

Maltese eNewsletter

The Journal of the Maltese Diaspora

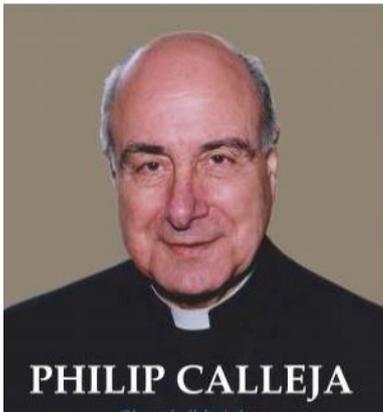
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HAPPY NEW YEAR

IS-SENA T-TAJBA LILL KULHADD



PHILIP CALLEJA

Champion of Maltese living abroad and of refugees

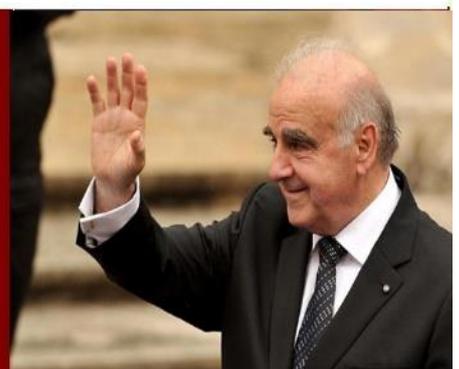
MALTESE LIVING IN MALTA

CONNECTING COMMUNITIES



Malta proud of its history and culture

BUILDING BRIDGES



President appeals for unity, tolerance and respect

MALTESE LIVING ABROAD



May the New Year bring peace and many blessings to Malta and all the Maltese around the world



President appeals for unity, tolerance and respect

Calls for everyone to shoulder responsibilities

In his message for Christmas, President George Vella spoke about the difficult time the country is currently going through saying he was concerned and shocked.

But, in spite of this, he said, the people should keep in mind the values associated with Christmas and appreciate all that made this people Maltese - loyalty to the family, hard work and generosity.

He called on the people to reflect on the meaning of Christmas and how this could help for the return of unity. President Vella thanked the public for their support during the first months of his Presidency, especially in the most difficult moments. He said he found a lot of strength and courage in the people's support.

He also thanked the people for keeping close to their heart the values and aims he had prepared for this Presidency - solidarity in illness, the fight against poverty, inclusion and voluntary work

The President called for tolerance and respect with those of different ideas and with whom tension had increased in recent days.

He appealed to the people to look at what united them rather than at what divided them.

Dr Vella appealed to the people to take care of the sick, the elderly and the less fortunate and appealed for funds for the Malta Community Chest Fund Foundation which helped those who were suffering in silence.

He also called for everyone to do their utmost for the country to regain ground and for everyone to feel respected. This could only be done if everyone shouldered their responsibilities and carried them out honestly and transparently, placing the country's interests first and foremost.



The President's message at the end of "Istrina"

Report: Melvic Zammit

"I would like to thank the entire people of Malta, those that may have contributed little and those that may have contributed much, but the sum collected is in itself a certificate of the generous heart of the people of Malta and underlines that when help and support is needed for fellow brethren facing certain difficulties, the population remains generous and sensitive to those who appeal for help and support. This is the characteristic of the Maltese people - a real people that when called to unite do so with unreserved fervour. I thank you from the bottom of my heart".

Visibly emotional, with his wife Miriam Vella beside him, President George Vella summed up the end of the 21st edition of the annual marathon of the gathering of funds, while stating that he had not expected that such a large sum would be collected. This was his first experience of "Istrina" as President and during which over €6,000,000 were collected.

During the virtual 12-hour marathon that was transmitted by TVM and other local stations, a total of €6,220,000 was raised. The sum also includes money that was collected through the staging of various activities including Rockestra and the August Moon Ball. Although this amount is almost €2 million less than the sum raised last year, a Spokesperson for the President's Office explained that this year's edition does not include the donations collected during the Fun Run as this had been postponed and will now take place on 26th January.





Before the marathon ended, President Vella explained these funds will go towards the needs of the Community Chest Fund to enable it to continue helping and giving support to those who need it, particularly to those who have to travel overseas for treatment.

He said he was really amazed and marvelled by the generosity of the people and will continue to repeat that in the circumstances he had not aspired that such a large sum would be collected. He again emphasised the absolute proof that in sickness and when solidarity is needed, the Maltese people always rise to the occasion and set everything aside and place unity foremost and this gives new strength.

Claire Micallef-Pule, the Manager of the Malta Community Chest Fund Foundation, said the Foundation is experiencing an increased request of need and support, especially for children as well as patients that require specialised treatment.

She said there is specialised chemotherapy that costs €7,000 monthly, people that have to travel overseas for curative treatment as well as sections of disabled and elderly people that need specialised equipment and all these cost a lot of money.

The whole marathon was filled with emotions, stories of persons that received help and support from the Foundation and this contributed to the generosity of donations pledged and thus enabled the compilation of such an amount.

Archbishop George Frendo speaks of the sufferings of the Albanian people



Report: Tony Dimech

After 22 years of pastoral work in Albania, Archbishop George Frendo feels he is very much an integral part of the Albanian community and understands the needs of the community. The Albanian people are still suffering the consequences of communism, a civil war and last month's earthquake which has left many people living in tents. He said there were a series of tremors, some of which are still being felt today and many houses were rendered unsafe, including Curia buildings and even his own office. Many people in Tirana were forced to leave their homes because extensive damages made them unsafe for habitation.

The Archbishop explained the Church helps out by supplying the essential life elements. He said many poor people are being helped because they need food and their rents are being paid as well as energy and water bills. Promising students are also receiving help because they come from poor families and thus they are helped to enable them to continue with their studies. Mons Frendo said the Church in Albania is very much alive and a great quantity of youths attended Christmas celebrations.

Every year at Christmas time a meal is organised for those in poverty and this year the location was chosen most affected by the earthquake and thus for those living in tents. The President of Albania is invited and will attend with his wife. Archbishop Frendo said that when he visits Malta once a year he appreciates the great generosity of the people of Malta and Gozo who offer their donations to enable the Church in Albania to continue with its social mission.



 l-istrina 2019 

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LIL MIN QEGHDIN TFITTXU?

Storja ħelwa li jirrakuntaw fuq Mother Theresa, il-qaddisa tal-karita', hi, ta' meta ltqagħet ma' raġel ifittex bl-akbar ħerqa xi haġa fejn il-bieb tiegħu. Hi waqfet u staqsietu x'kien qiegħed jagħmel u hu weġibha li kien qiegħed ifittex ċavetta. Wara li bdiet



tgħinu reġgħet staqsietu fejn jaħseb li kien tilifha u hu kien pront qalilha li aktarx fil-kamra ta' ġewwa. Mother Theresa, mistagħba staqsietu, "Mela għalfejn qiegħed tfittixa hawn barra?" Hu weġibha "Għax hawn, hawn id-dawl!"

Dak ma kienx id-dawl li kellu bżonn biex isib iċ-ċavetta.

Ħafna drabi aħna jiġriena bħal dan ir-raġel, nitfixklu fejn infittxu l-verita' ta' ħajjitna. Naħsbu li fejn jidhrilna aħna hemm id-dawl li jista' jwassalna għall-verita'. Nintilfu nfittxu hemm u ma nsalux li nsibu dak li nkunu qegħdin infittxu. Id-dawl jista' jkun li naħsbu li qiegħed fil-ġid ta' din id-dinja, jew fil-poter jew fil-fama u l-unuri. Imma jekk infittxu f'dawn l-affarijiet, kif jgħid il-Malti, nibqgħu b'xibher imnieher.

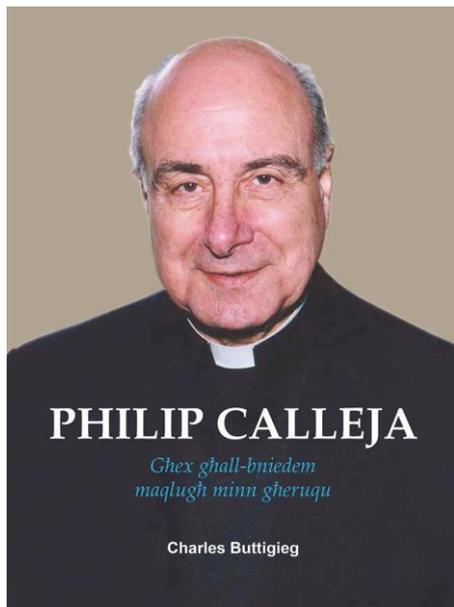
Il-verita' ta' ħajjitna għandu jkun Ġesu', l-lben t'Alla magħmul bniedem, għas-salvazzjoni tagħna. Aħna din il-ġrajja, tat-twelid ta' Ġesu', niċcelebrawaha kull sena. Imma ngħiduha kif inhi kemm qiegħeda tħalli effett fuqna din il-ġrajja? Milied jiġi u iehor jitlaq, u wara nibdew sena ġdida u r-rotta dduur!! Aħna nawguraw lil xulxin li xi darba nindunaw li ma rridux immorru mal-kurrent imma nkunu kapaċi nieqfu u nirriflettu u niehdu deċiżjonijiet li jgħinuna nikbru tassew f'Alla u bejnietna. Dan li nawguaw lil xulxin. Nittamaw li l-barka tal-Mulej Ġesu' tinzel fuqna lkoll u l-familji tagħna u jkollna sena tajba biex nimxu 'l quddiem fl-imħabba t'Alla u ta' xulxin.

Waqf li qiegħed nikteb dan il-messagġ, intom, fl-Awstralja għaddejjin minn esperjenza kera ta' sħana u nar u ħruq fl-imsaġar tagħkom. S'issa għadna ma smajniex li kien hemm xi Maltin ħutna li batew f'dawn iċ-ċirkostanzi u nittamaw li ma jkunx hemm għalkemm xorta jiddispjaċina għal dawk kollha li ġarrbu ħsara u tilfu ħafna f'dawn in-nirien. Aħna nistgħu niftakru fikom fit-talb tagħna f'dawn iċ-ċirkostanzi iebesin u diffiċli.

Ġrajja oħra li nemmnu li tinterressakom ħafna hi li fl-4 ta' Diċembru, ġie mniedi l-ktieb biografia ta' Mons. Philip Calleja, fundatur u president tal-Kummissjoni Emigranti. Kien mument sabiħ ħafna u interessanti għall-membri kollha tal-Kummissjoni Emigranti għax għalkemm il-ktieb jitkellem fuq il-ħajja tal-Monsinjur fl-istess ħin hemm l-istorja tal-Kummissjoni stess. L-Kummissjoni Emigranti u Monsinjur Philip huma sinonimi, haġa waħda. Minn ikun Malta u jkun jixtieq jakiwista kopja jgħaddi 'Dar l-Emigrant' u jistaqsi lili, Mons. Alfred. Matul din is-sena nixtiequ nilħqu l-mira tagħna li jinfetaħ ufficjalment l-Mużew tal-Migrazzjoni. Qegħdin f'kuntatti mal-ufficċju tal-Eċċellenza Tiegħu l-President ta' Malta biex ikun hu l-jiftaħ dan il-Mużew. Aħna nixtiequ li dan ikun ġrajja ħajja u minjiera ta' informazzjoni fuq l-istorja tal-emigrazzjoni f'Malta. Mill-ġdid nawguralkom dak kollu li tixtieq qalbkom. Saħħa u barka,

MONS. ALFRED VELLA, DIRETTUR KUMMISSJONI EMIGRANTI.





Emigrants' priest and refugees' Samaritan

Mgr Philip Calleja – A life dedicated to uprooted people (Mons Philip Calleja – Għex għall-bniedem maqluġh minn għeruqu) is the title of a

500-page biography which was launched on December 4 by the Emigrants' Commission and Midsea Books, focusing on Mgr Calleja's 70 years of committed service to Maltese emigrants, asylum seekers in Malta and the Church.

The biography was written by Charles Buttigieg, a close collaborator of Mgr Calleja for several years, who is also the author of two books about the Archbishop Mgr Joseph Mercieca and another about Archbishop Mgr Michael Gonzi, all published by Midsea Books. The author looks at Mgr Calleja as the priest for Maltese emigrants and a Samaritan for refugees in Malta.

The book in itself also offers the story of the Emigrants' Commission, born on March 1, 1950, through the initiative of the Catholic Action Movement. It further recounts how Dar l-Emigrant, in Valletta, came into being through the initiative of Mgr Calleja.

Speaking on the occasion of the laying of the Foundation Stone of Dar l-Emigrant, on February 10, 1971, Mgr Calleja saw the building as a permanent monument in honour of the Maltese migrant. Then, when the Emigrants' Commission became Malta's pioneer in the international protection and humanitarian support of asylum seekers in Malta, Mgr Calleja ensured that Dar l-Emigrant also serves as a beehive of activity for refugees.

“As we can see from this book about his life, Mgr Philip believed fully in what he did and continues to do so and strive to see that the organisation he developed and sustained for so many years continues to move ahead. At the age of 91, he is still giving his contribution with full commitment and zeal,” says Mgr Alfred Vella, his successor as director of the Emigrants' Commission, in the preface of the biography. Mgr Vella adds that Mgr Calleja always had and still has a deep desire to make himself available for those who have to leave their home in search of a new future elsewhere.

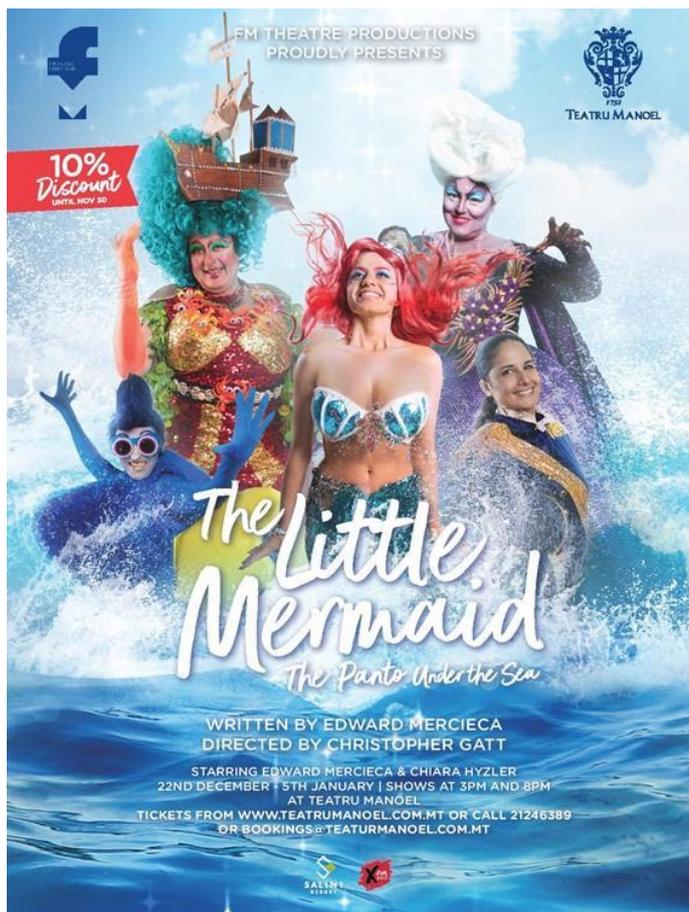
The book includes five sections dedicated to the childhood and up-bringing of Mgr Calleja in Valletta; his enormous love and dedication to the Maltese emigrant and his family; his life in the Church; his big Samaritan heart for the refugee; and what Mgr Calleja says about a number of particular persons he worked with throughout his life.

The basic information sources of the biography are Mgr Calleja himself, the Archives of the Emigrants' Commission and of the Migration Museum housed at Dar l-Emigrant, and the direct personal experiences the author has had over the years in working closely with Mgr Calleja.

Mgr Calleja enjoys international and local recognition for his lifelong dedicated work for Maltese migrants and asylum seekers in Malta.

On March 16, 2010, Stephen Gatt, president of the Federation of Maltese Abroad, presented to Mgr Calleja a plaque which states as follows: “In recognition of a lifetime of service, labour and travail well in excess of the call of duty in the interests of Maltese Migrants across the diaspora.”

Mgr Calleja was also granted a certification by UNHCR “in appreciation for years of dedicated service and close collaboration”. The Emigrants' Commission was UNHCR's operational partner in Malta from 1987 to 2004, when UNHCR's role in the island had taken a new form in the light of Malta's Refugees Act.. **Editorial – The Times**



THE LITTLE MERMAID AT MANOEL THEATRE

The Manoel Theatre will once again delight families this Christmas, as they return for The Little Mermaid: A Panto Under the Sea. The familiar tale of rebellious Ariel, a mermaid who only wants to explore the world above the waves despite being forbidden by her father King Triton, will be adapted for stage, complete with Ariel's nanny Dame Bormaljotta and the evil sea witch, Ursoola Minnofs.

Directed by Chris Gatt, the panto will also feature the talents of Musical Director Kris Spiteri, Choreographer Luisa Fenech Conti and vocal coach Analise Cassar. Perfect for all the family, The Little Mermaid is definitely a Christmas must-see. The Little Mermaid – A Panto Under the Sea will be staged at the Manoel Theatre, Valletta, from 22 December 2019 to 5 January 2020. Tickets available at www.teatrumanoel.com.mt

Tell me a story On Friday, 27 December and 3 January, Heritage Malta is inviting students aged 5 to 10 who have the Heritage Malta Passport, to participate in

the event – Tell me a story. During the storytelling experience, which will be delivered by the Lignin Team, the children will be invited not only to listen to the narratives but also to engage with them by making various sound effects, and also by sharing their own stories. The chosen stories will have a Christmas theme.. A different story is told per session.

Date and Time On 27 December, the session will start at 11.00am. On 3 January, the session will start at 11.00am. **Price:** €5 per student.

Location: National Museum of Archaeology, Republic Street, Valletta. Tickets available from Heritage Malta sites and museums, an



2020

**HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL OUR READERS
IS-SENA T-TAJBA LILL QARREJJA TAGHNA**

NEW YEAR TO REMEMBER ON THE ISLAND OF MALTA

Recently, New Year's Eve in Malta has become synonymous with thrilling fireworks and bustling street parties which, unlike in many countries, are still free of charge. However, these massively popular events are actually new developments in the country's history, having only been established within the last few years. Before, celebrating the New Year in Malta was a more casual affair, spent with family and often closely linked with food. That's not to say that food and family doesn't still play an important role – it most certainly does, with restaurants often packed out with generations of Maltese relations. It's just that now there's even more options for seeing in the New Year with a bang. Whether you plan to indulge in classic New Year's Eve staples like Imbuljuta tal-Qastan, catch the Valletta fireworks..

JOIN THE STREET PARTY IN FLORIANA

The fortified town of Floriana, just outside Valletta, has New Year celebrations that are so good they bring the town to a standstill. So, now you can understand why the town closes off St Anne's, one of Malta's busiest streets, for what is essentially one massive, buzzing street party. Our tip? Head down early and soak up the atmosphere, then move to the largest square in Malta, the Granaries, for the concert.

PUT DOWN THE CHAMPAGNE, AND TRY A MUG OF IMBULJUTA TAL-QASTAN INSTEAD

Another traditional festive staple is the Imbuljuta, a warming concoction that's traditionally enjoyed on New Year's Eve in Malta. The drink – you can think of it as essentially a luxe hot chocolate – is made from dried chestnuts, cocoa, tangerine rind, cloves and sugar and tastes like the last dregs of Christmas, which it kind of is. It's also just the thing to fortify you for the evening ahead, as the usually mild daytime temperatures take a turn for the chill.

PARTY INTO NEW YEAR'S DAY AT ST. JULIANS AND PACEVILLE

The fireworks are spent, the street parties are winding down, and people are filing home to sleep off their hangovers. Now's the time for the truly dedicated to step up – this is New Year's Eve after all.

If you want to dance your way into the new year, the best place to go is St Julians, where the island's nightclubs are generally concentrated. It's generally agreed that the stamina-rich club hop their way through Paceville, St Julian's dedicated clubbing and bar district, although on New Year's Eve this might prove a little difficult. Many of the NYE events are ticketed and prone to selling out in advance, so be sure to do your research first.

REVIVE SOME LOST TRADITIONS ON NEW YEAR'S DAY . . . OR NOT

Unfortunately, many Maltese traditions have been eroded by time. It was once customary to give gifts of money to small children on the first day of New Year in Malta. This was called I-Istrina, and was largely lost when the British influence popularized giving presents on Christmas Day. Likewise, superstitious people would often spread white lime on their thresholds to symbolise purity and a new beginning. However, nowadays you might get a few askance looks since this superstition generally died out in the 1930s

INDULGE IN A TRADITIONAL NEW YEAR'S EVE DINNER

Let's face it, you're probably going to need a decent meal to set you up for celebrating New Year in Malta. Luckily, Maltese Christmas and New Year's Eve dishes – with their convergence of North African, Sicilian and British influences – tends towards the hearty. Expect staples like brodu tat-tigieġa (chicken broth), imqarrun il-forn (baked macaroni) and tigieġa bil-patata il-forn (roast chicken and potatoes). For dessert, how about a traditional festive honey ring – known as a qagħaq tal-ġhasel – and, of course, a cup of strong coffee. Now you're set.

WATCH THE FIREWORKS SHOW IN VALLETTA

Considering that the history of pyrotechnics displays in Malta stretches back to the time of the Order of the Knights of St John, it's no surprise that this show has become the focal point of the national end of year celebrations, drawing huge crowds at key spots across the city. St George's Square and the Valletta Waterfront are popular gathering points, and great places to take the temperature of the famed Maltese party spirit, as locals, expats and tourists come together for the countdown. There's a free concert, too – last year jazz and brass bands met fusion DJs for a piece of truly inclusive scene setting.

BAY IMAGES SHOW LIFE IN MALTA 100 YEARS AGO



BAY RETRO, MALTA.

OLD PHOTOS

These days, living in Malta is all about avoiding traffic jams, answering countless emails at work and posing for selfies on

social media, but 100 years ago life was a much simpler affair. Back in the early 1900s, when a journey to London took 10 days instead of two-and-a-half hours on a budget airline, many Maltese were just getting the hang of photography. Now a series of amazing images from this era have emerged – with incredible pictures of Malta's Edwardians in front of the camera.

The black and white images, shared by history enthusiast Mario Schembri on 89.7 Bay's award-winning Bay Retro Facebook page, show how the fashions of the time for women often involved the traditional black ghonella.

U Ejja! These are the Maltese phrases you must learn, marelli!



Talk like a local in no time with these nifty words and phrases.

Rebecca Anastasi

Exchanging pleasantries:

Bongu Siehbi (bon-ju seeh-bi) or **bongu habib** (bon-ju ha-bib): Good morning, my friend.

Kif int'illum? (kiff int ill-um): How are you today?

Titkellem bl-Ingiliz? (tit-kell-em blin-gleez): Do you speak English?

One word wonders:

Uwejja (oo-wei-ya): C'mon

Uwejja (oo-wei-ya): You've got to be kidding me!

Mela (me-la)...: So...

Mela! (me-la): Yes, really!

Mela, mela (me-la, me-la): Yes, yes, I agree.

When socialising:

Marelli (ma-rel-li): Good Lord!

Pinta lager jekk joghgbok (pin-ta lager yekk yoj-bok): A pint of beer, please.

Tnejn irkotta jew pizelli! (t-ney-n ir-kot-ta yew pi-ze-lli): Two cheese or peacakes (*pastizzi*)!

Impress your friends:

Aw gobon (auw jo-bon): Directly translated as 'hey cheese' but used to call out someone you know (also commonly used: *aw lily*, *aw king*, *aw kugin* [hey cousin]; and the classic *aw spice*)

Xita (shit-a): rain

Fartas (pronounced with stress on both syllables): bald head (ironic, that)

Ghandi qtugh ta' laham: I've got cut of the meat (used when your muscles are aching after some physical exercise).

Hemm il-frisk: No, it's not you're feeling frisky, but 'it's a bit chilly'.

And finally:

Ma nafx nitkellem bil-Malti (ma naf-sh nit-kel-lem bil-mal-ti): I don't speak Maltese.

The official languages of Malta are Maltese and English. Maltese (Malti) is a language of Semitic origin written in the Latin script. Over the centuries, it has incorporated many words derived from English, Italian and French. It is a modern Arabic vernacular closely related to the western Arabic dialects. In its phonetics, morphology, syntax and vocabulary it shows the strong influence of an earlier, later and continuing Sicilian (Latin) form of speech. There are 30 letters in the Maltese alphabet. The letter "y" is not part of the Maltese alphabet but the alphabet includes five special letters:

A sampling of the Maltese language follows:

Yes/**Iva** (as in *diva*)

No/**Le** (as in *lethargy*)

Thank you very much/**Grazzi hafna** (grats-tsii haff-na)

Good-bye or cheers/**Sahha** (sah-ha)

Merry Christmas/**Il-Milied it-tajjeb**

Happy New Year/**Is-Sena t-tajba**

Please/**Jekk joghgbok** (yek-yooj-bok)

Good night/**Il-lejl it-tajjeb** (ill-layl it-ta-yep)

L—LSIEN MALTI

**Ghaliex tarmih l-ilsien li tatek ommok
U titef ghaqlek wara lsien barrani?
Maltija kenet l-ewwel kelma f'fommok
U bil-Malti tkellimt tifel dahkani.**

Dun Karm

Maltese language and other languages spoken in Malta

The Maltese language is the only Semitic language written in the Latin script and the only official Semitic language of the European Union, of which Malta forms part.

Originally an Arabic dialect, over the centuries it has picked up words from several other European languages – depending on who ruled Malta and for how long.

The Maltese language's ability to adapt and grow inorganically has ensured its survival throughout the millennia. Even in these modern times, the Maltese language continues to absorb foreign words with such ease that those steering the language debate are left... wordless.

Maltese language basics

Spoken by half a million people in the whole world, Maltese sounds strange to visitors – some feel they should be able to understand it, but many cannot.

This is mostly because **three out of every ten words in Maltese are words from either English, French or Italian**, while the rest have Semitic roots. Common expressions like 'thank you' or *grazzi* (grazie in Italian), and greetings like 'hello', *bonġu* (bonjour in French) or *bonswa* (bonsoir, also French), have almost completely replaced their Maltese equivalents.

Unfortunately, **not many Maltese people are able to write well in Maltese**. It is a sad truth. Many complain that written Maltese is a grammatical nightmare but probably the true reason is that few have the patience to do it right.

Local linguists are concerned about a modern society that writes Maltese as they like, without any care to grammatical rules that are so important. Others believe that this way of writing should be embraced, arguing that the written language should follow the spoken. The debates continue.

What is the official national language of Malta?

Malta has two official languages – Maltese and English – and both are spoken fluently by the vast majority of the population.

For hundreds of years, the Maltese language was left to its own devices, spoken by the commoners, ignored by those who ruled. This perhaps ensured its survival. With the arrival of the British in 1800, English was introduced and quickly absorbed by the Maltese. Today, a considerable portion of the population prefer to speak English, or were raised as English-speaking primarily. Both English and Maltese are compulsory academic subjects in schools.

Although the vast majority of the population speak English, most prefer to speak Maltese with fellow-countrymen. Being spoken to in English by another Maltese person is often questioned and although it's just my guess it could be a matter of pride. Even though English is an official language, the language of the people remains Maltese, which is very much part of the Maltese identity and important to most.

What other languages are commonly spoken in Malta?

The Italian influence can be greatly felt in Malta – from food to fashion, and also by the fact that Italian is spoken by roughly 60% of the Maltese. This influence has multiple facets – since ancient times, people crossed from Italy and Sicily to inhabit the island or to trade.

The Romans for example, spent a long while cultivating olive trees and vines. Later on in history, Malta became part of the Kingdom of Sicily – Malta's vicinity and trade ties with Sicily have strongly left their mark – linguistically and culturally. In 1530, Italian was declared the official language by the Knights of St John, and remained so until 1934. In more recent times, Italian TV stations were practically the only stations the Maltese tuned into for a period that lasted about 40 years, between the 60's and 2000.

Maltese literature

Every year, a growing number of books are published by a handful of local authors and publishers. Quality has increased greatly in recent years with a number of Maltese publications winning prestigious international awards. A number of Maltese books have also been translated in foreign languages, such as Pierre J. Meilak's

'*Dak li l-lejl iħallik tgħid*', a book that won the European Union Prize for Literature and was later published in English as 'Having said goodnight'.

There are two major literature events in Malta. One is the Malta Mediterranean Literature Festival, held in August at St. Elmo's Fort in Valletta and the second one is the Malta Book Festival, which takes place every November at the Mediterranean Conference Centre in Valletta. Both events are held over a span of days and include plenty of activities related to literature.

Origin, foreign influences and brief history

The exact origins of the Maltese language are difficult to determine. Some say Maltese is closer to Lebanese then to Northern African Arabic dialects, owing to the Phoenician influence. Others argue that the closest form of Semitic language to Maltese is Tunisian. Another popular theory is that Maltese is a Siculo-Arabic (an Arabic dialect of Sicily) derivative that has continued to evolve undisturbed.

What one can easily determine is that the Maltese language today has a definite Semitic platform into which words from English, Italian and French have plugged themselves, making it a hybrid language written in Latin script. Maltese uses the Roman alphabet with a number of additional letters: *ie, ż, ċ, ġ, ħ, and għ*.

In 1968, a 15th century poem written in Maltese was discovered by two renowned Maltese researchers. The poem, called '*Il-Kantilena*', was attributed to Pietru Caxaru and was written in Latin script.

U.S. soldiers pay tribute to the 8 million horses, donkeys and mules that lost their lives during World War 1. *Source:*

Reddit



Not only is this WWI tribute to fallen horses, mules and donkeys touching - but it's also a great piece of conceptual art. Way to go doughboys! These soldiers are paying their respect to the fallen animals that died by their side. This consists of roughly 650 soldiers standing in a formation which that perfectly resembles a horse's head. Not in a creepy Godfather sort-of-way - but in a very loving sort-of-way.

Eight million war horses were killed during WW I; while one million horses left the UK for the Western Front and only 60,000 returned. The horses helped carry food, water, ammunition, and medical supplies to men on the front.



Dr. Raymon Xerri - Consul General for Malta in Canada
with Father Christmas and his wife - Christmas 2019

set up shop in the local market of downtown Tunis, Marché Central in Rue de Allemagne,” he explains.

Though the Maltese community disintegrated after the 1950s, one can still find remnants of the past, harkening to the days of a rich Maltese presence in the country.

“The Maltese particularly are still remembered with endearment, due to the proximity of language and the adaptation of the Maltese in Tunisian society and upon which it left its mark.”

The bond between the two countries is still strong today and anyone travelling to and from Tunisia is sure to come across the phrase “*Malta ħanina, ħobża u sardina.*”

“Today they tell stories of how they lived harmoniously alongside other cultures carrying on their Maltese religious and cultural traditions, whilst integrating with the liberal and culturally diverse society in Tunisia which was open to the Mediterranean and its people.”

A particularly interesting photo that came from Andrew’s visit is that of a portrait of the Temimi family, the mother of which was Antoinette Zammit from Ħamrun. Antoinette worked as a stewardess on the ferry-ship between Malta and Tunisia in the early 1930s and, on this same ship, she met and fell in love with Mohamed Taoufik Temimi whom she eventually married.

Antoinette packed up her life in Malta, moved to Tunisia and started her life there living in La Fayette, where she raised her family.



Antoinette Zammit who became Ferida Temimi (Hatem Temimi Collection, Tunisia 2019)

Antoinette is still remembered today as Nanna Ferdia Temimi from Ħamrun and although there are only a few descendants of this once numerous community, they still retain a strong affection for their island of origin. Some have even obtained Maltese nationality.

The Embassy of Malta in

Tunis is also attempting to maintain these relationships, including publishing research on notable Tunisian-Maltese, including the discovery that the eminent Maltese architect Guze D’Amato, who designed the iconic Our Lady of Mount Carmel in Valletta was born in and graduated as an architect in Tunisia.

Magna Żmien plans to carry out more collection and digitisation throughout 2020 as it resumes its activity offering the public a free digitisation of personal and family audiovisual collections.

Projects like these help in telling the tales of Maltese communities abroad and are a great insight into how they used to live and the impact they left on those communities.

They also make for some great vintage photos and some super cool travel trivia!

Last week, archivist Andrew Pace presented Magna Żmien at the Digital Audiovisual Archiving and Community Engagement symposium at [The British Library](https://www.britishlibrary.org/) in London

Connecting Maltese Diaspora



Maltese Stuffed Artichokes

Qaqoċċ Mimli

By Sasha Martin

I often wonder how many people walk by their supermarket's artichoke display squinting their eyes, unsure of what to do with this prickly porcupine of a vegetable. I grew up eating artichokes and often take them for granted. I was thrilled this week to read that the Maltese also enjoy a giant, stuffed-to-the-brim artichoke – giving me a chance to indulge yet another time.

A stuffed-to-the-brim artichoke is my favourite movie snack. Perfect Friday night fun. The challenge for me *this* week, with Malta, is getting used to the idea of putting anchovies and olives in my artichokes. Because that's *exactly* what they do in Malta.

Note: Maltese typically pull the artichoke's leaves back and get the stuffing in every nook and cranny. Due to the fluffy nature of this stuffing, I had an easier time pulling the center wide open and putting it all there. The choice is yours!

Serves 4



Ingredients:

4 large artichokes, stems trimmed and lower, scraggly leaves plucked off
 3 cups coarsely crumbled bread (sourdough, if possible)
 3 anchovy fillets, chopped finely
 3 cloves of garlic, crushed
 3 green olives, chopped (capers is another common addition)
 1/3 cup chopped parsley
 salt & pepper
 Olive oil, as needed

Method:

Pop open a can of anchovies and breathe in deeply. It's fish. It's salt. It's oil.

I think I can get used to this. (I think I can, I think I can)

Now mince up those anchovies, some olives (or capers) and toss together with the breadcrumbs, garlic, parsley, salt, pepper and olive oil. Add enough olive oil to get the stuffing to bind together. Give it a taste. Add more seasonings, if needed. Now, prepare the beautiful, green artichokes. Start by trimming the stem and removing the scraggly leaves at the base of the artichoke. Next, trim the top, thereby removing many of the sharp, prickly points.

Pry the artichoke leaves open and stuff. Place in a large pot over happily simmering water.

Cover and steam for 45 minutes-1 hour, depending on size of the artichokes.

Enjoy with great gusto!

Keeping the Maltese culture in San Francisco alive

Albert Galea Times of Malta



sitting some 15 miles south of San Francisco, Millbrae is in many ways a typical American suburban town. However, there are hints of things which set it apart from other such towns; subtle hints such as small stickers of flags and plaques indicating the origin of family names.

Most striking, and perhaps even most out of place however, is a large piece of rock. Adorned with intricately carved patterns and sitting outside the Town Hall, the rock is accompanied by a plaque

which explains that it was once part of the Mosta parish church, some 6,700 miles away.

Millbrae is in fact paired with Mosta – they are sister cities. This owes to the fact that among its 21,000 or so strong population, Millbrae is home to a significant community of Maltese emigrants – a community which is also pockmarked across nearby San Bruno and the marvelous city of San Francisco. Tucked away just off the main road which passes through Millbrae is an average looking small office block, no more than two storeys, and with signs and service adverts leaning against the full length glass panel that runs across its side. Again, standing out from these is the seal of the Republic of Malta. However, it is not until one enters the building, walks down the main, wood-lined hallway and enters one of the office doors that they find out the reason for this seal's presence.

Indeed, nested at the back of the office of the Millbrae Chamber of Commerce is a small room. "You are now on Maltese territory", Louis Vella says with a smile as he takes his seat behind his desk and under a large, handmade wooden Maltese seal – one of only five ever made.

Despite being halfway across the globe from Malta, Vella isn't technically wrong – his office is one of 13 Honorary Consulates of Malta in the United States, and he is the Honorary Consul for San Francisco and most of the state of California.

His job is essentially to be the bridge between the community in the area and the Maltese government. He can sign off on the power of attorney for a person, help them with renewing or acquiring a Maltese passport, or with acquiring dual citizenship, while also representing the community or even the embassy – which is based six-hours away in Washington DC – in certain matters.

However, where does the Maltese presence in California originate from? It is a well known fact that Malta's emigration history is one which spans across many years and many parts of the globe. California is perhaps one of the more far-flung destinations, but in spite of its location, it has played home to Maltese for over 150 years to the 1850s.

The American West was, back then, something of a lawless state when compared to the continent's east coast. Anybody who dared to venture past the city of St. Louis in Missouri was entering practically lawless territory. However, in the 1850s gold was found in the Californian Mountains, giving rise to the gold rush.

Although there is no physical documentation of them, a number of Maltese were among the thousands who flocked to California in the hope of getting rich off of the gold, Vella explains when asked about the origins of the Maltese community in the state.

Documented evidence however shows that there was definitely a Maltese presence in San Francisco by the end of the nineteenth century, and they were present in the city when a third of it was leveled in the famous earthquake of 1906, Vella explained. The city however recovered, and in 1914 and 1915 the World Expo took place in San Francisco showing the Bay Area was open for business.

In that period there was a thriving Maltese community which was mainly based close to the city's port, Vella explains before adding that they had a linguistic advantage; they may not have had fantastic knowledge of English, but at least it was not a totally foreign language to them like it would be to an Italian or Chinese migrant.

In conjunction with San Francisco's revival, the Maltese Protective Society was founded in 1913. "It was brilliant", Vella says; "In a time when there was a lot of work but with a very low level of safety, meaning

that a lot of people got hurt or killed on the job, the society would raise money and step in to help those families whose breadwinner could not work anymore”.

In essence, the Maltese already had a social security system before the actual social security system was even created, Vella says. The Protective Society became the Maltese-American Social Club in November 1929, just over 90 years ago, and it became a one-stop shop for the Maltese community; one could find a job, a partner, a church close by, and everything else that may have been needed through the club, Vella explains. “It was a thriving community”, he says.

The influx of Maltese migrants came in the years that followed the Second World War, Vella said, however as other destinations such as Australia and Canada began to open up to Maltese, owing to them being in the Commonwealth, immigration from Malta to the States started to decrease earlier than it did to other destinations.

In spite of this, there are still a number of Maltese youths coming to San Francisco, primarily to work in the IT industry, Vella says, although he notes that this is not something of a renewed influx.

The Maltese-American Social Club is not the only club in the area; today the Maltese Heritage Association, the Maltese Historical Society, the Sister City Commission, and the St. Elizabeth Maltese Society all exist and are supported by the consulate. The Maltese Cross Foundation is another group; it gives out a grant of \$4000 every year to children of Maltese descent in order to aid them in their studies. Keeping Maltese culture alive however has not been easy, Vella says. “There was always a certain nucleus of people which keep it alive, but what they do is done by themselves and only themselves – the help actually coming from Malta is very minimal”, he continues before noting that nothing in terms of literature or filmography had ever come from Malta meaning that people had to create things based on their memories of the island.

The club had started to organize activities such as parades and exhibitions, but this perhaps did not take into account the collective feeling towards Malta that the bulk of those emigrating to San Francisco (and elsewhere) had.

“The people who came here after the war didn’t actually have nice memories of Malta. They came from a poor country with no infrastructure and no work, and they wanted to distance themselves from it”, Vella explains.

For instance, he says, these families imposed on their children to speak only in English, with the idea here being that they were now in America and must assimilate with their new home.

Most of those who emigrated after the war hailed from the western side of Malta – from then agricultural villages such as Mosta, Mgarr, Rabat, and Mellieha. This meant, Vella explains, that the traditions they brought with them were largely religious.

The population of first generation migrants is however ageing – one gentleman, Joe Chetcuti, recently turned 100 – but Vella has seen that their grandchildren are developing a fascination with Malta.

The second generation of Maltese in America are those who were assimilated into the American way of life by their parents, so they have been somewhat cut off from Malta, Vella explains. It is however their children who, by harnessing technology, are discovering the origins of their parents and grandparents and developing a fascination with Malta.

“We could write a book about this because it is a phenomenon”, Vella says.

Aside from this fascination with their roots, these youngsters also have a strong desire for a Maltese passport, Vella says before explaining that this is because of the amount of doors it will open across the pond in Europe.

“The passport is a very strong link in a chain which connects the person to Malta. It ties them to Malta forever. When one of these youngsters stumbles onto something big where they have the chance to invest, that connection can bring investment to the islands and open the doors for their children and grandchildren and those of others”, he says.

One of the highlights of the yearly calendar for the Maltese community is Malta Day which takes place on 21st September – coinciding with Malta’s Independence Day. This is a day dedicated solely to Malta; the Maltese flag is raised at City Hall while trips into the wine country accompanied by explanations of Maltese history are also organized. A reception which attracts a significant crowd – over 200 people and

even double that when a special guest, such as the Prime Minister, is in attendance, also forms part of the celebrations.

“The impetus behind this is that while people here cannot become Maltese, their roots are Maltese and we want them to know where they are coming from and teach them what Maltese culture is about”, Vella explains.

“Through Malta Day we try to teach people where they are coming from, and make them proud of being Maltese”, he continues.

The Maltese community is also invited to take part in the annual Columbus Day Parade by the Italian community, and they do so in front of over 100,000 people.

This is where, Vella laments, help from an authority such as the Malta Tourism Authority (MTA) can come in handy; “if even one couple goes to Malta as a result of the promotion in such an event, then the money spent is injected back into the economy, but there isn’t the contact unfortunately”.

This is a point which Vella expands upon when asked what he would like to see in the future in terms of support for the Maltese community in San Francisco.

“We would like to see support from entities such as the MTA or Heritage Malta – maybe in terms of finances but also in terms of sending a performer to the area from Malta”, he says. He laments that Maltese performers are generally sent to places such as Toronto or New York on the East Coast, but never reach San Francisco on the West Coast.

It is not the case, he says as he recalls a recent example to back his assertion; “last March, for the first time, we managed to bring over the play The Star of Strait Street and to prove that there was the interest, we booked a large auditorium for it – in spite of the fears of the embassy that we would not manage to fill it”, he says.

“The auditorium was packed; over 500 people came. The actors were astonished – they said it was the biggest audience they had ever performed the play to...and they’ve performed in Australia, Canada, and the UK!”

“This shows that there truly is a thirst for these things. But how long can this thirst last if there isn’t any help? The wheel sometimes needs an injection to help it spin further, and if it comes from Malta, it will be all the better”, he says.

“When it comes to America, there is still that certain opinion that those who have left Malta and came here are not Maltese anymore. We are not emigrants – we are Maltese who simply live elsewhere”, he says. “It took a while for people to get used to that phenomenon; until Malta entered the EU and more Maltese moved to Europe. Since they’re close enough though, that’s fine – for us, who are further, the attitude isn’t the same”, he laments.

“Should distance separate us from Malta? No. If I am Maltese and living abroad – be it in Luxembourg or in San Francisco – I am still Maltese”.

We thank all those who assisted us in making THE MALTESE JOURNAL great. We need your patronage in 2020 to continue with our mission to reach and connect all members of the Maltese community scattered around the world





Malta illustrated

Stephanie Fsadni

Malta-based Italian illustrator Magda Azab. Right: What's a Town Without its Band Club?

The Maltese islands have drawn many foreign artists over the centuries and still capture the imagination of many. Some visit briefly, others are spending longer periods of time here during artist-in-residence programmes, while a growing number are moving to Malta and Gozo for good.

One of these is Italian freelance illustrator Magda Azab, who decided to set up shop here four years ago. Her colourful and bright artworks, made of graphic elements, geometrical shapes and textures and replete with visual metaphors, are instantly recognisable.

She works with a wide range of projects, from editorial illustrations to branding and clothing patterns. Her clients include Mondadori, The Daily Telegraph, La Stampa and Endless Vacation Magazine. Ms Azab has slowly but surely made a name for herself even locally and her most recent collection reflects her love for the island.

"Malta is completely different from my hometown," says Ms Azab, who is of Egyptian origin but grew up in a small town near Milan, Italy.

"I love everything authentic, simple and characteristic. There's something here that sends me back in time. I love how traditions and modernity coexist," she notes.

Titled Ciao Għalikom, the series depicts elements, moments and details which characterise Malta and which make daily life on the island "so special" for the artist. These factors include anything from folklore and traditions to the island's flora and fauna, shops and architecture, to the different seasons. *There's something here that sends me back in time. I love how traditions and modernity coexist* "Every artwork is related to my experience of these islands, simple moments or elements I adore," she points out.

Spring and summer are her favourite seasons and they feature prominently in the series, especially summer, the festa season. Among other illustrations in her collection, one finds band clubs playing, fireworks and feast decorations.

She admits that some village decorations never cease to amaze her.

"I'm always impressed by the extreme care with which some decorations are made, for example, how wooden band stands look exactly like marble," Ms Azab says.

She is also amused by how locals communicate with their neighbours or passers-by from their window and she likes how they decorate these apertures on different annual festivities.

People are a huge source of inspiration for her and this collection features quite a few, such as a quirky bigilla vendor.

Ms Azab started working on Ciao Għalikom a year ago, when she was approached by the people behind Solo Vinyl & Books in Msida to host a solo exhibition.

"Regarding the theme, I had no doubt about it. I wanted to dedicate a series of works to what I have been calling my second home for ages now, so I thought this was the perfect opportunity," she enthuses.

Asked about the project's title, the artist says that it was one of the first phrases she heard and recognised soon after landing in Malta.

"I was excited and amused to hear two familiar words. That was one of the first little things and moments that made me happy and I wanted to celebrate it," she says.

"'Ciao' derives from Italian and 'għalikom' from Arabic... they perfectly combine my origins. It seemed to me the perfect expression to symbolise my link and view of the islands."

Ms Azab's collection was on display at Solo Vinyl & Books at 92, Bordin Street, Msida on December 23. All artworks are on sale in three different formats, as an A3 poster, A6 postcards or as part of a 2020 wall calendar. For more information about the artist, visit <http://magdaazab.it/>.



The Queen, then Princess Elizabeth, talking to a Maltese lady wearing the Ghonnella at Bigi Naval Hospital in Malta on New Year's Eve 1949.

Photo: Frank Attard

in addition to covering the body, another main purpose was to provide shelter from the intense Maltese sun, while capturing cool breezes and protection from rain and winds.

Made of predominantly black rich silk or cotton, the headwear features an arch shape framing the top of the head, with loose material draped either side, falling to mid-calf length, to be clasped in the hand. The arch is formed by having cardboard, cane or even whalebone stitched inside. From its introduction until the mid-20th century this was common wear among elderly spinsters and members of the religious Christian sect '*Il-Muzew*' as formal Sunday wear for female churchgoers. Despite its former popularity, the headwear also had its disadvantages. Women wearing *ghonnella* had their sight restricted and during high winds they were particularly difficult to wear as the arch caught the wind and the loose sides had to be held tightly with both hands to keep them in place. Following its demise during World War II, today it is very rare to see ladies wearing this headdress but is still considered part of the island's traditional costumes.

During later years, remaining in dark colours, the headdress became more common, with women taking to wearing these during everyday duties. Brides took to wearing white *ghonnella*, while it is alleged that peasants were sometimes seen wearing green. There are many theories behind the origin of this garment and today the truth remains unclear. Stories include that it originated from a long skirt that was often thrown above the head to help provide shade, while some historians believe it was influenced by both Italian and Sicilian mourning rituals of the time and introduced to the island of Malta during the reign of the Knights of St John. There is also the belief that it could possibly be an adapted version of the Spanish *mantilla*.

Although no longer spotted on the streets of Malta as daily wear, the *ghonnella* still lives on in Malta and Gozo. Souvenir shops boast dolls dressed in the traditional wear, galleries hold Maltese paintings of street scenes depicting the headdress in everyday life and decorative *ghonnella* often comes to life as part of the wonderful costumes during feasts, re-enactments and carnivals taking place in village to village across Malta and Gozo all year long.

Ghonnella: Malta's Traditional Headdress

Nicola Collins

Sometimes referred to as *Faldetta*, *Ghonnella*, a traditional Maltese headdress, is becoming something of a rarity to spot across the island. Here's a closer look at the *ghonnella* and its history up to the present day.

Dating back to the 16th century, during the time of the knights, women from the more well-to-do families adorned *ghonnielen* (pl.) in both white and bright colours. As a symbol of their wealth, the *ghonnella* was seen as appropriate dress as it covered the majority of the body. At a time when only the face of a lady should be seen, it was also often accompanied by a huge fan. Bearing a slight resemblance to the Turkish *charshaf*, the *ghonnella* is unique to both Malta and sister island of Gozo. In



AN UNFORGETTABLE GOZITAN POET

Mary Meilak (9 August 1905 – 1 January 1975) is one of the few Maltese women poets. Born in Victoria, Gozo in 1905, she was the daughter of Ġorg and Mananni Meilak. She received her education at Central School in Gozo. For seventeen years she worked in government offices but in 1942, she became a teacher, retiring twenty years later. Meilak wrote her first poem, *Faxx Nemel*, when she was 25 years old, in 1930. In 1945, she published her first collection of poems. She also published collections of essays, three novels, two operas and some operetti. She was a contemporary of Gan Anton Vassallo, Dwardu Cachia, Dun Karm, Anastasio Cuschieri, Ninu Cremona, Guze Delia, Gorg Zammit, Gorg Pisani, and Anton Buttigieg. Meilak died in 1975. On the centenary of her birth, in 2015, a memorial was erected in her honour in Victoria, Gozo.

Meaning of some Maltese Surnames



Chucky Bartolo

The deep, religious meaning of many Maltese first names is quite easily identified, but where exactly did our surnames come from? From Abela to Zammit Malta has quite the variety (bar the Borgs) and our friends **over at Kelma Kelma** have decided to help clear the air about a few of them.

- 1. PSAILA** Derived from the word *bsajla*, your surname basically means **onion**. Time to become bffs with a Theuma...
- 2. THEUMA** Most likely derived from the Arabic *al-tawmi* - aka someone who grows **garlic** in their fields. It could also be derived from the word *tawm* meaning **twins**.
- 3. CAMILLERI** We're not gonna beat around the bush with this one - your surname means **camel driver**.
- 4. VELLA** Hey Vellas, you lucked out - your surname comes from bella i.e. **beautiful**.
- 5. FARRUGIA** Another surname of Arabic origins, Farrugia comes from al-farrudj, which sounds fancy, but really means **chicken feeder**.
- 6. BORG** Ah, the famous borg. Still occasionally used in colloquial terms, Borg means a **pile of rocks**. The original Arabic definition for *burdj* was a **small, rocky tower**. (No, it has nothin' to do with the Northerner's *Borg* with a hard 'g').
- 7. MICALLEF** Does your Micallef friend always have to have the final say? It may be in their blood as their surname literally means **judge**.
- 8. SCERRI** The multiple spellings of Scerri vs Xerri are only the tip of the iceberg. This surname could have descended from the Sicilian *sciarra* meaning **a fight** or from Arabic's *sharra* meaning **cruel**. There's also theories about it being *shirra* meaning **anger**. Either way, it's not looking good Scerris.
- 9. CALLEJA** You're either a descendant of the *kalleyias*, making you a **farmer**, or from the *kallas* meaning **good and sweet**. Alternatively, you're both, making you a cute farmer.
- 10. BUHAGIAR** Congrats! You're the proud **father of a bunch of rocks** - just combine *abu* (Arabic for father) and *hadjar* (rocks).
- 11. Zahra** You're either **shiny**, or the beautiful **white blossom of an orange tree**. Either way, you're lucky, mate. (check out poor Scerri if you don't believe us).
- 12. ZERAFA** You'd better hope you're a tall Zerafa or the irony of your surname will never wash away. *Zarafah* means **giraffe**. There is some hope, it may have come from *zarifa*, meaning **graceful**.
- 13. AGIUS** From the Arabic *adjuz*, we won't beat around the bush with this explanation since you don't have much time left - Agius basically means you're old AF.
- 14. CACHIA** Cut those Cachias out of your life, originating from the nickname *kakias*, their name literally means bad and cruel-spirited.

15. XUEREB Always down for a good time, Xuerebs are either named after impressive moustaches or after their alcoholism. Either way, you're gonna want to invite a Xuereb to a party.

16. GAUCI Hailing from across the pond, the Guacis are *Ghawdxin...* aka from Gozo.

17. CHETCUTI Probably making the best of friends to Farrugias (the chicken feeders), Chetcutis are named after new-born chicks, *katkut*.

18. AZZOPARDI The *azzo* part means noble, the *pardi* part is up for debate. You're either named after a noble beard, or a noble leopard. Really, there's no losers here.

19. FALZON Keep your friends close, and your Falzons closer. Originating from Italy, a Falzon is a false person, or someone who enjoys lying.

Archbishop welcomes Serbian children facing eviction for Christmas Mass



Gives each of the children a baby Jesus

Archbishop Charles Scicluna presenting a Baby Jesus to one of the children. Photo: Curia - church.mt/photos

Serbian children whose parents live and work in Malta, including 22 facing eviction, attended Christmas Day's 11am Mass at St John's Co-Cathedral in Valletta.

Mass was celebrated by Archbishop Charles Scicluna who greeted them and gave them all a Baby Jesus at the end of

Mass. Last week, 17 non-EU families received letters from Identity Malta informing them that applications for residence permits for their children had been refused on the basis that they did not satisfy the financial requirements of a policy which required them to earn €19,000 and an additional €3,800 for each dependent.

Despite the public uproar that followed, the authorities defended their policy claiming they were taking a more lenient approach to means testing and adding that anyone failing that was at risk of living beneath the poverty line. In his homily, Archbishop Scicluna quoted the scriptures where they say that "whatever you do to the least of my brothers and sisters, you have done that to me. The Lord, he said, was one with people who were in need. "What will our reaction be? What will our answer be? If we receive them, we receive him." The fate of the minors remains unclear.



CHRISTMAS AT THE GUILD

Christmas was celebrated at the Maltese Cultural Centre, Beverley, South Australia, the Guild on Sunday 15th of December with a scrumptious lunch prepared by European Catering. The hall was filled with Christmas cheer and decked out in bright festive tinsel thanks to committee members and volunteers. About 110 members gathered together to share the joyous spirit of Christmas and spend time together and reflect on the year.



Martin Pace, an amazing entertainer/impersonator with a huge voice gave an extraordinary tribute to the legend Elvis Presley and wowed everyone by his performance.

Hampers filled with Christmas goodies and donated by Drakes Fulham and some of our very generous members were also raffled. Our special guest was Frank Scicluna, the Honorary Consul for Malta. A big thank you goes out to the hard working committee and volunteers for making this function such a success.
Margaret Abela Secretary

Photo1: Gloria and her siblings watch planes at the runway's end during their Sunday walk in Siġġiewi with their father. Their mother would stay at home to knit.

Photo 2: Gloria Callus (centre) and her brothers at Għar Lapsi. Their father would take them to Lapsi on the less hectic weekdays, preparing ħobż biż-żejt for the trip and buying them Coke and ice cream at the beach. Siġġiewi c. 1962.

Photo 3: Gloria Callus (left) and her brothers outside their Siġġiewi home, with their cousins on the latter's annual visit from Manchester as well as Noddy the pet dog. The seated lady at the back was their Nanna Maria.

Photo 4: Murtali (fireworks) on display. Siġġiewi c. 1954.

Photo 5: Guests look on at the wedding of Gloria Callus, held in the Siġġiewi church on 21st June 1979. The gentleman on the left was Gloria's uncle, known as Barba Gian; Barba was a common nickname for uncles among villages such as Siġġiewi and Żurrieq.

MAGNA ZMIEN COLLECTION



**GLORIA CALLUS COLLECTION
SIĠĠIEWI MAY 9, 2018 IMAGES**



NOSTALGIA



One of the more prominent of organizations sponsored by the Maltese American Benevolent Society was it's soccer clubs. For many young immigrants it was a taste of home in a foreign land. Pictured here is Sam Scerri (left) and Charles (Germanis) DeMarco (right) prior to a game at a field in Detroit, Michigan in 1948.



John Mifsud is pictured here in his US Army uniform during the Korean War. John's parents came to Detroit in the 1920s He was born in Detroit. Too young to participate in World War II, John volunteered for the Army during the Korean War and served overseas.

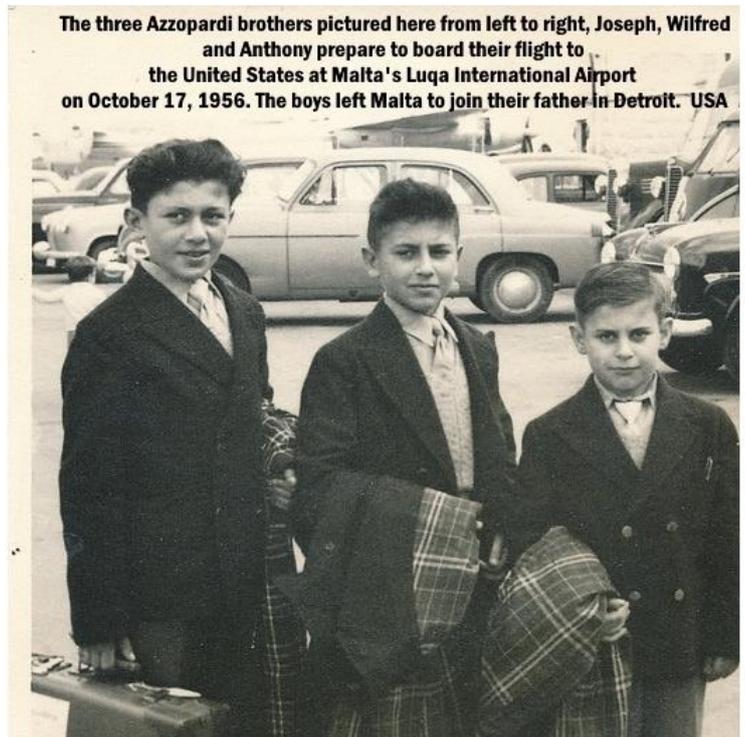
This photograph was donated digitally in 2013 by Rose Mifsud, John's wife.



DEMARCO FAMILY

Charles (Germanis) DeMarco is pictured here with his wife, Gelarda and daughter, Diane in front of their car and house on Abbott Street in Corktown during the mid-1950s.

Charles first emigrated to Windsor, Ontario in 1948 before returning to Malta in 1950. He returned later that year with his wife Gelarda and the family settled in the Corktown neighborhood of Detroit.



The three Azzopardi brothers pictured here from left to right, Joseph, Wilfred and Anthony prepare to board their flight to the United States at Malta's Luqa International Airport on October 17, 1956. The boys left Malta to join their father in Detroit. USA



Photo by Silvio John Farrugia

MARK DONEO

Irċevejt lid-direttur tal-produzzjonijiet tal-films Malti, is-Sur Mark Doneo. Bil-għajnuna tal-Konsolat Malti ġewwa Toronto, is-Sur Doneo irnexxielu jassigura l-wiri tal-film li iproduċa mat-tim tiegħu, bl-isem “Hemm Dar il-Qala” bl-Ingliż “The Weeping House of Qala”, fil-European Union Film Festival.

Semmejti li nemmen ħafna fl-esportazzjoni tal-prodott Malti barra minn xtutna inkluż il-kultura Maltija permezz ta’ produzzjonijiet audioviżivi Maltin.

Dan jista’ jiġi innutat kif fl-aħħar snin il-produzzjonijiet Maltin tejbu l-livell u l-kwalita’ tagħhom u għaldaqstant

jistgħu ifittxu udjenza ferm iżjed wiesgħa, ta’ persuni minn madwar id-dinja li jsibu produzzjonijiet indipendenti bħala attrazzjoni.

Ġejt ipprezentajt b’poster u programm k commemorattiv tal-wirja ta’ dan il-film f’Toronto, mill-Konslu Ġenerali Malti għal Kanada is-Sur Raymond Xerri.

Mark Anthony Doneo (born 10 December 1967) is an Australian born Maltese actor and screenwriter. In his adoptive country, Malta, Doneo is known for his various acting roles and for directing self-penned TV drama series such as, Shelly Rayner (1999-2001), L-Ispettur Lowell (2002-2003), Id-Dar tas-Soru (2004), Solitaire (2005) and Miriana Coljero’ (2007) that have since gained cult status in the local television community. Doneo has more recently gained recognition for his role as the titular burglar in his feature film debut Silhouette (2013) based on his own Solitaire TV series, of which he also penned, produced and directed and also for his latest feature film, Hemm Dar il-Qala (The Weeping House of Qala, 2018).

