MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER 514 March/Marzu 2024

Maltese eNewsletter

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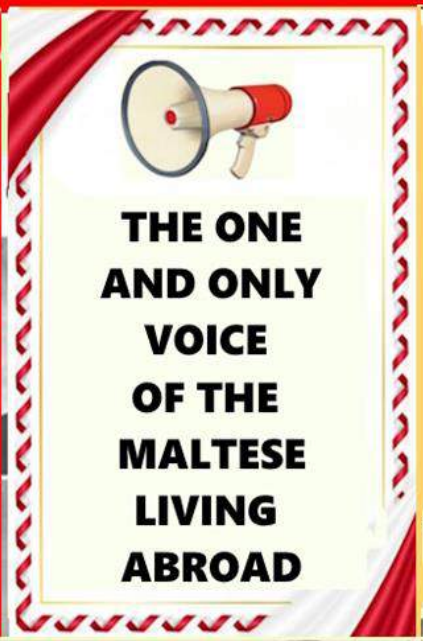
Journal for the Maltese Diaspora

Let's save Valletta while we can

THE CITY OF THE KNIGHTS

'A city is made by people, not hotels' Valletta residents oppose Evans project

THE STORY OF CORTO MALTESE



THE ONE AND ONLY VOICE OF THE MALTESE LIVING ABROAD

WEEKLY REFLECTION

BISHOP OF DARWIN
CHARLES GAUCI

LUDWIG AND JASMINE FROM MALTA TO NSW

Mary and Tony Pace-Feraud

CRISIS – QUO VADIS?

MALTESE LIVING ABROAD

More than three quarters of Maltese and Gozitans have relatives who live abroad. Malta is a small country in size, but we have a big family spread all over the world – the Maltese Diaspora.

Maltese and Gozitans have been emigrating to all corners of the world for centuries. At first, most of our people who had to emigrate because of unemployment, overpopulation, and poverty, sought a better life in neighbouring Mediterranean countries like Tunisia, Egypt and Lampedusa. Then, since the 1900s, they started venturing to faraway countries like Argentina, the United States, Canada and Australia. Today there are Maltese, Gozitans and their descendants in around 194 countries, practically in every country in the world.

At this point in time those Maltese communities who emigrated between 190s and 70s are rapidly disappearing and unfortunately, they are not being replaced by the younger generations. This last decade we have witness the closure of several organisations, journals (The Maltese Herald, the Voice and several others), Maltese radio programs, schools, clubs, chaplaincies (very few priests left) etc. Other associations are struggling to survive The future is looking grim. And the problem is too difficult to resolve.

The few of us that are left must understand that this is a crucial time to unite and join forces instead of pulling the rope in opposite direction.

The number of emails and comments that I have received from readers of the journal is unbelievable. Correspondence came from USA, Canada, UK and mainly Australia (NSW Victoria and South Australia). They all agree that we are in dire straight. They lost a large number of Malta-born individuals and associations etc.

I suggest we all get together and forget our differences and discuss the issue and find a way to reach the younger generations to continue the sterling work that the past and present generations managed to achieve to preserve the culture, identity and heritage of our homeland in the country where we live in. First of all we have to empower them and don't patronise them. I urge the Government of Malta through the Council for Maltese Living Abroad (CMLA), all the Maltese/Australian/Canadian/American associations to assist during this crisis before it is too late. This respected journal can be used as a tool of unity communication and survival.

Frank, Your Journal this month is extremely factual, possibly worldwide. We, here in South Africa, have seen the dwindling of Maltese for some time. The younger generations appear to have lost interest in their lineage. Keep your Journal running – it is fascinating. Regards Ronald Andrews 11/03/2024

CONCERNED – CARMEN GALEA

Dear Frank, it is a sobering thought about what happened in the state of the Maltese community in Australia. It leaves me sad and at a dilemma what one can do.

I, who spent twenty-eight years teaching Maltese at the Saturday school, saw in a tangible way how hard it was to keep the program of the Maltese language growing. The marketing of the HSC was important to keep the language afloat. The hard work to battle Board of studies to be lenient to our small candidature of our language proved futile in the end. Assimilation, internet, the social media and social change in Maltese society all played a role in diminishing the importance of the Maltese Language in our community.

I believe that for decades we were not able to regenerate enough young blood to take over many aspects of the Maltese community initiatives. The same people stuck to their seats of power and did not lead the young to educate them in depth about what it means to be Maltese in modern times. We continued to feed the Maltese anachronistic activities that lost their meaning. The young saw nothing exciting in Maltese culture and we cut off ourselves from our mother country and therefore had little regenerative material to give to our young.

The way forward for us is first to keep the channels of communications with the Maltese community open. The aftermath of Covid changed many mindsets. Important without any emotions, study the way forward without spending more time on what went wrong. We must pick up all the things that worked in the past and renew them to cater for families in our community. I think we did not put enough emphasis on our families to inspire them to lead their kids to study Maltese. In my teaching I always kept this as a priority and wherever possible talk to parents.

I hope that a new light is dawning and somehow, we start a new journey to have a vibrant Maltese community. – Carmen Galea

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UNESCO has warned us that the commercial takeover of Valletta poses a serious threat to its authenticity, as one of its criteria for its World Heritage status is Valletta being a "rare urban inhabited site which has preserved in near entirety its original features".

Tragically for the city of Valleta, Malta's capital, with every family that leaves, with every old shop that closes, the city's life-blood drains away. The latest issue is Evans Building, which has served the community as a college, a laboratory, public offices and a clinic, now threatened by privatisation, to be leased as for another five-star hotel, rather than being turned into public building for childceare for the Residents or an Aged Care Facility to keep Valletta's elderly in their community and to save the Nibbia chapel of Bones beneath Evan's Building, a Valletta heritage treasure.

Over the last years, some 70 permits for tourist accommodation were granted, from grand boutique hotels to Air BnB apartments adding thousands of hotel beds to our capital. There are enough grand hotels in the city while some resident were forced to leave the city and live somewhere else on the island.

Growing in a healthy love of self is part of our *Lenten journey.*

Shortly after I was born, my paternal grandmother found herself with all her children had left home. Dad was married and living with Mum. His two sisters had joined the convent and the youngest in the family, Uncle Joe joined the Jesuits.When my brother was born grandma often looked after me giving mum time to look after a new baby.

I spent a lot of time with my grandparents. I had grandma's unconditional love and attention. It was a very secure infancy with an **'all-powerful' protector!** I was her shadow! She died when I was five and a half years old. I remember her so very well. By this time, Mum and Dad had my sister Maria to also look after. Both our parents loved all of us very much. However, they had three children under five and a half years of age. They could not possibly give me the undivided attention that Grandma was able to give me. Her death triggered a crisis for me.

I had to rebuild my sense of being unconditionally loved. Even though we believe that God loves unconditionally we do not always act on that belief. We think that we need to earn love. We can at times even question our lovability. So many experiences that we carry can cause this to happen. We are the beloved sons and daughters of God. **God loves in us what The Abba ie the 'Father' loves in Jesus.**

We can hold our heads high securely and live by our God…

Karamellu books offer a glimpse of village life in a bygone era

Book set presented to the president

The president receives the books from Charles Buttigieg.

A set of the books *Karamellu tar-Raħal t'Isfel* was presented to President George Vella by the author, Charles Buttigieg.

The Karamellu stories were inspired by Buttigieg's childhood experiences and memories of people he used to meet throughout his upbringing in Żejtun's 'Ir-Raħal t'Isfel'.

Buttigieg underlined the need for children to appreciate and treasure the Maltese Language and praised the campaign in favour of the Maltese Language, '*L-Ilsien Malti Għal Qalbi*' launched in 2022 by the Office of the President and Maltese language associations.

The series 'Karamellu tar Raħal t'Isfel' is a collection of three books, with visuals by CN Creative Designs. The stories offer a glimpse of how children and their families lived decades ago in a calm and serene environment where everyone knew everyone else.

Buttigieg, who was the first Refugee Commissioner in Malta, also presented to the president a copy of his book 'Ir-Refuġjati f'Hajti', which tells the story of refugees in Malta from the mid-1980s to the first decade of the millennium.

Fiori della Passione – Passion of the Christ in flowers at Fontana

BY GOZO NEWS ·

Starting on Friday, a floral artistic installation will be on display in Fontana as part of the Easter in Gozo 2024 programme. This will be third edition of I Fiori della Passione, created by Ghaqda Armar Fontana and portraying the Passion of the Christ. The artistic installation will be related to the time of Lent, with the main attraction being a cross made of colourful flowering plants which is based on a design by local artist Josef Camilleri. I Fiori della Passione opens on Friday, the 8th of March, until Sunday, the 31st of March, on the Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish Shrine Parvis, Fontana, from 7am until 10pm. This event is being held in collaboration with the Cultural Heritage Directorate within the Ministry for Gozo and Planning.

Enabling Patient Public Involvement (PPI) in Epilepsy

Patient and public involvement (PPI) is defined as research that is carried out 'with' or 'by' the public and patients rather than 'to', 'about' or 'for' them. PPI is thus the active contribution of patients, often with lived experience of a condition, in determining how research is formulated, conducted, interpreted, and communicated. Epilepsy, which affects over 4000 persons in Malta and Gozo, can have profound physical, psychological, social and economic consequences. There are still many misconceptions about the condition and this greatly hinders persons with epilepsy to integrate fully in society. PPI can thus empower persons with epilepsy to participate more fully in policy and research decisions which affect their life.

These were some of the main points to emerge from a Malta Epilepsy Forum organised by the Caritas Malta Epilepsy Association entitled **Patient Public Involvement (PPI) in Epilepsy** on Saturday 2 March

2024, Caritas Community Centre, Hamrun, Malta, attended by over 100 participants which included persons with epilepsy and their relatives as well as various health care professionals and policy makers.
The forum was opened by Mr Frank Portelli, President, Caritas Malta Epilepsy Association with welcome remarks by Mr Anthony Gatt, Director, Caritas Malta, Her Excellency Marie Louise Coleiro Preca, President Emeritus of Malta, Hon Graziella Galea, Opposition spokesperson for Inclusion and the Voluntary Sector and a video message from Hon Julia Farrugia Portelli, Minister for Inclusion and the Voluntary Sector.
The key note talks were given by Prof Helen Cross, The Prince of Wales's Chair of Childhood Epilepsy, Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children NHS Trust, London, UK; President, International League Against Epilepsy and Dr Francesca Sofia from Milan, Italy, President, International Bureau for Epilepsy, who discussed how PPI is being implemented at an international level, such as in interactions with WHO.
The panel discussion focused on the European and Maltese experience in patient public involvement in epilepsy and included the participation of Ms Lorraine Lally, Ireland; Mr Michael Alexa, Austria; Dr Anna Camilleri, VP CMEA Malta**;** Ms Shirley Maxwell, Epilepsy Connections, Scotland; Mr Matthew Attard, PR CMEA, Malta and Mr Thomas Porschen, Germany.The main message from the Forum emphasised that persons with epilepsy should not keep their condition hidden; they should speak out and be more involved in policy decisions which affect their future such as availability of new antiseizure medicines in Malta.
The Forum was closed at 3.45pm by Opposition spokesperson for Health Dr Adrian Delia. Hon Jo-Etienne Abela, Minister for Health expressed his wish for CMEA to forward the report to him in order that the issues raised can be addressed. Contact details: Caritas Malta Epilepsy Association
Caritas Community Centre Triq Mountbatten Ħamrun ĦMR1577 Tel: (+356) 2219 9000
Email: maltaepilepsy@gmail.com https://www.facebook.com/Epilepsy.malta.association
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Marica Cassar PR & Fundraising Officer

Floating Solar Technology

This A PROMOTION OF the Preliminary Market Consultation issued byREWS:
https://www.rews.org.mt/#/en/pmc/276
The Regulator for Energy and Water Services Malta (REWS) is inviting interested supplier companies to submit proposals for floating solar technology projects, including photovoltaic farms, that can be implemented within the sea area extending up to12 nautical miles (NM) off the coast of Malta. This will allow the Maltese Government to assess investor interest in Malta's nearshore floating solar RES opportunities and gauge market readiness for such projects, while attracting both local and foreign investment.
Economic operators are encouraged to recommend their own solar technology project methodologies based on their experiences. The information to be received in response to this PMC will assist the project team in finalizing the scope of work and requirements, which may be used at a future date in the issuance of a competitive call for offers.
***Interested companies can register as Suppliers through the ePPs platform. Once registered and associated to this PMC, the designated contact within the organisation will continue to receive any information on updates and clarifications that may be made during the PMC publication period. All responses to this PMC need to be made in English. Responses must be uploaded through the ePPs platform. The electronic tendering platform can be accessed from:**
https://www.etenders.gov.mt/epps/pmc/viewPmc.do?resourceId=10825857
Deadline for submissions of proposals is set for April 24, 2024 at 11:00.

Against all odds our journal survived and still growing strong

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GAWDENZ BILOCCA GOES TO HOLLIWOOD

Photo: Canva Pro / facebook - Mr. Gawdenz always dreamed of working on a blockbuster movie.

Finally this blessed opportunity arose when the Parish priest went to America to finalize a contract with an American sculptor who WAS WORKING on the Parish statue. The Parish Priest decides to hire Gawdenz Bilocca as a lawyer to represent him on this contract.

The confusion starts right away because the Priest cannot understand how they were supposed to meet the sculptor in the city of New York and instead they meet in the city of California, where coincidentally there is the famous place where films are made: Hollywood.

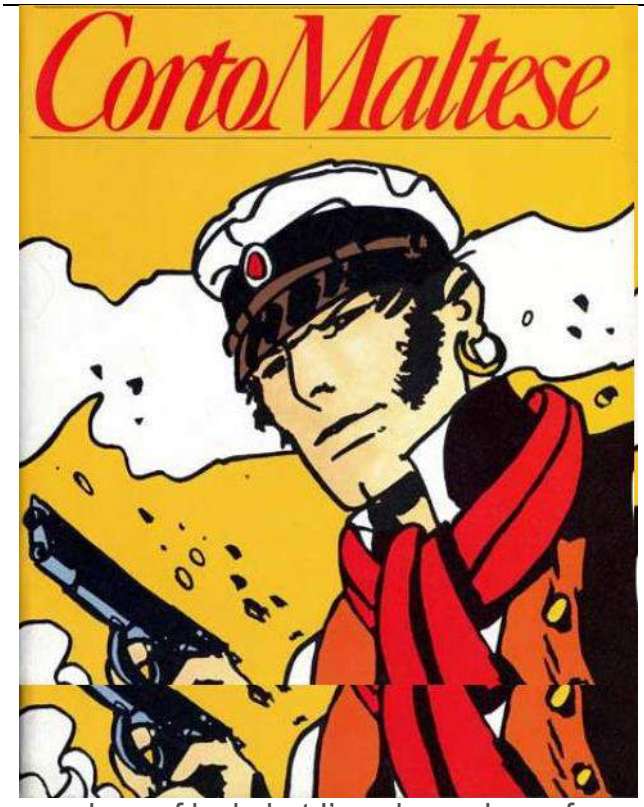
This is the story in the theatre production *Gawdenz for Hollywood* of the Theatre Company Moving On, directed by Fabian Scerri De Carlo and Frederick Camilleri.

The scrit and direction are by Frederick Camilleri while the part of Mr. Gawdenz, is created by none other than Fabian Scerri De Carlo who created this character that is loved by many Maltese and Gozitan. This entertaining comedy will be staged at the theatre of the Floriana Catholic Institute on Saturday 13 April 2024 at 6.00pm and Sunday 14 April 2024 at 4.00pm. Taking part among others Fabian Scerri De Carlo, Frederick Camilleri, Augusto Cardinali, Norma Cristina, Nadette De Carlo, Kyle Scerri De Carlo, Gino Lombardi, Romina Darmanin, Kimberly Ancielleri, Kelli Scerri De Carlo, Jurgen Ciantar, and Daniel Borg Carbott .

Tickets can be purchased from ticketline.com.mt or by calling the numbers 99431724 or 99473620.

Four years ago the Maltese population had to face the first case of Covid-19 on the island. Continuing on the same theme of pandemic diseases, Il-Ħaġar Museum will be presenting a historical lecture on Saturday 16 March 2024 at 11:00 by the title The Spanish Flu Pandemic in Gozo in 1918-1919. This time the lecture will delve into the medical history of the Maltese islands, recounting the 1918-1919 influenza pandemic with specific attention to its spread in Gozo. The audience will have their morbid curiosity satisfied since the lecture will also hint at the other infectious diseases common at that time. Dr Mario Saliba will be referring to original documents about the pandemic.

Entrance to the Museum is free but seat reservations are recommended by emailing: events@heartofgozo.org.mt. The audience is reminded that the Museum is currently also hosting four exhibitions until the Easter celebrations. First is the collective contemporary art exhibition Unknown Prescription by local artists Mario Abela, Charles Balzan, and Justin Falzon. Second is the documentary exhibit What's in a bequest? The Archive of Mro Joseph Vella displaying material from the Vella Music Archive. In relation to the Lent-Easter period, the Gozo Philatelic Society is also presenting various cards and stamps in conjunction with the initiative Easter in Gozo organised by the Ministry for Gozo and Planning. The last exhibit The Way of the Cross will satisfy those interested in the local handcrafted figurines (pasturi style). The miniature figures are set up in a traditional Good Friday procession. The Museum's opening hours are Monday to Sunday, 9:00-17:00. Entrance is free



The story of Corto Maltese

cortomaltese.com/

My name is Corto—Corto MalteseI was born in Malta on July 10, 1887– at least that is what I am told.

Of my early childhood I recall a flag full of crosses and a red beard, my father's. My mother? A gypsy from Seville. She was so beautiful that the painter Ingres fell madly in love with her. (I don't know if this is true; she never spoke to me about these things.)

I recall a beautiful house and a patio full of flowers– it was close to the mosque in Cordova—and I remember well the day a friend of my mother's took my left hand and gazed at it in horror: I did not have a Fate Line. I didn't think about it for long–I took one of my father's razor blades and cut my own Fate Line, long and deep. I doubt that I increased my dose of luck, but I've always been free, and that's good enough for me.

My father was always leaving, and over time he came back less and less often. He was from Tintagel, in Cornwall, a place full of fairies and wizards. He claimed to be the grandson of a witch from Man who had a red cat, but then again, he said a lot of things when he got lost in his bottles. I studied at La Valletta Jewish school and then in Cordova with Rabbi Ezra Toledano. It was he who initiated me into the Torah and told me other secret stories.

At any rate, what I remember best is the day I left Malta. I embarked on the Golden Vanity, a magnificent three-masted ship, and ever since then I have been sailing around the world. I have met Rasputin, Jack London, and many others; I learned to dance the tango in Buenos Aires; in the Antilles and Brazil I met Esmeralda and learned about voodoo rituals. Then there were the Indies, China, and the Caribbean islands, with those lazy verandas and shootings; the Pacific Islands, including Escondida–the strangest of them all–among monks and pirates. I saw a train loaded with gold fall into an icy lake in Mongolia; I have shared the desert silences with a warrior, and greenery and tears with a beautiful Irish fairy; and I've searched for jewels and impossible dreams along the canals and above the roofs of Venice.

I'm not a hero. I like to travel and I don't care for rules, but I respect just one: I never betray my friends. I've searched for so many treasures and I've never found a single one, but I'll keep looking, you can count on that; just a little bit further on…

I THANK ALL THOSE WHO SENT A DONATION TOWARDS THE PRODUCTION OF THE JOURNAL

If you want to send your donation these are the details
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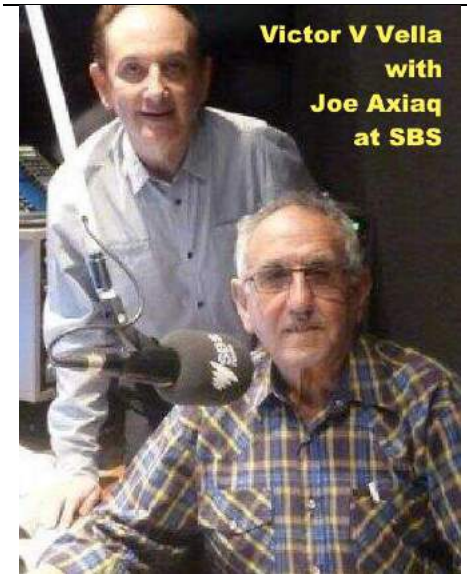


Opinion of Victor V Vella

MA BA Dip. Educ - NSW

Hello Frank and thanks for a colourful and informative. Edition of the Maltese Journal. Not that I enjoyed reading - the death of the Maltese communities in Australia. As I explained and discussed on a recent zoom discussion session with Prof Micallef... this an automatic result of whether you call it change or transition or assimilation It is a natural progression /evolution of migration. The old. gets so mixed up with the new and this is happening with the many 'old' cultures of Australia.

It's the new supported by numbers have and are taking over. The only solution as I see it ..I hope there are others with similar or better ideas. However we are barking at the wrong tree when we keep talking about Maltese classes and attendance at functions etc. One of the most effective way which I find and still practising are the Maltes radio programs.

We still have the services of the SBS. .don't know for how long!.. and also a number of community radio stations through which we can still spread the word . Yes we do not do it like you through English though in your case we can reach the young and the not so old...Maltese.

Again, we have to be painstaking in the preparation and choosing of material and personnel. Re the topics, the simplification of topics to have one foot on the old culture and this applies for the older generations to have the other foot in the new culture re the politics ..not the party one... and systems economics etc. of what is current.

I believe that the radio well used is our only means. Not even television news from Malta... offers any help as the news are the same as the Australian ones...with different faces.....crime accidents and the rhetoric of politicians. Now I am preparing a series of personal interviews for SBS. and two other radio stations about when we were much younger on the aspects of our culture which should go beyond il-*bizzilla* u *ghagin il-forn* and if I may add the language...

Basically, a look at our type of living in the 50 and 60's in Malta ... what were our hobbies how we got on as boys and girls and vice versa our education...walking which played such a part in our lives without modern means of transport... pastimes and processions and the volunteering we used to do.... These interviews are in Maltese as they are aimed at the older generation.

But as I emphasise above they would be good topics for the old to pass them on to the young. They offer something to talk about. These are the roots of our culture. we may be familiar with some history and old politics. However. it is these nitty gritty of living which may be of some help. I don't think. we should expect any big help from our so- called mother country.. I myself do not get much interest and response from some of the contacts who you may think may be interested in our news and culture and especially our writing... In short they are ot that interested. Except perhaps to feed us some propaganda about what an earthly paradise Malta has become, submerged with close 2 thirds of a million population mostly foreign...who can't even speak the local lingo.

The familiar slogan: if you don't use it you use fits in perfectly with the situation with Maltese. on SBS. Competition for air space is getting bigger. So let's support what is left and if we can improve it and increase its relevance.. it will survive. The same can be said of the community radio stations. We need more than music and copied comments... to make them more relevant to our a community which is getting or is old and still enjoys listening to the radio.... as is their only contact with the old and the new and with their culture and community.

Regards. Victor Vella M.A. (Sydney Uni) B.A. Macquarie, Dip Educ. New England Univ.

Photos of the 27 people who were aboard the luzzu. The last four survived the tragedy

Photo restoration: Paul Falzon. Photo courtesy of National Archives of Malta – Gozo Section

The Hondoq ir-Rummien tragedy

Those who tragically lost their lives 74 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.

On Saturday 30th October 1948 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 events leading up to a tragedy

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

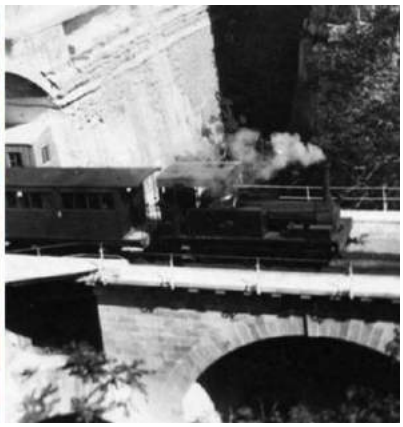
In a statement, Karmnu said that water was getting into the boat and when big waves struck, the passengers panicked, and the boat capsized. They were just 50m away from the shore.

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 form 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.

Old Ħamrun Train Station Restored

And Returned To Its Original Colours



Around 93 years after the last train departed from Ħamrun, the town's old station has been restored to its former glory and its exterior now looks as it did back in the day.

Restoration works on the building, which are used as the headquarters of the 1st Ħamrun Scout Group Duke of Argyll's Own, were funded by the Ħamrun local council.

Mayor Christian Sammut said the restoration included painting the former train station to its original colour, works on the ceiling and lighting, and cleaning the interior walls.

"This was another ambitious project by the Ħamrun local council to help towards the regeneration of Ħamrun," he said. **Malta's Railway operated between 1883 and 1931, with a single line running from Valletta to Mdina and stopping at a number of stations along the way.**

A fantastic concert to early commemorate Malta's Freedom Day was held at Wenty Leagues Club Wentworthville, NSW on Sunday 3 March 2024.

A lively and well-attended concert by two talented Maltese entertainers: young veteran pop-tenor Ludwig Galea together with an emerging female artist and one of the best singers of her generation, Jasmine Abela. Well done to these two exceptional singers who were very-well received in both at Cringila Wollongong and Sydney concerts.

WE would like to extend a special thanks to the organisers in particular Charlie Mifsud and the NSW Maltese Cultural Association. The audience was also entertained by the **Cittadini Theatrical Group** and they deserve a big accolade for their funny performance in Maltese..

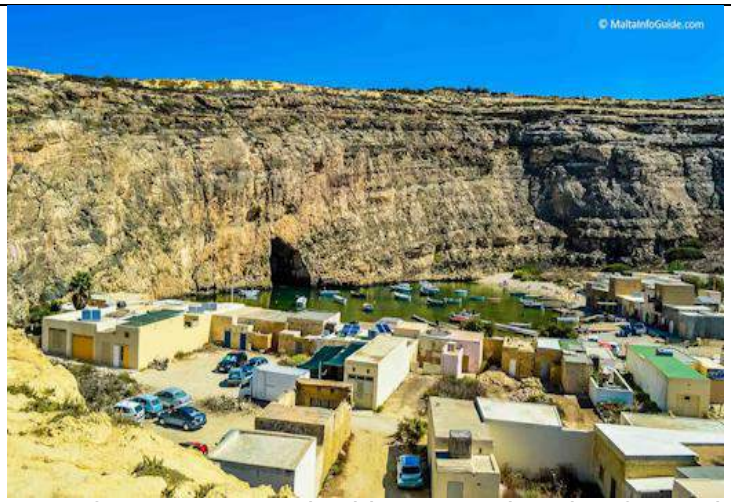
Where is the Cringila Centre situated and why we keep hearing about the many activities happening at this refurbished premises on the South Coast of NSW?

We need to go back to 2006 when as this Centre was facing a financial crisis, Mr. Parnis stepped in for a 3 months caretaker position and some 18 years later still leading this association but not just serving the Maltese but the wider Community.

The Centre host many local artists and also from Malta and recently with our regular visitor Ludwig Galea we had the pleasure to a visit by Jasmine Abela an upcoming huge singer for the Island of Malta. Cringila Centre as it mostly known today its registered name is the George Cross Falcons Community Centre Inc. and the only Centre hosting this 2024 Concert.

The concert saw a full house with many waving the white and red flags made by the Centre Craft team that's meet once a month. The committee also organised balloons for the end of the show keeping the spirit high for many attending.

During the concert free Mario's pastizzi were handed out plus Tea and Coffee at no charge to all attendees, an unprecedented idea, what Cringila is famous for at the many held activities. At the end of the concert a special ricotta cake was cut by Ludwig and Jasmine and a winner of a competition Luigi Villela. The President thanked the many attending the concert, the committee, Volunteers and not least the sponsors. Mr. Parnis also acknowledged the Mayor of Wollongong Gordon Bradbery welcoming the singers to Wollongong in absence of Maltese Leaders. Support your Community Centre offering many free programs to the wider Community across NSW. Louis Parnis JP



THE BEAUTY OF MALTA

"Dwejra", is a testament to the heritage and mythology of this ancient site

The word ***'dwejra'*** is derived from the **Maltese** phrase ***"a small home"*** and has a dual meaning: tradition has it that a small house was indeed present for many years in this remote location from which inhabitants would enjoy the stunning sunset scenes. But the metaphor of a 'home' is also an analogy referencing the huge, almost parallel vertical rocks which form what has been from time immemorial a primitive shape of a dwelling. Known as the 'Azure window', WHIUCH COLLAPSED FEW YEARS AGO, this majestic phenomenon was the result of geological forces which have shaped the face of the island of Gozo over several millennia. The bay is an ideal spot for a half-day or full-day hike in this idyllic spot close to the sleepy village of San Lawrenz in Gozo.

If you're an experienced swimmer you can dip into the inland sea where you'll find a hidden pebbly water lake which is an oasis of peace. The only access to this lake is through a well-known local passageway called the 'Ghar iz-Zerqa' which literally translates to the 'Cave of Blue Beauty'. From here you can hire a boat and slowly make your way through the caverns that dot Dwejra Bay. Do remember to take your mobile to immortalize the view of the majestic and pivtureque scene. If you're a diver be prepared to experience some of the best diving spots in Gozo which are plentiful in this area. While on land take some time to enjoy the rocky shoreline with its unique geology which offers several great hiking paths.

Along the coast is the prominent tower fortification built by Grand Master de Paule in the seventeenth century. This was intended to assist in the guarding of the coast which was a critical function during the Turkish invasion of the eighteenth century.

St.Thomas Bay - MARSASCALA

Offering both rocky and sandy areas suitable for swimming and sunbathing, St.Thomas Bay **guarantees an enjoyable day at the beach.** Only a ten minute walk from the main southern resort of **Marsascala**, this somewhat large and natural inlet is quite popular with local holidaymakers. This secluded bay in the south of **Malta** has not yet been developed into a tourist area and has more of a **Maltese** vibe with plenty of families enjoying its rocky coastline and small sandy banks.

Its shallow waters and sandy beach make it suitable for both sunbathing and swimming. For those who are more adventurous, it is also possible to hike to the Munxar cliffs which offer stunning views of the white cliffs as well as the opportunity to swim in some of the clearest waters. Sea urchins can be found in abundance here and it is also possible to see locals snorkeling in the area collecting them for a local favourite Mediterranean pasta dish. The seafront is a wonderful place for a stroll. You will also without doubt meet local fisherman bringing in fresh fish. Only a few minutes away, you can enjoy a pleasant walk on the Marsascala promenade where most restaurants offer dishes of fresh Maltese fish at reasonable prices. St. Thomas' Tower and a number of rural chapels are also worth a visit.

Ghar Lapsi

This natural cove surrounded by beautiful scenery offers swimmers a safe sheltered swim in the shimmering blue-green waters.

Situated just outside of the limits of **Siggiewi**, **Ghar Lapsi** is nestled below a stretch of **Dingli Cliffs**. Meaning 'Ascension Cave' in English, Ghar Lapsi was named by the local fishermen who had built a shrine here.

Located around a kilometre from **Blue Grotto**, Ghar Lapsi is a natural rocky swimming pool with a cave to compliment the surrounding areas. Apart from a few small areas of flat rock, there is no extended area for sunbathing so the area is mostly enjoyable for a lovely swim. A popular spot with fishermen, Ghar Lapsi transforms itself into a natural swimming pool attracting numerous snorkeling enthusiasts, divers and tourists. This natural cove offers extraordinary blue-green waters safe for a sheltered swim.

During the colder months, Ghar Lapsi is ideal for hiking tours and rock climbing while enjoying some of the most stunning views. From Lapsi, you will be able to admire the village of Siggiewi and the 16th century Verdala Palace. You will also be able to see the uninhabited island of Filfla from afar.

Ghar Lapsi is increasingly popular with divers for its reefs that stretch for 200 metres. Some of the fish species that inhabit the area include seahorses, eels and rays amongst other species. The boat houses next to Ghar Lapsi double up as snack bars during the warm summer months while there is also a bar and restaurant open all year round.

Vintage cars on show at Dar tal-Providenza on March 19

Old Motors Club to raise funds for the Siġġiewi home The Old Motors Club is holding its second show at Dar tal-Providenza on March 19.

The Old Motors Club will hold a static show of vintage vehicles at Dar tal-Providenza on June 19, a public holiday, to raise funds for the Home.

A similar event was held at the Siġġiewi Home for the first time last year. More than 100 cars of various eras were on display including a century-old Ford Model T. Supercars and commercial vehicles were also on show. €2,200 were donated to the Home.

This year's event will include an autojumble. Visitors will be able to enjoy a scenic ride on a vintage bus. Light refreshments will be available. Owners of classic cars who are not members of Old Motors Club Malta are welcome to take part. They can contact the club at info@oldmotorsclub.com. The show will be open to the public between 9:30am and noon.

FMLS FEDERATION OF MALTESE LANGUAGE SCHOOLS INC

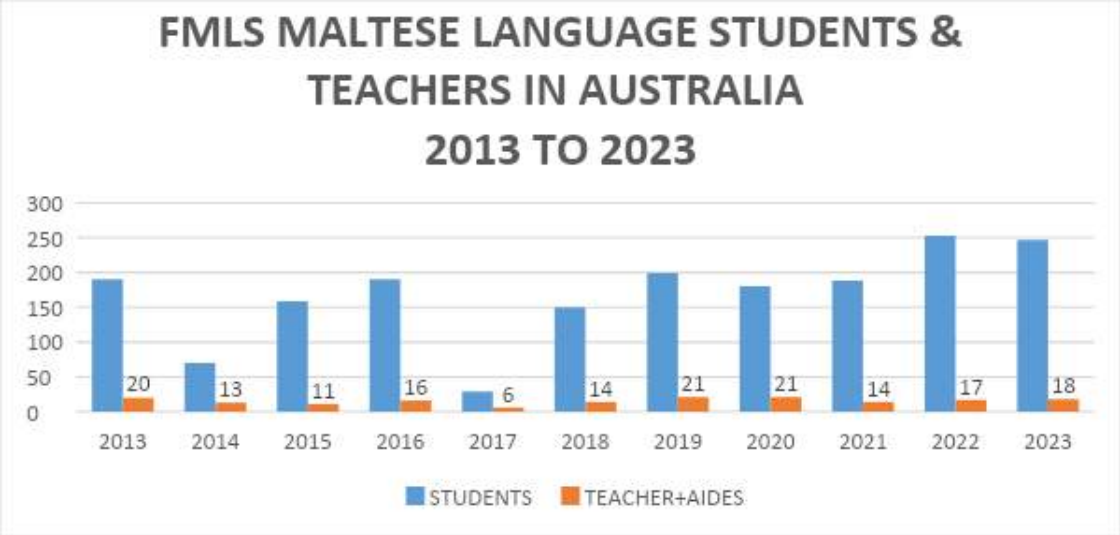
FEDERAZZJONI TAL-ISKEJJEL TAL-MALTI INC. (AWSTRALJA) ABN: 60 436 916 875

FEDERATION MALTESE LANGUAGE SCHOOLS INC. (AUSTRALIA)

2023 REPORT

Edwidge Borg- President

Since COVID many Maltese Language schools have moved to providing online classes using ZOOM, while schools have a mixture of face to face classes, especially with regards to school age children. The preferred option for adult classes is still online. Online classes has permitted adults in outer suburbs, Regional areas and States, where Maltese classes are unavailable to attend Maltese Language classes. Community Schools are run by the Maltese Community Councils in New South Wales and Victoria and by other registered Maltese Associations in New South Wales, Australian Capital Territory and Queensland. Schools are heavily sponsored by the Maltese Community Councils, Associations, school tuition fees, and the Federation of Maltese Language Schools (FMLS) annual subsidy. The FMLS Funds started with a seeding grant from the Maltese government in 2009 and subsequently received two grants from the Maltese Government. One in 2015 and another in 2021. The FMLS is constantly seeking funds to assist and support affiliated schools to continue in their dedicated work to provide Maltese Language classes to the Maltese Community.



While student numbers are on the increase in learing , Maltese teacher have fluctuated or remained static through the years. This is reflected by the decrease in Maltese imigration to Australia and the aging Maltese imigrants. Therefore finding native born teachers has been hard to recruit. Surveys in Victoria Australia indicate that there is a growing interest in learning Maltese from second and third generation Maltese Australian born students mostly female.

IN ADELAIDE – SOUTH AUSTRALIA - ASSOCIATIONS PERISHED

Melita Soccer Club, Maltese Philatelic Group, Returned Services League RSL Maltese Sub-branch, Blue Grotto Maltese Program on 5PBAfm, Maltese Language and Cultural School, the Maltese Chaplaincy. The few that are left are struggling to survive. JDM

On **Saturday 23rd March**, Heritage Malta is inviting you to witness the thrilling Freedom Day regatta – this year taking place a week earlier because of Easter Sunday – and explore, learn, and engage with the rich tapestry of Maltese history and culture in a day brimming with activities for all the family.

Fort St Angelo will again offer its majestic premises at a reduced entry fee, serving as the perfect vantage point from where to witness the rowing activities in the creek nearby. This year, in an exciting first, we are proud to announce a special collaboration with the Sovereign Military Order of Malta, granting the public unprecedented access to the Magistral Palace located within the upper reaches of the fort.

This medieval palace, a cornerstone of Malta's rich history, served as the first official residence of the Grand Masters of the Order of St John from 1530 until 1558. Visitors will have the unique opportunity to step inside and explore the halls where history was made, all for a nominal ticket price of 3 euro. This experience may also be enjoyed as part of the Biennale combo ticket, offering even more ways to explore and discover.

Lasting from 9:00 am till 6:00 pm, the day is packed with activities designed to engage and entertain the public. Highlights include:

A child-friendly exhibition of swords and arms, showcasing the martial prowess and craftsmanship of ages past.

A costume section, where the intricate process of making historical costumes is brought to life, emphasizing its significance in cultural preservation.

A music section inviting children to experience the joy of music first-hand by trying out various instruments, fostering a love for the arts from a young age.

A storyteller section, where tales of intrigue and history will captivate audiences of all ages.

Tickets for this enriching experience are available for purchase at our online store Store – Heritage Malta **and at museums and sites. Tickets will also be available at the door**

Nadur Belvedere beautification project inaugurated

The beautification project of the Nadur Belvedere which overlooks the San Blas valley from the side of the Hali area has been inaugurated by Minister for Gozo and Planning Clint Camilleri.

This project received €61,000 in funding from the Development Planning Fund from the Planning Authority.

"This Belvedere project is another project that the Nadur Local Council was able to carry out through funds it received from the Development Planning Fund, which was first established in 2017 and through which a large number of community projects have been financed around the Maltese Islands," Minister Camilleri explained.

Minister Camilleri went on to explain that these funds come from two sources; the fees (20%) associated with regularisation applications and the fees charged to a developer when on-site parking is not provided with a development permit.

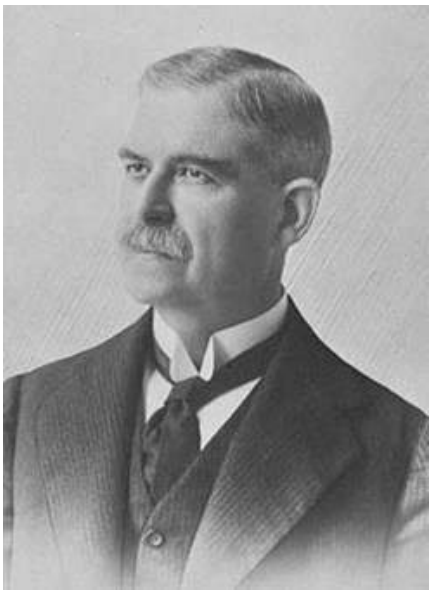
He said that projects that have benefited in recent years include beautification of playing fields and open spaces, restoration and regeneration of old properties for social community facilities, energy-saving street lighting, installation of outdoor gyms and much more. The proposed projects will be able to receive up to a maximum of 70% of the total cost of the project.

The Nadur Local Council, over the past years, has been able to carry out a number of projects financed through this same fund. These projects ranged from placing planters in the main square, placing equipment for physical training; and repair of a railing on the Kenuna Tower side.

Minister Clint Camilleri thanked everyone who worked so that this project could be completed, the Nadur Council, the Planning Authority employees and all those who contributed.

Also present for the inauguration were the Mayor of Nadur Edward Said and the Mayor of Zafferana Etnea Salvatore Russo.

Sir Gerald Strickland (1861–1940) by G.P. Walsh



Prime Minister of Malta and governor of the Leeward Islands and of Tasmania, Western Australian and New South Wales - Australia

Sir Gerald Strickland, 1st Baron Strickland of Sizergh Castle (1861-1940), governor and politician, was born on 24 May 1861 at Valletta, Malta, eldest son of Captain Walter Strickland, R.N., and his wife Maria Aloysia (Louisa), née Bonnici, niece and heiress of Sir Nicholas Sceberras Bologna, fifth Count della Catena in Malta, whom Gerald succeeded in 1875; he was also a nephew of (Sir) Edward Strickland. Educated at St Mary's College, Oscott, and Trinity College, Cambridge (B.A., LL.B., 1887), he was called to the Bar at the Inner Temple. During a world tour in 1883-84 he had visited Maltese settlers in Queensland and in Sydney discussed with the premier (Sir) Alexander Stuart the possibility of bringing Maltese orange-and olive-growers to New South Wales.

Elected in 1886 to the council of the government of Malta, Strickland represented the island at the first Colonial Conference and helped to frame its constitution in 1887. As chief secretary (1889-92) he initiated many reforms and public works. Although he showed a sound knowledge of public finance and administrative techniques, his tactlessness caused some uneasiness in the Colonial Office. On 26 August 1890 Strickland married Lady Edeline Sackville (d.1918), daughter of the seventh Earl De La Warr, in Our Lady of Victories Church, Kensington, London.

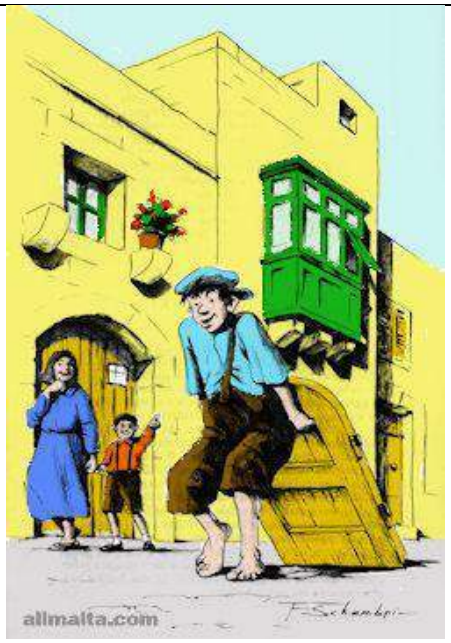
Appointed K.C.M.G. in 1897, he governed the Leeward Islands from 1902 and was transferred to Tasmania in October 1904. Belonging to an ancient English Catholic family, he was only the third Catholic to govern any Australian colony or State. In May 1909 Strickland became governor of Western Australia. In the early days of Federation he was involved in the delicate matter of State rights and the appointment, role and salaries of governors. He strongly supported Federation (as opposed to unification), as well as Imperial federation, and restrained his ministers from expressing secessionist views. A stickler for formalities and constitutional propriety, he also endeavoured to persuade members of cabinet not to recommend expenditure without parliamentary sanction. He did, however, quarrel privately with Governor-General Lord Dudley over the dormant commission and the channels of communication with the secretary of state.

Strickland was appointed G.C.M.G. in 1913 and advanced to New South Wales where he noted 'there was some religious friction'; he was confident that 'an *English* Roman Catholic Governor' would be the best person to control it. Yet, it was politics and not religion that was to bring about his downfall. He roused the antipathy of the governor-general Sir Ronald Munro Ferguson who told Bonar Law that 'I find him altogether too Machiavellian for ordinary intercourse'.

Handsome, solidly built and of middle height, Strickland triumphantly entered Government House, Sydney, in 1915. He was 'a genial host and brilliant controversialist'. Soldiering in his young years (he served with the Cambridge University Rifles) and mechanical engineering were his main hobbies; his spinning wheel and combination tool were exhibited at an industrial and models exhibition in Sydney.

Retiring from the colonial service, he divided his time between his Maltese and English estates (having acquired Sizergh in Westmorland from a cousin in 1896). Strickland was elected to the House of Commons as a Conservative for Lancaster in 1924; he married Margaret Hulton (D.B.E., 1937) on 31 August 1926 in the same church as his earlier wedding; in 1928 he was raised to the peerage. Having entered the Maltese Legislative Assembly in 1921, he helped to draft the Milner-Avery constitution. He formed the Anglo-Maltese (later Constitutional) party and was involved in bitter battles against Fascist, Italian and Church interference in politics. Prime Minister in 1927-32, he narrowly escaped assassination in May 1930. In 1932 he became leader of the Opposition against a pro-Italian government; he founded the *Times of Malta* (daily and weekly) and *Il Berka*, the first vernacular newspaper in Malta.

Strickland died in Malta on 22 August 1940 and was buried in the family vault of St Paul's Cathedral at Mdina. His wife survived him, as did five daughters of his first marriage; his two sons and a daughter had died in infancy. The combination of his English and Maltese inheritance accounted for the strength of his dual patriotism, but it brought out a pugnacity which often antagonized would-be sympathizers and obscured the worth of his policies. A portrait of Strickland by E. Caruana Dingli is in Malta and a statue by Anton Sciortino stands in Upper Barrakka Gardens, Valletta.



GAHAN AND THE DOOR (Gahan u l-Bieb)

The predominant anti-hero in Maltese folklore is Ġaħan. He is the wise fool, popular with one and all in contemporary Malta. He is the epitome of Maltese verbal wisdom and humour. The definite colouring of Ġaħan's anecdotes is imbued with typical Mediterranean narrators' humour which often takes the form of a negative tendency. But it is a tendency that springs from the inclination and will to laugh at oneself and the world at large, an ironical bent toward contradiction and debunking. Here is a typical anecdote = One day, Ġaħan was still asleep when his mother was going out to church. She woke him up and told him: "Ġaħan, I'm going to church, if you go out remember to pull the door behind you." Ġaħan went back to sleep. Later, he woke up and decided to go out. Just before leaving, he remembered his mother's words to "pull the door behind" him.

He quickly unhinged the door from its place, tied a rope around it, and carried it all the way to church. When his mother saw him and her door in the middle of the street, her shouts could be heard from kilometres away.

EU Climate Pact Youth Forum in Gozo – Engaging youth in climate action

BY GOZO NEWS ·

The European Climate Pact is a movement of people united around a common cause, each taking steps in their own worlds to build a more sustainable Europe.

Launched by the European Commission, the Pact is part of the European Green Deal and is helping the EU to meet its goal to become climate-neutral by 2050.

The objectives of the climate pact are to raise awareness of climate issues and EU actions, encourage climate action & catalyse engagement and connect citizens and organisations that act on climate and help them to learn from each other.As part of the EU Climate Pact initiative, Mwww.miema.org), as the Pact's country coordinator in Malta, with the support of Agenzija Zghazagh Gozo Youth Service, organised a cine-forum event for youths in Gozo on Saturday. The aim of the activity was to showcase the impact of climate change on our planet through short documentaries and engage the younger generation in an open discussion on possible adaptation and mitigation strategies for our island.The youth forum was held at the new Amphitheatre in San Lawrenz and was attended by students from different schools in Gozo.

The activity was addressed by one of the Pact ambassadors, Mr Noel Formosa – Mayor of San Lawrenz, who moderated the discussion with the youths and presented several environmentally friendly initiatives implemented in the locality, including local campaigns to promote clean energy and the deployment of an electric vehicle and electric bikes for use by the residents.

Further information on the EU Climate Pact is available on the following link: https://climate-pact.europa.eu/

F'dan iż-żmien qaddis

Kav. Joe M. Attard

F'dan iż-żmien qaddis tas-sena
Għandna ħafna drawwiet sbieħ
Li jagħżluna minn ġnus oħra:
Tas-smewwiet dawn il-muftieħ!

Niesna ssum u qatigħ titlob
Tul il-ġranet tar-Randan
Erbgħin jum ta' penitenza –
Għalhekk jiġi żmien bħal dan!

Għarkupptejha tirrifletti
Minn kemm għadda tbatijiet
U fit-Triq tas-Salib tilmaħ
Kristu fl-istazzjonijiet.

Tmur ukoll għall-Eżerċizzi
Sabiex tisma' l-Kelma t'Alla
Għalkemm Kristu bata u sofra
Tal-Kbarat il-pjan kien falla…

Tagħmel l-almu sabiex tħaffef
Lejn il-knisja tal-parroċċa
Għall-funzjonijiet mill-isbaħ
Mal-familja bħal qaqoċċa.

B'devozzjoni wkoll tinġabar
Fil-ġurnata tad-Duluri
U fil-knisja b'damask vjola
Qima u għożża lilha turi.

Tfeġġ imbagħad Ħamis ix-Xirka
Lis-Sepulkru nagħmlu żjara;
Min bl-imħatra jagħmlu l-isbaħ
Tassew dehra jkun fih x'tara!

Żgur li l-qofol ta' dan kollu
Hi bla dubju l-Ġimgħa Mqaddsa;
Kristu bata, miet, irxoxta,
Bla ma qies kulur jew razza.

Bil-gzuz għadha n-nies tiffolla
Sabiex tara l-Purċissjoni
Li fil-Ġimgħa l-Kbira toħroġ
Wara tal-knisja l-funzjoni!

U jekk ma' triqatna tiġri
Tara ħafna mill-wirjiet
Ta' statwetti illi jdommu
Tal-Passjoni il-ġrajjiet.

U fit-triq Santa Marija
Fil-qalba tal-belt Victoria
Issib wirja interessanti
Illi tassew għandha storja.

Ave Crux – iva – Spes Unica
Fiha ddomm il-ġrajja kollha
Illi bdiet ġewwa l-Getsemani
Sa ma Kristu s-sema tgħolla.

Għaxar snin iss'għaddew, tgerbu
Mindu Ġorġ fetaħ il-Bieb
Biex imħabbtu u senegħtu
B'ħila jgħaddi lil tant ħbieb.

Għażiż Ġorġ irrid nifraħlek –
O x'kappella x'waħda din!
Illi biha int qed tgħinna
Biex ngħożżu sew lid-Divin.

Ejjew ħbieb, żuru dil-wirja
Li bħalha ma ssibx kuljum –
Żewġ tarġiet idaħħluk ġewwa
Tiddejjaqx kemm tifli ddum.

Wiċċ imbenġel minn ta' Kristu
Żgur jiġbidlek l-attenzjoni
Fik ikebbes bla tbatija
L-isbaħ, l-ikbar devozzjoni.

Jalla daż-żmien qaddis jiġi
U jimliena bil-barkiet
Illi Kristu bil-Passjoni
Tiegħu lilna għamel ulied.

Nirringrazja lill-Kav Joe Attard tal-poeziji sbieh li dejjem jiktbilna

The Maltese Center, 2720 Hoyt Ave S, Astoria, New York, USA

ART EXPLORA FESTIVAL

CULTURAL ODYSSEY IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

VALLETTA
MALTA
21 - 31 MARCH 2024

Produced by

Join us for the annual Good Friday Procession/Stations of the Cross

GOOD FRIDAY PROCESSION
FRIDAY MARCH 29, 2024 at 6.30pm

Members of the community will carry the statue of the CrucifiedJesus (Il-Vara l-Kbira)
We need at least 6 volunteers to carry the statue and 4 to carry the resting stands (forcini)
Come to church main entrance at 6.00pm to volunteer at
the Most Precious Blood Church
Beteen Broadway and 34th Avenue

Church entrance off 37th Street/
Parking Entrance 36th Street
Every One Welcome

MALTESE CENTER - ASTORIA, NYC, USA

Maltese Chaplaincy Festivities - ADELAIDE

Dear Friends,
Please note that there will be NO Maltese Mass this 2nd Sunday (March) because it will be on the 24th March instead to celebrate
PALM SUNDAY.
Mass will commence at 2.30pm
followed by a Ravioli meal for which bookings are essential at $15 per head.
To reserve your meal (including dessert) please book by calling or texting any of the Chaplaincy Festivities Committee members
Mary - 0422388423 Jane - 0479113428
Jo-Anne - 0439551152

We are proud of our Maltese Achievers

The Journal of Maltese Living Abroad
connecting communities
around the world