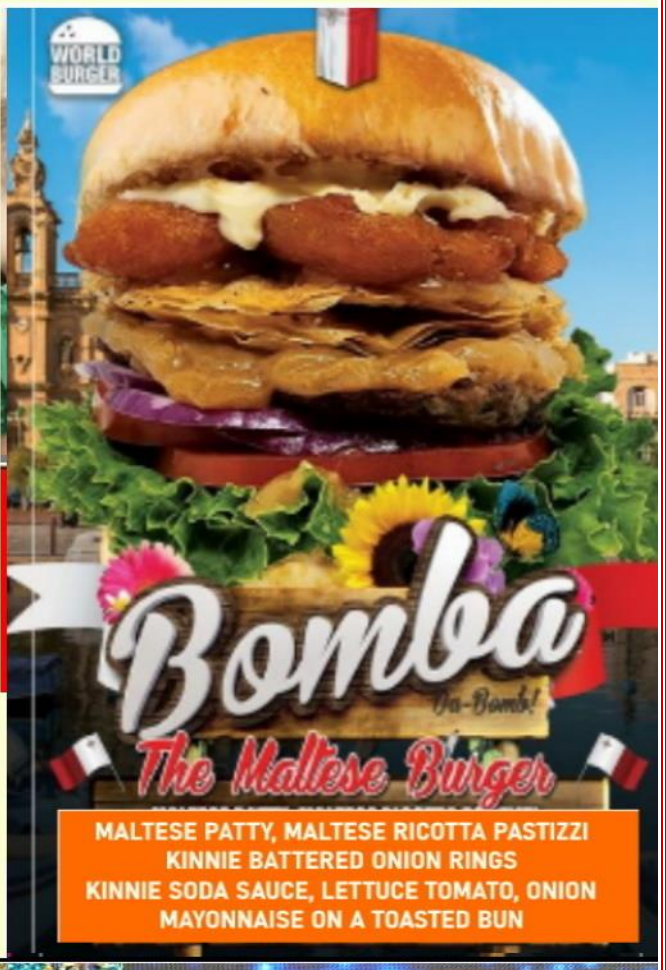
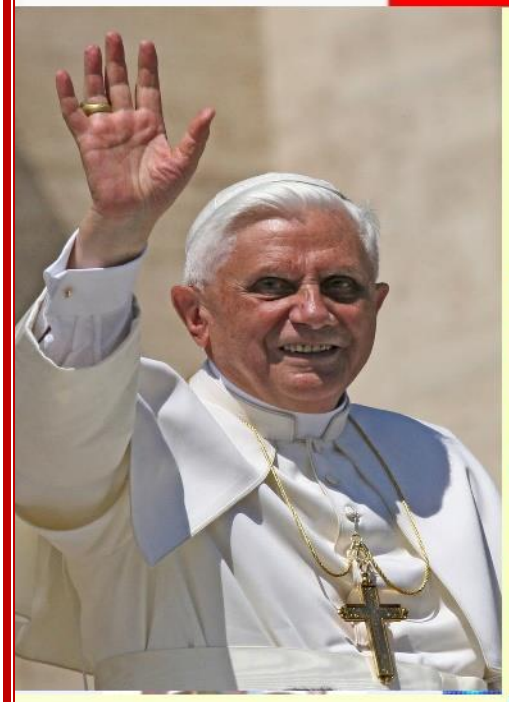
JOURNAL FOR MALTESE AROUND THE WORLD

MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER

Editor: Frank Scicluna OAM MQR JP

MULTICULTURAL MALTA





Former Pope Benedict XVI dies age 95

A BRAND NEW YEAR

2023

Let's make this year BRIGHTER

Euro Parliament President Dr. Roberta Metsola says that during 2023 the EU needs to give equal importance to the economy, the environment and security

In her New Year Message, the European Parliament President Roberta Metsola said that together, challenges affecting Europe may be confronted. She said there are families facing difficulties, youths concerned about their future as well as Ukrainians facing threats to life because of their war.

Dr Metsola maintained that she is convinced that in the coming year there will be positive results and Europe will once more achieve economic growth, expenses will be under control and there will be a fight against inflation and an assurance in the transition to a green environment as well as the digital.

Dr Metsola said this means the economy, the environment and security will be given equal attention and importance.

She emphasised that in 2023 there is a need to protect the values of liberty, democracy, justice, equality, solidarity and the Rule of Law. The EU should continue to support Ukraine to attain peace and liberty a well as dignity and security.

In addition she remarked that in the coming year Europe has to show progress and change to a positive attitude to address current and future problems.

Foreigners celebrate Emigrants Day in Gozo

Mass held at St Francis church in Victoria was animated by a choir from the Philippines Times of Malta

Gozo Bishop Anton Teuma greeting foreigners at St Francis convent in Gozo. Photo: Charles Spiteri

Emigrants Day was marked in Gozo with a concelebrated mass in English at St Francis church in Victoria. The mass, organised by the Gozo Pastoral Ministry Secretariat, in collaboration with the Gozo Ethnic Communities Coordination and Support Office, was presided by Canon Noel Saliba, responsible for the ethnic communities office, together with English Speaking Catholic Community chaplain Fr Loreto Tabone and Gozo Emigrants Office delegate Anton Schembri.

A choir made up of Filipinos living in Gozo, under the direction of Ryden Glinofria, animated the celebration, while members of the Anglican community in Gozo read the lessons.

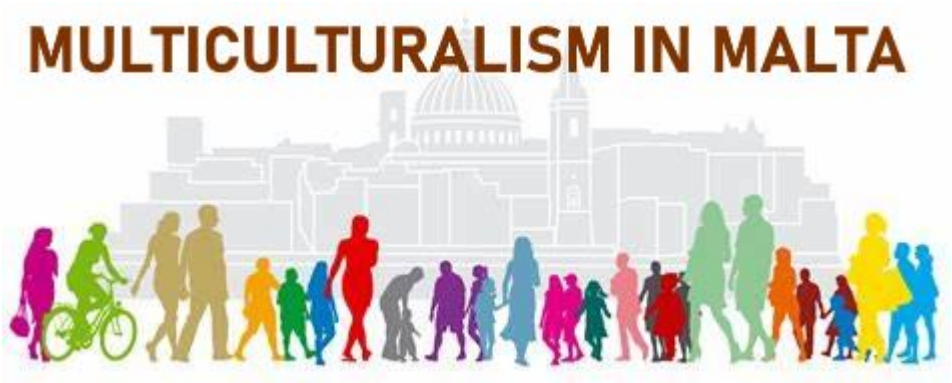
After mass, a social gathering was held at the Franciscan convent during which the Gozo Ethnic Communities Coordination and Support Office, formed on September 14 this year, was introduced.

Fr Saliba said around 4,000 foreigners from 10 communities live in Gozo. The aim of the office was to help foreigners integrate with the Gozitan community, he said.

The office is also offering lessons in the Maltese language as well as English language lessons. Recently, a Legion of Mary branch for Filipinos was formed, while a Catholic Action section for foreigners will be set up in January.

Gozo Bishop Anton Teuma was present for the meeting. He personally greeted every member and delivered a message which focused on the indispensable and valuable contribution these foreigners were giving to Gozitans.

At the end of his message, Mgr Teuma thanked all those who were offering pastoral help and services to these people and presented certificates marking the occasion to each community leader.



Malta is no stranger to multiculturalism. Given our position in the Mediterranean Sea between Africa and Europe, Malta is a natural stepping stone between continents. From as far back as 800 BC, our small island has played host to the likes of the Phoenicians, Carthaginians, Romans, Byzantines, Arabs, Normans, Sicilians, French, Aragonese, the Knights of St John and then the British.

Each has left a large impression on our culture and an acceptance of different civilisations and ways of life. It is something that remains with us today.

Thanks to an idyllic landscape, enviable geographic position and later, membership of the EU, Malta has always welcomed visitors. Our popularity as a holiday destination is as much a result of our climate as our relaxed way of life, warm welcome and central location.

Many commentators have said 'once you visit Malta, you won't want to leave.' While we may be biased, we have to say we agree! It seems many Europeans agree too, as many hundreds of people from across the EU come to Malta on holiday and then either return or stay on as permanent residents.

Currently, there are over 50,000 foreign nationals who call Malta home. They come from all over the world, from an estimated 151 different countries. There are also over hundreds international students from 71 different countries studying at the University of Malta.

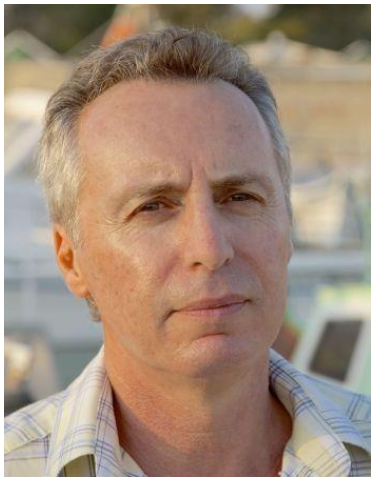
The Maltese have always welcomed people from all walks of life, from different cultures, religions and continents. That remains true today.

Our economy depends a lot on tourism. We are fortunate that our national culture is naturally welcoming and our island such a rich and vibrant place to visit. The warm Mediterranean climate doesn't hurt either!

Malta may be a small island, but it casts a large shadow. Parts of the island is densely populated, offering all the benefits or urban life in an idyllic setting. Other parts of the island are quieter, offering the peace and tranquillity of island life to those who seek it.

Wherever you go on the island, the feeling of warmth and community pervades. It also helps families feel welcome and safe when they are here. People are friendly and the old-fashioned way of life is still strong. People still greet each other, still help each other and work together to drive communities forward. Something that is missing in many countries.

The combination of lovely Mediterranean climate with its sunshine, warmth and beautiful sunsets along with a population who actively welcome people from different walks of life is why Malta is so popular. It isn't just the warmth of the sunshine that keeps people coming back for more though but also the warmth of its people.



Rupert Grech

Rupert Grech is a first generation Maltese-Australian born of post-war immigrants to New South Wales, Australia, from the small Mediterranean island of Malta. In childhood, he lived in the low rent suburbs of inner Sydney, eventually moving to the west of the city. Grech graduated with a Bachelor's degree in Economics and a Diploma in Education from the University of Sydney. He also played in A-Grade Rugby League and was selected to try out for one of the professional clubs. Teaching being at heart, Grech became a highly acclaimed principal of two regional schools in low socioeconomic areas and under his leadership, educational innovations resulted in a greater than 50 percent reduction of the student discipline suspension rate and over 30 percent increase in student enrollment in three years. Grech is the author of the popular book ***Stories My Parents Told Me: Tales of Growing Up in Wartime Malta.*** At present he spends time living alternately in Valletta, Malta and in the Blue Mountains, New South Wales, while trading equities on the Australian Stock Exchange, developing property and writing.

Remembrance Day Post- extract from the second edition..

Pupa and her classmates did not get much schooling in the spring of 1942. The *Nazis* had decided that Malta must fall because of the tiny nation's strategic location in the centre of the Mediterranean Sea between Sicily to the north and Libya to the south. Malta was a serious threat to AXIS shipping sailing from Italy to North Africa. The *Nazi* plan was to move across North Africa from Libya and capture Egypt where they could seize the Suez Canal and subsequently control the supply of oil from Middle East oilfields. The successful Allied disruption of the Axis supply route of materials and reinforcements to North Africa, launched from the British base in Malta, had been one of the few Allied success stories of the war up to that point. During the second half of 1941, allied attacks sank 60% of Axis supply ships going to North Africa.

In May 1942, German Field Marshall Rommel warned that "without Malta, the Axis will end by losing control of North Africa." Malta was pounded relentlessly with bombing. *Luftwaffe* records show that during the first six months of attacks, there was only one twenty-four-hour period without an air raid. During this period Malta suffered 154 continuous days of air raids. In comparison, the London Blitz experienced 57 continuous days of bombing[3]. The weight of bombs dropped on Malta during March and April of 1942 alone, was double the amount dropped on London during the worst year of the Blitz.[4]The main island of Malta, at 246 sq. km. in total area is less than one sixth the size of the City of London. Furthermore, the bombing was concentrated on the central and southern region of the island, especially the Grand Harbour area and central airfields. In the month of April alone, enemy planes executed 9,500 sorties over Malta resulting in 282 air raid alerts.

The Maltese feared the Germans during this time. Earlier in the war, the reluctant Italian pilots flew so high in order to avoid the anti-aircraft guns that their payload sometimes missed the island altogether and their bombs fell into the sea. The local fishermen even benefitted from the dead fish the exploding bombs would push to the surface in the Grand Harbour. But since the *Luftwaffe* took charge of the campaign the strikes were clinically efficient and devastating in their effect.

The Germans flew in low, reduced large areas to rubble and strafed anything on the ground that moved, including women, children and the elderly. Some of the worst of it was when the German planes dropped small anti-personal devices called "butterfly bombs" disguised as fountain pens that killed or maimed children who picked them up.

Terramaxka – the only one in Malta!

By Martina

The word terramaxka comes from the Maltese words kitarra magica, which means, magical guitar. In English, this instrument, is given a variety of names including, street organ, crank organ, barrel organ, fair organ and so forth. Street organs were imported in Malta from European countries such as France and Switzerland during the late nineteenth century.

Terramaxka is an important part of Maltese folklore. It was a popular feature in town squares in Malta towards the end of the 19th century. It was also an essential means of entertainment during the village 'festa' especially when there was no band playing..

You might be familiar with Terramaxka ancestors – smaller, easily portable street organs. These were played by organ grinders in the European streets as early as the late 18th century. This barrel organ was basically a small pipe organ played by turning a handle, which rotates a cylinder studded with pegs that open the valves to produce a preset tune.

This Terramaxka was built by Carl Frei, who started his career repairing Dutch Street Organs. He began building his own improved version of this music organ in 1920s. Frei made couple of important inventions that made his 'magical machine' louder, more distinct and easier to maintain. This is 72 key organ, the biggest street version of this organ has 90 keys and the 'Carl Frei Traveling Concert Organ' that consists of 112 keys is considered to be the largest traveling fair organ in the world.

The proud owner if this Terramaxka is Mari Van Rooy, a Dutchman married to a Maltese who has been living in Malta for over 25 years. It was always his dream to own one of these magical instruments and this is actually the only one of its kind in Malta!

And how does it work you may wonder. Well, Mr. Van Rooy was kind enough to show me what it looks like behind the scenes! Below you can see him operating his Terramaxka during 'Milied Malti' Christmas Market in Naxxar this December.

Terramaxka is basically an organ which plays music via stenciled pieces of cardboard. Here you can see Mr. Rooy manually operating the card feed mechanism. These exclusive stenciled cards are made in Holland.

Mr. Rooy got even some special Maltese tunes, which weren't easy to get. He had to send the musical compositions of such pieces to a company in Holland, which would had them played by a band, recorded them and produced the stencils.

And how is the music actually created? It's basically air passing through different pipes. The music notes manually control how long will air pass through certain pipes.

Terramaxka can play any sort of music. It all depends on the 'music notes' you have. Here is just a sample of Mr Rooy library. To this day he has made stencils for about 275 tunes that could be played by the Terramaxka! These range from melodies to band marches. To name few artists: Lady Gaga, Rolling

Stones, Beatles, Michael Jackson, Frank Sinatra and many others! And of course many Christmas melodies and Maltese music.
I think it's also important to mention, to really appreciate Mr Rooy's efforts, how much this 'hobby' costs. He pays about 10 euro per meter for a song book. One song is between 10 to 15 meters!
When you look closer you can admire the precise craftsmanship. Terramaxka is entirely made of wood, both the decorations and the instruments. Behind all the Christmas decorations and statues you can see the actual instruments that transform the cardboard stencils into beautiful tunes.
I got to say that this was definitely the highlight of the 'Milied Malti' in Naxxar for me this year. I mean I've been living in Malta for over 10 years and I never came across it! If you would like to see this Terramaxka live you can either get lucky during one of the Maltese village festas, Christmas markets or you can simple contact Mr Rooy and hire him and his Terramaxka for your private function. Now that would be original! And you know what? Kids love it!

Malta's National Costume for Miss Universe – THE MALTESE LIRA

MaltaDaily **-** ***Art*** -SHARE ON:

The National Costume with which Maxine Formosa Gruppetta will be representing Malta at the 71st Miss Universe on January 14th has been revealed. She will be leaving Malta on January 4th and head all the way to New Orleans, USA, to represent Malta against 86 countries from all around the world. Miss Universe is the most followed beauty pageant in the World. Alan J. Darmanin is the National Director of Malta at Miss Universe.
The inspiration behind the costume is the Maltese Lira, which was the currency of Malta from 1972 to 2007, after which it was replaced by Euro.
THE DRESS, which is a collection piece from worldwide renowned Maltese fashion designer duo 'Charles & Ron' depicts the LM 10 banknote which has been digitally manipulated into graphic design. Banknotes issued by the Government of Malta and then by the Central Bank of Malta were written in English up to 1972. From 1973 to 1985, they were written in Maltese on the obverse (with the currency identified as "lira"), and in English on the reverse (identifying the currency as pound). From 1986 to 2007, Maltese was used on both sides.
THE JEWELLERY, which are collection pieces from popular Maltese sibling jewellery makers with their brand name 'Carisma Collections', depicts the coins used in the Maltese Lira currency. A new coinage was issued in 1986 in denominations of 1c, 2c, 5c, 10c, 25c, 50c and Lm 1. A third series was introduced in 1991 due to the change in Malta's coat of arms. The one of a kind statement set of earrings consist of 2 Cents Maltese coins issued in 1995, which symbolize the Peace and Prosperity of an olive tree alongside their brand logo signifying Diversity, Charisma & Self-Love. Other coins depict the octagonal shape Maltese 25 Cent which displays a typical Maltese coastal scene including a rising sun and a traditional Maltese boat – The "Luzzu", the Great Siege Monument and Queen Penthesilea depicting the 'Woman as Hero'.
THE BIG BACK PIECE, in the shape of a coin, depicts the Maltese coat of arms, which signifies the Courage & Determination of the Maltese nation, which is found on the back side of some of the Maltese Lira Coins. The 2000 on the coin symbolizes the year of birth of Miss Universe Malta 2022 – Maxine Formose Gruppetta!
Photography: CP: Creative Photography MaltaDaily

Metsola among world leaders honoured by billboards in Ukrainian hero city

Photo shared by Roberta Metsola via Twitte

A Ukrainian city that witnessed fierce fighting earlier this year as fighters repelled Russian invaders has put up a number of billboards to thank prominent world leaders who have supported Ukraine – and a Maltese politician is among them.

European Parliament President Roberta Metsola is featured in one of a series of billboards featuring world leaders that have been put up in the city of Irpin, close to the Ukrainian capital city of Kyiv.

The billboards hail "the world of brave people" and feature a hashtag that says "thank you for your support."

Reacting to this unusual honour, the EP president said that she got emotional seeing the billboard put up in a city "that witnessed such horror, whose people inspired the world."

John Paul Cordina

December 28, 2022 8:52 PM

She also pledged that the European Parliament would not abandon Ukrainians, and would keep fighting for justice and accountability for what they had endured under Russian occupation.

Metsola was one of the first world leaders – and the first president of an EU institution – to visit Ukraine after Russia's invasion, paying a visit to Kyiv on 1 April, and has taken a clear stance in support of Ukraine and its ambitions to join the EU.

Irpin had been a key target at the early stages of Russia's invasion, at a time when Russian forces engaged in an abortive assault on the Ukrainian capital in an operation which Russian propaganda had proclaimed would swiftly be concluded.

The Battle of Irpin started on 27 February – three days after the start of the invasion – and Russian forces had captured roughly half of the city by mid-March. But Ukrainian forces fought back, and the city was fully recaptured by 28 March.

Their efforts did not spare the city tragedy, however: Ukraine has said that no less than 290 civilians were killed as a result of the Russian assault, along with 50 Ukrainian soldiers.

In recognition of the resolve shown by its inhabitants, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy designated Irpin as a Hero City of Ukraine on 25 March

VISIT BY THE HON. DR ANGLU FARRUGIA TO NSW

The Honourable Dr Anglu Farrugia, Speaker of the House of Representatives in Malta, will be visiting La Valette Social Centre on Friday the 6th January 2023 at around 6.00pm. He will be accompanied by H.E. Mario Borg Farrugia, High Commissioner of Malta for Australia & New Zealand, Ms Eleanor Scerri, Director on International Relations and Mr Lawrence Buhagiar, Consul-General for NSW in Sydney.

This will be an opportunity for the Maltese Community to meet and greet the Honourable Speaker. All welcome. On the same night La Valette will be hosting an Elvis Presley tribute on the occasion of his birthday presented by Charlie "Buddy" Sciberras and friends.

OUR JOURNAL REACHES OVER 10 000 READERS WORLDWIDE

REMINISCING – MALTA IN WORLD WAR 2

during the second world war 2 Malta was not self-sufficient in food production and thus depended to a very large extent on supplies of food reaching the island through convoys.

Malta required the sort of planning and sophistication of organisation to continually feed a population of about 260,000 civilians. The task was of continuous flexibility in administrative organisation to keep up the efficiency and effectiveness of providing not only enough food stocks but also in other matters as shelter excavation, schooling and health care.

The Maltese agricultural production could only feed one-third of the population. Several measures were implemented to ensure food was produced, supplies and distributed fairly among the inhabitants of the Maltese islands. Several organisations took part and new ones set up. The most important ones include the Rationing Office, the Agriculture Department, Food Distribution Office and the Communal Feeding Office or 'Victory' Kitchens.

Family Ration Book

Every family had its own Family Ration Book issued by the Food Distribution Office. This book was under the name of the head of the family. This Office also issued permits to grocers to provide the customer with such essential commodities as: Sugar Coffee Matches Laundry Soap Lard and/or Margarine Edible Oil Corned Beef Tomato Paste Kerosene

The above list was by no means exhaustive. It was imperative that changes in family size were to be reported to the Protection Officer within 48 hours against a penalty of not less than £5 or not more than £10. Also changes in locality from one District to another were to be notified of the destination area. Consumers who did not comply with these regulations risked being deprived of their rations.

Size of family was important in determining the amount of ration allotted per household.

The amount of entitlement would vary from time to time according to the availability of supplies during the period in question. For instance, at the height of the Blitz between Jan/Jun and Jul/Dec 1942, the amount allotted per half month for the two respective periods reveal that supplies were dwindling and the amount allotted to families was reduced heavily.

Agriculture Department

The Director of Agriculture was empowered to prohibit the collected or sale or purchasing of any type of agricultural product. He was also empowered to requisition any type of produce at a price not less than the wholesale price fixed by Government (at 10% less). On 3rd November 1942, the Director of Agriculture was also further empowered to enter in any fields and order the plantation of any produce according to the country's requirements. Furthermore on 9th November 1942, the Director of Agriculture could requisition some or all potato produce and sell it at a price fixed by Government.

The Director of Agriculture also approved agreements between farmers and the middleman (*Pitkal*). The Pitkal was the middleman between the farmer and vegetable vendor or greengrocer. The vegetable marketing centre is known as *Pitkali.*

One interesting agreement was approved by the Director of Agriculture on 1 June 1943 and this was an agreement between the farmer, Joseph Chetcuti *nicknamed ta Pawlu ta Vitor* from St. Paul's Bay who had the registration number 7113 and John Bonello, the middleman, nicknamed *ta kassun* from Birkirkara. The agreement laid down conditions under which the middleman agreed to buy quantities of tomatoes from the farmer:

- The farmer was to cultivate flat tomatoes in a land measure of 3 tomniet (3 square measurements equivalent to 12, 100 square feet each).
- The farmer was to supply to the middleman at his place of business in Qormi Road Birkirkara, between 1 June and 30 August 1943 not more than 7,000 rotolos (net) and not less than 6,000 rotolos (net) moist-free tomatoes.
- The middleman was to bind himself to pay the farmer prices that were annexed on a list to the agreement. From the price 1 shilling 8 pence for every pound were to be deducted as brokerage fees.

The Communal Feeding Department - 'Victory Kitchens'

The low amount of calories consumed by the population that were provided by the rations described in the previous section was of constant worry to the Council of Government particularly the Medical and Health Authorities who knew very well that starved people would run a higher risk of certain vitamin deficiencies and infections. Reports by the Medical and Health Department revealed a rise in bronchitis, pneumonia, typhoid, ariboflavinosis, and pellagra

The crowded atmospheres in shelters also contributed to the risk of communicable diseases especially lower and upper respiratory tract infections and therefore the situation had to be addressed immediately. The name 'Victory Kitchens', replaced the Voluntary Soup Kitchen organisation for the blitzed and homeless. These Kitchens provided a meagre daily sustenance masqueraded under the title of 'a meal' for either lunch or supper. This consisted of poor quality *'minestra'* soup, some beans, tinned fish portion, corned beef, and some goat flesh.

The family head would register with a particular 'Kitchen'. The 'Kitchen' would have its licensed cook/s.

The 'Siege' Kitchens of Malta were administered by the Communal Feeding Department. They were more of an improvisation necessitated by the possibility of a more serious deterioration in the fuel and food position.

After the arrival of the *Santa Marija* Convoy on 15th August, 1942, the Mediterranean position improved vastly and the consequent improvement in the supply position and security of supply lines, the Government was relieved from its anxiety and granted 100% increase in the bread ration and an equally important increase in other rationed commodities. The 'Victory' Kitchens provided the means by which nobody starved. A minority pilfered and black-marketed.

The Victory Kitchens were discontinued during 1943. The purpose to economise on the use of scare fuel for cooking stoves and food provisions had reached its goal. There was also the idea that the saying 'necessity is the mother of invention.

With the coming into force of the rationing arrangements on January 25, 1943, the Victory Kitchens were closed as the provision of food and fuel ameliorated. The last heavy and concentrated air raid attack on Malta occurred on 20, July 1943 claiming 6 lives and seriously injuring 17 persons. This brought to an end the fierce battle for Malta where one in every 200 of the population lost their lives.

THE MALTA INTERNATIONAL FOLK FESTIVAL

Malta, with its strategic position at the centre of the Mediterranean Sea, has always been a crossroad for exchanges of cultural diversity, also due to so many Nations who have ruled over this country throughout its history. This is why the island's folklore tradition is very old, strong, and widespread. The aim of this International Festival is to make sure that the different folk traditions from all over the World meet up in Malta, for reciprocal cultural exchange and enrichment. Malta is also definitely one of the most important countries in Europe's tourism sector. Rich in history and charm, with a great sense of hospitality towards visitors and above all with a warm temperate climate. During the free time, participating groups will have the chance to relax and explore the various unique cities and villages of this magical island full of history. Hence we would like to invite you to discover this reality, perhaps at the most beautiful time of the year. **Dates 22/09/2023 25/09/2023**

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"You learn how to appreciate life" – Maltese struck by work being done at hospital in Ghana

A group of Maltese youngsters went on a ten-day mission experience in Ghana.

The initiative was organized by the Ghana Mission Foundation which is going to change its name to Hope Exchange.

In this experience the Maltese saw first hand the fruits of the work being reaped inside a hospital which was built with funds collected from Malta, and more recently a new school.

It's a real experience. It changes your life and I will never forget it because you learn to appreciate the values of life and the simple things and how much we don't have to worry about small things and it made me more positive.

KEANE CUTAJA One thing that really struck me is that although they have more difficulties than us, they all have a sense of family, they all help each other.

MEGAN MAY CARUANA Keane Cutajar and Megan May Caruana are two of seven young people who experienced the ten day stint and saw the work done in the Maltese hospital in Ghana.The hospital was built thanks to the donations made by the Maltese. It is a hospital that, when compared to the surrounding areas, is top class. You almost forget where you are when you enter the hospital.

Keane Cutajar We saw a caesarean section being performed and held the baby. You start to feel that these people are human, they are like us, we are like them and it is fitting that they have such a clean hospital and great equipment and machines.

MEGAN MAY CARUANA We asked Keane and Megan May what impact the experience had on them.

I was undoubtedly struck by the smiles on the children's faces, particularly the children in the school which was also built with Maltese money. A smile for the smallest reason… singing to them a little, talking to them or giving them sweets or something. The smile and happiness was genuinely something I have never experienced in my life and they gave me more than I gave them.

KEANE CUTAJAR When you are living it you feel a great sadness and start to feel that maybe we are more fortunate than they are. You see people on the street with their difficulties, you see them with your own eyes and you want to help more.

MEGAN MAY CARUANA

The most recent project of Hope Exchange is a school that was built a year and a half ago and is welcoming 200 students from Ghana with the aim of ensuring that future generations have a good education.

The Government of Ghana is paying for the salaries of the teachers, with the rest of the costs being collected from Maltese donations. TVM News

OUR JOURNAL IS 100% AUSTRALIA-MADE, NON-POLITICAL and FREE

From Russia with Love – Malta's Got Talent Performer Embraces Her Ukrainian Boyfriend

By Benjamin Thomas Scerri – lovinmalta.com

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A Russian national who auditioned for Malta's Got Talent caught the judges' attention, not just with her performance but also her relationship status. Aurika Andrei was initially very nervous and excited as it was her first time on such a big stage, but this didn't stop her from putting on a powerful acting display that involved miming, bubble-blowing and setting a bubble on fire.

While the judges were impressed by her performance, they were also interested that she is dating a Ukrainian national, given the current war between their two nations.

"We want to see Ukraine hugging Russia on the stage of Malta's Got Talent," judge Gordon Bonello said as Aurika's boyfriend ran onto the stage.

The couple embraced on stage and was given a justified round of applause, not just for Aurika's performance but for the strong symbol of love that unites them, a love that transcends nationality and war.

Aurika will be moving on to the next round of Malta's Got Talent as she received unanimous support from the judges.

Tag someone who loved this performance

Press Release

The JP2 Cultural Foundation in full collaboration with the Victoria Local Council and the Gozo Cathedral Church will be holding a Charity Concert in aid of Dar tal-Providenza. The AFM Band will perform a repetition of this concert in Gozo after the success it had at the Mdina Cathedral in the beginning of December.

The AFM Charity Concert will take place on Thursday 5 January 2023 at the Assumption of Our Lady Cathedral Victoria starting at 7.00pm.

Entrance to this event is free. Any donation is welcome For more information, please contact the JP2 Cultural Foundation on 99688588. JP2 Foundation PRO

Bil-Malti

Stqarrijagħall-istampa

Il-Fondazzjoni Kulturali "JP2" b'kollaborazzjoni sħiħa tal-Kunsill Lokali tal-Belt Vittoria u l-Knisja Katidrali ta' Għawdex se jorganizzaw Kunċert għal Karità b'risq id-Dar tal-Providenza. Il-Banda AFM ser tesegwixxi ripetizzjoni ta' dan il-kunċert f'Għawdex wara s-suċċess li kellha fil-Katidral tal-Imdina fil-bidu ta' Diċembru. Il-Kunċert għall- Karità mill-Banda ta' AFM ser isir nhar il-Ħamis 5 ta' Jannar 2023 fil-

Katidral tal-Assunta, Rabat Għawdex fis-7.00pm. Id-dħul għal dan l-avveniment huwa b'xejn. Kwalunkwe donazzjoni hija milqugħa. Għal aktar informazzjoni, jekk jogħġbok ikkuntattja lill-Fondazzjoni Kulturali JP2 fuq

99688588. Fondazzjoni "JP2" PRO

Ta' Verna Folk Group

Ta' Verna Folk Band The group Ta' Verna was first established around forty years ago and was part of the Xagħra Kummittiva, a traditional Gozitan dance held in this village during Carnival. After coming across certain difficulties, the group had to disband.

In 2004, George Bonello was approached by some of the former musicians who expressed their desire to re-establish the group, and asked him to join them with his accordion as the leading instrument to take part from the Kummittiva. Therefore the group was again brought together, albeit with a different format, consisting of the accordion, violin, harmonica, friction drum known as żavżafa, Maltese tambourine known as tanbur and guitar.

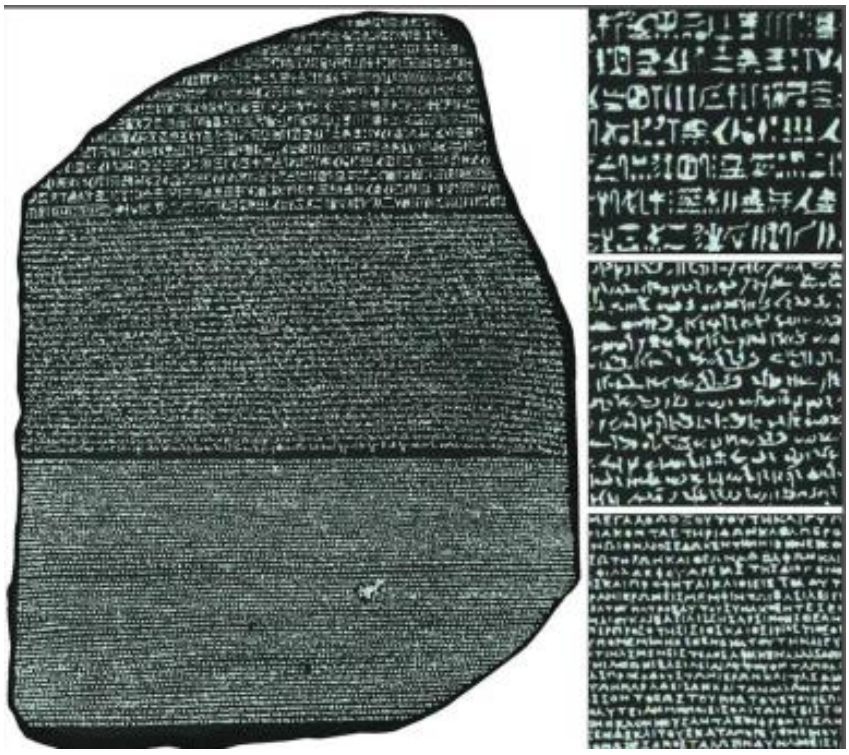
Therefore, the group was again brought together, this time consisting of the George on piano accordion, Teddy on harmonica & Maltese tambourine, Joe on friction drum (known as rabbaba), Michel on folk guitar, Raymond on acoustic bass guitar, John on Hammer (Karabazza) and Alfred on triangle (Trepit) On February of the same year that is in 2004, we took part in our first activity, this was when we played with the group *Kummittiva Xagħra*. Year after year we continued to grow in terms of success, we played in various other Gozitan villages as well as abroad. Some of the events that this folk band took part are : *Festubru* at Kerċem Gozo, *Casa Fornanro* at Ħal-Qormi, *Tieg l-Antik* at iż-Żurrieq, *lejliet Lapsi* at Rabat, *Festa Rebbiegħa*, *Bread Festival* at Ħal Qormi, *Żejt iż-Żejtun*, *Għana Fest* (Argotti), *Fete de la Musqiue*, *Notte Bianca*, *Festa raħħala* Żurrieq and so on.

This band also played with band program concert in Mnarja supported with L'Isle Adam band even in other feast programs with Victory Band - Xagħra & St Joseph Band - l-Imsida and in foreign countries such as Austria Slovakian city of Nitra, , where they placed third from the partecipating foreign groups, through their exposition and promotion of Maltese folk music. Bari, Lecce, and Gozitan villages to Tuscany in Italy. The group also has two female vocalists, Audrey Marie Bartolo and Maria Portelli.

The Rosetta Stone of Malta: Cippi of Malta Offers Key to Decoding the Phoenician Language

Malqart was considered lord over life and death; he was the chief deity of Tyre. His temple was the site of two major festivals and believed to have been the inspiration for the renowned Temple of Solomon. However, the god's most lasting gift to mankind was not received by his worshipers and defenders in Carthage. Rather, it came about in the late 17 th century when two ornamental pillars, known as cippi (singular: cippus) praising Malqart were uncovered in Malta. The engravings on these memorials held the secrets to understanding the Phoenician language and all the incredible works written in it.

The name Malqart literally means 'king of the city' and he is considered to be the head of the Phoenician pantheon. He is often depicted sporting a trim beard and a tall, rounded hat. In his hands, he holds the Egyptian *ankh* and a fenestrated ax- the symbols of life and death, respectively. In addition to defending his city, Malqart was known as the god of the sea; worshiping him brought good fortune for fishing, colonization, and trade. In particular, Malqart is believed to have ensured the commercial success of Tyre and its colonies (Carthage in Northern Africa and Gadir in Spain) by providing worshippers with the knowledge and means of extracting a dye from the murex shellfish for the creation of rich purple fabric.



THE ROSETTA STONE, discovered in 1799, was the key to unravelling the civilisation of ancient Egypt.

The European Space Agency's unprecedented mission of cometary exploration is named after the famous 'Rosetta Stone'. This slab of volcanic basalt – now in the British Museum in London – was the key to unravelling the civilisation ancient Egypt. French soldiers discovered the unique Stone in 1799, as they prepared to demolish a wall near the village of Rashid (Rosetta) in Egypt's Nile delta. The carved inscriptions on the Stone included hieroglyphics – the written language of ancient Egypt – and Greek, which was readily understood. After the French surrender in 1801, the 762 kg Stone was handed over to the British.

Antonia Camilleri - President
Maltese Community Council
of Victoria

Message from the President – Antonia Camilleri

Dear Maltese Community,

After a challenging year last year, it was pleasing to have had the opportunity to welcome back the community at the Centre once again.

However, the year was not without challenges.

The Social Support Group had to be trained and educate our senior people to assist them in coming out of isolation. More stringent compliance rules were introduced, and we had to adopt to a lot of changes.

Our staff have done a wonderful job in adopting to all these changes and should be congratulated.

We saw Marlene Ebejer resign due to health reasons but were fortunate enough to have gain three new members Joseph, Tania and Chris who added to the depth of the executive.

As the new president, my focus this year was to bring back as many events as possible to the Centre. I believe we have a great venue, and that venue is the base and home of our Maltese Community.

I also want to ensure that the role of the MCCV is clearly understood.

The MCCV is not a social club, but an entity that promotes Maltese culture, history, and language. We act as a representative of several associations that are under our umbrella and collaborate with the same vision.

The organisation of social events is left to the various associations under our umbrella. We are happy to promote these events on behalf of the associations on social media and our new website.

This year we had several great successful events, and the best is yet to come. (Refer to the Cultural event chairman's report.)

We have a lot of work ahead of us, but I also know that I have confidence in the members of the executive to deliver. But ultimately your participation and collaboration is what makes any event a success. So, we hope to see you at the Centre and say hello to our friendly staff and executive members.

I take this opportunity to wish our staff, executive members, the Mission Society of St Paul and the members of the Maltese community a Happy and a prosperous New Year.

Xlendi Gozo- Malta - 100 years ago.

Reading the titles and the contents from the last issue for the year 2022 **of MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER 456** I am again reminded of my childhood as a young boy in a family of ten children *(5 brothers and 5 sisters*) and the customs of those days when in Malta we lived a simpler life. Today's luxuries were non-existent.
Very vividly, you brought back memories of :

" ***il-Furnar, il-Hanut tal-Inbid, Il-Hanut tal-Grocer, Tal -Pitrolju, tal-hobz li kien jigi biz-ziemel bil-kamra tal-injam fuq ir-roti, il-Landier li kien ipoggi fil-kantuniera darba fix-xaghar u jgibulu kull xorta t' oggetti ghat-tiswija. Kien jigi tas-silg, Tal-gelat, Guzepp tal-imbarazz li jbieh oggetti bzonjuzi bhal kobob tas-suf, labar tal-inxir, mincotti u rkiekel tal-hajt kuluriti ghal tiswijiet u hjata fid-dar. Dawn huma xi ftit hsiebijiet li gibtli mil-imghoddi tieghi ta tifel, li ghext fir-rahal zghir ta Hal Balzan. Il-komunita ta dak iz-zmien kienet inqas minn tal-lum, IZDA, kullhadd kien jaf lill-kull mhin kien joqghod f'kull bieb u triq ta' Hal-Balzan."***

A tear of joy comes to my eyes when I remember how happy we were when Malta was Maltese and the people were more united in everything they did. Solidarity was at its best when something happened in the village.

With your publication from far away Australia, you are managing to make us all look back and remember the days when we played in the streets, helped in the home with the cleaning chores and even managed to attend for the daily dutrina lessons at il-Muzew tas-subien u bniet in the same village. Walking to everywhere was the order of the day. No rides in cars or busses. We simply did not have such opportunities….But we were happy just the same.

Frank, your nostalgic background comes out in the articles that you publish and the write-ups that are written. Before this year is ended, I wanted to express how very happy I am to have made contact with you some months ago and how lucky, to regularly receive the MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER from you. I say it from the heart because, you are instrumental to rekindle many happy thoughts and memories in my heart and mind.

May the new year that is about to start in approximately 60 hours time, bring you Peace, Health and Happiness. Sincere best regards and Happy New Year 2023 to you and families

George Stagno Navarra from Malta

Kav. Joe Attard reading a Christmas poem

CONCERT OF CHRISTMAS CAROLS

Photo shows the Sons of the Baptist Choir, a children's choir from the Parish of Xewkija, Gozo who on Tuesday 3 January gave a concert of Christmas Carols in the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Grace of the Capuchin Friars Victoria. The Choir was led by Aimy Rapa accompanied on the piano by Jennifer Grech.

On this occasion Father Gwardan blessed a new statue of Baby Jesus, Joseph Mizzi's work which will be exhibited in the church during Christmas every year. Kav Joe M Attard, read his poem 'Puer Natus est Nobis'. At the end of the concert, Father Joe Xerri thanked all those who took part and said a prayed together with the numerous gathering that attended so that the Child of Bethlehem reigns in the homes of the Gozitans and Maltese throughout the new year.

STHARRIG TA' GREG CARUANA MINN SYDNEY

Fil-qedem, meta kienu jridu jqieghdu xi haga fuq in-nara jew biex jghallu l-ilma fil-kaldarun ghall-hwejjeg, u biex isajru fil-bitha kienu juzaw ,il-kenur. Dan kien isir minn blokka gebel tal-franka, gebla biex tistrieh il-borma fuqu kellu erba' rkejjen gholjin, fin-nofs kellu xquq fil-gedda bhall kieku gradilja tal-gebel, li tinfed ma toqba isfel li tiftah quddiem,..Il-hatab kien jitqieghed fuq il-wicc tal-kenur bejn l-erba rokon taht il-borma, u minn jiehu hsiebu kien ikollu joqghod irewwahlu fil-fettieha quddiem il-kenur biex in-nar jiehu l-arja u iktar iheggeg…..Biex ikebbsu n-nar, l-antenati taghna ma kellhomx sulfaritni, ghax dawn bdew jidru wara zmien u biss f'idejn min jista jixtrihom, fl-ahhar snin, Ghall-eweel kienu juzaw xi bicca gebla taz-znied biex johrogu xrara, u gieli wkoll iremblu bejn idejhom zokk niexef bil-ponta tieghu fuq iz-zokk niexef jishon u juri nitfa duhhan, fejn tmiss il-ponta tahraq kienu jqieghedu ftit tiben jew haxix niexef imfarrak biex iservi bhala lixka; ghad ghanna isem ta pjanta salvagga li tigber fil-kampanja li nghidulha lixka, ghax kienu juzawha mhux biss biex iqabbbdu n-nar ghat-tisjir u s-shana, imma wkoll biex jixghlu l-pipa . Biex ma joqodux jiehdu battikati kull darba li jridu jqabbbdu n-nhar.

F'bosta djar kont issib musbieh tal-fuhhar bil-ftila tixghel fih jew b'bieqja, u b'hekk kien ikollom nemmiesa(din tkun bhall muzbieh li jkun jixghel dejjem) dejjem , li minna kienu jiehdu ftit nhar bil-nicca u iqabbdu li jridu.Kien hemm bosta rgiel jahdmu l-kwiener, u minn Ghawdex kienu wkoll igibuhom lejn il-belt fuq id-dghajjes tal-latini li kienu jbahhru lejn il-Port l- Kbir..

Dawk li jahdmuhom kienu jaqsmu x-xoghol bejniethom, u juzaw l-gebla skont id-daqs mehtieg ghax hemm kwiener kbar u wkoll ckejknin ,dawk li jahdmuhom bhall ma ghedna jaqsmu x-xoghol bejniethom, u juzaw ghodda komuni bhall imterqa, baqqun ; u dawk li jirfinahom bhall skarpell zghir biex jirfunahom u jaghmluhom il-kradilja li tkun fin-nofs ..Fl-ahhar il-kenur kienu jorbtulu madwaru bhal cinga dejqa tal-hadid biex jekk jixxaqqaq bin-nar ma jkunx hemm periklu li jinfetah u jaqa kollox fl-art.. Kienu jghaddu jbieghu minnhom fit-toroq fuq il-karettun. Fi zmien il-gwerra meta ma' kellniex pitrolju, konna nuzaw il-kenur bil-hatab u l-injam konna ngibuh mid-djar mgarrfa, fejn, minnbarra l-gebel, konna nsibu bcejjec ta twieqi xi bicca minn xi bieb u ghamara inkissra u mfarrka, u bil-pacenzja kollha kien jkollna nkomplu jnkissruhom bill-mannara ghal fuq il-kenur….Id-djar l-antiki tal-bliet u rhula l-kbar, fil-kcina kien ikollom il-fuklar.

Din il-kelma gejja mit-taljan fuocolare li tfisser post ghan-nar…Dan kien ikun mibni mal-hajt tal-kcina, ghamla ta bank gholi daqs mejda, li l-wicc kien jkollu zewg toqbiet li fuqhom jistriehu l-borom u kzazel.. L-isfel f'dawn il-hofriet kien jistreh l-hatab jew il-faham fuq gradilja li minnha jghaddi l-irmiedu aktar 'l-isfel, l-istess bhal kenur, kien hemm il-hofra li tinfed mal-faccata tal-fuklar, biex mhux biss jitnaddaf l-irmied li jinzel, imma wkoll min ikun qed isajjar jew isahhan, jista jrewwah biex iqajjem in-nar. L-imrewha kienet tkun,tat-trixxa, mahduma mill-kummar, u gie li kienu jbighuha fit-toroq. Bhall kenur, il-fuklar kien idehhan meta jkebbsu n-nar, ghall hekk fuqu dejjem kien ikun hemm bhall tinda tal-injam li tinfed ma' toqba ghall-barra, biex id-dhahen u l-irwejjah jibqu hergin……..Fi zmienna ghandna strumenti u metodi biex insahhnu u nsajjru l-ikel mill-aktar efficjenti u li jiffrankawlna hafna hin. Izda bhal kollox il-modern dejjem jizviluppa u jinbena fuq ta qablu, sa mill-aktar antik. Ftakru li dak li kienu juzaw l-antenati taghna kien il-modern ta' zmienhom, u kienu jaghmluh skont l-izviluppi ta' zmienhom. Jien niftakar ftit wara l-gwerra kont ikun man-nanna Vitor li kienet koka mill-aqwa ghat-tisjir ,kien jigi huha iz-Ziju Giuzeppi mill-Ingliterra ghall xi gimaghtejn ghall-vakanza u kont nismghu jghjid lin-nanna ,"Irridek issajjarli borma minestra fuq il-kenur u fil-borma tal-fuhhar Vitor u xi fenek imma kif ghidtlek fill-borma tal-fuhhar u fuq il-kenur..u darba staqsiejtu ; ghaliex zi ? "Qalli ghaliex fil-borma tal-fuhhar u fuq il-kenur it-tisjir isir bill-mod ,u l-palat tieghu jigi tajjeb wisq meta isir bill mod… Mehuda mill-ktieb ta' Guido Lafranco "Xoghol .Gahgih u snajja li spiccaw"

STONE - STOVE - "KENUR"

Due the lack of fire-wood "ħatab", in Malta, a slow cooking method was developed by using of the "kenun" stove. The "kenun - kenur" was curved from a fire resistant stone "ġebla tal-kwiener", weight 8 lbs to 10 lbs and 9 ins in length and weight. A 3 ins hole was cut at the base, where fagot "qabs", was places on the firewood "ħatab", to kindle. On top of the stone, a grate "gradilja", was cut to allow the heat to rice and heated the earthenware cooking pots "burom", saucepan "pagna", or small stewing pan "tiġan - twajġen".

The "kenur", needed constant tending and frequent fanning with a fan "trewwih bir-rewwieħa". The slow fire directed to the earthenware pot on the "kenun" made the food tasted better, the flame overspread the bottom of the cooking pots with soot "gmied". With great patience great grand mothers "buznanniet", lighten the "kenur" around 3 o'clock in the morning to start making coffee "kafe". Slow simmering "nar bati", was the only way to cook on the "kenur". Delicious soups "sopop", and stews "stuffat", were prepared for mid-day "fatar", or dinner "fatra".

THE STONE-HOB - "IL-FUKLAR"

Large stone-hob "fuklar", was fixed in the small kitchen "kcijna", wall, with a flat top approximately 3 ft long and 2 ft wide, to use as a working area, with an enclose of a fire-stove on the side and a place where the twigs "qabs", and other logs "ħatab", were put to make fire. On top of the "fuklar," there were other two holes on which the pots were placed on a grade "gradilja tal-fuklar", to let the flame arise to heath the pots.

The cooking pots were soot "ġimmed", with the burning of the logs. Some had a hood connected to stove chimney "cumnija", which enable the smoke to extracted out side the house. The flame "fjamma", was improved to soar more than the "kenur", stove. The "fuklar", became very helpful because it consisted of two burners and the food took less time to be cooked.

THE WICKS- STOVE - "KUCINETT TAL-FTEJJEL"

Wicks burners "kucinett tal-ftejjel", consisted of an enamel "enemel", round fuel tank, one or more wicks "ftejjel", a funner "kuperc", for each wick and a griddle "gradilja".

Only 2/3 of the tank was filled with paraffin "pitrolju", to let the 6 - 8 ins cotton wicks absorb the fuel. The wicks were pasted through a funnel. The size of the flame was regulate by a small adjusting knob on the side of the burner.
A griddle was put over to let the heat rice and heated the cookware. When the wicks were put high, they reached a very high temperature. The burners were put off by lower the wicks and bowled.
The wick stove "spiritera", need it little attendance and less soot "ġimed", covered under the pots and pans. With the regulator of low or high temperature the food was cooked deliciously, in bright colour enamel "enemel", or gray metal "metall), pots. The most common were cooking pot "borma", saucepan "kazzola", or frying pan " tiġan - taġen".

PRESSURE-STOVE - "SPIRTIERA TA' L-ISTIM"

Soot less kerosene-stove, had a pressurer brass "ram", fuel tank of paraffin "pitlorju", that was forced from the tank, thought a spirit cup near the top of the stove, the heat passed through with a convertible burner "ġewza ta' l-istim", used as a roarer for fast boiling and no soot "ġimed", was formed under the cooking pots. The burner was lighten by filling the brass cup with spirit "spirtu tal-kuciniera", and lit with a match.
They used a wire needle "labra ta' l-ispiritiera", to reach the center of the flame when the burner needed to be adjusted or cleaned. The primus-stove came in different sizes, mostly used for cooking food in big pots, boiling water in large kettle "kitla tal-mushun", or for boiling water in big cauldron "ġardarun".

COMMUNALITY OVENS - "FORN TAR-RAĦAL"

Gradually community ovens "il-forn tar-raħal", were found in every village. Several ovens were erected in Mellieha, known by their family nick name "bil-laqam".
Ovens were build with special heath resetting stone "ġebla tal-kwiener", approximate 8 ft to 10 ft long and in width and with an outlet made from cast iron. Bakers "ħabbiez", used thistles "xewk", to start the fire "qabs" and a lot of brushwood "ħatab tal-forn", for heating the oven. Temperature was raised to 500 degrees Celsius and took around 1.1/2 to 2 hours for to baking food in big dishes. They used a long wooden shovel "pala tal-forn", to take the scorching dishes out of the oven.
Since ovens were rare to find in homes, householders used to take their Sunday's roast and baking meals were made in big enamel "enemel", or metal "metall", dishes "dixxijiet", to be cooked "moħmi", at the bakeries. Bakers "furnara", had an early start to have the food dishes baked by 10' o'clock, for the people who had an early lunch "fatar", the second batch of dishes was baked "it-tieni forn", by noon.
The most tasteful dishes baked were, rise "ross", macaroni "imqarrun", marrows "qarabagħli", pork meat "laħam tal-majjal". Pumpkin pie, "Torta tal-Qargha hamra", Dorado fish pie, "Torta tal-Lampuka", and Corned beef pie, "Torta tal-Bulu bijf", were also popular seasonal dishes. Households started using tinned Corned beef as a substitute for fresh meat which was scarce during the Word was II, (1939 to 1945).
Not to be mixed up with other's dishes, they marked the dishes with a tag "għeliem", on the side or with a twisted piece of pastry on top of the food, as their family mark. They cover the dish with a big serviette "sarvetta", when carrying to take to the baker. They waited outside the bakery to pick up the good smiling hot dishes and hurried back home to serve while still hot.

"My memory really sucks Mildred, so I changed my password to "incorrect." That way when I log in with the wrong password, the computer will tell me... "Your password is incorrect"

ST. SYLVESTR CHAPEL IN MOSTA

During the Knights' reign in Malta, several Grand Masters strived to make their wish of having a private chapel built for them become a reality. We still find many of these places of worship scattered across the Maltese Islands. During the time of the third parish priest of Mosta, Dun Carlo Schembri (1647-1671), the church dedicated to Saint Sylvester the Pope was built, in 1664. The feast of St. Syvelster is celebrated on the last day of the year, December 31st.

MOSTA PARISH

In the 17th century, Mosta counted around nine hundred inhabitants. It was declared a parish by Bishop Gargallo on September 16th 1608, when it detached itself from the Naxxar matrix church.

THE ORIGINS OF THE CHURCH OF ST. SYLVESTER

The church owes its origins to the Knight Fra Silvestri Fiteni, a Maltese nobleman and Baron of Budac, who built it out of his own money and dedicated it to Pope St. Sylvester after his marriage was annulled. To commemorate this event, the church has a plaque above its main entrance and right underneath the coat of arms of the knight Fiteni. It reads (in Latin): **"FITENI SULVESTER EQUES, SULVESTRIBUS AGRIS, DIVO SVLVESTRO DAT DICAT, IPSE DOMVM 1664".**

Fra Silvestri Fiteni became a Knight of the Order of St. John after his marriage with Mrs. Genoveffa D. Tassalocanna was annulled. He built this church and opened it in 1664 at the age of 66. The church became government property when the Knights left Malta.

MODERN SURROUNDINGS

Although the church was originally constructed on fallow land, it is now in the middle of one of the busier roads around the Maltese town of Mosta. Indeed, the church sits on what is today a roundabout, its old architectural style completely disjointed from the modern buildings surrounding it.

LOCATION

The church was originally in St. Sylvester Street - a street named after this church - that today cuts through Independence Avenue in Mosta, a town in the Central Region of Malta. Independence Avenue (Vjal l-Indipendenza) today is the name of the main street that runs around the church. St. Sylvester Street is still there close to the church's left.

A FARMHOUSE NEXT TO THE CHURCH THAT WAS DEMOLISHED

Fra Silvestei Fiteni loved visiting Mosta and for this reason he thought well to build a farmhouse besides the church where he would reside during the time he spent in the whereabouts. The building was complete with a shed for his cart and horses as well as the Knight's personal coat of arms. The structure was still in existence up until the 1960s. When Independence Avenue started being built, the farmhouse was demolished to make way for the new development.

THE ONLY CHURCH DEDICATED TO ST. SYLVESTER IN MALTA

In Malta there was never really much devotion to Pope St. Sylvester and the fact this is the only church dedicated to this saint on the islands reflects this. The Knight benefactor who built it and dedicated to him had his name, Fra Silvestri Fiteni.

POPE ST. SYLVESTER

Pope Sylvester I (also Silvester) was born in Rome and was the bishop of the city from 31 January 314 until his death on 31 December 335. During his time he concentrated a lot of his work to building churches and basilicas, chief among them those of St. John Lateran in Rome, that of St. Peter, St. Paul and others.

WHAT WAS POPE SYLVESTER FAMOUS FOR?

Among the several notable things this pope is remembered for are that he was responsible for declaring the day of Sunday as a holy day and for baptizing Emperor Constantine. Pope Sylvester was also the first pope to wear a crown on his head.

THREE ST. SYLVESTERS

There were three popes that carried the name St. Sylvester but the one we are referring to is St. Sylvester I.

ARCHITECTURE

The church's architecture is simple but elegant and small. The façade is flanked by two Doric pilasters and the frontispiece is topped by a small campanile in its centre.

There are two niches on the upper part of the church's façade. Inside these, in the year 2002, two statues were placed, one of St. Peter (the first pope) and the other of St. Sylvester (patron saint of this church). These statues were placed there on July 30th 2002 during the time of Dun Salv Magro, and are the work of Savio Deguara. A rectangular window is present between these two niches.

INTERIOR AND WORKS OF ART

The interior is pleasantly decorated and includes a fine altarpiece depicting St. Sylvester that is the work of talented Maltese artist Stefano Erardi (1630-1716) from Valletta, who painted it in 1665. This painting was recently restored.

A plaque of Fra Silvestri Fiteni is located above the titular painting, which he commissioned Erardi to paint in 1665, when Fiteni was 67 years old. Fiteni's coat of arms is present at the painting's bottom.

The altar is made of stone. It was rebuilt anew in the 1980s by Glormu Deguara from Mosta. The altar has a set or six statues which are usually placed on it for the feast. The statues were sculpted from wood in the 1990s by Renzo Gauci from Tarxien. A statue of St. Rita is present, dating to 1963, the work of Ġlormu Dingli The church's ceiling used to once be adorned with stars and the eight-pointed cross of the Knights.

WWII

The church suffered damage during World War Two. A stone gate in front of the altar, as well as the sacristy, were destroyed. Fortunately the titular painting had been taken for safekeeping to the Mosta Rotunda. The sacristy was rebuilt once the war ended and the altarpiece put back in its place.

PRESENT DAY USE

Sessions of prayer in honour of Our Lady of Lourdes are held in the church on the days of the apparitions. Marriages are also popular in the church.

Holy Mass (prior the the recent restrictions and timetable modifications) would usually be celebrated at 7.30am on Sundays and days of obbligation.

THE FEAST OF ST. SYLVESTER

The feast of St. Syvelster is celebrated as St. Sylvester's Day in Western Christianity on the last day of the year, December 31, which is also the liturgical feast of the saint. In Eastern Christianity the feast is commemorated on 2 January. In this church, the feast is marked annually on December 31st, with the church still having a special place in the heart of many Mostin.

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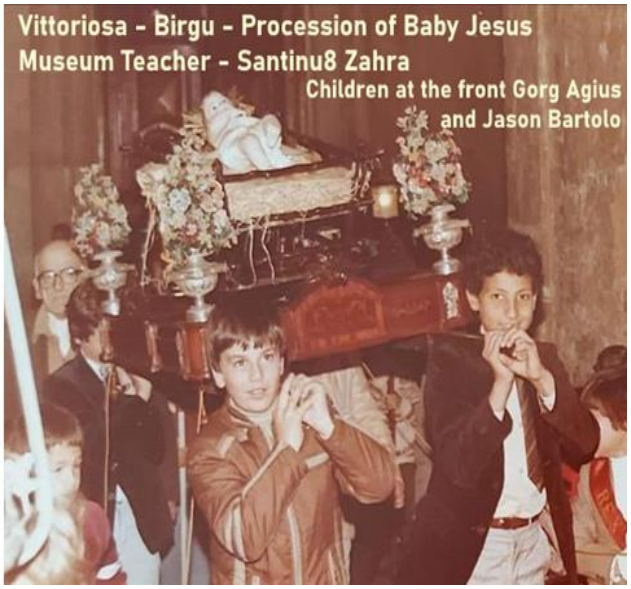
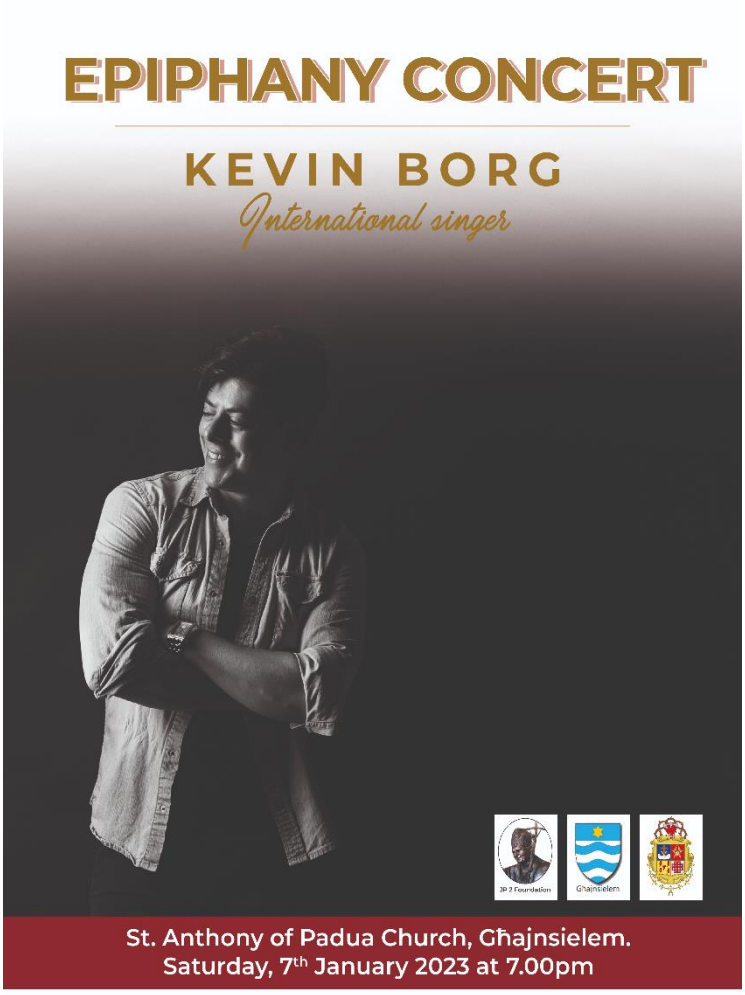


HAPPY NEW YEAR 2023
The JP2 Foundation would like to thank you for your support.



It is customary that the JP2 Cultural Foundation will be holding an Epiphany Concert as the last event to close the Festive Season. This year the Foundation will be holding its fourth edition, after having hosted some big pop singers like Ludwig Galea, Miriam Christin Borg, Vittorio Gauci and Chiara.

This year the Foundation has invited the Maltese International Singer, KEVIN BORG. He will be performing a concert with several songs that he performed in Sweden and in other parts of the globe during this festive time.

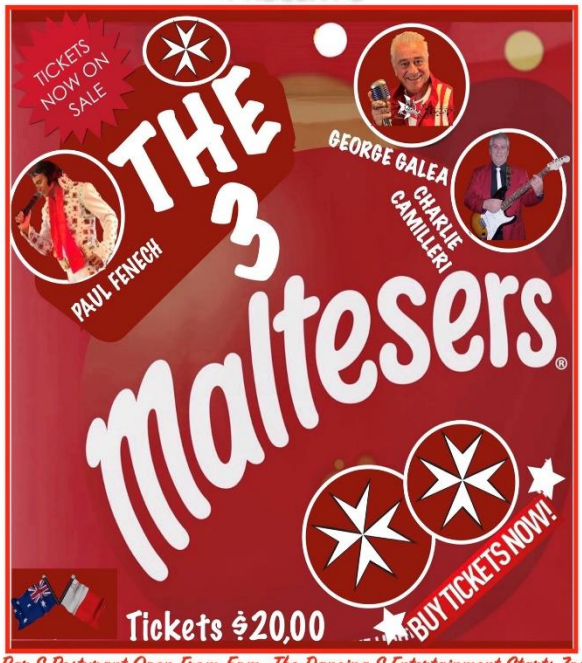
The Epiphany Concert will take place at St. Anthony of Padua Church, Għajnsielem on Saturday, 7 January 2023 starting at 7.00pm (as soon as the final Church evening service is finished).

The Franciscan Minor Friars along with the Għajnsielem Local Council and a number of establishments are helping to support this concert.

The public is invited to attend. For more information, please contact the JP2 Cultural Foundation on 99622620. JP2 Foundation PRO

"He who drinks, sleeps. He who sleeps, does not sin. He who does not sin, is holy. Therefore he who drinks, is holy."

SATURDAY 4th MARCH 2023
LA VALETTE SOCIAL CLUB
BLACKTOWN
175 WALTERS ROAD BLACKTOWN
PRESENTS



The Bar & Resturant Open From 5pm -The Dancing & Entertainment Starts 7pm
For Tickets Call Godfrey : 0402090339 - Antoinette 96712992
Frances : 0412320432 - The Centre : 96225847

A SPECTACULAR EVENT
George Cross Falcons
Community Centre - CRINGILA
NSW

Saturday 18 March from 2pm
Only $20 and includes Pastizzi

· A woman bids farewell to her family before leaving for Australia in the 1950s.
Photos: Migrants Commission Archive

Maltese Community Council of Victoria, Inc.

In May 1948, Australia and Malta signed an assisted-migrant-passage agreement, which extended the benefit of subsidised travel costs to over 63,000 Maltese. The peak period of migration to Australia occurred in the mid-fifties and sixties and the number of people in Australia who were born in Malta peaked in 1981. On the 6 May 2023, we will celebrate this event at the National Archives of Australia in North Melbourne and at the Centre in Parkville. Enter this date in your diary so you do not miss out.

FESTIVAL IN MALTA 2023