



Maltese e-Newsletter

The Journal of the Maltese Diaspora



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To all doctors,
nurses, carers
and other health
officials...

thank
you

God bless our
medical professionals.



Pope Francis described the
coronavirus (COVID-19) "tempest"
which he said had put everybody
"in the same boat".

13 March
13 Marzu

Prime
Minister
Robert
Abela



at the Freedom Monument
Vittoriosa
by himself
because of the
covid-19



FREEDOM DAY
JUM IL-HELSEN



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“Today we fight a modern freedom – freedom from a pandemic” – PM

Report: Melvic Zammit

On the 41st anniversary of Freedom Day, Prime Minister and Labour leader Robert Abela said that modern freedom the country is currently fighting for is the freedom from a pandemic. In a message on One Television, the Prime Minister said that when the people achieve this freedom, we have to implement and create more for our country.

The current extraordinary circumstances led the Prime Minister and Labour leader Robert Abela to walk up to the Freedom Monument by himself to lay a wreath and set alight the flame beside the Vittoriosa monument. The ceremony was held without a public manifestation.

Following the ceremony, Dr Abela said during a message on ONE TV that the current moment will define the beautiful qualities of the Maltese people, from which the country will create a sound foundation for a nice future for our children and all future generations.

He said that the Freedom achieved 41 years ago is still relevant today, adding that today we are fighting for a modern freedom – a freedom from a pandemic – that once it is achieved, the people may implement and dream further for our country. Dr Abela said that this victory will be remembered as a great victory by the Maltese and Gozitan people united with solidarity as one nation.

The Prime Minister added that this is not a moment of colours, and the more time passes, the more he believes in lesser moments where colour wins and that he speaks about one people.

Dr Abela stated that we cannot aspire for full freedom if there is inequality between sexes, including more women in leadership. Equality should be reflected in a social mobility, he said, where everyone has equal opportunity to move forward. This is the moment where, as a country, we provide a new meaning to values of honesty, integrity, family love and altruism.

Prime Minister Abela stated that our fathers placed “the we” before “myself” in the road towards freedom, adding that it was not easy for everyone to celebrate Freedom because with the departure of the British fleet, there were people who lost their job.

Dr Abela said that the Maltese and Gozitan people’s achievement, spearheaded by Perit Duminku Mintoff, occurred following long years of sacrifice which was achieved because the people believed in themselves.





Brokenhearted elderly have their say

Report: Keith Demicoli, Nigel Mifsud TVM.COM.MT

Today has been the last day in which about 118,000 persons have been permitted to leave their homes unless this is strictly for medical appointments.

In a tour around the country, noteworthy were the great number of elderly people stocking up with basic needs and provisions. Virtually all acknowledged the sacrifices that have to be made over the coming days or weeks for their own benefit.

Elderly people from various localities expressed their

apprehensions and anxieties with TVM but also expressed their appreciation for all the help and assistance they are receiving.

The state of anxiety and concerned apprehension has generated various emotions in all, particularly the elderly who have been assessed by experts to be the most at risk from coronavirus infection.

While some expressed that in recent days they continued going out of their homes, almost all appreciated that the measures taken are for their own good.

As this evening was the last in which those over 65 and those vulnerable were allowed to leave their residences, queues of mainly elderly people formed outside supermarkets awaiting their turn to purchase essential products.

Many of the elderly said they will find things to do at home to occupy their time.

The square outside the square opposite St Paul's Church at Rabat was empty. There was also silence from tea and coffee shops that normally have numbers of elderly customers meeting to pass their time in chatting and exchanging news and views. A few sat in their parked cars enjoying the final hours of freedom.

In Triq il-Kbira, a queue of people outside a pharmacy, all at required social distance.

Every morning, Pawlu Buhagiar can normally be found in the square at Żebbug – but this will now have to change.

Normally, the square at Żebbug is filled with number of elderly persons where they spend their mornings. Today however, because of the inclement weather and because of measures by the health authorities, the square was virtually empty with most carrying out final errands elsewhere before having to stay indoors tomorrow.

The situation was somewhat different in Paola where despite the weather conditions there were queues outside main banks observing social distancing with the elderly engaging in conversation with each other or passersby.

In Paola as well as Żebbug, Police were seen at hand giving instructions to queues to observe the necessary distancing.

The current frustration of anxiety created situations of persons trying to keep themselves occupied.

While non-essential retail outlets have observed directives and remained closed, messages of appreciation and encouragement were seen toward those working in the health sector.

Cospicua has never been observed to be so quiet. Although a few employees could be seen maintaining cleanliness in public areas, streets and public areas were virtually empty.

The situation was much the same at Senglea. From her first floor balcony, Carmen told us that despite this sorrowful situation she was optimistic because of the unity and solidarity of the people.

THE DAY WILL COME WHEN WE SAY “THANK GOD, THE CORONAVIRUS HAS BEEN DEFEATED AND WE ARE FREE AGAIN TO LOVE, RESPECT AND BE KIND TO EACH OTHER”.



Music to break the monotony of COVID-19

Report: Maria Muscat

During these times of great anxiety, the residents of a Fgura street have come out with the idea of organising a musical celebration from their balconies to entertain each other. Meanwhile, although all festa celebrations have been cancelled, the bandspersons from a Żejtun

band appealed for a patriotic stance by individually playing the country's National Anthem in their own homes.

The colourful flags and streamers that help create the great atmosphere during external festa celebrations have been put back into storage, the residents in Fgura's Triq Louis Scicluna have brightened up their street with a number of Malta flags and this evening a musical festival will take place from the balcony of dj Rudolph Degiorgio to keep nearby residents happy while breaking the monotony created by the spread of coronavirus.

Rudolph said the news of the music festival quickly spread among the neighbours. He said besides this music festival of all types of music from his balcony, every Tuesday the Holy Rosary will be recited to enable residents to pray together.

He continued by saying that children and the elderly are confined to their homes and he wanted to create a festive atmosphere to show there is still a strong light amidst the current dark atmosphere.

Degiorgio said he feels so united with his neighbours that he is planning to decorate his balcony with flowers to embellish the environment and please all passersby.

Another gesture intentioned to keep people happily entertained is being made by Żejtun's Beland Banda Muzikali that has produced a musical video of their bandspersons playing the National Anthem in their own homes. The scope of the video that is posted on social media is to strengthen patriotism and encourage persons to face up to the current challenge

Pope's special Urbi et Orbi blessing: 'God turns everything to our good'

Pope Francis delivers an extraordinary blessing "To the City and to the World" on Friday to pray for an end to the Covid-19 coronavirus pandemic. In his meditation, the Pope reflects on Jesus' words to His disciples: "Why are you afraid? Have you no faith?" Full text included.

By Devin Watkins

Pope Francis held the special Urbi et Orbi on Friday from the steps of St. Peter's Basilica.

Usually a colorful event reserved only for Christmas Day and Easter Sunday, this

extraordinary blessing was held in keeping with the gravity of the current global situation, as more than half of the world's population is confined to their homes to prevent the spread of Covid-19.

Standing in a deserted St. Peter's Square with a steady rain falling, Pope Francis spoke to the world through all the means of modern communication: Facebook, YouTube, TV, and radio.

Symbols of faith



He prayed for the world at this critical juncture in the presence of two images that have accompanied the people of Rome for centuries: the ancient icon of Mary *Salus Populi Romani* – usually housed in the Basilica of St. Mary Major – and the miraculous crucifix kept in the church of San Marcello on the city's Via del Corso.

Most importantly, the Pope exposed the Blessed Sacrament for adoration and imparted his Apostolic Blessing, offering everyone the opportunity to receive a plenary indulgence.

EVENING MEDITATION

But first, Pope Francis offered a meditation on the crisis facing the world, reflecting on a passage from the Gospel of Mark (4:35-41).

"For weeks now it has been evening," said the Pope. "Thick darkness has gathered over our squares, our streets and our cities; it has taken over our lives, filling everything with a deafening silence and a distressing void, that stops everything as it passes by; we feel it in the air, we notice it in people's gestures, their glances give them away."

In this situation, he said, we feel afraid and lost, like the disciples whose boat was in danger of sinking while Jesus slept at the stern.

ALL IN THE SAME BOAT

The Covid-19 pandemic has reminded us that we are all on the same boat, said Pope Francis, and so we call out to Jesus. The disciples ask Him, "Teacher, do you not care if we perish?"

The Pope said these words would have shaken Jesus, "because He, more than anyone, cares about us."

The storm, said the Pope, exposes "our vulnerability and uncovers those false and superfluous certainties around which we have constructed our daily schedules" and lays bare "all those attempts to anesthetize ourselves".

What is revealed, he said, is "our belonging as brothers and sisters", our common humanity.

"WHY ARE YOU AFRAID? HAVE YOU NO FAITH?"

Pope Francis then picked up the thread of Jesus' question: "Why are you afraid? Have you no faith?"

He said we have all gone ahead "at breakneck speed", ignoring the wars, injustice, and cries of the poor and our ailing planet. "We carried on regardless, thinking we would stay healthy in a world that was sick."

In our stormy sea, we now cry out: "Wake up, Lord!"

NOW IS THE TIME OF CHOOSING

Really, said Pope Francis, it is Jesus calling out to us to be converted, calling us to faith.

"You are calling on us to seize this time of trial as a *time of choosing*," he said.

Now is not the time of God's judgment, but of our own: "a time to choose what matters and what passes away, a time to separate what is necessary from what is not."

The Pope said we can draw lessons from the many people who – even though fearful – have reacted by giving their lives, including medical personnel, supermarket clerks, cleaners, priests, police officers, and volunteers. This, he said, "is the force of the Spirit poured out and fashioned in courageous and generous self-denial."

Stripped of our self-sufficiency

Pope Francis said faith begins "when we realize we are in need of salvation" and are not self-sufficient. If we turn to Jesus and hand Him our fears, said the Pope, He will conquer them.

"Because this is God's strength: turning to the good everything that happens to us, even the bad things. He brings serenity into our storms, because with God life never dies."

So God asks us now, in the midst of the tempest, "to reawaken and put into practice that solidarity and hope capable of giving strength, support and meaning to these hours when everything seems to be floundering."

HIS CROSS IS OUR HOPE

Jesus' cross, said Pope Francis, is the anchor that has saved us, the rudder that has redeemed us, and our hope, because "by His cross we have been healed and embraced so that nothing and no one can separate us from His redeeming love."

“In the midst of isolation when we are suffering from a lack of tenderness and chances to meet up, and we experience the loss of so many things,” he said, “let us once again listen to the proclamation that saves us: He is risen and is living by our side.”

So we embrace His cross in the hardships of the present time, and make room in our hearts “for the creativity that only the Spirit is capable of inspiring.”

TURNING TO THE LORD

Concluding his meditation, Pope Francis entrusted us all to the Lord, through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, so that our faith might not waiver in this time of crisis.

“Dear brothers and sisters, from this place that tells of Peter’s rock-solid faith, I would like this evening to entrust all of you to the Lord, through the intercession of Mary, Health of the People and Star of the stormy Sea. From this colonnade that embraces Rome and the whole world, may God’s blessing come down upon you as a consoling embrace. Lord, may you bless the world, give health to our bodies and comfort our hearts. You ask us not to be afraid. Yet our faith is weak and we are fearful. But you, Lord, will not leave us at the mercy of the storm. Tell us again: ‘Do not be afraid’ (Mt 28:5). And we, together with Peter, ‘cast all our anxieties onto you, for you care about us’ (cf. 1Pet 5:7).

PAUL THE APOSTLE CHURCH = TORONTO

- As advised earlier, both the church building and the office are presently closed, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. You can still reach us by phone or email.
- Frs Mario and Ivano are privately celebrating Mass every day, offering it for all parishioners. Booked Mass intentions are also offered during our daily Mass.
- You can visit <http://www.archtoronto.org/covid19> for updated information from the Archdiocese of Toronto and for links to view the Daily Mass online.
- From the sanctuary of your homes, please continue to pray for all who, in different ways, are being affected by this virus.

Please stay safe, stay home as much as possible to look after both your health and that of others.

PALM SUNDAY

Next Sunday, April 5, the Church celebrates Palm Sunday, thus entering into the mystery of the Holy Week celebrations. Due to the circumstances we are presently living, we cannot celebrate our liturgies as a community. Cardinal Collins will be celebrating the Eucharist with the blessing of the palms at St Michael’s Cathedral, accompanied by the priests of the Cathedral Parish. This will begin at 10:00 a.m., and will be livestreamed on You can, thus prayerfully unite yourself to the celebration of the liturgy from home.

Meanwhile, Frs Mario and Ivano will be celebrating the liturgy privately at the parish. Blessed palms will be distributed to the parishioners at a later date, as instructed by the Archdiocese.

www.stmichaelcathedral.com/live



ITALY SURPASSES CHINA FOR MOST COVID-19 DEATHS

Italy extends lockdown until Easter – Covid-19 claims the lives of 61 doctors

Italy, the European country most affected by the Coronavirus outbreak, where 11,591 people have lost their lives thus far, has extended its lockdown to Easter. The country is confident

that this measure, however stringent, will bear fruit given the reported reduction in the rate of infection since the start of the lockdown. The number of new people infected with coronavirus yesterday was 1,658 compared to 3,815 last Sunday. Still, the death toll rose to 812 yesterday compared to Sunday when 756 lost their lives. Italian authorities believe that the peak of the crisis will be reached within a week. The virus has also claimed the lives of 61 doctors in Italy.

Ghawdex gharkubbejh



Min qatt kellu 'l Ghawdex jghidlu
Li sa jinzel gharkubbejh
Quddiem dan l-imbierek 'virus'
U jhallih bla nifs qatigh!

Minn goċ-Ċina t-trieq qabad
B'heffa dar kollha l-ġnus
Harbat. werwer, kisser, farrak
U warajna għadu jsus!

Ma qagħadx jara intix helu,
Sinjur, fqir, twajjed jew kburi
Baqa' diehel gewwa djarna
Mhux b'fidejh xi bukkett fjuri

Imma żera' fost il-popli
Il-mewt xejn bla mistennija
W għadu jnissel biki w dwejjag
Tgħid meta ser tgħib dis-siegha!

Min hu akbar minni qalli
Qatt ma ra bħal dal-flagell
Li bis-saħħa illi għandu
Ihott sa l-aqwa kastell.

Inghalaqna gewwa djarna
Il-Knisja mbarrat il-bieb
Spiċċa l-'business' u l-iskejjel
U l-laqqgħat ta' bejn il-ħbieb.

U l-Ekonomija tagħna
Qatt ma batiet daqs illum
U l-affari mċajpra sewwa
Ma nafux kemm sejra iddum!

Marru l-baħar kollha l-festi
Tal-Maltin, tagħna l-Ghawdxin
Il-Papa se jibqa' Ruma
W id-dar nibqgħu magħluqin.

Tgħid warrabna lill-Imghallem
U bdilnih mas-setgħa, l-flus
U insejna li tad-dinja
Dan bla dubju l-aqwa fus!

Dan ser jibqa' l-Missier twajjed
Li jehtieg induru lejha
Nistqarru b'sogħba htijietna
U nintelqu dlonk f'idejh!

Sabiex naslu malajr għandu
Ejjew infittxu lil Ommu -
Ibqgħu ċerti li nisimgħu
Il-maħfra hierga minnn fommu!

B'hekk mill-ġdid il-poplu tagħna
Jerġa' lura għan-normal
Fit-toroq ferħana tilmaħ,
Għonja, fqar, iż-żgħar, il-kbar.

Kav Joe M Attard
Rabat Ghawdex
Festa tal-Lunzjata
25 - 03 - 202

The red colour on the Maltese flag represents the bravery of its people. White represents peace and optimism. As the world faces the war today against coronavirus, Malta unites once more. We can do this TOGETHER!



'Sahha' - ink & watercolour by Maltese artist
Luke Attard www.lukeattard.com

A hero and a martyr or a spy and a traitor – who was Carmelo Borg Pisani?



The story of the Maltese artist and Italian fascist Carmelo Borg Pisani has been made into a Maltese film 'Carmelo', based on researches that were carried out by former journalist Lawrence Mizzi who then published the book 'Għall-Ħolma ta' Hajtu'. Borg Pisani is seen by some as a traitor while others regard him as a hero but in reality who was this historic

personality who was born in 1914 and died in 1942?

Lawrence Mizzi said Borg Pisani had a dream that Malta should be united to Italy; he said he was infatuated with the Italians and his ideal was not that of harming Malta but in that Malta should not remain a colony. In a special edition of 'Ras imb Ras' to be broadcast tomorrow before the screening of 'Carmelo', Professor Henry Frendo refers to Borg Pisani as being an Italian sympathiser, as were many others; however, the outbreak of war changed the situation when he was charged by the Italians to act as a spy on the British. Journalist Lawrence Grech said that at the height of the war Malta was suffering greatly and the scope of Borg Pisani coming to Malta was to check out the British defence of Malta and this raised a reaction that resulted in him being taken as a prisoner of war. Lawrence Mizzi said he became aware of him when he was hanged and remarked that at the time nobody said anything. He maintained he was not allowed to see his Court process to find out more about this person historically controversial. The film is financed under the scheme Film Malta, by the Maltese Arts Council and Public Broadcasting Services.

Borg Pisani painting donated to national collection

Heritage Malta announces addition to MUŻA collection



AddThis Sharing Buttons

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Dr Ganado presented the painting to Heritage Malta's Chief Operation Officer, Mr Kenneth Gambin, in the presence of Senior Curator Kenneth Cassar, and Principal Curator Bernadine Scicluna.

An oil-on-canvas portrait by the Maltese artist Carmelo Borg Pisani has been donated to Heritage Malta.

In a statement, Heritage Malta said that Albert Ganado had donated the portrait of his late brother-in-law Manoel Mizzi (1919-2011) to the national collection.

Dr Ganado said it had been his late brother-in-law's express wish to donate the painting to the National Museum of Fine Arts, now MUŻA – the National Community Art Museum.

Dr Mizzi had befriended Mr Borg Pisani while studying in Rome in the late 1930s.

At the time Mr Borg Pisani had been studying art at the Accademia di Belle Arti di Roma.

Mr Borg Pisani painted Dr Mizzi's portrait in September 1940, the day before the Mizzi family had decided to move from Rome to Padova.

Dr Ganado presented the painting to Heritage Malta's Chief Operation Officer, Mr Kenneth Gambin, in the presence of Senior Curator Kenneth Cassar, and Principal Curator Bernadine Scicluna.

Mr Borg Pisani is best known for his vocal support of fascism during the war. While in Italy, he enrolled with Benito Mussolini's blackshirt militia and served as a fascist spy.

He was arrested in Malta in 1942, found guilty of treason and executed by hanging.



Freedom Monument silent, as Malta fights for another freedom

Report: Mario Micallef

On 31 March 2020 Malta commemorated the Freedom Day national feast, the event marking the end of the British services and the military base in Malta.

The 41 anniversary of the 31st March 1979 event this year passed-by without the official commemoration as the 'Kumitat Festi Nazzjonali' cancelled the ceremony in the wake of the health authorities directives.

On Tuesday morning, silence reigned in the area near the Freedom Monument at Vittoriosa as the official ceremony with the participation of the country's highest authorities and the Armed Forces guard of honour was cancelled.

Silence also prevailed at the Grand Harbour where crowds and enthusiasts of the traditional regatta gathered each year to watch the races on this day.

The 31st March 1979 marked the end of the seven-year agreement negotiated by Prime Minister Dom Mintoff with the United Kingdom that permitted the British forces to use the Malta facilities for military aims. The departure of the British services meant the end of centuries of foreign occupation in Malta, which was used for the military needs of foreign powers.

This historic event is commemorated with a monument at Vittoriosa, the work of sculptor Anton Agius, which represents the moment of the end of the military base in Malta when on that night the British flag was lowered and instead the Maltese flag was hoisted. The long and rough road undertaken by the Maltese people to achieve freedom is characterised through a passage at the lower part leading to the monument.

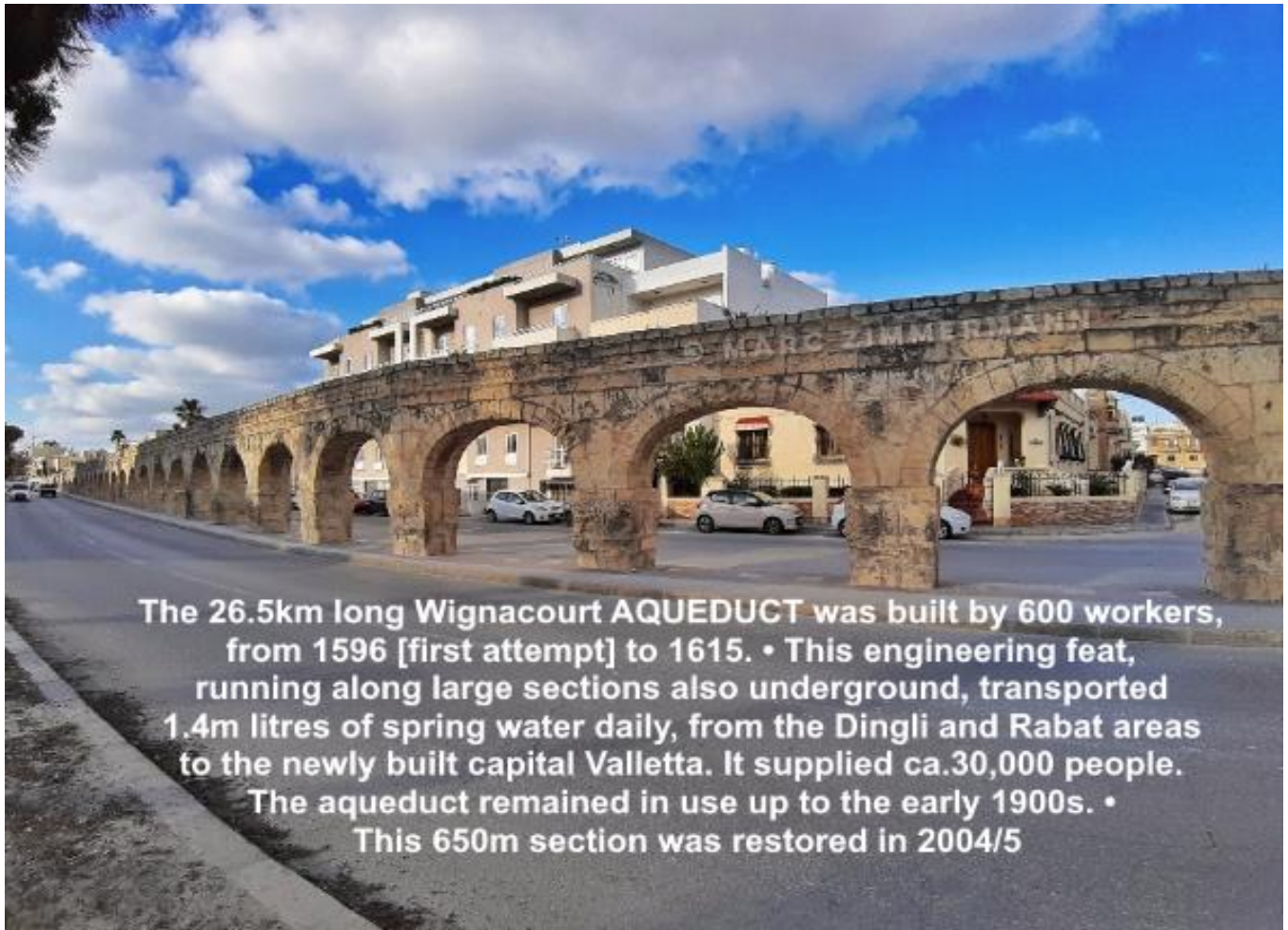
41 year later, Malta is fighting for another freedom; it is not the presence of a military power but a force which is not visible – the Covid-19 pandemic.

In contrast to the road leading to the 31st March 1979 event, this time Malta is not alone but all countries world-wide are on the same boat, that of performing great sacrifices to reach only one aim.

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MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER
The Journal of Maltese living in Malta and abroad

If you have never written to me now is the time to make contact. We love to hear from you – your emails will not be published in the journal unless you give us permission
Frank - Editor



The 26.5km long Wignacourt AQUEDUCT was built by 600 workers, from 1596 [first attempt] to 1615. • This engineering feat, running along large sections also underground, transported 1.4m litres of spring water daily, from the Dingli and Rabat areas to the newly built capital Valletta. It supplied ca.30,000 people. The aqueduct remained in use up to the early 1900s. • This 650m section was restored in 2004/5



Schinas Reservoir is located on the northern outskirts of Luqa Airport and the towers by the entrance to the facility were fortified. From an external view it would appear that there was an external ladder, leading up to firing positions. The loopholes have the familiar metal plates used to protect them during WW2. This position was hit by bombs and it is known that on February 1942, four 50KG General Purpose bombs landed on the Reservoir and were defused. (UXB Malta: Royal Engineers Bomb Disposal 1940-4 S.A.M Hudson November 30, 2011)



Festa Frawli, the people of Mgarr are helping families in need

Instead of holding the annual strawberry fair Festa Frawli, the people of Mgarr have set their thoughts to helping families in need. In an initiative taken by the Mgarr Parish and the help of the Local Council, a foodbank has been created to help needy families that have been affected economically by the spread of coronavirus.

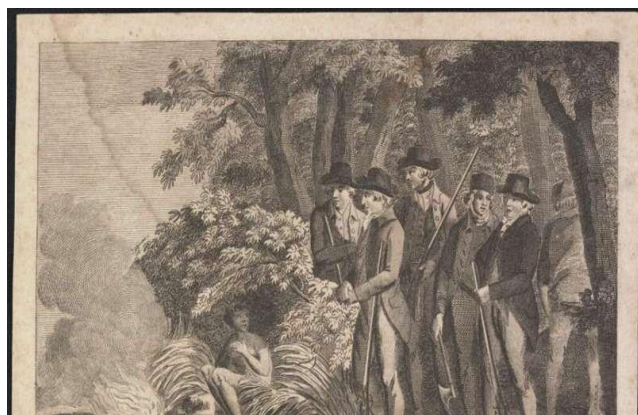
Inspired by the idea of an Mgarr family, the village parish opened the foodbank after obtaining the Council's support. Parish Priest Fr George Schembri explained that the spread of the virus has created the need for financial support for some persons, or otherwise support in food supply.

He said the locality is very much alive at this time of the year, especially the weekend, but now there is perfect silence and the streets and roads are empty. It has also become a time when one perceives the needs of some families that really have to be helped. Such people cannot be abandoned to their fate, such as those that have lost their jobs and also because the village is packed with catering outlets that have had to close, yet these people have to continue sustaining their families by providing the necessary elements.

Fr Schembri explained that parishioners and retail outlet owners have been cooperating, these by providing trolleys or boxes where people can purchase food products to place in them. In recent days the foodbank has helped five families that have young children.

He further explained it is also his aim to try and provide fresh employment for those who have lost their job. A Facebook page explains the help being tendered by the parish and the people. However, he also explained his concern that some persons are in need but refrain from asking for help and attempts with the help of parishioners are being made to identify persons experiencing problems.

THE CAUSE OF AUSTRALIA'S FIRST PANDEMIC IS STILL A CONTROVERSIAL MYSTERY 231 YEARS ON



"There would have been a 50 to 90 per cent death rate, which is a huge number," historian Craig Mear said.

"It's gone from Sydney all the way down to South Australia. And they were the major population centres of the Aboriginal people."

How Australia's first pandemic started, and more importantly, who started it, has been fiercely argued for more than a century.

"It is a real mystery," Henry Reynolds, another historian, said. "None of the people arriving in Sydney in early 1788 had smallpox. The long sea voyage meant that either people would have died or got better. So they didn't carry smallpox from Britain."

A 'wild supposition' "The surgeons brought smallpox in vials," Mr Mear said.

Before vaccination, doctors commonly kept jars of smallpox scabs which they would grind up so that they could be sniffed up through the nose or rubbed into scratches in the skin, in a process called variolation. The aim was to cause a mild case of smallpox, triggering immunity to a more serious infection.

Watkin Tench, the great chronicler of the First Fleet, confirmed doctors brought smallpox with them. "It is true, that our surgeons had brought out various matter in bottles," he wrote.

"But to infer that it was produced from this cause were a supposition so wild as to be unworthy of consideration." Tench himself wondered if earlier explorers like La Perouse, Cook or Dampier brought the virus, but then asked why smallpox hadn't been seen before then

Did smallpox arrive from northern Australia?

Throughout the 20th century, many historians suggested smallpox may have been introduced by Asian seafarers in the north of Australia, which then reached Sydney a year after the arrival of the First Fleet.

"It's stretching belief a bit to imagine that it just arrived at the time of the British," Mr Reynolds said.

"People with smallpox have very, very scarred faces and it would have been obvious that there had been a smallpox epidemic, but not even the oldest of the local Aborigines gave any sign."

For Mr Reynolds, that leaves the First Fleet as the only realistic source of the pandemic.

So could smallpox then have been introduced deliberately?

"Everyone, particularly military people, knew that smallpox could have a dramatic effect on war and campaigns and battles," Mr Reynolds said.

"There is no doubt that smallpox was certainly used against Indians in America."

Major Ross — a perfect suspect

Among the military officers of the First Fleet was a man who fought in America — the commander of the marines, Major Robert Ross. "Without exception the most disagreeable commanding officer I ever knew," was how fellow First Fleet marine Ralph Clark described Major Ross.

"He'd had experience of smallpox use in America, both in the Pontiac rebellion of 1763 and in the American War of Independence," Mr Mear said.

"So he knew its uses and he was a fairly vile sort of a man, by all reports."

Mr Reynolds says there is no evidence directly linking Major Ross to the smallpox pandemic.

Convicts who fought with Aboriginal people have also been suggested as suspects.

"It just seems to me possible that they, would have known what these bottles (of smallpox) contained, they would have known the effect," Mr Reynolds said.

"And it's just possible that they were the ones who thought, 'we'll get back at those blacks, we'll use this material.' "But, you know, that's totally speculative."

Mr Mear said he wondered if smallpox was introduced through clothing brought from Britain, which he said may have harboured active smallpox viruses.

"So, if they gave clothes out to the Aboriginal populations, it could be fatal," he said.

Australia's first pandemic may remain a mystery

Both Mr Reynolds and Mr Mear agree that unless some extraordinary new evidence emerges, it may never be known exactly how smallpox came to devastate Indigenous Australia.

However, both agree that the impact of smallpox was profound.

"When the settlers moved into the interior, they were meeting communities that were still suffering the demographic effect of the smallpox epidemic," Mr Reynolds said.

"So the populations were much smaller than they had been. And that undoubtedly made the push of the Europeans into the interior of South Eastern Australia, much easier.

Mr Mear goes one step further, wondering if the First Fleet would have survived without the pandemic.

"Aboriginal people were certainly becoming much more aggressive towards the settlers.

"The settlement could have been wiped out without the smallpox. So in my reading of it, yes, it changed the course of history."



World War 2 ENEMY BOMBS KILL 18 AT SANNAT GOZO, MALTA

In 1942, Malta was going through its darkest days of World War II. That year air raids killed hundreds and destroyed many buildings. In her book UXB Malta, English

author Susan Hudson says Malta was the most bombed place in the world; in only two years, the enemy carried out some 3,000 air attacks on the island.

The enemy targeted mostly ships in Grand Harbour or Marsamxett or the aerodromes at Luqa, Ħal Far, and Ta' Qali, which meant the civilians who suffered most were those who lived in or near those targets. In Gozo – which had no military installations and where no large ships could anchor and no airplanes could fly from or land – there was no reason for bombing raids. Because of this, many people from Malta sought refuge there during the war.

However, several Gozitans were killed by enemy action during the war.

Seventy years ago this week, on Saturday, October 10, 1942, the eve of the feast of Our Lady of the Rosary, two large bombs were dropped on the village of Sannat (known as Ta' Sannat) in the south of Gozo, leaving 18 dead and a trail of devastation.

The houses that were damaged or totally destroyed included those of my family and of my mother's relatives. Among the victims was my little sister Lydia, then about 18 months old.

In those days, my parents – Carmela née Debrincat, from Sannat, and Ġużeppi Zammit (Ciantar), from Xewkija, today both dead – had two children: my sister Lydia and I (born on May 8 of that year). Later they would have another four children: (another) Lydia, Anton, Marija and Ġovanni. They lived next to my grandmother Tona and my mother's unmarried brother Kalanġ and sisters Marija and Gerita, in Seguna Street (today Xabbata Street), on one side behind the parish church.

My mother had just learnt that the authorities were offering rationed biscuits for babies. She used to say that other families were already receiving such provisions although she had not heard about the offer before, and she asked my father to pick a card so that she could receive the ration due to her two babies.

That Saturday at 8am, as soon as my father finished his night shift at Il-Magna tad-Dawl (as we used to call the little power station) behind the Sacred Heart seminary in Victoria, he went to pick up the card from the Control Office at the Banca Giuratale on It-Tokk square. Then, on his bicycle, he pedalled on to Xewkija where his parents Mikiel and Ċikka (Francesca), and her sister Marianna, and brothers Rev. Pawl, Ġużepp, Salvu and Ġanni (all Ciantar and nicknamed Taċ-Ċantar) and his sisters Mari-Ġwann, Clementa, Nicolina and brother Toninu, lived. From there, around 9.30am, he and my uncle Kalanġ – who was then engaged to my father's sister Nicolina – cycled back to Sannat.

When they got home, my father heard airplanes in the distance. In those days it was rare to hear the sound of planes over Gozo, and to see them even rarer.

Giving the ration card to my mother, my father took me in his arms to show me the airplanes.

With me on the window sill in the small room at the back of the house, he started to peer at the aeroplanes flying over Sannat through a pair of binoculars. My uncle went behind him to have a look.

My father did not remember what happened then. What followed was narrated by my mother, Carmela, and her sisters, and is recorded in documents which recall the incident.

Joe Julian Farrugia 29/03/20

DAL-MISHUT CORONA

San Patrizju ħa fastidju
San Ġużepp tassew urtat
Għaliex b'dal-mishut Corona
Kollox safa kkanċellat

Mhux se jkollna Seba' Visti
Lanqas purċissjonijiet
Għaliex b'dal-mishut Corona
Thassru l-attivitajiet

Mhux se joħroġ l-Irxox t jġri
San Girgor ħadd mhu se jmur
Għaliex dal-mishut Corona
Ġo nofs folla jaqbdet żgur

Mhux se ngawdu l-marċ u l-festa
Mhux se jara dawl l-amar
Għaliex b'dal-mishut Corona
Jkollna nibqgħu ġewwa d-dar

Mhux se mmorru ngħumu l-baħar
Kontra l-liġi, jkun abbuż
Anzi b'dal-mishut Corona
Nistgħu neħlu kemxa flus

Kollha nħatfu s-sanitisers
Kemm pruvajt insib nixtrih!
Mhux hekk biss, għax b'dal-Corona
Lanqas karti tal-imsiħ

Igri tgħaddi din l-imxija
Ħadd ma jifdal infettat
Forsi dal-mishut Corona
Jsir xi ħaġa tal-passat



Hard-hit by the coronavirus crisis, quarantine measures and self-isolation efforts have left many public spaces deserted, including Independence Square (It-Tokk) in Victoria as this photo clearly shows.
GOZO 2020

DID YOU KNOW

@THEFACTGRAM

This amazing bridge turns into an underwater tunnel connecting Denmark and Sweden.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE GREAT WALL OF CHINA TOOK OVER 2000 YEARS.



@KARMALEDGE

DID YOU KNOW?

"THE WORLD" IS A CRUISE SHIP WHERE YOU CAN LIVE AS A PERMANENT RESIDENT AND WAKE UP IN A DIFFERENT COUNTRY EVERY MORNING.



@K4knowledge

DID YOU KNOW?

SMALLEST INTERNATIONAL BRIDGE IN THE WORLD, ON THE RIGHT IS CANADA AND ON THE LEFT IS USA.

Nostalgia

Monaro



People
Trust
Holden



Dr. Keith Sacco MD

Allergy & Immunology / General Allergy & Immunology

Dr. Keith Sacco is an allergist-immunologist in Bethesda, Maryland and is affiliated with National Institutes of Health Clinical Center. He received his medical degree from University of Malta School of Medicine and has been in practice between 3-5 years. He also speaks multiple languages, including Maltese, Spanish and Italian. Dr. Sacco talks about the COVID-19 in this video

<https://www.facebook.com/embassymt/videos/537325976926269/>

GETTING CREATIVE WITH A FUN POEM ABOUT COVID-19

Helping your child understand their world and COVID-19, what they see, hear and do, can help protect them and your family. We encourage you to calmly [talk to your child about coronavirus](#). However for very little ones who are finding it so hard to understand, get creative with this fun poem.

The Time We Spring-Cleaned the World

The world it got so busy,
There were people all around.
They left their germs behind them;
In the air and on the ground.

These germs grew bigger and stronger.
They wanted to come and stay.
They didn't want to hurt anyone –
They just really wanted to play.

Sometimes they tried to hold your hand,
Or tickled your throat or your nose.
They could make you cough and sneeze
And make your face as red as a rose.

And so these germs took over.
They started to make people ill,
And with every cough we coughed
More and more germs would spill.

All the queens and kings had a meeting.
"It's time to clean the world up!" they said.
And so they had to close lots of fun stuff,
Just so these germs couldn't spread.

We couldn't go to cinemas
Or restaurants for our tea.
There was no football or parties,
The world got as quiet as can be.

The kids stopped going to school,
The mums and dads went to work less.

Then a great, big, giant scrubbing brush
Cleaned the sky and the sea and the mess!

Dads started teaching the sums,
Big brothers played with us more,
Mums were in charge of homework
And we read and played jigsaws galore!

The whole world was washing their hands
And building super toilet roll forts!
Outside was quiet and peaceful,
Now home was the place for all sports.

So we played in the world that was home
And our days filled up with fun and love,
And the germs they grew smaller and smaller
And the sun watched from up above.

Then one morning the sun woke up early,
She smiled and stretched her beams wide.
The world had been fully spring cleaned,
It was time to go back outside!

We opened our doors oh so slowly
And breathed in the clean and fresh air.
We promised that forever and always
Of this beautiful world we'd take care!

This nursery rhyme was written and shared by a family from the UK – thank you for sharing! [facebook]



What you can see in 48 hours in Malta

SETH SHERWOOD

Many conquerors and countries have left their mark on this Mediterranean archipelago, and visitors will likely be entranced with the cultural mash-up. Related Article Città Vittoriosa is an old fortified city on the Grand Harbour in Malta. Credit Susan Wright for The New York Times Malta contains multitudes.

Despite being the smallest member of the European Union, the Mediterranean archipelago below Sicily bears traces of numerous peoples and conquerors: Phoenicians, Carthaginians, Romans, Byzantines, Arabs, Spanish, French and, most notably, the European crusader knights known as the Order of Malta. Preachers (St. Paul), painters (Caravaggio) and politicians (Napoleon) have washed up on the rocky sun-roasted shores and left marks too. The Maltese language is close to Arabic (though English is the second official tongue). And residents drive on the left like the British, who governed the islands for much of the 19th and 20th centuries. The cuisine is infused with Italian flavors and ingredients — to say nothing of rabbit, the national dish — while the architecture ranges from mysterious ancient temples to masterful Baroque-era cathedrals to new postmodern experiments. Rather than try to encapsulate Malta, it's best to simply plunge in. The walled cities of Valletta and Mdina are your entry points.

A Grand Entrance, Valletta, Malta's capital, is having a moment. Filled with palazzos and churches, the storybook city celebrates its 450th birthday and in 2018 Malta was the European Capital of Culture. Channeling its stony grandeur, the architect Renzo Piano designed two structures that form a dramatic introduction to Valletta. Inaugurated some years ago, his city gate is a vast, blocky, asymmetrical stone entryway that opens onto the adjacent new parliament. The monolithic jagged buildings are lifted off the ground by slender pillars and covered in textured panels like rippling waves. Circle the buildings and ascend the stone staircase alongside to appreciate their shifting forms. At the top is St. James Cavalier, a cultural center that hosts exhibitions and performances.

Green and Blue Wasn't that the castle in the films "Gladiator" and "Troy"? Such questions might spring to mind while absorbing the panoramic view from the Upper Barrakka Gardens, a pleasant green space of palms, plants and stone arches overlooking the main harbor. Across the way are centuries-old fortresses like Fort St. Angelo and Fort Ricasoli — used in many Hollywood productions — and the deep blue Mediterranean. A grappa (2.20 euros, or about \$2.40) or limoncello (€2.20) at the outdoor cafe-bar is the perfect complement to the sunset.

Sister Pact, A 16th-century palazzo with stone columns, gilded mirrors and chandeliers might sound like a recipe for pretentiousness. But Palazzo Preca, run by two Maltese sisters from a family of noted restaurateurs, defies expectations. The mood is easygoing, and the fenek moqli — in local parlance — is an inspiring concoction of plump rabbit nuggets rendered moist by a thick, elegant wine reduction, and velvety mashed potatoes. If the grilled rabbit liver appetizer feels like overkill, consider the seductive, spicy linguine Caruso, with diced squid, meaty shrimp, hot chiles and a zesty tomato sauce. The wine list is a Mediterranean tour, including Syrian, Israeli and Maltese bottles. Dinner for two, without drinks: about €70.

Strait and Narrow, Not many people are walking straight on Strait Street as the wee hours approach, thanks to the cozy bars within and near the slim passage. A stony 400-year-old cavern hung with musical instruments, Trabuxu Wine Barserves numerous Maltese vintages — including a citrusy blend of sauvignon blanc and local Girgentina from La Torre (€3) — alongside a roster of international wines. Sultry and plush, Taproom is a chic new bar-restaurant with creations like the Tap Tini (€12), a dessertlike

blend of gin, cream, simple syrup, coffee bitters and chocolate liqueur. The interior of St. Paul's Cathedral. Credit Susan Wright for The New York Times



John and Jerome, A half-dressed man lies on the ground with blood dripping from his slit neck while a knife-wielding thug prepares the death blow. Brutally realistic, Caravaggio's "Beheading of St. John the Baptist" (1608) — the Italian master's largest painting, and the only one he signed — and his nearby portrait of St. Jerome were painted during the artist's stay in Malta in the early 1600s. They are the marquee attractions of the stunning St. John's Co-Cathedral, a soaring barrel-vaulted space, built in the 1570s. The ceiling is painted with scenes from the life of St. John, as well as the goddess Minerva stomping

upon invading Moors. Intricately inlaid flat tombstones panel the floor, radiant with images of angels, ships, skeletons and other symbols. Admission: €10.

Saint Style, St. Paul, who was shipwrecked on Malta around A.D. 60 en route to Rome, is historically the patron saint of writers. In Valletta, he is also emerging as the patron saint of style — or at least his namesake street is. In addition to the Palazzo Prince d'Orange boutique hotel, St. Paul Street is home to new indie fashion boutiques like Kir Royal, a modern haberdashery selling dress shirts and jeans from the Italian label Kurosawa, along with shaving creams, tie clips and cuff links. For women, Mint Sparrow offers everything from shimmery backpacks for yoga mats to seahorse-shaped pendants.

Ride the Tide, Next to the restaurant, take the 10-minute ferry ride to the Sliema waterfront. From there embark on the 90-minute scenic "Harbour Cruise" from Captain Morgan Cruises (€16). Chugging along Malta's rocky coast, you'll pass massive, centuries-old fortresses and ruins, grottoes and gardens, lighthouses and church towers, tiny fishing skiffs, enormous container ships and even "Black Pearl" — a three-masted schooner that once belonged to the actor Errol Flynn. (It's now a restaurant.) An English-language commentary gives details and dates.



Bridge Bar serves up Aperol spritzes, bottles of prosecco, free cushions and live jazz to the crowds who fill the steps outside its door. Credit Susan Wright for The New York Times

White Palace, Another night, another palace. With its white walls, white chairs and white tablecloths, the soaring palazzo-turned-restaurant known as Michael's is a gallerylike environment for the culinary artistry of the father-son chef duo Michael and Daniel Cauchi. The menu features seafood — mussels in cream, grilled octopus — but the land-based bounty

proves equally enticing. The crispy, fatty and moist pork belly appetizer delivers an Asian crunch from thin-sliced cabbage, and fruity notes from apple-beet jam. After, three lamb preparations mix crispy croquettes — filled with shredded meat — with discs of shoulder and a robust two-bone rack. Among desserts, the dark-chocolate brownie with white chocolate ice cream, crunchy cookie crumbs and forest fruits is outstanding. A three-course dinner for two, without drinks, runs €80 to €90.

Step Out, Small, stone-walled, windowless: Many Valletta bars feel like dungeons. Fortunately, two of the best offer easy breakouts by allowing drinkers to escape onto the majestic outdoor staircase-streets beyond their doors. Bridge Bar serves up Aperol spritzes (€5.50), bottles of prosecco (€20), free cushions and live jazz (mainly Fridays) to the convivial crowds who fill the steps outside its door. Around the corner, the newcomer [Cafe Society](#) offers twinkling harbor views and stuffed agricultural sacks for the throngs who lounge in front while quaffing local Maltese craft beers like hoppy-crisp Rust.



40-storey Fort Cambridge tower hotel scaled down

Fort Cambridge tower hotel down 11 metres from 40 to 31 storeys, but but number of guest rooms to increase from 368 to 375

by **James Debono**
maltatoday.com.mt

The developers of a 40-storey tower

hotel on the former Fort Cambridge officers' mess in Tigné, Sliema, have presented news plans that scale down the hotel by 11 metres.

Fort Cambridge developers GAP Ltd presented plans for a 31-storey hotel which still envisage the obliteration of a sizeable part of the historical barracks. The application is still awaiting a decision by the Planning Authority as to whether these barracks should be granted protection or not.

The original tower will be scaled down to 123 metres. But even despite the COVID-19 crisis in Malta, the public is still being expected to send its feedback on the development - deadline 8 May.

The change in height reflects the removal of the hotel's conference facilities, which gave way to an increase in rooms from 368 to 375.

The design was also changed from a stepped pyramidal structure, to a rectangular pencil development rising above the Tigné skyline, complementing the 28-storey Townsquare project near Villa Drago.

The height reduction was widely anticipated following the revocation of Townsquare's original 38-storey application last year.

Yet one major obstacle for the development is that the policy permitting high-rise hotels specifically bans such developments on scheduled historical buildings.

The PA still has to decide on a request to schedule the building by the Sliema Local council. The building's historical importance was recognised in studies included in the Environment Impact Assessment which recommended Grade 2 scheduling for the buildings, a status which normally precludes substantial changes.

Photomontages for the new development suggest that most of the original barracks will be demolished with only parts of the façade being retained.

The Fort Cambridge officers' mess was built between 1903 and 1905. The building was designed according to the standard officers' mess designs that were used during this period. In 1915 the building was used as a military hospital.

Because the site of the proposed tower hotel amounts to 2,508 sq.m, 1,770 sq.m of which will be built up, the development cannot be approved under the Floor Area Ratio policy, a framework to allow higher buildings only on 4,000 sq.m sites surrounded by streets on all sides; half of which must be retained as an open space.

The project's EIA consultants claim the decrease in storeys will reduce anticipated traffic generation and the resultant noise and air pollution levels due to a reduction of conferences, meetings and conventions which would have been organised in the hotel.

The 2007 development brief for the land on which Fort Cambridge was leased to GAP Ltd for €54 million, had excluded development on the historical barracks. But the brief itself is legally not mentioned in the deed signed with Gap Holdings in 2007. In 2016 former parliamentary secretary for lands Deborah Schembri confirmed with MaltaToday that since the 2007 deed does not take into account the development brief that guided Gap Holdings, the Government Property Division "has to honour the original deed" – that would imply that no renegotiation of the lease price or any changes are being considered.



Gozo cathedral invokes St Ursula's intercession

Photos: Charles Spiteri

The Cathedral authorities in Victoria has placed the bust of Saint Ursula, patron of Gozo, upon the main altar of the Cathedral, to invoke her intercession against the COVID-19 pandemic.

Devotion to the saint in Gozo began in 1614, when Eugenio-Romirez Maldonado, a Knight from Salamanca and Governor of Gozo, donated a bust of the saint with her arm-bone to the Matrice, currently the Victoria Cathedral. On September 6, 1620, Saint Ursula was declared patron saint of Gozo.

Throughout the centuries, three votive processions, in which the civil authorities also took part, were held throughout the year in thanksgiving for deliverance from calamities.

On February 18, 1814, a bubonic plague broke out in Xagħra. Communications between Gozo and Malta were cut off and the military were sent to Gozo to form a double cordon around Xagħra to avoid people spilling out. Trespassers risked being gunned down by snipers.

On that occasion, the bust of St Ursula was taken out of the church to the gardjola or watch-tower

upon St John Demi-Bastion inside the Cittadella and raised on a plinth facing the plague-stricken village so that villagers could invoke the intercession of Saint Ursula from their homes. Special prayers are being said in front of the saint twice daily, at 8am and at 6pm. Everyone is being urged to join in prayers to Saint Ursula online on www.radjukatidral.com

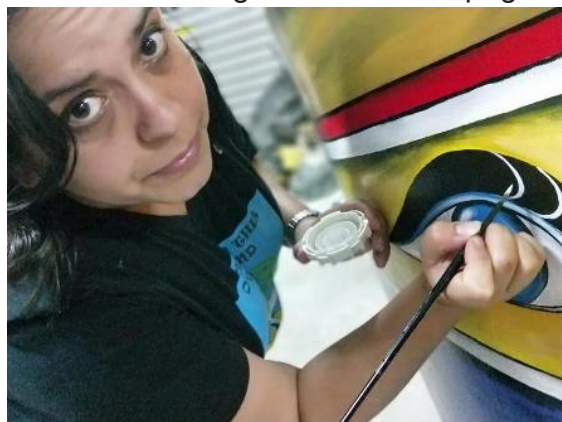


THE MALTESE JOURNAL

**OUR AIM IS TO KEEP
THE MALTESE
DIASPORA UNITED
AND STRENGTHEN
COMMUNICATION,
COOPERATION AND
COORDINATION
BETWEEN
COMMUNITIES
IN MALTA AND
ABROAD**

AUDREY BUTTIGIEG CARDONA - ABCreate Artworks

I came across a great Facebook page created in Malta by



the artist Stephanie Borg. This initiative saw several artists, including Audrey Buttigieg Cardona from Australia who is a migrant, an artist and an art teacher in

Victoria, Australia. It provides free downloadable colouring pages for children and adults alike to colour in while everyone is in self-isolation at home due to Covis-19. Have a look at the facebook page..

https://www.facebook.com/112072375520548/posts/3043656229028800/?substory_index=0



Audrey Buttigieg Cardona, 2D artist, painter

Audrey Buttigieg Cardona born in Malta, 1978, is an emerging artist who expresses herself mainly on paper. She draws her inspiration from the animal and natural worlds, interpreting life around her through a combination of real life drawing and doodling, which brings out her innermost emotions.



She started drawing at a very early age and has not stopped since. Her mentors helped her discover a new way of looking at things and they include internationally renowned Maltese artists, Joseph Mallia, Joseph Paul Cassar and the late Isabelle Borg. In Australia, her work has been featured at the Brunswick Art Gallery, Open Studios in the West, Art in Public Places organised by Hobsons Bay Council and a solo exhibition at Hunts Club Community Arts Centre, Deer Park. In Malta, she participated in collaborative exhibitions; in 2007 as part of a religious exhibition and in 2005 as a joint

exhibition with Maltese artist Charmaine Zammit.

In addition to creating her own artwork, Audrey teaches Visual Arts to young students at Christ the Priest Primary School. She believes in mentoring and guiding young minds to discovering their talents and creating their own artwork.

Audrey Buttigieg Cardona holds a B.Ed (Hons) in Art from the University of Malta. She currently lives with her husband and two young sons in Caroline Springs,

Online reading for children

Encouraging children to read for fun National Education Society COVID-19

Claudia Calleja

Coryse Borg: "With so many children being home now, we thought that parents would appreciate someone reading to their offspring – and we knew the children would enjoy it too."

A group of women have come together to read stories to children for an hour every day, trying to bring some respite and magic into their lives as they spend endless hours indoors.

"Children love stories and, at a time like this, it is important to reach out to as many children as possible," says Rachel Ellul Mercer, an early childhood educator who is involved in the Facebook project My Storytime. "The more children are exposed to storytellers, the more they too will pick up books to read for fun – not because they have to."

Since the coronavirus pandemic reached Malta's shores, various measures have been put in place to contain the outbreak, including the closure of schools.

With parents no longer taking children to playgrounds, children have been spending days indoors, keeping up with homework or doing online classes.

So why not take storytelling online too?

Stories are magical and there hasn't been a more needed time for some magic in our lifetimes than now That's the thought that struck actress Pia Zammit and she uploaded a Facebook post about it. A number of women picked up on it and came together to set up 'My Storytime Malta'.

So, every day at 5pm they premiere two or three stories, targeted at different age groups. Stories, read out by those involved in the project or guest readers, are pre-recorded.

"I know how much work class teachers put in with students, and now that all students are at home, I wanted to help relieve parents of their child-minding duties for at least a short while," Zammit said.

She hopes the initiative will also foster a greater love of books in children.

Coryse Borg, an actress and writer, agrees: "With so many children being home now, we thought that parents would appreciate someone reading to their offspring – and we knew the children would enjoy it too."

Marija Schranz, a self-confessed bibliophile, is using this as a creative platform where she can contribute to the community during this trying period.

"Books are a refuge that opens us up to so many worlds beyond our imagination, something we need badly at the moment," she says.



Dramatherapist Lou Ghirlando adds: "Stories are magical and there hasn't been a more needed time for some magic in our lifetimes than now."

"Stories can take us to different worlds through our imagination, and they can also speak to our souls, minds and hearts – helping us to make sense of our world."

**C
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**History will remember when the world stopped
And the flights stayed on the ground.
And the cars parked in the street.
And the trains didn't run.**

**History will remember when the schools closed
And the children stayed indoors
And the medical staff walked towards the fire
And they didn't run.**

**History will remember when the people sang
On their balconies, in isolation
But so very much together
In courage and song.**

**History will remember when the people fought
For their old and their weak
Protected the vulnerable
By doing nothing at all.**

**History will remember when the virus left
And the houses opened
And the people came out
And hugged and kissed
And started again**

Kinder than before.

Donna Ashworth



**THE JOURNAL THAT IS CONNECTING MALTESE
IN MALTA, GOZO AND THE REST OF THE WORLD**


**2013 - 2020 - SEVEN YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITIES
BUILDING BRIDGES**

maltesjournal@gmail.com



**THE MALTESE JOURNAL GIVES RECOGNITION TO
MALTESE ACHIEVERS IN MALTA AND OVERSEAS**

Galletti (Water Biscuits) Recipe

 *This is the story of the Maltese water biscuit, the humble galletta. The ingredients are simple: good quality flour, water, a little salt and a bag load of history. From the ship's biscuit and the rich maritime legacy of Malta's seafaring past, Galletti go back at least 150 years to the days of the naval bakeries, and possibly beyond. Bursting with goodness from the wheat plains, the flours we've blended to create our range give you a cracker that tastes as good as it sounds. Crisp and cooked to perfection, Good Earth Galletti are the ideal partner for dips, cheese, spreads and salamis.*

Ingredients:

- 1kg self-raising flour
- 1 tsp salt
- 50g fresh yeast
- 1 tsp sugar
- 1 cup warm water
- 60g melted butter
- Extra warm water

Method:

1. Dissolve the yeast and the sugar in a cup of warm water until the mixture is frothy.
2. Mix the flour and the salt in a large bowl and add the melted butter.
3. Add the yeast mixture and mix well.
4. Add the warm water as you go along to ensure a doughy consistency. When done, the dough should not be sticky.
5. Knead the dough on a bench top. Then place in a large bowl, cover it and leave the dough to rest for an hour or so.
6. Knead the dough again and cut it in small portions.
7. Roll out the portions as thinly as possible (you can use a pasta machine) and with a scone cutter or a glass cut the pastry in small circles.
8. Place the individual circles on a lightly dusted oven tray and bake until they are golden brown.



Maltese Snacks

Every country has their signature snacks and Malta is no different. Fortunately for us, our local friends greeted us with a little welcome packet allowing us to sample some of these Maltese favourites!

Kinnie: A bitter-sweet, 50g sugar-filled soft drink beverage! Found in any corner store, it's worth trying at least once.

Cisk: A traditional Maltese lager beer.

Ottijiet: A crumbly, buttery, sweet based cookie with sesame seeds, cloves & aniseed. They are shaped in a figure of 8 (hence the name ottijiet, the plural of otto which is 8 in Italian) and are commonly served alongside tea and coffee or with breakfast.

Kannoli: Originating from Sicily but all throughout Malta, these treats are to die for. Crisp, sweet crunchy tubes filled with sweet ricotta cheese. You can find them plain or flavoured with cocoa, nuts, chocolate, or candied fruits.