



CONSULATE OF MALTA IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA NEWSLETTER
MARCH 2014 FRANK L SCICLUNA - LINKING MALTA AND AUSTRALIA
EMAIL: honconsul@live.com.au Website: www.ozmalta.page4.me

Our Philosophy

"Bring us to you and we will bring you together".

We value diversity and believe that it is an essential ingredient in creating balance within a group and within the world. We sincerely believe that

- Each person is unique and has gifts, love and respect to share with those around him or her;
- People are an important part of nature, and our most basic roots come from nature - our ultimate goal is to be the caretakers of the Earth;
- We must respect, value, and be open to learn from all those who are around us – family, friends and neighbours.

POPE FRANCIS APPOINTS MALTESE BISHOP FOR MIAMI, USA



Pope Francis has appointed Msgr. Peter Baldacchino as the Auxiliary Bishop of Miami, USA.

Msgr. Baldacchino is currently serving as the Chancellor of "Missio sui iuris" of Turks and Caicos and the pastor of Our Lady of Divine Providence on the island of Providenciales.

He was born December 5, 1960, in Sliema. After attending elementary school in Msida and secondary school in Santa Venera, he obtained a degree in Computer Science from the University of Malta he worked as a technical manager of a bottling plant.

As a seminarian of the Redemptoris Mater Archdiocesan Missionary Seminary in Kearny, New Jersey, in the Archdiocese of Newark, he pursued his ecclesiastical studies at the Seton Hall University in South Orange, getting the Master of Divinity in 1996. He was ordained a priest on May 25, 1996. On March 30, 2009, Msgr Baldacchino was appointed Chaplain of His Holiness, the Pope. The new auxiliary bishop for the Archdiocese of Miami, Monsignor Peter Baldacchino, was picked by the pope and will be the right-hand man to Archbishop Thomas Wenski, who has been leader of the Miami Archdiocese since 2010. Baldacchino said, "I am looking forward to doing the plan of God, as revealed to me step by step and also through his grace, Archbishop Wenski, who's the chief shepherd."

Archdiocese of Miami Archbishop Wenski said, "I think bishop elect Mgr. Baldacchino is a good fit for Miami because of his wide experience."



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ONE FOR THE HISTORY BOOKS - CARMEN KEEPS GIVING.- SUCH A GENEROUS LIFE



What a treasure ... Carmen Testa has spent the last 57 years volunteering to help Maltese migrants adjust to life in their new country. She's won numerous awards including a Medal of the Order Of Australia and now she's been named one of Brimbank's Living Treasures.

A battle with jaw cancer may have slowed her speech but it hasn't dampened Carmen Testa's community spirit.

Since arriving in West Sunshine from her homeland in Malta in the early 1950s Mrs Testa has strived to improve the lives of those in her community. After retiring from teaching 25 years ago, Mrs Testa founded the Western Region Maltese Community Council Women's Group, to help break down the barriers experienced by culturally isolated women. Mrs Testa has also chalked up thousands of hours volunteering for other community organisations including the Maltese-Australian Welfare Association, the Maltese Elderly Citizens of West Sunshine and St Paul's church in Sunshine.

Her tireless dedication to the community has bagged her numerous awards including A Medal of the Order of Australia, the Council of the Ageing Senior Achievers Award and an award from the Prime Minister of Malta. At 76, the West Sunshine resident shows no signs of slowing down.

Two years ago she was diagnosed with jaw cancer, a crippling disease that took its toll on her health.

Even today, Mrs Testa continues to have difficulty talking but after 10 operations and chemotherapy, has been given a clean bill of health.



"It's been a very difficult time for me but I have been determined to stay involved in the community," Ms Testa said. She was recently honoured for more than 50 years of community service when she was dubbed one of Brimbank's "Living Treasures." Her remarkable story will feature in a new exhibition at Deer Park's Hunt Club. Despite the honour, Mrs Testa remains humble about her achievements. "I'm just doing what I've been doing for 57 years," she said. "I'm just trying to do what I can to help the community. I don't feel that I have done anything special but I feel very proud to be recognised."

(Photo) Author Olwen Ford, left, reads her new book Harvester City with Sunshine residents Carmen and Frank Testa.

TALES of migrant families have filled the pages of a new book about the making of multicultural Sunshine. Sunshine residents Frank and Carmen Testa have their story featured in the 592-page book which recounts their move from Malta to Sunshine in 1951.

Mr Testa said when he first arrived as a teenager there were plenty of [jobs](#) available at nearby factories, but the community had to [work](#) together to build new shops and houses.

"You had to build, you had no choice. You'd build a little bit, and a little bit, until we have now. It was very hard," he said. "But we were happy. It was beautiful. We came from a packed area in Malta and we loved the space."

Ever entered a home so warm it embraces you at the threshold? For years I caught glimpses of Carmen Testa's life through the [beaded curtain](#) of our mutual friendships. Although I had never met her, Carmen's love of people and her God pierced through our separate lives and touched me. Finally, I had the pleasure of meeting her and her husband Frank for the first time on the 9th of February. On that day, Carmen told me she had retired from teaching 25 years ago. I disagree, for on that day, the conversation we had confirms to me that she is still actively **teaching** – by osmosis – how to live the gospel. Carmen migrated to Australia and arrived



here on Australia Day 1951. Nine months later, Frank – who was her boyfriend at the time – followed, and two years after that they were married. They had eight children – unfortunately they lost one at birth.

(Photo) Carmen Testa with Dr. Tonio Borg in Melbourne

Frank has always supported Carmen in her community work, so much, Carmen always says: "Behind every man there is a woman but in our house it's the opposite, behind this woman there is that man." Her community spirit has been evident since she was 11 years old and has continued throughout her life. You might assume that raising seven children leaves little time to help others, but Carmen has proven that it's possible to successfully nurture family and support

neighbour. Even as a child growing up in Malta, Carmen helped other people. She was rare in her ability to read and write thanks to her parents who “Valued education,” she said. And consequently, she was often asked by people in her village to fill out forms for them.

On arrival to Australia, she continued helping fellow migrants with basic needs: “I know what it’s like to have a family and to struggle. I used to make dresses for those who couldn’t afford it...We’re very community orientated; people are important to us. Our house has always been a warm and friendly one. My children’s friends were always welcome.

Carmen’s ventures include: a women’s group she founded in 1987, to give new arrivals and widows a social and spiritual network – which still runs today. “(As a group) for 25 years we sponsored five World Vision kids. The people involved used to pay \$2 each per month. (Some of us) went to meet them.”

Also, she has been a regular speaker on the Maltese radio station 97.4 FM and she has raised money for the Augustinian Orphanage whenever possible. Thankfully, her contribution to the Maltese and migrant community has not gone unnoticed. She has received honours for:

- Manoel De Vilhena Award (A Cultural Award, awarded by the Prime Minister of Malta for work within the community) in 1995
- C.O.T.A. Senior Achiever Award in 1996
- Medal of the Order of Australia in 1998
- V.M.C. Premier's special Commendation Award in 2001
- Certificate of Recognition / Year of the Volunteer in 2001
- Outstanding Achievement in Promoting cultural Diversity - Victorian Immigration and Refugee Women's Coalition (VIRWC) in 2004
- Medalja tal-Qadi tar-Republika (MQR). This is the equivalent of the Order of Australia but awarded by the Prime Minister of Malta in 2005
- Living Treasure - Awarded for community work by Brimbank Council in conjunction with the Hunt Club in 2010

Although these awards are impressive, her strength and resilience amid 50 hours of surgery and 10 operations is incredible. Today, her courage shines brightly as a survivor of cancer in the jaw. Carmen attributes her strength to the support of her faith, family, friends and community.

This amazing lady also believes that you must persist in order to survive your ordeals.

I get up, when I’m not healthy I stay and read. When I pick up, I go and do things. You don’t want to give up and there’s always people worse than you – visiting nursing homes and sick makes me realise how much you have to accept it (your situation). Clearly, despite the pain and suffering she has experienced, Carmen advocates self motivation, “Believe in yourself. Don’t give up. You have to fight on.”

Trusting that you and the family are doing well. First of all my whole family cannot thank you enough for working so hard to prepare such a beautiful and most informative newsletter. We have been in Australia for 62 years but as one says – You can take a Maltese out of Malta, but you cannot take Malta out of the Maltese. How true is that, because every single item in your newsletter is read by all of us. My husband and I have sixteen grandchildren. Some of them have been to Malta and some are going this year so you can imagine the interest that they have in Malta. You are to an extent educating them because of the amount on history that they have learned from you. Keep up the good work. May God bless you and keep you in good health. Best regards
Carmen and Frank Testa-Melbourne AUSTRALIA



AGREEMENT SOUGHT FOR MALTESE ENTREPRENEURS TO EXPLORE BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES IN ITALY

Minister for the Economy Chris Cardona says government is set to finalise new industrial policy.



An agreement to facilitate Maltese entrepreneurs in exploring new business opportunities and technologies in Italy has been struck, Minister for Economy Chris Cardona said. Speaking during a meeting with Flavio Zanonato, Italy's minister for economic development, Cardona explained that the government is committed to provide a platform for businesses to adopt an economic vision for international markets.

After discussing the 'destinazione Italia', the Italian government's project to attract more investment, Cardona said the government was committed to provide similar opportunities for Maltese businesses to

expand their operations.

Meanwhile, Cardona said Malta Enterprise's restructured Business-First programme is set to facilitate the government in addressing the stumbling blocks that hinder companies from establishing their operations in Malta. The minister also explained that Malta's first industrial policy, is set to be finalised by the government.

Highlighting the importance of the sustainability of small and medium businesses, Cardona said the government is striving to address the sustainability, a case in point being its work on the new legislation for family businesses. The meeting took place after a series of meetings between industry representatives at a European ministerial conference in Rome. The minister and his Italian counterpart also discussed the Euro-Mediterranean project, the interconnector and the gas pipeline as well as the forthcoming meeting between the ministers for competitiveness.

MALTESE LOVE RABBITS TO EAT

Hello world, welcome to Merci Mama, a site dedicated to sharing my love of food and cooking with you. I'm Jules, a foodophile (I hate the word foodie) from the moment I could eat solid foods. I am from Melbourne Australia, with a Japanese mum and a Maltese dad, there was no question that loving food was in my genes.



Maltese rabbit stew Serves 4

What you need:

- 1 rabbit cut into 8 pieces – you can ask the butcher to do this for you
- 500ml red wine
- 1 bulb of garlic, finely chopped
- olive oil

- 1 bottle of tomato passata
- 1-2 tsp sugar
- 3 bay leaves
- 2 medium carrots, chopped into bite sized pieces
- 3 potatoes, cut into bite sized chunks and parboiled
- 1/2 cup of frozen peas
- salt and pepper
- 1/2 packet of spaghetti or angel hair pasta

What to do:

You will need to start this recipe the day before. Cut your rabbit into 8 pieces and marinate overnight in red wine ensuring that the rabbit is covered in the wine. The next day, heat 2 tbsp of olive oil in a heavy based pan, like a le creuset. My dad likes to use an electric frypan as he likes to be able to put it on a very low simmer, so you can use this as well if you have one. Cover the base of the pan with the garlic and cook for a few minutes on low heat, be careful not to burn the garlic. Put the pieces of the rabbit into the pan and cook until browned. Take out the rabbit. Add the bottle of tomato passata and slowly bring it to the boil

Put the rabbit back into the pan. Add the wine that the rabbit was marinated in and also add the bay leaves. Add 1 to 2 tsp of sugar to balance the acidity of the tomato. Cook for 1 to 1 1/2 hours or until the rabbit is tender and almost falling off the bone. Add the carrots and potatoes in the last hour of cooking and towards the end add the peas. Season to taste. Boil the pasta and for entrée dish up a small serve of pasta mixed with the sauce of the rabbit stew. For main, serve the rabbit and vegetables with a green salad and some crusty bread to mop up the delicious sauce.

FOOD – GLORIOUS MALTESE FOOD

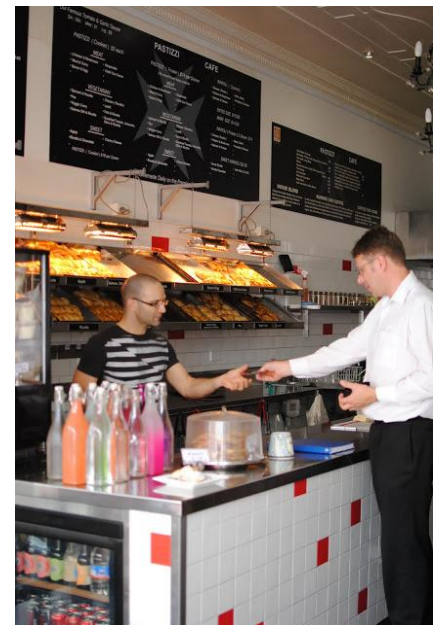


We decided to head up to King Street and seek sustenance at **Pastizzi**, a little cafe serving Maltese food. Pastizzi has been a mainstay Newtown restaurant for longer than I care to remember and I was hoping like crazy that they would be open as I was getting more than a little...starving.

Lady luck was shining on us as not only were they open but they had row upon row of delicious looking Pastizzi for us to devour. But first we start with a refreshing drink - KINNIE Pastizzi, a popular Maltese dish, are a little diamond shaped pastry (either filo or puff pastry) filled with either a savoury filling, like Ricotta, or something sweet like cherry. And boy, are they goooooood!!!

We decide to stick with the savoury and I limit myself to *just three* seeing as they are not exactly a health food with all that flaky pastry. After drooling at the counter for about 5 minutes I ended up choosing **Spinach and Ricotta**, **Pea**, and **Salmon Dill and Ricotta**. My favourite would

have to be the subtle flavour of the Spinach and Ricotta - a classic combination in my books.



PASTIZZI ARE ENJOYED EVERYWHERE

Mama Malta's pastizzi Co.. at Nimbin N.S.W. Australia

Nimbin is a village in the Northern Rivers area of the Australian state of New South Wales, approximately 30 km (19 mi) north of Lismore, 33 km (21 mi) southeast of Kyogle, and 70 km (43 mi) west of Byron Bay.



MALTESE TRADITIONAL FOODS – IT-TOKK RESTAURANT – RABAT - GOZO



Maltese Capers – Kappar Malti

Hand picked capers from selected rocky areas and rubble walls in picturesque places like Xlendi, Dwejra and Ta` Cenc. Well prepared and preserved in brine using a traditional recipe to obtain a natural, genuine taste. It is already matured and ready to be served especially in salads.



Sun Dried Tomatoes Tadam Imqadded

Selected Gozo grown tomatoes handpicked and traditionally processed with salt in June/July and left to dry for about 4 days in a temperature of above 35 ° C. It is then pressed and preserved in olive oil – Grandma says that it can last for generations.



Gozo Cheeselets – Gbejniet t'Ghawdex

Produced in chosen sheep farms around Zebbug, Ghasri and Gharb, using both the traditional and contemporary methods of milking and processing. When these cheeselets are dry they are marinated and preserved in wine, vinegar, salt and pepper. They can be served both as a delicacy by themselves and with salads.



Gozo Fig Jam- Gamm tal-Bajtar t'Ghawdex

This is manufactured locally and considered to be an old cottage industry. Being a Mediterranean island, Gozo has an abundance of delicious fruits especially Figs known as Tin in Maltese which are in season in August. A large quantity of this fruit is manufactured into jam. Available in 212ml.



Carob Syrup - Gulepp tal-Harrub

Manufactured traditionally from well selected juicy carobs without any preservatives. It was used as a tonic for soar throat and it is still used as such today. Ingredients: Carob sugar and water.

THE MALTESE FIG – IT-TINA MALTĠJA

The Fig tree (Maltese: *Siġra tat-Tin*) is known by the scientific name of *Ficus carica*. This common tree is found growing in all types of environments ranging from valleys to rock fissures and even disturbed habitats and bastions. It is thought that this small-to medium-sized tree was introduced in ancient times because of its edible - and rather delicious - fruit.



Although this well-known tree with twisting branches may exceed ten metres in height, it is usually more wide than tall. Its stems and branches, which are smooth and slender, usually produce a white sap when wounded - this unfortunately being an irritant to the human skin. Its large leaves resemble an open hand and its flowers are small and enclosed in a fleshy, pear-shaped pouch with a small opening at the tip, which is commonly referred to as the fig fruit. The fig is pollinated by a specific wasp which reaches the flowers through the opening in the 'fruit'.

Depending on the varieties, the common fig can produce fruits in different periods of the year. Different crops may be produced: Large early figs (bajtar) appear before or along the foliage, the true figs (tin) are borne on the young wood, and these are followed by the late figs (tin imħawwar). The edible fig is one of the first plants that was cultivated by man and has many uses. Figs can be eaten fresh or dried and are also used in the making of jam, cooling drinks and sorbets. The fruit is also a rich source of calcium and fibre.

THE MALTESE MONUMENT IN SYDNEY

The Maltese Monument was built as part of the Bicentenary Celebrations in 1988 when the Australian government and people were celebrating the 200th anniversary of British settlement in Australia. It was 200 years since Captain Arthur Phillip arrived in Australia in 1788 with the First Fleet and the first convicts to start the Colony of New South Wales.

For the Bicentenary Celebrations the Federal Government was encouraging the different communities in Australia to undertake suitable projects for the occasion.



The Maltese Community Council of NSW decided to build a Maltese Migrants monument and appointed a sub committee to carry out this task. The names of the members of the sub committee are inscribed on the Monument. Also inscribed on the Monument are the names of the executive committee of the Council which guided and helped the sub committee. Some of these people are with us today.

The project was started some 18 months before the Bicentenary Celebrations and required a lot of hard work and persistence. With the financial assistance of the Federal and State governments in Australia and of the government of Malta together with the grant of this land by the Holroyd Council, the Maltese Community Council acquired the necessary resources to complete the project. The monument was designed by a Maltese architect and built by a Maltese builder.

As you can see the pillars are the wings of the eight pointed Maltese Cross and on each pillar is inscribed important information relating to the Maltese Community such as the history of Maltese migration, the associations, Maltese names and so on. This information is inscribed on bronze plaques to last for many years to come. The visitors can examine this information for themselves.

In addition to the pillars, the Monument has an attractive floor design and brick fence with a pipe structure. Buried in front of the pillars is a time capsule containing information about the Monument and the Maltese Community, which is due to be opened in 50 years from the completion date of 1988. The monument is situated in Pendle Hill, one of the earliest sites of Maltese settlement in Western Sydney. It is the original site of the Maltese and Gozitan market gardeners which later became the site of the poultry industry which is now dominated by Maltese origin persons – the Baiadas , the Cordinas and Paces.

The Maltese Community Council holds many functions for the Community in front of the Monument, the most important being the yearly remembrance of one of Malta's national feast days, the Sette Giugno or the 7 of June. Official visitors from Malta are always invited to visit the Monument. In all these activities the MCC is always assisted by the Holroyd City Council.

First draft of Child Protection Act



The Minister for Families and Social Solidarity Marie Louise Coleiro Precia and Parliamentary Secretary for Justice Owen Bonnici presented the Draft Act on the Protection of Children

This chapter will offer stability and puts children at the center the Labour governments policies.

Minister Coleiro Precia explained how this law has risen from the bottom up with consultations among children, biological parents and foster carers as well as other interested parties.

Parliamentary Secretary for Justice Owen Bonnici said this was an important moment as it was the fruit of the efforts of many people.

As Parliamentary Secretary for Justice, he said he was obliged to choose experts in this field who would work in the best interests of children.

He said the government had already made ammendments to the Children's Act and through this draft the government will continue to strenghten and protect children's rights.

This law is proposed to enter new concepts including permanent foster care and freeing for Adoption while providing a center for Child Assessment and a Children's House with the aim to reduce the trauma children go.

St Paul's Catacombs in Rabata, Malta



Across Europe in some famous and, let's face it, some other less famous and downright bizarre venues, you'll find tourist attractions called 'dungeons'. There are fake ones in London, Amsterdam even Blackpool, for example, that aim to scare you witless with their spooky tales. They have their place I suppose, but Malta has the real thing! A genuinely scary place - the St Paul's Catacombs in Rabat!

So, if you want to spend a couple of hours in a proper spooky place, then a visit here is something to go on your agenda. Because while the pretenders overseas merely tell spooky tales, this is a genuine complex of Roman catacombs that incorporates the final resting places

for more than 1,000 bodies.

This labyrinth of interconnected, underground Roman cemeteries that hail from the 3rd century AD also represents the earliest archaeological evidence of Christianity in Malta. The Catacombs of St Paul derive their name from their proximity to St Paul's Church and Grotto. They are located in Rabat, on the outskirts of the old Roman capital [Mdina](#), specifically because Roman law prohibited burials within the city.

The site consists of two large areas, littered with more than 30 underground burial chambers, of which the main complex comprises a complex system of interconnected passages and tombs. The murals found in the catacombs are of significant interest, as they are the only surviving evidence on the Maltese Islands of painting from the late Roman and early medieval periods. The entrance to the main complex of St Paul's leads to two large halls, decked out with pillars, which look like Doric columns. The halls are equipped with two circular tables set in a low platform with sloping sides hewn out in one piece from the living rock, which resemble the reclining couch present in Roman houses. These are known as Agape tables and they were most likely used to host commemorative meals during the annual festival of the dead. The catacombs are thought to have been abandoned during the period of Saracen occupation of the island, when burial customs changed. However, parts of them were put into service again during the re-Christianisation of the island somewhere around the 13th century.

The underground complex was then abandoned again and the site fell into disrepair until it was cleared and investigated in 1894 by Dr A.A. Caruana - the pioneer of Christian archaeology in Malta. The catacombs are open from Monday to Sunday from 9am to 5pm and admission is €5, with reduced rates of €3.50 for students and OAPs, €2.50 for children aged 6 to 11 and free for under 6s. There are good and frequent bus links to Rabat, which is right next door (within easy walking distance) to the former capital of Mdina. The catacombs are in St Agatha Street, a narrow street running through the town centre and it is well-signposted. If you're in a car, park near the Domus Romana. It's about 5 minutes' walk from here.

Nursery rhymes in Maltese

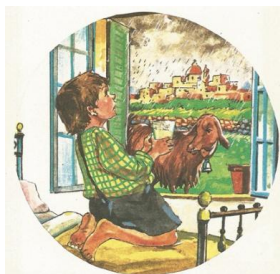


On Reading Nursery Rhymes With Children

These Maltese nursery rhymes are designed for children who are learning how to read Maltese. Preschoolers and Kindergartners enjoy picking out the words they can read in their favorite nursery rhymes.

All children take great delight in the rhythms and melodies of tunes. Remember, your singing voice doesn't matter -- even a jolly rhythmic chant will do, if you are hoarse. The emphasis on the melody and rhythm also helps the child learn the rhyme, increasing their vocabulary, and verbal skills. Even very young children will also imitate the songs, and have favorites they ask for. I

have heard children as young as a year and a half trying to sing their favorite nursery rhymes.



Aghmel, xita, aghmel
halli jikber il-haxix,
il-haxix intuh il-moghza
il-moghza ttina l-halib.

il-halib intuh in-nanna
in-nanna thitilna qmis



MALTA RAILWAY IL-VAPUR TAL-ART 1931



on the 31st of March 1931 . Unfortunately, from a total of 10 engines and about 34 passenger carriages, nothing is left to remind us of the existence of a railway system except for one surviving carriage which can be found in Gnien L-Istazzjon in Birkirkara.



One of the greatest inventions ever to come about during the Industrial revolution was the steam engine. The first commercial steam engine appeared in 1698. Here, in Malta, this great invention took a long time to reach our shores. In fact almost two centuries passed since the introduction of the first trains. The Malta Railway was officially inaugurated on February 1883 and lasted for a period of around fifty years. The train was lovingly known by the Maltese, as 'Il-Vapur tal-Art', meaning the land steamer. The dark green carriages were constructed out of wood and framed in steel

chassis. There were only first and third class carriages. Prior to the introduction of electricity, carriages were simply illuminated by candles. After 1900 the carriages were lit up by electricity.

Trains were expensive to run and the introduction of trams and buses adversely affected the Malta Railway. Buses soon became popular. After almost 50 years the train performed its last service

The carriage that is in the garden is very dark, with no windows at all. I wonder why they were constructed in this way. Was it because they were third class carriages or for safety measures?

The Railway station at Birkirkara, is one of the most well preserved buildings in Malta. For a number of years, the station was used as office for the Local Council. Now it is presently being used as a childcare centre. The building is surrounded by pleasant gardens.



The website of the Maltese/American expatriates – worth visiting - <http://www.starsandstripesmalta.com/>

TA' PINU SANCTUARY – GHARB GOZO



If you visit Malta's sister island of [Gozo](#), you'll notice that the pace of life seems much more relaxed than in Malta. It's peaceful, more tranquil, generally more laidback and so it's the perfect setting for the Ta' Pinu Sanctuary in Gharb.

The origins of the Ta' Pinu are unclear and steeped in folklore. What is known is that initially, the property was owned by the noble family of 'the Gentile'. In 1575, Monsignor Pietro Duzina, made a pastoral visit to the property under orders of Pope Gregory XII. He found the church to be in such a poor state that he ordered it to be demolished along with several others on Gozo.

However, this church would be the only one on his list to survive because when a workman tried to start the demolition and struck the first blow with his pick, it

resulted in him breaking his arm. This was seen as a sign that the property ought to be preserved after all and so it was spared.

The church changed hands in 1585 and became known as 'Ta Pinu - that is 'of Philip' after Pinu (Philip) Gauci, who was the procurator of this church, paid for its restoration and commissioned the altar painting of the Assumption of Our Lady in 1619 by Amadeo Perugino. This work was called Our Lady of Ta' Pinu.

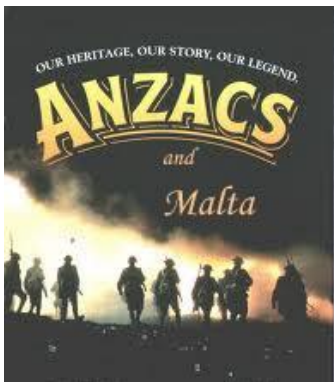
The story of the church is woven around this painting and outside the church are the words 'Ejja... fi hdan Marija, issib lil Gesu' – 'Come, Jesus is found in Mary's arms'. Following on from the broken arm incident, the next reported apocryphal moment in Ta' Pinu's history occurred in 1883, when a 45-year-old spinster and devotee of the Blessed Virgin, Karmni Grima, heard a call when she was returning from the fields.

She says she heard a woman's voice say: "Come, come!" The devout peasant woman followed the mysterious voice and realised it was coming from the image of the Virgin inside the church, who told her to recite three 'Ave Marias'. This might well have been dismissed as the deranged musings of a mad woman had it not been for the fact that in the intervening years three miracles were attributed to the Grace of Our Lady of the Assumption. Within a short time the little chapel became a devotional shrine and a place of pilgrimage.

And so, in 1887, the church authorities agreed to erect a larger church in the Romanesque style to handle the crowds and the foundation stone was eventually laid in November 1920. The new church was consecrated in 1932 and in 1935 Pope Plus XI elevated it to the status of Minor Basilica. The shrine was visited in 1990 by Pope John Paul II, who celebrated mass in the forecourt.

The small museum found towards the back of the Basilica contains a lot of artefacts of interest, including an offering of a silver heart which contains a record of one of the first organised pilgrimages to the shrine in 1895. Funding has recently been secured to restore the museum along with 12 works of art by Maltese artist Joseph Briffa. You'll also find an odd collection of plaster casts, trusses and other medical bits and pieces from people who have been cured after offering prayers at the church. The museum is open on Sundays from 8am to noon but the church opens from 6.30am to 7pm. It is closed between 12.15pm and 1.30pm. Admission is free but be sure to dress appropriately or you will be given a cape or dodgy skirt to wear and they only get washed once a week and it's very hot!

To find Ta' Pinu take the Gharb road from the capital, Victoria and just before you arrive in Gharb the road forks. Take the right hand fork which is Triq Ta' Pinu, which eventually leads to the church. It is also possible to get to the church using the excellent bus service.



100TH ANNIVERSARY OF WORLD WAR1 1915-2015 **MALTA - THE NURSE OF THE MEDITERRANEAN 1914 - 1918**

(thanks to Wayne Saillard on Malta for these great
reference images set here)

Malta was justly described as

the Nurse of the Mediterranean during WW1. In all 27 hospitals and camps were set up. The peace establishment of the RAMC in Malta in 1914 was 23 officers, 150 other ranks and 12 nursing sisters of the Queen Alexandra Imperial Military Nursing Service. On the declaration of war, the majority of regular RAMC officers were withdrawn from Malta for active service elsewhere, and replaced by four RAMC Territorial



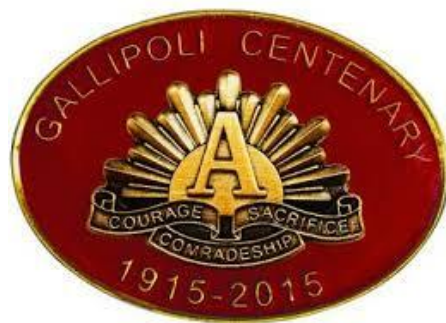
Force officers, four officers and nearly two hundred men of the 1st (City of London) Field Ambulance TF. Malta had four military hospitals in 1914. The Military Hospital in Cottonera, Mtarfa Barracks Hospital, St Julian's Forrest Hospital with 20 beds used mainly for venereal diseases, and the Valletta Station and Military Families Hospital. There was also a small military hospital on the neighbouring island of Gozo and the large Royal Naval Hospital at Bighi.

Ambulances at St Andrews Hospital - Malta - circa 1915.

of 600 casualties from the Gallipoli landings arrived on 4th May 1915. Barges of wounded men were unloaded gently on to the quayside outside Valletta's ancient Sacra Infirmaria hospital, which can still be visited today. It was built by the Knights of St John in the sixteenth century and has one of the longest wards or halls in Europe. From here the wounded were sorted and moved on to the other hospitals around the island. Local Boy Scouts ran errands for the soldiers, posting their letters and bringing them magazines. There was a cool garden at the back of the hospital where a weekly concert was held for the patients.

LAZARETT HOSPITAL – Manoel Island, Malta

The first batch of 240 medical officers, 567 sisters and VADs, as well as 1,760 men of the RAMC attended the sick and injured. In October 1915, a combined Franco-British force was landed at Salonika to assist Serbia in its war against Bulgaria. From Salonika came 2,600 officers, including members of the nursing services. Up to 64,500 other ranks were received at the hospitals of Malta up to August 1917, the majority arriving during the summer and autumn of 1916.



The Australian/New Zealanders casualties from Gallipoli and Salonika were initially treated at Malta and Egypt. In 1917, however, submarine attacks on

hospital ships made it unsafe to evacuate from Salonika, and five General Hospitals were mobilized in Malta for service in Salonika so the number of beds in Malta fell to just under 13,000. The number of sick and wounded treated in Malta from May 1915 up to February 1919 was approx 58,000 from the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force, and 78,000, from the Salonika Expeditionary Force. Not all patients survived of course. Private Donald Haldane of the Royal Fusiliers died of wounds received at Gallipoli and is buried along with the other casualties in Malta's Pieta Military Cemetery. To be continued.....

NOSTALGIA - PAPER ADVERTISEMENTS OF THE 1940/50'S



MALTESE MIGRATION TO AUSTRALIA

Father Robert Cassar O.Carm
With new Arrivals from Malta
1950



POPEYE VILLAGE – TOURISTS' ATTRACTION

Everything about this attraction screams at you that it shouldn't work! It's essentially the leftovers of the set from a not



particularly good or successful Disney film that was made more than 30 years ago. Even the website with tedious introduction and looped sea shanty gets right up your nose! And yet it provides a terrific and fun day out, especially for young families! The fantastical Sweet Haven Village, to give it its proper name, occupies the shores of one of Malta's most picturesque locations in the northwest corner of the island close to Mellieha Bay.

This makes you wonder how the devil they got permission to build it in the first place? It represented a massive investment by the producers at the time, especially when you consider it involved 165 men working for more than seven months to put together the 19 wooden buildings and the 200ft-plus breakwater built to protect the precious set from the sea.

Popeye the movie, which starred Robin Williams as the famous, mighty-

forearmed 'sailor man', would eventually prove to be a fairly sensible investment. It might have cost \$20 million to make but it brought in \$50 million in the US alone and another \$10 million in other parts of the world. A solid performance, despite some fairly dismal reviews.

Anchor Bay hosts this still surprisingly pristine ramshackle seaside village, which played host to the six-month shoot of the musical blockbuster. The late Robert Altman helmed the entire location shoot resulting in the story of Popeye searching for his lost father, Poopdeck Pappy. He stumbles upon Sweet Haven village, befriends an eccentric burger eater called Mr Wellington Wimpy and rents a room from Olive Oyl, the soon-to-be love of his life.

Popeye's motto through the film is 'I Yam what I Yam', and this rings true to this very day. After all these years this 'way of thinking' has swept the entire village and all those who visit the village are transported back in time, when the simple things were those that mattered most. All the buildings are kept in their original state, save for some added safety features, since these structures were only intended to offer a backdrop for the film's scenes. Detailed inspections are undertaken on a daily basis and the maintenance team is on the go 24/7.

But aside from marveling at the detail and devotion exercised in creating this magical place, there are also bags of fun activities on offer, such as boat rides around Anchor Bay, silversmith demonstrations, wine-tasting, open-air beach lido with shower and baywatch attendant, inflatable trampolines and slides just offshore in the sea and a terrific kids' pool with climbing frames and slides under a sensible sun shade plus a fun park with plenty of rides. Entry to the Fun Park is free but you'll need to buy tokens for the rides. You get to meet characters from the film; actors who spend the day wandering around the village and put on regular performances. So pack your swimming things and head off to Popeye Village, which 30-plus years on continues to welcome thousands of satisfied visitors each year.

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## MALTESE IN CANADA



The first documented Maltese arrived in Canada in 1826 and the majority came after World War II. In the community's heyday during the 1970s and 1980s, there were more than 45,000 Maltese in Canada, though the 1986 census reported a population of only 21,855. In the latest census, only 4,675 people in Toronto identified Maltese as their mother tongue.

While most Maltese immigrants came earlier in the last century as economic migrants, Toronto Maltese historian John Portelli said the last wave, arriving here between 1977 and 1982, fled political instability back home.

Migration from the small Mediterranean country has literally ended since, as

its own economy thrived.

"The older generation started dying gradually, no more immigrants are coming and some have returned," said Portelli, a professor at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto. "The community is definitely declining. The language is lost among the second generation."

The Maltese's success in integrating into Canadian society also contributes to its own decline, said Portelli, who came to Canada in 1977 with a Commonwealth scholarship for his graduate studies at McGill University. Up until the early 1980s, the old Maltese Village in Toronto's Junction area was home to more than 8,000 Maltese Canadians, who now have spread across Greater Toronto.

The number of social clubs in the Junction has dropped from nine to four. Just a few years ago, the community's monthly newspaper, **L-Ahbar**, also folded, apparently due to declining circulation.

"There is still the colonial attitude and influence that 'you'd better speak English than Maltese.' The bias is still there today," said Portelli, 56. "Integration can help you economically, but it kills you in terms of maintaining your identity."

Joe Sherri, president of the Maltese Canadian Federation, said the group was made up of 20 social clubs at its inception in 1980; today only 12 are left. "If you go to any of our clubs on Fridays or Saturdays, you won't find any young people there," said Sherri, 63, who came here in 1965 for job opportunities and now runs his own food distribution business. "Our biggest challenge is to get our young people involved."

These days, young Maltese only show up at big community celebrations such as annual Mnarja, the festival of light, in June. The only hope of closing the generation gap is to draw youth in through groups such as the Malta Band Club or its popular soccer club, said Vella.

"Something that concerns us a lot is where to find the new blood to replace the old blood," lamented the retired banker, whose three adult children, all professionally employed, speak very little Maltese. "We don't have an answer yet."



## YOUNGEST CANADIAN MP HAS MALTESE ROOTS

*Canadian MP Charmaine Borg, the youngest member of the Canadian parliament, expresses the wish to see Canada and Malta working together on different levels.*

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Julia Farrugia

*Canadian MP Charmaine Borg*

One of Canada's member of parliament, aged only 22, is of Maltese origin and was elected for the first time in parliament when she was 21. Charmaine Borg's grandfather, Alfred Borg from Hamrun, had immigrated to Canada in the 40s.

Interviewed by Sunday newspaper Illum, Borg says that she had faced much criticism questioning her ability to be an MP due to being so young. "I believe that all of our hard work has now paid off and we have shown to the Canadians that young people have a place in parliament," she says. Speaking on her holiday in Malta, Borg says she enjoyed visiting the Azure

Window in Dwejra and watching fireworks at St Paul's Bay.

## FACING REALITY: POPES HAVE ORDINARY MOMENTS, TOO

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Posted on January 15, 2014 by Paul Haring

**UPDATED Jan. 16:** The animated GIF is comprised of a dozen or more still photo frames shot within about 4 seconds. Each was cropped exactly the same. One of these frames is the featured photo. Neither the GIF nor the main photo were taken from video.

VATICAN CITY — Photographers covering the Vatican are witnesses to both the grandeur and ordinariness of the events that unfold in the Vatican. In a display of the ordinary, today I shot this unusual frame of Pope Francis as he rubbed his face.



Pope Francis' expression invites many captions, but he was really just rubbing his face. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)

He had just finished delivering his blessing at the end of his catechesis at the Wednesday general audience. The 77-year-old pope first rubbed his eyes, then his face. It was essentially the pope's four seconds of down time before spending the next hour and a half greeting bishops, people with disabilities and many others.

*An animated GIF of Pope Francis taking a breather at the end of his catechesis. (CNS photos/Paul Haring)*

My colleagues and I frequently see the pope doing ordinary human things: blowing his nose, taking a drink of water, scratching his face, etc.... We'll sometimes photograph these moments but usually don't use them. There is a certain sense of decorum among us — about what is appropriate for public consumption and what should be kept private. In this case, the photo seemed to convey just how tiring it is to lead an audience and greet so many people outside in winter weather for two and a half hours. My colleagues at the Rome bureau liked the photo because it showed a certain vulnerability. What do you think? On Friday in the Vatican Apostolic Palace the Holy Father Francis, received in audience the president of the Republic of Malta, George Abela, who subsequently met with Cardinal Secretary of State Pietro Parolin, accompanied by Archbishop Dominique Mamberti, secretary for Relations with States.

## **PRESIDENT ABELADISCUSSSES MALTA WITH POPE FRANCIS**

During the cordial discussions, mention was made of the deep imprints of Christianity in the history, culture and life of the Maltese population, as well as the good relations between the Holy See and Malta, recalling the pastoral visits made by Blessed John Paul II and Benedict XVI. Particular reference was made to the contribution of the Catholic Church in the fields of education and welfare, and the Agreements concluded between the Holy See and Malta with a view to fruitful collaboration in the service of the common good.

Finally, the Parties focused on Malta's contribution within the European Union, as well as various situations in the Mediterranean region, and the phenomenon of migration towards Europe which involves the efforts of the Church and the Government. President Abela, was on the visit to the Vatican with his wife, children and grandchildren, who joined the delegation at the end of the 20-minute private audience.

The President's grandson Luca then presented Pope Francis with the unique gift of a little plastic dinosaur.

## **ABOUT THE MALTA CENTRE**

On June 29<sup>th</sup> 2012, the cooperation contract for the Malta Centre was signed by the rectors of the University of Bremen and the Unviresity of Malta.

The Malta Centre is the result of a long cooperation between the universities of Bremen and Malta in the field of Maltese linguistics. Initiated by Professor Thomas Stolz (Department of Linguistics, University of Bremen) and Professor Ray Fabri (Department of Linguistics, University of Malta) a close partnership was crafted between the two universities over the last 10 years. In 2007, during the first International Conference on Maltese linguistics, the International Association of Maltese Linguistics (Ghaqda Internazzjonali tal-Lingwistika Maltija, GHILM) was founded in Bremen. The Association currently has 65 members from Germany, Malta, the USA, Japan and many other countries. The Association also launched two successful publications series: The Journal of Maltese Linguistics, ILSIENNA, and the companion series IL-LINGWA TAGHNA.



Signing of the cooperation contract for the Malta Centre in the Industrie-Club Bremen

## **GET TOGETHER WITH THE HIGH COMMISSIONER OF MALTA**

### **NILTAQGHU MAL-KUMMISSARJU MALTI**

**THE MALTESE CONSULATE OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA**

**INVITES THE MALTESE COMMUNITY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA**

**to attend a reception held at the**

**Maltese Cultural Centre, 6 Jeanes Street, Beverley**

**In honour of**

***His Excellency Charles Muscat and Mrs Victoria Muscat***

**Malta High Commissioner in Australia on Sunday 30 March 2014 at 1.00 - 400 pm**

**Finger food and tea or coffee will be provided**

**THE QUEEN OF VICTORIES BAND WILL PLAY MALTESE MARCHES**

## **MALTESE-CANADAIAN TENOR – VICTOR MICALLEF**



Maltese-Canadian tenor Victor Micallef was born and raised in Toronto, Canada. At the age of four, Victor began to play his favourite TV and movie melodies on his sisters' piano, without any formal training. His father took notice and enrolled the young tot in piano lessons at the Royal Conservatory of Music. Singing was always a passion for him, but he admits to being extremely shy as a youngster to pursue that as well. It was once again the patriarch of the Micallef household that pushed Victor to share his voice and passion for singing, beginning at church. Although petrified at first, the rush of standing in front of an audience soon took over.

At the age of 16, following his father's untimely death, Victor saw a performance of *Les Miserables* and realized how powerful music can be. He wanted to touch the hearts of people in the same way. This became the defining moment of his career. Shortly thereafter, he began taking voice lessons, and later attended the University of Western Ontario and the University of Toronto to obtain his Bachelor's Degree in Vocal Performance. Victor also fed his curiosity for the arrangement of music – from motives and phrases to themes and sequence – by studying music composition and conducting.

In the fall of 1998, Victor moved to Florence, Italy, where he studied with his mentor, tenor Franco Pagliazzi. While in Europe, Victor was featured in both opera and concert with several companies, including Teatro del Maggio Musicale Fiorentino. He had the honour of working with such world-renowned conductors as Zubin Mehta, Claudio Abbado and Daniel Oren. In June 2004, Victor returned to Toronto after being accepted as a member of the Canadian Opera Company's prestigious Ensemble Studio. For the following two years, he performed various roles, including Rodolfo in Puccini's *la Bohème*, Edgardo in Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor*, Lenski in Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin*, Alfredo in Verdi's *La Traviata*, Luke in the Canadian premiere of Ruder's *The Handmaid's Tale*, the title role in Britten's *Albert Herring*, Tamino in Mozart's *The Magic Flute*, and both Macduff and Malcolm in Verdi's *Macbeth*.



Throughout his career, Victor has performed for audiences and dignitaries in North America, Europe, and Asia. He has recorded as a soloist and in ensembles with Teatro del Maggio Musicale Fiorentino (Bocelli/Mehta), Coro di Ferrara and the Orpheus Choir. He has also been heard live on CBC's *Saturday Afternoon at the Opera* in Canada, and RAI's *Prima Della Prima* in Italy.

### **Vitals**

**Full Name:** Victor Anthony Micallef **Date of Birth:** June 5

**Zodiac sign:** Gemini

**Height:** 6'0"

**Hometown:** Toronto

**Current Residence:** Toronto, ONTARIO - CANADA

**Ethnic Background:** Maltese

**Pets:** Macduff, an English Cocker Spaniel

**Languages spoken:** English, Italian, Maltese

### **THE CANADIAN TENORS**

*Clockwise from top left: Remigio Pereira, Fraser Walters, Victor Micallef, and Clifton Murray.*



## **FAITH AND TRADITION LENTEN AND EASTER CELEBRATIONS**



The Ministry for Gozo has launched a publication promoting various activities being held in Gozo during the Lent and Easter period.

It is the greatest feast in the Christian calendar since it commemorates the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, a ten day festival celebrating the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ and includes various events of religious and traditional activities, such as processions, pageants, exhibitions and folklore.

Starting on Easter Saturday or Easter Vigil, the parishes of Gozo, as in Malta, will gather

the faithful in their churches for a solemn religious service and the traditional rituals of the blessing of water and fire. The church lights are turned off, and each of the congregation will light a candle from the Pascal Candle, resulting in the whole church being bathed in the glow of flickering candles

Bells ring out across the island and the scriptures are read and sermons delivered before the celebrant blesses the holy water that is used for baptisms and the whole congregation confirms their faith by reciting the baptismal vows. After the service the congregation may linger for a while in the church for a drink, or to take a piece of the traditional Figolla (Maltese almond Easter cake).

Easter Sunday is welcomed with bells ringing out across the islands, a traditional march with the statue of the risen Christ will take place in some parishes following the service. These traditional marches are usually accompanied by local bands and their popularity has remained undimmed through several centuries.

## **PILOT TABLET PROGRAMME TO BE ROLLED OUT NEXT WEEK**



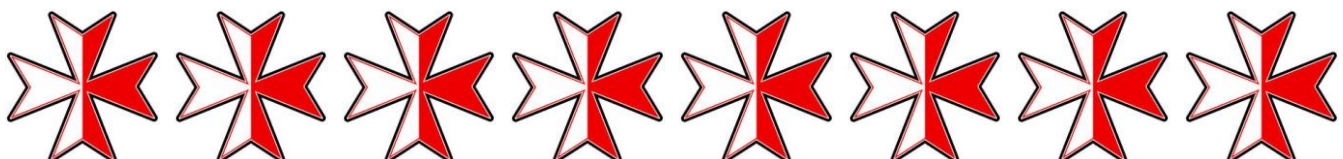
Tablet computers will start being distributed in some primary schools next week to pilot a nationwide program that will see the equipment being given free to all Year 4 students in 2015.

Initially the device will only be handed out to a number of teachers who volunteered to participate in this program. The ministry said at least one class in every State college will be taking part, as well as some teachers in private, Church and independent schools.”

Students with special educational needs will also be included in the pilot.

The plan is for teachers to familiarise themselves with the device and feedback on the software and

applications bundled with it by the end of the scholastic year.



## **US FIRST LADY HOSTS EDUCATION ROUNDTABLE**

Updated: Sunday March 23, 2014



US first lady Michelle Obama has told Chinese professors, students and parents that she wouldn't have risen to where she was if her parents hadn't pushed for her to get a good education.

She made her comments before hosting a discussion about education on the third day of her visit to the country aimed at promoting educational exchanges between the US and China. 'Education is an important focus for me. It's personal, because I wouldn't be where I am today without my parents investing and pushing me to get a good education,' she said.

'My parents were not educated themselves, but one of the things they understood was that my brother and I needed that foundation.' Obama said she and her husband wanted as many young people as possible in the United States and the world to have access to education.

She then hosted a roundtable with a handful of Chinese professors, students and parents at an event at the US Embassy in Beijing that was attended by new US Ambassador to China Max Baucus but closed to media. The US first lady plans to visit the Great Wall later on Sunday and have lunch with her mother and daughters at a restaurant in a former school near a section of the wall.

On Saturday, she gave a speech at China's prestigious Beijing University in which she promoted the free flow of information and freedom of speech, the only time during her trip that she has brought up a contentious issue. China routinely filters out information deemed offensive by the government and silences dissenting voices. Her remarks were absent from China's state media but were circulating in social media, where they were widely praised.



Marsaxlokk is a traditional fishing village and is located where the first Phoenicians landed and set up trading posts on Malta, during the ninth century BC. During the Great Siege of Malta, Marsaxlokk harbor was used as an anchorage by the Turkish fleet. The present-day population of Marsaxlokk is around 4,000.

**THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT – SEE YOU AGAIN - SAHHA U SLIEM**