

CENTRU MALTI
MALTESE COMMUNITY CENTRE

Maltese Community Council of Victoria Inc.



ANNUAL REPORT
2012-13

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President's Report

'Of all Maltese communities in Australia, the best organised community is that in the State of Victoria' – Dr Tonio Borg, former Deputy Prime Minister and former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Malta.

It gives me great pleasure to present the Annual Report for the year ending 30 September 2013 for the Maltese Community Council of Victoria (MCCV). During the past year the Executive and Council have been meeting every month to discuss issues of relevance to the Maltese community in Victoria. The following report addresses some of these issues and highlights some of the activities that occurred throughout the year.

The MCCV is involved in several functions, namely:

- To co-ordinate and represent the views of the Maltese community through the affiliated associations. This involves also representation with authorities both in Malta as well as in Australia,
- To provide a professional welfare service particularly to aged and home-bound Maltese, and
- To encourage culture and language maintenance.

Welfare Programmes

The welfare programs of the Council have been active throughout the year. Major programs under the control of the Council include:

Firstly, the **Home and Community Care (HACC) Program** enables Maltese elderly to attend for one or more days a week, either at the Centre in Parkville or that in Sunshine, where activities and meals are provided.

Secondly, the **Community Aged Care Packages (CACPs)** enable us to organise home visits by members of staff on a regular basis to assist Maltese elderly to remain living independently in their home or community rather than having to reside in a hostel or similar care facility.

These functions are covered in the report by the staff of the Welfare program.

Another function introduced last year is the **voluntary home visiting scheme**, where selected visitors visit persons who indicate a wish to speak in Maltese and have contact with Maltese persons. A committee was set up consisting of Mrs Rosemary Attard (Director of Welfare), Joseph Borg, Lewis Zammit, Albert Agius and myself to organise a home visiting program particularly for those living alone at home or in nursing homes. This program is now functioning, albeit with a small number of clients and volunteer visitors.

MCCV Community Awards and Bishop Joe Grech Memorial Scholarship

For the second year, the MCCV held a function on Saturday 31 August 2013 to make presentations of annual community and scholarship awards.

The **MCCV Community Awards** were set up to recognise exceptional contribution by individuals to the Maltese community. A subcommittee of the MCCV Executive was selected consisting of the President and the two vice-Presidents.

The committee received nominations in confidence and made recommendations as follows:

- Scholarship and Education: **Prof Frà Richard Divall and Prof Mary Galea**
- Culture: **Mr Emmanuel Cassar**
- Welfare Services **Mr Charles Farrugia and Mr Victor Bartolo**
- General services **Mr Charles Portelli, Mr Alfred Asciak and Mr George Brimmer**

The MCCV had established the **Bishop Joseph Grech Memorial Scholarship** to encourage interest and appreciation of Maltese culture in young Australians of Maltese descent living in the State of Victoria. It was set up in memory of Bishop Grech, who was Bishop of the Sandhurst Diocese in Victoria until his death in 2010. He was the Bishop delegate for Youth and Young Adults and for Migrants and Refugees, and he served in these roles with joy and a deep compassion. This year the successful candidate was Ms **Kristy Galea**.

Other Events and Activities

Maltese Cyclists in Melbourne. On Tuesday 6 November 2012, the MCCV held a reception for the Lifecycle Challenge team upon their arrival on 6 November at the Maltese Centre in Parkville, where they are staying for two nights.

Migration Museum. Through special fund-raising efforts of Mr Joe Stafrace, the MCCV succeeded in raising more than \$12,000 to buy stand-alone touch screen computer consoles for the Migration Museum in Malta.

Noise Complaint. The Melbourne City Council received complaints about noise associated with functions held at the Maltese Centre in Parkville. Members of the Executive met with the Council representative to discuss this issue. A document was prepared for the MCCV by a barrister. We have now installed equipment to alert DJs relating to level of noise, so that the risk of having excessive noise would be eliminated.

Youth Group. Under the name of **Generation AusMalts (GAM)** the MCCV youth group has been re-invigorated through the use of social media tools including Facebook and Twitter to encourage connection with the younger generation. Rita Ellul and Rita Catania have been leading and coordinating the GAM activities and initiatives.

Farewell Receptions. On 10 June 2013, the MCCV held a cocktail party in honour of the Malta High Commissioner in Australia, HE Mr Francis Tabone, whose six-and-a-half year terms of office ended in June 2013. The MCCV always has had very cordial relations with Mr Tabone and his assistance was always welcome, the latest being his involvement with the SBS radio to save the Maltese language program scheduling.

On Saturday 31 August the MCCV held a well-attended farewell reception at the Maltese Community Centre in Parkville in honour of Malta's Consul General for the State of Victoria, Mr Charles Mifsud, whose term of office that started in late 2009 has been terminated effective end of September 2013. During his term of office, Mr Mifsud was indefatigable in making himself available to members of the Maltese community, not merely to serve their needs in issues relating strictly to consular matters, but much more broadly.

Speaker's Visit. On Tuesday 10 September 2013 the MCCV held a welcome reception in honour of the Speaker of the Maltese Parliament, the Hon. Dr Anglu Farrugia, who was on a two-day visit to Melbourne.

MCCV Library. We have undertaken a major re-organisation of the library at the Maltese Centre, to ensure a much more user-friendly arrangement of books, now organised by topic. A number of new books have been put on the open shelves for borrowing or reference purposes.

Maltese Language Immersion morning. On Saturday 31 August the committee of the Maltese Historical Association, led by President Mrs Frances Bonnici, hosted the annual Language Immersion Morning for the students who are currently studying the Maltese language at the Maltese Community Centre in Parkville. This activity is intended to encourage Maltese children to continue their interest in learning the Maltese Language. The morning was filled with activities targeted towards the students who were multi-aged, ranging from primary to VCE level.

ECCV bestows Life Membership on Prof. Maurice Cauchi. At the Annual General Meeting of the Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria (ECCV) held on Tuesday 27 November 2012, Prof. Maurice Cauchi was awarded life Membership of the ECCV by the Chairman, Mr Joe Caputo. The award was made for outstanding service and dedication to the ECCV over many years. Prof. Cauchi was Chairperson of the ECCV between 1989 and 1991, and was involved in ECCV committees for several years prior to that.

Bereavements

In the past year the Maltese community in Victoria lost some of its prominent members. Among them were:

ANTHONY BONNICI AM, BA, LL.B (1930-2013): In April 2013, the death of Anthony Bonnici was announced. He was the second President of the MCCV and a well-known personality in the Maltese community. He was also Chairperson of the Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria. During his six years as MCCV President, Tony had established the organisation and structure of the community and formalised its processes and procedures to the benefit of the community.

EDWIN BALDACCHINO and LAURIE ARMATO passed away in May 2013. They both contributed significantly to the Maltese community and the Maltese Centre in particular.

FRANK CALLEJA passed away on 7 December, 2012, aged 95 years. He was a member of the MCCV executive for several years, and was heavily involved in Welfare services at the Maltese Centre. He was President of La Vallette association for several years.

Community information and education

A number of talks were organised during the year on several topics of interest and importance to the community. These were organised by the Welfare group (see report) as well as by occasional lectures given by guest speakers and visitors, particularly Dr Fr Victor Shields.

Some Issues of Concern

Maltese language at VCE level. A special effort has been made by the MCCV to increase the number of students sitting for the VCE examination in Maltese. The lack of a minimum number of students could result in loss of accreditation of Maltese as a VCE subject, with detrimental effects on Maltese children wishing to continue their studies in Maltese. This is a continuing issue.

This year, through special efforts of the MCCV as well as other individuals, we managed to raise the number of students sitting for the VCE, and therefore, it is hoped that we will not be losing this accreditation for the next three years.

Maltese language programs on SBS Radio. A major issue this year has been the threat to Maltese language programs on SBS radio which involved slashing radio programs from nine to only two hours per week. The MCCV was very active in opposing this move and organised a petition which was signed by more than 3000 persons. This resulted in an increase of an extra two hours of digital radio programming.

Relations with representatives of Maltese Government

The MCCV acknowledges the assistance and cooperation of the representatives of the Government of Malta. We have always found assistance from both High Commissioner HE Mr Francis Tabone and Consul General Mr Charles Mifsud when we needed it. Moreover, we have had the benefit of an Honorary Consul on the MCCV Executive for a very long time, first in the person of Mr Victor Borg, and more recently, with the appointment of Dr Edwin Borg-Manché. We thank all these persons for their continued interest and assistance in facilitating our interactions with the Maltese government.

Representatives on external organisations

For the second year, members of the MCCV Executive have been involved with two such organisations. Both President Prof Maurice Cauchi and PRO Dr Edwin Borg-Manché were elected on the committee of the Federation for Maltese Living Abroad (as President and member respectively). They also served on the statutory advisory body as members of the Council for Maltese living Abroad representing the State of Victoria. The Council is chaired by the Minister for Foreign Affairs in Malta. In this way, the views of the Council as well as the people of Victoria are well represented.

Relations with Religious Institutions

The Council would like to acknowledge the contribution of the Maltese religious institution to the Maltese community in general and the MCCV in particular. Our relations with the MSSP have always been very cordial and have been crucial to our success in establishing our centre in Parkville. This close cooperation has continued ever since.

We would also like to acknowledge the service given by the Diocesan priests, as well as the Dominican Sisters of Malta and other members of the various religious orders. Their service to the community is well appreciated.

Finally, I hope that we will continue to work together to provide a focus for all Maltese in Victoria, and to provide welfare and other social functions for the benefit of all. As the Maltese community grows older, their needs seem to increase, and we strongly believe that there will be a need for a Council for a long number of years to come. By working together we can achieve our aims.

Acknowledgement of Effort

The Council could not function without the assistance of several persons who selflessly devote themselves to the running of the Council and the Centre itself.

Firstly, I would like to thank the members of the Executive who have been very supportive to me over the year. In particular, I am indebted to the Vice-Presidents: to **GEJTU DEGUARA** for taking on the extra duties of manager of the premises at Parkville, and to **VICTOR BORG** for his valued advice and assistance.

PAUL BORG, our treasurer is the bed-rock on whom we depend for the health of the MCCV finances. He provides us with professional, precise, up-to-date financial reports on a monthly basis. He is also responsible for managing the bingo session on Friday evenings.

EDWINA MALLIA, our Secretary, and in her absence, **MARILYN PACE**, the Assistant Secretary, for dealing with correspondence, and other administrative duties.

Dr **EDWIN BORG-MANCHÉ**, our Public Relations Officer, is responsible for maintaining the MCCV website and edits our bi-monthly newsletter, the *MCCV News*. Both of these publications have now reached levels unheard of previously.

ROSEMARY ATTARD, our Welfare Officer, has been responsible for preparing monthly reports presented at the Council meetings.

A valuable addition to the Executive has been Assistant Treasurer **JOANNE ELLUL** who ably stood in for the Treasurer while he was overseas.

To all these people we owe our thanks.

I would also like to thank also those affiliated organisations who take their duties seriously and ensure that delegates from their organisation attend regularly at Council meetings. Without their cooperation the functions of the Council would come to a standstill.

I would also like to thank the members of the Welfare group, namely the Welfare Programmes Co-ordinator, **MICHAEL CARUANA**, the Community Aged Care Coordinator, **JEFFREY SALIBA** as well as the Community Development Worker, **PAUL LIA**. They run an excellent welfare program to help Maltese in need of our help.

I thank the Administrative Secretary, **CARMEN MAMO** for her excellent performance of her duties and support of the Council.

There are also a large number of volunteers who cannot be named individually, but who provide an essential service to the Council. Among these one must mention:

- The **Ladies Auxiliary** who have been active for decades in providing assistance to the Council not only in preparation for receptions on various occasions, raising funds, and also running social activities on Tuesdays.
- To **ALFRED ASCIAK** and his supporters for his unstinting efforts in continuing to organising and preparing the Centre for the various functions, including Good Friday, Christmas and several other occasions throughout the year.
- To all those others, too numerous to mention, who lend a hand when required, I also say thank you. We cannot work without you.

Maurice Cauchi
President, MCCV
30th September, 2013

Welfare Programmes

Many of our clients talk about their journey from Malta to Australia as the shift from the known, even if it was not so comfortable especially after the war, to the unknown even though they heard of the opportunities of work and a home of their own. Now some sixty or more years later they are facing another move. They are becoming elderly and frail and are faced with the decision to leave the security of their own home to the comfort but new beginnings in a residential facility. Most wish to stay at home as long as possible and through the services that the Maltese Community Council of Victoria Inc provides through Federal and State funding we are helping to grant their wish.

At present we are funded for three programmes: **Planned Activity Groups** (PAG) under the Home and Community Care, **Community Aged Care Packages** (CACPs) and the **Aged Care Services Improvement and Healthy Ageing Grants Fund** (ACSIHAG). Each of these programmes has a specific aim at assisting the elderly and in the case of the ACSIHAG funding work is also undertaken with residential facilities.

During 2012-13 the CACPs and PAG programmes underwent a Quality Review. The reviewers found that while we were very much focused on the service which was of high quality we needed to update our Policies and Procedures. An improvement Plan was drawn up and over a number of months work was done to bring our Policies and Procedures up to scratch and which concluded the review. The next review will be in three years' time.

Planned Activity Groups

The Planned Activity Groups are run four days a week, Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays at our Sunshine premises for the Maltese elderly in the western suburbs and Thursdays at our Centre in Parkville for those who live in the Northern suburbs. Numbers have increased and we cater for an average of 55 clients a week. Our PAG staff provide transport to and from home and a fresh meal prepared on site.

During the year the PAG staff and the coordinator have meetings to discuss issues that relate to the programme and how it can continue to achieve maximum benefit for those who attend. Also during these meetings parts of the Policy and procedures are discussed like: Risks, Confidentiality, Clients' health as observed by the staff and other matters that may be raised by any staff member.

In December 2012 the MCCV Ladies Auxiliary held the annual Christmas lunch for the PAG attendees as well as invitees from several residential facilities. Over a hundred people attended. Fr Edwin Agius mssp said mass and administered the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick. Mr Alfred Xuereb provided music and a number of those present led in singing Christmas Carols.

In February 2013 we recommenced the Saturday Programme on a fortnightly basis and an average of 13 people attends.

In May 2013 we ran a Satisfaction Survey among half of the groups, so that the next one in November would be distributed to the other half. The clients were given the option to remain anonymous. The majority returned the completed survey and, on the whole, all were satisfied with the way the programme is run. One item was mentioned in nearly all the surveys returned – the good quality of the meals prepared for them on site. Also the dedication of the staff was highlighted in several survey responses.

All our staff attended a refresher course run by Premium Health in Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) which is mandatory to undertake annually.

The programme is being aligned to the Active Service Model (ASM) which aims to give more independence and say to the participants. Over this year a number of them have shown interest in computers, collating recipes that their mothers used to cook and also recording their stories as a legacy for future generations.

Community Aged Care Packages (CACPs)

Introduction. The Maltese Community Council of Victoria is funded for twenty-five Community Aged Care Packages (CACPs) to be distributed amongst the frail, elderly Maltese. The Maltese CACPs program provides Maltese-speaking Personal Care Workers that assist Maltese elderly to remain living independently in their home or community rather than having to access a hostel or other residential care facility.

Home Care. MCCV Home Care provides a broad range of practical support and care services to enable clients to remain independent in their own home which includes those whose homes are in a Retirement Living community. Our team of responsive care workers pride themselves on supporting our clients' needs and preferences by personalising a broad range of care services, with options for short or long term support available. Our range of personalised care services include:

Personal care. Supporting people with meals, showering, dressing, laundry, home maintenance and gardening services as well as transport to medical appointments, shopping and social activities.

Organising access to community nursing care. Supporting people with complex care needs who have been approved to receive care provided by registered nurses and allied health professionals such as physiotherapists and podiatrists as well as assistance with aids and equipment.

Respite care. Supporting carers on a regular or emergency basis to supplement the support services at times of carer illness, holidays or any other time when a carer or a recipient requires a short-term change from their usual care arrangement.

Case Management. The Case Manager provides the expertise to organise and manage the initial and ongoing care for the clients.

Their duties include:

- assessing the needs of clients
- establishing a program that meets the complex needs of the client
- liaise with medical practitioners, aged care assessment services, family, carers, and the client themselves
- organizing personal alarms, wheelchair ramps, smoke alarms, podiatrist, special accommodation, emergency respite, and all other health related needs.

Community Development

This year has been a great year, in which we have strengthened the work we have done over the last few years as well as given our work longevity & sustainability for the benefit of our ageing Maltese community.

The Maltese Cluster Programme in which we are working in partnership with Cumberland Manor Aged Care Facility in North Sunshine is bearing fruit. This Programme was created to address the issue that the Maltese community has no culturally specific aged care facilities in the state. Through the Cluster Programme, the Staff at Cumberland Manor have been learning about Maltese cultural traditions, language & cuisine in order to provide better service to members of the Maltese Community.

Also we are trying to encourage persons of Maltese background who are contemplating entry into aged care to consider Cumberland Manor as a facility best suited to those for whom Cultural and linguistic issues are very important. From 4 residents of Maltese background the facility now has 7 Maltese residents as well as a large number of enquiries that are received by Cumberland Manor Staff and also by the Staff at the Maltese Community Centre.

On the 5th of March, we had the first open day for the Maltese Community at Cumberland Manor. Over 30 people from the Maltese community attended this event to find out about the facility and also about the work that is being done through the Maltese Cluster Programme. Apart from members of the Maltese community there were also representatives from a number of mainstream organisations and government departments.

This year we also celebrated *Mnarja* - a traditional Maltese Feast in honour of St Peter and St Paul, at Rosary Home in Keilor Downs. The residents and all those who attended enjoyed the day. The Dominican Sisters of Malta were great hosts.

This year we have begun a partnership with Community Chefs to provide some Maltese traditional meals for the elderly in Maltese Community. Community Chefs is an organisation that provides meals to elderly for over 20 local councils in the state taking over from the old 'Meals on Wheels'. It is envisaged that by winter 2014 we will have the first Maltese meals in circulation in the community.

Education is very important to everybody, but issues such as safety, power of attorney and health become more important as we age. This year we had around 20 different information sessions for Maltese carers from our Maltese Carers Support Group in conjunction with Carers Victoria. We also worked with a number of other mainstream organisations to provide information sessions to our Maltese community on diverse subjects such as brain health in conjunction with Alzheimer's Australia (Vic.), Seniors Rights in conjunction with COTA Vic. & Fire Safety in conjunction with the Metropolitan Fire Brigade.

For 2014 we aim to further strengthen our ties with mainstream organisations to provide better services to our Maltese community & make the Maltese community and its growing needs better known in the wider Australian community.

Michael Caruana

Welfare Programme Co-ordinator

Jeff Saliba

Community Aged Care Coordinator

Paul Lia

Community Development Worker

Public Relations

The highlight of the past year was the successful campaign that the MCCV organised to save the number of Maltese language programs on SBS Radio from decimation. On 30 November 2012 SBS published a new schedule for its radio network that was to come into effect at the end of April 2013. Of the 68 languages broadcast, the Maltese language fared the worst, being slashed from eight hours per week to only two hours. As a result of the campaign, SBS restored two further hours to a total of four hours per week.

Maltese Language Program hours on SBS Radio

The MCCV played an active role in a concerted effort across the Maltese community in Australia that showed that we are an organised and united community which reacts strongly when an injustice has been, or is about to be, committed against it. We demonstrated that we will not take lightly any threat to our rights, and will lobby the powers that be in a concerted manner to seek their support and use every other legitimate means to ensure that our rights are respected.

Of the twenty-two language programs reduced in the new SBS radio schedule, Maltese was the worst hit with 6 hours less, followed by Polish 4 hours, Spanish 3 hours, and German, Turkish, Russian, Dutch, Hungarian, Khmer, Portuguese and Ukrainian 2 hours each. The Maltese community in Melbourne was extremely disappointed with this decision.

The savaging of the Maltese language programs in the new schedule was discussed at length at the December MCCV Council Meeting. Council expressed its disappointment with the SBS decision and felt that the Maltese community was very hard done by. It was felt that, in making the decision to severely reduce Maltese language programs, SBS failed to adequately take into account the specific needs of the ageing members of the Maltese community in Australia. SBS had relied way too heavily on census numbers. It was also felt that SBS should have at least consulted directly with representatives of the Maltese community in Australia before making such a savage cut to Maltese language programs.

The MCCV held a special Community Action Meeting with the Maltese community in Victoria on 13 December 2012 at the Maltese Community Centre in Parkville. The meeting provided community members with an opportunity to discuss how the community should voice its disappointment and concerns about the SBS decision.

At the meeting Maltese community members were urged to express their disappointment and the impact that the decision had on them personally, by sending a complaint email or a letter to SBS management. They were also asked to sign the MCCV-organised petition urging SBS to reconsider its decision and restore the Maltese language programs to the previous level.

The MCCV also engaged with Maltese community leaders in other states to co-ordinate the signing of the same petition by as many members of the Maltese community around Australia as possible. More than 3,000 signatures were gathered. This was a significant community effort, given the short period of time in which the signatures were gathered and people going away during the holiday period. This petition, the largest of its kind ever undertaken within the Maltese community, was made possible through the assistance of several organisations and individuals from Victoria, NSW and South Australia. The MCCV is grateful to all those who assisted in organising gathering of signatures.

The campaign undertaken by the MCCV was multi-faceted and included writing to all federal and Victorian state MPs to enlist their support and make representations to the SBS Board and the Federal Government on behalf of the Maltese constituents in their electorate. It is understood that, upon receiving the MCCV communication, various members of Parliament and other prominent individuals wrote letters of support to SBS, strongly urging the national multicultural broadcaster to reconsider its decision. The MCCV also sought the support of the Maltese Government.

The reaction of the Maltese community in Australia to the severe Maltese language program cuts was intense. Several articles and letters to the editor, all critical of the decision, were published in *The Maltese Herald*, the only Maltese newspaper then published in Australia, as well as in newspapers in Malta and in various newsletters. Posts complaining about the decision were posted on the Facebook SBS page.

MCCV President, Professor Maurice Cauchi, and MCCV PRO, Dr Edwin Borg-Manché, participated in various meetings with high level representatives from SBS Radio.

In December last year a delegation consisting of the Malta High Commissioner in Canberra H.E. Mr Francis Tabone, the Consul General of Malta in Victoria Mr Charles Mifsud, and Professor Maurice Cauchi met formally with SBS management representatives in Melbourne to argue the case for more Maltese language programs and seek a revision of the schedule. Mr Fred Fenech, President of the Maltese Community Council of NSW, and Mr Lawrence Dimech, a member of the Council for Maltese Living Abroad, also met with SBS representatives in Sydney to argue the case.

In a follow-up meeting held in early February 2013 at SBS in Melbourne, a delegation of the Maltese community in Victoria, consisting of MCCV President, Professor Maurice Cauchi, MCCV PRO, Dr Edwin Borg-Manché, and President of the Maltese Association Hobson's Bay, Chev Joe Attard, met with representatives from Minister Stephen Conroy's office and an SBS senior executive to discuss the issue. The petition with over 3,000 signatures was presented to the representatives of Minister Conroy to the SBS authorities at the meeting.

After three-and-a-half months of persistent canvassing and negotiations led by Maltese community leaders in Melbourne and Sydney as well as Malta's High Commissioner in Canberra and the Consul-General in Melbourne, SBS announced that two one-hour Maltese radio programs would be broadcast commencing on 29 April 2013 in addition to the two which were originally included under the new schedule, giving a total of 4 one-hour programs per week. SBS advised that the additional two hours would be funded from within the existing radio budget. This meant that funding of the additional two hours on SBS 3 digital is guaranteed only for two years (until the end of the 2014/15 financial year) and the funding situation will be reviewed at the end of the two years.

As a result of this revised decision, the Maltese programs on SBS radio from 29 April are being broadcast as follows:

- **Tuesday at 12 noon – SBS 3 digital only** (digital radio/TV)
- **Thursday at 12 noon – SBS 3 digital only** (digital radio/TV)
- **Friday at 12 noon – SBS 2/FM analogue** (also on digital radio/TV)
- **Saturday at 2.00 pm – SBS 2/FM analogue** (also on digital radio/TV)

Maltese radio programs are also available over the internet as follows:

- **Internet Live and On-Demand** – <http://www.sbs.com.au/maltese>
- **iPhone and Android app** – *SBS Your Language* app
- **Podcasts of program segments** – <http://www.sbs.com.au/podcasts/your-language/maltese>.

Council for Maltese Living Abroad

Second Meeting through video-conferencing – February 2013

On 5 February 2013 the then Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr Francis Zammit Dimech, chaired the *second meeting of the Council for Maltese Living Abroad* held via video-conferencing, which was enabled by the Malta Enterprise office in New York. Council members representing Victoria, Prof. Maurice Cauchi and Dr Edwin Borg-Manché participated in the meeting.

The one-and-half hour meeting made it possible for members of the Council to participate in a fruitful and constructive discussion on various issues related to Maltese living abroad.

Minister Zammit Dimech announced the establishment of the Directorate for Maltese Living Abroad, within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and that Dr Raymond Xerri was appointed Director for Maltese Living Abroad.

During the meeting, it was decided that next Convention for Maltese Living Abroad be held in 2015. This will be the 4th Convention to take place, the latest one held in March 2010.

During the meeting it was also agreed that proposals by council members concerning the draft law to establish a Maltese Cultural Institute should be presented by the end of March.

Third Meeting held in Malta – October 2013

On 3-4 October 2013 the Council for Maltese Living Abroad held its third meeting in Malta at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Palazzo Parisio in Valletta. The meeting was chaired by the Hon Dr George W Vella, Minister for Foreign Affairs. Council members representing Victoria, Prof. Maurice Cauchi and Dr Edwin Borg-Manché attended the two-day meeting.

The Council discussed a variety of issues on its agenda, such as, the Maltese Culture Institute, Maltese language teaching overseas, the teaching of the history of the Diaspora in Maltese schools, biometric passport services, banking services, and other matters that impact directly or indirectly Maltese communities in other countries.

In his opening speech, Minister Vella recognised the important role that each member of the Council had in bringing to the fore the issues that concern Maltese communities established in other countries, reiterating his Ministry's commitment to ensure regular consultation, to facilitate the work of the Council, to identify the potential of Maltese living abroad, and to ensure strong bilateral relations with the countries where Maltese communities have been long settled.

In line with the *Guiding Principles* issued by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs last July, Minister Vella reiterated the Government's commitment to strengthen its relations with the Maltese Diaspora, to maintain the momentum on the progress achieved thus far in this regard, and, most importantly, to carve novel niches by which the Maltese communities in other countries can assist in shedding the spotlight on Malta by identifying foreign direct investment, tapping new tourism markets and promoting Malta as an ideal destination for international conferences and incentives.

MCCV Newsletter

Six editions of the MCCV newsletter *MCCV News* were published during the past year. The newsletter was circulated by email to over 600 readers locally and overseas and is available for download from the MCCV website. Detailed news reports were published in the newsletter on various MCCV and Maltese community events that took place during the year.

MCCV Website

The MCCV website continues to be well received both in Australia and overseas. During the past 12 months our website had about 25,000 hits from around the world who viewed the website, which is about an 80 percent increase in the number of visitors on the previous year. The most downloaded document during the past 12 months was the *MCCV News No. 118 – Mar-Apr 2013* with 733 downloads.

Edwin Borg-Manché

Public Relations Officer, MCCV

Maltese Language Classes



An appraisal of text books purchased from Malta was initiated as some of the resources were out of print. The review of the scope and sequence of the beginner's class was initiated. The MCCV Education Committee held several meetings to redraft this document and to compile records and resources to meet this requirement. The MCCV Maltese Language classes Semester 2, intake offered the same three levels of tuition - Beginners, advanced and conversation classes to

adults and family accompanied children. The tutors for this semester were Laura Schembri, Edwidge Borg and Georgina Scillio. Twenty eight students registered for these classes and all classes were well attended.

In Semester 1 2013, Mrs Scillio retired as teacher and was replaced by Mark Bonello. This semester marked the ninth year that classes are being held in their present structure of 2 yearly student intake. Twenty three students enrolled for this semester. The Beginners, intermediate and conversation classes were offered for Semester 1, 2013.

The MCCV – Maltese Language Classes continues support other Maltese Language Classes in Victoria.



In August 2012 the MCCV Maltese Language teachers assisted the Maltese Historical Association's annual Language Immersion day for students studying Maltese.

In September 2012 MCCV students participated in the Lejla Musiko-letterarja organised by the Maltese Literature Group. Students performed a Maltese Language skit, written and directed by Mrs Scillio.

At the Maltese Community reception organised by the Maltese Consul General, Mrs Borg distributed batches of flyers advertising Maltese Language Classes to various organisations to give to their members. Mrs Borg also met with various members of Parliament both in



Government and in Opposition who offered their assistance.

The MCCV sponsored the travel expenses of Maltese Language Teachers of Victoria to travel to Canberra to attend the Federation of Maltese Language Schools professional development seminar.

Edwidge Borg attended the Maltese Language book display held at the Brimbank Library. Leaflets promoting Maltese Language Schools in Victoria were placed in prominent positions throughout the library.

In November Ms Borg attended a meeting with the Principal of the Victorian School of Languages together with Ms Emma Navarro and the Consul General Charles Mifsud. The purpose of this meeting was to seek approval to have Adult VCE classes at the MCCV for Adults in 2013. The MCCV was requesting that these classes had to be accredited with the VSL and paid for by the MCCV. Support was also being requested for the composite classes at the VSL in the form of teacher aides. Another request was for an Adult beginners' class at the VSL in Taylor's Lakes. All these requested were granted.



During the MCCV children's party December 2012, MCCV Maltese Language tutors took the opportunity to meet with parents and encourage them to send their children to learn Maltese.

The MCCV Maltese Language classes applied for four grants from the Victorian Multicultural Commission – The Community Language Schools Program. Mr Michael Caruana, Welfare Co-ordinator at the MCCV, assisted Ms Borg to submit the submission. The MCCV has been successful in obtaining a grant for \$2,750 including GST for Support for Existing Community School.

In January 2013 the MCCV Education Committee organised a professional seminar for teacher and teacher aides. The seminar convenor was Mrs Frances Bonnici who was assisted by Edwidge Borg.

Ms Borg undertook to seek from the Executive of the MCCV to advertise Maltese Language Classes for all schools held in Victoria. A list of prospective local papers and a budget was compiled by Ms Borg. The MCCV approved this request and the advertisements appeared for several weeks throughout January and February 2013. Mr Bonello successfully negotiated with Leader Newspaper on a package advertisement deal. This advertising campaign was very successful in attracting many new young students to study the Maltese Language.

Ms Borg and Laura Schembri delivered flyers and pamphlets advertising Maltese Language classes to various libraries in the Northern suburbs as well as local clubs. Brochures were placed in church bulletins as well as church foyers.

Throughout Semester 1, 2013 the MCCV Education committee continued with its commitment to finalise the redrafting of scope and sequence for the Adult Beginner's class. The committee's aim is to commence a redrafting of the Intermediate scope and sequence in 2014 and to encourage more students to learn Maltese by its continued proactive approach towards advertising the language classes.

Edwidge Borg

Coordinator MCCV - Maltese Language Classes

Library

The number of books in the library continues to increase. Donations have been received from individuals as well as from Government sources. Some of the books received recently include the second edition of *It-Tezawru* by Albert Agius, *Learn Maltese* by Joseph Vella, I by Joe Axiaq, *Growing up Maltese* by Anthony D'Andria, and several others, including books for children.

During this year, a general re-arrangement of books in the library was undertaken in order to make the books more easily accessible to readers. The various sections have been clearly identified, and books in the literature section have been sorted out in alphabetical order by author.

A number of books which were previously under lock and key have been made available to the public, albeit as reference books in some instances.

As there were a number of duplicates of some books, these have been removed and stored in the adjoining room, which has now become an archive room, containing material which is duplicated in the library.

We have in addition a collection of CDs about Malta and related topics.

A number of books which were not strictly related to Maltese culture were also removed and archived. It is hoped that these measures would make the library more accessible and easier to manage.

This has necessitated restrictions about the use of the library, to emphasize that the library is to be used only by those requiring such services. For this purpose, computers which were previously used for recreational purposes unrelated to library use have been removed to another room.

The library is open once a week on Friday nights during the Centre's Bingo and at other times when supervision is made available. This ensures that that borrowing and return of books is kept under strict surveillance.

The Council encourages the general public as well as the persons who attend the various functions at the Centre to make use of the library. It would be indeed a pity if the Maltese community does not make use of this facility, which is unique outside Malta.

We thank **Mr Charles J Belli and Mr Guy Deguara**, *Library Co-Ordinators*, who have been instrumental in keeping the library open for the public.

Youth Group

During the past year *Generation AusMalts* (GAM) continued to grow slowly but surely. The GAM Facebook page now has over 200 'likes'. GAM also welcomed two new committee members in 2013: **HAYLEY HOUGEE**, who spent some time in Malta earlier this year and posted her insightful views on life and culture as lived on the Maltese islands via Facebook, and **KRISTY GALEA**, who was awarded the Bishop Joe Grech Memorial Scholarship 2013.

Looking back at 2013

As the Youth Sub-committee of the Maltese Community Council of Victoria, GAM has continued to work on its goals of encouraging young Australian-Maltese to be proud of, and learn more about, their Maltese heritage.

Some of the activities in this financial year have included:

- Making regular posts on GAM Facebook page highlighting range of events, news items and items of interest
- Supporting *Nisga Cook-Off* as cross-promotion activity the GAM team at the Cook-Off, led by Rita Catania, was the winning team overall – a tremendous effort
- Promoting the *Bishop Joe Grech Memorial Scholarship* among members of the younger Maltese-Australian generations and encouraging them to apply
- Organising the *Children's Christmas Party*, attended by approximately 70 children and their families. Activities included a range of craft activities, face-painting, cooking (no-bake items) and a visit by Santa
- Organising the *Stories, Rhyme and Fun Time* event aimed at giving young Australian-Maltese an opportunity to hear and share stories written by authors of Maltese heritage. Fifteen attendees were able to hear stories read by, and ask questions of, author Deborah Abela, based in Sydney, and Claire Azzopardi, in Malta, via Skype

Proposed GAM Activities for 2013/2014

Children's Christmas Party

Planning has commenced for this year's event, tentatively set for Saturday, Dec. 7.

Combined GAM and Nisga Event

Rita Ellul is the GAM representative on the Nisga committee. The GAM team, with support from Nisga, have proposed a 'Figolli Fun Day' event to take place two or three weeks before Easter (date TBC). The event will be targeted towards families where they learn to make a Figolla and also participate in other family activities.

GAM Maltese Trivia Night

Rita Catania proposed the idea of a GAM Trivia Night as a key event for the GAM calendar in 2014. The event would be a night of fun, interaction, education and competition to see who knows the most about their Maltese heritage. Date TBC, but a Saturday in May, or early June to coincide with *Sette Giugno*. A range of venues are currently being considered.

The GAM Committee would like to thank the ongoing support provided by the MCCV.

Rita Ellul & Rita Catania

Youth Committee

Bishop Joseph Grech Memorial Fund

The Bishop Joe Grech Memorial Fund was set up in memory of the late Bishop Joseph Grech of Sandhurst. The aim of the Scholarship Fund is to enable young persons of Maltese origin to continue in the footsteps of the late bishop, and in particular to encourage interest in Maltese culture.

Members on the committee include, Professor Maurice Cauchi, Mr Christian Zahra, Mr Paul Borg, Mrs Edwina Mallia, Mr George Saliba, Fr. Edwin Agius and Mr and Mrs Vella, relatives of the bishop. A meeting was held this year on 3 April 2013 to discuss the organisation of a fundraising activity at the same time as the MCCV Community Awards would be presented. Due to several activities happening at the same time no fundraising activity was held during the past year. More novel fund-raising ideas need to be generated to increase the scholarship funds.

This year it was decided to promote the Scholarship Award by advertising it in the local western suburbs newspaper to encourage more people to apply. This exercise did not achieve the results that were hoped for, with only one nomination coming from the newspaper paid advert. The Scholarship was also advertised at the Australian Catholic University and one nomination came in from this source. The Scholarship continues to be advertised on the MCCV website and through word of mouth.

There were six applicants in total this year, which was encouraging. Professor Maurice Cauchi, President of the MCCV, Mr. Charles Mifsud, Consul General of Malta in Melbourne and Frà Professor Richard Divall were the members on the selection committee. Professor Cauchi and Mr. Mifsud interviewed the 6 candidates as Frà Richard Divall was indisposed. The winner for 2013 is Kristy Galea who attended the Malta Study Tour of 2012. She is now a member in the Youth Committee and has contributed in the activities organised by this group.

Rita Catania, the winner of the Scholarship in June 2012 left for Malta in May 2013. She talked about her experience and what she gained at the presentation of this year's Bishop Joe Grech Scholarship Award. She spoke highly of Malta, the people she met especially her visit to Bishop Joe Grech's family. She encourages more young people to apply as she considers the experience to be priceless. She very capably continues in her role in the Youth Committee and has managed to recruit a couple more young people to the committee.

Donations from various people and organisations are continuously received. The encouragement and help by Mr Charles Mifsud, Consul General of Malta in Melbourne, is also noted.

The Fund is reasonably healthy and the scholarship amount to be awarded in 2014 will remain at \$1,000.

Edwina Mallia

Hon. Secretary to Bishop Joseph Grech Memorial Fund Committee

Ladies Auxiliary

The main aim of the Ladies Auxiliary (LA) group of the Maltese Community Council of Victoria (MCCV) is to assist and support the MCCV in its provision of welfare services to the Maltese Community at large.

The Bingo sessions on Tuesdays provides an outlet for a small group of women who come to the Centre on regular basis. They look forward to their social gathering and enjoy playing bingo in a more relaxed atmosphere. This year more women joined the bingo group.

Bingo commences on the first Tuesday in February and concludes on the second Tuesday in December. During the year Birthdays and Special days are also celebrated such as Shrove Tuesday, St Patrick's Day, Easter and Christmas are also celebrated.

In June catering was provided for the farewell cocktail party to Mr Tabone, High Commissioner of Malta in Canberra.

The Ladies auxiliary and the bingo group joined in a session about Brain Matters organized by the welfare group. Refreshments were provided by the Ladies Auxiliary.

November and December are busy months for the Ladies Auxiliary. They prepare and organize the Aged Christmas Luncheon with the welfare staff. The Tuesday's bingo group is invited to attend the luncheon. A raffle is held during the luncheon to help with the day's expenses as the Ladies Auxiliary sponsor and prepare the Christmas lunch. The luncheon is enjoyed by everyone.

The LA also provides refreshment for the Children's Christmas Party.

The LA appreciates the support of all the committee members, their partners and Volunteers. Their assistance throughout the year is greatly appreciated.

Committee members

- Marlene Xerri, *President*
- Therese Tabone, *Vice President*
- Mary McLaughlin, *Secretary*
- Pauline Farrugia, *Treasurer*
- Mary Cefai, *Member*
- Inez Mifsud, *Member*

Marlene Xerri
President

Men's Group

The Men's Group has now been active for over 30 years, and it continues to provide an opportunity for men of Maltese background to meet on a weekly basis.

The group meets every Monday, from 8.am to 2.pm. There are no membership fees and everyone is welcome.

The aim of the Men's Group is to offer friendship and social contact with those men who have found themselves isolated at home and from their community. Group members make new friends and are very supportive of each other.

On Mondays the group meets and chat over a cups of coffee or tea, eat some traditional Maltese *pastizzi* and beautiful fresh home-made salad rolls. Topics of discussion include Maltese current affairs, family visits overseas, football and Australian Rules AFL results and other hobbies and topics of interest. Group Members also enjoy a trip down memory lane recalling memories of their youth in Malta and recent holidays especially to their homeland.

Activities which are available include billiards, card games and board games, such as, draughts.

During the colder months, hot meals are available for purchase from the kitchen. These include, *pastizzi*, *ravjul*, *qassatat* and the ever famous "*ħobż biż-żejt*", or a freshly made sale roll with tea, coffee, soft drinks and Kinnie.

This year some of the regulars were overseas, and two men spent some weeks in hospital. The group are getting back together and the topics of conversation are many and varied as ever.

The Men's Group at the Maltese Community centre is open to all men, not to just those of Maltese background.

Further information can be obtained from John Pace at the Maltese Community Centre on 9387 8922 Monday 9am – 2pm or Friday 3pm to 9pm.

John Pace

Men's Group Co-ordinator

Malta Discovery Tour

The visit to Malta by Dr Michael Buchanan, a senior lecturer in the Faculty of Education at the Australian Catholic University in November 2011, was very successful. He was interested in setting up a unit within the faculty of Education incorporating the Malta Study Tour.

The project for November 2012 was diligently set up and we had 20 candidates from ACU and 9 coming through the MCCV. The students successfully completed their elective with a final assignment being handed in on the day before departure from Malta.

The itinerary which was worked out between me and Dr. Buchanan was very comprehensive including several historical sites and lectures from various educators in the area of history, teaching and religion. Ms Anne Quinaine, the then Australian High Commissioner to Malta hosted a function at her residence combining a welcome to our group with her farewell as her term office was to end that same month. Our group had the opportunity to meet, talk and mingle with some important people in politics and the diplomatic corps.

Early this year meetings were set up to prepare for The Malta Study Tour 2013. There were 15 students all paid up to travel in November this year. Just at the last minute 2 students pulled out for various reasons and the Dean of the Faculty decided to cancel the whole trip and refund all the money to the enrolled students as it was not financially viable for the university with only 13 students.

I had a meeting with Dr. Buchanan recently to see about The Malta Study Tour for 2014, he advised me he still had no confirmation from the university if the tour was to go ahead in 2014. It will be a great shame if this great project comes to an early demise.

In the meantime the MCCV continues to advertise and encourage the Maltese Community to participate in the November trip to Malta.

Edwina Mallia

MCCV Secretary and Tour Co-ordinator

Appendix A – Community Highlights in 2013

Friday, 16 November 2012

Mediterranean Diet Seminar

By Paul Lia

On Friday, 16th November 2012 we held the Mediterranean Diet Seminar at the Maltese Community Centre, Parkville.

This activity is part of the 'Building a Permanent Bridge' project which is funded by the Australian Federal Government through the 'Aged Care Service Improvement Healthy Ageing Group' (ACSIHAG).

The presentation was delivered by Mrs Ann Pantalleresco, Maltese dietician at the Austin Hospital.

The cooking demonstration was given by Mr Anton Camilleri, Maltese Chef. The aim of this activity is to provide the member of the Maltese community with information as to how they can care better for their health through healthy eating.



The function was attended by 80 people who included members from the Department of Health and Ageing, representatives from the MCCV Executive, and management and staff from residential facilities and members of the general public.

Thursday 19 June 2013

Talk on Dementia

On 19 June 2013 members of Reskeon Seniors Group had the chance to attend a very informative talk on Dementia, at their Wednesday meeting, at Merrilands Community Centre, Reservoir.

About three months prior, Ms Norminda Forteza, CALD Project Officer with Alzheimer's Australia Vic. made contact with Secretary, Paul Vella, to see if Reskeon Seniors Group would be interested in organising such a talk. Naturally the invitation was accepted as the group always have such talks on Glaucoma, diabetes, retiring homes, etc.



About 120 members were present. Speaker was Simon, from Alzheimer's Australia Vic., who was accompanied by Ms Norminda Forteza, Lisa and Bernadette.

The talk, which lasted about an hour, covered very interesting points and all aspects of Dementia, such as: When does it start? Memory/Dementia – is it inherited? Different types of Dementia. How do I recognise it? Signs and symptoms. Can I be tested? What causes Dementia? Does it affect the brain?

Simon covered the subject fully and very professionally. He was very happy with the response from those present, especially with the very important questions that came from the floor.

The Dementia group provided a lot of literature about the subject both in English and Maltese which were distributed among the members.

All those present felt that this was a very important subject to learn about. Some members have been affected by Dementia with some members losing a member of the family from it.

We would like to thank Alzheimer's Australia Vic for the opportunity they gave our group to learn more about it.



Reskeon Seniors Group enjoy such talks on Glaucoma, Diabetes and other interesting matters from time to time. Following the talk, the Reskeon Seniors Group committee organized a free sausage sizzle with free tea and coffee and soft drinks for all members.

Paul Vella

Secretary, Reskeon Seniors Group

Sunday, 25 August 2013

Stories, Rhymes & Fun Event – Generation AusMalts (GAM)

At the Maltese Centre in Parkville on the afternoon of Sunday 25 August the focus was on Maltese words, rhymes and stories for a group of children aged between 4-10 years. A GAM initiative, the Stories, Rhymes & Fun event was held to coincide with Australia's annual Children's Book Week (17th-23rd August).



The idea behind the event was to expose the children to Maltese authors and literature, as well as give them a taste of the Maltese language and alphabet. Activities involved live interactions, rhyming, storytelling, songs and games.

A feature of the afternoon was GAM enlisting the help of well-known children's authors Clare Azzopardi and Deborah Abela. Both spoke and read to the children via Skype. Clare, who

streamed in live from Malta, read from her popular book *Ġużeppina*, about a naughty little girl, who tries to learn the alphabet using the letters that her grandfather gave her for her birthday, only to end up stamping these letters all over her arms, cheeks, legs!



Deborah, an Australian born of Maltese bloodlines, currently based in Sydney, read from one her Max Remy Superspy book series - Max Remy Superspy, Mission in Malta, about 11 year old Max who is part of an elite intelligence agency called Spyforce that finds herself in Malta for one of her missions!

GAM hopes the Stories, Rhymes & Fun event will grow to become an annual occurrence and wishes to thank

all of those who participated.

Saturday, 31st August 2013

Presentation of MCCV Community Awards 2013

On Saturday 31 August the MCCV held a Farewell Reception at the Maltese Centre in Parkville in honour of the outgoing Consul General Mr Charles Mifsud. At the same function, MCCV President, Professor Maurice Cauchi, presented the MCCV Community Awards 2013 to the successful nominees, namely:

- **Prof Frà Richard Divall** – for his contribution to Scholarship and Education
- **Prof Mary Galea** – for her contribution to Scholarship and Education
- **Mr Emmanuel Cassar** – for his contribution to Culture
- **Mr Charles Farrugia** – for his contribution to Welfare Services
- **Mr Victor Bartolo** – for his contribution to Welfare Services (*in absentia*)
- **Mr Charles Portelli** – for his involvement in general within the community
- **Mr Alfred Asciak** – for his involvement in general within the community (*in absentia*)
- **Mr George Brimmer** – for his involvement in general within the community.



Prof Maurice Cauchi
with Prof Frà Richard Divall



Prof Maurice Cauchi
with Prof Mary Galea



Prof Maurice Cauchi
with Mr Charles Portelli



Prof Maurice Cauchi
with Mr Charles Farrugia



Prof Maurice Cauchi
with Mr George Brimmer



Prof Maurice Cauchi
with Mr Emmanuel Cassar



Alfred Asciak



Victor Bartolo

Saturday, 31 August 2013

Maltese in Melbourne farewell Malta's Consul General for Victoria



On Saturday 31 August the Maltese Community Council of Victoria held a well-attended Farewell Reception at the Maltese Community Centre in Parkville in honour of Malta's Consul General for the State of Victoria, Mr Charles Mifsud, whose term of office that started in late 2009 has been terminated effective end of September.

Among the guests present were the Hon. Andrew Elsbury MLC, the Co-Chair Victorian Parliamentary Friendship Group Malta; Mr Diego Velasco von Pilgrimm, the Consul General of Chile and Dean of the Consular Corps; Mr Linton Lethlean, the Honorary Consul-General of the Republic of Maldives and Hon. Secretary of the Consular Corps; and Dr George Luk, Hon. Consul General for Poland.

In his speech, MCCV President, Professor Maurice Cauchi said that, during his term of office, Mr Mifsud been indefatigable in making himself available to members of the Maltese community, not merely to serve their needs in issues relating strictly to consular matters, but much more broadly indeed. He referred to Mr Mifsud's religious attendance at functions organised by the various Maltese organisations which often consumed most of his weekends, normally cherished by most of us as time to relax and spend time with one's own family.

Prof. Cauchi made a presentation of a farewell gift to Mr Mifsud, consisting of a model aeroplane kit.



Saturday, 31 August 2013

Presentation of Bishop Joseph Grech Memorial Scholarship Award 2013



At the reception held on Saturday 31 August the outgoing Consul General Mr Charles Mifsud presented the Bishop Joseph Grech Memorial Scholarship 2013 to Ms Kristy Galea.

Kristy has completed a Bachelor of Music degree at the University of Melbourne, a Certificate IV in Business Administration, and a certificate IV in Occupation Health and Safety at the Australian National Institute of Business and Technology. She also completed a Graduate Diploma and is now completing a Master's degree in Teaching.

Kristy has been very involved with the Maltese community in Springvale. She plays the organ at the local church on a regular basis. She helps at the Wantirna Festa. She has been involved in working bees and helping in stores to raise funds for worthwhile projects. She intends to promote Maltese music on Facebook and cooperate with the MCCV Youth group to further attract Maltese youth to become part of the Maltese community. Before the presentation, Ms Rita Catania, who was awarded the inaugural scholarship last year, spoke about her first-hand experience of Maltese culture and history during her visit to Malta earlier this year.

Tuesday, 10th September 2013

Maltese community welcomes Maltese Speaker to Melbourne



On Tuesday 10 September 2013 the Maltese Community Council of Victoria held a welcome reception in honour of the Speaker of the Maltese Parliament, the Hon. Dr Anglu Farrugia, who was on a two-day visit to Melbourne.

Standing in for the MCCV President Prof Maurice Cauchi, who was unable to attend due to other commitments, Vice President Mr Victor Borg welcomed Dr Farrugia to the Maltese Community Centre in Parkville. Mr Borg thanked Dr Farrugia for visiting the Maltese community in Melbourne and

said that it was a great honour and a pleasure to welcome him to the Centre.

Dr Farrugia made reference to the passing of Act XX of 2011 which established by law the Council for Maltese Living Abroad, having the function to safeguard the interests of all generations of Maltese living overseas. He said that, as a result of this legislation, in his role as Speaker, he is able to receive reports from this Council and place them on the agenda for discussion by the relevant Parliamentary Standing Committee, foremost among them being the Foreign Affairs Committee.

Dr Farrugia then spoke about the benefits of having friendship groupings between the Maltese Parliament and the state parliaments of Victoria and NSW. He said that, after visiting South Africa for the Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference, he felt the need to travel to Australia to establish and strengthen the relationships of the Maltese Parliament with the NSW and Victorian State Parliaments.



The Speaker of the Maltese Parliament, the Hon Dr Anglu Farrugia, paid a two-day visit to Melbourne, while on a week-long visit to Australia, after attending a conference of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association in Johannesburg, South Africa. The highlights



of his brief visit included a meeting with members of the Malta Friendship Parliamentary Group of the Victoria Parliament and a visit to Rosary Home aged care facilities run by the Dominican Sisters of Malta in Keilor Downs.

Photographed above at the Victorian Parliament: (from left) Hon Don Nardella MP, Dr Anglu Farrugia and Legislative Assembly Deputy Speaker Mrs Christine Fyffe.

Thursday 6 & Sunday 9 September 2013

The Feast of Maria Bambina celebrated in Melbourne

Reskeon Maltese Association was again in charge in organising the Feast of Maria Bambina on behalf of the Missionary Society of St. Paul.

Because this year the 8th of September fell on a Sunday, the Mass at the Maltese Centre during the week was not held as this is normally held on the day of the actual Feast.

On Saturday, 7th September, Reskeon organised the Vittoria Dinner Dance at Firenze Receptions, Fawkner, which was well attended by over 200 members and friends.

Distinguished guests were the Consul General of Malta in Victoria, Mr Charles Mifsud; Fr Victor Shields, mssp; Honorary Life Members of Reskeon Maltese Association and Reskeon Seniors Group Inc., Dr Clemente Zammit and Mrs Mary Zammit; Life Member of Reskeon Maltese Association, Mr Laurie Bartolo and Mrs Theresa Bartolo; the MCCV Vice-President, Mr Victor Borg and Mrs Terri Borg; the MCCV Treasurer, Mr Paul Borg and Mrs Pauline Borg. Apologies were received from Fr Edwin Agius, mssp, and Life Member of Reskeon and Mrs Anne Gauci.

MC for the night was Mr Joe Cutajar. After welcoming the distinguished guests, all present were upstanding to sing the Maltese National Anthem and Advance Australia Fair. Music for the night was in the hands of DJ King Charlie.

Later in the night the Malta Gozo City of Brimbank Concert Band played marches for the occasion which created the merriment for the night, similar to that of the Maltese Festas. MC Mr Joe Cutajar thanked Social Secretary, Salvina Vella, who planned this night almost single-handed. All those attending complimented the way the night was organised, the food and the atmosphere. It was good to see among us some young guests who really enjoyed the night especially when DJ Charlie catered for their kind of music.



On Sunday, 8th September, Reskeon organised the Feast of Maria Bambina on behalf of the Missionary Society of St Paul, at St Mary Star of the Sea Church, West Melbourne.

This year it was a nice, warm Spring day and around 1000 of the Maltese Community attended for this Feast. A large number of Maltese associations attended with their banners and presented flowers to Our Lady.

Among those present were the Consul General of Malta in Victoria, Mr Charles Mifsud, the President of MCCV, Prof Maurice Cauchi and Mrs Agnes Cauchi; members of the MCCV Executive; Dr Clemente Zammit and Mrs Mary Zammit; members of the Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of St John of Jerusalem of Rhodes and of Malta and members of the Maltese Ex-Services Association of Victoria. A large number of Maltese Associations attended as well along with their banners, as well as the banners from the four villages and towns where the Bambina is celebrated in Malta and Gozo: Senglea, Mellieha, Naxxar and Xaghra, Gozo. Also present were Sisters from Religious Orders, members of the Society of Christian Doctrine and the Chief Representative in Australia of the Bank of Valletta plc, Mr George Portelli and Mrs Portelli.

Rosary was recited at 2.30pm by Mr Emmanuel Farrugia, which was followed by a Concelebrated Mass. Prime Celebrant was the MSSP Provincial in Australia, Fr Ivano Burdian; Concelebrants were Fr Edwin Agius, Fr Dr Victor Shields, Fr James Bonello, Fr Emmanuel Adami, Fr Denis Carabott, Fr John Taliana, all of mssp; Fr Karm Borg and Fr Raymond Bugeja. The homily in English was delivered by Fr Ivano Burdian, while Fr Dr Victor Shields delivered a short homily in Maltese.



The First Reading was by The Consul General of Malta in Victoria, Mr Charles Mifsud, who was attending the last function of the Maltese Community in Victoria, before returning to Malta after the end of his term of office. The Second Reading was read by Dr Edwin Borg-Manché, Hon. Consul of Malta in Victoria and MCCV PRO. The Prayers of the Faithful were read by Ms Antoinette Bajada and Mrs Phyllis Vella while the Sacrificial Offerings were brought to the Altar by Mr Joe Borg of First National, Deer Park and Mrs Borg, along with Mrs Anne Gauci and Mrs Tessie Cachia. Master of ceremonies was Emmanuel Farrugia helped by Frank Sirianni. The music and singing was provided by the Maltese Choir of Victoria under the direction of Mr Charles Schembri and Ms Lydia Gusman.

During Mass two collections took place: one going towards the Missionary Society of St Paul and the second one going towards the Church of St Mary Star of the Sea. After Mass, Fr Edwin Agius thanked all those present and the Reskeon Maltese Association for organising the Feast on their behalf. Special thanks went to Fr Anthony Bernal, Parish Priest of St. Mary Star of the Sea.

This was followed by a procession with the beautiful Statue of Maria Bambina in the streets around the church accompanied by the Maltese Own Band Philharmonic Society under the direction of Maestro George Aquilina, members of a large number of Maltese associations carrying their respectful banners and a large crowd from those attending the Church service. The procession was concluded by the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

Thanks to all those Reskeon members who on Friday and Sunday helped with the preparation for the Feast and then on Monday for putting everything back in its place.



Special thanks to the statue bearers and the *forcina*, to Mr Caesar Vella and Mr Alfred Asciak for their help and Mr Alfred Zahra, President of the St Bernadette Seniors and Social Club for providing transport to carry items from Parkville to St Mary Star of the Sea Church, West Melbourne, and back.

**Paul Vella, PRO, Reskeon Maltese Association
Secretary, Reskeon Seniors Group**

Appendix B – Maltese Historical Association

After the Christmas break, the committee of the Maltese Historical Association (MHA) met in January to outline our program for 2013. This year, our first presentation in January was by Mr Ray Bonnici, a manager from the Central Bank of Malta. He gave us a very interesting lecture about the history of Maltese coins. He presented the association with several coins which were later donated to the Maltese Community Council of Victoria (MCCV). The members who were present on the night were given a token 1 Euro coin as a keepsake.

In February, Mr Charles Mifsud presented the lecture about Malta's Role in World War 1 and its connection with the Anzacs. This lecture was very well attended. Present were also some members of the Australian community who had an interest in the topic.

In March, Professor Frà Richard Divall spoke about one of his favourite Maltese composers, Nicolo Isouard. After giving us some information about Isouard's life and background, Frà Richard played a number of compositions. Professor Divall also showed excerpts of the concert, he conducted at St John's Co-Cathedral in Malta in 2012.

Our guest speaker for April was Mr Albert Agius. He certainly took us down memory lane when he gave us a brief history of the public buses in Malta. Members of the committee represented the association at the Commemoration of the Awarding of the George Cross to Malta and its people at the Shelter of Peace in April. A bouquet of flowers was presented on behalf of the Association.

In May, Mr Joseph Borg, a past president of the MHA, gave a thorough and interesting presentation about 'The Plagues in Malta'. We learnt how plagues have been with us since the dawn of mankind and how vermin spread diseases amongst populations.

In June, Mrs Maria Catania presented a lecture the Maltese Education system from 1800-1974. Mrs Catania explained the changes that took place especially with the compulsory school attendance of all children from the age of five and the introduction of Teachers' Training colleges for

better qualified teachers. In 1970 the 'Secondary Schools for All Act' made secondary education compulsory from years 11 to 14.

Following a break in July, we held two activities in the month of August. Mr Joe Borg took a group of MHA members and friends around the city of Melbourne. Mr Borg, a sculpture engineer, explained how structures such as the MCG and sculptures such as the 'Angel' and the 'Wave' were built.

Later that month, the committee organised the ninth annual Language Immersion Morning for the students who attend the Maltese classes at the VSL Taylors Lakes Secondary College. Activities were planned for the different levels – primary and secondary. Students participated fully in the activities.

The theme for the primary level was 'Holm u Fantazija', so the students were encouraged to come along wearing costumes representing their favourite fantasy character (e.g. Ninja Turtles, fairies). The theme for the secondary level was 'Il-Festi'. Marija Cilia and Edwidge Borg gave the students a presentation on how to make the 'Prinjolata'.

In September, the MHA held a 'friendly' debate where a panel of three prominent MHA members, Professor Maurice Cauchi, Mr Joe Borg and Mr Albert Agius debated the question 'Which is the most important period of Maltese History?' At the end of the debate, the audience expressed their views about the topic.

The Annual General Meeting of the association will be held in October. It is envisaged that there will be changes in the committee. Discussion among the members of the current committee is being held regarding the November meeting.

We acknowledge the continuous support of the MCCV. We also acknowledge the financial support of the Bank of Valletta, the Travel Haven of Ringwood and the Maltese Literature Group.

Frances Bonnici
President

Appendix C – MCCV Committees and Memberships

(* Denotes Chairperson or joint Chairpersons)

Centre Management – MCCV Executive Committee

*Professor Maurice Cauchi (president); Victor Borg (Vice President); Guy Deguara (Vice President); Edwina Mallia (Secretary); Paul Borg (Treasurer); Joanne Ellul (Asst Treasurer); Rosemary Attard (Welfare Director); Marilyn Pace (Asst Secretary); Dr Edwin Borg-Manché (PRO); Fr Edwin Agius MSSP

Men's Group

John Pace and Marilyn Pace

Education

Edwidge Borg; Laura Schembri; Georgina Scillio; Edward Mercieca

Library

Guy Deguara; Charles Belli; Dr Brian Zammit

Administration

Edwina Mallia – Council Secretary

Carmen Mamo – Administrative Assistant

Maintenance

Guy Deguara

Ladies Auxiliary

Marlene Xerri (President); Theresa Tabone (Vice President); Pauline Farrugia (Treasurer); Mary McLaughlin (Secretary) Mary Cefai; Inez Mifsud

MCCV Welfare Staff

Rosemary Attard (Executive Member) – Welfare Director; Michael Caruana – Welfare Programmes Coordinator; Jeff Saliba – CACPS Coordinator; Paul Lia – Community Development Officer

Planned Activity Groups (HACC)

Pauline Fenech; Josephine Gauci; Antoinette Kasjan; Margaret Mallia; Carmen Mamo; Rose Nuner; Theresa Tabone

Community Aged Care Packages (CACP)

Mary Boland; Joan Buhagiar; Doris Cauchi; Annie Demetriou; Connine Fenech; Carmen Gauci; Josephine Gauci; Wayne Micallef; Vicky Sammut; Marina Scholz

Bingo Committee

Paul Borg; Joanne Ellul; Vince Calleja; George Brimmer; George Saliba; Emmanuel Camilleri; John Pace; Marilyn Pace; Horace Dalli; Peter Cardona; Joseph Sammut, Guy Deguara; Charles Borg

MEMBERSHIP & COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES

Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria
Radio 3ZZZ Board of Management

Mr Eddie Micallef
Mr Victor Borg

Appendix D – Liaison and Outreach Activities

Government Departments

Dept. of Health and Ageing
Dept. of Health
Dept. of Immigration, Multicultural & Indigenous Affairs

City Councils

Brimbank City Council
Darebin City Council
Hobson's Bay City Council
Hume City Council
Maribyrnong City Council
Melbourne City Council
Melton City Council
Moreland City Council
Whittlesea City Council
Wyndham City Council
Yarra City Council

Diplomatic & Consular Mission

Malta High Commission - Canberra
Consul-General for Malta – Victoria

Maltese Organisations

Maltese Community Council - Canberra
Maltese Community Council of NSW
Maltese Community Council of QLD
Maltese Community Council of SA
Maltese Community Council of WA
Maltese-Australian Club – Tasmania

Other Organisations

Public Library of Malta
University of Malta
Bank of Valletta Ltd

Ethnic Organisations

Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria
Australian Greek Welfare Society
Australian Jewish Welfare & Relief Committee
Italian Assistance Association (COASIT)

Welfare, Educational and Cultural Organisations

Age Care Assessment Team (ACAT)
Altona Migrant Resource Centre
Alzheimer's Association Victoria
Australian Council for Rehabilitation

Welfare, Educational and Cultural Organisations (cont'd)

Australian Council on Population and Ethnic Affairs
Catholic Education Office
Catholic Family Welfare Bureau
Commonwealth Voluntary Learning Group
Community Justice Centre
Diabetes Australia
Ethnic Consultation Committee of Victoria
Health Research Centre
ISIS Primary Care
Linkages
Marian Secondary College Sunshine
Melbourne University
North West Migrant Resource Centre
Northern Metropolitan Migrant Resource
Royal Park Psychiatric Hospital
St. Bernadette's Primary School, North Sunshine
St. Albans & Deer Park Agencies Network Group
The Australian Association of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta
Victoria University
Victorian Committee on Discrimination in Employment and Occupation
Victorian Council of Social Service
Victorian Deaf Society
Victorian Multicultural Commission
Vision Australia Foundation

Hostels & Hospitals / Organisations

Aberdeen Aged Care Facility
Arcare
Ardeer House
Baptcare
Carers Victoria
Catholic Homes
Cumberland Manor
Mercy Health
North West Hospital
North-West Hospital Royal Park
Rosary Home
Royal District Nursing Service
St. Bernadette's Hostel
St. George's Nursing Home/Hostel
Western Hospital
Winteringham Hostel

Appendix E – Affiliated Associations

Association	President
Australian Nadur Association Inc	Mr Tony Sultana
Ex-Members of the Malta Police Force Ass	Mr Vince Calleja
Hadfield Golden Years Social Club Inc	Mrs Rita Saliba
Klabb Ghannejja Maltin Inc	Mr George Aquilina
Lalor United Bocci Club	Mr David Ellul
MABPAV	Mr Damien Digby
Malta Star of the Sea House Inc	Mr Raymond Cini
Maltese Association Hobsons Bay Inc	Chev Joseph Attard
Maltese Association Northern Suburbs Inc	Mr Tony Abela
Maltese Australian Association	Mr Benedict Soler
Maltese Australian Community Centre & Social Club L.V	Mr John Buhagiar
Maltese Cultural Association of Victoria Inc	Mr Peter Muscat
Maltese Ex Services Association of Victoria	Mr Emmanuel Spiteri
Maltese Historical Association of Australia	Mrs Frances Bonnici
Maltese La Vallette Association	Mrs Carmen Camilleri
Maltese Literature Group	Dr Victor E Sammut
Maltese Own Band Philharmonic Society Inc	Mr Carmel Vassallo
Maltese Performing Arts	Mr Ray Anastasi
Maltese Salesian Past Pupils Assoc of Vic Inc	Mr Charlie Cutajar
Maltese Senior Citizens Club Airport West Inc	Mr Alfred Sammut
Maltese Social Bowls Club Inc	Mr Gregory Grima
Melita Social Club Inc	Mr Edwin Bonello
Moreland Maltese Elderly Citizens Assoc.	Mr Valentino Lewis
Newport Maltese Association Inc	Mr George Saliba
Newport Senior Citizens Group	Mr George Saliba
Our Lady of Grace Association	Mr Joseph Cutajar
Portarlinton Maltese Pensioners Assoc Inc	Mr Charles Attard
Reskeon Maltese Association (Vice President)	Mr Joe Cutajar
Reskeon Seniors Group (Coordinator)	Mrs Salivina Vella
St Albans Good Friday Ass Inc	Mr Lewis Stafrace
St Bernadette Seniors & Social Club	Mr Alfred Zahra
St. Gaetan's Society Inc.	Mr Jimmy Chircop
St. Helena Maltese-Australian Social Club	Mr Victor Bartolo
St. Paul's South Eastern Suburbs Assoc. Inc.	Fr Noel Bianco
St. Sebastian Association Inc	Mr Raymond Gatt
Stella Maris Maltese Association	Mr Charlie Xerri
Sunshine George Cross Soccer Club	Mr Darren Farrugia
Tarxien Social Club	Mrs Lina Mizzi
Tripoli Social Club	Mr Romeo Cini
Western Suburbs Maltese Assoc. Inc.	Mr Vince Aquilina

Appendix F – Ethnic Radio Stations

Stations Broadcasting Programs in Maltese

Name & Address	Contact Details	Program Time
SBS Radio PO Box 294 Sth Melb 3205	Mr: Joe Axiaq Title: Executive Producer Ph: 9949 2244 Fax: 9949 2385	Tuesday, Thursday midday SBS Radio 3 digital Friday midday, Saturday 2pm SBS Radio 2 digital www.sbs.com.au/maltese
BROADCASTERS:	Joe Axiaq; Marlene Galea	
Radio 3ZZZ PO Box 1106 Collingwood 3066	Mr: Emmanuel Brincat Title: Maltese Programs Convenor Ph: 9415 1923 Fax: 9415 1818	Monday and Friday 5.00pm - 6.00pm Saturday 10.00am –11.00am Last Wednesday of month 1.00pm – 2.00pm
BROADCASTERS:	Emmanuel Brincat; Mario Sammut; Paul Vella; Lewis Stafrace	
Stereo 97.4 PO Box 217 Sunshine 3020	Mr: Ray Anastasi Title: Co-ordinator Ph: 9318 0444 Fax: 9318 0866	Wednesday and Thursday 6.00pm - 8.00pm
BROADCASTERS:	Mary Louise Anastasi, Ray Anastasi, Charlie Zammit; Carmen Zammit; Carmen Testa; Carmen Portelli; Michelle Galea; Joe Farrugia	
97.9 FM PO Box 979 Melton 3337	Mrs: Miriam Vella Title: Broadcaster Ph: 9747 8500 Fax: 9747 0405	Tuesday 6.00pm – 8.00pm
BROADCASTERS:	Miriam Vella and Robert Vella	
98.9 North West FM PO Box 403 Glenroy 3046	Mr: Emmanuel Brincat Title: Producer/Presenter Ph: 9304 1244 Fax: 9304 1468	Friday 6.00pm – 7.00pm
BROADCASTER:	Emmanuel Brincat	