



# MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER

## The Journal of the Maltese Diaspora

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### HISTORY OF MALTA.



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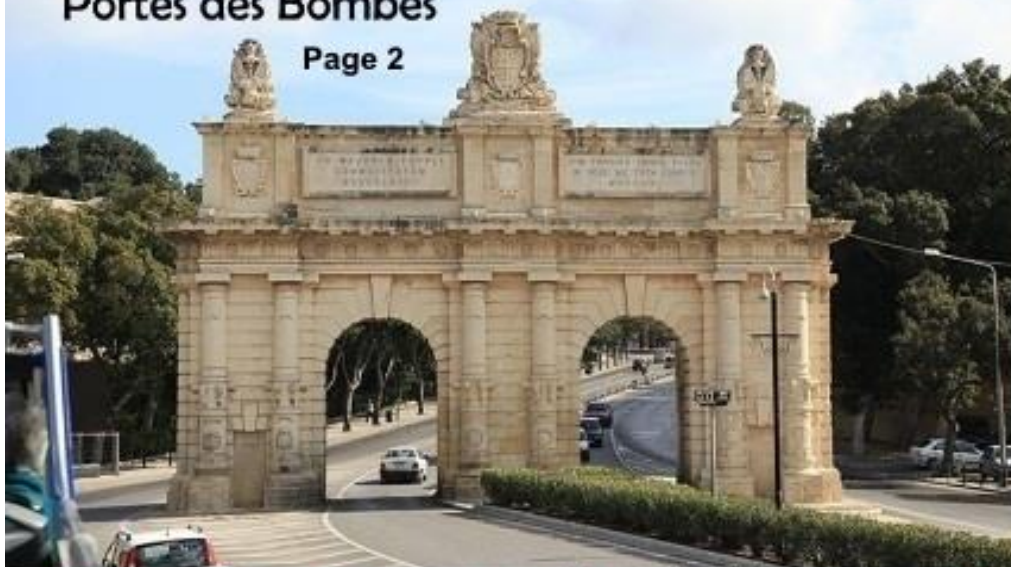


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### Portes des Bombes

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## Portes des Bombes- Il-Bieb tal-Bombi - Joe Bugeja

In the 17th century the land front of Valletta facing Floriana had to be safeguarded. In 1635, Pietro Paolo Floriani arrived in Malta. He proposed that the Floriana Lines should be built well beyond the Valletta front to strengthen the citadel. Floriani's report of a ring of fortifications was submitted to the Order's council in October 1638. It was accepted despite strong opposition.

The Floriana lines were constructed, though alterations or additions were made. Laparelli, completed his suggestions in 1645. Later, in 1681, Gutenberg proposed the construction of three bastions in front of Fort St Elmo. In July 1715 De Tigné recommended other additions.

Fort Ricasoli was built during the 17th century. The Marsamxett flank was protected by Fort Manoel. Fort Tigné was built in the 18th century. Valletta acted as a citadel in the 18th century. This continued to be so during the British occupation. Little work was done to Valletta until the middle of the 19th century.

After 1800, the British employed their own military engineers. They did extensive modifications to the miles of fortifications. They even destroyed the six gates that Floriana was proud of. When compared with the 17,000 men available to the knights in 1798, the British garrison was insignificant especially when one considers that there were 25 miles of fortifications.

These were pierced by eight main gates. Six gates in Floriana had to make way for British military exigencies. In his report, Harding suggested that the number of troops should increase from 3,000 to 6,000 to secure the gates. He reasoned that this was due to the fact that Valletta was a big commercial city needing to have open gates all the time. In the process, some of the old baroque gates were rebuilt, among which was Porta Reale. This background leads to the issue of Il-Bombi.

Portes des Bombes was not the main entrance into Borgo Vilhena. St Anne's Gate was. The Bombi landmark we know today was originally called Porta dei Cannoni. Later the Bombi Gate took its name from the two massive mortar shells placed on the side columns. The original Porta dei Bombi was a pillared opening in its foreground, which together served as an advanced access into the first line of fortifications called the faussebraye (1720).

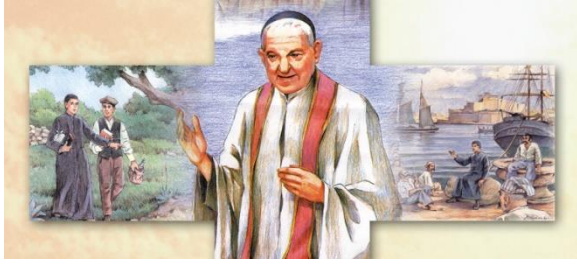
So no imagination, no matter how fanciful, would carry that heavy mortar Bombi all the way to Blata l-Bajda. The Lady Mayor of Floriana was right when she confirmed the date when Portes des Bombes was first built in 1720. However it was modified in 1868 and at other times as well.

This was done to modify the arches, to add the pedestrian gates, and to remove the central column. Moreover, to move the two pillars supporting the mortar shells aside: this was done at the expense of the pedestrian gates on either side. The archways were also modified to accommodate the tramways. Electrical wires powered the trams. Therefore, one should not jump into conclusions before consulting one of the illustrated volumes by Richard Ellis entitled The Photography Collection: Valletta and Floriana. It is a treasure for young minds in doing research before jumping into conclusions. (source timesofmalta.com)



**Anzac Day – 25 April - has been commemorated in Malta since 1916. Since 1979 the service has been held at the Pietà Military Cemetery as it contains the highest number of ANZAC war graves in Malta.**

**The Cemetery is located in Triq Id-Duluri, Pietà - Malta**



## PRECA COMMUNITY

The Preca Community officially known as the Society of Christian Doctrine – Societas Doctrinae Christianae [M.U.S.E.U.M] was founded in Malta in 1907 by St George Preca (1880 – 1962).

A diocesan priest St George Preca, was born and lived on the Mediterranean island of Malta. Aware of the urgent

need in spreading the Word of God and making it accessible to all, he was compelled to form an apostolic lay group to meet the need for a deeper formation in faith. Empowered to learn and teach the Word of God, the group flourished under his direction.

## Preca Community - Brompton – South Australia

Praise and thank the Lord for 60 years of ministry in Adelaide and faithful witness to the gospel by the members of the Society of Christian Doctrine in Australia.



*Australian Members meeting friends and associates in Adelaide, South Australia*

The Preca Family seeks holiness through a personal commitment to Jesus Christ and by contributing to the evangelising mission of the Church. The Preca Family is made up of the Members of the Societas Doctrinae Christianae (SDC), Associates, Friends and young people. The SDC has two sections: one for celibate women and another for celibate men. Recently SDC Members began using the name Preca Community to refer to the men's celibate section in Australia. Married or single adults can join the Preca Family as Friends or Associates. Young people can belong to a Preca youth group.

Present throughout the world, the Preca Family provides integrated Christian teaching and living in the Catholic tradition for young people and adults in its care. Men and women who form the Preca Family are urged to follow Christ and give witness to gospel values, especially fraternal love, humility and meekness.

Glory and Praise to God who provides us with the strength to follow Christ and the opportunity to continue the work of evangelisation.

### **Beginnings in Australia**

After WWII, immigration from Malta to Australia was encouraged with assisted passages for would-be immigrants. Fr George Preca called on the members of the society to offer their services and go to Australia to continue the mission in this new land.

The first parish where the Members began formally their activities was at St Mary Star of the Sea, West Melbourne. This was a flourishing parish under the guidance of Archbishop Justin Simonds.

There was a large Catholic population of Italian and Maltese people. It was into this backdrop that the Members arrived in 1956. These Members formed the nucleus of the first Australian Centre at West Melbourne.

The early Members were full of enthusiasm for the work of evangelisation. They had to find employment and fit in with the Australian psyche, and managed to make themselves known and understood in a culture that knew very little about this new form of lay apostolate. Today in Australia they are present in New South Wales, South Australia, Tasmania and Victoria.



### Charles Azzopardi (1930 -2007)

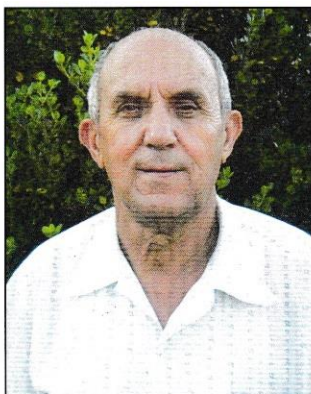
Charles Azzopardi was born in Malta on the 28 October 1930, and joined the SDC from the Marsa 11 Balbi Street. In 1957, Saint George Preca, sent Charles together with Emanuel Mifsud to help to establish the SDC centre in Adelaide in South Australia. Charles remained in Australia until 1967 when the Lord called him to go to Peru to serve the Church as a priest. He arrived in Peru after a long sea voyage and started his studies at the seminary in Arequipa. He was ordained priest in Chuquibamba on the 8 December 1970.



*Charles Azzopardi at Brompton Centre in South Australia in the early 60s . far right*

**Harry Brincat with his VW van - Adelaide circa 1960  
Preca Community**

**Horace Cassar - Adelaide 1960**



### Henry (Harry) Brincat

**Born in Birkirakara, Malta on May 29, 1934  
Entered eternity peacefully on February 16, 2018  
in Adelaide – South Australia  
Faithful member of the Preca Community  
also known as MUSEUM for 65 years  
Lovingly remembered by his relatives, the members  
of the Preca Community and friends in  
Australia and Malta  
May he rest in peace**

## CARMELITE CHURCH - MDINA - MALTA

The sense of mystery inspired by the richly-painted dome interior at the Carmelite Church is deepened when one considers that no-one knows who actually designed it. Many attribute the French military engineer Mederico de Blondel des Croisettes, who built the Santa Maria di Gesù in Valletta. Nonetheless you are walking among secrets here in the first elliptically-designed Baroque church in Malta, where the Carmelite friars dutifully gather in turns for the Hony Mass and the Eucharist and the 'Divine Office'. With the building stripped of its precious silver and damask hangings during the French occupation of 1798-1799, Maltese rebels finally rose against their oppressors: the church was laid to siege while a young boy climbed the belfry to ring the bell as a call to arms, igniting Mdina's revolt against French domination.

### The Priory Museum

The contemplative tree-lined courtyard of the adjacent Priory Museum rests at the heart of years of comprehensive restoration, with the re-opening of the museum in 2008. Contrasting with the splendour of the paintings and the fine ornament of sculpture, furniture and other artefacts, one can also glimpse the austerity of a friar's cell symbolically adjacent to the bier, which carried dead brothers to the crypt. The museum is an active cultural centre hosting concerts (every Wednesday and Saturday at noon) and exhibitions, and serving an enticing range of local and continental cuisine at the Old Priory Café.

### Don't miss

- The beautiful murals of the Refectory.
- The Oratory, housing the church's first altar, created in 1670.
- Andrea Imbroll's statue of Our Lady of Mount Carmel.
- The paintings of Mattia Preti, Stefano Erardi, Michele Bellanti and Giuseppe Cali.



**Carmelite  
Church**  
-----  
**Mdina - Malta**





Malta has been populated for over 8,000 years. Large Neolithic temples in the south of the island and in Gozo are still standing as witness today. These are Tarxien Temples, Hagar Qin and Mnahjdra

in south and Ggantija in Gozo. Scientists have dated these monuments with carbon. The results have shown that they existed with 1,000 years before the pyramids from Giza, in Egypt, thus making them the oldest freestanding monuments in the world. Starting with the year 2,000 BC, Malta was gradually conquered by Phoenicians, Carthaginians, Romans and Arabs.

The Arabs brought irrigation systems, fruits and cotton to the island. They also influenced the language spoken on the island. The Siculo-Arabic language by Sicilian origins is standing at the root of the modern Maltese. Arabs tolerated the Christian religion, but charged an extra tax to those that were practicing this rite. When the Normans conquered Malta in 1091, they re-established the Roman-Catholicism as the state religion. At the same time, Malta became part of the Kingdom of Sicily.

Between 1530 and 1789, the Knights of Malta, also known as the order of St. John Knights, governed the island. They encouraged the commerce and trade with foreigners, built strong fortifications and constructed hospitals. The robust fortifications held many assaults from the Ottomans. This era in the history of Malta is known as The Great Siege of 1565.

Napoleon followed as the ruler of the island. He abolished slavery and built an education system for the primary, secondary and university levels. The British Empire took Malta from French domination, and ruled it for the next 160 years. As the island has an important geo strategic position, it was bombed several times by the Germans in the Second World War. The alliance with the British protected the island from German domination. The year 1964 is the moment when Malta became an independent republic. The island became a member of the European Union in 2003, thus opening its gate to many tourists around the world.

## Museums and Historic Sites



- Mnajdra and Hagar Qim are the prehistoric UNESCO protected temples. They are considered to be built between 3600BC and 2500BC, much older and much more sophisticated than the pyramid of Giza or Stonehenge. The complexes are situated at only a distance of 500 m. The temple administration offers both guided or audio tours for the tourists interested of supplementary information.

- Hal Saflieni Hypogeum is a burial complex of the same age as the prehistorical temples of Mnajdra and Hagar Qim. It is an underground burial cave manually cut in stone, which is considered to have held over 7,000 bodies, deposited over a period of 1,000 years.

- Mdina was the first inhabited fortified capital city of Malta. It was started during the Bronze Age, expanded and modernised by Romans, but also suffered important influences from Christians, Arabs and 16th century Knights. The fortification was home to many noble families, which had their houses built on labyrinthine streets, which are a pleasure to explore. The fortification holds the Bastion Square and two cathedrals, which lets you see the place from above. In the evening tourists are welcome to have a dinner or a drink on the locals restaurants. The Cathedral Museums holds an impressive silver collection of religious objects, swords, woodcuts or copper plates signed by Albrecht Durer.
- Valletta fortification was built by the knights of the order of St. John. The thick wall fortification stood over 200 years as shield for many enemies, which did not dare to attack from the sea an impenetrable fortification built on the rocky peninsula.

- St. John's Cathedral is a beautiful place of worship built in baroque style by the Knights of Malta. The outside seems to be rather plain, influenced by military architecture, but the interior is rich, covered in expensive materials, such as gold or marble of different colors.



## The Maltese Culture

The rich culture of the island of Malta is due to the rich history of this wonderland, which goes back as much as 4,000 years. The eclectic history is the reason you might find numerous events, feasts, celebrations and special occasions.

The year starts with the carnival, which is spread for a week in February, before preparing for Lent. Adults and children dress in special costumes and

take part in the parade. In Nadur, on the island of Gozo, the celebrations of the carnival has a macabre twist. The week before Easter brings the inhabitants of Malta on the street, for processions. The religious event is celebrated with men in penitence that carry a cross. The solemnity of the Holy Week aims to commemorate the passion of Christ and prepare the people for the joy of resurrection. After Easter, it follows the Feast of San Grigor. On the Wednesday after Easter Sunday, a religious procession starts from the chapel of St. Clement in Zejtun and reaches the fishing village of Marsaxlokk.

Notte Bianca is held in spring, on the same time as the other European countries hold their museums open for the night long, with free entrance. On the 29th of June, Saints Peter and Paul are celebrated with the occasion of I-Imnarja. The people celebrate this harvesting festival with family picnics, folk music, agricultural show, but also horse and donkey races. Between Easter Sunday and September, many festivals dedicated to different village saint patrons take place with street processions, food stalls, statues and even fireworks. The Fireworks festival is held each spring in the idyllic harbour of Valetta.

On the 8th of September, is it the time of Victory Day, a public holiday in Malta. It celebrates Our Lady's birth, the end of Great Siege of 1565 and the surrender day of the Italian Navy to British in the Second World War. Alarme is a type of celebration that takes place each third Sunday between February and November. The Maltese people celebrate their rebellion against the rule of Napoleon in 1800.



## Water Sports for Children and Adults

If you are not the typical tourist, you have the chance to experiment in Malta a myriad of water activities by yourself, with the loved one, or together with your children. Swim with the dolphins at the Mediterraneo Marine Park in Bahar ic-Caghaq. Different shows give the opportunity to all tourists visiting this park to interact with dolphins, sea lions, reptiles and parrots. The tour includes many educational and fun activities which teach visitors of all ages about the inhabitants of marine life.

Sail all the way to Malta, or just rent a boat from the local owners. The beautiful climate makes Malta an excellent place for both beginners and connoisseurs of this sport. It is an excellent sport for the adventure seekers that love the sea. Windsurfing is a popular

water sport in Malta between November and March due to its warm waters and excellent wind conditions. Canoeing or kayaking is a good way to explore the surroundings of Malta, Gozo and Comino by yourself or together with your family. Fishing is an excellent way to spend some quality time at the shore of the sea, watching the crystal clear waters. If you befriend some of the locals, you might have the chance to be invited on a day fishing trip offshore.

Kite surfing is becoming popular both for locals and tourists. Golden Bay, Mellieha Bay and Ghajn Tuffieha Bay are some of the best locations to try this beautiful sport. Jet Ski lets you explore in a fun way the sea, the caves and the arches around Malta, Gozo and Comino.

Yacht chartering is another unforgettable adventure you can take on the Mediterranean Sea. You can build unforgettable sailing memories in simple or cabin cruisers. Some of the offers might include food and drink, or activities such as fishing.



## L-Eċċ, Tiegħu Mons Alfred Xuereb jinħatar bħala Arcisqof u Nunzju Apostoliku għal-Korea t'Isfel

Submitted by Fr. Gabriel S. Micallef OFM

Min hu Mons. Alfred Xuereb, in-Nunzju Appostoliku l-  
ġdid tal-Korea ta' Isfel?

Mons. Alfred Xuereb twieled il-Belt Victoria, Għawdex,  
fl-14 ta' Ottubru 1958. Huwa għamel l-istudji filosofiċi u

teoloġiċi tiegħu fis-Seminarju Maġġuri ta' Għawdex. Ġie ordnat saċerdot fil-Katidral ta' Għawdex mill-E.T. Mons. Nikol Ġ. Cauchi, Isqof ta' Għawdex, fis-26 ta' Mejju 1984, u ċċelebra l-Ewwel Quddiesa Solenni fit-8 ta' Lulju 1984, fil-Bażilika ta' San Ġorġ, il-parroċċa tal-origni tiegħu fir-Rabat ta' Għawdex.

Fl-ewwel snin tas-saċerdozju tiegħu hu għamel Liċenzjat fit-Teoloġija Spiritwali fl-Istitut Pontifiċju Teresianum ta' Ruma. Bit-teżi tiegħu Il Mistero Pasquale nella Vita Cristiana, fl-1989 kiseb id-Dottorat summa cum laude mill-istess istitut. Sadanittant, hu wettaq ukoll ħidma pastorali ta' Viċi Parroku fil-Parroċċi tan-Natività tal-Mulej (1984-1988) u tas-Santissmu Sacramento (1989-1991), it-tnejn f'Ruma.

Bejn l-1991 u l-1995 hu kien is-Segretarju personali tar-Rettur tal-Università Pontifiċja tal-Lateran, u konfessur straordinarju fis-Seminarju Pontifiċju Maġġuri ta' Ruma.

Bejn l-1995 u l-2000 huwa nħatar uffiċċjal tas-Segreterija tal-Istat, fejn ġie fdat b'zewġ missjonijiet qosra imma importanti bħala Rappreżentant tal-Vatikan fin-Nunzjatura Appostolika ta' Ottawa fil-Kanada. Fl-1997, Dun Alfred irċieva t-titlu ta' Kappillan tal-Qdusija Tiegħu bit-titlu ta' Monsinjur, imbagħad fis-sena 2000 inħatar Uffiċċjal tal-Prefettura tal-Palazz Appostoliku fis-Segreterija tal-Prefett.

Fil-Vatikan ukoll, fl-1997, Mons. Xuereb ġie maħtur Viċi Assistent Spiritwali tal-Assoċjazzjoni ta' San Pietru u San Pawl, u fl-2002 Assistent Spiritwali tagħha, kif ukoll Rettur tal-Knisja ta' Santa Caterina della Rota bejn l-2001 u l-2002. Il-pożizzjoni tiegħu ta' Prelato di Anticamera Pontificia (2003-2007), fejn fl-2003 ġie maħtur ukoll Prelato d'onore di Sua Santità, qegħditu qrib ħafna tal-mibki Papa (San) Ġwanni Pawlu II. Kien imbagħad fil-11 ta' Settembru 2007 li l-Papa Benedittu XVI sejjahlu biex jaħdem fis-Segreterija Partikulari tal-Qdusija Tiegħu, fejn Mons. Xuereb żvolġa r-rwol importanti tat-Tieni Segretarju tal-Papa.

Mal-ħatra tal-Papa Franġisku fl-2013, Mons. Xuereb sar l-ewwel Segretarju Privat tiegħu. Fit-28 ta' Novembru 2013, il-Papa ħatru Delegat tiegħu fuq il-Kummissjoni Pontifiċja dwar l-Istitut għall-Opri tar-Reliġjon (IOR) u fuq il-Kummissjoni Pontifiċja dwar l-Organizzazzjoni tal-Istruttura Ekonomika Amministrattiva tas-Santa Sede, bi rwol ta' superviżjoni li kien iwieġeb direttament lill-Qdusija Tiegħu.

Fit-3 ta' Marzu 2014, il-Papa Franġisku ħatar lil Mons. Alfred Xuereb l-ewwel Segretarju Prelat tas-Segretarjat għall-Ekonomija, dipartiment ġdid tal-Kurja Rumana.

Mid-9 ta' Mejju 1998, Mons. Xuereb hu membru onorarju tal-Kollegġjata ta' San Ġorġ fil-Belt Victoria, Għawdex. Fuq proposta tal-Presidenza tal-Kunsill tal-Ministri tal-Italja, fl-2007 Mons. Xuereb ġie maħtur Kommendatur tal-Ordni tal-Mertu tar-Repubblika Taljan, waqt li fi Frar 2009 hu ġie maħtur Kappillan konventwali ad honorem tal-Ordni ta' Malta. F'Diċembru 2011 hu ngħata wkoll Ġieħ il-Belt Victoria mill-Kunsill Lokali ta' belt twelidu.

Mons. Xuereb jaf it-Taljan, l-Ingliż, il-Ġermaniż, il-Franċiż, il-Portugiż, u l-lingwa nativa tiegħu, il-Malti.

The Journal of the  
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Maltese  
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## The Azure Window – Looking Beyond: Day of activities at Dwejra

A special day of events and activities exploring Dwejra beyond the fallen Azure Window, is being organised on Sunday, the 11th of March, between 10,00am and 2.00pm.

**The Azure Window**  
Looking Beyond

A day full of events and activities including:  
Fun walks to explore the surroundings of Dwejra.  
Exhibitions,  
Abseling by ERRC and Archery by Victoria Scout Group  
Free boat rides in the inland sea

Sunday 11th March 2018  
10:00am - 2:00pm - Dwejra Gozo

Visit Gozo  
eco gozo  
a better gozo  
MINISTRY FOR GOZO

Some of the activities on the day will include: Fun Walks to explore the surroundings of Dwejra; Zip Line by the ERRC; Archery by the Victoria Scout Group and a number of Exhibitions. There will also be free boat rides at the Inland Sea. So why not visit this beautiful area and discover something new and different about Dwejra

## Zammit Stevens, Scicluna perform in the Italian Championships



### Yazmin Zammit Stevens

Malta's leading female weightlifters, Yazmin Zammit Stevens and Elisia Scicluna, took part in the Italian National Championships held in Rome, at the end of February.

Both Zammit Stevens and Scicluna are currently preparing for their upcoming major appointments, in particular the Commonwealth Games and the Mediterranean Games among other tournaments and championships in between.

The athletes were accompanied by national team coach and president of the Malta Weightlifting Association, Jesmond Caruana, who also presented

medals as an honorary guest at the meet.

Zammit Stevens (69kg) was the first to take on the platform in what was one of the toughest competitions. She finished with an 80kg snatch on her second attempt, missing out on 83kg on her third. Afterwards, she went to lift a 98kg clean and jerk on her last attempt, after closely missing her first two attempts.

This result is only 2kg under her best ever performance back in November, where she has since been recovering from an injury. Her display showed that she is on the right track in her preparations ahead of the Commonwealth Games, which is due in six weeks time.

Scicluna (+75kg) also had a respectable performance on the day. She finished with a 75kg snatch and 94kg clean and jerk, breaking one national record in the process. She also managed to finish third in her group, with a total of 169kg matching her best ever performance, recorded in Malta Championships just four weeks ago.

## Increase in population was mainly a result of immigrants rather than babies born - NSO



In 2015, the increase in population was mainly explained by the increase in immigrants rather than babies born. This was published by the National Statistics Office (NSO) in their Trends in Malta 2016 report.

NSO said that, there were more births than deaths, but women under 30 are having less children. Over 12,000 immigrants came to Malta in 2015. When it comes to marriages, NSO said that civil marriages, including those among foreigners, were almost at par with religious marriages in 2015.

Diseases of the circulatory system and tumours were the primary causes of death in Malta during 2015.

In academic year 2014/2015, Church-run schools registered the highest average class sizes whereas the Northern District welcomed the largest number of foreign students at primary level. NSO said that females outnumbered males in tertiary programmes.

The construction industry registered the highest average annual increases in billed electricity consumption between 2010 and 2015. NSO said that in 2015, the household sector consumed almost one-third of all the electricity generated. Mineral and solidified waste accounted for the highest share of total waste generated. The majority of municipal waste generated was landfilled.

**Economy** - In 2015, growth in the real economy was mainly driven by domestic demand. The services sector was the main contributor to growth in private consumption.

In 2015, lower deficit and government debt were registered. Inflation in 2016 was mainly driven by the Food Index, in particular, higher prices for restaurants and the like. Since 2012, the value of goods exported outside the EU was more than twice the value exported to EU countries.

NSO said that between 2010 and 2014, mineral production from quarries decreased by 21 per cent. Building permits increased by 34.4 per cent in 2015.

The number of inbound tourists is increasing while the average length of stay is decreasing. Non-EU nationals spent more than EU nationals on average in 2015. The Maltese spent €991 on average when abroad during the same year. Between 2010 and 2015, nights spent abroad by the Maltese went up by 38.8 per cent and the preferred destinations were Italy and the UK. (Tourism)

When it comes to agriculture, NSO said that despite the lower rainfall recorded during 2016, vegetables sold through official markets increased.

**Labour Market** - In 2015, male workers typically earned €1,300 per annum more (basic salary) than female workers. Between 2005 and 2015, the employment rate went up by more than 10 percentage points mainly due to a higher proportion of females joining the labour market. Between 2005 and 2015, employment in the manufacturing sector went down while in the services sector it went up. Malta registered the fifth highest employment rate among the young (15-24) and the third lowest employment rate among the old (50+) in 2015. In 2015, 6.9% of salaries and wages earned by employees were paid for days which were not actually worked.



## FIRST: Valletta's overlooked gems - some intriguing places in the capital city streets



Over the years, Valletta has been evolving and adapting to attract increasing numbers of visitors. Whilst some establishments are temporary, attempting to attract the fleeting attention of customers, others have withstood the test of time and stayed with what they know best. Laura Schembri visited some of these places – which are interspersed, sometimes hidden, within Valletta's streets. Some are quirky, some are unconventional, but they all contribute to the city's character. Photography by Joanna Demarco.

Prego is a coffee shop frozen in time, where locals have been enjoying their simple black coffees and fresh sandwiches since 1964. This family-run business was the first place to purchase a coffee machine from overseas and retains a steady clientele by sticking with what works.

Giorgio Bezzina, the son of the original owner, has now taken over the running of the premises and remains faithful to his father's simple and minimalist principals. Although the coffee shop does not reflect the change Valletta itself has undergone, Bezzina notes that the resurging interest in our capital city has brought a new wave of customers, making it possible for his business to continue to thrive.

Almost as iconic as Prego's timeless interiors are the two other workers, Joe Borg and Carmello Spiteri who, along with Bezzina, have become staples of the shop in their own right, working for the family for over 20 years. Grab a seat at a table and experience the dynamic trio in action at Prego over a great cup of coffee.



**Toy Museum** - The toy museum is a delightful, doll-sized house, filled with forgotten gems from a bygone era. Vincent Brown first opened the doors to his whimsical time machine in 1998, after being inspired by a similar museum in England. Spread over three floors, the magical museum gives its visitors a peek into the past, with its impressive collection of toys such as Matchbox model cars, model planes and dolls - the oldest of which is a wooden Pinocchio dating from 1883. Today, the museum remains a big attraction to which both tourists and locals flock to enjoy a nostalgic trip down memory lane.



**Peter Spiteri - Mug Collector** - Peter Spiteri is an ordinary man with an extraordinary passion. Following a back injury that caused him to be bedridden for seven months, Peter was left feeling unmotivated and helpless. He found his lifeline in his mug collection, through which he was able to regain the key to his happiness. His garage houses an impressive collection of around 3,000 mugs and for over 25 years, visitors have been coming to see the spectacular floor-to-ceiling shelves stacked with mugs,

cans and water jugs. However, out of all his collection, his favourite mugs remain those given to him by his grandchildren. Every day, from 9 am till 1 pm, visitors are invited to view this heart-warming collection at the far end of Republic Street and talk to the man behind it all.

down.



**John Camilleri Fishing Tackle** - The understated charm of John Camilleri Fishing Tackle has been capturing customers' hearts for more than 100 years. Walking down Strait Street, the old shop façade - painted in the same pastel yellow with which it has been embellished for the past 30 years - is bound to catch your eye.

Standing out in a sea of modern stores, John Camilleri Fishing Tackle refuses to conform - what you see is what you get. This authenticity has enabled the business to retain its loyal clientele, but it has struggled to attract a new generation of customers. Peter, the last remaining member of the family to run the business, has accepted that it may be time to close this particular chapter, making way for a new one to grace Valletta.

## Two dead after suspected gas incident in Mgarr ix-Xini



**Paul Muscat**



Couple could have been dead since Tuesday



*The two dead are 59-year-old Paul Muscat, a Gozo Channel captain from Sannat, and his partner, 52-year-old British national Diane Ainsley.*



Two people were found dead after a suspected gas leak incident in Mgarr ix-Xini, Gozo, Times of Malta is informed.

The Maltese man, Paul Muscat aged 59, and a 52-year-old British woman, believed to be his partner, were found in a boathouse.

Initial investigations show the couple could have been dead since Tuesday, according to sources. So far, no foul play is suspected.

Mr Muscat, a father of three, and a captain on the Gozo Channel ferries from Sannat, had practically turned the boat house into his residence for the last five years.

The police were informed about the discovery at 1.30pm.

The roads leading to the picturesque Gozo bay have been closed, pending further investigations. A magisterial inquiry is under way. **Photo: Victor Paul Borg**



1



2



3



4

1. Stacey Saliba from Adelaide entertaining the audience 2. All the Entertainers: From Left - Charlie Muscat, Joe Galea, Katelyn Vella, Natasha Tatarinoff, Stacey Saliba, Martin and Brianna Saliba, A. Lee and Jim Borg (Co-ordinator, FOPH)  
3. MCA Choir 4. Natasha Tatarinoff, Joe Galea, Stacey Saliba and Charlie Muscat.

## ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL FUND RAISING CONCERT

*(written by Jim Borg and Marisa Previtera)*

The eagerly anticipated Fundraising Concert under the title of "Festa ta Generożita" in aid of Id-Dar Tal-Providenza held at La Vallette Social Centre on Sunday 25 February, raised the bar again as far as fundraising and entertainment combined. This was the second of its kind, last years concert having been held at Hamrun Club. La Vallette's Committee and volunteers ought to be congratulated and thanked for their part in assisting with the Hall and Kitchen. The Hall looked so elegant!

Congratulations and thank you to the "bevy of entertainers" including the popular MCA Choir, for their professionalism and offering their services for free. They all kept the capacity crowd entertained for over four hours! Our special guests for the afternoon were The Deputy High Commissioner for Malta, Ms Denise Demicoli, Mr Emanuel Camilleri, President of the Maltese Community Council of NSW, Mrs Antoinette Caruana, President of La Vallette Social Centre and our Major Sponsor, Mr George Vella of Breakaway Travel, Blacktown.

It was great to see so many of NSW Maltese Associations also represented. The generosity of the Maltese people was quite evident when after a call for donations one could notice a procession of persons placing their donation envelope in the barrel provided. The Chocolate Wheel under the supervision of Bill Schembri, proved to be a great attraction. A lot of credit and thanks must go to Agnese and Greg Caruana for they were the powerhouse couple organising the ticket sales.

On behalf of The Friends of Providence House NSW, we extend our appreciation and heartfelt thanks to all those who attended. A very big thank you to our Sponsors, Breakaway Travel, Minchinberry Fruit Market, Zammit Ham & Bacon Curers. We also wish to acknowledge the support of The Voice of the Maltese and the Maltese eNewsletter, and Radio Stations 2GLF, SWR FM and WOW FM for their ongoing support and all those who in one way or another gave us assistance, we thank you all and truly appreciate your help for this very worthy cause. We are happy to report a provisional result for our fundraising concert is around \$8,000. It is still not too late to donate directly to "The Friends of Providence House NSW, CBA Bank, BSB: 062416 Account No: 10199448 or contact Jim Borg 9636 7767



From 1938 to 1974 thousands of parents were persuaded to sign over legal guardianship of their children to Fairbridge Society to solve the problem of child poverty in Britain while populating the colony of Australia. Now many of those children have decided to speak out. Physical and sexual abuse was not uncommon. Loneliness was rife. Food was often inedible. The standard of education was appalling.

## THE MALTESE CONNECTION

**Did you know... that 310 Maltese child migrants were sent to Australia?**



*Maltese children at Bindoon Boys' Town 1952. Reproduced courtesy State Library of Western Australia, The Battye Library.*

In 1928 Perth-based Maltese priest Father Raphael Pace urged the Christian Brothers to include Maltese children in its emerging migration scheme. Negotiations between the Maltese and Western Australian Governments continued through the 1930s but the first Maltese child migrants did not arrive in Australia until after World War II.

Between 1950 and 1965, 259 boys and 51 girls were sent to Catholic institutions in Western Australia and South Australia. Most parents believed their children would receive a better education in Australia. Instead many were put to work on the

Christian Brothers' building projects and left to endure the same punishments and abuses as their British counterparts. Some were forced to stop using their Maltese language and never learned to read or write English.

A group of child migrants sent from Malta to Western Australia 1954-55



## MALTA'S CHILD MIGRANTS GATHER

Thousands of children arrived in WA without their families after WWII; mostly from Britain, but at least 300 from the Mediterranean island nation of Malta.. A popular post-war immigration slogan was "the child, the best immigrant," because children assimilated better, had a long working life and could be housed cheaply in dormitories.

Malta was struggling with widespread poverty at the time, so the Commonwealth-approved child migration scheme was thought to offer a reprieve for families with too many children. Subsidised by the governments of both countries, the scheme was facilitated by churches, but came under a cloud when widespread accusations of sexual abuse and neglect emerged. The children themselves are now often sympathetically described as "the forgotten generation" and formal apologies were issued by the governments of Britain, Australia, and Malta.



A monument, dedicated to child migrants, was unveiled in Fremantle by Sheila McHale, Western Australian State Minister for Community Development.



The monument features two statues showing a 12-year-old boy and a 10-year-old girl with expressions showing "awe and wonder". It cost \$A45,000 and the Federal and WA state governments shared the expenses.

The chairman of the Child Migrants of Malta (C-MOM), the late Prof David Plowman, who had a significant input into the nature of the

monument, was one of the key speakers at the opening. C-MOM was formed on the initiative of the Maltese Professional and Business Association of Western Australia. Paul Psaila-Savona is its deputy chairman and the Chief Justice of Western Australia, David Malcolm, is its patron.

C-MOM's organising committee was convinced that the nature of the Maltese child migration scheme and the experiences of the Maltese as Mediterranean, non-English speaking children made the Maltese unique. It successfully lobbied the Department of Community Development, the body responsible for the project, to have a separate plaque included in the monument to recognise the Maltese. C-MOM contended that one general plaque would result in the loss of identity for the Maltese.

The Maltese former child migrants were previously a forgotten item in the child migration debate. Church and government enquiries into the treatment of the child migrants would invariably focus almost entirely on the British and the Irish. Mention of the Maltese frequently came as an afterthought.

## A TRIBUTE TO MALTESE CHILD MIGRANTS

The committee of the Maltese Professional and Business Association of Western Australia during the unveiling of the monument to former child migrants in Fremantle. (Parts of the two plaques can be seen at the bottom of picture.) Photo courtesy of Paul Calleja.

Prof. Plowman, himself a former Maltese child migrant, explained the significance of having two separate plaques: "One important reason for the differentiation is to be faithful to the history that this monument represents. The different plaques bear witness to the fact that there was not one encompassing scheme involving child migrants. Rather, there were two distinct schemes... Catholic child migration from Britain commenced in 1938, was halted in 1939 because of war and resumed in 1947."

As early as 1938, attempts were made to include child migrants from Malta in the scheme. A reading of official correspondence at this time makes it clear that the Maltese were rejected on racial grounds. It was not until 1950, when it became clear that Australia could not fulfill its post-war migration objectives from Britain, that Maltese migration in general, and Maltese child migration in particular, were approved by the Australian government.

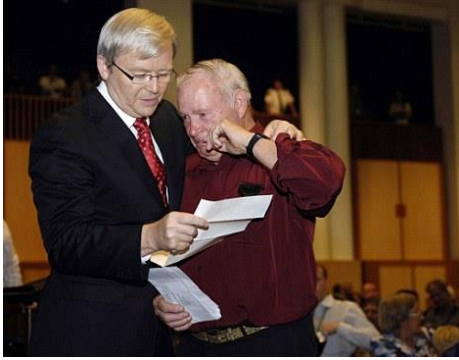
"As a result, a separate and distinct agreement was established with the Maltese government and the Catholic Church in Malta. The two plaques symbolise the different agreements."

Child migration ended many years ago. Its effects, however, continue, Prof. Plowman insisted.

This monument, and other undertakings by a number of governments in recent years, show recognition of the need to bring a closure to many of the issues affecting former child migrants.

"This brings me to the second reason why the child migrants of Malta have been keen to establish their own identity. It is pleasing to note that host countries such as Australia and Canada, and home countries such as the United Kingdom and Ireland, have sought to bring about some closure to issues confronting some former child migrants. In the case of the Malta, this has not been the case," he said. "Former child migrants from Malta are determined to persevere in their efforts, and, if necessary, adopt more radical approaches to achieving their modest aims," he warned.

There is a need for Malta to confront its past and to bring closure for those still affected by child migration.



## FORMER PRIME MINISTER OF AUSTRALIA APOLOGISES - 2009

Mr Rudd also apologised to the 'forgotten Australians' - children who suffered in state care during the last century.

According to a 2004 Australian Senate report, more than 500,000 children were placed in foster homes, orphanages and other institutions during the 20th century. Many were emotionally, physically and sexually abused in state care.

Under the Child Migrants Programme, poverty-stricken youngsters were compulsorily deported to Australia, Canada and other distant parts of the

Empire.

Most children were wrongly told that their parents had died and that they would enjoy a 'better life' outside Britain, while the parents thought the children had been adopted in Britain.

[Enlarge](#)



We're sorry: Australia's Prime Minister Kevin Rudd (left) comforts a victim after giving a national apology to the forgotten Australians and former child migrants at Parliament House ceremony in Canberra today

Critics said he had been 'shamed' into it by Australian prime minister Kevin Rudd, who today apologised for his country's role in the mistreatment and suffering of 500,000 people held in orphanages and children's homes between 1930 and 1970.

That includes 7,000 child migrants from Britain who still live in Australia.

'We are sorry,' Mr Rudd said at a ceremony in Parliament House in Canberra.

'Sorry for the physical suffering, the emotional starvation and the cold absence of love, of tenderness, of care. Sorry for the tragedy - the absolute tragedy - of childhoods lost.

'Sorry that as children you were taken from your families and placed in institutions where so

often you were abused.'

The programmes, which ended 40 years ago, were intended to provide the children with a new start - and the Empire with a supply of sturdy white workers. But many children ended up in institutions where they were physically and sexually abused, or were sent to work as farm labourers.

*Closure: Two women comfort one another as they listen to Mr Rudd's emotional apology in Canberra today*

Some in the audience wept openly and held each other as Mr Rudd shared painful stories of children he'd spoken with - children who were beaten with belt buckles and bamboo, who grew up in places they called 'utterly loveless'.

'Let us resolve this day that this national apology becomes a turning point in our nation's story,' Mr Rudd said.



Child Migrants' Memorial, Laguna Marina at Valletta Waterfront in Floriana, Malta



**The Australian Government has said sorry and some received compensation. The British maybe catching up and do the same. What I want to know is, when is the Maltese Government and the Church in Malta are going to admit that in the past they lied and covered up what was going on. Please say sorry for what happened in the past. It will mean a lot for us that are still alive. As an X Bindoon boy I beg for this to happen. Henry Berry (Maltese)**



## 'We may inhabit different lands, but we share one family' - President Coleiro Preca President's visit to Australia 2016



President of Malta, Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca spoke of the importance of keeping communications lines open.

In her first two engagements as part of her visit to Australia, the President said that although there is a huge distance

between Malta and Australia, "we may inhabit different lands but we share one family".

During a meeting which President Coleiro Preca had with Maltese businessmen and professionals in Perth, she spoke about the pride that she feels every time she hears of the successes that the Maltese people achieve overseas, particularly in Australia and that "Malta has been, and will always be proud of their achievements, whatever these achievements are, and in whatever sector they are achieved, be it business, sports, culture and social work amongst others." The President praised those present, as through their successes, they are continuously giving visibility to Malta.

She then visited the city port of Fremantle. This city port was the first Australian port of call, for over 300 Maltese unaccompanied child migrants in the late 1940s and early 1950s. President Coleiro Preca visited the child migrant monument as well as the Welcome Walls, on which hundreds of names of child migrants are engraved, including those of Maltese children. Speaking to the Maltese migrants who had arrived here under the scheme, President Coleiro Preca apologised for the decisions which were taken in the past, even though these might have been in the best interest, and expressed sadness at the consequences which some of the child migrants suffered. "If it was possible to turn back the clock, I would put all my efforts to erase this sad and heartbreaking part of our history". However, the President said that the opportunity that Australia gave to many thousands of Maltese to prosper is something that cannot be forgotten.

**I L**  **ve**  
TO HEAR FROM YOU

We read *The Times of Malta*, *Malta Today*, *The Malta Independent* and other journals online



MALTA 2018

SUNDAY 18<sup>th</sup> MARCH

VALLETTA

# St Patricks Festival

## PARADE STARTS AT VALLETTA GATE - 12:00pm



Ocht as Éirinn



The Claddagh Crooners



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Marsa Scouts Pipes & Drums



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## Strong bond between the Irish and Maltese people

Last year, for St Patrick's Day, Fort St Angelo was lit up in green.

St. Patrick's Day is the feast day of Ireland's patron saint, the cleric Patrick (386-461) and it is a public holiday. But St Patrick's Day has also become a global phenomenon and is celebrated informally worldwide, including Malta, where it has

become wildly popular especially with the younger generation.

So what is St Patrick's Day all about, and why is it celebrated so widely? St Patrick's Day is a global celebration of what it means to be Irish: the spirit, the determination, the creativity and that indefinable something that makes us who we are. We celebrate our rich culture and heritage and we're proud of its influence on world literature, art and music. St Patrick's Day is a great chance for us to share our culture with others.

Last year it was estimated that a crowd of about 20,000 gathered in Spinola Bay to celebrate and make merry. St Patrick's Day in Malta has taken on a flavour of its own that is completely disproportionate to the number of Irish people who actually live here.

Most Irish residents are either married to Maltese, have retired here or moved here for employment purposes, so there is no great diaspora of Irish emigrants to account for this kind of enthusiastic participation. So actually, it is the Maltese themselves who have embraced St Patrick's Day and go all out in their celebrations.

There are strong political, economic and cultural ties between Ireland and Malta that go back many years. But it is our shared values and outlook that provide the foundations for the development of such ties into the future.

Ireland, like Malta, is a committed EU Member State, and we have both benefitted enormously from membership. The future prosperity of both our island nations rests firmly in the EU.

We both share EU values – democracy, rule of law, human rights, international cooperation and sustainable development – and our EU membership allows us to leverage and project our common values within the wider international community. In pursuit of these common values, Malta and Ireland have been cooperating in the search and rescue missions in the Mediterranean.

The assistance of the Maltese authorities has been invaluable in facilitating the humanitarian mission of the six Irish naval vessels in the Mediterranean over the last two years. The Irish Defence Forces are privileged to welcome young men and women of the Armed Forces of Malta for officer training in Ireland. Of particular interest at the moment on the cultural side is the cooperation in the field of cinema, which should bear fruit in 2018. I also want to mention Martello Media from Dublin, who have worked with Heritage Malta on the interpretive centre in Fort St Angelo and on other projects, including the magnificent Esplora and the new Museum of Fine Arts. However, it is our people and the hospitality they show each other that are the basis of ties.

One of the first connections between Malta and Ireland goes back to 1895 when Irish Cardinal Michael Logue visited Malta. While in Floriana, he was given a rousing welcome, so much so that the Florianites earned the nickname 'Tal-Irish', which they still have today.

The first St Patrick's Day celebrations in Malta were held in the Balzunetta area of Floriana at the turn of the century by Irish soldiers who were stationed at the nearby barracks. This tradition was resurrected recently and a street party with live entertainment has become a regular part of their calendar.

Another interesting story has to do with football, where Floriana were among the pioneers of the sport in Malta. The Floriana team was founded in 1894 and at the time its colours were green and red.

However, after beating the Royal Dublin Fusiliers in a friendly match, the Irishmen gave their green and white striped vests to the Floriana players who immediately adopted them as their official colours. In fact, some historians contend that it was from this event that the nickname 'Tal-Irish' came into being.



## *F Jum il-Mewt tal-Professur Joseph Vella 25 ta' Frar 2018*

Ghażiż Surmast, dan kif tagħmel?  
Qbadt u tlaqt, ma għidt lil hadd!  
Bla kliem ħallejtna lkoll orfni,  
warajk kien mitluf kulhadd!

Sentejn ohra kont se tagħlaq  
ħamsin sena Direttur,  
ta' La Stella ċ-Ċittadina -  
fost il-baned l-isbah f'jur.

Lill-Banda Konti Ruġġieru  
ħadt ħsiebha għal erbghin sena,  
għax ma' Nathalie fir-Rabat  
flimkien għextu fl-akbar hena!

Iżda f'ħakka t'għajn hrabtilna  
u mort tgawdi lill-ħallieq:  
hawn sibt lit-Tribun ta' Lidda  
lilek idawwal it-triq!

Kemm dhert hieni tippreżenta  
xoghlijietek lil "tal-ħaġar" -  
ward prezżjuż mill-iktar ħlejj  
illi jsebbah l-isbah maşgar!

Imma tghid hebritek qalbek  
li ma kontx sa tibqa' magħna?  
Ara ftit f'liema stat ġibtna -  
imbikkija lkoll arana!

Kont ikona mużikali,  
ismek magħruf kullimkien;  
in-noti li ħażiżtilna  
sa jibqgħu jidwu maż-żmien!

Folol kbar kienu jingabru  
f'Għid San Ġorġ, il-ħadd filgħodu,  
biex igawdu l-Quddiesa  
illi ġriet ma' tagħna l-globu!

Fuq fommna ismek se jibqa'  
għal kemm għad itulu s-snin.  
Mur strieh issa mal-Ġorġjani,  
wiċċ imb wiċċ mal-qaddisin!

*Kaw. Joe M. Attard  
Victoria, Għawdex*



4 egg yolks, beaten

**For the almond paste** - 600 g caster or icing sugar

2-3 egg whites

Grated rind of 1 lemon

A few drops orange flower water

600 grams almonds, ground

**The icing** - Icing sugar

Royal icing

Small Easter eggs

**Don't worry, it's easy to prepare a Figolli:**

**Mix sugar with flour**, then **rub in the butter** until the mixture resembles to fine crumbs. Add the grated lemon rind and the yolks, mixed with a little water to make a dough. Leave to chill. Add the sugar, orange flower water and lemon rind to the ground almonds, and bind with the egg whites. Roll out the pastry and cut out your shapes.

Remember to **make two of each figure** as they will be sandwiched with almond paste (marzipan).

Lay the first shape on a greased and floured baking tray, spread with almond paste, leaving a small margin. Lay the second shape over the top and press the edges together. It helps if you wet the edges with a pastry brush to stick. Bake at 200°C/400°F/gas 6 for 5 minutes, then at 180°C/350°F/gas 4, for about 20 minutes, until pale golden. Cool on the tray. When cold, coat with icing, then decorate with royal icing in a different colour. While the icing is soft, press a small, foil-wrapped Easter egg in the middle of each shape.

## Figolli recipe, make your own Maltese traditional Easter Biscuit

Figolli are a traditional **almond biscuits** that you can do in all kinds of shapes! These marzipan-filled biscuits have been made for centuries in Malta, traditionally eaten on Easter Sunday. Very tasty and great fun for the children, in Malta are a speciality that is traditionally prepared for Easter.

**Ingredients to make your own Figolli:**

**For the pastry** 350 grams caster sugar

800 grams plain flour, sifted

400 grams butter

Grated rind of 1 lemon

# The Maltese Newsletter

A Big 'Thank You' to all our readers,  
contributors and supporters





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## West End leading lady for Malta's 'Mamma Mia'

Charlotte Gorton to star in FM Theatre's production of the Abba musical this April



Local theatre fans are in for a huge treat when West End leading lady Charlotte Gorton takes to the stage in *Mamma Mia* later this year, as part of FM Theatre's mammoth 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary theatrical season.

Hot on the heels of the sell-out success *My Fair Lady*, which was staged at the Mediterranean Conference Centre a few weeks ago, comes the multi award-winning all-singing, all-dancing musical based on Abba's biggest hits.

Gorton, who has starred in umpteen UK and international productions since the 1990s, will be taking on the iconic role of Donna Sheridan - a part she has played already, at the Prince Edward Theatre in London. Among her many career highlights, Gorton's impressive list of theatre credits include *Guys and Dolls* at the Piccadilly Theatre, *Grease* at the Cambridge Theatre and *The Rise and Fall of Little Voice* at the Union, for which she received the Craig Dodd Award for Best Actress, as well as a Best Actress nomination from the Offie Awards.

"I am thrilled to be travelling to Malta to take on *Mamma Mia* once again, as it's a musical I absolutely love and one of my all-time favourites," Gorton says. "It's always fun to return to a show and to have another go! I am a lot older now, so I know I will bring a different feel to it this time round. I have actually always wanted to visit Malta as I love places with history and the architecture looks wonderful. I am looking forward to really getting to know it during my stay."

Known to be the eighth longest-running musical in West End history, *Mamma Mia* includes Abba's hits including *Super Trouper*, *Lay All Your Love on Me*, *Dancing Queen*, *Knowing Me, Knowing You*, *Take a Chance on Me*, *Thank You for the Music*, *Money, Money, Money*, *The Winner Takes It All*, *Voulez-Vous*, *SOS* and the title track, *Mamma Mia*.

Speaking about FM Theatre's decision to present a second full-blown musical within a very short time span, producer Edward Mercieca said: "Our 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary will only come around once and it's a huge milestone for us, so we're proud to be going all out. Two musicals (and a panto) in one year is no mean feat, but the team is working brilliantly, as proved by the recent success with *My Fair Lady*. I have no doubt audiences will enjoy this show just as much as they did that one."

Aside from Gorton, *Mamma Mia* will feature an all-star local cast including Izzy Warrington, Pia Zammit, Antony Edridge, Ray Calleja, Edward Mercieca, Maxine Aquilina, Tom Camilleri, Francesco Nicodeme, Jeremy Grech, Nicole Cassar and Tezara Eve Camilleri. It will be directed by Chris Gatt, with Kris Spiteri as musical director, Cathy Lawlor as vocal coach and Francesco Nicodeme as choreographer.

## Azure Window lives on in art exhibition

### Fragments of arch recovered from seabed inspire French artist



The artist at the Azure Window.

It's almost a year to the date when exposure to the elements took an irreversible toll on what was one of Malta's most iconic landmarks – the Azure Window. But, with numerous tourism websites still showing the natural rock formation that had put Dwejra, Gozo, on the international map, its popularity shows no signs of abating.

And even as its remains are slowly turning into a new attraction for the multitude of divers that visit the sister island, the pull of the Azure Window remains so

strong that it has inspired French artist Patric Pantin to dedicate an entire exhibition to it.

*It was an unimaginable event, this disappearance into the waves; we had to do something with it*

Tieqa tad-Dwejra – A Tribute to the Azure Window, will showcase a series of photographic and pictorial works that take their inspiration from fragments of the arch that the artist himself brought back to the surface from the seabed where the rest of the structure now rests.

The Paris-based artist first visited the Maltese islands in 2015 to take part in the Mdina Contemporary Art Biennale. He was immediately struck by the topography of Malta and Gozo, which he describes as offering very fertile ground for his imagination.

In fact, this is not the first Malta-inspired collection that has been created by the artist. Shortly after his first visit, Pantin created a large map of the archipelago from local sand, which featured in the Contemporary Art Biennale in Mdina in 2015.

"The map was 2.40 metres high, all in blue, and represented a literal transcription of my first impression of the islands," he says.

Asked what led him to choose the Azure Window as the protagonist of his newest collection, he said the collapse of the natural arch had fascinated him. "It was an unimaginable event, this disappearance into the waves; we had to do something with it. So, a few 'underwater exhumations' later, I was in Paris, fragments in hand. I based the paintings on these fragments."



The final result is a series of works on paper, 50 x 50cm each, in black and white. Veils cover the stones, giving the illusion of a scene from the bottom of this world, gone forever.

Patrice lives and works in Pantin, near Paris, where for the last 20 years he has been honing the unique cloth technique he uses in this distinctive work.

The collection is being shown at Lazuli Art Gallery, a fair trade gallery in Victoria, between March 9 – a year to the day from the collapse – and April 1.

**RACISM. IT STOPS WITH ME**

## Savio College at Dingli turns 50



**Dingli school opened its doors to 12 students back in 1968 Savio College, in Dingli, will be marking the 50th anniversary of its foundation this month.**

A Catholic school founded on the educational philosophy of St

John Bosco, the college arose from the green fertile fields of Dingli back in 1965, when, on June 20, the late Archbishop Michael Gonzi blessed the foundation stone. It opened its doors three years later and welcomed its first group of 12 students.

The college today caters for 260 students, supported and guided to develop and grow in all spheres of their life, be it academically, physically, spiritually, emotionally and socially.

“With the help of a professional staff and a parents’ committee, the Salesian community caters for and is always on the lookout to address emerging needs and to safeguard a one-to-one approach,” a spokesman said. Savio College is a hub of activity all year round, holding summer camps, winter live-ins and retreats for youth from across the country.

A Salesian Oratory was opened in Dingli in 1970 with the aim of reaching out to young people within the locality, with the work continuing up to this day.

A sports complex was completed in 2003 and the outdoor facilities were upgraded with synthetic grass and athletic field facilities 11 years later.

Since 2015, the school went through a significant facelift with new electrical and water systems, new furniture, new windows and new technology.

The official 50th anniversary celebrations open on March 11 when a memorial will be unveiled, followed by Solemn Mass and an open day.





## Wied iz-Zurrieq designated a 'White Flag' beach

Malta first island in the world to have a 'White Flag' beach, a status given to beaches which are free of litter



by **Karl Azzopardi**

Malta is the first island in the world to have a beach given the 'White Flag' status

Wied iz-Zurrieq has been given the status of a 'White Flag' beach, which will see divers performing a clean-up of the sea bed in the area, removing any plastic and waste which might have accumulated there.

Beaches are given a 'White Flag' status when they are certified as being completely free of litter.

Addressing a ceremony on the occasion, environment minister Jose Herrera said that Wied iz-Zurrieq's nomination as a White Flag Beach highlighted its important role in the conservation of marine sites around the island.

Herrera pointed out that Malta currently has a third of its waters designated as Marine Protected Areas or Special Protection Areas.

The Minister said that by 2018, Malta will be nominating 30% of its beaches and seas to be assigned the status of Marine Protected Areas, in a drive towards the protection and conservation of caves and reefs. By 2020, management plans for 14 Marine Protected Areas will be developed, amounting to a space of 3,487 square km.

The minister thanked Prince Albert of Monaco and the CEO of White Flag International for providing the opportunity to the country, and thanking them for helping in the protection of the Maltese biodiversity. EU Commissioner Karmenu Vella emphasised the EU's excellent track record in safeguarding water environments.

"The clean-up will give an excellent contribution to the conservation and protection of the Maltese and European coast lines," Vella said.



## Discovering Merchants Street

Filmkien għal Ambient Aħjar is holding a walk along Merchants Street in Valletta to discover its splendour and history.

Merchants Street is one of the capital's longest thoroughfares. Prestigious establishments line the street, as do numerous imposing houses, palaces and churches that alternate with, and sometimes house, commercial enterprises.

A walk down this street with Vincent Zammit will help participants appreciate its stately, dignified architecture and historical heritage.

Mr Zammit will be talking about the numerous personalities who resided there and those attending will listen to some of the stories behind the facades adorning this street, the characters associated with the area and more curiosities. Among others, he will point out the official institutions that were present in this street and the role Pope Innocent XII, Romano Carapicchia, Francesco Zerafa, Sir Oliver Starkey, Fra Giovanni Francesco Ricasoli, Hector Zimelli and others played in the making of the street.

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