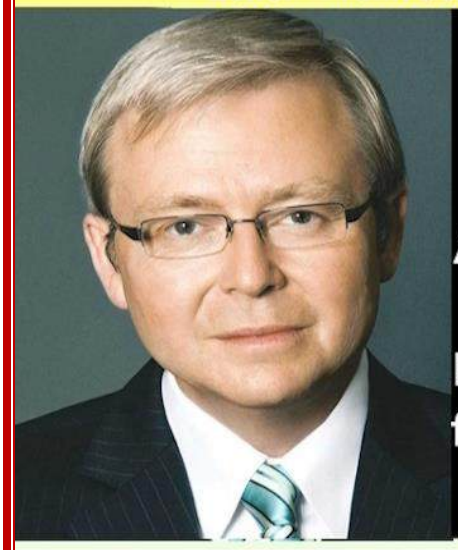
MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER

The Journal for Maltese Living Abroad

Editor- Frank Scicluna OAM MQR JP Est - 2013 Adelaide - Australia



HON. KEVIN RUDD Prime Minister of Australia Apology to Forgotten Australians and Former Child Migrants from Britain and Malta 2009

HISTORY OF MALTESE MIGRANTS

Leaving Malta

A SAD DAY FOR EVERY MIGRANT

Pope Leo XIV proclaims Carlo Acutis and Pier Giorgio Frassati saints

CARLO ACUTIS AND PIER GIORGIO FRASSATI DECLARED SAINTS BY POPE LEO XIV

Pope Leo XIV today declared Carlo Acutis and Pier Giorgio Frassati saints of the Catholic church on the 7 September 2025.
They are the first two blessed young people elevated to sainthood by Pope Leo XIV since he became the Leader of the Catholic Church.
Acutis was a 15-year-old London-born youth who died of leukaemia in 2006.
Acutis loved computer and video games, and created an electronic site to deliver religious content.
He is buried in the church at Assisi.
Frassati was 24 years old when he died of polio on 4 July 1925
He was known for helping those in need, particularly the poor and sick. His remains are in the cathedral at Turin, his birthplace. Around 270 bishops and 1,700 priests took part in the canonisation ceremony. An audience of some 80,000 thronged St Peter's Square for the occasion.

This is the only Maltese Journal for all Maltese Living Abroad and it has become a connecting point for members of the Maltese diaspora. It's a place to share community events, celebrate Malta's culture and heritage and keep track of social clubs across many counties and beyond. We are really concerned that without the involvement of the younger generations in the local Maltese associations and clubs, these clubs will be forced to disband and be lost for ever.

Don't ask what the community can do for you but what you can do for the community.

MALTA AND THE RAILWAYS OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Peter Buske - Adelaide, South Australia

On Monday morning, 28 May 1951, an official from the South Australian Railways (SAR) named Dick Fidock walked the short distance from his hotel to the offices of the Department of Emigration in Valletta, Malta.

The former Australian army lieutenant colonel, who saw service in Greece, Crete, and the Middle East before commanding a battalion in Papua New Guinea, Fidock was the railway commissioner's right-hand man. Less than a month earlier, he had been working in Adelaide when the commissioner told the ex-serviceman to pack his bags for London.

The SAR had been haemorrhaging staff since the end of the war. While recruiting displaced persons sent to Australia by the International Refugee Organization (IRO) had helped the railways, that scheme finished at the end of 1950 and the SAR still needed more employees. Fidock went overseas to singlehandedly recruit 2,000 men and send them to Adelaide to fill gaps in the railway workforce. After returning to London after an unsuccessful recruiting trip to Holland, Fidock found an urgent telegram ordering him to Malta ASAP.

An article in *Times of Malta* heralded Fidock's arrival.

The Minister for Emigration and Labour in a Press notice (33) issued yesterday, states that Colonel Fidock will arrive in Malta in a few days' time for the selection of applicants for employment with the South Australian Railways ... Selected applicants will sail for Australia by SS Asturias early next month ... Those applicants who have not yet completed their preparations are urged to do so before Colonel Fidock's arrival. [Selection of migrants', Times of Malta (Mriehel, MT), 15 May 1951, p. 7.]

Fidock hoped to select up to one hundred fit young men under a Maltese group nomination (SMG13) and train them as porters and engine cleaners for the SAR. He had been told that 140 potential recruits were available. The South Australian spent three days interviewing at the Department of Emigration before flying back to Rome on Thursday. Each man was also medically checked by physicians who had accompanied Fidock to Malta, and who made doubly sure anyone sent to Australia was not colour blind (colour sense was critical to the safe running of any railway).

In June 1951, 25 Maltese men set sail on the *Asturias* from Bighi Bay, destined for Adelaide, South Australia (via Melbourne) and a job on the SAR. In July, 21 from this group presented themselves to the railways to begin training. Unfortunately, despite the hopes of the railways, most left the SAR within two months. This was the only group of Maltese men recruited by the SAR directly from the island nation. Does this story sound familiar? Was your *missier* or *nannu* — or maybe your distant *ziju* — one of these 25 men? Or maybe your relatives were interviewed by Fidock but not selected for the railways? I am writing a history of migrants in the SAR between 1948 and 1954. This includes displaced persons, Britons, Germans and, of course, a small handful of Maltese nationals. If you have information relevant to this story and are happy to share it, please get in touch so I can better understand what happened in 1951 and help tell this Maltese railway story to the world. migrant.stories@outlook.com

List of the men selected for the South Australian Railways who arrived in Australia in July 1951 on the *Asturias*.

Surname	First Names	Birthdate
ABELA	Carmelo	10/10/1931
AQUILINA	Bartholomew	19/09/1929
AQUILINA	Joseph	01/12/1927
AQUILINA	Saviour	21/09/1931

AZZOPARDI	Anthony	06/10/1930
BARBARA	Victor	08/04/1932
BEZZINA	Joseph	26/07/1930
BUTTIGIEG	Joseph	26/06/1933
CARABOTT	Carmel	20/04/1931
CARUANA	Daniel	20/05/1928
CASSAR	George	15/05/1931
CUTAJAR	Anthony	02/12/1931
DE GIORGIO	Joseph	01/09/1930
FAVA	Anthony	12/05/1930
FORMOSA	Joseph	16/05/1932
GALEA	Joseph	1930
KNAPP	Richard	14/08/1929
MAMO	John	03/04/1932
MICALLEF	Joseph	22/10/1931
MIFSUD	Anthony	09/01/1933
MULA	Carmelo	9/10/1930
PACE	Joseph	13/01/1932
SCICLUNA	Edward	27/02/1933
TABONE	Francesco Saverio	10/04/1917
ZAMMIT	Stephen	10/10/1929

Maltese migrants were involved in manual labour in South Australia, including work on infrastructure like the railways, though specific details about their role in the South Australian Railways are not extensively documented in the provided snippets. The Maltese Guild of S.A. Inc., established in 1952, indicates a significant Maltese community and their involvement in nation-building activities, which would have included railway construction and maintenance.

Post-War Boom:The post-World War II era saw a surge in Maltese migration to Australia, with many arriving under assisted passage schemes designed to boost Australia's population and workforce for economic development.

Hard Labour:Maltese migrants were often recruited for hard, manual labour jobs, including construction, mining, and work on public projects like roads and railways.

Contribution to Infrastructure:Migrants were crucial for government infrastructure projects during the 1950s, and their labour helped build the nation.

The Maltese in South Australia

Community Growth:By the mid-1960s, the Maltese community in South Australia numbered in the thousands, a testament to their establishment and integration into the state's social fabric.

Work Camps:Many migrants lived in work camps to build national infrastructure projects, highlighting their often difficult initial living conditions.

The Maltese Guild:The Maltese Guild of S.A. Inc. was formed in 1952, showcasing the organised presence and community support for Maltese migrants in the state.

Maltese Involvement in Railways

Nationwide Contribution: Maltese migrants contributed to railway construction and maintenance across Australia, including in New South Wales.

South Australian Context: Although specific records for South Australia are limited, their known contributions to building and infrastructure suggest they would have participated in similar railway projects in the state.

IRENA SENDLER: AN ICON OF WWII AND AN INSPIRATION TO MANY

Infiltrating the ghetto for the purpose of sanitary inspections, she would leave with babies and small children loaded into suitcases and or disguised as packages.

Despite being suspended in school, Irena Sendler was a brave woman who dedicated her life and even risked torture and death to save more than 2,000 Jewish children. She is remembered as an icon of the Second World War and an inspiration to many.

Following a philosophy to "save those that are drowning no matter the race, nationality or origin," Irena made many sacrifices for those in need. Switching through identities in an effort to escape the constant danger she encountered, Irena is praised even today for her heroic actions.

Helping the Jewish people was punishable by death during the Nazi regime in Europe. After the invasion of Poland, the Germans started to work ferociously toward Polish-Jewish annihilation.

Irena had a job as a social worker at the Welfare Department of the Warsaw municipality. Right after the start of World War Two, most of her co-workers resigned due to fear of the Nazis. But giving up was not an option for Irena.

Irena Sendlerowa, chairman of children section of Polish underground Council to Aid Jews in Warsaw, who saved several thousands of Jewish children during Holocaust.

Not only did she take advantage of her job to continue helping the Jewish people, but she also got the permission of the municipality to enter a ghetto and inspect the sanitary conditions. She put herself in great danger by collaborating with activists of the Jewish welfare in order to smuggle Jews out and help them hide. She managed to make more than 3,000 false documents with the help of her supporters to give to Jewish families.

Announcement of death penalty for Jews found outside the ghetto and for Poles helping Jews in any way, 1941. In 1943, Irena changed her name to Jolanta when she joined the underground organization Zegota to help those of the Jewish faith escape. She was put in charge of the Department for the Care of Jewish Children and used all of her contacts to send the children to orphanages and Christian institutions.

Infiltrating the ghetto for the purpose of sanitary inspections, she would leave with babies and small children loaded into suitcases and or disguised as packages. On one occasion, she even took a child out in a coffin. Once outside the ghetto, the children would be drilled in Christian practices as a disguise and would learn prayers to help them during difficult tims.

Irena's main goal was to keep the children safe until the end of the war. She managed to keep detailed records of the children's names and locations. Irena would write them on tissue paper, but she never kept any such information at home. The list was later put inside jars and buried underground.

But on October 20, 1943, she was arrested. Irena was tortured by the Gestapo, but despite the beatings and the horrible conditions, she did not give away any information about the children she had saved.

Irena Sendler (Poland) on Christmas Eve of 1944. Anti-nazi activist, she was recognised by the State of Israel as Righteous Among the Nations.
She was given the death sentence but luckily managed to escape with her life since her friends from Zegota bribed officers. Even after everything Irena had been through, she rejoined Zegota and continued her mission of saving lives, using yet another a different name.
Irena started to work as a nurse after the end of the war. She also made a great effort to return the children to their families, but most of them had been killed in concentration camps.
The story of Irena is truly an inspirational one, and many people still wonder at how this woman managed to save more than 2,000 children.

Sendler with some people she saved as children, Warsaw, 2005.Photo: Mariusz Kubik CC BY 3.0
Her acts of heroism remained unknown for some time since the Communists in Poland would not recognize her. However, she later received the title of Righteous Among the Nations by the Yad Vashem in 1965. In order to honor her and her story, a tree was also planted in 1983 in the Garden of the Righteous Among Nations.
The full background of Irena Sendler was discovered in 1999 by four students at Uniontown High School, Kansas. They went on to write a play called *Life in a Jar*, which won the 2000 Kansas State National History Day competition.
The teacher, Norman Conard, and the four students Elizabeth Cambers, Megan Stewart, Sabrina Coons, and Janice Underwood, have been internationally recognized since then for bringing Irena Sendler's story back into the public eye. Irena once confessed how her parents gave her a wise lesson. "I was taught by my father that when someone is drowning you don't ask if they can swim, you just jump in and help." She certainly applied such teachings to the rest of her life, and thousands of children were able to grow up because of her brave deeds.

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FRIENDS OF VALLETTA
City of Chichester - Valletta Capital of Malta

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Members of Friends of Valletta, also non-members and guests are invited to Annual Dinner
Chichester College Thursday 23rd October 2025 6pm start
Cost : Members £30; non-members and guests £32 Includes a glass of wine on arrival
You are asked to let Anne Scicluna know on the form below, together with your menu choice before 7th October, as the college needs notice to order the food.
Please pay by BACS to this account : *BACS details: Friends of Valletta; Sort code 60-03-08, Account number 81138695, Reference: 'dinner'*
Friends of Valletta Annual Dinner 23rd October 2025 Name/s Menu choice
Please contact
Anne Scicluna <annescic.plus.com> before 7th October)

DEAR FRIEND
IF YOU HAVE AN INTERESTING STORY TO TELL SHARE IT WITH YOUR MALTESE FRIENDS ALL OVER THE WORLD. WE WOULD LIKE TO READ IT ON THIS JOURNAL.

Leaving Malta for Australia 22nd. September 1965
A sad day for many emigrants

My Love of Ships Malta to Australia on MS Skaubryn September, 1955

Joe Briffa – Member, Peninsula Ships Society

My earliest childhood memory is that of being in a big crowd in my mother's arms at Gardiola Gardens in my birth city of Senglea Malta, overlooking the magnificent Grand Harbour. I think it was sometime before my second birthday in 1945. I realised years later as an adult that the event was the best birthday present I could possibly have been given.

I recall much noise, people cheering, endless fireworks and continuous sounds of ships' horns. As I looked down from the gardens onto the water, my childhood brain could only wonder at the magnificence of so many ships of all description, and brightly lit, moored between Senglea, Dockyard Creek, Valletta (the capital city) Fort St Angelo, Marsa, Kalkara and the Breakwater entry to the Grand Harbour. I realised much later in my youth, the reason why my mother had been pushing my arm up above my head and opening my second and third fingers to form the sign of a "V".

It was indeed what everybody else was doing, and the reason was that the crowd was celebrating **VE Day** – the allies' victory of the war in Europe. With Malta and Senglea in particular, as well as other cities having been so vastly devastated by the relentless bombing by the AXIS alliance – Malta was the most bombed place on earth in history - the occasion would have been (and of course was) the most exhilarating and welcome outcome imaginable. At last, after years of horror, death, destruction and deprivation, the Maltese could return to a semblance at least, of normality.

MS Skaubryn

MS Skaubryn, I am sure now, that the experience at Gardiola Gardens sowed the seeds in my childhood mind of my love of ships. It was a love that grew as I grew, and that remained with me to this day. Indeed, it was the reason why I joined the PSS after reading an article in the Mornington Peninsula Magazine, written by our President, Maurie Hutchinson. The article was about the Orient liner Orcades. The featured photograph of this beautiful ship, immediately took me back to my childhood and the wonderful memories of the many occasions I sat on the bastions around our house in Senglea overlooking the harbour, admiring the very same ship moored at Valletta just a few hundred metres away. Those memories among myriad others of so many other beautiful ships of all kinds, among them an array of Royal Navy warships as well as Merchant Navy vessels, passenger liners, aircraft carriers, destroyers, landing barges, tankers, mine sweepers, tug-boats, ferries etc. Even the Royal Yacht Britannia that was literally moored just 200 to 300 or so metres away from our bedroom window.

Our house in Senglea in the early 1950's faced Dockyard Creek with Fort St Angelo across the other side. The stretch of water in between was a constant hive of activity with every sort of watercraft imaginable. From as I mentioned, the Royal Yacht, to an array of RN warships of all types and size. The Valletta to Senglea ferry

was the most constant "traveller' which enabled my mates and me, frequent opportunities to swim out to meet it on its way to Valletta, touch it, kick ourselves away from it as it moved, and then make our way to its rear into its turbulent propeller driven whirly-pool wake. This was a fantastic experience spinning us around for a short while until the wake subsided. We would then swim out to the numerous buoys to which the big ships were moored to sunbake until it was time to swim back to shore for a drink, lunch or supper. On occasions, we would also swim out to the RN ships, where the sailors would allow us to go on board and share some of their food, drinks, sweets and chocolate. It was indeed, a fantastic childhood!

My love of ships was further enhanced by the fact that my father was an officer in the RFA (Royal Fleet Auxiliary) – the British merchant navy – and served on RFA Sea Salvor, a salvage vessel which in 1954 with HMS Barhill, was involved in the retrieval of the remains of the Comet jet airliner Fog Alyp – Yoke Peter, that crashed into the Mediterranean off the coast of Elba. Fog Alyp – Yoke Peter was one of several Comets – the first passenger jet airliners – to crash. The salvage operation in 1954 eventually led to the solving of the mystery surrounding the reasons why these planes were crashing. It was discovered after the salvage, that minute cracks along the window surrounds continued to grow to the point where the pressure caused a break and the fuselage to collapse under pressure. As a result of my father's involvement in the salvage, I am the proud owner of a Commendation I inherited from him that is signed by Lord Louis Mountbatten, that my father was given as part of the team involved in the salvage of Yoke Peter. In addition, my father also took me on several Sea Salvor exercises for several days at a time, which I absolutely loved. I got to have breakfast, lunch and dinner with the captain and the officers - with my own napkin ring – and slept in Dad's cabin. In particular, I was able to witness live, HMS Cumberland firing torpedoes off its aft deck into to sea. Sea Salvor would then retrieve the blank test-torpedo and crane it onto the deck for tests. Another test was the firing off the coast of Malta, of a French version of the V1 rocket-bomb – a replica of the one the Germans used on London during the war. Like the torpedo test, the jet-propelled "bomb" – *see image below* - would be lifted onto Sea Salvor for tests.

A further embedding of my love of ships was my brother's joining of the Royal Navy as a 14 year old. He and three of his mates were the first Maltese boys to do so and the event was accordingly reported widely in various publications including the Times of Malta. They spent their first week or so at Fort St Angelo which was at the time a Royal Navy shore establishment, before being transferred to HMS Ganges in the UK. Coincidentally, my grandfather, also served at some time at Fort SA, so as you can see, there must be something in the genes connecting me to ships. I believe that my father's brother, worked for Lord Mountbatten as a civilian in Malta.

All of this background over the years instilled in me a wish that one day I would travel in one of the beautiful ocean liners that I saw and admired so much. Although I had visited many ships on "open days" most often RN ships, it was the ocean liners that I yearned to travel on, and to visit some wonderful distant destination, about which I could only read or be told about by others – mainly my father who had travelled extensively.

Well, my wish eventually became a reality. My father declared that the family needed to emigrate to another country with better prospects. He had travelled to South Africa looking for better work opportunities and remained there for what seemed at the time to be a very long time. He toyed with the idea of having the whole family join him there but with the troubles in SA with the Mau Mau uprising he decided it was too dangerous. As a result, on his return to Malta, he proposed to choose one of three countries as a destination - Canada, Australia or USA. We had friends in the latter and relatives in the other two. In the end and I think very wisely, it was decided that we should come to Melbourne where my two aunties had emigrated to previously.

After much activity preparing for the big trip, with me repeatedly seeking my father's reassurance that people in Australia spoke English and not some foreign language that I cold not speak, and tying up all the loose ends that come with such a big move, the day finally arrived.

Although the journey was quite a dramatic one, it is rarely mentioned online or in other links, newspapers etc. In fact, the voyage could easily have become one of the great shipping disasters of modern times. It was on this voyage that the ship could quite easily have sunk in the Indian Ocean off the coast of Aden where

indeed, Skaubryn ultimately met its fate just three years later in 1958. Eerily, that latter event occurred almost in the same spot as the event during our voyage in September1955. Although only twelve years old and it was such a long time ago, I remember the frightening event as if it was yesterday. It started with a woman running through the passageways on the lower deck screaming that the ship was on fire. I recall that we were told to put on our life jackets - doubtless as a precaution – albeit that it would have made no difference if the ship had sunk, given that there was a huge sea resulting from monsoon winds with waves so high and strong, that I doubt anyone would have survived. Indeed, my father who was a long-serving seaman had looked extremely worried by the state of the sea and the effect it was having on the ship. I remember asking him what the "creaking" sound the ship was making before the fire and why he looked so worried. He told me it was caused by the ship being raised to the top of a wave amidships and the weight on either side of the crest of the wave and the ship was stressing the rivets holding the iron plates together. It took me no time to realise, the potential for the ship to break in two! Needless to say, that fear, coupled with what we now knew was happening in the engine room (where the fire had started) had us praying for a miracle. Fortunately for all of us, the fire was put out but the rough sea continued unabated for some time. If that was not enough, we were then told that the ship had lost one of its propellers after which the ship drifted in the Indian Ocean for around what seemed a very long time. That meant that the scheduled 27day voyage to Melbourne was stretched out to 33 days.

Although I remember clearly that when we eventually docked in Melbourne the ship was standing at a quite serious angle, I am not sure whether the list was caused in the Indian ocean and or whether it was the result of the advised loss of a propeller, or after we left Perth for Melbourne somewhere in the Great Australian Bight. I do recall seeing a newspaper report on that situation showing a guy lighting another guy's cigarette with both standing at a precarious angle due to the ship's list. I have not been able to locate a copy of that report, but would dearly love to do so.

Despite the fear caused by the events south of Aden, the voyage itself was a great adventure for a 12-year-old child. I loved all the great activity and roaming around the myriad nooks and crannies of the ship and overall, had a great time. Not so for my mother and sister, who spent most of the trip in our cabin suffering chronic seasickness.

Which reminds me; one day I decided that they could do with some fresh sea air. So, very smartly, I looked out at the lovely sky out of our porthole and decided to open it to let in some air and a sea breeze. I then turned back to walk out of the cabin when I heard an almighty "whoosh" and was knocked out of the cabin by a huge body of sea water that hit my back! I had not realized that our cabin was just above the water line and when the ship rolled to the side of our cabin, our porthole was submerged and the pressure of seawater caused my quick exit from our cabin. I very quickly made a return to the porthole to close it off. Needless to say, the cabin was completely flooded and took much time and effort to dry everything in it - including my mother and sister. I was never allowed to forget the incident well into my adult life in Australia, but always chuckled to myself when reminded of it.

Regrettably, the food on offer for those migrants on the lower decks was very poor indeed and the water so horrible one could hardly drink it. Not so for those on the upper decks who enjoyed great food, wine and beverages. I recall one day when there were so many complaints about the food - eg: little white paper cups of glue-like gelatine-looking and tasting substance, accompanied by raw almonds - still in their green skin - being served as dessert! On that occasion, a fellow passenger from Malta who had lived in Australia for some 50 years, got a few other disgruntled passengers to go to the edges and other parts of the long table, each to grab a section of the table cloth, folded it over the "food", drinks, cutlery and crockery, and marched the lot out to the edge of the deck and through the lot overboard, all to the loud cheering of the passengers! We did notice some improvement in the food after that but not much!

For the life of me, I cannot understand why this particular voyage has not been the subject of much that has been said and written publicly, about Skaubryn.

Newspaper reports of Skaubryn's demise in 1958 - 3 years after our voyage and in the same area in the Indian Ocean where it had also caught fire during our own voyage.

Frank and Joe were 2 of these children. Joe Chetcuti

SENT TO US BY ONE OF OUR READERS

This is a photo of a band in Malta Georgina's brother Fred said that their father played in the band and he is somewhere on the L/H side. The band may be from Hamrun or Valletta. Some sad news her brother Frank Schembri passes away on the 20 Aug 2025 at the age of 86 This is a photo of him with his mother and brother Joe on they are on their way to Bindoon Western Australia. Some time ago you did a story about Maltese Migrant Children ON THIS bulletin who were sent out from Malta after WW2 to Australia some 350 boys and girls.

Bindoon (St. Joseph's Farm and Trade School) was a Christian Brothers institution in Western Australia that housed Maltese child migrants between 1947 and 1966 as part of formal child migration schemes. These unaccompanied child migrants were sent to Bindoon as part of a system where religious or charitable organizations worked with governments to provide homes and opportunities in Australia, though many experienced abuse, neglect, and hardship.

Key Information

- **Institution:** Bindoon (St. Joseph's Farm and Trade School), established in 1936 by the Christian Brothers near Perth, Western Australia.
- **Duration of Maltese Child Migration to Bindoon:** From 1947 to 1966.
- **Purpose:** To provide farm and trade education for child migrants from Malta and Britain, alongside Australian state wards.
- **Experiences:** Many former child migrants from institutions like Bindoon report experiences of institutional trauma, neglect, overwork, physical and sexual abuse, and a profound loss of identity and connection to family.
- **Child Migration Schemes:** Formal schemes facilitated the transfer of children from institutions in Britain and Malta to Australia.
- **"Out of Home" Care:** Bindoon served as a facility for children requiring out-of-home care before its transition to a Catholic agricultural high school in 1967.
- **Redress and Apologies:** Following revelations of widespread abuse, the Christian Brothers and the government established redress schemes to support survivors.

On 16 November 2009 Prime Minister Kevin Rudd made a formal apology on behalf of the nation to Australian-born children in care, often known as 'Forgotten Australians', and to former child migrants who had been subject to appalling deprivations and abuse while growing up in 'out-of-home care' across Australia in the 20th-century.

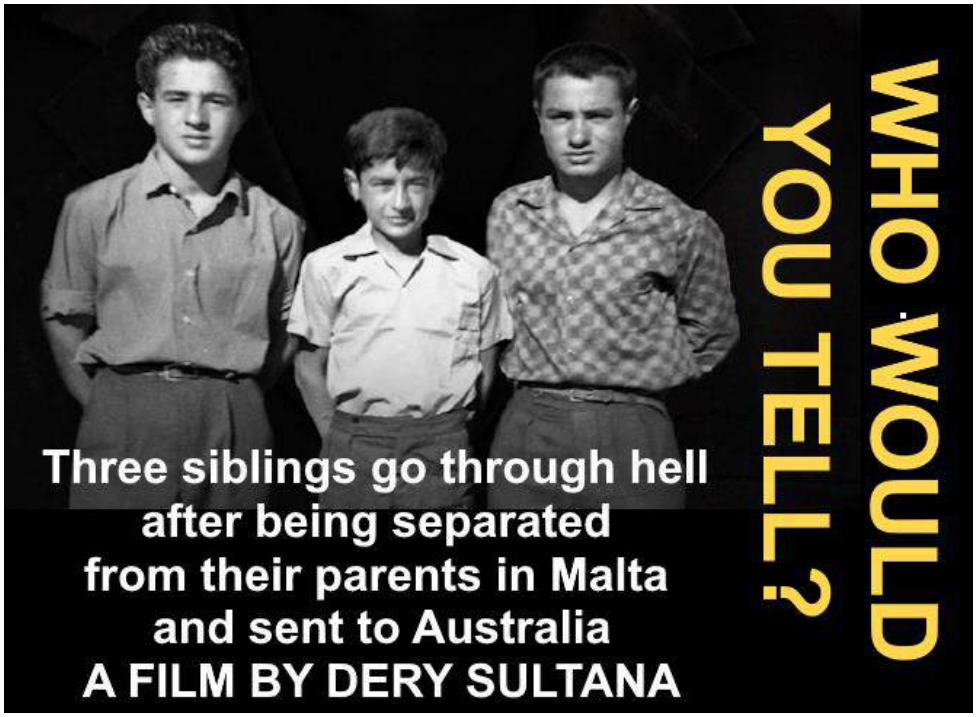
Here is the speech delivered by the Prime Minister Kevin Rudd, 2009:

We come together today to deal with an ugly chapter in our nation's history ... To say to you, the Forgotten Australians, and those who were sent to our shores as children without your consent, that

we are sorry. Sorry – that as children you were taken from your families and placed in institutions where so often you were abused. Sorry – for the physical suffering, the emotional starvation and the cold absence of love, of tenderness, of care. Sorry – for the tragedy, the absolute tragedy, of childhoods lost – childhoods spent instead in austere and authoritarian places … Sorry – for all these injustices to you … who were placed in our care … And let us also resolve this day that this national apology becomes a turning point in our nation's story. A turning point for shattered lives. A turning point for governments at all levels and of every political hue and colour to do all in our power to never let this happen again. For the protection of children is the sacred duty of us all.
National Apology to the Forgotten Australians and Former Child Migrants, Great Hall at Australian Parliament House

Child migrants

These children lived in homes alongside migrant children who had been sent to Australia, mostly from the United Kingdom, but also from Malta. From around 1912 to the late 1960s, approximately 7,000 child migrants were sent to institutions throughout Australia.
Before the Second World War, the rationale was to remove children from overcrowded British welfare institutions and provide them with farming or domestic skills. After the war it was 'Empire settlement', which aimed to increase the Australian population through bringing in British-born citizens. Child migrants were sometimes illegitimate or abandoned children, while others were removed from their parents and families through deception. Almost all came from disadvantaged backgrounds. Child migrants were usually eight to 13 years of age on their arrival in Australia, although many were younger than this, some as young as three. Child migrants were sent to charitable or welfare institutions across the country, often run by Christian religious orders.



DESTITUTE, THEN TRAUMATISED:

documentary reveals life of Maltese child migrants

Film tells fate of three brothers who were part of 1960s emigration scheme

Raphael (nine), Manny (13) and Peter Ellul (15) found themselves on a ship to Australia in 1960.

In the 1960s, three brothers from Malta were separated at a young age. They ended up in Tardun, Western Australia, as migrants forming part of a child migration scheme.

Their story forms the basis of *Who Would You Tell?,* a documentary by Dery Sultana that will be screened in Gozo on June 21 and 23, with a Q&A screening taking place on June 21.

Co-produced by Fish Isle Films and Strada Reali, the documentary tells the brothers' story as the trio - Raphael, Peter and Manny - reflect on their stolen childhood and how the sexual, emotional and physical abuse they experienced shaped their entire life.

Raphael's immigration document.

What was supposed to be a second chance turned into a lifetime of regret, pain and missed opportunities that deeply affected their journey to adulthood. The documentary draws on personal accounts, archival footage and interviews to paint a vivid picture of the brothers' ordeal. Through candid conversations, the film explores not only the trauma they endured but also the resilience they showed in facing their past. Viewers are offered an insight into the emotional scars that linger and the process of coming to terms with a childhood marked by loss and hardship.

Raphael's immigration document.

"We often hear many success stories of migrants who found their fortune in Australia, yet there have also been many other less fortunate migrants to Australia, not least of all the Tardun brothers," says the director.

The *Flaminia* en route to Australia

"These young boys were shipped to Australia by the Catholic Church to help them escape the ravages of Malta – which was the most bombed nation in World War II. What was meant to be a paradise with a bright future turned out to be a living hell filled with exploitation and constant abuse. "What happened to them as children devastated their lives."

Child abuse should never be swept under the carpet. Sultana noted that shining a light on the brothers' suffering did not make their memories any less traumatic, but through their testimony there is hope that one can prevent these abuses from happening again.

Driven by his own experience of clerical abuse suffered as a boy, combined with the fact that he is himself a Maltese migrant, Sultana has documented this dark chapter in Maltese-Australian migration history.

"At long last these three scarred individuals have the opportunity to share their childhood ordeals with the world," says the director.

Child abuse is one of those issues that's very difficult to talk about, enshrouded in guilt and shame. While child abuse may be committed behind closed doors, Sultana believes they should never be swept under the carpet.

Tardun in Australia where the boys were sent as children.

Through interviews and archive materials, Sultana navigates back through their memories of abuse, homesickness and severed family ties.

Their story unravels the historic failure of a scheme backed by two governments and the broken promises of the Catholic Organisation that received them.

The documentary features historian Henry Frendo, former prime minister Lawrence Gonzi, and the late monsignor Philip Calleja.

A SMALL DONATION WILL KEEP THIS JOURNAL ALIVE - THANKS

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MALTESE FEAST TRADITION IN SPAIN

Mark Micallef Perconte - Malta

As a Maltese festa enthusiast myself, I have never imagined that a Maltese festa tradition would find itself in a feast in Spain! It was in September 2022 when the rector of the *Hermandad* of *Nuestra Señora de la Asunción y Santísimo Rosario* contacted me, telling me that they were coming to Malta to discuss a project related to their feast. They wanted a set of decorative hanging banners and another set of eight hanging banners for their celebration.

The first step was creating a design for these banners. I took them to Jeremy Cachia, who designs many hanging banners for Maltese feasts. Jeremy completed the designs and enlargements by March 2023. Since time was short and the brotherhood wanted this project to be ready for the anniversary year of the Dogma of the Assumption (2025), several artists needed to work on it.

Henry Attard from Qormi sewed the pavilions, while Jeremy Cachia, who had prepared the design, did the shading of the same pavilions. Alfred and Sharon Bonnici sewed the banners, while Ryan Stivala did the shading of the banners. Everything was completed around March 2025. By the end of March, the rector of the brotherhood himself came to Malta to meet with everyone who had been involved in the project.

When the work arrived in Spain, there was still the final work to be done. Ricardo Pueyo, an artist from Cantillana and a member of the brotherhood, painted the wooden tops of the pavilions and banners, as well as images of the apostles in the centre of each banner.

Calle Martín Rey was inaugurated on 13th August 2025. I was present, and I was amazed by the positive reaction of the people of Cantillana. The number of videos and photos that appeared on social media in Spain, especially in Andalusia, was remarkable. The climax was reached on August 15th when, shortly after midnight, the statue of Santa Maria passed for the first time below these valances.

This is a tribute to the Maltese festa tradition and a name for our country.

FROM MALTA TO MELBOURNE TONY GRIMA'S STORY

The Malta-Australia Migration Agreement was signed on 31 May 1948. Amongst the first Maltese to arrive in Australia under the agreement was a young shipwright, Anthony Grima.

One of six children, Anthony (Tony) Grima left school aged 14. Tony won an apprenticeship at His Majesty's Naval Dockyard. The British Mediterranean fleet was based in Malta and the dockyard was the islands' major employer. Apprenticeships there were highly sought after.

Tony learned his trade during the War. There was a lot of work. Tony remembered 40 or 50 shipwrights alone would repair a bombed or torpedoed ship.

Tony completed his apprenticeship in 1946 and continued as a 'journeyman shipwright'.

However, the work was beginning to dry up. Sensing what might be coming, Tony began making plans to migrate to Australia. Tony already had an aunt living at Yallourn North in Victoria. In late 1947, he applied for a British passport and undertook a pre-migration medical examination.

Tony was retrenched in early July 1948. Fortunately, he had already been accepted under the new Malta-Australia Migration Agreement. This meant he only had to pay £10 for his passage.

On 15 July 1948, Tony departed for Australia on the *Asturias*. He was part of the second group of assisted migrants leaving under the Agreement. Some of Tony's family and friends farewelled him at the quay. However, his mother was too distraught to do so.

Tony arrived in Melbourne on 10 August 1948 – his 23th birthday. The inland coal mining town of Yallourn North subsequently proved to be quite a culture shock. Tony wondered 'what the hell have I done?'

Moving to Melbourne, Tony found work as a shipwright on the Melbourne waterfront. He initially lived in a West Melbourne boarding house. During his time there, Tony discovered Australian Rules Football. He became a lifelong supporter of North Melbourne, which played at the nearby Arden St oval. In April 1950, Tony was seriously injured at work and hospitalised for nearly a year. Later, he won £3,000 in compensation. He used part for a house deposit and some for a trip back to Malta in 1953. In Malta, Tony's experiences were written up in the national press to encourage others to migrate to Australia. According to Tony, Australia was the 'best place in the world for the emigrant'.

One of the things Tony liked most about Australia was its egalitarian spirit. His favourite example of this was down at the pub: the person having a beer next to him could be a lawyer, office worker or labourer. Tony felt Australia's egalitarianism set it apart from other countries like England. Tony was an active trade unionist for decades.

What Tony missed most about Malta was his family. One inventive way they overcame the 'tyranny of distance' was through tape recordings. Relatives would record their news – big and small – and post it to Tony. He loved hearing their voices, even though sometimes his relatives would tearfully ask 'when are you coming back?'. Tony never went back to Malta after 1953. However, in the 1960s two of his children spent several months there with their grandparents and other relatives.

LUXURY TRAVEL COLLECTION & VISIT MALTA BRING 'A TASTE OF MALTA' TO MELBOURNE, SYDNEY NEXT MALTESE AUSTRALIAN CHEF SHAUN DELIA AND VISIT MALTA

The Luxury Travel Collection (LTC) in partnership with Visit Malta hosted an exclusive "A Taste of Malta" event in Melbourne, immersing members in one of the Mediterranean's most captivating emerging luxury destinations.

Held at Bar Jayda, the evening featured a vibrant culinary journey curated by acclaimed chef Shane Delia, who brought the island's flavours to life through dishes inspired by his Maltese heritage and recent travels.

Guests were also joined by Mario Farrugia Borg, Director of Visit Malta for Australia & New Zealand, who shared insights into Malta's growing luxury appeal, cultural heritage, and unique positioning as a destination of choice for discerning travellers.

The Melbourne success sets the stage for the next event in the series, to be held on 16 September at the Sydney Seafood School, where Maltese chef Patrick Dugo will lead an immersive culinary experience, alongside further insights from Visit Malta.

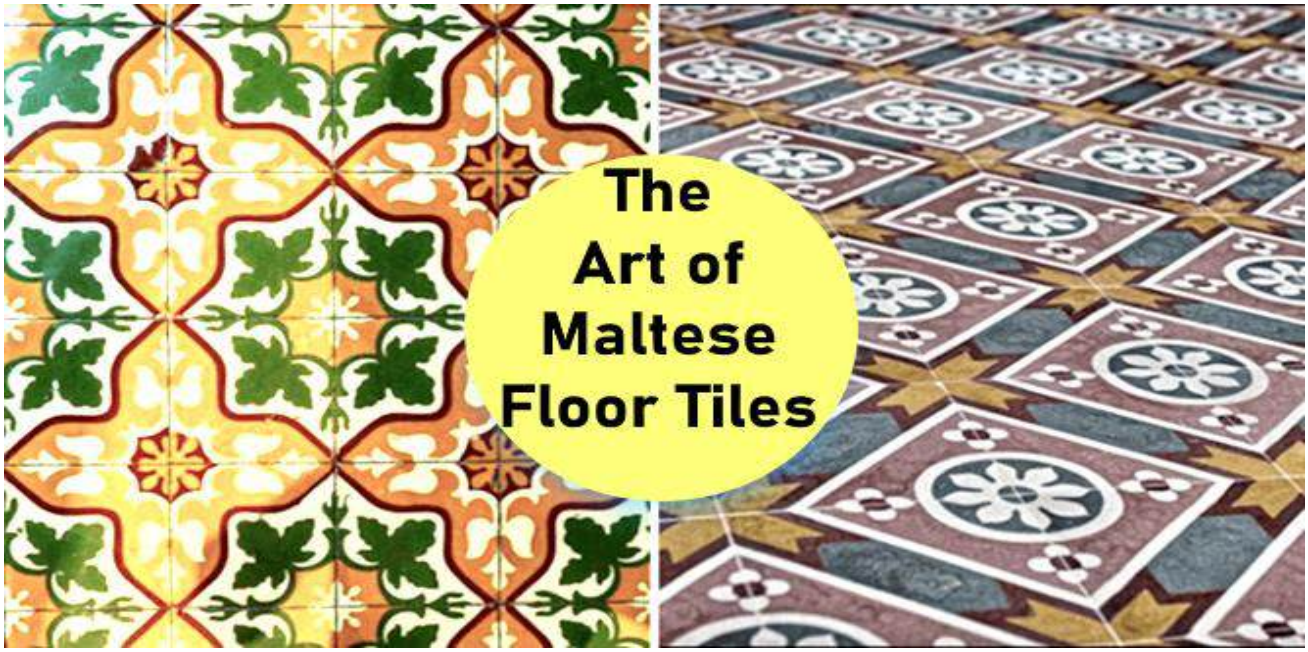
"It was fantastic to bring our members together in Melbourne for such an engaging evening with Visit Malta," said Lisa Wright, LTC's Head of Events.

"Events are essential in connecting our community with leading partners and destinations, ensuring our members remain at the forefront of luxury travel trends and the hottest destinations. By equipping our members with deep destination knowledge, they are empowered to better serve their clients with unique and meaningful experiences."

The events come as Australian interest in Malta continues to rise, with Australian travellers to Malta during Q1 2025 up 35% compared to Q1 2024, according to Visit Malta. Increasingly, travellers are seeking a less crowded alternative to Italy or Greece that still offers an authentic luxury travel experience, and Malta is stepping up its offering to meet this demand.

In response, LTC has expanded its Hotels de Luxe offering in Malta, while more Cruises de Luxe partners now include the archipelago in their itineraries. Several of LTC's Experiences and Touring partners are also designing new programs to showcase the country's rich culture, history, and breathtaking coastlines.

Adding to Malta's allure is its emergence as a gastronomic destination. The recent Michelin Guide Malta 2025 highlights several esteemed restaurants, further elevating the island's profile with luxury travellers seeking world-class dining experiences.



Did you've ever had a chance to admire the traditional tiled floors which adorn the Maltese houses? Have you ever wondered how are these traditional artworks are made?

Maltese TRADITIONAL tiles display a wonderful kaleidoscope of colour. A magnificent collection of patterns and designs, they offer something wonderful with their exquisite symmetrical shapes.. Although traditional Maltese tiles are mostly adorned amongst older buildings, they are sure to brighten up any home. The Maltese Cross of St.John is also well-known to be featured in many patterns.

The traditional patterns used years ago, are still in demand nowadays, together with the colours used, with the most common ones being white, green, red and black. The original ingredients used to produce a Maltese tile were beach sand, white cement and colour pigments. The only ingredient that has been changed in today's practice is the beach sand, which is now replaced with powdered marble.

The main tools an artisan needs are:

'Il-Plakka' – a mould with a particular design and pattern.

'Il-Kwadru' – a support used to keep the colour mixtures together as they set.

'It-Tampun' – a smooth back plate which is placed over the mixture where pressure is applied.

The consistency of the colour mixture must be just right, in order to achieve the finest result. The temperature, humidity and mixture variations can all lead to alteration of the final result.

Each colour is carefully poured individually from the 'Sasla' in each section of the designed mould. It is then covered with a substance known as 'Putraxx', which is a kind of fine cement to help soak up any excess water to prevent colours from running into each other. It is also covered with another kind of cement known as 'Milanc', which unlike the 'Putraxx' is damp enough to help the tile to set. A level is then used to scrap off the excess, and finally placed under the pressing machine, this replaced the original method, by which pressure used to be applied manually.

Maltese tiles were also given very interesting names, by which the artisan could distinguish between one design and another. The most common ones are:

'Sieq it-Tigiega' (hen's leg) 'Ghajn il-Baqra' (cow's eye) 'Il-Bettiegha' (the melon)

Watch this space

The Conductor

'Thank You' Joe Camilleri for your 44 years of service to the MQVB

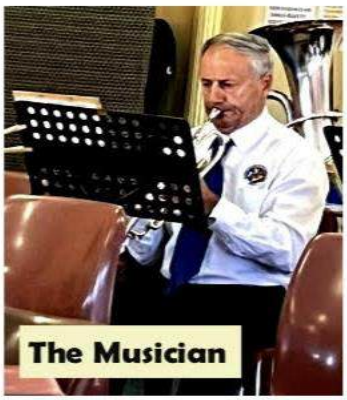
The Assistant MD

Joe Camilleri was one of the first musicians to join the Maltese Queen of Victories Band, joining in 1981 as a Trumpet player, which he learnt to play in the Service. He was always a lead trumpet player and he performed at most of the band's performances here in SA and in Victoria. Joe has served in the band committee as Band Sargeant in the early days, a job fitting for his disciplined military service approach. In this time he has seen many a Musical Director (MD) and musicians come and go. Joe was the assistant to at least four MD's. Much later, when the band was getting low in numbers and needed a leader, he became the Band's President, which he held for a good number of years.

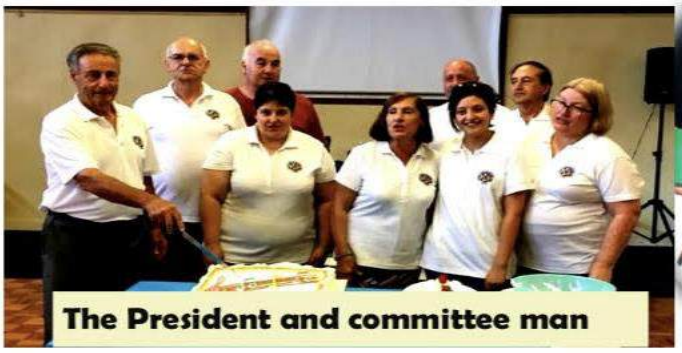
As Joe was the Assistant MD, and there was no sign of a new MD, he also took over the MD's role until this year, where the committee felt that a change was needed. Joe saw that it was a good time for him to take a well deserved break from the band and he resigned from the committee and sadly, from being an active playing member aswell, which is disappointing.

We take this opportunity to thank Joe for the many hours he spent as a musician, committee man, fund raiser and conductor of a band that is decreasing in the number of musicians. The responsibility of having the band on his shoulders would have taken a stressful toll at the best of times.

We hope that Joe can rest and recharge his batteries, knowing that he is always welcome to come back and continue enjoying to play the music and his friends in the band. Joe, we thank you and appreciate your good work and big efforts being a part of the MQVB and for stepping up in time of need.



The Musician



The President and committee man

The Smiles

Cheers!

Newsletter Published by the Maltese Queen of Victories Band SA Inc. – Ray Grima, Editor

Thank you to 'Lillian Camilleri' ex-Secretary

The MQVB would also like to take this opportunity to thank Lillian Camilleri ex-Secretary and Committee member of the band. Lillian has spent countless hours behind the scenes, as Secretaries usually do. For the last 44 years she has been the supportive wife of her musician Husband, President and Conductor, Joe, and in the early days, she was the supportive mother to her children who were also musicians in the band. Besides taking on the role of Secretary, one would see Lillian week in, week out, in the kitchen with others preparing snacks, cooking pastizzi, cake, and hot refreshments for the musicians at breaktime. Helped with Bunnings Fundraisers with her husband Joe and others. At Maltese Community events held at the Lockleys Parish Hall she helped out with the purchases of food and refreshments tickets, usually with her sister in law Tina. ***Always ready to lend a hand.***

You are missed

Lillian has a calm, kind and happy nature, she is a friend to everyone that knows her. She is always welcoming and has been a big support to the band and to the Maltese Community in her working and voluntary life. Like her husband Joe, she too, saw the need to get involved in the band Committee to ensure that the band continues to be managed properly and keeps on moving in the right direction. She has been a mentor, a guide and a friend to others in the Committee and I'm sure she knows that although she will not be returning in the committee to also take a well deserved break, the MQVB appreciates all that she has done for the band and is always welcome.

Thank you Lillian for your friendship and support to the band.

Newsletter Published by the Maltese Queen of Victories Band SA Inc. Editor – Ray Grima

THE NEW PRESIDENT JOHN MURPHY KMG

The Order of Malta Australia is pleased to announce the appointment of John Murphy as our new President. John succeeds the Hon. James Douglas KHD, who served with great distinction since 2019, guiding the Association through a period of consolidation and renewal.

John has been an active and dedicated member of the Order of Malta since 2017, contributing significantly to the Order's charitable initiatives both regionally, nationally and abroad as our National Hospitaller and also serving on the Grand Hospitaller's council. Prior to his appointment as President, he led the expansion of the Association's charitable works to include social engagement programs for vulnerable community groups, expanded outreach services to the homeless and initiated annual camps for disabled youth. His leadership in coordinating nationwide volunteer efforts and developing partnerships with Catholic and community organisations has also been critical to the success and growth of the Association in recent years.

Professionally, John brings decades of executive experience as CEO and Chairman of one of Australia's largest privately owned media companies. His extensive background in strategic growth and development, operational management, and team leadership positions him uniquely to navigate the challenges and opportunities facing the Order of Malta Australia in the years ahead.

As President, John utilises his skills and talents to continue driving the mission of the Order, focusing on *tuitio fidei et obsequium pauperum*—the defence of the faith and service to the poor and the sick. His vision for the future includes enhancing formation for new members and chaplains, increasing volunteer engagement and continuing to grow the Association's activities to benefit some of the most marginalised members of communities. He will also represent the Australian Association at both national and international events and collaborations, and ensure its activities continue to align and promote the Order's global mission. We congratulate John on this appointment and offer our prayers and full support as he begins this important service in the name of the Australian Association of the Order of Malta.

ORDER OF MALTA

THE MALTESE JOURNAL SUPPORTS
The Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of Saint John of Jerusalem, of Rhodes and of Malta

STEDINA MILL-FATHERS MALTIN TA' NSW
Il-Kommunità Maltija kollha hija mistiedna għall-festa tradizzjonali tal-Vitorja gewwa Sydney, nhar il-Ħadd 14ta' Settembru 2025 Fis-2.30 pm

tibda l-purċissjoni fejn jingħad ir-Ruzarju,
wara tibda l-quddiesa kkonċelebrata
fil-Katidral ta' St Mary's College Street Sydney.
Iċ-Ċelebrant Prinċipali ser ikun
Rev Fr John Taliana MSSP

Ejjew u ġibu magħkom 'il-familja u l-ħbieb. Dawk li ghandhom xi għaqda, ejjew u ġibu magħkom il-bnadar jew standardi tal-għaqda tagħkom. Aħsbu kmieni biex issibu post.
Kulħadd huwa mistieden biex jattendi biex nitolbu flimkien mas-saċerdoti Maltin.
Jekk jogħġobkhom aħsbu kmieni.
Grazzi ħafna lil dawk li dejjem attendew u ħadu sehem f'din iċ-ċelebrazzjoni tal-festa ta' Maria Bambina fil-Katidral ta' Sydney.

Rev Fr Tarcisio Micallef MSSP Maltese Chaplain in the Archdiocese of Sydney
Tel: 9380 8398

ORDER OF MALTA AUSTRALIA

ORDER OF MALTA CHRISTMAS CARD 2025

$50 for a pack of 10 (plus postage)

We are all living in an age that is increasingly secular and sadly Christmas cards with the image of Jesus Christ are becoming scarce. By sending loved ones a personal Christmas card celebrating the birth of Jesus you have the opportunity to respond to the challenge and effectively defend our faith with this simple gesture.

Every year since the early 1980s, the Australian Association of the Order, has been providing an Annual Christmas Card for use by Members. It always maintained the same theme, an image of the Madonna and Child Jesus with his cousin John, very familiar to us as John the Baptist, the Patron Saint of our Order. This year on the front cover we have the Madonna and Child with the young Saint John The Baptist mid 16th century by Polidoro da Lanciano (Italian, c.1515-1565).

On the back of the card is a note about the Order's history and inside there is a Christmas greeting that reads:

'May the Joy and Peace of Christmas be with you throughout the Year'

Members, Candidates and friends of the Australian Association are urged to support the spiritual and charitable work of the Order by ordering these exceptional cards.

ORDER NOW AT THE ORDER OF MALTA STORE

Orders will be despatched by 30 October 2025 onwards.

We thank the Kerry Stoeks Collection, Perth for the use of this image.

Maltese Welfare NSW Inc.

You are invited to attend a workshop morning

Seniors Mobile Phone Workshop

Learn how to use basic functions

Navigate with touchscreen, keep in contact with family, take pictures, send messages, what are apps

Guest Trainer

David Vasey

Tech Savvy Seniors

Macquarie Community College

When: **Monday 15th September 2025**

Time: **10.00am – 12.30 pm**

Where: **Dun Preca Centre - Our Lady of Peace**
198 Old Prospect Rd, Greystanes

Limited number, must register

Free entrance, just bring phone, notebook & pen

Ring Frances Montesin (02) 9631 9095 *or*
Lawrence Gatt 0404 462 344
Facebook search: Maltese Welfare in NSW

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE MALTESE SENIOR CITIZENS ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA 2025-26

New Committee

President- Godwin Gauci

Vice President

Antony Jackson

Secretary- Charles Mifsud

Treasurer – John Mangion

Members

Jane Grima

Bernadette Jackson

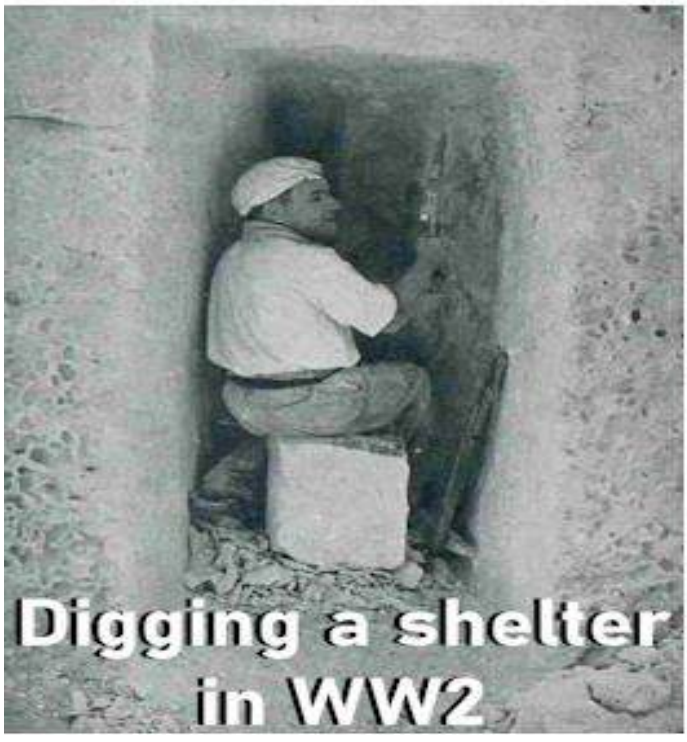
Alice Fabri

Mary Borg

Auditor and Trustee

Frank Scicluna OAM JP

PLEASE, SHOW THESE PHOTOS TO YOUR KIDS AND GRANDKIDS TO SHOW THEM THAT LIFE WAS NOT THAT EASY IN THOSE DAYS.



Show these photos to your kids and grandkids to give them a glimpse of the life in Malta in the 50s