



# Maltese e-Newsletter

The Journal of the Maltese Diaspora

Editor - Frank L Scicluna

maltesejournal@gmail.com



Louis Parnis from Wollongong NSW  
with his grandchildren  
after the COVID-19  
lockdown



TEACHERS  
PAUL AND ROSE  
SPITERI  
storytelling online



THANK YOU - GRAZZI

Maltese  
Living  
Abroad  
estimated  
at  
950 000



**We are proud to be Maltese. That's why we love and share this Journal**



# Sending children back to school



The outbreak of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) has been declared a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) and the virus has now spread to many countries and territories. While a lot is still unknown about the virus that causes COVID-19, we do know that it is transmitted through direct contact with respiratory droplets of an infected person (generated through coughing and sneezing) Individuals can also be infected from touching surfaces contaminated with the virus and touching

their face (e.g., eyes, nose, mouth). While COVID-19 continues to spread it is important that communities take action to prevent further transmission, reduce the impacts of the outbreak and support control measures.

The protection of children and educational facilities is particularly important. Precautions are necessary to prevent the potential spread of COVID-19 in school settings; however, care must also be taken to avoid stigmatizing students and staff who may have been exposed to the virus. It is important to remember that COVID-19 does not differentiate between borders, ethnicities, disability status, age or gender.

Education settings should continue to be welcoming, respectful, inclusive, and supportive environments to all. Measures taken by schools can prevent the entry and spread of COVID-19 by students and staff who may have been exposed to the virus, while minimizing disruption and protecting students and staff from discrimination.

Children and young people are global citizens, powerful agents of change and the next generation of caregivers, scientists, and doctors. Any crisis presents the opportunity to help them learn, cultivate compassion and increase resilience while building a safer and more caring community. Having information and facts about COVID-19 will help diminish students' fears and anxieties around the disease and support their ability to cope with any secondary impacts in their lives. This guidance provides key messages and considerations for engaging school administrators, teachers and staff, parents, caregivers and community members, as well as children themselves in promoting safe and healthy schools.

Education can encourage students to become advocates for disease prevention and control at home, in school, and in their community by talking to others about how to prevent the spread of viruses. Maintaining safe school operations or reopening schools after a closure requires many considerations but, if done well, can promote public health.





## MALTESE LIVING ABROAD ESTIMATED AT 950 000

Maltese Journal  
for the  
Maltese Diaspora

It was reported that the estimated number of Maltese living overseas is over 950 000. This number is according to statistics held by TVM and includes Maltese up to the fifth generation residing abroad around the world, which is about double the population living in Malta.

By far the largest number of Maltese descendants up to the fifth generation lives in Australia where, according to the news report, from the census they are estimated at 447,000. The second largest group of Maltese overseas lives in the United States numbering 220,000 and England with 91,000 is the third largest.

The surprising news was that there are Maltese who reside in places that one does not expect to find them, such as, Macao, Marshall Islands, Solomon Islands, Norfolk Island, Samoa, Christmas Island, Vanuatu as well as Trinidad and Tobago. There are some, if only a few individuals, living in countries such as Iran, Iraq, Botswana and Congo.

Malta's membership of the European Union appears to have led to a substantial increase in the number of Maltese living in Belgium now numbering about 668. In continental Europe the Maltese presence includes 900 in Italy, 23 in the Vatican, 600 in France and 276 in the Netherlands, not to mention Sweden, Finland, Switzerland, Spain and South Africa.

There is also a large longstanding Maltese community on the Mediterranean island of Corfu numbering 7,000 and in Alexandria, Egypt. Malta's commercial ties with the Middle East have led to an increase of Maltese presence in those countries including 733 in the United Arab Emirates and 36 in Qatar among others.

[Source: [www.tvm.com.mt](http://www.tvm.com.mt)]



### AFTER ITS BEAUTY SLEEP, GOZO WILL SOON BE READY TO WELCOME YOU AGAIN AND AGAIN

GOZO meaning "joy" in Castilian, is **the second largest island** of the Maltese archipelago. Though separated from mainland Malta by a mere 5km stretch of sea, Gozo is distinctly different from Malta, more rural and tranquil, its culture and way of life are rooted in tradition and yet open to the present. "The Maltese archipelago has more to offer than just the island from which it takes its name.

A mere 25 minutes by ferry from Malta, tiny Gozo is a destination in its own right, boasting a distinct history, culture and character. The Maltese flock here to enjoy the verdant scenery, superior food and relaxed pace of life. And it isn't just the locals that love it: none other than Brangelina chose it as their honeymoon destination. Most roads in Gozo lead to the capital, Victoria, an attractive jumble of markets, restaurants, quaint British gardens and diverting museums. Its high point – quite literally – is the ancient fortified Cittadella, with its magnificent 360-degree view of the island. Spread out below you are the island's chief sights: the scenic beach resort of Marsalforn, the world-famous Neolithic temples of Ggantija, and the legendary Calypso's Cave, where Odysseus may or may not have taken a break during his travels. Believe us: come to Gozo, and you'll want to stay for more than just a pit stop."

**By Time Out Malta and Gozo**

## Aqrali storja bil-Malti

## Read me a Story in Maltese



As we all know this Covid-19 pandemic has turned our lives upside down. Rose and Paul Spiteri a couple living in Mosta, Malta are no exception. After both teaching for 30 + years, Rose (59 years) is now a reliver kindergarten teacher in Gharghur and Paul (61 years) is a reliver and school librarian in a Salesian Secondary School for boys in Dingli.

Paul had been teaching the Maltese language for the first 29 years of his career

and still has the language very much at heart. Rose has always taught children between the tender ages of 3 and 5. Over these years they have seen a great change in both the language and the lack of it being spoken now.

As Malta has adapted to online teaching just like all the other countries, this couple found themselves at a loss when it came to their jobs. Besides the daily house chores, cooking etc. they had delved into a very important project to keep in contact with the students. Paul came up with the idea of reading stories in Maltese as there is a great lack of them on You Tube while Rose had to step into the shoes of a cameraperson. They turned their living-room into a mini-studio, set-up their holiday camera on a tripod, adjusted two house lamps for lights and gave it a go.

Over these 8 weeks they have recorded, edited and uploaded 60 odd, 12 minute clips. At first they started to upload them on YouTube but they decided to upload them on their Facebook walls too so that they can reach a bigger number of children and adults. They have had quite a good feedback both from Maltese and Maltese relatives living outside Malta. Also, once a week a different story is uploaded on the Savio College school website where Paul teaches.

At the moment, they are looking for more stories to be read in the coming weeks, although this whole experience is far from professional. Hopefully more Maltese Australians will be able to listen to our stories and enjoy the beauty of our mother tongue. Stories can be heard on the You Tube channel called <https://www.facebook.com/paul.spiteri.9828>

*I'M PROUD TO BE*  
**MALTESE**

**THAT'S WHY I READ, LOVE AND SHARE  
THE MALTESE JOURNAL**

[maltesejournal@gmail.com](mailto:maltesejournal@gmail.com)





# Orlando Emanuel Caruana

## An American Civil War Hero

DATE OF ACTION: 14/03/1862 New Bern, North Carolina USA.



Orlando Emanuel Caruana was born on 23 June 1844 in Valletta, Malta. Claiming to be 20 years old, he enlisted in the US Army from New York City in August 1861. He received the Medal of Honor for two actions. The first was on 14 March 1862 during the Battle of New Bern when he took the battle flag from the wounded color bearer, helping off the battlefield. The second was on 14 September that same year when he, along with three other men, volunteered to scout out the enemy's position in Maryland during the Battle of South Mountain. The other three men were killed but he managed to escape and rejoin his company. He was discharged from the 51st New York Infantry in September 1864.



Medal of Honor AWARDED FOR ACTIONS DURING Civil War

Service: Army Division: 51st New York Infantry

GENERAL ORDERS: Date of Issue: November 14, 1890

CITATION:

*The President of the United States of America, in the name of Congress, takes pleasure in presenting the Medal of Honor to Private Orlando Emanuel Caruana, United States Army, for extraordinary heroism on 14 March 1862, while serving with Company K, 51st New York Infantry, in action at New Bern, North Carolina. Private Caruana brought off the wounded color sergeant and the colors under a heavy fire of the enemy. He was one of four soldiers who volunteered to determine the position of the enemy at South Mountain, Maryland on 14 September 1862. While so engaged was fired upon and his three companions killed, but he escaped and rejoined his command in safety.*



Are you thinking  
about selling?

Robert is an experienced real estate professional working in Adelaide. Call now for a free property appraisal report to find out what your house is worth in today's market. Robert can fluently converse in Maltese

Robert D'Amato  
M 0452 544 668 P 08 8271 1111  
Email: robert.damato@harcourts.com.au  
Harcourts VennMillar RLA 266403  
414 Goodwood Road, Cumberland Park SA 5041

Harcourts VennMillar

If your property is currently listed with another agent please disregard this communication

WE LOVE TO  
HEAR FROM  
YOU.  
WE ARE ONE  
BUT WE ARE  
MANY. SHARE  
THIS JOURNAL  
WITH OTHERS



## **Memoirs of the Maltese community in Tunisia! Success story of a Maltese architect**

Joseph Damato (also known as Guze D'Amato) is known as one of the leading architects of the first half of the 20th Century in Malta. He drew plans of a number of churches including the one in Kalkara, Xewkija, Our Lady of Mount Carmel in Valletta and Paola. He was also an architect of many schools and hospitals, especially St. Catherine Hospital in Attard. However very few people know he was part of the Maltese community in Tunisia in his early stages of his life. He was born in Sfax on 12 December 1886 to a



Maltese immigrant family who arrived in Tunisia around 1850. After studying architecture in Tunis, he moved permanently to Malta. During 1920s, he helped many Maltese seek work in Tunisia and Algeria and to ensure they have good work conditions. He died on 26 May 1963 in Attard, Ma

## **Evarist Bartolo - Ministru**

L-istorja tghallimna li bhala pajjiz ckejken, dmirna li nqumu bil-wieqfa u nitkellmu: bir-raguni, b'mod sod, bla naqtghu qalbna.

Zghar fid-daqs ma jfissirx zghar fil-qalb, fil-mohh u fir-rieda.

Jekk ninzlu gharkubbtejna

Jew nitkaxkru mal-art,

Zgur ma niehdu xejn,

Lanqas rispet u dinjita`.

Sehemna lesti naghmluh.

Meta haddiehor ikollu bzonnna, jsibna.

Il-fatti juru li fejn nistghu, dejjem nghinu mill-ahjar li nistghu.

Nahdmu ghall-gid ta' pajjizna

Mhux biex naghmlu hsara lill-haddiehor.

Zgur li biex haddiehor jaghti kasna u jghinna,

Zgur mhux se jibda jghinna jekk ahna lanqas biss nitniffsu.

Zgur mhux se jibda jirrispettana jekk lanqas nirrispettaw lilna nfusna.

Zgur mhux se jibda jghinna

Jekk ahna lanqas nghinu lilna nfusna.

Sahha u sliem. (FACEBOOK)



**Marie-Louise Marisa Privitera**  
Delegate  
Council of Maltese Living Abroad

**Keeping Connected  
for Maltese Seniors**





**FACEBOOK PAGE for Maltese Seniors in Australia and the Maltese Diaspora helps keep them socially connected and informed with each other and their homeland Malta through stories, culture, and relevant important information from both Australia and Malta.**

<https://www.facebook.com/malteseseniors/>





*Week of Prayer for Christian Unity at Toronto, Canada  
27 January 2020*

## MALTESE-CANADIAN COMMUNITY NEWS

Malta at the centre of a Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

This Worship Service with a focus in **Malta** and St Paul saw a packed Yorkminster Parkway Parish Church made up of a **Catholics**, **Baptists**, United Church **Pentecostals**, Anglicans and **Armenian** Apostolic Church. The theme of the service was about, 'They showed us unusual kindness' (Acts 28:2).

The Maltese-Canadian delegation was lead by Fr Mario Micallef MSSP, Fr Ivan Burdian MSSP and Fr Karm Borg MSSP and a sizeable Maltese-Canadian MTCA parish members.

Dr Raymond Xerri, Consul General of **Malta to Canada** represented the Government of **Malta** at this historic service. After the prayer service lead by His Eminence Cardinal Thomas Collins of the Roman **Catholic Archdiocese of Toronto** a reception was held and a historic photo was taken with **Cardinal**.

#####



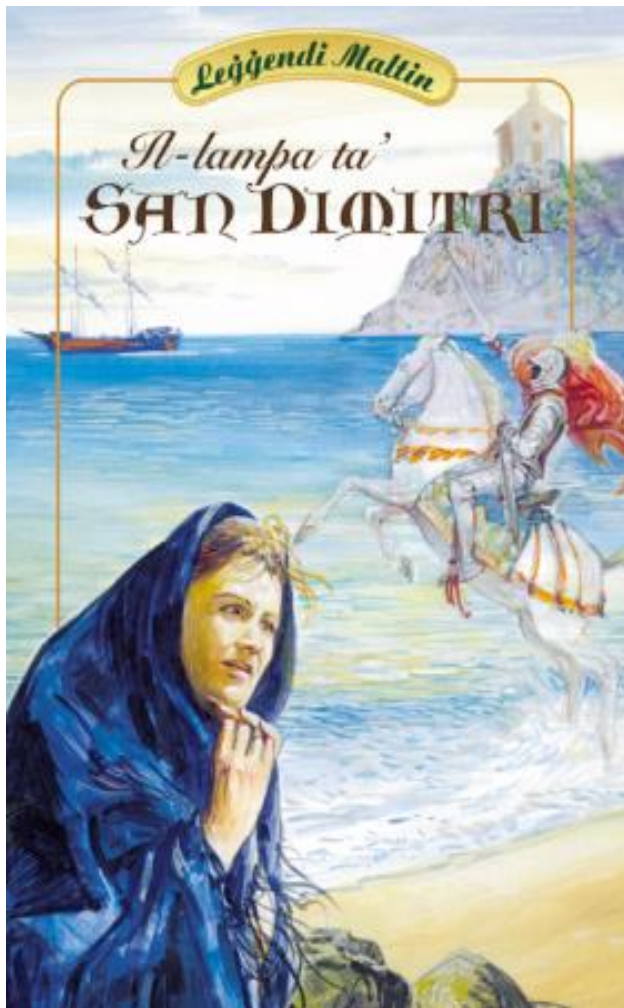
## Archbishop donates 700 meals charity on his 61st birthday

Photo: church.mt

Archbishop Charles Scicluna has personally donated 700 meals to those in need to mark his 61st birthday, which he is celebrating on Friday.

He offered the donation during a visit to the Solidarity Meals kitchen at Salini on Tuesday.

The meals donated by the archbishop will be distributed on Friday.



## Zgugina

Dik Zgugina mara ghawdxija  
Kienet toqghod l-Gharb il-gew  
U fid-dinja kull ma kellha  
Tifel biss jismu Matthew

Darba wahda gew it-Torok  
U l-Matthew malli serquh  
U gerrewh lejn it-Turkija  
U go Ghawdex ma sabuhx

Din l-imsejkna ta' Zgugina  
Tibki dejjem lejl u nhar  
Dejjem titlob lil San Mitri  
Li jerga jgibulha id-dar

O San Mitri gibli l-ibni  
Ha nixghelek qazba zejt  
Nixelilek minn fil-ghodu  
U ddum tighxel sa bil-lejl

Dan San Mitri gab lil binha  
Wara il-wedgha f'it sieghat  
Gie fuq ziemel u hawnekk halla  
Difru mhafter gewwa l-blat.

The village of Gharb celebrates the traditional and popular feast of Saint Demetrius. The chapel is built on the edge of a promontory in Gharb, close to a cliff called Ras San Mitri (St. Demetrius' Cape) not far from Ta' Gordan Lighthouse. It can be approached by a country road from Gharb.



An older chapel was built by Dun Frangisk Depena early in the fifteenth century. However, Bishop Miguel Balaguer Camarasa deconsecrated it on 24th May, 1657 and fell into disrepair. In 1736, Dun Mario Vella caused it to be rebuilt, leaving an annual legacy of five scudi for its maintenance. On 11th April, 1809 the archpriest of Gharb, Dun Publius Refalo, blessed the chapel on behalf of Bishop Ferdinando Mattei. At the start of the second world war, at the request of the procurator Dun Paul Formosa, Papas Schiro` parish priest of the Greek Catholic community, celebrated Mass at this chapel that bears the name of a Greek saint.

There are several legends related to the chapel. The most popular legend says that the pirates stole Zgugina's son. Zgugina went to the chapel and prayed San Dimitri to get her son back. San Dimitri leaped from the portrait with his white horse and rode to the pirate ship over water. He fought the pirates and returned her son safely. Another related legend says that the original San Dimitri chapel was close to the cliffs. One day in a big earthquake the chapel fell in one piece to the sea. The legend specifies that a candle is alight day and night in this underwater chapel. Also the legend mentions that the chapel bell still chimes on special religious days.





Before I start sharing adventures on all the different places you can visit on the islands of **Malta and Gozo** I thought I'd first pass on some tales and legends that enrich the folklore of these beautiful Mediterranean islands. Sitting at a crossroads in the Mediterranean, Malta lies both between Italy and Africa, but also the Middle East and the Atlantic. This means, the island has often featured among other cultures' stories. Aside from that, there's also plenty of local folklore of Malta regarding its history and people. These are just a few of the stories and tales of local folklore that commonly known on the islands.

**ISLE OF CALYPSO** One of the greater tales of Greek Mythology is Homer's **Odyssey**. The story follows the long journey of the hero Odysseus and includes his troubles with the nymph **Calypso** on her island of **Ogygia**. Calypso lived in a cave on the island and fell in love with the hero, bewitching him so as to keep him on the island eternally. For seven years Odysseus stayed with Calypso under her enchantment. It wasn't until the intervention of the gods that Odysseus was released from her spell and allowed to return home to his wife in Ithaca.

What makes this tale relevant to Malta is that it is widely believed that the island of Ogygia and the Maltese island of Gozo are one and the same. Since the 4th century BC, it has been suggested that **Gozo** is indeed the Isle of Calypso. Further reinforcing the idea is the presence of a cave by Ramla Bay on the island's north. Since it is believed that this cave is where Calypso is said to have lived, it is now known as Calypso's Cave. The cave is in fact a series of caverns and according to legend leads right down to the sea. The cave just recently had a small collapse and is not currently visible from its regular viewing platform.

When you visit Gozo, it becomes easy to understand how a legend arose about the island having a magical hold on you. Gozo is full of enchanting places and the vibrant red sand of Ramla Beach by Calypso's Cave is a wonderful example.

**THE MEGALITHIC GIANTESS** Scattered throughout the islands of Malta are stone structures that date all the way back to the 3600-2500 BC. These 5000 year old structures are historically known as **megalithic**, due to the large stones used to construct them. Thanks to their age, these millennia old temples are recognised as UNESCO World Heritage Sites and interwoven into the local folklore of Malta.

According to local legend the ruins were remains of temples built by giants who once resided there. One such place with several ruins is the area known as **Ggantija** or the *Giant's Tower* in English, in the heart of Gozo. This large temple complex still stands to this day and are the earliest of all the megalithic temples in Malta.

One legend from Ggantija tells of a giantess who was seen carrying boulders overhead in order to build many of the stone structures found throughout the area. It was said that she only ate broad beans and honey and built the places of worship all the while carrying a child too.

**SHIPWRECK OF ST. PAUL** The country of Malta has a deep relationship with Christianity, which according to legend had quite the fantastic start. It is said that Christianity came to Malta with the shipwreck of the **Apostle Paul** on a small island just off its coast in 60 AD. As told in the *Acts of the Apostles*, Paul was en route to Rome as a political prisoner when the ship he was on got caught in a vicious storm. Its passengers were shipwrecked and washed ashore on an island that's now known as **St Paul's Island**. The island lies just across the bay from the town of Bugibba on the northern coast of Malta.

The tale says that once on Malta, the passengers were met and welcomed by the locals under Roman rule. Invited to a fire, Paul was suddenly bitten by a poisonous snake but miraculously didn't fall ill. The people saw this as a sign that Paul was indeed an exceptional man. Paul would end up staying on Malta the entire winter and began the spread of Christianity on the island when he healed the Roman Chief's father from a fever. It is said that very chief named **Publius** would become the island's first bishop



## An Embassy of Malta in Ottawa..... When? Why not?

"I remember vividly when nearly 35 years ago, on October 3, 1985, former Consul General of Malta, at the time honorary, John P. Pisani issued a press release to all clubs and Maltese organisations in Canada stating that the former Minister for Foreign Affairs, Dr Alex Sciberras Trigona appointed him Consul General with jurisdiction over the whole territory of

Canada.

I recently found the press release while flipping through the pages of the November-December 1985 issue of the Maltese Canadian Club of London Newsletter here in Toronto.

Canada is home to the second largest Maltese community outside Malta and yet the Maltese Government representation is limited to a Consulate General in Toronto and just four honorary consuls in some provinces, which cater for thousands of Maltese throughout this vast country and a Malta Ambassador to Canada in Washington DC.

The latter representation, for a number of Canadian Members of Parliament I knew and spoke with over the years with, is nothing but an insult for a great country such as Canada to be represented from the United States.

Why hasn't the Government of Malta ever considered opening an Embassy in Ottawa? When in Australia where the largest Maltese communities outside of Malta live, there is a fully staffed Embassy in Canberra, a Consul General in Sydney and another in Melbourne and a number of honorary consuls in the other Australian States.

In the United States, where there are less Maltese than in Canada, there is an Ambassador and Consul in the Washington D.C., an Ambassador in New York and Consul General in New York and more than a dozen honorary consuls in a number of American states.

Having worked as a journalist and programme producer of the only Maltese TV programme in Maltese in Canada for over 30 years, Lehen Malti TV programme and after speaking to a number of my fellow Maltese-Canadians veterans we are committed to seek the answer to this decades-old question – why don't subsequent Maltese Governments since 1985 did not consider opening an Embassy in Ottawa?

Maltese-Canadians should not be treated less than Maltese elsewhere, we deserve diplomatic representation present in Ottawa!" Frank Attard, Ottawa.

**Ottawa is the capital city of Canada.** It stands on the south bank of the Ottawa River in the eastern portion of southern Ontario. Ottawa borders Gatineau, Quebec, and forms the core of the Ottawa–Gatineau census metropolitan area (CMA) and the National Capital Region (NCR). As of 2016, Ottawa had a city population of 934,243 and a metropolitan population of 1,323,783 making it the fourth-largest city and the fifth-largest CMA in Canada. In June 2019, the City of Ottawa estimated it had surpassed a population of a million.

Founded in 1826 as Bytown, and incorporated as Ottawa in 1855, the city has evolved into the political centre of Canada. Its original boundaries were expanded through numerous annexations and were ultimately replaced by a new city incorporation and amalgamation in 2001 which significantly increased its land area. The city name "Ottawa" was chosen in reference to the Ottawa River, the name of which is derived from the Algonquin *Odawa*, meaning "to trade".





## KNIGHTS OF MALTA INTERNATIONAL PILGRIMAGE

Due to the worldwide pandemic of COVID-19, we are unable to make our International Pilgrimage to Lourdes.

However, masses will be celebrated in different languages throughout the day. The English Mass will be celebrated at 5:00 PM local Lourdes time (11:00 Ontario time). Use this link to connect to the live broadcast from the Grotto.

<https://www.lourdes-france.org/en/tv-lourdes/>.

Roman J. Ciecierz, CStJ, CD, KMOB President

## Order of Malta - Funeral of H.M.E.H the Grand Master, Fra' Giacomo Dalla Torre del Tempio di Sanguinetto



The funeral was celebrated of the Prince and 80th Grand Master of the Sovereign Order of Malta, Fra' Giacomo Dalla Torre del Tempio di Sanguinetto, who passed away on 29th April in Rome after an incurable disease.

In compliance with the restriction measures for COVID-19, the funeral was celebrated in a limited form so it could be repeated four times over the same day to allow relatives, the Order's government, the closest collaborators, a diplomatic mission as well as the doctors who had treated Fra' Giacomo over the past months and some of the Order of Malta volunteers to pay their last respects.

Officiating the funeral, Cardinal

Giovanni Angelo Becciu, the Pope's Special Delegate to the Sovereign Order of Malta, recalled the heartfelt message Pope Francis had sent when he learnt of the Grand Master's death, remembering him as a "zealous man of culture and faith".

Live-Streamed Funeral of the Grand Master Fra ' Giacomo From the Tower of the Temple of Sanguinetto

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u5J7hoT4tGw>

**AVE MARIA DI LOURDES:** In memoriam of Fra' Giacomo Dalla Torre del Tempio di Sanguinetto, Grand Master of the Sovereign Order of Malta, who died on April 29 in Rome.

A truly touching tribute made by the Lebanese Association and sung by members and volunteers of the Order of Malta's Grand Priorities and National Associations around the world.

As if in Lourdes, they joined together to dedicate this Ave Maria, in their respective language, to our beloved Grand Master, who will always remain among us, in our hearts and prayers

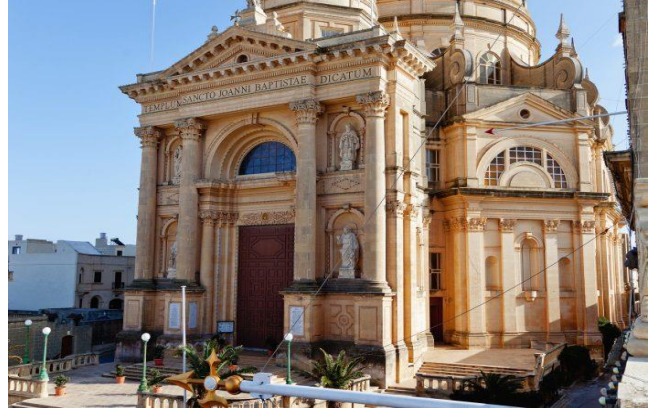
<https://youtu.be/Lzg0L02KPj4>



Read the Journal on  
<https://www.facebook.com/frank.scicluna.3>  
[www.ozmalta.com](http://www.ozmalta.com)

**MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER**

BE CONNECTED: [maltesejournal@gmail.com](mailto:maltesejournal@gmail.com)



## XEWKIJA - GOZO

Ix-Xewkija, which lies half way between Mġarr Harbour and ir-Rabat, is the oldest village in Gozo and is best known for its awesome rotunda, the circular church at the centre of the village. Gozo's largest church, its dome is a distinctive landmark visible across much of the island.

The Rotunda, which claims to have the third largest unsupported dome in the world (28m in diameter and 75m tall), was built in the twentieth century and dedicated to St. John the Baptist. In the impressive white limestone interior, eight concrete columns covered with stone support the elegant dome, which has an estimated weight of 45,000 tonnes. The interior shows off the versatility and texture of local limestone and the skills of local craftsmen. It is sparsely decorated with fine sculptures and modern paintings. The floor is of polished Carrara marble and the main altar is also carved in precious marble.

The ix-Xewkija rotunda, which is also the parish church, is the Seat of the Knights of the Order of St. John (also known as the Knights of Malta) and the festa is held each year on the closest Sunday to the 24th June.

The church was built as a replacement for an older church, the valuable stonework of which can still be seen in the Rotunda's Sculpture Museum. From here you can also take the lift up to the balcony of the dome for panoramic views over Gozo.

Ix-Xewkija is known for producing some of the best Gozitan stone masons and decorators of Maltese stone. They are also known for their skill at fishing and ix-Xewkija's fishermen have kept alive the art of making traditional cane fish traps.

Ix-Xewkija has a long and distinguished history. It became the first parish outside ir-Rabat (Victoria) on the 27th November 1678 and was the first to gain official 'village' status. The name derives from Arabic meaning 'an area of thorny wasteland' though it bears no resemblance to any such thing today, being instead one of the Gozo's larger villages.

Entering the village from the Mġarr Road one sees the remains of a Knights-period windmill erected in the time of Grand Master Perellos (1697-1720). This is a unique mill in Gozo because the ground floor is built in an octagon shape, which shows the eight principal wind directions.

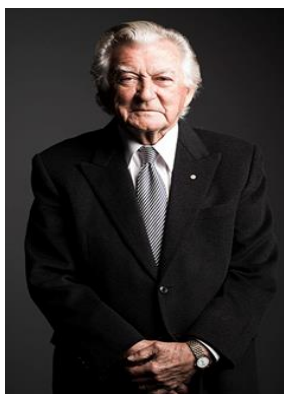
Also worth a look are the chapel known as Madonna tal-Ħniena (Our Lady of Charity) which is dedicated to St Bartholomew and the tower and newly restored chapel of St Cecilia that lie on the edge of the village. The St Ċeċċia chapel is the oldest in Gozo.

On the coast beyond the village lies the beautiful unspoilt Mġarr ix-Xini Valley and access to the peaceful Bay of Mġarr ix-Xini which is a lovely place to swim, snorkel and dive. Ix-Xewkija is an ideal base for walking as well as abseiling in winter and spring. Also close to the village are a variety of important modern Gozo institutions including the University of Malta (Gozo Campus), the Gozo Football Stadium and the island's Industrial Estate.

Accessible for persons with a disability.







## PRIME MINISTER OF AUSTRALIA ROBERT J L HAWKE AC GCL

1929—2019

REMEMBERING BOB HAWKE

**The Bob Hawke Prime Ministerial Centre, University of South Australia community continues to remember our friend and former Australian Prime Minister, Bob Hawke.**

One year on, Bob will be deservedly remembered among Australians in general, and this University in particular, not only as a politician of great talent and principle but as a man who was an active campaigner for education and the opportunities it offered to people. He was also unfailing in his support for social justice, the environment, peace and interfaith dialogue and Australia and its people.

At the establishment of The Bob Hawke Prime Ministerial Centre in 1997, he remarked: *"I will do all I can to help make the Centre an institution of which we can all be proud, not as a memorial to an individual, but as another small but important bridge to understanding, compassion, and good policy."*

In keeping with this vision, the Hawke Centre presents events that encourage new thinking about civil societies and provides everyone access to some of today's greatest thinkers and reformers. Here at the Hawke Centre we are sharing knowledge – which in turn cultivates social capital and lays down the foundations of inclusive societies.

As Hawke identified: *"Knowledge is the antidote to fear and prejudice and it is the indispensable basis of good policy-making and of a cohesive community."*

Hawke's formidable intellect drove him to the highest reaches of Australian public life, but Bob never lost the genuine connection with, and understanding of, everyday Australians and the joys and challenges in their lives.

While we grieve for his loss, we also give thanks for the life Bob lived and for how dramatically he helped shape this nation. The Bob Hawke Prime Ministerial Centre is determined to present a program that supplements the achievements of the Hawke Government; delivering free events and exhibitions that reflect the themes:

*Strengthening our Democracy – Valuing Our Diversity – and Building our Future.*

Representing a collective memory of Bob Hawke's life and time in office, archives from the Hawke era and beyond are accessible through The Bob Hawke Prime Ministerial Library. The Collection provides researchers with an invaluable resource for both political and social research from the Hawke era.

The Hawke Centre and Library continue to honour the values of Bob Hawke as a major supporter of education, of international understanding, and of balance between equity and economy to serve the greater social good. We seek to extend the governing principles of Hawke's leadership – so that they are not bound to just a single moment in time – but offer a legacy to build our future.

Jacinta Thompson Executive Director & Events and Exhibitions Producer

The Bob Hawke Prime Ministerial Centre

University of South Australia *Image Credit: The Hon Bob Hawke AC GCL, Photographer: Randy Larcombe*



FIS-6.30pm.....hin ta' MALTA,  
niltaqgħu fuq  
RADJU MALTA 93.7FM għal  
programm  
"ID-DJARJU ta' Enzo"

<https://tunein.com/radio/Radju-Malta-1-937-s8520/>

## medicinal folklore in the Maltese Islands

ALBERT FENECH



Cast your minds back to the days when a person could go through a whole life without once visiting a doctor as these were few and far between and only affordable by the rich, and without taking one manufactured medicine (equally few and far between and mostly fantasy concoctions of a dubious nature).

The alternative was to produce your own natural cures provided by Mother Nature while many found that good measures of alcohol worked wonders. With the current Covid-19 turmoil, the other day a visiting doctor because of my acute psoriasis infection problems, confided she was coming across many cases of persons confined

to their homes resorting more and more to alcohol!

These are some highly popular cures and remedies that make up Maltese medicinal lore and were used over the centuries and must have had some widespread positive results otherwise they would have been discarded – as they have been mostly today to be replaced by medicine chests filled with pills, pastels, gels and creams.



### THE COMMON ONION

This was widely used to help with respiratory and sinus problems for blocked noses and common colds. An onion would be sliced and boiled and the resultant liquid left to cool and then placed by the bedside overnight to release the relieving aroma. A hot roasted onion was used to help extract sharp urchin spikes and raw onion slices would be smeared over the skin for bee, wasp and nettle stings.

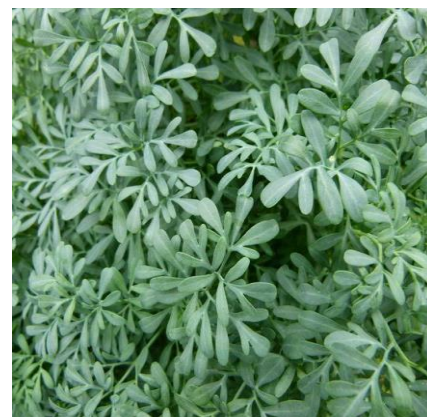
### SQUIRTING CUCUMBER (also known in Maltese as a Donkey Mushroom!)

A concoction was used by persons suffering from jaundice. It was believed that smelling the concoction was enough to disperse jaundice.

### RUE

Received a horse or donkey kick or maybe dropped something heavy on your feet? It was believed that the squeezed leaves from rue produced hydrogen and when

applied to the affected area this would prevent blood congealing under the skin. Another remedy was rue leaves fried in oil and applied to body bruises. Eye disease was treated by chewing raw rue leaves and inhaling the smell into the eyes.



### BORAGE

This has remained popular unto this day. The borage leaves are boiled, crushed and filtered and the juice drunk for bad coughs and sore throats.





### LEMONS

Mutiple uses mainly for their vitamin C value but also rubbed over warts and ringworms to prevent growth. Squeezed lemon also used with fresh fruit concotions as well as many number of dishes.

### GARLIC

Not associated with any Dracula connections but widely used in sauces and salsa

and typical Mediterranean dishes. Eaten raw (well chewed!) they are said to be extremely good for digestion.



### OLIVES

A history dating back to Phoenician times as a highly

precious commodity for cooking and preserving but also used as a medication for skin infections of all sorts. Dried olive twig were burnt to exorcise evil spirits and fresh olive twigs with leaves hung over doorways from Palm Sunday onward to keep away the Devil.

### COLD METAL KEYS TO INDUCE SHOCK

In addition, there were many other varied



remedies one of which was placing a large and cold metal key against the back of the neck as a shock to staunch nose bleeds and hicups. People carried a dried fig in their pocket to prevent their being infected with piles and rhuematism was treated by carrying a dried fish in the pocket!



### THE BIRTH PLACENTA LATER DRIED AND POWDERED

Maltese mothers often smeared their breasts with an extract of aloe after breastfeeding their young (as an antiseptic) and were said to preserve the umbilical chord of a newborn child, allowing it to dessicate and then grinding it into powder and if the baby develops a cold they are made to smell the powder.

If one had measles one wore red clothing and used red blankets as cover, said to absorb the redness and sting of measles.

Superstition also held the upper hand and mothers of newborn babes had to cook and eat a hen's neck and head a day after birth as failing to do that meant the baby would not be able to hold its neck and head erect for the first three months! In nearby Sicily this is varied in that it is the father who has to eat these.

Another bizarre belief held the placenta had to be minced and crushed using rain water and then buried in soil to prevent the baby contracting skin diseases.

Hence the medicinal beliefs of our forefathers for many, many centuries. Perhaps different from the eating of an apple a day to keep the doctor away ... but presumably equally effective in their day and age.

**About Albert Fenech** Born in 1946, Albert Fenech's family took up UK residence in 1954 where he spent his boyhood and youth before temporarily returning to Malta between 1957 and 1959 and then coming back to Malta permanently in 1965. He spent eight years as a full-time journalist with "The Times of Malta" before taking up a career in HR Management but still retained his roots by actively pursuing freelance journalism and broadcasting for various media outlets covering social issues, current affairs, sports and travel. <https://b-c-ing-u.com/author/albert/>

## HOW TO MAKE GALLETTI WATER CRACKERS

You gotta love Galletti (Maltese traditional water crackers). Lovely with every kind of dip, or cheese. Usually a staple in every Maltese household as a snack or as a pre-meal.

Very easy to buy ready packed but so satisfying to bake your own.... and now we have plenty of time for that, right?

Image: Pinterest

### INGREDIENTS

- 15g fresh yeast or the equivalent in easy blend or dried yeast
- 150 – 175 ml warm water
- 200g plain flour
- pinch of salt
- 150g semolina
- 25g butter

### HOW TO PREPARE

- Cream the yeast in water and sieve the flour and salt into a bowl.
- Add the semolina, rub in the butter and add the yeast and enough water until you have a pliable but rather dry dough. Work a little dough at a time, keeping the rest in a refrigerator to retard the rising.
- Roll out very thinly on a floured board and cut into rounds using a plain 5m cutter, prick each biscuit with a fork and lay on a floured baking sheet, bake at 200c / 400F / gas mark 6 until golden.
- Cool on a wire tray, and when completely cold store in an airtight tin



## Bacon Cheese Dip

### Ingredients:

- 8 slices bacon (about 200g), diced, fried
- and well drained 200g cream cheese, cubed, room temperature
- 2 cups shredded cheddar
- 1/2 small onion very finely minced
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- a dash of hot sauce

**Method:** Place bacon in a large skillet. Cook over medium-high heat until evenly brown. Drain, crumble, and set aside. In a small bowl, mix the cream cheese Cheddar cheese, onion, and bacon. Place bowl in microwave, and cook 2 minutes. Remove, and stir well. Return to microwave, and cook 2 to 4 minutes more. Serve warm with galletti or toasted bread



## Bigilla

### Ingredients:

- 250g ful ta' Ġirba (these are small brown beans, if you cannot find them use dried broad beans)
- 2 tbsps olive oil
- 1 head of garlic crushed
- 1 tbsp marjoram, mint or basil
- Salt
- Olive Oil

### Method:

- 1) Wash the beans and leave them soaking overnight in cold water
- 2) Change the water and boil the beans until they become very tender and the water evaporates
- 3) Mash the beans completely with a manual food masher or with a fork – the final consistency will be much better than if you use a food processor.





- 4) Put in a bowl and add all the other ingredients
- 5) Add a little extra olive oil on top

### **Anchovy Olive Dip**

#### **Ingredients:**

- 1 Garlic, crushed
- 1 cup Black Olives, pitted and chopped
- 4 anchovies
- 1 tsp Fresh Thyme
- 1 tsp Fresh Rosemary
- 2 tbsp Capers
- 3 tbsp Lemon Juice
- 4 tbsp Olive Oil
- Black Pepper, freshly ground.

**Method:** Place the olives in a food processor and chop to a coarse puree. Remove and reserve them. Drop in the rest of the ingredients and process into a puree, scraping the bowl, once or twice. Return the chopped olives/tomatoes to the processor, and mix briefly adding more oil if necessary. Serve with toasted crusty bread.



### **Tuna Dip**

#### **Ingredients:**

- 1 large onion
- 1 big can tuna
- 5 teaspoons mayonnaise
- 1 teaspoon tomato purée
- 1 teaspoon vinegar, salt and pepper

#### **Method:**

1. Mix all the ingredients in a food processor or blender.
2. Serve with Maltese galletti or Maltese bread. ENJOY!!!



**Joe Smith started the day early having set his alarm clock ( MADE IN JAPAN ) for 6am . While his coffeepot ( MADE IN CHINA ) was perking, he shaved with his electric razor (MADE IN HONG KONG ). He put on a dress shirt ( MADE IN SRI LANKA ), designer jeans ( MADE IN SINGAPORE ) and tennis shoes ( MADE IN KOREA ). After cooking his breakfast in his new electric skillet ( MADE IN INDIA ) he sat down with his calculator ( MADE IN MEXICO ) to see how much he could spend today. After setting his watch ( MADE IN TAIWAN ) to the radio ( MADE IN INDIA ) he got in his car ( MADE IN GERMANY ) filled it with Petrol from Saudi Arabia and continued his search for a good paying Australian JOB At the end of yet another discouraging and fruitless day checking his Computer (Made In Malaysia ), Joe decide to relax for a while.. He put on his sandals ( MADE IN BRAZIL ) poured himself a glass of wine ( MADE IN FRANCE.!) and turned on his TV ( MADE IN INDONESIA ), and then wondered why he can't find a good paying job in ... **Australia.....****



This inscription at our Mdina repository recalls a little-known part of our history that began 221 years ago.

At dawn on the 3rd of September 1798

Notary Emanuele Vitale and Santu Formosa from Żurrieq led Maltese rebels in an assault on the Mdina bastions, entering the old city of Malta through a hidden door.

Santu Formosa, known as 'it-tigra' (the Tiger), spearheaded his battalion of 65 men to chase the defending republican troops. Formosa killed 24 men with his sword. By the end of the fighting the sword broke in half in the chest of his final victim.

The city was taken and for the first time ever the red and white flag of Malta flew atop Mdina bastions.

The revolution against the French occupation had begun.

*The National Archives of Malta  
· September 3, 2019 ·*

## THE MALTA MIRACLE AND ITS TWO HEROES

This book by White Salmon author Sam Moses is the story of a British convoy sent to relieve the siege of Malta in 1942.

[Bruce Ramsey](#)

*"At All Costs: How A Crippled Ship and Two American Merchant Mariners Turned the Tide of World War II"*  
by Sam Moses

This book by White Salmon author Sam Moses is the story of a British convoy sent to relieve the siege of Malta in 1942. It offers a slice of World War II action small enough so that the author can personalize the story through the key people who lived it — particularly two American merchantmen who were awarded the Distinguished Service Medal.

Some historical background: Germany and Italy had an army in North Africa that was pushing the British back into Egypt. That army, under Erwin Rommel, was extremely aggressive — but only when it could get supplies of food and fuel across the sea from Italy.

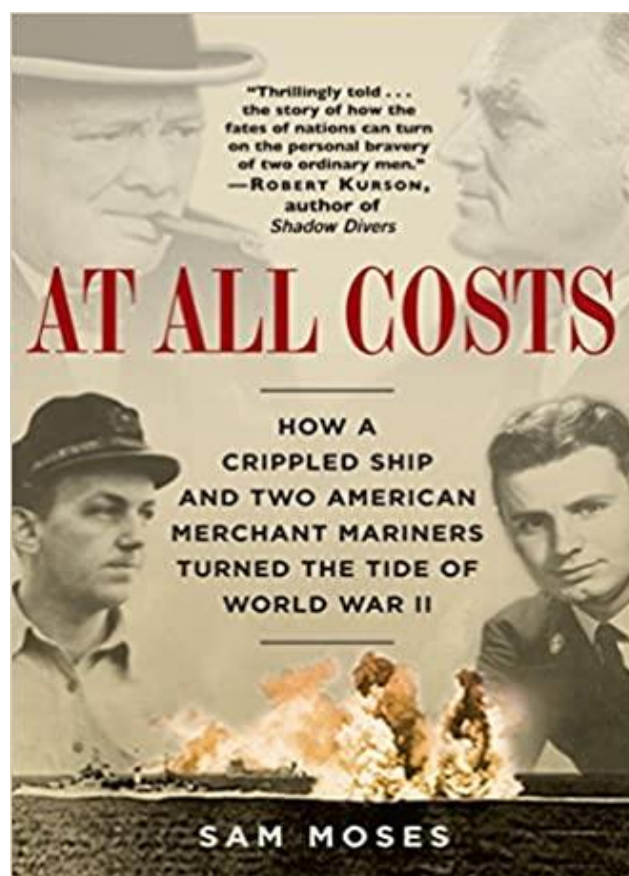
The sea route was short, but it was within easy air range of British-held Malta. If the British could hold Malta and keep enough combat aircraft there, armed and fueled, it could stop Rommel, and buy time to defeat him. But Malta had to hold out, and in the summer of 1942, its shelves of food and tanks of fuel were almost empty.

To save Malta, Winston Churchill talked Franklin Roosevelt out of a tanker — a new, fast tanker with welded rather than riveted compartments. The Royal Navy organized a convoy of other merchant ships — our American heroes were on one of them — protected by British warships. The convoy had to go from Britain and Gibraltar across half of the Mediterranean and through the strait between Vichy French Tunisia and Axis-held Sicily. Nearing the strait, they faced torpedo boats, dive-bombers and Italian submarines. Churchill was worried, but he took the gamble.

Mussolini was informed of the convoy, and knew the value of Malta to his enemies. He was also worried — and had to decide whether to gamble the Italian Navy's precious cruisers.

Moses also sets up the story of his two heroes with some detailed background, particularly on Frederick Larsen, an American who had a Norwegian wife and son stuck in Axis-occupied Norway. Larsen had a plan under way to get them out, and went into the battle not knowing whether they were safe.

As the attacks commenced, and ships in the convoy started to burn and sink — including the one our



heroes were on — key players had to make choices. One of the masters turned his freighter in fear back to Gibraltar — and was caught by a cruiser and turned around. He survived. Another sped ahead, found himself alone, and turned back to the convoy for support. He sank. Another master, an American, ordered his crew to abandon their damaged ship — and a British commander angrily ordered them back aboard.

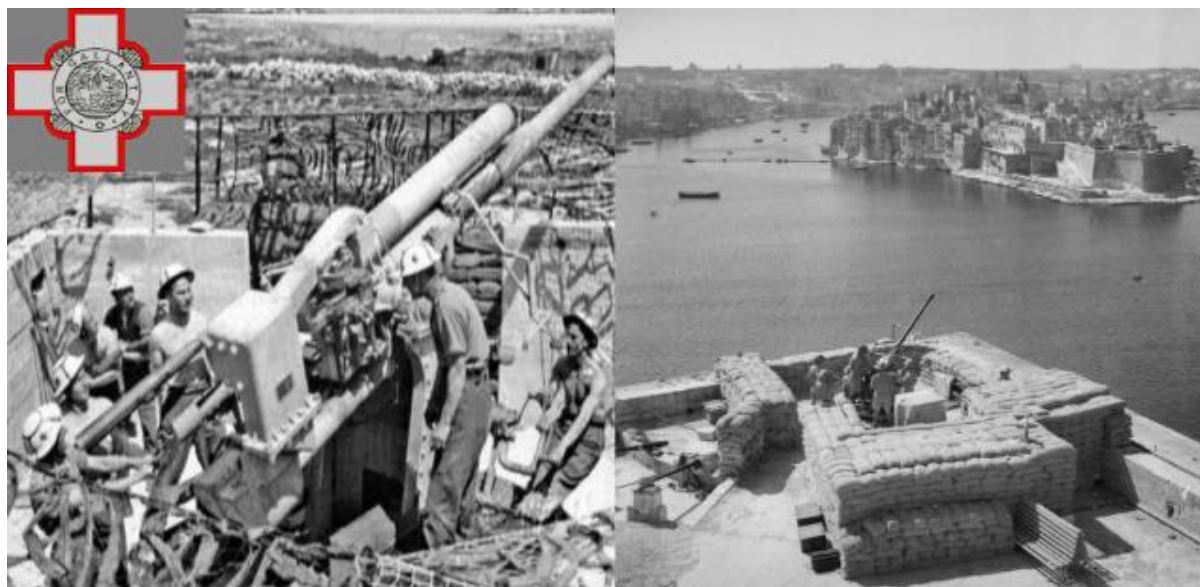
For America, it was early in the war, and many were not prepared for it. But Larsen and his shipmate Francis Dales, the heroes of this story, were ready for action. They volunteered to go back to the big American tanker that had been abandoned, but still had working anti-aircraft guns on it. They defended the hulking tub of fuel oil and kerosene from waves of dive-bombers.

The shot-up tanker, disfigured by aircraft wreckage, ripped by bombs and taking on seawater, is dragged into Valetta harbor, its cargo intact. For the Maltese, it is a Roman Catholic feast day — the sort of day when one might pray for a miracle.

The claim that two sailors “turned the tide” in the war is, of course, marketing rather than history. But they were heroes, and this is a fine and fast-paced story.



## The Island Nation that Defied the Fuhrer



Malta in the

### Second World War

The George Cross remains one of the highest military honors that can be given in the United Kingdom. Second only to the Victoria Cross, it was created in 1940 at the height of the German blitz on London a manner to recognize the great civilian courage it took to endure those dark days. As such, it has a particular civilian emphasis while still being given to members of the military for actions that don't quite fit a traditional military honor.

It is a high honor for an individual to receive the George Cross and an even more fascinating award when you consider it was given to an entire island nation at once. For this is the story of the people of Malta, the island nation that defied the Fuhrer.

### The Island Fortress of Malta

Granted, Malta was not its own sovereign state at the time, but the people of Malta certainly comprised a nation by any definition. Malta has long been at the crossroads of history given its unique position in the Mediterranean and has been the target of heroes and despots alike. Only 122 square miles in size, this small piece of real estate would prove to play a role disproportionate to its size in the course of human events.

Unfortunately for this particular generation, that significance put them squarely in the sights of Adolf Hitler. Since June of 1940, the island nation would find itself under almost constant attack from both German and Italian Air Forces. Resupply and reinforcement from the air was understandably difficult and German U-boats wreaked havoc on attempts to resupply by sea.

While the people of Malta endured these early years of war with grit and fortitude, their most harrowing season would come in 1942. Starting in January and going on through July, it was reported that there was only one 24 hour period where bombs did not fall on Malta. Dreaming of an invasion, Hitler ordered the island to be "neutralized" at all costs. Hitler planned to starve the people of the island while simultaneously pounding them with death from above. And while these heavy costs were paid in full by the people of Malta, they did not relent.

Service personnel and civilians clear up debris on a heavily bomb-damaged street in Valletta, Malta on 1 May 1942

### Life Underground

The people of Malta spent so much time underground in shelters, ancient catacombs, and bunkers that disease began to run rife through the community. Digging in became a way of life as the German onslaught persisted. Food became desperately short and one survivor recounted that transportation became a major problem because all the horses had been eaten. When you consider the size of the island, it is not hard to imagine that literally every square mile of the island was touched in some way by the terror of the Luftwaffe. The people of Malta had every reason to relent and give up, but history would prove them not so easy to break.

King George awarded the George Cross to the people of Malta at the height of the siege in April of 1942. He stated that it was "to bear witness to a heroism and a devotion that will long be famous in history." The resistance of the people of Malta was not just a feel good story about endurance, but a military feat of immense strategic significance. Had the Axis powers taken Malta it would have significantly altered the tactical landscape of the Mediterranean and prove to be a costly invasion for the Allies to take it back.

### On the Offensive

With the Germans starting to take heavy losses in North Africa, attention diverted away from Malta and the siege effectively ended by November of 1942. From this point forward, Malta would play a heavy offensive role. From the strategic island location halfway between North Africa and Italy, the Royal Air Force began to pound Axis naval forces and shipping. After all, it only seems fair that the Axis forces in North Africa feel the pain of hunger as their much-needed supplies from Europe were sent to the bottom of the Mediterranean. Spitfire Vc(trop) in North Africa. The Spitfire arrived in Malta in March 1942, providing the island with the RAF's main frontline fighter

By May of 1943, Air Forces launching from Malta had sunk 230 Axis ships in just 164 days which would prove to be the highest Allied sinking rate of the entire war. The last German air raid on Malta took place on July 20<sup>th</sup>, 1943 in which would be the 3,340<sup>th</sup> attack since June of 1940. Malta would go on to provide strategic air cover to forces massing for the invasion of Sicily. And with the fall of Italy, war would finally take place from a distance for the people of this tiny island nation who just a short timer earlier were on the brink of starvation.

### The George Cross

If you ever wonder what the George Cross means to the people of Malta, you need but look at their flag for an answer. For in the top left corner of the flag, you see the George Cross itself. To have had that honor awarded during the height of the siege gave the people of Malta a source of pride and the reminder that the world was watching their fortitude. It let them know that although they are surrounded by the enemy, they are not forgotten.

A modern ferry would get you to Malta from Sicily in less than a couple of hours and yet the entire might of the German and Italian forces couldn't take it. A remarkable story of resilience in the face of an enemy who conquered a continent. There wasn't man, woman, or child who could escape the harsh realities of life on that island and for that, an entire nation so rightly deserved the George Cross.



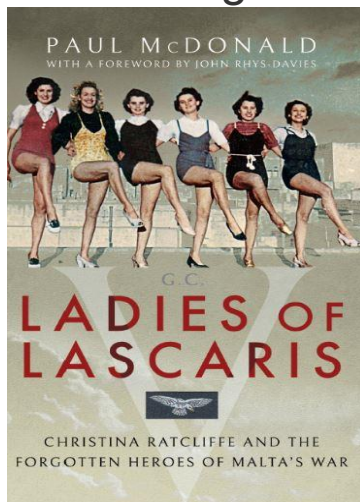
We sincerely thank all our eager readers from all over the world but I thank especially those who send us emails, comments, articles, pictures to assist us to make this journal AMAZING



**Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Second in Malta In 1949  
Chatting with a Maltese lady wearing the Ghonnella**



## Malta's forgotten female heroes of WWII:



by **PAUL McDONALD**

### **Christina Ratcliffe and the Forgotten Heroes of Malta's War**

*During World War 2, in 1942, 53 female civilian plotters worked at Lascaris, including Christina Ratcliffe, a former singer and dancer.*

Tracing the life of Christina Ratcliffe, an English who became an aircraft plotter in Malta in WWII, this book tells her story in the underground Royal Air Force operational headquarters beneath Lascaris Bastion in Valletta, as well as those of other British and Maltese girls employed by the RAF.

The author, Paul McDonald, is himself a former Royal Air Force pilot, yet while he's not old enough to have experienced the horrors of WWII, his connection with Malta is a strong one, having been posted here as a photo-recce pilot in 1975. The book explores the fascinating subject: the 'forgotten' heroes of Malta's war.

#### **Christina Ratcliffe?**



*Christina Ratcliffe seen here at (then) King's Way in Valletta. Photo by Philip Glassborow*

While the island of Malta was being bombed in June 1942, over 50 female civilian plotters were working at Lascaris, some girls as young as 14. Six, including Christina, received the award for gallantry. Christina was described in the Times of Malta in 1942 as "*Christina of George Cross Island*", and she herself was reported as saying that Malta "is carved on my heart."

*"Christina Ratcliffe was very much a real person. She was born in Cheshire, England, in 1914 and first came to Malta in 1937. She returned in March 1940 and remained on the island until she died in 1988,"* says Paul, who conducted vast research for

the book. *"My research involved contact with the Maltese historian Frederick Galea and with the families of the girls who worked at Lascaris,"* he explains. *"It also involved visits to the UK National Archives in Kew, London and visits to Malta itself."*

#### **A rare female perspective on war**

What the women of Lascaris did, how they lived and how some of them died is told in part using their own words with Paul's book. And indeed, their descriptions of life beneath the most intensive, prolonged bombing the world has ever seen are both rare and extraordinary – an insightful female perspective at the heart of military conflict.

According to Paul, for years after WWII, whispers of a remarkable RAF photo-recce pilot called Warby and his stunning companion Christina, a true heroine, echoes within small corner cafes and bars across Malta's towns and villages.

*"Malta is a jewel of an island and has a fascinating history,"* Pauls maintains. *"There is much that links Malta and its people with the UK. The people of both are determined and resilient, and both islands have stood up to invasion throughout their history."*

#### **The author of the book**

Paul McDonald and his wife Jackie lived in Birkirkara and Balzan from 1975 to 1978. They often drove past Christina's Floriana home, unaware at that time of her existence. When they left Malta, they had an even stronger connection with the island: two children, their son Matthew born in Mtarfa and their daughter Hannah in Attard. Asked of his connection with the island, Paul smiles, *"both my children were born in Malta. If I understand your laws correctly, that makes them Maltese. Need I say more?"*



**T I F C H I R A**

Ta L'euuel Missioni f'Detroit  
Lill Maltin  
Mghamula mil Predicaturi

**DUN GIORG CARUANA**  
Cappillan ta Corona Heights N. Y.

*Var 4 kat U MIN Dicem 1921*

**PATRI JACBU min MALTA**  
CAPPUCCIN

Taht il Cura  
Tal Cappillan tal Maltin

**DUN MICHEL BORG**  
Fil Chnisja

**ST. PAUL'S MALTESE PARISH**  
Detroit, Mich. U. S. A.

---

**MASSIMI**

Ftacar, o bniedem. li f'cull hin ghandech  
tcun lest; ghaliex is-sigha ta me' tech  
ma taflex.

Ftacar, li trab cont u trab ghad issir.

Ftacar fil crugha tad-dnub, fil gmiel tal  
virtu' u fit-tbatija u it-tgaudija ghal  
eternita'.

**Mis - 6 sat 13 ta Marzu 1921**

L-ARKIVI NAZZJONALI TA' MALTA

## The Maltese in Detroit

A prominent Maltese within the community in Detroit since 1920 was the Rev. Michael Borg who had arrived in that city to work among the Maltese in December 1920. The Maltese greeted their priest with enthusiasm. The "Detroit News" of November 13 had already received the news from Malta that a priest was going to Detroit to be put in charge of the Maltese living in that city. Under the heading: "Native Comes to Countrymen Here" the newspaper reproduced a photograph of the thirty-four-year old priest who had seen active service during the Great War and who was due to arrive shortly in New York from Cherbourg on the ship "Olympic".



The Rev. Michael Borg was to be installed as the first pastor of a Maltese ethnic parish in Detroit. He had arrived in the USA from his own parish of St. Lawrence in Vittoriosa, Malta, where he himself had been born. The bishop of Malta had agreed to send Father Borg to Detroit as the Maltese in that city had expressed their desire to have a priest of their own. When he arrived in Detroit, he said Mass in the Knights of Equity Hall where he preached in Maltese. After Mass a meeting was arranged at the head-quarters of the Detroit Maltese Association, 434 Michigan Avenue.

The bishop of Detroit, Mgr. Michael J. Gallagher D.D. had agreed to the appointment of the Rev. Michael Borg to work among the Maltese on a permanent basis. The priest from Vittoriosa was to hold the position of pastor of the Maltese parish in Detroit for seven years. Bernice

Stewart wrote about the new pastor on December 12, 1920: "Father Borg is a quiet smiling man in his early thirties, very gentle and concerned about his people and very interested in the city in which he finds himself. He knows so little about the secular side of our industrial life that it is difficult to see how he will be able to give his parishioners the advice about material ways and means they so patently need".

Although Father Borg was a newcomer to the American way of life he was not unaware of the trials which beset anybody trying to start a new life in a foreign country. Moreover a number of his parishioners were poor and lived in unhealthy lodging houses. He also knew that in his community men heavily outnumbered women and created an imbalance in the social and moral state of his parish. In January 1921 he wrote a warning to a Maltese newspaper: "Tell the Maltese not to come over here at the present because there are many out of work ... next March or April will be a good time to come".

A similar advice had been given on November 26, 1920, by a certain Antonio Agius who was then the assistant secretary of the Maltese Association of Detroit. Mr. Agius had warned that work in Detroit was very slack at that time and he thought it inadvisable for intending emigrants to leave their home at that time.

According to Bernice Stewart, Maltese men often wanted their wives and children with them even though at that time they were out of work. The public welfare department of Detroit was helping the unemployed to alleviate their problems, but she thought it unwise to send for dependants when money simply was not available. She cautioned her readers that most Maltese in Detroit at the time were a problem to the city.

Bernice Stewart noticed that in 1920 the Maltese had already banded themselves together in an association and that they had rented rooms at 434 Michigan Avenue which served as a meeting place



for their association. It was in those rooms that the Maltese held their meetings, presented plays and organised musical entertain-ment. Bernice Stewart wrote that some time before, the Maltese had put on Shakespearian plays in Maltese. This was a marked improvement from former days when most Maltese men had nowhere to go and therefore they wasted their time in walking up and down the streets, gazing into windows stacked with products which they knew they could not afford.

Less than a month after his arrival Father Michael Borg called a general meeting of all his parishioners. During that meeting he gave an account of the money collected and also said that more cash was needed if the Maltese in Detroit wanted to build their own church as many ethnic Catholics had already done. Those who attended the meeting accepted with enthusiasm the priest's appeal for a Maltese church in North America.

Present at that meeting was the Rev. Doyle who was then the chancellor of Bishop Gallagher. He was there to represent American church authorities. The chancellor stated that if the Maltese wished to build a church of their own in Detroit, it was necessary for them to achieve unity of mind and purpose. Rev. Doyle reminded the Maltese that his bishop had already helped them by letting them use the Knights of Equity Hall. He also assured his listeners that Bishop Gallagher was willing to help the Maltese to the limits of his powers. It seemed that the chancellor was not unaware of some dissident voices within the Maltese community because his intervention ended on an ominous note. He warned those present at the meeting that no club was to be greater than the parish.

Another prominent guest at the meeting called by the Maltese pastor, was Mr. Thompson who had been mayor of Detroit. Mr. Thompson still possessed considerable influence both in Catholic and in political circles. He was also a practical man who was liked by the Maltese. The fact that Mr. Thompson was himself a Catholic endeared him to the Maltese who put him in charge of the scheme for building a Maltese church. It was the opinion of the ex-mayor that Father Borg was a very hard-working priest.

That important meeting, called by the Maltese priest on January 23, 1921, ended on a positive note. The parishioners liked their pastor and the priest was in good standing with the Detroit diocesan authorities. Mr. Thompson was an asset to the community because of his valuable contacts. At that meeting it was also announced that the Society of Saint Vincent de Paule was ready to proceed with welfare work among the needy of the Maltese parish.

Father Borg knew that his was no affluent congregation and he must have had some hesitation in asking for contributions from people who found it quite difficult to survive. The plan to build a church was ambitious and eventually it was going to create dissensions by those who were quite willing to be counted as members of the parish but who did not cherish the idea of contributing from their own pockets.

The Maltese pastor had to cultivate his relations with Bishop Gallagher who was then the highest church authority in the whole diocese. Bishop Gallagher liked having the Maltese living within his territorial boundaries as they strengthened the numbers of Catholics living in the area. Moreover, the Maltese had already earned for themselves the reputation of being strong and steadfast in their faith. The bishop was willing to help the Maltese community, but the presence of his chancellor at the meeting of January 23, 1921, showed that his was to be the final word in whatever Catholics planned to do in Detroit. The warning delivered by Rev. Doyle about the clubs was to be seen in the perspective of the bishop's overall jurisdiction.

The clubs referred to by Rev. Doyle were the secular centres of gravity of the Detroit Maltese community. The priest was welcome in such premises but he exercised no authority as he did within his church. As Bernice Stewart noted, in 1920 there was already functioning a Maltese Association. This association had come into existence before the advent of Father Borg.

The Maltese Association of Detroit had began to consider itself as the secular authority, capable of speaking in the name of the community. In 1920 the Association had an erudite secretary in the person of Mr. Paul T. Olivier.

Mr. P. T. Olivier had been living in the USA since 1909 and had originally settled in San Francisco where he studied law. He later moved to Michigan where he practised as an attorney. In 1920 he was also a notary public for the county of Wayne. He was also deputy collector and inspector in the U.S. Customs Service for the port of Detroit. It was obvious that both Borg and Mr. P.T. Olivier had to cooperate if there was to be harmony within the Maltese community.

During Lent of 1921, the Rev. Michael Borg organised a mission for the Maltese. He invited two other Maltese priests to Detroit, the Rev. George Caruana, who was soon to be made bishop of Puerto Rico and whose prominence was a great asset to the Maltese, and the Rev. James Baldacchino, who was a Capuchin friar working in New York. The three priests had known each other for some time and their work among the Maltese immigrants had caught the attention of James L. Devlin of the "Detroit News".

Devlin wrote on March 20, 1921: "In order to accommodate the immense number of worshippers, additional services are being held daily. Salvatore Pulis Felice erected an altar, helped by artisans many of whom are out of work. The altar is in simple Roman style and furnished in old ivory".

Some five months after the mission had been concluded the Maltese in Detroit heard that their friend the Rev. George Caruana was to be consecrated bishop of Puerto Rico. The consecration took place in Rome on August 5, 1921. After his consecration the new bishop left Rome for Malta where he stayed till November 13. He was back in Puerto Rico on January 25, 1922 and remained stationed on that island for three years.

Before taking up residence in Puerto Rico, Bishop Caruana had been in contact with Detroit and it seemed that his friend Father Borg was thinking of leaving Detroit to take up the duties of secretary to the new bishop as soon as a substitute from Malta was found. Father Borg never took up his new appointment, but his friendship with Mgr. Caruana lasted for many years.

When Bishop Caruana visited Detroit he was met by many Maltese. He said Mass and delivered a sermon in Maltese. The choirs of Holy Trinity and Holy Rosary churches, under the baton of Professor R. Magnam, sang during the Mass and rendered the occasion more memorable by the Gregorian music which had been selected by the Professor himself. Father Borg presented Bishop Caruana with a golden pectoral cross on behalf of the Maltese community of Detroit.

The pastor had taken up residence at 1267 Baker Street. He still served his community at the Knights of Equity Hall which formerly was a Grace Episcopal church. Two years after the arrival of Father Borg, the site on which the Hall stood was put up for sale and the Maltese were hoping for a better church before they were told to leave the place. According to the "Michigan Catholic" of November 14, 1922, the Maltese were intending to collect 200,000 dollars to achieve their wish. Pledges were made payable to Bishop Gallagher and sent to Father Borg at his residence in Baker Street or at the Maltese American Printing Company which was situated at 1402, Third Street.

*Source: The Great Exodus by Fr Lawrence E. Attard. (C) P.E.G. Ltd - 1989.*







## When is Victoria Day in Canada?

Victoria Day (French: Fête de la Reine) is a federal Canadian statutory holiday observed on the Monday before May 25th each year. Victoria Day marks the birthday of Queen Victoria (1837-1901). Following the death of Queen Victoria, May 24th was decreed as Empire Day across the British Empire. Today, Canada is the only country who still has a holiday on the day.

## History of Victoria Day in Canada

Queen Victoria (May 24th 1819 – January 22nd 1901) was the ruler of the United Kingdom and the British Empire from June 20th 1837 until her death in 1901.

Victoria reigned for 63 years and seven months, a record for a British monarch that was only beaten in September 2015 by Queen Elizabeth II.

Though she never actually visited Canada, Queen Victoria grew up knowing a lot about Canada. Her father, the Duke of Kent (Prince Edward, fourth son of King George III), had lived for nearly ten years in Quebec City and Halifax.

### *Did you know?*

*Despite being one of the most famous British Monarchs, at birth, Victoria was only fifth in the line of succession for the British crown, behind the four eldest sons of George III, including her three uncles and her father, Edward.*

For many Canadians, Victoria Day marks the unofficial beginning of summer, with many people opening their summer cabins. It is a popular holiday as it is the first holiday to take place in the warmer summer months.

In Quebec, **National Patriots' Day** (Journée nationale des patriotes) which is a commemoration of the Lower Canada Rebellion of 1837 is celebrated on the same day as Victoria Day.

While Victoria Day is a holiday for all federal employees across Canada, it is not a paid statutory holiday in New Brunswick under the Days of Rest Act. Nova Scotia is the only province or territory not to designate the day a holiday.

The holiday is called '**May Two-Four**' in some parts of Canada, a name that refers both to the date around which the holiday falls (May 24th) and Canadian slang for a case of twenty-four beers (a "two-four"), a drink popular during the long weekend.

As it always falls on a Monday, leading to a long weekend, it may also be known as 'May Long' or 'May Run'.

On Victoria Day, all city, state, and government offices are closed. Schools, post offices, banks, and libraries are also closed. Public transport will run on a reduced holiday schedule.

**WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK DR. RAYMOND XERRI, CONSUL-GENERAL FOR THE  
REPUBLIC OF MALTA TO CANADA AND THE CANADIAN-MALTESE COMMUNITY  
OF TORONTO FOR THEIR GREAT SUPPORT AND WISH THEM  
A HAPPY VICTORIA DAY**



## **RIISING ABOVE COVID-19? 18 May 2020 SUMMARY OF THE OPINION PAPER BY THE ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION**

The Interdiocesan Environment Commission (KA) feels that now that our country is eagerly looking forward to a time of normality as the COVID-19 pandemic gradually subsides, it would be foolish to go back to our old ways as if nothing happened – as if we have learnt nothing from this experience. The KA believes we need to reinforce the self-discipline we have shown throughout the pandemic, so that all of us would be able to weather any similar experience in the future.

The COVID-19 crisis has opened our eyes to our vulnerability and to what is most valuable in life. The pandemic has caught many countries unprepared, giving rise to a huge setback in their economies, and a human tragedy that has shaken the whole world. It is hoped that this would serve as an eye-opener to what we might have to face when the negative impacts of climate change, caused by unsustainable development, start hitting us harder.

The United Nations has called on governments to show the same commitment, determination and unity shown in the fight against the pandemic, in order to find a solution to the problem of climate change.

The KA highlights a number of positive outcomes we have experienced during these difficult times: moments of solidarity, generosity, concern for the needy and personal sacrifice for the good of the community. Moreover, it seems we have come to understand how wellbeing does not depend solely on wealth, and that it takes more than financial prosperity to maintain a good quality of life. Nevertheless, the KA condemns the misconduct of whoever, in such a sad circumstance, chose to exploit the situation and disregard the good of others.

While commending the way the spread of the virus has been tackled by the local authorities, the KA feels the Government should show the same insight in adopting a socially just and sustainable post-COVID-19 strategy, which guarantees a decent quality of life for all so that we will not lose what we have achieved during this difficult time. This strategy should primarily provide economic support directly to the community (especially to those persons worse affected by the crisis), and not to those industries whose unsustainable practice is having a negative effect on the quality of life of citizens. This means that any economic stimulus package should ensure that no development would be considered unless it is sustainable and compatible with the European Green Deal.

Proposals for infrastructural projects that are not sustainable and which are devised only to jumpstart the economy, should be meticulously scrutinized before a decision on their implementation is taken. The improved air quality we have experienced these last weeks should open our eyes to the urgency of shifting from an economy that exploits unwisely the natural resources to one which gives due consideration to the natural and urban heritage.

The KA hopes that the authorities would continue to invest in our nation's environmental, cultural and human resources, and endorses the promise of the Minister for the Environment, Climate Change and Planning, that the Government "will support intelligent planning that will create wealth without sacrificing the environment, so that we can emerge strong and successful from this crisis" as a move in the right direction.

## **DON'T MISS THE NEXT EDITION OF THE MALTESE JOURNAL**