

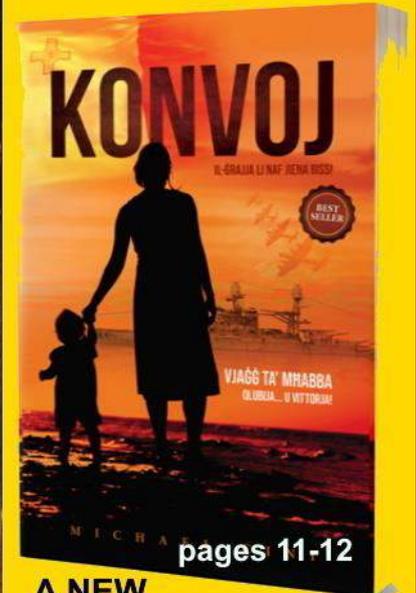
**H** Heritage Malta

**MASTERPIECES  
AT MUZA**

page 7



**Giovanni Baglione  
(Rome, 1566-1643)**



**A NEW  
PUBLICATION BY  
MICHAEL CINI**



**Maltese**



**eNewsletter**

**Journal of Maltese Living Abroad**

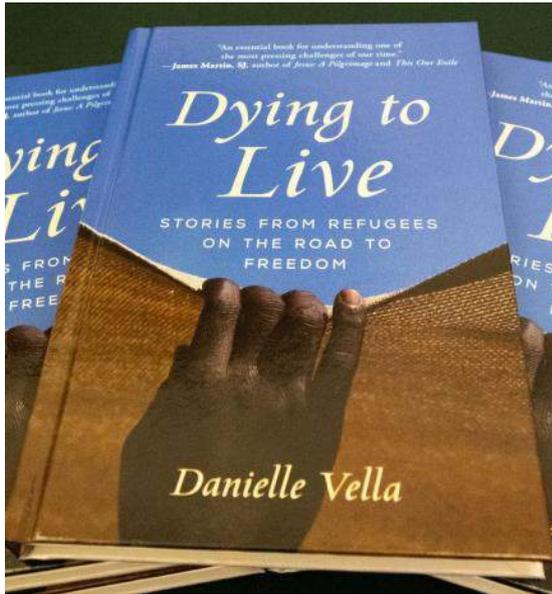
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23 July - 8 August



**Connecting  
and Serving  
the Diaspora**



## **DYING TO LIVE – STORIES FROM REFUGEES ON THE ROAD TO FREEDOM’ A BOOK LAUNCH ORGANISED BY JUSTICE & PEACE COMMISSION, JRS AND MIGRANTS COMMISSION**

“No one wants to leave home, but life forces you.” These were the poignant words by one of the refugees whose experience features in the book ‘Dying to Live’ by Danielle Vella, journalist and director of the International Reconciliation Program for the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS). The book was launched during an event hosted by Archbishop Charles Scicluna at the Curia in Floriana, during which the author herself as well Daniel Jude Okoeguale, an asylum seeker residing in Malta, were interviewed. The book captures the experiences of men, women and children who had no other option but to leave their country in order to survive. It includes stories of conflict, oppression and torture during precarious journeys, as well as the exhaustion and at times despair as a result of living in limbo and not knowing what the future or even the next hour holds.

Whilst addressing the book launch, Archbishop Charles Scicluna described the stories of refugees as gripping but also very moving. He emphasised the responsibility of saving lives at sea according to international law, of seeking concrete solidarity from Europe, and of rethinking our engagement with Libya on migration. Archbishop Scicluna thanked Danielle Vella for the opportunity she offered through this book to ask important questions which, he said, do not have easy answers: “Are we doing the right thing? Do we treat refugees in the right way? Do we have the right policy?” He appealed to authorities to revisit detention centres and the way in which we receive asylum seekers, to ensure we give hope to our brothers and sisters who have the right to live in humane conditions. The Archbishop said he was struck by reading the experiences of refugees who suffered because of “man’s inhumanity to man”. In these experiences, he said, one can see the gaping wounds of Jesus Christ. The narratives featured in the book ‘Dying to Live – Stories from refugees on the road to freedom’ are the fruit of interviews carried out by the author in several countries in Eastern Africa, the Middle East, Europe and the United States. “Each refugee story is unique – the events leading up to the fateful decision to leave everything and what happened next are never the same,” explained Danielle Vella. She said that this publication also provided refugees the opportunity to set the record straight by having them tell their own stories without being the

victims of labelling and prejudice by others. Daniel Jude Okoeguale, a Nigerian national and aspiring artist, shared his experience during the event and recalled the hurdles and suffering he faced until he arrived in Malta. He recalled how when in Sabha, Libya, migrants who did not pay the smugglers were locked up and tortured. "I was lucky enough not to be among them, but the civil war in Libya at that time made me wish I'd never left home. Flying bullets became my constant companions," Okoeguale said. At the event, guests were given a bookmark with a painting drawn by Daniel Jude Okoeguale while in detention. In his concluding remarks, Justice & Peace Commission President Daniel Darmanin said that "we cannot look the other way, in the face of such stories. We have a duty to tell these stories, because only by facing the truth can we bring justice and peace to the world". The book launch was organised by the Justice and Peace Commission, the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) and the Migrants Commission. The event drew attention not only to the physical and mental anguish that refugees experience but also the remarkable resilience they display in their search for a dignified life. 'Dying to Live' is published by Rowman and Littlefield and is available from major online retailers such as Amazon and Book Depository. Sorry for ticket holders and local residents who were looking forward to the games."

## Minister Evarist Bartolo participates in the Dubrovnik Forum 'Together in a World Apart'

Reference Number: 10072021, Press Release Issue Date: Jul 10, 2021

The Minister for Foreign and European Affairs, Evarist Bartolo took part in the Dubrovnik Forum



'Together in a World Apart'. He stated that we are in the same storm, but in different boats. There are those who have saved and healed, and there are those who have sunk.

He referred to realities that several countries are facing where he said that during the pandemic five million individuals became millionaires, but another 41 million are facing hunger, with 200 million people losing their jobs.

"During the pandemic, nine countries spent seventy two billion dollars on new nuclear weapons, but we don't have

two billion dollars to keep thousands of babies from dying of malaria in Africa, and six billion to keep millions from starving."

Minister Bartolo stated that there are countries which have been hit hard by Covid-19 and found enough resources to invest in weapons but alas do not have money to spend on health and vaccinations to save their people.

Minister Bartolo concluded that we need to learn to live together and not let the differences between us divide us.

"If we continue to split ourselves into groups against each other, we will not solve the great challenges of today and tomorrow within our tiny world."

**DISCLAIMER**

**Always refer to the official source of information for  
CONSULAR SERVICES**

The High Commission of Malta in Australia would like to inform the public that the High Commission in Canberra, the Consulates-General in Melbourne and Sydney, and our network of Honorary Consuls have not appointed or authorised external third-party individuals or entities in Australia empowered to present applications on behalf of applicants who wish to apply for Consular Services (eg. citizenship/passport/ visa applications, registration of life certificates, etc.).



Aġenzija Komunita’ Malta list of authorised agents to process citizenship applications are listed in the following link <https://komunita.gov.mt/en/agents/>.

The Ministry for Foreign and European Affairs, as well as the High Commission, the Consulates-General or the Honorary Consulates shall not be held responsible for any misinformation divulged and/or loss of documentation handled by third parties and that any official information about registration of public documents should always take place through the proper channels.

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[maltaconsulate.melbourne@gov.mt](mailto:maltaconsulate.melbourne@gov.mt)  
[maltaconsulate.sydney@gov.mt](mailto:maltaconsulate.sydney@gov.mt)

 [https://foreignandeu.gov.mt/en/Embassies/Hc\\_Canberra/](https://foreignandeu.gov.mt/en/Embassies/Hc_Canberra/)

**MESSAGE FROM THE  
HIGH COMMISSIONER  
IN CANBERRA**

In view of new restrictions in Public Health Directions from the Malta Superintendent for Public Health (SPH) to be enforced from 14 July 2021 until further notice:

All arrivals into Malta from 14/7/2021 need to possess a Maltese/EU/UK NHS covid-19 vaccine certificate. Without such certificates travellers will not be allowed to enter Malta.

As a consequence of this, all visa services at our Canberra, Melbourne and Sydney offices have been suspended until further notice. As you may imagine, persons residing in Australia or New Zealand are most likely not to have access to either vaccine certificate mentioned above & therefore irrelevant of any visa decision/issuance they would still not be able to enter Malta at this stage.

**Limited Visa Services  
from 14 July 2021 until further  
notice.**

ONLY travellers who present an authorised vaccine certificate will be allowed to enter Malta from 14/7/21 until further notice.



 HIGH COMMISSION OF MALTA AUSTRALIA  CONSULATE GENERAL OF MALTA MELBOURNE  CONSULATE GENERAL OF MALTA SYDNEY

Keep updated on the latest travel requirements to enter Malta on: [www.deputyprimeminister.gov.mt/en/health-promotion/covid-19/Pages/travel.aspx](http://www.deputyprimeminister.gov.mt/en/health-promotion/covid-19/Pages/travel.aspx)

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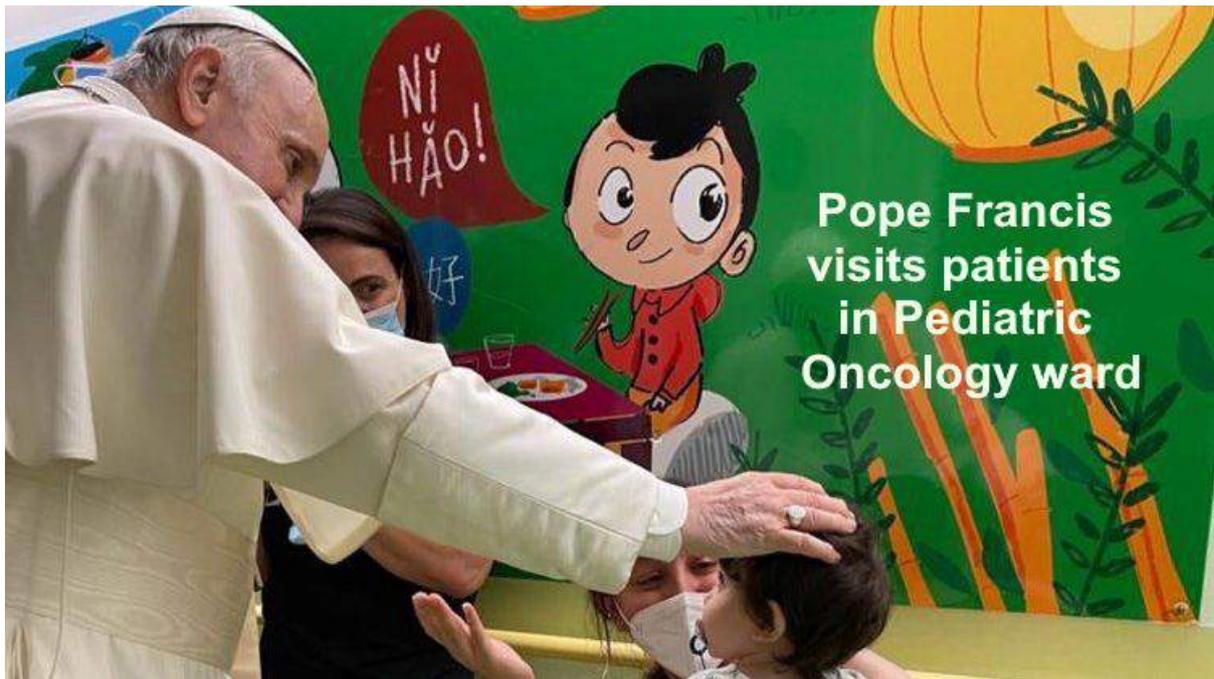
**“I’m praying for you... your prayers helped me when I was sick” – cancer girl to Pope**

A drawing by a girl being treated in an oncology ward at the Bambino Gesù Hospital in Rome has touched many hearts.

The girl, named Giulia, drew Pope Francis in his hospital bed, with her holding his hand.

Giulia embellished the drawing with the words: “Dear Pope. hear my prayer in the same way I heard your prayer when I was sick.”

Besides Giulia’s wishes to the Pope for a speedy recovery, in other posts on Twitter, the Bambino Gesù Hospital posted a number of other drawings addressed to the Pope that it had received from children recovering in other hospitals in the Italian capital.



The Vatican stated in the past hours that the Pope is continuing to recover from last Sunday’s operation on his large intestine. The Vatican added that the Pope is walking and eating with some assistance, and blood test results are satisfactory.

**I ALWAYS LEARN SOMETHING NEW EVERTIME I READ THE MALTESE JOURNAL**

## Dar tal-Providenza wins European Citizen's Award

Dar tal-Providenza has won the European Citizen's Award 2021 given by the European Parliament. The nomination was made by MEPs Roberta Metsola and David Casa, as members of the Nationalist Party delegation, for the project 'Monument of Mercy' – a reference to the work carried out by this organisation for disabled people live in the community.

Dar tal-Providenza was one among a number of finalists selected from among several nominations submitted. The 2021 European Citizens' Award committee has recognized that over the past 56 years, Dar tal-Providenza has provided accommodation for disabled people who are unable to live with their families to have a place to live in a family environment.

So far, Dar tal-Providenza has opened four homes in the community and is expected to open a fifth one in the coming weeks. The award ceremony for Dar tal-Providenza will be held on 9 November 2021

## Friends of Providence House NSW donates \$9,000AUD to Dar tal-Providenza.

Friends of Providence House NSW (FOPH) donated \$9,000AUD to Id-Dar tal- Providenza. The

cheque was presented during last Sunday's fund-raising Marathon. The sum was raised by FOPH throughout 2020/2021 and is normally presented in person to Fr Martin Micallef, Director of the Home, at the 'Annual Volleyball Marathon'. The fund-raiser is held in the first weekend of July on the grounds of the Siggiewi Home but had to be cancelled for the second year in a row due the COVID-19 Global Pandemic.

The Group wishes to thank the Maltese Community in Australia who has once again shown its solidarity together with a very generous benefactor who wishes to remain anonymous. The Group wishes to acknowledge its major Sponsor, George Vella of Breakaway Travel of Blacktown, as well as the support of the Maltese Media in Australia, 'The Voice of the Maltese' and the 'The Maltese E-Newsletter' for their ongoing support.

**Jim Borg**, the Coordinator of Friends of Providence House NSW, together with his team, **Marisa Previtera** (Secretary) and **Miriam Friggieri** (Treasurer) stay in regular contact with Fr Martin and continue with their fundraising initiatives for Dar tal-Providenza

**4 July 2021 - €512,870 were raised during Sunday's TV Marathon in Malta in aid of Dar tal-Providenza**



**God Gave Us Two Hands One Hand To Receive the Other To Give !  
Donations To Id- Dar Tal-Providenza Can Be Made at any  
Commonwealth Bank:**

**A/C Friends Of Providence House NSW :  
BSB 062 416 A/C No.10199448 . No Fees Apply.  
Or Contact Jim Borg 0418825591  
NSW Australia**



**WE ARE DELIGHTED THAT OUR READERS SEND  
THE JOURNAL TO THEIR RELATIVES AND FRIENDS  
ACCORDING TO OUR SURVEY THIS JOURNAL  
IS READ AND ENJOYED IN FIFTY (50) DIFFERENT  
COUNTRIES ALL OVER THE WORLD**





## Masterpieces at MUŻA

'Masterpieces at MUŻA' is Heritage Malta's eager greeting to thirteen Old Master paintings from an international private collection as they make a most welcome entry into the National Collection on a long-loan basis through this exhibition.

It is also a journey of artistic discovery through remarkable artworks ranging from the late 15th to the mid-18th centuries, displayed in five thematic sections. Interpretation, kept to a minimum, aims at enhancing meaning and stimulating connections. Considering artistic authorship presents its share of challenges and often remains a matter of debate.

This exhibition engages with this debate.

Opening hours at MUŻA:

All week except Tuesday, from 10:00am till 4:30pm.

Prices: Heritage Malta members – free of charge;

Children who are Heritage Malta student passport holders – free of charge, two accompanying persons €3 each; Seniors who are Heritage Malta passport holders – free of charge, two accompanying persons €3 each; Standard fee of €10 which covers both the exhibition and a visit to MUŻA.

The 'Masterpieces at MUŻA' exhibition may now be experienced through Virtual Reality (VR) on the website [muza.mt](https://muza.mt), ensuring an intimate and enhanced encounter with the 13 Old Master paintings currently on display at MUŻA, the National Community Art Museum in Valletta.

The website provides access to a virtual tour of the exhibition that may be viewed on a mobile phone, tablet or laptop here: <https://muza.mt/360-tour/> However, owners of a VR headset can enjoy the tour even more thanks to this gadget of modern technology.

The virtual tour, produced entirely by Heritage Malta's Digitisation Unit, enables the 13 masterpieces to be enjoyed free of charge in the comfort of one's home or office. The VR experience, in particular, is especially alluring to the younger generation, introducing them to Renaissance art in an entertaining way.

'Masterpieces at MUŻA' runs until the end of October, when its 13 paintings will be integrated in the MUŻA display for five years and possibly for another five after that. The paintings have been loaned to MUŻA on a long-term basis and range from the late 15th to the mid-18th century.

## Handicraft Jewellery in the Mediterranean – MaltaPost issue of : nps [GOZO NEWS](#)



Handicraft Jewellery in the Mediterranean – is the theme of a EuroMed Postal Union philatelic issue, for which MaltaPost will be participating with a set of three stamps.

The stamps set is designed by MaltaPost. Images by Fondazzjoni Patrimonju Malti.

For centuries the Mediterranean Sea was a refuge for many cultures and civilisations. This brought generations of artists who adopted and developed different styles and crafts that

created what we recognise today as distinctive Mediterranean jewellery.

MaltaPost explained that this philatelic issue reproduces items of jewellery found and produced in Malta in the 19th century. All three items are made from gold and embellished with seed pearls.

The stamps will be issued in a sheet of 10 stamps, with each stamp measuring 31mm x 44mm, with a comb perforation of 13.0 x 14.0 and bearing the Maltese Cross watermark.

The sheets measure 185mm x 114mm and were produced by Printex Ltd in the offset process. The issue consists of 100,000 of the €0.10 stamp, 600,000 of the €0.30 and 30,000 of the €2.50 stamp.

This philatelic issue will be available from all Post Offices in Malta and Gozo as from Monday, the 12th of July.

Orders may be placed 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: 2596 1740, e-mail: [info@maltaphilately.com](mailto:info@maltaphilately.com).



## MALTA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

Located halfway between northern Africa and Europe, Malta's geographical position in the heart of the Mediterranean has historically been of great strategic value for traders, merchants, and military powers.



In the 1920s, less than two decades after the first successful human flight took place, civil aviation had already arrived in Malta, when the islands were still under British rule. Malta's first civil airfield was constructed at Ta' Qali. Others, including one at Hal Far, shortly followed. These were severely battered during the Second World

War; civil operations subsequently centred on the one at Luqa airport.

More passengers and aircraft movements necessitated the construction of a civil air terminal in 1956. The British Government mainly financed what was at the time a Lm300,000 (€700,000) project. Malta's new passenger air terminal at Luqa was inaugurated on March 31, 1958 by Sir Robert Laycock, then Governor of Malta. It consisted of two floors and included basic facilities such as a restaurant, post office, cable and wireless office, and viewing balcony – a far cry from the bustling, multifaceted destination that Malta International Airport has developed into today.

In October 1977, a new and longer runway was developed in Malta. Airport construction extended and refurbished the air terminal, which refocused on departures. Lounges for arrivals and VIPs were also added.

This refurbishment was a step in the right direction but still lacked certain essential facilities. Following a change in Government in 1987, the new administration decided that the 35-year-old terminal was past its time and gave the green light for the construction of a new air terminal along Park 9.

In the meantime, the government also embarked on another upgrade of the old air terminal. Updated airport facilities included air conditioning, modern baggage carousels, flight information monitors, computerised check-in desks, new floors, and additional retail outlets (including a larger duty free area). The present air terminal was inaugurated in 1992, just 29 months after the foundation stone was laid in September 1989. Malta International Airport became fully operational on March 25, 1992, and the old Luqa airport terminal was effectively closed down after 35 years in service.

In July 2002, after expending considerable time and investment on a robust and successful operation, the government of Malta sold 40% of its equity to the Malta Mediterranean Link Consortium Ltd and a further 40% to the general public. The move to full privatisation marked the start of a new chapter for Malta International Airport, with Malta's worldwide connection continuing to improve over the years and traffic reaching 7.2 million passenger movements by the end of 2019, marking a decade of uninterrupted growth.

Beyond traffic development, the Company entrusted with the development, management and operation of Malta International Airport in 2002, adopted a diversification strategy, which has seen the development of the Company's retail and property portfolio within the non-aviation segment, which has contributed around 30% of Malta International Airport's revenues over the years. Introducing a relatively new concept to the local market back in 2012, SkyParks Business Centre was a landmark retail and

property investment for the Company. The resounding success of this project encouraged the Company to invest in a second multi-purpose building – Sky Parks 2 – works on which are currently underway. With sustainability being one of the Company’s core values, Malta International Airport has been publishing a sustainability report since 2016, becoming the first Maltese company to adopt the Global



Report Initiative guidelines in voluntarily disclosing to the public its economic, environmental and social impacts. The Company’s formally pledged its commitment to achieving carbon neutrality by 2050 in 2019, officially appointed its first Sustainability Manager a year later.

In an effort to enhance Malta’s cultural and environmental offering, Malta International Airport set up the independent, non-profit Malta Airport Foundation in 2014, which

is entrusted with identifying and supporting projects aimed at preserving, conserving and promoting the Maltese islands’ unique heritage. Some of the most notable projects the Foundation has supported so far include two underwater documentaries shining the spotlight on Filfla and Comino; the restoration of the 17th-century Ta’ Xutu watchtower in collaboration with Din l-Art Ħelwa; and the restoration of the Combined Operations Room within the Underground War Headquarters in Valletta in collaboration with Fondazzjoni Wirt Artna.

Malta International Airport is guided by a vision of service excellence, and has been awarded the prestigious title ‘Best Airport in Europe’ by Airports Council International three times in a row. Additionally, Malta International Airport was the recipient of the Best Airport and HR Excellence titles in November 2020, which were awarded by Airports Council International in recognition of the Company’s laudable efforts, both as an airport operator and an employer, in response to the unprecedented challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Malta Airport MetOffice is part of the Malta International Airport and provides the function of a national meteorological service for Malta. Although they primarily serve aviation they also service the public sector. All equipment, other than the Doppler Weather Radar, is enhanced by automatic weather stations, of which eight are situated in Malta and Gozo. At the same time an aerodrome weather observation system is located at the airport. The MetOffice is able to get information from the Agencia Estatal de Meteorología in Madrid and the UK’s Met Office along with numerical weather models such as those provided by the European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts in Reading, England.



## Tokyo Olympics to be held without spectators in July 2021

*Summer Games organiser announces no fans in the stands as COVID-19 surge hits Japan.*

Organisers of the Tokyo Olympics agreed on Thursday to ban

fans from the events under a COVID-19 state of emergency.

The Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games, which start on July 23, will be held without spectators due to a new [state of emergency](#) over COVID-19 in the Japanese capital.

Japan’s Olympics Minister Tamayo Marukawa made the announcement following discussions with International Olympic Committee officials and competition organizers on Thursday. The announcement came hours after Tokyo was slapped with further coronavirus restrictions until August 22, because of spiking case numbers in the city.

“Venues in Tokyo will be not including spectators,” Marukawa [told reporters](#). “For those areas [in Japan] where the state of emergency is not implemented ... we will discuss.”

“It is extremely regrettable that the games will be staged in a very limited manner in the face of the spread of novel coronavirus infections,” said Seiko Hashimoto, president of the organizing committee, according to [Kyodo News](#). “I am very

**ZEJTUN - MALTA**



# The Tragedy of 2/5/1942 at Zejtun

It was Saturday the second day of May of 1942. The time was 10:45am when a JU88 Bomber of the Axis forces dropped a number of delayed action bombs on the south part of the road linking Zejtun with Tarxien.

According to Malta: War Diary website the JU 88s dropped eight bombs near Zejtun Church and on houses south of Zejtun-Tarxien road. Many of the bombs did not explode on impact. They detonated later, destroying several houses, killing 21 civilians and wounding 30. Local researcher Carmelo Baldacchino referred to the bombs dropped in front of the Zejtun Parish Church as anti-

personnel bombs.

The most common of such bombs used by the Luftwaffe were known as Butterfly Bombs, (or *Sprengbombe Dickwandig 2 kg* or SD2). It was so named because of thin cylindrical metal outer shell which hinged open when the bomblet deployed gave it the superficial appearance of a large butterfly. The design was very distinctive and easy to recognise. Butterfly bombs contained 225 grams of TNT. They were generally lethal to anyone within a radius of 10 metres (33 ft) and could inflict serious shrapnel injuries (e.g. deep penetrating eye wounds) as far away as 100 metres (330 ft).



No wonder why these bombs left such a devastation in front of the church on this deadly day. It is said that people at that time were coming out from church after hearing the morning mass. There were also people in the few shops which existed and were open at that time, one of them was a barber right in front of the church. At that time the owner was busy serving his clients and shrapnel burst through the door leaving one of his clients, Dr Emmanuel Hyzler death in his hands. He was one of the twenty seven victims of this tragedy, ten of which were female. The names of these victims are listed on a marble plaque which was placed at the corner between Misraħ ir-Repubblika and Triq Santa Katarina on the 2nd May 1967.

The website referred to above listed 21 victims and included their age. These were:

Carmela Abela, age 14; Saviour Baldacchino, age 55; Saviour Bellotti, age 52; Tarcisio Bonnici, age 12; Rosario Bugeja, age 65; Mary Camilleri, age 68; Gracie Felice, age 14; Mary Rose Felice, age 5; Spira Fenech, age 46; Giuseppa Fenech, age 11; Victoria Fenech, age 10; Francis Frendo, age 30; Saviour Galea, age 17; Joseph Harris, age 11; Emanuel Hyzler, MD, age 56; Giuseppe Mamo, age 68; Calcedonio Palmier, age 40; Giuseppe Piscopo, age 75; Gaetana Portelli, age 60; Francesca Schembri, age 30; Emanuel Zammit, age 24

Besides the victims listed on this marble plaque there were several others who were injured. Rev Carmelo Galea (or as was commonly known, Dun Karm) who was walking out from the church was also injured in his leg and suffered a permanent disability. He also assisted his brother Salvu who was one of the victims.

One would think that besides the marble plaque mentioned above, there is no other evidence of this tragedy on site. This is a complete mistake. If one had to look closely at the lower part of the church facade, one can notice a number of circular spots and other square patches. These are several shrapnel marks left after this tragedy on the masonry, but some time after the tragedy, were filled in with cement and coloured to match the surrounding stone, others were replaced by neatly-cut square stone inserts. There are other larger shrapnel marks on the Oratory's bellcot, possibly pertaining to the same explosion.



## MARTHESE FENECH WRITES FROM TORONTO

As an author, words tend to come to me naturally. However, finding the words to convey the depth of my gratitude sometimes poses a challenge. Now is one such time, as I thank Consul General of Malta in Canada, Dr Raymond Xerri, for his championing of my work and his tireless support of Maltese-Canadian artists.

I was born the youngest of five in Toronto to Maltese parents, both active in the Maltese-Canadian community. I am a novelist, screenwriter, professional editor, and high school teacher. Raymond Xerri, an inveterate storyteller and historian himself, has been instrumental in spreading the word about my bestselling historical novels, *Eight Pointed Cross* and *Falcon's Shadow*, and creating anticipation around the forthcoming third novel in my Siege of Malta series. His sharing of my television and media appearances has garnered tens of thousands of views across the globe, the kind of publicity an author dreams about.

An advocate of the arts, Raymond Xerri has graciously put me in touch with editors and the arts community around Malta to increase coverage of my novels. He also plans to submit my third novel to the Toronto International Festival of Authors, an event I have longed to participate in since I began my career. Twenty years ago, I attended the festival as an aspiring writer and imaged that one day I might take part as a featured author.

Given that my novels are set in sixteenth-century Malta, it is beyond gratifying to have the support of the Maltese community. Through his promotion of my novels, Raymond Xerri has actively sought positive recognition for my efforts to publicize and celebrate Maltese culture through the arts.

I am often asked about my goals. Seeing my novels come to life on the screen is my biggest dream. For years, I have wished someone—a director, a producer, an actor—would approach me about adapting my books. Anytime a film is being produced in Malta, I'd pray the director would pop into a bookshop and pick up one of my novels and contact me. Suddenly, it dawned on me that I am capable—I did write the novels, after all.

That revelation guided me towards a book-to-script screenwriting course. I have since started adapting my first novel and am currently drafting a pilot episode that I hope to pitch to streaming services as well as HBO, and the History Channel in the next few months. Nothing would bring me more joy than experiencing the fortitude, resilience, and tenacity of the Maltese play out on the screen—big or small. Approaching studios with such a project is a daunting task, but one Raymond Xerri will help facilitate. I look forward to the realization of my dream, of connecting not only the Maltese community but the world with one of the most incredible stories of valour and triumph to grace the annals of history, the Great Siege of 1565.

I wish Dr Raymond Xerri and his wonderful colleagues continued success, and I hope he plans to stick around as our consul general for years to come. Without a High Commission in Ottawa, Maltese Canadians need such a talented, energetic, well-networked and an internationalist like Dr Xerri, who has worked hard and is offering hope to the Maltese Canadian Community an a Consul General many of us have been long wishing for

MARTHESE FENECH, TORONTO

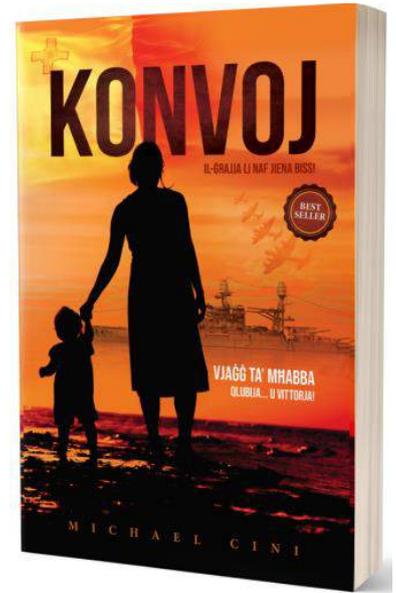
EMAIL: [info@marthesefenech.com](mailto:info@marthesefenech.com) WEBSITE: <https://marthesefenech.com>

Number one Bestselling Author of [Eight Pointed Cross](#) and [Falcon's Shadow](#)

# KONVOJ: Il-Ġrajja Li Naf Jiena Biss! (Malta Convoy: A Story of Love, Honour and Bravery)

Author: Michael Cini

Publishing House: Horizons ( [www.horizons.com.mt](http://www.horizons.com.mt) )



This historic novel recounts the story of a heroic voyage dominated by love, courage and victory... written by Michael Cini to honour the 75th anniversary of the arrival of the Santa Marija Convoy in Malta.

The novel is based on true historic events of the fierce battles which took place along the journey, fought by brave men who saved Malta from surrendering to the enemy. An event which to this day is still dearly remembered and celebrated with keen devotion by the Maltese people.

Together with an emotional love story, the book presents to the reader a vivid sequence of events which took place throughout the whole journey, from the very beginning as the convoy assembled at the mouth of the River Clyde in Scotland. An Operation which involved a heavy escort of no less than 60 British naval vessels, to protect 14 merchantmen carrying all sorts of supplies which had to reach Malta – at all costs!

In no time, the reader finds himself among the crew of the oil tanker *Ohio*, re-living the heart pounding experiences which these gallant men went through, especially during the heavy attacks which took place day and night by the enemy fighter-bombers, submarines and E-boats, on a course which was even peppered by sea mines hidden below the surface. No wonder the Maltese people always thought that this convoy was delivered by the divine hand of Our Lady. Through this historic novel, the author also highlights the honour and gratitude deserved by all the sailors who took part, never forgetting the hundreds who also perished during *Operation Pedestal* to save Malta.

The story is recounted through the eyes of two young lovers, who secretly board the *Ohio* – the only tanker of this convoy which was carrying fuel – with the hope of coming to Malta. However, little did they know what peril awaited them, especially when the *Ohio* became the enemy's primary target. They never imagined the dangers they were going to encounter till the very end of the journey – if they would ever succeed to arrive!

Before the outbreak of the Second World War, Marija a Maltese girl, found herself in Greenock, Scotland. Her father had been assigned duties by the British Admiralty in one of the best dockyards which prepared Allied convoy ships. There she meets James, a brave, strong and a very handsome young man who also worked on the docks. However, she still could not forget her fond childhood memories, as she recounted to James over and over about beautiful Malta.

Then, when the German bombers start to wreak havoc in the area surrounding the dockyards, Marija and James find themselves in a living hell. So, when James overhears a whisper that the tanker which he was working on was soon to join a convoy to Malta, the two young lovers manage to board it in secret, with the ardent hope of starting a new life on the island together.

Little did they know that once out of the frying pan, they were simply going to find themselves – straight into the fire!

Will they be able to save themselves from the fierce enemy attacks? Will they fulfill their fervent dream of a lifetime spent together? And most of all, will the two of them manage to reach Malta safe and sound? As notwithstanding all their efforts, nothing could change what destiny had already carved in stone!

At the end of the book, one shall also find some interesting complimentary material related to *Operation Pedestal*. This includes historic photographs, a map showing the route passage of the convoy indicating where the ships were sunk, an overview of the war situation in the central Mediterranean, and a list of military and merchant ships which took part in this Operation with their respective casualty numbers.

This is Michael Cini's fourth book. In his first novel *Preżenza – Inti Temmen fil-Fares?* (Horizons, 2014) the author brings the reader face to face with the ghost of a mother, who cannot yet rest in peace before someone uncovers how her young child had mysteriously disappeared many years before. A novel which

will be able to save themselves from the fierce enemy attacks? Will they fulfill their fervent dream of a lifetime spent together? And most of all, will the two of them manage to reach Malta safe and sound? As notwithstanding all their efforts, nothing could change what destiny had already carved in stone!

was re-printed twice as a best-seller. On the 450th anniversary of the Great Siege of Malta, his second novel *Ix-Xafra tad-Destin – L-Imdina 1565 (Horizons, 2015)* leads the reader through the gates of history to join the Mdina cavalry, and take part in a romantic adventure during the Great Siege. While on a totally different note from the previous two, his third novel *Skjava...fil-ktajjen tal-imħabba (Horizons, 2016)* exposes the reader to a sensual and erotic love story. An intimate relationship fuelled by emotional intrigue which, in order to survive, has to overcome unfaithfulness, domestic abuse... and lustful temptations! This novel was printed again in 2020 as a best-seller. Then in 2017 to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the arrival of the Santa Marija Convoy, this author published *Konvoj – Il-Ġraġja Li Naf Jiena Biss! (Horizons, 2017)*, also re-printed as a best-seller in 2021.

This is another historic novel which blends together romance with the historic events that took place all along this perilous journey. A journey featuring love, courage and victory which set sail from Scotland during which brave men and gallant heroes manage to save Malta from surrendering to the enemy, as they miraculously bring in vital supplies to the Grand Harbour. Cini's fifth novel *L-Ewwel Preżenza – L-Imħabba tal-Ħares ma Tmut Qatt (Horizons, 2018)* is the prequel to his first novel *Preżenza*, issued on the 220th anniversary of Napoleon's invasion of Malta.

It recounts the story of a young French soldier who falls in love with a beautiful Maltese farmgirl. But because he was murdered before he had fully enjoyed his girlfriend's love, his soul could not rest in peace. So much so that he remains entrapped between this life and the next, close to her to protect, provide and even love and caress her. But is it possible for such a beautiful girl like her to remain without a human lover for the rest of her life? Then in 2019 during the 100th anniversary of the Sette Giugno riots, Cini published his sixth novel *Eroj – Imħabba u Qlubija fis-Sette Giugno (Horizons, 2019)*. Another historic novel where the reader is among the angry crowds waving the red and white flag during the protests, and intrigued by a love story between two lovers from different social classes. While confronting rifles and sharp bayonettes in the loud and troubled streets of Valletta, the reader also discovers the mysterious underground secret passages which lie beneath this city.



#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**Michael Cini** was born in Ħamrun, grew up in Balzan and St Paul's Bay, and lives in Mosta. He is a qualified Draughtsman, and today occupies the position of Senior Principal. He studied Arabic to understand better the Semitic roots of the Maltese language. In the course of his career he also studied at the University of Malta, where he graduated in Public Administration and as a Proof-reader in the Maltese language. At this point in time, he started writing novels to contribute towards Maltese literature.

His love for the mother language and also his deep interest in Maltese history help him to interweave historic novels.



**XLENDI BAY - GOZO - MALTA NOW AND 140 YEARS AGO**

## Maltese-Swedish Chef - David Vidal

There are chefs that need no introduction, and I believe that David Vidal is one of them. His Dishes are like the most amazing art on a plate, so innovative and inspiring, and I was lucky enough to interview him and talk a little bit about his work and the man behind this amazing food.

**Please tell me a little bit about yourself, how you got started and your background?**

My name is David Vidal, and I am a chef who works in Strömstad,

Sweden which is a small fishing town on the west coast of Sweden. I was born in Canada but at the age of 12 I moved with my parents back to their home country which is Malta. I lived in Malta till I was 24 and then moved to Sweden since my wife is from there.

**How did you get into the culinary field?** I got into the culinary field from basically the time I moved to Malta. At 12 years old I started to help my uncle at his bakery. From there I decided to do it professionally and attended the Institute of Tourism Studies in Malta. Instead of being a pastry chef I decided to study to become a chef. For the next 20 years or so I had only worked on the savoury side of the kitchen and it has only been these last 5 years that I have been working with pastry.

**How do you decide about the dishes you're creating?** Usually when I'm creating a dish, I will usually first think about what is in season at the moment. So for example in the summer I would probably do something with Strawberries. Then from there I will start to think which flavour combinations I would like to use with it being a type of chocolate, spice, herbs, etc. From there when I have all the taste combinations I want to work with I will start to think which components and textures that I am going to use. Next step is to think visually how I want the dish to look.

**What is your favorite dish from everything you're creating?** Probably sounds weird but I have a really hard time enjoying anything I make myself. It is probably because I know how it is going to taste as I have been tasting the components before so it's nothing really special when I should eat it myself. I prefer to see what other people think of it themselves. If I would make something for myself I would probably just make a simple creme brulee and that's probably my favourite dessert to eat.

**What kind of music do you listen to, while you're cooking?** My favourite music to listen to when I am cooking is Hip Hop. So any time you catch me in the hotel kitchen there is usually anything from Dr. Dre, Jay-Z or Eminem on. I also really enjoy Red Hot Chili Peppers and they are most definitely my favourite band.

**Do you have someone you would like to cook and serve a dish you have prepared? Which dish will you serve?** There's probably more than one person but if I was to choose one it would be Sir Alex Ferguson. Reason is because he is someone I have a lot of admiration for. A leader and serial winner, someone who can get the best out of his team and great man manager. If I was to make him something I would do my dessert with Cucumber, Dill and White chocolate.

**Do you have a culinary muse?** There are a lot of chefs who inspire me, but the one who most comes up is Swedish chef Fredrik Borgskog. The tastes he uses are always on point and everything is always original in appearance. He is also a really great guy and always takes his time to talk and spread knowledge. Another is Antonio Bachour who I assisted one time and learnt so much in those days. He has a great level of dedication to pastry and makes everything look very beautiful.

**If you were not in the culinary field, what do you think you would be?**



One question that I really have to answer for as the only thing that I think I can do is cook. I would like to be a football player for Manchester United but if you see me kick a football you would soon find out that it's impossible.

**What is your culinary dream?** I'd love to have my own pastry shop where I could sell my pastries and also have a studio on the premises where I could hold courses and also bring chefs from around the world to do guest appearances and courses of their own.

**How has the Corona Virus affected your business?** The corona virus has affected our hotel like any other greatly. The hotel is still open for guests but it is next to none. The restaurant is closed but we have been refurbishing the restaurant in the meantime. We also try to work from home and try to plan menus for when we open again and think of scenarios that we will have to deal with for when we open.

**What are your plans for the future and where can we eat your dishes?** My plans for the future are to first try to get my book done which I really hope i can do this year. I would like to start travelling again and meeting people from around the world but we will have to wait with that for now. Hopefully also it would be nice to get that pastry shop but in the meantime you can eat my dishes at Scandic Laholmen in Strömstad, Sweden. Source- [www.veronikamos.com/post/vidal-david-vidal](http://www.veronikamos.com/post/vidal-david-vidal)

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## PEOPLE OF MALTA

[www.facebook.com/thepeopleofmalta](http://www.facebook.com/thepeopleofmalta)

"I give enjoyment to others through my art. Art is not solely what I perceive, but what I make others see. I am a dreamer, I think whilst breaking up wood and give life to perished objects. I carve and keep carving until I am satisfied that I have found what I have imagined in my head. Many times a thought keeps me awake at night, or maybe I'm chatting with somebody and I suddenly get inspired.

From a young age I used to play around with clay, but I realized that it was not clay I wanted to work with. When I was attending school in Mosta, Anton Agius was my teacher and he taught me how to appreciate and work with wood sculptures. I then went to England. It was Anton Agius who ignited my love for sculpting wood. He was my inspiration. It was Anton who gave birth to my fondness in sculpting wood. He

lit up the spark. Wood motivates me to work, to design. I love the semi-abstract. I mostly use olive wood. From a piece of wood, I visualize the art that is hidden inside. If I make a mistake I need to dress it. You will see from my works that I love the image of the Mother and Child.

My philosophy in life dictates that I work now, for as long as the Lord gives me the strength, because when that is gone, I shall not be able to create more art. Artists are appreciated after their death."

- Mario Agius

**The Maltese living in Malta and overseas are very friendly, helpful, intelligent and resilient people in spite of having different opinion regarding sport, politics, religion and other fields. We are still proud of our country and proud that we are Maltese** Joe Camilleri (Malta)



## PITKAL

By Nathan Abela In TasteHistory

One wonders how the largely illiterate Maltese farming community could keep track of any payments due when selling their produce at the vegetable and fruit market before the Second World War. Since the market received quantities of farmers' produce every day, the *pitkal* [the vegetable market supervisor] had to adopt an effective accounting system that was easily understood by both the farmer and the *pitkal*. This need developed the *taglia*, a wooden stick, 40cm in length and approximately 3cm wide. This rather

primitive register of business transactions was often made from a stick of the chestnut tree. Each stick was attached to a piece of string and eventually tied to the farmer's horse-driven cart.

Once that a farmer delivered his goods, the *pitkal* would score a series of signs and symbols that would indicate the amount of money due to be received by the farmer for his goods. All four sides of the *taglia* were used to signify different quantities. For instance, small change was always marked on one side. A slanting line denoted a specific amount, different in quantity from a horizontal line. Even the depth of a scored line could denote an amount of currency.

When all dues were settled, the farmer had to return the *taglia* to the *pitkal* who then burnt the stick to avoid its reuse.



## FUL, ĊĪRI U KARAWETT

Ful, ċġri u karawett – l-ghajta nofs il-bejgh. Children would miss the calling of their mother but not the cries of the peanut seller. Always present in places of significant public gatherings, the horse-racing track and the football stands on a Sunday or the Sliema front or the beach during the summer. Lugging around a sizable cane basket with a cloth-covered handle intended to relieve the stress on the arm, the peanut seller was constantly on

the lookout for those clients who required his service.

Before the introduction of plastic bags, the peanut seller provided his own packaging with a conical-shaped container made from baking paper. It is also popularly known that the peanut seller kept the small change in a handkerchief to avoid spilling any of the hard-earned money.

Maybe this image rekindles your recollection of an aspect of Malta's lost socio-cultural scene.

### MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER

This journal of Maltese living abroad is preserved at the Malta Migration Museum - Valletta, on Facebook and Twitter, the Maltese-Canadian Archives, Toronto and Gozo National Library and on [www.ozmalta.com](http://www.ozmalta.com) Several organisations and institutions print the journal and distribute it among their members. Our readers share it with their family and friends

### Maltese eNewsletter

Journal of Maltese Living Abroad



We  
Journey  
Together



KEEPING CONNECTED MATTERS

ALTHOUGH THE MALTESE ISLANDS ARE VERY SMALL IN SIZE  
THEY VERY ARE RICH IN HISTORY, CULTURE AND HERITAGE

## Roman Villa of Żejtun

Summer work in Malta is hard labour. But I was driving to meet teachers, lecturers, and students from the University of Malta who have spent countless summers digging up one of the most important Roman ruins in Malta. Dated from the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC (a recent dating that pushes it into the Punic period, the Carthaginians) the site combines a residential and industrial area. It is one of two remaining sites in southeast Malta. The Villa's industry was mainly pressing olives to make olive oil, a hint to the village's name Żejtun (*żejt* is Maltese for oil). One can imagine in antiquity, large numbers of these villas producing a particular type of Malta-branded olive oil shipped around the Mediterranean. To think that this valuable site was nearly lost



*.Prof. Anthony Bonanno*

In 1961, while building a school 'they [construction workers] came across large blocks of stone that indicated an ancient Roman ruin. They did not give it much notice. They cleared enough space for the construction of the first school blocks. In 1964, more bulldozing was done and more stuff was found,' remembers [Prof. Anthony Bonanno](#) (Faculty of Arts, University of Malta), one of the co-directors of the dig. The marks are still clear today. At this point the Museums department stepped in to preserve the area. Between 1970 and 1976, Frans Mallia, the Museums Department Director, and Tancred Gouder, Curator of Archaeology at the time, used workmen and foreign students studying English to excavate the site. The site was divided 'in rectangular boxes or trenches with letters assigned

to them in order to excavate in a proper way,' Prof. Bonanno continued explaining. Unfortunately, they used the old-fashioned Italian excavation style which he summarised as: 'removing a huge quantity of earth, without sieving, and following a wall's edge.' This leads to many disputes for dating. 'Eventually we learnt proper stratigraphic excavation techniques from British archaeologists, namely, peeling off layer after layer after having identified the difference between one layer and another,' a much more logical approach.

Prof. Bonanno's more accurate methods started being introduced in 1976 when he was working at University [its first lecturer in Archaeology]. With the permission of Dr Gouder he directed two short excavations with small groups of students. He introduced the stratigraphic sheet, which recorded what came from where and in which layer of earth. Before they stopped, they had 'the most important and spectacular discovery in just a five-day excavation, which was the discovery of a cooking pot with Punic inscription. Eventually we found out that this inscription was identical to scores of others discovered at Tas-Silġ in the 1960s.'

The inscription was dedicated to the goddess [Ashtart](#) (in Phoenician, Tanit in Carthaginian), the goddess of fertility, agriculture, seamen, and so on — perfect for Malta. Loads of dedications to her were found in the Punic sanctuary at Tas-Silġ, as expected (covered in THINK issue 02, pages 38–44). The Villa's inscribed cooking pot revealed that religious life in the Punic and Roman period was incredibly rich and extended outside this sanctuary.

In the 1970s, they found huge stone blocks used to produce olive oil. The Villa was equivalent to an olive-oil-producing factory. 'The pressing of olives to produce olive oil depends on a fairly straightforward process,' explained [Dr Nicholas Vella](#) (University of Malta) the other co-director of the dig site. 'You need to apply pressure to olives which have had their pips removed. The ancient sources tell us you did not want to crush the pip because that would create an inferior quality olive oil.' Dr Vella continued to explain how, peculiarly, today the whole fruit including the pip is crushed, then separated later. Today's olive oil could be worse than the Romans'. Research is needed to find out, once and for all, which process makes the best oil. [www.um.edu.mt/](http://www.um.edu.mt/) THINK



**"Those heroes that shed their blood and lost their lives... you are now lying in the soil of a friendly country. Therefore rest in peace.**

**There is no difference between the Johnnies and the Mehmets to us where they lay side by side now here in this country of ours.**

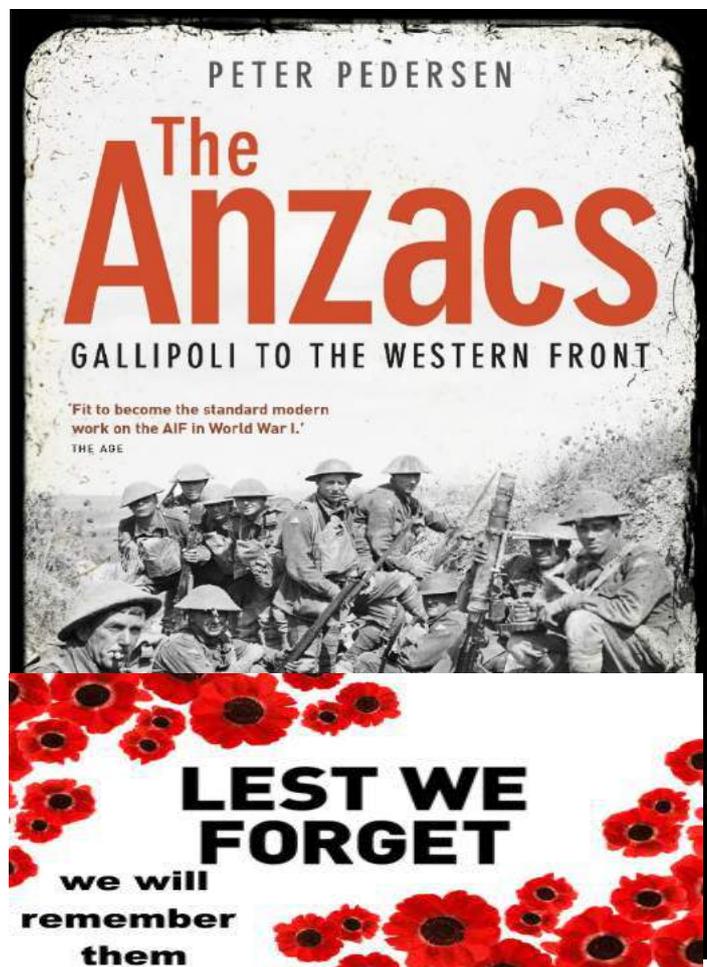
**You, the mothers, who sent their sons from faraway countries wipe away your tears; your sons are now lying in our bosom and are in peace.**

**After having lost their lives on this land they have become our sons as well."**

AJ

Ataturk 1934

In the 1930s, after the Battle of Gallipoli, Turkish President Mustafa Kemal Ataturk received a letter from the mothers of the fallen ANZAC soldiers requesting permission to visit the graves of their sons. In response he sat down and wrote this poignant letter to the women. Ataturk later used these same words in a speech to the first Australians, New Zealanders and British to visit the Gallipoli battlefields



**Keeping Maltese Communities Connected**



**We promote the interests of Maltese communities living abroad**

## The Maltese Dog History

Pierre Marie Louis de Boisgelin de Kerdu (1758-1816) shows a Maltese dog with two ladies and child in one of his engravings in *Ancient and Modern Malta* published in 1804.



### Where did the Maltese dog get his name?

The Maltese dog can be traced back over 28 centuries and it is an ancient breed of the island of Malta in the Mediterranean. This dog breed can be found on ancient Greek pottery and was mentioned by the philosopher Aristotle. It has been known to be a prized companion of royalty over the years. Unlike many small breeds, the Maltese was not bred down from larger sizes; it has always been a very **small dog**.

The Maltese has remained a dog breed of distinction—highly

esteemed and quite sought-after. This breed became popular among upper-class ladies in England in the 1300s. Attempts to breed even smaller Maltese in the 17th and 18th centuries resulted in tiny dogs the size of squirrels, but this effort almost wiped them out. They were crossbred with other small dogs to revive the breed and this resulted in the development of several related breeds.

### Which famous aristocrats owned a Maltese?



**Roman Emperor Claudius**

A famous Roman emperor from AD 41 to 54, Claudius was said to have owned a Maltese dog and treated it like royalty.

### Roman Emperor Publius

Publius Helvius Pertinax was the Roman emperor in AD 193. He was so obsessed with his Maltese that he created numerous works of art and poetry to immortalize his dog.



### Queen Elizabeth I of England

Queen Elizabeth I ruled from 1558-1603. She had a Maltese that she kept as a companion and lap warmer. The Maltese dog breed has been a favourite of royalty and the aristocracy throughout history and is often pictured in their art.



### Mary Queen of Scots

Mary, Queen of Scots ruled from 1542 to 1567. Her life was quite unstable; the only consistent thing in her life was her love of Maltese dogs. They were her constant companions from birth through to her reign on the throne.



### What cultures were Maltese dogs popular with?

Numerous pictorial representations of the Maltese occur in **Greek ceramic art**, such as the vases found at Vulci (about 500 B.C.).

The Maltese dog is **mentioned in the writings of many Greek and Roman philosophers**, and **other ancient poets and historians**, including: Aristotle, Timon, Callimachus, Aelian, Artimidorus, Epaminodus, Martial, Strabo, Pliny the Elder and Saint Clement of Alexandria.



### Which ancient culture worshiped the Maltese?

Hard archeological evidence places the Maltese in a **prominent place in Egyptian culture around 300 to 600 B.C.** where they were virtually worshipped as members of the royal families. The earliest known representations of Maltese dogs on artifacts found at Fayum, Egypt (600-300 B.C.), suggest that the **Maltese was one of the dogs worshipped by the ancient Egyptians.**

[maltesemaniac.com](http://maltesemaniac.com)

## 47% of the population believe that the Maltese are racist – ‘POPOLIN’



What makes a person racist? And are the Maltese racist? ‘Popolin’ investigated racism in Malta and the problems that frequently arise because of this phenomenon.

In collaboration with researcher Dr. Vincent Marmara, ‘Popolin’ made a scientific analysis of what the Maltese think on this subject. The survey was conducted among 600 Maltese, from which several interesting points emerged that better reflect public opinion.

When asked if they think that the Maltese people are racist, 47% answered in the affirmative, while 15% replied in the negative. When the question was asked directly, the absolute majority of the people said they do not consider themselves racist. Interestingly we understand why the absolute majority of the people are uncomfortable admitting that they are racist but when the same question was asked in another format, the result indicated that people have a tendency to discriminate between culture and another. In fact 41% of the people said they would not feel comfortable if their children were to have a relationship with or marry an Arab.

We spoke to the head of the People’s Party; Paul Salomone who said that the word racism refers to situations where a person judges or offends another person on the basis of skin colour, religious beliefs and so on. He reiterated that although there were cases of racism in Malta, each case needed to be analysed individually before the entire nation is judged.

Dr. Desiree Attard explained that racism is fear, hatred and discrimination against people who do not look like us. She reiterated that it is essential to distinguish between racist people and people who are worried about the way in which irregular immigration is being controlled in our country; “I think it’s justified to worry about irregular immigration, it’s just not justified to be racist. I believe that in our country we do have a problem with racism.”



**“Sometimes I feel sad when people say Maltese are not very friendly”**

The words are by Onana Pierre, the young man from Cameroon whose integration into the Maltese society can be called a success story.

Onana smiling in house in Iklin during the interview

We are in a white-walled, pristinely clean apartment in Inklin, on a Saturday afternoon. Our host greeted us with a warm smile. Dressed in a colourful shirt, a

brown knee-long pair of shorts and flip flops. He kept his smile throughout the interview, gently swinging his head and hands as he spoke, maybe a sign of nervousness, maybe not. He has a benevolent attitude and he is certainly captivating. For him “if you are a foreigner, it depends on how you introduce yourself to the locals. If you act good, for sure, they are going to give you a chance to be friends, so behave kindly.”

**Who is Pierre Onana?**

My name is Onana Pierre, an African of Cameroonian origin. I am 42 years old and I have been living in Malta for 3 years. I came here to seek asylum. I live here in Iklin, a very beautiful, quiet, residential area. Here I can rest after work and I have a beautiful view as you can see. I rent here and I do not intend to move because my relationship with the neighbors and landlord are very good. My landlord in particular is someone that I appreciate a lot. Always available whenever there is something to be fixed in the house. He is a very nice man; I hope he thinks the same of me.

**What do you do for a living?**

I work a full time job in a large company here in Malta as a Customer Manager. I like it because I have always wished to meet people and my work offers me that opportunity. I am happy at work and I appreciate my colleagues with whom I have a good relationship. Even if there are arguments, we always find a time and place to fix things.

**What has Malta brought to you in terms of opportunities?**

My wish was to become an expert in marketing and I think it was a great opportunity to come here and have it. My life has improved as I have a good job. I greatly appreciate my boss who is an expert in Marketing, and from whom I learn a lot. Sometimes I feel sad when people say Maltese are not very friendly. What I am going to say is that if you are a foreigner, it depends on how you introduce yourself to the locals. If you act good, for sure, they are going to give you a chance to be friends, so behave kindly. I have a lot of Maltese friends, we drink together, talk together. I have nothing to say against them. If you are a foreigner, you have to give the best of yourself to make them understand that you are a good person. I want to take this opportunity to send a hug to my colleagues:

I love you guys, Mr Ivan, Karl, I really appreciate what you are doing for me, your help, your support, thank you.

**Your story can be an inspiration for those immigrants who are still struggling to find their way in a society so different from their own, what advice can you give them?**

It depends on what one needs. Personally I wanted to improve myself to become an expert in marketing. For immigrants to have something better, they have to work, find the best ways to develop themselves. I know it is not easy, but It is important to dream big. If you have no knowledge, learn something. It is not easy because we come here to help our families, but you can do an evening course and learn something to improve yourself. Do not only think of people at home, but also think of yourself.

I want to add a piece of advice to some migrants who prefer working without a contract, so they can save money. When you pay taxes, you are clean with the government. My advice to them is this: guys, try to make things right, try to pay taxes. I also want to say to my Maltese friends: there are a lot of fantastic people among us, try to give us a chance to show what we can do before making up your mind about us.

**Tell us something about the Maltese culture that you like.**

I like the food. I cannot remember some names, but I like Pastizzi, and I also like Maltese music. Classical music is my favourite style and I like Estevan Ellul very much.

*(Good big laugh at the question if he can speak Maltese):* I cannot speak like a Maltese but I am going to try: "Mela *(Editor's note: It was said with a perfect Maltese accent !)* Inħobb il-pastizzi, grazzi hafna.

**Background** *On the occasion of World Refugee Day 2021, SuccessStories-RAS ( Success Stories among Refugees and Asylum Seekers) aims to showcase four unique lives of refugees based in Malta.*

*During the month of June every week, a video is published on our social media accounts, as well as on the **US Embassy Malta's** Face book page.*

*The project is done in partnership with the newspaper **L'Orizzont \_ It- Torca**, publishing the printed and online version of the stories in Maltese.*

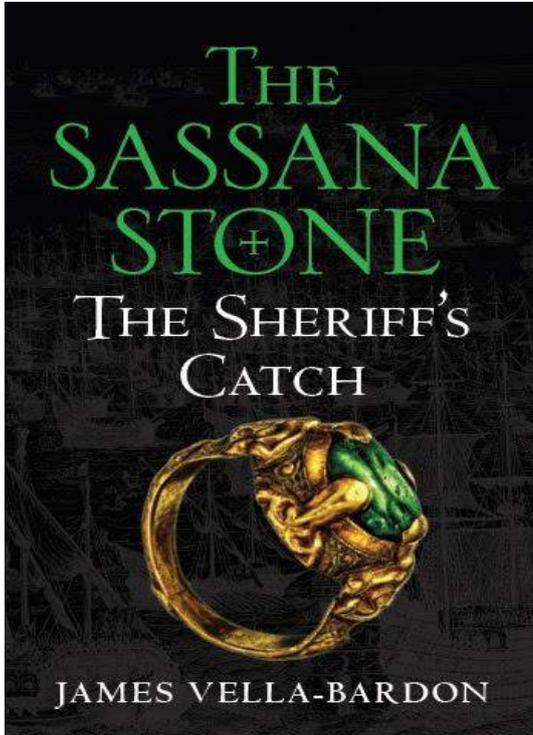
*All stories are featured here on our multilingual webzine.*

# JAMES VELLA-BARDON

Hi all, Can't quite believe that I'm in lockdown again! However we've not been idle in recent months, and after an unforeseen (can I use the word 'unforeseen' during Covid?) 2 week delay, I'm thrilled to announce that:



**TODAY** is **THE OFFICIAL LAUNCH DATE** of **THE SHERIFF'S CATCH, 2nd edition** - in ebook format.



It's been a long, hard trek to get to this point, but I'm delighted to have collaborated with Tearaway Press to release this 2nd edition or 'the author's cut' which makes for much more distilled reading and also contains a great **HISTORICAL NOTE**.

Amazon also has a crazy **ONE DOLLAR** launch day offer going on it. Not sure not sure how long this crazy discount will be available for, but you can check it out [here](#).

Sheriff ebook is also available on **KINDLE UNLIMITED** and I'll provide an update on my social media when the paperback is also available.

**And what about the sequel?**

Also stoked to share that Sheriff's sequel **A Rebel North** is over halfway through its structural edit, with a copy-edit scheduled to take place during August.

It's an absolute delight to be revisiting this book which really immerses the reader in the day to day struggles of a 16th C Irish tribe. Like its predecessor it's just so rich in detail & there's plenty of challenges for Santiago left to overcome - which I hope will make this sequel as good if not better than the first instalment.

So keep an eye out on my social media for a publication date

announcement sometime around November! Now the series is back in black with Tearaway Press, there should be plenty of good Santi books left to look forward to. Best & Go Santiago, James Vella-Bardon

[www.jamesvellabardon.com](http://www.jamesvellabardon.com)



**About me**

I live in Sydney, Australia with my young family and a maniacal cavoodle. In 2018 I achieved a lifelong dream, when my debut novel 'The Sheriff's Catch' was published in the UK. Sheriff is a tense, grim thriller set in 16th century Europe, and climbed to #3 on the bestseller list in my native Malta. My debut was also the recipient of a few international literary awards and nominations. When not writing, I enjoy reading gritty thrillers filled with moral dilemmas and a real sense of danger.

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## Bnadar tal-Festi Greg Caruana (NSW)

F'Malta teżisti namra qawwija tal-bnadar li ilha ġeġja minn żmien l-antik. Hawn ser nagħti xi ħjiel dwar l-istorja ta' kif żviluppat. Minn żmien il-medjuevu, fl-Ewropa u l-madwar, il-bnadar serwev bhala simboli ta' poter, tmexxija, u għaqda. Forsi l-eqdem bandiera li nafu biha f'Malta hi dik li fis-seklu ħmistax, kienet tperper fuq is-swar tal-Imdina, bajda u hamra. Din ma kinetx il-

bandiera ta' Malta iżda kienet bandiera li tirrappreżenta lill-Kunsill tal-Imdina. Meta l-Ordni ta' San Ġwann salpa lejn Malta l-bastimenti kellhom iperpru l-bnadar tas-salib abjad fuq sfond aħmar. Sakemm l-Ordni baqa' Malta l-ebda Malti ma seta' jtella' xi bandiera fuq il-bejt tiegħu. Għall-Maltin, il-bandiera tal-Ordni kienet il-bandiera li tirrappreżenta lilhom ukoll. Wara kollox, meta l-Maltin kienu jingagġaw fuq ix-xwieni tal-Ordni u jsalpaw 'il barra mill-Port, dawn kienu jsalpaw taht il-bandiera tal-Ordni.

Billi l-Ordni, apparti li kien il-ħakkiem ta' Malta, kien ukoll ikkunsidrat bhala istituzzjoni reliġjuża mmexxija mill-Papa, u difensur kontra l-Islam, il-Maltin kienu jassoċċjaw din il-bandiera bhala simbolu reliġjuż. Dan it-twemmin baqa' sal-lum, għaliex kważi f'kull festa għadek tara bnadar bis-salib abjad fuq sfond aħmar fost bosta bnadar oħrajn. Anki l-istatwa ta' Malta li titella' fil-pjazza waqt il-festa, din il-figura kemm-il darba jkollha l-bandiera tal-Ordni. L-istess naraw fuq l-istatwa ta' Kristu Rxox. Joseph Cassar Pullicino, jgħid li l-festi ta' barra bil-purċissjonijiet bdew jiehdu l-għeruf fi żmien l-Ordni, matul is-seklu 18. Biex jiċċelebraw il-festa kienu bdew jintużaw id-dwal mixgħula biż-żejt fil-lampi, u anki bdew jittellaw xi bnadar, kemm fuq il-binja tal-knisja kif ukoll fuq iz-zuntier.

Hu jgħid ukoll li n-nies taż-Żurrieq kienu jikru l-bnadar għall-festa, jew mill-Belt, jew mix-xwieni tal-Ordni. Intant insibu li fl-1724, il-Gran Mastru Vilhena, fit-23 ta' Ġunju 1824, lejliet il-festa ta' San Ġwann il-Battista, jordna lin-nies tal-Belt juru r-rispett tagħhom lejn il-qaddis patrun tal-Ordni, meta l-għada kellha ssir il-purċissjoni, billi jdendlu drappijiet tal-ħarir u twapet mal-gallariji u t-twieqi tad-dar: Dawn x'aktarx kienu twapet u pavaljuni sempliċi, xejn bhall-pavaljuni u twapet tad-damask u disinji li naraw illum. L-istoriku Carmelo Testa, isemmi li ħmistax-il sena, meta l-Gran Mastru Pinto kien elett fl-1741, u dan ried iżur l-Imdina b'mod uffċjali, hu rikeb il-karozzella mill-Palazz tiegħu fil-Belt sa Putirjal, fejn it-triq prinċipali kienet mzejna bil-bnadar. Jekk dawn kienux bnadar iperpru ma' antinjoli mwaqqfa fl-art, jew imdendlin minn binjiet, jew inkella standarti merfugħa ma nafux.

Meta ġew l-Ingliżi, l-Maltin kellhom biex jitpaxxew aktar bil-bnadar. Flok is-salib abjad fuq sfond aħmar, fil-Port il-Kbir, issa il-Port beda jkun mimli bastimenti bil-Union Flag fuq l-arblu. Dawn il-bastimenti kemm-il darba kien ikollhom ukoll xi banderetti mdendla mal-ventijiet meta jkunu qed jiċċelebraw xi avveniment Rjali. L-importanza tal-istandarti kibret aktarx meta l-fratellanzi bdew jorganizzaw il-festi fuq skala ikbar. Dak iż-żmien, bosta organizzaturi tal-festi, kienu ta' spiss jistiednu l-baned Inġliżi biex jagħtu programm mużikali fir-rahal tagħhom fil-festa. Dawn il-baned kienu jiġu bl-istandarti tar-regiment tagħhom.

wwel snin tas-seklu għoxrin il-kazini kienu issa jridu juru li għandhom baned ta' kalibru u kien importanti li jirrapreżentaw ruħhom bl-aħjar mod. Il-bnadar fuq il-bjut tal-kazini bdew isiru bil-mod il-mod aktar komuni. Meta banda kienet tagħti l-programm tagħha, kemm ġewwa r-rahal tagħha, kien importanti li jkollha l-istandart tagħha. Id-drapp tal-qoton, jew kif kienu jgħidulu, jew tax-xoqqa kien l-aktar li jintuża biex jinhadmu l-bnadar bih għaliex hu drapp relativament hafif biex il-bnadar iperpru maż-żifa. Illum jużaw l-aktar nylon jew polyester. Fis-snin sebgħin, il-festi komplew jikbru, wara li fl-1975, il-Gvern kien ħa f'idejh l-għoti tal-permessi tal-festi sekondarji. Issa l-organizzaturi tal-festi sekondarji bdew jagħmlu minn kollox biex ilaħħqu mal-festi primarji. Il-piki taw lok lil organizzaturi li jkollhom aktar armar ta' barra, fosthom, bnadar, bandalori u pavaljuni. Minn daqs ħamsin sena ilu l-hawn, bdejna naraw lokalitajiet ta' residenzi privati li l-bjut tagħhom ikunu mzejna bil-bnadar u ventijiet bil-bozoz ta' kulur tal-festa li jzommu magħha. Biż-żmien, il-bnadar bdew jikbru fil-kobor tagħhom u magħhom twalu l-antinjoli. Illum mhux rari li tara arblu ta' madwar 25 metru għoli b'xi bandiera ta' 10 x 15-il metru. Barra dawn, it-toroq tal-lokalità jkunu miżgħudin bil-bnadar zgħar, li jiddendlu fit-toroq mal-kolonni tal-injam, Il-pavaljuni saru jiksu t-toroq b'mod impressjonanti, qishom twapet ġganteski mdendlin fl-ajru u l-bandalori fuq l-antinjoli jikkumplimentaw dan.

F'ċertu lokalitajiet bosta organizzaturi tal-festi jitolbu r-residenti biex iħalluhom jarmaw antinjola fuq il-bejt tagħhom. Il-bandiera jissupplixxuha l-organizzaturi wkoll biex din tibqa' tidher hemm għall-jiem ta' qabel, u waqt il-festa. Għal kull waħda minn dawn l-okkażjonijiet il-bjut jimtlew b'bosta kuluri differenti. Kull ma jkun jonqos hi ziffa tajba biex il-bnadar jinfethu u l-kuluri u d-disinji jtagawdew.



## Student awarded for her help in assisting her friend who suffers communications problems

Tvm.com.mt

Kylie Grech, a student that attends the Kulleġġ San Benedittu Secondary School at Kirkop, is the winner of the Premju Papa Ġwanni XXIII għat-Tjubija 2021, organised by the Peace Laboratory.

This young student provides daily support for her friend Valentina Mifsud who suffers communications challenges.

During the ceremony at San Anton Palace, President George Vella presented a medal to Kylie Grech and said that Valentina and she had shown goodness that should serve as a lesson and an example for all of us. The President also spoke of national unity as shown by the behaviour of youngsters like Kylie and Valentina. He said unity is not a choice but a need and in his belief a mark of the values of respect, empathy and love that lead to unity. President Vella thanked Father Dijonisju Mintoff who for many years has been managing the Peace Laboratory and has organised this award to commemorate Pope John XXIII – a Pope renowned for his goodness.

During the ceremony it was described how Kylie helps Valentina not only in academic subjects but also helps her to enable Valentina to express her thoughts. This has filled Valentina with courage and even during the pandemic has drawn her closer to her friend. Father Mintoff expressed the need for education so that from an early age young children learn about the need for their altruism



NOSTALGIA - VALLETTA IN THE 60S



**Karkarizi hard at work  
installing  
Birkirkara's newest  
addition back  
in 1932!**

## THE LAST WORD

### New normal: life post COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed, and will continue to change, the world and the way we work, rest and play. Some readers might be old enough to recognise I have stolen those words from a certain chocolate bar's advertising strapline which helps you to 'WORK, REST and PLAY'. Borrowing from the impactful worlds, COVID-19 has completely changed the way the planet works, rests and plays.

So 'going back' to the way we were before COVID-19 is not an option. The challenge is now to start the process of thinking about a 'new normal'.

*"We cannot re-write the chapters of history already past, but we can learn from them, evolve and adapt. The new normal may even be a better normal, certainly a different normal"*

A quote from Ian Davis, Managing Partner at McKinsey, in his article 'The New Normal', summarises this: "For some organisations, near-term survival is the only agenda item. Others are peering through the fog of uncertainty, thinking about how to position themselves once the crisis has passed and things return to normal. The question is, 'What will normal look like?'. While no one can say how long the crisis will last, what we find on the other side will not look like the normal of recent years."

These words were written 11 years ago, during the global financial crisis, but they could easily have been written about the current COVID-19 pandemic. We have faced many challenges as a human race and overcome them, however the other side of each of these challenges has looked very different. This pandemic challenge we will get through, but we must face the fact that this will dramatically change the way we work, rest and play. **Mark Pringle**