MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER

11 YEARS

Editor: Frank Scicluna OAM MQR JP
Former Honorary Consul for Malta in SA

Email: maltesejournal@gmail.com
Journal for Maltese Diaspora

TO AUSTRALIA

JOSUEL GRECH

WINNER AT THE PARKES

Josuel As Elvis

ALL THE WAY FROM MALTA

Luke Micallef Sets a National Record

They don't build them like this anymore

WE CONGRATULATE Raymond Grima from Adelaide a Pillar of Futsal - Australia

Malala Yousafzai returns to Pakistan at a critical time for girls' education.

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

Press Release 1/2025

7/1/2025

SCHEDULE OF PENSION PAYMENT DATES 2025

The High Commission of Malta would like to inform the public of the 2025 pension payment dates under the Maltese Social Security Act.
This information is published on the Department of Social Security website: https://mysocialsecurity.gov.mt/Views/PaymentSchedules.aspx;

Retired **Retirement, Increased Retirement, Reduced National Minimum & Two-Thirds Pension** **National Minimum & Increased National Minimum Pension**	**Widow**	**Invalidity**
4 January 2025	**11 January 2025**	**4 January 2025**
1 February 2025	**8 February 2025**	**1 February 2025**
1 March 2025	**8 March 2025**	**1 March 2025**
29 March 2025	**5 April 2025**	**29 March 2025**
26 April 2025	**3 May 2025**	**26 April 2025**
24 May 2025	**31 May 2025**	**24 May 2025**
21 June 2025	**28 June 2025**	**21 June 2025**
19 July 2025	**26 July 2025**	**19 July 2025**
16 August 2025	**23 August 2025**	**16 August 2025**
13 September 2025	**20 September 2025**	**13 September 2025**
11 October 4 2025	**18 October 2025**	**11 October 2025**
8 November 2025	**15 November 2025**	**8 November 2025**
6 December 2025	**13 December 2025**	**6 December 2025**

For further information and clarification, please contact our offices on:

High Commission of Malta	**Consulate General Sydney**	**Consulate General Melbourne**
highcomission.canberra@gov.mt	maltaconsulate.sydney@gov.mt	maltaconsulate.melbourne@gov.mt
02 6290 1724	**02 9262 9500**	**03 9670 8427**

President Biden Awards Presidential Medal of Freedom with Distinction to Pope Francis

President Biden spoke with His Holiness Pope Francis and named him as a recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom with Distinction. The Presidential Medal of Freedom is the Nation's highest civilian honour, presented to individuals who have made exemplary contributions to the prosperity, values, or security of the United States, world peace, or other significant societal, public or private endeavours. This is the first time that President Biden has awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom with Distinction.

Citation:

As a young man, Jorge Bergoglio sought a career in science before faith led him to a life with the Jesuits. For decades, he served the voiceless and vulnerable across Argentina. As Pope Francis, his mission of serving the poor has never ceased. A loving pastor, he joyfully answers children's questions about God. A challenging teacher, he commands us to fight for peace and protect the planet. A welcoming leader, he reaches out to different faiths. The first pope from the Southern Hemisphere, Pope Francis is unlike any who came before. Above all, he is the People's Pope – a light of faith, hope, and love that shines brightly across the world.

This marks the second time a Pope has received the Presidential Medal of Freedom. On June 4, 2004, President George W. Bush presented the award to Pope John Paul II during a Vatican visit, recognizing his tireless advocacy for peace and human dignity.

BOV
Bank of Valletta

MALTESE LIVING ABROAD MAY CONTACT THE BANK OF VALLETTA AS FOLLOWS

Australia: customerserviceaustralia@bov.com
USA: customerserviceusa@bov.com
Canada: customerservicecanada@bov.com
Bank of Valletta Customer Service Centre +356 2131 2021

Education activist Malala returns to a region in crisis

Islamabad (AFP) – **Twelve years after she was evacuated out of Pakistan as a badly wounded schoolgirl, Malala Yousafzai has returned to her home country at a critical time for girls' education.**

Malala Yousafzai has made only a handful of public visits to Pakistan since her evacuation to Britain after being shot in the head by a Pakistan Taliban militant © Aamir QURESHI / AFP

"For her, it is a homecoming to a region that shaped who she is today, but also a reminder of the work still left unfinished," Yousafzai's friend and fellow rights activist Nighat Dad told AFP.

Millions more families are living in poverty while more than a third of children are still out of school, as the cash-strapped state grapples with cycles of political chaos and resurging militancy.

In neighbouring Afghanistan, the Taliban have returned to power and imposed an austere interpretation of Islamic law that includes banning girls from studying at secondary school and university. This weekend, 27-year-old Yousafzai was the guest of honour at a global summit on girls' education in Islamic nations hosted by Islamabad, where she called on leaders to stand up for Muslim girls.

"Her presence in Pakistan during such a time is a message to those in power: the fight for education cannot be silenced, whether it's in the Swat Valley or across the border in Afghanistan," Dad added.

In 2012 at the age of 15, Yousafzai was shot in the head while on her way home from school by a Pakistan Taliban militant incensed by an education blog she wrote.

At the time, an insurgency against the government had spread to her remote, picturesque Swat Valley and militants had ordered girls to stay home.

Across the frontier, the war raged between NATO forces and the Afghan Taliban, a separate but closely linked group from the Pakistan Taliban which flourished in the border regions.

I sincerely thank all those who sent a donation

WE NEED HELP TO CONTINUE PRODUCING THE MALTESE JOURNAL

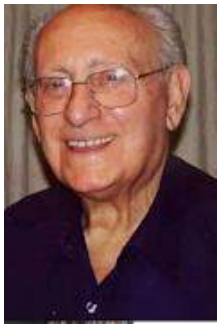
My bank details are Bank Commonwealth (Australia)
BSB - 065106 ACC - 00502597
Name - Frank Scicluna

RAYMOND GRIMA, A PILLAR OF THE FUTSAL REFEREEING COMMUNITY

Congratulations to Raymond Grima, a pillar of the Futsal refereeing community who has been recognised by Football Australia for his outstanding efforts and contribution to Futsal in Australia.

With a remarkable career spanning over three decades, Ray has been a driving force in South Australian Futsal since 1992. His extensive roles as a player, coach, team manager, competition administrator, and Futsal Referee Coach have left an indelible mark on the sport.

Andrew Murray, Lead Futsal Referee Coach, reflected, "Ray's commitment to nurturing and mentoring referees has shaped generations of officials, particularly in South Australia. His influence extends far beyond his own refereeing career, earning him the respect and admiration of the Futsal community nationwide. Congratulations Ray!"



Raymond, like his late father Emmanuel Grima, is heavily involved in the Maltese community of Adelaide especially with the Maltese Queen of Victories Band of South Australia.

WHAT iS FUTSAL?

Futsal is a football-based sport played on a hardcourt like a basketball court, smaller than a football pitch, and mainly indoors. It has similarities to five-a-side football and indoor football.

Futsal is played between two teams of five players each, one of whom is the goalkeeper. Unlimited substitutions are permitted. Unlike some other forms of indoor football, it is played on a hard-court surface marked by lines; walls or boards are not used. It is played with a smaller, harder, lower-bounce ball than association football. The surface, ball and rules favour ball control and passing in small spaces. The game also emphasizes improvisation, creativity and technique.

Futsal in Australia is governed by the Football Federation Australia and its state-based futsal associations. Australia has played in seven FIFA Futsal World Cups. Each State in Australia runs the Professional and Semi-Professional futsal leagues independently,

The Jewish history in Malta

Jewish roots in Malta date back to the 4th and 5th Century during the Roman period as evidenced by several Jewish Catacombs with drawings depicting the Jewish Menorah (candelabra) that can be found at the St. Paul's Catacomb site near Rabat.

St. Paul's Catacomb site near Rabat

The long Jewish history includes periods of enrichment as well as slavery, depending on who was ruling Malta at the time.

Points of special Jewish heritage interest on Malta include old landmarks and street signs. In the walled city of Mdina, where the Jews made up almost one third of the population, there is a "Jewish Silk Market" and a "Jews' Gate"; and in Valletta, Malta's capital and European Capital of Culture 2018 there is a sign "Jews Sally Port".Even the Island of Comino, almost uninhabited today but famous for the Blue Lagoon, has Jewish roots. Comino is where the well-known Jewish Mystic Avraham Abulafia lived from 1285 until his death in the 1290s. During this period, he compiled his Sefer ha Ot "Book of the Sign" as well as his last, and perhaps his most intelligible, work, the meditation manual Imrei Shefer "Words of Beauty".

Jews from Turkey and other places who were captured by the Hospitaller knights that ruled the island from 1530 till 1798, and were unable to redeem them, established a new Jewish community in Malta. The island became open to unimpaired settlement of Jews after Napoleon conquered it and expelled the knights. In 1798. During the British rule on the island, which began with the expulsion of the French in 1800, there began a limited immigration of Jews to Malta, but the community never numbered more than several dozen and there wasn't always a Rabbi. During WW2 the Jews of Malta were unaffected as the planned invasion of Malta never took place. Some German Jews even found refuge on the island during the thirties.

There are three Jewish cemeteries in Malta which can be visited through prior arrangements with the local Jewish Community leader. The stories gleaned from the tombstone inscriptions, are a rich narrative which includes Jewish soldiers who fought in WWI and were buried in Malta.

In 1979 the old synagogue of the community in the capital city , Valetta, was destroyed, and in 2000 a new synagogue was dedicated. Today there are about 250 Jews under the President Mr. Reuven Ochayon and the Rabbi of the community Rabbi Chaim Shalom Segal.

In 2013 a Chabad Center was established in Malta by Rabbi Chaim Shalom and Mrs. Chaya Mushka Segel. The Chabad Center of Malta runs a variety of activities for the local Jewish community and tourists including "L'Chaim" the only strictly kosher restaurant in all of Malta. The Chabad Foundation along with local Jewish community work to strengthen Judaism and make it flourish.

The Synagogue:

The synagogue located in a residential building at Ta'Xbiex city, The synagogue serves the Jewish community on the Sabbath and holidays.

On the Sabbath there is a morning minyan (prayer service) at 10:00.

Address: Florida Mansions #1 Enrico Mizzi Street Ta'Xbiex

JOSUEL GRECH WINS THE ELVIS COMPETITION IN AUSTRALIA

Brendon Chase from the Gold Coast was awarded second, winner Josuel Grech from Malta and third place was awarded to South Australia's Matt Birse. PHOTOS: Supplied

He has done it again. Josuel Grech known as Josuel As Elvis has just won an Elvis competition in Parkes, Australia, which was split over two days.

On the first day, Josuel made it to the top eight and in yesterday's final, Josuel managed to win this competition. This is not the first time that Josuel has won a similar competition. In February last year, he won a competition in England and next month he will be invited back to this competition.

In August, Josuel came in fourth place in a world competition for Elvis impersonators. Josuel Grech will be in Australia for about three weeks where he will be giving performances to the Maltese communities in Sydney and Melbourne. Photo - Facebook

WHERE IT ALL STARTED

Josuel's journey as an Elvis Tribute Artist commenced at the impressionable age of five, ignited by his viewing of the film G.I. Blues alongside his grandmother. Following the creation of an Elvis jumpsuit by his parents for the Maltese Carnival, Josuel's innate talent garnered attention within the local community. Subsequently, he was extended an invitation to showcase his abilities on a televised platform, where he captivated audiences with his rendition of "Blue Suede Shoes," one of his favored Elvis tracks. Entranced by the King's magnetic presence and musical virtuosity, young Josuel found himself inexorably drawn into the enchanting realm of Rock 'n' Roll. Little did he realize at the time, that this pivotal moment would lay the foundation for his illustrious career trajectory.

COMPETITIONS

In January 2017, Josuel made his debut in UK competitions. Since then, he has diligently pursued excellence, resulting in notable achievements. Securing 3rd and 2nd place in previous editions of Harbor Lights, Josuel's unwavering dedication propelled him to triumph in prestigious events such as "Mr. Songman 2023" and "Harbor Lights 2024" Elvis Tribute competitions in the UK. These victories not only boosted Josuel's confidence but also garnered international recognition, solidifying his standing as a formidable presence among tribute artists worldwide.

I'M ALL SHOOK UP!

In June 2022, the theatrical production 'I'm All Shook Up!' paid homage to the legendary King of Rock 'n' Roll, Elvis Presley. Renowned Maltese Elvis tribute artist, Josuel, graced the stage portraying Elvis, and he was supported by an accomplished 8-piece band, G&D Music, and Dancel Dance Studio. Hosted at St. Agatha's Auditorium, the performance enthralled audiences with Josuel's captivating portrayal and electrifying rendition of the iconic music of Elvis Presley.

ONE NIGHT WITH YOU!

The 'One Night With You!' tour spanned five nights across various locations in Malta, featuring the accompaniment of a 12-piece band. Josuel's tour entailed grand entrances via an American Classic Car, three costume changes representing distinct eras of Elvis, and performances by Vegas-style dancers. Each evening served as a commemoration of Elvis's enduring repertoire, underscoring Josuel's unwavering commitment to upholding the legacy of the King of Rock 'n' Roll.

HEADLINER

Taking his talent internationally, Josuel has begun headlining Elvis Festivals overseas and working on shows in the UK, along with some big projects for Malta. Today, Josuel stands as a headlining act, commanding the stage with confidence and style. His remarkable journey from a young boy with a dream to an internationally acclaimed Elvis Tribute Artist is a testament to his talent, dedication, and unwavering passion for music. As he takes centre stage, Josuel remains committed to delivering the ultimate Elvis experience, ensuring that the legacy of the King of Rock 'n' Roll lives on for generations to come.

ELVIS WEARING THE MALTESE CROSS

Linda Thompson designed the 'MALTESE CROSS ' for Elvis with the birthstones, each heart, intertwined and brought together by a single diamond. "So many memories, so little time."

Elvis Presley's Passion for Jewellery.

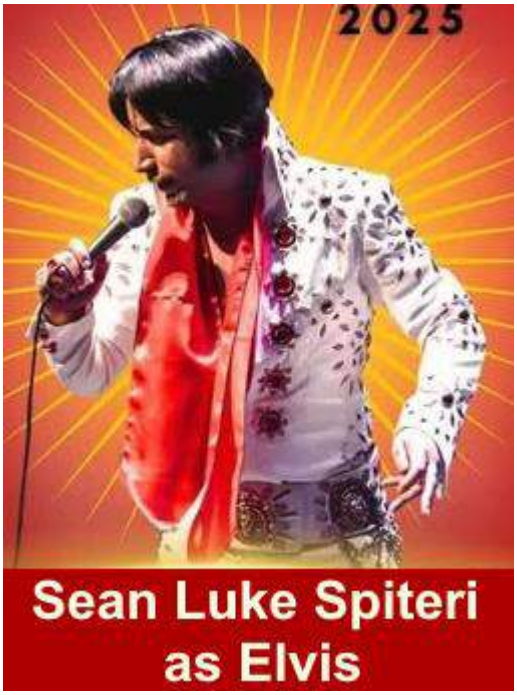
Elvis Presley was born on January 8, 1935 in Tupelo Tennessee, He and his parents moved to Memphis in 1948. Elvis' music influences were the pop and country music of the time. He was influenced by the black R&B he absorbed on historic Beale Street as a Memphis teenager. In 1954 he began his singing career with the Sun Record label. By 1956, he was an international singing sensation. He starred in 33 successful films and made history with his television appearances and specials live concert performances on tour and in Las Vegas.

His talent, good looks, sensuality, charisma, and good humour endeared him to millions, as did the humility and human kindness he demonstrated throughout his life. Known the world over by his first name, he is regarded as one of the most important figures of twentieth century popular culture.

There are thousands of Elvis pictures, CDs, books and films, some very rare, which have inspired thousands of tribute artists. There is also a huge range of Elvis jewellery – Elvis rings, pendants and coins, and of course the King's famous TCB pendant.

Nearly every country in the world has an official Elvis Presley fan club. Some of the legacy he has left with us will be there for ever: his jewellery (such as rings, pendants and coins), jump suits, sunglasses and Elvis memorabilia, and of course not forgetting the famous gold TCB pendant. Elvis died at his Memphis home, Graceland, on August 16, 1977 which will always be remembered by us all at Graceland Elvis.

We are excited to announce Sean Luke Spiteri 'Burning Love' Summer Tour for 2025
SAVE THE DATES
This is just the start of 2025! Next year Sean will celebrate 25 years as an Elvis Tribute Artist It is going to be a big year, with some very exciting projects in the works - lots of shows, lots of performing for Sean & lots of Elvis
See the 'Burning Love' Summer Tour Dates below:
Jan 26th - Portarlington Family Day - Australia Day Weekend. More details soon. (VIC)
Feb 1st - Mulwala Waterski Club (NSW)
Feb 8th - Elvis Moonlight Cruise - Docklands (VIC) Tickets are on sale now! Limited tickets available!
Be quick & book your tickets by clicking on the link below: https://www.123tix.com.au/.../elvis-moonlight-cruise...
⚡Feb 22nd - Eagle Ridge Golf Club (Boneo, VIC) in the Velvet Lounge. More details soon. More shows and states to come in 2025⚡



Elvis Lives Forever

MALTESE AUSTRALIAN FATHER AND SON ELVIS

Paul Fenech and son, Anthony are the world's only father-and-son Elvis tribute duo.
Earlier this year, at the Parkes Elvis Festival, for the first time they sang the same song together – a high point in both their careers.
"I've performed for thousands of people and that was amazing. But when I called my son up on stage to perform with me, to have him next to me, that was the real career highlight" says the 54-year-old who began singing at Elvis Pizza in Sydney's Rushcutters Bay in 1997. After performing there, people started booking him for weddings and corporate events. He says "I got so much work I gave up engineering and became a full-time Elvis. I even bought the restaurant!" Photo: Tim Bauer studio

Gozo to be Region of Culture for 2025
gozonews.com

Gozo will be the Region of Culture for next year, this will follow on from the Eastern Region's term as Region of Culture 2024 which ends in a few weeks.

A different region is selected each year to host a number of cultural activities in the respective localities

This was announced by the Minister for Gozo and Planning, Clint Camilleri, and Parliamentary Secretary for Local Government, Alison Zerafa Civelli, in the presence of the President of the Gozo Regional Council, Dr Samuel Azzopardi.

It was explained that during the next year the unique cultural identity of the island of Gozo will be celebrated through a multidisciplinary programme that explores and combines traditional and contemporary practices. The programme will cover various cultural and creative disciplines such as dance, music, theatre, visual arts, cinema, literature, cultural heritage, architecture and gastronomy.

LUKE MICALLEF SETS NEW NATIONAL RECORD IN BOLOGNA 10K RACE

Last Sunday my brother established a new national record for Malta in 10km race.

NATIONAL RECORD **Luke Micallef** Perconte (35 years) establishing a new National Record by 13 seconds previously set by Jordan Gusman in Gold Coast, Australia in 2022. Luke has established a new national record on the 10km road race distance, with a superb performance in Bologna on 12January 2025

Micallef finished overall today

For Micallef, this is another national record to his name as he currently holds the country's best in the 3,000 steeplechase.

Micallef's timing in Bologna will be confirmed as a national record once it is ratified by Athletics Malta.

MARK MICALLEF PERCONTE

see also:

Luke Micallef sets new national record in Bologna 10K race - SportsDesk

(5) Fabio Spiteri - Llum kelna Malti li kiser r-rekord nazzjonali... | Facebook

Bringing Community Together Through Story

by our correspondent Sean Richardson

I was recently invited by my local library, Umina Beach in NSW, to do a free author talk on my novel, *The Maltese Web*, a thriller set in Malta. It was booked out and I was thrilled that forty people attended to hear me talk about Malta. The event brought together a community of Maltese people I didn't know existed in and around my suburb. It was delightful to receive amazingly positive feedback and hear people exchanging their own memories. I was very appreciative of people wanting to share their stories of Malta with me and other people commenting that my talk had inspired them to put a visit on their bucket list.

We discussed what inspired me to set the novel in Malta and how I wove the history, food, culture and landscape into my writing. It was a joy sharing my affection for life on the island and my obsession with learning about the Maltese past and keeping up with the present.

What created a ripple amongst the audience, was a brief presentation when I shared our memories from the time we lived in Malta and from our many visits, and how I used it to infuse the book with my observations about living in Malta. The smiles and excited exclamations as they recognised Maltese towns, icons and food echoed my own feelings about Malta.

There was a keen interest in the challenge of weaving Maltese life into the story. It was a challenge I said I relished, of writing about the feeling of being immersed in Malta. There were nods in the audience as I spoke of writing about the taste of the pastizzi, the view when driving amongst the green fields or travelling along narrow roads surrounded by the beige stone buildings that funnelled traffic through townships. I emphasised how I liked to illustrate the elements of Malta that are not in the tourist brochures such as the white and beige buildings that dot the island and hug the coastline overlooking the waters painted in shades of blue. In contrast with a tourist's brochure portraying the blue sea surrounding Malta as a placid pond in which to dip to escape the scorching summer heat I wrote of how it could during winter, viciously slam into the island of rock swamping roads, walkways and small villages.

The Maltese Web, is the story of Marica Debono, a financial investigator who is trying to stop Russian criminals attempting to launder dirty money. The story is about Marica's fight to rebuild her career, while juggling a tense family situation, and in doing her job she uncovers a web of deceit, which leads her to discover an uncomfortable link to her father's business. Risking everything, can she save the island and those she loves? It is available on Amazon in kindle or paperback.

Sharing my story of how I crafted the novel with the attentive crowd who were a mixture of Maltese and non-Maltese gave me a special thrill. People smiled with rekindled memories, and many commented that they had learnt something new about Malta.

I was encouraged by the attendees to do an event to help other Maltese communities come together, so their families and friends could share a similar experience. If people are interested, I can be contacted by email at **seanrichardsonwriter@gmail.com** to see if it is possible to do such a talk at a local community function or library near you.

Adopted Maltese sisters fear for children's future

From childhood bullying to workplace prejudice, sisters speak out against racism in Malta

Jurgen Balzan – www.newsbook.com

Whitney Camilleri, a young Maltese woman adopted from Pakistan, shared the profound hurt she felt as a mother when her son was targeted by a racist remark. While playing in a local park, other children approached him, and one shouted, "Those Indians or whatever, I hate them."

In an interview with **Newsbook Malta**, Whitney and her sister Oriana opened up about the racism they've faced, the challenges of their upbringing, and their fears for their children's future. They highlighted the bullying experienced by many adopted Indian and Pakistani children in Malta, urging awareness and caution, particularly among parents whose words can influence their children's attitudes. "We never hear such comments about Italians, Russians, or Bulgarians, but when it comes to darker skin, the argument of overpopulation suddenly arises," they observed.

Whitney recounted a lonely childhood marred by constant bullying. "From kindergarten to senior school, I couldn't make friends. Those who did befriend me were ashamed of me." She was often called "Black" and mocked for her appearance. At school, she spent breaks alone, was always the last chosen for group activities, and endured teachers' inaction.

Art became her solace. Her art teacher would open the classroom for her during breaks, offering her a therapeutic escape. Still, the relentless bullying took its toll, leading to learning difficulties and depression. "Children aren't supposed to get depressed, but I did," she admitted.

Oriana's experience was different but equally painful. Her friends would greet her with, "The black one is here," and she struggled to understand why they subjected her to such cruelty. Today, she keeps a close circle of three friends and her boyfriend, avoiding the toxicity of larger social groups.

'We hear racist comments all day long'

Both sisters agree that racism has worsened despite awareness campaigns. Oriana, who works with carers, hears racist remarks daily. "Even when we're doing our jobs with dignity, we face hurtful comments," she said. Many Maltese are shocked when they hear her speak fluent Maltese and retract their words in embarrassment. Her Indian colleagues, however, often endure such treatment silently, fearing retaliation. Whitney referenced the tragic case of a bus driver who died in a traffic accident just before Christmas. "When the accident happened, they mocked him, saying Indians can't drive. Then, when he died, the same people wrote comments like 'rest in peace' and 'poor man.' The hypocrisy was painful to witness."

As mothers, Whitney and Oriana fear their children will face the same prejudice they endured. "No child deserves the suffering we went through," they said, calling for a society rooted in acceptance. They expressed gratitude to their adoptive family, who raised them with love and affection, and hope their children will grow up assertive and unafraid to embrace their differences.

Watch the interview; ***newsbook.com.mt/en/we-hear-racist-comments-daily-adopted-maltese-sisters-fear-for-childrens-future/***

This Saturday, 25 January the Malta Philharmonic Orchestra (MPO) invites music lovers to an extraordinary evening of classical splendour at the Hilton Malta in St Julian's.

Under the direction of maestro Sergey Smbatyan the concert, titled *Rachmaninoff3* promises an exquisite journey through the works of Ravel, Rachmaninoff and Prokofiev, highlighted by a performance of rare virtuosity from internationally-acclaimed pianist behzod abduraimov.

The centrepiece of the evening will be Sergei Rachmaninoff's iconic ***Piano Concerto No. 3,*** a work revered for its breathtaking beauty and formidable technical challenges. Bringing this masterpiece to life is Behzod Abduraimov, whose reputation for both technical brilliance and deep emotional expression has earned him standing ovations on stages worldwide. From the concerto's haunting opening theme to its explosive finale, Abduraimov's artistry promises an unforgettable experience.

The programme opens with Maurice Ravel's ***Pavane pour une infante défunte***. Originally composed for solo piano and later orchestrated, this delicately mournful piece embodies grace and nostalgia, evoking an elegant dance for a princess of a bygone era. Maestro Smbatyan will guide the orchestra in capturing Ravel's lush harmonies and restrained poignancy, setting the tone for a night of profound musical expression.

The evening concludes with Sergei Prokofiev's ***Symphony No. 7***, a poignant and introspective work from the composer's later years. Known for its heartfelt melodies and tender simplicity, this symphony reflects Prokofiev's lyrical genius, standing in contrast to the dynamic dissonance of his earlier compositions. Its reflective charm serves as a fitting end to a concert that traverses a wide emotional landscape.

Whether you're a devoted classical music enthusiast or exploring the genre for the first time, Rachmaninoff3 promises something for everyone - an evening you won't want to miss. The combination of Ravel's delicate introspection, Rachmaninoff's virtuosic depth, and Prokofiev's nostalgic beauty creates a rich tapestry of sound and emotion.

Join the Malta Philharmonic Orchestra and these world-class artists for this unforgettable celebration of music. The concert begins at 7.30pm.

Don't miss your chance to experience this stunning musical event. Tickets are available now at *showshappening.com*

IMPOTRTANT NOTIFICATION FOR MALTESE LIVING ABROAD AND FOR STUDENTS AND TEACHERS OF MALTESE LANGUAGE

The Directorate for Consular Services and Maltese Living Abroad within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is currently conducting a short questionnaire to understand the interest in online Maltese-language lessons for members of the diaspora, as well as a secondary short questionnaire to gauge interest in online professional development courses for teachers already teaching Maltese abroad. Kindly note that deadline for responses is 31st January 2025. Links to the questionnaires below:

For Students (including any past students): https://forms.office.com/e/uRLSYdMYVq

For Teachers: https://forms.office.com/e/7u9f4J5A39

Maltese American Benevolent Society, Inc.

1832 Michigan Ave, Detroit, MIchigan USA

Annual Calendar of Events

Sunday, January 26th – General Membership Meeting (GMM) 3 pm

Sunday, February 9th –
Brunch with the Ambassador of Malta to USA at 11 am
AND
Superbowl Sunday Celebration 5:30 pm Dinner; Game 6:30 pm

Sunday, March 16th – St. Patrick's Parade Day

Monday, March 17th – St. Patrick's Day - Club Open

Sunday, May 4th – Cinco de Mayo Celebration
w/Nacho Bar 12 pm

Sunday, June 8th – GMM 3 pm

Saturday, July 12th – Steak & Hamburger Barbeque 5 pm

Sunday, September 7th – Annual Festa & 85th Anniversary Celebration Starting w/11 am Mass, following at the Club for Maltese & American Food

Sunday, October 19th – GMM 3 pm

Sunday, November 2nd - Appreciation & Scholarship Awards 1 pm

Sunday, December 7th – Children's Christmas Party 2 pm

Wednesday, December 31st – New Year's Potluck 7 pm Dinner

THE MEMBERS & FRIENDS OF THE MALTESE GUILD OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA MEET EVERY TUESDAY FROM 10AM TILL 3PM FOR LUNCH AND SOCIAL ACTIVITIES AT THE MALTESE CULTURAL CENTRE 6 JEANES STREET BEVERLEY

Phone 08 8243 0868
Phone 0435 797 487

Email
malteseguildsainc@gmail.com

I would like to thank the many readers of the Maltese Journal who continuously encourage me to continue to publish the newsletter which is providing so much information, education and entertainment to thousands of Maltese around the world. But the most important fact is that this journal is connecting the Maltese living abroad together and with their homeland – Malta and Gozo. This is the only Maltese Journal which survived eleven years. We have witnessed the loss of many associations, clubs and journals (Maltese Herald, the Voice etc) because the members of the Maltese communities living abroad, especially the Malta-born migrants, are passing away in droves. May God give us strength i to continue keeping the Maltese living abroad on the map
The Editor.

GREGORY CARUANA

Remembering Assistant Steward Gregory Caruana, Born on 17th February 1918 in Qormi, Malta. On his 18th birthday, Gregory joined the Royal Navy. His Service Number is E/LX 22029. Gregory served aboard the **HMS Glorious** for four-plus years. At the young age of 22, Gregory's life was tragically cut short on 08 June 1940, a testament to the sacrifices made by those in service during wartime. His memory is commemorated on the Plymouth Naval Memorial in Devon, where his name is honored on Panel 42, Column 3. Gregory was the Son of Carmnu and Vittoria Caruana and brother of John (Ganni), Carmenu, Theresa (my Mother), Rosario (Zaru), Antoninu (Tony), Censinu (Vince), and Salvatore (Sam). Gregory's legacy symbolizes courage and dedication. His commitment to duty and the sacrifices he made for his country are deeply respected and remembered, reflecting the profound impact of his service.

HMS GLORIOUS

On the 8th June 1940 HMS. Glorious along with her two destroyer escorts HMS. Ardent and HMS. Acasta were sunk in Norwegian waters. A total of 1531 men lost their lives on the three ships making it one of the worst naval tragedies during WW2 for England and Malta. On board HMS. Glorious 40 Maltese men along with more than 10 English ratings who had made Malta their home died whilst serving on her. Shockwaves hit Malta when on the 10th June news reached us of the sinking. However this was soon overshadowed by the news that Italy had entered the war on the German side and declared war on England and its allies, which included Malta. Fear was felt throughout the island with war looming on the horizon. The next day at 6.30am Malta suffered its first victims of the war when the Italian Air Force dropped their bombs and a pregnant mother and her two children were killed in Pieta. The story of the sinking was now almost forgotten, except by the relatives of those men. Malta now was suffering the horrors of war and there was little time to reflect on past tragedies.

The mystery behind this tragedy arises from the fact that no clear answers were given to the public in England as to why Glorious was allowed to leave the convoy and sail on its own. To make matters worse the government slapped a 100 Year Secrecy Act on all documents related to this story. **HMS. Glorious is the only aircraft carrier to have the 100 Year Secrecy Act imposed on it.** This added fuel to a conspiracy theory that was going around at that time and is still the most believed theory of them all. Two evacuation convoys were to leave Narvik in Norway hoping to be as secretive as possible to ensure minimal loss of ships and lives. But, along with this convoy, but travelling separately, was H.M.S. Devonshire carrying on it, the Norwegian Royal Family, as well as the Norwegian parliament and Norwegian gold bullion. This theory has the Glorious being sacrificed in order for the Devonshire and the two convoys to reach Scapa Flow in Scotland without mishap. This they did as no one was attacked during their journey to Scapa Flow.

Maltese Traditional "Number 8" Shaped Biscuits

These Maltese biscuits are one of the most favourite biscuits in Malta. They still are as among the Maltese living Broad. We miss them whilst living here away from our homeland.
So obviously I have been asked to download a recipe of these special biscuits.
The recipe is very similar to Qagħaq tal-Ġunġlien (Maltese Biscuit Rings with Sesame Seeds) with some ingredient changes and also, this time we used a food processor. Needless to say, there is less mess in the kitchen and takes less time to prepare!! It is quite easy to shape a number 8, actually easier than you had thought.
Using this method I always get equally shaped (well approximately) finished products. So if you miss these biscuits here is how to make 10 of them first thing on a Saturday morning. You can dunk these in hot tea or coffee, that's how we like them :)

INGREDIENTS.

- 250g plain flour
- 85g caster sugar
- 1 ½ teaspoons baking powder
- 1 egg
- ½ teaspoon ground aniseed
- Pinch ground cloves
- 90g salted butter, at room temperature, cut into cubes
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 2 tablespoons water
- 1 tablespoon orange flower water - Ilma zahar (if not available add another tablespoon of water)
- Grated zest of 1 orange
- Sesame seeds

METHOD

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C.
2. If you are using a food processor, start by adding the flour, sugar, spices and baking powder into the food processor and pulse for a few minutes. If not using a processor add the dry ingredients in a large bowl and mix well. Add the butter and blend until all butter has been incorporated into the flour. If using your hands, mix the butter in with your fingertips until mixture resembles fine breadcrumbs.
3. In a small bowl beat the egg and mix in the orange zest, water, orange flower water and oil. Mix well. Add to the dry ingredients whilst food processor is running and blend until the dough comes together. Again if using your hands, add the wet ingredients to the dry ingredients mix well until you get a soft dough.
4. Divide the dough into 10 equal sized balls (about 50g each), a bit bigger than golf balls and roll into thin long sausage-like shapes, about 30cm long. Shape into a number 8 and carefully transfer into a plate with sesame seeds turning over to cover both sides with the seeds. Place on a tray lined with greaseproof paper and bake in the preheated oven for about 20-22 minutes.
5. Let cool down and serve with tea or coffee. Enjoy!!

Butterflies in Malta

In recent years, butterfly diversity in the Maltese Islands appears to have fluctuated significantly. While a new species has appeared (accidentally introduced via horticulture) and another (North African migrant) increased in number, others have evidently suffered a considerable decline across their local distribution range.

Some argue that this is due to changes in the climatic regime, notably, that an increase in hot and dry weather conditions on the islands has influenced local butterfly populations. Another possible explanation could be related to habitat impoverishment, as a result of land-use changes and increased urbanisation, with the result of increased fragmentation of rural landscapes.

Other major threats include an indiscriminate use of pesticides and exploitation of species, particularly for commercial reasons. This study aims to assess the local situation and identify as well as evaluate strategies towards conservation of butterfly species in the Maltese Islands. Butterflies were monitored within nine pre-determined sites; their abundance was assessed by means of transect counts along a route of 300 metres. A vegetation survey was also conducted in all the sites and data concerning the abundance of vegetation was estimated along the same transects.

Fifty-five percent of the total number of butterfly species, known to occur in the Maltese Islands, was recorded during the study. The results of the study indicate that valley systems harbour more butterfly individuals than garrigue sites ($p<0.05$), however, garrigue sites record the highest value for the total number of butterfly species encountered.

The study shows a positive correlation between species richness of butterflies and plants, however, results prove, that, butterfly diversity, does not always depend on the diversity of plant species present along the transect route. Thus, the findings of the present study suggest that butterflies respond not only to adult food resources but are also influenced by the landscape context. An urgent strategy for conserving butterflies in the Maltese Islands is recommended, with a view to address the various issues and problems that are affecting the decline of butterflies.

As a first step, a monitoring plan that involves various sites across the islands, should be formulated. In addition, local habitats must be assessed and evaluated to determine whether these merit any special protection in terms of butterfly fauna.

Other recommended conservation actions include: identifying food plants and specific habitats for subsequent conservation; raising awareness; promoting butterfly-friendly activities and projects; and providing an effective education scheme. Such a strategy could help thwart imminent extinctions and restore a countryside rich in butterflies.

THE EX-CONSUL -GENERAL FOR MALTA IN VICTORIA AUSTRALIA DIES

The former Consul General for the State of Victoria Mr Charles Mifsud passed away peacefully on the 1ST January 2025. The editor, staff and readers of the Maltese eNewsletter (the Journal for Maltese living abroad) convey their sincere condolences to his wife Anna and son Bernard. May he rest in peace.

CARDINAL MARIO GRECH IN BRAZIL

JOHN AQUILINA - MALTA'S AMBASSADOR TO BRAZIL

Greeting Maltese Cardinal Mario Grech in Brazil was both wonderful and exciting. It was also an outstanding and humbling experience to meet with the Maltese clergy, Bishop Emeritus Vincent Costa of the Diocese of Jundiaí, São Paulo, Fr Charles Borg, Fr Paulo Mercieca, Fr Xavier Cutajar and Fr Daniel Balzan. Each one has dedicated more than 50 years to Brazil's Catholic Community. Cardinal Grech, who is the Secretary General of the Synod of Bishops in Rome, addressed a large group of Priests and Deacons from São Paulo on the outcome of the last Synod of Bishops which was held in Rome. He also concelebrated Holy Mass at the beautiful Jundiaí Cathedral which dates back to 1655, and met with large numbers of Jundiaí's Catholic Community, including the Cloister of Carmelite Nuns.Affarijiet Barranin@Christopher Cutajarlan Borg

MALTESE SENIOR CITIZENS ASSOCIATION OF SA
OPENS EVERY TUESDAY BETWEEN 9.30 AM AND 3.00PM
FOR LUNCH, BINGO AND OTHER SOCIAL ACTIVITIES.
AT THE COMMUNITY HALL, 49 LEHUNTE STREET
KILBURN SOUTH AUSTRALIA.
A WARM WELCOME TO ALL MEMBERS AND FRIENDS .
YOU MAY ALSO COLLECT A PRINTED COPY OF THE MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER

Celebrate the Feast of St Paul's Shipwreck at San Pawl Milqi!

On **Monday, 10th February 2025**, Heritage Malta invites you to the historic and normally closed site of San Pawl Milqi in Burmarrad, traditionally associated with the arrival of St **PAUL ON THE ISLAND OF MALTA.** This event offers a unique opportunity to commemorate this significant moment in Maltese history through a special Mass and exclusive guided tours.

The event schedule includes **a mass**, which will be **held at 10:00 am in the site's chapel, in Maltese. Two guided tours** will be taking place – **one in** Maltese at 09:00 am, and another in English at 11:00 am. These tours will delve into the site's fascinating history, from its rich agricultural traditions during the Punic, Roman, and Arab periods, to its importance in Maltese religious tradition.

This event is open to all ages, with a maximum capacity of 25 participants in each guided tour, to ensure an enjoyable experience. Don't miss this rare chance to explore one of Malta's most iconic historic landmarks.

Secure your spot now by pre-booking online on Store – Heritage Malta or from any of our museums and sites. **Spaces are limited!**

Pawlu Mizzi
Father of Maltese books

Born in Rabat, Gozo in October, 1929 and died in August 2019 Pawlu Mizzi will always be known as the father of Maltese books. He studied at the Gozo seminary and the Royal University of Malta, where he obtained a BA and later a diploma in librarianship.

Throughout his life he taught at various schools and also served as the librarian at MCAST. Between 1948 and 1962 Mizzi was the correspondent in Gozo for Allied Newspapers. He also served as the director of *Il-Ħajja* and was also the director of the Mediterranean Film Studios. Mizzi had collaborated in the filming of such films as *Cristoforo Colombo* and *Pirates*.

Among his vast body of work, Pawlu Mizzi will be most remembered for setting *Klabb Kotba Maltin* in 1970 and later for the foundation of Midsea Publications. *Klabb Kotba Maltin* was a pioneer in the sector of Maltese books and books about Malta. The first book he published was I*l-Gaġġa* by Frans Sammut in 1971. Mizzi was also the editor of *Heritage*, the encyclopaedia of Maltese heritage, culture and civilisation.

Among the most important books published by *Klabb Kotba Maltin* is the New Testament – the first popular Bible written in modern Maltese, *Il-Miklem* by Erin Serracino Inglott, Ġużè Aquilina's dictionary, a collection of poems by national poet Dun Karm Psaila, edited by Prof Oliver Friggieri and *Rajt Malta Tinbidel* by Herbert Ganado. Pawlu Mizzi also published several of his own personal publications including *Il-Parroċċa t'Għawdex: Studju kulturali ta' epoka 1432-1689* and a series of legends about Malta and Gozo. In 1992 Mizzi was given the Medal for *Qadi tar-Repubblika* and in 1994, he was appointed a Knight of the *Sacra Ordina Militare Constantiniana de San Jorge*.

The Australian High Commissioner for Malta His Excellency Mr Matt Skelly *met the current cohort of students studying at the* ***IMO-International Maritime Law Institute****, including students from Vanuatu and Fiji funded by the Australian Government. IMLI aims to enhance capacity-building in international maritime law in all States, particularly developing countries, to promote safe, secure, and sustainable shipping through cooperation. The IMO International Maritime Law Institute is a world recognized centre for the training of specialists in international maritime law. Special emphasis is given to international regulations adopted by the International Maritime Organization.*

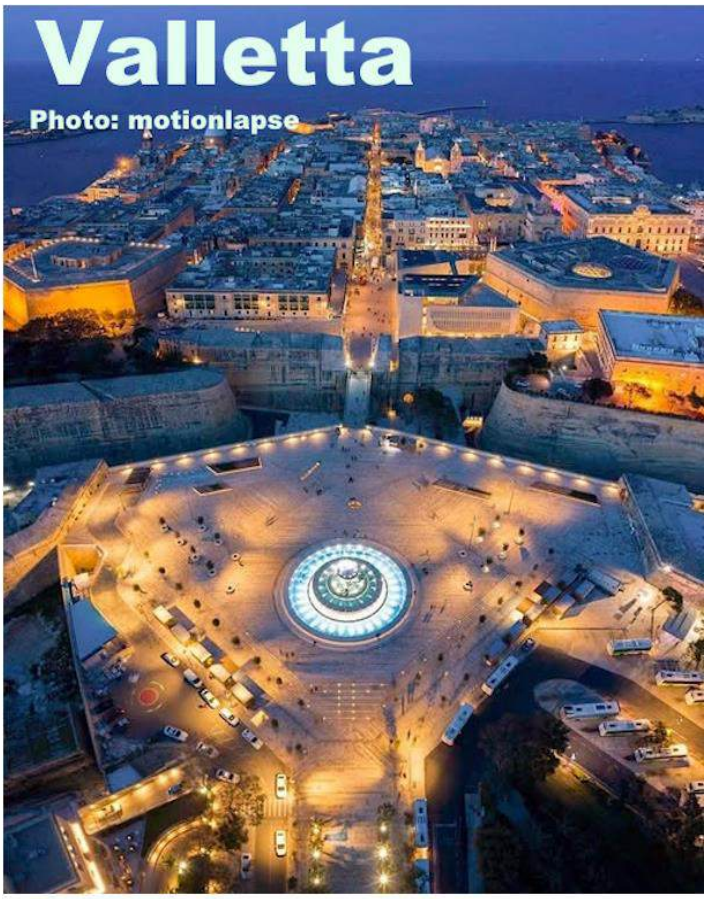
The mission of the IMO International Maritime Law Institute is to enhance capacity-building in all States, particularly developing States, to contribute to the fulfilment of the IMO objectives thereby promoting safe, secure, environmentally sound, efficient and sustainable shipping through cooperation.

Established in Malta in 1988 under an agreement concluded between the IMO and the Government of Malta, IMLI started its first programme in 1989. Its main purpose was, and remains, to train officers, principally from developing countries, in international maritime law. Over the last three decades, IMLI's work has contributed to the establishment of a cadre of experts in international maritime law who are able to prepare, review and advise on the implementation of maritime laws and regulations.

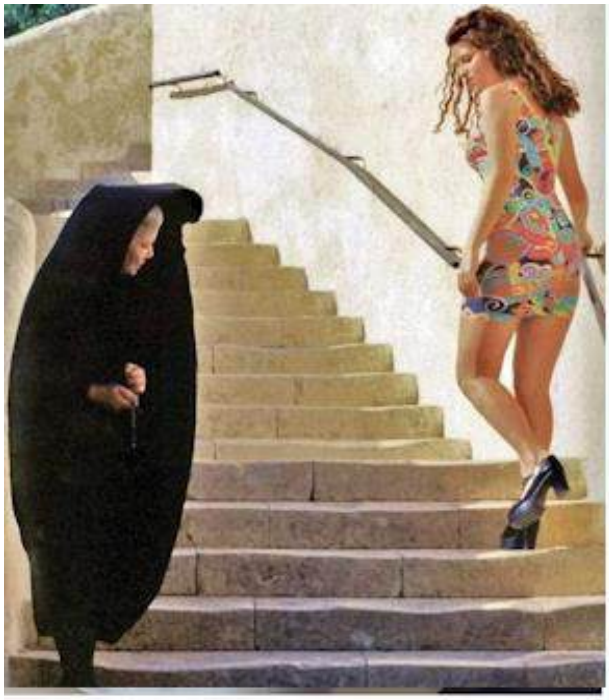
WHAT CAN YOU READ IN THIS JOURNAL?

Biographies, events, news from Malta, news from Maltese around the world, history and culture of the Maltese Islands, Traditional Maltese Recipes, old and new photos of Malta and Gozo, Art, Architecture, Traditional trades and customs etc etc

MANUEL ISLAND AND GZIRA


Valletta
Photo: motionlapse

BLUE WATERS OF MALTA
Ernest Ferrante



A PICTURE TELLS A THOUSAND WORDS