

MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER

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**Journal for Maltese
Living Abroad**

Editor: Frank Scicluna OAM MQR JP



**Marco Frisina
In Malta
3-4 November 2023**



Societa Filarmonica Nazionale La Valette - A.D. 1874



**Roberta Metsola Ursula von der Leyen
European Leaders Visit Israel**



**President George Vella
to visit Australia**

13 - 23 Oct. 2023

Welcome - Merhba - Mr President



Caritas Malta hosts communications forum

European Leaders' Visit To Israel: A Significant International Response

In a remarkable development amidst the recent turmoil, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and European Parliament President Roberta Metsola are set to visit Israel. This visit comes in the wake of a violent assault on Israeli communities by Hamas, a Palestinian Islamist political organization and militant group.

The visit indicates a robust international response and involvement in the aftermath of the assault.

An Indication of Serious International Engagement

While specific details about the visit or its implications haven't been provided, the presence of high-level European leaders in Israel suggests there will be discussions and engagements with Israeli officials. The aim would likely be to address the aftermath of the assault and the ongoing conflict with Hamas. The European Union has traditionally played a role in facilitating peace negotiations between Israel and Palestine. Their involvement in the current situation could signal an effort to de-escalate the conflict and find a diplomatic solution.

Solidarity and Support for Israel

The visit also highlights the international community's concern about the violence and its impact on the Israeli community. The assault by Hamas has resulted in significant damage to infrastructure and loss of life in Israeli



communities. Thus, the visit by European leaders demonstrates solidarity and support for Israel during this difficult time. It's likely that discussions during the visit will focus on the immediate humanitarian needs of affected communities and the long-term efforts to rebuild and restore stability in the region.

The involvement of the European Union in the aftermath of the assault by Hamas could also have broader geopolitical implications. The conflict between Israel and Palestine has long been a contentious issue, and international actors, including the European Union, have been seeking a resolution for years. The visit by Von der Leyen and Metsola could be seen as a reaffirmation of the European Union's commitment to finding a peaceful and lasting solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It may also serve as a platform for the European Union to assert its influence and engage with other international stakeholders in addressing the situation.

New Airline Replacing Air Malta to fly on March 31, 2024



Current workforce expected to be retained in 'almost seamless' transition.

A new national airline will make its maiden flight on March 31 next year, replacing the current flag carrier which will operate its last flight on March 30, Prime Minister Robert Abela said on Monday.

According to David Curmi, the Executive Chairman of Air Malta, the plan to dissolve Air Malta and open a new Maltese carrier is in its final stages. "We are nearing the end of long, difficult, and complex discussions with the European Commission, which did not want a photocopy of Air Malta. We showed the commission that we mean business," Curmi stated during an interview with Times of Malta. While the transition will be "seamless" for passengers, all 330 of the current employees working at Air Malta will have to re-apply to for roles at the new airline.

Several previous reports from outlets in Malta, including the Times of Malta and The Shift,

stated that the European Commission (EC) would not allow the local government to inject €290 million (\$318.2 million) to save the ailing Air Malta. This led the carrier to decide to start again with a new national carrier, with Curmi adding that the airline has a "five-year business plan".

"The new airline will not be competing on price but on service. This will be our competitive edge," Curmi added.

Malta is also home to Malta Air, a subsidiary of low-cost carrier Ryanair. Irish airline's Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Michael O'Leary told The Malta Independent in September 2022 that Air Malta was too small to survive.

In 2010, the Maltese government notified the EC that it wanted to grant a loan of €52 million (\$57 million) to ensure the survival of Air Malta, with the commission approving the aid. A year later, in May 2011, the government once again asked the EC to give permission to grant the flag carrier a capital injection of €130 million (\$142.6 million), which the EC eventually approved on June 27, 2012.

This is not the first time that the EC's decision not to grant permission for state aid has resulted in a freshly formed airline in the European Union (EU). The Italian government replaced Alitalia with ITA Airways on October 15, 2021, the same day that the former flag carrier shut its doors, while the Estonian government replaced Estonian Air with Nordica in November 2015.

Grazzi dejjem, Frank, u prosit kbir minghandi ghan-nom tal-Kunsill Malti ghall-Arti. Sliem. Marshall Albert at [ARTS COUNCIL MALTA](#)

We would like to thank these agencies who keep on sending us news and information to keep our readers around the globe updated.

HERITAGE-MALTA, VISITMALTA, VISITGOZO, GOZO NEWS, BIRDLIFE-MALTA, IL-FURJANA, MALTESE HIGH COMMISSIONS, EMBASSIES AND CONSULATES – ARCHDIOCESE OF MALTA, MALTESE ASSOCIATIONS, CLUBS AND GROUPS FROM USA, AUSTRALIA, CANADA AND UK, MALTESE LIBRARIES AND SCHOOLS, SEVERAL NEWSPAPERS, MAGAZINES AND NEWSLETTERS HAGAR-GOZO AND MANY INDIVIDUALS FROM DIFFERENT COUNTRIES



The local gazette 'IL-FURJANA' celebrates its 70th anniversary

Freddie Tonna

Prof Oliver Friggieri was one of its editors

In October 1953, the first issue of the local gazette 'IL-FURJANA' was published. It was not the first of its kind in the Maltese islands but while others

floundered the Floriana paper is still very much alive and flourishing.

The Florianese historian Prof Henry Frendo who researched a lot about the history of Maltese papers, twenty years ago wrote that, "'IL-FURJANA' was an absolute record in Maltese journalism". Originally 'IL-FURJANA' was born as the mouthpiece of the Floriana School Old Boys Association (FSOBA) which was founded on the 29 October 1949. The premises of this Association were later on referred to as, the Fsobians Club. There came a time when FSOBA found itself in an existential crisis which eventually led to its closure. A small group of Florianese, in order to save the gazette from extinction took over the administration, now totally independent from the FSOBA and continued to keep it alive notwithstanding the many problems encountered especially, the rising costs of production.

Its Mission Statement, as explained in the front-page of the first issue, is to instil in the inhabitants of Floriana, a sense of love for their native town, enhance the unity amongst them, and increase their good and rich traditions. All these laudable intentions are still the guiding principles of the paper today.

During its seven decades of history, 'IL-FURJANA' had 10 different editors under whose guidance were published 267 issues. Amongst them were those who were known or later, became prominent on a national level. The Editors were: the very first one John M. Testa (educator, 1953-55), Chev. Emanuel S. Tonna (educator and philanthropist, 1957-58, 1960-67, 1971-74), academics Prof Oliver Friggieri (1983-86) and Dr David Fabri (1987-88), Nigel Holland (former Floriana Mayor, 1991-2002) and Salvator Mousú (broadcaster, 1958-60), Gerald V. Bilocca (1961-63), Anthony Piscopo (1967-69, 1974-78, 1979-83, and 1989-90), Adrian Agius (1978-79), and the present editor Stephen Tonna (2002-) .

To mark this Platinum Jubilee of the paper, the Editorial Board published a special issue of 'IL-FURJANA'. Practically, it is a two in one edition, the commemorative one and a reproduction of the very first October 1953 issue, as a pull out.

The commemorative issue includes articles about the various mastheads used during the seven decades of its history, the various editors, the different printing presses in which it was printed, and an article about the shop known in Floriana as 'Ta' (Lorenzo) Ellul' which is the only one that advertised in the first issue of the paper, and still exists.

A book about Floriana

Meanwhile, besides publishing four issues or more of 'IL-FURJANA' annually, the Editorial Board has, since 2015 embarked on another branch of the publishing sector. Since then, it published two books and at present, another one is being compiled. The first book was 'Il-Knisja ta' San Publju fil-Furjana - Storja u Arti', which was about the history, art, architecture and riches pertaining to St Publius Church of Floriana, published in 2015. The second was 'L-Ark ta' San Publju tal-Furjana 1899-2019', published in 2020. This book featured the 120-year-old wooden Triumphal Arch which on the night of 27 April 2019 was totally burnt down in a senseless arson attack.

Both books were almost a sell-out. They included papers from a number of scholars and academics such as Judge Emeritus Giovanni Bonello and Prof Oliver Friggieri.

And now, on the occasion of the 300 anniversary (1724-2024) since the foundation of Floriana as a locality an occurrence that happened, and annually celebrated on the 9 of May, 'IL-FURJANA Publications' together with Kite Group will be launching a new book which will include some thirty papers written by academics and experts in different fields. This edition will be in English and includes also a large number of highly interesting photos. This publication will not appeal only to people of Floriana but also to all Melitensia collectors.

This book is being edited by Dr Joan Abela. Dr Abela from Floriana is the Head of the National Notarial Archives in Malta.

Anyone interested in acquiring a copy of the special Platinum Jubilee issue of 'IL-FURJANA' or any other previous issues, or, enrolling as a subscriber in the paper, or for any further information, including on next years forthcoming 300th. centenary book please contact Stephen Tonna by addressing an e-mail: sanpublju@gmail.com or Freddie Tonna, annotfre@gmail.com.

The fee for enrolling in the gazette is €20 annually. This amount covers the cost of the four standard editions plus the special issues published according to events and/or circumstances happening in the locality. The €20 fee includes also Postage fees (Malta only).

Best regards to Mr Frank Scicluna and all our brethren, readers and subscribers of the Maltese E-Newsletter wherever you may be. Grazzi u saħħa.



President George Vella leaves Malta for a visit to Australia

President George Vella left Malta for Australia on Wednesday. During his visit, he will be meeting Maltese communities in Melbourne, Adelaide, Canberra and Sydney.

He will also have a series of official meetings, including with the Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia David Hurley, Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, Opposition Leader Peter Dutton, as well as with the Governors of the states he will be visiting.

The delegation includes Minister Stefan Zrinzo Azzopardi. For the duration of President Vella's engagements in Australia, Professor Frank Bezzina will serve as Acting

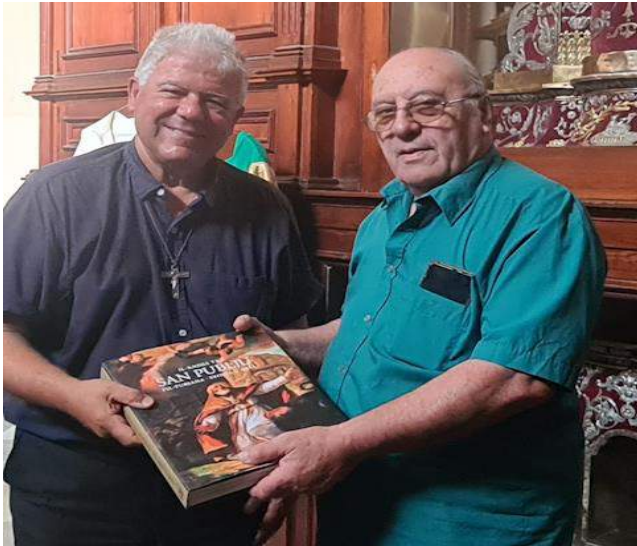
President. The President will return to Malta on October 23.

H.E. Dr George Vella is the tenth President of the Republic of Malta, by virtue of a Parliamentary Resolution passed on 7th March 2019 by the House of Representatives. President Vella was born in Zejtun on 24th April 1942. In 2018, he was identified by the Secretary General of the Commonwealth as one of eight 'Eminent Persons' from the Commonwealth to prepare a report on the 'Governance of the Commonwealth Secretariat'.

H.E. Dr George Vella has been decorated with Companion of Honour of the National Order of Merit (Malta), Knight Commander of the Order of St Michael and St George (UK), Gran Croce 'pro Merito Melitense' of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta (SMOM), Cavaliere di Gran Croce del'Ordine di Sant'Agata (San Marino), and Grand Commandeur de l'Ordre de l'Honneur (Hellenic Republic).

He is married to Miriam and they have three children: Claire, Elaine, George Jr., and seven grandchildren.

THIS JOURNAL IS A VERITABLE LINK BETWEEN US MALTESE



Whilst holidaying in Malta last August (2023) we asked His Excellency Mons Charles Gauci, Bishop of Darwin - Australia to forward some information about himself. This is what he divulged.

His great grandparents were Gużepi (Joseph) Maggi and his wife Ġianna (Giovanna) nee Busuttil. The couple were married at St Publius church - Floriana. Joseph and Giovanna had four children, Salvu (Saviour), Nina, Ġulina (Angolina) and Karmena (Carmela). On reaching adulthood, Nina married Karmenu (Carmelo) Briffa. The proverbial 'matrimonial knot' was tied at the same temple, St Publius church.

When Gużepi Maggi succumbed to the Spanish Flu Pandemic, his death left Giovanna a widow, facing the difficult burden of raising her children alone. In this situation, her son Salvu stepped in and assumed the responsibility of helping his mother in this arduous task.

One of the numerous births that Nina and Karmenu Briffa had, was Violet who years later, married John Gauci. On the 31 March 1952, at the King George V (KGV) Hospital, situated at Floriana, the couple John Gauci and his wife Violet nee Maggi were blessed with the birth of a baby boy. The baby was baptised at St Publius Church and given the name of Carmelo (Charles). The Gauci family took up residence, first at Pieta than at Hamrun. As a boy, Charles used to accompany his mother on frequent visits to their relatives at Floriana.

The connection of Charles family with the Continent of Australia had started in 1948 when first, his grandfather Carmelo Briffa took the long sea voyage to 'l-Awstralja' only to be followed a year later (1949) by his wife Nina complete with an entourage of seven of their children. The marriage of Charles's parents John and Violet Gauci took place before the above-mentioned emigration to Australia.

BISHOP OF DARWIN CHARLES GAUCI VISITS FLORIANA CHURCH WHILE IN MALTA

Correspondent Freddie Tonna - Floriana

On the 19 March 1965 the Gauci family boarded the ship 'Roma' and set sail to the Australian continent. It so happened that Charles celebrated his 13th. birthday when the vessel was crossing the Equator. On reaching their final destination, the Gauci family settled in Adelaide where Charles grew up. After answering the Lord's call to work in His fields with a 'Yes', he underwent the formative years at the Seminary until on the 10 December 1977 was Ordained as a priest in his hometown of Adelaide where he happily practised his priestly vocation for many years.

After Pope Francis elevated him to Episcopacy, he was appointed as Bishop and was assigned to the Diocese of Darwin. His Consecration as Bishop took place on the 26 September 2018. As a Maltese Bishop, His Excellency Bishop Charles Gauci, is a successor of St Publius who in A.D. 60, was consecrated by St Paul himself as the first Bishop of the newly founded Christian community in Malta.

Whilst talking to him in the sacristy of St Publius church, Bishop Charles stated that every time he returns to Malta, he learns something new about himself and his roots. He also went on to state, **"thank you Floriana and its people, for welcoming me. I have enjoyed staying here and for celebrating mass at St. Publius Church. Many thanks to my cousin Antida (Tida) Cordina for lending me her home"**.

It was fascinating learning from him that his diocese, covers an area of one million and three hundred thousand (1,300,000) square kilometres, twice the size of France. For us Maltese, these dimensions are inconceivable. He went on to say that the diocese is a missionary one where most of the inhabitants are native Australian Aborigines with many more coming from various other countries.

This latest Bishop Gauci's visit to Malta last August was for him, to officiate at a wedding ceremony at Hamrun.

Although he loves Australia very much, where he has been living for the last 58 years, he still considers himself as a Maltese Australian. After being so many years away from his birthplace, he acknowledges the fact that although he can speak the Maltese language, he finds it hard to write it and regarding reading it, he can manage as well, albeit slowly.

In his role as a 'Shepherd', his parting message couldn't be otherwise: "I pray that the people of Malta will keep

on hearing the message of God's loving coming to us from Jesus, the way, the truth, and the life."

"He calls us to a life of loving. This love calls us to a life of virtue and integrity. He calls us not to let our human weakness stop us from never stopping letting his love heal us. He is our strength".

PS - On the last day we met Bishop Gauci at the church, on behalf of the gazette IL-FURJANA we presented his Excellency with a copy of the book 'Il-Knisja ta San Publju fil-Furjana - Storja u Arti' (The Church of St Publius at Floriana - History and Arts).



Caritas Malta hosts communications and Fundraising forum

Caritas Malta has hosted the Caritas Communications and Fundraising Forum, a week-long event that brought together approximately 50 participants from various European countries.

The forum took place between 3 and 6 October 2023, and delved into a range of crucial topics, including Artificial Intelligence, social media strategies, and the art of storytelling.

Caritas Malta director Anthony Gatt delivered his opening address in which he extended his gratitude to all the participants for their presence and commitment to furthering the cause of communication in all aspects of work of Caritas around Europe.

European Parliament president Roberta Metsola emphasized the paramount importance of effective communication in the realm of humanitarian and charitable endeavors. Her insights resonated with the audience and set the stage for meaningful discussions throughout the week. While mentioning the sterling work of affiliated members of Caritas Europa she also stated that Caritas Malta has become a central pillar of many of our communities.

"We can continue to make Europe a little bit better, a little bit safer and a little more equal for us all," she said.

Other distinguished speakers took part in the forum, including former [Newsbook.com.mt](https://www.newsbook.com.mt) editor and lecturer Fr Joe Borg, known for his insightful

perspectives on social issues, and also how one communicates best a message to the audience.

Caritas Malta Well-known media personality, Peppi Azzopardi, spoke about story telling as an expert in fundraising strategies and Dawson Camilleri spoke about artificial intelligence.

Caritas Malta service coordinator, Josef Pace, spoke about the services provided from The Caritas Community Centre, while Chief Financial Officer, Ritianne Fiteni Cassar spoke about budget making and strategies for financial sustainability. Marica Cassar PRO and Fundraiser explained the different methods used at Caritas Malta to communicate the message. Their contributions added a local touch to the international event, providing valuable insights and fresh perspectives.

Participants engaged in rigorous discussions, workshops, and interactive sessions that aimed to enhance their skills and knowledge in the fields of communication and fundraising.

The diverse topics explored during the forum provided a comprehensive view of the contemporary challenges and opportunities faced by organizations in the charitable sector.

"The event not only strengthened bonds among participants but also provided a platform to enrich their capabilities for the greater good," Caritas Malta said, as it extended its gratitude to all the speakers, participants, and partners who made the event possible.

Turkey and the statue of Pope Pius V in Malta

The statue of Pope Pius V which caused diplomatic waves for the way the flag being trodden upon by the saint was mistakenly shown as the flag of modern Turkey.

The Dominican pope, St Pius V, is buried in the Sistine chapel in Santa Maria Maggiore; not to be confused with the Sistine chapel in the Vatican palace! This pope reformed and codified the Roman Missal, excommunicated Queen Elizabeth I and defeated the Turks at the Battle of Lepanto (thus saving Christian Europe). His body is on view in this chapel for the veneration of the faithful.

It is said that the pope now wears white because this pope refused to discard the white habit of the Order of Preachers

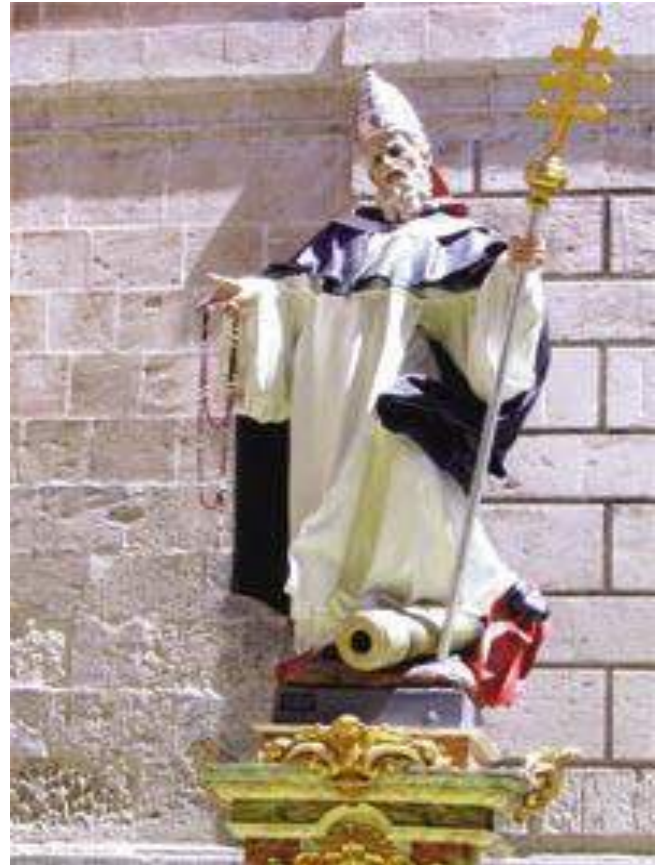
Pope Pius V, who led the Catholic Church between 1566 and 1572, ended up in the midst of a diplomatic incident some 440 years later due to a mistake in a flag on a statue in Vittoriosa.

When Pius V was elected Pope, the Catholic Church had just recovered from the upheavals of Protestantism and the Reformation but was being faced by the military power of Islam and the Ottoman Empire. The Dominican monk battled on two fronts, on one hand among quarrelling Catholic rulers and protestant kings and on the other with Muslim warlords. For Malta, Pius V is considered as the Pope who encouraged the Knights of St John, both morally and financially, to build the city of Valletta.

For all these reasons, Catholic iconography remembers him as the Pope who halted the march of the Ottoman Empire.

When, in 1999, the people of Vittoriosa commissioned Michael Camilleri Cauchi to make a statue of the saint, he was instructed to show Pius as a Dominican friar, wearing the papal tiara, trampling over the symbols of the Ottoman Empire. The artist represented these latter symbols as a broken canon and a flag of the Ottoman Empire.

And this is where the statue unwittingly entered the delicate realm of diplomacy. The Ottoman flag consisting of a white half-moon on a red field, was mistakenly represented as a half-moon and a star, turning it into the flag of modern Turkey.



The statue of Pope Pius V which caused diplomatic ripples for the way the flag being trodden upon by the saint was mistakenly shown as the flag of modern Turkey.

Nobody realised the mistake until the statue was displayed in Vittoriosa for one day in August 2000. A Turkish tourist took photos of the statue that offended him so much.

A few days later, the secretary of the committee in charge of the outdoor festivities got an urgent letter from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs requesting an explanation after pressure was brought to bear by the Turkish Embassy in Rome. After a thorough explanation of the facts, the white star was removed and the matter apparently settled.

But last year a picture of the statue with the Turkish flag appeared on an internet site, which stated that the Maltese were obstructing Turkey's integration within the EU, and the picture was proof enough of how the Maltese viewed modern Turkey!

Once again, diplomacy sprang into action and a former President of Malta was asked to intervene to clear the air after the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs informed its Maltese counterpart of the site.



Ta' Hagarat Temple – Mgarr, Malta

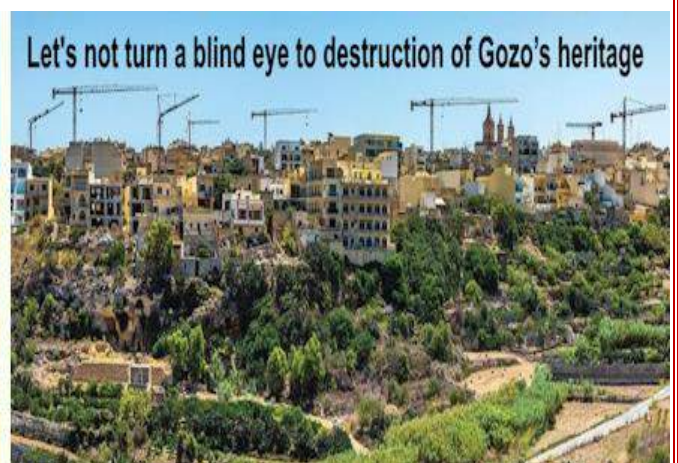
Set in the heart of Mgarr, a village in Northwest Malta, and smaller than most other sites of a similar nature, Ta' Hagarat is home to two well-preserved structures. The site was excavated between 1923 and 1926 with some other minor interventions in 1953 and in the 1960s. The larger of the two buildings dates from the earliest phases of megalithic construction – the Ġgantija phase (3600 – 3200 BC).

This structure has a monumental doorway and facade which give the site two of its most awe-inspiring and renowned characteristics. Other features include a bench, running along the facade's length, as well as a courtyard, measuring approximately 2.5m by 4.5m, surrounded by a raised stone kerb. This space, accessible through the entrance corridor of the temple, provides access to three chambers through megalithic doorways. The main doorway of this structure was restored in 1937 with the replacement of the door lintel in its original position. The smaller structure, built on a 4-apse plan, is linked to the earlier one through a doorway in the eastern room.

The dating of this building is still uncertain although the finds indicate a Saflieni phase (3,300 – 3,000 BC) date. Ceramic material from both earlier and later periods were also found within the site indicating that the site was used both before and after the construction of the Temples.

This Maltese Prehistoric Temple site is inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List and is one of the oldest free-standing monuments of such scale and complexity in the world.

Its monumental and awe-inspiring facade, including the unique stepped doorway leading into the Temple, allows one to appreciate better the genius of Maltese megalithic construction in a time when it was limited to stone, bone and wooden tools



Do you remember the Immigrant Ships?

The 'boat people' of the forties and fifties

Part 1



by Graeme Andrews

Orient Lines' Ormonde. 1917-1952 was the first ship to arrive in Sydney with displaced persons – or DPs as they were called. GKAC.

A wave of Europeans arrived by sea as a result of a great ship lift that took place during the late 1940s and 1950s. Post World War II many hundreds of thousands of Europeans were displaced as the shattered economies of those countries could not support the return of so many hungry mouths.

Elsewhere the economies of the New World and also of South America and Australasia needed people. First choice was America and as early as 1947 migrants were flooding across the Atlantic. The US Army had many purpose-built troop ships which could easily accommodate the desperate

flood, but real passenger liners were in short supply. Both sides had made great efforts to sink such ships and of the 350-odd large passenger ships that worked in 1939 there were fewer than 200 still afloat and they were not always in good order.

Australia was an attractive destination, as was New Zealand and the British shipping lines were soon offering austerity passages. The first ship to arrive in Australia carrying migrants whose fares were assisted by government – mainly Australian – was the Orient liner Ormonde. Australia urgently needed new infrastructure and had insufficient workers and our answer was immigration. The results changed Australia for the better and along the way we learnt many new social customs and found a much enhanced cuisine!

Shiploads of families were unloaded in Fremantle, Melbourne and Sydney with job security and basic accommodation being offered in return for so many years of honest toil. It soon became apparent that what was on offer was often not as good as that which had seemed to be offered but the system worked well enough and there are many third generation 'imports' now making the running in every aspect of Australia.



New logo for the Sacred Heart Minor Seminary Victoria, Gozo

On Wednesday, the 27th of September 2023, the Sacred Minor Seminary School in Victoria, Gozo, opened its doors for a new scholastic year. After Mass, celebrated by the new Major Seminary Rector Fr. Joseph Bajada, the new logo of the school was launched. A team of teachers leading this project considered the long and prestigious heritage of our school and ensured that the main elements are preserved within the new logo. The logo consists of six horizontal lines; the first lower three lines flow downwards at the centre to depict the image of a book which symbolizes the Holy

Bible, source of all knowledge. The three lines at the top have a curve at the middle to remind the viewer that Gozo is the island of the three hills. The third curve from above is halted at both sides at the middle to make space for the Cross. The Cross – representing the Catholic School – and the three lower lines are in yellow while those above are in white; the traditional colours of the Roman Catholic Papacy. Upon observation one notices that the logo is executed with the most basic element of art, the line.

The new logo, which was professionally designed by Philip Sultana, a past pupil of the SHMS, will now feature on the school's uniform and upon all official documents of the school and will replace the old one. The launching of the new logo coincides with the launch of the new school website (gozoseminary.com) and the new school uniform.



81 years ago

Horror at peaceful Sannat as bombing kills 18

Joe Zammit Ciantar recounts how he tragically lost his sister in World War II

Houses in ruins after the blast of October 10, 1942. Photo: Charles Bezzina

October 10, 1942

The author's father, Ġużeppi

It happened exactly 81 years ago – Saturday, October 10, 1942. My parents had married at the beginning of World War II and I was five months old. My sister Lydia was about 18 months.

We lived together with my mother's family in a large house on Ta' Saguna Street in peaceful Sannat, Gozo.

Ġużeppi, my father, used to work at the small power station – *Il-Magna tad-Dawl* – in Victoria. He started working there

when he was 14 years old and retired sometime in the 1980s having served mostly as an engine driver. He used to cycle to work. Little did he think he would be in danger while cycling along the open fields from Sannat to Victoria. Why would the enemy need to drop bombs over Gozo?

Rationed food

In those years, the authorities used to help people and families in need by offering them rationed oil, pasta and other foods... at special prices. And, in October 1942, the authorities offered rationed special biscuits

to families with babies.

My parents were entitled to those biscuits since they had two young babies.

After finishing work that Saturday morning, my 29-year-old father picked up the ration card for the biscuits from the Control Office in the Banca Giuratale at It-Tokk Square and cycled back home, to Sannat.

My mother then immediately went to Tal-Kaċċatur grocery, near the parish church, to collect her share of biscuits.

A young Joe Zammit Ciantar with his mother Carmela. Photo courtesy of Joe Zammit Ciantar

No sooner had she walked out of the house that she heard a huge explosion and found herself enveloped in a large thick cloud of red soil. She immediately turned back and found to her horror that her family house and home had been hit.

Bombers approaching As soon as my mother had left the house, Dad took me in his arms.

He heard the sound of aeroplanes approaching; it was very rare for

aeroplanes to fly over the village.

He placed me – a five-months baby – on the windowsill at the back of the house, and told me: "I'll show you an aeroplane, today."

Uncle Michelangelo – my mother's brother – was behind him hoping to catch a glimpse too.

That fateful hour It was almost 10.15am. In the skies over Sannat, two British Royal Air Force Spitfires were chasing two German Luftwaffe Junkers Ju 88 twin-engine bombers.

In order to fly lighter and escape the chasing fighters, the Junkers released two large bombs, one of which fell in the fields just behind our home.

Our house collapsed in the shattering explosion, with only one wall left standing - the one on whose windowsill my father had placed me.

Ruins, blasts and casualties





A marble plaque with the names of the 18 victims of the explosion of October 10, 1942. A piece of one of the bombs dropped over Sannat is seen affixed above the plaque on the back wall of the parish church. Photo: Joe Zammit Ciantar

My father was found motionless face-up, half buried in the rubble. He suffered smoke inhalation as well as badly injured legs and spent two weeks in hospital. He would continue to suffer from those injuries for most of his life.

Uncle Michelangelo was found face downwards, almost buried in the debris, but fortunately, he survived too.

Grandmother Tona was found crouched in a space luckily formed when a wardrobe toppled over and came to rest on a chest of drawers. Alas, however, my sister, Lydia was hit by shrapnel and died about two hours after the

explosion, in the arms of auntie Gerita, my mother's sister.

A ladder ... As soon as my horrified mother saw me, somehow still on the windowsill, she shouted for a ladder "to bring down and save that baby". Help was quickly at hand.

The second bomb from the Junkers hit houses near the old school building and close to a bakery, causing more casualties. As soon as he heard of the tragedy, Dr Emmanuel Caruana, who was on duty in Gozo at the time, drove to Sannat and gave his most appreciated help.

I never heard either of my parents describe how the rest of mother's family survived the explosion. What I know for certain is that on that fateful Saturday of 81 years ago Sannat lost 18 people, including children and babies, among them my sister Lydia. Source – *Times of Malta*

Maltese Traditional Stuffed Calamari

Ingredients

600g calamari
1 tbsp olive oil
2 onions, chopped
fresh garlic, finely chopped
1 tablespoon Kunserva (tomato paste)
400g can Tomato Pulp
100ml white wine
half a fish stock cube dissolved in 100ml warm water
100g whole black olives with stone
basil, mint, pepper
For the Filling
225g Three Hills Deli Tuna Dip with Anchovies
100g breadcrumbs
parsley and pepper



INSTRUCTIONS:

Clean the calamari and in a bowl, mix together the filling ingredients and stuff the calamari with the mixture, closing them with toothpicks. In a pan, heat the olive oil and gently fry the calamari. Add the chopped onion and garlic, the Three Hills Kunserva, the Mayor Tomato Pulp and the wine and simmer for 5 minutes. Add the rest of the ingredients

and season with pepper to taste. Simmer for around 30 minutes. Tip: When buying calamari, choose the smaller variety as they will be more tender to cook.



Lampuki (Dorado fish) The Maltese Islands' favourite fish!

September marks the beginning of the Lampuki season. It is a fish also known as Dorado fish or Mahi Mahi. The migratory fish are found in Maltese waters between the end of August till end of November. The Dolphin fish is known to grow fast in fact local fishermen catch a lot of them weighing 1 kilo to 1.5 kilos so the fish fits nicely on a plate. The lampuka has a beautiful silver and golden colour.

This migratory fish visits the Maltese Islands' waters from the end of August till early December, therefore fishing for this type of fish takes place **between September and November**.

How do Maltese fishermen fish for lampuki?

They weave fronds from palm trees into flat rafts. They then place the rafts on the surface of the sea. What happens is that the lampuka (dorado fish) schools under the rafts because these large rafts provide shade and shelter from the scorching sun. In Maltese, these types of "rafts" are referred to as *kannizzati*.

The fishermen then use nets to catch the dolphin fish. It is believed that this type of fishing method has been in use since ancient Roman times!

The Maltese people are very fond of this type of fish and when in season, you can usually spot many lampuki vendors roaming the streets with small vans. In some old villages you will also come across women with prams selling them! Yes prams ... without the baby of course :)

What they do, is use the pram as a sort of trolley to carry the wooden fish crates on. (The type of prams that they use are usually very old, no longer in use ones). In the old days, women used to put the wooden fish crates on their heads and hit the streets to sell them.

The lampuka grows really fast but the local fishermen usually aim to catch it when it **weighs from 1 to 1.5 kilos maximum** - just enough to sit nicely on a plate. This fish is a good source of vitamin B12, B6 and B3.

The lampuka is a delicious fish and there's a huge demand for it. So much so, that local fishermen also export their catch to other countries.

Cooking Lampuki

The popular fish in Malta can be cooked in various ways such as:

- The lampuki can be shallow-fried in slices with spinach, capers, mint and olive oil.
- The lampuki pie can also be done by baking covered in pastry with lampuki, tomato sauce capers, cauliflowers and carrots.
- Lampuki can also be done into a fish soup.

Health Benefits in Lampuki

Here are a few health benefits in consuming Lampuki:

- It is low in fat and mercury making it the healthier alternative.
- It has an excellent source of protein containing amino acids for survival.
- It contains minerals like Selenium, magnesium, iron, phosphorus that help the immune system fight illnesses and Potassium helps support the heart and muscle functions.
- It also has vitamins B12, B6 and niacin to help support metabolism, nourishing your skin and liver.

Submitted by LBJ

THESE JOURNALS SHOULD BE PUBLISHED IN A BOOK BUT IT IS TOO COSTLY. THAT WILL HAPPEN IF WE CAN GET A GRANT AND HAVE ENOUGH SPONSORS. CAN YOU HELP???



MASSACRE ON MIGRATING BIRDS CONTINUES

birdlifemalta.org

Illegal hunting continues to take its toll on migrating birds in Malta, even within protected havens like Buskett and Ghadira. Since our last update in the September newsletter, BirdLife Malta and police continued to receive more illegally shot protected birds.

One of the highlights was the shooting of a [Latvian-ringed Osprey](#) in Buskett, following the recovery of yet another Osprey at our Ghadira Nature Reserve in the same week. Other illegal hunting casualties recovered include a Hoopoe, a Grey Heron, a Night-heron, a Common Kestrel, an Eleonora's Falcon, a Honey-buzzard, a Hobby, a number of Bee-eaters, a Nightjar, a Yellow-legged Gull, and a Collared-dove.

Amongst the most recent illegally shot protected birds we collected was [a juvenile Marsh-harrier from Għar Lapsi](#) and another [Greater Flamingo](#) that was rescued at sea between Xlendi and Ta' Ċenċ in Gozo, and was brought to shore with the assistance of members of the public.

The targeting of such charismatic species was rife more than ever in the past weeks as the migration of various species peaked during the end of September and the beginning of October. Such illegal hunting occurs for the sole purpose of taxidermy collections, with specimens numbering hundreds of thousands amongst the hunting community.

Find out more about our events planned for 2023 via our website or our Facebook page. www.facebook.com/birdlifemalta/

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FROM HUMBLE BEGINNINGS After Our Lady's Call to Carmela Grima, the first foreign country that received an Icon of Our Lady Ta' Pinu was Tunisia, where some Gozitan people emigrated in the early years of the 20th century. These immigrants, besides personal devotion in their hearts, had carried to that country, an Icon of Our Lady Ta' Pinu and installed it in one of the local Churches. To date, devotions to Our Lady Ta' Pinu has spread all around the world, namely India, Guatemala, Toronto, Albania, Brazil, Rome, and the latest oratory was installed at the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Washington D.C in 2006. In 1957, for some reasons, this Icon from La Goulette, Tunisia was removed from Tunisia and was brought to a Church in Kensington, Melbourne.



After remaining for some years in that Church, it was transferred again to St. Bernadette Church, in Sunshine Victoria. In 1989, a group of devotees of Our Lady decided to have some celebrations in honour of Our Lady Ta' Pinu at St. Bernadette Church. In 1990, this group, wishing to have an icon of Our Lady for processions, commissioned a new Icon to artist, Chev. Paul Camilleri Cauchi.

The painting was finished early 1991 and Msgr Benedict Camilleri, then Rector of Ta Pinu Shrine in Gozo, Malta was invited to come to Australia and conduct a few Marian Celebrations.

Devotions to Our Lady Ta' Pinu were introduced in Horsley Park and Blacktown (Sydney) and She is also venerated in the Marian Centre of Berrima (NSW)

While Mgr. Benedict Camilleri was in Sydney, some friends suggested that he could build a church here in Australia dedicated to Our Lady Ta' Pinu. On his return to Melbourne, meeting the group that had invited him, he revealed this idea which they were ready to support. He then made the necessary requests to both Ecclesiastical Authorities, in Malta and in Melbourne, and began looking for a suitable place for such a devotion. After consultations, the Hill overlooking the Western Highway was selected, a loan to support the project was obtained and an application for a planning permit was lodged.

In 1992, a Low Mass was celebrated on the land. The first official Mass in the presence of a beautiful number of Pilgrims was celebrated on 27rd March 1993.

His Lordship, Archbishop Francis Thomas Little also gave permission for Mass to be said each first Saturday of the month. This began on the 26 March 1994 and Each month hundreds of people gather in front o the statue of the blessed Virgin Mary, duly built on the hillside, and blessed by Bishop Nicholas Cauchi of Gozo, to pray the Rosary and attend Holy Mass.

The majestic concrete Cross overlooking the Western Freeway was erected, marking the site of the proposed church. was blessed by His Lordship Dr. Francis Thomas Little, Archbishop of Melbourne on Saturday, 24th February 1996.

He also placed a solid brass cross which had been previously blessed by His Holiness Pope John Paul II, at the foot of the cross.

The growing number of pilgrims, as in earlier times, demands that a suitable church to accommodate them be built.

Accordingly, it has been decided to commence construction, by building a replica of the ancient chapel. This too will be surrounded by fields, but one day, with God's help, a beautiful church will also stand out, a sign of the Australian People's wish to honour the Mother of God.

Our prayer is that she will grant peace and harmony to all the peoples of this great land. And that she will draw us in all into communion with Jesus, her Son and our Saviour.

The foundation stone for this chapel was cut from the same stone in which the old chapel was built. It was

blessed by the Holy Father in Rome on 18 June 1997 and presented to His Grace Archbishop George Pell of Melbourne during his visit to Ta' Pinu on 10th July of that year. In accepting this cornerstone Archbishop Pell expressed his delight that the devotion the Maltese have for the blessed Virgin will have a new home in Melbourne. He looked forward to the day when the Church at Bacchus Marsh will be completed. May Our Lady guide those who are undertaking this challenging task.



First Mass celebrated on site on 27th March 1993.



Celebrating the life of
KARMNI GRIMA
Born 2nd Feb 1838 - Died 25th May 1922
in the village of Għarb ,Gozo, Malta
*"Blessed to be the chosen one
to receive Our Lady Ta' Pinu's Call"*
TA' PINU SANTUARY GOZO - MALTA





GIALANZE FAMILY IN AUSTRALIA IN 1955

BACKWARD STEP TO GO FORWARD

We are Maltese from Egypt. My name is Rosa and I am eighty years old. My husband is Ersilio. We have been in Australia for forty-four years. I have six children and am a grandmother of thirteen. We came from Egypt by ship in 1947 - my husband, myself and two children - a boy aged two and a girl aged one. I was also seven months pregnant.

We had been married for four years. In Egypt, my husband had been in the Air Force. We

were going to have to be transferred to a small village far from Alexandria where we lived. We did not want to go there so we applied to emigrate to Australia - thinking we could always go back if we did not like it. For that reason, we needed to keep our money that we had brought with us untouched so that we would have the means to go back if we wanted to.

Our family in Egypt told us that the Arabs were expelling the British so we thought if we had to live abroad, we would live in Australia.

In the first months, we lived in a hotel paying four and a half pounds a week. We were not happy. My husband used to go out looking for Maltese people to ask them if they know of any place we could rent. He found two rooms at the back of a fish 'n' chip shop. These rooms were very dirty and the owners were not the best.

After work my husband used to go to clean up these rooms before we started living there. We stayed there for nine months. I used to sit on my bed and cry, remembering how comfortable I was in Egypt; I came here and lost everything.

One day after Mass, an Italian friend of mine told me there was a house for rent. She also told my husband and together we went to see it. We paid fifty pounds "key money". The house was in very bad condition. Instead of glass, the windows were secured with cardboard and metal sheeting. My husband promised me that he would fix it all up and so he did and it turned out looking good. He worked very hard and by the time we left the house, it even had a hot water system. We lived there for four years.

The Housing Commission offered us a house in Braybrook and we went there. We still live in this same house - thirty years later. We had another four children besides the two we brought with us from Egypt and we are grandparents of thirteen. Our youngest son is ill and is in hospital. The others are all married, are doing well and are happy.

ROSA and ERSILIO GIALANZE

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On Sunday the 8th of October 2023, **THE NEWPORT MALTESE ASSOCIATION** celebrated 50th Year anniversary since it was formed. Close to 300 people associated with the association attending the gala night held at the Melrose Reception Centre in Tullamarine



Mr Joe Ellul, the current president of the association opened the night followed by Mr George Saliba, who was the founding member of the association.

Mr Saliba acknowledged all the committee members who over the past 50 years have dedicated their time to the association.

Mr Saliba specifically named some members that in his opinion excelled beyond expectations. Amongst the names were V. Calleja, M. Pace, N

Caruana, L Calleja, J. Cole, J Debono, R Caruana and Vince Camilleri.

Fr Victor Shields of the MSSP was acknowledged as being the instigator of the idea of forming the Association. The association held its first social activity in March 1974 at the Fiesta Ballroom in Footscray which was attended by over 400 people.

In 1978, the association joined forces with the **MALTESE COMMUNITY COUNCIL OF VICTORIA** to raise funds needed for the Community Centre.

Mr Saliba congratulated Joe Ellul, president for his work together with the vice President, Mr Andrew Gatt and wished them every success for the future of the Newport Maltese Association. The Maltese Community Council was represented by Madam President Antonia Camilleri, Mr Andrew Gatt, Secretary and Treasurer Mr Joseph Matina

Photos (left): George Saliba Joe Ellul and Andrew Gatt cutting the cake.

(right) Andrew Gatt, Antonia Camilleri and Joseph Matina



FROM READERS OF MALTA AND GOZO

We love to read about our sisters and brothers who live abroad especially about those associations who hold cultural and social functions for Maltese living abroad - Joseph N Attard

THE MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER

IF YOU HAVE AN INTERESTING STORY TO TELL SEND IT TO US FOR PUBLICATION IT WILL BE ARCHIVED FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

The Nurse of the Mediterranean

In 1915, as Europe's armies faced stalemate, World War One spread beyond the Western Front. To try to break the deadlock Britain and France led new campaigns at Gallipoli in Turkey, and Salonika in Greece.

New battle fronts meant new places to treat the wounded would be needed. But the allies had more than just combat casualties to deal with. Climate and conditions brought malaria and dysentery. Very quickly, there were tens of thousands of soldiers in need of urgent and ongoing care.

The answer was a tiny rock in the Mediterranean Sea. At a safe distance from the front line, Malta became a hospital island for more than 136,000 men. By the end of the war, it had earned itself the nickname the "Nurse of the Mediterranean". Malta was never involved in the world war.

A sanctuary across the sea Thousands of soldiers were shipped from Gallipoli and Salonika on hospital ships to the island of Malta. Although Malta was located relatively near to the new battlegrounds, it was still separated from them by hundreds of miles of sea.

The Gallipoli campaign At Gallipoli, a force of 70,000 men was sent to attack the Ottoman Empire. British, French, Australian and New Zealand soldiers launched an amphibious assault on the Turkish peninsula in an attempt to take the city of Constantinople. It was hoped that Germany would be forced to divert troops from the Western Front to support their Turkish allies.

The first batch of patients from the battlefield arrived in Malta in March 1915. The soldiers had to travel 850 miles across the Mediterranean to reach the safety of the island. Thousands of patients made the week-long journey on hospital ships. Gallipoli was a military disaster for the allies and after eight months of fierce fighting, both ground and naval forces had to withdraw.

The Salonika campaign At Salonika, British and French forces landed on the northern Greek coast in 1915, in an attempt to relieve Serbian forces fighting the Bulgarian army. Fighting continued for many months, and the allies were forced to dig in. The sick and wounded were taken from the battlefield and brought to Malta by ship.

In April 1917, after several hospital ships were sunk by German submarines, the allies decided the journey to Malta was too dangerous. Many hospitals



Australian soldiers (diggers) from Gallipoli to Malta WW1

on the island were closed and replaced with new facilities in Greece.

An island hospital Hospitals were opened up at a frantic pace to keep up with the thousands of sick and wounded soldiers brought to Malta. Pioneering heart surgery Robert Hugh Martin was shot in the heart at Salonika in 1917. Evacuated to Malta, he underwent one of the first successful heart surgeries of World War One in Malta.

Rest and recuperation Australia Hall was built on Malta in 1915 by the Australian Branch of the Red Cross. Medical care in Malta went beyond emergency treatment. The rest and recuperation of recovering soldiers was taken very seriously. Many of the troops were afflicted with dysentery, fever and malaria and needed ongoing care. Several convalescent hospitals were set up on the island to help those who were still not fit to return to the front.

In May, 1915 tea rooms were set up in Sliema to provide rest and refreshment for the sick and wounded soldiers. The tea rooms were manned by a band of local volunteers and hosted weekly concerts. They proved popular with the soldiers and during the course of the war around 50,000 men were served.

In October a Gymnasium in Valletta was converted into a facility for convalescents. It was equipped with a library, bar, a billiard table and a fully equipped stage. Over 80,000 men passed through its doors. Around this time Australia Hall was built by the Australian Red Cross. It was a combined recreation centre and theatre and provided entertainment for wounded soldiers of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps.

**Bridges don't fall from the sky
They don't rise from the
ground
People build them**

Impressive! Jordan Gusman smashes Malta's national men's marathon record by 12 minutes at Chicago Marathon

Jordan Gusman (born 30 Jan 1994) is a Maltese middle and long-distance runner who won several medals for Malta at the Games of the Small States of Europe. From Corindi Beach, Australia, he was eligible to represent Malta from 21 August 2019.

As an Australian, he won the 800 m at the 2012 Oceania Junior Athletics Championships.

Gusman won the 3000 m event establishing a Maltese national record at the 2021 European Athletics Team Championships (3rd League)

JORDAN GUSMAN

Maltese-Australian Athlete



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"La Valette"

fil-Kollegġjata ta' San Pawl Nawfragu,
fil-Belt Valletta
Nhar il-Hadd 22 ta' Ottubru 2023, fl-10:30 am.

Imexxi l-konċelebrazzjoni
Mons. Paul Carmel Vella
Rettur tal-Kon-Katidral ta' San Ġwann
flimkien mal-Kapitlu tal-Kollegġjata u
r-Retturi tal-Knejjes tal-Belt Valletta.

Tiehu sehem "La Valette Ensemble"
taht id-direzzjoni

tal-Assistent Surmast James Chappell
bis-sehem tas-Sopran Rosabelle Bianchi
u t-Tenur Georg Zammit



**I THANK
ALL THOSE
WHO
SUPPOORT
THIS
JOURNAL**

Heritage Malta
<https://heritagemalta.mt/>

At Heritage Malta we proudly manage
over 90 museums and landmarks, national
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