



# Maltese e-Newsletter

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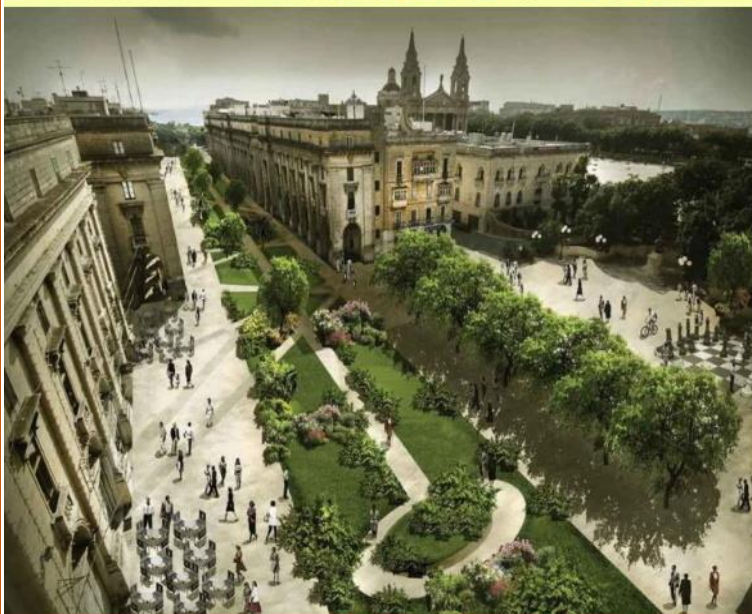
**HAPPY  
AUSTRALIA  
DAY**

**26 January**

To all our  
Australian readers  
and friends  
all over the world



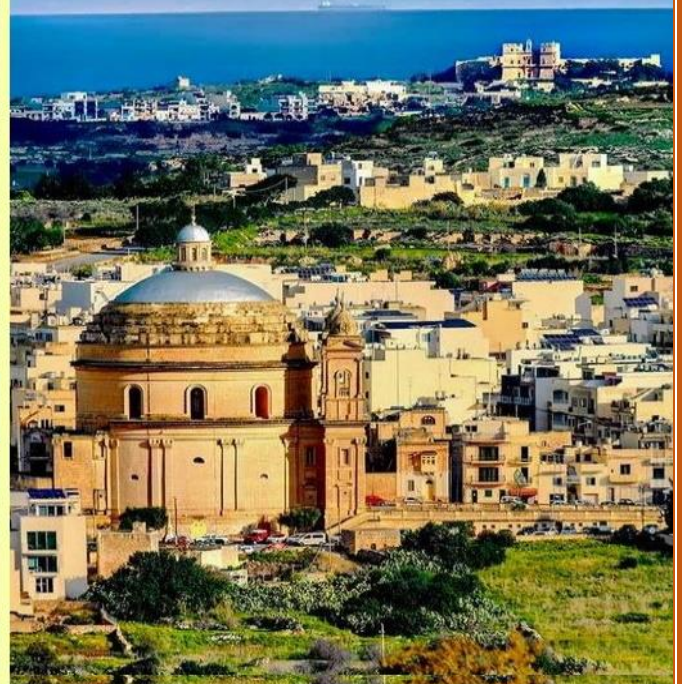
**Fr. Anton D'Amato**  
New Director of  
the Emigrants'  
Commission



**A photomontage of the St Anne Street  
Floriana - Malta project**

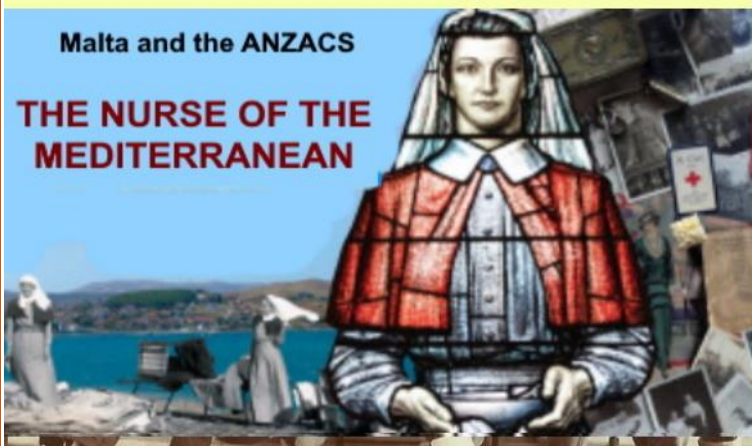
**Snow capped Mount Etna seen from  
under Fort Bingemma.  
Mgarr parish church on the left**

**Daniel Cilia**



**Malta and the ANZACS**

**THE NURSE OF THE  
MEDITERRANEAN**



***We are proud of our Maltese Achievers*** ✚

**The Journal of Maltese Living Abroad  
connecting communities  
around the world**



**Australia Day is celebrated each year on January 26.**

**Australia Day remembers the day in 1788 when the first white people arrived to live in Australia.**

**Australia Day is a holiday everywhere in Australia.**



***Captain Arthur Phillip raises the British flag at Sydney Cove. January 26, 1788. Photo: State Library of NSW***

#### **THE FIRST FLEET ARRIVES**

On January 26, 1788, a fleet of 11 ships under the command of Captain Arthur Phillip arrived at Sydney Cove. On board the ships, which became known as the First Fleet, were sailors, soldiers and convicts from England. From 1804 onwards, the people of the colony celebrated the day.

Australia Day became a national holiday in 1994. There are flag raising ceremonies all around the country and it is a day when many migrants (people from other

countries who want to live in Australia) become Australian citizens at citizenship ceremonies. Each year a person is named **Australian of the Year** on January 26. Australia Day is a day to celebrate everything that is good about Australia and to think about what can be done to make life in Australia better for everyone.



#### **AUSTRALIA DAY AND INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIANS**

Some Indigenous Australians (Aboriginal and Torres Strait peoples) do not celebrate Australia Day because they believe that January 26, 1788 was the day when white people invaded their land. Many call the day Survival Day. Because of these feelings some people think that it would be better if Australia Day was celebrated on a different date so that ALL Australians could celebrate with pride and respect. ***What do you think?***

**WHAT ABOUT CAPTAIN COOK?** The place chosen for the Australian penal colony had been made after a report, made 18 years earlier, by Captain James Cook. Cook had mapped the east coast of Australia and sailed into Sydney Harbour in 1770. Later, when the British government needed to find a place to send convicts, it was Cook's report that persuaded them that Australia might be a good place to start the colony.

#### **Read about Captain Cook**

<https://www.australiangeographic.com.au/tag/captain-james-cook/>

<https://www.natgeokids.com/au/discover/history/general-history/captain-cook/>

#### **Watch a video that shows the maps of Cook and other explorers**

<https://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/learning/captain-james-cook>

**Source: Thomas, Ron. & Sydenham, Shirley. 2020. Australia Day.**



**Australia Day**  
RESPECT, REFLECT, CELEBRATE



## MALTESE LIVING ABROAD WELCOME FR. ANTON D'AMATO THE NEW DIRECTOR FOR THE EMIGRANTS' COMMISSION



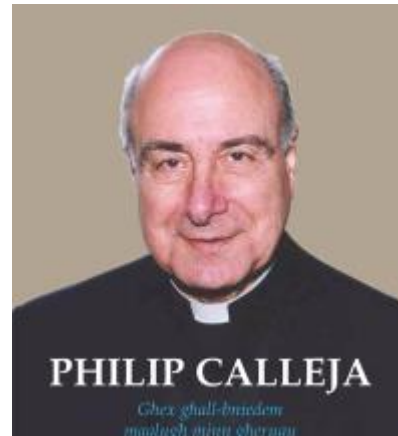
Fr Anton D'Amato has been appointed director of the church's Emigrants and Refugees Commission, taking over from Fr Alfred Vella.

The appointment was announced by the first director, Mgr

Philip Calleja, who is celebrating the 50th anniversary of the laying of the foundation stone of *Dar L-Emigrant*, his brainchild. The foundation stone was laid on February 10, 1971 by Prime Minister George Borg Olivier and the large building, just outside the Upper Barracca Garden in Valletta, continues to perform its role to this day.

In a statement announcing the appointment, Mgr Calleja thanked all those who had worked in the commission and in *Dar L-Emigrant* over the past decades and regretted that a celebration could not be held for now owing to the pandemic.

Mgr Calleja recalled how the church's work for emigrants started from a room in Palazzo Carafa, where advice was given to Maltese migrating to Australia, Canada and other countries. He was involved in that service as a newly-ordained priest in 1953, with the members of the Catholic Action. He became director in 1958.



Services increased over the years, including English language lessons and the Single Young Women Migrants Scheme.

Services moved to *Dar L-Emigrant* in December 1972 and the commission helped in the setting up of the Maltese American Association, the Friends of Australia Association and the Migration Museum. It also helped in the provision of radio programmes.

Services to refugees arriving in Malta started in 1983 and in 1987 the commission became a partner of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees. One of its

members, Charles Buttigieg, became Refugees Commissioner.

The commission had helped set up 20 localities for the



Fr. Alfred Vella

accommodation of migrants.

2021



## THE VALLETTA CULTURAL AGENCY

continues to build on the fantastic work carried out over the past year and a half, to provide another heartfelt programme enriching the Maltese cultural scene and society's well-being. The VCA continues to build its rapport with artists while devising its Cultural Programme, producing projects and providing opportunities for growth. Economic development, restoration works and infrastructural projects meanwhile, continue to be pushed.

Despite 2020 being a challenging year for everyone, people still enjoyed Valletta and the Agency's varied Cultural Programme, including projects for medium-sized audiences as well as intimate concerts; discussions and masterclasses with international performers and professors, visual art exhibitions, films, outdoor music performances and family events. The VCA has collaborated with several public and private entities including the Malta Philharmonic Orchestra, ŻfinMalta, Teatru Manoel, Ċinerabilja, Mużi, is-Suq tal-Belt, the Malta Tourism Authority, Festivals Malta and several artistic organisations, and individuals.

In his address, the Minister for National Heritage, the Arts and Local Government, Jose Herrera said, "The Government believes that the Valletta Cultural Agency is intrinsic to the work of artists and is important now more than ever. Our

traumatised world needs the healing powers of the arts to find solace and regain hope."

VCA Chairman Jason Micallef said, "The Valletta Cultural Agency reiterates that culture is no luxury but a necessity. This ambitious and exciting programme is a testament to our commitment to the arts and culture. With great optimism, we look forward to the year that has just started".

VCA CEO Catherine Tabone highlighted that, "Over the past year, the relevance of the arts has become ever more apparent. For 2021, the Valletta Cultural Agency is reinforcing its work with artists and the community to present a strong programme that features local and internationally-renowned performers engaging together in a variety of productions that provide a much-needed dose of creativity in these challenging times".

Efforts continue and over the coming weeks the VCA will present a concert of artistic songs by international soprano Tatiana Lisnic and MPO principal harpist Britt Arend, as well as another performance by Brian Schembri in the series Beethoven at Home. The photography project TNAX continues, while a number of calls will be issued for artists hailing from various artistic disciplines to join the VCA programme.

In February, the VCA is once again launching its innovAIR call for artists in residence which is part of VCA's commitment to continuously work with artists.

In March, George Benjamin's composition Written on Skin, winner of several prestigious awards, will be performed by the MPO together with five international soloists under the direction of Lawrence Renes.

Strada Stretta Concept, under the artistic direction of Prof. Giuseppe Schembri Bonaci, continues and we expect an evening of jazz music by the Sammy Murgo Quartet and a representation of Le Pauvre Matelot by the French theatre group Arcal Lyrique. Towards the end of March and the beginning of April, the play Vari, based on a novel by Trevor Zahra, will be held.

[www.vca.gov.mt](http://www.vca.gov.mt)





## Australia Day Celebrations 2021 – Hon. Jing Lee MLC

A very Happy New Year to you and wishing you a Happy Australia Day in advance. I hope this email finds you refreshed and ready for an exciting year in 2021! Australia Day is fast approaching on Tuesday 26th January 2021, and this year we will be celebrating Australia Day with all South Australians in a new COVID Safe format. In this unprecedented time of challenge and change, Australia Day 2021 will be a little different this year. It will be a day of reflection, respect, and celebration of our achievements and diverse community.

In 2021, we have reimagined our Australia Day program to present an exciting new line up of events and to ensure in the lead up to and on Australia day events have meaning for all.

Enjoy **FREE** live performances by Australian music legends Birds of Tokyo followed by a 15 piece orchestra fusing global sounds and cultures that celebrate the story of us.

Connect with the world's oldest living culture through a mesmerising ceremonial opening and join us as we honour our front line and emergency workers, together with a spectacular stylised intercultural parade.

Australia Day is for all Australians, no matter where our personal stories begin. We embrace the Australian spirit and our sense of community. We find optimism and hope as we look to the future.

Aus Day in the Arena is proudly presented in partnership with Aus Diamond Mining, SA Power Networks, Vili's Family Bakery and Boomerang International Education Services, and assisted by the Australian Government through the National Australia Day Council and supported by a grant from the Government of South Australia.

**AUS DAY IN THE ARENA 26 January 2021, 12.30pm and 6.30pm**

**Adelaide Entertainment Centre**

Two shows at 12.30pm and 6.30pm featuring an extraordinary Welcome to Country ceremony, civic ceremonies, parade honouring our multicultural communities and frontline workers, live performance by Birds of Tokyo, the Australian Girls Choir, Tutti and Nexus Orchestra conducted by Julian Ferraretto.

Bookings are essential to secure your attendance - don't miss this opportunity!

[https://premier.ticketek.com.au/shows/show.aspx?sh=AUSDAYCO21&mc\\_cid=bcc359fa22&mc\\_eid=%5bUNIQID%5d](https://premier.ticketek.com.au/shows/show.aspx?sh=AUSDAYCO21&mc_cid=bcc359fa22&mc_eid=%5bUNIQID%5d)



**Australia Day**

Reflect. Respect. Celebrate.

## MALTESE COMMUNITY COUNCIL OF VICTORIA

To start a brand new year and to celebrate Australia Day the Maltese Community Council (MCCV) (with funding from the Australia Day Council) we invite you attend to our breakfast event.

We were hoping to run our Australia Day Maltese Festa but covid-19 restrictions did not permit it to go ahead. We have missed you all, and of course apologise for the late invitation, but we had to even get approval for this.

This a fabulous opportunity to mix with others, enjoy breakfast and a coffee or two!

Tuesday 26th January Maltese Community Council of Victoria 477

Royal Parade, Parkville VIC 3052 Time: 8am - 10am Participation is

FREE ! Catered Breakfast (seated event).

RSVP by THURSDAY 21 January 2021 no later than 3 pm to [admin@mccv.org.au](mailto:admin@mccv.org.au).

In the reply let us know names and contact numbers for each person. Please do not arrive at the event before 7.50 am there will be plenty of parking.

To enter the centre you must wear a fitted mask unless you have exception. Once seated you can take it off. Numbers are limited to comply with government regulations so we please respond early as we are very much looking forward to you attending. Please refer to the attached checklist – if you feel unwell on the day please do not attend. We must remain covid safe and free heading into 2021. Regards

Marlene Ebejer President Maltese Community Council of Victoria

## Statue predating Knights' arrival being restored



Commissioned in 1504, the statue will get a new lease of life

The statue undergoing a gamma ray study. Photos: Prevarti

*'Gagini Madonna' was commissioned in 1504, 26 years before the Knights of the Order of St John came to Malta*

Detail of existing pigment on the effigy.

An Italian Renaissance white Carrara marble statue portraying the Madonna holding the Christ Child, which was commissioned 26 years before the arrival

of the Knights of the Order of St John in Malta and which was situated behind the main altar of the church of Santa Maria di Gesù (or Ta' Ġiezu), in Rabat, has started undergoing much needed conservation and restoration.

Known as the Gagini Madonna, the statue was commissioned on February 23, 1504, in Messina, directly from the then 26-year-old Palermitan sculptor Antonello Gagini (1478–1536), purposely for the newly-built church of Ta' Ġiezu, in Rabat dedicated to the Nativity of the Virgin, which was constructed in the late 1490s.

The white marble Renaissance sculpture of the Madonna holding the Child in her left arm is a very important artefact not only for being the oldest in the possession of the Observant Franciscan Order of Friars Minor in Malta but also as it is the much-venerated object that gave the church its name, Santa Maria di Gesù, and which Grand Master Fra Philippe Villiers de L'Isle Adam worshipped during his many stays with the Franciscans.

The statue was commissioned together with a marble pedestal that today survives in the national collection, at MUŻA, in Valletta. The pedestal has carved reliefs showing the stigmatisation of St Francis on the front and flanking it are two three-quarter length figures of St Francis and the patron saint of the Maltese islands, St Paul.

This project, which consists of photographic documentation, scientific analysis, cleaning, conservation and restoration entrusted to Prevarti Ltd, was made possible by the Observant Franciscan Order's collaboration with Charlene Vella from the Department of Art and Art History at the University of Malta and thanks to funds obtained from the Majjistral Action Group Foundation under the LEADER Programme 2014-2020, specifically, Measure 1: Restoration of Assets and Sites of Artistic and Cultural Value.

Vella explains how a 1504 document lists all the details related to this commission.

"The sculpture of the Madonna was to hold the Christ Child in her left arm and a flower in her right hand, which is today lost along with several of the fingers on this same hand. More damage has been sustained to the sculpture at an unknown point in its 500-year history, such as chips to the folds on the Madonna's mantle, the Child's fingers on the blessing right hand being broken off and the Madonna's head was completely detached from the rest of the sculpture and repaired with two metal rods."

*It is also the much-venerated object that gave the church its name, Santa Maria di Gesù*

The same document also states that the sculpture was to be six palm tall (c. 138cm) and the pedestal another one palm in height (c. 23cm), for a total of c. 161cm.

Vella added: "The sculpture had to receive blue and gold pigment. While traces of several pigments have been noted on the side and back of the sculpture, upon cleaning these same areas, more pigment was discovered hidden beneath a layer of plaster. Surprisingly to the restorers and researchers, the cleaning also revealed blue stylised floral motifs on the Madonna's mantle, which must have been gilded."

Gilding was also discovered on the Madonna and Child's hair. Moreover, a stylised floral design has emerged on the hemline of the Madonna's mantle. This reveals that this sculpture was an elaborate one and that no expense was spared in its commission. In fact, the same document reveals that it was to cost 20 uncie.

The first Observant Franciscan sculpture of the Madonna and Child that Gagini had produced when he settled in Messina was that for Nicotera in Calabria, in 1498. Therefore, it is not a coincidence that the Rabat sculpture is a variation of the Nicotera sculpture since they were both destined for Observant Franciscan churches.

The Rabat Madonna and Child, however, is most similar to the sculpture by Gagini in Catanzaro (Calabria) that was commissioned nine months after the Maltese sculpture, also by Observant Franciscans, but in which the Child takes a fruit from the Madonna. Two other Observant Franciscan sculptures in the Duomo of Castoreale (1500-01, Province of Messina) and in the Santuario dell'Ecce Homo in Mesoraca (1504, Calabria) survive with indicative polychromy that provides an idea of how the Rabat sculpture originally looked.

After being removed from the church on September 15, 2020 and as part of the research and prior to the cleaning tests, the sculpture was subjected to intense photographic documentation, tests under UV and gamma rays as well as a 3D scan.

Vella and her team will, throughout the duration of this project, be further researching the sculpture, building on the research previously carried out by the late Fr George Aquilina and professors Hanno-Walter Kruft and Mario Buhagiar. Once all the work has been completed, it is hoped that the Madonna and Child sculpture can be returned to the second altar on the north aisle where it was intended to be placed after the 1757 reconstruction of the church.

Timmy Gambin, from the University of Malta Department of Classics and Archaeology, has carried out the initial 3D scan of the marble sculpture that can be viewed online on <https://sketchfab.com/3d-models/madonna-and-jesus-37038ff944ef4953bc049352c4a04b84> as well as on <https://bit.ly/3qkOlgA>.



**A photomontage of the St Anne Street  
Floriana - Malta project**

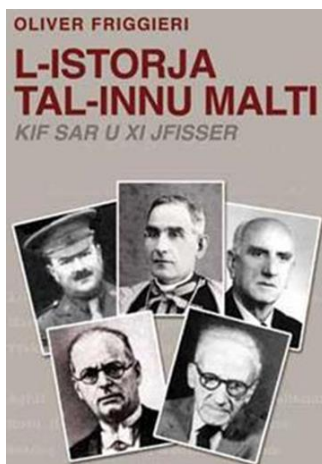
It proposes the removal of car traffic from St Anne avenue by creating an underground tunnel that would free the surface for landscaping to create a green recreational area.

The regeneration of the busy road into a public green area through a sustainable approach that would improve traffic circulation

around Floriana builds on government policies and can be a trendsetter for other localities.

It would inject new social life into Floriana, while contributing to its economic growth and value, enhancing the experience, spurring the regeneration of the existing buildings and creating another tourist centre.





## National Anthem of Malta

Oliver Friggieri, *L-Istorja tal-Innu Malti*. Kif sar u xi jfisser, Klabb Kotba Maltin, Malta, 2014. 152 pp.

Ever since it became our national anthem, the Innu Malti has been used, on some irrelevant occasions even over-used, to underline our identity.

Perhaps its most significant moment took place on March 25, 1945, when the crowds at the Empire Stadium rose as one defiantly to sing it when, before a match between Hajduk Split and Malta XI, only the British and Yugoslav anthems had been played.

The basic story behind the Innu Malti is generally known. Towards the end of 1922, director of education Albert Laferla was given a tune by his brother-in-law Robert Samut. This was then passed on to Dun Karm so he could write some lyrics in Maltese, for a hymn to be sung by schoolchildren.

The first public performance took place on December 27, 1922 at the Manoel Theatre when it was already being described as a national anthem specially written for the occasion.

Of course, the writing of a national anthem in the vernacular was a political act that has to be interpreted in the situation of the day, a year after the island had been granted self-government following the bloody riots of 1919.

*This was a nation that was still experiencing the notorious language question*

The fact that it was soon accepted by the people means that they felt that it was somehow encapsulated their national consciousness. Friggieri highlights the important roles played by two personalities in giving the Innu its present musical form. One was Paul Nani (also known as Paolo until the early 1940s).

Nani came from one of Malta's most distinguished musical families. Laferla, who was actually Nani's Valletta neighbour, had appointed him director of music for schools.

Samut had only written the tune and it was Nani who proceeded to write the full orchestral harmonisation in 1938 at the request of Laferla himself. The other was Vincenzo Ciappara who, in 1936, at the request of the King's Own Band Club, wrote down the adaptation for a band.

The anthem was given official recognition on February 27, 1941 and that again was a political decision by the colonial authorities as the winds of war were building up. Indeed, in just over three months' time the first fascist bombs were to be dropped over Malta.

Friggieri goes into careful details about the vicissitudes of the anthem that so fully encapsulated the essential elements of the Maltese identity, namely its steadfast religious belief, its language and its European traditions.

The second section of the book consists of a careful word-by-word analysis of the anthem. The fact that each of the mere 37 words employed is of Semitic origin is in itself a conscious statement of the nation's identity.

This was a nation that was still experiencing the notorious language question, ironically with English and Italian vying for superiority, with the vernacular being officially unseen.

The 50th anniversary of the writing of the anthem was allowed to pass by unnoticed. Two years later Friggieri has righted this slightly by offering us the definitive book about the text of the Innu Malti.

### **WORTH THINKING ABOUT - SUBMITTED BY VENNY SPITERI (ADELAIDE)**

***When wealth is lost, nothing is lost***

***When health is lost, something is lost***

***When character is lost, all is lost***

***Do not spoil what you have by desiring what you don't have***

***Remember that what you now have was once among the things you only hoped for***

### **MONTHLY MASS IN MALTESE AT LOCKLEYS, SOUTH AUSTRALIA**

**Every Second Sunday of the Month a Mass in Maltese is celebrated at Christ the King Church at Lockleys. Next Mass is on Sunday 14 February at 2.30pm. The members of the Maltese Community are invited to attend**





## Mosta: Myths and Facts

Mosta was in the direct flight path of enemy bombers retreating from or heading to the RAF base at Ta Qali. As a result the town was heavily bombed in the first four months of 1942, and civilian casualties were high. Never before had their faith been more important to the people of Mosta.

At 1600 hours on Thursday 9 April 1942 Mosta's parishioners were assembled beneath the beautiful Rotunda of St Marija Assunta for the daily hour of prayer. At the sound of the air raid alarm, many headed for shelter; some preferring to remain in one of the side chapels to pray.

At approximately 1640 hours a 500kg Luftwaffe bomb pierced the dome, smashed into masonry and clattered to the stone floor. It did not explode. The shocked parishioners were ushered out of the Church to safety and no-one was hurt.

A report was telephoned through to Royal Engineers Bomb Disposal of an unexploded bomb in a priority location: inside the Rotunda at Mosta. This designation meant it must be dealt with immediately and personally by one of the two RE Bomb Disposal

Officers, Lt T W T Blackwell or Lt G D Carroll.

The disposal of the unexploded bomb at Mosta on 9 April 1942 is logged in the official War Diary of the Royal Engineers Bomb Disposal as UXB report No 2175: priority; 500kg, defuzed and removed. A second bomb was reported on arrival, a 50kg was added to the report as UXB No 2175 (a), defuzed and removed.

No 1 Bomb Disposal Section January 1941

### The photograph

This is not the bomb which penetrated the Rotunda in Mosta. For many years the photograph was believed to show the actual unexploded bomb removed from the church. However, it was taken in January 1941 and shows the Royal Engineers Bomb Disposal Section with a 1000kg bomb. The BD Officer, Lt E E C Talbot (pictured left) was killed in October 1941.

### The bomb

The UXB removed from the church on 9 April 1942 was a 500kg German high explosive. Contrary to rumours, it was not full of sand and did not contain a message of greeting. It was a live bomb, and was defuzed and removed: all such neutralised bombs were taken to the west coast of Malta and dumped in the sea. The bomb on display in the church today is not the original one but a similar example.

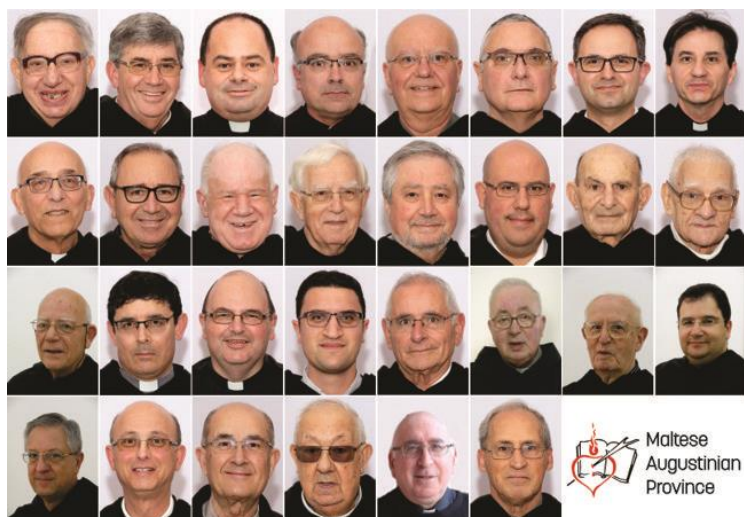
**The removal** Many who served in Malta during World War 2 have been drawn to return in recent decades. They often identify strongly with Mosta, so much so that some believe they were present on that day in 1942. According to several sources, former RAF and Army servicemen from a range of regiments have stated that they shepherded the congregation out to safety, others that they picked up the bomb and carried it out of the church.

### So who dealt with the Mosta bomb?

Unfortunately no-one can identify with certainty who tackled the unexploded bomb in the Rotunda, except that it was a Royal Engineers Bomb Disposal Officer. The bomb was then removed by members of the BD squad and dumped in the sea. For them, arriving after people had been led out of the church by their priests, there was no sense of a miracle at the time – this was just one of the many unexploded bombs they were tackling all over the Island in those weeks of intense bombing.

However, the unexploded bomb commemorated at Mosta represents over 7000 unexploded bombs dealt with by the RE Bomb Disposal Sections in two years. The real story of the men who dealt with the Mosta bomb is uncovered in [\*UXB Malta\*](#), S A M Hudson, History Press 2010/2011.

*We are proud of our Maltese achievers*



## Maltese Augustinian Province was established 203 year ago <https://agostinjani.org/>

The presence of the Augustinian Religious in Malta goes beyond six hundred years. For many years the friars lived and worked in the convent in Rabat, Malta, the one in Valletta and that in Victoria, Gozo where they established three communities. Meanwhile, as was

the case with other religious orders in Malta, they formed part of other provinces and, in the case of the Augustinians, they appertained to the Sicilian Province.

At around the second half of the eighteenth century, various attempts were made to render the Augustinians in Malta no longer dependent on Sicily. In 1801 the English Commissioner advised the local Bishop and the Religious Orders that the English Crown no longer recognised foreign superiors. This made the Maltese friars more inclined to gain autonomy even because it was feared that religious supervision could be at risk.

In fact, a few years later, Pope Pius VII accepted an appeal that the three Maltese convents become an autonomous Province.

It was by a decree dated 14 September 1817 that Fra. Septimus Rotelli, the Order's Vicar General, established the Malta Augustinian Province with the title of the Province of St. Mark.

Over the years, the work of the Maltese brothers continued unabated, both in Malta as well as beyond our shores in missionary countries. Today the Maltese Augustinians have six Religious Communities: that of St. Mark at Rabat, Malta; of St. Augustine at the Gozitan capital, Victoria; of the St. Augustine Parish at Malta's capital, Valletta; that dedicated to the Mother of Good Counsel, Paceville, St. Julians; that dedicated to St. Nicholas from Tolentino at Hal-Tarxien and that at St. Augustine College, Tal-Pieta'. Apart from at their conventual churches, the brothers also render religious services to the communities of St. Rita's Chapel, St. Julians; at tal-Baħrija (limits of Rabat, Malta); at the Chapel dedicated to St. Anthony Abbot at the gardens of the Verdala Palace, Burkett and at the Chapel of the Augustinian Sisters following a Contemplative Life at the capital, Valletta.

For more than one hundred and seventy years the Augustinians have been active in the educational field through the St. Augustinian College, nowadays with two *Campuses* at Marsa and at Tal-Pieta'. Mention should also be made of the significant and very noble work done at the Millennium Chapel, Paceville, St. Julians; in the area of Pastoral Culture; at the Augustinian Institute; at the Secretariat for Augustinian Missions; in the formation of the laity and in accompanying youths. Apart from this, three religious are also giving service away from Malta; in Cuba; Palermo and rendering service to the Order in Rome.

The Augustinian Family, together with all laity who are in some way involved in its work, give thanks to God for all this!



**WE THANK ALL OUR READERS AND SUPPORTERS  
FOR MAKING OUR JOURNAL NUMBER 1.  
BRINGING THE MALTESE COMMUNITIES CLOSER  
Together we defeat the COVID-19**





# JIKTABILNA P. MARK CAUCHI OSA MINN MALTA

Din id-darba ,dan in-numru(356) laqatni aktar mill-qrib għax ittratta minn emigranti Maltin mit-Tunisjija. Fl'1955 jiena ġejt mibgħut fit-Tuneżija mis-superjuri tiegħi fl-Afrika tan-Nord ,preċiżament fit-Tuniżija u l-Alġerija. Domt f'dawk l-artijiet tul għoxrin sena. Rajt ma wiċċi d-diffikultajiet ,il-perikli u l-biża ' ta' dak iż-żmien ta' qabel l-Indipendenza tat-Tuneżija u l-Alġerija.

Fit-Tuneżija kont l-ewwel f'Tuneż u wara f'La Goulette. F'Tuneż kont sewwa sew f'bab-el-Khadra, fil-Parroċċa tas-Sacre Coeur f'rue des protestants n.68.

F'din il-Parroċċa kien hemm aktar minn 32,000 fidili. Ħafna minnhom kienu Maltin. Kien hemm ħafna ħwienet tal-Maltin. L-aħjar jobs kienu għand il-Maltin. Kienu adfdati ħafna l-Maltin.

Il-knisja tagħna kienet l-ewwel imsemmija għal San Pawl. Wara, kien ġie kurat franċiż li bidel l-isem f'dak tal-Qalb ta' Ġesu'. Kien hemm ħafna xogħol x'tagħmel. Dak iż-żmien konna ngħamlu l-quddies bil-Franċiż u wara, f'dik tal-Maltin konna nitraduċu il-qari bil-Malti. Konna rrispettati ħafna. Fost id-devozzjonijiet konna daħħalna dik tal-Madonna ta' Pinu.

Kien hemm altar iddedikat lilha. Kien impitter minn Serge mir-Raħal Ġdid Malta. Kull nhar t'erbgħa kien ikun hemm il-laqqhat. Jiena kont Vicaire Cooperateur fil-parroċċa.

Minn hemm kont mibgħut fil-Parroċċa ta' La Goulette, ħdejn il-Port ta' Tuneż Hem kien hemm il-Maltin ukoll. L-aktar li kien hemm taljani minn Sqallija . Hemm kont nominat mill-Kurja Vigarju għall-Maltin kollha tat-Tuniżija. F'La Goulette. fil-Parroċċa il-Madonna ta' Pinu kienet meqjuma wkoll. Kien hemm kwadru kbir fil-kappella tal-Qalb ta' Ġesu'. Kien hemm wieħed Għawdexi Ġanni Mercieca li kien jieġu ħsiebha. Kienu joqgħodu f'laGoulette huwa u l-mara. Filgħaxija qabel ngħalqu kien jara l-lampier jekk hux mixgħul.

Din il-koppja Ġanni w l-mara tiegħu fis-snin sittin niftakar li billi fit-Tuneżija s-sitwazzjoni ma kienetx tajba, kienu emigraw fl-Awstralja. Kienu qaluli li Ġanni Mercieca kien daħħal id-devozzjoni tal-Madonna ta'Pinu fl-Awstralja .Fliema Belt ma nafx għax ma kellniex aktar kuntatt miegħu. Jiena kont immur spiss f'Bona l-Alġerija għax hemm kellna l-bażilka ta' Santu Wistin. Kien hemm ħafna Maltin u kienu ta' fiduċja. Kienu nies kapaċi.

Ghandek tkun taf li il-Maltin ta' Tuneż kienu minn MALTA.

Dawk ta' l-Algerija kienu il-maġġoranza minn Għawdex. Kien hemm il-famuza familja TEUMA. Dawn kienu kollha mix-Xagħra Għawdex Naħseb li l-isqof preżenti t'Għawdex kellu niesu f'Bona. Kienu mdrrijin li meta jaslu fl-eta' għaž-żwieġ kienu jiġu GĦAWDEX u jsibu siebha minn Għawdex.



**Patri Mark Cauchi twieled Bormla (Cospicua) iben Mark u Mary nee Carbonaro.**

**Ha l-edukazzjoni primarja fl-iskola gewwa Bormla u s-sekondarja fil-Kulleġġ ta' San Alwigi, Birkirakara. Huwa dahal mal-patrijiet Agostinjan f'Jannar 1946 geww Victoria. Huwa gie ordnat sacerdot fis-26 Jannar 1952 fil-kon-kattidral ta' San Gwann, Valletta f'Dicembru 1952.**

**Mark studja l-filosofija u t-teologija fil-Kulleġġa San Mark u l-letteratura u metodologija fl-Universita Grenoble fi Franza. Huwa serva il-provincja Agostinjana gewwa Malta, l-Africa, Svizzera u l-Italja. Barra mid-dmirijiet pastorli tiegħu u hadem ukoll fil-qasam tal-edukazzjoni fil-Kulleġġ Santu Wistin, Pieta bhala għalliem u membru tal-Bord. Huwa kiteb ħafna artikli bl-Ingliż u bil-Malti fuq il-gazzetti f'Malta u anki fl-Italja – Ruma, Napli,Vatania u Valvederel. Fr. Mark l-awtur tal-ktieb fuq il-Knisja u l-Monasteru ta' San Mark – Rabat.**



**THE MALTESE CENTER NY  
PRESENTS on  
Sunday 24 June 2021 @ 12  
noon  
Live online event  
IL-MALTIN TAGHNA  
with environmental  
advocate  
BETH FITENI**

This live online event will be hosted and moderated by Carmen Debono. A Q & A with audience participation will be available after the discussion. She is the Executive Director of Green Inside and

Out, a nonprofit whose mission it is to educate on matters of toxins and environmental health and hosts a monthly radio show on WUSB Stony Brook University radio. She is also the author of the book, "The Green Wardrobe Guide – Finding Eco Chic Fashions that Look Great and Help Save the Planet."

Beth lectures regularly all over Long Island on non-toxic, energy-efficient, green living, in both English and Spanish. She has been featured in media outlets such as News 12, Fios 1, WNBC Channel 4, Newsday and the Long Islander and has received numerous awards including the distinguished LI Sierra Club Environmentalist of the Year award in 2017. Find out how we can make small changes in our daily lives that benefit our health, well being, and the earth

**BETH FITENI** is the Executive Director of Green Inside and Out, a non-profit whose mission it is to educate on matters of toxins and environmental health. Beth has a Masters Degree in Environmental Law from Vermont Law School, as well as twenty years of experience working in the environmental movement for non-profit organizations in DC and NY. She has worked at Renewable Energy Long Island, Sustainability Institute at Molloy College, and Beyond Pesticides, through which she coordinated educational programs such as organic lawn care trade shows, energy policy work groups, and national conferences. She is the author of the forthcoming book, "The Green Wardrobe Guide – Finding EcoChic Fashions that Look Great and Help Save the Planet."

She founded Green Inside and Out in 2011 and hosts a monthly radio show on WUSB Stony Brook University radio. Fitni was awarded the LI Sierra Club Environmentalist of the Year in 2017, the Woman of Distinction Award by the Town of Oyster Bay in 2011, the EPA's Environmental Quality award 2010 for her work in co-creating educational materials on children's environmental health ([Ribbet.org](http://Ribbet.org)), and the LI Business News' Top 40 Under 40 Award in 2008.

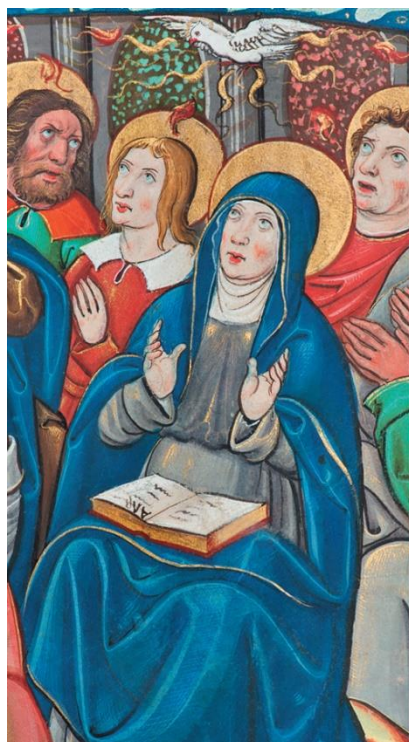
Beth has served as Board member of the US Green Building Council LI Chapter, Prevention is the Cure, Slow Food North Shore, Vision LI, Friends of Huntington Farmlands and the Huntington Clean Energy Task Force.

She was trained by former Vice President Al Gore in 2012 and lectures regularly all over Long Island on non-toxic, energy-efficient, green living, in both English and Spanish. She has been featured in media outlets such as News 12, Fios 1, WNBC Channel 4, Newsday and the Long Islander.



## CANTATE DOMINO

### EARLY CHOIR BOOKS FOR THE KNIGHTS IN MALTA



**Cantate Domino**

*Early Choir Books for  
the Knights in Malta*

THERESA ZAMMIT LUPU

FONDAZZJONI PATRIMONJU MALTI

#### Theresa Zammit Lupi

The ten volumes of graduals commissioned by Philippe Villiers de L'Isle Adam, elected Grand Master of the Knights Hospitaller of St John in 1521, are one of the treasures of the Co-Cathedral of St John in Valletta. Their size and their extensive and very beautiful decoration cannot fail to impress the visitors who see them in their display cases, but behind their grandeur (in no small part due to their great size) lies a complex artistic and liturgical history, which is the subject of the detailed account by Dr Theresa Zammit Lupi. They were written in 1533, shortly before L'Isle Adam's death in 1534, and following a disastrous fire in the Church of St Lawrence in Birgu. After the consecration of the new Co-Cathedral in Valletta, the graduals were moved to this church, where they have remained ever since, and, as Theresa Zammit Lupi shows in her historical account, remained in use there for more than four centuries, being repeatedly adapted for successive changes in the liturgy.

From tracing the history of the chorals and their manufacture, to making a convincing attribution to the artist Jean Pichore, whose collaborators were most probably responsible for the major decoration of the manuscripts in 1533, Theresa Zammit Lupi's work is an exemplary case of how the future preservation of a set of complex manuscript volumes involves a thorough awareness of the historical, liturgical, codicological, material, conservation and exhibition issues.



#### SKORBA MUSICO-DOCUMENTARY

Skorba is going to be doing a beautiful presentation which is a musico/documentary about the Ottoman Siege of Malta in 1565. It's a great and well researched historical piece covering this critical event that changed the history of Europe and possibly the World.

Skorba at The Springwood Hub February 26th 8:00 p.m.  
The Ottoman Siege of Malta 1565.

This presentation has 3 levels to it: a narrative that explains each part of the journey provided before each of the songs, a series of visual images on the big screen that accompany each of the songs and match the lyrics

of each song and the 'feel' of the tunes and songs and tunes that accompany every part of the narrative. Songs are in Maltese, English and Turkish and where necessary translations are given. This concert is a historical, audio and visual feast. Not to be missed!!! If you would like to come, and we do hope you support this great move back into live music in the Blue Mountains, click on the link below and buy a ticket [bmth.sales.ticketsearch.com](http://bmth.sales.ticketsearch.com)

**Blue Mountains Theatre NSW   Fri 26 Feb 2021, 08:00 PM**



## NUMISTATIC COINS - L'ISLE ADAM GRADUALS

The Central Bank of Malta has issued numismatic coins in gold and silver depicting an illuminated letter from the L'Isle Adam Graduals. The coins form part of the Europa Programme with the theme 'Gothic' and bear the Europa Star logo.

The obverse of the coin features the coat of arms of Malta and the Europa Star logo. The reverse of the coins depicts an illuminated letter O found in the L'Isle Adam Graduals, which are housed in the museum of St John's Co-Cathedral. Colour printing techniques have been used on the coins to reproduce the chromatic and aesthetic qualities of the original artwork.

The L'Isle Adam Graduals, which date to around 1533, are considered to be Malta's finest illuminated manuscripts. They consist of a set of ten choir books commissioned from a French scriptorium by Grand Master Philippe Villiers de L'Isle Adam. These graduals were produced quite some time after the advent of printing, epitomised by the Gutenberg Bible of 1455. This reflects the complexity of printing music scores, which ensured that the production of manuscript choir books – largely using medieval techniques – survived into the 16th century.



**I LOVE MY  
GRANDKIDS**

because

they are the apple  
of my eyes

they are the song  
in my heart

they are the warmth  
in my smile

they are the frosting  
on my cake

they are the roses  
in my garden

they are the light  
of my life

I love my

**NANNU AND NANNA**

Maltese e-Newsletter  
Journal of Maltese  
living abroad



**DO YOU HAVE A  
STORY TO TELL?**

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*We love to  
Hear from you*





REBECCA CARUANA

## Maltese Medical Student Co-Authors International E-Book On COVID-19

So Proud to Present to you my first e-book which I wrote named "COVID-19: THE REASON WHY THE EARTH STOOD STILL IN 2020. " The e-book can be downloaded for FREE in the link below just by entering your email address: <https://covid19ebook.org/>

Back in March 2020, I had written my first article regarding COVID-19 which was published on a local newspaper. After I had shared my article on social media, I was contacted by Dr. Syed M. Rizvi to start working on an international project with him. The team working on this project were Dr. Syed M. Rizvi a medical doctor from New York, Dr. Pippasha Khan a dentist in London, Mr. Daniel Hrbolic a speech therapist in Australia and myself, Rebecca Caruana a medical student from Malta. This project involved writing a book regarding COVID-19 using all of the reliable sources from doctors who work with the World Health Organisation and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). On the 5th of June 2020, Hons. Owen Bonnici (who was the Minister of Education at that time) & Dr. Francis Fabri had invited me to present the project to them. The book had to come out in 2020. Yet, because of the dynamic situation of the pandemic and new discoveries found regarding the COVID-19 virus, we had to constantly change data within the book. Thank you goes to **Constantine Suvorov** and rest of the team who helped us to get this project out in time. I hope that all readers will find value on this book by gaining more knowledge on this virus while helping them deal with this pandemic both physically and mentally. Credits: @lourdesphotographicservice



### MMG Concert Band of Victoria

Do you receive the Maltese E-Newsletter? If you do, you would have seen Jake featured in this edition of the Maltese E-Newsletter about joining our first rehearsal back after COVID.

If you do not receive the Maltese E-Newsletter, you can read via the below link and also email Frank ([maltesejournal@gmail.com](mailto:maltesejournal@gmail.com)) directly to have it sent straight to your email.

Thank you to Frank for this inclusion and once again for your time and dedication putting this newsletter together for us all to read and celebrate what we are doing around the world to preserve our Maltese culture.

Happy reading.

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



## PAWLU DEGABRIELE, *IL-BIES*

<http://www.magnazmien.com/stories/>

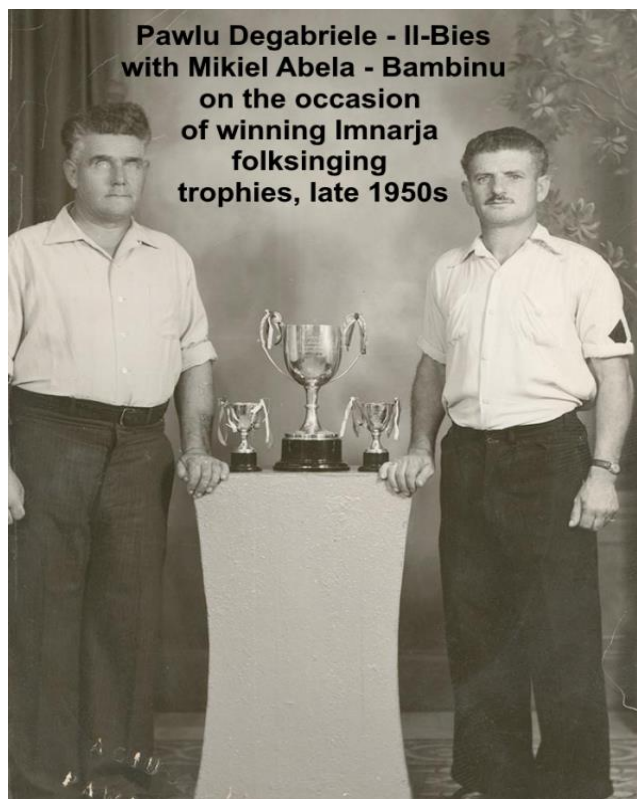
Musician Oliver Degabriele said that he had acquired recordings of his great grandfather who, he'd found out, was none other than the renowned *għannej* Pawlu Degabriele *il-Bies* (The Hawk).



As he had always wondered where his musical inclination had come from he was only too happy to write some words and share his story with us. Here is his story -

Pawlu I-Bies (the hawk) was a renowned *għannej* (folksinger) from Żejtun. He was born on the 11th April 1908. He worked in various jobs, including the laborious task of coal-heaving in the Grand Harbour and later on

as a tinsmith. Unfortunately, he went blind in his early twenties. He passed away in 1980, aged 72. He remains a favourite among folk enthusiasts for his yearning and passionate voice and his artistry in delivering his poetic verses.



*It's hard to talk about someone you've never met, and I have never had the luck to meet my great grandfather who passed away the same year that I was born. Pawlu I-Bies is a folk hero, especially in Żejtun (where he has a bust dedicated to his memory) and sang Il-Bormliża with a unique voice which forces you to sit down and listen. He is especially known for "Id-Destin", a song that speaks of how he lost his vision (at the age of 21) and how he never saw the faces of his children, except his elder one year old son (my grandfather)*

*Being a musician myself, I always had an inkling towards music and playing by ear from a very early age. I always questioned where this attraction came from since none of my immediate family play any instrument. Now I realise I have my great grandfather to thank for passing down some of that magic.*



## Maria Mifsud – Malta



Maria Mifsud is an award-winning music composer and pianist from Gozo, Malta. She commenced her piano studies at a tender age achieving distinctions and prizes in Trinity Guildhall grades. Later Maria proceeded to learning the violin as her second instrument. At age 18 she became an associate of the Trinity College of Music, London, obtaining the AMusTCL diploma in music theory and composition. Maria also holds the ATCL diploma (distinction) in piano performance. She became a licentiate of the London College of Music, after achieving the LMusLCM diploma in composition. In 2015, Maria graduated with a B.A.(Hons.) in Music, from the University of Malta, where she majored in

composition. She entered the semi-finals of Song of the Year and of the UK Songwriting Contest in addition to receiving honorable mentions for her compositions. In 2012 Maria was a winner of the Golden Key Piano Composition Competition, where she was awarded a Malta Arts Fund Bursary to perform her work in the World Young Composers Recital in Vienna. Her composition 'Checkmate' was an Award Winning Film Score in The Indie Gathering International Film Festival 2016, Hudson Ohio. In July 2016 Maria graduated with a Masters Degree in Music from Berklee College of Music. Maria was awarded a generous Berklee scholarship and was also a recipient of the Endeavour Scholarship. Her compositions range from solo instrumental works to full orchestral compositions, choral pieces and various musical ensembles. In addition, she has written music for short films, trailers, commercials and dance. <https://mariamifsud.com/>  
<https://www.facebook.com/maria.s.mifsud/>





## The story behind Malta's favourite cheeselet \_ Gbejniet

*Local farmer reveals how Maltese 'gbejniet' are made, and what makes them so popular. Martina Said*

Sheep's milk gbejniet have been in

production since time immemorial, and are among the best kind of gbejniet you'll find on the Islands. Most families who owned farmland and herds of sheep in the past would produce their own and incorporate them into meals in different forms, and for some families, the practice has been handed down from one generation to another. Chris Grech, a young farmer who runs a butcher shop in Birżebbuġa,



took over this practice from his father and grandfather before him.

### The process

"Making gbejniet is quite time-consuming and, unfortunately, a dying practice, but something I do every day, starting from very early in the morning," says Chris. "I head to the farm to milk the sheep, then take the milk home where my wife gets started on the process. Sheep's milk is without doubt the best milk for making gbejniet – it curdles the best, you get the most

out of every batch of milk, even in terms of fats and nutritional value, and you simply cannot compare the taste."

The rich and creamy texture of the gbejniet is a result of the type of milk used, as well as the fact that it isn't pasteurised. "Using pasteurised milk would change the taste and not allow it to curdle properly. I'm very careful to ensure that the animals are in good health and checked thoroughly on a regular basis, and as long as you take all the necessary precautions, there is no cause for concern," explains Chris.

"The milk, together with salt and rennet, is heated up to a temperature ranging between 38 and 40°C. It will then start to curdle and solidify. We cut this up and place an amount in small plastic containers called qwieleb, which give the gbejniet their distinctive pattern."

The gbejniet are left to rest in their containers overnight, placed on a rack to drain, and then flipped to get the same pattern on both sides. If they are to be sold as fresh gbejniet – where the cheese is still soft and needs to be consumed within a few days – they are placed in the fridge and prepared to be sold the following day.

**Different variations** If the gbejniet are to be sold as dried cheeselets, they are refrigerated for a few days, taken out and left to dry. When sold this way, they are known as gbejniet bojod or moxxi (white and salted cheeselets), whereas those who enjoy a bit of heat with their food can opt for gbejniet tal-bżar (peppered cheeselets), which, once dried, are left to soak in vinegar before being rolled in pepper and packaged.

His 70-strong herd of sheep permits Chris to yield approximately 250 gbejniet each day, although production varies depending on demand and available resources.





Veronica Stivala

## How to make Maltese cheeselets, aka Gbejniet

Gbejniet are one of Malta's typical foods. They are small cheeses and you can either buy them fresh, where they are a little blander in taste, or dried, with a more robust taste and a harder texture.

I'm so pleased I managed to make gbejniet here in Germany because it reminded me of home, but also because I managed to make cheese! I'd like to share the recipe as it really is quite easy to make them once you have the right ingredients and know a few tricks. While gbejniet are officially made with sheep's milk, I used cow's milk and they turned out just fine. You also need some kind of little baskets like you can see in the picture below. This is important because the excess water will need to drain from the cheese as it sets. Once you've made them you can then go on to make a magnificent cheese pie with the cheeselets. [Here's](#) the recipe!

### **Ingredients**

4 litres of fresh, full-fat milk (UHT milk will not work although both 1.5% and 3.5% fat fresh milk did)

1 teaspoon of rennet

Yield: seven to nine cheeselets

### **Method**

Prepare a dish with around seven baskets in them

Pour all the milk into a pan and heat over low heat until it is lukewarm. Next turn off the heat and add a teaspoon of the rennet, stirring it in well. Within seconds you will start to notice the milk beginning to coagulate, separating from the water. Once you have a good solid amount (after about five minutes) you can spoon the cheese into the baskets. Don't worry about scooping up water too. This will drain away. Once your baskets are full, place the cheese in the fridge to set. You may need to pour the water away once or twice. To eat, just turn the baskets upside down, pressing the sides to ease the cheeselets out and voila', you have gbejniet!



Toronto (M.C.S.T.), Father Anthony Vella, OFM of St. Paul the Apostle Church and M.C.S.T. president Charles Gixti

## **MALTESE CANADIAN ARCHIVES - 2000**

Here's a photo taken during the blessing of the St. Paul statue at the Maltese section of Assumption Cemetery in Mississauga, Ontario in June, 2000.

L. to R. Holding the Maltese Veterans flag is it's president Henry Formosa, who was also the president of the Maltese-Canadian Federation, Ross Zammit of the M.C.S.T., Richard Cumbo with the flag of the Maltese-Canadian Society of



## AZZJONI KATTOLIKA

Dar Ċentrali - Triq Sir Arturo Mercieca Victoria

### Media Release

#### Posposta l-Preżentazzjoni tat-Trabi f'Ta' Pinu

L-Azzjoni Kattolika, flimkien mar-rettur tas-Santwarju Ta' Pinu, tavża li ċ Ċelebrazzjoni tal-Preżentazzjoni tat-Trabi li ssir kull sena qrib il-Festa tal Gandlora hi posposta minħabba ċ ċirkostanzi preżenti. Jithabbar meta tkun tista' ssir.

#### Baby Presentations at Ta' Pinu postponed

Catholic Action, with the Ta' Pinu Sanctuary rector, announces that the Celebration of Child Presentations to Our Lady – held annually at the beginning of February - has been postponed because of the current situation. It is hoped that a new date can be decided soon.

*CATHOLIC ACTION MOVEMENT*



## ORDER OF MALTA INTERNATIONAL NEWS

### Archbishop of Adelaide Philip Wilson R.I.P.



The former Principal Chaplain of the Knight of Malta (South Australia), Archbishop Philip Wilson, died at the age of 70 in Adelaide recently..

He was the former Bishop of Wollongong and Archbishop of Adelaide as well as a former president of the Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference. He performed his duties as our Principal Chaplain with energy, grace, distinction and respect from our members for the work he did for the Order. He will be greatly missed.

Born in the Hunter region, a young Philip Wilson studied at St Columba's College, Springwood and St Patrick's College Manly before being ordained a priest of the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle. Later, after his ordination as Bishop of Wollongong in 1996, he became an important figure in introducing reforms to help the Catholic Church respond to the issue of child sexual abuse. Archbishop Wilson helped draft a new Church policy to deal nationally with abuse victims and perpetrators, Towards Healing.

He was appointed Archbishop of Adelaide in 2001 – another milestone in his 45 years of priestly ministry. Archbishop Wilson also served as president of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference for two terms, from 2006 to 2010. Please pray for the repose of his soul.







## **PHILIPPINES**

### **THE ORDER OF MALTA**

**PHILIPPINES** invites you to the 29th World Day of the Sick Celebration to be held on 11 February 2021, Thursday, Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes, at the Metropolitan Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist, Roman Catholic

Archdiocese of Lingayen-Dagupan Province of Pangasinan, Philippines.

The Eucharistic Celebration will be presided by His Excellency Most Reverend Archbishop Socrates B. Villegas, DD, Grand Cross Conventual Chaplain ad honorem of the Order of Malta Philippines and currently the Archbishop of Lingayen-Dagupan. This can be viewed ONLINE at the Order of Malta Philippines Facebook Page <https://www.facebook.com/orderofmaltaph/> on this day at the following time slots:

**4 PM Philippines / Singapore / HK 5 PM Korea / East Timor 7 PM Australia (AEST) 9 AM Rome / Switzerland (Central European time) 11 AM Middle East 12 MN US Pacific**



## **Annual Asia Pacific Youth Camp**

For the 2021 Order of Malta Asia Pacific Youth Camp, 150 young people with disabilities, volunteers and carers will come together for a once in a lifetime experience of fun, friendship and adventure at a premier sporting facility on the Gold Coast. Guests from all around the Asia Pacific region and Australia will participate, including those from disadvantaged communities in the outback. The objectives of the camps are:

- Help young people overcome personal barriers
- To forge a sense of community
- An opportunity to serve

**As hosts we need to raise \$250,000 for the accommodation, meals and activities for participants over five days.**



**We are asking you consider a donation to the Order of Malta to provide our disabled guests with a once in a lifetime opportunity. <https://live.orderofmalta.org.au/>**



## Maltese Music in Canada

The majority of Maltese in Canada arrived after World War II, though a few immigrated prior to 1930. Gaetano Francesco Farrugia settled in Halifax and achieved local recognition for his *Agnes Waltzes* during the mid-19th century.

The majority of Maltese in Canada arrived after World War II, though a few immigrated prior to 1930. Gaetano Francesco Farrugia settled in Halifax and achieved local recognition for his *Agnes Waltzes* during the mid-19th century. Some years later (1870-1) the Canadian-born soprano Emma Albani spent five months in Malta, singing in productions of *L'Africaine*, *The Barber of Seville*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Robert le Diable*, and a new opera buffa, Carlo Romani's *Il Mantello*, at the Royal Opera House in

Valetta. News of Albani's success in Malta led to her Covent Garden engagement in 1871.

In 1979 over 40,000 Maltese were living in Canada, approximately 25,000 of these in Toronto, but the 1986 census figures registered a Maltese population of only 21,855. Maltese communities were established elsewhere in Ontario (Guelph, Hamilton, London, Oshawa, St Thomas, Windsor) and in Montreal, Vancouver, and Winnipeg. Because Malta was a British Crown colony until 1962, many Maltese are fluent in English, and this has facilitated their integration into Canadian society. The first Maltese church in Canada was that of St Paul the Apostle (Roman Catholic), founded in Toronto in 1931 with assistance from the Maltese Canadian Society of Toronto, the oldest Maltese organization in North America.

Maltese music is heard at celebrations for Republic Day (13 December), at traditional Imnarja Carnival celebrations, and for the historic national day (8 September). Reflecting the popularity of village bands in the homeland, Malta Band Clubs of 25 or more members have been organized in Maltese-Canadian communities.

Toronto's Malta Band Club, conducted in 1990 by Greg Farugia, was founded in 1971 and performs at 16-20 events yearly. Several organizations have sponsored visits by Maltese popular singers, as well as entertainment by local groups at concerts and dances. Popular Maltese folk dances are 'il-Maltija,' a national country dance, and the 'parata,' which is performed with wooden sticks. Viva Malta, a group of Maltese musicians who play traditional instruments, performed at the Commonwealth Games in Edmonton in 1978.

The first Maltese radio program in North America originated in Windsor, Ont, in 1954. The Maltese community in Toronto is served by 'Wirt Malta' or 'Maltese Heritage' on CHIN radio and by other community programs on cable TV which feature both Maltese and Maltese-Canadian performers.

The Maltese composer and accordionist Charles Camilleri lived in Canada 1959-65 and 1977-9. The harpsichordist Vivienne Spiteri was born in Malta. In 1959 George Bonavia (editor of *Kaleidoscope Canada*, published 1979-82 by Employment and Immigration Canada) donated to the Windsor Public Library a collection of Maltese books and of recordings of Maltese folksongs and other music. In 1964 Folkways issued the LP *Folk Songs and Music From Malta* (FM 4047) extracted from these recordings, with notes by Bonavia.

*This article was printed in the Canadian Encyclopedia 2014*







## WAS MALTA A GREEK COLONY?

The persistent tradition of a Greek colonization of the Maltese Islands in ancient times was inspired mainly by ancient literary allusions.

These are basically

- 1) the identification of the Homeric island of Ogygia, Calypso's refuge, with Malta;
- 2) the reference in the Greek poet Lycophron to the settlement in Malta of a group of Greek warriors on their return home from the Trojan war;
- 3) the ties of friendship between the Maltese and Phalaris, the Greek tyrant of Agrigento, revealed in three of a group of letters attributed to him;
- 4) the mythical reign of a king of Malta, named Battus, homonymous of another Greek king historically associated with the foundation of the Greek colony of Cyrene in North Africa;
- 5) Thucydides' inclusion of 'the small islands' with that part of Sicily which, after an alleged Phoenician domination, was colonized by the Greeks.

This theory appeared to receive confirmation from numerous archaeological objects found in these islands which showed Greek characteristics or bore inscriptions in the Greek language.

## The Greek's Gate in Mdina – Malta

### Il-Mina tal-Griegi



The Greek Gate in Malta is one of the most beautiful historical architectural landmarks in the country. Although it was built centuries ago, the structure has been well preserved.

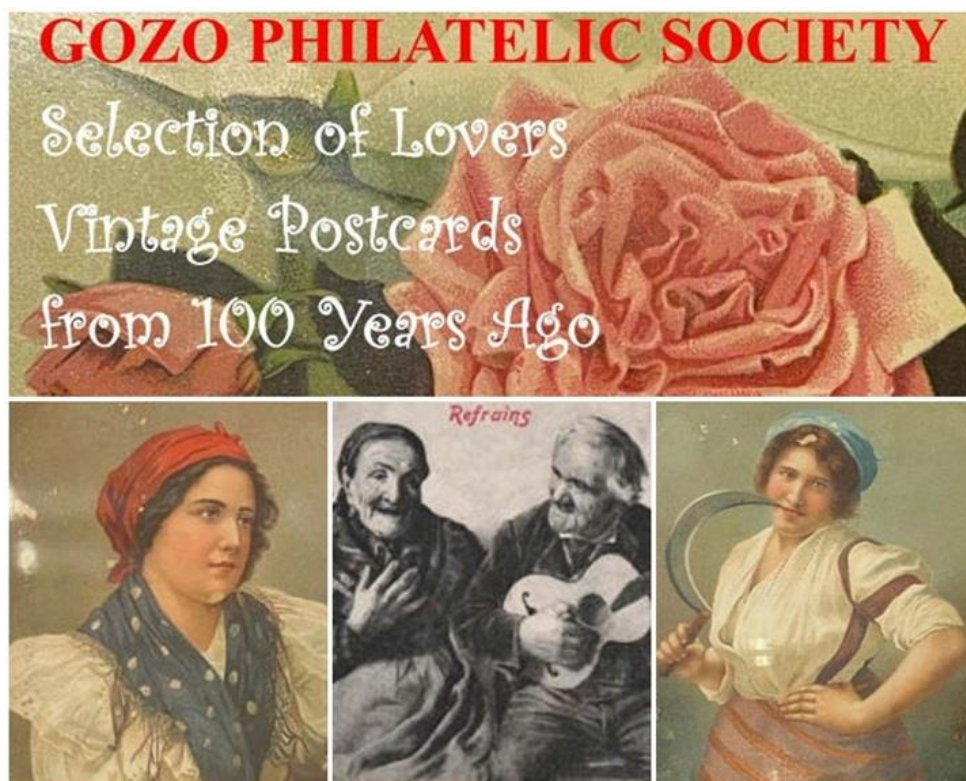
**Location** The gate can be found at St Nicholas Square, Mdina.

This gate is the second gate of Malta apart from the Main Gate. The design of the gate, particularly the columns and the roof, are akin to those in classical Greece.

Apart from the gate, there is also a Valletta-Mdina railroad station nearby. Tourists can check this out when they visit the gate. The area also has a small restaurant where you can eat some local delicious food.

Although the Greek Gate in Malta is well preserved, it was built in the 17th century. Some are of the opinion that a Greek community existed there. The site is actually called St Nicholas Square. Saint Nicholas is the patron saint of Greece. There also used to be a chapel in the area. This was dedicated to Saint Nicholas.





**VINTAGE  
LOVERS CARDS  
FOR  
VALENTINE'S  
ON DISPLAY  
AT IL-HAGAR  
IN GOZO**

**FONDAZZJONI  
BELT  
VICTORIA  
VO/0762 Gozo**

**NGOs Association founder-member Pjazza San Ġorġ, Victoria VCT 1101**

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#### **Media Release**

#### **Lovers' Cards @ Il-Haġar**

The Gozo Philatelic Society has set up a new exhibit in their showcase on level -1 at Il-Haġar (Pjazza San Ġorġ - Victoria) featuring vintage Lovers' Cards.

The assortment is mostly from the World War I period which means the cards are a hundred years old; thus interest is quite wide, also offering an insight into social aspects.

In any case, the exhibit can be visited till after Valentine Day.

This cultural centre is open 9am to 5pm seven days a week – with no entrance fee.

### **MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER**

This journal of Maltese living abroad is preserved at the Malta Migration Museum - Valletta, on Facebook and Twitter, the Maltese-Canadian Archives, Toronto and Gozo National Library and on [www.ozmalta.com](http://www.ozmalta.com)  
Several organisations and institutions print the journal and distribute it among their members.  
Our readers share it with their family and friends



## **St. Paul the Apostle Church Maltese-Canadian Parish**

3224, Dundas Street West, Toronto, ON M6P 2A3, Canada

Tel: (416) 767-7054

Update from Fr. Ivano January 21, 2021

Dear Friends: I hope this finds you all in good health. On Monday, January 25<sup>th</sup> we will be celebrating the Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul. Therefore, the livestreamed Mass on Sunday, January 24<sup>th</sup> will be celebrated in commemoration of this special day.

Take care and stay safe. God Bless, Fr. Ivano



## **MALTESE COMMUNITY COUNCIL OF VICTORIA**

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.



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