



CONSULATE OF MALTA IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA NEWSLETTER
APRIL 2014 FRANK L SCICLUNA - LINKING MALTA AND AUSTRALIA
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Easter is one of the most important holidays for Christians. They give huge importance to this yearly occasions. Easter Sunday commemorates the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. This Easter may we always be blessed with love, life and happiness. May our lives be touched by the true meaning of Easter. Exchanging greetings and Easter wishes to celebrate this day is one of the most common traditions.

TIMES OF MALTA Friday, April 4, 2014,

New President has link to Russian Royal Family



Saint Gorg Preca is her husband's great-great-uncle but President-elect Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca has some fine lineage of her own in her family tree.

According to a genealogist, she is related to a Russian Romanov princess.

Charles Said-Vassallo, who has been studying Maltese genealogy, particularly that of nobility, for more than 15 years, said that Ms Coleiro Preca was the first cousin, twice removed of Edgar Tabone who was married to Princess Nathalie Poutiatine, a member of the Russian royal family who moved to Malta after the Bolshevik revolution. It was here that the

princess met her future husband," he said.

Ms Coleiro Preca's great-grandfather, Salvatore Coleiro, married Teresa Tabone, Edgar's aunt. Princess Nathalie and Edgar never had children themselves but Ms Coleiro Preca is connected through lineage, he explained..

Ms Coleiro-Preca was sworn in as President of the Republic of Malta today 4 April 2014 at a special sitting of the House of Representatives in the Grand Council Chamber of the Palace in Valletta following Mass at Dar Tal-Providenza.

Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca has taken the oath of Office as President of Malta on Friday evening. She has become Malta's ninth President and the second female President in Maltese history.

In her first address President Coleiro-Preca emphasized **unity, diversity** and **inclusiveness**. Her presidency will be characterised by commitment to work for inclusiveness, tolerance and diversity.

APRIL FOOL'S JOKE BOOSTS 'PASTIZZI' SALES – CAJTA TAL-1 T'APRIL DID YOU FALL FOR IT?..... I DID.

DID YOU READ THE ARTICLE IN ISSUE 36 REGARDING THE BANNING OF 'PASTIZZI' BY EU?



Brussels has no intention of interfering with the recipe of Maltese *pastizzi*, since the article claiming this fallacy this morning was just an April Fool's joke courtesy of Times of Malta newsroom. But the joke had a positive consequence for the industry, which saw an unusual boost in sales this morning. Dolceria Micallef in Valletta reported they had not sold so many *pastizzi* in 20 years, running out by 11am. The story, which appeared on April 1, on The Times of Malta, racked up over 40,000 hits and 100 comments by 11.30am. The buzz was aided by the fact that the European Parliament Office in Valletta had a similar idea, announcing that the European Parliament had voted to ban *pastizzi* by 2015. Its announcement, however, was given away by a line at the bottom which said the source was an April Fool's joke. Readers had mixed reactions. Some clearly fell for it, like the first reader who suggested Malta should fight Brussels like Italy had done with a real proposal to ban restaurants from serving olive oil in dishes. The reaction was even more dramatic in a couple of replies to this first comment with one reader supporting the initiative and pointing out that

trying to fight it would be akin to promoting a "killer-culture".

Others figured out it was a joke and added their own spin, like a certain William Cauchi, who suggested setting up an NGO, *Fondazzjoni Insalvaw il-Pastizz*.

READ THE TIMES OF MALTA (In English) ONLINE <http://www.timesofmalta.com/>

Kummissjoni Gholja tar-Repubblika ta' Malta
Media Release 09-2014



High Commission of the Republic of Malta

His Excellency Mr. Charles Muscat made an official visit to Adelaide, South Australia on

27th March 2014 to 31st March 2014

High Commissioner Mr. Charles Muscat and Mr. Frank Scicluna, Honorary Consul of South Australia, visited the Maltese Senior Citizens Association of South Australia. They were greeted by Mr. Frank Grima, President, who introduced the High Commissioner and Mrs. Victoria Muscat. High Commissioner addressed the crowd in Maltese, which was well received.

High Commissioner and Mr. Scicluna also met with Mr. Emmanuel Falzon and Mr. John Falzon of LMS Energy. Mr. Emmanuel Falzon, Executive Founder and Mr. John Falzon, Chief Executive Officer, showed strong interest in visiting Malta. High Commissioner promoted Malta and encouraged them to visit the country. He assured them of full cooperation and assistance should they wish to visit Malta anytime.

In addition, a dinner was hosted by Mr. Charles Figallo, in honour of the High Commissioner. Mr. Figallo is the Director of the Australian Arab Chamber of Commerce and the Managing Director of Basetec Services. Also present at dinner were Mr. Raj Najar, National Director, Australian Arab Chamber of Commerce; Mr. Bob Shepard, Managing Director, Shepard International; and other business representatives, showing interest in Malta.

On Saturday, 29th March, High Commissioner Mr. Charles Muscat and Mr. Scicluna, attended a Maltese function, organised by the Chaplaincy Festivities Group, headed by Father Gabriel Micallef, the Franciscan Sisters of the Heart of Jesus. High Commissioner gave an address, in both, Maltese and English, which was well received by the large crowd.

Furthermore, there was a reception organised by Mr Scicluna, the Honorary Consul of Malta in South Australia, in honour of His Excellency Mr. Muscat. The reception was held at the Maltese Cultural Centre and in attendance were H.E. Hieu Van Lee, Lt. Governor of South Australia; Ms. Zoe Batteson, Minister for Multicultural Affairs; Mr. David Pisoni, Shadow Minister for Multicultural Affairs; Mr. Vincent Tarzia, MP Member for Hartley; Dr. Dante Juanta OAM, Honorary Consul for the Philippines; Mr. Edgar Agius, President, Maltese Community Council of SA; The Maltese Queen of Victories Band of South Australia played Maltese Marches.

In addition, High Commissioner had radio interviews with Ms. Connie Vidal, Coordinator, Blue Grotto Radio and Mr. John Mangion, President, Maltese Community Radio. On Monday, 31st March, His Excellency Mr. Muscat had a breakfast meeting with Mr. John Fargher, Managing Director, Steriline Racing and Mr. Bob Shepard, Shepard International. Mr. Fargher is in the business of construction and manufacturing race barriers. It was noted that all race-horse barriers in the United Kingdom is built and supplied by Mr. Fargher's business. Mr. Fargher showed interest in visiting Malta to explore business opportunities.

High Commissioner also met with Mr. Stephen Diamond, General Manager, Naval, Military and Air Force Club of South Australia. During discussions, High Commissioner agreed to supply some old war photographs to exhibit at the Club with other war frames and exhibitions.

Charles Muscat High Commissioner Canberra, 03 April 2014



FOUR MALTESE TO CLIMB EVEREST FROM THE NORTH EAST RIDGE

Four Maltese Climbers Leave Malta this week for two-month expedition which will see them become the first Maltese to climb Mount Everest from the North East Ridge.

Douglas Barbaro Sant, Matthew Xerri, Gregory Attard and Raphael Fenech Adami will be climbing the North East ridge of Mount Everest to raise funds for Dar tal-

Providenza in Siggiewi.

"It is going to be a two-month emotional ride that will test the mind as well as the body. Away from our comfort zones and exposed to constant cold, we are prepared for an experience that will humble us in a way we've never experienced before," was how they described it.

They recently visited Express Trailers' Head Office where they were presented with a sponsorship in aid of their challenge. Their orange down suits are in fact being sponsored by Express Trailers and will feature the company's logo embroidered on them. The team will also be carrying the Express Trailers flag on top of Mount Everest.

“Our interest in this challenge stems from two objectives presented to us by the team. We are in the business of ‘delivering’ many times against several odds and challenges. This team’s quest to deliver our flag to the summit of the Everest is a test of physical and mental fortitude, and a demonstration of near-perfect logistic and tact. The other objective to raise funds for charity is a noble gesture of altruism which resonates with our Emanuel Vella Charity Fund initiatives. I augur these four Maltese climbers the best of conditions and a safe return,” said said Franco Azzopardi, Chairman and CEO of Express Group.

Matthew Xerri, one of the team members explained “we have been training very hard mostly during the past six months in preparation for this gruelling task. Colder temperatures than other parts of the mountain that can reach as low as -45C, as well as prevailing winds, make the North East ridge more challenging. In fact, only one fourth of the climbers who visit Everest each year choose this route. The rest climb the mountain from the South. There is also no evacuation from the Northeast ridge as no helicopters can land on the mountain. Therefore we are going to be really put to our test!”

MALTA-FILMED SAUL: THE JOURNEY TO DAMASCUS RELEASED

1.



The trail of the film Saul, The journey to Damascus, which has been shot in Malta, was released today.

Written and directed by Mario Philip Azzopardi, the movie is the very first joint Maltese/Canadian feature film which tells the story of the conversion of Saul, played by the renowned Canadian actor Kyle Schmid.

The stoning of Stephen shatters his faith in the Temple and its denial of Christ as the Messiah. As the story unfolds, audiences will see the transformation of Saul, his conversion to Christianity and how his actions changed the history of the world.

Produced by Cittadella Malta Films and Starfield Independent Studios, the movie stars both local and foreign actors; including the acclaimed British actor John Rhys-Davies who is known for his roles in ‘Indiana Jones’ and ‘Lord of the Rings’. Also featured in the film are many of Malta’s most established artists, including Godwin Scerri, John Suda and Larissa Bonaci.



MALTA - GEORGE CROSS AWARD 15 APRIL 1942- 2014

On the 15th of April 1942, King George VI of the United Kingdom awarded the Maltese Islands the 'George Cross'; an award that is bestowed on civilians for demonstrations of bravery.

This was the worst period for the Allies during the Second World War (1939-1945) as Britain's enemies clearly appeared to have the upper hand. German planes were striking Malta - night and day - with an unimaginable amount of deadly arsenal in an attempt to annihilate this British military base that was constantly getting in the way of their naval attempts to supply Rommel's North African campaign. Malta's geographic position, wedged as it is between Italy and North Africa, as well as dividing the Mediterranean basin into east and west, put the Islands at the top of Hitler's hit-list.

Malta-based British aircraft could reach as far as Tripoli in Libya to the south, Tunisia to the west and right over German bases in Italy; on Pantelleria, Sicily and even as far as the port of Naples farther to the north. Thus, standing right on the route of Italian convoys supplying Rommel's Afrika Korps, Malta had to be demolished, if the war in the Med was to be won by the Axis powers.

At this time, military resources and food rations in Malta were practically finished. Fuel was restricted to military action and heavily rationed, the population was on the brim of starvation, and even ammunition was running out, so much that Anti-Aircraft (AA) guns could only fire a few rounds per day, then wait like sitting ducks as the enemy unleashed its fiercest on the Islands.

Italian battleships (of the Regia Marina) out-gunned the British, yet the Royal Navy was far from out-classed. The German airforce (the Luftwaffe) had superior aircraft until late in the day, when Spitfires were finally sent to Malta, and German pilots were the best ever seen in the skies, with their unnecessary daring and brute determination, but British fighter pilots had no intention of yielding one bit. In fact, so important was this little colony for Great Britain and her allies that so many gallant servicemen and brave civilians from all over the Commonwealth lost their lives in the defence of these islands and running convoys to save this prime military base. Malta served as Britain's vital link between Gibraltar and Alexandria. Without Malta, the British garrison in Egypt would have been isolated and stood little chance of survival.

Also at this time, German and Italian strategists were planning 'Operation Hercules', a sea and air invasion of the Maltese Islands, which fortunately is said to have been called off by Hitler himself - until it was too late, because the

Maltese Islands finally received their vital supply of fuel, food and fire-power. On August 15th 1942, on the feast of Santa Maria, a convoy of Royal and Merchant naval ships made port at Valletta's Grand Harbour, after completing one of the more heroic maritime episodes in recent history. To-date, this event remains commemorated in Malta in remembrance of that gift from heaven, the Convoy of S. Maria, and all the men who lived and died in this and previous attempts to bring supplies to Malta.

This event also coincided with the turning point of World War Two in favour of the allied forces.

Four months prior to the arrival of the famed Santa Maria Convoy, in his letter addressed to the British Governor of Malta, on April 15th 1942, from Buckingham Palace and in his own hand, King George VI wrote:

"To honour her brave people I award the George Cross to the Island Fortress of Malta to bear witness to a heroism and devotion that will long be famous in history."

To this day, the 'George Cross' flies proudly on the Maltese flag, lest we forget the patrimony of bravery, brotherhood and glory handed down to us by our forefathers.

MALTESE RESTAURANT IN CHINA

THERE IS NO BUSINESS LIKE FOOD BUSINESS



Owner Carmelo Vassallo (left), chef Martin Charles Buttigieg and their business partner Yi Liu 'greet' patrons at Aroma Mediterania, in Urumqi, close to the Kazakhstan border.

Aroma Mediterania, almost certainly China's only Maltese restaurant, has not only proven to be a complete success only a year after opening, but is firm proof that local culinary traditions travel well – even to the most challenging markets in the world.

Owner Carmelo Vassallo has reason to celebrate after having accomplished the same feat he had always admired the Chinese for – taking their cuisine to other peoples, making it popular, and remaining as true to themselves as they could in other cultures.

Mr Vassallo, an entrepreneur operating a handful of ventures, including a soft furnishings firm, had travelled to China for business on numerous occasions when he began to toy with the idea of opening a Maltese restaurant. His dream partly stemmed from his craving for Maltese food so far away from home.

Back in Malta, he discussed his plans with his friend Martin Charles Buttigieg, an experienced chef, and his eventual business partner Yi Liu, at the time studying at the University of Malta. They were enthralled with it, and set about identifying property for lease through a business network.

Aroma Mediterania opened on the Jian She Road, a busy thoroughfare in Urumqi, in November 2009, after two years of hard work. Urumqi, the capital of

Xinjiang province, is a resource-rich region in northwestern China, close to the Kazakhstan border, a three-and-a-half-hour flight from Beijing.

"Urumqi is the world's furthest city from the sea and it is fitting to bring the cuisine of an island to its population," Mr Vassallo told The Sunday Times. "We even joke with the patrons that the word 'Mediterranean' in Mandarin symbolises Malta." Broken down, Mediteranean translates to Di (place), Zhong (centre), and Hai (sea). The 'Mediterania' in the restaurant's name has been intentionally misspelt as a way to simplify Chinese to make it easier to pronounce.

"The locals and the numerous expatriates who are based in Urumqi have been incredibly loyal to Aroma Mediterania," Mr Vassallo continued. "Yes, I can say it has been a huge success. It is the area's largest restaurant serving Western cuisine and has fed the curiosity of the inhabitants."

Located on the second floor of a corner block, Aroma Mediterania boasts 200 covers plus a terrace bar. The restaurant bears replica traditional wooden beams, limestone archways, and reproduction furniture typically found in Maltese village restaurants. Its walls are lined with Malta Tourism Authority prints of scenes from Malta and Gozo and reproductions of work by artist Frans Galea, whom Mr Vassallo describes as another loyal supporter of the project. A flat screen TV constantly shows footage of Maltese sights. (Source: *Times of Malta*)

WESTERN AUSTRALIA PAYS TRIBUTE TO MALTESE CHILD MIGRANTS



The committee of the Maltese Professional and Business Association of Western Australia during the unveiling of the monument to former child migrants in Fremantle. (Parts of the two plaques can be seen at the bottom of picture.) Photo courtesy of Paul Calleja.

A monument, dedicated to child migrants, was unveiled in Fremantle by Sheila McHale, Western Australian State Minister for Community Development in 2004.

The monument features two statues showing a 12-year-old boy and a 10-year-old girl with expressions showing "awe and wonder". It cost \$A45,000 and the Federal and WA state governments shared the expenses.

The chairman of the Child Migrants of Malta (C-MOM), David Plowman, who had a significant input into the nature of the monument, was one of the key speakers at the opening. C-MOM was formed on the initiative of the Maltese Professional and Business Association of Western Australia. Paul Psaila-Savona is its deputy chairman and the Chief Justice of Western Australia, David Malcolm, is its patron. A notable feature of the memorial is a separate plaque recognising the Maltese component of the child migrant group.

C-MOM's organising committee was convinced that the nature of the Maltese child migration scheme and the experiences of the Maltese as Mediterranean, non-English speaking children made the Maltese unique. It successfully lobbied the Department of Community Development, the body responsible for the project, to have a separate plaque included in the monument to recognise the Maltese. C-MOM contended that one general plaque would result in the loss of identity for the Maltese.

The Maltese former child migrants were previously a forgotten item in the child migration debate. Church and government enquiries into the treatment of the child migrants would invariably focus almost entirely on the British and the Irish. Mention of the Maltese frequently came as an afterthought.

Prof. Plowman, himself a former Maltese child migrant, explained the significance of having two separate plaques: "One important reason for the differentiation is to be faithful to the history that this monument represents. The different plaques bear witness to the fact that there was not one encompassing scheme involving child migrants. Rather, there were two distinct schemes... Catholic child migration from Britain commenced in 1938, was halted in 1939 because of war and resumed in 1947."

"As early as 1938, attempts were made to include child migrants from Malta in the scheme. A reading of official correspondence at this time makes it clear that the Maltese were rejected on racial grounds. It was not until 1950, when it became clear that Australia could not fulfill its post-war migration objectives from Britain, that Maltese migration in general, and Maltese child migration in particular, were approved by the Australian government," Prof Plowman added.

"As a result, a separate and distinct agreement was established with the Maltese government and the Catholic Church in Malta. The two plaques symbolise the different agreements." Child migration ended many years ago. Its effects, however, continue, Prof. Plowman insisted.

This monument, and other undertakings by a number of governments in recent years, show recognition of the need to bring a closure to many of the issues affecting former child migrants.

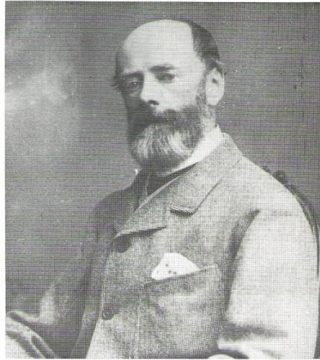
"This brings me to the second reason why the child migrants of Malta have been keen to establish their own identity. It is pleasing to note that host countries such as Australia and Canada, and home countries such as the United Kingdom and Ireland, have sought to bring about some closure to issues confronting some former child migrants. In the case of the Malta, this has not been the case," he said.

Prof. Plowman was in Malta earlier this year canvassing a solution to the lingering issue but "despite a number of written submissions and in-person meetings with Maltese government and Church authorities, to date there have been bland promises rather than any tangible outcomes.

"Former child migrants from Malta are determined to persevere in their efforts, and, if necessary, adopt more radical approaches to achieving their modest aims," he warned. "There is a need for Malta to confront its past and to bring closure for those still affected by child migration. It is in such a context that we recognise the importance of this monument to former child migrants from wherever they came."

OUTLINES OF MALTA POSTAL HISTORY

The postal history of Malta can be traced to the Middle Ages. The origins of organised postal services in the Maltese islands, however, date back to the years of the rule of the Order of St John of Jerusalem between 1530 and 1798. Direct sea connections had been established between Malta and Sicily, Italy and other countries bordering the Mediterranean Sea. The despatches were then forwarded by land courier to their ultimate destination. Although the postal services were mainly used by the Knights of St John, these facilities were also used by the bishop, the Inquisitor and various Maltese merchants and other citizens.



Roger Duke, Postmaster 1880 to 1885

The French occupied Malta for 27 months between 1798 and 1800. During this period, Napoleon decreed that postal facilities should be reorganised and a number of the employees of the Knights of St John were subsequently taken on by the French.

One of the first acts of the British on taking over the Administration in the year 1800 was to improve postal communications within the Maltese Islands and with other Mediterranean countries. In 1806, a Packet Agency was established to handle external mail and in 1849 the local Postal Organisation was amalgamated with the Packet Agency.



**Halfpenny -
First Maltese
Stamp 1860**

British stamps were introduced in Malta in 1857 and their use for outgoing mail became compulsory in 1858. These stamps continued to be used until 1884. In 1860, the halfpenny inland post was introduced, and as there was at that time no British stamp of that denomination, it was decided to issue the first Malta stamp for a halfpenny postage. Malta became a member of the Universal Postal Union in 1875, a year after the creation of the Union, and since then the rates of postage have been those stipulated by the UPU.

By virtue of Ordinance No. 11 of 31 December 1884, establishing a Post Office, total control of the Postal Administration in Malta was transferred from General Post Office in London to the local Colonial Government. A set of postage stamps, consisting of six values featuring four designs was issued on 1 January 1885 for both local and international use. Designs by Jean Ferdinand Joubert de la Ferte were adopted for this set of Queen Victoria head stamps which were all produced by Messrs De La Rue & Co. A Postmaster for the Island of Malta and its dependencies was appointed on 1 January 1885.

During the same year regular transport between the Islands of Malta and Gozo was established. Airmails from Malta to several overseas countries were introduced in 1928. Malta became a member of the Conference of European Postal and Telecommunications Administration (CEPT) in 1970. Since its establishment the Malta Post Office has fulfilled

a vital social role and has contributed substantially to the development of the National economy by promoting an efficient communication service. In spite of the continuous development in technology, the Postal service will continue to play an important part in the face of the ever increasing competitive environment.



CARAVAGGIO - THE ARTIST MICHELANGELO MERISI



Michelangelo Merisi was born in the town of Caravaggio (about 30 kilometres from Milan) in 1571. Caravaggio was, in fact, the first great representative of the Baroque movement. He was the archetypal rebellious artist and led a turbulent life. His life, it is said, matched the high-drama of the chiaroscuro style that his paintings became famous for.

In 1606 whilst working in Rome, one of his many brawls resulted in Caravaggio killing a young man called Ranuccio Tomassoni. With a price on his head, Caravaggio fled and headed for Naples where he would be outside the Roman jurisdiction and under the protection of the Colonna family.

After just a few months, despite a successful period in Naples where he was given a number of important church commissions, Caravaggio left for Malta, the headquarters of the Knights of the Order of St John of Jerusalem, arriving on the island in July 1607.

Grand Master Alof de Wignacourt invested Caravaggio as a knight of magistral obedience so taken was he at having an artist of such calibre as official painter of the Order. It was during this time that Caravaggio was commissioned to paint 'The Beheading of St John the Baptist' and 'St Jerome Writing', both of which are on display in St John's Co-Cathedral in Valletta.

This period of relative calm in his life was short lived, and by late August 1608, Caravaggio was arrested for causing trouble once again, this time badly wounding a high ranking Knight in another fight. Imprisoned at Fort St Angelo, disgraced and unable to paint, he used his inventive powers to plan his escape. Caravaggio's incredible break-out took place in October 1608 and once again he was on the run. The Council, informed of his escape, immediately expelled him from the Order.

After a nine month stay in Sicily, during which time he was trying to secure a pardon from Pope Paul V, Caravaggio returned to Naples and the protection of the Colonna family. His style and technique as an artist was still evolving and he enjoyed a productive time in his second spell in Naples. An attempt was made on his life, and an incorrect account of his death was reported in Rome. Although Caravaggio survived the attempt, his face was left seriously disfigured.

In an attempt to build bridges, Caravaggio painted 'Salome with the Head of John the Baptist'. He depicted his own head on the platter and sent the work to de Wignacourt as a plea for forgiveness.

In 1610, Caravaggio took a boat north to receive a pardon, thanks to powerful allies in Rome. What happened then is shrouded in mystery. The artist was reported as dead in a private newsletter (an avviso) dated 28th July. Three days later, another newsletter declared that the artist had died of fever. His body, however, was never found.

**THE BEHEADING
OF SAINT JOHN**
Painted by
Caravaggio



NOSTALGIA – MORE FROM THE ARCHIVES



17th Melbourne First Malta Scout Group, 1957.



Maltese immigrants disembarked from the Asturias in Melbourne, 1948.

Source: La Trobe Picture Collection, State Library of Victoria

Parade of St Paul, Maltese festival, West Sunshine, Melbourne Australia 1980s.

Source: Workers of Maltese Background



Maltese migrants on deck of the SS Asturias 1949

THE AZZOPARDI FAMILY



At Portland Beach

Mary and her three boys - Tony, 5 years, Roger, 4 years and Godwin, 3 years - migrated from Malta to Australia, arriving on 25th August 1949.

Their father 'Edgar Azzopardi' had arrived earlier to work on a farm in Narrawong, near Portland, Victoria.

The family was sponsored by the farmer as there was a shortage of farm hands after the war.

Our parents felt there would be a better future for the children in Australia. As a four year old on the SS Asturias I recall getting lost on this enormous ship, and the purser eventually taking me back to my mother.



Passport Photo

I also recall my mother buying wares off the boats that came out to the ship in the Port of Aden. They would raise baskets on ropes with the wares in them and then lower them again with money to pay for them. There are many members of the extended families now, and all are residing in Australia.

Roger Azzopardi Melbourne

MALTESE EMIGRANTS ALL OVER THE WORLD



Although the Maltese Islands never had more than 400,000 native inhabitants, it is estimated that the number of Maltese living around the world is many hundreds of thousands higher. That is because over the past two centuries thousands of Maltese left their homeland in search of a better future elsewhere.

In today's terms, they would have been 'economic migrants' and surely not 'illegal immigrants' because their mass migration from Malta was not just organised but also encouraged, especially in the 1960's when it was a handy solution to Malta's economic problems at its dawn of Independence in 1964. Many of these went to English-speaking countries such as the USA, Canada and Australia.

A century earlier they had just ventured in the Mediterranean and Maltese communities can today be traced in Tunisia, Gibraltar, Libya and Egypt. When pondering on issues related to the wave of illegal immigrants hitting the Maltese shores, the Maltese people surely

know what it feels like to have to leave your mother country in search of a better life far away.



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THE VISIT OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER TO SOUTH AUSTRALIA



Mr John Mangion presenting a gift to Mr Muscat
During the reception at the Maltese Cultural Centre, Beverley.



Mr Charles Figallo presenting a gift to the
Lt. Governor of South Australia H.E. Hieu Van Lee



The Malta High Commissioner with committee and members of Seniors Citizens on
Friday 28 March 2014 at Kilburn South Australia

More photos will be shown when they are available.



MR AND MRS MICHAEL AND CARMEN AGIUS

65 YEARS IN AUSTRALIA

Michael and Carmen Agius celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary. (Below) They were the first migrants from Malta 65 years ago.



RESPONDING to a request for stamps from a woman in Australia was life changing for Michael and Carmen Agius. Originally, from Malta, Michael was working in the Royal Air Force headquarters opening mail and came across a letter from an Australian woman named Joan requesting Maltese stamps. "Normally we'd ignore these sorts of letters," Michael, now 89, said.

"But because I had it in mind that I wanted to go (leave Malta), I responded and sent about 20 stamps.

"She wrote back and said she wanted to do something nice for

me. I said I did not want to stay in Malta because it was too small for us to have our family grow up in.

"And she found a relative who nominated us to come to Australia."

Carmen, now 85, and Michael met in 1945 at the opera company where they both sang in the choir.

After spotting her in the street one afternoon, Michael invited her out for gelati. .

"First of all I was attracted by her beauty," he said.

"Two, I was looking for a companion, which is a natural thing, "and she seemed to respond to my approaches." After a couple years of dating, the pair became engaged. Three days after their wedding on April 18, 1949, Michael, 25, and Carmen, 21, boarded the *Misr* bound for Australia – the first-full shipload of Maltese migrants, all 750 of them.

"We weren't meant to go yet because there were people on the list ahead of us,"

Michael said. "But they had a cabin free in First Class because not many people applied for it, so we were asked if we'd like to go.

"It cost £280. The food was good for us, the company was good but we had tempestuous weather."

Carmen: "That was the honeymoon." After 33 days, the pair docked in Melbourne and" the following day travelled to Adelaide where they settled with their Australian friends in Ambleside, near Hahndorf.

The couple has since lived in Norwood, the City, Hilton, Flinders Park and they settled at Alberton about 16 years ago?

Last monthIn April 2009 the couple celebrated 60 years of marriage with family and friends at the Prospect Town Hall.

They have three children Jennifer, Alex. In addition, Katherine and two grand children.

And their secret to a lasting marriage?

"You to give and take and forget the bad that's happened," Carmen said. "You know how marriage is, it's not always beautiful."

Michael: "You need a lot of patience and a lot of forgiving . . . get over your differences quickly."

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*Contributed by Noah Muscat. This story is part of a collection of stories from the Skola Maltija's Maltese Migration Projects [From Malta to Australia](#).*



### **An interview with my uncle Christopher Abela about his journey from Malta to Australia. By Noah Muscat**

*[picture] Christopher and Noah*

#### **1. Christopher, where did you live in Malta?**

I lived in Mgarr, Malta with my family. We lived about a half an hour walk to the sea. In the village square there was my school, the Mgarr church, and the police station.

#### **2. When did you leave Malta?**

I left Malta last year, on the 27th July, 2010 and arrived in Australia on the 29th July, 2010.

#### **3. How old were you when you left Malta?**

I was 20 years old.

**4. Christopher, why did you migrate to Australia?**

I came to Australia to be with the love of my life, your Aunt Joyce. If it wasn't for her I wouldn't have come here. (Joyce and Christopher met each other when Joyce went to Malta for her nannu's funeral in May 2008). I am happy to be in Australia as there are more opportunities here.

**5. How did you travel here?**

I came by plane, Emirates business class with your Aunt Joyce. Before I got on the plane I was scared and nervous because it was my first time on a plane and it was a very long flight. I didn't realise how long it was going to take and I got bored, but the trip was good because I had a good sleep. We stopped at Larnaca to refuel and stayed in Dubai overnight before we arrived in Australia. When we arrived we lived in Joyce's family home. It was situated on five acres in Calverts Road, Orchard Hills.

**6. What was your first job in Australia?**

My first job was as a labourer, repairing and making pallets.

**7. Is there anything else you would like to tell me?**

I would like to go back to Malta one day to see my family again as I only have distant relatives that live in Australia and to have some pastizzi as the pastizzi here isn't as good as the Malta ones. However, I am very glad I migrated to Australia.

## **LORD GERALD STRICKLAND**

**Governor of Tasmania (1904-09) Western Australia (1909-12) and New South Wales (1912-17) and Prime Minister of Malta (1924-32)**

Lord Gerald Strickland was born in Valletta on 24th May 1861, son of Walter Strickland and Louisa Bonici Mompalao. Gerald studied in Malta, Britain and Italy. He began to take an active part in Maltese politics at an early age and won the warm praise of Dr. Fortunato Mizzi, whom he even accompanied to London to submit a scheme for a legislative assembly. The result was that the new Constitution of December 1887 was largely based on the joint Strickland-Mizzi proposals.

In 1887, at the age of 28, he was elected to the Council of Government as representative of the nobility and land proprietors. In 1888 he was nominated Principal Government Secretary, a position he held until 1902. Strickland was created a Companion of the Order of St. Michael and St. George in 1889, for rendering invaluable services during a severe cholera epidemic. He was Governor of the Leeward Islands in the West Indies (1902-04), Tasmania (1904-9), West Australia (1909-12) and New South Wales (1912-17).

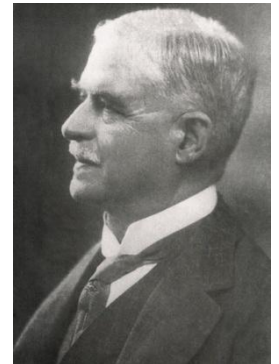
On returning to Malta after the grant of self government, Strickland founded the Anglo-Maltese Party in 1921 and after a few months it merged with the Maltese Constitutional Party forming the CP under his leadership. He was Leader of the Opposition (1921-27). In 1924, Lord Strickland won the seat for Lancaster for the Conservatives in the House of Commons.

After the 1927 elections, following the so called "compact" alliance with the Labour Party, he had a majority in the Legislative Assembly and became Head of Ministry (the fourth Prime Minister between August 1927 and June 1930). In 1928 he was elevated to the peerage. One of the most important projects of his government was the commencement of building works for St. Luke's Hospital.

During his administration Lord Strickland clashed with the Senate leading to the issue of Letters Patent which curtailed its powers. Concurrently he clashed with the ecclesiastical authorities which led to the suspension of the Constitution in 1930. Between July 1932 and November 1933 he was once again Leader of the Opposition and in 1939, after the grant of the new Constitution he became the leader of the elected majority in the Council of Government.

He was an owner and director of Progress Printing Company and The Times of Malta.

In 1890 Lord Strickland married Lady Edeline Sackville and they had eight children. In 1926 Gerald Strickland re-married Margaret Hulton. He died at his residence in Villa Bologna, Attard and is buried in the family chapel at the Mdina Cathedral.





Thanks once again Frank for the very informative News letter. I enjoyed reading the diverse topics & found them all very interesting. Regards to you and family, Carmen De Bono

*Thank You*



Nirringrazzjak tal hargiet tan-Newsletter' li tibghatli regularment li dejjem ikunu imzewqa b'artikli u suggetti varjati, u li zgur se jkunu parti mil li storja ta l-emigrazzjoni min Malta ghal Awstralja. Bhala eks emigrant laqatni l-artiklu fil harga numru 36 dwar certi vapuri li kienu jgorru l-emigranti Maltin. Il-bicca l-kbira minnhom kienu qodma li salvaw it-tieni gwerra dinjija, u kienu ta standard baxx hafna. Kien zmien li l-flottot ta hafna pajjizi kienu ghadhom ma rkuprawx mit-telf kbir li garrbu. Jiena u l-familja flimkien ma numru ta familji ohra Maltin, kif ukoll mijiet ta Griegi li telghu min Piraeus konna trasportati lejn l-Awstralja fuq il-vapur AROSA KHULM. Dan kien vapur fil-klassi fqira li ssemnew fl-artiklu numru 36.

Naturalment bhal eluf ta Maltin li marru l-Awstralja ma kellniex ghazla fejn jidhol it-trasport u kien kaz ukoll ta 'beggars cannot be choosers'. Kien vapur qadim hafna li kien jahdem fin-nahat ta fuq ta l-Ewropa u peress li kien mahsub ghal ibhra kiesha, wiehed jista jahseb kemm kien skomdu meta kien jaqsam il-partijiet shan ta qrib l-ekwatur. L-AROSA KHULM kien ghamel xi zewg vjaggi biss min Malta ghal Awstralja. Nawgura li n-News Letter ikollha hajja twila u lilek nibghatlek ix-xewqat ta' l-Ghid u Sahha Nick Bonello (ex-Kummissarju Gholi ghal Malta fl-Awstralja)



I so look forward to receiving this newsletter – it takes me back to a most happy time when I visited Malta. Congratulations on its content, well written articles and photographs. My best wishes to Josie and your family Kind regards, Vicki.



Nittana tinsabu tajbin. Grazzi ta din l-edizzjoni tal-gazzetta Maltija li tassew nihi gost naqrha. Proset u grazzi. Warm Regards Marthese Caruana (NSW)

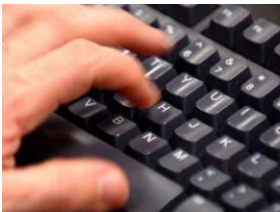


As a friend and as the President of the Maltese Guild of SA Inc. (Maltese Cultural Centre of SA) very much appreciate your very informative news letter that you are producing as late, it does bring me and the Maltese Community World wide great memories, keep it up please you are doing a great job of it Regards to you and Josie Joseph Briffa President and Acting Secretary



Newsletter mimlija taghrif interessanti ferm u pont xieraq u siewi bejn Malta u l-Awstralja. Grazzi tal-bicca xoghol. Tislijiet minn Malta, Patrick

Drop us a line



I thank you for your newsletter that you send to me, I enjoy it immensely my name is Lewis Stafrace I am also a migrant ( Asturias November 1949) I was 18 years old. My reason for writing is that , I am one of the Broadcaster on 3ZZZ, in my program I cover many aspects for our community. I like your stories especially your old ones and would like with your permission to broadcast some of your articles naturally these will be done in Maltese. For instance the one on Richard Curmi, we relied very much on this man those days. If you like this idea, please let me know, naturally we will promote your Newsletter and where we obtained this information. Regards L. Stafrace



Mr Scicluna ghadni kif qrajt il Maltese Newsletter nixtieq li nghajdlek Proset ghax veru sibta interessanti imzewqa minn kollox Proset veru ogbitni Regards Joe Monsigneur Sahha and God Blessing



I so look forward to receiving this newsletter – it takes me back to a most happy time when I visited Malta. Congratulations on its content, well written articles and photographs. My best wishes to Josie and your family. Kind regards, Vicki Antoniou (Adelaide).



We would like to have the Maltese E-Newsletter sent directly to us. At the moment we are getting this from a friend in Sydney. We live just out of Bathurst NSW so there aren't many Maltese around here. The E-Newsletter is filled with many interesting articles. Kind regards, Dominic & Judy Chircop (Adventure before Dementia)



I was looking on Migrants to Australia from Malta on your last mail and I found nothing about the M.V. Surriento Leaving Malta 4th. Nov. 1949, unless I missed something, as I with all the family were passengers on it. I wish to know more about it if you have anything. I have the passengers List, if it is of any help to you. Regards Alfred Alessandro

## Why do I attend the Maltese School?

Jennifer Young - Adelaide Australia



The Maltese School of Adelaide in the 80's - Folk-dance teacher Mary Sgarbossa (in the centre)

Malta is the birthplace of both my parents and grandparents. I have heard many stories about Malta and it has been my dream to visit Malta one day and explore the islands I have heard so much about.

As a baby and young child I spent a lot of time at my maternal grandparent's place. Mum and Dad would leave my sister and me at Nanna and Nannu's place while they both worked or when they went out in the evening. For this reason I had no choice but to learn Maltese as this was all my grandparents spoke.

As an adult I understand Maltese well and can speak it reasonably well. However, I lack confidence in reading and writing Maltese. The main reason I attend school is to become more confident in reading and writing (i.e. grammar) and also to learn more about the history and culture of the Maltese Islands and people. I have been extremely impressed with the history and culture lessons and they make me want to visit Malta even more.

Another reason for attending the Maltese School is to help to keep the culture, language and history alive in my family. My five-year-old daughter Lauren came home from school one day and counted from 1 to 10 in Italian. Emma, my nine-year-old daughter, can say many Italian words and phrases. Italian is the second language taught at their school. Although I think it is great for them to learn another language other than English, I was so sad that it was not Maltese.

After attending Maltese classes Emma now can count to 40 in Maltese and knows the colours and simple phrases. Lauren is still learning English let alone Maltese, but in time, I am sure she will also be able to understand Maltese.

Finally, I think I am becoming more fluent in my speech and gaining confidence in my grammar since I started attending the Maltese Language School. I am grateful for my Maltese heritage and I hope that through these Maltese Classes I will keep it alive in my daughters and in generations to come.

### **THE "GHAQDA TAL-MALTI – UNIVERSITÀ" PRESS RELEASE**

The Għaqda tal-Malti – Università will be organising the first edition of the Book Festival on Campus, in collaboration with The National Book Council. The Festival will be held between the 28th and 30th April kicking off daily at 9:00, till 16:00. Some of the activities will be held after 18.00.

Some of Malta's leading publishers and distributors will be having their book stand: Sierra Book Distributors, Horizons, Faraxa Books, Sensiela Kotba Soċjalisti, Bronk Productions, and Agius and Agius. Books by other publishers will be available, while The National Council for the Maltese Language will also have a stand. There will also be a number of activities on different parts of the Quadrangle, some of which will involve established writers, distinct critics and students:

**Sexuality in the Maltese Literature:** a discussion between Trevor Żahra, Immanuel Mifsud, Sean Buhagiar and Aleks Farrugia, amongst others.

**Fight Club:** a film with Maltese subtitles, translated by Simon Cassar, with the help of Prof. Toni Aquilina

**Aqrali, qaltli:** another public reading by Immanuel Mifsud; this time Mifsud will be reading *Fl-Isem tal-Missier (u tal-Iben)*.

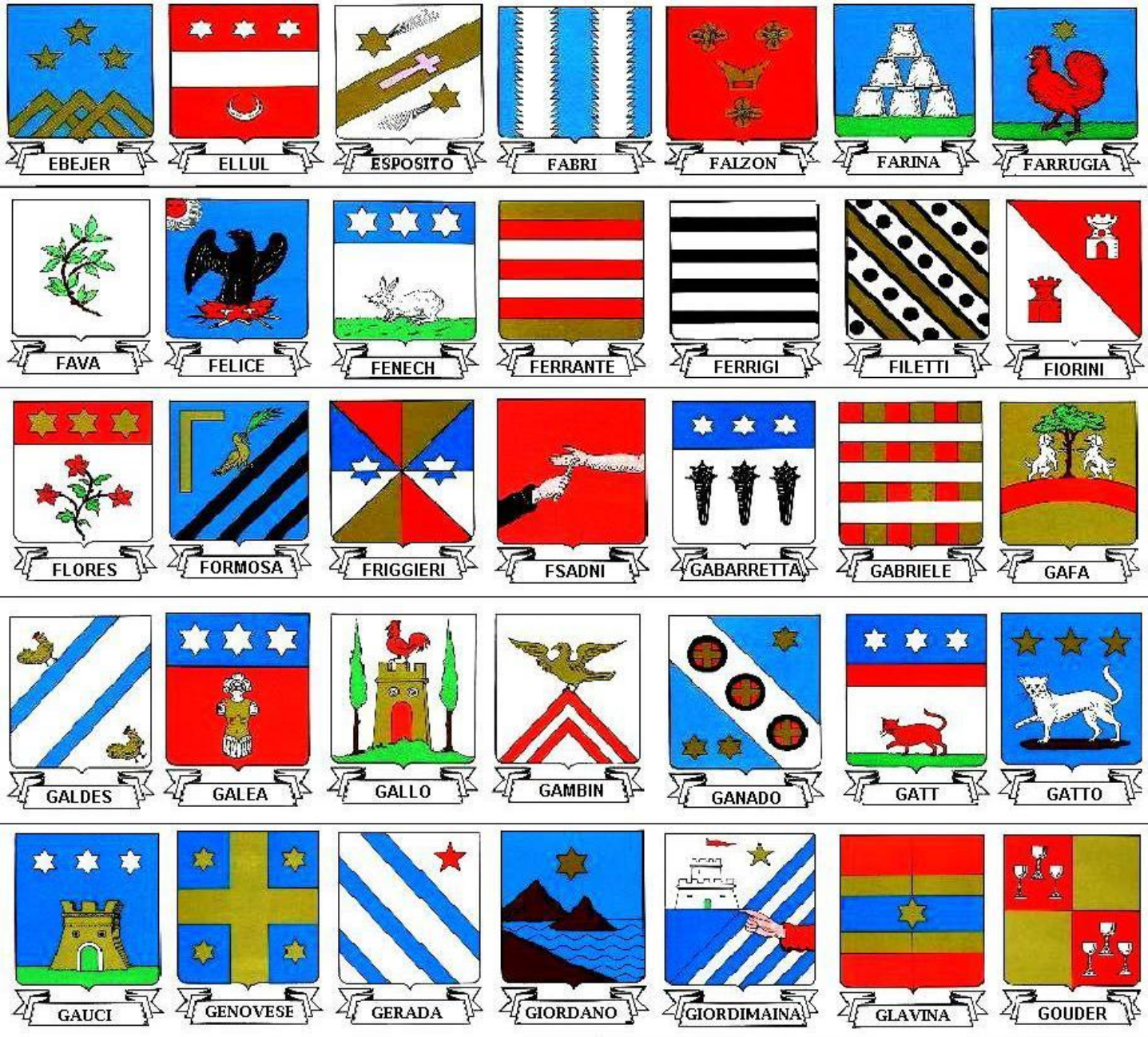
**Transessjoni:** a public reading and discussion between the participants of the creative writing programme *TAHŻIŻ2*

**...hsieb il-ktieb:** a talk on how to organize and take care of your own private library.

- **Musical adaptations** by Danjeli to some of the literary pieces found in *Lehen il-Malti* (32).

More details about the Festival will be published in the coming days. The event on Facebook is to be found here: [www.facebook.com/events/1420579458192903](http://www.facebook.com/events/1420579458192903). The Festival is open to all.

#### COATS OF ARMS OF MALTESE FAMILIES' SURNAMES



**THAT'S ALL FOR TODAY, FOLKS - SEE AGAIN NEXT TIME**  
**DAK KOLLU GHALL-LUM - SAHHA U SLIEM LILKOM**