

JOURNAL FOR MALTESE AROUND THE WORLD



MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER

Editor: Frank Scicluna OAM MQR JP



**Maxine Formosa Gruppetta
wins Miss Congeniality at Miss Universe**



**Joanne Camilleri
'INANNA' The Rising
Goddess of Malta**

**THE AMAZING STORY
OF SHARON SILVA
(AQUILINA)
USA**



**THE GIRL
WITH A
PEARL
EARRING**

**Dutch
painter
Johannes
Vermeer,
dated C. 1665**



**A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE
MALTESE MIGRATION TO
SOUTH AUSTRALIA**



President Vella postpones Australia trip amid controversy on abortion debate

President OF Malta Dr. George Vella did not comment on whether the decision is linked to the abortion vote. Photo: Jonathan Borg

President George Vella has postponed the scheduled trip to Australia in February, indicating he intends to be in Malta when the abortion amendment goes through parliament. That way he can sign off on the law himself if he agrees with the amendment's wording, or else resign if he remains uncomfortable with it.

The decision dismisses rumours that the president intends to repeat the IVF vote controversy, when he went abroad to avoid signing the law. But when asked by the *Times of Malta*, he refused to comment on whether the decision

was linked to the abortion vote.

He said: "Those decisions are taken depending on the work exigencies and other appointments," he replied, when asked why the trip was called off. "We change our appointments according to the circumstances."

Asked whether the decision had anything to do with the abortion vote, Vella said people have been speculating. "Speculate as much as you want. It won't be the first time that people have speculated."

Times of Malta asked him whether he ruled out that the decision was not connected to the abortion vote. "That's what you are saying," he said.

Some sources said the trip had been postponed but not cancelled. Trips are often rescheduled for a number of reasons, they said. **Three-week trip scheduled for early February**

The three-week trip was scheduled for early February and maintains a tradition that has seen every president in modern times visit Maltese emigrants and their families in a tour of Australian cities, towns and Maltese clubs. It is considered one of the more important trips during a president's tenure.

"Arrangements in Australia for this visit by Malta's head of state were advanced. No reason has been given for the cancellation. An official announcement is expected soon," the brief notice said.

Sources said that another trip to Geneva, later in February, has also reportedly been postponed



"Shouldn't we be doing these grand demonstrations of love towards a person while they are still alive? Why wait for the funeral? Why not have everyone gather together and tell the person to their face how much they are appreciated, loved and what they have meant to them. Like a living wake? That's what I want for myself." Davina McCall



Schengen Area The World's Largest Visa Free Zone

member countries. All of these countries are located in Europe, from which:

- 23 members fully implement the Schengen acquis, Four of them – members of the EFTA, implement Schengen acquis through specific agreements related to the Schengen agreement.
- Iceland, Norway, Switzerland and Lichtenstein are associate

Schengen Area signifies a zone where 27 European countries have abolished their internal borders, for the free and unrestricted movement of people, in harmony with common rules for controlling external borders and fighting criminality by strengthening the common judicial system and police cooperation. Schengen Area covers most of the EU countries, except Ireland, and the countries that are soon to be part of the Schengen Area: Romania, Bulgaria, and Cyprus. Although not members of the EU, countries like Norway, Iceland, Switzerland and Lichtenstein are also part of the Schengen zone.

Schengen Area Countries

The 27 Schengen countries are Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Croatia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, and Switzerland.

Currently, the Schengen Area consists of 27

members of the Schengen Area but are not members of the EU. They are part of the EFTA and implement the Schengen acquis through specific agreements related to the Schengen agreement. Monaco, San Marino, and Vatican City have opened their borders but are not members of the visa-free zone. The Azores, Madeira, and the Canary Islands are special members of the EU and part of the Schengen Zone, even though they are located outside the European continent.

There are four more EU members that have not joined the Schengen zone: Ireland – which still maintains opt-outs, and Romania, Bulgaria, and Cyprus – which are seeking to join soon.

The external borders of the Schengen Zone stretch for a distance of 50,000 km, with 80% being water and the remaining 20% being land. This area includes hundreds of airports and maritime ports, numerous land crossing points, an area of 4,368,693 km², and a population of 423,264,262 citizens.



**WE ALL LOVE AND RESPECT
THE MALTESE JOURNAL.
IT'S LIKE A BREATH OF FRESH AIR**

Malta will in the coming months officially be joining the route of the famous pilgrimage, the Camino de Santiago de Compostela - Spain.

This was announced during a public information session held at the Fort St Angelo, which was addressed by Culture Minister Owen Bonnici and Foreign Affairs Minister Ian Borg.

During this session, it was explained that the Camino de Santiago is a large network of pilgrimage routes that is travelled by around 400,000 people, with 300 of them being Maltese.

Therefore, a route known as the "Camino Maltés" spanning some 3,600 kilometres has been created, connecting with Sicily, Sardinia, Barcelona, and eventually Santiago de Compostela.

During the session, the benefits of this experience were explained from the perspectives of cultural and religious tourism, as well as from a commercial standpoint.

The Minister for National Heritage, the Arts, and Local Government Owen Bonnici highlighted the efforts of the Heritage Malta workers, praising them for the work they have done. He stated that the



government is committed to creating high-level event initiatives that will strengthen the Maltese cultural calendar.

On his part, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Ian Borg, explained the important work that the Maltese Embassy in Spain did together with the NGO Xircammini. He said that through a number of meetings at a diplomatic and technical level, it was possible to reach the agreement that Malta will be a part of this international map. He stated that the cultural sector is essential and he looks forward to collaborating in more initiatives of this kind.



As from Wednesday 18th January 2023, all Christians around the world will be celebrating the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, which will end on Wednesday 25th January. During this week, different Churches come together in ecumenical prayer with the aim of seeking Christian unity. This year's theme

Week of prayer for Christian unity 2023

Press Release

is "Do good; seek justice" (Isaiah 1:17). This theme and related material have been prepared by the Council of Churches of Minnesota in the United States of America.

During this week a Diocesan Ecumenical Service will be held on Friday 20th January 2023 at 6:30pm at St Nicholas' Church of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, Merchants Street, Valletta. Archbishop Charles Scicluna will participate, together with other Church leaders in Malta, while a biblical reflection will be delivered by Pastor Klaus-Peter Edinger of the local Evangelical Lutheran Church.

Policy to promote bilingualism in primary schools launched in Malta

The Education Ministry launched a language policy aimed at promoting and strengthening the teaching of both Maltese and English at primary school level.

The Ministry of Education, Sport, Youth, Research and Innovation officially launched the document "Language Policy for the Primary Years in Malta and Gozo", after it was put forward for public consultation.

The document provides direction and support in the use of languages in the curriculum and language teaching in the following years, that is, in primary education. The general objective of this policy is to promote and strengthen bilingualism of all children during the primary years (between 7 and 11 years old).

"This is an important document that builds on work that has been done in recent years and highlights the importance of languages and how they provide many opportunities for children and young people, facilitate development and contribute to society," Education Minister Clifton Grima said in a press conference on Tuesday.

He also highlighted the work that needs to be done to strengthen the Maltese language and strengthen national identity.

Grima was speaking during the launch of the document "Language Policy for the Primary Years in Malta and Gozo" at the A Primary School in Mosta, Maria Regina College.

"Language as the most important means of communication and essential for our country to develop in all areas of life: economically, socially, in education and innovation, is the basis of this document. The document strengthens the Maltese socio-linguistic context which is rich in a long history of bilingualism and in an environment that is



becoming increasingly multilingual," the ministry said in its statement following the launch.

This policy builds on the "Language Policy for the Upcoming Years" and is specifically designed to provide clear guidance on how languages can be used in primary years (between 7 and 11 years old).

The policy promotes the teaching of Maltese and English in a multilingual context and includes recommendations for children, parents, guardians, school administrators and language teachers on how to use these languages effectively in the primary years.

The policy is based on the recommendations of the Ministerial Committee on Language Policy in Education, after a thorough public consultation process was carried out by Charles L. Mifsud, Lara Ann Vella, and David Muscat.

During the launch, Professor Charles L. Mifsud, Chairperson of the Language Policy in Education Committee, emphasised the need for a clear language curriculum during primary years in order to ensure effective intercultural and international communication. He said that language is the strongest tool for promoting peace and understanding in a society that is becoming increasingly multilingual.

**YOUR STORY WILL BE READ BY THOUSANDS OF MALTESE AROUND THE WORLD
PUBLISH IT HERE**

AN AMAZING STORY OF COURAGE. MOTIVATION AND DETERMINATION

Run Sharon, Run!

Fred Aquilina with collaboration of Sharon Silvas.



And run she does. The New York City marathon, the world's largest, was held on Nov. 6, 2022 and was Sharon's 28th marathon (second New York) and not her last marathon. The NYC marathon was started in 1970 by the NY Runners Club and has become a premier event. The course runs through all the five boroughs and had a field of 44,743 runners. She qualified due to her previous performances in Boston, NY and other numerous marathons and races. Not only

does she qualify, but she outperforms for her qualifying age group.

Most everyone knows that a marathon is 26 miles, but don't know why they added 385 yards (.2 miles) to the course. That happened in the 1908 London Olympics when the course was from Windsor castle and ended at White City stadium. They moved the finish line inside the stadium by .2 miles. in order for the race to end in front of King Edward VII and the royal family's viewing box.

Although she entered the marathon knowing she could not win, her motivation and determination was a personal challenge to compete and to excel. Below are some of her stats from the event. What's significant is that of all the women competitors of all ages (21,160), she was in the top 1.6%, and in her age group (2,278) she ranked in the top half of 1%. Quite impressive when I tell you her story.

When Sharon Silva (Aquilina), our third child and second daughter, was born in 1967, if anyone would have said that she would grow up to be quite athletic and a candidate as a marathon runner, my wife Ida and I would have looked at them as if they

were blind and could not see the obvious. Here was this fragile little girl wriggling on her back, then motionless in her hospital crib, but with a glaring deformity. Her two tiny feet were pointed grotesquely inwards in what in those days was called "club feet". Athletic? A marathon runner? A teaching career where she would become her school's head coach for cross country and track? No way! She would be lucky not to fall on her face trying to balance herself.

Fortunately, the doctors assured us that although severe, her problem could be corrected. We were sceptical and wondered if she would ever walk "normal". Her treatments from birth began with incremental changing of plaster casts to gradually spread each foot outward. Her reaction was to use the casts as battering rams to demolish her wooden crib and chip the casts. Needless to say, she was not a comfortable, happy baby being subjected to what she probably thought of as leg irons. As the months passed and the feet began to straighten out, she "graduated" to a steel apparatus that kept both legs spread apart and had orthopaedic baby shoes attached to the steel brace. The shoes could be adjusted as needed to spread her little feet outwards. If the plaster casts were battering rams, this steel apparatus was a sledgehammer that splintered the wooden crib when she "exercised" her legs.

These treatments lasted for about eight months and before her second birthday, to our joy, she was walking normally. The treatments had done their job of correcting her deformity. As a youngster her activities were never hindered by her birth defect. If they did, the family never knew it. Growing up in the early seventies, she was always an active little girl with lots of energy, and she and her two brothers and sister biked, roller skated, and played sports like most children. Well, except for the roller-skating part. One day while roller skating, she decided to let her brother tow her behind his bike while she held on. All was fine, until the bike hit a crack in the sidewalk and Sharon ended up in the emergency room with a broken arm. Of course the injury did not deter her from continuing her athletic activities. She simply adjusted.

Her running began at about age seven when she was on a girls' softball team. For her, the best part

of softball was getting to run around the base path. She frolicked around the bases just for the fun of running. A physical education teacher in middle school assigned her class a timed mile around the running track which she not only enjoyed, but excelled in. This experience led her as a youngster, on a whim, to enter our city's children's Thanksgiving Day "Turkey Trot". At the end of the race she brought home the turkey! In the following photo, Sharon, in the middle, is competing in one of her early races.

She loved to play softball and did so all the way up through high school and college. Her college coach's practice regimen included a daily two mile run. Those daily runs were the foundation for her fitness habit of a daily run and taught her endurance and stamina. Completing college, and even during her two pregnancies, she was running about 10 miles a week. With the birth of her son and daughter, she started increasing her mileage as she even jogged while pushing a stroller.

Moving near Tucson, Arizona around 2000, she discovered that there was a large running community many of whom were training to run in marathons. About all she knew about marathons was that it took place in Greece. History tells us that a Greek soldier (Pheidippes) ran a long way (26 miles) from the battlefield (near Marathon, Greece in 490 BC) to announce the defeat of the Persians to the Athenians. When someone told her the marathon was 26.2 miles long, her jaw dropped in amazement and disbelief. Up to that point in her life, her longest run was six miles. She asked how long does the run take? When the reply was about 4 hours, that sounded better than 26.2 miles to her. Time and endurance were easier to focus on than mileage. The challenge was now there, and her motivation and discipline kicked in.

In order to enhance her endurance and increase her mileage, she joined a training program around 2002. The program entailed a run for six minutes, followed by a one minute walk and then repeating that ratio. It's called the Galloway training program and lessons learned improved both her mileage and endurance totals. Over the next twenty years, cycling and competitive swimming were added to her routine for cross training purposes which led her to competing in local 5 kilometer and greater races, and eventually to half iron man triathlons. The half-iron man triathlon consists of 70.3 miles (a half of an iron man triathlon) in three events. One has to swim 1.2 miles (1.9k), ride a bicycle for 56 miles (90k) and end the race by up running 13.1 miles (21.1k - a half marathon). After competing in four half- iron man triathlons, she moved on to

competing in marathons. Twenty-eight so far, including three in Boston, and 2 in New York. Other highlights of her running career include holding four Arizona state women's records for 8 miler race at age 48; at age 51 she captured the 5k record as well as the marathon record (3:06), and finally, the half miler record at age 54. Although she holds Arizona's marathon record for 51 year olds, her best time for any marathon was her time of 2:59:35 when in July of 2021 she ran the Jack an Jill marathon in Bend, Washington just outside of Seattle. Her stats were outstanding as she finished 22nd overall in a field of 427 marathoners, and fifth among all the women. Not bad for a kid that was born with club feet.

She continues to maintain her fitness by running 50 miles a week. Everyday she starts her run in the predawn hours to avoid the blazing Arizona sun. Then it's off to teach language arts to her students and to coach the school's track team. She prides herself in motivating these students and other Tucson youth to excel in their running endeavors. In fact, many of her students move on to competitive running in college. Her dedication to running has also garnered social media friends. One of them, a cousin who is a distance runner in Melbourne, Australia has been inspired to make the NYC marathon a goal for 2023 Sharon's next goal is to compete in the USATF (USA Track & Field) Masters Championships. Knowing her, she will achieve that goal and her objectives.

But besides this, if you ask her about her achievements, top of her list is not the medals from her runs, but rather for being honoured for her positive influence in the community, for passing on the love of the run to Tucson youth and for receiving the Spirit of Rob Bell award in 2018. Who was Rob Bell? Just an avid and middle-of-the-pack runner in Southern Arizona who passed away during a workout in 2000. An ordinary, soft-spoken man who, like Sharon, loved to run and to race. He selflessly was always aware of the successes of other runners and celebrated with them when they competed. The award was created in his memory with the support of two individuals, who like Rob, embody his passion for the run as well as the spirit of camaraderie. The nominee for the award is chosen by the southern Arizona running and walking community. Like Rob, Sharon has exhibited these qualities and is testimony to the fact that it takes more than just physical ability. It demands determination and grit to overcome the difficulties of not only the run, but of life in general. We saw that from the time she was born.



“INANNA” - RISING GODDESS OF MALTA” IS COMING HOME TO THE MALTESE ISLANDS.

(Toronto/ Canada and Rabat / Victoria Gozo; January 18)

“INANNA” - Rising Goddess of Malta” - is coming home to the Maltese Islands - brought by the production’s star and creator, JOanne Camilleri, who flew into Malta mid November. JOanne whose parents emigrated to Canada from Mellieħa, is a Toronto, Canada based Maltese citizen Canadian performer, a renowned Belly Dancer and University of Toronto instructor. Entertainment Monthly in the United States described her multimedia stage show “INANNA - Rising Goddess of Malta,” as “an epic stage production.” That couldn’t be more true - INANNA is an exciting new project based on one of the oldest stories ever told.

The project is already garnering international attention.

In addition to the Entertainment Monthly profile, “INANNA - the Rising Goddess of Malta,” was also featured in the November-December issue of the newsletter, The Maltese Presence in North America, Camilleri is scheduled to sit down with the editors at Authority

Magazine stateside for a deep dive into her fascinating career for their Live Arts / Theater and Live Performances section.

INANNA the Rising Goddess of Malta is a 90-minute multi-media, dance, circus, animation projection and an original musical soundtrack, a mix of folk rock and Islamic scales bringing the sounds and performance of the east and west together in this production that celebrates Malta’s prehistoric culture and circles around Malta’s goddess of fertility story for a contemporary audience.

The concept of INANNA comes from the Maltese named for Camilleri’s Maltese ‘grandmother,’ in Maltese ‘in-Nanna’, referring to all her grandmothers since antiquity, ‘INANNA Productions’ is part of a dance company called “Ancient Rumbblings” which is based in Toronto, Canada.

Renowned Maltese - Canadian artist JOanne Camilleri director, choreographer, written by and producer of INANNA will be assisted by Chris Hall, composer, producer, writer and arranger of the INANNA album and Maltese-Canadian Izzy Camilleri, Canada’s renowned costume designer.

“The story of INANNA is found inscribed on clay tablets and fragments in INANNA’s temples that exist today in Malta and her sister island Gozo. It is our vision to present INANNA live in theatres on the islands of Malta and Gozo and at the Goddesses Neolithic Temples where she once lived,” Camilleri says.

Script written by Camilleri from the ancient myth of the “the descent of INANNA.” This epic poem found in scripted on a cuneiform from the early Neolithic Age in the Latin: cuneus named for the characteristic wedge-shaped impressions is one of the first stories ever told by the first poet known in history Edehuanna.

Some big names lent their talents to the soundtrack. Canadian music and cultural figure Michael Williams of Much Music fame, voices a major character. Michael Fonfara, an Icon in rock music of gigantic proportions whose legendary work with Lou Reed, Rough Trade, Foreigner and many more made him famous, played keyboards on the soundtrack. Fred Mandel, another huge talent, who played with Elton John, Queen, Pink Floyd, and Supertramp, also contributed to the keyboards, while Peter De Sotto from Quartetto Gelato played Violin. Terry Brown, best known as the producer of the legendary Canadian band "Rush," mixed the INANNA album.

With the financial support from Malta and the generous assistance from the former Consul General of the Republic of Malta to Canada, Dr Raymond C. Xerri, artist Camilleri's production is planning to fly to Malta mid 2023 and perform this unique spectacle in the Maltese Islands accompanied by the core performers of the INANNA cast and crew renowned dance and circus artists, Christina Jennifer Lee, Mark Segal, Laura Lawless, and Christine Leong.

Finally, Consul General, Dr Raymond C. Xerri stated that this production is not only unique to the Maltese Islands, it's an original artistic masterpiece with enormous potential in a variety of spheres, which not only narrates one of our civilization's oldest stories but has all the elements and hallmark to transcend into a permanent Maltese heritage production which can be treasured by all Maltese and millions of tourists who visit our islands alike.

She speaks with passion about bringing INANNA home to Malta.

She is now in Malta, engaging in conversation with local theatres, performers and government officials to make it a reality.

This production was also highly endorsed and promoted amongst the Maltese-Canadian Community in Canada and the one million Maltese and Gozitan diaspora around the world by the former Consul General of the Republic of Malta to the Commonwealth of Canada, Dr Raymond. C. Xerri.

"I see this production becoming a national-level performance that will be representative of Malta's ancient history and will celebrate Malta for both locals and for tourists on an annual basis. Effectively our Production will contribute to the cultural preservation of history through the performing arts" she adds with passion.

"Internationally, the production will educate the world on Malta/Goza's critical contribution to the development of modern society through the mythos."

INANNA Productions will be auditioning in the coming months from the Maltese islands, Gozitan vocalists, musicians and dance performers. Local companies can be invited in this unique multi-media production.

JOanne Camilleri is currently in Malta and available for media interviews about the exciting INANNA project and all aspects of Belly Dance.

Dr Raymond Xerri of Gozo is also available to the media for interviews about his support for the INANNA project and how important it will be for the Maltese islands.

Media contact : Tracy Lamourie

Founder, Managing Director, Senior Publicist

LAMOURIE MEDIA "Global Award Winning PR - Toronto, Hollywood, the EU & Beyond"

*Toronto : 289-788-5881 Beverly Hills : 424-444-8052

*Europe / Mediterranean 356 9939 0971 Email : lamouriePR@gmail.com

MALTESE LIVING ABROAD

**ALTHOUGH MALTA IS ONE OF THE SMALLEST COUNTRIES IN THE
WORLD IT HAS A VERY ANCIENT AND RICH HISTORY, LANGUAGE AND
CULTURE.**

**MALTESE ALLOVER THE WORLD HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL IN THEIR
RESPECTIVE FIELD AND WE ARE PROUD OF THEIR ACHIEVEMENTS**

THE JEWISH HISTORY IN MALTA

Jewish roots in Malta date back to the 4th and 5th Century during the Roman period as evidenced by several Jewish Catacombs with drawings depicting the Jewish Menorah (candelabra) that can be found at the St. Paul's Catacomb site near Rabat.

St. Paul's Catacomb site near Rabat

The long Jewish history includes periods of enrichment as well as slavery, depending on who was ruling Malta at the time.

Points of special Jewish heritage interest on Malta include old landmarks and street signs. In the walled city of Mdina, where the Jews made up almost one third of the population, there is a "Jewish Silk Market" and a "Jews' Gate"; and in Valletta, Malta's capital and European Capital of Culture 2018 there is a sign "Jews Sally Port". Even the Island of Comino, almost uninhabited today but famous for the Blue Lagoon, has Jewish roots. Comino is where the well-known Jewish Mystic Avraham Abulafia lived from 1285 until his death in the 1290s. During this period, he compiled his Sefer ha Ot "Book of the Sign" as well as his last, and perhaps his most intelligible, work, the meditation manual Imrei Shefer "Words of Beauty". Jews from Turkey and other places who were captured by the Hospitaller knights that ruled the island from 1530 till 1798, and were unable to redeem them, established a new Jewish community in Malta. The island became open to unimpaird settlement of Jews after Napoleon conquered it and expelled the knights. In 1798. During the British rule on the island, which began with the expulsion of the French in 1800, there began a limited immigration of Jews to Malta, but the community never numbered more than several dozen and there wasn't always a Rabbi. During WW2 the Jews of Malta were unaffected as the planned invasion of Malta never took place. Some German Jews even found refuge on the island during the thirties.

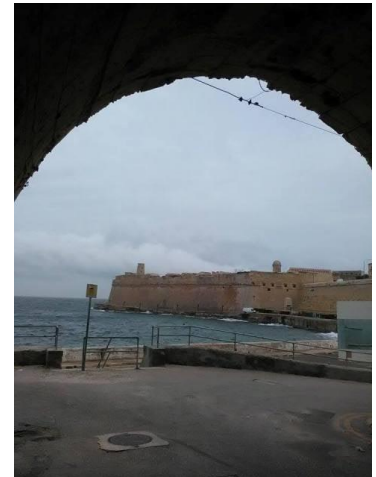
There are three Jewish cemeteries in Malta which can be visited through prior arrangements with the local Jewish Community leader. The stories gleaned from the tombstone inscriptions, are a rich



narrative which includes Jewish soldiers who fought in WWI and were buried in Malta.

Jews Sally Port

In 1979 the old synagogue of the community in the capital city, Valetta, was destroyed, and in 2000 a new synagogue was dedicated. Today there are about 250



Jews under the President Mr. Reuven Ochayon and the Rabbi of the community Rabbi Chaim Shalom Segal.

In 2013 a Chabad Center was established in Malta by Rabbi Chaim Shalom and Mrs. Chaya Mushka Segal. The Chabad Center of Malta runs a variety of activities for the

local Jewish community and tourists including "L'Chaim" the only strictly kosher restaurant in all of Malta. The Chabad

Foundation along with local Jewish community work to strengthen Judaism and make it flourish.

Jews street

The Synagogue The synagogue is located in a residential building at Ta'Xbiex city, The synagogue serves the Jewish community on the Sabbath and holidays.

On the Sabbath there is a morning minyan (prayer service) at 10:00. Address: Florida Mansions Enrico Mizzi Street Ta'Xbiex

Jews Street





FOOD AND AGRICULTURE PROVISION IN MALTA DURING WWII

Anthony Zarb Dimech looks into Malta's formidable and successful effort in feeding its population during the Second World War through the different measures put into place by the civil defence authorities

During the Second World War 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.

The Rationing Office

The Rationing Office ensured that essential commodities were equitably and fairly distributed. The work of this office was implemented through District

Commissioners and Regional Protection Officers. The Maltese Islands were divided into North, West, South East Regions, and into Valletta, Sliema, Marsa, Cottonera Districts and Gozo.

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 (*Pitka*). The Pitka 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:

1. The farmer was to cultivate flat tomatoes in a land measure of 3 tomniet (3 square measurements equivalent to 12, 100 square feet each).
2. 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.
3. 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.

Prices (1943)

Season	Price of Tomatoes (round)	Price of Tomatoes (oblong)
2 May - 12 June	2s/- every 5 rotolos	2s/3d every 5 rotolos
13 June - 2 October	1s/6d every 5 rotolos	1s/9d every 5 rotolos
3 October - 31 November	2s/- every 5 rotolos	2s/3d every 5 rotolos

The agreement was signed on 1 June 1943 covered specifically the 3 months from June to August. These 3 months are the hot summer months just before the first September rainfall. This meant that the farmer had to irrigate the tomatoes and the sooner he cultivated them the better would be their quality.

During wartime Malta, it was hard to irrigate agriculture produce (such as tomatoes, pumpkin, aubergines, green pepper as water had to be transported. There were no pumps as today which could irrigate the crops. In those days the quality of the produce was more genuine and lasted more, even without conserving it in a refrigerator which were not in existence. The produce was smaller but better tasting and more nutritious in value. This was a result of the high quality in purity of the water which passed through the rock formation and filtered.

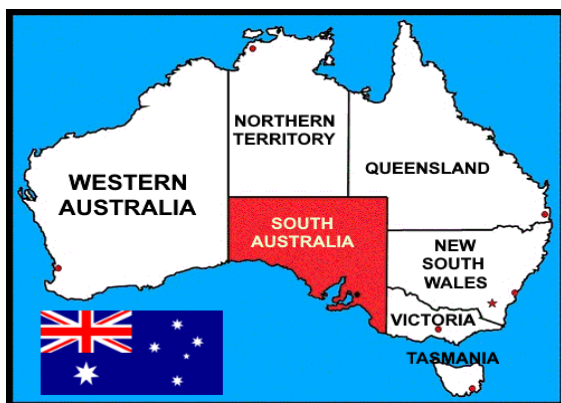
Unfortunately, nowadays water irrigation of produce results in larger fruits and vegetables but the quality and nutritional value in certain instances is questionable as sometimes even drainage water has been used in irrigation. The product even when put in a fridge smells and decays quickly. Interestingly, the old Maltese adage, '*Ahjar kromba baghlja minn mija*', (better a cabbage that grows in dry soil than a hundred that grow in irrigated soil) also hints of that better quality.

The Communal Feeding Department - 'Victory Kitchens'

The low number 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 how nobody starved. A minority pilfered and black-marketed. The Victory Kitchens were discontinued during 1943. The purpose to economise on the use of scarce 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 ended the fierce battle for Malta where one in every 200 of the population lost their lives.



A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE MALTESE COMMUNITY IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

The first Maltese to arrive in Australia was a convict Felice Pace. He arrived in Sydney in 1810 together with a group of prisoners from England and Ireland. Antonio Azzopardi was the first free settler and he set foot in Australia in 1837.

A Maltese Franciscan priest, Fr Ambrose Cassar, migrated to Australia together with a group of 61 labourers and 9 stowaways in 1881. They attempted to settle in Queensland to work on sugar cane farms but their plan was unsuccessful as the conditions were extreme.



Father Ambrose Cassar

We do not know who was the first Maltese to settle in Adelaide, South Australia. However, Francesco De Cesare, a Maltese scholar who travelled across Australia during the 1880s, recorded a very interesting but sad story of Adelaide's first Maltese he encountered. His name was Carmelo Fabri and his occupation was a land surveyor. Decesare

stated in his work *Reports Upon the Unsuitability of the British Colonies in Australia as a Field Maltese Emigration* that he met Fabri who at that time was employed by the government as a draughtsman. Unfortunately, he was retrenched due to economic measures taken by the government. To survive he had to sell his professional instruments and books. His health deteriorated so much that he finished up in Adelaide's Destitute Asylum (now Migration Museum) where he eventually died.

According to the 1911 census there were 248 Maltese in Australia. The number increased considerably in the years to follow. However, in 1912 the Australian Government excluded Maltese immigrants from the assisted passage scheme as a result of trade unions bans on "cheap labour". In the same year the Government legislated the new policy of White Australia called the 1901 Immigration Restriction Act and Maltese people were banned from travelling to Australia. This unfair exclusion of the Maltese made a

mockery of the fact that they Maltese were British subjects and held a British passport.

The bans remained in force until 1948. Yet, between 1911 and 1919 over 2000 Maltese migrated to Australia. They encountered some opposition and most of them had to find work in remote areas such as the Mt Lyell copper mines in Tasmania, at Broken Hill mines and on the Pine Creek to Katherine railway in the Northern Territory. In 1914 there were approximately 385 Maltese working on the Pine Creek to Katherine railway line and another 200 working at Mt Lyell mines. In South Australia significant number of Maltese worked at Port Pirie. Father Fenech, a Maltese Carmelite priest, was assisting new arrivals to settle in other States. He even arranged for them to travel to the Northern Territory.

In December 1913 Joseph Vella from Mellieha, Malta and his friend Paul Abela, decided to emigrate to Australia. They left Malta for Naples, Italy. They continued their journey to Australia aboard the Otway. The two friends were able to find a job as labourers within a week however when they lost their jobs they run out of money and they experienced poverty and hunger. They lived in the bush not very far from Port Adelaide. Every day they walked from the port to the city in search of work. During this period Joe and Paul lived on scraps, grass and tree roots.

Mistaken as German illegal immigrants they were detained by the police. When they were cleared, the police helped them to find work on a small merchant ship. Joe later moved to Broken Hill on the border between South Australia and New South Wales to worked as a miner with Paul's cousin. Joe then moved to Sydney and found a job working on the railway lines. He later settled in Mackay, Queensland.

Frank Schembri, who worked as a canteen manager on British ship when he was in Malta, arrived in Adelaide in 1915. He commenced his working life in Australia at Port Pirie. Later, he moved to Adelaide where he opened a grocery shop at Glanville. Three years later he was able to pay for the passage for his wife and daughter to be with him. In 1922 Frank built an ice-cream factory behind his shop. For twenty years he managed the factory and his business flourished. Then, in 1942 he switched to producing soft drinks. In the late 80s Frank's son was still running the family business in Alice Springs.

The darkest period in the history of Maltese migration in South Australia occurred in the 1920s when they were savagely discriminated against. The Australian Government banned them from being employed with

the Australian railways. The irony is that a large number of them served in World War I. Most of the Maltese suffered hunger and despair in spite of many of them were skilled artisans. Mr Gunn, the South Australian Premier, regarded the Maltese as "uninvited immigrants" and refused to assist them to find employment. So, the Maltese set up tents along the River Torrens near the city and made their living from selling vegetables and fruit. They received help and support from the Maltese Club which was situated in 158 Hindley Street, Adelaide. They formed their own association and called it the Adelaide Unemployed Maltese Organisation and lobbied the Federal and State Governments to lift up the ban. Unfortunately, their efforts were fruitless and the ban stayed. Many of them returned to Malta or went to other States and found work on small farms run by fellow Maltese Australians.

Malta, being a British colony, served as a strategic base for Allied forces during World War II. The Maltese Islands suffered heavy bomb damage to most of its buildings. When the war ended Malta and the Maltese were physically and economically under a heavy stress. Malta and Gozo were overpopulated and the unemployment was very high. Therefore, between 1948 and 1973 a large number of Maltese paid the Australian Government ten pounds, sold up their belongings and took ship for Australia under the Malta-Australia Passage Scheme.

Maltese Associations in South Australia

1. Maltese Community Council of SA
2. Maltese Guild of SA Incorporated
3. *Maltese Language and Folkdance School - dissolved*
4. Maltese Queen of Victories Band Inc.
5. *Returned Soldiers League (Maltese branch) - Dissolved*
6. Maltese Chaplaincy Group
7. *Maltese Philatelic Club – Dissolved*
8. *Enfield City Soccer Club – Dissolved*
9. Maltese Senior Citizens Association of SA Inc
10. St Catherine's Association of SA Inc
11. Society of Christian Doctrine M.U.S.E.U.M – PRECA COMMUNITY.
12. *Blue Grotto Maltese Program on 5PBAfm (Saturday 10 - 11.30 am)- Dissolved*



Mr & Mrs Camenzuli and their daughters on their arrival in Adelaide in 1948

The range of social background of migrants was wide. So were their skills and ages. Some were married with children, but many were single. The lucky ones had relatives already in Australia, but the majority did not. The Maltese left home not because of political or religious oppression; they had one idea in common - to build a better future for their children and for themselves.

Most Maltese have prospered and have no regrets; but there were those who wish they have never left Malta. Some of them went back and many returned to Australia again, unable to settle in either country. Today nearly every family in Malta has an immediate relative living in this continent.

STATISTICS

Approximately, 1500 Maltese settled in South Australia between 1947 and 1961 and by 1966 there were 2258 Maltese South Australians. Since then the number of Maltese who settled in South Australia was minimal. The 1981 Census recorded 2183 Maltese South Australian. The 1986 Census recorded 2145 Maltese South Australian. 4171 South Australians stated they were of Maltese descent. 1991 Census recorded 2 088 Maltese South Australians. 3 913 South Australians stated that their mother was born in Malta and 4 201 persons stated their father was born in Malta. Census 2021 ... 1300



Fr. Giles Ferriggi OFM
First Parish Priest
at Lockleys SA

13. Maltese Community Radio on 5EBIfm.

The Maltese Franciscan priests of Lockleys looked after the spiritual needs of the Maltese Community of South Australia since 1948. The last Chaplain, Fr. Gabriel Micallef OPFM returned to Malta 3 years ago.

At this stage the Maltese community has no Chaplain to look after them

**LET'S KEEP THE HISTORY OF
MALTESE EMIGRATION ALIVE**



Prison in Fort Saint Angelo

The guva, or oubliette, was chiseled out of stone underneath the fort and could only be accessed through a trapdoor in its ceiling. The oval-shaped prison is situated opposite the Chapel of Nativity, and was originally a water cistern. Soon, however, errant knights were locked up there to languish as punishment for various crimes. Shelves and niches were carved into the walls to hold candles or lamps.

One of the most notable prisoners who served some time in the guva was the infamous artist Caravaggio, who was confined there in the early 17th century before he escaped the fort and the island.

Scratched on the walls of this grim and often unnoticed oubliette are various designs and inscriptions, dating back to as early as 1532, almost immediately after the fort's construction. A lot of the graffiti, which is written in different European languages including Latin, reflects the despair of those holed up in the underbelly of the vast fort.

A later inscription by a knight who was accused of stealing silver from the church and melting it down, reads:

"John James Sandilands // Imprisoned in this living grave // Where evil triumphs over good // To the satisfaction of my enemies // So much for friendship."

Sandilands was later executed for his crime.

Another prominent inscription features the shield of a French knight, whose family escutcheon is a swan beneath a chevron, with a right and left star respectively and a rose. The names of Italian knights Leonardv, Brvnv, and Annibale Parucci are still seen, with the year 1573 carved underneath the inscriptions from the Bible.

The guva was most likely a temporary prison, holding convicts for brief periods. Although the oubliette is not accessible, there is a monitor which shows the 360 degree interior, as well as photographs of the graffiti and its history.

Il-Birgu, Malta

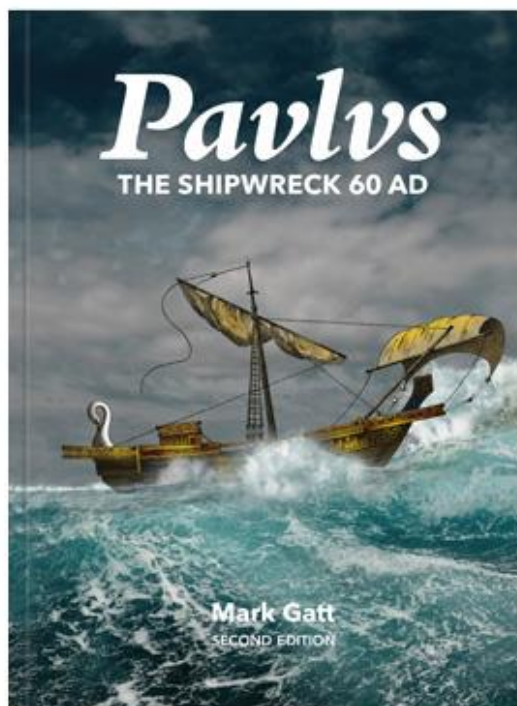
This almost-forgotten underground dungeon housed several convicts over the years, including Caravaggio.

ONE OF MALTA'S MOST well-known landmarks, Fort Saint Angelo, was fortified in 1530, when the Order of Saint John came to the island. The original structure, which was crumbling, was rebuilt and became the residence of the head of the Catholic military order, as well as the organization's headquarters.



The massive fort has several rooms that reflect its crucial role in Maltese history, especially during the Great Siege, which took place a few decades after its construction. But beneath the fort itself lies a prison which was greatly feared and housed many high-ranking offenders within the order. It was rediscovered by the British in 1913.

DEAR FRIEND
IF YOU HAVE AN INTERESTING STORY TO TELL SHARE IT WITH YOUR
MALTESE FRIENDS ALL OVER THE WORLD. WE WOULD LIKE
TO READ IT ON THIS JOURNAL.

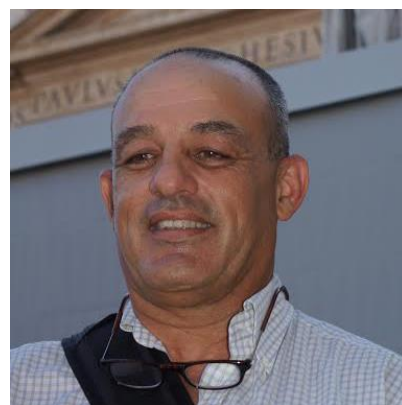


ABOUT THE BOOK

This book, narrating the discovery of an ancient lead anchor stock embossed with the names of the Egyptian gods ISIS and SARAPI(S) in the seabed off Salina Bay on a Sunday morning in April, 2005, is also the story of the search for the real site of St Paul's shipwreck in Malta. In the process the author surprises us with a novelistic but accurate account of the storm, shipwreck and landing of St Paul in Malta, as set out in chapters 27 and 28 of the Acts of the Apostles.

But Mark Gatt's own investigations on the site of Apostle Paul's shipwreck is also his own quest for the spiritual message of salvation in St Paul's life and teaching embodied in the real 'anchor' of Christ Jesus.

Paul Guillaumier - Biblical scholar



The Author - MARK GATT

Mark is a man on a mission. His PAVLVS The Shipwreck 60 AD is the result of a wondrous underwater discovery while scuba diving just off Qawra Point – the remains of a huge Roman-period lead anchor stock embossed with the names of the Egyptian gods ISIS and SARAPI(S). He has been scuba

diving for the past 30 years and has been an active volunteer in Civil Protection for the same number of years. For most of this time, Mark was commanding and coordinating a group of rescue divers and was involved in many underwater search and recovery operations for missing persons at sea.



Order the book & DVD now.

Allied Publications (2017) | ISBN: 978-99909-3-221-8

Postage USA €12.50, Australia €15.00, U.K. & E.U.
€9.50

PAVLVS The Shipwreck 60 A.D.

www.stpaulshipwreck.com Email: mrk.gatt@gmail.com

Mobile: +356 79582482 Tel.: +356 21580024

Add.: 'L-Ankra' 32 Triq il-Konventwali Qawra SPB 1133 Malta

Keeping Maltese Communities Connected

A centuries-old forgotten underworld lies beneath Valletta Malta

Entrance to the Lascaris War Rooms, St. James Ditch in Valletta, Malta

Located Between North Africa, Europe, and the Middle East, with the deepest port in the Mediterranean Sea, Malta's capital,



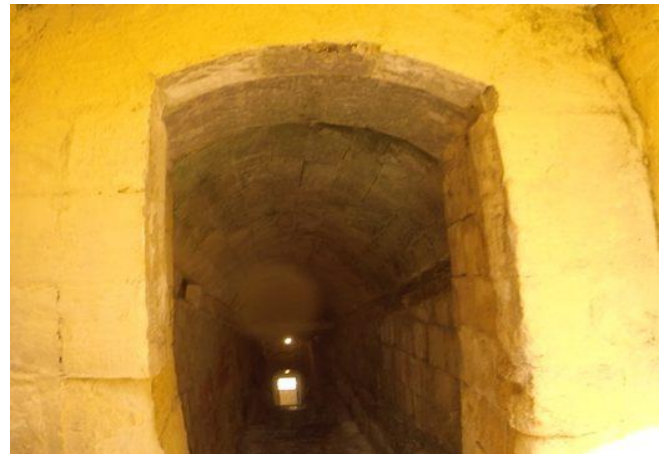
Valletta, has long been a strategic fortress. And while the city's walls protected it from the outside, a network of tunnels underneath the city have also provided protection for centuries.

Malta was part of the Kingdom of Sicily until 1530, when Holy Roman Emperor Charles V leased the archipelago to the Knights of the Hospital of St. John. Today, we know them as the Knights of Malta. At the time, the price per year for the country was a single falcon.

The first recorded instance of the tunnels was

OUR JOURNAL REACHES OVER 10 000 READERS WORLDWIDE

during the Great Siege of Malta in 1565. The Ottoman Empire, recognizing the Malta's importance, attacked the island. As part of their defense, the Knights of Malta dug tunnels underneath the area that would later become the capital city's place to store water and food. It was even said that during the siege, Ottoman troops and the Knights of Malta both dug tunnels in their battle for the fort, leading to subterranean clashes when one side would break through into the



The tunnels underneath Valletta were not purely defensive. Archaeologists say that some are the remnants of a sewer system that was more advanced than many in Europe at the time.

Though the Knights of Malta were dispelled from the island by Napoleon in 1798, Valletta's tunnels continued to be integral to the geography of the city, and during World War II, they were the difference between life and death for many locals. As a British colony at the time, Malta was brutally bombed by the Axis Powers in an attempt to take the island and solidify their hold on the North African front. In the course of two years, Axis forces flew more than 3,000 bomb raids over the island, dropping thousands of explosives as they passed. The inhabitants of Valletta took shelter in the city's secret tunnels. City residents even dug new tunnels in their homes or businesses where they hid with supplies from the constant air attacks.

But Malta held, the key to Allied defense of the Mediterranean.

After the war, Valletta's tunnels became dormant, until 2009, when a series of tunnels beneath the city was discovered during an archaeological survey to build a new parking garage. Today, some of the tunnels are being restored for public access, but many more still lie quiet and undisturbed beneath the city.

OUR JOURNAL REACHES OVER 10 000 READERS WORLDWIDE



The Girl with a Pearl Earring

Book reveals the extent of the influence of the Catholic church on the artist

The Johannes Vermeer's painting 'Girl with a Pearl Earring' at the Mauritshuis museum. Photo: Lex Van Lieshout/ANP/AFP

Dutch master Johannes Vermeer's photo-like paintings were likely inspired by a 17th-century pinhole camera that was first introduced to him by Jesuit priests, a new biography said on Friday.

The book also reveals for the first time the extent of the influence of the Catholic church on Vermeer (1632-1675), who was born Protestant but later converted, Amsterdam's Rijksmuseum said.

The museum will in February stage the biggest-ever exhibition by the Dutch Golden Age painter, whose works such as *Girl with a Pearl Earring* are world famous but about whose life little is known. His home in Delft was next to a Jesuit mission with a hidden church where he "quite possibly first came into contact with the Jesuits in connection with the camera obscura", says the biography by Gregor Weber, the Rijksmuseum's fine arts department head.

Used in various forms for thousands of years, the "camera obscura" involves a darkened room or box into which the outside image is projected through a small hole or lens.

"Lighting effects which are particular to the camera can also be found in Vermeer's paintings, leaving little room for doubt that the artist drew inspiration from the device," the museum said.

Speculation has swirled for years that Vermeer experimented with a camera obscura for his works, which are renowned for their use of light and shade. The Jesuits "regarded the camera obscura as a tool for the observation of God's divine light" and Weber had discovered a drawing by the priest living next door to Vermeer that shows its effects, the Rijksmuseum said.



The characteristic effect produced by the device, with the centre in focus but other areas blurred, is "precisely what Vermeer achieves" in his painting *The Lacemaker*, which hangs in the Louvre in Paris, it added. Although Vermeer was baptised in the Reformed Church, he likely converted to Catholicism just before marrying Catharina Bolnes in 1653.

Public Catholic worship was outlawed in the late 16th century by the Calvinist Dutch, but around a third of the population remained faithful to the Vatican.

Vermeer's fame has soared in recent years but he died in relative obscurity, leaving his wife and children in debt.

The Vermeer exhibition opens in the Rijksmuseum on February 10, bringing together 28 of the master painter's works under one roof.



Skola Maltija Mackay - Maltese Language Classes will begin Wednesday 1st February 2023, 6pm at Ooralea. If you are interested in learning Maltese and want to give it a go please contact me for more information. veronica.gauci@bigpond.com or 0418108464.

MACKAY MALTESE CLUB - QUEENSLAND, AUSTRALIA

Recovering the stolen Caravaggio in 1987

Former President Ugo Mifsud Bonnici was very much involved in the 1987 recovery of a stolen Caravaggio painting. He said so in his autobiography 'Konvinzjoni u Esperjenza.' (Conviction and Experience) "The painting of St Jerome writing, by Michelangelo Merisi de Caravaggio, was stolen in December 1984, more than two years before I became Minister. Mintoff had had the painting restored some decades earlier and it was later transferred to the St John's Co-Cathedral



Museum. Before, it used to hang in the Cathedral." Dr Mifsud Bonnici, who served as PN Minister for seven years and was President of the Republic between 1994 and 1999, was visiting a number of museums in 1987, when he was given information that led to the eventual recovery of the painting.

"When I visited the Arts Museum I was approached by the director, Fr Marius Zerafa, who told me that he had some confidential information. He said he had been receiving phone calls from the people who stole the painting and that they were demanding LM250,000 (€582,342) as ransom from the government." The robbers threatened that if the sum was not paid, the painting would be torched and the priest would pay dearly.

The Fr. Zerafa also told Dr Mifsud Bonnici that his cousin, former Labour Prime Minister Karmenu Mifsud Bonnici, knew about the phone calls. "I visited Karmenu, who was in hospital at the time, and he told me that he had authorised the phone company to tap the calls but he had not called in the police. Karmenu said he had told Fr. Zerafa that the government could not suddenly come up with the money to pay and we needed more time."



[Father Marius Zerafa](#) was the director of museums in Malta, and he managed to establish a channel of communication with the thieves and set off on a quest to recover the priceless painting. Despite not having the money to pay their ransom, he risked everything, putting his life on the line for the sake of a masterpiece.

By chance, Dr Mifsud Bonnici received a visit from Alfred Calleja, an "excellent investigator" who had retired from the police a few years earlier but was re-joining the force. "I told Father Zerafa to help Mr Calleja in any way he asked. They agreed that Zerafa would keep contact with the robbers and lead them to believe that the ransom would be paid. In the meantime, the Armed Forces were instructed to look out for certain movements from their helicopters." Eventually, Father Zerafa and the robbers agreed on a meeting place where the painting would be given back in exchange for the ransom. "We were prepared, and they walked right into our trap. The robbers were arrested, and the Caravaggio was safely recovered. It was a moment of triumph."

The painting was later sent to Rome for restoration but Dr Mifsud Bonnici was to have an altercation with the Italian minister responsible for the works, who said that the restoration had begun when it had not. "I was not in the habit of lying to Parliament for I had told his fellow MPs that the painting was being restored." Finally, Dr Mifsud Bonnici was able to inform Parliament about the successful operation. "When I told Parliament that my cousin, Karmenu had helped me, Mintoff was pleased that I had not decided to bask in the glory alone."

Fr Marius Zerafa has passed away at the age of 93. In October 2022. He was also the nephew of former Prime Minister Paul Boffa.



Maltese Community Council of Victoria
presents a
musicworx
production

Wenzu u Rozi
Praspura wara l-oħra

New Shows added due to popular demand

Based on the book by George Zammit
Adapted for stage & directed by Simone Cremona

Saturday 18 February 2023 6:00pm
Sunday 19 February 2023 1:00pm | 4:00pm | 7:00pm
(Run time 1 hr 15 min) **SOLD OUT** **SOLD OUT**

The Bowery Theatre | St Albans, VIC
Tickets: www.creativebrimbank.com.au/wenzu-u-rozi

In collaboration with:

Creative Brimbank
Brimbank City Council
BOWERY
midseaBOOKS
MMG CONCERT BAND

AN IVITATION- Maltese in Melbourne **WENZU U ROZI**

PRASPURA WAR A L-OĦRA

An activity of the **Maltese Community Council of Victoria - Australia**

Wenzu enjoys a drink (or six!) at the local tavern, catching up on the news and spending time with his mates after a hard day's work. Meanwhile, his wife Rozi is at home, attending to the daily chores. Will the wine wash away Wenzu's cares or add to them on his return home?

Wenzu u Rozi - praspura wara l-oħra (antics galore) is an original production based on the well-loved short stories of George Zammit (1976, midsea books). It is presented in the style of a traditional Maltese "teatrin" (a comic theatrical play). Join us on the 18th or 19th February 2023 to meet our lead characters, a loving yet frequently bickering elderly couple who live in a remote Maltese village together with their neighbours and friends. Set in the early 1920s, this light-hearted comedy reminds us of the bitter-sweet nostalgia of days gone by. Genre: Comedy

Language: Maltese with periodic English narrations Suitable for: All ages Run time: 1 hour 15 minutes
This show has been made possible by funding from the Brimbank City Council, the support of the MCCV and dedication of our cast members and director Simone Cremona (musicworx). **AT THE BOWERY THEATRE, ST. ALBANS VICTORIA, AUSTRALIA DATES – SATURDAY AND SUNDAY 18 and 19 February 2023**

Tickets: <https://creativebrimbank.com.au/wenzu-u-rozi>

More info: <https://fb.me/e/2knvVOPsC>

Photo - Lovinmalta.com



Mount Kilimanjaro
CONGRATULATIONS
YOU ARE NOW AT
KILIMANJARO PEAK TANZANIA 5895M/19341FT AMSL
WORLD'S HIGHEST POINT
WORLD'S HIGHEST FREE-STANDING MOUNTAIN

Mosta Labour MP Alex Muscat has successfully summited Mount Kilimanjaro, the highest peak in the African continent in aid of Puttinu Cares

Read the
full article
in the
popular
magazine
www.lovinmalta.com

100,000th birth at Holy Family Hospital in Bethlehem



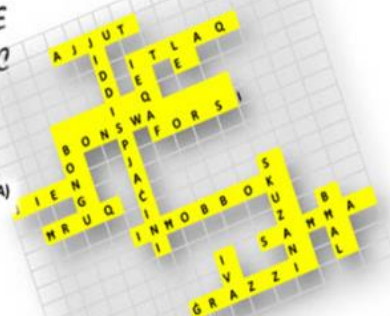
One of the Order of Malta's most famous institution, The Holy Family Hospital in Bethlehem, just passed an important milestone – the birth of the 100,000th child since the Order has been managing the health facility. On Epiphany Day, baby girl Muhammad was delivered into the embrace of her parents.

Since 1990, more than 4,600 children have been born here every year, assisted by a staff of 200 including doctors, nurses and midwives. The hospital, located a few steps from the Church of the Nativity, is the only one in the area to have a neonatal intensive care unit for babies of less than 24 weeks' gestation. In addition to a pharmacy, a laboratory and a training centre, the hospital runs the Well Women clinic for menopausal women and the Mobile Medical Unit that assists remote communities and isolated villages in the desert surrounding Bethlehem. The Order of Malta is proud of its doctors and all the staff at Bethlehem Hospital for this historic achievement.



FEDERATION OF MALTESE LANGUAGE SCHOOLS INC
FEDERAZZJONI TA' L-ISKEJJEL TAL- MALTI INC. (AWSTRALJA)
Edwidge Borg - FLMS President

LEARN THE MALTESE LANGUAGE AND CULTURE IN AUSTRALIA



Registration for the 2023 Maltese Language classes is now open

ACT:

Maltese Australian Association of Canberra and Queanbeyan

Maltese Language classes: johnvass54@gmail.com

MACKAY:

MacKay Maltese Language classes: veronica.gauci@bigpond.com

NSW:

Maltese Language School of NSW: mle@mccnsw.org.au

Skola Maltija Sydney: skolamaltijasdney@yahoo.com.au

Dwejret il-Malti – Blacktown: dwejretilmalti@gmail.com

VIC:

Online Adult Maltese Language Classes MCCV

<https://mccv.org.au/services/language/>

Prep to Year 10 face to face Saturday Maltese Language classes MCCV
Caroline Springs George Cross FC Function Room 46 City Vista Ct,
Plumpton, VIC 3335 <https://mccv.org.au/services/language/>

FEDERATION OF MALTESE LANGUAGE CLASSES:

For other information please contact: malteselanguageschools@yahoo.com

THE MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER

Published in Adelaide, Australia since 2013
free, bilingual and non-political
The editor and team produce this journal mainly for Maltese living abroad.



OUR AIM IS TO INFORM,
SHARE, CONNECT
AND EMPOWER MALTESE
LIVING AROUND THE WORLD

To contact us or/and send
a donation email us
maltesejournal@gmail.com
Printed 100% in Australia



WORLD WAR 2 STRUCTURES KNOWN AS 'PILLBOXES' DUE TO THEIR SHAPE SCATTERED AROUND MALTA

Pillboxes are small fortified structures constructed as part of British anti-invasion

preparations during the second world war. They normally feature slits through which soldiers could observe goings-on or fire weapons.

If you walk around the island especially in countryside you will come across these uncharted pillboxes which, for some strange reason, most people do not even know exist.

Unfortunately, this amazing interesting section of Malta's WW2 history has been abandoned.

These defences

were strategically placed in vulnerable areas with tiers of interlocking defensive support, starting with the posts directly on the shore and a second line to create defence in depth.

Pillboxes are, however, scattered all over the island, from the main entrance to Valletta to a machine gun post hidden in the Notre Dame gate on the Cottonera lines. Most of them are accessible to the public. There are all types and styles of pillboxes. They range from the pre-war ones (circa 1935-1939), which were built due to the Abyssinia Crisis when Fascist Italy was casting its eyes on Malta, to the standard box types that were mass produced in the peak of the war years.

"The early ones are generally very well constructed, mostly unique in style, beautifully situated and excellently camouflaged to fit in with the local terrain. Detailing inside is a joy to see those located on private property or cultivated land should be respected.



**A waterfront beach post near Smart City in Kalkara.
Photos: Andrew Galea**



**A standard rectangular pillbox in the
north of Malta.**



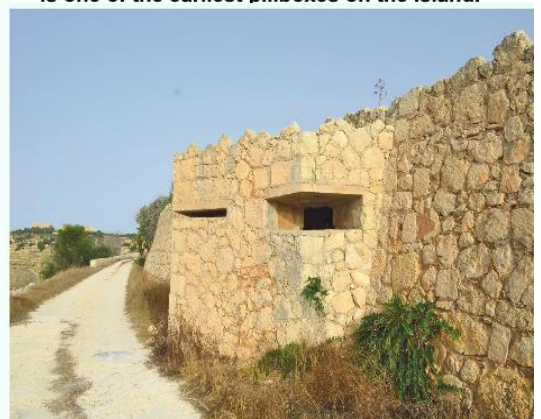
**Some pillboxes are well camouflaged like this one
close to the Red Tower in Mellieha.**



**This structure in Manikata, dating circa 1935,
is one of the earliest pillboxes on the island.**



**A waterfront pillbox built in front of the Sirens
Aquatic Sports Club in St Paul's Bay.**



**A pillbox on the outer wall of Fort Campbell,
built by the British circa 1937 in Mellieha.**



DEATH OF CARDINAL GEORGE PELL

11 January, 2023.

It was on Wednesday morning 11 January, 2023 when I read about the death of His Eminence Cardinal George Pell. It happened that I was a walking distance from St. Patrick's Cathedral in Melbourne when I saw the post on Facebook by the Most Rev. Archbishop's Peter Comensoli.

Then Dame Mary and I went to the Cathedral and we were the first to say a prayer for the soul of Cardinal Pell in front of a makeshift memorial.

The Confraternity of the Knights of St. Peter & St. Paul, lost a friend in Cardinal George Pell, he was the first Catholic leader to approve the Confraternity, while he was Archbishop of Melbourne.

Cardinal George Pell, the seventh Archbishop of Melbourne, died from heart complications following hip surgery in Rome, Italy.

George Pell AC was an Australian cardinal of the Catholic Church. He served as the inaugural prefect of the Secretariat for the Economy between 2014 and 2019, and was a member of the Council of Cardinal Advisers between 2013 and 2018. Ordained a priest in 1966, bishop of Melbourne in 1987, Archbishop of Melbourne (1996–2001). He was made a Cardinal in 2003.

Cardinal Pell led the local Church of Melbourne from 1996 to 2001 with strong leadership in the Catholic faith and with good governance, before being transferred to Sydney and then to Rome.

Cardinal Pell was a very influential figure in Rome and respected by many around the world.

He suffered at the end of his life. He was a victim anti-Catholic sentiment in Australian society, which showed all its ugliness.

Cardinal Pell was a Humble, faithful, orthodox Shepherd who truly was a martyr. May eternal light shine upon him, and may he now rest in peace and rise to glory in the Lord.

Read more: **Archbishop Coleridge reflects on the extraordinary life of Cardinal Pell**

<https://catholicleader.com.au/news/qld/archbishop-coleridge-reflects-on-the-extraordinary-life-of-cardinal-pell/> Yours in Christ.

Chevalier Peter Paul Portelli

Grand Master - Confraternity of the Knights of St. Peter & St. Paul.

Seat in Melbourne. Vic. Australia.



Ġbejna is a small cheeselet produced from sheep or goat milk, rennet, and salt. The cheese can be prepared in numerous ways – salted, peppered, pickled, covered in herbs, or plain. It is believed that Ġbejna was originally prepared with seawater instead of rennet as a curdling agent. Nowadays, the cheese is a staple of Maltese cuisine – it can be used in a traditional Maltese soup called *soppa tal-armila*, served with local sourdough bread for breakfast, or paired with dips and spreads in Maltese appetizer platters. Many Maltese restaurants have recently employed the practice of using this cheese instead of ricotta in the preparation of a traditional filled pastry known as *qassat*.



The Church of St Augustine in Gozo

is a [Roman Catholic](#) church building in [Victoria, Gozo, Malta](#), situated in St Augustine's Square. The church is part of the [Augustinian monastery](#) situated on its left side.

The order of St Augustine is the oldest religious order in [Gozo](#). Probably the Augustinian order in [Gozo](#) was the first such order to establish permanent residence in [Malta](#). Before establishing themselves in [Victoria](#) the order lived in [Xaghra](#) near a small church dedicated to Our Lady of the Seven Joys. The earliest mention of the Victoria monastery and church date to 1435 but some researchers claim that the monastery already existed in 1260. In October 1652 [Pope Innocent X](#) ordered the monastery and church to be closed but they were reopened after 4 months through the

intervention of Grand Master [Giovanni Paolo Lascaris](#).

Enlargement In the 17th century the church was rebuilt and the monastery enlarged. The church was finished sometime between 1662 till 1666. The church was consecrated by the Bishop of Malta, [Vincenzo Labini](#) on May 12, 1782. The works on the monastery were finished by 1717.

Works of art The main attraction of this church is the titular altar piece depicting [Augustine of Hippo](#), [John the Baptist](#) and [William I, Duke of Aquitaine](#). It was painted by [Mattia Preti](#) in 1694 and paid by Giovanni Gurgion. In 1836 the corpse of St. Dionisia was brought from [Rome](#) and placed beneath the third lateral altar. The icon of the Blessed Virgin of Good Counsel on the main altar was brought from Rome in 1765. In 2007 some thieves stole a number of priceless ornaments that adorned the image.

Restawr f'Misraħ Sant Wistin Victoria

Jikteb il-KavJoe M Attard minn Ghawdex

Xi żmien ilu kont ktibt dwar il-ħtieġa ta' restawr fuq l-erba' statwi li nsibu fuq iz-zuntier tal- Knisja tal-Patrijiet Agostinjani Victoria. Dawn il-jiem mort nara l-Wirja ta' Presepji li kien hemm fil-kurituri tal-Kunvent u sibt li dawn l-erba' statwi issa regħhu lura għall-istat tajjeb li kienu fih wara xogħol ta' restawr minn Rudolph Cauchi taħt is-supervizjoni tal-Perit Edward Xerri, grazzi għall-finanzjarjament mill-Eco-Gozo, A Better Gozo li nsibu fi ħdan il-Ministeru għal Ghawdex. Mhux bogħod minn hawn insibu l-istatwa qadima ta' San Gorg tal- Ħaġar li nifhem issa jmiss li jsirilha wkoll xi restawr kif turi tabella li hemm biswitha.

Ir-Rabat tagħna huwa mzejjen b'għadd ta' statwi mat-toroq tagħna u sewwa li dawn nibzġhu għalihom. Ċert li l-Kunsill Lokali tagħna jzomm għajnejh miftuħa beraħ fuq dawn l-opri antiki biex iż-żmien ma jkomplix jagħmel ħerba minnhom. Mill-ġdid Grazzi u Prosit lill- Kunsill tal-Belt Victoria.

WE THANK ALL OUR MANY READERS IN SYDNEY, MELBOURNE AND ADELAIDE AS WELL AS IN EU, UNITED KINGDOM , USA, CANADA, MALTA AND GOZO FOR YOUR SUPPORT AND LOVE FOR THE JOURNAL