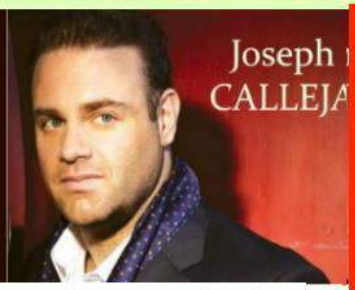
Maltese e-Newsletter

The Journal of Maltese Living Abroad

Editor : Frank L Scicluna OAM MQR JP

Anthony Albanese : new Prime Minister of Australia



We salute all our past and present leaders

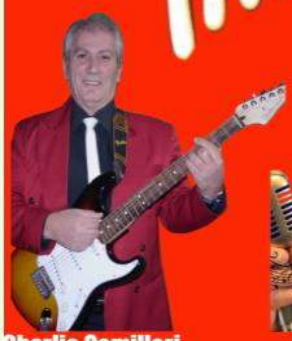
of the Maltese communities living abroad who worked hard to serve

their fellow sisters and brothers in these last hundred years

We salute our HEROES

WE REMEMBER THEM ALWAYS

The "3" Maltesers



Charlie Camilleri — DJ George Galea — Paul Fenech

Join Your Host DJ George Galea - Charlie Camiller & One Of Australias Leading Elvis Performers Pau Fenech As The 3 Maltesers .

Maltese Classic Hits & Rock n Roll Memories

WHO IS ANTHONY ALBANESE – THE NEW PRIME MINISTER5 OF AUSTRALIA

Nearly 10 years of Liberal-National Party coalition government in Australia came to an end on Saturday as prime minister Scott Morrison conceded the election to Labor.

Mr Morrison, whose Liberal Party led the right-wing coalition, will be replaced by Anthony Albanese, who became leader of the opposition in 2019.

Nicknamed "Albo", he promised Australians "safe change" and unity in an election campaign that was dominated by the post-Covid pandemic recovery, the cost of living and national security amid the growing rise of China.

"I think people want to come together, look for our common interest, look towards that sense of common purpose," he said after winning the election.

"I think people have had enough of division, what they want is to come together as a nation and I intend to lead that," he added.

Although he is one of the country's longest-serving politicians, Mr Albanese's journey to the top has been less than straightforward.

The son of a single mother living on a disability pension, the 59-year-old was raised in a council flat and cites these experiences as forming his progressive views.

He has become an advocate for the LGBT community and has formed a reputation for being a fierce defender of Australia's free healthcare system.

The first person in his family to finish school, Mr Albanese went on to the University of Sydney where he gained a degree in economics and became involved in student politics. He was first elected to parliament in 1996 as John Howard, former Labour leader and prime minister, rose to power.

He is a Catholic and a Rugby League fan who said during the campaign: "I came out [of the womb] with three great faiths – the Labor Party, the Catholic Church and the South Sydney Rabbitohs."

OUR AIM – JOURNAL OF MALTESE LIVING ABROAD

As a result of the comments regarding the present situation of our Maltese communities living abroad, we had a very good response from our readers, mostly positive. We sincerely acknowledge the valuable work done by many leaders of the Maltese communities during these last decades and the the pioneers of migration to faraway lands, especially during the 50s, 60s and 70s.

We hope that their work will continue to flourish in the future by the upcoming generations. Their names and their achievements will be engraved in the history books of the Maltese migration. This is the main aim of THE MALTESE JOURNAL. Our newsletters, which highlight many biographies of Maltese achievers around the world, are preserved for future researchers. Therefore, we urge all those who of goodwill to unite and leave a legacy of honour and pride for all the Maltese who left the islands of Malta and Gozo and settled successfully in many counties around the world.

MALTA AND GOZO – 100 YEARS AGO

Malta Blue Books

NATIONAL STATISTICS OFFICE • MALTA

The Malta Blue Books date back to the times of the British Administration of the 19th and 20th Centuries. The British Empire set high standards for the collection and availability of information regarding several aspects of life in its colonies. Indeed, it can be said that the single most significant resource of information in British colonies and dominions was the Blue Book. The NSO has an impressive collection which is only rivalled by the one at the Mdina National Archives.

The volumes comprise a wealth of statistics: population; vital statistics; imports and exports; taxes, duties and other revenue sources; infrastructural projects; civil and military expenditure; education; hospitals; the penal system; and climate statistics. Some Blue Books contain very distinctive illustrative material. This may range from beautiful watercolours of local flora, to delicately drawn section maps and street plans.

The digitisation project undertaken by the NSO was originally facilitated by an EU grant. By the time the grant was terminated, a proportion of the volumes had been digitised and placed online. Now the full complement of 116 volumes can be consulted online, therefore providing service while at the same time saving wear and tear to the original artefacts.

Malta got its first autonomous government 100 years ago, a time when a railway and trams still operated and Valletta housed more than 22,000 people. In 1921, Malta and Gozo's population stood at 212,258, which grew to 215,437 when British military families were included.
There were 153 men and only three women attending university and the average wage for someone working in the trade and manufacture sector amounted to £90 per year.
In that year, Britain spent almost half-a-million Sterling for the military protection of Malta.
The country was served by five daily newspapers and no less than nine weekly publications.
This is a collection of historical statistical information held by the National Statistics Office.
Population: The 1921 Census recorded a population of 212,258 of which 52% were women.
The major population centres were concentrated around the Grand Harbour and Sliema.
Valletta was home to 22,392 people, a far cry from the 5,891 who call the capital home today. Sliema had a population of 14,362, while Bormla had 11,536 residents.
These three localities alone accounted for 23% of people living in Malta back then.
The Hamrun-Marsa-Santa Venera conurbation was considered as one in the Census, with a combined population of 17,182. Gozo had a population of 22,561.
Some of the place names were written at the time. Marsaxlokk was written as Marsascirocco, Mqabba as Micabiba, Naxxar as Naxaro and Mdina referred to as Notabile.
The population figures show that there were 7,688 births in 1921, including 350 still-born babies. This contrasts with the 4,523 babies born last year to a much larger population. Malta registered 4,833 deaths in 1921 and 1,306 marriages. Statistics for immigration show that a century ago 4,007 Maltese returned to live in Malta from abroad while 2,606 emigrated to other countries.
Religion: The data leaves no doubt as to the predominance of the Roman Catholic Church, which had 210,000 followers and 353 churches around Malta and Gozo.
The records give a breakdown of the type of churches: two cathedrals, 46 parochial churches, two vice parochial churches and 260 other churches in Malta; and one cathedral, 13 parochial churches and 29 other churches in Gozo. The Catholic Church received £72 in assistance from public funds.
But the figures show that protestant denominations had around 2,000 followers with churches in Valletta and Sliema. The Greek-orthodox Church had around 200 followers with a church in Valletta, while the number of Jews was insignificant, although they had a place of worship in Valletta.
Education: A boys' world: 100 years ago the student population at university was a meagre 176, of which only three were women. Education appears to have had little importance beyond the elementary school years. While the figures show that 22,390 students attended elementary school, only 2,384 continued their studies at secondary school level. And from those attending secondary school, 57% were boys.

A breakdown of figures shows that in secondary school, the vast majority attended 'private schools', otherwise referred to today as church schools. However, while there were 17 'private schools', there were only three government secondary schools – the Lyceum for boys and a secondary school for girls in Malta; and one secondary school for boys in Victoria, Gozo.

While 1,111 boys and 931 girls attended private secondary schools, only 309 boys and 193 girls attended government schools.

In Gozo, no girls attended secondary school and the 40 boys who did get a secondary education, did so in the government school.

Government elementary schools could be found in practically every locality thus ensuring free education for the masses. The figures show that 87% of elementary-school students attended government schools.

Expenditure for all elementary government schools in 1921 was £55,961. Government also spent £30 per year on each of two 'aided private schools' in Mdina and Valletta.

Accompanying the figures were descriptions of what the secondary schools intended to achieve. While the Lyceum and the secondary school in Gozo offered a varied list of subjects intended to "prepare young men to matriculate for admission into the university", the secondary school for girls was more austere. Girls could learn maths, English, Italian, French and needle work and "other subjects usually included in the curriculum of a secondary school for young ladies". No reference was made to preparing girls for university.

Wages and food: In 1921 there were 16,270 employed in agriculture and their average rate of wage was £54 per year.

Manufacture employed 29,074 people, while another 20,340 earned a living in commerce. The average yearly wage in these two sectors stood at £90. Rates for domestic service were a meagre £18 per year.

And in a pre-decimal system a barrel of 196lb (equivalent to 89kg) of flour would retail at an average of £1 17s. and 4d. (one pound 17 shillings and four pence).

A pound of fresh butter from New Zealand would cost two shillings and four pence, while salted butter from Ireland would cost three shillings.

A gallon (4.5Lit.) of milk would retail at an average of £8, while a dozen Maltese eggs would cost one shilling and six pence. Imported eggs would cost less at one shilling and two pence.

Buying 'horned cattle' would cost you £30.

Prison: Records show that in 1921 the prison population stood at a whopping 4,510, equivalent to 2% of the country's population.

The Corradino Civil Prison housed 2,151 inmates, while the Valletta prison held 1,666. A further 693 prison inmates were held in Gozo. The inmate population was made up of 3,314 men, 480 women and 716 juveniles.

The detailed records also note that throughout 1921 there were 2,953 punishments inflicted on prisoners for offences committed while in jail. Of these, 1,534 punishments were 'solitary confinement on punishment diet' and 722 were 'solitary confinement without punishment diet'. In 35 instances, inmates were punished by being deprived of their mattress for a period not exceeding three days.

Crime and punishment: In a society where farming was a key sector in the country's economic and social life, it is no wonder that 80 cases of 'praedial larceny' (theft of agricultural produce) were reported in 1921.

The crime statistics show that no homicides were reported that year but there were 149 reports of offences against the person. Another 1,104 were offences against property, while there were 512 other crimes.

In 1921, one man was acquitted of murder of his 'wife or concubine', while three were acquitted of manslaughter charges and another found guilty and fined.

One man was convicted for attempted murder and sentenced to 'penal servitude', or rather, hard labour.

Hospitals: Like most of the British colonies, Malta also had a lock hospital to treat people suffering from sexually-transmitted diseases. In 1921, a lock hospital was situated in Luqa, a section of the old people's home in what is now known as St Vincent de Paul. According to the description accompanying the entry, the hospital had an average of 44 'inmates' and was used for the 'treatment of prostitutes suffering from venereal disease'. The same grounds also housed a hospital for male and female lepers.

A list of hospitals shows that the main hospital, known as Central Hospital, was in Floriana, while the Seamen's Hospital was situated in St Julian's, where Zammit Clapp now stands.

Other hospitals included the Santo Spirito Hospital in Mdina, Connaught Hospital, also in Mdina where the Vilhena Palace stands, and Manoel Hospital in Sliema, more popularly known as the Lazzaretto on Manoel Island, which used to house patients with infectious diseases.

Gozo had a general hospital, which included a wing for contagious diseases.
Records show that 255 people were hospitalised with typhoid fever in 1921, including 30 who eventually died. At Connaught Hospital, 233 patients were admitted with pulmonary tuberculosis of which 64 died.
At Manoel Hospital, 418 patients were receiving treatment for scabies, an itchy skin condition caused by a tiny burrowing mite. What is today Mount Carmel Hospital, already existed 100 years ago when it was referred to as a lunatic asylum. There were 811 patients in the lunatic asylum in 1921, of which 175 were admitted in that year.
According to a classification determined by the reporting requirements, 87 patients in the mental health hospital were considered 'maniacal and dangerous', while 554 were considered 'quiet chronic'. The rest were classified either as 'melancholy and suicidal' or 'idiotic, paralytic and epileptic'.

Transport: Roads were divided into 1st class and 2nd class with the former deemed to be suitable for motor traffic and the latter suitable for horse drawn traffic. The 1921 records show that Malta had 350km of 1st class roads and 167km of 2nd class roads. In Gozo, 84km were suitable for motor traffic, while 16km were deemed to be 2nd class roads. This means that across both islands, the road network suitable for cars amounted to 434km. Malta today has almost 3,000km of paved roads.
At the time there were 265 cars, referred to as touring cars, and 151 motorcycles. The roads were also used by 37 privately-owned buses operated along six routes and 63 touring cars used for hire. But whereas cars were still a novelty back then, Malta had a train and trams servicing the main population centres. The railway, owned and operated by government, ran from Valletta and its construction had until then amounted to £58,562. The records show that passenger receipts amounted to £12,165.
There were also three tramways owned and operated Macartney McElroy & Coy. Limited. The lines from Birkirkara, Cospicua and Żebbuġ all led to Valletta.

For centuries, the coastline of Malta has been dotted with lookout posts or watchtowers that were built by the Knights of Malta during the 17th century.
These towers were manned nightly to watch the seaward approaches and to raise the alarm in the event of an imminent threat.
The positioning of these towers was planned as such so that one could see both neighbouring towers, which acted as an early warning system against invaders.
As soon as one tower spotted a suspicious event, a fire signal was started which was picked up by the neighbouring towers, in so doing carrying on the message.
A number of coastal towers were built during the reigns of Grand Master Alof de Wignacourt (1601 – 1622), Grand Master Paul Lascaris Castellar (1636 – 1657) and Grand Master Martin de Redin (1657 – 1660).

WIGNACOURT TOWERS A total of seven towers were built under the order of Grand Master Fra Alof de Wignacourt, of which five remain today.

The Wignacourt towers, as they're referred to, were not just watch towers but formed important strongpoints in the Knights' tactical defence system for the Maltese islands, of which parts were vulnerable to attack from the coast.
These towers towers were the first to be built, and the Maltese watch tower grid was to be expanded by the Grand Master's two successors.
The Wignacourt Towers:

- Saint Lucian Tower – Marsaxlokk
- Saint Thomas Tower – Marsaskala
- Wignacourt Tower – St. Paul's Bay
- Saint Mary's Tower – Comino (island)
- Marsalforn Tower – Gozo (island) (demolished)
- Santa Maria delle Grazie Tower – Xgħajra (demolished)

LASCARIS TOWERS Under the reign of Grand Master Juan de Lascaris-Castellar, seven towers were built in the period 1637 – 1640. As well as Wignacourt, Grand Master Lascaris paid for the building of these towers out of his own pocket, such was his dedication to fortifying Malta's coastal defences.
With the exception of St. Agatha's Tower in Mellieha (built in Wignacourt built), the Lascaris towers are smaller than Wignacourt's and consisted of two storeys, a flat roof and a parapet.
On some of the Lascaris towers, a cannon was positioned.
The Lascaris Towers:

- Ta' Lippija Tower – Ġnejna Bay
- Għajn Tuffieħa Tower – On the cliff between Għajn Tuffieħa Bay and Golden Bay
- Nadur Tower – Binġemma/Rabat (Malta)
- Qawra Tower – Ta' Fra Ben at Qawra point
- St. George's Tower – St. Julian's
- Sciuta Tower – Qrendi
- St. Agatha's Tower – Mellieħa (built in Wignacourt style)
- Xlendi Tower (Gozo)
- Dwejra Tower (Gozo)

DE REDIN TOWERS When Grand Master Lascaris died aged 97, having ruled for 21 years, he was succeeded by Grand Master Marino de Redin, a Frenchman. He was a seasoned soldier and diplomat who was deeply concerned about the Island's security and vulnerability to seaward attack. Aware of the deficiencies of the existing system, de Redin devised a coast-guarding plan whose main features wee:

- Each tower would be inter-visible and able to communicate with its neighbours by day or night
- Each tower would be manned by 4 men on a daily 24-hour guard basis. The guardsmen would be equipped with a musket and paid a regular monthly salary
- Each tower would be mounted with a small gun.

Grand Master de Redin built thirteen such towers at his own expense at key tactical sites in Malta, starting from Mellieħa in the North, eastwards to Żonqor, round to Bengħisa and ending near Zurrieq. The rugged Western coast was considered naturally inaccessible and needing no towers. The cost of the thirteen towers amounted to 6,428 scudi or about €1,246 today, making the average cost of each tower about €96.
De Redin Towers:

- Ghajn Hadid Tower – Ghajn Hadid cliffs near Mellieħa (ruins)
- Għallis Tower – Naxxar
- St. Mark's Tower or Qalet Marku Tower – Baħar iċ-Ċagħaq
- Madliena Tower – Madliena
- Saint Julian' s Tower – Sliema
- Aħrax (White) Tower – near Armier Bay at the Northern most tip of Malta
- Bengħisa Tower – near Birżebbuġa (demolished)
- Xrobb l-Għaġin Tower – Marsaxlokk (ruins)
- Triq il-Wiesgħa Tower – Żabbar
- Delimara Tower (demolished)
- Żonqor Tower (demolished)
- Ħamrija Tower – close to Siġġiewi
- Wardija Tower – between Zurrieq and Ħal Far

Unfortunately, the successor Grand Masters after de Redin did not share the enthusiasm for building new towers and by the late 17th century the watch towers had fallen into disrepair, but eventually did receive attention and were maintained for future generations (and rulers of the Maltese islands).
It is interesting to note that in many locations of the towers built in the 17th century, Medieval watch posts or towers existed previously. This could suggest that the towers built under Grand Masters Wignacourt, Lascaris and de Redin were intended to augment and fortify pre-existing coastal defences.

Soprano Nicola Said leads Malta Opera's hope to nurture homegrown talent

Malta has a completely renewed cohort of talented opera singers following important international professional opera careers

Malta Opera hosted a masterclass for young singers before its official launch

Malta Opera launched with a gala concert on 5 May at the Casino Maltese in Valletta.
With a rich and diverse programme organised by soprano and founder Nicola Said and featuring 15 established Maltese opera singers who were joined by young and emerging singers, the ballroom was packed with VIP guests, friends and families.
Established performers included Francesca Aquilina, Albert Buttigieg, Louis Andrew Cassar, Graziella Debattista, Clare Ghigo, Joseph Lia, Nicola Said, Ken Scicluna, Cliff Zammit Stevens, Nadia Vella, Charles Vincenti and Gillian Zammit. Emerging singers (also in alphabetical order) participating were Michaela Agius, Mariette Borg, Mariah Costa, Maria Grazia Grech, Madeleine Gruppetta, Gabrielle Portelli and Nicole Vassallo.
The pianist was Maria-Elena Farrugia. Compère for the evening was Joseph Chetcuti, while Albert George Storace prepared the programme notes.
The programme covered a broad repertoire of music by well-loved international composers Handel, Mozart, Léhar, Donizetti, Gounod, Gilbert and Sullivan, Bernstein, Verdi, Puccini, Sorozábal and Maltese composer Camilleri.
"Opera has always held a special place in our hearts, our culture and society. And although today it competes with popular musical genres and entertainment, our love for opera has certainly not dimmed. In our case, it gave birth to a dream – Malta Opera," said Said.
Malta Opera is a unique, professional collaborative initiative bringing together Maltese singers, experienced and professional management, artistic production, and internationally-renowned conductors with long standing connections with Malta.
Shortly before the launch, Malta Opera held a Masterclass at the Malta Society of Arts in Valletta – "The German System: What's Your Fach?" – during which eight talented singers shone for three days under the coaching of international masters, Conductor Ben Woodward and Director Detlef Sölter.
"We believe that investing in the future of opera is the key to giving opportunities to those singers who study and perform both locally and internationally. We also believe that it is important to promote the work as a multidisciplinary platform and develop a community of supporters," Said said.
The Maltese have a deeply-rooted infatuation with opera culture. From global superstars like Oreste Kirkop and Joseph Calleja, to internationally acclaimed singers such as Miriam Gauci, Lydia Caruana and Antoinette Miggiani, they bring out the best of local talent and the Maltese communities.
Today in Malta there is a completely renewed cohort of talented opera singers following important international professional opera careers. Many other great and promising Maltese voices can be found among opera students studying at home and abroad.

"Unfortunately, such talent is not always adequately appreciated due to the lack of local opportunities. Young singers leave Malta to pursue their dreams abroad, with little hope of returning to pursue a full-time artistic career. They do however shine in highly acclaimed productions overseas productions. This is the gap that Malta Opera has set out to fill," Said said.

"Our dream is to grow the company and have world-class opera productions that bring together Maltese talent from all over the world. We are also planning to develop exchanges with international opera singers, productions and companies. Whether it is education through masterclasses, exploring of innovative ways to bring work to life through emerging technology and media, or opportunities for through multidisciplinary concerts and opera scene productions, we want opera to be the beating heart of our communities."

Present for the launch were arts minister Owen Bonnici, Italian ambassador Fabrizio Romano, German and Spanish embassy representatives, finance ministry permanent secretary Alfred Camilleri, and soprano Lydia Caruana.

Solidarity in Hondoq ir-Rummien talk by Qala Mayor Paul Buttigieg

GOZO NEWS

The Mayor of Qala, Paul Buttigieg, recently gave an inspiring talk on the efforts involved in trying to safeguard Hondoq ir-Rummien, to a group of professors and doctoral research students during one of the series of network wide training events organised by SoliDi https://www.solidi.eu/ exploring place-based practices of solidarity.

MALTESE ON-THE-GO AUDIO APP
www.facebook.com/groups/12475046491

For all the Maltese who visit, live, work or study in the USA. and Americans who visit, live, work or study in Malta. For Maltese and Americans to find friends and relatives both in the US and Malta, or just want to have more information about both countries

***Gauging interest - please comment.

Would you be interested in a Maltese App/podcast to start learning the language, continue learning or practice fluency in Maltese? I have been asked by many over the years and I am now seriously considering it (if there is a need and enough interest).

These audios would serve either as a supplement or as stand alone courses. Some audio will come with handouts/notes. My online weekly Skype lessons will continue of course.

QUESTIONS: What would you like to see/hear in this listening App?

Where and when would you be likely to use it eg at home, in the car, before bed, on the train etc?

Would you like to be considered as a sample tester?

Note: I am a registered teacher with 30 years experience. Besides my teaching degree, my second degree focused on working with foreigners and multiculturalism. I now teach Maltese full-time to students worldwide. **Rose-Mary Curmi**

Innu lil San Bert fil-Għargħur 250 sena tal-istatwa fostna

Kemm ninsabu llum ferħana
Miġburin madwar San Bert
Il-Patrun mimmi t'għajnejna
M'għandniex dubju, kulħadd ċert!

Is-snin jgħaddu jiġru, jħaffu
Issa mitejn u ħamsin
Mindu din l-istatwa sbejħa
Serqet il-qlub tar-raħlin

U ġiet fostna sabiex tibqa'
Il-ġieħ, l-unur tal-Għargħur -
Ma ssibx wieħed ġo raħalna
Illi tagħha mhux għajjur!

Lejk San Bert aħna nduru
Kbir Appostlu ta' Gesu'
Sabiex tkompli lilna tfisser
Għalina Kristu min hu!

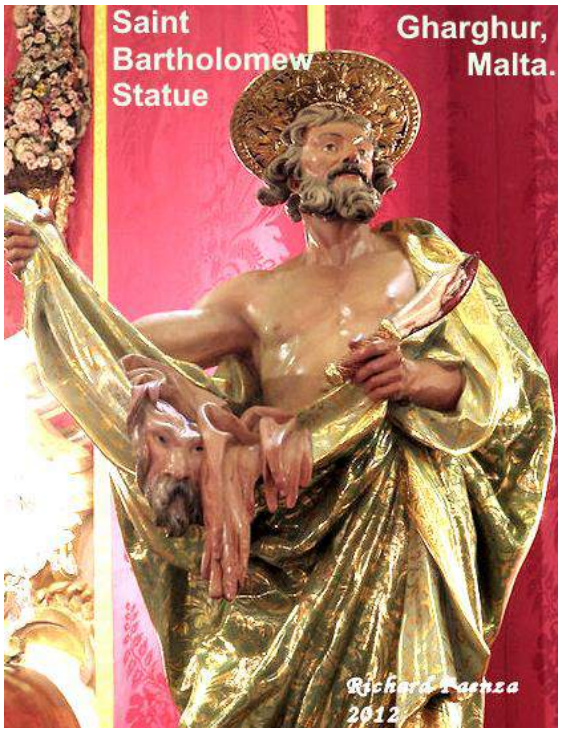
Fuq raħalna xerred dejjem
Għadd ta' grazzji u barkiet
Għinna nifhmu l-martirju
U il-mewt tiegħek xi swiet!

Minn taħt it-tina sejjaħlek
Biex tkompli miexi warajh
Dixxiplu għal qalb ta' Kristu
Illi laqgħek ġo dirgħajh.

Ritornell:
La tħallina qatt nitbiegħdu
O San Bert int protettur
Aħna wliedek dejjem nibqgħu
Ħudna miegħek kull fejn tmur!

Bartilmew kun dlonk fuq fommna
Fuq xufftejna lejl u nhar;
Idħol f'darna w ibqa' hemm ġewwa
U ħares lil kbar w iż-żgħar!

Kav Joe M Attard
emarjos@hotmail.com
17 – 05 – 2022



The **Church of St Bartholomew** is a Roman Catholic Parish church in the village of Għargħur, Malta.

The original chapel of St Bartholomew, which stood on the site of the present church, was documented by inquisitor Pietro Dusina on his apostolic visit to Malta in 1575. With the growing population of the village, the Bishop of Malta Tomás Gargallo created the new parish of Għargħur. Prior to this the village was part of the parish of Naxxar. Consequently, the parish priest of Naxxar refused to recognise this decision due to financial loss for the Naxxar parish and asked for the decision to create a new parish to be withdrawn. The bishop succumbed to the wishes of the parish priest of Naxxar, the elderly Julian Borg who died in 1610, which year the bishop re-established the parish of Għargħur with Reverend John Baptist Chetcuti as the first parish priest.

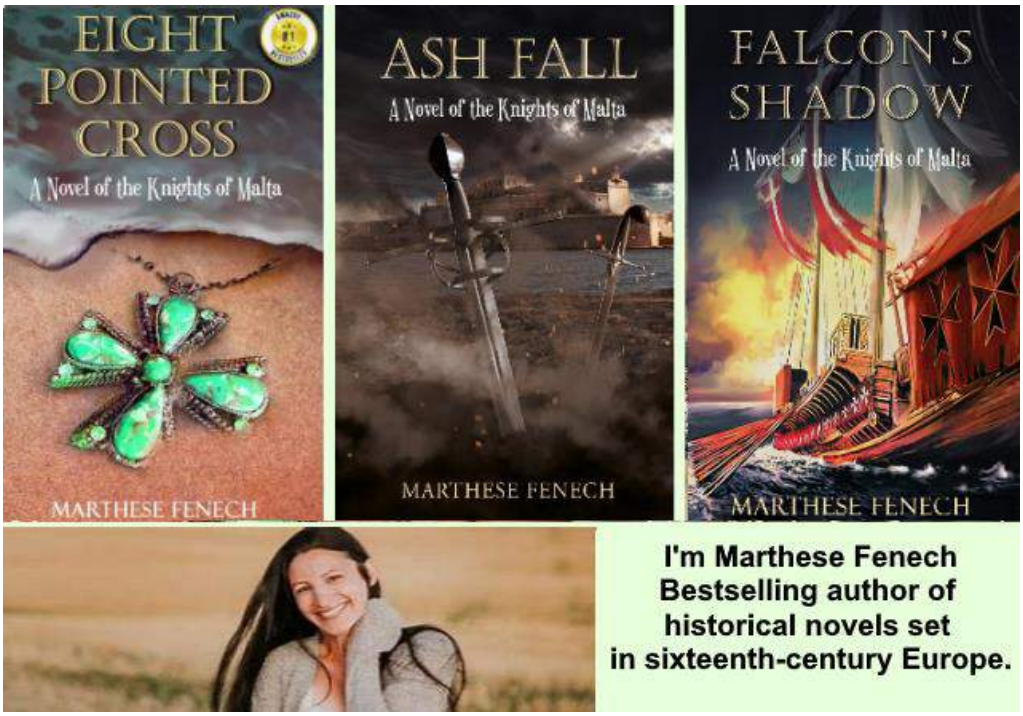
At first the people used the chapel of St John the Baptist as the parish church however as the population increased a new church was needed. The site of the chapel of St Bartholomew was chosen for the new church which commenced in 1610 on plans by Tommaso Dingli. The church has Doric and Baroque styles. The church was consecrated by Archbishop Paul Alphéran de Bussan on April 22, 1736.[1] The facade of the church was built in 1743. It is built in a style different from that of the interior of the church. The old facade made by Dingli was quite different from the present one. It is slighting higher than the church roof and at the back of the frontispiece there are sculptured ornaments probably from the old church.

The painting behind the high altar, depicting the martyrdom of St Bartholomew, was painted by Giuseppe Calì in 1902. The painting replaced an older one, dating from the 17th century, by Emmanuel Perren, which was destroyed at the end of the last century. Other paintings in the quire depict the Last supper and the Nativity of Jesus, both the work of Francesco Zahra. Other work by Zahra include two of the side altars paintings.

The organisers said that the group met at Hondoq ir-Rummien, a site that has been the focus of political activist efforts throughout the last 20 years with the aim of preventing disastrous social, cultural and environmental effects from unnecessary land and marine related developments

They explained that "the Mayor has drawn on his long activist experiences in creating solidarities within the Qala community, numerous Gozitan, Maltese and International groups who have taken concrete action in favour of saving Hondoq from environmental ruin, which itself would be a recipe for failure to attract tourists to this unspoilt natural gem."

The activity was organised by Associate Professor Simone Galea from the Department of Education Studies, the Faculty of Education who is part of the Solidi Consortium European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under the Marie Sklodowska-Curie Actions



I am beyond thrilled to announce **the digital version** of *Ash Fall: a Novel of the Knights of Malta* is now available for pre-order from Amazon. (Canada, UK and Australia)

Ash Fall marks the third and culminating installment of my *Siege of Malta* trilogy—and twenty-two years of commitment.

I could not have achieved this landmark moment without your support—I thank you so much.

The **official launch** of the ebook and paperback is set for **September 8, 2022**. On that date, your e-readers will give you access to the digital version, and you can also purchase the paperback if you prefer a hard copy. Initially, I had planned to release all formats of *Ash Fall* on May 18 to correspond with the commencement of the Great Siege on May 18, 1565, but, as you may know, my health condition derailed those plans.

However, following desperately-needed surgery in Germany, I am happily, gratefully, and giddily on the mend.

I still wanted to honour May 18, so I decided to make the digital version (ebook) available for pre-order today.

The official launch of the ebook and paperback is **September 8, 2022**—Victory Day in Malta. In essence, the pre-order period will span the duration of the Great Siege of 1565.

If you are new to the trilogy and haven't read *Eight Pointed Cross* or *Falcon's Shadow*, all formats are available here: https://marthesefenech.com/books/ And of course, if you have read them (and liked them!) a positive review on Amazon or BDL Publishing's website would be most appreciated.

Finally, I was invited to appear as a guest on the Maltese talk show *Kikkra Te* (*Cup of Tea)* today at 5 pm (Central European Time)/11 am (Eastern Time) to discuss my novels and experiences writing them. It can

be live-streamed here: netondemand.mt
I will share the recording on social media and in a newsletter (provided I don't come across like an idiot). It is an emotional thing, releasing the final novel in a trilogy I've spent more than half my life working on. Fortunately, I have the script adaptation and a possible prequel to keep me busy and creative. I cannot thank you enough for your support. Oh, and I crossed over to the Darkside and joined TikTok, so if you're on the platform and would like to follow me, I'm @Fenka33.
Sending you and your readers my very best, MARTHESE FENECH (Canada)

We know many things about history, but what we don't know outweighs what we think we know. Throughout my travels, I have come not only to embrace, but to seek out history's mysteries. If your eyes and your mind are open you can find mysteries whenever and wherever you travel. Malta is one of those places where the mysteries are too numerous to count, and the culture is too rich to understand in just a few days. Out of the hundreds of unique sites and artifacts found throughout Malta, seven are highlighted below that pose more questions than answers.

1. ***THE SLEEPING LADY OF MALTA*** *was discovered on the lower floor of the Hypogeum of Hal-Safleni.* The Sleeping Lady is 5,000 years old. When you stop for a moment to pause and think about that span of time, that figure is remarkable. More questions remain about the Sleeping Lady than have been answered. Does she represent death? Meditation? Sleep? Why was she created? What was her purpose? Was she an offering to the Gods? The Hypogeum of Hal-Safleni is an underground chamber and a place of deep spiritual significance. Recent evidence indicates that the underground chambers in the Hypogeum were specifically carved to achieve acoustic frequencies that induce a meditative state.

2. THE CALENDAR OF MNAJDRA

How did a culture over 6,000 years ago track the equinoxes? We don't know, but they left behind a snapshot of their work on a megalithic stone at the temple of Mnajdra at Qrendi. How were the equinoxes tracked and recorded? Why were they tracked? Who was in charge of tracking such events? Mnajdra is considered one of the oldest religious sites in the world. This UNESCO World Heritage Site is one of the only archaeological sites in Malta that is protected by a tent. I was annoyed at first, that the views of such an amazing place were obscured by a white tent. Upon closer examination however, it is obvious that these intricate carvings would eventually disappear if left exposed to the elements of wind and water.

3. THE PHOENICIAN FACE (1500 – 300 BCE)

This is an uncommon find in Malta. No one knows exactly what it was used for or what it represents. Is it a crude image of a long dead Phoenician? Is it a figurative representation of death? In the Phoenician world some images are meant to ward off death, could this be such an image? Or are the tightly slit eyes and mouth meant to prevent death from getting in?

4. MINIATURE TEMPLE FROM THE HAGAR QIM GROUP

This limestone sculpture is the oldest representation of a temple in the world. It is from the Hagar Qim group in Malta and dates to about 3300 BCE. We know that this tiny temple is a true architectural rendering of the some of the larger megalithic structures in Malta. What we don't know is why it was made. Is it a kind of draft for a life-size model? Is it an offering for the Gods? Is it a child's toy?

5. THE VENUS OF MALTA

The Venus of Malta was discovered in the Hagar Qim temples (3300 BCE) and is from the same time period as the miniature temple above. A common consensus is that these Venus figurines represent fertility. Thousands of these Venus figurines have been found all over the world. The most famous of which is the Venus of Willendorf, which dates to 25,000 BCE! We know the age of these figurines but we don't know their purpose. Was this meant to represent the worship of a mother or fertility goddess? Was it something kept in the home? Was it used in a religious ritual?

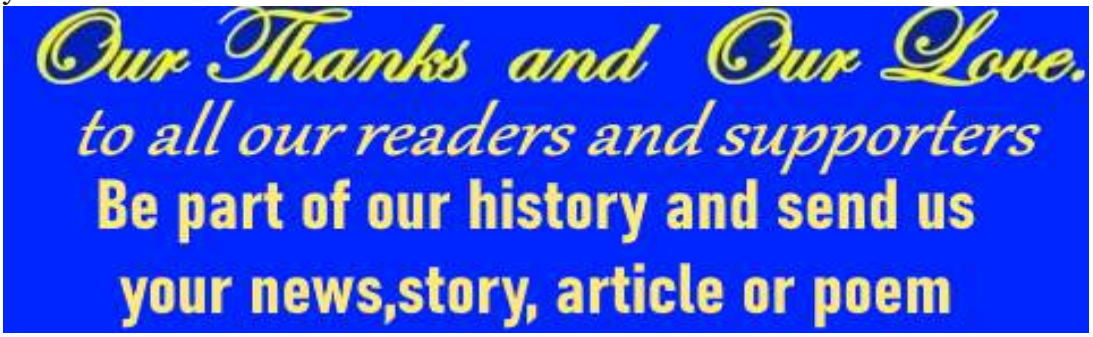
6. *BRONZE AND BONE DAGGER FROM THE BORG IN-NADUR PHASE (2000 BCE)*

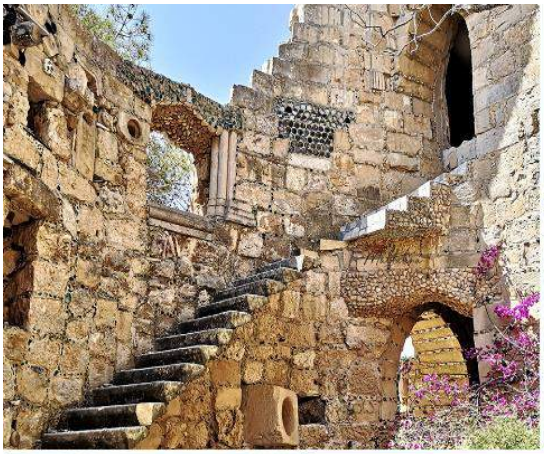
This dagger was found in a nearly inaccessible cliff-cave below Dingli, Malta. We do know that there was a thriving Bronze-Age culture in the area, but we don't know why they chose this cave to deposit their artifacts. When I first saw this dagger I imagined that it looked like something from the Trojan War. I later discovered that Mycenaean pottery shards were found in the Bronze Age village where this dagger was discovered. Did my subconscious pick up just the slightest Mycenaean-Greek influence in the artwork of this dagger? Perhaps. Why was this dagger deposited in this cave? What was its purpose? Finally, what does the circular pattern on the hilt mean? Did the Mycenaean Greeks actually influence this design, or is that wishful thinking on my part?

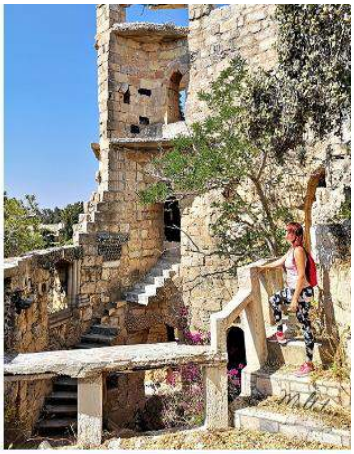
7. MALTESE TEMPLE STATUARY FROM THE HAGAR QIM PERIOD (3300 BCE).

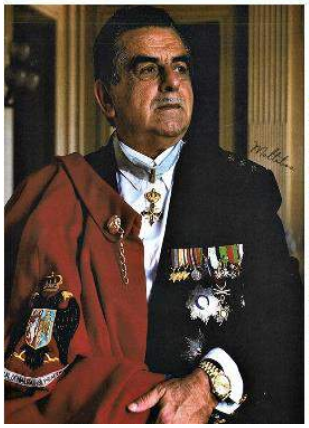
These statues raise more questions than they answer. Are they male or female? Why do they all have one hand over the abdomen? They have holes in the neck; did they once have interchangeable heads? Hundreds of these figures have been found in Malta, all without heads. What happened to the heads? Maybe one day an archaeologist in Malta is going to discover a pit of disarticulated heads that fit all of these statues.

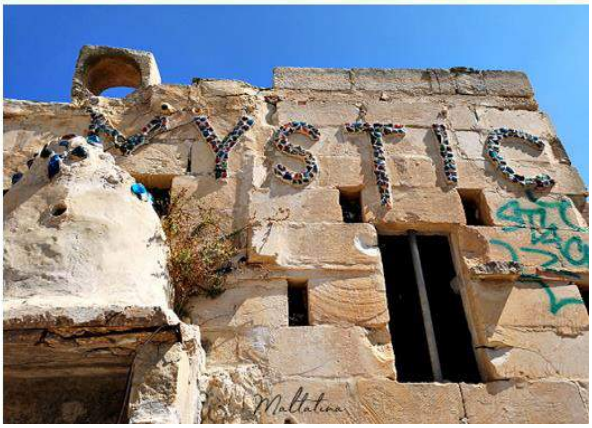
I hope that you have enjoyed this discussion of these unique artifacts from Malta. I can't wait to go back for a second visit with keener eyes. I will be teaching 9th grade World History this year so my blog may not be as active as it once was, but it's not going anywhere, and neither is my love of the mysteries of history!











Madliena's Mystique: the unique building that defies all rules of architecture

Did you know this beautiful structure existed?

Jillian Mallia

If you've ever wandered around the streets of the quiet Madliena village, you would have probably noticed an odd-looking structure that has fallen into quite the dilapidated state. For years, this site has been known as 'Villa Mystique.' But surprisingly enough, it is actually not a villa - it's not even a building for that matter, rather it was intended to be a sculpture. Basically, it's a beautifully disguised piece of art!

According to local blogger Maltatina.com, there is quite the mystery surrounding the so-called structure and was the subject of one certain 1960's artist, Joseph John Scicluna, who attempted to express Maltese identity in a time when mass construction began.

Highly expressive but retaining strong historical ties, the structure was built using salvaged stones, ornaments and arches – all remnants of houses destroyed during the Second World War. And if you think Joseph stood by as he watched its construction, then you've got another thing coming! Not only did he direct the process, he got his own hands dirty as well!

If you've never had the pleasure to come across it, it is perhaps an indescribable sight to be beheld! Mystique is far from average. Rather, it is surreal, authentic and original. It is 'a strange, fantastical structure built for the joy of the owner' and defies the rules of architecture. It was built without a design or even a plan … how crazy is that?!

"It has been said by the architectural community that; 'There is no real reason, why this structure is standing because it denies all the rules of architecture. 'They question how a man with no formal training could design and build such a place,'" Baroness Christiane Ramsay Scicluna tells Maltatina in her interview.

At the time of its construction, Mystique acted for Joe and other artists as 'a source of inspiration'. In fact, its intention was never to be lived in, but rather 'as a hub for artists', a safe space for them to meet, 'paint, play music, sing etc'. There was even a time when Mystique was famously known as 'the Mecca of Jazz', with musical sessions being held every Sunday.

As for the beautiful decor? An interesting and prominent element is the colourful mosaic-like features. The interior is actually decorated with thousands upon thousands of rejected glass shards from the popular local artisan store, Mdina Glass. All the unwanted and unfit pieces for their elaborate creations were collected by Joseph himself and used here.

Unfortunately, Mystique was never actually finished, and various damage has been caused throughout the years. Nevertheless, plans for its restoration remain, as Joseph's family hope that it could one day be turned into 'a multi-functioning art hub', just like he had always wanted.

But whilst you may be tempted to visit the lovely site, maybe even have a little roam around, please refrain from doing so! The structure is said to be unsafe and climbing it is dangerous – not to mention, it's technically trespassing if you do so.

The Maltese Are at Your Gates! Malta Gets Its Own Civilisation in New Age of Empires Expansion Pack

By Tim Diacono

Massive news has just come in for Maltese Age of Empires fans.

The popular strategy game has announced a new expansion pack, 'Knights Of The Mediterranean', for the Age of Empires 3 Definitive Edition – and it's bringing with it two new civilisations: the Italians and the Maltese.

That's right; you will soon be able to play as the Maltese, battling against the likes of the Spanish, the Britons and the Aztecs for world domination.

Described by the game as "one of the Mediterranean's epitomes of a melting pot", the Maltese civilisation is designed to portray the island as it was when it was ruled by the Knights of St John.

The civilisation comes with a range of unique buildings, including hospitals and fixed guns, as well as units like Grand Masters, Hospitaliers, sentinels and fire throwers.

The game bases the Maltese in the capital of Valletta, which comes with buildings and landscape features like Fort St Elmo, the Barakka Gardens and the Grand Harbour, all of which are customisable.

Besides the new civilisations, the expansion pack also includes 30 new random maps, nine new minor civilisations, eight historical maps and two new game modes.

It is set to be released on 26th May and can be pre-ordered from Steam and the Microsoft Store.

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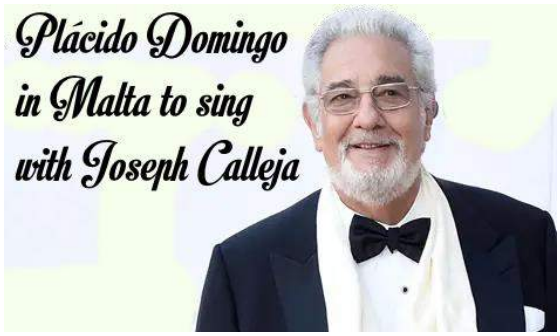


Opera legend Plácido Domingo will be Joseph Calleja's special guest at the Maltese tenor's 25th anniversary concert being held in the spectacular surroundings of Fort Manoel in Malta on July 26.

Acknowledged as one of the finest-ever singers, Domingo has almost reached 4,100 performances in a stellar career that has made him a household name both as a tenor and a conductor.

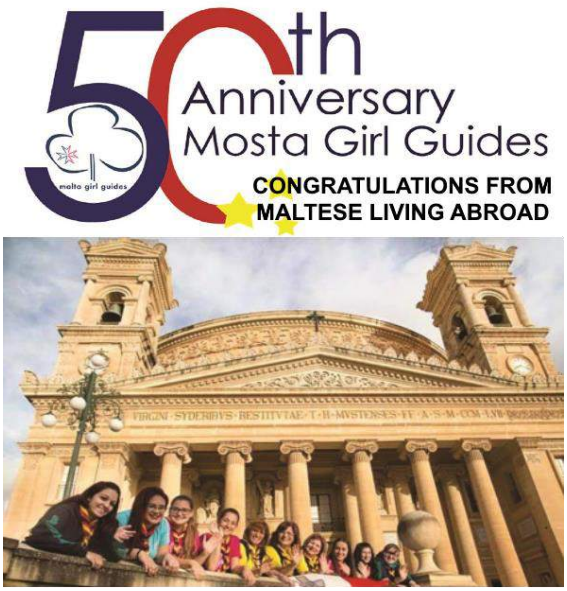
Calleja, who has just completed the recording of his sixth album for Decca Records on the back of a critically acclaimed run in New York, said:

"The Maestro needs no introduction. His talent, stamina and love for the opera world are revered the world over and what I can promise is that this will be a concert to remember. Placido and I have sung together abroad, but to perform with him in my homeland is a dream come true. My first big break in opera came in the 1999 edition of his annual Operalia competition and I have wanted to get him over to Malta ever since."

Domingo said: "I am very happy and proud of Joseph's beautiful artistic trajectory with his generous voice and admirable extension. I gladly welcome his invitation to participate in this concert to commemorate the first quarter-century of his career! I was privileged to share the stage with Joseph on two memorable Simon Boccanegra productions and now I am thrilled at the chance of making my Malta debut with him, in his homeland!"

The Maltese tenor continues to grace the world's leading opera houses and concert halls in his silver jubilee year which will see him perform in France, Germany, the UK and Australia among others.
Domingo, whose repertoire encompasses more than 150 roles, has continued uninterrupted his extraordinary artistic career for more than half a century and this year, after having sung in Madrid, Moscow, Paris, Palermo, Salzburg, Versailles, Buenos Aires and Budapest, he is expected to return to Italy, Austria, Germany, Japan, South Korea, Spain, Slovenia, Mexico and South America.
The fitting venue for this spectacular concert, which will also feature the Malta Philharmonic Orchestra, was originally built by the Knights in 1723 to defend Valletta under the patronage of Portugese Grand Master Manoel de Vilhena and underwent meticulous restoration thanks to Midi plc. Joseph Calleja – 25th Anniversary Concert is being produced by Mint Media with the support of the Malta Tourism Authority, The European Foundation for Support of Culture, Bank of Valletta and Midi.
Malta Tourism Authority Chairman Gavin Gulia said: "When we speak of Maltese Cultural Ambassadors who – through their exceptional talent – give visibility to the Maltese Islands and their endless beauty, one cannot but not think of The Maltese Tenor Joseph Calleja. It gives us great pleasure, as Malta Tourism Authority to support Joseph's 25th Anniversary Concert, which this year will be held in one of the island's most beautiful locations, making the concert even more unique. Events such as this one continue to add versatility to the Maltese Islands, by enhancing the quality of the tourism product, reaffirming once more that there truly is something for everyone in Malta."
European Foundation for Support of Culture President Konstantin Ishkhanov said: "The EUFSC has been collaborating with Joseph Calleja for quite some time now, both nationally and around the world, and we are always very proud and honoured to team up with him, especially for such a special occasion as this. He is undoubtedly one of the best standard-bearers of Malta's cultural heritage, and I am certain that this event will prove, once again, to be yet another memorable triumph."
BOV CEO Rick Hunkin said: "The Bank's support for the annual Joseph Calleja concert encompasses Bank of Valletta's continued support of the local arts and culture scene as part of its Environment, Social and Governance (ESG) commitment. This annual concert is back and will showcase Malta's top talents, along with other local and international stars while a large number of children will get the opportunity to perform alongside these great artists, and for some, their first opportunity on a stage through the BOV Joseph Calleja Children's Choir. The concert has also been an opportunity to showcase the talents of the scholars of the BOV Joseph Calleja Foundation, the Bank's collaboration with the Maltese Tenor to assist talented local artists to fulfil their potential and become Malta's future stars."

The Malta Girl Guides Association started 99 years ago when a group of 40 young ladies were enrolled in the British girl guides in Malta.
The first groups in 1923 were based in Valletta, Sliema, Ħamrun, Rabat and Lija. Today, there are 22 localities with their own guiding branch.
"Throughout the years, guiding has evolved in such an interesting manner," said Lara Tonna, former chief commissioner and current council member.
"It is still a movement for the development of girls and young women and we adhere to the promises and laws as laid by the founders, Lord and Lady Baden Powell. However, guiding has evolved to meet the needs of the times," she said.
The Girl Guides are the largest association for girls and young women. They have been enabling girls and young women to develop to their fullest potential as responsible citizens. The world of Girl Guiding is like no other – they provide a safe place where girls can be themselves, develop personally and socially and, most of all, have fun while doing so. They promote confidence, commitment and determination.
The Malta Girl Guides are full members of the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts and form part of 10 million members worldwide.



50 years of Girl Guiding in Mosta

The 31st Mosta Girl Guides Company is this year celebrating its 50th anniversary. It was started in the early 1970s by sisters Mary Borg and Kitty Saliba, née Muscat, who, at the time, carried out voluntary work with the Mosta branch of the St John Ambulance Brigade as well as with the Mosta Boy Scout Group. The St John Ambulance Brigade had both boys and girl members while the scout group was open for boys only. Mary and Kitty were members of the former but also helped with the scouts since their sons were members. Among the youngest members of the St John Ambulance Brigade was Marvic Camilleri, Mary's daughter, who is still involved with the Mosta Girl Guides today. The Mosta Girl Guides during a tree-planting event held in April as part of the group's 50th anniversary celebrations. The idea to start a new Girl Guide company in Mosta came after Mary and Kitty, along with their children and some friends, went to Valletta to support the Mosta Scout Group, which was participating with its band in that year's annual parade.

PACEVILLE, ST. JULIAN'S MERCURY TOWERS

Mercury Towers is J. Portelli Project's most ambitious undertaking to date. Located at the heart of St. Julians, J. Portelli commissioned the internationally renowned Zaha Hadid Architects to design a unique high-rise tower. This commission was in fact one of the final concept designs signed off by Zaha Hadid personally. The project is a fitting legacy of a

Mercury Towers is a mixed use development designed by the world class and internationally renowned architectural firm Zaha Hadid Architects. This is one of the final projects signed off by Zaha herself, only a few days before her untimely passing. The finished project will include a mix of historical and contemporary edifices on its site. At its heart is a 19-century heritage building, which will be flanked by a 33-storey residential tower with a luxury 5-star ME by Meliã, a hotel brand of Meliã Hotels International, situated in its podium.

This is a unique project that J.Portelli Projects has targeted as a signature development with the visual presence, architecture, and technical solutions that are a first in Malta.

AMERICA'S First Lady Jill Biden meets with Order of Malta volunteers during her visit to the Slovak-Ukrainian border

Jill Biden offered them words of thanks and encouragement

During her visit to the Slovak-Ukrainian border, the First Lady of the United States, Jill Biden – accompanied by the Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic, Eduard Heger, and the Minister of the Interior, Roman Mikulec – met with a team of volunteers from the Order of Malta currently assisting tens of thousands of Ukrainian refugees.

Jill Biden expressed words of support and encouragement for the many services offered by the Order of Malta's volunteers in Slovakia, who have been assisting refugees since the beginning of the war in Ukraine. The First Lady was received by the President of the Order of Malta in Slovakia (Maltézska pomoc Slovensko), Julius Brichta, and the Vice-President, Tomáš Sklenár, who described the Order of Malta's humanitarian, medical and social assistance programmes for Ukrainian refugees not only in Slovakia but also in other countries such as Poland, Hungary, Romania and in numerous Ukrainian cities.

The First Lady, together with representatives of the Slovak state, then participated in a Sunday prayer in the Order of Malta's field chapel at the Vyšné Nemecké border station. This converted and heated tent, which houses the chapel, also serves as a waiting area for mothers and children in case of bad weather conditions.

The Order of Malta in Slovakia has been providing services at the Slovak-Ukrainian border crossing Vyšné Nemecké since the second day of the war. The services offered 24 hours a day, 7 days a week include health, social and psychological assistance to all arriving refugees. More than 200 volunteers from Slovakia and other Order of Malta relief organisations in neighbouring countries serve in 72-hour shifts and have distributed more than 60,000 drinks and 100,000 food and social assistance rations. During the first weeks of the war, the Order's volunteers also coordinated all transport and accommodation for the thousands of refugees who arrived at this border station, where temperatures
at night reached minus 20 degrees.

CULTURE OF MALTA
"IL-FAWWARA" AND ITS HISTORY AND LEGENDS

The stretch of land between Siġġiewi, Rabat and Ħad-Dingli is known as "Tal-Fawwara". This land hosts a spring (in Maltese, Fawwara) which in the past was known for the large ammount of water it supplied. The area is naturally very beautiful and picturesque.

This area is also known for its vast history with origins dating back from the times when the Arabs controlled Malta in the thirteen century.

Fawwara is host to two chapels. One of the chapels in Fawwara is dedicated to Our Lady of Mount Carmel. It was built in 1616 and it was administered for a long time by the confraternity of Our Lady of Charity whose headquarters are the church of St Paul in Valletta. Another chapel in Fawwara is that of Our Lady of Providence in the limits of Siggiewi where in 1575 there was a medieval village called Hal-Kbir.

This picturesque area still retains a lot of its natural beauty not yet destroyed under the guise of development. To reach this place one is to take the road that leads to Rabat from Siġġiewi. On the way,

look out for a statue of the souls in purgatory, and then take a left turn and keep on going further until reaching two chapels.
The first chapel is dedicated to Our Lady of the Annunciation and the second one is dedicated to Our Lady of Mount Carmel. The latter is built on the Fawwara spring.
Historians tell us that Fawwara is not only known for its beauty and spring water but also for its chequered history and legends, found in the writings of Fr Francis Cilia (d. 1864) and kept in the archives of the Cathedral of Mdina.
The most widely known legends date back to the 13th century. Fr Cilia relates the horrible details about how the Arabs tortured and killed seven young girls who all lived in Fawwara between 1270 and 1280, and who no matter how much they were tortured, would not give up their Christian faith. He also noted that under the rule of tyrant Ali Sid, the last of the Arab commanders left by the Normans after their arrival on the Maltese islands, more than 2,000 men and women were killed.
On another note, a more pleasant legend relates the drought that struck the village at the beginning of the 17th century. This dried up the spring water reserves.
The lack of rain caused a lot of concern, especially for the farmers of the area. Among those affected was Ġlorma Ciantar, who owned many fields in the area. Ġlorma made a promise to Our Lady that, if the water of the spring came back, she would build a chapel dedicated to Her in one of her fields.
Soon after her petition, water began to gush out, more than ever before, and farmers began to rest assured that their livelihood was safe.
Ġlorma visited notary Pietro Paolo Vincella on March 5, 1616, and gave him enough money to build a small chapel dedicated to Our Lady of Mount Carmel.
This generous woman also left money for every girl bearing the surname of Ciantar who got married on a particular day. These young ladies would receive a sum of money to assist them at the start of their new life.
Ġlorma left the chapel in the care of the Confraternity of Our Lady of Charity set up in the church of St Paul's Shipwreck in Valletta. A marble plaque on the outside of this chapel commemorates this donation.
Another marble plaque mentions that the chapel was rebuilt in 1669 by the same confraternity. It is believed that in 1756, the chapel was renovated and took on the appearance that it has today.
It has a square-shaped form and on its four pillars rests a small dome without a spire. This particular style is similar to that of the Annunciation chapel found nearby.
It is worth noting that adjacent to the dome is a small bell tower with one bell which in the past was used to call nearby farmers to Mass.
The church is still in a very good condition. Adjoining the chapel is a small house whose lower level is used as a sacristy.
On the portico of the chapel door there is a coat of arms belonging to the Confraternity of Our Lady of Charity. Above it there is another coat of arms belonging to the Ciantar family, a reminder of the benefactors of this chapel.
This coat of arms was restored, bringing out the detail in it. Above the coat of arms is a large window that throws light on the inner altar.
A small parvis surrounds the chapel, with a beautiful view of the fields and the sea. The island of Filfla can also be seen from THIS LOCATION..
On entering the chapel one's gaze falls on the main altar. It is the only part of the chapel that is painted. The altar is made of stone, wood and canvas, bearing a beautiful coat of arms of Nome di Maria surrounded by lilies painted on it.
Above the altar is a wonderful masterpiece, the titular painting, made in 1674 by an unknown artist. It depicts Our Lady of Mount Carmel with the Child Jesus in her arms, both holding a scapular. Below them are the figures of St Jerome and St Catherine of Alexandria, looking up towards them.
Below these saints are two brothers wearing capirotes. An emblem of Charitas separates them. St Jerome was probably included in the painting to remind us of the benefactor Ġlorma Ciantar. In the past this painting attracted many devout people.
Above this masterpiece is a plaque with the words Regina Decor Carmeli (Queen of Carmel).
To the left of the altar, in a small niche, there is a lovely wooden statue of Our Lady of Mount Carmel that was carved in the mid-20th century in Bolzano, Italy. This statue is dressed in Carmelite clothing and the scapulars held by Our Lady and Jesus are both made of cloth.

by Robert Aloisio

"My heart's desire"

By the end of World War II, Toni Agius (1907-1989), a MUSUEM partner and engine-fitter, had left his secure job at the Shipyard to open a new school. He and three other members of the MUSEUM, apprentices in the Shipyard, sacrificed everything to embark on a beautiful adventure that, like everything else, was not without its thorns. Like the founder of the MUSEUM, Agius found those who did not understand and others had their reasonable fears. But St Ġorġ Preca blessed Agius with both hands and the new work that God was about to begin. Dun Ġorġ later called St Michael's School "my heart's content" and it was his happiness to visit the school, talk to the students and teachers and sanctify them.

A special school

In 1996, St Michael's School celebrated its 50th anniversary, and in the same year I joined the school as a teacher. In St Michael's I found a welcoming family environment. A school that has given me and many others the opportunity to put my talents to work in service of others, especially students. 25 years have passed since then and I have no regrets about the choice I made a quarter of a century ago. Thousands of students and dozens of teachers also passed through St Michael's School. For me and many others it was an experience that marked our lives. And it marked us in the most positive way.

Toni Agius used to call St Michael's School a "special school" because he wanted to create a different school from the ones available in Malta at that time. Agius had seen how many young people were being influenced badly at their the workplace, and how much the schools were not doing enough to combat this decay. And in the face of all this, he decided to do something about it inspired by the altruistic and missionary spirit, which was instilled in him by St Ġorġ Preca.

Fruit of sacrifice

The message for the book by Archbishop Charles Scicluna, reads: "As a young priest, I had the opportunity to celebrate the Eucharist with the students of St Michael's School. It was a wonderful experience for me to meet so many students and teachers in an environment where I could see that education is also a formation of strong Christian values.

"St Michael's School is a monument to the dedication of the members of the Christian Doctrine Society, but it is also the fruit of the sacrifices of many dedicated parents, families and lay people. Over time, I have seen the happy development of the School: from a modest environment to a more modern environment and adapted to today's demands.

"I wish St Michael's School to continue to serve our country in the field of education and instill in students and teachers the persuasion of the words that St Ġorġ Preca loved to repeat: 'Teaching is the the source of all good'."

Saint Gorg Preca blessing the foundation stone of St. Michael School, run by the MUSEUM members

Contribution to the Maltese society

The introduction of the book, written by Raymond D'Amato, who has been Head of School for more than 30 years, says: "I truly thank Mr Robert Aloisio, our teacher and author of this voluminous book, not only for the thorough research he has done to give us the history of our dear school, but also for his commitment to give us the vision, love and dedication of the work of the members of the staff of the school our all these years.

"You who came across this book, while reading it, appreciated the contribution that the school has made to the Maltese society even in difficult times. If you have been lucky enough to be a part of our school in the last 75 years, share with others what you have received. I wish St Michael's School a bright future so that, in the words of St Ġorġ Preca, it 'rises with your blessing and brings out spiritual and temporal good, and all who enter it will be the object of your mercy'."

Major developments in the school

In 1977, St Michael School understood that the reality of our country had changed drastically. Thus, it stopped from being a technical school and started preparing its students for the ordinary level examinations. This brought great changes and in the next 30 years: two more floors were built, as well as new laboratories and a large gymnasium. Hence, the school was able to bring in more students and expand the range of subjects on offer.

Today, St Michael's School employs 80 people and has 370 students between the ages of 11 and 16. Inspired by the Gospel, our school community works to instill in every student a vision of hope through an educational model built on humility and meekness, the two pillars on which the founder founded the his society.

We support the Maltese media,Maltese NGOs the Maltese communities of usa, Canada, UK and Australia, authors of Maltese publications and readers in Malta and all around the globe and owners of several websites, Facebook pages, Twitter and Linkden.

This unique windmill in its structure is the windmill which is known as the 'Eight Corner' or occasionally the 'Eight Pointed' Windmill, situated at the entry to the village of Xewkija. Its location is a strategic one on the most frequented road from Imġarr, which leads you to Victoria. Hence it cannot go unnoticed when passing by. As the same name bears, the windmill has an octagonal base with eight sides. This windmill was built in 1710 by Grand Master Perellos' Foundation and is the oldest standing one in Gozo this day. Its first miller was Gio Maris Xikluna, from the Xikluna family of millers, which kept operating this windmill for several years. In the mid-19th century this windmill was passed on to the Camilleri family of millers which had the majority of the other windmills in Gozo. This windmill kept operating until it was hit by a huge fire which completely destroyed its operating mechanism and antennas in 1886. The structure, made up of the base and tower only, remained like this for several years until it was restored by EU funds and returned to its original grandeur. It was inaugurated on 29 January 2021.

The meticulously restored Xewkija Windmill is currently being utilised as a Centre for Folklore Dancing and as a cultural hub. This contributes to cultural exchanges, in particular between local residents and tourists. Such exchanges also encourage the transfer of ideas and thus broaden the educational and cultural horizons of the participants. This eventuality contributes to the creation of a more inclusive and open society while, at the same time, creating the conditions that is conducive to further artistic and cultural development.

Through the recent restoration works, the main objective was to improve the Maltese competitiveness standing within the tourism sector through the promotion, protection and preservation of natural/cultural/historical assets in the public domain intended to improve the Maltese cultural tourism experience whilst maintaining increased tourist flows. The works were also essential to stop the windmill from falling into an even deeper state of disrepair.

The Xewkija Windmill now gives Gozo another facet in its tourism offering by providing an experience that not only promotes but celebrates and showcases its cultural and historical heritage and folklore.

SA joins the world in celebrating cultural diversity

Hon Jing Lee MLC

Shadow Minister for Multicultural South Australia
Shadow Minister for Communities

South Australia is proud to be home to people from more than 200 culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and our multicultural community in this state joins the world in celebrating "World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development".

Held every year on the 21st of May, UNESCO leads a celebration of the richness of the world's cultures and the essential role of intercultural dialogue for achieving peace and sustainable development.

UNESCO stated that three-quarters of the world's major conflicts have a cultural dimension. Bridging the gap between cultures is necessary for peace, stability and development.

Cultural diversity is a driving force of development, not only with respect to social progress
and economic growth, but also as a means of leading a more fulfilling life. The pandemic has proven the intrinsic value of the cultural and creative sector at generating social cohesion, educational resource or personal well-being in times of crisis.

Charter which will pave the way for a stronger and dynamic inclusive society

"Also, for the first time, our First Nation peoples are recognised by the Parliament of South Australia and incorporated in the South Australian Multicultural Act 2021.

"It's a great privilege to work with so many hardworking and inspiring community leaders, members and volunteers of our multicultural community.

"During National Volunteer Week, I also want to acknowledge the thousands of volunteers within our diverse communities who have gone above and beyond the call of duty to help
those in need."

IMTARFA MILITARY CEMETERY

Imtarfa Military Cemetery is located on Triq Buqana, about 1 kilometre to the north east of Mdina. It is 3 kilometres from Mosta and 1 kilometre from Rabat. This cemetery is also known locally as Hemsija Military Cemetery.

This beautiful site has over 1,400 civilian and military graves all cared for by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. Amongst the many striking private memorials are 253 graves of casualties from the First and Second World War. The Commonwealth burials are marked by flat headstones bearing many names due to the shallow earth and hard rock in Malta.

On some of the headstones here you will see visible bomb damage. This is due to the cemetery being in close proximity to a nearby RAF airfield (RAF Ta Kali) that was subject to heavy bombardment throughout the Second World War. These graves are a visible reminder of Malta's suffering and resilience during this time.

Amongst many others buried here are six members of the British Prime Minister Winston Churchill's delegation who were killed in plane crash whilst heading for the 1945 Yalta Conference in Crimea. These vital talks between Churchill, US President Franklin D. Roosevelt and Russia's Premier Joseph Stalin shaped the future of Europe following the end of the war.

HISTORY INFORMATION

From the spring of 1915, the hospitals and convalescent depots established on the islands of Malta and Gozo dealt with over 135,000 sick and wounded, chiefly from the campaigns in Gallipoli and Salonika, although increased submarine activity in the Mediterranean meant that fewer hospital ships were sent to the island from May 1917.

During the Second World War, Malta's position in the Mediterranean was of enormous Allied strategic importance. Heavily fortified, the island was never invaded but was subjected to continual bombardment and blockade between Italy's entry into the war in June 1940 and the Axis defeat at El Alamein in November 1942. At the height of Axis attempts to break Malta's resistance in April 1942, the island and her people were awarded the George Cross by King George VI.

Malta's defence relied upon a combined operation in which the contributions made by the three branches of the armed forces and Merchant Navy were equally crucial. Although heavily pressed in defence, offensive raids launched from the island by air and sea had a crippling effect on the Axis lines of communication with North Africa, and played a vital part in the eventual Allied success there.

Imtarfa Military Cemetery contains 15 Commonwealth burials of the First World War and 238 from the Second World War. The Commission also cares for 1,203 non-war graves within the cemetery and one Dutch war grave.

This Maltese Journal is archived at the MALTA MIGRATION MUSEUM - Valletta
Maltese-Canadian Museume - Toronto, several schools and libraries
websites; ozmalta.com., Maltese Community Council of Victoria
Ministry for Foreign and European Affairs, Maltese Clubs in Australia, NZ, UK and USA
Aged Care Facilities and FACEBOOK. Subscribe now- maltesejournal@gmail.com

Saint Nicholas Festa Committee

Presents
The Feasts of Saints Peter & Paul
Festa ta L'Imnarja & Lejla fil – Buskett
On Sunday 10th July 2022
At
The Good Shepherd Parish Hall
130-136 Hyatts Road Plumpton NSW

Classic Car Display
At 8.30am, Followed by

Arts & Crafts, Agriculture Displays, Spinning Wheel
& Entertainment for the whole family.
Starting at 11.00am

All Exhibitors & Stall Holders are welcome.
If a stall is required please contact
The President – Emmanuel Vella on 0405 677 064

There will be Music & Singing featuring
The Heartbeats.

*** KIDS CORNER ***
Featuring Old Traditional
Maltese Games & a Jumping Castle

Maltese food, drinks, tea & coffee will be available for purchase.

ENTRANCE IS FREE, ALL UNDER COVER & EVERYONE IS WELCOME

UPCOMING EVENTS FOR 2022
Fiera on Sunday 16th October 2022
Dinner Dance on Saturday 19th November 2022
The Feast of St Nicholas on Sunday 4thDecember 2022

For more information please contact
President: Emmanuel Vella on 0405 677 064 or
Public Relations Officer: Stella Vella on 0414 188 226

Imnarja 2022
at La Valette Social Centre

Imnarja
(St Peter and St Paul)
will be celebrated at
La Valette Social Centre
175 Walters Road,
Blacktown NSW
on Sunday 26 June 2022
**** from 10.00am ****

There will be musical
Entertainment
and
Ghana (folklore singing)
with Saver Bonanno &
friends

Also a Jumping Castle and
FREE "Popcorn u Fairy Floss"
for the kids,
plus
participation by
Maltese Concert Band NSW

Kitchen and Bar
will be open for your
convenience
offering traditional
Maltese food & drinks

There will be on exhibition arts and crafts, some farm animals and fresh produce. Those wishing to exhibit or hold stalls please contact the Centre at your earliest on 9222 5847 or Joe Abela on 0416 971 484.
For all other information contact the Centre on 9622 5847

MALTESE GUILD OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA
Members and friends meet every Tuesday
at the Maltese Cultural Centre
6 Jeanes Street, Beverley SA 5009
for lunch, bingo, billiards, cards
and social gathering
from 10am till 3pm

MALTESE SENIOR CITIZENS ASSOCIATION
Members and friends meet every Friday
at the Council Hall
49 LeHunte Street, Kilburn SA 5084
from 9.30am till 3.30pm
Lunch, billiards, bingo and other entertainment

On the initiative of
The Maltese Center
it announces

Bank of Valletta

Customer Service
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USA and CANADA
+356 2131 2021

We would like to thank the following for their help

BOV Bank of Valletta
Mr. Keith Farrugia
Chief Retail Banking Officer
Mr. Geoffrey Ghigo
Head Retail Network

MBA Malta Bankers' Association
Mr.Karol Gabarretta
SecretaryGeneral

Amb. Vanessa Frazier Permanent Representative to the United Nations
Amb Keith Azzopardi of Malta to the USA
Hon. Evarist Bartolo
Advisor Charles Zammit

IMNARJA Maltese in Canada
MALTA FEST

A MALTESE CANADIAN FEDERATION EVENT IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE MCBNA JUNE252022

VENDORS WANTED!

SELL . PROMOTE . ENGAGE

Imnarja - MALTAFEST 2022

25 June 2022 AT 2.00pm
Runnymode Park
221 Ryding Avenue, Toronto Ontario

email: maltafestemcbna.com