



MCCV News

Maltese Community Council of Victoria, Inc.

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Labor and Greens to oppose 'unfair' pension reduction budget measure in travel cases

In a report by the Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs published in February, the Labor and Greens Senators rejected the Government's changes proposed in the Social Services Legislation Amendment (Budget Repair) Bill 2015. These include a measure whereby age pensioners, who spent less than 35 years of their working life in Australia, would have their pensions reduced once their overseas travel duration reached six weeks – down from the currently allowed limit of 26 weeks per year.

Schedule 1 to the Bill proposes to reduce, from 26 weeks to six weeks, the length of time for which recipients of Age Pension, and certain recipients of Disability Support Pension, Wife Pension and Widow B Pension, would be paid the basic means tested rate while outside Australia, from 1 January 2017. The Explanatory Memorandum states that this measure would 'reinforce and strengthen the residence-based nature of Australia's social security system'.

Minister explains budget measure

In its issue published last month, *The Voice of the Maltese* reported on the outcome of its investigation of the issue relating to the payment of the Australian age pension overseas and the international social security agreement between Australia and Malta. The paper sought and received clarification of this issue from the Minister for Social Services and member for Pearce in Western Australia, the Hon Christian Porter MP.

In his reply, the Minister pointed out that the proposed change does not affect pensioners paid under the Agreement on Social Security between Australia and Malta.



Social Services Minister Christian Porter MP

[photo: <http://www.perthnow.com.au>]

He said that people in Malta who claim an Australian pension under the Agreement are paid a proportional rate from the date they claim or become eligible, whichever is later. People in Australia who are paid under the Agreement will continue to be paid the same rate if they depart Australia temporarily for up to 26 weeks (their pensions are calculated differently in that the pension they receive from Malta is directly deducted from their Australian pension entitlement).

Australia currently has social security agreements with 30 countries, including Malta. The change to the rate of pension paid overseas will apply to all pensioners who leave Australia who have unlimited portability and are paid under the portability provisions of the Social Security Act 1991.

If the legislation is passed, it will affect all such pensioners whether they are going to Malta or any other country.

The Minister continues to say that Australia's social security system differs

markedly from the pension contributory systems that operate overseas.

The Australian Age Pension is a payment made from general tax revenue and is based on the concepts of residence and need. Having worked and paid tax in Australia does not automatically entitle a person to receive an Australian Age Pension.

Age Pension recipients who travel overseas have indefinite portability of their pension. Under current social security law a person who travels overseas must have 35 years Australian Working Life Residence (AWLR) to retain their basic (means-tested) rate of pension for longer than 26 weeks. AWLR is the number of years a person has lived in Australia between the age of 16 and Age Pension age.

From January 1, 2017, subject to the passage of legislation, the period that Age Pension, and a small number of other

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President's Perspective

MCCV continues to prioritise aged care in community welfare programs

The Maltese Community Council of Victoria is the umbrella organisation for some 37 affiliated organisations. It is responsible for the coordination of all aspects of the welfare services provided to the Maltese community in Victoria.

Planned Activity Groups

With premises at Parkville and Sunshine, the MCCV is well placed to provide administration and staff to direct and supervise the various projects it has undertaken in the interest of the community. Currently the MCCV receives funding from the Commonwealth and the State Governments to conduct five weekly sessions of planned activity groups for aged persons, generally over the age of 65 years. The purpose of these sessions is to enable our clients to socialise with persons of their own background and culture and enjoy a Maltese meal during the session.

Generally aged persons are provided transport to the Maltese Centre for the sessions in an MCCV bus picking them up from their own home or, alternatively, travel in taxis, as required. All travel costs are met by the MCCV. Various activities are organised for our clients including bingo, art and craft, bowls and board games of their choice.

Fundraising initiatives

Despite government funding it is essential for the MCCV to continuously raise funds to meet the shortfall in the expenses relating to the program.

A dedicated team of volunteers directed by our Vice President Joseph Stafrace attend regularly at Parkville to conduct bingo sessions and staff the canteen which serves Maltese meals to those attending. Proceeds from these activities are directed towards our welfare programs.

Meeting with affiliated associations

Council recently invited presidents of affiliated associations to our centre in Parkville to provide them with details regarding the full extent of welfare, educational and cultural services that the MCCV provides to the community. Hopefully affiliated organisations will assist council in meeting its financial commitments.

Extending community services

Council is constantly planning for extension of its community services. At present we are about to launch a visitation scheme directed to various aged care facilities in which many Maltese aged are resident. This service will include a presentation to staff relating to Maltese history, Culture and language. A Maltese culture and resource directory will be included in a package together with tapes of Maltese songs and music, and religious CDs prepared by the Dominican Sisters of Malta with prayers and rosary recited in the Maltese language. It is expected that this will be well received by Maltese residents. A mobile library will also operate to service these facilities.

During volunteer week council is organising a forum to encourage community members to join our team of volunteers within our welfare program.

Seeking further grants

Council has recently applied for a number of Victorian Multicultural Grants. These include an application for an infrastructure grant, upgrading of the kitchen and equipment, home visitation program as well as Maltese language classes. In another grant application council seeks assistance to meet the cost of proposed functions to celebrate Malta Independence Day and the 75th Anniversary of the award of the George Cross.

Maltese Cultural Festival 2016

Council has decided to recommence its annual Maltese Cultural Festival. It is planned to hold the festival between 19th and 25th September 2016. An event to celebrate Malta Independence Day will be held on 21st September and will be included in the festival program.

The Maltese Historical Association and the Maltese Literature Group have agreed to take part in the festival. Other activities are being organised.

The festival provides an excellent opportunity for members of the Maltese community with children and friends to enjoy activities which will extend over one week. A fête is also to be arranged for the weekend of 24th-25th September 2016.

ANZAC Day March

On 25th April 2016, members of the Maltese Ex Services Association represented the community in the ANZAC Day March proudly displaying a banner with the words *Malta—the Nurse of the Mediterranean*. Family members of deceased ex-servicemen also marched displaying their deceased's war medals on their jackets.

It was a most appropriate opportunity to remind the general community of the role played by Maltese Ex-Servicemen and Maltese surveillance in World War 1 and World War II.

In 2017 the Maltese community will be celebrating the 75th Anniversary of the George Cross by King George VI to Malta and its people for the bravery and heroism displayed during the 2nd world war. The MCCV is planning a special celebration for the occasion.

CMLA Meeting in Malta

On the 5th and 6th May the Council for Maltese Living Abroad (CMLA) established by the Malta Government will be meeting in Malta. Former MCCV President Professor Maurice Cauchi and MCCV Vice President Dr Edwin Borg- Manché will be attending the meeting. It is expected that council members will be identifying and discussing matters of concern to Maltese people living overseas and that their recommendations will be acted upon by the Government of Malta in the interest of Maltese citizens and their families living around the world.

Victor Borg
MCCV President

What matters to seniors from non-English speaking backgrounds

By Marion Lau OAM JP, ECCV Deputy Chairperson



The 2011 Productivity Commission report, 'Caring for Older Australians', states that the percentage of the population aged over 65 from non-English speaking and culturally diverse backgrounds is projected to grow another 43 percent nationally in the next 15 years. In Victoria the

proportion of the population aged over 65 born in non-English speaking countries is approximately 30 percent (ABS 2011).

More established ethnic communities in Victoria are about to experiencing their peak in their aged populations. For example, approximately 9,000 people aged 65 and over who were born in Malta live in Victoria (see table below).

Top 10	Ethnic group	Culturally diverse population aged 65 and over in total numbers	Ethnic group	Culturally diverse population aged 55-64 in total numbers
1	Italian	45,400	Italian	18,600
2	Greek	29,300	Greek	10,900
3	German	11,800	Vietnamese	9,400
4	Dutch	10,700	Chinese	7,500
5	Maltese	8,900	German	7,200
6	Chinese	8,000	Maltese	6,900
7	Croatian	6,900	Dutch	6,400
8	Indian	6,300	Indian	6,100
9	Polish	6,200	Malaysian	5,600
10	Vietnamese	5,300	Sri Lankan	5,600

TOP 10 culturally diverse ageing groups in Victoria (2011 ABS Census)

Since its inception in 1974, ECCV has been advocating for access of multicultural communities and seniors to culturally appropriate ageing and aged care services.

Culturally appropriate care includes:

- Culturally sensitive aged care assessment;
- Partnerships with ethno-specific and faith-based organisations;
- Same language services;
- Employment of bilingual staff;
- Provision of culturally appropriate food; and
- Cultural and spiritual care.

A pillar of ECCV's ageing and aged care advocacy work is its Aged Care Policy Sub-committee. Through the Committee we regularly consult with members on policy and access and

equity issues. The Committee makes recommendations to the ECCV Board of Directors and these are driven by myself and the ECCV aged care team. The Committee consists of ethno-specific and multicultural aged care agencies, mainstream service providers, peak bodies, and ethnic seniors' organisations. The Maltese Community Council of Victoria is represented at the Committee by its Chairperson Victor Borg.

Joint ECCV-Monash University research indicates that older people from non-English speaking and culturally diverse backgrounds have a strong preference for remaining in the community rather than seeking institutional care. I would like to emphasise that consumers from non-English speaking and culturally diverse backgrounds and their families need to be strongly supported through targeted education, community development, and capacity building strategies to access home care services.

Care at home is currently delivered under a Consumer Directed Care (CDC) framework. CDC is a new philosophy and orientation to service delivery. It gives people more choice to decide what types of care and services they access and how those services are delivered. This means that the consumers are in charge, provided they know their rights and responsibilities.

From February 2017, funding for home care packages will follow the consumers. This will allow them to choose providers who are suited to them and to direct the funding to the respective providers. Consumers will also be able to change their providers if they wish, even if they move to another area to live.

The Commonwealth Department of Health has made it clear that it envisages a consistent national approach for people to access home care services through the My Aged Care gateway. MyAgedCare is the single entry portal to access ageing and aged care services in Australia. The portal provides information about aged care for consumers, family members and also carers, and service providers. People can go to the My Aged Care website (www.myagedcare.gov.au) or phone the My Aged Care contact centre (1800 200 422).

People from non-English speaking backgrounds may choose to phone the National Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) to be connected to MyAgedCare. The phone number for TIS is 131 450. State your language and then explain that you would like to contact MyAgedCare. For further information on TIS, you can visit the website on www.tisnational.gov.au.

ECCV is continuing to work towards making care and other relevant information accessible to seniors from non-English speaking backgrounds. As a member of the Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia's Healthy Ageing Reference Network, ECCV maintains its advocacy role at the Commonwealth level to ensure equitable access to culturally appropriate services which affect the senior members within our multicultural communities.

I look forward to working with the MCCV to promote healthy ageing of our older migrants from non-English speaking backgrounds. For more information, please do not hesitate contact me through the ECCV office on 9349 4122 or the ECCV aged care policy officer, Nikolaus Rittinghausen, on nrittinghausen@eccv.org.au.

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.

Contributions should be forwarded to the Editor either by email at pro@mccv.org.au or alternatively by post to:

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Labor and Greens to oppose 'unfair' pension reduction budget measure in travel cases

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payments with indefinite portability, can be paid outside Australia at the basic (means-tested) rate will reduce from 26 weeks to six weeks.

After six weeks overseas a pensioner, with less than 35 years AWLR, will have their rate of pension adjusted according to their AWLR. For example, a person with 17 years of AWLR would receive 17/35ths of the pension they would receive if they stayed in Australia.

Pensioners who depart Australia before January 1, 2017 will continue to have their pension rate adjusted after 26 weeks based on their AWLR. Subsequent travel to overseas will have the new six-week rule applied.

This change only affects the rate a pensioner receives after six weeks overseas. The Age Pension, and a small number of other payments, will continue to be payable overseas indefinitely.

The Minister adds that it is reasonable to expect that people who receive an Australian pension, while they are overseas, have spent a large portion of their working life in Australia and contributed to the Australia economy and community. The retirement costs of a person should be fairly distributed between where a person has lived or worked during their working life.

This change, according to the Minister for Social Services will reinforce and strengthen the residence based nature of Australia's social security system. The Government believes it is unreasonable for Australian taxpayers to pay pensions to people outside Australia without regard to their period of residence in Australia, for anything other than short absences.

Senate Committee Report

While the majority report recommended that the Social Services Legislation Amendment (Budget Repair) Bill be passed, the Labor and Greens Senators on the Committee rejected this recommendation and expressed their views in dissenting reports.

'Measures fail the fairness test'

In their dissenting report the Labor Senators on the Committee, Senator Carol Brown (Tasmania), Senator Katy Gallagher (ACT) and Senator Claire Moore (Qld), outlined "the overwhelming and near unanimous evidence provided to the Committee rejecting the measures."



In the view of the Labor Senators, "to recommend passage of these measures would be to recommend the imposition of harsh and unfair cuts to low and middle income individuals and families. This legislation makes it harder for migrant pensioners to continue to receive their pension while they are overseas. This is a cruel and unfair cut. There are many older Australians who left family or fled conflict on the other side of the world to build a better life in our country. They have spent decades working hard, paying taxes, raising families and making Australia a better place. They deserve the pension, just like any other eligible older Australian."

The Labor Senators further state that "this legislation will also remove important supports for age pensioners, disability support pensioners and other low-income Australians who are seeking to improve their opportunity in life by getting an education. These measures fail the fairness test."

Referring to the submissions made to the Senate inquiry, the Labor Senators wrote that "it is clear that these measures do not carry the support of the vast majority of the submissions made to this inquiry. The submitters' comments outlined in the majority report are unequivocal: these measures are fundamentally unfair. They should not be supported."

Unfair and significant impact on Age Pension recipients—Greens

In her dissenting report, the Greens Senator on the Committee, Senator Rachel Siewart (WA), referred to the various submissions made to the Senate inquiry.

"The Federation of Ethnic Communities' Council of Australia (FECCA) argued that the measure would disadvantage a significant portion of the Australian population who were born overseas. These concerns were shared by a number of other submitters, including the National Welfare Rights Network (NWRN), the Refugee Council of

Australia, the Welfare Rights Centre Sydney (WRSC) and the St Vincent de Paul Society. The Council of the Ageing (COTA) has also expressed its opposition to this measure. COTA stated:

COTA believes that this measure is excessively punitive and inequitable in its impact on Australians not born in this country and who maintain cultural and familial ties to their place of birth. As around 40 per cent of Age Pensioners were not born in Australia the impact of the measure is likely to be significant and unfairly borne by one segment of our community.

Senator Siewart noted that "there is already a limit in place which restricts pension portability, based on AWLR. This measure is a tightening of an existing restriction, rather than addressing a gap in the system. It is poorly targeted, and does not recognise the range of circumstances in which pensioners may need to travel for more than 6 weeks outside Australia."

She referred to a number of submissions, including the NWRN, Refugee Council of Australia and WRCS, who "noted the need for pensioners to spend extended periods overseas, particularly in cases of illness or bereavement. In their submission, the NWRN said:

They are more likely to have humanitarian and compassionate reasons for travel (e.g. to visit parents and family members overseas who may be elderly and require care or other assistance). Reducing the rate of Age Pension after just 6 weeks is too short a period in such circumstances.

In her dissenting report Senator Siewart concluded that "the Australian Greens do not support this measure. It is unfair, and will have a significant impact on Age Pension recipients."

For more details, [click here](#) to download a copy of the Senate Standing Committee's report. ♦

Maltese community flocks to Morwell for Latrobe Valley Maltese Festival

A large number of Maltese, estimated by the event organisers at around 4,500, attended the Latrobe Valley Maltese Festival held on Saturday, 27 February, at Kernot Hall, Morwell, between 10 am and 6 pm.

People from Melbourne and Latrobe Valley region attended the festival several buses being organised from Melbourne on the day for the occasion, including one organised by the Maltese Community Council of Victoria. The contingent from the MCCV included President Victor Borg and several Executive Committee members and their spouses.

The event raised close to \$15,000 for the local charity organisation known as the Gippsland Centenary Rotary House.

The Festival was the brainchild of Frank Tabone, who was born in Australia of Maltese parents from Birkirkara. It was intended as a revival of *Jum il-Maltin* (Maltese Day) that used to be held in Sunbury years ago and the Portarlington Maltese Festival, both of which have been discontinued.

The main aim of the Festival was to provide an opportunity for Maltese people in Victoria to come together as a group in one location to catch up with long-time friends they may not have seen for years, celebrate their Maltese heritage and culture, and experience some of the old traditions of their country of origin.

The event was supported by a number of organisations including the Latrobe Valley Maltese Club through its President John Buhagiar and its committee; Mario Sammut, broadcaster on Gippsland FM and on 3ZZZ Melbourne; Latrobe City Council; the Maltese Community Council of Victoria and he is sponsored by several businesses especially Stable Engineering.

At the festival there was music by Mark Andrew, Elvis Tribute Entertainer; Destiny Band; Stex Band; Maltese Brass Band and well-known singer from Portarlington, Charles Attard.

There were market stalls and entertainment for the kids: Luna Moonies and Koko the Clown; Jumping Castle, Face Painting and Balloon Tying.

There was Maltese food and drink, including Cisk beer and Kinnie soft drink; pastizzi; and other Maltese food.

It was an highly enjoyable day for the Maltese community in Victoria. We congratulate the event organisers on their initiative.💧



Clockwise from bottom: MCCV contingent at the Morwell Migrant Memorial; the MSSP and MCCV stand; the Maltese Brass Band; a packed Kernot Hall enjoying the entertainment; and the various external stalls.



Malta pays its last respects to Archbishop Emeritus Ġużeppi Mercieca

Former Archbishop of Malta, Mgr Ġużeppi Mercieca, who was the head of the Catholic Church in Malta for 30 years, passed away early on Monday 21 March 2016, aged 87. His funeral was held at St John's Co-Cathedral in Valletta on the following Wednesday and the burial at the Cathedral in Mdina later that day.

Hundreds of people, including Gozitans and some tourists, gathered to pay their last respects to Mgr Mercieca. They started queuing behind barriers for the funeral which took place on Wednesday from before 3pm and a crowd rushed up the Co-Cathedral steps as soon as the barriers were opened briefly before the funeral mass started.

The congregation was led by President Marie Louise Coleiro Preca and her husband Edgar Preca. Prime Minister Joseph Muscat, who is abroad, was represented by Education Minister Evarist Bartolo. Opposition leader Simon Busuttil, led Nationalist MPs.

In his homily the main celebrant at the funeral mass, Archbishop Charles Scicluna, called Ġużeppi Mercieca 'a man for all seasons', who showed exemplary docility to the will of God.

Archbishop Scicluna spoke about Mgr Mercieca's obedience to the Lord and described him as a man who showed courage when this was needed, when faced with violence, adversity and persecution.

He paid tribute to the late Gozitan for defending the faith without ever giving in to the threat of violence or incitement.

He recalled his own ordination by Mgr Mercieca and said he would always remember the spiritual paternity the late bishop had always shown to him and his colleagues, even when he needed to be somewhat strict with them, making his loss feel like that of a father.

Although not an extraordinary orator, his word was essential and he communicated faith, Mgr Scicluna said adding that Mgr Mercieca had left behind a legacy "which we treasure and for which we thank the Lord".

"We promise to learn from him to have space for everyone in our heart, to really be brothers and sisters in Christ," Mgr Scicluna said.

Tributes

President Marie Louise Coleiro expressed her regret in a statement, saying that Mgr Mercieca was instrumental at a crucial time for the Church and State in Malta.

Speaking to journalists yesterday, Mrs Coleiro Preca said Mgr. Merieca was a



catalyst in bringing peace between the Church and the Malta Labour Party. "He carried out his duties well not only as the head of the Church in Malta but also as a citizen." Mons. Mercieca, she said, had always acted in an able and dignified manner.

Both the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition expressed their condolences. Prime Minister Joseph Muscat said that Mgr Mercieca Archbishop Emeritus Mercieca led the Maltese church at delicate juncture and was bridge-builder in society. "I deeply value his contribution". Opposition Leader Simon Busuttil expressed his sorrow at the news, and described him as "a standard bearer of the Church in Malta in difficult times".

President Emeritus Eddie Fenech Adami said that Archbishop emeritus Mercieca was a very humble person. One felt very much at ease when around him, when speaking with him. I met him very many years ago when he became Archbishop. It's a pity we lost him, but everyone has to go".

"In 1997, before government announced a study about divorce and the family in Malta, I visited him personally and face to face explained our plans. He showed me that he wasn't pleased. He recommended prudence but accepted that government had every right to legislate what was being recommended at that time, when on the social front, things were different from today".

"I appreciated his two visits at hospital when I was being operated at Mater Dei Hospital. In his humility, Mgr Mercieca would, on more than one occasion, make private visits to patients at different hospitals".

President Emeritus Ugo Mifsud Bonnici was contacted by this newsroom yesterday, and recalled an opinion shared to him by former Prime Minister Dom Mintoff on the

Archbishop emeritus. "He told me – 'he is a very good priest, and it is difficult to wage war upon him'".

Describing the former Archbishop, Dr Mifsud Bonnici said he was a "saintly man, endowed with great prudence. He was a seasoned sailor in turbulent seas, and he managed to bring the ship home into port".

Former Prime Minister and MEP Alfred Sant described Mgr Mercieca as a cordial, cautious and correct person who chose prudence in the way of doing things.

"I always appreciated the frankness with which he spoke to me, even if he tried not to offend me in any way with his words and actions".

Archbishop Emeritus Paul Cremona spoke highly of Mgr Mercieca: "He was very humble. Sometimes his moral strength was not seen by others due to his humility. He was a person who would not lead into confrontation with others, but was strong in his principles. He remained very close to church and myself and always loved the Church in Malta and Gozo".

Charles Buttigieg, Mgr Mercieca's former public relations officer, described Mercieca as being first and foremost a priest. "He kept the common good as his top priority. He was ready to undertake every personal sacrifice to find a way to solve the problems of the time".

Through his own initiative, Archbishop Mercieca sent a message to Dom Mintoff in order to try and find a solution, Mr Buttigieg said. The five points included that the Church was ready to hold discussions on its property, and points regarding the schools to be discussed. "Mintoff liked the idea, and in a few days, the road to discussions opened". ♦

[sources: timesofmalta.com & independent.com.mt]

Tribute to Anthony 'Tony' Abela

On 29 March 2016 the Maltese community in Victoria lost one of its prominent leaders when Anthony 'Tony' Abela, Vice President of the Maltese Association Northern Suburbs Inc. (MANSI), passed away. His funeral took place on Friday 1 April at St Mathews Church in Fawkner.

Born in February 1936 at Marsa, Malta, Tony attended the Marsa Primary school and then went on to study at Stella Maris College in Gzira for his secondary education. Having reached the final scholastic year, he obtained his General Certificate of Education from Oxford University in England in 1953.

As a result of the post World War II economic situation in Malta where there was little work or opportunities, Tony reluctantly migrated to Australia in 1955 under the 10 liri (£10) scheme. Within 2 days of his arrival in Port Melbourne, Tony found work at a wholesale merchant business called Henry Berry & Sons in Collins St, where he remained for



10 years. During that time he worked as a clerk, a paymaster and then as a Manager of Accounts Payable.

In 1965, Tony joined the Ford Motor Company at Broadmeadows which was

closer to home. At Ford, Tony was employed as a Treasurer, Money Market Dealer and then as Payroll Supervisor. Tony retired in 1990.

Tony has always had a keen interest in politics and in community issues and as a result he decided to run for local government in the former City of Broadmeadows in 1989 and was successful in 3 consecutive elections, at one point serving as Deputy Mayor. In 1996, Tony was elected to the Moreland Council where he served for 3 years.

In 1962, Tony married Lina Mizzi who was from Hamrun and they had 5 children, including two sets of twins. Tony and Lina placed a high priority on the education of their children and so were very proud when they all completed university degrees.

Tony has been a member of the Maltese Association Northern Suburbs Inc. (MANSI) for 20 years and has spent a total of seven years as president. He will be sorely missed.

May he rest in Peace. 💧

Seeking information about Maltese involvement with Church of St Mary Star of the Sea in West Melbourne

By Charles Gatt - Secretary, Maltese Historical Association, Inc.

Thomas Hazell and Aaron Milburn are writing a book about the history of St Mary Star of the Sea Church in West Melbourne. Founded in 1852, the church is an important part of the cultural heritage of Melbourne's Catholic history and the Maltese Community. Tom and Aaron are seeking information on the Maltese involvement with this Church during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries for a chapter in their book.

The Maltese established a de facto community in the parish. Why did they come to St. Mary's in the first instance? A Maltese curate lived at St. Mary's. Can we provide dates, anecdotes or any historical resources or references to this office? What did the Maltese actually do within the parish and church of St. Mary's? We had confessions: did we also have Masses in Maltese?

The Maltese probably conducted catechetical classes. Are there any records to confirm this? Are there any extant records of Weddings, Funerals or Baptisms? Who were the prominent



Photo: Paul Vella

Maltese in the church and community? Does anyone have any anecdotes or records concerning the single men who worked on the railways or docks around WWI. These men obviously lived around the area. Did they form part of the parish?

Tom and Aaron hope that these suggestions will be a guide and that we will be able to provide them with more accurate and relevant information. You are encouraged to contact them by

phone on 0411 146 246 or 0416 196 685 or by email to:

info@stmaryswestmelbourne.org or aaronmilburnspain@gmail.com

You may prefer to talk with me at the next lecture or by phone on 0425 708 830 or email secretary@mha.org.au. Let us contribute as much as we can to this part of the history of early Melbourne, and especially of the beautiful Church of St Mary, Star of the Sea. 💧

Maltese Historical Association—March 2016 Event

As Others See Us

What visitors to Malta over the ages had to say about Malta

Malta and Gozo were mentioned by early Greek writers and poets during the Greek and Phoenicians expansion into the western Mediterranean. Around 300 BC, Callimachus identified the island of 'Gaudos' with the island of Calypso.

The first Latin reference to Malta is by the Roman poet and historian Naevius (270 BC – c. 201 BC). In his epic poem, *Bellum Punicum*, he described how the island was plundered and laid waste by fire around 256 BC, during the first Punic War. Livy wrote that in 218 BC, during the second Punic War, Hamilcar, not the one who was Hannibal's father but the commander of a Carthaginian garrison of 2000 soldiers, surrendered the island to the Romans and Malta became part of the Roman province of Sicily.

In his *Verrine Orations*, the Roman, Cicero, referred to ivory tusks stolen from the temple of Juno in Malta by the admiral of King Massinissa of Numidia (c 238-149 BC). In *Contra Verres* (70 BC), Cicero accused Verres, the Roman Governor of Sicily and Malta, of abuse of office and shamelessly plundering the riches of his province. Cicero's witnesses included one who hailed from Malta. He referred to the city of Malta, 'bearing the same name', which produced women's vests to satisfy the luxury demands of Verres, who was seen with a 'cushion of transparent Maltese cloth stuffed with roses'. He also wrote that Verres allowed pirates to use Maltese harbours.

Ovid, the Roman Poet, (43 BC – AD 17/18) stated that Malta was a fertile island.

The Roman author and philosopher, Pliny (25 – 79AD) mentioned the *catulos Melitaeos*, the Maltese dog. He assures us that placing one of these dogs repeatedly on the stomach will cure stomach pains. Many Greek authors also mentioned the 'Maltese dog'. Aristotle described them as 'exquisite' and they appeared frequently on statues, vases, and gravestones.

In the early 530s the Maltese islands became part of the province of Byzantine

Sicily, under the name of 'Gaudomelete'.

Count Roger's famous geographer, the Arab scholar, Al-Idrisi, wrote *Kitab Rugar* in the 1150s. He described Malta as a large island, with a safe harbour open to the east, fertile and known for its honey. Life was concentrated in Mdina. A map shows the distances between Malta and major Mediterranean ports.

The chaplain of the Knights of St John, Jean Quintin D'Autun, described Malta in *Insulae Melitae Descriptio* in 1560. Montesquieu wrote later that the Order of Malta 'is most likely the most respected one in the universe'. Voltaire wrote, 'Nothing is better known than the siege of Malta'. By 1567 the heroic defence of Fort St. Elmo was widely known in Europe, through many pamphlets and descriptions circulated in Italy, Spain, France and Germany. The Siege featured strongly in novels, drama and poetry, exalting the Christian victory. In the five decades after the epochal siege, the Maltese islands featured in over 110 known published travelogues, travel diaries and editions of letters by travellers. By 1600, most authors assumed their readers knew about the Knights, the Great Siege and the Catholicity of Malta.

In Baroque Europe, Malta featured in a variety of epics, novels and other works, centred on the heroic deeds of the Knights of St John, such as Antoine de Saint Michel's, seven hundred page long, *Le Triomphe de Malte* of 1628. The great siege even found an echo in Greek poetry and in the Spanish poem *La Malea* (1582). Many German writers wrote about the siege or made reference to it, including Goethe's *Faust*, (1790), Schiller's *Don Carlos* (1803/05), and Vulpius' very popular novel, *Rinaldo Rinaldini* (1798).

However, not everyone supported the Knights. Some Christian powers, especially Genoa and Venice, had massive economic interests in Turkey, North African and the Levant, trading with the Ottoman Empire. They resented the interference of the Order of St John, when its caravans or corsairs molested or threatened Muslim-Christian exchange. Venice may even have celebrated the news of the fall of St Elmo! Other countries, including England, appreciated the anger of the Ottomans against the Knights of Malta.

The British had little knowledge of Malta's history and culture, concentrating more on events and actions. They were impressed by the fortifications. Maximilian, Duke in Bavaria, quarantined in Malta for three weeks in the 1840s, stressed the advantages which British colonialism brought to Malta, especially the "neatness, law and order".

He was more interested in the ex-library of the Knights of St John, where he found 40 000 books, many dating back to the knights.

The Cippi of Melqart (right) is the collective name for two Phoenician marble *cippi* (candelabra) from the 2nd century BC. They have parallel inscriptions in Punic and Greek, which facilitated the deciphering of the Punic language.

In Homer's *Odyssey* (8th Century BC), Calypso kept her lover, Odysseus, a prisoner at Ogygia for seven years, before he returned to his wife, Penelope. In the 18th century, countless authors and visitors, including Lord Byron, Sir Walter Scott, and Jules Verne, referred to Gozo as the legendary island of Calypso, though the cave itself was often referred to unkindly.

Fungus Rock or *Haġret il-General* in Maltese, (right) contained the rare, parasitic plant *Cynomorium coccineum*, widely written about for its medicinal properties in the 17th and 18th centuries. Grandmaster Pinto installed a precarious ropeway and basket to the islet, which was also guarded to prevent any unauthorised taking of the plant.

St Luke's reports about St Paul's shipwreck and subsequent events on Malta led to the Pauline traditions and legends, important shaping forces of Malta's cultural



Continued on Page 9

Maltese Historical Association—March 2016 Event

As Others See Us

What visitors to Malta over the ages had to say about Malta

Continued from Page 8

identity. Many writers from Pliny (c. 70 AD) onwards referred to the lack of venomous animals. In 1588 Hieronymus Megister wrote the most extensive description of Malta till then, attributing the lack of venomous animals to its soil. Gabriele Rossetti wrote his poem *'L'apostolo S. Paolo che naufrago in Malta'* while in Malta (1821 – 1824). Albrecht was one of many travellers who referred to the miraculous power of the earth from St Paul's Grotto at Rabat. The famous 'Glossopetrae' or 'St Paul's tongues', believed to be the petrified teeth of poisonous snakes, were a standard feature of baroque treatises and travelogues.

In 1828, the first Duke of Buckingham commissioned a series of 19 watercolours of Maltese monuments, including Ġgantija and the Xaghra Circle. They are now in the national Library of Malta. In the same year, the British periodical *Archaeologia* featured a series of sketches of Gozitan monuments by British Officer William Smythe. George Angas made drawings of various sites in Gozo in September 1841.

Malta was considered a cosmopolitan centre, with many visitors and many different languages being spoken. Hans Christian Anderson in 1840 thought Malta to be African. Some Protestant writers like William Lithgow or William Biddulph in the early 17th century thought that Catholic and 'inquisition infested' Malta was a most dangerous place, inhabited by 'viperous people'.

In the 1790s, Albrecht Christoph Kayser's novel, *Gemahlde von Malta*, delved into Maltese language, archaeological excavations, history, economy and trade. He mentioned the Manoel Theatre, where plays were mainly performed by the knights in French or Italian. He also praised Malta's fruits.

Most travellers mainly visited Valletta and Mdina, maybe staying at the Grandmaster's summer residence in the Boschetto, and ignored the lives of the common people. However, John Henry Newman, an Anglican priest, who later converted to Catholicism and became a cardinal, visited Malta twice, in 1832 and 1833 and commented that the most positive quality of the Maltese was their industriousness. He was impressed by St John's cathedral's 'richness and exactness, minuteness and completeness of decoration' He also wrote, 'A great part of

the population lived in poverty, a situation made even worse by the heavy corn tax which was levied by the British government.'

Many praised the beauty of the Maltese and Gozitan women, with their black eyes and pale faces, in their *faldettas*, but some also thought the Maltese quite 'Arab-like' or African, full of superstition and anachronistic ways of behaviour. The upper classes dressed like the French but many women and children of the lower classes begged.

Thackeray in 1844 described the Grand Harbour with its tangle of big and small ships and boats, the 'busy blue water,' and the rocks of the fortifications 'blazing in sunshine.' Valletta thronged with a lively, comfortable-looking population. Along Strada Reale, he saw the 'genteel London shops, and the latest articles of perfumery', as well as 'squads of priests'.

Seventeen corsair raids on Gozo were recorded between 1533 and 1599, the most famous being in 1551, when almost the entire population of 5000 was taken into slavery. Many writers commented on the fresh water springs and fertility of Gozo; the industriousness of the inhabitants, the abundance of grains, fruit and vegetables, sugar cane and cotton, the fine cotton sheets, and carpets similar to those from Turkey.

Albert Kayser (1750) described ancient artefacts discovered on the island including the story of a golden statue, a cow on a pedestal, with precious stones for eyes. A Gozitan farmer had found it and sold it to a rich Gozitan. Grand Master Pinto insisted that the owner hand this statue over to him. He refused to disclose its whereabouts and died as a result of torture. It is believed the statue had long before been sold to foreigners.

Boisgelin (1790s) and Lady Stanhope (1810) described people descending the perpendicular cliffs of Gozo, sometimes on ropes, searching for eggs, birds and fish. Others were impressed with the size, beauty and strength of the Gozitan donkeys.

Duke Muskau in 1835 detailed how some Capuchin monasteries, such as Palermo, mummified their dead. This was also practised at the Capuchin monastery in Gozo. Directly after death, the monk would be laid out in his full habit in a dry subterranean chamber for a whole year,

then the corpse was transferred to a huge room and put against a wall.

George Angas in 1841 described mourners, 'newwieha' at funerals, smiting their breasts and singing in a low dismal voice, building to howling and tearing their hair.

Madox (1821) mentioned great quantities of quail visiting Comino, particularly in April and September, soon to be disposed of by the 'natives'. The English had also introduced rabbits to the islet. They met a similar end.

Pelusio (1567) referred to the 'capers, cumin and cotton... wild olive trees, fig trees, vines.... pastures and excellent honey' grown in Malta. Denon (1778) described it as a 'barren' and 'wretched' island but praised the industriousness of the inhabitants and elaborated on the Maltese cotton industry. Boisgelin (1790s) admired the industrious Maltese country folk and found the vegetables and fruit to be excellent. He wrote that an aunt of Louis XVI had a garden in Malta just to grow oranges and pomegranates for her own needs.... The animals reared on this island were rabbits, pigs, sheep, cattle and mules. Still, a huge amount of foodstuff had to be imported from Sicily.

Overall, the people of were seen as hard-working, thrifty people, doing the best they could out of the rather meagre resources available to them.

[Click here](#) for Prof Cauchi's PowerPoint and lecture recording.

NOTE

Information in this article was extracted from:

- Thomas Freller: *Verses and visions: The Maltese Islands in World Literature*
- Thomas Freller: *GOZO: The Island of Joy*

This article is based on a lecture delivered by Prof Maurice Cauchi to the Maltese Historical Association in March 2016. The article was edited by MHA Secretary, Charles Gatt, and was first published in the MHA newsletter Merħba of April 2016

74th Anniversary of George Cross Award to Malta commemorated in Melbourne

The 74th Anniversary of the George Cross Award to Malta made on 15 April 1942 was commemorated in Melbourne with two ceremonies a week apart.

On Sunday 10 April a ceremony organised by the Maltese Australian Association was held at the Shelter of Peace, located next to the prominent Melbourne landmark of the Shrine of Remembrance.

Proceedings started with a procession at 11:00 am along the Shrine of Remembrance forecourt, during which there was the traditional flypast of three CT4 and two Harvard aircraft, led by Squadron Leader Glen Coy. After the laying of wreaths at the eternal flame, there was a procession to the Shelter of Peace on Birdwood Avenue for speeches and the laying of wreaths. The national anthems were followed by the reading of the Ode to the Fallen. One minute silence was observed between the Last Post and the Rouse.

A week later, on Sunday 17 April, another ceremony organised by the Maltese Ex Services Association of Victoria took place at the George Cross Memorial, located between the Maltese Community Centre and St Paul's Chapel in Parkville.

At 11:00 am a commemoration mass was celebrated in the chapel by Fr Emmanuel Adami mssp. Those present included the Consul General of Malta in Victoria Mr Victor Grech, MCCV President Mr Victor Borg, Maltese Ex Services Association President and MCCV Vice President Mr Joe Stafrace, and members of the MCCV Executive and affiliated associations.

Before mass began Mr Joe Stafrace remembered his predecessor in the role of President of the Association, Mr Emmanuel (Laurie) Spiteri, who passed away last year. Laurie had been the driving force behind the Association, having held the positions of President and Secretary for many years.

Mr Joe Borg, President of the Maltese Historical Association, read out a special prayer for the occasion written by Fr Adami.

Following Mass, Consul General Victor Grech and MCCV President Victor Borg briefly addressed the gathering.

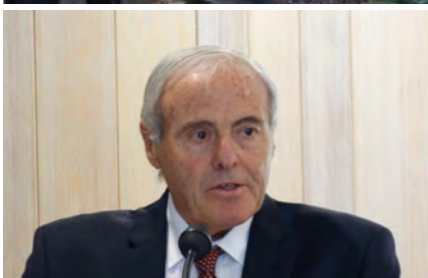
The Consul General spoke about the importance of the George Cross award to Malta in recognition of the bravery of the people of Malta and Gozo during the Second World War and the extreme hardships and devastation that they had to endure during those times. The Maltese were loyal to the British Crown and resisted as much they could to defend freedom and democracy.

Mr Grech said that the gesture of King George VI was appreciated and considered as a token of gratitude to the population for their loyalty during the worst of the air raids. This gesture is still appreciated today, as can be seen from the commemoration event held on 15 April in Malta at St George's Square, where the award was officially made in 1942.

In his address, MCCV President Victor Borg spoke of the importance of such commemorative events to direct our minds to the tragedy that befell Malta during the Second World War. Malta has always been a



Above: The ceremony at the Shelter of Peace (photos: Edwidge Borg)



Above: The ceremony at the George Cross Memorial at Parkville (photos: George Brimmer)

vulnerable country. The Maltese could never in their own right defend their small island which happened to be strategically located in the Mediterranean and of great importance to colonial powers.

Mr Borg said that it was about February 1940 when Adolf Hitler directed the Germans and the Italians to neutralise the island which meant to wipe it out. Within weeks of that direction Malta was bombed almost day and night. How did the poor Maltese people cope? If it wasn't for the assistance provided by other Commonwealth countries, including Britain, Canada, Australia and others, the Maltese would not have made it.

Mr Borg said that we need to cast our mind back to the many service men and women who died in their attempt to save the Maltese from starvation and to save lives. Food became scarce and Malta had to rely on convoys to bring food to the island. Many destroyers and other naval and merchant ships met their end before making it safely to the island. Many people we never heard about lost their lives simply to try and give us the Maltese an opportunity to live.

Mr Borg said that we should be eternally grateful to the thousands of seamen, airmen and others who without any hesitation

followed higher commands to come to the aid of the Maltese. Those who lived were meant to survive. It was our blind faith that pulled us through.

How lucky we are today, many of us have not really experienced war, said Mr Borg. We don't know what hardship is and what heartbreak is. He said that he wondered whether we would have the strength to replicate the efforts of our ancestors.

Mr Borg referred to today's situation in the central Mediterranean region close to Malta, mentioning the bombing of Libya by the Americans to try and break up ISIS in that country. We pray to God that in these difficult times Malta would be spared from any atrocious events that ISIS have become known for.

Following Mass, a laying of wreaths ceremony was held at the George Cross Memorial. The national anthems were followed by the reading of the Ode to the Fallen. A minute silence was observed between the Last Post and the Rouse.

A sausage sizzle and refreshments were served at the Maltese Centre after the ceremony. 💧

Maltese Ex Services Association participates in ANZAC Day March

A group of Maltese Ex Services Association members and their families participated at the annual ANZAC Day march held at the Shrine of Remembrance in Melbourne yesterday.

The group was led by Association President Mr Joseph Stafrace, who took over the presidency after the passing away of the much loved Emmanuel 'Laurie' Spiteri last year.

A group of about thirty marched with the Maltese ex-servicemen to the Shrine as part of the official proceedings. Later they visited the Shelter of Peace dedicated to Malta's historic achievements in wartime located near the Shrine. Joe Stafrace gave a brief address to the gathering, remembering our fallen and thanking all those who attended. 💧



The Maltese Ex Services Association members and their families who participated at the ANZAC DAY March 2016 (photo: Andrew Gatt)

Information Session for affiliated associations



On Sunday, 20 March 2016 an information session for MCCV-affiliated associations was held at the Maltese Community Centre in Parkville. MCCV President Victor Borg addressed the meeting and provided a detailed account of a number of programs and services currently being provided to the Maltese community in Victoria.

Mr Borg explained that the care of the aged was a priority in the Council's welfare program. The Home and Community Care (HACC) program grant enabled the MCCV to conduct six planned activity groups at its premises at Sunshine (on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays with a fortnightly session on a Saturday) and Parkville (on Tuesdays and Thursdays).

Aged and frail persons are collected from their homes either by the Centre's mini bus or taxi and taken to the relevant premises. The participants have morning tea immediately upon their arrival, with lunch and afternoon tea prior to their departure. During the session participants are engaged in various activities ranging from bingo sessions, art and craft and gentle exercise.

The MCCV home visitation scheme will be revamped and its success will depend on regular volunteers to be trained for this purpose.

A carers group also meets on a monthly basis at the Sunshine premises. This service provides carers and their charges with an opportunity to socialise and establish networks which would be of a great assistance to them. Subject to a further grant council proposes to commence a café style session on a weekly basis, for isolated men living in the Western suburbs.

The President also detailed council's role in advocating and lobbying for the Maltese community with the Australian authorities and the Government of Malta. The MCCV immediate past president, Prof. Maurice Cauchi, and MCCV Vice President, Dr Edwin Borg-Manché, are members of the Council for Maltese Living Abroad appointed by the Maltese Government. They play an important role in raising matters of concern to the Maltese community in Australia.

Education and Culture including the teaching of the Maltese language is also catered for by Council.

Finally the President urged the associations' representatives to play their part in the provision of community services. He called for stronger support to the Council's activities and their involvement in the various MCCV initiatives.

MCCV Vice President Joseph Stafrace then addressed the meeting and gave a full description of the capital works and maintenance recently carried out at the centre. He referred to the mural installed in the main hall, which was well received by the community and visitors to the centre. He also spoke of council's efforts to raise funds which were urgently required for the maintenance of the premises at Parkville and Sunshine. He advised that the bingo sessions and canteen services provided on Friday evenings were progressing well but would encourage the associations to inform their members of this activity. Traditional Maltese delicacies and Maltese products are available for purchase on Friday evenings from the Centre in Parkville.

In closing Victor Borg thanked the representatives for their attendance and informed them that it was proposed to arrange for information sessions to be held twice a year. Representatives were then invited to the refreshments which had been provided. 💧

Easter celebrations in our community

By Paul Vella



On Saturday, March 19, the **Palm Sunday** Mass celebration in Maltese was held at the Chapel of St. Francis of Assisi Church, in Child's Road, Mill Park. This was organised by the Maltese Committee. The celebrant was Fr Edwin Agius, mssp.

Before the Mass, Martin and Carmen Gauci played and sang excerpts from the Passion Musical *Ikun li Trid Int* written by Theresa Cassar and Prof. Manwel Mifsud.

The Chapel was full of members of the Maltese community.

After Mass, all present were invited to the foyer of the Church for a cup of tea or coffee and a lot of cakes to enjoy, which was provided by the committee.

Holy Thursday

On Holy Thursday, March 24, we attended the Church of St Joseph the Worker in North Reservoir. Once again the church was full of members of the parish and far beyond.

The Mass was celebrated by Canon Fr Emmanuel Bonello, Parish Priest of the parish. The readings were done in English and Italian.

During Mass there was the ceremony of the washing of the feet in commemoration of what the Lord Jesus did at the last supper. Men, women and children made up the twelve. Fr Manny, as everyone knows him, delivered a lovely Homily for the occasion.

On the same day, there was a Maltese Mass held at St' Paul's Chapel, Parkville. The Mass was celebrated by Fr Edwin Agius, mssp, followed by the Seven Visits to the Sepulchre of the Holy Sacrament.

Good Friday

On Good Friday, March 25, the Maltese community attended in large numbers the Mass and celebration of the Good Friday rituals at St. Paul's Chapel in Parkville.



Once again Fr Edwin Agius, mssp was the main celebrant with Fr Ivano Burdian concelebrating.

First and Second Readings were done by Ms Mary Bonello and Paul Borg respectively. The Passion Gospel was read by Fr Edwin Agius, mssp, Paul Vella and Paul Borg.

There were special prayers for certain members of the community and other church denominations.

Then there was the adoration of the Crucifix followed by Holy Communion.

After Mass everyone was invited for a cuppa in the foyer of the Maltese Centre.

Easter Vigil

On Saturday, March 26, a Mass was held at St. Paul's Chapel, Parkville, to celebrate the Easter Vigil and the Risen Lord.

The chapel was once again full. The main celebrant was Fr Edwin Agius, mssp, while Fr Emmanuel Adami, mssp, was con-celebrant.

The ceremony started outside the Chapel with the blessing of the fire from which the Pascal Candle was lit. This was followed by a procession into the Chapel

to the Altar. After some prayers, there were seven readings on the night. Then there was the blessing of the Baptismal Font Water, followed by the rest of the Mass and Holy Communion.

Among those present were the MCCV Vice-President, Mr Joe Stafrace and Mrs Stafrace and members of the Female Section of the Society of Christian Doctrine (SCD).

At the end of proceedings, Fr Agius thanked Mr Alfred Asciak who was responsible for the chapel decorations especially the image of the Risen Lord. Fr Agius also thanked Paul Vella for taking care of the music during Mass.

Afterwards everyone proceeded to the the Maltese Centre for refreshments. ♦



Hu Hsieb Sahh'tek

Professur Maurice Cauchi



X'ghandek taghmel biex torqod ahjar?

Hafna nies isibuha bi tqila biex jmorru jorqdu, jew inkella isibu li qed iqumu ta' spiss bil-lejl u mbagħad ma jkunux jistghu jergħu jorqdu.

Hemm hafna raġunijiet għaliex jiġri dan. Xi drabi jista' jkun hemm problemi serji, imma hafna drabi n-nuqqas ta' rqad jkun għej mill-fatt li nkunu drajna bi drawwiet hżiena li jżommuha mqajjmin, jew li jqajmuna ta' spiss matul il-lejl.

Dawn huma xi rakkomandazzjoniet biex wiehied jorqod ahjar:

- Importanti li tuża s-sodda biss biex torqod: hafna jmorru fis-sodda biex jaraw it-televisin fis-shana speċjalment fix-xitwa. Din mhix ideja tajba.
 - Mur fis-sodda biss meta thossok ghajjen. Jekk tistembah u ma tkunx tista torqod, ahjar toħroġ mis-sodda u tmur f'kamra oħra, tippassiġġa ftit, milli toqghod titqalleb fis-sodda tistenna li jiġi n-nghas.
 - Hu ktieb jew gazzetta u aqra ftit sa kemm jerga jiġi n-nghas.
- Fl-ahħarnet, tajjeb li tiehu rutina biex il-moħħ jidra jirregola l-irqad. Biex jiġri dan:
- Ipprova orqod dejjem fl-istess hin u mhux daqqa torqod kmieni u daqqa tard.



Photo: <http://www.capitalotc.com/>

- Ipprova torqodx matul il-ġurnata: evita s-sjesta kemm jista' jkun, u speċjalment, toġnosx quddiem it-TV.
- Tixrob stimulanti (bħal kafè u te) xi tlieta jew erba' siegħat qabel torqod.
- Tużax il-kompjuter jew 'smartphones' u apparat elettroniku iehor bħal dawn qabel torqod għax dan jagħmilha aktar diffiċli biex tirrelaksja u torqod.

Jekk il-problema qed tiġri ta' spiss, allura għandek tiehu passi biex tipprova tirrelaksja xi ftit: tista' tibda taghmel eżercizzji biex tidra tirrelaksja, per eżempju, joga, meditazzjoni, eżercizzi biex tiehu nifs ahjar, u tiehu parir kif

għandek taghmel biex tirrelaksja l-muskoli.

Daż-żmien hawn għajnuna psikoloġika li tista tghin f'kazi aktar serji. Teknika waħda imsjeha *cognitive behavioural therapy* (CBT) tista tghinek biex tnaqqas hafna it-taħbil tal-moħħ u tghinek biex torqod ahjar.

Jekk ma tkunx tista torqod minhabba xi uġieħ, allura jkun jeħtieġ li tiehu passi biex tnaqqas dan. Uġieħ fid-dahar jew fil-ġogi bl-artrite huwa komuni hafna, u bosta nies jgħidu li ma jkunux jistghu jorqdu sew minhabba dan. F'dan il-kaz ikun jeħtieġ li t-tabib tiegħek jordnalek medicini biex inaqqs dan l-uġieħ, għax bl-uġieħ hadd ma jkun jista jorqod. ♦

Bunnings – a fine community benefactor

Recently the President of the Maltese Ex Services Association, Joseph Stafrace, contacted the hardware store, Bunnings, at Brunswick, and requested a loan of a BBQ for a sausage sizzle that was being planned to follow the George Cross commemoration ceremony on 17 April 2016.

Joe was quite surprised when he was informed that Bunnings would make a gift of a barbecue for the occasion.

On Wednesday, 30th March 2016 Natalie Alfonso from Bunnings, Brunswick attended at the centre with a Jumbuck Barbecue and presented it to the Association. The presentation was made in the presence of some 200

guests who were attending an elderly citizens session.

Joseph Stafrace thanked Bunnings for its generous gesture and requested Natalie to pass on the Maltese community's appreciation for the gift.

MCCV President Victor Borg also spoke at the presentation. He also thanked Bunnings for its generosity in gifting the BBQ to the community. He said that the gift was a great example of the community service being provided by Bunnings. ♦



Ms Natalie Alfonso from Bunnings flanked by Victor Borg on the left and Joe Stafrace on the right at the presentation.

Newport Fancy Dress Dance

On the 13th March the Newport Maltese Association held the Fancy Dress Dinner Dance at the Melrose Reception Centre. About one hundred people were dressed in fancy costumes.

The food was very good and with an extra plate of hors d'oeuvres there was plenty to eat. I am sure nobody went home hungry.

Tony the DJ did a fantastic job getting everyone up dancing with his cheerful music. A few Maltese songs were also played, to which everyone started singing.

Four ladies and four gentlemen were lucky enough to be drawn out of a hat (so to speak) to receive an encouragement prize.

It was a night of Fun, Fun, Fun.

— Lydia Cole
PRO Newport Maltese Assn



Reskeon trip to Geelong, Pt Lonsdale & Queenscliff



A group of 54 members from Reskeon Maltese Association Seniors Group boarded a Dyson coach to enjoy a trip to Geelong, Pt Lonsdale and Queenscliff on Thursday 7th April. The Lord was kind to us regarding the weather. The day before it rained 24 hours while Thursday was a 22 deg day with beautiful blue sky in the morning and a bit of clouds in the afternoon, but no rain.

The coach left the car park of St Joseph the Worker Parish Church at 9 am. We travelled through the Princes Highway to Geelong where we stopped for 45 minutes

for morning tea, provided free by the Reskeon committee. Tea and coffee and biscuits were provided as well as the goodies brought by some members.

From there, we got on the Bellarine Highway and travelled to Point Lonsdale with a short stop to enjoy the wonderful views. Then on to our main destination – Queenscliff.

We stopped at the park and there were plenty of tables and benches for our use, while several members brought chairs and tables with them. Some members brought lunch with them while others enjoyed a meal of fish and chips or a meal at one of the Pubs.

After the meal members enjoyed a chat or a walk around to the Pier and other places.

At 3 pm members boarded the coach for the trip back to Reservoir.

Thanks to our Coach Captain, Kevin, for a good and safe trip there and back. Thank him for his patience and friendliness and we hope to get his services in the near future.

Thanks to our members who are always the best and most of all being punctual to be on the coach at the time asked of them. ♦

— Paul Vella, Secretary, Reskeon Maltese Association Seniors Group

Jinżamm il-*Piers Festival* multikulturali tal-2016

Nhar il-Hadd, 3 t'April bejn nofsinhar u s-7 ta' filghaxija nżamm il-*Piers Festival* 2016 fuq Princes Pier, Port Melbourne, organizzat mill-Multicultural Arts Victoria.

Din kienet il-ħamest darba li nżamm dan il-festival annwali, li jiċċelebra l-Princes Pier li ra ħafna emigranti jidhlu fl-Awstralja.

Ħafna nazzjonijiet ħadu sehem kemm bil-kultura tagħhom u ż-żfin u affarijiet kulturali ohra.

Is-sena l-oħra l-Maltin ħadu sehem bi kwadru li ppreparat is-Sinjura Rosemary Attard bl-istorja tal-vjaġġ tagħha u l-familja tagħha fuq il-vapur *Arosa Kulm*. Imma din is-sena, jiddispjċini ngħid, ma ħadu sehem xejn.

Ma nafx jekk dan hux dovut minħabba nuqqas ta' pubbliċità minn qabel għax naf żgur li forsi xi hadd kien jithajjar jagħmel xi haġa. Minn naha tiegħi, jien naf li s-sena li għaddiet għamilt kuntatt mal-organizzaturi biex jgħiduli minn qabel



meta jkun se jinżamm dan il-festival. Imma irċevejt l-informazzjoni jumejn qabel ma nżamm u lanqas kelli ċans inħabbru fuq il-programm tiegħi tal-Gimgha fuq 3ZZZ. Din is-sena nerga' nagħmel kuntatt magħhom.

Għalkemm ma ltqajt ma' hadd Malti, kien hemm ħafna nies ta' nazzjonijiet

ohra. Kien hemm ħafna kwadri bl-istess ta' emigrant, Taljani, Germanizi, mill-Olanda, eċċ. Kien hemm ukoll ħafna varjetà ta' daqq, kant u żfin.

Nisperaw li s-sena d-dieħla jkollna aktar pubbliċità minn qabel. ♦

— Paul Vella

BBQ for Reskeon members at Edwardes Lake Park



As we do every year, around 120 members of the Reskeon Seniors Group enjoyed a barbecue at Edwardes Lake Park, this year held on Wednesday, 10th March.

Weather forecast was for rain, and more rain, with a possibility of a thunderstorm. A few members rang up to see if the barbecue was still on, and when they did that, members of the committee were in the park already making the necessary preparations.

God was looking after us, as the weather held up and allowed us to cook everything in time. The rain held for most of the afternoon and it rained only around 2.30 pm when all the cooking was done and lunch served.

The rain didn't stop members to stay back to have a chat and some were still there until 5 pm.

Our thanks go to our President, Salvina Vella (and Paul), who did all the shopping and meat preparation, to Madeleine Vella, Sylvia Dakin, Phyllis Vella, Vera Sacco and Melita Magro who helped in the preparation of the salads, etc. and also to the cooks on the day: Charles Sacco, Vince Borg, Joe Pace (who cooked all the sausages) while Caesar Vella cooked all the steak.

In no time, all members received the meal of steak and sausages, salads, break, etc. Red and White wine and soft drinks well self-served all day. Tea, coffee and biscuits were available as well.

This was followed by a platter of fruit. There were plenty of cakes and goodies brought by some of the members.

All this was provided for a charge of \$2.

All members enjoyed the day and many approached members of the committee to thank them for the day and for the work they did to prepare all this.

A few requested to organise a similar event in the near future and the committee will try to organise this barbecue more than once a year.

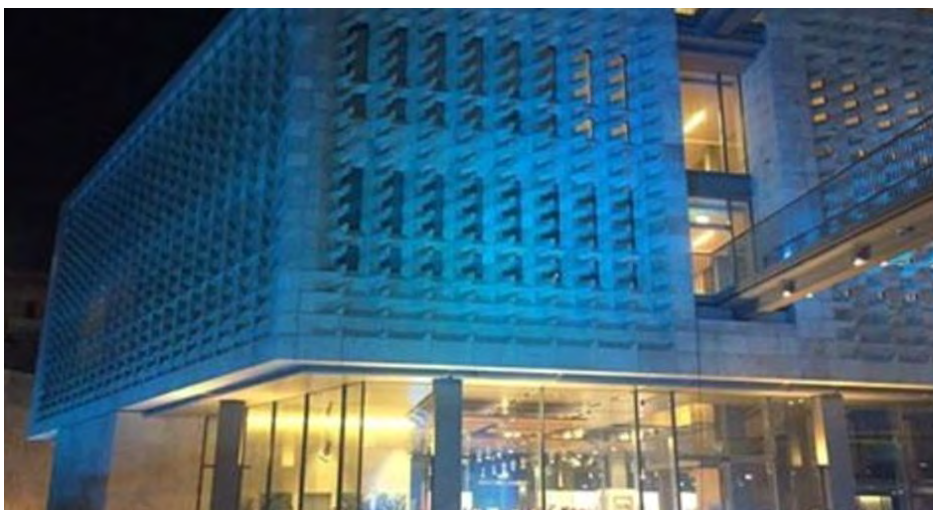
Thanks to our members who once again they attended and helped to make the serving of the meal goes smoothly. ♦

— Paul Vella, Secretary, Reskeon Maltese Association Seniors Group

Maltese Parliament building lit up in blue to raise autism awareness

On Monday 4 April the Maltese Parliament building in Valletta was lit up with blue lights as a symbolic gesture in support of people who suffer from autism. April is the month dedicated to raise awareness on the autism spectrum disorder.

That day's parliamentary session included a debate on a bill aimed at giving give better assistance to those suffering from the condition. ♦



Community Events Calendar

For up-to-date and more detailed information, visit our website at www.mccv.org.au/community-events

APRIL

Sat 30 April @ 6.00 pm	Mother's Day / Feast of the Cross Function – St Helena	Melrose Reception Centre Tullamarine
Sat 30 April @ 6.00 pm	Feast of St George Preca—Holy Mass	Queen of Peace Church 62 Everingham Rd Altona Meadows

MAY

Wed 4 May @ 7.00 pm	MCCV Council Meeting	Maltese Centre Parkville
Fri 6 May @ 6.00 pm	Mother's Day Dinner—Maltese Assoc. Northern Suburbs Inc.	Ferraro Receptions Campbellfield
Sat 14 May @ 4.00 pm	Feast of St George Preca—Eucharist Adoration	Preca Centre Sunshine North
Sat 14 May @ 5.30 pm	Seafood Night—St Gaetan's Society Inc.	St Martin De Porres Avondale Heights
Sat 14 May @ 6.30 pm	Family Get Together—St Helena Maltese Australian	Klabb Ghanneja Maltin St Albans
Thu 19 May @ 12.00 pm	Newport Seniors Luncheon—Newport Maltese Association	TBA
Thu 19 May @ 6.00 pm	Pizza Night—Maltese Assoc. Northern Suburbs Inc.	TBA

JUNE

Wed 1 June @ 7.00 pm	MCCV Council Meeting	Maltese Centre Parkville
Thu 5 June @ 12.00 pm	Comedy Fun Luncheon—Newport Maltese Association	Maltese Centre Parkville
Thu 16 June @ 6.00 pm	Pizza Night—Maltese Assoc. Northern Suburbs Inc.	TBA
Sat 18 June @ 6.30 pm	Family Get Together—St Helena Maltese Australian	Holy Eucharist Hall St Albans
Sun 19 June @ 8.00 am	Day Trip—Maltese Assoc. Northern Suburbs Inc.	TBA



**Special Novena to Our Lady Ta' Pinu,
15 Wednesdays Devotions**
in preparation for the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin
STARTS Wednesday 4th May 2016
@ 11.00a.m

Rosary . Confession followed by Holy Mass
"When you give thanks, when you have particular prayer intentions, and when you seek heavenly protection for your loved ones, it is custom for the faithful to turn to the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church and our Mother." So Come and join the pilgrims to venerate our heavenly mother and seek her intercession as you bring to her your burden, so that you may obtain the graces you seek from her Divine Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ

Our Lady Ta' Pinu Shrine
All Nations Marian Centre
15 Flanagan Drive, Merrimu, Victoria 3340
If you wish to hop on the Keilor-Sunshine-Deer Park shuttle bus
Please contact Maria Cordina on 93827490 or Caroline on 0414503944
Or the office at the Shrine on 53677006



Walking through the Door of Mercy...

Making it to the Shrine on pilgrimage has a special place in the Holy Year of Mercy. It represents the journey each one of us make in this earthly life. Similar to reach the Holy Door of Mercy in Rome, or anywhere in the world, each according to his or her ability has to make a pilgrimage as a sign that mercy...

It is also a goal to be reached through dedication and sacrifice

We therefore invite you to take this opportunity to

Cross the threshold of the Holy Door at Ta Pinu Shrine

to find the strength to embrace the God's Mercy and dedicate oneself to be merciful to others as the father has been with us. [MISERICORDIA VULTUS 14]

TO OBTAIN THE PLENARY INDULGENCE PROMISED BY THE POPE...

1. We **MUST** go on pilgrimage as a sign of true desire to conversion
2. Receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation and celebrate the Holy Eucharist .
3. Recite Pope Francis' prayer for the Holy Year of Mercy

"It will be necessary to accompany those celebrations with the profession of faith, a prayer for me and for the intentions which I bear in my heart for the good of the Church and of the entire world" Pope Francis

To see what's on this month by visiting our website
www.ta-pinu-shrine-australia.org
The Door of Mercy is opened from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. daily
(including weekends and public holidays)

THE MALTA COMMUNITY CHEST FUND MALTESE CHARITY DINNER DANCE

SATURDAY 23RD JULY 2016

6.30PM - 11.30PM

GRAND STAR RECEPTIONS

499 GRIEVE PARADE, ALTONA NORTH, VIC 3025

TICKETS ADULTS \$65 CHILDREN \$40
INCLUDES 4 COURSE MEAL, SOFT DRINKS, BEER & WINE

MALTESE MUSIC - MALTESE BRASS BAND- RAFFLE TICKETS
SILENT AUCTIONS & MAJOR GRAND AUCTION

ENQUIRES & TICKETS
CONTACT: DANIEL 0404 096 560 / LOURDES 0402 813 179 /
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