

# THE JOURNAL OF THE MALTESE DIASPORA

## MALTESE NEWSLETTER

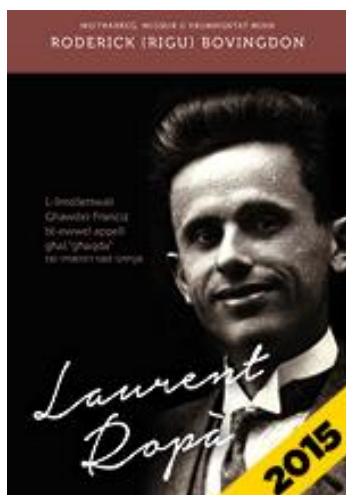


A FREE E-JOURNAL LINKING THE MALTESE ALLOVER THE WORLD

# LAURENT ROPÀ

Mistharreġ, Miġbur u Kkummentat minn Roderick (Rigu) Bovington

*L-intellettwali Għawdxi-Franċiż bl-ewwel appell għal "għaqda" tal-Maltin tad-dinja*

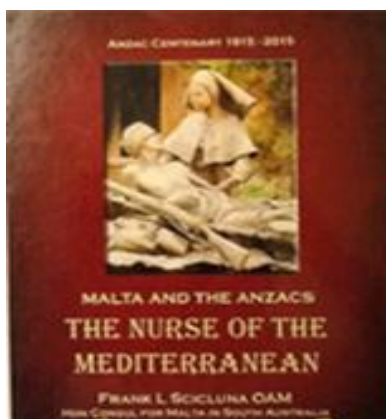


Il-ġrajja dwar il-protagonist ta' din il-prezentazzjoni, Laurent Ropà tifrex biswit il-qarrejja l-esperjenza komuni ta' min iħalli 'l pajjiżu għal futur aktar promettenti. Il-qagħda minuskuli ta' pajjiż il-Maltin minn dejjem kienet tippreżenta sfidi kbar liċ-ċittadin li ma jixtieqx kieku jabbanduna għal dejjem lil pajjiżu. Id-deċiżjoni li jsiefer, meta tittiehed, taf tisfa fi progress kbir. Min-naħa l-oħra taf ukoll tkun għajn kontinwa ta' qtiġħ il-jies, diżappunt u ġieli wkoll traġika. - F'dan it-trattat il-qarrej jiltaqa' maż-żewġ eghjun: kemm il-qares u sija l-ħelu.

L-individwu Laurent Ropà hawnhekk jispikka b'xempju ta' Malti (Għawdxi) li minkejja li nfatam minn pajjiżu huwa rnexxielu jissiefaħ 'il fuq, lil hinn mill-belligħat ħorox li l-ħajja tal-imsiefer taf tisqik, sabiex mhux biss rnexxa iżda sar portavuċi kolta għall-Maltin imbiegħda; wiehed mill-bosta reklami sbieħ lin-nazzjon ċkejken taġna l-Maltin fil-familja tal-ġnus mondjali.

Il-posterità nazzjonali Maltija ma kinitx rgħiba ma' dan il-patrijott għalkemm jidher li jista' jsir aktar sabiex il-frott fin li ħallielna mhux biss ma jintesix imma jibqa' apprezzat fis-swali kolti ta' ġensna.

For enquires regarding LAURENT ROPÀ' book please send an e-mail to: [info@horizons.com.mt](mailto:info@horizons.com.mt) (HORISONS PUBLICATIONS)

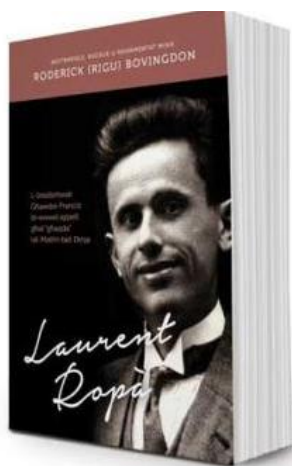


## MALTA AND THE ANZACS THE NURSE OF THE MEDITERRANEAN

A BOOK EVERY MALTESE FAMILY  
SHOULD HAVE

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Frank: [honconsul@live.com.au](mailto:honconsul@live.com.au)

**MALTA'S ROLE DURING WORLD WAR 1**



## LAURENT ROPA'

RODERICK (RIGU) BOVINGTON

The historicity of Maltese seafaring knows its origins from the earliest of times; whether exploring, pirateering or indeed migrating in search of brighter days. The great migratory waves however began towards the middle of the nineteenth century when literally tens of thousands sailed beyond Maltese horizons for the Mediterranean littoral. Most of these headed for the north African coastal fringes of the Middle Sea. But many others too headed for the levant, namely Greece and Turkey.

In those days fortunes were struck but alas some encountered only woe. This latter group is often ignored by raconteurs. The saga of this account's protagonist's experience, being that of a hard working family from Gozo which migrated to Algiers towards the turn of the nineteenth century features both good fortune as much as and success.

determination

and

success.

The protagonist in this case was a one year old boy from the Gozitan village of Xaghra who never again set foot upon his beloved island home. But his fortunes were not of the material kind. While his family fell on hard times materially, he was fortunate enough to win the favour of having been given a good schooling. Although as a young lad in Algeria (Bona) he too shared in the family rural responsibilities, his inclination towards the finer levels of human endeavour saw him through college. He eventually, after serving in the French armed forces and being decorated for bravery with a *Croix de Guerre*, after leaving the armed forces of colonial France, followed a career in teaching until his retirement.

It was this intellectual inclination which saw him shine amongst the French intelligentsia as a poet and novelist of some standing. His never ending love for Malta (Gozo) drew him to an immersion into the best Maltese literature of the times. This culminated in him becoming a virtual mouthpiece for the Maltese 'cause' amongst his fellow countrymen both in Algeria as much as in France. His reputation further extended along the Mediterranean coastal extremities, both south and north, as well as much further afield engulfing the entire Maltese diaspora even beyond the pillars of Hercules in the USA.

Despite not having had the facility to formally study Maltese, his familial upbringing in Algiers enabled him to read and translate into French a number of Maltese poets of the time with particular emphasis on Dun Karm's *Il-Jien u Lilhinn Minnu* (The Self and Beyond) as well as *Non Omnis Moriar* (Not Everything Dies at our Demise). Through his thirst for Maltese cultural affairs he managed to cultivate fervent correspondence with Malta's national poet as well as leading intellectual figures such as Guze' Aquilina, Pietru Pawl Saydon and Ninu Cremona.

Upon his passing away the powers that be in Gozo showed their appreciation of Ropa's contribution to the good name of Malta generally by erecting a plaque honoring his name at Xaghra. More to the point, his literary endeavours in praise of Malta's contribution to the intellectual literary life as well as that of disseminating Malta's good name overseas, is incorporated within this fresh approach to his life and works in this new publication. May other Maltese expatriots take the same cue from him in promoting the good name of minuscule Malta and its people to the wide expanses out there and amongst the choleidoscope of ethnic groups within our human existence.

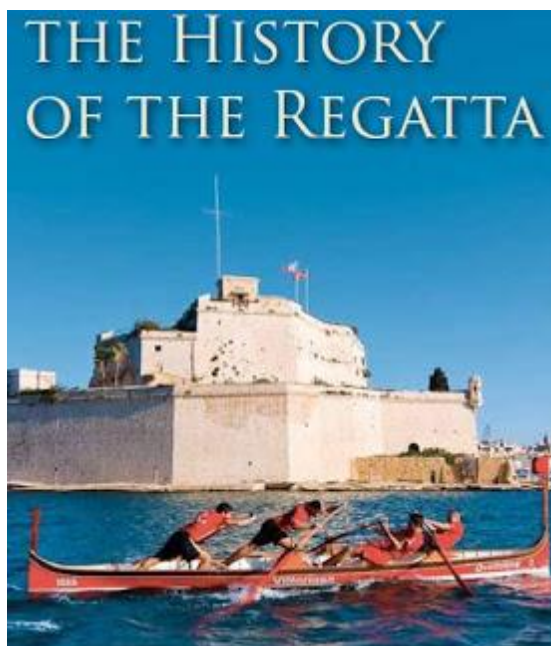


# NITKELLMU BIL-MALTI GHAX AHNA MALTIN

Kunsill Nazzjonali tal-ilsien Malti  
[www.kunsilltalmalti.gov.mt](http://www.kunsilltalmalti.gov.mt)



## 8 September – VICTORY DAY IN MALTA



The 8th September is known as Victory Day in Malta. It's a catch-all day because this particular public holiday has several roots, not one clear-cut *raison d'être* for celebration: it marks the end of the Great Siege of Malta in 1565 and the end of French occupation on Malta in 1800, as well as the armistice of the Fascist regime in Italy in 1943, which saw the close of the Italian bombardment of the Maltese Islands.

Every nation has its hour of glory in battle. The Regatta is held on September 8th in Grand Harbour to celebrate Malta's victories during the Great Siege of 1565 and the Second World War. The magnificent Fort St Angelo provides an imposing backdrop to the sleek and colourful Maltese boats. Band marches, water-carnival, boat races and display of colourful fireworks are the main features attracting large crowds to the capital city, Valletta, and the Grand Harbour.

Rowing teams from the cities bordering Grand Harbour such as Valletta, Vittoriosa, Senglea, Kalkara, Cospicua, Marsaxlokk and Marsa, participate in a number of very exciting races, marked by extreme rivalry between participating teams and their respective supporters. For weeks on end, the competitors prepare for the races with fanatic zeal and rivalry. In the afternoon of Regatta day thousands of people crowd the waterfront and the surrounding bastions and craft of every description converge to the Grand Harbour to watch the races.

The first 3 winners in each race are awarded prizes and the club with the highest overall points wins the Aggregate Shield. Each year the different regatta clubs do their best to win the shield, which is strongly contested.

The Regatta is a great fun event and a source of great local pride. If you're in Malta on the 8th of September make sure you don't miss attending!



## DINNER: Maltese Arts and Cultural Night (a family event)

on the occasion of:

### 'ISLE LANDERS' – BOAT MIGRATION AND MALTA

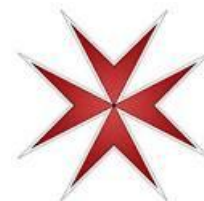
Where: Lydiard Wine Bar, 13 Lydiard St N, Ballarat Victoria

When: 12 September 2015

Time: 5.30pm – 10.00pm

Cost: \$50 per head

Booking info: [Coming soon on Generation AusMaltz facebook page](#)



'Isle Landers' is presented by Mr Darrin Zammit-Lupi, photo-journalist of the 'Times of Malta' in Ballarat and in Melbourne

The **Ballarat International Foto Biennale 2015:** is officially open for public viewing between 22 August to 20 September (including 'Isle Landers' exhibition). On the 12 September 2015 at 2.30pm, there will be

the formal launch of the photo exhibition.

**12 September 2015 at 2.30pm BALLARAT**

### ISLE LANDERS – BOAT MIGRATION AND MALTA

Location: Minning Exchange, 8 Lydiard St N, Ballarat Vic

- Opening address by David Manne, Executive Director of the Refugee and Immigration Legal Centre (RILC) Human rights lawyer and migration agent.
- Followed by Victor Grech, Consul-General of Malta for Victoria
- Q & A with Darrin Zammit-Lupi
- Book signing

5.30pm: Dinner at Lydiard Wine Bar, 13 Lydiard St N, Ballarat

Link to register coming soon on GAM Facebook page: as from 1<sup>st</sup> September

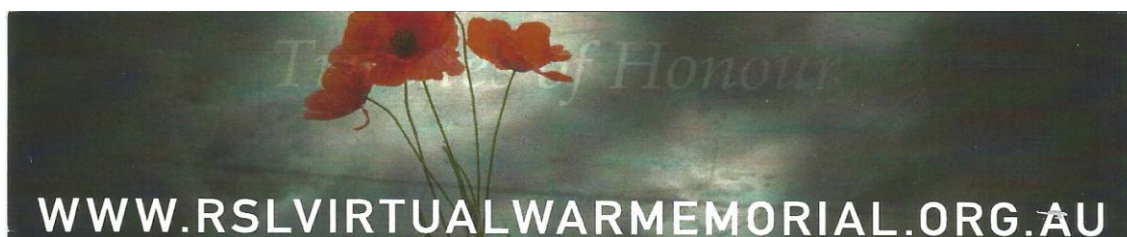
**17 September 2015 at 1.00pm to 2.00pm Carlton, Melbourne**

### ILLUSTRATED TALK at the University of Melbourne on 'ISLE LANDERS' – BOAT MIGRATION AND MALTA

Location: *Seminar Room Carlton Connect 700 Swanston Street Carlton, Melbourne*

Audiovisual presentation by Mr Darrin Zammit-Lupi, photo-journalist of the 'Times of Malta'.

Registration is required either from the attached Flyer or from the following link: <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/isle-landers-boat-migration-and-malta-an-illustrated-talk-tickets-18184052992>







European Union Centre on  
Shared Complex Challenges



## 'Isle Landers' - boat migration and Malta

an illustrated talk



Mr Zammit Lupi was born in Malta in 1968. He joined Times of Malta in 1996 and Reuters on a freelance basis a year later. His work over the past two decades has taken him all over the world, during which time he covered the Bosnian war, the Kosovo refugee crisis, the Southeast Asia tsunami tragedy, the Libyan conflict, development issues in various parts of Africa and several other international assignments. His work has been widely published in the international press, including TIME, Newsweek, The New York Times, The Sunday Times, The Guardian, Paris Match, The Sydney Morning Herald, Der Spiegel and others.

**17 September 2015**

**1 – 2 pm**

**Seminar Room, Carlton Connect**

**700 Swanston Street,  
CARLTON, Melbourne.**

**Register [here](#)**



Isle Landers is a photographic art project based on photojournalist Darrin Zammit Lupi's documentation of the lives of asylum seekers and migrants through and after their journey across the Mediterranean to Malta.

Hear Darrin, a regular winner at the Malta Journalism Awards, speak of his experiences and the stories behind the pictures - documenting the drama, tragedy and on occasion tears of joy - of the irregular migration centred around his home island of Malta, as his way of reminding the world about the reality of what is happening.

Introduction by **Mark Avellino**, Project Co-ordinator, 2015 Ballarat International Foto Biennale and chaired by **Professor Nikos Papastergiadis**, Director of the Research Unit in Public Cultures, School of Culture and Communications at the University of Melbourne.

*This event is brought to you by the Consulate General of Malta in Melbourne and the [University of Melbourne EU Centre on Shared Complex Challenges](#). The EU Centre is co-funded by the European Commission and the University of Melbourne.*

MALTA  
ARTS  
FUND



CHOGM  
Malta 2015

TIMES MALTA





# INNU LILL-MARIJA BAMBINA



O kemm kienu ixxurtjati  
Sant'Anna u San Ġwakkin  
illi taw lid-dinja tagħna  
l-Omm li welldet lill-Bambin!

O helwa ċkejna Bambina  
kemm ninsabu kburin bik;  
l-hena w il-ferħ kollu tagħna  
insibuh aħna biss fik!

Il-ġmiel tiegħek isaħħarna  
Miġbur f' statwa hekk sabiħa  
B'kuruna helwa fuq rasek  
Minn fejn tgħaddi, tarmi l-fwieħa!

O Sultana nkurunata  
Qatt ma nixbgħu nfahhruk  
Warajk ninsabu miġnuna  
Imħabbatna dlonk nuruk!

Festa kbira lilek nagħmlu  
kif Settembru jidhol magħna;  
inti l-ġawhra ta' mħabbatna  
illi ssaltan fil-qalb tagħna.

U fit-tokk tar-raħal tagħna  
bnejnielek tempju mis-sbieħ  
fejn ix-Xagħra lkoll tingabar  
għaliex tħobbok wisq, qatigh!

Lilna ħlist mill-qawwa Torka  
li niesna kienet tistmerrha;  
fuq pajjiżna ġibt il-paċi  
kif intemmet l-aħħar gwerra!

Ritornell: O Bambina hawn arana  
ma' djulek dlonk miġburin  
la twarrabx ħarstek minn fuqna  
aħna wliedek midinbin.  
Lejl u nhar lix-Xagħrin bierek  
żommhom dejjem magħqudin

*Joe M Attard – Gozo Malta*



# PHILATEY - MALTA

<http://philatelynews.com/tag/europa-2015/>



## SEPAC 2015 – Malta

Malta post issued stamps illustrating various elements of culture as a part of SEPAC 2015. The theme of the year 2015 stamps is Culture and the members will issue such stamps from their respective countries.

The stamps features Maltese culture, which include the Regatta, the Festa and the Easter Sunday procession which portray religious influences on Maltese culture as well as national feasts celebrated during the year.

### Religious influences on Maltese culture

The Maltese are devout Catholics, and religion still holds an important place in Maltese society. There are around 365 churches and chapels throughout the Islands – one for every day of the year. Each town has its parish church that annually celebrates its festa.

This yearly occasion marks the day of the patron saint of each parish with marching bands, processions, fireworks and other festivities.

The statue featured on the 0.26 stamp illustrates the feast of St George in Victoria Gozo which is celebrated in summer during several days of external festivities, cultural fare and popular entertainment.

The statue of the Risen Christ which is portrayed on the 1.16 is carried around the streets of many towns and villages on Easter Sunday accompanied by a band playing festive tunes.

At the end of this procession, the way is cleared and the statue-bearers take a run to carry the Risen Christ triumphantly back into the church. The photo on the stamp was captured in Ħebbug Malta.

The national days of the 31st March and 8th September are marked by unique activities including boat races called Regattas. The Regatta is held called Regattas.

**ALL THE PREVIOUS NEWSLETTERS ARE ON THE WEBSITES**  
[www.ozmalta.page4.me](http://www.ozmalta.page4.me) or [www.ozmalta.com](http://www.ozmalta.com)



## DR. CLAUDIA SAGONA, UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE

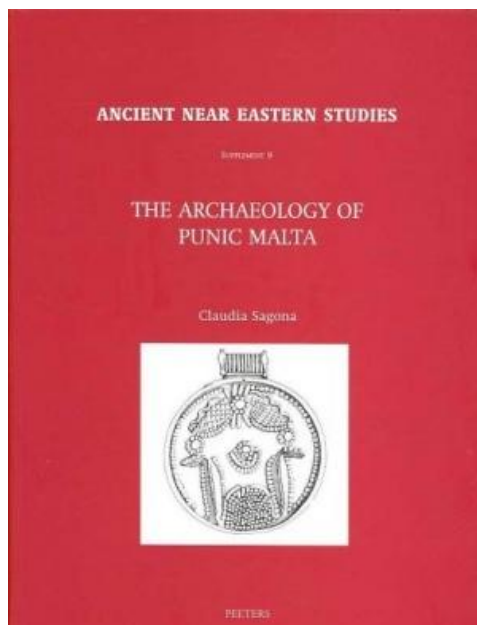


Claudia Sagona is a Senior Fellow in Archaeology at the University of Melbourne. She is the author of several books on Malta, including **Looking for Mithra in Malta** (2009), and the editor of books including **Ceramics of the Phoenician-Punic World** (2011) and *Beyond the Homeland: Markers in Phoenician Chronology* (2008). Her articles have appeared in academic journals including *Anatolian Studies*, *Anatolia Antiqua*, *Ancient Near Eastern Studies*, *Mediterranean Archaeology* and the *Oxford Journal of Archaeology*. In recognition of her contribution to Malta, she was made an honorary member of the National Order of Merit of Malta in 2007.

### Book breaks new ground in archaeology of Malta

Two centuries of archaeological investigation into the first millennium BC heritage of the Maltese

archipelago is brought together for the first time in a new book by University of Melbourne academic Dr Claudia Sagona (Fine Arts, Classical Studies and Archaeology).



Her book, *The Archaeology of Punic Malta* (Louvain: Peeters, 2002) traces the colonisation of the islands by Phoenician traders from Lebanese and Syrian coastal lands around 1000 BC and describes the islands' subsequent transformation into a major Mediterranean Punic centre.

The volume, which has more than 1100 pages of texts and illustrations, was recently presented to both the President and Prime Minister of Malta by the High Commissioner for Malta, in Australia, Mr Ivan Fsadni.

Dr Sagona (right) says Malta offers a rare opportunity to examine the Punic settlements of the central Mediterranean from the first appearance of Phoenician traders and immigrants around 900 BC to approximately 200 AD when the local culture became Romanised.

She has based her book on an immense body of new data from two centuries of fieldwork tracked down in museum holdings, manuscript materials, photographic archives and other sources.

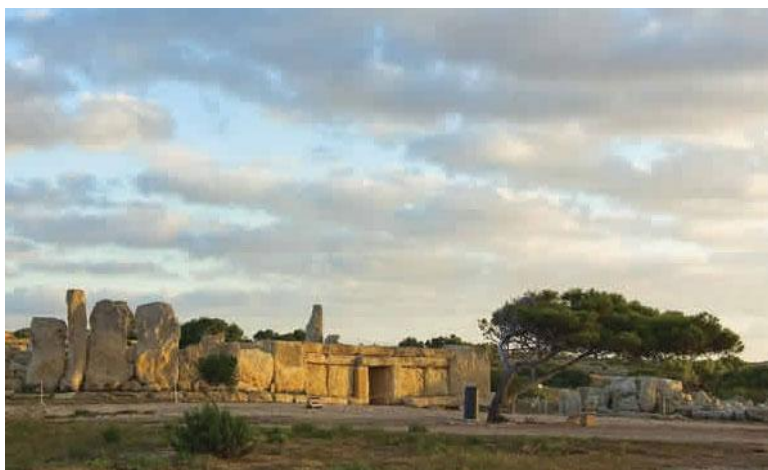
Included in the volume are a developmental sequence and chronology of Punic pottery, an outline of the evolution of the shape, structure and distribution of Malta's rock-hewn tombs and hundreds of previously unpublished tomb groups and individual items from the National Museum of Archaeology, Malta.

You might be interested to know of a new book of mine on *The Archaeology of Malta* published by Cambridge University Press that has just been printed. It covers the period from the initial colonisation through the Roman period. Here is the link:



<http://www.cambridge.org/au/academic/subjects/archaeology/archaeology-europe-and-near-and-middle-east/archaeology-malta-neolithic-through-roman-period?format=HB>

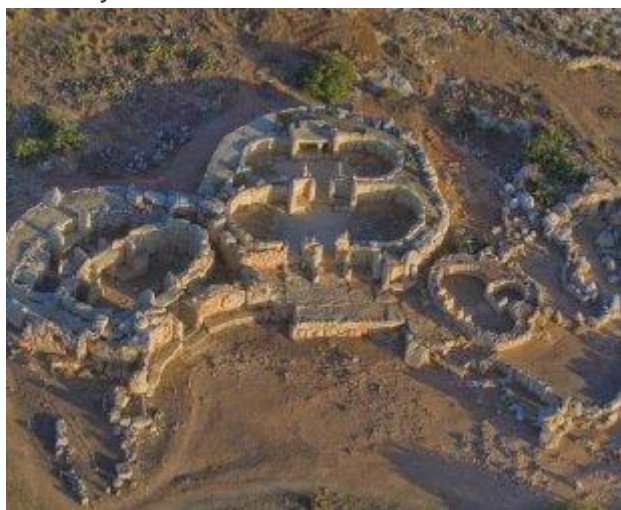
## THE VILLAGE OF QRENDI - MALTA



The village of Qrendi (pronounced 'Rendee'), on the south-east coast of Malta, is the perfect starting point for a journey back in time. It contains two of the most spectacular megalithic temples in Malta, dating back to 3800 B.C.: Hagar Qim and Mnajdra. The two temples are located in a pristine area, sheltered by the sea cliffs and with a spectacular view of the Mediterranean and the rocky island of Ffilla. It is rare for archaeology and landscape to meet in so breathtaking a manner. For those interested in geological phenomena, Qrendi has something else to offer: 'Il-Maqluba' (meaning upside-down) is a curious round canyon, 15-metres deep, the unusual shape of which has given rise to many legends. The most popular of these says that the canyon was created by the wrath of God to punish the evil inhabitants of the village which used to be sited on that spot. From Qrendi it is easy to get to the small fishing village of Ghar Lapsi, popular for its crystal-clear waters and the easy access to its small sea caves.

### Mattia Preti in Qrendi

Despite the fact that there are no original works by Mattia Preti in Qrendi, the sacristy of the parish church has a copy of the great altarpiece that Preti made for the Italian Chapel in St. John's Co-Cathedral in Valletta - further proof of Preti's celebrity on the island. In the chapel dedicated to St Matthew, next to Il-Maqluba, there is a painting by Preti's workshop, the *Martyrdom of St Matthew*.



### Mnajdra Temples

Although at times (especially in busy car parks and traffic jams) all evidence seems to suggest otherwise, people, generally speaking, are not stupid. So if you were a prehistoric person with rudimentary clothing and housing then you'd probably prefer to live somewhere nice. Somewhere hot, where it doesn't rain much! Somewhere like Mnajdra on Malta! Many people did live in this area more than 5,000 years ago, enough of them in fact to build the mighty complex of Temples at Mnajdra, as well as another bunch of buildings about half a kilometre down the road known as [Hagar Qim](#). As historic sites go, the Megalithic Temples on Malta, as they are collectively known, and which also include the [Ggantija](#) complex, are considered to be so incredibly important that they are listed as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO. The site at Mnajdra

was excavated in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The archaeologists unearthed three temples, two large buildings with two pairs of apses and smaller building made up of three connected rooms.

Although it is now seen as an established tourist attraction and its significance in heritage terms has resulted in it being securely fenced off and fiercely protected, that only happened relatively recently. But it was not overly popular with the locals. The new restrictions and specifically the fences around the site prevented them from using long established hides used for wildfowling.

They finally retaliated in 2001 by attacking the site under the cover of darkness and caused a fair amount of damage. But that's not to say it's not worth visiting because there is still much of it remains intact (as much as a ruin can be) and it makes for an evocative trip out, especially if you combine it with the Hagar Qim Temples, which are only five minutes away on foot.

The one word that springs to mind instantly when viewing either set of historic remains is "How?" How the f... how on earth did people dressed in animal skins and without the facility to hire a bulldozer, or any other item of heavy plant machinery, manage to move those great slabs of limestone and build these things?

The site emits the same air of mystery as Stonehenge in the UK or those giant heads that stick out of the ground on Easter Island, or the Inca temple at Machu Picchu. And when you consider that the experts believe that these temples, with their pitted walls, were covered by vaulted ceilings too back in the day, then you can envisage what clever little chaps our ancestors were.

The three temples are roughly arranged in a semi-circle around a forecourt in which you'll find stone benches. But the cleverest thing, in our humble opinion, is that the lowest temple of the three is aligned with the sun on the equinox - autumn or spring. When the sun is over the equator light passes through the main door and illuminates the centre of the temple. Very Indiana Jones!

The Mnajdra Temples are open every day from 9am to 5pm in the winter – mid-October to mid-April - but stay open later till 7pm for the rest of the year. Admission is €9 for adults, €6.50 for concessions and €4 for children aged six to 11-years-old. That ticket will also get you into the Hagar Qim complex nearby. The temples are right in the south of the island so you need to follow signs for Zurrieq or Qrendi to find them. Buses also run to the site.

## REBUILDING THE FLUER-DE-LYSE ARCH



The application for the development permit was filed by the administrative committee of Fleur-de-Lys, which is part of Birkirkara local council. The committee is planning to build a replica of the arch on the roundabout between St Joseph High Road and the Rabat road, on the original site. The arch - also known as Wignacourt Arch - was actually a large arch and two smaller ones which linked the aqueduct in Mrieħel and Sta Venera. It was demolished after having been damaged by a Royal Air Force crane in an accident in 1943.

The arch was adorned by Grand Master Alof de Wignacourt's escutcheon and by three carved fleur-de-Lys at the top, which gave the name to this locality. The new arch will be built to the same dimensions of the old one, on the existing roundabout, so as not to hinder the heavy traffic flow. Two plaques from the original arch, relocated recently, will be included in the new structure.





An impression of how the new arch will look.

## OVER 100,00 BIRDS KILLED IN MALTA EACH YEAR – BIRDLIFE INTERNATIONAL

Tens of millions of birds are being killed illegally each year across the Mediterranean, according to the first scientific review of its kind to be carried out in the region by BirdLife International.

Despite not ranking in the top 10 overall, [Malta](#) (where 108,000 birds are estimated to be killed illegally each year, it said) is still seeing the region's highest estimated number of birds illegally killed per square kilometre, the Review said. In Malta: the mean estimated number of birds killed illegally each year is 108,000, with a minimum number of 5,800 and a maximum number of 211,000, the study said.



Birdlife International stated that when territorial size and population are taken into account, Malta has the highest rate. This is because in Malta, around 340 birds are killed for every kilometre whilst in Italy this figure is 19. BirdLife and Partners have uncovered the shocking extent to which a number of birds are being illegally killed, putting together a list of the ten countries with the highest estimated annual death toll.

Although countries currently hit by conflict, such as Syria and Libya, feature high in the rankings, some European nations also fare poorly. Italy (where 5.6 million birds are estimated to be killed illegally every year is second only to Egypt for the estimated mean number of illegal killings each year, with the Famagusta area of Cyprus the single worst location in the

Mediterranean. Other European countries featuring in the top 10 are; Greece mean estimate of 0.7 million birds killed annually, France million, Croatia 0.5 million and Albania 0.3 million.

## Ġużè Cassar Pullicino



## Akkademja tal-Malti



ĠUŻÈ CASSAR PULLICINO twieled Birkirkara fil-21 ta' Settembru 1921 u daħal fis-servizz ċivili fl-1940 u rtira bħala Direttur fil-Ministeru tal-Industrija fl-1979. Għamel żmien bħala bibljotekarju fil-Fakultà tat-Teologija (Fondazzjoni tal-Istudji Teoloġiċi).

Kien ingħata *scholarship* mill-British Council għat-taħriġ bħala bibljotekarju f'Leeds u Londra (1950); inħatar Associate of the Library Association (1952); membru tal-Akkademja tal-Malti u membru tal-kumitat tagħha (1942-45) u tal-Għaqda tal-Malti (Università); Assistent Editur tal-*Melita Historica* (1952-61); u tal-*Maltese Folklore Review* (1962-73).

Kien ukoll President Onorarju tal-Għaqda tal-Folklor 1965-; membru tal-Kunsill ta' Din l-Art Helwa (1965-67); tal-Folklore Society ta' Londra (1962-), u tal-International Society for Folk-Narrative Research ta' Pariġi (1962-).

Ha sehem u qara studji f'diversi kongressi internazzjonali f'Malta, Kiel, Kopenhagen, Katanja, Ġirba (it-Tuneżija) u l-Kanada. Kien mogħti l-midalja tal-Meritu tal-Fidda mill-

Konfederazzjoni tal-Kunsilli Ċiviċi (1970); rebaħ il-Malta Government Prize għall-aħjar ktieb maħruġ fl-1974; il-Premju Letterarju għal xogħol oriġinali ta' riċerka dwar Ġużè Muscat Azzopardi (1978); il-Malta Literary Award (1979); il-Premio Città di Valletta (1989); mogħti l-Grad ta' Master of Philosophy (Hon. Causa) mill-Università ta' Malta (1993), u mogħti l-Midalja għall-Qadi tar-Repubblika ta' Malta (1993). Ġużè Cassar Pullicino, meqjus bħala studjuż ewlieni dwar il-folklor u l-kitba tal-Malti għandu diversi pubblikazzjonijiet f'dan ir-rigward.

Huwa l-awtur ta' *Kelma Waħda Biss* (1971); *Aquilina u l-Malti* (1974); *Ġużè Muscat Azzopardi: Studji* (1991); *Kitba u Kittieba tal-Malti – tliet kotba* (1962-64); *Dun Karm: tagħrif ġdid u noti kritiċi* (1985); *Poeżiji ta' Ġorġ Zammit: noti kritiċi* (1985); *Ġużè Ellul Mercer: il-kitbiet miġbura, l-ewwel ktieb* (1985); *Malta fis-Seklu Tmintax: xi djarji Maltin tal-Imġhoddi* (1981); *An Introduction to Maltese Folklore* (1947); *Haġa Moħgaġa 1-4* (1957-59); *Il-Folklor Malti* (1960); *Stejjier ta' Niesna* (1962); *Il-Bennejja tal-Folklor Malti* (1964); *Studies in Maltese Folklore* (1976); *Skunġrar u Orazzjoni fil-Poeżija Popolari Reliġjuża f'Malta* (1981); *Studji di tradizionii popolari maltesi* (1989); *L-Imġhoddi tal-Ġens Tagħna: Bejn Storja u Folklor* (1990); *Ħžuż Manwel Magri: Ktieb tan-Notamenti dwar il-Folklor Malti* (1991); *Kitba bil-Malti sal-1870* (2001) u *Kitbiet Oħra tas-Seklu Dsatax* (2002) u *Haġa Moħgaġa u Taħbil il-Moħħ leħor* (2003).

**IF YOU READ AND APPRECIATE  
THIS NEWSLETTER PLEASE LET  
US KNOW. THE EASIEST WORD  
IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE IS  
"THANKS"**

**JEKK TAQRA U TAPPREZZA  
DAN IL-GURNAL IKTIBILNA.  
L-IKTAR KELMA FACLI FL-  
ISLIEN MALTI HIJA  
"GRAZZI"**



## OUR LADY OF 'TAL-HLAS' – QORMI PROTECTRESS OF MONTHERS IN LABOUR



A special mass is celebrated at half past 4 every third Sunday of the month and the children of all ages are presented to Our Lady in gratitude following a safe delivery.

This small chapel is situated in a secluded part of Qormi and lies on the border with Zebbug. For a time its location was disputed as either being in Zebbug or Qormi territory. Incidentally, this chapel is also said to lie in a path halfway between Birgu and Mdina. Hence it was a convenient resting place for the pilgrims travelling between these towns. The unusual twin porticoed loggias on either side with stone benches and tables, were built in 1699 to provide shelter for the numerous pilgrims who visited the church. The original church, now turned into a sacristy, was built around 1500. In the year 1560, Fra Christophe le Boulleur Montgauldry, the Treasurer of the Order of St John, who had a house by the church (I



believe the building opposite the church is the one that is being referred to here) was a great benefactor of the church, building it anew and paying for the titular painting now kept in the sacristy, which showed Our Lady with St Paul and St John the Baptist. In this sacristy a large number of ex-votos are kept here.

The original chapel was seriously damaged in the violent earthquake of 1693 and was rebuilt by the architect Lorenzo Gafa. The titular painting of Our Lady tal-Hlas (protectress of mothers in labour) was placed above the old one. The feast, which used to be held on the 15th August, is now celebrated on the Sunday following that date. In the past there was the custom of distributing hazelnuts and a glass of wine to visitors on the feast day.

### FRENCH FILM TO BE SHOT IN MALTA



Philippe de Chauveron, the French writer and director who made the blockbuster film "Serial Bad Weddings" last year, will be shooting his new film called "Immediate Boarding" in Malta next month, according to the Malta Film Commission.

Various locations across the archipelago were chosen for the film, including the water tanks at the Malta Film Studios in Kalkara, Valletta, Vittoriosa, Senglea and Majjistral Park. With the support of the Malta Film Commission, de Chauveron visited Malta in 2014 and developed his script for "Immediate Boarding" so that it could be filmed here.

As Malta will be featured extensively, the hopeful residual effect of the film will be publicity to promote the island's beautiful and scenic spots to Europe audiences and possibly beyond, according to Times of Malta's report. "Immediate Boarding" is set to hit French theatres in October 2016. This is the seventh international production to be shot in Malta in 2015, a year which has seen back to back film projects, ensuring support for the local film industry

## The Nuns of the Order of Malta



Not everyone knows that the Order of Malta's large religious family boasts very ancient contemplative communities in Spain and Malta: the enclosed nuns of St John of Jerusalem still live in the monasteries of St Jean d'Acre in the Salinas de Añana and Zamora districts in Spain and that of St Ursula on Malta.

*The Grand Master with the Order's nuns in the monastery of Salinas de Añana, Spain*

Scholars date the origin of the female branch to the Order's foundation in Jerusalem in the 11th century and to the first consecrated nuns of the Hospital of St Mary Magdalena. The nuns were needed in the hospitals to tend the female pilgrims and patients

and were led by the Servant of God Agnese of Alix. Over time they increased in number and organisation; they continued to embrace the ideal and charisma of the Order of St. John and to spread out across most of Europe to Italy, Spain, Portugal, Great Britain, France, Denmark, Holland and Rhodes.

Other historians give the year 1153 as the official date for the establishment of the Order's female branch: it was then that Pope Eugene III approved the Sijena convent community, founded by Queen Sancha of Aragon, widow of Alfonso II, and her daughter Dulce. Thus one of the oldest communities of nuns in Christendom was born. At the beginning they were exclusively relatives of the Knights of the Order with the specific mission to pray for them all and for the Grand Master. As in the other monasteries in previous centuries, the nuns were called "Sorores" (like "Fratres" for the Knights).

*The Grand Master with the Order's nuns in the monastery of St Ursula, Malta*

The Monastery of St Ursula in Valletta, Malta was founded by Grand Master Verdalle in 1582, in the Grand Master's



Palace in Birgu, which had been left vacant since the Order established itself in Valletta. In 1595 the monastery was transferred to Valletta. The nuns were equal in rank to the chaplain brothers of the Order, observed the rules of the cloister, and were under the Grandmaster's jurisdiction. In their religious solemn profession the nuns vow to observe the Rule of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem, following the practice established at their foundation, which continues uninterrupted up to the present day.

For over 800 years the nuns of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem have been praying for the Order's members and until the 19<sup>th</sup> century they were under the jurisdiction of the

Grand Master. They have provided the Church with admirable models of sanctity such as St Ubaldesca Taccini (1136-1206), St Toscana Canoculi (1280-1343), St Flora di Beaulieu (c. 1300-1347). The beatification process is underway for Sister Patrocinio Chillida Manes and Sister Visitacion Solè Yvern, Spanish civil war martyrs.

"The mission of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem religious," wrote the Servant of God Primitiva del SS. Sacramento, "is to give glory to God through personal sanctification, by observing the Holy Gospel, their vows, the Rule and the Constitution, by practising hospitality in the manner consented by papal enclosure and by praying for the sanctification of our brothers the Knights". Despite being an enclosed order, in accordance with their tradition the Spanish nuns manage a house close to the monastery in which spiritual retreats are organised for visitors and parishioners.

The Spanish monastery of St Jean d'Acre at Salinas de Añana was founded when the Order was still present in Acre in the Holy Land. In Valletta, the monastery of St Ursula is one of the Republic's historic monuments and a milestone in Malta's religious life.

**For further information on the Order of Malta' nuns on Malta:**

**[www.orderofmalta-malta.org/stursula/index.html](http://www.orderofmalta-malta.org/stursula/index.html)**

**[www.ozmalta.page4.me](http://www.ozmalta.page4.me)**



## Mandraggio - Diary the Grand Canal Scheme that went askew

Albert Fenech



(Below) A site map of the area at Marsamxett earmarked to become an inner harbour.



*Mandraggio cafe and eatery and a Dutch map of Valletta 1730*

Well yes, there is always a slip twixt the cup and the lip – and the area in lower Valletta still known today as “Il-Mandragg” (originally “Mandaraggio”) is a living example of this where great plans on paper backfired in the reality of implementation. Work on the building of Malta’s capital city Valletta commenced on 14<sup>th</sup> March 1566, the brainchild of the French Grandmaster Jean Parisot de la Valette whose immaculate military tactics had defeated and vanquished the marauding and massive Ottoman forces a few months earlier after the epic Great Siege of Malta.

That battle was won by the Knights and the Maltese, but the war was far from over. The Ottoman Empire was still all-powerful and the sting of such a tremendous loss-of-face defeat was sure to fester in Turkish minds. Their return with re-doubled efforts and determination was just a matter of time.



With equal vigour and energy la Valette set about bolstering Malta’s defence and thus began the construction on Xiberras Hill of a fortified city that was to become Malta’s capital Valletta. Sadly, the Grandmaster died a year later and the city was given his name. The decision was taken the new city should be built on Bernard Palissy’s grid-iron pattern of criss-crossing parallel lines with all street corners at strict right angles.

The city itself was surrounded by substantial bastions enclosing a set of splendid auberges and palaces from which the Knights would administer Malta and Gozo. The Grand Harbour side was particularly fortified with the strengthening of Fort St. Elmo, opposite Fort St. Angelo and the fortified three cities across the water. However, the other Valletta side on Marsamxett Harbour was seen to be particularly vulnerable to attack and the Knights needed a safe sea-haven for their fleet, together with building and repair facilities for new fleets.

### **Mandragg slum dwellings.**

All those who think that city and urban planning is something new, think again. The Knights had an Officio delle Case (Housing Authority) that oversaw planning and lay-out and was particularly fastidious. Part of the city plan was an inner

harbour for galleys and this was set to be on the Marsamxetto side which obviously had to be excavated and quarried to create an artificial harbour.

Those who thought that re-cycling is something new, think again too. The Authority decreed that all the stone excavated was to be used for building the city and its fortifications. Work commenced with great haste and enthusiasm and of course with no mechanical machinery, everything had to be done by hand.



### **Buildings of different kinds and levels filled the holes.**

However, over and above the primary scope of a safe inner harbour there were also aspirations of creating a "little Venice" and its Grand Canal with all the necessary embellishments.

Excavation began in different localities within the Marsamxetto area. The surface rock was soft and manageable enough, but as deeper strata of rock were reached, the softness turned to hard and really hard. Spirit and enthusiasm began to flag with the hot summer months setting in.

### **Running water drawn from street fountains.**

A re-calculation established that much deeper excavations had to be continued to reach sea level for the water to be able to flow into the new harbour.

Finally it became obvious the whole project was not feasible and resulted in abandonment. However, great holes and craters of varying levels had been built and there was no definite concept of what should be done with them.

Years passed and the ugly massive pot-holes remained. In the meantime the attraction of the new city and its bustling commerce began to increase its

population, particularly sea-farers seeking work on the military and commercial galleys. The Knights had built splendid palaces and the rich and noble splendid houses.



### **Mandragg street corner**

The homeless, the poor and the criminal element began to drift towards Marsamxetto and illegal tenements began to spring up like mushrooms. Because of the different levels of holes, there was no real uniformity. Some buildings were as much as eight storeys high and others just one or two storeys. Now, the meaning of the word "Mandragg" began to take interpretation. It was probable the Knights had coined the name to commemorate the Mandraki port they had in Rhodes and lost to the Turks, a port that still exists today. The local population twisted the name and it popularly became "Mandragg" which probably emanates from the word "mandra", meaning swill and rubbish.

The buildings were mostly slum tenements without running water or internal sanitary facilities. Four fountains in different areas supplied running water which had to be carried. Sanitary facilities were external troughs and the whole environment was one of stench and filth.



### **Down into the depths of Valletta.**

Yet, as with all slum tenements, the "ghetto" inhabitants had their pride and communal spirit of "togetherness in dire straits". Non-slum tenants were not welcome and viewed with deep suspicion and only ventured there at great peril. In time the area had its own retail and commercial outlets and the women-folk earned a living by taking in laundry washed at one of the four fountains.

Remarkably enough, despite the environmental filth and squalor, the tenants kept spotless living quarters and showed great pride in their embellishment. The cleanliness of the laundry returned became a bye-word and later they were given contracts to



launder British military uniforms.

*Young architect Dom Mintoff (centre) planning to destroy the slums.*

For almost 400 years, the “Mandragg” struggled on mostly unchanged and with little improvement.

The General Election that followed the end of the Second World War saw the country’s Malta Labour Party elected to Government for the very first time under the Premiership of Dr Paul Boffa. As his Minister for Public Works he appointed a young architect Dominic Mintoff whose naval cook father was from Valletta.

Bustling with energy and great drive, the young Mintoff decreed the ignominy of the “Mandragg” was to reach its end. All the tenants were ordered to evict the slums within three days and many had to be escorted out by Police, unwilling as they were to leave and temporarily be re-housed with relatives in other areas.

The “Mandragg” was flattened and in its place rows and rows of modern apartments with all facilities sprang up like mushrooms and there they still stand today, the architectural epic of a man who went on to become Malta’s Prime Minister three times and a man who was a magnet for controversy and viewed either with love or hate, according to one’s political views and interpretations.

## COMMONWEALTH - ADDING GLOBAL VALUE THE THEME FOR CHOGM MALTA 2015



Adding Global Value is about using the Commonwealth’s strengths in international politics to influence and eventually effect change on important global issues. It is also about making a positive difference to the lives of Commonwealth citizens. Adding Global Value seeks to unify the Commonwealth behind an ambitious policy agenda that bequeaths to our young a life of liberty, dignity and prosperity. Besides, considering its geographical extent around the globe, actions and initiatives taken at Commonwealth

level will undoubtedly add to global values.

Commonwealth countries are already pro-active on the international stage. As one example Commonwealth countries, who represent one fourth of the countries of the UN, provide 47 percent of UN peacekeepers (Early 2015 figures). The Commonwealth can therefore bring together a community of countries with the energy and drive to develop fair, resilient and universally acceptable solutions to global problems.

The Commonwealth is well represented in most global institutions. It makes up a quarter of the membership in the United Nations; at the moment has four Members on the UN Security Council (Malaysia, New Zealand, Nigeria, UK); has a strong representation in the Caribbean Community; has three Members in the European Union (Cyprus, Malta, UK); has two Members in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Malaysia, Singapore) and five countries represented in the G20 (Australia, Canada, India, South Africa, UK). The Commonwealth is therefore well placed to influence the policy agenda of some of the most influential institutions in global politics.

The Commonwealth is recognised as a leader in developing education programmes around the world. It also provides legal and operational support to Member States on a myriad of issues ranging from International Maritime Law to Election Observance.

**Adding Global Value** is about encouraging Commonwealth governments and civil society to think about what unites the Commonwealth and what it can achieve together. Malta is asking fellow Commonwealth Members to consider which important issues have been missed by other global institutions, and to use the Commonwealth to provide leadership in those areas. This involves taking advantage of the inherent strengths of the Commonwealth and developing strategies that will make a substantive and demonstrable difference to the lives of people around the world. <https://chogm2015.mt/>

## Queen to attend Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in Malta



The Queen, accompanied by The Duke of Edinburgh, will visit Malta and attend the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) which takes place in Valletta from the 27th to the 29th of November.

The Prince of Wales, accompanied by The Duchess of Cornwall, will also attend CHOGM in support of The Queen.

## AGHLABID CONQUEST ISLAM IN MALTA

This period coincided with the golden age of Moorish culture and included innovations like the introduction of crop rotation and irrigation systems in Malta and Sicily, and the cultivation of citrus fruits and mulberries.

Then capital city Mdina, originally called *Maleth* by the Phoenicians, was at this time refortified, surrounded with a wide moat and separated from its nearest town, Rabat. This period of Arabic influence followed the conquest of Malta, Sicily and Southern Italy by the Aghlabids. It is presently evident in the names of various Maltese towns and villages and in the Maltese language, a genetic descendant of Siculo-Arabic. It is noted that, during this period, Malta was administered from Palermo, Sicily, as part of the Emirate of Sicily. Genetic studies indicate that the Arabs who colonised Malta in this period were in fact Arabic-speaking Sicilians.

It is difficult to trace a continuous line of cultural development during this time. A proposed theory that the islands were sparsely populated during Fatimid rule is based on a citation in the French translation of the *Rawd*



*al-miṭār fī khabar al-aqtār* ("The Scented Garden of Information about Places").<sup>[14]</sup> Al-Himyari describes Malta as generally uninhabited and visited by Arabs solely for the purpose of gathering honey and timber and catching fish. No other chronicles make similar descriptions and this claim is not universally accepted.

Kufic gravestone of the girl Majmuna who died on Thursday, 21 March 1174 [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Culture\\_of\\_Malta](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Culture_of_Malta) - cite\_note-Xewkija-15

Up to two hundred years after Count Roger the Norman conquered the island, differences in the customs and usages of the inhabitants of Malta were distinct from those in other parts of the Kingdom of Two Sicilies: *moribus d'aliis de vivunt d'ipsarum d'insularum de homines et constitutionibus, nostri Sicilie*.

The marble gravestone of a Saracen girl named Majmuna (pr. *My-moona*), found in a pagan temple in the Xewkija area of Gozo dates back to 1173. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Culture\\_of\\_Malta](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Culture_of_Malta) -

cite\_note-Xewkija-15 Written in Kufic, it concludes saying, "You who read this, see that dust covers my eyelids, in my place and in my house, nothing but sadness and weeping; what will my resurrection be like?"

The population of Malta at that time amounted to no more than 1,119 households, of whom 836 were described as Saracens, inhabiting the island following the Norman invasion and before their ultimate expulsion.





## ROCK CLIMBING IN MALTA

The Malta Climbing Club (MCC) was formally set up on June 18<sup>th</sup> 2010 during a public meeting held at the premises of the German-Maltese Circle in Valletta. Coming soon after Malta's first ascent of Mount Everest, the club was set up on the initiative of a group of local climbers who felt the need to bring together the increasing number of practicing climbers in the sport in the Maltese Islands, as well as to promote the sport locally. Climbing is not new to the Maltese Islands, and in fact it has been practiced as a sport here since at least the 1940s.



The well-attended meeting was addressed by local veteran climber Simon Alden who explained the reasons for taking this initiative, as well as the aims and objectives of the MCC as detailed in the statute. The primary aims are of course to promote the sport locally, to protect access to popular climbing areas, organize activities and competitions for its members, protect local climbing ethics and traditions as well as to provide climbing related services such as training and information to its members, amongst other goals. The MCC is aimed at climbers who practice all the different types of vertical sport, including alpinism, mountaineering, bouldering, traditional and sport rock-climbing as well as deep water soloing – the latter being the

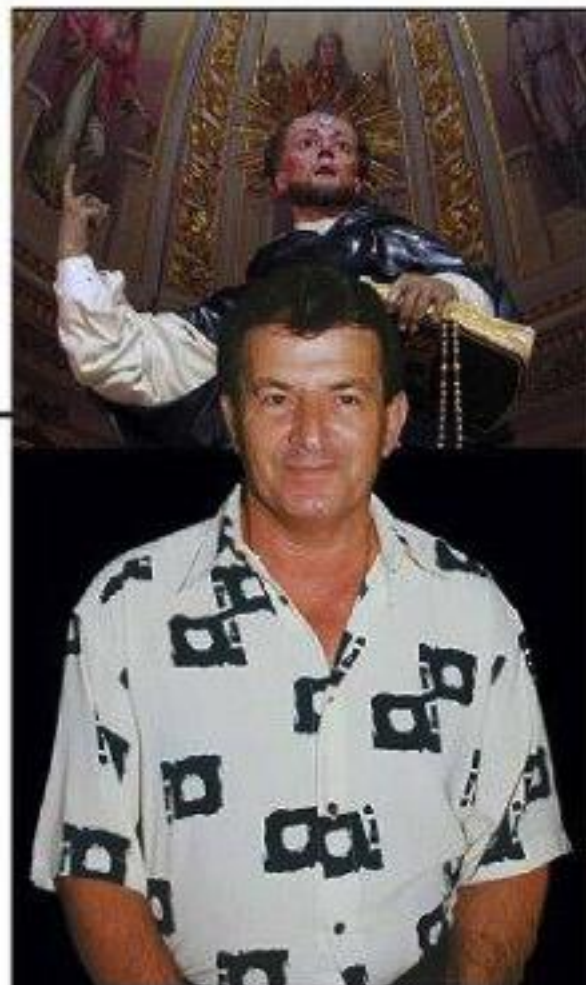
practice of climbing on the sea cliffs over the sea without ropes...jumping into the sea when the going gets too tough!

The need was also recognized to collaborate closely and act as a point of reference with the commercial arm of this sport which has been growing over recent years, such as climbing equipment suppliers as well as those providing climbing services to climbers visiting our islands. The MCC will remain however, a non-profit organization with the main priority being the interests of climbers, and the promotion of climbing in Malta and Gozo in general in a way that is compatible with the ethics and traditions of the sport

The achievements of certain Maltese climbers past and present was recognized by the MCC by offering them Honorary Membership in the Club. Needless to say, the Everest team members Robert Gatt, Greg Attard and Marco Cremona who have all shown support for this initiative, as well as veteran climbers of the 1960s Edward Pellegrini Petit, Paul Calleja Gera and Mario DeGabriele were the first climbers to be so honoured. Since the club was set-up, top British climber Stevie Haston visited Malta as guest of the Malta Tourism Authority and MCC and also accepted to be an honorary member. Mr. Haston, whose mother is Gozitan, spent a number of his childhood years living on Gozo exploring the local seacliffs and valleys and has put up a number of classic routes on the island.

On the 28th September 2011, the club took another step forward when it launched the Mountaineering section which will be serving as a point of reference for budding and experienced mountaineers based in the Maltese islands who wish to pursue this branch of climbing. This section is led by Kilimanjaro veteran Josef N. Grech.

Should anyone wish to contact the club, the registered address is 19, Triq id-Dejqa, Naxxar NXR 1920 or contact Simon Alden on 9929 9836



*Anthony Paul Borg*

3 July 1944 – 11 August 2015

*No longer in our lives to share  
but in our hearts you'll  
always be there.*

*Loving Husband, Father  
Grandfather, Brother,  
Uncle and Friend.*

## A TRIBUTE TO ANTHONY PAUL BORG 1944-2015

### Alfred Borg

My father well nurtured his family to the best of his ability with his successful and honest business ethics and practices. In his 60s his first job in Australia was making fibreglass pools, then with he opened the first Maltese Restaurant in Sydney. Then in 90s he opened the TONY'S Jewellery shop. He kept on working up to this year 2015.

My father was also known as the *Quiet Achiever*. He assisted financially several associations namely George Cross Falcons - Melita Eagles, Hamrum-La Vallette Club, Wentworthville Junior Ruby Club and Our Lady of Peace parish at Greystanes.

I am the eldest son of Anthony and I will never forget when I was at the age of five, in the 60s walking down a street in Valletta next to my father, my left hand holding on to his and in my right hand, carrying a box. Inside it there was a pair of white shoes that cost of 100 pounds which he bought to wear at a Wedding. Walking along Dad stopped by a rundown tramp who he once knew, sitting on the sandstone gutter in desperate need of help.

Dad handed over the white shoes to this man and we continued our journey home. All the way back home I was continually looking at dad with awe and heartfelt pride. He felt that helping someone in need was far more important than looking good at a wedding.

Dear Dad, you were my father who had charisma, charm and passion, you walked with a smile and you always held your head high. Mar partens', Tony and Sylvia, favourite tune was "SAVE THE LAST DANCE FOR ME."

**WE ALL MISS YOU DAD**





*Bonnie Lee Galea*



*Since I Fell For You*

**Debut CD Launch  
Cheeky Jazz & Smokey Blues  
with her band  
JAZZ in CHEEK  
8PM @ PARIS CAT JAZZ CLUB  
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*From Sth Aust. Bonnie Lee Galea , Vocals & Quinton Dunne, Double Bass  
joined by Victorian Musicians...*

*Jo Abbott, Piano ~ James Osborne ,Drums ~ Bruce Sandell , Tenor Sax/Flute  
& Guest, Chris Canning ~ Harmonica*

**WEBSITE: [bonnieleegalea.com](http://bonnieleegalea.com)**

**PHOTO: Kathleen Morris**

