

MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER

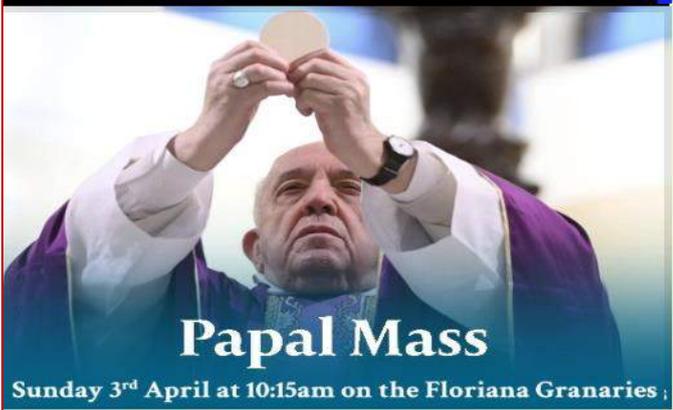
March 2022



MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER

Journal of Maltese Living Abroad

Editor: Frank L Scicluna OAM MQR

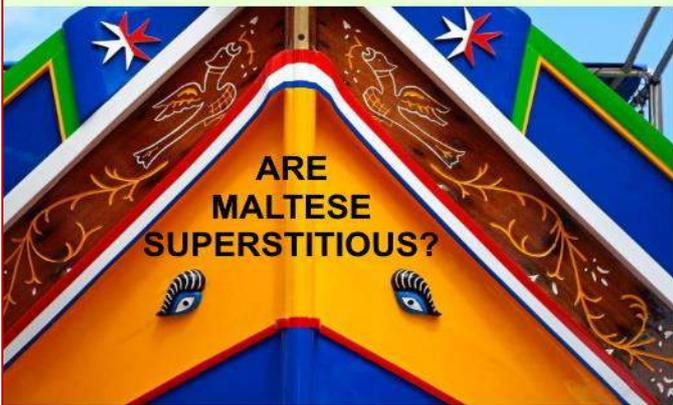


Papal Mass

Sunday 3rd April at 10:15am on the Floriana Granaries



TONY DRAGO



ARE MALTESE SUPERSTITIOUS?



FREEDOM DAY 31 March 2022 VALLETTA



Paralympic swimmer Maja Theuma



The Maltese Community
of South Australia
supports



THE MALTESE JOURNAL

CRUISE LINERS IN THE GRAND HARBOUR - VALLETTA



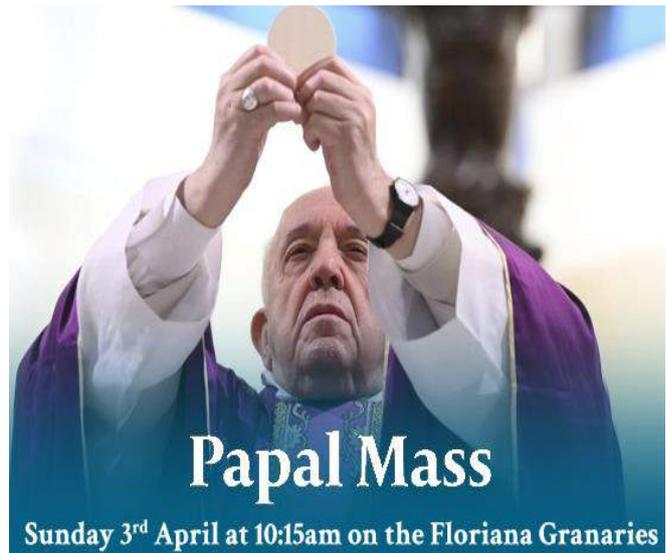
PAPAL VISIT TO MALTA

Anyone wishing to book a seat for a Mass to be led by Pope Francis during his visit to Malta can do so online as of 12pm on Saturday.

The Mass will be celebrated on Sunday, April 3 at 10.15am at the Granaries on Floriana.

To register for a seat, visit papafrangisku.mt/quddiesa or your local Parish office. Registrations can be made individually or on behalf of a family or group and will be open from 12pm on Saturday until Sunday, March 27.

Anyone who registers for a seat will receive an email confirming the registration. They will receive a ticket to the event one week before the Mass. Tickets must be presented at the door and attendees must plan to be there early in the day.



The Church is setting up a special area for wheelchair users and people with hearing difficulties who need the help of a sign language interpreter.



Victor Scicluna hoped for a new life in Ukraine

The family of Victor Scicluna was

about to start a new life in Odessa, a harbour town in southern Ukraine, however destiny showed another course of events.

Victor Scicluna, who is now in Munich and had lived for the past 30 years ago abroad, described Odessa has a lively city, with a coast of some 20 kilometres and a tourist attraction. Fear and hatred have now characterised the city, where Ukrainians and Russians used to live peacefully.

Mr Scicluna told TVMnews that he was in Odessa in January to monitor the last preparations for the family's new house and never dreamed that Russia will some day invade Ukraine.

"I thought that Putin will only take over and when relatives phoned me I used to tell them not to worry....we never thought that the attack will go this far. When we installed the IP cam we never predicted that we will see Russian troops, we did it for safety reasons. Now this is the road that if Russians enter

Odessa, will pass through it.....that is with my cam I initially check if the apartment is still there and at times we see live images of trucks and tanks moving in".

Mr Scicluna added that the Russian attacks and invasion left a great and disastrous impact on the busy Odessa harbour and will have a great negative effect on the Ukrainian economy. He recounted to TVMnews the great shock they suffered when they witnessed large parts of Ukraine resembling a war zone.

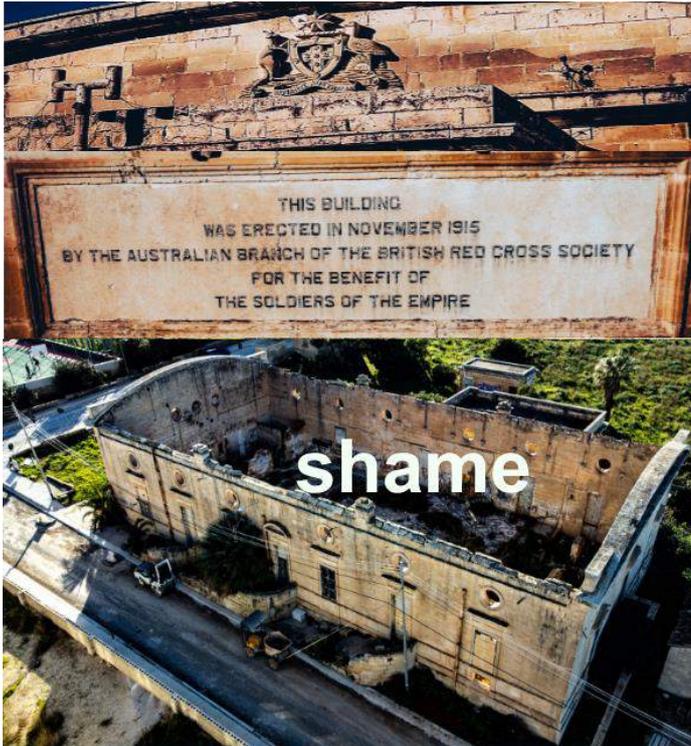
Scicluna said they are in continuous contacts with his wife's family who are refusing to leave their homeland."If my wife's family leave they have to leave their men behind. It looks easy for a person to just leave.... you may not see him again. You watch these things in films, but when you have your family telling you 'sorry we have to end call because an air raid is coming', obviously we are experiencing many emotions".

Mr Scicluna said sanctions against Russia are necessary to obstruct the Russian government, however he sees little hope that Putin will change his mind. He expressed his admiration for Ukrainian President Zelensky for the courage to continue fighting till the end despite the Russians strong attacks

MALTA'S AUSTRALIA HALL AGAIN

WW1

In the heart of Pembroke district you may find the former British Military of Pembroke barracks. Many buildings of what once was the great empire in the world at its peak. You see scattered all around what was left by the British when they left Malta in the late 1970's. Many are now occupied or handed over to the Maltese government and then onto various people and local councils. Here you will find one of those very gems who catered for servicemen who served for the British Red Cross and out of those



Save this unique ANZAC icon - NOW

, during World War. The hall official opening was in January 1916. The sheer size could hold up to in the excess of 2000 people, and was used as theatre. All the servicemen from the Navy, Army and Air Forces which also serving people of Malta and government officials.

Later alternations that added a projection room were added in 1921 to act as a cinema theatre. An extension was added to the main doors to make another story to factor this room and utility room into the main foyer doors. A sum of 2,000 pounds was set aside for the construction by the Red Cross Society. The hall itself was overseen by the British Red Cross as well as the Young Men's Christian Association in conjunction with military authorities.

Australia Hall were amongst the very first to be the first cinemas in Malta. Seating up to 500, it

branches it was supplied to the Australian Branch within the British Red Cross.

A former recreational hall for the servicemen & women of the Australian Branch of the British Red Cross Society. For wounded soldiers from the Australian & New Zealand armed forces who were treated here in nearby St. Michael Hospital became known as the Globe Cinema. During WW2 the hall was used to provide entertainment to servicemen and allied troops. This was overseen by (ENSA) Entertainment National Service Association. Even in the 1960's the venue was still known as a place to be by all who had been there.

Present DaycccSoon as the British left, Australia Hall was handed to the Maltese Government which then was leased out as a discothèque and then left abandoned. By the 1996 the hall was placed to be a Grade 2 Historical and architectural value. Just two years late the building caught fire, this was left as suspicious. The hall was badly damaged and the roof collapsed. There was a lot of question about how it went up on fire, to this day. Now abandoned and left to decay we can only imagine the Australia Hall that served the great hero's from WW1 & 2 and will live on a all round historical gem for Malta. Thank you for the support and following us.

Fort Finder is all about capturing these fortifications throughout our lands through digital media. Preserving, respecting and documenting so they can survive for years to come. Will be exploring Forts of all kinds & sizes above ground and beneath.

Please keep sending us letters of support, Maltese, British, Australians and New Zealanders – once it's gone, it won't be replaced – maltesejournal@gmail.com

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A LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,
Allow me to introduce myself. My name is Desiree Bernard a Guyanese immigrant, residing in Canada for the past 43 years.

The purpose of this email is to bid farewell to Dr. Raymond Xerri, Consulate General of the Republic of Malta to the Commonwealth of Canada.

You are probably pondering on why a Guyanese immigrant is writing about Dr. Xerri. Well, here you go – My Maltese girlfriend (Mrs. Ivy

Bowman) introduced me to Dr. Xerri on a visit to the Malta Community Club in Mississauga, where we go to have dinner on Friday evenings.

In our introduction, I have found Dr. Xerri to be intelligent and a great conversationalist. When I mentioned I was originally from Guyana, his response was, I have been to Guyana on a Mission, taken by surprise, we talked about various parts of Guyana and where he visited. Dr. Raymond Xerri is patriotic to his country (Malta) and a great humanitarian. His mannerism is undoubtedly a gentleman from a great upbringing. With that said, I would like to convey my warmest farewell to Dr. Xerri for all the success and happiness in the next chapter of his career, along with good health to him and his family. It was a pleasure meeting you and getting acquainted. God Bless! Best regards,

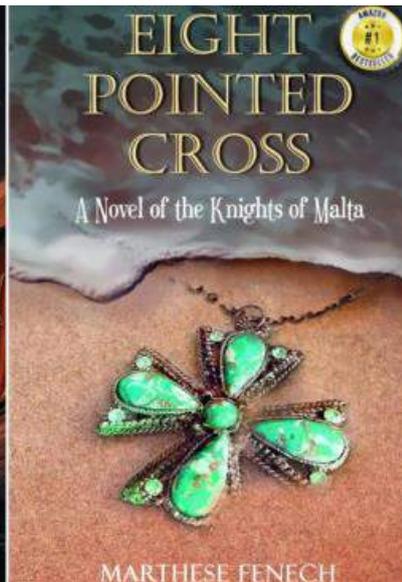
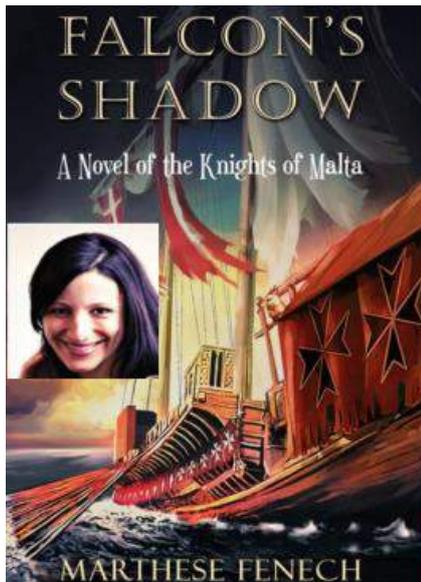
Desiree Bernard -

The Maltese eNewsletter - The Journal of the Maltese Diaspora has been published and can be obtained by emailing the editor Frank L. Scicluna on maltesejournal@gmail.com
Copies can now be obtained from Malta Info Stations at the Consulate General of the Republic of Malta to Canada, Malta Bake Shop, the Melita Soccer Club and the Malta Band Club Toronto.

CANADA

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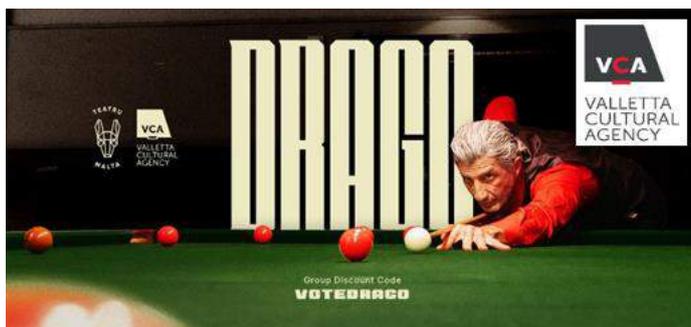
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MESSAGE FROM MARTHESE FENECH – CANADA

Dr. Raymond Xerri, a 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* trilogy. His sharing of my television and media appearances has garnered tens of thousands of

views across the globe, and I am deeply grateful for his promotional efforts and advocacy.



Theatre Production *Drago* opens

50% discount limited time offer

The Valletta Cultural Agency's first theatre production of the year, a collaboration with Teatru Malta, celebrates

al and international snooker player Tony Drago.

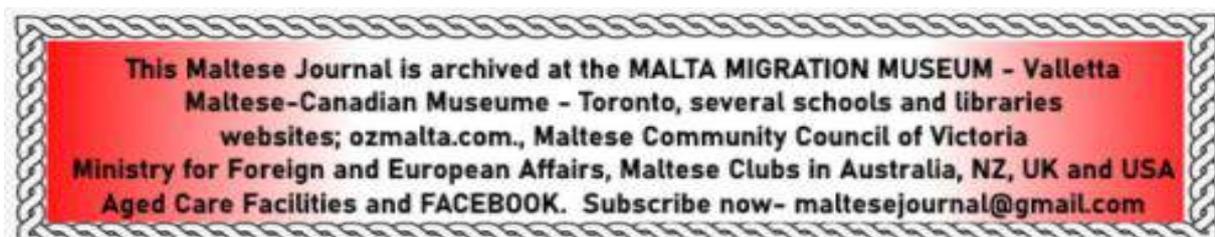
DRAGO - It-Tvenvin ta' Tornado Tony, opens tomorrow Friday 11th March with doors opening at 7pm at the grand club of Società Filarmonica La Valette. This site-specific production takes a look at the highs and lows of Tony Drago's path to greatness.

A limited time offer of a 50% discount on the €20 ticket price applies to group bookings of 4 or more. Simply apply the promo code VOTEDRAGO upon check-out on www.showshappening.com/Valletta-Cultural-Agency/DRAGO.

Famous for his fiery temper and speed around the table, both becoming as synonymous with him as his competition attire, Tony is the stuff of living legend on both the local and international snooker circuits. This site-specific performance is directed by Sean Buhagiar and written by André Mangion, with the artistic and audiovisual direction of the show being entrusted to visual artist Charlie Cauchi.

Will you be keeping score? The production opens on the 11th of March and will run until the 20th of March with an 8pm performance.

For more information on DRAGO 'It-Tvenvin ta' Tornado Tony' visit <https://www.vca.gov.mt/en/news/vca-l-teatru-malta-present-'drago> and <https://www.facebook.com/vallettaculturalagency>



Maltese Community Council of Victoria



The Executive prepares to join in the parade



The Maltese Community of Victoria during the Moomba Festival Melbourne 2022



MCCV AND MMG Participate in MOOMBA 2022

Moomba is held annually in Melbourne, Australia. Run by the City of Melbourne, it is Australia's largest free community festival. The Melburnian tradition is celebrated over four days, incorporating the Labour Day long weekend, from Friday to the second Monday in March. Moomba is culturally important to Melbourne, having been celebrated since 1955, and regularly attracts up to a million people,





MEET MARK BUTTIGIEG MLC

Maltese-Australian Politician

Mark was born in Sydney to Maltese parents Victor and Carmen, who immigrated to Australia from Malta in the 1950s. He is married to Anna and together they have a son Gerard. Mark's areas of interest include political philosophy and macroeconomics. He enjoys music, exercise and surfing.

Mark is an Electrician and has qualifications in the Electrical Trade and Electrical Engineering from TAFE NSW. He also holds an Arts degree majoring in political science and an Economics degree with first-class

honours. At 15 Mark began an Electrical Apprenticeship with the then Sydney County Council and later became an electrical systems operator then training manager with Energy Australia, now Ausgrid.

Mark joined the Electrical Trades Union (ETU) in 1982 and the Australian Labor Party (ALP) in 1993 and has had extensive involvement with both the political and industrial wings of the Labor movement. Mark stood for the ALP in the Division of Cook at the 2004 and 2007 Federal Elections. He was an organiser for the Electrical Trades Union NSW Branch before entering parliament.

Mark was elected as a Councillor of the Sutherland Shire Council.

Mark is the NSW Labor Spokesperson for the electorates of Heathcote, Oatley, Camden, Bathurst and Orange.

unmissable Gozitan dishes

Rebecca Anastasi

GOZITAN FTIRA

Legendary across the archipelago, the Gozitan ftira, or traditional pizza, is true sin, and perfect for days when you just want to forget about the waistline. Using bread dough as the base, and topped with potato (yes, that's carbs on carbs), the ftira is also flavoured with local zest – try one with tuna and anchovies for an authentic taste of the island. And another plus? It'll keep you full for hours. Well, until the cravings start again.

FRESH PRODUCE AND ANTIPASTI

Gozo is known for its bucolic landscapes and salt-of-the-earth lifestyle. And this is reflected in its food. Olives, capers, sundried tomatoes, basil, and mint are frequently served in platters with local cheese and smoked sausage. No need for cutlery: these are best scooped up in a fresh hobza (loaf) and picked up with your fingers. Add some homemade jam and drink a shot of herbal liqueur to complete your meal.

FRESH FISH

This may not be surprising (Gozo being an island and all), but fresh fish is easily available and provides a healthy, Mediterranean alternative to more meat-based dishes. Tuna, swordfish and lampuki (dorado) are staples, especially when baked in the oven or pan fried with lashings of olive oil and garlic.

BREAD, CHEESE AND OLIVE OIL

Simple is often best and there's nothing better than a meal of hobz with Gozitan gbejniet (sheep or goat cheeselets). There are two varieties: melt-in-your-mouth soft or tangy hard with a peppery infusion. And, finish that off with prized Gozitan extra virgin olive oil, a fruity pale ingredient which takes your meal from great to outstanding.

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CHEESE OR PUMPKIN PIE

Crumbly puff pastry pies are popular any time of year, but spring is the time in which they really come into their own. Pumpkin or cheeselet pie, made out of the traditional sheep or goat's cheese, are made and sold by the bucket load. You'll be able to find these in most restaurants and snack bars – just try a different slice every day!

RABBIT STEW

Traditional Maltese Rabbit Stew is considered Malta's national dish. Read on to find out how you can make this cultural delicacy yourself.

Traditional Maltese stewed rabbit, better known as 'Stuffat tal-Fenek', is considered Malta's national dish. It's been around the Maltese Islands since the Knights of St John, which makes it a cultural delicacy that contributes to Malta's rich heritage. The dish is internationally famed, popular among locals and foreigners alike and is definitely one of the top Maltese foods you must try whilst on holiday in Malta!



Are Maltese Superstitious?

Culture



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

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

The moon may be regarded by some possessing in its gravitational force the power to influence our lives. Some firmly believe that the moon casts its effect not only on the sea, vegetables and animals, but also on humans. For instance, a person suffering from an epileptic fit is said to be influenced by the moon – we say '*tah tal-qamar*', – that is, one is reacting according to the physical influence of the moon. There is a proverb that says: (Maltese) *Torqodx fid-dawl tal-qamar għax jagħtik ħmar-il-lejl*, Eng. Do not sleep under a moonlit sky lest you shall suffer from nightmares.

A person, when eating, should be wary if a pregnant woman is in his presence, so that he offers her from his food lest the expectant mother's child be born with a birth mark. This instance I have experienced when my wife was pregnant. While promenading in Marsaskala a woman enjoying a barbeque on the rocky beach came over and offered my wife an apple.

Young children are to be protected from the evil eye. Hence it is expected that whenever a stranger compliments a child for his healthy looks one should always add the words (Maltese) '*Alla jbierek*' god bless or '*imbierek alla*' – god be praised. Otherwise, the mother of the child might be suspicious that one's compliments were actually meant to harm the child.

Up to a generation or so ago, whenever a child opened his mouth to yawn, the mother would quickly make the sign of the cross with her thumb over the child's mouth, to ward off any evil spirits that might be ready to enter that orifice. The sign of the cross is marked on a heap of salt that has just been harvested.

On the child's first birthday, a game is set up to test the child's inclination towards any possible profession when reaching adulthood. This game is known as '*il-quććija*'. Numerous objects are laid on the floor by the parents, and the toddler is coaxed to crawl towards this cluster of 'toys' to pick up one item of his choice. The item picked up by the child will hint the child's inclinations. For instance, if he chooses to pick up a writing implement, he would be expected to choose a clerical job. Similarly, were he to choose, say, a labourer's tool, such as a hammer or pincers, he might want to become a craftsman. This game is all taken with a pinch of salt really.

Bad luck in marriage – There is a saying in Maltese that goes: '*Ix-xebba li tiekol fit-triq ma ssibx tiżzewweġ*' – Eng. 'The girl who eats (any sort of food) in the street shall never find her man to marry'.

A bride should not be seen in her wedding dress by her groom prior to wedding ceremony lest this brings bad luck. Another saying relates to the bride who gets wet in rain when on her way to the wedding ceremony, shall enjoy good luck. This comes from the Italian saying. '*Sposa bagnata, sposa fortunata*'.

Historical Chapels in Malta

Culture

The medieval Santa Cecilia Chapel in Għajnsielem - Gozo

Jean-Paul Borg



The oldest surviving chapel in Gozo: The medieval Santa Cecilia Chapel in Għajnsielem, built in around 1540

Dedicated to St. Cecilia, patroness of sacred music (whose feast day is November 22), the chapel was completely restored prior to 1630 and functioned intermittently as a church until 1644 when it was declared unfit for the celebration of mass and deconsecrated.

This small stone church is the best example of the many unaisled chapels that once dotted the countryside of Gozo. Like other late medieval chapels it is a plain cube except for the slight pitch of the roof. Its floor measures seven by seven metres, nearly a perfect square. It is divided into four bays by three slightly pointed arches rising from wall piers to hold up the shallow pitched stone roof.

At the entrance, three steps lead down to the chapel floor which is about a metre below ground level. The only light source inside is a single rectangular window over the door.

In 1613, the neighbouring tower was built; affording a degree of protection to the farming community of the area but the socio-economic conditions and ecclesiastical policy of the period signalled the beginning of the end for the chapel – despite considerable local support for it to stay open. After periods of closure in 1630 and 1634, in 1635, a devotee, Pasquale Muscat, is recorded as having given the sum of six tari per year for the maintenance of the church. This payment, however, seems to have ended with his death, which is registered in 1644, shortly before the final deconsecration of the chapel.

A few years later ix-Xewkija became the first rural parish of Gozo and the building of the parish church of St. John the Baptist meant that the centre of religious activity shifted east. The abandoned church became an ancillary building to the St. Cecilia tower and may even have been used to house a mule-powered mill. The tower and church were listed as Grade One monuments in 1996 but little was done to protect the chapel which was battered by weather and vandalism until it was finally entrusted to Wirt Għawdex (Gozo Heritage) in 2008. It has now been fully restored and is open to visitors as well as hosting lectures, exhibitions, concerts and even business conferences.



Ghala tuza l-Ingiliz meta taf titkellem bil-Malti

MALTA HIJA WAHDA
MILL-IZGHAR
PAJJIZI TAD-DINJA LI
GHANDHA LINGWA
TAGHHA

Kappella (Chapel) at Wied il-Lunzjata, Kerċem - Gozo (Malta)



– Kav Joe Attard

tidher fil-faċċata, kienet tgħid li din il-kappella ċkejna kienet benefiċċju rjali mwaqqaf mis-Sinjura Sibilla d'Aragona. Billi meta mietet din is-Sinjura ma kellhiex tfal, il-Kappella waqgħet f'idejn l-Istat u r-Rettur allura kien jintagħżel mill-Viċi Re ta'Sqallija u wara mill-Gran Mastru. Il-bini u l-forma tal-Kappella tallum imorru lura lejn it-18-il sekl, għalkemm wara t-Tieni Gwerra Dinjija parti mill-faċċata u s-Sagrastija kienu xi darba Katakombi Insara. Il-Pittura tat-Titular hija xogħol Fra Luca Garnier tal-Ordni ta' San Gwann.

Din hija l-unika pittura tal-Lunzjata li nsibuha f'Titular. Barra l-pittura tat-titular f'din il-kappella ċkejna nsibu wkoll l-istatwa li turina d-dehra tal-anġlu qed jagħti l-aħbar lil Marija li kellha ssir Omm il-Feddej. Skrizzjoni fuq irħama li għadha tidher fuq il-faċċata tal-Kappella bil-kelmiet Non gode l'immunita' ecclesiastica turi li din il-kappella ma kenitx tgawdi d-dritt bħalma kienu jgawdu oħrajn – jiġifieri li l-Liġi jew l-Awtorita' Ċivili ma kenitx tgawdi d-dritt fuq min ifttx kenn f'kappelli bħal din. Ta' min jgħid hawnhekk li l-Gvernatur Sir Frederick Ponsonby (1827-1836) kien neħħa dan id-dritt fl-1828.

Fil-knisja parrokkjali ta' San Gorg fil-Belt Victoria, insibu wkoll din il-ġrajja tal-Lunzjata li l-Pittur Taljan minn Ruma Gian Battista Conti, li għamel snin twal ipinġi f'din il-Bażilika (magħruf bħala l-Pittur tal-Anġli), hallielna fuq iż-‘żejt’ (ara ritratt) fl-1964 u li nsibuha fil-Kappellun ta' San Lazzru. Din il-Bażilika Gorgjana tista' tiftaħar b'għadd ta' xogħlijiet li ħarġu mill-pniezel ta' bosta pitturi magħrufa fosthom Mattia Preti, Gużepi Cali', Giuseppe d'Arena, Godwin Cutajar, Stefano u Alessio d'Erardi, Gio Nicola Buhaġjar u Vincenzo Zahra.

Nibqgħu fil-Belt Victoria u tefgħa ta' ġebli bogħod għandna l-Knisja Katidrali fejn hawnhekk ukoll insibu t-tifkira tal-Lunzjata u propju fis-saqaf tal-Korsija nsibu l-istorja tal-Anġlu Gabrijel iħabbar lil Marija, xogħol il-pittur Ganni Vella. Fil-Katidral tal-Assunta niltaqgħu ma' diversi episodji mill-ħajja tal-Madonna u dan tal-Lunzjata huwa wieħed minnhom. Qabel naqbd u treqitna lejn il-bajja

Il-Ġrajja tal-Lunzjata f'diversi nħawi t'Għawdex Il-ġrajja tal-Lunzjata hija mument importanti ħafna fl-Istorja tas-Salvazzjoni. Kien minn hawn nistgħu ngħidu li beda t-tnissil tat-tarbija divina li kellha tifdi lill-umanita' sħiħa. Bil-kliem stedina tal-anġlu Gabrijel lix-xbejba twajba Marija li mill-ewwel tat il-'fiat' tagħha lil Alla l-Missier, ingħata bidu għall-proċess twil li kellu jintemm fil-għar ta' Betlem fejn il-Madonna tat il-ħajja lil Binha Gesu' li kellu jifdi d-dinja kollha.

L-istorja lkoll nafuha: mis-Sema il-Missier Etern jibgħat lill-anġlu messagġier tiegħu f'dar fqajra u modesta biex jagħti l-aħbar lil Marija li kellha ssir Omm Alla. Dan il-kwadru nistgħu narawh fit-titular li hemm fil-kappella ċkejna tal-Lunzjata taħt ir-riħ tar-raħal ta' Kerċem fejn insibu Wied saqwi mill-isbaħ magħruf mill-Għawdxin kollha bħala Wied il-Lunzjata. Dan il-Wied ħa ismu minn din il-Kappella antika li tiddomina dan il-post li jsaħhar iddedikata lit-Thabbira tal-Anġlu Gabrijel lill-Madonna. Il-Madonna hija dik il-krejtura li ġiet imħabbra (annunzjata) li kellha ssir Omm il-Feddej. Biż-żmien il-kelma 'annunzjata' saret u daret għal kelma 'Lunzjata' u baqgħet ġejja sallum. Naħseb li ġara l-istess lill-kelmiet bil-Latin li darba kien qal Pilatu dwar Gesu' wara li dan kien ġie fflaġellat u muri lill-poplu: 'Ecce Homo'.

Illum din x-xbieha ta' Kristu tant daret u nbidlet fil-kliem li saret 'L-aċċjomu'. Intant il-festa f'din il-knisja żgħira tal-Lunzjata ssir fil-25 ta' Marzu, propju disa' xhur qabel it-tifkira tat-Twelid ta' Gesu' Bambin fl-għar ta' Betlem (Il-Milied). Dokumenti qodma juru li din il-Kappella kienet diġa teżisti fl-1347. Stemma jew aħjar arma tal-familja li kienet

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pittoreska tax-Xlendi, għandna l-knisja Santwarju ddedikat lill-Qalb Imqaddsa ta' Gesu' u waqt żjara li kont qed nagħmel dan l-aħħar lil dan it-tempju mwaqqaf fir-raħal tas-sajjeda billi s-sekonda festa hija dik ta' Sant'Indrija, nilmaħ ukoll lepisodju tal-Lunzjata mimli ħajja bil-kuluri li jaf jagħtina l-Pittur Għawdx i Kav Pawlu Camilleri Cauchi; dan issibuh fil-kappella ta' Lourdes, sewwa sew fil-koppleta. Nitolqu mill-Fontana u nerħulha lejn il-Punent tal-gżira Għawdxija u nidħu firraħal tal-Għarb u hawn insibu żewġ pitturi marbutin mal-ġrajja tal-Lunzjata; il-pittur huwa l-Kav Pawlu Camilleri Cauchi li ħallielna t-tifkira tat-Thabbira tal-Anġlu Gabrijel fid-dar tagħha ta' Nazzaret, l-ewwel fil-Knisja Parrokkjali ddedikata lill-Viżitazzjoni tal-Madonna lill-qariba tagħha Santa Eliżabetta fil-koppla kkulurita ta' din il-Bażilika qadima, u t-tieni pittura tal-istess artist insbuha fil-kappella qadima magħrufa bħala taż-Żejt mibnija f'nofs il-kampanja. Ma nitbiegħdux mill-Għarb u nidħu sas-Santwarju Nazzjonali tal-Madonna Ta' Pinu u hawn ukoll insibu l-ġrajja tal-Lunzjata f'iktar minn okkażjoni waħda; Emvin Cremona (1919- 1987) ħallielna x-xogħol tiegħu, kif jaf hu, fil-knisja waqt li Robert Caruana Dingli ħallielna din t-tifkira fis-Marija li kienet ser issir Omm l-iben t'Alla biex jieħu s-sura ta' bniedem bħalna u jgħammar fostna biex ikun jista' jitwieled, ibati u jmut għalina biex jifdi lid-dinja sħiħa minn dnubietha.

Sagrastija; fil-korsija Briffa wkoll fakkar din il-ġrajja għażiża. Ir-rettur ta' dan is-Santwarju bagħat jgħidli wkoll li fil-knisja parrokkjali tax-Xagħra, raħal twelidu, insibu wkoll dehra tal-Lunzjata, xogħol Virgilio Monti. Nibqgħu fil-Punent t'Għawdex u fil-knisja Arcipretali taż-Żebbuġ iddedikata lit-Tluġħ fis-Sema tal-Madonna, insbu wkoll il-ġrajja tal-Lunzjata.

L-istorja kollha nsibuha f'wieħed mill-kwadri laterali, xogħol li ħareġ mill-pinzell ta' Emvin Cremona fl-1945. Din il-knisja hija miksija minn tip ta' rħam li nstab biss fiż-Żebbuġ u allura d-dehra ta' din il-knisja minn ġewwa hija xi ħaġa mhix komuni. Knisja oħra f'Għawdex li naf li għandha wkoll kwadru tal-Lunzjata hija l-knisja qadima li għal żmien twil qdiet lill-parruċċani ta' Għajnsielem u li issa għamlet il-wisa' għall-knisja ġdida u gotika li tinsab tefgħa ta' ġebbla bogħod minnha L-artist huwa Giuseppe Cali'. Din il-knisja żgħira u qadima llum il-ġurnata tkun miftuħa għal sigħat twal kuljum għall-Adorazzjoni. B'hekk tajna ħarsa lejn il-kwadri li juruna l-ġrajja sabiħa tal-Lunzjata fejn il-protagonisti huma tnejn; l-Anġlu Gabrijel mibgħut mis-Sema biex iħabbar lil Omna

THE ZOOM LINK Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/77356918431?pwd=OHVLTktBMFJoMVpmWU5WT3pBRVICdz09> Meeting ID: 773 5691 8431 Passcode: U71p1V

So Friday and every Friday at 7.30pm Australian Eastern Standard Time 4.30pm in Perth, in Queensland 6.30pm, 9.30am in central Europe and 2.30am in California USA, 4.30am Washington DC, 11.30am in Nairobi-Kenya and 9.30pm in Wellington New Zealand) on our MSSP COVID OUTREACH Please pass on this information to others make sure you do this in the name of the Good News which we treasure in our hearts! CAN YOU PLEASE SEND ME YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS IF YOU HAVE ONE THANKS! Fr. Noel Bianco mssp – Victoria, Australia

Dear Frank, I, on behalf of the members of the Maltese community of Adelaide, cannot thank you enough for your great effort to put Malta and the Maltese culture on the map of the world. We in South Australia support you in your endeavour and you made our community proud that the best journal for Maltese living abroad is the best on the NET. It is not political and easy to read. Every issue is full of information about the history, culture and heritage of Malta and Gozo. PLEASE. Watch out for an individual who is putting obstacles to your journal. I hope we all ignore him. Keep up the good work, we are all behind you. Thank you and your staff. LBJ - ADELAIDE



World Down Syndrome Day 2022: Inclusion Means Program

Join us for an exciting programme of webinars on World Down Syndrome Day (21 March 2022) a

Why 'inclusion means'?

The United Nations, in the general principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD), calls for "full and effective participation and inclusion in society". Everyone should have the same

opportunities, take part in the same activities, be able to go to the same places and enjoy the same experiences in life.

But around the world people with Down syndrome and disabilities do not benefit from full and effective participation and inclusion in society.

There are many reasons for this. One reason is a lack of agreed understanding about what inclusion is and what inclusive systems look like in practice.

Not everyone understands:

- how to include people with Down syndrome and disabilities;
- how full inclusion benefits everyone – with or without disabilities;
- what is happening around the world to bring about inclusion for all.

WDSO 2022 "INCLUSION MEANS..." – MALTA

When you believe and recognise the abilities of persons with the condition of Down Syndrome the result is amazing.

The Friendship Circle a group of youths within The Down Syndrome Association Malta were given the opportunity to work in a one-day cafeteria, a project called Coffee with a Smile funded by the Maltese Youth Agency (Be-active).

The participants managed to run and work as a team together with some support and serve numerous clients who joined for coffees

and sweets. This project was a real success so much so that a similar project will be implemented again this year.

Do you know why love is blind? Love is blind because our mother started loving us before seeing us.

[Petra Wettinger Photography](#)

MC by [Malcolm Cremona](#)

Down Syndrome Association – Malta



Former prime minister Karmenu Mifsud Bonnici donates newspaper collection

Oldest documents in his possession consist of a 1793 manuscript copy of the will drawn up by the King of France. by Matthew Vella

Karmenu Mifsud Bonnici



The University of Malta Library has been the recipient of Emeritus Prime Minister Karmenu Mifsud Bonnici's book and newspaper collection.

This donation, which was facilitated by Prof Arnold Cassola and encouraged by Dr Mifsud Bonnici's siblings, includes Dr Karmenu Mifsud Bonnici's private collection of books and newspapers.

A few other documents are also part of the collection: the oldest documents in his possession consist of a 1793 manuscript copy of the will drawn up by the King of France, Louis and another old manuscript text pertaining to the 2 July 1817 Conto del Reliquiario della Santa Colonna di San Paolo.

Various copies of *L-iStudent* and *Is-Sebħ*, *The Bulletin*, *Il-Kokka* and the pamphlets issued by the *Għaqda Zgħazagħ Soċjalisti* are a staple part of his collection as are many other publications relating to industrial law and workers' participation. Manwel Dimech's keen interest in languages and literature is testified by the 1907 *Il Chelliem tal erbat ilsna* (French, English, Italian and Maltese), as well as *Il Chelliem Inglis*, which contains a rare image of Manwel Dimech's tomb in Sidi Bishr Xatbi, Egypt. Both books form part of the collection.

A signed typewritten collection of poems by Oliver Friggieri, Ġorġ Pisani's classical work *Il Waltz tad-Dellijiet*, a 1986 ode to the prowess and bounty of Karmenu Mifsud Bonnici, written by Gozitan

Labour candidate Kelinu Vella Haber, and embossed on simil-parchment paper form part of the small Melitensia group of books.

To these one must add antiquarian publications of Maltese interest such as the volume entitled *L'Assemblea Nazionale di Malta (26 February 1919-27 May 1921)* and the Ordinance nr. VII of 1868, which was published in book form after the end of the legislature.

Another important item which is very relevant to Maltese political history is an undated book in Maltese, unfortunately without its original cover, which is basically a detailed account of the life of Lord Gerald Stickland. The author of this book was the former Minister of Works, Edwin P. Vassallo.

Two other books of interest include a neat handwritten dedication to Karmenu Mifsud Bonnici, by the author, Giuseppe Borg Pantalleresco. The two *dediche* are written in Italian and are to be found respectively in the 1957 book entitled *Palpiti, Dmugħ u Tbissim*, and the 1953 book entitled, *Għex, mhux bil-Ħobs biss*.

Apart from the many books on law and industrial relations, which were all related to his legal formation, specialisation and subsequent legal career, there are a number of publications pertaining to pharmacy and medicine, which were part of his sister Cettina's textbooks at University. These prestigious collections, which will be housed at the University of Malta Library, will shortly be processed and made accessible for consultation.





'MY GRANDFATHER WAS FOUR WHEN HE WAS STOLEN FROM HIS MUM. HE NEVER SAW HER AGAIN.'

Adrienne Tam *MamaMia*

Like many people, television host and fitness instructor Megan Waters has a love-hate relationship with the effects of the pandemic. On one hand, she was stuck in

a seemingly endless loop of lockdowns in Melbourne last year and missed out on several key experiences in her first year as co-host of NITV's AFL show *Yokayi Footy*.

On the other hand, she had time to recalibrate and focus on her goals. Most importantly, she was able to spend four months in 2020 and another two months at the end of last year in her home city of Darwin, in Larrakia Country in the Northern Territory. She got to have quality time with friends and family, including her favourite person in the world - her grandfather.

The 33-year-old becomes emotional as she speaks about her grandad, who is from the Stolen Generation. "He's really unwell. It's pretty raw at the moment. He's the king of our family. He is an extraordinary human. And he's lived such a full, humongous life," she tells *Mamamia*.

"He's 92. Well, he likes to think he's 92 and we let him have that," she continues with a watery laugh. "But he was taken away from his mum around the age of four from the Tennant Creek region. They were never reunited. I can't even fathom what it would have been like for him growing up without love, removed from his culture, traditions and family. I think about how painful it would have been for his mum. So much trauma."

THE STOLEN GENERATIONS The Stolen Generations (also known as Stolen Children) were the children of Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent who were removed from their families by the Australian federal and state government agencies and church missions, under acts of their respective parliaments. The removals of those referred to as "half-caste" children were conducted in the period between approximately 1905 and 1967, although in some places mixed-race children were still being taken into the 1970s.



Sorry, Tony Albert, Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane, 2008.

Official government estimates are that between one in ten and one in three Indigenous Australian children were forcibly taken from their families and communities, between 1910 and 1970, affecting all regions of the country. They are called "the Stolen Generation".

Maltese Paralympic Swimmer Lights Up World Series Event With Stellar Performance



By [Gianluca Barbara](#)

Paralympic swimmer Maja Theuma has capped off an impressive display at the World Series in Lignano, Sabbiadoro, placing second in the 50m freestyle on Saturday with a season-best.

After nailing the 50m, Theuma took to the

400m freestyle and 100m backstroke, clocking 10:02.26 and 3:10:94 respectively, with the latter result being her second-fastest result in the event ever.



Paralympic swimmer Maja Theuma ACHI finest.

The 21-year-old's second-placed 50m sprint was completed with a time of 1:08:42. Not impressive enough? Theuma did all this whilst unwell.

The competition was the fourth edition of the Italian WPS World Series event, held in Udine between March 6th and March 13th, 2022.

This was Theuma's first international meet of the season, taken in preparation for the upcoming ASA International Easter tournament in April.

She attended the competition alongside coach Edward Caruana Dingli.

With no breaks on Theuma's schedule, the young athlete has now convened with her team – Exiles. In due course, they will set out to Italy, to engage in a training camp there, and prepare for the upcoming Easter meet.

Without question, Theuma will continue to establish herself as one of Malta's

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Sunday, 20th March 2022 10.00am – 2.00pm (4 hours) 5 per person (donation)

ZOOM link and user pack will be provided upon registration and payment. You will be provided with recipe, utensil list and figolli template.



Register and book here or for further information phone our office on (03) [9387 8922](tel:93878922)
egister today and join in on the fun.

LEGGENDI MALTIN - MALTESE LEGENDS

Culture

Malta's mysterious, 7000 years of history together with its strong religious background makes it the perfect backdrop to a number of legends, myths and folk tales. Most of the stories find their foundations in truth and historical facts, with each story being embellished by every generation that narrated it. Other stories were used as explanations of different phenomena that people could not explain. Here are some of our favourite myths & legends...

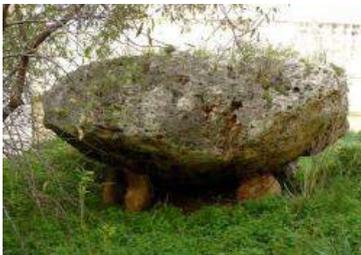
IL-ĠEBLA L-WIEQFA (THE UPRIGHT STONE)



In the whereabouts of Qala, Gozo, there was once a drought villagers were unhappy when they saw that the land was not producing anything so they asked the giantess the lucky stone and place it in the middle of the village.

The giantess placed the lucky stone in the middle of the village and they did some rituals, danced, and sang for the gods for many days. Finally the gods heard their prayers and rain showered over their land and it was soon full of vegetation. When the wise old man saw all that vegetation he said, "Make sure to treasure that stone as a sacred token. With the stone next to us we will have no more troubles. However, we need to guard it now and forever" The giantess happily offered to guard the stone and she sat on top of it and never got off it. For this reason, the villagers were very happy and did not have any trouble with their crops. One night, the giantess disappeared and the whole village was looking for her. They could not find her anywhere so the wise old man conducted a ritual around the stone and prayed for their land. According to the legend, the giantess was never seen again but she left the upright stone behind her. As long as the stone remains in its place, the village will remain peaceful just as the giantess wanted it to be.

IL-ĦAĠRA TA' SANSUNA (SANSUNA'S ROCK)



In the village of Xagħra, Gozo one can find remains of large rocks. According to the legend, a woman who was very strong used to live there (her name Sansuna deriving from the name Samson because of her strength) Sansuna did not live in the whereabouts of Xagħra at first. She used to live in a far village but the people there did not like her so she grabbed her things and

Sansuna did not live in the whereabouts of Xagħra at first. She used to live in a far village but the people there did not like her so she grabbed her things and started walking towards a peaceful place. On the way she met some people and asked them, "I'm trying to find the peaceful place, do you know where it is?" but these people didn't know exactly where it was so they told her to keep on walking straight ahead and she would come across it at some point.

At last she found a farmer who knew where the peaceful place was. He told her to keep on walking up the hill and she kept on walking. When she arrived at the top of the hill and looked at the view she knew she had arrived at the peaceful place. Laying her big rock on the ground, she built her house there and slept. The legend does not say for how long Sansuna slept, or if she ever woke up, but the villagers of where she lived before also wanted to find the peaceful place. When they arrived on top of the hill they saw the rock where Sansuna lived, but it was empty. Instead, beneath the large rock was a very rich area of vegetation and the legend says that Sansuna's spirit continued to be present in that area and within the people.

ST. PAUL & THE VENOMOUS VIPER



This legend is probably the best known amongst the locals, as it is about Malta's Patron Saint and can be found in the Bible. The story says that when St. Paul was shipwrecked in Malta, he was gathering wood to make himself a

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fire, as he lit the fire a viper was driven out by the heat and bit him. The Maltese, who were very superstitious people, expected St. Paul to die of poisoning, however, he simply shook the snake off into the fire and no harm came to him. It is said that from that day on, all snakes and scorpions found in Malta became harmless and non-poisonous.

THE LEGEND OF WIED SPERANZA



This legend can be attributed to small chapel which can be found on the outskirts of the village of Mosta. According to the legend, one day a young girl and her sisters were in the fields looking after a herd of sheep when they noticed a group of Turks approaching them. The girls started running away, but the youngest girl couldn't keep up because she had a limp. The girl found a cave, hid inside and started praying to Our Lady to save her. The story goes that Our Lady immediately intervened and sent a spider to weave a web over the opening of the cave. When the Turkish invaders arrived near the cave entrance, they saw the web intact and assumed that nobody had been inside. Since Our Lady saved the girl's life, she got permission to build a chapel on top of the cave where she hid.

THE LEGEND OF IL-MAQLUBA & FILFLA



Il-Maqluba is a large sinkhole found in the village of Qrendi, it is believed to be created around the year 1343, when Malta experienced one of its most severe winter storms and possibly even an earthquake. The people at the time probably could not think of a plausible explanation for the sinkhole, and so this legend was created. The story goes that a group of bad and corrupt people lived together in a hamlet. God was so angry at their behaviour that he decided that the land swallow up the village sparing no one, in turn, angels were then dispatched to dispose of the "bad village" by dumping it in the sea - this is how Filfla was created.



THE MALTESE FLAG

This legend is quite controversial because some historians claim it is true, while others claim that it is impossible, but that is what a legend is by definition. I decided to include it because it is one of the legends which I learnt at school which I remember to this very day! The legend goes that around the year 1090AD, the Norman Count Roger of Sicily came to Malta to expel the Arab rulers. After a short battle, the Arabs surrendered and the locals recognised Count Roger as their leader. The locals then asked Count Roger to give them their colours, so he gave them his red and white chequered

shield, he told them the white is to represent their strong religious beliefs, and the red was to represent their patriotic hearts!

As for the cross on our flag - the story behind that is more modern and definitely not a legend! In fact the cross is the George Cross, awarded to the people of Malta on the 13th September 1942, "to bear witness to a heroism and devotion that will long be famous in history." The red and white Maltese flag was adopted as the official flag of Malta when Malta gained independence from Britain, on the 21st September 1964.

THANKS TO ALL OUR READERS AND CONTRIBUTORS



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SUPPORTED BY ALL IN
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Thank you

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Valletta is the principal seaport and capital city of Malta (island country in the central Mediterranean Sea, southern Europe). Malta Island is located midway between North Africa and Sicily (Italy). Since 1974, Malta is a British Commonwealth nation. The other Malta cruise port is Mgarr Harbour (in Gozo Island).

The cruise port is located within the Grand Harbour, which is a natural deep-water harbor waterway. The Valletta Cruise Port is a subsidiary company of Global Ports Holding. Valletta Malta is also the flag-state (port of registry) for many cruise liners and also riverboats. A fast-ferry service Mgarr/Gozo-Valletta is provided by two companies - Gozo Fast Ferry, and Virtu Ferries. Both operators offer 45-min crossings via high-speed catamaran ferries with max passenger capacity 300. The Gozo-Valletta distance is approx 43 km (27 mi). La Valletta City was founded by the 49th Grand Master of Knights of St John - Jean Parisot de Valette (1495-1568). Most of the town's medieval structures still remain. In 2015, Port Valletta handled 668,277 cruise passengers (29% increase over 2014). The cruise port in 2016 reported a record year with a total of 682,222 cruisers (embarking passengers were excluded), or 2% increase over 2015. During 2016, the port was booked by 42 different cruise shipping operators and 81 different vessels. In 2016, Gozo Island received 19 cruise ship calls and around 7,000 passengers.

In 2017, Port Valletta handled 330 cruiseship calls and 700,000+ tourists. With P&O UK's ship Oceana in the Mediterranean during 2017 season, the port had scheduled 27 calls and over 100,000 passengers via P&O's fly-cruise deals (fares inclusive of flights from UK to Malta and back). The port also had another 5 calls with additional 10,000 passengers (visiting Valletta as port of call). In 2017, Valletta welcomed its 700,000 cruiser. He arrived on MSC Meraviglia and received a free 3-day Malta vacation package for 2. The package (courtesy of Malta Tourism Authority) was inclusive of flights and a 2-night luxury hotel (provided by The Saint John Hotel). By the end of 2017, the cruise port reported a record year with handled 340 ship calls and around 780,000 passengers. For season 2017, here were homeported liners from the fleets of P&O UK and TUI. In 2017, Malta's inbound tourism results totalled



nearly 2,3 million (15,7% increase over 2016). Total overnights in Malta increased by 10,3%. The tourism industry contributed EUR 1,9 billion to country's economy. As demographics, most cruise ship tourists are from North America (USA and Canada).

For 2018, Valletta City was designated "European Capital of Culture". In 2018, Port Valletta handled nearly 800,000 cruise tourists. Season's highlights included Seabourn Ovation's christening ceremony (held here on May 11). In 2019 (a record year) were handled 906,000+ cruise passenger via 373 ship calls. Season 2019 included roundtrip departures by P&O UK and TUI liners, representing ~31% homeporting operations.

Valletta Cruise Port is managed by Global Ports Holding Plc (GPH) - currently ranked world's largest cruise port terminal operator with lease agreements in the regions of Europe-Mediterranean, Caribbean, Asia-Pacific.

Cruise ships dock at Valletta Waterfront pier in Valletta Harbour. Currently, the cruise port offers 7 ship berths, of which 4 are within 15-min walk from city center. In 2020 will be inaugurated an extended quay with capacity to handle larger vessels.

The terminal features 250-year-old warehouses from the baroque era. This is the city's historical Quay Wall where merchant vessels used to dock and unload their cargo.

If you want to read about politics and the upcoming election in Malta go the political e-newspapers online - TIMES OF MALTA, NEWSBOOK, MALTA TODAY, LOVINMALTA.COM and several others. Our journal is non-political

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by Direct Investment that leads to naturalisation after one year. This citizenship, in turn, grants full rights within the entire European Union and one of the world's most powerful passports. At a sunk cost of around **1 Million Euro**, it is far from cheap. Also, let's call a spade a spade; Maltese citizenship is also a status symbol.

However, there are other symbols of wealth if you know where to look.

In fact, within a few minutes of landing at Malta International Airport, you can see clues that Malta is a hidden playground for billionaires. Comlux, VistaJet and DC Aviation, three of the world's largest private jet operators have bases here.

A 20-minute drive to the Grand Harbour reveals Camper & Nicholsons flagship superyacht marina set against the stunning backdrop of Malta's capital city Valletta featured in numerous Hollywood movies. Berthed here are some of the most luxurious superyachts in the world.

Ironically, and notwithstanding Malta's various UNESCO world heritage sites and burgeoning economy, Malta still feels low-key and in the right way. Unlike their lesser affluent mortals, Ultra-High-Net-Worth Individuals tend to prefer many times to lead invisible lives. It is this combination of an advanced economy coupled with a Mediterranean flair that seems to be the winning formula.

Judging by the private yachts, private jets, registration of family offices and those that have acquired citizenship through investment, Malta is quietly attracting the ultra-rich by the droves.

"There are now over 7,300 single family offices globally, with assets under management approaching US\$5.9 trillion."

The ultra-rich, technically defined as **Ultra-High-Net-Worth Individuals**, are those whose investable wealth exceeds a minimum of **US\$50 million**. However, in the realm of Ultra-High-Net-Worth Individuals, US\$50 million will merely get you on the ladder. The latest Campden Wealth Report reveals that there are now over 7,300 single family offices globally, with assets under management approaching US\$5.9 trillion. While in line with the Pareto principle, the concentration of wealth will skew towards the top family offices, a simple division reveals an average of US\$808 million per family office.

While no doubt having money is better than not having it, great wealth brings its own set of problems. Once a person accumulates significant wealth, the focus becomes one of legacy. As a result, family offices offer a one-stop solution to asset management, philanthropy, and succession planning. The ultra-rich tend to gravitate towards a set of common factors, namely political and economic stability. So, the choice of jurisdiction to set up a family office, with which they identify is crucial. The Campden Wealth Report continues to indicate that 32% of family offices are located in various jurisdictions in Europe, among which is Malta.

However, **why Malta?** Let's look at some recent updates.

On 7 July 2019, the European Commission projected that the Maltese economy would continue to be the fastest-growing economy within the EU growing by **5.3%** in 2019 against an average of 1.4% in the EU. A couple of weeks later, the international agency Moody's upgraded Malta's credit rating to A2 stable.

Malta is also the favourite choice to acquire the Malta Citizenship by Naturalisation for Exceptional Services

In Conversation with
Richard England

Eminent architect, artist and academic Richard England talks to former Times of Malta editor Steve Mallia about his life and remarkable career

Saturday 19 March 2022 | 11:00
Il-Haġar | Heart of Gozo Museum
St George's Square, Victoria



AIR RAID SHELTERS IN MALTA

WW2

Today, many of the wartime generation can remember their experiences of different types of shelters: the damp and cramped small ones we can hardly cram in a small family, the bleak and unhygienic public shelters, and the novelty of school shelters where shrapnel, gossip, and exam answers could be surreptitiously exchanged.

From the past many also recall the attempts by parents and teachers to make shelters into a more familiar, domestic space, with amenities, decorations, and stoves for brewing tea and tins of foods rationed out to the masses at such time if you were lucky.

The history of air raid shelters in pre-war and wartime Malta is a gripping story of engineering genius and political short-sightedness, and also a story about the men, women, and children who inhabited and endured them. Malta lasted constant enemy bombardment from constant bombing raids by enemy bombers.

By means to survive the use of the shelters was not universally popular. Some found them unpleasant or claustrophobic, and there were widespread doubts as to their effectiveness grew weary. The people of Malta had no other option to survive, it was to make them or hope the bombs would not fall on them.

.Many air raid shelters scattered around Floriana and most of Malta. We came across a few within the same area, as Floriana was heavily British at the time of the war. It was target by enemy forces so many air raid bunkers were vast in numbers.

.Some of the deep shelters had stairs leading down to connect to longer complexes of rooms and stores. We can they were used for quick escape from passing bombing raids.



Now unfortunately they are covered up or used as dumping grounds. Let these places be remembered but not forgotten by the people who took shelter to save themselves from instant death. And to the people now who find these places remember those who used them or lost their lives in them. (Fort Finder)

IF YOU HAVE A STORY TO TELL AND WANT TO SHARE IT WITH OTHER MALTESE LIVING ABROAD - SEND IT TO US



NGOS APPEAL AGAINST MONSTROUS DEVELOPMENT IN BIRZEBBUGIA

Din I-Art Helwa and The Archaeological Society Malta have filed an appeal to overturn the Planning Authority's approval of 161 apartments in the Il-Girgħien area of Birżebbuġa which will result in the total development of the 4,000 sq metre site despite the policy for the area which specifies that 20% must be retained as open public space.

Through the approved mega-development, an existing rock-cut chamber believed to be a WWII shelter and an old quarry rich in industrial heritage and biodiversity, will be buried under a curtain of 7-storey apartments.

The Planning Commission justified its decision to approve the total sealing of the site on a clause that allows developers to pay 20Eur for every square meter of floor area developed in lieu of the required open space. The Commission however failed to consider that this clause can in fact only be applied to sites of a smaller nature which are not developed comprehensively. In this case both the applicant and the PA confirmed that the site was being developed comprehensively, therefore the need to provide public open space could not be waived through the loophole applied by the Planning Commission.

It should be said that the same policy also allows a height limitation of four floors for sites developed comprehensively which is lowered to three floors for sites that are not. When assessing height, the Commission did consider the fact that the development was a comprehensive one and proceeded to reward the developer with the additional floor. Through the application of the controversial Annex 2 policy introduced in 2015, the 4 floor height limitation was further increased to 7 floors, resulting in an unbroken row of solid buildings that allows no relief both visually and with no open spaces.

It is alarmingly clear, state the two NGOs, that the Commission chose to consider the maximum development potential of the site whilst blatantly overlooking all other policies intended to provide residents with desperately needed public open space for the wellbeing of the community as well as the preservation of the cultural and natural heritage and biodiversity of the site such as a quarry can provide. The Commission's decision is a further illustration of the Authority's systematic failure to protect the needs of the general public and is yet another reckless blow to the natural environment of Birżebbuġa and its landscape.



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March 2022

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Bingo, Billiards
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social gathering

MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER

March 2022



Chamber of Commerce in Sydney, members of Council of Maltese Living Abroad and of Maltese Community Council NSW meeting Jenny Cartmill - Australian High Commissioner to Malta



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Marku, the Maltese from Gozo at La Valette Centre

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