

Malta and the Anzacs: The Nurse of the Mediterranean

Edited by Frank L
Scicluna OAM
Hon Consul for Malta
in South Australia

Review by Charles Gatt

MALTESE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION (AUSTRALIA)

I was delighted to receive my copy of *Malta and the Anzacs: The Nurse of the Mediterranean* by Frank L Scicluna OAM last week. It is a quality production, hard covered and printed on 150 pages of glossy paper, with superb photographs and illustrations throughout.

The introduction by His Excellency Charles Muscat, High Commissioner for Malta to Australia and New Zealand, the Foreword by Chev Charles Farrugia OAM JP, President of the RSL Maltese Sub-branch South Australia, messages from several MPs and many others all pay tribute to the important role this book plays in commemorating Malta's contribution during World War I, on the hundredth anniversary of the ANZAC tradition. Around 80,000 wounded soldiers owe their lives to the care they received in Malta. 276 never made it home and found their permanent resting place in Malta.

The book describes the events of World War I, the development of the ANZAC tradition, and some of the people involved through diaries, firsthand accounts and old photographs. Although Malta did

not play a direct part in fighting, the Maltese were active in repairing ships, as well as crewing them. Over 600 Maltese were killed, mostly at sea. The number of Maltese serving with the Australians is unknown but it is estimated that 15000 were members of the Maltese Labour Corps, 1000 of whom unloaded ships at Anzac Cove.

27 hospitals were established in Malta, catering for up to 135,000 sick and wounded, including 20,000 ANZACs. Frank describes them in detail and also describes some of the personalities involved, and the many complications they had to deal with, such as leprosy and malaria, dysentery, typhoid and trench fever. An interesting section in the book deals with hospital ships during the war; another on the prisoners of war held in Malta.

Frank lists details of the 276 ANZACs buried in Maltese war graves, which are cared for by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. During World War I, 2692 Australian nurses volunteered for service. Twenty-five died on active service; some are buried in Malta and are remembered, as are 7 known Maltese ANZACs who were killed, and a number of Maltese migrants to Australia who served in the armed forces

The book shows Maltese stamps commemorating WW1, Photographs and descriptions of the military cemeteries in Malta, including the Turkish cemetery, are given, as well as a memorial to the 68 Japanese sailors buried at Kalkara Naval cemetery in Malta.

Frank describes the now dilapidated Australia Hall, earmarked for conservation, and details the inauguration celebrations of the ANZAC memorial in the Argotti gardens in Floriana. He concludes with the anthems of Australia, New Zealand and Malta.

What a thoroughly enjoyable, detailed and informative book this is; a must for your library!

STOP PRESS:

**Malta and the ANZACS
THE NURSE OF THE MEDITERRANEAN**

This unique book is selling fast and since we printed only a limited number order your copy now before they all go.

Cost: \$35.00 + \$12.00 postage
(Australia only)

The Consul General for Malta in Victoria

Mr Victor Grech

is launching the book –**MALTA AND THE ANZACS – THE NURSE OF
THE MEDITERRANEAN** on Tuesday 21 July at the
Maltese Community Centre, Royal Parade, Parkville at 7.30pm
Everyone is invited to attend

Where did the word 'ANZAC' originate?



Historically, ANZAC (**A**ustralian and **N**ew **Z**ealand **A**rmY **C**orps) was an acronym devised by Major General William Birdwood's staff in Cairo in early 1915. It was used for registering correspondence for the new corps and a rubber stamp was cut using the letters A.&N.Z.A.C.

After the landing at Gallipoli, General Birdwood requested that the position held by the Australians and New Zealanders on the peninsula be called 'Anzac' to distinguish it from the British position at Helles. Permission was also sought to name the little bay, where the majority of the corps had come ashore on 25 April 1915, 'Anzac Cove'. The letters now were upper and lower case, indicating that the original acronym had already found a use beyond that of a military code word or corps designation.

The marketing power of the word 'Anzac' itself was realised early on by astute entrepreneurs. Then there were those who genuinely sought to immortalise lost loved ones by naming their homes 'Anzac'.

Whether its use was well-intentioned or purely commercial, the word 'Anzac' could easily have been exploited, overused or misused. This was realised as early as 1916 and so legislation was passed to regulate its use and has existed ever since.



THE UNVEILING OF AN ANZAC MONUMENT – SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Malta GC — the island nation awarded the George Cross for the gallantry of its people under siege in the early years of World War 2 is renowned also for its care of the wounded in World War 1.

A new memorial recognising this chapter in Malta's history has been installed in Prospect. It carries the names of South Australian ANZACS were buried on Malta after dying of wounds from the Gallipoli campaign.

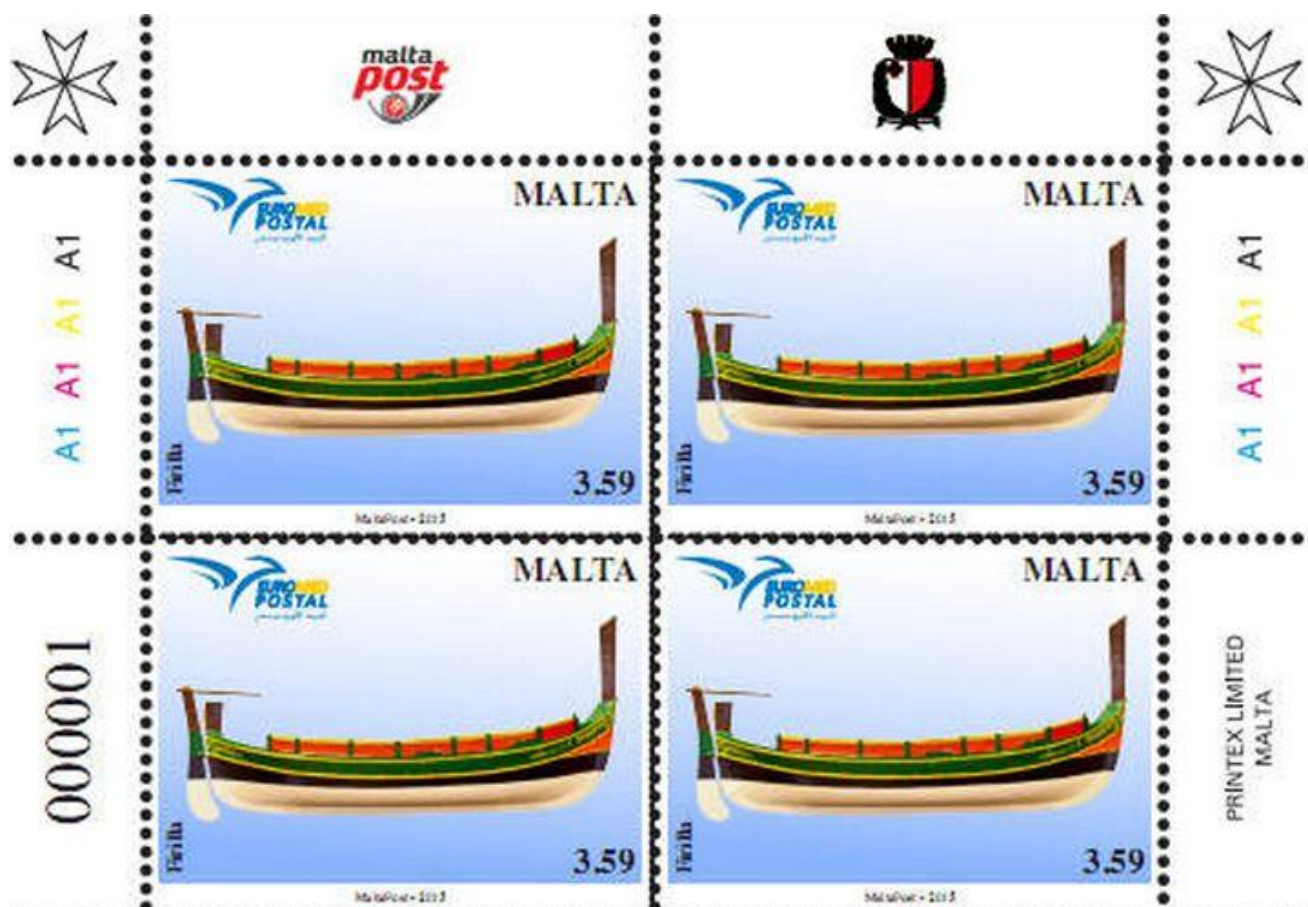
The memorial was unveiled by the RSL state president Brigadier T. Hanna, accompanied by the president of the Maltese subbranch, Chev. C. Farrugia — a veteran of the Royal Malta Artillery. Attending the ceremony Frank Scicluna, the Hon Consul for Malta in SA, David O'Loughlin, Mayor of the Prospect City Council and Robert Banton, President Prospect RSL Branch.

"Almost 58,000 ANZACs were taken to Malta - 4 000 alone in May 1915 after the first weeks of the landings - to be treated for their wounds," Brigadier Hanna said "This contribution resulted in Malta becoming known as the Nurse of the Mediterranean."

He added that Maltese immigrants had contributed significantly to the multicultural character of contemporary Australia.

"It is most fitting," he said, "that the Maltese community in South Australia are amongst those doing something special to commemorate the lives lost in World War I and to share their memories and thoughts with today's generations."

PHILATELIC POSTAGE STAMP ISSUE 'BOATS OF THE MEDITERRANEAN'



The postal operators within the Postal Union for the Mediterranean, – PUMed, will be issuing stamps featuring as a common theme the boats of the Mediterranean.

Malta will be participating in this initiative by issuing a stamp featuring the Firilla which in the past was commonly seen around the Maltese Islands.

PUMed marks the Mediterranean region as a political, economic and social area. Faced with an ever-changing postal industry, members within PUMed have come together so as to develop projects that will help each postal operator keep up with the challenges of the market. PUMed was officially established on 15 March 2011 and its headquarters are stationed in Malta.

The Malta stamp carries a face-value of €3.59 and the issue consists of 20,000 stamps. It was designed by Sean Cini of MaltaPost and will be issued in sheets of 10 stamps.

The stamp measures 41mm x 30.5mm with a perforation of 13.7 x 13.8 (comb.) and bears the Maltese Crosses watermark while the sheet measures 108mm x 178.5mm and is complemented by an illustration of the Firilla.

This philatelic issue will be available as from Thursday, the 9th of July 2015, from all Post Offices in Malta and Gozo, online at www.maltaphilately.com or by mail from the Philatelic Bureau, MaltaPost p.l.c. 305, Qormi Road, Marsa, MTP 1001; Telephone: 2596 1740, e-mail: info@maltaphilately.com.



Stedina

**Il-Fathers Maltin
jixtiequ jistiednu lill-
Kommunita' Maltija,
ghal festa tradizzjonali
tal-Vitorja,**

Il-Hadd 13 ta' Settembru 2015

Fis-2.30 pm tibda l-purcissjoni fejn jinghad ir-Ruzarju - wara tibda l-quddiesa kkoncelebrata **fil-Katidral ta' St Mary's College Street Sydney.**

Il-Predikatur, ser ikun Rev Fr Noel Bianco MSSP

Ejjew u gibu maghkom il-bnadar jew standardi tal-ghaqda taghkom.

Jekk joghgobkhom, tridu tkunu hemm qabel is-2.00 pm biex issibu post.

Dawk il-familji li ghandom xi tfal jew zghazagh li jkunu jrridu jilbsu kostum Malti jew tal-precett, biex jimxu fil-purcissjoni fil-Katidral ghandom ic-cemplu lil Antoinette Mascari 9899 1938 jew 0438 639 986

Grazzi lil kull min dejjem attenda ghal din il-festa, li niccelebraw ta' kull sena ghal dawn l-ahhar wiehed u hamsin sena.

Fr Tarcisio Micallef MSSP

Chaplain for the Maltese Community
in the Archdiocese of Sydney.

SAVE THE MALTESE LANGUAGE PROGRAM ON SBS RADIO

Hello everyone,

I just signed the campaign: **SAVE THE MALTESE LANGUAGE PROGRAM ON SBS RADIO**

Every name that is added builds momentum around the campaign and makes it more likely for us to get the change we want to see. Will you join me by taking action on this campaign? **Click on the link...**

<http://www.communityrun.org/petitions/save-the-maltese-language-program-on-sbs-radio>

After you've signed the petition please also take a moment to share it with others. **Cheers Joseph Deguara**



History of the Organisation

Solidarity Overseas Services

At its inception, SOS Malta was founded to address the hunger and poverty stricken Albanians that reached the Maltese shores in ship-loads in the early nineties. Not being able to seek haven on our small island, a national campaign to assist them in need was launched. This led to the first visits of the founders of the organisation to the country.

Humanitarian aid and emergency food supplies, together with items of clothing and other basic needs first reached the Albanian shores in September 1991. After various appeals for assistance on a national level, it was soon realised that a more structured and permanent approach was needed if any difference was to be made to the quality of life of Albanians. This led to the foundation of SOS Malta as the first international NGO in Malta.

From the delivery of ship-loads of humanitarian aid, SOS Malta has developed into a development agency, providing for the long-term social, economic and political development of the people of Albania, assisting in times of crisis as happened during the collapse of the pyramid schemes in 1997 in the country as well as the Kosovo crisis in 1999.

Aims and Objectives

- SOS Malta is a non governmental organisation working in Malta and overseas
- SOS Malta assists all peoples through projects of a social and charitable nature
- SOS Malta provides assistance to the poor helping them to improve quality of life
- SOS Malta helps to enhance the knowledge and skills of those it serves
- SOS Malta advocates on behalf of the poor
- SOS Malta promotes models of good care and practice
- SOS Malta works with local and international NGO's in order to achieve its aims

Mission Statement

Aiding people experiencing times of crisis and empowering them by providing support services and opportunities to implement development and change in their country to ensure a better quality of life.

Contact

Santa Venera Office: Address: 10 Triq il-Ward,
Santa Venera MALTA SVR 1640
Telephone: 356 21244123 **Fax:** 356 21224742
Email: info@sosmalta.org

Details:

Zurrieq



Zurrieq is not only an interesting village to visit in itself but also the perfect departure point for unforgettable excursions. Located in the deep south of Malta, the village retains many houses built before the arrival of the Knights on the island, and is a rare window into pre-baroque Malta. There are many noteworthy archaeological sites including a Roman tower, Punic graves and a curious room with an Egyptian ledge - probably part of an old temple dedicated to Melqart, a Phoenician deity. From Zurrieq it is easy to reach the spectacular cliffs of Wied iz-Zurrieq, a favourite destination both for divers and climbers. From here you can also take a boat and visit the Blue Grotto, a vast system of sea caves with incredible shades of blue.

Church of St Catherine

Completed in 1658 with the support of the whole population, the Church of St Catherine of Alexandria is without any doubt one of the most beautiful on the island, not only for the impetus it gave to baroque architecture in Malta but also because it hosts some of the best works by Mattia Preti. Preti worked a lot in Zurrieq, and at one point apparently even moved to the village, probably to avoid the plague spreading in Valletta.

Martyrdom of St Catherine

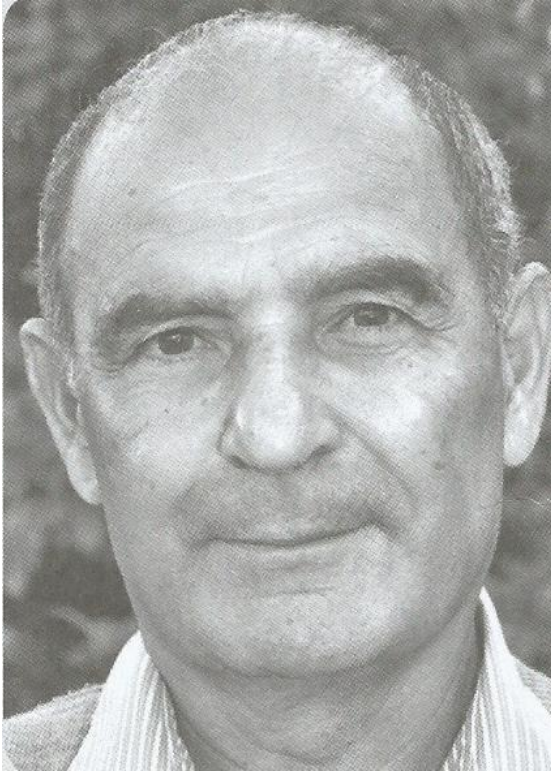
On the main altar one finds the *Martyrdom of St Catherine*, created between 1667 and 1671. Preti shows us the precise moment when the Saint, after her refusal to renounce the Christian faith in favour of pagan idols, is condemned to torture on a serrated wheel by the Roman governor Maximus, who is also witnessing the scene. The wheel, supposed to tear apart the Saint's flesh, miraculously breaks into pieces, sending forth its blades to rend and kill St Catherine's tormentors. The Saint is then liberated by two angels guided by the dove of the Holy Spirit. The wheel divides the composition into two contrasting halves: the lower one with the defeated torturers in a dark and bleak shadow, the upper one marking the triumph of St Catherine, immersed in a miraculous light as she looks towards heaven. On top of the altarpiece there is an oval painting showing *God the Father*, depicted by Preti with intense realism.

Other works by Mattia Preti

The church houses other notable works by Preti: the *Martyrdom of St Stephen* (first altar on the left) with its vivid colour contrasts; the *Martyrdom of St Andrew* (first altar on the right), with many evocative references to the maritime tradition of Zurrieq (mainly in the maritime seascapes and the still-lives with fishes in the foreground); and *Our Lady of Graces with Saints* (chapel in the right transept). The Saints asked to intercede in an attempt to overcome the plague are represented on the altarpiece, while the Blessed Virgin was portrayed on a separate panel, now on display in the sacristy. Finally Preti painted the splendid *Visitation*, where Mary, pregnant with Jesus, embraces her cousin Elisabeth tenderly in a serene family atmosphere.

Address

Church of St Catherine, Triq Pietru Pawl Saydon, Zurrieq, Malta.



FRANK ZAMMIT – NSW, AUSTRALIA

twieled il-Belt Victoria, Ghawdex fis-27 ta' Jannar 1944 u trabba l-Marsa. Ta' ghoxrin sena emigra lejn l-Awstralja fejn izzewweg u ghandu tlett itfal. Fl-1981 rega' lura Malta bil-familja biex ta' l-opportunité lill-uliedu li jgawdu wkoll il-kumpliment tal-familja u li jifhmu ahjar il-kultura Maltija, sakemm fl-1984 irritorna Sydney bil-familja.

Wara l-Preparatorja fis-Seminarju Arciveskovili fil-Floriana huwa kompla s-Sekondarja fil-Liceo, il-Hamrun u spicca l-Matrikula f'Southampton, l-Ingilterra. Fl-Awstralja ghamel korsijiet terzjarji tal-Accountancy, Ligi Kummercjali, I.T., Xandir u Gurnaliimu f'diversi kulleggi Awstraljani u fl-iSpecial Broadcasting Services (SBS) Sydney.

Frank kien ghallem il-Malti u suggetti ohra fil-Kullegg De La Salle, Malta u fl-Awstralja u kien wiehed mill-pijunieri tat-tagħlim tal-Malti fejn għallmu għal bosta snin. Hadem bhala Computer Programmer u Systems Analyst, Accountant, Investment Manager, u Traduttur u Interpretu part-time mal-gvern u mal-privat fl-oqsma legali, tas-sahha, sigurté socjali u religjuii, waqt li għal hafna snin kien parti mit-tim ta' xandara u gurnalisti Maltin tar-Radju SBS Sydney, fejn għadu jippartecipa biss bhala kontributor. Fl-isfera letterarja, għal xi imien kien membru tal-Bord Editorjali ta' Il-Polz (Malta), huwa membru tal-Akkademja tal-Malti u għaqdiet letterarji ohra f'Malta u fl-Awstralja. Fl-1988 waqqaf l-Ghaqda Kulturali Maltija ta' NSW.

Fost il-kotba tieghu li gew ippubblikati nsibu: Bejn zewg Giiriet — (700 poeija sal-1995), Il-Ballata tal-Maltin ta' New Caledonia — (ktieb u kassett immuiikat- 1988), Il-Quddiesa bil-Ghana Malti — (ktieb u kassett immuzikat-1990), It-Triq Imqaddsa — (kteb u kassett immuzikat — 1990), Valentin V. Barbara 70 Sena (ko-awtur — 1990), The Self And Beyond It — (traduzzjoni ta' Il-Jien u Lilhinn Minnu ta' Dun Karm — University of Victoria - 1997), Qwiel Minn Fomm L-Imgarrab — (1160 poezija fuq stil Hajku — 2010), Mixijiet Fi Triqatek — (poeziji - 2013), u ko-awtur ukoll ta' għadd ta' antologiji fl-Awstralja u f'Malta. Inghata l-Premju Kulturali 2000 u fl-2006 nhatar Membru għal Ghomru tat-Centru Socjali Malin ta' Blacktown, NSW bit-fitli ta' Poeta tal-Emigrant-i u Konsulent Kulturali tal-istess Centru.

Frank għadu jahdem f'diversi aspetfi kulturali u socjali fost H-Maltin fi NSW u wasal ukoll biex jippubblika ktieb ta' aktar minn elf epigramm bil-Malti. Huwa jemmen li l-element ewlieni tal-identita Maltija huwa l-Ilsien Malti.

Church of St Catherine of Alexandria -VALLETTA



Recently restored, this church is an ideal setting to discover Mattia Preti's refined style close up. The church was particularly significant for the Italian painter for at least two reasons. Firstly, it was the church of his own Langue, the Italian Knights, who also lived close by in the Auberge d'Italie. Secondly this was one of Preti's first commissions after his arrival in Malta in 1659, and was an early opportunity to showcase his artistic talent.

The Knights asked Preti to design the decoration for the vault, but commissioned a local painter to actually execute the work. Preti drew an elegant vault with painted stucco decorations and ornamental patterns in grey and gold, elegant and still worthy of admiration today. This commission also offered Preti the opportunity to learn a technique new to him, from the local painter executing his designs: oil painting applied directly on the wall, instead of the more traditional tempera technique used in frescoes. Preti mastered the technique quickly, putting it into practice only a few years later to paint the vault of an even more important church, St John's Co-Cathedral. The real masterpiece by Mattia Preti in the Church of St Catherine is the altarpiece with the grandiose tableaux of *The Martyrdom of St Catherine*, executed in 1659 in Naples and donated by Preti to the Italian Knights to demonstrate his talent. This work represents for Malta one of the first examples of the great talent of Mattia Preti, a painter responsible for bringing to the island the strong pathos and theatrical exuberance of the baroque style, with its warm colours and strong contrasts.

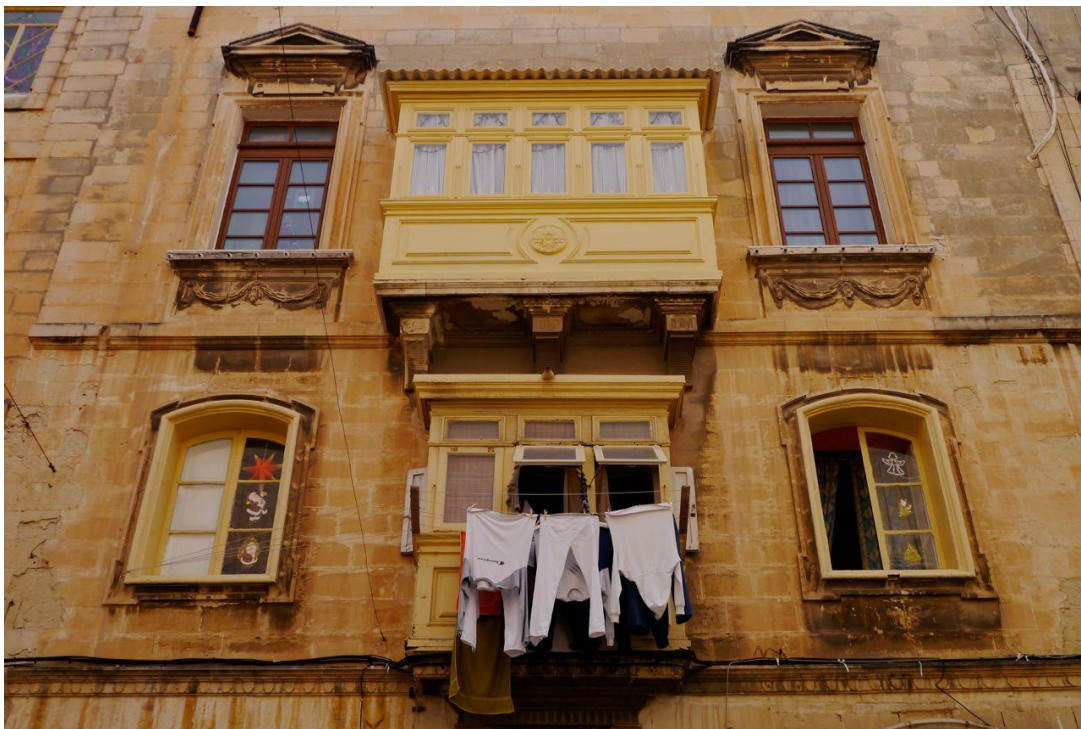
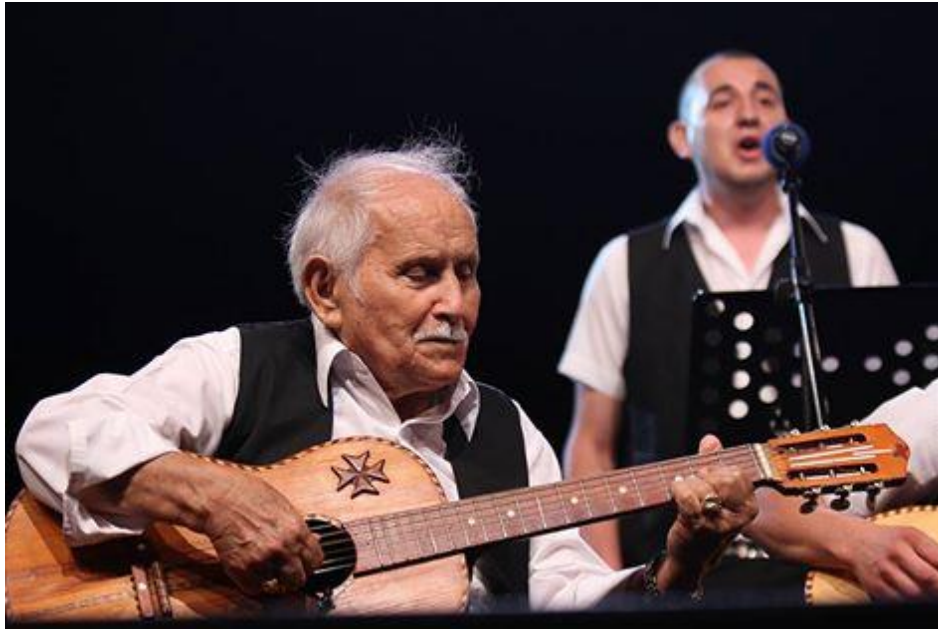
Address Triq il-Merkanti, Valletta, Malta.



"Ili fuq 70 sena ndoqq il-kitarra u ngħanni. L-għana qegħda ġo fija. Dik tkun minnek. Il-versi jiġu waħedhom.

Fejn jistednuni mmur. Issa minħabba li l-vuċi bġhattiet, m'għadnix ngħanni. L-għana ma tispicċax...hawn id-dilettanti. Għandi 8 itfal, imma hadd minnhom ma ħareġ jgħanni."

- Fredu Grech "l-Irish"



TONXOR IL-HWEJJEG TA TAHT FIL-GALLARIJA FIL-BELT



Which year do you think this photo was taken?

This was Air Malta's summer uniform, requiring extreme ironing skills! We take this opportunity to say hello to all our present and past AirMalta staff.



**ARCHBISHOP MICHAEL GONZI DURING HIS VISIT TO THE
MALTESE COMMUNITY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA**

**This picture was taken at the North Terrace War Memorial
ADELAIDE in 1953**



Emigrants' Commission- Malta

Dar l-Emigrant, Castille Place, Valletta, VLT 01, Malta Phone (+356) 21222644, 21232545, 21240255 Fax

(+356) 21240022 ; E-mail:

mecmalta@vol.net.mt

Office Hours: Week-days: 8.30a.m. - 12.30a.m. > 3.00p.m. - 6.00p.m. Summer time: 8.30a.m. - 1.30p.m.



Mgr Philip Calleja

Emigrants' Commission is a non-governmental, non-profitable, voluntary organisation, which is established to help and protect people in need by offering them free services, counselling and protection.

Emigrants' Commission came into being in 1950 due to the huge exodus of Maltese to foreign lands because of over population and unemployment. The aim was to offer help to those who intended to settle abroad.



Father Alfred Vella

Now its services cover all those affected by migration including immigrants, refugees and tourists. Under the patronage of the Emigrants' Commission there are other organisations whose activities are orientated to help immigrants and tourists in more specific areas and it also houses Associations such as: Maltese - Canadian Association, U.K. and Other Countries, Maltese - American Association, Friends of Australia Association and International Wives Association, Association of Families of Migrants



The activities of the Emigrants' Commission are various and many such as: **Social Work, Refugees, Catholic Enquiry Centre, Media and Research Centre, S.O.S Albania, Secretariat for Maltese Priests Overseas, Associations of Returned Migrants, Travel Counter**

Social Work

Counselling, tracing lost relatives, speaking up for migrants and refugees with the local authorities, help with language courses, providing useful contacts. Organising cultural, social and religious activities at regular intervals e.g. Seminars, Courses, Cultural Tours, Migrants' Day, Mothers' Day, Christmas Gatherings.

For more information about courses or activities, please contact e-mail: mecmalta@vol.net.mt

Marriages

One significant corollary to migration is that of mixed marriages: Maltese marrying non-Maltese, Maltese marrying foreign-based Maltese, Catholics marrying non-Catholics. Preparatory courses and talks are held regularly and married people with problems are helped.

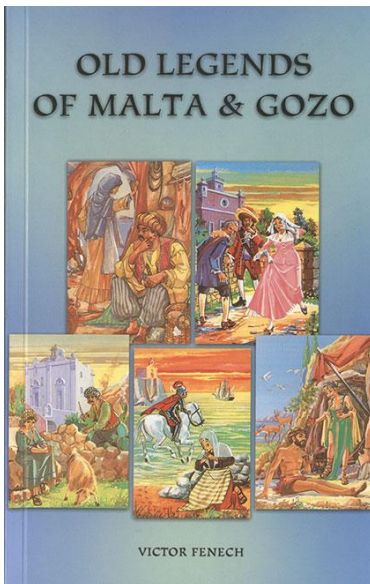
Contacts are established with spouses living in other countries. For the appointment or any questions, please contact e-mail: fravella@onvol.net Fr. Alfred Vella.

Refugees:

For many years now refugees in Malta have been helped in many ways. Protection, basic needs, accommodation, recreation and schooling are sympathetically dealt with. This is made more effective by the official recognition of the Emigrants' Commission as an Operational Partner of the UNHCR Branch Office in Rome. Help for refugees is also solicited by the Commission through its very useful contacts both domestic and foreign. Records are kept and reports are issued from time to time. Emigrants' Commission has some 10 homes at its disposal, where approximately 150 of the most vulnerable refugees are accommodated, free of charge. Some of these homes are privately owned, while the others are church homes.

Should you need any help or information, please contact Fr. Alfred Vella or Mgr. Philip Calleja, e-mail: mecmalta@vol.net.mt

Catholic Enquiry Centre: The scope of the CEC is to provide information on the Catholic Church and its teaching to those who are interested. Those who normally seek this service are overseas visitors and non-Catholics who intend to marry a Catholic partner. Personal and confidential instruction is provided and so are books and leaflets. Those who wish to contact a priest can do so. Confidentiality is assured. Social gatherings are occasionally organised.



LEGENDS OF MALTA

A characteristic feature common to some Maltese and Gozitan legends is the popular attempt to attribute the present site of a church to supernatural intervention prevailing over human decisions. The following stories illustrate this common motif, which occurs in foreign legends as well.

Tradition claims that originally the village church at Qormi was to be erected on the present site of St Francis' Church, but the knight Stagno, who was reputed to be a wizard, wanted it built nearer his house, to this day called 11-Palazz ta' Stagno. So every night he exercised his occult power until he carried the foundation stones to the present site of the parish church. The people finally came to the conclusion that their patron saint was in favour of the latter site, and accordingly the church rose on the site where it now stands.

Gozitans say that the foundations of the present Cathedral church were being laid on Gelmus Hill, about a quarter of a mile from Victoria, but the stones were transported by supernatural agency to the present site of the Cathedral within the citadel. The Gozitans interpreted this as a sign that Our Lady did not want the temple on Gelmus Hill, but on the Citadel Hill.

According to another Gozitan legend, the villagers of Nadur could not agree on a site for their church. An old villager, Grejger by name, suggested that if they loaded an ass with quarry stones they could erect their church at the place where the beast first stopped. The others approved of this plan and the ass was

accordingly laden at Xewkija, from where it went uphill towards Nadur not stopping until it reached the highest spot of the rising ground. There the villagers built their present temple.

Crossing over to Malta, we find that people still recall how the Turks, having landed at Marsaxlokk, proceeded from Zejtun towards St George's Bay, Birzebbuga, as far as Tal-Brolli. The Maltese were under the command of the knight Murines (Umberto de Murines), who vowed that he would erect a church in honour of Our Lady of Loreto if the Turks were defeated.

In the ensuing struggle the Maltese came out victorious and the church was erected to fulfil the vow. But the stones were miraculously transported some 200 yards to the rise overlooking St George's Bay, on top of which the church now stands. An old painting (1548) in the small church shows a knight kneeling in prayer while the Turkish armada is approaching the island.

In a variation of this intervention theme the 19th-century historian Count Ciantar mentioned an old custom which was subsequently abolished. On St Paul's Day (February 10) it was customary for the farmers in the vicinity of San Pawl Milqi to prepare a banquet. Each one gave some grain or its equivalent in money, and a bull was fattened for the feast. But these banquets gradually came to be a source of great disorder. The Bishop prohibited them and, together with the Apostolic Visitor, ordered that the money usually spent should, in future, go towards the saying of Masses to be celebrated on feast days for the benefit of the inhabitants of that neighbourhood. And so it happened that on the day of that saint a strong bull, tightly bound though it was, broke loose of the ropes that bound it and set out at a run until, arriving before the door of the church, it paused for a while, then continued its headlong run to the shore and plunged into the sea.

On account of this those peasants believed that it was a clear indication that the Apostle was displeased because the feast was no longer being celebrated in the original manner. And they went before the Bishop, pleading their case and asking permission to continue the custom of preparing the usual banquet; but the prudent prelate, following the orders of the Holy See, instructed them to abide by the decree and thus that custom came to an end.

China talks on the future of Air Malta



Air Malta's future is on the agenda of talks the Tourism Minister is having in Beijing with the Chinese government, the Times of Malta has learnt. Edward Zammit Lewis is heading a delegation in the Chinese capital where, sources said, talks with the Chinese government were "open ended" and "all options were being considered". A spokeswoman for the Tourism Minister confirmed that Dr Zammit Lewis and Air Malta chairwoman Maria Micallef are in Beijing discussing "collaboration concerning the national carrier". She did not elaborate.

The sources told the Times of Malta the talks formed part of the government's drive to find a solution to Air Malta's problems before the restructuring plan ends in March next year. "The preferred option is to have some sort of alliance or strategic partner for Air Malta with the government keeping control," the sources said.

Wirt Ghawdex

Safeguarding our heritage for future generations



Dar il-Gvernatur, Rabat, Għawdex our headquarters

Wirt Għawdex is a voluntary non-governmental organisation founded in 1981 with the aims of fostering the knowledge of our heritage amongst all levels of society and to strive to safeguard the natural, archaeological, historical and anthropological patrimony of the islands of Gozo and Comino.

Our efforts to increase the awareness and love of our history include the holding of regular public lectures, promoting the safeguarding of our heritage in school presentations, issuing publications related to our sites and issuing a quarterly newsletter. We also strive to be vigilant with regards to the enforcement of existing laws in order to protect our natural and built heritage

One of our main focuses today is to lobby the Government and obtain Management Agreements that authorize us to restore heritage sites. Once restoration is complete, we continue to manage these sites and open them to the general public.

The society is a non-profit organisation and its funds are generated mainly through membership fees, sales of our publications, voluntary contributions and sponsorships and donations collected through the management of its sites as public and cultural attractions. All the revenue it generates goes towards the restoration and ongoing conservation of these historical sites.

Wirt Għawdex is governed by a committee elected by its membership and whose role is to formulate the general policy and safe-guard the aims of the society as identified in the organisation's statute.

The sites we manage are opened for the general public by our volunteers

Wirt Għawdex president and committee members

Paul George Pisani (centre) with the NGO's 2015 committee. *Photos: Charles Spiteri*

Paul George Pisani is the president of Wirt Għawdex. He succeeded Franco Masini, who served as president for four years.

Pisani, a historian and researcher, graduated from the University of Malta as notary public in 1985, a doctor of laws in 1986 and a master in Mediterranean historical studies in 2010. He is a member of the Malta Institute of



Management, Malta Historical Society, the Akkademja tal-Malti, the Għaqda tal-Malti (Università) and the Malta Folklore Society. <http://www.wirtghawdex.org/>

Tourists can apply for bus card and have it delivered to their home country - operator

Tourists planning to visit Malta can apply for their personalised tallinja bus card online and have it delivered to an address outside Malta, Malta Public Transport said. "All the fares, tickets and cards that came into effect on July 1 are available to anyone irrespective of their place of residence or nationality," the company said.

"The change in fares is about encouraging people to use a card instead of buying their tickets on board the bus. Until June this year, there was no difference in price when buying a ticket from on board the bus or not. In fact, 95% of bus tickets were being purchased from the bus" said Daniel Grech, Commercial Director. "After one week of introducing the new tallinja card, we can report that over 50,000 people used their tallinja card instead of paying cash on the bus – this is a major milestone for us."

"We have added a new feature to our online registration process whereby anyone registering for a tallinja card may have it delivered to any address even if it is outside Malta. Our objective is to reduce the sale of tickets from on board the bus as much as possible – hence the lower fares when using any of our cards," he added. He also pointed out that there are other products available for immediate use which do not require pre-registration or personalisation. These too offer reduced fares when compared to the ticket bought on the bus. The Explore Cards and the 12 Single Day Journey Card can be purchased by anyone from our ticket booths and other leading outlets.

"We are currently working with the Malta Hotels and Restaurants Association to have these cards readily available in as many places as quickly as possible," Mr Grech said. The Explore 7 Day card offers unlimited travel by bus throughout Malta and Gozo, on all day and night services. It can be used immediately upon purchase and is valid for seven consecutive days from the first validation. The card is valid for one person only and cannot be shared. The Explore Card for Adults costs €21 and the Explore Card for children costs €15. This 12 Single Day Journey Card, on the other hand, allows people to travel for 12 journeys on day services or six journeys on night services or a combination of both for €15. This card can be used immediately and may be shared and used more than once on the same bus trip.

MALTESE LANGUAGE: WHAT FUTURE?

BY PROFS HENRY FREND

Thousands of parents, pupils and students, writers and authors, translators and interpreters, journalists, broadcasters and publishers, teachers, tutors and proof-readers must be grateful to the Minister of Education for his wise decision to initiate a public consultation on the future of the Maltese language, particularly in the light of so many twists and turns to which it has been and is being subjected 'from above', as well as from below, lately.

For such a small people with a syncretic vernacular language which did not have a standard orthography before the 1930s, the preservation of Maltese as a recognised literary genre is of the utmost importance, nationally and internationally. Its descent into a pidgin by equating the spoken with the written should not be allowed, the more so when internalised and accepted Maltese words, expressions and forms of writing already exist.

Maltese for shower has long been doċċa; it is not xawer. Last week a sign at the Marsaxlokk market was advertising sordfixx but the Maltese word has long been pixxispad.

The obsession with 'phoneticisation', in an anglicised direction, must be moderated. English is a relatively recent influence on Maltese, albeit a major one because of 'globalised' American technology. However, there is no place for a deterministic absolutism, when a modest flexibility to avoid disruption would be more appropriate (switch or swicc, skond or skont, etc). An advisory 'regulator', if at all required, should be broadly representative of proven, well-established and recognised scholarship and credentials in related disciplines – socio-linguistic, literary, historical and philosophical.

Any grammatical or orthographical changes to so sensitive a medium as language need a slow, mature and careful elaboration, especially if and when they are quite uncalled for. Sadly, as numerous correspondents have noted, we have had a number of such impositions or influences, with a presumed and probably misplaced touch of officialdom, mainly by a so-called Council for the Maltese Language, which was set up in 2005 to offer 'guidelines' rather than brandish decrees.

The latest howlers facing our people are henceforth to say and write Netherlandiż instead of Olandiż, and San Mariniż instead of minn San Marino, and so on ad nauseam. God help us if we become clowns in a circus, which others may insist they are not. There is no doubt that it is time urgently to take stock of this degenerating and confusing situation and to seek to address its unilaterally pretentious arrogance, if only in response to growing public criticism and frustration. Of course, no language is static; it responds to change if and as necessary; the late Prof. Ġużè Aquilina, who gave us a priceless six-volume dictionary in a life work, once compared it to a river.

But a people's language tradition with its etymology and semantics is not the monopoly of a handful of all-knowing dirigisme-bloated latter day 'linguists' from exactly the same stable bent on re-inventing it, for purposes best known to themselves. Our language has a valuable corpus of literary expression moulded over time by some of our greatest writers and thinkers – poets, litterateurs, historians, philosophers – deserving of every respect, not subjected to an uncalled for inter-generational rupture.

Over-regulation, with the presumed wand of an officially designated power, perverts the beauty of writing in any language. It disincentivises and insults the author. It makes parents, teachers and children wonder why all these changes are being made to the language we have known and used successfully for a century, and with what specific authority from on high.

For the first time in my life, I am feeling uncomfortable writing in Maltese. I have stopped the fourth volume of Storja ta' Malta (Is-Seklu Għoxrin) half-way because of that; this is a school textbook for the upper forms of secondary. I recently was with a learned lady from a culturally-driven council in Valletta who has children at school and I said casually that Maltese sometimes risked becoming "an object of ridicule". No, she corrected me, "an object of mockery".

All those who truly cherish Maltese as proud native speakers and writers, without undue pretensions (or designated institutionalised positions) certainly would not want that to happen. As a graduate in Maltese, a one-time journalist and the author of books in the language, I am one of them. By all means, let us open the discussion further and see how the situation may best be resolved. I just hope that laziness or indifference will not keep anyone from responding meaningfully to this very timely and very sincere call from the highest quarters for consultation on this vital matter.



Chinese telecoms giant prepares to test 5G in Malta

Prime Minister Joseph Muscat this morning thanked government envoy Sai Mizzi, the energy minister's wife, for her work in attracting Chinese company Hawei to Malta, where it will test 5G technology.

Dr Muscat said this was the first major result of the decisions taken by the government, despite stiff criticism, but there would be more. He said talks would be started on a fibre to homes technology project which would also benefit local businesses such as e-gaming firms.

Hawei, he pointed out, is the biggest producer of mobile phones in the world and the pride of the Chinese technology sector. He also thanked Parliamentary Secretary Jose' Herrera and consultancy company Earnst and Young for their work. The Sunday Times of Malta reported earlier today that Huawei will open a branch at Smart City. The multinational company that specialises in network and telecommunications equipment is expected to sign a memorandum of understanding with the government tomorrow. Huawei will evaluate the possibility of setting up a research and development facility in Malta apart from the Smart City office, depending on the 5G test results. The 5G testing forms part of Huawei's five-year plan that started in 2013 to invest \$600 million in research on the next phase of mobile phone networks.

It will be the second major Chinese company to invest in Malta after Shanghai Electric Power concluded a transaction to buy a 33 per cent stake in Enemalta last year. Huawei is headquartered in Shenzhen, Guangdong. It is the largest telecommunications equipment maker in the world, having overtaken Ericsson in 2012

FANTASTIC.. WHAT A WOMAN!!!!

I wonder what criteria is used to select people for the Nobel peace prize. Read the story below and we then understand how pathetic and superficial our world has become! Remember this lady?



Irena Sendler

Died: May 12, 2008 (aged 98) Warsaw , Poland

During WWII, Irena, got permission to work in the Warsaw ghetto, as a Plumbing/Sewer specialist. She had an ulterior motive. Irena smuggled Jewish infants out in the bottom of the tool box she carried. She also carried a burlap sack in the back of her truck, for larger kids.

Irena kept a dog in the back that she trained to bark when the Nazi soldiers let her in and out of the ghetto. The soldiers, of course, wanted nothing to do with the dog and the barking covered the kids/infants noises.

During her time of doing this, she managed to smuggle out and save 2500 kids/infants. Ultimately, she was caught, however, and the Nazis broke both of her legs and arms and beat her severely.

Irena kept a record of the names of all the kids she had smuggled out in a glass jar that she buried under a tree in her back yard. After the war, she tried to locate any parents that may have survived and tried to reunite the families. Most had been gassed. Those kids she helped got placed into foster family homes or adopted.

In 2007 Irena was up for the Nobel Peace Prize. She was not selected..... why?

China talks on the future of Air Malta



Air Malta's future is on the agenda of talks the Tourism Minister is having in Beijing with the Chinese government, the Times of Malta has learnt. Edward Zammit Lewis is heading a delegation in the Chinese capital where, sources said, talks with the Chinese government were "open ended" and "all options were being considered".

A spokeswoman for the Tourism Minister confirmed that Dr Zammit Lewis and Air Malta chairwoman Maria Micallef are in Beijing discussing "collaboration concerning the national carrier". She did not elaborate.

The sources told the Times of Malta the talks formed part of the government's drive to find a solution to Air Malta's problems before the restructuring plan ends in March next year. "The preferred option is to have some sort of alliance or strategic partner for Air Malta with the government keeping control," the sources said.

SEE YOU AGAIN SOON BYE

NERGA NARAKOM DALWAQT SAHHA