Maltese Newsletter
Journal of Maltese Living Abroad
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Maltese Museum

Australia's first and only Maltese Museum,
located in Victoria's Gippsland region.
Henry St, Morwell, VIC, Australia, Victoria
0412 411 719

THE ONLY MALTESE MUSEUM IN AUSTRALIA

The Latrobe Valley Maltese Museum was founded by Mario Sammut in 2018 as a labour of love

What it Feels Like Leaving a Country You Once Called Home?

phenomenon that has never happened again

In May 1948, Australia and Malta signed an assisted-migrant-passage agreement, which extended the benefit of subsidised travel costs to over 63,000 Maltese. The peak period of migration to Australia occurred in the mid-fifties and sixties and the number of people in Australia who were born in Malta peaked in 1981.

Joseph A Xerri Secretary

COUNCIL OF MALTESE LIVING ABROAD

Joseph was born in Victoria Gozo. He started his teaching career in 1956 moving up the ladder throughout the years to assistant Director of Education. Attended teacher training course at St Michael's Training College, later successfully completing the Diploma in Educational Administration and Management. He also read for a Master's in Education at the University of Malta. Acted as Public Relations Officer (1972 – 1978) for the Ministry of Education and as personal assistant to the Director of Education (1984-1987).

Ex-Casual Tutor and Teaching Practice Supervisor at the Faculty of Education of the University of Malta.

For thirteen years he acted as UNESCO Associated School Project National Coordinator, and represented the Ministry of Education in various international meetings and agreements.

Xerri is a researcher in Educational and Political Maltese History, author of "L-Iżvillup tal-Edukazzjoni f'Malta" He was a script writer for TV and contributor to the media. Joseph was the Maltese Correspondent for the Maltese Herald of Australia for 50 years.

Appointed Secretary to the Council for Maltese Living Abroad in 2017 after serving as member of the same council. The Maltese Living Abroad Unit seeks to promote and protect the rights and interests of Maltese living abroad. www.foreign.gov.mt/

14th Annual Meeting of the Council for Maltese Living Abroad

The CMLA Meeting 2022 took place at Palazzo Parisio, Borġ Olivier Hall, Valletta on the 27th and 28th October 2022 with representatives of the Maltese community coming from all over the world. It also included the participation of numerous members of the Ministry staff who took part as rapporteurs, observers as well as on logistics. Among the themes discussed, there was education and sharing of information with the Maltese communities abroad.

Important Documentaries and Sites for Maltese Living Abroad

MTA Brochure

As a Maltese living abroad stop a few minutes to savour the historical heritage and culture that your family's birthplace can offer. Malta and Gozo are but an archipelago blessed by the second highest concentration of historical sites in the world. The archipelago boasts of a multitude of churches, palaces and museums as well as the oldest free-standing buildings in the world: the Maltese temples. All these finely wrapped in a background of blue sky and sea as well as hilly landscapes that, along with the local festas and ongoing activities round the clock, can only guarantee the most pleasurable of time.

www. foreign.gov.mt/en/Government/MLA/Documents/MTA%20Electronic%20brochure.pdf

Fondazzjoni Patrimonju Malti

FPM is a non-profit making organisation spreading awareness of the island's heritage locally and internationally, through museums, exhibitions and publications. Its mission is to collect and disseminate information, to assist with research, produce publications, catalogues, books, documents and other material that reflects the same aim. It also publishes the ***Treasures of Malta*** magazine which is issued three times a year.

Treasures from Malta is a new podcast series presented by Francesca Balzan, art historian and artist with a long connection with FPM. It includes a number of individual interviews. You can access the interviews with various Maltese personalities by clicking here:

https://www.patrimonju.org/fpm-podcasts

Maltese museum in Australia keeps heritage alive

Did you know that there is a museum dedicated to Maltese culture, heritage and traditions in Morwell, Latrobe Valley in Australia? This is Australia's first and only museum dedicated to all things Maltese, and its primary aim is to keep Maltese-Australian expats connected to their home country.

The Latrobe Valley Maltese Museum was founded by Mario Sammut in 2018.

https://newsbook.com.mt/en/maltese-museum-in-australia-keeps-heritage-alive/

Heritage Malta

Heritage Malta (https://heritagemalta.mt/) manages over 90 museums and landmarks, national monuments and underwater sites including prehistoric caves, subterranean passageways, geology, ethnography, seven World Heritage Sites and industrial heritage.

It is a national agency committed to bringing culture closer to the people through facilitating interpretation and accessibility, both physical and intellectual, and turning museums and sites into spaces for the exchange of ideas and knowledge. It has a professional team of highly respected curators and archaeologists, architects, digital and scientific experts, conservators, and restorers.

Treasure to meet you is a new series of short videos where various curators, historians and personalities with hands-on experience of Maltese heritage found in various sites and museums who express what they think about prestigious items, artefacts in their collections, structures of particular interest and much more. This series of youtube videos can be accessed on: https://www.youtube.com/@HeritageMalta

Episode from Infotainment Programme 'Ħajjitna Ktieb' during which John Demanuele interviews Michael Refalo on the Maltese in Egypt

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ArJOWrwwz98

The National Archives of Malta

The National Archives of Malta is the government entity that preserves and maintains a significant number of records concerning the history of Malta and provides access to them for research. It holds one of the largest archival collections in Malta, spanning from the 1530s up to the current day. The National Archives is more than government records. Many private collections are deposited and donated by individuals. These collections add context, depth, variety, as well as a different perspective on history, to the material already held in the repository

Visit us on https://nationalarchives.gov.mt/en/Pages/default.aspx

MEMORJA

MEMORJA is the oral, sound and visual archive of the National Archives of Malta intent on become the Maltese Islands' main depositor of national and public memory. By employing cutting-edge research, methodologies, theoretical and archival approaches, MEMORJA collects, records, transcribes and preserves community/shared and individual memories, oral history/traditions, knowledge and experiences as well as makes them available for research, interpretation and educational purposes. The digital platform of the project is being developed: https://www.memorja.com/

Roberta Metsola Gives President Volodymyr Zelenskyy A Brief Maltese War History Lesson

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy received a brief history lesson about the courage shown by the people of Malta during the Second World War, courtesy of European Parliament President Roberta Metsola.

As she addressed Zelenskyy in Brussels and urged EU countries to ramp up their military aid to Ukraine, Metsola drew comparisons with the struggles Malta faced some 83 years ago.

"I grew up hearing my grandparents' stories of my country's last three fighter planes. When all seemed lost, when they had no ammunition, no food and no hope, all that remained were three barely functioning planes that they called Faith, Hope and Charity – named after what they were fighting for, after what was at stake," Metsola said.

"The planes meant one more day of liberty, just long enough for help to arrive. They meant peace."

"You do not need to convince anyone here of how essential it is to support Ukraine. To back all those giving their lives. To support the values we preach with concrete measures. To ensure victory, real peace – based on your 10-point plan, accountability for those who committed war crimes and for the protection of freedom for all Ukrainians."

"And I want to repeat the promise I made to you when we met in Kyiv last April: we have your back. We were with you then, we are with you now, we will be with you for as long as it takes. Freedom will prevail. Peace will reign. You will win."

Zelenskyy had drawn similar parallels when he addressed Malta's Parliament in 2022.

"The resilience of your people and their resistance in many ways defined the future of the Mediterranean," Zelenskyy said back then. "Malta withstood the severe siege and bombardment and together with the Allies managed to protect itself, and played a role in liberating Europe. Today's events remind me of your story."

While Zelenskyy received a standing ovation at the European Parliament, Metsola's call for EU member states to provide Ukraine with fighter jets and long-range missiles received some skepticism in Malta.

PL MEP Alex Agius Saliba warned that the EP has "forgotten about the concept of peace" and said he doesn't want Malta to ever "fight someone else's war".

The Busker to represent Malta in 2023 Eurovision

Ryan Hili places second, Matt Blxck third

The Busker celebrating their victory.

The Busker won the Malta Eurovision Song Contest on Saturday securing a ticket for the big festival in Liverpool in May.

The Busker performed the song *Dance (Our own party)* obtaining 121 points, beating Ryan Hili's *In the Silence*, which got 85 points. Matt Blxck's *Up* placed third in the contest, with 76 points.

Voting was split between a professional jury panel and nationwide televoting. It was Matt Blxck who got the biggest number of votes from the five jury members.

But it was the three-piece band The Busker (made up of singer Dav Jr, saxophonist Sean Meachen and drummer Jean Paul Borg) which ultimately walked away with the trophy after securing a whopping 80 votes from televoting.

Saturday's finale saw 16 contestants perform in the hope of winning a ticket to Liverpool, where this year's Eurovision Song Contest will be held. There were some familiar faces in the context, such as X-Factor Malta winner Ryan Hili and 2001 winner Fabrizio Faniello.

Conspicuous by his absence was fan favourite Aidan Cassar, who was disqualified for breaching the competition's social media rules. Cassar was allowed a cameo appearance on the night.

The Busker aced a long path to victory. For the first time, the Malta Eurovision Song Contest was held across five separate nights, with contestants being gradually whittled down from an original longlist of 40 songs and singers to Saturday night's winner. Apart from the honour of representing Malta in this year's Eurovision Song Contest, The Busker also walks away with a €10,000 prize, which they can choose to share with their song's author and composer.

There are also monetary prizes for runners-up, ranging from €4,000 for second-place to €300 for each contestant who made it to the final 40.

While Dance (Our own party) took top billing on Saturday night, there is no guarantee that it will be the song that The Busker will perform in Liverpool.

Matt BlXck

Both the 2021 and 2022 winners, Destiny and Emma Muscat, performed songs selected for them by PBS after they were crowned champions. The song performed by 2019 winner Michaela Pace was also selected for her by PBS.

Malta has until March to submit its entry to the Eurovision Song Contest. The contest itself will be held in May.

Government says it will continue protecting farmers and agricultural land through change in law

Over the last decade, the amount of utilised agricultural area in Malta decreased by 6.2%, a survey by the National Statistics Office shows.

Utilised agricultural area decreased from 11,500 hectares in 2010 to 10,700 hectares in 2020 - the loss of land is equivalent to twice the size of Comino.

The census, carried out in collaboration with the Agriculture Directorate within the Ministry for Agriculture took stock of the activities being carried out by farmers, livestock breeders and beekeepers in both Malta and Gozo. This statistical exercise is used to analyse the changes that this sector may have gone through since the last comparable exercise in 2010.

Through the change in agricultural leasing legislation, which has been approved by parliament.
The government will continue providing protection to farmers and their agricultural land

"Through the change in legislation, the sustainability of farming, food production and the protection of the rural environment is being guaranteed, and agricultural land is being safeguarded," the government statement read.

It said that government, through National and European Funds, also announced several schemes to help the agricultural sector remain strong even in the face of crisis.
Government also said that through the €166 million announced for the Common Agricultural Policy of the European Union, Malta will work to strengthen direct payments to improve the economic situation of farmers throughout the next seven years.
"We will create a tool for young farmers to acquire agricultural land, while giving greater emphasis to organic farming," it said.
Government will now have the power to set clear and fair rules on how the crop should be valued. These rules will be published after consultation with the sector, it said.

Latrobe Valley Maltese Museum

Australia's first and only Maltese Museum, is the culmination of a dream and a promise. A recurring dream over many years by a migrant who came with his family to the Latrobe Valley in 1985 – Mario Sammut. The dream was to preserve the Maltese culture and identity while assimilating within the Australian community. It was just a dream, but over the years it became more evident that other Maltese migrants shared the same dream and determination to preserve their culture.
Charlie Camilleri, who had spent years constructing miniature replicas of Maltese historical buildings, donated his exhibits to the Maltese Community Centre if Mario promised that one day these will be fully restored and permanently displayed in a museum.
The late Mr Frank Consiglio, the first Consul General for Malta in Victoria, together with his wife Frances amassed a huge collection of Maltese artefacts and memorabilia over many years and Frances together with her sons Colin and Charlie very graciously donated the whole collection to the Maltese Museum.
Many other individuals have donated special objects that for many years carried private sentimental value together with a story and now through the Latrobe Valley Maltese Museum these will be preserved for future generations. **Open:** Sundays 11am – 4pm or by appointment, phone 0412 411 719.
Entry: Gold coin donation is appreciated

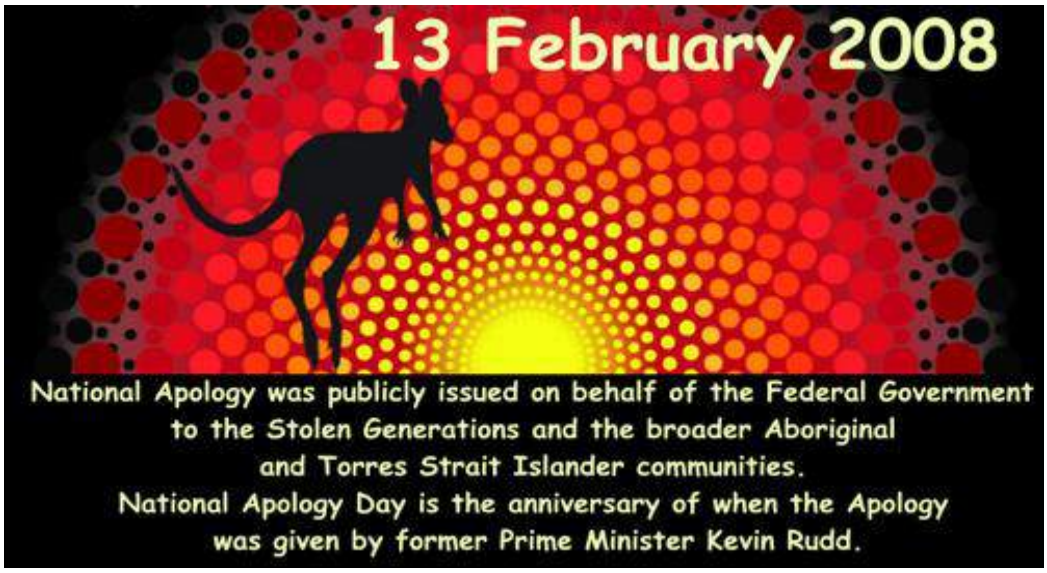
The 13th February marks the 19-year anniversary of the National Apology.

Between 1910 through to the 1970s, up to an estimated one third of all Indigenous children in Australia were forcibly removed from their families and country sanctioned under government assimilation policies of the day. In 1995, the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commissions investigated government policies and practices that forcefully separated many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families into white Australian culture.

When the report Bringing them Home: Report of the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from Their Families was presented in Parliament in 1997, the Children became known as the Stolen Generation. The landmark Bringing them Home report demonstrated to the Australian public the extent of intergenerational trauma being transferred from first generation survivors to the next and the next, and how the suffering, grief and harm continued (and still continues) to be unresolved. The report sparked significant and swift public response, calling for a national apology and also notably a huge protest in the year 2000, in which more than 250,000 Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians walked across the Sydney Harbour Bridge to protest the lack of a national apology to the Stolen Generations.

It was not until a decade later that the then Prime Minister Kevin Rudd issued a formal public apology on February 13th, 2008. The official apology underlies a national recognition of the trauma, abuse, loss, and grief inflicted on the Stolen Generations, their families, and communities.

At Tetra Tech International Development Indo-Pacific, we embrace National Apology Day as it acknowledges the inflicted profound grief, suffering and loss experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who were forcibly removed from their families, their communities and their country by the Australian government. As an organisation, we support an environment where employees of all backgrounds can work together, to ensure a shared future, where our commitment towards learning and reconciliation enables communities to thrive.



On 13th February every year communities across each State and Territory come to remember the National Apology and show solidarity with the survivors of the Stolen Generation. Events taking place around the country.

The Pride of Gozo Awards shone a light on ordinary individuals acting in extraordinary, inspiring ways

Times of Malta

Rotary Club president Thomas Welch handing an award to the parents of tug master Kenneth Grima during the first edition of the Pride of Gozo Awards last Thursday.

Inspiring selflessness is a value most of us would wish to see much more of at individual, community and national level. It is a value all too often ignored, mocked or brushed aside, often seen by many as a sign of weakness. It stands in stark contrast to the selfish, greedy and dominant value that guides much of Malta and Gozo's development at present.

It represents what for many is one of the characteristics of the people of these islands which receives little by way of recognition, let alone accolades.

Yet, recently, seven residents of Gozo were presented with awards for selfless and inspiring deeds in their community during the first Pride of Gozo Awards organised by the Rotary Club of Gozo and sponsored by the Ministry for Gozo in association with Times of Malta.

Awards were presented to a 12-year-old who swam the Gozo channel to raise awareness of plastic pollution; a woman with terminal cancer who devoted her final months to helping the relatives of other cancer patients; a tug boat captain who assisted in the rescue of a drifting tanker; a young lawyer voluntarily assisting migrants; a mayor at the forefront of the campaign to protect and conserve the environment; a young student helping her single mother care for her siblings; and a successful entrepreneur.

The awards seek to acknowledge the selfless acts of Gozo residents engaged in helping their communities become better places. For example, volunteer Linda Fryer, aged 70, was acknowledged for setting up fundraising campaigns to help the relatives of fellow Gozitans experiencing cancer at life's end.

Kenneth Grima, aged 30, a tug master, was handed a special award for his work in the rescue of a tanker adrift in Maltese waters in 2022.

Well-known Qala mayor Paul Buttigieg received the community award for his tireless work to save Ħondoq ir-Rummien from reckless development while lawyer Stanley Portelli was awarded for his voluntary work in assisting migrants who experience injustice.

Rotary Club of Gozo, which created the Pride of Gozo Awards, aims to inject a much needed strand of positivity into the community and to recognise the work of so many unsung heroes who go out of their way to support and serve others.

Yet, the awards initiative goes way beyond that.

It clearly seeks to inspire others at a variety of levels to do likewise. It shines a light on the many, many individuals who inhabit our communities and who offer a glimpse of the thousands of selfless deeds that occur on a daily basis.

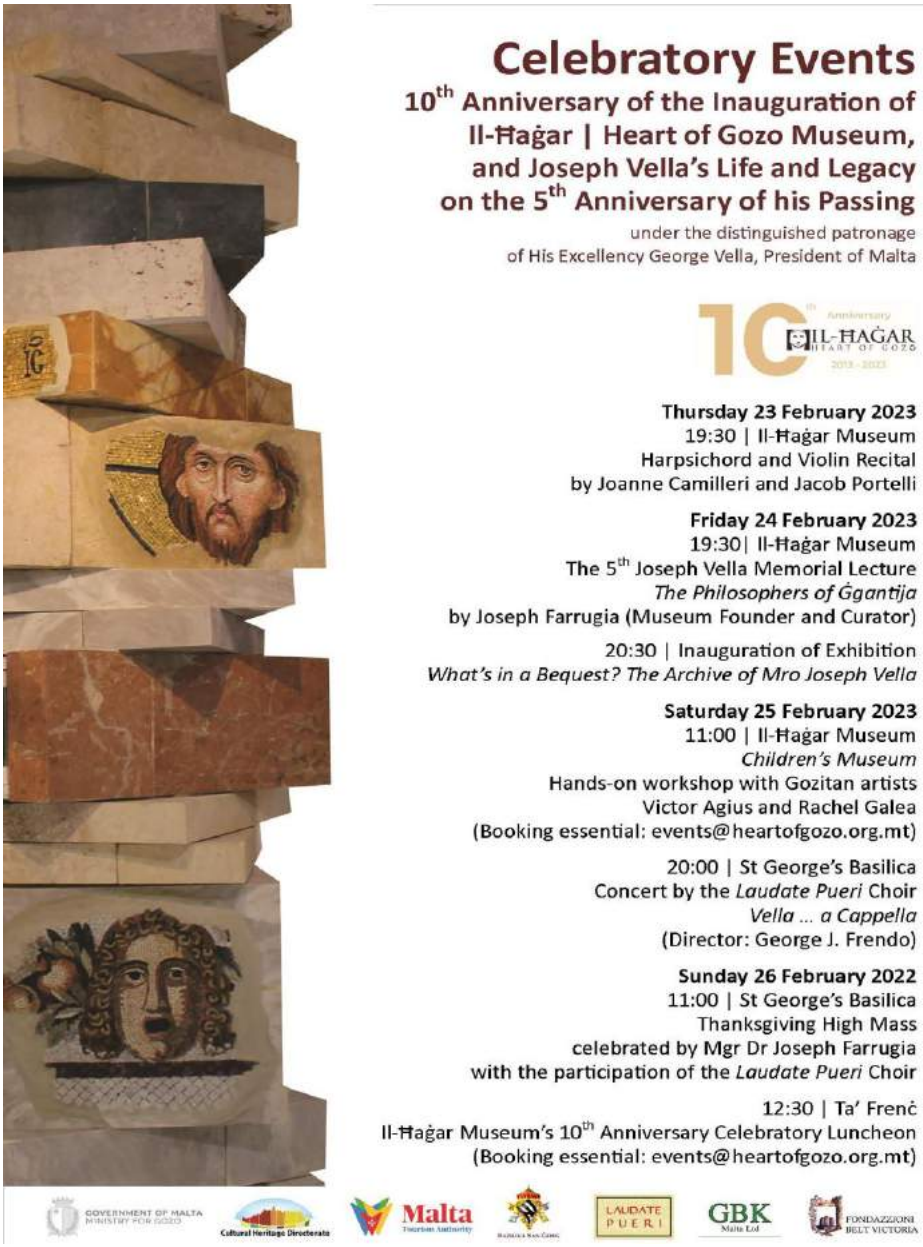
The awards also highlight the opportunities open to all to change the dominant story of Malta and Gozo today. They illustrate the capacity of single individuals working within their community to challenge dominant ideas and mores.

The Pride of Gozo initiative also celebrates the quiet and routinely unpublicised energy and vision that can infuse a community. In that sense, the awards offer an alternative selection of role models in contrast to those normally publicised.

The awards offer examples of many ordinary people doing extraordinary things with selflessness, vision and motivation. Rotary itself, in organising the awards, offers a similar example.

The Pride of Gozo Awards are about building belief, capacity, trust and inspiration, values badly needed in Gozo and Malta today. As such, they deserve to grow, prosper and multiply.

SUPPORT YOUR JOURNAL SHARE IT WITH YOUR FAMILY, RELATIVES AND FRIENDS



Il-Ħaġar Heart of Gozo

Museum in Victoria's Pjazza San Ġorġ was officially inaugurated on 23 February 2013 and so a weekend of exciting events has been prepared.

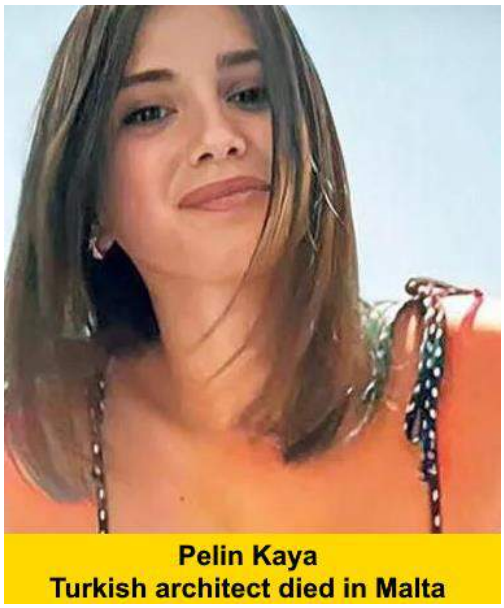
On **Thursday** 23 February the museum is hosting a Harpsichord and Violin Recital by Joanne Camilleri and Jacob Portelli at **7.30pm**.

The 5th Joseph Vella Memorial Lecture will be held on **Friday** at **7.30pm**: Mgr Dr Joseph Farrugia MOM will be speaking about the Philosophers of Ġgantija. Immediately after (at **8.30**) an exhibition will be inaugurated in the Mro Vella Archive.

Saturday 25 begins at **11am** with a hands-on workshop by Victor Agius and Rachel Galea for children: obviously booking is essential (on events@heartofgozo.org.mt). The day concludes with an *a cappella* concert of Professor Vella works by *Laudate Pueri* Choir in Saint George's Basilica at **8pm**.

Sunday 26 February offers **11am** thanksgiving Mass at St George's celebrated by Mgr Farrugia and with the participation of the *Laudate Pueri.* A celebratory luncheon (for which booking is of course required) will be held at Ta' Frenċ at **12.30**.

Additionally, Il-Ħaġar continues with its special exhibition over all levels featuring Donations and Bequests. The normal opening hours seven days a week are 9am to 5pm. There is no entrance fee though obviously donations are gratefully accepted. Tours around all the halls can be organized: just write to info@heartofgozo.org.mt.


Pelin Kaya
Turkish architect died in Malta

Pelin Kaya's colleagues recall murder victim as 'a true friend'

Members of Turkish community and Pelin's colleagues followed court case

Giulia Magri

Colleagues of Pelin Kaya, the Turkish woman murdered on her birthday in Gżira earlier this month, joined her grieving family in court on Monday as the case against her alleged killer began.

"I miss her voice, she had such a calming voice and I know that everybody misses her so much at work," her colleague Vincenzo told reporters on Monday.

Vincenzo worked with Kaya at a Birkirkara furniture store and was among work colleagues to join family members for Monday's court case.

"We want everybody to know we loved her. She was not just a colleague but a true friend," he said.

Two of Pelin Kaya's colleagues speak outside the law courts. Video: Giulia Magri

Pelin, a 30-year-old interior designer, was walking home after a birthday celebration on January 18, when a car ploughed into her before crashing into a petrol station and a KFC restaurant.

On Monday, the court heard how she was walking to meet her boyfriend at the time.

The boyfriend came across police and first responders as he went to meet her. He only discovered she had died when he called her, and the phone at the scene of the crime began to ring.

Members of the Turkish community were also present outside the law courts on Monday and carried banners that read 'Justice delayed is justice denied' and 'It was not an accident. It was a murder'.

Members of Turkish community outside the law courts on Monday. Photo: Matthew Mirabelli

'We will never forget her smile'

Vincenzo and fellow colleague Alessandro recounted how Pelin had not shown up for work that day.

From left to right: Vincenzo, Alessandro and Pelin during a staff event. Photo: Vincenzo

"She usually messages us when she is running late, but we heard nothing from her that morning," they recalled.

Once they read the news and realised that it was the victim's birthday, they expected the worse.

"She was always putting herself there to help any of us, she was so kind, and I will miss her so much," Alessandro said.

"Her energy was so good, she was always smiling, we will never forget that smile," Vincenzo added.

"She brought love and happiness every time she walked in (to work) in the morning. I was always looking forward to work to spend the day with her. She didn't deserve this."

Her colleagues said Pelin had a lot of dreams and that she had come to Malta to find a better living.

"Her life is stopped, I see videos of her blowing the candles and I see her dreams in her eyes, and now they have vanished," Vincenzo said.

Alessandro added: "You never come to terms with the pain, but you just learn to cope with the pain and there is a hole in our hearts that cannot be filled." Ahead of the sitting, the Kaya family gathered at the scene of the murder outside a petrol shop and KFC outlet. Her mother travelled to Malta to lay flowers at the scene and attend the court case.

KEEPING MALTESE DIASPORA ON THE RADAR

200 years ago 110 children died in a crush in Valletta... the worst ever tragedy in Malta

The **Carnival tragedy of 1823** was a human crush which occurred on 11 February 1823 at the Convent of the Franciscans Friars in Valletta, Malta. About 110 boys who had gone to the convent to receive bread on the last day of carnival celebrations were killed after falling down a flight of steps while trying to get out of the convent.

BACKGROUND During the early 19th century, the Crown Colony of Malta was experiencing a famine, and it had become a tradition to gather 8-to-15-year-old boys from the working classes of Valletta and the Three Cities to participate in a procession during the last few days of carnival.[1][2] After the procession, they would attend Mass, and they would be given some bread afterwards.[3][4] This activity was arranged by ecclesiastical directors who taught catechism, and its main aim was to keep children out of the riots and confusion of carnival.

This activity was organized on 10 February 1823, when children attended mass at Floriana and then went to the Convent of the Minori Osservanti (now better known as *ta' Ġieżu*) in Valletta where they were given bread.[3][4] Everything went as planned, and the same procedure was planned for the following day.[1][4]

DISASTER The same procedure took place on 11 February 1823. Children were gathered and attended mass at Floriana, but the ceremony lasted an hour longer than usual.[3][4] The children's procession to the convent in Valletta occurred at the same time as the carnival celebrations had ended, so they met with many people who were returning home.[3][5] At this point, some adults and children from the crowd mixed in with the boys in order to receive free bread which was being distributed.

The boys entered one of the convent's corridors from the vestry door in the church, and were to be let out through another door on St. Ursula Street. The bread was to be distributed at the latter door.[3][4] Although the vestry door was usually locked to prevent boys from reentering to receive more bread, this time the door was left open since the boys were late. Due to this, more men and boys entered without anyone realizing.[1][3][5]

Those who had entered began to push the boys queuing in the corridor, who were shoved to the end of the corridor near a half-open door. At this point, a lamp went out leaving the corridor in darkness, and the people inside began to push forward even more. The boys at the front fell down a flight of steps, blocking the door in the process.

Those who were distributing the bread as well as some neighbours rushed to assist the children after they heard screams. They managed to open the doors, and many boys got out and were revived. However, a number of boys had already died due to suffocation or being trampled upon.[1][3][6]

The exact number of casualties is not known. Records of the Sacra Infermeria show that 94 bodies of boys aged between 15 and 16 were brought to the hospital on 11 February, and they were buried the following day.[7] However, contemporary sources such as *The Gentleman's Magazine and Historical Chronicle*, and *Nile's Weekly Chronicle* record that "no less than 110 boys perished on this occasion".

Aftermath In investigation led by the Lieutenant Governor, Richard Plasket, took place after the disaster, and a report about the findings was published a few days after the incident.[3][4] The investigation concluded that it was an unfortunate accident caused by a succession of errors, and no one was accused for the deaths of the children.

How to save the Maltese language from extinction

While Maltese literature is doing very well and publications are relatively strong, the everyday use of the language in the digital world is minimal, and there's little hope this will be reversed - **Evarist Bartolo**

A 2012 study by the University of Manchester on the use of language in Europe makes glum reading. Scientists from this university, together with other European researchers, concluded that 21 out of the 30 languages on which they carried out research, risked becoming weak, or even non-existent, due to the digital revolution.

The argument made is that because a number of European languages are used by a proportionally small number of people, these would not generate enough resources to integrate fully within the digital world.

"Icelandic, Latvian, Lithuanian and Maltese are at the highest risk of disappearing, while other languages such as Bulgarian, Greek, Hungarian and Polish are also at risk" the report concludes.

Anecdotal analysis lines up with the evidence. Today's modern iPhone or Android phones, and their apps, are entirely in the English language. Maltese translations of this software, or organic applications produced in Maltese, are the absolute minority. This also applies to everyday computers, which by default are in English, and very small numbers are operated through the Maltese language.

There are relatively decent translations of popular computer software and websites, such as Google Mail and Facebook, however, the use of the English language in these cases is also prevalent locally.

This is a very important element related to the use of languages, because while Maltese literature is doing very well and publications are relatively strong, the everyday use of the language in the digital world is minimal, and there's little hope this will be reversed. I do believe that one of the most important steps we can take in the short-term is to introduce the Maltese language in the mass-produced devices, principally Apple and Android products, to make sure that when someone in Malta types in a Maltese word it is understood, recognised and there is a proposed correction in case of a mistake.

However, that is the short-term. In the long-term we must work on strategies to make sure the omnipresent use of digital services around us have the possibility to be introduced in the Maltese language.

Machine translation is indeed gaining traction, however, such features are often reliant on user input to strengthen the quality of the translations, similar to what Google Translate does. Google Translate is a positive first step, but it leaves a lot to be desired with translations of full paragraphs not up to scratch. This is not a problem reserved only for our language since it can be seen in various other cases. However, this is a technology which is constantly improving, including through individual user input.

If the Maltese language perishes in the digital world, it will create a wider effect on our future generations. The presence of the Maltese language here is of the utmost importance. Not preparing for it, especially with some great technologies around the corner such as Google's Quest Visual, would be a shame. This is not a challenge faced by our language only. Countries such as the Netherlands and others in the Baltic, with considerably larger populations than ours, are also at risk. We must make sure we have the strategy in place to maximise this technology and make sure our language continues to thrive. Absence in the digital world would mean being absent in everyday life

Maintaining one's culture, values and heritage is beyond price
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Melissa Tkautz Maltese-Australian model

Melissa Tkautz father is originally from Australia whereas her mother is from a Maltese family. Hence, her ethnicity is Australian- Maltese. She was born and raised in Australia and has since then lived there and holds Australian Nationality.

Melissa Tkautz (born January 24, 1974) is an AustrIIIIIalian actress, singer and model of Maltese heritage. Born in Sydney, Tkautz began her career at age 3 in a series of TV commercials. Much later she acted in soap operas Richmond Hill and Home & Away in the late 1980s, and in mini-series The Girl from Tomorrow. During this time attended the Academy of Dramatic and Social Arts in Sydney, graduating in 1991.

1991 would prove a breakthrough year for Melissa. She landed the role of Nikki Spencer on the soap opera E Street and became an overnight sensation. Through the record label Westside Records that had been created by the producers of the show, she also recorded

www.myspace.com/melissatkautzofficial

music, resulting in what would be her first major dance pop smash, "Read My Lips". She followed this with top-five hit "Sexy (Is the Word)" in 1992, both tracks coming from her album Fresh!. That same year Melissa (sans Tkautz at the time) won several ARIA Awards, including 'Most Popular New Talent' and 'Most Popular Music Video' (for "Read My Lips"). She left E Street to concentrate on recording but returned to the series after her singing career fizzled. After E Street ended in 1993 Tkautz's acting career continued with regular roles in Paradise Beach and Echo Point. In 1996 she joined the series Pacific Drive, where she played a HIV-positive model named Bethany.

Today Tkautz continues to grace covers as a model while still continuing her acting roles. She released a new single in 2005, a cover version of "The Glamorous Life" - a song originally by Prince and Sheila E. Her re-working featured heavy guitars and a strong electro beat, however its release was marred by another cover of the same track by fellow Australian, producer Mr Timothy featuring Inaya Day on vocals. Despite this Tkautz's version achieved some success. It debuted at its peak position - #31 on the ARIA charts top 100. It also reached #6 on ARIA club chart, #8 on ARIA dance chart and #8 on ARIA Australasian chart.

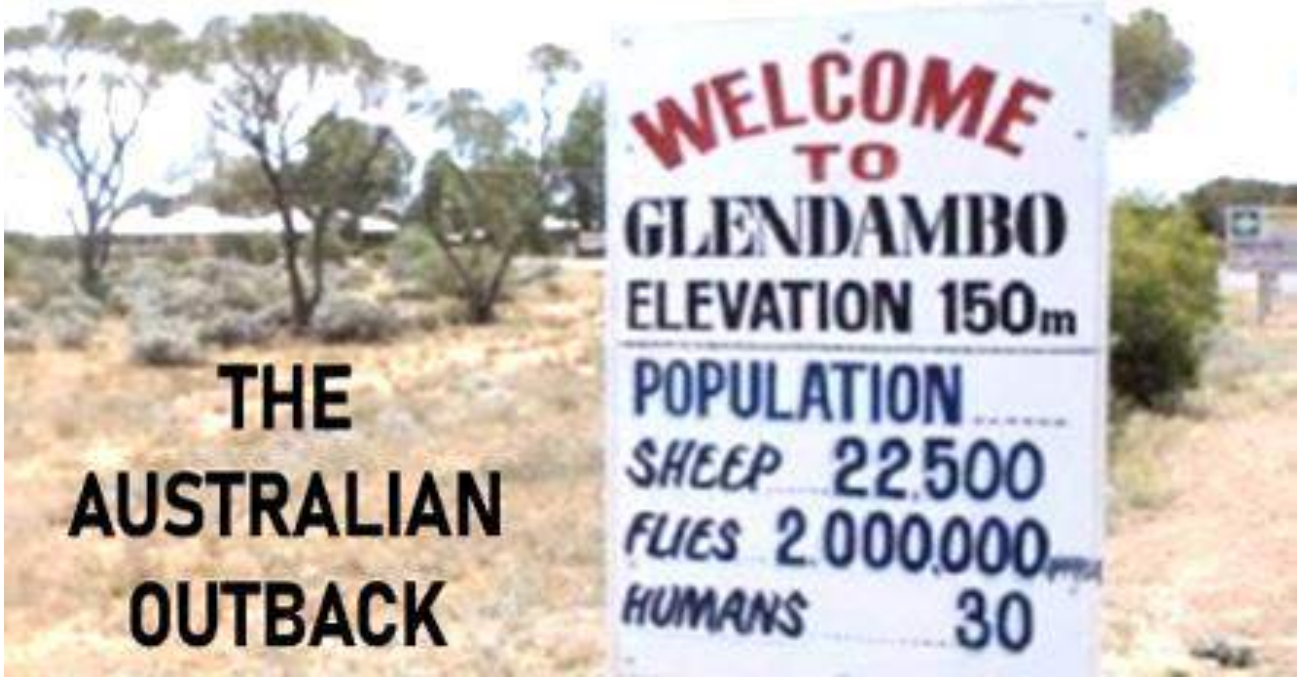
She toured the country promoting the single with her dancers. Her second single, "All I Want", was released on November 20, 2005, and peaked at #72 on the ARIA charts. The video for this single was not released. The album, Lost & Found, was released on December 4, 2005, and did not chart in the top 100 on ARIA. Melissa's new single has been changed from "Fake it Good" to a new track that she recorded whilst in Europe. "Easily Affected" is due to be released on October 21, 2006.

Non-discrimination and equality rights are central features of the major human rights treaties

MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER
The Journal of the Maltese Diaspora

Our Journal is reaching readers from all over the world. It is serving as a link especially among the Maltese living in Malta and those living overseas. It is free non-political and easy to read. Share it with your relatives and friends. Become a member of our family - contact: maltesejournal@gmail.com

STREET SIGNS SOMEWHERE IN THE OUTBACK OF AUSTRALIA



GREYSTANES NSW – in the 50s-70s MANY RESIDENTS WERE POULTRY FARMERS FROM MALTA AND GOZO

Greystanes is a suburb in Greater Western Sydney, New South Wales, Australia. Greystanes is located 25 kilometres west of Sydney. Greystanes is one of the oldest suburbs in New South Waales.

In the early years of British settlement, the area was known as Prospect Hill and was the site of the first land grants to emancipated convicts in 1791. In this period it was one of several areas of conflict between the Darug people and the settlers, the Darug people being led for many years of guerrilla warfare by Pemulwuy.

The area later became differentiated into Prospect, to the west of Greystanes Creek, and Greystanes to the east of the Creek, the latter taking its name from a historical home on Prospect Hill, built by

1Frank Cefai laying the first stone at OLQP Chu

Nelson Simmons Lawson, third child of Lieutenant William Lawson. The name 'Grey Stanes', given by Nelson Lawson, came from the outcrops of basalt on Prospect Hill, "Grey" being its colour and "Stanes" being the Scottish word for stones.

The area was used for poultry farming in the early twentieth century until Greystanes developed in the 1950s and 1960s as a residential suburb. Frank Cefai, a Maltese migrant, is a well known developer who built thousands of residential homes throughout Greystanes and its surrounding suburbs. Frank built and helped fund the Our Lady

Queen of Peace Catholic Church in 1975 and the surrounding primary and secondary schools.

Many of the early residents of Greystanes were from Malta and many of them operated poultry farms. ***Three family poultry businesses from Greystanes became household names throughout Australia - Cordina Chickens, Baiada Chickens and Pace Farm Eggs.*** Greystanes still has a large Maltese Australian community. The Maltese community have hosted a Festa (Festa tal-Vitorja & Maria Bambina) every October since 1965 in and around the church.

The Maltese community purchased the land and built a new church dedicated to Our Lady of Victories in 1975. The Maltese Festa has its origins in the religious festivals held annually in each village of Malta, celebrating the patron saint of the village. The church and parish were named after Our Lady of Victories, a beautifully hand crafted statue from Italy, a replica of Maria Bambina from Gozo. Despite hundreds of years of tradition, the Australian clergy of the Catholic Church deemed it incorrect to have the moniker Victories attached to Our Lady. The church then became the Parish of Our Lady Queen of Peace. The statue is on display in the church and at the annual procession of the Maltese Festa.

Thousands engage in faith, culture and fellowship as Festa returns to Greystanes in 2022

The OLQP Festa was back face-to-face celebrating the Parish feast of Our Lady Queen of Peace after two years of online Festa celebrations due to COVID limitations. Sunday, 25th September saw approximately 4000 people engage with faith, culture and fellowship at OLQP Greystanes.

Julie Piscopo, chairperson of the Festa Committee offered an opening statement during the Festa Mass and spoke to the changing face of Festa over the years, sharing her hopes and the spirit of the Our Lady Queen of Peace community, “I have just one

hope and that is that through our faith and celebration of this day we may touch the hearts of many; that they may realise that here at OLQP they will find no judgment; only love and family, and may they be assured that all are welcome with open arms."

The Mass was followed by the traditional procession of the Statue of Our Lady, a tradition that has its origin in the Maltese culture. The sun shone brightly after a week of rain, as dedicated volunteers proudly and faithfully carried the statue of Our Lady Queen of Peace, which is a replica of Our Lady of Victories statue in Xaghra, Gozo. The statue arrived in Greystanes in 1965 from Italy after being commissioned by a band of Maltese immigrants hoping to share their faith and culture within the new parish community of Greystanes. The Festa has been celebrated ever since.

The joyous atmosphere was palpable after so many who attended shared with organisers and via social media how exciting it was to be back face-to-face. So many people shared their memories of Festa from when they were young and were excited to experience it anew with their own families. Kayla Nahlous remembered coming to the Festa as a child with her whole family. She was now able to bring her own child to the Festa. Kayla says, "Yes, seeing life through your kids' eyes is incredible, but what's even more invaluable is having the opportunity to revisit your own childhood memories as an adult and create a new reality for yourself."

Festa Entertainment included the Maltese Concert Band, students from OLQP Primary School Band, the OLQP Youth Band and the Maltese Cultural Association of NSW Choir.

Market stalls and food stalls enticed shoppers and rides and amusements were bursting with family fun. The evening concluded at 8.30pm with the annual fireworks display which did not disappoint. Thank you to the many, many people who supported the Festa in various ways and to all the people behind the scenes who make Festa possible.

Plans are already underway for Festa 2023 to continue this OLQP tradition of 57 years. Visit the OLQP Festa Facebook page https://www.facebook.com/olqp.festa to enjoy highlights of the day.

Story from the ground: farming in Malta

www.friendsoftheearth.eu/

The New Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) is said to be greener and fairer. So in order to improve the situation of farmers, the European Commission promised a fairer distribution of CAP income support among farmers. The Commission declared that *"the new CAP takes further steps towards a fairer distribution of income support and a greater targeting towards small and medium-sized farms."*

But what does it mean for Malta? What are the big farming challenges there? What obstacles do Maltese farmers have to face and how can they be supported? Friends of the Earth Malta interviewed Maltese farmer Cane Vella and asked him about the major challenges of being a farmer in Malta.

A FARMER'S VOICE, CANE VELLA FROM BIOME MUNCH

Cane is a young farmer and environmentalist at heart, who passionately works on his farm applying sustainable and ethical farming practices. Together with his partner Cassandra he works on his project called Biome Munch in Burmarrad. At Biome Munch, it is all about looking at food in a holistic way. Their vision is to promote a Mediterranean diet and make eating a local and nutritious diet simple, affordable and accessible to people in Malta.

Maltese farmers Cane Vella & Cassandra (c) Biome Munch 2019

THE TRUE COST OF FOOD

Cane identified the main obstacles to farming in Malta. According to him, the prices of vegetables and fruits is one of them. The price difference between organic and commercially produced vegetables and fruits is high which explains why the general public would rather buy commercially produced vegetables and fruits.

Cane says:

"Organic produce is still not available to the general public. It's a challenge to provide organically produced vegetables and fruits to the general public and at the same time make a living from it."

This is why organic farming is no option for many farmers in Malta and is therefore one milestone to overcome in order to make farming greener in Malta and more sustainable.

In addition to that, Cane outlines the need for a system that supports the value of food. It's not clear to people where their vegetables and fruits come from, whether it is from Malta or France or Italy. "There are no labels on veggies and fruits at the supermarket. People cannot tell whether their purchases come from the neighbour farmer or a foreign country." This makes it harder for people in Malta to support local farmers even if they are willing to.

SUPPORTING LOCAL FARMERS According to Cane the lack of workforce in farming has created another major challenge. He said: *"We do not have enough support in the way we need it and instead get support in the wrong areas. Farmers receive funds to buy tractors, while the majority actually needs help with a completely different section."*

For Cane, a solution could be for businesses to receive incentives if they decide to support and employ local farmers to grow vegetables and fruits for them. This would create a "sustainable workforce", says Cane. "And from my own experience I can tell that this system is working. I work together with Xara lodge. In my opinion, they are leading the way in sustaining farmers by supporting them to grow vegetables directly for the local industry." The Xara Lodge is a purpose-built multi-functional event venue located in the countryside outside Rabat. "Since they have the capital funds to buy land and support the local farming industry, big companies can help solve these issues, and in this way, farmers can sustain their families."

ACCESS TO LAND Another challenge lies in the accessibility of land. Cane deplores that *"it's impossible to access land in Malta. If your family does not already own land, you have no chance."*

This would make it impossible for young people and those interested in farming to start up. The average age of farmers in Malta is 57, but young farmers cannot get a hold of land as the sector is pricing them out. Cane continues: "*Land is not affordable and you won't receive a loan from the bank if you want to use it for agricultural reasons.*" This system would need to be changed and support would be needed, especially for young people in order to make it possible for them to enter the agricultural business.

Friends of the Earth Malta is convinced that projects like Biome Munch and farmers like Cane and Cassandra need to be supported by governmental institutions and policies. It is also important that the general public and communities support their local farmers with their political and, when possible, economic decisions.

Government says it will continue protecting farmers and agricultural land through change in law

Friday, 10 February 2023,

Over the last decade, the amount of utilised agricultural area in Malta decreased by 6.2%, a survey by the National Statistics Office shows.

Utilised agricultural area decreased from 11,500 hectares in 2010 to 10,700 hectares in 2020 - the loss of land is equivalent to twice the size of Comino.

The census, carried out in collaboration with the Agriculture Directorate within the Ministry for Agriculture took stock of the activities being carried out by farmers, livestock breeders and beekeepers in both Malta and Gozo. This statistical exercise is used to analyse the changes that this sector may have gone through since the last comparable exercise in 2010. Through the change in agricultural leasing legislation, which has been approved by parliament. The government will continue providing protection to farmers and their agricultural land

"Through the change in legislation, the sustainability of farming, food production and the protection of the rural environment is being guaranteed, and agricultural land is being safeguarded," the government statement read. It said that government, through National and European Funds, also announced several schemes to help the agricultural sector remain strong even in the face of crisis.

Government also said that through the €166 million announced for the Common Agricultural Policy of the European Union, Malta will work to strengthen direct payments to improve the economic situation of farmers throughout the next seven years.

"We will create a tool for young farmers to acquire agricultural land, while giving greater emphasis to organic farming," it said. The Government will now have the power to set clear and fair rules on how the crop should be valued. These rules will be published after consultation with the sector, it said

With his family in 1946 (back row, from left) Francis, Sister Fausta, Sister Monica, Sister Josephine, Joseph. (Front row, from left) Aronne, his parents Victoria and Carmelo, Fr Darmanin and Tony.

Salvino Darmanin's life as a Jesuit and a prisoner of war

Fr.Darmanin was born in Senglea on 31st.October 1919, he is the son of Mr.Carmelo and Victoria nee' Rope. He is the eldest brother of Joseph, Maria (Sister of Charity), France, Theresa (Sister of Charity), Aronne, Carmen (Sister of Charity) and Tony. While pursuing his studies in Villa San Cataldo in Bagheria (Palermo), Fr. Darmanin was caught in the turmoil caused by the World War II.

Being holder of a Commonwealth passport, Fr. Darmanin, together with other Maltese Jesuits, was interned in Northern Italy. In the meantime, on various fronts in Italy itself, the Germans suffered many losses and faced the need to care without delay for their many wounded soldiers.

In these circumstances they required without hindrance hospitals and care-centers, where to tend their wounded men. Being at their disposal the Germans evacuated all these various establishments and clinics, dispersed the patients to their homes. Fr.Darmanin was one of the patients at S.Pancrazio, who at that time was recovering from pleurisy (inflammation of the pleura membrane that lines the chest cavity and the lung).

On the 30th of September 1943, at 9.30 a.m., before boarding the bus, which had to take all the patients and some of the hospital staff to Brescia Central station, en route to Milan, the Germans found in the Administration Office Fr. Darmanin's passport, showing he was a British subject. He was summoned by the Chief Medical Officer and left the hospital escorted by a German M.O.. On arriving in Milan at dusk, he was accompanied by the German Medical officer to Albergo Eden, which the Germans had occupied and were using as their Command Office.

Fr. Darmanin's protests were in vain and he was ordered to march to the civil prison of San Vittore, Milan, escorted by two armed guards.

Fr. Darmanin arrived at San Vittore at about 10 o'clock in the evening, and after the necessary registration he was escorted to prison cell No:40, on the second floor. The cell, being rather small (eight feet long by six feet wide), dimly lit and gloomy, bore on its walls countless inscriptions of love and hatred, of Christian fortitude and reckless desperation. Furthermore the guards went to check every two hours, waking all the prisoners shouting and swearing at them. This made the night more painful and longer. Fr. Darmanin consumed the soup, saving the slice of bread by soaking half of it in water to serve him for supper and consuming the other half for breakfast the following morning. For two long days Fr. Darmanin was kept in his prison cell without seeing anyone except the guards every now and then. Early in the afternoon on October 9th Fr. Darmanin was called downstairs together with four other priests (one over 60 yrs). All the prisoners were extremely glad on arrival, as they were packed like sardines.

On 16th of October 1943 the prisoners were called for the usual morning roll-call and were ordered to carry all their possessions with them. The prisoners were ordered to march to the railway station. At the station some German soldiers were taking photographs of Fr. Darmanin since he was a priest. Some prisoners shouted, "Padre, they'll soon be after your autograph next". This made Fr. Darmanin feel rather uneasy.

They were now ready to board the train which was waiting alongside one of the station's platform. The transport to Germany was a freight of train to which a number of cattle-trucks were added. The prisoners were divided into groups of fifty to each cattle-truck in which, traveling three whole nights under those conditions, were beyond description. Fortunately, at many Italian stations, during intermediate stops, food was generously given to them by Italian women. On arriving at the German boundaries they were informed that lately, the German guards deprived the prisoners of their belts, trousers and shoes before leaving the Italian stations to lessen the ever increasing number of escapees from convoys on their way to Germany. At Gratz they were given a thin slice of bread to share between two prisoners and a cup of German tea. They reached Moosburg on the 19th October 1943 and placed in Stalag VIIA, approximately 20 miles north of Munich.

This was one of the largest and oldest P.o.W camps in Germany, having 30,000 prisoners at that time. The huts

were overcrowded but warm, three Decker beds with blankets and parcels supplied by the Red Cross were available. Fr. Darmanin was subject to various comments as some prisoners thought he was a soldier disguised in clerical robes. Every morning he attended the 6 o'clock Mass in the camp chapel.

On the 3rd November Fr. Darmanin was ridiculed by a German soldier, when before moving to a Russian compound, he was ordered to strip in front of other prisoners.

Together with other prisoners he was accommodated in huts with broken beds without any light or shutters. Next morning, he was issued a 2 day ration and together with 2400 British P.o.W. spent the whole night in cattle-trucks, unaware of their future destination.

Christmas day was very dull and Fr. Darmanin had dinner with Abbe' Courbon (a French chaplain) and attended a midnight Mass in hospital. Later, in April, more prisoners recaptured in Italy after several months of freedom arrived at the same camp. In the circumstances, the camp was overcrowded and again life became difficult.

On April 19th, some prisoners were sent to Elsterhorst, Reserve Lazarett 742, Stalag IVA, about 25 miles southeast of Dresden. German administration and their medical officers were not always scrupulous in taking all the necessary measures to safeguard the health of the patients. Due to different nationalities of the patients, Fr.Darmanin acted as an interpreter, mostly to the Italian and French P.o.W., whenever they required to be consulted by the English and French M.O.. Drawing and needle-work were the most appreciated occupational therapies. This log-book served as a private diary in which prisoners of war inscribed autobiographical records on a regular, if not daily basis, of their experience while in captivity.

In his log-book he recorded his feelings and several events he encountered, wrote prayers, drawn sketches of the prison camp and also addresses of his family, relatives and friends. At Elsterhorst, Darmanin met Abbe' Ceriser, a French chaplain and was glad to attend Mass daily. This consisted of a type-written sheet with news and items of some interest to the patients. Its publishing was soon frustrated by the splitting of the patients and the editorial staff by their removal to Konigswartha Hospital.

The thought of the approaching winter of 1944, Christmas could not but press heavily on every prisoner's mind. All spare time was to be from then onwards dedicated to the preparation of this big event. Orderlies kept storing carefully all paper bandages and extra orders were placed at the store. Surplus medicines and chemicals were withdrawn from the pharmacy, empty tins and paper-shavings from parcels were set aside. Orderlies kept storing carefully all paper bandages and extra orders were placed at the store. Every night, bathrooms offered the spectacular sight of metres with colored paper hanging out to dry. Patients helped by folding colored bandages into three or four colored streamers, others gave a hand in sewing costumes for the pantomime which was being rehearsed. On the morning of December 22, the Chefartz (the German doctor in charge of the hospital) left for his Christmas vacation. The wards were suddenly transformed into comfortable and nicely decorated wards. A huge Christmas tree occupied the center of every hall.

A few days later, rumours spread that another exchange of prisoners of war and civilian internees were officially confirmed on the 13th January 1945.

Although already entitled for repatriation, (following the medical examination), Fr. Darmanin was intentionally excluded from the list by the German officials, without no reason whatsoever.

Patients, mostly stretcher case, suffering from pleurisy, pneumonia and other diseases, had to lie in the cold dark night on a layer of snow, awaiting transport.

For days, long streams of horse-carts carrying children, women and old men passed wearily by the hospital, towards unknown destinations. Then from Oflag IVD, a nearby camp, about 5000 French prisoners marched by, pushing wheelbarrows and carrying their belongings towards central Germany.

In February 1945, with the advance of the Russian armies from the East, the prisoners were ordered to evacuate the camp. Dresden 25 miles to the west, was totally destroyed by 773 RAF Lancasters and 17 American Flying Bombers, 25000 died.

On the 18th of February, a friend of his came in the recreation hut, and shouted that orders had been given to evacuate the hospital by 5.00 p.m. Being used to sudden moves, the prisoners hurriedly packed their few belongings. Each took, as many Red Cross parcels one could carry from the store-room, and at 5 o'clock they marched past the camp gate.

This time only horse-carts were available and they were strictly reserved for the most seriously sick patients. The journey of 240 Km was supposed to be covered in three days, but because of the continuous air raids, a great deal of time was spent idling in different stations and so the journey lasted 7 days. At 3a.m. on the 26th February, the train proceeded to Hohenstein-Ernstradt. At the station a lorry was at the disposal of the very sick cases and the rest had to march to the hospital.

The hospital, originally a convent and sanatorium, was overcrowded and before they could set foot in, a German warrant-officer ordered them to stop and turn back. Fr. Darmanin did not stay there very long, but soon discovered what had been going on in the main hospital. The hospital wards were crammed, covered with dust and

very unhealthy. After a few days Fr.Darmanin along with a few others, was sent to a small working camp not far away. As the Russian artillery was advancing, the German military vehicles were retreating amidst confusion. Finally the working party settled in an abandoned small paper factory. In those circumstances, they offered to show the prisoners the route to freedom. At about 5 p.m. without hesitation the prisoners collected once more their belongings and started marching to the American zone. In all, between 20th October 1943 and 5th May 1945, Fr. Darmanin sent 142 letters/postcards of which 27 were returned back whilst the remaining were never traced.

Fr. Darmanin and the other prisoners of war were greeted by a hearty handshake from the American Officers in command; soon afterwards food and clothing were supplied. Shortly after 4 p.m., they were served tea and tasted white bread for the first time since they were taken prisoners. When the war was over, Fr.Darmanin's family were still awaiting for the day of Fr.Salvino return home. On 4th October, 1945, he returned back to Malta.

Following the war Fr.Salvino Darmanin resumed with his studies and on 14th June 1949 was ordained priest. During the years Fr.Salvino sustained several appointments in the Society of Jesus Community. In the year 2000, he retreated at the Jesuits Retreat home at Mt.St.Joseph, Mosta.

After suffering a severe heart attack Fr.Darmanin died on 14th February2001

Maltese Historical Association - February Presentation

The Maltese Historical Association Victoria Australia is inviting you to a presentation which will be held on Zoom on Tuesday 21 February 2023, starting at 7.20pm (Australian Eastern Standard Time). This is the first event of the year, after a two-month summer break.

This month we are pleased to host Mr Daniel Cilia, one Malta's leading photographers. Through his photography, he has made several discoveries which helped preserve many heritage buildings in Malta. See the attached link from a report published recently on The Times of Malta.

https://timesofmalta.com/articles/view/underground-malta-never-seen.1006057

We hope that you can attend this occasion which should not be missed.

The link below allows you to join the meeting. Further details are available on the attached flyer.

Join Zoom Meeting

https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82018774252?pwd=OGlvSWpYcUYrUVNzVDI3TWt6a3RYQT09

Meeting ID: 820 1877 4252 Passcode: 412471 J

Introducing Ghosts Stories of Malta

Why do certain places in Malta seem to be haunted?

Malta is known for its antiquity, and the mythology of ghost stories loom large. In the limestone buildings of the city these stories are not just historical memories but continue to shape Maltese culture.

Join Ramon Mizzi as he searches for the ghosts behind these stories -**Over time I've learned that certain spirits know that they are no longer with us, so they may be frustrated that they are stuck in our world and did not find rest.**

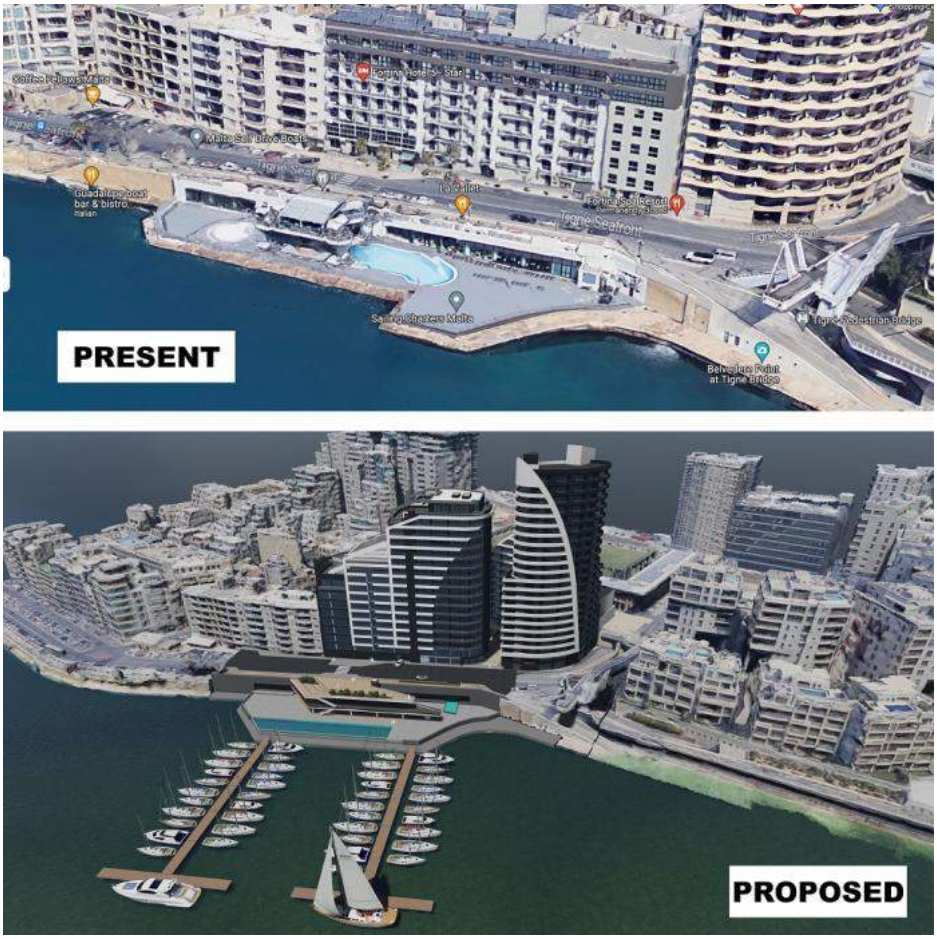
Follow ' Ghost Stories of Malta on SBS Maltese , on the SBS Radio App, or wherever you get your podcasts so that each episode is delivered directly to your digital device.

Ramon Mizzi *is a film maker. He holds an MA in TV & Interactive Content from the Birmingham City University, UK. In October 2009, his short film 'In the End' won Best International Contemporary Short in the New York International Independent Film & Video Festival. His brother Alexis was Director of Photography and co-producer of the film.*

www. podcasts.apple.com/au/podcast/ghost-stories-of-malta-l-iħirsa-fmalta/id1667450781

Tigné swimming spot making way for Fortina's marina and lido extension – report

John Paul Cordina



A swimming spot in Tigné is set to be lost as the government passes to the Fortina Group an area larger than two football grounds for the development of a private yacht marina and expanded lido to accompany their hotel, The Shift is reporting.

The concession was one of four government land concessions announced by the Economy Ministry earlier this month, though perhaps predictably, this announcement was scant on the details of the concessions.

The Shift's report not only highlighted the extent of the area involved in the Fortina Group deal, but also suggested that the concession comes at terms that are very favourable to the company.

The proposed 65-year concession, which will require parliamentary approval that is expected to be a formality, comes with an annual fee of €5.63 per sqm, roughly €90,000 per year, which was described by industry sources as an amount that will be easily recouped through the high amounts paid for berthing facilities. The Fortina Group will also be allowed to enter into a management agreement with third parties.

Development permission to demolish and rebuild the hotel's lido had been granted in 2021; no development application for the yacht marina appears to have been submitted to the Planning Authority.

Though the government has insisted that the yacht marina would be temporary – with the pontoons dismantled every winter – it appears that no such condition appears in the draft deed.

The Shift also cited opposition by the many swimmers who frequent the site, and who face the prospect of losing their swimming spot to the benefit of the Fortina Group.

It was also pointed out that concessions for yacht marina are typically awarded following a public call by Transport Malta: this was not the case with Tigné, where it is being treated as an extension to the hotel.

The Story of a Thriving Maltese Community In The Heart Of Motor City

By Jean Paul Azzopardi

www.lovinmalta.com/lifestyle/watch-welcome-to-detroit-the-untold-story-of-a-thriving-maltese-community-in-the-heart-of-motor-city/

An exclusive documentary delves into the lives of a thriving Maltese community that exists in none other than the suburbs of Motown America – Detroit, Michigan.

'From Malta to Motor City' takes us to Detroit where there exist two towns with a deep connection to Malta – embodied in two separate clubs that have become a mecca for the local Maltese people.

The Maltese American Community Club in Dearborn and the Maltese American Benevolent Society in Corktown.

The history of Detroit's Maltese communities starts with World War II, or shortly after it, when a surge of emigrants left the island in pursuit of better opportunities, the American Dream.

Yet, years after emigrating to the US, and thousands of miles away from home, there's no escaping the island culture. "The interiors of people's homes were felt uncannily familiar. You had to step outside to remind yourself you were across the Atlantic," said director Charlie Cauchi.

The walls of the clubs are a museum of the community's rich past, decorated with photos of club presidents and the Maltese and US politicians alike.

The food is distinctly Maltese, with kitchens manned by first-generation emigrants cooking up rabbit, ftira and pastizzi too. **And so are the drinks, with Kinnie being served to club members.**

The Maltese community in Detroit thrived throughout the city's automotive heyday and continues to grow now with second and third-generation emigrants equally as enthusiastic about Malta as their predecessors.

"They were able to keep the close-knit community they had in Malta while having space and freedom that a place like the USA can offer," Charlie continued.

"The younger members of the community that we met had such a love and fascination for Malta. Many of them spoke Maltese and even if they didn't, they were trying to learn the language," he said.

From Malta to Motor City also features a heartwarming celebration that hits close to home, a festa. A group of American-Maltese people gathered in a church to celebrate mass, before parading around with a statue of Holy Mary; pretty similar to what a traditional festa would like here. "We managed to capture the Victoria Festa celebrations, and while the statue and the procession might be on a smaller scale, what they lack in ceremony they demonstrate in heart, passion and dedication," she continued.

The documentary then ends with a particularly important note for the Maltese community of Detroit, the inauguration of Maltese American Heritage Day.

Charlie's fascination with Maltese communities abroad continues.

"There may be people out there that were interviewed that do not feature in this film but I am working on releasing the additional interviews from Michigan, as well as Canada and New York," she said.