JOURNAL FOR MALTESE AROUND THE WORLD

MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER

WE ❤ OUR JOURNAL

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Welcome Aboard

HISTORY OF MALTESE BUSES - Vassallo

PAINTING - E. CARUANA DINGLI

COME AND HAVE A CUPPA WITH ME

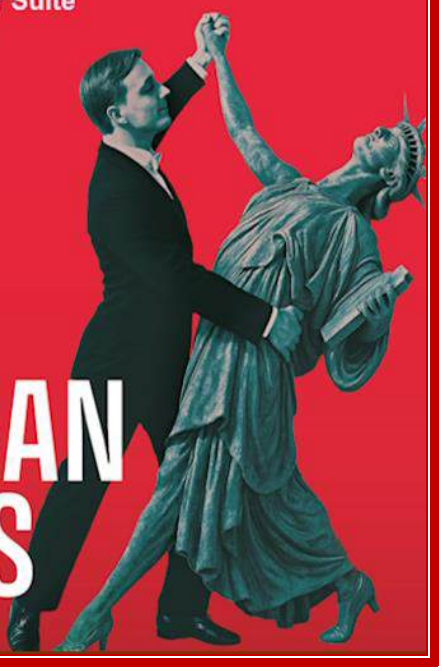
SBS Radio
50 years of broadcasting

A LIFELONG DEDICATION

MALTA PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

19 July 2025 at 8.00 pm
Grandmaster Suite
Hilton Malta
St. Julians

TANGO TALES AND AMERICAN DREAMS



Here is the list of the Australian members of the CMLA and regional committees.

Name		Australia Region	Committee	email
Miriam	**Friggieri**	**AUS-NSW**	**CMLA**	miriam-m.friggieri@gov.mt
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Lawrence	Gatt	AUS-NSW	Regional	_
Sandra	Grech	AUS-NSW	Regional	_
Louis	Parnis	AUS-NSW	Regional	_
Frank	Testa	AUS-NSW	Regional	_
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Martin	Debono	AUS-Rest of Australia	Regional	_
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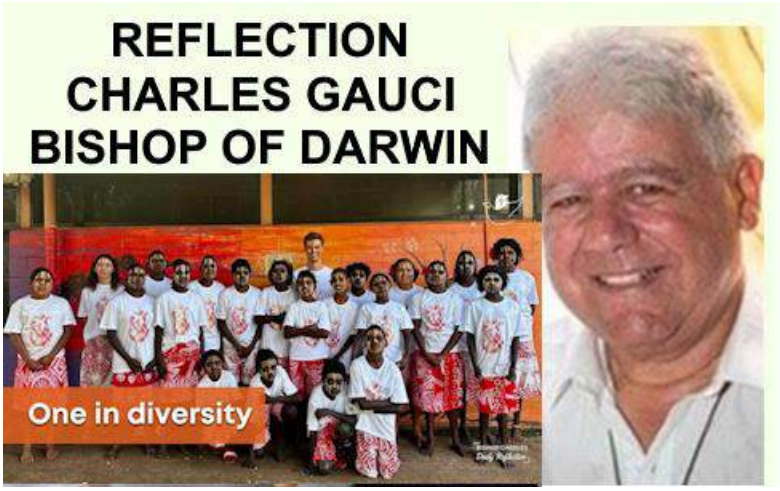
Elton	Cutajar	AUS-VIC	Regional	
Andrew	Gatt	AUS-VIC	Regional	
Ryan	Axiak	AUS-VIC	Regional	
Declan	Mentzing	AUS-VIC	Regional	

More information about the CMLA members, can be found at this link
https://malteselivingabroad.gov.mt/council-for-maltese-living-abroad/cmla-members/
Email addresses will be published when available. I hope soon. We need to contact you.

COUNCIL AND JOURNAL WORKING together FOR MALTESE LIVING ABROAD



.As I write this reflection, I am on the Tiwi Islands. This is a unique culture, experiencing the challenges of change.

This morning, I celebrated Mass at the retirement home where the elders reside.

The faith of these seniors is impressive—it is so real for them. Tomorrow, I will be celebrating Confirmation with the young people. I have spent time with them during their retreat, preparing for the celebration.

The old and the new coexist and blend. There are challenges in this interaction. This, of course, is true of all cultures. No culture is static; all cultures evolve. There is, however, a common humanity that all cultures share. There is also the Catholic faith. As Pope Leo said recently, our diversity is our Catholic strength. We learn from one another. We have foundational truths that are expressed in evolving and diverse ways, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. This provides a living expression of perennial truths. The Holy Spirit invites us to humble and obedient reflection, guiding us on our pilgrimage as we journey together towards our eternal home.

MUSEUMS BY CANDLELIGHT VALLETTA

Heritage Malta is thrilled to announce another edition of Museums by Candlelight, and this time it's more magical than ever. For the **very first time**, the event will take place in Valletta, transforming the capital into a glowing stage of history, art, and culture on **Saturday, 21st June**.

For a donation of just €5, you will gain access to five historical sites, all open from 7:00 pm to midnight, bathed in the soft, flickering glow of candlelight and enlivened with music, live performances, and a truly unforgettable atmosphere.

The National Museum of Archaeology takes you on a journey through Malta's earliest history, with artefacts from the Neolithic to the Phoenician era. Set in the elegant Auberge de Provence, highlights include The Sleeping Lady, Venus of Malta, and the impressive Gran Salon. The baroque Gran Salon – with its richly painted frescoes, exquisite arabesque cycles and wooden beamed ceiling, will be filled with soothing notes from a talented **instrumental trio.**

Step inside the newly restored **Grand Master's Palace**, Valletta's architectural jewel and a symbol of national power for over 450 years. Don't miss the opportunity to visit the historical state carriage, now on display following its recent restoration thanks to Eden Leisure Foundation. Visitors will now also be able to experience nine new halls of the Palace – which formed part of the Grand Master's summer apartment, restored and opened just in time. The **Dominic Galea Jazz Quartet** will be entertaining the visiting public at the Palace.

At **MUŻA – The National Community Art Museum**, explore artworks from the 15th to the 21st century. Housed in the Auberge d'Italie, MUŻA offers a varied collection of paintings, sculptures, furniture, silver pieces, works on paper and objets d'art which trace artistic developments in Malta impacted by the island's Mediterranean context as well as cultural influences. **Violinist Mario Ciantar** will delight visitors, offering a different than usual museum experience.

Experience **St John's Co-Cathedral** like never before – illuminated by candlelight. Built in 1572 by the Knights of St John, this Baroque masterpiece dazzles with ornate marble floors, vaulted ceilings by Mattia Preti, and Caravaggio's iconic The Beheading of St John the Baptist – the only painting he ever signed.

For the very first time, the **Church of St Catherine of Italy**, set to become part of the MUŻA visitor experience, will open its doors to the public. Designed by Girolamo Cassar for the Italian Knights, this historical gem is the only surviving example of a Hospitaller church annexed to its original auberge, in this case the Auberge d'Italie.

Colourful Inguardia re-enactors will depart from Fort St Elmo and roam Valletta's streets from 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm, station at the Grand Master's Palace from 8:30 till 10:00pm, and then march out again in Valletta.**General admission tickets – combining entry in all five sites for just €5, can be purchased online or at any Heritage Malta museum and site. During the event, tickets will also be available at the door of the National Museum of Archaeology, the Grand Master's Palace and MUŻA.**

L-IMNARJA: WHAT GOES ON DURING THIS CELEBRATION OF MALTESE FOLKLORE

Karl Azzopardi

Whether you are a local or a tourist looking to experience Malta in its most honest and authentic form, l-Imnarja or Mnarja, is a celebration that you cannot miss. Rightfully dubbed the most Maltese of Maltese holidays, l-Imnarja highlights Malta's agricultural roots and age-old traditions.

This public holiday has a long history of festivities dedicated to the rejuvenation and cultivation of Maltese folklore, coupled with exhibitions and competitions that showcase our land's abundance. L-Imnarja is celebrated on the 29th of June, though festivities start on the evening of the 28th and go on through the night. Here's what you should expect from a typical Mnarja celebration.

OFF TO THE RACES Much like other public holidays, we waste no time when it comes to celebrations, opening l-Imnarja festivities with music, parades and most importantly the Mnarja horse races the evening before the official public holiday.

These historic races take place along the aptly named Triq it-Tigrijia (Race Course Street) below Saqqajja Hill in Rabat. Hundreds of horseriders usually take part to show off the power of their trusty steed and races are typically divided into three categories — bareback, serkin (harness) and trot.

The Mnarja races are then followed by a parade through Malta's rich countryside from Rabat to Buskett Gardens where the rest of the evening activities take place. Here, numerous stages and stalls would have already been set up to welcome the parade. Most notable among them are the food stalls selling traditional Maltese food or special Mnarja editions of their products such as bigilla and pastizzi. However, the best seller is always our beloved national dish — rabbit stew.

During the time of the Knights of St John, Buskett served as a hunting ground for wild rabbits. However, common people were banned from hunting or eating rabbits, except on the day of l-Imnarja. Eating rabbits thus became an act of rebellion and an important part of the Maltese identity. So, it is with good reason that rabbit stew is served and consumed in abundance on the eve of l-Imnarja, in those same hunting grounds we were once unjustly denied.

AGRICULTURAL EXHIBITIONS & COMPETITIONS

Aside from food stalls serving fresh Maltese dishes, you will also find stands packed with local products like honey and olive oil, as well as a variety of fruit and vegetables. It is a time for farmers to rightfully boast about the product of their hard work by displaying their finest produce on the numerous stands that decorate the entrance to Buskett.

They are an ode to Malta's agricultural roots and its fertile land which has sustained our civilisation for thousands of years. From onions and turnips the size of footballs to watermelons and pumpkins as heavy as boulders, there's no denying the richness of Maltese soil and the mastery of our farmers. These displays are usually accompanied by exhibitions of traditional agricultural machinery and tools that were or are still used to cultivate the land. You will even find animal breeders showcasing their most prized livestock including rabbits, cows and fancy poultry.

These exhibitions typically start on the eve of l-Imnarja and last throughout the next day as well. However, you should expect even more animals on the day of l-Imnarja as this is when the much sought-after animal competitions take place. From the early hours of the morning, Buskett Gardens is packed with herds of well-groomed cows, sheep, goats, equines and even hunting dogs waiting to be examined by the judges for their respective competitions. The end of the Mnarja is marked by the announcement of the winners and the dissemination of prizes.

But before we close it all off we have to talk about the folk performances and traditional games that play out throughout both days of the festival.

A TASTE OF MALTA'S FOLKLORE

As the parade reaches the end of its course, people dressed in folkloristic wear take to the stage to welcome visitors with traditional Maltese songs and dances. A whole programme of performances is prepared, showcasing the diverse and rich musical traditions of our island that last through both the eve and day of l-Imnarja.

One of the musical Maltese traditions you will get to experience is our beloved 'ghana' — slow songs, typically humorous in nature, sung to rhythmic guitar music which come in a variety of styles starting with **'ghana spirtu pront'**. This form of ghana is like a folkloristic rap battle — it is completely improvised and takes the shape of a discussion on a certain topic between two 'ghannejja' who have to follow a rigid syllabic structure. Alternatively, 'ghana tal-banju' refers to traditional songs that are known by heart, having been used for centuries by locals during work. Another style is 'ghana tal-kelma' where the ghannejja are given a series of words which have to be included in the song. Finally, 'ghana tal-fatt' which is a more thought-provoking type of song prepared beforehand and tells stories that vary from historical occurrences or contemporary topics. There is also the 'makkjetti' which takes a more theatrical and humorous approach to ghana. They typically involve a pre-written short story that is acted out with ghana weaved into the performance, somewhat like a short musical. The masterful guitarists controlling the strict tempo of ghana also get a chance to let loose and show off their skills with instrumental performances known as 'prejjem'. This is an improvised guitar tradition where the musicians are given the stage to perform a piece of their own work or freestyle on the spot. And that's not all! You will also get to experience the sounds of traditional Maltese instruments such as 'iz-zafzafa', 'it-tumbur' and 'iz-zaqq' which looks like a bagpipe but is actually the carcass of a headless goat.

Aside from musical performances, you will also get to experience Maltese traditional dance. This usually involves dance groups dressed in typical village attire of times gone by, twirling and swirling to melodic folkloristic tunes both alone and with partners. And to top this celebration of Maltese folklore, traditional games are also organised for all to enjoy, together with stalls for traditional crafts such as stonework, weaving, filigree, lace, pottery, tiles and wicker among others.

SBS (Special Broadcasting Service) - 50 years of broadcasting

A sense of belonging

The SBS AUSTRALIA radio is celeberating its 50th anniversary since its establishment. It served as a vital means of communication with ethnic communities that immigrated post-WW2.

SBS has had an "immense" impact since it all began in 1975. Fifty years on, it continues to hold a unique place in the Australian media landscape, with exciting plans to deliver even more distinctive content and storytelling to viewers and readers.

One of a long-standing affiliation with SBS is the Maltese program.

The Maltese program has been on air since the late 1970s, and Joe Axiaq has been delivering the Maltese program for 45 years. Joe believes that the radio provided a sense of belonging to the community and kept listeners informed about activities that foster community cohesion. Joe is a passionate and dedicated radio broadcaster. The future challenge lies in finding a suitable replacement for Joe upon his retirement. The Maltese language, like many other languages, is at risk of being lost, and it is through community radio and television, in conjunction with Maltese community councils across the state, that efforts will be made to preserve the Maltese language.

Joe Axiaq is a writer, broadcaster and the Executive Producer of the Maltese Programs on SBS Radio (Melbourne.) Joe was born in Żebbuġ, Gozo and migrated to Australia in 1974. He joined the first group of broadcasters on Radio 3ZZ (1975) and later on SBS Radio. He was involved in establishing the Malta Youth Group in 1976, with the aim of bringing young Maltese Australian people of Victoria together, through different recreational activities. Joe was also involved in establishing the Maltese Literature Group in 1979 and was in charge of buying and bringing Maltese books from Malta to Australia for school libraries and students of Maltese classes. Many of his poems and short stories are published in journals and anthologies. He is the author of several articles of historical nature published in Maltese newspapers and magazines.

Joe says this connection to the community and between community members formed a strong attachment to the program for many. "There is this sense of belonging. This is 'our' radio station, this is 'our' program."

The Editor and readers of the Maltese Journal wish SBS a very happy 50th anniversary. To our friend Joe Axiaq we are grateful for the work he has accomplished in these last 45 year to keep the Maltese community all over Australia informed, entertains and connected and wish him AD MULTOS ANNOS.

WE ARE PROUD OF OUR MALTESE ACHIEVERS

Jumping ship over politics- Joe Sherry and Tony Axiak

Two men's amazing adventure to get to Mackay - Queensland

Published in Courier Mail- Queensland in 2016

Joe Sherry in 1928. Picture: Contributed **Mackay**

Joe Sherry and Tony Axiak swam in shark infested waters to reach Australian soil - they swam towards the lights of Sydney while shots were fired over their heads.

Mr Sherry, also known as Giuseppe Xerri, was 25 years old and Mr Axiak was 21 when they left Malta.

They were among 200 Maltese to make the trip to Australia in September 1916. But the French mail steamer 'Gange' was prohibited from docking and was anchored of Fremantle on October 21, 1916.

The ship had been detained because of the referendum to impose conscription in Australia. Prime Minster, at the time, Bill Hughes feared the immigrants would "turn the tide" against the conscription vote.

Hughes implemented the Immigration Act's stipulation that "persons seeking to disembark at Australian port could be classified as prohibited immigrants if they failed a dictation test in any European language." The passengers were given the test in Dutch - they all failed.

The ship was turned around and headed to New Caledonia where the passengers spent 10 weeks before being allowed to return to Australia - their original treatment was deemed as discrimination.

Before the ship had departed for New Caledonia, Mr Sherry and Mr Axiak with 42 other men jumped ship under the cover of darkness - 15 were captured quickly including Mr Sherry, more were later found but Mr Axiak made it land with the help of wharf workers.

Mr Sherry's granddaughter Therese Townley said the family was proud of Mr Sherry and all he went through to set up life in Australia. "They came from a place that was established to Mackay which was just starting off," Mrs Townley said. "It was pretty basic and they left their homeland with nothing - they had to start all over again. "They worked hard in harsh conditions to set us all up."

Mr Sherry eventually purchased a cane farm which still remains in the family.

SHERRY FAMILY: Children of Joe Sherry, back from left, Frances Camilleri, Lawrence Sherry, Joe Sherry and Mary Borg. Absent Tony sherry (dec)

Mrs Townley said Mr Sherry and Mr Axiak were reunited in Mackay a couple of years later and both worked in it sugar industry and become life-long friends.

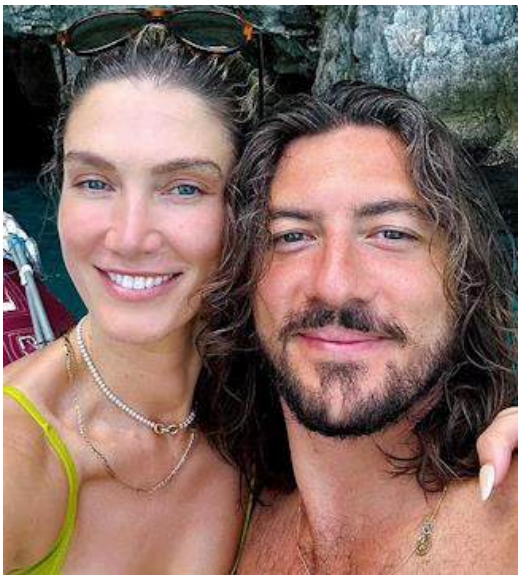
"My grandfather came to Mackay because he knew there were Maltese people here," she explained.

Mr Axiak made his way to Mackay by working on the railway and arrived in 1918. He also established himself in cane farming after he took on a crop partnership with Gaetano Zammit in Farleigh. The Axiak still own cane farms the Mackay area.

AXIAK FAMILY: The children of Tony Axiak, back from left, Charlie Axiak, Margaret Bezzina and Fred Axiak, front, Tony Aniak, Mary Schembri and Joe Axiak. Picture: contributed

The men's extraordinary journey to Australia was commemorated with a limited edition post

Delta Goodrem: Aussie singer gets married to long-time partner Matthew Copley in Malta



Australian singer Delta Goodrem has reportedly married her longtime partner Matthew Copley in a star-studded ceremony on the tiny European island of Malta.

New Idea reports that Goodrem, 40, and Copley, 38, wed on June 16 in a ceremony attended by celeb friends including Goodrem's bestie Renee Bargh, Nine entertainment reporter Richard Wilkins and his son Christian.

The mag reports Goodrem's mother Lea and brother Trent were among the other guests in attendance.

In keeping with their private approach to their relationship, neither Goodrem nor Copley have posted anything about the wedding on social media, several days after they reportedly tied the knot. The couple started dating in 2017 ... ... and got engaged in Malta in 2023.

The pair have been together since 2017, with Copley popping the question in 2023 when they were on holiday in Malta, where he has family.

"My best friend asked me to marry him," is how Goodrem announced that news at the time.

Opening up about the engagement on the Stellar podcast, Something To Talk About, Goodrem revealed it came midway through a European tour.

"During that tour, it was beautiful – because it felt like we'd done an engagement party in every single city," she said.

Copley is a member of Goodrem's band, so the pair are frequently seen in public and on stage together – but the *Born to Try* singer said in 2018 that she'd made the "conscious decision" to keep her love life private from the public. Copley is a member of Delta's band.

Something To Talk About "I made a choice that I'm not even going to comment 'yes' or 'no' ... I've said nothing for three or four years," she said at the time.

"He's my guitarist, I met him through music.

"It's incredible to be on stage with him because he's so talented. We really are a team. He's my best friend, he's kind and just a beautiful human being.

"I'm very lucky. It's all very natural and I think that comes from a beautiful respect and love. I feel so grateful."

Goodrem's near-decade-long relationship with Copley came after a string of high profile romances with other celebs earlier in her career, among them Nick Jonas, Brian McFadden, Mark Philippoussis and Blair McDonaugh.

7 NEW SAINTS - CARLO ACUTIS AND PIER GIORGIO FRASSATI TO BE CANONISED TOGETHER

Pope Says He'll Make Carlo Acutis, Who Died At 15, the First Millennial Saint

Pope Leo XIV held the first Ordinary Public Consistory of his pontificate on Friday morning, with Cardinals giving their formal approval for the canonisations of eight Blesseds.

During the ceremony, the Holy Father announced that Bd Pier Giorgio Frassati and Bd Carlo Acutis will be canonised together on 7 September.

The canonisations of the two young saints – one from the early twentieth century, the other the first twenty-first century saint – have been greatly anticipated due to the great devotion among the faithful.

The late pope himself had announced the canonisations of Bd Pier Giorgio and Bd Carlo at the General Audience of 20 November 2024, prompting thunderous applause from the crowds gathered in St Peter's Square.

The canonisation of Acutis, who was beatified in Assisi on 10 October 2020, had originally been scheduled for 27 April, the Second Sunday of Easter, to coincide with the Jubilee of Teenagers; while Frassati's canonisation had been set for 3 August, the culmination of the Jubilee for Youth. The postponement of Bd Carlo's canonisation was announced on the day of Pope Francis' death, 21 April; and it was widely assumed that Bd Pier Giorgio's canonisation would similarly be delayed.

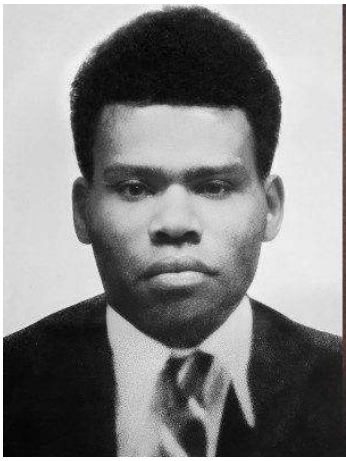


Photo: Blessed Peter To Rot, catechist and martyr and Blessed Ignatius Maloyan, Armenian Archbishop and martyr

Seven blessed to be canonised in October

During Friday's consistory, Pope Leo also set the date for the canonisation of seven other Blesseds, including martyred Armenian Catholic Archbishop Ignatius Shoukrallah Maloyan, who died in 1915 during the Armenian Genocide in the Ottoman Empire; and Peter To Rot, a lay catechist, who was martyred in 1945 for continuing his apostolate despite the ban imposed by the Japanese. Blessed Peter will be the first canonised saint from Papua New Guinea.

Three female religious are also among those who will be canonised in October: Vincenza Maria Poloni, founder of the Institute of the Sisters of Mercy of Verona; Maria del Monte Carmelo Rendiles (née Carmen Elena Rendiles Martínez), from Venezuela, founder of the Congregation of the Servants of Jesus; and Maria Troncatti, a professed religious of the Daughters of Mary, Help of Christians.

Finally, two other laymen will be among those enrolled in the catalogue of the saints: Bartolo Longo, founder of the famous Marian Shrine at Pompeii; and José Gregorio Hernández Cisneros, a Venezuelan doctor and member of the Secular Franciscan Order, known as "the doctor of the poor" because he treated those in need and even paid for their medicines.

Source: ***vaticannews.va***

REFUGEE WEEK – 15 TO 21 JUNE 2025
'FINDING FREEDOM: DIVERSITY IN COMMUNITY'

Refugee Week 2025 continues the three-year theme of 'Finding Freedom' with this year focusing on Diversity in Community, to honour the important role diverse communities play in welcoming refugees and providing them with a sense of belonging.

South Australia is proud of its cultural diversity, which is reflected in communities large and small across our great state. The unique diversity of each community helps foster an environment where people feel included, safe and welcome.

The ongoing advocacy of service providers and community organisations in protecting the rights and dignity of refugees is a powerful source of inspiration. Their commitment helps us to recognise, and better understand, the remarkable strength and courage of people who have been forced to flee their home country in search of safety, having escaped conflict or persecution.

This Refugee Week, the South Australian Government acknowledges the vital role that refugee organisations play in supporting individuals and strengthening our communities. We express our deep gratitude and ongoing support to these organisations, and to the thousands of refugees whose resilience, dedication, and contributions continue to enrich the multicultural fabric of our great state. Together, we build a more inclusive, compassionate, and vibrant South Australia.

Happy Refugee Week 2025.

Peter Malinauskas
Premier of South Australia

Zoe Bettison
Minister for Multicultural Affairs

Amended

THE MALTESE JOURNAL IN SOUTH AFRICA

RONALD ANDREWS – MALTA HON CONSUL IN DURBAN, SOUTH AFRICA.

Thank you once again for an enjoyable Newsletter.

A comment on Maltese Diaspora – South Africa (Maltese eNewsletter 563). After WW 2, the biggest employer in Malta, the Dockyard, was no longer as active as prior to, and during the war. Hence the mass migration from Malta. In this period, the Royal Navy had a base in Simonstown, South Africa. Some of the early Maltese secured jobs at this base, but then Britain decided to withdraw from South Africa, and this resulted in job shrinkage at the base. Most of the Maltese came to Simonstown during this period to secure jobs. Regards

PS Some of the old timers may well remember my Dad captaining the football team of Floriana, and then Sliema Wanderers.

PEMBROKE - MALTA

PEMBROKE CLOCK TOWER

SCENIC VIEW

WATCH TOWER

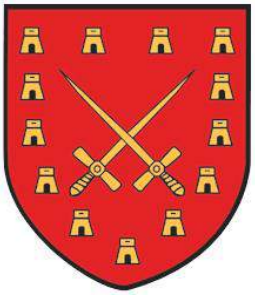
CEMETERY

PEMBROKE FORT (1879

PEMBROKE GARDENS

ASUTRALIA HALL - 1915

PEMBROKE LOCAL COUNCIL



PEMBROKE – MALTA

Pembroke, Malta's newest city was named in 1859 after the twelve "Earl of Pembroke" and British Secretary of War. Pembroke has on one side the Mediterranean Sea and on the three other sides the city of St Julians and the residential areas of the Swieqi and Baħar is-Ċagħaq. Its size is 2.3 square kilometres and is located six kilometres away from Capital Valletta and twelve kilometres from Malta International Airport. The estimated population is more than 4 000)

Pembroke knows its origins to the Knights of St John of Jerusalem who built two towers on its coast as a means of defending the Great Harbour due to Pembroke's strategic position. However, the English Services have been instrumental in the development and fortification of this city. The first building built between 1859 and 1862 was the "Barracks" mentioned for St George – the patron of the British. More buildings were built in the following years and was named after the patrons of Ireland and Scotland – St. Patrick and St Andrews respectively. Fort Pembroke was built between 1875 and 1878 to defend any enemy attack from the sea as well as from the land on the part of the Victoria Lines. The Pembroke Battery was later built to serve for the same defence purpose. Several regiments were served in Pembroke and the last British soldiers are said to have left Pembroke in March 1979. During the Second World War, German War Prisoners held in Pembroke, built a small chapel to meet the needs of the British Services. The land occupied by the English services was passed on to the Maltese Government and after being released for some years, in the mid-1980s "the Barracks" began to be transformed into private, office and complex tourist residences. The government later released the land for sale and the first residents entered their homes in 1986.

By virtue of the 1993 Local Councils Law, Pembroke was one of the 67 localities held by its Local Council. The first election took place on Saturday 19 March 1994. Since then seven further elections have taken place in 1996, 1999, 2002, 2005, 2008, 2013 and 2019. The next election will take place in 2024.

Pembroke's coat reflects the military connection Pembroke has always had. Two gold swords on a red background are crucified and surrounded by thirteen Tories built by Grand Master De Redin.

When Pembroke began to be inhabited, he belonged to St Julian's Parish, and at the request of Parish Priest Dun Tony Agius, the chapel that had built the German prisoners was enlarged and recoloured on the designs of Professor Richard England. When the Curia set up a new Pastoral Area for Ibraġ, Pembroke began to be part of this area until Palm Sunday 1998, when the pastoral needs of the Pembroke community began to increase, the Curia issued an Episcopal decree establishing a new Pastoral Area for Pembroke. In recent years a Pastoral Centre dedicated to the Risen Christ has been built which is being used to serve the needs of the Pembroke community. The centre and the Church to be built were designed by Architects Antonio Mollicone and Paul Camilleri.

In Pembroke one finds endemic plant species, some of which are only here, the most important of which are – Tursin the Swimmers. A mixture of planted trees is found in Pembroke, with the most predominant Pine trees followed by Olive trees. There are three waterways – one passing through Triq il-Mediterran to the sea known as Point l-Ilqieqa; another near the Madliena Tower known as The Back.

COME AND HAVE A CUPPA WITH ME

Coffee started to gain popularity in Europe around the mid-17th century, Malta's connection to it seems to go back around a century earlier.

In fact, some believe that Malta was the very first European country where coffee was introduced, most probably through Turkish slaves, who prepared their traditional beverage in the prisons where they were kept. A statement from a German traveller in the mid-1600s talks of this strange concoction of a powder resembling snuff tobacco, which the Turks mixed with water and sugar, and which they could sell to earn some extra money.

Soon the Knights themselves became very fond of this drink and would visit the *Bagno degli Schiavi* (Slaves' Prison) because this was where the best quality coffee could be found.

This theory is of course quite plausible considering that the Ottomans at this time had full control over the coffee trade, and later introduced it to the rest of Europe through Venice, with whom they enjoyed very strong trade relations, but this does not totally exclude other possible ways how this product could have found its way into Malta at such an early stage.

Piracy cannot be excluded, as Maltese corsairs would have undoubtedly confiscated coffee grains, along with other cargo, during their continuous raids against Ottoman shipping, while it could also have first been offered to a Grand Master as a gift from some North African prince or bey, or it could have entered through other European merchants, most likely French, who traded with the Orient.

The Knights' fondness for coffee soon led to its introduction in Maltese high society. Coffee started to be imported regularly, and its popularity was such that soon numerous coffee shops sprouted all around Valletta, making it easily available to people from all levels of society, and proving testament to the high demand for it.

The Grand Master even had a waiter employed as part of his magisterial household at the palace, known as the *Garzone del Caffè*, whose sole job was to prepare and serve him coffee!

According to a 17th century document found at the National Archives, for the perfect cup of coffee one needed coffee beans, a special coffee pot made of copper, and to know how to recite the Apostles' Creed. Coffee, it was recommended, should be left to brew for as long as it took to recite this prayer.

Like today, coffee was normally served at the end of a meal, together with the dessert, often a piece of cake or other pastry. Interestingly though, coffee was also believed to be a remedy for many ills.

A 17th century treatise about coffee, written in Malta by a certain Domenico Magri, claims that coffee was good for the lungs, the liver and the stomach amongst others, while, according to him, the Turks, who consumed copious amounts of this substance, never seemed to suffer from toothache, gout and other infirmities. (Matthew Camilleri)

KINNIE – ALL OVER THE WORLD

Kinnie unveils global brand positioning and vision to make Everyday Original
June 11, 2025

Kinnie, Malta's own iconic soft drink, has launched a bold and vibrant new brand positioning that celebrates individuality, creativity and imagination, and inspires consumers to drink different, explore and embrace new experiences.

The fresh new Kinnie brandmark is the essence of the brand: bold, iconic, and deeply connected to its heritage while embracing a fresh, contemporary energy. At its core, a dynamic series of vibrant, interconnected orange rings radiate outward, symbolising movement, energy, and vitality. These rings create a sense of perpetual motion, embodying a forward-thinking spirit. A fine geometric dot print subtly overlays the design, representative of both orange peel texture and the brand's signature effervescence. Adding depth and warmth, the Kinnie shadow represents sunlight, refreshing shade, and the vibrant outdoor lifestyle the brand embodies.

Ms Susan Weenink Camilleri, Head of Sales & Marketing, commenting on this notable development, said: "Kinnie's new brand identity is built on the power of simplicity: bold, single-minded, and confident. The new brandmark is the most iconic version of our Kinnie logo to date, taking us forward with confidence and impact as our brand expands into new regions."

This launch is the culmination of a thorough process of market research, strategy and creative thinking, in collaboration with renowned UK-based agency, Bluemarlin.

"We have big ambitions to conquer new markets and excite new potential consumers worldwide. And to do that, we have to be bold, confident and consistent in our brand communications. Through this new positioning we aim to engage new audiences and present Kinnie as an iconic global soft drink with a unique taste and a culturally inspiring lifestyle," continued Mr Michael Farrugia, Deputy Chief Executive (Beverage Business).

The brainchild of Farsons' former chairman, Anthony 'Sur-Nini' Miceli Farrugia, Kinnie is a drink that was born to be different. Launched in 1952 as an alternative to the cola invasion of Malta at the time, it was an instant hit with the locals and has since become a sparkling staple of everyday life, loved by everyone across generations.

Ever since its launch, Kinnie has always championed creativity and innovation, staying at the forefront of fashion, style and consumer demand through the launch of various variants throughout the years including Kinnie Zest and now Kinnie Zero. Most recently, Kinnie has boldly embraced the new trends through the launch of the Kinnie Aperitivo range with 4% alcohol content.

Kinnie is produced, sold, distributed and marketed by Simonds Farsons Cisk plc. The portfolio currently includes the original Kinnie, Kinnie Zero and Kinnie Zest available in recyclable cans and PET bottles containing recycled PET with Kinnie and Kinnie Zero also available in returnable glass bottles and on tap. The Kinnie Aperitivo range includes Kinnie Spritz and the newly launched Kinnie Rumba available in glass bottles. Visit www.kinnie.com.

THE ORDER OF SAINT JOHN OF JERUSALEM KNIGHTS HOSPITALLERS - AUSTRALIA

BY Dame Annette Summers

The Grand Priory is the central core of the Priories and Commanderies in Australasia, in the states of New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania. The Order is committed to the following: -

Dame Annette Summers AO RFD DSJ

Mission

To work with dedication to ensure the Order's projects are of high quality.

To make the white eight-pointed cross known as the symbol for the Order's Christian roots.

To continue the work for unifying separate Orders under the Constitution of King Peter II.

To work for homogeneity in mantel, insignia and ceremonies, respecting cultural diversity.

To encourage a humble attitude to the work of the Order and its motto and not for fulfilling personal ambitions.

Code of Knighthood

- ***To know the history and traditions of the Order.***
- ***To work together dedicated in Christian ecumenical matters.***
- ***To be aware of the needs of fellow human beings.***
- ***To be kind, open minded and obliging.***
- ***To concentrate on ethical and moral demands to improve personal attitudes.***
- ***To be responsible and respectful to other people.***
- ***To help, relieve and comfort people in need.***
- ***To work voluntarily in charitable and administrative duties for the Order.***
- ***To have a Christian lifestyle and to feel honoured to wear the eight-pointed cross.***

The order in Australasia has now over 300 members with plans to be expanded into New Zealand. To date the Australasian Order has donated well over a million dollars to charities throughout Australia. The Australasian Order of St John, Knights Hospitallers continues to attract committed professional men and women, who wish to lead their lives in the manner expected of a Knight or Dame in the Order.

Dame Annette Summers AO RFD DSJ

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THE OMNIBUS in MALTA

Vassallo History
A project run by the vassallomalta.com website

The first Omnibus was brought to Malta in October 1856 from England by a certain Ċensu Attard.
A month later on 28 November, the public was informed that this ominbus, which carried 16 passengers, was expected to start operating on Sunday 30 November 1856.
The timetable was to be as follows:
6.30 a.m: Departure from Lija to Valletta Belt passing from Balzan, Birkirkara, San Giuseppe (Ħamrun), Tas-Samra, Floriana, Valletta.
8.00 a.m: Return trip from Valletta to Lija on the same route.
3.30 p.m: Another trip from Lija to Valletta followed by a return trip to Lija

When Ċensu Attard's omnibus started operating on 30 November 1856 it was a success. The fare for a return trip was 5d.
In 1856 Paul Galea and Notary Manuel Catania set up a company to organise Omnibus trips. The company offered £1,500 worth of shares to the public which offer was exhausted by September 1856.
Paul Galea went to France and on 21 October 1856 he bought 6 omnibuses (carrying 27 passengers each) from Paris at a cost of 2,700 Franks. He also bought most of the horses needed to draw these omnibuses. Ten horses were brought onboard the French ship Euphrates on 2 November 1856. Two omnibuses arrived in Malta onboard the French ship Hydaspe on 4 January 1857. Another two omnibuses arrived in Malta on 11 January 1857.
The company started operating on the Lija-Valletta route on 11 January 1857. However, from 19 January 1857 the Company started operating also the St-Julian's to Valletta route. These routes were operated from Monday to Saturday.
The timetable was as follows:
Valletta-Lija Route: operating four times a day leaving Valletta at 7.00am, 11.45am, 3.20pm and 4.40pm
Lija- Valletta Route: operating four times a day leaving Lija at 7.00am, 8.05am, 1.30pm and 5.30pm.
Valletta-St Julian's Route: operating three times a day leaving Valletta at 11.55am, 2.30pm, 4.30pm
St Julian's Valletta Route: operating twice a day leaving St Julian's at 6.45am and 4.15pm
The fare from Lija and St Julian's was 4d. The fare from B'Kara was 3d and the fare from Hamrun was 2½d. On 20 March 1857 the service was extended to the Zebbug-Valletta route. Some trips used to be organised to Mdina and sometimes even to St Paul's Bay.

THE HISTORY OF BUSES IN MALTA

The traditional Maltese buses were well known abroad, loved by tourists for their character and nostalgic value. With the majority of the fleet classified as antique, tourists often marvelled at the fact that these vehicles were still in operating condition up until 2011.

A large part of the Maltese population, however, had become increasingly frustrated with the heavy diesel fumes and slow bus service. Being one of the few modes of public transport in Malta currently, with a network of bus routes reaching most remote villages, many Maltese depend on the bus service on a daily basis.

Tourists still get to enjoy the old Malta buses, for example, on these organised bus tours.

Table of contents The old Malta buses were really something truly unique and one of the most recognisable icons of Malta. Mainly of British manufacture, with marques such as Bedford, AEC, Leyland and Ford, a large number of these buses date back from the 1970s and 1960s, with a few examples from the 1950s. Some were manufactured locally as well.

Having been replaced with a modern fleet of buses by Arriva, then Malta Public Transport, the old Maltese buses have vanished from the streets of Malta and Gozo. If you're lucky you can spot a few of them around the Sliema area, for tourist tours. Another couple of these old timers were exported to the UK, bought by collectors for restoration projects.

Colours and livery The last of these old Maltese buses were yellow in colour with an orange horizontal stripe and their Gozitan counterparts grey coloured with a red horizontal stripe. The vast majority of the buses started and ended their trips at the main terminus in Valletta with a few operating on circular routes.

History of Malta Buses Before buses were even visible on Malta roads, the main mode of transport was by Rail (with a single line stretching from Valletta to Rabat and Mdina on the Eastern side of Malta), cabs, and horse-driven lorries. Primitive buses began operating in 1905 and this had a negative effect on the Malta Railway as buses became more popular. In the early 1920s, bus manufacturing took centre stage on the Malta Island. In the late 1920s, buses operated on public transport roads and there was a lot of competition between operators.

In 1930 the fleet of buses in Malta counted 385 licensed route buses, several of these owned by the bus drivers themselves. With a high number of operating buses, competition was so fierce that buses were often overloaded and speeding became a regular occurrence, with drivers trying to complete more trips. However, in 1931, the Traffic Control Board was formed bringing in great discipline and regulation in the bus industry. New routes were introduced, with a formalised trip schedule, making the service increasingly efficient and organised.

With more regular and secure income, bus owners now began upgrading their buses to make them more attractive to the public. Since then, customization and decoration of Malta buses became a tradition. Buses were well maintained, kept clean and painted in various colours, depending on their designated route(s).

The 1970 reforms in Malta led to the centralization of bus operations with the formation of the Public Transport Association. The association had the mandate of day-to-day bus operation management.

In 2003, the government launched a scheme in which around 100 buses were scrapped and replaced by modern imported line buses from China. The government lowered the rates for bus tour services and traditional Malta buses were mainly in use. In December 2008, a major proposed streamlining of the ownership and operation of Malta buses was declared and a reform is expected in 2011, in which all of the antique buses will be replaced.

Malta Public Transport and the modern fleet In mid-2011, Arriva was introduced as the new public transport operator and introduced a modern fleet of buses with more environmentally friendly engines and easier to access for the less abled passenger. The intention was to take a big step up in terms of quality and efficiency of public transport in Malta while reducing emissions and encouraging the use of public transport to combat the ever increasing problem of traffic congestion on the Maltese roads.

The transition was far from smooth. With numerous problems popping up ranging from the new routes to unwieldy bendy buses and to disgruntled bus drivers who saw their conditions worsened.

A change in government in 2013 helped the transition from Arriva (who were unable to run the service profitably and were looking for an early exit) to being managed by Malta Public Transport. Since 2015, Malta Public Transport is run by Autobuses de Leon – a Spanish company – although the operator's name was left unchanged.

Although the quality of public transport has increased, the service isn't quite the well-oiled machine that was once picture to be the future of public transport in Malta.

SEND US YOUR STORY AND SHARE IT WITH OTHER

CLAUDIA CALLEJA

AMERICAN HANS PUEHSE AND GINA CALLEJA MARRY AT MOSTA DOME IN JUNE 1962.

A US couple marked their 30th wedding anniversary by renewing their vows at the Mosta Dome – the same church, and with the same priest, where both they and the groom's parents were married.

Michael, 62, and Caryn Puehse, 57, travelled from Scottsdale, Arizona to mark their anniversary at the exact location where their lives together began on June 10, 1995. But the connection to Mosta Dome runs even deeper: it's also where Michael's parents, Hans and Gina, were married on the same date in 1962.

The couple had originally hoped to mark their 25th wedding anniversary in Malta in 2020, but their plans were disrupted when COVID-19 travel restrictions cancelled flights and halted travel worldwide. They were determined to return. "Malta has a special place in our hearts. My parents had a wonderful marriage. It's a great place to be married because it's so unique," Michael said.

The vow renewal took place this week, exactly 30 years to the day since the couple's wedding at the Mosta Dome on June 10, 1995. The ceremony was officiated by Fr John Scicluna, the same priest who had led their original ceremony and who had married Michael's parents.

Fr Scicluna had presided over a virtual vow renewal for the couple in 2020, but the Puehses were determined to return in person. They were joined by friends and family, some flying in from the US to mark the occasion. The trip held particular emotional weight for Michael. His parents – German-born Hans Puehse and Maltese native Gina Calleja – had both passed away in recent years. Gina died in November, five years after her husband. Their ashes were brought to Malta and scattered in the surrounding seas, as the family had long intended. "I kept their ashes and always knew in my heart that when they both passed, I'd scatter them in the sea near the place where their love story started," he said. A ceremony for them was held in St Paul's Bay on Saturday, again led by Fr Scicluna.

The Puehses' connection to Mosta runs deep. Michael's mother spent her childhood living in a house just across the street from Mosta Dome. She met Hans in Germany in 1959, when she walked into a bank to cash traveller's cheques and caught the eye of the young teller.

"He asked her where she was from, and when she said Malta, he went into the back office to ask someone where Malta was," Michael said. Hans later took a job in Libya to be closer to Malta, and after three years of long-distance courtship, the couple wed in Malta before moving to San Francisco, where they began to raise a family of four.

Michael and Caryn, now 57, met through a mutual friend. When it came time to plan their wedding, they decided to return to Malta – and the same church where his parents had tied the knot.

"My parents' story provided the inspiration," Michael said. "Our wedding was Caryn's first time in Malta." Now, 30 years later, their children – 27-year-old twins, Tristan and Nic, and 24-yearold Natasha – joined them in marking the occasion. They hope the tradition – and the special connection to Malta – continues for generations to come.

Article Name: **US family love story returns to Mosta Dome** Publication:**Times of Malta**
postage to Europe.

RESURRECTING CLOSED ASSOCIATIONS

CELEBRATING MARSA FEAST AT CRINGILA, NSW

BY Louis Parnis – President GCFCC - See us on FACEBOOK

The Holy Trinity Marsa Association of NSW was a very active group for many years with hundreds of members and friends. It changed many Presidents and Committee members.

The idea of forming a Marsa association arose when, during the 50s to 70s many Maltese migrants from the Maltese town of Marsa established themselves in the metropolitan and regional areas of NSW.

The objective of the association was to bring together the *Marsin* for social, cultural and religious events. The association used to welcome not only Maltese from Marsa but other Maltese and Australians.

I was born and raised in Marsa before I migrated to Australia in 1973. As the current president of the George Cross Falcons Community Centre, I felt the need to make our weekly luncheons available to everyone, without exception. A bus full of Marsa people was organised to show us support at the South Coast and to participate in the FESTA.

It became apparent that the Marsa association was facing a crisis, and eventually it had to wind up because of lack of interest. Unfortunately, I was made aware of the situation that the association was finished after it was dissolved.

It is important to resurrect those groups or associations after winding up, for our younger generation's sake and the growing of the Maltese Communities around Australia.

We approached the Marsin people and asked them what they would like to see happening, and they suggested holding a Marsa Feast in June, coinciding with the celebrated feast in Malta.

We commenced organising the Feast, and we were very pleased to see our Hall at the Cringila Community Centre once again full of attendees on Monday 16 June 2025.

Yoang and not so young, including the Wollongong Councillors participated in the vibrant and celebration. Those in attendance were provided with flags, banners, scarfs and balloons. That was only one part of the celebrations. Our very experienced cooks in the spacious kitchen prepared a big and delicious meal and dessert for everyone. We were allowed to use the Holy Trinity Marsa Banner which is being look after by the Maltese Community Council of NSW.

The food and the entertainment and the company were excellent. It was a celebration that we can be proud of. We held a march around the hall and our Cringila Bagpipes led the march, reminding us of the Marsa Scouts when living in Malta. We take the opportunity to thank the many attendees, and we look forward to holding the event again in 2026. CRINGILA COMMUNITY CENTRE IS THE PLACE TO BE.

MALTESE AUSTRALIAN ARTIST LOUISE CHIRCOP

Photo - The Australian High Commissioner, H.E. Matthew Skelly, was pleased to support Maltese Australian artist Louisa Chircop at the official opening of her exhibition 'Grotto Girl' at MUŻA.

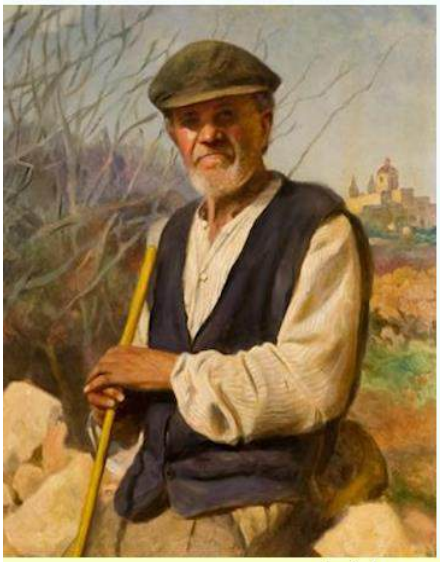
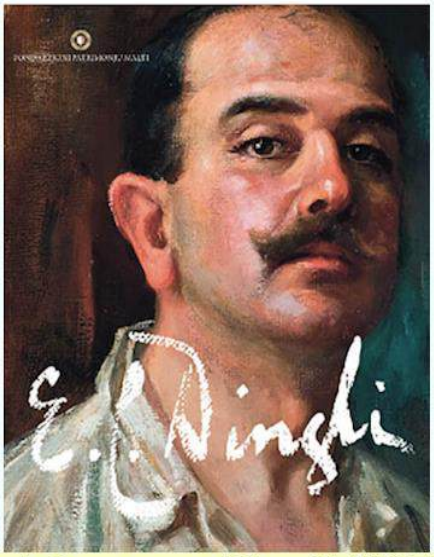
Grotto Girl is an artist-led community outreach initiative and artist residency by Louisa Chircop, hosted at MUŻA. The project explores identity and belonging, inviting both the Maltese community and international participants into a meaningful dialogue about heritage, connection, and shared experiences.

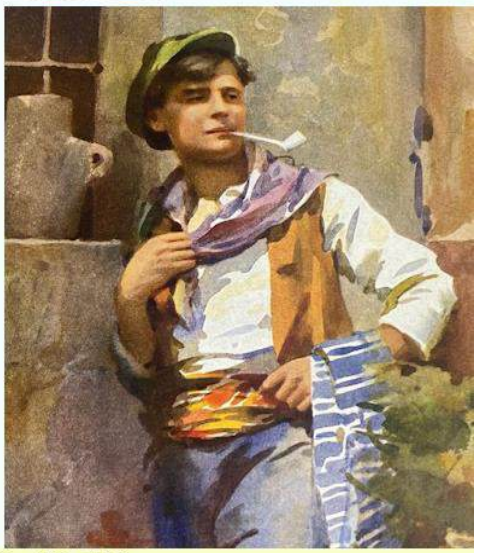
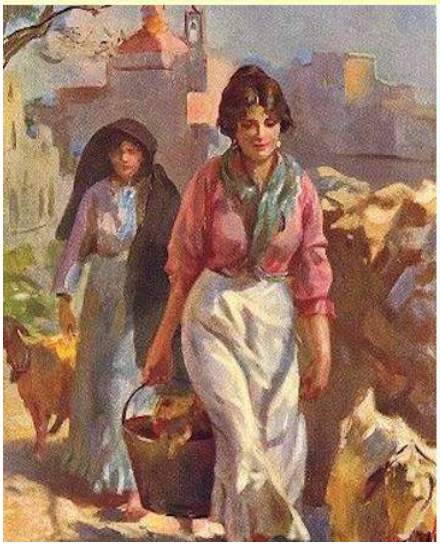
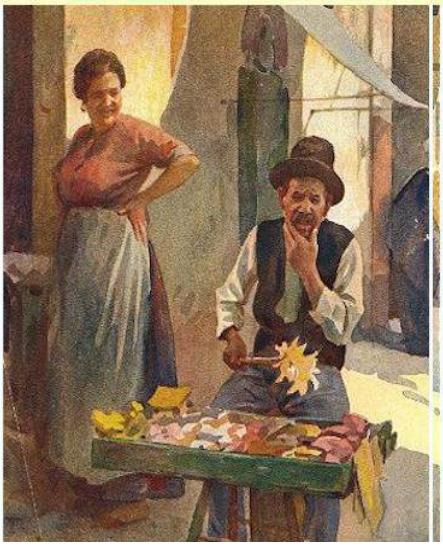
Drawing from her upbringing in a post-WWII Maltese immigrant household in Sydney, Australia, the artist weaves together personal and community narratives. Just as people draw water from a well, Grotto Girl draws stories from the people, using MUŻA's central courtyard well as a conceptual starting point. Identifying herself as the Grotto Girl, the artist transforms this space into a symbolic grotto, an evolving expression of collective voices, histories, and identities. Her personal journey serves as a catalyst for reconnection, inviting the Maltese community at MUŻA to explore their own sense of identity while joining her on a shared path of discovery.

As part of her residency, the artist leads hands-on workshops and interactive art-making sessions, where participants contribute to the creation of the grotto by exploring Maltese motifs connected with water as a point of personal reflection. Clay serves as the primary medium, allowing individuals to shape their stories and reflect on the forces that have shaped them. The project culminates in a celebratory exhibition that is both a showcase of these community-created artworks and an immersive artwork in itself. Echoing the spirit of Maltese festival culture, this Festa of Grotto Girl honours the power of collective storytelling, cultural heritage, and artistic expression. Through this culminating exhibition, the project fosters unity, empathy, and cross-cultural exchange.

In the end, the grotto becomes a living vessel, cradling echoes of the past and whispers of the present, a sanctuary where stories take root, shaping and reshaping themselves like water carving stone, each participant leaving an imprint that lingers in the rhythm of something timeless.

Grotto Girl, an artist-led residency and community outreach project, explores the themes of identity, memory and belonging through the medium of clay sculptural art pieces. It brought together participants from a range of backgrounds in a series of artist-led clay workshops.



Edward Caruana Dingli (1876-1950)
Portraits, Views and Folkloristic Scences