



# MCCV News

**Maltese Community Council of Victoria, Inc.**

**477 Royal Parade, Parkville, Victoria 3052, AUSTRALIA**

Phone: (03) 9387 8922 | Fax: (03) 9387 8309

Email: [admin@mccv.org.au](mailto:admin@mccv.org.au) | Website: [www.mccv.org.au](http://www.mccv.org.au)

Editor: Dr Edwin Borg-Manché | Sub-Editor: Andrew Gatt

## IN THIS ISSUE

• <a href="#">President's Perspective — The President of Malta's candid and fearless speech</a>	2	• <a href="#">Maltese crib inaugurated at Vatican signifies 'urgent' need for solidarity</a>	9
• <a href="#">Appointment of new Australian High Commissioner to Malta</a>	3	• <a href="#">Book launch of Dr Tonio Borg's acclaimed Commentary on Malta's Constitution</a>	10
• <a href="#">FMLA has a new Board of Management</a>	5	• <a href="#">Maltese DownUnder set to return in 2017 as Community TV licence extended 6 months</a>	11
• <a href="#">President of Malta speaks out against the ills of Maltese society in Republic Day speech</a>	6	• <a href="#">Maltese community mourns the loss of Charles Belli</a>	12
• <a href="#">Malta outlaws 'Conversion Therapy' - a first in Europe</a>	7	• <a href="#">MCCV Planned Activity Group Christmas Party</a>	13
• <a href="#">Pope Francis speaks out: - Pope sends letter to indigenous Australians - 'Never forget to smile, even when life is hard' - Pope Francis turns 80</a>	8	• <a href="#">Laggha Generali Annwali tal-Grupp Letteratura Maltija</a>	14
		• <a href="#">Hu hsieb saħteġ: Meta l-maltemp kważi holoġ epidemija ta' l-azma</a>	15

## Maltese community leaders call for overhaul of SBS Radio criteria

**M**altese community leaders in Victoria and New South Wales presented a joint submission to SBS Radio in response to the draft Language Selection Criteria 2016/17, calling for an overhaul of the draft criteria. In their view, the criteria are “fundamentally flawed, grossly inequitable and unfairly disadvantageous to communities of medium to small size”. They believe that a complete makeover is necessary to ensure a fairer and more equitable distribution of radio broadcasting hours among the communities.

For several years, the Maltese Community Council of Victoria (MCCV) and the Maltese Community Council of New South Wales (MCCNSW) have been working together in the interests of the Maltese community in Australia to fight for a fairer method of distribution of radio broadcast hours on SBS Radio among ethnic communities.

On 14 November 2016 SBS launched a public consultation on the criteria for the SBS Radio Review. The draft criteria are identical to those used in the SBS Radio review conducted in 2012, except for the increase from 20,000 to 25,000 in the threshold population figure that a community must have in order to qualify as a ‘large’ language.

The Maltese community organisations gave several grounds on which they based their call for an overhaul:

- Currently the largest six languages in terms of population size speaking the language at home are allocated 14 hours per week or 2 hours per day air time, which is way too high. This



overgenerous allocation to the larger ethnic groups has resulted in insufficient air time left over to be allocated to the remaining communities to meet their information needs. In the case of one of these six languages, SBS even set up a 24/7 radio station in March 2016 dedicated exclusively to programs in that language, while still retaining the allocation of 14 hours per week accorded to that language under the 2012 SBS Radio schedule review.

- The draft criteria are based on the flawed assumption that the information needs of a community are commensurate with the size of its population. Such an assumption leads to the absurd result that the largest six communities were allocated 14 times more broadcasting hours than the smallest, with some communities even missing out completely.
- Under the draft criteria, the high needs of communities, which exceed the arbitrarily set threshold of 25,000 to qualify as a ‘large’ community, are not taken into account at all. The

draft ‘high needs criteria’ only apply to communities whose population is below that threshold. This is a major flaw in the draft criteria. All communities must be subjected to the ‘high needs’ test as part of the determination of the number of hours they are allocated.

- To make an overgenerous allocation of program hours to ‘large’ communities simply on the basis of their size without applying the ‘high needs’ test to them is to discriminate against the remaining communities who are required to jump the ‘high needs’ hurdle before they can qualify for any program hours.
- In the draft criteria there is too strong a bias in favour of size and not enough importance given to other determining factors listed in the criteria for ‘high needs’ communities, particularly, that of ageing. The right balance can only be achieved if all communities, regardless of size, are subjected to the ‘high needs’ test.

*Continued on page 4*



## President's Perspective

# The President of Malta's candid and fearless speech

**O**n 13 December 2016 Malta celebrated the 42nd Anniversary of Republic Day. In her address to dignitaries, the President of Malta, Her Excellency Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca, expressed great concern about the behaviour in politics referring to a "scarcity of honesty and truth in political life", and difficulties experienced by the financially disadvantaged and youth as well as environment shortcomings (see [report on page 6](#)).

The President should be congratulated on her honesty and candour, and her fearless presentation. She called it as she saw it and, no doubt, spoke loudly and clearly on behalf of the citizens of Malta who, it seems, have had their fill of neglect and abandonment of their personal rights and interests.

The Maltese in Australia would urge the President of Malta to maintain her vigilance in the hope and expectation of a clean-up of the improper behaviour that is slowly corroding the way of life in our beloved country of birth.

In her speech, the President did not make any specific reference to the serious allegations of corrupt practices that were extensively reported in the Maltese and international media over many months. For some time, the Maltese living abroad have expressed their concern at the alleged abuse of power, including the apparent failure of Government to conduct proper investigations into these allegations.

We are aware that Malta has an independent statutory body, the Permanent Commission Against Corruption, set up in 1988, to investigate corrupt practices involving public officers and Ministers. We find it, therefore, rather perplexing and disappointing that the Commission appears not to have shown much interest, let alone take action, in investigating the allegations of corrupt practices and abuse of their office on the part of prominent government figures.

We are also saddened by the level to which Malta's standing overseas, especially within the European Union, has descended. It was so embarrassing to see earlier this year a nomination made by the Maltese government to the European Court of Auditors being rejected.

Many Maltese-Australian visitors to Malta, who previously would have applauded the Maltese way of life and traditions, now return from their country of birth pretty disillusioned and express disbelief at the current disturbing situation in Malta, as candidly described by the President in her speech.

### SBS Submission

On 14 November 2016 SBS published a notice advising its intention to review its allocation of radio broadcasting time in the various languages when the data from the 2016 census is published next year. SBS sought public feedback on a set of draft criteria which it proposed to apply in making its decision.

The only apparent change from the criteria applied in 2012 related to a redefinition of large groups by increasing the number of people speaking a language in their own home from 20,000 to 25,000 people. Smaller communities have to qualify on 'high needs' criteria to be allocated any broadcast hours.

Following a meeting in Melbourne in early December between the MCCV Executive Committee and our counterparts from Sydney, MCCNSW President Emanuel Camilleri and Vice President Laurie Dimech, agreement was reached to present a joint submission to SBS at a meeting via video link-up.

The Victorian delegation for the meeting consisted of myself as MCCV President, Dr Edwin Borg-Manché as MCCV Vice President and Professor Maurice Cauchi MCCV Immediate Past President. During the meeting Dr Borg-Manché outlined the contents of the detailed submission that had been forwarded to SBS on the previous evening.

The submission emphasised the need to overhaul the criteria and suggested amendments to make them fairer and more equitable, particularly towards the smaller communities. It was suggested that the larger groups, currently broadcasting for 2 hours daily (14 hours weekly), should be reduced to 1 hour each day with every language group receiving at least 2 hours every week.

Reference was also made to a number of large communities who are serviced by non SBS broadcast services on a 24/7 basis. It was said that these alternative broadcasts should be balanced against community needs and more broadcasting time becoming available for the smaller communities.

The two Councils also criticised SBS for being wasteful in participating in the Eurovision Song Contest which is of no relevance to the Australian ethnic communities.

More details about the submission are published in this issue of MCCV News. The Maltese community will be advised of the outcome of the submission next year but not before July 2017.

### Political correctness gone mad

There has been considerable debate of late regarding political correctness in relation to the celebration of Christmas. It seems to have become trendy in some quarters to use the politically correct 'Happy Holidays' greeting instead 'Happy Christmas'. There are some who believe that, in view of the cultural diversity of the Australian population, we should remove any reference to the religious significance in celebrating Christmas festivities.

It is hard to understand why the Australian community, which boasts of being a multicultural, tolerant society, respectful of all religions and backgrounds of its residents, should find it necessary to remove references to the religious aspects of our Christmas traditions. I totally agree with Federal Immigration Minister Peter Dutton, who recently, in a talkback radio interview, called for Australians to "rise up" to defend Christmas against what he labelled "political correctness gone mad".

### Christmas Celebrations

The Maltese community in Australia celebrates Christmas in traditional Maltese style. Typically a midnight mass is celebrated by Maltese priests. This is preceded by Maltese Christmas carols taught to us by our parents at a young age and the traditional Christmas sermon recited in Maltese by a child, which evokes unforgettable memories of our childhood.

Christmas is a great family event with the extended family coming together for lunch at the family home, where Maltese delicacies are served. During the Christmas break many Maltese families head for their holiday houses by the sea to enjoy *ħobż biż-żejt* with fresh tomatoes, tomato paste, tuna, anchovies, olives and capers.

On behalf of the MCCV, I wish every member of the Maltese community in Australia and our many readers here and overseas, best wishes for a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

**Victor Borg**  
MCCV President

## Appointment of new Australian High Commissioner to Malta announced

**O**n 14 November 2016 the Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Hon. Julie Bishop, announced the appointment of Ms Julianne Hince (pictured right), a career diplomat, as Australia's next High Commissioner to Malta. Ms Hince will also have non-resident accreditation to Tunisia.

In her statement published on the Ministry's website, Ms Bishop said that "Australia and Malta enjoy close ties. The relationship is built on strong people-to-people links, a common parliamentary system and our membership of the Commonwealth. We also share a strong commitment to the promotion of international peace, security and prosperity.

"Australia looks forward to working with Malta and other members of the European Union as we progress towards an Australia-EU Free Trade Agreement, which will expand our trade and investment, and boost prosperity in our countries.

"The visit to Australia of H.E. Ms Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca, President of the Republic of Malta in July 2016 helped forge new connections and strengthen foundations on which to develop future cooperation.

"Australia has long been a strong supporter of Tunisia's transition to democracy. We cooperate on a range of important issues, including regional security in North Africa, to address the challenges of terrorism and foreign fighters," said Ms Bishop.

Ms Bishop thanked outgoing High Commissioner Ms Jane Lambert for her significant contribution to advancing Australia's interests in Malta since 2013.



**Ms Julianne Hince** is a career officer with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and was most recently Director, South America and Council on Australia-Latin America Relations Section, DFAT. She was Deputy Director of the DFAT Victorian State Office and Director of the DFAT Northern Territory Office.

Ms Hince has served overseas as Deputy Head of Mission, Athens, with earlier postings in Bangladesh and Germany. Ms Hince holds a Graduate Diploma in Foreign Affairs from the Australian National University and a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Melbourne. ♦

## MCCV meeting with representatives from MCCNSW

Two representatives from the Maltese Community Council of New South Wales, Emanuel Camilleri (President) and Lawrence Dimech (Public Relations Officer) travelled to Melbourne in early December. During their visit they met with members of the MCCV Executive Committee at the Maltese community centre in Parkville.

Foremost among the topics discussed was the joint submission that the two organisations were planning to submit to SBS Radio on the draft criteria published for public consultation.

This meeting continued to strengthen the relationship and ties between the two councils in the interest of the Maltese communities in Australia. ♦



*Standing in the back from left: Andrew Gatt, Rita Pullicino, Lawrence Dimech and Emanuel Camilleri. Sitting from left, Joseph Stafrace, Dr Edwin Borg-Manché, Victor Borg, Professor Maurice Cauchi and Rosemary Attard.*



## Maltese community leaders call for overhaul of SBS Radio criteria

*Continued from page 1*

- Basing criteria for eligibility to radio broadcasting hours so heavily on census data relating to the number of persons in a community, who stated in their census form that they speak their native language at home, is a flawed and unfair way to allocate radio time. Much more emphasis should be placed on the specific needs of a particular ethnic community.
- The draft criteria do not take into account the fact that the larger ethnic groups have many other non-SBS sources of information in their own language, including direct ongoing broadcasts from their country of origin. An adjustment should be made to reduce the number of SBS radio hours allocated to a community which has the luxury of such services.
- The draft criteria do not take into account the size of the ethnic community audience actually listening to their respective SBS Radio programs when allocating the number of hours to the various communities. The number of radio listeners from the largest communities, which have the luxury of other comprehensive non-SBS sources of information, is likely not to be as high as that from the smaller communities. This is because, for smaller communities like the Maltese, such a quality information service tailored to the specific needs of a community can only be obtained through SBS radio's language program, as there is no other service of equivalent quality available to them broadcasting in their language.

The MCCV and MCCNSW also complained about the complete lack of transparency in relation to the exact methodology used to apply the criteria in allocating the number of radio broadcasting hours to communities. The criteria document should include clear information on the methodology.

The two community organisations proposed a set of basic principles that should underpin the overhaul of the criteria to make them more equitable and fairer:

- The same set of criteria should be applied to all communities regardless of the size of their overseas-born and/or language speaking population in Australia.
- An appropriate weighting and scoring methodology should be developed, agreed and applied to each criterion in order to rank the languages and their respective community needs.
- A maximum number of broadcasting hours for any language should be set at not more than seven hours per week in order to free up sufficient air time to adequately meet the information needs of the several medium to small sized communities and be accommodated within the limited resources available.
- A minimum number of broadcasting hours for any language should be set at not less than two hours per week to adequately service the information needs of the small communities.
- Communities with a large proportion of elderly members over 65 years of age, who are not internet savvy and are unable to benefit from the use of the SBS digital platform services and social media, should be compensated with more radio air time.

In their joint submission the MCCV and MCCNSW proposed a set of criteria and weightings for the scoring of all communities without exception in the allocation of radio broadcasting hours.

In addition to population size in terms of language spoken at home (15% weighting); English language proficiency (15%); ageing (20%); recentness of arrival (10%); and household income (10%), they proposed two new criteria: availability of non-SBS sources of broadcast media in the language of a community (20%); and listenership levels for SBS Radio programs in the language of a community (10%).

The MCCV and MCCNSW also proposed a scoring scale to rate all communities without exception against the proposed criteria. The aggregated weighted score for each community would be used to rank communities and languages from highest to lowest. The

allocation of radio broadcasting hours and digital services to the various community languages would then be based on the application of the aggregated weighted score for a community within the parameters of the proposed basic principles.

The MCCV and MCCNSW stressed that it is critical that SBS set an adequate budget for its radio program services in the ethnic community languages, which the organisation was primarily set up to serve.

In their joint submission, the two organisations severely criticised SBS for complaining about government funding cuts but then being able to find significant funds to: finance its highly expensive but totally inappropriate participation in the annual Eurovision Song Contest; set up a 24/7 Food Network TV station in 2015 dedicated to cooking and food shows which SBS sources from the USA; establish a 24/7 Arabic radio station in March 2016; and win an expensive auction against the Nine Network for commercial content to secure content owned by US cable channel *Viceland* in October 2016.

The funding of these expensive SBS initiatives contrasts sharply with the mean-spirited decision taken by SBS in July 2015, when it decided to discontinue the two hours of Maltese radio programs on the digital network that were added in April 2013 after persistent representations were made by the MCCV and MCCNSW. SBS had given its funding situation as the reason for these cuts and had explained that its funding no longer permitted the provision of these additional services.

The MCCV and MCCNSW questioned the latest commercial projects undertaken by SBS in the past couple of years, which would appear to be in violation of the SBS Charter, as provided in the *Special Broadcasting Services Act 1991*. They also complained about SBS abandoning a number of ethnic communities by directing its funds to purposes other than those it was intended to serve. 💧



Federation of Maltese Living Abroad

## New Committee elected to run FMLA

**E**lections for a new Committee to run the Federation of Maltese Living Abroad (FMLA) for the next two years were recently held and the results have been published. The members of the Committee are as follows:

**President:** Kristian Bonnici - Australasia

**Directors:**

- Edwin Bonello - Australasia;
- Andrew Bonello - Australasia
- Sergio Bonnici - Australasia
- Claudia Caruana - USA/Canada;
- Brian Ciappara - USA/Canada
- Irene Cooper - Australasia

New FMLA President, Kristian Bonnici, was born in Malta and was raised in Cospicua and Zabbar and now lives in Melbourne, Australia, was a career diplomat. He worked in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Malta. After completing his training, Kristian was sent on several assignments and tours of diplomatic duty in Europe, Asia, Africa and Australia. He served as Deputy Head of Mission at the Embassy in Cairo and High Commission in Canberra. In Melbourne, Kristian set up a migration agency DEC (Diplomatic Envoy Consultancy) Migration ([www.decmigration.com](http://www.decmigration.com)), assisting people who wish to emigrate to Australia.

### About FMLA

The FMLA is a democratic, ground roots and independent organisation, whose President and Committee members are elected every two years by Maltese associations that form its membership. Any person of Maltese extraction can be nominated to participate in the elections. The FMLA believes that it is important to ensure dissemination of information and interaction with members as well as the general public.

The first documented need for an umbrella organisation for the Maltese



New FMLA President Kristian Bonnici

Diaspora was highlighted by one of the most famous sons of Maltese living abroad, namely the Maltese-French writer, Laurent Ropa, back in the 1930s. Mr. Ropa introduced the idea that Maltese writers around the world should form an association to promote the Maltese language and writing in particular.

The first real attempt, however, to form such an organisation occurred at the Convention for Leaders of Maltese Abroad held in 2000, organised by the Migrants Commission in Malta. A loose federation (Federation of Maltese Abroad - FOMA) was created and committee members were elected.

At the subsequent Convention of Maltese Living Abroad held in March 2010, a group of delegates discussed recommendations and terms for revamping the old FOMA, resulting in the formation of a new organisation, namely, the Federation for Maltese Living Abroad (FMLA). During that convention three officers were elected to organise formal elections which were carried out in December 2011. Professor Maurice Cauchi from Melbourne, Australia, was elected as its first president. At elections held in December 2013, Albert Vella from Torono, Canada, was elected President.

### The aims of FMLA

The main purpose of the FMLA is to represent Maltese organisations, as well as individuals throughout the

world, to give them a voice, and to inform them about developments of interest to the Diaspora. The FMLA acts as a communications channel for the hundreds of Maltese organisations which currently may not have the means or framework to do so.

Within the first term of the FMLA, a formal constitution was developed. A newsletter was established and circulated widely. A website was also set up with the aim of disseminating information of interest to the Maltese living abroad and facilitating feedback from readers.

It is estimated that the FMLA had a total of 46 affiliated member associations with a combined membership of close to 10,000. These facilitated the spread of relevant information, and it also served as a repository of important data not available elsewhere.

### FMLA and CMLA

Some of our readers would be aware there is another organisation, the Council for Maltese Living Abroad (CMLA) but may not appreciate the difference between the FMLA and the CMLA.

As explained above, the FMLA consists of elected members who represent the various organisations representing Maltese around the world. On the other hand, the CMLA is a statutory body that the Maltese Government set up in 2011 through an Act of Parliament. The Council's members are appointed by the Maltese Government and they represent the Maltese diaspora living across the globe. One of its primary functions is to advise the Minister for Foreign Affairs in Malta on issues relating to Maltese living abroad. ♦

# President of Malta speaks out against the ills of Maltese society in Republic Day speech

In a speech to mark the 42nd anniversary of Malta becoming a Republic, the President of Malta, H.E. Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca departed from the typical style of presidential speeches and used the Republic Day investiture ceremony to speak against the ills of Maltese society. In her speech, she warned against the mounting threats of greed, racism, increasing poverty and the dwindling environment.

"Material shortcomings, social exclusion, the threat to the quality of life resulting in development which is not always sustainable; the overcrowding of residential areas; the limitation of public spaces; noise and traffic delays; and the scarcity of honesty and truth in political life, are among the issues of concern."

During the past 12 months, tension in Malta has increased and those "regarded as alien", continued to flourish, she said in an admonishing speech against online demagoguery and hate speech.

Addressing the dignitaries who gathered at the Palace, President Coleiro-Preca did not mince her words: "I must say that I am sincerely concerned about the behaviour of politicians in our country," said the former Social Policy Minister.

Children and youths are voicing their disappointment at the way our politicians are behaving towards each other, setting bad examples when they should be role models.

The situation was so bad that it was forcing valid people to shy away from public service.

"Unrestrained partisanship and populism lower the esteem that should be shown towards politics... Unrestrained partisanship and populism cause rifts among people, instead of being an instrument of unity and respect towards diversity."

Whatever achievements politicians managed to attain, whatever laws they strove to enact for the benefit of all, were soon shot down through a smear campaign of accusations and counter-accusations, calling of names, insinuations, digging into personal lives and mudslinging.

But it was also "morally and ethically unacceptable" that sections of the traditional media, bloggers and individuals were making use of social media to attack the private lives of persons and their family to appease some people and generate hate, she said.

Freedom of expression does not give the right to threaten anyone's human rights, including respect for family life, and to privacy.

"As a nation, we cannot accept such obscenity. It is disgraceful for any person



President Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca delivering her speech

doing it." She reiterated her appeal to all political parties, public entities and all people of goodwill, to dissociate themselves publicly from these individuals.

"I also wish that everyone would think about and reflect before believing every word that is reported in the media... We need to invest much more in media education, not only for children and young people, but also for adults."

Dr Coleiro-Preca, a champion for migrants' rights, said she believed Malta should continue to host all those who live among us, or those who come to visit us, with the utmost love and respect.

The comment is seen as a direct criticism of the government's recent decision to deport a number of African migrants who had been living in Malta for a number of years.

"I am morally convinced that we should appreciate, and not condemn, persons who are helping to build our prosperity, and who form part of our society, by sending them back."

In reference to the deluge of racist online comments, she insisted Malta should not tolerate any manifestation of hatred, internal conflict or the domination of one culture over another.

"If we are going to protest, we will protest against xenophobia, racism, social exclusion and the exploitation of workers for profit. If we are going to celebrate, we will applaud the increase of civil rights, laws which are less discriminatory, laws which protect a life of quality; which safeguard human dignity; and which promote economic, cultural and social inclusion as well as equal opportunities for all."

"Those who present demographic and economic reasons normally make provision for a calm, mature and reasoned debate. But the same cannot be said for those who embrace racist views," she told those present at the Palace.

While applauding the economic progress in Malta, she noted with regret that a

considerable number of families are still struggling to make ends meet.

"It is immoral to reduce people who have always worked hard and those who genuinely are not able to work, to the brink of poverty or to a perpetual state of destitution."

She added that exploitation should have no roots in a truly ethical and moral structure, and therefore correct practice in this sector calls for the exploitation of these workers to be seriously condemned by the competent authorities.

The President hoped that the public dialogue and discussions on the minimum wage will lead to concrete action shortly. The precarious worker, living in a state of constant uncertainty, cannot wait any longer.

She said it was unacceptable that women are not paid the same wage as their male counterparts for the same line of work.

Statistics by Eurostat indicate that the difference in wage for the same work between women and men is 11 per cent lower for women.

She insisted it is the State's obligation to ensure that the citizens of this country have access to habitable spaces with social rates. As the burden on individuals and families in this sector continues to increase, the competent authorities should step up the projects of new buildings as well as the refurbishment of existing buildings for social accommodation.

President Coleiro Preca also spoke in detail about the threat of unbridled construction, stressing that not every legal development can be considered as acceptable development in the light of quality of life and the protection of biodiversity.

"I am convinced that the tension in the environment sector would be greatly reduced if dialogue and the quality of our life, and that of future generations, are put at the centre of the planning and development process.

Children constantly complain about the lack of open spaces where they can play and that this has impoverished their lives. Children also share their concerns regarding air pollution from traffic emissions as well as noise pollution.

If we persist on this trajectory, future generations will not pay us homage. We cannot continue to enjoy the present moment with complete disregard to the rights of future generations.

"Therefore, I appeal for diligence and integrity in the planning sector and for the absolute recognition that people come before profits." ♦

[Source: [timesofmalta.com](http://timesofmalta.com)]



# Malta outlaws ‘Conversion Therapy’ — a first in Europe

By Liam Stack

7 December 2016

Malta has become the first European country to criminalize therapeutic methods that purport to change a person’s sexual orientation or gender identity, the government and activist groups said.

That measure was one aspect of far-reaching legislation approved by Parliament on Monday that also includes provisions that support transgender rights. In a [statement](#), the government said the two bills “prohibit the pathologization of any sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression.”

**The first bill** focused on so-called *conversion therapy*, a discredited collection of quasi-psychoanalytic methods that aim to change a person’s sexual orientation or gender identity. It is also sometimes known as “reparative therapy” or, when religious methods are used, “ex-gay ministry.”

Conversion therapy has been increasingly in the spotlight in the weeks since Donald J. Trump won the United States presidential election because of speculation that his running mate, Vice President-elect Mike Pence, [supports the practice](#). Mr. Pence has denied that is the case.

In Malta, the new law imposes fines and jail terms “on those advertising, offering, performing or referring an individual to another person which performs” any practice “which aims to change, repress or eliminate a person’s sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression.” It said “no sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression constitutes a disorder, disease or shortcoming of any sort.”

*Malta Today*, a local media organization, reported that violators would face fines as high as \$5,383 or five months in jail.

**The second bill** focused on gender identity and the rights of transgender people.

It lowered the age at which people can change their gender on government documents without the consent of a parent or guardian to 16 from 18.



The President’s Palace in St George’s Square, Valletta, in 2014. Malta has been praised for its record on gay and transgender rights. [Credit Matthew Mirabelli/AFP—Getty Images]

The measure also allows what the government called “non-Maltese individuals who are currently detained in gender segregated facilities” to secure an affidavit attesting to their gender identity which can then be used to request housing that accords with that identity instead of the gender on their birth certificate.

Malta is the smallest European Union member state by population, with just over 420,000 people, and it has been praised for its record on gay and transgender rights before.

In a [report](#) issued in May, the European arm of the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association called the country, which lies in the Mediterranean between Italy and Libya, the most gay-friendly in Europe.

“With the adoption of these bills Malta continues to be at the forefront of trans rights in Europe,” Transgender Europe, an advocacy group, said in a [statement](#).

Graeme Reid, the director of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Rights Program at Human Rights Watch, said he believed Malta was the first European country to enact a ban on conversion therapy, although he said others regulate the practice through other means, including professional medical associations.

“Any psychiatric treatment that sets out to change sexual orientation or gender identity is not only wrongheaded, but harmful,” he said.

Both measures were supported by a range of mental health organizations in Malta, including the Malta Chamber of Psychologists and the Maltese Association of Psychiatry.

In a [statement](#), the groups said they were “very proud to have played an integral part in the drafting of this bill, which openly disapproves of practices which are harmful to people in our community.”

[New York Times](#)

## 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](mailto:pro@mccv.org.au) or alternatively by post to: **The Editor—MCCV News, Maltese Community Council of Victoria, 477 Royal Parade, PARKVILLE VIC 3052**



## News from the Vatican

## Pope Francis speaks out

Compiled by Rev. Charles Borg-Manché from Vatican Radio sources

## Pope sends letter to indigenous Australians

**29 Nov.** Pope Francis has sent a letter on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of St John Paul II's words to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Alice Springs, Australia on 29 November 1986.

The [letter](#) was sent to the Chairperson of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Catholic Council (NATSICC), John Lochowiak, by the Apostolic Nuncio to Canberra Archbishop Adolfo Tito Yllana.

The Holy Father writes that, "this anniversary affords me the happy opportunity to express my deep esteem for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and for your ancient cultural heritage". He also draws from the words of Pope John II which stress, "your culture, which shows the lasting genius and dignity of your race, must not be allowed to disappear. Do not think that your gifts are worth so little that you should no longer bother to maintain them. Share them with each other and teach them to your children. Your songs, your stories, your paintings, your dances, your languages, must never be lost."

In July the Pope's prayer intention was for [Respect for Indigenous Peoples](#).

## 'Never forget to smile, even when life is hard'

**7 Dec.** For Pope Francis, one of most needed virtues of modern time is hope, which is something he said must never be abandoned no matter how hard life gets, and which is often expressed in the simple act of a smile.

Referring to the "dramatic moment" of Israel's exile in the desert, Pope Francis said that this time was especially hard for the people because they had lost everything, and felt "abandoned and without hope."

The desert is a difficult place to live, he said, but noted that it is precisely inside the desert that the people of Israel are able to walk in order to return "not only to their homeland, but to return to God, and to hope and smile again."

"When we are in darkness and difficulty the smile doesn't come, but there is the hope that teaches us to smile on that path to find God," Francis said, noting that one of the trademarks of those who break away from God is "the absence of the smile, the smile of the hope of finding God."

Perhaps these people know how to "have a good laugh" or make jokes, but they are missing the smile that only God knows how to give, the Pope continued.



Life, he said, "is often a desert, it's hard to walk in it, but if we entrust ourselves to God it can become beautiful and wide like a highway."

"It's enough to never lose hope, it's enough to continue to believe, always, despite everything," he said, noting that often when we find ourselves in front of a child, "there is a spontaneous smile because a child is hope."

"Let us also smile even if it was a difficult day, because we see the hope."

Preparing this path, Francis said, "means to prepare a path of salvation and liberation from every obstacle and stumbling block."

When Isaiah says that he is the voice "of one crying out in the desert: prepare the way of the Lord," the Pope noted that it's a voice that seems to be crying out in a place where "no one is listening" and which mourns "the loss owed to the crisis of faith."

However, he stressed that the true story is not the one made by the powerful who are seen by the world, "but rather the one made by God together with his little ones."

Zachariah and Elizabeth were elderly and "marked by infertility," and Mary was a young virgin betrothed to Joseph, while the shepherds who met the infant Jesus "were despised and didn't count for anything," the Pope observed.

"It is the small ones, made great by their faith, the little ones who know how to continue to hope," he said, adding that it is they who are able to transform "the desert of exile, of desperate loneliness, of suffering, into a level road on which to walk to meet the glory of the Lord."

"Let us therefore teach hope, let us look

forward faithfully to the coming of the Lord and whatever the desert of our lives, it will become a flowery garden."

## Pope Francis turns 80



Pope Francis blows out candles on a cake for his 78th birthday two years ago

**17 Dec.** Pope Francis celebrated his 80th birthday today. Three years ago Pope Francis described retired Pope Benedict XVI as being like a wise grandfather, although there is less than 10 years' difference in their ages; today, Pope Francis tends to include himself in the category of grandfatherly figures.

"You, or better we — because I, too, am one of you — are called to work for the development of a culture of life, witnessing that every stage of existence is a gift from God and has its own beauty and importance, even if it is marked by fragility," the pope told a meeting of 7,000 Italian grandparents last October.

For the Catholic hierarchy, 80 is a significant age. When cardinals turn 80, they are no longer members of the Vatican congregations and councils they served, even in retirement, and they cease to be eligible to enter a conclave to elect a new pope. 💧



## Maltese crib inaugurated at Vatican signifies 'urgent' need for solidarity



A luzzu boat forming part of a Maltese crib at the Vatican signifies the “urgent appeal” for a generous commitment of welcome to those crossing the Mediterranean in search of our solidarity, Archbishop Charles Scicluna told the Pope during a presentation on 9 December.

“We find the *luzzu*, a colourful boat of our fishermen. It represents all the boats and ships that crossed our millennial history: invasions and rescues, fishing and piracy, emigration and immigration: shadows and light,” Mgr Scicluna said during the presentation at the Vatican.

In a brief speech, Pope Francis likened the plight of migrants crossing the Mediterranean to the scene of the nativity, with Mary and Joseph turned away and forced to give birth to Jesus in a Bethlehem manger, “before being taken to Egypt to escape Herod’s threats.”

The Christmas tree and Nativity scene are symbols of God’s love and hope, reminding us to contemplate the beauty of creation and welcome the marginalised, the Pope said. Nativity scenes all over the world “are an invitation to make room in our life and

society for God — hidden in the gaze of so many people” who are living in need, poverty or suffering, he told people involved in donating the tree and creche for St Peter’s Square.

The northern Italian province of Trent donated the 82-foot-tall spruce fir, which was adorned with ceramic ornaments handmade by children receiving medical treatment at several Italian hospitals.

The 55-foot-wide Nativity scene was donated by the government and Archdiocese of Malta. It is the first time a foreign state set up a crib in St Peter’s Square.

The crib features 17 figures dressed in traditional Maltese attire as well as replica of a Maltese boat to represent the seafaring traditions of the island.

The boat also represents “the sad and tragic reality of migrants on boats headed toward Italy,” the Pope said in his speech in the Vatican’s Paul VI hall.

“In the painful experience of these brothers and sisters, we revisit that (experience) of baby Jesus, who at the time of his birth did not find accommodation and was born in a grotto in Bethlehem and then was brought to Egypt to escape Herod’s threat.”

“Those who visit this crèche will be invited to rediscover its symbolic value, which is a message of fraternity, sharing, welcoming and solidarity,” the Pope said.

The beauty of the pristine forests of northern Italy where the tree grew “is an invitation to contemplate the creator and to respect nature,” he said, adding that “we are all called to approach creation with contemplative awe.”

The Nativity scene and tree will remain in St. Peter’s Square until the feast of the Lord’s Baptism on January 9.

The crib designed by Gozitan Manwel Grech includes typical characteristics of the Maltese countryside, including architecture, flora and fauna, as well as traditional figures.

Among the statuettes of this year’s Nativity crib is a figure of St George Preca, who had encouraged his catechists to give a small grotto with the Baby Jesus to all the girls and boys attending catechism classes because he wanted to ensure the presence of the Nativity crib in the heart of every family.💧

[Sources: [timesofmalta.com](http://timesofmalta.com) and [www.catholicerald.co.uk](http://www.catholicerald.co.uk)]

## Book launch of Dr Tonio Borg's acclaimed Commentary on Malta's Constitution

A 700-page master work, *A Commentary on the Constitution of Malta*, authored by former Deputy Prime Minister of Malta, Dr Tonio Borg, and published by the Kite Group, was launched at the President's Palace in Valletta on 18th October 2016. The book has received favourable comments by eminent jurists, such as, Judge Emeritus of the European Court Dr Giovanni Bonello, and the Dean of the Faculty of Laws at the University of Malta, Professor Kevin Aquilina.

This is the first analysis of the Constitution of Malta, article by article, a study of the landmark judgments of the Maltese Constitutional Court and an introduction to Maltese Constitutional law. Even though most of the jurisprudence of Malta's highest court has hovered around the human right articles of Chapter IV of the Constitution, the author comments on all the one hundred and twenty four articles, with references to authors, jurisprudence and practices.

This is an authentic compendium of laws, practices and judgments on Maltese Constitutional law and the first work of its kind which has already received acclaim by well-known Maltese jurists.

### Excerpts from the book's Introduction

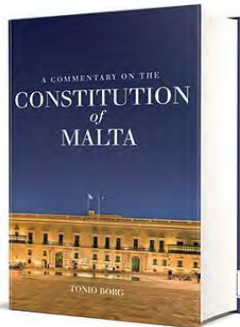
*This following are some passages taken from the book's Introduction written by Prof Kevin Aquilina.*

Tonio Borg's *A Commentary on the Constitution of Malta* is the most detailed book published so far on the Constitution of Malta as it comments, section by section, upon the constitution's provisions.

The approach that Borg has adopted differs from that used by other authors ranging from J.J. Cremona to David Attard. In his volume, Cremona studies the Constitution primarily from a historical perspective. On the other hand, Attard's monograph is more interested in disseminating knowledge of Constitutional Law to the ordinary reader.

These are the pluses of Cremona's and Attard's works. Borg, however, adopts a different, and unique, style. His monograph, on the lines of the Indian author Burga Das Basu, provides the reader with a commentary on each and every single provision of the constitution, rather than having recourse to a thematic approach. Both approaches are academically valid.

That adopted by Borg, undoubtedly, complements previous written works and is not a duplication of what has already been published in the realm of constitutional and human rights law.



The textual commentary is prefaced with a discussion, in brief, of the historical development of Maltese Constitutional Law, its sources and main doctrines which pervade it such as those of separation of powers, rule of law, etc. Indeed, Borg did well not to dwell on such aspects of constitutional law at great depth once the books of Cremona, Attard and others are quite exhaustive on these aspects.

Borg does bring a new dimension to the study of the Constitution of Malta in this book. He has lived the constitution on which he is commenting upon. He has served as Minister, Deputy Prime Minister, Acting Prime Minister, Leader of the House, Deputy Leader of the Nationalist Party, Member of Parliament, member of the Nationalist Party Parliamentary Group, lawyer in private practice engaged in human rights litigation and, later, as EU Commissioner.

Parallel to all these public offices he has held during his successful political career, Borg has also been a visiting senior lecturer at the Faculty of Laws of the University of Malta, where he has been lecturing, since 1989, constitutional law and human rights law.

Thus, this commentary benefits from both his academic grounding in the law, his past exercise of the profession of advocate and his experience in the two organs of the state – the legislature and the executive – which play a pivotal role in all constitution making.

In this monograph, therefore, he has brilliantly managed to bring together in a

harmonious way all these aspects in which he has excelled to the benefit of the reader of his work.

A landmark feature which this volume exhibits is that it is very much case law driven. Borg does not simply comment on the constitution's provisions through his reflections, readings and direct experience in the field, but refers constantly and incessantly to every single decided case related to the provision he is commenting upon.

His work has ample reference to decisions of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, the European Commission of Human Rights, the European Court of Human Rights, foreign courts and national courts.

Needless to say, great emphasis is placed on the jurisprudential activity of Maltese courts – in particular the Constitutional Court – in relation to the constitution's interpretation. Yet, although the book is titled *A Commentary on the Constitution of Malta*, the monograph is replete with references to Maltese legislation in general and Maltese constitutional law in particular.

For, not all of Maltese constitutional law is contained in the Constitution. Borg, indeed, dispels such a thought by thorough reference to a multiplicity of ordinary primary constitutional laws which supplement the provisions of the Constitution of Malta.

Copies of the book are available from the [Kite website](#).



## Maltese DownUnder set to return in 2017 as Community TV licence is extended for 6 months



Community television station Channel 31 (C31) has been granted a six-month extension to broadcast into 2017. The Federal Government had earlier decided to bring 22 years of community television broadcasting in Australia to an end this December. However, its decision to terminate the licence for community TVs still stands.

In September 2014 Malcolm Turnbull, Communications Minister at the time, had informed community TV stations that they would have to move online to free up valuable spectrum.

C31 Head of Production, Shane Dunlop, explains that "In 2014 we were told it would be the end of 2014 which was 3 months [notice]. Then it was the end of 2015 and we had a big campaign, and got the extension to the end of 2016. At which point they told us that would be it ... don't come back and ask again."

A statement from Communications Minister Mitch Fifield's office issued on 12 December 2016 called the extension "a transition". "Following consultation with CTV broadcasters operating terrestrial services, the Government will allow these services that wish to take up the extension until the end of June 2017 to transition to an online environment."

Channel 31 is expected to migrate solely to an online presence when it finally loses its broadcast licence.

Staffed by volunteers, the community network broadcasts via TVS Sydney, C31 Melbourne and Geelong, 31 Digital Brisbane, 44 Adelaide and WTV Perth.

### Maltese DownUnder

The decision to extend the licence until the end of June 2017 was welcomed by Channel 31 and community TV producers, including Marlene Scicluna and Mark Avellino, the producers of the popular community TV show *Maltese DownUnder*.



Photo supplied by Mark Avellino Photography

Maltese DownUnder producers Mark Avellino and Marlene Scicluna

Community TV show *Maltese DownUnder* is now set to return to Melbourne's C31 (channel 44) for another season in 2017 if there is sufficient community support.

*Maltese DownUnder* was first screened on C31 in February 2016 on Sundays at 4pm with a repeat Tuesdays at 3pm for seasons 1 and 2, then 2.30pm for season 3. The show is also streamed live via [www.c31.org.au/series/1313](http://www.c31.org.au/series/1313) and most of the shows are still available on demand via the same link.

*Maltese DownUnder* has viewers from all over Australia, New Zealand, Malta, Belgium, UK, USA and Canada; this definitely helped make the show the second most popular online on C31, after only a few weeks of production.

*Maltese DownUnder* can only be produced with financial support from sponsors and voluntary donations, as production comes with a lot of expenses, including broadcast fees and editing.

Producers Marlene Scicluna and Mark Avellino are currently waiting on updates for the new schedule and processes from C31 with regards to this new development. Both Marlene and Mark filmed and produced three seasons of *Maltese DownUnder* on a voluntary basis. They are happy to produce another season of *Maltese DownUnder* on C31, but they say "it is now up to the

community and Maltese Associations to decide whether or not to support the show financially!"

The cost of producing one show is \$950, consisting of broadcast fees of \$200, travel for filming and interviewing of \$400 and editing and packing show of \$350. For a season of 13 shows, the cost amounts to \$12,650.

The Maltese Community Council of Victoria was proud to be one of the sponsors of the show for season 2 and then again for season 3, in collaboration with Newport Maltese Association.

The producers are currently seeking sponsors to be able to fund another season of *Maltese DownUnder*. They are inviting Maltese associations to donate \$200 for one season in 2017.

Sponsorships range from **Gold** (limited to 4 sponsors) at \$1,250 for one season of 13 weeks providing 15 seconds animated logo plus logo & mention on billboard; **Silver** (limited to 6) \$500 providing logo and mention on billboard at start of show; and **Bronze** (Maltese Associations) \$200 providing logo on billboard.

Any Maltese association, business or individual interested in sponsoring *Maltese DownUnder* may contact Marlene on 0401 078 162 or Mark on 0416 015 266 or by email to: [maltesetv@gmail.com](mailto:maltesetv@gmail.com).



## Maltese community mourns the loss of Charles Belli

**T**he Maltese community in Victoria is mourning the sad loss of one of its prominent members, Charles Belli, who passed away on Sunday 18 December 2016, aged 84 years. The Rosary and a Funeral Mass will be offered for the repose of his soul at St Thomas More Catholic Church, 69 North Street, Hadfield on Friday 23 December 2016 at 11.30 am. The Funeral will leave at the conclusion of Mass for burial at Northern Memorial Park, Box Forest Rd, Glenroy.

Charles had a heart of gold, always ready to help whoever sought his assistance. He was a very active volunteer at the Maltese Centre looking after the MCCV Library in Parkville.

For many years Charles edited and published the MCCV newsletter and also maintained the MCCV website. He also had his own website [www.charbell.com](http://www.charbell.com), which is still accessible on the internet. It contains many links that are of particular interest to Maltese living abroad, including online links to Maltese TV and radio stations. He had another webpage at <http://www.users.on.net/~charbell/wm.htm> with links to back issues of the popular but discontinued TV program series *Waltzing Matilda* by Josephine Zammit Cordina.

Charles Joseph Belli was born on the 5 July 1932. He was educated at St Aloysius College in Malta. He arrived in Australia in 1954 aged 22 years. He married his wife Doris on the 17 September 1955. They have three children, Raymond, Anthony and Yvonne, seven grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

Charles and his wife built their home in West Street, Glenroy, where they raised their family and have resided since. Shortly after arriving in Australia Charles continued with his education and obtained a Certificate of Civil and Civic Industrial Chemistry (Oxford) at RMIT Melbourne and a Certificate of Business Management at Melbourne University.



Charles worked for over 8 years as Production Assistant and later Production Manager with the Commonwealth Aircraft Corporation. Later he spent almost 20 years at Port Philip Mills in Melbourne as Dye House Manager and Centre Controller.

Charles served on various sport and social committees in Malta and in Melbourne. For some 30 years he held the position of President of the Broadmeadows Soccer Club and other Executive positions on its executive committee.

At its meeting held in October 2016 the MCCV Executive Committee awarded an MCCV Community Award to Charles Belli for services to the community over a period of many

years, including his significant contribution to the establishment and management of the MCCV library.

On Thursday 15 December, MCCV President Victor Borg presented the MCCV Community Award to Charles Belli at his home, with his wife Doris sitting by his side.

On Thursday 15 December 2016 MCCV President Victor Borg and Vice President Joe Stafrace attended at the Belli home to present Charles with the MCCV Community Award certificate as they had been advised that he was in a poor state of health. He was extremely pleased and expressed his gratitude to the Council for the award.

Sadly, three days later, on Sunday 18 December 2016, Charles Belli passed away peacefully surrounded by his family.

MCCV President Victor Borg and the Executive Committee members extend their sincere condolences and deepest sympathies to his wife, Doris, his children Raymond and his wife Melanie, Anthony and his wife Eugenie, and Yvonne and her husband Vince and their families.

*May God grant him eternal rest.* ♦



MCCV President Victor Borg presented the MCCV Community Award to Charles Belli at his home, with his wife Doris at his side.

## MCCV Planned Activity Group Christmas Party

On Tuesday 13 December, the MCCV Planned Activity Group (PAG) hosted their annual Christmas Party at the Maltese Community Centre in Parkville which was funded by the MCCV Ladies Auxiliary.

This event celebrated the end of another successful year of PAG and provided the opportunity to bring over 100 frail elderly Maltese people together to socialise and celebrate Christmas. This event was organised by the Planned Activity Coordinator and the MCCV Ladies Auxiliary.

The festivities commenced with Fr Edwin Agius holding a beautiful Mass and performing *Anointing of the Sick* to all present. Following this, the entertainment began with Carol and Christian performing many songs and sing along Christmas Carols throughout the day. Special guests included Mother Christmas who sang several lovely Maltese songs, Elvis, who had many singing and dancing and also Joe Camilleri who was wonderfully entertaining both in and out of his Santa suit.

The Ladies Auxiliary organised delicious entrée, roast lunch and a lovely dessert, and, as always, were extremely organised and helpful ensuring that all ran smoothly on the day. Several volunteers ranging from Executive members to family members of clients and staff also assisted with transporting clients, setting up and serving food. Planned Activity Group staff members assisted all present with any personal requirements over the course of the day.

Special presentations were made by Victor Borg to Theresa Tabone, a Planned Activity staff member for almost 30 years who is retiring at the end of this year and to Edwina Mallia, an Executive Committee member who also retired this year.

Functions such as this one would not be possible without the tireless efforts of the wonderful volunteers who generously donate their time to assist the Maltese Community in celebrating such a special day.💧



MCCV President Victor Borg presenting a Certificate of Appreciation to former **Mrs Edwina Mallia** in recognition of her excellent and dedicated community service, including 15 years as Hon. Secretary of the MCCV. Mrs Rosemary Attard, MCCV Welfare Director is on the far right.



MCCV President Victor Borg presenting a Certificate of Appreciation to **Mrs Theresa Tabone** in recognition of her 30 years of excellent service as a Care Support Worker with the MCCV. Mrs Rosemary Attard, MCCV Welfare Director is on the far right.



## Laqgħa Ġenerali Annwali tal-Grupp Letteratura Maltija

Minn Paul Vella, PRO GLM

**N**har il-Ġimgħa, 25 ta' Novembru, il-Grupp Letteratura Maltija tal-Victoria kellhom il-Laqgħa Ġenerali Annwali tagħhom fil-boardroom taċ-Ċentru Malti ta' Parkville fis-7.30 pm.

Il-laqgħa bdiet b'talba u wara s-Segretarja, Rosemary Attard, qrat il-Minuti tal-aħħar Laqgħa Ġenerali Annwali. Wara kien imiss it-Teżorier, Ray Anastasi, biex jaqra' r-rapport finanzjarju tal-Għaqda.

Il-President, Dr Victor Sammut, indirizza lil daww preżenti u ta rapport tal-avvenimenti organizzati mill-Għaqda matul is-sena.

Fl-aħħar wasal il-hin biex issir elezzjoni għal kumitat ġdid. Minhabba li n-numru ta' daww innominati ma kienx akbar min-numru ta' pożizzjonijiet meħtieġa, ma kienx hemm b'żonn ta' votazzjoni.

Il-Kumitat ġdid ġie ffurmat hekk: President, Dr Victor Sammut; Viċi-President, Marie Louise Anastasi; Segretarja, Rosemary Attard; Teżorier, Ray Anastasi; Uffiċjal għar-Relazzjonijiet Pubbliċi, Paul Vella; Segretarja għall-Avvenimenti Soċjali, Salvina Vella.

Il-membri rringrazzjaw lill-kumitat għal mod kif mexxa din l-aħħar sena u awgurawlihom l-istess ħidma u suċċess għal din is-sena li ġejja.

Il-laqgħa spicċat b'xi ikel u xorb għall-okkażjoni. ♦



Fuq: Daww li attendew għal din il-laqgħa



Il-kumitat: fuq wara mix-xellug għal-lemin: Paul Vella, Victor Sammut, Ray Anastasi. Fuq quddiem, mix-xellug għal-lemin: Rosemary Attard, Marie Louise Anastasi u Salvina Vella [Ritratti pprovduti minn Paul Vella]

## MCCV acknowledges volunteers' great contribution

**O**n Saturday 10 December the MCCV held its annual function at the Maltese Community Centre in Parkville in honour of its many volunteer friends of the Maltese community.

On behalf of the MCCV, the President, Victor Borg thanked the volunteers for their dedication and commitment to helping others and to assisting the MCCV in providing such important welfare services to the Maltese community in Victoria. He said that without the active involvement of our volunteers, the MCCV would be unable to provide quality services, particularly to the ageing members of our community.

MCCV Vice President Joseph Stafrace pointed out that the team of MCCV volunteers include many who provide support behind the scenes. ♦







## Hu Hsieb Saħħtek

Professur Maurice Cauchi



### Meta l-maltemp kwazi holoq epidemija ta' l-ażma

**K**ulhadd nahseb li sema' kif dan l-aħħar kellna kwazi epidemija ta' l-ażma (*asthma*) hawn fil-Victoria.

Hafna qamu f'nofs ta' lejl ghax ma jistghux jieħdu nifs! Hafna kellhom imorru l-isptar, u xi uħud ukoll spičcaw meġta!

Hawn fl-Awstralja, u aktar u aktar fil-Victoria, din saret problema li qed tinkweta lil hafna nies. Xi tkun din l-ażma? U donnu aktar ma jghaddi ż-żmien, aktar qed issir komuni din il-kundizzjoni.

Li jiġru hu dan. Il-ġisem ta' ċertu nies huwa sensitiv aktar minn ta' haddieħor. Din hija xi haġa ġenetika, jiġifieri li nitwieldu biha, u għalhekk hawn nies li ibatu b'din il-kundizzjoni u oħrajn li ma taffettwahom xejn.

Meta fl-arja timtela b'hafna prodotti bħal polline (*pollen*) li johroġ minn ħaxix u ward, allura kull meta nieħdu nifs, il-pulmun jimtela b'dawn il-prodotti, u jiġri li min ikun sensitiv għal dawn, jibda juri sintomi ta' l-ażma, jiġifieri li jibda jaqta' in-nifs, jisgħol, u meta dan jkun attakk serju, allura anke hemm il-periklu tal-mewt.

Dana jiġri ghax dawk li jbatu bl-ażma ikollhom infjammazzjoni tal-bronki (dawk it-tubi li jieħdu l-arja għall-pulmun), u dawn il-bronki jidjiequ u ma jħallux tgħaddi arja biż-żejjed.



Photo: www.smh.com.au

Issa għaliex ġara dan li ġara dan l-aħħar, dan li ġie imsejjah *thunderstorm asthma*, jiġifieri l-ażma tal-maltempata bir-ragħad? Mar-ragħad l-atmosfera timtela bin-nida u dan jħajjar il-fjuri tal-ħxejjex u tas-siġar biex jifthu f'daqqa u jerħu dan il-pollen fl-atmosfera. Din affetwat lil dawk li is-soltu ibatu bl-ażma, imma anke ukoll lil dawk li ma tantx taffettwahom.

X'għandu wieħed jagħmel biex jevita dawn il-problemi? Dawk kollha li huma suġġetti għall-ażma għandhom jačcertaw ruħhom li għandhom il-medicini kollha nečessarji fid-dar tagħhom halli jekk jagħtihom xi attakk

ikunu jistgħu jieħdu malajr il-medicini meħtieġa.

Importanti li napprezzaw li jekk is-sintomi ta' l-ażma ma jčedux wara li nieħdu dawn il-medicini għal darba tnejn, allura jeħtieġ li nieħdu l-pazjent l-isptar, u f'każijiet l-aktar urġenti, spečjalment fit-tfal žġhar, anke bl-ambulanza, għaliex f'dan il-każ, jista' jkun hemm il-periklu tal-mewt.

Importanti ukoll li t-tfal li jbatu bl-ażma jiġu mgħallma minn kmieni kif jgħarf u li gej attakk u kif jieħdu l-medicini meħtieġa.💧

### MCCV Christmas Raffle 2016

The winning ticket numbers of the MCCV Christmas Raffle 2016 drawn on 25 November 2015 at the Maltese Community Centre are as follows:

1st Prize:	170	Ray Hyslop
2nd Prize:	127	Irene Cachia
3rd Prize:	229	Lina Zammit
4th Prize:	037	Tessie Zarb
5th Prize:	262	Oliver Camilleri
6th Prize:	424	Helen Bonavia
7th Prize:	263	Carmen Spiteri
8th Prize:	493	George Mallia
9th Prize:	305	John Zika

We congratulate all the winners and our thanks go to all those who participated for their support.



## Maltese Historical Association Annual General Meeting

By Charles Gatt, MHA Secretary

The Maltese Historical Association held its Annual General Meeting on 15 November 2016 at the Maltese Community Centre in Parkville, with 15 members present. The minutes of the previous year's AGM were read and Robert Blythe was thanked for the MHA facebook page, which has received 12,000 likes! Joseph Borg then gave the President's report for 2016.

Joseph Borg then thanked the committee for their efforts during the year, especially Charles Gatt for the newsletter, Charlie Portelli for technical support with audio-visuals and Mario Bonnici for keeping the books in order. He thanked the many speakers for their essential contribution; Frances and Mario Bonnici for catering; all those who prepared the hall and cleaned up afterwards; all those who attended our discussions; and the MCCV Executive for making the hall available to us.

He urged members to become more involved, either as presenters or as executives, and called for ideas on attracting younger members. Membership is not onerous and plenty of support is available for volunteers.

The committee stood down and Frances Bonnici was selected as scrutineer. The new committee was elected unopposed and comprises:

President: Joseph Borg  
Vice President: Robert Blythe  
Treasurer: Mario Bonnici  
Secretary: Charles Gatt  
Member: Charlie Portelli  
Member: George Portelli

In General Business, a \$500 donation to the MCCV was approved and a Donation to 3ZZZ was ratified. After some discussion, it was agreed to raise the membership fees to \$15 for a single and \$20 for a couple.

Joseph Borg then outlined some ideas for the talks next year, which will be the 75th Anniversary of the Malta George Cross award, and the 30th anniversary of the founding of the MHA. Some suggestions included involvement with the Migration Museum; WW2 as seen from different points of view - British, German,



MHA Committee 2018: back row from left - Mario Bonnici (Treasurer), Charlie Portelli (Member), George Portelli (Member); front row from left - Charles Gatt (Secretary), Joseph Borg (President), Robert Blythe (Vice President).

Maltese; the 16-year transition from the French to the British; Malta's Independence; the Cultural Festival in September and the AGM in November.

Marlene Grech suggested Heritage Malta, maybe a Maltese Guest Speaker on Skype. Mario Bonnici suggested internet biographies, and programmes such as *Deheb il-Karta* from TVM. Francesca Folk-Scolaro suggested inviting Dr Barry York from Canberra or to appear on Skype, also Maltese Music and Festas; Dr Joe Camilleri; Robert Blythe suggested Maltese Cooking, e.g. Shane Delia; Green Gully; History of Maltese Australian Associations; History of Maltese in Australia; Angela

Portelli suggested looking at Maltese Villages; Joe Borg suggested a discussion on WW2, such as how silk parachutes were recycled as Wedding dresses.

There was some debate on holding the winter lectures on a Sunday afternoon. Rosemary Attard pointed out the Maltese Language Group meets on Sundays and they have very good attendance. However, people could have other commitments. Earlier on weekdays was put forward but discounted because of traffic, so it was decided to keep the meeting times as is for now. The meeting closed at 8.35 pm and we socialized afterwards.💧



On the occasion of  
2017 Maltese Presidency of the Council of the European Union  
The Ministry of Foreign Affairs

in coordination with the  
Consulate-General of Malta for Victoria

has the pleasure to invite the Maltese/Australian community  
to attend for a special performance by the Maltese instrumental group ETNIKA

on Monday, 6 February 2017  
at 1900hrs

at the Maltese Community Centre of Victoria  
477 Royal Parade, Parkville Vic 3052

In view of the limited seating, it is advisable to make advanced  
booking by calling the MCCV on: (03) 9387 8922

Dress Code: Smart Casual  
No Entrance Fee Required  
Drinks and food will be available at bar prices.  
For further info, contact the Consulate-General of Malta: 03 9670 8427  
Email: maltaconsulate.melbourne@gov.mt