



The Voice of the Maltese

(We are for the Greater Malta)

Issue
249

A fortnightly magazine driven by the voice of its readers

March 23, 2020



View of Manoel Island and the former Lazzaretto building on Manoel Island from under Valletta Gate



Foreign language learning is a strength in Malta's local system



Malta's Minister for Education, Dr Justyn Caruana addressing a virtual meeting of the working group for promoting foreign languages

Dr Justyn Caruana, Malta's Minister for Education, told a virtual meeting of the working group for promoting foreign languages, that "Malta has always had a multilingual nature and foreign language learning is a strength in our local system that needs to be sustained".

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

Minister Caruana provided a background of Malta where languages are involved. She said that it is a country with a population that embraces languages, and that one should be proud that as a population, the Maltese are literate in more than their native language, the Maltese language.

She described the Maltese as being natural polyglot (multilingual), which is why over the centuries Malta was at the very centre of civilisation.

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, the Minister said.

She said that bilingualism and plurilingualism also entail economic advantages, that is, that jobs are more easily available for those who speak several languages, while multilingual companies have a better competitive edge than monolingual ones.

Learning foreign languages is a must considering changing educational and labour market demands as well as growing

mobility between countries that favour citizens who can speak two or more languages.

Minister Caruana said that the Ministry of Education recognises the importance of linguistic diversity and supports language learning as a lifelong task, essential for economic competitiveness and inclusive societies.

She pointed out that as a minister for education, she strongly believes in the promotion of foreign languages for various reasons, even for enhancing one's personality and development, as languages increase communication and help students to be more confident while opening their minds to new cultures.

Minister Caruana said that the ministry encourages Maltese students not only to learn foreign languages but to participate in fora and events where languages are celebrated. As a matter of fact, Maltese schools participate in the Council of Europe's annual European Day of Languages to celebrate linguistic diversity.

She praised the National Literacy Agency, which is part of her ministry, which has a commitment to promote foreign languages, and in fact with the National Literacy Agency recently launched the Language Policy for Junior Years that strives to provide learners with opportunities to have positive attitudes towards Maltese, English and other languages.

Minister Caruana said that she also remains committed to see to the promotion of foreign languages in the education system and beyond.

Representatives of foreign embassies also participated in the meeting.



Dr Mario Pace ... he headed the working group

Another service offered by The Voice of the Maltese providing legal information to our readers

What can you do 20 years after separation if a property gets sold and you receive no proceeds of sale?

by Paul Sant

Recently, the Supreme Court was asked to decide whether a transfer of a husband's interest in a property, to his former wife, was done fraudulently, in *Musa v Alzreaiawi* [2021].

Background

Adam Musa and Bushra Alzreaiawi married in 1994 and migrated to Australia with their three children. Bushra also had a son from a previous marriage. In 1998, Adam and Bushra separated.

Despite the separation, Adam and Bushra wanted a home for their children. In 1999 they purchased a property in Smithfield as joint tenants, the "*the Smithfield property*". There was an initial mortgage of \$170,000 to fund the purchase.

Adam lived in a granny flat at the back of the property from 2000 to 2009. He moved to Canberra in 2010.

In March 2010, Adam and Bushra were divorced. They did not make any formal arrangements about a property settlement. In 2012, Adam remarried.

A transfer signed by Adam in October 2010 was registered in June 2011. The document transferred all of Adam's interest in the property to Bushra. From June 2011, Bushra was the sole registered proprietor – the single owner – of the Smithfield property.

In 2017, Bushra sold the Smithfield property for \$860,000. Her net proceeds of sale were just under \$780,000. The net proceeds were held pending determina-

tion of the dispute.

The Dispute

Adam commenced proceedings in the Supreme Court of NSW claiming he did not sign the transfer: it was a forgery. He challenged the validity of the transfer under the *Real Property Act 1900*.

Bushra told the court that in 2009, she and Adam reached an agreement: Adam would transfer his interest in the Smithfield property to her. After they made this informal agreement, in October 2010, Adam gave her the transfer document signed in front of an attesting witness, "*Salah Namens*".

Shortly after, Adam withdrew \$35,000 from the mortgage, which he told the court were payments he had made in advance.

The evidence

Adam did not call "*Salah Namens*" to give evidence in his case. He asked the court to make an inference that, because Bushra did not call *Salah*, it must mean Bushra intentionally did not want *Saleh* to give evidence because it would have been bad for her case.

In some cases, such an inference can be made by a court (it is called a *Jones v Dunkel* inference). In Adam's case, he had to **actually persuade** the court to accept his version of events, in part due to the serious nature of fraud allegations he made against his former wife.

A handwriting expert examined a copy of the transfer (the original was not able to be produced by the Land Registry Services). Her report was inconclusive – she made some findings that it may be

Adam's signature, and other findings that it may not.

Bushra had two witnesses who supported her version of events: her son from her previous marriage, and her brother.

The decision

The first Supreme Court Judge found that Adam had not actually persuaded the court his version of events is what occurred: it was equally likely that Bushra's version of events had occurred. A finding that both versions of events were equally as likely was supported by the handwriting expert's evidence.

Adam appealed and was unsuccessful in actually persuading three Supreme Court Judges that the first Judge was wrong.

What could Adam and Bushra have done to avoid this situation?

After their marriage broke down, they could have formalised their agreement and documented a property settlement! This is what we recommend after a separation: sever joint financial ties (house, loan), and tie up any loose ends, enabling each party able to move on with their lives.

If there had been a formal property settlement, neither party would have expended significant amounts of money on legal costs – the court ordered Adam to pay Bushra's costs after his unsuccessful appeal – and Bushra's net proceeds of sale would not have been unable to be used for years during the court proceedings.

What would have happened in the family court?

Adam and Bushra had divorced many years before this dispute. After a divorce, there is a time limit to commence court proceedings for a property settlement of 12 months. Applications can be made out of time, but you would have to provide the court with exceptional reasons for such a delay.

Had this dispute been under family law jurisdiction in 2009, contributions of both Adam and Bushra to the property and the children during the relationship and post-separation would have been considered, as well as future needs. It is likely that Adam would have been entitled to a portion of the available equity in the property and Bushra would have had to 'buy him out'.

We have provided you with an overview of the topic above but you should consult a professional for advice specific to your circumstances.



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Maltese Spoken



A stalwart of the Maltese language, poet, and publisher

Poet, educator and synonymous with the teaching of Maltese in NSW, our Personality this month is a respected operator not only in the Maltese, but in the general community as well

FRANK ZAMMIT

Frank was born in Victoria, Gozo in 1944 when his family was evacuated from Marsa, Malta during the war. Before he turned one, his family returned to Marsa where he lived until he emigrated to Australia in January 1965. Since childhood, he was trained as a group leader at the local Catholic Action Centre and by age 17 he was teaching scripture to juniors.

By 1963, he was leading a group of youths who were helping in building a three-storey centre, St. Pius X Catholic Action Centre, now the Parish Centre. This was very beneficial in building his confidence to become an effective handyman in Australia in extending and maintaining his own and his children's homes.

In Marsa, a parish run by the highly educated Capuchin monks, he was influenced by some of them and at the age of 13 he started writing poetry and publishing at 15.

Frank, then known as Frans, was educated at the local state School, the Archbishop's Seminary at Floriana, the Lyceum at Hamrun and finished his matriculation in Southampton, in the UK. Back in Malta, he was trained as an emergency school teacher and subsequently employed by De La Salle College, Cottonera to teach the Maltese language.

When he arrived in Australia, he discovered that the teaching profession paid comparatively poor wages. Australia had started introducing first-generation computers, so after securing a job as a teller at the Commonwealth Bank, Riverstone, he embarked on a long course of studies combining accounting and E.D.P. Soon after he joined the Bank, he was carrying a loaded gun in his pocket while in the company with the branch manager transferring large amounts of cash between regional branches. He admits that he had no idea which way to point the gun if he had to use it!

During and after his studies, he kept climbing up the ladder of promotions, mainly through studies and changing employers. He worked as a Management & Investment Accountant with combined computer systems analysis mainly in the pharmaceutical and food manufacturing industries until he retired from full-time employment aged 55. He joined the Maltese team at SBS Radio Sydney, as broadcaster/journalist, until the Sydney SBS Maltese programme was practically dismantled.

Days after Frank arrived in Sydney in 1965, a knock at his sister Lucy's door at Schofields, where he was first living, introduced him to the Maltese community in Sydney in the person of Fr. Paul Baron OFM Cap. Without Frank's knowledge, Fr Paul was earlier detailed about Frank's future movements by a colleague in Malta.

Fr Paul was then residing in Blacktown but was acquiring the property in Doonside on behalf of the Maltese community. He and Frank soon became friends with a common cause. Frank was soon involved in setting up the Maltese Entertainment Organisation in Western Sydney and became its chairperson, with Joe Gauci, from Vittoriosa, as Stage Director. Advertising was then almost inexistent, and he smilingly recalls that they used to



PERSONALITY OF THE MONTH

charge 80 cents a ticket for an evening of entertainment!

In the early 80's Valentin V. (Joe) Barbara, a brilliant Maltese translator and poet became acquainted with Frank's literary talents, and he visited him at his Pendle Hill Home enquiring about any manuscripts of poetry

he could look at.

At first reluctantly, but eventually happily, Frank handed Joe over 700 Maltese poems. Joe was much impressed, and insisted that they should be published in a book. He offered Frank his free service of typing all the manuscripts and producing a computer master ready to print! Knowing Valentine (Joe) Barbara high literary reputation from way back, Frank was astounded by this gesture that forged an intimate friendship that lasted till Joe passed on in 2005.

Since then, Frank has published more than ten books, either as himself as publisher or published by others, like *The Self And Beyond It*, a translation of Dun Karm's *Il-Jien u Lilhinn Minnu*, published by Victoria University. He also participated in several group poetic anthologies in Malta and Australia.

His Maltese and English poetry is also featured in various Maltese and Australian publications and electronic media. Some of his Maltese poetry was translated into English, Italian and Esperanto and published locally and overseas.

Frank is a member of the Maltese Language Academy in Malta and other literary associations. During his frequent visits to Malta, he meets committees of literary associations and government authorities, visits secondary Schools and gives interviews to promote the important inclusion of Maltese literary and cultural content within the diaspora of Maltese heritage worldwide.

**Continued on opposite page*

Personality of the Month:

FRANK ZAMMIT

Continued from opposite page

In 1988, Frank founded the Maltese Cultural Association of NSW and was its president for the first nine years. Since the early 70's he organised Maltese Language lessons in Western Sydney suburbs until he participated in setting up the Maltese Community Council's Maltese Language School and retired from actual teaching. Now he assists several Maltese organisations with their cultural and religious functions and financial auditing.

Back in 1981, with his wife Giovanna and three young children Rose, Peter and Chris, Frank went to Malta to afford the children the opportunity to appreciate their extended family and Maltese heritage. He went back to teaching at De La Salle College, became a member of the Maltese Poets Association and joined the editorial board of *Il-Polz*, (The Pulse), then a leading journal of the *Qawmien Letterarju*, (Literary Renaissance). Before returning to Sydney in 1984, the Poets Association appointed him its representative in Australia.

Frank was interviewed for the National University Library of Oral History of Migration by Dr Barry York re early Maltese migration experiences, and by Dr Edgar Waters re how Maltese cultural activities were introduced to Australia. He also did research work for non-Maltese writers, like Dr P.Cochrane for his book *Simpson and the Donkey*, for Chief Justice Y.R. El Chidiac for his *Alkadi Walmadina* and others.

Among many other eminent Maltese academic masters, Prof. Oliver Friggieri regarded Frank as a mature poet who deserves a respected placing in the realm of recent Maltese poetry. The Maltese Cultural Association of NSW awarded him the *Millenium Cultural Award* in 2000 and La Valette Maltese Social Centre titled him Poet of the Maltese Migrants. Frank firmly believes that the Maltese language is the pivot of the Maltese Identity.



For the second successive year, the celebrations commemorating Freedom Day (Jum il-Helsien), one of Malta's national days that is annually held on March 31, will once again be remembered in silence.

The COVID-19 pandemic is seeing to that. However, the day that marked the withdrawal of British troops and the Royal Navy from Malta in 1979 cannot be forgotten. It is much too important not to commemorate it.

On that day 42 years ago, the last British Forces left Malta, and for the first time in a millennium, the Maltese Islands were no longer a military base of a foreign power and Malta became independent in reality as well by right.

The main events of the day commemorating this date normally occur at the Freedom Day Monument at Birgu (Vittoriosa) in remembrance of the British troops' withdrawal from Malta, and at the War Memorial in Floriana.

Due to the restrictive measures of the pandemic, these events along with the competitive regatta at the Grand Harbour, that attracts thousands of spectators and the participation of rowing boat crews from the three cities of Birgu, Bormla and Isla, as well as coastal towns have of course been cancelled.



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 www.foreignandeu.gov.mt


 mario.farrugia-borg@gov.mt


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St. Martins Tower, Suite 10.04, Level 10, 31 Market St, Sydney NSW 2000

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 0430 402 177


 (02) 9264 4722


 maltaconsulate.sydney@gov.mt
lawrence.c.buhagiar@gov.mt

Consulate General - Melbourne

Vacant

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 (03) 9670 9451

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Recollections of a Maltese octogenarian – My Sixties (continued)

Joseph Lanzon

Strolling up and down Kingsway “in search of a girlfriend”

In the sixties football was Malta's most popular sport by far. The island had several good players in those days. I still recall the opportunistic goals of Sliema's Tony Nicholl and Salvinu Schembri, the dribbling runs of Floriana's Pullu Demanuele (il-Koku), the articulate play of Floriana's Lolly Borg, and the immaculate saves by St. George's goalkeeper, Guzi Gabaretta or Sliema's Harry Edwards.

I was a frequent visitor to the Empire Stadium in Gżira, not only to watch the local teams in action, but to watch games involving club teams from Austria, Germany, Yugoslavia, England, Scotland and Switzerland during the annual Christmas Tourneys.

Malta's main football clubs published their own monthly or fortnightly magazines. Sliema Wanderers published *'The Blue Review'*, Floriana *'The Evergreen'*, Valetta the *'Lilywhites'*, Rabat *'The Magpies'* and others their own. They were precious collectors' items for the enthusiasts.

I attended several football matches at the Gżira stadium, starting from the fifties and continuing to the sixties, not only to watch my home team St. George's but also those involving Sliema Wanderers, Floriana and Valetta who were the best of the bunch with the league's finest players. Football was very popular at the time and most football matches attracted thousands of supporters.

Another sport I liked was roller-skating. My friends and I used to go rollerskating at the 'Rockyvale' in Spinola. Before making the trip there we used to train on a cement platform in Rinella. At times I used to roller skate my way back to Marsaskala.

The Rockyvale

The 'Rockyvale', situated in the beautiful valley of 'Wied il-Ghomor' in Spinola Bay at St. Julian's, had a roller skating rink that was popular with youths who mixed with servicemen in uniforms, gentlemen in suits and ladies with hats. They all roller-skated



Kingsway (now Republic Street), has always been popular

while the orchestra played live music.

In the late sixties the venue was converted into a nightclub by the name of 'Tigullio'. Later it stopped functioning was even used as a bus terminal.

Kingsway parades

Because of lack of entertainment facilities youths also sought their own mode of recreation. One of them was strolling up and down Kingsway in Valletta on Saturday and Sunday evenings, from Wembley store to Café Cordina and back again.

Most young people looked forward to those evenings. Walking up and down, talking to friends, chatting, gossiping, making new friends and meeting girls were the norm. Several boys met their future wives while strolling down Kingsway.

Piazza Regina in front of Cordina's was a great attraction. An orchestra played live music and accompanied several of Malta's best singers.

Malta becomes Independent

From whatever angle one looks at 1964, there is no denying that it was most momentous in Malta's long and glorious history. On 21 September Malta became a sovereign and independent state, a full member of the British Commonwealth of free nations.

Despite its small size, the country became entirely responsible for the running of its government and for managing

ing its administration. It started on its arduous but exiting road towards a new future.

I was 26 years at the time. I looked in awe and admiration as this important event. Although a referendum confirmed that 54.5% of the Maltese agreed with Independence, a good number still doubted whether the little island could go it alone in a world of continuous conflicts and turmoil. It was a challenge and a plunge into the unknown.

The official ceremony in which the Duke of Edinburgh handed the legal documents establishing the new Maltese Constitution to Prime Minister Dr George Borg Olivier was held in the spacious Floriana Parade Ground (Ix-xagħra).

However, there were celebrations even before that as the people rejoiced in a thousand ways. Malta was now on its way towards a successful future led by its own leaders, representatives and administrators.

The crazy weather and record temperatures

As far as the weather is concerned, those who lived in Malta in 1962 will remember, that temperatures passed from one extreme to the other. On the last day of January temperatures tumbled to only -1.6 degrees centigrade, freezing point level and the first ever in Malta within living memory, heavy snow fell in some parts of Malta. A further drop in temperature brought heavy rain and sleet.

However, come summer and, on more than one occasion, the temperatures hit 41 degrees Centigrade in the shade. As if that was not enough for one year, on August 18 (my second wedding anniversary) Malta and Gozo experienced earth tremors that brought frightened people rushing out of their houses and into the streets seeking open spaces to get away from quivering buildings.

**In the next issue, The seventies*

◀Three of Malta's most popular footballers in the sixties.
(From left): Tony Nicholl, Pullu Demanuele and Lolly Borg



Glen Vella jirbaħ l-ewwel edizzjoni ta'



Il-kantant popolari Glen Vella rebah l-ewwel edizzjoni tal-festival tal-kanzunetta Maltija, **Muzika Muzika** bil-kanzunetta 'Harsa Biss' meta kiseb 78 punt wara votazzjoni minn ġurija ta' disgħa u l-voti tal-pubbliku.

Il-festival, li ġie organizzat biex ipoġġi fuq quddiem il-kanzunetta Maltija u li fih hadu sehem l-aqwa kantanti Maltin li kantaw fuq palk spettakolari u għal mużika *live*, kien ta' success kbir.

Eventwalment ġie deċiż bil-vot tal-pubbliku, għax wara li Glenn u Christian Ardin bil-kanzunetta 'Għajjejt Inħobb' kisbu l-istess ammont ta' punti, skont ir-regolamenti, minn għab l-akbar għadd ta' voti mill-pubbliku (b'piż ta' 25 fil-mija), kellu jiġi dikjarat rebbieh tat-trofew u jingħata l-premju ta' €10,000.

Christian Ardin ġie dikjarat fit-tieni post u ha l-premju ta' €5,000, filwaqt li l-grupp Kantera bil-kanzunetta 'L-Ewwel Jien' ġie t-tielet.

Il-kanzunetta *Għajjejt Inħobb* ta' Danica Muscat kisbet l-ogħla puntegg tat-televoting ta' 32 punt.

'Harsa Biss' hija kompożizzjoni ta' Philip Vella fuq kliem ta' Joe Julian Farrugia.

Min jinteressah jista' jidhol *yutube* u jfittex dan il-festival.



Glen Vella bit-trofew wara r-rebħa



The Landillo Seniors Group

Happy (Senior Days) are here again!

It was lovely to see so many happy smiling faces again as the Llandilo, Greystanes and Fairfield NSW Social Seniors Welfare Groups restarted their monthly meetings after the COVID-19 restrictions on gatherings, after nearly a year.

Everywhere, people were heard greeting each other with "kemm ili ma narak!" and the continual buzz of conversations making up for the lost time. The Voice of the Maltese was again requested to keep them up to date with events both locally and in Malta.

The groups settled back into their routines, and did not mind the extra precautions that had to be taken, such as sanitising hands and temperature checks to look after their safety.

The group leaders, Helen Azzopardi, Francis Montesin and Dorothy Gatt worked hard to make sure all went smoothly for their groups, and discussions and plans made for our future meetings and bus trips.

There were a large number of opportunities to socialise and catching up with old friends, and it seems that a great time was had by all.

New members are always welcome. For more information contact Welfare / Community Worker, Marisa Previtera on 0414 863 123.

MarisaPrevitera



The Greystanes Seniors Group

Have your say/Xi trid tgħid?



The Voice of the Maltese

Print & Digital magazine

This is a bi-lingual (in English and Maltese) fortnightly magazine that specifically targets all Maltese living abroad with emphasis on the Australian and Maltese scenes.

The magazine can be read in flip-book or PDF format online. A pdf copy is sent via email on request.

Hard copy subscription is also available at a cost.

Editors:

Malta: Joseph Cutajar

Australia:

Lawrence Dimech: MOM,
OAM, JP Rt

email address:

maltesevoice@gmail.com

Letters for publication in *The Voice* magazine, either in Maltese or English should include name, e-mail address and residence of the writer, and be e-mailed to: maltesevoice@gmail.com.



Now you can also
join us on facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/thevoice-ofthemaltese>

Your letters/ L-ittri tagħkom ...

Australia Hall Still Maltese at heart! fake News

Ant. Micallef from Penrith NSW writes:

Further to what Les Mamo of Regents Park NSW stated under the heading, 'It is that Australian Hall issue again!' in the last issue of *The Voice of the Maltese*, please allow me to add my comments on the matter.

May I add that according to the last sale agreement on the Pembroke site, the new owners are committed to restoring Australia Hall.

Even the Australian High Commission in Malta had confirmed this part of the deal. I also remember the issuing of a ministerial statement about it.

Unfortunately, a politically frustrate, misinformed few are still trying to give us fake news. They should stop flogging a dead horse.

Always balanced news

Joe Bugeja from Ceduna SA writes:

May I be allowed to thank *The Voice* for providing us with news from Malta, both in Maltese and English that is politically balanced. There is a huge difference between stating that you are non-political (in Malta that is hardly possible) and then, in many subtle ways you show bias. Not so this magazine.

I discuss Malta with many friends, and I challenge them to tell me if they regard the news in our magazine not to be fair.

In the news in English *The Voice* gives the facts and Malta is pictured in a good light as it should be for a publication aimed at the Maltese living abroad. Nobody can accuse it of not being factual as it gives the true picture; then it lets the readers to make their own judgements. Keep it up!

Doris Cannataci from Sliema writes:

How pleased I am to read articles by Barry York; and letters such as the one by Eugene Calleja about "Joe's recollections ... What nostalgia!" regarding Joseph Lanzon's articles in previous editions of the *Voice of the Maltese*.

They give me the impression that they yearn to learn more about their roots, place of birth or descent. Still Maltese at heart!!

Kummentarju mqanqal

Joe Vella minn Sunshine Victoria jikteb:

Qrajt il-kummentarju mqanqal taht irras 'L-abbandonati' fl-ahhar hargha ta' *The Voice* u tassew interessani. Hadt pjaċir ukoll meta smajtu jinqara fil-programm 98.9 North West FM, ta' Melbourne.

Il-križi msemija mhix faċli li titranga iżda almenu f'dan il-kummentarju stajna nifhmu għaliex il-Maltin jixtiequ mhux biss saċerdot Malti iżda wiehed b'kultura nisranija Maltija.

Hemm hi d-differenza. Meta ndahlet il-kurja naqset serjament li tifhem din id-differenza.

Dik il-mishuta politika!

Chas Farrugia minn Brisbane Qld jikteb:

Malta bħalissa tinsab fi żmien meta saret kapaċi thabbatha mal-aqwa tad-dinja f'kull settur u l-poplu jinsab komdu u moqdi. Hafna minna li ilna hafna snin ngħixu bogħod minn art twelidna, kieku nixtiequ, imma minhabba li bnejna familji f'pajjiżi mbiegħda mhux faċli li nerġhu nerfghu l-ankri u nirritornaw f'art twelidna biex ingawdu mill-benna li jista' joffri tal-pajjiż.

Jiddispjaċini nara li madankollu f'Malta għadek issib lil min, li sforz l-għamad politiku għadu jgħix fis-sittinijiet u mhux kapaċi jgħożż dak li l-Bambin żejjen bih lill-Gżejjer Maltin, mhux bir-rikkezzji materjali daqskemm għal hili li għandu l-poplu u min imexxi.

Bħalissa l-imxija COVID-19 mhix daqstant hanina ma' Malta, imma b'danakollu mqabbel ma' dak li huma għaddejnin minnu il-bieċa 'l kbira tal-popli l-oħra Ewropej li bħal Malta huma msieħba tal-UE, mhux ibati.

Anzi skont l-għaqdiet dinjin, grazzi għall-għaqal ta' min qed imexxi il-pajjiż jinsab f'qagħda ferm u ferm ahjar minn ta' oħrajn f'kull settur, inkluzi dawk tas-saħħa u l-ekonomija.

Dan jafu kulhadd, imma mill-bogħod xorta qed nindunaw u nhossu li hemm min irid idahhal il-mishuta politika anke fis-saħħa. Hu ċar li jew hemm min hu mazzun inkella u jibla kollox, jew għall-finijiet ta' mohhu ma jridx jifhem.



Dr Hugh McDermott MP State Member for Prospect

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Stabat Mater ta' Chris Muscat – tagħmel gieħ lill-mużika sagra

Ftit tal-jiem oħra nidhlu fil-Gimgha Mqaddsa u fit-2 ta' April il-Knsja tfakkar il-mewt u l-qawmien ta' Ġesù Kristu biex jumejn wara niċċelebraw ukoll l-Għid il-Kbir. Is-soltu f' dawn il-jiem, l-insara jidhlu sew f' qox-orthom; il-knejjes jiġu mlibbsa l-iswed u tispikka l-mużika kiebja.

Illum se niffoka fuq kompożizzjoni mużikali unika magħrufa li ġej żmienha, 'Stabat Mater', taż-żagħżuġ kompożitur Christopher Muscat.

Nifhem li x-xogħol ta' mużika sagra huwa dejjem apprezzat, imma donnu li f' dawn il-jiem tas-sena xogħlijiet ta' mużika sagra jinħassu aktar profondi u devozzjonali, l-aktar u l-aktar jekk tkun xi 'Stabat Mater' li r-repertorju mużikali huwa mfawwar bihom.

Għandi esperjenzi sbieħ tax-xogħol mużikali ta' Christopher (jew Chris kif inħobb insejjahlu). Kont preżenti meta l-kompożizzjoni tiegħu thabbret rebbieha minn ġurija barranija u esperta f' kompetizzjoni mużikali organizzata mill-APS Bank.

L-esperjenza l-oħra kienet meta rajt il-Katidral tal-Imdina mimli daqs bajda għall-ewwel eżekuzzjoni ta' dan ix-xogħol sagru. Dakinhar donnu li l-pubbliku kien jaf minn qabel bil-gmiel din il-kompożizzjoni Maltija.

Ma' dawn l-esperjenzi sbieħ inżid ukoll it-tnejja tas-CD tal-istess kompożizzjoni jew aħjar l-oratorju għal soprano, kantur, kor u orchestra bl-eżekuzzjoni tas-Soprano Charlene Portelli, il-Kantur Josef Bugeja, il-Korijiet Santa Monica u Jubilate Deo, flimkien mal-Orkestra Filarmanoka ta' Malta bid-direzzjoni ta' Chris innifsu.

Flinkien mas-CD li giet irrekordjata f' Novembru 2013 kien hemm ukoll ktejjeb editjat minn Joseph Vella Bondin li mill-bidu nett kien il-moħħ ta' din il-kompetizzjoni mużikali.

'Stabat Mater' oħra

Is-sugġett ta' 'Stabat Mater' (fuq versi attribwiti lil Jocopone da Todi) kien ilu żmien twil f' moħħ Chris. Tant li fl-1998 (14-il sena qabel) kien diġà kkompona 'Stabat Mater' oħra, b'verzjoni mqassra. Kien qalli hu stess, u ssokta jgħidli li din il-kompożizzjoni hi ferm għal qalbu għax kienet l-ewwel f' sensiela ta' xogħlijiet ta' mużika sagra.

Meta kienu ġew immedja r-regolarmenti għall-kompetizzjoni tal-APS fl-2012, Mro Muscat mill-ewwel thajjar li jikkomponi 'Stabat Mater' oħra ġdida u differenti minn ta' qabilha.

Kont xtaqt inkun naf ir-raġuni wara dan l-interess kollu f' sugġett bħal 'Stabat Mater' meta hawn daqstant kompożituri kbar oħrajn u ta' fama internazzjonali bħal Rossini, Dvorak u oħrajn, li diġà kitbu dwar is-sugġett.

Kien qalli li l-ewwel nettkien minhabba l-fatt li t-test komplut ta' 'Stabat Mater' huwa wieħed tassew profund u li jmissu fil-fond spiritwalment. Raġuni oħra kienet is-sodisfazzjon. Kien jaf li kieku kellha tirbaħ il-kompożizzjoni (kif fil-fatt sar) kien se jkollu xogħol li jindaqq professjonalment u li jiġi rrekordjat. Din il-kompożizzjoni ta' mużika sagra tassew tagħmel gieħ lir-repertorju Malti f' dan il-qasam nobbli.



Is-surmast kompożitur Christopher Muscat



Kif normalment naraw f' xogħlijiet oħrajn bl-istess tema ta' kompożituri oħrajn, 'Stabat Mater' ta' Christopher Muscat hi mqassma f' seba' partijiet. Tibda bi 'Stabat Mater Dolorosa', bil-kompożitur jaħkem lill-udjenza sa mill-ftuħ tal-kompożizzjoni, b' largo sabiħ hafna għal kor u orchestra. Sa mill-ewwel battuti thossok fid-dulur kbir ta' Marija taħt is-Salib ta' Binha.

Wara tindaqq il-'Cujus Animam' fejn il-kompożitur

jagħti xenarju mistiku marbut mal-karba u l-uġiħ ta' Marija (soprano) f' arja tassew sabiħa li tirrifletti l-mużika taż-żminijiet tagħna. Mas-soprano jingħaqdu wkoll il-kor u l-orkestra li jgħinu bis-siħi dan l-andament mużikali.

Final emozzjonali

Il-kompożizzjoni tkompli bil-partijiet l-oħra, fosthom 'Eia Mater' bis-sehem tal-kantur, kor u orchestra; 'Sancta Mater' u l-agitato 'Virgo Virginum', passagg koral sabiħ u l-orkestra. Hawn ukoll għandna mużika profonda, hekk li tassew thossok li tinsab ma' Marija taħt is-Salib ta' Binha Ġesù li ssallab biex jifdi lill-bnedmin.

Ix-xogħol għandu final emozzjonali u tassew spiritwali. Fih tassew thoss id-dulur qawwi ta' ommna Marija u tithalla tirrifletti dwar hekk. 'Stabat Mater' ta' livell mużikali għoli!

Chris għandu esperjenzi sewwa ta' xogħlijiet ta' mużika sagra. Fil-fatt, minbarra 'Stabat Mater' qasira għandu wkoll 'Ave Maria' (2003), kompożizzjoni rebbieha tal-Jaume Dotras Serrabella' li saret fl-2006 fi Spanja. Sena wara kkompona 'Christmas Quadrille'.

Għall-Milied għandu wkoll kantata 'Jesu Redemptor Omnium' (2008) u 'Crucem Tuam' (2010). Fl-istess sena kkompona wkoll 'Jubilate Deo' għal kor b'erbat ilhna (a cappella); 'Laudate Pueri'; 'Salve Regina'; u 'Tantum Ergo' għal kor f'erba' vuċijiet u orġni.

Magħhom Christopher Muscat għandu wkoll quddiesa, 'Dawl tal-Fidi', kif ukoll għadd ta' bċejeċ liturġiċi oħrajn bħal innijiet, salmi u antifoni.

Nawgura lil jibqa' jtna xogħlijiet mużikali sbieħ u ta' livell.

Perspettiva

A version of this series in English may be found in the author's blog at:

<https://ivancauchi.blogspot.com>

kitba ta'
IVAN
CAUCHI



Il-COVID u Malta

F'din il-kriżi estiża li l-umanità ilha għaddejja minnha għal aktar minn sena, hafna mid-deċiżjonijiet, diskussjonijiet, aħbarijiet u attivitajiet tal-bnedmin u l-mexxejja tagħhom kienu kompletament iddominati minn dan il-virus il-gdid. L-awtoritajiet amministrattivi tal-pajjiżi ta' madwar id-dinja huma għudikati fuq żammewx il-bilanċ bejn il-għieda kontra l-virus u kemm inżammiet hajja l-ekonomija (anke jekk fuq ventilatur metaforiku).

Jidhirli li l-maġġoranza tal-popolazzjoni aktarx tkun l-iktar interessata li tiġi pprijorizzata s-saħħa pubblika, imma li jkun hemm ukoll minn jahseb li tista' tittollera ċertu livell kontrollabbli ta' riskju lejn is-saħħa bil-ghan li l-ekonomija tkun affettwata biss minimament.

Jien daparti tiegħi, ngħid li inutli jkollok miljun dollaru fil-but jekk int mejjet.

Hafna ċittadini ta' madwar id-dinja għal dawn l-aħħar xhur taw attenzjoni hafna iktar mis-soltu lill-mexxejja politiki u l-awtoritajiet tas-saħħa, bl-istatistika li setgħet ingħatat, dettaljata u kuljum, ta' kemm qed jiġu infettati nies, kemm traġikament qed jaqgħu taht il-marda, x'restrizzjonijiet qegħdin jittiehdu u meta se jiġu mneħhija, u kif u meta nistghu nohorgu minn dan il-purgatorju.

Il-mistoqsija ewlenija: meta sejjer il-COVID-19 isir wiehed biss mill-hafna mard li Prattikament sparixxa madwar id-dinja minhabba li l-biċċa l-kbira tal-popolazzjoni dinjija tkun vaċċinata?

Uhud ohra nfexxew fi spekulazzjoni bla bażi, per eżempju li dan il-virus mhu xejn hlief xi konfokka shiha.

Wahda mill-iktar teoriji ridikoli li smajt kienet li l-gvernijiet kollha tad-dinja qiegħdin jahdmu flimkien biex bl-iskuża tal-COVID ilkoll nitilfu mil-libertajiet tagħna. Qatt bsartu li l-gvernijiet tal-Istati Uniti, taċ-Ċina u tar-Russja fil-fatt kien qiegħdin jahdmu id f'id?

Jien nisma' lil kulhadd, imma m'għandix hin għall-frugħat.

F'dawn l-aħħar xhur, kien b'inkwiet dejjem jizdied li nisma' l-aħbarijiet dwar is-sitwazzjoni f'Malta. Fil-bidu, kien jidher li s-sitwazzjoni kienet raġjonevoli, imma għal dan l-aħħar ġimghat ma stajtx nifhem kif Malta bdiet tirrapporta mijiet (madwar mitejn) każ gdid tal-COVID kuljum (b'popolazzjoni ta' nofs miljun), filwaqt li l-Awstralja fl-istess perġodu kien hemm hafna jiem li fihom ma kien hemm lanqas każ wiehed f'popolazzjoni ta' 25 miljun.

B'popolazzjoni tant zghira, l-ammont totali ta' nies infettati (26,748) u mwiet (358) irrappurtati mal-World Health Organisation (WHO) sas-17 ta' Marzu 2021 mhumix għoljin imqabbla mal-pajjiżi l-oħra (Malta fil-119 post minn 236 pajjiż jew territorju),¹ għalkemm kull mewt hija traġedja, u infezzjoni tista' tibqa' taffettwak għal hafna xhur, u ma nafux jekk hux iktar minn hekk ukoll.

Madankollu, jekk thares lejn ir-rata ta' infezzjoni skont il-popolazzjoni, is-sitwazzjoni mqabbla ma' dik tal-bqija tad-dinja tinbidel, u għall-agħar.

Fil-fatt, Malta kellha 6,057 infezzjoni għal kull 100,000 popolazzjoni, fit-33 post u fit biss wara l-Gran Brittanja (6,280) li mhix meqjusa affattu li marret tajjeb, u mhux daqshekk 'il bogħod mill-Istati Uniti bi 8,808. L-agħar hija l-Andorra, b'14,610 każ kull 100,000 popolazzjoni. Qabbel dan mal-Awstralja b'114 każ kull 100,000, u New Zealand bi 43.

Sitwazzjoni simili tinstab meta tqis l-imwiet kull 100,000 popolazzjoni. Malta qiegħda fis-47 post minn 236 pajjiż jew territorju bi 80 imwiet kull 100,000, Prattikament fl-istess livell tal-Germanja bi 87, u nofs dik tal-Istati Uniti tal-Amerka b'160, ir-Renju Unit b'184 u fuq nett Ġibiltà b'279. Qabbel dan mal-Awstralja bi 3.5 imwiet kull 100,000, u New Zealand b'0.5!

Kont sorpriż hafna xi ġimghat ilu naqra li l-Prim Ministru Malti Robert Abela jikkummenta li Malta kienet qisha qiegħda l-genna meta mqabbla mal-bqija tal-Ewropa.²

L-ewwel haġa, meta mqabbla mal-pajjiżi tal-Ewropa biss, Malta qisha tinsab bejn wiehed u iehor f'nofs il-klassifika kemm fl-infezzjonijiet u kemm fl-imwiet.

It-tieni, l-Ewropa mhi meqjusa li kienet effettiva xejn fit-trażzin tal-COVID, b'pajjiżi bħall-Italja, ir-Renju Unit u Spanja ma jissemmewx fit-tajjeb f'dan il-qasam. Huwa veru li jekk tqabbel ruhek mal-agħar, se ssib li kont aħjar, imma jekk trid tkun kredibbli meta titkellem fuq il-genna, trid tqabbel ruhek mal-aħjar u mhux mal-agħar.

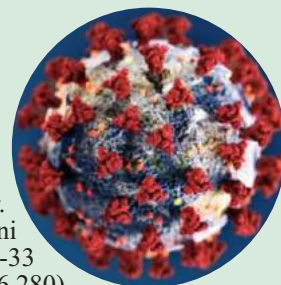
Jien għandi familjari tiegħi ilhom madwar sena f'Malta u Ghawdex Prattikament ma jiċċaqalqux mid-dar bil-biża' tan-numru relattivament għoli ta' nies li għadhom sal-lum jinstabu infettati, u meta dawn ikunu anzjani tista' timmaġina l-ansjetà tagħhom f'dan iż-żmien.

Ukoll jibqgħu skantati jqabblu l-aħbarijiet tagħhom u kif il-hajja qed tiżvolgi ma daww tagħna fl-Awstralja meta nitkellmu minn naha tad-dinja għall-oħra.

Jidhirli li l-bilanċ bejn l-ekonomija u t-tharis tas-saħħa kien iktar imxaqleb lejn tal-ewwel f'Malta milli kien fl-Awstralja. Naċċetta li kull deċiżjoni hija diffiċli, imma jibqa' għal kull gvern biex jiddefendi d-deċiżjonijiet li ttiehdu u meta, u jiffaċċja l-familji ta' daww li ntmessu mit-traġedja.

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From left: Jennifer Gurry (Founder and CEO of Diamond Women), Paul Zammit OAM, Hon Tanya Davies MP, Hon Guy Zangari MP, Hon Fred Nile MLC, Bridget Spinks (Founder of Gala for Life), HE Jim Dominguez KCSG CBE AM, Hon Kevin Conolly MP, Hon Hugh McDermott MP, Dalton Fogarty, Sophie York, Vera Nadile and Marcello Nadile

Supporting ‘Diamond Women’

The Gala for Life held a highly successful Fundraising Dinner in support of the ‘Diamond Women’ in a packed-out auditorium in NSW. Bridget Spinks, the indefatigable founder of “Gala for Life” and her highly professional team were the people behind the organisation.

With “Eliminate the Crisis but not the Pregnancy” as its motto, the group has Our Lady of Guadalupe as the Mother of Jesus in her pregnancy as its Patron. In 1531 Our Lady appeared on six occasions to Juan Diego in Mexico and left him miraculous image on a cloak that is still fresh today and venerated by pilgrims daily.

Bridget Spinks and Jennifer Gurry thanked the Friends and Supporters of the Catholic Breakfast group, not only for their great support by attending the dinner in such good numbers but also for their financial support.

Jennifer Gurry founded ‘Diamond Women’ 15 years ago to the

Tixtieq li jkollok kopja ta’ The Voice f’idejk?

The Voice of the Maltese, mhux biss magazine online. Hu wkoll l-uniku tax-xorta tiegħu fl-Awstralja li wkoll hu ippubblikat, u hafna qed approffittaw ruħhom billi jabbonaw u qed jirċevu kopja pprintjata bil-posta d-dar bi flas.

Min jixtieq jibda jirċevi kopja pprintjata kull darba li joħroġ imhegga jabbonaw għal sena u jkun żgur mill-kopja kull darba.

Dan isir billi wieħed jibgħat email lil maltesevoice@gmail.com u jitlob tagħrif dwar il-flas ta’ abbonament għal sena fl-istat fejn jgħix. Imbagħad jekk ikun irid jissieheb ma’ daww kollha li mhu-miex kuntenti biss li jaqraw il-magazine online, imma wkoll li jkoll-hom kopja tiegħu, f’idejhom jgħarrafna u jkun moqdijin.

day. The organisation operates from seven offices in NSW. It is run by volunteers, without any government financial support whatsoever, hence having to rely on donations to keep their doors open, including the fundraiser by the Gala for Life team.

In her key-note address at the dinner, Jennifer Gurry, the founder and CEO of “Diamond Women” stated that during these past 12 months they have provided more than 17,000 hours of counseling support to provide choices and options other than straight-out abortion on demand, and all of that at no cost to the taxpayer.

Jennifer is an inspiration for all of us with her well-researched command of the issues, her textual knowledge of the Bible and with her clarity of thought and dedication.

Led by Jennifer, Preethy Abraham, Rose Pender and Kieren Jackson, Diamond Women, the organisation is in safe and secure hands.

Two other keynote speakers before Jennifer Gurry, Hon Guy Zangari MP, Member for Fairfield and the Hon Tanya Davies MP, Member for Mulgoa two keynote, were absolutely brilliant as reflected by the applause they received.

I know that there are ever-increasing demands on our CBG for financial assistance from so many deserving charities, however, we were not set up to do that and I am reluctant to mention all the demands being made on us. However, I wish to make an exception for Diamond Women.

Should any friends and supporters of our CBG wish to consider making a tax-free financial donation or willing to offer their time and expertise to help “Diamond Women,” they should contact Bridget Spinks directly on: Mob: 0408 496 610; Email: bridgetannamaria@gmail.com

Report: PaulZammit OAM



Roundup of News About Malta



A meeting of the INDEX (Indicators Networking Data Extrapolation eXchange) team

Maltese have higher level of satisfaction than their European counterparts - survey

People in Malta have a higher level of satisfaction with jobs, finances and relationships than their European counterparts (7.5 out of 10 to EU's 7.3). However, they are less satisfied with their use of time and leisure, survey finds

The initial findings from the survey by INDEX (Indicators Networking Data Extrapolation eXchange), which is a strategic initiative by the Malta Foundation for the Wellbeing of Society with the University of Malta also found that in contrast, average satisfaction with time use by Maltese stood at 6.6 compared to an EU average of 6.8.

Lead researcher Marie Briguglio said the emerging data was not surprising, especially considering Maltese tend to work longer hours than their European neighbours.

In terms of emotional wellbeing, like their European counterparts, people in Malta, re-

ported happiness as the more frequently felt emotion, and that the elderly are those most satisfied with their time use.

The study confirmed that materially-deprived individuals in poor health and separated or divorced reported lower well-being levels than others, while employed people report higher life satisfaction than those in retirement, unemployed or unable to work due to disability.

The research employed a dataset collected in 2018 by Malta's National Statistics Office as part of the EU Survey on Income and Living Conditions.

The first set of outcomes were presented in Parliament at an event opened by Speaker Anglu Farrugia and addressed by European Commission Vice President Dubravka Šuica, MFWS chair Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca, and University rector Alfred Vella.

Life-saving cystic fibrosis drugs to be provided for free

In a live-streamed video-call with a 26-year-old cystic fibrosis patient, Prime Minister Robert Abela said the government would make life-saving drugs for cystic fibrosis patients freely available to patients on its formulary. Mandy Vella who has been petitioning since 2018 for the expensive Trikafta drug to be provided to sufferers like her had been hospitalised with a chest infection.

Cystic fibrosis is a genetic disease that affects around 20 people in Malta. The drug is used to treat the cells of cystic fibrosis patients and gives more strength to their lungs.

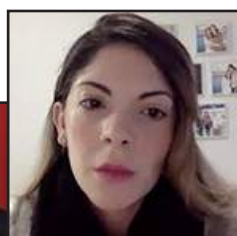
Approved by the EU's medicine's watchdog in August, the treatment can cost some €18,000 every month for patients.

"I've been insisting with authorities from 2018, that when it gets approved by the EU, Malta works to procure it," Vella had said.

Speaking to Mandy in a video-call on Friday, the Prime Minister referred to an earlier discussion they had during which she raised the issue on behalf of other people. He said he highly admired her for that as despite her own suffering she had approached him to advocate on behalf of others.

He said that soon, the medicine would be made available to her and to all the others.

Then in a Facebook post reaction, Mandy thanked the authorities for their prompt action.



Prime Minister Robert Abela and Mandy Vella during their video-call

Malta's National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security

The Oversight Committee on Malta's National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security tasked with monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the Action Plan, covering the term 2020–2024, that seeks to implement the UN Security Resolution 1325 on Women Peace and Security, convened for its first session under the chairmanship of Ambassador Cecilia Attard-Pirotta.

The Resolution reaffirmed the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, peace negotiations, peacebuilding, peacekeeping, humanitarian res-

ponses, and post-conflict reconstruction, and underlined the importance of their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security.

Addressing the meeting, Evarist Bartolo, Minister for Foreign and European Affairs highlighted the importance afforded by the Maltese Government to the WPS Agenda as reflected in its decision to identify this theme as one of the priorities for Malta's candidature, as well as its membership, in the UN Security Council for 2023-2024.

He thanked the committee for its input in

drawing up the National Action Plan and further highlighted that everyone needed to take ownership of the National Action Plan approved by the Cabinet in December 2019. He argued that the implementation does not solely depend on women, but is the responsibility of everybody regardless of gender, age, creed, or position.

Minister Bartolo concluded by reiterating his call to work together to foster an environment where women are internationally recognised as leaders, policy motivators, and decision-makers, in peace and conflict settings and beyond.



Roundup of News About Malta



National policy for youths (2021–2030) launched

Towards 2030 – Reaching out and supporting young people, is the theme that would be guiding youths between the ages of thirteen and thirty in the national policy just launched.

The policy document would be providing support to young people to participate and to contribute to political, economic, social and cultural life at both local and European level.

The launch occurred during a press conference addressed by the Minister for Inclusion and Quality of Life Julia Farrugia Portelli and the Parliamentary Secretary for

Sport, Recreation and Voluntary Organisations Clifton Grima.

Describing youths as being the link with

Reaching out and supporting young people

the present, the past and future, Minister Farrugia Portelli said this reflects the great trust the government has in youths in a

world of continuous challenges that should be transformed into opportunities and promised all the support and encouragement to youths and adults to reach their potential and aspirations.

She also listed the eight strategic objectives on which the government would be basing its support.

Parliamentary Secretary Clifton Grima maintained that while focusing on the changes and opportunities that exist for young people, this national youth policy is based on the success of the last five years.

He explained that this policy is incorporated with other national strategies and with other international and European policies.



Minister Julia Farrugia Portelli (left) and Parliamentary Secretary Clifton Grima (sec. left) at the launch

Promoting EU from Malta

A Malta-based company, has successfully promoted European Union opportunities to clients all over Europe ranging from governments, businesses, NGOs, and academia through the building of partnerships that work in the field of research and innovation.

AcrossLimits company has been in operation for the last 20 years. It employs 11 people in Malta and over 40 experts globally in different technology domains. It has also acted as a contractor to the European Commission and its agencies on various projects.

President appeals to architects to avoid trends not reflecting local characteristics

The President of Malta, HE George Vella told architects that it is their responsibility to use the latest trends, the latest materials, the latest technologies, and the best of design to enhance the characteristics of Maltese heritage and to avoid all trends, however modern, that lead one to adopt styles and structures that are anonymous, albeit international, but do not reflect in any way any particular redeeming Maltese characteristics.

The President was congratulating the winners in ten categories and all those who came in for a commendation at the Malta Architectural and Spatial Planning Awards that were meant to highlight projects that stood out, to be given due recognition, and to encourage emerging and established architects and designers who have shown vision, and commitment to high environmental standards in their projects in the past year.

President George Vella said that the COVID-19 pandemic has been an eye-opener in this regard as everyone has come to appreciate the importance of having adequate living spaces. “We

think globally but we must act local,” he said.

He said that the state of the environment, be it natural or built, and the care, or lack of, that one gives it, says a lot about a country.

He truly believed that architects and spatial planners are key players in all this as they are the agents of change whose duty it is to preserve what we have while ensuring that our future generations can look back at our generation and thank us for making the right decisions at the right time.

He explained that it was the time for discussing constructively, “what changes would we like to see occurring to avoid the repetition or continuation of practices that could have left us short of arriving at the desired optimal levels in our planning policies”.

He maintained that such events give him hope, and if there is enough will from all the stakeholders that determine this delicate balance, “We can manage to identify the right formula for the well-being of our people”.

Mix-xena tal-ħajja Maltija

minn Ġużè Camilleri

Mill-ġdid il-COVID-19

Mhux suġġett li wiehed jiehu pjaċir jikteb dwaru, imma fis-sitwazzjoni li ninsabu fiha wiehed ma jistax jevita li jagħmel hekk.

Kif żgur smajtu jew grajtu wara li għal xi żmien kien qed jidher li l-infezzjonijiet, jekk ma kienux qed jonqsu, tal-inqas ma kienux qed jiżdiedu b'rata allarmanti, sbahna jum meta l-infezzjonijiet aktar minn irdupjaw.

Dan wassal għal azzjoni mill-Awtoritajiet li habbru miżuri iebsa, fosthom l-gheluq tal-iskejjel, wahda mill-aktar miżuri li l-Gvern kien qed jirrezisti li jagħmel.

Infatti, il-Ministru tal-Edukazzjoni, Dr Justyne Caruana sostniet li d-deċiżjoni biex jingħalqu l-iskejjel ma kienitx wahda faċli. Qalet: "Ahna dejjem għedna li ftaħna l-iskejjel, kburi li żammajnihom miftuħin u investejna biex żammajnihom miftuħin, però malli jkun hemm bidla fid-direzzjoni mill-awtoritajiet tas-saħħa, ahna nirvedu l-pożizzjoni tagħna għax fl-aħħar mill-aħħar l-ewwel li trid tissalvagwardja hija s-saħħa tat-tfal, tal-edukaturi u tal-istaff fl-iskejjel."

Fortunatament il-figura li konna rajna f'24 siegħa ma rgajniex rajnieha, imma issa nstab li tliet kwarti tal-ġadd tal-każi pożittivi huma kaġun tal-imgharraq varjant Ingliż li ħakem bil-kbir kwazi lill-Ewropa kollha u qed iħalli l-figuri għoljin.

Anke l-ġadd tal-imwiet kompli tiela' għalkemm baqa' bejn wiehed u iehor fil-livell tal-aħħar xahar. Biss, l-ġadd ta' dawh li qed ikunu dikjarati mfejjja qed ikun daqs jew akbar mill-każijiet godda.

Dan, flimkien mar-ritmu tajjeb tal-ghoti tal-vaċċin, qed jagħti xaqqa' dawl li forsi mexjin biex bil-mod il-mod nohorgu minn din il-kriżi.

Internet u kompjuters b'xejn għall-istudenti biex jinqdew

Bhalissa għaddejja ħidma biex l-istudenti li bi dritt għandu jkollhom edukazzjoni ta' kwalità, din titwasslilhom xorta wahda b'mod diġitali, u b'mod kwalitattiv.

Għalhekk permezz tal-Ministeru tal-Edukazzjoni l-gvern huwa kkommiss li jgħin bis-siħ lill-istudenti li għandhom bżonnijiet materjali iktar minn haddiehor, partikolarment f'dan ix-xahar li matulu (għalissa żgur sal-11 ta' April) is-servizzi edukattivi għadew online.

Tul il-perjodu li fih l-iskejjel se jkunu magħluqin l-istudenti li jew ma għandhomx aċċess għall-internet inkella kompjuter qed jiġu pprovduti lilhom *laptops* jew *tablets* u s-servizz tal-internet b'xejn halli jużawhom waqt li jkunu jsegwu l-lezzjonijiet virtwali minn djarhom.

Il-ministeru qed jesigi li mhux biss jagħti l-assistenza u jipprovdut s-servizz, imma wkoll li jingħata s-serħan tal-moħħ lill-istudenti kif ukoll lill-familji tagħhom.

L-ghaqal ta' Malta fi-ksib tal-vaċċin kontra l-imxija

L-ghaqal u s-suċċess ta' Malta fil-kampanja ta' tilqim kontra l-pandemija ma tantx niżel tajjeb ma' ċerti pajjiżi Ewropej li jinsabu ferm wara Malta fir-rata ta' l-ghoti ta' dan it-tilqim.

Dan hareġ ċar minn stqarrija tal-Kanċillier Awstrijakk Sebastian Kurz, li allega li xi pajjiżi Ewropej, inkluż Malta "kellhom ne-gozjati sigrieti" biex jiksbu aktar vaċċini għal kontra l-COVID-19. Fil-fatt, lill-ġurnalisti qalilhom li Malta u l-Olanda, irċievew aktar vaċċini ras għal ras meta mqabbla ma' pajjiżi oħrajn.

Saħansitra sostna li sa tmiem Lulju Malta kienet se tirċievi tliet darbiet vaċċin daqs li se tkun tirċievi l-Bulgarija. Kurz, appella għat-trasparenza fost il-pajjiżi Ewropej meta jkun diskuss it-tqassim tad-dożi.

Id-Deputat Prim Ministru Chris Fearne, mill-ewwel ċahad l-allegazzjoni tal-Kanċillier Awstrijakk, u qal li l-ammonti ta' dożi li jiehdu l-pajjiżi jgħaddi minn skrutinju siħ u huwa maqbul mill-Membri Stati kollha.

Attwalment skont dak li deher fl-istampa jidher li l-pajjiżi tal-Unjoni Ewropeja ngħataw iċ-ċans li jinnegozjaw biex jiksbu aktar dożi milli kien allokat lilhom inizjalment u fil-waqt li Malta għamlet dan l-Awstrija baqgħet lura.

Dan ġie kkonfermat għax ftit wara l-istqarrija tal-Kanċillier



Il-Mnstru Chris Fearne (fuq) u l-Kanċillier Sebastian Kurz

ħarġet l-aħbar li l-uffiċjal Awstrijakk, li kien inkarigat min-negozjar għall-kisba tal-vaċċin, irriżenja għax jidher li ma kienx ħataf l-oportunità li bħal Malta jiddiskuti biex jikseb aktar dożi għal pajjiżu.

U nahseb li l-Kanċillier Awstrijakk kellu għaliex jipprova jgħatti xtur meta wiehed jiehu f'kunsiderazzjoni li sa dakinhar li tkellem Kurz, pajjiżu kien għadu biss laqqam 8.4% tal-popolazzjoni meta Malta kienet laqqmet 18.3%.



Zwigijiet ċivili u bir-rit reliġjuż fis-seba' snin bejn l-2013 u l-2020

Min qara dwar, jew jiftakar isewwa l-hamsinijiet u s-sittinijiet, żgur jaf li wiehed mill-punti ewlenin li dwaru ma kienux jaqblu l-Knisja u l-Partit Laburista kien iż-żwieġ ċivili. Minn dak iż-żmien l-istampa inbidlet u ż-żwieġ ċivili mhux talli daħal f'Malta, iżda wkoll ma baqax dak it-*taboo* li kien darba.

Maż-żmien dan indara sew. tant li issa wasalna f'punt li tant kiseb popolarità li mill-aħħar figuri li ħargu minn mistoqsija Parlamentari jidher li mill-2013 sal-llum fil-Gżejjer Maltin l-ġadd ta' żwigijiet ċivili kien akbar sew minn dak taż-żwigijiet bir-rit reliġjuż.

Madanakollu fejn jidhol żwieġ

fejn il-koppji huma t-tnejn Maltin iż-żwieġ bil-Knisja xorta għadu jiddomina. Tant li mill-2013 'l hawn, kien hemm 10,058 żwieġ ċivili rreġistrat f'Malta. Minn-hom hemm 7,890 żwieġ ċivili fejn parti mill-koppja jew iż-żewġ partijiet huma ta' nazzjonalità barranija.

Fl-istess seba' snin kien hemm 8,895 żwieġ reliġjuż li f'989 minnhom kien hemm parti mill-koppja jew iż-żewġ partijiet li kienu ta' nazzjonalità barranija.

Matul l-istess perjodu kien hemm ukoll 192 unjoni ċivili rreġistrati f'Malta li 135 minnhom, parti mill-koppja jew iż-żewġ partijiet huma ta' nazzjonalità barranija.

Mix-xena tal-ħajja Maltija

minn Ġużè Camilleri



Il-Kappillan Dun Marc Andre Camilleri (xellug) u L-Isqof Awzilarju Joe Galea Curmi

Il-Koħħu

Il-Koħħu huwa laqam li dan l-aħħar issemma' hafna u biex ngħidu hekk qiegħed fuq ilsien bosta nies. Hu l-laqam ta' Vince Muscat wiehed mill-mixlija tal-qtil ta' Daphne Caruana Galizia, u li dan l-aħħar ammetta l-kompliċirā tiegħu fil-qtil bil-patt li jitla' jixhed u jgħid dak li jaf dwar diversi atti kriminali nkluż lil-qtil ta' DCG u ta' eks avukat sentejn qabel.

Ix-xhieda tiegħu qed tiġbed l-attenzjoni tal-istampa u tal-poplu, imma dak li l-aktar qed iqajjem kurżita' u diskussjoni huwa l-hekk imsejjah element politiku billi fix-xhieda tiegħu dwar il-qtil ta' DCG, implika, fost l-oħrajn, lill-eks Ministru Chris Cardona.

Hu veru li f'hafna mix-xhieda tiegħu dwar Cardona ma kienetx dak li ra hu, imma dak li ntqal lilu, imma xorta dan poġġa dell fuq Cardona, li mmedjatament ċaħad dak li ntqal dwaru.



Il-Koħħu

Imma d-diskussjoni baqgħet u sintendi fil-logħba politika ġie mdeffes mhux hu biss imma anke il-Partit Laburista.

U biex il-borma tkompli tithawwad, il-Koħħu, semma wkoll li meta kienet saret serqa kbira mill-HSBC kien imdaħħal ukoll persuna li llum hu Ministru. Dan sintendi wassal għal aktar kritika u allegazzjonijiet ta' kriminalità' eċċ, tant li meta l-Prim Ministru ġie mistoqsi dwar il-każ qal li kien talab lill-Kummissarju tal-Gulizija biex jindaga dwar din l-allegazzjoni, l-aktar u aktar talli filwaqt li issemma Cardona il-Koħħu ma' semmix min kien il-Ministru li skont hu kien imdaħħal fis-serqa.

Sadaniant l-Prim Ministru qal li ma kienx se jiehu l-ebda passi qabel jiġi żvelat l-isem tal-Ministru, xi haġa li dan ix-xhud jidher li ma jridx jagħmel.

Insomma aktar ma jgħaddi ż-żmien aktar il-kobba żżid tithabbel.

Kappillan jirribella

Fl-istess jum li l-Gvern f'Malta dahhal il-miżuri godda dwar l-imxija COVID-19, il-Kurja wkoll hadet passi biex kemm jista' jkun tnaqqas iċ-ċans li n-nies jiltaqgħu u tiġi evitata l-pandemija. Għalhekk ordnat li filwaqt li l-knejjes xorta jistgħu jifih f'xi hinijiet, imma jridu jibqgħu jinżammu l-miżuri ta' mitigazzjoni.

Għalkemm persuni jistgħu jagħmlu mument ta' talb personali fil-Knisja, m'għandux isir talb organizzat u saħansitra twaqqaf il-quddies.

Dawn il-passi ma niżlux tajjeb ma xi nies fosthom il-Kappillan ta' Raħal Ġdid Dun Marc André Camilleri. Tant li dan ġie rrap-

purtat li kiteb lill-Kurja juri li ma kienx jaqbel mad-deċiżjonijiet tal-Kurja fosthom li jitwaqqaf il-quddies. Fost kollox kiteb li bil-miżuri preżenti n-nies mhux se jittqarbn, u se jkun ifisser kif se jintbagħat messagg li l-membri tal-Kleru huma privileġġati.

"Kif se nwiegħu lin-nies li qed jitolbuna biex jittqarbn? Li l-kleru għandu l-privileġġ li jittqarben, u l-poplu jittqarben minn fuq it-televixin?", staqsa.

Ilmenta li hu sar jaf bl-aħbar tal-gheluq tal-knejjes wara li sema' lill-Ministru tas-Saħħa jgħid dan waqt f'konferenza tal-aħbarijiet u semgħu jgħid li kien tkellem mal-Arċisqof dwar hekk.

Hawn Marc André staqsa lill-Awtoritajiet Ekkleżjastiċi jekk hu, bħala Kappillan hux stmat, u sa talab biex tal-Kurja jieqfu jgħaduh biż-żmien. Qal li jekk ma kienux se jwiegħbuh għall-argumenti tiegħu kien se jirrangħa hu.

Għal dan pront wiegħu l-Isqof Awzilarju u id il-leminija tal-Arċisqof Charles Scicluna Joe Galea Curmi li qal lill-Kappillan ta' Raħal Ġdid li le, ma jirrangħax differenti minn dak li ddeċieda l-Arċisqof ta' Malta.

Jiżdiedu kemm il-multi u wkoll is-sorveljanza

Ilment li wiehed jisma' ta' sikwit, hu dak li, iwa veru li għandna l-ligijiet, imma meta niġu biex nimplimentawhom ma niehdux l-affarijiet bis-serjetà.

Dan l-ilment issemma' hafna drabi matul dawn ix-xhur tal-imxija l-aktar meta bdew jiżdiedu l-ghadd tal-infezzjonijiet, li hafna jagħtu tort għalihom għal-laxkezza u l-irresponsabbiltà ta' xi wħud.

Filwaqt li l-maġġoranza tan-nies kienu qed jimxu mal-miżuri, kellek dik il-minoranza li ma thabbilx rasha u tiġi u taqa' u tqum mill-miżuri, bir-riżultat li kienu qed jgħinu fit-tixrid tal-infezzjonijiet.

Jidher li l-Awtoritajiet semgħu dawn l-ilmenti għax mhux biss ždiedu l-multi għal min jikser dawn ir-regolamenti, imma wkoll ždied aktar l-infurzar.

Attwalment fl-ewwel ġimgħa minn meta thabbu l-aħħar miżuri l-pulizija harget 750 multa u saħansitra ressqet fil-qorti raġel li ffalsifika test negattiv ta' COVID-19 biex jgħaddi mill-ajruport, u ġie mmultat €350.



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A quick glimpse at Australia



A happy Mark McGowan with his family after his party's victory in Western Australia

Labor crushes Liberals in WA election

It is a nightmare scenario for the Liberals. Voters in the west handed Labor a landslide victory unlike anything seen before and so comprehensively rejected the Liberal Party that it's now on the brink of extinction.

In the new State Parliament, Labor will hold at least 53 of the 59 seats and the Liberals just two, meaning the Nationals – which won four regional seats – will become the official opposition.

With a likely Labor majority in the Upper House, WA has virtually become a one-party state. Labor has almost three times the number of first-preference votes of the Liberal party.

No government in WA has enjoyed a parliamentary majority of such a scale. The huge win vindicates Mr McGowan's tough response to the COVID-19 pandemic, with voters ignoring a Liberal campaign against handing Labor "total control".

"The magnitude of what happened today is not lost on me," the 53-year-old premier said in his victory speech. With it comes great responsibility. We will continue to

deliver stable, competent, responsible and caring government for all West Australians, promise to work for everyone across Western Australia over these coming four years," he said.

He said the result, coming after the year of the pandemic, shows that resilience will be rewarded.

Federal Labor leader Anthony Albanese described Mark McGowan's landslide victory as "quite extraordinary" and said it was not just about how WA Labor has handled the pandemic with its stiff border closure.

"It's about the way WA Labor have run the economy, they have produced surpluses, they have created jobs and they have kept West Australians safe," Mr Albanese said.

Opposition Leader Zak Kirkup called Mr McGowan within two hours of polls closing to formally concede. Mr Kirkup is the first WA Liberal leader to lose his seat since the 1930s and has reiterated that he will not seek re-election at a state or federal level.

Backing the AstraZenca vaccine

Australian politicians and health experts say they remain confident in the country's rollout of the AstraZeneca coronavirus vaccine, despite several European countries halting the jab over safety concerns.

But Australia's Chief Medical Officer Paul Kelly said he remains "absolutely confident" the AstraZeneca vaccine is safe and that there is currently no evidence it causes blood clots.

AstraZeneca will be Australia's main COVID-19 vaccine, with CSL's Melbourne plant expected to start its rolling supply from next week, gearing up to produce one million doses each week.

Professor Kelly told reporters while authorities are closely monitoring the situation, there is no need to pause Australia's rollout.

"I want to make it very clear that here in Australia safety is our first priority. And in any large vaccine rollout, we do expect to see unusual events, and we monitor very closely and carefully for those," he said.

Professor Kelly explained that blood clots are fairly common in Australia – with about 17,000 cases each year – and it's expected they could occur around the time of vaccinations.

"But from my perspective, I do not see that there is any specific link between the AstraZeneca vaccine and blood clots," he said.



Jessica jailed for 21 years for murdering mum



Jessica Camilleri, 27 years (left) was jailed for a maximum of 21 years and seven months for decapitating her mother Rita Camilleri at her home in the suburb of St Clair NSW in what Justice Helen Wilson described as a crime of "extraordinary viciousness and brutality". Camilleri stabbed her mother more than 200 times with seven knives, decapitating her.

A jury ruled Jessica's crime was manslaughter because of an inability to control herself due to her multiple mental health conditions. But the judge said Camilleri knew

what she was doing was wrong.

The court heard Mrs Rita Camilleri had done everything she could to help her daughter, who refused to take any prescribed medication from about three months before the killing.

At a sentence hearing, Mrs Camilleri's other daughter Kristy Torrisi described her sister as selfish. "She preferred the attention her behaviour attracted instead," Ms Torrisi said. "It was her own choices in refusing the help that led her here".



A quick glimpse at Australia

Religious groups on climate change

Leaders of Islam, Judaism, Buddhism and various Christian denominations will take part in the series of actions around the country, which will also include silent protests outside the offices of senior government figures.

Anglican Bishop Philip Huggins, President of the National Council of Churches in Australia, said leaders of all faiths were speaking with a common voice out of their shared value of compassion.

"God gives us the opportunity and responsibility to look after this beautiful planet and this beautiful creation. So out of my faith I want to make sure we look after this planet and make sure it's available for the next generation and protect the biodiversity," he said.

"It's a matter of shared compassion. We have compassion for each other and compassion for biodiversity and species, from the koala to the coral reef, to ensure we get to net zero emissions hopefully by 2030 and call on our PM to set the target and inspire our best."

Prime Minister Scott Morrison previously said Australia should get to net zero emissions "as soon as possible" and preferably by 2050, but has not moved to formally legislate the target.

All states and territories in Australia have a formal target of reaching net zero emissions by 2050 or sooner.



New secretary-general for the OECD

Ex-Senator Mathias Cormann has been elected the next secretary-general of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

The former Australian finance minister was named the winner, according to reports, beating nine other candidates in a battle that came down to the wire as he went head-to-head with former European Union trade

commissioner Cecilia Malmstrom.

His bid for the job has been deeply controversial, with environmental groups and activists banding together to stop him.

The Australian described it as a "stunning diplomatic coup" with the win coming after lobbying from Prime Minister Scott Morrison and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

Hoping to protect other women



Speaking at one of several March4Justice rallies held around the country, Ms Brittany Higgins said her former bosses had downplayed her lived experience and she felt like a "political problem" when she went public with allegations about being raped in Parliament House, Canberra.

She said she came forward in the hopes of protecting other women, and it was time for politicians from all parties to stop "sidestepping accountability" and address gendered violence.

Former Liberal staffer Brittany Higgins has questioned whether politicians can be trusted to address sexual harassment and assault in the community "if they aren't committed to addressing these issues in their own offices".

At the Hobart, Tasmania March4Justice rally, Australian of the Year Grace Tame welcomed the "paradigm shift" in normalising conversations around sexual abuse.

She called for attendees to take action

and stand up to abuse when they saw it, saying an individual person's contribution can have a powerful domino effect.

International Travel

The Australian federal government recently extended the existing emergency period by three months until June 17, meaning international travel will remain off-limits for those who don't qualify for an exemption until the middle of the year, at the earliest.

The Department of Health said the government's expectation is that while COVID-19 continues to pose a significant threat to public health around the world, people coming to Australia will need to undertake "appropriate risk mitigations".

While that strategy includes immunisations, the government does not view the vaccine as a "panacea or a complete substitute for other public health interventions, but rather a supplementary measure."



Michelle Rowland MP

Shadow Minister for Communications
Federal Member for Greenway



Level 1. Suite 101C, 130 Main Street, Blacktown

PO Box 8525, Blacktown NSW 2148

(02) 9671 4780

Michelle.Rowland.MP@aph.gov.au

MRRowlandMP

www.michellerowland.com.au

Tagħrif dwar il-kitba Maltija u dawk li matul is-sekli ħadmu għall-iżvilupp tal-ilsien Malti

Il-kittieb, persunaġġ tal-lum ma setax kellu ħajja aktar imżewġa u kkulurita. Iddistingwa ruħu f'għadd ta' oqsma, u mhux faċli tgħid f'liema l-aktar li għamel isem. Anton Buttigieg mhux biss kien kittieb u poeta, imma wkoll poli-

tiku ta' ċerta stoffa. Għadda minn esperjenzi li sawwruh, uħud minnhom li kienu anke ta' dieqa; u ġie msejjah jimla karigi importanti fil-politika, fi żmienijiet diffiċli. u finalment laħaq ukoll President ta' Malta.

ANTON BUTTIĠIEĠ – Għawdxi u kittieb mahtur President ta' Malta

Għalkemm għex hafna minn ħajtu fil-Hamrun, Anton Buttigieg dejjem kien kburi li kien Għawdxi, imwieled fil-Qala, fid-19 ta' Frar, 1912 it-tielet wild ta' Salvatore u Koncetta (née Falzon).

Sa mill-ewwel snin tiegħu fl-iskola primarja tal-istess raħal kien juri li kellu karattru mogħni b'ċerta intelligenza u hadd ma kien sorpriz li għadda biex ikompli l-erba' snin ta' wara (1923–1927) jistudja fis-Seminarju ta' Għawdex.

Wara niżel Malta fejn għal sentejn attenda l-Kulleġġ ta' San Alwiġi f'Birkirkara. Meta għadda mill-matrikola, wera x-xewqa li jidhol l-Università bil-ħsieb li jsir avukat. Imma l-ġenituri tiegħu xtaqu li iwa jattendi l-Università, imma bil-kundizzjoni li jkompli jistudja biex jilħaq qassis. Anke jekk kontra qalbu, Anton aċċetta t-talba tal-ġenituri li jibda l-kors għas-saċerdozju.

Hu daħal l-Università fl-1930 u wara erba' snin iggradwa fil-bachelor tal-Arti (BA). Imma hass li ma kienx imsejjah għal qassis, allura bidel il-kors biex kompli għal avukat. Fl-1939 l-ewwel laħaq nutar u s-sena ta' wara, fl-24 ta' Ġunju 1940, kiseb il-lawrja ta' avukat.

Fl-istudji tiegħu kien jiddistingwi ruħu fit-tagħlim l-aktar fl-Ilsien Taljan, u fl-1938 kien diġà ippubbliku l-ewwel kitba tiegħu bl-isem ta' *L'insegnamento dei Sepolcri* fir-rivista tal-Kulleġġ ta' San Alwiġi. Imbagħad sena wara beda jipubblika l-poeziji fil-Pronostku Malti u rebah is-sitt premju bil-poezija "Sajf".

Fl-università Anton kien attiv hafna, u flimkien ma' Gużè Bonnici u Rużar Briffa fl-1931 kienu membri fundaturi tal-Għaqda tal-Malti. Fost l-istudenti kien hemm ukoll Sir Anthony Mamo, aktar tard mahtur l-ewwel President ta' Malta.

Fl-istess sena Anton kien fost il-fundaturi tal-Għaqda Letterarja tal-Ingliz, u wara s-Società Universitaria di Letteratura Italiana.

Għal xi zmien wara li spiċċa l-istudji tiegħu Anton serva bħala spettur fil-Korp tal-Pulizija u matul it-Tieni Gwerra Dinjija ġie stazzjonat fl-għassa tal-Hamrun. Bejn l-1944 u l-1948 kien ukoll ġurnalista mal-Allied Malta Newspapers Limited, inkarigat mir-rapporti tal-kawzi fil-Qorti. Għamel ukoll sentejn jieh u ħsieb l-editorjali ta' *The Times of Malta*, u fl-1955 għamel zmien iservi bħala agent Maġistrat.

Sadanittant, fl-1944 iżżewweġ lil Censina Bezzina u kellhom tliet ulied, lil John, Rose u Emanuel. Sfortunatament martu mietet disa' snin wara u hallietu armel bit-tlett itfal. Fl-1953 reġa' żżewweġ, lil Connie Scicluna, li wkoll mitietlu tliet snin wara f'incident tat-traffiku f'Londra.

Fl-1975 iżżewweġ għat-tielet u l-aħhar darba, lill-Iskoċċoza Margery Helen Patterson.

Anton Buttigieg beda juri interess qawwi fil-politika u fl-1955 beda l-karriera politika. Wara li kkandidata ruħu mal-Partit Laburista taħt it-tmexxija tal-Perit Duminku Mintoff, ġie elett fl-Assemblea Legislattiva u baqa' jikkontesta u jiġi elett f'kull elezzjoni ta' wara biex jirrappreżenta lill-poplu fil-Parlament. Dam jagħmel dan sakemm irriżenja f'October 1976.

Fl-1958 ġie magħżul bħala delegat tal-Konferenzi Kostituzzjonali ta' Malta li kienu saru f'Londra, u baqa' jokkupa l-pożizzjoni għal sitt snin, sal-1964.

Bejn l-1959 l-1961 mela l-kariga ta' president tal-Partit Laburista, u bejn l-1962 u l-1976 laħaq Deputat Mexxej tal-istess partit. Meta l-Partit rebah l-elezzjoni tal-1971 serva għal erba' snin bħala Deputat Prim Ministru u Ministru tal-Gustizzja u l-Affarijiet Parlamentari fil-gvern immexxi mill-Perit Duminku Mintoff.

Sadanittant, għal 11-il sena, bejn l-1959 u l-1970 serva fil-hatra ta' editor tal-gazzetta tal-Partit Laburista, *The Voice of Malta*.

Sena wara t-tielet żwieġ tiegħu, f'Ottubru tal-1976 Anton irriżenja mill-Kamra tar-Rappreżentanti biex xahrejn wara, fis-27 ta' Diċembru ġie magħżul fl-ogħla kariga tal-pajjiż u sar it-tieni President tar-Repubblika ta' Malta. Kienet kariga li dam jokkupa sas-27 ta' Diċembru tal-1981.

Tul iż-żmien tiegħu bħala President, huwa wera karizma kbira u kien dejjem jishaq dwar il-htieġa li l-poplu kellu jibqa' magħqud u jgħix fis-sliem. F'din l-ogħla kariga tal-istat, dejjem żamm għoli d-dinjità xierqa.



Minbarra l-għamel isem fi-politika, Anton Buttigieg jibqa' wkoll magħruf bħala kittieb u bħala l-Poeta tan-Natura. Fid-diskorsi tiegħu dejjem kien jipprova jdaħhal siltiet poetiċi li tant kien iħobb.

Qatt ma warab il-kitba u ippubblika hafna mix-xogħlijiet tiegħu li fihom kien jipprova jdaħhal anke l-poezija, l-aktar fil-kotba, *Mill-Gallerija ta' Żoġġiti*, *Fanali bil-Lejl*, *Qasba mar-Rih*, *Il-Muża bil-Kimono*, *Fl-Arena* u *Ballati Maltin*.

Kellu wkoll lil-hila li jġieghel lil min jibbissem b'limerikki u poezij li kienu jinżlu għasel ma' min jaqrahom jew jismagħhom. Fost dawn wiehed ta' min isemmi, *Ejjew nidhku f'it* (fl-1963), u *Ejjew nidhku f'it iehor* (1966).

Kellu wkoll kitbiet li ġew tradotti f'isla barranin oħra, fosthom *Il-Muża bil-Kimono* (1968), fil-Ġappuniż u fl-Ingiż.

Anton Buttigieg miet nhar il-5 ta' Mejju 1983 fl-età ta' 71 sena. Kien Inghata funerals statali. Huwa ġie midfun fiċ-ċimiterju tal-Addolorata.

Huwa mfakkar ukoll f'monument li ġie inawgurat f'għieħ fil-Blata l-Bajda fil-5 ta' Mejju 1985. Skulturi tiegħu jinsabu wkoll fil-Qala f'Għawdex u fil-Ġonna ta' Sant'Anton, ma' tal-Presidenti l-oħra.



Kerċem ifakkar lil San Girgor il-Kbir

It-12 ta' Marzu huwa l-jum li l-anzjani Għawdxin jiftakruh b'hafna nostalgija. F'dan il-jum il-poplu Għawdxin ngħaqad f'pellegrinagg penitenzjali mill-Knisja Katidrali lejn il-Knisja Parrokkjali ta' Kerċem, iddedikata lil Madonna tas-Sokkors u lil San Girgor il-Kbir, li l-knisja madwar id-dinja kollha tiddedika dan il-jum għalih. Kien miet f'dal-jum 604 snin ilu.

Minhabba s-sitwazzjoni u r-restrizzjonijiet tal-pandemija l-festi li kellhom isiru fir-rahall ta' Kerċem thassru, imma

f'dan il-jum, il-Kerċmin kienu nistiedna jżuru s-Santwarju Parrokkjali fejn kien hemm Gesu' Espot u l-Patrun tal-Kerċmin San Girgor il-Kbir fuq il-Presbiterju qrib l-altar.

Il-Kappillan Dun Brian Mejlak li mexxa t-talb lissen "...ejjew illum nixtehtu għarkubtejna quddiem il-Mulej Gesu' Haj fl-Ewkaristija u nitolbuh biex bl-interċessjoni tal-Papa San Girgor il-Kbir ikollu hniena minna u jehlisna minn din il-pandemija. San Girgor il-Kbir itlob għalina, għall-familja tagħna, għall-parroċċa

tagħna, għal pajjiż-na..."

Sadattant Il-Gozo Crafty Ladies ta' Kerċem, hadu l-inizzjattiva biex isebbhu iz-zuntier tas-Santwarju b'dak imsejjah il-Cross of Hope! Is-Salib tal-Mulej (*fuq*). Dan hu Salib tal-metall miksi b'xogħol tar-rakkmu u mzejjjen bi fjuri magħmula mis-suf.

Hafna żejnu it-twieqi tad-djar tagħhom anke bi kwadri u statwi ta' San Girgor, bħattieqa tad-dar tal-familja ta' Pawlu Mizzi (*fuq lemin*)



Mill-Gżira Għawdxija

Charles Spiteri



Ftit tal-jiem ilul-Assoċjazzjoni tat-Turiżmu Għawdxija (GTA) organizzat it-22 laqgħa ġenerali li minhabba l-imxija saret b'mod virtwali b'agenda li kienet ristretta għal parti statutorja skont kif jitlob l-istatut u kienet tinkludi messaġġ ta' introduzzjoni miċ-chairman Paul Scicluna, ir-rapport finanzjarju u r-rapport amministrattiv mill-Kap Eżekuttiv Joe Muscat.

Għal-laqgħa kienu preżenti diversi membri tal-għaqda mid-diversi setturi tat-turiżmu fosthom lukandi, ristoranti, diving, attrazzjonijiet turistici, operatori turistici, trasport, *self catering*, u *real estates*.

Fl-introduzzjoni tiegħu s-Sur Scicluna saħaq li s-settur tat-turiżmu huwa wiehed mill-aktar setturi effettwati mill-pandemija u semma l-inċertezzi dwar il-gejjieni tat-turiżmu f'pajjiżna, l-aktar fl-ewwel zewġ kwarti tal-2021.

Il-laqgħa ġenerali tal-GTA waqt l-imxija



A band that bonds us together



Ron Borg

On Sunday February 21, the Maltese Queen of Victories Band celebrated its 40th anniversary with a reunion luncheon at the Lockleys parish hall in Adelaide that has been adopted by the Maltese community for several years and every Wednesday night is also the weekly band rehearsal spot. The occasion was much sought after as the hall was packed to the brim within the allowed COVID-19 restrictions.

The Band committee provided a three-course meal and all the musicians and helpers were pleased with the little gift presented to each of them as a token of appreciation for their commitments.

The hall was adorned with collages and memorabilia of the band's history, but the focal point in the afternoon was the PowerPoint presentation of memories preserved on photos that were projected onto a screen continuously throughout the event.

This presentation, which was assembled by one of our most arduous bandsman Ray Grima told the story, in pictorial form, of the band from its inauguration in 1981 till now. Ray conjured photos from "every corner of the earth" including a loud cry for assistance on Facebook.

It had a resounding response as the musicians and friends that we had not heard from in ages came out of the woodwork with a fantastic array of photographs from the past. By itself this reaction exhibited the bond that still exists even with members that are not still actively involved in the band.

Many former bandsmen (and women!) congregated in groups reminiscing over the views were heard laughing and spinning yarns about their many performances at the numerous Maltese 'Festas', such as *Il-Vitorja*, *Santa Katerina*, *l'Imnarja*, *Il-Gimgha l-Kbira*,



Our Lady Queen of Victories feast in the early years

40th anniversary of Maltese Queen of Victories Band in South Australia

and those of St Peter in Chains, San Gaetanu, and Santa Maria.

However, these members relished the 'Brijju' at the end of each feast and at the 'Ballu tal-Festa', a time where they could all let their hair down and enjoy playing music 'informally' while they got showered with shredded paper confetti from the flag-waving, dancing and

frolicking audiences around them, especially while singing "Ma taghmli xejn mal-festa taghna".

They were such jubilant times for the members who were only young teenagers at the time, yet here they were, 40 years later enjoying these memories with their children, and with their grandchildren by their side! Indeed, what happy bonding!

was emphasised by

The busloads of interstate visitors that accompanied the bands that performed at the Adelaide feasts were emphasised by the happy atmosphere at these feasts. It was such a beautiful and glorious sight to watch the religious processions in the streets led by the array of Maltese societies' flag-bearers and children in their communion dress, following the Maltese Own Band of Victoria (MOBV) ahead of the clergy and statue and followed by the Adelaide band.

People living in these streets used to come out to watch the procession and walk in awe and admiration of this beautiful display of our religious and Maltese heritage! Our band was the catalyst of our bond with our religious and heritage sharing it with our Victorian neighbours!

The complimentary messages sent from the MOBV and MMG that were read out at this band's anniversary celebration, were an open testimonial with our fellow interstate friends and bandsmen! No wonder our bandsmen relished our visits to Melbourne to perform at the Maltese feasts over there. The festa organisers always treated us and the host band with great hospitality.

Our bandsmen delightfully intermingled with our Victorian counterparts, and the biggest 'Buzz' came toward the end of the Festa, when the red and the blue hats and ties would be exchanged, and the bands would combine (about 100 bandsmen) to pour their hearts out playing the 'Brijju' marches to the joy of the festa revellers.

**Continued on opposite page*



President Joe Camilleri and Kate Cassar presenting a gift to sax player David Baldacchino



40th anniversary of Maltese Queen of Victories Band in South Australia

**from opposite page*

It was an awesome feeling, to end up playing the soulful 'Ave Maria' for the festa's finale! Wow! It would be remiss of me not to mention that the MOBV was our sister and right arm in our early formation. In fact, even our band hymn was composed and donated by their then conductor Mro Joe Muscat (RIP).

Our band is named after "Our Lady Queen of Victories", consequently it participates in many religious occasions. One of the most prominent was its participation at the Pope Paul's visit to Adelaide in November 1986 in the presence of 180,000 people.

It was an honour for our band to be invited to perform on

such an auspicious occasion. On that occasion we also acted as good ambassadors for the Maltese Community in South Australia.

There are also several other performances during religious feasts for the Italian Community, as just like the Maltese feasts in Malta, the Italians in SA also have theirs. La Banda Maltese, as it is called in Italian, is usually invited to participate at such feasts, in processions, or in concerts.

I am proud to say that even when there was an Italian band in existence in SA, the Maltese band was frequently asked to perform in preference! We are well respected and admired by the Italian Community and a firm bond exists between us.

We have participated at sev-

eral state functions. Our band has been invited to perform whenever any Maltese dignitaries visit our state from Malta.

They in turn acknowledge and appreciate our band. Much to the pleasure and pride of our Maltese community, the band has always given a good acquittal of itself when invited for in State public performances such as, SA 150 m year Jubilee, Ethnic Children's, Parade, VE Day, VN Holden Release, and others.

It also has annual commitments to perform on special days and most recently it performed for 'The Cessation of the Conflict in Korea' in the presence of the Governor General.

Returned servicemen all

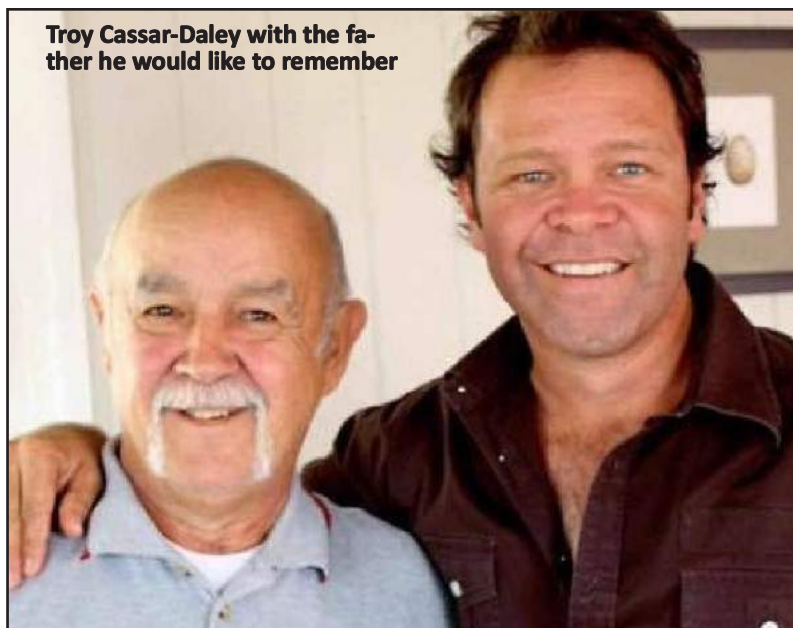
made several complimentary comments on the Maltese here in Australia today and during the war, an affirmation of the band is a catalyst in the friendship between the Maltese community and the Aussie public!

There have been other performances that I have omitted. I am convinced that we can be proud of the fact that this band has forged a bond between those who participated in it, as well as those who never did.

Happy 40th anniversary to the Maltese Queen of Victories Band of South Australia

Pictures top show: the band playing on top of a roofless bus (top left); and enjoying itself on the march making 'bri-ju' (merry) under a rain of confetti

Troy Cassar-Daley shares the sorrow of his dad's death in new album



Troy Cassar-Daley with the father he would like to remember

Troy Cassar Daley, the award-winner and popular Australian singer, has never cried so much while recording the songs for his new album *The World Today*. Losing his Maltese dad Tony who took his own life after suffering two strokes in 2019, was hard enough, but "COVID-19 was a darkness I did not need" he said.

Revealing the heartbreak of losing his dad in this way, and talking about it, the country music star, now 30 years into his career and three decades into his marriage to Laurel Edwards, a radio announcer said, "I felt angry with myself at first for not understanding what my dad had been going through.

"I thought I could have read that better. . .but you can't. He had a couple of strokes. He just was not the same person, and I didn't get that. I saw it when sitting with him in Liverpool hospital. I thought he was sick, but that he could get better", he said.

In his latest song, Tony wants to highlight as well the scourge of indigenous incarceration in Australia and the realities of life after prison.



The entrance to the hotel with the flags of the Commonwealth nations

Malta, Turkey in joint research

A collaboration between Malta and Turkey, is the first of its kind, will see the financing of two joint research projects between researchers from Malta and Turkey will come together for the first time to collaborate on two joint research projects by the two countries.

The Malta Council for Science and Technology (MCST) and the Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TÜBİTAK) will jointly finance €400,000 for research and innovation projects to strengthen the R&I capacities in the fields of water management, farming systems and agro-food value chains.

The call is an integral part of the Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area (PRIMA), which brings together 19 countries from the Mediterranean region and Europe. It will be the most ambitious joint programme to be undertaken in the frame of Euro-Mediterranean co-operation.

The call for joint Maltese-Turkish projects was been issued on March 1 and close on June 17. Meanwhile, the two authorities are engaging in further technical discussions to strengthen the collaboration between the two parties.

In a joint virtual event, Minister for Research, Innovation and the Co-ordination of Post COVID-19 Strategy Owen Bonnici praised the sterling work undertaken between MCST and TÜBİTAK in terms of this collaboration. He said that the Mediterranean area is crucial for Malta, and that, through these projects, the co-operation between Malta and Turkey will also improve.

He said that this endeavour will also assist researchers and innovators from both countries to strengthen their scientific expertise and network, enabling them to collaborate further in future annual PRIMA Calls.

Commonwealth Day celebrated in Sydney – Malta represented

Malta participated in the celebrations marking Commonwealth Day, the annual celebration of Nations, at a Gala Luncheon at a hotel in Sydney, NSW. The event that was held on March 8 was hosted by the Hon John Ajaka, President of the Legislative Council and the Hon Jonathan O'Dea, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly in the presence of Her Excellency The Honourable Margaret Beazley AC QC, Governor of New South Wales.

Lawrence Buhagiar, the Consul General in NSW, represented Malta, one of the 54 member countries in the Commonwealth, and the country's national flag was prominently positioned at the entrance of the Hotel.

Her Excellency Margaret Beazley, read out a message by HM the Queen as head of the Commonwealth, and Commissioner Shane Fitzsimmons, who was in charge of coordinating the rescue operations and fire fighting during the 2019–2020 bushfires in NSW delivered an interest-

ing speech.

Although Commonwealth Day is not observed as a public holiday in Australia, several regional public holidays coincide with this day: Canberra Day in the Australian Capital Territory, Labour Day in Victoria, Adelaide Cup Day in South Australia, and Eight-hour Day in Tasmania. In 2006 Queen Elizabeth II delivered her Commonwealth Day address from St. Andrew's Cathedral,

Sydney, New South Wales, Australia; this formed part of the lead-up to the 2006 Commonwealth Games in Melbourne.

Dr Joseph Muscat, former Prime Minister of Malta, was chair-in-office of the Commonwealth of Nations (CHOGM) from 27th November 2015 to 19th April 2018 and in his capacity, in March 2018 attended the Commonwealth Games that were held in Brisbane, Queensland.

Lawrence Buhagiar, the Consul General of Malta in NSW (front fourth from right) with other diplomats representing their countries on Commonwealth Day in Sydney



The Voice is not just a news portal: We comment. we fight for your rights. We believe in freedom of expression: We are read in the right places.

Community News

Tune in to Radio and Television

MELBOURNE: on 3ZZZ 92.3FM or on www.3zzz.com.au. Mondays 5-6 pm, Fridays 5-6 pm and Saturdays 10-11am.

MELBOURNE: on 98.9 North West FM, every Friday 6.00 - 7.00p.m. and Mondays 7.00 to 8.00pm. Presenter: Emmanuel Brincat.

On SBS Radio

Day Time Analogue and Digital Tuesdays and Fridays: 12:00-13:00 97.7fm SBS 2.

To tune into digital radio you need a receiver or device with a DAB+ chip.

Tuning in is by station name not frequency. Digital radio can also be heard via digital TV.

SYDNEY: listen to the MCC radio programmes on 2GLF FM 89.3.

Isma' l-programm tar-radju bil-Malti mill-Kunsill Malti ta' NSW minn fuq l-istazzjon 2GLF 89.3FM. Also On De-



mand on l-Internet: www.893fm.com.au

On Demand: Ethnic Maltese Council 11am) Il-Ħadd 11.00 am: l-aħħar aħbarijiet minn Malta, mużika, tagħrif, kultura, avvizi u suġġetti ta' interess.

SBS Radio 2 on Channel 38. Programmes can be accessed online (live/catch up) at: sbs.com.au/maltese (mobile), using the SBS Radio app.

For television news from Malta - **SBS2 TV 32** (Viceland) on Thursdays and Sundays at 8am.

VIVA MALTA on COAST FM 96.3 Community Radio in Gosford Central Coast NSW. Aired on Thursdays every fortnight from 6 pm - 7 pm. Presenter: Nathalie Gatt.

Web streaming:

www.coastfm.org.au

SBS MALTESE NEWS: L-Aħbarijiet are now on SBSTV Viceland HD Channel 32 every Sunday at 8.00 a.m. and on Thursday at 8.00 a.m.

BRISBANE listen to the Maltese Programme on 4EB on Tuesdays 6.00 - 8.15am; Sundays 4.15pm to 5.15pm.

Maltese Community Radio Adelaide: Maltese Programmes on 5EBI 103.1fm: **Sunday:** 7.30am; **Monday:** 8.00 am; **Monday:** 6.00pm.

Contact: Bernadette Buhagiar: 0420 944 205. Email bernadettebuhagiar@gmail.com Ron Borg: 0418 843 850. Email ronborg@mac.com

97.9 FM Melton Tuesday Maltese Programme: 6.00 To 8.00 pm Presenter Miriam Vella

Programmes on 89.3 Fm 2GLF

A Solid Gold: music programme with English and Italian timeless favourites Fridays 11.00am to 1.00 pm.

Maltese voices: One hour of Maltese talent, songs from Maltese artists. Sundays @ 12.00 pm to 1.00 pm

Also listen on "Tune in" by downloading app and search for the station 2GLF ~ 89.3 Fm - by Marthese Caruana

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La Valette Social Centre

La Valette Social Centre Inc. 175 Walters Road, Blacktown Tel. 96225847

The Centre is now open again two days a week, Thursdays, Saturdays

The Centre is a registered Covid-Safe Venue and all special requirements are in force including social distancing, restricted numbers, temperature taking, patron register and Covid-Marshall.

Flexible Respite is operating normally but Centre-Based Respite is restricted due to low numbers that can be transported.

Charlie's Family Restaurant is open Thursdays and Saturdays for lunch and dinner.

Bocci pitches are operating again with some restrictions.

Bingo: Saturdays only at 8.00pm preceded by short Maltese movie at 7.30pm.

MASS: Thursday: 10.15am; Saturday: 5.30 p.m. (subject to availability of a priest.)

L-aħbarijiet tal-PBS (Malta)

Il-PBS ta' Malta tforni lill-SBS fl-Awstralja bis-servizz tal-aħbarijiet tagħha, imma l-qarrejja xorta huma mhegga biex jidhlu fil-website tal-istazzjon Malti: www.tvn.com.mt. għall-aħbarijiet kemm bil-Malti u bl-Ingliż.



National team in triple World Cup action



The Malta national football team will face Russia, Slovakia and Croatia in a triple-header at the end of this month in its first three 2022 World Cup European Group H Qualifiers starting on Wednesday March 24 at the Ta' Qali National Stadium. On the 27th it travels to Slovakia and three days later flies to Croatia. Slovenia and Cyprus are the other teams in Malta's group.

commitments, the national football team has been granted an exemption. The same exemptions have also been granted to other national sports organisations with international commitments.

However, all domestic team competitions in Malta and Gozo are temporarily suspended – effective from 11th March until 11th April. The qualifiers will be the first national team commitments since the positive UEFA Nations League group campaign in which Malta totalled nine points and finished second in its group.

'Football' gets 2020 awards

Malta's Football Head coach Devis Mangia (above) who guided Malta to seven consecutive positive results last year, won the Coach of the Year Award in the 2020 Malta Sports awards.

Football received two more recognitions when international footballer Haley Bugeja was named Sportswoman of the Year, and the women's national team won the Team Award in the virtual awards.

Meanwhile, Pool player Dejan Gech was chosen Sportsman of the Year.

The national team is being allowed to fulfil these commitments as a special concession as all organised sports, including the MFA competitions have been suspended until 11th April as a precautionary measure against the COVID-19 pandemic.

However, in view of the national teams' upcoming international matches that are scheduled for the final week of March, and the required preparations for these



Melita's Executive (From left): George Ellul, Marthese Ellul, David Frendo and Anthony Theuma

In the Eagles' den for a meeting

Entering Melita Stadium at Granville South NSW after a long time was tense. It was my second home for several years. We built this monument for the Maltese community from the ground up.

On numerous occasions the Melita Stadium attracted 8,000 or more spectators and the fanatical support of the Maltese. This recent visit was on a rainy Sunday morning on the 65th anniversary of the club's annual general meeting. Not the same enthusiasm as in those golden years but, nonetheless there is enough young blood to carry the club forward.

David Frendo, the re-elected club president proudly declared that the Melita name is the strength of our survival. Parramatta Melita Eagles Sports Club Ltd still have five more years on their lease on Melita stadium, and every effort is being made to strengthen the partnership with the Granville Football District Association, the arm that is presently running the soccer section.

It was hinted that another Maltese club is trying to introduce junior soccer, but Melita will stick to its roots and legacy without interfering with any others.

The executive committee composed of David Frendo as president, Anthony Theuma as secretary and Marthese Ellul as treasurer were re-elected unopposed to form the next executive committee.

The regular board members positions remain unchanged, with George Ellul, Ron Grima, Paul Buttigieg, Tony Buttigieg and Mark Tanti as directors.

LawrenceDimech

Eagles' Rd 3 clash washed out

Parramatta Melita Eagles' Round 3 NSW NPL4 game against Nepean FC scheduled for last Saturday at Melita Stadium was washed out, denying them the possibility of making it three wins on the trot.

The Eagles had managed to get maximum points from their first two matches. After beating Camden Tigers, they followed that up with a 3-1 resounding 3-1 win in Richmond against Hawkesbury City with goals by Matthew Joseph (26 mins), Milorad Cubrilo (47th) and Ali Dulleh (68th).

The hosts grabbed a consolation from a penalty (87th). otherwise keeper Nikola Bratic, kept them at bay with at least a dozen incredible saves



Football mourns loss of Hibs club president

During last week, Maltese football and Premier League club Hibernians in particular mourned the death of the Paolites' long-serving dedicated club President Tony Bezzina. He died on March 15 aged 72.

'Is-Sur Tony', as he was affectionately known, was the longest-serving president in the top division. He served the club for 43 years, since 1978 and in 2019 was honoured by the state for his sterling service to football with the Midalja għall-Qadi tar-Repubblika.

On the same day Maltese football also mourned Vincent Tabone, a long-serving member of the Valletta FC committee and club director. He was also aged 72.

The Cross start with win

George Cross kicked off their Victoria State League Division 1 State League 1 North-West season with a good first-up 2-0 win over Sydenham Park SC in front of a bumper crowd at the City Vista Court stadium.

Speedy winger Rhys Saunders scored a goal in each half to give his team the first three points of the season. George Cross were the more dominant team and deserved the victory against a side that is expected to be one of the challengers for the championship.