



# Maltese e-Newsletter



**The Journal of the Maltese Diaspora**

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**ARRIVEDERCI  
MALTA**

**WHEN THE MALTESE EMIGRANTS HAD TO LEAVE MALTA  
Mr and Mrs John Manche' with their family of eight left Malta  
on the migrant ship, Castel Felice, to settle at Wentworthville, NSW.**

**Date: 26 January 1955**

**The children are Tony 12, Monica 9, Marie 8, Rose 6, Francis 4,  
George 3, Charlotte 1 and Jeanette 5 months.**

**Source: Fairfax Photography. Photo: Argus**



**National Museum of Archaeology - Valletta - Malta**

## War graves and cemeteries in Malta



Capuccini Naval Cemetery



Pieta Military Cemetery



Mtarfa Military Cemetery



Pembroke Military Cemetery

Malta was the first place in the Empire to be attacked from the air and assaulted by sea, and during the long ordeal of the siege 432 members of the garrison were killed by enemy aircraft alone. There were numerous deaths among servicemen from other causes so that the Service war burials in Malta total 1512, of whom 181 are Maltese.

The majority of these burials were from the various hospitals which functioned there. In addition to the existing hospitals, No.90 British General Hospital was posted to the Island in April 1940 and was still there in December 1945. Nos.39 and 45 British

General Hospitals arrived in September 1941 and January 1942 respectively, remaining until April and March 1944. Nos.161 Field Ambulance, 15 Field Ambulance and 57 Field Ambulance were stationed on the island also and 30 Coy. RAMC staffed the Command Laboratory.

Most of the casualties were buried in the naval and military cemeteries. These are Capuccini Naval Cemetery, Pembroke Military Cemetery, Mtarfa Military Cemetery and Pieta` Military Cemetery. At Pieta` are to be found war graves going back to the 1914-1918 War, when sick and wounded from Gallipoli and the Near East were brought to Malta. A few casualties from both wars are buried in civilian cemeteries in various parts of the island.

During both world wars burials were in collective or joint graves, although during the last war single graves were used to some extent when the air raids lessened as Malta is mainly rock and the earth shallow the graves were cut in rock. To mark the graves recumbent stone slabs - on which several inscriptions could be carved - were used instead of the traditional Commission headstone. For the sake of uniformity the same type of memorial was used on the single graves.

Those men whose graves, although known, are so situated that permanent maintenance cannot be assured, are commemorated individually on memorial plaques let into the base of the Cross of Sacrifice in Pembroke Military Cemetery. Their names number 52, although 53 names are inscribed in the memorial plaques as one who lies buried in Zurrieq (St Leo's) Cemetery is also commemorated there. Nineteen Maltese servicemen are buried in other cemeteries.

The Malta Branch of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission tends to the graves of British Commonwealth servicemen buried in the four military cemeteries.

### THE CEMETERIES

**(Capuccini) Naval Cemetery, Kalkara** - This cemetery, which once belonged to the Admiralty, is located near Rinella, a bay across Valletta in the Grand Harbour and is close to a Capuchin monastery from which it takes its name. It is in two sections, Protestant and Roman Catholic. There is a triangular 1914-1918 War plot in the Protestant section in which stands a granite Cross of Sacrifice which was erected after that war. Most of the 1939-1945 War graves too are in the Protestant section, in a plot near the entrance and there is another group in the Roman Catholic section but there are a few others in scattered positions in this burial ground.

Capuccini Naval Cemetery, known locally as the Royal Naval Cemetery, Kalkara, contains the largest number of 1939-1945 burials in Malta; they total 734. The ten Merchant Navy non-war graves are those of men whose death was not due to war service. The 1914-1918 War casualties buried or commemorated in



this cemetery number 346. This figure includes six casualties whose burial in the cemetery was not verified until after the publication of the 1914-1918 register, and one who was buried in the island of Pantellaria, but whose grave was lost. This man is commemorated by a special memorial type E, which is inscribed to this effect, with the quotation "Their glory shall not be blotted out."

The cemetery is planted with trees and shrubs, which include pines, cypresses, oleanders and hibiscus. Low hedges line the main paths and around the 1939-1945 plots are low evergreen hedges of *atriplex halimus* (tree purslane) which has leaves of silvery green.

**Pembroke Military Cemetery, St. Andrew's** - This burial ground, which was controlled by the War Office, is to be found close to the Pembroke Rifle Ranges and the former St Andrew's Barracks. It lies adjacent to the main road from St Julians to St Pauls. It was begun in 1908 by the military authorities, to serve the garrison and besides the 1939-1945 War graves contains nine 1914-1918 War graves. There are in all 318 casualties of the 1939-1945 War buried in the cemetery. In addition 53 servicemen, whose graves in other parts of Malta are so situated that permanent maintenance cannot be assured, are commemorated by name on marble plaques let into the plinth of the Cross of Sacrifice. A central plaque bears the dedicatory inscription which reads:

1939 – 1945 THE SAILORS, SOLDIERS AND AIRMEN WHOSE NAMES ARE HONOURED HERE DIED IN THE SERVICE OF THEIR COUNTRY AND LIE BURIED ELSEWHERE IN MALTA. This cemetery lies on sloping ground and is terraced. On the top terrace stands the Cross of Sacrifice approached by flanking steps.

**Mtarfa Military Cemetery** - Just below Mdina, the former capital of Malta, lies Mtarfa Military Cemetery. This burial ground contains graves of both World Wars, the 1914-1918 War burials numbering 15 while the 1939-1945 burials total 262. The latter include six Service personnel and six members of the Foreign Office attached to the Prime Minister's delegation for the Yalta conference, who were killed in a flying accident on the way to the Crimea. The civilians are included in the figures for non-war graves.

The 1939-1945 War graves occupy a considerable area in which a Cross of Sacrifice has been erected. Pencil cypresses and a group of flowering shrubs form a background to the Cross. In front of it, bordering the main path, a low hedge of *bougainvillea* has been planted. Around the boundaries and in various positions in the cemetery are trees of several kinds, including pines, false pepper, *casuarina*, *lantana* and Indian lilac. Elsewhere are flowering shrubs to give colour and beauty, among them *spiraea*, *plumbago*, *oleander* and *bougainvillea*.

**Pieta' Military Cemetery** - This cemetery is one of two in Pieta' and should not be mistaken with Ta' Braxia (non-catholic burials). Pieta' was the principal garrison cemetery and is laid out in rectangular paved terraces and planted with trees and shrubs.

Along the main paths pencil cypresses have been planted to form avenues, while in the plots, between the blocks of graves, are beds of oleanders and *lantana*. Oleanders form a background to the Cross of Sacrifice and along the north-eastern boundary and elsewhere in the cemetery are trees of various kinds, including pines, palms, *casuarina*, and *ceratonia* or carob-bean. Here are buried or commemorated 1,304 casualties of the 1914-1918 War, in a section which contains the Cross of Sacrifice. The 1939-1945 War burials number 180 and this total is made up by 135 soldiers belonging to the United Kingdom Army, 31 men of the Malta Forces, 14 Yugoslavs, and 1 civilian.



**Dear Mr Scicluna, Thank you very much for your interesting journal, which is a much appreciated instrument to unite Maltese living abroad, in so many different countries. + Mons. George Frendo O.P. Archbishop of Tirana, Albania**



## Notre Dame Gate

Cottonera Gate - Zabbar Gate

Bieb is- Sultan - Porta della Maria

Vergine delle Grazie

Built in 1675 by the Order of St. John as part of the Cottonera Lines to serve as its main gate for the Eastern Provinces, this grand baroque building survives complete and includes some marvelous

architectural features which are not found anywhere else in Malta. It stands on four levels which makes it still the highest peak in the region. From its roof one can enjoy stunning views of most of the island. It consist of four large bomb-proof casemates standing upon each other flanking the roadway and crowned by a large gatehouse which originally housed the lifting mechanism for its portcullis gate. This building has a very rich and colourful history most of which is still visible in its stone in the shape of musket ball indentations and many graffiti left behind by soldiers of the Order's navy, the French and the British.

Following the nearby building of the Cottonera Military Hospital in 1870, the gate gradually started serving as an adjunct to the new military medical establishment. Following the debacle at Gallipoli in 1915, thousands of wounded troops were brought to Malta for treatment and convalescence and some of these were accommodated at Notre Dame Gate for the duration of the Great War.

## Malta Parkinson's Disease Association



**How It All Started** - MPDA was founded in 2008 by Mrs Anne Downing, who ran as president of the MPDA from 2008 till 2012. It was set up as the first association in Malta to provide support for persons living with Parkinson's Disease (PD) along with their families.

MPDA is a registered charity (VO/0061) run by a committee of volunteers. It is monitored by the Commissioner for Voluntary Organisations.

**Our Aims** Our main aims are to give advice and information regarding PD to persons with Parkinson's as well as to their carers; to promote and raise awareness of the difficulties faced by persons with Parkinson's along with their carers; to raise funds to support us in our aims and to contribute towards research into finding a cure for this disease.

**The Committee** - We are an enthusiastic group of individuals with one common aim: to improve the lives of people living with Parkinson's in Malta and around the world. The association would not exist without the hard work of the committee and we take pride in our work. We are volunteers and we do our work in our own spare time.

### AGM

The MPDA holds an Annual General Meeting early each year. It is a time when we deliver information about the past year and proposed plans for the following one. We also hold general elections for committee members during the AGM. Click below for a copy of our statute to know more about the running of the MPDA.

## MALTA'S ROCK SHELTERS

After the massive death toll of the Illustrious Blitz in January 1941, it seemed that the only safe haven during Luftwaffe air raids was underground. The Governor was determined to provide bomb-proof shelters as a matter of urgency. Malta's rock provided the ideal cover, but underground shelters would take a long time to complete. Over 2000 miners and other labourers were given the task of digging out hundreds of rock shelters in key locations.



Shelter in former railway tunnel, Valletta (NWMA) *"There were public shelters and private ones all were dug down with more than 10 feet of rock thickness overhead. The rocks in [Dingli] are not that hard and ten feet of it over your head was safe enough. The authorities went into this exercise of providing private shelters in great earnest. In fact so many shelters were dug around the village.*

*Luckily for us there were enough workers who were professional diggers in rock. They had had great experience in an exercise that had been going on in the village during the previous years:...digging shafts some four feet wide and going down till they reached the clay layer...[where] water was found... On each shaft a wind pump was erected and a reservoir was dug or built near it.*

*As soon as war started it became illegal to dig such shafts. They released a number of skilled workers in this art of rock digging. An ingenious manner of keeping a straight wall while digging was the use of an antique lit oil lamp with a wick which was put in a hole in the wall. It was so placed as to create a shadow of say one inch wide on the face of the rock being cut. This shadow was strictly followed and the walls of shelters were straight as if mechanically cut."*

### SHELTERS FOR ALL

By June 1941 the workforce had increased to 5,500 by June 1941, nearly 500 public rock shelters had been finished and another 400 were in progress. In total they could house 138,000 people. Another 90,000 had access to alternative shelters:

*"I was born in April 1937 and when war broke out my family moved to Lija, a villa which was considered to be safer than areas around the harbours where we lived. The family spent 18 months living at the bottom of the well which was inside the house. A passageway and two rooms were dug out from the bottom of the well where we slept down there and emerged a few times a day when the 'all clear' siren sounded. I remember one or two bombs falling nearby but at that young age wasn't alarmed by the whistling sound as they fell."* **Edward Caruana Gali.**

2011



This still left thousands with nowhere to go during an air raid. Teams of volunteers, including women, joined in the digging, giving their labour in return for knowing their locality would have enough shelter. At the end of November 1941, the Governor announced there was space available in a shelter for the whole population of Malta.

### SCRAMBLE FOR SHELTER

By February 1942, with raids often continuous throughout the night, shelters became congested with chairs and bedding brought in for comfort and rest. The two square feet per head originally allowed was insufficient. Anticipating a night of raids, people began to rush to shelters straight after supper. Spaces were often over-subscribed:

*"When an air raid alarm is given, huge crowds of people can be seen heading for [the shelter at 111 Kingsway, Valletta]...large enough to hold at least 150 people, whilst in a raid this place is sheltering approximately 300 people with more than 50 persons outside the passage hoping to get in."*

Shelter in South St, Valletta (NWMA)

As one newspaper reported:

*"The shelter at the bottom of South Street, Valletta is absolutely choked with beds so that people with more consideration for others who have not brought a bed down with them find it very difficult to find a place to stand inside the shelter."*

In February 1942 the Government began to appoint Shelter Wardens who would allocate places in shelters to named individuals, and keep the spaces clean. They also decided to allow private individuals to excavate cubicles in shelters, creating up to twelve additional places each. Others felt the time had come to provide their own shelters:

*"The public shelters were soon filled up with the people bringing down straw mattresses to sleep on during the night in the wide corridors hewn below. Private citizens then dug small cubicles in the public shelters for them*



to sleep in. Others who could not afford it just threw their mattress on the empty space on the floor. Chamber pots were carried down too.

We dug our shelter at the basement of our house and in it we had three cubicles for us and our two aunts. We went as deep as the public shelter and left a skin of about three inches thickness so that in case our house came down we could escape by knocking down the thin shield of rock separating us.

A sledge hammer for this eventuality always lay next to this area."

Joseph Farrugia, Attard 2011

## **The Battle for Malta – our finest hour** Maurice Agius



Women washing plates and dishes. at the entrance to an air raid shelter.

At the end of the 18th century, the Maltese asked the British Navy in the Mediterranean, under the command of Horatio Nelson, to help them get rid of the French. Napoleon Bonaparte, on his way to conquer Egypt, had ousted, without a fight, the Knights of the Order of St John of Jerusalem who had ruled over Malta since 1530 and who had successfully defended Malta against the Turks in the Great Siege of 1565.

Soon after Napoleon's departure, the Maltese had risen against the French garrison who took shelter inside the walls of Valletta, Manoel Island and Mdina. With British help, the French eventually surrendered and left.

The Maltese did not want the Knights back and instead asked the British to stay, using Malta as their Mediterranean Base in exchange for protection. The Maltese were Roman Catholics but were prepared to trust their future to a Protestant nation.

The arrangement worked peacefully and amicably over the years, except when the world situation was more peaceful than usual, as this nearly always, among other savings, developed in many of those temporarily employed by the British services getting the sack and there was no dole to fall on to. Then after nearly 140 years, in September 1939, World War II broke out.

My town, Sliema, just across the smaller harbour to the north west of Valletta, was popular with the Services. In the 1930s the harbour was home to two destroyer flotillas, some submarines, a hospital ship and a large number of smaller naval craft. The aircraft carriers, battleships and battle cruisers had their moorings in the Grand Harbour and provided a spectacular panorama from the Upper Barrakka Gardens in Valletta.

The sailors loved Malta. There were four main Army Barracks – St George's, St Andrew's, St David's and St Patrick's. Three barracks were quite close to Sliema, one for the gunners and each of the other two housing an infantry battalion. Swordfish and Gladiator biplanes, temporarily at Hal Far airfield while their aircraft-carrier was in port, often flew very low along the Sliema seafront probably hoping to get a glimpse of one of their girl friends. The civilians usually gave them a wave and they always waved back. I often went to school by ferry to get a closer look at the destroyers. The Tribal Class were my favourites.

Sliema was also very popular with families of servicemen and many lived there in rented accommodation. I practised my English with Penry Greenaway whose father was a civilian technician with the navy. Our mothers became very good friends. Penry also had two very attractive sisters. Every year Royal Navy and Army units took part in a civilian football knockout competition for the Cassar Cup. The final match usually attracted close to 10,000 civilians and servicemen at the Empire Stadium.

The Services did not take part in the FA Trophy KO, that is still played for in the same way as the FA cup is organised in UK. The beautiful trophy was donated to Malta by the Football Association for the support given by a sizeable vociferous group of Maltese fans who in 1934 travelled to Rome to watch a friendly match between Italy and England. Sports was mostly introduced in Malta by the Services, who also provided some of the better referees and advisers.

There was no shortage of bands playing popular music, military tattoos, coast defence practice shoots complete with searchlights, soldiers in a hurry on route marches, Sunday church parade for sailors from the Ferries to St Patrick's church with an officer at its head complete with sword in a black and gold sheath, and much more. A regular feature was a curtained omnibus drawn by a mule taking children to the Army School in St Andrew's Barracks at five miles an hour.



## THE 3 PALACES FESTIVAL – MALTA 2-11 November 2018

The Three Palaces Festival, a week-long event of classical music performances set in historical buildings, has become an important appointment in Malta's cultural calendar, a festival aimed at making chamber music more accessible to the public.

Starting on November 2, this festival, now in its sixth year, is Autumn's main event. The Three Palaces will once again feature the participation of artists of exceptional talent from around the world, which this year will be performing at the magnificent National Museum of Archaeology Valletta

Charlene Farrugia **11 November**

Charlene Farrugia, the winner of the 2018 International Achievement Award within the Premju għall-Arti, is recognised as Malta's leading and most successful pianist. She has performed with partners such as Joseph Calleja, Dimitri Ashkenazy and Ning Feng. Charlene has recorded for labels such as Naxos, Parma and Sony, being also a 2016 Naxos Critics Choice. At the age of 13, Charlene debuted with the National Orchestra of Malta. Since then, she has appeared with orchestras such as Metropolitana Orchestra, Camerata Austriaca, Kaliningrad Philharmonic Orchestra, Rotterdam Sinfonietta, European Chamber Orchestra, Arad State Philharmonic, Croatian Chamber Orchestra, and many others, performing in Smetana Hall, Princess Grace Theatre, Shanghai Oriental Arts Centre,

United Nations NY, Chateau Saint-Anne and so on. She has maintained a keen interest in contemporary music, which has led to many world premieres. Charlene is an international ambassador for EMMA for Peace under the patronage of UNESCO and honorary president Riccardo Muti. She finished her studies at the Royal Academy of Music in London and is currently a piano professor at the Music Academy in Croatia

## THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF ARCHAEOLOGY



The National Museum of Archaeology, managed by Heritage Malta, is housed in the Auberge de Provence and holds exceptional artefacts from the prehistoric and early Phoenician periods. The

Auberge is one of the most important buildings that were built in Malta's capital following the great siege of 1565. An example of early Maltese Baroque architecture, the Auberge was built in 1571 and followed a plan by Maltese architect Ġormu Cassar. Several architectural changes were carried out over the centuries; nonetheless, the Auberge de Provence remains one of the best preserved residences of the Knights of St John. One of its most beautiful rooms is the Grand Salon in the upper floor, with richly painted walls and a wooden beamed ceiling.

The building was the main residence of Provençal knights of the Order of St John. Following the knights' departure, the building was first administered by the French during their brief occupation of the islands and was later taken over by the British government. Before being inaugurated as The National Museum in 1958, it served as a military barracks, a hotel, Union Club and an auction house. Initially, the museum held both the archaeology and fine arts collections. Eventually, the fine arts section was moved elsewhere and the museum became the National Museum of Archaeology in 1974.



PHOTO : DOJ - Kevin Abela

## Sophia speaks in Maltese and has citizenship

The Parliamentary Secretary for the Digital Economy and Innovation, Silvio Schembri, has launched the vision of a national strategy for Artificial Intelligence which will be officially launched next year.

Mr Schembri said that the aim of the Government is the development of systems by means of which AI will

improve the lives of Maltese citizens. He said that Malta is a cosmopolitan city and this makes it ideal for companies who wish to test their products in realistic scenarios.

Sophia is a human robot which speaks and is able to express all the emotions which are normally expressed by humans. The robot even spoke in Maltese when she was launched at the AI national strategy conference, which among other things will determine whether robots should be given citizenship.

"Sometimes she answers spontaneously, if they are very specific questions, you can feed the knowledge into a knowledge base and then she just comes up with the knowledge that we put there, so it's a mix," explained scientist Ben Goertzel.

Dr Ben Goertzel, who developed Sophia's brain, said that this has combined science and technology with fashion and art. Since 2016, Sophia has become an international celebrity and has appeared on the front cover of scientific, current events and fashion magazines. Sophia has even been granted citizenship from Saudi Arabia, making her the first robot to have a nationality.

He said that the idea to create Sophia is the brainchild of the founder of Hanson Robotics, David Hanson. "Her head is full of motors, she has chest computers and there is some AI there, and the singularity system runs on a computer cloud and she can communicate with the internet to get more and more intelligence from the singularity from the internet."

Dr Goertzel admitted that there are ethical implications, however he said that one cannot escape from technological developments. "There are also humans who will choose to merge their minds in a computer interface completely in the AI, that would become something beyond the current notion of humanity."

PS Schembri said that the aim of the Government is for Malta to position itself to be among the ten most advanced countries in the AI sector. He said that sophisticated AI systems have led to an improvement in every sector of our lives, from health to public administration, and an improvement in efficiency in the way we operate traffic systems and systems at the workplace.

"We will have a national holistic strategy, in other words, in terms of financial measures, in terms of assisting and bringing start-ups here and in terms of how we can help our educational aspirations," he explained. Mr Schembri said that AI will have an impact on every economic sector.

<https://www.tvm.com.mt/en/news/watch-sophia-speaks-in-maltese-and-has-citizenship/>





## THE DEADLY PLAGUE OF 1675

Sarria Church is a Roman Catholic Rotunda church in Floriana dedicated to the Immaculate Conception.

In December 1675 there was an outbreak of plague in Marsamxetto which quickly spread to Valletta, to Senglea and by April 1676 had spread to Zurrieq. Malta lost a third of its population. Grand Master Nicholas Cottoner felt that only the divine intercession of the Immaculate Conception, with her renowned power over evil, could stop the plague and he ordered that Sarria's small church be rebuilt in grander style as a vote of thanksgiving for her intercession. The church was built in 1676, on the site of an earlier church constructed in 1574.

The most precious possession of this church are the seven large canvases that surround the interior, painted by Mattia Preti. The altarpiece, by Mattia Preti, depicts the Immaculate Conception with angels sheltering their swords after defeating the plague of 1675.

The outbreak of the plague began in the Valletta house of Matteo Bonnici, a successful trader and importer of cloth. On Christmas Eve 1675, his 11-year-old daughter Anna started showing symptoms that alarmed the family doctor. She died four days later. When most of her family and a neighbouring one as well, succumbed to this mystery illness, it became evident that some terrible disease had reached our shores. The purveyor of this devastating outbreak was most probably an English squadron that had previously visited Tripoli.

The Order of St. John soon set its famed medical organisational skills to work, but the plague soon got out of control. The effect was enormous; a few who could afford to, left the island, while others sought refuge in the country, with some even choosing to live and sleep in the open. Others locked themselves inside their houses or chose places in the countryside or by the sea.

The four-man commission of public health issued stringent laws, even though there were serious disagreements among the doctors as to the nature of the illness and the various treatments that could be given. Strict measures were enforced to limit contact between the villages, and especially with Gozo and abroad.

Eventually foreign doctors were brought over to help in a situation which was rapidly running out of control. These medical practitioners confirmed that the disease was the plague, and even more stringent rules were enacted, including much stricter quarantine laws and sectioning off of particular areas.

Only one person per household was allowed to go out in the streets, and women could not walk outside with their head covered, even with the traditional black ghonnella.

The plague brought out heroic behaviour, especially among the clergy and the medical and the nursing professions, not a few of whom paid for their devotion to duty with their lives. Some others made hay while the sun shone and demanded no little recompense in money or goods. Yet others succumbed to cowardly or egoistic deeds, sometimes looting the houses of the victims and imperilling their own lives.

Almost all turned to the divine for protection in those months of desperation, with many pledging gifts of money, the erection of niches and churches, and pilgrimages, if they were to be delivered from the illness. Many of these mementoes still survive around us and Micallef's book will open the eyes of many to this aspect of our heritage.

Perhaps the most notable relic of the plague is the elegant Sarria rotunda church, the only church that Mattia Preti ever actually designed. Preti himself was then a long-term resident of the island and he is reputed to have sought a safe haven in Zurrieq. The plague started in Rabat, where the first case was reported on March 11, and the efforts of the Universitas to control its spread. Rabat, where there were 88 deaths, had the best organisation in the island.

Gozo was not infected at all, as were Mdina and Safi. The cities were, of course, the worst to suffer, with over 41 per cent of the fatalities, with the poor and the indigent being particularly badly hit. Overall, over 22 per cent of the population of the island succumbed to this terrible disease, which was the universal fear in medieval and early modern times.

Only 10 knights died of the plague, but they included Giovanni Bigli, the nephew of Pope Alexander VII. The Order interpreted as a divine sign the fact that the plague started to abate on June 24, the feast of its protector, St John the Baptist, but the *prattica universale* was only granted exactly three months later. The news was received with the joyous pealing of bells and cannon- and musket-firing.

## Il-Festa ta' San Martin Greg Caruana NSW Australia

### Maltese tradition (Bag of Saint Martin)



- A big simple colourful cloth bag pulled with a string on top called "il-borża ta' San Martin", was placed near the children bedside, full of hard shelled almonds ("lewż"), walnuts ("gawż"), chestnuts ("qastan"), figs ("tin"), apples ("tuffieħ"), oranges ("laring"), tangerines ("mandolina"), pomegranates ("rummien"), San Martin bun ("ħbejża ta' San Martin"), hard glazed on top and with a liquored sweet ("perlina tas-sugu"), stuck in the middle of the bun.

Kristu libes il-mantell li hu kien tagħ lil dak l-imsejken fqir u qal "Dan hu Martin li għallkemm mhux nistrani, kont qed inħoss il-bard u libbisni." Iż-żagħżuġh Martin sar nistrani u wara laħaq Isqof ta' Tours. Huwa miet fis-sena 397 wara Kristu.

Missirijietna minn dejjem kellhom devozzjoni kbira lejn dan il-qaddis, saħansitra insibu żewg kappelli ddedikati lil San Martin; waħda l-Bahrija u l-oħra fl-inħawi ta' l-iMgarr magħrufa bħala ta' San Martin. Fl-imgħoddi, f'din il-kappella tal-iMgarr kienet issir festa tradizzjonali (bħall-Imnarja) bill-logħob tan-nar, bil-għana u bit-tlielaq tal-bhejjem. Fill-Bahrija kienet u għada ssir fiera tad-dundjani. Issir ukoll purċissjoni tat-tfal fejn iġorru statwa żgħira ta' San Martin.

Fl-imgħoddi fi żmien l-Avvent missirijietna kienu jsumu u dak iż-żmienijiet is-sawm ma kienx ċajta. Allura huma kienu jinqdew b'din il-festa biex jieklu u jixorbu dak li jridu. Bħala ikel u ħelu li kien jittiekel f'dan il-jum kien ikun hemm xi fenek jew dundjan inkella ħasi milli kienu jrabbu huma u xi pudina tal-ħobż, pastarjarli, gawż, lewż, qastan, tin, tin tač-čappa, ħobż ħelu u frott bħal-laring, rummien u tuffieħ ta' Belludja u mbid li kien jkun ġdid wara l-ewwel għalja. Fill-fatt, ħafna kienu daww li iqabblu flimkien "Gawż, lewż, qastan, tin, kemm inħobbu l-San Martin."

Billi San Martin huwa simbolu tal-karita, kienet daħlet id-drawwa li tingħata borża tač-čarruta lit-tfal talli jkun għabu ruħhom tajjeb mal-ġenituri tagħhom. U meta konna żagħar konna nemmnu li għabilna San Martin. Niftakar fl-aħħar tal-erbghinijiet in-nanna kienet tgħidilna "Oqogħdu kwiet iħalli San Martin iġibilkom borża sabieħa". Din kienet tkun mimlija b'għadd t'ikel: gawż, lewż, qastan, tin, tin tač-čappa, tuffieħa, laringa, u ħobża żgħira bit-togħma tal-kożbor imsejha Bannozzu. Maż-żmien din il-ħbejża bdew iżidulha xi ħelu tas-sugu jew xi lewża f'nofsha. Fl-imgħoddi t-tfal kienu jieħdu pjačir jerfgħu l-gellewż u l-gawż biex ikunu jistgħu jilagħbu bihom minnflok bočči.

Fl-imgħoddi kien hemm ukoll Fratellanza ta' San Martin u dawn il-fratelli kienu jkun jew jkollhom xi ħwienet tax-xorb jew ta l-ikel jew xi kokijiet. Fill-fatt kien hemm fraži li meta xi ħadd ikun imlaħlaħ għax ikun xorob xi ftit iżżejjed kienu jgħidulu "Qisek Fratell ta' San Martin". Ir-raġuni hi, bħall ma għidna qabel, kienet għax f'dan il-jum kienu jixorbu mbid ġdid. Ħafna drabi għall kemm tkun daħlet ix-xitwa, kien ikun temp sabieħ, xi ftit shun li kien jissejjaħ "Is-sajf ta' San Martin".



# The Maltese Diaspora

## MALTESE ARE ALL OVER THE GLOBE

**Belgium** Before 2003, the Maltese in Belgium were mostly people married to Belgians who had emigrated to the country or Maltese diplomats. In 2003 the employment of Maltese nationals with the European Union (EU) started in earnest in view of Malta's membership of the organisation. Most of the Maltese are in Belgium because of their employment with the EU. It is in fact estimated that of the 324 Maltese employed with the EU in 2010,<sup>[17]</sup> around 250 worked in Belgium.<sup>[18]</sup> This is why they consider themselves to expatriates rather than emigrants as was the case with the Maltese Diaspora in the demographic movements of previous generations. This also explains why most Maltese in Belgium either live in the Brussels-Capital Region or the municipalities bordering this region, in the area in and around the Brussels Ring. The 2008 statistics indicate a community that's more or less evenly balanced between the sexes and whose members are predominantly in the 25-40 age groups.

**Brazil** The first Maltese colony arrived in Brazil in 1912 on board the SS Province, that landed in the port city of Santos with 73 persons. Another 106 arrived later the same year. All started working in the coffee plantations in Sao Paulo and in Fortaleza. As holders of British passports, they were considered by the Brazilian authorities as any other British subject. Many of them later returned to Malta. A second group of Maltese emigrants moved to Brazil in the 1920s, to work on the railroads; among them was Dominic Collier from Floriana, who held an administrative position in the Sao Paulo-Parana railway company. The third phase of Maltese immigration to Brazil, in the 1950s and 1960s, had a different, religious rather than economic, motivation. The Franciscan Order of Malta had been asked by the State of Parana to send priests and sisters to the growing diocese of Jacarezinho. Maltese priests later spread also to the States of Sao Paulo and Pernambuco. In 1977 father Walter Ebejer - brother of Francis Ebejer - was consecrated bishop of the diocese of Vitoria do Sul. Common surnames among the Brazilian Maltese include Busuttil, Zammit, Azzopardi, Balzan, Cutajar.

**Canada** The Maltese emigration to Canada of significant manner occurred in 1840, followed by periods of emigration around 1907 and between 1918-1920. However, most Maltese emigrants settled in Canada after World War II. Most these immigrants settled in Ontario, mainly Toronto, but over time other Maltese immigrants moved to other Canadian cities including Montreal, Vancouver, and St. John's. Approximately 18,000 Maltese people emigrated to Canada between 1946 and 1981, but emigration slowly reduced over time. In 2006 only 145 people of Maltese origin settled in the country.<sup>[20]</sup> According to the 2011 Census, there were 38,780 Canadians who claimed full or partial Maltese ancestry, having an increase compared to those 37,120 in 2006. Today, most of people of Maltese origin, some 18,680 live in Toronto (more than 50% of the total Maltese Canadian population). An area of Dundas Street West in The Junction is known as "Little Malta" due to the historic Maltese population, as well as the continued presence of Maltese clubs and businesses. There are also Maltese communities in other parts of Ontario as well as in Montreal, Winnipeg and Vancouver.

**Egypt** Some Maltese had been present in Egypt as early as the era of Napoleon and his conquest of Egypt. The proximity between the two countries and the similarity between the Maltese and Arabic languages have led many Maltese to settle in Egypt in the past, mainly in Alexandria.<sup>[22]</sup> Like the Italians who settled in Egypt, the Egyptian-born Maltese constituted a portion of Egypt's Roman Catholic community. By 1939, up to 20,000 Maltese were living in Egypt. Practically all of these were French-speaking, and those with a French parent had French as their mother tongue. In many middle-class families (especially in Alexandria and Cairo) a language shift had occurred, with Italian used as the home language alongside French; a large minority of Egyptian Maltese (for example those of the Suez Canal Zone) still retained Maltese as their mother tongue. This number was greatly reduced by emigration years after, and almost completely wiped out by expulsions in 1956 due to the Maltese being British nationals. Most of the Egyptian Franco-Maltese settled in Australia or Britain, where they remained culturally distinct from immigrants from Malta. Those with French citizenship were repatriated to France (most often to Marseille). Post-war Malta in general did not accept refugees from Egypt.

**Gibraltar** A Maltese community has existed in Gibraltar since shortly after its capture by an Anglo-Dutch fleet in 1704. The majority of the Spanish inhabitants were then expelled, leaving behind a garrison to be serviced by immigrants, mostly from Malta and Genoa. Immigration from neighboring Spanish towns soon followed, giving Gibraltar a very cosmopolitan population. Gibraltar's prosperity attracted immigrants from neighbouring Mediterranean lands and in 1885 there were about 1,000 Maltese people living in Gibraltar. Early in the 20th century the British undertook vast naval works and improvements to the existing fortifications of Gibraltar to make the rock practically impregnable. Many Maltese worked in the dockyard and others operated ancillary businesses. However, the economy of Gibraltar was not capable of absorbing a large number of immigrants from Malta and by 1912 the number of Maltese was already in decline (not above 700) as they returned to the Maltese Islands. Eventually those who stayed in Gibraltar became very much involved in the economic and social life in Gibraltar, most of them also being staunch supporters of links with the UK.

**Greece** A large community of descendants of Maltese Italians is still present in Corfu.<sup>[24]</sup> Their forebears came to the island during the 19th century, when the British authorities brought many skilled workers from Malta to the Ionian Islands. The British needed married men so that their work would be continued by their children, and as a consequence 80 people (40 families from 1815 until 1860) were transported to Corfu, whose descendants remain on the island today. In 1901, there were almost one thousand people in Corfu who considered themselves to be ethnic Maltese. In Cephalonia the number was 225. There were another hundred Maltese spread among the other lesser islands of the Ionian Group. Maltese emigration to these islands practically ceased when the islands were returned to Greece in 1864. Because of the union with Greece, a number of Maltese families abandoned Corfu and settled in Cardiff, Wales, where their descendants still live. In Corfu, two villages on the island bear names testifying to Maltese presence: Maltezika is named after Malta and Cozzella got its name from Gozo. In Cozzella the Franciscan Sisters of Malta opened a convent and a school in 1907. Those two institutions still flourish. In 1930, the Maltese in Corfu had their own priest who looked after their welfare while he kept useful contacts with the ecclesiastical and civil authorities in Malta. That priest was the Rev. Spiridione Cilia, who had been born in Corfu of Maltese parents and became the parish priest of the Maltese community. The Corfiot Maltese community currently numbers 3,500 people in the entire island. They constitute the center of the Catholic community of Corfu, but not one among them speaks the Maltese language. The former mayor of the city of Corfu, Sotiris Micallef, is of Maltese descent.

**Italy** The town of Pachino, in the south of Sicily, was developed based on a royal decree of Ferdinand I of the Two Sicilies of 1760. Prince Ferdinand invited the Maltese neighbors to populate the new country and more than thirty families accepted the invitation. The first families were: Agius, Azzoppard, Arafam, Bughagiar, Bartolo, Caldies, Bonelli, Cammisuli, Borgh, Cassar Scalia, Boager, Fenech, Ferruggia, Grech, Mizzi, Meilach, Micallef, Mallia, Ongres, Saliba, Sultan, and Xueref.

**Libya** A community of Maltese in Libya was established in the XIX century. They remained in the country throughout the XX century, as they were not subject to expulsion by the Qaddafi regime in the 1970s.<sup>[25]</sup> Many Maltese continued to move to Libya for work, particularly after the thaw with the West of Qaddafi's regime in the 2000s, until the start of the Libyan civil war in 2011.

Maltese families still live in [Tripoli](#) to this day like The family of Abuhajr, the Faruja family, the Zmayt family and the Bazina family.

**New Zealand** The first recorded Maltese migrant to [New Zealand](#) was Angelo Parigi, who is listed at St Patrick's Church in Auckland as having married 16-year-old RoseAnne McMullen on 4 July 1849. He was described as "a boatman born in Malta". Others followed including a James Cassar for whom some letters remained unclaimed at the Auckland Post Office in 1864. In 1883, Francesco Saverio de Cesare, who was tasked by the Government in Malta to assess the "suitability of the British Colonies in Australia as a field for Maltese Migration", reported that: "At Auckland I met three Maltese, there settled for several years, and at Tauranga another one, employed as a cook; they are doing well; and have no idea of returning to Malta. They told me there are some other Maltese, whom they know, settled in Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin." The Maltese Association of Wellington was founded in 1989, with Carmen Dalli as president. The latest census puts the number of Maltese residents in New Zealand at 222.<sup>[26]</sup>

**South Africa** The Maltese started to emigrate to South Africa right after the [second world war](#). In 1947-1948, 102 persons, particularly highly skilled workers, moved to the South Cape colony. Yet, this first wave was soon stooped, as the new South African government did not favour further immigration.



**TAHLITA TA' MUŻIKA, STORJA U DRAMA FIL-BELT VICTORIA**

Ma naqbel xejn li fil-belt Victoria fl-istess ħin u fl-istess lejla jkunu għaddejnin tliet attivitajiet f'daqqa. Hekk ġara nhar il-Hadd filgħaxija 28 ta' Ottubru 2018 meta fi Pjazza t-Tokk, illum Misraħ Indipendenza kienet qed issir it-tifkira tal-220 sena mit-tluq tal-Franċiżi u l-Għoti ta' Gieħ Għawdex, fiċ-Ċittadella kien qed jinħadem id-dramm msejjes fuq ir-rumanz ta' Gorg Scicluna 'Il-Qassis li rebaħ' u fis-Sala ewlenija tal-Ministeru għal Għawdex kienet qed issir serata mużikali bis-sehem ta' Rebecca Hall fuq il-flawt u Gisele Grima fuq il-pjanu bħala parti mill-festival *Music +* organizzat mill-Classique Foundation imwaqqa f'Għawdex minn Mro Joseph Debrincat fis-sena 2000.

Nghid għaliya xtaqt li attendejt għalihom it-tlieta għax it-tlieta kienu jinteressawni imma nistqarr li għad ma għandix id-don tat-trilokazzjoni u allura kelli nikkuntenta ruħi li ntlef tnejn u ngawdi attività waħda biss. Intant nixtieq nifrah lil Dr Anton Refalo ex Ministru għal Għawdex u lil Paul M Cassar ex librar għal snin twal u ex Segretarju Generali tas-Socjeta La Stella li ra t-twelid tat-Tejatra Astra, li ingħataw Gieħ Għawdex waqt serata sabiha bis-sehem tal-Cordia String Quartet li

saret fil-pjazza ewlenija tal-belt tagħna fil-preżenza tal-President ta' Malta li poġġiet ukoll kuruna f'riglejn il-Monument tal-Arċipriet Saverio Cassar li taħt it-tmexxija tiegħu l-Għawdxin kien inxexxielhom ikeċċu lill-Franċiżi wara li dawn okkupaw lil Għawdex għal 141 ġurnata. Biex ifakkar lil dan il-patrijott, ic-Circolo Gozitano jagħti Gieħ Għawdex lill-personalitajiet u organizzazzjonijiet li għamlu gieħ kbir lil Għawdex jew li taw kontribut ta' fejda għall-iżvilupp soċjo-ekonomiku u kulturali tal-gżira.

Kif għidt iktar 'l fuq, fl-istess ħin li kienet għaddejja din iċ-ċerimonja fil-Pjazza Indipendenza, dejjem fl-okkażjoni ta' Jum Għawdex u fl-okkażjoni tal-220 sena mit-tkeċċija tal-Franċiżi, il-'Gozo Creative Theatre Club' bil-kollaborazzjoni tar-Regjun t'Għawdex taħt il-Patroċinju distint tal-President ta' Malta, fiċ-Ċittadella kien qed jinħadem id-dramm storiku mir-rumanz ta' Gorg Scicluna, 'Il-Qassis li Rebaħ', drammatizzazzjoni ta' Joe W Psaila u direzzjoni artistika ta' George Mizzi. Prosit lill-atturi kollha li ħadu sehem.

Sadanittant dejjem fl-istess lejla u fl-istess ħin, pubbliku numeruż attenda għall-kunċert mużikali mlaqqam 'Bach and Beyond' bis-sehem ta' żewġ solisti bravi li ġa semmejt iktar 'l fuq. Dawn daqqew bejniethom siltiet minn xogħlijiet magħrufa ta' kompożituri famużi li kienu jinkludu lil Johann Sebastian Bach, Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach, Enrique Granados, Claude Debussy, Joseph Vella, Georges Bizet u Frederic Chopin. Dan il-kunċert kien qed iġib fit-tmiem, sensiela ta' kunċerti u attivitajoet mużikali bħala parti mill-Festival *Music+*. L-aħħar attività se tkun tikkonsisti f'Kunferenza bil-Malti fic-Circolo Gozitano fi Pjazza Savina Victoria l-Gimgha 9 ta' Novembru li se tkun titratta l-Futur tal-Opra fil-gzejjer tagħna.

Kelma tal-aħħar; Prosit għal din l-attività kollha fil-Belt Victoria imma ma naqbel xejn li l-affarijiet ma jsirux b'iktar ħsieb u ippjanar biex b'hekk kollox ikun jista' jtgawda u l-organizzaturi jassikuraw attendenzi tajbin li ma jkunux imxerxa għax il-baħar xhin tqassmu jsir għadajjar, jghid il-Malti. **Kav Joe M Attard Victoria Għawdex**



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**1 Minister Carmelo Abela delivering his opening speech at the 3rd EU-Arab World Summit in Athens**

Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade Promotion Carmelo Abela addressed the 3rd EU-Arab World Summit in Athens, an international event bringing together leaders, ministers, and other high-ranking government officials

from around 30 European Union and Arab states, European

Commission representatives, and influential business leaders.



*Minister Carmelo Abela meeting Giorgos Katrougalos, the Alternate Minister of Foreign Affairs of Greece*

## Narrative of hope and progress as equal partners for EU and Arab countries

This year, the two-day summit convened on the 29th and 30th of October 2018 under the theme of a 'Shared Horizon'. It focused on the joint challenges and opportunities faced by the EU and the Arab world and debated topical issues such as migration policies; the challenging global environment; the respective neighbourhood policies *vis-à-vis* the Mediterranean, Africa, and the Middle East; cooperation on climate change and energy transition; institution building and social movements; the digital economy; and the role of transportation in promoting growth in trade and investment.

"For too long, the narrative surrounding our two regions has been strikingly negative", said Minister Abela. "The issues that frequently bring us around one table are migration, counter-terrorism, conflicts, extremism... For too long, our messages have been nuanced by perceptions, which diffused the energy and the enthusiasm to register progress on issues of mutual benefit. Whether to maintain this course or to change direction is up to us. The [narrative of hope and progress as equal partners](#) – each contributing positively for the benefit of our inter-regional relationship and for our own societies – is in our hands." Stressing that the involvement of young people in the process of change is paramount, he said that a 'can-do' attitude is essential for keeping up a steady pace for both societies to move forward toward achievement.

Minister Abela pointed out that over the years, Malta has consistently advocated a more visible and structured format of dialogue which would pave the way for a partnership between Europe and the Arab World. The country has been an active participant in the 5+5 Western Mediterranean Dialogue and in the Union for the Mediterranean. Furthermore, as a direct result of a Maltese initiative, the first European Union – League of Arab States (LAS) Ministerial Meeting was organised in Malta in 2008, establishing regular exchanges between the EU and the LAS.

Since 2009, Malta has proudly hosted the European Commission – LAS Liaison Office (ECLASLO), which is the only representative body that exemplifies the unique relationship between the two organisations. This office has promulgated a designed and desired message of inter-regional outreach, which Malta consistently advocates. Minister Abela congratulated this office for all its hard work to promote dialogue as well as a number of concrete projects relating to culture, crisis management, diplomatic training, network formation, and electoral observation. He urged that this liaison office continues to be assisted to increase its visibility by identifying new fields of cooperation, and other forward-looking initiatives.

The line-up of speakers at the summit also included Prime Minister of the Hellenic Republic Alexis Tsipras, President of the Republic of Cyprus Nicos Anastasiades, EU Commissioner for Migration, Home Affairs & Citizenship Dimitris Avramopoulos, and Prime Minister of the Republic of Bulgaria Boyko Borissov. On the margins of the summit, Minister Abela held bilateral meetings with Greek Alternate Foreign Minister Giorgos Katrougalos, and with European Commissioner for Home Affairs, Migration, and Citizenship Dimitris Avramopoulos..





## The Ambassador of Malta in China

H.E. John Aquilina is the ambassador of the Republic of Malta in Beijing. The Embassy is in charge of diplomatic relations between Malta and the People's Republic of China.

John Aquilina was born in Malta and at a young age migrated to Australia with his parents and younger brother. He graduated from Sydney University, and then worked as a high school teacher of History and English in public schools for almost ten years.

John was elected Mayor of Blacktown in 1977 and in 1981 he became a member of the New South Wales (NSW) Parliament.

Mr Aquilina was elected as a Minister for several years, and held many ministerial portfolios, including Education and Training for six years and seven months. Other Portfolios he held were Natural Resources, Youth and Community Services, Fair Trading, and Lands and Water Resources. Mr. Aquilina then served for four years as the Speaker of the Parliament, and finally for a further four years as the Leader of the House in the NSW Legislative Assembly, until his retirement from active politics in 2011.

During his long term in public life Mr Aquilina had substantial interaction with many migrant communities, including a large number of Chinese Australian migrants, many of whom played significant roles in business and commerce.

Mr Aquilina visited China in an official capacity on several occasions. This included twice as the Minister for Education and Training to sign contracts for the exchange of teachers, as well as the signing of Memoranda of Understanding. On another occasion, while Speaker of the NSW Parliament, Mr Aquilina led a Joint Delegation of Members of Parliament to various key Chinese National and Provincial centres. While Leader of the House, Mr Aquilina launched a major publication on indigenous Chinese and Australian art at the Australian Pavilion of the Shanghai World Expo. He also attended a major conference of Business, Industrial and Political Leaders in Changchun City.

Mr Aquilina has received numerous official international honours for his work in public life, including Officer of the Order of Merit of Malta (U.O.M.), The Order of Australia (A.M.), The Polish Officer's Cross, The Slovenian Order of Services, The Philippines Congressional Medal of Achievement, and the Papal Knighthood, Commander of the Order of St. Gregory the Great, from His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI.

Although Mr Aquilina resided in Australia for many years, he has always closely identified with his Maltese heritage. He was honoured to have been invited to represent Malta as its High Commissioner to India, as well as several SARC countries, and to now be appointed as Malta's Ambassador to China.

His Excellency, the Hon. John Aquilina U.O.M., arrived in China with his wife Ann to take up office on December 17, 2015.



**Our journey journal is  
archived at the  
Malta Migration Museum –  
Valletta  
Gozo National Library  
Maltese-Canadian Museum  
Website  
Ozmalta.com**



## The success story of the George Cross Falcons Community Centre Inc

*Louis Parnis - President*

The premises are situated ten minutes outside Wollongong and forty minutes from Liverpool. The Club was built in 1951 to serve the Maltese community members of the Illawarra (Wollongong) region who used to work at the steel factory. It has also served the community as a welcoming place for Maltese presidents, parliamentarians, religious leaders and other dignitaries who travelled to this continent from Malta to visit and meet the members of the Maltese communities.



Today the Club is proud of our great committee that understands the importance of solidarity and the President Louis Parnis is providing personal management skills to our Club, which we know are reaping the rewards after 10 years of dedication to make sure that the financial position of the George Cross Falcons Centre is viable to cover all the expenses in maintaining the premises and payments of all the bills when due. We encourage everyone to attend the Club events and functions at some time to appreciate all the work the committee members have achieved in the last ten years, things like renovation of the amenities block, holding workshops to produce the toys for children, thanks to the organiser's team Vince Xuereb, Henry Briffa, Tony Borg (carpenter) and the volunteers especially the disability group in helping with the sanding.

The centre is embellished with murals (see picture above), air-conditioner, solar panels on the roof, carport, workshop and the planting of many trees which were donated by Wollongong City Council. The Committee four years ago committed to refurbish the original room underneath the premises and the President designed a plan and today the room is completed and fully functional to be used for the Men's Shed Workshop. We are proud to support Greenacres group men and women to work in the workshop. We take the opportunity to thank the volunteers and to all that donated funds so to enable us to complete this great project for the local Community. To date we had donated Wooden toys to the

Illawarra Disability Trust, Greenacres Group, Kids in Foster homes, and Carinya Cottage Women's refuge.

Recently, the committee invited Doris Cachia to make the Maltese traditional clothes for the folk-dancing group and they look fabulous. The same group holds special performances in Nursing Homes especially where Maltese elderly reside.

The Senior's lunch had reached a great number of over 120 every Monday from 10 am till 2.30 pm. Tea, coffee and biscuits are provided for morning tea, a home cooked meal bread and dessert plus a chance to win one of 3 meat trays. The George Cross Falcons Community Centre Inc. comes under the REGIONAL NSW in



providing a voice to regional associations. For further information. Well done Louis and committee.

**Contact Louis Parnis - President Email : [Louie.parnis@gmail.com](mailto:Louie.parnis@gmail.com)**



## Concert of music by Rossini and Isouard



Andriana Yordanova. Right: Julia Miller.

A concert of music by Italian composer Gioacchino Rossini and Maltese composer Nicolò Isouard was performed by soprano Andriana Yordanova, accompanied by pianist Julia Miller, at The Splendid, Valletta. The repertoire of the concert, entitled Rossini and Isouard and directed by Giuseppe Schembri Bonaci, included arias from Rossini's *Otello*, *L'Assedio di Corinto*, *Guglielmo Tell*, *Tancredi* and chamber works and arias from Isouard's operas including *Jeanot et Colin* and *Cendrillon*.

The two composers, who lived in different but overlapping times, competed for international recognition in Paris. Rossini was 19 years younger than Isouard and after the latter's premature death he outlived him by 50 years. Also performing at the concert are soprano Kimberly Grech and mezzo soprano Christine Dalli.

*The Rossini and Isouard concert, presented*

*by the Strada Stretta Concept, will be held today at 8.30pm at The Splendid, Strait Street, Valletta. Admission is free.*

Kimberly Grech. Right: Christine Dalli.



## Heritage Malta exhibition sheds light on Malta's medieval history

Displays builds on findings of excavations



Photo: Wikimapia

A new exhibition entitled *Core and Periphery: Mdina and Safi in the 9th and 10th centuries* focuses on Medieval times in Malta and is the first of a series, which will be shedding further light on this fascinating epoch. In collaboration with the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage and the University of Malta, this exhibition presents some of the results obtained from two rescue archaeological excavations that were carried out in Mdina in 2008, and in Ħal Safi in 2015.

Both excavations yielded precious archaeological information on Malta's Dark Ages – a period of dramatic historical change that saw the end of Byzantine domination and the arrival of the Arabs in the islands – one of the least understood, yet crucial moments of change in the Maltese history. The exhibition is being hosted by the National Museum of Archaeology in Valletta and it will be open to the public until January 31, 2019. Admission is free of charge. A publication by Heritage Malta with detailed information relating to the 9th and 10th century Medieval Malta and including studies of the archaeological excavations in I-Mdina and Ħal Safi, is available for sale from all Heritage Malta sites and museums.

Further information may be obtained from Heritage Malta's website [www.heritagemalta.org](http://www.heritagemalta.org)

## Building a sound migration policy for Europe

### French minister to address meeting on migration



*French Minister for European Affairs Nathalie Loiseau. Photo: J. Litvine*

French Minister for European Affairs Nathalie Loiseau will be in Malta to speak about the importance of building sound migration policies for Europe.

Ms Loiseau was invited by her Maltese counterpart, Helena Dalli, to address a citizens' consultation meeting

which will focus on migration.

French Ambassador Brigitte Curmi said the topic was important for France and Malta since the two shared the same views on the importance of building a sound migration policy for Europe.

"Through continuous dialogue and concrete action, we believe that a truly European response to this challenge can be found. More broadly, France and Malta share the same views on what the Europe of tomorrow should be: democratic, close to its citizens, safe, fair and innovative," Ms Curmi said.

She referred the ad hoc agreements put in place by some European states to respond to the urgent need of the migrants who were on board the Lifeline and Aquarius.

These agreements, which were the result of joint efforts by Malta, France and other European states, "were the best possible solution to these specific situations".

"They showed that solidarity among Europeans is always the best way forward to fulfil our humanitarian duty in the fastest, most efficient and fair way for all parties involved," she said.

"These agreements must now guide us to find, at the European level, permanent mechanisms to address the issue of migrations in a way that is, again, a demonstration that Europe bears the values of solidarity and responsibility and which ensures protection to those in need, while addressing the challenge of illegal migration," Ms Curmi added.



## Did you know... that 310 Maltese child migrants were sent to Australia (1950-65)?

Maltese children at Bindoon Boys' Town 1952. Reproduced courtesy State Library of Western Australia, The Battye Library 005086D.

In 1928 Perth-based Maltese priest Father Raphael Pace urged the Christian Brothers to include Maltese children in its

emerging migration scheme. Negotiations between the Maltese and Western Australian Governments continued through the 1930s but the first Maltese child migrants did not arrive in Australia until after World War II.

Between 1950 and 1965, 259 boys and 51 girls were sent to Catholic institutions in Western Australia and South Australia. Most parents believed their children would receive a better education in Australia. Instead many were put to work on the Christian Brothers' building projects and left to endure the same punishment and abuses as their British counterparts. Some were forced to stop using their Maltese language and never learned to read or write English.





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

## Memorial to the Migrant Children from Malta and Britain

A sculpture commemorates the contribution made by British and Maltese girls and boys who left their country to find a new life in Western Australia.

The life-size bronze statue of a young boy and girl carrying all their worldly possessions in a small suitcase apiece serves as a perpetual reminder of the experiences of nearly 3,000 unaccompanied children who were shipped to Western Australia from Britain and Malta over a period spanning more than 50 years. The memorial to honour the memory, and the contribution to Western Australian society and history, of former child migrants was launched on Human Rights Day (10 December) 2004 by the West Australian Minister for Community Development, the Honourable Sheila McHale.

Between 1947 and 1955 over 3200 children migrated to Australia under approved schemes. About 310 of them were Maltese while the remainder came from the United Kingdom. Other European countries were asked if they would like to participate in the child migration scheme but declined. Over 30 homes were approved by the Commonwealth for the housing of child migrants. Most of these were run by voluntary and religious organisations. It was not government policy to provide homes specifically for migrant children; however, the government did contribute towards the capital expenditure incurred by these organisations in setting up suitable homes. Both the Commonwealth and State governments contributed towards running costs. The governments of the United Kingdom and Malta also paid maintenance for their children who had emigrated to approved institutions in Australia.



We thank all our readers for supporting this journal and especially those who contact us to thank us and also those who send us contributions, stories, suggestions and ideas





## First Congress in Malta of the Sovereign Order of St. John – Hand stamp

BA special hand stamp to mark the occasion of the first congress held in Malta of the Sovereign Order of St John of Jerusalem Knights of Malta, is to be issued by MaltaPost.

It will be available this Saturday, the 3rd of November, at the Valletta Castille Post Office, situated at 1, Annona House, Castille Square, Valletta.

MaltaPost said that orders may be placed online at [www.maltaphilately.com](http://www.maltaphilately.com) or by mail from the Philatelic Bureau, MaltaPost p.l.c. 305, Triq Hal Qormi, Marsa, MTP 1001 – Telephone 2596 1740 – e-mail: [info@maltaphilately.com](mailto:info@maltaphilately.com)

## “Gozo’s Trailblazer” Exhibition



Il-Ħaġar museum (in Victoria's Pjazza San Ġorġ) is hosting an exhibition on the occasion of the Golden Jubilee of Teatru Astra. It consists of a range of clearly-captioned photos giving a bird's eye view of the gamut of innovative events during these fifty years: operettas, stage plays, musical shows, international variety shows, operas, musicals, and band concerts. Others illustrate construction, inauguration, and revamping after the fire. A surely interesting – singed - item is one of the original decorations by artist Frank Portelli. An opera video also runs.

This is accompanied with a book in colour with expanded information and photos. Copies of “Gozo’s Trailblazer”, number three in the Il-Ħaġar GEMS series, can be acquired until stocks last but the exhibition continues till end November. The closing event will be a conversation with Joseph Calleja who, as is quite well known, debuted in opera at the Astra. There is no entrance fee and the museum is open 9am to 5pm seven days a week. [Antoine Vassallo]



## Sovereign Order of Malta linking diplomacy with aid to reach people in need

The diplomatic relations which the Sovereign Order of Malta enjoys with 108 countries and the European Union, its permanent observer status at the United Nations and international Cooperation Agreements concluded with over 50 states, exist to facilitate its humanitarian activities, and allow unrestricted and protected access especially in crisis regions.

The Order’s diplomatic network strengthens its relationships with the governments of the countries in which it operates. This network allows its medical programmes to be integrated into national and regional healthcare systems and to facilitate the importing of healthcare equipment to reach people in need as quickly as possible. An example is Myanmar, where the Order of Malta’s worldwide relief agency, Malteser International, has been allowed to operate since 2001 when it was still extremely difficult for foreign relief organisations to work in the country. Malteser International was one of the very few international organisations able to start an immediate relief operation after cyclone Nargis hit the country in 2008, channelling international aid into affected regions.

Due to its status as a neutral, apolitical and independent institution and its humanitarian role and ongoing activities in 120 countries, the Sovereign Order of Malta is able to intervene as a mediator in conflicts.



## 50 years since the first MSSP mission in Peru

At the Chuqubamba Prelature in Peru, the first three missionaries – Fr Anton Camilleri, Fr Thomas Soler and Fr Vincent Magro – started their pastoral work in the parish of Aplao, 180km away from Arequipa and 1,024km from Lima. Many difficulties exist in this place, including great poverty, unhealthy food and distances, residents without water and electricity, bad roads and social injustices. Fr

Vincent Magro said that during a 50-year period, the Missionary Society of St Paul's Oratory (MSSP) managed to build primary and secondary schools to guarantee education to all children, churches and parish halls, together with clinics and kitchens to provide health services and free food to the poor.

Currently there are 14 priests including seven Maltese working in poor and abandoned areas, including Aplao, Acequia Alta, Tomilla, Buenos Aires de Alto Cayma, Sta Teresa de Calcutta and Sta Elena Arequipa. Fr Magro stated there is a good future for vocations and this year five youths are preparing themselves for vocations. He thanked the Maltese and Gozitans who contribute for the continuation of the mission, year after year.

# MAMA LANA'S



## ROGER AND LANA BORG:

### How It All Began

Husband and wife duo Roger and Lana Borg work full time jobs, have seven children aged 9-30 years old, four grandchildren and five loved dogs.

Back in October 2013, Roger and Lana cooked for the fire fighters battling the Blue Mountains bush fires. The duo delivered 350 meals a day over a 12 day period during the fires as well as cooking BBQ breakfasts and dinners for the Volunteers. Then in November they were asked to cook a banquet Christmas Eve dinner from a carpark in Penrith for the homeless and underprivileged. After contacting

Vinnies, Roger and Lana organised to go down to the Penrith carpark location Vinnies regularly attended to "check it out". From here, Roger and Lana realised there was a great need in our local community to help feed the homeless and underprivileged and began delivering meals four nights a week. When the need arose, Mama Lana's Community Foundation increased meal services to the current arrangement of six nights each week.





Lana says, “We want to let these beautiful patrons know that there are people out there that truly care and help them get back their self-respect and dignity so they can eventually get back on their feet.” We believe in kindness with no strings attached, and, with love and commitment, Mama Lana’s is doing everything we can to achieve this.

Mama Lana’s Community Foundation (MLCF) is a wholly not-for-profit organisation dedicated to helping our often forgotten homeless and underprivileged community in the greater Penrith region, to advance their wellbeing and prospects for future independence. The foundation offers hot meals six nights a week, supplies food and toiletry packs, as well as providing clothing, sleeping bags, swags and blankets to keep the homeless and underprivileged warm during cold Penrith nights.

MLCF also works with and assists other local charities and support services. Whenever we can respond to crisis calls from people who need a hand up with food, clothing, furniture, and in some cases, financial issues.

We also liaise on behalf of the patrons with Centrelink, Penrith Council, Department of Housing and other source centres and government departments to help the patrons any way we can to make their lives more comfortable and bearable, as well as seeking to find long term solutions to better their circumstances. Each night we are seeing new faces, reinforcing to us that the need for our service is necessary.

## Controversial Valletta 2018 sculptures cost €68,500

Project is aimed at promoting Maltese language



'Il-huta ż-żgħira qatt ma kielel il-kbira'. Photo:

Facebook/Greta Ellul Xuereb

Love them or hate them, those plaster sculptures dotted around Valletta cost taxpayers €68,500. The cost of the public art installation of 13 statues – part of the Valletta 2018 project *Kif Jgħid il-Malti* – was revealed by Culture Minister Owen Bonnici in his reply to a parliamentary question

posed by Nationalist MP Therese Comodini Cachia.

Dr Bonnici said the works had been welcomed by the public – though when they first put up, they were greeted by [reactions ranging from puzzlement to sniggers](#). Just two days, after they were unveiled, a number of them were [vandalised](#).

The sculptures, designed by Joel Saliba, visually depict Maltese proverbs and were meant to encourage people to reflect on Malta's national language. The project was chosen on its “artistic merit”, Dr Bonnici said.

Margaret Pace and Ikona Artworks Ltd helped Mr Saliba, while Sarah-Lee Zammit helped with research, with Chris Galea providing logistic support and Perry Scenic Ltd manufacturing the designs.

The temporary installations vary from one of a prickly pear-headed figure looking at their watch (*'Iż-żmien isajru l-bajtar'*) - to one of a minnow trying to swallow a far bigger fish (*'Il-huta ż-żgħira qatt ma kielel lill-kbira'*) and another of an eyeball resting in a spoon (*'L-ewwel ma tiekol l-għajn'*).



## Pembroke Won Halloween David Grech Urpani

Trick or treating and all things Halloween have seen a rise in popularity in Malta over the last couple of years. With more and more people getting into the spooky spirit, towns and villages all around the island keep upping their game... but they've got their work cut out for them if they want to reach Pembroke level.



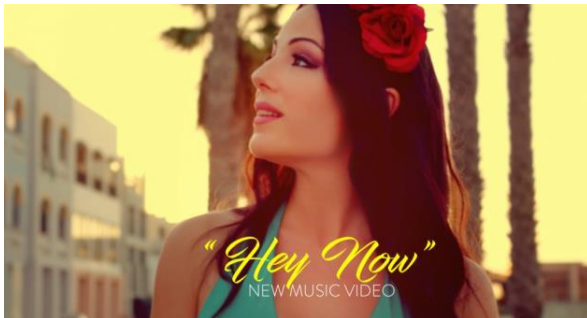
Yet again, residents of Triq San Ġorġ Preca and beyond came together last night for a celebration of creepy and creative costumes. With a completely pimped out street including fake fog and skeletons aplenty, the Pembroke street yet again showed Malta how it's really done, and young mayor Dean Hili was at the heart of it all.

"We weren't expecting the numbers we saw last year, so we worked longer and harder on it this year to make sure we beefed up the organisation more than anything," Hili told Lovin Malta. "We wanted to make the activity better and to also minimise the nuisance to the community as much as is possible. In the end, we ended up going even bigger!"

Barely an hour after the sun set on Wednesday night, thousands descended on the Pembroke street for a night adults and children alike definitely won't be forgetting any time soon.

"Many local councils cancelled their events because of yesterday's bad weather, but we never lost hope," Hili smiled. "We persevered, and with a big stroke of luck, the rain stopped at 6pm when the activity was meant to start." On [Facebook](#), hundreds posted photos, tagging friends and convincing family members to head on down to San Ġorġ Preca Street. And best of all, it was all in aid of Puttinu Cares.

"We're still counting the money collected, but it's looking like it will be more than last year," the young Pembroke mayor told Lovin Malta. "All in all, I'd say it was a great success, thanks to the cooperation and work of the residents of Triq San Ġorġ Preca and others around it."



## IRA LOSCO RELEASES NEW MUSIC VIDEO

Popular artist Ira Losco has just released a brand new music video called *Hey Now*.

This is the fifth single off her double album *No Sinner No Saint*. A first on the local scene, the album is divided in two CD albums with 12 tracks each.

The music video starts with the statement: "There are always two sides to every story", a phrase which also

accompanies the narrative of the double album and which also hints what could follow next.

*Hey Now* was directed by Steven Levi Vella and was shot by Matthew Muscat Drago. It features a colorful and vibrant palette with Losco in a variety of scenes accompanying the reggaeton groovy track.

Losco's fifth studio album can be purchased from all music portals or [www.jaggedhouse.com](http://www.jaggedhouse.com)



**MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER**  
The Journal of the Maltese Diaspora

*Serving the community for five years  
Thanking our readers for their patronage*



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



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



The Maltese emigrants in front of Customs House before boarding the Vulcania on June 17, 1948 on their way to Canada.

## Maltese Migration to Canada

On May 8, 1948, 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, 1948