



Maltese e-Newsletter

The Journal of the Maltese Diaspora



Editor: Frank L Scicluna OAM MQR JP

Email: maltesejournal@gmail.com

THE QUEEN AND THE PRESIDENT



ROGER SCANURRA
flamenco guitarist
CANADA



www.visitmalta.com

Malta

Gozo & Comino

BEYOND GALLIPOLI REUNION

Background shows the Australian Hall at Pembroke, Malta with the Head of Navy SA Commander Alistair Cooper with the Legion cadets

Australian Hall built in 1915, located in Malta. Used for the wounded to recover from their injuries. Australian Coat of Arms displayed on the building



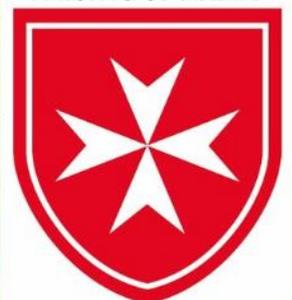
29 February 2020
Adelaide
South Australia



WHAT IS HAPPENING TO AUSTRALIA HALL?



KNIGHTS OF MALTA





Government launches website to keep public informed on Coronavirus

The Maltese government has launched a website to keep the public informed on the Coronavirus.

The latest post reads that public health authorities held an online teleconference with Dr. Gauden Galea, a Maltese Public Health specialist working and WHO Representative for China.

"He gave a brief overview of the efforts being made in China to contain COVID-19. Thanks to significant prevention and containment efforts, China has managed to slow down the number of new infections and has also significantly increased its capacity to care for the sick, improving the initially high fatality rates." The public health authorities also discussed with Dr. Galea the measures being implemented in Malta from the outset, to prevent the virus from spreading in Malta. **Website address:** <https://covid19malta.info/>

President Vella meets Queen Elizabeth II

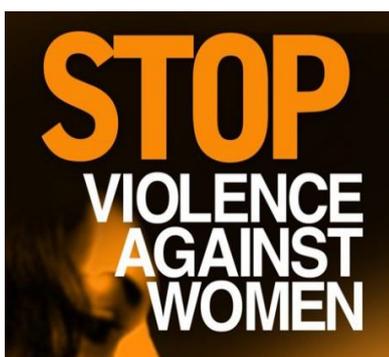


President Dr George Vella, accompanied by his wife, today met Queen Elizabeth II at Buckingham Palace.

An official statement said the Queen expressed great interest in Malta developments and spoke of the memories of her visits to Malta.

The President and Ms Vella are currently in London on an official four-day visit.

Earlier the President had also met the Prince of Wales, Prince Charles, during which Commonwealth themes were discussed.



Today, the European Commission presented its strategy for equality between women and men in Europe. While the EU is a global leader in gender equality and has made significant progress in the last decades, gender-based violence and stereotypes continue to persist: one in three women in the EU was subject to physical and/or sexual violence. Even though more women graduate from universities, they earn on average 16% less than men do and only 8% of CEO's of the EU's largest companies are women.

CMLA AND THE CONVENTION 2020

THE COUNCIL FOR MALTESE LIVING ABROAD is considered as the official vehicle carrying ideas that promote the rights and interests outside Malta, with a view that, where possible, to be implemented by the Central Government. We believe in the idea of a global Malta in a globalised world, as the way to look at the Maltese diaspora in the coming years. There is no **us and them, our interests and theirs**, but a common interest to boost Malta's uniqueness.

CONVENTION OF MALTESE LIVING ABROAD. As you must have read in this journal it was announced by the Minister of Foreign Affairs that in October 2020 a convention for the Maltese living abroad will be held in Malta. The chosen theme is *'Keeping Connected'* and it will be largely devoted to workshops composed of Maltese who live abroad with the aim to discuss and submit new ideas. Maltese communities and individuals are invited to attend.

THE TEACHING OF THE MALTESE LANGUAGE will soon be available online through the creation of an online digital platform, a project which is being carried out through the Ministry for Education and Employment which has now passed into the tender preparation phase.

THE LAUNCH OF REGIONAL COMMITTEES AND OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS. These included the review of Act XX of 2011 to regulate the Council; changing culture programs; registration of property which the Maltese have lives outside the Maltese Islands; the subtitles Maltese productions; matters relating to Maltese identity, ways how to better engage with Maltese Diaspora. So far there was an increase in the registration of Maltese living abroad with the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, which is done through the submission of Form D, a form which is available on the Ministry's website. This is a service offered by the consular directorate where through this information, the directorate can assist better these individuals in case of need and the establishment of Regional Committees (*as yet we haven't received any solid information about the constitution of these committees*).

WE ACKNOWLEDGED THE VALUABLE WORK being done by the Council OF Maltese Living Abroad and the Directorate responsible for Maltese Living Abroad, which from this year has been amalgamated within a Directorate which also includes the Consular Services.

Hi Frank, thank you for all your interesting newsletters, and all your research to keep the newsletters going. I read them with interest, especially news from back home. Looking forward for many more informative newsletters.
Thanks again.
Yours sincerely
Dolores Muscat





AUSTRALIA
HALL
MUST
BE
SAVED

How Pembroke’s once-popular entertainment venue Australia Hall turned into a sad ruin



BEFORE



AFTER

The 104-year-old building was buzzing with life in the first half of the 20th century
Caroline Curmi

If you’ve ever taken a stroll through Pembroke, you might have spotted a once majestic (but now a roofless and decaying) building within the parameters of the town. Built between 1915 and 1916 by the Australian branch of the British Red Cross Services, it was aptly christened as Australia Hall. Its original purpose had been to entertain wounded soldiers from the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps recuperating in Malta during WWI.

Large and spacious, it could fit 2,000 people in its massive hall (which would sometimes double as a theatre) and even had its own library. Later, it was passed on to a section of the British government in charge of overseeing recreational space for its troops, with the hall being subsequently fitted with a projector and transformed into a cinema in 1921. It would serve as an entertainment hall right till the last days of the British retreat from Malta.

After the islands’ independence, the property passed on to the Maltese government and later to third parties, but it was never put back in operation. In 1996, Australia Hall was listed as a Grade

2 National Monument but by December 1998, it suffered a catastrophic fire that destroyed its roof. Although it was believed to have been caused by an arsonist, the case was never solved, and repairs were never effected. As such, it became a target for vandals and now graffiti cover some of its walls.

However, in 2016, the Australian High Commissioner got in contact with the building's current owners for a possible restoration. Estimated to run into millions of Euros if this were to be effected, no word has yet been issued regarding if, or when, this would take place, and whether it would be rendered accessible to the public.

Would you like to see this piece of local history restored to its former glory?



Att Penitenzjali f'Ta' Sannat mill-JP2

Kav Joe Attard – Rabat Ghawdex

Bħala parti mill-attivitajiet bi thejjija għall-100 sena mit-Twelid tal-Papa Gwanni Pawlu t-Tieni kif ukoll fl-okkażjoni tat-30 sena mindu dan il-Prelat Pollakk kien żar il-gzejjer Maltin, il-Fondazzjoni Papa Gwanni Pawlu t-Tieni, nhar il-Gimgha fil-għaxija, 28 ta' Frar, il-Fondazzjoni organizzat Att Penitenzjali fil-Knisja Parrokkjali Ta' Sannat bis-sehem tal-Junior College Youth Orchestra taħt id-direzzjoni ta Mro Manwel Pirota u bil-kolloborazzjoni shiħa tal-Parroċċa Ta' Sannat u l-Kunsill Lokali tal-istess raħal. Fetaħ is-serata l-Arċipriet tal-Parroċċa li ta' messaggħ għal dan iż-żmien qawwi tar-Randan u wara diversi qarrejja qraw poeziji dwar il-ħames taqsimiet tas-serata li kienu jinkludu il-Wiċċ qaddis ta' Kristu, l-Ecce Homo, Redemptor Noster, Mater Dolorosa, Cricifixus u L-Ewkaristija.

L-orkestra żagħżugħa daqget diversi xogħlijiet mifruxa mal-programm fosthom *Des Sauvages*, *1V Minuet ta' Johann Scherer*, *Sonata in G Minor ta' Benedetto Marcello*, *Kif qatt Nista'*, *Trio in E Minor*, *Jekk qatt ma Hassejt*, *Turcz ta' J.B. Lully*, *Intermezzo ta' George Bizet*, *Gymnopedie ta' Erik Satie*, *O Gesu' la titlaqnix*, *Quddiem Altarek u Nadurawk Ja Hobz tas-Sema*.

Fi tmiem is-serata li għaliha attendew ukoll membri tal-GRTA, il-Vigarju Generali tad-Djoċesi, Mons Tarcisio Camilleri ta' messaggħ għad-Randan u heġgeġ lil kulhadd biex jagħmlu tagħhom il-ħsebijiet sbieħ li nqraw waqt dan l-Att Penitenzjali u biex ir-Randan ikun għalina żmien ta' penitenza, maħfra u sagrafiċċj.

The Journal that has taken the Maltese living abroad by storm

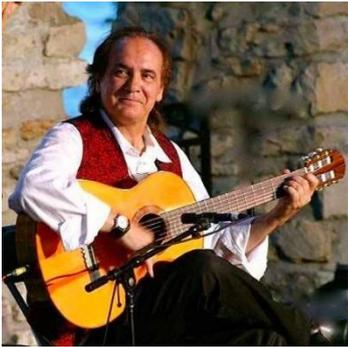


**Maltese participate in Toronto Historical Board's Heritage Fair 1983 at Fort York- Toronto
Mr. A Goggi, Miss M Pace, Mrs D Goggi, Mr. J Caruana, Mr. RS Cumbo and Mr Charles Cumbo
(Richard Cumbo of the Maltese Society of Toronto)**



**Fr. A Cauchi OSA (died 1943) parish priest of St. Paul the Apostle Maltese-Canadian Church Toronto
and a First Holy Communion Class of 1930s**

MALTESE – CANADIAN MEMORIES



FOLLOW MALTESE-CANADIAN ACHIEVERS

Flamenco guitarist and an exponent of 'nuevo flamenco'

Roger Scannura was born in the history drenched island of Malta at an early age mastered the flamenco guitar while in Spain. He is the founder of a Toronto based dance company, Ritmo Flamenco and has recorded many CDs of original flamenco music compassing both traditional and modern styles.

Roots is the company that has built an empire on marketing the image of Canada's great outdoors, in the form of stylish sportswear, homewares, and even a luxurious vacation lodge in British Columbia. Art director Roger Scannura is part of the creative team that has somehow brought beavers and log cabins into high urban style, even among people who have never even been to Canada. (Roots launched a Manhattan store in 1998.)

Mr. Scannura has a unique global perspective, having been educated in fine art, Gregorian chant, and Sicilian guitar music at the Franciscan monastery of St. Teresa. He is one of Canada's most renowned flamenco guitarists and is considered a leader of the Nuevo flamenco guitarists and is considered a leader of the Nuevo flamenco movement, music that blends the traditional music with newfangled jazz and Afro-Cuban rhythms. "Pure flamenco is very crude," says the musical innovator. "There are probably only five people in the world who plays pure flamenco." Mr. Scannura has recorded three CDs, Ritmo Flamenco, Saracen and most recently Medina





NEWS FROM THE MALTESE CANADIAN COMMUNITY

'The Journal of the Maltese Diaspora' is out and can be obtained by emailing maltesejournal@gmail.com to the editor Frank L. Scicluna or from the usual [Malta Info](#)

Stations at the Consulate General of the Republic of Malta to Canada in [Etobicoke](#), at St Paul The Apostle Church and Melita Soccer Club on [Dundas](#) and at the Malta Band.

MALTESE CANADIAN COMMUNITY NEWS



Meeting with Maltese-Canadian Youth Ambassador Jason Borg. Dr Raymond Xerri, Consul General of Malta to Canada had a courtesy call from Jason Borg, Maltese-Canadian Youth Ambassador, a title and task held for the second consecutive year.

On August 25, 2019, Mr Borg had met the President of the Republic of Malta, H.E. Dr George W. Vella at the San Anton Palace.

Dr Xerri and Mr Borg spoke about the importance to entice Maltese-Canadian youth to participate in Community life and events. Dr Xerri encouraged Maltese-Canadian youth to enroll and participate in the upcoming 5th Convention for Maltese Living Abroad due to be organised on 6-7 October 2020 in Malta to share their ideas and aspirations. Mr Borg is also the Youth Ministry Coordinator of the St Paul The Apostle Maltese-Canadian Parish in Malta Village, Toronto.

NORTH AMERICAN MALTESE COMMUNITY CUP 2020

MALTESE DOLPHINS



TORONTO TRIP MAY 22-25

DEPART: THE MALTESE CENTER
FRIDAY MAY 22
7 PM
Bus Ticket: \$150 per person
*valid passport required

Hotel: Hyatt Place Toronto/Mississauga

Per person \$185 Double
\$370 Single \$130 Triple
\$110 Quad

*prices are in \$US, subject to change with exchange rate fluctuations, include taxes & fees, early check-in on arrival & 2 nights, standard room

SCHEDULE

May 22 NYC→TOR
May 23 Dinner Dance
May 24 Dolphins vs Melita
May 25 TOR→NIAGARA→NYC

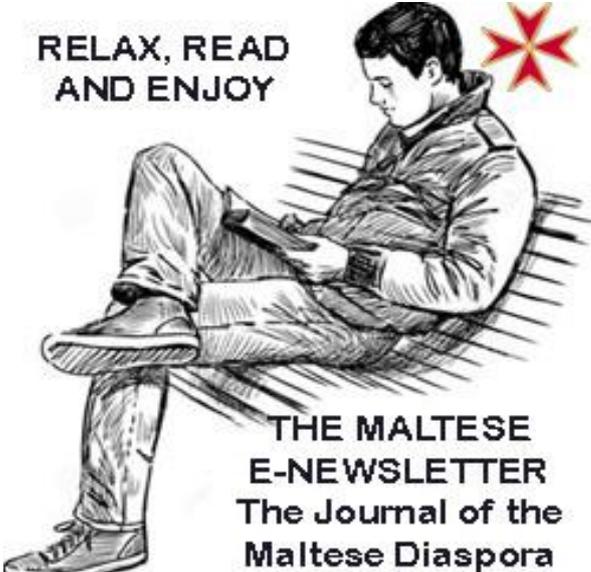
DEADLINE APRIL 10
FOR BOOKING CONTACT:
Eddie Debono 917-807-2874
Daniel Attard 646-556-5447

A bus ticket: refund will be issued if capacity is not met.
You are responsible for your travel documents & clearing customs






RELAX, READ AND ENJOY



THE MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER
The Journal of the Maltese Diaspora

MALTESE SENIOR CITIZENS ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

HARMONY DAY

FRIDAY 20 March 2020

At the progressive Hall
LeHunte Street Kilburn SA

Application for Renewal of a Maltese and Australian Passport

May I bring up once again the issue relating to the procedure involved in application for renewal of a Maltese passport, which most applicants find laborious, time-wasting, antiquated and practically Kafkaesque.

I would like to compare Maltese with Australian passport renewal applications to highlight the differences. I have just gone through the process of applying for both:

1. In the case of application for renewal of **AUSTRALIAN PASSPORT**,

- Obtain a form from the Post Office or online.
- Take a new photo (at the Post Office, or the Chemist down the road)
- Return the form, duly filled together with old passport to Post Office
- Asked to pick up the new passport in a week's time from Post office, or, if urgent ,(as was my case) one could go and pick up the new passport from their Central Office **the next day!**

2. In the case of application for **MALTESE PASSPORT**, the following was the procedure:

- obtain required Form by post
- full birth certificate
- Father/mothers' Birth certificate

- Parent's marriage certificate
- one's own marriage certificate
- 6-year letter confirming residency abroad (in Australia)

- For dual citizens:

Original certificate of Australian Citizenship

- Original passport

In addition, for a married woman, she would also require:

- husband's birth certificate
- marriage certificate

This is particularly galling since most applicants just cannot understand the need for supplying most of the information above, seeing that the procedure for obtaining the original passport should have required such information. Most of the above information should have been elicited before issuing the original passport and should not be required again for issuing a renewal passport.

It is requested that this procedure should be reviewed with a view to streamlining it, ensuring that only additional information is required for renewal of a passport and not the full gamut as required for an original passport application. A flyer explaining in detail why such new information is required should be distributed with the Application Form, to explain why such information is necessary.

It might also be pointed out that presumably most of the above information is not required by Identity Malta for non-Maltese citizens applying for Maltese passports. *Prof Maurice Gauci*



May I have an explanation why it takes over two years to process the Maltese Citizenship application after you apply and pay for it when you are entitled and eligible. George Pace

AN INVITATION

It is proposed to organise a Forum of Maltese -Australian published authors at some stage. The idea will be to have it in Malta in October / November this year. Before deciding on dates and format there has to be enough interest coming from prospective participants.

If you have written and published a work in Maltese or in English please send an email to <victorvella39@gmail.com.au>. to show your interest. Forms will be sent asking for your details. May as well mention that to participate you don't have to be bodily present for the occasion. You can make your presence felt by other means. Thank you. **Victor. V. Vella. M.A. (Sydney Univ)**

International collaboration between schools in Gozo and Israel

BY [GOZO NEWS](#)



The GLOBE Country Coordinator of Israel, Ms. Refaela Babish, together with the GLOBE Deputy Coordinator of Malta, Ms. Ramona Mercieca, coordinated a collaborative project of schools from their respective countries.

The organisers said that the students' love and enthusiasm about traditions and the significance of trees in their countries' cultures led to a full blown project.

This was demonstrated during an international video call on Tuesday which was organised between four schools.

Students from Gozo College Victoria Primary School, Victoria and Begin Elementary School, Dimona, Israel,

each sang a song about trees and nature in their own language, while students attending Gozo College Middle School, Victoria and Mosenson Youth Village High School, Hod Hasharon, Israel read a tree blessing in Maltese and Hebrew plus a translation in English, the communicating language. Two trees – a fig tree and an olive tree, symbolising peace, were planted on the school grounds of each of the schools at the end of the video call, in honour of this international friendship.

The organisers said that plaques in English and Hebrew, to commemorate the event, were placed next to the trees.

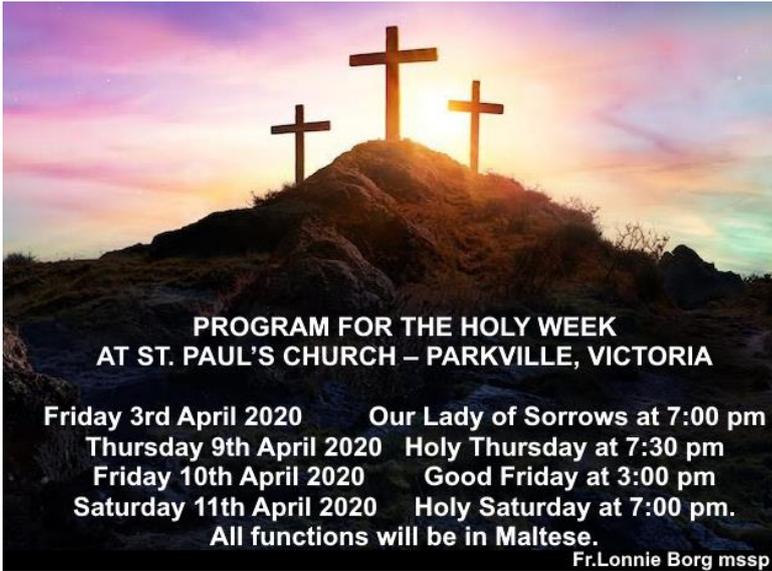
The collaboration between Gozo and Israel brought together many students, teachers and representatives from US Embassies and The GLOBE Programme.*

It provided a unique learning experience where students and teachers are not only contributing to the scientific discovery but they are being exposed to different cultures, languages and traditions.

Before the call on Tuesday, students attending Gozo College Middle School researched about Tu Bishvat, an ecological awareness day in Israel, and shared their knowledge with all students at school through presentations during the school's morning assemblies.

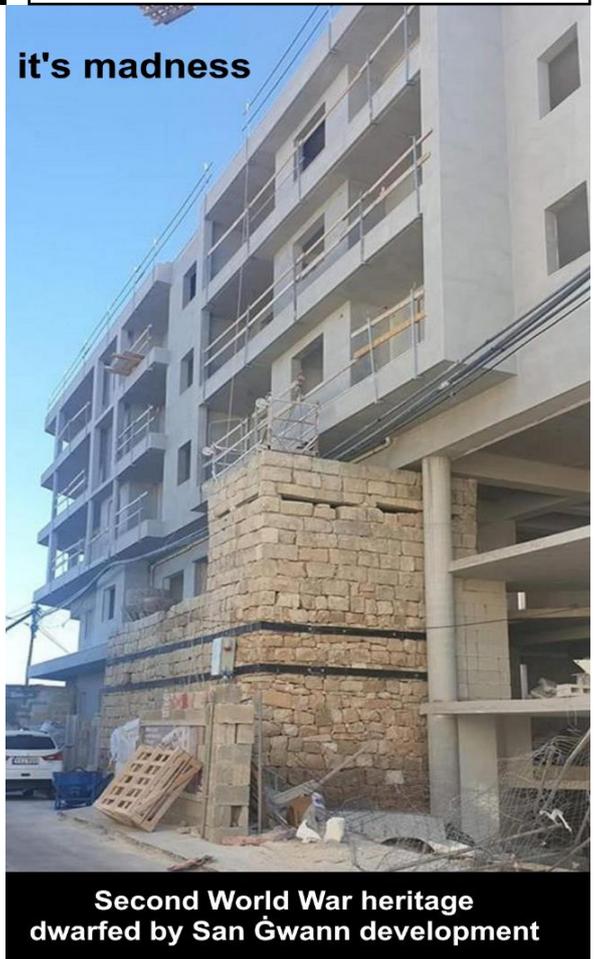
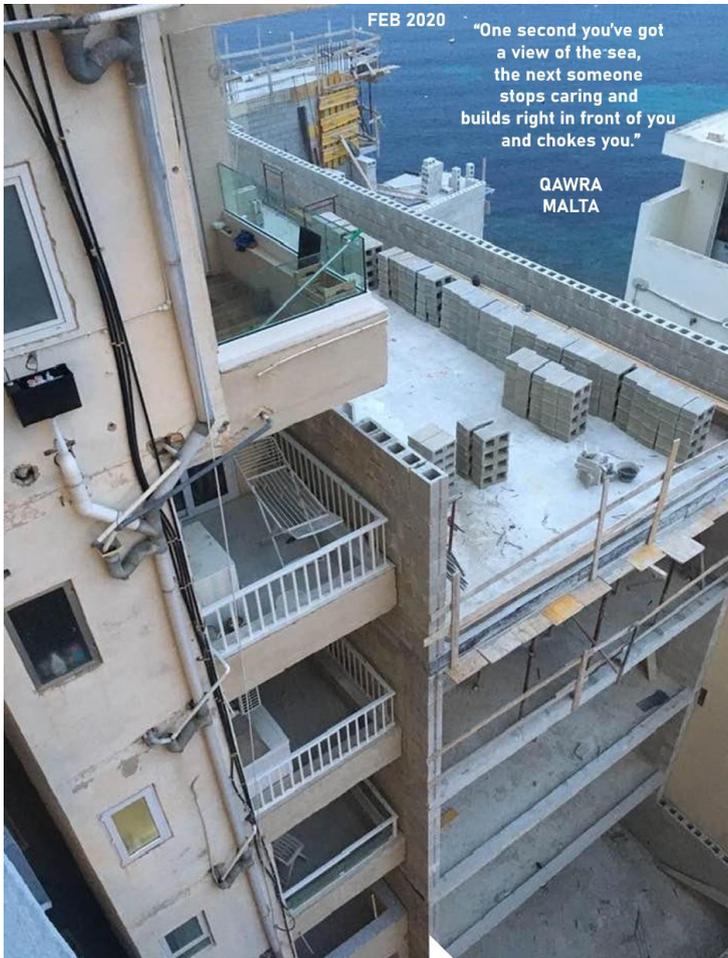
Coordinator Ms. Ramona Mercieca, explained that this collaboration raised awareness among the whole school communities about the importance of trees and set up an example through tree planting.





* The Global Learning and Observations to Benefit the Environment (GLOBE) Program is an international science and education program that provides students and the public worldwide with the opportunity to participate in data collection and the scientific process, and contribute meaningfully to our understanding of the Earth system and global environment.

Maltese e-Newsletter
The Journal that bridges the gap



Malta Has Been Letting Bad Construction Slide for way Too Long

By Johnathan Cilia <https://lovinmalta.com/>

A photo of a construction site in Qawra has stirred anger among Maltese people as the island tries to come to grips with the absolutely avoidable death of Miriam Pace.

In a photo which was taken last month but only went viral this morning, a new building's walls totally cover multiple storeys of balconies, turning what must have once been a view of the sea into a view of... well, grey concrete.

The building is built so near to the balconies, in fact, that the occupants could literally reach out and touch their new neighbours' home.

However, to make things even better, the first building is also riddled with illegalities, with everything from an outdoor flushing cistern to no safety rails on the lower block, placing the newer building in the right legally.

The image struck a chord with people, with people complaining about both buildings and generally finding the entire image emblematic of what is going wrong in Malta's construction industry.

"You think these guys are greedy?" said an occupant of the older building.

"One second you've got a view of the sea, the next someone stops caring and builds right in front of you and chokes you."

"How can it be?" one person asked. "Money talks, ħabib" was the reply.

Malta's construction industry has been put under the spotlight once again following the shocking death of 54-year-old Maltese mother of two Miriam Pace, who was pronounced dead last night after an eight-hour long search under the rubble of her collapsed home.

Two protests have since been called, people have been arrested and several platitudes have been said – but the fact remains that Malta's construction industry has gotten out of hands, and has been for a while. Four buildings have collapsed in the last 12 months alone – and those are just the ones we know about.

While Miriam may have been the first occupant to die inside her home as it suddenly collapsed around her due to reckless construction workers working in a nearby plot, she is far from the first person in recent months to die from the construction industry, with regular falls and injuries on construction sites leading to untimely deaths – usually of young, foreign workers.



Gozo's delicious fruit, vegetables, produce and traditional food on display

Mill-Għalqa Nhawru l-Borma – which was due to be held last Sunday at the Villa Rundle Gardens in Victoria, was postponed and is now due to take place on Sunday, the 26th of April.

This event is aimed at promoting greater recognition of local vegetables, fruits and other produce, with activities planned during the day to suit all ages. There will be no single-use plastic during the activity.

Visitors will be able to wonder around the beautiful gardens and visit the various stands, including a vegetable section direct from local farmers, who will also be on hand to give information on the fresh and healthy produce and its use in traditional recipes. There will also be a display of agricultural machinery.

Other attractions include a section with fresh Gozitan strawberries, with ideas for their use, such as in smoothies and milk shakes; a section with old coffee and mulled wine and a selection of Gozo wines; artisan products, in particular local honey, molasses and olive oil. Other local delicacies

available will be ravioli made with sheep's cheese, pepper cheeses and white cheeses for which Gozitan people are famous, other local cuisine such as meatballs made with beef and chicken and oven baked local potatoes, bragjoli, local potatoes and local Maltese sausage.

Different children's games will be held around the garden with the aim of encouraging children to be active, as well as eat good, healthy food. Other stands at the Villa Rundle will include the local Brownies and Scout Groups and Puttinu Cares.

Entertainment in the morning from 10am to 1pm will be modern songs and from 1pm to 3pm songs with school children led by Marlene Bartolo. Then from 3pm until 6pm Ta' Verna Folk Band will close the event. This special event is taking place on Sunday, the 26th of April, from 10.00am until 6pm at the Villa Rundle Gardens, Victoria, Gozo.

ANOTHER 12,000 CARS JOIN THE TRAFFIC ON MALTA'S ROADS



The number of cars, vans and lorries on Malta's roads has reached a new record high.

New figures show that 397,508 vehicles were registered in Malta by the end of last year, an increase of 12,000 compared to 2018.

The National Office of Statistics in Valletta said 77% were passenger cars, 18% were commercial vehicles and 8% were motorcycles.

Buses and minibuses amounted to less than 1%.

During the last three months of 2019, the number of vehicles

on Malta's roads rose by an average of 28 a day.

Belt il-Beltin

28 March, 12:00 - 17:00 29 March, 10:00 - 14:00
St George's Square & Around Valletta

The festival 'Belt il-Beltin' (the City of Valletta Citizens), among other items, will commemorate when the first stone was laid for the building of Valletta by Grandmaster Jean de Parisot de La Vallette on 28th March, 1566. The Chairman of the Valletta Cultural Agency, Jason Micallef, said the festival will celebrate Valletta's culture with activities consisting of games and exhibitions in Pjazza San Ġorġ with the participation of Valletta associations.

The festival will also include the two Valletta bands paying band marches in the major roads. A two-day festival celebrating the heritage of Valletta's historic organisations with fun activities, competitions, games and special tours to their community spaces in the city. Free entrance. *This event is created by Dr Victor Jacono, Edward Bonello & VCA and produced by VCA in collaboration with Valletta Local Council.*



Western Australia Census 2018 - Estimated Resident Population
for Western Australia is 2,595,192, with a population density of 0.01 persons
per hectare and land area of 253,151,440 hectares



TWANNIE AQUILINA

maqtul
fit-23 ta' Awissu 1960
R. I. P.



Giga Camilleri who was found guilty of her son's murder and sentenced to death (later turned into life imprisonment) under heavy police escort during her trial. Photo: Frank Attard

The murder of the century: 60 years since the murder of Twannie Aquilina

Albert Galea

As the sun set over Malta on 23 August 1960, it seemed like any other typical warm summer's day. The tranquillity and stillness of dusk was however shattered at 7:45pm when Police Constable Carmelo Attard, doing his rounds in Strait Street in Valletta, was confronted by a panic-stricken Joseph Schembri who said that a boy had fallen and died.

When Attard arrived at the scene on St Dominic Street, however, what he found before him was all the more gruesome than a fall. Twannie Aquilina, who was eight-years-old at the time, was found lying on the kitchen floor in a pool of blood. His neck had been cut so deeply and violently, that the boy had been practically decapitated.

The murder weapon, a bloody bread knife, was found in a kitchen drawer soon after the boy was found.

The crime shook the country to its core. The now defunct *Il-Berqa* described the shockwaves that enveloped the country, saying that a "wave of fear and anger" spread like wildfire. The prime suspects were Twannie's mother, Luigia Camilleri - known as Giga - and his step-father Leli, who was a marine engineer onboard HMS Angelo. Twannie also had a sister, Carmen, who would later become a key witness in the case, and a step-sister, Marthese, who was just three years old at the time.

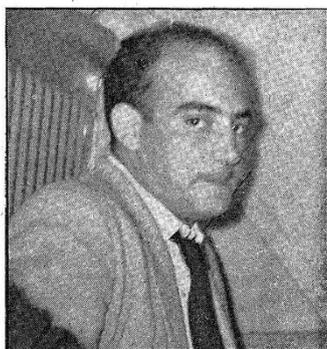
The couple were asked to give a statement to the police, with Leli saying that he was out of the house at the time on an errand to buy some stationery and Giga saying that she was at a place close to her house, known as *Il-Fossa*, with her daughters, eating and playing tombola.

Both made similar statements about finding the boy; Leli explaining how he had heard shouting and running towards Strada Forni, and found his wife shouting outside that "the boy was full of blood". He ran into the building, found the kitchen door ajar and then found Twannie on the

kitchen floor in a pool of blood, and as he moved the boy's head to see if he was still alive, "it came off and I realised that his neck was cut".

Giga's statement is similar; she said that when the boy did not turn up at *il-Fossa*, she sent Carmen to check up on him. She found the light in the building on but received no response to her knocks on the door. Reporting this to her mother, Carmen was sent back with another girl, Mary, to check whether the boy was asleep; but when they returned to Giga they told her that someone said there was blood in the building. Giga spoke about how she found the kitchen door ajar and then saw the boy full of blood. She ran outside, shouting and screaming when Leli found her. He asked what had happened, and she told her husband "My son is finished, he's soaked in blood."

In November of the same year, with Scotland Yard assisting investigations, the couple were arrested and charged with murdering their son. The grizzly details of the case began to emerge when the trial began on 25 February 1961.



Leli Camilleri

The step-father Leli Camilleri

The testimony of medical experts shocked people further; Twannie had first been beaten with a deadbolt, leaving three deep lacerations in his skull. The boy was still alive, albeit probably unconscious, when his throat was slit. Other experts also found bloody handprints and small puddles of blood in the common stairway leading to the apartment, together with pieces of brain.

It was only through witness testimonies that the story started to be put together. 14-year-old Alfred Fitzpatrick recounted how he saw Giga lifting a motionless Twannie from the stairs and carrying him up to the apartment. He said he was climbing the stairs to his own apartment when he heard a moan and two or more people running. He also heard the sound of a metal object hitting the ground.

He then said that he had waited outside the apartment, expecting a doctor to arrive, but when this did not happen, he went to *il-Fossa*. He later returned at the time of sunset, and on the way up to his own apartment, he saw Giga's kitchen door ajar. Overcome by curiosity, he stepped inside and found Twannie lying on the floor. He tried touching and calling the boy, but when he received no response, he washed his hands and left.

In the end it was Twannie's sister, Carmen, who filled in the most gaps. She said that Twannie had been washing the floor when he took his father's tools to repair his shoes. His mother realised this and reacting angrily, before beating the boy with a leather strap. The boy tried to escape the apartment, calling his sister, but his mother caught him and carried back into the room, where he was laid onto the bed in the kitchen - the apartment was in reality only two rooms.

Carmen then said that she was told to go fetch her step-father from a friend's garage. When Leli arrived and asked what had happened, Giga said that she had found Twannie dead. Carmen said that Leli moved Twannie off the bed he was laying on and put his on the floor, as Giga drew a bread knife from a drawer and knelt down next to the boy.

The girl said that her mother had sent to her to wait at *il-Fossa*, but she remained outside the apartment, and saw her parents changing their clothes and putting those they had taken off into the washing machine along with a bedspread.

The trial kept going for 17 days, the longest trial Malta had ever seen up till then, and the jury reached a unanimous decision; Giga Camilleri and Leli Camilleri were guilty of murdering their son, Twannie Aquilina. Leli was sentenced to 20 years imprisonment with hard labour, whilst Giga was sentenced to death. It was the first time in 14 years that the jury had reached a unanimous decision in a capital case. Only after petitions to the Governor was the death sentence changed to a life sentence in jail. Despite this though, ten years later Giga walked out of prison, a free woman.

Giga only ever gave one interview to the press, specifically to the Church newspaper *//-Gens*. Even then, 33 years after being sentenced to death, she insisted she was innocent. "How can a mother kill her son?" she questioned. Indeed this was a question on the lips of so many as the trial of who killed Twannie Aquilina unfolded, so many years ago.

FROM ROYAL OPERA HOUSE TO PJAZZA TEATRU RJAL

Martin Morana



1866



1873



1877



1942

ROYAL
OPERA
HOUSE
VALLETTA

In the mid-19th century, as opera became more popular in the Maltese Islands, it was felt that the Manoel Theatre, opened in 1732, was becoming too small for increasing audiences.

In 1860 the Governor of Malta – Sir John Gaspard Le Marchand – formally approved the construction of a new theatre, to be built on a site at the entrance to Valletta. The new “Royal Opera House” was designed in the following year by the English architect Edward Middleton Barry, who had designed several prominent buildings in London including Covent

Garden and the National Gallery. The building in the Neo-Classical style was constructed on a 63 m by 34 m site previously occupied by the Casa della Giornata, the onetime residence of the Turcopilier of the Auberge d’Angleterre during the time of the Knights. It was completed after five years with a seating capacity of 1095 and 200 standing; more than double the capacity of the teatru Manoel. It was inaugurated on October 9, 1866 with Vincenzo Bellini’s opera *I Puritani*. The total cost amounted to £60,000 which, at that time, was a considerable sum.

On Sunday evening of May 25, 1873 during the rehearsals of Giuseppe Privitera’s opera *La Vergine del Castello*, the theatre accidentally caught fire and its interior was extensively damaged. Restoration works were taken up immediately under the supervision of Architect Webster Poulson, at a cost of £4,000. On October 11, 1877 – after nearly four and a half years from this accidental

fire – the theatre reopened with a performance of Giuseppe Verdi's Aida, followed by a further 18 performances of the same opera. During the 1877-78 opera season, twenty-three other opera productions were staged. In 1895, electricity replaced the use of gas to illuminate the theatre.

For many years, the Royal Opera House in Valletta served not only as an important launching pad for aspiring opera singers but also as the prime theatrical venue of Malta. This was the place where Military Officers, British Royalty and Maltese enthusiasts came to enjoy staged entertainment of the highest quality, both in the field of music as well as that of drama. Many foreign artistes, including the world renowned tenor Giovanni Zenatello (1876 – 1949), the celebrated Italian mezzo Giulietta Simionato (1910 – 2010) and the equally famous Brazilian soprano Bidu Sayão (1902 – 1999), who later became top notch stars of the Metropolitan Opera in New York, started their illustrious career in this theatre. Much to the delight of Maltese opera lovers, other distinguished opera singers engaged by the management of the Opera House included tenor Icilio Calleja (1882 – 1941) and baritone Giuseppe Satariano (1895 – 1992). Famous composers also invited to Malta by the Impresa of the theatre were Ottorino Respighi, Mons. Licinio Refice, Giuseppe Mule' and Riccardo Zandonai.

The Royal Opera House was held to be one of the most beautiful and awe-inspiring Opera Houses in Europe. This was therefore by default the theatre where Maltese singers and musicians aspired to commence their career.

On the evening of Tuesday April 7, 1942 the theatre suffered its second tragedy when it was devastated in an aerial attack by Stuka dive-bombers. Its pristine interior and most of its side walls came crashing down and one of Malta's cultural and architectural landmarks ended up in miserable ruins. Only the numerous Corinthian columns and peripheral hard stone base survived. In 1953, six renowned architects submitted their designs to have the theatre built anew. The Committee chose Zavellani-Rossi's project and recommended its acceptance by Government, subject to certain alterations. The project was however shelved after a lot of bickering. Eventually, the ruins fell into disuse and the interior floor of the glorious theatre came to serve as a parking lot for the vehicles of the many commuters who entered Valletta. However, from time to time, some metaphorical cinder did throw some sparks into the air, and occasionally, the site was cleared of these vehicles to hold a theatrical event of one kind or another.

In the 1980s, contact was made with renowned architect Renzo Piano to design a building to be



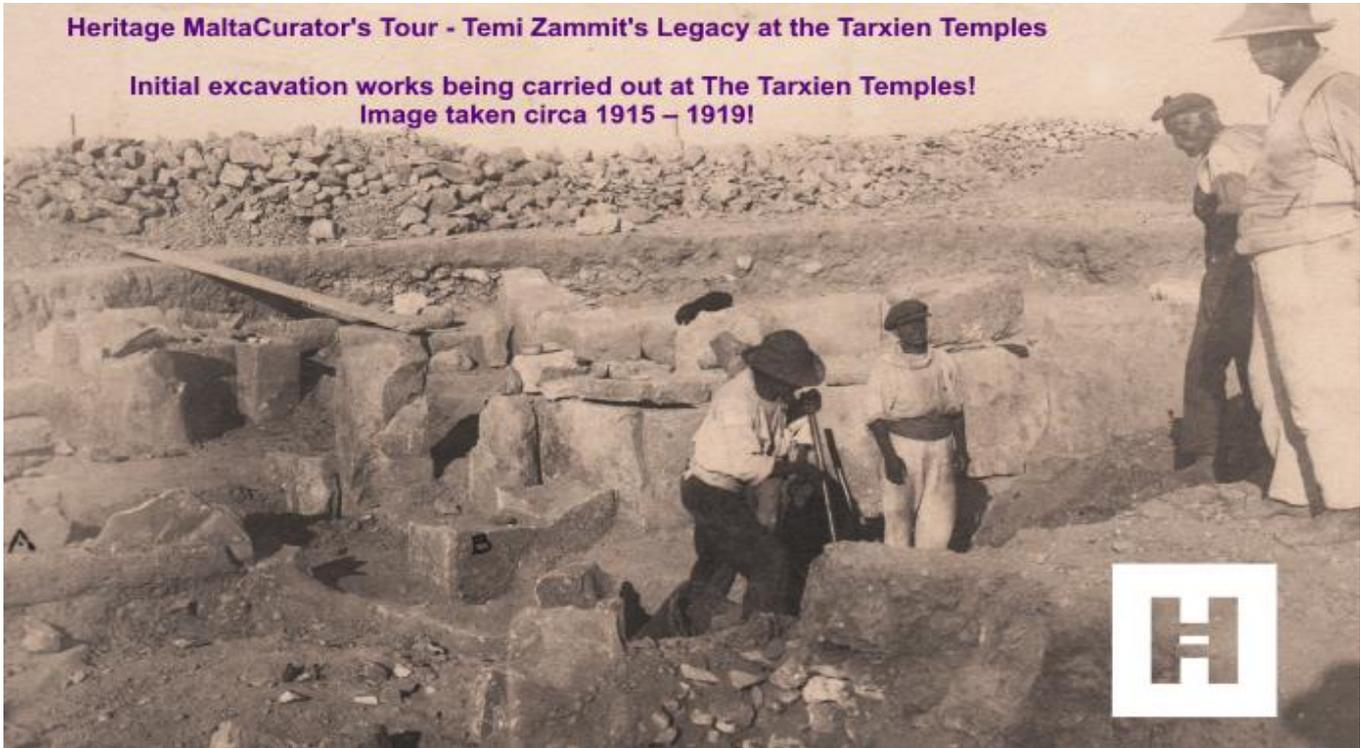
constructed on site of the ruins as well as to embark on the rehabilitation of the entrance of the City. Piano submitted the plans which were approved by the Government in 1990. Again this project never came to fruition, mainly due to the heavy opposition it found from various quarters of the conservative Maltese intelligentsia.

In 2006, the government announced a proposal to redevelop the site to provide a new location for the House of Parliament. In 2008, the Renzo Piano

project was revived with a proposed budget of €80 million. Piano, however, dissuaded the Government from building a Parliament on site of the Opera House. Instead he chose to construct the Parliament building on Freedom Square and to convert and use the ruins of the Opera House as an open-air theatre. Thus the Pjazza Teatru Rjal came to be. It was officially inaugurated on August 8, 2013.

Today Pjazza Teatru Rjal (below) has been integrated into the old theatre’s ruins. It is regarded as a monument that stands for the heroism, tenacity and dignity of the Maltese who stood against enemy action in the Second World War. At the same time the newly built theatre shows an aspiration to preserve past culture with a promise to create and nurture new artistic ideas.

I live in Perth, Western Australia. Recently I applied for a Maltese passport which I am entitled to. I was told that I have to wait few months because the local consulate has no equipment to process a biometric passport. The equipment consists of a digital machine to take fingerprints and a camera for visual recognition (photo). And I believe this situation is the same in Queensland, Tasmania, South Australia, Northern Territory and New Zealand. I was asked to pay extra for a consul to come from Sydney, Melbourne or Canberra. Why these places cannot be supplied with the necessary equipment to be able to give a service to the members of the Maltese community? S.Caruana



MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER

The Journal of the Maltese Diaspora

Read, loved and respected by all
Maltese Living Abroad

maltesejournal@gmail.com



*Share it with others
send it to us*

Re-opening of Grandmasters' Crypt at St John's Co-cathedral



Grandmaster Jean Parisot de la Valette's tomb at the Crypt of Saint John's Co-Cathedral Valletta, Malta

Great Siege; as well as Fra' Jean L'Evesque de la Cassiere who financed the building of the conventual church, and Fra' Alof de Wignacourt – the Grandmaster responsible for bringing



Caravaggio to Malta.

In the eighteenth century, during the reign of Grandmaster Antonio Manoel de Vilhena, the ceiling of the Crypt was painted by the Florentine artist Niccolo' Nasoni, who had used the fresco technique to paint the ceiling *en grisaille* with a funerary theme which refers to episodes from the Old Testament, accompanied by skeletons and war trophies. *Putti* can also be seen resting on the monuments which carry symbols of the Order of St John.

The Crypt project at the Co-cathedral has just been awarded the Prix d'Honneur for Architectural Heritage by Din I-Art Felwa in the Restoration and conservation category, for installation of an Environmental Control system. This same conservation project is nominated for a Europa Nostra 2020 award – a European award for initiatives for conservation of historic heritage.

The restoration and conservation project to protect this unique heritage was made possible through financing and ongoing efforts by the St John's Co-cathedral Foundation – a project costing some half a million euro. Archbishop Charles Scicluna, Minister José Herrera, Foundation President Wilfred Buttigieg and Curator/CEO Cynthia de Giorgio addressed the assembled guests on the occasion.

The archbishop blessed the Crypt and inaugurated this formidable project. The inauguration has re-opened access to the Crypt to visitors to the Co-Cathedral, which welcomes over half a million visitors every year. the Crypt is accessed from steps in the chapel of the Langue of Provence and can be appreciated from behind a glass door.

The Grandmasters' Crypt is a special place, as it is the burial place of the first Grandmasters who jointly combine the history of Malta, from Fra' Philippe de Villiers de L'Isle-Adam, who brought the Knights of the Order of St John to the island, to Fra' Jean Parisot de Valette, hero of the 1565

Alegria Flamenco Dance Company Malta



Alegria Dance Company is a Company of fine dancers who have dedicated their time and energy to an art form they love. Under the direction of Ingrid Sciberras, Alegria is Malta's only Established Flamenco Dance Company and its members are also trained in other forms of dances. They are frequently invited to perform in Theatre, Gala performances, Cabaret and Festivals, Television and Film and have a prolific repertoire earning them an esteemed reputation in the arts. The dancers individually tour abroad and study with notable maestros of dance. Some individuals have also performed with reknowned Flamenco Companies in Malta

and abroad in Spain, Italy, South Africa and India.

Alegria Dance Company pride themselves in the capability of fusing Flamenco with difference genres of dance and music yet retaining the authenticity and technique of flamenco dance. They have experimented and succeeded in creating work to Maltese composed funeral marches, Maltese folk song and music and their latest work which enjoyed three full houses at Teatru Manoel entitled 'Carmen' which was a fusion with contemporary dance.

*The company work to play back and live music and song with the diversity of artists performing from solo to maximum 12 member dancers. Musicians are commissioned separately. Audiovisual material is available on request.

Alegria aims to introduce the highest standard of artistry and technical skill with a holistic approach (mind, body and spirit) in an organized discipline in both teaching and performing, on an international scale, by establishing fully trained teachers effective in Alianza Flamenca and choreography for all purposes of growth in the Arts.



Alegria Academia provides:

- Junior and adult education
- Alianza Flamenco certified assessments
- Choreography Academic study
- Resident and guest teachers in various disciplines
- Resident and guest performing artists of Alegria Dance Company

Courses:

Classes are available to students from children and adult beginners to advanced level. Courses in Alianza Flamenca ensure that the student achieves the highest aims of Flamenco. Open choreographic classes are given to broaden the knowledge and artistic development of the student. The student is trained to be able to choreograph, improvise and learn choreographic repertoire for the professional stage.

90 Triq il-Wied ta' L-Imsida, B'Kara alegriamalta@gmail.com tel : 99495187

The Maltese Diaspora: Changing Faces of Malta Abroad

The aim of this introduction is to emphasize the changing pattern of migration and to give some idea of the movement of people that occurred particularly during the first three-quarters of the 20th century, until 1975, described as a water-shed in Maltese migration, when more people started to return to Malta than leave it. Maurice Cauchi - Australia <https://mauricecauchi.wordpress.com/>

'Malta was my university': the Eritrean migrant running a US trucking company

Company name pays tribute to Aman Tekeste's time in Malta



Kristina Abela

When Aman Tekeste opened a truck company in North Carolina, the US, a couple of years ago, he called it Malta Trucking because he wanted everyone to know about the island.

“When people see my trucks, I want them to ask me where Malta is, so I can tell them all about the small island in the Mediterranean,” he told Times of Malta.

Mr Tekeste credits the Maltese with teaching him everything

he needed to know about opening a business. But more than that, he is grateful for the care and friendship they offered him at a time in his life when he most needed it.

“Malta is a country that made me the person I am today,” he posted on social media, alongside a picture of him proudly standing by his truck.

“It made me a better person than I used to be. I would like to thank the people of Malta for helping me when I was struggling.”

Malta became Mr Tekeste’s second home at the age of 22. He was driven out of his home country Eritrea and forced to leave his pregnant wife because of political instability.

Fleeing for his life, he boarded a rickety boat in Libya with 97 others and attempted the dangerous crossing across the Mediterranean seeking asylum.

They were at sea for four days before the Armed Forces of Malta rescued them.

“I was ready to die and then the Maltese navy came for us. They were so kind and from that moment I said this place is my place.”

Mr Tekeste was fortunate to survive. In the year he made the crossing, in 2013, there were 600 deaths at sea. The following year, 3,093 who attempted the crossing were recorded as dead or missing by the UNHCR.

I want to thank the Maltese for helping me when I was struggling

The next challenge came when he was cleared from detention.

“I was at college when I left Eritrea studying history. I didn’t have any work experience, so I said to myself I have to be a man and learn very quickly to get a job.”

Despite his situation he was given a job with a Maltese company and was trained as a plumber. He worked hard to learn everything there was to know about his job and when he asked for help from his colleagues or boss, they were very willing to help.

More than that, they took the time to teach him the Maltese culture and language, as well as business.

“Malta was my university. The best thing you can give someone is education. If you show them how to do something, then they will be able to do it for themselves. These men I met became my brothers.”

Mr Tekeste was in Malta for four years before he was forced to relocate to the US through a resettlement programme. At first, he was very unhappy about leaving Malta, but once in the US decided to open a trucking company through which he hoped to give people jobs and create a community.

“I will help any Maltese or any person from my country who come here. I want to give them a home.”

He says it is not easy being separated from his wife and son who he has never seen, but insists life is all about attitude.

“I hope one day things will change and my wife and son can join me. But in life when things are tough, it is all about how you act.”



MMG Concert Band
of Victoria

Presents **Silhouette**
Movie Fundraiser

Silhouette is the story of a professional car thief trying to make emends with his family after a short spell in prison for a robbery that goes wrong. On his first day as a free man he realizes that it is going to take him much more than good will to be forgiven, so he decides to exile himself from his family and live as an outcast on the remote island of Comino.

However, his criminal past catches up with him and is forced to return to mainland Malta to be able to protect his family. Set in a world of fast cars and illegal street racing, Silhouette delivers on all cylinders guaranteeing a rollercoaster ride of adrenaline-fueled action and a story that shall keep you guessing till the very end. Movie is in Maltese with English Subtitles. Cost \$20 per ticket. Date: Sunday 5 April 2020 Time: 7pm Location: Village Sunshine Contact Amie on 0404 894 576



CULTURE

The Maltese bus is an important part of our history – a tourist attraction

We used to love our Maltese buses. Some were bull and emitted quite a pit of fumes. Although the weren't always kept clean, many of them were always on time and would get you wherever you wanted to go all over the island. Beyond Malta's feasts, sunshine her heritage and her cuisine, the Maltese tradition

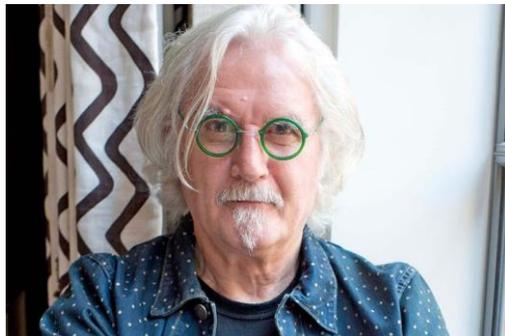
buses were dear to everyone's heart.

This means of transport began operating in 1905, and remained in service until 2011. However despite the fact that they are no longer seen snaking their way through the streets of these island the old buses are still the talk of the town for many. Tourists would refer to them as *bone rattle* given the bumpy ride and the sound of glass about to crack with every passing pothole . Until 1973, the old buses were painted according to their route. Among these, red was the Birkirkara route, Cottonera was green, and Gozo was grey. Subsequently they were all painted green, and after 1995 they were painted yellow with an orange band.

**ALL YOUR MALTESE JOURNALS ARE PROUDLY
PRESERVED ON MY USB STICK.
I READ THEM, LOVE THEM AND SHARE THEM**

Sir Billy Connolly describes his love for 'wee Gozo'

Gozo's most famous resident has opened up about his love for 'the wee island'.



Comedy legend Sir Billy Connolly, 77, said he 'fuels up' on sunshine at his homes in Gozo and Florida following medical advice.

The Glasgow-born actor and comedian said: 'The doctors told me to scale back and enjoy the simple life.'

'Gozo is a lovely wee island off Malta and it's quiet.'

'I sail my boat, smoke cigars, read books and relax.'

Sir Billy, who was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease in 2013, owns a large house near the centre of Sannat and

has often been spotted by astonished tourists while running errands in Victoria.

The star announced his retirement from performing live last year, after more than half a century of entertaining audiences.

The Big Yin admitted his condition has 'made his brain work differently' and it meant he could no longer perform in front of an audience.

He told [Sky News](#): 'You should know when you're finished, and I'm finished with stand up. 'It was lovely and it was lovely being good at it. It was the first thing I was ever good at. 'The Parkinson's has made my brain work differently and you need a good brain for comedy.'

'It's just about accepting what it is. Just deal with it. Get on with it. Enjoy it.'

Sir Billy and his wife Pamela Stephenson are now said to divide their time between their homes in Sannat and Key West.

THE MCBNA PRESENTS:

A TASTE OF MALTA



LIVE COOKING DEMOS

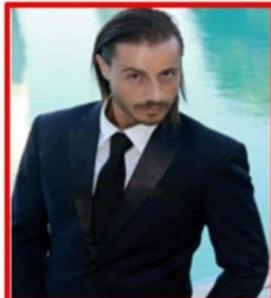
PASTIZZI. ROSS IL-FORN. TORTA. BRUNGIEL MIMLI & MORE

\$45 PER PERSON

Buffet Dinner
Rabbit, Chicken,
Roasted Potatoes, Imqarrun,
Salad, Hobz Biz-Zejt & more
 CASH BAR

MALTA BAND CLUB
 5745 Coopers Ave, Mississauga, ON
Thurs Mar 26th @ 6:30pm
 Tickets must be purchased in advance

A PORTION OF THE PROCEEDS WILL GO TO THE ST PAUL THE APOSTLE MISSION GROUP

\$20 each

SATURDAY
21st MARCH 2020
FROM 2.00PM

GEORGE CROSS FALCONS COMMUNITY CENTRE

THE COMMITTEE IN CONJUNCTION WITH
 THE MALTESE CULTURAL ASSOCIATION OF NSW PRESENTS
 LUDWIG GALEA MALTA'S MOST LOVED ROCK TENOR!
 CHARLIE CAMILLERI BACK UP SINGER

\$20 includes light refreshment tea and coffee



Malta's Justin Haber Features On First Episode Of Netflix's Newest Food Show And It's An Emotional Patriotic Masterpiece

Haber 16 in Marsaxlokk and owner Justin are featured in

the beautiful first episode of the Netflix show 'Restaurants on the Edge' - so proud!

Episode one eases us in by finding the perfect subject for an eaterie-rescue show. In Marsaxlokk, Malta, Justin Haber is a local celebrity, but his harbourside joint, Haber 16, has plunged him into debt. Despite being a professional footballer, he's still a charming underdog – “I am the shortest goalkeeper in the world!” – and he's got the one quality we viewers of this format demand: he's making a load of painfully obvious mistakes, such as shipping all his seafood from abroad when one of the Mediterranean's best fish markets is on his doorstep.



Where has Majsi gone?

ONCE UPON A TIME lamp lighting in Malta was a respectable and almost heroic occupation. Like the postman and the iceman, the old lamplighter was a familiar and beloved figure. But progress has interceded. Today lamplighters are almost as unwanted as blacksmiths. Indeed, anyone claiming this trade must surely be suspect.

Pondering upon this tradition, which has survived the ravages of time, Anton Buttigieg's poignant words in his poem *Il-kebbies tal-fanali* (the lantern lighter) come to mind : “Kull fl-ghaxija kif mal-ghabex tnin u tmut saħħet il-jum, jigi Majsi bis-sellum, u jixgħelli taħt it-tieqa fanal ċkejken li tal-lejl itaffi d-diqa” (loosely translated: every night, as the day starts fading away at dusk, there comes Majsi with his ladder and he lights up a small lantern right below my window, easing the sadness of the night).

Where has our Majsi gone?

WE LOOK FORWARD TO THE NEXT ISSUE