

**JOURNAL FOR MALTESE AROUND THE WORLD**



# MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER

Editor: Frank Scicluna OAM MQR JP - Published in Adelaide - Australia

The true  
Meaning of  
Christmas



HAPPY  
CHRISTMAS  
TO ALL  
READERS  
OF THE  
MALTESE  
JOURNAL

IL-MILIED  
IT-TAJJEB  
LILL-  
QARREJJA  
TAL-  
GURNAL  
MALTI



**SEASON OF JOY, LOVE,  
PEACE AND BLESSINGS**





## **Message of good wishes for Christmas and New Year by His Excellency George Vella for Maltese living abroad 16th December 2022**

Fellow Maltese and Gozitans living abroad, greetings, I welcome with great pleasure this annual occasion to send you my

best wishes for this Christmas season, as well as to give some thought to its significance and value. I firmly believe that despite the geographical distance that separates you from Malta and Gozo, you still feel very close to the traditions that make us unique as a People, and this undoubtedly applies to the celebration of Christmas.

Many of you in lands far from ours, might have set up a Nativity scene or a baby Jesus in the warmth of your home, as our ancestors used to do over the years, and are preparing for the traditional Christmas meal with your loved ones.

I also believe that at this time of the year, Maltese associations, clubs, and band clubs abroad meet - despite long distances - for typical Christmas parties that bring together large numbers of their members. This love of tradition and sense of belonging is extraordinary. I follow with pleasure such events and initiatives through the letters and publications that you send to me about how other associations and organisations spread all over the world continued to convey this type of connection to older members as well as youths and children. I would like to take this opportunity to thank these many organisations for their very important work with you Maltese living abroad.

Everyone can benefit from this work, which can provide a sense of fellowship to the elderly who left Malta years ago, to those who may still be children and want to learn Maltese, to those who do not wish to lose the cultural heritage of their ancestors, to others who enjoy a traditional religious feast, and perhaps also to those who want to learn to cook typical Maltese food.

Nowadays there are many means and structures, both real and virtual, that can safeguard the Maltese identity, even in other countries far away. To mention just one example, this year I had the satisfaction of meeting the members of the Council for Maltese Living Abroad at Sant'Anton Palace to hear directly from them about what is being done to continue to safeguard the interests of the

Maltese community around the world. I was very pleased to

learn how seriously subjects and themes such as the Maltese language, the procedures for obtaining citizenship, the promotion of art and culture, and many others are being addressed.

I reiterate my appreciation for the role and function served by this Council. I would also like to commend the initiative for the First Virtual Forum, taken by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, addressed to the youths of the Maltese diaspora.

It was a pleasure to deliver my message because I believe that they have a big role to play for the present and future of the Community of Maltese Living Abroad, as well as for the realities and challenges that affect Malta and Gozo themselves. Key among these is 'Unity' – a concept very close to my heart and which I am sure you are now used to me mentioning it in my speeches and appeals. It is not just youths who have a role to play in this regard, but all of you, wherever you are. As part of the Maltese family spread around the world, you can be a voice for inclusion, solidarity, growth, and economic wealth for every environment around us, for innovation and unlimited training, for lessons in tolerance of any religion, ethnicity, or sexual orientation. We can all learn from the constructive experiences you are going through in your adoptive countries.

I encourage you not to refrain from sharing your thoughts and ideas, as many of you already do, both by keeping in touch with my Office and also through the delightful letters of encouragement, enthusiasm, and sometimes even a small dose of nostalgia you send directly to me.

I conclude this message by wishing you and your loved ones, both those close to you as well as those in Malta and Gozo, on my behalf and on behalf of my wife Miriam, a Merry Christmas and a New Year full of happiness and peace.

**The Editor and the Maltese living  
abroad reciprocate the President's  
greetings and convey their best wishes  
for a happy and holy Christmas**



## Message By Prime Minister Hon. Robert Abela To the Maltese Communities Abroad

Dear Maltese citizens, near and far.

2022 was a dynamic year for the Government of Malta which saw us returning to normality after the pandemic. It

was an eventful year. We continued in our reform programme by introducing amendments to the IVF legislation which is leading to the introduction of new free services, thus helping more couples to become parents in our country.

We also introduced new rights for the workers and continued to increase open spaces for our families whilst we kicked-off our ambitious investment to have more green spaces in the heart of our communities.

Our citizens, together with their needs and aspirations, are at the very heart of our policies. Facing global challenges, we were fully committed in keeping energy and fuel prices stable.

We intervened, as a government, to safeguard our citizens and will continue to do so next year.

On the international front, as from next year, Malta will be taking its seat as an elected member to the United Nations Security Council.

We look forward to play a key role in maintaining international peace and security on an international level. We will also be prioritising climate change during our tenure.

In parallel, we are working steadfast on our local decarbonisation strategy to achieve climate neutrality by 2050. In light of the European Commission positive forecast on our economic growth, which will be nine times the EU average, we are satisfied that our policies are working with great success. However, we remain determined to do more so that the common good reaches everybody. This enables us to look forward to 2023 with positivity.

Also, next year, we will be hosting the Games of the Small States of Europe.

Our preparations are underway, and I look forward to welcoming athletes and officials to Malta, in a spirit of sportsmanship, friendship and respect.

2022 taught us how resilient we are as a people, and as a country and this resilience is key to how we embrace the future.

We are capable to transform challenges into opportunities. We are proud to be Maltese, and I am sure you share this pride, wherever in the world you may be.

As Prime Minister of our beloved country, I am also proud of each one of you living around the globe. We are proud of you, who are making a name for our country.

You are not just part of our history, but also part of our present and future.

I welcome you to stay in touch with us and give us your views and thoughts.

My wife Lydia, our daughter Giorgia Mae and I, would like to wish you a joyful Christmas, and a new year full of good health, happiness and prosperity.

*We wish all our leaders  
political and religious  
A Merry Christmas and a great New Year 2023*



## **Message of good wishes for Christmas and New Year by Hon. Ian Borġ, Minister for Foreign and European Affairs and Trade for Maltese living abroad**

Dear all,

This is my first message to you as Minister

responsible for Foreign and European Affairs and Trade.

We have got to the end of another year, a year full of difficult challenges, both for us, the Maltese, as well as for all of humanity around the globe. The challenges were various, especially those which resulted from what is going on around us. However, our country, just like others, had to face other challenges such as the recovery from the pandemic and challenges to reinforce our country's institutions so that they reflect the times we are living in. We have done this, and will go on doing it, because it is a process by means of which our country can move forward.

The year ahead is an important one for Malta, due to the fact that we will take part in the United Nations Security Council. Malta will show the maturity it acquired along the time, from Independence to Freedom Day until we joined the EU. Now is the time to show how our country can contribute further for the common benefit of mankind, such as with regard to the struggle against climate change, as well as the enhancement of stability and dialogue between the peoples.

I cannot but comment on what is going on at our doorstep in Ukraine. We have never understood and cherished peace as much as today. We had never envisaged that we would have another war in the European continent, that would lead to such serious consequences both in Europe and internationally.

We must harbor peace, by respecting and supporting each other, both among us, the Maltese, as well as among nations. It is therefore, important, that you and us, Maltese and Gozitans living all over the world will keep on working for peace. It is inconceivable that at this day and age, with so much cultural, social or technological development, some choose war over peace.

Our country, thus, will go on assisting the Ukrainian people in a humanitarian way with the

resources at our disposal. Nobody should be afraid to live in his own home, and likewise, the Ukrainian people should be able to live in peace in their own homeland.

We have an important role in all that happens around us. We are all for peace, and we must carry on with this pursuit for peace, so that in spite of our resources, we contribute further on an international level in favour of social justice, progress, equality and peace.

It is particularly for this reason that Malta's role in the UN Security Council as from next year will be a determining one. Our commitment in this sense remains clear and based on the principles of peace and dialogue.

Dear all, I cannot but also mention that as from this legislature, trade forms part of this Ministry. And that's why, I would like to bring to the fore the incessant toil to push our trade forward, to wander further away and make of it another link of which our country should feel honoured and out of which we are bound to get more positive results for our country and our businesses, that are close to our heart.

We have worked incessantly in the interest of the Maltese living abroad, so much so, that, this year focused on a number of high-quality projects amongst which the launching of the Persons of Value Form. This is aimed at compiling a registry for the Ministry, of Maltese living abroad, that, with their talents and experience can contribute productively towards our country. It is also worth mentioning, the setting up of Regional Councils which aim to reach out to more Maltese abroad at grass-root level, as well as the new equipment launched for the Consul-on-the-Move that should help so that such service is rendered in a more efficient way.

In September, we held the first Virtual Youth Forum for young Maltese living abroad, where subjects related to the Maltese language, culture and identity, chosen by the participants themselves were discussed. In October, I also had the honour to host the 14th Annual Meeting of the Council for Maltese Living Abroad – the first

physical meeting after a two-year absence due to the pandemic.

This was my first opportunity as Minister for Foreign Affairs, to meet this Council that has the role of safeguarding and promoting the rights and interests of Maltese living abroad.

This year was also a hectic year when it comes to diplomatic work, where, while we continued to strengthen our diplomatic and consular presence in other strategically important countries in South America, Africa and the Middle East, we also worked on a strategy that brings us closer to countries

with big potential with regard to political, commercial and cultural cooperation, while still being faithful to our goals agreed upon at European and international level to address climate change in an effective way.

Malta believes in the principles of peace, social justice and equality. So, we need to keep on working so that such principles which we believe in, remain the framework of our work so as to have a better world for us as well as for the generations that follow. This is the time when Malta has to push on to contribute for the benefit of the whole of humanity.

I conclude by taking the opportunity to wish



**A MESSAGE FROM H. E. MARIO FARRUGIA BORG  
HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR MALTA IN AUSTRALIA  
AND NEW ZEALAND**

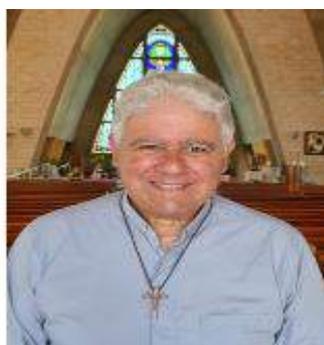
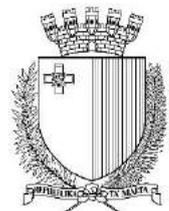
Another year has flown away though these communities are like a dream and once again we smaller than those in Victoria and are at that time which, for NSW, they are none the less equally many, is their favourite of the important and close to our hearts.

realises that time waits for no one and this inevitably makes us reflect on how the past year treated us, what went well, and what could have gone better.

For me it was a very busy year, not only with the work at the Office but also with numerous events which we, as diplomats representing our countries overseas, need to attend or participate in. I am very happy that in 2022 I managed to visit South and Western Australia, not only meeting the authorities of the respective states but also, of course, the Maltese communities, delivering home the message that, even

With huge satisfaction I also mention that the Consul-on-the-Move exercise has now resumed, and between September and December we managed to conduct one exercise in all the usual states, as well as NZ. I would like to thank my Deputy, Ms Gail Demanuele, and Consuls General, Lawrence Buhagiar and Chirelle Ellul Sciberras, as well as our honorary consuls for their commitment and hard work. Next year will be equally busy but also exciting, and we look forward to 2023 with enthusiasm.

A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all!



**A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE FROM  
MGR. CHARLES GAUCI – BISHOP OF DARWIN**

Jesus carried on shoulders ...dad decorating the Christmas cake before we set of to midnight mass . So many memories including big quantities of food shared with family. These are great healthy memories of celebration.

Yet Christmas is primarily about a person. It is about Jesus who was born about two thousand years ago. Jesus truly God and truly human. Yet it is more than just remembering a past event hugely important though it is ... We stop and remember that he is truly still with us today . We are called to rebirth, fresh starts in all of our relationships. With God . With self .... With others ... With all of creation.

As a boy in Malta I found the events around Christmas enchanting.

The crib ...the statue of baby Jesus in the window with decorations of sprouted seeds (gulbina) grown in the dark surrounding it ... the Christmas tree .. the procession in the street with the statue baby

As we face family issues, grief of various types, illness and other challenges we are invited to do so full of hope because of Jesus .

We do not fall in love with an idea, we fall in love with a person. God became flesh in Jesus so that we came enter into a profoundly deep and intimate relationship with God. In his message Jesus

reminds us that we matter absolutely to God, and nothing can come between us and the love of God made visible in Christ Jesus our lord. A blessed

Christmas to you all

+ Charles Gauci



**Message from the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Parliament of Malta.**

**Hon Anglu Farrugia**

Dear Maltese and Gozitan brothers and sisters, another year has passed by and once again, we are

celebrating

Christmas together. This year, we will be celebrating this Christmas with a difference when one remembers what we've been through with the pandemic that laid rest on our doorsteps up to a couple of months ago. So, for many of us, this

might be the time when families will gather & unite year, namely the birth of our Saviour Jesus Christ, a tradition that we, as Maltese families have inherited from one generation to another.

Throughout this year, I had the opportunity to meet with some of the members of the Council of the Maltese Living Abroad at the House of Representatives, Parliament of Malta, during which meeting we discussed various issues of general interest. During the first days of the coming new year 2023, I will be travelling to

Canberra to participate in the 26th Conference of Speakers and Presiding Officers of the Commonwealth.

To conclude my message, on behalf of all the members of the Maltese Parliament, I take this opportunity to wish you and all your loved ones, a very happy Christmas and a Prosperous New Year, filled with the blessings and love of the Lord Jesus Christ. May the Peace He brought on earth when He was born reign again throughout the whole world, especially in those countries that are suffering from war.

**Chev. Charles Figallo OAM OSJ**  
**Chief Executive Officer**  
**Novafast Holdings Australia**



**A message from the heart**

I'll begin my Christmas greeting with this little verse that I'm sure we can all relate to.

*All hearts go home for Christmas across the miles and years  
to live again the age-old joys that passing time endears.  
The ones who mean the most to us are sometimes far away –  
but still they're close in heart and thought on days like Christmas Day.*

Our reality is that as the year draws to an end we will celebrate with family and friends, what should be the happiest time of the year. We cannot ignore however that there is also much sadness in the world today. My personal sadness was the loss of my dear mother who was born in Sliema 92 years ago but left us recently.

So whatever your sadness or joy, hold each other close. And if we can move beyond all that troubles us with love, understanding, compassion and generosity, this is the greatest gift of all.

I wish the entire Maltese community across the world a very enjoyable festive season and a great New Year to follow.

**To the Maltese community**

I hope you have had a great year in 2022. It has been an honour to serve the South Australian community as the Shadow Minister across three portfolios including Communities, Multicultural South Australia, Tourism and Hospitality.

I have always been inspired by the commitment and contributions made by individuals, volunteers, businesses and local community groups across our beautiful State.

Thank you sincerely for your efforts to create opportunities and foster a more inclusive and equitable society where everyone is respected and supported. It is my pleasure to include a Parliament Sitting Calendar for your reference as well as grants information which may be of interest to you or your community. As the festive season is

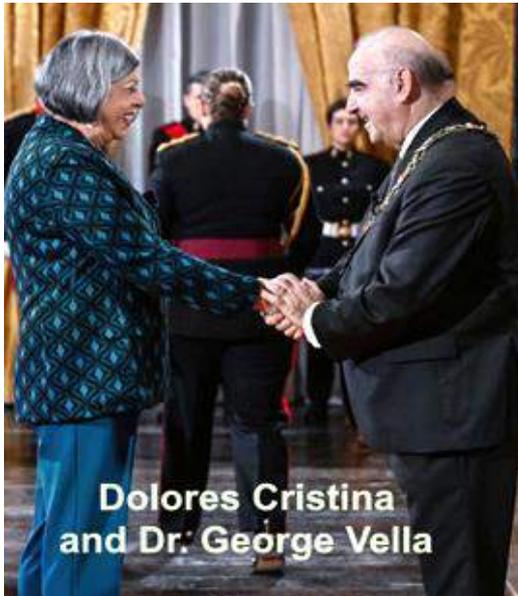


**Hon. Jing Lee MLC**

Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council  
Shadow Minister for Multicultural South Australia  
Shadow Minister for Tourism and Hospitality  
Shadow Minister for Communities

**(08) 8237 9408**  
Parliament House of South Australia  
North Terrace, Adelaide SA 5000  
jing.lee@parliament.sa.gov.au

fast approaching, I take this opportunity to wish you and your family a joyful time of togetherness and may you enjoy a rewarding year in 2023. I look forward to continue working closely with you in the year ahead. Warmest regards, Hon. Jing Lee MLC



*I welcome this opportunity to wish all the readers of the Journal of the Maltese Abroad a Happy Christmas Season.*

*It is always a pleasure to open my Inbox and find a copy of the latest edition to browse through. It makes me feel close to so many of you spread far and wide across the world.*

*Christmas brings out the child in me. With the first flicker of fairy lights and the first appearance of festive decorations the winter becomes brighter and the atmosphere warmer and cosier.*

**DOLORES CRISTINA  
FORMER ACTING PRESIDENT OF  
MALTA SENDS A MESSAGA TO ALL  
THE READERS OF THE JOURNAL OF  
THE MALTESE LIVING ABROAD**

*I am very appreciative of the fact that I am privileged and fortunate to have a large, extended family with whom to share these days. But my work in past and recent times has brought me firsthand experience of the lives of many for whom Christmas is just a time to be gotten through in loneliness, in pain and in sorrow. While many of us take a roof over our heads and food on the table for granted there are others for whom poverty and deprivation is a stark reality.*

*My heart goes out to those who have lost loved ones or who are battling with loneliness, unhappy family situations and difficult life experiences. If each and every one of us could take it upon ourselves to make the life of at least one person better during this season then the true meaning of Christmas will be fulfilled.*

*May the New Year bring you all that your heart's desire, especially love, serenity, good health and happiness*

**Dolores Cristina was awarded Malta's highest honour on the Republic Day 2022 ce  
by His Excellency Dr. George Vella - President of Malta**



**Unity, solidarity and peace emphasized in messages by the country's highest authorities**

**Dr. George Vella - President, Robert Abela - Prime Minister, Dr. Bernard Grech - Opposition Leader  
Anglu Farrugia - Speaker, Mgr. Charles Scicluna - Archbishop**



**CHRISTMAS MESSAGE FROM FR. LONNIE BORG mssp**

*Recently I visited a family who are passing through difficult time. I felt that deep within their hearts there is sorrow and pain. I was lost for words and thought silence was best. Looking around I glanced a small and simple nativity scene or as we call it presepu back home. At that moment, the message received by the shepherds in Bethlehem flashed across my mind. I picked up courage and said to the parents and their two small children , " the shepherds were poor, forgotten and the marginalised of society. Their world was small and limited, only taking care of their flock. Yet deep in their heart they knew and believed that one day a Saviour will come and he will be the world's true shepherd."*

*Dear friends the message of Christmas joy, peace and hope came first to those humble shepherds. Their hearts like ours grew weary from their*

*labour and long waiting for the coming of the Messiah. It was not to the rich and famous but to them, that the angels heralded, " Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy. Today in the town of David, has been born to you, the Messiah, the Lord." Luke 2:10-11. Remember that when you look at the Nativity figures in the crib, remember the true spirit of Christmas, different from the consumeristic and commercial Christmas. It reminds us to cherish moments of gratitude, silence and prayer.*

*Pray as a family and rekindle the true spirit of Christmas. If we want to celebrate Christmas, let us like the shepherds rediscover the surprises of littleness, that is the littleness of God, who is not born in the splendour of appearances, but in the poverty of a stable. Wishing you and your family a Blessed Christmas and a peaceful New 2023. Bless you*

**The Maltese Cultural Association of NSW wishes a Merry and Holy Christmas and a Happy New Year of Peace and Love to you, Frank, and to the readers of the Maltese Journal. Thanks and regards,**

**Tony Pace-Feraud MCA Secretary                      Charles Mifsud – President**

**THE MALTESE COMMUNITY OF ADELAIDE**  
**THE MALTESE GUILD OF SA, THE MALTESE SENIORS**  
**CITIZENS ASSOCIATION, THE ST. CATHERINE SOCIETY OF**  
**SA, THE MALTESE COMMUNITY RADIO AND THE MALTESE**  
**CHAPLAINCY FESTIVITIES GROUP**  
**send their best wishes and a happy and holy Christmas to all**  
**the readers of this Journal and to the Maltese Diaspora**

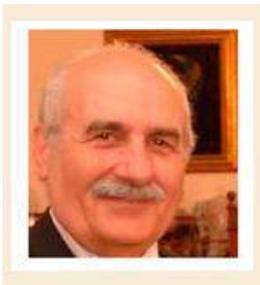


**YOUTHS AND THE MALTESE LIVING ABROAD MISSED OUT**

While we congratulate all those who were awarded Malta’s highest honours on Republic Day we note that only one of them was born in the 1970s, another was born in the 1960s, and the rest were born before, during or just after the Second World War. This means that, at least this year, there was no recognition for anyone from the younger generations and from thousands of Maltese citizens living abroad who worked and still working selflessly to promote Malta and the Maltese culture. These are the most influential ambassadors for Malta, and they are proud that

they have Maltese heritage and background. They deserve a big “Thank you” and recognition.

**Message from George Stagno Navarra  
 President - Association of Lyceum Past Students**



It goes without saying, that every beginning has its end. And yes, the year 2022 is soon ending and leaving behind some pleasant and some sad episodes to remember. There were the

happy times seeing so many people getting together after the effects of Covid and sharing again from the wonderful things that life prepares for us.

Unfortunately, there are the sad occasions in life that are hard to swallow and can be hurting too. However, we must thank the Lord for helping us to be here today and for all that is provided for us. Let us be thankful and show

gratitude and share from the times of our life with others who may be less fortunate than us. Fortunately, The Maltese E-Newsletter is a good shoulder to lean on. It helps to bring a smile to many readers who are enjoying the material that is presented and which brings memories of a past that shall never be forgotten.

I end by reciprocating your kind Christmas and New year greetings. May you and your family, enjoy Christmas day in Peace and Happiness. Auguring to you and your loved one, all the very best of Health in the coming year 2023 and may it be full of many pleasant surprises too.

Sincerely **George Stagno Navarra**



**FESTO  
CHRISTI NATALICIO**

WIRJA TA' ARTI NATALIZJA MINN DIVERSI ARTISTI  
GHAWDXIN, U PASTURI NAPLITANI TA' JUSANA HOPAS

**POST**  
Sala Joe Tabone  
Kunsill Lokali - Nadur

**FTUH UFFIĊJALI**  
Is-Sibt 3 ta' Dicembru  
7.00pm

**DATI TAL-FTUH**  
3 ta' Dicemru 2022  
sal-1 ta' Jannar 2023

**HINIJET TAL-FTUH**  
**Tnejn sal-Ġimgħa:**  
9:00 am - 12:00pm  
u 1:00pm - 4:00pm  
**Is-Sibt:** 9:00am - 12:00pm  
u 5:30pm - 8:00pm  
**Il-Hadd:** 10:00am - 12:00pm  
u 5:30pm - 8:00pm

## Festo Christi Natalicio

Kav Joe M Attard

Din hija Wirja ta' Arti Natalizja minn diversi artisti Ghawdxin u Pasturi Naplitani ta' Jusana Hopas li qed issir bhalissa f'wahda mis-swali tal-Kunsill Lokali tan-Nadur li qed jorganizza dan il-Kunsill habrieki stabilit fil-Belt ta' Napli u li jahdem pasturi tradizzjonali fl-istil Naplitan. Inheggeg lil-qarrejja biex matul Diċembru jsibu hin immoral jzuru din il-wirja unika li harget mill-idejn ta' bosta artisti bravi Ghawdxin flimkien ma' dal-mistieden Naplitan.

Intant l-Ghaqda Hbieb tal-Presejju Ghawdex-Malta 1985 bhas-snin l-imghoddija qed taghmel zewg wirjiet tal-Presejji u Grotti, wahda fis-Sala tal-Ministeru ghal Ghawdex u ohra fil-kuritur tal-Kunvent tal-Patrijiet Agostinjani Victoria flimkien ma' kuncert tal-Milied fil-Knisja tal-Patrijiet Agostinjani. flimkien mal-Ghaqda Hbieb tal-Presejju tan-Nadur. Il-partecipanti, hafna minnhom min-Nadur, huma Wistin Azzopardi, Joseph Farrugia, Peter Muscat, Peter Aquilina, Jean Paul Portelli, Kav Joseph Louis Meilak, Kav

Adonai u Kav Michael Camilleri Cauchi, Charlie Camilleri, Kav Charlie Xuereb, Victor Agius u Jusana Hopas imwieled f'Bangkok, iben skultur Jusana Hopas, presejista



ecological Christmas.”

Ghajnsielem Local Council welcomed the news, saying that ‘this tree will continue to make our locality proud and together with Bethlehem f'Ghajnsielem, street decorations in different zones and events make Ghajnsielem a magical Christmas destination.’

## GHAJNSIELEM A BEAUTIFUL VILLAGE IN THE ISLAND OF GOZO MALTA

The Ghajnsielem Christmas Tree has been classified as one of the “best and most beautiful in Europe” according to the popular website – [European Best Destinations](#). The website is describing Ghajnsielem as the place to visit for “a sunny and



Christmas is very important to the people of Malta and its sister Island of Gozo. Most people on Malta are Catholics and go to a Midnight Mass Service. Usually the churches are full with people. In Maltese Happy/Merry Christmas is 'Il-Milied it-Tajjeb'.

The Churches are decorated with lights and nativity cribs, 'Presepu', built by the church goers. The cribs are decorated with figurines, called 'pasturi' (representing figures like the shepherds and angels). Today some of the cribs are mechanical and the figures in them move! The figure of the baby Jesus is put on the main altar at midnight on Christmas night. At Epiphany it is traditional to put the three figures of the Magi (Wise Men) in the crib. There is a group on Malta called 'Friends of the Crib' who help to keep the Maltese crib tradition alive.

Cribs were first introduced into Malta from Italy by rich noblemen. They were not popular at first and most were burnt. The first true Maltese crib is believed to have been made in Malta in 1617 and was displayed in the Domenican Friars Church in Rabat. In St Peter's Monastery in Mdina, there is a crib dating back to 1670. This is treasured and looked after by the Benedictine Nuns who live in the monastery. At about the same time, another

Maltese man made a crib with moving parts powered by water! As cribs became more popular they also became more 'Maltese' with people replacing the Italian looking buildings and trades people with local ones. (Flour windmills were and are still popular buildings to feature in a crib scene.) The first imported Italian 'pasturi' were very expensive and most people couldn't afford them. So people started making their own 'pasturi' from rough clay and plaster. Some of these figures still exist today. (Modern pasturi are now often made of plastic.)

By the early to mid 20th century, cribs were thought of as old fashioned and not very popular anymore. To stop the decline of Christmas, in 1907, a priest called George Preca founded a children's charity and society called 'MUSEUM'. In 1921 he started a tradition of having a Christmas Eve procession with a life size figure of the Baby Jesus being carried at the head of the procession.

At sunset on Christmas Eve in 1921, Fra Diegu Street in the town of Hamrun was crowded with children and adults ready to take part in the first procession. In those days, street lighting was very poor in Malta and so many people brought lanterns with them to help them see their way during the procession and to

shed light on the statue of Baby Jesus carried shoulder-high by four boys. The different types of lamps included, gas powered bicycle headlamps, oil lamps used on farmers carts, colored paper lanterns, Venetian lights, palm fronds and olive branches. The idea became very popular with people of all ages and so the very special Maltese traditional started. These processions are still popular today and form part of the Christmas Eve celebrations. In 1986 the 'Friends of the Crib' society was formed and now they have over 500 members. Every year, in the weeks running up to Christmas, the Friends put on a exhibition of about 100 cribs of all shapes and sizes.

Maltese houses are often also decorated with cribs with 'pasturi' (which are small plastic or clay figures representing figures like the shepherds and angels). Large figures of the baby Jesus are sometimes put behind windows or in balconies and lit at night. Houses are also decorated with Christmas wreaths, candles and all sorts of other decorations. Every household also has a Christmas Tree decorated with light bulbs, tinsel and Christmas decorations.

It is traditional to sow wheat, grain and canary seed, 'gulbiena', on cotton buds in flat pans five weeks before Christmas. These are left in dark corners in the

house until the seeds produce white grass-like shoots. The pans with the fully-grown shoots are then used to decorate the crib or the statue of Baby Jesus.

One Maltese Christmas tradition is the 'Priedka tat-Tifel' which means 'the preaching of the child'. A boy or a girl, normally aged 7 to 10, does the preaching of the sermon at the midnight mass instead of the priest! The children learn the sermon by heart and start learning it four or five weeks before they preach on Christmas Eve. The parents are also very excited and nervous about the performance, as they would have helped the children to learn the sermon. The boy or girl tells the story of the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem and is encouraged to give their sermon a personal delivery which will touch the hearts of the church-goers.

George Sapiano delivered the first known Christmas Eve sermon by an altar boy in 1883, in the parish church of Luqa. It has also become common for local churches to organise a mini-pageant with children dressed up as shepherds, Joseph and Mary carrying a baby doll (representing Jesus) acting out the story of the Nativity. This re-enactment starts at 11pm and is followed by High Mass at midnight.

A popular Maltese carol is 'ninni la tibkix izjed'. It means 'sleep and cry no more' and was written by the Jesuit Priest, Fr. Andrew Schembri (1774-1862) from Luqa for Maltese migrants in Tunis.

There is a village on Malta called 'Siggiewi' dedicated to St.

Nicholas, who is also known as San Niklaw, of Bari in Italy and its feast is celebrated on the last Sunday of June.

Children on Malta get their presents from Santa Claus on Christmas night. Sometimes, Father Christmas comes knocking at doors early on Christmas night delivering presents!

Schools in Malta often hold a Christmas concert. Most of the children take part. It consists of Christmas Carols, plays with a Christmas theme, mimes and poetry recitals, etc. It is enjoyed by the children and teachers alike. Christmas parties are also often held in each class. Sometimes the children bring food which their parents prepare at home and it is shared with every one in their class. Gifts are exchanged and sometimes money is collected which is given to charity.

A concert and Christmas party is held every year at the Residential Home for the Disabled in Siggiewi. The residents take part in Christmas plays and carol singing helped by the people who work who work in the Home including Nuns. The Home is decorated and the atmosphere is great. The chapel is decorated with a beautiful crib with Baby Jesus. On Christmas Eve, a procession with the Baby Jesus is held and then Midnight Mass. Relatives of the residents also participate in the Christmas celebrations. Special food is prepared and the atmosphere is very happy!

Voluntary organisations also organise Carol Singing evenings

in old people's homes and hospitals, helping to cheer up the elderly and sick with the spirit of Christmas.

Under the patronage of the President of Malta, the Community Chest Fund sets up a tent in Freedom Square in the town of Valletta, where volunteers help to raise donations of cash. The donations are then distributed to charity organisations such as orphanages and other charities, which often rely on donations to continue their work in the community.

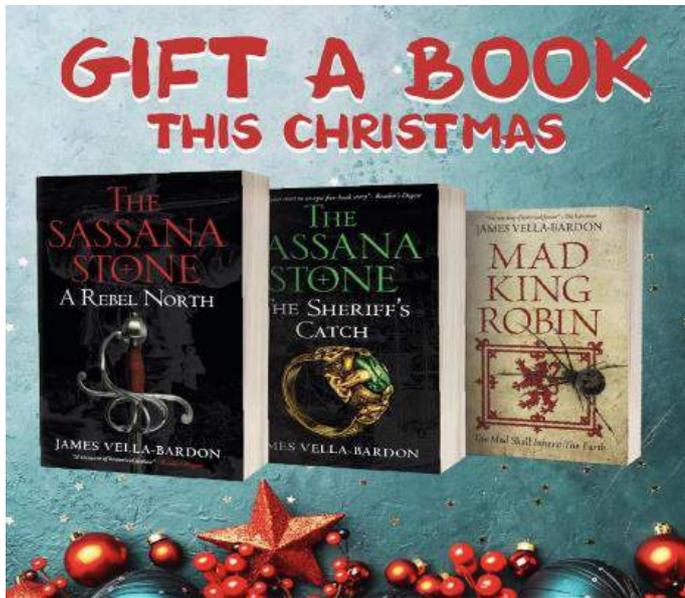
Maltese people have a wide range of food at Christmas. Traditionally, the Maltese housewife kept the fattest capon/rooster, 'hasi', especially for Christmas Lunch, which was roasted at the local bakery in a casserole full of potatoes and vegetables. The traditional dessert served at Christmas was the Treacle Ring, 'Qaghqa tal-Ghasel', and to finish it off, a hot Chestnut and Cocoa Soup, 'Imbuljuta tal-Qastan', which was and is served as a cosy night cap during the cold December days in Malta.

Today the traditional Maltese menu has made way for Christmas Turkey, Christmas Cakes, Christmas Puddings and Mince Pies, all inherited during 164 years of British rule (1800 - 1964) in Malta. Italian Panettone has also become a Christmas favourite.

**We thank all our  
Readers and  
correspondents**

## JAMES VELLA-BARDON

<info@jamesvellabardon.com>



## SEASON'S GREETINGS!

G'day all from the land down under!

It's been a while since I last dropped you a line, its just there's been so much exciting stuff going on this end - as described in this newsletter.

I'd firstly like to thank you all for your messages of congratulations, photos with the books and the incredible reviews of my work on Amazon and Goodreads, amongst others. Simply a dream come true for me: it's you readers that make all the effort worthwhile!

And more importantly: I wish you and your loved ones a joyous and restorative Christmas and New Year break. I'm sure we've all been busy making up lost ground after the Covid setbacks of the previous two years, so I hope you all get yourselves a well-deserved rest over the festive

season.

## CHRISTMAS BARGAINS!

I think I should also do my bit to contribute to the all-round cheery feel of this festive season and I've some exciting news to share with you: The ebook versions of my following three acclaimed titles will be available for **FREE DOWNLOAD** on **Amazon.com** between **Friday 15 December to 20 December!** All freely available to you at the click of a button! [WWW.Jamesvellabardon.com/](http://WWW.Jamesvellabardon.com/)

## MELISSA JONES (Camilleri) DAUGHTER OF A MALTESE MIGRANT ELECTED MAYOR OF WALKERVILLE, SOUTH AUSTRALIA



Melissa Jones has been elected as the Mayor of Walkerville in the recent local government elections in South Australia. Melissa is the daughter of Maltese migrant Edward Camilleri and Italian migrant, Santina Camilleri. They are both very active members of the Maltese community in Adelaide.

Edward Camilleri was born in Senglea, Malta in 1950 and emigrated to Adelaide with his parents and three siblings in 1956.

After graduating from High School, Melissa studied Commerce and Law at The University of Adelaide, and then worked as a lawyer in Adelaide, Sydney, and Hong Kong, before returning to Adelaide in 2013.

Melissa is married to Llewellyn and has four children. She is involved in her local community, with her children attending the local primary school, and playing for the local cricket team, the Walkerville Cats.

As well as being Mayor, Melissa now runs her own legal practice, specialising in providing commercial legal services to mining companies. She has contributed to her profession through being a member of the Council of the Law Society of South Australia and mentoring young women in both law and mining.

Melissa leads the Walkerville Council during an exciting period with several intergenerational capital projects to be funded and delivered over the next four years.

The Maltese community of South Australia and the readers of the Maltese Journal are very proud of the achievement of a first generation Australian and wish Melissa continued success in her future.



## “MALTALINGUA” THANK YOU AND HAPPY CHRISTMAS

As the final week of the year comes to a close it is the perfect opportunity to reflect, look back on the year, and give thanks. What a year it has been! Maltalingua has been celebrating its 10-year anniversary throughout 2022, and we are delighted that over 3200 students (a new school record!) decided to walk through our doors this year and celebrate with us.

We would like to thank every single one of you who chose to study at our school and look forward to welcoming you back again

very soon.

We would also like to thank all of our teachers who have been part of the Maltalingua family this year and all of our administration staff, managers, and interns who have worked incredibly hard, showing dedication and loyalty all year long and ensuring you have the best experience here possible. [blog.maltalingua.com/merry-christmas-2022](https://blog.maltalingua.com/merry-christmas-2022)

## Ursuline Sisters to sing traditional Christmas song to raise funds for children’s centre project



This year, a group of five Ursuline Sisters will sing the Maltese popular Christmas song “Ninni La Tibkix Iżjed” to raise funds for a new project in Tas-Sliema aimed at further assisting children and families.

The last appearance on stage of Sisters Michaela, Denise, Magdalene, Rita and Monica as the Ekklesia Sisters was in 2015 during the local Eurovision festival.

The aim of the Sisters’ new venture is to refurbish a property in Tas-Sliema and open a children’s protection centre, instead of the Creche, which no

longer welcomes babies. This followed a new EU legislation in 2021 that banned the upbringing of children under-3 by institutes, but instead by families.

Singer Franklin Calleja and Gilbert Camilleri came up with the idea of writing a song for the Sisters to assist them in their project.

We are changing the Creche service to a day care centre so that our mission continues. It is important for us because we need funds. Ursuline Mother Superior Magdalene Cauchi

Mother Magdalene stated that she wishes to dedicate “Ninni la Tibkix Iżjed,” which was also produced in a video, to all those experiencing hard times.

**We are not in competition with other journals. We are only one of many other social media who promote Malta and its culture and strive to put the **Maltese living abroad** on the map**



## **Another *Australian – Maltese Achiever* Kathryn Burgess (Chetcuti)**

**Social Worker Multi-Disciplinary Community Geriatric  
Service Central Adelaide Local Health Network**

Here I am in my university graduation picture. I never thought that I would go to university and get a degree as I felt that it was out of my reach. However, I entered as a mature aged student and four years ago at the age of 50 I graduated with a Bachelor of Social Work (honours) degree. I must say I am proud of this achievement, acknowledging that I couldn't have done it without my husband and my parents, as they supported me all of the way.

I grew up as an only child to Joseph and Georgina Chetcuti. They were both children when their families migrated to Australia from Malta. Our families are now extended due to many of us being married, with children and grandchildren. I am fortunate to have love and support from my parents in all that I do. I was very active with sport as a younger person, playing tennis (we had a tennis club across the road from where we lived), netball for the school and basketball (both school and church club). Throughout my schooling at St. Mary's College my mum would come and watch me play sports and although my dad was working, he was in retail, they both were always encouraging and supportive. I completed all my schooling from grade one to year twelve at St. Mary's College. Back then we were also taught by nuns. Once I completed high school, I had applied for College as I wanted to be an Art or kindy

teacher. Nevertheless, despite my good grades I was not successful with obtaining entry into further education. I then went on to find my first job as a receptionist in a physiotherapist clinic (which I thoroughly enjoyed) and from there on I had many jobs from office work, courier, running my own Motel business, catering in a hospital and then as a receptionist for a non for-profit organisation that changed my career course immensely. During this period, I was offered opportunities of further study to which I accepted and upon completing these courses I applied and was successful in obtaining a coordinator role managing home care packages out in the community in aged care. Throughout the following years I remained and continued further studies within the aged care industry, as this provided me additional opportunity to experience various roles, enabling my skills and knowledge to grow.

Along the way I was fortunate to make good networking contacts that also provided me with support and information that enhanced my work practice and enjoyment of the aged care industry. I wanted to remain in this industry and noted a shift of qualifications required to obtain jobs that I have already worked in, including the current role I was working in and decided it was time I obtain such qualification.

I did some research and decided to become a social worker.

I enrolled and was accepted to UniSA at the Magill Campus.

I worked and studied full time.

As I was doing my honours the final year was to write a paper, the topic being of your own choice. I therefore wrote a paper which was titled "The meaning of home for baby boomers and grey nomads". Writing a paper was always going to be challenging as English was not one of my best subjects at school. I completed the paper and my lecturer who was also my mentor with assisting me with support to complete the paper stated she really liked what I wrote. She requested my permission to assist me with getting my paper published. I was delighted and said yes. After a while she came back to me and said she had a change of plan and was writing a book that provided an insight of the meaning of home from many viewpoints in social work and asked if she could use my paper for one of the chapters in that book.

I could hardly contain myself with excitement and said yes. Over the next three years we kept in contact and earlier this year (2022) the book had it's final edit and was published. A copy of the book was sent out to all that were involved, with our names not only in the front introduction of the book, but actually on the front cover. The book is called The complexities of home in social work. I could not believe this and was in amazement that my paper was in this book as one chapter and my name was on the front cover. It is an honour to be chosen to be a part of that book as the other people who also wrote and contributed are established and seasoned writers/lecturers. I am so grateful.



## LUMEN REQUIRUNT LUMINE

(Huma u jimxu wara d-dawl, fittxew id-Dawl – il-Maġi)

Ta' kull sena jiena nikteb  
Poezija għall-Milied;  
Għax dil-festa hi mifruxa  
Mal-irhula u l-ibliet.

Din il-grajja hekk qadima  
L'għandha 'l fuq minn elfejn sena  
Magħha gġib ferh mhux tas-soltu –  
Li 'l qalbna jimla bil-hena.

It-Twelid tal-Bambin ckejken  
Għandu seher fuq il-qlub  
U mal-wasla ta' dil-festa  
Bil-ghors veru qalbna ddub!

Bejn Gużepi u Marija  
Il-Bambin twieled fil-faqar  
Għan-nifs shun ta' baqra w hmara –  
Miskin kemm kellu jinhaqar!

Imma din kienet ix-xewqa  
Tal-Imghallem, il-Missier,  
Illi Ibnu jbati, jsufri –  
Għalih dan kien il-mestier!

Izuruh gewwa l-grotta  
Ir-raghajja marru bi nġarhom;  
O kemm ferhu b'dak il-ghageb –  
Bil-hena fawwar lil djarhom!

Wara d-dawl imxew il-Maġi  
Biex ifittxu lit-Tarbija  
Li offrewlha r-rigali  
U imliethom bl-armonija!

Fl-istorja dahal Erodi  
Li ried jeqred lit-tarbija;  
O kemm qatel innocenti,  
Biki xerred, dmugh u dmija!

Niesna tibni l-presepju  
Li jehodna lura s-snin  
U quddiemna jgibilna  
Twelid helu l-Bambin.

Tal-Mużew il-Purċissjoni  
Jagħmlu lejlet il-Milied;  
Ikantaw, jiehdu sehem fiha  
It-tfal zġhar, subien u bniet!

U fil-knisja tard flghaxija  
Kulhadd jisma' lill-abbati  
Jirakkonta b'vuċi għolja  
Kemm Gesù kellu jbati

Biex jifdina minn dnubietna  
Billi twieled gewwa għar  
U marru jzuruh ferhana  
Hienja l-ifqar fost il-fqar.

Qtajja' t'angli b'vuċi għolja  
Flimkien kantaw għalenija  
L-ahbar tajba taw lid-dinja –  
"Fl-għar twieled Gesù tarbija!"

Jalla dan il-ferh tas-Sema  
Isaltan gewwa d-djar tagħna,  
Lil qlubna jfawwar bil-hena  
U ma jitlaq qatt minn magħna.

Flimkien mal-familja tiegħi  
Nixteqikom ferh qaddis  
Illi jidhol fil-qalb tagħkom  
Bla dewmien, mill-aktar fis!

*Kav. Joe M. Attard  
Milied 2022*



**GROTTA TAL-MUZEW**  
ta' Lina Brockdorff - Malta

Kont għadni tifla żgħira  
nitgħallem il-Mużew,  
rbaħt grotta f'lotterija,  
fraħt biha din tassew.

Dawwartha b'ħafna xemgħa,  
għulbiena u rancis.  
Kewkba qasqast tal-fidda,  
weħħiltha fuq precis.

Ġew fuqna l-jiem qerrieda;  
tfuliti ntemmet hemm,  
taħt trab, duħħan u bombi,  
maħsula kollha demm.

Jum minnhom messet lilna  
ix-xorti ta' l-oħrajn;  
darna ma baqgħetx wieqfa,  
Hwejjina mas-saqajn

Xi nies ta' qalbhom twajba  
xxabtu mal-ħitan,  
ħarġulna x'erba' lbiesi,  
xi mejda u sufan

Fost dawk li huma ġabru  
kien hemm iċ-ċkejken għar;  
waqgħu kienu l-pasturi,  
il-baqra u il-ħmar.

Farfartha u ħadtha miegħi  
f'qigħ xelter, hemm ġo ħajt.  
I-għadu le jerġa' jsibha  
il-grotta li kont qlajt.

Is-snin u l-ġranet gerrbu,  
illum għandi l-ulied,  
b'dankollu bqajt ingħozżha,  
il-grotta tal-Milied.

Għad hemm iċ-ċkejknha grotta,  
l-istess li irbaħt jien.  
Hemm għadhom il-pasturi,  
wara dal-bosta snin.

Għad hemm xemgħa u għulbiena,  
tal-fidda l-kewkba ssib.  
Għakemm tidher tant fqajra,  
grotta oħra qatt ma ngib.

Għax waqt li nduru magħha  
b'għajnejna jleqqu sew,  
tfuliti nerħa' nilmaħ,  
fil-grotta tal-Mużew.



**Joseph Monsigneur**

19/03/1931 - 10/12/2022  
Sliema - Malta Adelaide Australia

Aged 91 years.  
Loving Husband of Pauline.  
Much loved Father of  
Vincent and Monica.  
Loved Nannu of Joshua,  
Alanna, Sean and Bianca.  
Eldest Brother of Pauline,  
Carmen, Rita, Leli (dec)  
Richard,  
Charlie, Vivian and John

**WE REMEMBER IN  
OUR PRAYERS ALL  
THOSE MALTESE  
WHO LIVED  
ABROAD AND  
PASSED AWAY  
DURING THIS YEAR  
2022  
R.I.P.**



**LITURGICAL CELEBRATIONS BY THE ARCHBISHOP DURING CHRISTMAS AND AT THE BEGINNING OF THE NEW YEAR**

radio station 103 starts at 11:30 p.m. with the Christmas sermon which this year will be delivered by a girl.

On Sunday 25 December, the Archbishop will celebrate Christmas Day Mass at 9:30 a.m. at St Paul's Cathedral in Mdina. This will be broadcast on TVM, Church.mt, Newsbook.com.mt and on radio station 103.

On Saturday 31 December, the Archbishop will celebrate a thanksgiving Mass at 5:45 p.m. at St. John's Co-Cathedral, Valletta, for the year that is drawing to a close. At the end of the celebration, the *Te Deum* will be sung and the Sacramental Blessing given.

On Sunday 1 January 2023, at 9:30 a.m., the Archbishop will celebrate Mass on New Year's Day at Dar tal-Providenza, Siggiewi. It will be broadcast on TVM, Church.mt, Newsbook.com.mt and on radio station 103.

Archbishop Charles Jude Scicluna will lead a number of liturgical celebrations at Christmastime which are open to the public. The first of these will be on Christmas Eve.

On Saturday 24 December, the Archbishop presides over the First Vespers at 5:15 p.m. and then celebrates the Vigil Mass at St John's Co-Cathedral, Valletta. At 11:00 p.m., the Office of Readings and Christmas carol singing will take place at St Paul's Cathedral, Mdina. At midnight, the Archbishop celebrates Midnight Mass. The broadcast on TVM, Church.mt, Newsbook.com.mt and on

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**General Consulate of Malta inaugurated in Istanbul, Turkey**



The Minister for Foreign Affairs Minister reminded everyone of this Consulate's important role, especially where European Consulate work is concerned, such as citizenship, Affairs and visas and passports. He added that there is great potential through this Consulate of a EU member state to establish more joint business ventures. Minister Borg thanked the Consul General Walter Mallia along with the Maltese Ambassador for the Consulate of Turkey, Theresa Cutajar for her work in such an important country.

Istanbul, Turkey.

During the inauguration, Minister Borg said that it is an honour for our country to keep strengthening its presence in this well-known city. Over the last few years, a number of Maltese visitors have been assisted by means of this Consulate and strong trade relations have been created between the two countries.

Ambassador Theresa Cutajar and Consul General Walter Mallia said that this inauguration is a demonstration of the positive relations which exist between our country and Turkey as well as another step towards potentially continuing to keep opening more doors for new opportunities.

 **The Maltese Journal**

**OUR AIM IS TO DEFEND THE RIGHTS AND INTERESTS OF MALTESE LIVING ABROAD**



## Wenzu u Rozi

### BOOK NOW

Wenzu u Rozi introduces us to a loving yet frequently bickering elderly couple living in Malta in the 1920s. Wenzu enjoys a drink (or six!) at the local tavern, catching up on the news and spending time with his mates after a hard day's work. Meanwhile, his wife Rozi is at home, attending to the daily chores. Will the wine wash away Wenzu's cares or add to them on his return home?

Wenzu u Rozi - praspura wara l-oħra (antics galore) is an original production based on the well-loved short

stories of George Zammit. It is presented in the style of a traditional Maltese "teatrin" (a comic theatrical play). Join us on the 19th February 2023 to meet our lead characters, a loving yet frequently bickering elderly couple who live in a remote Maltese village together with their neighbours and friends. Set in the early 1920s, this light-hearted comedy reminds us of the bitter-sweet nostalgia of days gone by.

Language: Maltese with periodic English narrations making it accessible to a multicultural audience.

**The Bowery Theatre 33 Princess Street, St Albans VIC 3021**

**Suitable for: All ages Date: Sunday 19th February 2023**

**Two shows 4pm, 7pm Run time: 1 hour 15 minutes**

This show has been made possible by funding from the Brimbank City Council, the support of the MCCV and dedication of our cast members and director Simone Cremona (musicworx).



The Presidium of the GERMAN-MALTESE SOCIETY  
wishes the members and their families  
as well as the readers of the Maltese Journal  
a MERRY CHRISTMAS and a HEALTHY  
and PEACEFUL 2023!  
Frohe Weihnachten und ein gutes, sorgenfreies Neues Jahr  
Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year  
Bix-Xewqat Tajba għal Millied Qaddis u Sena ta' Hena  
Christian Launer – President



## The Voice of our Readers

I wanted to thank you so much for all of your wonderful work over the last 12 months and the wonderful productions of the newsletter which bring much joy to so many all over.

I wanted to take this opportunity to wish you and your family a very Merry and Holy Christmas and our very best wishes for a very healthy and happy 2023.

My wishes are also for peace throughout the world and the suffering to end for those in areas of conflict and sadness and ill health many are experiencing.

Take care – keep safe and well and please, I am sure I speak for so many, keep up the production of your wonderful newsletter. Kind regards and very best wishes **Marion (Brisbane) Australia**

**John and Doris Mangion – Adelaide, Australia**

May I congratulate you for the wonderful journal you publish regularly for so many Maltese around the world. It is very much appreciated and loved by everyone. It keeps us connected with our homeland – Malta. May I take this opportunity to wish you and all the readers a very merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year 2023.



*I regret that I cannot publish all the messages I received because of space. Our journal reaches Maltese living in these places – all over Australia, Malta and Gozo, Canada, USA, United Kingdom, Honolulu, Spain, Italy, Brussels, Philippines, South Africa, Portugal, Norfolk Islands, France, Germany, Netherlands, Sweden, Finland, Albania, South America – Brazil, Peru and Bolivia*



Kull fejn jiġi ċelebrat il-Milied, il-PRESEPJU jiffirma parti mit-tradizzjoni tal-pajjiż u Malta mhix eċċezzjoni. Sa minn kmieni fix-xahar ta' Ottubru, statwetti, magħrufa lokalment u popolarment bħala pasturi, jitqiegħdu għall-bejgħ fil-ħwienet. Huwa komonement magħruf li r-rgħajja kienu l-ewwel persuni li għrew lejn il-presepju fejn twieled Ġesù Bambin f'Betlem.



L-ewwel presepju magħruf li nbena f'Malta jmur lura għassena 1617 u kien esebit fil-Knisja tal-Patrijiet Dumnikani fir-Rabat. Kien jiġi mdawwal minn dwal tax-xemgħa u lampi taż-żejt. Gurnata sabiħa, xi ħadd ħalla l-bibien tal-knisja miftuhin ħalla riħ veloci li bidlet id-dwal żgħar tax-xemgħa fi ħugġieġa li qered il-presepju u dekorazzjonijiet oħra madwaru. Dan il-presepju qatt ma reġa' nbena. Fil-Monasteru tas-sorijiet Benedittini fl-Imdina, nsibu presepju li jmur lura għall-1826. Lejn nofs is-seklu dsatax, ċertu Antonio Muscat Fenech minn Ħal Qormi, kien jibni presepju mekkaniku li kien jiftaħ għall-wiri tal-pubbliku fil-garaxx tiegħu.

Ilma li jqattar fuq xewk imwaħħla mar-roti kien jintuża biex idawwar ix-xaftijiet tal-injam li min-naħa tagħhom, attivaw il-movimenti tal-statwetti fil-presepju. Minħabba l-folol li kienu jżuru, il-presepju nżamm miftuħ sa Frar. Il-bini tal-presepji f'Malta kien influwenzat l-aktar mill-istil Naplitan li kien u għadu popolari ħafna fl-Ewropa. L-istil ta' presepju Sqalli, ġie introdott f'Malta minn patri Frangiskan minn Sqallija, Benedetto Papale, li hu magħruf li bena numru mhux ħażin ta' presepji matul iż-żjara tiegħu f'Malta.

L-istil Sqalli kien aktar aċċettabbli għall-Maltin, forsi minħabba x-xebh bejn il-kampanja Maltija u dik Sqallija murija fil-presepji. Minkejja dan, il-poplu Malti ried li jkollu l-presepju tiegħu li fih tradizzjonijiet lokali, snajja', kostumi, strumenti mużikali u bini. Il-farmhouse u l-mithna tar-riħ tad-dqiq Maltin għadhom jidhru bi prominenza fil-presepji mibnija lokalment. Il-bini tal-presepji f'Malta kellu l-aqwa żmien tiegħu matul id-dsatax u l-ewwel parti tas-seklu għoxrin. Wara l-Milied il-presepju ġie żarmat u l-'għebel' inhażen għas-sena ta' wara. L-introduzzjoni ta' fjuwils moderni fil-fran neħhiet il-faħam u għalhekk il-provvista tal-'gagazza' saret remota ħafna, filwaqt li l-użu tal-għebel kien pjuttost ingombranti.

Għalhekk id-dilettanti tal-presepji daru għal medium ieħor, il-kartapesta. Dan għamel presepji aktar solidi u ħfief; madankollu pprezentat problema ta' ħażna. Għal din ir-raġuni, il-presepji ħafna drabi kienu meqruda wara l-Milied. Aspett ieħor interessanti tal-Presepju huwa l-evoluzzjoni tal-istatwetti jew 'pasturi'. L-ewwel figurini artistici kienu pjuttost għoljin u għalhekk lil hinn mil-lat tal-bniedem ordinarju. Għalhekk fassal il-metodu tiegħu kif jagħmel il-'pasturi'. Billi uża t- tafal tal- art, hu sawwar dak li dehru qishom figuri imħattek ħafna. Iż-żebgħa għenet biex tiddefinixxi l-wiċċ, l-idejn u l-ħwejjeg. Ix-xama' tan-naħal kienet tintuża wkoll fil-forom biex isiru repliki ta' Ġesù Bambin u statwetti oħra.

Lejn nofs is-Seklu 20, ittradizzjonijiet u l-folklor ġew imwarrba minn dekorazzjonijiet tal-Milied aktar moderni. Kemm f'Malta kif ukoll barra, il-Presepju sar biss tiżjin ieħor tal-Milied u minħabba xxogħol meħtieġ fil-bini tiegħu, għamel spazju għas-sigra tal-Milied u dekorazzjonijiet oħra faċli biex jintramaw. Il-produzzjoni tal-massa ta' figurini tal-plastik, miżbugħin fi stili u kuluri brillanti, ma kellhiex il-prestigju tal-figura magħmula bl-idejn individwalment u għenet biex it-tradizzjoni tiddeterjora saħansitra aktar.

Fis-sena 1907, twaqqfet is-Socjetà għad-Duttrina Reliġjuża, magħrufa bħala M.U.S.E.U.M.. Imhegġa mill-motto tagħha, 'VERBUM DEI CARO FACTUM EST', li litteralment tfisser: 'Il-Kelma ta' Alla saret Bniedem', din is-Socjetà, taħt it-tmexxija tal-fundatur tagħha, San Ġorġ Preca, għamlitha l-kompitu tagħha li terġa' tkebbes. L-imħabba għall-Milied reali. Kull Diċembru, it-tfal kienu jingħataw replika ta' Ġesù Bambin jew presepju żgħir bħala rigal. Inizjattiva oħra ta' din is-Socjetà kienet it-twettiq ta' purċissjoni lejlet il-Milied li matulha nġarret replika ta' Ġesù Bambin b'qies naturali u tkantaw innijiet reliġjużi tal-Milied. L-ewwel minn dawn il-purċissjonijiet saret fl-1921

Fl-1986, grupp ta' dawn id-dilettanti tal-Presepu ltaqghu flimkien u ffurmaw il-**'#BIEB TAL-PRESEPU'**. L-iskop tal-grupp huwa li jippromwovi t-tradizzjoni tal-presepu f'Malta. Minn dakinhar, is-Socjeta' rnexxielha terga' tqanqal l-imhabba lejn il-Presepu u tista' tiftaħar b'aktar minn erba' mitt membru attiv.

Madwar mitt presepu ta' diversi forom u daqsijiet magħmulin minn mezzj differenti bħall-kartapesta, polystyrene, sufra, eċċ., jingabru flimkien biex joffru lill-vizitaturi, nies tal-lokal u turisti, l-istorja vera tal-Milied, **IT-TWELID TA' ĠESÙ BAMBIN.**



**Sarah Jane and and  
Ivan Malekin | Nexus  
Production Group  
CATS OF  
MALTA**

Ivan and I hope that you are able to unwind right now as the end of the year approaches faster than a Japanese bullet train.

We wrapped production on another feature a week ago and are now taking this time to work on the back end of Cats of Malta - strengthening our list of potential PBS sponsors and partners, conversing with festivals and companies for future screenings, editing the 69 min version of the film to a meet a requested time frame for the PBS broadcast (as per the feedback from our station manager), plus also we need to create a DCP file and a new subtitle track. Working on the back end basically!

2023 is going to be the biggest year for Cats of Malta -- and we can't wait to see what our unconventional distribution methods leads us to. Hopefully a wide

spread of the film and success on a lot of different levels. This email is to tell you all that from the virtual screening Cats of Malta screening, for Animal Guardians Cat Cafe we raised €248.63 in donations from ticket sales and extra donations.

Thanks to all who were part of this with watching and sharing the link, the 300 cats will be so happy and the volunteers super grateful.

We won't have another update until January. And it will start off with some exciting news, which we can't share yet. Trust us. Until then, have a safe and happy holiday break and be kind to one another. The world needs more kindness and cat videos right now. We hope you agree.

Sarah Jayne Portelli & Ivan Malekin                      Nexus  
Production Group



**Augustinian Sisters Avondale  
Heights  
Victoria - Australia  
Extend our best wishes to Frank  
Scicluna OAM  
For the festive season.**

**With gratitude for the  
unwavering commitment to  
keep the Maltese culture alive.**

**Sr Lorraine Testa (asjm)**

**Once again we have enjoyed a year of e-Maltese news.  
Not only have the newsletters reminded us of our heritage  
but also helped us understand much of it's origins. Thank you.**



### **CYCLING IN MALTA – Joe Bajada**

**Two young Maltese cyclists for a training camp with the Under 23 Eolo-Kometa team thanks to the sponsorship between Visitmalta and the same Eolo-Kometa**

After recently two promising young Maltese cyclists who form part of the Maltese National team went for two days of testing their cycling abilities with the Eolo-Kometa Professional Team in one of their quarters in Varese, now Luke Borg (The Cyclist) and Jacob Schembri (Mosta) in a training camp that will be held in Oliva near Valencia in Spain from 13 to 18 December 2022 with the Under 23 team of Eolo-Kometa. Apart from the fact that they will also train with professional cyclists, where this will be a strong test for them to see if in the future they join the same under-23 team as the Eolo-Kometa team.

After this, there will be the possibility that next year they will compete internationally with the same Under 23 team, and then they will be evaluated by the team itself so that over the years they will see if they can pass for professionals. Thus this will be a big step for Maltese cycling thanks to more cooperation for the development of cycling in Malta, thanks also to the vision of the Ministry of Tourism the Hon. Clayton Bartolo and Visit Malta, who together with Valerio Agnoli and the Maltese Cycling Federation, are working together for more development opportunities for local cycling, but also that one day Malta will still have a professional cyclist

## **MALTESE CANADIAN COMMUNITY NEWS**



On Saturday, December 10, the Maltese-Canadian Museum in Toronto hosted the launch of [Ash Fall](#), the third novel in my [Siege of Malta](#) trilogy. Book launches are not always well-attended. Of her first experience holding such an event, legendary Canadian Author Margaret Atwood [shared](#), "I did a signing to which Nobody came, except a guy who wanted to buy some Scotch tape and thought I was the help."

Stephen King, Neil Gaiman, and Jodi Picoult have all recalled similar disappointments. So, I figured if even 10 people showed up, I would call it a major triumph.

Well, we had over **200** people come out - some traveling a great distance to be there. And we sold every copy of all three novels. And there were *pastizzi*. A more successful book launch than I could have ever imagined.

What an incredible day! Such an unexpectedly beautiful turnout. The outpouring of support from the Maltese community, my wonderful friends and family, fans of my work--now new friends!--completely bowled me over. Not to mention the perfection of the Museum itself as a place to celebrate a historical trilogy. I would like to express my very deep gratitude to the organizers and attendees and those who lent support from afar. Thank YOU for the gift of your time—the most valuable thing a person can give.

I cannot thank everyone enough, especially the Museum's curator Richard Cumbo for spearheading the event and for his promotion of my novels, Chairperson Fr Ivano, and the entire team of dedicated Museum members and volunteers, Nigel, Marthese—who shares my exact name!—Mary, Mani, Carmen, Debbie, Mike, Rose, and Rita.

The success of our event owes entirely to all of you. A very special thanks to my husband, Brad, who tirelessly handled all book sales

and photography and the carrying of heavy boxes. Thank you, thank you, thank you.

### **♥ Marthese Fenech - Canada**

PS. If you happen to be in or around the Toronto area, I encourage you to visit the [Maltese-Canadian Museum](#).



**Dolores Cristina  
and Dr. George Vella**

## **DOLORES CRISTINA Granted Malta's Highest Honour in the Republic 2022 Ceremony**

Ten people were honoured with Malta's highest honour in the traditional Republic Day ceremony held in Valletta on Tuesday.

On Republic Day each year, the President, on behalf of the Government and

people of Malta, pays public tribute to a number of Maltese citizens who distinguish themselves in different fields of endeavour, by appointing them to The National Order of Merit or to the Xirka Ġieħ ir-Repubblika, or by awarding them the Midalja għall-Qlubija or the Midalja għall-Qadi tar-Repubblika.

This year's investiture ceremony took place at The Palace, Valletta, on Tuesday 13 December 2022, immediately following the customary ceremonial parade held at the Palace Square. One of the recipients is Mrs Dolores Cristina. Dolores was born in Senglea in 1949. She is a former Maltese politician who served in several ministerial positions under Nationalist Governments. Cristina graduated from the RUM (Royal University of Malta) with a Bachelor of Arts

(Hons) degree and held teaching posts in History and English at Secondary and Post-Secondary levels. Between 1991 and 1995, she held the post of President of the National Council of Women, with a strong involvement in the voluntary sector. She was also President of the Women's Section and President of the Administrative Council of the Nationalist Party. In 1996 she contested the General Election unsuccessfully and in 1998 she served briefly as Mayor of Swieqi until she was elected to Parliament in the same year from the 10th district. During the legislature, she occupied the post of Chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

She was re-elected to Parliament from the 9th District in the 2003 general election and became Parliamentary Secretary within the Ministry of Social Policy. In the 2004 Cabinet reshuffle, she was appointed Minister for the Family and Social Solidarity, with a portfolio including social policy, family policy, child policy, solidarity services, social security, social housing and equality. In 2008, elected from both the 9th and 10th districts, Cristina was appointed Minister for Education and Culture, also assuming responsibility for the Ministry of Social Policy during the years 2010-2012. In 2013, Dolores Cristina was appointed Acting President, a post she occupied until 2022



## **ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL YEAR FOR THE CRINGILA CLUB N.S.W. ASSOCIATION**

Many buses from outside the Illawarra region attended the Senior's Lunch on Mondays', The average regular attendance is 130 on each day. The Centre provides 3-course meals every Mondays for only \$8 making it affordable and attractive for many. The Centre also raffle off a prize of \$30 in cash, without the attendees buying any tickets.

In 2023 we have 2 concerts one on the 18 March famous singer Ludwig Galea & Stacey Saliba at the centre for only \$20 including tea coffee and Pastizzi. The other one is on the 15 April Father and son Elvis Show Paul and Anthony Fenech. The show at Ribbonwood Centre allows us more space for this Show Spectacular. The charge is only \$22, with nibbles placed on the tables, plus a full bar available. We like to wish our members and friends and the readers of this amazing journal a Happy Christmas and a New Year 2023 and look forward to meeting you again on 30 January 2023.

**LOUIS PARNIS - President**

The George Cross Falcons Centre in Cringila NSW is believed to have a great and successful year in 2022. The wider community benefited from all the functions, services and programs run at the Centre. The committee organised numerous activities for its members and friends while keeping the prices low, not disadvantaging anyone.

This Journal for Maltese living Abroad (Maltese eNewsletter) by Frank Scicluna from South Australia supported our association by promoting our activities during 2022. This Year the Federal Member for Cunnigham mentioned the Centre as part of her Parliament speech, talking about community services in her electoral.



**THE MALTESE CENTER**

**NEW YEAR'S EVE Party 2023**

8:00 PM SATURDAY, DECEMBER 31  
at The Maltese Center  
lower hall

**\$75 Adults 13 & up** \* Cash Bar  
**Free Under 12** Free Champagne to toast the New Year

RSVP by Dec 26th. Tickets available at [www.themaltesecenter.com](http://www.themaltesecenter.com)  
Limited Seating. Tickets will not be sold at the door.  
Please contact 917-807-2874 if you have questions or for booking  
\* funds allocated to operating budget

Please join us as we ring in 2023! Limited seating.  
Book your tickets now. Tickets will not be sold at the door.  
**MALTESE CENTER - NEW YORK**  
2720 Hoyt Ave S, Astoria, NY 11102, USA

## **MALTESE-CANADIAN COMMUNITY OF TORONTO – CANADA**

We have started taking Bookings for our parish's New Year's Eve DinnerDance. Apart from being served a 7-Course Meal, each table will have one bottle of red wine and one bottle of white wine; and of course champagne at midnight will be served at midnight to celebrate the New Year! You can purchase your tickets by contacting Freda at 416-762-1891. Prices are \$60.00 for Adults; \$25.00 for children 5-12 years old; and children 5 years and under are free. To reduce waste and unnecessary expenses, bookings and purchases must be made by Wednesday, December 28th. Let's welcome 2023 together in a joyful and friendly manner, with good food, a good atmosphere, and good company, especially since this is the last New Year's we will be celebrating with the MSSP Fathers.

## **Recipes from [www.benna.com.mt/recipes/](http://www.benna.com.mt/recipes/)**



### **Fried Ġbejna with Side Salad**

Serves 2

#### **Ingredients:**

- 2 Ġbejniet (cheese slices)
- 1 cup plain flour
- 2 eggs
- 1.5 cups breadcrumbs
- Salt & pepper
- Mixed herbs

#### **Method:**

- Slice your ġbejniet in half, which will give

you 4 portions

- Mix the breadcrumbs with the herbs, salt and pepper and place in a bowl
- Place the beaten eggs in a bowl
- Dip the ġbejna first into the flour, then the egg mixture, then the breadcrumbs
- Remove any excess crumbs and shallow fry in a well-oiled pan
- Let them fry for approx. 7 minutes on each side. When you begin to see the edges brown, flip them
- Once done lay them on a paper napkin to absorb excess oil and rest before serving
- Serve with a small side salad and a dressing of your choice (chutney, mayo, cranberry sauce)

## Irkotta Cannoli

Serves 8

### Ingredients:

- 8 cannoli cases
- 250g fresh Benna irkotta
- 65g icing sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla
- 200g chopped pistachios

### Method:

- For the filling, first let the irkotta sit in a strainer over a small bowl in the refrigerator for 30 minutes to remove excess water
- Mix the irkotta with icing sugar, vanilla and some of the chopped pistachios
- Chill in the refrigerator for at least 30 minutes
- Fill a piping bag with the mixture, and pipe into the cannoli cases
- Decorate the cannoli ends with the remaining chopped pistachios
- Chill until ready to serve. When you finish don't forget to send me one CANNOL.



## Imbuljuta tal-Qastan – Hot Chestnut drink

Imbuljuta tal-Qastan is a traditional hot and spiced cocoa-based Maltese drink served after midnight Mass at Christmas and at New Year's Eve.

Servings: [6](#) people

### Ingredients

- 2 cups dried peeled chestnuts
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 cup cocoa powder
- 1 stick cinnamon
- 6 cloves
- ½ teaspoon spice blend (cinnamon, nutmeg, cloves, etc.)
- Rind of a mandarin
- 4 tablespoons corn-starch
- 3 tablespoons sour cream (optional)

### Instructions

1. Wash and soak the chestnuts for at least 8 hours.
2. Drain and put the chestnuts in a pan. Add 4 cups (1l) of water, cinnamon, cloves, cocoa powder, sugar, spice blend and mandarin rind cut in small pieces.
3. Bring to a boil and simmer until the chestnuts are tender, about 1 hour.
4. At the end of cooking, break the chestnuts into small pieces with a large spoon without crushing them.
5. Dissolve the corn-starch in a little water and add to slightly thicken the sauce.
6. Serve hot in a cup or a bowl.



**IF YOU LIKE READING THIS JOURNAL SHARE IT ON YOUR  
FACEBOOK PAGE OR SEND IT TO YOUR RELATIVES AND  
FRIENDS WHEREVER THEY ARE ..  
WE ARE "ONE BIG HAPPY FAMILY".**



**St Nicholas Feast held on the 4th December 2022**

**MMG**  
CONCERT BAND  
OF  
VICTORIA

**WE WISH YOU AND YOUR  
FAMILIES A VERY**

*Merry  
Christmas*

*and Happy New Year*

**To the editor and all the readers  
of the Maltese Journal**

**From the President and committee of MMG Concert Band of Victoria**

**A gift for you**



**Give a Gift Voucher this Christmas to your loved ones to share the joy of learning Maltese Language and Culture. Gift vouchers available for online classes for children's classes and adults. Email us on [MI@mccnsw.org.au](mailto:MI@mccnsw.org.au) for more details.**



**Maltese Community Council  
LIBRARY  
Now open!**

**Maltese Community Council of Victoria Inc  
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**Browsing Hours are Back  
Monday to Friday 10.00am to 3.00pm**

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**Call/Email us on (03) 9387 8922 lakmali.atwis@mccv.gov.au to have us  
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**THE HAMRUN CLUB  
NEW YEARS EVE**



**Charlie Muscat**

*5 Course Dinner All Drinks Included  
Members \$65.00 None Members \$70.00  
Per Person*

*Raffles On The Night  
From 6:30 - 12:30*

*So Join Us As We Bring In The New Year 2023  
Tickets On Sale Now Call Joe Borg On 0414429391*



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OF VICTORIA INC.**

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Tel: 03 9387 8922 or 0466 079 814 AH***

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SHARE, CONNECT  
AND EMPOWER MALTESE  
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