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MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER

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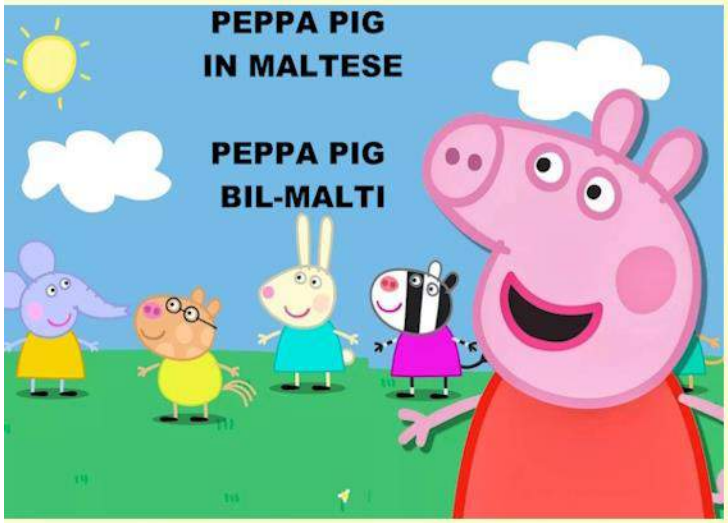

Fourth edition of the "State of the Nation" conference launched

May 24, 2024

The fourth edition of the National Research Conference regarding the "State of the Nation" will be held on 20th June at Verdala Palace.

While launching, President Myriam Spiteri Debono said the scope of the conference is that of creating an informative debate between political leaders to give more information and address the needs of concern of the public and how matters are evolving and changing from time to time.

HE the President said this should serve as a basis so that in perhaps not an open manner the country's political leaders draw up a programme for the public.

In preparation for this conference over recent days the statistician and lecturer Vincent Marmara has been working on the strategy for the fourth time defining the people and what influences its opinions.

For the first time this is being held at a time of electoral campaigning.

He said that where policies influence the public and campaigns, are the public really interested? Are they interested more, or less?

The Consultant for Strategy Communications, Lou Bondi, said this year the theme will focus on Malta's economic model. He said every edition has focussed on current affairs and whether policies are succeeding – or not. Whether changes are needed and which directions should they proceed, and what will be the consequences?

The conference will consist of four panels of 20 speakers from different sectors and will end with addresses by the Opposition Leader and the Prime Minister and the conference will be closed by the President

WORDS OF WISDOM FROM THE PRESIDENT

During her first visit to Gozo as President of Malta Spiteri Debono has spoken on the program **GHAWDEX JITKELLEM**on RTK103, She made a reference to building and development when the presenters asked her how she feels and sees that Gozo has changed since her childhood as a woman Gozzia. She said that the development challenge "is not a matter of feeling but a matter of things that have already been done". She explained that "we cannot stifle everywhere", as she went on to say that "we must seek not to be excessive in what we do". She made reference to several places including Xlendi, Marsalforn and the area of 'Santu Wistin' in Victoria Gozo which were all exploited with concrete.

Myriam Spiteri Debono stressed the importance that in development it is not about doing the study so that the regulations and guidelines come out of it, "but with these there must be serious enforcement"

Regarding the thought that one day the villages in Gozo will be united as if they were one village, the President said that she spoke a lot about what she thinks about this initiative as she emphasized that she does not believe that this step should be taken which could leading to the extinction of several unique characteristics, including the dialect. Facades of new buildings in Gozo must be built with Maltese stone "In Gozo, how a person speaks will know where they are from, as it still is in certain localities in Malta, but in Gozo it is even more important that the dialect is maintained," stressed the President. She continued that "Gozo's insularity from the rest of the Maltese Islands has always brought with it certain problems, but from what I see in recent years communication has improved greatly".

"A bridge or a tunnel can be a degradation of the beauty and characteristics of Gozitan" With reference to the accessibility between Gozo and Malta with remarks for a bridge or a tunnel between the two islands, the President said that she does not feel that she is the best person to talk about this subject, but pointed out that they too can they will be a degradation of the beauty and of the Gozitan characteristics. Only, she went on to say that just as health services have recently been increased in Gozo, the same should be done in several other areas in order to reduce excess travel. Despite this thought, she added that there are certain things that the Gozitan people must resort to in Malta, and that this is very difficult to change.

"It worries me that young people have no confidence in any party" Myriam Spiteri Debono said that she is worried to hear young people say that "they do not trust any party in politics and that there are no options for them". While she commented that she believes that politicians should give space to young people to give their share in ideas, suggestions and in action for a better Malta and Gozo, she appealed that no one should brush off the responsibility, as Malta and Gozo must be led by someone.

She continued that "if they don't like things, it's important that they move forward and make the path they want, and not abdicate their share of the leadership of the Maltese islands".

"Many do not realize how hard it is that the house, the family and the children depend on the woman"

Regarding her appeal to women to be part of the leadership of Malta and Gozo, Spiteri Debono said that "you cannot appeal to women to enter politics more and more if these women do not find their partner theirs is ready to take responsibility both in raising the children and in the housework".

She said that she repeatedly approached different women to join the same political party she was part of, but she stressed that many would give up and tell her "who will prepare food or who will make the beds!". She explained that before, unlike today, young people were less prepared for everyday life. "There are many who do not realize how hard it is that the house depends on the woman together with raising the children, and how difficult it is to increase the work and also to keep up with politics". She reiterated that "even if you make it, it's nice to be already tired". "We continue to cherish the family, always and above all"

In a message to the Maltese, and especially to the Gozitans, the President said that "we should continue to cherish the family, the elderly because we learn a lot from them and we cherish the children in a different way while we see that we do not hurt them and we show them respect".

She emphasized that there is nothing more beautiful than "we continue to cherish the family, always and above all." She also called for "there is always respect between us and with the people who enter the community with us".

"Use your vote" The President insisted that the vote should be used, and reminded that there were many before us who worked for everyone to have the right to vote. "I'm not saying that for everyone to go out and vote, but there should be less apathy", said Spiteri Debono. She emphasized the importance of the country having a part in the leadership, because in her words, the people's ideas are important and are used a lot in Malta's politics.

"The Church is a benefactor of the vulnerable" Regarding the social services in Malta, the President remarked that "I can never get enough of saying that the social services in our country were started by the Church, even in Gozo". She added that the Church then entered other areas including Caritas and Dar Arka. "The Church through the priests is a benefactor of the vulnerable and shows the way so that the neighbor is always helpful to others", she added.

M'għadnix nagħrfek! Għawdex tagħna

M'għadnix nagħrfek! Għawdex tagħna,
Int inbdilt f'qasir iż-żmien,
Jew aħjar bidlulek surtek,
B'dan il-bini kullimkien.

Kull fejn tħares, 'l fuq fil-għoli,
Tara biss il-krejnijiet,
Blokok bil-konkos mibnija,
Blokok kbar tal-flettijiet.

Fejn qabel konna nilagħbu,
Dawk l-għelieqi m'għadhomx hemm,
Flokhom hemm appartamenti,
Qed jinbigħu, ma nafx kemm!

M'għadnix nagħrfek! Għawdex tagħna,
Dawk it-toroq mimlijin,
Bil-karozzi ppakkjati,
Sar ikun, x'ikun il-ħin.

Kull raħal, toroq magħluqa,
Tara biss it-trakkijiet,
Min bil-konkos, min bil-ġebel,
Fl-arja hemm biss trabijiet.

Ma nafx biss, jien kif uliedna,
X'ser jagħmlu huma 'l quddiem,
Sabiex jixtru fejn joqogħdu,
B'mijiet t'eluf kullimkien.

M'għadnix nagħrfek! Għawdex tagħna,
Konna nafu lil kulħadd,
Nilagħbu mal-ġirien tagħna,
Bieb magħluq ma tara qatt.

Illum trid issakkar sewwa,
Għax ma tista' tafda 'l ħadd,
Kulħadd moħħu f'dak u fl-ieħor,
Kulħadd qisu ndannat.

Tfal fit-triq konna nilagħbu,
U nifirħu ma' xulxin,
Illum lanqas m'għandna spazju,
Għax diffiċli nsibu l-ħin.

M'għadnix nagħrfek! Għawdex tagħna,
Nibku rridu dan iż-żmien,
U ngħidu li ħtija tagħna,
Dan il-ġenn ma' kullimkien.

M'għadnix nagħrfek! Għawdex tagħna,
Hemm bżonn li nieħdu azzjoni,
Għax inkella f'din il-gżira,
Tirdoppja l-popolazzjoni.

M'għadnix nagħrfek! Għawdex tagħna,
Fejn hi l-ħdura kull fejn tmur?
Illum tħares, bini għoli,
Biss inħobbok nibqa' żgur.

Taf min kiteb din il-poeżija?

On the 7th of June the Feast of the Redeemer of Isla Submitted by Can. Robin Camilleri – Archpriest Of Senglea City

Can. Robin Camilleri

This year the Feast of Jesus the Redeemer inside the Isla City Basilica will take place on June 7th. At 6 pm Mass celebrated by Mons. Carmelo Refalo with the participation of the Senglean Chapter and after a procession with the miraculous image of Jesus the Redeemer. This year is being anticipated because of the elections here in our country. During this procession organized by the Brotherhood of the Holy Crucifix with the participation of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulcher of Jerusalem, which takes part through the Knights, Ladies and Ecclesiastics.

This Festival goes back to 1813 when the Sengleani made a promise that if the plague does not enter the City of Isla they will start making 3 processions including this one in June with the miraculous image of Jesus the Redeemer. The Senglean People continued to keep this promise and every year this Feast is held in honor of Jesus the Redeemer.

Many are those pilgrims who gather inside the Basilica of Senglea City to walk with such devotion after this miraculous image, which we can say is a devout and prayerful one. Many are those people who come and make this walk because of some grace they received or as a walk of faith. Large crowds throng the streets of this City to express their faith and devotion.

This miraculous Image appears in the streets of Senglea City three times a year: in March during the National Diocesan pilgrimage led by Archbishop Charles J. Scicluna, in the procession with the mysteries of the passion on Friday l -Big and in June in the Feast dedicated to him. This festival starts through three days of Tridu starting on June 4th until June 6th at 6 pm inside the Isla Basilica, this Tridu opens this year the - Can. Dr. Nicholas Doublet who is the archivist of the Diocese and a lecturer in Church History within the University of Malta.

Many communities make prayer pilgrimages to pray in front of this image and every Friday at 10 am there is a mass for pilgrims. It would be a wonderful thing to leave this day in order to walk together with Jesus the Redeemer and pray for peace, for families and for vocations.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across the continent of Australia

The National Reconciliation Week theme for 2024, **Now More Than Ever**, is a reminder to all of us that no matter what, the fight for justice and the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people will —and must —continue.

There have been many moments in Australia's reconciliation journey that make us want to turn away. But when things are divisive, the worst thing we can do is disengage or disconnect.

Now more than ever, we need to tackle the unfinished business of reconciliation. We know that the 6.2 million Australians who voted YES are committed to better outcomes for First Nations people, and are with us. Reconciliation supporters must stand up to defend and uphold the rights of First Nations peoples. To call out racism wherever we encounter it, and to actively reinforce the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across this continent.

Now more than ever, the work continues. In treaty making, in truth-telling, in understanding our history, in education, and in tackling racism. We need connection. We need respect. We need action. And we need change. Now more than ever, we need reconciliation.

The children born in Malta who have no passport

There are at least 171 stateless people in Malta, almost half of them aged under nine

Mark Laurence Zammit

Children born in Malta to parents who have been rejected asylum are technically stateless. A photo taken during a migrant protest in Valletta in 2021. Photo: Chris Sant Fournier

Stateless children living in Malta should be granted "some form of regular status" to uphold their "fundamental right to a family life", the children's commissioner has urged.

In a reply to *Times of Malta* questions, a spokesperson for the Office of the Children's Commissioner said there are migrant children who are stateless or risk becoming stateless and the office continues to advocate for their rights and voice its concern about the issue with the authorities.

"Children who are born here [in Malta], irrespective of their status, only know Malta as their home and, therefore, we believe that it is in the best interest of these migrant children for the status of the entire family unit to be regularised since this safeguards the children's fundamental right to a family life," the spokesperson said.

"This regularisation should not be limited to those children who are born in Malta but equally to those migrant children who were born in other countries but who have settled and integrated here whether or not they enjoy international protection."

The children's commissioner is appointed to uphold the rights and freedoms of all children living in Malta.

The current commissioner – former Ta' Xbiex mayor and former Housing Authority chairperson Antoinette Vassallo – was appointed in 2022 and her pleas for the recognition of stateless children join those of many migrants' rights activists, who, over the past months, have been pushing on the authorities to give more rights to migrants who were denied asylum.

How do children become stateless?

Most migrants who are denied asylum are allowed to work in Malta and are obliged to pay tax and social contributions but have no access to free education. While working, they have access to healthcare but no social protection.

This means that if they are injured, taken ill or can no longer be gainfully employed, they will not receive any social, medical or unemployment benefits. They are similarly not entitled to a pension once they reach retirement age.

Children born here only know Malta as their home

They are also not allowed to marry, even if they enter loving relationships and form a family of their own.

Moreover, children born in Malta to parents who have been rejected asylum inherit their parents' lack of documentation, have no social protection and are technically stateless.

According to recent data, there are at least 171 stateless people in Malta, almost half of them aged under nine.

Some of these families have been living and working in Malta for as long as 20 years and they live in Maltese villages, their children go to school there, play an instrument with the local band club and help with the village feast or have joined the local sports nursery – yet, they are still not considered

Maltese, they cannot represent Malta in a sports or artistic discipline and are frustrated for being continually referred to as 'migrants' or 'aliens'.

'A more definite and permanent status'

The Office of the Children's Commissioner said that, on various occasions, it advocated publicly for the rights of migrant children through statements and its annual reports and "also brought it concerns to the attention of the relevant entities".

"The Office believes that migrants who have settled in Malta and integrated in Maltese society should be given a more definite and permanent status even if they do not qualify for any form of international protection," the commissioner's spokesperson said.

"If irregular migrants are not repatriated within a short period of time from their irregular entry into Malta, migrants and their families should be given some form of regular status that would legitimise their long-term stay in Malta, therefore enabling children to access their rights including their right to education among many others."

The issue of undocumented migrants resurfaced last February after Kusi Dismark – a man who had lived, studied and worked in Malta for 13 years – was forced to leave the country or be deported and his was not the only such case.

Blacktown City Council - NSW

Maltese Concert Band NSW Inc. participates in Blactown's *Streets Alive and Parade Day*

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Celebration as a community at the Streets Alive and Parade Day in the Blacktown CBD. It's the City's biggest community festival of the year. Music, colour, food, dance, and entertainment took over the streets for everyone to enjoy in addition to free amusement rides, arts and crafts, and market stalls. Bluey and her little sister Bingo exhibited their live interactive experience at the Bowman Hall! The street parade travelled through the CBD at 11 am, showcasing Blacktown's multiculturalism, history, emergency services and local groups.

"The Maltese Concert Band makes a SPLASH at Blacktown Festival!" The Maltese Concert Band played their first Blacktown Festival on Saturday, 25 May 2024! Led by Charles Simiana, the band delighted the crowd with a vibrant mix of traditional and contemporary pieces. The band enjoyed entertaining the community audience very much! The Maltese Concert Band thanks Blacktown City Council for their first invitation and hope to return again next year.

Well done Maltese Concert Band!

INQAJJMU KUXJENZA NAZZJONALI GĦALL-IMĦABBA U L-ĦARSIEN TA' L-ILSIEN MALTI

NAZZARENU ZERAFA BRISBANE – AUSTRALIA (2006)

'Meta ilsien imut, ikun miet poplu'. Hekk qal darba, wieħed għaref. Wasal għalhekk forsi iż-żmien li kull wieħed u waħda minna jistaqsi lilu innifsu, " X'inhu dak li jagħmilna Maltin?" Il-festi u l-baned ? Ir-religjon ? Il-pulitika partiġġjana ? Il-fissazzjoni fuq il-futbol ? Jew il-piki? Fuq hiex nitkellmu bejnietna, meta ma nkunux nitkellmu fuq dawn? Aktar minn hekk, jekk ninżlu ftit aktar fil-fond, irridu nistaqsu, 'Kif qegħdin nesprimu ruħna? Kif qegħdin nikkomunikaw ħsibijietna? Kif qed ngħidu dak li tħoss qalbna u li jaħseb moħħna?

Li kellu wieħed joqgħod jaħseb ftit fuq il-popli tad-dinja, ma jdumx ma jinduna li bażikament, il-bniedem kullimkien hu l-istess. Għalkemm mhux kulħadd jgħix fl-istess kundizzjonijiet u fl-istess ambjent, il-bniedem minn ġuf ommu għandu l-istess bżonnijiet, fosthom dawk li jħobb u jinħabb, li jmantni lilu innifsu, u li jirripproduċi lilu innifsu. Dawn huma xeħtiet komuni ta' kull razza, iżda li jiddistingwi razza minn oħra, poplu minn ieħor, huwa l-mod kif wieħed jikkomunika ma' l-ieħor, f'kelma waħda, hu d-diskors, il-kliem, jew aħjar, l-ilsien.

Saru fl-imgħoddi, u qegħdin isiru anke llum, ħafna sforzi biex aħna l-Maltin nħarsu u nippriservaw l-istorja qadima u rikka tagħna, bħal bini storiku, knejjes, katidrali u kappelli qodma, siti ta' wirt dinji, drawwiet antiki, irziezet u l-kampanja u ħafna affarijiet oħra li jifformaw parti mill-kultura tagħna l-Maltin, iżda x'qegħdin nagħmlu aħna, kull wieħed u waħda minna, biex inħarsu l-unika ħaġa li veru tagħmilna Maltin? Kif qegħdin inħarsuh ilsienna? Qatt ħsibt fuq hekk, ħija, oħti? Jekk ma nindukrawhx u ma nħarsuhx aħna, l-ilsien Malti,, min ser joħdilna ħsiebu?

Matul iż-żminijiet, l-istudjużi, il-ħassieba, u l-kittieba ta'l-ilsien Malti, għax ħabbewh, ħadmu sfieq għat-tisħieh, it-tkattir, u t-tixrid tiegħu u xejn inqas m'hu qegħdin jagħmlu dawk tal-lum, li jaħdmu bla heda, kemm f'Malta kif ukoll f'artijiet barranin biex iżommu ħaj dan l-ilsien uniku. Iżda d-dover, mhux ta' dawn biss hu. Ir-responsabilta` taqa' fuq kull wieħed u waħda minna. Kulħadd għandu parti x'jaqdi. Kulħadd jista jikkontribwixxi, jew aħjar, jagħti sehmu, minn kif jista, u fejn jista. L-ilsien Malti hu l-ilma tal-ħajja għall- poplu Malti. Bla ilma, ħadd u xejn ma jgħix.

Dun Karm jgħidilna f'waħda mill-aqwa poeżiji tiegħu, " Maltija kienet l-ewwel kelma f'fommok" u jwiddibna, " Għaliex tarmih il-lsien li tatek ommok.....?" Forsi wasal iż-żmien, aktar minn qatt qabel li nidħlu ftit fina nfusna u nfittxu fi ħsus qalbna, it-tweġiba għal din il-mistoqsija. Hemm bzonn aktar minn qatt qabel li nqajmu **kuxjenza nazzjonali** għall- imħabba u l-ħarsien ta' dan l-ilsien ħelu tagħna li jiddistingwina minn kull poplu ieħor fid-dinja.

Il-problema tafu x'inhi? Li l-ħaga, hi x'inhi, ma tapprezzahiex qabel ma titlifha, u tkun traġedja

kbira jekk dan l-ilsien għad jintilef u jmut. Meta tkun fiha, il-ħaga, jew tgħixha kuljum, issir ħaga komuni u dak li jkun ma jagħtix kasha, jaħseb li se tibqa hemm għal dejjem u ma japprezzahiex, la lilha u l-anqas il-valur tagħha. Bħan-nifs. Ipprova oqgħod żewġ minuti bla nifs. Hemm tara l-valur tiegħu. Ilsienna hu n-nifs li jagħti l-ħajja lill-poplu Malti u mingħajru, il-poplu Malti jmut. Dal-ħsieb imissna nżommuh f'moħħna ma' kull nifs li nieħdu.

'Fejn hemm il-ħajja, hemm it-tama', jgħid il-qawl Malti u hekk nemmen jien. Il-lum il-poplu Malti għandu sfidi kbar quddiemu, u liema poplu m'għandux, għiduli? Fid-dinja tal-lum, fejn l-unika ħaġa fissa hi l-bidla, bidla kontinwa b'pass ħafif mgħaġġel, speċjalment fit-teknoloġija, il-popli tad-dinja, kollha qegħdin iħabbtu wiċċhom ma' sfidi kbar u sfidi ġodda. Barra minn hekk, l-irwiefen qawwija tal-ġuh, tal-gwerer, tal-oppressjoni, tal-mibgħeda, tan-nuqqas ta' tagħlim, tal-faqar u l-għaks, tal-mard, ta' migrazzjoni imposta, tal-għoli fil-prezz taż-żejt, tal-għoli tal-ħajja u tal-bini, qed jagħmlu stqarrijiet kbar madwar id-dinja kollha, u jvenvnu, isaffru u jpespsu f'widnejn il-popli, li jridu jagħmlu l-għażliet tagħhom. U x'jagħmel il-bniedem? Jew jaħrab, jew iqum fuq tiegħu jiddefendi lilu nnifsu.

Il-Malti qatt ma ħarab minn dmiru u dejjem kif seta', u meta seta' ddefenda lilu nnifsu mill-aħjar li kien jaf, anke kontra sfidi u għedewwa bil-wisq akbar minnhu. U hekk hemm bżonn li jagħmel issa wkoll. Hemm bżonn li jieqaf ftit, u jaħseb ftit fuq din 'l-issa', dal-mument fiż-żmien. Jeħtieġ li jidħol daħla fih innifsu u jistaqsi lil kuxjenza fis-skiet ta' qalbu, "X'qed nagħmel jien, biex nħares u nippreserva dil-kelma, l-kelma Maltija, l-ilsien li jagħmilni dak li jien?" Kultant kull m'hu meħtieġ hija xrara t'interess minn kull individwu biex flimkien, b'reazzjoni katinika nkebbsu l-ħuġġieġa tal- entużjażmu u l-imħabba għall-ilsien wirt artna, l-ilsien Malti.

Jien ilni ngħix fi Brisbane, l-Awstralja għal aktar minn ħamsa u għoxrin sena u l-imħabba għall-ilsien art twelidi ma naqsitli qatt. Nistħajjilkom tgħidu, "Dan kif qed jikteb issa?" jew "Dan minn fejn inqala'?" Meta għext f'Malta, bħalkom kont, jien. Il-Malti studjajtu iżda qatt ma tajt kasu serjament, qatt ma apprezzajtu jew tajtu dik l-attenzjoni li tixraqlu għax kont go fih u qatt ma ħassejt in-nuqqas tiegħu. Taf meta tapprezzah il-Malti imbagħad? Meta tiġi biex tesprimi ruħek u ħsibijietek b'lingwa oħra. Hemm tara u tapprezza l-valur veru u s-sbuħija ta' ilsienek. Meta f'moħħok hemm idjomi li m'hemmx l-ekwivalenti tagħhom f'lingwa ohra. Meta ħsieb trid tesprimih spirtu pront u ma tistax issib f'lingwa ohra l-kelma ekwivalenti għal dik Maltija li hemm f'moħħok. Meta dak il-ħsieb, ikkulurit b'l-ilwien kollha tal-qawsalla jirriflettu f'ilma ġieri, trid tniżżlu f'abjad u iswed b'lingwa oħra fuq biċċa karta, u teħillek il-pinna.

Forsi tistaqsu wkoll, "Dan x'ġiegħlu jikteb, meta ilu mbiegħed minn art twelidu das-snin kollha?" "Aktar ma wieħed jitbiegħed miċ-ċentru, aktar wieħed jersaq lejn iċ-ċentru, għax ilkoll nifformaw parti mill-istess ċirku." Hekk qal il-Professur O. Friggieri f'intervista li smajt dan l-aħħar minn fuq ir-radju etniku 3ZZZ ta' Melbourne f'repetizzjoni tal-programm 'Uniċi' mtellgħa mir-radju tal-Universita`. Kienet din l-intervista flimkien mal-mewt riċenti ta' Guże` Chetcuti, li kien wieħed mill-ewwel għalliema tiegħi tal-Malti li kelli fis-sittinijiet, u flimkien ma l'imħabba li sawwret fija ommi għall- ilsien Malti, li qanqluni biex naqbad il-pinna u nħażżeż dawn l-erba kelmiet.

Forsi kultant, x'imkien, għadhu jinbet xi ġiżimin li jiftaħ, imqar jekk f'artijiet imbiegħda, u hi dik il-fwieħa u l-aroma unika tiegħu li tispirak u tnibbixlek il-lehma f'armonija ta' ħsibijiet u ħsus li jixxebilku f'karba melodjuża li wieħed minsi jaspira u jittama li ma taqax f'widnejn torox. "Inkunu, jew ma nkunux: dik hi l-mistoqsija." Neżistu, jew ma neżistux. "La naħseb, neżisti" jgħid Rene` Descartes. Għaliex, mela, ma naħsbuhiex sew? L-għażla f'idejna; f'idejn kull wieħed u waħda minna.

SHARE A THOUGHT

SHARE A MEMORY

SHARE A STORY

CathCroc

is an **animated character brought to life by the Diocese of Darwin, designed to engage children and address their questions through the insights of Bishop Charles Gauci.**

In a recent interaction, James, a student from Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Catholic College in Alice Springs, posed a profound question to Cathcroc, the beloved mascot known for engaging with the community on matters of faith and spirituality. The question was then directed to Bishop Charles Gauci, who provided a compassionate and insightful response.

James asked, "Why does God give cancer to children?" This heartfelt inquiry, filled with the innocence and curiosity of youth, was met with an understanding nod from Cathcroc, who promptly turned to Bishop Gauci for a thoughtful answer.

Bishop Gauci began by gently clarifying, "James, God doesn't give cancer to people or children or anyone. God doesn't give illness to anyone. Nature does that. Nature is limited. And as we know, things can go wrong in nature."

Drawing from personal experience, Bishop Gauci shared, "My sister died as a baby. My brother died as a four-and-a-half-year-old boy. God did not kill them. Illness killed them. Human reality took their life, not God's plan." His words highlighted a fundamental distinction between natural occurrences and divine intention, emphasising that suffering and illness are not orchestrated by God.

Bishop Gauci offered reassurance by saying, "But what God has promised is to be with us and guide us even when these things happen." He conveyed a message of hope and eternal life, affirming, "I am sure I will see my sister in heaven and my brother in heaven because God is looking after them."

In addressing the broader question of suffering, Bishop Gauci noted, "The message of Jesus tells us that no, God does not give us illness. The limitation of nature does that." This explanation underscores a theological perspective that sees God as a source of comfort and guidance rather than a cause of suffering.

The session concluded with an invitation from Cathcroc and Bishop Gauci for further engagement. "If you have any questions about God and the beautiful creations around us, feel free to get in touch.

Maltese Australian woman connects with family after 'Times of Malta' appeal

Emma Borg

Thomas Zerafa and Linda Coppini Foot. Photo: Emma Borg

When Linda Coppini Foot's family left Malta for Australia in the 1950s, she was left with more questions than answers about her Maltese roots.

She returned to Malta in April and did not know a single soul on the island. But one month later, after an appeal through *Times of Malta*, Coppini has for the first time met with five of her maternal cousins.

Linda and her daughter Charlotte arrived in Malta with very little information to go by: a few photos and her family's immigration documents, as well as the faint memory of rarely told stories about Malta that she heard as a child.

After contacting *Times of Malta* to help trace her family, Coppini Foot had an influx of people contacting her with information, including Thomas Zerafa, her mother's first cousin.

Thomas Zerafa at four years old. Photo: Zerafa Family

Just two days after his 89th birthday, Zerafa and Coppini Foot met up at his home, where they both recounted how lucky they felt to have found each other. As his wife, Edith, poured everyone a cup of tea, Zerafa explained that he was orphaned as a child because of World War II.

"I was an orphan, my father and mother were both dead, and I was in institutional care. I forgot all about my family," said Zerafa.

But one memory remained for Zerafa: when he was in the institution at age 15, he met Coppini Foot's grandfather, Romeggio.

"He came over to see me at a time when nobody else on this earth was interested in me," said Zerafa. During this encounter, Zerafa remembers Romeggio telling him with tears in his eyes that he would be moving to Australia and that they probably would never see each other again. And they never did.

I always knew I had a relation with Malta but having that connection with people makes it so much more special, and it helps me understand who I am- Linda Coppini Foot

"They forgot all about us, and we forget all about them," said Zerafa.

He did not think about his cousins in Australia until he went on a trip there decades ago and tried to trace them but to no avail.

"It was a huge surprise to hear about Linda and our family there because we never even knew they existed," said Zerafa. They spent the rest of their morning with Zerafa, who told her stories about growing up in Żabbar during the war, while Coppini Foot shared stories about his family in Australia.

While in Malta, Coppini Foot also met cousin Emily, who has the same name as Coppini Foot's mother.

Linda Coppini Foot and her cousin Emily. Photo: Linda Coppini Foot

Emily, like Coppini Foot, is a child of migrants, but her family moved to Canada. Coincidentally, the two long-lost cousins met while they were both on holiday in Malta; before the article, they never even knew the other existed.

"It has given me a sense of belonging. I always knew I had a relation with Malta but having that connection with people makes it so much more special, and it helps me understand who I am," said Coppini Foot.

While in Malta, Coppini Foot only met family members from her mother's side, while her father's side remains a mystery. All she knows about her paternal family is that her father, Charles Coppini, was born in 1936 and lived in Unit 1, Block 1, Hubbard Flats, in Cospicua. At 19, he decided to quit his job as a footman and join his siblings, Joe and Tony, in Australia.

Coppini Foot may still be contacted at e- lindafoot1@gmail.com.

Do You Have What It Takes To Bring An Artistic Change In Malta?

By Lovin Malta

Excitement kicks in as a number of calls will soon be launched as part of the Creative Europe Programme providing European funding to support artists and organisations in the media and cultural sphere eager to cultivate distinctive projects. Every year, European Funding presents remarkable opportunities for supporting local artists in the development of innovative ideas and collaborative projects at a European scale. Artists have the option to pursue either individual mobility initiatives or engage in joint projects with fellow European artists.

Additionally, the programme extends its invitation to other entities such as NGOs and local councils, encouraging those with creative concepts related to cultural endeavours to participate.

The aims of these programmes encompass the preservation, enhancement, and advocacy of European cultural and linguistic diversity and heritage. They seek to bolster the competitiveness and economic viability of the cultural and creative industries, while fostering competitiveness, scalability, collaboration, mobility, innovation, and sustainability within the audio-visual sector.

The programme actively promotes inclusivity, equality, and diversity, advocating for the participation of individuals from minority and socially marginalised communities. This includes initiatives focused on audience development and the advancement of gender equality.

Whether you're a dancer, singer, actor, fashion designer, writer, or affiliated with an NGO, Local Council, or any local entity, and you aspire to make an impact in the Culture Sector, this opportunity is tailor-made for you!

Prospective applicants seeking additional details on how to apply for calls are urged to reach out to the Creative Europe Desk either by calling 20908990/1 or by visiting www.creativeeuropemalta.mt or the Creative Europe Desk Malta Facebook Page.

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The 'Great Wall' of Malta

By Adam Alexander

The Victoria Lines, a network of forts, batteries, entrenchments and howitzer positions, is Malta's answer to China's Great Wall (Credit: Charles O. Cecil/Alamy)

The 12km network of fortifications stretches across the entire northern end of the island, but for decades, few people knew it existed.

With a population density predicted to reach 6,700 per sq km in the next 10 years, Malta is easily one of the European Union's most crowded countries. And with more and more visitors flocking to the scenic Mediterranean archipelago every year, it's hard to imagine that any corner of this destination remains undiscovered.

Yet there is one. Across the northern portion of the isle of Malta is a spectacular defensive line which has incredibly lain abandoned for decades.

Known as the Victoria Lines and strategically built on the edge of a natural fault, this continuous defensive wall spans the entire width of Malta, some 12km from Fomm ir-Riħ in the west to Madliena in the east. But unlike the stately Grand Harbour of Valletta or imposing medieval town of Mdina, few will have even heard of the Victoria Lines, let alone seen them.

"What a revelation, to find so much nature and tranquility," said Helen Jones Florio, long-time Malta resident and keen rambler who didn't even know of the Victoria Lines' existence until she walked the entire length recently. "From our starting point in a small village near Mgarr, on the west coast of Malta, we walked across the entire country."

Malta's answer to China's Great Wall, the Victoria Lines are a network of fortifications built by the British Army during the second half of the 19th Century, consisting of forts, batteries, entrenchments and howitzer positions, and a continuous infantry line that connects them all together.

"From the bastions we had panoramic views of the island, and north on the horizon we could see the rocky outline of Malta's sister islands of Gozo and Comino," said Florio's husband, Jason, who walked the Victoria Lines with her. "Then just east of Mosta we walked down into the craggy Wied il-Ghasel – Valley of Honey – where tucked into an overhanging cliff we found the tiny Chapel of St Paul the Hermit."

The Victoria Lines, a network of forts, batteries, entrenchments and howitzer positions, is Malta's answer to China's Great Wall (Credit: Charles O. Cecil/Alamy)

Begun in the late 1800s by the Royal Engineers, and inaugurated in 1897 (the same year as Queen Victoria's jubilee), the wall was designed to link together a number of detached forts and to provide one long, continuous path for British military patrols. At the time, Britain was wary that some other country – primarily France and the newly created kingdom of Italy – might seek to hijack its vital bases in the Mediterranean.

But it was the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, which allowed European powers to access their territories in India and Asia without circumnavigating Africa, that was probably the most significant factor behind the building of the Victoria Lines. With more and more ships traversing the Mediterranean Sea, Britain's stronghold on Malta became increasingly strategically important.

Natural cliffs in the west and a string of forts in the south protected the rest of the island, but the fear was that any land attack on the rear of Valletta's Grand Harbour in the east and her naval installations could prove devastating to the British fleet. That left the north end of Malta as the only vulnerable area – save for the Great Fault line along which several infantry entrenchments had already been fashioned in the early 18th Century by the Knights of Malta.

"Nowhere in the Maltese islands is geography so emphatically exploited for defence than along the line of natural escarpments known as the Great Fault," writes military historian Dr Stephen C Spiteri in his book A Guide to The Fortifications of Malta.

Despite Britain's fears, the Victoria Lines were never put to the ultimate test of an enemy invasion, and by 1907, had already been abandoned and troops relocated to the island's coastlines. When a Nazi invasion looked likely during World War Two, the lines were rehabilitated with new guard posts built along them as a second line of defence. But once again, the fortifications escaped skirmish.

The Victoria Lines' anonymity is about to change, however. Just as hiking and rambling are surging in popularity, only now is Malta beginning to wake up to the fact that they have a glorious untapped treasure on their hands. By the end of the year, the Maltese Tourism Authority hopes to introduce visitors to this hidden gem with the designation of the nation's first national walkway, which will lead hikers along the historical battlement.

"We are currently working on setting up two trails along the Victoria Lines from Kuncizzjoni to Mosta, and from Gharghur to Pembroke," said Stephanie Attard Grech, who is overseeing the new project as assistant manager at the Maltese Tourism Authority.

The long-awaited launch of the Victoria Lines trail will be met with particular excitement by those enthusiasts in Malta – particularly in the north-central Maltese town of Mosta – who have been pushing steadily for its creation for more than 20 years. Mosta's residents were inspired to preserve the battlement by the UK's effort to promote Hadrian's Wall as a continuous walking trail, kicking off their own efforts with a celebration of the Victoria Lines' centenary anniversary in 1997.

Those familiar with the project hope a national trail will attract a new form of responsible, high-quality tourism; put Malta on the European ramblers' map; and ensure a greater level of protection for this piece of the archipelago's cultural heritage and the landscape surrounding it.

"This is something that can only be fully appreciated if one actually walks along the Victoria Lines," said Ray Cachia Zammit, who created the Facebook page, Friends of the Victoria Lines Trail. "Dedicated trekkers and ramblers already manage to do this despite the many current obstacles, but a managed national trail would extend this experience to the wider public, both locals and tourists," he said.

Zammit is the first to admit walking along various parts of the Victoria Lines can be difficult because of overgrown vegetation and other hazards (there are places where parts of the wall have collapsed and even a tract that has disappeared altogether). However, a walk along the Victoria Lines is "a unique experience through the stunning beauty of Malta's landscapes, offering breath-taking views", he said.

If you haven't walked the Victoria Lines then you have not seen Malta

The battlement is at its most spectacular where it snakes dramatically up and down a number of valleys. "At times we were left gripping the wall in fear that a misplaced step would lead to a tumble," Jason said. "But the joy of walking the Lines is the variation. The smooth flat sections around the forts giving way suddenly to tight, crumbling paths and finally those rugged snaking ramparts along cliff edges that give it the look of a diminutive Great Wall of China."

His views are echoed by the growing number of followers on the Friends of the Victoria Lines Trail Facebook page, all hoping to preserve the lines for future generations. After all, according to member George Wayte: "If you haven't walked the Victoria Lines then you have not seen Malta."

Pjazza Teatru Rjal to hold concert in memory of Joe Cutajar and Sammy Murgo

The Malta Concert Orchestra will be opening its summer season at the Pjazza Teatru Rjal with the concert MCO BIG BAND SWINGS under the direction of Maestro Paul Abela.

Pjazza Teatru Rjal will be dedicating this year's concert to the memory of two Maltese legends who passed away earlier this year – singer Joe Cutajar and saxophonist Sammy Murgo. Many remember both Cutajar as well as Murgo as soloists with the Malta Concert Orchestra on the stage at Pjazza Teatru Rjal.

This will be the first in a series of concerts which will include MCO Pop, Funk, Rock on 28 June, Cartoni Animati which will bring back a lot of memories of memorable signature tunes from the 80s and 90s on 26 July, the popular annual appointment Notte Italiana on 23 August and the MCO Soul, Rhythm 'n' Blues concert on 13 September.

Students and senior citizens can benefit from special discounts (terms and conditions apply). The concert starts at 8.30pm. For more information and other events at this theatre one can visit www.pjazzateatrurjal.mt

Environmental NGOs to challenge ERA's refusal to publish Carrying Capacity Assessment for Comino

Seven environmental NGOs will be supporting an appeal against a decision by the Environment and Resources Authority (ERA) to not publish a visitor Carrying Capacity Assessment for the island of Comino, despite repeated attempts to release this document publicly, the NGOs said Saturday.

The need to carry out such an assessment featured as a requirement from Comino's Management Plan for the island which was finalised in 2014, which management plan had set a number of targets and priorities aimed at preserving and restoring the island's biodiversity. Initial requests for the study's release by BirdLife Malta representatives were denied by ERA, prompting BirdLife Malta to file a Freedom of Information (FOI) request last October 2023.

ERA sought an extension to respond, eventually stating in December that the document could not be released since this was a reserved matter requested by the Cabinet of Ministers. BirdLife Malta escalated the issue by filing a FOI complaint, leading to an investigation by the Information and Data Protection Commissioner (IDPC).

The IDPC's investigation concluded that a note from the Cabinet's Secretary stated that this was requested by Cabinet, and that the document was lawfully exempt from being released, the NGOs said.

In response, BirdLife Malta and six other ENGOs will be filing an appeal in front of the IDPC Tribunal, arguing that the visitor Carrying Capacity Study is not a Cabinet prerogative, but a requirement of the 2014 Comino Management Plan commissioned by ERA itself, which is meant to guide policy-making and conservation measures for the preservation of the island.

The ENGOs condemned ERA's refusal to release this critical documentation. The intervention of Cabinet's Secretary to support such a block suggests a reluctance to address the mass tourism issue on Comino which is causing significant environmental impacts while generating profit for service providers, operating legally and illegally.

Santa Marija Bay, in fact, has over the past days seen the setting up of another beach kiosk without any relevant permits issued by ERA to authorise such activities within the Natura 2000 site. On the other hand, ERA has in the past days authorised kiosk operators to camp at the back of Santa Marija Bay until the end of September 2024, despite the setting up of a dedicated camp site for the public on another part of the island.

Last year, in April 2023, sunbeds appeared in a new area on Comino, away from the usual concessions granted at the Blue Lagoon, adding encroachment of commercial activities on the protected Natura 2000 site.

Meanwhile, proposals for rebuilding of the Comino Hotel are still under review, with environmental NGOs challenging the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) carried out to determine the hotel's impact on the Natura 2000 site.

Amongst the various flaws challenged by the NGOs, the impact assessment did not outline the number of extra visitors to the island a renewed hotel and its facilities would generate on top of the already tourist packed island during the summer months.

"We are appealing to government to shy away from commercial operators' interests and come clean on the island's limitations to support sustainable tourism, giving priority to nature protection over an ever-increasing exploitation of the island for profit. Comino's future as a pristine island to be enjoyed by all, now and in the future, depends on a long-term strategy at safeguarding the island, with adequate planning and enforcement aimed at maintaining sustainability and not at fattening the pockets of selected operators at the expense of our natural heritage. We also want to warn against the commercialisation of Santa Marija Bay which would eventually replicate what is happening at Blue Lagoon," the NGOs said.

Environmental organisations: BirdLife Malta Moviment Graffitti Flimkien għal Ambjent Aħjar Din l-Art Ħelwa Friends of the Earth Malta Nature Trust-FEE Malta Ramblers' Association of Malta.

Chinese medical team provides free clinical services in Malta

VALLETTA, May 24 (Xinhua) -- The 19th Chinese medical team for Malta from the Mediterranean Regional Centre for Traditional Chinese Medicine (MRCTCM) on Friday hosted a special event to provide free clinical services to elderly residents at the city hall of Birgu in southeastern Malta.

Doctors from the medical team gave brief introductions about traditional Chinese massage techniques and shared recipes for a traditional soup made with brown sugar, red dates, and ginger before the services. Laurence Farrugia, 71, suffered from neck stiffness and limited mobility. He told Xinhua that after the event, he had decided to make an appointment with the Chinese doctors to relieve the stiffness of his neck.

Miriam Ancilleri, 65, recounted her experience with acupuncture at the MRCTCM after injuring her feet last year. "I feel glad that Malta has the Chinese medical team to serve Maltese people," she said. John Boxall, mayor of Birgu, expressed his appreciation for the event. "It's a great opportunity for our elderly population, and they benefited a lot today," said Boxall.

Feng Hua, leader of the 19th Chinese medical team for Malta, said that similar events have been held five times in the city councils of Senglea and Zejtun.

The MRCTCM was established by the Chinese and Maltese governments in 1994. To date, 19 Chinese medical teams comprising over 100 doctors have provided TCM treatments to approximately 250,000 Maltese patients.

(Web editor: Tian Yi, Liang Jun)

The beloved animated series Peppa Pig, adored by children all over the world made its debut in Maltese homes, and in collaboration with *Ċentru tal-Ilsien Malti*, fully translated into the Maltese Language.

Children's favourite PEPPA PIG was shown on Maltese TV screens, fully translated into Maltese

Co-founder and Director of Media Exclusive Ben Camille shared his excitement for the project and expressed his personal attachment to it, emphasising the importance of promoting the Maltese language in a fun and engaging way.

Rachel Cachia, Executive Producer and Director at Media Exclusive, highlighted the meticulous translation process to ensure children can easily connect with the language through the use of modern and correct terms.

Norma Saliba, the Executive Head of Ċentru tal-Ilsien Malti, said children needed more audiovisual resources in Maltese to be able to understand, speak, read and write in Maltese. "As a promoter of Maltese, the Centre for Maltese Language is committed to support projects like Peppa Pig in Maltese so that children enjoy learning the Maltese language."

Producers Media Exclusive said they were thrilled to introduce the captivating addition to their franchise programming line-up. Director Ben Camille expressed his personal attachment to this project, stressing the significance of promoting Maltese by providing children with enjoyable and entertaining avenues for learning.Rachel Cachia, one of Media Exclusive's executive producers, said the scripts are currently being translated from English to Maltese. She emphasised the need for using the right Maltese words, along with modern terms, so that children can understand and connect with the language they hear from adults.

1950s to 1989:

REUNION George Cross Soccer Club in Cringila, NSW

In this story we touch upon the lives of many settling in the Illawarra area, predominately in the suburb of Cringila (the Steel City)

During the 50s many arriving in Australia from our Island of Malta were in their 20s, full of life and looking to starting a new life far away from their families. Looking back, tt is understandable that there was the need of finding ways for men to socialize.

Soccer as it was known at the time was the answer. They mostly played in the area against other church groups formed at that time.

Over a long period of time the Cringila Club commenced its building. History will show it was built in numerous sections, in fact in the early 60s initially just one room was built for people to meet. Today you will find it underneath the club used as a Men's Shed.

In 1983 it was decided to form the George Cross Soccer Club (GCS)as a sub-committee of the association. The very first meeting was held on 24 February 1983 with Joe Magro Snr, Freddy Galea, Emanuel Bonnici, Freddy Greg and Frank Zammit.

They initially played in Church competitions and on the 9th April 1983 the committee fielded 2 teams, where the first side went through the season undefeated. In honour of this second generation Maltese, we salute them as clearly then they were ambassadors to what is known today the George Cross Falcons Community Centre Inc.

Frank Zammit, who was part of the coaching at the time, informed me the GCS joined the District competition in the 2nd division until 1989 with great success. In the photo below Joe Magro Jnr was recognised for his talent and achievements in the game of soccer.

It is natural that over time, what were once good times might be seen as all diminished but what is important is that we learn to adjust, not allow ourselves to give up but rather instil our culture and heritage to the next generation.

**by Louis Parnis, President of the George Cross Falcons Community Centre Inc. Photos: supplied*

Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean gives an award to Holy Family Hospital in Bethlehem

20/05/2024

The Holy Family Hospital in Bethlehem, run by the Order of Malta, has received a prestigious award from the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean, an international organisation consisting of representatives of national parliaments of states on the northern and southern shores of the Mediterranean.

During the 18th Plenary Assembly, held on 15 and 16 May in Braga, Portugal, Ambassador Alberto di Luca received the award for humanitarian or political actions in the 31 PAM member states on behalf of Grand Master Fra' John Dunlap and Grand Hospitaller Fra' Alessandro de Franciscis.

"All those who are at the forefront in defending the right to health in an area of the world so seriously and increasingly affected by the conflict scenarios of recent months should be given credit," said ambassador di Luca in his speech, during which he briefly summarized the most significant data of the Order of Malta's presence in the world. "We are proudly a Catholic religious order, but when a woman asks for help for herself or her child, we react independently whether she is Muslim, Jewish, Christian or any other religion," added the Ambassador, stressing the apolitical, neutral and independent nature of the Order of Malta's work.

The Ambassador also presented the medal issued to celebrate the birth of the 100,000th child in the Bethlehem Hospital to the PAM President on behalf of the Order of Malta's Ambassador to Palestine, Michele Bowe.

Bethlehem's Holy Family Maternity Hospital: a birthplace of hope

Just 1500 steps from the grotto where Jesus was born in Bethlehem, the Order of Malta's Holy Family Hospital continues to provide excellent care to mothers and babies of all creeds and needs. As Christmas approaches in this holy place, the Hospital prepares to deliver its 100,000th baby!

The Holy Family Hospital in Bethlehem, Palestine, is a truly special place. Located just steps away from the birthplace of Christ, the Order of Malta-run maternity and neonatal critical care centre serves poor and at-risk women, infants and children throughout the region.

For the over 30 years since it became a specialized maternity unit, the area where the Hospital operates has been one of conflict and poverty, of refugee camps and remote desert villages. Notwithstanding the devastating economic effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, it continues to offer state-of-the-art neonatal care and support to families, and it is where about 90% of all Bethlehem's infants are born. *"Our motto is: we serve everyone without regard to need or creed."*

This tiny island nation has more AI startups per capita than the United States

Malta is competing with Silicon Valley to become a leader in the global AI arms race. Yuriy

Silicon Valley isn't the only hotspot in the AI boom.

Malta, a small island in the Mediterranean Sea, is leaning heavily into the technology. Its businesses, universities, and the government are embracing AI as a way to automate tasks, improve education, and even solve rush hour traffic jams.

The country has a population of just over 500,000, but it already has 56 AI startups, according to startup tracker Tracxn Technologies. That's about 1 startup for every 9,500 people. Meanwhile, the United States, which has a population of over 330 million, has around 24,000 AI startups by Tracxn's count. Or 1 for about every 14,000 residents.

The country has long made headlines as a hot spot for wealthy tourists. Its "golden passport," which gives rich foreigners citizenship in exchange for investing a certain amount of money in the country, was the second most sought-after foreign passport program for Americans last year. It also began pouring money into artificial intelligence before the ChatGPT-fueled AI arms race began.

In 2019, Malta outlined a vision to be the "Ultimate AI Launchpad" by 2030. The goal was for Malta to become "a place in which local and foreign companies and entrepreneurs can develop, prototype, test, and scale AI, and ultimately showcase the value of their innovations across an entire nation primed for adoption." AI would "springboard from Malta to the world."

Those efforts stalled between the pandemic and a turn of the political administration. Now, under the EU's AI Act — the region's sweeping AI legislation, which bans unacceptable use cases — Malta is working on a new AI strategy, Bloomberg reported.

Those at the center of this renewed effort are focused on safely deploying the technology. They're developing initiatives to combat job displacement and ethical frameworks, for instance.

"Foresight in recognizing the importance of AI has given Malta a head start in the field of AI, and it continues to be a leader in the industry today," Alexiei Dingli, a professor of artificial intelligence at the University of Malta, who's leading Malta's endeavors, including the traffic jam project, told Bloomberg.

Axel Springer, Business Insider's parent company, has a global deal to allow OpenAI to train its models on its media brands' reporting.

Maltese Concert Band NSW Inc. 27 May at 22:36 ·

Celebrate as a community at the Streets Alive and Parade Day in the Blacktown CBD. It's the City's biggest community festival of the year.

Music, colour, food, dance, and entertainment will take over the streets for everyone to enjoy in addition to free amusement rides, arts and crafts, and market stalls. See Bluey and her little sister Bingo during their live interactive experience at the Bowman Hall! Bookings are essential.

The street parade will travel through the CBD at 11 am, showcasing Blacktown's multiculturalism, history, emergency services and local groups. Come along, show support, and engage with other members of our wonderful Blacktown City community.

"The Maltese Concert Band makes a SPLASH at Blacktown Festival!" The Maltese Concert Band played their first Blacktown Festival on Saturday, 25 May 2024! Led by Charles Simiana, the band delighted the crowd with a vibrant mix of traditional and contemporary pieces. The band enjoyed entertaining the community audience very much! The Maltese Concert Band thanks Blacktown City Council for their first invitation and hope to return again next year.

ell done Maltese Concert Band!

At The Roman Domus Of Rabat (Malta) 2024

Program Type:
Field School, Volunteer
Affiliation:
Heritage Malta, University of South Florida, University of North Alabama, Intercontinental Archaeology
Project Director:
David Cardona (Heritage Malta), Ben Lowe (University of North Alabama & Intercontinental Archaeology), Davide Tanasi (University of South Florida), Rob Brown (Australian National University; Intercontinental Archaeology), Andrew Wilkinson (Intercontinental Archaeology)

Project Description:
The Domus Romana in Rabat, Malta is the remains of a rich, aristocratic roman town house (domvs) which was accidentally discovered in 1881. Although very little remains from the house itself, the intricate mosaics which survived for centuries as well as the artefacts found within the remains are testimony enough of the original richness and story of this fantastic abode. The archaeological landscape surrounding the house has been excavated to some extent close to the structure of the domus. These excavations dating back to the late 19th and early 20th centuries uncovered the remains of a road passing by the structure as well as a number of other buildings and features lining the road. This archaeology needs a great deal of further research and re-excavation, as does the open ground beyond the Domus Romana that continues below the city of Mdina. Once known as the Roman city of Melite, Mdina is contiguous to the site.
The Project, for our intentions, aims to establish the extent of the roman archaeological landscape in which the Domus sits. Furthermore we hope to determine a possible role of the Domus in that landscape including is place in the Roman settlement and agricultural function of the region as well as its significance to the Roman settlement at Melite. We also hope to answer a number of broader questions we have regarding links of the Domus and the surrounding structures to local trade, including the possibility of the Roman use or control of earlier Phoenician trade structures. Our project, though only in the field for short research and excavation seasons, will continue to work on the data and materials from our research year round. The proposal that is being drawn up will include thorough processes and procedures for the protection and conservation of the site after the field season has concluded as well as a rigorous publication expectation.
The field school entails 3 weeks of archaeological fieldwork, classification, analysis and emergency restoration of ancient artifacts and application of 3D scanning and digital photogrammetry to archaeological contexts.
Costs include 4 star accommodation, 2 meals each day, transport to/from site, and free access to Heritage Malta sites and lecture on various aspects of archaeological excavations methods archaeological science and digital archaeology. Costs of 2024 season are yet to be determined.
A trailer of the 2023 excavation season can be found here:
https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=845495580060622&extid=CL-UNK-UNK-UNK-AN_GK0T-GK1C&mibextid=2Rb1fB&ref=sharing

I WILL NEVER STOP SAYING...

- The rights of all Maltese living abroad must be preserved and respected.
- Unless we work together, we are going to lose all we have achieved.
- Some of us suffer from APATHY – indifference, I don't care, selfishness and 'She'll be right, mate'
- Give credit where credit is due and don't obstruct other people's progress.
- We must not forget the pain, sacrifices and hard-work the early Maltese migrants suffered when they had to leave Malta/Gozo to settle in an unknown far away country
- BE POSITIVE and help each other to succeed and prosper.