



# MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER

The Journal of the Maltese Diaspora

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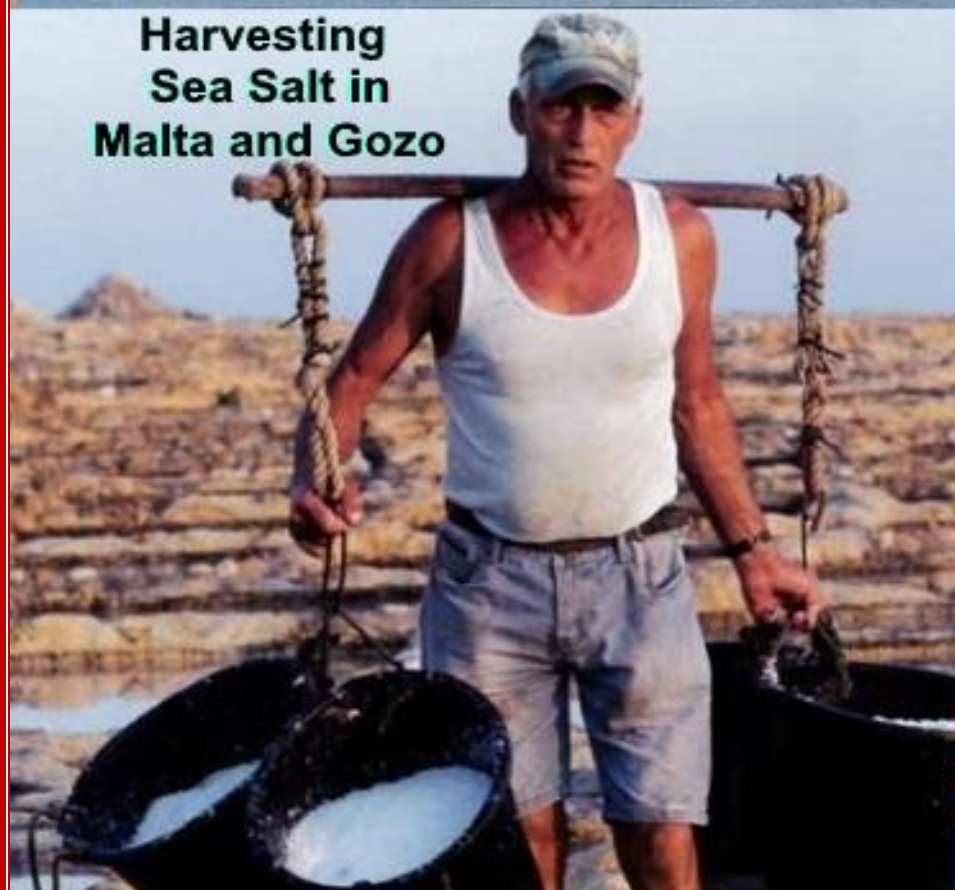
THE IMMIGRANTS

Adelaide's

MIGRATION  
MUSEUM

COURAGE • PRIDE • DREAMS • ACHIEVEMENTS

Harvesting  
Sea Salt in  
Malta and Gozo



SPECIAL FEATURE



The Ruined  
Australia Hall in  
Pembroke, Malta

The former Australia  
Hall is crying out  
to be restored







## THE MIGRATION MUSEUM ADELAIDE SOUTH AUSTRALIA

The Immigrants sculpture has been climbed on, sat on, stood next to and embraced by many people who have walked through the gates to the Migration Museum since 2006. The sculpture features in numerous souvenir photos. This symbolic family represents all migrants, while also immediately reminding us of the era of mass migration after the Second World War. The inspiration for this

monument came from the Hon. Julian Stefani, a member of the Migration Museum Foundation. The sculpture was unveiled in 2006 by Governor Marjorie Jackson-Nelson and dedicated by Lord Mayor of Adelaide Michael Harbison.

### MIGRATION MUSEUM IN ADELAIDE

Opened in 1986 the Migration Museum in Adelaide was a world first. It predated the Immigration Museum in Melbourne and the Ellis Island Museum in the United States. Several museums focussed on migration have since opened around the world. The Migration Museum preserves, documents and interprets the cultural diversity of the people of South Australia.

Robert Edwards, AO recommended the development of an 'Ethnic Museum' in his 1981 report on Museum Policy and Development in South Australia. The History Trust of South Australia was established that year under the History Trust of South Australia Act 1981 and had plans underway by 1983 for the Migration and Settlement Museum. The site of the former Destitute Asylum at 82 Kintore Avenue was chosen and buildings redeveloped to house the Museum. The Museum officially opened in 1986 with a celebration in the courtyard and banners made by South Australian community groups. The name was changed in 1988 to become the Migration Museum.

The Museum collection was begun in 1983. Collection growth has largely relied on donations of objects, though there were some early purchases during the establishment of the Museum. Strengths include costume and documents, with a focus on items that represent the migration experience, cultural heritage, identity, cultural diversity and attitudes towards migrants. The Museum also documents the impact of colonisation and migration on Aboriginal people in South Australia.

The Migration Museum works towards the preservation, understanding and enjoyment of South Australia's diverse cultures. It is a place to discover the many identities of the people of South Australia through the stories of individuals and communities

### OPINION: PERCY EUGENE CARTWRIGHT JNR. WRITES

Yes, you are right. This Journal keeps us Maltese expatriates in communication together. I, for one, am always eager to receive the following issues after I read the one you send. Without any bias Frank, I feel your journal is the best around and you should be highly commended for such a stellar job you are doing for us - Maltese living abroad. On behalf of all the readers of this journal I thank you and I wish you keep on publishing this wonderful newsletter, I thank you and WELL DONE FRANK



## Malta and its Salt pans

Written by [Sabine Jung](#)

Recently we noticed a number of little gourmet shops popping up on street corners in [Malta](#) and [Gozo](#). These shops are treasure troves of local and foreign delicacies like locally produced salt, herbs, fruit preserves, jam, and even pretty Malta-themed homeware that verges on elegant as opposed to tacky.

Just last week I was browsing through a few shops, and a fine package of rock salt caught my eye. Placed on a shelf next to Maltese herbs and pepper, stood little packets or jars full of salt, either plain or infused with an aromatic herb. It seems that there is nothing that isn't Maltese about this sea salt. It is collected, processed, and packaged by hand on the Maltese islands. Well, at least that's what the knowledgeable shop owner told me.

My curiosity positively piqued, I did some research on local salt production and just how Maltese and Gozitan artisans are bottling the Mediterranean. It turns out that salt production is a tradition that has been passed down from generation to generation in Malta and Gozo. It's only recently that several companies have begun marketing sea salt as a gourmet product.

The salt is firstly collected from salt pans along the coasts of Malta and Gozo. Salina Bay, near Bugibba, is the main production area of salt in Malta. At its peak of production, the Salina Bay salt pans would produce over 4,000 tons of coarse salt over two harvests. There are quite a few salt pan areas in Malta, albeit smaller than those in Salina Bay, namely those found in Marsascala, Żonqor Point, Delimara, Xgħajra, and Birżebbuġa. One interesting fact I discovered is Mellieħa, a Northern town in Malta, was named after the salt (melħ) produced in Għadira Bay in Mellieħa.

The **formation process** of the salt begins when sea water starts to fill crevices in the coastline. This sea water is left to settle for eight days before it is moved to smaller salt pans that are warmer in temperature and further away from the sea. At the beginning of the drying process the water takes on a reddish hue and salt crystals begin to form. In fact, if you head down to the coast really early in the morning, there's a chance you can see locals collecting rock salt from the 350-year-old salt pans in Marsalforn, Gozo. There are several salt pans along the Gozitan coast, namely in Qala, Dwejra, and Xlendi.

As per family tradition, once the rock salt has been processed it is packed up and taken to a small warehouse or garage, and then packaged by hand before it is distributed to supermarkets, souvenir shops, and gourmet food shops.

As more and more chefs and gastronomes are discovering with Black Hawaiian, Celtic, Fleur De Sel and Malta and Gozo varieties harvested from the sea, salt flakes obtained from this most natural source add outstanding flavour to many a fresh local dish, from ħobż biż-żejt, sundried tomatoes and briny olives, to rabbit stew and lampuki pie.





## SPECIAL FEATURE

### The Ruined Australia Hall in Pembroke, Malta

DEBRA KELLY

All wars bring with them horrifying casualties, and the Great War was one of the deadliest conflicts in human history. With it came an urgent need to care for the wounded, and in 1915 a small island in the

Mediterranean found itself perfectly positioned for that purpose. Malta became known as the “Nurse of the Mediterranean”, and by the time the Armistice sounded in 1918, around 136,000 men had been treated there.

Malta had 27 hospitals in January 1916, which cared for some 2,000 new patients each week. The record for a single day stands at staggering 20,994 patients, who came under the care of hundreds of doctors and nurses working tirelessly to save the wounded front line troops.

It was in 1915 that Australia Hall was built at Pembroke, a town in the country’s Northern Region. As the name suggests, it was built by the Australian branch of the British Red Cross as an entertainment venue for convalescing Anzac soldiers. Its function wasn’t merely to distract wounded soldiers as they recovered from their physical injuries. It also saw to their mental, spiritual, and emotional needs as well.



According to The Times of Malta, the entertainment hall officially opened on January 16, 1916, with enough room to accommodate 2,000 people for stage productions, dances and other events. A library and reading room were later added, and after the war, in 1921, a projector was installed so that the venue could be used as a cinema. Providing soldiers with light-hearted entertainment was a big part of the care that Malta offered. Even after World War One drew to a close, Australia Hall remained a major entertainment centre until British forces left the island in 1979.

But the years that followed were not so kind on the historic structure. Having passed into Maltese government ownership, the historic building was closed and became increasingly neglected. It was eventually gutted by fire in 1998, just two years after being formally recognised as a Grade 2 National Monument.

The derelict, fire-ravaged Australia Hall was controversially sold in 2014 into private hands, and last year it was reported that Australia’s High Commissioner to Malta, Jane Lambert, was pushing for the century-old venue’s restoration. With only walls remaining, renovation would cost millions of euros and require in-depth planning. But as an important part of Australia’s national heritage, many are hopeful that a solution can soon be found.

**N.B. This International Maltese journal and several other parties have been imploring the Maltese and Australian authorities to preserve this historical monument for years. Let us pay due homage to our Australian Allies by showing respect to their memorial monuments. We request our readers to send letters of support for this cause before it will be too late.**





## Pop-legend Anastacia performance at Ta' Qali

Pop legend Anastacia – the mega voice behind massive hits including 'I'm Outta Love' and 'Left Outside Alone' is performed live at the MFCC in Ta' Qali. Anastacia's performance is part of her Europe-wide tour for her seventh album 'Evolution'.

This is the second time Anastacia is performing in Malta, after she performed with tenor Joseph Calleja at the Luxol Grounds in 2015.

With over 30 million records sold worldwide, Anastacia is one of the most recognisable voices of our time, and her latest album marks her return.

"Speaking about the new tour, Anastacia said "I am so excited to be coming back to Europe and performing Evolution. I recorded the album whilst I was on the road touring the Ultimate Collection and I'm really looking forward to sharing these songs with my fans." As if that wasn't enough to entice you, the concert, which was organised by NnG Promotions, opened by Maltese sister duo The New Victorians.

## Valletta comes alive during the Pageant of the Seas



The Pageant of the Seas brought Valletta's history to life with re-enactments, activities and competitive races, and performances throughout the day, ending the night with a fireworks display over the Grand Harbour

(Photo: Valletta 2018: Francesca Vella)

The Pageant of the Seas, one of the highlights of the Valletta 2018 programme was held all day yesterday.

Activities started on Thursday afternoon, with a re-enactment, by members of In Guardia, of a parade harking

back to the time of the knights. A regatta race was also held from the Old Customs House across the fairway and back.

It was followed by a race of rafts built from recycled materials, without the use of traditional oars and motors. 25 teams participated. Swimmers also swam between Fort St Angelo and Valletta in *L-Għawma Toni Bajada* recalling the historical figure who relayed information between the knights during the Great Siege of Malta.

During the Valletta Pageant of the Seas night performance, a number of components were used to deliver a spectacular night performance that illuminated the Grand Harbour, with the night programme starting at 9 pm.

During the night, 28 yachts lit up with lights, carrying flags of the European member states, were displayed brightly as they entered the Grand Harbour from the Kalkara yacht marina, surrounding the stage that was anchored in the middle of the harbour aboard a large barge.

Following this nautical display, a choir gave a preview of the upcoming Valletta 2018 opera *Aħna Refuġjati* by singing a piece from the production, which will be taking place at the end of August and the beginning of September, later this year.

A water curtain also featured in the night performance with audio-visual projections projected onto the water, followed by a performance developed in collaboration with Barcelona-based artists La Fura Dels Baus. The performance saw a luminous tree being split open and the gigantic female figure of the Venus of Malta arising from the sea and lifted in the air with local acrobats trained by La Fura Dels Baus performing on the structure. The night culminated with a fireworks display over the Grand Harbour. In total, over a thousand artists took part during the day's activities.

**Mro Gius. Giardini Vella****1926-1951****Ġonna ta' Villa Rundle****10 ta' Gunju 2018**

Kien xieraq u f'postu sewwa  
Li nfakkru dal-persunaġġ  
U f'dal-Ġnien ta' Villa Rundle  
Lilu nagħtu dan l-omaġġ!

Nies illi għamlulna isem  
M'għandna qatt lilhom ninsew  
Għalkemm ħafna minn uliedna  
Ftit li xejn jafu xi swew!

Persunaġġi ta' dix-xorta  
Xieraq illi nfakkruhom  
Ma nħallux iż-żmien jitfihom  
Iżda ġieħ u stima ntuhom.

Fost dawn hemm Giardini Vella  
Tal-Orkestra Direttur;  
Għal snin twal Surmast tal-Banda  
Ta' La Stella l-isbaħ f'jur.

Għal qalbu kellu t-Tejtru  
L-Operetta ħabb bi sħiħ  
U lis-swali hu kien jimla  
Il-folla ħabbet qatigh.

Meta kont titkellem miegħu  
Bil-Malti jew bit-Taljan  
Mill-ewwel int kont tinduna  
Li dan kien bniedem ferħan.

Fi Sqallija għajnejh fetaħ  
Għall-ewwel raġġi tax-xemx  
Ġo Catania kiber, tgħallim  
Ħafna bħalu żgur ma mhemmx!

Anke f'Tunes għamel isem  
U l-orkestra idderieġa,  
Għallim, ħarreġ tfal u żgħażaġh  
Fejn l-arti kienet meħtieġa.

Biż-żmien spiċċa f'Għawdex tagħna  
Fejn iżżewweġ mara Għawdxija  
W allura issa bil-jedd kollu  
Kien parti mill-art Maltija.

Xejn mhu mkabbar b'dik il-mużika  
Li kienet timlielu ħajtu,  
Il-gost tiegħu illi jpaxxi  
U japprezza illi smajtu!

Dan il-Ġnien tant miżmum sewwa  
Hu tassew lok adattat  
Li fih jilqa' lil Giardini –  
Muzicist mill- aktar smat

Dan il-Ġnien tant miżmum sewwa  
Hu tassew lok adattat  
Li fih jilqa' lil Giardini –  
Mużicist mill-aktar smat.

U biż-żmien dan l-imkien ħelu  
Jista' jkun il-Ġnien tal-Ġieħ  
Illi fih isibu posthom  
Għawdxin ta' isem sabiħ.

Bla dubju Grazzi u Prosit  
Għal dina l-inizjattiva  
Illi turi li l-Kultura  
Għadha ħajja u attiva.

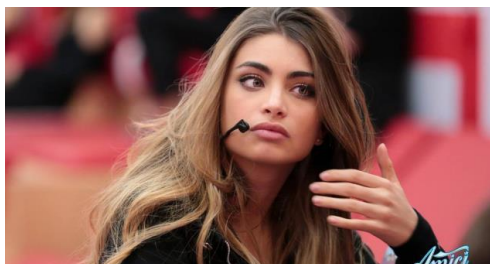
Jalla l-interess jitkabbar  
F'dawk kollha li ġew qabilna  
Lilhom nibqgħu aħna nfakkru  
Dan unur sabiħ għalina!

Fl-aħħar 'grazzi' lill-artista  
Li hu midħla t'Għawdex tagħna -  
Jalla bl-opri illi joħloq  
Ta' spiss jiġi hawn jarana

Kav Joe M Attard  
Victoria Għawdex  
Gunju 2018



## Emma Muscat to sing alongside Joseph Calleja and Eros Ramazzotti



The Amici semi-finalist is back with a bang, taking part in next month's Joseph Calleja & Eros Ramazzotti concert

Home-grown Amici Star, Emma Muscat, will be taking part in this year's Joseph Calleja & Eros Ramazzotti concert on the 21 of July.

The 18-year-old, famed from Italy's longest running-television talent show 'Amici di Maria de Filippi' has performed with famous Italian and international artists such as Gianni Morandi, Laura Pausini, Al Bano, Rita Pavone, Elisa, Arisa, Annalisa, Alice Merton Fedez and Alvaro Soler.

Despite her elimination, the Amici Semi-finalist has walked away with a Warner Music record contract in her back pocket before returning to Malta last Friday and receiving a warm welcome from fans.

Keith Kiko Muscat her Manager said 'It's an inspiration to see Emma's level of passion at such a young age, giving her heart and soul in all stages of songwriting and production resulting in a musical form of art that breathes excellence' This year, World-leading tenor Joseph Calleja will be joined by Italian star Eros Ramazzotti, Platinum artist behind 'Cose Della Vita', 'Quanto Amore Sei' and 'Parla con me'.

Tickets for the show are available from [www.showshappening.com](http://www.showshappening.com)



## Young pianist to represent Malta at Eurovision Young Musicians 2018

Posted On June 14, 2018 - Updated 14 June, 2018 4:32pm

Report: Norma Saliba

Bernice Sammut Attard will be representing Malta at the Eurovision Young Musicians which will take place in Edinburgh in August. Bernice was among the four young pianists who made it to the finals in the local selection for

the contest,. The finals were broadcast on Wednesday evening on **TVM2**.

In her first reaction, Bernice said, "I did not expect this result because it was a very difficult competition. I am very proud and happy to be representing Malta in Edinburgh and I will do my best to make Malta proud of me."

Bernice is 18 years old and is studying piano and violin at the school of music in Chetham, Manchester. Her ambition is to continue with her studies at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland in Glasgow. She has managed to achieve success in various competitions, and has performed in England, Scotland, Wales, Poland, Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands and Russia.

"Don't be afraid to go abroad and do the best you can. Don't be afraid to say you want to do something different. Music is something which everyone can do, and although there are many who think you cannot make a career out of music, those who really want it and work for it, will manage to do so," said Bernice.

During the competition of the Eurovision Young Musicians, the young pianist will be performing excerpts of 18 minutes each in the semifinal in which musicians from 18 European countries will be taking part. For the final on 22 August, only six finalists will get through and they will have to perform a musical piece accompanied by a live orchestra.



## CURRENT AFFAIRS



## The Travellers – back to the '70s

Following the success of the launch of their album, *Iljuni fis-Silġ*, The Travellers will be launching their third single from this first album, entitled *Tpingijiet*.

The song is about how to meet new people, stay young and live a free life. With an electric guitar dominating this track, the band is showing how it has continued to change and evolve.

Apart from their new song, The Travellers will be releasing their music video which has a 70s vibe, showing a group of friends who meet to camp out and enjoy each other's company. This photo is just a taste of what we can expect from The Travellers this summer. More information can be found on their website [thetravellersmalta.com](http://thetravellersmalta.com).

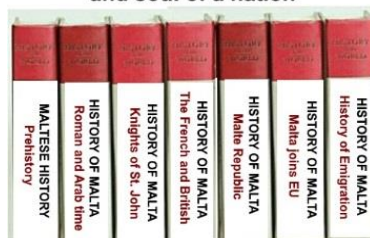


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great

## The late Prof David Plowman (1942-2013)



### Champion of Maltese child migrants

Sydney Morning Herald 2014 - Braham Dabscheck

David Plowman made important contributions to industrial relations scholarship, management education and the cause of Maltese child migrants in Australia

From 2002, through to its disbanding in 2009, he was chairman of the Child Migrants of Malta organisation, raising awareness of Maltese child migrants and lobbying on their behalf concerning their past treatment. In 2012, he was made a Member of the Order of

Australia for this work.

David Henry Plowman was born on April 9, 1942 at the Imtarfa Military Hospital in Malta, the second of three sons to Harold Plowman, an English soldier who had married a Maltese woman, Josephine Cassar. After the war the family moved to England, but because David and his brother Jim had respiratory problems it was decided that Josephine and the boys would return to Malta. Although Harold was supposed to join the family, he never appeared.

Jim concluded that there was no future for them in Malta and persuaded David that they should move to Australia as child migrants. They did not travel together as David suffered an injury and needed to recover before he could travel, so Jim arrived in Fremantle in 1953 and David joined him three months later. They were two of 310 Maltese child migrants who found their way to Australia between 1950 and 1965. Eight years later, David and Jim sponsored Josephine and younger brother Richard to join them.





*Photo: Prof David Plowman (centre) with the late Fr. Carmelo Mifsud and the late Fr. Joe Finde SDB, Salesian priests he knew at St. Patricks - Mark Caruana*

After David arrived in Australia he was moved to Tardun, 480 kilometres north of Perth, and attended St Mary's Agricultural College. He maintained contact with the school all his life and in 2003 published a history of the school,

*Enduring Struggle: St Mary's Tardun Farm School*, celebrating its 75th anniversary.

After St Mary's, Plowman went to teachers' college and won a scholarship for a Master of Arts in Industrial Relations at the University of Melbourne. In 1973, he married Catherine Burke after meeting her at a church social club.

At the end of the 1970s, Plowman was employed in the Department of Industrial Relations at the University of NSW. In time, he became a professor of industrial relations and was appointed head of the School of Industrial Relations and Organisational Behaviour. In 1993, he went back to Western Australia as the director of the Graduate School of Management (now called the Business School) at the University of WA.

He had a broad, generalist approach to industrial relations research. He published several books and many articles that examined both historical and contemporary issues. The breadth of his research is indicated by the titles of his books: *Australian Industrial Relations* (1980) (the first textbook in the area, co-authored with a variety of other scholars over many editions), *Australian Trade Union Statistics* (1981), *Wage Indexation: A Study of Australian Wage Issues* (1981), *Australian Unions: An Industrial Relations Perspective* (1983) (a co-edited book of readings), *Holding The Line: Compulsory Arbitration and National Employer Co-ordination in Australia* (1989) (based on his PhD thesis), *Australian Industrial Relations: An Introduction* (1992) and *Australian Wage Determination: Select Documents* (1992). In 1994, Plowman was elected a fellow of the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia.

In late 2013, Plowman received the University of WA Chancellor's Medal and the Dean's Award from the Business School of the University of WA. He was also the founding editor of *The Economic and Labour Relations Review*, which has now run for 25 years.

Plowman approached life with enthusiasm and energy. He was an energetic and hard-working scholar, and an able and forthright administrator. His approach to everyone was simple, genuine and courteous. He liked helping others and was never happier than when one of his students reported back to him about their progress. Even as he approached death, all he wanted to do was to hear news, talk and laugh about old times from visitors, saying nothing about himself. He was one of life's gentlemen.

## Plowman's memoirs



David Plowman's AM was awarded high honour from the Australian Government for "service to the community through support for child migrants, as the founding chair of Child Migrants of Malta, and to higher education."

From its establishment in 2002 through to its disbanding in 2009, Plowman served as the Chairman of Child Migrants of Malta. During this time, the organisation liaised with the Australian and Maltese governments and Catholic Church, raising awareness of Maltese child migrants and lobbying on issues of re-dress.

**A privileged life** - At the age of ten, Plowman arrived in Fremantle. His brother Jim had arrived in Australia three months earlier. Plowman was one of just 18 child migrants on board the ship and one of 310 Maltese child migrants to arrive

in Australia in the years between 1950 and 1965.

The brothers spent one week at Clontarf Boys' Town before being settled in Tardun, 500km north of Perth. There, they attended St Mary's Agricultural College.

Eight years after their arrival, Plowman and his brother sponsored their mother and younger brother, who joined the two brothers in Australia. To the Western Australian government's frustration, half of the Maltese child migrants were reunited with their families within two years, with most choosing to move interstate.

Plowman was among those who moved east. Upon finishing secondary school, he attended teachers college, later winning a scholarship to study a Master of Arts in industrial relations at The University of Melbourne. Next came a move into academia, and in 1993 Plowman and his wife returned to Perth where he became Director of the Graduate School of Management at The University of Western Australia.

For Plowman, the experience of child migration was positive. 'I have been lucky,' he reflects. 'The experience has been a good outcome for me and my brothers... I have been privileged to have a much better education than most of my peers. Of those who were at Tardun at my time I'm the only one that I know of with a university education.'

For other child migrants, the experience was less positive. Some have described stories of physical, emotional and, in rarer cases, sexual abuse. In 1993, the Christian Brothers responded by publishing a national apology for any abuses that occurred in its Western Australian child care institutions during the 1940s and 1950s.

Plowman acknowledges the repercussions of these abuses and other hardships. 'One does not dispute the grievances - even if only perceived they are real grievances to those affected - but it would be a mistake to represent the whole of the child migrant story through such grievances,' he said.

**Maltese child migration: "Why me?"** - For nearly 350 years, British child migration was supported by the Commonwealth as a means of settling Commonwealth countries with the 'right' sort of population, in addition to providing a source of cheap labour. In many cases, churches and evangelical organisations saw child migration as an opportunity to provide illegitimate children with a new life.

The consequences were long-lasting. 'Those kids (British child migrants) grew up thinking they were orphans and the truth only came out in the last 10 to 15 years. Many were illegitimate children whose mothers often put them in institutions. You can imagine the heartache when you're 45 and discover you have a living mother. In some cases it was too late but lots of child migrants had reunions with families, including half brothers and sisters,' said Plowman.

In Malta, the situation was vastly different. Every one of the 310 children sent to Australia was transported with the consent of a parent or guardian. With Malta experiencing an unemployment rate of over 50 per cent and nearly 140,000 people leaving the country between 1945 and 1979, migration represented an opportunity for Maltese children - and eventually, their families - to benefit from increased educational and employment opportunities.

'In fact, about 1,000 children were put up as child migrants. So few came out to Australia because Australian authorities did not allow many out on the grounds of medical checks. But when you check the medical records, it was because these children were too dark, or too Arab looking. It was sheer racism. It could have been a bigger scheme than it was,' said Plowman.



'For most Maltese, child migration was accompanied by the rigours of unfamiliar institutionalisation with its disciplined routine; physical labour; regimented time-table; mass-produced meals; communal dormitories, showering and washing amenities; and a brutal pecking order.

'The Maltese had a different problem. Everybody knew who their families were - most had large extended families and thirteen kids was not uncommon. If four of them were sent to Australia, the question was: "Why me?" 'Some of them are very bitter about the whole experience and they need closure.'

**A different time** - Plowman emphasises the importance of not judging child migration by today's standards. 'Child migration persists today, albeit in a different form. It takes the form of adoption of third world children by affluent first world parents and the migration of the adopted to the foster parents' country... One would hope that what is condoned today will be the subject of balanced analysis in the future,' he said.

As examples, Plowman cites the frequency with which child migrants in the 1950s did not wear shoes, were given 'hand-me-down' clothing, tasked with physical labour, and subjected to discipline and corporal punishment.

'When I was at Tardun, on Saturday morning we would go down to the paddock and throw stumps on the fire,' he recalled. 'However, for kids to work in the 1950s was a common thing. One of the problems with judging by today's standards is we forget a lot of that.'





'Would those who have done very well in their adopted country have fared as well in the more hierarchical and class conscious home countries?... Would the rate of marriage and long-term relationships have been different? Would the level of alcoholism or drug dependency of some have been different?'

Plowman doesn't have the answers. 'People want to generalise and that's very difficult to do... Child migration was but a very small part, a fragment, of the general exodus from Malta following World War II. It is, nevertheless, a distinctive part of Maltese history, and one that should be remembered if we are to learn from our history,' he concludes.

In 2009, the Australian Government issued a national apology to the hundreds of thousands of people, including British and Maltese child migrants, who were abused or neglected in state care between 1930 and 1970.

Monuments to Maltese child migration now stand in Fremantle, Western Australia and Valletta Waterfront, Malta.

University of Western Australia [www.news.uwa.edu.au](http://www.news.uwa.edu.au)



### **Maltese in Australia**

**(Left)** 17th Melbourne First Malta Scout Group, 1957. *Source: La Trobe Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria*

**(Right)** Parade of St Paul, Maltese Festival, West Sunshine, 1980s. *Source: Workers of Maltese Background*



**Rinella Battery** is a Victorian battery in Kalkara, Malta. It is commonly referred to as Fort Rinella, although it was never classified as a fort while in use. It contains one of two surviving Armstrong 100-ton guns.

**Fondazzjoni Wirt Artna** - the Malta Heritage Trust is a voluntary non-governmental organization (VO/0117) active in the fields of cultural heritage preservation and management. It was formed in October 1987 and is responsible for a rich array of cultural heritage sites that together span some

7,000 years of continued history

## TALB ANTİK

Malti, li kien jingħad u jintiret minn ġenerazzjoni għal oħra, fiż-żmien, meta n-nies bħala regola ma kinux jafu jiktbu u jaqraw: Dan it-talb kien miġbur minn Tarcisju Zarb u Philip Xuereb

### *Talba ta' Filgħaxija*

Ha norqod u nistrieħ  
F'għieħ Alla u għall-Erwieħ!  
Ha norqod u nirpoża  
F'għieħ Alla u Santa Roża!  
Salib indew indew!  
F'għieħ San Mark u San Matthew:

Erba' xemgħat minn Santa Luċija  
Tnejn f'rasha u tnejn f'saqajha,  
Haġa hażina la tersaqx lejha;

Mulejja, se norqod jiena,  
W Alla jaf nerġax inqum,  
U tliet hwejjeġ irrid minnek:  
Qrar, tqarbin u konfessur.

Sinjur, id-dnubiet taffihom,  
Miċ-ċkunija tiegħi għad irrid  
inqerrhom,  
Agħtini l-indiema tagħhom,  
Aħfirhomli għall-ħniena tiegħek.

Dak il-ġnien minn ta' Sant'Anna  
Kollu ward u kollu fjuri,  
Imħawwel bl-Angli tas-Sema  
U msoqqi bil-konfessuri;

Dak il-ġnien minn ta' Sant'Anna  
Kollu ward u ġiżimin,  
Imħawwel bl-angli tas-Sema  
U msoqqi bil-qaddisin.

Se norqod fil-friex tiegħi,  
Seba' qaddisin fejn rasi,  
L-Anglu Kustodju f'nofs id-dar  
Iberikni bil-lejl u bi nhar.

L-Anglu Kustodju tiegħi  
Iħarisni mid-dnub tiegħi;  
Jekk jien immut f'hedan il-lejl  
Jikkunsinnali r-ruħ tiegħi  
f'idejn il-Missier etern.

Iva, kuxjenza tiegħi  
Niħaddet mal-konfessur,  
Gwerra naqbad ma' l-għedewwa,  
Paċi nagħmel ma' Ġesù.

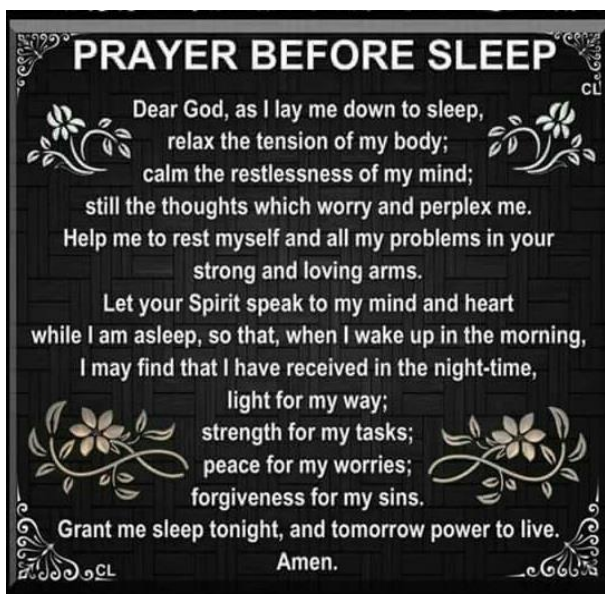
Ġesù, qabel ma tikkundannani  
Hares lejn ommok Marija,  
Ftakar kemm xtrajtni bi prezz għoli  
Demmek kollu ċarċart għalija!

Sinjur, inti dnubiet tafhom,  
Għandek ġejt inqerrhom,  
Arfa' idek u berikni,  
Nitolbok taħfirli minnhom.

Sodda is-salib.  
L-imħadda il-kuruna.  
Ġesù Kristu ħada rasi  
Il-Madonna tagħtini l-għajnuna.

Salib indew, indew,  
San Mark u San Matthew,  
Erba' xemgħat minn Santa Luċija  
Tnejn fejn rasi U tnejn fejn riġlejja.  
Norqod u nirpoża  
Xi haġa hażina ma tersaqx lejja.

Ta' min jinnota li din il-verżjoni  
partikulari hija magħmula minn  
elementi ta' talb divers li l-  
informatur seta' ftakar u rrepeta  
jew kien abitwalment jirrepeti  
flimkien bħala talba waħda.





## Hunters spot first-ever Hoopoe breeding in Malta



Hunters spotted two pairs of hoopoes, one pair bred in Gozo, while the other in the south of Malta

*Hoopoes are renowned for tossing and swallowing the food they catch on the spot.*

*Natalino Fenech*

Two pairs of hoopoes have bred, with each pair raising three young, in the first confirmed breeding records in the Maltese islands. Although this year saw fewer Hoopoes than other years, it was observed that quite a good number spent longer periods before migrating north, and a few were seen way past their usual migration

period. One pair bred in Gozo, while the other in the south of Malta.

Kaccaturi San Ubertu (KSU) were monitoring another location in the west, but a nest was never confirmed and the activity of the birds was not strong enough to encourage further observation. Hoopoes show up in considerable numbers during spring and are among the first birds to migrate. They are renowned for immediately tossing in the air and swallowing the food they catch on the spot.

The first pair to fledge were the ones in Gozo, where the birds bred in a crevice in the cliffs at San Blas area. The young, together with their parents, are now being seen flying around Ramla and Nadur areas. The second pair bred in the south at about the same time, but the young fledged a few days later. The birds have now been noticed shifting north of their nesting area and are covering a much wider area than they did while breeding.

Before they fledged, the birds were monitored over several days by ornithologist Dr. Natalino Fenech together with KSU members Marcus Camilleri and Peter Paul Azzopardi, who are both hunters and photographers. The birds were monitored from a distance to ensure they were not disturbed in any way. Although Hoopoes can be very tolerant of people, it was decided not to try and photograph the birds from a close distance to ensure the birds were not disturbed. KSU urged farmers and hunters in the area to keep tracking their movements and encouraged recording such sightings, which are not only important from an ornithological point of view but also to continue to prove that the majority of hunters are responsible and law abiding.

Hoopoes appear in considerable numbers in spring and are among the first migrants; often appearing in February and they keep being seen until May. They appear in smaller numbers from late August to mid-October.

## Things Only People Over 50 Will Remember About Malta

**Childhood memories are go!** Tanja Cilia

The phrase 'time flies' is a huge understatement. One second you're running around the *Chalet* talking Beano with your friends, and suddenly you blink and you're pushing 60 and everyone seems to be running around with one type of mobile or an iPad. But we'll always have our memories of the good old days, and here are a few of the things we remember from our past:



Those who grew up with the radio available 24/7 find it hard to believe that old local version came packaged in a Bakelite or wooden box with a grille at the front. Transmissions began at 6.00am, and went on till 11.00pm – and in some households the set was never switched off. Remember the Muskettieri and iz-Ziju Salv. The redifussion used to start at 6 a, with the sound of Ave Maria.

**Rediffusion** - There were two switches A (local) and B (English-speaking). The clanging of bells on the latter, on a Sunday morning, signalled the Tom Meijer Happy Station Show, from Radio Nederland (Hilversum).

**Religious retreats** - These days they're known as live-ins. Mostly single-sex, but sometimes also "mixed", these were held from Friday evenings to Sunday afternoons at retreat houses (unlike many these days, which are even hosted at hotels). The idea was to remove youth from the temptations afforded by Carnival (Halloween was not even an issue back then), or to orchestrate socialisation opportunities during school holidays and / or long weekends.

The schedules always consisted of Mass, group meetings, talks, meals, and free time, during which one could catch up on reading and correspondence, do crafts, meditate, or talk with fellow 'hermits'.



**Sweetmeat Cigarettes** - These were either bubble-gum sickly sweet sticks, or soft chocolate covered with edible rice paper. The tip was red, so one could pretend to be smoking "like an adult". The preferred bubble-gum flavour was always Bubbly – a gob of lurid pink latex-like substance that could be blown into bubbles big enough to stick to your face and hair when they inevitably burst.

**Comics** - Each weekend, we would roll out of bed and fly to the stationer's to get our weekly dose of Beano or Dandy. The more 'girly girls' had Bunty, with a cut-out doll and her clothes on the back page. The position of the limbs and head was always slightly different, so clothes from one week would not fit the doll from another.

The more studious teens bought Look and Learn, or, later, Knowledge (which had better paper, but was not as interesting). Then there were the absolute nerds, who bought the magazines that had the words to all the popular songs (English or Italian versions) and learned them all by heart.

**Penfriends** - The more you had, the more bohemian and avant-garde you were considered. And if you could say a couple of words that Dominik from Austria or Akio from Japan taught you, it was even better. For the boys, of course, if the girl was a looker it gave them a couple of extra Brownie points. Ditto for the girls if the boy was handsome. Of course back then, it never crossed our minds that the photos could have been of someone else.



### **Winner Soft Drinks KITTY COLA AND PORTANIER -**

These came in lemonade, orange / tangerine, and cola flavours, and were delivered in old wooden crates that often smelled of damp. Bottle **Trufruit by Portanier Bros. of Hamrun** from the 1950s. Interestingly enough, this Maltese soft drink was marketed as containing the juice of 2 whole oranges in every bottle.

**Kitty Kola**, from the 1960s. This cola flavoured soft drink was first bottled in Malta by The Stars Company of Birkirkara. Does anyone remember this drink?

## **AN EX-SERVICEMAN HONOURED**



**Charlie Farrugia receiving the certificate from the David O'Loughlin, Mayor of Prospect**

Charlie Farrugia from Adelaide is one of the co-founder of the South Australian RSL Maltese Sub Branch established in 1968 and currently serves as the sub-branch president. For over 20 years Charlie has been providing lunches twice a month to ex-servicemen, their families, friends and guests in the Prospect Community Hall with the larger events being held in the Prospect Town Hall.

The Maltese RSL evolved as a direct result of the camaraderie, concern and mateship for the welfare of others. The ethos of compassion and service remains today by the motivating influence of people like- Charlie. Charlie brings together like minded people who may be at risk of social isolation due to the age of their members.

Charlie survived the relentless bombing of his homeland Malta in WW2, won his parachutist wings while serving with the British forces in 1947. In 2016 Charlie was presented with the RSL's highest award, the Meritorious Service Medal. He was granted a life membership in 1997 and the OAM medal in 2010 for 'sterling work rendered to the Maltese community these past 50 years'. On a local level, City of Prospect acknowledged and recognized Charlie's work with the Maltese community and his commitment to the remembrance of those who served and their families.



BY DAN BROCK - 2018 PUBLISHED IN THE SUNDAY TIMES OF MALTA

# The beginning of a new wave of Maltese migration to Canada



**Prime Minister Paul Boffa and Archbishop Michael Gonzi (standing, centre) seeing off the emigrants about to board the Vulcania.**

This year marks the 70th anniversary of the beginning of a new wave of Maltese migration to Canada. While there was a trickle of Maltese migration in the 19th century, it was only in the few years immediately prior to and following World War I that large numbers of emigrants from Malta began arriving in Canada. But after 1921 and until 1948, the Canadian government all but closed

immigration from places such as Malta.

It was on May 8, 1948, that the first contingent, consisting of 131 men, left Malta for Canada on board the Marine Perch. They were joined by another 380, on board the Vulcania, which departed from Grand Harbour on June 17.

After years in which the doors had been closed, or partly closed, to Maltese immigration, Allison Glen, Canada's Minister of Mines and Resources, had announced, on December 19, 1947, that arrangements had been made with the government of Malta to allow 500 men into Canada. A joint announcement to this effect was made in Valletta and in Ottawa on March 1, 1948.

As the late Fr Lawrence Attard noted, despite the "heroic stand that the people of Malta made against the Axis forces during World War II, racial prejudice against the Maltese was never far from the surface". On March 10, F.B. Cotsworth, Canada's acting superintendent of European migration, wrote that "the rate of tuberculosis among the Maltese could be high" and "single men should be preferred because most married men in Malta liked to father many children". Moreover, "the Maltese could be troublesome".

J. Robillard, a member of the Canadian selection team to Malta, who was then stationed in Rome, "was afraid that some Maltese could carry in them traces of Arab or Asian blood in their veins". Once he had completed this work and had personally met a number of the prospective emigrants, however, "his fears were assuaged and he was of the opinion that Canadians had nothing to fear from the Maltese as they were physically and civilly of a very good standard".

Of the more than 2,000 applicants it was believed that only 1,364 were really serious about living in Canada. Of these, 300 were thought to require further questioning and only 36 were rejected outright as being considered too old or unsuitable for the Canadian market.



W. Carnhill, the Labour representative from Ottawa on the selection team, "believed that the men he interviewed would be readily accepted by most Canadians anywhere and that they had the makings of solid citizens". He further noted "that the candidates spoke good English, had good manners and were prepared for hard work. He also thought that the Maltese officials underrated those they classified as unskilled because these would be readily acceptable to Canadian employers looking for good workers".

**Rosaria Muscat, a nurse on her way to join her fiancé' in New York, together with other Maltese emigrants on board the Marine Perch**

Malta's Prime Minister Paul Boffa, and John Cole, Malta's first Minister of Emigration, were well aware that this experiment with the 500 "pioneers" being selected to resettle in Canada had to succeed as "the future of Maltese settlement in Canada" depended on it.

While initially transport to Canada was to be the responsibility of the Maltese authorities, according to Fr Attard, interviews with some of these '500' leads this writer to believe that each had to pay half the fare of £21, and the Canadian government paid the other half, on condition that the immigrant remained in Canada for at least a year.

The American Export ship *Marine Perch* had left Naples on May 8, arrived in Grand Harbour the same day and then left with the 131 men bound for Canada and a handful of other Maltese emigrants en route to New York Harbour.

The ship arrived at Pier 22, in Halifax on May 19, and cleared port the same day for New York City. Most of the 131 men who disembarked from the *Marine Perch* at Halifax were brought by special train to London, Ontario. A few may have been lured by employers while still on the dock in Halifax, eager for the skills many of these men had. As a case in point, 21 of the Maltese emigrants were hired on the spot by INCO in Port Colborne, Ontario. A few others may have left the train when met by relatives and acquaintances at Union Station in Toronto. This was to be even more the case with those arriving in June. After arriving in London, Ontario, early on the afternoon of May 21, the men were taken in big army trucks to the former World War II Royal Canadian Air Force bombing and gunnery station at Fingal, less than 40km southwest of the town. Employers quickly hired the men who found employment in nearby St Thomas, London and Woodstock, as well as further afield, in Ontario, in St Catharines, Collingwood and Peterborough.



***Maltese emigrant Edward Scicluna kissing the hand of Archbishop Michael Gonzi as he blessed those about to board the *Vulcania*. Photo: Joe Pace***

On June 17, a second American Export ship, the 24,400-ton Italian liner *Vulcania* left Naples for Malta, en route to Halifax and New York. The number of emigrants picked up in Malta that same day was 380.

*The work ethic and law-biding characteristics of these first post-war groups from Malta would open the doors for the many thousands who followed in*

*the subsequent decades*

Their families were at the dock to see them off and, as they boarded the ship, a band played in the background. One of the last tunes it played was Auld Lang Syne. One of the emigrants, Anthony Grima, a capable young singer with the voice of a tenor, sang the last song, *Maria Christina*, at the dock in Malta. Another of the emigrants, Karmenu Sapiano, read his own farewell poem, 'To Malta My Native Land', over the microphone at the dock.

There were a total of 1,252 passengers on board the ship including a large number of Jewish refugees from continental Europe.

gees from continental Europe.

At about 5.30pm on June 19, the ship entered Gibraltar Harbour. A number of boats came out to meet the ship and their occupants offered to sell wine and other items to the passengers on the *Vulcania*. But after

the latter lowered money in buckets to the boats for the goods, the boats took off with the money without giving the passengers the goods for which they paid.

***The Maltese emigrants in front of Customs House before boarding the *Vulcania* on June 17, 1948.***



The *Vulcania* docked in Halifax on June 25. The next day it cleared the harbour for New York.

Meanwhile, the 340 Maltese emigrants who had disembarked at Halifax went



through customs and immigration and then boarded a Canadian National Railway train for St Thomas, Ontario. The train made at least two stops – at Campbellton, New Brunswick, and a French-Canadian village in Quebec – before reaching Montreal. At each of these stops the immigrants were able to get off the train and stretch their legs before reboarding.

Along the way to St Thomas some were met by relatives and friends. The Debono brothers – Amadeo and Tony – were met by relatives in Toronto and stayed there. Accompanied by A.J. Murray of the Department of Labour at Ottawa, those who remained with the group, like those in May who had preceded them, were taken to the Dominion Department of Labour's hostel in Fingal, where they arrived at about 3pm on June 27.



As with those who had arrived in May, many of these men quickly found work in nearby St Thomas and London. These two groups laid the foundation for the London area, becoming the second largest Maltese-Canadian community in Canada, after Toronto.

***The Marine Perch setting out from Grand Harbour on May 8, 1948. Photo: Frank Cauchi***

Some of these new arrivals ended up in Hamilton, Ontario. Joseph Cassar, Joseph Tabone and Johnny Camilleri knew Tony Vella, a school friend of Cassar's, who had emigrated before the war and was living in Stoney Creek, near Hamilton. Vella telephoned them while they were at Fingal and they

took a taxi and met him in Hamilton. Camilleri was the only one of the more than 500 men at that time who had been able to bring out his entire family, consisting of his wife and four children.

A few others settled in Brantford. Edward Scicluna was met at Union Station in Toronto by his oldest brother, Charles, whom he had not seen since about 1913. The latter advised his youngest brother that his prospects for work would be better in Brantford where Joe Gatt, an acquaintance of Edward's who had come out with the first group, had settled, than in Toronto. Coincidentally, Scicluna and his fellow companions on board the Vulcania, Mike Portelli and Paul Chetcuti, worked for a time at the Brantford Glue Factory, as had some of the Maltese arrivals in Brantford in 1913.

The wives and children of these two groups would start arriving later in 1948, and others would follow in

the following years. The work ethic and law-biding characteristics of these first post-war groups from Malta would open the doors for the many thousands who followed in the subsequent decades.

***The Maltese migrants participating in the mandatory safety drill on board the Vulcania. Photo: Frank and Yvonne Gatt***

To these first post-war arrivals by way of the Marine Perch and the Vulcania, a great debt of gratitude is owed by those who followed in their wake and by their children, grandchildren and



great-grandchildren.

***Dan Brock, who is based in London, Ontario, Canada, is the editor of the newsletter of the Maltese-Canadian Club of London, Canada.***



## Who gave Trump the idea to build a wall?

### MALTESE CITIES SURROUNDED BY WALLS

#### MDINA

Mdina was around since like, forever. The city was founded eons ago and had been inhabited by many of our conquerors over the ages. When the Knights came over they decided to arm the city up with some really

cool walls around it. Most of the walls were already there, however the Knights decided to upgrade them a little bit in order to rebuff any enemy attacks.

The first walls around the city were made around the Bronze Age, updated by the Phoenicians, Romans, Byzantines Arabs and even the Normans. When the Order eventually took over, the city lost much of its glamour since they all decided to settle down in Birgu. However eventually they started adding bastions and castles to the area.

Mdina was reduced in size after the Great Siege as it proved to be too large to protect — turning it into a mesmerising fortress. Many castles, walls, gates and churches were added to it along with bastionettes and batteries to protect the lovely city.

**ĊITTADELLA** - In Gozo we find one great walled city which seriously looks like something out of Game of Thrones. Just like Mdina, this area had been inhabited since forever and at some point it was a Roman city too.

The Knights worked on most of the upgrades we can see today on the Ċittadella, however in like 1551 it was attacked and almost completely destroyed by the Ottomans. Actually, this city was attacked repeatedly by the Ottomans and at one point it was so heavily taken over that almost everybody in Gozo was captured and enslaved.

When the Order eventually started working on Valletta they decided to leave the Ċittadella as is, it was too much of a hassle for them to work on both cities at once.

The French gave the gift of water to the Ċittadella by building an aqueduct in the 19th Century, however the Brits kind of left it as is when they took over since they did not feel like it would be much of an investment.

**VITTORIOSA (Birgu)** - Birgu is littered with *swar*. These defensive walls leave anyone who get the chance to visit them in awe at how wonderful and majestic they look. The walls of Birgu took around two centuries to build and were done over by the Knights of St. John, obv.

The first inkling of any sort of wall in the area was introduced by the Arabs in the 9th Century when they built the first version of what today we call Fort St. Angelo. When the Knights came however it was like, all ruins and stuff and they were a bit salty for being kicked out of Rhodes. But they immediately saw the potential in Malta — they could own their own island brah. #makeover

Anyway, since these guys decided to establish themselves in Birgu they started working on Fort St. Angelo as we know it today right around the 16th Century. At first it was just the fort that had walls around it, but as time passed they started Minecrafting their way through walling the whole damn city. They did such an amazing job that when the Ottomans came over in 1551 to throw us some shade via gunpowder, they saw the walls and went back home.

**SENGLEA (I-Isla)** - After doing the whole Birgu thing the Knights needed to get a new expansion pack in order to win this competition, so they decided to expand their fortifications to Senglea.

They started off by building the lovely Fort St. Michael in 1552. The expansion continued for around two centuries more, which was a good thing since this city played a great role in The Great Siege of Malta. It became known as the unconquered city as the Ottomans failed repeatedly at taking it over. These fortifications consist of numerous bastions and a cool sea level battery. We can still enjoy the beauty of Senglea's spur and the lovely *Gardjola* till this day, along with the very strange but majestic Maċina — a wedgy bastion o the creek which was used to mount masts on galleys.



**COSPICUA (Bormla)** - In the 17th Century, the Knights were still heavily obsessed with the whole three Cities area, however they ran out of money at one point and had to stop expanding on all of them walls around Bormla. We can still however enjoy the Notre Dame Gate and St. Paul Bastions which were built around Cospicua.

These bastions were pretty strong and along with them the Knights also constructed that really cool dockyard, which was eventually used by the Brits during the First and Second World Wars.

The dockyard kept on being used up until the 21st Century, however it is nowadays undergoing a serious makeover as a touristic attraction.

**VALLETTA** - Valletta is one of those really cool cities which scream 'respect my authority' when looked at. Seriously. Go stare at that city from opposite, you will feel psychologically undermined by its grandiosity. It was the Knight's lovechild — they built its first fort in 1552, but the actual walls came around in like, 1566.

Valletta is like, the Knight's equivalent of having a really small penis and making up for it by buying a fucking Hummer of the 16th Century. Seriously it had a bunch of guns and attack points and major defence XP like no other city on the island.



## Soppa tal-Kirxa

### Tripe Soup, Maltese Style

We knew it was Lent when Ma dished up more soups. In Malta the Catholic Church ruled Sundays, holy days and meals. Lent was a time of fast and abstinence.

No fooling around. You walked around for a whole day with ashes on your forehead. Lousy meals were a part of the season. Live with it. If

you're unfamiliar with those terms, abstinence meant no meat on Wednesday and Friday during Lent. Actually that was a bit of a joke. We didn't eat that much meat. Hey, heard of the Mediterranean Diet?

But the one-two punch of Lent was fasting. That meant two half meals and no snacks.

And that one main meal better not make up for what you were missing.

Your Lenten meals were being recorded in a celestial diet record book more strictly than anything Weight Watchers would expect you to do to lose 5 pounds.

Fasting. What is it about religion and food? Okay... Ma wanted to follow the Church's rules. Ma wanted to avoid living with a hungry family.

Especially a hungry Pop. He didn't cope well with a rumbling belly. Catholic Moms knew a few diet tricks. Fill the belly with water. Soup. Weight Watchers didn't invent that trick. This is a Maltese Lent staple. Filling and not something you'd find in a fancy restaurant. The priests and Pop approved. So did the budget. That's just our way.

## Soppa tal Kirxa

Tripe is a type of edible lining from the stomach of various farm animals. Most tripe is from cattle and sheep or pig

Simmer for about 2 hours - 800 g (about 2 pounds) tripe, cut into small pieces - 2 litres of water

### Add

1 cauliflower, finely chopped

1 turnip, finely chopped

1 cabbage, finely chopped

2 tomatoes, chopped

400 g pumpkin

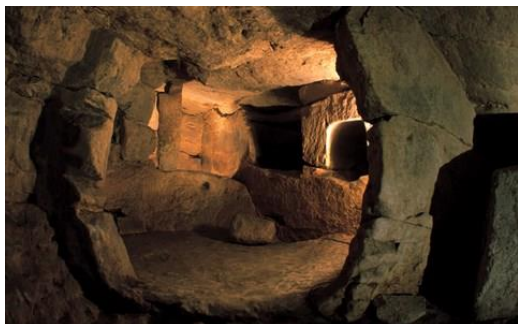
4 large potatoes, finely chopped

1 onion, finely chopped Bring to the boil.

Reduce heat and simmer until the vegetables are done. Season with salt and pepper.

Serve with grated Parmesan cheese.

## INTERESTING PLACES TO VISIT IN MALTA



**HAL SAFLIENI HYPOGEUM** - This must-see sight is quite extraordinary. It is a burial complex cut into solid rock by the same people who built Malta's unique prehistoric temples between 3600BC and 2500BC. Like the temples, the Hypogeum is a Unesco World Heritage Site. For conservation reasons only ten people per hour can visit, so book as far in advance as possible. Visits start with a short film before you descend into the underworld in an accompanied group with a very good audio guide. The complex consists of three layers (the deeper the more recent) each with multiple rooms. It is estimated that it once held some 7,000 bodies, deposited down here over a period of nearly 1000 years. The most impressive room, the 'Holy of Holies', is a carved copy of the above-ground temples cut into the rock. Being underground, it has been far better preserved than the actual temples. I never tire of this remarkable place. If you have failed to book before arriving in Malta, tickets for two tours per day (noon and 4pm) are sold in Valletta the day before. Also note that while older children are likely to find this place enthralling, kids under six are not admitted. It is a burial complex cut into solid rock by the same people who built Malta's unique prehistoric temples between 3600BC and 2500BC CREDIT: © VIEWINGMALTA.COM



**LASCARIS WAR ROOMS** - Deep inside the bastion walls of Valletta, these tunnels were once the slave quarters of the Order of St John. In the Second World War they became the secret headquarters of the British and Allied Mediterranean forces, and it was from here that General Eisenhower commanded Operation Husky, the successful invasion of Sicily in 1943. You can still see ops rooms complete with maps, phones and plotting tables, as well as ancient-looking – yet inventive – communication systems. There is an audioguide in English as well as human guides full of additional facts and stories about Malta's crucial role in the war. The Lascaris War Rooms are underneath the Upper Barracca Gardens so it is easy to visit both on the same outing.



**GRAND MASTER'S PALACE** - This palace was the home of the Grand Master of the Order of St John from the time Valletta was built in the early 1570s until the Knights were kicked out of Malta by Napoleon in 1798. The Grand Master was head of a celibate religious order but by the 17th century behaved much like a secular prince, as you will see from the portraits, rich armour, rare tapestries and luxurious décor of the Grand Master's State Rooms. The palace has remained the

centre of power in Valletta through British times and independence. It is now both parliament and the office of the President. The MPs are expected to move to the new parliament at City Gate in 2015, but the president will remain, which means the State Rooms sometimes close unexpectedly for state activities so do call ahead to check. The Knights Armoury remains open.

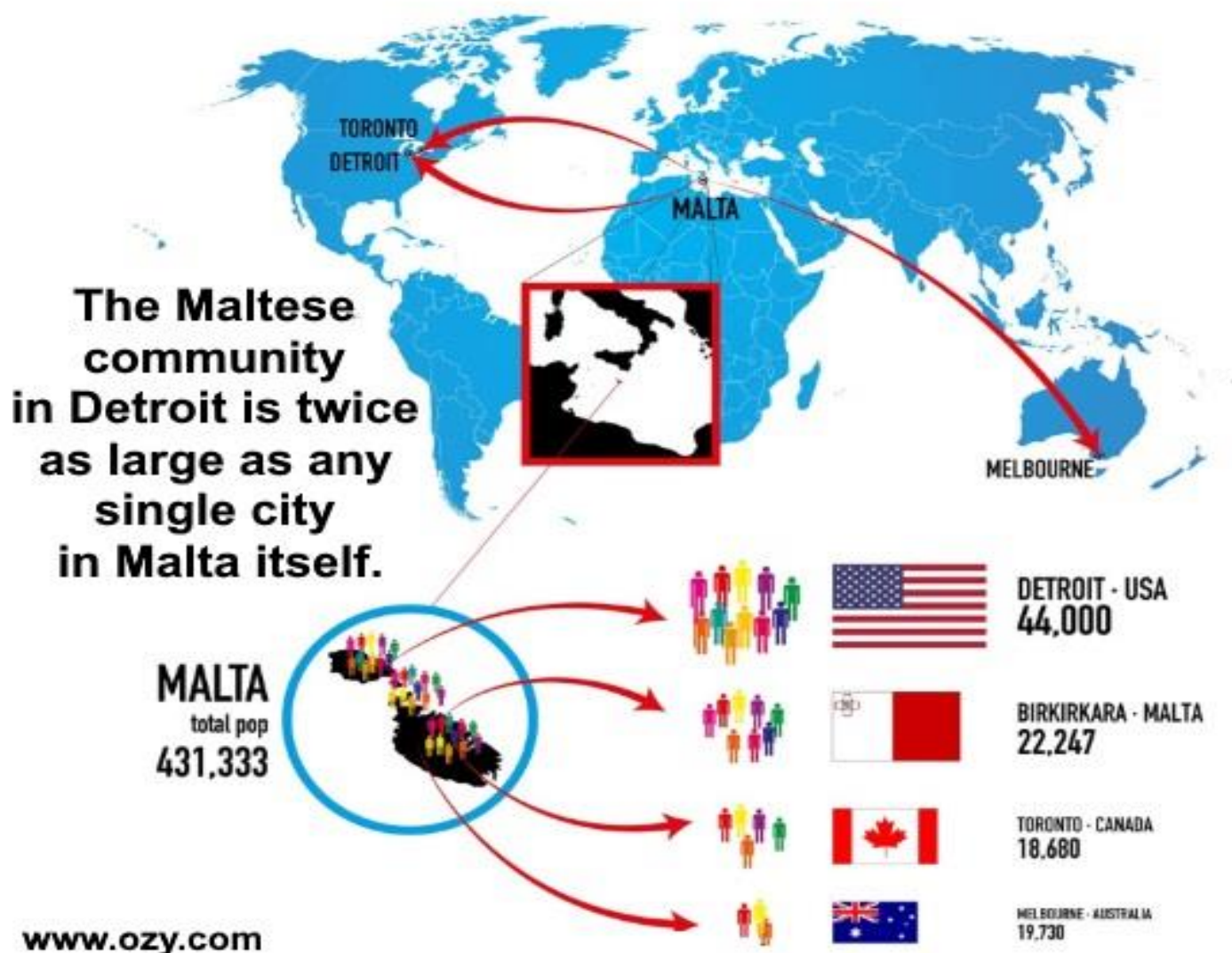


**MALTA AT WAR MUSEUM** - This is not only a museum about Malta's Second World War but – for me more interestingly – it offers tours of the vast World War Two shelter below ground. Don a hard hat, pass through the (reproduction) gas curtain and descend into the world of the Maltese during the worst of the war. Malta was the target of some of the most concentrated bombing anywhere and this area, home of the Grand Harbour dockyards doing crucial ship repair work, was hardest hit. Hundreds of people spent days and nights down in these hand-cut rock tunnels with only smoky little oil lamps for light. The guides here are exceptionally well informed and really bring the place to life (in English).

In summer, bring a sweatshirt as it can be cold by comparison with outside



# MALTA'S LARGEST CITIES



Regardless, the fact remains that even with 13,000+ Maltese people living primarily in the Detroit region, the Motor City is within the top 10 of Malta's largest cities, at home and abroad.

Birkirkara - 22,247 St. Paul's Bay - 21,046 Mosta - 20,241 Melbourne, Australia - 19,730

Toronto, Canada - 18,680 Hal Qormi - 16,779 Haż-Żabbar - 15,404 Tas-Sliema - 16,854

**Detroit, Michigan - 13,726** In-Naxxar - 13,443

But, let's go back to the idea of 44,000 and our second (and even third) generation Maltese living in Metro-Detroit. What matters is, at the end of the day there are probably somewhere in the ballpark of 44,000 people who do identify, to some extent, as Maltese in the region and that does make the Detroit area vitally important in the global Maltese world.

These numbers are excellent reminders of our stewardship to our collective, global, Maltese heritage. We live in the United States (or Canada for our friends in Windsor and beyond) but we are still Maltese. I have studied Maltese communities in North America for years now and from their first founding in the 1910s and 1920s, they all have desired to be in touch and more importantly remembered by their friends, family, politicians, and religious figures back home.

We are lucky in that we are not forgotten by people in Malta. Most sitting Prime Ministers of Malta make it a priority to visit Detroit. Many other politicians, religious members, and even major entertainers endeavour to visit us. Hopefully you can take part and do your duty to help us preserve the history and heritage of this Maltese **COMMUNITY WITHIN THIS GREAT AMERICAN CITY.** AUGUST 17, 2017 MARC SANKO



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