



Maltese eNewsletter

maltesejournal@gmail.com

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Editor: Frank Scicluna

VICTORY DAY 8 SEPTEMBER MALTA



VIVA
MALTA

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**Ludwig van
Beethoven**



**Princess Diana statue to be installed
to mark her 60th birthday**

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By [ChiaraM](#)

Jum il-Vitorja or *Il-Bambina* commemorates not one, but *four* important events in Maltese history. Malta loves a feast, and this one's no exception, reigning as one of the most important *festas* around. However let's first start off by why it's called *Il-Bambina*.

The feast originally celebrates the Virgin Mary's nativity, and needless to say, local parishes go all out. Altars are dressed in lavish garlands, red *damask* is hanged all over the place and the most beautiful ornaments are put out on display. Towns are decorated and local bands fill the streets with joyous marches. Throughout Malta's long and tumultuous history however, it became known as 'Our Lady of Victories' – and for good reason.



The date holds a special place in the annals of Maltese history, for it marks the defeat of the Ottoman invaders during the Great Siege of 1565, and the victory over the French in 1800. The 8th of September also marks the switch Italy made from the Axis to the Allied forces in 1943 which would prove vital to Malta's survival.

Turning the clock back a few centuries, the Great Siege was also a big deal for the Maltese. The bloodbath experienced during this war was on a level locals had never witnessed before, and Ottoman victory was all but an absolute certainty. Assistance was

8 September : Victory Day

provided to the Maltese on the 7th of September, resulting in a major setback for the Ottomans.

On the other hand when the [French](#) invaded our country two centuries later, the Maltese had already endured a number of injustices such as the [looting](#) of the churches, so when the locals fought off the invaders with the help of the [British](#), it was seen as a local victory (even though they technically kicked out the French three days prior the actual *Bambina* celebrations).

In the [Second World War](#), Mussolini devised Operation Hercules. His aims included cutting off supply routes to Malta in an effort to take over the islands. Add to this, a blitz of bombs and air raids continuously pommelling the islands made Malta one of the most heavily-bombed places in WWII.

That jump Italy made to join the Allies? The near constant bombardment by the Italian forces all came to a halt, and Operation Hercules was deemed a failure, the Italians surrendered on the 8th of September — which happened to be the Great Siege's anniversary. So as you can see this *fešta* is quite a big deal for the Maltese Islands both historically and religiously.



MALTA LIVING ABROAD

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Statue of Princess Diana coming to Kensington Palace on what would be her 60th birthday

A much anticipated statue of Princess Diana will be installed in the Sunken Garden of Kensington Palace on July 1, 2021, the palace announced Friday.

"The statue that Prince William and Prince Harry have commemorate their mother, Diana, installed next year on what would Birthday," Kensington Palace said in was first commissioned only two children, in 2017 to mark death.

after a car crash in the Pont D'Alma Harry were 15 and 12, respectively,

walks with sons Prince Harry and College, Berkshire, England, Sept. 6,

statement in 2017 that said, "It has mother's death and the time is right impact in the UK and around the statue. Our mother touched so many help all those who visit Kensington

commissioned to Princess of Wales, will be have been her 60th a statement. The statue by William and Harry, Diana's the 20th anniversary of her Diana died in August 1997 Bridge in Paris. William and at the time.

Diana, Princess of Wales Prince William at the Eton 1995.

The princes issued a been 20 years since our to recognize her positive world with a permanent lives. We hope the statue will Palace to reflect on her life and legacy."

MORE: Princess Diana musical set to stream before Broadway debut

Ian Rank-Broadley, a well-known British sculptor, will complete the project. His depiction of Queen Elizabeth has been the blueprint for all British coins since 1998.

"Ian is an extremely gifted sculptor and we know that he will create a fitting and lasting tribute to our mother," William and Harry said.

The statue was initially expected to be installed in 2019 but Kensington Palace said the "design stages of the statue of Diana, Princess of Wales have progressed but installation has been delayed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic."

Instead, it will be officially installed on what would have been Princess Diana's 60th birthday.

Diana, The Princess Of Wales a gala dinner held by the American Red Cross in Washington, June 17, 1997.

"The fact that it has been delayed has ended up meaning that it will be installed on a date next year that is particularly poignant," according to ABC News royal contributor Victoria Murphy.

It is unusual for the two princes to issue a joint statement, especially now that Prince Harry is living in the U.S.

The statement shows how important the statue of Diana is to both of them, Murphy said.

"This is a rare joint statement from William and Harry," she said. "And I think it shows that, while they have gone their separate ways professionally, they remain very united when it comes to honoring their mother's legacy in this way."



Due to the present situation regarding the Covid-19 pandemic all 8 September (VITORJA) activities have been cancelled



New biometric ID to enter circulation in September

By

John Paul Cordina

-

A new Maltese identity card will enter circulation next month, and it will include biometric data in line with recommendations made by the European Commission.

The new ID will include a number of new

embedded security features, with one's personal details safely captured on a polycarbonate card, which should make it extremely difficult to forge or tamper with.

Identity Malta CEO Anton Sevasta announced that the first batch of new IDs will be issued to senior citizens as from next week. This will be followed by the 14+ category, and eventually to all Maltese citizens.

A gradual rollout will take place, as existing cards will continue to remain valid until their expiry date. The new ID will only be issued on new applications and renewals. Applicants must go to Identity Malta's office in Gattard House, fill in the necessary forms and capture biometric information.

"The advancement in technology that Identity Malta has made in recent months is translating into further changes in how the same agency operates," Parliamentary Secretary Alex Muscat maintained. "We will see that such development continues so as to remain at the forefront

when it comes to the security of our identity."



Who are the MJESC 2020 finalists?

Posted On August 31, 2020 - Updated 31 August, 2020
7:14pm

The twelve finalists of the Malta Junior Eurovision Song Contest 2020 were announced.

The winning singer from the twelve

finalists will be representing Malta in the Junior Eurovision Song Contest, which will be held in Poland next November. The Malta Junior Eurovision Song Contest 2020 finalists are:

ANĠLI Singer: Leah Cauchi **ANYWHERE** Singer: Leah Mifsud **Beside Me** Singer: Isaac Tom

CHANGE THE SILENCE Singer: Mariah Cefai **CHASING SUNSETS** Singer: Chanel

Monseigneur **DECK OF CARDS** Singers: Yulan Law and Gianluca Cilia **MADE OF STARS**

Singer: Kaya Gouder Curmi **MODERN-DAY CINDERELLA** Singer: Emma Cutajar **MOVING**

Singer: Anneka Xerri **ONLY LIVE ONCE** Singers: Zaira Mifsud and Eksenia Sammut **REPLAY**

Singer: Michela Caruana **THE CHILD FROM INSIDE** Singer: Mychael Bartolo Chircop

Don't just play the game... change the game

Shaun Bonétt



Shaun Bonétt founded Precision Group in 1994 and has grown to become one of the most successful property investment companies in Australia and New Zealand, with expanding interests in finance, technology, online consumer services and litigation funding.

Shaun serves as its CEO & Managing Director, and together with his brother Steve Bonétt who serves as its Executive Director, they are principally responsible for the strategic direction of Precision in addition to playing an active role in the purchase, finance and development of all the Group's commercial activities.

Shaun view is that:

"Everyone spends one's money in some way. I believe it's very important for anyone, in their own way, to give something back to the community they operate in. No one becomes successful without lots of hard work, support from others, and some luck. I'm proud to partner with organizations that place an emphasis on and share my interest in community."

Shaun is also Director and Patron of the Princes Trust. The Prince's Trust in Australia was established in January 2013 to provide a co-ordinating presence for His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales's charitable endeavours in Australia, that is enhanced coordination of The Prince of Wales' charitable interests, and increased collaboration and communication between The Prince of Wales' family of charities and similar and related charities in Australia.

In addition, Shaun has been a member of the national board of Life Education Australia since 2016. In March 2018, Shaun was appointed to the position of Deputy Chair. Shaun is also founding donor of the Life Education Foundation.



Life Education is Australia's largest preventative health organisation, endeavouring to empower children to live a safe and healthy life through education. The Program reaches over 710,000 students across the country.

In 2005 Shaun set up his own charitable foundation - The Heartfelt Foundation, to give something back to the communities in which Precision Group operates.

HeartFelt Foundation offers an online platform that enables its users to find information and donate for charity programs. The Heartfelt Foundation gives to charities that are under stress and need help in getting established or continuing to operate.

Charities that the Heartfelt Foundation has supported include Pathways, Youth Insearch, Sydney Children's Hospital Foundation, Oncology Children's Foundation, Ardoch Youth Foundation, Gawler Foundation, Bear Cottage, School Aid and the Art Gallery of NSW.

Social Impact Investments

Over the last 15 years Shaun and his brother Steve have made various other investments with an underlying social impact strategy, alongside obtaining above market financial return. Shaun and Steve are both committed to generating long-term meaningful change that will allow people and communities to thrive.

Some examples of their investments are:

iSelect

Shaun was a seed investor and remains a Director of iSelect, Australia's largest consumer vertical comparison online service. iSelect are passionate about helping Australians reduce their household bills and save money, time and effort.

iSelect is Australia's go-to destination for comparison across insurance, utilities and personal finance products made available from all providers. iSelect's advice is provided at no cost.

Prezzee

Shaun is a co-founder of Prezzee, the leading e-Gift Card App that has digitized the gift card experience for the smart phone world. For users, Prezzee provides a choice of almost all retailers in one simple App. At a touch they can connect with their friends, sending personalised greeting cards and they will never miss an opportunity to redeem their e-gift card.

It takes 23 grams of Co2 to produce a plastic gift card. Since Prezzee launched 4 years ago, it has issued 3.5 million e-gift cards, and enabled a saving of 84,500kg of Co2. In FY21 Prezzee is on track to issue over 4.5 million e-gift cards alone, which will prevent over 110,000kgs of Co2 from being produced.

Litigation Lending Services

Shaun acts as Chairman of Litigation Lending Services and is responsible for ensuring due process and governance is being adhered to in this business, and in monitoring the selection process of what actions are provided funding to.

Litigation Lending Services recently was successful in reaching a resolution on behalf of over 12,000 Indigenous First Nations Australians with the Queensland Government, which resulted in a payment to them of \$190 million dollars. The case known as the "Stolen Wages" case was funded by Litigation Lending Services over 12 years ago and is considered as one of the most important cases in Australian history.

Precision Group's raison d'être...to create significant value where others see risk.



Steve Bonétt

Executive Director

Steve is actively involved in all aspects of Precision's business. Steve is a company director and corporate lawyer who brings considerable commercial, legal, corporate governance, M&A and finance experience to the Board with over 20 years' experience. He has practised as a partner of Finlaysons Lawyers and at Allen Allen & Hemsley where he led numerous national and international transactions and is a consultant to HWL Ebsworth Lawyers.



He has been a Director of Terramin Australia Limited, an ASX listed company and has guided that company from its ASX listing through its growth and portfolio development in Australia and overseas. Steve also serves on boards of not-for-profit organisations, including The Queen Elizabeth Hospital Research Foundation.

Steve holds degrees in Commerce (Hons) and Law (Hons) from the University of Adelaide and is Fellow to the Australian Institute of Company Directors, and an active member of the Financial Services Institute of Australasia, and the Australian Corporate Lawyers Association.

We are proud of our Maltese Achievers

Saluting Battery

The Saluting Battery is one of Malta's most vibrant visitor attractions where history is brought to life daily! Located high along Valletta's eastern historic ramparts, it enjoys unrivaled spectacular views of the Grand Harbour and its surrounding fortified towns. It is also perhaps the oldest saluting battery still in operation anywhere in the world. For almost 500 years, its guns protected the harbour against naval assault. Its prominent position also ensured it becoming the island's principal saluting platform. From here, gun salutes were



fired on occasions of state, to mark anniversaries and religious feasts, and also to greet visiting dignitaries and vessels. From the 1820's a gun was also fired at mid-day to signal out the exact hour of the day by which Ship Masters would calibrate their chronographs on board. These time pieces were used up to the early part of the 20th century to find the longitude at sea. These signals, along with the one at mid-day, served largely to regulate the pace of life in the city and its surroundings. Following a lull of almost half-a century, this battery is back in use following an extensive restoration process by Fondazzjoni Wirt Artna - the Malta Heritage Trust, in conjunction with the Malta Tourism Authority. Once again, its guns resonate daily in the same way of old to herald the passage of mid-day and to add to the festive mood that marks important anniversaries in the history of the island. Opening Times: Mon to Sun between 10.00hrs & 17.00hrs. Closed: New Year's Eve, New Year, Good Friday, Easter, Santa Marija 15 August, Christmas Eve and Christmas.

Entrance Fees:

- Adults: €3 inclusive of guided tour (including use of audio guide)
- Children u/16yrs : €1 (accompanied by an adult)

Guided tours in English take place at 11.00, 12.10 and 15.00hrs. This attraction is also equipped with audio-guides in Arabic, English, Dutch, German, Maltese, Spanish, Russian, French, Danish, Chinese, Japanese and Italian.

Guided tours of the War H.Q. Tunnel can be booked from Monday to Friday between 10.30hrs and 13.00hrs.

For more info visit <http://www.salutingbattery.com>

NOTE: Full-gun salutes are also fired on:

- 10th February (St. Paul's Day) at 12.00hrs.
- 28th March (Foundation of Valletta Day) at 12.00hrs.
- 8th September (Victory Day) at 12.00hrs.
- 24th June (St. John the Baptist Day) at 19.00hrs.

As an organisation Fondazzjoni Wirt Artna is there to help conserve our nation's heritage for present and future generations to enjoy. Over the past years FWA was instrumental in saving and rehabilitating various heritage sites and in engendering awareness and disseminating knowledge about neglected aspects of our rich history. Preserving historic places is an expensive task.

The income we receive from visitors' fees at our properties, and membership, is crucial to keep our work going, but this only covers a fraction of our costs. We need extra funds to help with the conservation and maintenance of the historic properties in our care. You can support us by making a donation which will help us raise the extra funds we need to continue with our mission.

Malta has changed " U ejja..... mhux xorta"

How I long for the days when we were all born at home, when we all went to school in our home villages & towns, walked everywhere within the villages because the buses did not go everywhere. We never had much but everyone helped and nobody in our neighbourhood went to bed hungry. Church was very much respected. Our mothers were home when we got home. A look from any parent, stopped us in our tracks. It would have been nothing out of the ordinary for residents to sit outside in the evening and say the rosary together. If something bad happened,

we all gathered and helped as best we could. We learned crafts and trades from each other, I learned to sew on my Mother's lap as I could not reach the sewing machine's pedal. Nobody expected anything in return for teaching. Life was hard but was also simple.

I long for those days when there was harmony and respect for everyone and when a handshake was bigger than any contract drawn by the Notary. Yes, Dear Malta I do miss you and miss especially those days. Charles Micallef



WHERE ARE MY MALTESE PEOPLE AT??

Joel "Cama KO" Camilleri

Joel is a professional boxer from Melbourne , Australia, now living in Brisbane, Former Australian Super-Welterweight Champion. Record 18W-6L-1D

People are always asking me "What is that tattoo on your back?".

My tattoo features two hands with wraps around it, two boxing gloves hanging down with my initials J C, and a big red Maltese cross. I was born in Australia but am very proud of my Maltese heritage. My dad was born in Malta and moved here as a kid, while my mum was born in Australia but both of her parents were also born in Malta. It would be an honour to one day headline a fight show in Malta and fight in front of the Maltese people



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IN MALTA, GOZO AND THE REST OF THE WORLD**

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ships, that these warships are recorded to have NEVER LOST a battle at sea, from 1700 all the way to 1798.....DEJJEM REBBIEH!!!!

[Furban Malti - Malta's Real History on T-shirts of the Highest Quality](#)

<https://www.facebook.com/corsairclothingfurbanmalti>

IL-VAXXELL – The Invincible Maltese Beast of the Sea!!!! Our third (out of 4 new designs) for 2020 in collaboration with yours truly **Joseph Bugeja**

The Vaxxell Squadron were third rate ships of the line Meaning they were warships carrying around 56 cannons spread over two decks! These ships, are recorded to have carried a lion figurehead (pulena)...big deal perhaps....had it not been for the fact that our Lion was the only Lion in the world sculpted clasping the head of an Ottoman in its claws!! The message of the lion was very clear back then...beware any vessel subject of the Ottoman empire daring to meet us at sea! No maritime nation but that of Malta would dare to be so bold! Introduced in 1700, the Vaxxell squadron of warships were commanded by the knights and manned by their expert cannoneers ... the Maltese. Therefore.... it comes as no surprise that with such firepower in the hands of such capable sailors and marksmen...the Maltese who mostly manned these



1798 – THERE'S NO STOPPING THE MALTESE REVOLUTION On 2nd September, the Maltese hurl the French Captain Mason from a balcony and tear him to pieces. No turning back, the "Karkarizi" capture the St Julian's and St George Battery, and today at dawn the 3rd September 1798, Emmanuele Vitale and the rebels from Zurrieq joined with those from Rabat, Siggiewi and Zebbug storm Mdina, killing all of the French Garrison... One Maltese rebel from Zurrieq known as "It-Tigra" kills 24 French soldiers singlehandedly later on the same day, Maltese from Birkirkara, Qormi and Mosta with just around 29 muskets, stones but not lacking BALLS OF STEEL ...ambush a French column of 250 soldiers heading towards Mdina. The courageous Maltese win the day with the surviving French soldiers beating a hasty retreat.

General Vabouis and his shocked French soldiers, plan an all-out assault to eliminate the rebels; but the day is saved when ex-Maltese Corsairs and other battle experienced ex-soldiers and sailors of the Galleys from Bormla stop Vabouis' plan in its tracks, by starting an uprising in their town. All French soldiers that cross their path were swiftly killed.

These are soon joined by rebels from Zejtun, Zurrieq and Zabbar. The battle in Bormla is bloody and vicious and is only brought down through heavy fighting, and with the French threatening to train all their guns including guns on the French ship "Dego" docked in the harbour on all the houses in Bormla. The mob is dispersed and many rebels flee to the countryside.

But the French momentum has been stopped! The Maltese are possibly the FIRST in all of Europe to independently dare revolt against Napoleon and the new French Revolutionary army AND without outside help at this stage! And now....The Red and White Maltese colours defiantly fly over Mdina... the captured cannons are turned towards Valletta, Floriana and the Three Cities.

In Hamrun, the Maltese put up a large Crucifix and raise the "Black" standard on the Samra Church. The message is clear - We put our faith in God in our battle to the Death!! VIVA MALTA!

AND...for the first time ever ...the Red and White flag of the Knights, flown for so many years by Maltese Corsairs is NOW briefly replaced by the Red and White Flag of MALTA on their vessels!

From their new base in St Paul's Bay The Maltese Corsairs are now back at it again, for the first time ever flying the Maltese Flag, preying on all French and collaborator merchant ships in the area trying to re-supply the besieged Frenchwith their ancient battle cry that for hundreds year before was the most feared by Ottoman vessels at sea...."VIVA MALTA!"

<http://www.furbanmalti.com.mt/>



I write to you with the hope that you and your family and friends are doing well and have been able to manage through this stage 4 lockdown.



As we are hopefully getting closer to seeing the end of this lockdown and some easing of

the restrictions, I cannot help but think of the impact that this has had on us.

I myself had to self-isolate from the 31 July till the 15 September, thankfully at home (not in a hotel room), and was tested twice, thankfully both negative. During this time I reflected on how fortunate I am when I think of those that have lost a loved one, those that have passed away in nursing homes and those in the world that don't have any freedom to speak out without going over the top and/or into a personnel political outburst.

Furthermore, be it under a State of Emergency and/or Disaster, it is sad to see that we have seen, to date in Victoria, a total of 19,336 cases, with 16,370 recovered and 591 deaths. No matter where you turn its sad news.

I pray for a speedy recovery to all the healthcare workers and our seniors/elders that are unwell and show our gratitude to all our frontline services and Defence personnel, who no matter what emergency/disaster, they are always there for us. God Bless them and keep them all safe. THANK YOU for your dedication, loyalty, and service to all Australians.

With a possibility (this is me with my fingers crossed) that we might be able to have gatherings by November (I know, wishful thinking) I will do my very best to organise a Thanksgiving function for Thursday 26 November. It would be a wonderful time for us to catch up, support each other and to remember all those that have lost loved ones.

Of course, this will all depend on the restrictions, but I am keen to get an idea on numbers for a Thanksgiving dinner, so please let me know if you would be interested to attend.

Again, I hope that you and your family are all doing well and staying safe.

In the sense of lightheartedness, which I personally feel we all need right now, you might be interested in this video, this is some amazing engineering! GOD BLESS AMERICA!

https://1funny.com/the-worlds-tallest-symbol-of-freedom/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=getresponse&utm_content=The+World%E2%80%99s+Tallest+Symbol+of+Freedom&utm_campaign=1Funny.com+Newsletter

God Bless you, your family, Australia, and America

Sam CJ Muscat JP President
Australian American Association (Victoria)



THE MALTESE JOURNAL

It is our aim is to enrich connectivity through active interaction and cooperation as well as to promote Maltese identity, culture, history and heritage, including the Maltese language as goalposts of Maltese presence in the world. The journal tries to continue building on the networks of the Maltese living abroad and to explore business and other forms of collaboration within the framework of mutual understanding and in the common interests of Malta.

Thomas B. Formosa (1874-1939) – a watercolour master painter

The painting of a Sudanese tribesman by Thomas Formosa.

Thomas B. Formosa was born on December 18, 1874, in Vittoriosa, the fifth offspring of 14 children. His father was Giuseppe Lorenzo Formosa and his mother Violante Tagliaferro. Both parents were from Vittoriosa.

Violante was the sister of Francesco Napoleone Tagliaferro, the well-known mathematician better known to his friends and colleagues as simply 'Napuljun'.



Violante's family reportedly lived in Desain Street in Vittoriosa, in the house presently occupied by the Nationalist Party Club. The family later moved to Sliema.

Little is known about Thomas Formosa except that he probably attended the Lyceum where he also took art lessons. Sometime later he emigrated to Egypt. He died on July 22, 1939, in Cairo,



where he is buried.

He probably flourished in Egypt, where many of his paintings should be found. Perhaps this is the reason why Nicholas De Piro, in his *International Dictionary of Artists Who Painted Malta*, says that "only one watercolour (depicting the Lyceum staircase) has come to light. It would be interesting to assess this artist's work by seeing more".

In this regard, there is at least one other extant watercolour portrait by Thomas Formosa of what is possibly a Sudanese tribesman. This is in the private collection of Stephen Formosa.

Thomas Formosa painted this exquisite portrait when he was just 20 years old. The painting measures 24cm by 29cm. The medium chosen by the artist is watercolours, a fluid and unforgiving medium, especially if, as Formosa did, one opts for a classical approach, avoiding broad indicative washes.

Clearly he was a meticulous painter; his was not a rushed job. There is no doubt that he studied his subject intensely, and given the details in the picture, he must have painted his subject from real life, as colour photography was still not fully developed at the time and could not have helped him much in his work.

Yet the painting brings out admirably the character of the tribesman. He is clearly proud of his origins. He has presented his tribal identification scars on his cheek for the artist to paint, as a soldier would when he wears his medals for his portrait.

The lights and shadows on the dark glistening skin are an excellent rendition of the tribesman's complexion, while the texture of the thick, woollen cloth with its delicate folds is a study in itself. Although not the centre of the painting, the artist has taken pains to paint the folds very carefully. The soft muted colours of the painting are broken by the red band and the blue undervest of the tribesman.

The artist's father, Giuseppe Lorenzo Formosa.

Although this is the only portrait painting by Thomas Formosa that has come to light so far, it is enough to admit him to the pantheon of accomplished watercolour portraitists. Indeed, Cottonera, and Vittoriosa in particular, ought to be proud of their gifted citizen.



Keeping Maltese Communities Connected

Splendid Beethoven at The Splendid



The Strada Stretta Concept, operating under the Valletta Cultural Agency, is organising Splendid Beethoven at Splendid on the 6th and 7th September 2020 at 7.30 pm, at The Splendid on Valletta's Strait Street.

The two-day event is a performance that will feature one of Malta's most talented and illustrious musicians, the pianist and conductor Brian Schembri. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, Splendid Beethoven at Splendid, will be held on two separate nights to a limited audience.

In honour of the 250th anniversary of Ludwig

3

van Beethoven's birth. Brian Schembri will be presenting Beethoven's iconic work, the Piano Sonata No. 29.

Also known as the Große Sonate für das Hammerklavier, or more simply as the Hammerklavier. This is famously one of Beethoven's most challenging works for performer and public, due to the pure density of thought and technical prowess needed to master this piece. Keeping that in mind, it is unsurprising that when the work was initially published in Vienna the work was described as 'artistic perfection'.

Due to the vision of Artistic Director Prof. Giuseppe Schembri Bonaci, Strada Stretta Concept seamlessly manages to merge the world of high culture with the accessibility of popular culture. This approach will once again be utilised giving the audience an opportunity to listen to Brian Schembri's presentation of this masterpiece in an intimate casual setting, as opposed to the usual packed formal concert hall in which one may typically expect to hear this work.

For more information, you may follow the Strada Stretta Concept and the Valletta Cultural Agency on Facebook.

Due to the current government restrictions, no more than 13 people will be permitted to attend the performance and masks are to be worn indoors for the duration of the performance at all times. Entrance will be permitted on a first-come-first-served basis and is free of charge. *This content was supplied by the Valletta Cultural Agency*



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Pompa.

Hu ratat tkiek fin, u kieghdu gozz f'nofs
ic-cichnatur, f' nofsu aghmel hofra li gio figha
titfa daksxein ilma bil melh, aghsar nofs
lumia, itfa ucoll isfar ta baida, u ibda aghgen;
meta taghkad, zidila imgharfa zeid ftit, ftit, u
fl' ahhar cucciarina mastica.

Hu pastarda zghira, tmien kattiet spinaci,
sitt klub tal kakoċċ u nofs-artal piselli; għalli
collox għalieh, hagia hagia, hu lampuca, jen
salamun immellah, jenuinchella salamun tal-
laned. Il-lampuca kattahha roti, xarraba għal
xi quarta u nofs genna il hall, erfahha, ixxut-
tagħa u akligha għoz-zeit jagħli. Kalli fiz-
zeit l' ispinaci u il piselli, itfa mahhom daks
tuzzana zebbuġ, mingħair għadma, u nofs quart
• zbib *sultana*. Itfa biccia mill ghagina fil kieħ
tad-dixx u ibda kieghed ftit minn dac li kalleit;
katta il pastarda fiuri fiuri, u kieghed fiur tal
pastard, kalba tal kakoċċ u biccia huta u com-
pli dauuar id-dixx; argia kieghed saff spinaci
u argia compli bil pastard, kakoċċ, u hut;
ghatti collox bil ghagina, aghmlila circu tal

4



OLDEST MALTESE RECIPE (1894) LAMPUKI PIE

The lampuki season is here again!
This is the oldest published recipe
in the Maltese language known
to-date. The source is the
first edition E.L. Vella's
Ctieb tal Chcina [1894]. 'Pompa'
was the name used to prepare
a lampuki pie.

Enjoy reading this recipe in an early
orthographic format of the
Maltese language.

Also note the format of the recipe,
quite different from the
modern version we are
more familiar with.

Indulge and let us know
about your lampuki pie!

Inquisitor's Palace -
National Museum of Ethnography, Malta



CLEVER

Look at Carmelo Briffa and how talented he is. Carmelo suffered a workplace injury many years ago but that didn't stop him making these amazing knights of Malta. We look forward to putting them in an exhibition in the new year to show Carmelo's work along with other creative artists in our community. Carmelo is a valued member of our planned activity group. If you know someone who could benefit on being connected give us a call on 03 9387 8922.

FIND US ON FACEBOOK, TWITTER
Malta Migration Museum – Valletta
Maltese Canadian Archives – Toronto CA
WEBSITE: www.ozmalta.com



OUR CULTURE -

THE ART OF LACE-MAKING

Lacemaking in Malta and neighboring Gozo trace their origins back to the 16th century. Needlelace was made there as in was in Venice. This continued until the 19th century when the depression that descended upon the islands nearly led to its extinction. Two people are known to be responsible for introducing and promoting a new lace in these islands in the mid 1800's.

Lady Hamilton Chichester sent lace makers from Genoa, where the technique of Italian bobbin lace was developed, to Malta. They used the old needle lace patterns and turned them into ones using bobbins, instead of the slower time-consuming needles.

On Gozo it was the promotion by designer, Dun Guzeppa, that made lacemaking a way of raising the standard of living for local families. It wasn't long after its introduction before the Maltese/Gozo lace developed its own unique style from lace on the continent.

One of the most recognizable traits of Maltese and Gozo lace is the creamy, honey colored, Spanish silk from which most of it is made. Black silk was also used until the 20th century when it declined in favor so is harder to find today. Later linen was also used in some pieces used for

household purposes instead of clothing, as it was more durable.

Another distinguishing feature of Maltese/Gozo lace is the 8 pointed Maltese crosses that are worked into most, but not all of this lace. These crosses are done in what lacemakers call whole or cloth stitch. (see photo)

The last of the most recognizable features are the leaves known as "wheat ears" or "oats". They are plump and rounded in shape compared to the long narrow Bedfordshire lace leaves. Bedfordshire lace, which is sometimes compared to Maltese lace, has some similarities and were probably both developed from the Genosese bobbin lace.

It is interesting to note that larger pieces of real Maltese lace are made by piecing together sections rarely wider than 6 inches. One more thing to look for in assessing Maltese design is the more fluid styles. Genoese lace is more geometric and without the swirls developed in Gozo. Another interesting item that lacemakers might find interesting is that the patterns do not have the pin holes pre-marked as in the closely related "Beds" lace.

The study of Maltese/Gozo lace is at best difficult, as there is very little printed material about it. The only author who has written about it in English is Consiglia Azzopardi. She has written 2 books. The first: "Gozo Lace- An introduction to Lacemaking in the Maltese Islands" and the follow-up. "Gozo Lace - A selection of Bobbin Lace Patterns" 1998. She now has a website too!

<http://www.gozolace.bizland.com/>





CANADA - MALTA RELATIONS

Overview Canada enjoys excellent relations with Malta based on a shared commitment to democratic values. Our countries share similar views and positions in the UN, and the

Commonwealth. Canada's relations with Malta are managed by the mission in Rome, supported by an Honorary Consul in Valletta. Malta's High Commission to Canada is in Washington, but consideration is being given to opening a High Commission in Ottawa. Malta has a Consulate General in Toronto and Honorary Consuls in Montreal, Ottawa, St. John's, and Vancouver.

People-to-people ties People-to-people ties between Canada and Malta are strong, with a significant Maltese-Canadian population (close to 42,000 according to the 2016 census), concentrated mainly in west-end Toronto, and which forms one of the largest Maltese diasporas in the world.

Bilateral agreements Canada and Malta have negotiated a number of bilateral agreements covering investment (1982), taxation (1987), social security (1992), film co-production (1995) and audio-visual relations (1997).

Defense Cooperation Malta played a key role in facilitating the evacuation of Canadians during the Libya evacuation operation in March 2011.

Trade and investment Although trade links with Canada are still relatively modest, Malta has expressed clear support for enhanced trade relations between Canada and the EU and CETA ratification and implementation.

Consulate General of the Republic of Malta to Canada



MALTESE CANADIAN COMMUNITY NEWS The Consulate General of the Republic of Malta to Canada has reopened to the public for appointments only

Since the COVID19 pandemic, the Consulate General of Malta to Canada has been closed and only very urgent calls were responded to by the Consul General of Malta to Canada, Dr Raymond Xerri. The last two weeks have been dedicated to preparing the premises of the Consulate General to be COVID19 compliant and to sort out the many appointments cancelled because of COVID19 and the many many others that have accumulated during the past 5 months. Both Karen Zahra and Denise Falzon were very busy taking your calls, future appointments and replying to your inquiries. If you need a service from us please call for an appointment on 416-207-0922 or 416-207-0989, if you show up at the Consulate without an appointment you will be turned back. If you have an appointment, bring with you a facial mask, use the

santizer units in the building and in the Consulate to clean your hands. Maintain social distancing at all times and if you are unwell cancel your appointment. It is very important that we protect each other from COVID19.



"Ilma 52 sena miżżewġin. Ta' 13-il sena konna diġa' nittantaw lil xulxin. Jien kont nieħu ħsieb l-entratura tal-talkies billi naqta' l-biljetti tad-dħul ġewwa l-Azzjoni Kattolika. Dak iż-żmien entratura biex tara film kienet 7 soldi. U hi kienet tiġi b'sold inqas. Kienet tinkini u jien ninkiha lura. Jien ma kontx indaħħalha biex noqogħdu nitkellmu. Kollox minn taħt, bil-moħbi biex ma jindunawx. Dak iż-żmien kien hawn is-sikkatura. Illum it-tnejn li aħna ngħoddu 'l fuq minn 70 sena." – John u Doris

"We have been married for 52 years. At 13 we were already flirting with one another. I was in charge of selling tickets at the talkies entrance of the Catholic Institute. It used to cost 7 pence to watch a film. And she used to turn up with a penny short. She used to tease me and I used to tease her back. I used to leave her outside so we could talk. Everything was done in secret so nobody would notice. At the time there were a lot of restrictions. Now we are both over 70 years old." – People of Malta - John u Doris Raggio

CareMalta - FACEBOOK



After spending hours on end meticulously working on Żejtun's coat of arms made out of kite paper, Carmelo Zammit, a resident at the Żejtun Home since 2017, can finally admire his finished product. Joining Żejtun Home in 2017 together with his wife Mary, who passed away last year, Zammit has three children, seven grandchildren and another seven great-grandchildren. Having worked as an engine fitter at the Dockyard for 45 years, he is a skilful craftsman who works on various projects from a small workshop in his room.

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Maltese Own Band Philharmonic Society Inc..

<https://www.facebook.com/MalteseOwnBand/videos/790423078434316>

We have been working on something very special just for all of you!



The Maltese Own Band proudly presents, "Do Rei Mi". This well known song from the movie 'The Sound of Music' is just one part of a magnificent arrangement by our very own Band Master, Mro. **Mario Cassar**. While technology restrictions meant not all of our players were able to take part in this, we hope you'll enjoy seeing some familiar faces! Remember to Like and Follow us on Facebook and Instagram for all of our latest updates! @MalteseOwnBand

Victor Cilia Supa Sal Aaron Azzopardi Helena Cilia
David Coleiro Jason Parnis

Ryan Attard

Jake Rodrigues Corina De Leon Fiona Cassar

David De Leon Danielle Ward-Smith **Joe Portelli**

Marisa Portelli



MALTESE CULTURAL ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA INC.

Reg. No. A0025814T Address: 27 Talmage Street, Albion. Victoria Australia 3020 Tel: 9311 4750

We regret to announce that because of the spread of the Coronavirus, all the events by the Maltese Cultural Association of Victoria will be postponed for the time being. The health and wellbeing of our members is very important to us. We will inform you when is the right time to open again.
The Committee.

FONDAZZJONI BELT VICTORIA

Pjazza San Ġorġ, Victoria VCT 1101
info@heartofgozo.org.mt 21557504
Media release

Cardona OH! Exhibition @ Il-Haġar
Covid restrictions will be activated for the opening of another temporary exhibition at Il-Haġar museum (Pjazza San Ġorġ, Victoria).
Bob Cardona is showing between 12 and 30 September a collection of portraits, paintings celebrating the stunning style of tribes from Ethiopia's Omo Valley, in "OH! Only Human".

Booking on info@heartofgozo.org.mt is required for participation in the opening on Saturday 12.

A choice of three different slots is being offered: 5, 6 and 7 pm. Entrance remains free from 9am to 5pm seven days a week.



Heritage Malta attractions receive 2020 Travellers' Choice Award

Nine Heritage Malta attractions have received the 2020 Travellers' Choice Award from Tripadvisor in recognition of their outstanding service and quality.

The results of this coveted award programme was based on the quality and quantity of the millions of reviews, opinions and ratings collected on Tripadvisor in 2019, prior

to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Heritage Malta attractions which have received this prestigious award are the megalithic temples of Ħaġar Qim and Ġgantija, the Ħal Saflieni Hypogeum, St Paul's Catacombs, Fort St Angelo and Fort St Elmo (including the National War Museum), the National Museum of Archaeology, the Palace Armoury and Ta' Kola Windmill.

These awards form part of the ongoing effort of Tripadvisor, which is the world's largest travel platform, to support the recovery of the tourism and hospitality industry following the difficulties experienced by the COVID-19 pandemic.

In Tripadvisor's view, through this programme, travellers can benefit from the real-life



experiences of other people so that they can plan their perfect trip which meets their needs, budget and style. Winners of the Travellers' Choice Awards consistently earn great reviews from travellers and are ranked within the top 10% of the sites on Tripadvisor.

"When considering how tough this year has been to our industry, such news encourage us to strive harder in order to keep ensuring the best service to our visitors. We're passionate about our cultural heritage and these awards reflect our aim to excel in what we do," said Heritage Malta CEO, Noel Zammit.

This content was supplied by Heritage Malta



One day a little girl was sitting and watching her mother do the dishes at the kitchen sink. She suddenly noticed that her mother had several strands of white hair sticking out in contrast on her brunette head.

She looked at her mother and inquisitively asked, 'Why are some of your hairs white, Mommy?'

Her mother replied, 'Well, every time that you do something wrong and make me cry or unhappy, one of my hairs turns white.'

The little girl thought about this revelation for a while and then said, 'Mommy, how come ALL of grandma's hairs are white?' Lawrence Gauci

This journal is put together, to provide quarterly news and messages from varies people to keep our Members and the Maltese community informed with the events of the

**Maltese Cultural Association of Victoria
Committee 2019-2020**



Mary Micallef
Treasurer



Peter Paul Portelli
President



Pius Sagona
Secretary



Joseph Spiteri
Vice President



Margaret Spiteri
Committee Member



Louise McDonald
Finance Manager

**Maltese Cultural and Heritage
Centre at 27 Talmage Street,
Albion, Victoria.**

Quarterly Newsletter 1 August 2020 Editor:
Pius Sagona.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT I like to thank the Secretary Pius Sagona for the initiative to start a quarterly newsletter for the Maltese Cultural Association of Victoria Inc. I think that it is a good way to keep in touch with our Members and the Maltese community. I hope that you find the newsletter interesting to read. The Committee of the Maltese Cultural Association, manages the Cultural and Heritage Centre at 27 Talmage Street, Albion. In the last two months we gave the main hall a new facelift with a fresh paint and decorated the pillars with chandeliers like wall

brackets. We also have gold wooden frames to install, when the travel restrictions are eased. The two square post near the foyer are being transformed into fancy columns. I believe that our Members and the Maltese community will be surprised to see the new look hall. The committee have many more projects to accomplish, one of them is the car park. It is planned that the car park will be sealed with white lines, a nice fence, electronic gate opener and landscape.

Users of the Maltese Cultural Centre Maltese Cultural Association of Victoria Inc. Maltese Cultural Bizzilla Group Maltese Cultural Table Tennis Group Australian Nadur Association Inc. Xaghra Association of Australia Inc. Maltese Own Band Philharmonic Society Inc. Ghaqda Zebbugija St. Filep Melbourne Australia Inc. Australian Canary Association Inc. Springside Pidgeon Club Inc. St. George Association Inc. St. Helena Maltese Australian Social Club Inc. Victory Grace Church New Age Wrestling Dementia Australia



REFURBISHMENT OF THE GRAND MASTERS HALL By Pius Sagona Secretary At the meeting of 2 June, 2020, the Committee of management decided to upgrade the Grand Masters Hall. This has been a dream that the President Peter Paul Portelli had for a long time. The Committee of Management consist of Peter Paul Portelli – President. Joseph Spiteri – Vice President, Pius Sagona – Secretary, Mary Micallef – Treasurer, Margaret Spiteri and Sam Cauchi Committee Members. Louise McDonald resigned for health reasons. Long time Life Member Sam Cauchi was co-opted to the committee at the meeting of 17 March, 2020 to fill a vacancy. The work started on the 23 June, 2020 with Sam Cauchi cutting the bricks to fit the steel conduits to pass the electrical

wires to fit 12 chandelier type wall brackets. When this was done, the next thing was to cement over the steel conduits. This was done by Peter Paul Portelli and Pius Sagona. On the 26 June, 2020, our cook, Emanuel Farrugia and Pius Sagona went to Joe Spiteri's place and painted 12 MDF sheets to line the pillars to cover the bricks. We also painted MDF strips to attach to the gold wooden frames which are designed to decorate the pillars. After cutting in the brickwork, we had to clean the dust that was covering the floor and chairs. Joe Spiteri brought a compressor to

clean the dust from the chairs. This was done by Peter Paul Portelli, Margaret Spiteri, Eddie Micallef, Joe Spiteri and Pius Sagona. On 20 July, the electrician started running the wires through the ceiling and down the conduits for the wall brackets. On 2 July, the working gang got together again and started to fix the MDF sheets to the pillars and was finished in two days. Then on Monday 6 July, Frank Galea came to replace the cornice and fix some cracks in the ceiling. On 7 July, we purchased a 6 meter long by 250 mm PCV pipe to transform the two steel posts which were lined with plaster at the back of the hall into round columns. On the 9 July, the painter started his work, he painted the ceiling and the walls. We chose a soft whitish creamy colour for the walls. It looks much warmer and fresh. On the 29 July, the electrician hang the new chandelier that was recently purchased, that took Peter and his wife Mary quite a few hours to assemble. The chandelier is a beautiful works of art having 15 lights in two tiers that replaced the old one at the entrance of the hall. When the work is completed, the Grand Masters Hall will look like a palace. The committee has decided that the hall will look like a theater at all times. No more stacking of tables and chairs at the back of the hall.

Mary Micallef - Treasurer I am Mary Micallef. I joined The Maltese Cultural Association of Victoria in 2019. I first joined the Maltese Culture Lace Group - Bizzilla - because I was always fascinated by it and it's a way we can keep this part of the Maltese culture alive. I am also part of the MCAV committee group. We hope to bring all members together so we can all share and enjoy our Culture and Heritage of past and present. Hope you are all keeping safe and well during this difficult time. Looking forward to resuming our activities when it is safe to do so.

JOSEPH SPITERI – Vice President I am Joseph Spiteri, I was elected to the committee of the Maltese Cultural Association in April, 2019, as a committee member. In December, the committee called another General Meeting to adopt a new constitution and elect new office bearers and I was elected Vice President. I was very happy to see so many members enjoy themselves on Thursday nights before the coronavirus pandemic, I hope that soon we can return to normal. I am also happy with the refurbishment of our Centre. We have decorated the main hall to make our Centre more welcoming to our members and the visitors. We have a lot of ideas to keep improving the Centre.

COOKING By Emanuel Farrugia I am Emanuel Farrugia, I do the cooking at the Maltese Centre in Albion. I like to say that I miss my cooking and friends too. I like to say about my cooking that Peter the President always insist to me to make sure every thing have to be fresh to keep the customers happy, that's the aim of the cooking I like to thank the helpers around me they keep the place clean and hygienic. I wish that we meet again one day soon. Stay safe everyone. Recipe Sesame biscuits This is a recipe for sesame biscuits. 1 kg SR Flour. 400g butter or margarine. 3 eggs. 350g Sugar. 1t/spoon Vanilla. 1t/spoon aniseed in seed and some aniseed liquid. 1 t/spoon ground cloves. lemon & orange grated peel. mix eggs & sugar together, put the rest, let it sit for one hou



Malala Fund

"To young people: you don't need to wait for someone in power to give you permission or even listen to you to be an activist. You can begin by educating yourself on issues, educating others and organising in your community. Get some momentum and try to make advocates out of everyone you meet."

Malala Yousafzai
Born:
July 12, 1997 (age 23)
in Mingora, Pakistan
Education:
Edgbaston High School



Pope calls for day of prayer, fasting in solidarity with Lebanon

One month after a massive explosion at a fertilizer storage facility tore through Beirut and reopened Lebanon's old wounds, Pope Francis expresses his and the Church's solidarity with the troubled nation and calls for a worldwide day of prayer on Friday, 4 September.



Żejtun 18th century villa gets Grade 2 scheduled protection

Photo: Planning Authority

An 18th-century villa owned by the Testaferrata Bonici family, in Ta' Tavlin, Żejtun, has been given a Grade 2 protection status by the Planning Authority.

The scheduling of the building, which was carried out in close collaboration with the Superintendent of Cultural

Heritage, covers not the residence but the formal garden, a number of rural structures, a forecourt and an extensive buffer zone.

The "estate" which is being scheduled for its historical, architectural and social significance, was used as a place where the Testaferrata Bonici family retreated to for rest.

With this property now scheduled as a Grade 2 building, the extension of Triq John Borg through the villa's garden area, in accordance with the official alignment, shall not be permitted. Within the designated buffer zone, any proposed development cannot exceed the maximum building height of 12.3 metres. Although the main doorway is devoid of any decorations apart from a relatively large family coat-of-arms, the estate has some unique characteristics especially in the formal garden which is unattached to the residence.

The garden has an ornate neoclassical entrance gate which lies in-line with the formal walkway leading to the nymphaeum located at the other end of the garden.

This formed part of the main axis that continues towards the main doorway of the villa. A forecourt separates the villa from the garden. The residence has a central courtyard with a traditional balustrades parapet wall and a baroque well.

Both the Testaferrata and Bonici families had strong ties with Żejtun so much so that the Bonici family had donated the land on which the Parish Church dedicated to St Catherine stands today.



UNUSUAL HOUSE

Could this be the quirkiest, most charming house in the South of Malta? Decorated with hundreds of seashells and dating back to 1898, this feast for the eyes is the creation of one man by the name of Indri. Sadly, over the years, most of the shells that decorate this house by the name of 'Dar il-Bebbux' have eroded away. We hope that something can be done to restore this beautiful and unique property in time before the elements, or human intervention, see it gone forever.

If you want to know more about Dar il-Bebbux and other unusual places in Malta,

then you should really get your hands on the book Bizarre Malta online at: <http://bit.ly/BizarreMalta> or from all bookshops and stationers in Malta and Gozo. Image courtesy: Roderick Vella and Stephen Buhagiar at 'The People of Malta'. Read all about it in the book here: <http://bit.ly/BizarreMalta> Bizarre Malta by Fiona Vella and Oliver Gatt is available from all leading bookshops, stationers and souvenir shops. Also available directly from BDL Books in San Gwann (behind Junior's Toy Shop).



BRIMBANK COUNCIL ELECTION 2020 ICTORIA - AUSTRALIA

Now that I am getting close to the end of my term as a Councillor, I would like to let you know that I am a Candidate for the upcoming election in October 2020

It has been (and still is) a great pleasure and honour to serve the community at such grassroots level.

I'm looking forward to do it again if re-elected. Your support would be greatly appreciated.



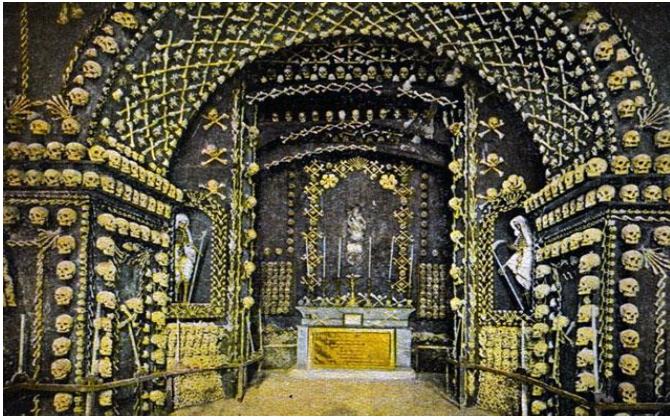
Joe Monsigneur Sisters and brothers
L-R Charlie, Carmen, Rita, John Vivien, Joe, Leli, Sr Ottavia, and Richard all born in Sliema baptized at Sacro Cuor Parish, Sliema, Malta. Live in Adelaide Australia,

Nostalgia
Joe Monsigneur
Adelaide - South Australia (2020)



Joseph Muscat
great historical Photo cousin never to be forgotten the sacrifices these young done for a better future to themselves and their families but still very loyal to their home country Malta

Joe Monsigneur - S.S. Asturias 1952



Somewhere beneath the ruins of the Nibbia Chapel in Malta is an ossuary decorated in human bones exhumed from a nearby cemetery.

For nearly a hundred years a small church in Malta's capital of Valletta served as a place of religious devotion, as well as a macabre tourist destination. Known as the Chapel of Bones, the vaulted crypt beneath the church was elaborately decorated with human skulls and bones exhumed from a nearby cemetery in the mid-1800s. Bombs dropped on the city during the second World War, on February 14, 1941, left the chapel damaged. What remained was later demolished sometime in the 1970s. Only the sarcophagus of the chapel's builder Fra Giorgia Nibbia, along with remnants of the foundation, were left standing.

The Nibbia Chapel was built in the year 1612. Nibbia, a member of the Knights of the Order of St. John (who controlled the island at that time) funded the construction of the Roman Catholic chapel beside a cemetery where deceased patients of the nearby Sacra Infermeria hospital were laid to rest. It was dedicated to the *Madonna della Misericordia*, or Our Lady of Mercy, and was originally called *Taz-Zuntier*, a Maltese word for "cemetery." The altar had a Latin inscription that "lamented the ephemerality of life and requested prayers for the dead. When Nibbia died in 1619, he was entombed in a stone sarcophagus within the chapel.

The chapel was dismantled in 1730 to make room for expansion of the hospital. At that time, Nibbia's tomb was opened, and his corpse was said to appear untouched by death. The church was rebuilt the following year in the Baroque style with architecture attributed to Romano Carapicchia. This new structure, as described by the *Times of Malta*, "consisted of a large portal panel having the main door set within two clustered sets of Doric

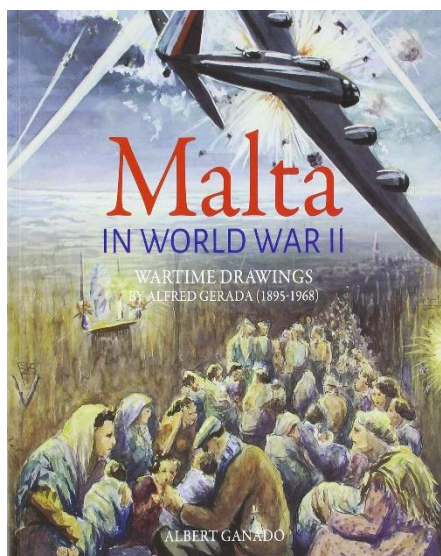
The Lost Chapel of Bones in Valletta Malta

pilasters on each side. The door's architrave was adorned with a marble plaque at the centre and topped by a broken rounded pediment. A thin cornice separated the upper section which was made up of a central light arched window set between two smaller clusters of pilasters and running scrolls. Above the whole was a triangular pediment."

In 1776, the decision was made to relocate the cemetery. The remains were exhumed and reinterred underground in a large ossuary beneath the chapel. Then, in 1852, hospital chaplain Rev. Sacco decided to use the bones as decoration, adorning the walls and ceiling of the crypt with elaborate shapes and patterns made entirely of human skeletal remains. He created intricate patterns with crossed long bones, scapulae were used for floral shapes, skulls lined the walls, and smaller bones were used as trim..

In the 1914 book *Six and One Abroad*, author Sidney J. Thomas wrote about the Church of St. John in Valetta, where a relic said to be the mummified right hand of John the Baptist was kept (after Napoleon stole the diamond ring from its finger), before moving on to describe the city's other macabre destination.

"But yet a more startling apartment in this remarkable edifice is a chapel whose walls and ceiling are lined with grinning human skulls," Thomas wrote. "This gruesome decoration of bones is not disposed at random and in sparse bits here and there, but is arranged with artistic skill into all sorts of designs, shaped into full framed skeletons that leer at you with ghastly smiles, into the curves of arm bones and arches of clavicles and windows and wainscoting of ribs. In the world, civilized and savage, there is not another such a gruesome and appalling spectacle. It was a clever artist who assembled these, the relics of the sturdy Knights of Malta, into such extraordinary schemes of drapery and friezes and ornaments – here and arm bone finished off with finger joints and meeting another of the same kind and together holding a grinning skull as the keystone of an arch; yonder a row of columns with their tops decorated with skulls." Though little remains of the Nibbia Chapel, the underground crypt is believed to still exist, and may one day be found.



A first-class documentary Louis Scerri

Albert Ganado: Malta in World War II. Wartime Drawings by Alfred Gerada (1895-1968)

Midsea Books, 2018.

Alfred Gerada (1895-1968) is best known as the cartoonist associated for many, many years with Progress Press which he joined as press artist at the age of 38. His tens of thousands idiosyncratic cartoons, so immediately identifiable by his style, provide a history of Malta's political travails. He also designed coats of arms, posters, logos, badges, and advertisement book illustrations (including the original cover of Ġwann Mamo's *Ulied in-Nanna Venut fl'Amerca*).

Gerada was an autodidact who left school at the age of 14, but he became a fine designer with notable draughtsman qualities, winning several international design competitions in London, Paris, and Ottawa.

His art, especially in the watercolours in the present book, has a spontaneous naïveté and a charm of its own, not to mention, in this case, its outstanding importance of a historical and social record of Malta's most perilous times since the siege of 1565.

The background to this very interesting book starts with Albert Ganado buying a collection of over 160 medium-format watercolours from the family after Gerada's death. This cache had been quite unknown as it was never mentioned by his biographers.

Ganado, to use a tired cliché, surely needs no introduction. He owns what is possibly the finest collection of Melitensia in private hands. Unlike some collectors, Ganado does not keep the collection tucked away to gloat but actively studies it and publishes most interesting papers and books. This latest book is a delightful publication which should especially interests all those who follow the part played by Malta in World War II, as well as all those keen on the history of local art as well as Maltese society in a very particular time.



A few years back, Ganado had published an accompanying volume mostly concerned with military events. This volume, however, deals more with the civilian aspect which makes it far more interesting for the general reader and is, to all intents purposes, a stand-alone.

Although there are quite a number of pictures of Malta under siege made by British war artists, these 116 watercolours have the merit of having been done by a local artist over the period of the siege itself. Some other Maltese artists may have also carried out a few sketches and paintings, but this portfolio is unique for its vastness and complete nature. It is a first-class documentary record.

During the war, Gerada was employed by the Progress Press. From his room in Strickland House in St Paul Street (not St Paul's, please), he must have had a great view of the terrible action taking place all around him, especially on the Grand Harbour. One particular watercolour indeed shows a raid in progress 'from my studio window'.

This portfolio is unique for its vastness and complete nature

The author's commentary on each picture provides a vivid succinct account, and taken in its totality, makes up a potted history of the suffering of the Maltese civil population during the dark war years. Very often, like a Cicerone, he takes the opportunity to add historical data about particular sites culled from his encyclopaedic knowledge of all things Maltese.

It was indeed a time of suffering inflicted on the general population with deadly bombs almost daily falling from the sky, sometimes in places least expected, and the pangs of hunger daily pinching one's stomach. Yet, going by Gerada's pictures, many a woman seems to have managed to retain their 'portly' appearance in spite of the all-encompassing famine.

Although the second part of the book, captioned by Denis Darmanin, may not have the immediate appeal of the war scenes depicted, it is nevertheless a most precious record of the various uniforms, field service caps, formation signs, flashes, pennants, types of camouflage, and depictions of people who carried out various activities. For those with a deep interest in the war, they provide a valuable source of information.

But most readers will be attracted and remain fascinated by the other depictions of actual events which



Gerada could have himself witnessed or by those general scenes of everyday life which went on despite the bombing raids.

Gerada gives us vivid pictures of the arrival of HMS Welshman and of the Santa Marija convoy, the Talabot ablaze beneath Floriana, the Bofors emplacement at the Upper Barrakka firing away, and so on. What is quite striking is that in all the harbour scenes, the bastions and high points of view are always packed with onlookers.

Then there are the heart-rending scenes of destruction like St Paul Street (painted from just outside where Gerada had his Allied Newspapers studio) filled with rubble, the forlorn skeleton of the Valletta primary school, the shattered streets of Senglea, and the devastated Argotti Gardens where, however, lovers still met for their trysts. In all scenes the backdrop consists of heaps of rubble and gutted buildings.

The bombing led to a huge evacuation from the harbour area, very effectively shown as columns of people laden with whatever they could carry wend their painful way (similar scenes we have been recently seeing in Isis-threatened lands) and houses marked with crosses to show that they were taking in refugees.

Actually one of the most striking pictures is an unfinished one showing goats being led the goatherd in devastated Senglea. The goats have been sketched but not coloured in giving them an eerie but fascinating ghostly aspect.

And yet, among all this devastation, the people tried to soldier on as best they could. Salvatore Micallef kept his florist's shop open at the corner of Pjazza Regina, where it still lies today; musicians still went round in the evening playing the popular tunes; tombola parties were held outside shelters; and even Sunday picnics were held in the devastated Barriera area in the harbour. The 'Talkies' still attracted people, with even the hallowed Manoel Theatre serving as a cinema.

The Maltese must also become more or less accustomed to that most unMaltese way of doing things: queuing. There are queues for water and kerosene, but apparently when it came to potatoes and bread, it was more of a free-for-all. The longest queue and the most orderly one by far, however, is that of men queuing from the Palace and all around Pjazza Regina to get cigarettes!

Judging by the number of pictures depicting brawling women, tension must have often given rise to full-fledged fights. Gerada sometimes cannot resist a humorous comment, like the woman cooking over a kenur fed with whatever pieces of wood she could get hold of and creating an unholy looming black sooty cloud. He calls the drawing Il-Patalott – the first smoke screen?

On the 50th anniversary of Gerada's death in 1968, this book is fitting tribute because it shows an aspect of his art that had not been much known. However, it is also a fitting tribute to an island and its doughty people who held on steadfastly in the face of almost daily raids for over three years. For those who actually experienced the siege, whose number is decreasing with every passing year, this book will remain a proud memorial. It should also serve as an eye-opener to all of us who thankfully never had the misfortune to experience such a catastrophic time.





Inawgurata pittura ġdida f'kappellun fil-Knisja ta' San Publiu

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Il-Ħadd ġiet inawgurata pittura ġdida fil-Kappellun tar-Rużarju fil-Knisja Arċipretali ta' San Publiu fil-Floriana. Il-pittura hija tal-artist John Grima.

Il-pittura fost l-oħrajn tirrapreżenta l-ġrajja li tinsab fl-Atti tal-Appostli, għal meta l-poplu Malti laqa' lil San Pawl u lil dawk kollha li kienu miegħu tul in-nawfraġju.

Hemm ukoll il-pitturi tal-Arċisqof Emeritus Gużeppe Mercieca u Pawlu Cremona, tkomplija mal-pitturi li diġà hemm fil-Korsija tal-Arċisqfijiet tad-Djoċesi Maltija.

Il-Furjaniżi lbieraħ iċċelebraw il-festa ta' San Publiu, minflok fis-26 t'April meta kellhom jiċċelebrawha. Il-festa kienet posposta minħabba l-Coronavirus.

L-Arċisqof Charles J. Scicluna ċċelebra quddiesa pontifikali fil-

5.30pm, dan hekk kif ukoll kien hu dak li bierek din il-pittura l-ġdida.

Fil-panigierku tiegħu l-Arċisqof tenna biex il-poplu Malti jdur lejn San Publiu, Protettur ta' Malta, u jitolbu biex iħares lil dawn il-ġzejjer tiegħu. Huwa appella biex il-politiċi u l-mexxejja ta' żminijietna, jimxu fuq il-passi li kien wettaq Publiu bħala mexxej tal-ġzejjer Maltin, jifhmu li jridu jwettqu l-ħniena mal-proxxmu, u fl-istess waqt jaġixxu dejjem bis-sewwa.



Freddie Tonna

Pass iehor lejn it-tkomplija li jkollna s-saqaf kollu tal-knisja ta' San Publiu dekorat u mpitter. Prosit lil Mons. Richard Borg li fi zmienu nbeda' dan il-progett, lill-arcipriet prezenti l-Kanonku Dun Charles Cini li komplieh, lill-pittur John Grima li huwa t-tielet artist li hadem fuq skala hekk kbira, u lill volontiera kollha għax xogħol kollu relatat li sar, inkluz l-induratura. Bdejna mill-1962 sal-1972 bil-Prof. Evin Cremona li penga mill-abside tal-kor, l-erba pendenti tal-koppla u s-saqaf kollu tal-korsija. L-ahwa Camilleri

Cauchi, Pawlu u Alfred hadmu fil-koppla bejn 1983-1987. U finalment John Grima. Bhal ghada 6 snin ilu (26-08-2014) tallajna t-travi u t-twavel biex hloqna l-impalkatura li minn fuqha sar ix-xogħol kollu fil-kappellun tal-Madonna tar-Rużarju. Issa jonqos is-saqaf tal-kappellun tal-Kurċifiss li diġà jinsab armat u nbeda xogħol preparatorju.



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