



MCCV News

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Maltese in Melbourne welcome new High Commissioner and Consul General

At a well-attended reception hosted by the Maltese Community Council of Victoria held at the Maltese Centre in Parkville on Saturday 9 November 2013 the Maltese community in Melbourne welcomed the new Malta High Commissioner for Australia, His Excellency Mr Charles Muscat, and the new Consul General for Malta in the State of Victoria, Mr Victor Grech.

Among the guests present at the reception were the High Commissioner's wife Mrs Muscat; the Consul General's wife, Mrs Patricia Grech; Mr Don Nardella MP, Parliamentary Secretary to the Leader of the Opposition in the Victorian State Parliament; Mr Chin Tan, Chairman of the Victorian Multicultural Commission; Dr Edwin Borg-Manché, Honorary Consul of Malta for Victoria; Mr Mario Sammut OAM, Honorary Vice Consul of Malta for the Latrobe Valley; Mr Hasan Sayar, Manager Victorian School of Languages; Fr Mark Grima mssp, Superior General of the Missionary Society of St Paul; Fr Ivano Burdian, Provincial of the Missionary Society of St Paul in Australia; and Mr George Portelli, Representative of Bank of Valletta in Australia.

In his welcome address in English MCCV President Professor Maurice Cauchi said that the Maltese Community Council of Victoria has always recognised the importance of the position of both the High Commissioner as well as the Consul General.

"We recognise that they represent the Government of Malta and they are available to help all Maltese who need their help. We should remember that Malta House in Canberra is indeed part of Malta, and it is our earnest hope that forever it remains so," said Prof Cauchi.

"We have had excellent relationships with both. It is enough to mention the great help received by the previous incumbents in relation to issues such as the SBS radio problems that we had last year, as well as issues relating to maintaining Maltese language and culture within the community. I am very confident that we will be having the same support in the years to come."

In closing, Prof Cauchi wished both the High Commissioner and the Consul General them a smooth entry into this new field of



From left: Prof. Maurice Cauchi, Mr Victor Grech and H.E. Mr Charles Muscat

endeavour, and to continue and enhance the role of the Maltese Government in Victoria. "We, as Maltese Community Council, look forward to working together in our role as representatives of the Maltese people in Victoria" he concluded.

Prof Cauchi then gave a summary in Maltese of the key points of his address.



In his address in English the new **Consul General for Malta in Victoria, Mr Victor Grech** (above), said that he had taken up his new position only a month before and he already felt at home in Melbourne. His stay has been facilitated by the welcoming spirit of the Maltese community. He said that he was deeply touched by the warmth, fervour and love that the Maltese in Australia still feel towards their homeland.

"It is indeed an opportunity for me, which I did not want to miss, and therefore here I am at your service, to serve the Maltese community, to the best of my ability," said Mr Grech.

[Continued on page 4](#)

In this Edition

• President's Column: Recent visits to Melbourne by prominent Maltese politicians	2
• Lawrence Dimech awarded MOM in Republic Day Honours	
• Notes from MCCV AGM and Council Meeting	3
• Malta's Opposition Leader meets with Maltese community	6
• EU Commission for Health visits the Maltese Community Centre	8
• Albert Marshall on Culture and other changes in Malta today	9
• MHA Event November 2013: Maritime heritage of the Maltese Islands	
• Eddie Micallef elected ECCV Chairperson	10
• ECCV confers Life Member Award on Victor Borg	
• Fest in tal-Milied għat-tfal – Children's Christmas Party	11
• GAM PROFILE Brendan Coleiro	
• Christmas Messages from the Maltese and Australian High Commissioners	12
• MHA re-energised with election of new committee	13
• Happy 100th Birthday, Paolina Armato!	
• University of Malta Study on Maltese in Australia	14
• MCCV Survey on Second Generation Maltese in Australia	
• Reskeon Seniors Group's Christmas Party	
• Laqgħa Ġenerali Annwali 2013 tal-Grupp Letteratura Maltija	15
• Reskeon Maltese Association Christmas Party	
• Community Calendar	16



The President's Column

Recent visits to Melbourne by prominent Maltese politicians

In the space of one week we had the privilege of meeting with the Hon Dr Simon Busuttil, Leader of the Opposition in Malta, and the Hon Dr Joe Cassar, Opposition Spokesperson for Education, as well as with the European Commissioner for Health, Dr Tonio Borg.

Such visits serve very a useful purpose. They give an opportunity to the visitors to express their point of view about issues of current interest. They are given an opportunity to listen to the views of the MCCV as well as the general public with whom they mingle in their all-so-short time while they are here. Moreover, they are given an opportunity to see something of Australia and the way of life in Australia of the visitors from Malta, particularly, as in this case, this is their first visit to Australia.

One might say straight away that they were quite impressed with the Australian way of life, and particularly impressed with the excellent accommodation provided for the frail and elderly at the Rosary Home by the Dominican Sisters.

In my introductory talk, I emphasized yet again the importance of language and culture maintenance, and sent a clear message that the Government of Malta should feel the responsibility of ensuring that this is not lost prematurely. I emphasized particularly the importance of secondment of teachers of Maltese who are in very short supply at the moment.

Of interest was the response given by Dr Busuttil in reply to a question put by Mr Victor Borg, Vice President of the MCCV, in relation to the currently very hot issue of 'sale of Maltese citizenship'. The government of Malta has thought it fit to make available citizenship to persons who are prepared to pay 650,000 euros for it. The Opposition in Malta is very strongly against this. He mentioned that they would be in favour of encouraging these prospective investors to settle and invest in Malta first, and then provide citizenship to them after living in Malta for a certain number of years. This is the course that is followed by most countries (including Australia) as regards the granting of citizenship to new settlers.

The visit of Tonio Borg, no stranger to this country, has come to Australia this time in his capacity as Commissioner for the EU responsible for Health and Consumer Policy. He explained how the EU functions, how each of the 28 countries which are members of the EU have a 'commissioner', each one responsible for a specific area within this institution. In effect they act to some extent like ministers within a normal parliament, with an elected President. While they do not 'represent' their country of origin, they obviously would be well aware of relevant issues there.

It must be said that the EU has been of tremendous benefit to Malta. Any visitor to Malta will be pleasantly surprised to witness the very significant changes that have taken place in the past decade, and most of these developments have been made possible through massive financial support from the EU.

One must also mention the equally significant, but much less visible developments in the intellectual sphere. Contacts between Maltese and EU scholars have enabled the University to progress dramatically, and have enabled much collaborative study. Many Maltese students are benefitting from scholarships awarded by the EU for study in Europe. One cannot help but point out that we in Australia, as Maltese citizens could also benefit from these links.

Unfortunately, Europe does not hold a very significant place in the mind of most of our children. At best they see it as a place where they could have a good holiday. However, there are many opportunities that could be grasped by those with a wider vision. This is one good reason why we as parents should make a special efforts to ensure that our children and grandchildren are made aware of these possibilities and encourage them to apply for Maltese citizenship.

Prof. Maurice Cauchi
MCCV President

7 December 2013

Lawrence Dimech awarded MOM in Republic Day Honours



Prominent Maltese-Australian Mr Lawrence Dimech was made a Member of the Order of Merit (MOM) by the Malta Government as one of the recipients honoured on Republic Day.

The President of Malta Dr George Abela presented the honour to Mr Dimech during the Republic Day Honours ceremony held at the President's Palace in Valletta. It was bestowed on Mr Dimech in recognition of his exceptional contribution towards the welfare of the people of Malta, and in particular, Maltese migrants in Australia.

Lawrence Dimech was born in 1936, in Hamrun. He migrated to Australia in 1954 but returned to Malta in 1962 and worked for the Malta Allied Newspapers as sub-editor with *Il-Berqa*. He also served as sports editor with *Lehen il-Malti* and editor of *Malta News*. He is considered as a pioneer of Maltese print journalism in Australia. He founded the *Maltese Herald* which he also edited until 1971. He is the representative in Australia for the Institute of Maltese Journalists.

Mr Dimech was Malta's representative in New South Wales, Australia, first as Migration Attaché (1971-1977) and Consul General (1997-2000). Since 2012 he has been serving as a member of the Council for Maltese Living Abroad.

He was appointed by the Australian Federal Government as Director-Coordinator of the first Migrant Resource Centre in Australia and also served as Executive Officer of the Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs (1977-1985). He served on various committees, advising governments on settlement issues and ethnic affairs (1985-1992).

Mr Dimech is one of the founders and life member of Melita Eagles Soccer Club where he served both as Secretary and President. He served as President of the Maltese Community Council of New South Wales.

He was awarded the Manoel Vilhena Award (1996), the *Premju Kulturali* by the Maltese Cultural Association of New South Wales for outstanding contribution to the Maltese and Australian media (1997), and a Special Merit Award by the NSW Football Federation for outstanding contribution to soccer (1998). In 2003, he was awarded 'The Order of Australia' for his long-standing contribution to the Maltese community in New South Wales since 1956.

Mr Dimech, who lives in Sydney, is the author of a research study *The Ageing Maltese – a minefield of need and neglect* (1992), and editor of *The Maltese Resource Dictionary*. He also published two sell-out books *Telqu ghal ghonq it-triq* about Maltese settlement in Australia.

The MCCV congratulates Mr Dimech on his achievements and his latest award. 🇲🇹



Notes from MCCV AGM and Council Meeting

NOVEMBER 2013—AGM

On Wednesday 6 November 2013 the MCCV held its Annual General Meeting for 2013. The President Maurice Cauchi presented the *MCCV Annual Report for 2012-13*. ([Click here](#) to download a copy of the Annual Report from the MCCV website.) The President's Report included the following highlights and achievements for the past year:

Welfare Programmes. The welfare programs of the Council have been active throughout the year. Major programs include the Home and Community Care (HACC) Program, the Community Aged Care Packages (CACPs) and the voluntary home visiting scheme.

MCCV Community Awards and Bishop Joe Grech Memorial Scholarship. For the second year running, the MCCV held a function on the last day of August 2013 to present its annual community awards to several distinguished recipients to recognise their exceptional contribution to the Maltese community. The MCCV also made its second award of the Bishop Joseph Grech Memorial Scholarship.

Welcomes and Farewells. During the year the MCCV organised several social events including: a Welcome Reception for Maltese Cyclists who in November 2012 took part in the Lifecycle Challenge held in Melbourne; two Farewell Receptions, in June in honour of the Malta High Commissioner in Australia, HE Mr Francis Tabone, and in August in honour of Malta's Consul General for the State of Victoria, Mr Charles Mifsud; and a Welcome Reception on 10 September in honour of the Speaker of the Maltese Parliament, the Hon. Dr Anglu Farrugia.

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.

MCCV Library. The MCCV undertook a major re-organisation of the library at the Maltese Centre.

Bereavements. In the past year the Maltese community in Victoria lost some of its prominent members: in April 2013 Anthony Bonnici AM, BA, LL.B (1930-2013) the second President of the MCCV; in May 2013 Edwin Baldacchino and Laurie Armato; and December 2012 Frank Calleja, aged 95 years. Ex-member of the MCCV executive 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 and occasional lectures given by guest speakers, particularly Dr Fr Victor Shields.

Issues of Concern. The MCCV played a significant role, namely, the saving the Maltese language from loss of recognition at VCE level and the savage reduction of Maltese language programs on SBS Radio. The MCCV was very active in opposing the SBS 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.

Representatives on external organisations. For the second year, President Prof Maurice Cauchi and PRO Dr Edwin Borg-Manché were involved with on the committee of the Federation for Maltese Living Abroad and as members of the Council for Maltese living Abroad. ✨

DECEMBER 2013—Council Meeting

On Wednesday 4 December 2013 at the Council Meeting at which Fr Mark Grima, MSSP Superior General, was present, the following items were discussed:

Council for Maltese Living Abroad. MCCV President Prof Maurice Cauchi and PRO Dr Edwin Borg-Manché attended the third meeting of the CMLA held in Malta during the first week of October 2013. This was the first meeting that was presided over by the *ex officio* Chairperson, the Hon Dr George Vella, Minister of Foreign Affairs, since the change of government last March.

Federation of Maltese Living Abroad. The FMLA represents Maltese associations around the world as well as individuals from each region. Following the recent election, both Prof Cauchi, who was its President since its formation in 2010, and Dr Edwin Borg-Manché, who was a committee member and managed its website, did not contest the election and are no longer on the committee. Australia, which was previously represented by no less than five members, including the President, now has only one representative on the committee, Mr Edwin Bonello.

Maltese language classes. The MCCV is still grappling with issue of lack of Maltese teachers. When Professor Cauchi and Dr Borg-Manché were in Malta last October, they met with Professor Grace Grima, Director General for Quality and Standards in Education, with a view to establishing a direct relationship with the Ministry of Education and putting some more pressure on the Maltese government to assist us by sending one or more teachers. The meeting was positive and we need to wait and see what the outcome will be. There has been no update from Malta.

MCCV Community Awards and Bishop Joe Grech Scholarship. The names of the recipients of these awards have now been posted in a frame that is hanging in the foyer of the Maltese Centre in Parkville.

Welcome Reception for Leader of the Opposition and meeting with EU Commissioner. On 30 November 2013 the MCCV held a Welcome Reception for Hon Dr Simon Busuttil, Leader of the Opposition, and Dr Joseph Cassar, Opposition spokesperson on Education. Prof Cauchi thanked Joe Stafrace for doing a great job organising the catering for the event. On 2 December the MCCV held a meeting with the EU Commissioner for Health, Dr Tonio Borg. All three VIPs were guests at an international conference on diabetes being held in Melbourne in early December.

Eddie Micallef elected ECCV Chairperson. Prof Cauchi announced that the MCCV representative on the ECCV, Eddie Micallef, was elected ECCV Chairperson that day. Mr Micallef indicated that he will continue to represent the MCCV on the ECCV Committee. It was agreed that a letter of congratulations would be sent to Mr Micallef.

Victor Borg awarded ECCV Life Member. Council congratulated Vice President Victor Borg on being awarded Life Member by the ECCV at the Annual General Meeting held on 26 November. ✨

MCCV News

The *MCCV News* is published by the Maltese Community Council of Victoria every two months to inform the Maltese community about activities, news and information that would be of interest to it. Contributions should be forwarded to the Editor either by email at pro@mccv.org.au or alternatively by post to:

The Editor—MCCV News, Maltese Community Council of Victoria, 477 Royal Parade, PARKVILLE VIC 3052

Maltese in Melbourne welcome new High Commissioner and Consul General

Continued from page 1



Above: The audience present to greet the new Malta High Commissioner and new Consul General for the State of Victoria

The Consul General said that his presence among the Maltese community was a sign of commitment and in the interest of all the Maltese community, which established itself many years ago. While most of those present had left Malta many years ago and consider Australia as their home, Mr Grech was confident that Malta and its cultural traditions would continue to be treasured by them. "You have worked hard and raised your families, ingraining in them our traditional Maltese values," he said.

Mr Grech said that "since Malta is a very small nation, it is very important that all of us preserve our identity and cultural roots. The Maltese community in Australia has always been regarded as an asset to the Maltese economy and will continue to be valued as such, once we all continue to respect and safeguard our values and traditions."

"It is well known that there are various Maltese *festas* being celebrated throughout the year in Australia, whilst the Maltese language remains our means of communication amongst the community. Indeed it is our unique language, which we are proud of. We do enjoy eating Maltese food, listen to traditional Maltese music and reminisce about the Malta that we left behind," he said.

Mr Grech commented on how the Maltese community had integrated well in the fabric of multicultural Australia. "The Maltese are well known for their generosity, hard work, close family relations and for their sound religious faith, all important values that form a sound foundation for a better society," he said.

Mr Grech said that he felt obliged to thank his predecessor, Mr Charles Mifsud, who served in the position of Consul General with dedication and passion. "Each time I spoke to him, he spoke highly of the Maltese community especially, notably the respect which you have constantly extended to him and his wife Anna. Charles Mifsud has also contributed to my smooth transition from my former responsibilities within the Ministry to our Consulate in Melbourne. I assure you that his contacts and lines of communication have been always open," said Mr Grech.

Mr Grech then thanked the staff at the Maltese Consulate in Melbourne, Ms Miriam Cassar and Ms Pauline Theuma, who were both present in the audience.

Mr Grech wished every success to the Maltese Community Council of Victoria, which is a non-profit organisation that

provides social, cultural, recreational and welfare support to all members of the Maltese community in the State of Victoria. He said that he looked forward to be of service to all, in close cooperation with the MCCV, as well as with all the other Maltese Associations.

Mr Grech finished by saying a few words in Maltese for the occasion. He concluded by auguring that, through the Maltese Centre, the MCCV continues with its useful work for the benefit of the Maltese community.



In his address in English the new **High Commissioner, H.E. Mr Charles Muscat**, said that this was not his first time he visited the Maltese Centre in Parkville that had been built with very hard work of the Maltese community in Victoria. He said that it was a pleasure to visit such a centre.

Mr Muscat said that he wanted those present to know that he was appointed High Commissioner to Australia "because the Prime Minister, the Minister [for Foreign Affairs] and the Government of Malta thought that at this stage I would be one of the best [to] represent the Maltese people in Australia. And that is because I have been [living] in Australia for 55 years. I have worked and experienced life the way all of you have lived. I am one of you. I am proud that I am still Maltese."

Mr Muscat explained that he is no longer an Australian citizen as he had to relinquish his Australian citizenship to take up his

appointment. "It was a little bit hard to relinquish it but there was no other way than to relinquish the Australian citizenship," he said.

"I promise every one of you and every Maltese and Gozitan in Australia that my intention is to give every attention to every one of us, everybody. I always did, even though in my previous life, everyone knows whom I represented, I always gave all I had in me as a Maltese and I was always proud and still am proud to represent that little jewel in the Mediterranean. Therefore, I will give it my all to make sure that we together will get what is there for us and for you all," said Mr Muscat.

Mr Muscat referred to the Council for Maltese Living Abroad and said that he will "follow [its workings] right through to make sure that we will achieve whatever we could achieve for all of us in Australia. Even though I now belong to the Maltese government, I am here to look after all the Maltese."

Mr Muscat said that he had visited the Maltese community in Sydney two weeks before. "I have to explain right around Australia wherever I go, so that there are no misunderstandings of what is happening here, this is a serious matter, this is a serious job, and I am giving it whatever it deserves to be a High Commissioner," he said.

"Hopefully at the end of the period, at the end of my time, none of us will be disappointed. I am sure that once you see the way I can work and do my work accordingly, then everyone will be more than happy," said Mr Muscat.

"I need to mention too that in the five weeks that I have been in Canberra I have already had some dealings with my past experiences that I had in business. So we have already started the road to see what we can acquire for Malta. I haven't been appointed just to look after the Maltese only, but also we need to help Malta continue to prosper under this government and the government in the future," he said.

Mr Muscat thanked his predecessor, Mr Francis Tabone, for an excellent job that he performed as well as "other High Commissioners previous to him to keep these excellent relations that we have with Australia. I can assure you that, when I was briefed by the Australian government before I have taken this appointment, they showed me that, yes, things have changed. The only thing that I had to give [up] was my citizenship, but other than that, the Maltese here in Australia are held in very high esteem. And this is thanks to all the past High Commissioners."

Mr Muscat said that he has "a job to keep building on these good relations and there is no other way but to look forward."

Continued on page 5

Maltese in Melbourne welcome new High Commissioner and Consul General

Continued from page 4

Mr Muscat also thanked Mr Charles Mifsud, the former Consul General of Malta in Victoria, whose term of office was terminated last September, for doing an excellent job.

"With my past business experiences, I can assure you that I have a lot of contacts here in Australia that we can use for the benefit of Malta. I have started using these contacts. We have something in the pipeline. It is too early to elaborate on things but this will be one of my fortes that I have to really work hard [on] what we can gain for Malta from this beautiful rich land that we live in here and that we have lived in for such a long time," said Mr Muscat.

Mr Muscat then concluded with a few words in Maltese. He urged those present to assist him and the new Consul General to promote Malta as an island that we are all proud of, and as a potential destination for Australians, and not just Maltese living in Australia. He said that he and the new Consul General are there to assist the Maltese community as required.

Prof Cauchi then presented a copy of his book *Under One Umbrella*, a history of the Maltese Community Council of Victoria, to Mr Muscat and Mr Grech.

Mr George Saliba OAM was MC for the evening. 🇲🇹



Clockwise from top: Mr Charles Muscat addressing the audience; Mr Charles Muscat and Mrs Victoria Muscat; Prof. Maurice Cauchi showing Mr Victor Grech and Mr Charles Muscat around the MCCV Library at the Maltese Centre before the reception; and Mr Victor Grech and Mrs Patricia Grech.



Malta's Opposition Leader meets with Maltese community



On Saturday 30 November the Maltese Community Council of Victoria hosted a well-attended welcome reception in honour of the Malta's Leader of the Opposition, the Hon Dr Simon Busuttil MP, and the Opposition spokesperson on Education, the Hon Dr Joseph Cassar, at the Maltese Centre in Parkville. Dr Busuttil and Dr Cassar are in Melbourne at the invitation of the International Diabetes Federation (IDF) to attend an international conference on Diabetes.

MC Mr George Saliba OAM welcomed the guests. Among those present at the reception were Ms Marion Lau OAM, Community Representative Commissioner for the Victorian Multicultural Commission; Mr Victor Grech, Consul General of Malta for the State of Victoria; Dr Edwin Borg-Manché, Honorary Consul of Malta for the State of Victoria; Sr Doris Falzon from the Dominican Sisters of Malta, Administrator of Rosary Home for the Aged; Fr Denis Carabott mssp from St Bernadette's Parish in North Sunshine; Mr George Portelli, Representative of Bank of Valletta in Australia; several members of the MCCV Executive Committee and Presidents of MCCV-affiliated associations.

In his speech in English, MCCV President **Professor Maurice Cauchi** welcomed the guests from Malta and said that the event was an occasion for sharing hopes and ideas, and to discuss issues that we, as Maltese living abroad, face now and in the near future.

Maltese Language in Australia

Prof Cauchi highlighted some issues relating to maintaining the Maltese culture in Australia, 12,000 miles away from home. First and foremost he spoke about the challenge of preventing the imminent loss of Maltese language itself. "Language is perhaps the most important prop of any culture, and losing our language presents a real challenge to culture maintenance," he said.

Prof Cauchi referred to the insufficient number of teachers to teach Maltese in Australia. "In our last visit to Malta as members of the Council for Maltese Living Abroad, we made a special plea to the Director of Education to ensure that secondment of teachers of Maltese has become essential for maintenance of teaching of Maltese language," said Prof Cauchi.

Maintenance of Maltese Culture

Prof Cauchi then referred to the second major issue which relates to culture maintenance in a broader sense. "You might ask: what is it that makes us Maltese? Is it the fact that we were born in Malta several decades ago? I believe that that is merely an accident of time and place, and may have no bearing on how we feel about our identity. There are currently around 200,000 persons born in Australia of Maltese parents, who have the right to consider themselves Maltese as much as the Malta-born persons. Some of these young persons may have a stronger sense of belonging, of being Maltese, than their parents have," he said.

Prof Cauchi said that the MCCV has done what it can to promote these and related aspects of identity.

Maltese Cultural Institute

Turning to expectations for assistance from Malta to help maintain Maltese culture in Australia, Prof Cauchi recalled how a couple of years ago, when the then Minister for Foreign Affairs the Hon Tonio Borg visited this Centre, "we were very excited about the promise of a new Act to establish the Council for Maltese Living Abroad, which included the setting up of a Cultural Institute. We were hoping that through this Institute, Maltese living abroad would be exposed to their language and culture, in the same way that other communities like the French, German, Italian communities are through theirs. Unfortunately, this concept seems to have become hijacked and is now

Dr Busuttil and Dr Cassar seen here with some members of the Maltese community present.

being touted as *Malta Kreattiva – Creative Malta* – whose aim it seems to be to encourage excellence in the arts in Malta. There is nothing wrong with such a concept, but to me it appears that the aim of encouraging culture maintenance among Maltese living abroad has been all but completely forgotten," he said.

Prof Cauchi said the MCCV would really appreciate it if Dr Busuttil and Dr Cassar could use their influence to ensure that the Maltese in Australia are able to maintain what Maltese culture we managed to preserve so far.

Prof Cauchi then gave a brief summary of his address in Maltese.

In his reply address in Maltese, **Dr Simon Busuttil** thanked those present for their attendance. "It is an experience that is not only beautiful but also a moving one, that you come to Australia, you meet with the Maltese community and you feel the great love that you still have towards our country. It is something that I will be taking back with me as a very beautiful memory that I will continue to appreciate," he said.

Dr Busuttil said that he wanted to speak about three things. First, he wanted to introduce himself, as he was still new in his current position; second, say something about the Nationalist Party that he leads; and third, respond on some of the issues that are important to the Maltese in Australia that Prof Cauchi raised in his address.

Public Life

About himself, Dr Busuttil said that he started his public life 14 years ago, when Malta started on its journey to become a member of the European Union. You know that, as Maltese citizens, we are also EU citizens. As a lawyer who specialised in European Union matters, he was directly

Continued on page 7

Malta's Opposition Leader meets with Maltese community

Continued from page 6

involved in our country's EU accession negotiations.

When Malta joined the EU, almost 10 years ago, in 2004, elections were conducted in Malta to elect its then five (later increased to six) Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) to represent Malta, out of a total of 750 members in that parliament. In the first MEP election, Dr Busuttil was the first MEP to be elected from Malta in the interests of the Nationalist Party. It was the first time that he got involved in public and political life. The second person elected MEP was Dr Joseph Muscat who is now Prime Minister of Malta. Dr Busuttil served as an MEP for nine years, while Dr Muscat for only 4 years.

"So, just like you, I have had the experience of living overseas, in Brussels, Belgium, for nine years," said Dr Busuttil. "I therefore know what it means the commuting from one country to another, although from Malta to Brussels it only takes two and a half hours by air, it doesn't take a couple of days to arrive, as we had to do to come here."

"This experience ended up immersing me significantly into politics and this year, after the general elections which the PN lost and went into opposition, we had a change in the leadership of the party, with Dr Lawrence Gonzi relinquishing the reins of the party, and I was elected leader instead," said Dr Busuttil.

Dr Busuttil said that "both parties in Malta made a generational leap, as Dr Muscat is not yet 40 years old and I am 44. So now in Malta the party leaders are among the youngest politicians around."

The Nationalist Party

On the state of the Nationalist Party, Dr Busuttil said that the PN is now in opposition after having governed for a quarter of a century less a couple of years between 1996 and 1998. During that time the party devoted a lot of energy to governing but not much to the party itself. "Now that we are in opposition, we are rebuilding the party from scratch, working on party structures, and trying to give our contribution from opposition," he said.

Dr Busuttil said that it is a great, exciting and very important experience for a party in opposition to continue to work to again win the trust of the people.

Issues affecting Maltese in Australia

As regards the issues that Prof Cauchi had raised in his address, Dr Busuttil said that he understands that the cultural attraction to, and link with, Malta is a strong bond, which has remained strong up to this day and it is important that it be preserved. Although the Nationalist Party is now in opposition, he still intends to help in continuing to strengthen this bond.

Dr Busuttil said that, while this was the first time that he came to Australia, he immediately understood the importance of the Maltese community, how large and well



Dr Simon Busuttil addressing the gathering

recognised it is and how important it is for its members to retain this bond with Malta. "Accordingly, the Nationalist Party will be supporting the government in the strengthening of this cultural bond, so that you can continue to be proud to be Maltese, just as you are proud that you are Australian, and retain the bond with our country. This bond will not stop with you but you will pass it on to your children and your grandchildren, and great grandchildren so that the cultural bond, the link of Maltese identity remains in your families," he said.

Dr Busuttil said that "the first time that I felt proud to be Maltese and that my identity is strong was not when I was living in Malta but when I was overseas. I appreciate what you feel and I would like to work to ensure that we continue to safeguard, strengthen and treasure our identity."



Prof Cauchi presenting Dr Simon Busuttil and Dr Joe Cassar with the history of the MCCV Under One Umbrella.

Sale of Maltese Citizenship

Replying to a question about the status of the Individual Investor Programme that the Maltese government is implementing through a change in the Maltese Citizenship Act, Dr Busuttil explained that there is a big controversy going on in Malta at the moment about this citizenship issue. The government announced the scheme which consists of the sale of citizenship. Anyone who is not Maltese, from anywhere in the world can buy the Maltese citizenship and the Maltese passport for 650,000 Euros (about AUD 1M).

Dr Busuttil said that the Nationalist Party took a very clear position on this issue: to be against this scheme. "I believe that there are some things in life that cannot be sold. I am prepared to give citizenship for free to anyone who is Maltese, to anyone who has Maltese roots, Maltese family, but not to someone who is going to buy it," he said to the applause of those present.

Dr Busuttil said that unfortunately the law was adopted because the government has a very strong majority in Parliament and despite their opposition. Following the enactment of the law, the government realised that there was a great deal of resistance even in terms of public disapproval. Opinion polls showed that the public was against this law. As a result, the government accepted his offer to try and hold talks between the government and the opposition to change this scheme.

Dr Busuttil said that the opposition "would be willing to agree on a scheme which attracts foreign investors to Malta, and which could allow them to get citizenship after they invest and they have lived in Malta, like you obtained Australian citizenship after you have lived in Australia and committed yourself to the country. So if some foreigner wants to come to our country, live there, invest there, commit to the country, love my country, then after a number of years, why not? I would agree to give this person citizenship, but not if they come to pay money and get citizenship on day one. That is something that I cannot agree to."

Dr Busuttil said that the talks are currently ongoing and he hoped that they managed to find a consensus. If no agreement is reached, then this citizenship issue will continue to be at the centre of the political controversy. Even internationally this scheme has been publicised all over the world and he did not think this was good publicity for Malta.

Dr Busuttil referred to the possibility of having an abrogative referendum about this law, the objective of such a referendum being to cancel a law. This would require collecting signatures and holding a referendum. "I hope that it would not come to that and that an agreement could be reached in a mature manner, as ours is a mature democracy," he said. ✨

EU Commission for Health visits the Maltese Community Centre



On Monday 2 December 2013 the EU Commissioner for Health, Dr Tonio Borg, paid a visit to the Maltese Centre in Parkville to meet with members of the Maltese community in Melbourne. Dr Borg had last visited as Deputy Prime Minister of Malta in October 2011 prior to the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting that was held in Perth, Western Australia.

At the Maltese centre Dr Borg was greeted by the MCCV President Professor Maurice Cauchi, Consul General of Malta for Victoria Mr Victor Grech and members of the MCCV Executive.

Dr Borg said that he has been visiting Australia every two years since 2007 and this time his was visiting as EU Commissioner for Health. Sometimes to some people his role may be confusing. He had noticed a certain lack of knowledge about the EU structures and their workings even among the politicians. While his role is different from his previous roles, his experience as a minister has assisted him greatly in carrying out his current role.

Dr Borg explained that an EU Commissioner is basically equivalent to a minister with the important proviso that it is not quite the same because there is no commonwealth of Europe or United States of Europe. EU President Barroso calls it “a federation of sovereign states” which sounds like a contradiction in terms, because when a federation is formed, the member states do not remain sovereign.

Dr Borg said that every EU Commissioner has his or her own portfolio. Each member country nominates one EU Commissioner and the EU President allocates a portfolio to the Commissioners which defines the work that they will be responsible for. In his case, he has been assigned the Health portfolio which also includes food safety.

In the field of food safety, Dr Borg said that he often has issues with Australia that need to

From left: Consul-General Mr Victor Grech, EU Commissioner Dr Tonio Borg and MCCV President Professor Maurice Cauchi

be addressed as the EU imports food from Australia and then exports it. He said that he came to Australia to address the international diabetes conference taking place in Melbourne. Diabetes is on the increase everywhere, including Australia. He felt that he needed to attend to give a political impetus to this initiative the aim of which is to ensure that all countries around the world fight this disease. Dr Borg also took this opportunity to meet with both the Australian federal and Victorian state health ministers.

One of the major differences from his previous roles in the Malta government is that his actions as EU Commissioner will impact 500 million people, the total population of EU member states, and not just 400,000 the population of Malta. So one needs to be even more careful, knowing that one's work is being scrutinised by a much larger stakeholder group. There are many limitations on what an EU Commissioner can do: for example, there is always the issue of whether control on certain issues should be left with the member states or be handed over to the EU Commission in Brussels. On competition law, control is with Brussels, whereas in health, control is more with the member states.

Dr Borg spoke about an interesting EU Directive that came into effect on 25 October which enables EU citizens who pay employment insurance in an EU country to go to another EU country for medical treatment at their own expense, and then go back to their own country to make a claim for a refund of their expense. The refund will not consist of the whole expense but of an amount that the medical treatment would have cost had it been provided in their own country. This is not a blank cheque and one

would need to get prior authorisation from the Health Minister in one's own country before incurring the expense. So there is a certain procedure that one would need to follow. If the treatment that one requires cannot be provided with a reasonable period, then one would have the right to seek that treatment overseas.

Dr Borg said that the EU member states were not too happy about this, but the Directive was issued to give effect to judgments of the European Court which held that according to its interpretation of the existing laws this right (as now acknowledged in the Directive) already exists. The Directive gave it a framework to give effect to this right of treatment overseas.

Referring to the fight against smoking, Dr Borg said that the target of the EU is to reduce the number of smokers by two percent over the next five years, which means 2.4 million fewer smokers. To achieve this target one has two ways: first is by persuading smokers to stop smoking, which not easy, and second, more importantly, is to prevent those who are tempted to take up smoking not to do so. According to the statistics, 93% take up smoking under the age of 25 years and 70% under the age of 18 years.

Dr Borg said that Australia is at the forefront of this fight with the introduction of plain packaging. This ensures that all cigarette packages are all the same with health warnings and graphic photos of nicotine-infested lungs and other off-putting photos. These measures are effective. The EU will not be introducing but will be increasing pictorial warnings covering a larger percentage of the packet and prohibiting flavoured cigarettes aimed at the younger generations.

Referring to his previous visits, Dr Borg said that every time he visited Australia he tried to bring some good news. In 2007 he had announced the granting of Maltese citizenship to the first generation of Maltese born abroad. In 2009 he had visited with the then President of Malta, Dr Eddie Fenech Adami, and Dr Borg had announced that Maltese citizenship was being extended to subsequent generations of Maltese born overseas. In 2011 he had presented MCCV President Maurice Cauchi with a copy of the draft Bill which was being published in Malta on the same day, establishing the Council for Maltese Living Abroad (CMLA), which was subsequently passed by the Maltese Parliament by unanimous vote later that year. In one of his final activities before becoming EU Commissioner, Dr Borg convened the first meeting of the CMLA that was held in Malta in September 2012.

Dr Borg's tenure as EU commissioner expires in November 2014. 🌟

Albert Marshall on *Culture and other changes in Malta today*

On Tuesday 10 December Mr Albert Marshall, Chairman of the Malta Council for Culture & the Arts (MCCA) and Vice Chairman of the Public Broadcasting Service, gave a talk at the Maltese Community Centre in Parkville on *Culture and other changes in Malta*.

During his talk, Mr Marshall highlighted the various cultural links that the MCCA in Malta is developing. A whole series of activities are being organised throughout the year, aimed not only for Maltese, but also for the larger European community. In fact, Malta has now become the hub for the Central Mediterranean region, attracting artists from all around the area for such activities like the Rock Festival, Carnival, Maltese Fest, and *Notte Bianca*.



He also emphasized the importance being given to culture, with the new set-up now referred to as 'Malta Kreattiva', which denotes the special emphasis being put on new talent and new directions in the arts and culture. He encouraged Maltese artists anywhere in the world to apply for grants which are available from the Malta government to spearhead schemes of this nature.

In his capacity as Vice-Chair of the Public Broadcasting Service in Malta, he referred to efforts being made to produce television material of world standard, which will be made available to the SBS, hopefully to be incorporated in their programs. To a question relating to the need of sub-titling, he mentioned that the SBS and/or the PBS should be in a position to do this.

Mr Marshall is no stranger to the Maltese community in Melbourne. He had emigrated to Melbourne in 1981. During his 15 years in Australia, he worked in Australian film, radio, theatre, and television. Albert was the first Maltese to direct at the Sydney Opera House.

In Melbourne, Albert founded Harmonic 65 Culture Club. Albert wrote and directed for mainstream Australian theatre and television and, specifically, for the Maltese-Australian community.

Albert was also active in Melbourne's literary circles. He was heavily involved in the promotion of the Maltese language in Australia. In fact, he occupied the post of Chairman of the panel responsible for the setting and assessing of the Australian national examination in the Maltese language.

In 1990, Albert started pursuing an academic career at Victoria University in Melbourne. After finishing reading for his Masters degree in Communication Studies, he was offered tenure as full-time lecturer at the University. In 1995 he returned with his family to live Malta. ❀

MHA Event — November 2013

Maritime heritage of the Maltese Islands — a talk by Dr Timmy Gambin



On Wednesday 27 November 2013 Dr Timmy Gambin from the University of Malta, gave a very interesting talk about *The maritime heritage of the Maltese Islands: a fascinating past - an exciting future* at the Maltese community Centre in Parkville. The talk was delivered in conjunction with the Maltese Historical Association.

The MHA special event was very well attended both by Maltese as well as by a considerable contingent of academics from universities around Melbourne. Dr Gambin took the audience through a maritime journey from the time of the Mediterranean seafaring Phoenicians to the present time. He also provided a detailed description about the geography and the archaeology of the Maltese Islands.

Dr Gambin is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Classics and Archaeology at the University of Malta specialising in Maritime Archaeology. He has been investigating and looking for remains of ships and their cargos that were lost around Malta and the Central Mediterranean.

Dr Gambin has forged close ties with other research centres overseas, including centres in France, Italy and the USA in an effort aimed at the reconstruction of ancient coastal landscapes and environments of the Maltese Islands. He has directed numerous offshore underwater surveys in various parts of the Mediterranean, including Spain, Italy and Croatia.

Dr Gambin gave a glimpse of the techniques used to examine the sea bed which, at around 100 metres, is far too deep to allow ordinary divers to examine directly. It was amazing to see, for instance, the dozens of amphorae which are still packed together exactly as they were on the ship that sank two thousand years ago.

One of Dr Gambin's dreams is to build a ship exactly to the specifications of a Roman ship, and use this to roam

around the Mediterranean, advertising the enormous riches to be found in Malta and its surrounds.

Dr Gambin is seeking expertise and assistance to help him with the planning, development of a future project that would take some five years of building a replica of a Maltese Corsair sailing ship (Xebek).

The ship will be constructed in Malta

making use of experts to build it but at the same time use the experience as an opportunity to train young men and women in the art of shipbuilding, carpentry and ship maintenance.

Dr Gambin was on a tour of Australia sponsored by the University of Malta which took him to Melbourne, Sydney and Perth in Western Australia. He explained his endeavours to set up a masters programme in maritime archaeology with the University of WA in Perth.

In Sydney he had talks with Dr Nigel Erskine, an Australian maritime archaeologist who is Research Manager at the National Maritime Museum. ❀



Eddie Micallef elected ECCV Chairperson

The Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria (ECCV) has elected long serving advocate for multicultural communities Mr Eddie Micallef, who is of Maltese background, as its Chairperson. A prominent member of the Maltese community in Victoria, Mr Micallef was formerly ECCV Deputy Chair, a position he held for the past six years before becoming the chairperson. On the ECCV Board Mr Micallef has been, and continues to be, the representative of the MCCV.

Mr Micallef is also the convenor of the ECCV Health Policy Sub-committee. In that role he has brought forward crucial policy work in areas including diabetes education, youth sexual health, language services and substance abuse. He also presided over the launch of an ECCV Health Literacy Paper by the Victorian Health Minister, the Hon. David Davis.

"It's an honour to serve as ECCV's chair, an organisation that I have seen grow exponentially since the beginning of my involvement," said Mr Micallef.

"I am determined to further advance ECCV's advocacy on a wide range of issues crucial for our members and stakeholders by building stronger alliances between governments, services providers and ethnic communities," added Mr Micallef.

Mr Micallef will head a new Board and will be well supported by Deputy Chairpersons Marion Lau and Sam Afra. The Board itself comprises a good balance of men and women from culturally diverse backgrounds with strong grassroots links.

The new Board thanked outgoing chair Joe Caputo OAM JP, who will remain on the ECCV board whilst serving as Chair of the Federations of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia (FECCA), for his outstanding leadership.

"I have known Joe since he was mayor for Moreland and have been very pleased to see his long term contribution to the empowerment of ethnic communities recognised at ECCV and now at FECCA," said Mr Micallef.

Mr Micallef is looking forward to promoting ECCV's core work on behalf of multicultural communities in employment, aged care, training, education, new and emerging communities, mental health, women's and youth health issues to ensure all Victorians have equal opportunities to progress.

Mr Micallef began his working life as a turbine fitter in the power industry and then became an Occupational Health and Safety

Officer for the Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union, before getting involved in state politics. The former Labour MP, who served as a member of the Victorian Parliament for 17

years from 1983 to 1999, has been a committed deputy giving a strong voice to people from culturally diverse backgrounds at government and community consultations over many years. During that time he held many responsibilities including health, industrial relations, Workcover and multicultural affairs.

Mr Micallef has had a strong community involvement for many years. He was former Chairperson of the Springvale Community Health Service and became involved with drug issues including the links between culturally diverse communities and illicit drugs. He is currently Chairperson of the Beacon Cove Neighbourhood Association and Deputy Chair of the Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria.

On behalf of the Maltese community, the Maltese Community Council of Victoria extends its warm congratulations to Mr Micallef on his well-deserved appointment. 🌟



ECCV confers Life Member Award on Victor Borg



At the ECCV's 2013 Annual General Meeting held Tuesday the 26th of November Prominent Maltese community member and Vice President of the MCCV, Mr Victor Borg, was one of two persons conferred a Life Member Award by the Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria in recognition of their services to the ethnic communities in Victoria. The other person was Mr Giovanni Sgro, a former member of the Victorian Parliament.

As an organisation with over 200 members, some of them life members, the ECCV recognised their input to the organization by attributing two Life Member Awards to Mr Borg and Mr Sgro. Both were presented with a certificate and a gift by Mr Caputo and Deputy Chair Eddie Micallef.

Mr Borg has been with ECCV since foundation in 1974 and served as its Chairperson between 1991 and 1997. In his speech accepting the award, he took those present back to those early days when the ECCV was just starting out and said that it is now as it was then "vital that we be bound together by our shared struggle for better recognition and equity". 🌟



On 16 December the new ECCV Chairperson, Mr Eddie Micallef, accompanied by the FECCA Chair Joseph Caputo, paid a courtesy visit to former Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser, who is the Patron of the ECCV, at Mr Fraser's office in Melbourne. Among other topics, they discussed the ECCV's 40th anniversary celebrations to be held in 2014 and the possible involvement by the Patron.



GAM is a group of Aussies with Maltese bloodlines. Working in conjunction with the Maltese Community Council of Victoria, GAM is about linking Australian-Maltese youth with their Maltese heritage to preserve the Maltese culture for generations to come. Like us on [Facebook.com/Generation AusMalts](https://www.facebook.com/GenerationAusMalts) (GAM).

Fest in tal-Milied għat-tfal – Children's Christmas Party

By Rita Catania

Everybody loves a great Christmas party! And a Christmas party wouldn't be the same without Christmas carols, a visit from Mrs Claus, fun activities, loads of Christmas cheer and of course - presents!

This was the scene at the Maltese Community Centre in Parkville on Saturday, December 7th. Decorated with all things festive and tinselly, the hall was filled with children running around, enjoying the atmosphere and Christmas themed activities with their parents and grandparents. The party was a great occasion for bringing the Maltese community together from all generations.

This year's Christmas party also had quite the Maltese spin on it. Apart from being held at the Maltese Community Centre, everybody involved got to hear the St Bernadette's Choir sing beautiful Christmas carols in Maltese, children got to enjoy the traditional Maltese activity of making paper chains at Christmas time, as well as making a collage of with images from the nativity scene, also known as *preseppju*.

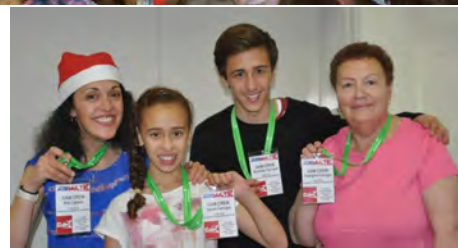
Other activities included making food for the reindeers in preparation for Santa's arrival, handmade Christmas cards, face painting by Shiney Shelley and the magical stylings of *The Amazing David*. After much anticipation, Mrs Claus made her appearance on behalf of Santa



who was busily working away in the North Pole, and gave out loads of presents.

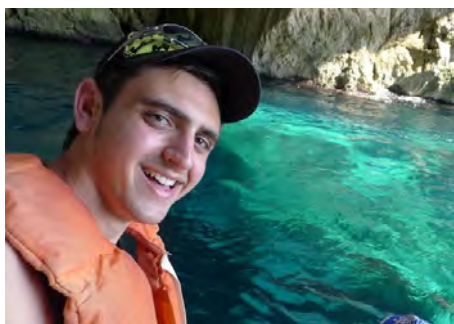
Amongst all of the excitement were some tasty treats for young and old prepared by the Maltese Ladies Women's Auxiliary. And yes, you guessed it! What would a Maltese function be without some *pastizzi*, as they too made a welcome appearance!

All in all, the party was a great success with many new faces attending along with regulars from previous years. GAM thanks all of those in attendance and those who volunteered their time on the day. We look forward to this event taking place again next Christmas, but for now, we wish everybody a Happy Christmas and Happy New Year. Or, as we would say in Maltese: *Il-milied it-tajjeb u is-sena t-tajba!* ❄️



GAM PROFILE Brendan Coleiro

Interview by Rita Catania



GAM: How old are you?

BC: 24 years old.

GAM: Where are your parents from in Malta or Gozo?

BC: Well my parents were both born in Australia, but my Nanna and Nannu (from mum's side), both come from Gozo. Nanna is from Nadur and Nannu from Xagħra. My Nannu (on dad's side), comes from Ħaż-Zabbar in Malta.

GAM: Have you been to Malta & Gozo?

BC: Yes, I went last year in September for 10 days. I spent 8 days in Malta and 2 days in Gozo. I went with a friend of mine who is Turkish. He wanted to go to Italy and convinced me to go along with him. When he asked where I wanted to go, I said Malta and Gozo as I had never been.

GAM: If so, what was one of the things you loved the most when there?

BC: The people! They were really friendly and always helped me out. They used to give me advice on where to go. I would ask questions in English and they would answer me in Maltese! Being in Malta reminded me of St Albans 15 years ago. I really felt a connection, as well as the overall connection between Malta and Australia. The sounds were familiar. I didn't feel like a foreigner when I was there, just that I was in a new place!

GAM: What was something significant you learned about Malta or Gozo that you didn't know before your trip?

BC: The Ġgantija Temples. I didn't know about these before I went to Gozo. Plus, things really hit home when I was in both Gozo and Malta. My Nanna and Nannu used to talk about Ta' Pinu Church in Gozo all the time. I also learned about Mosta Church and the bomb that hit it. I learned about Mdina - The Silent City, how good the beaches are and how clean the water is!

GAM: Do you think it's important for Australian youth born of Maltese blood to learn about their Maltese heritage & why?

BC: Yes, because it gives a person culture, explains their background and why they are in Australia now. Mixtures of culture are

important and it is good to find out about your own heritage.

GAM: Would you recommend other AusMalts like you visit Malta & Gozo at least once in their life?

BC: Yes definitely! There is a lot to do there that would interest young people like the beaches, Jet Skiing, Parasailing, Diving, the nightlife and the weather is amazing 4-5 months of the year. You don't feel like you have to worry about anything either when you are there. It feels very safe. It also has a great history that I think would attract the younger generation. An example of this is St John's Co-Cathedral in Valletta. I couldn't believe how much detail there was - in the pillars, the ceilings, the walls - everything! The tombstones of the Knights in the floor are amazing.

GAM: What else have you done to link to your Maltese and Gozitan heritage?

BC: Since having gone to Malta and Gozo, I enrolled in the Maltese Language Beginners Classes this year and was in one of the teams that competed in this year's Nisga Maltese Cook Off event.

GAM: Anything else you would like to add?

BC: Now that I have been to Malta and Gozo - I want to go back again! Others should visit too! ❄️



Christmas Messages from the Maltese and Australian High Commissioners



H.E. Mr Charles Muscat Maltese High Commissioner in Australia

Another year has gone by and we will soon be celebrating the birth of Our Lord Jesus Christ, the little Jesus born in a manger. We ought to look at this great event with a sense of humility. We need to learn that He was born in a cave without all the comforts that we have today. This was the man sent by God to be born and die for all of us. In this sense, when at times we forget our origins, and where we all started in life, it will be helpful to come back to our senses so we can respect and be more tolerant with each other.

In this, my first message as Malta's High Commissioner to Australia, I would like to appeal to all Maltese and Gozitans scattered all over this continent to remember the true meaning of Christmas and what it teaches us: we are all brethren!

We all know that Australia is known for its multi-culturalism. We live among people with different cultures, religions, customs and race, who have learned to live together. The fact that we live peacefully together, sets a great example to the whole world. It is pertinent therefore, that during this festive season we ought to think of the less fortunate. With some extra effort we can help those who badly need our support. The Maltese and Gozitans are known for being generous, and it follows, that during these days we further give evidence of the roots we have inherited from our dear ancestors.

On behalf of myself, my wife Victoria, and all staff at the High Commission, I extend best wishes for Christmas that gives us real joy in sharing with our neighbour! Let us hope that we will have a better and more positive new year, and enjoy more peace within our families and all around us!

Kważi għaddiet sena oħra u fi ftit granet oħra niċċelebraw it-twelid ta' Sidna Ġesù Ktistu, il-Bambin li twieled fil-faqar ta' maxtura. Għandna nħarsu lejn din il-ġrajja kbira bl-akbar umiltà. Għandna nitgħallmu l-akbar lezzjoni li Ġesù twieled f'għar u ma kellux il-kumditajiet li għandna aħna llum. Dan kien il-bniedem li Alla baġat biex jitwieled u jmut għalina. Għalhekk meta kultant ninsew minn fejn ġejna u minn fejn tlaqna fil-ħajja, għandna niftakru f'din il-ġrajja biex nerġghu nżommu saqajna mal-art halli nkunu nistgħu naġixxu b'mod aktar tolleranti u b'rispett lejn xulxin.

F'dan l-ewwel messaġġ tiegħi bħala Kummissarju Għoli nixtieq nappella lil ħuti Maltin u Għawdxin li jinsabu mxerrdin mal-erbat irjieħ ta' dan il-kontinent, li niftakru fil-veru sens tal-Milied u dak li jgħallimna dejjem: aħna lkoll aħwa!

Kif nafu lkoll l-Awstralja hija magħrufa għall-mod kif qegħdin ngħixu f'komunità multikulturali, jiġifieri ma' nies li ġew minn diversi pajjiżi oħra. Nies ta' kultura, reliġjon, użanzi u kulur differenti li tgħallmu jgħixu flimkien. Dan huwa ta' eżempju kbir għall-bqija tad-dinja meta aħna ngħixu flimkien bla inkwiet ta' xejn. Xieraq għalhekk nappella biex f'dawn iżżminijiet ta' festi niftakru f'dawk li huma anqas ixxurtjati minna. Għandna nagħmlu sforz speċjali biex jekk nafu min għandu bżonn xi għajjuna, nagħmlu minn kollox biex nestendu l-id tal-ħbibberija ta' veru u naraw fejn nistgħu nagħtuhom imbutturata 'il quddiem. Fuq kollox bħala Maltin u Għawdxin aħna magħrufin bħala nies ġenerużi u allura l-imġieba tagħna fil-granet tal-Milied tkompli turi r-rabta tan-nisel mal-antenati tagħna.

F'isem marti Victoria u f'ismi, kif ukoll f'isem l-staff kollu tal-Kummissjoni Għolja, inwassal l-isbaħ xewqat għal Milied mill-isbaħ li jgħibilna l-ferħ veru meta naqsmu dak li Alla pprovidielna billi naħsbu fil-proxxmu tagħna. J'Alla jkollna sena ġdida isbaħ, aħjar u aktar paċi u risq madwarna, għalina u l-familji tagħna! ❄️

H.E. Ms Jane Lambert Australian High Commissioner in Malta

On behalf of all the team here at the Australian High Commission in Malta I would like to wish the Maltese community in Victoria a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. We look forward to working with the community during 2014, which will be an important year as it will mark the 50th anniversary on 21 September of formal diplomatic relations between Australia and Malta.

I hope you and your families have a safe and happy holiday.

F'isem it-team tal-Kummissjoni Għolja Awstraljana f'Malta, nixtieq lil-komunità Maltija f'Victoria xewqat sbieħ tal-Milied u s-Sena it-tajba. Aħna herqana li naħdmu mal-komunità matul l-2014, li ser tkun sena importanti minħabba li l-21 ta' Settembru ser jimmarka il-50 anniversarju ta' relazzionijiet diplomatiċi formali bejn l-Awstralja u Malta.

Nispera il intom u l-familji tagħkom ikollkom festi ferħana u bla periklu. ❄️

Maltese classes in Victoria for 2014

Registration for Maltese language classes in Victoria for 2014 for children and adults is now open,

- **Classes for children** from Prep to VCE level on Saturday mornings from 9.00 am to 12.30 pm at Taylors Lakes
- **Classes for adults** on Thursday evenings from 6.00 pm to 7.00 pm at the Maltese Centre in Parkville.
- For those who wish to advance in the study of Maltese, a VCE class for adults will be held.

Young and adults, who wish to learn Maltese in other Centres in Victoria and for all other information, should call **0412 115 919** or email admin@mccv.org.au

Edwidge Borg
Maltese Language Classes Co-ordinator—MCCV

MHA Special General Meeting

MHA re-energised with election of new committee

By Charles Gatt, MHA Hon. Secretary

At the Special General Meeting held by the Maltese Historical Association held at the Maltese Community Centre in Parkille on Tuesday 3 December was a critical meeting that could have resulted in the winding up of the association if insufficient committee members were elected. The meeting was called as there were no candidates for key committee positions at the Annual General Meeting held in November.

The SGM was well attended and all positions on the committee were filled. The general feeling at the meeting was very positive and encouraging.

The composition of the new Committee for 2013/14 is as follows:

President: Joseph Borg
Vice President: George Portelli
Secretary: Charles Gatt
Treasurer: Mario Bonnici
Members: Agnes Cauchi,
 Charles Portelli
 Lewis Zammit

The MHA has been running for 25 years and wishes to encourage and welcome young people and instil in them a love of Maltese history and culture.

New President Joseph Borg encouraged members to consider researching and giving a presentation to the group. The MCCV library is the best Maltese library outside Malta and there are many resources on the Internet, e.g. Vassallomalta. It is just a matter of choosing a topic of interest, reading and summarizing information for a presentation/

The social committee was commended for its fantastic effort.



MHA Committee 2013/14 (from left) Mr George Portelli, Mr Charles Portelli, Mr Charles Gatt, Mr Joseph Borg, Mr Mario Bonnici, Mr Lewis Zammit and Mrs Agnes Cauchi

Professor Maurice Cauchi suggested that if people have any books they don't want, especially on Maltese History, they may like to donate them to the library. He has collected talks from the last 10 years and they will be made available in due course on the MHA website.

A number of suggestions for future MHA Events including :

Trivia nights; "What is it; where is it?"; Sharing skills in model building; *Melita historica*; Albert Farrugia's *A History of Malta through stamps*; French arrival in Malta in 8 vignettes; the history of Maltese in Australia; Green Gully soccer. A group presentation rather than a solo lecture may be

less daunting for some. Members are asked to bring a list of topics to the next meeting.

Suggestions to attract new members included approaching Dr Claudia Sagona's archaeology students and students from Vic Uni, reviving our facebook page and attracting young Maltese learning Maltese, for example through the language immersion programme.

Skype could be used to communicate live with lecturers in Malta.

Finally Lewis Zammit read out a tribute to outgoing President Mrs Frances Bonnici and the retiring committee members, commending them for their outstanding work. ❄

Happy 100th Birthday, Paolina Armato!

The last day of October 2013 was a red-letter day for a senior member of our community, Paolina Armato, who reached centenarian status. The Armato family have a history of members of their family reaching the ripe age of 100 years and more. Paolina's mother lived to a ripe old age of 105 and her older sister Nina to 100 and 3 months.

Paolina was born in Birkirkara, Malta, and is the 4th child in the family of 12. She migrated to Australia with her family in 1955. After living for some years in the Melbourne suburb of Ascot Vale the family moved to Airport West.

Paolina always looked after her younger siblings and helped her mother in the household chores. Until recently she was living with her two brothers in the family home, when the three of them moved to the North Western District Private Nursing Home in Gladstone Park.

Paolina has adjusted quite nicely in the friendly new home, although since moving there she lost her dear baby brother Laurie. She has her other brother Sam to keep her company but likes visits from the many extended family members and some friends that visit regularly and the friendly people around her new home.

Paolina walks without a frame and mentally she is still very sharp. She likes reading and doing Maltese crosswords and playing cards. She also likes watching the game shows on TV and can answer quite a few of the questions asked of contestants.

Paolina has never smoked but enjoyed a glass of wine with every meal. Although she worked hard in her younger days, she is quite happy with what life has brought her way ... a happy loving, caring family!

Paolina, congratulations and best wishes for healthy and happy times for the future! ❄



University of Malta Study on Maltese in Australia



The University of Malta in conjunction with the University of Florence, Italy is conducting a study aimed at Maltese people who have migrated to Australia and have lived there for at least the past

year, or who have been born in Australia and lived there but hold Maltese origins.

The study being undertaken concerns Maltese people living in Australia, either as migrants themselves or as second or perhaps even third generation immigrants. The intention is to compare the identities of Maltese living in Malta with identities of Maltese migrants overseas, in an effort to better understand the situation of Maltese migrants abroad as well as what strategies have enabled their successful settlement.

The findings of this study are very important as it is the first study to be conducted with migrant communities overseas. The study is being conducted by Dr Gordon Sammut of the University of Malta in association with Prof Marco Giannini and Mr Arvin Eslami of the University of Florence in Italy.

Survey Questionnaire

Participants are being sought to contribute to this study by completing a questionnaire. Participants must be Maltese migrants who have lived in Australia for at least a year or were born in Australia of Maltese background and lived there. The study will enable us to learn further about Maltese identities around the world and how these enable Maltese migrants to settle away from Malta.

The information for the study will be gathered through a survey questionnaire. Maltese living in Australia are urged to assist in this study by completing the survey form. [Click here](#) to complete the questionnaire online or, alternatively, [click here](#) to download a copy of the survey form in PDF format to be emailed or printed out and sent as described below when completed.

The questionnaire is brief and should not take more than 10 minutes to complete. There are no right or wrong answers. It is one's own personal opinion that counts. The questions must be answered truthfully. The questionnaire is anonymous and no personal details are being gathered in this survey. Any queries or comments may be noted on the on the last page of the questionnaire form. All the questions in the form must be answered.

Completed questionnaires in PDF format should be emailed to: arvin.eslami@stud.unifi.it or alternatively printed in hardcopy and posted to the following address:

Dr Gordon Sammut
OH214
Department of Psychology
University of Malta
Msida
Malta.

MCCV Survey on Second Generation Maltese in Australia



The Maltese Community Council of Victoria is conducting a survey to obtain a picture of the Second Generation of Maltese in Australia about whom we really know very little. If you are a second generation person of Maltese background, it would be

appreciated if you would fill out the survey questionnaire which is available for download from the MCCV website ([click here to download](#)).

Completed forms may be returned in electronic or hardcopy form.

BY EMAIL: Scan the completed form and email it to the email address of Prof Maurice Cauchi

mnc25@optusnet.com.au

BY POST: Post completed form to: Prof Maurice Cauchi, MCCV President, Maltese Community Centre, 477 Royal Parade, Parkville, Victoria 3052

The information provided will be treated in the strictest confidence.

Please pass this information and request for survey participation on to your children, friends and acquaintances.

Prof Maurice Cauchi
MCCV President

Reskeon Seniors Group's Christmas Party



The Reskeon Seniors Group organised a Christmas Luncheon for their members at the Firenze Reception, Fawkner, on Wednesday 11 December. Around 153 members and friends attended. There was a presentation of flowers to a special couple who were celebrating their 50th Wedding Anniversary, **Doris and Fred Schembri**, photographed above with Group Co-Ordinator, Mrs Salvina Vella (centre).

Laqgħa Ġenerali Annwali 2013 tal-Grupp Letteratura Maltija

Minn Paul Vella, PRO

Nhar il-Ġimgha, 29 ta' Novembru, saret il-Laqgħa Ġenerali Annwali tal-Grupp Letteratura Maltija tal-Victoria, fil-boardroom taċ-Ċentru Malti ta' Parkille.

Hmistax-il membru attendew: Rosemary u Charles Attard, Ray u Marie Louise Anastasi, Paul u Salvina Vella, Joe u Rose Lofaro, Fr Dom De Giorgio, Michael Xuereb, Dr Victor Sammut, Alfred Xuereb, Joe Bonett, Frank Bonett u Joe Camilleri. Kien hemm aploġġja minn Maria u Armando Catania.

Wara talba minn Fr De Giorgio, infetħet il-laqgħa. Inqraw il-Minuti tal-aħħar Laqgħa Ġenerali Annwali mis-Segretarja, Rosemary Attard. Wara, it-Teżorier, Ray Anastasi, qara r-Rapport Finanzjarju. Imbagħad kien imiss lill-President, Dr Victor Sammut li ta r-rapport tiegħu fejn qalilna li kellna sena ta' suċċess bil-laqgħat tagħna fejn jinqara xogħol oriġinali tal-membri tagħna jew xogħol ta' awturi oħra. Qalilna li tlietna f'it membri li hallew din id-dinja: Joe Schembri, Laurie Armato, Edwin Baldacchino u Joe Saliba. Dr Sammut spicċa billi qal li hemm bżonn li nhegħu oħrajn biex isiru membri tal-Grupp tagħna. Dr Sammut irringrazzja lill-PRO, Paul Vella, li permezz tal-Folju li jippubblika kull xahar iżomm lill-membri u oħrajn informati b'dak li jiġri fostna. Huwa qal li permezz ta' dan il-folju, hafna f'Malta u pajjiżi oħra iżommu ruħhom aġġornati ma' dak li naghmlu hawn.

Waqt li l-laqgħa nfetħet għall-mistoqsijiet ġenerali, Fr Dom De Giorgio, staqsa għaliex waqt li ahna Grupp tal-Letteratura Maltija, inżommu l-Minuti bl-Ingliż. It-twegiba kienet li minhabba d-Dipartiment tal-Inkorporazzjoni, jekk jitolbuna



Il-Kumitat: tal-GLM mix-xellug: Paul Vella (Uffiċjal għar-Relazzjonijiet Pubbliċi), Rosemary Attard (Segretarja), Dr Victor Sammut (President), Marie Louise Anastasi (Viċi-President), Ray Anastasi (Teżorier), Salvina Vella (Segretarja għall-attivitajiet Soċjali).

kopja tal-Minuti jridu jkun bl-Ingliż u jekk naghmluhom bil-Malti, f'dan il-każ ikollna naqilbuhom professjonalment għall-Ingliż u nhallsu għal dan ix-xogħol.

Paul Vella rringrazzja lil Ray Anastasi għar-Rapport Finanzjarju u li jzomm il-kotba. Paul irringrazzja wkoll lil Rose Lofaro li tiehu hsieb il-qari tal-provi tal-folju li żgur qed tagħmel xogħol tajjeb mill-kummenti li nircievu dwar il-Malti li jkun fih. Dr Sammut mill-banda l-oħra rringrazzja lill-Kumitat kollu, speċjalment lil Ray, u lil Salvina Vella li dejjem tiehu hsieb torganizza l-affarijiet soċjali li jkollna.

Minhabba li n-numru ta' nominazzjonijiet għall-Kumitat ġdid ma kienx akbar minn numru li kien hemm bżonn fil-Kumitat, ma kienx hemm bżonn ta' elezzjoni.

Il-Kumitat ġdid huwa l-istess kif kien qabel: President: Dr Victor Sammut; Viċi-President: Marie Louise Anastasi; Segretarja: Rosemary Attard; Teżorier: Ray Anastasi; PRO: Paul Vella; Social Secretary: Salvina Vella. Nominazzjoni wahda biss għal kull pozzizzjoni waslet għand is-Segretarja u għalhekk dawk li ġew innominati, awtomatikament ġew eletti. Nawguraw kull suċċess lill-Kumitat ġdid għas-sena li ġejja. ❀

Reskeon Maltese Association Christmas Party

By Paul Vella, PRO

On Sunday, 1st December, Reskeon Maltese Association held the Christmas Party for their members at the Maltese Centre, Parkville at 12 noon. Around 85 members attended.

Members started to arrive around 11.30 am. They helped themselves to cups of tea and coffee.

Members were served with a plate of antipasto, followed by a lunch of roast chicken, roast potatoes and salad. Red and white wine, beer and soft drinks were also served. Dessert was fruit and ice cream.

We were lucky to get a visit from Father Christmas who went around all the table to share the Christmas spirit. Music was provided by DJ Markis (Reno) who kept members on the dance floor most of the time.

All members complimented the committee on a well-organised afternoon and told them how much they enjoyed the event. Thanks to Social Secretary, Mrs Salvina Vella, who organised the event and to all those who helped in one way or another in the kitchen. ❀



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Please contact us on
9387 8922
0412 115 919
or email us on
admin@mccv.org.au



**The President and Executive Committee
of the Maltese Community Council of Victoria
wish our readers a Merry Christmas and
a Happy and Safe New Year 2014**

Community Events

For up-to-date and more detailed information, [click event link below](#)

Date	Event	Venue	Location
Tue 24 Dec 11.30 pm	Christmas Midnight Mass - Parkville - MSSP Event	St Paul's Chapel	Parkville
Tue 31 Dec	New Year's Eve Ball - Newport Maltese Association	Lakeside Reception Centre	Taylors Lakes
Wed 22 Jan	Newport Seniors Group - Resume Function	Maltese Centre	Parkville
Wed 29 Jan 6.30 pm	MCCV Executive Committee Meeting	Maltese Centre	Parkville
Sun 02 Feb 12.00 pm	Members' meeting, luncheon and bingo - St Gaetan's Society	St Martin de Porres Church	Avondale Heights
Wed 05 Feb	Reskeon Seniors Club Opening	-	-
Wed 05 Feb 7.00 pm	MCCV Council Meeting	Maltese Centre	Parkville
Wed 12 Feb	Newport Seniors Group - Annual General Meeting	Maltese Centre	Parkville
Sun 16 Feb	Over-the-Bay trip to Queenscliff and Sorento - St Gaetan's Society	-	-
Sun 23 Feb	Carnival Dance - Newport Maltese Association	Melrose Receptions	Tullamarine
Wed 26 Feb 6.30 pm	MCCV Executive Committee Meeting	Maltese Centre	Parkville
Thu 27 Feb	Newport Seniors Group - Day Trip	-	-
Wed 05 Mar 7.00 pm	MCCV Council Meeting	Maltese Centre	Parkville
Sat 08 Mar 7.30 pm	Get-Together and seafood night - St Gaetan's Society	St Martin de Porres Church	Avondale Heights