



# Maltese e-Newsletter



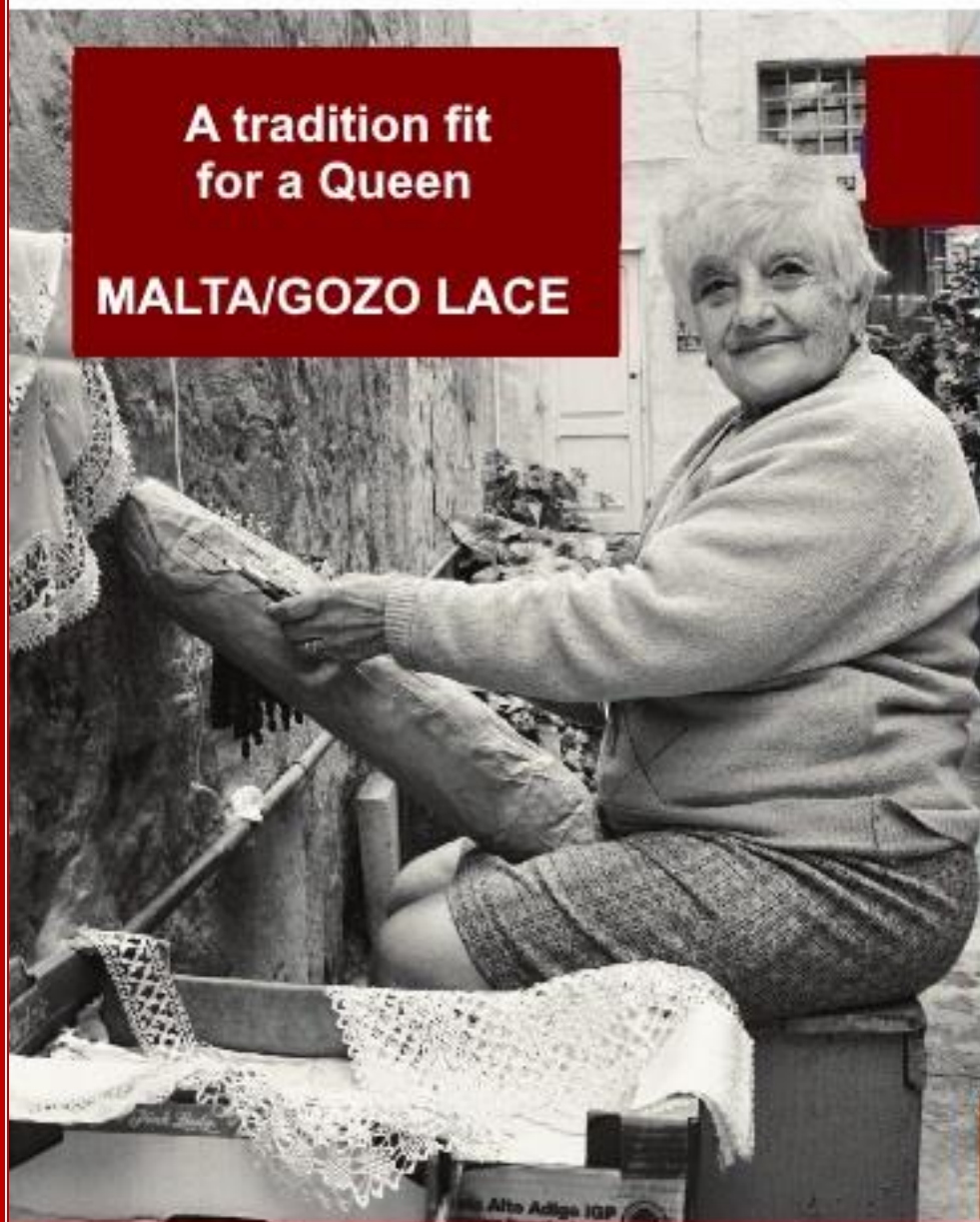
**The Journal of the Maltese Diaspora**

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**A tradition fit  
for a Queen**

**MALTA/GOZO LACE**



**Maltese Lady at the well  
Ed Caruana Dingli**



**The Sovereign Order of Malta is one of the oldest institutions of Western and Christian civilisation. A lay religious order of the Catholic Church since 1113 and a subject of international law, the Sovereign Order of Malta has diplomatic relations with over 100 states and the European Union, and permanent observer status at the United Nations. Today, the Order of Malta is active in 120 countries.**



## The Grand Master Inaugurates New Care Home in the UK 28/09/2018

The Edwardstow Court care home in Gloucestershire, managed by the Order of Malta in the United Kingdom, was officially inaugurated with the delivery of a minibus, donated by the Global Fund for Forgotten People, by Grand Master Fra' Giacomo Dalla Torre who also unveiled an inaugural plaque.

This new centre has four floors offering 48 bedrooms with en-suite bathrooms and various rooms for listening to music, for social activities such as painting and cooking or discovering together the traditions of other countries. There is also a sensory bathroom to alleviate rheumatic pain and a large garden with aromatic herbs and opportunities for gardening.

These are just some of the features of the new care home, the 72th to be run by the Order of Malta through the "Orders of Saint John Care Trust"; the Trust currently runs 72 care homes and 16 accommodation schemes in England, providing support and housing to residents and tenants across Lincolnshire, Oxfordshire, Gloucestershire, Wiltshire, West Sussex and Suffolk. The centre opened in March and will reach its maximum capacity of 48 guests over the coming months.

The Grand Master wanted to visit the home in person, meeting and chatting with many of the guests present, almost all with problems of dementia or convalescing after an operation or an illness. "It is a great honour to be here today for the opening of this splendid new home. The Sovereign Order of Malta has a long experience in offering high-level care and I am truly happy that this tradition is being carried on here in Edwardstow Court. I express my warm thanks to all the staff who take care of the guests," said Fra' Giacomo Dalla Torre at the end of his visit to the centre.

The minibus delivered to the care home management will allow guests to make regular excursions around the beautiful countryside and pretty villages.



## Five locals pledge to serve the Lord in the sick and poor

*Joshua and Lindsey Bachman are pictured following their investiture into the the Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of St. John of Jerusalem, of Rhodes, and of Malta in Washington, D.C. Locals Stephen Minnis, Michael O'Shaughnessy, and Doug Rivard were also invested into the order. (Photo courtesy of Lindsey Bachman)*

**By Sara Kraft**

"I had the same feeling I had when I converted to Catholicism, the feeling of now being part of something greater than myself," explained lawyer Joshua Bachman. "When I became Catholic, there was a bigger entity that was calling the shots. There's a comfort and joy in that. Through the Knights of Malta, I have a room within the mansion to carry out my calling as a Catholic."



Recently, Joshua Bachman and wife Lindsey, along with Stephen Minnis, Michael O'Shaughnessy, and Doug Rivard were invested into the Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of St. John of Jerusalem, of Rhodes, and of Malta (known as the Order of Malta for short). The Bachmans, Michael O'Shaughnessy, and Doug Rivard's investiture into the Order was held in Washington, D.C. with a Mass including at least fifteen bishops and the papal nuncio.

The Order of Malta is a lay religious order of the Catholic Church with approximately 13,500 Knights and Dames located throughout the globe. The Order of Malta dates back to around 1048. It was founded as a religious and military order to help sick and injured pilgrims to the Holy Land. As a lay religious order, members pledge to obey the laws of the church, defend the faith, and serve our Lord in the sick and the poor. Although its roots are ancient, the Order of Malta continues to live this pledge in our modern world.

"My desire to join the Order was due to both an interest in history and desire to provide 'hands on' service to the poor and the sick," explained Visitation parishioner Michael O'Shaughnessy, in-house legal counsel at Sprint. "I was always interested in the history of the Church and Medieval times – fascinated, in particular, with the knights and orders during the Crusades in their defense of the Faith and service to its members. The Order is different in its focus on serving the poor and the sick and as a spiritual home for its members."

Each region of the Order of Malta has its own ministries that it serves. Two regions exist in the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph – the St. Joseph region and a greater Kansas City region, which also includes members from the Archdiocese of Kansas City, Kansas. Between the two chapters, there are approximately 60 Knights, Dames, and chaplains who serve in over a dozen ministries including the Duchesne Clinic, Shalom House, Prison Ministry, Christmas in October, Little Sisters of the Poor, the Haven in St. Joseph and the Bishop Sullivan Center Food Kitchen. Recently, an Order of Malta Federal Association grant check for \$23,107 was awarded to Community Missions Corporation in St. Joseph for improvements to help serve the chronically homeless.

The order has three international projects. Participation in a pilgrimage to Lourdes during which several thousand very sick "maladies" enjoy a week of intense prayer and fellowship is requested of each Knight and Dame in their first three years of investiture. Additionally, the order operates the Holy Family Hospital in Bethlehem, a maternity hospital that serves women of all faiths, and Malteser International, a humanitarian relief organization serving disaster victims all around the world.

"About the time we were asked to check out the order, we were discerning specifically how we could help the poor like Jesus asked us," explained Lindsey. "Caring for the poor needs to be a central part of our lives. This order addresses that call."

In addition to practicing the corporal works of mercy, the Knights and Dames are quick to credit the Order of Malta with transforming their spiritual lives.

"The Knights focus on service to the poor and the sick is not just one of service but of prayer as well," added Michael. "Though such prayer and service is not, for lack of a better phrase, 'parish bound,' I readily acknowledge that since beginning my spiritual journey with the Order I have become much more involved in my parish spiritual activities, including serving as a Eucharistic Minister and participating in retreats."

"The order is a helpful construct to do more on a daily basis. It strengthened my relationship with Jesus through daily prayer and helped me to have a higher expectation of myself," explained pediatric radiologist Dr. Doug Rivard.

The order has a daily prayer the Knights and Dames are encouraged to pray. "The charism of the order is pilgrimage," explained Joshua. He added it encompasses not just the annual pilgrimage to Lourdes, but is expanded to include the pilgrimage to sainthood.

"I appreciate the mission of Malta to defend the faith and serve the poor," explained Stephen Minnis, President of Benedictine College in Atchison, Kansas. Stephen is a St. Joseph, Missouri native and alum of St. Francis Xavier School and Bishop LeBlond High School. "This mission touched my heart and I believed it was consistent with my mission and what we are doing at Benedictine College too. In my short time with the members of the Knights of Malta, I have been moved by the sincerity of its members and am honored to be a part of this historical order in the Church."

## Grand Officer Cross with Swords pro Merito Melitensi awarded to Chief of Defence of Lithuania



**The oldest Christian charitable organisation, more than 900 years old Order of Malta has bestowed the Grand Officer Cross with Swords pro Merito Melitensi on Chief of Defence of Lithuania Lieutenant General Arvydas Pocius.**

Lithuania's Chief of Defence was honoured with a high decoration for a long-lived logistic support to the campaign of the Order of Malta "Maltese Soup" which aims at calling the attention of the society to the old, impoverished or ill lonely people.

"Although this honourable award was given to me, it really is a merit of soldiers of the Lithuanian Armed Forces. We, soldiers of Lithuania, are an inseparable part of the society, therefore helping our socially vulnerable countrymen is our duty," said LTG A.Pocius upon accepting the decoration.

"Lithuanian Armed Forces have proved by deeds that it cares for the weak in the society – the impoverished, the deprived, the old," said Ambassador of the Order of Malta in Lithuania baron Christian von Bechtolsheim. "Both, the leadership and ordinary soldiers of the Lithuanian Armed Forces assisting in the "Maltese Soup" campaign do it actively and with goodwill. These men are not just strong and brave but also kind-hearted and sensitive."

The Lithuanian Armed Forces have been with the Maltese campaign since its outset in 2006. Soldiers help transporting huge military tents to the locations where the soup is distributed, help to put them up, stay on guard in such locations, help transporting the soup. The "Maltese Soup" campaign has already become traditional in Vilnius and other cities of Lithuania – hot soup is distributed to people, they are invited to donate for the impoverished and seniors, public music performances are held. The money raised is put to the Maltese fund and is used for paying for care and food for senior people.

According to President of the Maltese Order Assistance Council Romas Abunevičius, another instance of cooperation with the Lithuanian Armed Forces is the money raised by the community of the Military Academy of Lithuania in Vilnius for providing food for homeless people. The community is constantly donating their personal income for buying food and for other Maltese support activities. The most recent instance of such cooperation is a social campaign "Maltese Easter". The money collected for coffee sold at the canteen of the Academy was dedicated for buying food for impoverished seniors. The money raised during Social Days for post cards made by children and bought by military personnel were also used for that purpose.

The Assistance Council of the Order of Malta was established in Lithuania 1991. Currently it is implementing social projects in 28 towns of Lithuania and unites over 800 volunteers.

*Spokesperson to the Chief of Defence of Lithuania Captain Tomas Pakalniškis, mobile phone no. 00370 657 61271, 00370 682 25359, Email: [tomas.pakalniskis@mil.lt](mailto:tomas.pakalniskis@mil.lt)*



## A tradition fit for a Queen Maltese/Gozo lace

Lace making, otherwise known as '*il-bizzilla*', is one of Malta's oldest and most valued beautiful traditions. Maltese lace is usually made from cream-coloured Spanish silk. However, what makes Maltese lace truly unique is its inclusion of the symbolic Maltese cross into the lace pattern. Discover more about the origins of Maltese lace and book your [flights to Malta](#) to learn the craft for yourself.



The lace pattern is initially hand drawn on parchment paper, and holes are pricked to show where the bobbin pins need to be placed. The lace is then made using various threads which are each tied to a bobbin pin to produce beautifully intricate items such as table centre pieces, bridal veils or handkerchiefs. The tradition dates back to the time of the Knights of St John from 1530-1798. Back then, the bobbin lace produced was used as to accessorise the clothing of noblemen. Due to its popularity during this time, the Maltese grew increasingly skilled and specialised in the art of lace making. This craft was often encouraged by the Church, as it was also used to embellish the clothing of the Clergy. Lace making, along with other textile crafts such as weaving eventually became the main source of income of many rural families in Malta and [Gozo](#).



Lace making almost faced an extinction during the economic depression in the 19th century. Fortunately, the tradition was saved by a handful of individuals who strongly supported it. The first person was Lady Hamilton Chichester who sent lacemakers to Malta from Genoa to teach locals how to produce Italian bobbin lace. In the meantime, Dun Guzepppe, a designer in Gozo, was busy promoting the production of lace in Gozo. This eventually led to the lace produced in Gozo developing its own distinct style.

However, the most famous admirer of Maltese lace was Queen Victoria. Her love for the delicate Maltese lace led to a considerable increase in its popularity. Incidentally, the Queen sent a piece of the intricate fabric to London in 1881, to be displayed at the 'Exhibition of Industries' in 1881. In fact, a close look at the statue of Queen Victoria in Republic Square, Valletta reveals a sculpted lace shawl over the Queen's lap, reflecting her love for the crafted fabric. Maltese lace became so popular at one point that copies of the most popular Maltese lace designs were made and sent to China for mass production.



Nowadays, the tradition is still kept alive throughout Malta and Gozo. However it is by far not as popular and widely practiced as it once was. Nevertheless, by taking a walk through the quieter streets of Gozo, you will most likely come across local women making lace on their doorstep - a process which is truly fascinating to watch.

If you would like to try your hand at lace making, traditional Maltese lace making courses will be taking place EVERY SUMMER. These will take place at L-Ixtabi Casa Bottega, a traditional Gozitan farmhouse in Gozo, allowing participants to gain insight into the calm and tranquil environment which traditional lace makers would have enjoyed in the past.

Author: [Sabine Jung](#)



## **Maltese Elderly Thanksgiving Day in Sydney - 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.**

Dr. George M Boffa

The Maltese Elderly Thanksgiving Day has just celebrated a significant milestone, the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. To many in Malta this has no tangible meaning. But not so to the hundreds of senior citizens who attended in Sydney today. The generosity and the kindness shown to them today, September 26<sup>th</sup>, is a clear indication of respect, of gratitude and of love by our community. To the thousands who have celebrated the day since its inception, it has remained an indelible memory until death.

The symbol chosen for this event by a Maltese nun, Sr Mary Ann Grima, is significant. It is an olive tree that is robust and capable of regeneration - a symbol of peace, dialogue and heritage reminiscent of the Malta which our elderly left behind.

Gratitude and praise are due to many who helped and contributed. The occasion included Mass, morning tea, a generous, tasty lunch, music and entertainment. The honour of cutting a beautiful 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary cake was given to Mrs Catie Mifsud Ellul and Mr Emmanuel Micallef, the two eldest seniors present for the occasion.

The Maltese Elderly Thanksgiving Day offers the warm experience of making new friendships and renewing of old ones. There is also the deep satisfaction of having one's contribution to society publicly acknowledged.

Mass this year was concelebrated by Fr Noel Bianco MSSP, one of our dedicated migrants' chaplains and by Fr Anthony Bayada P.P of San Lawrenz, who hails from Xaghra, in Gozo.

Mrs Antoinette Mascari proved to be an energetic M.C.

Maltese Elderly Thanksgiving Day, the inspiration of Sr Grima, now unfortunately ill for some time, flowed from the International Year of the Family. Sister Mary Ann wanted to honour the elderly who are often hardly remembered, barely recognised, and little appreciated or thanked for their contribution to the establishment of the Maltese community in Australia and to the development of our new country, Australia. Help comes from many sources including Maltese businessmen. Sr Grima's approach was simple and direct. She told businessmen that the Maltese community contributed much to their success and it was appropriate that they should give something in return. Thankfully, some firms remain highly generous.

When the first Maltese Elderly Thanksgiving Day was organised about 100 people responded and enjoyed the day together. At that time, there were different reactions the leaders of the Maltese community.

Some were pessimistic and discouraging. They thought that the flames of enthusiasm of the first effort would quickly die out. They were very wrong. Others, a few, accepted Sr Grima's invitation keenly and continue to lend their support and encouragement with significant success and benefit for many. Over the years others have joined in. With none seeking recognition, praise or personal advancement, these good people have certainly travelled and arrived with honour and great merit.

So much so, that when the Hon Ken Wyatt A.M. Federal Minister for the Aged Care learnt of the occasion, he sent a beautiful letter of congratulations to the President and Members of the Maltese Elderly Thanksgiving Day Committee.

The minister's letter was rightly given due mention during the celebration. The occasion celebrates and acknowledges the contribution of the elderly Maltese migrants and remembers those among them who are forgotten and abandoned. Some have, from the very first, supported Sr Grima's mission and that of her worthy helpers. This year, the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, certificates of gratitude were presented to benefactors and contributors. Lawrence Buhagiar, Consul General, and George Boffa, Patron of the M.E.T.D. presented the certificates.

It is important to remember that there are needs; that there is loneliness and other heavy burdens, not rarely including the pain of abandonment, particularly among elderly migrants. These needs, these sad situations, are often hidden and remain unknown to visiting dignitaries from Malta.

Should you wish to help or to get in touch, the e-mail address of the Maltese Elderly Thanksgiving Day Committee is [metd@live.com.au](mailto:metd@live.com.au)



## CITADELLA VISITORS' CENTRE RECEIVES PRESTIGIOUS TEA THEA AWARD

Sarner's distinguished work on

the Cittadella Visitors' Centre has been rewarded with the themed entertainment industries top honour – a TEA Thea Award for Outstanding Achievement. The award, which recognises outstanding achievements in the creation of compelling places and experiences recognises the consistent level of high quality work that was put into this project. Other Thea-honoured attractions this year included 'Pandora – The World of Avatar' at Disney's Animal Kingdom at Walt Disney World in Orlando, Jameson Distillery Bow St. in Dublin and the DreamWorks Animation Zone at MOTIONGATE™ Dubai, so the Cittadella Visitors' Centre was in extremely good company.

The award was accepted on behalf of the Cittadella Visitors' Centre by a very special guest, H.E. Mr Pierre Clive Agius, Ambassador of the Republic of Malta to America, along with Ross Magri, Managing Director of Sarner International. H.E. Mr Pierre Clive Agius was delighted with the award, commenting: "We are all very proud of the Cittadella and I want to personally congratulate everyone involved, not only for receiving this award but for the beautiful work you all did."

Sarner worked closely with architect Martin Xuereb and the Ministry for Gozo, utilising the carefully designed structure of the reservoir and resulting in a visually striking walk through exhibition that draws the visitor deeper and deeper within the building whilst highlighting the characteristics of this unique site

This combination of history and technology made a material impression on the TEA Thea Awards Committee helping Cittadella Visitors' Centre being named for this prestigious award. The Thea Committee stated that "what makes this project so special is the combination of traditional exhibition techniques, exceptional storytelling and the 360° show finale, within the unique setting".



## Foreign workers should learn to speak Maltese

Foreign members of staff at Mater Dei Hospital are obliged to undergo a course in basic Maltese, in order to be able to carry out their duties in Malta. The course is offered by the Department of Maltese at the University of Malta, and focuses on medical Maltese.

Dr. Michael Spagnol from the Department of Maltese stated this morning on the TVAM programme that the course is aimed at foreign workers and medical students who come into contact with patients. Dr Spagnol added that it is included in the contract that if they fail the examinations, they can no longer work in Maltese hospitals. This is what Dr Spagnol stated about the Maltese language being taught to foreign workers:



**Louis Parnis with the Prime Minister Joseph Muscat**

**MR LOUIS PARNIS  
PRESIDENT OF THE GEORGE  
CROSS FALCONS COMMUNITY  
CENTRE OF WOLLONGONG VISITS  
MALTA**

Our visitation to Malta was overwhelming and enjoyable.

I was born in Marsa and migrated to Australia in 1973. Although we have been back to Malta twice this time we saw many changes and our experiences were of great admiration and we have seen that the culture and traditions are still alive.

Valletta is a city that never sleeps and we cannot count the number of times we visited in the 13-day program.

On the 13 September my wife and I were back to Malta from a cruise to Croatia. I

found myself in a suit in 35 degrees heat catching a bus to visit the Prime Minister at the Auberge de Castile, Valletta. The meeting was informative and we discussed his visit to Wollongong and the nice drive he endured from Sydney CBD.

On the 20th of September again finding myself travelling by bus to San Anton Gardens where we met the President. That day was very hot but the meeting was a beautiful experience and the President's secretary provided us with a tour of the Palace. This was a great occasion that we will never forget and the President's hospitality was tremendous.

Everywhere I went I spoke very highly of the Maltese Community and our ability to try to keep alive the Maltese culture and traditions here in Australia. The President is always encouraging us, leaders of the communities, to focus on positive ideas for the good and welfare of the young and older generations. Thanks, Louis Parnis President G.C.F.C. Wollongong NSW



**Luois Parnis with the President Marie Louise Coleiro Preca**



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**We thank the Maltese Community Councils, the many Maltese associations in Australia, Canada, UK and USA, readers from Malta, Gozo and Maltese scattered all over the world for their support. Your patronage is greatly appreciated and WE LOVE YOU**





## FONDAZZJONI BELT VICTORIA

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### Media Release

#### Magical Colours Exhibition

Artist Jo Debono is opening his new exhibition of paintings "*Ilwien Imsaħħra*" (=Magical Colours) on level 2 at IL-HAGAR museum (Pjazza San Ġorġ, Victoria) on Saturday 13 October @ 11am.

It can be visited to 28 October 9am to 5pm seven days a week and there is no entrance fee.

Other current exhibitions include Graham Gurr's "Images of the Orient" (till 19 October), St George Icons and Decorated Postcards.

#### Wirja ta' Ilwien Imsaħħra

Fil-Mużew IL-HAGAR (Pjazza San Ġorġ, Victoria) se tinfetaħ Wirja tal-artist Jo Debono "*Ilwien Imsaħħra*" nhar is-Sibt 13 t'Ottubru fil-11am.

Il-ħinijiet ikompli sebat ijiem fil-ġimgħa bejn id-9am u l-5pm sat-28 t'Ottubru - u m'hemmx ħlas tad-dħul.

Esibizzjonijiet kurrenti oħra jinkludu *Images of the Orient* ta' Graham Gurr's (sad-19 t'Ottubru), Ikoni ta' San Ġorġ u Kartolini Dekorati.

Many thanks for sending me the Maltese Newsletter which I enjoy reading and which I pass on to one of my schoolmates who now lives in Canada. God bless you **Herbert Lenicker**

Please keep me on your mailing list for the Maltese e-Newsletter. I look forward to each issue and send them on to other members of our local Maltese Canadian club **Dan Brock**  
**London, Ontario, Canada.**

**IT IS VERY ENCOURAGING TO RECEIVE HUNDREDS AND HUNDREDS OF EMAILS CONFIRMING THE SUBSCRIPTION – IT IS NOT POSSIBLE FOR US TO REPLY TO ALL OF THEM. SO OIF YOU HAVE WRITTEN TO US WE SAY TO YOU**

**"THANK YOU"**

## 'I no longer see her as my baby with Down Syndrome'

### 5-7 children born with DS in Malta every year



From left: Francesca, Mariah, Beppe, Nicole, Jordi, Katarina and Amber. Photos: Tickles and Giggles photography

*Children with Down syndrome go on to live happy, healthy and successful lives. Yet, outdated notions of the condition still persist, says **Sandra Borg**, whose daughter was born with the condition.*

One in 100, said the gynaecologist, those were my chances of my daughter being born with Down syndrome. All the antenatal tests had shown a healthy growing baby, so I put the thought out of my mind until, two weeks before her delivery was due, I kept having the same nagging thought.

When Katarina was born, I only had time for a quick look before she was taken away. I could see that she was beautiful, perfect – and that she had Down syndrome. When we waited for what seemed like ages and the paediatrician gave us the news officially, it just seemed like the beginning of a journey I had always somehow known I would take. *I could see that she was beautiful, perfect – and that she had Down syndrome*

Those early days were not easy. Some of our dreams came crashing down. My daughter would never be top of her class – would she get married, would she lead a completely independent life, would she have to face discrimination, what would become of her after my death? Thoughts and fears came flooding in. I thought my heart would break.

But as the days and months passed, Katarina's character started to shine through. Never was there a bubblier baby. Wherever we went, she smiled and gurgled at people, eliciting smiles and cuddles.

One year later, she is the light of our family. Sure, there are challenges – but slowly she is overcoming them, as we cheer her on like maniacs at every milestone.

Down syndrome is caused by an extra copy of chromosome 21 (Trisomy 21), the result of a genetic mutation at the time of conception, or soon after. It affects people of all ages and races irrespective of economic levels or culture. It is one of the most frequently occurring chromosomal anomalies found in humans, occurring approximately once in every 660 births.

According to the Down Syndrome Association Malta, in Malta it is recorded that approximately five to seven children with Down syndrome are born each year. Despite its relative frequency, a lot of outdated notions still persist around the condition. "We would like for people to understand the condition better," says Lawrence Mangion, father of 14-month-old Amber.

"So that parents of children with this condition are prepared and understand what it means. And that people understand that children with this condition are just like all the other children." Four-year-old Beppe, who was diagnosed with the condition at birth, lives a full and happy life, with a packed timetable, says his mother Vanessa Portanier.

"School, therapies and extra-curricular activities, like music and swimming. He also enjoys his 'break time' watching educational videos on iPad and also meeting people. He adores his grandparents, the rest of our family members and a few close friends who have been with us on this journey full of surprises."

Three-year-old Francesca Rausi, too, goes to school and has integrated very well in class with other children, says her mother Michelle.

"She participates in all activities, swimming, reading, singing... she loves school and loves being with her schoolfriends and teachers. She has never cried because she didn't want to go to school. She has learned so much - already she can understand both English and Maltese, she can easily identify colours, numbers, letters and she sings along with nursery rhymes."

Most parents, particularly in Malta, go through our same journey, with a diagnosis being given at birth. Like us, most are initially broken by the news, then recover quickly to channel their energy into their children's development and well-being.

"At first it was a big shock for us – but from that day we started the challenge and looked for information and dealt with our newborn beauty," says Reuben Spiteri, father of four-year-old Mariah.

"We started with all that had to be done, such as therapy, talks and all we could do to reach new goals... Now Mariah is doing very well and improving day by day. It is a big challenge for us. But I will do all that I can for her... Mariah is always happy and very outgoing so she makes you love her more each day.

Of course it helps to know that you are not alone. When Katarina was born, I thought that a piece of my heart was broken forever. And if I compare her to typical children – or think about the distant future – sometimes it still feels that way. But who is to define the meaning of a useful, successful life? And aren't we all on a troubled sea? Does anyone know what the future will bring? A year later, I no longer see her as my baby with Down Syndrome – and I know I am not alone in this – she is simply Katarina, the child I always wanted.

*This feature first appeared in September's edition of Pink magazine*



Sunday, September 23, 2018, by Dylan Seychell

## When computers see

Local researchers at the University of Malta are able to programme computers to detect people in pictures and to define their poses. Photo: The People of Malta/Gatt and Seychell, 2018

Have you ever paused for a moment and counted the number of cameras you actually own and use? It is fine, you may do so now. This probably ranges from digital cameras to webcams and cameras which are built-in your mobile

phone and tablet. Even more, a single device may have more than one camera. As a matter of fact, many of the latest smartphones have around three cameras with concept phones indicating that we will be seeing phones with more cameras than that.

What does this mean? First of all, it confirms that from a technological perspective, we mastered the ability of capturing digital representations of our real world. Cameras have been with us for centuries and it was only since a few decades ago that photographs and videos were actually made commercially viable and available. In practice, this meant that it took humanity 200 years to digitise photography. As Sara Robinson from Google explains, once everyone started making effective use of digital cameras, we discovered that taking digital photographs was actually the easy part. The real technological challenge of this century is enabling computers to understand the content of the images and videos we capture in our daily lives.

While you are probably wondering why we should bother with having machines understand what an image contains, let me assure you that, unknowingly, you are expecting computers to do so (even if that means a fine for over-speeding just out of the Santa Venera tunnels!). Computer vision is the multi-disciplinarily field of study that is converting this utility device we call 'camera' into the ultimate input device. It takes different professionals working together to deliver this ultimate experience; engineers to build and design hardware for capturing and transmitting visual data, computer scientists to design the most efficient algorithms, and artificial intelligence specialists to design frameworks that make computers work a bit more like us humans.

Imagine a CCTV camera monitoring an elderly person living alone and it detects anomalies in behaviour such as laying on a sofa at a time when that person usually does not and prompts the person with a message to check whether everything is fine before calling the emergency service. You may even imagine a drone hovering over our coasts and detecting plastic bottles, locating them before ending up in the sea, harming the environment.

You may now stop imagining. These are actual projects currently being researched and developed at the Department of Artificial Intelligence at the University of Malta. This is just the start of what can be achieved and our undergraduate and postgraduate students are being equipped with knowledge and skills to build such technology that can make a difference to humanity.



*Dylan Seychell is a resident academic in the Department of AI at the University of Malta specialising in computer vision. He is the founder of Malta's Google Developers Group and tweets on @DylanSeychell.*

## Mary's sewing a blessing



BY LINDY MCNAMARA

From sewing school uniforms through to christening gowns for her grandchildren, Mary Bugeja thought she had accomplished most things as a dressmaker – until she was asked to make a mitre to be worn at one of Australia's largest ever Catholic celebrations.

*Mary Bugeja working in one of the new sewing rooms.*

The challenge was set by the Archbishop of Adelaide Wilson who wanted to wear the mitre at the canonisation of Mary MacKillop in 2010.

He had heard that Mary, who joined the Adelaide Cathedral parish as a sacristan in 2007, was a talented seamstress and had no hesitation in approaching her with the proposed task.

"He had a lot of faith in me and that gave me confidence. I had certainly never made one of those before, but I decided to give it a go," Mary said.

Drawing on 35 years' experience of running a business which made uniforms for schools around Adelaide, Mary sewed the mitre to perfection and her accomplishment saw many more projects sent her way. In recent years she has been responsible for producing beautiful chasubles, altar cloths and albs for different churches within the parish, while also juggling her job as a sacristan.

"The sewing here all began when I was washing and ironing clothing for the Cathedral and zips would break, and so I just started mending them," Mary explained.

"Then we were short of albs – the kids were coming in to serve and they had no albs – so I asked if I could get some material and make some.

"When the Archbishop found out about my sewing, he had other things that he wanted fixed and then he asked me if I could make a mitre for him for the Mary MacKillop canonisation."

A bit like an elf toiling in Santa's workshop, Mary, 72, made do with the facilities available in the Cathedral buildings but as demand grew, she needed to have more space.

"It got to the point where it was not ideal to work in such a restricted environment.

"Jane Garforth was the office manager in the Archdiocese at the time and recognised that a different venue needed to be explored, but nothing was found to be suitable to deal with the demands of sewing.

"Eventually I realised that the upper level of the sacristy could be a possible option because two rooms were vacant.

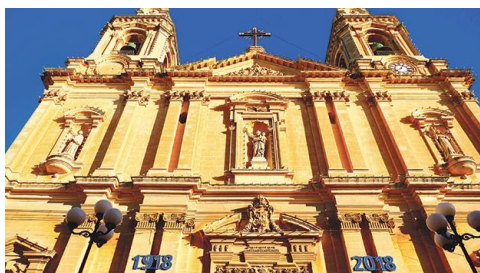
It wasn't being used because the staircase was deemed too dangerous. "It was in a bad state – it was dark and there were cobwebs everywhere but I thought it could work," she said.

Mary and Jane pursued the use of the space with Archbishop Wilson who saw the potential and granted permission for a new staircase to be built.

The rooms were upgraded and now provide a spacious, well-lit cutting room and a separate sewing room, complete with domestic and industrial machines. The area was officially blessed by Bishop Elect Charles Gauci on August 14.

"I'm so grateful to Archbishop Wilson for the role he played in this new sewing room," Mary said.

"I just love the space and now that we have the industrial machines there is the potential to generate money for the Cathedral by making garments for other churches."



## Sacro Cuor Parish, Sliema, celebrates its centenary

Joseph Grech recounts the history of Sliema's second parish

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart church became the second of Sliema's four parishes on September 24, 1918. Photo: Shutterstock

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart parish church, Sliema, better known as Sacro Cuor, is this week marking 100 years since it became the second of Sliema's four parishes on September 24, 1918. It was preceded by the church of Our Lady Star of the Sea (Stella Maris), which became a parish church in 1878, and was followed by St Gregory the Great church, which became a parish in 1943, and Jesus of Nazareth parish church in 1973.

The church owes its origin to Dun Pawl Vella, a priest from Valletta. Seeing Sliema's ever-increasing population in the 19th century, and the opening of Prince of Wales Road, which led to new residences in the area, around 1874 Fr Vella felt a call to build a new church for the Maltese province of the Order of Friars Minor to cater for the spiritual needs of residents in the area.

He formed a committee including himself, Pietru Pawl Galea, Giacchino Ellul, who owned the Imperial Hotel, Kalçidon Schembri and Pawlu Souchet. The committee drew up plans to raise funds and commissioned architect Giovanni Domenico Debono, who designed a church in a Roman-Ionic style. Builders volunteered to work for free on Sundays and feast days to help build the church.

The committee submitted a petition to the Curia, and on May 16, 1877, Archbishop Carmelo Scicluna and the Cathedral Chapter approved the building of the new church. A mere four days later, a ceremony was held on the site chosen for the church to mark the start of construction work.

Fr Vella recommended that the new church be given the title 'Our Lady of the Sacred Heart of Jesus', or 'Sacro Cuor', as a national monument marking the 50th anniversary of the episcopal ordination of Pope Pius IX. The first stone of the church was laid on June 3, 1877, to mark his episcopal jubilee.

The altar is surrounded by five paintings by Maltese artist Giuseppe Cali, one of which is his masterpiece representing St Gerome half naked in the grotto in Bethlehem

The church was built between 1877 and 1881. However, construction work was hampered by a shortage of funds, and suffered a setback on October 22, 1879, when one of the main pillars on which the church roof, and eventually the dome, was to rest, cracked. It was realised that the pillars should have been built using hard Coralline limestone rather than the softer globigerina limestone. After this incident, the four main pillars and those of the aisle were dismantled and rebuilt.

The church was decorated with gilded sculptures and paintings. The dome features paintings of Franciscan saints and the ceiling depicts joyful episodes from the life of the Virgin Mary. The altar is surrounded by five paintings by Maltese artist Giuseppe Cali, one of which is his masterpiece representing St Gerome half naked in the grotto in Bethlehem.

Artist Gerolamo Darmanin was commissioned to create the statue of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, which was ceremoniously brought to the church on June 26, 1881, the day it was consecrated and opened for worship. A convent for the Franciscans was also built next to the church.

Designed in a Roman-Ionic style by Architect Giovanni Domenico Debono, the church was opened on June 26, 1881, and enlarged in 1930. Photo: Shutterstock

At the church opening, the Archbishop presented the committee with five conditions: firstly, that the church and its property be passed on to the Franciscan Order; secondly, that the usufruct of the altar of St Joseph be retained by the Archbishop; thirdly, that the Archbishop deliver panegyric on the eve of the titular feast; fourthly, that the superior of the Franciscan community donate not less than two rotolos of candles to the Archbishop every year on June 1; and finally, that if the church needed to become a parish, the Franciscans must accept. These conditions were accepted by the Council of the Franciscan Order on November 12, 1881, and the Order took possession of the church the day after.

An incident took place on the feast day on June 19, 1910, when, during the singing of vespers, a group of men and youths grabbed the titular statue of the Madonna and quickly took it on a spontaneous procession and left it on the church parvis. In the subsequent days, a total of 39 men and youths, all feast enthusiasts, were charged over the incident. Giovanni Micallef, known as ir-Rabti, was condemned to three days' imprisonment and Giovanni Suda two days, while Ġużeppi Schembri, George Bundy and others were fined.

The following year, two requests were made to the ecclesiastical and civil authorities to give permission for a procession with the statue to take place. Both were refused. Finally, a petition signed by 1,150 parishioners was submitted to the Franciscans. The Father Guardian, Fr Felič Grima, presented it to Archbishop Pietro Pace who accepted it on April 21, 1911.

The first outdoor feast was celebrated on July 2, amid great enthusiasm. The procession with the statue proceeded from the church along Strada San Trofimo, Prince of Wales Road, Strada San Piju V and back up Strada San Trofimo. Since that day the procession has been held for 117 consecutive years on the first Sunday of July, except for two years during World War II.

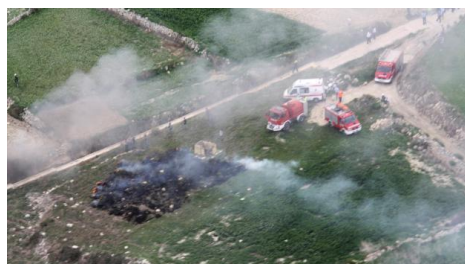
As Sliema's population continued to expand, the need was felt for Sacro Cuor to be made Sliema's second parish. The official designation was issued on September 24, 1918, and on September 29, the church started functioning as a parish with four baptisms being held. In 1930, the church was enlarged to cater better for the parish's increasing population.

On the feast day on June 19, 1910, a group of men and youths grabbed the titular statue of the Madonna and took it out on a spontaneous procession

On June 9, 1940, Italy declared war on England, and Malta heard an air siren wail for the first time. The parish church suffered two tragedies during the war. One took place on March 17, 1942, at about 8am, when bombs fell on the area near the Sliema police station. Twenty-two people died buried under the rubble, including Albert Mifsud, a young altar boy who had just served at Mass at Sacro Cuor church. These victims and another 22 residents who were injured in the incident are commemorated by a plaque on the wall of the police station.

Fifteen days later, on Ash Wednesday, April 1, 1942, at 3pm, a series of bombs hit the church and houses on either side of it. The Franciscan convent and the chapel of the Madonna of Pompeii were destroyed, while the church was heavily damaged. In this incident, another 28 Sliema residents were killed and 23 others injured. Among those who perished in the attack was Franciscan father Diegu Galdes. The names of the fallen are listed in the parish church's chapel of the sacrament. After the war, the church and convent were restored, chapels dedicated to St Paschal Baylo and St Francis of Assisi were built, as well as a new sacristy. These were inaugurated by Archbishop Michael Gonzi on November 30, 1950. *This article is based on research conducted by Tony Terribile.*





Picture: Liliana Borg - [mynews@timesofmalta.com](mailto:mynews@timesofmalta.com)

Picture: Clayton Curmi

## Tragedy repeats itself

*Fatal blast in Għarb, 24 people had been killed as a result of fireworks-related accidents in Gozo alone. Historian **Eddie Attard** traced a bloody trail through the decades.*

- **March 31, 1893:** Karmnu Grech died in the Gran Kastell at Victoria. The Grech family was one of the first to manufacture fireworks on the island and, at the time, there were neither fireworks factories nor proper legislation. Fireworks were manufactured and stored in inhabited places.
- **June 3, 1949:** An explosion occurred at the San Lawrenz church centre, where fireworks were being manufactured and stored without a police permit. At the time of the explosion, Żarenu Formosa, 21, Victor Formosa, 13, and Ġużeppi Mizzi, 18, were inside the building. The three suffered serious injuries and Mr Formosa died nine days after being admitted to hospital.
- **September 7, 1949:** Franġisku Camilleri, 23, was manufacturing a petard in a tin can at Qala when the device exploded. He died at the Gozo hospital after suffering serious stomach injuries.
- **August 19, 1955:** A man and boy died after an explosion at the Fontana Catholic Centre. Ġużeppi Schembri, 32, Salvu Formosa, 40, Ġanni Cini, 22, and Toni Formosa, six, who were on the premises, were injured. Schembri died at the Gozo hospital three days later and the boy passed away the following day.
- **May 14, 1960:** Pawlu Vella, a soldier of the 3rd LAA Regiment, Royal Malta Artillery, was manufacturing fireworks near the old parish church in Xewkija when something went wrong, causing an explosion. When the police arrived on the scene, Mr Vella was already dead.
- **April 6, 1963:** Following an explosion at Tal-Ħanżiera, limits of Xewkija, Marjannu Pace, 20, and Roża Haber were injured but survived.
- **August 18, 1967:** The illegal manufacture of fireworks continued unabated and no one dared to report that fireworks were being manufactured and stored at the Catholic Action Centre in Żebbuġ. The centre was completely wrecked after an explosion at about noon. Mario Saliba, 18, who was on the premises, died. A man was charged with manslaughter and sentenced to six months imprisonment. The Court of Appeal reduced the sentence to three months and imposed a fine.
- **May 25, 1968:** Carmelo Rapa, 11, from Xewkija, died when he tried to open a petard which he found in a field. Two boys who were in the vicinity suffered minor injuries. It had been discarded the previous day during the feast of St John the Baptist at Xewkija. Children used to fill water pipes with the explosive mixture and ignite them for amusement.
- **July 15, 1974:** In the afternoon of the day after the feast of Our Lady of Assistance celebrated in Kerċem, some children found a number of petards in an empty well near the local school. After igniting one of the petards on the spot, the children extracted the contents from another. They then proceeded to the steps leading to the parish centre and filled a water pipe with explosive material. A fuse was attached to the pipe and, when it was ignited, Gregory Gambin, 12, died instantly. His brother Anton, 14, was seriously injured. He was immediately operated upon but died soon after. Two other children suffered serious injuries as a result of the explosion.
- **June 18, 1984:** An explosion demolished the Cilia Fireworks Factory in Ta' Żabetta, limits of Sannat. Owner Toni Cilia, 78, and his son Joseph, 58, both died as a result of the explosion. Another victim was Joseph Attard, 31, who on that day happened to be there to buy fireworks.
- **July 14, 1993:** Ġużeppi Cini, 49, and Godwin Cini, 21, lost their lives while manufacturing explosives at their fireworks factory in Qortin taż-Żebbuġ. The bodies of the victims were found some distance away from each other.
- **October 23, 1997:** Joe Grima and his father-in-law, Mikiel Azzopardi, 52, died after an explosion at a fireworks factory in Santa Margerita valley, limits of Munxar. In spite of his serious injuries, Mr Azzopardi managed to walk up to Cilia Fireworks Factory for assistance. In 1980, Mr Azzopardi had lost half of the palm and some fingers of one of his hands when a petard ignited.

- **January 28, 2000:** Adrian Agius, 45, died when working at Kerċem's 15 ta' Awissu Vampa ta' Ljun factory. Another man had just left the factory before the explosion.
- **September 5, 2010:** An explosion at the Farrugia Brothers Factory in Għarb rocks Gozo and wiped out an entire family: owner Nenu Farrugia, 67, his two sons Noel, 31, and Raymond, 32, daughter-in-law Antinette, son-in-law Peter Paul Micallef, 35, and Jean-Pierre Azzopardi, 27, a family friend



## The song “Mhux kulma jleqq deheb” wins l-Għanja tal-Poplu Festival

Posted On September 2, 2018 Report: Mario Micallef

“Mhux kulma jleqq deheb”, (“Not All That Glitters is Gold”), a song sung by Michela Galea, has won the Festival “L-Għanja tal-Poplu” (“Song of the People”) that was held last month at the Pjazza Teatru Rjal in Valletta. The Festival is a celebration of Maltese song.

On a summer's evening with temperatures slightly cooler, the Pjazza Teatru Rjal held the 42nd edition of this Festival which aims to profile the quality of Maltese song.

First place went to the song “Mhux kulma jleqq deheb” sung by Michela Galea, words by Emil Calleja Bayliss and Renato Briffa's music. The song reflects that sometimes appearances are deceptive and something that seems to glitter may in reality be greatly different. It also emphasises that to achieve success one has to be dedicated to work towards achieving one's targets.

Second place went to “Mhux kif hsibt” interpreted by Dwett, while third placed was “Allura” sung by Philip Vella. Among other awards, the meritorious “L-Għanja li Tibqà” went to Maestro Paul Abela for his contribution spanning 50 years on the Malta music scene. In yesterday's Festival finals, Abela, together with Maestro Joe Brown, directed the Malta Concert Orchestra made up of 40 musicians. The audience greatly enjoyed interpretations by Georgina and Roger Tirazona of excerpts from songs composed by Paul Abela over the years including very well known songs like “Kemmi hu sabih”, “Tfajjel ċkejken”, “Tema” and “L-Aħħar Bidwi f'Wied il-Għasel”.



## Sagrada Familia - Work on it has been ongoing for 136 years and still going

24 September, 2018

**Works on the Sagrada Familia basilica in Barcelona**, a masterpiece by architect Antoni Gaudí, have been going on for 136 years.

The basilica, which is recognized by UNESCO as a world heritage site, was never issued with a permit for its works, which are expected to be concluded by 2026. The only issued document goes back to 1882 when the Sant Martí de Provençals requested the architect to proceed with

the project and register the cathedral in the properties register. Gaudí never obeyed the order and by 1995, the cathedral was listed as a piece of vacant land which is owned by the Barcelona diocese.

In 2015, negotiations had started to regularize the building, which are expected to be announced at the end of this year – however even if the building is not yet officially regularized, works will continue on the basilica. It was revealed in 2007 that eight columns of the cathedral are invading the pavement, however authorities failed to take action. Some 12,000 tourists visit the basilica daily and it is estimated that some 4.5 million visit the site annually.



## IL-KOPPJA MERCIECA TINGHATA GIEH L-GHASRI

Nhar is-Sibt filgħaxija, 29 ta' Settembru, id-dentist Franco Mercieca mwieded l-Għasri u martu Audrey mwieda Hal Luqa ngħataw Gieh l-Għasri mis-Sindku tal-lokal waqt ċerimonja fil-Knisja Parrokkjali tal-Għasri wara l-Quddiesa mill-Kappillan Dun Edward Xuereb. Dr Mercieca huwa magħruf għall-interess kbir li juri fil-festi esterni tat-titular Kristu Salvatur u jgħin b'kull mod biex din il-festa tkompli tikber. Huwa ggradwa fl-1997 u

baqa' jispesjalizza f'diversi oqsma tad-Dentistria fost l-Implantologija barra minn Malta. Minn kmieni ħass il-ħtieġa li jaħdem b'mod volontarju biex jgħin lill-parroċċa ta' raħal twelidu.

Fil-fatt huwa membru attiv fil-Kumitat tal-festa ta' barra fejn ħa ħsieb fuq medda ta' ħames snin biex jinbidel l-armar ta' barra fosthom jinxtraw tlettax- il arblu għall-pjazza Salvatur, jinħadmu tlettax-il alabarda, jiġu restawrati l-istatwi ta' barra fi pjazza Salvatur u ikkordina proġett estensiv biex jinħadmu tlettax-il bandalora għall-pjazza Salvatur li kien jirrekjedi ħafna xogħol fuq medda ta' erba'snin. Fl-1998, kien ukoll involut biex jinħadmu tnax-il arblu tal-metall flimkien ma' ħuh John u biex inxtraw tnax-il bandalora għal Triq Dun Karm Caruana. Jinteressawh ħafna wkoll ir-restawr ta' postgiet ta' valur storiku fir-raħal. Insibuh jieħu sehem f'laqgħat biex siti storiċi fl-Għasri bħal Knisja parrokkjali, il-Knisja tal-Patroċinju, il-Fanal ta' Gordan ma jaqgħux lura kif ukoll jitjeb l-aċċess għall-Bajja ta' Wied il-Għasri. Fi Frar ta' din is-sena dan id-Dentista bravu kellu laqgħa kordjali ħafna mal-Prim Ministru fejn iddiskutew fit-tul u b'sodisfazzjon ir-restawr tal-Fanal ta' Gordan kif ukoll biex jinbdew it-taħdidiet għar-restawr tal-Knisja Parrokkjali tal-Għasri.

Martu Audrey li wkoll qed taqsa dan il-Gieħ tar-Raħal ma' żewġha, hija artista brava ħafna u studjat taħt diversi pitturi magħrufa barranin fosthom Jordan Sokol, Eran Webber, Vitaliy Shtanko, Jura Bedic u Simone Olivia u ħadet diversi korsijiet barra minn xtutna. F'Malta studjat l-Art History taħt il-gwida ta' Dr Joseph Paul Cassar u segwiet korsijiet ta' Anton Calleja, Charles Cassar, u korsijiet aktar fit-tul għand l-artist Alfred Briffa. Għal dawn l-aħħar snin hija komplet bl-istudji tagħha fid-design tal-human figure u landscapes b'diversi media bħal ma huma l-acrylics, oils, pastels u watercolours taħt il-gwida ta' Winston Hassel u Philip Agius. Studjat u ipprattikat ukoll id-Drawing u l-iskultura fil-Malta School of Arts taħt il-gwida ta' Mr Joseph Chetcuti u Noel Azzopardi. Din is-sisnjura mwieda Hal Luqa ħadet l-Ewwel Premju fl-Iskulptura taħt il-gwida ta' Mr Chetcuti mil-Malta School of Art. Hija dejjem xtaqet taqsa dan it-talent kollu billi tagħti xi ħaġa lir-raħal tal-Għasri u dan għamlitu billi għal erba' snin hija impenjat ruħha u ħadmet bi sħiħ biex irregalat lil-lokal fejn tiewled żewġha, tlettax-il abbozz u tlettax-il pittura b'suġġetti fuq l-Ewkaristija.

Dawn it-tlettax-il pittura llum jinsabu fuq il-bandalori biex jitgawdew fil-jiem tal-festa titulari. Ilkoll juru livell ta' arti originali u juru krejattività fl-arti. Ħadmet ukoll pittura tal-mibki Mons Guzeppi Mintoff, ex Kappillan li tista' titgawda fil-Knisja parrokkjali. Minn dan kollu wieħed jaqbel perfettament mad-deċiżjoni tal-Kunsill tal-Għasri li Gieħ ir-Raħal din is-sena ngħata lil din il-koppja li hija meqjusa fost il-benefatturi kbar tar-raħal tal-Għasri. Minn dawn il-kolonni nifirhulhom.

**Kav Joe M Attard   Victoria – Ghawdex   emarjos@hotmail.com**





Yes please keep me on your data list to receive your Maltese E-Newsletter, thank you. We also thank you for the time you give to producing this wonderful Newsletter for us the Maltese diaspora. Many articles that are published are of historical events that we, perhaps even though not so young, have not heard of before. To our second and third generation, our children and grandchildren these are of immeasurable informative value of where their roots are. Where their parents and

grandparents and some even their great grand parents came from . Please accept our most appreciative thanks for your work and time freely given .

God Bless You Sahhiet u Tislijiet **Rosemary & Charles Attard**

Your Maltese e-Newsletter is enriching our collection of information about our Maltese history and also about our Maltese brothers and Sisters abroad especially in Australia. So please continue to send us the Newsletter. Thanks. Any information possible from our side will be available any time. May God bless you always. **Fr. Manuel Parnis mssp – Canada**

I would love to continue receiving your journal please. I find it very informative and interesting, with a lot of information about our beloved Malta that we didn't know about. Thank you for all your work and time that you put in. Regards, **Olga Ellul, Melbourne.** Just to let you know that I would like to continue receiving the Maltese Newsletter. Thank you for sending it to me. It has been always an interesting Newsletter and I share it with friends. Regards, **Sr. Ottavia Monsigneur Mackay, Queensland .**

I would like to continue to receive your wonderful newsletter. Regards, **Judge Peter Zahra NSW**

I would love to continue receiving your journal please. I find it very informative and interesting, with a lot of information about our beloved Malta that we didn't know about. Thank you for all your work and time that you put in. Regards, **Olga Ellul, Melbourne.**

Thank you for sending me the Maltese Journal. I wish to confirm that I wish to continue receiving this journal. Once again, thank you for your courtesy. Best regards, **Ron Borg - Adelaide.**

Dear Mr. Scicluna, First of all thank you for the Maltese Newsletter. There is so much information in every issue and we congratulate you. I would like to continue receiving the Maltese Journal. Please put me on your list. Thank you and may God bless you and your family. Regards, **Sr. Vittoriana DeBattista – Adelaide SA**

Roger Goldsworthy much appreciates receiving the journal which is an excellent publication full of interesting articles. Please keep sending to my email address – **worthy@senet.com.au – South Australia**

Replying to your 'received e-newsletter request' below. You report on the most interesting, informative and educational historical facts about Malta in the The Journal of the Maltese Diaspora Maltese e-Newsletter. Best regards, **Nancy Serg nee Borg OAM - NSW**

By all means Dear Frank, keep on sending this informative journal. I don't think I need to assure you of that. And whatever you wish to publish of mine, when you come across something interesting in the press, you have my approval. Regards **Roderick Bovingdon fl-Ahwija Maltija (Fraternite Maltaise) New South Wales**

Yes, I am still interested. Please let me know the cost of the annual membership fee. Yours in Melitenses **Emmanuel (Mani) Mifsud Toronto Canada**

Thank you always for all the work you put in this newsletter. Please keep sending it and prosit. God bless Sahha Regards **Mary and Emmanuel Debono**

Many thanks for sending a copy of your newsletter to the members of The Order of Saint John, Knights Hospitaller. We would appreciate the opportunity to continue being recipients.

*Yours sincerely in the Service of Saint John* **Graeme Gatley KGSJ Secretary, Priory of South Australia**

These are a few samples of the many hundreds of comments we received.

## Relive Valletta's past and present as seen by Dragut



The cast of *Xaghret Mewwija* includes Rachel Micallef, Maria Farrugia, Joe Pace, Charles Sammut, Joseph Galea and Carlos Farrugia.

*Xaghret Mewwija*, a play that offers a fast-paced tour of the founding, building and development of Valletta up to the present day, will be performed at St James Cavalier this weekend and next.

Narrated by the Ottoman general Dragut, the play starts with the Sceberras promontory as a barren, desolate landscape. Subsequently, during the three months of the Great Siege the same piece of land is

seen filled with multi-coloured enemy tents and armed Ottoman troops.

During the play, scripted by Trevor Zahra, the audience will be taken on a journey that interweaves facts and fantasy with a high dose of comedy and satire. Despite Dragut being killed, his soul remains on the island, witnessing scenes such as the ousting of the French, British sailors in Strait Street, and the rise and fall of the Royal Opera House.

*Xaghret Mewwija*'s cast includes Rachel Micallef, Maria Farrugia, Joe Pace, Charles Sammut, Joseph Galea and Carlos Farrugia, while Augusto Cardinale composed its original music. The play is produced and directed by Joseph Galea and Carlos Farrugia respectively.

*Xaghret Mewwija* will be staged at St James Cavalier Theatre, Valletta, from Friday to Sunday and on October 12, 13 and 15 at 8pm. For tickets visit [www.kreattivita.org](http://www.kreattivita.org).

## Historical political power game staged in Malta



Alex Weenink, Naomi Said and Philip Leone-Ganado in *The Jew of Malta*.

Photos: Justin Mamo

Christopher Marlowe's classic play *The Jew of Malta* will be staged by the MADC at the Manoel Theatre this weekend and next.

Religious and historical hatred between Christians, Jews and Muslims are used as excuse for the political power game played out on stage.

The play is a story about a man seeking revenge, which cascades into a series of ever more murderous events, with disastrous consequences. It was set in an alternative Malta that audiences will not historically recognise, one in which the Knights of Malta are paying a tribute to the Turkish Sultan Suleiman in order to stave off a potential attack from the Turks that the Knights would surely lose. Religious and historical hatred between Christians, Jews and Muslims are used as excuse for the political power game played out on stage.

Director Chris Gatt commented that despite Marlowe being a contemporary of Shakespeare, the play's themes of corruption and hypocrisy in high places, racism against foreigners and minorities, and the dog-eat-dog attitude of



its protagonists are still familiar today. Gatt added: "It feels fresh and as relevant today as it did 400 years ago. The action-packed story will leave audiences breathless as it lurches from one disastrous event to the next, veering perilously between tragedy and high camp comedy."

The title character, Barabas, will be played by Mikhail Basmadjian. The cast also includes Naomi Said, Antony Edridge and Erica Muscat.

*The Jew of Malta* will be staged by the MADC at the Manoel Theatre, Valletta, from Friday to Sunday and from October 12 to 14 at 8pm, except for this Saturday's performance, which starts at 6pm. It is classified 14+. For tickets, call 2124 6389 or visit [www.teatrumanoel.com](http://www.teatrumanoel.com).

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## The Most Heavenly Maltese Dishes Every Visitor Must Try



### PASTIZZI AND OTHER SAVOURY PASTRY SNACKS

Before McDonald's, Burger King (Hungry Jacks) and KFC came around in Malta in the 1990s, fast food for the Maltese meant walking down to the nearest *pastizzeria* to grab some super tasty (but also amazingly greasy) savoury snacks, that form the cornerstone of street food in Malta.

The most popular snack are ***pastizzi*** – fluffy pastry formed in specific shapes and stuffed with either ricotta cheese or a paste of peas (*pizelli* in

Maltese). You'll also find the most oily square pizza slices (very tasty and fluffy nevertheless) and typically Maltese snacks like ***Qassatat*** (different type of pastry stuffed with cheese, peas and spinach), ***Arancini*** (balls of tomato-flavoured rice with a breaded crust) and ***Timpana*** (a popular pasta oven dish).

**FISH** Fish has always been popular in Malta, being an island where fish is relatively easy to come by in its surrounding waters. You'll be able to find all sorts of local fish served fresh daily in local restaurants, but there are specific types of fish that are traditionally more popular among the Maltese.

The first is ***Lampuka***, (a species of dolphin fish also referred to as *Mahi-mahi*), which is caught seasonally and available as fresh catch during the period of 15th of August (the start date of Lampuki (plural) fishing season in Malta, also a public holiday) through to the end of December. You'll still be able to taste Lampuka at other times of the year, but it obviously won't be as fresh. Still worth your while though! Although available as a fried fish, it's pretty popularly served in pie form as well (*Torta tal-Lampuki*).

Another type of fish to try is **locally caught swordfish**, prepared as a dish called *Pixxispad* (grilled swordfish steak). Fried in olive oil, lemon added – Super tasty. You'll also find a few species of **seabream**, **seabass** and **grouper**, often cooked grilled on the skin or *al cartoccio* (Italian term that means something like baked in foil) with olive oil, lemon, salt/pepper seasoning and sometimes capers. They'll often ask you which method you prefer, in fact. Hey, and do not forget **the Sea-Urchins (Rizzi) and Stewed Octopus (Qarnit)**.

**RABBIT** Although most people outside of Malta probably think of rabbits as "a nice pet for the kids", in Malta rabbit is more commonly served as a dish, most popularly fried (sometimes with spaghetti with tomato sauce and peas) or as a stew (*Stuffat Tal-Fenek*). It's important to note that I've never come across anyone in Malta who keeps rabbits as pets until Christmas comes around. Rabbits are bred OR kept as pets (and not consumed).

For most Europeans it'll be a tough sell, but it really isn't a big deal unless you're vegan or vegetarian. It's actually very tasty. Often likened to chicken by foreigner it's a rich flavour and it's understandable why it's a popular choice among the locals. Dining is sometimes organised to be specifically for rabbit, called a *fenkata*.

**KINNIE** Personally I really love it, particularly on a hot summer's day. It's a drink that has a bittersweet flavour that it owes to a particular type of bitter orange (referred to as *Mediterranean chinotto*) that you're unlikely to have tasted before and is definitely worth trying. It's also a great mixer to try with spirits like vodka and rum and usually tastes best cold.

If you want to go "pro", there's a variant called Kinzie Zest, which has a stronger, more pronounced flavour. Similar to the original, just stronger (and either better or worse depending on your personal taste).

**ČISK** Čisk (pron. Ch-isk) is the most popular (locally brewed) beer that's an easy, light drink that's generally liked by foreign beer lovers. Perhaps not the smoothest of beers, it has a gentle flavour and is very refreshing on a warm day. Although many international brands are available on the island, most will opt to enjoy the local tipple. Aside from the original, low-carb (Čisk Excel), fruity flavoured (Chill Lemon and Chill Berry) and a few other variations are available. The same producers (Farsons) produce different ales as well.



## **Mary and Harry Bugeja in Adelaide SA** **1st October 1957--2018**



Today 61 years ago Mary and I and a group of Maltese Migrants left our beloved Malta to settle in Australia on board the migrant ship "AURELIA". Whoever thought that we came to Australia as a newly married couple and 61 years down the road we are so happy that God blessed us with such a loveable family with all the additions totalling 21 (Second great grand on the way). This total does not include girlfriends and boyfriends we occasionally meet.



(left) Mary & Harry and my sister Mary (Right) Mary and I and some of the Maltese migrants on board the ship "Aurelia" with the captain



(Left) Mary and Harry with their 5 children and 9 grandchildren

**6 October 2018**

**We just received the sad news of the death of TESSIE MANSUETO of Parafield Gardens, South Australia/ More information will be given in the next issue**



## ***Bharat*: Salman Khan 'Explores' Malta With The 'Love Of His Life'**

Salman Khan shared a photo with his mother Salma, who is in Malta with him at the juncture [by Taboola](#)

Salman Khan with mom Salma who accompanied him to the destination (Courtesy [beingsalmankhan](#))

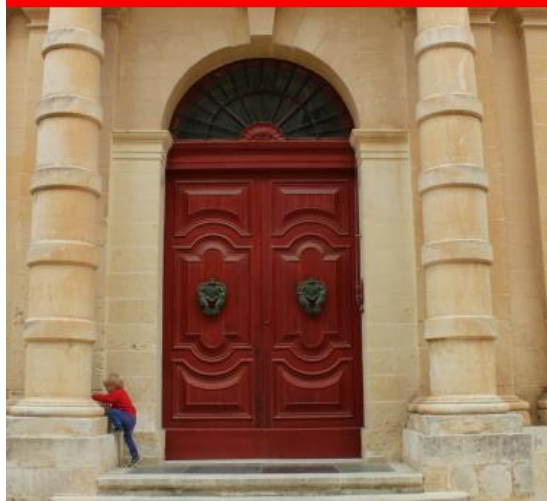
Salman Khan, who is currently in Malta shooting for his next film *Bharat*, is exploring the "lovely country" with the

"love of his life." In case you are still wondering about the person (love of his life), who has followed the actor all the way to Malta, well it's none other than his mother Salma. Salman Khan shared a photo with his mother Salma, who is in Malta with him at the juncture. "With the love of my life," the actor wrote with a photo featuring both of them. The 52-year-old actor also shared a video of himself with his mother "exploring" the picturesque country of Malta. Just in few hours, the photo has over six lakh likes and the comment section is flooded with words like: "Mom and son certainly got the swag there," "Amazing *bhaijaan*," and we totally agree. Preity Zinta's comment on the photo read: "Awww!! So sweet." The photo has also been liked by Varun Dhawan and Manish Malhotra.

After wrapping up the Mumbai schedule, Salman Khan and team *Bharat* have kick-started the shooting of the second schedule in Malta. Salman shared the news on social media with a photo of himself, which read: "Starting the shooting schedule of *Bharat* in Malta, lovely country."

*Bharat* directed by Ali Abbas Zafar also features Katrina Kaif, Disha Patani, Tabu and Nora Fatehi. In the movie, Salman Khan plays a daredevil stuntman and will undergo multiple look changes as its timeline is spread across decades - from 1960 till current times. Disha Patani will play the role of a trapeze artiste while the roles of other characters of the film have not been revealed.

### **From Malta With Love**



## **Why You Will Fall in Love with Malta in Just One Visit?**

I fell in love with Malta. You can't blame me, there is no one that visits this beautiful country and remains the same ever again. Malta will change you, it will change the way you see the world and the way you see things. In fact, you will be thinking about going back at the end of your first vacation in Malta.

Malta is the least dull place on earth. It breaks my heart to see people who haven't visited this beautiful place. There are people who don't even know about Malta or have a certain misconception about this country.

Let's get it straight. Malta is a country in the south of Sicily in the Mediterranean. They speak English as well as Maltese and use Euro as their currency. You can easily get to Malta via a 90-minute ferry from Catania. If you want to reach there faster, there are several airlines including Air Malta that comes to Malta every day from UK, Italy, and from other European countries.





## **“No Milk Today” Will we start to import cows?**

*TVM - with Joe Julian Farrugia*

In 1966 the Manchester group Herman's Hermits came out with the song “No Milk Today”. It was a very popular song, with the main words being “No milk today, My love has gone away”. Although I was very young, years later I recall that we used to jokingly sing it to our version as “No milk

today, tal-baqra baqa' għaddej!”, which loosely translated but not rhyming, means “No milk today, the cow owner didn't stop!”

I was reminded of this song recently when a shortage of milk made the news. This sort of news hits everyone. When did we ever go to purchase milk, only to be told by the grocer that if we wanted this commodity we would have to start ordering it? Some are blaming this problem on an increase in the population, others are saying the cows are not producing enough milk. It seems everyone has an opinion, except the cows themselves.

Such a problem would never have cropped up in the middle of the previous century, because goats' milk was more popular than cows' milk. And it didn't come in cartons either. It was a common sight for whole herds of goats to go around the streets of our towns and villages, with the herdsman selling milk on the hoof. It used to be said that in Valletta alone, some 2,000 goats went around on a daily basis.

The milk used to be both fresh and warm, as the animals used to be milked right in front of the buyers. The housewife used to come out carrying an enamel container, and the herdsman or boy accompanying the herd would milk a goat and charge one penny for every filled container. One penny equals today's one cent.

And this was the problem, because undulant fever was having an effect on the Maltese population, causing an inflammation of the spleen, pain in one's joints and fever. No one knew where the problem lay, until Dr Temi Zammit discovered in 1905 that the problem was being caused by goats' milk.

This was the reason why pasteurisation became obligatory shortly before the war, both for goats' and cows' milk. The temperature of milk is subject to a sudden change, killing off every possible bacteria.

Milk started being sold in bottles, and cardboard containers in pyramid form, with different flavours, were distributed in schools. We used to look forward to Thursdays, when the milk was chocolate-flavoured. In recent years the milk started being sold in packets, which in turn led to an increase in waste!

Meanwhile, the country's cows are being milked dry and stressed out in every sense, to keep up with the demand. Are we approaching a time when we will start importing cows? Definitely not from India, where cows enjoy the best of lives because the Hindus consider them sacred animals... and definitely don't stress them out!





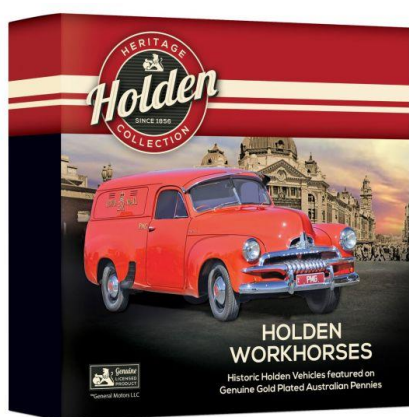
## THE BANKNOTE THAT CHANGED THE WORLD

*Australia's first modern polymer banknote receives a stunning tribute, finished in precious gold!*

After decades of research and experimentation by the CSIRO, Australia became the first country in the world to introduce polymer banknotes. It was the 26<sup>th</sup> of January,

1988, and the note was a special commemorative issue honouring the bicentenary of European settlement in Australia. It was a ground-breaking release – for Australia, and across the globe.

Our own polymer pioneer has now been immortalised in a beautiful replica, complete with a 24-carat gold finish! Eye-catching and affordable, this exquisite tribute is a must-have for all Australian collectors. It's available exclusively in Australia through Macquarie Mint.



## Holden Workhorses Enamel Penny Collection

Holden's iconic vehicles have been a part of Australian life since 1948. This officially-licensed Holden release celebrates Holden's workhorses - the unsung heroes of our streets. Discover Holden vehicles from the past across a series of nine original pennies, each enriched with full-colour enamel and finished in 24-carat gold. A superb gift idea - if you can bear to part with it! - this nostalgic set will delight car enthusiasts and collectors alike..

**A MUST FOR THE HOLDEN ENTHUSIAST** If the sight of a Kingswood or 1 Tonner Ute makes you weak at the knees, then this is the set for you.

Your nine pennies celebrate the cars that were there when we needed them most - used by police, the fire department and other essential services. Prepare to reacquaint yourself with some of Holden's most memorable models.

**STRICTLY LIMITED EDITION** This is an officially licensed Holden release, and has been issued in strictly limited numbers. Just 5,000 complete sets will be issued.

**DISCOVER EIGHT ICONIC VEHICLES** Many will remember the vivid, red FJ Panel Vans from the Post Master General's Department - an iconic sight in the early 1950s. And the WB 1 Tonner Ambulances, 30 years later, getting Australians to hospital quickly. This brilliant set pays homage to eight iconic Holden vehicles, with a ninth honouring their service to Australia. There's something for everyone - whether it's '50s curves or '70s angles that drive you.

**DEPICTED ON ORIGINAL PENNIES - FINISHED IN GOLD** All nine coins in this set are original, genuine Australian pennies. As such, the obverse portrait on each coin could feature King George V, King George VI or Queen Elizabeth II - portraits are of your choice. In addition to the full-colour enamel, each penny has been finished in stunning, 24-carat gold. This brings the perfect touch of luxury to an already good-looking collection.

**BEAUTIFULLY PRESENTED** Ready to give away as a gift, this set arrives in Holden presentation packaging. It's also accompanied by an individually-numbered Certificate of Authenticity, your reminder that there are just 5,000 full collections in existence. With limited numbers, and demand expected by the ute-load, don't miss out! Get your coin collection into gear and add this superb set to your cart now!

<https://www.downies.com/holden-workhorses-enamel-penny-collection/#product.info.description>