

JOURNAL FOR MALTESE AROUND THE WORLD



MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER



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MALTA AND THE ANZACS NURSE OF THE MEDITERRANEAN



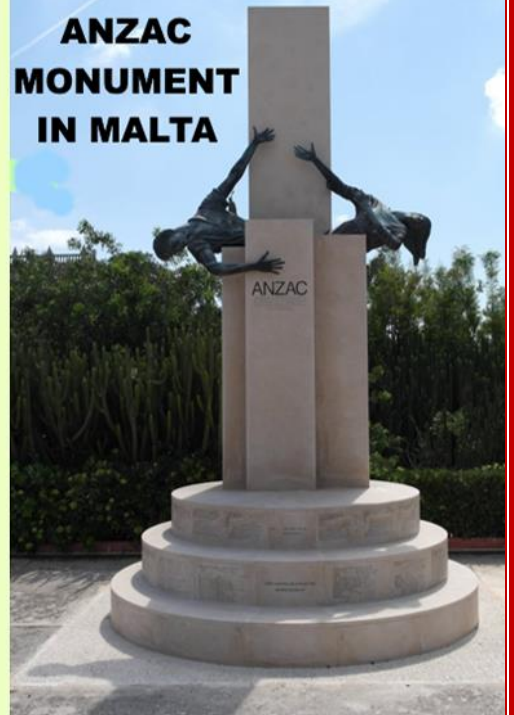
WW1 ANZAC NURSE COMFORTS WOUNDED AUSSIE SOLDIER



**MALTA AWARDED
THE GEORGE CROSS**



**ANZAC
MONUMENT
IN MALTA**



**THE MALTESE JOURNAL IS THE MOUTHPIECE
OF ALL MALTESE LIVING ABROAD**





MALTA

GEORGE CROSS

One of the most fascinating stories Malta has to offer is the story of how it won the George Cross. Discover more.

The Islands of Malta have a long and fascinating history, from staving off the invasion of thousands of Turks, to being almost blitzed into oblivion during the Second World War. Everywhere you look and everything you do whilst you are here, you're reminded of some part of its rich tapestry of history.

One of the most fascinating stories Malta has to offer is the story of how it, and all of its inhabitants won the George Cross at the end of the Second World War. If you're planning holidays in Malta this year, why not take some time out to visit the National War Museum to see it for yourself?

The story of Malta's part in WWII is a long one that started in 1940 and continued to 1942 during what is now known as the Siege of Malta. This epic battle was a two-year struggle for the control of the islands between the German and Italian air force and the British RAF and Navy. Throughout history, and even to this day, Malta's extremely strategic location between Europe and Africa made it much sought after territory. Had the Axis (as they were known) won this battle, the war could have ended very differently indeed.

At the time, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill referred to Malta as an "unsinkable aircraft carrier"- something that had not escaped the attention of German and Italian forces. The Axis resorted to bombing and attempting to starve the native population into submission, as well as any allied ships that attempted to supply the island. As a result, the islands cities, towns, and ports were destroyed beyond recognition and Malta was one of the most intensively bombed areas during the whole war.

The Santa Maria Convoy

On the 15th of August, 1942 during the Maltese festa of Santa Maria, a convoy of allied force vessels made it through to Valletta Grand Harbour. They managed to deliver much needed supplies to a starving and suffering island. This event is still commemorated today and is now a celebration of all of those that lived and died to bring Malta aid during these dark times.



Image courtesy of World War 2 Collectables Facebook Page

Total devastation

The Luftwaffe (German Air force) and the Regia Aeronautica (Italian Royal Air Force) carried out over 3,000 individual bombing raids on the islands. However, they failed in their attempts to form any kind of amphibious landing, which ultimately usurped their plans.

The RAF strongly defended the Maltese airspace and sea lanes until the point that The Axis gave up and set their sights on other locations. Come December of 1942, the British forces had almost completely destroyed The Axis fleet, sinking a total of 230 ships in less than 6 months.

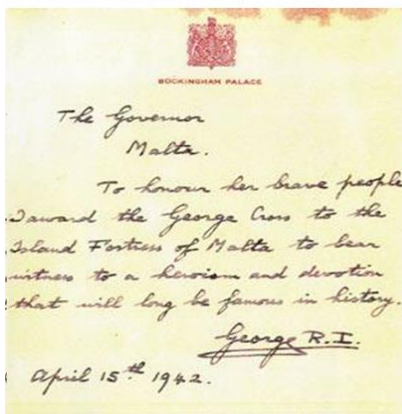
During this period of war, over 5,500 houses were devastated, nearly 10,000 were badly damaged, and 14,000 just damaged. In addition to that, another 20,000 public buildings were damaged or destroyed including The Royal Opera House, Fort Ricasoli, and Castile.



The George Cross

After the arrival of the Santa Maria Convoy, a ceremony was held in Valletta where the George Cross was presented to the Maltese people to commemorate their bravery, courage, and heroism in the face of adversity.

The George Cross was awarded to Malta by King George VI to “bear witness to the heroism and devotion of its people” during the great siege the islands suffered during the beginning of WWII. You can see it today, immortalised into every Maltese flag as it is woven into the design in the top left-hand corner. To this day, it remains as one of the proudest parts of Malta’s heritage and one that should always be remembered.



It-Tlieta, 3 ta' Gunju, 1986.

The MALTESE HERALD



Mr. Barry York, with the Maltese Pottery held in Canberra.

Maltese pottery held in Canberra

DR BARRY YORK (MEILAK) REMEMBERS

Little did I realize in the 1980s when researching my PhD thesis into the history of Maltese migration to Australia that my research would lead to the discovery of some neolithic Maltese pottery held at the then Parliament House in Canberra.

I think it was the late George Griffiths who first alerted the community to the existence of the pottery, which had been given as a gift to the Australian

Government by the Maltese Government in 1935.

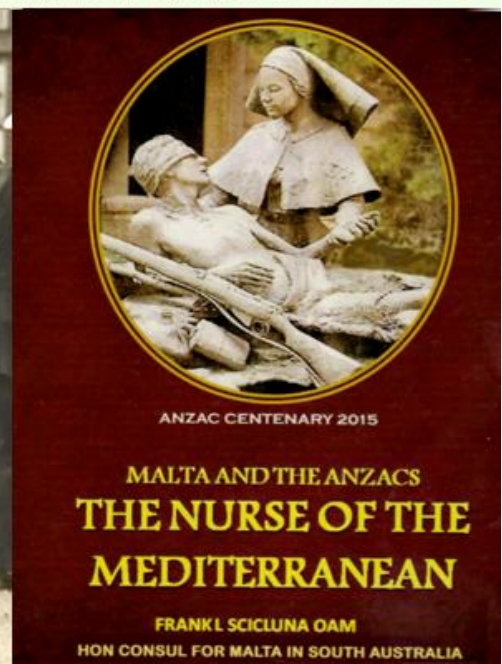
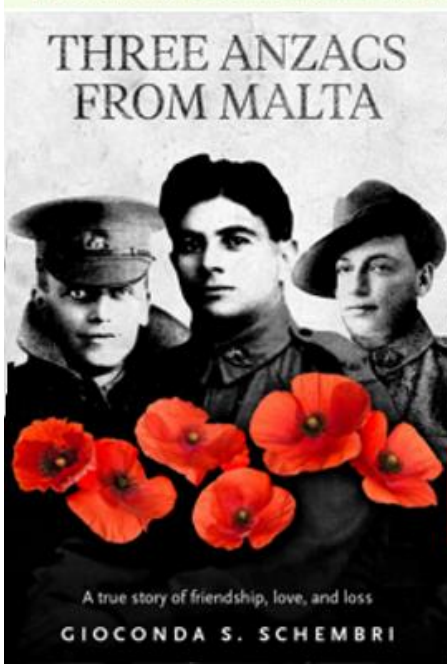
But there was a puzzle: No-one seemed to know where the pottery had ended up!

During a research trip to Canberra, I arranged with the Parliament's Joint House Committee to go to Parliament House and, accompanied by a committee officer, to search for the pottery.

Gifts from other governments were either displayed or kept in an old vault at the back of the House. I still remember entering the vault and marvelling at all the gifts in storage - some were quite exotic. The ancient Maltese pottery - which had been carefully selected by Sir Themis Zammit - was up high on a top shelf in a shoe-box, each piece wrapped in tea-towels. The oldest piece, I later learned, was 2,500 years old. I couldn't believe that such a magnificent collection could be treated in such a shoddy manner but was none the less relieved to locate it. (It had probably been there, like that, for 50 years).

The story has a happy ending with the pottery was put on display in Sydney and then, later, at the new Parliament House in Canberra.

I'm assuming it has been back in storage for many years, and that the storage is undertaken at the highest professional standards in the new Parliament House.



ANZAC DAY

They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning,
We will remember them.

lest we forget

25 April

Malta earns the title ‘nurse of the Mediterranean’



The first arrivals in Malta of the wounded soldiers from the theatres of war made history. A stream of ambulance

wagons and motor-cars swept through Valletta on their way to the landing places, attracting crowds of spectators along the route. Michael GaleA

The first arrivals in Malta of the wounded soldiers from the theatres of war made history. A stream of ambulance wagons and motor-cars swept through Valletta on their way to the landing places, attracting crowds of spectators along the route. Afterwards, the vehicles returned in different directions for the hospitals and other places where accommodation had been provided. In Strada Reale, “hats were raised and handkerchiefs waved as the vehicles approached, the crowds pressing forward to catch a glimpse of the soldiers recumbent on stretchers or seated”.

From among the frequent arrivals from the Dardanelles, one would single out “a remarkable episode providing the material for a romance in real life”. The ship was moored in Sliema Creek. “During the landing of the wounded, the shrieks of a woman were heard among the crowd. The excited woman had recognised her husband whom she had not seen for nine years.”

British wounded from the Balkan front were brought to Malta, which provided hospital accommodation for well over 18,000 sick and wounded. The island's resources were taxed to the utmost

The hospital ship Asturias, with wounded from the Dardanelles, was torpedoed in the channel but the torpedo missed its mark. Arrivals included the New Zealand hospital ship Maheno.

The French government placed at the disposal of the French Red Cross, a vessel belonging to the Messageries Maritimes, the Charles Roux, which was fitted out as a hospital ship. It was used for both French and British casualties.

For the first time since Italy's intervention in the world conflict, the hospital ship Re d'Italia of Lloyd Sabaudo Coy arrived in Malta, and berthed at Sa Maison. Four Maltese doctors, namely P. Biasini, Balzan, Azzopardi and Inglott, and several English nurses, proceeded with the ship. Other Italian

hospital ships followed. The Lloyd Sabaudo provided six of its fine fleet for the purpose.

The hospital ship Assaye arrived in Malta with a large party of Canadian and English lady nurses. The novel uniform of the Canadians attracted great attention. The ship was en route to the Balkans.

Sir Thomas Lipton's yacht Erin arrived in Malta on her second voyage from South Hampton to Salonika. She was carrying a number of nurses and medical stores. Sir Thomas embarked on the yacht to Marseilles.

The British steam yachts Sunbeam, owned by naval writer Lord Brassey, and Liberty, owned by the eminent physician Sir James Porter, were converted into private hospital ships. They called at Malta en route to the Dardanelles.

A French ship arrived in Malta with 720 Syrian Jews, mostly French citizens. They were embarked at Beirut upon escaping massacre by the Turks. These refugees were being conveyed to Corsica.

Among the wounded who arrived in Malta were several Turkish officers, some of whom died of their wounds on board the hospital ship on their way to Malta. They were buried at sea.

Egbert Rizzo, a Maltese residing in Constantinople prior to the outbreak of the war, was deported to Urfa and was subsequently allowed to return to Constantinople with several other British citizens, including Maltese. The Turkish government issued instructions that all British citizens were to be well treated.

The more serious cases were sent on to England from Malta, while a good number of the first arrivals left Malta to rejoin their respective regiments.

Strong contingents of medical officers and trained nurses continued to arrive from England and were absorbed in the various hospitals on the island. Male nurses at the Central Civil Hospital, Floriana, spontaneously offered to devote their off-duty days to the wounded in the hospitals. When Italy joined the Allies, plans were mooted towards establishing convalescent homes in Sicily.

British wounded from the Balkan front were brought to Malta, which provided hospital accommodation for well over 18,000 sick and wounded. The island's resources were taxed to the utmost.

As the conflict continued, a local newspaper wrote: “Funeral services will be held in the churches of the island by order of the Archbishop for the souls of those who have fallen in the war. It would be suggested that the people of this island might give further appropriate expression to the feelings which animate them by bedecking with flowers the



honoured graves of those who succumbed to their wounds in Malta.”

It would be added that the ringing of bells “so highly favoured by custom is not always a necessity, especially in view of our limited area, so we trust that bell ringing will be restricted as much as possible in certain areas”.

In the event of any cases of cholera developing on board a hospital ship during the voyage to Malta, the patient was to be at once transported to Comino, where arrangements were made for a small hospital. If disembarkation was impossible, the patient would be taken to the Lazarette on Manoel Island, where complete isolation was arranged. If any cases of cholera occurred at the Dardanelles, they would be treated at Lemnos.

Following an appeal for help in connection with the housing of convalescent patients, unfurnished private houses in different parts of the island were placed at the authorities' disposal

There was a remote danger of cases developing on board ship. For this reason, Governor Methuen set up an ad hoc committee which included Dr G. Caruana Scicluna, Prof. Temi Zammit and Dr A. Critien to decide on the best means to meet this possible danger.

Following an appeal for help in connection with the housing of convalescent patients, unfurnished private houses in different parts of the island were placed at the authorities' disposal, including the Archbishop Palace in Mdina.

The Marchesa Scicluna placed at the disposal of the authorities the palatial Villa Dragonara. The Carmelite Friars offered the upper floor of their convent at St Julian's. The Vincenzo Bugeja Institute at Hamrun was equipped as a hospital. The Army Pay Office at Auberge de Baviere in Valletta was moved elsewhere and the building converted into a hospital.

The government school in Sliema was turned into a hospital to house 450 patients; it was known as St John Hospital. Nevertheless, school started as usual as alternative premises were made available, including the Juventutis Domus and part of the Carmelite Convent by Fr O'Grady and Rev. Prof. A. Cuschieri, respectively. San Anton Palace and Verdala were also used to accommodate patients.

There was also a generous response from Maltese owners of motorcars and carriages who readily lent their transport for the conveyance of the sick and wounded from

the quay to the hospitals on the arrival of hospital transport ships. Besides, owners of motorcars and carriages offered to take out convalescents for drives.

During the war years the Malta Centre of the St John Ambulance and the British Red Cross Society were amalgamated for the better and more efficient organisation in aid of the sick and wounded. They became known as the Ladies Committee, which was composed as follows: The Countess Lucan, Miss Calvocoressi, Mrs Clapp Zammit, Mrs F. P. Denaro, Mrs A. M. Galea, Mrs Lewis Hall, Miss Gatt and Mrs Pringle.

It was a very active committee, organising concerts by local civic bands, variety entertainment and performances, cinema shows (sometimes screening scenes of the war), excursions, tea sessions, talks; promoting donations in kind such as cakes, fruit, flowers, books (a box of books was received in Malta from Queen Mary), magazines, newspapers, games, playing cards, gramophones, cigarettes, cigars and tobacco.

The committee actively supplied caps, mufflers, gloves (these were with a thumb piece but without divisions for the fingers), mittens (with short fingers or at least a knitted hole to cover the palm and were long above the wrist). The government provided for exemption of custom duties on gifts to the troops received from abroad.

A novel initiative was the holding of a hospital football league. Some 17 hospitals entered their teams. One of the first matches, which took place at the Marsa, was played between two Royal Army Medical Corps teams – Valletta Hospital and Baviere, ending with the score: Baviere 2, Valletta Hospital 0.

Another novel idea was the setting up of a club for nurses; they used to meet in the Ladies Room at the Union Club. No wonder Malta earned the title of “nurse of the Mediterranean”.



ANZAC MONUMENT IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

On ANZC DAY 2019 Chev Charles Farrugia, President of the RSL Maltese branch together with Frank Scicluna, the former Consul for Malta in South Australia and Mr. Edgar Agius, President of the Maltese Community Council of South Australia laid a wreath at the foot of the Monument at the Prospect Gardens, Adelaide in remembrance of the ANZACs who died and are buried in Malta during the Gallipoli tragedy of WW1. The late Charlie Vidal, a war veteran, was also in attendance.

This monument was made in 2015 with funds received from the Australian Ministry of Veteran Affairs. This monument carries the names of South Australian servicemen buried in various cemeteries in Malta. The memorial was unveiled by the RSL state president Brigadier T. Hanna, accompanied by the president of the Maltese sub-branch, Chev. C. Farrugia — a veteran of the

Royal Malta Artillery. Attending the ceremony were Frank Scicluna, the Hon Consul for Malta in SA, David O'Loughlin, Mayor of the Prospect City Council and Robert Banton, President of the Prospect RSL Branch. Brigadier Hanna said "Almost 58,000 ANZAC s were taken to Malta (4000 alone in May 1915) after the first weeks of the landing at Gallipoli, Turkey - to be treated for their wounds. This contribution resulted in Malta becoming known as the Nurse of the Mediterranean."

He added that Maltese immigrants had contributed significantly to the multicultural character of contemporary Australia. "It is most fitting," he said, "that the Maltese community in South Australia are amongst those doing something special to commemorate the centenary of the war which was supposed to be the end of all wars".



The Ministry for Tourism and the Malta Tourism Authority are pleased to announce that the 21st edition of the Malta International Fireworks Festival will be taking place on seven nights between Monday 24th April and Sunday 30th April 2023. Each night promises to be a beautiful display of colour and coordination, and the closing night is bound to be a true spectacle. The festival also has a competitive edge! Each year, the festival hosts a Pyro-musical competition, which means that the fireworks are designed to match the rhythm of a musical number! Awards are then distributed to the most impressive displays.

More information can be found on the website and through the Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/maltafireworks>



Tonio Portghese .

Dr. Tonio Portghese was appointed HON PRESIDENT of the Maria Assunta Musical Society, Gudja

Tonio shares this prestigious appointment by the Maria Assunta Musical Society of Gudja as Honorary President. He said that this was given to him because of his commitment and dedication to being of service and support mainly in the upgrading of Musical standards and professional teaching of music.

He is honoured and motivated to keep nurturing this Society's cultural mission.



Archbishop baptises 12 at Easter vigil

Easter processions held over Malta

The archbishop during the baptism ceremony. Archbishop Charles Scicluna baptised 12 people at the Easter Vigil late on Saturday.

The ceremony was held at St John's Co-Cathedral. During his homily the archbishop called for prayers that Easter may be an opportunity for a new beginning for the world,

the country and individuals. This, he said, should be a time of renewal and hope. The newly baptised people came from China, Turkey, China, Turkey, Latvia, the UK, France, Nepal, Albania and Malta. Meanwhile, processions with the statue of the Risen Christ were held in several parishes on Sunday morning, with the bearers traditionally running with the statue for part of the route. Also in line with tradition, children had their Easter eggs and *figolli* blessed.



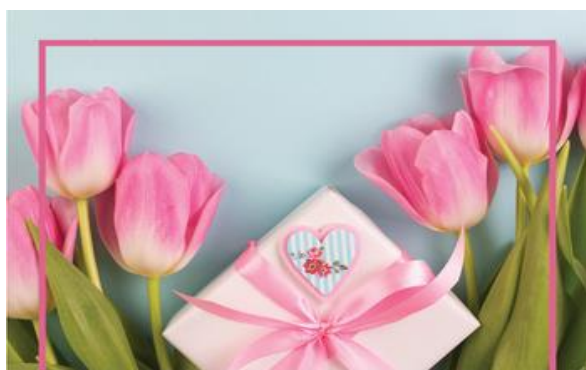
Armed Forces of Malta commemorates 50th anniversary

Malta's President Dr. George Vella attended the 50th anniversary of the Armed Forces of Malta in Valletta, Malta, on April 19, 2023. The Armed Forces of Malta is celebrating its 50th anniversary following its inauguration on April 19th 1973, when the 'Malta Land Force' changed its name and became known as the 'Armed Forces of Malta'. 150 AFM personnel participated in a parade in Valletta to commemorate this important milestone in the history of the armed forces.



A Guard of Honour accompanied by the AFM band marched from the Valletta entrance and reached St George's square to take part in a special display for the anniversary celebrations. A series of fly pasts including all types in the airwing's inventory flew over St George's Square.

While congratulating the Armed Forces on this important anniversary, The President would like to take the opportunity to salute and thank all its present and past members for the dedication they have always shown in the performance of their duties throughout all these years.



— QUDDIESA TA' —
JUM L-OMM
Fil-Palazz ta' Sant Anton

IL-HADD 14 TA' MEJJU FID-9.30am

Il-postijiet huma limitati.

Kull min jixtieq jattendi huwa mheggeg
jibbukja sa nhar l-Erbgha 10 ta' Mejju billi
jcempel fuq in-numru 22053342 jew jibghat
email fuq rsvp.opr@gov.mt

NANNA, DID YOU SAY

I AM MALTESE?

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the next edition
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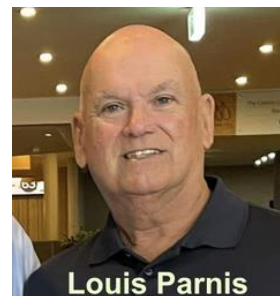
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The Malta Migrant Museum - Valletta
Maltese-Canadian Museum - Toronto, Canada
Gozo National Museum - www.ozmalta.com
Facebook - www.facebook.com/frank.scicluna.3
Website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs - Malta
Website of the Maltese Community Council of Victoria
At clubs of several Maltese Associations
At Maltese Language Schools and libraries
Many readers preserve them on their USB



A NIGHT TO REMEMBER

Saturday 15 April was a memorable day, THE Paul Fenech and his son Anthony performing an Elvis show at Dapto Ribbonwood Centre.



Louis Parnis

Our secretary Elizabeth worked hard to hold dialogue with the Illawarra Disability Trust seeing 35 adults with a disability attending the night performance. The manager, Tracey, thanked the association for the support given, making sure the wheelchairs are allocated more space in the hall. The hall was practically full of people, and everyone enjoyed themselves. The entry cost was minimal, and the committee provided 300 hotdogs to everyone in the audience at no charge.

The night went smoothly, and I wish to thank the sponsors for the vouchers distributed during the night raffle.

We are hoping to hold more concerts in the future supporting the wider community. Thanks to Paul Scully MP and Alison

Byrnes MP for attending and joined our community and also for their continuous support and friendship.
Louis Parnis. – President - George Cross Falcons Community Centre, Cringila NSW

HON ALISON BYRNES, FEDERAL MEMBER FOR CUNNINGHAM.



Alison Byrnes was born, raised and educated in the Illawarra, NSW

Alison has spent the last three decades working with and for our community. She has dedicated her personal and professional life to helping local residents and community organisations to get a better deal for the Illawarra from all levels of Government. Alison grew up in Woonona and now lives in Wollongong with her husband, Paul.

Alison is committed to a future for the Illawarra that:

- Has high quality services like healthcare and Medicare, early childhood education, disability and aged care, that are available when people need them.
- Supports the development of a skilled workforce to take advantage of

emerging industries and new jobs, and grow existing businesses.

Invests in local infrastructure, social and affordable housing, education and training.

Alison will always fight to make sure that the Illawarra gets its fair share, and to make our community an even better place to live, work and raise a family. Alison is a great supporter of the Maltese community.

HON PAUL SCULLY - MEMBER FOR WOLLONGONG NSW STATE PARLIAMENT



PAUL was elected as the Member for Wollongong in November 2016 and re-elected in March 2019 and March 2023. He also serve as the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces in the Minns Government.

He lives in Wollongong and three generations of his family call Wollongong home. He went to Mount Kembla Public School and Figtree High School before graduating from the University of Wollongong.

As our local State MP, he has been able to help save the free Gong Shuttle; secure additional carriages for overcrowded afternoon train services; forced the Government to commit to fund lifts at Unanderra Station; and helped secure funding for local community organisations including the Maltese..



THE CONSUL-GENERAL CHIRELLE ELLUL SCIBERRAS VISITED ST BERNADETTE'S AGED CARE RESIDENCE IN SUNSHINE NORTH, VICTORIA, AUSTRALIA.



On 19 April 2023 a special event brought smiles and appreciation to the elderly Maltese residents at the St Bernadette's Aged Care Hostel in North Sunshine Victoria. They had the privilege of being visited by Chirelle Ellul-Sciberras, Consulate General of Malta, who spent time mingling and speaking to the Maltese residents.

Ms. Chirelle not only donated books and gave keyrings to the residents but also she showed great warmth and friendship. She took time to meet with each one to listen to their stories of migration and their experiences past and present.

She spent some time to meet to the Maltese speaking volunteers who do a great job connecting weekly with those whose background language is Maltese.

Sr Lorraine Testa, Pastoral Care Practitioner, on behalf of the St Bernadette's RAF thanked Chirelle for remembering those who always treasure visits from Malta dignitaries. THANK YOU, CHIRELLE.

Sr Lorraine Testa *asjm* Pastoral Care Practitioner
St Bernadette's Aged Care Residence
 17 Park Drive, Sunshine North, Victoria, Australia
 Phone 9310 1000 <https://vmch.com.au>



Do you live in Australia and practice traditional Maltese handicrafts, either as a hobby or for commercial purposes?

If so and you wish that your details and services are registered, please contact us for further information on the below email:

maltaconsulate.melbourne@gov.mt



STUDENTS COMPETITION

The Consulate-General of Malta in Melbourne is pleased to announce that it is organizing a school competition about Maltese migration to Australia.

The competition is open for students of Maltese background or who have an interest in Maltese migration from both primary and secondary schools in Victoria. Students are invited to explore the theme of Maltese migration to Australia.

The competition coincides with the celebration of the 75th anniversary from the signing of the Assisted Passage Agreement with Australia.

The deadline for submission of entries is Friday 28th of April 2023. Book prizes will be awarded to the three best entries who will also have the opportunity to have their work exhibited.

For any further information, kindly contact the Consulate on 9670 8427 or by email maltaconsulate.melbourne@gov.mt



THE FIREWORKS FACTORY OF ZEBBUG EXPLODED IN 1955



Facebook - Għaqda Każin Banda San Filep

On Maundy Thursday 68 years ago, on 7 April 1955, an explosion occurred in the San Filep Fire Hall in the Kandlora area, Zebbug in the afternoon.

The victims were Philip Cassar (Ta Simillu, 37 years old), Anthony Debono (Tal-Paradajs, 29 years old), John Mary Farrugia (il-Bibillu, 37 years old), and Philip Xuereb (ta Lilel, 52 years old), four fire craftsmen members of the Musical Society, Banda San Philep Club. While Farrugia and Debono died immediately and were taken out from under the crash barely recognizable, Cassar and Xuereb died the next day in San Luqa hospital.

Two days after this tragedy, on Easter Saturday, April 9, 1955, their funeral took place. The Banda San Philep accompanied them to the grave in the cemetery of the Sacred Heart, Zebbug. As a sign of respect that year the feast of Saint Philip had no fireworks, no scaffolding and no band. Several societies from other villages accompanied with the standards.

In 2005 there was also a procession to their grave in the cemetery of the Heart of Jesus. The relatives and neighbours of the victims took part in it together with many members and officials of the Association Każin Banda San Filep. The memory of this tragedy is still alive among the pproplr of Zebbug to this day!

Ankes Malta Shop

Getränke & Delikatessen

From Berlin - Germany



Anke Jablinski (also owner of Anke's Malta Shop):
Malta, books, novels, stories, shirts,
design, paintings, drawings, art projects, art objects

Merħba (Welcome) to Ankes Malta Online Shop!

My name is Anke Jablinski and I am the author of several book about Malta & Gozo. Thank you for mentioning one of them once in Australia. Frank, I like your newsletter a lot and receive it from my friend Christian Launer (DMG, German Maltese Association or Circle) - I live in Berlin and I am selling products of Malta & Gozo since 15 years, did you know that there is someone in Germany selling Kinnie, wines & beer?

It is called Ankes Malta Shop, I have been Travelling to Malta & Gozo since 1987, writing books on the subject and drawing, painting and designing on site. I love these islands, I explored the country excessively and I also learned MALTI, the Maltese language.

In Anke's Malta Shop there are Kinnie, Cisk and other beers, wine, liqueurs, delicacies and special books about the island nation. Enjoy shopping! Please ask for special requests, such as resale prices for gastronomic establishments or pre-orders by e-mail. Other products from Farsons, Marsovin, Meridiana or Jubilee Foods can also be ordered!

For special orders, allow time of approx. 2-4 weeks is to be expected and for large orders for events, the shipping costs can be negotiated (order value of >400 €). For orders abroad, please select the corresponding country once. Will not be delivered to dhl packing stations.

Shipping takes place within a period of 1-2 working days after receipt of payment, the average delivery time is 3-5 days from order. And please note the new "Disposable Beverage Packaging Deposit Act" of the DPG! In the case of glass bottles, I advise you to inquire locally which deposit machines accept the empties with DPG label. Textiles as a reminder of the beautiful journey?

A gift? I also design shirts, baseball caps and bags with motifs from Malta & Gozo: <https://www.spreadshirt.de/user/Anke+Jablinski>

And art prints and calligraphic plates from Malta can be found here, just ask if you are interested! <https://ankejablinski.jimdo.com/>

Here is a video of the Berliner Abendschau from the early days of Anke's Malta Shop, at that time still in the Copy Shop: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o5ziLiMqwII>

Dear customer, we accept PayPal and immediate cash. Please contact us by e-mail if you have any questions regarding delivery to countries outside Germany as we deliver worldwide. Please Chose your country when you order.

ALMOST EVERYTHING REVOLVES AROUND THE TOPIC OF MALTA!

Born in Berlin in 1962, I was fascinated by art as a child.

After the first small steps in the 1980s (exhibitions, my own studio, sales at art markets and my own shirt label), I received some funding in the field of literature in the 1990s and gave my first readings. This was followed by prose and essay publications.

While in the past millennium my work was mainly related to "people" (portraits, nudes, celebrities, literature related to psychological topics), today my focus is on Malta.

Since my first visit to Malta in 1987, I have been fascinated by the archipelago.

Malta and the sister island of Gozo have become my second home and I give readings and lectures. I describe and paint Malta and create designs for shirts that have a connection to the islands. The calligraphic plates are place names of Malta & Gozo, in which a reference to the respective place has been incorporated. The place names can also be ordered as a print on the shirt. Shirts also here: <https://www.spreadshirt.de/user/Anke+Jablinski>.



MALTESE SERVICEMEN IN WW1

EW Bratchell and Group, Malta, 3rd London Regiment, 1915-1918

Situated in the Mediterranean Sea, the Maltese islands of Malta, Gozo and Comino have a land area equal to twice the size of Dublin. The population of the islands in 1914 was approximately 217,000, nearly a third of which were concentrated in the capital Valletta. Due to its central position in the central Mediterranean and its role as a naval base, Malta has been strategically important since Roman times.

When war was declared, the garrison on Malta totalled 6,000 servicemen of all ranks. These forces came under the command of the governor, General Sir Leslie Rundle, who was replaced in 1915 by Field Marshal Lord Methuen. Many Maltese who fought in the war joined the armed forces of Canada and Australia as well as the British Army.

In January 1917, 95 Maltese officers served outside of Malta with a further 13 serving as surgeons on British hospital ships. Locally raised units included the King's Own Malta Regiment of Militia with a strength of 3,393, the Royal Malta Artillery with a strength of 1,032 and the Royal Engineer Militia which a contingent of 136 men. None of these units served at the front but by taking part in garrison duty they allowed British troops to be deployed overseas.

The total number of Maltese from Malta who served in the army in any capacity during the war is estimated at 15,000, with the Maltese Labour Corp accounting for 7,000. One battalion unloaded ships at Gallipoli with a further two battalions serving at Salonika. A further 1,500 Maltese were employed in the motor transport work of the Army Service Corps. The number of men killed and injured in the Labour Corps totalled 300. Maltese also served at various Royal Naval establishments with 10,000 employed at the Dockyard Naval Ordnance Depot, 2,400 in coaling, 1,300 on sea-going service and 200 in mine sweeping. A number of Maltese also served aboard British ships at Jutland with 778 employed by the Royal Air Force.



MILITARY HOSPITALS

RNA Seaplane base, Malta, 1917

Malta's most significant contribution to the war was its role as a military hospital base. Following the first landings in Gallipoli in April 1915, a total of 4,000 wounded servicemen

were treated in hospitals in Malta. By June over 6,000 beds were made available and the end of September 13,000 men were under treatment in hospitals, camps and schools. At its height, the number of wounded reached 20,000, with dysentery and typhoid accounting for the same number of casualties as gunshot wounds.

As a result of the Gallipoli campaign alone, approximately 2,500 officers and 55,400 other ranks received treatment in Malta. To deal with the casualties, the size of the Royal Army Medical Corps increased to 334 medical officers, 913 nurses and 2,032 other ranks. In July 1915, Sir H R Whitehead was appointed Surgeon-General. He was succeeded in March 1916 by Surgeon-General Sir Thomas Yarr. Women assisted the injured via the Voluntary Aid Detachment, the Red Cross and the Church Army. Private subscriptions to the British Red Cross and St. John Ambulance amounted to £18,562. Due to its role in tending the war-wounded Malta became known as the nurse of the Mediterranean.

THE MYSTERY OF MALTA'S LONG-HEADED SKULLS

*The Editor of
HERA, Italy's
Magazine of
Ancient Mysteries,
Unravels One of
the World's
Strangest Puzzles*

Long ago in the megalithic temple of Hal Saflieni, in Malta, were buried men with extraordinary cranial volume. Their skulls seem to observers today to belong to a truly alien stock. If properly understood, could these skulls provide a link between the ancient Mesopotamian and Egyptian cultures and a race of sacerdotal (priestly) men identified with the serpent?

We are back from a visit in Malta where we traced an ancient tale originating from megalithic temples to the Mother Goddess—adored in prehistoric times when the island was an important cult center. We were trying to resolve a mystery of truly stunning implications.

Before 1985 a number of these skulls, found in prehistoric Maltese temples at Taxien, Ggantja and Hal Saflieni, were displayed in the Archaeological Museum of the Valletta. A few years ago, though, they were removed and placed in storage. The public has not seen them since. Only the photographs taken by Maltese researcher Dr. Anton Mifsud and his colleague Dr. Charles Savona Ventura remain to testify of their existence and as proof of their extraordinary characteristics. Books by the two doctors, who helped us during our stay, provided the necessary documentation.

Illustrations in the books show a collection of skulls with unmistakable abnormalities and/or pathologies. Some revealed nonexistent cranial knitting lines, abnormally developed temporal



Two of Malta's mysterious skulls, the dolichocephalous (long-headed) one below.

partitions, and drilled and swollen occiputs (the back, or posterior, part of the head or skull; the region of the occipital bone), as might appear after trauma recovery. Most significantly, however, they included an odd lengthened skull, bigger and stranger than the others, lacking the median knitting. Such a finding leads to several possible hypotheses. A similarity with skulls from Egypt and South America found with this particular deformity—ancient (from approximately 3000 B.C.), yet unique in medical pathology—suggests this could be an extraordinary discovery. Was this skull the result of an ancient genetic mutation between different races or something else?

The Long-Headed Skulls

Our request for help from the museum's management would certainly have failed if not for the intercession of the minister of tourism, Michael Refalo, who we met at the end of a press conference organized by Dr. Robert Zammit, of the Maltese Provincial Tourism Board. The minister, whose interest in the matter we stimulated, accompanied us to the museum, and personally obtained the director's permission to bring out the mysterious skulls, kept for about 15 years far from the sight of curious onlookers and researchers.



Media release

Il-Ħaġar Commemorates Benedict XVI

The Gozo Philatelic Society has changed the display in its showcase on level -1 at Il-Ħaġar museum in Victoria's Pjazza San Ġorġ.

On the anniversary of Pope Benedict XVI's visit to Malta, a range of exclusive covers

and designs by Anthony Grech are on show. He produced them on 17 and 18 April 2010 during the visit, as well as on the demise of the Pope Emeritus on 31 December 2022. These exhibits will be replaced in mid May when the GPS will be issuing a Card publication. However the permanent items on level 2 include a signed letter, skullcap and mitre from his pontificate.

Visitors can continue to pick up free copies of the GPS quarterly periodical. Visiting hours remain 9am – 5pm seven days a week, still with no entrance fee.



ST. NICHOLAS FESTA COMMITTEE PLUMPTON NSW

Variety Night

Saturday 29th April 2023
6.30pm to 11pm
At The Good Shepherd Hall
136, Hyatts Road Plumpton NSW 2761

Featuring:-
Charlie Muscat, Martin Vella, Natasha Tatarinoff & More Entertainers

Food & Drinks available from the Kitchen
Also Maltese Biscuits, Cakes & Cannoli will be available from

Traditional Delights
Competitiveness Quality Not Compromised

\$10 Entry Donation & Kids U / 12yrs. Free
For tickets please call **Stella** on 0414 188 226
Public Relations Officer



Press Release:

Happy Parenting Malta's Voice at International IPAAD and ISPD Conferences

25th April is the International Parental Alienation Awareness Day IPAAD, and 26th April is the International Shared Parenting Day ISPD.

Our NGO *Happy Parenting - Malta (For Happier Children)* has been invited to address:

the 24th-25th April's Conference in Romania, organized by Bucharest Tribunal and APISET Innovative projects in education, health and tourism. The

Conference theme will be: **The Interdisciplinary approach to litigation with minors in cases of Parental Alienation**

as well as the 5th-7th May's **6th International Conference of the ICSP International Council of Shared Parenting**. Happy Parenting - Malta (For Happier Children) is an official member of ICSP.

Our NGO will be speaking about the importance of family wellbeing through prevention, early detection and intervention, support and therapy.

Anyone interested to join any of these conferences and needs assistance, is encouraged to contact us.

Mary Gauci- President

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THE THREE IRISH PRIESTS IN GOZO

Fr. Eugene and his brother Fr. Martin O'Hagan who originally are from the village of Claudy County Londonderry and Fr. David Delargy

PRESS RELEASE

Jp2 foundation

Chev Joe M Attard - PRO

'The Priests' well received in the Basilica of Xaghra'.

On Friday evening, April 14, a church packed with people from every corner of the island of Gozo filled the Church of Nativity of Our Lady Basilica in Xaghra to see and hear three priests from Ireland sing a number of sacred and popular songs on the occasion of the 50th anniversary from the Coronation of the titular statue of the Virgin Mary in Xaghra. They were accompanied on the piano by Mro Dr. John Galea. Between the first and second part of the concert, a number of children also took part under the direction of Grace Vella Refalo and accompanied on the piano by Dr. Joseph Camilleri. They sang 'Nadurawk ja Hobz tas Sema' and 'Reisaq Il-lejl Muleja' written by the National Poet Monsignor Dun Karm Psaila and the 'Hymn of the Coronation' composed by the late Mro Nazzareno Refalo and words of Canon Giljan Refalo Rapa.

This occasion was held on the initiative of the JP2 Foundation (Pope Saint John Paul II Cultural Foundation) with the full assistance of the Ministry for Gozo, the Directorate of Cultural Heritage as well of the Xaghra Local Council and with the blessing and full collaboration of the Xaghra Parish Chapter and that of the Archpriest.

During the two hour program, the three priests, Fr. Eugene and his brother Fr. Martin O'Hagan who originally are from the village of Claudy County Londonderry and Fr. David Delargy from Ballymena

County Antrim performed with a really solid and majestic voice several songs including, 'Laudamus te' by Vivaldi, 'Ave Maria' by Schubert, 'How great thou art' by Carl Bobert, the 'Benedictus' which is the canticle of Zacharias, 'King of Kings' from the American film, 'Ag Criost an Sol' from Irish poetry, 'Amazing Grace' by John Newton, 'Morning has broken' by Eleanor Farjeon, 'You raise me Up' by Brendan Graham, 'Lord of the Dance' by Sydney Carter, 'I cannot tell' written by William Young Fullerton a writer from Belfast, 'Panis Angelicus' who came from the pen of Saint Thomas Aquinas, 'Have I told you lately that I love You' by Van Morrison, 'Eleanor Rigby' originally written by Paul McCartney, 'Ave Verum' which is a Eucharistic Hymn and 'You will never walk alone' from Rodgers' Musical 'Carousel' and Hammerstein. During the singing of the Ave Maria, two of the Priests presented a bouquet of roses in front of the statue of Our Lady.

Towards the end of this evening, which ended with a great 'Standing Ovation', Archpriest Mons Carmel Refalo thanked all those that were involved in this event and expressed how great and noble the mission of the priest and presented some gifts to these three Irish priests who have been singing together since they were still students together in college in the seventies. They had many successes and allowed recorded their first CD in St. Peters Basilica at the Vatican. They toured the world delivering a message of hope.

The evening closed by three mothers who they all have their children priests - Mari Sultana the mother of the Priest Daniel Sultana, Marija Curmi, mother of three priests, two of them Archpriests and one in the Mission, and Marija Refalo. mother of two other priests, one the same Archpriest of the Basilica and Can Anton Refalo Parish priest of Munxar, they also presented a gift to these singer-priests of world fame who came among us with the initiative of the President of the JP2 Foundation Comm. Carmel Zammit.

I WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE MANY THOUSANDS OF MALTESE FROM GOZO WHO READ AND SUPPORT THE MALTESE JOURNAL EVERY WEEK



Audrey Mercieca

Audrey Mercieca from Luqa and lives in Gozo was born on 17th December 1974. Audrey started studying art and art history under the guidance of Professor Joseph Paul Cassar. Later on she attended classes by the late artist Mr Charles Cassar who emphasized on the imaginative painting.

Audrey also attended Mr Anton Calleja's life classes. She later continued attending Mr Alfred Briffa's life classes where she consolidated her design especially in the human figure and portraiture and a good use of colour both in pastels and oils. Audrey also attended Mr Winston Hassall's watercolour classes covering various subjects. For a brief period she frequented Mr Angelo Agius' studio making statues in clay. Audrey attended a three year sculpture course with the late Mr Joseph Chetcuti at the Malta School of Arts and designing at his studio. She placed first in the sculpture class with Mr Chetcuti. Later she attended various courses at the Florence Academy of Art in 2013, 2016, 2017 and 2018 covering drawing, painting and sculpture with internationally renowned artists Jordan Sokol, Eran Webber, Vitaliy Shtanko, Jura Bedic and Simone Olivia Moritz. The latest was a workshop in 2019 with artist Nicholas O'Leary in Mölndal Sweden which is 10 minutes outside Gothenburg.

Audrey received "Gieh l-Ghasri" in 2018 for painting the "Bandalori" of the Ghasri village feast

Audrey Mercieca believes that education in art is of optimal importance and that there's always room to learn more. Her experience in art yielded to artistic growth and style experimenting with different media in various subjects. It depends on her mood to pick up a media and start bringing to life on paper, canvas or in clay what's in her mind. Her good observation, understanding and sensitivity towards the subject painted, result in paintings that convey a mood. She prefers working from life so she's either painting portraits and figures in her studio or painting landscapes plein-air.

Painting outdoors helps Audrey to feel one with nature and enhances her observation.

While the scene in front of her is constantly changing due to change in lights, shadows, colours, and mobile objects example boats she can choose her palette and composition according to what inspires her at that moment. While painting en plein-air Audrey feels that she's flowing in the moment and usually the result is a tranquil and peaceful painting.

Many times a lot of tracking with the outdoor painting equipment has to take place to reach a desirable place to paint a particular scene. This brings out the inner child in the artist and reminds her of her childhood days when her mother used to take her out for very long walks in the countryside to explore new wonderful places. Audrey says she feels a divine presence and comfort in all the little things around her from the tiny ladybird on delicate petals, the breeze that caresses her skin, the shimmering golden light on the ocean, different colours of sandy beaches to the swaying trees in the wind, powerful rough seas and hot weather. Audrey paints plein-air all year round and she sees the pattern of nature from season to season. Nature is her teacher and she feels there's even more to explore along her artistic journey. Many might say that Malta is a small island but she says not if one sees it through the eyes of an artist.

Every painting for Audrey is part of her diary. Saying that, one can conclude that each painting is part of her life which brings to memory not only her story but also thoughts and feelings.

Audrey is a member of the Malta Society of Arts & Pastel Society of Arts. She took part in various collective and solo exhibitions. Her works hang in private collections both in Malta and abroad.



AN EXHIBITION NOT TO BE MISSED

This is the name of a Painting Exhibition by the artist Audrey Mercieca from Hal Luqa and lives in Ghasri Gozo with the family. The exhibition is on display at the Valletta Local Council, Triq ir-Repubblika Valletta which was opened to the public on Monday 17 April and which will remain open until Tuesday 2 May 2023

THE MID-YEAR COMBINED BAND CONCERT



**FEATURING
MALTESE CONCERT BAND
&
ON THE BEAT
MUSIC ACADEMY BAND**

AWE-INSPIRING MUSIC
FROM DIFFERENT CONTINENTS
GENRES & PERIODS

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3-5PM**

LA VALETTE SOCIAL CENTRE
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LA VALETTE

• \$10 ENTRY •
5.30PM 9PM

LIVE ON STAGE



ROC-A-TAC

DJ ALBERT

175 WALTERS ROAD BLACKTOWN



**MALTESE COMMUNITY
COUNCIL OF VICTORIA
(MCCV)**

Antonia Camilleri President of the MCCV
and the Secretary Andrew Gatt attended the
81st anniversary of the George Cross
at the Shrine of remembrance in Melbourne.

**We are the leading journal of relationship support
services for Maltese individuals, families and communities
all over the world. We aim to support all Maltese communities
to achieve positive and respectful relationships.**

The cave churches of Malta: symbols of entombment and resurrection

Image Courtesy of the Archdiocese of Malta *MTA - Malta Tourism Authority -*

Early Christians in the archipelago turned caves and pre-existing catacombs into chapels that could accommodate a growing community of believers.

From prehistoric cave dwellings and burial chambers to medieval and modern military tunnels, the history of Malta is deeply intertwined with its relatively 'soft' rock formations and its limestone caves. **Early Christians turned caves and pre-existing catacombs into chapels that could accommodate a growing community of believers, resulting in a series of churches which appear to have formed naturally out of the beautiful Maltese underground landscape.** As explained by Dr. Charlene Vella to the website Guidememalta.com, (the Department of Art and Art History at the University of Malta), **cave churches also took a symbolic meaning as they were seen as a "figuration of the Entombment and Resurrection" of Jesus Christ.**



Known as **troglo-dyte churches**, from the Greek word τρωγλοδύτης (troglo-dýtis) *troggle-dyein* (*troggle*: "hole" or "cave" and *dyein*: "get into"), **cave churches are one of the most interesting architectural developments in the history of Christian culture.** Part rock, part sculpture, they contain elements that display the fine skills of local sculptors and artists. While other cave churches have appeared across the Mediterranean, from Southern Italy to France and Egypt, **Maltese cave churches are unique for the quality of their finely decorated interiors, featuring limestone carvings and colourful murals.** The

way functional elements were hewn out of raw rocks is simply impressive. Many features could be carved out of limestone, while natural protrusions were carved to make "natural" seating and altars.

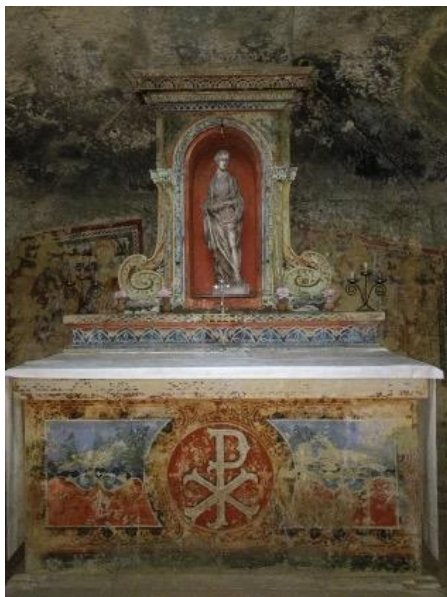
Often, **it was hermit-monks who discovered suitable natural enclaves for prayer and meditation which were later used by Christians as places of worship.** Sometimes, when local parish communities experienced fast growth, cave churches were annexed to existing catacombs built by the early Christian community way back, when Christian burials were not allowed within the city walls.

Following is a list of the most interesting cave churches, developed in Malta from the 4th century to the 15th century AD. **This list is not exhaustive, as there are other existing cave churches, and others which are documented but unfortunately have been completely lost.** Also, it is beyond doubt that in Malta and Gozo there are several other cavern churches buried under the ground or hewn deep in the hill sides of our steep valleys. Our rock formations are mostly of globigerina limestone, soft and easy to burrow, and caves and caverns are common in such geological environment. **To unearth or discover some of these is a long and arduous task.** However, we have faith that in the future more cave churches and subterranean treasures will be discovered.

ST. AGATHA'S CRYPT CHURCH.

In an area of modern Rabat, **one finds a network of Early Christian Catacombs called the St. Agatha Complex.** Local tradition has it that during the persecution of the Roman Emperor Trajanus Decius (AD 249-251), Agatha, together with some of her friends, fled from her native land of Sicily and took refuge in Malta. The underground crypt-church of St. Agatha is hewn in live rock. It is an underground basilica which was venerated by the Maltese since Antiquity. At the time of St. Agatha's stay, the crypt was a small natural cave, which during the 4th or 5th century was enlarged and embellished. The cave church is the perfect example of Maltese cave churches' development. **First built as a place of worship out of a small natural cave, it later came to engulf the nearby catacomb, also dedicated to St. Agatha, in order to accommodate a larger number of believers.** The altar dedicated to Saint Agatha, at the far end, was in use until at least AD 1647. This cave church stands out because of the number of colourful mural paintings

**OUR JOURNAL IS NON-POLITICAL AND FREE. OUR AIM IS TO INFORM AND UNITE
MALTESE COMMUNITIES AROUND THE WORLD**



The Fourth Century Fresco – Courtesy of Saint Agatha's complex, Rabat

dating as far back as the 12th century. Of the 30 images painted on the cave walls, 13 represent Saint Agatha while the rest represent bishops, saints, martyrs and the Virgin Mary.

Saint Agatha's Crypt – Courtesy of Saint Agatha's complex, Rabat.

One of the chambers of these Christian catacombs seems to be their *Sancta Sanctorum*. This primitive chapel is decorated with a 4th century fresco representing a scallop shell painted in various colours. It symbolizes the source of life, that is God. In the middle there is a cross with the Greek letter "R" (rho) with a horizontal line passing through its middle, an artistic variation of the Greek letter "X" (chi), which signifies Christ. On both ends of the horizontal line, there are the alpha (α) and omega (ω). The fresco also has flowers on both sides, and a dove with leaves or flowers in its claws. Being the best-preserved fresco from the earliest age of Malta's Christian age existing in the Catacombs, the fresco underwent restoration in the year 2000 by Mr. George Farrugia from the art conservation department before Heritage Malta was established in 2004. Unfortunately, certain parts were completely destroyed and could not be recovered



NATIVITY OF OUR LADY – SANCTUARY OF THE VIRGIN, MELLIEĦA.

The cave church in the [Malta National Shrine of the Blessed Virgin of Mellieħa](#) stands out from the others because it holds a wall painting of the Virgin Mary called *Hodegetria* (the Virgin who shows the way). The *Rollo* document of AD 1436, of Bishop De Mello, clearly states that a parish already existed in Mellieħa. This Sanctuary was visited by Pope St. John Paul II during his visit in 1990. It is very probable that Christian practice, on this site and the cave church, vastly predates the present 13th century fresco. A tradition maintains that in AD 409, a number of Catholic Bishops visited the hallowed grotto and consecrated it as a Church. Indeed, the ceiling mural (which can be seen in the

accompanying image) is a late depiction of this event. This would have been very close to the Council of Ephesus of AD 431 when the Blessed Virgin was universally recognized and acclaimed as *Theotokos*, (Birth-giver of Christ God – *Mater Dei* in Latin). An interesting fact is that after Ottoman corsairs attacked the church, causing damage to the *Hodegetria* painting, the whole mural was covered with silver, apart from the faces of Mary and the Child Jesus. It was only thanks to scientific restoration in 1950, that art historians and expert art restorers were able to uncover the rest of the painting.

The cave church of the Mellieħa National Marian Shrine. The *Hodegetria* can be seen above the altar, and part of the ceiling mural depicting the Bishops can also be seen | Courtesy of the Archdiocese of Malta

Courtesy of the Archdiocese of Malta

Between 2013 and 2016 further restoration was carried out by Atelier del Restauro, in order to preserve the Holy Icon for posterity. Another grotto forms part of the complex of the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Mellieħa. It consists of a chapel hewn in the 17th century out of the hard, brownish limestone– a dream come true of a Sicilian devotee of Our Lady, Mario de Vasi, who was a regular visitor to the Mellieħa Sanctuary. It is located across the street from the Church of Our Lady of Victory, adjacent to the Sanctuary of the Madonna of Mellieħa. To fulfil his life-long wish, de Vasi later erected a white statue, of Our Lady holding the Holy Infant Jesus on her left arm, at the far end of the chapel. Over the years thousands of pilgrims visited the underground Shrine and prayed before the Madonna, attributing to her many miraculous interventions and healings, spiritual and temporal.

WE ARE PROUD OF OUR MALTESE ACHIEVERS