MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER

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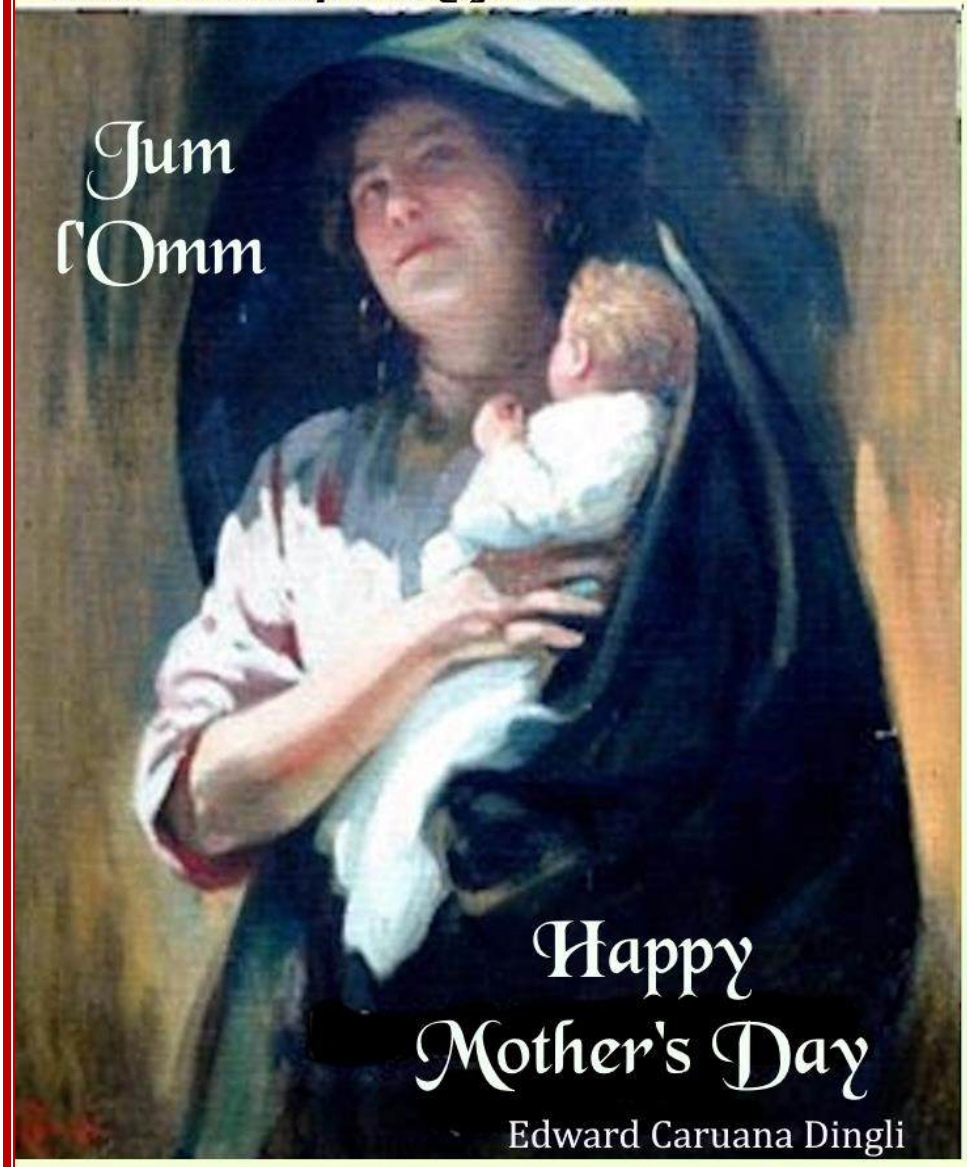
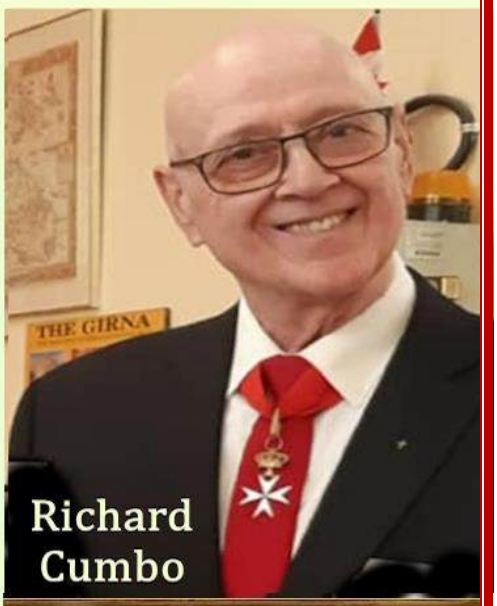
THE JOURNAL FOR MALTESE LIVING ABROAD





MALTESE - CANADIAN
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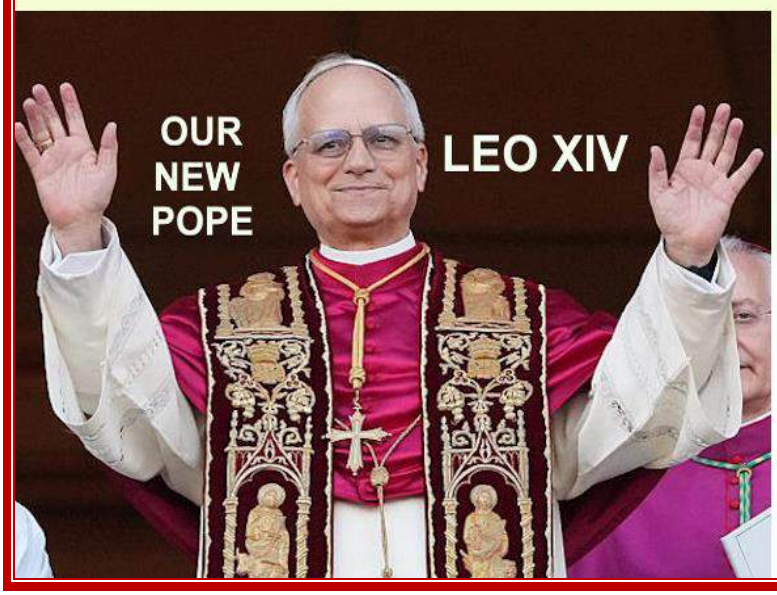
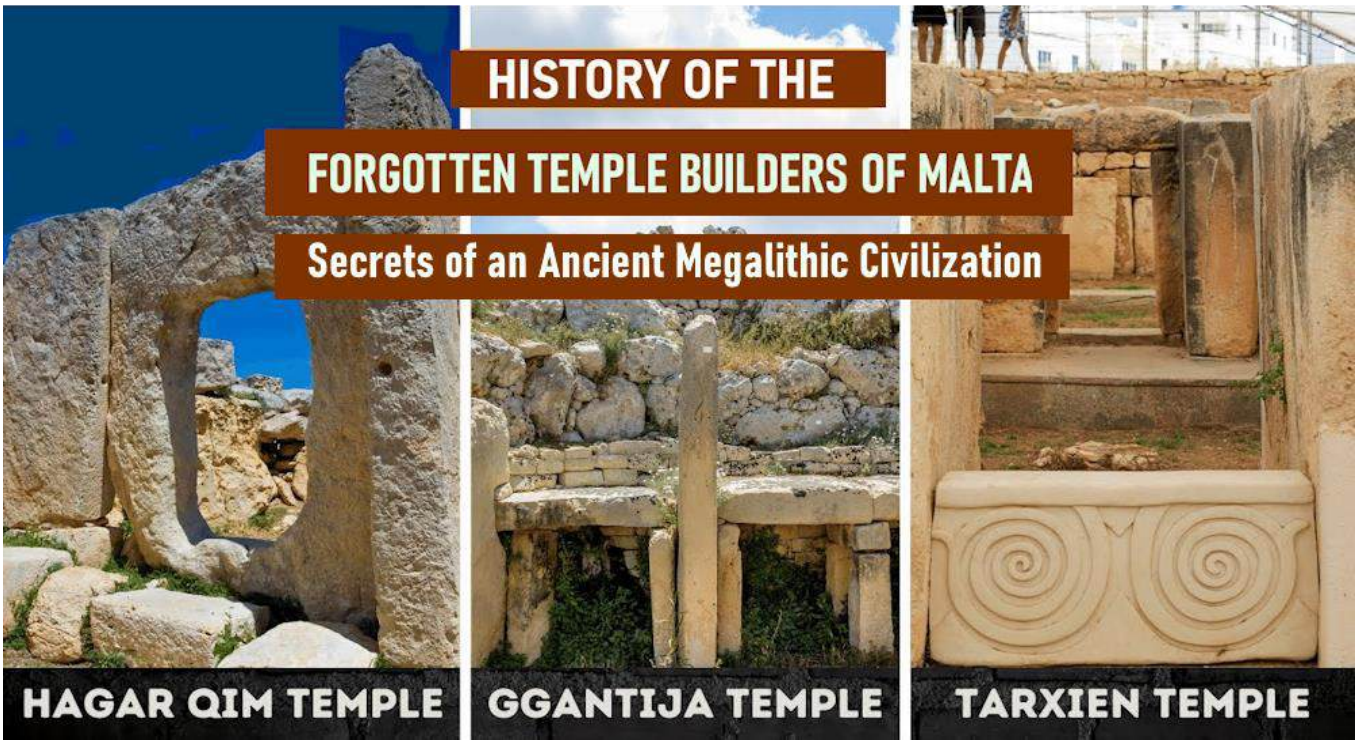
ORDER OF MALTA



MALTESE SENIOR CITIZENS
ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

42ND ANNIVERSARY

FRIDAY 23 MAY 2025



The small archipelago of Malta, nestled in the heart of the Mediterranean, is renowned for its rich history, vibrant culture, and sun-kissed beaches. Yet, beneath the surface of this idyllic island lies a mystery that has puzzled archaeologists for centuries: the Maltese temples, some of the world's oldest freestanding megalithic structures. Dating back as far as 3600 BCE, these temples predate both Stonehenge and the Great Pyramids of Giza by over a thousand years.

Who were the people that built these monumental structures? What purpose did they serve? And why, after flourishing for nearly 1,400 years, did this advanced civilization suddenly disappear without a trace?

As we delve into the enigmatic story of Malta's temple builders, we'll uncover incredible facts—and raise questions that may never be fully answered.

A CIVILIZATION LOST IN TIME: WHO WERE MALTA'S TEMPLE BUILDERS?

The earliest inhabitants of Malta arrived from nearby Sicily around 5000 BCE during the Neolithic period. These settlers were farmers and craftsmen, bringing with them knowledge of agriculture and animal domestication. Within a millennium, these simple agrarian people transformed into master builders, constructing temples that would stand for millennia.

We know very little about these early temple builders. They left behind no written records, no clear indication of their language or societal structure. Yet, they left monumental architecture that speaks volumes. Carbon-dating places the construction of these temples between 3600 BCE and 2500 BCE, well before the rise of more commonly recognized ancient civilizations.

Is it possible that this mysterious Maltese civilization influenced broader Neolithic cultures in Europe? Could their technology, knowledge, and architectural skills have spread beyond the islands, planting the seeds for other megalithic structures, such as Stonehenge?

THE MEGALITHIC TEMPLES: ARCHITECTURAL MARVELS THAT DEFY EXPLANATION

Malta is home to several major temple complexes, including Ħaġar Qim, Mnajdra, Ġgantija, Tarxien, Skorba, and Ta' Ħaġrat. Each site has its unique design, yet all follow a similar pattern of semicircular chambers, often referred to as apses, symmetrically arranged around a central axis. The entrances to these temples are grand, with massive trilithon doorways—two vertical stones supporting a horizontal lintel—some aligned with the movement of the sun.

One of the most remarkable aspects of these temples is their construction. Using simple tools—stone hammers, wooden levers, and flint knives—the builders quarried, transported, and assembled massive limestone blocks, some weighing up to 20 tons. The precision with which these stones were placed, often fitted together without mortar, suggests a level of architectural sophistication that seems incongruous with the Stone Age.

But how did these early builders achieve such precision? What tools or techniques did they use that have been lost to time? Could they have had knowledge that we have yet to rediscover?

QUARRYING AND TRANSPORTING STONES: AN ANCIENT MYSTERY

Malta's geological structure provided two types of limestone: the hard, gray Upper Coralline Limestone and the softer, pale Globigerina Limestone. Early builders quarried these stones using rudimentary tools, but it remains unclear how they managed to transport such heavy megaliths across miles of uneven terrain. The prevailing theory is that they used a system of rollers and stone balls, but the logistics of moving 20-ton slabs remains a topic of debate.

Some have speculated that the builders may have had access to advanced technology or knowledge lost over time. Could they have harnessed natural forces, such as magnetism or sound, to move these massive stones? This notion, while far-fetched to some, aligns with similar mysteries surrounding other ancient structures worldwide.

For more on this intriguing possibility, explore our article on Geological Instability and the Maltese Megalithic Structures: Are They Connected?

ALIGNMENTS AND CALENDARS: WERE MALTA'S TEMPLES BUILT TO TRACK THE STARS?

Several of Malta's temples, most notably Mnajdra, exhibit solar alignments. During the equinoxes, the rising sun perfectly illuminates the central axis of the temple. On the solstices, sunlight falls precisely on the temple's entrance stones. This suggests that the temples may have functioned as solar calendars, marking the changing seasons.

But why was this astronomical knowledge so important to the temple builders? Was it merely to track agricultural cycles, or did it serve a more sacred purpose? Some theorists suggest that the temples were built to align with celestial events, possibly as part of a broader belief system centered around the worship of the sun or the stars.

Is it possible that Malta's temple builders were part of a larger, interconnected network of ancient astronomers? Could their knowledge of the heavens have influenced the construction of other ancient structures around the Mediterranean?

THE HYPOGEUM AND THE 'SLEEPING LADY': WHAT LURKS BENEATH MALTA?

While the above-ground temples are impressive, Malta's most mysterious structure lies underground: the Ħal Saflieni Hypogeum. This subterranean complex, carved into the limestone over 1,000 years, consists of three levels of chambers and halls, including the "Holy of Holies," a sacred space where red ochre spirals and intricate carvings adorn the walls.

The most famous artifact found in the Hypogeum is the **Sleeping Lady**, a small figurine of a corpulent woman in repose. The figure has led to speculation that the temple builders worshipped a fertility goddess, possibly linked to the broader Neolithic mother goddess cult found throughout Europe.

But what was the real purpose of the Hypogeum? Was it a burial site, a temple, or something even more mysterious? Some have speculated that the underground chambers were used for initiation rituals or as places of spiritual transformation. Others believe the Hypogeum may have had acoustic properties, amplifying sound in ways that could alter consciousness. Could this be an ancient site of ritual sound manipulation?

THE ENIGMA OF THE CART RUTS: AN ANCIENT ROAD SYSTEM OR SOMETHING MORE?

Scattered across the Maltese landscape are the **cart ruts**, deep grooves carved into the limestone, often running in parallel pairs. These ruts, sometimes disappearing over cliffs or beneath the sea, have puzzled archaeologists for centuries. The conventional theory is that they were tracks worn into the stone by carts or sledges transporting heavy materials.

However, the cart ruts' complexity and odd placements—many leading nowhere—have given rise to alternative theories. Some suggest they were part of an ancient transportation system, while others believe they had a ceremonial or symbolic purpose. Could they represent something far more mysterious, perhaps even a forgotten technology or method of travel?

WHAT HAPPENED TO MALTA'S TEMPLE BUILDERS?

Around 2500 BCE, the temple-building culture of Malta vanished without a trace. The exact cause of their disappearance remains unknown, but several theories have been proposed, including climate change, disease, famine, or invasion. However, there is little archaeological evidence to definitively support any of these scenarios.

Could it be that the temple builders simply left the island, taking their knowledge and traditions with them? Did they assimilate into another culture, or did their society collapse from within due to internal strife? The sudden decline of such an advanced civilization remains one of Malta's greatest mysteries.

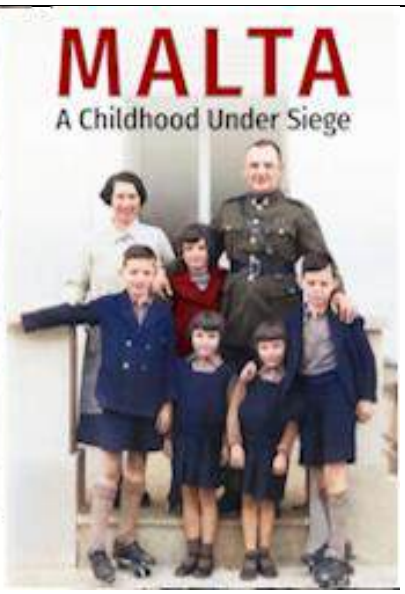
MALTA'S MEGALITHIC LEGACY: SACRED PLACES OF POWER

Today, the Maltese temples stand as silent witnesses to a long-lost civilization. They are a testament to the ingenuity and spiritual devotion of their builders, who, with simple tools and a profound understanding of their environment, created some of the most enduring monuments in human history.

But the temples also raise more questions than they answer. Why did these people invest so much time and energy into constructing these massive structures? What beliefs drove them to align their temples with the stars? And most intriguingly, what secrets do these ancient stones still hold?

As we continue to uncover the mysteries of Malta's temple builders, one thing is certain: their legacy endures, not only in the stones they left behind but in the questions that continue to captivate us.

LINDA PEEK



WILL YOU BE IN LONDON ON 2 JUNE?

Linda Peek will be launching her book "Malta: A Childhood Under Siege" at the Maltese High Commission (36-38 Piccadilly) on Monday 2 June at 4pm.

If you would like to attend this one hour Author Talk and book signing, followed by wine and cheese, please send an email to this address to secure your place: events.london@gov.mt

Photo ID will be required at the door for security reasons.

Godwin Gauci – President

Back in 1983, six members of the Maltese community got together and formed the Maltese Senior Citizens Association of South Australia Incorporated.

They formed the first committee and the members were,

President Mr. Andrew Coleiro
Secretary Mr. Frank Falzon
Treasurer Mr.Emmanuel Grima
Committee Members Mr.Paul Delia, Mr. Joe Barbara
Auditor Mr. Anthony Buhagiar.

There have been several presidents over the last 42 years, but sadly the last one, Mr. Frank Grima has passed away only months ago and I, Godwin Gauci, have been elected President at the last AGM to fill in his shoes.

Currently, the club meets every Friday at the Kilburn Community Hall at 49 LeHunt Street, Kilburn in South Australia. Every week the seniors meet to socialize in playing cards, bingo, billiards, carpet bowls and much more. The club provides various lunches for the members and friends such as Raviolis, Chicken and Chips with salad and various Bread rolls with special fillings for just three dollars ($3.00) per person, very cheap. We also put on Free lunches and barbecues on special days, including Mother's Day, Father's Day, Christmas time.

To celebrate the special day of the **42nd Anniversary** of the club we are organising a Free Lunch for the members, dining out at a restaurant.

Other functions include free bus trips to historic towns like Hahndorf in the Adelaide Hills, built in 19th Century and to wineries in the region of the Barossa Valley. The club had a few hundred members when it started, but as time went on the members got older or passed away the numbers has slowly diminished, but the club is still very active and going forward and strong. We invite everyone to join and support our club to stay strong.

As President of this club and on behalf of the committee, I welcome the Maltese Citizens to come on a Friday and have a look around, meet other Maltese people and enjoy a cuppa and some traditional Maltese Pastizzis.

Celebrate the hard work of heritage with the Lieutenant Governor's Ontario Heritage Awards

CELEBRATE THE HARD WORK OF HERITAGE WITH THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR'S ONTARIO HERITAGE AWARDS

TORONTO — Today, the Ontario Heritage Trust and the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario are celebrating the 2024 recipients of the Lieutenant Governor's Ontario Heritage Awards. These annual juried awards, administered by the Trust, recognize people's outstanding achievements across a variety of pursuits in preserving and promoting Ontario's heritage.

There are nine projects and eight individual recipients of the 2024 Lieutenant Governor's Ontario Heritage Awards. The recipients were recognized at a private ceremony during the afternoon of April 25 at the Legislative Building in Toronto, presided over by the Honourable Edith Dumont, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, and John Ecker, Chair of the Board of Directors of the Ontario Heritage Trust. One of the institutions that received the award was-

The Maltese-Canadian Museum, Toronto

The Maltese-Canadian Museum in Toronto's Junction neighbourhood is run by a volunteer group dedicated to the preservation of the cultural and material heritage of the Maltese diaspora and the memories that shaped the identity of the neighbourhood. Also known as Little Malta or Malta Village, this area had a significant increase in Maltese immigration after both world wars and is still the largest Maltese community in Canada. As the community evolves and new generations emerge, local heritage and traditions are at risk of being lost. Their body of work curating exhibitions, displays, events and a recently launched large-scale digitization project with the Magna Żmien Foundation makes them inspiring leaders in their community.

The Lieutenant Governor's Ontario Heritage Award

95 years ago St. Paul the Apostle Church was built in Toronto. A site of rich history for the Maltese-Canadian community and the Maltese-Canadian Museum's home

ABOUT THE ONTARIO HERITAGE TRUST

The Ontario Heritage Trust (the Trust) is an agency of the Government of Ontario. The Trust conserves, interprets and shares Ontario's heritage. The Trust conserves provincially significant cultural and natural heritage, interprets Ontario's history, celebrates its diversity and educates Ontarians of its importance in our society. The Trust envisions an Ontario where we conserve, value and share the places and landscapes, histories, traditions and stories that embody our heritage, now and for future generations.

MALTESE-CANADIAN MUSEUM

The curator since the Museum's opening in 2017 has been Richard S. Cumbo, O.S.J., who is accompanied by a team of dedicated volunteers: Rose Cassar, Marthese Fenech, Debbie Lightfoot, Carmen Galea, Mani Mifsud, Mary Zarb, Michael Gouveia, and the most recent additions Niġel Klemenčič-Puglisevich and Kealey Kennedy. Niġel is a Maltese-Canadian student going for his MA Public History at the History Department - Western University. He brings years of experience in museums and archaeology, including from his time as a Collections Manager at the Museum of Classical Antiquities at the University of Ottawa. His interests are mostly in medieval Islamic Malta and the consequences of British colonialism. He received his BA History and Classics from Carleton University in 2022. Niġel is joined by Kealey, an incoming student of the MA Public History programme at Western with a keen interest in museums, cemeteries, and music history. She received her BMus in Music with a Minor in Medieval & Early Modern Studies from Carleton University also in 2022. Niġel and Kealey have both been working on developing a digital exhibit in collaborative effort with the Maltese-Canadian Museum and Public History at Western University using ArcGIS to document Maltese immigration to Canada.

The Maltese-Canadian Museum group

The Museum Committee has had four chairpersons since its opening on 29 January 2017: Father Manuel Parnis (MSSP, 2017-2019), Father Mario Micallef (MSSP, 2019-2022), Father Ivano Burdian (MSSP, 2022-Feb. 2023), and now Father Roy Farrell (Feb. 2023-present). The collection of the Museum was originally founded by Father Raymond Falzon, OFM in the 1980s. The Maltese-Canadian Museum, Toronto

ANZAC DAY COMMEMORATIVE ACTIVITIES 2025

The Australian High Commission in Malta

2025 marks 110 years since the Gallipoli Campaign. The Australian High Commission marked the significance of this anniversary through a series of commemorative activities and events: an Anzac Day Commemorative Service at the Commonwealth War Graves cemetery in Pieta, and a video and other posts for the High Commission's social media highlighting the historic links between ANZACs and Malta. The High Commissioner was also invited to participate in an interview on Maltese TV show "Ġimgħa b'Ġimgħa" to share information about Anzac Day.

This was in addition to the display of a photo exhibition at Fort St Elmo, Valletta in November 2024 for Remembrance Weekend: "A Camera on Gallipoli". This exhibition captures the experience of the lives of ANZACs through the camera of soldier and surgeon, Sir Charles Ryan.

Anzac Day Service

Australian High Commissioner, H.E. Matt Skelly, and Deputy Head of Mission, New Zealand Embassy to Spain with accreditation to Malta, Mr Blake Van Velden, were honoured to be joined by Acting President of Malta, the Hon Mr Anglu Farrugia; Acting Speaker of the House, the Hon Michael Farrugia MP; and members of the Diplomatic Corps, Maltese and Australian communities, to commemorate Anzac Day at an annual ceremony at Pieta Military cemetery Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

Anzac Day is one of Australia's most significant days of national commemoration —a time for all Australians to recognise the more than 1.5 million service men and women who have served our country in all conflicts, wars and peacekeeping operations. It's also a time to remember the over 103,000 Australians who sacrificed their lives in our country's name. This day also acknowledges the role of Malta, the 'Nurse of the Mediterranean, in the care of our sick and wounded Anzacs in 1915.

H.E. Matt Skelly (below left image) and Mr Blake Van Velden (below centre image) delivered commemorative addresses representing Australia and New Zealand. Ambassador for the Republic of Türkiye, H.E. Mr Erdeniz **Ş**en, delivered a reading of the 'Tribute to Anzacs Who Died at Gallipoli' attributed to Turkish President Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, First President of the Republic of Türkiye, and Ms Diana Sillato, an Australian Maltese PhD Student, read 'In Flanders Fields' by Lt. Col. John McCrae, 1915 (below right image).

This year, H.E. Matt Skelly presented the Armed Forces of Malta (AFM) with a commemorative bugle on behalf of the Australian High Commission and Australian Army Band Corps in recognition of their continued support of Anzac Day.

If you would like to see a copy of the Order of Service, please visit the Australian High Commission Malta website at malta.embassy.gov.au/files/mlta/Order of Service - Anzac Day 2025.pdf

Anzac Day Video- in the footsteps of Malta's Anzacs

To mark Anzac Day and the start of Commonwealth War Graves Commission War Graves Week, the Australian High Commission has produced a video for social media to highlight the strong historical military ties between Australia and Malta.

H.E. Matt Skelly was joined by Diana Sillato, whose research focuses on the ANZAC experience in Malta, entitled 'From Gallipoli to Malta: A Medical, Social and Cultural History of the Anzacs'. This video features a tour of a few locations key to the ANZAC legacy in Malta, where the history of the ANZACs can still be felt today. These locations include St Edward's College, Birgu, formerly Cottonera Hospital, Valletta Harbour, Pieta Military Cemetery and Australia Hall. Please visit the Australian High Commission Facebook page to watch the video or follow this link https://www.facebook.com/share/v/15RNPEbsUP/

We give thanks to St Edward's College, Malta and the Commonwealth War Graves Commission for participating in this video, and to the Australian War Memorial for the provision of resources.

TV Interview

H.E. Matt Skelly participated in an interview about Anzac Day on Maltese TV show Ġimgħa b'Ġimgħa, alongside Deputy Head of Mission, New Zealand Embassy Spain, Mr Blake Van Velden, Australian Maltese PhD student Ms Diana Sillato, and President of the GLARAC Association Malta, Mr Saviour Azzopardi.

The Australian High Commission was pleased to share information on the Anzac Day service here in Malta and highlight the strong historical military ties between our two nations. This can be viewed at Ġimgħa b'Ġimgħa - 23/04/2025 - NET On Demand.

We give thanks to the host, Josef Bonello, and TV producer Lorraine Sultana for this opportunity.

Social Media

In the week before Anzac Day, the Australian High Commission shared a short series of ANZAC stories that highlight a range of shared historical military connections between Malta and Australia. These stories included memoirs for soldiers, including Private Charles Emanuel Bonavia (below left image) - one of the Maltese soldiers serving with front line Australian units at Gallipoli - and Gordon Charles Naley (below right image) from the Madra Balae Station in Western Australia, who received medical treatment in Malta.

They also feature information on famous sites linked to the ANZAC history in Malta and Australia, like the wrecked remains of SS Maheno on Fraser Island in Queensland, Australia. To view this full series, please visit the Australian High Commission Malta Facebook Page Facebook.

Gallipoli Exhibition

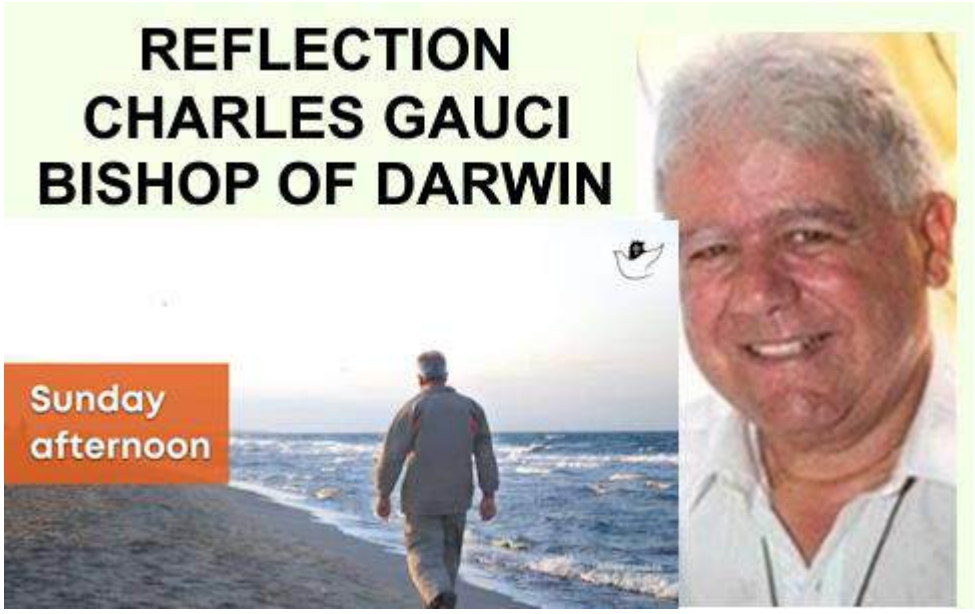
On Remembrance Weekend in 2024, the Australian High Commission, in collaboration with Heritage Malta, exhibited 'A Camera on Gallipoli' at Fort St. Elmo & The National War Museum. This exhibition was displayed for a month-long period as part of the official ministerial launch of Malta Tourism Authority's strategy to promote military tourism in Malta.

'A Camera on Gallipoli' showcased a unique series of candid photographs taken by Senior Medical Officer Sir Charles Ryan. Ryan's photographs capture the everyday life of the ANZACs during the 1915 Gallipoli Campaign.

Over 2300 tickets were disseminated to people visiting Fort St Elmo that weekend, which helped raise awareness of the ANZACs in advance of the 110th anniversary of the Gallipoli Campaign.

All are welcome to attend the annual Anzac service in Malta organised by the Australian High Commission. Information for future services will be provided on the Australian High Commission website Home.

Lest We Forget.



Last Sunday afternoon, I went for a walk around Sydney Harbour during a break at the Bishops' Conference.

I have very fond memories of Sunday afternoon walks with my family as a boy in Malta. We had a tradition of enjoying a family roast lunch together. We loved hearing stories about our parents' childhood experiences, including what they went through during World War II, which they endured with many challenges as young people.It was a way of bonding with them, as well as with our grandparents.

We didn't have a car. After lunch, we almost always went for a walk. We would catch a bus to the outskirts of the city and then walk in the countryside. Or we would go to one of the public gardens and run around playing.

After returning home, we would watch a Disneyland program while eating supper before going to bed.

I have such great memories of those times. How blessed my siblings and I were to have had that time together as a family, enjoying simple fun and shared moments!

As I walked, I was taken back to those experiences and how refreshing they still are, even now.

I reflect on how much more complex life can be for families today.

We cannot turn back the clock. However, we need to find contemporary ways for families to spend time together and help young people understand where they come from.

For those whose family life has not always been such a positive experience, we, as Church and community, need to find ways to support them in still growing in their sense of self and identity...

YOUNG MEDITERRANEAN PEOPLE GATHER IN MALTA TO REFLECT ON WOMEN IN THE MEDITERRANEAN, PEACE AND HOPE

NewsPress Releases

Photo: Archdiocese of Malta

Young people from 14 Mediterranean countries came together in Malta for four days as part of the MED25 – Bel Espoir project, a youth initiative inspired by Pope Francis' call to view the Mediterranean not as a barrier, but as a bridge of dialogue, encounter and peace.

The activities in Malta launched the third stage of the MED25 project, centred on the theme "Women in the Mediterranean". During their time in Malta, the participants explored the island's rich cultural and spiritual identity through visits to sacred sites such as the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Mellieħa, St John's Co-Cathedral, and the prehistoric temples of Ħaġar Qim and Mnajdra. These encounters offered insight into how art, sacred space and symbolism have shaped Maltese culture and broader Mediterranean religious heritage.

The participants are from Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt, Lebanon, Palestine, Bosnia, Romania, Syria, Georgia, France, Spain, Italy and Malta.

The young people also participated in a Mass celebrated by Bishop Joseph Galea-Curmi, where they read bidding prayers in their own languages. Recognising each of their unique stories of resilience and witness, Bishop Galea-Curmi described them as **"living pages of the Gospel that is still being written"**.

The highlight of the visit was a national conference titled *Women in the Mediterranean*, organised by MED25 Malta and MELA, which addressed the evolving role of women in the region, particularly in the context of migration, conflict and cultural transformation.

The keynote speakers were: Prof. Daniela Debono, who used real-life stories and ethnographic research to explore the humanitarian and political dimensions of Mediterranean migration; Ms

Marcelle Bugre Zanya, who examined identity struggles shaped by colonial legacies and the internal and external pressures on women; and Dr Maria Brown, who analysed the paradox of silence and silencing, addressed domestic violence, and advocated for creativity as a pathway to healing.

Photo: Archdiocese of Malta

In their addresses to the *Women in the Mediterranean* conference, Archbishop Charles Scicluna and President Myriam Spiteri Debono both underscored the urgent need for unity, dignity and hope in the Mediterranean region.

Archbishop Scicluna reflected on Malta's ancient heritage, noting that its name evokes both 'a safe haven' and 'the island of honey'—powerful symbols of the Maltese spirit, marked by refuge and hospitality, resilience and warmth. He highlighted how the shrines, churches and statues dedicated to Our Lady across Malta continue to testify to the enduring power of the feminine presence as a bridge to the divine.

President Spiteri Debono described the Mediterranean as both a cradle of civilisation and a site of suffering, particularly for women. She praised the leadership of women in fields like education and peacebuilding, while raising concerns over rising domestic violence and feminicide. She urged that lived experience be combined with academic insight to build a more inclusive and compassionate future for women.

During the conference, the NGO Inizjamed brought a literary dimension to the event through poetry readings by Maltese women poets. This contribution revitalised artistic expression in Malta, shedding light on the diverse voices that exist in Malta and the Mediterranean.

Photo: Archdiocese of Malta

The conference continued with small group sessions, giving all participants the chance to share their personal experiences on the selected themes. This exercise in listening and dialogue will be carried forward by **MELA**, a project of the Episcopal Delegate for Evangelisation in collaboration with the Coordinator of the Diocesan Presence in the Mediterranean, with the aim of creating spaces that foster a culture of encounter, fraternity and reconciliation in the service of peace.

The conference concluded with a reception that provided international participants the opportunity to connect and engage in conversation with local attendees.

The *Women in the Mediterranean* conference, which was held at the Mediterranean Conference Centre, was organised by MED25 in Malta in collaboration with MELA.

Photo: Archdiocese of Malta

Youths also took part in an interfaith dialogue at the Mariam Al-Batool Mosque in Paola with Imam Mohammed Elsadi, focusing on the need for peace and mutual understanding among diverse cultures and faiths across the region.

Malta was just one of several stops the young participants will make over eight months as the ship Bel Espoir journeys across the Mediterranean. The group now sails to Crete in Greece, continuing their voyage to foster peace, unity, encounter and hope, inspired by Pope Francis's vision for the region.

Jake William Brimmer (born 3 April 1998)

is an Australian/Maltese soccer player who plays as a central midfielder for A-League club Auckland FC. Brimmer is of Maltese and Scottish ancestry.

Jake Brimmer, the Auckland midfielder, has played in the vast majority of the team's Isuzu UTE A-League games in 2024/2025, making 24 appearances overall and accumulating 1,462 minutes of playing time. He has been selected in the starting XI in 18 of these appearances across their 25 fixtures and entered as a substitute on six occasions.

Brimmer last featured in an Isuzu UTE A-League game on April 27, playing 90 minutes for Auckland against Perth Glory in a 1-0 success. The midfielder has scored three Isuzu UTE A-League goals this season. He has been shown two yellow cards.

Brimmer was last on target in the league in the 4-1 win against Central Coast Mariners on December 28, netting in the 31st minute. He opened his account for the campaign against Wellington Phoenix on November 2, scoring twice during a 2-0 victory.

Auckland are on the road at Western United on May 3 the next time they are in Isuzu UTE A-League action.

- Brimmer played 29 Isuzu UTE A-League games last season for Melbourne Victory and created four assists.
- Brimmer moved to Auckland in June 2024 from Perth Glory, for whom he made 60 league appearances in total, providing three assists.

Teams

- Auckland FC (25/06/2024 - ongoing)
- A-Leagues All Stars (20/05/2022 - 24/05/2022)
- Melbourne Victory FC (21/11/2020 - 30/06/2024)
- Perth Glory FC Youth (16/12/2017 - 12/04/2019)
- Perth Glory FC (31/07/2017 - 20/11/2020)
- Liverpool Under 23 (01/01/2017 - 30/06/2017)
- Australia Under 19 (01/01/2016 - 15/10/2018)
- Liverpool FC (08/02/2015 - 08/02/2015)
- Liverpool FC Under 18 Academy (08/02/2015 - 30/06/2017)
- Australia Under 17 (01/01/2015 - 31/10/2015)

Mackay Maltese Club Inc.
Queensland

Our club aims to foster Maltese cultural awareness among the descendants of Maltese immigrants in Mackay & District.
President - Doris Gauci
Vice President - Peter Zahra
Treasurer - Lyn Zahra
Secretary - Veronica Gauci
0419 027 554
Veronica.gauci@bigpond.com

Lonnie Borg

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You Won't Believe the Miraculous Experience of the Swiss Guard Who Stood Before Pope Francis' Coffin

As thousands of mourners filed solemnly into St. Peter's Basilica to pay their last respects to Pope Francis, a quiet and deeply personal miracle unfolded—one that only a few witnessed but has since left many in awe.

Among the elite Swiss Guards, tasked with the solemn duty of standing vigil by the Pope's coffin, was Luca Meier, a young guard from Lucerne. Having served for five years, Luca was no stranger to ceremonial duties. But what happened during his shift beside the late Holy Father's remains was unlike anything he had ever experienced.

As Luca stood silently at attention, his thoughts were far from the crowd. Privately, he had been struggling with his faith. Though raised Catholic, recent personal trials—his mother's illness, the pressure of military life, and spiritual dryness—had left him feeling distant from God.

Standing beside Pope Francis' simple wooden coffin, Luca found himself praying silently:

"If You're real, Lord... if You're really here, show me. I need to know."

Just minutes later, as the sunlight filtered through the high stained-glass windows, Luca said he suddenly felt an overwhelming warmth and peace. He described it as something that "entered not just the room, but my heart." For a few seconds, time felt suspended.

The scent of frankincense, though not currently in use, briefly filled the air. Then, most startling of all, Luca claims he heard, deep within his soul, the words:

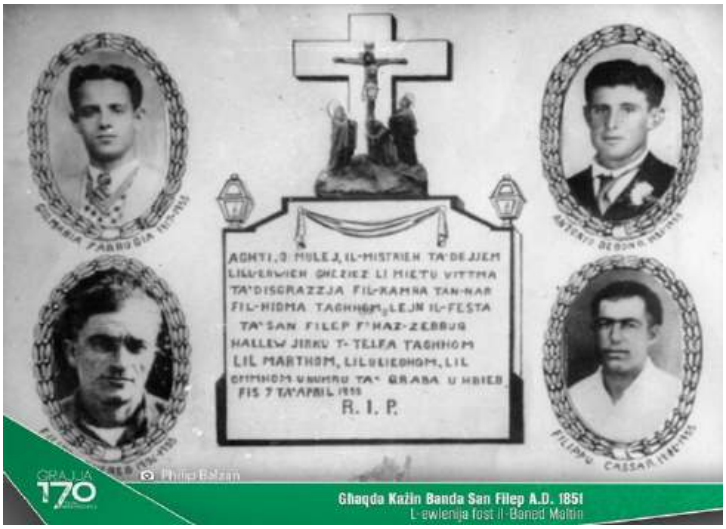
"Do not be afraid. I am with you always."

Luca did not tell anyone at first. He didn't want to create a spectacle. But later, in the presence of a Vatican chaplain, he shared his story. The priest gently told him that Pope Francis, even in death, may have continued his mission of drawing hearts back to Christ.

The experience rekindled Luca's faith. He now attends daily Mass, has reconciled with God through Confession, and has found peace amid his personal struggles.

Whether one sees this moment as miraculous or deeply spiritual, one thing is certain: even in death, Pope Francis continues to inspire faith. A life poured out in service to Christ echoes far beyond the grave.

THE FIREWORKS FACTORY OF ZEBBUG EXPLODED IN 1955



Facebook

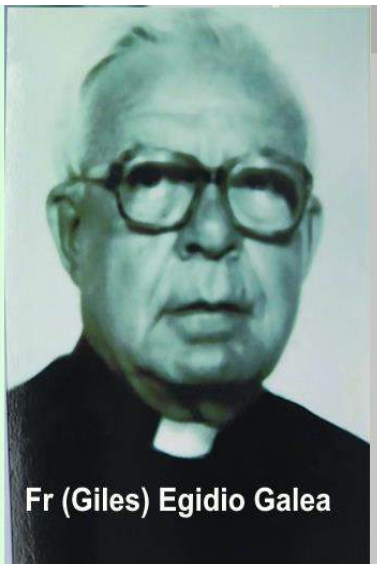
On Maundy Thursday 68 years ago, on 7 April 1955, an explosion occurred in the San Filep Fire Hall in the Kandlora area, Zebbuġ in the afternoon.

The victims were Philip Cassar (Ta Simillu, 37 years old), Anthony Debono (Tal-Paradajs, 29 years old), John Mary Farrugia (il-Bibillu, 37 years old), and Philip Xuereb (ta Lilel, 52 years old), four fire craftsmen members of the Musical Society, Banda San Philep Club. While Farrugia and Debono died immediately and were taken out from under the crash barely recognizable, Cassar and Xuereb died the next day in San Luqa hospital.

Two days after this tragedy, on Easter Saturday, April 9, 1955, their funeral took place. The Banda San Philep accompanied them to the grave in the cemetery of the Sacred Heart, Zebbuġ. As a sign of respect that year the feast of Saint Philip had no fireworks, no scaffolding and no band. Several societies from other villages accompanied with the standards.

In 2005 there was also a procession to their grave in the cemetery of the Heart of Jesus.

The relatives and neighbours of the victims took part in it together with many members and officials of the Association Kazin Banda San Filep. The memory of this tragedy is still alive among the pproplr of Zebbug to this day!



Proud of our Maltese Achievers

Fr (Giles) Egidio Galea was awarded the 'Member of the British Empire' civil medal for helping Jewish and escaped Allied POWs evade Nazi capture or persecution. Under the leadership of the indomitable Irish Mgr Hugh O'Flaherty, Fr Galea, along with other Maltese priests, hid these POWs within the Vatican and in apartments in the environs, constantly moving them from one location to another to avoid detection during the German occupation of Rome between September 10, 1943 and June 4, 1944. Surmounted by a crown, the cross features the profiles of the British monarch in a medallion encircled by the motto 'For God and the Empire'.

Who is Adrian Portelli? Meet the serial Block buyer and founder of LMCT+

The Block 2024 is officially done and dusted us and while we may have been thrown off by a 'mystery buyer' during the auctions – we now know Adrian Portelli **bought all five houses**.

The man known colloquially as "Lambo Guy" earned himself the moniker after turning up at auction day in 2022 in a yellow Lamborghini, no less.

In 2023, he splashed out a whopping $12.4 million, securing himself three out of the five Block houses on Charming Street. He later said the price was worth it for "exposure and marketing".

Now, as he faces nine charges over unlawful lottery allegations, here's everything you need to know about the Aussie billionaire.

How did Adrian Portelli start?

Adrian is a Melbourne entrepreneur who launched the rewards company LMCT+ in 2018.

The company offers members prestige prizes, such as luxury homes, cars and cash via monthly prize draws using a legal loophole and has customers who pay a monthly subscription.

But while his business has been a staggering success, it's come at a cost, too – Adrian revealed in a March 2024 social media post that he'd spent "eight years and $100 million" on building a brand that was able to "build trust in the public". He added that the business had "a database in the millions".

"Our pixels, our social media, are so warm that we can just throw money at it and it will convert," Adrian revealed. "We have access to features with these social media platforms and teams that you would not even know exist.

"So, for anyone that thinks they are just going to wake up one day and 'hey, I have a good idea, I am going to start a new giveaway company', guys, it did not happen overnight."

Adrian also comes from humble beginnings as the son of Maltese immigrants.

He dropped out of uni to work with his father at his truck repair business, where he came to the conclusion that he didn't love manual labour and later moved to Los Angeles to launch a chauffeur service for celebrities.

"I'm always humble because where I got to wasn't easy," he told the *Australian Financial Review* in October 2023. "I live a very basic life. I'm just into cars."

How did Adrian Portelli become wealthy?

Subscribers pay $20, $50 or $100 per month to enter raffles to win prizes such as homes and luxury cars. In 2022, Adrian snapped up **House Three** on *The Block,* which he later raffled off through LMCT. Talking about the early days of LMCT in his *Australian Financial Review* interview, Adrian said he was "very, very private" in the first few years of the business.

"My social media was all on private, never really posted much," he said. "Then I made an advert with my face on it, and people really opened up. They were drawn towards having a face behind the brand, and I just had to suck it up.

"I'm always humble because where I got to wasn't easy ... Every day, I'd just wake up with the thought of being successful. I was just consumed by it," he added.

"I was just a bit of a loner, mate, and used to motivate myself and just keep pushing."

(Credit: Instagram)

In December 2024, Adrian was hit with charges over allegations he had been running an illegal lottery. He faces nine charges of personally conducting or assisting in the conduct of an unlawful lottery, and his company, Xclusive Tech Pty Ltd, which operates under the brand LMCT+, has been charged with ten similar counts.

Responding to the charges, Adrian wrote in a now-deleted Instagram post, "Let's talk facts and disclose that my business generates millions and millions of dollars in sales for Australian

businesses both big and small and pass those savings onto Aussie families to help alleviate the cost of living crisis."

"I know the tall poppy phrase gets thrown around in Australia often, and I hate mentioning it because I don't want to believe it, but at what point in this country are we going to celebrate others' success and use it to motivate our upcoming generation, rather than frowning upon it?"

His first mention is scheduled for January 15 in the South Australian Magistrates Court.

How much money is Adrian Portelli worth?

In November 2023, Adrian was placed seventh on the Financial Review Young Rich List published in *AFR Magazine*, with the publication placing his net worth at $1 billion.

In 2024, Adrian was listed among 158 other billionaires in Australia on Richest240 in The Australian's *The List,* with the publication placing his net worth at $1.30 billion.

A Brief History of the Order of St John in Australia

The Order of St John of Jerusalem, Knights Hospitaller, has pursued its mission of aiding the sick, the poor, and the vulnerable for nearly a thousand years. Originally established as the Hospice of Jerusalem in 1048, the Order also adopted a military role to provide protection during turbulent times. Over the centuries, it relocated from the Holy Land to the island of Rhodes in the 14th century, and then to Malta, where it remained for centuries.

In 1964, a new constitution was adopted to align the Order's values with the modern world. While retaining its centuries-old traditions, such as the red mantle and the white eight-pointed Maltese Cross, the Order moved away from its military roots to focus on charitable service. This transformation included the admission of women and a renewed emphasis on humanitarian work.

In 1969, the Grand Prior of Malta commissioned the establishment of a Commandery in Brisbane, Queensland. Chevalier Roland Podesta was appointed the first Commander. The initial group of Australian Knights travelled to Malta for their investiture, among them Sir Hubert Opperman, former Australian High Commissioner to Malta, and the Hon. Frank Forde, former caretaker Prime Minister of Australia. The Commandery was elevated to a Priory in 1974.

By 1977, Victoria also had a Priory and two Commanderies. That year, Australia was designated a Grand Priory, with Roland Podesta becoming the first Grand Prior. Commanderies were subsequently established in Canberra, Sydney, and Adelaide, with Sydney achieving Priory status in 1983 and Adelaide in 1992.

Throughout the 1980s, the Order maintained active Priories in several countries, including England, Belgium, Canada, and Australia. However, administrative disagreements led to a separation, with England eventually operating independently from the Malta-based administration. Australia maintained cordial relations with England until 2010 when Australasia rejoined OSJ Malta. The Order continued to grow in Australia, particularly in Victoria, South Australia, Tasmania and New South Wales under the Maltese Magisterium.

More about the development in the next article.

Chevalier Peter Summers OAM CJSJ Grand Priory IT Manager

Le Chevalier Editor Priory envoy.

RHUBARB AND APPLE SPICE CAKE

LINDA PEEK

This recipe was given to me by my friend Fiona.

She has made it many times and had success with several variations, such as using pears poached in red wine – drained and cut into chunks – instead of the apples. When she made it for our French group lunch she used poached quinces instead of apples and it was delicious. So as I had some poached quinces in the freezer which needed using up that's what I did. Feel free to try other combinations.

Ingridients

1 tea bag (English breakfast or similar)
3 Tbs boiling water
A generous half cup of raisins or sultanas
2 cups caster sugar
3 eggs
1 cup vegetable oil
2 tsp vanilla essence
300g plain flour (2 and 2/3 cups)
1½ tsp baking powder
½ tsp salt
1 tsp cinnamon
¼ tsp each cloves, nutmeg and mace
4-5 stalks of fresh rhubarb, cut into 2cm lengths
2 large apples, peeled, cored and sliced
1 cup walnuts or pecans, coarsely chopped

To serve:

Rhubarb compote (optional) Whipped cream, thick pouring cream or sour cream (shown in photo)

In a small bowl, pour boiling water over tea bag, press to release the flavour, then remove the tea bag. Add the raisins, mix to cover, then leave for half an hour. Drain raisins, discarding the liquid.

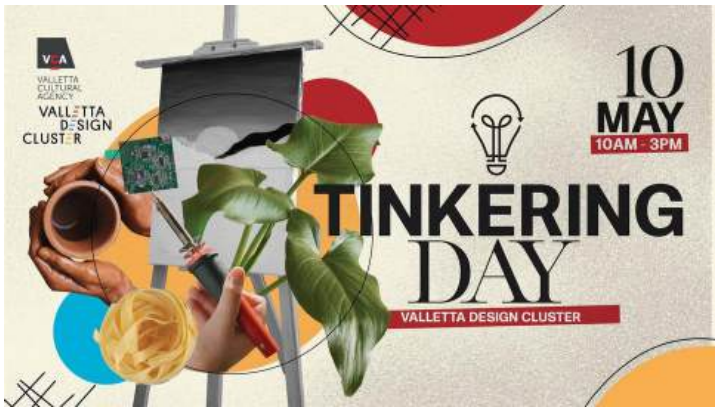
Meanwhile preheat oven to 160°C. Grease a 25cm springform pan and line with baking paper. Place eggs and sugar in an electric mixer and whisk until thick and pale. Add the oil and vanilla essence and mix well for a minute or two. Place a sieve over the bowl then measure the flour, salt and spices and add them to the mixture through the sieve. Fold in the rhubarb, apple and nuts. Make sure there are no pockets of flour. The mixture will be quite stiff.Bake for an hour and 3/4 or until golden brown and firm on top. Ovens vary so start checking after an hour and a half. Cool in the tin for half an hour then remove. Store in an airtight tin when cold.

The cake should have a crunchy top and a chewy centre and improves after a day or two of storage.Serve with rhubarb compote and cream as a dessert.

Serves 12

Variations: I didn't have any mace, so I added more cinnamon. Use poached pears or quinces in red wine instead of the apples.

Send any questions or feedback for this article via the Café Cat website.



Tinkering Day is this Saturday!

We're just days away from Tinkering Day – happening this **Saturday 10 May** at the **Valletta Design Cluster** – and you won't want to miss it!

VCA VALLETTA CULTURAL AGENCY

This is your final call to join a day full of **creativity, problem-solving, and community spirit**, inspired by the global Maker Movement.

What to expect: Live demos & DIY activities Our Repair Café.

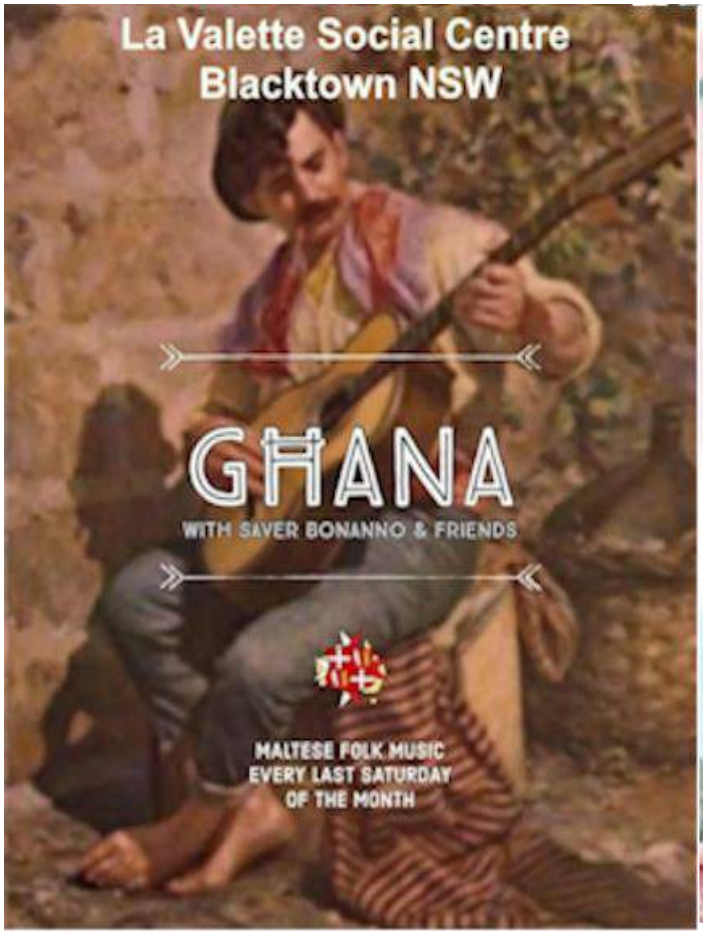
Last chance to register for the **3D Design Competition**Tinkering fun for all ages – from kids to seasoned makers **Where:** Valletta Design Cluster **When:** Saturday 10 May, from 10am - 3pm. **It's free, fun, and full of hands-on experiences.** Let's make, fix, and create – together.

See you on Saturday!

KAPPA VISION FACEBOOK PAGE

Anġlu has lived here for over 80 years. He has seen a lot throughout his life - but we hope he doesn't take too much notice of how the village he dearly loved - Żabbar - has grown and is forever changing. Today a sprawling city, Żabbar is yet another locality in Malta where everywhere you look, construction work, trucks, noise and dust dominate everyday life.

In the meantime, however, Kappa Vision enjoyed a chat with Anġlu on a warm spring afternoon in his favourite alley. He offered some of his ful - the Maltese people's favourite bean. They're everywhere too, just like the construction work. But these are seasonal and will end before the summer. Is there an end to all this construction?



A photograph of the Micallef family from Naxxar who emigrated to Australia in 1959.
this photo was featured in the "Bullettin Emigranti" published by the Department of Information together with the Emigration Office (November 1959)
Ritratt tal-familja Micallef minn Naxxar li kienu emigraw lejn l-Awstralja fl-1959.
Dan ir-ritratt deher fil-"Bullettin Emigranti" li kien maħruġ mid-Dipartiment tal-Informazzjoni flimkien mal-Uffiċċju tal-Emigrazzjoni (Novembru 1959).

Set on the Xagħra plateau, Ġgantija stands as a powerful symbol of ancient achievement, e mbodying the creative and technical genius of its Neolithic builders.
On the 23rd of May, Heritage Malta invites you to experience this UNESCO World Heritage Site at sundown, with exclusive after-hours access and a guided tour.
After the tour, guests are invited to relax and enjoy light refreshments while taking in panoramic views of this unique prehistoric site at last light.
This will also be the perfect opportunity to chat with us, ask questions, and delve further into the rich history of this Neolithic monument.
Tours will be held in both Maltese and English and will start at 6.30pm

THIS MALTESE JOURNAL IS SO POPULAR AND READ AND RESPECTED BY SO MANY THOUSANDS OF MALTESE LIVING ABROAD BECAUSE IT ONLY HIGHLIGHTS THE MALTESE CULTURE, HISTORY AND HERITAGE AND IT IS NON-POLITICAL. IT IS A TRUE FRIEND OF EVERYONE, IT IS OF A VERY HIGH STANDARD AND NEVER CRITICISES ANYONE.
IT IS THE 0NLY JOURNAL FOR MALTESE LIVING ABROAD.
KEEP IT UP
Charles Sammut – Queensland, Australia

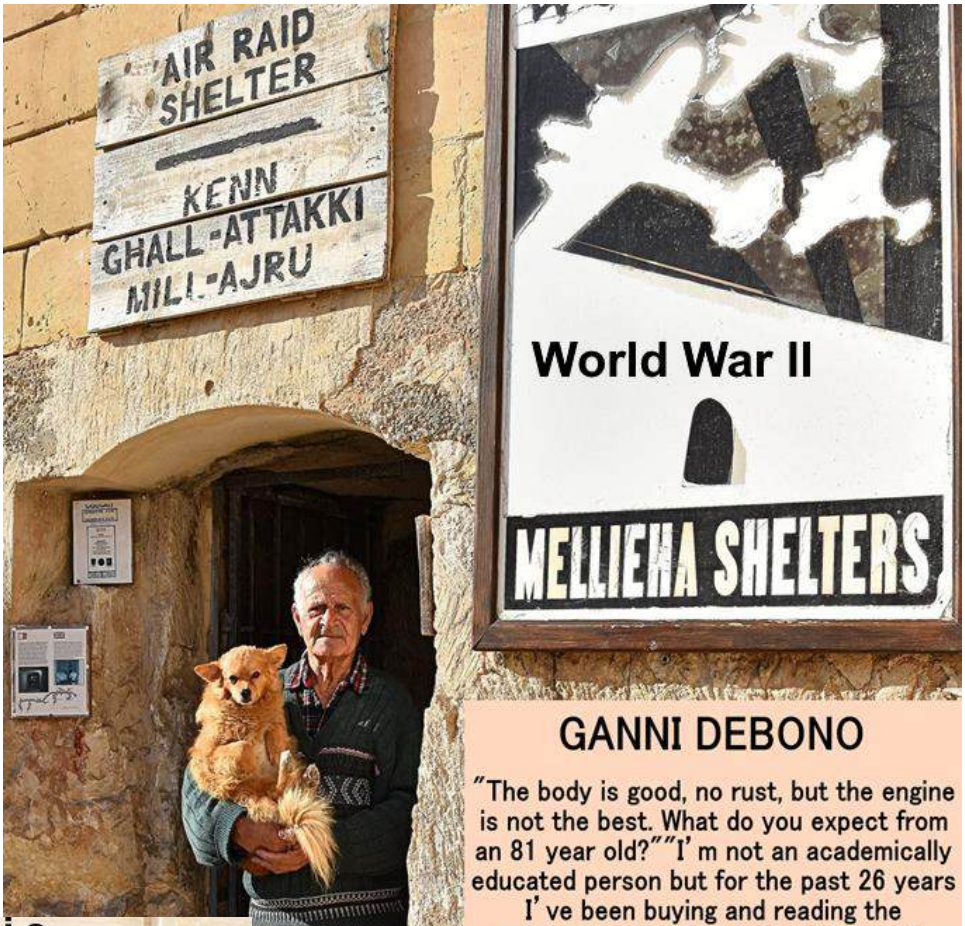
CARMEN THE MALTESE

Hello to my beautiful fans,
I'm reaching out with a very heavy heart to share some difficult news. Due to a dear loved one being terminally ill, I must postpone my upcoming shows. This decision was not easy, and I truly appreciate your understanding during this challenging time. I want nothing more than to deliver my best performances to you and share in joy and laughter, and at this sad time, I simply cannot do that.
I want to assure you that I have rescheduled the shows to later in the year, so your tickets will still be valid for these new dates. There is nothing you need to do, except attend the show on the new dates listed below.
However, I understand that not everyone may be able to attend the rescheduled shows. If you are unable to make it, please know that a full refund will be offered.
Thank you for your support and understanding and I look forward to seeing you later this year.
I am sorry to disappoint you, especially for the Mackay fans for this weekend.
Love Carmen xx
NEW SHOW DATES
MACKAY
Central QLD Conservatory of Music
Sunday 31st August at 2pm
CENTRAL COAST
Breakers Country Club
Sunday 14th September at 2pm
PERTH
(Will advise shortly)

THERE IS NOTHING BETTER THAN A CUP OF COFFEE WHILE READING THE MALTESE JOURNAL

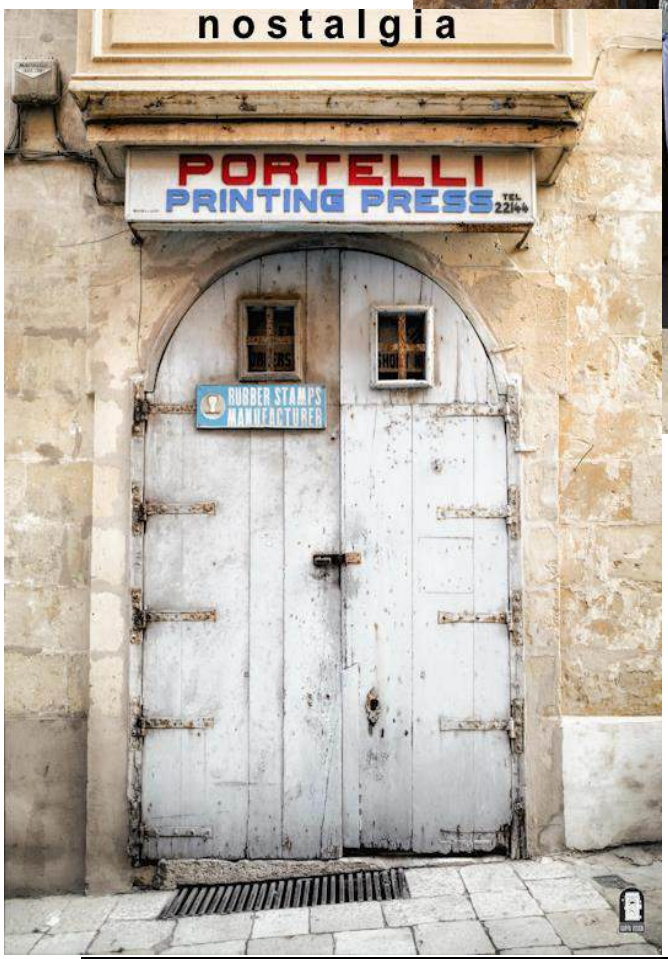
The Journal for Maltese Living Abroad

THE MALTESE NEWSLETTER



GANNI DEBONO

"The body is good, no rust, but the engine is not the best. What do you expect from an 81 year old?""I' m not an academically educated person but for the past 26 years I' ve been buying and reading the newspaper every day. I also like to write. I' m a Mellieha man, born and bred, made in Mellieha.
However in 1954 I left for Australia, like many other Maltese folk at the time. Suddenly,Mellieha was deserted. All the men left to find work in Australia because there were no job opportunities in Malta.
I came back to Malta in 1981.
I wrote about my life in Australia and about the local Mellieha expressions which we used in our daily language.
These are not published.



THANK YOU

WITHOUT YOUR HELP

I WON'T BE ABLE TO PRODUCE THIS JOURNAL

Send us your story