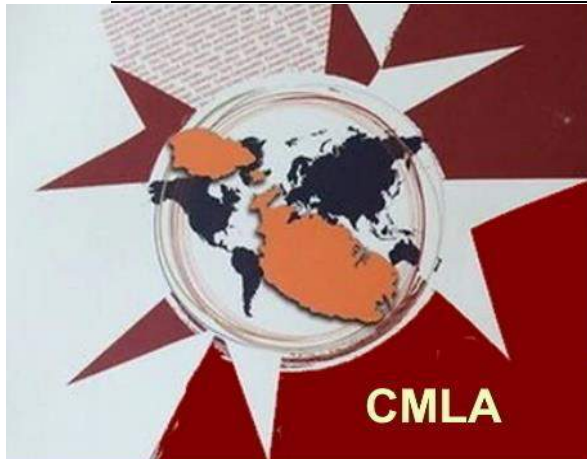


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MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER 367

April 2021



## Maltese eNewsletter

Journal of Maltese Living  
Abroad



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# JOE GAUCI



# #46

ADELAIDE UNITED



Louis D'Arrigo



JUM IL-HELSEN  
FREEDOM DAY



WE WISH  
OUR  
READERS  
A HAPPY  
EASTER

-  
L-GHID  
IT-TAJJEB  
LIL  
KULHADD

## Spitfires in Malta.



Source-Historynet





## Easter in Malta

**Atmosphere** Easter is a chance to dive into the [culture](#) of the Maltese islands and experience something very special. Eat, drink, dance and celebrate, join the street processions and enjoy the friendly jubilant Easter atmosphere. Malta loves to celebrate and generally does it in a colourful and joyous fashion.

Gozo is not just a weekend event, it is celebrated for whole week leading



**Holy Week** Easter in Malta and building up to Easter weekend. Starting on the Friday prior to [Good Friday](#), the Statue of Our Lady of Sorrows is carried in a procession through the streets of Valletta and many other small towns and villages. This starts off the celebrations for the Easter week.



**Maundy Thursday** [Maundy Thursday](#) – the eve of Good Friday. This is

when the 'seven visits' takes place, traditionally people visit seven different alters in seven different churches to pay homage to the Alter's of Repose. **Good Friday**

[Good Friday](#) is a day of mourning and can be a sombre day. [Churches](#) take down the



ornamental decorations and no bells are rung and then procession run through the streets of all towns and villages. Malta does have some special and spectacular processions particularly [Zebbug](#) which is renowned for its extravagance, use of horses and involves hundreds of cast members making this a big tourist attraction. In [Gozo](#) the most notable procession can be seen in [Xaghra](#).



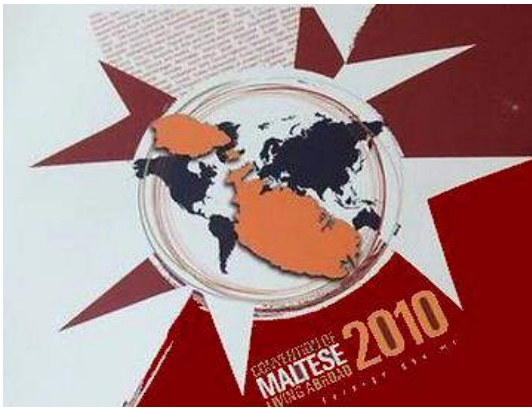
**Easter Sunday** While Saturday remains a slightly sombre moment, [Easter Sunday](#) is a real celebration day with Church bells ringing out and more spectacular processions where people line the streets carrying statues of the Risen Christ with bands playing festive tunes. Like the UK, Easter Sunday is quite a family oriented day, after the processions and celebrations families sit together for Sunday Lunch.

### Easter Eggs & Figolli

It wouldn't be Easter in the modern age without sweet treats. Easter Eggs are widely brought for children at Easter. The Maltese at Easter also have more traditional sweets, the most popular of these is known as 'figolli', an almond pastry covered in icing sugar in the shape of a rabbit, lamb, fish or heart.

Malta is well known for its [amazing bread](#) so this treat is not be missed. Qaghag tal-appostili which is literally translated as 'Apostles Bread Rings' which is sold and enjoyed during lent and for the traditional Easter lunch.





The Constitution of Malta was amended to “facilitate the participation of Maltese citizens who live abroad in the political, social, economic and cultural life of Malta”, according to a Bill to establish a council for Maltese living abroad which Parliament unanimously approved in 2011.

Introducing the Bill, the then deputy Prime Minister Tonio Borg said the council would give advice to the minister on any Bill that affected the rights, entitlements or interests of Maltese living abroad; budgetary and administrative measures affecting Maltese communities and any transmission on, and production of, public broadcasting services relating to programmes for Maltese living abroad.

The council IS MADE up of 17 members – 12 of whom would be appointed, two each from the states of Victoria and New South Wales in Australia, from the US, Canada, and EU countries. One member each would be appointed from among Maltese living in the UK and in any other state in Australia. The other five members of the council, who had to have specialised knowledge on emigration and related affairs, would be appointed by the Prime Minister in consultation with the Leader of the Opposition.

The Foreign Minister said the 2010 convention for Maltese living abroad had agreed on the setting up of a permanent mechanism that represented them and which was recognised by the State.

During the last 15 years, the government had given new importance to Maltese communities abroad and embarked on

## **THE BIRTH OF THE COUNCIL OF MALTESE LIVING ABROAD**

citizenship reforms that led to the end of discrimination between Maltese living here and those living in other countries.

The functions of the council includes monitoring the quality of life of Maltese living abroad; strengthening and cultivating ties between these communities and Malta’s political, cultural, economic and social life; ensuring effective protection of the rights of their rights and facilitating the maintenance of the cultural and linguistic identity of these communities.

The minister of Foreign Affairs would preside over the council but would have no power to vote. The council had to meet annually in Malta.

The Foreign Office would also have a director and desk officers responsible for these communities. The government was also considering holding the convention for Maltese living abroad every five instead of 10 years.

The government accepted the opposition’s suggestion to set up two registers – one for NGOs established outside Malta involved in the promotion and protection of the interests of Maltese living abroad, and another for prominent Maltese nationals living abroad who had distinguished themselves.

The Bill established also a Malta Cultural Institute to promote Maltese culture abroad. The opposition’s main spokesman on foreign affairs and now the President of Malta, George Vella, said there was a need to let the Maltese living abroad feel as much Maltese as those who lived here.

One should not think that Maltese living abroad were only those in Australia: there were others who lived in Canada, the US, France and Egypt among others.

Dr Vella said the Maltese Cultural Institute should not only serve to hold exhibitions. The late Frans Sammut was already working on

this idea in 1996 under the Labour government

One should promote the idea of the greater Malta as opening this vision would also be beneficial with regard to tourism.

The council should have an organised committee to have continuity in everyday contact. This would also help Maltese children to understand the circumstances that led Maltese to emigrate. It would also help them understand that Malta was not only a dot on a map.

This council would make the Maltese living abroad feel more a part of Malta even though the Maltese never rejected them.

Malta should make use of Maltese descendants' knowledge to export Maltese culture.

Malta should make use of talent of many Maltese living abroad because they could also contribute greatly to Malta's cultural sphere.

The Maltese cultural institute should not be limited to the traditional arts and folklore but should also work on sport and pop culture. The biggest challenge would be to spread Maltese culture with people who were not of Maltese descent.

The Bill would also include a new amendment to the Constitution. The clause made reference to the contribution to Malta's socio-political and cultural spheres by Maltese citizens living abroad. Their contribution must be fruitful and should not be limited to mere participation.

Information material should be sent to Maltese communities and one should also create opportunities for Maltese to be taught as a foreign language.

The Maltese Cultural Institute should also strive to strike deals with foreign universities which would help in bringing foreigners to study Maltese studies.

One should not limit oneself by focusing on Maltese who had emigrated abroad 60 years ago, but reference to Maltese who were going abroad to work should also be made. A different perspective should be adopted with regard to the latter.

It is estimated that there are nearly a million Maltese persons currently living abroad. Many sought better opportunities in foreign countries.

It was the economic situation that had prompted them to leave the country and that it was thus very important to ensure that the highest welfare state be present in Malta.

**CMLA 2011 -2016** The Council is represented by 5 experts Roderick Bovingdon – Australia Carmen Galea – Canada Rosalie Rivett – UK Franklin Mamo – Europe Fr. Alfred Vella – Malta and Council Members - Australia - Professor Maurice Cauchi, Edwin Borg-Manché, Lawrence Dimech, Gejtu Pace, Frank Scicluna USA - Louis Vella, Larry Zahra Canada

- Nadim Kanawati Joseph Scerri UK

- Bernard Scerri Malta - Joseph Muscat

**CMLA 2017 - Members:** Alexander Grima A Angelo Grima Anita Grillo Antonella Berry-Brincat Brandon Azzopardi, Claudia Caruana, Denis Muniglia, Edwige Borg, Emanuel Camilleri, Dr Josephine Ann Cutajar, Marie-Louise Previtera, Mario M Sammut, Shane Delia, Profs Stephen Gatt, Susan Schembri - The fifteen members of the Council for Maltese Living Abroad come from the different states of Australia, Canada and the United States of America, as well as the United Kingdom, France, the European Union, the United Arab Emirates and Malta. *Secretary:* - Joseph A Xerri

***“The future of our diaspora should be a major challenge and it also brings opportunities in different areas such as business, culture and education.” So, let’s work TOGETHER Maltese people living abroad are no less Maltese than those residing on the islands and, at times, they are even more Maltese, according to Maltese Studies Institute director Prof. Henry Frendo.***



## **Consul General of Malta to Canada visits Gozitan/Maltese community**

BY [GOZO NEWS](#) · MARCH 29, 2021



The Consul General of Malta to Canada, Dr Raymond C. Xerri recently visited the Gozitan/Maltese community in the City of Whitby, Durham Region in the Province of Toronto.

The last visit made by a Consul General to this region where many Maltese/Gozitans live, was by the first Malta Trade



Commissioner and Honorary Consul General, John Pisani in 1972 when he was appointed. Consul General, Dr Raymond C. Xerri was welcomed by Theresa Bugelli, the coordinator of the Maltese Cultural Club of Durham, in the City of Whitby.

Dr Xerri, who was appointed Consul General in July 2019, met a set number of Maltese /Gozitans citizens and persons of Gozitan/Maltese descent due to the Covid-19 restrictions and delivered a question-and-answer session mainly about the benefits of obtaining Maltese citizenship, passports,

studying and opening a business in Gozo and Malta, among other issues.

This visit in the Durham Region is the first in list of similar visits to remote places in the Province of Ontario in light of the growing demand of second, third and fourth generation Gozitans/Maltese in Canada wishing to learn about their ancestral country which often leads to applying for Maltese citizenship and a Maltese passport among other services.

There are some 147,000 Gozitan and Maltese-Canadians living in Canada from coast to coast. 52% are of Gozitan ancestry and have reached the fourth generation in certain cities and provinces in Canada. While the latest statistics show that there are 480

Gozitan-Canadians living in Gozo. Dr Xerri is the son of a Gozitan migrant family in the United States where he was born. In 1991, Raymond returned to Malta where he obtained dual American – Maltese citizenship.

He has addressed, chaired and mentored many local, national, continental, regional and international conferences, seminars and gatherings related to politics, diplomacy, international relations, the environment and particularly in the area of diaspora

studies. Dr Xerri is an author, editor and producer of numerous publications, multimedia and multilingual productions.

He is also a founder, co-founder and active member of a number of Gozitan, Maltese and internationally-based Maltese diaspora organisations.

Dr Xerri was the main organiser of twenty-eight editions of the Gozo International Celebration in Gozo (Malta) with attendance and audience from 51 different countries.

He has received numerous international awards and is the initiator and editor of the production series, Gozo and the Gozitans.

## Five AFM soldiers, two police officers died in patrol boat explosion



Five Armed Forces of Malta personnel and two police officers died in an explosion on a patrol boat two miles off Qala.

It was the 7<sup>th</sup> of September, 1984, when a violent explosion on board the C23

patrol boat killed the seven men who were disposing of illegally manufactured fireworks at sea.

What was supposed to be a routine operation – the fireworks had been seized by the police in Zabbar a day before – turned into a national tragedy as the seven men died in the blast.

They were Bombardier Joseph Pace, 36 of Santa Venera; Gunner William Simpson, 36 of Lija; Private Anthony Vella, 20 of Ghajnsielem, Gozo; Police Sergeant Saviour Muscat, 30 of Birkirkara; and Police Constable Joseph Hare, 24 of Sliema. The remains of 36-year-old Bombardier Francis Borg of Hamrun and 27-year-old Private Anthony Farrugia of Zejtun, were never found.

Private Emmanuel Montesin, 21 of Paola, survived the blast and steered the boat to Comino to raise the alarm. The cause of the explosion was never established, although it is thought to have been a spark caused when a hatch was closed.

Fireworks have since no longer been carried on patrol boats. Towed barges are used instead



### **CITTA INVICTA**

07/05/2021 - 09/05/2021 12:00

This three day event in the historic city of Senglea encompasses an exhibition related to the Knights of St. John, a procession with a replica of the statue of our Lady of Victories, a concert in front of the beautiful Senglea Basilica and more!

For more information about this event send an email to [sezzjonizghazaghsengleani@gmail.com](mailto:sezzjonizghazaghsengleani@gmail.com).



**Maltese living abroad had two distinct but complementary emotions: their love for Malta and its traditions as well as the fondness shown towards the countries they had moved to.**



### THE ARAB DOMINATION CIRCA 800 AD

The Maltese under the Byzantine rule fought great battles to repel the numerous attacks by the Arabs who started to rule the Mediterranean, but in 870 AD Malta fell to the Aghlabid Arab invasion from Sicily led by Admiral Ahmad bin-Umar, known as Habasi.

The Arabs aim to expand the Islam faith had its effect on the Maltese, as additional taxes were imposed on Christians while those who embrace the new religion would not be liable to these taxes. The Maltese had also experienced religious prosecution. In 878 AD the Arabs expelled the Maltese bishop and a number of his flock and imprisoned them in Palermo, Sicily. This was also the era of piracy and slavery and at one stage the number of slaves in Malta exceeded that of the free Maltese population.

### COUNT ROGER OF NORMANDY AND THE NORMANS

It was Count Roger of Normandy who ended the Arab occupation in 1091, ushering Malta into the European community once again. Although the Arabic influence remained with the Maltese until 1224 AD, they regained their freedom of worship and the Maltese had by now regained their freedom and returned back to Christianity. 1224 AD was also the time that Malta was annexed to the Kingdom of Sicily

### ANGEVIN AND ARAGON RULES 1282-1438 (AND THE MALTESE REVOLT)

**While under the jurisdiction of the Kingdom of Sicily, Malta went through a long unstable period. The Angevins and the Aragonese were engaged in fierce battles for control of the Mediterranean.**

The Maltese witnessed the first battle in their own waters, when in 1283 AD, the Aragonese fleet fought a decisive battle in the Grand Harbour. The Maltese who were on the Aragonese side, rejoiced at the defeat of the Angevins.

The locals did not enjoy this new found freedom for long, as during this period, Malta saw numerous changes of power. Malta was tossed around from one King to another, used as a fief to please some Duke or Count. In January 1421 King Alfonso granted the islands and all the Maltese revenue to Don Antonio Cardona, who in turn transferred these rights to his friend Don Gonsalvo de Monroy.

The dissatisfied Maltese were getting more restless and in 1426 with the backing of the Università rebelled, pillaging the Monroy's house in Mdina and laid siege on his castle at Birgu. For a brief period, the Maltese had complete control on their homeland. This rebellion had prompted King Alfonso to grant the Maltese to buy back the islands and he formally ratified Malta's rights under the Crown in a Royal Charter.

*I am always gobsmacked by how small the world is. One of the letters included in this most recent article was from Msgr. George Frendo O.P., Archbishop of Tirana, Albania. Seeing his name brought back many fond memories of attending annual religious events with my Nanna Mary Anne celebrating "il-festa ta' San Duminku" in Birgu watching my uncle Fr Josie Bonnici O.P. in the procession, who was "il-Pirjol tad-Dumnikani" back in the days (we're talking the mid/late 80s) and a fraternal colleague of Msgr Frendo. Msgr Frendo was highly respected by my mum's family (the Bonnicis) - do convey my regards to him on behalf of the Bonnici's, even though he is unlikely to remember me as I was only a little girl tagged to my Nanna's skirt at the time!*

*Thanks for bringing the Maltese community so close to each other from all corners of the globe. Best wishes Nicky (Canberra, Australia) I am sure you will find something of interest. I am glad Mary Man is mentioned. I remember her well during the war. She was a huge woman who wore a steel helmet and a long grey overall and rubber boots. She looked very impressive. She towered above the men of the ARP (air raid precaution) corps and marched at the head of them when they came out in three columns on parade from the Sliema Govt Primary School in Blanche Street where they were based. She was present especially after air raid hits personally helping the injured and helping to clear the rubble so that the injured could be carried away. I can still smell the acrid smell of explosive and the special smell of Malta limestone debris after a direct hit explosion. During those times she was a source of great comfort to the dazed coming out of the shelters. It is a shame that she has not as far as I know been more publicly honoured. Thank you Frank! Herbert Manfred Lenicker*



World-renowned Maltese tenor Joseph Calleja will on Sunday perform alongside acclaimed violinist Daniel Hope in an Easter concert to be live-streamed at 7pm.

The concert is one of a series of 27 - one for each EU country - being held from Hope's Berlin living room. It is organised by ARTE and has been dubbed the EUROPE@HOME series. It is dedicated to sharing Europe's "extraordinary cultural diversity and musical riches".

Maria-Elena Farrugia and Alina Pronina will also make an appearance.

The series follows ARTE's HOPE@HOME series, which featured exclusively young and independent solo artists in the autumn of 2020. EUROPE@HOME will be led by Hope, winner of the European Culture Prize 2015, and will focus on international music.

*I would like to see music lending expression to those European ideals that are more important than ever at a time when our culture is under fire* Concerts will be broadcast on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays over nine-weeks and each will celebrate the music of an EU country.

Musicians will join Hope at his home in Berlin, where he will join them playing works by composers from their country, learning about each country's unique cultural heritage. The aim is to rekindle enthusiasm for a shared European identity.



The livestream can be viewed on Times of Malta's [ARTE section](#) on April 4 at 7p



## BOOK EVENTS GO ONLINE FOR THE 2021 CAMPUS BOOK FESTIVAL: ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW

Mark Doty

What is the Campus Book Festival?

Organised in collaboration with student organisations, local publishers and University of Malta Departments, the Campus Book Festival is an annual festival event usually held on Campus. This year, a programme of cultural events curated specifically for an audience of university students and the wider public has been put together, but it is taking place entirely online for the very first time between Wednesday, March 24 and

Friday, March 26. We'll be streaming the entire programme to be viewed from wherever you wish on [www.ktieb.org.mt](http://www.ktieb.org.mt) and the National Book Council Facebook page.

Where can books be purchased?

Despite the online switch, the Festival is still hosting launches and presentations of exciting new titles of literary fiction, translated literature and nonfiction by

some of Malta's leading publishers. These include the widely anticipated second volume of memoirs by the 2020 National Book Prize Lifetime Achievement Award-winning author Dr Alfred Sant, *Confessions of a European Maltese – The Middle Years 1975-1992* (2021). All participating publishers are offering discounts on many titles on their websites which can also be viewed at our dedicated page for exhibitors. Who is this year's special guest? Mark Doty, the acclaimed American poet and memoirist, will be participating in a book-club session with University students lead by Dr Mario Aquilina and centred on

his memoir *Firebird* (HarperCollins, 1999) on Thursday, March 25. Doty, who is the award-winning author of nine volumes of poetry, three memoirs and essay collections, will be returning on Friday, March 26 for an extensive interview with Head of English Department at UM Prof. James Corby to discuss his literary and non-literary output more broadly. Doty was the first American to win the T.S. Eliot Prize in the U.K in 1995, and in 2008 he won the National Book Award for the book *Fire to Fire: New and Selected Poems* (HarperCollins, 2008).

**We are publishing a  
special edition of the  
MALTESE JOURNAL for ANZAC DAY**  
**If you have a story about  
this commemorative day  
send it to us**

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

**25<sup>TH</sup>  
APRIL  
ANZAC DAY**  
*Lest we forget*

**Treat others with respect.**



**MALTESE CULTURAL ASSOCIATION of NSW Inc.**

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**2021 MCA AGM REPORT 29 March 2021**

On Friday 26<sup>th</sup> March 2021 the Maltese Cultural Association of NSW held their Annual General Meeting at the Wentworthville Leagues Club.NSW

After the usual reading of Minutes and administrative reports, the presentation of the financial report and general business, the election of the new committee was held by the retuning officer, Lawrence Dimech with the following result:

President:	Charles N. Mifsud
Secretary:	Tony Pace-Feraud
Treasurer:	Victor Fenech
Vice President:	Michelle McCann
Assistant Secretary:	Mary Pace-Feraud
Public Relations Officer:	Mary Ramundi
Social Organiser:	Charles C. Mifsud
Committee Member:	Eddie Calleja
Committee Member:	Monica Ledger

After the meeting was declared closed light refreshments were offered



# Maltese eNewsletter



**Maltese living abroad had two distinct but complementary emotions:  
their love for Malta and its traditions as well as the fondness  
shown towards the countries they had moved to**



## Father Carlo Manché (1905-1950) Gżira Parish Priest

**Carlo Manché** was a [Maltese](#) Catholic parish priest. He was born in [Valletta, Malta](#), on 22 September 1905. He was one of seven children of surgeon Charles Manché, a Lieutenant Colonel in the British army, and his first wife Giuseppina Falzon. When Giuseppina died, Charles Manché married his second wife Lucrezia Tanti who bore him eight children.

Carlo Manché was ordained as a [Roman Catholic](#) priest on 22 September 1928. The next day, he celebrated his first mass at the [Gżira](#) Parish Church. With a flair for languages, Carlo could speak English,



Italian, French and German. He also had an academic knowledge of Latin, Hebrew and Biblical Greek.

On 1 October 1928, Carlo Manché graduated in theology and a Bachelor in Canon Law from the University of Malta. For two years Carlo studied at the Gregorian University in Rome, from where he was conferred with a Doctor Of Philosophy degree. Between 1935 and 1950 he was the Parish Priest of [Gżira](#).

Parish priest Manché helped his people not only with prayer, but with courageous action in aid of the victims and of his flock, who were fleeing from Gżira to various safer villages in the island. Fr Manché worked night and day, while like a true general he did not abandon the parish. He helped the homeless, the injured and sought food for the people, even serving in the commensal Victory Kitchens.

In Malta, during World War II, there was a sudden great demand for rock shelters. Soon, many voluntary organisations were formed to assist in the building of these shelters. "Probably the first organised

group was at Gżira. On 20 January 1941 the Gżira-Msida District Committee got volunteers together. Men who had never done any work with pick and shovel started digging into the rock to provide protection to the people of the district. The first neo-miners were the Rev. Manché, the Gżira Parish Priest, and Dr A.F. Colombo M.D."

"Manché changed his parish from a habitat of prostitution to a reputable place. He lived like one of the poorest of his parishioners". Manché even used to try and convince prostitutes to change their practice. This did not go down well with some pimps, and on one occasion he was severely beaten. One day a man went with a gun to his office, but luckily a certain Twanny Farrugia appeared at the office, and the man ran away. Manché refused to lodge a police report.

Carlo Manché died at the young age of 45 on 18 November 1950, in [Gżira](#). Thousands of people attended his funeral. This was a sign of the respect and admiration people had for him.

Carlo Manché left no belongings, except his bed, his mattress and pillows, some books, one pair of torn shoes and a watch. "As all he had he distributed to the poor or for the needs of the parish. With him he took to heaven thousands and thousands of good works, for which God rewarded him," wrote Monsignor Arturo Bonnici in a booklet published by Christus Rex of the Society for the Clergy.

Charles Vella wrote that "Had the Church carried out a study of the heroic virtues of this priest he would by now be declared a Servant of God". On 10 May 2017 the community of [Gżira](#) inaugurated the embellishment of a 1975 plaque, and a bust of Carlo Manché erected in 2000, adjacent to the [Gżira](#) Parish Church.<sup>[12]</sup> In the 1950s, the street where this monument is located, previously known as Oratory Street, was renamed after Carlo Manché.

## MICHAEL AGIUS REMEMBERING THE MANCHES



In the issue 361 of February 2021 the renowned surgeon Lorenzo Manche' was given ample publicity for his remarkable career in ophthalmology. His name has brought to my mind his descendants with whom I had the pleasure of knowing and mixing in their company when I was eleven years old. I am now 96 and residing in an Aged Care Facility of the Southern Cross in Adelaide.

Memory of old friends frequently come to my mind. The memory of the Manche' family with whom I had associated awakened in me in virtue of that article in the Maltese Journal. The association with the family originated at Gzira Parish Church by the friendship that developed between us I was able to learn that Dr. Manshe' who died in 1921 had a wife who died and later re-married. From the first wife he had three children; Charles who succeeded him in the ophthalmology and the youngest was Dun Carlo, Paris Priest of Gzira. From the second wife he had eleven children three of whom were Frank, Morris and John. They were my friends and I really enjoyed their company. They have a house overlooking the Gzira Football Stadium and they always invited me to watch soccer from the roof of their house.

About Fr. Carlo Manche I do remember a lot because he was interested in me becoming a priest. His attempts failed but I always remember his saintly attitude. One of his many achievements was the introduction of benches in churches instead of chairs. He was susceptible to high blood pressure which eventually caused his death. I will follow his advice and spirituality for the rest of my life.

### Year Pack launch including all stamp sets issued in 2020



BY [GOZO NEWS](#) · Year Pack, which includes all stamp sets in mint condition issued during the year, is to be launched by MaltaPost next Tuesday. These will include: Old Residential Houses – Series II, Maltese Festa Series IV, EUROPA 2020 – 'Ancient Postal Routes', SEPAC – Artworks in the National Collection, EUROMED – 'Traditional Gastronomy in the Mediterranean', Dogs Series II, 100th Anniversary – Birth of St. John Paul, Joint Stamp Issue Malta – Slovakia 'Viticulture', Christmas 2020 and 250th Anniversary – Birth of Ludwig Van Beethoven.

MaltaPost said that the Year Pack is presented in an attractive folder and includes all technical details related to all 2020 issues. The Year Pack is available as from the 30th of March from all Post Offices in Malta and Gozo, online at [www.maltaphilately.com](http://www.maltaphilately.com) or by mail from the Philatelic Bureau, MaltaPost p.l.c 305, Qormi Road, Marsa, MTP 1001; Telephone: 25961740, e-mail: [info@maltaphilately.com](mailto:info@maltaphilately.com).



## **Consulate General of the Republic of Malta to Canada**

### **MALTESE CANADIAN COMMUNITY NEWS**

## **THE CONSULATE GENERAL OF MALTA TO CANADA ESTABLISHES A NEW REFERENCE LIBRARY AND HELPLINE FOR MALTESE CANADIAN STUDENTS AND RESEARCHERS**



Maltese Canadians are very proud of their Maltese heritage and this is reflected in the growing number of enquiries the Consulate General of the Republic of Malta to Canada receives in relation to Maltese Canadian Migration history, family history searches and research about the Maltese Islands in general. To respond to this ever-growing demand, the Consul General of the Republic of Malta to Canada informs of the establishment of a new reference library and helpline for Maltese Canadian students and researchers of Maltese Diaspora in Canada.

This small but specialised Library will compliment and work in full cooperation with the Board of the Maltese Canadian Museum, Archives Centre and Library found at the Maltese Canadian Museum hosted at the St Paul The Apostle Maltese Canadian Parish in Malta Village in the Junction, in Toronto, in the Province of Ontario and other resources throughout Canada.

Maltese Canadian students and researchers who are interested in volunteering and/or want to make use of this service can contact directly, the Consul General of the Republic

of Malta to Canada, Dr Raymond C. Xerri on [raymond.c.xerri@gov.mt](mailto:raymond.c.xerri@gov.mt), on messenger, on Facebook webpage, 'Consulate General of the Republic of Malta to Canada' or call him on 416-207-0922 or 416-207-0989.



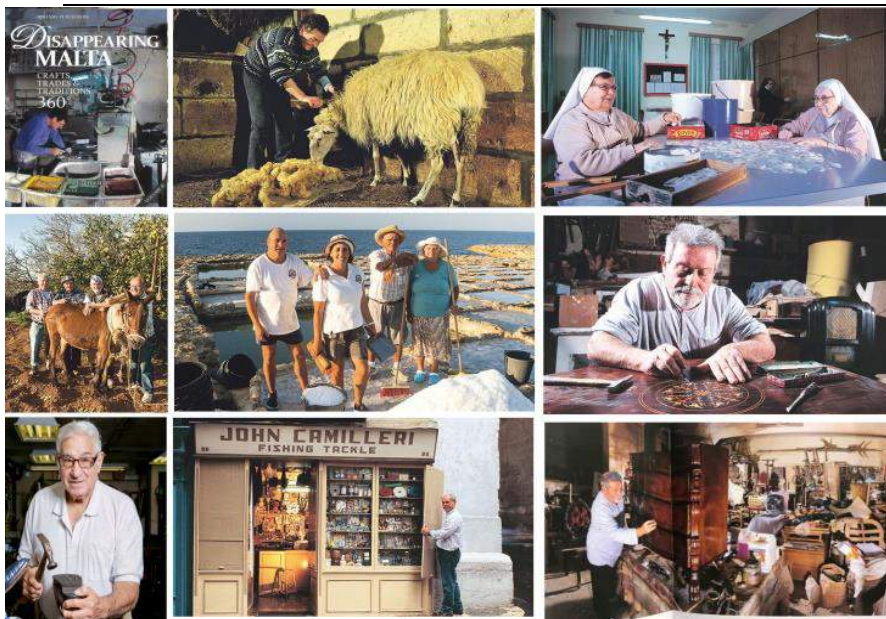
During Lent, many Maltese fast or perform some sort of sacrifice. They tend to give up sweets for the duration of Lent. However Kwarezimal, Lenten biscuits, are allowed. These are delicious chewy, nutty, orange-flower flavoured local biscuits.

The Qaghaq tal-Appostoli is a traditional loaf of bread eaten after the Seven Visits on Maundy Thursday. It is a ring-shaped loaf of bread made with honey and garnished with almonds and sesame seeds.

Figolli are the most popular traditional Easter food. They are baked at Easter and given to friends and family, especially children on Easter Sunday. Figolli are sweet almond Easter cakes covered in icing or

chocolate. They are usually in Christian traditional shapes such as fish, but recently new forms have been added to the traditional shapes such as cars, lambs and butterflies.

You can find many delicious Maltese Easter Recipes here: [http://www.maltabulb.com/easter\\_recipes.html](http://www.maltabulb.com/easter_recipes.html)



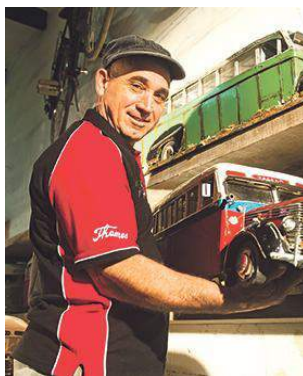
## **Disappearing Malta – Crafts, Trades and Traditions 360° -** Author: Fiona Vella

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ENRICO FORMICA

**Second volume of book bringing to life fast-disappearing trades and crafts published in 2017**

**Available: <https://www.mirandabooks.com/>**

Joanne Cocks



John Lia was introduced to the world of buses by his father. Now he builds models after first drawing their design on cardboard.

Miranda Publishers have had more than 45 books printed over the last 30 years. However, none has given them as much pleasure and satisfaction as the two volumes of *Disappearing Malta – Crafts, Trades and Traditions 360°*. Their second volume of the book bringing to life fast-disappearing trades and crafts has just hit bookshelves.

Eddie Aquilina, who with his brother, Tony, is the brains behind

*Disappearing Malta*, said that while working on the book in recent months he realised that “we’re really losing our identity”. The authorities and government are not doing enough to safeguard such crafts.

“We should be doing more to help. They shouldn’t be sidelined. We should come up with innovative ideas to help them get back on their feet,” he said.

The book in fact features Philip Grixti in his fishing tackle shop in St John’s Street, Valletta. Since the book went to print, the shop has closed its doors and will now make way for a boutique hotel.

*While working on the book, the publisher realised ‘we’re really losing our identity’*

Mr Aquilina said that the most frequent comment he came across during the book’s production was that today’s children do not want to get their hands dirty and suffer.

In fact some tradesmen find it very difficult to find willing apprentices ready to learn the trade or craft. Farmers Nenu, Grezzju and Fredu Buhagiar and Żaren Pulis till fields outside Żabbar.

*Disappearing Malta*, with interviews and text by Fiona Vella and photos by Enrico Formica, shines a spotlight on 25 different trades and crafts.

Featured in the volume are nuns who prepare Communion hosts, an ecclesiastical embroiderer, a pipe maker, father and son boat builders, a bus restorer and model maker, harvesters of sea salt, blacksmiths, a traditional tile maker, a cane worker, a modeller of wax figurines and a furniture restorer, among others. [www.mirandabooks.com](http://www.mirandabooks.com)

John Camilleri’s fishing tackle shop in St John’s Street, Valletta, has closed its doors, making way for a boutique hotel. The Cini family has been harvesting sea salt at Xwejini, Gozo, for nearly 50 years. Franciscan sisters of the Heart of Jesus preparing Holy Communion hosts at their convent in Msida. Paul Bonello has been working as a furniture restorer for over 50 years.





## The art of tberfil: an old Maltese trade that is slowly dying

Jillian Mallia October 2019

Imagine a time when local characteristics, particularly traditional Maltese buses, were decorated with beautiful signage that caught the eye of every passerby. This was called *tberfil*, a trade that is unfortunately slowly (rapidly) dying on our islands.

**WHAT IS TBERFIL?** *Tberfil* is the art and craft of lettering or signwriting in Maltese style which was used as a decoration particularly on Maltese traditional buses (yup, those gorgeous yellowy-orange ones) that have been removed off our streets (but might make a [comeback](#) soon!)

**WHERE WOULD YOU FIND TBERFIL?** As already mentioned, it was a prominent feature of old Maltese buses, but other modes of transport were adorned with this beautiful craft. Horse-racing carriages for one, horse-drawn cabins (what we call *karozzini* which have since turned into a tourist attraction), farmer's carts and, even, construction trucks!

**WHERE DOES THE NAME TBERFIL COME FROM?** The word *tberfil* actually refers to anything of decoration in Maltese society, including the baroque work of the *festa* banners known as *pavaljuni* and *bandalori*, the intricate work and patterning of *bizzilla* making. The most common type of *tberfil* is the hand-painted lettering and beautiful designs found on every corner of the old Maltese buses.

**A NEAR END TO TBERFIL IN MALTA** Sadly, with the overhaul of the bus system, replacing the old yellow buses with the then-Arriva sea-green ones meant that we waved goodbye to mindlessly admiring the work as we travelled on the buses from one destination to another. While the art of *tberfil* is slowly dying out with the old generation of craftsmen, veteran artists are trying to keep the tradition alive in the hopes of passing it on to the next generation, which will hopefully catch on to the beauty that is *tberfil*.



**We are proud of our Maltese Achievers**

**Promoting the Maltese culture, history and heritage**

## MALTESE-AUSTRALIANS IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA



Adelaide United has signed goalkeeper Joe Gauci on a scholarship deal ahead of the upcoming A-League 2020/21 campaign. Gauci, 20, returns to his hometown after

spending last season as a back-up gloveman at Melbourne City. In 2018 he joined Central Coast Mariners on a scholarship contract for the 2018/19 season from then National Premier League side, West Torrens Birkalla, before a move to Adelaide City followed. After signing with the Reds, Gauci said: "I'm ecstatic to be signing with Adelaide United. "As an Adelaide boy, I grew up going to Coopers Stadium and watching the Reds play, so it was always a dream of mine to play for the Club. "Over the last couple of years I've moved around a bit and it's been hard for the family to come and watch me play, so to have an opportunity to play in front of them regularly is fantastic too. "The Club is heading in the right direction so, for me, my goal is to play as many games as possible and really make a name for myself as a good, young 'keeper in this league." Adelaide United Director of Football, Bruce Djite, said: "Joe is another fantastic young, South Australian talent that we're delighted has signed with our Club. "Joe has all the attributes to be a top-level goalkeeper and we see a big future for him here with us. "The hard work starts now for Joe, under Eugene (Galekovic) and alongside Dakota (Ochsenham) and Ethan (Cox), I'm confident all three players will continue to develop into important players for the Club. "As we continue to increase the competition amongst our goalkeepers, we all look forward to watching Joe continue to develop and grow.



**LOUIS D'ARRIGO** - One of the most talented players within the Club's youth ranks, Louis D'Arrigo was one of the revelations of the 2019/20 season. The holding midfielder has previously won the Foxtel Y-League Player of the Year following a standout 2017/18 campaign and since continued his assured display in the local National Premier League. The 19-year-old made his debut in March 2019 as a late substitute, but it was not until the subsequent season where D'Arrigo made the

rather seamless adjustment. He was named the Hyundai A-League Rising Star for United after amassing 21 league matches. **Louis' 'nannu' worked as Adelaide City's kit man for love**

Adelaide United rising star Louis D'Arrigo's tight knit family connection to the game includes his grandfather who played for Malta United in South Australia.



## ***JOE BAJADA RE-ELECTED TO AN IMPORTANT POSITION IN THE EUROPEAN CYCLING UNION***



***Photo: Mr. Joe Bajada with Mr. Enrico Della Casa, the new elected UEC President***

On Saturday, 6 March 2021, during the 2021 virtual Congress of the European Union of Cycling, Gozitan Joe Bajada, Secretary-General of the Malta Cycling Federation was re-elected to a vital post within this European Union. Over the next four years, he will form part of 15 delegates who will have the right to vote on behalf of the 50 European affiliated countries, during the Annual General Congress of the International Federation Cycling Championships to be held next September in Belgium. These 15 will also be identified by another 30 delegates from the other four confederations, which are ACC (Asia), COPACI (Pan America), CAC (Africa), and the OCC (Oceania).

In this election, 29 delegates were nominated from different Federations and Associations within the UEC, where 15 had to be elected. Due to changes in

the UEC statute, the first four women and men were elected. The other seven candidates with the most votes joined them. Appointed with Joe Bajada were: Alejandro Martin Garcia (Spain), Umberto Langellotti (Monaco), Lucia Trevisan (Italy), Victoria Lesnikova (Russia), Thierry Marechal (Belgium), Walter Baldiserra (San Marino), Camille Dahm (Luxembourg), Livia Hanesova (Slovakia), Raivo Rand (Estonia), José Luís Costa Mendes Ribeiro (Portugal), Tomislav Zadro (Croatia), Csilla Tam (Hungary), Jaroslava Krakovičová (Czech Republic) and Vitali Zhmako (Belarus).

In this Congress, the UEC now has a new president, Italian Enrico Della Casa, who for the last eight years has been the Secretary-General of the same UEC. He was not contested because current Swiss President Rocco Cataneo did not run for office due to his many other commitments, including being a member of the Swiss Parliament.

Other elections during this Congress were for six members of the Executive were Henrik Jess Jensen (Denmark), Delmino Albano Magalhães Pereira (Portugal), Alexander Gusyatnikov (Russia), Dragomir Gusyatnikov (Bulgaria), Katarina Jakubova (Slovakia), were elected here, And Natallia Tsylynskaya (Belarus). The following were elected to the UCI Management Committee: Daniela Isetti (Italy); Agata Lang (Poland); Michel

Callot (France); Rocco Cattaneo this is personal satisfaction and success (Switzerland); Henrik Jess Jensen for the Malta Cycling Federation and (Denmark); Toni Kirsch (Germany); Malta and Gozo. He added that this Jose Luis Lopez Cerron (Spain); Igor result reflects his hard work above all; Makarov (Russia) and Petr Marek it was noticed and continued to be (Czech Republic).

Very pleased with this result, Joe Bajada thanked all those 37 European countries that have once again shown full confidence in him with their vote so that now together with the other 14 delegates they will represent them during the next UCI Congress that is supposed to take place next September in Belgium where there will also be elections. Commenting on this prestigious result, Joe Bajada said that

appreciated even on the international scene. He dedicated all this to his dear mother, Giovanna, who passed away recently, and his whole family for the continuous support they always give him. He wished to thank President John Zammit and his colleagues and members of the Malta Cycling Federation, the UEC Officials, particularly new President Enrico Della Casa, and the International Federations that sent him congratulations after this result.



### ***Message from Sam CJ Muscat JP President Australian American Association (Vic)***

***As we prepare to celebrate Easter 2021, this time hopefully with our family and friends for maybe the first time in a while.***

***I would like to on behalf of the Australian American Association, wish you and your family, Great Health, Peace, Love, Strength and Happiness at Easter.***

***Although we are not completely out of the woods with the Coronavirus pandemic, we are on that positive road, and hopefully we continue to turn towards a Covid free Australia/World. However, at the same time we again see innocent people and families in our region - Hong Kong and now Myanmar who have had their freedom pulled from under their feet. The people of Burma (Myanmar) today live-in complete fear. How very fortunate are we to have our Freedoms, Liberty and democracy. As we celebrate Easter with our families and friends, let us also remember in our prayers those families in Australia and those around the World especially the Burmese who are not as Lucky as we are, that they find Peace and Freedom.***

***Please stay safe, keep well and have a wonderful Easter.***

***Let us all do what we can to support those in need.***

***That truth, justice, freedom, love and happiness reaches all,***

***That we are not driven by greed and unnecessary want,***

***That those in power, remember that we are all a one people,***



*That we are strengthened by the Love of God during these times.*



**Report: Glen Falzon Times of Malta**

The project to rebuild the airport junction has brought to light Punic-Roman remains including a quarry, a tomb and carts ruts that were likely to be used to carry stones. The Superintendent of Cultural Heritage, Kurt Farrugia told TVM that talks are underway with Infrastructure Malta to strike a balance between the protection of this heritage and the need for infrastructural interventions in the area.

Near the pedestrian bridge of Vjal l-Aviación between Ħal Luqa and Gudja, in the direction of Birżebbuġa, archaeologists discovered a Roman-era barrier while monitoring ongoing infrastructural works in the area. Archaeologists told TVM that this quarry probably continued to be used at least until the beginning of the seventeenth century.

From it, limestone was cut and used for construction. Cart ruts were also found in the area which were probably used to transport stones from one place to another. Evidence in the hands of archaeologists also shows that the quarry was for some time used as a reservoir.

Archaeologist Tamsin Kingswell explained “in Roman times it was a quarry. Then it was used as a reservoir. It may have been

## **Punic-Roman remains found near airport**

rediscovered later. Then it was used again as a quarry and so we are always seeing this kind of re-use – for us it’s very important because you get to know what these people used.”

A stone’s throw away from the quarry a Punic tomb was found containing human remains. The tomb is broken unfortunately. But we found many things in it. There was an abundance of bones which from what we could see there belonged to at least two adults, one of whom could be a man, and possibly a teenager especially from the teeth and the type of bone of the bones in the feet.

Archaeologists were hired by the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage due to the sensitivity of the area also because in the area there are the catacombs of Ħal Resqun and megalithic remains had also been found. The Superintendent of Cultural Heritage, Kurt Farrugia, said that talks were currently underway with Infrastructure Malta to issue more detailed plans of how works will be carried out in the area.

“Here there’s going to be a flyover. Talks are now being held to make sure that the infrastructural work that is needed here to build this flyover does not harm the remains that we have.”

An Infrastructure Malta project is underway in the area to build two new tunnels and a flyover at the Gudja roundabout junction with the aim of improving access to Gudja, a number of localities located behind the Gudja tunnel, Kirkop, the airport and the Freeport

## **Keeping Maltese Communities Connected**



**103's Malta's Heart will be playing local music from all ages and styles, but most importantly they are all going to be songs from local artists. Let us know which song would you like to listen to by messaging us on What's App (79238103) or through 103's Facebook Page.**

**<https://103.mt/2021/03/08/maltin-biss-is-back-on-103>**

## **SPREAD LIKE WILDFIRE**

**In spite of a couple of individuals in Canberra and Sydney tried to stop us from publishing this journal we continued to grow and flourish and spread around the world like wildfire**

## **FONDAZZJONI WIRT ARTNA**

### **KING GEORGE V MALTA DOCKYARD SHIP MODEL** *Fund Raising Appeal*

Help us raise the amount of  
**€3,000**  
to repatriate from the U.S. & restore  
a unique Malta Dockyard ship model  
of  
the British King V battleship made  
by journeyman-machinist  
Manuel Aquilina  
from Gżira when he was 15 yrs old in  
1945 before his family migrated to  
the U.S.

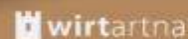
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First of all, I hope all is well with you and now that vaccinations are being populated, we may be seeing an end in sight to this terrible pandemic. The Malta at War Museum (Fondazzjoni Wirt Artna) would like to display this model at their museum and needs assistance in raising funds to accomplish this. During WW II, HMS King George V was part of Malta's history including escorting two captured Italian battleships from Sicily to Valletta. The model was made from discarded tin, wood, brass, etc. found at the dockyards



in Valletta where Manuel was employed as a teen. It was hand made without the aid of any kit.

Due to the pandemic, the museum has been closed to visitors and they have had to lay off staff due to lack of revenue. I was wondering if you could possibly disseminate the below information to help the museum bring this ship model "home". We are donating the artifact to the museum and as there are expenses involved with shipping and handling of the piece, importation taxes (27%), restoration fees, etc., the museum is putting out the word to accomplish this acquisition. Your ability to spread the word is appreciated. Grazi and regards, Fred Aquilina Malta – Wirt Atrna

## TRAGEDIES IN MALTA - 1806 Birgu pulverista explosion

The **Birgu pulverista explosion** was the accidental detonation of ammunition in the gunpowder magazine (polverista) of [Birgu](#) in the British [Malta Protectorate](#) on 18 July 1806. The explosion occurred due to negligence while transferring shells from the magazine, and it resulted in the detonation of 18,000 kg of gunpowder. It killed approximately 200 people, including British and Maltese military personnel and Maltese civilians from Birgu. Parts of the [city's fortifications](#), some naval stores, and many houses were destroyed, and the affected area became known as *I-Imġarraf* (Maltese for "the destroyed").



*Site of the Magazine*

In the 18th and early 19th centuries, the main gunpowder store in Birgu was located in a [casemate](#) within the city walls, close to

the *Porta Marina*. This was an improvised measure; the casemate was not intended to be used as a gunpowder magazine, but such practice was common at the time. Gunpowder was also stored in casemates at other locations, such as [Fort St. Angelo](#), [Fort Ricasoli](#), and [Mdina](#).<sup>[1][2]</sup> The Birgu magazine was located close to civilian housing, and the residents had complained about the dangers before the explosion. Preparations had been made to find alternative sites but nothing had been done; the storerooms that were meant to store gunpowder were being used as barracks or military hospitals.<sup>[3]</sup>

The 1806 explosion was not the first time that a gunpowder disaster occurred in Malta. On 12 September 1634, a gunpowder factory in Valletta [blew up](#), killing 22 people and causing severe damage to the [Church of the Jesuits](#) and [the nearby college](#).<sup>[4]</sup> In 1662, gunpowder that was stored in an [echaugette](#) on one of Valletta's [counterguards](#) exploded after being hit by lightning, but there were no casualties.

Explosion[ - In July 1806, British forces in Malta were preparing artillery shells for shipment to Sicily, as ammunition stocks there were depleted due to the [siege of Gaeta](#) by the French. On 18 July, a working party of 13 men commanded by garrison

gunner [Bombardier](#) Anderson were preparing a consignment of shells from the Birgu magazine,<sup>[3]</sup> which was filled at full capacity with 370 barrels containing 40,000 lb (18,000 kg) of gunpowder, as well as 1,600 shells and grenades.<sup>[6]</sup> Anderson was using a metal chisel to remove the fuses from live shells, which was contrary to instructions, and this resulted in sparks which caused a massive explosion at 06:15.

Anderson and the working party were killed instantly, as were three British soldiers of the [39th \(Dorsetshire\) Regiment of Foot](#) and 23 Maltese soldiers of the [2nd Provincial Battalion](#).<sup>[7]</sup> Between 150<sup>[8]</sup> and 200 civilians from Birgu were also killed, and approximately 100 others were injured by falling debris.<sup>[3]</sup> The explosion frightened the inhabitants of Birgu, and it was also heard in the nearby cities of [Senglea](#) and [Cospicua](#), as well as in the surrounding villages.

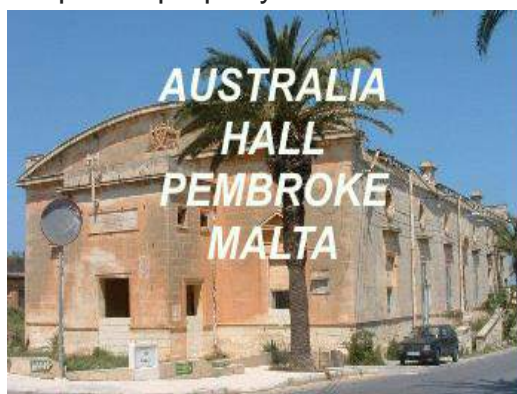
The magazine was located within the city's fortifications, and a section of the walls "went up in the air" and left a large breach.<sup>[10]</sup> The city gate at the Porta Marina, a small bastion, and part of a curtain wall were all destroyed and were never rebuilt.<sup>[11][12]</sup> Parts of the Navy Store Houses were also damaged or destroyed during the explosion.<sup>[3]</sup> Birgu's cityscape was also altered by the explosion, since a large number of houses were destroyed or damaged by the explosion itself and by the rocks which fell from the bastions.<sup>[10]</sup> Four hundred ninety-three people reported property losses due to the explosion.

negligence on behalf of the military. Civil Commissioner [Alexander Ball](#) reported that:

those Maltese who had already become disaffected with the Government, fanned the embers and fermented great agitation by magnifying the casualties and working upon the weakness and credibility of the lower ranks.

Victims and their families were paid partial compensation, and Ball set up a committee overseeing aid distribution. He also urged the government to pay full compensation. This was initially denied, but eventually the poorer classes received a compensation equivalent to two-thirds of their property which had been destroyed, while those of the upper classes received half of the value of their property. In 1811, £18,066.5s.10d was evenly distributed among those who had claimed damages. A wine merchant named Woodhouse lost a large amount of wine and the government provided him with extensive storehouses at the former [Slaves' Prison](#) in Valletta as a compensation.<sup>[3]</sup> The initial total estimated damage for rebuilding was estimated at £35,000.

A street close to where the explosion occurred is now known as *Triq il-Vittmi tal-Porvlista* (Maltese for "Polverista Victims Street"). The Vittoriosa Historical and Cultural Society installed a plaque at the St. Lawrence Cemetery on the 200th anniversary of the disaster in 2006, where most of the victims were buried



**THE RESTORATION OF AUSTRALIA HALL**  
**We are still waiting for a positive response**  
**to our plea**  
**On ANZAC DAY pay a visit to this icon**  
**and find out for yourself the shameful state**  
**it is in.**

Aftermath[ Many Maltese people were angered at the loss of lives caused by



## The Simshar incident

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

*This article is about the fishing boat Simshar. For the 2014 film based on its story.*

**Simshar incident** refers to an incident whereby four people died before or after an explosion took place aboard a fishing vessel named *Simshar* off the eastern coast of [Malta](#). The incident took place on July 11, 2008.

**Incident** On the morning of 7 July 2008, *Simshar* departed the coast of [Marsaxlokk](#), a small, traditional [fishing village](#) in the [South Eastern Region](#) of [Malta](#) on a fishing trip, expected to return on 11 July. The boat was carrying five people - its owner, Simon Bugeja, his father Karmenu Bugeja, his 11-year-old son Theo Bugeja, a Maltese man named Noel Carabott, and a Somali man named Abdulrahman Abdala Gedi. It is believed that a blast took place on board the vessel on 11 July, destroying the boat. The five people on board survived the blast and survived for several days adrift a makeshift raft made of floating debris from the blast.<sup>[3]</sup>

**Victims** Four of the five people on board the *Simshar* died in the days following the incident, Simon Bugeja being the sole survivor. According to Simon Bugeja, Abdulrahman Abdala Gedi died on 12 July, followed by Noel Carabott on 13 July, Karmenu Bugeja on 14 July, and Theo Bugeja on 18 July.<sup>[3]</sup> The bodies of three of the victims were recovered, however that of Theo Bugeja was never found. Following an extensive search by the [Armed Forces of Malta](#), and the Maltese fishing community, a fishing vessel called the *Grecale* found Simon Bugeja alive on 18 July.

**In popular culture** The incident was dramatised by Maltese director [Rebecca Cremona](#) through a 2014 film titled *Simshar*.



## Spitfires Daring Mission To Save Malta in World War II- Operation Bowery



As Malta was crucial for Britain in World War II, Churchill sent RAF Spitfires to Malta in a peculiar transport.

[Karthick Nambi](#)

Spitfire in Malta.Source-Historynet

An aircraft carrier floated towards the tiny island of Malta in the middle of the Mediterranean Sea. The island was of strategic importance to Britain for its operations in North Africa, and it safeguarded the Suez channel. Off the aircraft carrier came out Spitfire aircraft of the RAF (Royal Air Force).

The aircraft will not return to the aircraft carrier. It will land in Malta amid heavy Luftwaffe attack and participate in the island's defense against Luftwaffe and help Britain win World War II.

Malta has been a point of strategic importance for centuries. Malta was the fortress of the Knight Templar, and its proximity to Europe and Africa was important for trade.

Malta became part of the British colony, and in World War II was one of the most bombed sites by Axis powers. Malta was crucial for resupplying Allied troops in North Africa.

As Spain and Portugal were neutral British supplied its forces in North Africa via its colony of Gibraltar in Spain. From Gibraltar, the supplies reached Malta and then to North African ports. Also, Malta safeguarded the Suez canall as it was the vital lifeline between Britain and its colonies in Asia.

This vital link for the allied war supply line was a constant annoyance to the Axis powers. Instead of a full-scale invasion, Axis powers thought to bomb and siege Malta and force it into a surrender.

Malta was bombarded by Italian and German air forces day and night. Though the island had anti-aircraft artillery, it was of minimal effect. The defense was so insignificant that Luftwaffe conducted daytime bombings on Malta. What Malta needed was air power, especially Spitfire fighter planes from the RAF.

Sensing the importance of Malta, Winston S. Churchill, the prime minister of Britain, decided to sent Spitfires to Malta.

The Spitfire was the state of the art fighter aircraft in the RAF and a perfect match to any Luftwaffe fighters. The problem was that spitfires could not fly from Britain to Malta due to the distance.

A cargo ship carrying the Spitfires if attacked by Luftwaffe cannot defend itself as warships cannot escort the cargo ship in the Mediterranean. A novel idea to fit the Spitfires with an extra fuel tank that would increase its range was proposed.

The Spitfires would launch from an aircraft carrier in Mediterranean and fight Luftwaffe aircraft on the way to Malta. The mission was code-named Operation Calendar.

Operation Calendar:

The first ship for the mission the American aircraft carrier *USS Wasp* set sail from Glasgow on 14th

April 1942 with 601 and 603 Squadrons of RAF onboard.

After a brief halt in Gibraltar, the *USS Wasp* was joined by with Royal Navy destroyers and continued her journey into the Mediterranean. Forty-eight spitfires took off from the deck of the ship towards Malta.

The Luftwaffe knew of the arrival of the Spitfires in advance and bombarded the Ta'Qali airfield where the Spitfires were parked. All the Spitfires burned into ashes within 48 hours of their landing in Malta. The lessons learned in Operation Calendar helped in the planning for Spitfire on *USS Wasp*. Source-World War Photos

On 29th April 1942, 47 Spitfires rested on *USS Wasp* destined for Malta. The leaky tank issue in the Spitfire got rectified.

Also, the *HMS Eagle* transported 17 Spitfires in this mission. An exciting incident during the operation was *HMS Welshman* disguise.

The *HMS Welshman*, a Royal Navy cargo ship, also traveled from Gibraltar to Malta. *HMS Welshman* was disguised to look like a neutral French destroyer, the *Leopard*.



## Maltese Immigrant Named One of Canada's Top Lawyers under 40 in 2017

Maltese Immigrant Named One Of  
Canada's Top Lawyers Under 40

**A Canadian lawyer David**

**Cuschieri has been named as one of the top lawyers under the age of 40 in the country for 2017.**

Cuschieri was honoured in a reception held at the Fairmont Royal York Hotel in Toronto. The event, the Rising Stars Award, was hosted by Lexpert, a leading source of legal news and information in Canada.

**Family Immigrated From Malta in 1978** - A resident of Calgary Cuschieri was born in 1980 and is the youngest of three children of late Vincent Cuschieri and Angela. He has two elder sisters, Suzanne and Lisa, both born in Malta.

The family had left Malta In 1978 to settle in Canada. Vincent worked as a senior geophysicist in the country's oil industry for nearly 30 years.

Cuschieri studied law at the University of Alberta, graduating in 2004. He was called to the Bar in 2005. After a few years with, Macleod Dixon a Canadian law firm, he joined another law firm, Torsys, in 2011 where he was made partner in 2015.



Cuschieri currently practices corporate law as well as commercial law with a special focus on Canadian and international energy , power, oil and energy related transactions including joint ventures, acquisitions and project developments.

He is a member of the Calgary Bar Association, the Association of International Petroleum Negotiators, and the Law Society of Alberta.

**Strong Legal Tradition In Family** - David's family has a strong legal tradition. His great-grandfather was a legal procurator and the uncle of Sir Luigi Camilleri, the Chief Justice of Malta for the period 1952 to 1957.

According to a family tree available in a biography published on Sir Luigi the family has more than 30 lawyers, legal procurators or notaries , all of whom are descendants of Sir Luigi. One of David's sisters Suzanne is also a barrister and practices in Calgary. Five of his cousins in Malta are also lawyers. Source: [www.lawnn.com](http://www.lawnn.com)



**MALTESE COMMUNITY COUNCIL OF VICTORIA INC.**  
A very big thank you to Peter Haber and Catholic Regional College  
for yet again supporting our figoli making day 100 people of all ages  
enjoyed their day and delicious figoli take aways!  
Stay tuned for more events.



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





## **FREEDOM DAY** **31 MARCH 1979**

This is the anniversary of the withdrawal of the last British troops and the Royal Navy from Malta, in 1979. The Maltese had already acquired Independence from the British on 21st September 1964, when the first Maltese Government was elected. However, a lease agreement allowed the British authorities use of the island as a military and naval base, which was revised in 1971 and finally terminated in 1979.

## **JUM IL-#ELSIEN**

**31 TA' MARZU 1979**



**Maltese-Canadian Museum**



3 little models of traditional Maltese buildings of Malta and Gozo.  
They are a part of our large collection of artifacts on display  
in the upper hall of St. Paul the Apostle Church in the  
West Toronto Junction.



***Hand painted traditional Maltese Buildings  
of Malta and Gozo***