JOURNAL FOR MALTESE AROUND THE WORLD

MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER

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Boy comes from New York performs with Mosta band during Santa Marija

THE VOICE OF ALL MALTESE LIVING ABROAD

SAD NEWS OF THE WEEK

Daily newspapers' front page

TIMES OF MALTA

Tuesday, August 13, 2024 | www.timesofmalta.com | €3.50

Nicolette Ghirxi and Edward William Johnston had a one-and-a-half-year relationship that ended last December.

Woman, 48, murdered, police shoot dead suspect

- Nicolette Ghirxi stabbed to death in her Swatar apartment
- Ex-partner Edward William Johnston shot dead at St Julian's
- Police shot three times at Johnston, after he pointed replica gun
- Victim had made multiple reports of harassment against ex-partner

In-Nazzjon

Mara Maltija ta' 48 sena tinqatel mill-eks sieħeb tagħha tlett ijiem wara li għamlet rapport lill-Pulizija

- L-aggressur Irlandiż jinqatel mill-Pulizija ftit sigħat wara f'San Ġiljan
- Nicolette Ghirxi kienet għamlet rapport ta' fastidju f'April li għadda
- Il-Kummissarju jgħid li t-talba li għamlet il-vittma l-Ħamis li għadda "kienet għadha qed tiġi proċessata"

Robert Cremona

(Fuq): Iż-żewġ vittmi tal-biercaħ: Nicolette Ghirxi u Edward William Johnston

Is-sistema qatlet mara oħra

– Il-Kap tal-Partit Nazzjonalista Bernard Grech

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L-AKTAR ĠIMGĦA IMPENJATTIVA GĦALL-AJRUPORT MALTI

.. 216,922 passiġġier se jkunu qegħdin ihallu jew jaslu Malta matul din il-ġimgħa

MARA TINQATEL B'DAQQIET TA' SIKKINA F'BIRKIRKARA

.. l-allegat aggressur jinqatel mill-pulizija f'San Ġiljan

the malta independent

PN Another Byron Camilleri failure has led to a woman's death, PN Leader Bernard Grech says

MURDER A 'beautiful person, inside and out': Tributes pour in for victim Nicolette Ghirxi

COURT Prince wanted by Romania will not be extradited from Malta

Woman murdered in Birkirkara apartment, police shoot alleged aggressor dead in St Julian's

SEMIRA ADRAS SHALAN

Women killed by men

48 women were murdered in the past 22 years, 32 being femicides

Vanessa Grech and her 17-month-old daughter Ailey
Pauline Tanti
Rachel Muscat
Patricia Attard
Josette Scicluna
Doris Schembri
Charlene Farrugia
Lyudmila Nykytiuk
Maria Theresa Vella
Catherine Agius
Christine Sammut
Irena Abadzhieva
Karen Cheatle
Margaret Mifsud
Meryem Bugeja
Yvette Gajda
Silvana Muscat
Caroline Magri
Maria Carmela Fenech
Antonia Micallef
Shannon Mak
Lourdes Agius
Lourdes Agius, Maria Lourdes and Angele Bonnici
Chantelle Chetcuti
Paulina Dembska
Strangled: Rita Ellul
Bernice Cassar
Pelin Kaya
Sandra Ramirez
Nicolette Ghirxi

While Gozo is full to the brim with visitors, most of them Maltese, the Santa Maria feast is marked by a number of activities, some traditional and others cultural, including the Cittadella Arts Festival. One of the oldest traditions is horse-racing in capitla city of Gozo, Victoria, during the feast of Santa Marija, which still attracts many enthusiasts, including Maltese horse-owners, despite the controversy about the practise being carried out in the blazing sun.

Distressingly for animal rights defenders, once again, horse-races took place in Victoria, between 3pm and 6pm, since these in no way fall unde the regulations which were issued months ago which preclude carriage horses-rides when the sun is at its peak.

Calls made by Animal Welfare Commissioner Magistrate Dennis Montebello for these races to stop once and for all, have been ignored.

Traditional horse racing on the day of the Santa Maria feast has been carried out for several years. In recent days, controversy has arisen as to whether or not these races should take place in the afternoon.

Pro-animal activists regard these races as cruelty to animals, both because of the heat and because they take place in the street which is not designed for horse racing.

Before the races began and between one race and the next, horse-owners could be seen constantly gave the horses water to cool them off and also kept them in the shade. The owners, many of them from Malta, are keen on this tradition.

One horse owner said that ” although some say this is cruelty, it isn’t. We take care of these horses all year round, why stop this tradition which has been going on for years.”

The Leone Philharmonic Society, which organizes these races, defended this tradition with the President Dr. Michael Caruana saying that he sees nothing wrong in it. ” A race takes a maximum of one minute and twenty seconds. That is the extent of their exposure to the sun. So you can’t compare the tradition of horse-racing which has been going on since 1400 to the issue of karrozzini.”

Former CEO of Infrastructure Malta Ivan Falzon took to Facebook to criticise the decision to close one of Victoria's main roads for the Santa Marija horse races, saying that the road has ended up as "a construction site with a foul smell.".

On Saturday, Republic Street in Victoria, Gozo, was closed off for the traditional Santa Marija horse races. Falzon, posted a comment on social media against the closing off of the road.

Falzon said "whoever gave permission to close the main road (in a savage manner, causing permanent damage) in Gozo during the peak of the season to allow for a horse race when there is an equipped racecourse for this purpose less than two kilometres away, deserved an Olympic medal," he said sarcastically. He said that the main road was left smelling and resembling a construction site.

Birgu shows its new flag with a unique mosaic

Considered to have a unique background, this flag consists of a painted mosaic made from over 10,000 pieces. The Great Siege flag is one of three flags flown on Dar Levita Martri for the titular feast of San Lawrenz, Birgu.

TVMnews followed the hoisting of this flag on Friday, the eve of the feast.

It is around 12 and a half metres and was hoisted from Triq Nestu Laiviera on to the roof of Dar Levita Martri, in Birgu.

The Great Siege flag depicts the theme of the City which won the Great Siege and was made by artist Joseph Galea. It made its debut on the eve of the feast and after the Mass, it was blessed by the Archpriest Can. Carmelo Busuttil.

Me and my friend Joe Galea made this flag which is around 40 feet.

Andrew Lawrence Zarb – Artistic Director of Dar Levita Martri Speaking to TVMNews Andrew Lawrence Zarb explained that the background is unique. The background is yellow which means glory. It has an unusual element which is the mosaic made up of 10,000 painted pieces.

Andrew Lawrence Zarb – Artistic Director of Dar Levita Martri. Mr Zarb added that the flag is characterised by four elements and the style is a departure from flags which are more traditional.

There is the Birgu coat of arms. These are the bastions at the entrance to Birgu, La Valette's sword and the palm because the motto of Birgu written around the flag is "Rebbieħa l-Palma Nġib". The colours and composition reflect today's times and is more modern.

The Great Siege flag was presented for the first time in the presence of the Banda Vittoriosa San Lawrenz. We hope to have more of a breeze so we can appreciate the flag more.

Andrew Lawrence Zarb – Artistic Director of Dar Levita Martri

New Chairperson for Malta Philharmonic Orchestra

Professor Odette Vassallo has been appointed as the Chairperson of the Malta Philharmonic Orchestra to replace Alfred Camilleri who showed his wishes he did not want to continue in the role.

She has a vast experience in the educational sector and graduated in English from Malta University while acquiring a Masters and a Doctorate from Nottingham University in England to serve as MATSEC Board Chairperson.

The Minister for National Heritage, Arts and Local Government Owen Bonnici greatly praised the contribution given to the Orchestra by Alfred Camilleri and said he is and will remain a sincere and loyal friend to the artistic and cultural sector.

He added that during his period as Chairperson of the Orchestra, Camilleri had carried out important changes, paving the steps for the way following.

Minister Bonnici also thanked Professor Vassallo for accepting the appointment and said that through her work and experience she will strengthen the role between the Orchestra and the educational sector.

Bishop Emmanuel Galea (1891–1974)

On August 21 the people of Senglea together with the Missionary Sisters of Jesus of Nazareth will commemorate the 50th anniversary of the demise of Bishop Emmanuel Galea with a mass celebrated in the Senglea Basilica at 6p.m.

Mgr Galea was born in Senglea on March 10, 1891. He pursued his studies at the University of Malta and was ordained on December 18, 1915. He later earned his doctorate at the Gregorian University in Rome. In 1930, he was appointed Professor of Canon Law at the University of Malta, and in 1940 he became the bishop's General Vicar. During the Second World War, on June 9, 1942, he was appointed Titular Bishop of Tralles and Auxiliary Bishop of Malta.

Bishop Galea is remembered as a compassionate and wise shepherd, renowned for his holiness and ability to communicate with simplicity. He was a bishop who dedicated himself to pastoral and spiritual work, and is particularly remembered for the long hours he dedicated to confession and for his insightful teachings, especially in his writings and homilies.

His co-citizens, the people of Senglea, remember him first and foremost for his saintly life; his memory is also cherished thanks to his contributions in many fields. He was the one who consecrated the new altars after the rebuilding of the basilica, he paid for the painting on altar of Our Lady of the Rosary by Emvin Cremona, and also donated a chalice to his parish. He is probably best remembered for having composed the lyrics of the beloved hymn O Marija, O Ħelwa Bambina in 1934.

Mgr Galea passed away with a reputation for sanctity on August 21, 1974. The process of Beatification was initiated on June 24, 2003, by Archbishop Joseph Mercieca.

In addition to the mass that will commemorate the cherished memories of this beloved bishop, the parish of Senglea will host an exhibition with the help of the Missionary Sisters of Jesus of Nazareth, the Diocesan Archive, and the Metropolitan Archive of Mdina. This exhibition will showcase several of his writings, personal items, and interesting details related to his saintly life.

ON THE GRAPEVINE = OUR READERS' OPINION

Thanks Frank Always happy and look forward to receive every issue of "THE MALTESE JOURNAL" Looking forward to receive issue"530" Congratulations for your dedication and time spent to reach so many Maltese and other readers May you keep enjoying good health Harry Bugeja – Adelaide, Australia

Always a pleasure to receive and read one edition after another, of your wonderful NEWSLETTER, that is full of interesting news from the Maltese Islands. News coming from the present and better still from the past. It is s great to admire the pictures that you include therein as well as the write-ups. Keep up the good work dear friend....Always nice to have people like you who continue to promote the greatness of our Island Nation MALTA & GOZO. Sincerely George Stagno Navarra - Malta

Dear Frank A great achievement indeed and highly appreciated by Maltese living and working oversea, including myself. Aside from its intrinsic value to those interested and forever proud of their native country of birth, the quality in terms of journal production, quality, content , historical interest and the selfless work involved by you as editor to date is truly remarkable and greatly appreciated by me and I am sure, many Maltese expats. Over 500 issues is indeed a huge achievement my friend. Kind regards,
Prof Sir Alfred Cuschieri, MD, PhD United Kingdom

SANTA MARIJA FEAST IN COMINO TO BE CELEBRATED ON AUGUST 2024

Times of Malta

The chapel of St Mary (inset) in Comino. Photos: Charles Spiteri

The feast of Santa Marija will be celebrated at the Comino chapel on Saturday, August 24. Gozo Bishop Anton Teuma will be sailing on a dinghy to bless all marine vessels which happen to be at San Nikola Bay at 4.30pm and Santa Marija Bay at 5.15pm. All mariners will be given a memento. A solemn Mass will then be celebrated by Mgr Teuma in front of the chapel at 6.45pm. Seats will be available.

The Saturday Mass at the chapel is very popular with Maltese and Gozitans who happen to be sailing or camping there, especially in summer. Mgr Joseph Attard, the rector of the chapel, is calling the occasion *Komunita, Ħbieb tal-Baħar fil-Mulej – Kemmuna* (Friends of the Sea in Jesus Christ community – Comino). For the first time, the Naxxar Scout Group Band will participate in the celebration. Those who would like to take part, a charter boat will leave Gozo at 5.30pm. For bookings, call 9984 7099.

The chapel of St Mary was first mentioned in a map dating from 1296. However, the location of this original chapel is not known. The present chapel may have been built on the exact site of the medieval chapel. The original chapel must have been ravaged on numerous occasions by pirates who attacked the island due to its defenceless shores. In fact, there was no defence on Comino prior to 1618. As a result, its population abandoned the island and settled in Gozo.

The statue of St Mary, by the well-known statuarian and sculptor Wistin Camilleri, was restored in 2016. It was donated to the chapel by Captain Charles Vassallo in 1948.

I remember some time ago talking with a friend who told me that his prayer is mostly 'Saying Yes'.

Yes to life, yes to being, yes to connection, yes to what is, yes to God. Saying yes to relationships is at the heart of spirituality. Saying yes is about being real. It is about fully living. It is about being authentic. It is about being who we are meant to be. It is about meaningful engagement. Jesus said, '*I have come to bring life.'* He is the key to us saying yes. He is the way the truth and the life.

Saying yes is the best antidote to the ego. The ego makes us shrink. It leads us to the dead end of self. We find ourselves when we give ourselves. Sitting down quietly and saying yes with words and an open heart leads to life. We are connecting with life everlasting

THE FOUR SEASONS IN MALTA

SPRING IS THE BEST TIME FOR SIGHTSEEING AND HIKING

Malta and Gozo are home to some of the oldest temples in the world, as well as a wealth of stunning coastal trails to hike. Spring's sunny but relatively cool days make for the best moments to experience both. The weather is bright and comparatively fresh from March to May, with maximum highs of 18°–24°C (64°–75°F). You won't need to worry about getting scorched when visiting Malta's impressive temples, the oldest and best preserved being the limestone wonder Ħagar Qim and its smaller neighbor Mnajdra. Archeologists have dated the monuments to as far back as 3700 BCE, and suggested that the island's prehistoric inhabitants built them to worship the sun and mark the changing seasons.

Hiking the wildly scenic loops and paths along Malta's coast – in particular, the Dingli Cliffs and Fawwara Trail – is also best done at this time of year, before the summer heat sizzles. Spring also brings Easter ceremonies, which the Maltese take very seriously. Week-long celebrations include parades, markets and local bakers selling *figolli*, sweet, almond-filled cakes shaped like lambs or bunnies.

Festivals take place after dark in villages all over Malta in summer – and invariably feature a procession, music, street food and fireworks.

SUMMER IS THE BEST TIME FOR EVENING FESTIVALS

Maltese summers get hot. *Very* hot, with highs of 30°–38°C (86°–100°F) and up to 85% humidity. From June until late September is the best time to visit Malta and Gozo's excellent beaches by day (it's really too sweaty to consider doing anything else) – then head to a festival of local *festa* once the sun has set. International music festivals take place all season long. Produced by the music network every year since 2007, Isle of MTV brings huge pop acts to Floriana – with all tickets free. Glitch Festival has been inviting EDM artists to the island since 2016. Film festivals like Kinemastic (short films) and Mediterrane Film Festival (features) also run through the summer.

Festa season truly reflects Maltese culture, with each village, town and city in producing its own event. The settlement's patron saint is inevitably celebrated every year with a procession, food market and fireworks display, the latter of which get very competitive from town to town. Since there's a *festa* happening somewhere pretty much every weekend, look up where if you're visiting in the summer months. You're guaranteed a brilliant view. In the sunny but not brutally hot fall, you can both enjoy the beach and the stone monuments of cities like Mdina.

AUTUMN IS THE BEST TIME FOR PERFECT WEATHER

The best weather in Malta arrives in mid-September and lasts until late October, when the days are still long and sun-drenched but the peak summer heat begins to break. This means you can hit the beach and dive into the still-mild Mediterranean – while also managing some sightseeing without melting. Wandering the picturesque lanes of Mdina, visiting the Roman ruins of a villa in Rabat, taking in Neolithic temples like Tarxien and the subterranean Hypogeum, or hopping on a boat to Comino or the Blue Lagoon won't leave you lobster red (still, don't forget the SPF 50).

Our favourite swim spots in Malta include St Peter's Pool (look out for Leli and his diving dog); Sliema's salt pans; Ghar Lapsi, near Ħaġar Qim; the golden terracotta sands of Ramla Bay; and the natural phenomenon of Gozo's Inland Sea. Still, on islands as small as Malta and Gozo, you're never far from a wonderful spot for jumping into the sea, wherever you find yourself.

WINTER IS THE BEST TIME FOR BUDGET TRAVELERS

The November-to-February period is the archipelago's off season, with January and February being the rainiest months. (This also makes them the greenest ones.) The winter months are the most affordable time in Malta, too, with good deals on accommodation. Hostels and Airbnbs whose prices spike in the summer (now considered May to October) become accessible options – sometimes even bargains – in the cooler period.

Winter also is a great time of year for outdoor pursuits like hiking, rock climbing and even scuba diving. You can take the plunge all year long here, with an impressive number of shipwrecks close to land (such as HMS *Maori*, near Valletta). Visibility is generally very good – unless there's a storm, of course.

This article was first published May 11, 2022 and updated Aug 9, 2024.

Xemxija is a suburb of **St. Paul's Bay**. It is a quiet resort, all surrounded by some of the most fertile valleys and **Maltese countryside**.

There is also a picturesque small fishing harbour. The resort is the gateway to the sandy and popular beaches of **Golden Bay** and to **Mellieħa Bay**. There are several hotels and restaurants in **Ix-Xemxija**. The area around **Ix-Xemxija** has been inhabited since prehistoric times.

It contains a number of archaeological sites, which now form a heritage trail. These include a number of rock-hewn tombs, remains of two megalithic temples, a **Bronze Age** grain silo, trogloditic dwellings, cart ruts, a **Roman road**, and **Roman** apiaries.

In around 1715, the **Order of St. John** built **Arrias Battery** as part of a series of **fortifications defending Malta's coastline**. It was also called **Ix-Xemxija Battery** since it was on the sunny side of the bay, **Ix-Xemxija** means *sunny* in Maltese, and the area around it became known as **Ix-Xemxija**. In 1839, the **British** built an aqueduct allowing the transportation of water. The water travelled from an underground aqueduct in an area in **Wardija**, known as **tal-Ballut**, that extends to an above ground aqueduct and then to a reservoir both in Xemxija. The conservation of water was needed for the **British military** and their horses, who surveilled the area from the nearby defence posts. An underground emergency flour mill was built in **Ix-Xemxija** during the **Cold War**. It has been restored to working condition by the *Fondazzjoni Wirt Industrijali Malti*, the Maltese Industrial Heritage Foundation, and is now open to the public. Since the 1980s, several apartment blocks were built in Xemxija making it a popular residential area. It is also a small resort, mainly catering with bars and restaurants.

The **Simar Nature Reserve** forms part of the suburb. On the eastern edge of **Bajda Ridge**, overlooking **Ix-Xemxija**, are concentrated a wide variety of archaeological sites ranging from the **Neolithic age** more than 5500 years ago, through **Punic** and **Roman** times. The area is well cared for and organised into an interesting heritage trail starting uphill along **a road dating back to the Roman era** that cuts across the ridge past **ancient cave dwellings, tombs and apiaries**, heading towards **Mellieħa**. In the **Miżieb** woodland to the west of the road are ruins of what may have been a megalthic temple. To the east one can head towards punic tombs and more cave dwellings. Yet further east one comes across a prehistoric grain silo and a cluster of six rock-cut neolithic tombs dating from the early temple period, 5500 years ago. In the northeast, overlooking **Mistra Valley** and **Mistra Gate**, beneath the cart ruts, one can find the **Roman** baths in an evocative setting on the cliff face.

Bajda Ridge is bound to the south by **Pwales Valley** and to the north by **Miżieb** and **Mistra Valleys**. From the top of this ridge one can enjoy views of **Xemxija Bay** and **St. Paul's Bay** in the distance, **Is-Simar Nature Reserve** in **Pwales Valley** and **Mellieħa Ridge** and **Selmun Palace** to the north.

MONKS AND NUNS DANCING IN THE PARISH SQUARE

VERY IMPRESSIVE AND ENTERTAINING

*They spread some much-needed joy.*One of the beauties of social media is that you can get a glimpse of what's going on around the world from wherever you may be, such as your own home. Just this week, Vittorio Ricco shared on his Facebook page a video clip that is bound to make anyone smile.

In the homemade video, Ricco managed to capture some of the joy that the Franciscan Mission of Legnano in Italy is bringing to the locals. **The dance moves are impressive — after all, these friars and nuns are wearing sandals, cassocks and habits — and their *joie de vivre* spreads around the crowd.**

Dancing together to the contemporary song *Jerusalem,* the religious beam as they show off some nifty footwork and coordination. As crowds gather to watch this surprising spectacle, a few can't resist joining in.

It's not the first time the Mission Legnano has taken to the streets to spread some joy, with a flashmob going viral in 2017. **Their aim is to follow in the footsteps of Christ by bringing friendship, peace, and comfort to the streets.** It seems they're doing a great job with Ricco's video notching up some impressive views.

So take a look at these wonderful Italian religious men and women using dance to express their love for Jesus Christ and their community. Watch - www.youtube.com/watch?v=xD4Bhqzkikg

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August Presentation

Presentation by Simone Cremona

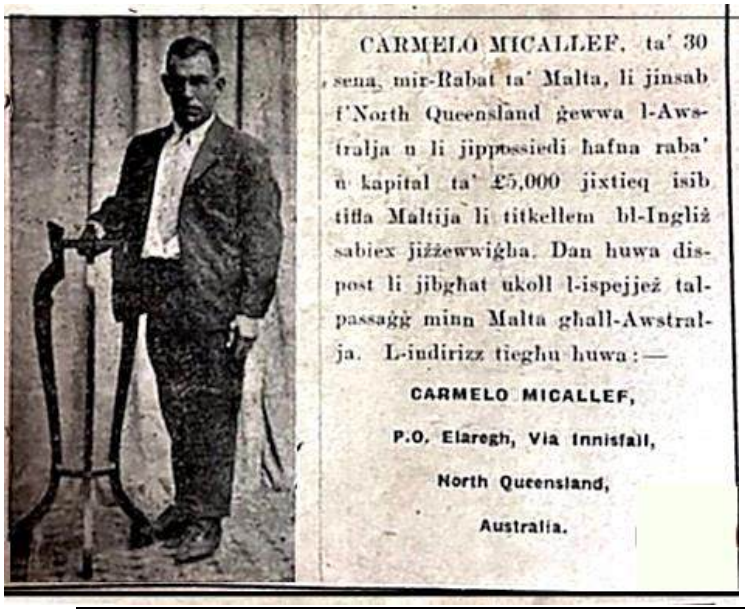
Wenzu u Rożi: culture, customs & traditions.

Dear Members and Friends of the MHA,

We are delighted to announce our upcoming presentation for the month of August. We really hope you can join us. The session will take place on Wednesday the 21st of August 2024 at 7:30 PM Australian Eastern Standard Time (11:30 AM CET). The presentation will be held on Zoom.

Musicworx director & producer Simone Cremona, together with the actors who play Wenzu, Rożi & Zolli, will share their experiences delving into Malta's culture, customs and traditions, so as to bring the stories in their upcoming production to life! Preparing for a stage production requires attention to not just the script, but matters such as the set, the props and the costumes. This led to much research and preparation, some of which we would like to share with you during this presentation. For more information contact <mfbonnici@bigpond.com>

OUR AIM IS TO MAKE SURE THAT ALL MALTESE LIVING OVERSEAS REMAIN ON THE MAP AND THEIR HISTORY IS RECORDED FOR GENERATIONS TO COME



CARMELO MICALLEF, ta' 30 sena, mir-Rabat ta' Malta, li jinsab f'North Queensland gewwa l-Awstralja u li jippossiedi hafna raba' u kapital ta' £5,000 jixtieq isib tifla Maltija li titkellem bl-Ingliż sabiex jiżżewwiġha. Dan huwa dispost li jibgħat ukoll l-ispejjeż talpassaġġ minn Malta għall-Awstralja. L-indirizz tiegħu huwa:—

CARMELO MICALLEF,
P.O. Elaregh, Via Innisfail,
North Queensland,
Australia.

ADVERTISEMENT ON THE MALTESE NEWSPAPERS

CAMELO MICALLEF, 30 years old, from Rabat, Malta who lives in North Queensland in Australia and who owns lots of land with a capital of £5 000 would like to find a Maltese girl who can speak English in order to marry him. He is ready to send all the expenses for the passage from Malta to Australia.

His address is:

CARMELO MICALLEF
P.O. Elaregh, Via Innisfail
North Queensland
Australia (Circa- 1950s)

Dom Mintoff - former Malta's Prime Minister

DOM MINTOFF BECAME THE YOUNGEST PRIME MINISTER IN THE COMMONWEALTH

Dom Mintoff dominated the politics of the small, but strategically important, Mediterranean island of Malta for more than two decades from the 1960s, twice being prime minister.

Born Dominic Mintoff in 1916, he was the son of a Maltese chief cook in the Royal Navy. He studied engineering and architecture at the University of Malta before going on a Rhodes scholarship to Oxford University.

He remained in England during part of World War II as a civilian garrison engineer employed by the War Office. On his return to Malta, he joined the Labour Party, became its leader in 1949 and led it to victory in 1955, when at 38 he became the youngest prime minister in the Commonwealth.

He advocated a programme of integration with the United Kingdom and his proposals were supported by a round-table conference of British and Maltese representatives and by a referendum. But the negotiations foundered and Mintoff resigned in 1958.

For most of the 1960s, he was leader of the opposition and it was during this period that Malta was granted a new constitution and then its independence from Britain.

Hard bargain

The Labour Party regained power in 1971 and Mr Mintoff became prime minister again with a parliamentary majority of only one seat, but he did not allow this to cramp his style.

Mintoff exploited Malta's strategic importance to Britain

Within a few days of taking office, he had dismissed the governor-general, and expelled from Malta the commander-in-chief of the Nato naval forces in Southern Europe.

He went on to demand a drastic revision of Malta's defence agreement with Britain, which provided for Malta to receive £5m a year in loans and grants, in return for the stationing of British forces on the island, and use of the dockyards.

Mintoff declared that Britain would have to pay a much larger rent for military facilities. The British government reacted coolly and after fruitless negotiations - in which Nato as well as British representatives had taken part - Mr Mintoff called for the withdrawal of all British forces from the island.

Orders were given for a phased withdrawal, and the movement was almost complete when, towards the end of March 1972, Mintoff finally reached an accord.

The new seven-year defence agreement was greatly to his advantage; under it, Malta got £14m a year from Nato, of which £5m was provided by Britain, with additional money for development and economic projects.

Malta became a republic within the Commonwealth at the end of 1974. A general election in September 1976 confirmed Mr Mintoff in office for another five years, with an unchanged parliamentary majority of three seats.

The election brought a considerable increase in political violence. During and after the campaign, many clubs run by the main opposition party, Borg Olivier's Nationalists, were attacked and wrecked by faceless men who seemed to be above the law.

Church power curbed

Mintoff was a skilful and confident administrator and a tough negotiator; short in physical stature and fond of pipe-smoking and horse-riding, but with an enormous capacity for hard work.

He was married to an Englishwoman and their two daughters were educated in England. In the early 1970s his government improved conditions for Maltese workers: he increased pensions, held inflation in check and brought in measures on housing and other social problems.

Later Mintoff reduced the voting age to 18 and tried to curb the Catholic Church as a political force. Gradually, he moved closer to full state control, and political opponents accused him of assuming dictatorial powers.

Mintoff continued to be an influential figure long after he left office

In 1977, Malta saw many strikes about union rights and practices. Civil servants came out in protest over a cut in public holidays and there was a bitter clash with the doctors when Mintoff insisted that medical graduates should register for work in government hospitals.

Twice he travelled to Britain to try to persuade industrialists to invest more capital in the island before the defence agreement ended in 1979. In foreign affairs, he accepted aid from Arab countries and China.

Libya gave him cheap petrol, and the Arab links gradually got stronger. In 1978, Mintoff said Malta considered itself part of the Arab world.

His foreign policy continued to be erratic, playing off the East against the West. He made many visits abroad, but in 1979 a rift developed with Libyan leader Col Gaddafi over the demarcation of the sea-bed for oil exploration.

However, when a general election was held at the end of 1981 Mintoff was returned to power. His last years in office saw arguments with the Church, particularly over its role in Malta's education system.

He stepped down as prime minister in 1984, but remained an influential backbench MP. His legacy is still apparent in the nationalist outlook of Malta's Labour Party.

Mintoff was taken to hospital on 18 July 2012. He was later discharged on 4 August and spent his 96th birthday at home where he died on 20 August 2021. He was given a state funeral by the Government of Malta on 25 August.

THE BATTLE FOR MALTA (1940 - 1943): 'THE DEFENDERS OF MALTA' - THE ROYAL MALTA ARTILLERY

The Royal Malta Artillery (RMA) was formed in 1889 as a locally raised gunner regiment, forming part of the Royal Artillery, and with the role of defending Malta. During the Second World War, the RMA was tasked with anti-aircraft as well as coastal defence and was expanded to include five regiments: the 1st and 5th Coast, 2nd and 11th Heavy Anti-Aircraft, and 3rd Light Anti-Aircraft Regiments.

During the Second World War, the RMA was tasked with anti-aircraft as well as coastal defence

The very first military casualties of the war in Malta came from this unit, when six men of the RMA were killed at Upper Fort St. Elmo during the very first bombing raid, on 11th June 1940. Over the next few years, the anti-aircraft batteries of the RMA, together with those of the Royal Artillery, bore the responsibility of defending the island against the enemy's constant air attacks.

Anti-aircraft defences were sited in particular around the area of the Grand Harbour and HM Dockyard, as well as in the vicinity of other primary targets, such as the airfields. Their aim was to engage enemy aircraft before they were able to release their bombs, or at least to harass them so as to make them miss their target.

The gunners would sometimes target individual aircraft, but another very effective method was that of the 'box barrage', which was particularly effective when repelling heavy attacks against vulnerable points. In this case, each gun would fire on a predetermined bearing and height, so that all the shells would be exploding in the same area, forming a 'box' of explosions above the vulnerable point, through which the enemy had to fly in order to bomb the target. This tactic proved highly effective, especially during the '*Illustrious* Blitz'.

The 'box barrage' method was particularly effective when repelling heavy attacks against vulnerable points

This was also a very dangerous job. While others could take cover during an air raid, the anti-aircraft gunners had to keep firing away, while hoping that they would not be hit by the falling bombs. Anti-aircraft batteries were often targeted by the enemy, being bombed or strafed, and many gunners lost their lives in this way.

Their job was made even more difficult when the ammunition stock was low. This was a common situation since the constant air raids meant that great amounts of ammunition were expended, and not always easily replenished. In such situations, the gunners were sometimes restricted as to the number of shells they could fire.

One of the heaviest periods of air raids was the month of April 1942, during which the anti-aircraft gunners were almost continuously in action, shooting down no less than 102 enemy planes by the end of the month. Their contribution to the defence of the island cannot be underestimated. They repeatedly showed great courage and determination in the face of ferocious attacks, and earned for themselves the reputation of 'the deadliest gunners on Earth'.

Unlike the anti-aircraft gunners, their comrades manning the coastal batteries did not have the opportunity to engage the enemy but were kept in a constant state of preparedness for a possible seaborne assault.

The chance for them to prove their mettle came on 26th July 1941, when the *Decima Flottiglia Mezzi d'Assalto*, also known as *X^{a} MAS*, an elite unit of the *Regia Marina* - the Italian navy - carried out a

daring attempt to infiltrate the Grand Harbour and Marsamxett. Their mission was to destroy a convoy that had reached Malta two days earlier and to paralyse the submarine base at Manoel Island.

The expedition left Augusta in Sicily at sunset on 25th July. It consisted of the sloop *Diana*, and a small naval force, which included two large motor torpedo boats (MAS), two manned torpedoes (SLC) nicknamed '*maiale'* by their crews, and eight motor assault boats (MT), nicknamed '*barchino'*. The latter carried an explosive charge in their bow and were crewed by one man, who would steer the assault craft on a collision course with his target and jump from the boat just before impact.

The 'maiale' was a manned torpedo used by the Decima MAS

At about 10.30 pm on 25th July, the radar station at Madliena detected *Diana* about 45 nautical miles off the coast. Shortly after, the smaller boats were unloaded, and they began their trip towards Malta, approaching at slow speed, in order not to alert the defences with the noise of their engines. Their plan was for the SLCs to breach the outer defences of the Grand Harbour and Marsamxett, allowing the MTs to enter and target the merchant ships.

The assault was launched at 4.44 am, as the Italians tried to breach the net guarding the entrance to the Grand Harbour. This proved to be more complicated than first thought, and in a desperate attempt to make it through, one of the boats was directed towards the breakwater viaduct in a suicidal attack, hitting the centre pylon. The resulting explosion brought down the outer span of the bridge, which came to rest between the pylons, thus blocking access to the harbour.

Apart from this setback, the harbour defences now also sprang to life, as searchlights came on to illuminate the whole area, exposing the rest of the assault craft. Twin 6-pounder guns from Fort St. Elmo and Fort Ricasoli, as well as from other posts guarding the harbour approaches, came into action. The ensuing battle lasted six short, hectic minutes, during which the majority of the craft were destroyed or immobilised.

At dawn, Hurricanes were sent up from Malta to finish off any craft trying to escape. The rout was now complete. Later on in the morning, the crew of the second SLC, who, having become lost, had scuttled their craft at St. George's Bay, were captured. In all, fifteen *Decima MAS* crewmen were killed, and eighteen were taken prisoner.

The invaluable work of the Maltese gunners did not go unnoticed, and on 3rd April 1942, a great honour was bestowed upon them when King George VI became Colonel-in-Chief of the RMA, in recognition of the outstanding role that the unit played in the defence of the island. And the king awarded the George Cross medal for bravery to the people of Malta and Gozo.

THE NEW BANDSTAND FOR THE
THE SANTA VENERA PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY VM

SANTA VENERA

Reno Micallef – Treasurer SVPSVM

These are some of the volunteers who worked hard to set a new national record in the Maltese islands. The biggest bandstand used in the village festival.

These are its dimensions:

4.79m wide (15.72 feet) 5.44m high (17.85 feet) 18.76m length (61.55 feet)

This record was established by the Young Palmists Commission within the Santa Venera Philharmonic Society V.M.

A few facts and figures about this bandstand:

1. They started to work on it from August 2023.
2. Iron, wood, paint and cloth were used as materials.
3. The Young Palmists Commission took care of its funds, apart from donations from benefactors and volunteers.
4. The people who worked on it are all members of the club.
5. The Mallia family offered a garage where it was stored while it was being built. Emanuel Micallef, Clyde and Clive Mallia paid most of the costs out of their own pockets without asking for anything in return.
6. There are less than 10 other bandstands in Maltese festivals. In the past it was more popular but it became less and less popular.
7. Its magnitude is unique in Santa Venera because there has never been an edice of this magnitude.
8. The original purpose of the bandstand was to offer shelter for the band members from the heat of the sun
9. It took about 13 hours to be tested the first time and 8 hours to be constructed between Thursday night and Friday. All this makes the record huge and special.

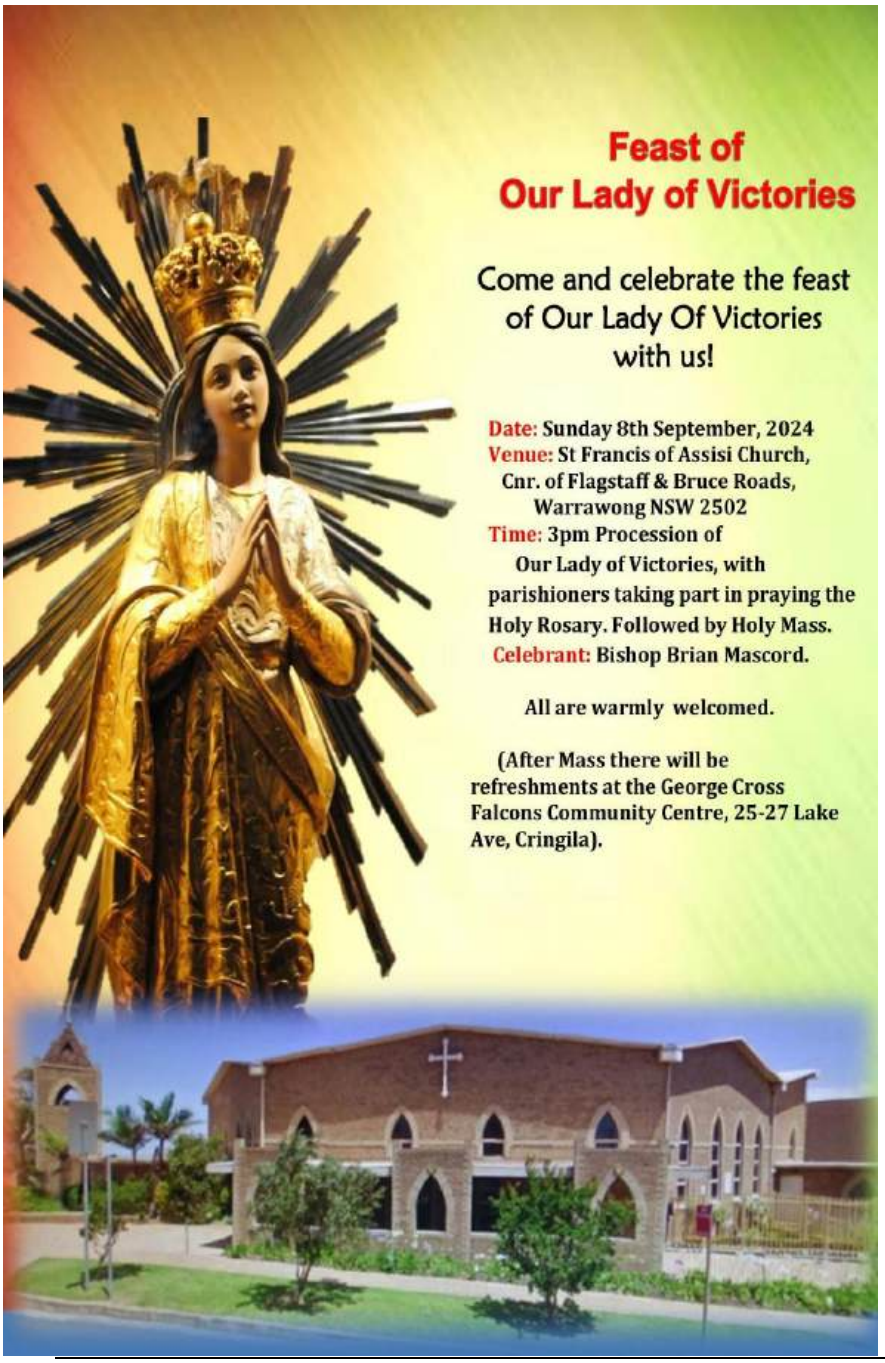
I WANT TO THANK ALL THOSE WHO KINDLY SENT A DONATION
IF YOU WANT TO HELP, THESE ARE MY DETAILS

COMMONWEALTH BANK
BSB: 065-106 Account Number: 0050 2597
NAME: Frank Scicluna

Directed by Jeff Beesley, Hallmark's 'To Catch a Spy' is a romance–mystery movie that revolves around Chloe Day, a travel writer who becomes a primary witness in a murder case while on her tour to Malta. When the FBI agent Aaron Maxwell learns about the murder while working on another case at the US embassy, he can't help himself and gets involved in the investigation.

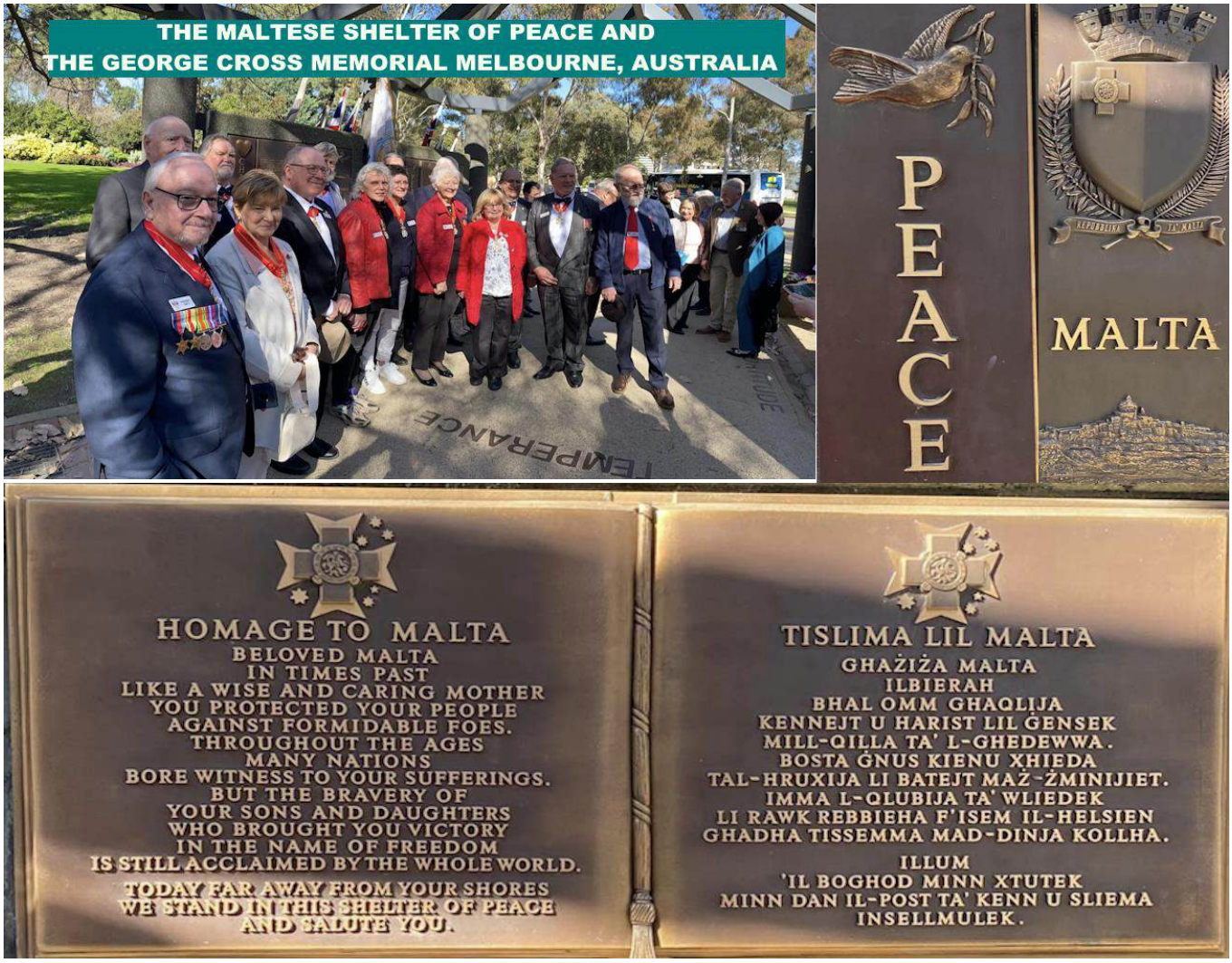
Now along with Chloe, Aaron must use his investigative prowess to uncover the criminal behind the murder before the killer gets to them. The hunt for the mysterious murderer can get anyone hooked, and viewers may naturally get curious about the mesmerizing filming locations of the movie. In case you are looking for similar information, then we have you covered.

The romance-mystery movie was filmed on location in Malta. The production began sometime in early April 2021, and it wrapped up in a few weeks on April 29, 2021. Located in the central Mediterranean, 80 kilometers south of Italy, the archipelago has been inhabited since 5900 BC. Because of the strategic importance it can provide over the centuries, it has come under the rule of the French, British, Normans, Greeks, Arabs, and Romans. The cultural influence of these colonizing forces is still reflected in the Maltese way of life.



Horsley Park Parish NSW
OUR LADY OF VICTORIES
Parish Feast Day
MALTA NATIONAL DAY

Come on down to Our Lady of Victories Catholic Parish, Horsley Park NSW Australia to celebrate Mary's birthday with us on September 8!
We would love to see you all!
2pm Eucharistic celebration
3pm Rosary procession with statue of Our Lady
4 - 8pm Festivities including rides, entertainment, market stalls, food truck



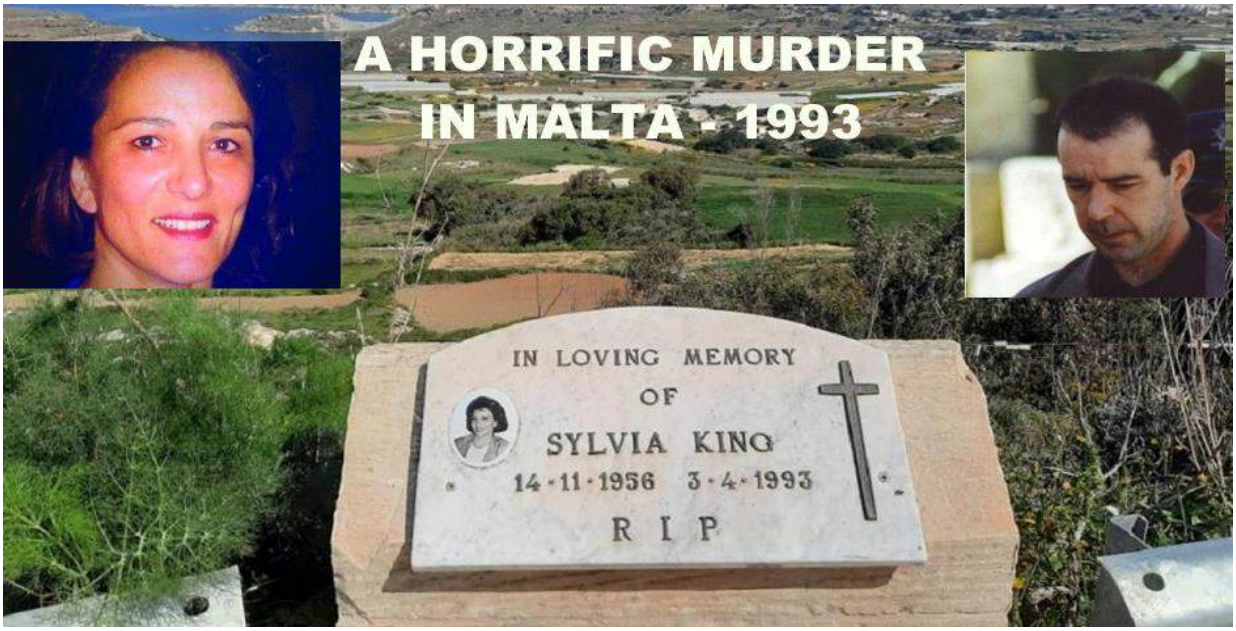
Today's ceremony of Operation Pedestal at the Shrine of Remembrance and the heritage listed Maltese War Memorial also known as the Maltese Shelter of Peace, and the George Cross memorial which is in the grounds next to the Shine of Remembrance.

It's a walk-though open frame type structure with two bench seats placed between 3 cylindrical vertical pillars on both sides and with bronze inscribed panels above each seat. Eight values are listed on the memorial: faith, hope, charity, peace, fortitude, temperance, justice and prudence. It commemorates the awarding of the George Cross to the Mediterrranean island of Malta on 15 April 1942 and pays tribute to the people of Malta, and to those who served in defending this very small country from the Nazi's in World War II. It was erected in 1994 by the governments of Australia and Malta, the City of Melbourne and the Maltese community of Melbourne and was unveiled on 11th December 1994.

Many of us know about the convoys to Malta that delivered fuel, ammunition and food, but do you know of the service and sacrifice of those on the convoy.

Out of 14 merchant ships in the convoy, 9 were sunk with many crew perishing. The convoy was escorted by Navy ships where many were sunk also. These convoys helped Malta in her hour of need. Encourage your Grandchildren to watch YouTube "Operation Pedestal" to increase their knowledge of the bravery of the people of Malta and those who served to save her. May God bless all these heroes who came to the aid of Malta 11/8/2024 **Ron Evans**

The monument to Sylvia King in Kunċizzjoni, near Rabat.



30 YEARS AGO: A HORRIFIC MURDER IN ONE OF MALTA'S MOST PEACEFUL SPOTS SYLVIA KING WAS BURNT ALIVE IN HER OWN CAR

Christopher Scicluna

One of the most notorious murders in Malta's criminal history took place 30 years ago today, at one of the island's most peaceful spots.

Champion bowler Sylvia King, 36, died when her car was set on fire in scenic Kunċizzjoni, having earlier been kidnapped from Marsascala.

Her killer, Joseph Harrington, was convicted in a trial by jury in 2000 and jailed for life.

An accomplice, Tommy Baldacchino, was convicted in a separate trial in 1997 after having given the police a detailed account of the murder and how he said he had wanted to stop Harrington but feared he too would be killed. Sylvia King was a champion bowler.

A small monument, overlooking Mġarr, Ġnejna Bay and Gozo in the distance, marks the spot of the tragedy which shocked Malta on April 3, 1993.

King was involved in an organisation that supported people in need and had become friends with Harrington's wife, who was going through a separation and feared her husband. Investigators believed that Harrington wanted King to tell him where his wife was.

Harrington and Baldacchino had followed King as she left the Lemon and Lime Bar where she worked in Marsascala. They blocked her car on the Marsascala bypass near the Sant Antin waste recycling plant, pulled her out of the driving seat, bound and gagged her, bundled her in the back and drove off.

It was later established that they had planned to kill her and leave the body in a quarry at Għaxaq, but several children were in the area. They therefore went on to Kunċizzjoni, in the countryside behind Rabat. King was struck on the head with a hard object but was still alive, on the back seat, when her car was set on fire.

Forensics expert Anthony Abela Medici later described the case as "one of the worst cases Malta ever had." He was the one who pulled the remains of King's charred body out of car.

"The car was still very hot when we arrived. It was totally burnt," Abela Medici later recalled. A bra strap indicated that the victim was a woman. The first clue about the victim's identity was a gold

pendant in the shape of a bowling pin. That year, Ms King had won the national bowling championships. The nation was shocked as details of the murder emerged.

Forensic tests proved that King was still alive when the car was set on fire. Parts of the vehicle's shattered window, which melted with the heat, were found underneath her head, suggesting she had moved after the fire started. This was proven when soot was detected in her body.

Since, at the time, DNA testing was still in its infancy, her identity had to be established through dental records that had to be obtained from Northern Ireland where she had lived for some years.

Police investigations made quick progress and a bag containing two pistols and items belonging to King were found under a car near Zejtun two days after the murder.

Evidence led the police to drug addict Tony Baldacchino, who was arrested and told investigators he was involved in the murder together with Harrington.

Harrington was arrested a few days later. Following his trial and imprisonment, he died in 2014. Baldacchino was released from prison in 2002 and was found dead the following year in his flat in Buġibba. It was suspected he had died of a heroin overdose, according to published reports

MSSP

INVITATION TO THE MALTESE COMMUNITY OF MELBOURNE

THE MISSIONARY SOCIETY OF ST. PAUL WOULD LIKE TO INVITE YOU TO CELEBRATE THE FEAST OF THE NATIVITY OF MARY,

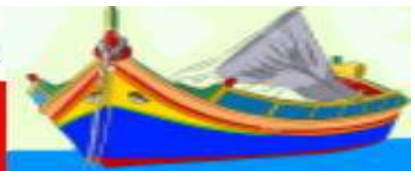
IL-BAMBINA.

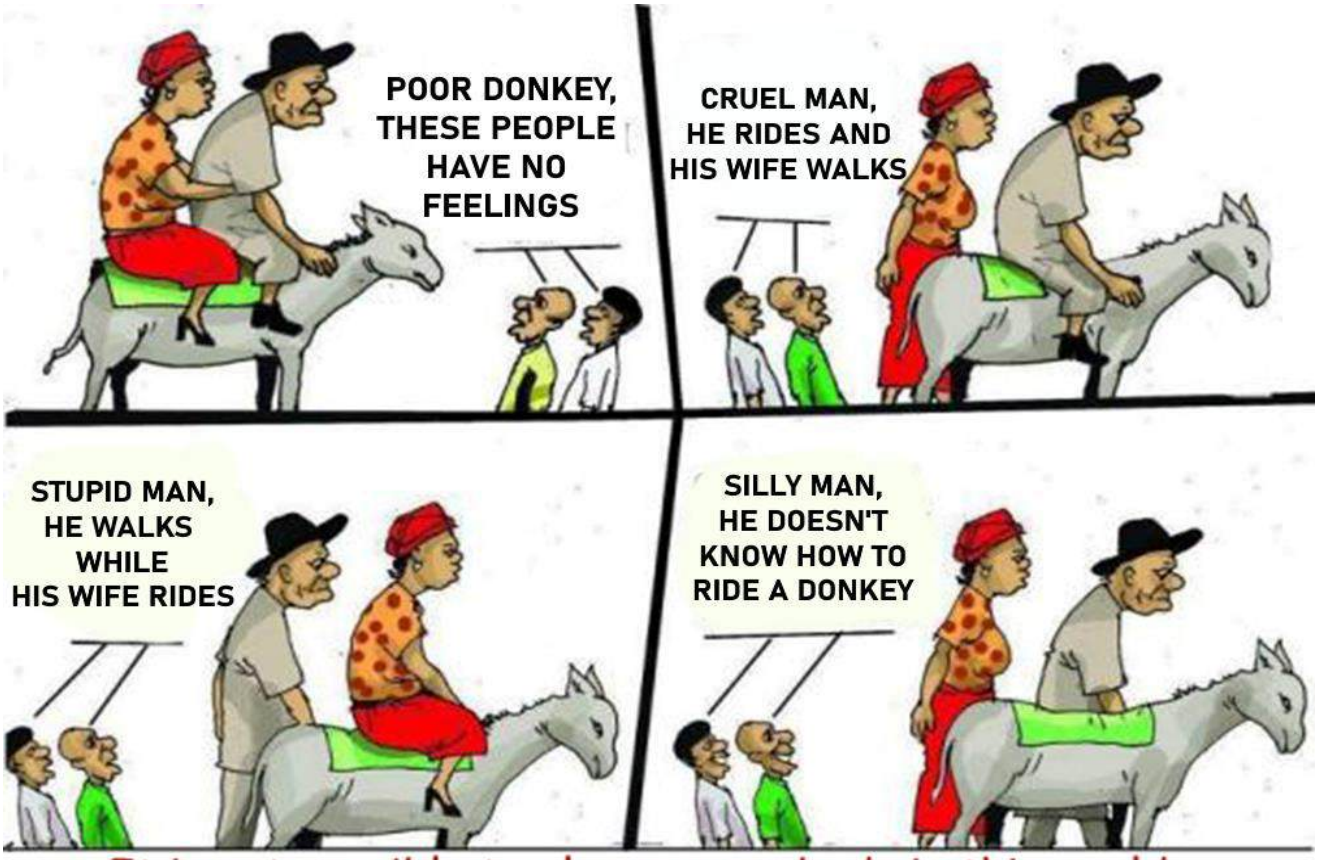
IT WILL BE HELD AT ST. MARY'S STAR OF THE SEA WEST MELBOURNE, ON SUNDAY 8TH SEPTEMBER 2024. WE WILL START AT 3.OO PM WITH A CONCELEBRATED MASS. EVERYONE IS ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND THIS TRADITIONAL FEAST. FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL THE MSSP AT PARKVILLE

TEL: 03 9387 7433. Fr. Lonnie Borg mssp

If you have enjoyed reading this journal

SUPPORT AND SHARE IT WITH OTHERS




POOR DONKEY, THESE PEOPLE HAVE NO FEELINGS
CRUEL MAN, HE RIDES AND HIS WIFE WALKS
STUPID MAN, HE WALKS WHILE HIS WIFE RIDES
SILLY MAN, HE DOESN'T KNOW HOW TO RIDE A DONKEY
It is not possible to please everybody in this world

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GOZO

Niftakar Meta...
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SINGER