

# MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER

The Journal of Maltese Living Abroad



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## CHRISTMAS PRAYER

May all the Maltese living in Malta, Gozo and Abroad  
have and enjoy peace, unity, love and harmony  
during this festive season and in the new year 2020



**Christmas for kids**

**Il-Milied ghat-tfal**

*Happy Christmas*  
to all our readers

*Milied it-Tajjeb*  
lill-qarrejja kollha taghna



## Festive Season Greetings 2019 to the Maltese Diaspora: Malta Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade Promotion Carmelo Abela



Happy Christmas and Happy New Year to you, all of you. This time of the year is the time to celebrate, full of joy. But it's also the time for reflection. Reflection on these months that we passed through, the achievements that we

made at every level, and also the time to look forward to better things. This is the attitude that we need to have when it comes to the New Year and the festive season.

This year, it was a real pleasure and joy for me to meet some of you in your respective countries and to talk to each and everyone one of you about the interest that you show in your country, which is our country.

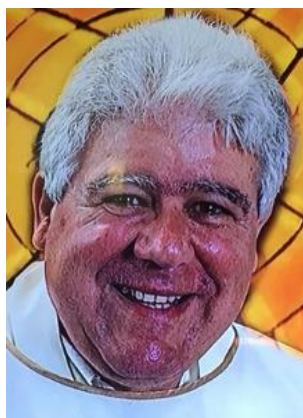
And Therefore, I think that for next year, it's important that we keep this engagement by visits that we make, we keep this engagement by the meeting of the Council of Maltese Living Abroad (CMLA), and actually next year, we will have the Convention of Maltese Living Abroad. This convention allows more people to come here to Malta, to actively participate in the proceedings, and to partake in the discussions.

We know that the challenges are quite big: We need to keep in touch with new ways to communicate with the Maltese diaspora: i dare say that, with all the Maltese that feel that they have something that relates them to this country, Next year, 2020, will be the year where we hold the convention for the Maltese Living Abroad. The theme that we chose is "Keeping Connected", and that is a message in itself: We want to keep connected with each and everyone of you. We want you to be part of this convention, by coming here if that's possible for you, and we want you to listen in what you have to say, in how we can better the relationship with each diaspora scattered all around the world.

With this spirit, I ask you to contact us about this Convention, and to be part of it. We feel that it's of utmost importance for us to keep connected with each other.

Looking towards the future, we see that the future is bright, but it's only bright if we work together. And I think this is the message that I want to convey to you: We need to continue working together, we need to continue to be connected, and it will be my pleasure if possible to meet with you in your respective communities.

Until then, I wish you and your loved ones a Happy Christmas, and a Happy New Year.



### + CHARLES GAUCI BISHOP OF DARWIN – AUSTRALIA To the readers of the Maltese Journal

Dear Friends , Peace be with you . Christmas for brings many memories . My first 13 Christmases were in Malta . Crib Christmas tree , the novena in the church with traditional bagpipes at San Gejtanu in the morning , grandma and mum and the aunties making Christmas pudding in Banjju Maria , dad decorating the Christmas tree before midnight mass , processions in the streets with baby Jesus , figures of Jesus in the windows and so much more !! You had no doubt that it was Christmas for all the right reasons .

A lot of what we see at Christmas now is so commercialised. Spend spend and spend

more !!

Dear friends let us remember that Christmas is about God becoming truly one of us. InJesus we have the best possible way of connecting with God .

His message is that we and every other person matter absolutely to God . We can always make fresh starts and find healing and forgiveness . Forgiveness of others brings healing . We find ourselves when we give ourselves and so much more . Blessings upon you all for Christmas. Let us not forget those for whom Christmas is not a happy time , + Charles Gauci , Bishop of Darwin



## Christmas Message 2019 from Father Gabriel Stephen Micallef OFM

Għeziez ħuti Maltin,  
Fuq talba tal-ħabrieġi  
Konslu Onorarju Malti  
fis-South Astralia, Mr  
Frank Scicluna OAM

MQR, ġejt mitlub li nibgħat messagg lil dawġ li jirċievu l-Maltese eNewsletter, Journal of the Maltese Diaspora, b'mod speċjali lil Maltin tas-South Australia, fejn ħdimt fosthom għal dawn l-aħħar 23 sena bħala Kappillan tal-Kommunità Maltija. Nieħu l-opportunità biex niringrazzja lil Frank tal-ħidma li qiegħed iwettaq b'risq il-Kommunità Maltija fid-dijaspora, billi jzommna nfurmati b'dak li qiegħed iseħħ fostna l-Maltin mxerrdin madwar il-globu u jkompli jagħtina informazzjoni fuq l-għeruq tagħna l-Maltin aħna minn fejn aħna u qegħdin fejn aħna qegħdin.

B'għafsa ta' qalb jkolli ngħid li, mingħajr qatt ma bsart, kelli ħesrem nħalli warajja l-merħla li giet afdata f'idejja mill-awtoritajiet reliġjużi tal-Arċidjoċesi t'Adelaide, f'dak iż-żmien, fis-sena 1996, l-Arċisqof Leonard A. Faulkner. Naf li kien ta' xokk kbir għal dawġ li ħadmu miegħi mill-qrib f'dawn l-aħħar snin. Ma' kelli kliem u l-anqas għandi issa, biex nesprimi d-dieqa ta' dak kollu li għaddejt minnu matul dawn l-aħħar xhur u dik li għaddejjin minnha dawġ li qegħdin jhossu in-nuqqas tiegħi. Kif appena ntbaħt b'dak li kellu jseħħ, ppruvajt għal snin shaħ niprova nsib min jieħu posti, imma dejjem bqajt mingħajr ebda risposta positiva. Minħabba raġunijiet diversi, saħħti marret għal għar u ma kienx hemm triq oħra. Għadni ma rkopejtx mix-xokk, imma bl-għajnuna t'Alla nittama li nirkopra bil-mod il-mod.

Dan nafu lil oħti Tonina li nizlet minn Brisbane u giet tghinni nippakkja u li ħadet ħsiebi għal tlett gimgħat fid-dar tagħha qabel ma tlaqt lejn Malta, lin-neputijiet tiegħi f'Għawdex li ma jafdawnix minuta, u qiegħed inħares lejn dak iż-żmien li nerga' lura fil-Kommunità

tal-Patrijet Frangiskani fil-Kunvent ta' Sant'Antnin, Għawdex u nerga' għal hajja li dħalt għalija kważi 60 sena ilu

Nibda biex niringrazzja lil:

JOE CASSAR, iċ-Chairperson tal-MALTESE CHAPLAINCY FESTIVITIES GROUP INC. tal-kuraġġ li għamilli u ta' l-għajnuna li tagħni biex nippakkja u jibgħatli l-kaxxi Malta. (*S'issa għadni ma rċevejt xejn!*)

il-membri kollha tal-Grupp li dejjem ħadmu bi shiħ biex dak kollu li organiżzajna, rnexxa; is-Sorijiet Frangiskani Maltin tal-Qalb ta' Ġesu f'Lokleys għas-support li dejjem tawni, il-Konsolat Malti fis-South Australia, il-Maltese Community Council - l-Għaqdiet l-oħra Maltin kollha: il-MQVBand, Sta Katerina, il-Maltese Guild, is-Seniors, is-Socjetà tal-Mużew, l-RS.L. - S.A.Maltese Branch, il-tant u tant morda fi djarhom u f'Residential Homes u Hospices li jiddispjaċini ngħid, li lil x'uħud minnhom ma kelli iċ-ċans li nsellmilhom qabel ma tlaqt - ta' dan nitlobhom jgħadrni għax moħħi ma kienx hemm u kont ftiit li xejn mifxul, u ma jonqosx li niringrazzja lil ħafna w ħafna li kienu qrib tiegħi mill-Parroċċa ta' Lockleys, li taf il-bidu tagħha lil-Patrijet Frangiskani Maltin 71 sena ilu u lil ħafna mil-Kommunità Taljana li kienu jużaw il-facilitajiet tal-Parroċċa ta' Lockleys u li magħhom ħdimt tant mill-qrib u li kienu ta' għajnuna kbira għalija.

Nawgura ħidma wtieqa lill-Membri tal-MALTESE CHAPLAINCY FESTIVITIES GROUP li id f'id mas-SORIJET FRANGISKANI MALTIN, u li mingħajr it-tmexxija ta' sacerdot Malti, ser isibuha xi ftiit diffiċli biex jkomplu jattwaw l-ativitajiet li matul dawn l-aħħar sebgħin sena twettqu fi ħdan il-Kommunità Maltija fis-South Australia. Minn jixtieq jikkomunika ma Fr. Gabriel l-'email address' tiegħu huwa:

**stephengabmic@gmail.com**



Nieħu din l-opportunità biex nawguralkom il-koll  
**MILIED QADDIS** mimli Barkiet u Tifkiriet Sbieħ u  
**SENA ĠDIDA** milija Risq u Hena  
lilkom u lill-familji tagħkom huma fejn huma.

*Wishing you all and your families  
wherever they are*

*a **BLESSED CHRISTMAS**  
and a **HAPPY AND PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR.***



### MESSAGE FROM MR EMANUEL CAMILLERI

**President – Maltese Community Council of NSW**

In the midst of the festive season we take time to reflect on the past year as 2019 draws to a close. We remember dear friends and family



members that departed our world and live on in our hearts.

We reflect on their legacies and many good works and we also look forward to the year ahead as they would want us to.

Our wish is for continued unity between our many Maltese Associations, both young and old, and a common love and passion for our unique Maltese heritage and culture to be passed on and taken up by the younger generations of Maltese descendants.

On behalf of the Maltese Community Council of NSW, we wish the Maltese Community a very happy, holy and safe Christmas. May the spirit of Christmas bring family and friends together and fill your hearts and homes with peace and love.

We look forward to continuing our work supporting the Maltese Community in the new year ahead. May God Bless you all and Best wishes from the MCC President and Committee



Seasons greetings to you all. May the true spirit of Christmas be with you in this wonderful time of the year and God's blessings of health, wealth and prosperity for the coming New Year 2020.

Regards Edgar Agius OAM JP. President Maltese Community Council of SA Inc.



Dear Frank, On behalf of our chairperson Father Mario Micallef, MSSP and the executive committee of the Maltese-Canadian Museum/Archives at St. Paul the apostle Church in Toronto, as curator I wish all of your supporters and readers in the Maltese Diaspora a very Happy, Holy Christmas and a Healthy and Successful year in 2020. Keep up with your excellent publication. **RICHARD S. CUMBO, CURATOR – TORONTO Canada**



Hello Frank Thank you again for another interesting and informative newsletter. I write with a sadness in my heart that just so many Members of our community have passed away the last few months. Some of these namely Cikku Spiteri, Lonzu Pace, Theresa Buhagiar and recently Pawlu Borg, all served in committees and served the community well. Others have passed too and the community is diminishing rapidly. Anyway keep up the good work and best wishes for a blessed Christmas and a healthy and productive 2020 to you and your family. **RAYMOND AND RITA GRIMA AND FAMILY ADELAIDE**



Ghaziz Frank, Prosit u grazzi minn qalbi ghall- Maltese e-Newsletter li regolarment tibghatli. Inkun nistennieha u ma noqghodx bi kwieti qabel ma naraha kollha sal-ahhar pagna. L-ahbarijiet dwar Maltin imxerrdin mad-dinja jaghmluni kburija li jien Maltija. Minn qalbi nixtieq lilek u lill-familja kollha affarijiet sbieh ghall-Milied u ghas-Sena l-Gdida 2020. **LINA BROCKDORFF – PEMBROKE MALTA**



Great to read about Skola Maltija NSW. Well done to the teachers for passing on the language and culture onto the the next generation. The Maltese government could support this service financially to ensure that it can go on for years to come. thank you for the article Frank Regards **LAWRENCE SCERRI, SYDNEY NSW**



Hi Frank, We would like to send a Christmas message. The Committee of St Nicholas in Plumpton NSW would like to wish all your readers a Blessed Christmas and a prosperous New Year. Emmanuel Camilleri President of the St.Nicholas Festa Committee, Pympton NSW





Grazzi hafna Frank! Nixtieqilkom Milied hieni u sena mimlija barka t Alla!. Tislijiet **ROSE U PAUL XXX (MALTA)**

Wishing you and your family a very happy Christmas and the best for the New Year. What a magnificent journal.

Regards **Vicky and Salvu Buhagiar**



Awguri u xewqat sbieh ghal Milied u Sena gdida lil Frank u kull min jahdem ghal Maltese Newslettter ghal artikoli sbieh u ta interess li jkun fiha . Il-Milied it-Tajjeb u Sena mimlija gid u barka tal; Mulej. **MIRIAM BELLI MELBOURNE.**



Dear Mr Scicluna, First of all I would like to thank you heartily for your prompt action to send me the current Newsletter.

Secondly I would like to commend you for your Maltese E-Newsletter VALUES. Prosit u Prosit tassew. Ftit hawn nies bħalek li għandhom għal qalbhom il-gid, il-għaqda u l-paċi

f'pajjiżna. Sfortunatament dan qatt ma jista jintlaħaq minnħabba d-dualizmu li jeżisti u li donnu ma jista jinqered qatt u b'xejn. Napprezza immens il-kuraġġ, is-sagrificċji, l-hin, il-hila u l-isforzi dinamiċi tiegħek u kitbietek biex forsi xi darba, minn dawn ix-xtut imbiegħda ibħra minn art twelidna, għad naraw żernieg ġdid ta' għaqda u paċi ifiġġ fuq, u jbewwes u jgħannaq lil xtut dik l-Art ħelwa, l-'Omm li tatna isimha'. Grazzi ħafna tax-xewqat sbieħ tiegħek u nixtieq lilek, lill-familja tiegħek u lill-familja kollha Maltija, Milied Hieni u Qaddis u sena ġdida mimlija

b'kull saħħa, ġid, imħabba, risq u paċi u b'dak kollu li tixtieq qalbkom. Tislijiet sinciera u mill-qalb, **NAZZARENU ZERAFA**



Thank you very much Frank. On behalf of the Friends of Australia Association I wish you, your family and your readers a very happy and holy Christmas and a New Year filled with joy, peace and good health. Kind regards **TANIA WALTERS**



Mr. Frank Scicluna, Thank you for the good work that you are doing with The Maltese Journal. Most importantly for keeping it free of what is going on in Malta at the moment. Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year you and your loved ones. My wish and prayers this Christmas are all for our loved Country Malta. May we all forget our

differences and unite as one Nation and pray that God will grant us peace.

**HENRY BERRY, PAKENHAM**



Many thanks for your journal wishing you and your family a holy,happy Christmas and may 2020 be kind to us all and may we have rain as well.Thank you.

**SAM GATT VICTORIA**



Greetings from the Franciscan Sisters of the Heart of Jesus to the Maltese Community wherever they may be for A very Happy and Blessed Christmas And a New Year filled with Blessing of Joy, Peace and Good Health.

**SISTER VITTORIANA DEBATTISTA**



It was great seeing you recently at La Valette. I hope you continue to be in good health.Thank you for your greetings and I shall certainly keep you in my prayers, and I wish you a joyful and blessed Christmas and every blessing of the Lord in the coming year. Fraternally, **FR. ANTHONY SCERRI, O,CARM.**



Hi Frank Thank you for all you do, and on behalf of myself; my wife Mary and our families wish you and you family and all those involved in the preparation, contribution and read this Journal A Merry and Safe Christmas and a Happy New and Joyous and Safe New Year 2020. **MANNY DEBONO**

A very happy Christmas frank to you. AND all the family thank you for all the work you do **DORIS AND JOE ATTARD NSW**

Dear Frank I read your newsletter all the time. It is *A breath of Fresh air*. I know I could never afford to go to Malta so your newsletter is awesome.



A little Christmas message of good will and happiness to the Guillaumier and Zammit families in Malta. my best regards of the season to you and your family. Hoping well meet again some day. **IRENE COOPER**



Wishing health and happiness. At this time of goodwill we trust that all Maltese Societies in South Australia will appreciate the wisdom in helping each other and taking a united stand for the benefit of our community, not only during the Festive Season but throughout the year. Many thanks Frank. **VENNY & CARMEN SPITERI**



Thank you for the Maltese e-newsletter and all the work you do to produce it May I take this opportunity to wish you, Josie and your family a .appy, Holy Christmas and a Wonderfully Blessed New Year. **ROSEMARY NORTON**



## Pastor Emeritus - Fr Frank Buhagiar

Photo: Damjan Janevski

Father Francis 'Frank' Buhagiar retired after 46 years in the priesthood. Father Buhagiar will celebrated both his last official day as a priest and his 75th birthday.

Father Buhagiar was ordained as a priest in 1971 in his village of birth, Siggiewi in Malta, after studying at the University of Malta and Corpus Christi

College in Glen Waverley.

He has been based at St Andrew's Catholic Church in Werribee since June 2000. He also served in the parish between 1976 and 1980. During his career, he worked at churches in Fawkner, Moonee Ponds and Maidstone.

Father Buhagiar said he enjoyed the fellowship in St Andrew's, including social events such as the annual parish fete, its tennis club and the St Andrew's Theatre Company.

"I'm very proud of the fellowship here in Werribee, it brings people together on a social level and people of all different cultures together," he said.

"The whole idea is we don't just pray, we have a sense of community."

Father Buhagiar said during his time in Werribee, he had helped to oversee the refurbishment of the St Andrew's church, parish office and presbytery, which was established in 1898.

He said he was "very grateful" to the maintenance team and volunteers who helped on all these projects.

"Volunteers are the lifeblood of the parish, I would like to salute all the volunteers," he said.

"I have also been very blessed with a tremendous support team from my brother priests and the leadership from St Andrew's parish." Father Buhagiar said he planned on spending his retirement years visiting his family in Malta and going on nature walks.

**CHRISTMAS MESSAGE FROM FR. BUGAHAR - Dear Frank, Thanks a Million for your valuable information and stories . Wish you and your family and all readers the Blessings of The Child Jesus, Our Emmanuel . May the New Year 2020 be a great one too. Sahha u Sliem Fr. Frank Buhagiar PE Maribyrnong Victoria 3032**



Thank you for bringing us the Maltese E-newsletter to our homes. I very much appreciate your hard work you bring to the community. I wish you Frank, your dear wife Josie and all your family a wonderful Christmas u ls-sena it-tajba. Cheers **PAUL AND LILLIAN BUGEJA**



Thank you for your untiring optimism and commitment! May your star shine brightly in 2020! **RITA CAMILLERI**



I Heartily Wish You and all the readers, A Happy And Holy Chritmas And A New Year Filled With Graces and Heavenly Blessings, yours in Christ, **SR TERESIA BUTTIGIEG**



What a wonderful way to keep all the communities CONNECTED together. Your journal is our only tool to reach so many thousands of Maltese living in many parts of the world. I always look forward to receiving it and show it to my family and friends. Please, don't stop producing this magnificent journal. Wishing you and all your readers, my fellow Maltese, a very Holy Christmas.

**MARYANNE GRECH ABELA.**



Dear Family & Friends It's that time of year again! Time for twinkling lights, festive carols, and merry celebrations. And time for spreading the birth of our Saviour Jesus by giving Christmas cards to the special people in your world. Yes it's that time of the year when families and friends get together to celebrate the birth of Our Saviour Jesus. May you and your family cherish the wonderful memories, of love, care, and hope. This is our wish for you: Peace of mind - Prosperity through the year 2020- Happiness that multiplies- Health for you and yours - Fun around every corner Energy to chase your dreams Joy to fill your holidays. May you live life in joy and peace. Merry Christmas and A Happy and Prosperous New Year. Love to ALL **HARRY & MARY BUGEJA (ADELAIDE)**



Dear Frank, Whilst thanking you for your great effort to present to us and to so many others a great and fantastic journal of the Maltese Diaspora,

We send you and your family our very best wishes for a Christmas filled with peace, joy and love and may your new year be a year of further success, wonderful occasions, good health and God's blessings. **MARIA AND ARMANDO CATANIA**

Nixtieq lilek u 'l tieghek Milied Qaddis u Sena Gdida kollha risq u barka. Ixtieq lilek u 'l tieghek Milied Qaddis u Sena Gdida kollha risq u barka. **RODERICK BOVINGDON**



We reciprocate your Christmas greetings and wish you all the readers of this journal a safe Christmas and a wonderful New Year 2020. Mary and Joe Cassar, Alfred Borg, Charles Micallef Tarcisio Zarb, Henry Berry, Charles Micallef, George, Muscat, Greg Caruana, Tony Callus, Helen and Joe Borg, Antonia Xerri, Caesar Vella, Maltese Queen of Victories Band – South Australia, Louis Parnis, Gregory and Agnes Caruana, John Mangion, Robert Debono, Joe Vella, Father John Briffa SDB, Bonnie Lee Galea, Lino Vella, Louis Vella, John Buttigieg, Stephen Gatt, John Mangion, Alex Gabbaretta, Jane O'Loughlin, David Galea, Richard Cumbo, Angelo Farrugia, Carmela Farrugia, Tonio Scicluna, Eva Hewson, Rita Camilleri, Charles Mifsud, John Aquilina, Stephen Parnis, Peter Paul Orsini, P. Cartwright, H.E. Charles Muscat Malta High Commission (Canberra), Maltese Guild of South Australia, Mary Saliba, Bernadette Buhagiar, Jim Borg, Rita and Felix Demicoli, Josephine Norton, Charles Cassar, Knights and Dames Hospitalliers of Malta, Dominic N Pantalleresco, Louis Parnis, Salvatore, Hon. Jing Lee, Vella, Joe Borg, Silvio Tanti, Emanuel Tabone, G. Vella, Lavette social Centre, Rita Briffa, Dominican Sisters of Malta, many many more in the next edition



### LA VALETTE SOCIAL CENTRE BLACKTOWN NSW

At 9.00 pm,  
there will be  
a procession  
with the statue of  
Baby Jesus  
Afterwards,  
there will be  
Christmas Carols  
followed by a  
Christmas sermon  
delivered by a child  
About 10.00 pm, the  
celebration of  
Christmas Mass





May the simple joys of Christmas warm your heart,  
fill your home and last a lifetime.

**IL-MILIED IT-TAJJEB! - MERRY CHRISTMAS!**

**From The Maltese Center  
Astoria NEW YORK USA**



**THE MALTESE JOURNAL  
WISHES THE MOST  
WONDERFUL CHRISTMAS TO**  
The President of Malta HE  
George Vella and Mrs Vella  
The Government of Malta and  
the Opposition  
The Archbishop of Malta,  
Bishops, clergy and religious  
Each and every Maltese living  
in Malta  
Each and every Maltese living  
abroad  
All Maltese Embassies and  
High Commissions  
Consulates of Malta  
All the Maltese organisations  
in Malta and those scattered  
all over the world  
All the members of the media  
in Malta and abroad  
All the wonderful readers of  
this Journal of the Maltese  
Diaspora

O, little town of Bethlehem...

*We wish all our dear Friends, Relatives and Maltese Societies  
A Very Happy and Holy Christmas, and may God bless your  
New Year with Health, Peace and Happiness Agnes & Ron Borg*



**3 Different Maltese Programs can be heard on**  
**Sunday Morning - 7.30am**  
**Monday Morning - 8.00 am**  
**Monday Evening - 6.00pm**

Ahna, Bernadette, Carmen, Fr. Gabriel u Ron nixtiequ niringrazzaw lis-semmiegha  
taghna tas-support u l-kumplimenti taghkom matul is-sena  
Nixtiequkom il-Milied it-Tajjeb u sena gdida 2020  
mimlija sahha u paci



Grazzi lil Frank Scicluna tal-opportunita' biex nawguraw l-isbah xewqat  
lill-komunita Maltija t'Adelaide



## Kav. Joe M. Attard korrispondent speċjali tal-gurnal tagħna tal-Maltin li jgħixu barra



Twieled ir-Rabat Għawdex fl-1 ta' Jannar 1946 u ħa l-edukazzjoni primarja tiegħu fl-iskola tal-Gvern fir-Rabat Għawdex. Kompla fil-Liceo Ninu Cremona ta' Victoria, u wara xi zmien Gwida tat-Turisti, u iktar tard pustier; għamel sentejn ta' taħriġ għal Għalliem f'St. Michael's

Training College of Education f'Ta' Giorni, San Ġiljan (1967 – 69). Studja wkoll fil-Collegio Universitario Mario Bracci ta' Siena fl-Italja fejn segwa kors ta' Perfezzjonament fil-Lingwa Taljana fl-1972. Għalliem il-Malti għal fuq minn tletin sena fl-iskola Sekondarja tal-Kumpless Ninu Cremona Victoria u l-Malti lil residenti barranin li jgħixu f'Għawdex. Għal għadd ta' snin Assistent Kap kif ukoll Agent Kap tas-6th Form f'Għawdex.

Għadna nsibuh bħala Eżaminatur fl-Orali tal-Malti tal-Matrikula fil-livell Ordinarju u u Intermediate. Membru tal-Akkademja tal-Malti u

awtur ta' bosta poeziji, essays u features letterarji (wħud minndawn nstemgħu fuq ir-Rediffusion u anke fuq Calypso Radio matul il-Gimgha Mqaddsa u fi zmien il-Milied). Kiteb mill-ġdid ir-rumanz storiku Nikol Abdul b'malti rivedut tal-Akkademja u stampat mill-KKM u li daħal ukoll bħala wiehed mit-text books għal eżami tal-Matrikola.

Mahtur Kavallier tal-Ordni Unione Cavalleria Cristiana Internazionale (UCCI) fl-1984 u huwa s-Segretarju tal-Għaqda Gurnalisti u Kittieba Għawdxin sa mit-twaqqif tagħha fl-1960. Għal snin twal membru fl-Astra Dramatic Company u President tal-fergħa tal-Irgiel tal-Azzjoni Kattolika, Victoria. Għal dawn l-aħħar 20 sena Preżentatur ta' Chat Show fuq Calypso Radio darba fil-gimgha u fuq LBV, ir-radio tal-Kommunita' parrokkjali ta' San Gorg Victoria.

Mizzewweg lil Maria nee Zammit u għandhom tlett itfal: Nathaniel, Kap tat-taqsim tal-Aħbarijiet ta' Stazjon Televisiv lokali, Fr. Geoffrey, għalliem u Viċi Parroku, u Francesco Pio.



## Il-Presepu mekkaniku tax-Xagħra jagħlaq 50 sena Kav Joe M Attard

Il-Presepu mekkaniku tax-Xagħra li nsibu fil-Qasam tas-Subien (tal-Museum) qed jagħlaq 50 sena. Dawn il-ġranet iltqajt ma' wiehed mill-iktar membri habrieka u llum nistgħu nsejnhulu anzjan bħali li ra t-twelid ta' dan il-Presepu li min jaf kemm żaruh nies matul dawn is-snin kollha. Bla

dubju fil-Qasam tal-Mużew matul il-ġranet tal-Milied dan jisraq l-attenzjoni kollha imma rridu nġidwu wkoll li l-Qasam kollu jkun mzejjen waħda prima b'għadd ta' presepi, grotti u diorami li jhalluk imbellah bis-sengħa u l-hila tal-poplu tagħna.

Dan il-presepu mekkaniku trid tarah b'ċerta attenzjoni u mhabba u tisma' wkoll il-kummentarju (fi tlett lingwi) biex tgawdih sewwa. Joe Borg qalli li dan il-presepu twieled fl-iskola l-qadima tax-Xagħra u hemmhekk dam isir għal tlett snin, bejn l-1969 u l-1971. Is-sena ta' wara ma sarx imma fl-1973, is-sena li fiha kien lahaq l-Arċipriet Dun Ewkarist Sultana u l-festa tal-Inkurunazzjoni tal-istatwa helwa ta' Marija Bambina, il-presepu beda

jsir fiċ-Ċirklu tal-Azzjoni Kattolika tal-Irgiel fi Triq Sant Anton sa ma ħa postu, fl-1976 fil-bini tal-Mużew attwali. Fil-bidu kompla jirakkuntali Joe Borg, li llum nsibuh jaħdem fid-Dar tal-Anzjani tal-Museum f'Malta, il-presepu kien jinbena fl-intrata, forma ta' 'basement' iżda bil-mod tela' fuq fejn insibuh f'kamra mdaqqsqa. Hawnhekk qed nitkellmu mis-sena 1983 fejn għall-bidu kien presepu statiku imma kif il-binja tlestiet sewwa, il-presepu nbidel f'wiehed mekkaniku kif għadna narawh sallum. Maż-żmien nbidlulu xi magni u tbiddlu ma'

ohrajn iktar moderni li jaħdmu bit-’timer’ u hađu post ohrajn qodma li kienu jaħdmu bič-ċineg, qtaġġen tal-bicycles, relays u x’naf jien.

Hafna mill-pasturi nhadmu apposta minn Ganni Attard biex dawn jidhru jitharrku u jagħmlu xi movimenti; ohrajn inxtraw skont l-esiġenzi tal-preseppju. Ganni bena wkoll id-djar minn ġabło, kartun, kartapesta, waqt li uża wkoll il-gagazza li hafna minnha nstabet fix-Xagħra stess. Il-Preseppju mekkaniku fix-Xagħra ġibed l-attenzjoni ta’ hafna tant li fost il-premjijiet li rebah hemm dawk li ngħata f’kompetizzjonijiet nazzjonali fl-1970 u fl-1973. Wiehed fost dawk li għenu fil-bini tal-preseppju kien Karmenu Spiteri li qabel ma emigra lejn l-Canada, kien bieġh xi apparat li nsibuh fil-preseppju tallum.

Joe Borg isostni li bir-riħ ta’ dan il-preseppju hafna tfal kienu saru jinteressaw ruħhom fil-bini tal-preseppju billi kienu jmorru jgħaddu hin twil jarawh jinbena tant li bdew jagħmlu l-preseppju tagħhom fid-dar u din l-imħabba tant kibret u tferrxet maż-żmien li llum fix-Xagħra nsibu għadd ġmielu ta’ dilettanti tal-Preseppju u mhux inqas minn 31 preseppju qed ikunu għall-wiri din is-sena. Dan huwa ġid kbir li ġej minn dawn is-snin bikrija. B’hekk naraw bič-ċar li fi hdan il-Mużew qed isseħh ix-xewqa tal-Fundatur San Gorg Preca li dejjem sostna li kull tifel li jmur il-Mużew jingħata grotta fi żmien il-Milied biex l-imħabba lejn l-Inkarnazzjoni tkompli tikber u tixtered.

Fix-Xagħra wkoll illum nsibu l-Għaqda Hbieb tal-Preseppju li hija attiva sew; saħansitra wiehed mill-membri tagħha, Victor Agius għazel li jagħmel it-teżi tiegħu fl-Universita ta’ Malta, dwar il-Preseppju waqt li nsibuh jagħti daqqa t’id siewja fil-Wirja tal-Preseppi li l-Għaqda Hbieb tal-Preseppju Għawdex Malta 1985 ta’ kull sena tagħmel fis-swali tal-Ministeru għal Għawdex.

Nagħlaq billi nhegġigkom tmorru żżuru din il-Wirja kif ukoll il-Preseppju mekkaniku fix-Xagħra flimkien ma’ tant preseppi ohra li jinbnew ma’ Għawdex kollu. Thallux barra ‘Betlem f’Għajnsielem’ u fil-fehma tiegħi l-Preseppju ferm artistiku tas-Sur Frankie Mizzi fil-bidu tal-Fontana!



**MARIO FARRUGIA BORG - CONSUL GENERAL FOR MALTA IN VICTORIA**  
December 2019

Such a pleasure to attend the MMG Concert Band of Victoria Christmas Spectacular where we were treated to some all-time season favourites. Had the opportunity to meet the Hon. Georgina Papafiotou, Mayor of Brimbank City, together with councillors amongst whom our very own Victoria Borg. Thank you to the Presidents and committee of MMG for the lovely evening.

Victoria Borg, Joe Cardona, Amie Cardona and Dean Attard

*We say ‘thank you’ to all our Maltese-Canadian friends and readers  
for supporting our journal*



## ***Old English Fruitcake - A dark, rich, well spiced old fashioned English style fruitcake that can be made weeks in advance of Christmas.***

### **Ingredients**

- 1 1/4 cups chopped dried prunes (6 oz), chopped
- 1 1/4 cups chopped dates (6 oz), chopped
- 1 1/2 cups dark raisins (8 oz)
- 1 1/4 cups golden raisins (6 oz)
- 1 1/4 cups currents (6 oz)
- 3/4 cup butter
- 1 cup dark brown sugar
- 3/4 cup molasses
- 1/2 cup coffee liqueur, or 1/2 cup strong black coffee
- Zest and juice of 2 oranges
- 1 cup chopped glace cherries
- 1 cup candied citrus peel
- 1 1/2 cups toasted pecans (7 oz), roughly chopped
- 2 tsp allspice
- 2 tsp cinnamon
- 2 tsp powdered ginger
- 1 tsp cloves
- 2 tsp nutmeg
- 3 tbsp cocoa
- 3 eggs
- 1 1/3 cups all purpose flour
- 1/2 cup ground hazelnuts or almonds
- 1/2 tsp baking powder
- 1/2 tsp baking soda



### **Instructions**

1. In a large saucepan melt the butter over medium heat and add the raisins, dates, prunes, currents, brown sugar, molasses, spices, coffee liqueur (or coffee) and the orange zest and juice.
2. Bring to a gentle boil and very slowly simmer for 10 minutes.
3. Remove from heat and allow to cool for 30-45 minutes.
4. When cool stir in the beaten eggs.
5. Sift together, flour, cocoa, baking powder, baking soda.
6. Add the ground nuts and fold through the boiled mixture. Fold in cherries, citrus peel and pecans. Pour into prepared baking pan. You can decorate the top with additional pecan halves, cherries etc., if you like.
7. Bake at 300 degrees F for 1 1/2 to 2 hours depending upon the size of your pan. Mine took the full two hours in a 10 inch spring form pan. The cake should feel firm to the touch at the centre and a wooden toothpick inserted into the center should come out clean. The cake should be cooled completely in the pan on a wire rack before removing.
8. At this point you can poke small holes in the top and bottom of the cake with a fork and pour on 4 ounces of dark rum or your favorite whiskey, half on the top, wait ten minutes, then flip it over and pour the remaining half on the bottom.
9. Soak several layers of cheesecloth in additional rum if you like and wrap completely around the cake, then cover with several layers of plastic wrap and store in a COOL place.
10. When serving, you can add a layer of marzipan or if you have decorated the top with fruit and nuts, brush with a simple glaze of equal parts water and sugar boiled together for about 10-15 minutes.



## The art of crib making

**Stephanie Fsadni** [timesofmalta.com](http://timesofmalta.com)

Some of the Għaqda Presepij Rabtin cribs exhibited during Natalis Notabilis in Rabat. Photos: Matthew Mirabelli.

The history of Christmas cribs goes a long way back... St Francis of Assisi is credited with creating the first Nativity scene on Christmas Eve of 1223 at Greccio, in central Italy. It is said that his aim was to place the emphasis of Christmas upon the worship of Christ rather than upon secular materialism and gift giving.

Cribs nowadays form an integral part of Christmas decorations in Christian households and are loved by old and young alike.

Families proudly display their home-made or ready-bought cribs on their windowsill. Crib enthusiasts take part in collective exhibitions or set up their own personal displays.

Others join purposely set-up groups, such as the Għaqda Presepij Rabtin, which has just presented a crib exhibition at Natalis Notabilis, the Christmas village held in Rabat last week.

Hundreds visited the Franciscan convent, where 30 cribs of various dimensions, including very minute ones which fit into wall frames or lanterns, were exhibited.

There were also mechanised cribs, with some having very detailed scenes which, of course, featured St Joseph, St Mary and Baby Jesus surrounded by

shepherds, animals and the Three Kings. But most recreated other scenes portraying daily life in Bethlehem.

One of the highlights was a Christmas village, created by Rita Agius Genovese, a co-founder of the Għaqda, who is following in the footsteps of her father Emanuel and her grandfather Ġużi, both renowned crib makers from Rabat.

"The crib is the most important of Christmas decorations as it represents the birth of Jesus," Ms Agius Genovese told Times of Malta.

She has been making cribs for as long as she can remember and had been tinkering with the idea of doing a Christmas village for a while but never got down to do it. Then she came across some small houses which she could use for her project and last January, started building the structure.

Her imposing, 'snow'-laden diorama features a carousel, a Ferris wheel, a fountain, snowmen and also a train. At its centre is, of course, the Nativity Scene, with a group of choristers standing outside the grotto.

Ms Agius Genovese set up the Għaqda Presepij Rabtin with her father six years ago. The group is made up of enthusiasts from all over the island who attend crib-making courses by the father-daughter duo.

Ms Agius Genovese explains that crib-making is a laborious process, with the most difficult part being the building of structure, often made of expanded polystyrene. Then there's the need for plaster, colouring and lighting and electronic systems for mechanised contraptions like watermills and windmills if used, besides all the embellishments and finer details. Figurines can also be hand-made. "It's a long process, which takes months to complete," she said.

The skill, patience and determination of her students pays off when their artworks are exhibited, such as at Natalis Notabilis, which came to a close on Sunday. The group's next crib-making courses will start in February. For more information, call Ms Agius Genovese on 9980 1437.





Tliet għanjiet bil-Malti 2.Pp64

## I.

Min għatma fit-tama  
It-tama t'għarraq biez,  
Jagħmel ir-riż fil-bomblu  
Jażsep l'isiefer biez.

## II

Sma' l'inti tarbit l'imħabba:  
Għidli fl'imħabba wi għalek?  
Eja t'għaddet għomok migei,  
Għali n'għaseb liena għali p'għalek.

## III

Għadira li tixrob minnha,  
Nitlobok lad-dardar għej,  
Għali imur zmjen u iji jezor,  
Tfittixha, mas-sib għej.

Tliet għanjiet bil-Malti

## I.

Min jitma fit-tama  
It-tama t'għarraq bih,  
Jagħmel ir-riż fil-bomblu  
Jaħseb li siefer bih.

## II

Smajt l'inti tarbit l-imħabba:  
Għidli fl-imħabba xi għalek?  
Ejja t'għaddet għommok miegħi,  
Għax n'għaseb jiena għali bħalek.

## III

Għadira li tixrob minnha,  
Nitlobok la ddardar għej,  
Għax imur zmien u jigi ieħor,  
Tfittixha, ma ssib għej.

## What does this writing mean?

A photo which was posted on social media over these last few days shows that around 200 years ago, the calligraphy of the Maltese language was still a very mixed amalgamation of Semitic letters and letters which are rooted in Latin.

The photo is taken from a book entitled "*Malte par un voyageur François*", published in 1791.

The book, written by French politician François-Emmanuel Guignard de Saint-Priest and dedicated to Grandmaster De Rohan, talks about the vast and colourful history of the Maltese islands, which have always been a sought after location particularly because of their strategic position in the middle of the Mediterranean Sea.

Kudos to Facebook users and logophiles Drinu Camilleri, Emmanuel Bonnici and Leli Forte for providing the much-needed translations in the comments under the post.

In a post shared to logophile Facebook page Kelmet il-Malti, a poem on Malta from 1791 shows a barely recognisable language. In fact, from the get-go, it pretty much looks like some derivation

of *The Lord of the Rings'* Elvish language.

Of course, local linguists are more than familiar with this derivation of Maltese... and it didn't take long for context – and translations – to emerge

As the person who originally posted the extract explained (and credited to Denis Darmanin), the 12 verses are actually an extract from *Malte Par Un Voyageur François*,

Back then more than ever, Malta's turbulent history and strategic position was the subject of many a poem and song, with this particular book talking about it all in a beautiful – and quite frankly nearly unrecognisable – language.

Arab letters like ج, ش, ق, ع appear in the text, and soon enough, readers managed to decipher even the most alien-looking words. The result? Glorious, poignant poetry.

**VIVA THE MALTESE JOURNAL OF THE MALTESE DIASPORA**

Lora and Manwel deBattista



Grand Master  
Emmanuel De Rohan

## Maltese Motorbike rider dies after head-on collision with truck

[www.msn.com](http://www.msn.com)

A 31-year-old motorbike rider has died after colliding head-on with a semi-trailer in Adelaide's north. Paramedics were called to Waterloo Corner Road in Burton just after 4.30am to find Vincent De Bono lying on the side of the road, his bike a crumpled wreck.



Mr De Bono was rushed to the Royal Adelaide Hospital where he died of his injuries.

© Supplied Vincent De Bono.

The 42-year-old truck driver wasn't injured in the crash.

"It was pretty horrific... all I seen was just stuff go flying up in the air," witness Brenton, who was driving behind Mr BeBono, told 9News.

"I was following the bike pretty much all the way... and he was swerving

all over the roads, and speeding up and slowing down."

Brenton described the truck driver as "pretty shaken".

© 9News Mr De Bono was rushed to the Royal Adelaide Hospital where he died of his injuries.

"He said he tried to swerve out of the way... but it was just too quick ... too late."

Mr De Bono becomes the 17<sup>th</sup> rider to lose their life on South Australian roads this year.

Police are investigating the exact circumstances of the crash.

They are also pleading with motorists to be vigilant this festive season



## Christmas contest Models of Malta2019 – and the winners are

...

75 contestants in total took part in the Christmas contest Models of Malta 2019, organized by Ivan Gaffiero.

Many took part -from toddlers to grandparents.

Yesterday, the final was held in Montekristo, where Salaya Agius from Floriana won the title of Miss Teen Christmas, Donna Micallef from Birkirkara won the title of Miss Christmas, Michelle Vella a mother of five, won the title of Mrs. Christmas while Josef Grixti from St Venera won the title of Mister Christmas.

Philis Bonnanno Azzopardi, 62, won the title of The Christmas Model grandmas

Chrizaya Attard and Rebecca Chircop won the title Little / Junior Miss Christmas and Medision Col won the title Junior Mister Christmas. During the contest there were several surprises in store for many going through a difficult time.



## THE MAGICAL CHRISTMAS CONCERT

*City Theatre, Old Bakery Street, Valletta, Malta*

This Christmas, your children's favourite Disney characters together with the Malta National Children's Choir turned the theatre into one energetic concert.

The most beautiful Christmas songs performed to a lively rhythm to make any person of any age sing and dance.

The Magical Christmas Concert feature an array of Disney's best scores of all time along with the world's most amazing Christmas songs. Surely an alternative, yet fun for all children with spectacular visuals, synchronised lights and continuous animation. The concert was creatively produced and choreographed in order to turn the theatre into an amazing one hour and 30 minute party for all attending.





## Activities In Malta December 2019

Activities in Malta December gives you exciting events that are held during the month of December and Christmas time. Christmas in Malta is very a fun and jolly time! **The Maltese love Christmas!** Here too **Christmas in Malta is one of the most important events** of the year.

If you visit Malta during this month you will find an **abundance of Christmas activities**. During this month all the Maltese houses, shops and streets will be decorated with Christmas trees,

decorations and lights. You will find many Maltese people already buying their Christmas presents and preparing for the many feasts with family and friends.

**What will I find in Malta during Christmas time?**

- Christmas Pantos - Crib Exhibitions - Christmas Concerts - Christmas Markets
- Fund Raising Activities - Live Crib Exhibitions

All churches in Malta and Gozo celebrate the midnight mass starting on the 24th December around 23:00 with a pageant, carol singing and the traditional talk by a young child about the birth of Christ. Afterwards a mass is held. If you intend to go you must be there early since the churches will be packed with the locals. One of the main and most important activities during this month is the **L-Istrina**. This is a **fund raising activity** organised by the **Malta Community Chest Fund** in aid of **helping people in need of urgent medical care**. It is usually held on the 26th December on all local Maltese television stations running for 12 hours which succeeds to collect €7,134,036 (2018).

Around Malta and Gozo there are various crib exhibitions. The two most popular ones are the **Bethlehem f'Ghajnsielem Gozo** and **Presepju Haj in Lija**. Both are live animated cribs with many locals dressed in costumes which takes you back in time to the Judea time around 2000 years ago.

Prepare to embrace the spirit of Christmas in Malta by walking around Valletta which will be fully decorated and full of Maltese people having a lovely time. As the last day of the year approaches, Malta celebrates with **parties, fireworks, get togethers** and a **live stage at Valletta** with the **countdown to the new year**.



**Marco Caruana**

## CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT at La Valette Social Centre – Blacktown NSW

My wife Agnes and I would like to give thanks to the president, committee members and the volunteers for organising this wonderful event for the younger generations. The hall was full the rafters.

I was very happy because once again we managed to attract quite a good number of second generation mums and dads. Special thanks go to:

- Antoinette Caruana our president and the committee members at la Valette.
- The entertainer Joe Apap (il-Kangaroo) who gave a fantastic show
- The rising star of the Maltese Community - Natasha Tatarin and Marisa Privitera and her choir
- Victor Mifsud (nannu santa) singer of traditional Christmas carols some of them written by Frank Zammit and was the commentator of the film that

was shown about the Maltese Traditions of Christmas

- Marco Caruana - the boy who delivered the Christmas sermon
- Sister Olivia and Maria DeCarlo who looked after the children of the Maltese Language School NSW
- Manwell Grech for organising the lights and sounds
- and Leli Saliba and his wife Lina. Leli was responsible for filming the show.
- I would like to thank everyone that attended and everybody that helped to run this show.

**GREGORY CARUANA (NSW) - Organiser**



## WinterFest at Canada's Wonderland

**Find it:** Select nights November 22 to December 31, times vary so check the calendar for hours, at Canada's Wonderland, 1 Canada's Wonderland Drive, Vaughan, [canadaswonderland.com](http://canadaswonderland.com)

For the first time, this massive amusement park located just outside of Toronto will be transformed into a legit winter wonderland with five million

holiday lights, shows and tons of festive treats.

**Must-visit attraction:** The new annual event will have eight themed areas, including Candy Cane Lane, the Elf Village and Charlie Brown's Christmas Town. Stop by Snow Flake Lake in front of the park's iconic Wonder Mountain for ice skating.

**But also:** There's a lot to see and do at WinterFest, but set aside time at 5:30 p.m. to catch the tree-lighting ceremony and performance.

**Cost of admission:** General admission is \$22 online or \$35 onsite, junior (under 4 feet) and senior (ages 62+) tickets are \$20 online or \$23 onsite and children under the age of 3 are free

## A Chocolate Christmas: Team of Maltese Pastry Chefs Build a *Presepu* Entirely out of Chocolate



The staff over at Radisson Blu Golden Sands might have just claimed the title for the tastiest crib to grace Malta this Christmas holiday.

Instead of erecting a traditional nativity scene, pastry chef

Jimmy Aquilina and his team put their culinary skills to the test and decided to make a *presepu* entirely out of chocolate

We're not just talking about chocolate figurines, we're talking about chocolate trees and buildings as well. As you can imagine, this was no easy task, and took 70 kilos of chocolate as well as over 100 hours to make... now that's dedication.

This *presepu* is the definition of taking things to the next level and is definitely a sight to behold.

Thankfully, the staff at Radisson Blu are pros in their field and managed to pull it off superbly. They're also artistic AF, too because this *presepu* is both very delicious *and* detailed!





## CHRISTMAS STAMPS



**MALTESE-CANADIAN COMMUNITY NEWS** St Paul The Apostle Christmas Concert  
 The grand finale 'Holiday Sing Along' performed by the Malta Band, the St. Cecilia's Choir and all those who participated in the concert.  
 An awesome end to such a great event. By far the most popular Maltese Christmas carol and the most anticipated at the  
 St Paul The Apostle Christmas Concert is 'Ninni, La Tikkix Izjed'





## Proud of her daughter's participation in Miss World

Nicole Vella, daughter of singer Debbie Scerri, represented Malta in the Miss World beauty competition. Proud of her daughter's achievement Debbie said her daughter could not have made her feel any happier.

Toni-Ann Singh, the 23-year-old contestant representing Jamaica, was declared Miss World in the 69th edition of this international beauty pageant. This year's competition was held at Excel London and saw Miss World 2018 Vanessa Ponce de Leon ceding her crown to the new queen.



MAY YOUR HEART  
AND HOME BE FILLED  
WITH ALL THE JOYS  
THE FESTIVE SEASON  
BRINGS.

MERRY CHRISTMAS  
AND A WONDERFUL  
NEW YEAR!

*Joseph and Marlene*

WELCOME ALL THE WAY FROM MALTA

**CHEF CAVETT & CHEF KARL**  
**SINGER : MIKE SPITERI**  
LINE DANCING BY KATE

WELCOMES YOU TO A  
TRADITIONAL-MALTESE  
FENKATA NIGHT  
WITH OUR SIGNATURE RECIPE  
RABBIT IN BLUE LABEL BEER  
IN AID OF PUTTING CARES

**SATURDAY**  
**15 FEB 2020**  
AT LA VALETTE SOCIAL CENTRE BLACKTOWN SYDNEY  
DOOR OPEN AT 7.00PM  
COME AND JOIN

**\$65 PP**

WITH SPECIAL THANKS TO LILIAN CHETCUTI RIOLO, GODFREY SULTANA & ANTOINETTE CARUANA



## Celebrating a Maltese Christmas in North Queensland

**ABC Tropical North 2018**



By [Harriet Tatham](#)

**PHOTO:** Rose and Joe Borg have numerous nativity scenes displayed in and outside their home. (ABC Tropical North: Harriet Tatham)

**Despite being one of the world's most celebrated holidays, there is great difference in how we all celebrate Christmas.**

The 2011 census data reveals Mackay has one of the largest Maltese-ancestry communities in regional Australia, a percentage well above the national average. So how do

Maltese people celebrate Christmas? Sister Pauline Bonavia spent over 30 Christmases in Malta, before moving to Mackay to work as a nurse at Francis of Assisi Home.

She remembers Christmas as a time for family, public processions, and baby Jesus dolls in cribs.

"By Christmas Eve ... a group of people will carry baby Jesus and all the children process along with a baby Jesus [doll] and there will be Christmas carols," Sister Pauline said.

"That ends up in the parish church, and then about 10 o'clock, they will start doing some pageant — narrating the story of Christmas, and then at midnight exactly the mass will start," she said.



**PHOTO:** Sister Pauline Bonavia says displaying a crib at Christmas time is an important part of Maltese culture. (ABC Tropical North: Harriet Tatham)

**Church services lead by a 10-year-old boy**

While Catholic services in Australia are frequently led by a senior member of the congregation, Sister Pauline said Malta takes a younger approach.

"Over there that they get a 10-year-old boy and he'll preach — this is just a tradition and it's still happening today," she said.

Space to play or pause, M to mute, left and right arrows to seek, up and

down arrows for volume.

"It's very, very nice because it always ends by this little boy asking baby Jesus to bless him, to bless him family, to bless the place where he is, to bless Malta, to bless the leaders," she said.

Sister Pauline said after midnight mass, Maltese families typically go home and share food and drinks with one another before enjoying a hot lunch on Christmas Day.

"The main dish is turkey, and roast potatoes, baked pasta — everything is baked — you wouldn't dream over there to have salads for Christmas, and I suppose part of the season is because Christmas is winter for us, and is very, very cold," she said.

Sister Pauline said Christmas time was also a time for people to decorate their homes with nativity scenes. "When I was there, every house had a crib and then decorated the house with Christmas trees," she said.



"[The cribs] come from Spain and you would give someone, let's say that's going to have first Holy Communion, a baby Jesus, because that's something that they then," she said.

And this is a ritual she continues to perform today.

"The sisters have been here in Mackay 54 years, so we always do cribs everywhere — like if you go at any entrance you'll find a crib," she said.

"It's a tradition for us that we don't want to lose either."

**PHOTO:** A traditional Maltese meal includes a casserole made out of rabbit. (ABC Tropical North: Harriet Tatham)



## Traditional Maltese food

Rose Borg is also trying to keep Maltese traditions alive in north Queensland, by cooking a traditional Christmas lunch. "I always make the rabbit at Christmas time — being a Maltese dish I just kept it up," she said. "I don't like it, I don't eat it, but the rest of family, they love it."

"I just get a joy out of other people enjoying it."

Aside from the rabbit casserole, Mrs Borg said she also enjoyed people coming to look at the crib she had placed out the front of her home, as she believed it helped to refocus the holiday period.

"I feel like that's what Christmas is about — Christmas is the birth of Jesus and I just sort of feel as if it's not emphasized enough anymore," she said. "You sit here sometimes at night time and see people walk in the yard and see people stopping out the front [to look at the crib] and I just enjoy doing it."

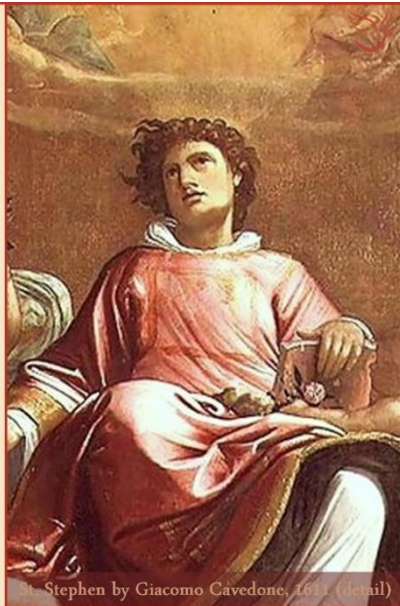
### THE FEAST OF ST. STEPHEN 26TH DECEMBER

St. Stephen, the first of the Martyrs, d. c. 34AD, was a popular deacon in the early Church of Jerusalem, who distributed alms to the orphans and poor. He was falsely accused of blasphemy and stoned to death by the Jewish Authorities.

His martyrdom was witnessed by the Pharisee, Saul of Tarsus—who would later convert to Christianity and become St. Paul the Apostle.

St. Stephen is the Patron Saint of deacons, and stonemasons, and is usually shown with a martyr's palm and three stones. His Feast Day is celebrated as 'Boxing Day' in New Zealand, Canada, Australia and the United Kingdom.

The Guild of St. Stephen traditionally award their crosses, medals and awards to altar servers on this day.



Stephen by Giacomo Cavedone, 1611 (detail)

## Boxing Day around the world in 2019

The day after Christmas, which is today known as Boxing Day, was the feast day of St Stephen, the first Christian martyr or protomartyr. Stephen was stoned to death after being accused of blasphemy and his death was witnessed by Paul the Apostle, then known as Saul of Tarsus.

This public holiday is celebrated on 26th December in several

countries as part of the Christmas holidays.

Typically it will be moved and celebrated on the next weekday if 26th December is a Saturday or Sunday. If Christmas Day falls on a weekend, Boxing Day may be observed on Tuesday 27th December.

It has been said that the name of Boxing Day comes from people getting rid of empty boxes from presents after Christmas day. While a beguiling notion, the tradition dates back to England in the middle ages, though the exact origin is debatable

One theory is that it comes from the fact that servants were given their presents in boxes on this day, the 26th being the first working day after Christmas day. This tradition of giving gifts for service extended beyond servants to tradesmen, such as milkmen, butchers, etc.

Another popular theory is that it is named after the custom of priests opening alms boxes in churches after Christmas. These held money which had been donated to the poor and needy in the run-up to Christmas. Some churches still open these boxes on Boxing Day.

**Australia** In South Australia, Boxing day is known as **Proclamation day**. It celebrates the proclamation of South Australia as a British province by Captain John Hindmarsh when he arrived at Holdfast Bay on 28 December 1836.

**South Africa** In South Africa, December 26th is a public holiday known as the **Day of Goodwill**. Before 1980, the day was celebrated as Boxing Day.

**United Kingdom** Boxing Day has been a Bank Holiday in England, Wales and Northern Ireland since 1871. Having this status during the height of the British Empire explains why this holiday is still celebrated in many Commonwealth countries.

**St. Stephen's Day** In non-Commonwealth countries, the day is more commonly referred to as St Stephen's Day or the feast of Stephen as mentioned in the carol 'Good King Wenceslas'.





## How about a Christmas Maltese Cocktail

Taċ-Ċitru

This one's a non-alcoholic cocktail with a strong citrus kick. And it features Malta's favourite drink.

- 20ml Passion Fruit syrup
- Kinnie
- Orange zest

Fill a glass with ice and pour the passion fruit syrup on top, then add in the orange zest. Top up the glass with Kinnie, mix well and garnish with a cherry and slice of orange.

Photo credit to IRIS

*Dear Frank,*

*It has been a very fast year and just as it is coming to an end, on Behalf of the Executive & Committee I would like to Wish You and Your Family a*

*Merry Christmas*

*Christmas brings family and friend's together;*

*It helps us appreciate the love in our lives we can often take for granted.*

*May the true meaning of Christmas fill your heart and home with many blessings.*

*May we also keep in our prayers those around this Troubled World that will not be as fortunate & blessed as we are during this time, those that are facing hunger and conflict who have lost everything*

*May 2020*

*Be full of Good Health, Everlasting Peace in our world and Success.*

*We truly are grateful for your continuing friendship and support throughout 2019 and look forward to your ongoing support for what should be an exciting 2020.*



*Merry Christmas*

Sam CJ Muscat JP  
President

Australian American  
Association (Vic)





## 72 recipes in the 10th edition of 'Tisjir mill-Qalb'

Report: Glen Falzon

A collation of original recipes by the best of local chefs will lend a new palate to the Maltese kitchen. The recipes are part of another edition of the booklet 'Tisjir mill-Qalb' which is published annually at this time of the year as a result of a voluntary initiative in aid of the Malta Community Chest Fund Foundation.

A number of new culinary ideas are contained in this the 10th edition of the booklet which this time round is full of appetising recipes made from authentic Maltese products. The booklet contains 72 recipes including light meals and other more abundant preparations, the work of premiere local chefs. Included is a choice of various cocktail preparations.

The booklet's coordinator, Lino Schembri, explained the recipes include typical Maltese culinary fare including a recipe for the cooking of snails, currently in season.

Once more recipes for rabbit, lamb and fish are highlighted.

There are different methods for the preparation of lampuki. There is also a recipe for old-style trifle and ice cream (ġelat tan-nanna) as well as fig fritters (imqaret). The whole provides a wide selection of culinary fare.

In launching the publication, President George Vella expressed his gratitude to the participating chefs and the volunteers who helped the collation of the booklet. Money raised by the sale of the booklet will go to the Malta Community Chest Fund. This book is sold in all leading bookshops in Malta and Gozo.



## CANADIAN-MALTESE AUTHOR OF THE EIGHT POINTED CROSS

Marthese Fenech was born the youngest of five to Maltese parents in Toronto. She has traveled extensively across four continents, and in the course of researching for Eight-Pointed Cross, toured Malta, Turkey, Italy, France—a wealth of fascinating places that introduced her to her characters and their cultures in a most authentic way.

When she was twelve, she lived in Malta for six months, enrolling in an all-girls private school run by nuns. She lasted three days before getting kicked out for talking too much. Back in Toronto, she started her own business

recording, editing, and selling bootleg heavy metal concerts. While in high school, she took a position with a popular seafood chain as its first female dishwasher. She later worked with special needs children and adults, where witnessing small miracles on a daily basis was part of the job.

A former kickboxing instructor, Marthese currently teaches high school English and history. She speaks fluent Maltese and French and is learning Italian. As part of her research for Eight-Pointed Cross, she took up archery, and ended up accidentally becoming a certified instructor. She has a passion for adventure, photography, running, music, snowboarding, and yoga. Writer Marthese Fenech, who was born in Canada to Maltese parents, is one such person and she has always been fervently proud of her island roots. So much so that she was inspired to write an epic novel that puts Malta's and Gozo's exciting history firmly in the spotlight.



## THE NOVEL - EIGHT POINTED CROSS

The violent clash between the Ottoman Empire and the Knights of St John on the island fortress Malta serves as the backdrop to *Eight-Pointed Cross*. Young siblings Domenicus and Katrina Montesa live under constant threat of raids by the Ottoman Turks, the staunchest enemies of the Christian knights. All the while, hundreds of leagues away in Istanbul, Demir's dream of becoming an imperial horseman in the Sultan's cavalry is his only salvation against relentless torment by his cruel brother.

The Turkish invasion of Malta and the island's bloody defence will forever change the lives of the three protagonists, whose fates are intertwined not only with each other, but with nobles and peasants, knights and corsairs, tyrants and galley slaves, on both sides of the conflict as the novel sweeps across the Mediterranean world of the sixteenth century—from Malta, a barren Christian outpost, to Istanbul, the glittering seat of Islam, from filthy prison cells to lush palace gardens.

Against soaring sea-cliffs and open sea-lanes, the men and women of *Eight-Pointed Cross* face corruption and oppression, broken vows and betrayal, as two great empires collide. Surviving this battle-soaked world of swords and scimitars will test the limits of every character's courage, loyalty, and love.

## Lija keeping Christmas tradition alive



Lija is once again bringing to life the Nativity scene as numerous re-enactors take part in a traditional event synonymous with the locality. The town has been hosting a live crib since 1962, when it was organised by the late Fr Anton Ebejer in the gardens of the old church of the Transfiguration. Since then, it changed venues a couple of times and was not held for a few years, until St Andrew Social Club and the St Pius X Band Club joined forces to revive the tradition in 2018.

Visitors are transported back in time as they walk through the live crib in Robert Mifsud Bonnici Street.

Held in a former derelict farmhouse, the crib features a waterfall, windmill and animal pens for cows, sheep, ducks, chickens and rabbits. There is also an olive press, a bakery and carpenter and blacksmith workshops where the re-enactors show the old way of life in Bethlehem. The main attraction, however, remains the Nativity scene featuring Mary, Joseph and Baby Jesus.

Oranges, for which Lija is well-known, qagħaq tal-ghasel (honey rings), imqaret (date-filled pastries) and mulled wine, besides other Christmas-related items, are on sale at the premises.

This year's live crib was inaugurated by Archbishop Charles Scicluna and Lija mayor

Anthony Dalli on December 13. It is open in Robert Mifsud Bonnici Street (opposite the local council) on Saturday between 6 and 8.30pm and on Sunday and Christmas Day between 3.30 and 8.30pm. It will also be open the following weekend. On December 28, it will be open from 6 to 8.30pm and on December 29 between 3.30 and 8.30pm. Entrance is against a €1 donation for adults. Children enter for free





## MALTESE-CANADIAN COMMUNITY NEWS

### St. Paul The Apostle Christmas Concert

An awesome feeling of Maltese Christmas and Maltese Canadian sense of Community at its very best! Thanks to the leadership of pastor Fr Mario Micallef, Fr Ivano and especially the coordination of the St Paul The Apostle Youth Group lead by Youth Ambassador, Jason Borg and his team. A Christmas Concert with the participation of the Malta Band under the direction of Maestro Nic Arrigo, Karen Polidano, Lauren & Emma, Adrian Camilleri and the St Cecilia's Choir. The Maltese-Canadian Church of St Paul in Malta Village, Toronto was not only packed with families but alive with joy and full of Christmas spirit. The highlight of the evening was the reintroduction of the #nativity pageant with the participation of Maltese-Canadian MTCA children. The Consul General of Malta to Canada, Dr Raymond Xerri attended this event.





# EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT FAIRYLAND MALTA



• By Bay News

Nothing says 'Christmas is coming' quite like skidding onto your bum at an outdoor ice rink. And now Valletta, inspired by New York, London and Paris, has set up its very own festive rink for you to glide around.

The 900m<sup>2</sup> ice rink in Triton Square is sure to get you feeling festive and raise your Christmas spirits – even if you can't skate very well.

It's the main focus of the spectacular Fairyland Malta attraction being held at Triton Square and organised by [VisitMalta Events](#).

Fairyland promises an exciting day out for the whole family.

Children will have an a wonderful time viewing Valletta, Floriana and the Grand Harbour from the toop of the 32-metre high Rudolph's Wheel.

They can also hop on to Santas' magical carousel and then get the opportunity to meet Father Christmas in his beautiful grotto, letting him know if they have been naughty or nice.

[Fairyland Malta](#) has transformed Triton Square into a wonderful Christmas extravaganza.

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[Fairyland Malta](#) has transformed Triton Square into a wonderful Christmas extravaganza.

## What time is Fairyland Malta open?

Fairyland is open until January 5 at the following times:

Sunday to Thursday from 10am till 10pm

Friday and Saturday from 10am till 11.30pm

Christmas Eve from 10am till 1am

Christmas Day from 3pm till 10pm

Boxing Day from 10am till 11.30pm

New Year's Eve from 10am till 2am

New Year's Day from 3pm till 10pm



## What age is it aimed at?

Fairyland is for all the family. There are rides and attractions for children as young as 2, with more rides for the older ones.

## Do I have to pay to get in?

No! Fairyland has no admission fee. You only pay for the attractions you choose.

You will need tickets for the rides which will be available from the ticket booths on site.

Skate hire is included in the Penguin's Ice Rink ticket price.

## Can I take photographs on the ice rink?

For safety reasons, you are not allowed to take photographs whilst on the ice rink. However, spectators can take photos of you from the viewing platforms around the rink.



## Christians celebrate Christmas around the world

Nations including Russia, Ukraine and Ethiopia observe the Julian Calendar, currently 13 days behind the Gregorian

Hundreds of millions of people across the world are celebrating Christmas Day.

While those in the UK, America and much of Europe celebrate the birth of Christ in December, there are roughly 100 to 200 million

Orthodox Christians for whom January 7 is the traditional day of celebration. *People dressed in traditional costumes sing Christmas carols in Kiev (Reuters)*



That's because they still observe the Julian Calendar, which is currently 13 days behind the Gregorian calendar used by most of the modern world.

Countries including Russia, Belarus, Egypt, Ethiopia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia, and Ukraine are marking the occasion with their own unique national traditions.

In Russia, which has the largest Orthodox Christian community in the world, an estimated 350,000

people were in Moscow for Christmas liturgies, traditionally held on Christmas Eve, January 6.

Families then return home for a 12-course supper, with a dish for each apostle. Russia has the largest Orthodox Christian community in the world (AP)

The following day they attend church and enjoy a Christmas feast – goose in sour cream sauce being a popular delicacy. Ukraine holds similar celebrations, with the addition of dressing up and carol-singing door to door.

Ukraine adds dressing up to the traditional Russia celebration (Reuters)

In Serbia, Christmas begins when an oak log or branch known as a badnjak is brought into the home and placed on the Christmas fire.

Worshippers in Ethiopia are up for a 4am mass to celebrate 'Ganna', having fasted for the previous 43 days. Many wear a thin white cloth garment known as a shamma. A traditional Christmas meal would be a 'wat' - a hot, spicy meat stew, washed down with honey wine.

Dearest family and friends,

Have a blessed Christmas,  
and may the good Lord keep  
us strong against all odds that  
come our way in the New Year  
and beyond.

Jalla li l-ferh tal-Milied jibqa'  
magħna lkoll tul is-Sena l-  
Gdida.

Dan li nixtiequkom minn qalbna,

Mary u Clemente Zammit  
u l-familja



For Romanians, today is the last day of celebrations which began on December 20. Traditional



meals include gammon and pork chops carved from a pig slaughtered on the first day of the festivities (St. Ignatius's Day).

A similar tradition to Serbia is prominent in Macedonia, where celebrations traditionally start a few days earlier on December 5, a day called 'Kolede'. On this day, children sing carols to their neighbours and are given fruit, nuts and money in return.

They eat a vegan meal on Christmas Eve,

which is preceded by the lighting of the yule log, called a 'badnik'.

As in Ethiopia, Christians in Egypt celebrate the run up to Christmas by fasting for 43 days, subsisting on a mainly vegan diet. The fast is broken on Christmas Eve with a meal containing meat, eggs and butter. A popular dish is a lamb soup called Fata.

Georgians celebrate Christmas with a parade through the street, known as an Alilo. Curiously, although celebrations are held on January 7, they sing a popular Christmas song which includes the words: "On 25th Decembessr, Christ was boorn in Bethlehem."

SAVE THE DATE - DECEMBER 31st, 2019

**THE MALTESE CENTER PRESENTS**  
**New Years Eve Gala Dinner Dance**  
**AT THE ASTORIA WORLD MANOR**  
**MC AND ENTERTAINMENT BY OUR OWN ...DJ CHUCK...!!!!**

**7.30pm - 1.30am**

**Deluxe Butler Service Cocktail Hour**  
**Twenty Item Buffet Dinner / Reserved Seating**  
**Dessert and Coffee**  
**Open Bar / Premium Liquor**

**Adult Donation: \$150**      **Under 12 yrs Donation: \$70**

*Under the Auspices of the Malta Mission*

**EMPIRE HALL**

**RSVP - email - [maltesecenterny@aol.com](mailto:maltesecenterny@aol.com)**  
**Call: Joe Grech at 646 287-7263 or Eddie DeBono at 917 807-2874**