



MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER

The Journal of Maltese Living Abroad

Editor : Frank L Sciclna OAM MQR JP

maltesejournal@gmail.com

FRA' JEAN PARISOT DE LA VALETTE 49TH GRAND MASTER OF THE ORDER OF MALTA



LIMESTONE
COWBOY

COVID-19 PRECAUTION
the use of
masks or visors
in church in
Malta





Mass in the Solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ (Corpus Christi)

Homily of Archbishop Charles Jude Scicluna

We have made a three-month fasting and today in our parishes and churches the community can begin to meet again to hear the Word of God and receive the Eucharist.

We need to do this in a particular context that requires a lot of restrictions so that this meeting of love does not lead us to the illnesses that brings death but keeps caring for us; this meeting with Jesus continues to be an expression of love and charity.

In 1920, a hundred years ago, Pope Benedict XV announced to the whole Church that it would give the beautiful title of a Church doctor to one of Syrian saints, who had lived 16 centuries earlier, St Efrem the deacon. Ten years ago, Pope Benedict said in the year in which he came from us and in this church too, spoke of St Efrem and at that Wednesday meeting Pope Benedict quoted a beautiful excerpt from the teachings of St. Efrem.

"In your bread," wrote St Efrem, "there is hidden the unedible Spirit. In your wine there is the fire you can't drink.

Our prayer is that our lips will be an instrument of love and never of betrayal

The spirit in your bread, fire in your wine. Some beauty grew up on our lips' for our lips are beloved not only because they express love in the intimacy of love loved ones but because also through them we are trailed by the Body and blood of Jesus.

Today we are also recalling the generous blood donation with which we assure healing and life to so many people. How beautiful it is to celebrate this generosity, so many people who donate their blood on the day of the Eucharist.

Unless in the Gospel we have heard Jesus insists in the need to come unto Him, eat His Body, drink His Blood to have life. Our prayer is that our lips are an instrument of love and never of betrayal – as they were for Judas – and receive with a yellow heart the Lord's Beloved Body and Blood.

Today we are also recalling the generous blood donation with which we assure healing and life to so many people. How beautiful it is to celebrate this generosity, so many people who donate their blood on the day of the Eucharist. Because Jesus, by the power of the Holy Ghost, by the word of the Father, transforms the wine we offer to him in His Blood as the bread we offer him in his beloved Body.

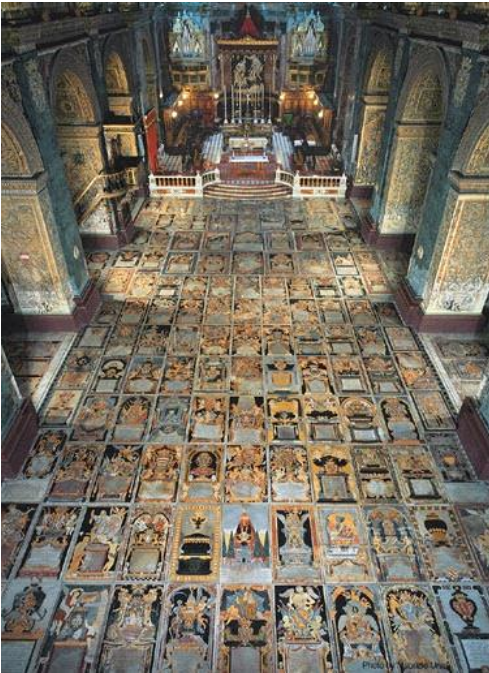
When we ask our communities from these meetings that have now begun and may continue, they also ask for those who have in the past moved away from this bread and wine, from this food and from these beverages, so that all of us felt and the hunger we had in this great sauna, mitigated by our presence in our churches.



Chief Herald of Arms of Malta

Heraldry has its own language, known as 'blazon', originating in medieval France. The blazon describing the Arms of the Chief Herald of Arms of Malta is: (Left) a crest coronet of fourteen oak leaves Or issuant from a wreath of the colours and upon a hurt edged of the First bearing the motto VIRTUTE ET CONSTANTIA and debrousing two herald's maces of the First in saltire with dexter finial displaying the Cross and Arms of Aragon and sinister finial the Arms of Fortress Malta both Proper, the shield of Malta, with the whole supported by an Eight-pointed Cross of the Second. The motto, 'VIRTUTE ET CONSTANTIA', alludes to a phrase which reverberates throughout the history of Malta. Grand Master Jean 'Parisot' de Valette used these words in a dispatch to King Philip II of Spain when describing the victory of the Great Siege of Malta in 1565

THE MOST BEAUTIFUL FLOOR IN THE WORLD



Commissioned in 1572 by Grand Master Jean de la Cassière as the Conventual Church of St. John, the St. John's Co-Cathedral in Valletta, Malta, is considered to be one of the finest examples of high Baroque architecture in Europe and one of the world's great cathedrals. The cathedral's interior is extremely ornate, with carved stone walls, painted vaulted ceiling and side altars with scenes from the life of John the Baptist. The most impressive is the marble floor which is composed of nearly 400 tombstones of Knights and officers of the Order OF Malta. Each tombstone is inlaid by a coloured, marble slab bearing the crest, coat-of-arms and epitaph of the noble knight.

Photo credit: www.maltacultureguide.com

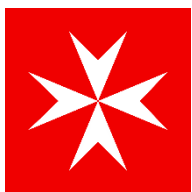
The personal information contains the name of the deceased, his genealogy(family), origin (city or region), age indication, date of demise and cause of death..

The Knights of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem were noblemen from the most important families of Europe, and their mission was to protect the Catholic faith against the Muslim forces. The

Knights came to Malta in 1530 after they were evicted from their earlier home on Rhodes by the Turks in 1522. Using Malta as their new base, the Knights continued to fight against the Turks and especially the Barbary pirates. Unhappy to see the order resettled, Ottoman Sultan, Suleiman the Magnificent, sent an invasion force of about 40,000 men to besiege Malta. Despite having a small army of 6,000 soldiers, half of which are civilians and only 500 or so were Knights, the Turks were unable to siege the island. After defending Malta from the Ottomans, the Knights turned Malta into a fortress that befitted a military Order and built a new capital city worthy of noblemen.

The Knights who fell during the Great Siege of 1565 were originally buried in Fort St Angelo but were later re-interred inside the Cathedral of St. John's. They were later joined by Grand Masters like Philippe Villiers de L'Isle-Adam, Claude de la Sengle, Jean Parisot de Valette, and Alof de Wignacourt. The earliest grave dates back to 1606, some 25 years after the church was opened. Bodies continued to be buried in the cathedral till the 19th century.

Today, the cathedral is one of the most popular tourist attractions in Malta, and it is listed on the National Inventory of the Cultural Property of the Maltese Islands.



The Maltese Cross: Its origin and importance to Malta

Introduced to Malta by the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem upon taking possession of the islands in 1530, the Maltese Cross has become an intrinsic part of Malta's culture and heritage, as well as a much-cherished symbol by the Maltese.

What is the Maltese cross?

The Maltese cross is a symbol that is most commonly associated with the Knights of Malta (also known as the Knights Hospitallers), who ruled the Maltese islands between 1530 and 1798. The Maltese cross is nowadays widely used and associated with Malta as a country, used by the national airline Air Malta as part of its livery, and even featuring on the Maltese Euro coins, for example.

What does it look like?

The shape of the Maltese cross is star-like with four V-shaped arms that are joined together at the tips. It's frequently used either in black and white or red and white and is symmetrical both vertically as well as horizontally

WHAT'S THE HISTORY BEHIND THE CROSS?

Although the Maltese cross is most famously associated with the Knights of Malta, as well as Malta itself as a country, it is thought the symbol evolved from a closely resembling cross found on coins minted in Amalfi (an Italian republic) during the 11th century.

WHAT'S THE MEANING OF THE MALTESE CROSS?

The Maltese Cross formally adopted by the Knights Hospitallers of St. John in 1126, stylistically owes its origins to the crosses used in the crusades, when it was identified as the symbol of the "Christian warrior": Its eight points denote the eight obligations or aspirations of the knights, namely "to live in truth, have faith, repent one's sins, give proof of humility, love justice, be merciful, be sincere and wholehearted, and to endure persecution".

With time, the eight points also came to represent the eight *languēs* (or "tongues", but in effect national groupings) of the noblemen who were admitted to the famed order, namely those of Auvergne, Provence, France, Aragon, Castille and Portugal, Italy, Baviere (Germany), and England (with Scotland and Ireland).

The Maltese cross remains the symbol of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta, which is still in existence (and active as an international organisation for medical and humanitarian aid) today. As part of its present-day teachings, the cross represents eight beatitudes (or 'blessings'). A good first aider in service of the Order of St. John is Observant, Tactful, Resourceful, Dextrous, Explicit, Discriminating, Persevering and Sympathetic.

Kamra tal-Periti turns 100 years old

Chamber of architects and civil engineers marks its centenary



KTP founders pose for a group photo.

Malta's architecture lobby, the *Kamra tal-Periti*, has turned 100 years old.

The KTP was established on June 12, 1920 through a government notice issued by governor Field Marshall Herbert Charles Onslow Plumer. At the time, it was known as the Chamber of Architects.

It is the sole recognised professional body representing architects and civil engineers in Malta. Apart from supporting members, it is also responsible for looking into any charges of

misconduct or abuse made against architects or civil engineers and sanctioning them accordingly. Just last week, the KTP unveiled a [comprehensive reform](#) framework to overhaul Malta's construction sector.

In a statement marking its centenary, the KTP said it was now looking towards a future founded on quality, design, community, progress, identity, innovation, culture, sustainability.

"These are the elements that must shape our built environment, forging the very essence of the spaces we inhabit in the present, and for generations to come," it said. <https://timesofmalta.com/>

THE KNIGHTS AND THE MALTESE CROSS



The Knights of Malta (Order of St. John) can trace their origin to a group of monks attached to a hospice built in the Holy Lands to aid pilgrims. Over time, the monks started

offering an armed escort to travellers as they passed through perilous Syrian territory. Following the success of the First Crusade, the Knights Hospitallers evolved into a military order.

The link between the Maltese Cross and these islands was forged with the Knights' arrival in Malta in 1530. By then, the Cross had become the established symbol of the Order, and as the Knights set about putting their stamp on these islands through their inspired architectural feats and patronage of the arts, so the Maltese Cross provided the signature to this glorious legacy. The Cross found itself on coats-of-arms, palaces, hospitals, the entrances and gates to various forts and towers, on fortifications as well as on coins, cannon, monuments, churches, paintings and frescoes, furniture, silverware and jewellery.

Valletta is home to the world's largest concentration of portrayals of the Maltese Cross. The palaces and churches constructed during the long rule of the Knights, as well as the many treasures they house, are bedecked with this representation of aristocratic and autocratic power. The Maltese Cross, however, has come to epitomise not only one of Malta's most glorious historical periods but also anything which is intrinsically Maltese.

How the maltese cross is used nowadays

Today, the Maltese Cross is undoubtedly the single most recognisable symbol of the Maltese Islands. It's no coincidence that this emblem forms part of the logo of a number of local institutions, including the Malta Tourism Authority, Malta Enterprise, and the Islands' flag-carrier, Air Malta, not to mention the national football and rugby teams' official strip.

Many Maltese houses still incorporate the Cross in their stonework. A visit to any souvenir or gift shop will also reveal an array of local crafts adorned with the Maltese Cross. Apart from the obvious t-shirts and key-chains, you will find the Cross on a generous variety of quality lace and filigree products, all kinds of jewellery, pottery and

glassware, brass door knockers, as well as items made from limestone.

It seems that the Maltese Cross, a symbol which chivalric warriors first wore with pride hundreds of years ago in faraway lands, has found a permanent home on this little archipelago in the middle of the Mediterranean!

<https://www.maltauncovered.com/malta-history/maltese-cross/>



Why did houses have Maltese crosses during WWII?

Before WWII broke out, there were 85,000 people living in Valletta, Floriana, the Three Cities and the surrounding urban areas. As soon as the first bombs fell on Malta in June of 1940, they had to see what they were going to do to find refuge in the villages and towns which were not the target of the enemy. It is estimated that in the first few days of the war, around one-third of the population sought refugee further inland. The problem of the refugees was a huge headache for the authorities, more than the fact of the air strike or the lack of shelters. They were terrified that complete chaos would be created in society which could hamper the efficiency of the military defence of the island.

During the documentary 'Malta fil-Gwerra' TVM journalist Mario Xuereb and researcher Martin Debattista explained how the Maltese took shelter in every type of building away from the Grand Harbour. Some even made their way to Gozo and Marsalforn started looking like the Sliema front.

As the war raged on, appeals started being made for refugees who had lost their homes to be welcomed into the homes of other Maltese. To this end, Governor William Dobbie gave permission for those homes which were hosting refugees to draw a Maltese cross on the facade of the house for every family of refugees they were accommodating, as evidence of their generosity. This gesture also made it easier for district officials to house the refugees in homes where there was still space. Tvm.com.mt

Acknowledgement of Country

We respect and honour Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders past, present and future. We acknowledge the stories, traditions and living cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples on this land and commit to building a brighter future together.

**Proud of Indigenous Australians**

Source: <https://australiantogether.org.au/>

Beyond myths and stereotypes. Just 30% of the general Australian community socialise with Indigenous people.^[1] So where do the majority of Australians get their ideas about Indigenous Australians? The media? The government? Maybe the history books? We believe it's important for Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians to understand each other better, beyond myths and stereotypes. So first things first, who are Indigenous Australians?

FIRST THINGS FIRST, WHO ARE INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIANS?

Indigenous Australians are descended from the people who lived in Australia and the surrounding islands prior to European colonisation. Generally speaking, there are two distinct groups of Indigenous people in Australia - Torres Strait Islanders, who come from the Torres Strait Islands north of Cape York in Queensland, and Aboriginal people, who come from all other parts of Australia.

Amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, there are many different languages, cultures and beliefs. So when we refer to "Indigenous Australians", we're actually using a collective name to refer to hundreds of diverse groups.

In fact, at the time of colonisation, approximately 700 languages were spoken by different Indigenous groups throughout Australia.^[2] Some of these languages are still spoken in Indigenous communities, and many Indigenous cultures have survived and adapted to colonisation while others are being actively revived and reclaimed. So whether you're in the city or the bush, Indigenous culture is very much alive across Australia!

WHAT MAKES SOMEONE INDIGENOUS?

Many Australians assume that to be Indigenous, a person should look or act a

certain way. For example, often Indigenous Australians are expected to have dark skin, live in remote areas and be outstanding athletes. Sadly, there's also an assumption that Indigenous people must be dysfunctional, dependant on welfare, violent or addicted to alcohol. These are stereotypes; they're not only extremely hurtful, they contribute to the confusion about who Indigenous people are.

Who does the government say Indigenous people are?

The Australian Government has 3 criteria for determining whether a person is Indigenous. According to this definition, a person is Indigenous if they:

- are of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent
- identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander and
- are accepted by the Indigenous community in which he or she lives^[3]

LISTENING TO INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

To really understand who Indigenous Australians are, we need to listen to what Indigenous people say. Remember, Indigenous people are diverse - being Indigenous means different things to different people. Yet for many, being Indigenous is about being connected to Country, community and culture. The following quotes from Indigenous people express what it means to them to be an Indigenous person living in Australia.

"Our culture connects with the land, with our kinships. We know who we are, what sort of relationships we've got within our clan groups, or other clan groups around the Tanami. To do with our skin names, which part of the country we belong to, which part of the country is ours... That's why it's important for us to know who we are, what skin group, which country we belong to."

Lynette, Walpiri, Lajamanu, NT

"If you're an Aboriginal person, then you have spirituality. There is no denying that. All of our history, everything that makes us Aboriginal is connected to spirituality."

Kyle, Bundjalung Cultural Leader, NSW

"Aboriginality and spirituality and connection and culture isn't about the colour of your skin,

it's the practice of what you've been taught, it's tradition that's gone through generations."

Jamie, Peek Whuurrong Gunditjmara and Gunnai Cultural Leader, VIC

"I represent my ancestors and dreamtime."

Andrew Johnson, Walpiri, Lajamanu, NT

WHERE DO INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIANS LIVE?

Today, Indigenous people make up 3% of Australia's population. New South Wales has the highest Indigenous population (208,500 people), while the Northern Territory has the highest proportion of Indigenous people (30% of the Northern Territory's population). As these statistics suggest, despite common misperceptions that Indigenous people only live in remote communities, a third of Indigenous Australians actually live in major cities. ^[4]

The Stolen Generations

The forcible removal of Indigenous children from their families.

Between 1910-1970, many Indigenous children were forcibly removed from their families as a result of various government policies. The generations of children removed under these policies became known as the Stolen Generations. The policies of child removal left a legacy of trauma and loss that continues to affect Indigenous communities, families and individuals.

WHAT HAPPENED AND WHY?

The forcible removal of Indigenous children from their families was part of the policy of **Assimilation**. Assimilation was based on the assumption of black inferiority and white superiority, which proposed that Indigenous people should be allowed to "die out" through a process of natural elimination, or, where possible, should be assimilated into the white community. ^[1] Children taken from their parents as part of the Stolen Generation were taught to reject their Indigenous heritage and forced to adopt white culture. Their names were often changed, and they were forbidden to speak their traditional languages. Some children were adopted by white families, and many were placed in institutions where abuse and neglect were common. ^[2]

Assimilation policies focused on children, who were considered more adaptable to white

society than Indigenous adults. "Half-caste" children (a term now considered derogatory for people of Aboriginal and white parentage), were particularly vulnerable to removal, because authorities thought these children could be assimilated more easily into the white community due to their lighter skin colour. ^[3]

Assimilation, including child removal policies, failed its aim of improving the lives of Indigenous Australians by absorbing them into white society. This was primarily because white society refused to accept Indigenous people as equals, regardless of their efforts to live like white people.

STOP AND THINK: LOSING THE ONES YOU LOVE MOST

What would you do if one day the police turned up to your home and took your children away simply because of the colour of your skin? How would you feel knowing you had no way of getting your children back and no higher authority to appeal to?

Imagine if one day you were at home with your parents and government officials came and took you away to live with strangers, and told you that you had to learn to live, eat, speak and dress differently than you were used to. How might that experience continue to affect you throughout your life?

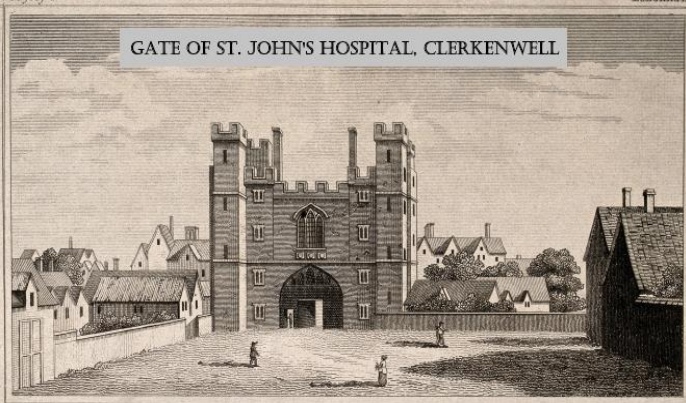
Almost every Indigenous family has been affected by the forcible removal of one or more children across generations. Many people, families and communities are still coming to terms with the trauma that this has caused.



**"We are one - but we are many
And from all the lands on earth we come
We'll share a dream and sing with one
voice - I am, you are, we are
Australian"**

History of the Order of St. John in England - Museum

By 1080, a hospital had been established in Jerusalem by



a group of monks under the guidance of Brother Gerard. Its purpose was to care for the many pilgrims who had become ill on their travels to the Holy Land. The men and women who worked there were members of a new religious order, officially recognised by the Church in 1113. Known as the Hospitallers, they cared for anyone, without distinction of race or faith. After the Crusaders captured Jerusalem, the Hospitallers also took on a military role. They became known as the Knights of the Order of St John of Jerusalem.

When Palestine was recaptured by Muslim forces in 1291, the Order moved briefly to Cyprus and then, in 1309, to Rhodes. The Order remained on Rhodes until 1522, when the Turkish Sultan, Suleiman the Magnificent, conquered the island.

From Rhodes, the Order moved to Malta. After a famous siege by Suleiman in 1565, which the Knights and the Maltese people survived, a new capital city, Valletta, was built. The Order's ships patrolled the Mediterranean and remained on Malta until 1798, when the island was surrendered to Napoleon. The original Roman Catholic Order still has headquarters in Rome; its full title is the Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of St John of Jerusalem, of Rhodes and of Malta. It remains a sovereign entity in international law and is engaged in international charity work.

The Clerkenwell Priory

In the 1140s the Priory in Clerkenwell was set up as the English headquarters of the Order. When King Henry VIII split from the Catholic Church and established a new Anglican Church, the Order in England was dissolved and all its lands and wealth were seized by the Crown. The Order was restored briefly by Henry's Catholic daughter, Queen Mary, who granted it a Royal Charter. However, on the accession of her Protestant

sister, Queen Elizabeth I, the Order in England was dissolved for good. The buildings in Clerkenwell were put to different uses in the years that followed. During the sixteenth century, they were used as the offices of the Master of the Revels. Thirty of Shakespeare's plays were licensed here.

In the eighteenth century, the Gate was briefly used as a coffee house, run by Richard Hogarth, father of the artist William Hogarth. Dr. Samuel Johnson was given his first job in London at St John's Gate, writing reports for *The Gentleman's Magazine*. At the end of the eighteenth century, the Gate was used as a pub, *The Old Jerusalem Tavern*, where artists and writers, including Charles Dickens, used to meet.

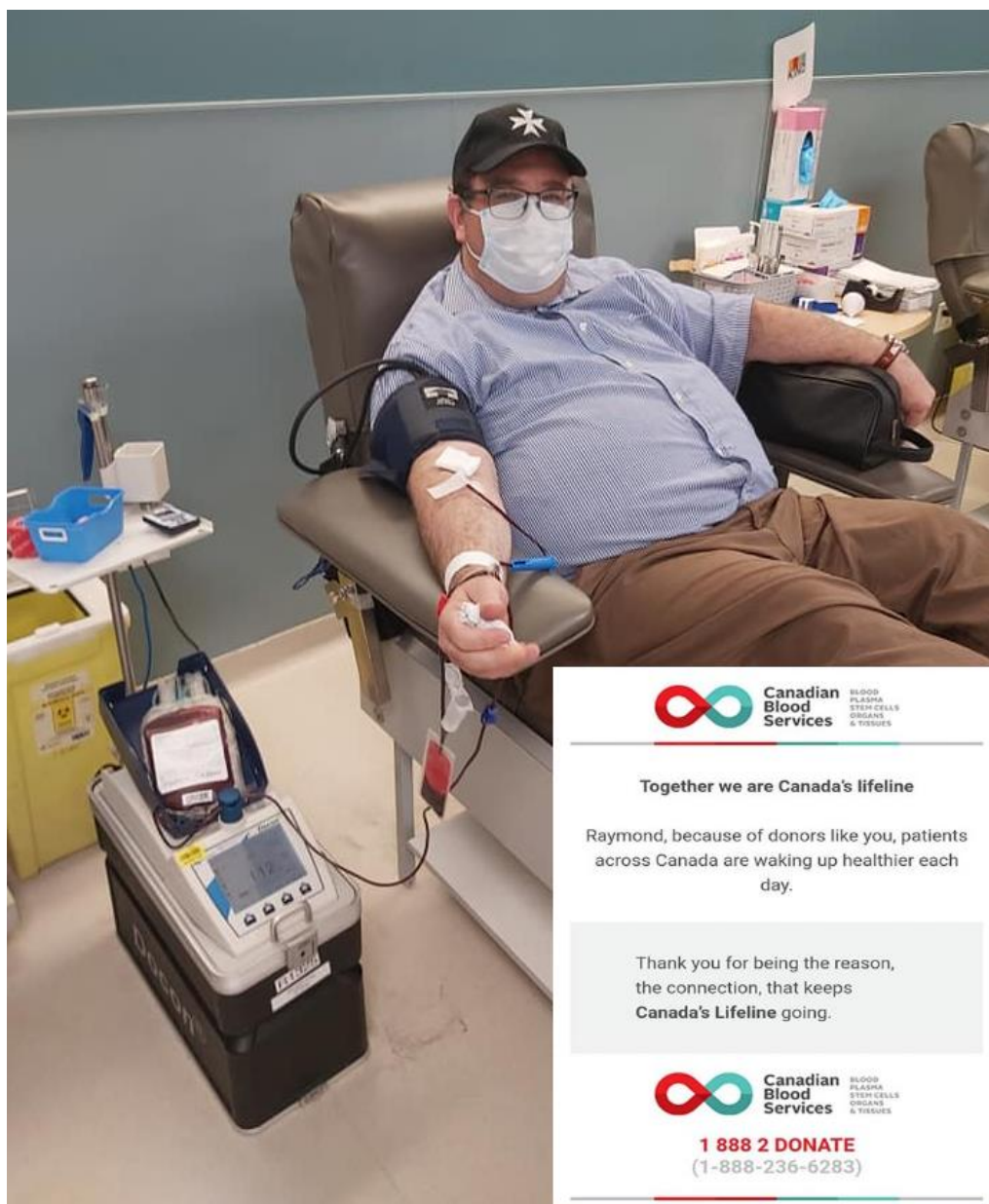
The modern Order of St John in England was granted a Royal Charter by Queen Victoria in 1888. Humanitarian in its aims and purpose, the modern Order recognised the need for public First Aid and ambulance transport services, as no such system existed in newly industrialised England. In addition, the Order established an eye hospital in Jerusalem, following the principles of the Order's first hospital, treating all those in need, regardless of faith or wealth. The Order's full title is *The Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem*. Its principal charitable foundations today are the St John Eye Hospital in Jerusalem, and St John Ambulance.

About the Museum

The Museum at St John's Gate has been welcoming visitors for over a hundred years. The extensive collections include paintings and illuminated manuscripts, rare armour, a bronze cannon given by Henry VIII, ancient coins, decorative furniture, ceramics, silverware and textiles.

Across St John's Square from the Gate is the Priory Church, with its twelfth century Crypt. The Church and Crypt are open to visitors by appointment. The Church's Priory Gallery features an exhibition on life in the medieval priory and Clerkenwell through the ages. The Church Cloister Garden provides a tranquil space for members of the public to enjoy, and its range of herbs gives an idea of the medicinal gardens that would have been cultivated by the Knights Hospitaller during Medieval times.

CONSULATE GENERAL OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALTA TO CANADA



WORLD BLOOD DONORS DAY 2020

AS A MALTESE-CANADIAN - DO YOUR PART - GIVE BLOOD SAVE UP TO 20 LIVES

As a life-long blood donor, the Consul General of Malta to Canada Dr Raymond Xerri (photo) gave his 91st blood bag over the past 28 years and continued his commitment here in **Canada** and gave his fourth blood bag here in **Canada**.

He has given blood in Malta, Australia, in the United Kingdom and in the United States of

America. Giving Blood is one of the best gifts anyone and give, it sustains life and saves lives..

Are you going to do your part?



Canadian Blood Services

BLOOD PLASMA STEM CELLS ORGANS & TISSUES

Together we are Canada's lifeline

Raymond, because of donors like you, patients across Canada are waking up healthier each day.

Thank you for being the reason, the connection, that keeps Canada's Lifeline going.



Canadian Blood Services

BLOOD PLASMA STEM CELLS ORGANS & TISSUES

1 888 2 DONATE
(1-888-236-6283)

Consul-on-the-Move

The **Consul-on-the-Move Program** was launched on 5 May 2016, in accordance with the Passports Office within Identity Malta Agency, and conforms with the Government's vision to have Governmental services closer to the citizens. It provides a number of Consular services (that are normally available at Maltese Embassies and Consulates) in different locations. The need for this Program was mostly felt after the introduction of biometric passports, that led Maltese applicants living abroad to go physically to the nearest Maltese Embassy or Consulate in order to capture biometric data. This was resulting to an inconvenience, especially due to additional expenses related to costs for travel and accommodation

In view of the measures taken to address COVID-19 (Corona Virus), the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs has suspended all the activities of the Consul-on-the-Move program as of 18 March 2020, until further notice. We are sorry for any inconvenience.



SISTER M. BERNARDETTE ABDILLA

60th Anniversary of Religious Profession

On the 8th of April the sisters of the Australian Delegation had the joy of celebrating the 60th Anniversary of Sr. M. Bernadette Abdilla's 60th Anniversary of Religious Profession. The Eucharistic Celebration was presided by Fr. Michael Goonan SSP. All the sisters helped to make Sr. M Bernadette's special day a memorable occasion. The chapel was adorned with beautiful flowers, joyful hymns of praise enhanced the ceremony in which Sr Bernadette renewed her Religious Vows with much fervour. A delicious festive meal was enjoyed by all the sisters.

Sr. M. Bernadette is part of the Pioneer group of sisters who together with Mother M. Annunciata first established the congregation of the **Sister Disciples of the Divine Master in Australia**. The early years were lived in great poverty and the sisters made many sacrifices

in order to build up the Delegation. However this first little group of Sister Disciples were always joyfully united and knew how to give without counting the cost whilst always trusting in God's loving providence.

Sr. M. Bernadette was born in Malta but entered the congregation in Italy where she did her formation and made her first Religious Profession on the 25th March, 1958. She spent a few years in Italy carrying out the Liturgical Apostolate before she was sent to Australia in 1961. Over the years Sr Bernadette has been involved in various ministries, she served in: the Liturgical Centre which was in the heart of the city of Sydney, for many years; she collaborated with the society of St. Paul in their Publication

sector; at present she is ministering at Bethany, a holistic centre where her generous service is greatly appreciated. We wish Sr. Bernadette every blessing at this time as she celebrates her 60th Anniversary and assure her of our continual sisterly support especially with our prayers before the Eucharistic Lord.



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Archaeological investigations into recently-discovered ancient quarry in Rabat, Gozo

Coryse Borg



Photo credit: Superintendence of Cultural Heritage/Joseph Grima

The Superintendence of Cultural Heritage is directing archaeological investigations in preparation for the extension of the Middle School at Rabat, Gozo, during which an ancient quarry has been discovered.

First properly-recorded discovery of classical period quarrying in Gozo

In a Facebook post, the superintendence explained that this quarry forms part of the Roman quarry discovered underneath the adjacent school during works for its conversion into the Gozo Museum, and both have been tentatively dated to the 3rd and 4th century AD on the basis of the pottery found on site. In addition, the ashlar being quarried on this site follow standards in use during the Roman period. According to the superintendence, in the case of Gozo little if any such features were recorded and therefore these quarries would be the first properly-recorded discovery of classical period quarrying in Gozo. Furthermore, this discovery is even more of interest as the quarry complex discovered to date covers a vast area of over 5,000 square metres, some of it still covered by the surrounding school complex. This ancient quarry is about one to two metres deep and has

two distinct characteristics: the clearly defined uncut blocks waiting to be extracted, and the negative void of the already extracted blocks. A vaulted cistern connected to two wells has also been discovered within the quarry. This is currently being studied to understand whether it was constructed as part of the quarry activity or is of a more recent date. Also of interest is a number of amphorae laid out radially, discovered in a different section of the quarry. Amphorae were usually used for the transportation of food and drink and it is not yet clear whether they were being used in conjunction with the quarry or whether they were being stored on site.

Discussions are ongoing between the superintendence and the Foundation for Tomorrow Schools to find solutions on how to preserve and integrate the discoveries within the project. The superintendence has noted with great satisfaction and appreciation that the Foundation for Tomorrow Schools are making the necessary efforts to preserve this heritage.

Photo credit: Superintendence of Cultural Heritage/Joseph Grima

The state of preservation of this ancient quarrying is rather good despite the construction of the school grounds and car park over it in the 1960s, since at the time, no basement was cut. The preservation and integration of the recently discovered ancient quarry remains at the site of the Rabat Middle School is highly commendable and has its endorsement, the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage said

MALTESE CENTER , Astoria New Yoirk

Planning Ahead



Dear Members & Maltese Community,

In regards to the COVID-19 pandemic we have been closed since March 9th 2020 following the New York City and New York State guidelines and would like to update you on our current financial status of the Maltese Center. Many members have inquired about the financial well-being of the Maltese Center. Currently, the total amount of dues

collected is only but a small portion of the Maltese Center's funds. Let us all be reminded, we are a member owned, volunteer operated Center and that we are all in this together. It is important that members continue to make timely payments on their dues schedule. Given COVID-19's impact on the economy, the Maltese Center is adopting a more conservative stance to our pending capital project schedule.

For the moment, we are limiting capital expenditures to absolute necessary maintenance. The bulk of monies that go towards operational costs and capital improvement come from events and the concession which have been nonexistent for three months but our monthly expenses (taxes, insurance, gas, electric, internet, phone etc.) are still due.

The funds that were allocated to capital improvement projects will have to be on hold due to the setback that the closure has created and go towards the Center's operational expenses. The Maltese Center has always striven to stay in a sound financial position and be fiscally responsible but we will need to focus on filling the financial gap.

The Maltese Center is considered a social organization in Queens County within the region of New York City. As of June 11th 2020, we must remain closed as we do not qualify for Phase I. The situation is dynamic and continuing to change daily, and we will be updating and providing timely information to our members.

Please know that the Committee and Advisory Board are greatly disappointed that we are not able to offer the Center as an outlet during this time; however, it is just not a possibility for now. We will make certain to be in a position to open as soon as permissible.

The Committee and Advisory Board are in discussion to come up with a 3 phase plan to reopening the Center in strict adherence with the NYS & NYC guidelines. It is a fluid situation with no hard dates.

Phase 1 Sanitizing the premises; organizing a volunteer cleaning crew, appeal for cleaning & sanitizing supply donations, health and safety training. The biggest step in reopening is cleaning and sanitizing the premises, if you would like to volunteer, please contact us with your dates and availability.

Phase 2 New health and safety protocols will be announced; floor markers and signage will be posted throughout the premises and available hand sanitizing stations to comply with NYS & NYC reopening rules.

Phase 3 Soft opening with a controlled capacity & contingency plan for the time being. Implementing a MEMBERS ONLY visiting reservation system and snacks/pastizzi to go . With a controlled capacity we cannot allow anyone who is not a member to make a reservation as we would like to give priority to members. A member cannot bring family or guests on the premises which would compromise the limited capacity that will be set forth by NYS & NYC . Thank you for your patience as we "figure this out". Stay safe and stay well.

The Maltese Center Committee

Cooking the Maltese Way – RABBIT STEW

What exactly that is depends on Maltese family recipes handed down over generations. In essence, rabbit cooked 'the Maltese way' sees the meat simmering away for around an hour and a half minimum – usually far longer – in a rich wine and tomato sauce infused with bay. My father-in-law does a mean rabbit and we meet at a large family gathering around twice a year for his famed 'fenkata' (rabbit meal in company). He prides himself on marinating the rabbit a good 24 hours in a bottle of red plonk (the local grocer's red wine is the norm) laced with garlic and generous handfuls of bay as well as other herbs he has to hand. The husband told me that this dish is one of Maltese kids' first intros to wine, which you'll often find served no frills in regular tumblers if you eat rabbit in village bars. Kids in his day would get an inch of wine topped up liberally with 7Up!

Perhaps they still do. Most Maltese make a large stew using around two or even three rabbits as the meal is a communal affair. Given that rabbit has fiddly joints you need that many to ensure there's a decent portion per person. The rabbits come with head (eyes) and all when you order one from the butcher. The liver, and sometimes the kidneys too, are fished out of the stew and eaten with spaghetti as a first course with liberal ladles of the thickened sauce. The stew proper is the main and served mostly with roast potatoes scattered with fennel seeds and accompanied by crusty Maltese bread. The sauce may contain peas, though I doubt this was the norm before the age of the fridge-freezer in rural homes as pea season lasts a mere month at the most in spring.



INGREDIENTS

- 2 rabbits skinned and jointed, with or without liver and kidneys
- ¾ bottle robust red wine (cheap and cheerful)
- approx. 2 wine glasses of water
- 2 onions, finely chopped
- 4 garlic cloves, peeled and crushed
- 8-10 bay leaves
- 1 x 400g can tomato polpa or whole plum tomatoes mashed up
- 3 tbsps tomato puree'
- 2 carrots, peeled and sliced
- 6-8 medium potatoes, peeled and roughly chopped
- salt & pepper
- 3 tbsp regular olive oil

METHOD

1. Marinate the rabbit in the wine, garlic and bay for an hour or two, or if possible the night before cooking. Cover and chill in the fridge.
2. When ready to cook, remove the rabbit joints from the marinade, shaking off excess liquid. Heat the olive oil over a high heat in a heavy-based casserole and sear the rabbit on all sides until lightly browned (approx 4 mins each side). Remove and set aside.
3. Lower the heat under the casserole and add the onion and some fresh bay leaves to the pan. Brown the onion gently for around 5 minutes, then add the garlic and continue to fry gently for another minute.
4. Add the tomato 'polpa' or peeled whole canned tomatoes mashed up, and increase the heat. Cook for around 5 minutes stirring a little, then add the marinade and bring to the boil. Return the rabbit joints to the pan, give a good shake and top up with water to just cover the rabbit. Cover, return to the boil, and then reduce to a medium simmer (gently bubbling).
5. After half an hour, add the sliced carrots, potatoes and tomato puree', shake the pot gently or stir to ensure the vegetables are covered with liquid. Continue to simmer the stew for around another half an hour.
6. At one hour, prop the lid half off to allow the sauce to thicken up. Check the rabbit after 15 minutes – the stew is ready when the rabbit is just falling off the bone and the root vegetables are tender.
7. Serve with fennel-seed and olive oil roast potatoes or regular potato mash and with white crusty bread to mop up the delicious and rich sauce.

Russian Centre for Science and Culture in Malta

ALEXANDER PUSHKIN
(1799-1837)



Pushkin would blend very well in our era of globalization. He was a man of the world. His great grandfather, Abram Petrovich Gannibal, of Ethiopian origin, was raised in Peter the Great's court household and became a Russian military engineer, general and nobleman.

Achilles Mizzi, a famous Maltese poet translated a number of Pushkin's poems into Maltese. Recalling his experience, Mizzi says that he could sense "the fiery temperament of a southerner subdued by the imprint of a civilisation that had become sophisticated". This is very close to the truth like Malta is very close to Africa!

There are more translations of Pushkin from Russian into Maltese - some of them done by our compatriot and poet Yana Psaila.

Read Pushkin's poems translated into Maltese on our Facebook page — among them are the most famous, which we study in school and still remember by heart after so many years. Do you agree with what the prominent Maltese poet says about his Russian "colleague"?

Creative Evening of Vladimir Vysotsky's Poetry in Interpretation of the Russian-Maltese Poetess Yana Psaila



On February 19 a creative evening of poetry of Vladimir Vysotsky in the interpretation of the Russian-Maltese poetess Yana Psaila was held at the Russian Centre for Science and Culture.

The evening was dedicated to the 80th anniversary of the composer and poet Vladimir Vysotsky.

Poems and songs were performed in Russian and Maltese. Yana Psaila is a poet and translator, the author of

Russian-Maltese and Maltese-Russian phrase books, a participant in an international project of translating poetry by V. Vysotsky into 157 languages.

The guests of the evening were members of the Malta Poets' Union, famous actors, translators, and students of Russian as a foreign language courses.

At the beginning of the evening Yana Psaila introduced the biography, acting and musical careers of Vladimir Vysotsky to the guests, and the main part of the program became screening of videos with songs performed by Vysotsky, to which Yana recited the translation into Maltese. The program of the event included songs "I Do Not Like", "He Did Not Return from the Fight", "Fastidious Hours", "Lyrical", "Ships", "Song of a Friend", "Song of the Earth." Each verse was greeted with a storm of applause from the guests.

This is the first experience in the history of translating Vysotsky's works into Maltese. At the end of the evening the Maltese guests asked many questions not only about Vysotsky, but also Russian language and literature.



Ms. Abigail Mallia, Director of Take 2 Entertainment, "Limestone Cowboy explores Maltese culture and celebrates it in an authentic way through a universal human story of a family grappling with the discomforting notion of a delusional parent. Karist believes he is The Limestone Cowboy - the heroic protagonist from a woven tale told by his

LIMESTONE COWBOY

late father, and as the quintessential hero, Karist runs for office to save his country. Little does he realise that he is in fact the object of national ridicule, consequently bringing shame and heartache to his family. *Limestone Cowboy* has been screened in local cinemas and festivals, and has received overwhelming feedback, but as an effort to bring indigenous films to an international market, they have made *Limestone*

Cowboy available to stream world wide via: <https://vimeo.com/ondemand/limestonecowboy> ".



Ħareġ it-tmien episodju mis-sensiela ta' podcasts Xpatapumm!

Illum, ma' Clare u Chris, **misteri u investigazzjonijiet** galore, u anki nirkbu fuq **magna taż-żmien**. U nilqgħu magħna mistieden speċjali ieħor:

lil John Bonello

Din hi l-

ħolqa: <https://anchor.fm/merlinpublishers/episodes/Ilt-tmien-podcast-ef2gpl>
 Ħudu gost!

ROSS IL-FORM – BAKED RICE**MALTESE CUISINE**

Ross il-forn in Maltese literally translates to *baked rice*. It is a popular rice dish in Malta and can be considered the ultimate Maltese comfort food. Although it takes some time to prepare the dish from scratch, there is nothing too complicated about it. Once at it, I like to make extra portions and freeze them for future meals.

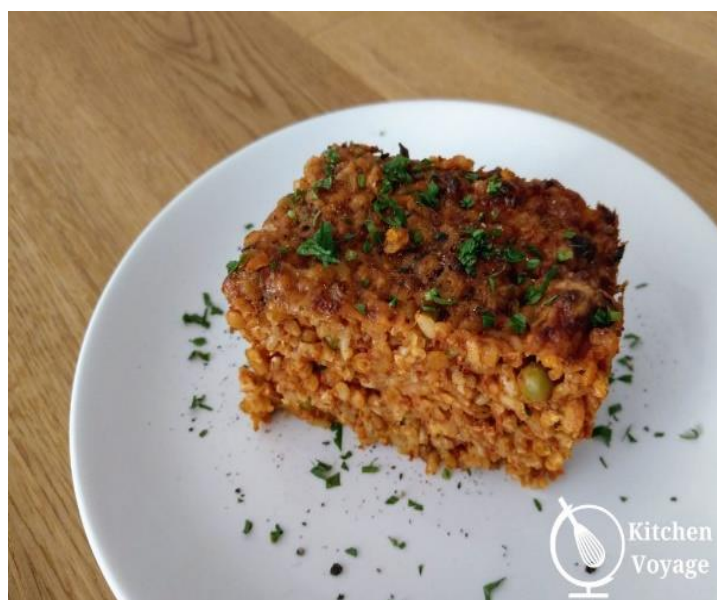
Traditionally, the recipe calls for ground beef and pork as well as slices of bacon. However, I have used the traditional Maltese recipe as an inspiration to turn this dish into a vegetarian one. I have used red lentils to substitute the meat and also used a good quality vegetable stock rather than beef stock.

Traditionally, parboiled long grain rice is used for this dish. It is mixed into the meaty tomato sauce, placed in an oven dish and cooked together in the oven. I prefer wholegrain rice and therefore, I have pre-cooked it before adding it to the sauce.

Here's my vegetarian twist on the tradition Maltese *Ross il-Forn*... Enjoy!

Ingredients

- 500g wholegrain rice
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- 1l boiling water
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 chili pepper (optional)
- 2 bayleaf
- 1 tbsp tomato paste
- 800g tomato passata
- 1 tbsp vegetable stock powder
- 1 tsp curry powder
- 300g dried red lentils, rinsed and drained
- 100g frozen peas, thawed
- Salt & black pepper
- Handful of fresh parsley, chopped
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 150g kefalotyri or pecorino, grated cheese

**Directions**

1. For the sauce: In a large saucepan, heat the olive oil and sauté the onion until translucent. Add the garlic, chili pepper (if using) and the bayleaf and cook for another 2 minutes.
2. Add the tomato paste and stir everything while cooking for another 2 minutes. Add the tomato passata, vegetable stock powder, curry powder and season with salt and pepper. Bring to a gentle simmer.
3. Add the red lentils to the tomato sauce and let it cook for 20 minutes.
4. Preheat the oven to 220 degrees Celsius.
5. For the rice: Place the rice in the oven dish, sprinkle the oregano and add a good pinch of salt and a generous grind of black pepper. Pour over the boiling water and cover tightly with aluminium foil. Bake for 20 minutes or until the rice is almost fully cooked. The water should be fully absorbed by the rice in this time. Remove from the oven.
6. Lower the oven temperature to 180 degrees Celsius.
7. Pour the tomato sauce over the rice, add the peas and 1/3 of the cheese. Mix to combine, making sure that the rice is well covered with the sauce and everything is evenly distributed.
8. Add the parsley and the beaten eggs and mix everything again.
9. Top with the remaining cheese and place in the oven.
10. Bake for 30 minutes until firm and the top is golden brown. MARICA - <https://www.kitchenvoyage.com/>



Watch: The Fox and the Goat – reading by My Storytime

Coryse Borg [Newsbook.com.mt](https://www.newsbook.com.mt) features a reading from [MyStorytime](https://www.facebook.com/MyStorytimeMalta/) (<https://www.facebook.com/MyStorytimeMalta/>). Today's offering is Aesop's fable The Fox and the Goat, which is suitable for children from four to six years old. Happy

listening and happy reading.



Taħt il-Qoxra: Louise Vella

I would like to bring the following book to attention of your readers, written by the young Maltese writer and poet, Ms Louise Vella who published her first book in 2019 with the title 'Lethe A Rhapsody of Life Remembered'. The book consists of poems related to Malta mainly written in English but also in Maltese. I have read that book which has been recommended to me by the author herself

who works at the book shop from where I have obtained it. For I am interested in nearly everything about Malta, mainly in Maltese history but also other subjects like culture and the Maltese language as well, I gave the book a try for reading and I am still very much impressed by the writing style of Ms Vella and her poetry which distinct itself from the usual poetry that is available.

For I also know from my reading of books and articles related to Malta and the Maltese media, I know about the Maltese diaspora and I thought that because this book is already a part of modern Maltese culture, it might be good to recommend it to you and maybe bring it to the attention of others via your website.

For more information please click on the following link of the online book shop of Book Distributors Limited Malta (BDL). <https://bdlbooks.com/product/lethe-a-rhapsody-of-life-remembered/>

For further information about the book and the author herself click on the following links which provide articles from other websites and an audio page with an interview with the author by Radju Malta from 31.05.2020.

<https://www.telltellpoetry.com/blog/2020/3/5/n57g5e4wuwwq4e5fn0ugg477ietbl0u>

If you would like to contact the author Ms Louise Vella at BDL during her office hours from Mo - Fr from 9am to 5pm (local time in Malta) please send an email to marketing@bdlbooks.com and you will be in direct contact with her. I am myself no Maltese but my vast interest in Malta has already led me to start learning Maltese as another foreign language.

If you would be that kind to bring this new Maltese author to the attention of other readers of your website, you would be helping a new emerging natural writers talent from Malta and this is the reason for why I am contacting you, so that you could look into the links and read for yourself.

This contact from me has no commercial bearings whatsoever and is just done for the benefit of a new writers talent, Ms Vella, from Malta.

Best regards, Thomas Barna

https://www.facebook.com/lethepoetry/?ref=py_c

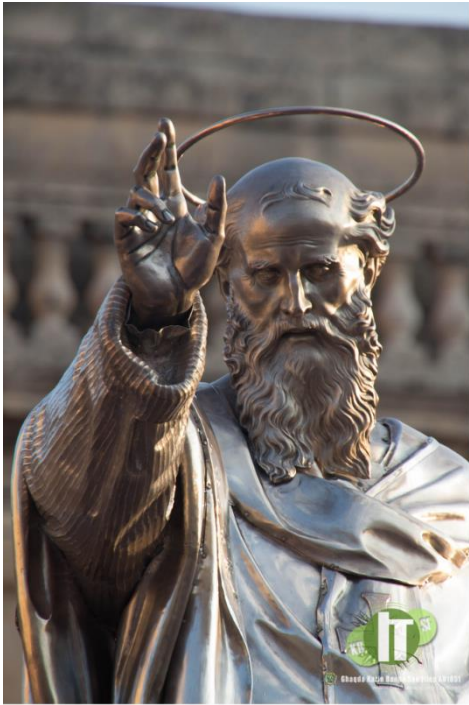
<https://www.instagram.com/lethe.poetry/?hl=en>

<https://ktieb.org.mt/taht-il-qoxra-louise-vella/>

<https://soundcloud.com/user-436072438/episodju-138-mistiedna-louise-vella>

<https://www.telltellpoetry.com/blog/2020/3/5/n57g5e4wuwwq4e5fn0ugg477ietbl0u>

Half-million euro St Philip silver statue of Ғаž-Ғеbbuğ



tvm.com.mt

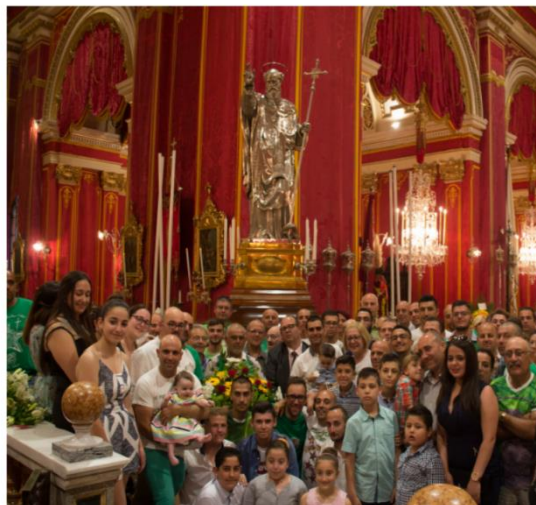
With summer fast approaching, as the Maltese and Gozitans will now resort to sun bathing and swimming, during these coming days they will also miss their enthusiasm of the feasts season.

If Covid-19 repercussion had not denied feast enthusiasts, today would have been the turn of Ғаž-Ғеbbuğ enthusiasts and residents to celebrate their patron St Philip at the locality.

Apart from the feast atmosphere there is also an interesting factor connected with the feast – the statue of St Philip. Excluding the statue's head, hands, feet and the snake which are made of solid silver, the statue consists of 76 plates of some 36 kilograms of silver.

Speaking to tvn.com.mt the 'Għaqda Każin Banda San Filep secretary Brian Bonnici, PRO Philip Balzan and IT committee member Christopher Cutajar Kunitat IT stated that the statue was manufactured with hammered silver plates, which makes it among the few large statues of this type in the world.

The feast of St. Philip Neri at Zebbug Malta



Asked about the cost of the statue, the society's three members said that if the expense on the statue work was converted in today's money value, it will cost some half a million euro in total. At that time, a government worker earned an annual wage of £20, which in today's money is some €10,000 a year. This means that, as the statue's cost was equal to the annual wages of 46 workers, most probably the statue had cost some €460,000.

The silver work on the St Philip statue was carried out in Rome by Luigi Fontana, one of the best artist in Tommaso Minardi's workshop. Before being transported to Malta on the 13th July 1863, the statue was taken to the Vatican where it was blessed by Pope Piju IX and exhibited for some days. <https://europe.easybranches.com/malta/2283498>

IMAGINE

If we work together instead of pulling the same rope in opposite direction, we will achieve so much for all Maltese living abroad.

Half of Msida's population is foreign, pipping St Paul's Bay



Commuter town that serves both Sliema and Valletta business districts sees population growth solely through foreign workers

by Kurt Sansone maltatoday.com.mt

Msida eclipsed St Paul's Bay with the highest concentration of foreign residents, a breakdown of population figures by locality shows. The population of Msida by the end of 2018 stood at 13,713, half of which were foreigners. The share of foreign residents living in Msida increased from 42% in 2017 to 49% a year later, placing the locality ahead of St Paul's Bay.

The figures were obtained from the National Statistics Office after last week's publication of regional population, social and economic statistics.

Msida's population grew by 1,500 in just 12 months, with the increase attributed solely to foreign residents. St Paul's Bay had the second highest concentration of foreigners with 48% of the locality's population classified as non-Maltese.

The northern seaside locality was Malta's largest town in 2018 with just over 29,000 residents, an increase of almost 3,000 on the previous year. Foreigners, again, accounted for the bulk of that increase.

Gzira came in third with its share of foreign residents hitting 45% of the population, an increase of five points over the previous year. Gzira's total population stood at 11,669, a growth of 885 that was completely attributed to foreigners who moved into the locality.

Birżebbuġa, which placed sixth, was the only town from the south that made it into the top 10 ranking for the highest concentration of foreign residents living within a locality.

Non-Maltese residents accounted for 35% of Birżebbuġa's population, which would include migrants living at the Hal Far migrant open centre.

The next southern town with a high concentration of foreigners was Marsaskala that came in 11th with 22%. On the flipside, the town with the lowest concentration of foreign residents was Mtarfa with just 1%, followed by Dingli, Mqabba, Santa Luċija and Kirkop, each at 2%.

St Paul's Bay, Birkirkara, Sliema largest localities

St Paul's Bay retained the top spot as the largest locality in Malta with a population of 29,097 by the end of 2018. The locality has seen the largest increase in population over recent years, registering a whopping growth of 117% since 2005 when the town had 13,414 residents.

Birkirkara, which has the second largest population at 24,356, only registered an 11% increase between 2005 and 2018. Sliema, which reversed the downward trend it had been experiencing for decades, is now the third largest locality with 22,591 residents. The locality saw its population increase by 71% since 2005.

Marsaskala and Swieqi, with populations of 14,592 and 14,452 respectively, are the ninth and 10th largest localities. But they have experienced significant growth since 2005 with Marsaskala's population growing by 56% and Swieqi's by 76%.

Msida	49% (+7pts)
St Paul's bay	48% (+5)
Gzira	45% (+5)
Sliema	39% (+3)
St Julian's	38% (+4)
Birżebbuġa	35% (+2)
Swieqi	29% (+3)
Ta' Xbiex	28% (+2)
Mellieha	28% (+3)
Pieta	25% (+5)



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THE WIGNACOURT AQUADUCT BUILT

APRIL 1616

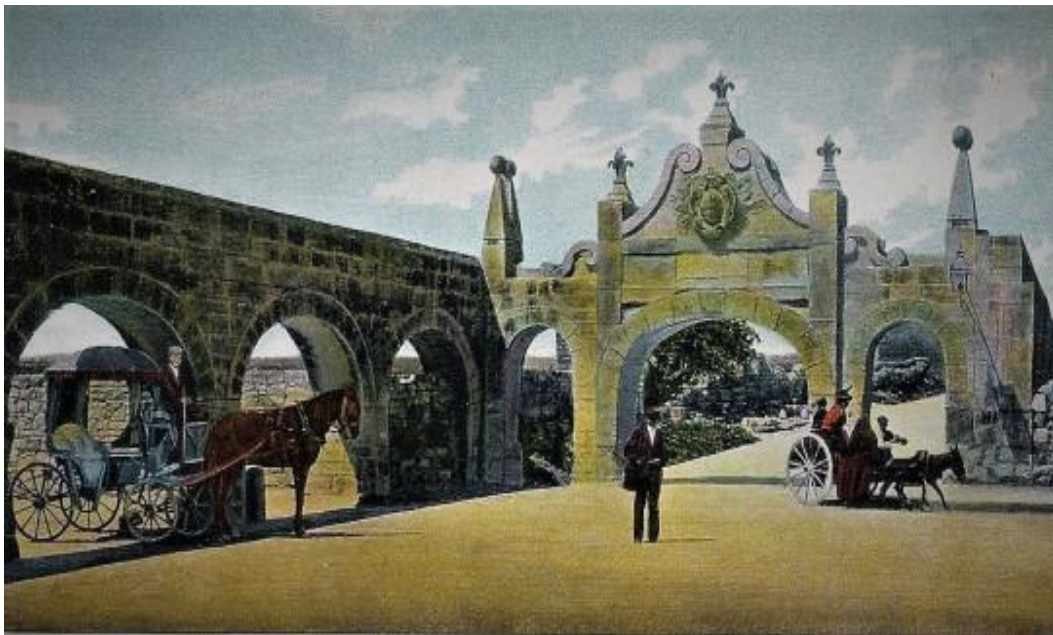
When Valletta was being built, the Order of St John had ensured that its population would have its essential supply of water. All houses, palaces, convents and churches had their own wells dug out underneath their edifices. Numerous large collective cisterns were also dug out at various locations inside the city walls. This notwithstanding, over the years, due to

the ever increasing population, supply was not keeping up with consumption. The Grand Master of the time, Alof de Wignacourt, (r. 1601-1622), decided to raise funds, so that potable water would be harnessed from the natural springs around the higher and fertile grounds of Rabat and Mdina and be conducted to Valletta. In 1610, an Italian civil engineer, the Jesuit, Natale Tomasucci, was brought over to Malta to devise and work on this water channelling system. However, after some while the project stalled due to insurmountable technical problems.

Another engineer, Bontadino Bontadini was called in. He advocated the use of a new type of cementing material that would withstand the pressure of flowing water. This cement contained *pozzolana*, a composite of volcanic ash that was imported from Pozzuoli, (hence the name), near Naples. For part of the distance where the gradient of the land was downhill, the water canal ran underground. When reaching the outskirts of H'Attard a series of arches were set up to support the channelling to flow further. This structure extended several hundred metres in all. Further

channelling conducted the water supply, all the way to Floriana and Valletta. The total distance that the aqueduct covered was twelve kilometres.

On April 21 of 1616, Grand Master Alof de Wignacourt ceremoniously inaugurated the project that was meant to sustain human life and commerce inside Malta's capital. The whole project amounted to



400,000 *scudi* (at that time, one *scudo* was worth an average of a month's salary paid to an unskilled worker.)



Medical student chosen for e-book publication on Covid-19 in New York

Report: Maria Muscat

A 22-year-old student, Rebecca Caruana, has written an e-book about the current Covid-19 pandemic that is to be published in a few days' time in New York in conjunction with WHO and US Disease Control Centres. Rebecca said she had never aspired she would be given this unique opportunity to further

increase greater awareness of the virus.

Obviously pleased, Rebecca Caruana who is a second year medical student at Malta University said she had written an article in local media about the virus and had then received a telephone call from a doctor in New York and at first she had thought this was a joke.

She said the doctor told her she would be interviewed about the project and everything transpired as he had said. Over and above being a medical student and manning the line 111 to give Covid-19 information she had been working continually on the site 'COVID-19, The Reason Why the Earth Stood Still' that is to be published in New York in a few days' time.

The Minister for Education, Dr Owen Bonnici, met with Rebecca Caruana and praised her initiative which he said was an educational means and a point of reference to the public about the pandemic. The book was compiled in collaboration with New York doctor Syed Rizvi, dentist Pippasha Khan from London and speech therapist Daniel Hrbolio from Melbourne. WHO and US disease control centres have given the rights of this publication



MOAS donates 21 tablets to immigrant students in Malta

MOAS (Migrant Offshore Aid Station) has said it is near to immigrant families in Malta and has donated 21 tablets to vulnerable students to enable the continuation of their studies. This will enable them to continue their studies online during the pandemic which was hindering the continuation of their

educational studies.

Under the project, known as the Malta Remote Learning Project, MOAS donated 21 Samsung tablets while 21 modems were donated by GO Mobile as well as internet membership valid for six months. families most in need while helping the NGO to distribute the important electronic equipment.



GEMMA will be organising webinars on various topics: pulse survey on household money management, scams and frauds, family budgeting and more. A panel of professionals will be interacting with participants to answer their questions. For more details <http://gemma.gov.mt>

IT'S NICE TO BE IMPORTANT, BUT IT MORE IMPORTANT TO BE NICE



JUM IL-MISSIER *mill-korrispondent taghna l-Kav. Joe M Attard - Ghawdex*

Bħalma matul Mejju fakkarna Jum l-Omm, jixraq li f'dan ix-xahar ta' Gunju, aħna nfakkru Jum il-Missier għaliex dan ukoll jixraq li jkollu t-tifkira tiegħu. Jekk l-Omm hija l-perm tal-familja, żgur li l-Missier huwa l-fus li fuq jrid idur kollox. F'festa bħal din, bla dubju ta' xejn aħna ma niftakrux biss fil-misserijiet li niltaqgħu magħhom kuljum, iżda wkoll f'dawk li ħallewna. Għalhekk f'dan il-jum ta' tifkira, il-Moviment ta' Kana f'Malta u Ghawdex mhux darba u tnejn ha' ħsieb jorganizza Quddiesa għal ruħ dawk il-missirijiet li ma għadhomx magħna u li f'dan il-jum ma nistgħux nersqu għandhom u nsejthom b'dik il-kelma tant helwa ta' 'pa'. Hafna u hafna huma dawk l-ulied li f'dan il-Jum imorru jqiegħdu bukkett ward ifuħ fuq midfen missierhom; it-tifkira tiegħu ma tghib qatt minn quddiem għajnejhom u mal-poeta Kapuċċin Patri Matthew Sultana, jistqarru b'mod speċjali f'dan il-jum:

*Bqajt sallum, għażiż missieri,
Bil-mewt tiegħek mingħajr
sabar,
Ma nistax indaħħal f'moħħi
Li tinsab magħluq f'dal-qabar.*

*Tkellem int, għażiż missieri,
Qum farragħni b'żewġ kelmiet,
Semma' leħnek għal darb'oħra
F'din il-ħemda, f'dan is-skiet!*

*Nigi nitlob fuq il-qabar
Jew inqegħidlek xi ftit fjuri,
Jigi x'jgħidli: 'Għal missierek
Dawn bla fwieħa, bla kuluri!'*

*X'jiswa qatt li ma rridx nemmen!
Naf li mejjet hawn tinsab
Rajtek niezze f'din il-ħofra,
Bkejtek mgħotti taht it-trab.*

*Għidli mmela fejn infittex
Dak il-ferħ tat-tnejn flimkien
Għax mill-jum li fih infidna
Ma sibt faraġ qatt u mkien.*

*Mis-smewwiet għażiż missieri,
Tinsinix, jien l-iben tiegħek;
Jew tagħtini l-mixtieq sabar,
Jew inkella ħudni miegħek*

Naturalment aħna ma rridux ninsew imbagħad lil dawk il-misserijiet anzjani, forsi xi wħud minhom f'sieq wħda fil-qabar, li llum taw il-ħidma tagħhom u forsi jinsabu fl-isptarijiet jew f'xi dar tax-xjuħ, xi wħud minnhom forsi anke minsija mill-istess uliedhom li għalihom min jaf kemm għamlu sagrifċċji! M'għandniex inkunu ngrati lejn dawn, għax forsi issa ma jistgħux jgħinuna iktar, ma jistgħux jieħdu ħsiebna. Iż-żmien qiegħed hemm u dan hu xhieda shiħa tas-sehem tagħhom fl-imghoddi. Xi membri ta' Kana, ta' l-Azzjoni Kattolika, tal-Legion of Mary, ta' l-Għaqda Hbieb tal-Morda u l-Anzjani, gie li jmorru jzuruhom f'darhom jew fl-isptarijiet u jehdulhom xi rigali żgħar. Kemm jieħdu gost bihom u wiċċhom jixgħel bil-ferħ.

Meta mbagħad nitkellmu mill-misserijiet li għadhom fiż-żmien, tajjeb li ngħidu, li dawn jieħdu gost b'xi kumpliment jew b'xi rigal ċekken li jkun geġ mill-qalb. Niftakru li l-qalb tal-missier hija kbira wisq. Hudu l-eżempju tal-Missier ta' dak l-Iben il-Hali. Wara azzjoni hekk kiefra, il-missier tela' fuq il-bejt biex jara jilmaħx lil dan ibnu l-mitluf, u meta lemħu geġ, x'ma għamilx biex jilqgħu fi ħdanu! Meta Sid il-Holqien ried johloq sieħba lil Adam, hu mar jisraqlu kustilja minn ħdejn qalbu biex jagħmillu mara li thobbu. Kull missier għandu parti kbira u mportanti x'jagħti lill-familja tiegħu, b'mod speċjali lil uliedu. Ix-xogħol ta' dirgħajh jew ta' moħħu huwa l-ghixien tal-membri li jiddependu għal kollox minnu. Huwa irid jahseb bil-għaqal tiegħu u hafna drabi b'sagrificċju personali għall-gejjieni tat-tfal. Mhemmx għalfejn immur fil-bogħod wisq. Missieri kien ħaddiem modest li bata hafna biex rabbiena s-sebgha li konna. Ta' tifel li kont niftakar li gie li għadda jum shiħ bla ma kont narah għaliex kien ibakkar biex jiftaħ hanutu waqt li jien kont inkun għadni qed nixxaħxaħ taht il-kutri shan u mhux darba u tnejn omni kienet tigborna fl-ghaxija fis-sodda wara hames posti rużarju u missieri jkun għadu ma giex lura mix-xogħol, imma għadu sejjer bis-sahra biex iwarraħ xi sold; għax lil omni kont nismagħha tghid 'li punt fis-sahra jitma l-ħmara'! U dan kollu għalfejn! Biex seta' jrabbina nieqsa minn xejn u jedukana kif xtaqna.

Flimkien ma' martu, il-missier ħabrieke u għaqli jrid jara li l-familja tiegħu, bħal Arka ta' Noe, tibqa' miexja 'l quddiem, imħarsa u mkenna mill-perikli kollha li tiltaqa' magħhom f'dawn iż-żmenijiet kruċjali

ta' materjalizmu u divertiment bla rażan. Il-missier ma huwiex biss dak il-bniedem li jiehu ħsieb iġib id-dar is-salarju, iżda wkoll dak il-moħħ u l-qalb li tiehu ħsieb tmexxi b'dixxiplina u mħabba lill-ulied fit-triq li twassal għal hena u l-iġulija. Il-preżenza tal-missier fil-familja hija meħtieġa għall-formazzjoni tal-karattru tat-tfal. Jagħmlu żball daww il-missierijiet li biex mingħajr vera bżonn li jaqilghu ħafna flus, biex mingħalihom uliedhom jgħixu aħjar, tant jitgħabbew b'xogħol li f'it ikunu jistgħu joqogħdu ma' uliedhom biex jilagħbu f'it magħhom jew joqogħdu jisimghuhom, skond l-eta tagħhom. Hbieb tiegħi nvoluti ħafna fil-ħajja pubblika, fil-ħajja tal-kummerċ, fid-dinja ta' l-ispettaklu llum jgħiduli kemm iddispjaċihom li lil uliedhom ma rawhomx jikbru!

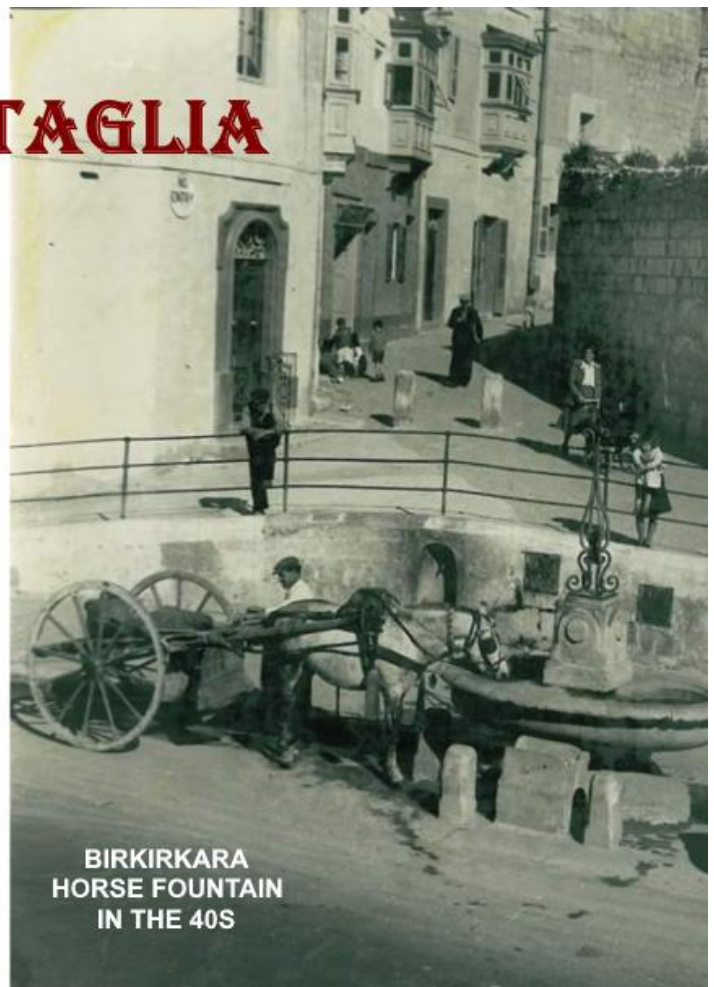
Illum mhux il-waqt li noqogħdu ngħidu x'inhuma d-dmirijiet tal-missier u d-diffikultajiet li jrid jiffaċċja fil-qadi tagħhom. Illum nifirħu fil-festa tiegħu u nittamaw li bħas-snin l-imghoddija, dan il-Jum ikun ta' okkażjoni fejn matulu l-ulied kollha fil-għejjer Maltin juru r-rispett u l-apprezzament tagħhom lejn missierhom billi l-ewwelnett jitolbu għal daww li għadhom magħna waqt li ma jinsewx lil daww li diġa ħallewna, u billi joffru xi rigal sabiħ bħala turija ta' mħabba sinċiera u ta' radd il-ħajr lejhom.

F'din il-ghodwa, ħalli mmela l-ulied kollha jingħaqdu flimkien u b'vuċi waħda, jgħidulu lil missierhom:

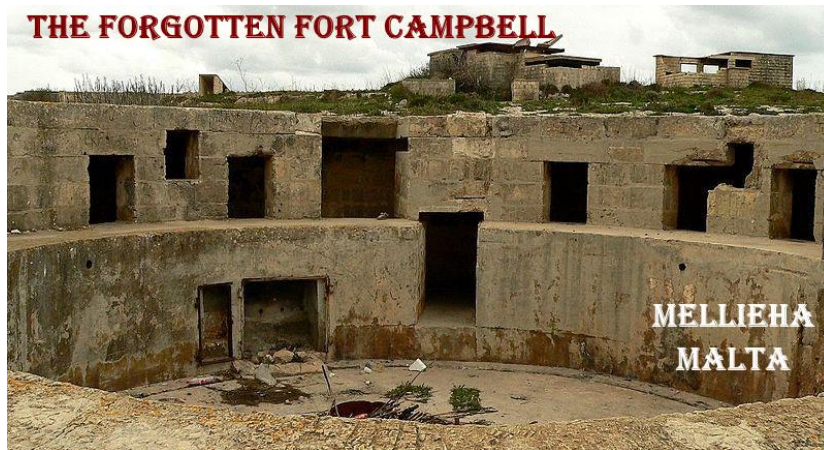
*O Missier, aħna uliedek,
Illum nixtiequ li nuruk
Li mħabbtina qatt ma tieqaf –
F'ħajtek, f'mewtek, inħobbuk!*

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FORT CAMPBELL **MELLIEHA – MALTA**

HISTORY Fort Campbell is located on the Selmun peninsula, roughly halfway between [Mistra Battery](#) and the ruins of [Għajn Hadid Tower](#), and facing [St Paul's Islands](#). It was built to protect the approach to both Mellieħa Bay and [St. Paul's Bay](#). It also protected British [seaplanes](#) which landed in Mistra Bay. The fort took over the role of [Wardija Battery](#), which had been built in 1915.

Before construction of the fort began, Governor [Charles Bonham-Carter](#) visited the site. Work on the fort probably began in December 1937, and work was hurried after the [Munich Agreement](#) of September 1938.^[4] The fort was modified throughout the course of [World War II](#), when barracks were built and a radar was installed. It is not known exactly when the fort was decommissioned. After the war, its strategic importance diminished and it was on the verge of being closed by 1949. However, the fort remained in military hands and a watchman remained stationed there until the 1970s.

LAYOUT Fort Campbell is very different from earlier fortifications in Malta, such as the bastioned forts built by the [Knights Hospitaller](#) and the [polygonal forts](#) built by the British in the 19th century. Due to the new threat of [aerial warfare](#), the fort was surrounded by a thin wall, and the buildings were placed at a distance from each other. Due to this, the fort was camouflaged as from the air it resembled the field walls of the surrounding countryside. Unlike many of the earlier fortifications, Fort Campbell was unadorned. For example, the fort's gateway is just a breach in the perimeter wall defended by a guard room,

in contrast with the usually ornate gates of many Hospitaller or Victorian forts.

Fort Campbell's design is similar to other fortifications built before and during World War II throughout the British Empire, such as [Fort Stanley](#) in [Hong Kong](#), [Good Head Battery](#) in [New Zealand](#), [Brownstone Battery](#) in [Devon](#), and [Fort Sutor](#) in [Scotland](#).

The fort had two gun emplacements which were armed with 6-inch BL guns. A third gun emplacement may have housed another 6-inch gun or a heavy anti-aircraft

gun. In addition, a number of concrete machine gun posts (similar to [pillboxes](#)) and rifle loopholes were placed at irregular intervals around the perimeter wall. The buildings in the fort included Battery Observation Post, which served as the command post of the fort and had a gun control room and an underground plotting room. The fort also had direction posts, a water tank, underground magazines, a generator room and rock-hewn bomb shelters. Defence Electric Lights and [searchlight](#) emplacements were also built outside the perimeter wall on the shoreline.

In 1942, barracks were built outside the fort to house the force of infantry that was stationed in Selmun. Various [Nissen](#) and [Romney huts](#) were also built inside and outside the fort.

PRESENT DAY Since Fort Campbell was decommissioned, it has fallen into a state of neglect and disrepair. It still retains most of its original features, although many rooms are in ruins. The fort was vandalized repeatedly, and in 2004 the fire control position was completely destroyed by vandals. At some point, the iron beams that supported the roof of the barracks were stolen, and due to this some of the blocks have collapsed or are in danger of collapsing. Since the fort is abandoned, it is possible to enter, but parts of it are dangerous to visitors.

The mayor of the Mellieħa Local Council, Robert Cutajar, is attempting to restore the fort.^[5] Until now, the site was never restored since it would be very expensive given the large area of the fort. It has been proposed that the site be rehabilitated as a picnic or camping site. In 2014, Prime Minister [Joseph Muscat](#) stated that the government intends to rehabilitate the fort and the surrounding area.



The first vehicle I painted was a Hillman Mix, which belonged to my father. In those days, in the 1950s, tberfil was a popular craft. Many carts had tberfil and later you could see tberfil on local buses as well. I was always fond of painting. I have beautiful reminders here of the work that I have done throughout the years. When the fuel business started dwindling, I focused my energy on tberfil. I quit my job and started my own tberfil business. I used to work from 6.30am till 9pm. Back in the day, I only used paint brushes. I have worked on all sorts of things, but my greatest pleasure is working on trucks.

I never gave up. I worked hard to ensure that the clients got what they requested. Saint names and

horse heads were very popular on buses, carts and trucks respectively. When they asked me to write names or indecent words, I declined. When I finished my work on a coach, they would attach the number plate here and they would leave the workshop, all ready and done. I can't say that it was a boring job. I felt sad when I finished my work on a bus and it left the premises. My greatest joy was going to Valletta and seeing my work on display. I ask myself, "Has it really been 45 years?" Tberfil is declining rapidly. I have retired now; I no longer do this work. I kept this van as a reminder. It was thrown away; I brought it here, cleaned it, fixed it and gave it a fresh paint of coat."Supported by: [Excel Homes Malta](http://www.excel.com.mt) - www.excel.com.mt - [PEOPLE OF MALTA](https://www.facebook.com/peopleofmalta)

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— with [Alice Darmanin](#) i

L-Arkivji Nazzjonali ta' Malta

1919 Passport Photo

Francesco and Vittoria Azzopardi,
together with their children;
Carmela, Michel'Angelo,
Giuseppe, Antonio and Annibale.
A family from Mellieha.
Destination: Australia.





Once upon a time, olive oil was more precious than gold

ALBERT FENECH

e/mail – salina46af@gmail.com

The Mediterranean Sea, Mediterranean countries, olives and olive oil intermingle, live and thrive off each other – and in Malta, no less. It is believed the olive tree was first cultivated in Malta by the Phoenicians about 1,500 BC and then further cultivated strongly by the Romans during their lengthy sojourn in Malta. The Romans used the fishing village of Marsaxlokk as a port and this led to the founding of the town today still known as Zejtun for olive cultivation. The name itself Zejtun comes from the Arabic word 'Zejtuna' (olive), the word for oil being 'zejt'. This in turn led to the nearby locality of Bir-id-Deheb (the well of gold as olive oil was regarded as being as precious as gold) and then down to the bay of Birzebbuga, literally meaning a well of olives. Further inland there is the old town of Zebbug, from the word olive because of the extensive cultivation of olive groves.

Zejtun nowadays holds a week-end dedicated to 'Zejt iz-Zejtun' in the latter part of September, a veritable feast of olives and olive products – sadly, postponed this year.

Traces of the Malta olive story go back to Neolithic temples in which several carbonised remains of tree species were found, including the *Olea europea* (olive).

Very unfortunately there were long stretches over centuries when olive groves were vastly overlooked and classed to be of little importance. Many were cut down during the time of the Knights to provide wood for their galleys and ship repairs. To add insult to injury for several centuries cotton was seen to be of greater value (Maltese cotton was famous throughout Europe) than olives, and whole groves were demolished to make way for cotton fields – of which today there are none!

However, over the last 35 or so years there has been a great resurgence and olive groves have thankfully returned with a vengeance and oil pressing has become a speciality, one of the foremost experts being one Sam Cremona who has his own olive press. Naturally, the process is now modernised as opposed to the days of manual grinding or making a poor donkey walk around and circulate for days on end to gear-drive the stone grinding presses.

Cold press is known to produce the best oil because the olives are circulated in large cylindrical drums and the centrifugal process divides water in its outer layer, followed by a circle of broken olives debris with the precious oil as an inner layer that is then oozed away by a pipe and goes into large drums to be bottled.

Carrying out a DNA profile study, some years back, Oriana Mazzitelli working in conjunction with the University of Malta, employed genetic studies and concluded on the different types of Maltese olive cultivars and more importantly, the Maltese wild olive and she then compared these to two Italian and two Tunisian cultivars, that is Carolea and Chemlali. She also managed to identify four cultivars indigenous to the Maltese islands: the Bidni, Malti, White Olive or bajda and the Maltese wild oleaster.

Amazingly enough, a field of magnificent old and gnarled trees can be found in a field in the area known as Bidnija, and its rural village. The trees and olives are known as Bidni. Carbon dating on the trees established there are some that are no less than 2,000 years old.

Very much a part of the Mediterranean Diet, almost every type of typical Maltese food preparation involves the use of olive oil. In days when poverty was widespread a meal often consisted of thick slices of crunchy bread layered generously with olive oil topped with thinly-mashed fresh tomatoes, topped with fresh basil and finally topped off with lashings of black pepper and salt. This in fact is the base for the birth of the Neapolitan pizza, the Pizza Margherita – fresh dough with olive oil topped with fresh tomato spread and basil, a dish pioneered by Queen Margherita of Naples to provide a cheap food source for the poor.

Nowadays the bread and oil have become a favoured snack, varied with fresh crusty bread dipped in a mix of olive oil and balsamic vinegar and then dipped in black pepper and salt.