



MerHbA

Maltese Historical Association (Aust) Inc
(Għaqda Storika Maltija (Awstralija) Inkorporata)

No 4/2012

MAY Newsletter

This Month's Program:

From Megaliths to Microliths



(Presentation by Mr. Joseph Borg)

Ever wondered about.....

- what it takes to put a building together?
- about the shape of a building?
- who was the architect behind a building?
- why the building was built and for what purpose?
- what buildings are made of?
- the different styles of buildings?
- how long they last?
- the building blocks?
- about.....? about?

Malta has many and well known megalithic buildings. It also has underground burial chambers hewn out of rock, generally in pre-existing caves, carved to resemble the above ground ones.

There are also other structures which are of interest, not only because of their age but also because of the use to which they were put. Malta is basically a stony island. Its fields are surrounded by rocks. Why? There are similar structures elsewhere in Europe and other places. Is there a connection between these? What about the pieces of smaller material that were found in these places? Who made them and what for? Any of them made of stone or some derivative?

Joseph Borg will endeavor to highlight and explain many of these buildings, shapes and artifacts in this coming talk for the MHA.

About Mr Joseph Borg

KM, Dip. Mech Eng., B.E. (Mech), M.I.E. (Aust)

Joseph Borg was born in Rabat, Malta and attended the Seminary in Floriana for his education. He migrated to Australia with his family in December 1954 on the SS Surriento.

In 1966, he obtained a Diploma in Mechanical Engineering from Swinburne Technical College while working as an apprentice at Commonwealth Aircraft Corporation. He attended a course at Melbourne University and completed a degree in Mechanical Engineering. In 1971 he was seconded to a company called Steel Mains and in 1981 he was promoted to the position of Works Engineer at the Somerton Plant in charge of all capital works and maintenance. After being appointed as the Engineering Services Manager at Tubemakers Steel Water Pipe Division and being in charge of designing large pieces of equipment, Joe retired in September 2000.

Joe is a member of the Institute of Engineers, Australia. He has been President of the Maltese Community Council of Victoria (1991 – 1993) as well as Secretary and President of the Maltese Historical Association (Aust) for several years. In 1995 he became a member of the Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of St John of Jerusalem, Rhodes and Malta.

One of Joe's interests is the design of large sculptures made chiefly from steel and bronze to be seen around the streets and parks of Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane, New Zealand and the USA. His many other interests include bush-walking, music, astronomy, geology, archaeology, history and languages. Joseph was married to Frances (nee Lee, deceased). He has five daughters and ten grandchildren.



Venue: **Maltese Community Centre**

477 Royal Parade, Parkville

Time: 7.30pm

Date: Tuesday 15th May, 2012.

Retrospective

"Malta and the George Cross"

By Agnes Cauchi

The presentation entitled was given by Mr. Charles Mifsud, Consul General for Malta in Victoria to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the George Cross for Malta.

There were four parts to the presentation:

Mr Charles Mifsud talked about the giving of the George Cross by King George VI Flight Lt Ian Speer, on the 10th Maritime Squadron

Showing of a short film about the bombing of Malta

Audience participation, sharing their war-time experiences.

Mr Charles Mifsud asked the question: Did Malta deserve the GC Medal, and he explored the reasons why:

The George Cross which was created by King George VI was intended for civilians only who did extraordinary things. The Maltese were starving because of the blockade. The Germans wanted to starve Malta to make them capitulate. Hence Victory Kitchens were established to feed the people.

Another reason why the bombing was concentrated so heavily on Malta had strategic positions which enabled it to cause havoc on German shipping which supplied the Germans in North Africa. In fact, it is said that Malta was and still is the most bombed place on earth. Most of the people living around the Harbour area had to move to rural area looking for relative safety.

The anti-aircraft guns were all manned by Maltese soldiers and that was a very dangerous job.

The next speaker was flight Lt Ian Speer, an Australian soldier who found himself in the same squadron that brought the GC medal to Malta. In 1939 he joined the Air Force. He went to Point Cook, but there was no runway. He spoke of his journey from Australia to Plymouth where he joined the 10th Maritime Squadron. It

took 90 days to arrive in the UK. He went via New Orleans, Texas, and Miami. On the way to England, a U-boat surfaced in front of them, and the ship decided to chase it.

A short film about the bombing of Malta was shown as part of the presentation.

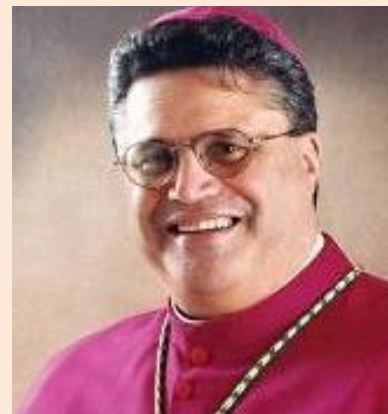
To end the evening, the audience was invited to talk about their memories of the war. There were some retired soldiers who talked about their experiences during the war.

Afterwards, refreshments, kindly provided by 'Busybee caterers', were served in the Foyer of the Maltese Centre.



From left: Mr Charles Mifsud, Mrs Frances Bonnici & Mr Ian Speer (Photo: Martin Bonnici photography)

Bishop Joe Grech Memorial Fund



A scholarship is being offered to young persons of Maltese background to encourage maintenance of Maltese Culture. The first scholarship, worth \$1,000, is available this year. Application forms are available from the Maltese Centre Parkville. For further information please ring the centre on 9387 8922

SOME MALTESE FLORA

The Crown Daisy



The Crown Daisy (Lellux in Maltese) is a very common flower, which blooms from January to June. It grows on both cultivated and disturbed grounds, near seashores and garigue areas. It is very common in the Mediterranean region. Its leaves are dark green, hairy and pinnately-lobed. Its flowers are pale yellow, and its flower-head is 30-60mm. The stems may reach a height of around 60cm.

The Branched Asphodel



The Branched Asphodel (Berwieq in Maltese) is another very common flower, which can be found in steppe and arid rocky areas. The flowers may be observed from December up to May. It has robust stems that can reach a height of 150 cm. The stems are capable of carrying large numbers of flowers.

The Common Pyramidal Orchid



The Common Pyramidal Orchid ((Orkida Piramidali in Maltese) is a hardy perennial plant, that may reach a height of 30 - 50 cm. It has a wide distribution, from Europe to Central Russia, North Africa and Western Asia. It is usually found in the following habitats: garigue, maquis, steppic terrain and sometimes abandoned fields. The colour of the flower varies from pink to purple. The arrangement of hermaphroditic flowers in a compact pyramidal shape is very distinctive and gives the orchid its common name. The flowers bloom during April and May. The flowers are pollinated by butterflies and moths.

The French Daffodil



The French Daffodil (Narcis in Maltese) is a perennial type of plant, with flowers that bloom from November to March. It is found mostly in uncultivated areas, valleys and less frequently in garigue habitats. It is a monocot type of plant, which grows from underground bulbs. From the middle of its leaves, grows a tall flowering stalk carrying between 3 and 12 flowers. It is a protected species because unfortunately, it used to be collected (for sale) in large numbers!

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WEBSITE LAUNCH

As some of you might have noticed, our website has been off line for the past few months. It is with great pleasure that we announce the launch of the new MHA website. This will take place on Tuesday 15th May 2012 at 7:30pm, prior to Mr Joe Borg's presentation.

On behalf of the committee and members I would like to thank Dr Edwin Borg Manche who kindly shared his knowledge and donated his time to set up the association's website. He will be introducing the new website on the night.

Frances Bonnici



WANTED

The Maltese Historical Association is looking for sponsors from within and outside the Maltese Community. The role of a sponsor is to offer some financial assistance in support of our activities. In return the Sponsor will be given an advertising space in our Newsletter and given mention at all our events throughout the year. It is a worthwhile cause in helping the MHA to continue the good work within the Maltese Community. For more details about the MHA please e-mail Frances Bonnici (President) at [mfbonnici@bigpond.com]

Thanking you in advance.

Prospective members:

All Welcome

You are always welcome to attend any of our lectures and obtain a hard copy of the membership form from Mario Bonnici.

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Interesting Websites

Check these out:

- 1] www.malteseabroad.org - the website of the Federation of Maltese Living Abroad, formed following the Convention of Maltese Living Abroad held in Malta in 2010.
- 2] <http://www.maltain360.com/#110001632> - this Heritage Malta website takes you on a virtual tour of a number of historically significant sites (courtesy of Joe Borg).
- 3] www.maltagc.net.au - This website dedicated to the people of the Maltese Islands to whom the British monarch, King George VI, awarded the George Cross seventy years ago on 15 April 1942.
- 4] <http://www.maltain360.com/#110001632> - this Heritage Malta website takes you on a virtual tour of a number of historically significant sites (courtesy of Joe Borg).
- 5] <http://www.maltamigration.com> - The aim of the Malta Migration Museum website is to collect information relating to issues of interest to migrants and migration. It will continue to grow to provide the most comprehensive collection of such information.
- 6] www.mha.org.au. The official Maltese Historical Association website to be launched this month