



MerHbA

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

MHA Newsletter No. 7/2015

www.mha.org.au

August 2015

Merhba! The MHA extends a warm welcome to all our members and friends.

Our July event, the Melbourne launch of Frank Scicluna's book, *Malta and the Anzacs - Nurse of the Mediterranean* was very well attended. The author, Frank Scicluna OAM, spoke about his book, followed by the Maltese Consul General, Mr. Victor Grech, and yours truly. Afterwards, Frank Scicluna was kept busy signing books until they sold out. I am glad that the book was such a success and that we, the MHA, supported it. Malta's role in WWI, caring for 50,000 sick and injured ANZACs and 35,000 other soldiers, was one of the most noble episodes in Malta's long and rich history and very relevant to us Maltese Australians.

Professor Maurice Cauchi will give our next lecture on the 18th August on the life and achievements of Sir Temi Zammit. Joe Borg's third and last lecture on the Great Siege will be held on 15 September.

Membership Fees became due on 1 July. They have remained unchanged at \$10 single and \$15 for a family. Thank you all those who have already paid. Our treasurer, Mario Bonnici, will accept payments at the next lecture or you may prefer to send a cheque to:

Mario Bonnici
59 Binnak Drive
Watsonia
VIC 3087

Thank you to our contributors! You add variety and style to this newsletter. This issue of Merhba also includes old photos, interesting website links and coming events. If you would like to share information in this newsletter, you can contact me by phone or text on 0425 708 830, by email to secretary@mha.org.au, or by post to me at 9/99 The Strand, Newport, VIC 3015.

Looking forward to seeing you on 18 August,

Charlie G

Charles Gatt (MHA Secretary)

MHA August Lecture:

People who made history:

Sir Temi Zammit:

by

Professor Maurice Cauchi

Sir Temi Zammit was a doctor, chemist and bacteriologist, who found the cure for 'Malta fever'. He also discovered and meticulously recorded several archaeological sites.

7.30 pm 18th August

**Maltese Community Centre, Royal Parade,
Parkville, Victoria
(enter from Ievers St)**

Solemn Feast of the
Assumption of The Blessed Virgin
Our Lady Ta' Pinu Shrine
All Nations Marian Centre
15 Flanagan Drv, Bacchus Marsh, Vic 3340
Melway 334J9



Saturday
15th August
2015

From 2.00 p.m.

Rosary
Procession
Holy Mass &
Benediction
Principal Celebrant

Bishop Emeritus Hilton F Deakin AM PhD DD

Please join us for Fellowship after mass.

For more information, please contact us on:

Tel/fax 03 53677006 Mob 0412360231 or 0437 261 517

email: infotapinu@optusnet.com

Website www.tapinushrine-australia.org

MHA July Event:
Melbourne Book launch of
Malta and the Anzacs - Nurse of the Mediterranean
Edited by Frank L Scicluna Dip. T, JP, OAM,
Honorary Consul for Malta in South Australia

Photographs by Lewis Zammit



Joseph Borg, president of the MHA, opened the evening by reminding us that the MHA promotes both the historical and cultural aspects of Malta.

He welcomed Victor Borg, the president of the MCCV, and Prof Maurice Cauchi, the immediate past president, Mr Victor Grech, the consul for Malta in Melbourne, Mr Frank Scicluna, the Honorary Consul for Malta in South Australia and author of the book being launched on the night, and Charles Farrugia, the president of the Maltese branch of the RSL in South Australia, and their respective spouses.

He reminded the audience to sign the petition requesting SBS radio to reconsider cancelling half its Maltese language radio programmes.

Joe then read an account of the Great Siege from this day 450 years ago on 21 July 1565. Convinced the Turks would attack Castille, La Valette undertook extensive preparations, including fortifications and scuttling ships to prevent the Turks landing under the shelter of the walls, demolishing houses that would be destroyed in the assault and breaking up the stones to a size more suitable for throwing. Munitions and articles of war were readied. The finding of a spring in Birgu was a Godsend. La Valette's continual presence throughout encouraged the morale of the defenders. At dawn the following day, Sunday, the Turks began a bombardment that could be heard as far away as Syracuse and Catania. Joe directed the audience to follow the day by day events at: <http://www.heritagemalta.org/1565/>

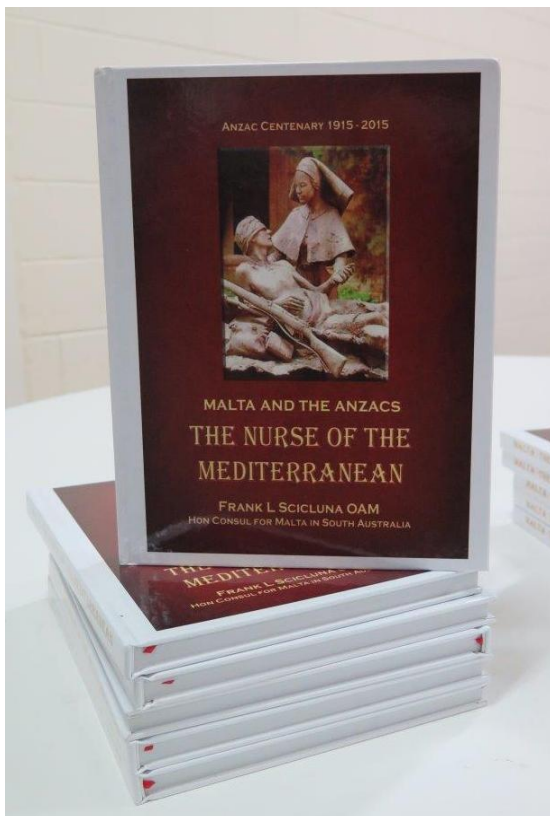
Joe then listed some of Frank Scicluna's many achievements, (see the July edition of *Merħba* for details), and introduced his latest book, *Malta and the Anzacs - The Nurse of the Mediterranean*.

Frank Scicluna then took the stand and welcomed everyone. He thanked Joe Borg and Victor Grech, Dr Victor Borg and Dr Edwin Borg-Manché from the MCCV, Charles Gatt and Mario Bonnici from the MHA who helped facilitate this event, and especially his wife Josie, and his good friend, Charles Farrugia, for their assistance.



He explained that the book was a joint venture with the Maltese branch of the RSL in South Australia, and the Consulate of Malta in South Australia. It was conceived about 2 years ago, when the Australian Government announced the commemoration of the centenary of WWI. Malta had never been mentioned in this context. Although she was not directly involved in the war, Malta nursed over 50,000 ANZACs and earned the title of Nurse of the Mediterranean.

Another part of the project was the creation of a monument in the Prospect Gardens of South Australia listing the names of ANZACs from South Australia who were buried in Malta. It was unveiled by the president of the South Australian branch of the RSL, with a good number of Maltese and dignitaries present.



The cover of the book shows a monument in Anzac Square in Brisbane. A nurse is caring for a wounded soldier, representing Malta's devotion to the care of the ANZACs. The introduction by Charles Muscat the High Commissioner for Malta in Australia and New Zealand gives a good picture of the relationship between the three countries. The foreword is by Chevalier Charles Farrugia, the president of the Maltese branch of the RSL, and there are messages from the ministers of Veteran Affairs in Australia and in New Zealand and others.

The book contains many pictures, lists and descriptions, including the many military hospitals which cared for the ANZACs, the military hospital ships that transferred the wounded soldiers from Gallipoli to Malta, the soldiers who travelled on the ships and the cemeteries where the ANZACs are buried. 85,000 soldiers, 50,000 of them ANZACs, were nursed in Malta. Most recovered and returned home but nearly 300 died in Malta and were buried there, mainly in Pieta cemetery. Frank was present at the unveiling of the ANZAC memorial at the Argotti gardens in Floriana. There are descriptions of several Maltese enlisted in the Australian army, recorded for posterity.

Frank then read a message from the Government of Australia supporting the book, detailing the devastation of World War I to Australia's population and the birth of the ANZAC tradition and congratulating Malta for her contribution to the treatment of the wounded in this terrible war.

Frank concluded with a commemoration to those who gave their lives so that we could live in peace. "Biex qatt ma ninsew". Lest we forget.

Mr Scicluna then called on Victor Grech, the Victorian Consul for Malta and presented him with a copy of his book to keep in the Consulate for all those who visit.

Mr Grech then congratulated Frank for his contribution to the historical record and for the edification of future generations of Maltese. He highlighted Malta's sacrifice to world peace and to the alleviation of human suffering. He also acknowledged the 3000 Australian women nurses in WWI, who worked in dangerous and difficult conditions.



Charles Gatt concluded the presentations by pointing out that this episode in Malta's long and diverse history was in his opinion its most noble. This book is an excellent record of that time and he recommended it as a very appropriate and special memento and gift, especially to Maltese Australians.

Frank Scicluna then signed several copies of the book and sold out. He returned the following day, sold out again and took orders. If you missed out and would like to order a copy, please contact Frank Scicluna at honconsul@live.com.au. Charles Farrugia will bring them to the Maltese Community Centre in Parkville on Wednesday 19 August, the day after the next MHA lecture.

MHA August Lecture:

People who made history:

Sir Temi Zammit

by

Professor Maurice Cauchi

The history of a nation is often taken to be synonymous with that of its rulers. It is not often that we look at fellow Maltese and examine how they impacted on the history of Malta.

Some people stand out amongst the Maltese community over the years: one of these was Sir Temi Zammit. Briefly, Zammit was born towards the end of the 19th century and graduated as a doctor from the University of Malta. He specialised as a chemist and became active as a bacteriologist.

At that time, one of the biggest health problems was what was then called 'Malta fever', which attacked a considerable number of persons but nobody knew where it came from. Zammit's outstanding success was to realise that the thousands of goats that roamed the streets of Valletta and other localities in Malta were the culprits. After that, the incidence of the disease dropped almost completely, through the simple measure of boiling the milk.

Restless as ever, Zammit turned his attention to archaeological studies. He was responsible for discovering several archaeological sites. In contrast to others before him, he was meticulous in the way he went about his work, leaving exact and detailed descriptions of his finds.

These and other aspects of his work will be discussed at this talk.

About the presenter:

Professor Maurice Cauchi is well known to the MHA audience. He has been President of the MCCV for several terms and is now the Immediate Past President.

He has written several books relating to the Maltese community as well as being a regular contributor to the Sunday Times of Malta, writing on various topics, including multiculturalism, medical issues, ethical issues, and so on. Anyone curious about these may have a look at his website:

<https://mauricecauchi.wordpress.com>

INTERESTING LINKS

Malta: War Diary STORY OF A GEORGE CROSS

A day by day account of WWII and much more!

<https://maltagc70.wordpress.com/>

The British Pathé Film Archive: Malta receiving the George Cross 1942 (0:51)

<https://www.facebook.com/bayretro/videos/vb.125825400821156/847764778627211/?type=2&theater>

Magna Curia Castellaniae (1545-1689) digitised

The National Archives of Malta have announced the completion of the digitisation of the 1,141 volumes of the Magna Curia Castellaniae (1545-1689), the main secular tribunal in Malta during the period of the Knights of St John, and the 25-volume index created by Dr G Portelli Carbone in the 19th century, resulting in 1,606,301 digital images. These records are one of the main sources about life in Malta during the time of the knights and deal with varying situations, from domestic violence, assaults, thefts and fights, to the appointment of guardians for minors. The documents will now become more widely accessible and should be available from 2016.

<http://gozonews.com/57816/completion-of-the-digitisation-of-the-magna-curia-castellaniae/>

Idiot's guide to spring hunting in Malta.

Whatever you think about hunting in Malta, this tongue-in-cheek article is most amusing:

<https://themaltingpot.wordpress.com/2015/04/17/idiots-guide-to-spring-hunting-in-malta/>

Wirt Ghawdex completes restoration of Sant' Indrija statue in Xlendi:

<http://gozonews.com/57808/wirt-ghawdex-completes-restoration-of-sant-indrija-statue-in-xlendi/>

MEPA decision on extension of St John's Co-Cathedral Museum postponed after UNESCO reservations. Interesting issues and excellent photos:

<http://www.independent.com.mt/articles/2015-08-06/local-news/MEPA-s-decision-on-extension-of-St-John-s-Cathedral-Museum-postponed-after-UNESCO-reservations-6736140102>

St John Crypt Video (6:21) Awesome!

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=aylDOY86fgs>

Il-Kappella tal-Madonna tal-Karmnu fil-Fawwara, fil-limiti tas- Siggiewi...Malta

(The Chapel of Our Lady of Mt Carmel
at Fawwara near Siggiewi)



Photo: Benny Scerri

In a garden known as *ta' Ġebel Ċiantar*, (a Bronze Age wall), was a spring (fawwara) which dried up in a drought, risking the loss of the year's crops. Girolama Ċiantar, wife of Martino Vella, vowed that if it flowed again she would build a chapel there, which she did in 1616. The chapel was passed on to the Confraternity of Our Lady of Charity at Valletta, who rebuilt it in 1669. It was restored in 1756.

More information and photos can be found here:
<http://allaboutmalta.blogspot.com.au/2011/07/wayside-chapels-our-lady-of-carmel-at.html>

KKI 2015 - KUN IMBIEREK - SIMONE GAUCI
I think you will like this song.

The lyrics are by a multi-talented young person,
Ingrid Vella, currently studying a PhD in Physics
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y9SUPThaEOs&feature=youtu.be>

Mulberries in Malta



Mulberry trees (photo at left) still grow profusely in "Wied iċ-Ċawqli", Hal Qormi, and other places too. The reason for having these trees is interesting. This part of the valley is so called because of the large number of Mulberry trees planted there in 1827 with the hope of setting up silk production in Malta on an industrial scale (by the "British & Colonial Silk Company") after the failed attempt by the Knights of St. John some 87 years before.

In the travelogue that the Duke of Buckingham & Chandos kept while visiting Verdala Palace at Buskett he wrote, "... Thousands of Mulberry trees had been planted for the growth of silk worms, hundreds of which were also being given to such peasants and people as mulberry trees or the means of raising them..." The Mulberry leaves were harvested as food for the silkworms. Although the silk produced was of extremely high quality, even at par with the Italian and French product, this enterprise didn't remain commercially viable for long and in 1857 production ceased.

For many, the trees have only one good use now, to provide free fruit in May. Still, up to a number of years ago there were those few who kept their own silkworms for a modest domestic silk trade. It is also interesting to know that H.M. Queen Victoria was a patron of Maltese silk lace. So much so that her sculpture in "Piazza Regina", Valletta shows the Queen showing off an intricate Maltese silk lace overskirt (photo at right).

Eric Bonanno

**Mulberries in Maltese are called "tut"
pronounced "toot"**

Photos

Karozzin Howard Gardens Mdina



Photo: Nino Xerri

Msida waterfront over 60 years ago



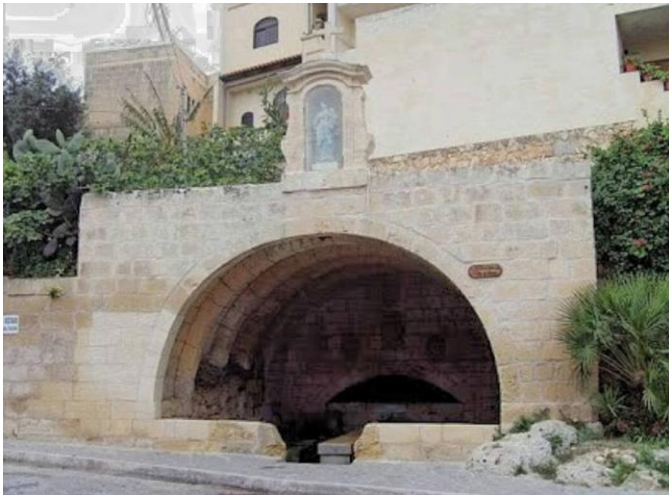
Source: Bay Retro

Msida feast 2015

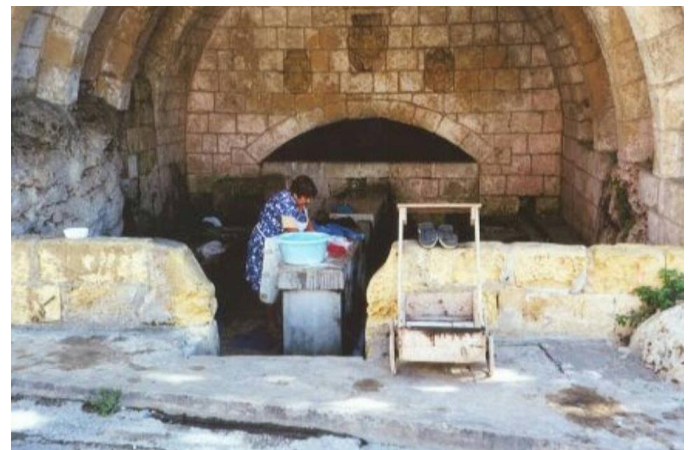


Photos: Caroline Camilleri

Fontana – Photos Charoline Camilleri



Fontana, locally known "il-Ghajn il-Kbira", (the big spring) takes its name from a bountiful spring at the bottom of the road leading to Xlendi. Fontana is the Italian name for spring and is a suburb of Victoria, Gozo. People began to inhabit the area because of this useful fresh water. The arched shelters were built in the sixteenth century over each spring for the convenience of the people. Inside one can still find traditional stone water tubs in which local folk do their washing.



Reskeon Maltese Association Seniors Group Inc.

invite you to their

Vittoria Dinner Dance

to be held at FIRENZE RECEPTIONS

134 McBryde Street, Fawkner

on SATURDAY, 12th SEPTEMBER, 2015

Music by: DJ KING CHARLIE

Merriment marches by the Brass Band

Time: 6.30 pm till 12 am — Dress: Jacket & Tie (Formal)

Five Course Meal (Drinks: BEER, RED/WHITE WINE,
SOFT DRINKS included)

Tickets: Members: \$48 — Non-Members: \$52

Phone: 9460-4404 Mobile: 0409 961 928

Federation of Australian Historical Societies

www.history.org.au

e-BULLETIN No. 138 – 15 June 2015

- 1) [Australian Sketchbook: Colonial life and the art of S T Gill - exhibition, Melbourne](#)
- 2) [Heritage value of Windsor Hotel, Melbourne](#)
- 3) [Proposed Central Australian electorate name - Battarbee](#)
- 4) [South Australian History Fund](#)
- 5) [Parramatta Female Factory being assessed for National Heritage List](#)
- 6) [Tasmanian heritage - Clarendon House, Evandale](#)

COMING EVENTS

15th August: Feast of the Assumption. Rosary Procession, Holy Mass & Benediction. From 2:00 p.m. at Ta' Pinu Shrine, All Nations Marian Centre. 15 Flanagan Drv, Bacchus Marsh Victoria, 3340

16th August: Nisga 2015 Maltese Cook Off

18th August: MHA Lecture Professor Maurice Cauchi "People making History: The Life and achievements of Sir Temi Zammit". 7:30 pm. Maltese Community Centre, Parkville

12th September: Vittoria Dinner Dance

13th September: 2:00 pm. Book launch. *A Transient Colony in the Valley of the Nile* by Nicolas Chircop. Melita Social Club

13th September: 2:30 pm. Feast of Our Lady of Victories. Rosary, Mass and Benediction. St Mary Star of the Sea Church, Howard St., West Melbourne

15th September: MHA Lecture. "The Aftermath of the Great Siege of 1565". 7:30 pm. Maltese Community Centre, Parkville

Brunswick Community History Group Inc

The BCHG meets on the first Saturday of the month at Bridie O'Reilly's Irish Pub from 1:30 pm to 4:30 pm. Their meeting schedule follows:

Sept 5: Empowering the Homeless
Tony Keenan

Oct 3: AGM BCHG financial members

Contact: Francesca 9387 1194

Meet beforehand at 12:00 for a chat and a \$10 light lunch and soft drink

BOOK LAUNCH

Nicolas Chircop's book, "A TRANSIENT COLONY IN THE VALLEY OF THE NILE" will be launched at the Melita Social Club at 2:00pm on 13th September 2015. It looks at the history of the Maltese Community who lived in Egypt for over a century. Their final exodus took place abruptly at the time of the Suez debacle of 1956-57. An estimated 10,000 of their descendants now reside in Australia and a similar figure may be quoted for the United Kingdom, including some Countries in Continental Europe, Canada and the USA, where the uprooted settlers blossomed in their respective Zion.

The Bibliography Index is: ISBN: 9780646937601.

The book includes bibliographical references and Index.

Subjects: Maltese-Egypt—History. Malta—Emigration and Immigration—History. Egypt—Emigration and immigration—history—20th century. Egypt—Emigration and immigration—Political aspects.

(PAGES 434 - PRICE Aust. \$30.)

If you are interested you may contact Nicolas directly on nchircop@bigpond.net.au.

BANK OF VALLETTA PLC

Australia Representative Office:

16 Watt Street Sunshine Vic 3020

Tel 9311 3222 Fax 9311 3216

Open on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 9.00am to 1.00pm and 2.00pm to 5.00pm

Uffiċċju Rappreżentattiv

L-Ewwel Bank Rappreżentattiv Malti fl-Awstralja



Address: Shop 10,
204 Warrandyte Road,
Ringwood North Vic 3134
Phone: (03) 9876 7688
Fax: (03) 9011 9698
email: claudia@thetravelhaven.com.au
ABN: 83156081015
Lic. No. TA-0033041
The Travel Haven Pty. Ltd.

Claudia Zammit
Manager

Live Love Travel