



MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER

The Journal of the Maltese Diaspora

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"IL-LUZZU" MALTA'S TRADITIONAL BOAT



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Maltese Luzzu: A Unique Traditional Boat

by Sabine Jung

If you take a trip to any one of Malta's seaside villages you will immediately notice many colourful boats floating in the water – and lots of eyes staring at you! These colourful boats are known as the Maltese *luzzu*, and they date back to the time of the ancient Phoenicians. The *luzzu* has now even become one of the symbols associated with the Maltese islands. Discover more about these traditional boats ahead of booking your flights to Malta.

Luzzus are essentially traditional fishing boats. They are typically painted in traditional bright colours including blue, yellow, red and green. You can normally spot a rather large number of *luzzus* in Malta's seaside villages, including Marsaxlokk and Marsascala on the south side of the island, or St Paul's Bay on the north. These brightly coloured fishing boats often create a postcard-perfect scene on the beautiful and clear Mediterranean Sea surrounding the islands.

Due its stable, sturdy and reliable nature, the design of the *luzzu* dates back to the Phoenician times. In fact, the *luzzu* can be used both in good and in bad weather conditions. The boats normally have a double-ended hull and are built using wood. During the Phoenician times, the *luzzu* used to be smaller and used to be equipped with sails. However, this is not the case anymore as nowadays most *luzzus* are slightly larger, motorized and work with a diesel engine. Other than that, the design and style of the *luzzu* nowadays is very similar to the ones used in ancient times.

Just like in the ancient times, *luzzus* are nowadays most commonly used as fishing boats. If you head down to Marsaxlokk early

enough on a Sunday morning you will be able to watch the local fishermen at work. As they head close to the shores with their *luzzus*, the fishermen transfer their freshly caught fish to the stalls, where the fish is sold at the Marsaxlokk Fish Market soon after being caught. However, in addition to being used as fishing boats, *luzzus* are sometimes used as passenger carriers for visitors to the Maltese islands.

There is quite a lot of superstition surrounding the *luzzu*, the most prominent of them all being the painted or engraved pair of eyes on the front of the boat. These eyes are believed to be a modern survival of an old Phoenician tradition, and are normally referred to as the Eye of Osiris, or the Eye of Horus – the Phoenicians' god of protection from evil. They are a symbol of protection and good health, and are believed to protect the fishermen from any harm while they are out at sea.

In addition to this, *luzzus* are normally inherited from a person's father and grandfather. However, although the exact colours of each *luzzu* vary from one another, the colours of each *luzzu* are normally kept the same due to superstitious belief. Therefore, when the old paint is completely stripped off the boat every five years, in order for the fisherman to closely inspect his boat for anything that needs to be replaced, the boat is then re-painted in exactly the same colours that the person's father and grandfather had used.

So, if you're heading to Malta this year, be sure to visit one of the many fantastic seaside villages around the Maltese islands and admire one of Malta's oldest traditions that's still kept alive today.



Australia Day, 26 January, is the day to reflect on what it means to be Australian, to celebrate contemporary Australia and to acknowledge our history.

On Australia Day we celebrate all the things we love about Australia: land, sense of fair go, lifestyle, democracy, the freedoms we enjoy but particularly our people.

Australia Day is about acknowledging and celebrating the contribution that every Australian makes to our contemporary and dynamic nation.

From our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people - who have been here for more than 65,000 years - to those who have lived here for generations, to those who have come from all corners of the globe to call our country home.

The marking of 26 January is an important date in Australia's history and has changed over time: starting as a celebration for emancipated convicts and evolving into what is now a celebration of Australia that reflects the nation's diverse people. Australia Day continues to be hugely popular, with 3 in 4 Australians believing it has a bigger meaning beyond being just a day off.

More than half of all Australians participate in Australia Day attending events organised by State Governments, local councils, community groups or getting together with family and friends. In addition, over 16,000 new Australians become citizens on Australia Day.

HAPPY AUSTRALIA DAY TO ALL AUSTRALIANS

JIKTABILNA L-“ISPEAKER” TAL-PARLAMENT MALTI

L-ONOR ANGLU FARRUGIA



Huwa ta' pjaċir kbir tiegħi bħala President tal-Parlament Malti, l-oġġla istituzzjoni tal-pajjiż, li nagħti l-messaġġ tiegħi lill-Maltin kollha ta' barra. Jien dejjem emmint ħafna fl-identità ta' pajjiżna għaliex din hija aħna; aħna, inkunu fejn inkunu, bil-valuri tagħna, bil-kultura tagħna u bl-istorja tagħna, li nagħtu l-identità kull fejn inkunu. U nagħtu l-identità tagħna bħala Maltin mhux biss għaliex l-orijini tagħna hija Malta, anke min hu 'l bogħod, imma minħabba l-valur bħala Malti, ikun fejn ikun. Dan huwa valur addizzjonali għal fejn inkunu. Fil-fatt meta wieħed jistudja d-dijaspora tal-Maltin isib li dawn dejjem kienu ta' kontribut mill-aqwa, kienu fejn kienu. Pereżempju, jien għadni ġej minn konferenza fi Buenos Aires, l-Argentina, li fiha rrappreżentajt il-Commonwealth. Hemmhekk kelli x-xorti li mmur fit-triq ewlenija fiċ-ċentru ta' Buenos Aires imsemmija għal wieħed Malti. Dan huwa Juan Azopardo li kien l-ewwel ammirall tan-Navy tal-Argentina. Dan qed ngħidu mhux għaliex dan ħalla marka kbira ta' pajjiżna barra minn Malta imma għaliex dawn l-affarijiet ma sarux fl-Argentina biss. Pereżempju fl-Awstralja l-maġġoranza tal-Maltin kollha li marru hemmhekk kollha taw kontribut lis-soċjetà Awstraljana u dejjem żammew ħaj il-valur tal-familja Maltija.

Jien inħossni kburi aktar għaliex tajt kontribut lid-dijaspora Maltija u nibqa' nagħti kontribut. Pereżempju jien l-ewwel Speaker fl-istorja ta' Malta li ħassejt li għandi niftaħ l-orizzont kollu tal-Parlament għall-iskrutinju tal-Maltin ta' barra. Illum il-Maltin ta' barra jistgħu jseguw l-Parlament b'mod dirett minn fuq l-*internet* u l-Maltin jistgħu jseguw dirett minn fuq it-telewizjoni. Barra minn hekk wieħed jista' jaqsam dak kollu li jkun qed isir billi jagħmel kumment dirett anke fuq l-*internet* mal-Parlament Malti. Hemm ħafna aktar affarijiet x'nagħmlu.

Hemm kumitat apposta tal-affarijiet barranin fejn wieħed jista' – permezz tar-rappreżentanti tiegħu fil-Kunsill Malti – jagħmel ir-rappreżentazzjonijiet tiegħu f'dak li għandu x'jaqsam mad-drittijiet tal-Maltin ta' barra. Hemm aktar xi jsir. Jien bħala Speaker elett fil-Commonwealth li nirrappreżenta lill-pajjiżi żgħar u lil dawk il-postijiet li għandhom popolazzjoni ta' inqas minn 500,000 ruħ ikolli x-xorti li nżur ukoll l-Awstralja. Fil-fatt dan l-aħħar kont qiegħed Darwin, in-Northern Territory, fejn hemm popolazzjoni ta' madwar 250,000 u kelli x-xorti li nikkontribwixxi u niltaqa' ma' Maltin f'dawk l-inħawi. Jien inħossni kburi li kemm indum President tal-Kamra nista' nagħti aktar kontribut lill-Maltin ta' barra.

Jien messaġġ wieħed irrid nagħmel. Komplu aħdmu flimkien, kompli żommu l-valuri Maltin u lit-tfal tagħkom u lit-tfal tat-tfal tagħkom għallmuhom li storikament pajjiżna dejjem kien minn ta' quddiem biex jagħti kontribut mhux lill-Mediterran biss imma lid-dinja kollha. Dan l-aħħar fil-Parlament Malti kkommemorajna l-50 sena minn mindu fil-Ġnus Magħquda kien hemm id-diskors tal-Ambaxxatur Malti Arvid Pardo li ħareġ bl-idea tal-liġi dwar il-baħar li llum hija liġi tad-dritt internazzjonali.

Dan huwa kollu kontribut tal-Maltin fil-governanza dinjija. Jien insellem lill-Maltin kollha, imxerrdin mad-dinja kollha u nawguralkom sena mimlija risq u hena.

Angelo "Anglu" Farrugia (born 29 December 1955) is a Maltese politician and the Speaker of the House of Representatives of Malta. Previously he served Deputy Leader of the Labour Party, a Member of Parliament and Shadow Minister for work, workers' rights and parliamentary affairs.

Farrugia was born in Mosta and is married to Carmen née Zammit and they have a daughter, Caroline, a Magistrate in family law



The Maltese Community Council



THE MALTESE LANGUAGE OF NSW (L-ISKOLA TAL-MALTI)

A division of the Maltese Community Council of NSW Inc.

P.O. Box 5332, Greystanes LPO, NSW 2145 Email: malteselanguageschoolnsw@hotmail.com

The Maltese Language School of NSW (L-Iskola tal-Malti) has experienced yet another successful year since the restructure in late 2007. The school is in its 11th year of operation and is currently running classes in three locations. Saturday morning classes are held at Horsley Park, Wednesday afternoon at Terra Sancta College in Schofield and Evening classes at the Meadows Public School in Seven Hills. Enrolments included in all 3 locations have risen from previous years, with the highest being in Term I of 2009 where it peaked to 70 students. The school currently operates with seven teachers, with two new teachers, having successfully completed the course for Certificate in Community Language Teaching provided by the University of Wollongong.

A new location opened in 2009. It had been a long term aim to entice students to learn Maltese, while still in their respective schools and to encourage them to include the Maltese language in their HSC studies. To this end, the MLS of NSW succeeded in attracting 12 students from Terra Sancta College at Schofields to participate in Maltese language classes as an extra subject after schools hours. The class commenced in February 2009 and much interest is shown by the students in learning the language, history and culture of Malta. On Easter week, a food fest including the Maltese figolli was organised.

The students are always informed and encouraged to attend and participate in Maltese community activities and it was pleasing to see a good number attending the Festa tal-Vitorja at St Mary's last September, and the Good Friday procession and Sette Giugno this year.

In October 2008, members of the MLS committee and teachers attended the first Annual Conference of the Federation of Language Schools held at Epping High school and we look forward to attending the 2nd Annual Conference to be held on October 10 this year.

Anna Maria Bonnici, Consul General, visited the Horsley Park Campus where students displayed their skills in the Maltese language and shared a Christmas / end of year celebration. Other guest speakers Augustine Borg demonstrating old childhood customs, Andy Busuttil of Skorba who spoke on the ancient temples in Malta and recently Rigu Bovingdon about the origin and history of the Maltese language.

In June this year the students in Marthese Caruana's class at Horsley Park attempted a project of creating 3-D images of Maltese landmarks and icons. These were displayed at the Mnarja festival held at Plumpton this year. This created much interest in the MLS and an information leaflet was distributed to promote the school on his occasion.

The MLS of NSW Board of Management and teachers, with the support of the MCC are to be highly commended for their work and dedication in maintaining the team spirit to benefit the successful survival of the MLS.

Inquiries about learning/teaching the Maltese Language in Sydney please contact Maria De Carlo on 0416119100 or email malteselanguageschoolnsw@hotmail.com

JIENA NHOBBI NITGHALLEM U NITKELLEM BIL-MALTI

GHAX IL-MALTI HUWA SABIH U L-ILSIEN TA' MALTA



Maltese Academy NSW - Akkademja Maltija ta' NSW

SKOLA MALTJA

The people and society, living in the country we now recognise as Malta, have survived two world wars and multiple dominating foreign cultures that wanted to colonise its inhabitants.

The Maltese kept their language intact and it continues to develop to this day. Although the Maltese diasporas are culturally and linguistically diverse, our identity and our understandings of the significance of our heritage are growing strong.

The name **Skola Maltija** is derived from an ongoing question throughout history: what is Maltese? To be Maltese may mean different things for different people. Though essentially, Maltese people are inherently multicultural. The Maltese language itself is still developing as a dynamic language in many places around the world as well as in Australia and Malta, including Canada, Morocco, New Zealand, America and Britain.

Recent events such as Malta's membership to the European Union and the granting of dual citizenship to all successive generations of Maltese in Australia, assures us that il-Malti will continue to be a dynamic language in content and that the number of people who engage with it will increase.

Our modern world which is grappling with the new global society and all the challenges within it, can find there is more to be learnt from the Maltese experience; including the Maltese language itself, the history and heritage we assume today and the development of our culture over literally, many thousands of years.

Skola Maltija is a movement whose time has come. Skola Maltija...Nimxu (we walk forward in knowledge).



Enrolments from students (Yr7 to 12) who want to study Maltese at the **Saturday School of Community Languages at The Hills Sports High School to, Seven Hills and Skola Maltija Sydney (Rouse Hill & Ringrose)** are now open. High school students who wish to join the SSCL can apply through their high school or by visiting www.sscl.schools.nsw.edu.au or by contacting Charles Galea at carmelg108@gmail.com. **Lessons start on 3th February.**

For **Skola Maltija Sydney** primary (K-6) call Jane Borg on 0411478233 or Charles Galea on 0400485239. For adults enrolments call Mrs Anna Cuschieri, curriculum coordinator on 0406188136 or email annacus1@bigpond.com.au or skolamaltijasdney@yahoo.com.au.

The study of Maltese is an SSCL and DET endorsed programs that give the students of Maltese a well-rounded education in literacy, culture and language.

LESTI GHALL-ISKOLA!



MALTESE BOOK CLUB END OF YEAR GET TOGETHER. Thanks to Maria Sammut and Sam for hosting. With Mary Jane Bonello, Elizabeth Bugeja, Prapas Carmen Carew, Sally Spiteri, Aaron Stanley, Andrew Mifsud, Sonia Aquilina, Mark Anthony Bonello, Marty Varga and Linda Duckham

MALTESE LANGUAGE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA



In collaboration with the [Victorian School of Languages](#), the MLTAV is taking expressions of interest for primary and secondary school children wanting to attend Maltese classes in 2018 at the Point Cook Senior College on Saturday mornings. For anyone interested in registering their child/children is required to send an email to learnmaltesevic@gmail.com. If you have any questions please contact Mark Bonello on 0400307945 or Emma Navarro on 0406215990.

Whilst the children are taking some time off from Maltese school the teachers [Emma Navarro](#) [Gillian Falzon Darcy](#), MLTAV members [Mark Anthony Bonello](#) and New Consul General for Victoria - Ms Joanna Pisani are working away trying to attract younger students to learn Maltese!



Mr Gemma Ciantar - IN LOVING REMEMBRANCE OF ONE OF THE TEACHERS OF MALTESE IN NSW WHO PASSED AWAY LATE LAST YEAR.

We were saddened when we heard the news of the passing away of one of the former Maltese Language Teachers - Mrs Gemma Ciantar. Gemma was a wonderful teacher who taught Maltese At The Skola Maltija of Sydney for several years. She was born in Gharb, Gozo on 8 January 1935 and died on 28 October 2017 in NSW.

We have lots of fond memories of Mrs Ciantar teaching the Maltese language and culture to 2nd, 3rd and 4th generation Maltese-Australian students.

MALTESE CLASSES IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA

"Expressions of interest in Maltese language lessons in Perth should be send to The Maltese Association of Western Australia at mawai@bigpond.com.au marked to the attention of Club President Stephen Cauchi"

MALTESE LANGUAGE SCHOOL OF ADELAIDE

We invite individuals or associations to restart the Maltese School in Adelaide.

The school opened in 1984 and the first teacher was Mrs. Mary Bugeja.

It provided educational services for over 30 years. Thousands of students (young ones and adults) attended the Maltese Language School of Adelaide for the last several years. It also provided opportunities to students to sit for the South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE).

If you are interested in re-establishing the school, please contact Frank Scicluna on honconsul@live.com.au for more information.

2018 MALTESE VCE

We are pleased to announce that in collaboration with the Victorian School of Languages (VSL) Maltese VCE will be offered to both Year 12 and adults student in 2018, depending on the demand and number of places available.

Start: Saturday 10 February 2018

Time: 9.am to 12.20pm

Cost: Adult fee - \$220 Year 11 and 12 - \$90

Age is no barrier! Get yourself a formal certificate in Maltese language. If you are interested, please email us on learnmaltese@gmail.com and we will follow up with an application form and further information on the course



THE MALTESE COMMUNITY COUNCIL OF VICTORIA qeda tilqa' applikazzjonijiet għall-pożizzjoni ta' għalliem/a tal-lingwa Maltija.

Applikanti għandhom ikollhom għarfien sewwa tal-Malti kemm miktub u mitkellem. Dan huwa xogħol bi ħlas. Ibgħat l-applikazzjoni bid-dettalji akkademiċi lill :

edwidgeborg@hotmail.com

NIXTIEQ NAQBAD IT-TREN TAL-1931

L-ewwel darba li missieri qalli illi snin ilu f'Malta kellna tren, ħsibtu li kien qed jgħaddini biż-żmien u kellu jehodni sar-restorant li kien hemm fl-Imtarfa biex emmintu. Niftakar sewwa kif kont bqajt b'ħalqi miftuħ



hekk kif rajt l-istazzjon u r-ritratti antiki mdendla mal-ħitan tar-restorant! Ma stajtx nifhem kif f'pajjiż żgħir b'ħal tagħna, fejn kull fejn tmur tasal f'tebqa t'għajn, kellna bżonn mezz ta' trasport simili. Naturalment imbagħad missieri kellu jfhemni wkoll li f'dik l-era l-karozzi li nafu illum kienu għadhom ma nħolqux. U allura x-xettiċiżmu tiegħi nbidel f'ammirazzjoni u xenqa li stajt immur lura fiż-żmien sabiex nara dit-tren għaddejja u għaliex le, biex nirkibha wkoll.

Is-snin għaddew u t-tren irkibtha, għalkemm f'pajjiżi oħra u mhux f'Malta. Madanakollu dil-ġimgħa waqt li kont imsiefra u moħħi kien qed jaħseb f'dan l-artiklu, irrealizzajt illi dik ix-xewqa ta' tfuliti għadha ħajja f'ħafna aktar milli naħseb jien. Intbaħt b'dan hekk kif kont għaddejja fi tren ċkejna turistika f'Sorrento u sibtni qed nifrah bir-rikba fiha ħafna aktar mit-tifla tiegħi! Ftakart illi ma kienx hemm tren waħda ta' dat-tip li ma rkibtx f'kull pajjiż li żort u ovvjament ma nqastx li nitla' anki f'dik li titlaq mill-lmdina. Jista' jkun li bla ma naf, kull darba nkun qed nipprova nesperjenza l-emozzjoni ta' żmien li mar u qatt ma' reġa' lura aktar f'pajjiżi. AQRA L-ARTIKLU KOLLU FUQ IL-WEBSAJT TA' FIONA VELLA



MIGRATION - History

Maltese migrants land in Sydney from the SS Partizanka, 1948 with Father Robert Cassar O. Carm - Chaplain

The first Maltese to come to Australia arrived as convicts around 1810. The first Maltese immigrant (as opposed to convict or bonded servant) is thought to have been Antonio Azzopardi who arrived in 1838.^[5] 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. The Maltese, as in their home country, are predominantly Roman Catholic.

One of the first women 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.



On 24 September 2017 the Maltese Augustinian Sisters, Servants of Jesus and Mary, celebrated 60 years of their religious ministry in Australia with a thanksgiving mass held at St Martin De Porres parish church in Avondale Heights.

HAPPY AND HOLY ANNIVERSARY

Back L to R: Fr Brendan Hayes, Fr John Taliana, Fr Denis Carabott, Fr Nhan Le, Bishop Terence Curtin, Fr Anthony Kerin, Fr Carm Borg, Fr Ivano Burdian, Fr Edwin Agius. Front: L to R: Sr Anna Chircop (half view), Sr Renata Cross, Sr Cresilda Villas, Sr Marlene Falzon, Sr Ninette D'Amato (General Secretary, Rome), Sr Tessie Bezzina

(Mother General, Rome), Sr Connie Mamo, Sr Lorraine Testa [Photo: Edwin Borg-Manché]

Maltese community to join Australian Football International at Australia Day 2018 Parade in Melbourne



Australian Football International (AFI) will take part in the Australia

Day Parade in Melbourne on 26 January 2018, under the banner of the “United Nations of Footy”. People from many different communities in Melbourne will march together under one banner, wearing their different national footy jumpers, to celebrate both our diversity and our harmony. We may come from many backgrounds and cultures, but we

are all Australians.



AFI invites the Maltese community in Melbourne to get involved in the Australia Day Parade, wearing the Malta footy jumper. Jumpers are available for purchase at \$70 plus postage from on the AFI website at <http://aflinternational.com/jumpers>.

Australian Football International (AFI) is an organisation established for the purpose of growing and developing the Aussie Rules football game internationally, with a focus on Footy 9s and junior development. Its major aim is to empower people and communities through sport. AFI is committed to using the sport of Australian Football to break down barriers between people of different cultures. It is also committed to using the inclusive and fitness aspects of the sport to help combat the growing rise of childhood obesity in many countries.

AFI Malta promotes Aussie Rules among students in Malta

The objectives of AFI Malta include:

Encouraging participation at the grassroots level, with a focus on youth and community development

Establishing Footy 9s in the Maltese school sports curriculum at both primary and secondary level

Introducing Footy 9s as a university sport in Malta

Providing players with the opportunity to compete in competitions at school and club level in Malta

Establishing National Teams (men & women) to compete in matches against other countries

Securing recognition of Footy 9s as an official sport in Malta

Anyone interested in being a part of AFI Malta



The Maltese Community Council



AUSTRALIA DAY 2018

The Maltese Community Council of NSW will be celebrating Australia Day on Sunday 28th January 2018

at the Holroyd Function Centre 17 Miller Street Merrylands NSW 2160
4.00 pm start, free admission, light refreshments, Parking available

COME AND JOIN US CELEBRATE AUSTRALIA DAY



Malta - Retiring & Pensions

Malta is a particularly popular retirement destination, Its attractions include

the climate, the wide use of English, the high standard of living, relatively low cost of living, and the very low crime rate.

Malta has Double Taxation treaties with 34 other countries. People from these countries who retire in Malta can have their pensions sent to them free of tax in their country of origin, and will only pay 15% tax on their pensions in Malta, if they have permanent residence status. It should be noted, however, some of the treaties do not cover civil service pensions or other pensions paid in respect of government services. Further details of the Double Taxation treaties can be found on Malta's Inland Revenue website (<http://www.ird.gov.mt>).

A LONG-forgotten relic that was part of the story of the original Anzacs is in danger of being lost to history. Who cares? We care What can be done NOW



Australia Hall in Malta built in 1915

Australia Hall, Pembroke, Malta in pitiful state

In 1915, the Australian Branch of the British Red Cross collected funds for the building of Australia Hall



Derelict building in Pembroke, which used to entertain thousands of wounded soldiers, was officially inaugurated 100 years ago

During the First World War (1914-18), Malta was dubbed as **The Nurse of the Mediterranean** as it was the largest British military outpost hosting thousands of allied wounded soldiers from the Gallipoli and Salonika warfronts. Numerous convalescent camps were erected and large buildings were transformed into hospitals. Most of these soldiers belonged to the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZACS), some of whom died while in Malta.

In 1915, the Australian Branch of the British Red Cross collected funds for the building of **Australia Hall** at Pembroke, a recreation centre/theatre and annexes, to stand as a monument to the wounded ANZAC troops that were nursed in Malta. This large hall could cater for some 2000 men, in which stage productions, bingo, dances and other forms of entertainment were held. A library and reading room were later included and it was the building where the Navy, Army and Air Force Institute (NAAFI), was first established in 1921. About this time, a projection room was added for the hall to double as a cinema.

With the closure of the British military facilities in St Andrew's Barracks in 1978, the hall became the property of the Maltese government and later allocated to third parties. Unfortunately, the ceiling of trusses and sheeting was gutted by fire in December 1998 but its sturdy four walls still remain standing.

Many are truly heartbroken and even disgusted at the state of the Australia Hall in Pembroke.

The Australian branch of the Red Cross had raised funds to finance a combined recreation centre/theatre building that would serve to entertain wounded soldiers belonging to the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC).

The hall eventually became the property of the Maltese government and was later allocated to third parties after the closure of the British military facilities in St Andrew's Barracks in 1978.

Right up to the withdrawal of the British troops in 1979, the building was in constant use for entertainment of all kinds. It was closed but in December 1998 it was severely damaged by fire and reduced to a derelict roofless shell.

In 1996, the Malta Environment and Planning Authority scheduled Australia Hall as a Grade 2 building of historic, architectural and contextual value as it forms part of a larger scheduled military complex and its protection status was retained and republished following a revision as per Government Notice number 880/09 dated October 30, 2009.

The original blueprints have been found for the building and 6,000sqm grounds, but restoration is likely to require millions of euros.

It is now at the risk of disappearing both physically and from living memory due to different agendas at play. The large painting on one of the walls of the abandoned White Rocks complex not far from the Australia Hall is perhaps a good explanation of the situation... **Who cares?** The former Australia Hall is crying out to be restored in its formal glory and rehabilitated to a use which would serve the needs of the local community. This begs the question as to how long all we will continue to close a Nelson's eye to this shambolic situation.



WORLD WAR ONE 1918-2018 100 years of the Nurse of the Mediterranean

The Sacra Infermeria. Now Mediterranean Conference Centre, Valletta

Commemorations are being held in Gallipoli, Turkey, today, to mark the centenary since the landings on the Gallipoli Peninsula, which saw Malta earn its reputation

as the 'Nurse of the Mediterranean'.

The ultimate aim of the campaign was the occupation of Constantinople (Istanbul) forcing Turkey out of the war. But the campaign was poorly planned and executed, becoming a spectacular failure for the allies.

The allied landings were carried out mostly by Australians and New Zealand troops (since known as Anzacs) along with British and French soldiers. They landed on a narrow stretch of land right into a hail of machinegun fire by a prepared enemy.

The campaign continued for more than nine months before the allies withdrew. As the casualties mounted, thousands were brought to Malta in a fleet of hospital ships.

At the outset of the war Malta had four military hospitals - in Valletta, St Julian's Mtarfa and Cottonera, along with facilities at Bighi and Fort Chambray in Gozo.

The first batch of 600 injured soldiers were brought here on May 4, 1915 and hundreds more followed within days. A number of doctors and nurses were also brought in from the UK but they could hardly cope as schools and other buildings were taken over by the military and hastily converted into hospitals. New buildings were also erected - including Australia Hall.

There were over 30 medical establishments dotted across Malta by the time the campaign was over. 58,000 injured soldiers were brought to Malta in less than a year. Some 1,500 died and are buried here - Australians, New Zealanders, Britons, French, Indians, Egyptians and Turks.

Some 800 Maltese labourers also served under Maltese officers in Gallipoli, and a number of them lost their lives there. Malta played a similar role as that of Gallipoli when the allied forces launched the Salonika campaign, with landings on the northern Greek coast in 1915 in an attempt to relieve Serbian forces fighting the Bulgarian army. Some 78,000 injured soldiers were eventually brought to Malta for medical care.



Maltese veteran said almost nothing to his 14 children about time in Gallipoli

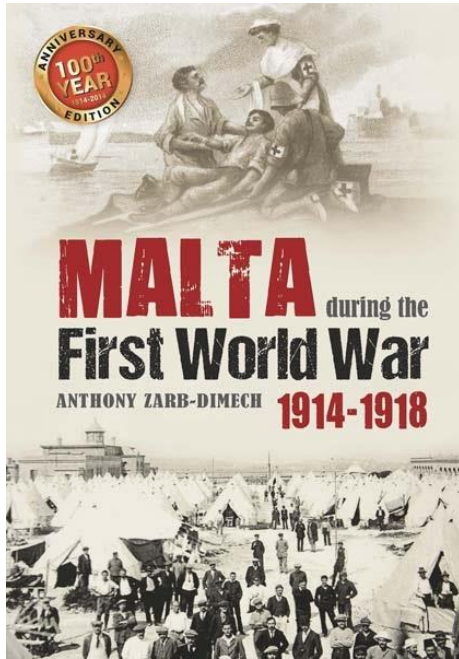
Henry Gatt grew up hearing nothing of his father's distinguished World War I service because "he didn't brag", and so took it upon himself to try and find out something about the part he played.

"He never shared stories with me about the war. He wasn't pompous. In fact he was very humble. I suppose I would have known nothing if it weren't for a few military dispatches," Major Gatt, 92, said.

He was speaking to Times of Malta 100 years after his father, Alfred Gatt, left Malta for Egypt to join the British forces in Gallipoli as part of the Royal Army Ordnance Corps in Gallipoli. It was not likely he was on the front lines, but he played an integral part in the supply and running of equipment on the battleground.

He was one of four Maltese to be awarded the Military Cross "for distinguished service in the field" and led a long military career which at one point saw him appointed commander of the fixed defences in Malta, with the rank of Brigadier. Major Gatt, however, said that although his father had eventually been buried .

with full military honours, he had shared close to nothing of his exploits with him, or any of his 13 siblings, even in the many years after the war



MALTA DURING THE FIRST WAR

Anthony Zarb-Dimech

Malta's indirect role in the First World War, 1914–1918 is often portrayed as 'the nurse of the Mediterranean' to the thousands of wounded allied servicemen of this war who were ferried to Malta and also as a 'battleship' servicing the needs of the allied forces. The task undertaken by the author is an attempt to bring together in one publication the most important aspects related to Malta during the First World War in a practical step-by-step study and reference guide. This bird's eye view perspective is generously complemented with images and references, many of which have surfaced for the first time. Coupled with the above is the direct and personal interest of the author, whose mother's Uncle, John Ellul (Assistant Engineer on HMS Louvain) lost his life when UC 22 sent the ship to the bottom of the Aegean in January 1918

Facade at St John's co-Cathedral restored.



Restoration works on the facade of the iconic St John's co-Cathedral has come to an end just in time for the start of Valletta's European Capital of Culture festivities.

Chairman of the V18 Foundation Jason Micallef enthusiastically encouraged all to attend a celebration in the piazza right outside the co-Cathedral's main entrance this Saturday at 7pm. He spoke of great collaborative efforts between local and international artists for a unique celebration, including a 140-person choir.

Works on restoring the facade began in 2014 and cost some €660,000. An area of 2,000 square meters was covered, primarily relating to cleaning the facade's stonemasonry and

restoring the co-Cathedral's towers and clocks.

Three clocks can be seen, one showing the time, another showing the date and a third one showing the day of the week. The words 'Clerici in Vernt' were found to be inscribed which is believed to be a reference to the clockmaker.

Speaking at the inauguration this morning, Culture Minister Owen Bonnici, together with representatives from the directorate of restoration works, the St John's co-Cathedral foundation and a representative on behalf of the Archbishop all spoke of how the works would not have been possible without collaboration from the aforementioned entities.

Head of the St John co-Cathedral Foundation said that there are plans to illuminate three sides of the church facade, and that eventually when the museum is restored the entire block would be illuminated, using a "holistic approach"

The co-Cathedral was designed by Ġlormu Cassar and opened in 1577. An estimated 500,000 tourists visit it every year, roughly 1 in every four tourists visiting the island.



St John's was built by the Knights of Malta between 1573 and 1578, having been commissioned in 1572 by Grand Master Jean de la Cassière as the conventual church of the Order of the Knights Hospitaller of St John, known as the Knights of Malta. The Church was designed by the Maltese military architect Ġlormu Cassar (Girolamo Cassar) who designed several of the more prominent buildings in Valletta. The church is considered to be one of the finest examples of high Baroque architecture in Europe and one of

the world's great cathedrals. The severe exterior of the Cathedral, built immediately after the ending of the Great Siege of 1565, is reminiscent of a military fort. The façade has some interesting features. On the right are three clocks – one shows the time, one shows the day of the week and the other shows the date. In the middle is a balcony with balustrades. From this balcony was announced the name of the newly-elected grand-master. It was customary for the grand-master to throw golden coins on the people who were waiting in the square for the news. Under the balcony are three coat of arms. One is of Grand Master La Cassiere, who paid for the building of the Cathedral, one is of Bishop Torres who opened the Cathedral and the third is the coat of arms of religion. The columns on the main door are Tuscan, therefore massive and impressive.

Doing it for the love and passion of dance

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Vicki Attard a former Mackay resident is the interim director of the Houston Ballet Academy. Contributed
VICKI Attard was six years old when her mother thought it would be a lovely idea for her to try ballet.

With a ballet teacher living two doors down it was an idea that allowed Ms Attard to enjoy a prestigious career as a ballerina with the Australia Ballet Company and an international ballet teacher. She admits it was her persistent personality that allowed her to move forward in her career. "I never felt like I was good enough so I persisted," she said.

The former Mackay resident now divides her time in Sydney and Houston, Texas, after she was given the interim director with Houston Ballet Academy

Fellow Australian Stanton Welch, working with the Houston Ballet Academy, offered Ms Attard the position at the academy which she described as once in a lifetime opportunity.

Focusing on classical ballet, Ms Attard said the style was universal and she hoped to inspire the students and ensure she had done her job properly, with a high standard in maintained.

"It will be sad to leave," she said. Ms Attard is back in Australia to visit her two sons who are unable to travel with her. "It's tough but we knew that there would be an end after a year," she said.

Ms Attard tries to return to Mackay once a year to visit family and teach at local dance schools.

She has close ties to the Maltese community.

Her great-grandmother Carmela Ellul and grandmother Gracia believed to be the first known Maltese women to arrive in Mackay in 1915.

Ms Attard learnt ballet in Mackay under the guidance of Dawn Armstrong and Betty Meskell before being accepted to the Australian Ballet School in 1985.

She was promoted to Coryphee in 1987, Soloiste in 1991, Senior Artiste in 1992 and Principal Artiste in 1993. She joined Sydney Dance Company for its 1989 season and rejoined The Australian Ballet in 1990. Performing in many productions over the years, Ms Attard said it was difficult to choose a favourite but Romeo and Juliet and Madam Butterfly were important to her.

"The role of Cio Cio San in the world premiere of Stanton Welch's Madame Butterfly in 1995 was created for me," she said.

Ms Attard has also studied in Copenhagen, London and Netherlands.

Highlights of her career include dancing Kitri on the opening night of the Washington season, the title role of Manon in Tokyo and the opening and all subsequent performances of Cio Cio San in Madame Butterfly for the New York season.

Other Australian Ballet tours included London, Greece, Italy, China and Russia.

She retired from dancing in 2000 and knew she wanted to teach. She began a Graduate Diploma in Dance Instruction and completed the course within a year.

BirdLife Malta launches new “stoptrappingnow” campaign



BirdLife Malta has today launched the campaign [#STOPTRAPPINGNOW](#) with the objective it said, “of explaining more about trapping to the general public and raising awareness about the several impacts of finch trapping on the birds, their habitat and the Maltese environment in general.”

The NGO explained that, “we are now very close to having the final verdict from the European Court of Justice (ECJ) in the

court case initiated by the European Commission against Malta on the trapping of seven species of wild finches.”

BirdLife said that “in July 2017 ECJ Advocate General Eleanor V. E. Sharpston [delivered her Opinion](#) in regard to the Infringement Proceedings, which on 24th September 2015 resulted in Malta being referred to the Court of Justice of the EU over the Maltese Government’s decision to allow the trapping of seven species of wild finches on Maltese territory as of 2014.”

The practice was reintroduced four years ago after it was banned in 2009 in line with the EU Accession Treaty. Finch Trapping is illegal across the European Union under the EU Birds’ Directive.

The seven types of finches are: Linnet, Goldfinch, Greenfinch, Siskin, Hawfinch, Chaffinch and Serin. The final decision in this pending ECJ court case is now imminent, said BirdLife. [Gozonews.com](#)

Novels with A Maltese Setting [Andrew Ricca](#)



On the international stage, the country is known as the backdrop to Christopher Marlowe’s play *The Jew of Malta* and to a number of historical novels drawn to the drama inherent in the island’s history. Here’s our guide to the best novels set in Malta, incidentally more appreciative of their setting than Lord Byron was, describing the island as one of ‘yells, bells, and smells’.

[*The chapel at San Lawrenz, Gozo*](#) | © [Thyes/WikiCommons](#)

Nicholas Monsarrat — *The Kappillan of Malta* - After serving in the Royal Navy during the same period, and later as a diplomat, Liverpool born writer Nicholas Monsarrat wrote *The Kappillan of Malta* in 1973 while living in the village of San Lawrenz, Gozo. Arguably the English novel with the pre-eminent theme of Malta itself for a subject, the historical novel tells the story of the dealings of Father Salvatore, a humble parish priest, or kappillan, caught in the drama of World War Two and devoted to serving the poor and homeless. Recently adapted to a play by Maltese author [Immanuel Mifsud](#), it is fondly remembered for warm depictions of day to day life in Malta.

Thomas Pynchon — *V.* - Thomas Pynchon’s debut novel and classic of post-modernist fiction “V.” is as witty, dreamlike, and hard to follow as it was when it first appeared some 50 years ago. It broadly follows the alternating and increasingly converging narratives of recently discharged U.S. Navy sailor Benny Profane in the company of a New York group of pseudo-bohemians known as the Whole Sick Crew, and the mission of ageing traveller Herbert Stencil as he seeks to locate the obscure entity only known as V. What, or who, is V? If the question doesn’t frustrate readers enough, the number of characters and digressive subplots may do so. One thing everyone agrees on is that Valletta in the historical backdrop of the Suez Crisis features prominently, particularly in the novel’s epilogue.



[*Portrait of Sir Walter Scott \(1771 – 1832\) by Sir Henry Raeburn*](#) | © [Botaurus/WikiCommons](#)

Sir Walter Scott — *The Siege of Malta* - [Scottish](#) writer Sir Walter Scott, largely remembered for his historical novels (a genre he helped shape and popularize back in the early 19th century), was the first of many to tackle *The Siege of Malta* – an account of Malta’s defense against Ottoman forces during the siege of 1565. Planned as part of the [Waverley Series](#), then among the most widely read novels in Europe, it was written towards the end of author’s life sometime in 1831-32. Long thought inappropriate for publication due to Scott’s ill health at the time, the novel was first published in 2008

causing some controversy on the rights of literary executors' wishes to suppress publication. It is far from its writer's best moments but, as a companion piece to David Ball's *The Sword and the Scimitar* (2004), goes some way to show the enduring appeal of this episode in Malta's history.

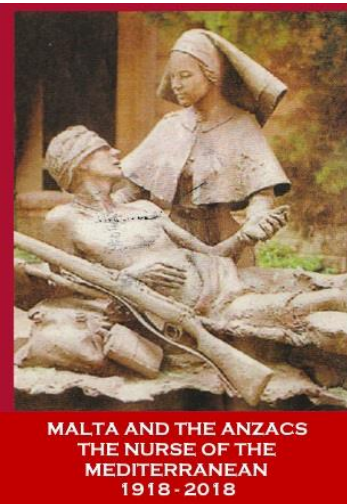
Anthony Burgess — *Earthly Powers* - Albeit little is known of British novelist Anthony Burgess' stay in Malta as a tax exile from 1968-1970, it left enough of an impression to find a place in his monumental saga *Earthly Powers*. The ambitious novel weaves all of the social ills and the ethical questions of the 20th century one can possibly think of into a narrative spanning six decades of the life of its fictional protagonist, retired writer Kenneth Toomey. Like Burgess himself, Toomey lives in a house in the town of Lija. The unflattering descriptions of Malta's censorship regime in the novel's first pages are also extracted from the writer's own experience, having faced a hard time gaining access to his own earlier works.



Caravaggio's *Beheading of St. John the Baptist* | © Dcoetzee/WikiCommons

Andrea Camilleri — *Il Colore Del Sole* - The best-selling Sicilian writer of detective fiction is most known for his widely translated Inspector Montalbano series. In *Il Colore Del Sole* (2007), or "The Color of the Sun", Camilleri substitutes Montalbano for his own persona, a detective-of-sorts who falls upon a diary written by the great Caravaggio during the summer of 1607- the same year in which the real life painter, accused of homicide in Rome, went into exile on Malta, and later Sicily. True to Camilleri's characterizations,

Caravaggio's writing is rendered in a sixteenth century dialect, imaginatively reconstructing the last months of the artist's suffered life.



MALTA AND THE ANZACS 1918-2018 THE NURSE OF THE MEDITERRANEAN

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MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER The Journal of the Maltese Diaspora



AN AMERICAN VISITS MALTA



Tricia and Shawn Mitchell

Who are you? I'm Tricia, an American freelance writer, trainer and explorer. I've been abroad for about 16 years, living in Heidelberg, Germany, and most recently, Valletta, Malta.

Where, when and why did you move abroad? As a child, my parents instilled in me an appreciation of all things international. Whether traveling to Europe to see friends, hosting exchange students from France, Germany, and Hungary, or having a Czech piano teacher, I came to appreciate intercultural exchange. A few years after finishing

college, I set out to move overseas. For about a decade, I lived in Germany solo, working as a trainer and education manager. When I met my husband, Shawn, we left Germany and embarked on a voyage through Southeast Asia and India. Sixty+ countries later, we're still overseas.

What challenges did you face during the move? Now that I've moved a few times, I've noticed that a few themes appear. Mostly, I've felt homesick and missed family and friends - especially when you can't share special moments with loved ones, such as a wedding. It can also be tricky trying to navigate day-to-day tasks in a foreign language - especially when it comes to translating official documents.

Are there many other expats in your area? There have generally been expats wherever we've lived, but so much of the joy of living and traveling abroad is mingling with the locals! Heidelberg, my German home for 10 years, had many Americans, as well as university students from around the world. In Malta, we mingled more with the Maltese, however, there were a good number of people from the UK there. Since Malta is a hub for English-language schools, we'd often meet students from as far away as Asia, too.

What do you like about life where you are? We've recently left Malta, but what I most enjoyed (and now miss) was the perpetual sunshine, the sea, the fascinating history, and the colorful festivals and architecture.

What do you dislike about your expat life? Of course, there are pros and cons everywhere, even back "home". Perhaps one of the biggest challenges of expat life is the feeling that many places in the world now feel like "home" but that you're not officially grounded in one community anymore.

What is the biggest cultural difference you have experienced between your new country and life back home? In Malta, it was a bit of a shift getting used to what people jokingly refer to as "Mediterranean time". We'd be promised an appointment to fix the washing machine, for example, and one or two days later, the repairman still hadn't come - or called to reschedule.

What do you think of the food and drink in your new country? What are your particular likes or dislikes? We loved Malta's festivals focused upon seasonal produce - everything from oranges and strawberries to olives. While we found some foods to be too sweet or rich (the pastizzi in particular!) we enjoyed sharing freshly-caught fish at the home of Maltese friends. It was also fun getting to participate in olive and orange harvests.

What advice would you give to anyone following in your footsteps? Whether moving to Malta or somewhere else, try to learn as much of the host country's language as possible. Though English is one of the official languages in Malta, we found that the locals still greatly appreciated our linguistic efforts, however bad our Maltese pronunciation was.

What are your plans for the future? We recently left Malta, and are plotting our next move. At present, we're exploring Croatia, a country we seem to keep coming back to. I also have dreams of someday living in France, since I studied the language. The future is not yet certain, but it's fun to keep our options open. *Would you like to share your experience of life abroad with other readers?*



A MAN ON A MISSION by Fiona Vella



"Ageing should not be a barrier in life but a further opportunity to excel," insists 80-year-old Angelo Zahra who has recently been selected to receive the main prize in the award 'Premju Anzjanità Attiva' (Award for the Active Ageing) for his voluntary management of three homes for the disabled.

Zahra studied mechanical engineering at the Dockyard Technical College and for several years, he served in managerial roles. Before his retirement, at age 63, he was the Director of the Manufacturing and Services Department with the Government of Malta.

"I have known Fr Angelo Seychell since his priesthood and I have always admired his work. When he founded the Nazareth Foundation in 1995 and opened his house to provide a home for people with special needs, I supported his venture by collecting donations from my colleagues twice a year. However, I was not directly involved with Dar Nazareth."

Yet Fr Seychell had for long earmarked Zahra to help him develop his mission to create a warm family environment in which people

with disabilities could lead a good and respectful life which gave them the possibility to be happy and to achieve their full potential.

"As soon as I retired, Fr Seychell approached me and asked me to consider serving as the administrator of Dar Nazareth. I accepted on condition to start three months later since I had promised my wife that I would finally take a much-awaited break from work. In the meantime, my wife and I booked a tour to Lourdes and to our great surprise we found out that the group which we were going to travel with were none other than Fr Seychell, his volunteers and the residents at Dar Nazareth. This was a golden opportunity to get to know everyone better and soon, I was deeply involved with the Nazareth Foundation."

"In September 2000, when I joined in, there were only five residents at Dar Nazareth. However, in a short time, the house was elaborated to receive a further five residents where it reached its full capacity. A year later, the Foundation rented a workshop wherein our residents could attend daily to entertain themselves and to make crafts which could be sold to the public."

Dar Nazareth addressed a demand which had been stalled for several years. Soon, its success lead to the establishment of two other houses.

"In 2004, the Foundation opened the second house, Dar l-Arcipriet Degabriele, which welcomed a further nine residents. Five years later, the third house, Dar Jean Vanier, opened its doors to another nine residents."

While in the beginning Dar Nazareth was operated by volunteers, the increase in residents and houses required the engagement of full-time workers.

"The funding of such projects is always one of the major stumbling blocks. The Foundation had succeeded to purchase two properties and develop them into residential homes. It also managed to acquire enough money to fund the salary of 30 full-time workers. Nevertheless, the sourcing of further income to sustain all the expenses required to keep these three homes functioning are a constant responsibility. Thankfully, in 2016, the Government signed an agreement with Nazareth Foundation through which it was given 1.4 million euro over a period of three years. This serves as a safety net for the Foundation's administration to provide the best service possible to its residents."

For the past 17 years, Zahra has voluntarily taken in hand the management of these three homes and presently he also acts as President of the Nazareth Foundation Board.

"This work has become my mission to do something worthwhile with my available time. It gives me utter satisfaction to see our residents living in a friendly and family environment where they can feel safe, at ease, and loved. Their appreciation and happiness in return give me a sense of fulfilment and help me to feel much younger." (This feature was published in the Senior Times supplement issued with The Times of Malta on 15 December 2017)

The coldest and warmest: Freaky winter season



In Malta

Rebecca Iversen

of temperatures, from some very chilly days to some very warm, almost hot, days.

Interestingly, at the beginning of January (5 and 6 January), MIA recorded temperatures of up to 19.5 degrees. In the sun, this feels more like 22°C. The climatic norm for the maximum temperature for these usually varies between 15.4°C and 16.4°C.

But just 24 hours later (7 January) Malta experienced a low of 10.5°C, which is in line with the climatic norm for the minimum temperature varying between 9.5°C and 10.4°C. Thus a 9°C degree drop was recorded in the space of a day.

MIA told this newsroom that at this time of year, the coldest days on our islands are usually recorded when a Polar continental air mass is affecting Russia and Eastern Europe, causing heavy snow to fall over these regions.

If the currents from these regions reach the central Mediterranean, normally via a North-easterly and Northerly wind, temperatures drop significantly over our island.

This has not been the case so far, this year. Instead, warm air masses have affected us, such as those coming from Libya and reaching us in the past 2 days, maintaining the minimum temperatures relatively high. The strong winds which were recently recorded also contributed to these temperatures, as they transferred the warm air from the Mediterranean Sea over the Maltese islands.



AN UNFORGETTABLE GOZITAN POET

Mary Meilak (9 August 1905 – 1 January 1975) is one of the few Maltese women poets. Born in Victoria, Gozo in 1905, she was the daughter of Ġorg and Mananni Meilak. She received her education at Central School in Gozo. For seventeen years she worked in government offices but in 1942, she became a teacher, retiring twenty years later. Meilak wrote her first poem, *Faxx Nemel*, when she was 25 years old, in 1930. In 1945, she published her first collection of poems. She also published

collections of essays, three novels, two operas and some operetti. She was a contemporary of Gan Anton Vassallo, Dwardu Cachia, Dun Karm, Anastasio Cuschieri, Ninu Cremona, Guze Delia, Gorg Zammit, Gorg Pisani, and Anton Buttigieg. Meilak died in 1975. On the centenary of her birth, in 2015, a memorial was erected in her honour in Victoria, Gozo

ALL THE MALTESE E-NEWSLETTERS ARE ARCHIVED AT THE
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Every January, Sydney Festival enlivens and transforms Sydney with a bold cultural celebration based on big ideas and cutting-edge art and performance. This year is no exception and introduces European tones in the form of Rembrandt Live, Germany's Katharina Grosse who has been commissioned for an installation at the Carriageworks, Estonia's Award winning Seidler Salon Series, to name but a few. The program is kaleidoscopic in its diversity, from contemporary ballet to international theatre hits, primal circus, immersive virtual reality,

modern Indigenous art and theatre, punk protest music and more.

The Festival includes free music events Symphony Under The Stars in Parramatta Park and Opera in the Domain, or head for Circus City in Prince Alfred Square, Parramatta, for free performances by Legs On The Wall and Sydney Trapeze School. More information on the sydney festival webpage.



A happy ride, led by the secretary of the Valletta Club in Alexandria during an excursion the day of Cham el Nessim of 1948.



Alexandria Sacred Heart Girl's School, was run by Franciscan Nuns, with a large proportion of Maltese pupils. 1945/46 term.



In 1940, the Maltese Girl Guide Company and the Scout Group were invited by the Old Sea Scouts in the Royal Navy to an indoor campfire at the Alexandria Fleet Club.



The 4th Alexandria Maltese Scout Group that visited Malta in August 1939.

Nostalgia

MALTESE IN EGYPT

Wikipedia

The **Maltese of Egypt**, also known as **Egyptian Franco-Maltese**, are an ethnic minority group in Egypt. Though culturally very similar to the Franco-Maltese of Tunisia and Algeria, most people of Maltese or part-Maltese descent born in Egypt remained British subjects. They are immigrants, or descendants of immigrants, from the islands of Malta, who settled in Egypt largely during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and intermarried heavily with Italians, French and other Europeans. Those with a French father assumed French citizenship. Some Maltese had been present in the country as early as the era of Napoleon and his conquest of Egypt. The proximity between the two countries and the similarity between the Maltese and Arabic languages have led many Maltese to settle in Egypt in the past, mainly in Alexandria.^[1] Like the Italians who settled in Egypt, the Egyptian-born Maltese constituted a portion of Egypt's Roman Catholic community. By 1939, up to 20,000 Maltese were living in Egypt. Practically all of these were French-speaking, and those with a French parent had French as their mother tongue. In many middle-class families (especially in Alexandria and Cairo) a language shift had occurred, with Italian used as the home language alongside French; a large minority of Egyptian Maltese (for example those of the Suez Canal Zone) still retained Maltese as their mother tongue. This number was greatly reduced by emigration years after, and almost completely wiped out by expulsions in 1956 due to the Maltese being British nationals. Most of the Egyptian Franco-Maltese settled in Australia or Britain, where they remained culturally distinct from immigrants from Malta. Those with French citizenship were repatriated to France. Post-war Malta in general did not accept refugees from Egypt.

Catholic Malta and predominantly Muslim North Africa have had troubled relations since at least the Crusades, when Malta became the final stand against the Turks by the Knights Hospitallers. Malta held, and after the Crusades many attacks against Arab and Turkish coastal towns were launched from it. Not all of the Maltese who joined the Knights in these attacks returned home. Some lost their liberty, settling against their will in North Africa.

The Knights remained in possession of Malta until its seizure by Napoleon Bonaparte in 1798. Bonaparte formed a troop of Maltese--the number

of men varies in sources from 400 or 500 to 2000--who went with him into Egypt as part of the Mediterranean campaign of 1798. Many of these men settled in the Eastern Mediterranean after Napoleon's loss at the Battle of the Nile, becoming some of the first Maltese settlers in Egypt. Opportunity for work with the British drew more Maltese into the area thereafter, although there was an exodus of Maltese refugees back to their native land in 1822, when Alexandria was besieged by the British. Nevertheless, Alexandria, Cairo, Suez, Rosetta and Port Said continued to be a draw for Maltese settlers.

Maltese immigrants joined the many others who flocked to the area for work in 1859 with the construction of the Suez Canal. The Egyptian Maltese community was heavily employed in such construction areas as masonry, carpentry, and smithing as well as in administration and commerce. Many became employees of the French Suez Canal Company. As English was known to some and they were quicker than Europeans to learn Arabic, they proved useful to British employers. Language became a major focus of the Maltese work force. While many had left their homes illiterate, speaking Maltese and usually also Italian, they sent their children to French Catholic schools where they developed fluency not only in French, which became the principal language of the subsequent generations, but also in English and Arabic. This education made them useful both in consular work and to European companies entering the area.

Relations between the Maltese immigrants and the Egyptian population were not always easy. In Alexandria in 1882, a fight between a Maltese immigrant and an Egyptian donkey driver, in which the donkey driver was killed, led the Egyptians to riot. As word spread that the Europeans were killing Egyptians the residents took to the streets. They met return fire from Europeans, Greeks, Syrians and other Christians, with violence continuing until finally the army was called in to intervene.

In 1926, there were nearly 20,000 Maltese residents living and working in Egypt. However, the Suez Crisis of 1956,^[6] when Malta was used as a point of deployment by the British and French for troops to invade Egypt, was followed by the expulsion of Maltese immigrants, along with many other groups, from the country.



THE BIG PICTURE - DON BOSCO GRAND CONCERT 2018 MILL- GOZO YOUTH WIND BAND

'Il-Gozo Youth Wind Band' fi hndan il-'Gozo Youth Wind Band & Orchestra' qeghda taghmel l-aħħar thejijiet tagħha biex tippreżenta l-Kunċert Annwali tagħha, id-'Don Bosco Grand Concert', din is-sena taħt it-titlu ta' The Big Picture

nhar il-Ħadd 4 ta' Frar 2018 fis-7.30pm fuq il-palk tal-Oratorju Don Bosco fi tmiem il-festa ta' San Gwann Bosco, il-qaddis tat-tfal u ż-żgħażaġh. Il-'Gozo Youth Wind Band' tagħmel hilita kollha biex tippreżenta arrangamenti mużikali ġodda fix-xena mużikali lill-pubbliku nġenerali biex dan ikun jista' jiddeverti u dis-sena se nisimgħu fost l-oħrajn Highlights mill-musical Chess, The Big Picture, The Mask of Zorro, Highlights mill-Cats, Serata all'Opera, Symphonic Rock, u Hymn to the Fallen.

Il-'Gozo Youth Wind Band' tikkonsisti prinċipalment minn madwar ħamsin element żagħżuġh li wara li jkunu studjaw sewwa l-mużika f'Malta u Għawdex, jiltaqgħu regularment biex jippreparaw repertorju mużikali mill-aktar wiesa' li huma jippreżentaw matul is-sena f'diversi okkażjonijiet. Din hija s-sittax-il sena mit-twelid ta' dan il-kumless ta' mużiċisti Għawdxin li ilu jferraħ lil dawk kollha li jsegwuh. Iktar tard din is-sena, sewwa sew nhar it-Tnejn 30 ta' Lulju l-'Gozo Youth Orchestra' se tkun qed tippreżenta l-ħdax-il edizzjoni tal-ispettaklu mużikali Opera vs Pop under the Stars u iktar tard Stage and Proms on the Sea nhar it-Tnejn, 10 ta' Settembru 2018.

Kulħadd mela huwa mistieden bla ħlas għal The Big Picture nhar il-Ħadd 4 ta' Frar 2018 mill-Gozo Youth Wind Band taħt id-direzzjoni ta' Mro Dr Joseph Grech, direttur u fundatur. Għall-iktar informazzjoni tistgħu tikkuntattjaw lil: gozowindbandorchestra@yahoo.co.uk Kav Joe M Attard Victoria Għawdex



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Email – Dr Jeff Nicholas sejhn@ozemail.com.au

Discrimination affecting large numbers of ethnic minorities and immigrants

Maria Pace

33% of immigrants from Sub-Saharan Africa feel discriminated due to their skin colour in Malta.

The results of the EU MIDIS II report published by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights show that a number of immigrants feel discriminated against in Malta.



While over 30% felt they were discriminated against due to their skin colour, 20% are discriminated due to their ethnic origin in four areas of daily life, namely when looking for work, at work, in access to housing, and when in contact with school authorities as a parent, in the five years before the survey.

On the other hand, across Europe, the findings show that four out of 10 respondents felt discriminated against in one or more areas of daily life because of their ethnic or immigrant background during the same period of time.

These findings are the result of an EU-wide survey carried out by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights in 2015 and

2016.

The survey was based on a sample of over 25,500 randomly selected respondents with different ethnic minority and immigrant backgrounds.

In Malta's sphere of employment, 20% of respondents experienced discrimination based on their ethnic or immigrant background when looking for work in the 12 months before the survey, while 15% faced such discrimination at work.

Similarly, 29% of the respondents in the EU28 who looked for a job and 22% of those at work in the five years before the survey experienced discrimination.

The findings show that very few victims of discrimination reported to anyone or made a complaint about the most recent incident of discrimination.

Overall, one out of eight respondents (12%) across Europe reported or made a complaint, compared to 11% of the respondents with Sub-Saharan African backgrounds living in Malta.

The survey examined respondents' level of awareness of organisations that offer support and advice in case of discrimination. 27% of all respondents across Europe, and 12% of the respondents with Sub-Saharan African backgrounds in Malta are aware of such organisations.

In a statement, the National Commission for the Promotion of Equality (NCPE) said that it is illegal to discriminate against people on the grounds of race or ethnic origin, or to treat them less favourably.

"Persons who feel discriminated on the grounds of their race/ethnic origin in employment and in the provision of goods and services can bring this to the attention of NCPE which has the responsibility of investigating such complaints," the statement said.

"NCPE provides training on diversity, equality and non-discrimination to departments/entities in the Public Sector and to any organisation in the private sector on request."

The NCPE reiterated that the participation of all citizens in the different spheres of society enhances diversity and enriches society. **Maltatoday.com.mt**

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