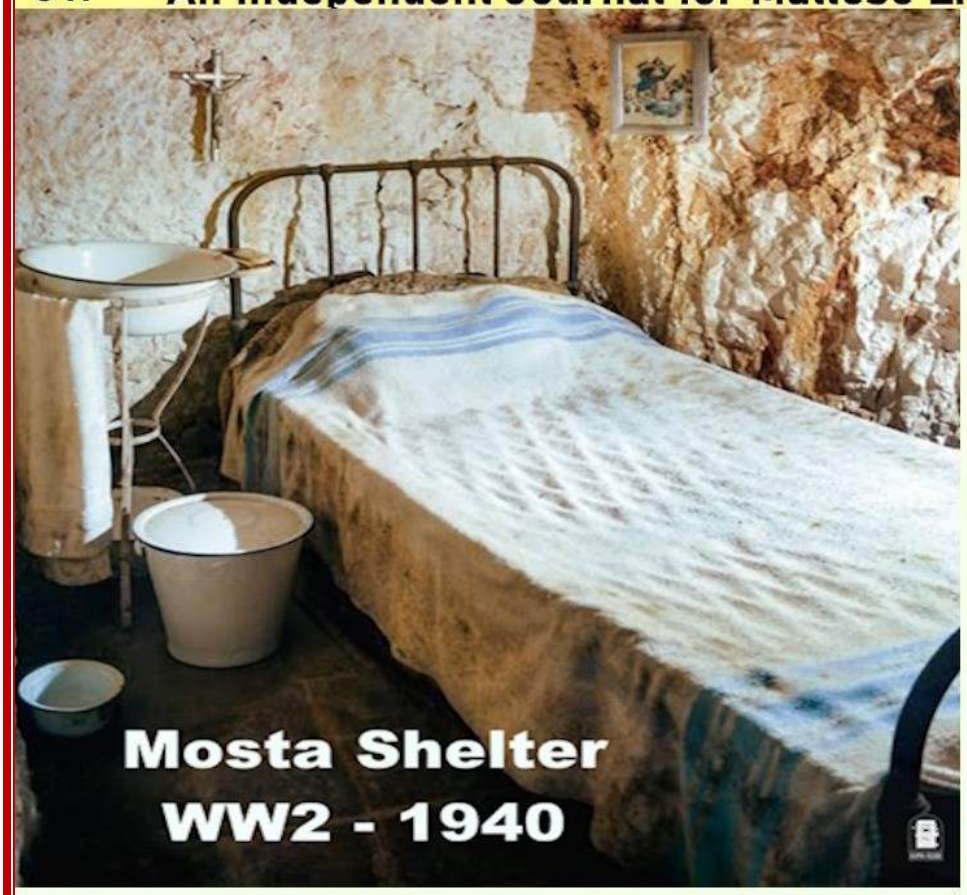
MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER

11 YEARS

Editor: Frank Scicluna OAM MQR JP Email: maltesejournal@gmail.com

547 An Independent Journal for Maltese Living Abroad



Mosta Shelter
WW2 - 1940

INANNA

Joanne Lordess Camilleri from Canada to Malta in July

BONNIE LEE GALEA & THE BOYZ - BAND- ADELAIDE

PRICKLY PEAR LIQUEUR MADE IN MALTA

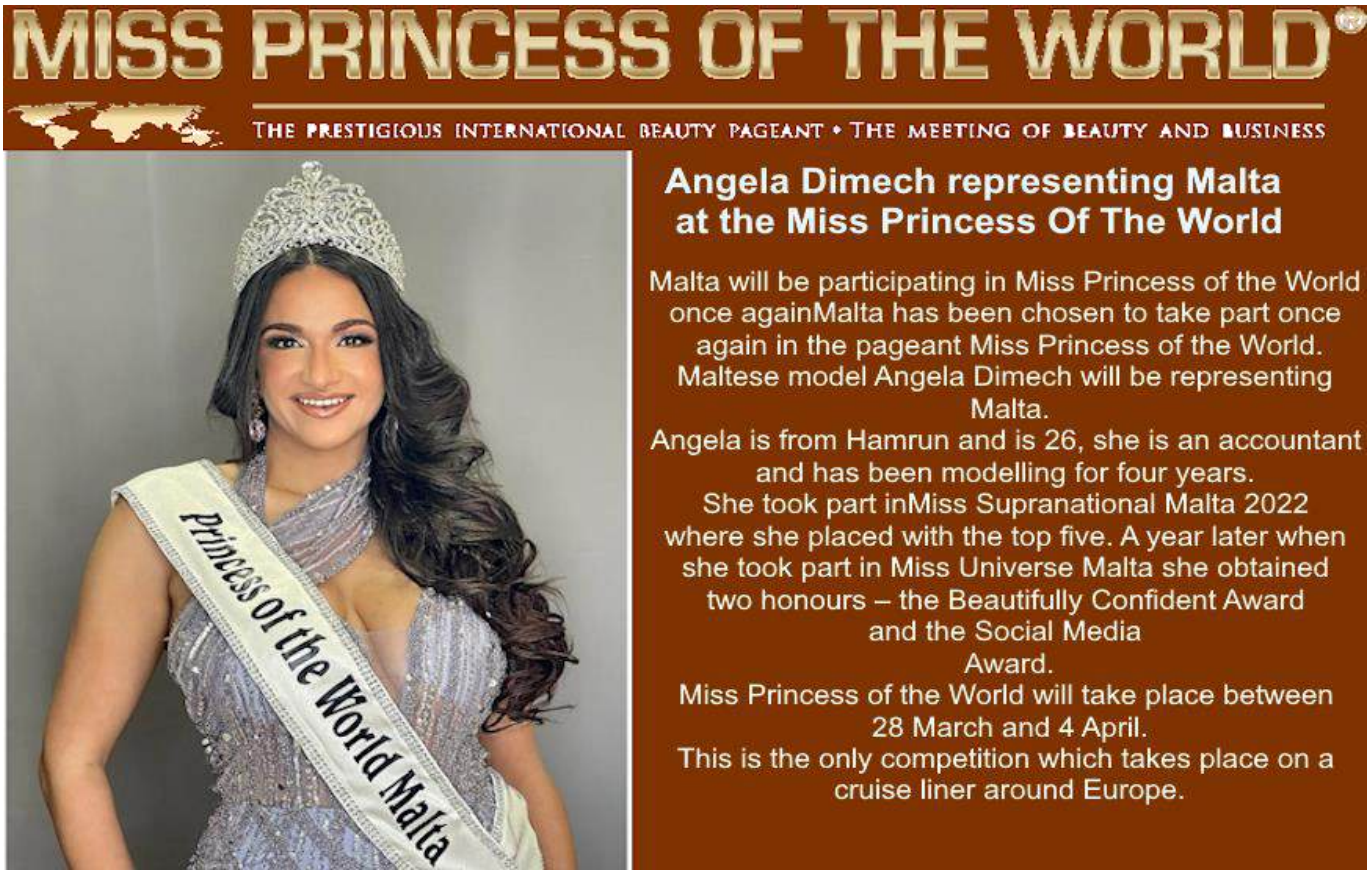
We love, respect and share this Journal - JC Galea

Editorial

As we are starting a brand-new year, I wish you and your loved once a year filled with new hope, new joy, and new beginnings. May 2025 bring you endless happiness, peace and success! As a loyal reader and supporter of the Journal of and for Maltese Living Abroad may you be surrounded by the love of family and friends and may every moment of the new year be filled with joy, blessings and prosperity.

We remember and salute all the Maltese pioneers who passed away and despite the hardships they endured to settle in a faraway country, spent their time and expertise to help their fellow migrants and established the present organisations. Most of them excelled and achieved distinguished success and made a good name for Malta and Gozo overseas. We are proud of those quiet achievers, and we never forget their efforts. May we also remember the present and emerging leaders of the Maltese communities around in Australia and around the world.

In 2025 the Maltese eNewsletter and myself are going to be officially acknowledged and rewarded by the Governor's Multicultural Award for the long-standing commitment to keep Maltese South Australians connected to their language and culture and strengthen relationships with the Maltese Diaspora in Australia and overseas. I share this prestigious award with you.



AUSTRALIA DAY 2025 in Adelaide

Language Revival and Protection

Mourning in the Morning – Smoking Ceremony

26 January means different things to different people. To some, it is 'Australia Day' and a time for celebration. But for others – including many First Nations people – the date is difficult, challenging and a source of extreme grief and sorrow.

The Australia Day Council of South Australia (ADCSA) considers the date a time for reflection and mature, respectful conversation, and is proud each year to host *Mourning in the Morning* in Adelaide.

This First Nations-led, family-friendly event offers an opportunity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to share their perspectives on history and hopes and aspirations for the future. And it enables non-Indigenous allies and supporters of reconciliation – old and new friends – to show their support, appreciation and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and issues.

Mourning in the Morning 2025 will have a focus on First Nations languages.

Ever since the first sunrise more than 65,000 years ago, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have nurtured and been the knowledge holders for their traditional lands 'Country'. They use ancient words to express, describe and honour Country. And it speaks through them.

First Nations languages should be valued, respected and cherished, yet tragically today many are under serious threat. Urgent action is needed to document, revive, strengthen and protect them.

At *Mourning in the Morning*, hear languages spoken and sung, and learn about their regenerative power, how they better connect us all with 'place', and their role in a better, more compelling and inclusive 'national story'.

Mourning in the Morning 2025 highlights will include:

- A Welcome to Kaurna Country
- Keynote speaker Yankunytjatjara woman, climate justice campaigner, and senior Aboriginal language expert Karina Lester
- Music, dance, storytelling
- Interactive activities
- A Smoking Ceremony conducted by Elder Uncle Moogy Sumner (and everyone is invited to join in)

The event will start at 7.30am and conclude at 8.45am. It'll be held in Elder Park/*Tarntanya Wama*, between the Adelaide Festival Centre Plaza and the River Torrens/*Karrawirra Parri*.

Bring a hat and sunscreen and keep an eye on the weather forecast. Some seating will be provided. Food and drink vendors will be on site.

Follow the ADCSA website and socials for updates on the program.

Mourning in the Morning Smoking Ceremony sponsors Accenture, Sarah Constructions and SA Power Networks.

The program is assisted by the Australian Government through the National Australia Day Council and the City the Adelaide and is supported by a grant from the Government of South Australia. **Ruby from Australia Day Council of South Australia**

SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE MALTA MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND TOURISM

www.foreign.gov.mt/services/

VISAS FOR FOREIGN NATIONALS TO ENTER MALTA

Further information on Visa Advice for Foreign Nationals may be obtained from the ConsularPlus website. **www. consularplus.gov.mt/visa-advice?lang=en**

ASSISTANCE TO MALTESE CITIZENS IN DISTRESS WHILST ABROAD

If Maltese nationals need emergency assistance while abroad, they should either contact the nearest Maltese Embassy or Consulate; or the Ministry on 00356 21 242 191 which provides emergency consular assistance 24/7. The Ministry operates an after-office hours service through a Duty Officer who takes note of requests and if possible, assist immediately. When immediate assistance is not possible, requests will be referred for action to the Consular Service Office.

PUBLIC REGISTRY CERTIFICATES (LIFE EVENTS)

The Public Registry is responsible for the issuance of birth, marriage, civil union, free status and death certificates. The certificates can be ordered in person from the Public Registry Office in Marsa or online on **www.certifikati.gov.mt** and have them delivered to an address of one's choice. When ordered online, a certificate can also be ordered with an Apostille/Legalization certificate. More information regarding the services offered by the Public Registry website. www.identita.gov.mt

MALTESE PASSPORTS

The Passport Office which falls under the remit of Identity Malta issues a Maltese passport to Maltese citizens and assists Maltese Embassies and Maltese High Commissions abroad to issue or renew Maltese passports for Maltese citizens residing abroad. The validity of an ordinary Maltese passport is ten years for adults over 16 years, five years for minors between 10 and 15 and two years for minors under 10 years of age. More details about the Maltese passport can be obtained on the Passports Office website. **www. identita.gov.mt**

MALTESE CITIZENSHIP

Community Malta Agency is responsible for administering Maltese citizenship applications. The Agency processes applications for the acquisition of Maltese citizenship by birth, by registration, by naturalisation through long term residence, by merit for exceptional services and for exceptional services by direct investment in Malta. More details about the acquisition of Maltese citizenship can be obtained from the Community Malta Agency website. **www. komunita.gov.mt/en/**

ST BERNADETTE'S PARISH – VICTORIA - AUSTRALIA
SOCIETY OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE - - TAL-MUZEW

The Society of Christian Doctrine, Female Section Il-Membri nisa tal-museum qed jghamlu laqa spirtiwali ghal maltin darba fix-xahar. Fi Preca Centre 82 Westmoreland Road North Sunshine. Kull tieni tnejn tax-xahar, mis 1pm sas 2pm. L-Ewwe4l laqa ghal din is-sena ser issir nhar it-tnejn 8 ta Marzu 2021. Kullhadd huwa mistieden. Miriam Belli (superjura)

Proud of our language: Learning Maltese

Learning Maltese for migrant students#
www.malti.skola.edu.mt

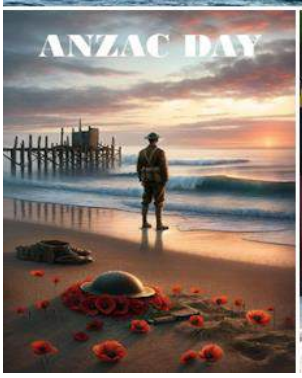
The Department for Maltese has developed a new resource for listening which has been added to the many other resources on www.malti.skola.edu.mt
This complements the resources for the induction level of Maltese for migrant students. This resource can be used by students with very little guidance from the teacher and can provide them with opportunities for further practice when at home. Students will be able to practice vocabulary and common phrases required for basic communication such as vocabulary related to food, clothes, the living surroundings and school. This resource is built on five graded levels. In the first level, the student sees the picture and listens to nouns related to the theme. In the second level they follow a series of pictures and listen to nouns and their article. In the third level they listen to a phrase made up of a noun, article and adjective describing the picture. In the fourth level a demonstrative pronoun is added to the phrase whilst the last level is intended for revision. Each theme is presented in the singular and plural version except for the theme Il-Post Fejn Ngħix. For this theme the students require a little more input from the teacher in the third level since the visuals might present different interpretations for the adjective.
This resource can be accessed from the link: ***https://malti.skola.edu.mt/malti-barranin/il-malti-ghall-barranin-primarja/smigh-mlb-primarja/***
Online Language courses by the University of Malta
Language classes in the Maltese Community Council of Victoria, Australia

MALTESE COMMUNITY COUNCIL OF VICTORIA, INC.
(Inc. No. A1737) A.B.N. 66 736475 892
477 Royal Parade, Parkville, Victoria 3052, Australia
Telephone (03) 9387 8922 Facsimile (03) 9387 8309
Internet Website: http://www.mccv.org.au
Email Address: admin@mccv.org.au

Il-Kunsill Malti ta' Victoria jixtieq javża li fetħu r-reġistrazzjoni għall-klassijiet tal-lingwa Maltija għal-kbar u tfal. Dawn il-klassijiet qed issiru online virtwali permezz taż-ZOOM.
Biex tirreġistra għall-klassijiet mur fuq is-sit elettroniku tal-MCCV u kklikkja fuq il-paġna taS-Servizzi u ssib informazzjoni dwar il-klassijiet u formola ta' reġistrazzjoni elettronika.
www.mccv.org.au/services/language/
Għal kull tagħrif ieħor ċemplu 9387 8922 **waqt il-ħin ta' x-xogħol** jew fuq 0466 079 814 **fil-għaxija** jew ibagħtu *imejl* fuq **admin@mccv.org.au**

Edwidge Borg - Koordinatur Klassijiet tal-Malti
Kunsill tal-Komunità Maltija ta 'Victoria Inc.
0466 079 814

ANZAC DAY BEACH SPRINT REGATTA – MALTA 2025



Malta ANZACs sports campaign organised by Mr John Calleja Adelaide Australia

For the second time, New Zealand is sending U17/U18 Boys and Girls Teams to Malta to compete against crews from Australia and Malta in a unique Beach Sprint Regatta on ANZAC DAY after the ANZAC Service. the First ANZAC sports in Malta happened on ANZAC DAY 2023. As well as competing, the trip will be a learning experience, educational and remembering the 72 New Zealand Serviceman buried in Malta.

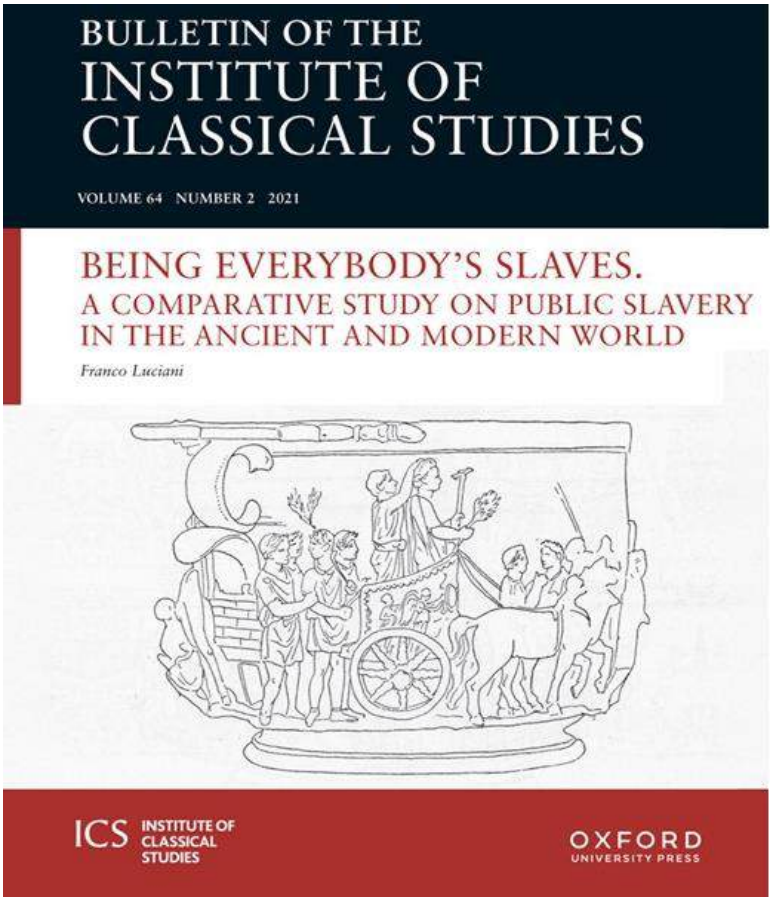
The purpose of ANZAC sports in Malta on ANZAC Days is a remembrance of Malta's connection with the wounded from Gallipoli and the Salonika camps ...a total of over 130000 wounded soldier's were treated in Malta [Malta was known as the Nurse Island of the Mediterranean]. The 10 day ANZAC sports itinerary combines education and sport plus provides locals to interact and join in watching the Beach sprint Regatta.

Malta ANZACs sports campaign organiser Mr John Calleja will also organise during ANZAC week in Malta a Workshop activity outside the **Australia Hall** grounds at Pembroke involving the rowing teams from Australia, Malta and NZ as well as locals.

The aim of the workshop is to plant rosemary clippings in plastic tubs outside the Australia Hall grounds - Rosemary is an ancient symbol of **fidelity and remembrance**. The aromatic herb grows wild on the Gallipoli peninsula in Türkiye, where the original Anzacs served in World War I. Australians traditionally wear sprigs of rosemary as a symbol of remembrance on Anzac Day or Remembrance Day. John is seeking local involvement and support especially **households** who have rosemary bushes to donate clippings ...for more information contact John via email **malta.anzacs@gmail.com**

I wish you all and Your Families a Happy New Year ....special thanks to Frank for his hard work providing us an amazing quality Maltese e-newsletter keeping us connected and informed Maltese Living Abroad.

EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC SLAVERY IN HOSPITALLERS' MALTA



Anne Brogini

A vast quantity of research on slavery in the early modern Mediterranean was undertaken in the 1970s and 1980s.[1] This research has recently benefited from a historiographical revival,[2] in connection with current trends inherited from global history, which analyzes the trade of slaves and captives from the long-term angle of maritime connectivity.[3] This trade led to an economic rise of Christian and Barbarian ports in the Western Mediterranean, which no longer needs to be demonstrated,[4] and which favoured the development of connections and networks between the Maltese island and representatives of Europe and Africa.[5] Works on the mercantile dimension of *corso* and the intercultural human trade have renewed the theme of slavery, but some historians deplore the lack of global and long-term research on many aspects of this phenomenon which characterized Mediterranean societies during the Middle Ages and early modern period.[6]

As in other Mediterranean ports, Maltese slaves were considered things, inferior beings and strangers to the community in which they were inserted after their capture and sale. Sold and uprooted, slaves were subject to the will of their master, who could forbid them to create family relationships (marriage) or friendship. Above all, they were a labour force which generated profits and stimulated, as merchandise, economic circulation and commercial networks.[7] Public slavery in Malta was a reality of the early modern period. Slavery existed in medieval Malta, but it was a private and essentially rural slavery. Everything changed from the sixteenth century and especially during the seventeenth century (during the 'corsair century'). In 1530, Malta became fiefdom of the Order of St John of Jerusalem. Their military and corsair activity in the service of Spain transformed Malta into the principal port of the Christian *corso*, and a centre of slavery for many Jews, Muslims, and Christians. Most of them were public slaves and were the property of the Order of Malta.

I sincerely thank all those who sent a donation
WE NEED HELP TO CONTINUE PRODUCING THE MALTESE JOURNAL
My bank details are Bank Commonwealth (Australia)
BSB - 065106 ACC - 00502597
Name - Frank Scicluna

The art of "tberfil": an old Maltese trade that is slowly disappearing

Jillian Mallia

Imagine a time when local characteristics, particularly traditional Maltese buses, were decorated with beautiful signage that caught the eye of every passerby. This was called *tberfil*, a trade that is unfortunately slowly (rapidly) dying on our islands.

Tberfil is the art and craft of lettering or signwriting in Maltese style which was used as a decoration particularly on Maltese traditional buses (yup, those gorgeous yellowy-orange ones) that have been removed off our streets.

Where would you find *tberfil*?

As already mentioned, it was a prominent feature of old Maltese buses, but other modes of transport were adorned with this beautiful craft. Horse-racing carriages for one, horse-drawn cabins (what we call *karozzini* which have since turned into a tourist attraction), farmer's carts and even construction trucks!

Where does the name *tberfil* come from?

The word *tberfil* actually refers to anything of decoration in Maltese society, including the baroque work of the *festa* banners known as *pavaljuni* and *bandalori*, the intricate work and patterning of *bizzilla* making. The most common type of *tberfil* is the hand-painted lettering and beautiful designs found on every corner of the old Maltese buses.

A near end to *tberfil* in Malta

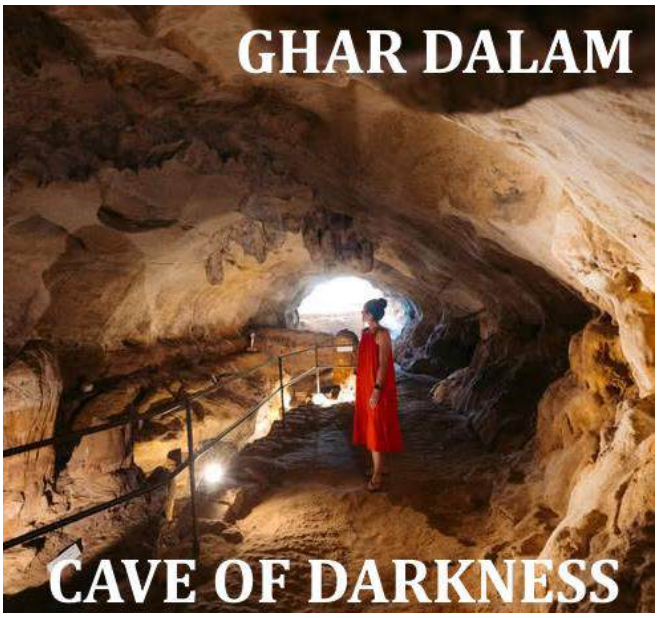
Sadly, with the overhaul of the bus system, replacing the old yellow buses with the then-Arriva sea-green ones meant that we waved goodbye to mindlessly admiring the work as we travelled on the buses from one destination to another. While the art of *tberfil* is slowly dying out with the old generation of craftsmen, veteran artists are trying to keep the tradition alive in the hopes of passing it on to the next generation, which will hopefully catch on to the beauty that is *tberfil*.

ANOTHER MALTESE CHAPLAIN IN AUSTRALIA PASSES AWAY

"It is with deep sorrow that we announce the passing away last night of our beloved Fr. Denis Carabott mssp at Rosary Home in Melbourne. He is now in the embrace of our Heavenly Father, together with our Founder Joseph De Piro and our deceased brothers singing his fave song Alabare a mi Señor. His funeral details are still to be announced. Rest In Peace and let us keep him in our prayers. Fr Dennis Carabott from the Missionary of St Paul passed most of his priesthood years working amongst the Maltese migrants in Australia.

ANOTHER PIONEER LEFT US – TONY SPITERI

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of one of the Maltese pioneers in Australia, Tony Spiteri, who passed away on 25th December at the age of 71. In addition to his many years of radio work, Tony Spiteri was an active member of the Maltese community, including in the teaching of Maltese, the Maltese Literature Group, the Maltese Performing Arts Association, the Maltese Cultural Festival and many other organisations and associations. While on behalf of the readers of the Maltese Journal we offer our condolences to his family, we remember him in our prayers. May the Lord grant him eternal rest.



HERITAGE MALTA

Malta's oldest prehistoric site of Għar Dalam engages visitors to step back in time. Rows of ancient animal bones, unearthed from Għar Dalam cave, are exhibited in the Joseph Baldacchino's Hall, which still retains one of a handful of Victorian style displays in Europe.

No such animals have lived on the Maltese Islands for thousands of years. The **George Zammit Maempel Hall** presents in a more didactic manner the historical aspects of the cave as well as detailed displays on the various species found in the Maltese Quaternary deposits. Even more bones of the Ice Age animals are still visible inside the cave.

A series of archaeological excavations held in the cave in the latter half of the 19th century have led to the discovery of five main layers of interest. Whereas no traces of any animal species were found in the **lowest layer** which consisted of clay, an extensive amount of animal bones were discovered in the '**Hippopotamus Layer**'. These bones were deposited at this site by water during the Pleistocene era, around 500,000 years ago. **Pebbles and sparse animal bones** belonging to species from the earlier layer were identified in the next one, while remains dating from 25,000 to 18,000 years ago were recovered from the '**Deer Layer**'. A sterile layer corresponding to a volcanic ash layer present outside, lies over the deer layer and the top layer. The '**Cultural Layer**' holds the earliest evidence of human presence in Malta, some 7,400 years ago.

Għar Dalam is also renowned for its ecological value. A garden planted with indigenous plants and trees introduce visitors to local flora. The site forms part of the **Natura 2000** network of protected sites which includes **Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) of International Importance** and **Special Protection Areas (SPA)**. This conservation status is due to a small population of endemic cave woodlouse, Armadillidium ghardalamensis, and a roosting site for the Lesser Horse-shoe Bat, Rhinolophus hipposideros.

Information on the Ghar Dalam Cave and Museum can be found on Heritage Malta's website, which includes opening and closing hours, highlights of the sites and admission fees. Information leaflets are also available in museums and in tourist information offices. We offer concession admission fees

Address Għar Dalam, Għar Dalam Road, Birżebbuġia, Malta

MALTESE YOUTHS INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE BENJAMIN FRANKLIN TRANSATLANTIC FELLOWSHIP FOR YOUTHS

8 January 2025

What is the Benjamin Franklin Transatlantic Fellowship?

This fellowship is an intensive short-term exchange program, intended to form relationships among young Europeans and Americans to build strong linkages and awareness of shared values. The four-week program will enable teenagers, ages 16-18, to explore U.S. foreign policy priorities such as youth engagement, support for democracy and civil society, and economic prosperity. The program will consist of a series of lectures, seminar discussions and presentations, and a broad assortment of practical, faculty- and mentor-led workshops. The coursework and classroom activities will be complemented by community service activities, site visits, social and cultural activities, and homestays with American families to deepen participants' experience of U.S. society during their exchange.

During the academic residency, participants also will have the opportunity to discuss other topics such as democratic practices, conflict resolution, problem solving, communication skills, critical thinking, tolerance and respect for diversity, youth leadership, team building, and the media. The institute will explore how freedom of expression provides rights to and imposes responsibilities on citizens.

The American Embassy is inviting young Maltese people between the ages of 16 and 18 to apply for the *Benjamin Franklin Transatlantic Fellowship for Youths* to be held in the United States in the summer of 2025.

The initiative is named after diplomat Benjamin Franklin and intends to honour Franklin's life and career as an inspiration to those working to strengthen transatlantic cooperation.

This initiative is intended to foster relations among the younger generations of Europe and the United States in order to strengthen global freedom, build relationships between young people, and advance common values.

Around 45 young Europeans, including one participant from Malta, and 10 Americans will take part in an intensive four-week exchange programme in the United States. This programme focuses on the global issues that young Europeans and Americans face on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean in the 21st century.

The participation of one person from Malta is fully funded by the US Department of State. Interested parties should contact the American Embassy (vallettaprograms@state.gov) for further information. Nominations are due to arrive at the American Embassy by February 10, 2025.

Pjazza Rjal Teatru to host INANNA - "RIsing Goddess of Malta" is "Coming Home" In Epic Multimedia Performance on July 18th and 19th, 2025 (VALLETTA, Jan 8, 2025)

"Local audiences have never seen anything like this before." The awe-inspiring historical Pjazza Rjal Teatru in the centre of Malta's beautiful capital city, Valletta, has been chosen as the performance venue for a culturally important, truly epic multimedia performance that will thrill locals and visitors alike in the summer of 2025.

A year ago, Canada based Maltese citizen JOanne Camilleri (the star and visionary creator behind the project), a globally renowned Belly Dancer and instructor at the prestigious University of Toronto whose parents emigrated to Canada from Mellieħa, made an exciting announcement. Thrilling art and theatre lovers across the island nation, she shared her plans to bring her incredible stage show, "INANNA" - RIsing Goddess of Malta" - back home to the Maltese Islands. "I am so excited to bring this international Maltese–Canadian multi-media production to my mother country."

INANNA the Rising Goddess of Malta is a 90-minute multi-media, dance, circus, animation projection and an original musical soundtrack, a mix of folk rock and Islamic scales bringing the sounds and performance of the east and west together in this production that celebrates Malta's prehistoric culture and circles around Malta's goddess of fertility story for a contemporary audience. As Camilleri puts it, "it is through the mythos of the Goddess of Love and Fertility in the present, that Malta can embrace a celebration of its history via the performing arts."

"INANNA is an exciting modern multimedia art project based on one of the oldest stories ever told," says Camilleri. "I am so thrilled to bring this international Maltese–Canadian multi-media production to my mother country - where the story of Inanna began. It truly is a nationally important performance about Malta's critical contribution to the development of society and culture. She also points out that the concept of INANNA comes from the Maltese named for Camilleri's Maltese 'grandmother,' (in Maltese 'in-Nanna' - referring to all her grandmothers since antiquity.)

"The story of INANNA is found inscribed on clay tablets and fragments in INANNA's temples that exist today in Malta and her sister island Gozo," says Camilleri who wrote the fascinating script from the ancient myth of the "the descent of INANNA." This epic poem found in scripted on a cuneiform from the early Neolithic Age in the Latin: cuneus named for the characteristic wedge-shaped impressions is one of the first stories ever told by the first poet known in history, Edehuanna.

INANNA has already been garnering international attention. Entertainment Monthly in the United States described it as "an epic stage production," in a full feature article they did about the show. In addition to the Entertainment Monthly profile, "INANNA - the Rising Goddess of Malta," was also featured in the December 2023 issue of the newsletter, The Maltese Presence in North America. Camilleri also sat down with the editors at Authority Magazine stateside for a deep dive into her fascinating career for their Live Arts / Theater and Live Performances section.

Camilleri hopes the July performance will be the first of many future performances on the islands. "It is my vision to share this story in performance on Malta and Gozo and at the Goddesses Neolithic Temples where Inanna once lived."

This production was also highly endorsed and promoted amongst the Maltese-Canadian Community in Canada and the one million Maltese and Gozitan diaspora around the world by the former Consul General of the Republic of Malta to the Commonwealth of Canada, Dr Raymond. C. Xerri.

Xerri says : "This production is not only unique to the Maltese Islands, it's an original artistic masterpiece with enormous potential in a variety of spheres, which not only narrates one of our civilization's oldest stories but has all the elements and hallmark to transcend into a permanent Maltese heritage production - which can be treasured by all Maltese and millions of tourists who visit our islands alike."

Camilleri agrees. "I see this production becoming a national-level performance that will be representative of Malta's ancient history and will celebrate Malta for both locals and for tourists on an annual basis. Effectively our Production will contribute to the cultural preservation of history through the performing arts," she adds with passion. "Internationally, the production will educate the world on Malta/Gozo's critical contribution to the development of modern society through the mythos." INANNA Productions will be auditioning vocalists, musicians and dance performers from the Maltese islands.

JOanne Camilleri is available for media interviews about the exciting INANNA project and all aspects of Belly Dance. Dr Raymond Xerri is also available to the media for interviews about his support for the INANNA project and how important it will be for the Maltese islands.

Media contact : Tracy Lamourie Founder, Managing Director, Senior Publicist , LAMOURIE MEDIA "Global Award Winning PR - Toronto, Hollywood, the EU & Beyond" North American East Coast *Toronto : 289-788-5881

THE LAST MAN STANDING

My aim and my wish is make this journal read, accepted and supported by every Maltese Living Abroad. There are still a few individuals who are still hesitant to accept the fact that this is the only FREE MALTESE JOURNAL that is connecting Maltese all over the world

THERE ARE NO MENIAL JOBS

But there are plenty of menial attitudes...

by **Anna Marie Galea**

Old trades are dying fast in Malta.

I've spent the last hour looking for a cobbler after going to my usual guy and finding the doors of his workshop tightly and, I suspect, permanently closed.

The last time I went to pick up my repaired shoes, he told me that he felt too old and tired to go on working for much longer. He sadly said to me that fewer and fewer people were visiting his shop and that his children weren't interested in continuing what he had started.

The shop was a sad, dusty shell that hinted heavily at better days and left me feeling more than a bit haunted; however, I still didn't feel as bad as I did when I visited the haberdashery shop of my old seamstress a couple of weeks ago only to find the whole place deserted.

For too long, our authorities have ignored the gaping hole in our trade career market, and the situation has become critical. The focus has been on pushing more and more people into university for decades now, and no allowances have been made for any of our fast-vanishing trades.

In a country of sometimes third-rate professionals, we have lost a place for the very people who once formed the foundation of society. Even village bakeries are fast disappearing, swallowed up by ubiquitous suoermarkets that are clones of each other and sell the same products.

While our authorities continue to present trade careers as somehow inferior to their university counterparts, the service gaps are only going to continue to increase in our society. We need to start sending a new message to our fellow countrypeople that a country that cannot offer its people essential services is truly poor and not one where every second person has a degree.

No academic achievement is going to be of any help if our toilets don't work, and we have to throw out our shoes every time we wear them out a little because we have no one to fix them. I can't believe that I have to say this in 2024, but every job is useful, needed and has an inherent dignity, and it's time our policies started to reflect that.

Does no one think that it's time to re-open trade schools and force open the door to new jobs and a fresh way of looking at manual labour? As the famous quote goes: "There are no menial jobs, only menial attitudes."

If you have an interesting story to tell
Send it to us and share it with others
maltesejournal@gmail.com

The Blue Lagoon with Kids, Malta

by our correspondent

The Blue Lagoon in Malta is one of those places that seems almost too incredible to be real. Crystal clear water, white sand and nothing to be seen for miles. Our high season visit to the Blue Lagoon in Malta lived up to expectations. We avoided the crowds, sunburn and high costs with a few simple steps.

Your best bet to enjoy an uncrowded picturesque Blue Lagoon is to arrive early. This can be done by taking the ferry. Ferry. They run on a “regular” schedule.

The ferry ride takes 20-25 min and is incredible scenic. The co-op runs a variety of boats depending on crowds and what else they are hauling. They are not all covered so be prepared for sun and wind on your ride over.

In order to enter the Blue Lagoon you have to sail through the one opening to the ocean. The only people that beat us into the lagoon were those with their own boats.

The Blue Lagoon tours leave later and therefore arrive later to the lagoon. Also the boats hold many more people than the ferries, so when you come ashore it is with your entire boat. You are also limited to how much time you spend on the island. Taking the ferry let us decide how much time we wanted to spend there.

We took advantage of the early arrival and had the place to ourselves for over an hour. There was plenty of space to swim and lots of fish floating around. The kids had an easy time in the water and we could easily see them and give them some freedom. Once the larger boats started to arrive the water was packed making the kids swimming more dangerous.

The sea also is calmest in the morning. We could easily swim around when we arrived at 9:30, but by noon the water was throwing people around and a large current had developed through the middle of the lagoon.

There are basically two places to enter the water at the Blue Lagoon. The first beach you encounter as you exit the boats is the best for kids. There is a gentle entrance here and the water is shallow.

If you walk a bit further on the beach, or come around the corner of the lagoon via the water there is another beach. This area, strangely, gets far more crowded. It is also not as gentle for the kids. As it is where the water passes through the lagoon it also develops a current.

The beaches get super crowded and there is not much room. We packed just the necessities, including floats for the kids, into one bag that we could have with us near the shore. If you have too much stuff it will really inhibit your ability to get around.

Every inch of the land is covered with chairs and umbrellas for rent. When you arrive early consider renting an umbrella and chairs if you think you are going to be there for a while. The closer you are to the beach the more your umbrella will cost.

When we arrived there was no one there so we just threw our things down by the beach. We had read the tip to rent an umbrella and chair early and ignored it. We didn’t anticipate we would make it very long with the kids anyway. The island quickly filled up and we didn’t have anywhere to sit.

When it came time for lunch we found a few little rocky spots to perch everyone, but were jealous of those who had a shady place to rest. It is certainly not a game-ender to not rent a chair, but it would have made our lives a bit easier.

If there is any chance you or your kids are going to want a float, buy it on the island and bring it with you. The markup is huge. We came prepared with floats for the kids and were glad to have them with us. We also made it clear that we wouldn't be buying novelty floats since we had no way to get them back to the Netherlands with us.

Walk up the hill and you will find a ton of food trucks and vendors. We took a lap and found something everyone would like and enjoyed our treats sitting up on the rocks. We ate around 11:30 just as the tourist boats were arriving and avoided some crazy long lines.

When It Gets Crowded Leave

Once things start to get crowded it is not an enjoyable (or safe in my opinion) place to have kids. The narrow paths that run up and down the island get overcrowded with people drinking too much and not watching out for little people. The water also gets crowded and makes it more difficult to manage the kids.

As more and more private boaters arrived they parked closer and closer to the rope line for the swimmers. We saw so many people almost get hit by boats, it made me nervous to even be there.

We left mid day and all felt satisfied. Sure, if we had the place to ourselves we probably would have stayed all day playing in the shallow water. As the circumstances changed though we decided to leave.

We mostly packed up and sort of waited in the water near where the boats leave. When we saw one of the co-op ferry boats come around the corner we hopped out and went over to the dock. The boat ride back was more crowded. Lots more people coming and going mid-day but still a pleasant, comfortable ride.

The hours we had nearly alone in the Blue Lagoon still seems magical. We now live near crystal clear beaches and this still stands out as an incredibly picturesque place to bring the kids. Don't miss the Blue Lagoon just because you have kids. Plan accordingly and have a lovely time playing in the lagoon together.

MMG CONCERT BAND OF VICTORIA - AUSTRALIA

Happy 2025! May this new year bring you and your loved ones immense joy, prosperity, and good health. Your support has been invaluable, and here's to another year of wonderful moments and achievements with the MMG Concert Band of Victoria.

We deeply appreciate the commitment given by our committee, conductors, musicians, teachers, helpers, students, and families—all volunteers who generously give up their time to be a part of our community band. We enjoy seeing you all enjoy yourselves and the music, and continuing the Maltese music culture here in Victoria. A special thank you to the associations and everyone who booked us in 2024 for their support. Your partnership has helped us thrive and continue to preserve our Maltese music culture, and we look forward to this new year working with you.

Here's to a fantastic 2025 filled with more music, joy, and togetherness!

Parish churches in Malta and Gozo from 1798 to 1900

Part 2 (continues from Part 1 which appeared in issue number 537)

By Tony Mamo

The French occupation of Malta was short-lived from June 1798 to September 1800. There were three main reasons for this: after the Anglo-Franco Battle of Aboukir Bay (Egypt) on 1 August 1798, the British fleet regained control of the Mediterranean Sea and prevented reinforcements from France reaching the French garrison on our islands; the French broke their promises to the Maltese for example non-payment of salaries; and the French despoiled Church property to replenish their treasury. The simmering tension between the French and the Maltese erupted on 4th September 1798 when the French tried to seize religious artefacts of the Carmelite church in Rabat. From that day, the Maltese besieged the French garrison in Valletta and Cottonera. Some clergy participated actively in this bloody and destructive siege including (i) Dun Mikiel Xerri (1737-1799) and Reverend Bartholomew Zarb (both executed by the French) (ii) Dun Saverio Cassar (1746-1805), and (iii) Dun Francesco Saverio Caruana (1759-1847).

After the capitulation of the French garrison in September 1800, Britain remained in Malta for another 164 years until its independence on 21st September 1964. But Malta was not like any other British colony, it was unique: its long rich history went back thousands of years to the Phoenicians (8th century before Christ), it had its own languages – Maltese and Italian, codified laws and courts, a university, a society with strong links to Italy and an influential Catholic Church. Above all, the Maltese are a very proud people. This uniqueness created friction between the colonial governors and the governed.

Let us have a quick look at the situation in Malta and its impact on parish churches.

In his paper "Mortmain Legislation In Malta: The General Principle", Mons. Charles J. Scicluna, the Archbishop of Malta, wrote that "It was an essential aspect of British policy in the early years of their rule not to show any sort of hostility to the Church in Malta since they reckoned that the thing would inflame the natives against them". Britain was well aware of the clergy's role in the uprising against the French and the reverence the Maltese had towards the Church.

Britain, therefore, adopted policies that reinforced its imperial interests in Malta while maintaining good relations with the Church, for example: (i) Britain insisted that the bishop of Malta was selected from the Maltese clergy and that the selected clergy was approved by Britain and the Pope. This ensured that the Bishop of Malta was generally sympathetic to Britain; (ii) the See of Malta was separated from that of Palermo to avoid Sicilian interference in Malta; (iii) the friar orders (Dominicans, Augustinians, Carmelites etc) in Malta were decoupled from their Sicilian counterparts; and (iv) the abolition of immunity from prosecution. Everyone was subject to jurisdiction of the civil courts except for the Colonial Governor and the Bishop of Malta.

The wars with the Ottomans and Barbery pirates were a thing of the past. The prosperity that Malta enjoyed in the first two decades of British rule came to an end with the final defeat of Napoleon, the French Emperor, at Waterloo in 1815. As Europe enjoyed a period of relative peace until 1850s, Britain reduced military spending in Malta, its main naval base for its Mediterranean Fleet. The result for Malta was catastrophic: mass unemployment particularly around the harbour areas, people lived in crowded smelly tenements with poor ventilation, inadequate lighting and poor hygiene facilities. It was not surprising that epidemics (plague, cholera, and smallpox) visited Malta in 1813, 1830, 1837, 1850, 1865, 1871 and 1877 and claimed some 15,500 victims. Sarah Austin described the work of the Church in the 1837 epidemic: the Capuchins and the Dominicans cared for the victims; the convents in Valletta made soup for the poor; and the Congregation of the Oratory of St Philip Neri of Senglea converted their premises into a quarantine hospital for the duration of the cholera outbreak.

The economy of Malta started to improve after 1850s when Britain expanded military spending. Britain built (i) new drydocks, workshops and stores in Senglea Creek, (ii) bunkering and coaling facilities for steam ships, (iii) a Drydocks School to train apprentices, (iv) new fortifications (Victoria Lines), and (v) a breakwater at the entrance to the Grand Harbour. The Suez Canal linking the Mediterranean Sea to the Red Sea was opened in 1869 and Malta became a coaling station on the imperial maritime route linking Britain to its colonies in India, Asia and Australia.

Maltese emigrants to North Africa 1842-80

Year	Algeria	Tunis	Tripoli	Egypt
1842	5,000	3,000	1,000	2,000
1865	10,000	7,000	not known	5,000
1880	15,000	11,000	3,000	7,000

Source: J. Cassar Pullicino - Studies in Maltese Folklore

The chart on the left shows that in 1798, when the Knights-Hospitallers left Malta, the population of Malta was about 100,000, after which it grew slowly to about 124,000 by 1850, and then to about 185,000 by 1900. The village people looking for better paid work moved to Valletta and the Cottonera to be close to the naval and commercial activities that generated most jobs. However, as these cities got over-crowded and rents increased, people settled in nearby Floriana, Hamrun, Marsa, Qormi, Luqa, Tarxien, Paola and Zabbar. Valletta, the Cottonera and the surrounding villages accounted for half the population of Malta in the 1891 census. Thousands of Maltese, however, lost hope of finding a job, and emigrated to nearby Mediterranean countries like Egypt, Libya, Tunisia and Algeria. The last two French colonies welcomed the Maltese because France did not have surplus people to settle there.

The following parishes were established between 1800 and 1900:

Malta:1.San Publiju, Floriana (1844), 2.San Ġużepp, L'Imsida (1867), 3.Verġni Marija Kewkba tal-Baħar, Sliema (1878), 4.San Gejtanu, Hamrun (1881), 5.San Ġużepp, Il-Kalkara (1897), 6.Madonna ta' Pompej, Marsaxlokk (1897), and 7.Santa Marija, Imgarr (1898).

Gozo: 8.Il-Madonna ta' Loreto, Għajnsielem (1855) 9.San Ġużepp, Qala (1872), 10.Madonna tas-Sokkors u San Girgor il-Kbir, Kerċem (1885), 11. San Lawrenz, San Lawrenz (1893)

As discussed above, the relative prosperity of Malta in the second half of the 19th century influenced the establishment of new parishes and population growth. Let us a quick look a couple of these parishes in some detail.

Floriana lies between the Floriani fortifications and the Valletta fortifications. Initially Floriana was meant to be an open space with no buildings. The idea was that, if the enemy succeeded to penetrate the Floriani fortifications, it would be trapped in this open space and killed or captured by the garrison in Valletta. As the enemy threats receded, a suburb developed in Floriana, part of the parish church of San Pawl Nawfragu in Valletta. The church dedicated to San Publiju, the first bishop of Malta, was completed in 1768 and in 1844 it was elevated to a parish church. In 1860 Floriana had a population of 7,871.

Sliema: Apart from a small community of farmers and herdsmen, Sliema was practically uninhabited during the time of the Knight-Hospitallers and the first decades of the British administration. In 1861 Sliema had a population of 324 people which increased to 3,599 people by 1881. The introduction of regulated passenger boats rowed by barklori (boatmen) (1856) and steam ferries (1882) reduced travel time between Sliema and Valletta. Sliema attracted wealthy people, professionals and public servants living in Valletta. Sliema then was part of the parish of B'kara. In 1852, the Bishop, Publio Maria Sant (1779-1864), approved the construction of the new church for the growing population. The church dedicated to Stella Maris, was completed in 1855 and became a parish in 1878.

HISTORY OF MALTESE MIGRATION

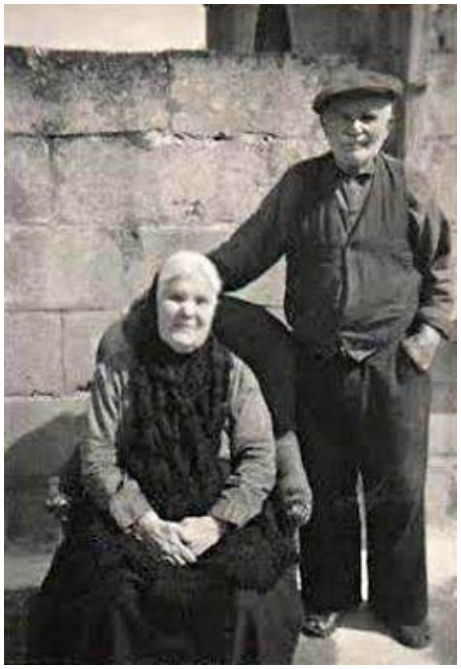
PACIFICO CALLEJA - ONE OF THE UNSUNG HEROES

by Greg Caruana NSW

Pacifico Calleja was born in Mosta on the 17th April 1905. He was the third child with two older brothers and two younger sisters. His parents were Annunciato (Lonzu) Calleja (Tas-Siggijiet) and Teresa (Zeza) Bugeja.

Pacifico and Teresa Caruana on their wedding day

He attended Mosta Boys' School and finished year 6 Grade. He left school at the age of 12 years and went to work with his father as a assistant builder. Around May of 1921 Pacikk (as he was known) left Malta together with his dad Lonzu on the ship ***"Empress of Asia***" and arrived in Ellis Island, New York Harbour, USA on 21st June 1921.



Pacifico worked at Charles Restaurant (chain) for about nine and a half years. He started washing pots and pans and ended up as an assistant baker. He then went to work at Woolworths as a short-order cook for about 6 months. Then he moved to New Orleans, Louisiana for the next two years with his father's brother Wenzu Calleja, who was a wine and spirit maker. In 1933, Pacifico returned to Malta, where he was more of an entrepreneur. He ordered two buses from Italy, which arrived as parts and he hired a mechanic to assist in the assembly. He painted these buses brown with lead paint as Mosta buses. He had a construction business with his brother Karmnu. They also had a grocery store and a petrol station.

When war started in Malta in 1939, he converted three cars into trucks and leased them to the British Army. At the same time, he helped some of his friends get work, by allowing them to drive needed supply to the British troops that where in Malta.

On January 1942, Pacikk met Teresa Caruana. She was a refugee with her family in Mosta from war-torn Paula where she used to live. They got married on the 11th January 1942. Teresa and Pacific had 6 children: Lannie, Carmen, Tessie, Victor, Nancy and Mary. After the war, there was not much work in Malta, so Pacikk decided to migrate for the second time to the United States. His oldest brother Joe was a foreman at "Goodman Lumber" in San Francisco. And he offered him a job there.

Pacifico and his parents Annunziato and Tereza

In 1952, Teresa with five siblings Carmen, Tessie, Victor, Nancy and Mary retuned to the United States via New York. Then Pacikk caught a plane from San Francisco to New York and the family returned to San Francisco by train. By then, the family grew with the addition of Joyce, Joe, Rita, George and Tony. Pacifico had to work really hard to provide for his family; he worked long days and did side jobs building fences and other odd jobs. In the meantime, he helped lots of people, especially his fellow Maltese.

Pacifico and Teresa decided to return to Malta once he retired. So, on the 22nd of February 1968 Pacifico sent his wife Teresa along with their children Mary, Joyce, Joe, Rita, George and Tony, the youngest, to Malta on Pan

American Airlines. On the 17th of April 1968, Pacific retired from work after 17 years with Goodman Lumber at the age of 63. He never had a sick day or a day vacation. He then flew to Malta, along with his daughter Carmen, about a week later. The family lived in Lija for a few months while their home was being built in Birkirkara; then on the 28th April 1973 their daughter Joyce got married and left to the States. Two weeks later, their son Joe left for San Francisco.

On January 1974, their daughters Carmen and Mary left for San Francisco, with everyone retuning to the States and with Rita and George coming of age, the house being too big. In 1974. Pacific and Teresa where thinking of selling their house and buying a smaller one. But Tony the youngest one, now 14 years old, suggested that since everybody was returning to the States perhaps it was time to go back to the States. Pacifico and Teresa lived in San Francisco from 1974 to 1986. Then they moved to Federal Way, Washington.

The golden-hearted Pacific passed away on 2nd May 1993 at great age of 89 years. Theresa lived there in Washington till 2000. Then she moved to New York and lived there, until she was 84 years of age. On the 4th of January 2004, she passed away to go and be united with her beloved husband Pacifico.

This incredible loving couple worked hard to maintain their family and they bestowed their love wherever they were. These are my loving Ziju Pacikk, and my Zija Teresa. Which I am pretty sure they are enjoying eternal rest.

Incredible air raid shelters to visit in Malta & Gozo

Melanie Drury

On 15 June 1941, the news was out that thousands in Malta had no air raid shelter and too many civilians were being left at the mercy of fate as bombs showered down upon them. Five thousand men were deployed to construct 400 public rock shelters in addition to the 473 already in use. Even this endeavour, however, would leave tens of thousands unprotected, out of a population of 270,000.

Therefore, shelters were overcrowded and uncomfortable. However, they were the only guarantee of safety while Malta became the most bombed place on earth. Visit Malta and Gozo's' air raid shelters to get an insider's perspective of living underground to save your life during World War II.

1. MELLIEHA AIR RAID SHELTER

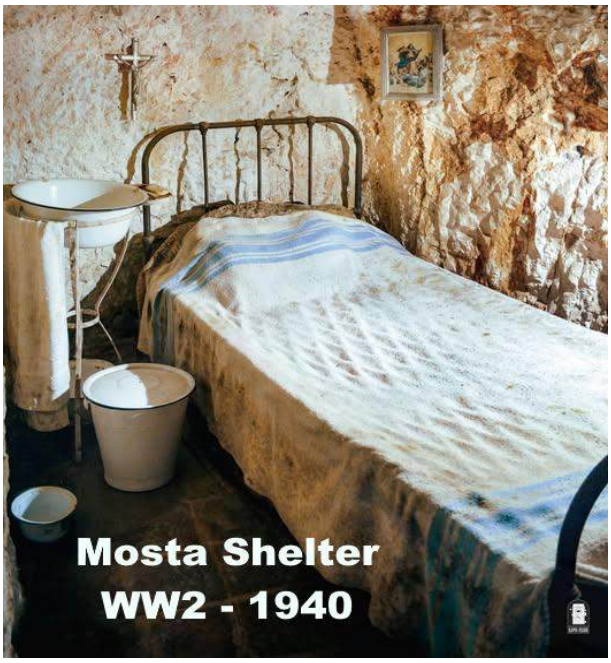
One of Malta's largest shelters, the Mellieha Air Raid Shelters consist of over 500 metres of hand-hewn corridors and private family rooms, as well as anti-blast chambers, a maternity clinic and a treasury.

2. WIGNACOURT MUSEUM AIR RAID SHELTER

The Wignacourt Museum World War II shelters in Rabat consist of about 50 rooms that could accommodate circa 350 people. Two main corridors were provided by the government; then each family paid to have a room dug out with pick axes. The numbered rooms were made homely by use of paint, tiles and makeshift doors made out of wooden planks!

3. VILLA BOLOGNA AIR RAID SHELTER

The tour around Villa Bologna and gardens includes a visit the family's World War II shelters. The private shelters had an entrance through the cellar of the house and an exit onto the garden, and included marble steps and electricity. The shelter has a main room, previously an 18th century well, and four little rooms, probably sleeping quarters and a food storage space.



4. IL-BARRI MGARR AIR RAID SHELTER

This rock-hewn shelter lies beneath the il-Barri restaurant near the village church of Mgarr. Reaching a depth of 12 metres and spanning some 225 metres, it is one of the largest underground bomb shelters in Malta. It was dug entirely by hand and used by about 400 people. Only half of the shelter's maze of corridors are open to the public yet the restricted spaces with low ceilings, rough ground, and damp atmosphere by candlelight provide a good insight to what life in the shelter might have been like.

5. CASA ROCCA PICCOLA AIR RAID SHELTER

A tour of Casa Rocca Piccola in Valletta also takes you to the bomb shelters below the house. Although the house belonged to a noble family, over 100 people sheltered here from the bombs that poured onto Valletta. The air raid shelters of Casa Rocca Piccola include around 100 stone steps and narrow tunnels with rough, uneven surfaces.

6. MALTA AT WAR MUSEUM, COUVRE PORTE, BIRGU

The Malta at War Museum showcases the ordeal of the people of Malta during the Blitz in World War II. It includes an underground bomb shelter below it, which at that time lay beneath a police station. Explore a real air raid shelter as well as period artefacts and war memorabilia to truly immerse yourself in the WWII experience.

7. CITTADELLA AIR RAID SHELTER

The Cittadella Air Raid Shelters in Victoria, Gozo, have only recently opened to the public, in March 2019, thanks to an extensive restoration project by the Wirt Ghawdex foundation. Out of some 170 public shelters in Gozo created between 1941 and 1942, 20 were in Rabat. Since the town's core stands on clay, two large shelters were dug near the main entrance to the Gozo Citadel.

8. MOSTA SHELTER

This shelter was started in 1940 and was dug out by about 15 people, highly experienced in rock cutting by hand. This technique for which Mosta is well known, and the method used is to first cut out a small 2 inch channel out of a section of rock and then drive in a large wedge to split it away from the main rock. It took shifts of rock cutters working 24 hours a day, 5 months to excavate. The rock here is very hard, it is known as Zonqor. It was dug about 20 feet below the ground, the length of the tunnel is about 75 meters.On 9th April 1942, this shelter came close to disaster, when several German bombs were directed at the Church and almost succeeded in tis partial destruction. At 4.40p.m. on that day, one bomb actually penetrated the great dome of the Church. It failed to explode and landed on the right side of the Church, near 300 people were at worship in the Church, it was a miracle that no one was hurt.

Maltese Ravioli

This recipe makes about 4 trays. You can freeze the ravioli also and serve another time. Just make sure to freeze the ravioli in the trays first and then place in a container once semi frozen. Otherwise they will stick together. (Marlene Zammit)

IR-RAVJUL TAN-NANNA

Ingredients

- 500 grams plain flour
- 1 egg lightly beaten
- 200 ml water plus 50 ml extra
- For the filling:
- 5 Maltese cheeselets (Gbejniet)

or 500 grams ricotta

- 2 handfuls parmesan cheese
- 2 lightly beaten eggs
- Small bunch of parsley finely chopped
- Salt and pepper
- For the tomato sauce:
- Olive oil
- 3 cloves garlic finely sliced
- 1 medium jar tomato passata
- Salt and pepper

For serving:

- Extra chopped parsley
- Parmesan cheese

Instructions

1. Prepare the dough by placing the flour into a large bowl.
2. Add into the centre of the flour the egg and water.
3. Mix with a knife and once the dough starts to form add more water if the dough feels a bit too dry.
4. Now knead the dough with your hands until the ball feels firm but springy to touch.
5. Place in the fridge wrapped in cling wrap for two hours.
6. While the dough is in the fridge prepare the mixture. Mix all the ingredients together and set aside.
7. Prepare the trays by lining with baking paper.
8. Once the dough is ready. Roll out some of the dough thinly onto a floured surface.
9. Using a medium sized biscuit cutter, cut out circles to form round pastry shapes.
10. Place 1 large teaspoon of the mixture inside the centre of each of the pastry shapes.
11. Fold over the pastry to form semi circles. Firmly press the edges and if you with mark the edges with a fork.
12. Add the ravioli into boiling water and boil uncovered for about 20 minutes. If the ravioli come to the top of the pot then gently press them down. Do not stir the ravioli at any point.
13. Make the tomato sauce by frying the garlic in oil for 2 minutes. Add the passata and seasoning and simmer for about 15 minutes.
14. Once the 20 minutes has passed gently remove the ravioli and place into plates.
15. Serve with the tomato sauce, some grated cheese, parsley and seasoning.

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