



MALTESE NEWSLETTER

JOURNAL FOR THE MALTESE DIASPORA



Editor - Frank L Scicluna OAM MQR maltesejournal@gmail.com

**WOLLONGONG
NSW
AUSTRALIA**



The only Maltese regatta held outside Malta ...



**ORDER OF
MALTA
NEWS**

We are flying over Malta



**VOLUNTEERS
ARE NOT PAID
NOT BECAUSE THEY
ARE WORTHLESS
BUT BECAUSE THEY
ARE PRICELESS**





RECENT VISIT OF REBEKAH AND JURGEN BORG IN ADELAIDE, AUSTRALIA

“This is my second visit to Australia, but this time it feels completely different.” Jurgen writes.

The last time I was here was in 2017. Back then I was single, and I came mainly to spend time with my Uncle Charlie Borg, who worked as a financial adviser for many Maltese people in South Australia, as well as Australians. I also came to be with my Aunty Jane, my cousins

and all our extended family here.

That first trip became a real Australian adventure for me. I spent time in Adelaide and travelled extensively, including along the Great Ocean Road, visiting the Twelve Apostles and many of the beautiful coastal stops along the way. I also visited the Blue Mountains, travelled all the way to Sydney, explored Kangaroo Island and saw the Remarkable Rocks, together with so many other places in between. It was the kind of trip that stays with you for life.

I returned to Malta with incredible memories and spoke about Australia for a long time afterwards. I spoke about the places, the landscapes, the people, the Maltese community and, most of all, my family here.

A few months after I returned to Malta, I met Rebekah, who later became my wife. Rebekah is also involved in public life in Malta as a politician, so life for us has certainly become busier over the years. From early on, though, I always told her about Australia and how much I wanted to bring her here one day so she could meet everyone properly and understand why this place meant so much to me.

Life then moved very quickly. Rebekah and I got married, and we were blessed with our two children, Beth and Marcus. And now, almost ten years after my first visit, here we are again only this time I am not traveling alone. I am here with my wife and our children, and that has made the whole experience so much more meaningful.

This visit has been much less about travelling around Australia and much more about being with family. That was the main reason we came. I missed them so much over the years, and being able to spend proper time together again has honestly meant everything to me. Family is everything to me, and seeing Beth and Marcus meeting relatives they had only ever heard us talk about has been one of the most special parts of the trip.

We are very lucky to have such a large extended Maltese family here in South Australia, including relatives from the Borg, Muscat and Ellul families, many of whom are members of the Maltese Guild of South Australia. It has been wonderful reconnecting with everyone and spending time together as a family.

I also have to make a special mention of my second cousins, Dolores and Tania Muscat, who helped us enormously throughout our stay. Traveling with two young children is not always easy, and they were constantly there for us helping with the kids, making sure we were looked after, and very often making sure there was always food ready for us. Those little things make

such a big difference when you are away from home, and their kindness made us feel completely at home here in South Australia. It is something Rebekah and I truly appreciated and will always remember.

During this visit we have also had the opportunity to meet and spend time with members of different Maltese communities in South Australia. For me, that has been something very special. Even though we are thousands of kilometres away from Malta, there is still such a strong Maltese feeling here.

You see it in the language, the food, the traditions, the friendships and, most of all, in the importance placed on family.

It makes you appreciate what previous generations of Maltese migrants built here. They left Malta, started new lives, worked hard, raised families and created strong communities, while still keeping a connection to where they came from.

For someone coming from Malta, that is very moving to see.

Australia already had a special place in my heart after my first visit in 2017, but this trip has given me a completely different kind of memory. This time it is not just about the places I have seen. It is about seeing Rebekah, Beth and Marcus becoming part of that same family connection I experienced all those years ago.

When we return to Malta, I know I will once again speak about Australia for years to come. But this time the memories will be different.

They will be memories of family, of reconnecting, of seeing our children build relationships with their relatives, and of feeling the bond between Malta and the Maltese community in South Australia stronger than ever.

And for me, that is what this trip has really been about.

CHEV. NOEL MIFSUD JP KMG

Australia's most influential Educators List 2024 and 2025 and Director SA Intercultural Peace Forum Ambassador



Noel Mifsud was named as one of Australia's Most Influential Educational Leaders by The Educator in 2024 and 2025.

He has served as Principal of three schools in SA and remote Aboriginal communities in the NT. His career includes wintering station leader in Casey Station, Antarctica and Captain in the Australian Army Education Corps. He is Chair of the SA Multicultural Education and Languages Committee and member of the Education

Standards Board of SA.

Noel has engaged in education, public speaking and humanitarian service on every continent. He is a founding member of the SA Intercultural Peace Forum and CEO of Malteser International Asia Pacific which provides medical care to 1,000 patients a month in Timor Leste. In 2024 he was recognised for outstanding service to the SA community and advancement of intercultural understanding and peace. In 2025 Noel was invited as a panellist at the UN Sustainable Development Goals Conference in New York. Noel is the Manager of Community Relations for Rex Minerals and a Justice of the Peace in South Australia.

Noel sent us the link of the next page.....

ARCHBISHOP PATRICK O'REGAN OF ADELAIDE INVESTED AS CONVENTUAL CHAPLAIN 'AD HONOREM'



Members of the Order of Malta Australia travelled to Adelaide on 11 and 12 September for the Investiture of Archbishop Patrick O'Regan as a Conventual Chaplain 'ad honorem' of the Order of Malta.

The visit brought together members,

chaplains, aspirants and friends of the Order for a weekend of fellowship and celebration, while also marking an exciting period of growth for the Order in South Australia.

The delegation included members of the Executive Committee, John Murphy, **Daniel Kwok** and **Neville Zammit**, together with the Regent, **Prof David Kissane**, and representatives of the Order's leadership.

The weekend commenced with a dinner hosted by the Southern Central Regional Hospitaller, **Noel Mifsud**, bringing together approximately 20 members and friends of the Order. Among those attending were Magistral Chaplain **Fr Allan Winter**, prospective Magistral Chaplain **Fr Christopher Matala**, Ambassador **Michael Mann**, three young aspirants and a candidate for membership.

The following morning, Archbishop O'Regan's Investiture took place during the 11am Mass at **St Patrick's Cathedral, Adelaide**. The Mass was concelebrated by the Principal Chaplain of the Subpriory, **Bishop Terence Curtin**, together with **Fr Allan Winter** and **Fr Christopher Matala**.

The Investiture formally welcomed Archbishop O'Regan into the spiritual life of the Order and recognises his commitment to the Church and to the Order's charism of *tuitio fidei et obsequium pauperum* — the defence of the faith and service of the poor and sick.

Following the Mass, members and guests gathered for afternoon tea in the Cathedral Hall, hosted by **Aida Joseph**, Assistant to the Archbishop, and **Belinda Fusco**, Director of Archdiocesan Events.

The occasion was an important milestone for the Order in Adelaide, bringing together the Order's members and friends while highlighting the growing interest in its mission and vocation.

The presence of new aspirants, a candidate for membership and prospective new chaplain reflects an exciting new phase for the Order in the Southern Central Region. The development of these vocations will help strengthen the Order's spiritual and hospitaller mission in South Australia and across the region.

The Order of Malta Australia extends its warmest congratulations and welcome to **Archbishop Patrick O'Regan** and its sincere thanks to **Noel Mifsud** for his leadership and organisation of the weekend, as well as to all those who contributed to making the occasion such a memorable celebration.

The Investiture was not only a celebration of Archbishop O'Regan's new role within the Order, but also a sign of the growing community of faith, service and fellowship that continues to develop in Adelaide.

Chev. Noel Mifud



THE FEAST OF MARIA BAMBINA IN VICTORIA



THE FEAST OF MARIA BAMBINA IN VICTORIA

On Sunday, September 13, the Feast of Maria Bambina was celebrated at St Mary Star of the Sea Church, Howard Street, West Melbourne, by the Fathers of the Missionary Society of St Paul helped as in every year by Reskeon Maltese Association Seniors Group.

Present were six members of the Knights of Hospitaller of St John of Jerusalem, of Rhodes and of Malta, members of very little Associations, the Standards flags of Malta and Australia, the Standard of St Geatan and that of Reskeon. Bandalori of Mellieha and Senglea

Ms Miriam Belli recited the Rosary at 2.30 pm. This was followed by Concelebrated Mass at 3 pm. Prime Celebrant was Fr Tarcisio Micallef. Concelebrants were Fr Lonnie Borg, Fr Edwin Agius and Fr Noel Bianco, all MSSP. The music and singing during Mass was in the hands of Carmen Parnis and Victor and Doris Sammut.

First Reading was in the hands of Dr Gioconda Schembri, Consul General of the Republic of Malta in Victoria. Second Reading was done by Mr Joseph Borg. The Gospel was read by Fr Edwin Agius.

The Homily was done by Fr Lonnie Borg. Prayers of the Faithful was read by Ms Phyllis Vella.

The Gifts Offering was done By Salvina Vella and Madeleine Vella.

After Mass was the Sacramental Blessing.

After the Church functions, the Maltese Own Band Philharmonic Society played Religious and other marches outside the Church. Considering that the Maltese Community is getting old we were pleased with the number of Community members attending. It was a bit of disappointment that there were three Associations holding their functions on this same day as this Maltese National Day of the Feast of Maria Bambina, Our Lady of Victories.

Thanks to the committee members of Reskeon Maltese Association Seniors Group who helped a lot in organising this Feast, among them Salvina Vella, Madeleine Vella, Carmen Topolcsanyi, Fred Pace and other members. We have to specially thank George Topolcsanyi and Raymond Fenech who worked very hard on Saturday to fix the Statue of our Lady and deliver it to St Mary's Church and put it place. Other work on Sunday and on Monday to dismantle the Statue and deliver it back to St Paul's Chapel, Parkville, and put it back in place. Well done.

Paul Vella, Secretary Reskeon Maltese Association Seniors Group



Hon. Dr Angelo Farrugia (House of Representatives, Parliament of Malta), the former Speaker from 2013 to 2026 was awarded the **2026 Parliamentarian Life-time Achievement Award** in recognition of almost three decades of parliamentary and public service, including as Speaker from 2013 to 2026. Praised for his commitment to the independence and dignity of Parliament, Dr Farrugia became the first elected Chairperson of the CPA Small Branches network and was twice elected President of the IPU Committee to Promote Respect for International Humanitarian Law, sharing his knowledge and expertise with legislatures and international parliamentary bodies across the Commonwealth and beyond.



The Malta Regatta made its return to Wollongong on Sunday, 20 September, showcasing Malta's distinguished maritime and rowing heritage at Wollongong Harbour, New South Wales. This significant occasion, occurring one day prior to Malta's National Celebration of Independence Day, coincided with the 75th Anniversary commemorating the

establishment of the George Cross Community Club of Cringila, NSW.

Managed by the George Cross Falcons Community Centre and generously sponsored by Visit Malta, the Regatta took place at Belmore Basin, Wollongong Harbour, with participating teams engaging in water-based activities that celebrated Maltese heritage, community spirit, and the enduring relationship with maritime traditions. The event attracted considerably higher attendance than anticipated, drawing Maltese nationals, Australians, and representatives from various other nationalities.

The Hal-Qormi team emerged as the victorious regatta champions. Congratulations to all participants. The day's programme further included a 2:00pm Holy Mass dedicated to Our Lady of Victories at St Francis of Assisi Church, Warrawong, accompanied by a procession featuring the revered statue of Our Lady.

This occasion provided an exceptional platform for the Maltese community, Malta's supporters, and the broader Illawarra community to unite in celebration of Maltese traditions and cultural heritage. The Maltese e-Newsletter, the publication for Maltese Living Abroad, presented certificates of appreciation to the three participating Surf Life Saving Clubs for participating in the regatta.

Louis Parnis -President - GCFCC.

ANOTHER WOMAN MURDERED IN MALTA



MAN FROM GHANA ARRESTED

A 34-year-old man from Ghana was arrested by the police in Marsa as the investigation into the death of Miriam Azzopardi progressed.

The man was arrested in Marsa at around 7 p.m. and is considered the prime suspect at this stage of the investigation.

Azzopardi, a resident of Qormi, was found dead in Marsa earlier today. An autopsy confirmed that she died of asphyxiation; the case is therefore being investigated as a homicide.

Malta has a problem. The Maltese government makes the most of a legal loophole in the



EU's Birds Directive that allows hunters to shoot quail, and (illegally) anything else in the crosshairs, for three weeks every April

There are more than 500 species of wild birds in Europe and every spring millions of them make the voyage back to the continent after winters spent sunning themselves down south. For these birds, the journey from Africa to Europe

is arduous, to say the least, with wild weather, predators and exhaustion all meaning that a successful migration is nothing short of miraculous. Seemingly endless desert sands and open water crossings are particularly fraught.

The islands of Malta are conveniently located for hundreds of bird species, including turtle doves, quail, swifts, yellow-legged gulls, bitterns, kestrels and the rare Montagu's harrier, to breed, feed and rest. But unfortunately, touching down here for a bit of R&R is laced with inconceivable risk.

You would think that this massive spring migration, which includes around 398 of Europe's bird species, would be a time to rejoice in nature and welcome returning feathered friends with telephoto

lenses and binoculars. But no. Not for everyone in Malta.

As soon as migratory birds are sighted on the islands of Malta and Gozo, they're greeted by the barrels of up to 6,000 guns. For 20 days in April, it's quail hunting season.

Practically all of the species migrating via Malta are protected by [EU law under its Birds Directive](#).

However the Maltese government has side-stepped the rules by using a legal exemption that allows local

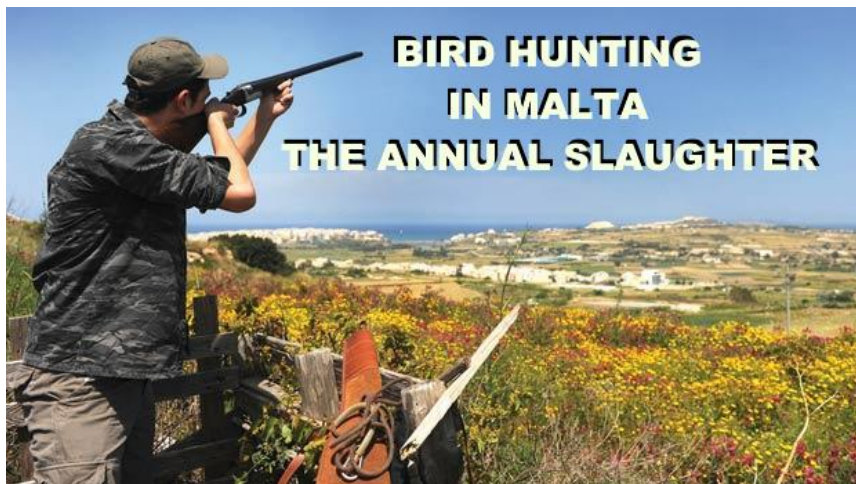
hunters to continue to kill up to 5,000 quail. There are no daily or individual quotas. Each death has to be registered at the time via text or phone call from the kill site. However, pellets don't discriminate once fired. From two hours before dawn until midday, shooting shatters the calm.

If it flies... it dies.

The environmental organisation [BirdLife Malta](#) believes that over 7,000 birds per square kilometre are killed in Malta every year. But this is not just a Maltese problem. If spring shooting doesn't stop, the appearance of migratory birds in northern Europe's gardens, wetlands and woodlands will be a thing of the past.

What is being done to protect the birds?

It is no accident that these hunting dates also coincide with the peak migratory period for turtle doves. These could be legally shot until April 2017, when hunting them was outlawed in response to the doves being added to the International Union for Conservation of Nature's (IUCN) 'red list' of



species most at risk of extinction. But in 2022, the moratorium was lifted and turtle doves once again became a legitimate target for spring hunters. And they make are easy targets.

Although jail time and fines can be imposed for anyone shooting anything other than quail (and now turtle doves), the truth is that many hunters are getting away with murder, and facing few, if any, consequences. For example: bagging more than your quota of quail is considered a minor misdemeanour. However, the majority of quail kills are registered in the last two or three days of the season. What was going on for the previous two weeks? Did no one hit anything?

Nets and traps, live caged birds (used as lures), and electronic bird calls, have all been found and documented by local conservationists and volunteers patrolling the island each spring. Police are informed, illegal equipment is destroyed but still the sound of a thousand guns pollutes the air.

Not everyone is happy with the scale of destruction. In a referendum on the matter, nearly three quarters of the Maltese population turned out to vote, and only 50.4 percent voted to keep existing bird hunting laws as they were, with traditional values and cultural identity cited as reasons for preserving spring hunting. So we know that there are many people out there who disagree with it. Even in Malta, not everyone is happy with the scale of destruction, as was seen in 2015's spring hunting referendum. Nearly three quarters of the island's population turned out to vote, and 50.4 percent voted to keep existing bird hunting laws as they were. Traditional values and cultural identity were cited as reasons for preserving spring hunting.

HOPE FOR THE FUTURE OF EUROPE'S BIRDS

The world is facing a biodiversity crisis, with ecosystems in collapse everywhere. This reckless, ruthless slaughter will eventually result in some species becoming endangered, while those that are already endangered, like the turtle dove, could easily be pushed over the edge into extinction. The tireless conservation work and activism of dedicated staff and volunteers at NGOs like BirdLife Malta give bird lovers and responsible travellers hope for the future.

Nathaniel Attard is communications manager for BirdLife Malta. He says: "There needs to be a change in the public's approach to illegal hunting and trapping in Malta and more awareness of how these activities threaten the environment. This can be reached by providing the opportunity to raise the profile for Malta as a bird-watching haven during spring and autumn migration season. This way, both hunters and trappers are enabled to view birds as something they can enjoy watching while being out in nature."

Reflection
by
Bishop Gharles
Gauci
Dawrin

GOD'S GENEROSITY



In today's Gospel, Jesus talks about the generosity of God.

God is love, and that love is universal. All of creation is deeply loved by God. Human beings are especially loved by God.

God is just. God's love goes far beyond duty or justice as we humans understand it. We can never fully comprehend that love. God's love is more than sufficient for each one of us. We are each loved with superabundance.

It makes no sense to compare how much we are loved with how others are loved.

This way of understanding enables us to also love others. Our ideal is to try to love them as God loves them, although we can never fully achieve this.

We are constantly in need of God's grace as we try to love our neighbour as ourselves.



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Your questions answered in an open, informative discussion



DATE

Thursday 22 October 2026



TIME

10:30am to 12:00pm



VENUE

La Valette Centre, Blacktown
175 Walters Rd, Blacktown

PRESENTED BY



Marie-Louise Muscat CFP®

CFP®, DipFP
Financial Adviser Representative
ARN 1005882

- ✓ Over 27 years' experience as a Financial Adviser
- ✓ CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER® professional
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THE WELFARE NSW WILL HOLD AN INFORMATION TALK, ***RETIREMENT VILLAGE OR AN AGED CARE FACILITY?***

Well-known Maltese identity **Marie Louise Muscat**, a **Financial Adviser Representative** from Fiducian Financial Services who is fluent in Maltese and English, will help you understand your options and plan with confidence. Explain the latest costs and government support available to help you with this important and complex lifestyle decision.

Maltese seniors and their family members are encouraged to attend this essential open and informative event. The event will be hosted and held at La Valette Centre. Guests are welcome to stay for lunch, with Maltese favourite dishes available for purchase at the Bistro.

Lawrence Gatt President Maltese Welfare NSW 0404 462 344



F'CASAL FORNARO B'JUMEJN TA' MUŻIKA, FOLKLOR U SPETTAKLI FIT-TOROQ TA' ĦAL QORMI

F'Casal Fornaro se jirritorna f'Ħal Qormi nhar il-Ġimgħa 18 u s-Sibt 19 ta' Settembru, bi programm li jgħaqqad il-mużika, il-baned, il-folklor, l-għana u d-drama ma' diversi spettacoli fit-toroq. Fuq il-palk ewlieni, il-Ġimgħa filgħaxija se jdoqqu l-iSpiteri Lucas Band u The Travellers, filwaqt li s-Sibt ikun imiss lil Kantera u Versatile Brass.

F'zoni oħrajn tal-attività se jittellgħu wkoll kunċerti minn artisti lokali, fosthom Christabelle Scerri, Ramires Sciberras, Eliza Borg, Nicole Hammett, Nathan Psaila, Kristy Spiteri, Miguel Bonello Stewart u Josuel Elvis, li se jagħti spettacoli ta' kanzunetti marbutin ma' Elvis Presley. Il-programm mhux se jkun limitat għall-palkijiet. Il-Ġimgħa, il-Banda tal-Pulizija se tkun fost l-attrazzjonijiet li se jdur fit-toroq ta' Ħal Qormi, biex il-mużika tkun parti mill-esperjenza tal-viżitaturi huma u jimxu bejn wirja u oħra.

Is-Sibt se tittella' wkoll *mass band* magħmula minn baned mir-regjun tan-Nofsinhar. Għadd ta' mużiċisti se jingħaqdu għal spettacoli kollettivi li se jkompli jsaħħaħ l-atmosfera ta' festa fit-toroq Qriema. Il-folklor Malti se jkollu sehem importanti matul iż-żewġ serati, b'wirjiet minn diversi gruppi folkloristiċi. Il-programm se jkompli jenfasizza kif it-tradizzjonijiet Maltin jistgħu jiġu pprezentati bħala espressjoni kulturali haġja quddiem udjenzi ta' kull età.

Mhux se jonqos lanqas l-għana, bis-sehem ta' għannejja u kitarristi li se jwasslu waħda mill-aktar forom distintivi tal-kultura mużikali Maltija.

Minbarra l-mużika, madwar l-inħawi se jkun hemm ukoll drama u rappreżentazzjonijiet marbutin mal-istorja u t-tradizzjonijiet Maltin. Fosthom se jkun hemm persuni lebsin kostumi ta' żmien ieħor, it-Tieg Malti u *In Guardia*. Dawn l-elementi se jagħmlu mit-toroq parti integrali mill-ispettaklu, hekk kif il-viżitaturi jkunu jistgħu jiltaqgħu ma' rappreżentazzjonijiet differenti huma u jdur minn attrazzjoni għal oħra.

F'Casal Fornaro se jsir f'Ħal Qormi nhar il-Ġimgħa 18 u s-Sibt 19 ta' Settembru, b'attivitajiet maħsubin għal udjenzi ta' etajiet u interessi differenti.

FREE OFFER TO THE READERS OF THE MALTESE NEWS LETTER

**As a follow-up to Victor Vella's interview which appeared in the last issue of this NEWSLETTER, Victor has a special offer to the readers :
2 recordings of his talks in Maltese entitled 'Is-Sigra ta l-Gherf (The Tree of Knowledge) and l-Empatija (Empathy). Contact - Victor on <victorvella39@gmail.com> 2 recordings of 2 radio talks will be sent to you to download and listen.**



Dr Charles Daniel Saliba presenting his books to Professor George

DR CHARLES DANIEL SALIBA EXPLORES MALTA'S ARABIC LINGUISTIC HERITAGE AT BUCHAREST CONFERENCE

Dr Charles Daniel Saliba, an academic at the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST) Gozo Campus, recently participated in the international conference *The Presence of Arabic in the Languages of the World*, organised by the Arabic Department and the Center for Arab Studies at the University of Bucharest.

The opening session featured Associate Professor Laura Sitaru, Dean of the Faculty of Foreign Languages and Literatures, and Professor George Grigore, Coordinator of the

Arabic Department.

In his lecture, entitled “Arabic Inheritance in Maltese Verbal Morphology: A Study of Verbal Inflection and Derivation”, Dr Saliba examined how Maltese verbs preserve their Arabic linguistic inheritance while also reflecting centuries of contact with Sicilian, Italian and English.

Reflecting on the experience, Dr Saliba said: “It is very fulfilling to see international scholars and students of Arabic taking an interest in the unique characteristics of the Maltese language.”

During his visit, Dr Saliba also donated copies of the three books comprising Level A1 of his Maltese for Foreigners series to the department’s library. He also donated a copy of the trilingual volume *Provérbios Europeus / European Proverbs / Proverbji*

Ewropej, written in Portuguese, English and Maltese, which he co-authored with Professor Rui Soares, President of the International Association of Paremiology. The publications will serve as additional reference material for students studying Modern Standard Arabic and Arabic dialects, while providing further opportunities to engage with the Maltese language.

Dr Saliba’s participation contributes to MCAST’s international academic presence and promotes scholarly exchange and research dissemination beyond Malta. For further information, please visit <https://mcast.edu.mt/> or <https://www.charlesdanielsaliba.com>.



Multicultural
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**WE ACKNOWLEDGE THE SUPPORT GIVEN TO THE
MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER – THE JOURNAL FOR MALTESE
LIVING ABROAD BY THE MULTICULTURAL AGED CARE OF
SOUTH AUSTRALIA (MACSA)**

MALTESE HUMAN RIGHTS EXPERT AWARDED AUSTRALIA'S SECOND-HIGHEST HONOUR

John Pace led human rights missions in various countries, including Iraq from 2004 to 2006



Former UN official John Pace (centre) was presented with the award at a ceremony hosted by Australia's High Commissioner Matt Skelly. Photo: Matthew Mirabelli

Maltese human rights expert John Pace has been awarded the Officer of the Order of Australia for "distinguished service to international human rights and social justice, to diplomatic leadership and to law and policy education".

The honour was awarded by the Australian High Commission in Malta, in a ceremony led by High Commissioner Matt Skelly.

The Officer of the Order of Australia, Australia's second-highest honour, is given for "distinguished service of a high degree to Australia or humanity at large".

Pace, a former secretary of the UN Commission on Human Rights, spent more than 30 years at the international organisation, during which time he pioneered methods of investigating and documenting incidents of human rights abuses.

He led human rights missions in various countries, including Iraq from 2004 to 2006. Towards the end of his term in the country, Pace made international headlines after speaking out about torture happening in Iraqi prisons and the detaining of innocent men by US forces.

He was recognised in Australia's King's Birthday Honours List, preceding the presentation of the award, in June last year.

Accepting the award at a ceremony in Naxxar on Friday, Pace told attendees he deeply appreciates the honour, while paying tribute to the "countries, people and situations my work brought me into contact with over the years".

"This award emphasises the bond which brings Australia and Malta together in enhancing the collective responsibility through the welfare of the individual," he said, describing Australia as a "special place".

Pace became an Australian citizen in 2003, four years after emigrating to the country, but has since returned to Malta. His work in the country covered legal and educational work, including at Sydney's University of New South Wales.

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The Sacred Heritage of the Ghazziela Tradition in the village of Żebbuġ, Gozo

By our correspondent Chev. Joe Bajada KHS

(Secretary of the Central Committee of the Feast of the Assumption of Mary, Żebbuġ, Gozo)



The village of Żebbuġ, perched on a hill and surrounded by the characteristic beauty of the Gozitan landscape, has long been known for the delicate art of lace, for its majestic parish church and for the power of the elements which, during the winter months, often clash with their fury against the Żebbuġ hill.

In this village, from generation to generation, a truly unique tradition has survived, closely linked to faith, prayer and devotion to Our Lady of the Garlands. A tradition which, beyond its form, embraces a history of popular faith, collective work and trust in the maternal protection of Our Lady, especially in times when storms meant great danger to families and their homes.

Thus the Tradition of Ghazziela, linked to the veneration that the people of Żebbuġi have always had

for the Madonna, continued to live on. With unleavened bread dough, the inhabitants would begin work as early as July to prepare enough ghazziela for the homes of the entire village, as well as for those who sought this traditional reminder of faith and devotion.

The Ghazziela, with a particular shape reminiscent of a wheel, was placed in homes as a sign of trust in the protection of the Madonna and, according to popular tradition, as protection against the wrath of storms. Therefore, this tradition was never a simple folkloric custom, but a living expression of the faith and hope of a people who, faced with the power of nature, knew how to raise their eyes to Heaven and entrust themselves to the hands of the Madonna.

According to legend...

The ancient legend tells that, one night, during a fierce storm, a poor family living on the outskirts of the village had a truly extraordinary dream. In the dream, fire snakes were trying to enter the house through the window. But, suddenly, a mysterious wheel appeared in front of them that began to shine with a light so bright that it blinded the snakes and prevented them from entering the house.

The next morning, the mother recounted her dream to the village priest. According to legend, the priest, moved by what he heard, ordered the families of the village to make similar wheels from a piece of dough and keep them in their homes as a sign of trust and devotion to the Madonna.

And so, according to tradition, from that distant night a custom was born that was passed down from mother to daughter, from father to son, from family to family and from generation to generation. Today, after so many years, the Ghazziela still reminds us of the spiritual and cultural heritage left to us by our ancestors. It is a tradition that combines faith with work, prayer with manual dexterity, and the past with the present; a tradition in which the people of Żebbuġi continue to express, in a simple yet profound way, their love, hope and trust in Our Lady of Ghazziela.

The Work of the Shepherds



The work of the Ghazziela is also a beautiful expression of the unity and volunteerism that inhabit the Żebbuġia community. For about five consecutive Sundays, volunteers gather to work on the necessary ghazziela, so that by the second Sunday of September there will be enough for everyone. It is precisely on this Sunday that the ghazziela are distributed to the people, at a time that was traditionally linked to the first rain after summer.

The zeppelins are cut in the shape of a spinning wheel, which according to tradition was one of the tasks of the Madonna. Their design also features the letter "M", as a tribute to the Virgin Mary, to whom the people of Żebbuġ have great devotion.

After being made, the loaves are baked in the oven and carefully stored until the day of distribution. When the long-awaited day arrives, the loaves are taken out of the boxes, the excess flour is removed and they are placed on display in wicker baskets on the church porch. After Mass, the loaves are blessed and distributed to the villagers: each adult receives two, while each child receives one.

No one knows exactly when, how or why this truly ancient and unique tradition began. However, in the will of the first parish priest of Żebbuġ, dating back to 1737, we find important evidence of its antiquity. In his will, he left a trust fund for the community, with the aim of ensuring that the ghazziela continue to be held and that this unique tradition of the village remains alive.

Therefore, the Ghazziela is not simply a piece of dough formed into a traditional shape. It is a living memory of the faith of our fathers, a sign of hope and trust in the protection of the Madonna, and a testament to the unity of a community that, despite the passage of time, still cherishes what it has received as a sacred heritage.

A heritage that will not be lost, a tradition that will not die, and a devotion that, under the protection of the Most Holy Mary, will continue to be passed down from generation to generation.



FIL-FESTA TA' STELLA MARIS (F'DOWNUNDER)

Bil-qalb nilqa' l-istedina
Li waslitli mill-Awstralja
Illi nikteb poezija
Għall-Ommna mnissla bla tbajja.

Fost it-titli illi tgawdi
Din il-omm tagħna l-bnedmin
Insibu ta' Stella Maris
Fuq l-ibhra tant imqarbin!

Din l-istilla minn tal-baħar
Firxet il-mant helu tagħha
Fuq dawk kollha illi jbaħħru
Marbutin żammithom magħha.

Minn gos-Sema O Marija
Itfa' ħarstek fuq uliedek
Illi biex il-hobza jiksibu
Jħabbtu wiċċhom ma' mewġietek!

U f'Melbourne dawn ħutna mbiegħda
F'nofs Ottubru ifakkruk
Festa helwa dawn jagħmlulek
U b'għemilhom ifaħħruk!

Anke f'Malta ġo tas-Sliema
Dawna ħutna ifakkruk
U festa kbira jagħmlulek
L-akbar ġieh bla dubju jtuk!

Imma f'Melbourne żgur mhux b'inqas
Jistennew il-festa tiegħek
F'nofs Ottubru sewwa sewwa
Arahom imdawrin miegħek.

Jiena ċert jagħmlu minn kollox
Sabiex tidhol ġewwa d-djar
Biex hemmhekk iġġib tbissima
F'qalb iż-żgħar u f'qalb il-kbar.

Itfa' ħartstek fuq il-morda,
Fuq l-anzjani w l-imnikktin
Għal dawn kollha ħalla ħajtu
Iċ-ċkejken Gesu Bambin.

Kumitat ġewwa Downunder
Filtu jagħmel biex jgħollik
Biex jara stmata w meqjuma
Bi tbissima isemmik!

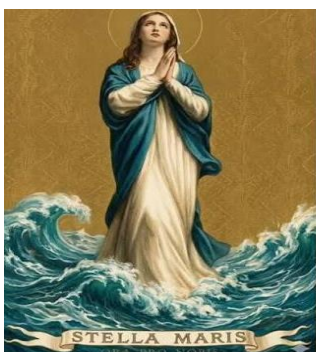
Kien is-Sur Brincat hegġiġni
Biex nikteb dil-poezija
Sabiex l-emigranti tagħna
Hienja jgħixu fl-armonija

Illi magħha gġib dil-festa
Din il-Omm tas-Sema w l-art
Illi qatt ma ser tinsiena
Sew fil-bnazzi, sew fil-bard!

Ħalli mela jiena nifraħ
Lil dal-grupp ta' nies ħabrieke
Illi jagħmlu l-almu tagħhom
Biex jagħtuk festa hekk xierqa!

O Marija kewkba tiddi
Ħarstek żomm fuq dawn uliedek -
Evviva O Stella Maris
B'Omm dawn kollha Alla riedek!

Kav Joe M Attard
Rabat - Għawdex



**Poezija li jiena ktibt
fuq xewqa ta'
Emmanuel Brincat
li miegħu lqajt
Melbourne meta
żort l-Awstralja
matul Awwissu
li għadda.**



**WE ARE PROUD TO PRESENT TO YOU THE NEWLY FORMED
FOLKLORISTIC GROUP OGYGIA FOLK GROUP,
FROM GOZO.**



The main target of the group is to enhance our local knowledge, crafts and cultural aspects of the Maltese Islands. The goal is to spread the heritage beyond our shores, to show what an amazing historic folklore Malta has to offer beyond our borders.

This is achieved through the combined talents, efforts and artistic direction of Ms. Michelle Grech Farrugia and Mr. Mario Houtsma-Grech, both experienced choreographers.

Ms Grech Farrugia has years of choreography under her belt.

She began early on in her career, and continues to this day. For the past 35 years she has successfully led dance troupes who compete during the Carnival festivities. Additionally, she has been responsible for the choreography in large scale productions, including musical and operas. Grech Farrugia's skills and experience have also allowed her the role of choreographer for the Aurora Folk Group, for 27 years. She additionally served as part of the Education Drama Unit in Gozo for several years and taught movement and dance at the Gozo School of Drama.

No less impressive are the qualifications and experiences as dancer and choreographer Mario Houtsma-Grech brings to the partnership. Locally, he has led and continues to lead major productions. Internationally, Houtsma-Grech, together with his dance partner competed and won several European dance competitions, in Ballroom and Latin. Additionally, he was part of the YADA Dance Company, allowing him to perform in several major productions, such as musicals, operas, local tv programmes, and casinos. During this period with YADA, he also travelled and performed in major cities abroad. Several times he was also responsible for the choreography of yearly productions. He has also taught Jazz Dance at the Rhythm and Dance School in Zurrieq and several other dancing schools

The Ogygia Folk Group is composed of highly skilled female and male dancers. The group also consists of live singers and musicians who perform using traditional Maltese instruments. All artists bring years of tradition and skills in the overarching years of experience. The repertoire consists of traditional dance and memorable Maltese folk songs. Every act portrays an historical event in the rich cultural past of Malta and Gozo. Each act is a window to the past, whether the elaborate lifestyle of the Nobles or the daily life of the farmers and their crafts and traditions.

All the theatrical costumes are researched and accurate in their traditional style and presentation. Costume designs are the unique creations of Ms Anna Maria Farrugia, an avid and experienced history enthusiast. Houtsma-Grech also assists in the costume creation process. Together they create a spectacular and colorful harmony of costumes, depicting the Maltese culture and heritage. All costumes are made from woven wool, lace and local cotton. The Farrugia sisters come from a long line of Maltese artisans and feel right at home in the theatre. Their grandfathers on both sides were talented musicians and dramaturgs. Their father was a music director and composer, excelling in design and craftsmanship as well. Artistic consultant Mr. Manwel Grech compliments the group, as a well-established top artist in both Malta and Gozo. His work is also internationally recognized, as the first foreign artist, exhibiting a life size Nativity Scene at St. Peter's Square, in the Vatican City, during the Christmas season.

This amazing Nativity is now exhibited each Christmas, in one of the cities or villages across Malta. His fine attention to detail and an eye for artistic details complete the group's composition and make for a uniquely qualified team.

Keeping it in the family, merging the skills, creativity, pride and energy of Grech Farrugia and Houtsma-Grech gives the Ogygia Folk Group a modern delivery of Maltese culture and history. Their special attention to every detail delivers high-level performances from beginning to end.



Ta' Verna is folk revival band from Gozo, first establish in the early 1980s and returned on the local music scene in 2004.

Some of the musicians from original group approached George Bonello to reform the band.

The new formation consisted of accordion, harmonica, friction drum (rabbaba), Maltese tambourine, guitar, castanets and triangle. In February 2004 they played their first gig in the formation at the Kummittiva Xagħra, a traditional dance held during Carnival days. They then went on to play at other villages in Gozo. They have also played in Austria, Italy (Tuscany), and Slovakia (Nitra).



ONLY SIX NIGHTS REMAIN TO EXPERIENCE

FOLK UNDERGROUND

Make a night of it in Valletta and discover Malta's living folk heritage beneath the streets of the capital
VALLETTA, MALTA | September 2026

– Beneath the streets of Valletta, the voices, guitars and stories of Malta's folk tradition continue to echo through the historic vaults of Sala San Duminku.

But only **six dates** remain to experience **Folk Underground** in

2026. Following its summer launch, the live cultural experience enters its final weeks with performances throughout September and October, culminating in a special **Final Night on Wednesday 28 October**, featuring two performances and the final show of the season at 20:15. Folk Underground brings together **traditional Maltese ghana, acoustic music and storytelling** in an intimate 45-minute performance that celebrates a living tradition passed from one generation to another. Rather than simply watching a performance, audiences are invited to step into a different side of Malta: one shaped by voices, stories, humour, memory and music.

MAKE A NIGHT OF IT IN THE CAPITAL

As autumn evenings arrive, Folk Underground is inviting locals and visitors alike to gather their friends and **make a night of it in Valletta**.

Come into the capital, enjoy dinner or a drink, wander through Valletta after dark and then head underground to Sala San Duminku for an experience rooted firmly in Malta.

With **bar service available at the venue**, audiences can arrive early, enjoy the historic surroundings and settle into the atmosphere before the performance begins.

And perhaps most importantly, simply being there matters.

Traditions and cultural heritage remain alive because people continue to experience them, share them and pass them on.

Every person who takes a seat, brings a friend, tells someone about the experience or introduces a visitor to Maltese folk culture becomes part of that continuing story.

Folk Underground is ultimately about bringing Malta's living heritage out of the archive and into the present, allowing ghana and its stories to be heard not simply as something belonging to the past, but as something that continues to have a place in Malta today.

THE FINAL PERFORMANCES SEPTEMBER

Wednesday 23 September | 20:15 Wednesday 30 September | 20:15

**OCTOBER Wednesday 7 October | 20:15 Sunday 11 October | 19:00 | Special Sunday Edition
Wednesday 14 October | 20:15**

WEDNESDAY 28 OCTOBER | FINAL NIGHT 19:00 20:15 | Final Performance

All performances take place at **Sala San Duminku, Valletta**.

Tickets and information are available through the official Folk Underground website
WWW.FOLKUNDERGROUND.COM

Come underground. Bring your friends. Make a night of it.

Because Malta's traditions do not stay alive by standing still.

They stay alive when we gather to hear them.



MALTESE- CANADIAN MUSEUM - TORONTO

The Maltese-Canadian Museum documents and shares the heritage,

stories, and enduring contributions of Maltese Canadians across generations.

This IS an exciting milestone for the Maltese-Canadian Museum as we held our first in-person Board meeting at the Museum since being formally incorporated through the Ontario Historical Society!

We're pleased to introduce the Board and leadership helping guide the Museum into its next chapter: **Nigel Klemenčič-Puglisevich — Chair, Joan Carbonaro — Vice-Chair, Jacob Carbonaro — Treasurer, Kealey Kennedy-Puglisevich — Library & Archives Officer Sarah Meli — Outreach & Media Officer Amani Abu Ramadan — Director Richard Cumbo — Executive Director & Curator**

Fr. James Bussanich — St. Paul the Apostle Church Representative

As well as our many volunteers who help keep the Museum alive!

With incorporation now complete, we're looking forward to strengthening our museum as an organisation, preserving and sharing Maltese-Canadian heritage, and preparing for many exciting years ahead.



Maltese-Canadian Museum 3224 Dundas St W Toronto, ON M6P 2A3 Canada

The Museum is located within the St. Paul the Apostle Church complex in Toronto.

We are deeply grateful to announce that the Maltese-Canadian Museum has received a generous \$10,000 legacy gift from the Estate of Dame Violet Antoinette Sillato, presented on

behalf of the Estate by Teresa Bugelli.

Dame Violet gave many years of her time, energy, and support to St. Paul the Apostle Church and the Maltese-Canadian community, contributing to community life in countless ways. We are honoured that her legacy will now continue through the Museum and its work to preserve and share Maltese-Canadian history and heritage.

This remarkable gift will support ongoing improvements to the Museum, the development of our new permanent exhibit, and future community initiatives.

We extend our sincere gratitude to the Estate of Dame Violet Sillato and to Teresa Bugelli for their support and trust in the Maltese-Canadian Museum



MALTESE CENTER
ASTORIA, NEW YORK CITY

MONSIGNOR ANTHONY SALIBA•

Congratulations to Fr. Anthony!

The Maltese Center would like to extend our heartfelt congratulations to our Chaplain, Fr. Anthony, on being named an Honorary Monsignor and on celebrating an incredible 25 years of priesthood!

We thank Monsignor Anthony for his many years of dedicated service, spiritual guidance, and commitment to the Maltese

community. We are truly grateful for everything he has done and continues to do for our community.

A special celebration will take place at the Cathedral in honour of these wonderful milestones.. Congratulations, Monsignor Anthony, on this well-deserved honour and 25 blessed years of priesthood! May God continue to bless you for many more years.

The editor and readers of the Maltese Journal join the members of the Maltese Center to congratulate Fr. Anthony and wish him best of health and happiness.



**TO ALL FAMILY AND FRIENDS
THANK YOU FOR YOUR
GOOD WISHES AND CALLS
MARY AND MYSELF
HAD A GREAT DAY
CELEBRATING OUR
69th WEDDING ANNIVERSARY
WISH YOU WERE ALL WITH US
TO CELEBRATE
OUR MILESTONE
LOVE TO ALL**

FRANK SCICLUNA, THE EDITOR, EXTENDS HIS THANKS TO MARY AND HARRY BUGEJA FOR THEIR SIGNIFICANT SUPPORT TO THE MALTESE JOURNAL AND ON BEHALF OF THE CORRESPONDENTS AND READERS WISHES YOU BOTH

AD MULTOS ANNOS

WOMEN FARMERS

IN MALTA



Barefoot women toiled beneath the sweltering Maltese sun, working an unforgiving soil that demanded

Women make up roughly 11% to 14% of registered farm holders and direct agricultural workers in Malta, representing one of the smallest shares of female farm leadership in the European Union.

Current Statistics and Roles

Low Formal Representation: Women account for only about 11.1% of registered farm holders and roughly 14% of the total direct agricultural workforce.

Unpaid and Informal Labor: A large portion of women's work occurs through unpaid or informal

contributions on family-run farms, managing essential tasks like bookkeeping, marketing, and daily fieldwork.

Traditional Gender Roles: Male family members often handle more visible business and heavy machinery operations, while female contributions have historically been underrecognized despite being vital to farm survival.

Challenges Faced by Female Farmers

Societal Stereotypes: Deeply ingrained cultural expectations often position farming as a male domain, leaving women to balance heavy agricultural duties with domestic responsibilities. [1]

Institutional Barriers: Access to land ownership, formal credit, and agricultural networks remains skewed, compounded by limited structural support for women leading independent ventures.

Emerging Initiatives and Change

Ta' Lazzru Farm: Run by Joanne Micallef and her daughter Rhiannon in Marsa, this century-old family farm operates as a prominent women-led enterprise. They grow local produce and host "HerHarvest" workshops to teach other women traditional and sustainable farming skills.

Empowering Women in Agrifood (EWA): Programs like [EWA Malta](#) offer targeted mentoring, business development, and community networking to help female entrepreneurs build sustainable ventures in the local food.

IT'S NICE TO BE IMPORTANT, BUT IT MORE IMPORTANT TO BE NICE



Robert and Lydia Abela meet Maltese community in Astoria New York City



Prime Minister Robert Abela together with his wife Dr Lydia Abela met with members of the Maltese and Gozitan community in New York during a visit to the Ċentru tal-Maltin in Astoria, as part of their commitments in New York to attend the General Assembly of the United Nations. The PM and wife had the opportunity to meet those who have resided in the United States for many years as well as the younger members of their families who have continued to maintain strong relations with Malta. In a message, PM Abela expressed his appreciation that despite the great distance, the community has highly maintained its identity, culture and traditions. He particularly thanked those who on a voluntary basis work for the community, and their initiatives.

The Ċentru tal-Maltin in Astoria is administered by volunteers and was established in 1979 to provide space for the Maltese community to meet and retain high their language, culture and traditions. Over the years it has continued to host cultural and social activities and the Maltese language is taught.

The Prime Minister stressed on the importance of the Maltese language that this is passed on to upcoming generations of children and youths, born and bred outside Malta.

In fact, the PM said, that the community has continued to establish itself out of the country remains an important part of the identity and history of Malta and Gozo and also shows the value of the work done by the community.

“The fact that thousands of kilometres from Malta you have continued to retain traditions and have remained a community makes us proud”, said the PM.

He also remarked on the importance of direct flights between New York and Malta which continue to strengthen ties between the two countries. Dr Abela said the Government is working to continue strengthening the connectivity with the Maltese community and create more opportunities for ties with the US to attract quality tourism.

He ended by urging the community to continue strengthening ties for the benefit of future generations.

Maltese Community Council of Victoria, Inc.



THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE PICTURED WITH THE CONSUL GENERALE DR. GIOCONDA SCHEMBRI

The MCCV held its Annual General Meeting on Wednesday 9 September and the following have been elected to the Executive Committee.

Antonia Camilleri – President, Tania De Carli – Vice President, Ron Evans – Secretary David Betts – Treasurer, Rosemary Attard – Welfare Director Rita Attard- Executive Member, Joseph Camilleri- Executive Member, Father Lonnie Borg – Missionary Society of St

Paul. We acknowledge the contribution and express our thanks to outgoing members Andrew Gatt and Joseph Matina

JAZZ in CHEEK Trio or Al.Q.Bon



***LENOX AVENUE
278A Rundle St,
Adelaide***

***(next door to
Gelatissimo)
6pm -9pm (Free
Entry)***

***EVERY THIRD FRIDAY
NIGHT!***

FRI 16 OCT 2026 FRI 20

NOV 2026 FRI 18 DEC 2026

Featuring

Bonnie Lee Galea- voice Quinton Dunne - double bass/voice

Richard Coates – keys or Al Valodze - guitar

Come in for dinner or a drink at the bar!

We would love to see you there for some

Cheeky JAZZ, Smokey BLUES & SWINGing Rhythms,

with some Latin and gypsy jazz vibes!

Facebook event link

<https://www.facebook.com/share/1BULDdE1co/>

OUR LADY QUEEN OF PEACE FESTA 2026

To Grow as a Community in the Likeness of Christ

**Wednesday 23rd | Thursday 24th | Friday 25th
September 2026**

7.30pm Rosary (in the church)

Sunday 27th September 2026

Please note: Carpark will be closed after 7am Sunday Mass
& there will be no Sunday 6pm Mass.

7.00am Parish Mass

8.30am Parish Mass

10.30am Parish Mass

2.00pm Festa Mass celebrated in English
After Mass procession of the Statue
of Our Lady Queen of Peace

3.30pm Outside festivities begin

4.30pm Musical Performance by Maltese
Concert Band

6.00pm Musical Performance by OLQP
Primary School Band

6.45pm Musical Performance by G-Sus

8.30pm Fireworks Display

**Food Stalls | Amusements | Rides
Entertainment | Fireworks | Market Stalls**

**Our Lady Queen of Peace Catholic Church
198 Old Prospect Rd, Greystanes**



MARK ANDREW TABONE'S

BOOK LAUNCH

Memoir • Music • Inspiration



Join Us!

FOR THE
MEMOIR BOOK LAUNCH

**SATURDAY
NOVEMBER 14**

LA VALETTE SOCIAL CENTRE
175 WALTERS RD
BLACKTOWN 4PM

*Real Stories
Real Music
Real Dreams*

**Meet Mark
in Person!**



LA VALETTE
BLACKTOWN



MELBOURNE CUP

2026

TUESDAY 3 NOVEMBER
FROM 10AM

**BUFFET LUNCH
& MORNING TEA**
SWEEPS • HAT PARADE
GAMES & PRIZES
ENTERTAINMENT BY
JOE APAP &
CHEEKY CHARLIE

\$45(M) - \$50(NM)
TO BOOK PLEASE SPEAK TO
COMMITTEE OR STAFF, OR VISIT
LAVALETTE.COM.AU/MCUP26

