



Maltese Newsletter

Journal of Maltese Living Abroad

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A group of boys leaving Malta for Australia in the 1950s

MALTA'S CHILD MIGRANTS ERA

AN UNFORTUNATE CHAPTER IN THE HISTORY OF MALTESE EMIGRATION

ANDRÉ RIEU
AND HIS JOHANN STRAUSS ORCHESTRA



FLORIANA MALTA

SEPTEMBER 1 & 2, 2023
THE GRANARIES



Carnival in Malta - 2023

Photo: Jonathan Borg

FOR THE SAKE OF FUTURE GENERATIONS

Preserve the History of Maltese Emigration



THE MALTESE CONNECTION

THE FORGOTTEN CHILDREN OF MALTA



lewisblayse

Malta was a source of “child migrants” to Australia. Most attention has been placed on the child migrants from the U.K., largely because there were 7,000 from the U.K. and about 300 from Malta.

In both cases, children were promised a good life in Catholic Church Children’s Homes in Australia. The reality, of course, was very different, with many suffering all of the known forms of abuse at the hands of their supposed “carers”.

Maltese boys were placed in Castledare Junior Orphanage, Clontarf Boys’ Town, St Joseph’s Trade and Farm School, Bindoon, and in St Mary’s Agricultural

School, Tardun. Previous postings have covered some of the abuses at these Christian Brotherhood institutions.

About 50 girls were sent out to Western Australia and were placed in the St. Joseph Girls’ Orphanage, Subiaco and Nazareth House, Geraldton. Nazareth House was run by the Sisters of Nazareth (see previous posting) who were responsible for abuses at other institutions they ran in Australia. It closed in 1977 and is now a

residential aged-care facility. St. Joseph’s was founded by the Spanish Benedictine Monks and closed in 1974. It catered for girls from six to sixteen years of age. While significant information exists about abuses suffered by the boys from Malta, not much is available concerning the girls.

The first group of 27 boys, on assisted passage, left Valetta Grand Harbour on March 26, 1950, for Freemantle in Western Australia, aboard the “Ocean Triumph”. A memorial plaque and sculpture (see photo) have been placed on the site (activists had wanted a list of names included, but this did not happen). The plaque reads:

CHILDS MIGRANTS’ MEMORIAL

Inaugurated by
the Hon. Lawrence Gonzi
Prime Minister
2 March 2008



The late Monsignor Philip Calleja, who ran the Maltese Church’s Emigrants’

Commission for many years, wrote a paper about Maltese child migrants in 2008. It was read out during the unveiling of the child migrants’ monument at the Valletta Waterfront. Following on Prime Minister Gonzi’s 2008 apology, Archbishop Paul Cremona apologized, in 2010, for the Maltese Church’s involvement in the child migration scheme. The Australian Government has also apologized.

In 2011, three former Maltese child migrants began legal action against the Christian Brotherhood for sexual and physical abuses. In Malta, the issue appears to remain contentious, particularly with regard to the role of former Emigration Minister, Dr Cachia Zammit.

One former child migrant, Raphael Ellul, returned to Malta to reconnect with his past, but also to close a traumatic chapter in his life when, as a 10 year old child, he endured physical and sexual abuse at the hands of the Christian Brothers in Australia, in their Tardun and Castledare facilities (see yesterday’s posting). “Ray”, as he became known, was born in 1960 in Cospicua.

Dr Patrick Howard, who worked with stress-disordered Vietnam veterans and with children in institutions run by the Christian Brothers, states that the six years at Tardun’s Agriculture Farm left Ray with “chronic depressed mood, low self-esteem and a feeling of hopelessness.”

In Tardun, he was forbidden to speak the Maltese language with other Maltese residents and was subjected to beatings whenever he was heard speaking it. During this period, he received no specific English language



The migrant children making their beds in a dormitory

instructions, which inhibited his chances to apply for non-manual jobs later on in his life. Lack of English was a further protection for the Brothers from having victims alert community members to the abuses.

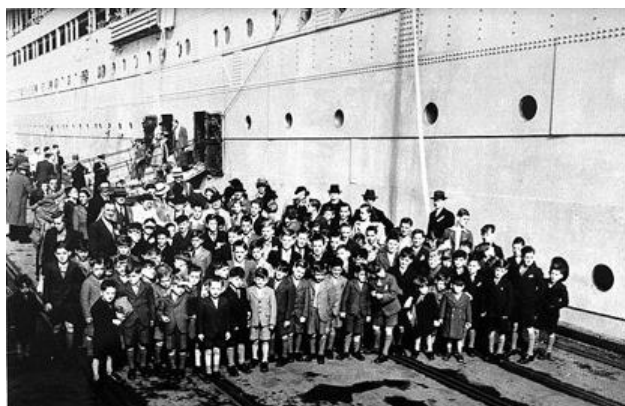
A few of the Maltese child migrants fared better in their new country, particularly those who were later re-united with family who migrated to Australia as part of the large migration scheme from war-torn Europe.

One of these was the late Professor David Plowman who came out at the age of ten, followed three months later by a brother. Eight years after their arrival, Plowman and his brother sponsored their mother and younger brother, who joined the

two brothers in Australia as normal migrants. To the Western Australian government's frustration, half of the Maltese child migrants were reunited with their families within two years, with most choosing to move interstate.

In 1993, Professor Plowman, who is now deceased became Director of the Graduate School of Management at The University of Western Australia. "I have been lucky," he has said. "Of those who were at Tardun at my time, I'm the only one that I know of with a university education."

In the 1990s, the Maltese Professional and Business Association set up the Child Migrants of Malta organisation to help the former child migrants, with Professor Plowman as chairman. He has written an extensive account of the Malta child migrant scheme for a Maltese history journal. For these activities he was awarded the Queen's Birthday honour of Medal of the Order of Australia.



Migrant Children arriving in Australia



The Statue at Fremantle

MEMORIAL TO THE MIGRANT CHILDREN (Graeme Saunders)

Between 1947 and 1953 over 3200 children migrated to Australia under approved schemes. About 300 of them were Maltese while the remainder came from the United Kingdom. Other European countries were

The sculpture commemorates the contribution made by British and Maltese girls and boys who left their country to find a new life in Western Australia.

The life-size bronze statue of a young boy and girl carrying all their worldly possessions in a small suitcase apiece serves as a perpetual reminder of the experiences of nearly 3,000 unaccompanied children who were shipped to Western Australia from Britain and Malta over a period spanning more than 50 years. The memorial to honour the memory, and the contribution to Western Australian society and history, of former child migrants was launched on Human Rights Day (10 December) 2004 by the West Australian Minister for Community Development, the Honourable Sheila McHale.

asked if they would like to participate in the child migration scheme but declined. Over 30 homes were approved by the Commonwealth for the housing of child migrants. Most of these were run by voluntary and religious organisations.

It was not government policy to provide homes specifically for migrant children; however, the government did contribute towards the capital expenditure incurred by these organisations in setting up suitable homes. Both the Commonwealth and State governments contributed towards running costs. The governments of the United Kingdom and Malta also paid maintenance for their children who had emigrated to approved institutions in Australia.

From the Archives: Australia's unfair dictation test

The Dictation Test applied to all non-European people entering Australia between 1901 and 1958. The applicant was required to write out 50 words in any European language including Dutch, Estonian or Scottish Gaelic dictated by an immigration officer. A person who failed the test was deemed a prohibited immigrant and deported. It could be given to people on arrival in Australia which assessed their English language skills, but sometimes the test would be given in other words, this was a test you could not pass if the Immigration officers didn't want you to. We hear about how the test was used for political, moral and racial purposes.

End of Dictation Test from Today - June 1, 1959



In 1934 Egon Kisch, journalist and communist, in defiance of the migration authorities, jumped six metres from his ship onto Station Pier at Port Melbourne, breaking his leg. He later failed the dictation test.

CANBERRA, Sunday – The old and “now discredited device of the dictation test” will disappear from tomorrow as a means of excluding unwanted persons from Australia.

The Acting Minister for Immigration (Mr. Osborne) said this today when he announced that the new migration act would come into operation tomorrow.

The act marked the end of an era as far as immigration law was concerned, he said.

“On those relatively infrequent occasions when someone reaches our shores who cannot be permitted to enter, the traveller will simply be told he cannot land because he has been refused an entry permit,” he added.

ENTRY PERMITS

Mr. Osborne said that migrants reaching Australia tomorrow would receive the first “entry permits” provided under the new Migration Act which was passed by Parliament last year.

Advertisement

He said the entry permits would consist of a stamped endorsement in the migrants passport reading “Permitted to enter Australia.”

The stamp would include the heading “Department of Immigration” and the name of the port of entry.

Novel Dictation Test

As a dictation test, Jorgen Carl Krumbok, 27 years, a Dane, who described himself as a dairy expert, was requested by Commonwealth officers to write in the Roumanian language the first three verses of the first chapter according to St. Luke. He failed, and a charge of being a prohibited immigrant was preferred against him. Krumbok, who appeared at the City Court yesterday before Mr. McLean, P.M., pleaded guilty. Asked if he had anything to say, he replied that “he would like to get out as soon as possible.” He told the bench that although he failed in the dictation test, he could speak six languages. It was stated in evidence that defendant had arrived in Melbourne by the Maloja.

Mr. Osborne said this endorsement would prevent the migrant from becoming a “prohibited immigrant” upon landing in Australia.

He added that the new regulations had just been gazetted and completely revised instructions on new simplified procedures generally had been sent to all officers.

The department was confident that the transition from the old to the new law would be accomplished smoothly.

THE EXCLUSION CASE OF GIUSEPPE MIFSUD

It is possible to identify some of the excluded Maltese. The individual excluded by the dictation test in 1926, for instance, was almost certainly Guisepppe Mifsud, whose case was reported in the daily press. Mifsud and his English wife and young daughter were detained on board the Moreton Bay at each Australian port until their final destination, Sydney, when they were deported on the Esperance Bay. According to press reports, Mifsud had “failed the migrants’ test”; a test which had been applied because of his alleged Communist sympathies. Press reports indicated that, two days out from Fremantle, Mifsud had refused to stand for the playing of the National Anthem at the conclusion of a concert on board the ship. Reports are not entirely clear, but it seems that a group of young men started to sing the



'Red Flag'. Officers on the Moreton Bay had reported that Mifsud was spreading Bolshevik propaganda among the younger migrants.

Mifsud was angered by the prohibition and denied that he had attempted to spread Communist doctrines. A veteran of the first world war who had served in the British Army Services Corps as a baker and, on being demobilised in 1919, in the Royal Navy as a cook, Mifsud possessed a certificate of discharge which described his conduct in the service as very good. Completing his service in the Navy in January 1926, he unsuccessfully sought employment in England until he signed on with the ship *Relion* as a cook. The *Relion* was headed for America, where Mifsud hoped better employment prospects might lay. However, the *Relion* sank 500 miles from Ireland and Mifsud and his shipmates spent three days and nights in open boats before making it to the safety of the Irish coast. Mifsud then decided to try his luck in Australia.



**Australian Prime Minister
Billy Hughes**



**Emmanuel Attard,
1920 on the Gange**

THE BILLY HUGHES SAGA

The Maltese 'children of Billy Hughes' were a group of 214 Maltese migrants who arrived during Australia's conscription plebiscite campaign over a century ago and were deemed to be prohibited immigrants under section 3(a) of the *Immigration (Restriction) Act* after failing a dictation test in the Dutch language. They are remembered in Maltese communities as *it-tfal ta' Billy Hughes*, 'Billy Hughes' children'. The fact that the Maltese in Australia numbered less than a thousand at that time did not

deter talk of a Maltese invasion. The Australian Workers' Union declared that the Maltese were a 'black menace' and a meeting at Inverell was panicked by the rumour that four thousand had just landed and were sneaking in via Coffs Harbour. Many years later in his memoir, *I Remember* (1956), anti-conscriptionist Jack Lang stated that the arrival of the 'Gange' was just the evidence the 'No' case needed.

Prime Minister Hughes, an ardent advocate for a 'yes' vote, did not want the 'Gange' to disembark its passengers and relied on the 'dictation test' provision of the *Immigration (Restriction) Act* to keep them out. Section 3(a) meant that immigration officers could declare any new arrival a prohibited immigrant if they failed a dictation test of 50 words in any European language.

Originally meant to exclude Chinese and other 'coloured' people, Section 3(a) had occasional political application, such as the infamous case of Czech communist Egon Kisch in 1934 who was tested in Scottish Gaelic (see above).

The Maltese were tested in the Dutch language, by a professor from Melbourne University. Obviously, they all failed and were prohibited to enter Australia. A Maltese priest, Father William Bonnet, was allowed onto the vessel when it reached Sydney and spoke with the prohibited men. Outraged by the injustice and the sheer dishonesty, he wrote to Governor-General Munro-Fergusson, about what had happened.



Statue of Maltese Jesuit Missionary unveiled in Majlispur, India

Press Release Issue Date: Feb 14, 2023

On Tuesday 14 February 2023, the High Commissioner of Malta to India, H.E. Reuben Gauci visited the Indian village of Majlispur and inaugurated a commemorative statue of

the Maltese Jesuit, Fr Anthony Debono SJ, who founded the mission amongst the Santal Tribe in 1925 in this village in West Bengal, North East India. Fr Anthony Debono SJ was a visionary son of Malta, was born at Victoria, Gozo (Malta). Having completed his seminary studies in Gozo, he joined the Jesuits in Palermo on 15 September 1904. He was ordained priest on 25 July 1920 and pronounced his final vows in 1924.

On arriving in India he learned the tribal Santali language. In the process, he also learnt about the customs and life of the Santal Tribe. He later moved to Majlisipur and settled there on 9 March, 1925 for his pioneering work. The Statue of Fr Anthony Debono SJ was produced by the Society of Jesus (Jesuits) of India. During the inauguration, this Statue was blessed by the Bishop Emeritus of the Diocese of Purnea, H.E. Angelus Kujur SJ. Maltese Missionaries who have worked in the Santal Mission for decades: Fr Paul Aquilina SJ, Fr Joseph Gauci Sacco SJ and Ms Marcette Buttigieg were present for the occasion.

Maltese Migrants, like other migrants, changed their name to 'fit in' or to 'get a job'

Carmel changed his name to Charlie to secure employment

The very first organised group of Maltese migrants moved to Australia in 1883. The group consisted of 79 Maltese people, supported by a Capuchin friar, who migrated on a five-year contract to harvest cane in North Queensland.

We have a profound lack of knowledge of our own emigration history - the fact that the Maltese emigrated legally does not mean that the Maltese were wanted and accepted with open arms

AUSTRALIA sees itself as a fair-go type place, but that's not always the reality. I found this out when I met fellow Maltese migrants had to change their name to be able to find employment.

Migrants shouldn't have to change their name to 'fit in'.

When in 1920s Charles (Carmel) Farrugia emigrated from Malta he came across a job vacancy poster that read 'No Giuseppis wanted' he changed his surname to Ferguson. Since Ferguson sounds nothing like a Maltese or Italian surname, he managed to secure a job at the Sydney wharf.

Charles was not the only migrant to change his name to fit in a society where prejudice against non-locals was rife. And the darker the skin, the harsher the derogatory labels, such as 'wog' and 'dago'. The Maltese who travelled to Australia at the beginning of the century stood out – they spoke a strange language, walked in groups with other Maltese, wore working-class clothes and walked barefoot.

Post-war Maltese migrants usually settled down in places where their own relatives or friends would have settled down before them. Their aim was to overcome poverty, send money to their relatives in

Malta and eventually help their own family members join them in Australia.

English-speaking, monolingual immigration officials stumbling through lists of foreign names coerced people into making their foreign surnames easier to spell or pronounce.

Historically, it was very common for immigrants to change their own names, and they usually did so within the first few months of establishing their residence in Australia.

Pre-World War Two migrants who moved to Australia from Sliema in 1973, recalled making sure they wore a hat and carried at least one pound in their pockets when travelling to the city. Otherwise, they risked being stopped by a police officer and charged with vagrancy or homelessness.

But despite being perceived by some Australians as an undesirable migrant who might steal the locals' jobs, the Maltese were also known as hard workers and union loyalists.

Most found jobs outside the city – in farming, cutting cane or working in mine and railway construction industries.

They carried out work that not many Australians wanted to. One migrant recalled how the doctor's test, carried out on migrants before landing in Australia, consisted of an assessment of their hands. If they looked tough and able to deal with hard work, they passed the test with flying colours,

In the midst of last century Maltese and other Europeans were not allowed to speak their language in public. You were told off if you do. Or be told 'Go back to your own country'. European foods were non-existent.



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Census results released

90% Caucasian - persons of European origin: 83% Roman Catholic

It has found that more than one in five residents were foreign, with 115,449 non-Maltese persons residing in Malta on Census Day., 21 November 2021. The increase in population wasn't a result from an increased in childbirths but from immigration. According to the Census the final usual resident population in Malta stood at 519,562, more than doubling over a century, and growing by more than 100,000 over the past 10 years. The NSO today released statistics related to the census which it carried out in November 2021.

Malta remains the most densely populated country in

the EU with 1,649 residents per square kilometre.

For the first time ever, the 2021 Census recorded more males than females within the Maltese population. There were 270,021 men (52 per cent of the population) and 249,541 women in Malta, resulting in a sex ratio of 924 females per 1,000 males.

The average age of the population was 41.7 years, and Gozitan residents were slightly older than the Maltese with average ages of 43.8 years and 41.5 years respectively.

More than one in five residents were foreign, with 115,449 non-Maltese persons residing in Malta on Census Day - an increase of more than five times in the share of foreigners since 2011.

Just less than 90 per cent of residents were Caucasian, and a further 5.2 per cent were Asian. A total of 6,101 persons (1.2 per cent) had more than one racial origin.

A total of 14,822 persons immigrated to Malta in the year prior to the Census - more than three times the figure reported in 2011. More than half of these immigrants were non-EU citizens (including British) and 4,765 were citizens from countries outside of Europe.

The majority of the population aged 1 year and over did not internally migrate in the year prior to the Census (93.5 per cent), while 18,558 persons changed their residence.

When asked about their religious affiliation, a total of 373,304 residents aged 15 and over (or 82.6 per cent) identified themselves as Roman Catholic.

A total of 17,454 persons reported that they belong to Islam, followed by 16,457 persons who identified themselves with the Orthodox religion. Another 23,243 stated that they did not have any religious affiliation. These figures suggest that although Roman Catholicism remains the dominant religion, Malta is gradually becoming increasingly diverse in terms of faith.

Sliema is the most densely populated locality with 15,167 persons per square kilometre, which is 151 times higher than the EU average, while Għasri is the least with 104 persons per square kilometre – the latter being the only locality that is comparable to the EU average.

The new census has also found that the largest three localities are San Pawl il-Baħar, Birkirkara,



Maltese eNewsletter

**IF YOU HAVE A STORY TO TELL
SHARE IT WITH OTHERS. WE LOVE
TO HEAR FROM YOU. SEND IT TO US**

OUR READERS' VOICE

Victor Vella MA (NSW)

It is rather strange to say the least to have an ex minister of the Maltese Parliament and an ex Minister for Educ. bemoaning the death or the agony of the Maltese Language in its place of birth. Of course, he blames the media and the translations... etc. which is a typical trend or method of a politician to slide the blame on other factors to bring out his own heroism of coming to the rescue. He has been in power whether officially in Parliament as a Minister as well as a journalist for many years. To start crusading for the Maltese language now when he is not in power sounds rather hollow. As a journalist and a minister he could notice that the Maltese language or its use has been deteriorating for the last 30 /40 years. We had warning signs and crocodile tears were shed in Australia itself when the Nationalist Government was in power that the Maltese Language was nearing the edge of the cliff. But these warning signs were ignored. The unfortunate thing was that it was ignored by the people in power. I used to receive circulars and other official documents or reports even from institutions /organisations who were supposed to be in the forefront of the defence of the Maltese language.

The ex-minister enumerated the causes of the decline. But decline can be controlled to some extent. It could be controlled by those in power to ensure that it is being properly used in the various media, and especially how the language is taught in the classroom. He mentioned the number of publications of books in Maltese: he did not mention the fact the low reading rate of these books. Nor of the editing of these publications to ensure the proper use of the language especially of the vocabulary being used.

Language is the soul of the culture of the country. Be it small or big, the language is more than the language of songs or the language of chitchat or of the media. It is

the expression of the depth of thought and the way we express ourselves intimately in our deep thinking in our deep expression of our thought and the beauty of our unique culture and feeling and the environment in our literature. And it is this love this attachment to the language and the pride in its unique way of expression which are lost if and when a language is lost. Generally speaking, we have lost the standards even in the use of language. And to make it worse or as part of it we do not like controls. Years ago the French did establish a Board to control the use of foreign words and to purify it from foreign additions. Not an easy task. However, a similar board could in diverse ways show, criticise the major culprits of those writers journalist who misuse the language. Editing could help, as well as constant criticism of those who exaggerate in breaking the rules. The main offenders are those in power such as government departments and organisations and schools and universities who supposedly cater for and safeguard the purification and the healthy life of the language. These are the beacons you may say of the culture but especially of the language....

A common saying in Maltese is *il-huta minn rasha tintenn..* (a fish starts to rot from the head). that would fit so well in this situation. And it is not much of a help when an ex Minister who had the power to do so much blames outside and foreign forces for a dire situation. I do not think we did hear much dissent from him when he was in power about this linguistic deterioration. I feel he could even have done a lot while in power to control the sudden growth and change in the population. After all this surely has and is having a great and deleterious effect on the culture and especially on the LANGUAGE of Malta.

In memory of Theresa Mary Agius

Born in Valletta Malta 24 August 1929

Died in Adelaide, SA on 9 February 2023

Dearly loved wife of Charlie (dec)

mother and mother-in-law of

Lorris and Michelle, Maryanne and Peter,

Alex and Michelle, Simon (dec), David

Grandma of

Jason, Tahnee, Scott, Stacey, Craig, Tatjana

Chelsie and Allan

Great Grandmother of 8

Member of the Maltese Community

of Adelaide, South Australia

Rest in Peace



**WHEN OUR TIME ON THIS
EARTH IS DONE, MONEY
OR MATERIAL THINGS
WILL NOT MATTER, BUT
THE LOVE, TIME AND
KINDNESS THAT WE HAVE
GIVEN TO OTHERS WILL
SHINE AND LIVE ON
FOREVER.**



Scrubbing the salt pans in the old days.



Salt carts used to be pushed on rails from the salt pans to the storage shed.



Chapel of the Annunciation at Salini



Salina Nature Reserve

Salina Nature Reserve lies in the Burmarrad valley mouth (limits of St Paul's Bay in the north of Malta). Originally a harbour, the Salina site consists of 154,000 square metres of saline marshland and a number of salt pans built on a reclaimed island of clay surrounded by garrigue.

The site has been rehabilitated through a €7 million project partially financed with EU funds under the Agricultural Fund for Rural Development 2007-2013. The site's potential to attract a number of species has been proven repeatedly by birds alighting in the salt pans to rest during migration, among which the most spectacular; the flamingo – a bird synonymous with salt pans, especially in the Mediterranean. Salina is a protected area forming part of the Natura 2000 network and also a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) because of the endemic flora and fauna which can be found in the area.

History The Salina Salt Pans were constructed by the Knights of St John in the 16th century. The complex is home to three timber huts which were reconstructed on the same style of the original ones built by the British in the 18th century for salt production, one of which serves as the visitors' centre. It also includes the Ximenes Redoubt which was originally developed in 1715/16 during the reign of Grand Master Perellos as part of the Knights' strategy of defending the Maltese Islands against invasion with a network of coastal fortifications.

During the course of the 18th century, the redoubt was partially converted into a salt magazine. Grand Master Ximenes added a second warehouse to the complex to increase its storage capacity. Salt production was one of the main industries across the Maltese islands for hundreds of years. During the rule of the Knights of St John Maltese salt was exported to the European continent and was appreciated for its quality and taste. There are 27 salt pans around Malta, 11 salt pans in Gozo and two in Comino. Most salt pans portray exceptional hard work and are still in good condition.



THE BASILICA OF THE CITY OF SENGLEA (L-ISLA)

On February 18 after the 6 p.m. mass. Msgr.

Archbishop Charles J. Scicluna

inaugurated the second phase of the Senglea City Basilica ceiling painting project. The

theme central to this phase is Salus

Infermorum,

which recalls Our Lady's help during illness. the intercession of Our Lady in the glorious history of Senglea City and also includes the Pandemic of Covid 19.

The Painting is the work of the artist Manuel Farrugia who was chosen to beautify the entire ceiling with the painting of the Basilica and Collegiate of Senglea City. Historical information: It was the artist Guzeppi Briffa whom Archpriest Bonanno commissioned to paint the roof of the Choir.

This an opera was completed in 1934, and was considered the best piece of work of this nature, ever this painter worked. At the same time, the painting of the lunettes that had been done by Joseph Bonnici. Briffa had finished the sketches for a new painting..

Unfortunately this work was lost during the second world war when 80% of this basilica was swept away. It was in 1981 when the

late Archpriest Sladden planned to restore this Basilica be decorated. The archpriest Sladden had invited the artist Giuseppe Briffa to paint the dome and glasses Briffa had turned 80 years old, but he agreed to do it with joy.

He completed the drafts and they were approved, but unfortunately in 1984 he fell ill and did not recover, so the opera did not did not continue In 1988 the Archpriest Vincenz Cachia started the preparations so that this Basilica continues to be decorated with painting, in this same year a call to Maltese artists was published. The Commission Arti Sagra together with the Parish Commission decided to choose the painter and decorator Frank Portelli, whose work we are enjoying today in the apse, the lunettes and the painting of the dome. the thought was that this would continue the roof of the choir and the whole roof of the Church in fact in the parish archive we find a study that was done on the themes of the painting. This artist fell ill and the dream of Sengleani did not continue. The Chapter under the leadership of Archpriest Canon. Cav. Robin Camilleri together with the administration of the Basilica in 2020 chose artist Manuel Farrugia to beautify the ceiling of the Basilica with a painting with Marian themes.

On June 12, the first phase was inaugurated the Painting of the Choir of this Basilica, Collegiate Church and Sanctuary of the Virgin Mary in the City Senglea. The continuation of this work is the dream of every parishioner of Senglea

**IMAGINE WHAT WE CAN ACHIEVE
IF WE WORK TOGETHER**



Meet the team behind the Maltese-Canadian Museum! The curator since the Museum's opening in 2017 has been Richard S. Cumbo, O.S.J., who is accompanied by a team of dedicated volunteers: Rose Cassar, Marthese Fenech, Debbie Lightfoot, Carmen Galea, Mani Mifsud, Mary Zarb, Michael Gouveia, and the most recent additions Nigel Klemenčič-Puglisevich and Kealey Kennedy.

Nigel is a Maltese-Canadian student going for his MA Public History at the History Department - Western University. He brings years of experience in museums and archaeology, including from his time as a Collections Manager at the Museum of

Classical Antiquities at the University of Ottawa. His interests are mostly in medieval Islamic Malta and the consequences of British colonialism. He received his BA History and Classics from Carleton University in 2022. Nigel is joined by Kealey, an incoming student of the MA Public History programme at Western with a keen interest in museums, cemeteries, and music history. She received her BMus in Music with a Minor in Medieval & Early Modern Studies from Carleton University also in 2022. Nigel and Kealey have both been working on developing a digital exhibit in collaborative effort with the Maltese-Canadian Museum and Public History at Western University using ArcGIS to document Maltese immigration to Canada.

The Museum Committee has had four chairpersons since its opening on 29 January 2017: Father Manuel Parnis (MSSP, 2017-2019), Father Mario Micallef (MSSP, 2019-2022), Father Ivano Burdian (MSSP, 2022-Feb. 2023), and now Father Roy Farrell (Feb. 2023-present).

The collection of the Museum was originally founded by Father Raymond Falzon, OFM in the 1980s.

Who are the foreign nationals living in Malta?

Neville Borg

There are just over 8,000 non-Maltese children under the age of nine living in Malta.

Malta's foreign population increased by over 95,000 people in the past 10 years, according to [census data](#). There are now over 115,000 non-Maltese nationals in Malta, just over 22 per cent of the total population. This figure stood at a little over 20,000 people in 2011 (under five per cent). The newly published data from the National Statistics Office provides a detailed insight into Malta's growing foreign population for the first time.

Foreign nationals living in Malta tend to be male and younger than their Maltese counterparts, at an average age of 34.4 compared to 43.6 for Maltese. Those living in Gozo tend to be slightly older, at 42.1 on average. Almost three quarters, 72 per cent, are between the ages of 20 and 50. In contrast, only 39 per cent of Maltese nationals are within this age group. There are just over 8,000 non-Maltese children under the age of nine living in Malta.

Third of foreigners are EU citizens

A third of foreigners in Malta are EU citizens. A further seven per cent are from other European countries that are not EU member states. Italians are the most prevalent foreign nationality at 12 per cent, followed by British residents at just over nine per cent. Other common nationalities include Indian and Filipino, both at just under seven per cent. Malta also has a sizeable Serbian and Bulgarian community.

The biggest increase since the 2011 census was registered amongst the Italian community, which grew from 947 people in 2011 to almost 14,000 in 2021.

Filipino is the only nationality where women outnumber men, with over 4,500 women.

A total of 171 individuals are listed as stateless, almost half of them children under the age of nine. Nearly half of all non-Maltese nationals live in the Northern Harbour region, with a further 23 per cent living in the Northern region. St Paul's Bay alone is home to over 17,000 non-Maltese residents, while 10,000 foreign nationals live in Sliema.

19,000 Maltese have a second citizenship

A little under 3,000 non-Maltese citizens hold multiple citizenships, however, data about their secondary citizenship is not available. Meanwhile, nearly 19,000 Maltese nationals also hold secondary citizenship. Almost half of them hold either British or Australian citizenship, an indication of Malta's ongoing ties with Commonwealth countries. A little under 4,000 Maltese are also Canadian or American citizens. There are also 759 Maltese-Russian citizens living in Malta, over a third of them under the age of 19.

[Ghaqda] Practical Maltese Classes in Bremen - Germany



Universität Bremen

Good news! After three long years without Maltese classes in Bremen, we are happy to announce that the Malta Centre will offer practical Maltese language classes again this year.

The Maltese for Beginners class will be held from 31 July - 4 August 2023.

The Maltese for Advanced Learners class will be held from 7-11 August 2023.

You can participate in only one of the classes or join us for both of them.

The classes will be taught in English and are offered free of charge. They will be held at the University of Bremen, Germany. Visit our website for more information: [Language classes 2023 - Universität Bremen \(uni-bremen.de\)](https://uni-bremen.de) Feel free to share this information with anyone interested in learning Maltese.

For those of you employed in Germany: the classes are currently being assessed for being accredited as "Bildungszeit".

Maike Vorholt, M.A. Malta-Zentrum / Malta-Centre / Iċ-Ċentru tal-ilsien Malti Universität Bremen

Linguistik / Allgemeine und vergleichende Sprachwissenschaft Fachbereich 10

[The University of Bremen in Profile](#)

The University of Bremen is a medium-sized German university with around 20,000 students. Bremen offers a wide range of subjects and degrees for its committed and talented students: more than 100 master's and bachelor's degrees, as well as the state law exam. Moreover, with research-based learning, the university has reinterpreted project-based courses, a defining feature originating from when the University of Bremen was founded. As part of the European university network YUFE-Young Universities for

the Future of Europe it is developing a new model for European higher education together with nine other universities.

2,300 academics (43% of which are female), among them 270 professors (32% of which are female), teach and carry out research in a wide range of disciplines. We have a long-established tradition in interdisciplinary cooperation and excellent research in natural sciences, engineering, the social sciences and the humanities, as well as in teacher training. From 2012-2019, the University of Bremen with its future concept "Ambitious and Agile" was one of eleven universities that held the title "University of Excellence"



IL-KUNSILL REĠJONALI GHAWDEX
F'KOLLABORAZZJONI MA' INIZJAMED

**JISTEDNUKOM GHAT-TNEDIJA
TAL-EWWEL FESTIVAL
LETTERARJU GHAWDXI**

linja hamra.

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TRIQ VAJRINĠA, IR-RABAT**



RSVP
regjun-ghawdex.dlg@gov.mt

F'dan iż-żmien għażiż tas-sena

Żmien sabiħ qed jerga' magħna –
jiem għeżież tal-Ġimgħa l-Kbira
illi fihom aħna nagħmlu
tal-mewt il-Mulej tifikira!

'Il fuq minn elfejn sena ilu
Kristu ssallab għall-bnedmin,
ċarċar demmu, ħalla ħajtu,
biex le nibqgħu midinbin.

It-tbatija illi soffra
ma tfissirha bl-ebda kliem;
għuda tqila garr fuq spalltu
li wasslitu lejn it-tmiem.

Fuq salib safa mdendel
qisu l-aqwa kriminal;
lil Missieru minn hemm talab
biex jaħfrilhom dan l-iżball.

Għaddew, tgerbu das-snin kollha –
lil-Mulej għadna nwarrebuh,
u lil qalbu nfieru, inweggħu,
dispjaċir wisq kbir nagħtuh!

Tafu xejn li bl-aġir tagħna
mill-ġdid qegħdin insallbuh
u fuq l-għolja tal-Qorriegħa
qegħdin nerggħu nwassluh!

Ejjew nidhlu fina nfusna
u naraw li jisgħobbina;
nibdlu r-rotta, lilu nwiegħdu,
li naharbu t-triq ħażina.

Ħalli wkoll nitfgħu ħarsitna
fuq Marija Addolorata
li mxiet it-triq ma' Binha
b'rieda soda daqs ta' blata.

Iżda min jista' ifisser
it-tbatija li batiet!
L-ebda pinna m'hi ser tfisser
il-mument li sofriet.

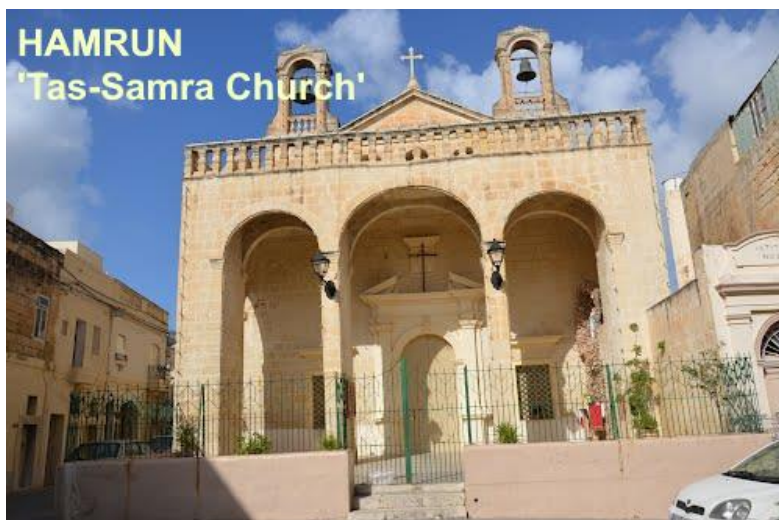
F'dan iż-żmien qaddis tas-sena
inwiegħduk, Mulej Divin,
illi lilek qatt ma nonqsu –
ma nħallukx bi dnuhna tnin!

Aħfrilna, Mulej, ħtjietna
u fis-siegha ta' l-hemm tagħna,
Ħalli nħaddnu lil salibek
biex henjin dlonk int tarana!

Kav. Joe M. Attard
Victoria-Għawdex



The one and only
Journal for Maltese Living Abroad



HAMRUN
'Tas-Samra Church'

TAS-SAMRA CHURCH HAMRUN

In the house he had his daughter Elizabeth, a baby who was buried under the wreckage of the house.

Everyone thought the baby died but to everyone's surprise, the baby was found alive when the rubble was removed. Time passed and when Elizabeth grew up, she married Giuseppe Casauri who was a rich businessman and had many contacts in Spain. Joseph had brought with him a devoted image of Our Lady of

Atocia which enjoyed great devotion in Spain.

When he came to Malta together with his wife Elizabeth, they began to spread the devotion to this image of the Madonna. People were soon drawn to this painting of Our Lady who they call Tas-Samra because the image shows a black Madonna. Joseph and his wife thought of building a new church and dedicating it to this Our Lady instead of the ruined church of San Nicola that was standing in this place

Mario Coleiro

Hamrun is a locality that has developed over the last 150 years. The oldest part of Hamrun is undoubtedly the part near the church dedicated to Our Lady of Samra. The story of how devotion to this Madonna began takes us to Birgu during the Great Siege.

It seems that a businessman whose name was Toni Spinaci and who lived in Birgu, suffered a great cut when during the attacks of the Turks on Birgu, his house was hit and completely collapsed.



SARRIA CHURCH FLORIANA

significantly. It happened that when the plague of 1675 and '76, in which as many as 11,300 people died, Grand Master Nicolas Cotoner had made a promise to build this chapel in a brighter church.

Upon the end of the epidemic, Cotoner commissioned Mattia Preti to design the new church. As soon as it was completed, pilgrimages

Today, this name refers both to the church next to Argotti, Floriana, and to the environment closest to this church. Sarria's church is round-shaped and is located between the parish church and the Wignacourt fountain.

The appeal of this church is attributed to the Spanish Knight of Malta, Martin Sarria Navarra, who in 1585, paid for the first church dedicated to the Conception to be built.

Origin. There was a smaller chapel on this location. By the middle of the seventeenth century this chapel had deteriorated

began to take place from St John's Cathedral in Valletta, with the statue of Our Lady of Caraffa, to this church. This pilgrimage lasted for many years. The more Floriana became inhabited, the more this church was used by parishioners. Then when the parish church was built in 1733, it lost its importance, all the more so when in 1844 the church of St Publius became a parish. In 1924, the church of Sarria was given to the Jesuits to administer it. See: *A Hundred Wayside Chapels of Malta and Gozo*, pp. 160-163; www.kappellimaltin.com.



The Apostolate of the Order of St. John in the Mdina Cathedral of Malta

Fifteen statues of "Antonio Arrighi silversmith in Rome"

In the Metropolitan Cathedral of Malta in Mdina, since 1799 fifteen silver statues depicting the Twelve Apostles have been preserved, which together with Mary, John the Baptist and St.

Paul, constitute the precious sculptural group called "the Apostolate of Malta". The statues of the Apostles reproduce on a smaller scale the monumental Carrara marble figures present in the central nave of the Papal Basilica of San Giovanni in Laterano, cathedral of Rome.

The Apostolate of Malta was carried out between 1739 and 1743 in Rome by the silversmith Antonio Arrighi, by the will of the Grand Master of the Knights of St. John the Baptist Raymond Despuig. The precious silver and gilded silver trousseau, the only one of its kind in Europe, risked being lost forever due to the expropriation of precious metal works wanted by Napoleon Bonaparte, during his stay in Malta about to go to Egypt.



Ta' Sanċir chapel, Rabat - very old chapel, perhaps the oldest in Malta

The **Chapel of St Michael** more popularly known in Maltese as **Il-Kappella tas-San Ċir** or **Il-Kappella ta' San Mikiel** is **Sanċir** is a medieval chapel located in the limits of Rabat, Malta in an area referred to as *Ġnien is-Sultan* (King's Garden).

ORIGINS The chapel's architecture dates back to the middle of the 15th century. The first mention of the chapel is found in a report written by Bishop Pietro Dusino when he visited Malta in 1575. The report refers to the church as the church of St Michael in the garden of *Ġnien is-Sultan*. The chapel was mentioned numerous times through the years, notably in 1615 when Bishop Baldassare Cagliares described the painting of St Michael located in the church as barely recognizable, indicating the poor state of the chapel. In 1598 Bishop Gargallo mentions that the feast of St Michael was celebrated every September 29 with vespers, which were attended by the local farmers. Due to its neglected state, in 1678 Bishop Miguel Jerónimo de Molina deconsecrated the church and ordered that the painting of St Michael be transferred to the parish church of Rabat.

USE AS A STABLE After the chapel fell in disrepair it was used as a stable and storage space by local farmers. A wall was built inside the chapel to divide it in two sections.

RESTORATION In 1981 the chapel was restored and the wall that divided the chapel was demolished. The chapel was restored by volunteers from the Sanċir Trust and volunteers from the National Students Travel Foundation and the Friends of Malta. A stone altar was built and the church was reopened for religious services on October 2, 1988. The President of Malta, Ugo Mifsud Bonnici attended the opening

service. The service was led by Monsignor Gwann Azzopardi who was a benefactor of the chapel's restoration.

PRESENT DAY In the 30 years since the church was restored, it has fallen into disuse and disrepair and is in danger of collapsing. Vegetation has grown on the walls of the chapel and trees have blocked the main entrance of the chapel. Part of the roof near the altar has collapsed, and cracks in the chapel's walls are visible.

INTERIOR The interior of the chapel is quite bare. The interior is one spacious room with the walls built in the form of pointed arches, typical to medieval architecture in Malta. There is one stone altar. During the restoration of the 1980s, stone benches were discovered along the wall of the chapel. The chapel can be accessed by two doors. A Graffiti of a ship, which was discovered on the walls of the chapel, is probably some kind of Ex-voto.

NAME OF THE CHAPEL The chapel's origins may date to the Byzantine era, as evidenced by the chapel's name, *Is-Sanċir*. According to Professor Stanley Fiorini, the name *is-Sanċir* may indicate that the chapel was dedicated to Cyriacus the Anchorite, a Greek saint. After the Moors were driven out of Malta, Christianity regained its power over Malta. Western Latin Christianity was spreading, replacing any traces of the Greek Christianity in Malta, which dated from Byzantine times. As a result, the names of churches in Malta which had been dedicated to Greek saints were replaced by the names of popular Western saints. Thus, the name of this chapel might have been changed from St Cyriacus (*San Ċirijaku* or *San Ċir* in Maltese) to St Michael (*San Mikiel*). It is possible that the local people referred to the chapel by its original name, hence the name *San Mikiel Is-Sanċir* or literal translation in English, St Michael the St Cyr. However, no documentation survives to prove this theory.

Wealthy Americans are racing to get the EU's last remaining 'golden passport' before it's gone



For some ultra-wealthy individuals, the most powerful asset money can buy isn't a superyacht or private jet — it's a passport.

"Golden passports," formally known as citizenship by investment programs, allow wealthy foreigners to receive citizenship in exchange for investing a certain amount of money in a country, often by purchasing real estate. Their less-advantageous sibling, "golden visas,"

provide temporary residence permits in exchange for investment, as opposed to permanent citizenship.

For the first time, Americans are applying for golden passports and visas more than any other nationality, according to Henley & Partners' 2023 USA Wealth Report, released Thursday. Historically, the programs have been dominated by Chinese and Russian nationals.

The record number of American applicants is the result of high-net-worth individuals "future-proofing their American lives" amid inflation, social and political unrest, and a shrinking middle class in the US, global investment expert and financial writer Jeff D. Opdyke, said in the report.

"We see these programs as an insurance policy," Ezzedeen Soleiman, a managing partner at Latitude Residency & Citizenship, an investor immigration firm, told Insider in May. "We've had some billionaires approach us and ask what's the best place to live if there's a climate catastrophe, or if there's another storm, or another global pandemic."

Options for Americans looking to build their passport collections are quickly dwindling

Portugal announced it will no longer be accepting new applications to its golden visa program, a decision Prime Minister António Costa said will help "fight against price speculation in real estate" as the

country combats a housing crisis. Henley & Partners ranked Portugal's program as the most popular offering among its American clientele. Just three days earlier, Ireland also shuttered its golden visa program. Last year, 282 of 306 applications came from Chinese citizens, with only 10 US applications, The Irish Times reported.

Malta is currently the only country in the EU that still has a citizenship-by-investment scheme based on pre-determined payments or investments without a "genuine link" to the country, such as long-term residence, according to the European Commission.

This is not including Austria's citizenship act, which allows the government to grant citizenship to high-net-worth foreigners of "extraordinary merit" who invest an estimated \$9.5 million directly into the Austrian economy.

Henley & Partners' Head of North America Mehdi Kadiri said Malta's golden passport scheme was the second-most sought-after program among Americans, in part because Malta's program is accessible through real estate investment.

"International real estate has always been a reliable asset class for global investors due to its long-term staying power," Kadiri said, adding that holding multiple passports creates "optionality in terms of where you and your family can live, work, study, retire, and invest."

Malta's program, which has been riddled with scandal, has attracted the likes of billionaire Silicon Valley investor and former Trump adviser Peter Thiel, as The New York Times first reported in October. But if the EU has its way, it may not be around for much longer. In September, the European Commission referred the Maltese government to the EU Court of Justice, arguing that the golden passport scheme poses a security risk for the entire union.

Being a citizen in an EU member state like Malta opens up a number of privileges, including free movement through 27 countries, voting rights, and access to internal EU markets. Following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, golden passports and visas faced global scrutiny for allowing sanctioned oligarchs access to the UK.

This set off a series of program closures, including the UK, Bulgaria, and Cyprus. But despite insistent demands from the EU, Malta has so far refused to follow suit.

In order to receive citizenship through Malta's golden passport program, applicants must invest between €590,000 and €740,000 (depending if you have resided in the country for more or less than 36 months); purchase real estate worth at least €700,000 or pay rent of at least €16,000 per year (for five years); donate an additional €10,000; and pay a total of €26,500 in non-refundable deposits and fees

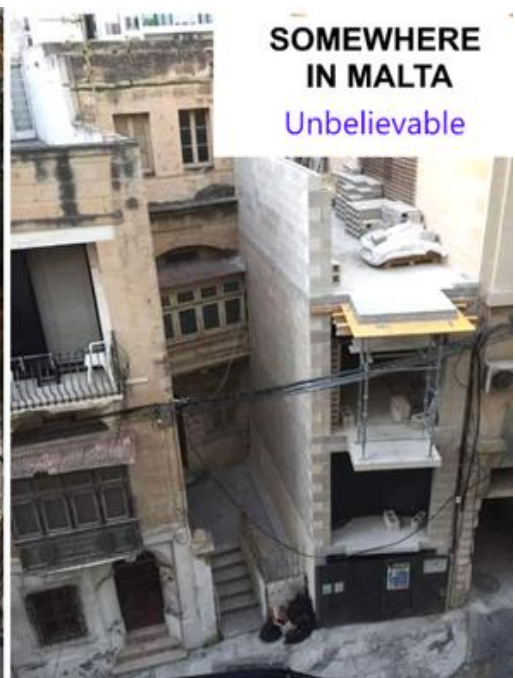
MALTESE COMMUNITY – CANADA NEWS

From the Desk of Fr. Roy Farrell – St, Paul the Apostle – Canadian Maltese Parish, Toronto



After bidding farewell to Fr. Ivano on Wednesday at 4 am, the goodbye felt so final it was overwhelming. I will forever owe him a debt of gratitude for his hospitality and support since I arrived at St. Paul's on January 5th. Let us all ask for God's divine protection on him as he embarks on his new ministry in Peru. It must have been difficult to start fresh in a country where the political climate is so unpredictable. I'm sending my appreciation to the Social Committee for their phenomenal work for the feast of St. Paul. I was astonished by the amount of energy they put forth as well as their devotion to the parish and their goal of creating a stronger Maltese community. Everyone was delighted with the entertainment, and the food was extraordinary. It was an enormous success. Our total revenue will be published in the coming weeks. Your effort was incredibly appreciated, and we want

you to be aware that we have taken notice of your hard work.



**THE 5th JOSEPH VELLA
MEMORIAL LECTURE**

**THE
PHILOSOPHERS
OF
ĠGANTIJA**

PUBLIC LECTURE
Rev. Dr **JOSEPH FARRUGIA**

Il-Ħaġar | Heart of Gozo Museum
Pjazza San Ġorġ, Victoria, Gozo, Malta
Friday 24 February 2023, 19:30
Registration: events@heartofgozo.org.mt



1 May 1956.
The Floriana lion removed as part of the works to re-align St Anne Street.
The fountain, built by Grand Master António Manoel de Vilhena in 1728, was re-instated on 31 December 1958.
Photo: The National Archives of Malta.

**KEEPING MALTESE
DIASPORA ON THE RADAR**

La Valette Social Centre Blacktown NSW



Players wanted to play Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays.
Contact Michael (Kelinu) SPITERI or the Centre on 9622 5847

**The Maltese Guild of South Australia
Lunch at Noon Every Tuesday
at the Maltese Cultural Centre
6 Jeanes Street, Beverley 5009**

IL-KARNIVAL TA' MALTA

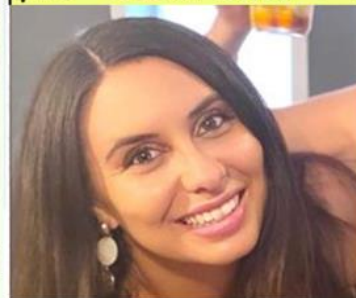
**17 - 21
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2023**



PLEASE, SUPPORT YOUR CLUB

**George Cross Falcons
Community Centre - CRINGILA
NSW**

**Saturday - 18 March 2023 at 2pm
\$20 -Great show + Pastizzi ,Tea/Coffee**



Charlie
Muscat



LUDWIG GALEA

**KANTANT
MINN MALTA**

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.



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**SHARE YOUR
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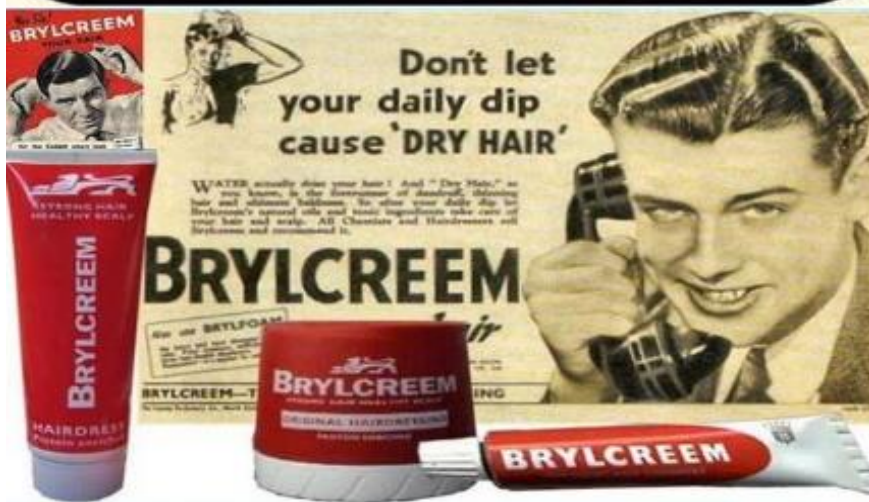


LIFE BEFORE THE COMPUTER

- * Memory was something that you lost with age
- * An application was for employment
- * A program was a TV show
- * A cursor used profanity
- * A keyboard was a piano
- * A web was a spider's home
- * A virus was the flu
- * A CD was a bank account
- * A hard drive was a long trip on the road
- * A mouse pad was where a mouse lived
- * And if you had a 3 1/2 inch floppy
....you just hoped nobody found out



No Mobiles or Ipads



My First TV set

A NOSTALGIC EVENT OF THE YEAR 1968



Mr. Dom Mintoff, ex-Prime Minister of Malta, visiting the George Cross Falcons Club at Cringila NSW in 1968. This is one of the oldest Maltese Clubs est. 1951