


THE MALTESE NEWSLETTER

The Journal of the Maltese Diaspora

THE MOTTO - BUILDING BRIDGES NOT WALLS

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Cyclone Debbie: Storm surge blankets Mackay area- Australia



By Jessica Haynes

WHAT'S THE LATEST ON THE STORM?

The latest advice is that Debbie is about **45 kilometres southeast of Bowen** and **15 kilometres north of Proserpine**.

The eye wall of the cyclone is now impacting the mainland near Airlie Beach as well as the Whitsunday Islands. There are 48,000 people without power in Airlie Beach,

Proserpine, Bowen, Mackay and Cannonvale. Hamilton Island Airport observed wind gusts of 263 kilometres at 10:25am and Proserpine Airport reported wind gusts of 139 kilometres at 10:22am. Bowen Airport recorded wind gusts of 120 kilometres at 10:41am.

A cyclone warning zone extends from **Lucinda** to **St Lawrence**, including **Townsville**, **Mackay**, the **Whitsundays** and inland of **Bowen** to **Charters Towers**, **Mount Coolon**, **Moranbah** and **Pentland**. The cyclone is tipped to bring gale-force winds and gusts of up to **250kph** at the core of the storm.



Homes older than those built in 1985 are not expected to withstand the strength of the storm.

High tides, known as a storm surge, are expected along the coast between **Proserpine** and **Mackay**, and those living between **Lucinda** and **Mackay** have been warned ahead of a "dangerous storm tide". In simple terms, a storm surge is a raised dome of water which moves to the coast ahead of and with a tropical cyclone, which can penetrate further

inland than usual. The one expected to come with this cyclone could be up to four metres high seas. So far the total damage is more than one billion dollars.

Thousands of Australian of Maltese descent reside in these areas.

Our thoughts and prayers go out to all the residents effected by Cyclone Debbie!

Filipinos, Serbs top list of third country nationals working in Malta



2017: Last update: about 6 months ago. In 2016 there were 1,468 Filipinos working in Malta, topping the list of third country nationals working in Malta. The second largest group on the list is made up of 1,246 Serbs.

The information was tabled in Parliament by Work and Education Minister Evarist Bartolo, at the request of PN MP Carmelo Mifsud Bonnici. The list also includes 369 Chinese workers, 286

Eritreans, 383 Indians, 322 Libyans and 264 Nigerians.

Among the more interesting nationalities one finds 43 Afghans, 3 people from American Samoa, 13 from Belarus, 55 Brazilians, one person from Comoros, 7 Jamaicans, one person from Myanmar, 16 from North Korea, 89 from Thailand.

According to the list there are 46 Australians, 56 Canadians and 108 Americans living and working in Malta. There are also 351 Russians, 195 Turks and 279 Ukrainians.

Over 22,000 EU nationals working in Malta

In reply to another parliamentary question, Mr Bartolo said there were 22,579 EU nationals working in Malta by the end of April. Italians made up the largest group, with 5,180 people. The second largest group was 3,985 Britons, followed by Bulgaria, with 2,044 nationals working in Malta.

At the end of April there were also 332 Austrians, 188 Belgians, 100 Croats, 26 Cypriots, 296 Czechs, 204 Danes, 120 Estonians, 321 Finns, 879 French, 991 Germans, 379 Greeks, 1,308 Hungarians, 281 Irish, 276 Latvians, 213 Lithuanians, 4 Luxembourgish, 466 Dutch, 779 Polish, 297 Portuguese, 1,262 Romanians, 338 Slovaks, 106 Slovenians, 1,119 Spanish and 1,085 Swedes working in Malta.

According to the list there were also 252 EEA/EFTA nationals, and 245 EU Dependents working in Malta



AS PER THE PRESS RELEASE LAST WEEK we have additional information about the new Deputy High Commissioner in Australia. Ms Denise Demicoli has been posted to the High Commission of the Republic of Malta in Canberra in March 2017, assuming the capacity of Deputy to the High Commissioner.

Having served as a Second Secretary within the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Malta, her areas of expertise range from issues pertaining to Mediterranean Regional Initiatives, EU coordination on the EU's Common Foreign Security Policy and the revamped European Union Neighbourhood Policy. Ms Demicoli has carried out extensive research on intercultural dialogue through the perspectives of media and communications and critical theory.

Her interdisciplinary post-graduate studies in the field are best applied in relation to mediating relationships within the Maltese Communities Living Abroad and local authorities, with the aim to safeguard the interests and well-being of Maltese citizens.

Easter in Malta 2017: A time to indulge in Maltese traditions, figolli and celebrate in style on Easter Sunday!

Thinking of spending your [Easter in Malta in 2017?](#) Then read on.



In 2017, **Holy Week** will start on the 9th of April (Palm Sunday) and **Easter Sunday** is going to be celebrated on the 16th of April. The majority of Malta's population are devout Catholics and therefore it should come as no surprise that Easter in Malta is a big event.

However, even if you're not the religious type or are a non-believer, most of the Maltese traditions that take place during the Easter period are generally interesting to watch or participate in for any visitor who may happen to be holidaying in Malta during that time.

During Lent, there are a lot of religious events that take place, and are mostly practiced by all Catholics across the globe.

However, on Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Sunday some interesting practices take place in Malta.

On *Hamis ix-Xirka* (Maundy Thursday) many locals participate in specific religious events that are held on the day. For more information on what goes

on during Maundy Thursday, visit our [Hamis ix-Xirka](#) page.

On Good Friday, no church bells are rung. Instead, in some of the old villages, a different and unique instrument is played. For more information on this intriguing Maltese tradition, visit our [Cuqlajta](#) page.

On **Good Friday**, a lot of Maltese towns and villages stage biblical re-enactments. These captivating, sombre and elaborate pageants feature life size statues and biblical characters.

The statues depict various scenes from the passion and death of Jesus Christ and each statue is carried by approximately 6 to 8 men on their shoulders. Some parades even have horses in the re-enactment.

Roman soldiers feature heavily in these processions, and some villages have these Roman soldiers parade on their horses with chariots and the whole works. The Good Friday re-enactment in Zebbug, Malta is one of them.



Most processions also have participants dressed in white robes and hoods, walk the parade with lots of metal chains tied at their ankles and dragging them the whole way or carrying wooden crosses in penitence.

In the old days, this tradition was more widespread than today.

Overall, the total number of participants in the Good Friday re-enactment is always in the hundreds. So there's lots to see!

For more information on these popular Maltese processions, visit our [Good Friday Processions in Malta and Gozo](#) page.

On **Easter Sunday**, the atmosphere is completely different all across the island, since it is a day of joy and celebrations.

Towns and villages celebrate the resurrection of Christ with lively band marches and a short procession with the statue of the Risen Christ.

The procession starts right after the morning mass at around 10.00am.

An interesting yet somewhat funny tradition is to run with the statue of the Risen Christ.

This does not occur in all processions, but only at the harbour towns of Vittoriosa, Senglea and Cospicua. So if you want to see some 6 men running with a statue of Christ on their shoulders, you know where you have to go :)

Easter in Malta: Maltese Figolli ... Yummy Traditional Easter Sweets!

As with all major celebrations and events on the Maltese islands, you will find a traditional sweet or type of food that's savoured exclusively during that particular time. And Lent and Easter in Malta, are no different!

Kusksu is a traditional Maltese fava bean soup which is cooked mainly during Lent.

Qaghaq ta' l-Appostli (Apostles' bread rings) is a special type of bread prepared for the Lenten period and sold mostly on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday.

By far, the most popular Maltese Easter sweet is the **figolla**.

Maltese figolli are baked sweet pastry cut in different shapes (ranging from butterflies, fish, sirens to lambs, etc) filled with almonds.

They are coated with icing sugar and colorfully decorated with chocolate and Easter eggs. If you'd like to get the recipe for these delicious cakes, visit our **Maltese Easter Recipes** page.

Tradition dictates that figolli should not be eaten until Easter Sunday, when it's time to celebrate the resurrection of Christ.

On Easter Sunday, you can see many kids with their figolla during the procession because it's customary for them to have their figolla blessed during this event.

Easter lunch is also highly popular since it's a time for the whole family to meet, celebrate and eat and drink together. They exchange Easter presents and the main meal is usually the traditional lamb, with potatoes and vegetables. Followed by a slice of figolla, of course :)

Easter eggs and **Colomba** (an Italian Easter sweet) are also very popular.

During Lent, another sweet is also popular with the locals. It's the **kwarezimal** and it's basically a small almond cake made with milk, flour, black honey, spices and of course almonds.

The number of visitors that choose Malta as their travel destination for Easter has been increasing for years. And for good reason too, because Easter in Malta will invariably mean warm weather (compared to other European countries), a good peak into Maltese culture and traditions and a time for celebration on Easter Sunday. http://www.maltabulb.com/easter_in_malta.html

X'inhw wiehed mill-“akbar sigrieti” ta' pajjiżna? Ix-xemx? Il-baħar? Le...



Mhux l-ewwel darba li pajjiżna jispiċċa jissemma f'artikli turistiċi għall-baħar kahlani li joffri, jew għall-istaġuni kkaratterizzati minn sigħat twal ta' xemx. Biex ma nsemmux ukoll l-aspett storiku li jagħmilna gawhra fil-Mediterran.

Madankollu artiklu riċenti fuq The Daily Express jitfa' dawl fuq element imfittex ħafna mit-turisti li jżuru lil pajjiżna ... l-aspett kulinari. Id-diversità kbira fl-ikel li joffri l-ikel huwa saħansitra deskritt bħala wiehed mill-akbar sigrieti li joffru l-għejjer tagħna. L-artiklu ma jonqosx li jsemmi n-numru kbir ta' ristoranti li jżewqu kull rokna tal-għejjer tagħna b'ikel tradizzjonali,

bħall-fenek u kull xorta ta' frott tal-baħar. L-artiklu ma setax ma jsemmix prodott tipiku kulinari ta' pajjiżna, il-gbejniet. Biex ma ninsewx ukoll l-inbid, deskritt bħala li huwa ta' kwalità għolja ħafna

MALTA IS SET TO BECOME THE WORLD'S FIRST WI-FI NATION



March 2017 Malta is on course to become the world's first wi-fi nation. Malta's economy minister made the pledge at a Facebook roadshow in Valletta.

Chris Cardona told the Boost Your Business seminar that the Malta Communications Authority was working to make sure Malta will become the first Wi-Fi state in the world by Christmas. He said: 'Malta is the European leader in

fast broadband coverage, and in the quality of e-government services.

'Just last week we launched 20 new mobile apps that make government services and information available 24 hours a day.' The minister said around three-quarters of people in Malta and Gozo use social media every week.

He added: 'This is an impressive figure when compared to the EU average of 37 per cent.' Facebook figures show that 89.7 Bay's award-winning Bay Easy page has the highest engagement of any Facebook business account in the Maltese Islands – more than double its nearest rival. The Valletta event was hosted by Facebook, the Ministry for the Economy and the Malta Chamber of Commerce.



National Commission for Active Ageing Gozo launched

The Parliamentary Secretary for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Active Ageing Justyne Caruana, has announced the members who will make up the National Commission for Active Ageing Gozo.

Dr Caruana made the announcement during a visit to the Ghajnsielem Learning Hub. The members are Mr Joe Camilleri, Ms Gemma Zammit, Mr. Emanuel Grima, Ms Marita Buttigieg, Ms. Antonia Sammut, Prof. John Pace, Mr. Amand Veranneman and Kav. Joe M. Attard.

Parliamentary Secretary Justyne Caruana explained the role of this Commission. saying that among the challenges facing the Commission is, the changing demographics of Gozo, an increasingly ageing society in Gozo, as well as the concrete realisation of the National Strategy for Active Ageing.

Dr Caruana also mentioned that Gozo, with its particular demographic challenges, needs the participation of its own people to ensure older age appropriate environments and for Gozitan society to know and understand a life of dignity for them in this particular period of their lives.

"If we supply services to Gozo, it is appropriate for the Gozitans themselves to come forward with ideas on how the Government can provide more suitable services for our elderly," said Dr Caruana.

Parliamentary Secretary Caruana mentioned the services already provided in Gozo by the Government through the Secretariat, which she said are helping to create suitable environments for older people to remain active in the community, some which have never existed before, including BeActive,

the Active Ageing Centres, Night Shelter, Respite services, Residential services, and services offered by CommCare and free geriatric consultant services for the elderly.

Parliamentary Secretary Justyne Caruana concluded by congratulating the members of the National Commission for Active Ageing Gozo, and wished them well for the good work in favour of the Gozitan elderly, while also inviting them to submit their future recommendations in this regard.

Angelo Azzopardi CARLTON FC Australian Football League

by Tony De Bolfo, Carlton Media



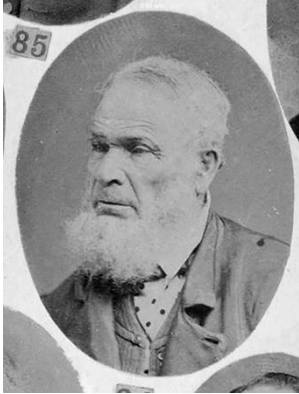
Picture left - Former Carlton footballer Angelo Azzopardi, the son of Australia's first Maltese free settler. (Photo: Blueseum)

If multiculturalism means "the existence, acceptance, or promotion of multiple cultural traditions within a single jurisdiction" then Carlton can surely claim football's multicultural dominion. Amongst the club's historic ranks is a solid collective born beyond Australian shores - from the Indian-born Fred Pringle through to the London-born Wayne Blackwell.

Then there are those boasting generational links with the old world – from Wally Koochew, whose father was Chinese and mother of Nordic extraction, through to Anthony Koutoufides, the son of a Greek Egyptian-born father and Italian-born mother.

Another such Carltonite was truly of another time. His name was Angelo Azzopardi, whom history records was the son of Australia's first Maltese free settler. The much-resourced Carlton historic website www.blueseum.org, through its dedicated

researcher Pete McLean, unearthed precious details of Australia's first Azzopardi family. Angelo's father, the seaman Antonio Azzopardi, was born in Zejtun, a city in the south eastern region of Malta, in 1805. An image of him is included in the photographic montage published by Thomas Foster Chuck in 1872



entitled "The Explorers and Early Colonists of Victoria and he is listed as number 84, "A. Azzopardi".

Antonio Azzopardi, Australia's first Maltese free settler 1893.

Antonio disembarked the barque *Mary Hay* in Melbourne in 1839 - just four years after the city's founding by John Batman.

Antonio initially toiled as a mail contractor before turning his hand to the publishing game as a canvasser with Melbourne's *The Herald* newspaper. In time he acquired RM Abbott's printing works and duly pursued a career in the printing profession.

Antonio's son Angelo (later to represent the Carlton Football Club in its pre-VFA years), was born in this city on August 8, 1846 – one of four children (three brothers and a sister) raised by Antonio and his Scottish-born wife Margaret Hannah Sandeman, who had exchanged marital vows at the Congregational Church the previous October.

At one point, Angelo and his siblings followed their mother back to their homeland Malta, and legend has it that on his return aboard the *SS Great Britain*, Angelo spoke with a Sean Connery-esque brouhaha.

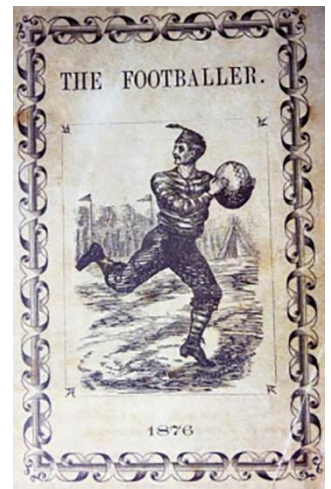
Back in Melbourne, and according to The Dictionary of Australian Artists Online (DAAO), Angelo Azzopardi followed his father into the printing profession, and pursued a career as artist-engraver and publisher.

At some point in the 1870s, Angelo established an independent printing business headquartered in the Herald Passage - an old cobblestone lane tucked behind the city's GPO Building. For a time he worked in partnership with Oliver Levey, a subsequent

owner of *The Herald*, and later Hildreth & Co. Angelo's presence obviously impacted on local planners, as a 1937 edition of Morgan's Melbourne street directory lists the passageway as "Angelo Lane". That lane was later incorporated into the Myer complex.

Angelo also gained local fame as a watercolour painter who exhibited his works at the 1866 Melbourne Intercolonial Exhibition. He also pursued an interest as an engraver and silversmith by way of the Eureka Electrotypes and Stereotype foundry out of 17-19 La Trobe Street, between Exhibition and Springs Streets at the top end of town.

According to newspaper records, Angelo turned out for Carlton through two stints - 1868-1870 and 1875. He was named for the club in five matches in his maiden season, which took on rivals such as Geelong, South Yarra and Emerald Hill, but it remains unclear as to how many matches he actually participated in. *An early Azzopardi football engraving 1876.*



The 19th century publication, "The Footballer", carries on one of its front cover a sketch of what appears to be a Geelong footballer in full flight as he carries the ball. Beneath the figure's left heel in small print, appears the name Azzopardi. Could this be the footballer or the artist?

Angelo James Azzopardi was 49 when he died in neighbouring Brunswick on January 18, 1896 – a year before Carlton became a foundation member of the fledgling VFL. A death notice acknowledged that Angelo died suddenly at his home, 74 Cassels Road, just off Moreland Road, and was survived by his dear wife Annie, who co-incidentally was also a Scot. One hundred and twenty years after Angelo's untimely passing, the Azzopardi name remains inextricably linked to this football club's stirring multicultural story.

WE WISH ALL OUR READERS A HAPPY AND BLESSED EASTER

NIXTIEQU LILL-QARREJJA TAGHNA MILIED HIENI U QADDIS



ritratt: Joe Attard

Marija Addolorata

Min qatt jista' jasal jifhem
x'hasset l-Omm taghna l-bnedmin
meta rat lil Binha mdendel
bejn dawk iz-żewġ hallelin!

X'qatt kien ghamel dana l-Iben
sabiex tawh mewta bhal dik!
Kellu bżonn Passjoni jġarrab
biex ikun jista' jifdik!

Hekk pattietlu dik il-folla
li lilha m'ghamilx hlief ġid,
billi ma' salib dendlitu
b'dawk l-insiemer tal-hadid.

U l-Omm li wilditu f'Betlem
ma fdatux għal mument wiehed,
baqgħet miegħu sal-Qorriegħa
fejn ratu għan-rifs jissielet!

Ma' xi nisa baqgħet sejra
u ma' Gwanni l-mahbub
sa ma l-ġebba l-qabar tebqet,
minn quddienha ratu jdub!

O Marija Addolorata,
għall-kenn tiegħek ahna ġejna;
miegħek naqsmu dad-duluri -
fid-dmugħ jgħumu dawn għajnejna!

Inwiegħduk illi lil Ibnek
m'ahniex iktar ser nonqsuh,
fuq il-gholja tal-Kalvarju
ma rridux illi nwassluh!

Għinna nindmu minn htijietna
biex ngħixu ta' vera Nsara;
kun int li ddawwal hajjitna
u dlonk beghidna minn kull hsara!

Kav. Joe M. Attard
Randan 2015



Matul dawn il-jiem tar-Randan 2017 l-Kav Joe M Attard għadu kemm stampa ktejjeb dwar is-Seba' Duluri tal-Madonna waqt li nqeda bil-versi tat-tmienja tal-Poezija. Waqt li kien Malta dan l-aħħar huwa pprezenta kopja tal-pubblikazzjoni tiegħu lill-President ta' Malta l-ET M'Louise Coleiro Preca fil-Palazz ta' Sant Anton f'Attard. (ara ritratt)

STUDY CASE: Foreigners leading to Malta's population boom – TIMES OF MALTA

27,000 more people will be living on island in next 18 years Foreigners have become the main driver pushing up Malta's population figures, according to a new report which estimates some 27,000 more people will be living on the island in the next 18 years.

The population increase marks six per cent of the island's population and is almost double the number of people currently living on Gozo. According to the projections, published as part of a detailed report by the National Statistics Office, the increase in Malta's population won't stop there: it will have increased by nearly 40,000 by 2055. The report, entitled Trends in Malta, is a collection of different statistics painting a picture of life on the island today and tomorrow.

It points the finger at migration as the main factor behind population growth, saying the number of foreigners settling in Malta last year was almost triple the number of births. "It is more likely that the next inhabitant added to the population is an immigrant than a new-born," the report reads, adding that nearly 13,000 migrants settled on Malta in 2015. It says that the island has been steadily attracting more foreigners with the number of non-Maltese living here more than doubling over the last decade.

It is likely that the next inhabitant added to the population is an immigrant than a new-born The population projection is based on a formula drafted by the EU's statistical arm. A closer look at the population projections shows that the largest increase is expected to come among those aged 75 and older. The current number of elderly people, some 32,000, is set to more than increase to 65,000 by 2035.

It will increase to some 72,000 by 2055, the NSO projects. The report says that "old-age dependants" currently make up around 18 per cent of the total population but would make up around 50 per cent by 2055.

This, of course, is not a new trend. A look back at statistics for previous years, laid out in the same report, shows that pensioners had stood at 11 per cent of the population in 1995. A few pages down, the report returns to the impact foreigners were having on society, this time at school. Although the report does not give the total number of foreign students attending school on the island, it does break down figures for different districts.

According to the report some 37 per cent of the foreign students attending school in Malta did so in the north of the island, with a further 30 per cent doing so in the area known as the northern harbour district – which encompasses Msida, Hamrun, Floriana and the surrounding environs.

Just five per cent attended school on the other end of the Grand Harbour, the southern harbour district. According to the report, a third of foreign students came from the UK, with a further 18 per cent, coming from Bulgaria. Some 17 per cent were Italian, with 15 per cent coming from Syria.

The report paints a worrying picture of the number of cars on the road. It says there were almost as many registered vehicles in 2015 as there were people aged over 18. The net stock of licensed vehicles continued to increase in 2016, reaching 358,947, an increase of 3.5 per cent over the previous year.

In its traffic section, the report makes a brief but important reference to the number of motorcycle deaths. There were nine fatalities in 2016, the highest since 2005. This accounted for almost 41 per cent of the total traffic fatalities (22) last year.

Facts and figures from the report

- Circulatory disease (39 per cent) and tumours (27 per cent) were the primary cause of death in 2015.
- Church schools have the largest average class sizes.
- The net stock of licensed vehicles on the road increased by an average of 33 vehicles per day in 2016, up from 20 vehicles per day in 2011.
- More than three-quarters of people used the internet at least once in their life, and 97 per of those that did, did so every day.
- Households consume almost a third of all the electricity generated on the island.
- Building permits increased by 34 per cent from 2014 to 2015.
- In 2015, male workers typically earned €1,300 annually more than their female co-workers.

ABOUT PARRY AGIUS Aboriginal/Maltese

Parry Agius heads Agius Consulting Services a boutique consultancy practice which specialises in supporting Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities, groups and enterprises to do business together; this includes promoting Aboriginal entrepreneurship in commerce. Currently he is studying his Master Business Administration at The University of Adelaide and as of April 2015 is the inaugural President of the Aboriginal Business Industry Chamber of South Australia (ABICSA).



Parry brings a visionary, transformative and principled approach along with an outstanding reputation and network of contacts across private industry, government and community organisations. Parry is also an Accredited Partnership Broker with the UK's Overseas Development Institute and a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Director's Course, has a Bachelor of Art in Aboriginal Affairs Administration and is an Honorary Associate Faculty of Science, Macquarie University.

I am passionate and dedicated to making the dreams and future hopes of each person I work with come within their reach. This includes my family, friends, networks, communities, colleagues and you if we come to work together.

My father's family name is Agius (Maltese) and my mother's family is Sansbury. My father's family come from Malta and the west coast of South Australia and my mother's family come from South Australia. My four grandparents who came from Yorke Peninsula, Flinders Rangers, far west coast of South Australia, Coorong lakes and the mid north of South Australia.

I went to the Hamley Bridge Primary School, Riverton District High School, and attended the South Australian Institute of Technology, and the University of South Australia. In 2015 I enrolled in the University of Adelaide's Master Business Administration program (MBA) as a part-time student for the next 3 years. I have four children; two sets of twins, a set of girls and set of boys from my first marriage. My children have created their futures and have children. I have 8 grandchildren who are cute, flourishing and great little people. Being lonely for a lone time and a workaholic, I decided to find a lifestyle change and new perspective and in July 2014 remarried for the second time to a beautiful women from Adelaide.

CONTRIBUTING TO THIS NEWSLETTER

Unlike some other newspapers & magazines that expect you to write in their style we want individuality. But please study the magazine before sending us your contributions! You'd be surprised how many 'professional' writers email me, saying 'Your magazine sounds great! I'd love to write for it. Or – 'How much are you going to pay me?' No it doesn't sound great. Our magazine is free! And they obviously haven't bothered to even look at newsletter. We have a bank of high-quality writers whose work we can rely on and use regularly. And we need even photos to accompany your articles. The magazine is very colourful. In return, as a chosen Contributor, you will be able to use our name etc. And we guarantee to honour promises and not let you down, which makes you in turn reliable.

At the bottom of your article, IF YOU PLEASE SO, you need a Bio, with a photo of you, and a link to your website, email address, etc. This will increase your readers. And we have many followers on Facebook, etc. It would be good if you have loads of contacts who you can tell about us, & help us all to grow together. We are on an upward curve. Would you like to join us? Email us if you have any questions.

honconsul@live.com.au



Australian Ta' Pinu Shrine welcomes the international centennial pilgrim statue

Tuesday 21 March 2017 *Our Lady Ta' Pinu Shrine*

In celebration of the 100 years apparition of the Blessed Mother in Fatima, Portugal, six 3-foot high statues were blessed by Pope Francis in Rome on 11 January 2017. Each one was set to travel to the six continents and one of them was brought from Rome to Australia by the Alliance of the Holy Family International in collaboration with the Alliance of the Two Hearts (Australia).

The goal of Our Lady of Fatima's Centennial Pilgrimage is to echo her urgent appeal for prayer and reparation, for peace in the world, and to promote the sanctity of family life.

She began her Australia-wide pilgrimage in Melbourne, her first stop where the Catholic community has embraced the opportunity to pray before the pilgrim statue in each of the churches it visits.

On 13 March, our Heavenly Mother Mary, made her stop at Our Lady of Ta' Pinu Shrine where a sea of pilgrims welcomed her.

The day began with the Rosary Procession. Our Lady led the way followed by banners and flags from all nations. The pilgrims came from afar. Saying the rosary in various languages, they slowly made their way up the hill of Ta' Pinu, where they were joined with an even larger crowd waiting for them at the top. A guard of honour was given to Our Lady as she made her way to the church where she crowned by Fr Manuel Sunez. He then celebrated the solemn mass in honour of Our Lady's Immaculate Heart. The 600 seats capacity church was quickly filled and extended.

Following Holy Mass, Brother Andrew gave an inspiring talk about the Message of Our Lady of Fatima and its relevance in the world today. At 3pm, the Divine Mercy Chaplet was recited followed by talk on the power of the Divine Mercy, by Fr Ted Rostowski. The 'young at heart' crowd went on the 'Way with Mary along the Calvary' with meditations on the Stations of the Cross despite the humidity and heat. The event came to an end with Holy Mass, con-celebrated by Fr Fabian Smith and Fr Ted Rostowski.

Our Lady of Fatima gave her message to three shepherd children, so it is fitting for her children of the Diocese to lead by their example. The Statue will continue its journey through Australia.

Office: Our Lady Ta' Pinu Shrine All Nations Marian Centre 15 Flanagans Drive Merrimu VIC 3340 Melway
Telephone: (03) 5367 7006 Email: infotapinu@optusnet.com.au Web: www.tapinu-australia.org

Please note:

The Shrine is open from 07:00 AM to 08:00 PM everyday of the year (including public holiday) 7 days a week.

To contact the Director: **Mgr. Benedict Camilleri** Telephone: (03) 5367 7006 Mobile: 0437 261 517



Ghosts, ogres, myths, legends and traditions that have shaped Malta and Gozo down through the centuries

Apps, computers, tablets, social media and instant news are today's modern influences. Not so long ago it was vastly different because the influences were provided by nature – whether natural or unnatural – and included weather patterns, animal behaviour, social status and the 'power' to forecast, curse, interpret and of course – invent, and all mainly underpinned by religious influences. Roman emperors, senators and centurions always sacrificed an animal on the eve of any great event – particularly a battle – and studied the condition of its liver to obtain omens. A perfectly formed liver was a good omen while a tainted and scarred liver was a terrible omen and forecast defeat and tragedy. Malta, Gozo and its people have been influenced by these forces down through the centuries and need to be recorded for posterity because most have had their day and their usefulness and the bulk of today's youth are totally unaware of them and only remain vaguely in old-timer memories. Here are some of them. The Church above the Grotto at Rabat, Malta.



“Il-Gawgaw”

Being born on 24th December was considered a most unfavourably disastrous day to be born. According to superstitious belief which lingered on

in the islands right up to the end of the 19th Century, persons born on this day risked being transformed into a ghost at night while they slept.

To make it more effectively out-ranging, the “Gawgaw” manifested itself by wandering around and groaning during the night and was used as a means of controlling children who misbehaved. These were threatened the “Gawgaw” would kidnap them and drag them away to a far off land where they would be exiled to a life of hunger and loneliness.

Towards dawn the persons transformed into a “Gawgaw” would return home exhausted. By the time they woke up in the morning they would have resumed their human form, quite unaware of their nocturnal peregrinations. The remedy against this transformation was a particularly one and consisted in inducing the sufferer to sit up all night counting the holes of a sieve from eleven o’ clock at night to the following Christmas morning!

“Il-Belliegha” Children were also a target of this scam! This was a time when a household running water supply was non-existent. Households either had a well in their backyard or otherwise on the corner of a network of streets there was a common, public water pump and the household wife or her children would have to visit the pump daily, armed with various buckets and other recipients to fill up and take home the day's supply.

Children (and there were plenty of them!) would spend their day playing around in the backyard and children being children always had the curiosity to open the well cover and peer down the well – sometimes with fatal consequences. The remedy was to threaten children with “Il-Belliegha”, a terrible monster who lived in the well and would grab any child who opened the well cover, and devour them. This was one of the threats my grandparents used in my case. On the more realistic side, most house owners kept a few eels in their fresh water well because the eels would eat away moss and vegetable growth and help purify the well and keep it clean..

Saint Paul's Grotto According to legend, St Paul's Grotto at Rabat in Malta always remained the same size no matter how many people chipped away bits of rock to take away as souvenirs. This was supposed to be due to the miraculous influence of St Paul who always ensured his grotto

would remain intact! A comical legend was attached to this too concerning one of the early travel guides taking tourists around but whose command of the English language was extremely limited. His explanation was said to have been “cut and cut you never cut”.

Another legend in connection with St. Paul says that when he was preaching at Burmarrad, his voice carried as far away as Gozo where the people there flocked to the coast to hear his sermon. He must have had an enormously large megaphone!

Saint Paul and the Venomous Viper Yet again St Paul was at the centre of probably the best known legend in Malta because it is recorded in the Bible description of his shipwreck in Malta. After struggling to make land amidst the ravages of the storm, he was gathering wood to make a fire for the shipwreck survivors when a venomous viper sprang out of the sticks and bit him. The Maltese “barbarians” (as described by St Luke as their native tongue was not Latin) and who were ruled by superstition interpreted this as a sign that the new arrival was an evil man and although the Gods had spared him from death by drowning they took revenge on him in another lethal form. However, St Paul suffered no harm and it is said that from that day onward all poisonous snakes and scorpions were eliminated from the Maltese islands.

Men later extended on this to their advantage by adding that St Paul may have eliminated the poison from snakes and scorpions but had transplanted this into women’s tongues!

The Legend of Ghajn Razul It is believed that the water spring known as Ghajn Razul, in the area of Burmarrad, was the work of St. Paul who needed water for his shipmates after their shipwreck. The name ‘Razul’ is derived from the Phoenician language and means ‘apostle’, thus giving more credibility to the Pauline connection. Of more importance is the fact that this indicates his shipwreck was in the St Paul’s Bay locality and not at Mistra where there was another spring although

nowadays there is a totally different contention that in fact the shipwreck took place in the south of Malta and not in the northern part.

Treasure at Fort Ricasoli A Maltese ghost is referred to as “il-hares” perhaps a derivation from the Latin “Lares” (i.e. household gods). Once, a “hares” in the form of a Turk, woke a workman at Fort Ricasoli (in the Grand Harbour region) and told him of an enormous treasure within the fort area. This workman told one of his colleagues and together they went to search at the indicated spot where they found a treasure of coins. As in other local folk tales because of his greed and the betrayal of the secret imparted to him only by the ghost the coins were immediately turned into coal. The following night the “hares” reappeared and beat up the workman for sharing the secret. The moral of this legend is that if a ghost gives you information, keep it to yourself and don’t share it!

Ogygia in Homer’s Odyssey Everyone knows about Homer’s poem, The Odyssey, right? Well, Gozo has been put forward as being the legendary Ogygia, the home of the nymph Calypso. In the poem, Calypso is said to have held Odysseus captive for seven years after he had become shipwrecked on the island. This widely held local legend is backed up by a number of historians, including Greek historian Callimachus. The cave where Odysseus is thought to have been held captive is known as Calypso’s Cave, above Ramla l-Hamra beach.

ALBERT FENECH

Born in 1946, Albert Fenech’s family took up UK residence in 1954 where he spent his boyhood and youth before temporarily returning to Malta between 1957 and 1959 and then coming back to Malta permanently in 1965. He spent eight years as a full-time journalist with “The Times of Malta” before taking up a career in HR Management but still retained his roots by actively pursuing freelance journalism and broadcasting for various media outlets covering social issues, current affairs, sports and travel.



Every Edition is Precious
READ IT
ANYTIME, ANYWHERE, ANYHOW
PACKED WITH NEWS
INFORMATION, HISTORY
CULTURE AND HERITAGE



Historical Links Very few people know that it was a Portuguese Admiral who first came to our rescue during the uprising against the French in 1798. At a crucial time of this historic event, Lord Nelson sent word to Admiral Marquis de Nisa that he would not make it in time to Malta, and the latter promptly entered Maltese shores with some

3000 able-bodied seamen and bolstered the fighting power of the local insurgents with some 400 muskets. During the unveiling of a plaque at the Upper Barracca Garden some years back, Prof. Henry Frendo aptly remarked that "We have put up 1001 plaques but not one about the contribution by the Portuguese navy!" But our links with Portugal go even further back in time. There were no less than three natives of Portugal who were elected Grandmasters to the Order of St. John: Luis Mendes de Vasconcellos, Antonio Manoel de Vilhena, and Manuel Pinto de Fonseca. It was Antonio Manoel who, among other notable endeavours, laid the plans for the building of Floriana and erected a roofed theatre in Valletta which still bears his name.

Bilateral Relations at Political Level Direct diplomatic relations between Malta and Portugal were established in 1968. Since then, they have remained stable, friendly and fruitful. More recently, and aside from the closer and elaborate contacts within the EU and other international and regional organisations, both countries have worked closely in the 5+5 Group which held its last Summit here in Malta in October, 2012 and which welcomed, amongst other eminent chief politicians, the Portuguese Prime and the then Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Exploring Potential Sectors of Mutual Interest: Tourism and Education Among a number of sectors that may well lend themselves to potential business ventures, by way of example, I would definitely include the tourism industry and the teaching of English to Portuguese students in one of our reputable schools. Unfortunately, the lack of direct flights between the two countries seriously hampers the realisation of a continuing and healthy opening in both areas. Our Embassy has been constantly trying to attract a reliable airline company to take up the challenge and offer this new route. There is much more to Portugal for Maltese tourists than a fleeting visit to Fatima and its immediate surroundings as a pilgrim, whilst our English Language schools have a lot to offer to Portuguese students by way of quality in the level of teaching, competitive prices and a safe, friendly and attractive environment. I see no other specific reasons why Malta could not tap the Portuguese student potential in the way it has so far and over the years managed to attract other foreign students from say Spain and Italy. Financial constraints have indeed somewhat blurred this lucrative market but the possibility of attracting other students from countries like Portugal should not be overlooked. It is pertinent to note that contacts at tertiary level are already on-going. Just to mention a few, there is a good level of interchange by way of research and joint programmes, notably with our Department of Radiography within the Faculty of Health Sciences of the University of Malta with three Higher Education Institutions in Portugal, namely the Instituto Politecnico de Coimbra, the Universidade do Algarve and the Instituto Politecnico do Porto. In other words, if one were to look around more carefully, there is much more than meets the eye.

The Setting Up Of a Portuguese-Maltese Chamber of Commerce The need to spur a better understanding of each other in the business sector called for a more tangible and pro-active interaction. To this end, the idea to set up a viable venture in the shape of a Portuguese-Maltese Chamber of Commerce was mooted among a number of interested stakeholders with the help and unstinting efforts of the Malta Mission. Among those who deserve a special mention in this regard are Dr. Augusto Athayde, Honorary Consul for Algarve, Dr. Ray Bondin, our former Charge' d'affaires for Malta in Lisbon and another Maltese compatriot Mr. Roderick Micallef, then General Manager of the prestigious Corinthia-Lisboa Hotel, and now Vice-President of the Corinthia Group of Companies, Ms. Claire Azzopardi from Malta Enterprise, and Mr. Neville Aquilina, Director, from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. On his part, the newly-appointed Charge' d'affaires ad interim, Mr. Walter Mallia, left no stone unturned to co-ordinate and steer the project to a creditable conclusion.

Of course, this stage is not the end of the matter but rather the beginning of an exciting and promising venture. Indeed, we are looking already forward into the possibility of a similar project linking Malta with Porto in Northern Portugal. It is also most interesting to note that by way of strengthening even further business connections and awareness between both countries, I have held talks with Mr. Klaus Pedersen representing the Malta Chamber of Commerce who is very keen in formalising a collaboration agreement between the Portuguese Business Council in the Malta Chamber as well as working closely with the new Chamber which is in the offing..

October Launch of the Portuguese-Maltese Chamber of Commerce A formal Launch of the Portuguese-Maltese Chamber of Commerce is due to take place on October 17 in Lisbon with the support of Corinthia-Lisboa and our Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the participation of the Head of Banif Bank, a Portuguese Bank with commercial connections with Malta. It is of the utmost importance that such a worthwhile initiative continues to thrive. To reach this goal, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is partly sponsoring the creation of a website offering a multiple of services and information to would-be entrepreneurs seeking pastures new. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has done its best towards achieving a successful and lasting outcome of this new venture between Malta and Portugal. Long may it endure! Joseph A. Filletti
http://mpcc.org.mt/wp/?page_id=205

400-year-old San Anton Palace reservoir to be restored



Memorandum of Understanding for the restoration of a rainwater reservoir at San Anton Palace signed on World Water Day

Jurgen Balzan

The Memorandum of Understanding for the reinstatement of the rainwater harvesting reservoir was signed at San Anton Palace

Representatives of The Office of the President of Malta, the Energy and Water Agency of Malta and the Global Water Partnership – Mediterranean (GWP-Med) yesterday marked World Water Day by signing a Memorandum of Understanding for the reinstatement of a rainwater harvesting reservoir at San Anton Palace. The ceremony took place at the Presidential Palace in Attard adjacent to the San Anton Gardens where the water reservoir is located, in the presence of the *Alter Aqua* partners, including General Soft Drinks Marketing Ltd representing the System of Coca-Cola in Malta, as the programme has been financially supported by The Coca-Cola Foundation, since 2011.



The San Anton Garden reservoir was built by the Knights of Malta in 1600AD and has a capacity of 1,800,000 liters. The San Anton Garden reservoir was built by the Knights of Malta in 1600AD and has a capacity of 1,800,000 liters. Its reinstatement, under the technical supervision of the Energy and Water Agency and GWP-Med, presents historic, cultural, social and water management significance.

Harvesting rainwater today through a system built over 400 years ago highlights the intrinsic value of water solutions for sustaining life on the island. This water will be used to irrigate the orange grove of the Palace and its Gardens. The reservoir will have a social impact as the produce of the orange grove is merchandised to support the Malta Community Chest Fund Foundation, a charitable foundation, which helps the Maltese

in need of medical assistance, provides food to the poor and scholarships for students. Works would be completed by the end of the summer 2017.

Presiding over the ceremony, President Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca said that the idea to bring the reservoir to life, is part of a whole restoration project which the Presidency has undertaken at San Anton Palace. "We are also committed, as a country, together with all the countries of the United Nations, to Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals," Coleiro Preca said. The President added that "this project is a statement, that we are doing our part in this sense, together with other initiatives all over the globe for water sustainability and to meet the aspirations of Goal 6". Her Excellency thanked all the stakeholders involved in this project for being a part of this project – "a project which will become a reality thanks to our combined efforts"

. GSD Marketing Chief Operating Officer Maria Micallef said "through Alter Aqua we have succeed to positively impact the lives of 53,000 people in the Maltese Islands by collecting and reusing more than 16 million litres of water on an annual basis. Going beyond the infrastructure works the Alter Aqua project has a special focus on schools and the organization of educational campaigns aimed at raising awareness on the application of Non-Conventional Water Resources and sustainable water use. In this regard, through the Alter Aqua project, more than 13,000 students have been educated on sustainable development in schools, while 1228 teachers have been trained since 2011."

THE FLORIANA GRANARIES – IL-FOSOS TAL-FURJANA NOT JUST ENTERTAINMENT!



Everyone knows where the Floriana Granaries, known as '*il-Fosos*,' are situated – whether you have been to this popular square in Floriana during the famous Isle of MTV event, or for a concert by Elton John, or possibly during the Pope's visit, you must surely be aware of it as an important landmark.

While the Floriana Granaries are a prominent venue for events and media-related promotions, not to mention political rallies, unfortunately most people are not aware of their importance as part of our cultural heritage and history.

Most of the Granaries in Floriana were commissioned as an underground storage facility by Grand Master Marino de Redin between 1657 and 1660, even before the city of Floriana itself was built. At the time of the Knights of St. John, while Malta was under constant threat of attack by the Turks, there wasn't enough grain or wheat produced in Malta to cater for all the population, and Malta had to import a lot of cereals from Sicily. It was very important for Malta to have an abundant storage of grain always available, in the event of a siege, as well as in case of other calamities, such as a plague.

The granaries in Floriana are to be found in a huge square, directly in front of the Floriana Parish church. There are actually 76 underground bell-shaped reservoirs covered up with huge stone caps, today sealed with mortar. The stone caps are either circular or squarish. A single storage pit, or trench (which is the English translation for the word '*fossa*') can hold from around 60 to 80 tons of wheat, and is designed for the wheat to be kept dry, which is essential.

Although the largest number of '*fosos*' is to be found in Floriana, there are also a number of other underground silos around Malta, mainly in Valletta and Birgu.

During the Second World War, the Floriana Granaries were targeted by the Germans, who wanted to destroy the Maltese's storage of provisions. The Parish church of Saint Publius in fact, received extensive bomb damage at the time, yet amazingly enough, the granaries themselves were spared.

The underground silos remained in use until 1962, when modern storage facilities were built above ground.

Nowadays, the area known as 'il-Fosos' is a popular open space normally used for open-air concerts, featuring important local artists such as **Joseph Calleja** or Federica Falzon, as well as internationally-acclaimed singers, such as Claudio Baglioni and Rod Stewart. They were used when Pope John II celebrated Holy Mass during his visit in 1990, as well as in 2011 when Pope Benedict XVI was here.

Past, present and future; the Floriana Granaries span all three, being not only a testament of Malta's glorious regime under the Knights of Saint John, or a media-related venue, but also a reminder of the ventures of the past transposed into our day-to-day lives. Although we might not be aware of their original meaning in the scheme of things, or treasure their worth in historical value, we still cannot but feel something every time we walk near them. It could be cultural pride, the memory of an incredible event, or the anticipation of a future one – the 'Fosos' still continue to influence and shape our lives to this day.



Shaping up for spring

by Liz Ayling

Malta has never been known for its greenery. Any visitor flying to the Islands from mid May to early October, will see a below a rocky landscape shimmering white in the heat. But Malta in spring, that's a different matter.

It's thought that even in prehistory, at the time of the last temple builders, the islands were largely afforested. When the Knights of St John arrived in Malta in 1530, they reported that the islands were '...merely a rock of soft sandstone...scarcely covered with more than three or four feet of earth...no running water, nor even wells....wood was so scarce it was sold by the pound...'. In all, they found Malta '...extremely disagreeable – indeed almost insupportable – particularly in summer.'



But, despite seeing Malta as temporary home, they ended up here for 260 years! However bereft of

wood, soil and water or hot the islands were, the Knights had to adapt and make the best of it. And that's pretty much the attitude of the plants that make the Maltese Islands their home.

On the short 300 meter coastline walk between Ghajn Tuffieha and Golden Bays – where the photo above was shot – I counted 28 different types of plant pushing valiantly up through the garrigue. March to May are the best months to enjoy Malta's all too brief floral display as spring rushes at breakneck speed into summer. When I see their parched stems in early June, I feel it's a miracle these plants survive. They've many more months to go without water, yet will burst into life again come autumn, which is like a second spring. Now, in our true spring, the plants are magnificent, and stand for survival of this rock, despite the odds stacked against it. I've yet to find a great pocket guide to the fauna and flora of Malta, along the lines of the 'Observer Book of' series that my parents had in the '60s and which used to accompany us on holidays to far-flung parts of the British countryside. When I do, I'll update this post with its title.

In the meantime, here are just some of the common, colourful species to spot this time of year, and make your walks in Malta's countryside more informed.

The English weed (*Oxalis cernua*): in profusion now, this lemon yellow plant was said to have been introduced to Malta in 1806 by an Englishwoman. It's pretty, but prolific and considered a weed.

Borage (*Borrago officinalis*): a bright blue flower on hairy stems and leaves., it grows in verges and rough garrigue.

Crown daisy (*Chrysanthemum coronarium*): the epitomy of spring. It makes a real statement in golden yellow and standing up to 3 ft tall.

Anemone (*A. coronaria*): small is beautiful. Find it in sheltered valleys.

Crimson Corn Flag (*Gladiolus segetum*): pinkish-purple, it's another rough ground grower, but despite being common, it's a real spring statement. Squeeze the flower, as my son does, and they look like gaping mouths!

Red Snapdragon (*Antirrhinum majus*): another tall plant that is hard to miss for its colour and display.

Scarlet Corn Poppy (*Papaver rhoeas*): almost as common here as in Tuscany, this bright spark loves crop fields.

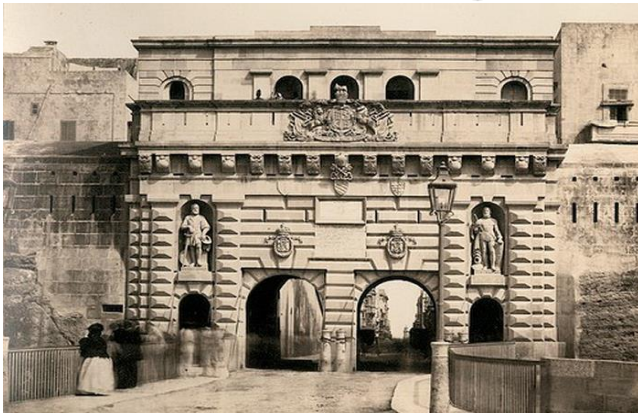
Purple Clover (*Hedysarum coronarium*): not a native, but grown as fodder. It carpets fields and, along with the English Weed, is a colour you see from the air.

Later on, towards May, you'll find the **caper** in flower in crevices. It has enormous white-pink feathery flowers with a heady scent. Spot it in the bastions of Mdina. Its buds get hoovered off for pickling, so it's about the only place you'll see it flower! Another to look for in May, but on the clifftops, is the native **Maltese thyme**, flowering a deep purple. Don't pick it though, as it's protected! Instead, brush it with a hand and enjoy the strong scent. It has no domestic garden rival!

Photo: Prickly Pears – Alex Grech.

Valletta: The City Gates

Written by Adam Claffey



The only constant in life is change. As an amateur historian with a keen interest in culture I have been watching the recent architectural developments in Valletta with keen interest.

Over the last few years the entrance to Malta's capital city and its surrounding environment has been transformed with a new city gate for Valletta, Parliament building, a piazza and a new performing space.

This will actually be the fifth city gate Valletta has had in about 450 years. The original gate, known as *Porta San Giorgio*, was first started in April 1566 and was finished in 1569.

In 1632 a more ornate gate was designed by a Maltese architect known as *Tommaso Dingli*. His design consisted of a central archway with a smaller arch at each side, and a wooden drawbridge across the deep, dry moat that was immediately outside the walls of Valletta. Unfortunately images of the first two gates are unavailable

In 1853, during the peak of the British rule over Malta, *Col. Thompson* of the Royal Engineers designed a new gate consisting of two central arches with two smaller ones. During the 19th and early 20th century *Porta Reale* became known as *Putirjal* in Maltese and *Kingsway* in English

The fourth City Gate was built in 1964 and was part of a project that never actually materialised. Its Italian modernism design was the source of much controversy.

The new City Gate, nearing completion was designed by world famous, *Renzo Piano*, known for building *The Shard* in London. His radical new design has also caused some controversy. Some members of the public would like a somewhat more traditional Victorian Design while others are more comfortable with this new one. So much work has been completed all that can be done now is to wait for the final result. I believe these new developments just form part of a new phase for Valletta. It is a city that is dearly loved, by both those who live in Malta and by those who have had the opportunity to explore its enchanting streets. Much has happened within these thick city walls as generations have come and gone. Valletta was here long before us and will remain long after we have gone. City Gates will come and go and just add another chapter to the story of this great city.



Manoel Island: A Brief History

Written by Sabine on 20 March 2017

You've booked your flights to Malta and now you're wondering what to do when you arrive. Luckily at Air Malta, we can provide you with insider knowledge on some of the hidden delights that Malta has to offer.

Introducing Manoel Island, a small island in the Marsamxett Harbour between Gzira and Valletta.

How did the island get its name?

The island's name dates back to the times of the Grand Masters, and in particular Antonio Manoel de Vilhena who built a fort on the island in the 1720's. At its peak, the fort was considered completely impenetrable and was home to around 500 men- an impressive number if you consider the island is only 0.3 km sq in size!

Fort Manoel

A pre-war picture of the Chapel of St Anthony on Manoel Island. The statue of Grand Master de Vilhena, now in Floriana, can be seen in front of it.



The impressive fortress was built in the 18th Century under the eyes of the Order of Saint John and has had many different uses over the years. After it was used to protect the coast line of Malta it was taken over by the British Military in 1800 and remained under their jurisdiction, albeit with several different functions, until Independence in 1964. The Fort was also used as a hospital and as a Royal Navy base during WWII. In March 1942, the Chapel of St Anthony was destroyed following a direct hit from Luftwaffe bombers

and the island lay abandoned for many years until restoration began in the early 21st Century.

Who lives there? No one at the moment but if local rumours and folklore is to be believed then the fort is apparently haunted by an apparition called the Black Knight who appears to unsuspecting visitors and wears the full armour and regalia of the Order of St John. It is speculated that it is the ghostly figure of the Grand Master Vilhena and many people have noted his presence over the years, from tourists, to workmen, and soldiers staying there.

Can I visit the island? Yes of course! Today, the island is connected to the buzzing strip of the Gzira waterfront by a small bridge and the island comprises of a luxury yacht marina, a ship yard, and a large restaurant serving pizza and pasta 7 days a week. A short walking distance from cosmopolitan Sliema, the area offers an exciting mix of safe swimming waters, designer shops, and delectable café's to be enjoyed by all that pass.

The island has a secret quirk... Manoel Island also has a secret quirk that is just waiting to be discovered. For several years, the Island has housed a quaint, informal, volunteer-run sanctuary for ducks and various other animals. Upon visiting the aptly names 'Duck Village', one can feed animals such as ducks, chickens, geese, rabbits, cats, guinea pigs, and other fowl.



Malta Inter. Airport launches new summer schedule

Malta International Airport has launched its new flight schedule for the summer season.

Taking off today, the summer schedule features two new scheduled airlines and a total of 87 routes, four of which

are completely new to the airport.

Three of these will be introduced by Wizz Air, giving travellers the opportunity to fly directly to Katowice in Poland, Cluj-Napoca in Romania, and Skopje in Macedonia. Moreover, the airline will be operating flights from Malta International Airport to Belgrade; a route previously served only by Air Serbia.

Low-cost carrier Volotea will be offering the fourth new summer route, Bordeaux, with flights to the French capital of wine taking off from MIA on Mondays and Thursdays.

The two new scheduled airlines for summer 2017, which are both German, are expected to enhance the airport's connections with Austria and Germany.

Eurowings, a fully owned subsidiary of the Lufthansa Group, will be kicking off its biweekly operations from Malta International Airport to Vienna on the 9th of April. On the other hand, Condor's operations from Malta to Hamburg and Frankfurt will be launched on the 26th of April.

April also marks the start of a new Cruise & Fly service offered by P&O, which is part of the world's biggest cruise company, Carnival Corporation. This service will be using Malta as the home port.

Passengers taking off in the coming weeks are reminded to check in early at the airport, as ongoing reconfiguration works across the terminal may impact the check-in and security screening processes.

Guests having queries regarding their next visit or requiring special assistance, should contact the airport's team by email on info@maltaairport.com.



Solidarity with partner and friend UK following London attack on Wednesday

/file/junckerjpg_enjuncker.jpg

The European Commission's President Jean Claude Juncker said that the United Kingdom will always, "remain a partner and a friend and one we will continue to work hand in hand with in the fight against terror. Together, Europeans will never cease to prove that love will

always triumph over hate and that tolerance will always triumph over fear," following the London Attacks. "The people of Brussels and Belgium suffered a similar pain and felt the support of your sympathy and solidarity. At this emotional time, we at the European Commission can only send that sympathy back twofold. My thoughts are with London," President Juncker said. "With the families of the victims, with the people across the country." President of the European Council Donald Tusk also stated that his thoughts were with the victims of the Westminster attack. "Europe stands firm with the UK against terror and ready to help," President Tusk said. The European Commissioner for the Security Union Julian King stated that it was a 'horrible coincidence' that this attack would come on the anniversary of the Brussels attacks.

VOX POPULI ,

- ❖ I am a Maltese Australian citizen, but living in Spain since we retired. My cousin living in Australia sent me the e newsletter and I would like to congratulate you for providing such important information, very interesting reading and memories. We lived in Australia for almost 25 years, our daughter still lives there, she is a veterinarian in Tasmania. I kindly ask you to enrol me to receive the newsletter as we find it extremely interesting Thank you Kind regards Godfrey and Carmen Vella
- ❖ Congratulations again for the Maltese e-Newsletter. My compliments to The Maltese Aged Care Assn (SA) MACASA VOLUNTEERS for their magnificent work for Maltese seniors and the aged. I sit on the Multicultural Aged Care (MAC) Board of Management as a co-opted Member "engineered" by our good friend, Rosa Colanero MAC's CEO! Regards, Dr. Dante Raymondo Juana OAM – former Consul General for the Philippines
- ❖ Every week my Maltese Teacher send me the newsletter and I enjoy reading your articles. I am of Maltese decent and I do travel to Malta every couple of years. Could you email the newsletter? Kind Regards Anthony Zarb
- ❖ I like your journal because you only publish "good news" stories and you never criticize other people. Darren Calleja
- ❖ We are grateful that the Maltese e-Newsletters are uploaded on the website www.ozmalta.page4.me. All we need now is a Table of Contents of all the newsletters.

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