

CONSULATE OF MALTA IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2013 FRANK L SCICLUNA - HON CONSUL - FULL OF HISTORY AND CULTURE OF MALTA

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TONY ABBOTT – NEW PRIME MINISTER OF AUSTRALIA - KEVIN RUDD RESIGNS



September 08, 2013

Prime Minister-elect Tony Abbott declared Australia 'open for business' after Kevin Rudd conceded defeat.

Prime Minister-elect Tony Abbott has declared Australia 'open for business' after Labor's Kevin Rudd conceded defeat in the federal election and stepped down as party leader. The coalition on Saturday night was on track for at least 89 seats in the 150-seat House of Representatives on the back of a 3.6 per cent national

swing against the ALP.

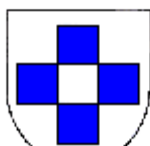
'From today, I declare that Australia is under new management and that Australia is once again open for new business,' Mr Abbott said in his victory speech to the coalition party faithful gathered at the Four Seasons Hotel in Sydney.

Coat of Arms of Malta and Gozo Towns and Villages



The Maltese Coat-of-Arms consists of a shield showing a heraldic representation of the National Flag of Malta; above the shield there is a mural crown in gold with sally port and eight turrets (five only being visible), representing the fortifications of Malta and denoting a City State; around the shield there is a wreath of two branches, the dexter of olive, the sinister a palm, symbols of peace and traditionally associated with Malta, all in their proper colors, tied at the base with a white ribbon, backed with red and upon which are written the words "Repubblika ta' Malta" in capital letters in black.

The official coat-of-arms of Gozo is a field divided horizontally: the upper two thirds silver; the lower Gozo Coat of Arms one third made up of six parallel wavy horizontal bands alternately silver and black, the top one silver, the bottom one black. Upon the upper part, three slightly pointed hills in black, the centre hill higher and in front of the other two hills. Above the shield is a mural coronet with five eschaugettes and a sally-port in gold. Simultaneously with this emblem, Gozo earned its popular nickname the Island of the Three Hills probably derived from the hilly view when observed from mainland Malta.



Attard



Balzan



Birgu



Birkirkara



Birzebbuga



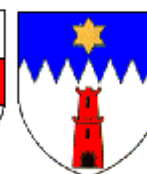
Bormla



Dingli



Fgura



Gharb



Floriana



Fontana



Ghajnsielem



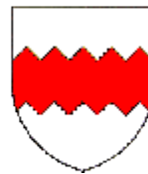
Gharghur



Ghasri



Ghaxaq



Gudja



Gzira



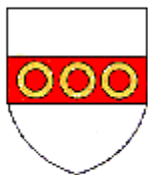
Hamrun



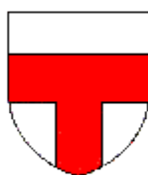
Iklin



Kalkara



Kercem



Kirkop



LJA



Luqa



Marsa



Marsascale



Marsaxlokk



Mdina



MELLIEHA
Mellieha



MGARR
Mgarr (Malta)



Mosta



Mqabba



Msida



Mtarfa



Munxar



NADUR
Nadur



NAXXAR



PAOLA



Pembroke



Pieta'



Qala



Qrendi



Qormi



RABAT
Città Vittoria
Rabat (Gozo)



Rabat (Malta)



Safi



San Lawrenz



San Pawl il-Bahar



Sannat



Santa Lucia



Senglea (Isla)



Santa Venera



Siggiewi



Sliema



Swieqi



Tarxien



Ta'Xbiex



Valletta



Xaghra



Xewkija (Gozo)



Zebbug (Gozo)



Zebbug (Malta)



Żejtun
Città Beland

Maltese memories- FOOD GLORIOUS FOOD



modern times occupied by Arab invaders, then Roman, Norman, Sicilian, Spanish, French and English. It's now a free country with many Maltese scattered throughout the world. Like many parts of the Mediterranean, there was an exodus around World War II due to extremely harsh economic times.

Much of the food is based on what is available, and is easy to grow and even what grows wild – capers grow by the side of the road and are used in many dishes, from the lovely open sandwich *hobz biz-zeit* to many great seafood dishes. This is truly peasant cuisine, using vegetables in season, home-made cheeses and some of the cheaper cuts of meat. These are cooked slowly with fresh tomatoes, parsley and garlic to create tender stews with lots of flavour. One of the famous meat dishes is *bragioli* or beef olives, a rolled stuffed piece of meat cooked slowly. To make the meal go further, a first course of pasta is served with the tomato sauce the *bragioli* cooks in, then as main course, the meat itself.



Rabbit is also extremely popular and many Maltese families raise their own. The signature dish of Malta is undoubtedly *stuffat tal fenek* – rabbit stew, with each town and village claiming to make the best version.

Perhaps the most famous culinary export from Malta is the golden flaky *pastizzi*. It's the meat pie of Malta, filled with mushy peas or ricotta and baked to golden, crunchy and deeply satisfying. Sydney-based *pastizzi* makers Charlie and Joe Hili reckon they make it better in Australia than it is done back home, but they're biased. A good *pastizzi* is made with the best puff-style pastry, rolled by hand and filled with basic comfort food fillings, no tomato sauce required.

Some of the simplest food is the result of people having to make do with what they had. *Widow's soup* or *Soppa ta l-Armla* is made up of whatever vegetables are in season and, if available, an egg or *gbejniet* (Maltese cheeselets) served with it. This was a dish served by many religious orders to families who had fallen on

extreme hardship, a soup that is perfect in its simplicity.

Naturally, fish and seafood are a large part of the diet and one of the beloved dishes is a fish pie: Torta tal-Lampuk. Anchovies are plentiful and star on top of the open sandwich hobs biz-zeit – a big crusty round of bread spread with kunserva (tomato paste) then piled with goodies including capers, tuna and a few gherkins.

Chef Shane Delia (Ted's son) says much of the food is a melting pot of all the people who have 'visited' Malta over centuries, pointing out the delicious alijota, a seafood soup, is remarkably similar to the classic French bouillabaisse. "But we've given it our own twist with handfuls of marjoram, fresh mint and garlic – ours is better," he adds with classic Maltese bravado.

Shane has fond memories of his grandmother's Stufat tal quarnit (octopus and walnut stew), which she would braise slowly with raisins and chickpeas; one of those recipes that touches your soul.

When it comes to sweets, there is a mixture of influences. Arabic culinary traditions are evident in qaq tal-ghase – a sweet biscuit served in a ring shape stuffed with dates and honey; mqaret are sweet date-filled pastries. Italian invaders are responsible for kannoli – pastry tubes fried then stuffed with ricotta, while some sweets show the English influence – with a twist – a classic bread and butter pudding becomes puddina – a more solid version packed with chocolate and dried fruit, which is sliced into squares and is terrific with a cup of tea.

One favourite Maltese sweet recipe is a heavenly chocolate dessert that's enjoyed in Malta at Christmas and uses roasted chestnuts mixed with blood oranges and chocolate, a mixture that shows off the country's ingenuity with ingredients.

With the sentiment that one should eat because tomorrow you may die, Maltese families get together every Sunday (just as the Italians do) to feast and share stories. Meals are large and served communally – the famous baked pasta pie timpana generally feeds a small army of people.

These Maltese feasts are a great delight, people brought together with food and wine. One final saying sums it up: *Hu pjacir hu gawdi, ghaliex F'din id-dinja xejn ma huwa taghna* – enjoy yourself, for there is nothing in the world we can call our own.

GOVERNMENT'S POLICY ON BOAT PEOPLE



If you come here by boat without a visa you won't be settled in Australia.

Australia's migration policy has changed. From 19 July 2013 if you travel to Australia by boat with no visa, you will not be settled here. You will be sent to Papua New Guinea or Nauru for processing. If found to be a refugee, you'll be settled in Papua New Guinea or Nauru, or another participating regional state, not Australia. This includes women and children. These changes have been introduced to stop people smugglers and stop further loss of life at sea.

If you are not found to be in need of protection, you will stay in Papua New Guinea or Nauru until you can be sent to your home country.

There will be no cap on the number of people who can be transferred or resettled in Papua New Guinea or Nauru.

Ghar Dalam (Cave of Darkness)



How to get there

By public transport: Bus numbers 11, 12, 115. By self-drive car: Drive towards Zejtun and Birzebbuga. The site is easy to locate as it is situated on the main road leading to Birzebbuga. Parking is easily accessible close to the main entrance.

Our Locals' Tip: The prehistoric 'Cave of Darkness' found in the South of Malta that also includes an interesting museum with remains of a dwarf elephant from 500,000 years ago...

Ghar Dalam Cave is a very important find as it was here that the earliest evidence of human settlement on Malta, some 7,400 years ago, was discovered. The site consists of a cave and a museum. The

history of the cave and of the Islands can be decoded from Ghar Dalam's stratigraphy. The lowermost layers, more than 500,000 years old, contained the fossil bones of dwarf elephants, hippopotami, micro-mammals and birds. Above the pebble layer that follows, is the so-called 'deer' layer, dated to around 18,000 years ago. The top layer, or 'cultural layer', dates to less than 10,000 years and holds evidence of the first humans on the Island.

Today the caves support a unique ecosystem for a variety of animal species. Ghar Dalam hosts over forty different species of life form including a unique endemic creature, a tiny woodlouse known to science as *Armadillidum ghardalamensis*. It has no sense of sight and is highly sensitive to light. This is why the inner part of the cave is kept in complete darkness.

The museum hosts a series of repetitive exhibits of semi-fossilized bones mounted on wooden boards displayed in Victorian style. The center of the room is decorated with mounted skeletons belonging to modern-day animals and is exhibited for comparative and educational purposes only. The museum also bears information on life on earth, the effects of the Ice Age on Malta, the formation of the cave, and dwarfing and gigantism in animals.

Discoveries from the caves include an elephant molar, hippopotamus tusk, bear jaw, human bull tooth, deer skull, dwarf swan, bat bones, jaw of a shrew and the endemic *Armadillidum ghardalamensis*.

Opening Hours

Monday to Sunday: 9.00-17.00

Last admission: 16.30

Closed: 24, 25 & 31 December, 1 January, Good Friday

Tickets Adults (18 - 59 years): €5.00

Students, Senior Citizens and Children (12 - 17 years): €3.50

Children (6 - 11 years): €2.50 Infants (1 - 5 years): Free

Maltese Australians

Maltese Australians are residents or citizens of Australia who are of Maltese ancestry or Maltese citizens. While most of them emigrated to Australia from Malta, a number emigrated from the United Kingdom where they had settled after having been expelled from Egypt, as holders of British passports, during the Suez Crisis.

People with Maltese ancestry as a percentage of the population in Australia divided geographically by statistical local area, as of the 2011 census



The first Maltese arrivals to Australia were convicts who arrived around 1810.http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maltese_Australian_-_cite_note-3 The first Maltese immigrant (as opposed to convict or bonded servant) is thought to have been Antonio Azzopardi who arrived in 1838. Many attempts were made at organised mass migration throughout the 19th century but it was only in 1883 the first group of 70 labourers (and nine stowaways) arrived.

Group and mass migration gradually picked up, first, to Queensland and, after World War I, to Sydney whose automobile industry drew many. Immigration was not without difficulty as Maltese workers tended to be looked

down upon and restrictions and quotas were applied. A significant percentage of the Maltese immigrants had intended to stay only temporarily for work but many settled in Australia permanently. Maltese immigration to Australia reached its peak during the 1960s. The majority of Maltese immigrants reside in Melbourne's western suburbs of Sunshine (especially on Glengala Rd) and St Albans, and in Sydney's western suburbs of Greystanes and Horsley Park. In Adelaide, although they are spread all over the state, there is a large number residing in the northern suburbs, especially Salisbury and Elizabeth. The Maltese, as in their home country, are predominately Roman Catholic.
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maltese_Australian_-_cite_note-5

The first woman to migrate from Malta to Australia was Carmela Sant in 1915. The move was prompted by her husband Giuseppe Ellul, who had migrated in 1913. Giuseppe Ellul was a stonemason in Mosta before moving to Australia to commence a successful career in sugar cane and dairy farming in Mackay, Queensland. In 1916 the couple gave birth to the first born Maltese Australian, Joseph Ellul



JOE CAMILLERI – AUSTRALIAN MUSICIAN

Joseph Vincent "Joe" Camilleri,http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joe_Camilleri_-_cite_note-ASCAP-1 (born 21 May 1948 in Malta) (**Jo Jo Zep** or **Joey Vincent**), is an Australian vocalist, songwriter and saxophonist. Camilleri has recorded as a solo artist and as a member of Jo Jo Zep & The Falcons and The Black Sorrows. Jo Jo Zep & The Falcons' highest charting single was "Hit & Run" from June 1979, which peaked at #12; Jo Jo Zep's "Taxi Mary" peaked in September 1982;http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joe_Camilleri_-_cite_note-Kent-5 and The Black Sorrows top single, "Chained to the Wheel", peaked in March 1989.

Camilleri has also produced records for The Sports, Jo Jo Zep & The Falcons, Paul Kelly & the Dots, The Black Sorrows, Renée Geyer and Ross Wilson. Australian music journalist, Ian McFarlane, described him as "one of the most genuinely talented figures in Australian music", and, as a member of Jo Jo Zep & The Falcons, Camilleri was inducted into the Australian Recording Industry Association (ARIA) Hall of Fame in 2007.

Joe Camilleri was born the third of ten children in Malta in 1948. The family migrated to Australia when he was two.^[9] Camilleri grew up in Port Melbourne and listened to rock music on the radio.^[9] His mother called him Zep and he became known as Jo Zep. Camilleri began his music career in 1964 when literally thrown onstage to sing with The Drollies.^[9] He played blues and R&B in the mid-1960s with The King Bees,^{[4][9]} and was then a member of Adderley Smith Blues Band. In 1968, lead singer for the band, Broderick Smith had been conscripted for National Service during the Vietnam War. Camilleri lasted a year with Adderley Smith, and enjoyed working with the band including guitarist Kerry Tolhurst (later in The Dingoes with Smith). According to Australian music journalist Ed Nimmervoll, Camilleri was sacked for sounding too much like Mick Jagger and upstaging other band members.^[10] After Adderley Smith, Camilleri was a member of various bands, including The Pelaco Brothers during 1974–1975.

Jo Jo Zep & The Falcons formed in 1975 and Camilleri gained national prominence as the group's lead singer, co-songwriter and saxophonist.^[2] Other members (from 1976 on)



included Jeff Burstin (guitar, vocals), John Power (bass guitar, vocals), Gary Young (drums), Tony Faehse (guitar, vocals) and Wilbur Wilde on sax. Incorporating influences from blues, R&B, soul, punk rock, New Wave and reggae, the group achieved considerable commercial and critical success in Australia.http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joe_Camilleri - cite note-McFJJZF-2 Hit singles for Jo Jo Zep & The Falcons included "Shape I'm In" and "Puppet on a String"; their highest charting single was "Hit & Run" from June 1979 which peaked at No.12.

The classic 1976-1981 group reformed in 2001 for a one-off gig, but stayed together to release an album of new material, *Ricochet*, in 2003. As a member of Jo Jo Zep & The Falcons, Camilleri was inducted into the Australian Recording Industry Association (ARIA) Hall of Fame in 2007.

After the demise of Jo Jo Zep & the Falcons in 1983, Camilleri achieved his greatest success with another long-running group The Black Sorrows, which began in 1984 as an informal semi-acoustic band playing blues. The Black Sorrows had a shifting line-up and at various points included three ex-Falcons: Jeff Burstin, Wayne Burt, and Gary Young. Camilleri himself has been the only constant member of the group.

The Black Sorrows developed a strong fan following and garnered wide critical acclaim for their recordings and superb live performances. After starting life as an acoustic cover band, they evolved into a full electric ensemble that wrote their own material, releasing a string of commercially successful and critically acclaimed albums in the 1980s and 1990s. For the first several years the band was in existence, Camilleri performed under the pseudonym "Joey Vincent" (a name he had previously used for a solo single), although he wrote and produced material for the group using his real name. The "Joey Vincent" persona was finally dropped in time for the release of 1990's *Harley & Rose*.

With a number of different line-ups, the band has continued to release material through the 1990s and 2000s. Their most recent release of original material was *Roarin' Town* in 2006, followed by a live-in-the-studio album of newly recorded versions of older songs called *4 Days In Sing Sing* (2009).



Dr. Barry York

MALTESE VOICES DOWN UNDER

On Sunday 31st of May 1998 at the Maltese Cultural Centre in Albion, Australia, a new audio-CD, "[Maltese Voices Down Under](#)" and a book "Maltese in Australia", both by Dr. Barry York, were launched

Despite the surname - York - Dr. Barry York's dad is Maltese. He was born Loreto Meilak but he changed his name after the Second World War when the Air Force (which he joined in Malta) stationed him in London

.Dr. Barry York's dad brothers and sisters, parents, etc., were all from Ghajnsielem, Gozo. The nickname was "tan-Nassi". His dad, however, being the eleventh child, happened to be born in Sliema, Malta, as the family moved there from Gozo around 1916. His dad was born in 1918

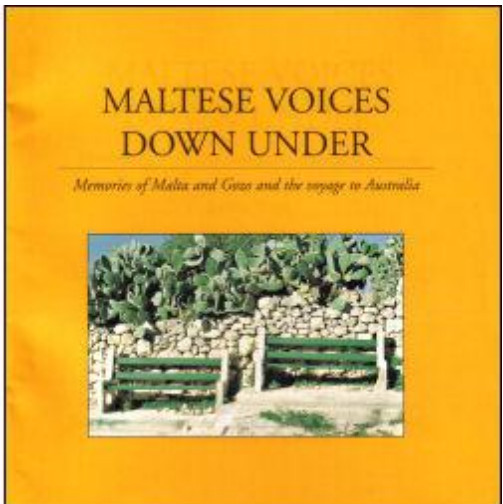
On this CD set, you will hear voices of Maltese men and women who migrated to Australia in eras as different to each other as the First World War and the 1940s. In their own words, they recall aspects of life in Malta and Gozo in the years before they migrated to Australia and they reminisce about the voyage to Australia

In all, there are excerpts from oral history interviews with twenty-one Maltese migrants. The interviews were completed for the National Library of Australia, which has an Oral History Collection and a Sound Preservation and Technical Service Unit of world class. The excerpts are linked together by music – beautiful guitar and mandolin playing – also recorded for the National Library. The musicians, like the interviewees, are all Maltese migrants or of Maltese background. Everything on this CD was recorded in Australia

.The voice of Mr. Emmanuel Attard, who was born a hundred years ago in 1898, will be heard. He talks of conditions on the French mailboat, Gange, in 1916. This was the era when, as he points out, bulls were slaughtered on deck for food. Mr. Attard was among a group of more than 200 Maltese migrants who were turned away from Australia and forced to go on to Noumea. He states on the tape that the Maltese passengers on the Gange had no reason to believe they would not be allowed in. His voice, recorded in 1989, is slow, thoughtful and richly deep. We learn more about the human being from listening to the voice than we would from merely reading words on paper

Another early vintage migrant is Mrs. Josephine Gauci, who disembarked at Adelaide in 1922. Her voice bounces along at a merry rate. It is a very different voice to Mr. Attard's. She didn't want to leave her homeland but her father was already in South Australia. Today it would be called a 'family reunion' migration. Mrs. Gauci's laughter is infectious, but one senses that it conceals sadness as well as expresses happiness. Mixed emotions are common on this CD. Bella Bugeja, for example, left Malta in 1949 with a sense of adventure and, being with her loved ones on the ship, did not feel sad. However, when she thinks about it today, she says she could cry

Emmanuel Attard and Josephine Gauci are no longer with us. Sadly, others on this CD – Joseph B. Attard and Frank Falzon – have passed on. Yet through this CD, and the original tapes on which they were interviewed at length, they live on. Nothing is as indicative of the individual, nothing as reflective of personality, as the human voice. And beyond the idiosyncrasies, the voice also has much to tell about a person's class and regional background.



There are many highlights on this CD. Another track "Saga of Skaubryn", which features Georgina Camenzuli relating the story, based on her own experience, of how the migrants' ship Skaubryn caught fire in the Indian Ocean in 1958 and sank. Encouraged by her husband, Nazzarenu, who was also on the Skaubryn, she wrote the lyrics so that future generations will know – to use her own words – "how we suffered to come to this country". Her song is in the ghana tal-fatt genre: a Maltese folk-song based on an actual event

.The people whose voices are heard on this CD set were born in a range of different villages and towns of Malta and Gozo: Hamrun, Msida, Birkirkara, Mdina, Lija, Zejtun, Cospicua, Paola, Valletta, Qala, Naxxar, Mosta, Senglea, Sliema and Ghajnsielem. There is also the voice of Robert Gauci, a Maltese from Egypt, who was born at Alexandria

The original recordings were completed in places of Maltese settlement in Australia: Sydney, Melbourne, Bassendean (Perth), East Fremantle, Adelaide, Canberra and Mackay (Queensland)



.A range of accents will be heard, too, and I'm sure linguists will be fascinated by the differences between them. With two exceptions, the voices belong to people who migrated by ship. The migrants voyage is part of the direct personal experience of about two million Australians. However, as migrants shipping declined during the 1960s and unlikely to ever happen again, it is an aspect of 'living memory' that needs to be preserved and recorded now – before it is too late. I hope the CD on the "Voyage" theme has gone some small way towards that end. The voyages remembered are of the Gange (1916), Florentia (1951), Moreton Bay (1952), Sydney (1954),

Toscana (1954), Orosa Kulm (1956) and Skaubryn (1958)

The "Memories of Malta and Gozo" CD features people who made the voyage to Australia on the Orama (1925), Asturias (1949 and 1952), Strathnaver (1950), Himalaya (1954) and Castel Verde (1954). It will bring back some wonderful memories for all the Maltese in Australia and for those elsewhere too. It will also provide important cultural insights into Maltese life and society at particular points in time. But the memories are by no means all happy ones. Memories of war are never happy and the Second World War features significantly on the CD. Joseph Aquilina's recollections of the bombardment of Malta will remain with listeners for a very long time. The tiny Island of Malta was almost bombed to submission by Nazi and Fascist Forces. But the Maltese did not give in. It was in large part due to Malta's war-time heroism that the Australian government agreed to develop a scheme for assisted passages for Maltese migrants after the war

The great majority of Maltese people in Australia migrated within the two decades after 1946. The Australian Census of 1947 found only 3,238 Malta-born persons in Australia. The 1966 Census found 55,104. This meant that by 1966 one in every six Maltese had left Malta and Gozo to settle in Australia. Today, there are about 50,000 Malta-born Australians. If one includes the Australian-born children of the Maltese migrants, then the figure for "Maltese-Australians" stands at about 180,000. It is ultimately for them, their children and their children's children, that this CD set has been produced Melbourne, Australia.

MALTESE COMMUNITY HERITAGE PROJECT IN WOLLONGONG NSW

As the Maltese Community Development Officer for the Illawarra Area, for the past five years, Lorraine Vargas (nee



Sammut-Alessi) came to realise that amongst the aging population of Maltese people who immigrated to Wollongong, there were a vast wealth of memories that were not being recorded and many objects were in a real danger of being lost if no action was taken to preserve these stories and items.

Lorraine, herself a daughter of Maltese immigrants and a Wollongong resident for some 27 years, found that when people came in to her office to fill out some forms, for example, they would stay and talk about their life in Malta and their life in Wollongong. Lorraine felt it was a shame that nothing was in place to make sure that these stories were being recorded. Two years ago, with the formation of the Migration Heritage Project (MHP) Lorraine was given the opportunity to start documenting the Maltese migrant

history in a structured way.

So on 17 June 2004 members of the Migration Heritage Project, together with Lorraine, held a presentation at the George Cross Falcons Club in Cringila and invited members of the Maltese community in Wollongong. This was primarily an information night to let them know that their stories were important and that if anyone wanted to share their information Lorraine was going to start collecting. Following the presentation Lorraine's list of participants grew.

Lorraine is now in the process of collecting stories or information about objects, photographs or documents people may have at home. Their stories are then recorded on audiotapes or be transcribed directly onto the computer. Lorraine scans photographs and documents and photograph objects, to record all this information. Lorraine also gives them a questionnaire to fill out, either with her in the office or to take away with them to do at home, which would record all their important personal immigration history, once again ensuring that their story is documented for history.

Lorraine never keeps any of these items as she does not want the people participating in her project to feel that they relinquish ownership of any objects, nor is any of the information or details made known as everything remains anonymous unless written permission is given by the owner. Lorraine, along with the MHP, feels very strongly about respecting the privacy and the wishes of the individual.

So far Lorraine has recorded a lot of this information into files, which she is archiving so that none of this information will be lost. Lorraine hopes to put all this information together and present it as part of the history of the Maltese community in

the Illawarra. She would also like to make the information available to the Illawarra community as a whole, to be used as a means of learning and understanding the hardships and joy that the Maltese migrants in Wollongong experienced.

Much of the work Lorraine has achieved thus far is as a result of funding received from the Community Relations Commission of N.S.W. and with the support of the George Cross Falcons Club and its president, George Bajjada, who was very supportive and welcomed the idea of getting the Maltese community history together. To Lorraine's surprise her endeavours have achieved special attention both here and overseas.

Above all, Lorraine has found that members of the Maltese community who are participating in this project have found an opportunity to share their stories with other community members. Lorraine is also very pleased to know that her efforts have provided them an interest and is bonding the Maltese community as a whole.

Carnival in Malta

Carnivals in Malta, as we know them now, were first organised shortly after the Knights of St John came to the Island in 1535. The first that really broke out into the general jollification was probably the Carnival of 1560, when a massed Christian Armada was harbour-bound in Malta before sailing to Tripoli.

The Grand Admiral sent his men ashore while Grand Master La Valette sanctioned the wearing of masks in public, which no doubt helped to ease their inhibitions. This was a marked contrast to the action of Grand Master Lascaris, who in 1639 prohibited the wearing of masks by women under penalty of their being whipped.



By the middle of the 18th Century, Carnival in Valletta was in its heyday. From 1751 onwards a rival Carnival attraction took place in Floriana a few weeks before Carnival proper and it too, involved a defile of masks and carriages. The Order encouraged the craze by staging extra Carnivals called "Mad Carnivals" for special occasions. During that period it was usual for the Grand Master's carriage to head the Carnival Procession and it would be flanked by cavalry marching to the beat of the drums.

For many years now Carnival in Malta has been re-established as a season of general jollification. Today, Carnival is one of the main Cultural events in the Maltese cultural calendar. Carnival is organised prior to the Catholic period of Lent which comes prior to the religious festivities of Easter Sunday. The main activities are held in the streets of the Maltese capital Valletta and Floriana, but other activities are held in various villages in Malta and in Gozo.

REACHING THE TARGET ON A GREASY POLE - IL-GOSTRA

During the height of summer, when it is customary to hold feasts (festi) throughout Malta and Gozo, a popular game near the seaside is that of the gostra or greasy pole which today, in the face of other more popular and more modern sports, still forms an essential element in the customs and traditions of Malta's folklore.



Il-Gostra

The word itself derives from the Italian giostra. The latter has a different meaning to that practised in Malta, as it refers to the mediaeval tournament of the jousts while the one in Malta deals with a sea sport with a greasy pole.

It is thought by many that the sport of the gostra must have evolved alongside the Maypole and 'kukkanja', which were practised in Palace Square opposite the Grand Master's Palace in Valletta. Others opine that the sport must have been introduced from nearby Sicily in later days. Be that as it may, perusal of some old prints would suggest that the sport flourished some time after the start of the British period of domination in these islands, following the expulsion of the French under

Napoleon in 1798. In fact a particular print shows the Union Jack hoisted both on a high pole as well as at the end of the greasy pole, to be snatched by the winner.

Whatever the historical connections, the sport had become very entertaining, as can be verified from the accompanying picture which shows Balluta Bay, opposite the church of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. The barge carrying the greasy pole is the centre of the fun game in action, with a ferryboat close by used to tow the barge itself. The very large number of spectators, both from high vantage points and in all types of small and large craft including luzzis, dghajjes and frejgatinis are ample evidence of the sport's popularity at the time.

The spectators know that to run up the greasy pole is no mean task, and there is always the danger that moving quickly up the pole tends to unbalance many participants, who often fall awkwardly into the sea and at times even hurt themselves. Consequently, on the whole the gostra attracts the younger and more daring sportsmen.



It must be mentioned that to reach the target, the sportsmen have to run up a pole that is smeared with grease or some other slippery element. Its total length is about 10 metres. In the traditional 'gostra', a game stretching back to the Middle Ages, Maltese young men, women and children have to scabble their way to the top of a very greasy pole.

If they manage the tricky feat, they need to then uproot one of the flags to claim their hard-won prize.

The comical sight of contestants slithering to victory happens every year on August 25 for the religious feast of St Julian, patron of the town of St Julian's, outside the capital Valletta.

Energetic: A man running up the pole covered in grease during the religious feast in Malta

Celebrations start from days before the actual date, with the town covered in lights and flags. On the day of the feast, there is a procession around town carrying a statue of St. Julian followed by brass band music. Then it is time for the climax of the festivities - the much-loved pole competition. Residents of all abilities can enter, making it an exciting and unpredictable spectacle.

From May to September in Malta, there is hardly a weekend when a town or a village is not celebrating the feast of its patron saint or other saints revered in different churches.



A man runs up the "gostra", a pole covered in grease, during the religious feast of St Julian, patron of St Julian's on Sunday. In the traditional "gostra", a game stretching back to the Middle Ages, young men, women and children have to make their way to the top and try to uproot one of the flags to win prizes. Photo: Darrin Zammit Lupi –

Unscheduled Bus Service operator to join forces with Arriva

To help minimise any inconvenience of the public transport system, talks were held this evening to identify temporary solutions between the Transport Ministry, Arriva and Transport Malta. Following this evening's talks, the Transport Ministry said that as from tomorrow the Unsheduled Bus Services (UBS) operator will join forces with Arriva to operate routes which will be affected as a result of the decision that was taken earlier today, that of withdrawing all Arriva bendy buses, a total of 68.

The ministry also said that Arriva will be financing the additional expenses that will be incurred so that the operation could go ahead as planned. Meanwhile, Arriva confirmed in a statement issued this evening that all articulated (bendy) buses have been temporarily withdrawn.

Arriva said that it will use its best endeavours to ensure the continuity of service on all routes and limit disruption adding that a transport operator has been subcontracted as a temporary measure to provide replacement vehicles and help ensure a satisfactory level of service. Arriva advised customers that subcontracted vehicles will not feature its standard bus livery. Drivers of these vehicles will not be able to sell tickets so customers are advised to purchase their tickets off-board from ticket machines, street sellers or Arriva ticket booths. Arriva said that it would continue to collaborate with the ministry and the regulating authority in order to achieve a public transportation system that meets legitimate passenger expectations and that is aligned with the government's objectives.



A picture is
worth 1000 words



The story of the Valletta blockade, by someone who was trapped inside

It seems strange, but two diaries relating to the invasion of Malta by Napoleon's troops and the subsequent two years of the blockade of Valletta lay in the National Library of Malta for all those years but were never, until recently, been translated. One of these diaries was translated and published two years ago. The other will be published in the coming weeks.



Both have been translated by Joseph Scicluna who has recently written and published a story, *Ricasoli Soldier*, relating to roughly the same time. To consider them together, the three books are like a series.

First comes *Malta Surrendered: the Doublet Memoirs* which tells the story of the arrival of the French force and the capitulation by the Knights which brought to an end the Order's stay in Malta. Then comes *Blockade: Malta 1798-1800* which tells the story of Valletta under blockade. And then finally there is *Ricasoli Soldier*, which tells the fictitious story of an Italian man who came to Malta to enrol in a British regiment and fight Napoleon.

Mr Scicluna has also translated another French work, which has so far been published only as an e-book. This is *Sword-Lily: The Last Days of the Knights of Malta – 1798*, an English translation of Auguste-Émile

Cillart De Kermainguy's third and last novel about the Knights of Malta in which he tells the story of Sword-Lily and her love for a young French nobleman who came to Malta from Brittany to become a Knight.





THE FINAL INSPECTION

*The Soldier stood and faced God, Which must always come to pass.
He hoped his shoes were shining, just as brightly as his brass.
'Step forward now, Soldier, How shall I deal with you?
Have you always turned the other cheek? To My Church have you been true?'
The soldier squared his shoulders and said, 'No, Lord, I guess I ain't.
Because those of us who carry guns, Can't always be a saint.
I've had to work most Sundays, and at times my talk was tough.
And sometimes I've been violent, because the world is awfully rough.
But, I never took a penny, that wasn't mine to keep...
Though I worked a lot of overtime, when the bills got just too steep.
And I never passed a cry for help, Though at times I shook with fear..
And sometimes, God, forgive me, I've wept unmanly tears.
I know I don't deserve a place, among the people here.
They never wanted me around, except to calm their fears
If you've a place for me here, Lord, It needn't be so grand.
I never expected or had too much, but if you don't, I'll understand.
There was a silence all around the throne, where the saints had often trod.
As the Soldier waited quietly for the judgment of his God.
'Step forward now, you Soldier, You've borne your burdens well.
Walk peacefully on Heaven's streets; you've done your time in Hell.'*

Royal Adelaide Show 2013

Dates **06 Sept 2013 – 14 Sept 2013**



The Royal Adelaide Show is South Australia's biggest annual event run by the Royal Agricultural and Horticultural Society of South Australia. Experiences run the whole gamut from carnival rides, exhibitions and attractions to exquisite handicraft, cookery and wide variety of champion livestock and animals. It is at the Show that rural South Australia and City business alike can showcase their best produce, wares and services.

The Royal Adelaide Show is the 'people's event' and truly offers something for everyone, such as food and wine tastings; entertainment with bands, dancing, comedy acrobatic; exhibitions and displays; fashion parades; competitions; animals (livestock and pets); farmyard nursery and animal petting area.

Top chocolate awards at the Royal Adelaide Show

BRACEGIRDLE'S Fine House of Chocolate has tasted sweet success at this year's Royal Adelaide Show.



Chocolatier Megan Charlton and Sue Bracegirdle and the winning chocolates. Bracegirdle's House of Fine Chocolate has taken out the top chocolate categories at the 2013 Royal Adelaide Show for the second year in a row, crowned Champion Chocolate Exhibit and Most Successful Chocolate Exhibitor.

Source: News Limited

The business, which has cafes at Toorak Gardens, Kensington Park, Glenelg and Marion, has taken out the top chocolate categories at the show's SA Diary Awards for the second year in a row. Bracegirdle's was awarded the John W Rothwell Trophy for Champion Chocolate for its Royale Gift Box containing 25 of their best chocolates.

It was also crowned the most successful chocolate

exhibitor after winning 21 gold awards. Bracegirdle's owner Sue Bracegirdle says the recognition is an honour for the business' chocolatiers who make its range by hand in the Adelaide Hills.

"We are always thinking outside the square on what can be created using high quality chocolate and the Bracegirdle's team works tirelessly trialling and testing new products before they hit the shelves," Mrs Bracegirdle says. Bracegirdle's also took out top honours at this year's Sydney Royal Easter Show and Melbourne Royal Show. Bracegirdle's winning chocolates will be on display in the Dairy Hall at this year's Royal Adelaide Show until this Saturday (September 14).