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# Maltese e-Newsletter



**Maltese-Australian  
Shaun Bonétt  
The homeschooled  
billionaire  
who built a fortune  
before turning 40**



**Vladyslava Kravchenko  
Maltese Paralympian**

**The Maltese Journal  
from Australia to  
the World**



**Hon Ian Borg  
Deputy Prime Minister**



**Ramires Sciberras wins  
the Malta Junior Eurovision  
Song Contest 2024  
and will represent  
Malta at the Junior  
Eurovision Song  
Contest 2024 in Spain  
with the song  
“Stilla Ċkejna”  
on the 16th  
November**



**Mario Farrugia Borg  
High Commissioner**



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## Message from Minister of Foreign and European Affairs and Trade and Deputy Prime Minister Hon. Ian Borg

As we commemorate the 60th Anniversary of Malta's Independence, we stand at a pivotal juncture in our nation's history — a moment to reflect on our achievements and to envision the future we aspire to create. This milestone is not just a

celebration of our sovereignty, but a testament to the enduring strength of our bilateral relations, particularly with nations like Australia, with whom we share profound historical ties and a common commitment to global peace and prosperity.

Over the decades, Malta has emerged as a resolute advocate on the international stage, pushing the values of democracy, human rights, and multilateral cooperation. Our collaboration with Australia within pivotal international bodies such as the United Nations Security Council and the OSCE underscores the deep mutual respect and shared strategic interests that bind our countries together.

I would like to take this opportunity to extend my heartfelt greetings to the Maltese community in Australia—the largest Maltese diaspora in the world. You are the living bridge between our two nations, and your contributions have not only strengthened the fabric of Australian society but have also preserved the rich cultural heritage of Malta abroad. Your unwavering dedication to Malta, even from distant shores, is a source of great pride for us all.

As we look ahead, Malta is determined to broaden its horizons, reaching beyond traditional European markets to engage dynamically with the Asia-Pacific region. In this spirit, we are committed to deepening trade relations, fostering educational and cultural exchanges, and pioneering innovative partnerships in critical areas such as the digital economy, climate resilience, and sustainable development.

On this auspicious occasion, let us reaffirm our dedication to building a future that honors our past, strengthens our global partnerships, and ensures that Malta continues to thrive as a beacon of progress and stability in an ever-evolving world.

It was very moving to read Her Excellency Myriam Spiteri Debono's message to the readers of this Maltese Journal. The President is a very wise person and it shows that she cares for all Maltese citizens living in Malta and overseas. May we all follow her advise to keep alive the Language, Culture and Heritage of the Maltese islands wherever we are. Thank you and may God bless you Madam President. A & J Coleiro USA

## Message from High Commissioner of Malta H.E. Mario Farrugia Borg

This year, as we mark Malta's 60th Anniversary of Independence as well as 60 years since the establishment of diplomatic relations with Australia, we reflect on how crucial it is to preserve our rich cultural legacy. The vibrant Maltese community in Australia is a testament to the enduring bonds between our two nations, and it is our shared responsibility to ensure these connections remain alive and strong.

In order to guarantee that the Maltese community in Australia gets the help and support it requires, initiatives like the Consul-on-the-Move are essential. This milestone is a reminder of our mutual commitment to enhance our ties. We are dedicated to continuing our collaboration in supporting cultural activities, enhancing educational exchanges, and building on our people-to-people links. Together, we will ensure that Malta's rich traditions, language, and heritage continue to develop and inspire future generations in Australia.



## INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATION IN SYDNEY NSW

Photo – Lawrence Buhagiar, Chris Bown and Syd Borg

The Australian-Maltese Chamber of Commerce (AMCC) Gala Dinner held at Mandavilla Function Centre in Horsley NSW together with president the Chev Sydney JP Borg and members of the Australian Maltese Chamber of Commerce, and various guests including the Federal Minister for Energy and Climate Change, The Hon. Chris Bowen.

Together with the Consulate General of Malta. Mr. Lawrence Buhagiar they celebrated the 60th

Independence Anniversary of the Republic of Malta, and the 30th Anniversary of the AMCC. Mr Buhagiar was happy to support the Chamber of Commerce and assist its members to connect and do business in Malta

Mr. Buhagiar would like to thank the AMCC and its members for gifting him with the Akubra handcrafted Australian hat - it will be treasured and proudly used in New Zealand.

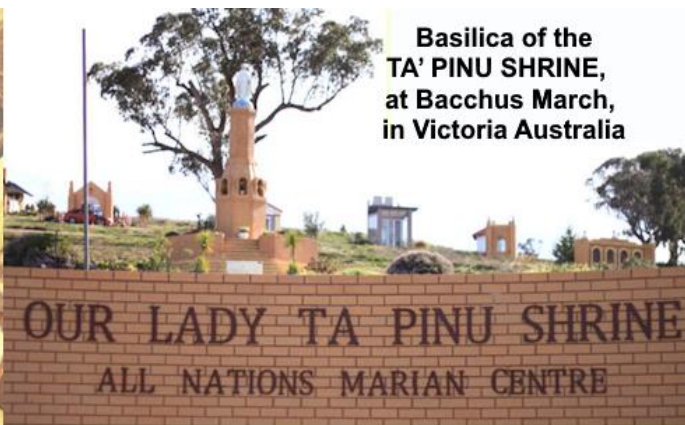
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## MGR. BENEDICT CAMILLERI

It was one of the hardest moments as Mgr. Benedict Camilleri, (Dun Beneditt) was admitted into the Rosary Home in Keilor Downs. He is very grateful to Sister Doris and the Dominican Sisters of Malta for accepting him in their care and above all for their warm welcome and care!!!

Father benedict has been the rector of the Basilica of the TA' PINU



**Basilica of the  
TA' PINU SHRINE,  
at Bacchus March,  
in Victoria Australia**

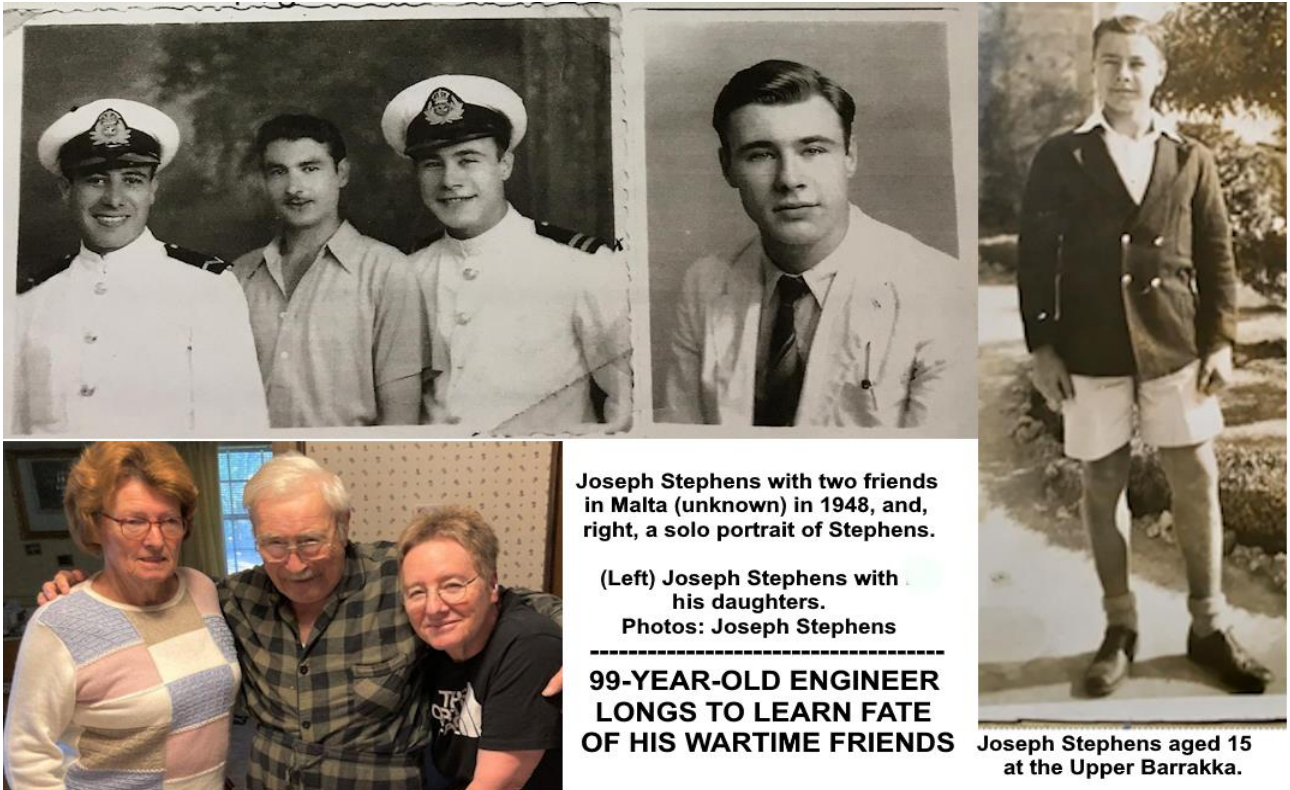
SHRINE, at Bacchus March, in Victoria Australia for many years.

This was the first of many shrines dedicated to the Blessed Virgin under various titles. The intention of the Ta' Pinu Shrine has always been and remains to create a united family of Immigrants, loving and helping each other spiritually working together in this place of God, an oasis of Peace, Unity and Love while we thrive to maintain harmony and good examples among us.. Funded by Msgr. Benedict Camilleri and other Maltese devotees, work commenced on the 14th November 2005. On 18th December 2005 the oratory was inaugurated and blessed by His Lordship, Dr Frank Little, Archbishop of Melbourne

I love to receive your Maltese Journal, and I am grateful that you continue sending it to me. By the way, my parents were both Maltese and were born and grew up in Malta. They went to Australia where I was born in 1956. I'm also a Maltese citizen with my Maltese passport. Your journal is very interesting and keeps me up to date. Please keep sending me your good work. Thank you, Frank. Ciao for now, Maurice Harrington / Azzopardi.

[Emma Borg](#)

A 99-year-old retired engineer is making a heartfelt appeal to understand what happened to his



wartime friends from his days as a dockyard apprentice during World War II.

Joseph V Stephens, born in Marsa to a Maltese mother and English father, began his electrical apprenticeship at the dockyard at age 16, just one month before Malta was under siege.

Now living in the US, Stephens, who despite his age, is as sharp as a knife, is eager to discover what happened to those who shared the hardships of those years.

"I'm doing all this because I want to feel young again. It would give me such strength knowing what happened to them," he said.

More than 75 years have passed since Stephens left Malta, but the bonds he formed with his fellow apprentices during those turbulent times remain strong in his memory.

One man, in particular, stands out – Cuthbert Grech, whom Stephens fondly remembers as "a remarkably ingenious fellow".

Joseph Stephens with two friends in Malta (unknown) in 1948, and, right, a solo portrait of Stephens. In 1942, amid the bombs raining down on the Grand Harbour, Grech and Stephens would disguise themselves as naval personnel in blue overalls, and sneak aboard cruisers and destroyers to scavenge for food.

"We could easily have been arrested, but we didn't care. We were starving," Stephens recalled.

Stephens also remembers his contemporaries Walter Darmanin, Caledon Ferriggi and Immanuel Cauchi, as well as their instructor, Chiko Zammit.

He hopes to find out what became of them and perhaps reconnect even though he is aware the chances of that happening are fairly slim.

The Siege of Malta, which began in June 1940 and lasted until May 1943, transformed the island into a fortress under constant attack. Malta, crucial for its strategic location in the Mediterranean, became one of the most-bombed areas in the world.

The dockyard, located near the Grand Harbour, was a key target as Axis forces sought to cripple British naval operations on the island.

Stephens recalls the fear and danger of working in the dockyard during the air raids.

“My mother was very concerned for my safety as we were in the centre of the action. It was very dangerous just going to work in those days,” he said.

Despite the danger, the experience forged strong friendships among the apprentices.

Joseph Stephens aged 15 at the Upper Barrakka. 'Everyone in Malta wanted to leave'

“At my age, you have a lot of time on your hands, and your mind begins to wander. Lately, I've been wondering what happened to my old friends,” he said.

Stephens finished his apprenticeship in 1946 and left Malta two years later, joining many young Maltese who sought opportunities abroad after the war.

“Everyone in Malta wanted to leave, especially our young ones, and unfortunately, we totally lost touch,” he said. Stephens tried to reconnect with his contemporaries decades ago through an Australian publication but his efforts fell flat. Now, with more time on his hands, Stephens is making one final attempt to reach out to his wartime comrades.

“I have this curiosity about them I can't seem to shake, and I know I need to tackle it,” he said.

Anyone with information on dockyard apprentices between 1940 and 1946 may contact Stephens at [joseph9922@icloud.com](mailto:joseph9922@icloud.com)



## **MALTESE COMMUNITY COUNCIL OF NSW - AUSTRALIA**

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**MCC NSW: The Umbrella Body of Maltese Associations in NSW**

## RESTORATION OF AUSTRALIA HALL MALTA PROJECT

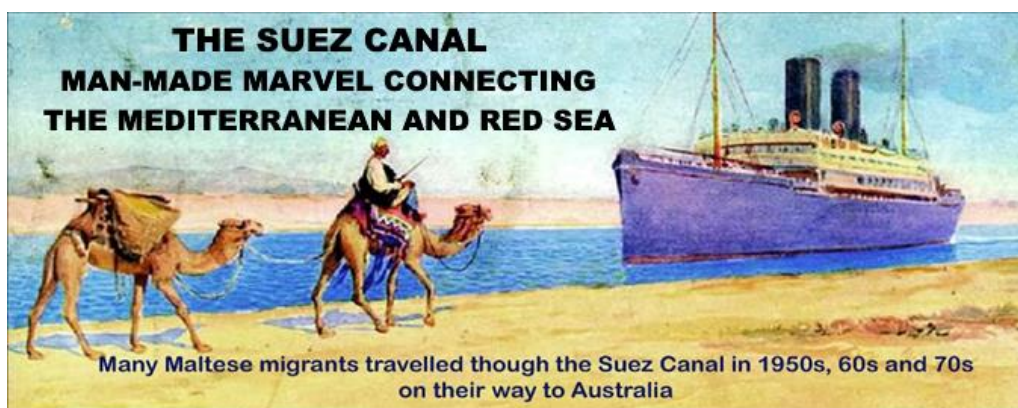
This week I took a University of South Florida Professor - Dr Davide Tanasi and two of his students - Dustin Thomas and Don Wyant to Australia Hall to test their scanning technology. The result is a demonstration of the technology and when they return to the US they will clean up the product.

I will be meeting with a number of people this week, including the Pembroke Council (if we can collaborate times), a couple of locals who are interested in the building's history, and the property owner to discuss the next steps. Two weeks ago I met with the Australian High

Commissioner HE Matt Skelly, who is actively interested in supporting our project where he can, and I met briefly with a number of US veterans at the US Embassy in Malta who are excited by veterans support programs. All the best, In the meantime, here is a link for your viewing:

<https://my.matterport.com/show/?m=qD3LHb1XfgU...>

Andrew Wilkinson and RAHMP Team



## HISTORY OF EGYPT - THE SUEZ CANAL

1859 was another important year in the history of Egypt and of the Mediterranean. On April 25 of that year

Ferdinand de Lesseps started working on the Suez Canal and that zone was to attract thousands of workers from the European shores of the Mediterranean. Some Maltese sought their fortune in that area. Manual workers left Malta on their own initiative to find employment with the British Forces in Egypt. Most of the immigrants from Malta earned their livelihood in the construction business as masons, carpenters, smiths and glaziers. Their British employers found them useful because some Maltese knew English, and they were able to pick up Arabic much faster than other European



### **The Vulcan plane crash that devastated Zabbar - Malta**

**I**t was a military aviation accident that occurred in Malta on 14 October 1975 when an Avro Vulcan B.2 bomber crashed after an aborted landing at RAF Luqa. The aircraft crashed in a residential area in Żabbar, and five crew members and one civilian (Vincenza Zammit) on the ground were killed. The two

pilots managed to eject and survived the accident. The crash caused extensive damage to many buildings in Żabbar. An investigation of the accident cited pilot error as the primary cause. XM645 was an Avro Vulcan B.2 bomber which had been completed in March 1964.

On 14 October 1975, the aircraft was flying from RAF Waddington in England to RAF Luqa in Malta.<sup>[2]</sup> The pilot was Flight Lieutenant G. R. Alcock, and the co-pilot was Flying Officer E. G. Alexander, and five other crew members were also on board.<sup>[2]</sup> Alcock allowed Alexander to carry out the final approach, but the latter was not adequately briefed with the problems that arose when landing on a short, sloping runway like that at Luqa.

With Alexander piloting the aircraft, it made a hard landing at Luqa and undershot the runway, shearing off its undercarriage.<sup>[3]</sup> According to an eyewitness, the aircraft then became airborne and touched down again about 600 feet (180 m) from where it first landed.<sup>[2]</sup> By this point, captain Alcock had taken over control of the aircraft, and he decided to climb again and attempt another landing.<sup>[2]</sup> Fire broke out in the starboard wing as a fuel tank had been pierced by the initial impact.<sup>[3]</sup> Before the aircraft managed to return to the airport, the crew realised that it was too late and the pilot and co-pilot ejected.<sup>[2]</sup> The aircraft then exploded in mid-air, killing the remaining five crew members on board, who did not have time to escape the aircraft by bailing out through a crew door.

Debris including the aircraft's fuel tanks landed in the main street of Żabbar and exploded upon impact. Other parts of the aircraft fell on top of the school and other areas of the town. There was extensive property damage, with over 100 houses and shops and some cars being damaged. A woman who was walking in the street was killed, while about 20 other people on the ground were injured, some seriously. Firefighters took hours to put out the fires caused by the crash.

Plaque in Żabbar with a Maltese inscription reading ***"To thank God and Our Lady of Graces for the deliverance from greater destruction in the plane crash (Vulcan) on 14 October 1975, the people of Żabbar set up this lasting memorial."***

An inquiry was held after the crash, and it concluded that it was "an avoidable accident in which a serviceable aircraft was flown into the ground killing all rear crew members."<sup>[3]</sup> The report criticized captain Alcock for allowing co-pilot Alexander to carry out the final approach without adequately briefing him, and found his handling of the aircraft as negligent.<sup>[3]</sup>

One of the houses which was seriously damaged was rebuilt at the expense of the RAF, and it was later renamed *Vulcan*.

Since the aircraft crashed in a residential area and caused severe damage, the human casualties on the ground could have been much worse.<sup>[2]</sup> Some interpreted this as a [miracle](#). In fact, a few days after the crash, on 25th October 1975 a procession with the stature of Our Lady of Graces was carried out to "thank God and His Mother for saving the locality from what could have been a much worse disaster." The [Żabbar Sanctuary Museum](#) contains a small exhibition relating to the accident.



## Auberge d'Allemagne

The Auberge d'Allemagne was the conventual home of the German Knights Hospitaller. Built between 1571 and 1575 in Strada Ponente (West Street). The Architect was Gerolamo Cassar.

When Queen Adelaide, the widow of William IV, spent the winter of 1838/39 in Malta she was dismayed to find no

proper Anglican Church. The British authorities had resisted previous suggestions to build, ostensibly on the grounds of expense, but partly out of consideration for the Roman Catholic Maltese population. Anglican services were held in a room of the Grand Master's Palace and was "insufficient to contain more than the chief English families". The vast majority of English residents were spiritually neglected. Queen Adelaide's offer to pay for a church (nearly £20,000 at the time) overcame all objections. The British Government provided a site, on the spot where the Auberge d'Allemagne had stood. Queen Adelaide laid the foundation stone on 20th March 1839. Queen Adelaide's Banner hangs majestically above the choir stalls.

The original building proved unstable and work started again in 1841 under new designs by William Scamp, who had been employed for some years as Clerk of Works to Sir James Wyattville on the remodeling of Windsor Castle. The Cathedral was built between 1839 and 1844.

A Valletta landmark due to its spire rising over 60 meters, it is constructed with Maltese limestone in a neo-classical style. The cathedral has columns with capitals of the Corinthian order while the capitals of the six columns of the portico are of the Ionic order. The internal dimensions of the building are 33.5 metres x 20.4 metres.

The Blessed Sacrament is reserved in the Lady Chapel located to the left of the pulpit facing the altar.

Above the entrance to the Cathedral is located the organ that originated in Chester Cathedral in northwest England. The one-manual instrument was built in 1684 by Bernard Smith and is said to have been played by George Frederick Handel while en route to Dublin for the first performance of the Messiah.

The oak panels around the High Altar are a memorial to the Allied units which took part in the defence of Malta between 1940 and 1943 and twelve flags hang in the aisles representing amongst others the Royal Air Force, the British Merchant Navy, and the Royal Navy.

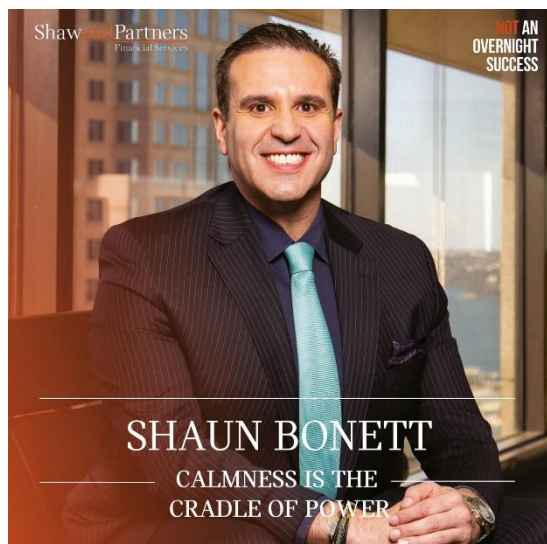
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## The homeschooled billionaire who built a fortune before turning 40

*In 2007, Shaun Bonett, an Australian of a Maltese mother*

*was the country's richest person under 40. Now a billionaire, he shares his story, including a humiliating \$25 million mistake, in the AFR's How I Made It podcast.*

**When billionaire shopping mall owner Shaun Bonett was about 10 years old he refused to go to school. He simply hated it.**

**Shaun Bonett** (born 1 January 1971) is an Australian entrepreneur<sup>[1]</sup> and property developer who founded and is CEO of Precision Group.

Shaun Bonett was born in London, England, to parents of Australian and Maltese descent, Marlene and Anton Bonett, the latter of whom was an oncologist for the World Health Organization.<sup>[2]</sup> Bonett moved to Australia in 1978<sup>[5]</sup> and studied at Saint Ignatius College, in Adelaide.<sup>[1]</sup> In the 1980s, Bonett worked as a law clerk in Adelaide, and studied at the University of Adelaide, graduating in 1991 with a Bachelor of Laws and Arts.<sup>[1][6]</sup> Bonett is also a graduate of the University of South Australia. Bonett worked for the law firm Thomson Simmons & Co from 1990 to 1996 and then as a Senior Associate at Phillips Fox Lawyers from 1996 to 1998.

In 1994 when he was 24 years old, Bonett founded Precision Group, a property investment and management company,<sup>[6]</sup> and was involved in the re-positioning of MacArthur Central,<sup>[9]</sup> and collaborated with the Bank of China to purchase the Chevron Renaissance Shopping Centre.<sup>[10]</sup> Bonett also negotiated the establishment of a Tiffany & Company outlet in Adelaide Central Plaza, along with three other international retailers,<sup>[11]</sup> including David Jones.<sup>[12]</sup>

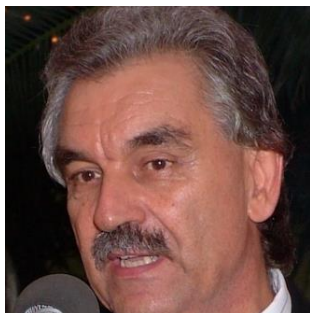
In 2003 Bonett joined the board of directors of iSelect Health & Life Insurance, in 2005 he joined the board of Lenders Direct, and in 2007 he joined the board and became Chairman of Litigation Lending Services.<sup>[2]</sup> In 2018 Bonett acquired a material stake and board seat in the data analytics ASX listed company Skyfii Limited.

In May 2006, Bonett negotiated one of the largest property swap transactions in Australian history, when he swapped Precision Group's property at 160 Ann Street, Brisbane for MacArthur Central in Brisbane, in a \$186 million swap transaction.<sup>[9]</sup>

In 2010 Bonett's Precision Group was the first private Australian businesses to undertake various finance transactions with the Bank of China and Bonett subsequently made submissions to the Foreign Investment Review Board ("FIRB") to enable more Australian businesses to access loans from International banks without having to first obtain FIRB approval.<sup>[14]</sup> In 2015 Bonett also actively supported and made representations to Government for Australia's free trade agreement with China. In 2022, the University of South Australia conferred to Bonett an honorary doctorate.

In 2004, Bonett married model, Vanessa Baron. As of 2021, they have a daughter, Eve, and a son, Gabriel. Bonett debuted on the *Business Review Weekly (BRW)* Young Rich List in 2006 placing third with a net worth of A\$220 million<sup>[19][20]</sup> and was ranked as Australia's Richest Person 40 and Under in 2007–2008.<sup>[21]</sup> As of May 2023, Bonett's net worth was estimated by *The Australian Financial Review* to be A\$2.31 billion. In 2019 Bonett's net worth was estimated by *The Australian* to be A\$1.17 billion (79th rank).

## The Academy of Maltese salutes its former President, Prof. Charles Briffa (1951-2024)



Posted on 21/09/2024 by [Academy of Maltese](#) Professor Charles Briffa (t. 16.07.1951) taught Maltese literature and translation theory and practice at the University of Malta for many years, and was a literary critic, researcher of Maltese, and translator.

His main interests were in cognitive stylistics which is well seen in his numerous publications on Maltese authors and cultural linguistics, which he regularly broadcast on different radio and television

channels.

He began his career as a teacher in Church and Government schools and after some years as Assistant Head at Junior Lyceum he was appointed Chief Officer of the Arts Section at matsec Support Unit. He was a lecturer in the University's Department of Maltese and in 2010 was appointed Professor of the Translation Department at the Faculty of Arts.

Former President of the Academy of Maltese (2000-2004) and editor of *Il-Malti* (2000-2001). He organised numerous courses and participated in a large number of conferences and seminars in Malta and abroad.

Charles was the general editor of the *Kullana Kulturali* and his publications earned first prize in the research section of the National Book Prize.

He was a regular contributor on local stations and was known for many radio listeners and television viewers for his articulate explanation of Maltese writing.

On 13 December 2020 he was formally appointed Member of the National Order of Merit (MOM) for his participation in the study of Maltese and literature.

The Academy of Maltese salutes Prof. Charles Briffa and extends his condolences to his wife Angela, his children, his relatives and friends.





**Maltese Cultural Centre**  
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**SATURDAY 5TH OCTOBER**  
Doors open: 6.30pm - Show starts: 8pm  
Bookings Essential: <https://www.trybooking.com/CPLUN>



## ELVIS IN VICTORIA

Get ready to shake, rattle, and roll at the “Elvis Forever” tribute show, presented by the incredibly talented Damian Mullin and hosted by the Maltese Own Band!

Step into the spotlight and immerse yourself in the legendary sounds of Elvis Presley as Damian Mullin channels the King of Rock ‘n’ Roll with unparalleled passion and authenticity. This tribute promises an evening of nostalgia and pure entertainment. Join us for an unforgettable experience where every note resonates with the spirit of Elvis himself. Secure your tickets now through the Trybooking URL below and get ready to be transported back to the golden era of rock ‘n’ roll. It’s an event you won’t want to miss!

Buy tickets here <https://trybooking.com/CPLUN>

## Maltese in Tunisia

Images: Joseph Mangani collection

Despite being an archipelago in the middle of the Mediterranean, we often forget that Malta has a close and deep history with its neighbouring countries, especially those in North Africa.

On a research and collection trip to Tunisia, Magna Żmien founder and artistic director Andrew Alamango met with some Tunisian-Maltese who shared their memories, anecdotes, and stories of their once-thriving community.

The Maltese in Tunis were known as quality cotton producers, for driving *karozzini* (horse-driven carriage) and for Maltese *pastizzi*, which left their mark on Tunisian society even today. They were also particularly associated with being butchers, particularly of horse meat as well as pork. Many of these set up shop in the local market of downtown Tunis, Marché Central in Rue de Allemagne.

Joseph Mangani collection

Though the Maltese community disintegrated in Tunis after the 1950s, one can still find remnants of the past, harkening to the days of a rich Maltese presence in the country.

The Maltese particularly are still remembered with endearment, due to the proximity of language and the adaptation of the Maltese in Tunisian society and upon which it left its mark. The bond between the two countries is still strong today and anyone travelling to and from Tunisia is sure to come across the phrase “*Malta ħanina, ħobża u sardina.*”

Today they tell stories of how they lived harmoniously alongside other cultures carrying on their Maltese religious and cultural traditions, whilst integrating with the liberal and culturally diverse society in Tunisia which was open to the Mediterranean and its people.



A particularly interesting photo is that of a portrait of the Temimi family, the grandmother of which was Antoinette Zammit from Ħamrun. Antoinette worked as a stewardess on the ferry-ship between Malta and Tunisia in the early 1930s and, on this same ship, she met and fell in love with Mohamed Taoufik Temimi whom she eventually married.

Antoinette packed up her life in Malta, moved to Tunisia and started her life there living in La Fayette, where



she raised her family. Antoinette is still remembered today as Nanna Ferida Temimi from Ħamrun and although there are only a few descendants of this once numerous community, they still retain a strong affection for their island of origin. Some have even obtained Maltese nationality.



Hatem Temimi collection

The Embassy of Malta in Tunis is also attempting to maintain these relationships, including publishing research on notable Tunisian-Maltese, including the discovery that the eminent Maltese architect Ġuże D'Amato, who designed the iconic Our Lady of Mount Carmel in Valletta, was born in and graduated as an architect in Tunisia.



The Niagara Falls in Malta's colours.

Canada's majestic Niagara Falls were lit in Malta's colours on Saturday night to celebrate the 60th anniversary of Malta's independence.

The event was coordinated by Malta's High Commission to Canada and the Consulate General of Malta in Toronto.

During the display a

reception was held at the Crowne Plaza in Niagara Falls. Over 80 members of the Maltese community from across Ontario were present along with Malta's High Commissioner Mark Anthony Pace.

The Foreign Ministry said several hundred Maltese and Gozitans also went to Niagara Falls to celebrate the occasion. On Sunday, a thanksgiving Mass in Maltese and English was held at St Paul the Apostle Church in Toronto, Canada, followed by a reception which gathered 150 members of the Maltese community in the Greater Toronto Area.

Louis Parnis from Cringila, NSW  
**MALTESE HEADQUARTERS NSW & FRIENDS**

Registration: (oth-004524-8c38p)

This story is about collecting information as President for a period of 20 years. One observes lots of changes over time and it is disheartening as I feel that the members of the Maltese community is on a slippery slide.

In the last decade we witnessed several associations folding, mostly close to our hearts, the Melita Eagles Soccer Club and recently the closure of the **St Dominic's Home for the Elderly** in Blacktown, NSW. We have also witnessed predominately Maltese Clubs losing members, because the first-generation migrants are too old to participate or passed away. One might ask who is responsible to help these groups survive, and to stop our Maltese Community from perishing?

As the president of a very vibrant association, the George Cross Falcons Community Centre at Cringila NSW I was approached by many individuals to find a workable solution. We listened to the voice of the people and in 2022 a new Group was formed called the Maltese Headquarters NSW & Friends. Initially, many leaders of the community did not understand the reason for forming this group and they were invited to attend the launch in Cringila but regrettably refused to attend.

Why launch in Cringila? The group although formed to serve the whole community of NSW needed a support base and Cringila Centre as it did on many occasions was happy to support this initiative and groups or individuals.

Lately it became apparent that the Maltese Community is being neglected and as the leader of the Maltese Centre Cringila, I asked six people to help me form this group. The selection of the group is strategically planned as the people selected reside in different areas of NSW including one representative that lives in ACT and Malta.

Where to from here? The group within the near future is to meet to discuss strategies of importance and to strengthen the new group seek feedback from the wider community. One of the objectives of by this group is for the Maltese Community to work in unity and harmony and to support each other. We look forward to receiving feedback or suggestions,

Please contact the secretary Elizabeth Walker on ([lizwalker56@gmail.com](mailto:lizwalker56@gmail.com))



Grazzi Frank għal din l-edizzjoni wkoll tal-Maltese E-Newsletter Il-kelma PROSIT tista tidher tedjanti u repetittiva, imma l-verità dik hi. Kull edizzjoni hija minjiera ta tagħrif. Jien, li twelidt u ngħix f'Malta ġieli sirt naf affarijiet fuq pajjiżi, mill-ħargiet tiegħek. Mill-ġdid grazzi, saħħa u tisljiet. Freddie Tonna - Malta



**Maltese paralympian  
Vladyslava Kravchenko**

### **Maltese Paralympian elected to the International Paralympic Committee Athletes' Council at the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games**

A former gymnast, Ms Kravchenko suffered a spinal cord injury after a lighting structure fell on her during a party in Qawra back in September 2008. She was told she would never walk again. However, this did not stop her from learning to drive, moving into her own place, qualifying as a chartered accountant and eventually taking up swimming, with a training regimen of up to two hours a day.

Vladyslava Kravchenko, has been elected to serve on the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) Athletes' Council, achieving the second highest vote count.

The IPC announced that six members (four women and two men) were elected for a four-year term. The IPC Athletes' Council were elected by their fellow athletes in a vote that took place during the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games. The IPC highlighted that there were

close to a record 25 candidates representing 12 different sports from four continents. In total, 1,821 athletes cast their ballot. The six elected members will be presented during the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games Closing Ceremony on Sunday 8 September.

Over the past three editions of the Summer Paralympic Games, almost 50% of all participating countries were represented by teams of 3 or less athletes, which made up only 3% of total participants at each Games. These Paralympians typically come from small states, developing nations, regions in conflict, and countries with recently established National Paralympic Committees.

Vladyslava Kravchenko commented that: ***"My primary objective is to be the voice of athletes from countries where Para sport is currently underdeveloped and to support the IPC's strategic objective of driving impact through Para sport in developing regions."***

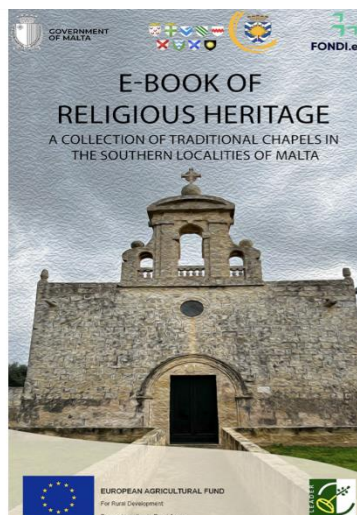
Congratulating Vladyslava on her election, **Malta Paralympic Committee (MPC)** underlined that *"This election is reflective of Vladyslava's unmatched ability and proven track record of building communities and enabling individuals through the transformative power of Para Sport"*, adding that *"We must recognise what a significant moment for Malta this election result is - Vladyslava's election places Malta on the global stage and strengthens our collective resolve to pro-actively shape the global Paralympic Movement."*

Vladyslava Kravchenko is a two-time Paralympian and an award-winning Para sport advocate. In 2016 she became Malta's first female swimmer and first female athlete since 1980 to represent the country at the Paralympic Games, repeating the feat in Tokyo 2020. She supported the formal re-establishment of the MPC in 2018 and has been a Board Member since then. She graduated as a Master of Science in Sport Management, Politics and International Development from Loughborough University, as a recipient of the Malta Sports Scholarship, and was recently awarded an academic scholarship by the Loughborough University London to pursue a PhD in Diplomacy and International Governance.

**Vladyslava is among 205 leaders selected to join the prestigious Obama Foundation Leaders programme, which trains participants around the world in leadership development and civic engagement to help build their skills and scale their work across public, private, and nonprofit sectors. She will be one of just 36 Leaders participating in the Leaders Europe programme.**



## Southern Regional Council



## A collection of traditional Chapels in the southern localities of Malta

Dear readers,  
we welcome you to a virtual journey presenting Chapels situated around the towns and villages within the Southern Region. Throughout this journey, you will experience an interactive feature

consisting of visual and descriptive information about the Chapels. The eBook of Religious Heritage- A Collection of Traditional Chapels in the Southern Localities of Malta - is divided into 9 Chapters with each chapter representing a locality. This digital platform features a 360° Virtual Tour of each chapel which in return enhances rural development in an innovative cultural dimension through technology. This visual experience is supported by a summary of information about the historical and architectural importance of each chapel. The manner in which the project has been designed facilitates access to visualise the architecture of both the outside and interiors of the chapels. To access this eBook, you can check it out [here](#) to get a glimpse of some of the most traditional Chapels in the Southern region of Malta.

The evolvement of the eBook project knows its inception from a concept brought forward by the managerial team, mainly the Culture Manager and the EU Funds Manager of the Southern Regional Council. Conscious of the need to promote cultural heritage, the main thematic area focused on Chapels within the Southern Region. The project objective is to identify and collect information about the chapels as a means to promote their existence. We have learnt from historians that the earliest chapels on the islands date back to the 12th and 13th centuries when monks from southern Italy started the process of the re-Christianisation of Malta. However, due to the fast-paced living of many communities, some of these historical buildings are being side-lined, neglected and closed to the public.

During the implementation of the project, the project team met with chapels which are abandoned or used as stores or are privately owned and hence not available to the public. Fortunately, not all chapels suffered this turn of events as we also discovered that there are many dedicated gatekeepers of these gems. One cannot but express gratitude and praise for the daily commitment of the gatekeepers and custodians of the chapels whose testimonials can be viewed throughout the eBook. The cooperation of these persons was a pinnacle element of this project, without them, the project could not be implemented.

The homogenous characteristic of this project is the methodology that was adopted which for the first time 9 Local Councils - Ħal-Luqa, Ħal-Qormi, Birżebbuġa, Ħal-Għaxaq, Iż-Żejtun, Santa Luċija, Gudja, Marsaxlokk and Marsaskala - partnered in a project with the objective to develop the culture and traditional knowledge base, increase cost-effectiveness and improve the locals' as well as the touristic experience since information is easily accessible. Having all this information on an online platform is in line with the national drive to build a digital platform for Malta's touristic products. This could also lead to future projects across these neighbouring localities such as one which combines these attractions and sites into a package touristic product.

## Pizza with Fresh Cheeselets (Gbejniet)

### Ingredients:

- 2 fresh cheeselets (Gbejniet friski)
- 1 large ripe tomato
- black olives (with stone)
- fresh basil
- Tomato puree
- 1 clove Garlic
- olive oil
- sea salt & fresh pepper

### Method:

In a small pan heat some olive oil, and fry the garlic (very finely chopped), until it gets golden.

Add the tomato puree and stir.

Add salt and pepper and some chopped basil.

Open the pizza dough.

Cover the base with the sauce.

Cut the tomato and fresh cheeselets in slices and place alternating in a circular way covering the face of the pizza.

Place a few olives randomly.

Bake for about 19 minutes until base is cooked well.

Put fresh basil on top and serve !



## MALTESE/GOZITAN FTIRA (FTIRA GHAWDXIJA)



by amaltesemouthful@gmail.com

Our traditional flatbread mainly famous in Gozo and topped with special Maltese/mediterranean ingredients has become to be known as Gozitan ftira or ftira Ghawdxija. This is served all over Gozo and Malta.

The first time I had heard about this type of 'pizza' was when I was on holiday with my mum in Malta in her family village. We were at the Mgarr bakery and my mum asked the baker if they had any of the special pizza they used to sell with anchovies, tomatoes and sliced potatoes. Unfortunately they did not sell it anymore and my mum was very disappointed.

It was then mentioned that it was a type of ftira topped with different type of toppings. Not sure why this wasn't sold any more in the bakery but we soon discovered Gozo was where it was a speciality.

There are many famous bakeries/restaurants in Gozo and Malta that sell Gozitan/Maltese ftira, some more famous than others. What makes this a ftira and not a pizza, which is what it seems at first glance, is the dough that is used which produces a unique taste. The toppings used vary but most seem to have sliced potatoes on top. One of the common ftira toppings include sliced tomatoes, anchovies/tuna, capers, olives and potatoes. Another common ftira is usually topped with Maltese cheese (gbejneit), beaten eggs, sliced potatoes and sometimes even Maltese sausage.

My guess is the dough that is used by bakeries to make our traditional sourdough bread and also our smaller ftira sourdough bread is used to make the Gozitan ftira. This is flattened, topped with ingredients mentioned, and then finally placed in the wood ovens to produce what had become to be known as Gozitan ftira.

I have yet to master the art of sourdough breadmaking but am hoping to soon enough. If you are ever in Gozo, do try their Gozitan ftira. You won't be disappointed!

## CHILDREN'S POEMS AND NURSERY RHYMES FROM MALTA

### Ġanni l-bidwi

Ġanni l-bidwi razzett għandu,  
fih irabbi l-annimali  
mogħża u ħmara fih insibu  
kif ukoll xi sitt majjali.

Għandu žiemel abjad kollu,  
baqra smina u tal-ħalib,  
tiġieġ, flieles u kelb iswed,  
li ta' dawn huwa l-ħabib.



### Katarin

Katarin ġibtlek lampuka.  
Katarin kebbes in-nar.  
Katarin iftaħ it-tieqa,  
ħalli joħroġ id-duħħan.



### Il-Mara tal-Qaqoċċ



Naf mara li tħobb il-qaqoċċ  
tnax tiekol kull kwarta bl-arloġġ,  
u biex ma taħlix  
il-qxur ma tarmix  
imma tħithom u tagħmel papoċċ.



### Toninu

Waq t li Toninu, kien qiegħed jaqra,  
b'qattus maġenbu, u kelb daqs naqra,  
daħlet in-nanna, inkiss inkiss  
u tatu bewsa, kif kien imiss!



### Ix-Xufier

Tiri, tiri, tanna,  
u aħna s'hawn wasalna.  
Qus, qus, qus  
u x-xufier kemm hu gustuż.  
Okkli, okkli, okkli,  
U x-xufier kemm  
għandu nokkli.  
Ana, ana, ana,  
u x-xufier kemm hu minn tagħna.  
Qusa, qusa, qusa,  
u x-xufier għandu  
l-għarusa.



### Iz-Zija ta' Ħal Lija



Darba z-zija ta' Ħal Lija  
ġiet għalija filgħaxija.  
Oħti Pija qabdet fija  
għax iz-zija ferħet bija.  
Jiena sfart daqs il-lumija,  
qbadt qasrija tfajtha 'l ħija.  
Ilqatt iz-zija li din toqgħod  
numru mija, Triq San Lija, go Ħal Lija!

# VILLA FRERE, PIETA, MALTA



## HERITAGE MALTA

The fascinating story of Villa Frere came into being when the Rt. Hon. John Hookham Frere, a renowned English scholar, politician, poet and diplomat, retired in Malta accompanied by his ailing wife, Lady Elizabeth dowager countess of Errol and his sister Susanna in 1821. They first resided in Valletta but a year later Frere took out a 99-year lease from the nuns of St. Catherine of a property on the Pieta waterfront which later became Villa Frere and its grand gardens.

Following the end of the lease the government embarked on plans to construct the new St. Luke's general hospital. Works were postponed for the duration of the Second World War, during which time the gardens suffered some bombing damage. In 1952 Villa Frere was leased to third parties but the extensive gardens were radically downsized due to encroachment of the hospital as well as a new primary school built onto the Japanese garden and Wilderness. Thirty years later it was reduced even further when a helipad was laid out instead of the upper part of the gardens. The site fell into neglect until forty years later when the villa became the residence of Captain Edward Price. A notable garden

enthusiast, he gave life back to the property, earning it the title of a botanic garden. The place became a prominent attraction, both to locals and foreigners.

In June 2013 a dedicated group of volunteers got together to form the Friends of Villa Frere charity, with the sole intention of saving and restoring what remains of this grand estate. With just a mere third surviving, including the house, our mission is rendered even more critical. However, thanks to increasing media exposure, such as the President of Malta's official visit in 2018, and a joint management agreement with Heritage Malta, 2020 saw the scheduling of Villa Frere and its gardens as a Grade 1 national monument by the Planning Authority and the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage, thus continuing to raise awareness about the beauty and historical and cultural importance of Villa Frere.

Today, just over a third of the original area survives (including the house), yet the mystique is still there. NGO Friends of Villa Frere has been working hard to protect what remains and to restore the gardens with life. Open every first Sunday of the month between 5.30pm and 8.30pm

Villa Frere, Pieta, Malta



**SPECIAL FEATURE**

LACE MAKING  
IS ONE OF MALTA'S  
MOST  
PRECIOUS TRADITIONS.  
ORIGINALLY  
ASSOCIATED  
WITH NOBILITY,  
IT IS NOW CONSIDERED  
A HIGHLY VALUED  
COMMODITY

**BIZZILLA - LACE-MAKING IN MALTA**

# THE ART OF LACE-MAKING

Lacemaking in Malta and neighboring Gozo trace their origins back to the 16th century. Needlelace was made there as in was in Venice. This continued until the 19th century when the depression that descended upon the islands nearly led to its extinction. Two people are known to be responsible for introducing and promoting a new lace in these islands in the mid 1800's.

Lady Hamilton Chichester sent lacemakers from Genoa, where the technique of Italian bobbin lace was developed, to Malta. They used the old needlelace patterns and turned them into ones using bobbins, instead of the slower time-consuming needles.

On Gozo it was the promotion by designer, Dun Guzepppe, that made lacemaking a way of raising the standard of living for local families. It wasn't long after its introduction before the Maltese/Gozo lace developed it's own unique style from lace on the continent.

One of the most recognizable traits of Maltese and Gozo lace is the creamy, honey colored, Spanish silk from which most of it is made. Black silk was also used until the 20th century when it declined in favor so is harder to find today. Later linen was also used in some pieces used for household purposes instead of clothing, as it was more durable. Another distinguishing feature of Maltese/Gozo lace is the 8 pointed Maltese crosses that are worked into most, but not all of this lace. These crosses are done in what lacemakers call whole or cloth stitch. (see photo)

The last of the most recognizable features are the leaves known as "wheat ears" or "oats". They are plump and rounded in shape compared to the long narrow Bedfordshire lace leaves. Bedfordshire lace, which is sometimes compared to Maltese lace, has some similarities and were probably both developed from the Genosese bobbin lace.

It is interesting to note that larger pieces of real Maltese lace are made by piecing together sections rarely wider than 6 inches. One more thing to look for in assessing Maltese design is the more fluid styles. Genoese lace is more geometric and without the swirls developed in Gozo. Another interesting item that lacemakers might find interesting is that the patterns do not have the pin holes pre-marked as in the closely related "Beds" lace.

The study of Maltese/Gozo lace is at best difficult, as there is very little printed material about it. The only author who has written about it in English is Consiglia Azzopardi. She has written 2 books. The first: "Gozo Lace- An introduction to Lacemaking in the Maltese Islands" and the follow-up. "Gozo Lace – A selection of Bobbin Lace Patterns" 1998. She has a website too!



The new Committee members of the  
Newport Seniors Association - Victoria