



Maltese e-Newsletter

Journal of Maltese Living Abroad

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H. E. Mr Mario Farrugia Borg the High Commissioner for Malta presenting his credentials to H. E. Hon. David Hurley AC DSC (Retd), Governor General of the Commonwealth of Australia,



**The Maltese
Australians
congratulate
the newly
appointed
High
Commissioner
for Malta
in Australia
H.E. Mario
Farrugia Borg**



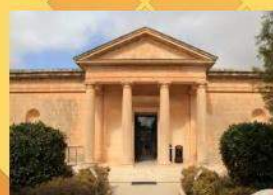
**QAGHAQ
TAL-GHASEL
HONEY RINGS**

Recipe page

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ROMAN VILLA RABAT

Built - 1st century
and discovered
in 1881



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**DOMUS
ROMANA**

**LORENZO
GAFA'**



Maltese Baroque architect

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Kummissjoni Għolja tar-Repubblika ta' Malta fl-Awstralja

High Commission for the Republic for Malta to Australia

PRESS RELEASE 01/2021 17 February 2021 38 Culgoa Circuit, O'Malley ACT 2606

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(English)



Presentation of credentials by newly appointed High Commissioner for the Republic of Malta to Australia to His Excellency the Governor General of the Commonwealth of Australia The High Commission for the Republic of Malta to Australia & New Zealand has the honour and pleasure to announce that His Excellency Mr Mario Farrugia Borg has presented his credentials to His Excellency General the Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Retd), Governor General of the Commonwealth of Australia, on 17 February 2021. During the ceremony held at Governor General House in Canberra, H.E. Mr Farrugia Borg had the opportunity to discuss the strengthening of Malta-Australia bilateral relations as well as seeking to

keep the interests of Maltese living in Australia at the core of the mandate of the High Commission in Canberra, and the Consulates General in Melbourne and Sydney.

(Maltese)

Preżentazzjoni tal-kredenzjali mill-Kummissarju Għoli għal Malta lill-Eċċellenza Tiegħu il-Gvernatur Ġenerali tal-Commonwealth tal-Awstralja Il-Kummissjoni Għolja tar-Repubblika ta' Malta f'Canberra għandha l-unur u l-pjaċir li tinforma li fis-17 ta' Frar 2021, L-Eċċellenza Tiegħu s-Sur Mario Farrugia Borg ippreżenta l-kredenzjali bħala il-Kummissarju Għoli, lill-Gvernatur Ġenerali tal-Commonwealth tal-Awstralja, l-Eċċellenza Tiegħu Ġenerali l-Onorevoli David Hurley AC DSC (Retd). Waqt iċ-ċerimonja, f'Governor General House f'Canberra, il-Kummissarju Għoli ħa l-opportunità li jiddiskuti t-tishieħ tar-relazzjonijiet bilaterali bejn Malta u l-Awstralja, waqt li spjega kif li nħarsu l-interessi tal-Maltin li jgħixu fl-Awstralja tibqa' parti sostanzjali mill-mandat tal-Kummissjoni Għolja f'Canberra u tal-Konsolati Ġenerali f'Melbourne u f'Sydney.

THE MALTESE JOURNAL WELCOMES THE NEW HIGH COMMISSIONER

Mario Farrugia Borg is the new High Commissioner for the Republic of Malta in Australia. Marlo was the Consul General for Victoria since 2019 and during his term of office he was well loved and respected by the whole Maltese community of Melbourne. He is very attuned to the Maltese-Australians and very passionate about ensuring that the service he provides is community focused.

I, on behalf of the readers of the Maltese journal and the Maltese communities of Australia and New Zealand welcome His Excellency and we wish him a happy and fruitful role as Malta's HC and to continue to consolidate the strong relationship between Malta, Australia and New Zealand – Frank Scicluna

President George Vella calls a conference for national unity

"Seddaq il-ghaqda fil-Maltin u sliem"

KONFERENZA GHALL-GHAQDA NAZZJONALI 2021

IL-PALAZZ VERDALA Is-Sibt 27 ta' Frar fid-9.30 am

Blex tiriserva post fis-sala, ikteb fuq konferenzanazzjonali@gov.mt
Minhabba l-pandemija l-postijiet huma limitati, il-konferenza se tintwera wkoll dirett fuq Facebook

facebook.com/PresidentofMalta

1. Lil din l-Art he-lwa, l-Omm li tat - nu
2. Art - nu, l-Omm li tat - nu
Hs - res.

President George Vella announces conference for national unity

President George Vella has unveiled a new national conference on national unity. The conference follows on Vella's pledge in his April 2019 speech upon his appointment as President of the Republic, to work towards the strengthening of national unity.

The conference will be held on 27 February at the Verdala Palace, with a panel led by Reno Bugeja, former PBS head of news and presenter of Reno Bugeja Jistaqsi; writer Aleks Farrugia; University of Malta pro-rector Prof. Carmen Sammut; Chamber of Commerce David Xuereb; Faculty of Social Wellbeing Dean Prof. Andrew Azzopardi; and Prof. Simone Borg.

"The time has come for us to ask about which causes we must unite over... I insist that we must be united on certain issues." The President said that the event must be held "as far away from partisan politics as possible."

The president said the COVID-19 pandemic had forced upon the Maltese a period of reflection that inspired a sense of solidarity for those stricken by the virus, as well as respect for medical frontliners and a realisation that foreign workers "such as those who clean our public benches" were far more important to Malta than previously believed.

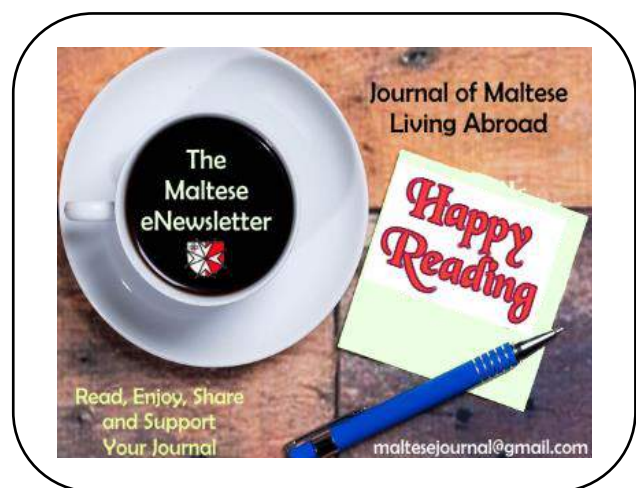
"Our exchanges and discussions have to be dignified, based on civic and correct demeanour, and never result in attacks of a personal nature."

The debate will also cover who much the Maltese people feel themselves represented by the institutions. Social inequality led to division, he said, adding that a plan was needed to implement social justice in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

President Vella's address touched on a number of other issues of concern, amongst them the decline in the use of the Maltese language and lack of care for the environment.

In conclusion Vella said the answers were in the hands of the Maltese people. "If nothing, it should create a conscience about these things and raise awareness."

The conference can be followed DIRECTLY on FACEBOOK.

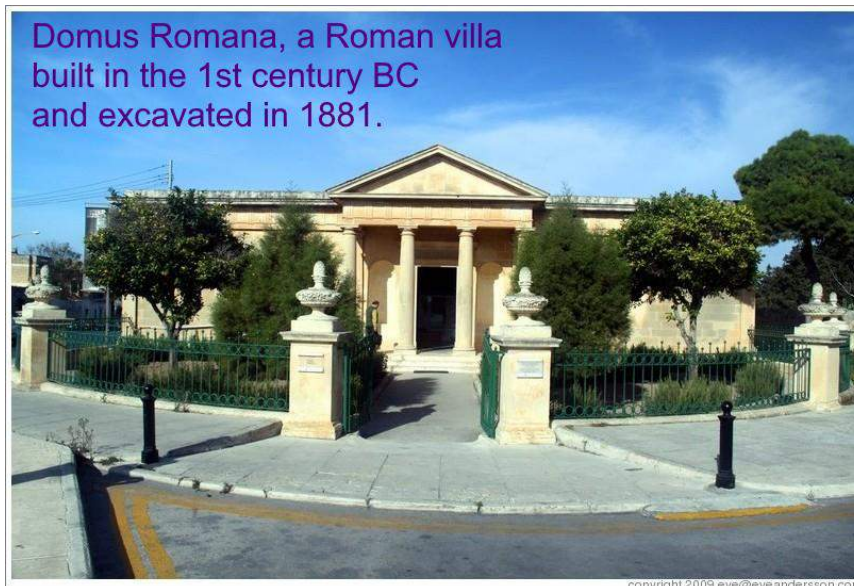




'DOMUS ROMANA' THE ROMAN VILLA IN RABAT

It is rare that construction contributes positively to the preservation of Malta's heritage, but on the 3rd of February 1881, a Public Works employee digging in the area known as it-Tomba, outside Mdina, unearthed a splendid mosaic pavement. [Architect Luigi Emanuele Galizia](#), head of Public Works, investigated and the public was so excited by the finds that a policeman had to be called in to guard the remains.

Several mosaics were found, as well as Roman sculptures and other artefacts which turned out to be the remains of a Roman aristocratic home just outside the walls of Mdina, now one of the most visited touristic attractions on the island – but which is also of great interest to those who live in Malta and are studying the Roman period on the island.



We now know that the Domus Romana was a townhouse rather than a country villa, and indeed it fell within the old Roman walls of Mdina – called Melite at the time – which extended much further into Rabat than they do now. A Roman domus like this one was not just a home but would serve as a meeting place and play an important role in the powerful owner's business and political life.

Some time after the initial finding was made, a building was erected to protect the discovered mosaics, sculptures, and other objects discovered and therefore over the [peristyle](#) and surrounding rooms of the Roman house. In this way, the first museum in Malta built specifically for the purpose was inaugurated in 1882.

The Domus Romana is thought to date back to the first century BC and was probably still in use during the first and second centuries AD. Little is left of the actual Roman building now, and no one knows whether it simply got eroded with time, was purposely destroyed or dismantled to re-use its stones. However it is obvious that it consisted of several rooms built around a remarkable peristyle, which was a continuous porch with columns surrounding a central courtyard. This central colonnade, which has been reconstructed using – in part – some of the original stonework, surrounds a courtyard with a floor mosaic which is of outstanding quality. In the centre it depicts the Drinking Doves of Sosos, one of the most famous motifs of antiquity, popular among rich and noble Romans. Still, it is the border of this mosaic which is the most fascinating with its astounding 3D effect which must have been the achievement of the best craftsmen of the time.



Other floor mosaics in the rooms surrounding the courtyard have elaborate borders, delicate motifs and representations of mythological figures. The Roman mosaics of the Domus Romana are considered to be among the finest to be found in the Mediterranean region. The fact that Roman sculptures found during excavation include one full length, larger than life-size, statue of the Emperor Claudius (10BC – 54AD), and a bust of his daughter Claudia Antonia, points to a very



**Portarit Statue of Antonia Claudia,
daughter of Emperor Claudius**

well-connected family living in this house. Considering the intricacy and quality of the mosaics covering the floors of their home, the occupants must certainly have been very wealthy as they could afford to employ top craftsmen.

Other artefacts on display at the museum include more statuary; one very intricate head of a maenad showing off an elaborate hairstyle is of particular interest. One can also see an extensive collection of coins, Roman glassware, jewellery, hairpins, a collection of perfume bottles, weaving bobbins, tableware, a baby's rattle and terracotta theatrical masks, all dating from the Roman period on Malta. Most of these were found on the site of the Domus Romana, however some were also found during excavations within the walls of Mdina and at other Roman sites on the island.

During 1922 – 1925 the Maltese doctor and archaeologist Sir Temi Zammit was supervising further excavations on the site when skeletons and tombstones were unearthed. A Muslim cemetery was discovered close to the Roman Domus. One can see its remains behind the present-day museum, while some silver personal effects, ceramics and tombstones with Naskh and Kufi inscriptions dating to a much later Arab cemetery in use during the 11th century and possibly early 12th century AD, may be seen inside the museum.



PAWLU THE TAILOR FROM RABAT

"People often stop here to wish me good morning. That's lovely, isn't it? Much better than looking annoyed and irritated! Isn't it better to have a friend rather than a foe? I am known as Pawlu the tailor. I still come to sew, but just a few alterations my clients require. I no longer tailor suits like I used to. What is there to do at home? As long as God gives me strength I will continue coming. I have been in this trade for 53 years and who knows how many people from Rabat and others outside the town have come to me to make use of my services. People come here from everywhere to mend their clothes. I bought this machine myself. I have had it for 52 years and it is still in good working order. Don't ask me to go to St Paul's square to loiter. I need to be active in the

morning." - Pawlu <https://www.facebook.com/thepeopleofmalta/>



**If you are Maltese living abroad and
you have a story to tell share it with
others. Send it to us
maltesejournal@gmail.com**



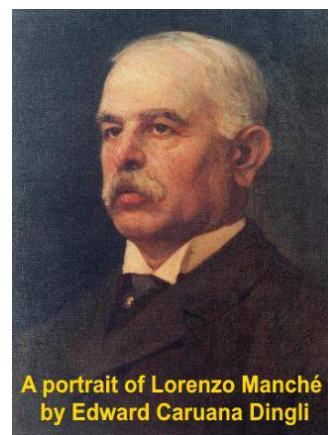


RAMC OFFICERS OF THE MALTA GARRISON

Surgeon Lorenzo Manche MD

Born: 26 Nov 1846 [Floriana] – Died: 16 Feb 1921 [Valletta Malta] . (Courtesy Malta Medical School).

Dr Lorenzo Manche graduated in medicine at the University of Malta in 1868 and specialised in Ophthalmology in Paris and London. In 1875, he was commissioned in the Royal Malta Fencible Artillery and was also Ophthalmic Surgeon at the Central Civil Hospital Floriana. In 1888, he became the first professor in Ophthalmology at the



A portrait of Lorenzo Manch  by Edward Caruana Dingli

University of Malta.

In 1908, he founded the Instituto Ophthalmico at Hamrun, conjointly with his son, Surgeon-Lt Colonel Charles Manche (1874-1936) for the treatment of trachoma in the poor.

In his petition for an improved pension dated 29 July 1908, from 33 Strada Alessandra Valletta, Manche stated that over 13 years (10 March 1875 to 30 November 1888), he gratuitously served as ophthalmic surgeon at the Civil Hospital, and Lecturer in Ophthalmology at the University.

That the authorities woke up to the necessity of recognising this branch of science as a specialty by founding a Chair of Ophthalmology at the University, and by creating the situation of Ophthalmic Surgeon at the hospital both of which I was called to fill. That with a view to better assisting the medical students in pursuing their studies in Ophthalmology, I compiled, and at my own expense, published a treatise on the diseases of the eye, which has since been adopted as a textbook at the university.

1880–1908 Professor of Ophthalmology University of Malta. Manche advocated legislation to force midwives to instil a 2% solution of silver nitrate in the eyes of newborn babies as a preventive measure against ophthalmia neonatorum.¹

Manche claimed that his professional colleagues declared him to be the Founder of Ophthalmology in Malta. During his 13 years he neither received nor applied for any emolument. His work proved to be of the greatest benefit to the population at large in as much as his instructions, both theoretical and practical, imparted to all the Maltese medical practitioners, enabled the diseases of the eye which were very prevalent, being properly treated, thereby alleviating innumerable sufferers and enabling them to continue to earn their livelihood, as well as preventing so many causes of blindness.

14 Apr 1886 Manche was appointed Professor of Ophthalmology at the University of Malta on a salary of £50 a year, but this was not carried out owing to the difficulty of recouping the expense of £50 from the fees paid by the students. Manche, however, volunteered to give his lectures for free.

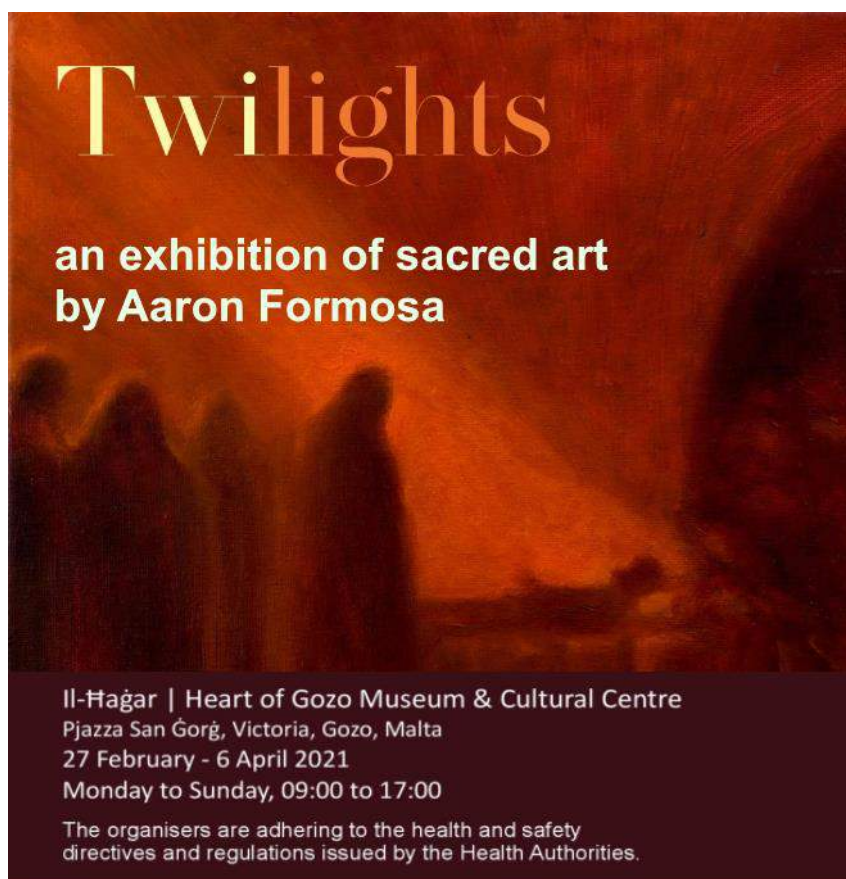
He was the first occupant of the Chair of Ophthalmology in the University of Malta.

He was the founder of the Malta and Mediterranean Branch of the British Medical Association. Acted as its Honorary Secretary from its formation in 1888 to 1902. Manche was several times President of the Branch, and at the time of his death in 1921, he was Vice-President both of the Malta Branch of the Association and of the Malta Medical Association. The president of the Malta and Mediterranean Branch of the British Medical Association in 1888 was Surgeon-General [James Sinclair](#).

He presented at a General Meeting of the Malta and Mediterranean Branch of the British Medical Association, as its Honorary Secretary, which was held at Valletta under the presidency of Surgeon-General [Thomas O'Farrell](#). Resigned as Honorary Secretary as was unable to find sufficient time to continue in office. Had been a member of the association since 1888 when the Branch was founded. On the resignation of Manche, Themistocles Zammit, MD, of the Public Health Department, became the new Honorary Secretary.²

1908 Renowned [ophthalmologist](#). In 1908, he founded the Instituto Ophthalmico at Hamrun, conjointly with his son, Surgeon-Lt Colonel Charles Manche (1874-1936) for the treatment of trachoma in the poor.

On 16 Feb 1921 he died at Valletta aged 75 years. As Vice-President of the Malta Medical Association, Manche brought together the naval, military, and civil members of the medical profession on the island.



Sacred Art Exhibition @ Il-Ħaġar

Il-Ħaġar museum (Pjazza San Ġorġ, Victoria) is hosting a new exhibition, "Twilights", featuring sacred art by Aaron Formosa.

Basically a self-taught painter, he was born in 1980 and has participated in various collective and solo exhibitions in Malta and Gozo. His works can be found in private and public collections, locally and overseas. In his art, Formosa aims to capture the intensity of transient emotions and communicate these experienced moments. A crepuscular light pervades these paintings in such a way that the loosely painted figures seek to manifest themselves in this aura of semi-darkness. He teaches philosophy, in which he holds a masters degree, at the Refalo Sixth Form.

The official opening is on Saturday 27 February at 11.30am, accompanied with the launch of the

eleventh book in the Il-Ħaġar GEMS series of full-colour sixty-pagers. Visitors can go round these paintings till 6 April during the normal times of 9am to 5pm seven days a week. This cultural centre does not charge an entrance fee.

This event, included in the programme for Il-Ħaġar's eighth anniversary, is supported financially – as happens thankfully regularly – by the Gozo Ministry's Cultural Directorate.

The organisers are obviously responsible for adhering to the Health Authority's directives and so are offering options for the opening. Besides 11.30am, sessions are also available at 7 and 9 pm, as well as 11.45am on Sunday. Please make your choice and book on events@heartofgozo.org.mt.



FONDAZZJONI
BELT VICTORIA

IL-ĦAĠAR
HEART OF GOZO



Bank of Valletta



Cultural Heritage Directorate

Maltese Journal



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The Journal of Maltese Living Abroad is read at:

Malta Migration Museum - Valletta, Maltese-Canadian Archives - Toronto, Embassies and Consulates, Libraries, Schools and Residential Homes, Maltese Community Centres in Australia, Canada, USA and UK.

Government Departments and Agencies in Malta, Gozo and Australia

FACEBOOK: facebook.com/frank.scicluna.3

WEBSITE: ozmalta.com

MALTESE CARNIVAL 2021 OFF

One of the pandemic's cancellations this year is Carnival. In spite of the fact that this year people can't go out in streets with the crowds, wearing colourful costumes and celebrate one of the most awaited events of every year, the floats still took to the streets to keep the Carnival spirit alive. A float sheds light on current issues focusing on COVID-19.



Newsbook.com.mt is the third largest news website in Malta having an audience much bigger than ever before. This is confirmed by the authoritative Alexa.com which ranks

websites.

A delighted Editor-in-Chief, Sylvana Debono reacted to this impressive result by thanking the readers for their support and the journalists for the stories investigated and published.

According to the Alexa ratings, Newsbook's audiences are larger than those of Malta Today, Lovin' Malta, The Malta Independent, Net, iNews and One. Newsbook's success can be attributed to its bilingual package, offering a great variety of high quality investigative stories as well as stories about lifestyle, culture, sports, celebrities and the Church.

This achievement is underlined by an increase of 15% in the number of unique users as well as a 41% increase in the number of sessions over the same period- May and June – last year.

Since the reform of the Church media started in January 2017, Newsbook has been increasing its popularity year in year out. The increase in readership of Newsbook.com.mt since the reform can be described as nothing if not impressive.

Five generations of Bezzinas live on

by taracassidy 2017

Stephen, Maria (Mary), Mac, Joseph and Damian Bezzina are all from the same clan, and have a rich history in Mackay dating back to about 1923.

Mary was originally from Malta, but migrated to Australia on the Ormuz on April 4, 1923, with her parents Grazio and Carmela Vella and her brother Matthew.

They settled in Mackay and within a few years were at Coningsby near Farleigh on their sugarcane farm.

Salvatore (Sam) Bezzina also migrated to Australia from Malta in 1935, aboard the Hobsons Bay.

He moved to Mackay and purchased a farm in partnership with his brother-in-law Sam Zammit at Beaconsfield in 1938.

Following their marriage on June 22, 1940, Sam and Mary lived on the Beaconsfield farm until 1952, when they relocated to Andergrove to establish another farm.

They raised nine children, seven boys and two girls, their fourth child, Joseph Michael (pictured) married Lillian Cranston. The couple eventually settled at Andergrove where they still live; they had four children, three girls and a boy.

One of Joseph's sons, Stephen Bezzina, went on to marry Jacque Woodley and they were blessed with five children, one of which was Damian. Damian fathers six-month-old Mac, who brought the fifth generation of the Bezzina name come to life.

Damian is currently working as a diesel fitter in Mackay, Stephen a fitter and turner, Joseph a retired boilermaker and Mary a retired housewife.

The family are a close knit group who enjoy regular visits to the Francis of Assisi Home, where they visit Mary who is now 94 years old. Stephen said Mary is never without visitors and looks forward to many more additions to the family.





South Australian Maltese Youth Club in the Sixties

By Godwin Gauci

In the early sixties, there were a lot of young Maltese Men and Women here in South Australian, but there was only the one Maltese club, 'The Maltese Guild'. These young Men and Women felt very uncomfortable hanging around with the elderly. There was the need for them to be around together on their own and their age group. They needed a club of their own, a place where they would feel comfortable and to belong and do their own thing. Around 1965, a few of these young Maltese Men and Women and with the help of Fr. Fortunatus Briffa as their spiritual leader, formed a committee and started the South Australian Youth Club.



South Australian Maltese Youth Club

The First Committee Members.

From left Standing - Vic Damato, Fr F Briffa, Rose Abela, Vic Azzopardi, Joe Galea, Doris Chetcuti & George Parnis.
Front row from left Ron Borg, Johnny Caruana & Michael Dingli.

at the Lockleys Picture Theatre hall (photo next page).

The word got around that a new club was formed for the young Maltese, and quite a few young Men and Women joined up and became members. The committee held meetings every Friday night at one of the Committee members house where they began to organize future functions.

The first few functions had to be Dances so that the members can get to know each other. Although they didn't have a hall of their own, they managed to hire many different venues and held lots of formal Dances with the occasional special Fancy Dress Ball. One in particular

There were quite a few Cabarets held at different venues like the Enfield Hotel at Enfield, at the Bridgeway Hotel at Pooraka, and at the Shandon Hotel at Seaton. The young men and women did enjoy their times together at these functions. The club flourished with more young Maltese joining the club, they formed Netball teams for the Women and Soccer teams for the Men. They held matches on the weekends within their own teams and sometimes with teams from other clubs. A few men held snooker and darts competitions with trophies awarded at the end of the championships. In the summer months, the club would put on Picnic at Belair National Park and we invite the whole family to join us. Also Beach Parties at Moana Beach where we drive the cars down on the sand. Car rallies were very popular during the year, looking for objects and travelling within the time limits.

One popular Venue was a Picnic at Silver Lake, complete with live Band playing our favorite Rock' N' Roll music

Occasionally a talent show would be put on for young Men and Women to perform on the stage. I remember when I helped painting on canvas a stage backdrop of the inside a café which a few weeks later a play was put on.



One particular Cabaret held at the Shandon Hotel, we held our own floorshow with men competing in the Mr. South Australian Bodybuilder Competition and the winner is at the front holding his Trophy. Several years later I joined the committee for a few years until I got married and was no longer legible to stay. The club was doing well and Quite a few members had coupled up and got married. As time went by, a lot of members moved on, and the club started

to decline and eventually it stopped to exist. A lot of these past members are now seniors and still see each other. Some have joined the Maltese Senior Citizens Assoc on South Australia Inc

Final appeal for objections to massive Nadur apartment block

Nadur Local Council objects proposed development

Nadur residents opposed to a 71-apartment block on the periphery of their town are making a final appeal for the public to object, on the eve of the deadline for representations to be submitted.

Gozitan-American filmmaker Chelsea Muscat, a Nadur native now based in New York, has made an impassioned appeal on film in a bid to garner support.

Objectors are being encouraged to send an email to representations@pa.org.mt with PA/00085/21 in the subject line. While objectors are free to submit their own objections, they can also simply copy and paste the suggested text and finalise the objection process in seconds.

We object to the construction of 74 garages, a single communal pool, and 71 apartments rising 4 stories on fertile land still in use, only partly outside the development zone in Nadur, Gozo. Such a development is ecologically unsound and yet another example of the short-sighted destruction of Malta's natural world. Further, it devastates the nearby residents and would greatly destroy the character of Nadur.

The development is proposed involving excessive excavation, insensible height, volume, and density is partially located Outside the Development Zone and therefore must adhere to the RPDG14. The scope of such policies is to enhance and add value to the rural scene. The excavation of 2 to 3 floors below street level is unjustified within the site in question.

The proposed development runs counter to P6 of DC15 "Transition solutions between DZ edge and ODZ" and SPED Thematic Objectives 1.10, 8.1, 7.6, 7.7, and Urban objective 3.7



Chelsea Muscat is a Writer/Director/Cinematographer born and raised on the tiny island of Gozo in the heart of the Mediterranean until she was nine. She's been in NYC ever since and is currently pursuing filmmaking with her biggest focus being directing and cinematography. She often explores themes of love, abandonment, and isolation in fiction, documentary and experimental film as well as in her photography. Her keen eye lends to her stunning and emotional visuals that enhance the storytelling



**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





Lorenzo Gafà (1639–1703) was a [Maltese Baroque](#) architect and sculptor. He designed many churches in the Maltese Islands, including [St. Paul's Cathedral](#) in [Mdina](#) and the [Cathedral of the Assumption](#) in [Victoria, Gozo](#). He was the younger brother of the sculptor [Melchiorre Cafà](#).

Gafà was born in 1639 in [Birgu](#), to the stone carver Marco Gafà and his wife Veronica. He began his working life as a stone carver with his father and his older brother [Melchiorre](#), who became a renowned sculptor. He might have studied architecture in [Rome](#), although there is no documentary evidence that he ever left Malta. It is possible that Gafà was an apprentice of the Italian architect [Francesco Buonamici](#) while the latter lived in Malta.^[2]

By the early 1660s he had developed a strong interest in architectural design and in 1661 is known to have been involved in the choir of the [Church of St. Philip](#) in [Żebbuġ](#). Sometime before 1666, he worked on the [reredos](#) of the main altar in the church of Sta Scolastica and in the Dominican church of the Annunciation, both in his native town of Birgu. He is also known to have designed the altar of the [Church of St. Nicholas](#) in [Valletta](#). He also designed or was involved in the construction of the following churches:

- [Church of St. Paul, Rabat](#) (1664–83)
- [Church of St. Paul's Shipwreck, Valletta](#) (1666–80)
- Carmelite Church, [Mdina](#) (1668–72)
- [Sarria Church, Floriana](#) (1676)
- [Church of St. Nicholas, Siġġiewi](#) (1676–93)
- [Monastery of St. Scholastica, Birgu](#) (1679)
- Church of St. Roque, Valletta (c. 1680)
- [Church of St. Lawrence, Birgu](#) (1681–97)
- Church of St. Peter the Martyr, [Marsaxlokk](#) (1682)
- Dome of the [Church of St. George, Qormi](#) (1684)
- [Church of St. Mary, Qrendi](#) (1685–1712)
- Tal-Ħlas Church, Qormi (1690)
- [Church of St. Catherine, Żejtun](#) (1692–1744)
- [Church of the Holy Spirit, Żejtun](#) (1688)
- [Cathedral of the Assumption, Victoria, Gozo](#) (1697–1711)
- Enlarging of the [Church of Our Lady of Victories, Valletta](#) (1699)



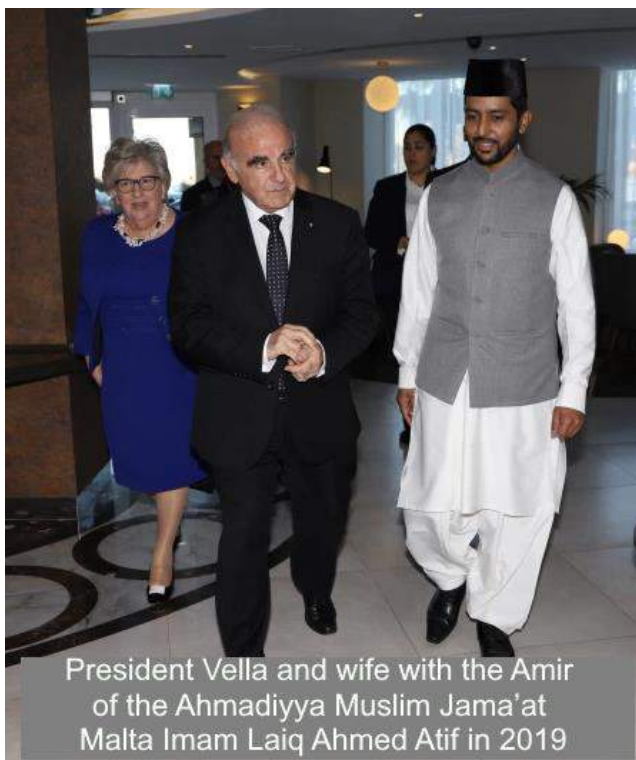
Some sources also state that Gafà was involved in the construction of the [Church of St. Catherine](#) in [Żurrieq](#) (1632–55), the Church of Our Saviour in [Kalkara](#) (1650), the Church of St. Mary in [Żebbuġ](#) (1683), the Church of the Holy Spirit in [Żejtun](#) (1688), the Church of the Holy Spirit in [Mdina](#) (1688), the choir of the [Church of the Nativity of Mary](#) in [Naxxar](#) (1691), the Church of the Annunciation

in [Tarxien](#) (1692), the Church of St. Nicholas in Mdina (1692), the Church of St. Agatha in Mdina (1694) and the Church of St. Julian in [Senglea](#) (1696).

In 1679, Gafà designed and oversaw the construction of the [choir](#) of [St. Paul's Cathedral](#) in Mdina, and he later designed the Bishop's Palace. The cathedral was partially destroyed a few years later during the [1693 Sicily earthquake](#), although the newly built choir remained intact. The old cathedral was dismantled, and between 1696 and 1705 a new cathedral was built to Gafà's Baroque designs. The cathedral was consecrated on 8 October 1702, and it is regarded as Gafà's masterpiece.

Gafà also designed some secular buildings, including [Villa Bichi](#) (1675), the palace of the General of the Galleys in Birgu (before 1695) and possibly the Ta' Saura hospital in Rabat (1655). Gafà died on 16 February 1703 at the age of 64.

Names Reveal History of Muslim Malta



President Vella and wife with the Amir of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at Malta Imam Laiq Ahmed Atif in 2019

CAIRO – A Maltese medieval historian has stressed that Malta had a tolerant Muslim community that allowed the thriving of Christian churches during the Arab rule between 870 and 1090, using Maltese names to prove his theory.

"The indication is that the local scene was very heavily Arabicized and Islamicized by the time the

About Islam & Newspapers

Normans conquered the island," Charles Dalli told the popular newspaper *Malta Today*.

"Although the Normans certainly urged the public to convert to Christianity, they didn't Latinise them and allowed them to continue speaking Arabic. This is probably why the Maltese words for Christian feasts are derived from similar Islamic celebrations."

According to Dalli, remnants of a Muslim Malta still remain ironically in the Maltese names for Catholic feasts.

He cited the Maltese word *Randan* (Lent) comes from *Ramadan*, the holy fasting month for Muslims. Similarly, *Għid* (Easter) has its roots in *Eid al-Fitr*, the joyous Islamic feast that marks the end of Ramadan, and *Milied* (Christmas) originates from *Mawlid*, the Islamic celebration of the birth of the Prophet Muhammad.

Also, the Maltese word for 'Friday' (*Il-Ġimgħa*) is called so because it was the day in which Muslims on the island used to attend their weekly congregational 'Jumu'ah' prayers.

Of the estimated 3,000 Muslims in **Malta**, approximately 2,250 are foreigners, approximately 600 are naturalized citizens, and approximately 150 are native-born **Maltese**. The Ahmadiyya **Muslim** Community is also present.

Islamic Malta

Dalli went on to criticize interpretations by professors such as Stanley Fiorini and Horatio Vella who claim that Christians did not revert to Islam during the Arab rule.

Their theory is based on a passage in a medieval poem, composed by an anonymous Greek poet who had been exiled to Malta.

The passage refers to a Christian bishop who had greeted Roger II of Sicily, the son of Count Roger, upon his arrival to Malta, with some historians

arguing that it is evidence that a Christian community with its own churches and bishop thrived in Malta during Arab rule.

The claims were rejected by Oxford professor Jeremy Johns last year who said that Fiorini erred when translating the Greek text, and that the poet had actually written about a bishop sent by Sicily to Malta to help convert the people to Christianity. The new interpretation, according to Dalli, proves that Malta was an Islamic society under the Arabs.

"Look, anybody who believes in an ethnic continuity of Maltese people dating back from the time of St Paul is quite frankly living in cloud cuckoo-land," he said. "There is absolutely no such thing as pure Maltese DNA."

Dalli believes that the conversion of Maltese society from Islam to Christianity was a gradual process, abetted by the Normans who conquered the island in 1091.

"The Normans financially incentivized the natives to convert to Christianity by imposing a religious tax on Muslim subjects," he said.

"It is also possible that churches were erected where mosques were pulled down, and that the Mdina Cathedral was built on the site of the largest mosque on the island."

Dalli confirmed that Muslims and Christians lived together during the 400 or so years between the arrival of the Normans and the mass ethnic cleansing of Muslims.

"Muslims and Christians lived side by side in Malta during that period, a sign of how close Abrahamic faiths are to each other," he said.

"Malta was a bridge where the two cultures converged."

Malta is a Muslim-friendly country and has a small Muslim population and plenty of halal food options for the Muslim travellers available in addition to a small local mosque on the island. Malta has everything you might want as a tourist, halal food, amazing private villas, history and beautiful location.



Mtarfa clock tower to get major makeover

Picture - Jonathan Borg.

Mtarfa's historic clock tower is to get a €950,000 makeover in a local council project which also includes the building of an interpretation centre.

Half of the funds will be provided by the European Regional Development Fund.

The interpretation centre will showcase the historical and military history of the former

barracks town.

The restoration of the clock tower consists of the replacement of lighting, stone cleaning, calibration of the clock mechanism, works on the damaged stairway and removal of rust from the railing and staircase leading to the roof.

Mtarfa clock tower, which has four faces, was built in 1895 by the British military forces and was transferred to Mtarfa local council by the government in 2010. Two clock enthusiasts, Charles Pace and Mario Agius, both Mtarfa residents, [had managed to get the clock going again](#) two years previously.

**WE ARE PROUD AND SALUTE ALL MALTESE CITIZENS
LIVING ABROAD WHO ARE MAKING A GOOD NAME TO
THE MALTESE ISLANDS**



Traditional garment rescued from a house that was due to be demolished

An old, long disused *ghonella* has been given a new lease of life after being on the brink of being thrown away.

The *ghonnella*, sometimes referred to as a *faldetta*, was a woman's shawl worn over the head and outer garments. The upper part was starched and given a broad, rounded frame, formed by means of a board, cane, or whalebone. Usually black and generally made of cotton or silk, its use petered out after the war, with the very last examples seen in Gozo in 1991.

The restored *ghonella*, worn by Katya Galea.

One of them survived hidden away in the wardrobe of a house which was about to be demolished but was found by a construction worker. He took it home but his wife was not too happy as it took a lot of space.

Rosanne Galea, managing director of Future Focus Ltd, took it instead.

"A client of ours wanted to sell his house in Floriana and he asked us if we were interested to buy it. Although not particularly interested we went along to view it," she said.

"As we were going through the house, he started chatting to us telling us that once he moves he would have to throw many things away including the *ghonella*. It was in a very bad condition and covered in dust. He said he had stumbled on it while clearing an old house which was being renovated. His wife had been telling him to throw it away because it was tattered and took up a lot of space. I told him that I was interested in it so he told me to take it away there and then."

"I do not know how old it is but it must be some 100 to 150 years old," she said.

New lease of life for old *ghonella*

She sent it off to a professional seamstress who spent many hours changing some of the material and restoring it.

"We thought it would be a good idea to get someone to help us restore it as we plan to use it when we do lessons about Maltese culture to our foreign students. We run a language school here in Floriana. Having something like this would be interesting and useful," Galea added.

She said she remembers that her own grandmother had an *ghonella* but does not recall ever seeing her wear it. She does, however, remember seeing some women still wearing it when she was still a child.

"A number of years ago I had participated in a cultural fashion show in Cairo and had modelled wearing the *ghonella*. At that time I had hired one from the Manoel Theatre. It was very well received by the journalists and I remember being interviewed about our traditional dress which was described as very elegant. While most traditional dresses are very colourful, ours is black and very elegant.

The restored *ghonella* is now on display at her office.

"It is part of the Maltese history and culture. Whoever has one, or finds one should preserve it or restore it," she said.

PROSIT għal darb'oħra tan-Newsletter iktar u iktar f'dan iż-żmien meta niesna qed toqgħod iktar id-dar minħabba l-pandemija u alura jkollha x'taqra permezz ta' dan il-materjal li inti tiġbor b'tant fidma, paċenzja u dehwa kbira. Nieħu gost inkun ta' spalla f'din l-inizjattiva settimanali tiegħek!

Ċert li lilek jagħmillek tajjeb ukoll għax timla ħafna mill-ħin! Inselli għal żewġ ħuti bniet Adelina miżżewġa lil Lawrence Mizzi u lil Rose miżżewġa lil Louis Cassar li issa ilhom jgħixu Melbourne Keilor Downs għal bosta snin. Insellem ukoll lil Paul u Salvina li jżommuna nfurmati permezz tal-istazzjon ZZZ3 u lill-ħabib tiegħi Joe Axiaq li wkoll ixandar mill-Awstralja għall-emigranti tagħna. Awguri u tislijiet! **Kav Joie M Attard - Rabat - Ghawdex**



POPULAR MALTESE PROGRAM ON COMMUNITY RADIO IN ILLAWARRA

Louis Parnis 2 years ago was trained to use the panel at VOX FM 106.9 a Community Radio Station in the Illawarra REGION.

Mr Parnis IS interested in supporting the Maltese community and found that a program playing only Maltese songs is needed here in Australia. The program is streamed online and is listened to by many, even by Maltese residing in Malta, US, New Zealand. Recently Mr Parnis recorded the open song of the program, based on Charlie Camilleri song (ejjew nidqu dahqa) ans was recorded by Fred Borg in his studio.



We like to thank Mary Pace- Feraud for introducing a Culture Corner broadcasted on this program.

This program can be listened to every Monday from 5-6 PM NSW AUSTRALIA time on VOX FM 106.9 Streamed on the Internet

What we've done

Vox FM is a not-for-profit charitable institution is dedicated to give members of the Illawarra community a voice. From music programs playing hits from the 50's, 60's 70's and 80's to discussing regions local issues & hosting ethnic music. Vox FM gives local talent the opportunity to be heard and it also caters for many of the various ethnic communities that call the Illawarra home.

For over 25yrs Vox FM 106.9, The Voice of the Illawarra, has been broadcasting in the region. Vox has a loyal listenership across the Illawarra. Over the years it has become an integral part of the Illawarra community. Vox FM is proud to say it is supported by listeners from many

heritages - Indigenous, Bosnian, Croatian, Cyprian, Dutch, Filipino, German, Greek, Indian, Irish, Koori, Macedonian, Maltese, Portuguese, Puka Puka, Scottish, Serbian, Slovenian, Spanish, and Polish.

TESTIMONIALS

Mr. Louiis Parnis - The Voice of Valletta Vox FM 106.9

On behalf of the Maltese Cultural Association of NSW I would like to congratulate you on securing a very successful weekly Maltese radio program on The Voice of the Illawarra station which some of our members do follow.

We are sure that you are filling a great need of such a Maltese language program in the Illawarra and beyond, and which is evident from the wide spectrum of listeners of your radio program. Again we congratulate you and urge you to continue the good work. Well done to you and your supporters.

Kind regards,

Tony Pace-Feraud

Secretary **MALTESE CULTURAL ASSOCIATION of NSW Inc.**



We thank all our
readers, supporters
and contributors
for making this
e-Newsletter
THE BEST

QAGHAQ TAL-GHASEL HONEY RINGS

Qagħaq tal-għasel are sweet pastry rings filled with a treacle mixture. Literally translated they are 'honey

rings'; but there is absolutely no honey in the recipe. The main ingredient in the filling is treacle. In Maltese treacle is known as *għasel iswed*, so probably that is why they are known as honey rings. Years ago village people used *qastanija*, and not treacle, for their *qagħaq tal-għasel*. This was made by melting down honey-combs after the honey had been extracted from them. In all probability *qastanija* is a corruption of the Italian *castagna*, which means chestnut. It might be that it was so called because the mixture was the colour of chestnuts. But there are absolutely no chestnuts in the mixture. Through the years *qastanija* was substituted by black treacle. For those who have a very sweet tooth, sugar is added to the filling mixture.

Ingredients:

For the Pastry

500g plain flour
3 egg yolks
50g margarine
water or anisette liqueur

For the filling:

400g of black treacle or golden syrup or a combination of the two
400ml water
100g of sugar and 180g semolina
the grated rind of a tangerine, lemon and orange
one tablespoonful of aniseeds
one tablespoonful of mixed spice
2 tablespoons cocoa powder
3 tablespoons orange flower water

Method

The pastry is made in the same way as the sweet shortcrust pastry. Whilst the pastry is resting, prepare the filling. In a large saucepan put all the ingredients, except for the semolina and slowly bring to the boil. You have to stir all the time.

When the mixture boils add the semolina **VERY SLOWLY**, stirring all the time.

Bring again to the boil. Cook for a further 5 minutes. It is **VERY IMPORTANT** that you stir all the time; otherwise the semolina will stick to the bottom of the saucepan.

Remove from heat and put in a large bowl. When the mixture has cooled cover the bowl with stretch and seal and leave overnight in the fridge.

The next day, cut the pastry into eight pieces. Roll out each piece and give it a rectangular shape. Preheat the oven 180°C, Gas Mark 4.

Lightly dust a table top with semolina. Take spoonfuls of the filling and curve them *into S shapes* that resemble *snakes*. *The shapes have to fit the rectangles*.

If you find that the filling is rather sticky, just add more semolina on the table top.

Place one of the S shapes on each rectangle of pastry. Roll it like a small Swiss roll. Place it cut side down and lightly moisten the ends with water. Bring the ends together to form a ring. Pinch ends together to seal. With a sharp knife, make a series of decorative slashes on the top.

Put pastry rings on a baking tray that has previously been well dusted with semolina.

Bake about 15-20 minutes, or till the pastry is a very light beige colour. In the case of these pastry rings, the pastry should never turn a golden brown.



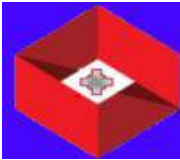
Making fresh cheese is a daily ritual for people like Josephine. It is a cottage industry enjoyed in several rural households.

Making cheese is a fairly dedicated craft. Every day farmers need to make good use of the fresh milk they extract from their herd. In Malta we love our fresh cheeselets and therefore there is a strong appetite for the purchase of a good genuine cheeselet.



Traditionally made from sheep milk but you can also find variations made with goat and cow milk as well. The milk is coagulated with rennet and left to set during the day. Depending on the demand for the fresh cheeselets, then some are air-dried for preservation. Some of the dry cheese is also pickled with vinegar and pepper. Therefore cheesemakers succeed in making three variations from the same batch of cheese. In Dingli Josephine has her daily ritual of making fresh cheese with the milk of her husband Guzu. Let's find out more about her daily routine.

"I have been making cheeselets for around sixty years, since I have been married. Because my husband Guzu is a shepherd, he has goats and sheep and brings milk daily for me to turn into cheeselets. I add specific drops to help the milk coagulate and after a few minutes I start spooning the cheese into the baskets. As soon as they start taking shape I turn them around again. This is a daily routine. When they are going to be taken fresh I let them stand a bit longer in the baskets.



GBEJNIET - MALTESE CHEESE Freshly Made Every Day

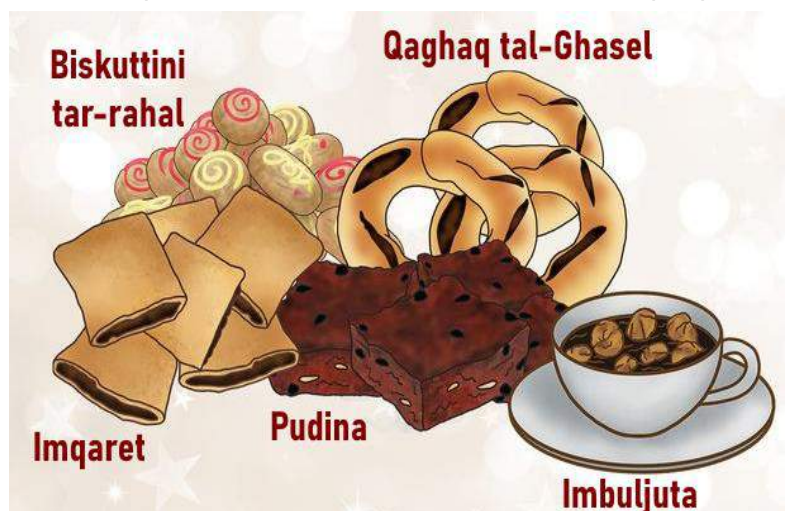
Then I take the ones I do not sell on the roof, and put them in wooden containers to dry. When it is windy they dry in three days. I add pepper to a few of them. There's nothing better to accompany Maltese bread or a salad! Or even better when they are fried in a little oil!

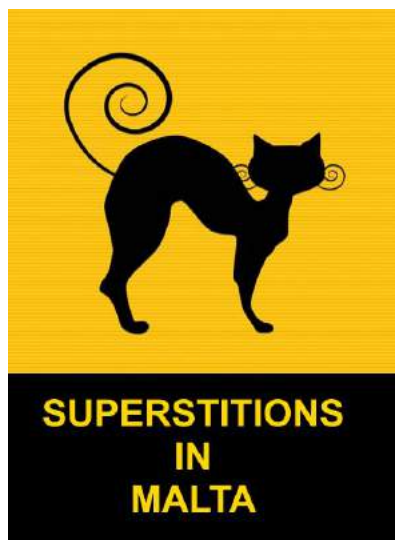
The fresh ones are often used in kuskusu (a broad bean and pasta soup), Widow's soup, pies or even in ravioli. Others are consumed fresh with a pinch of pepper and salt. I love them, even with toast, no butter, I just slice them up with a tomato.

I do not come from a family of farmers so it was my husband who taught me how to make them. And I still make them for him because he expects me to keep making cheeselets from the milk he produces. Here is where you will find me every afternoon, preparing and making fresh cheeselets instead of enjoying a siesta. But then I enjoy and am pleased to see clients who come from the other side of Malta, even from Marsaxlokk and Marsascala to buy and sample my cheeselets. And they keep coming back." – Josephine Muscat, Had Dingli

WRITTEN BY **The People of Malta**

An artistic project to share emotions, stories, personalities, moods and contrasts depicted in pictures and in citations of the Maltese people.





It is safe to say that in general, the Maltese are not an overtly superstitious lot. In the present world, they adhere in their convictions to the common laws of nature as backed by scientific rules. They also do not stray into superstitious beliefs that are not sanctioned by the official teachings of the Roman Catholic Church.

Nevertheless, some may still hark back to the beliefs of old on various matters. Like in any other culture one will always find people of a gullible nature who tend to stick toward one or two superstitious practices when faced with certain situations. For instance you will find those who are wary of walking beneath a ladder, lest this brings bad luck. Another frivolous case is the belief about black cats. And what about Friday 13? Is this Friday not related to the day when Christ was executed on the cross – the 13 being related to the twelve apostles having their Last Supper with Christ. These three superstitious beliefs cannot be so ingrained amongst the Maltese, these being of

an English cultural origin. With these, there are other credences that are importes from Italian culture, via Italian TV channels. All these are taken with a pinch of salt and a observed with a 'just-in-case-it-is-true' attitude.

Having said that, there are still some quasi-religious habits that verge somewhere between the religious and the superstitious. For instance the belief in ghosts – once Roman Catholics believe in an afterlife. There are various beliefs related to the danger of lightening. We still pray to Santa Barbara whenever there is a thunderstorm. In olden times people used to go further by hanging an elaborately designed small piece of dough (known as *għažziela*) in Maltese with the Mater Maria symbol (see above), on the door of the house to ward off such dangers. In olden times there was the custom of the pealing church bells in order to quell thunderstorms.

In the modern world, there still are numerous instances where people adhere to such beliefs and seek folkloristic solutions in various aspects of their life and beyond. Here are some examples:

- ❖ The moon may be regarded by some possessing in its gravitational force the power to influence our lives. Some firmly believe that the moon casts its effect not only on the sea, vegetables and animals, but also on humans. For instance a person suffering from an epileptic fit is said to be influenced by the moon – we say '*tah tal-qamar*', – that is, one is reacting according to the physical influence of the moon. There is a proverb that says: (Maltese) *Torqodx fid-dawl tal-qamar għax jagħtik ħmar-il-lejl*, Eng. Do not sleep under a moonlit sky lest you shall suffer from nightmares.
- ❖ A person, when eating, should be wary if a pregnant woman is in his presence, so that he offers her from his food lest the expectant mother's child be born with a birth mark. This instance I have experienced when my wife was pregnant. While promenading in Marsaskala a woman enjoying a barbeque on the rocky beach came over and offered my wife an apple.
- ❖ Young children are to be protected from the evil eye. Hence it is expected that whenever a stranger compliments a child for his healthy looks one should always add the words (Maltese) '*Alla jbierek*' god bless or '*imbierek alla*' – god be praised. Otherwise, the mother of the child might be suspicious that one's compliments were actually meant to harm the child.
- ❖ Up to a generation or so ago, whenever a child opened his mouth to yawn, the mother would quickly make the sign of the cross with her thumb over the child's mouth, to ward off any evil spirits that might be ready to enter that orifice. The sign of the cross is seen here below being marked on a heap of salt that has just been harvested.
- ❖ On the child's first birthday, a game is set up to test the child's inclination towards any possible profession when reaching adulthood. This game is known as '*il-qućċija*'. Numerous objects are laid on the floor by the parents, and the toddler is coaxed to crawl towards this cluster of 'toys' to pick up one item of his choice. The item picked up by the child will hint the child's inclinations. For instance, if he chooses to pick up a writing implement he would be expected to choose a clerical job. Similarly, were he to choose, say, a labourer's tool, such as a hammer or pincers, he might want to become a craftsman. This game is all taken with a pinch of salt really.

- ❖ Bad luck in marriage – There is a saying in Maltese that goes: '*lx-xebba li tiekol fit-triq ma ssibx tiżżewweġ*' – Eng. 'The girl who eats (any sort of food) in the street shall never find her man to marry'.
 - ❖ A bride should not be seen in her wedding dress by her groom prior to wedding ceremony lest this brings bad luck. Another saying relates to the bride who gets wet in rain when on her way to the wedding ceremony, shall enjoy good luck. This comes from the Italian saying. '*Sposa bagnata, sposa fortunata*'.
- Some people believe in the evil eye, and therefore they carry on them tiny horns as amulets or key chains. Real horns of bulls are sometimes set up on farm gates or elsewhere to ward off the malignant eye especially to protect cattle, people or objects, even cars. A person feeling threatened by the evil eye would position his thumb and little finger to point outward as if in the shape of a bull's horn to ward off any evil intentions. I once assisted to a street altercation between two women. One was accusing the other of having pointed her fingers towards her in the horn position as if she was afraid that the other was casting the evil eye on her.
- ❖ The eyes portrayed on the prow of the Maltese fishing boat – the *luzzu*. Nowadays, these are painted mainly as a decorative design, but in olden times the eyes were believed to ward off any mishap at sea. The belief in the power of the eyes is said to have been brought to Malta originally by the Phoenicians who regarded the Egyptian God Horus, the falcon god as a protector from evil beings.
 - ❖ Some believe in the *rwieġel* – an assumption that purports that the weather of the who year is pre-set on a pattern that may be observed on each of the twelve days prior to Christmas. Thus, if the first day of the *rwieġel*, that is, December 13, happens to be a rainy day, it implies that January, the first month of the year, should likewise prove to be wet. Similarly, each of the other days leading up to Christmas will foretell the weather conditions of each of the forthcoming months in a sequential manner.
 - ❖ On Good Friday if the weather is cloudy, humid and dusty red, it is thought to herald an earthquake. This is regarded as re-enactment to similar atmospheric conditions that are believed to have occurred while Christ was on his death throes on the cross. Indeed in Maltese parlance, whenever such dark and cloudy conditions prevail the Maltese claim tht these are 'Good Friday weather'.
 - ❖ There still persists the practice of blessing the house with palm twigs and fumigating the house with the smoke emitted from the slow burning twigs. The palm twigs are blessed in church on Palm Sunday and taken home by members of the congregation to be fixed to a wall in order to keep the house blessed. The smoke would be allowed to permeate into all rooms of the house and behind furniture to exorcise the home from any evil.

Source: <https://kliemustorja.com/w/>



Happy ladies at the Maltese Cultural Centre doing their lace

The Maltese Bizzilla Group started at the Maltese Community Centre in Albion about five years ago. We are a group of around 20 ladies who meet every Thursday evening for two and a half hours. Our teacher, Mary Galea, is a wonderful and talented lady who is always ready to lead and encourage us while helping us along the way. The best about it all is that we always work at our own pace. Although Bizzilla is the main interest of the evening, we also enjoy reminiscing and sharing our past experiences of back home in Malta and Gozo. We share stories, recipes, jokes, Maltese singalongs and also experiences of our village Festas back home. We are all so proud of our heritage. Although most of us can speak Maltese well, we have some younger ladies who are 2nd and 3rd generation Maltese and who find it a bit harder to speak the language. All of us,

'older' ladies do our best to help them understand both the Maltese language and its culture. We all look forward to these wonderful evenings together. We are now all looking forward to next year when we can start meeting again, as this last nine months, like everything else, our Bizzilla evenings came to a halt. However we still kept in touch through our Bizzilla Facebook Group. It was a pleasure to see the amazing work that everyone was producing. We are grateful to the Maltese Cultural Centre who make it easier for us to keep this Bizzilla group going.

Maltese boys maimed, injured in 1955 accident in Australia

Child Migrants Welcomed

(Reported by Mollie Simson Asphar.)

Saturday was a grey sultry morning, and on the Quay at Fremantle an excited group of Maltese, from all parts of West Australia, and an impatient boat-race-minded group of officials and Immigration authorities, and people in transient positions were awaiting the arrival of the "Ocean Triumph" with over a thousand Maltese settlers for Australia, amongst whom were 27 eager-eyed excited boys bound for Fardun and Bindoon.

In the traditional manner of the place, the very extensive plans for their welcome had (owing to the lateness of the ship, almost two days overdue) gone awry, but the impromptu arrangements that were substituted, varying as the shipboard arrangements.

"With a start like this the boys' future is a bright one." And knowing the Malta position of overcrowding, lack of jobs and land, etc.—I fervently echoed her sentiments.

As the ship neared the wharf, the Clontarf band struck up a

started girls at the exchange must have been where they were, at the boat-race-minded group of officials and Immigration authorities, and people in transient positions were awaiting the arrival of the "Ocean Triumph" with over a thousand Maltese settlers for Australia, amongst whom were 27 eager-eyed excited boys bound for Fardun and Bindoon.

Finally, at high noon, down the gang-plank came 27 boys, each carrying a strapped suitcase that bumped and impeded



Rev. Monsignor Moss, acting for His Grace the Archbishop, welcomed the boys.

generally lagged, proved happy, and equally as good. Father Simson and Margaret Sanderson, and the Brothers of Clontarf were responsible for a great deal of happiness that day, not only amongst the boy migrants, but amongst the officials and visitors who shared it. I never have had a happier and more instructive hour, a lady visitor said to one who knew it, and then they

his slippery progress. That through the Customs, with a roll-call of strange names, and then into a waiting bus for the first step of the three hundred mile-long journey, with a shorter one for the Bindoonites.

Barry Coldrey, who has written extensively on child migration to Australia, wrote the following on Maltese child migration:

"Child migration from Malta was a marginal feature of Maltese emigration in general. It was first mooted in the 1930s when the Catholic Religious Congregation of the Christian Brothers, through their regional higher superior in Western Australia, Brother P.A. Conlon, was negotiating with the Catholic Emigration Society (UK) regarding child migrants from Catholic institutions in the UK to the Brothers' institutions in Western Australia for training and assimilation before their placement in employment. Some Maltese Catholic leaders in Australia were anxious for their institutional children to be included in the scheme."

On February 23, 1950, an agreement was signed between the Australian Catholic Migration Committee and the Maltese government for the admission of children from Malta into Catholic institutions in Australia. They undertook to train the children to fit them for life in Australia. About 370 Maltese children, mostly from institutions like St Joseph's Institute in Santa Venera and St Patrick's in Sliema, emigrated to Australia between 1950 to 1965.

The parents or legal guardians of the Maltese children involved

were required to sign a declaration before the children's departure to Australia that they had no objection to releasing the children under the child migration scheme. This is, however, not the impression that has been given by some former child migrants in Australia in sworn testimony before Australian parliamentary commissions that, unfortunately, has not been critically examined.



in mind that in practice, the Maltese child migrant was a young lad preceeding family members to Australia or with close relatives already living there.

Coldrey adds: "For Maltese young people, life in Australian institutions posed difficult adjustment problems... However, for most of the children, the experience prepared them for adjustment to Australian society, and offered them opportunities not currently available in Malta."

A very serious accident happened on December 15, 1955. It illustrates the care with which children in these schools were treated. At about 7.15am on the South West Highway from Clontarf Boys School near Perth, a bus

was travelling at normal speed. From inside the bus was coming the sound of happy singing by 53 boys from the school who were excited by the prospect of passing the festive season in the homes of volunteer private families.

The driver of the bus was Brother Patrick Doyle, a cherry Irish man who was proud of the brand new bus donated to the school by a local businessman from Perth with the school emblem and the words 'Clontarf Boys' prominently painted on both sides of the bus. As they approached a narrow bridge, Doyle slowed down to allow a tip-up truck to pass from the opposite direction.

For unknown reasons, the driver of the tip-up drove the truck very close to the school bus and in the process ripped open the entire side of the bus. The inside of the bus became a mangled mess with crushed seats, metal crazily jutting out in all directions, and blood everywhere. Doyle had the presence of mind to pull over on the side of the road and thus avoid further disaster.

Of the 53 young passengers, one was dead and 19 others maimed or seriously injured. Due to the height at which the truck's edge ploughed through the side of the bus, most of the boys on that side had legs either severed or crushed.

The injured boys were put into cars, ambulances or other vehicles available on site and urgently transferred to the nearest hospitals. Doctors, nurses, aid workers and police rushed to the scene of the accident to provide first aid and other urgent necessities. Blood donors were soon queuing at hospitals to provide blood to the injured boys.

The Maltese boys injured were Anthony Bugeja, 13 from Msida, amputation of both legs; Alister Carr, 11 from St Julian's, fracture of tibia, fibia, fractured right femur; Charles Gatt, 13 from St Patrick's Institute, Sliema, fractured right tibia and fibia, amputation of left leg mid-calf; Joseph Bugeja, 15 from Qrendi, amputation of both legs; George Littleton, 12 from Paola, lacerated liver, scalp and right thigh; Anthony Grech, 11 from Birżebbuġa, fracture of right leg and Carmelo Vassallo, 13 from Mgarr, injuries to neck.

Little is known what happened afterwards to these boys but a trust fund was established by the Federal government of Australia to ensure that the victims got a handsome sum on attaining the age of 21.

Maltese most numerous priests in Victoria, Melbourne in 2008 – what about now?



Fr Ben Azzopardi and a number of Maltese men before leaving Malta for Australia in 1958.

The largest number of foreign priests in Victoria, Melbourne, is Maltese, research carried out by Emigrants' Commission.

Maltese priests have taken the place of the Irish, who had the highest number of foreign priests in the city - there are currently 32 Maltese priests in Victoria. Leafing through pages of data, including the names of all those priests who moved to Australia over the years, Mgr

Calleja said: "Malta is an emigrant's country, however, it has not only sent its people to other countries but also priests who used to take care of them." Mgr Calleja, who has been working with migrants for many years, said a Maltese priest used to depart with every ship full of emigrants leaving the island some 50 years ago.

"Some of them decided to stay on," he said. The new immigrants had needed help, especially since many were illiterate and could not communicate with their families back in Malta without assistance.

"Soon after the immigration started we realised there was a big problem because they could not communicate with any of their relatives. The priests were very important in this area because they used to read letters and even write on behalf of Maltese migrants."

But staying on in Australia was no easy feat for priests who initially did not receive any financial assistance. "We tried hard to get them some assistance and they started getting AUS\$10 a month, which did not even cover their travelling expenses to visit the Maltese living in different areas of Australia," he said pensively.

Over the years some 200 Maltese priests have served in Australia, some of whom were the sons of Maltese migrants born on the continent. There are still 66 Maltese priests in Australia.

Mgr Calleja said one of the Maltese priests - Fr Albert Fulbrook - left the island as a child migrant in the 1950s. Posted on 18 May 2018 by Kim Tao

NB - Now the number of Maltese Chaplains in Australia has declined so much that several states and territories don't have access to a Maltese Chaplain. This journal has approached the Church authorities in Malta to send Maltese priests to Australia with no avail.



Ir-Randan dari u llum

Minn Greg Caruana NSW

Zmien ir-Randan Ir-Randan ta dari, bic-celebrazzjonijiet tal-Gimgha l-Kbira, kien bil-wisq differenti mil-lum u kien zmien ghaziz kollu drawwiet gejjin mill-qedem. Illum baqa biss ismu u t-tifkiriet nostalgici tieghu. Ghal x'uhud, minkejja li huma xjuh, ir-Randan ghadu dak ta dari u josservawh bhalma kien jobbliga l-precett ta l-

imghoddi. Ir-Randan kien jibda mill-ewwel Erbgha ta l-Irmied u jispicca nhar is-Sibt il-Ghid f'nofs inhar. Is-sawm kien obligat ghal dawk kollha li kienu ghalqu t-tmintax-il sena sa dawk li ghalqu s-sittin. Kienu jridu jsumu u min ma kienx isum kien jaghmel dnub mejjet. Nhar ta' Gimgha hadd ma kien jiekol laham. Is-sawm kien jibda minn fil-ghodu bil-kafe jew te u xi haga zghira mieghu. L-ikla ta nofs in-nhar u ta filghaxija ma kontx tista tiekol aktar minn kwart hobz. Il-lum ghalkemm is-sawm kif kien fl-antik spicca, baqa biss obligatorju l-Erbgha ta' l-Irmied u l-Gimgha l-Kbira. Bhal dari l-parrocci jorganizzaw l-ezercizzji biex dawn jattendu ghalihom.

IL-BULETTIN Fil-bidu tar-Randan, is-sagrستان kien iqassam bieb bieb il-bullettin. Dawn kienu jkunu ftit akbar mid-daqs tal-Karta tal-Identita. Qrib l-Ghid, wiehed kien jiehu din il-bicca karta mieghu ghat-tqarbin u tinbidel f'karta ohra, li tkun turi il wiehed ikun ghamel it-tqarbin tal-Ghid. Din id-drawwa ilha li spiccat pero lobbliu li wiehed jitqarben ghal zmien il-Ghid baqa jghodd xorta wahda.

L-EZERCIZZI TAR-RANDAN Ir-Randan huwa zmien ta ezercizzi spiritwali. F'kull parrocca, Fill-gzejjer Maltin jigu organizzati ezercizzi. F'dawn iz-zminijiet is-sacerdot jippridka minn fuq l-ambone fejn ikun hemm espost kurcifiss kbir, fl-imghoddi il-qassis kien jitla fuq palkett zghir armat apposta fil-knisja, b'mejda zghir fin-nofs u kurcifiss kbir fil-gemb. Fiz-zminijiet taghna l-priedki aktar jiffukaw fuq il-problemi tal-lum, filwaqt li fl-imghoddi kienu jitekllmu fuq suggetti li sfortunatament ftit li xejn jn jissemmeu jew jissemmeu hafif. Qed nirreferi ghassuggetti bhalma huma l-infern, il-gudizzju, il-mewt, il-genna etc. Il-poplu kien jirrikorri hafna fl-imghoddi ghal dawn l-ezercizzi tar-Randan izda l-lum lattendenza naqset hafna. Xi granet qabel Hamis ix-Xirka, jibdeu it-thejjijiet biex jintrama s-sepukru. Dan jiddependi hafna mill-armar ta l-istess Artal tar-Riposizzjoni. F'Malta u Ghawdex dawn is-sepulkri, kif inhuma maghrufa fostna, jolqtu l-ghajn minhabba li hafna minnhom huma originali u jkunu imzejna b'mod PROFESSJONALI.

L-ERBGHA TAT-TNIEBRI L-Erbgha tal-Gimgha Mqaddsa kienu jsejhulha l-Erbgha tat-Tniebri. Il-gemgha ta l-insara kienet tiltaqa fil-knisja biex hemm issegwi t-talb li jsir mis-sacerdoti kollha flimkien. Kien jinxteghel il-kandler forma ta triangu li kien izomm fuqu 13-il xema. Dawn kienu xemghat maghmulha mix-xema tan-nahal.

Waqf il-kant u f'kull salm kienu jitfu xema. Fit-13 il-xema, x'hin din kienet tintefa l-migemgha kienet tinfezz thabbat fuq il-bankijiet biex ifakkru l-istorbju li ghamlu l-Lhud meta marru ghal Gesu fil-Getsemani.

ID-DULURI L-ahhar zmien tar-Randan idahhalna fil-Gimgha Mqaddsa. Jasal Hadd Lazzru, Hadd qabel Hadd il-Palm, Hadd il-Passjoni, meta kienu jghattu l-inkwadri bi drapp vjola. Nhar il-Gimgha ta qabel Hadd il-Palm, jigifieri tmint ijjiem qabel il-Gimgha l-Kbira tabbat il-festa tad-Duluri festa devota. Dak in-nhar dari kienu jsumu hobz u ilma, sawma msejha s-Sawma tas-Seba Bukkuni. Dawk li kienu jsumu hobz u ilma kienu jduru u jigbru seba bukkuni minghand in-nies, imbaghad jieklu bukkun u l-ohrajn kienu jqassmuhom lill-fqar. Il-Gimgha filghaxija issir il-purcissjoni tad-Duluri li fiha jiehu sehem tista tghid il-maggranza tal-poplu. Numru ta partecipanti jaghzlu li jimxu hafjin biex itemmu xi weghda ghall-grazzji li jkun qalghu bl-iintercessjoni ta Omm Gesu Addolorata.

Inkomplu gimgha ohra

Garden of Life at Xaghra cemetery Gozo

One of the tombstones at the Garden of Life. Photos: Charles Spiteri

A new area, called *Ġnien il-Ħajja* (Garden of Life), has been created at Xaghra cemetery, following the completion of the new extension of the burial ground and the restoration of the old part of the cemetery, including 'the garden of reflection' last year.



The idea to create *Ġnien il-Ħajja* came to fruition after several Xaghra families who emigrated to other places and had to be buried abroad, will be remembered by affixing their photos and inscriptions on large rocks scattered around the garden.

Xaghra archpriest Carmelo Refalo said it was sad that after these people, who loved and dedicated their lives to their village, but had to leave Gozo for a better living, were to be forgotten.

"Today we find Xaghra parishioners who are buried in other cemeteries in Malta, Gozo and abroad and

whose memories are not recorded in the village," he said.

"With this new novel idea, families and friends can now pay their respects to these people who are not buried in this cemetery."

Along the path of *Ġnien il-Ħajja*, one finds natural vegetation which embellishes the surroundings.

During the excavation of the place an antique rubble wall pertaining to the old cemetery was unearthed. In the near future the Way of the Cross will be affixed to the wall. (Source: Times of Malta)



**Mill-ewwel habbejtek ja Malta art twelidi
Għalkemm boghod minnek, fittixt l-ghajxien
imma lejtk bqajt inharek tul il-medda taz-zmien
sakemm dana gismi go fik sab mistrieh**

Learning foreign languages is a strength in our local system



“Learning foreign languages is a must to address educational and labour market demands,” said Minister for Education Justyne Caruana.

The Minister was addressing a virtual meeting of the working group for the promotion of foreign languages, during which she also highlighted that, “Malta has always had a multilingual nature and foreign language learning is a strength in our local system which needs to be sustained.”

The working group, chaired by Dr Mario Pace, Senior Lecturer of Languages and Humanities Education in the Faculty of Education at the University of Malta, discussed the teaching of foreign languages in tertiary schools and institutions. Representatives of foreign embassies also participated.

Minister Caruana provided a background of our country where languages are involved, explaining that Malta is a country with a population that embraces languages – and we should be proud that as a population we are literate in more than our mother tongue, the Maltese language.

She said that “we are natural polyglots and that is why over the centuries Malta was indeed at the very centre of civilisation.”

Dr Caruana went on to say that the wish to foster plurilingual and intercultural competences in the Maltese educational system is a response to European linguistic and cultural diversity and an increasing need for mobility and employability.

“Bilingualism and plurilingualism also entail economic advantages – jobs are more easily available for those who speak several languages, and multilingual companies have a better competitive edge than monolingual ones,” she added.

Learning foreign languages is a must in light of changing educational and labour market demands as well as growing mobility between countries which favour citizens who are able to speak two or more languages, the Minister said.

OUR SUCCESS STORY

We are grateful for this journal because we have learnt so much about the history of Maltese emigration and the success stories of Maltese migrants and communities. Our children, who are in their 20s love to read about the history and culture of their parents’ and grandparents’ homeland. This journal is a blessing and should be given recognition and appreciation it deserves. No wonder thousands of readers in Malta and in every corner of the world enjoy and share this wonderful newsletter.

Carmen and Joseph Briffa and family



Original Image from Migration Museum at Dar l-Emigrant in Valletta, Malta , Retouched & Colorized. The priest with the glasses is Fr Pascal Grech, originally from Hamrun, Malta. He was ordained as a Franciscan Priest in Florence in 1927 and sent to Port Said. Photo is dated 1927/28. He returned to Malta, regularly said Mass at San Gaetano Church, Hamrun. He died in 1993. He came back from Egypt in 1952 and spent many years up to 1976 as Chaplin and Guardian at the Sacro Cuor church in Sliema

Ryan Calleja is a hit on The Ellen Show



With the Maltese flag in the background, Ryan Calleja had his moment in the spotlight when this week he appeared on Ellen Degeneres' popular chat show 'The Ellen Show' (very) early this morning. Ryan was taking part in the



first-ever 'Audience Olympics', which sees Ellen fans from all around the world try to outdo themselves in a skill – in this case, bottle flipping. Ryan's competitors were from Malawi and Belgium.

Speaking to the very charismatic Ryan, Ellen asked, "How are things in Malta right now; what's the temperature and what time is it?" to which he responded that it was past midnight and the temperature was about 13 degrees during the day and six or seven degrees at night. Ellen joked "That's not Fahrenheit is it?" and professed not to know what 'Celsius' meant.

Writing on Facebook, Ryan said: "Flipping bottles is not for me but having fun is. Thanks for the invite, team. I remember the teenage years when I used to carry Ellen's book outside and re-reading it after I finish it. Ellen is inspirational and just by watching her she fuels my positive attitude. Absolutely, a great working environment and very friendly virtually on set!" Sadly, Ryan did not win the competition, but we can surmise that being on the show, which is watched by so many people everyday, was a thrill and triumph in itself for him.

You may watch it on YOUTUBE (NEWSBOOK – By Coryse Borg)

AUSTRALIAN IMPERIAL FORCES

AGIUS ALBERT	MOSTA	1401	FARRUGIA WILLIAM WALTER	MATTLAND, NSW	2632
AQUILINA CARMELO	NAXXAR	1052	FERRIS JOSEPH	VALLETTA	36
ATTARD EMANUEL	GOZO, QALA	4991	GALEA JOHN	SLIEMA	4123
ATTARD PAUL	ZEJTUN	3592	GAUCI FRANK	NAXXAR	1699
ATTARD VINCENT	QORMI	3005	GAUCI JOE	ATTARD	7590
AZZOPARDI ANTHONY	MELLIEHA	7352	HENRY HUGH	SLIEMA	38346
BALDACCHINO GEORGE	SIGGIEWI	7599	MATTEI CHARLES	VALLETTA	MD
BARTOLO CHARLES	MELLIEHA	6402	MICALLEF PAUL	MOSTA	1393
† BARTOLO FRANCESCO	MELLIEHA	823	MICALLEF SALVATORE	BIRKIRKARA	3876
BARIJN JOSEPH	VITTORIOSA	227	MIFSUD JOSEPH	GHARGHUR	1382
† BECK WALDEMAR	MSIDA	6969	MIRUZZI ANTHONY	VALLETTA	373
† BELLIA FRANCIS	FLORIANA	7209	PACE JOSEPH	VALLETTA	646
† BONAVIA CHARLES	SLIEMA	157	PALMIER JOSEPH	MSIDA	4262
BORG LORENZO	VALLETTA	2130	PALMIER VINCENT	MSIDA	1106
† BROWN FRANK	VALLETTA	31803	† RIZZO ANTONIO THOMAS	MELBOURNE, VIC	3084
BUSUTTIN BASIL CHARLES	AYR, QLD	3260	RIZZO CHARLES	SENGLEA	7543
CAMILLERI ANDREW	MOQARRA	7212	SCHEMBRI CHARLES	NAXXAR	4617
† CAMILLERI BENEDETTO	RABAT	2145	SCHEMBRI FIDELLE	NAXXAR	1178 / 85821
CAMILLERI PAOLO	NAXXAR	4753	SCIBERRAS JOHN	COSPICUA	2868
CASTALDI ELIGIO	SLIEMA	3615	SCOTT JOSEPH	VALLETTA	94
DALLI JOHN	VALLETTA	1823	VASSALLO CARMELO	ATTARD	2267
DARMANIN GIUSEPPE	COSPICUA	6730	WEST ALFRED	COSPICUA	3517
DEBONO ANDREW	BIRKIRKARA	2160	XUEREB ANTHONY	ATTARD	1053
DEBONO PAUL	BIRKIRKARA	4695	ZAMMIT MICHAEL	MOSTA	1645

NEW ZEALAND EXPEDITIONARY FORCES

CAMILLERI CHARLES	MOSTA	57364
CREMONA LOUIS	GOZO, RABAT	55923
MALLIA CHARLES	SENGLEA	10 / 3343
PILLOW JOHN RICHARD	SLIEMA	15 / 74
VELLA FRANK VICTOR	INVERCARGILL, NZ	35930

† SUPREME SACRIFICE

LEST WE FORGET

MALTESE EX-SERVICEMEN'S ASSOCIATION, NSW SUB BRANCH
RETURNED AND SERVICES LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA**IN MEMORY OF MALTESE ANZACS WORLD WAR 1 1914-1918**

PLAQUES AT THE GEORGE CROSS FALCONS COMMUNITY CENTRE – CRINGILA NSW

The Monument dedicated to the Sette Gungio Victims at the Goerge Cross Falcons Community Centre in Gringila, New South Wales.. Well done to the president, Louis Parnis, committee and volunteers of the centre.
The Editor



7 ta' Gunju 1919

100 Anniversary of Sette Gungio
7 June 1919 - 2019

Sette Gungio is a Maltese national day celebrated annually on June 7. It commemorates events which occurred on that day in 1919 when, following a series of riots by the Maltese population, British troops fired into the crowd, killing four.



Marwel Attard



Kamnu Abela



Guza Bajada



Wenzu Dyer