

MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER

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Journal for Maltese Living Abroad

Editor: Frank Scicluna OAM MQR JP



MMG Concert Band of Vict.

It was a great honour to perform for Dr. George Vella, the President of Malta at the Caroline Springs George Cross Soccer Club - Victoria Oct. 2023

**Heritage
Malta**

www.heritagemalta.mt



MISS ANTOINETTE SPITERI
The 100 000th migrant
1965

11 November
I-Borża
ta' San Martin



youtube.com/watch?v=5B3Rkrli0jY

ST.MARTIN'S BAG



**Ella Portelli Off To El Salvador To Represent
Miss Universe Malta**

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MALTESE
LIVING
ABROAD**

History of Maltese Emigration.....

HUMAN ASPECTS OF EMIGRATION



Emigration has long acted as a safety valve for the overpopulated islands-fortress of Malta and Gozo.

Consequently, the Maltese diaspora has expanded to lands far beyond the island's Mediterranean shores. Despite the defence offered by Maltese Government officials responsible for chartering ships for the transport of emigrants, it was obvious that the human aspect of migration had to be respected. Emigrants

were not just humans to be shipped from one over-populated country to another one that had both space and need of them. The opposition in Malta's Legislative Assembly insisted that no converted ships should be chartered, but only passenger ships which had the required certificates from European authorities. It was also suggested that those passengers who were willing to pay extra money were to be allowed better accommodation if they were prepared to pay for that little bit of extra comfort.

Great Britain was urged to provide more financial aid to the Maltese Government so that more comfortable ships could be chartered. As Malta's Prime Minister, Dr P. Boffa, told the Legislative Assembly, more than 8,000 Maltese had settled permanently in other countries

during 1948 and

1949. They did so

through the help of

his Ministry of

Emigration. Dr Boffa

reminded his

listeners that his

ministry had

received little help

from the British

Government in

chartering ships.

Great Britain did

help. On May 4,

1950, Lord Holden,

Under-Secretary for

Commonwealth

Relations, said in the House of Lords that His Majesty's Government would soon be

assisting Malta by providing financial help towards the Organisation of mass emigration

from the Island.



Relations, said in the House of Lords that His Majesty's Government would soon be assisting Malta by providing financial help towards the Organisation of mass emigration from the Island.

Significant steps had been taken since 1947 when the Maltese had at least a partial say in the running of their own country. Ships were now regularly available and the conditions of



travel would eventually improve. However, emigration cannot be assessed through abstract statistics alone. It was a very human experience which entailed physical and mental anguish. At that time the authorities both in London and in Valletta chose largely to ignore this human side of the problem. They were eager to dispatch thousands to foreign lands in order to alleviate the precarious position of Malta in the days following the end of the Second World War.

The newspaper *II-Berqa* was not only very pro-British but it also carried consistently articles on the urgent need of mass emigration so long as that emigration was directed to the regions of the British Empire. But even such a loyalist newspaper could not ignore the anguish caused by the separation of so many Maltese from their

kith and kin. This is how the departure of migrants on the *Misir* in 1949 was described:

"On the quay there were many people waiting to see the last of their relatives and friends. Most women were in tears and the nearby road was so congested that the Police Cavalry had to be used to control the crowd. Many refused to board the ship. Many had gathered near the Customs House from the early hours of the morning. At one time the police nearly lost the control of the crowd."

When in later years air transport became common, scenes at the departure lounge of the airport were reminiscent of what had happened earlier on the quays. On October 15, 1964, a group of one hundred and twenty-one emigrants arrived at the airport in Luqa. There were seventy-two men, thirty-five women and fourteen children under the age of twelve. Seeing them off was the minister responsible for emigration, Dr Alexander Cachia Zammit. As the emigrants were being called board their airplane, one girl fainted and she had to be helped by her mother to walk to the airplane. A father, watching his son leaving, nearly jumped from the spectator's gallery on to the tarmac, were it not for his other two sons and a daughter who barely managed to restrain him.

Similar scenes occasionally took place at the receiving end. If the departures were marked by heart-rending separation, there were joyous reunions on the quays and at the airports. Grown up men who had lived for long periods away from their wives and children would break down and weep as they embraced their loved ones.

Fortunately, the saga of Maltese emigration is free from any great disasters. One exception was that concerning the migrant ship *Skaubryn*. But even this mishap did not entail any loss of life.

THE TEACHING OF EMIGRATION HISTORY IN MALTESE SCHOOLS.

The Ministry of Education revised the National Curriculum to include teaching about Emigration History at all Levels of Education. The teaching of Emigration History is also included in some courses at the University of Malta.



THE FUTURE OF THE MALTESE COMMUNITY IN NSW – AUSTRALIA

Louis Parnis – President CCFCC

To know the future one needs to learn about the past, questions like why did Maltese people immigrate to other countries and how did they manage and adapt to the numerous changes in their lives.

Looking back to the 50's most Maltese post Second World War arriving in Australia, many were in their 20's, and at that time Australia had full employment and work was made available on arrival. Within a few years of arrival, many got married mostly to other Maltese and started a family.

It was at that time some of the Maltese emerged as community leaders and organized meetings commenced to build Maltese churches and places of gathering like Clubs or an association representing their hometown Feast. Many prospered and still operating to date but many also folded, as their members at this time due to their age could not possibly continue supporting.



WHAT NOW? WHAT IS OUR FUTURE?

Talking about the road for our future in my opinion should have started ten years ago and fortunately for the Illawarra Community, at the Cringila Centre I, as President of with a clear vision had foreseen this and had already commenced a program. The second generation born in Australia were brought up differently. They had good education, employment and a different culture to what their parents experienced before leaving Malta.

I took upon re-programming this generation in thinking that their parents passing of the baton to

them is an honour for themselves to do the same with their kids. I together with my committee organized get together without the pressure of being Maltese but rather introduced Maltese, celebrities, artists like comedian portraying a sense of togetherness. Keeping in touch today through Facebook and social media is a good tool reaching the masses quickly and gather feedback.

This week as I was writing this article a 60-year-old Maltese friend reached out to inform me that the second generation are ready and would like to meet and socialize at the Centre in Cringila. It was a great inspiration and a sense of jubilation while immediately plans are being implemented to make this first historical meeting a reality. The time is ripe.

The Future is not like a switch with on and off button but a process that takes long time and it is imperative not to wait or as we say in Australia (She'll be right mate)

We Salute the Past and Present Leaders of Maltese living Abroad





Mużiċist Manny Muscat Suċċess f'Sydney
Mary Gauci President Happy Parenting – Malta (For Happier Children)

It-Taqsima ta' Prevenzjoni ta' Happy Parenting – Malta (For Happier Children) tippromwovi life styles f'saħħithom. Iltqajt ma' Manny (Emmanuel) Muscat dan l-aħħar, f'Sydney. Mimli b'enerġija, b'imħabba lejn kulhadd, lejn il-familja, lejn il-ħajja, lejn Malta, u lejn il-mużika. Bniedem li dejjem ifittex il-pożittiv u dak li jgħaqqad u jara kif jafferma u jferraħ lil ta' madwaru. Ħalla Malta bosta snin ilu meta kellu biss 12-il sena. Ommu u missieru kellhom imorru bil-familja lejn l-Awstralja biex isibu għixien aħjar.

Missieru baqa' dejjem miġbud lejn Malta. Kien iħoss li l-egħruq tiegħu dejjem jibqgħu f'Malta, bħal xitla li wara li tkabbar l-egħruq, ikun iebes li tinqala' u titħawwel xi post ieħor. Kien għalhekk wara li urihom it-triq, lil uliedu, missieru reġa rritorna lejn Malta. Dejjem kien jishaq biex dejjem jibqgħu jgħożžu dak li hu Malti u ma jiċhdu qatt lil Malta.

Manny kien iħobbhom ħafna lill-ġenituri tiegħu lil-ommu u lill-missieru. Japprezza s-sagrifiċċi kbar li għamlu għall-familja. Imma Manny l-aktar li kien iqatta' ħin, kien ma' missieru, tgħallem ħafna minnu u kellu għożża kbira li baqgħet iżżid minkejja li missieru miet. Dan l-aħħar Manny kiteb kanzunetta sentimentali ħafna lil missieru fejn jispjega kemm ħadem u stinka missieru biex jara lilu u lil ħutu jirnexxu, jitkellem dwar ir-rispett u l-għożża u li għad jerga jiltaqa' ma missieru meta l-bieb tas-sema jinfetħ għal Manny ukoll.

Lyrics - DAD

Thinking back through my life and wondering where it's all gone
Feels like it was yesterday I was with you back home
There's not a day that goes past that I'm not thinking of you
Things you said to me then seems to have all come through
Too many years have passed, and I can never forget
How you worked so hard without any regrets

There's been many a times When you had to make do
Even when times got tough You did what you could
Cause you had to make good

And if I had to have this time again with you
I would cherish every second, every moment of all day through
But I was way too young to understand
what you had to go through for me to see me who I am today.

Thinking back through my life, and wondering where it's all gone
Feels like it was yesterday, I was with you back home
I know that many a times, you're standing by my side
Helping me through my life, until the heavens opens wide

Kif bdew jgħixu l-Awstralja, Manny kien ħabib ma' wieħed minn šabu tal-iskola li kien idoqq il-kitarra. Eventwalment Manny thajjar u tgħallem il-kitarra hu ukoll u minn hemm ma ħarisx lura. Iffurmaw grupp



li bdew idoqqu fl-iskejjel u saru popolari ferm mal-istudenti u mal-pubbliku. Daqqew f'diversi okkazzjonijiet f'Malta u f'diversi postijiet fl-Awstralja. Spiss kienu u għadhom idoqqu fil-clubs tal-Maltin fejn jintlaqgħu tajjeb, u hafna minn dawk preżenti jqumu jiżfnu.

Il-mara ta' Manny, Carmen thobb tiżfen ukoll. Carmen tagħti appoġġ kbir li Manny u jikkompensaw hafna lil xulxin. Carmen iffissata fit-tindif u fiż-żamma tad-dar waqt li Manny jhobb isajjar. Carmen mara b'qalb kbira. Aktar thobb tagħti mill-tircievi. L-għożża tagħhom hi l-familja. Manny jieħu gost meta jkollhom ċans jiġu Malta u dieqa kbira meta jkollhom jirritornaw lura. Għandu aħwa u familjari f'Malta u fl-Awstralja. Manny hu John Muscat, preżentatur fuq programmi tar-radju hawn Malta.

Manny għandu valuri nobbli. Fosthom dejjem jara li ma jonqos li hadd, forsi b'xi kelma jew b'xi nuqqas ieħor. Jemmen li kull ma jiġri, jiġri għal xi pjan li jkollu Alla għalina. Bniedem li dejjem jiċċajta u jferraħ.



Kummissjoni Għolja tar-Repubblika ta' Malta
High Commission for the Republic of Malta

Press Release 11/2023
25/10/2023

The President of Malta visit to Australia 13-22 October 2023

The High Commission of the Republic of Malta has the pleasure to inform the Maltese Community in Australia that the President of the Republic of Malta, H.E. Dr. George Vella has successfully completed his visit to Australia on 22 October 2023. The President, accompanied by the Minister for Public Works and Planning the Hon. Stefan Zrinzo Azzopardi, visited the cities of Melbourne, Adelaide, Canberra and Sydney between 13 – 22 October 2023.

During his visit, the President met with the Governor General of Australia His Excellency the Hon. David Hurley, the Prime Minister of Australia the Hon. Anthony Albanese, whilst also with the Governors of Victoria, South Australia, and New South Wales and the Leader of the Opposition the Hon. Peter Dutton. Throughout these meetings, the President of Malta H.E. George Vella primarily focused on the Maltese Community and their contributions to Australia, climate change, the unfolding events in the Middle East and the strengthened relations between the European Union and Australia.

The High Commission of Malta organized various events in the different cities for the President of Malta including visits to several Maltese associations, giving the Maltese community the opportunity to meet and greet the President and his delegation. His Excellency reiterated to the Maltese community that the relations between Malta and Australia "could not be so special were it not for the contribution which you - the Maltese community here – have made along the years". Furthermore, His Excellency paid homage and laid a wreath at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra the Shrine of Remembrance and the Shelter of Peace – Maltese War Memorial in Melbourne.

On the margins of the President's visit, Minister Zrinzo Azzopardi separately visited a number of Maltese-owned businesses and entities from the ACT Government related to his portfolio.

The High Commission of Malta for Australia and Consulates in Melbourne and Sydney extend their heartfelt gratitude to Maltese associations, groups and individuals who had contributed to the success of the President's visit to Australia.

Kultant Carmen tibda tisthi għax ikompli hafna anki ma' nies li ma jafhomx. L-għaxqa tiegħu joqgħod fl-istudio modern li hu attrezzaat ferm fid-dar tiegħu f'Sydney imdawwar b'kitarri diversi ta' ċertu valur, apparat ta' recording, diski u kwadri ta' tifkiriet... jisma' l-mużika jew idoqq. Għandu għal qalbu kantanti u kanzunetti Maltin bħal Riviera Blu, Viva Malta, L-Aħħar Bidwi f'Wied il-Għasel. Il-parir ta' Manny hu li fejn jistgħu l-Maltin, jibqgħu jgħixu Malta għax minkejja li hu dara l-Awstralja, u hemm hafna sabiħ anki biex wiehed imur vaganza, Malta tibqa' l-aqwa u l-aħjar.

**TELL US
YOUR
STORY**

THE PRESIDENTIAL PALACE VALLETTA • MALTA

In the heart of Malta's capital city of Valletta, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, lies the majestic Grand Master's Palace, chosen as the main presidency venue. During Malta's Presidency of the Council, the Palace will host a wide variety of meetings which will include both High-Level and ministerial meetings. This historical site, designed by Girolamo Cassar in 1571, always held a central role in Maltese policy making, as evidenced by its long history.

Under the Knights of St. John, the Palace was used as the official residence for the consecutive Grand Masters of the Order. The British colonials used the palace to house the Governor, where it was enriched with a number of architectural works following damages received during World War II. Following Malta's Independence in 1964, the Palace became the seat of Malta's first House of Representatives, thus continuing its legacy as a central part of Maltese politics. Today, the House of Representatives has been relocated to a new Parliament House built at the entrance of the capital. Nevertheless, the Palace still hosts the office of the President of the Republic of Malta.

Inside this magnificent structure lie four State Rooms. The Council Chamber is lavishly decorated with a collection of Gobelins tapestries, woven in France and given as a gift to the Spanish Grand Master Ramón Perellos Roccaful. The tapestries are nearly 300 years old and showcase exotic hunting scenes of the Caribbean, South America, India and Africa. These tapestries are kept in pristine condition to this day. The State Dining Room is graced by a painting of Queen Elizabeth II and



Presidential portraits of the Republic of Malta. The Hall of the Supreme Council of the Knights, which is also called the Throne Room, is adorned with a series of twelve fine frescoes by Mattia Perez d'Aleccio depicting events from the Great Siege of Malta in 1565. The Ambassador's Hall or better known as the Red Room, exhibits portraits of Grandmasters and other governors, as well as a high fresco depicting historical events from the Order of St. John. Furthermore, the Grand Master welcomed important guests in this very State Room. In fact, foreign dignitaries are still greeted here by the Maltese President to this very day.

Being one of the first buildings in Valletta in 1571, the Palace holds one of the greatest armour and weapons arsenals in the world. The arsenal dates back to the Knights of St. John and it is still kept in its original state. The Palace Armoury was officially opened in 1860 and became Malta's first public museum. It features the personal armour worn by the Grand Master La Valette, the remarkable damascened armour of Grand Master Alof de Wignacourt and a unique display of weapons used during the Great Siege of 1565 by the Ottoman Empire. It also holds authentic pieces of Spanish, French, Italian and German origin. The Armory is currently located inside two halls that used to hold the Grand Master's stables.

**GOZO BUSINESS
CHAMBERS welcomes
news of prospective start to
Gozo airfield by
Gozonews.com**



The Gozo Business Chamber has welcomed the news in Budget 2024 of the prospective start of the rural airfield project.

It also welcomed news of the completion of important projects in the upcoming year such as the Gozo Aquatic and Sports Centre, Dar San Guzepp, the Victoria Primary and Middle Schools, and the new health centre in Victoria.

It also noted positively the already announced upcoming acquisition of an MRI machine for Gozo, a service which will greatly abate the hardships of Gozitan patients who have to travel to Malta to use this service.

The Chamber welcomed the provision of accommodation for Gozitan students studying in Malta, and those for relatives who have their family members currently undertaking care in Maltese hospitals. This had been promised for some time.

Nonetheless in view of the recent publication of the Gozo Regional Development Strategy the Chamber said it believes that the budget has “failed an important opportunity to transform the Gozitan economy into a more sustainable economy, and to sustain a long-term vision for the island.”

In its budgetary document the Chamber said it had highlighted that: While the blanket 2% tax on the purchase of property in Gozo was beneficial at a point when the market was stagnant, such a blanket measure as it is currently formulated is incentivising the development of small apartments concentrated into massive projects, within communities that cannot currently absorb such type of development.

Nonetheless the Chamber said it had also advocated that the savings from the removal of

the reduced stamp duty should be directed to incentives which are aligned to Gozo’s socio-economic priorities.

Except from the increase from Euro 30,000 to Euro 40,000 for first time buyers in Gozo who buy property in Urban Conservation Areas, such incentives have not materialised in any way, the Chamber said.

The Ghal Ghawdex Forum had proposed that incentives be extended to vernacular and post war properties southside the UCA where buyers undertake to preserve the integrity of the property. In 2022 the GRDA had also highlighted that the present scheme be transformed into:

“Targeted incentives that are aligned with the achievement of policy objectives, namely:

- (i) encourage more upmarket property development in Gozo;*
- (ii) limit eligibility of the scheme to low-end, dilapidated and vacant property which is repurposed into medium- to higher-end real estate in selected development zones;*
- (iii) at the same time, subject small units to either higher stamp duty and/or additional fees to disincentivise the construction of small, low-end units; and*
- (iv) promote green and efficient buildings.”*

Unfortunately, no such type of incentives have materialised, the Chamber said. “Such a situation may simply lead to an increase in prices, without actually directing the current construction industry to more sustainable practices and upmarket property development.”



75 years on: Putting a face to victims of one of Gozo's biggest tragedies

On Saturday 30th October 1948, 75 years ago today, the day started off normally, with ferry trips from Gozo to Malta and back working like clockwork. But no one knew the tragedy that was awaiting the island that day.

The Gozo ferry MV Bancinu took on the 1:15pm trip, taking passengers from the Mgarr Harbour in Gozo to Marfa in Malta. But, considering the fact that a strong south-westerly wind was blowing, the ferry made its way to St Paul's Bay rather than Marfa.

In an extensive 2012 article, details of a tragedy that would take place later that day were relived. The 4:30pm trip leaving from Marfa was cancelled because the MV Bancinu took about 75 minutes to get from Mgarr to St Paul's Bay and back. It also took a longer time for the passengers to disembark, since it didn't moor properly to the quay.

People boarding the bus from Valletta to Marfa to catch the cancelled 4:30pm were informed, and one passenger called up the manager of Marfa-Mgarr Transport, Mariano Xuereb, who said he was willing to provide a *luzzu* (fishing boat) for these passengers.

As the day progressed, Xuereb changed his mind about sending the *luzzu*, so instead, other arrangements were made. Karmnu Grima and Salvu Refalo agreed to do the trip and headed to Marfa, only to find quite a large amount of people waiting: 24 men and one woman, definitely more than they were expecting. The men insisted on making two trips to the island, but the passengers protested, possibly frustrated by the waiting time, and all boarded the small boat.

Sailing to Comino went by without incident, but once the boat passed the small island, the sea became rougher. They were advised to head to Hondoq ir-Rummien creek instead of Mgarr, which is an inlet close to the port. It was reported that the passengers, however, insisted on Mgarr, despite the rough waves. As the small boat approached the port, it could no longer withstand the pounding waves, and capsized near Il-Golf tac-Cawl just after 8pm. The youngest member aboard, Karmnu Attard, managed to make it to shore and call to inform the Mgarr police of the tragedy.

The aftermath

In a statement, Karmnu said that water was getting into the boat and when big waves struck, the passengers panicked, and the boat capsized. They were just 50m away from the shore.

It was all-hands-on-deck from there, with several constables, locals and the Royal Navy and Royal Air Force pitching in. Thankfully, Michael Buttigieg from Nadur, Pawlu Zammit from Xaghra and Cikku Gauci had also managed to swim safely to shore.

In the inquiry, technical expert Giuseppe Caruana stated that the safety load had been exceeded, saying not more than 13 passengers should have been on that boat. In the days that followed, the corpses of the remaining passengers were recovered from the sea, some even found off Fomm ir-Rih in Malta, six days after the tragedy.

Remembering those who passed away.

Those who tragically lost their lives 71 years ago were: Duminku Attard, Karmnu Azzopardi, Mikiel Azzopardi, Rita Buttigieg, Salvu Buttigieg, Manwel Camilleri, Gorg Curmi, Guzeppi Dingli, Guzeppi Gatt, Gorg Galea, Karmnu Grima, Ganni Mercieca, Wistin Magro, Grezzju Magro, Cikku Portelli, Salvu Refalo, Baskal Sammut, Karmnu Spiteri, Manwel Sultana, Manwel Vella, Pawlu Vella, Guzeppi Scicluna and Manwel Zammit. Times of Malta



*Gewz, lewz,
qastan, tin
Kemm
inhobb lil
San Martin.
Which roughly
translates to:
Walnuts,
almonds,
chestnuts,
figs - I sure
love
St Martin.*

Saint Martin's cloth purse: In Maltese tradition, On St. Martin's day, children are given a simple and colourful cloth bag that is full of sweets, fruits, and nuts. As per the custom, the bag includes an apple, an orange, a tangerine, a pomegranate along with a collection of walnuts, hazelnuts, chestnuts, shelled almonds and figs.

Sweets can also be included and usually one finds a glazed bun with a liquorice-sweet on top. Tradition has it that in days gone by, children used to hang this cloth bag onto their bed at bedtime and they would find all the goodies inside it in the morning.

This tradition of a bounty on the feast of Saint Martin can be associated with the charity displayed by Saint Martin, but some say it originated from the times when the Church would be preparing for the fasting that was done during Advent and hence a good spread was a big treat before the 40 days of Advent..

Make sure you will not miss the 500th Edition of the this Journal

Various aspects of women's lives in the 18th century have been documented by historian Yosanne Vella, revealing so many aspects of women's lives, including the work they did, their involvement in religion and magic, as well as their encounters with other members of society, their crimes and when they themselves fell victims of crime. Here are six stories from real court and administrative records of the age

Women at the tail-end of Malta's historical dominance by the Knights were not economically inactive, and registers consulted by historian Yosanne Vella reveal a considerable 199 out of some 829 shop permits, that were run by women.

Throughout the 1700s, women could be found working in wine taverns with other family members when husbands or fathers were out at sea corsairing and looting Muslim ships – licensed piracy was during this century the second most important job for the Maltese after agriculture.

But as these six stories show, far from passive members of society, women occupied many other shades of life in the kaleidoscopic society of the 18th century.

Witchcraft

The Inquisitor's Archives are replete with cases of women accused of sorcery, the preparation of love potions, magic perfumes or claiming to heal by magic, yet only a few cases mention specifically the 'Devil'. In 1749 Andrea Schembri from Naxxar reported a woman had been to his house to cure his sick wife: he alleged of hearing the widow Maria Gusman whisper three times: "Devil, cure the body and take the soul"... that same year, Gusman owned up to the Inquisitor of having personally invoked the Devil as a young girl 10 years earlier.

Love potions from the Manderaggio

In another case from 1721, the two sisters Maddalena and Anna, together with their friend Catherine, confessed of having concocted a magic potion of salt, charcoal, palm leaves, olive leaves, fire and water in a bid to make them charming and attractive. They said they had made it with Grattia, a 60-year-old woman from Żebbuġ but who lived in Valletta's Mandraġġ, who had claimed she had the approval from the Church for this potion.

A darker history:
tales of **Maltese women**
in the **18th century**



Healers

In 1715, the woman Grattia Farrugia from Qormi who was known as a healer tried curing Anna Grech's neck pain – caused by a tumour no less – by boiling olive and palm leaves with the pieces of wood from a broom, in water on a fire. She placed the mixture on Anna while recalling Christ's Passion and the Holy Trinity. Before throwing away the liquid in the fire, she asked Anna's aunt Francesca to look deeply in it and to see if she could see the face of anyone she knew. Grattia was warned several times to stop using her magical cures, until she was imprisoned in 1749 in the Bishop's Court.

Women in crime

Women were naturally also implicated in crime, and displayed great skill and cunning as much as their male counterparts. Using fairly elaborate cons, one Paulica Demicoli in 1744 managed to steal various objects from Thomas Mifsud of Bormla: specifically four walking sticks, men's and women's silk stockings of various colours, an Indian blanket, a white embroidered sheet, 13 Maltese cotton caps, two pieces of Indian curtain and a cutting of bed hangings made of green wool.

Demicoli managed this by tricking Mifsud's young daughter Maria by paying her a scudo to simply hand over the goods and another scudo after gaining her confidence and even claiming that a young man named Felice was interested in asking for her hand in marriage. Upon learning of the daring theft, Thomas Mifsud filed a case to fore Demicoli to return the goods she had 'acquired'.

Victims of crime

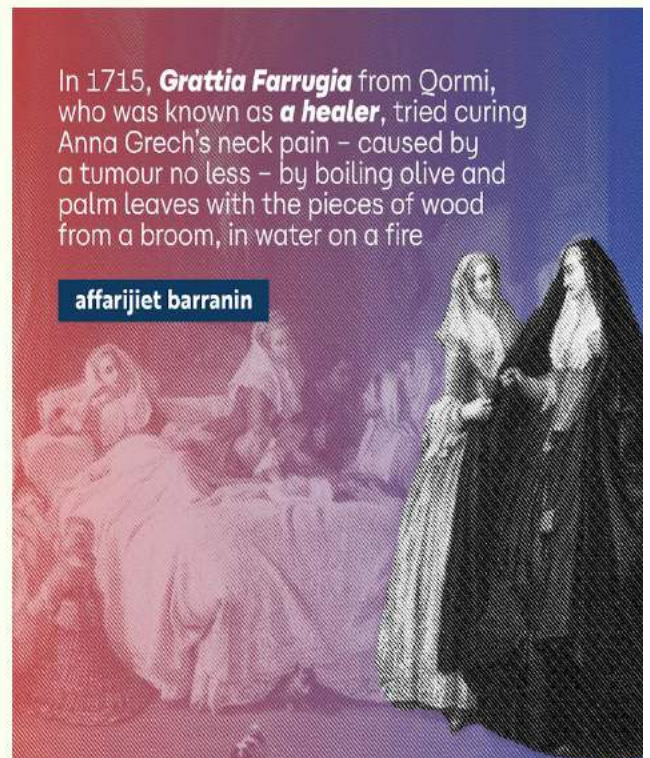
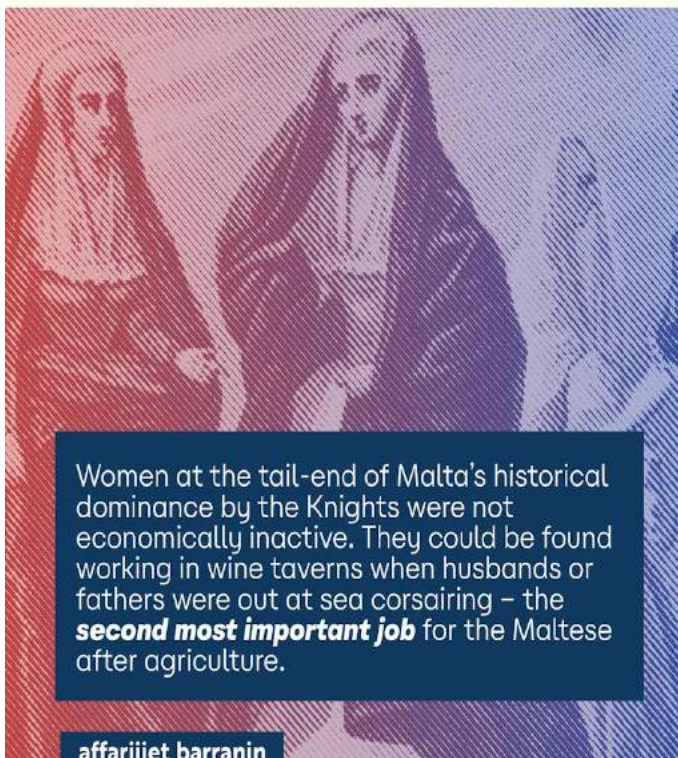
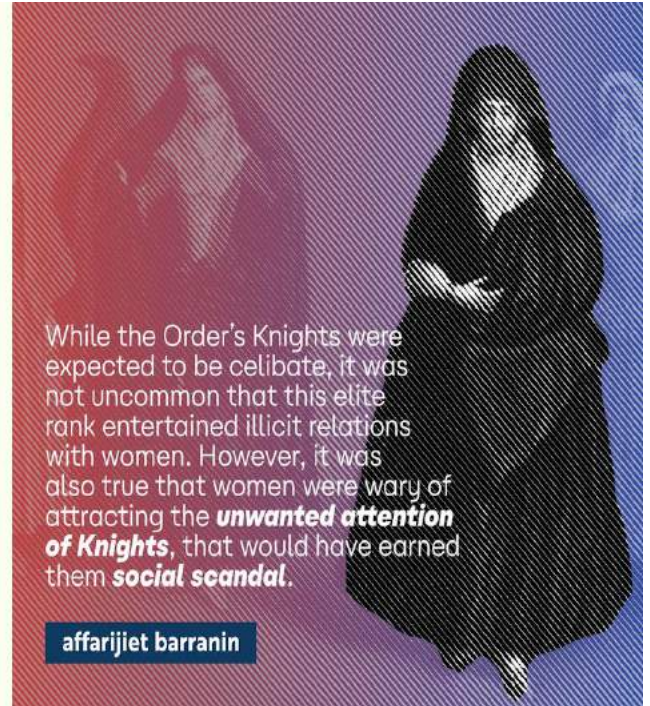
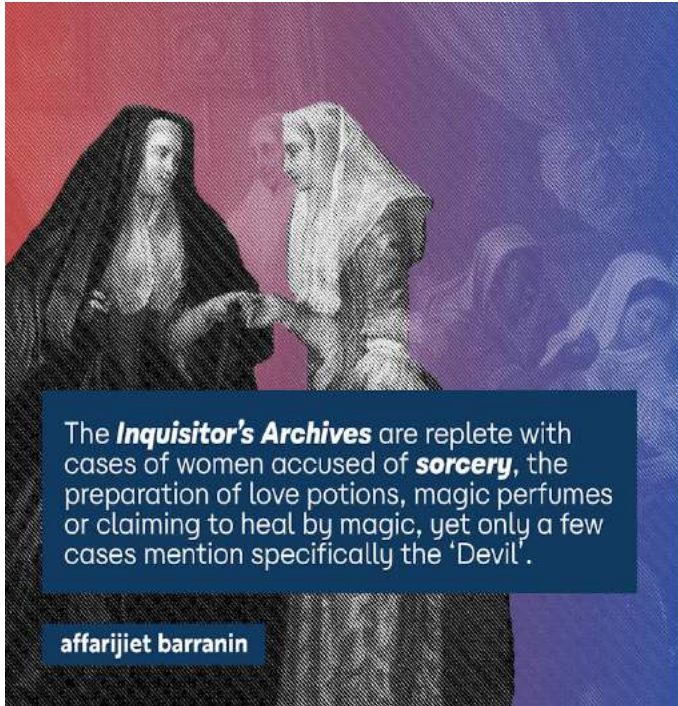
18th century court records reveal through investigations of rape cases where female victims were treated as "fallen" women. In many cases, the rapist was often a neighbour, fiancé or a relative. Some women were persuaded into collaborating by promises of marriage, such as one Catherine Frendo, who later complained that the man had not kept his promise. Not all women agreed to marry their assailant after being raped even if he was available: one Giovanni Maria of Qormi, in 1705 told a court that he had raped Gratia Psaila knowingly, since she would be then unable to marry anyone else other than him. But Gratia refused to marry him.

Knights and mistresses

While the Order's Knights were expected to be celibate, it was not uncommon that this elite rank entertained illicit relations with women. However, it was also true that women were wary of attracting the unwanted attention of Knights, that would have earned them social scandal. In 1723, one Maria Dwieli was approached by a Knight of the French Langue while she was praying at the

altar of the church of St John in Valletta: the Knight had asked her to visit his house. Maria changed the church she frequented to avoid the Knight's advances, but his persistence led her to file a report to the Inquisitor, fearing that her reputation would be tarnished and that this could have cost her the prospect of a good marriage.

Source: *Women In 18th Century Malta*, Yosanne Vella (SKS)



The Vulcan tragedy miracle at Żabbar 78 years ago



Seventy years ago, a co-pilot of a Royal Air Force Vulcan bomber requested leave because of the imminent birth of his baby. Kristina

Chetcuti discovers how his last-minute substitution led to a series of technical landing errors and, consequently, the tragic mid-air explosion of the bomber over Żabbar, leaving five of its seven crewmen and one civilian dead.

On October 14, 1975, Flying Officer E.G. Alexander was co-piloting the routine exercise flight of Vulcan XM645 from the RAF base in Waddington, UK to Malta. He was not normally part of the Vulcan's crew, as the original co-pilot had asked to be replaced because his wife was about to give birth. This change in crew proved to be fatal.

The RAF's official reports of the incident say the co-pilot was "imprudently" given leave by the captain, Flight Lieutenant G.R. Alcock, to do the first approach at Luqa. Fl. Off. Alexander was not adequately briefed on the problems of landing on a short runway, especially one with a slope.

Godfrey Mangion, 65, an aircraft and photo enthusiast, who was on the runway threshold and saw the drama unfold before his camera lens that day, recalls the moment.

"I noticed that the Vulcan was landing quite low but didn't quite register there was a problem until I heard this deafening iron scraping sound. I realised the aircraft had hit the undershoot and sheared off the undercarriage. It bounced back into the air some 20 feet or so and it then hit the runway again some 600 feet after the impact," he recalled.

By this time, the RAF reports say, the captain had taken over but, according to Mr Mangion, "instead of staying put and waiting for the fire engines to extinguish any possible fire, the captain decided – it must have been a split-second decision – to climb away again and attempt to do a circuit and crash land".

It was an ill-fated judgment and, for a few seconds later, fire broke out on one of the wings and the bomber exploded mid-air. The captain and co-pilot ejected at the last moment and descended by parachute.

"The curse of the Vulcans was that the rear crew members didn't have ejector seats. They had to open the crew door, lower a ladder and bale out with their parachutes on. The five crew members, for unclear reasons, never managed this," Mr Mangion added.

The deadly explosion occurred over Żabbar at lunchtime, claiming the life of Vincenza Zammit, 48, who was walking in the town's main road at the time. About 20 others were injured, some seriously.

The report of The Times of Malta the next day said: "It was part of the aircraft containing the fuel tanks and it exploded on impact with the ground, sending a searing wall of flame, two storeys high down the street away from the parish church. Over 100 houses and shops suffered considerable damage... The crash sent the people into a panic. Women, some weeping, other screaming left their houses and ran as fast as they could, away from the wreckage." Despite the sheer devastation in Żabbar, the casualties were so low many still consider it to be a miracle.

Charles Meilaq, 60, from Żabbar, who was then a reporter with The Times, heard the explosion and rushed to the roof of his house.



“It was a miracle. Our Lady saved us from what could have been a more terrible tragedy,” he said. Mr Meilaq recalled how he rushed to the scene and came across a completely gutted Triumph in the middle of Sanctuary Street. “I feared for the life of the car owners but was told they had escaped. It was one of the luckiest escapes.”

The car belonged to a couple from Wales who were honeymooning in Malta and the second they saw the fire they abandoned their car and ran away

from the searing flames. Within seconds, the car was just one blaze. The scene was chaotic.

The Times of Malta reported: “The rescuers suffered from lack of water. Having exhausted both the foam and the water carried in the tenders, they desperately sought a well in the vicinity. They only succeeded after a long time. For hours after the crash, the fire-fighting tenders ran a shuttle service to and from the scene of the crash.”

One corner house was so gutted the RAF rebuilt it from scratch for the owners. The house was re-named Vulcan.

Ironically, for Flt Lt Alcock, it was second time lucky. International aviation expert Richard Caruana said the airman had been involved in another Vulcan accident four years earlier in the UK but he had taken the aircraft up to 10,000 feet to give his crew time to jump out, preventing the aircraft from crashing on a village school.

The success of that operation was probably the reason why he opted to circuit the damaged Vulcan but the plan failed and it led to one of the biggest aviation tragedies in Malta, leaving a permanent scar on the nation. During the filming for the feature on the tragedy, The Times crew were approached by several people wanting to recount their sad memories of the day. One woman summed it up: “I was here. I saw the bits fall off from the sky. I haven’t been on an aeroplane since that day.” Times of Malta



Ed Sheeran to hold concert in Malta

Modern music icon Ed Sheeran is going to be playing a concert in Malta as part of his 2024 Mathematics tour.

Malta features as one of the destinations where Sheeran will be playing, as announced on his website on Friday morning. More details such as the date and venue of the concert are set to be announced on 6 November, according to the same website. It is expected that the concert will take place between in the second half of June or the beginning of July. A Grammy award winner, Sheeran’s latest album Autumn Variations came out not long ago on 29th September.

Produced by twin brothers Aaron and Bryce Dessner who form part of indie rock group The National, it is Sheeran’s seventh studio album, coming hot on the heels of his sixth album Subtract, which was released last May. With over 150 million records sold worldwide, Sheeran is one of the best known and most successful music artists in the modern music world, with two of his albums featuring in the list of best-selling albums in UK chart history.

Lenten biscuits (kwarezimal)

A **kwarezimal** (Maltese: *kwareżimal*; from Italian *Quaresima* 'Lent') is a traditional Maltese biscuit, usually baked during Lent. It contains flour, sugar, orange rind and ground almonds (*intrita*). They are vegan, since they contain no animal protein, eggs, or dairy products.

Tradition holds that the kwarezimal was developed by the Knights of Malta. At the time, sugar was not restricted during Lent as it often is in modern practice, but rather considered a type of spice due to its high cost and humoral qualities.

MAKES 12 COOKING 25 MINUTES

Ingredients

- **300 g** plain flour
- **1 tbsp** olive oil
- **300 g** ground almonds
- **150 g** sugar
- **1 tbsp** cocoa powder
- **1 tsp** mixed spice
- **1 tsp** ground cinnamon
- **½ tsp** ground cloves
- **2 tbsp** orange flower water
- grated rind of 1 lemon
- grated rind of 1 orange
- **200 ml** water
- **2 tbsp** honey
- **2 tbsp** chopped roasted almonds

Standing time 2–3 hours

Advertisement

Instructions

Rub the flour and olive oil together. Add the ground almonds, sugar, cocoa powder, mixed spice, cinnamon, cloves, orange flower water, and the lemon and orange rinds.

Make a well in the centre, pour in the water and knead gently to form a soft smooth dough. Dust slightly with the flour and allow to rest for 15 minutes.

On a lightly floured board, gently roll out the pastry to 1 cm thick and 15 cm wide. Cut oblongs 8 cm in width and place on a lightly floured baking sheet. Allow to sit for a few hours before baking. Bake in a preheated oven at 180°C for 25 minutes.

Remove from oven and allow to cool slightly. Brush with honey and sprinkle with the almonds to serve.

Cook's Notes

Oven temperatures are for conventional; if using fan-forced (convection), reduce the temperature by 20° C. | We use Australian tablespoons and cups: 1 teaspoon equals 5 ml; 1 tablespoon equals 20 ml; 1 cup equals 250 ml. | All herbs are fresh (unless specified) and cups are lightly packed. | All vegetables are medium size and peeled, unless specified. | All eggs are 55-60 g, unless specified.





**FEDERATION OF MALTESE
LANGUAGE SCHOOLS INC**

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FMLS Newsletter 2023- 4

Executive Committee: President – Edwidge Borg (VIC). Secretary Annemarie Thind (NSW), Treasurer - Alfred Flask (ACT). Vice President Miriam Friggieri (NSW), All Correspondence to be addressed to: The Secretary, FMLS INC. Email: illawarramalteseaustralians@gmail.com & cc to: The President: malteselanguageschools@yahoo.com

FMLS 2023 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

This year's **FMLS AGM** will be held on the **12 November at 6.00 pm on ZOOM**. We look forward to seeing as many teachers and coordinators of Maltese Language schools participating at this meeting. Please mark this date in your calendar. Schools please notify the FMLS of any new, or teachers no longer involved with your school, in order that our mailing list is kept up to date.

SCHOOLS Reports

If you have not done so, now is the time to prepare your 2022_2023 school report for the FMLS AGM. It is important that schools share their experiences throughout the year on how they are progressing, obstacles encountered, and achievements. We all can learn from each other.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND ACHIEVEMENTS

After the AGM, time will be allocated to whoever wants to make a presentation for this session. It is important that the FMLS executive is notified of any presentation at least 2 days before the meeting.

Useful video links for teachers.

Learn Maltese with dialogues. There are over 29 videos in this series. The accent might sound like you hear in Australia. Still a useful resource.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sAoHhRqwxJQ&list=PLAYE3mVUE5sdC1CUIw1Ry_rNY0-487L3V&index=5

Introducing the verb TO BE <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J2ki4qdDrdI>

Mastering the Art of Writing a Letter <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B1CtGW68tLg>

First words in Maltese <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Aop0fo2OJw0>

TVM 17 October 2023 about our Maltese Language Classes in Australia.



Maltese Classes Aust TVM Intvw.mp4

Edwidge Borg
President

WE SUPPORT THE TEACHING AND LEARNING OF THE MALTESE LANGUAGE WHEREVER THE MALTESE LIVE AND ENCOURAGE EVERYONE TO PRESERVE IT FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS, MR FRANK SCICLUNA WAS THE FIRST PRESIDENT OF THE FEDERATION OF MALTESE LANGUAGE SCHOOLS INC. IN AUSTRALIA.



Here is a group of men playing Bocci at the Maltese Senior Citizens Club. The club is run for seniors within the Shire of Whittlesea with the goal of socializing, bonding friendship and exercising an active body and mind. Maltese men and women meet every Friday morning for up to about five hours. The club is located in the Wu3a building behind the Lalor Library. Most people drive to the facility as there is a good carpark but there is also a free pick up and return transport service.

The major activities at the club consist of the games of Bocci as in this photo, others like to play cards or billiards or the most women's favorite the bingo. There are spaces in the establishment where most men gather to chat about Australian news and Maltese news of their birth country. Another favorite topic is talking about the holiday they just had, either from Malta, internationally or locally. Most men are keen in their sports such as soccer and of course footy. Women talk about their family, their house, their cooking and of course focusing on the numbers being drawn during bingo. The club holds quite a few different activities throughout the year such as Dinner Dances, Outings, Club lunches, etc. The club consists of a good membership and it is always a fun day enjoyed every week by all.

Maltese Diaspora



Matters

MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER
Journal for Maltese Living Abroad



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Serje ta' Tahdilitiet

L-INKWIZIZZJONI

Il-Palazz tal-Inkwizitur, il-Birgu

9 ta' Novembru 2023
7 ta' Dicembru 2023

25 ta' Jannar 2024
22 ta' Frar 2024



The Ghost of
ELVIS

Darren Armstrong
AS ELVIS

PROMISED LAND ENTERTAINMENT PROUDLY PRESENTS

THREE ACES IN CONCERT

DEC 16TH
2023

BRODRICK JONES
TOM JONES

JACQUI D
PATSY CLINE

TICKETS \$25 EACH - 7:30PM TILL 10PM

GEORGE CROSS FALCONS
COMMUNITY CENTRE
25-27 LAKE AVE CRINGILA NSW

TO BOOK TICKETS CALL LOUIS 0420857363

ARTWORK BY JACQUI D AT TEAMPATSYDESIGNS@GMAIL.COM



St Sebastian Seniors Association

Cup Eve Social Night

Date: Saturday 4th November, 2023

Time: 6.30pm till 12.00 midnight

Venue: Luxor Function Centre
(503 Sydenham Rd, Sydenham 3037)

Cost: Adults - \$70.00p/p
Members \$65.00 p/p

Includes: A 2-course meal (main & dessert)
(Drinks included - wine, beer, soft drinks, tea & coffee)

Music: By D.J Tony Tabone

Dress: Neat casual

R.S.V.P: 28/10/23 (No refunds after 01/11/23)

Contact:
Monica - 0413 539 046
Allan - 0411 500 842



A prize awarded to the best dressed wearing a hat

Soon, we are
reaching the
500th edition



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to send us your
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