



The Voice of the Maltese

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Malta President George Vella laying wreath at foot of Independence monument at Floriana on September 21, 2023. Photo: Matthew Cutajar (ICAM) via George Vella/Facebook

Independence Day Special

Independence Day in Malta

By Brian Decelis

September 19, 2023

Over the years, Malta has been under the control of a range of empires and civilizations, such as the Phoenicians, the Romans, the Greeks, the Arabs, the Normans, Sicilians, Swabians, Aragonese, the Knights of St John, the French for two restless years and finally the British for over 150 years. The country voluntarily became a part of the British Empire in 1800, and as such it became a protectorate.

The early years of the 20th century saw Malta for the first time manifesting its own sense of identity and an overwhelming willingness to stand on its own two feet. After Britain granted Malta self-governance in the aftermath of the island's bravery and loyalty to the crown during World War II, the movement for independence continued to grow.

The British had come to Malta after the island asked for help in expelling the French in 1800. Britain then incorporated Malta into its empire, but not before some hesitation from the new colonial rulers. In fact, the Treaty of Amiens of 1802 decreed that Malta should be passed back to the Order of St John, who had been unceremoniously kicked out by the French in 1798. However, some locals were not keen on this arrangement, and asked to remain under British protection.

As the Napoleonic wars resumed, the British were committed to defend Malta and would eventually gain full sovereignty of the Maltese Islands in 1814. Malta became a strategic stronghold and an important stepping stone for the British expansion in the east. It was home to the British Mediterranean fleet and a mid-way stop between British Gibraltar and the Suez Canal.

It remained an important asset to the British, especially after the Suez Canal, connecting the Red Sea and the Mediterranean Sea, opened in 1869. Malta soon became a naval and military headquarters for the British Mediterranean Fleet.

The country flourished under British rule: the country was declared free of the plague by 1814; censorship of the press was abolished by 1839; the Malta Railway was open by 1882; Malta got its own postage by 1855; and in 1904 the first tram service began servicing the main localities.

During World War I, Malta became known as the "Nurse of the Mediterranean" because, due to its location, it became a place where injured soldiers were sent to receive treatment and to recuperate.

By the mid 1930's however, there were growing tensions between the Maltese Catholic Church, the Maltese political elite, and the British rulers. These tensions grew to the point that the 1921 Constitution was suspended twice and violent clashes took place on the streets.

During the Second World War, Malta was savagely and constantly bombed by both German and Italian forces. This was due to the fact it was used as a listening post, as well as having a strong British Military presence. Much of the island was devastated during the raids including Mosta, Zabbar, and of course the capital, Valletta. But on the 15th of April 1942, King George VI awarded the people of Malta the highest civilian award for gallantry – the George Cross – and the Maltese people were so proud of it that it was put on the Maltese flag.

After the war ended, Malta finally achieved self-rule under Dom Mintoff, the head of the Malta Labour Party. After self-governance was restored in 1947, two political camps emerged: one side favoured full integration with the United Kingdom while the other preferred 'self-determination' with the same dominion status enjoyed by Canada, Australia and New Zealand.

During this time, the Maltese were offered three seats in British Parliament and they would retain responsibility for all Maltese affairs except defence, tax, and foreign affairs. This did however cause a lot



The George Cross medal currently in the National War Museum in Valletta.

Photo: AirMalta



Then Malta Prime Minister George Borg Olivier waving to the crowd with the Constitutional Independence document. Source: Cultural Heritage Directorate, Ministry for Gozo via Facebook

of controversy and a referendum held was deemed inconclusive.

After having had a series of talks with the British Government and after preparing a Constitution for an independent Malta, which was endorsed by Parliament and approved in a referendum held in February 1964, Prime Minister George Borg Olivier negotiated a package which included retaining British defence facilities for ten years and financial aid to the tune of £51 million.

On the 21st of September 1964, Malta became an independent constitutional monarchy with full independence but Elizabeth II as the Queen of Malta and the Head of State. Borg Olivier believed that the country's economy as well as its defense interests were best served by strong links with Britain, but the economic benefits of that policy were eroded by British defense cuts. Soon after Mintoff was returned to power in 1971, Malta was declared a republic (in 1974) and ties with Britain were cut completely on what is known as Freedom Day on 31st March 1979.

On the 25th anniversary of Malta's independence, a bronze and marble Independence monument was inaugurated at the entrance to the Mall in Floriana. Created by celebrated Maltese sculptor Ganni Bonnici it merges the abstract with the figurative, as the female figure (an allegory of Malta) strides forward into the unknown while liberating herself from the shackles of the past represented by the abstracted bands beneath her as she holds aloft the national flag.

This day, the day of independence is celebrated every year with



Then President of Malta George Abela laying a wreath at the Independence Monument at Floriana in 2009. Photo: "File:Cérémonie de l'Indépendance du 21 sept 2009.jpg" by Hamelin de Guettelet is licensed under CC BY-SA 3.0.

a public holiday and various events taking place around the island. Although these used to be dominated by the Nationalist Party in the past, Independence Day is now one of five national holidays commemorated by the public.

As part of the celebrations centred on Independence Day, a Pontifical Mass by the Bishop of Malta is held at the St. John's Co-Cathedral Valletta. This mass is followed by a flower-laying ceremony in front of the Independence Monument in Floriana, attended by the Prime Minister of Malta, the President and the Opposition Leader.

In the evening, the Independence Day Concert is organised by the National Festivities Committee, under the patronage of the President of Malta. This concert includes performances from the Malta Philharmonic Orchestra as well as vocals by seasoned sopranos.

Sources: AirMalta.com, GuideMeMalta.com, Festivals.mt

National Independence Day 2023

By Brian Decelis

September 22, 2023

The fifty-ninth anniversary since Malta attained independence was celebrated with official events on the day as well as those by the Nationalist Party which were traditionally celebrated on the eve leading up to midnight when the Maltese flag had been hoisted instead of the British one.

A Guard of Honor and the Band of the Armed Forces welcomed the President of Malta George Vella in Misraħ San Ġwann, where he was given the national salute and an inspection of the Honor Guard.

A Pontifical Mass by the Archbishop of Malta at the St. John's Co-Cathedral Valletta including the singing of the Te Deum. The Archbishop's homilies at such events usually provide much food for



Malta President Vella inspecting the Honor Guard. Photo by Matthew Cutajar (Icam) via George Vella Facebook page



thought especially reflecting on the current state of the nation and this year's proved no exception. Archbishop Charles Scicluna used his Independence Day homily to tear into the country's economic model, saying that exploitation of the less fortunate and foreign workers has turned the Maltese from being colonised into colonisers. The following are some excerpts from his surprisingly hard-hitting homily:

"Fifty-nine years ago today, Malta celebrated its birth as a sovereign and independent nation governed by the Maltese. For the first time, our country was no longer dependent on the decisions made by others on our behalf. We were no longer a people subject to external governance. Governance now rested in the hands of our citizens, who, every five years, got to choose whom to entrust with this responsibility.

"As a sovereign state, we might have unwittingly assumed that we had once-and-for-all eradicated those dependencies that impeded our progress and fulfilment. However, almost six decades after this historical moment, it would be pertinent for us to pause and reflect on the true significance of our independence and assess how autonomous we really are.

"One cannot help but notice that as we walk through our streets today, we are met with the sight of a people often ruled by commercial and personal interests. The question we need to ask, is: In our pursuit of economic success, have we created new dependencies? Have we placed rapid financial gain and rampant development ahead of the wealth of our sovereign nation? Have we placed rapid financial gain ahead of our quality of life and ahead of our values as Maltese – casting aside the worse off in our society in the process? (...)

Scicluna said "After fifty-nine years of independence, it is imperative that we reflect on whether we are on the right path. What vision do we hold for the future? Where are we heading? When we start asking these questions, we embark on the long and difficult journey towards justice. The significance and urgency of these questions grow within the current discourse our country is engaging in regarding the necessity of forging a new economic model for the years ahead. It is not the Church's role to provide detailed and technical solutions.

These should be entrusted to the capable authorities in dialogue with experts, social partners, and civil society. Yet is our duty as a Church to raise these issues and —guided by the teachings of Pope Francis— to support and encourage the transition from an economy that kills to an economy of life. (...)

Scicluna continued “Sixty years ago, our forefathers feared that we could not stand on our own two feet and that the country’s economy would collapse once we gained independence. History has proved that through hard work and the sacrifices we have made, the change led to something better. Today, as we celebrate Independence Day, let us pray for our country to be freed from dependence on the idols of our times that push us towards always having more and from the rat-race that ends up crushing us humans and our common home. (...)

“It is only when we are freed from the idols that alienate us that we will be able to follow the road of charity and justice that frees the poor from their misery, and all of us from the bonds of the ‘idols of wealth’ that blind and deafen, and that deprive us of our independence,” he concluded.

Afterwards, the President of Malta, Dr George Vella together with the Acting Prime Minister Owen Bonnici and the Leader of the Opposition Bernard Grech, honoured Independent Malta by laying flowers at the Independence Monument in Floriana.

In the evening then, a concert by the Malta Philharmonic Orchestra



L-R: Owen Bonnici (acting Prime Minister), George Vella (Malta President), Bernard Grech (Leader of Opposition). Photo by Matthew Cutajar (Icam) via George Vella Facebook page



Photo by Joseph Galea via Partit Nazzjonalista Facebook page

at the Manoel Theatre under the direction of Mro. Michael Laus was organised by the National Festivities Committee, under the patronage of the President of Malta.

This concert included works by various composers of Maltese classical music or of Maltese descent. The list of musical works includes compositions by Nicolò Isouard, Vincenzo Bugeja, Ruben Zahra, Paolino Vassallo, and Josef Bugeja. It also included a passage from Giuseppe Verdi and Otto Nicolai.

Aside from these official events, the Nationalist Party, which had been in government led by Dr George Borg Olivier when independence was granted to the island, has traditionally commemorated this occasion with mass gatherings which in their heyday used to be held on the Granaries.

It had been four years since the PN held its Independence Day mass gathering. This year it was held in the square near the Triton fountain (where the main bus terminus used to be situated in the past).

The guest of honour was European President Roberta Metsola who was invited to address the meeting by party leader Bernard Grech. Her attendance at the party meeting was criticised by former PL Secretary General Jason Micallef and current Labour Party CEO Randolph De Battista.

Roundup of Maltese News

PM addresses UN General Assembly

By Brian Decelis
September 24, 2023

“No man is an island entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main.”

The words of poet John Donne echoed in the United Nations’ General Assembly chamber in New York as the Prime Minister addressed the gathering, while highlighting that throughout its history Malta has always looked outwards, conscious of its unique geographic position at the crossroads of Europe and Africa. The following are highlights of his speech.

“Consciously stepping up into a unique role, building bridges, and building understanding between different traditions”, he said, mentioning the talks facilitated earlier this month between US and Chinese representatives – a role that Malta has been carrying out

since being admitted as a full member of the UN almost 60 years ago, that it is also serving on the Security Council in the active pursuit of “peace, security and social progress among all nations” as found in Malta’s Constitution.

He stressed that Malta’s response to the situation in Ukraine – and other crises across the world – is guided by the values of neutrality enshrined in our constitution but it does not mean that we are indifferent to what happens around us. “We will never be neutral when we see pain and suffering caused by an illegal invasion,” he said, calling on Russia to withdraw its forces and urging the nations gathered to deliver an end to the war.

He also urged Russia to re-join the Black Sea Grain Initiative and stop standing in the way of vital food supplies leaving Ukraine to feed the world’s most needy.

Abela identified the most pressing issue in the Mediterranean being Libya – a subject that he also broached in a separate meeting with the UN General Secretary António Guterres. As he also explained in his speech, Libya needed help not just to recover and rebuild after the tragic devastation of Storm Daniel but also to support the Libyan

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Happy Independence Day!

Mark
Buttigieg MLC

Parliamentary Secretary for Multiculturalism

Parliament of New South Wales 6 Macquarie Street Sydney NSW 2000
office.buttigieg@parliament.nsw.gov.au

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Prime Minister Robert Abela in discussions with the UN Secretary-General António Guterres. Photo: DOI

people to have the political stability they deserve. "The peace of our whole region depends on a lasting settlement there," he said.

Other hotspots that Malta is assisting in, mentioned by the Prime Minister, included Lebanon and countries in Africa where new diplomatic missions were opened in Ghana and Ethiopia, and putting into action our first national Strategy for Africa.

"Malta remains deeply disturbed by the dire security situation in the Sahel: political turmoil, irregular migration, the jihadist attacks on the civilian population and food insecurity. We are particularly concerned about the current situation in Niger and underline the urgency of a peaceful resolution to the crisis.

"From Ukraine to Mali, Libya to Niger, it can – all too often – seem like we are living in an era of despair. And the problems the world faces are indeed deep and profound. It would be all too easy – and all too understandable – to fall into despondency. To think that nothing

can be done.

"But... things can be done. That we can make a difference. That if a small nation like Malta can play its part in addressing the most urgent issues our world faces – then this United Nations can put in place real and effective solutions globally... We must show through deeds – not just words – that we can address the fears, as well as the hopes and aspirations, of the people we represent," he said.

He said that post pandemic, people feel that the world is a less stable, increasingly scary place, where they cannot control their futures. He said that addressing these concerns is what brought him into politics.

"No one can feel secure about their family's future unless they feel secure about the future of the planet on which we all live." And the biggest threat to our planet is clearly climate change.

"Current pledges and targets are not sufficient to keep the 1.5 degrees objective of the Paris Agreement within reach. Malta wholeheartedly commends the Secretary General's initiative to help states accelerate efforts at the global level. We must all play our part and work together. The time for excuses is long over!"

He continued "Rising sea levels are a severe threat to the security, livelihood, and indeed, the very existence of island countries like ours. As land is degraded – freshwater shortages, displacement of people and food insecurity all risk undermining global security. Generating new conflicts and exacerbating existing ones.

"Protecting our planet is a mammoth task. But by taking visible, measurable action we can and we must show our citizens that they have reason to believe in the security of the earth's future. And this security does not need to come about at the expense of economic growth because only if you feel secure about your family's economic wellbeing can you turn your attention to the wellbeing of the earth. And only by delivering sustainable economic growth can we deliver sustainable environmental protection.

He emphasized that decision making should be based on fairness and opportunity, with a commitment to equality which is also a commitment to competitiveness. By way of an example he mentioned



Speech by Prime Minister of Malta Robert Abela at the 78th session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York. Photo: DOI

steps Malta has taken to improve gender equality and closing the digital divide.

“Similarly, upholding the rights of the child – as enshrined in the UN Convention – is of paramount importance to Malta. We work hard to ensure that every child has the opportunities they deserve – no matter what the circumstances of their birth. By tackling child poverty and ensuring equal access to education and healthcare, we aim to ensure no child is left behind.

“Leaving any of the next generation of workers without the skills they need isn’t just damaging to the individuals excluded from prosperity. It is also damaging to economic growth. None of us can feel secure unless every child in our societies is safe and secure.”

He also referred to the growing number of mental health issues due to the feeling of insecurity about the future and how Malta has implemented a comprehensive mental health strategy to build capacity, address causes, and offer continuing support to individuals with mental health needs, and their families.

“One of the biggest fears many have is of technology. And now, with the advent of generative Artificial Intelligence, it seems that as lurid media headlines shout out loud the ‘Machines (are) Taking Over’.

“But the answer is not to turn back the clock but as leaders we must take the right decision for AI to have a positive impact and harness its power for the public good, not fear it as a coming catastrophe,” he said.

The Malta PM stated that “In Malta we are already seeing how AI can enhance public services, improving lives for all citizens, with six pilot projects covering areas from healthcare to traffic management. But global action is action for AI to become a global good.

“Put simply – that standing together we can achieve so much more than working alone. That yes, none of us – nations, leaders, societies – stand as islands isolated from each other. We are all connected in ever more ways. We live in a new age.”

He stressed the importance of working together for multilateralism to include a much wider group of voices – of all countries – large and small, rich, and poor, developed and developing and of all sections of civil society – women not just men, young as well as old, gay as well as straight, of all backgrounds and ethnicities.

“I refuse to believe; Malta refuses to believe; that a new age of insecurity is inevitable. I know, Malta knows, that we must build a new age of security. Not by trying to turn the clock back. But by getting the future right!

“If we work together. If we listen to – and learn from each other. If we understand and appreciate the desire of our citizens to take back control of their lives.”

Dr Robert Abela concluded his wide-ranging and important speech with the words “We can and we will get the future right!”



Dr Abela with Jake Sullivan, US National Security Advisor to President Biden



President Bush has lunch with Soviet President Gorbachev aboard the Maxim Gorky during the Malta Summit. Photo: David Valdez, U.S. National Archives and Records Administration

Malta hosts China-US talks

By Brian Decelis

September 21, 2023

Malta hosted talks between Jake Sullivan, the United States National Security Advisor to President Joe Biden, and Wang Yi, the People’s Republic of China Foreign Minister, who were also accompanied by their respective delegations.

A meeting between Prime Minister Robert Abela and Jake Sullivan was also held in which both sides highlighted that the stability of the Mediterranean region is of paramount importance for global peace and security. Prime Minister Abela underlined the importance of global peace as a fundamental prerequisite for a prosperous world where the quality of life for people and communities enables nations to cooperate and address global challenges.

The hosting of these discussions by Malta reaffirms the country’s longstanding role as a natural and safe place for holding high-level diplomatic discussions. When called upon Malta will continue to give its part to facilitate more open channels of communication in line with its longstanding position of advocating for a more just, peaceful, and prosperous future.

It makes one recall what is known as The Malta Summit – a meeting between US President George H. W. Bush and Soviet General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev on December 2–3, 1989, just a few weeks after the fall of the Berlin Wall which is attributed to having ended the Cold War between the two super powers of the time.

Council for the Maltese Living Abroad meets

By Brian Decelis

September 20, 2023

"The Council for the Maltese Living Abroad continues to be instrumental in acquiring knowledge and better understanding of how the Maltese diaspora sees our country from abroad, and to further communicate our vision of foreign policy." Minister for Foreign and European Affairs and Trade Ian Borg stated this while addressing the 15th Annual Meeting of the Council for the Maltese Living Abroad.

The 15th Annual Meeting of the Council, established by law, was held between the 11th and 12th of September 2023 at the Ministry for Foreign and European Affairs and Trade in Palazzo Spinola, St Julian's.

Minister Borg emphasised the impressive integration of Maltese



Minister Ian Borg with the Council for Maltese Living Abroad

diaspora worldwide and the importance of fostering adaptation in younger generations.

"The demographics and dynamics of Maltese mobility is changing at a rapid pace, mostly driven by globalisation, technological progress, and environmental concerns. These factors are expected to affect migration and priorities in the future. Hence, our country needs to remain active to ensure better outcomes that enhance our country's reputation," said Minister Ian Borg.

Minister Borg also mentioned various initiatives and events, including the launch of a new High Commission in Ottawa, Canada, and the organisation of a Virtual Forum for Young Maltese Living Abroad. He outlined plans to present a Bill which will formalise the Council for the Maltese Living Abroad, a crucial step for the Council's future development and operation.

This Council has 15 members, including representatives from Australia, the United States, Canada, Belgium, the United Kingdom, France, Egypt, and the United Arab Emirates.

Australia is represented by Edwidge Borg, Emanuel Camilleri, John Vassallo, Marisa Previtera and Mario A Sammut.

During their time in Malta the Council members and some of their guests also met informally with the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Anglu Farrugia in a visit to the Parliament building.



The Speaker of the House of Representatives, Anglu Farrugia, meeting informally with some CMLA members and their guests

Mix-xena tal-ħajja Maltija

Disgħin sena ilu fil-Ħamrun...

By Fr Norbert Bonavia mssp

August 31, 2023

"Meta mmutu nibdew ngħixu l-vera ħajja."

Dawn il-kelmiet qalhom il-Qaddej t'Alla Mons. Ġużepi De Piro 90 sena ilu fis-17 ta' Settembru 1933, propju ftit sigħat qabel ma miet.

Žgur u mhux forsi, li l-isem ta' Mons. De Piro mhux isem ġdid. Imma forsi ftit jafu li hu miet tista' tgħid soptu fil-knisja ta' San Gejtanu fil-Ħamrun.

Fil-Ħamrun kienet qed issir għall-ewwel darba l-purċissjoni tad-Duluri. Il-Kappillan Mifsud kien stieden lil Mons. De Piro biex filgħodu jiċcelebra hu l-quddies tal-festa u filgħaxija jmessxi l-purċissjoni. Dan il-ġest min-naħa tal-Kappillan kien bi gratitudni lill-Monsinjur, ghax kien bl-għajjnuna tiegħu quddiem l-Isqof li ngħata l-permess li ssir din il-festa.

Il-festa tad-Duluri kienet qed issir għall-ewwel darba bl-għajjnuna ta' Mons. De Piro, quddiem l-Isqof.

Hawn ta' min jgħid li sadanittant il-Kappillan Mifsud laħaq miet. Imma l-festa saret xorta.

Meta daħlet il-purċissjoni, Mons. De Piro għamel żewġ kelmiet tal-okkażjoni, u kkomova ftit ruħu, speċjalment meta semma' lill-Kappillan Mifsud, li kif għedna, kien għadu kemm miet, u qal dawn il-preċiżi kelmiet fuqu, "Jien naf x'kappillan u x'teżor kellkom. Kemm

kien iħobbni!"

Imbagħad niżel għarkupptejh biex tibda l-Barka Sagramentali. Imma fil-pront qal lil żewġ qassisin li kienu ħdejh, "Kemmm qed inħossni ħażin!" Huma riduh jidhlo għewwa, imma qalilhom, "Le għax inkella n-nies tagħmel għagħa. Żommuni." Imma waqt il-Barka, ipprova jqum, imma waqa' mitluf minn sensih fuq wieħed mill-ministri ta' ħdejh. Daħlul fil-kor u poġġewh fuq pultruna.

Ftit wara giet l-ambulanza, u ħaduh l-Isptar Ċentrali tal-Furjana, fejn illum hemm id-Dpot tal-pulizija. Biex ma jtilfux ħin poġġewh fl-ewwel sala tat-tfal. Madwar is-sodda barra Profs. Ellul kien hemm ukoll il-Prof. Stilon u xi sorijiet.

Imma meta l-infermier tellagħlu l-komma tas-suttana u l-professur fetaħlu idu, d-demmm minflok ma ħareġ itir u bis-saħħa, ħareġ



Mons. Ġużepi de Piro. Ritratt: martinmssp/Wikipedia



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magħqud. Hekk deher li l-mewt kienet ċerta. Il-Prof. Stilon li kien kuġinuh, u li kien qed iżommli rasu, qal lill-Prof. Ellul: "Il-Monsinjur miet." Dan kien għall-ħabta tad-9.00pm.



L-awtoritajiet ċivili, Il-Gvernatur, membri tas-Senat u l-poplu li attenda għad-difna

Is-Supretendent Bonello, li kien ħdejn iż-żewġ professuri, qal, "Dan kien verament bniedem li qatt ma ftaħar b'dak li għamel." U l-Prof. Ellul kompli, "Għex mat-tfal u miet mat-tfal".

Għall-funeral, attendew l-oġġla awtoritajiet ekkleżjastiċi u statali, fosthom il-Gvernatur ta' Malta.

L-għada li sar il-funeral, il-gazzetti ħarġu jsellmu lil dan il-bniedem, bi kliem tassew sabiħ. Fosthom sejhulu l-ħabib tal-fqar.



Dan il-Qaddej ta' Alla għandu jibqa' jissemma għal bosta raġunijiet, fosthom għax waqqaf is-Socjetà Missjunarja ta' San Pawl (l-unika Socjetà mwaqqfa f'Malta għall-missjoni), għal dak kollu li kien għall-Knisja ta' Malta u ta' Għawdex, għas-sitt istituti tal-karità li tagħhom kien direttur u għas-sehem li ha biex jikkalma l-poplu fl-irvell tas-7 ta' Gunju (De Piro kien membru tas-Senat). Imma fuq kollox jibqa' msemmi għall-ħajja qaddisa li għex.

Dan il-bniedem, nisel familja nobbli u sinjura, għex ta' fqir. Qatt ma għex fil-palazz t'ommu, imma fl-istituti li kien imexxi. U kien irid jiekol l-ikel sempliċi bħalma kienu jiekol t-tfal.

Virtù oħra li ta' min jammira fih kienet l-umiltà fi lbiesu u fi mgiebtu. Kien jilbes suttana sewda, avolja kien monsinjur u ma kienx jiddejjaq imur fejn il-bieb tat-tarzna, jistenna l-ħaddiema ħerġin biex jittallab il-flus għat-tfal li kellu fl-istituti.



It-tberik tat-tebut waqt id-difna

Insemmu wkoll il-ħajja tat-talb. Għalih it-talb ma kienx devozzjoni,

imma relazzjoni ta' ħbiberija ma' Alla. Kull ma kien jagħmel kien iħossu mdawwal bit-talb.

Għalhekk ninkoraġġik sabiex fil-bżonnijiet tiegħek, titlob lil Alla bl-interċessjoni tal-Qaddej t'Alla Mons. De Piro, ħalli meta jrid Alla narawh meqjum fuq l-artali.

Nota: Jekk tixtieq santi jew trid tkun taf aktar fuq il-Qaddej t'Alla Mons De Piro, ikteb lil Fr Norbert Bonavia, Dar Sant'Agata, Sqaq Sant'Agata, Ir-Rabat RBT 2020 jew ċempel (+356) 7926 5968.



Fejn jinsab midfun bħalissa Mon. De Piro fil-kappella tas-Sočjetà Missjunarja ta' San Pawl

Mill-gżira Għawdxija

L-Isqof t'Għawdex għall-festa tal-Kappella ta' Kemmuna

By Charles Spiteri

September 6, 2023

F'Kemmuna għet iċċelebrata il-festa tar-Ritorn tal-Familja ta'

Nazzaret mill-Eġittu. Din il-festa f'dawn l-aħħar tliet snin ħadet prinċipalment l-aspett ta' festa reliġjuża, fejn isir it-tberik tal-laneċ u dgħajjes oħra li jkunu jinsabu fil-bajja ta' San Nikola u l-bajja ta' Santa Marija, u wara ikun hemm Konċelebrażjoni Ewkaristika preseduta mill-Isqof ta' Għawdex, Anton Teuma.

Madwar din il-festa hemm sens ta' għaqda ma' dawk li sikwit ikunu jgħattgħu tmiem il-ġimgħa fil-bajjiet ta' Kemmuna. Din l-atmosfera sabiha li inħolqot dawn l-aħħar snin, li Mons. Ġużepp Attard, ir-rettur



MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN
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High Commission of Malta - Canberra

H.E. Mr. Mario Farrugia Borg
High Commissioner for Malta to Australia
38 Culgoa Circuit, O'Malley, ACT 2606

(02) 6290 1724 / 1426 / 1573

www.foreignandeu.gov.mt

0433 799 746

highcommission.canberra@gov.mt

Consulate General - Sydney

Mr. Lawrence Buhagiar (Consul General)
St. Martins Tower, Suite 10.04, Level 10, 31 Market St, Sydney NSW 2000

(02) 9262 9500

0430 402 177

(02) 9264 4722

maltaconsulate.sydney@gov.mt
lawrence.c.buhagiar@gov.mt

Consulate General - Melbourne

Ms. Chirelle Ellul Sciberras (Consul General)
Suite 613, 6th Floor, 343 Little Collins Street, Melbourne VIC 3000

(03) 9670 8427

0430 378 407

(03) 9670 9451

maltaconsulate.melbourne@gov.mt



ta' din il-knisja jsejnhilha Komunità, Hbieb il-Baħar fil-Mulej, Kemmuna, għaliex għal hafna minnhom huwa madwar il-quddies a f'jum il-Mulej li f'din il-kappella jingħaqdu f'atmosfera ta' hiberija.



Ta' min ifakkar li d-Djoċesi t'Għawdex toffri dan is-sevizz matul is-sena kollha f'Kemmina, partikolarment għat-turisti, Għawdxin u Maltin u kif ukoll għar-residenti.

L-Isqof ta' Għawdex Anton Teuma, mgħejjun mir-Rettur Mons Ġużep Attard, bierek madwar 200 lanċa li kienu fil-bajjiet ta' San Nikola u Santa Marija, u wara, il-qofol taċ-Ċelebrazzjoni kienet il-quddies fil-beraħ quddiem il-kappella. Waqt l-omelja tiegħu, Mons Isqof ha spunt mill-esperjenza ta' San Pietru fil-relazzjoni tiegħu ma' Kristu, biex sejjaħ lil dawk prezenti halli jsaħħu r-relazzjoni tagħhom ma' Kristu.



Iċ-ċelebrazzjoni tal-festa fil-kappella ta' Kemmina mill-Isqof ta' Għawdex Anton Teuma u Mons. Ġużep Attard. Jidher ukoll it-tberik tal-bċejeċ tal-baħar. Ritratti: Alessio Sultana

L-Isqof zied jgħid li mhux biżżejjed li nkunu nafu hafna fuq Kristu, imma l-iżjed importanti li jkollna relazzjoni tajba ma' Krsitu, u dan nistgħu naslu għaliha jekk inkunu prattiċi fis-smiġħ sinċier tal-Kelma



ta' Alla. Staqs a l-Isqof min hu Kristu għalina? Dan jkun tajjeb jekk nistaqsu lillna nfusna ta' spiss u nħallu l-Ispirtu ta' Alla jaħdem fina. Għax hija l-Kelma t'Alla li tagħmilna nsara maturi, speċjalment fil-mument tal-kriżijiet tagħna.

Waqt l-Istqarrija tal-Fidi l-Isqof raxxax l-ilma tal-Magħmudija fost dawk prezenti. Iċ-ċelebrazzjoni intemmet bil-Barka Sagramentali u mument ta' fraternità, f'atmosfera ta' serenità.

Marija Bambina fix-Xagħra

By Charles Spiteri

September 2, 2023

Illum is-Sibt 2 ta' Settembru 2023, l-istatwa titolari devota ta' Marija Bambina tax-Xagħra qed tiċċelebra l-ġublew tad-deheb tal-inkurunazzjoni tagħha, meta l-Isqof Nikol G. Cauchi, f'isem il-poplu Xagħri, poġġa fuq ras il-Bambina kuruna tad-deheb u haġar prezzjuż. Hija data partikolari għax-Xagħrin meta fl-1973 il-Parroċċa wettqet holla ta' għexieren ta' snin sa minn meta twaqqfet parroċċa fl-1688.

Fl-okkażjoni ta' din il-ġurnata speċjali, fl-10 ta' dalgħodu, l-Isqof t'Għawdex, Mons Anton Teuma ser jagħmel Pontifikal solenni assistit mill-Isqof George Bugeja OFM, Vigarju Appostoliku ta' Tripli fil-Libja u l-Isqof maħtur bħala Vigarju Appostoliku ta' Bengħazi fil-Libja, Mons. Sandro Overend Rigillo OFM, bis-sehem tal-Kapitlu Kolleġjali u kleru tal-parroċċa.

Għal din l-okkażjoni se tiġi esegwita l-quddies a San Antonio tas-surmast Nazzareno Refalo bis-sehem tal-orkestra, solisti u l-kor Voci Angeliche taħt id-direzzjoni ta' Grace Vella Refalo u Mro. Joseph Galea. Din l-istess quddies a giet esegwita f'Jum l-Inkurunazzjoni fl-1973.



Filgħaxija għall-habta tas-sebġha, l-istatwa tal-Bambina mistennija toħroġ fuq iz-zuntier tal-Bażilika, waqt li fil-pjazza t-tfal u l-adolesxenti jieħdu sehem f'rappreżentazzjoni mużikali 'Lil min se ninkurunaw?' fuq kitba ta' Alex Farrugia.

Wara ssir purċissjoni bl-istatwa devota tal-Bambina madwar il-pjazza waqt li l-Banda Victory ddoqq innijiet Marjani. Mad-dhul lura tal-Bambina fil-Knisja tingħata l-barka sagramentali.



Ritratti meħudin waqt l-ewwel ġurnata tal-Bidu tan-Novena tal-Bambina tat-Tfal fiċ-Ċinkwantenarju tal-Inkurunazzjoni tal-Istatwa ta' Marija Bambina. Ritratti: CHARLES SPITERI

Sadattant fl-imsemmija Knisja Bazilika, ittella' ORATORIO NATIVITAS MARIAE. Lirika ta' Mons. Arcipriet Carmelo Refalo, Kompożizzjoni ta' Ray Sciberras. Esekuzzjoni impekkabbli u mill-isbaħ mill-Kor Voci Angeliche taħt id-Direzzjoni ta' Grace Vella Refalo u l-Orkestra taħt id-Direzzjoni tas-Surmast Antoine Mercieca. Opra oħra li tkompli ssebbi il-ġest tal-Inkurunazzjoni tal-Istatwa tal-Bambina li l-poplu tax-Xagħra għamel 50 sena ilu.

Harġet ukoll Pubblikazzjoni Speċjali sabiex tfakkar din l-okkażjoni.

Aussie news

Practical assistance to the cost of living crisis

By TVOTM Community Desk

September 21, 2023

The May Federal Budget had a \$14.6 billion package to tackle the cost of living crisis. More changes have just been announced.

More than five million Australians on welfare have had their payments boosted. People on JobSeeker, Youth Allowance, Austudy, ABSTUDY and the Youth Disability Support Pension will receive immediately an extra \$40 per fortnight in addition to the \$16 increase from indexation.

Meanwhile, veterans on a service pension will receive an extra \$32.70 with those on the Disability Compensation Payment receiving an additional \$53 a fortnight.

A range of other support recipients including those on the Age Pension, Disability Support Pension and Carer Payment are set to receive a \$32.70 increase for singles, or \$49.40 extra for couples combined due to the 2.2 per cent indexation rate.

Also, income limits for Commonwealth Seniors Health Card recipients will be indexed, increasing by \$5,400 to \$95,400 a year for singles and by \$8,640 to \$152,640 a year for couples combined. Singles on JobSeeker will collect an extra \$56.10, which brings their fortnightly payments to \$749.20.

Renters on income support will receive an extra \$27.60 per fortnight



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after the government expanded Commonwealth Rent Assistance by 15 per cent on top of indexation, making it the largest increase to the payment in more than three decades.

Social Services Minister Amanda Rishworth said it offered practical assistance to Australian households.

"It means more money in the pockets of those doing it toughest, and that will make a difference," Rishworth said in a statement. "We know that many people are doing it tough right now and they expect us to assist where we can to help with the cost of living, particularly for those on the lowest incomes. And that's exactly what we're doing."

**based on reporting by SBS News*

It is Yes or is it No?

By TVOTM NewsDesk

September 6, 2023

The debate continues. During a NITV programme discussing the proposed Voice to Parliament, two prominent personalities put their views forward. The Voice is a proposed independent and permanent advisory body that would advise policymakers on matters affecting the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

National MP Barnaby Jones said he believed a Voice would give some people a "greater parliamentary right". He questioned what the legislation might look like and expressed concern that a Voice would "cause more problems."

Joyce said he'd grown up being told not to define people by race, but in the case of the Voice, it's a case of "Well, hang on, except on certain occasions, where we will define people by race".

"People have to see how that annoys me," he told the program. "We don't know what the leg(islation) is, and people say it's advice and there's a lot more than that, the word advice is not even in the constitutional question," Joyce said.

"It's a capacity for people to have representations and I tell you what, if I got the High Court I want legal representation, not legal advice."

Nova Peris, ex-senator, Olympic athlete and an aboriginal replied how the Australian Constitution from the outset defined people by race to the detriment of Aboriginal people.

"1788, Union Jack planted, it was declared *terra nullius*, no man's land. So we became invisible then. But we know all the atrocities, the massacres and all the policies that happened, shifted Aboriginal people of their respective communities.

"Fast forward, 1901. This document. 1901 is the birth certificate of this country. Now, there were two references to Aboriginal people in there in 1901: that the Commonwealth shall make law for whom it deems necessary for except the Aboriginal race ... and the other one was the Aborigines could not be counted, so we weren't allowed to be



National Party MP Barnaby Joyce. Image: NITV

counted as part of Australian population," she said.

"We have been subjected since day dot in this country to brutal acts that have hurt our people," Peris added. "It's a very simple thing what we're asking ... The birth certificate of this country does not include the first-born."

Liberal Opposition leader Peter Dutton speaking recently committed



Ex Labor Party Senator Nova Peris. Image: NITV

to holding a second referendum should the upcoming vote fail and the Coalition is returned to power. That referendum would focus solely on constitutional recognition, and not enshrining a Voice to Parliament – an essential part of the Uluru Statement from the Heart.

CHRIS BOWEN MP
FEDERAL MEMBER FOR MCKINNON

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Level 1, Suite 101C, 130 Main Street, Blacktown
 PO Box 8525, Blacktown NSW 2148
 (02) 9671 4780 Michelle.Rowland.MP@aph.gov.au
 MRowlandMP www.michellerowland.com.au

NSW Happenings

Volunteers in a culturally and linguistically diverse district

By TVOTM NewsDesk

September 14, 2023

Dr HUGH McDERMOTT, the State Member for Prospect, delivered a private members statement in NSW State Parliament where he acknowledged the vital work of the volunteers in a district where culturally and linguistically diverse community groups live and work together in harmony.

Dr McDermott recognises the important and incredible contribution of culturally and linguistically diverse community groups, and their volunteers, across Western Sydney. This is his speech as reported on Hansard 3/8/2023:

The electorate of Prospect is lucky to be the home to a remarkable multicultural community of people from all over the world. Our community is home to individuals and families whose heritage is represented by a range of cultures:

Maltese, Assyrian, Chaldean, Tamil, Egyptian, South Sudanese, Kurdish, South-East Asian, Armenian, Aziri, Palestinian, Jordanian, Arabic, Lebanese, Maori, Pacifica, Bosniaki, Equatorial African, Telugu, Bangladeshi, Sikh, Irish, British, and our Australian First Nations people. No doubt I have missed one or two.

We also have culturally and linguistically diverse community organisations such as the Maltese Community Council of NSW, an umbrella body of many associations, the newspaper, The Voice of the Maltese, the Assyrian Democratic Movement, the Assyrian National Council of Australia, the Assyrian Cultural and Social Youth Association, the Chaldean League, the Consortium of Tamil Associations, the Sydney Tamil Manram, the Tamil Valarchi Manram, the Australian Egyptian Forum Council, the South Sudanese Equatorial Communities Association, the South Sudanese Community and Youth Association of NSW, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the Armenian National Committee, the Homenetmen Ararat or the Smithfield Armenian Scouts as we call them, and the Armenian Youth Federation — just to name a handful of incredible volunteer associations in our community.

Those community organisations, and many more, diligently serve Western Sydney in a multitude of different ways, including creating spaces to gather for festivals, food, art showcases, and sporting competitions; advocating for the specific social, religious, and political needs for their communities.

Creating a sense of belonging and safety; opening and improving community schools to promote and maintain their languages; publishing and distributing local newspapers or media; and engaging in dialogue with community leaders and government bodies and, in fact, each other.

They contribute greatly to our thriving social fabric and sense of belonging in Western Sydney. The roots of all of their cultures, languages and traditions continue to thrive and evolve every day because of the work of those organisations and the volunteers that engage with us.

One of the many challenges that our culturally and linguistically diverse community organisations face is resourcing, whether it be finding space to organise meetings and festivals or finding volunteers to organise events or teach at language schools on weekends.

It is no easy task for our volunteers to take valuable time away from their work, families and loved ones to contribute to our community.

However, time and again I have seen our volunteers channel their interests and passions into action. Every single day our volunteers make a tangible difference and better the community they are seeking to support.

It is in places like Western Sydney, where there are many multicultural and diverse backgrounds and where people face significant struggles every day, that volunteering is needed most.

Whether it is through a deep connection to culture and language, dedication to family, strong community bonds, or a devotion to offering the utmost hospitality to those who wish to join their community, the Western Sydney community must be praised for creating a welcoming, supportive and enthusiastic space for individuals and families to work or call home.

As a multicultural community, we rely on the passion of volunteers every day. I sincerely thank all of our culturally and linguistically diverse community groups for their continued commitment to improving and strengthening the lives of people in Western Sydney.

Dr. McDermott was born 15 Jun 1968, is Member of the Legislative Assembly, the Member for Prospect, Parliamentary Secretary to the Attorney General and Member of the Australian Labor Party.

Prospect is an electoral district of the Legislative Assembly in the Australian state of New South Wales. An urban electorate in Western Sydney, it is centred on the suburb of Prospect from which it takes its name. It also includes the suburbs of Arndell Park, Bossley Park, Bungarribee, Girraween, Huntingwood, Pemulwuy, Wetherill Park, as well as parts of Blacktown, Eastern Creek, Greystanes, Pendle Hill, South Wentworthville and Smithfield.

He was elected to Parliament in 2015. Prior to entering Parliament, he had a career as an international lawyer and university academic.



Hugh McDermott, Member for Prospect in the NSW Legislative Assembly

The celebration started with a recital of the rosary and the procession around the church with the statue of Our Lady accompanied by the celebrants and leaders of the Maltese community in NSW.

Mass was celebrated by Fr Noel Bianco M SSP from Melbourne who also delivered the homily, assisted by Fr Tarcisio Micallef, Fr Carmelo Sciberras, and Fr Laurie Cauchi.

Present also were deacons, Louis Azzopardi and Roderick Pirotta. Mark Boffa was the co-ordinator. Miss Malta was Sarah Vella. The Choir was under the direction of Marisa Privitera. The guest of honour was the Consul General for Malta in NSW, Lawrence Buhagiar and his wife Rosieanne. Also present was Ms Miriam Friggieri, President of the Maltese Community Council of NSW and the PRO, Sandra Grech.

The



Statue of Our Lady being carried in St. Mary's Cathedral, Sydney



Fr. Noel Bianco M SSP

Maltese associations that took part with their banners were Maltese RSL, St Nicholas Festa Committee, Maltese Welfare, Maltese Past Pupils of Don Bosco, La Valette SC, Maltese Australian Women's Association and Maltese Cultural Association. The Knights of St John were also present.

Il-Vitorja at St Mary's Cathedral: the tradition continues

By TVOTM Community Desk

September 10, 2023

They came by train, cars, buses, wheelchairs and whatever they could find to celebrate Jum il-Vitorja. They responded to the call with devotion and the usual enthusiasm.

From various parts of the State of NSW, all roads led to St Mary's Cathedral for the historical annual gathering, the 8 September, Malta's most religious of the five National Days, organized for the last 63 years by the MSSP.





Banners of the associations that attended



Mons Depiro House in East Sydney, where the reception was held. All photos: supplied.

Everyone was invited to a reception at the MSSP Mons Depiro's House in East Sydney, hosted by Fr Tarciso Micallef who works so hard to organize this celebration of faith.

This demonstration of the Maltese Catholic faith has been including the whole of the State of NSW for the last 63 years and held at St Mary's, the Cathedral that holds the title and dignity of a minor basilica, bestowed upon it by Pope Pius XI on 4 August 1932. It is the cathedral church of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney and the seat of the Archbishop of Sydney.

It is held there because it is the major and most significant religious event in the calendar of the Maltese community in ALL the State of NSW.

It gathers all the community once a year on the holy *Festa Tat-Twelid tal-Madonna*, il-Bambina, a Malta National Day. It will be indeed a sad and sorry day if we are to lose or in some way lessen the importance of this annual celebration of faith.

Żažu Member for Life – Hamrun Spartans may play in Australia next year

By TVOTM SportsDesk
September 10, 2023

The Hamrun Centre at Marsden Park came to life with a very interesting welcome to Ray 'Żažu' Farrugia as he returned to Sydney to launch his autobiography "And in Malta is my home" – a 160-page book.



Ray Farrugia is being presented with a Certificate of Life Membership of the Melita Eagles FC. by Lawrence Dimech

The enthusiastic crowd that attended learned more about Ray's life when he was interviewed by Joe Borg, the President of the Centre, for his TV show.

Ray let slip that Hamrun Spartans FC, Malta's current champions, under the leadership of their controversial President Joseph Portelli, could be visiting Sydney early next year.

In fact, Mr. Portelli donated to the Hamrun Club in Sydney two historical Spartans championship jerseys as a souvenir.

Pressed for more details, Ray told The Voice of the Maltese that the news of the Spartans' visit came from a very reliable source.

Mark Tanti, the current President of the Melita Eagles Soccer Club, then introduced Lawrence Dimech and asked him to present a certificate of life membership to Żažu. In his short speech, Lawrence mentioned that in fact Żažu was the only Maltese player selected to play for the Malta national team while he was still playing for 12 years in Sydney.

He is also one of the rare footballers to be awarded the medal for Gieħ ir-Repubblika in 2022 (Medal for Services to the Republic of Malta).

Ray Farrugia managed various teams in Malta but ultimately reached the top when he was appointed coach for the Malta U21 and National team in 2018/9.

It was further revealed that in fact the name EAGLES originated from the Hamrun district and was brought forward by Lawrence Dimech and his fellow footballers in 1954. Hamrun Eagles F.T. was based at the Spartans Bar at Triq San Gejtanu, behind the parish church.

Ray also confessed that his nickname originated from the name of a garage his grandfather owned.



Ray Farrugia with Don Allan in front of the HISTORY WALL at the Melita Stadium at Everley Park Granville

This eventful evening was attended by the Consul-General, Lawrence Buhagiar and his wife Rosieanne, the President of the MCC NSW Miriam Friggieri, businessman and President of the Balzan Football Club of Malta, Anton Talgiaferro and former senior players Afredo Barrios, Hugo Himenez and Don Allan. The Caruana and Ellul families were also present.

The function appeared to have sealed the fusion between the Hamrun Centre and the Melita Eagles SC.

**Ray Farrugia's book is available for sale. Contact Mark 04 6744 6965.*



From Left: Miriam Friggieri, Nathalie Gatt, Lawrence Dimech, Ray Farrugia, Francis Montesin, Rosieanne Buhagiar and Lawrence Gatt

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VIC Happenings

13 new Maltese citizens in Victoria

By TVOTM Community Desk
September 23, 2023

For the Maltese Community Council of Victoria (MCCV), the 21 September was not only a celebration of Independence Day but also a celebration of Maltese Citizenship for 13 new Citizens

The event was organized by the High Commissioner of the Republic of Malta. Ms Giaconda Schembri represented the High Commission assisted by Ms Pauline Theuma from the Office of the Consulate General in Melbourne.

Madam President, Antonia Camilleri together with the Treasurer, Joseph Matina represented the Maltese community Council of Victoria for this ceremony.

The night was of great success and delicious traditional food complemented the night.

On behalf of the Executive of the Maltese Community Council of Victoria, we wish all 13 new citizens the very best and trust they enjoy all the benefits that come with their new citizenship.



13 new Maltese citizens from Victoria. Photo: supplied

**media release from Joseph Matina, Treasurer & Chairman of the Cultural Events Team, MCCV*

Independence Day celebrations in Victoria

By TVOTM Community Desk

September 20, 2023

The Maltese Community Council of Victoria Inc. (MCCV) held the celebrations of the 59th year of Malta's Independence on Saturday 16 September 2023.

Madam President Antonia Camilleri welcomed close to 100 people who attended the event.

Those who attended enjoyed sumptuous cocktail food and a glass of red/white wine. Everyone networked together and had an enjoyable night.

Madam President thanked the members of the council, Tania Di Carli, Fr Lonnie, Andrew Gatt, Chris Chetcutti and Rosemary Attard for a great team effort for both pre event and on the day. She also thanked a number of volunteers for the Maltese Community who also contributed to assist.

Madam President acknowledged Mr Joe Ellul, President of the Newport Maltese Association & Seniors Group Inc and Mr George Saliba who is the immediate Past President of the same organisation.

Lastly, Madam President thanked all those who attended for coming and their support because without their attendance these events will not be successful.



From left to right Andrew Gatt – Secretary, Joseph Matina – Treasurer & Chair of Multicultural events/Media, Chris Chetcutti – Compliance Director, Antonia Camilleri – President and Tania De Carli – Deputy President.

Photo: supplied

Joseph Matina, Treasurer and Chair of Multicultural Events and Media, MCCV

Features

Promoting Social Justice and Opposing Social Injustice

By Paul Zammit

September 11, 2023

The Voice of the Maltese is pleased to publish a speech delivered at the Loreto Normanhurst Catholic Girls School in Sydney on 9th August, 2023 by Paul Zammit OAM KSG FAICD.

The topic was "Promoting Social Justice and opposing Social Injustice", two issues which the speaker believes are intertwined.

Perhaps Martin Luther King put it best when he said, and I quote: *"Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere".*

We as Australians and as Catholics have a great story to tell and to feel proud of the fact that our Nation has been very generous indeed, in providing financial foreign aid and at all times as complemented by our Church in Australia.

From a strictly secular perspective:

Each year, successive Australian governments, and I hasten to add always on a bi-partisan basis, are invariably placed among the top 15 Nations of the world on a per capita basis in providing financial foreign aid and just last year, Australia provided a record amount of \$4.4 billion or 15% of the total federal budget.

Further and in addition...In the 20/21 Federal Budget, the Australian Government allocated a not unsubstantial sum of \$5.7 BN to the "Indigenous Advancement Strategy" over a period of 4 years.

Another cause for great pride from we as Australians.

From a strictly Catholic perspective:

Our Church, our religious and our laity are unsurpassed in providing assistance to the poor, the needy, the underprivileged, the sick and the homeless in our society. We have not been found wanting...far from it...and I think that we should not be at all backward in publicising and promoting the achievements of our Church.

To quote but a few examples:

- The Catholic church is the largest non-government provider of healthcare in the world and not just here in Australia but also

to the Pacific Islands in our region and again, by way of just a few examples; the Australian Catholic church operates:

- 530 aged care facilities
- 54 private hospitals
- 21 public hospitals
- Further, 1 million of our fellow Australians each year, no matter their faith desperately rely on the 69-member organisation of the Catholic Social Services Association (CSSA) to help them get on with living with as much dignity as humanly possible.

This is all further reinforced by the innumerable Catholic voluntary groups and associations in Australia dedicated to providing social justice assistance, not the least of which is the highly respected Saint Vincent de Paul Society with large numbers of volunteers applying themselves, day-in day-out 7 days a week, 365 days a year in assisting those in greatest need.

Also, it would be remiss of me if I did not acknowledge the highly respected Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary, more often referred to as the Loreto Sisters, a world-wide community of Catholic Religious Sisters dedicated to serving God by responding to the needs of God's people, so ably represented here today by our co-panelist, Sister Libby.

All of this is underpinned in Australia by our highly dedicated 3000 Catholic Priests, 6000 Catholic Religious Sisters and hundreds of Religious Brothers. Again, something we should be enormously proud of!

Of course, much, much more can and should be done and this can only occur by a heightened awareness of these deficiencies in our society, no doubt reinforced by your parents, your school, your teachers and by your local Parish, that will further enhance your Faith and your religious beliefs through helping those most in need in our society.

Incidentally, I read the transcripts all the speeches delivered by His Holiness at the World Youth Gathering in Portugal and I must say that something he said struck me in particular which may well have also been directed to the Loreto Normanhurst girls when he said and I quote;

"Go forward for there is a world out there that needs what you and

you alone can give it"

How inspirational is that!

Regarding Social Justice Volunteering:

Of course your time is limited, but I would suggest even an hour or two of volunteering during your semester breaks will go a long way in reinforcing your commitment to assisting the disadvantaged and needy in our society, no doubt inspired as you are by the words of the Apostle Paul who quoted Jesus by saying:

"It is more blessed to give than to receive."

Many young people ask: 'How does one volunteer?', 'Where does one go?', 'Who does one talk to?'

I can understand that – doing something one is not used to can be a little confusing, if not daunting, so please don't feel negated by this. It's natural.

As but just one suggestion from me, you may wish to contact St. Vincent de Paul Society directly or online by offering to assist them in volunteering, either through their Volunteer Manager or through their Metro Youth Volunteer Team.

On a still-related matter...

My local Parish church is St. Pat's Mortlake and at a recent social justice meeting I attended, our Parish priest, Fr Tom Stevens, who is a very perceptive, astute and a highly regarded up-and-coming young priest, was asked what he thought was the major issue facing our Parish and he was quick to respond with just one word "Loneliness" ...

He is absolutely right and if I had to add another issue to that, I would say without any hesitation that of "Elder Abuse" which is deep-seated, insidious and very widespread.

Unfortunately, these 2 issues are underrepresented in the statistics because of their very nature which makes it almost impossible to quantify but make no mistake about it, from which untold numbers of our most vulnerable fellow Australians suffer unrelentingly.

These are the things I have seen at first hand over many years such as when I was on the Board of Directors at the St Dominic's Home for Elderly as well as during my time as a volunteer visitor from St Vincent de Paul to privately-owned nursing homes, among other such similar instances, all of which I found to be quite painful and confronting experiences.

Regarding Social Injustice:

In the not-too-distant future, you will be able to cast a vote that will play a part in determining who will be your local elected representatives at all 3 levels of government, be they; Local, State and Federal. The fact is that whoever holds these elected positions have decision-making responsibilities that ultimately control the purse-strings that result in funding allocations or a: "share of the pie", as the saying goes.

I would like to suggest that occasionally and during your school breaks, you may wish to contact in turn, each of your local Councilors or MPs to put your views to them, preferably as part of a group of 3 or 4 of your schoolmates, and ask these elected representatives what

they are doing or planning to do in this sphere of social justice funding and provision of services and to also invite them to respond to any concerns you may have.

I want to leave you today with the very inspirational, uplifting and challenging words expressed by the US Senator Ted Kennedy at his funeral oration upon the assassination of his brother Senator Robert Kennedy who, quite tragically was also the brother of the assassinated US President John Kennedy, when Senator Ted Kennedy repeated the words which were the guiding mantra driving the Kennedy family and I quote:

"I see the world as it is, and I ask why?"

I see the world as it could be, and I ask why not?"

Why not indeed!

God bless and Peace to all People of Goodwill.

Who is Paul Zammit, the writer of the article?

Paul Zammit OAM KSG FAICD was a Member of Strathfield in the NSW Parliament from 1984 to 1996, and a Member of Lowe in the Federal Parliament of Australia between 1996 and 1998, before returning to the world of business, where he originally came from. Paul is the Chairman and CEO of Zammit Sales, Marketing and Management Pty Limited.

In 1983, Paul was elected a Fellow of the Institute of Company Directors in Australia, and was subsequently elected in 1990 as a Foundation Fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors (FAICD) a position he continues to hold to this day, covering an unbroken period of more than 30 years.

In 2020, Paul was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM), and two years later the Holy Father, Pope Francis, bestowed on Paul the honour of a Papal Knighthood, as a Knight of the Order of St Gregory the Great (KSG).

Paul has a strong interest in languages, and is a multi-linguist, fluent in – in addition to English – French, Italian, reasonably fluent in Greek, and Arabic (although admittedly rusty in the latter).

L-ewwel sena ta' Karlu III, in-Nannu tan-Nazzjon fl-Awstralja, il-Gran Brittanja u l-Kanada

By Lawrence Dimech

September 6, 2023

Ir-Re Karlu t-tielet, diġa ilu jirrenja sena sħiħa, kienu ilu jistenna biex jilhaq Re madwar 70 sena. Wara li mietet ommu, Elizabetta t-tieni fit-22 ta' Settembru 2022, il-Prinċep ta' Wales sar ir-Re tal-Awstralja (u tal-Gran Brittanja u l-Kanada) wkoll. Mhux Re ta' Malta, għax aħna Repubblika iżda xorta membri tal-Commonwealth of Nations u għalhekk għad hemm rabta tradizzjonali.

Kif kien mistenni r-Re Karlu ddedika haġtu lill-Kuruna u ħalef



Paul Zammit OAM KSG FAICD with Anthony Fisher OP, Archbishop of Sydney



"King Charles III" by Capt' Gorgeous is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

sollenniment li jkompli jservi l-kostituzzjoni. L-ewwel anniversarju tiegħu għaddieh ukoll f'Balmoral fejn mietet ommu, Qed isejjgħulu n-Nannu tan-Nazzjon.

Fl-ewwel sena sintendi kellu l-kurunazzjoni fis-6 ta' Mejju. Minkejja l-hafna kritika u kontroversa konnessa miegħu u martu Camilla, il-poplu Ingliż xorta offrielu ċerimonja spettakulari kif jafu jorganizzaw l-Ingliži. L-ewwel f'Westminster Abbey u wara f'Windsor Castle.

Kellu jagħmel żjarat statali fil-Ġermanja u Franza f'Marzu izda minħabba l-inkwiet f'dawk in-naħat kellu jipposponi ż-żjara. Kien hemm min qal li r-Re Karlu missu żar xi pajjiż tal-Commonwealth l-ewwel kif għamlet qablu r-regina Elizabetta meta giet l-Awstralja fis-sena 1954. Ir-Re l-gdid mistenni jżur l-Awstralja mar-Regina Camilla

iktar tard dis-sena.

Dan ir-Re mistenni ikun iktar opinjonista minn ommu dwar suġġetti jaħarqu u għalhekk jingħad li l-politiċi Ingliži zammewh mill-jitkellem dwar il-bdil fil-klima fil-konferenza COP27 li saret f'Novembru f'Sharm el-Sheikh.

Is-suġġett mistenni li dwaru se jitkellem ir-Re hu l-hela eseġerat ta' ikel skond l-istess linji-għwida tal-Coronation Food Project.

Sadanittant il-kap tal-Commonwealth u l-Knisja Protestanta għad għandhom problemi jaħarqu fejn tidhol il-familja tiegħu, speċjalment il-mistenni dokumentarju ta' Netflix li ħiereg f'Novembru dwar Harry u Meghan, u sintendi l-ktieb ta' Harry dwar ħajtu bl-isem *Spare*.

Mistenni joħorgu dalwaqt flus ġodda b'wiċċ r-Re Karlu.

Personality of the Month

Life-long individual contribution to football in NSW

By Lawrence Dimech

August 30, 2023

Our choice for Personality of the Month for September is George Ellul, well known to Maltese soccer aficionados in NSW and Australia. George Ellul

Mention the words Melita Eagles and the name George Ellul pops out with a bang like a champagne cork. The Ellul family is synonymous with this famous NSW football club. Not only George but his son Stephen (as President) and daughter Marthese (as Secretary) served on the committee.

After winning the Australian National Cup in 1991, FIFA Ranking listed Parramatta Melita Eagles F.C. in their 100 best teams in the world.

George was born in Sliema (Sacre Coeur Parish) on 13 February 1948, the son of Charles from Sliema and Margaret Francica of Valletta. George's father opened The Queen's Restaurant at Pjazza Sant Anna in Sliema Wharf in 1963.

Two years after the family emigrated to Sydney, Australia. George remembers having a very active life with his father attending football games at the Empire Stadium and being politically active.



George Ellul



George with his siblings, from left: Stephen (ex-president), Marthese (ex-secretary), George and Joseph (ex-player).

George told *The Voice of the Maltese* that the Australian medical officer during the interviewing process necessary for all Maltese to migrate to Australia, demanded on top of the other normal medical requirements, circumcision. "Very strange I thought at the time, but it shows how strict they were with us, we were all to be a hundred per cent healthy to emigrate," said George.

Arriving in Sydney, George settled in the Leichhardt area and was involved with the Legion of Mary and the activities of Fr. Leonard Busuttil, where during one of the ferry outings he met his wife Carmen Fenech from Sliema. They married in 1970. They have three children, Joseph, Marthese and Stephen.

Meeting Charlie Spiteri, then one of the Melita Eagles' Managers, gave him a new direction and a life-long association with Maltese football in NSW.

"We did not have any cars then, we used to travel by train, buses and walk to places like Fraser Park (1965), Garside Park (1966), Mona Park (1981) and the like,"



George Ellul with his wife Carmen on his 70th birthday



Then Premier of NSW, Hon. Neville Wran, opening Melita Stadium in 1981

reminisces George.

George remembers the first game played at Melita Stadium on 12 April 1981 and the official opening by the Premier of NSW. Hon Neville Wran on the fifth of July 1981 (see photo). They were historical days in the annals of the Maltese community in NSW.

When it comes to the history and goings-on of the Melita Eagles, George has an encyclopedic mind and he can rattle dates and names with ease. Therefore his concern is that the History Wall at the Melita Stadium erected during the association with PCYC contains some mistakes.

George speaks with pride about the building of the Melita Stadium and the enormous contribution of the volunteers. "I used to go religiously every day after work to late at night to assist, it was a labour of love, to see the grandstand, club's main hall and restaurant being built," said George.

He talks about the Supporters Group, he was an active member who played a major role in convincing the Phoenician Club that the future of the Maltese community was in the western suburbs of Sydney.

George became a director of the club in 1982 and assumed the position of Senior Team Manager and at times Social Organiser.

He retired in 2023, after 40 years of continuous voluntary service at the managerial level. He received the prestigious Charles Valentine Medal from the Federation for his distinguished service to football in NSW.

For the last seven years, George Ellul has been appointed by the NSW Federation to be a Match Commissioner with responsibilities to attend matches at various soccer fields and report their suitability, safety and playing conditions.

The final question to ask was obvious, why such a gradual decline from such a lofty position? "It started when in 1995 we were kicked out unjustly by the National League, not only we lost many supporters, the kind that support you when you are winning, but gate money disappeared, we used to attract crowds of 6,000 when we played the Greeks, the Italians, Croatians. We lost TV rights, we never recovered".

As to the future, George is of the view that Melita Eagles should have stayed at Melita Stadium, that's where our roots are, even if we lost the lease of the ground.

Paul Sant

Another service offered by The Voice of the Maltese providing legal information to our readers

Ramification of 'Harman' undertaking in Family Law

By Paul Sant

September 25, 2023

The *Harman* undertaking originally derived its name from the English case of *Harman v Secretary of State for Home Department* [1983] 1 AC 280.

It is an implied undertaking to the court that any documents produced or filed in a court proceeding are to be used only for the purposes of that proceedings and is said to preserve privacy and confidentiality, whilst ensuring that justice is done.

The principle is that where one party to litigation is compelled, either by reason of a rule of court, or by reason of a specific order of the court, or otherwise, to disclose documents or information, the party obtaining the disclosure cannot, without the leave of the court, use it for any purpose other than that for which it was given unless it is received into evidence (see *Hearne v Street* [2008] HCA 36; (2008) 235 CLR 235 at [96].

The Federal Court in *Springfield Nominees Pty Ltd v Bridgelands Securities Ltd* (1992) 38 FCR 217 at [225] identified the following considerations relevant to the exercise of the discretion:

- (a) the nature of the document.
- (b) the circumstances under which the document came into existence.
- (c) the attitude of the author of the document and any prejudice the author may sustain.
- (d) whether the document pre-existed litigation or was created for that purpose and therefore expected to enter the public domain.
- (e) the nature of the information in the document (in particular whether it contains personal data or commercially sensitive information).
- (f) the circumstances in which the document came into the hands of the applicant; and
- (g) the likely contribution of the document achieving justice in the [other] proceeding.

The Court in determining whether to relieve a party from the *Harman* undertaking, is to consider: (a) any injustice caused to the other party; and (b) whether the party ought to be relieved from the *Harman* undertaking because some "special circumstance" exists.

In *Liberty Funding Pty Ltd v Phoenix Capital Ltd* [2005] FCAFC 3; (2005) 218 ALR 283, the Full Court of the Federal Court of Australia held at [31] "the notion of "special circumstances" does not require that some extraordinary factors must bear on the question before the discretion will be exercised. It is sufficient to say that, in all the circumstances, good reason must be shown why, contrary to the usual position, documents produced, or information obtained in one piece of litigation should be used for the advantage of a party in another piece of litigation or for other non-litigious purposes".

In *Fotopoulos v Commonwealth Bank* [2017] VSC 461, Derham AsJ held:

[32] The High Court made clear that the implied undertaking is in truth a substantive legal obligation or duty imposed by law on the litigants, their servants or agent (or privies) and others. The types of material disclosed to which this principle applies include:

- (a) documents inspected after discovery;
- (b) answers to interrogatories;
- (c) documents produced on subpoena;
- (d) documents produced for the purposes of taxation of costs;
- (e) documents produced pursuant to a direction from an arbitrator;
- (f) documents seized pursuant to an *Anton Piller* order;
- (g) witness statements served pursuant to a judicial direction; and
- (h) affidavits.

[33] The obligation extends not merely to the documents themselves but also to copies of those documents and information derived from these documents. Accordingly, it attaches to information provided in answers to interrogatories and to the content of witness statements or affidavits delivered in obedience to court order.

[34] The obligation is binding upon anyone into whose hands the documents come, if they know that the documents were obtained by way of coercive court processes. In *Riddick v Thames Board Mills Ltd*

[1977] QB 881 at 896 Lord Denning MR said that the courts should not allow the other party – or anyone else – to use the documents for any ulterior or alien purpose.

In the recent case of *Plantier & Plantier (No 2)* [2023] FedCFamC2F 386, Judge Beckhouse relieved the parties and their legal representatives of the implied *Harman* undertaking to this court with respect to:

(a) Any document sworn or affirmed and filed in this Court in this

proceeding, being DGC 1773 of 2019 (“the Proceeding”);

(b) Any Orders made and Judgments delivered in the Proceeding, including these Reasons for Judgment;

(c) Case summaries or Case Outlines filed in the Proceeding; and

(d) Notices to Admit Facts and/or documents filed in the Proceeding.

Please feel free to contact Longton Legal who have expertise in checking the *Harman* status of documents prior to relying upon them in this Court or any other Court or Tribunal.

The Malta Journalism Awards 2023 was awarded to The Voice of the Maltese for their long journalistic contribution to the Maltese living outside Malta

The email address for our newspaper has changed to editor@thevoiceofthemaltese.org.



PAUL SANT
(SOLICITOR)
PARTNER AT LONGTON LEGAL

For All Your Legal Needs
Now at:
**level 4, 87 Marsden Street
Parramatta**
Phone: 8599 8877

Also at:
Level 4, 370 Pitt Street, Sydney. Ph: 8355 9999
Email paul.sant@longtonlegal.com.au
Maltese Spoken





This is a monthly service offered by The Voice of the Maltese in which Marie Louise Muscat from Fiducian Financial Services helps our readers understand the complexities associated with financial planning. If you need more advice send an email to Marie Louise via editor@thevoiceofthemaltese.org.

Q&A 307

By Marie Louise Muscat

September 20, 2023

Q. I am 78 years old and my wife is 74. We have two account based pensions and we have to take an income of around \$100,000 for myself and around \$60,000 for my wife from these pensions. We do not need all this income. Are we able to reduce our payments from these account based pensions?

A. At your age you need to take a minimum payment of 6% and your wife a minimum payment of 5% per annum. The amount is calculated on the balance of these income streams as of the 1 July each year. There are two options you could look at. You could roll over a portion of your account based pensions back into accumulation. This means that on the amount you rollover you will not be required to take an income but allow it to stay in accumulation and grow. You will however have to pay tax at 15% on the earnings within the super funds that are in accumulation. Another option would be to continue to take the current income and invest the surplus income that you have into other financial assets to generate both income and growth. This can be done in a tax effective way. I would recommend you visit a financial adviser who will explain these options further.

Q. I am 83 years old. Currently I am living in my own home but my health is deteriorating fast and as I have no children or siblings, I feel that I should move into either a retirement village or into an aged care facility. How would I know what is most suitable for me?

A. If you had to move into a retirement village you will still be living independently. That is, you will not have anyone to care and look after your needs. If you feel your health is deteriorating fast you will

probably be better off moving into aged care. However, you would need to ask for an ACAT assessment (Aged Care Assessment Team) and they will look at your situation and advise you accordingly. Your medical practitioner would be in a better situation to advise you on this.

Q. I am 68 years old and single. I am a self-funded retiree and have a large amount of cash sitting in bank accounts. Am I able to invest some of my cash into superannuation since I no longer work?

A. Yes, you are able to make non-concessional contributions of \$110,000 per annum until the age of 75. You are also able to use the bring forward rule and invest \$330,000 in the first year and nothing for the next two years, and then start again in three years' time. However, you need to make sure that you have not already reached the total superannuation balance which as at 1 July 2023 was \$1.9 million. I believe you need to visit a financial planner who can advise you on this once he knows your situation.

Q. I am in my 30s and currently working full time. I have a portfolio of direct shares which I have started to build when I first started to work around 10 years ago. I have been taking the dividends as income but I do not really need this money. Would it be a good idea to re-invest the dividends?

A. If you do not need the dividends by using the dividend re-investment plan you are allowing your holdings to increase every six months. You will also be “cost averaging” as your dividends will be used to purchase shares at the price of the day of payment. This is a great way of building up your wealth. If in the future you find you need the dividends, you could always stop the dividend re-investment plan. Not ALL shares offer a dividend reinvestment plan. However, you could still invest these dividends back into either these shares, or maybe even a diversified Managed investment.

Q. We have been married for a couple of years. My wife works full time and earns around \$60,000 per annum while my salary is around \$80,000 p.a. gross. We are in the process of purchasing our first home and we will be borrowing around \$750,000. Our mortgage repayments will be around \$5200 per month for a 30 year term or \$6000 per month for a 25 year term. We believe we can manage to pay at least \$6000 per month. Which option do you believe we should go for?

A. I believe by taking the 30 year option you are allowing yourself some freedom. There is nothing stopping you from paying the \$6000

per month if you find you can do this easy, and if an unexpected expense turns up you could go back to the \$5200 per month to ease your burden. Another option would be to have an offset facility and any surplus funds that you have are maintained in this account and as it builds up, you can make small lump sum payments on your mortgage from this account at regular intervals. I recommend you discuss the options with your credit provider, as I am only able to provide general advice in this area.

Are you part of the Maltese diaspora? Are you a first or subsequent generation Maltese emigrant in the first wave (north Africa), second wave (English speaking nations) or contemporary (Europe/elsewhere), and have stories that would interest the Maltese wherever they are? We would like to hear from you!

Write to us at editor@thevoiceofthemaltese.org

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Culture

We published the first Maltese novel in China

By TVOTM Staff

September 17, 2023

In early 2019, I received an email from a person with an unfamiliar name. The sender was the Executive Chairman of the Malta National Book Council, Mark Camilleri. He wrote that he wished to find a collaborating partner in China who could help drive forward literary exchanges between Malta and China.

Malta? I looked up where Malta was on the map. A tiny European country consisting of an archipelago south of Italy in the Mediterranean Sea. When I wrote back to him, I jokingly asked him if he was related to the famous Italian writer Andrea Camilleri. I had read 2 novels written by the detective writer and I liked them both.

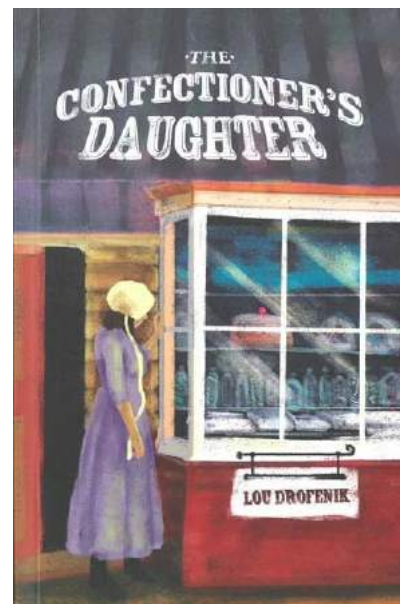
Mr. Camilleri replied that Andrea Camilleri was a Sicilian and that his surname Camilleri was a common one in both Sicily and Malta. But they were not related to each other. And that he would soon be visiting China – it would be the first time in the country, he continued.

One of the main aims of the Malta National Book Council is to promote Maltese literature abroad. Another aim is to spread literature written in other countries amongst the Maltese population. In fact the Council had already succeeded in coordinating the translation to Maltese (and publication) of *The Analects* (by Confucius). They were also looking for a contemporary Chinese novel to translate to Maltese. Someone had recommended me as the person he should talk to about this. He had gone to the Chinese embassy in Malta to apply for a visa to be able to travel to China, but he needed a formal invitation letter first. Therefore, he asked me whether my company

could issue this type of invitation letter so that he could visit China, and, in the future, he would then invite me to attend the Malta National Book Festival.

How could I say no? I did not hesitate to send him the invitation letter. By the end of the month, my curiosity was over as I finally got to meet Camilleri at our scheduled time in the lobby of a hotel. With his black hair and deep dark eyes, this relatively short guy did indeed look like your typical Mediterranean person. He said that China's influence on the world was so important, that even though Malta was just a tiny country, he still wanted to further literary exchanges between the two countries.

As far as he knew, no Maltese novel had ever been published in China, so he wanted to take the opportunity to find a publishing house in China to translate and publish the winning novel of the 2017 Malta National Book Prize, *"The Confectioner's Daughter"*. He then produced a copy of the book from his bag! He also asked me to suggest a contemporary Chinese novel that he would then pass on to a Maltese publishing house that would translate and publish it in Maltese. In his role as Executive Chairman



of the Malta National Book Council he was ready to provide funds to support this literary exchange project and to make sure that it could be carried out.

I happily told him that he had found the right man because I was in charge of the copyright for translations made for a number of Chinese authors. He could choose from Jin Yu Cheng's "Beautiful Flowers", Xiao Bai's "Blockade", Shuang Xue Tao's "Moses of the Plain" and Yin Jian Ling's "Wild Reeds Slope".

He said that after leaving Shanghai, he was going to Hong Kong to meet a Maltese translator who could translate Chinese novels to Maltese. And that is how we parted ways that day. I would read "The Confectioner's Daughter" while he would work together with Faraxa Publishing House in Malta to choose a Chinese novel from the books I had suggested.

The author of "The Confectioner's Daughter" is Lou Drofenik, a Maltese author who lives in Australia. The novel is about women across five generations in a century characterized by radical changes, a book that speaks to women all around the world. The book chosen by Mr. Camilleri to be translated to Maltese was also written by a female author – it was the novel *Wild Reeds Slope* written by the Shanghai author of children's and young adults' fiction, Yin Jian Ling.

Inspired by the Tushanwan orphanage established by Catholic missionaries in the Xujiahui district of Shanghai more than a hundred years ago, the novel describes how different artists were given an education in a similar institution. Yin Jian Ling carried out detailed research on life at the orphanage and recreated it in the fiction of the novel, starting with the protagonist, the young You An.

We then coordinated this literary exchange project between Malta and China through email. Mr. Camilleri proposed that the formal agreement to undertake this project should be signed at the Frankfurt book fair. So it was that after a number of years, the Maltese version of "Wild Reeds Slope" and the Chinese version of "The Confectioner's Daughter" have finally been published. But alas, after the pandemic ended, Mr. Camilleri is no longer the executive chairman of the Malta National Book Council, and I don't know what position he has now. Still, I really wish that one day I can visit the Malta Book Fair...

Lou Drofenik was born in Malta but now lives in Victoria, Australia. She graduated at various levels in Australia, including a Ph.D. She has held different positions, including teaching schoolchildren. Her writings describe the problems encountered by Maltese emigrants, especially women, the trauma of emigration, forced exile and learning to love the country to which they emigrated. Her novels have received many awards and prizes both in Malta and in Australia. Apart from writing, Lou particularly likes gardening. She is especially fond of her garden where she grows different types of flowers, fruits and vegetables. Lou Drofenik has 4 sons and daughters and 7 grandchildren.

Lou Drofenik's "The Confectioner's Daughter" is a novel that takes place over the span of a whole century. Women across five generations play their role on the stage of the novel in a century characterized by radical changes, a book that speaks to women all around the world. The stories take place in Malta, New York, Sydney and Melbourne. Set against the confusion and difficulties of a rapidly changing world, the stories describe the struggles of these women to survive, to raise their children and to earn a livelihood based on their inner strengths while at the mercy of fate and the harshness of the outside world. The confectionery is both the place where they lead their struggle as well as their place of refuge.

Guditia, Licia, Frances, Claire, Daphne...these are the women who have to face difficult challenges across different times and in different countries but no matter when or where, they find the strength to carry on, to adapt, to make the difficulties more bearable while taking care of others. Finally, the youngest daughter returns to Malta, interrupting the storyline. It is there she finds her Maltese roots the characteristic cradle, the "benniena"....

*by Peng Lun (Archipelago Books, Shanghai Translation Publishing House)

translated to English by Stephen Cachia

Gbejniet

By Charmaine Tokic

September 11, 2023

Gbejniet are a cheese that are unique to the Islands. I tried to think of a creative title for this article, but they are so unique, they deserve to have a title on its own. They are little cheeselets most commonly made with sheep milk, but can be made from any milk. The earliest evidence of this style of cheese making dates as far back as 1000 B.C. with traces of cow milk protein found on pottery in the style of an *qaleb* (cheese basket) in Baħrija.

What I love about my community on Instagram is that I learn things everyday, not just about food. A couple of months ago, I was making *gbejniet* with my mum where I shared some snippets of the process. A mama friend I have met through Instagram who is of Syrian background and her husband of Lebanese background, had seen the word *gbejniet* and messaged me asking what my nationality is. As we all know, the Maltese language derives from Siculo-Arabic. She told me that she writes cheese in Arabic as 'jibneh'. When I mentioned this to mum she said that 'gibna' is the term she uses when the milk sets just after adding the rennet.

On further reading, *gbejna* is indeed a modern Arabic word (جبنة). *Gobna* (cheese), *gobon* (cheeses), *gbejna*, *gbejniet* are all derived from Siculo-Arabic which was introduced into Malta in the high Middle Ages before it evolved into modern Maltese. The word *gbejna* is used on its own to describe a small cheeselet. Other descriptive terms were added to convey an understanding of what type of cheese it was specifically, for example; *gbejna tan-nagħaġ* (sheep cheeselet), *tal-baqra* (cow), *tal-mogħoż* (goat), *friska* (fresh), *niexfa* (dried hard), *moxxa* (dried semi-hard), *tal-ġarra* (in a terracotta pot/container) *t'Għawdex* (of Gozo) or *tal-bżar* (pepper).



Traditional qwieleb (cheese baskets)

Photo by: Pippa Mattei

When my mum used to finish school as a young girl, she used to go and feed the sheep and goats, milk them and then make *gbejniet* in a mix of both sheep and goat's milk – apparently they are much tastier when made with both milks. What I found interesting

is she didn't heat the milk up like we do today, she made the cheese quite literally 'fresh' at the temperature the milk came out which is around that 38 degrees Celsius point. She used to use baskets made out of cane, she said they were a pain to wash and didn't enjoy that part all that much. Nanna used to then wash the *gbejniet* once made and prepare them to either sell or to make traditional meals for the family; *pastizzi*, *torta* (cheese pie), *qassatat* (similar to pastizzi, not as flakey), *kusksu* (a broad bean and cheese soup), *soppa tal-armila* (widow's soup) and even to make stuffing for pigeon! They are so versatile and can be prepared and eaten in so many ways, even dessert.

Now, *gbejniet* are quite easy to make. I had always wanted to make them but, a little hesitant I must admit. Mum always made them growing up and since I moved out of home, will bring me some whenever she makes. I finally asked her to walk me through the process a few months ago. There is another method where they are made with regular full cream cow's milk, junket tablets and milk powder. My method below is made with liquid rennet and unhomogenized cow's milk – I like to stick as close to the traditional way of making them as possible.

I don't know about you, but I'm feeling that *gbejniet* are trending here in Australia at the moment. I feel every time I scroll down my Facebook feed, I see someone sharing their batches of fresh or dried *gbejniet* and everyone commenting asking if they are selling or where



Ġbejniet friski (fresh ġbejniet) featuring the old traditional cane cheese baskets (qwieleb)
Photo by: Pippa Mattei

to buy them from. This traditional Maltese cheese has become quite a rare find in the shops here in Sydney that, if you do find them, fresh can be at over \$30 per kilo or dried at a high price of over \$80.00 per kilo!

So, if you're craving a little Maltese cheese and finding it hard to source or finding it's a little too much for your budget, give making them a try. I promise you won't be disappointed and your inner Maltese roots will squeal with excitement when you see the final product of these cute little cheeselets!

Ġbejniet friski

This recipe makes for 12 cheeselets. You will need *ġbejniet* cheese baskets known as *qwieleb*. You can quite easily find these online.

Ingredients:

- 3L unhomogenised milk
- 1 tbsp liquid rennet
- salt

Method:

1. In a small cup pour one tablespoon of rennet into approx. half a cup of water, set aside.
2. Pour the milk in a large pot on a stove and warm gently.
3. Use a thermometer and when the milk reaches 38 degrees Celsius, remove off the heat immediately.
4. Pour the rennet/water mixture into the heated milk and gently stir to mix well.
5. Cover and let stand for a total of 3 hours.
6. After 1.5 hours gently cut through the coagulating milk in vertical lines and leave to stand for the remaining 1.5 hours. This will help the separation of the curds and whey.
7. After 3 hours scoop up the curds to fill your *qwieleb*. Place them in a tray.
8. Repeat step 7 until all the *qwieleb* have been filled.
9. Sprinkle salt on top of the curds and place in the fridge. Leave overnight.
10. The following morning, turn the cheese over in its' *qaleb* and sprinkle with salt again.



It's as easy as 1, 2, 3! If you've always wanted to try and make them, this is your sign!

11. Keep in the fridge for another 12 hours and there you have your *ġbejniet friski*!

Tips:

1. If you do not have a dripping tray, gently tip the tray to remove any excess whey when putting the curds into the *qwieleb* before placing in the fridge.
2. When filling the *qwieleb* up initially, you'll get to about half of what's in the pot and find that you have filled the 12 *qwieleb*. You'll also find by the time you get to the 12th one, the first one you filled has gone down a little (this is as a result of the whey leaving the curd). Continue to fill each *qaleb* until you have used all the cheese in the pot – even if it seems to be overfilled, once in the fridge for a while, you'll see they go down again.
3. You'll need to empty the whey again a few times even after putting into the fridge, you'll be surprised at how much comes out!
4. You can actually save the whey to make ricotta. Let me know if this is a recipe you'd like the method to!
5. Drying them to make dried cheeselets can be done outside (the traditional way – best done when it's windy) or with a dehydrator. I dry mine with a dehydrator, but my mum has always dried outside – if this is something you'd also like to know the method for, drop me a line via editor@thevoiceofthemaltese.org or direct message me on my Instagram @_thefoodiemama

Letters to the Editor

A better look to The Voice of the Maltese

I follow very closely all that is printed related to our diaspora world-wide.

I will once again as I have done in the past congratulate both

Lawrence Dimech and now Ivan Cauchi for their continuous contribution to connecting our diaspora. A word of thanks goes to Joe Cutajar for his contributions over the years to 'The Voice of the Maltese'.

The new look is far more reader-friendly and the news items are more organized under their respective titles.

A note on areas of improvement: I would find it very helpful to have

a wider margin, especially on the left hand side since copies at most libraries, on an annual basis such copies are bound and therefore text and photos on the left side of the page often end up hidden in the binding and make it difficult for researchers to obtain a full page. Finally, I would include a table of contents on the front page.

Thank you, all the best in the future and continue the sterling work.

Chev Dr Raymond C. Xerri – Il-Qala Ghawdex

*Note by Co-Editors: We thank Dr Xerri for his comments, and will look into the technical feasibility of his suggestions.

A user-friendly newsletter

Thank you for the newsletter, the new version is very good and user-friendly. I enjoy reading the newsletter especially when promoting the Maltese culture and cuisine, keep up the good work. Thank you. 🌸

Doreen Sammut, an ex-secretary of the Malta China Friendship Society since January of last year. Doreen said it was a great experience and loved the post, but after 20 years she decided that it was time for new blood and new ideas in the Society.

Dr Hugh McDermott MP

Parliamentary Secretary to the Attorney General
State Member for Prospect

For help on NSW Government issues concerning:

- Education
- Health
- Housing
- Public transport
- Crime
- Environment
- Local Government
- Community Services

CONTACT US

2/679 The Horsley Drive, Smithfield

(02) 9756 4766

prospect@parliament.nsw.gov.au

Labor

The Voice of the Maltese is a bi-lingual (English and Maltese) online publication specifically targeting all Maltese living abroad. It is freely available online at the following address:

<https://thevoiceofthemaltese.org>

A selection of articles is made available in a fortnightly Print Version that readers can request to be sent by email as a PDF attachment (free), or as a paper copy by post (for a small fee).

Editors: Ivan Cauchi B.Elec.Eng.(Hons) M.Phil.,
Lawrence Dimech MOM OAM JP

Email address: editor@thevoiceofthemaltese.org

Note: the next Print Edition will be issued on 24 October 2023 (there will not be a Print Edition on 10 October)

Keeps us united

Thank you so much for all the interesting articles and features in The Voice of the Maltese. So much better now, full of interesting articles and one can go through it anytime.

Thanks for the time and effort you put in it for the sake of us readers. It keeps us united. God bless.

Carmen Bonanno from Merrylands, NSW

Apprezzament

PROSIT TASSEW. Kif ghamiltuha issa l-gazzetta, għandha dehra vera sabiħa.

Bħas-soltu mimlija daqs bajda.

Grazzi, u keep it up.

Fr. Norbert Bonavia

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Maltese Funerals

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Richard Spiteri
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tagħna tghin lill-
familja tiegħek**

Notice Board



St. Mary's Cathedral, Sydney

Il-President ta' Malta fiċ-ċentru ta' Sydney

STEDINA

Nhar l-20 ta' Ottubru 2023, il-President tar-Repubblika ta' Malta, l-Eċċellenza tiegħu Dr George Vella u Mrs Miriam Vella, ser iżuru De Piro House Stanley Street Sydney, biex jiltaqu mal-Maltin, li jixtiequ jiltaqu' magħhom.

Fil-10.30 am, jaslu l-President u martu fejn jingħataw merħba. Wara jkun hemm quddiesa. Meta tispicċa l-quddiesa jkun hemm refreshments u niltaqgħu mal-President u martu.

Kulħadd huwa mistieden biex nagħtuhom merħba xierqa.

Għal kull informazzjoni tistgħu cċemplu lil Fr Tarcisio Micallef fuq 02 9380 8398.

EVERY SUNDAY AT DE PIRO HOUSE

Every Sunday in the chapel of St Paul in De Piro House, Stanley Street Sydney, there is a Mass in Maltese by Fr Tarcisio, which starts at 10.00 am and afterwards, there will be a cup of coffee. Come and meet together in a Maltese atmosphere.

Apprezzament lil Joe Galea

Joe Galea tweek il-Qrendi fl-10 ta' Lulju 1944. Huwa miet nhar il-Ħamis, 24 ta' Awwissu 2023, f'Our Lady of Consolation Nursing Home, Rooty Hill, fl-ghomor ta' 79 sena. Ħalla jibku t-telfa tiegħu lil martu Pauline, lit-tfal Andrew u Desmond u l-familji tagħhom.

Joe kien iħobb ħafna l-għaqdiet Maltin u kien japprezza ferm is-sagrifiċċji li jagħmlu l-membri tagħhom. Kien bniedem pozittiv ħafna u minkejja l-problemi li kellu kont tarah dejjem bi tbiissima fuq fomm. Kien bniedem ta' fomm sieket u wieħed li tista' tafda kelma miegħu.

Joe kien attiv ħafna fil-komunità Maltija. Sa mis-sittinijiet kien fil-kumitat ta' San Nikola u fil-prezent huwa kien associate member tal-Maltese Brass Band.

Bhal ma jafu ħafna, aħna l-group ta' Santa Marija konna nagħmlu l-festa u kien ikollna l-banda għad-Dinner Dance tal-festa u Joe Galea, bħala membru tal-banda, kien ikun mistieden u kien ikun il-pjacer tiegħu li jiġi għall-festa. Izda dan l-imbierak ta' Joe Galea kien ikun minn tal-ewwel li jagħtina donazzjoni tal-biljett tad-dħul li konna nagħtuh.

Joe kien dilettanti kbir tar-radju u kien membru tal-Amateur Radio Society of Australia.

Il-funeral tiegħu sar nhar l-Erbgħa 6 ta' Settembru 2023, fil-kappella ta' San Franġisk Assisi, taċ-Ċentru Malti La Vallette.



Strieħ fis-sliem ħabib, sa ma nerġgħu niltaqgħu. Agħtih O Mulej il-mistrieħ ta' dejjem.

*Ricarka ta Greg Caruana

Visit of the President of Malta to Australia 13-22 October 2023

The High Commission of the Republic of Malta is pleased to announce the forthcoming visit of the President of the Republic of Malta, H.E. Dr. George Vella and Mrs Vella to Australia from 13-22 October 2023. The President will be visiting the cities of Melbourne, Adelaide, Canberra & Sydney.

A reception for the Maltese communities to meet the President of Malta and Mrs Vella will be held in these cities on the following dates:

- Park Hyatt Melbourne – 7:30 pm, Saturday, 14 October 2023
- Rydges Adelaide – 7:30 pm, Sunday, 15 October 2023
- Park Hyatt Canberra – 7:30 pm, Tuesday, 17 October 2023. This event is the National Day
- Reception.
- Mandavilla Function Centre, Sydney – 6:30 pm, Friday, 20 October 2023



Il-President ta' Malta George Vella

To register interest in attending one of the above receptions, you may send an email to highcommission.canberra@gov.mt with the following information:

- Subject: President's Visit Reception
- Reception Location: (Melbourne, Adelaide, Canberra or Sydney)
- Number of Attendees:
- Full name: (First Name & Surname) of all Attendees:
- Telephone no.: (Mobile or Landline)
- Residential Address: (complete address)
- Email Address:
- How did you learn about the President's Visit/reception: (which Maltese Association, other)

For those who are unable to email their reply, contact can be made with the High Commission of Malta in Canberra at (02) 6290 1724.

Closing date for submission of interest is Thursday, 28 September 2023 and due to the limited capacity of the venues, attendance will be on a first come first basis.

Official invites will then be sent at a later date.

Virtual Youth Forum: Impact of Climate Change on Present & Future Generations

The Government of Malta, through its agencies Agenzija Żgħażaġh and the Council for Maltese Living Abroad (CMLA) will be organising a Virtual Youth Forum on 27 October 2023 from 6pm onwards.

Save the date!



St Nicholas Festa Committee

130-136 Hyatts Rd, Plumpston, NSW. PRO: Stella Vella 0414188226



Upcoming activities:

- Sunday 15 October – Fete
- Saturday 18 November – Dinner Dance
- Sunday 3 December – Festa

Hamrun Club Association – Marsden Park

Address: 100 Jackwon St, Marsden Park, NSW.



Upcoming activities by or at the club

- 14 October – St Gejtanu Dinner Ball
- 4 November – Ghannejja with Jomike
- 19 November – Jomike & Lydon Agius + George Spiteri live @ Wenty Leagues Club
- 25 November – Jomike & Lydon Agius + Charlie Muscat @ Hamrun Club

For further information & bookings: call Joe

Borg 0414429391.

Tune in to radio and television

NATIONAL

SBS RADIO: 97.7 FM Tuesdays 12:00pm; Friday 12:00pm. Listen on Digital Radio or Live Streaming on www.sbs.com.au/radio/ or on TV Channel 38. On Demand and podcasts on www.sbs.com.au/maltese.

SBS TV: SBS TV news from Malta every day at 4.30 pm on Channel 35 also on demand.

VICTORIA

3ZZZ 92.3FM: Mondays 5-6pm, Fridays 5-6pm and Saturdays 10-11am. Presenters: Paul Vella, Mario Sammut, Liz Phillips. Listen live on www.3zzz.com.au.

98.9 North West FM: Mondays 7-8pm and Fridays 6-7pm. Maltese Program. Presenter: Emmanuel Brincat. Listen live on www.northwestfm.org/ethnic-radio/.

97.9 FM Melton: Tuesday 6.00pm to 8.00pm Maltese Program. Presenter: Miriam Vella. Live streaming on www.979fm.com.au.

NSW

2GLF FM 89.3 Maltese Community Council programme: Every Sunday is now two whole hours, from 10 to 12 noon. The first hour is Maltese Voices, dedicated to the best of Maltese talent. This is followed by News from Malta, the latest information, culture, interviews, community notices and topics of interest. Listen live on www.893fm.com.au/on-demand.

WOW-FM 100.7: Tuesdays 6pm to 9pm. Maltese program with Joe Borg, Emanuel Camilleri and Michael Mallia. Listen live on www.wowfm1007.com.au.

VOX FM 106.9: Mondays 5pm to 6pm. Voice of Valletta – Illawarra Maltese programme presented by Louis Parnis. Live streaming on www.voxfm.org.au.

QUEENSLAND

4EB FM 98.1: Tuesdays 6:00am to 8:00am; Presenter: Lucy Stewart. Music, news from Malta, topics of interest, song requests, community announcements. Live streaming on www.4eb.org.au or On Demand on www.4eb.org.au/shows/program-bill-malti-global-maltese/.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

5EBI FM 103.1: Maltese Community Radio Program from Adelaide. Sunday: 7.00am; Monday: 8.00am; Monday: 6.00pm. Presenters: Bernadette Buhagiar and Ron Borg. Listen live or On Demand on www.5ebi.com.au.

Maltese Language School of NSW

Learn about the Maltese language, the culture, lifestyle, cuisine, traditions and the amazing history of the magnificent Mediterranean islands of Malta and Gozo. Classes available for beginners and those who already have a confident grasp of the Maltese language. Adult and Children's classes available. All classes are online. Positions available for people who can assist with teaching the Maltese Language.

Call Lisa for an information package on 0419 418 547 or email mls@mccnsw.org.au.



A division of the Maltese Community Council of NSW Inc. Established in 1999

La Valette Social Centre



Thursdays: Open around lunchtime for food, drinks, boċci and Holy Mass..

Saturdays: Enjoy a great Maltese menu, drinks and entertainment on Saturday nights. Ghana every last Saturday of the month. Play bingo and boċci with your friends in a family environment. Holy Mass at St Francis Chapel at 5.30pm.

Sundays: Rock&Roll from 6pm onwards. Drinks & pastizzi.

25 November: Three Aces in Concert – The Ghost of Elvis, Tony Jones & Patsy Cline

<https://lavalette.com.au>. 175 Walters Road, Blacktown. Tel. 96225847.

Maltese Community Council of Victoria

477 Royal Parade Parkville Victoria 3052. Phone 03 9387 8922, Admin@mccv.org.au



Upcoming activities:

- 18 October – Annual General Meeting
- 18 November – 40th Anniversary
- 26 November – Film Festival
- Children's Christmas Party

Maltese Seniors Social Welfare Day Groups

Llandilo Maltese Seniors: meets on the first Wednesday of each month at the Llandilo Community Hall, 257 Seventh Avenue, Llandilo 11am to 1.00 pm. Group holds regular Information Sessions/ Workshops & Bus Trips. Group Leader: Helen Azzopardi.

Merrylands Social Maltese Seniors: meets every second Friday of the month at the Miller Room, Memorial Avenue, Merrylands from 10.30am to 12.30 pm. Group Leader: Salvina Falzon.

Fairfield Active Maltese Seniors: meets on the last Tuesday of the month. Group meets in the Parish Hall of Our Lady of the Rosary Church, 18 Vine Street, Fairfield from 10 am to 12 noon. Group Leader Dorothy Gatt mobile 0422757829

Maltese of Bankstown Group: meets third Wednesday of the month from 10am at the Lewis Bowling Club, 14A Waterloo Rd, Greenacre. Every other Wednesday, an outing is organised. For enquiries, call Sam Galea on 0410 269 519. This Group is sponsored by the Bankstown Resource Centre.

Daceyville Maltese Seniors: meets the last Wednesday of the month in Meeting Room One, No. 3 General Bridges Crescent, Daceyville. Note: the group also arranges regular bus trips. Join us and make new friends. Group Leader: Connie De Gabriele.

The Sutherland & St George Maltese Group: meets every first

Wednesday of the month, from 10:00am to 12noon at the Miranda Community Centre, 93 Karimbla Rd cnr. Kiaora Dd, Miranda. The meetings are interesting and informative. We have guest speakers. Sometimes we also show films. Monthly outings as well, travelling in modern, safe & comfortable minibuses. Membership is Free. Everyone is welcome. For more info please contact Charles N. Mifsud, coordinator, on 0421 662 298.

Greystanes Maltese Seniors: meets on the second Monday of each month at the George Preca Parish Centre Our Lady Queen of Peace (OLQP) Church, 198 Old Prospect Road, Greystanes from

10.30 am to 12.30 noon. Group holds regular Information Sessions/ Workshops & Bus Trips. Group Leader: Frances Montesin.

Men's Group: meets every last Tuesday of the month at the MCC Centre at 59b Franklin Str, Parramatta WEst (next to the Primary School) from 10 to 12 noon. Discussion, information and renew friendship. Pastizzi, Kinnie etc. available. Contact Fred on 98632550

**All groups are supported by the Maltese Community Council of NSW, with a sponsorship from Multicultural NSW. Contact the MCC Welfare Officer: Marisa Privitera JP on 0414863123. The MCC offices are at 59b Franklin St cnr. Young St, Parramatta West, NSW*

Sports



Dan it-tim ma temmx it-tigrija tiegħu u qed jingħata l-għajnuna. Ritrat: Ivan Cauchi

Il-Birgu u Bormla jaqsmu l-unur ewlieni fir-Regatta tal-Vitorja

By TVOTM SportsDesk

September 10, 2023

Għall-ewwel darba mill-2013 lil hawn, żewġ timijiet ta' qaddiefa, mid-distretti tal-iblet girien, il-Birgu u Bormla, il-bieraħ f'Jum il-Vitorja ċelebraw flimkien ir-rebħ tar-regatta tradizzjonali tat-8 ta' Settembru li nqadfet f'baħar qawwi fil-Port il-Kbir. Hekk u se jżommu x-Shield għal sitt xhur kull wiehied.

Tul in-nofs ta' nhar erba' dgħajjes tal-Midalji ġew sfurzati jabbandunaw it-tellieqa minhabba li għamli l-ilma u kellhom jistennu l-għajnuna biex isalvaw l-opri tagħhom.

Veru li dejjem ikun hemm il-pika f'avveniment bħal dan, l-aktar minn fost it-timijiet girien, imma f'jum il-Gimgha, daww tal-Birgu u Bormla ferhu flimkien hekk kif fit-tmien ġew ipprezentati x-Shield mill-Ministru tal-Edukazzjoni, Sport, Żgħażaġh, Riċerka u Innovazzjoni Clifton Grima, wara li kisbu l-istess ammont ta' punti, 56, fil-kategorija ewlenija (Open) biex bejniethom qasmu l-unur.

Għall-Bormliżi, din kienet it-22 rebħa fl-istorja. Għalihom hi wkoll it-tieni darba li qasmu l-unur wara li kienu għamli l-istess mal-Marsa għaxar snin ilu. Għall-Birgin, din kienet it-tieni rebħa wara dik li kienu kisbu 39 sena ilu, fl-1984.

F'ta' din is-sena, it-tielet post intrebaħ mill-Isla bi 28 punt. Ġew segwiti mill-Marsa u Marsamxett bi 12-il punt kull wiehied, filwaqt li l-Kalkara kisbu s-sitt post bi tmien punti.

Bormla rebħu wkoll il-Kategorija B bi 80 punt segwiti mill-Kalkara bi 48, Birzebbuga b'24, il-Birgu b'14 u Marsamxett b'sitta.

Fil-Kategorija tal-Fregatini tan-Nisa, il-koppja Shazel Grima u Glynis Mizzi reġġu rebħu għad-distrett tal-Birgu.

It-tlielaq fil-kategorija A intrebħu hekk:

Tal-Midalji: 1. Bormla 2. Birgu 3. Marsamxett

Fregatini: 1. Marsa 2. Kalkara 3. Birgu



Il-Ministru Clifford Grima jipprezenta x-Shield lir-rebbieħa. Ritrat: TVMSport



Xi qaddiefa tad-distretti tal-Birgu u Bormla jifirhu flimkien bix-Shield. Rotrat: TVMSport



Waq mir-Regatta tal-Vitorja tal-2023. Ritrat: TVMSport

Tal-Pass b'żewġ Imqadef: 1. Birgu 2. Bormla 3. Marsamxett

Kajjikki: 1. Birg 2. Bormla 3. Isla

Tal-Pass b'Erbat Imqadef: 1. Isla 2. Bormla 3. Birgu

Birkirkara earn dramatic stoppage-time win in UEFA Women's Champions League qualifier

By TVOTM SportsDesk
September 8, 2023

Despite playing for the final 20 minutes and added time with a numerical disadvantage due to the red carding of Alishia Sultana in the 71st minute, Birkirkara still managed to beat FK Breznica of Montenegro 1-0 to set up a clash at the same venue, the Centenary Stadium, against Swiss champions FC Zurich in the final game of the preliminary group of the UEFA Women's Champions League.

Birkirkara won with their stoppage-time goal scored by substitute Edith Garcia.

After a scoreless first half, which was sometimes drab, Birkirkara looked more proactive on the change-of-ends and came close to scoring through Veronique Mifsud and Raina Giusti. However, in the 71st minute, they were dealt a severe blow when Alisha Sultana gained the referee's displeasure by arguing for a yellow card and was sent off.

The numerical advantage seemed to put the wind into the visitors' sails, and the pendulum appeared to swing in Breznica's favour as they pushed forward for the winning goal. But the locals had other thoughts, and two minutes in added time, Birkirkara brought on Edith Garcia Falero as a substitute. It was the trump card as she was the one who slotted the ball past goalkeeper Svetlana Milicic to win the match.

Another good-looking fleet assembling for the 44th Rolex Middle Sea Race

By TVOTM SportsDesk
August 30, 2023

With the news that last year's monohull and multihull line honours winners have entered, entries at the 44th Rolex Middle Sea Race that starts on Saturday, 21 October, have shifted gears again. The Dutch 30-metre Leopard 3 yacht skippered by Chris Sherlock, which delivered its new owner Joost Schultz his first silverware, returns to renew old rivalries and perhaps create some fresh.



Birkirkara players congratulate themselves after their victory

Alexia Barrier, skipper on Riccardo Pavoncelli's MOD70 Mana in 2022 when it beat immediate rival Zoulou across the line by 56 seconds, will be back, this time as skipper and owner of the multihull, now named Limosa. The Swiss Botin 52 Caro, owned by Maximilian Klink and overall winner under IRC of the Rolex Fastnet Race, will be looking to add a second win in an ambitious trifecta of offshore races, including the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race.

Entries for the race officially close on Friday, 22 September, although the club also reserves the right to accept late applications up to 29 September.

Alexia Barrier's The Famous Project is a new racing team whose ultimate ambition is an all-women Jules Verne record attempt on the 32-metre Idec Sport. Taking over Mana after last year's epic contest, the multihull has been renamed Limosa, after a small bird that holds the record for a non-stop migratory flight.

This year's crew will look very different to last year. Barrier will no longer be the lone woman, with Dee Caffari, Elodie Mettraux, Marie Riou and Sara Hastreiter joining her in a mixed team. Their goal is the highest level of multihull sailing, and they are looking forward to this opportunity to train with the crew and continue their progress.

Leopard 3 is up against BlackJack, Spirit of Malouen X and Pyewacket 70 in the monohull line honours contest. This illustrious group is expected to be joined by Lucky, the former Rambler 88, which holds the record for being first to finish in five consecutive races between 2015 and 2019, and the Wally Bullitt, which made its debut last year.

Beyond the headline acts, the core constituents of any Rolex Middle Sea Race are to be found in the lower orders of the multinational fleet. One such entry is first-time participant Simon Xuereb, owner of the Maltese entry Spirt of the Winds, a Dufour 40.

For Hanno Ziehm, the German Marten 49 Moana owner, the Rolex Middle Sea Race is a highlight. The boat has completed the 606 nautical mile course twice in 2014 and 2015, mainly with the same team, a crew of friends that sail together in more or less the same constellation for 12 years.



Leopard 3. Photo: Rolex/Kurt Arrigo

Hervé Grünig may be embarking on his first Rolex Middle Sea Race with his Swan 56 Azahar, but he has some family pedigree. His late brother-in-law, Jaume Binimelis, competed three times with his yacht, Petrouchka III, winning his ORC class twice (2011 and 2017) and finishing second in the overall ORC standings in 2011 behind the formidable Artie, which that year cleaned up in both IRC and ORC.

The SunFast 3300 Red Ruby took on the course last year under the command of Jonathan McKee, the double Olympic medalist. This year, the yacht's American owner, Christina Wolfe and her husband, Justin, aim to go one better and complete the course.

Wolfe said this would be their first Rolex Middle Sea Race. She said, "It looks to be one of the most beautiful and interesting racecourses of the 600-milers and is the race we most wanted to do when we decided to get a boat to race in Europe."

The Rolex Middle Sea Race course is approximately 606 nautical miles long. It is sailed anti-clockwise, starting from Grand Harbour, Valletta, Malta.

