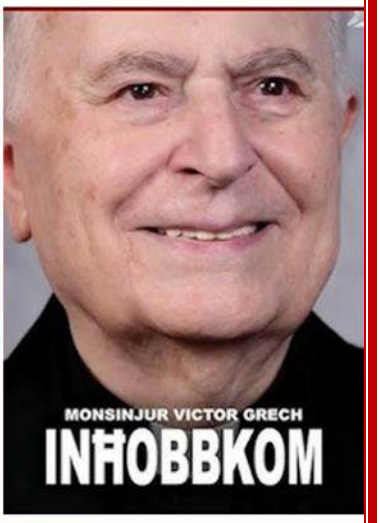
MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER

The Journal for Maltese Living Abroad

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

POPE LEO AND KING CHARLES PRAY TOGETHER AT THR VATICAN



MESSAGE FROM THE HIGH COMMISSIONER OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALTA IN AUSTRALIA CLIFFORD BORG MARKS

HIGH COMMISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALTA IN AUSTRALIA

38 Culgoa Circuit, O'Malley, ACT 2006, Canberra, ACT, Australia.
HIGH COMMISSIONER H.E. CLIFFORD BORG MARKS

As the new High Commissioner for Malta to Australia, I was very pleased when Editor Frank Scicluna asked me to contribute a message to the readers of this Journal.

I presented my credentials to H.E. the Hon. Sam Mostyn AC, Governor-General of Australia, only a few days ago, specifically on 8 October 2025.

High Commissioner Clifford Borg Marks

This was the seventh time in my career that I presented credentials as Ambassador or High Commissioner for Malta in a foreign land, but this time felt different. As I listened to the Maltese National Anthem being played on the lawn of Government House in Canberra by the assembled military band, I could not help but think of the many Maltese who have come before me to this beautiful country over the years and done so well here.

In my conversation with her, Governor-General Mostyn praised the positive contributions of the Maltese diaspora to Australian society, and this is something we can all be proud of.

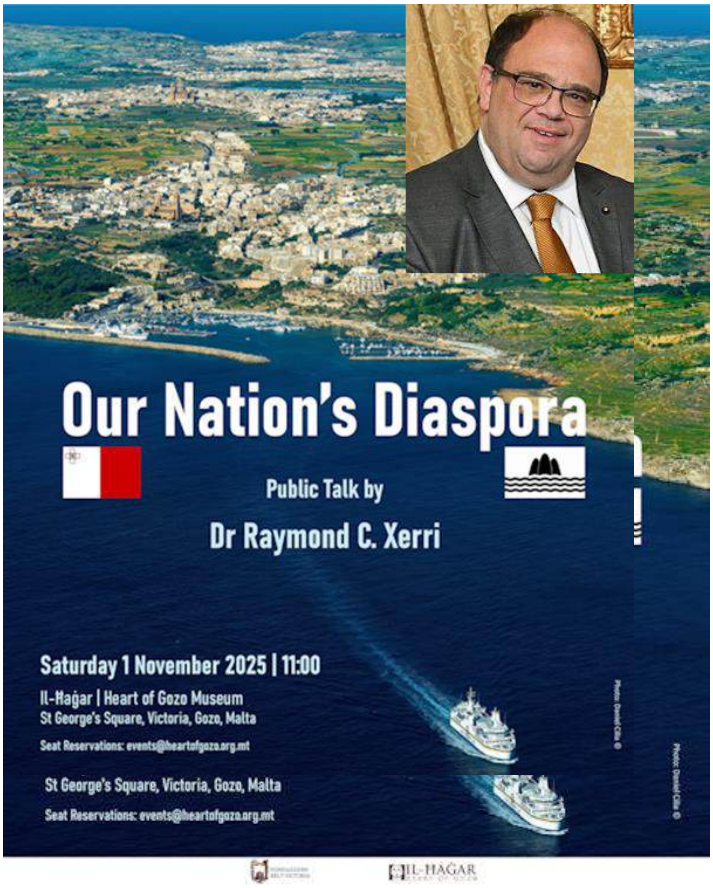
We remain committed to strengthening bilateral ties with Australia and fostering closer cooperation across a wide range of sectors. Malta and Australia share common values, including a high regard for democratic principles, the rule of law, sustainable growth and international cooperation. The High Commission will work towards the translation of these shared values into practical cooperation that strengthens dialogue, deepens institutional and community links, and delivers outcomes that keep the relationship dynamic and relevant.

Looking ahead, we plan to focus on advancing Malta's strategic objectives in Australia, including expanding trade and investment opportunities, promoting tourism and educational partnerships, encouraging collaboration in research and innovation, digital transformation and sustainability, and facilitating people-to-people exchanges.

Needless to say, the High Commission also remains committed to the maintenance of close links with the Maltese diaspora and the provision of efficient consular services to the Maltese community. I send you all my warmest regards and best wishes for health and prosperity!

The High Commissioner presenting his credentail to the Governor General

Our Nation's Diaspora



Public Talk at Il-ĦaġarThe next public talk of the Saturday morning series at Il-Ħaġar, happening on 1 st of November at 11:00 and delivered by Dr Raymond C. Xerri, should be the first in the history of our nation to present scientifically researched, data-driven estimates of how many people of Gozitan and Maltese origin live worldwide today. Global Gozo and Global Malta reveal that 410,000 Gozitans and 380,000 Maltese reside beyond our shores, making a combined diaspora of 800,000, from the first to fifth generations.

This striking reality shows that Gozo, proportionally, has one of the largest diasporas globally, while Malta ranks among the world's smallest island states with one of the highest outward populations.Beyond statistics, this lecture addresses the urgent dilemma we face: the need to embrace maturity as an 'international nation', with citizens in 171 countries and territories. It explores the economic potential of this global community, highlighting countless opportunities for mutually beneficial initiatives. Ultimately, it redefines Malta and Gozo as international peoples with far greater reach, unity, and promise than ever imagined.

Born in New York to Gozitan parents, Chevallier Dr Raymond C. Xerri is a career diplomat of 30 years with postings across five continents. He currently heads the Gozo Diaspora & International Office within the Ministry of Gozo and Planning and serves as President of Europeans Throughout The World (ETTW), representing 480 million Europeans globally. A recognised researcher with a doctorate in Gozitan Diaspora Studies, he is also an academic, author, curator and award-winning community leader.Admission is free but seat reservations are advised. For seat reservations, please send an email to events@heartofgozo.org.mt.

MALTESE NEWSLETTER
SINCE 2013
JOURNAL FOR MALTESE LIVING ABROAD
If you have a story to tell send it to us and we publish it and share it with our readers

High Commission of Malta in Canada

The High Commission is pleased to announce our collaboration with the Maltese band **Etnika**. This initiative celebrates Malta's rich cultural heritage and aims to strengthen cultural ties between Malta and Canada through music.

As part of the Cultural Diplomacy Fund supported by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Tourism of Malta, Etnika will be touring parts of Canada this November, bringing their unique blend of traditional Maltese folk and contemporary music to the following venues:

- 6 November 20:00 – Small World Centre, Toronto, ON
- 7 November 19:30 – St. Paul the Apostle Church Hall, Toronto, ON
- 8 November 14:30 – Ottawa, ON
- 9 November 20:00 – La Sala Rossa, Montreal, QC

Tickets:

• Rows 1–2: $40 • Rows 3–6: $30 • Rows 7 and above: $20 (*$25 at the door*)

Etnika has played a pivotal role in reviving Maltese folk music over the past 25 years. They toured extensively representing Malta and performed internationally in over 15 countries. Their unique sound blends traditional instruments, with contemporary, pan Mediterranean musical elements, offering a dynamic and engaging performance, broadening people's perception of their own musical identity.

We invite you to explore the following links to learn more about Etnika:

- **https://www.instagram.com/etnikamalta/?hl=en**
- **https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCf8Lzif4-rrWau1_698mWIg**

We also wish to thank **The Maltese Canadian Cultural Association** for all their assistance in Toronto and **Visit Malta** for their support.

THOUSANDS ATTEND FESTA IKEL MALTI 2025 AT TA' QALI

13 October 2025

Thousands of people attended this year's Festa Ikel Malti, which was organised by the Malta Food Agency and held on Sunday, 12 October, at Pitkalija in Ta' Qali, the government said.

The event, celebrated just days before World Food Day on 16th October, focused on promoting sustainability, local produce, and Maltese identity through food.

The festival offered families a day filled with gastronomy, music, heritage, and creativity. Visitors enjoyed exhibitions and sales of agricultural products, educational activities for children, and demonstrations highlighting the importance of fresh food and sustainability within the food chain.

Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Animal Rights Anton Refalo praised the Malta Food Agency and the turnout, stating that the event showed unity between the community and those who work to bring Maltese produce to local tables. He emphasised that food remains a central part of Maltese and Gozitan identity and commended farmers, herders, and fishermen for their dedication to providing fresh, quality produce.

Parliamentary Secretary for Fisheries, Aquaculture and Animal Rights Alicia Bugeja Said also highlighted the event's role in commemorating Malta's culinary heritage. She thanked the Malta Food Agency for its organisation, noting that Festa Ikel Malti continues to promote local and quality products thanks to the passion of Maltese and Gozitan producers.

Malta Food Agency Chief Executive Brian Vella expressed gratitude to the thousands of attendees and the more than 40 producers who took part. He stated that "this feast was not only a celebration of our products, but also of those who make them possible - the farmers, fishermen, herders and producers whose work and dedication give strength to the Maltese food sector." Vella added that the event served as "an occasion to pay tribute to the men and women who raise, harvest and create authentic products that represent the best of Malta."

The Ministry for Agriculture, Fisheries and Animal Rights and the Malta Food Agency said the high turnout reflects the growing public interest in locally sourced food and the efforts being made to promote sustainability within the agricultural sector.

STUDY BUSINESS IN MALTA'S DYNAMIC MEDITERRANEAN ENVIRONMENT

BUSINESS SCHOOL IN MALTA

Located in the heart of Malta, GBSB Global's campus offers a diverse, international environment. With over 100 nationalities represented, students enjoy a multicultural learning experience on one of Europe's most dynamic islands.

GBSB Global Business School in Malta **is one of the most awarded and internationally recognized business schools**.

Licensed as a Higher Education Institution by the Malta Further & Higher Education Authority (MFHEA), GBSB Global is accredited by ACBSP in the USA and ASIC in the UK, recognized as a 5-Star Business School by the QS Stars University Rating System and as a Microsoft Showcase School, and listed among the best international business schools in Europe by *Forbes*, *Newsweek Magazine* and *El Mundo*.

Our business school in Malta campus fosters a diverse and international learning environment, bringing together students from different parts of the world. With strong ties to Malta's key industries, including fintech, igaming, and digital innovation, we offer students unparalleled networking and career opportunities.

Our dynamic business education isn't just about textbooks and lectures – it's a passport to thinking globally, thriving in international teams, and creating strategic business plans that set you apart. Our highly regarded programs emphasize technology and innovation, giving students the skills they need to succeed in the evolving business world. Get ready to take on the business world with us! Visit - www.global-business-school.org/gbsb-global-business-school-malta/

NEWS IN BRIEF

A total of 2,089,047 passengers travelled between Malta and Gozo between July and September 2025, according to figures published by the National Statistics Office (NSO).

- Police have arrested a 45-year-old Croatian national and seized 76 kilograms of suspected cocaine with an estimated street value of €9 million after an investigation into "suspicious activities" between Malta and Gozo.

- Due to seasonality in tourism, the effective population reached a peak of 649,546 in August 2024 and dipped to 581,720 in December 2024. (NSO)

STEP INTO A CHRISTMAS WORLD OF WONDER

The Magical Illuminated Trail returns for its 6th Edition – bigger, brighter, and more enchanting than ever! **Malta's Most Enchanted Christmas Experience**

This festive season, Malta's most beloved after-dark attraction returns bigger, brighter & more magical than ever. The Magical Illuminated Trail celebrates its 6th spectacular edition, transforming the Enchanted Verdala Palace Gardens into a glowing wonderland of light, color, and imagination.

From 5th December to 3rd January*, visitors of all ages are invited to embark on an unforgettable journey through breathtaking displays, enchanting worlds, and interactive light installations that bring the spirit of Christmas to life. Stroll through the glowing Coral Kingdom with Nemo and friend tumble into Alice's Wonderland filled with curious surprises, and let the little ones light up the night in the Interactive Magical Forest.

Don't miss the giant sweets in Candy Land and the dazzling Enchanted Creatures waiting to be discovered along the way. But watch out – while Santa is busy bringing joy and gifts, the mischievous Grinch might just try to sneak in and steal the Christmas magic!

With every twist and turn, the trail sparkles with wonder, laughter, and glowing festive moments – all perfect for creating magical family memories.

This event is proudly supported by the Malta Tourism Authority and held in aid of the Malta Community Chest Fund Foundation, making every visit a contribution to a truly wonderful cause.

As darkness descends, the gardens come alive with enchanting light, inviting guests to explore the captivating art of illumination during this festive season. Families, individuals, and groups may pre-purchase their entrance tickets online. The trail has been designed to allow guests in scheduled time intervals of 20 minutes to fully enjoy the sights.

Plan for an immersive journey that lasts around 60 to 90 minutes, allowing time to wander through our delightful Christmas Village and savor delicious offerings at the Food Court! Book your tickets, starting from **€9** only

Children aged 2 years and under enter for free but still require an Infant Ticket from the online booking system."

Readers Voice

Your incredible journal dedicated to the Maltese community abroad has been a guiding light for over 12 years, producing 579 editions and impacting the lives of more than 12,000 readers worldwide. It has played a crucial role in honouring our rich history, culture, language, and heritage. I'm curious whether the Government of Malta has provided any financial support for your essential work. They frequently show their appreciation for those who promote the Maltese narrative on a global scale, which is exactly what your efforts represent. Have you ever received any recognition or thanks from the Maltese government? I genuinely hope they consider lending their support to this important initiative before it is too late. Without funding, who will continue to publish this journal when you decide to step back? ***Joseph Camilleri – Victoria, Australia***

A HISTORIC FIRST FOR ORDER OF MALTA KOREA!

On Sunday, 12 October, #OrderofMalta #Korea celebrated its very first Lourdes Mass at Jeoldusan Shrine Church in #Seoul, presided over by Cardinal Andrew Yeom Soo-jung.

Members of the Philippine, Vietnamese, Indonesian, Malaysian, Guadalupe, Mexican, Colombian, and Spanish communities joined the celebration, along with the Sisters of Bethany House and Friars Minor of St. Francis—gathered in faith and gratitude.

In his homily, Chaplain Fr. John Ki-seok Park reflected on the Gospel of Luke, reminding everyone that true faith begins when we return to give thanks.

As a special blessing, participants received holy water from Lourdes, brought back during the Order's pilgrimage in May.

May this first Lourdes Mass be the beginning of a lasting journey of healing and hope for all migrant communities, under the loving gaze of Our Lady of Lourdes.

ORDER OF MALTA
AUSTRALIA

Serving the Sick and Poor
and Defending the Faith
for over 900 years

Serving the Sick and Poor, and Defending the Faith, for over 900 yearsOver the weekend, the Nicholas Tonti-Filippini Oration and White Mass for healthcare workers marked the opening of the National Conference for the Catholic Medical Association of Australia.

The Order of Malta Australia was once again proud to support this significant event, which was well attended by our members.

The annual Oration honours the legacy of Dr Nicholas Tonti-Filippini, a renowned #Catholic ethicist and devoted member of the Order. This year's Oration was delivered by our Chief Chaplain, Archbishop Anthony Fisher OP (pictured), on the topic "Reflections on Evangelium Vitae and Australian Culture – 30 Years On." The event was graciously hosted by fellow Chaplain Archbishop Peter Comensoli, who also celebrated the White Mass in thanksgiving for those serving in healthcare.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to everyone who contributed to the success of this special occasion. A particular thank you to Confrère Eamon Mathieson and Consoeur Mary Tonti-Filippini for their dedication and organisation.

PRAYER MEETS ACTION: THE CHAPLAINS OF THE ORDER OF MALTA AUSTRALIA

The Order of Malta is founded on a unique and enduring mission: to defend the faith and to serve the sick and the poor. In Australia, this mission is brought to life in a powerful way through the work of the Order's chaplains, who serve not only as spiritual leaders, but as active participants - and sometimes initiators - of charitable works across the country.

Guiding in Faith, Leading in Service

Chaplains within the Order of Malta Australia provide extensive liturgical support to members and candidates, making the Order for many a true 'spiritual home'. Their contributions include:

Monthly Vigil Masses for members

Monthly Online spiritual reflections that offer encouragement and formation

Leadership at retreats and special liturgical events

Preparation of candidates and ongoing formation of members

But their role goes well beyond spiritual guidance. Chaplains are actively engaged in hands-on service, often working alongside members and volunteers in some of the Order's most impactful charitable initiatives.

"*As part of their formation, we encourage our chaplains to actively participate in the Order's charitable projects - not just to observe, but to engage meaningfully with our members, volunteers, and, most importantly, those we serve"* explains John Murphy, President of the Australian Association. *"It is through this shared experience that our chaplains come to understand the unique charism of the Order of Malta: faith lived through service. This connection grounds their spiritual leadership in the very heart of our mission."*

From supporting food services and homeless outreach street missions, to participating in the Order's Camps for Disabled Youth, chaplains are a visible and compassionate presence—bringing both spiritual comfort and practical assistance to those in need.

Chaplains as Project Leaders Order of Malta chaplains are not only participants in charitable works—they are often key drivers of new initiatives.

In the well-known beachside suburb of Bondi, Sydney, the Order of Malta Community Care Kitchen has been serving nutritious, home-cooked meals to the homeless, disadvantaged, and isolated for the past four years. Each service welcomes around 30 guests, offering not just food, but a sense of dignity and belonging. This initiative was launched by Conventual Chaplain ad honorem, Fr Anthony Robbie, and continues to operate from his parish.

"We aim to provide a hearty home-cooked meal of the standard that we would serve to valued visitors in our own homes," said Fr Robbie. "For many of our guests, it's the only nutritious quality meal they'll have all week—and the social interaction is just as important."

In Queensland, another chaplain-led initiative is nearing completion. Philermos House, located in Southport, is scheduled to open later this year. The project is the result of the vision and dedication of Chaplain Fr Gerard McMorrow, in partnership with the Archdiocese of Brisbane and the Order of Malta. Fr McMorrow, who serves as parish priest at Southport, recognised a growing need in his local community. Philermos House will provide meals, showers, laundry facilities, medical services, and recreational spaces for homeless individuals, low-income families, and others on the margins. It is anticipated that the centre will serve between 150–200 people daily.

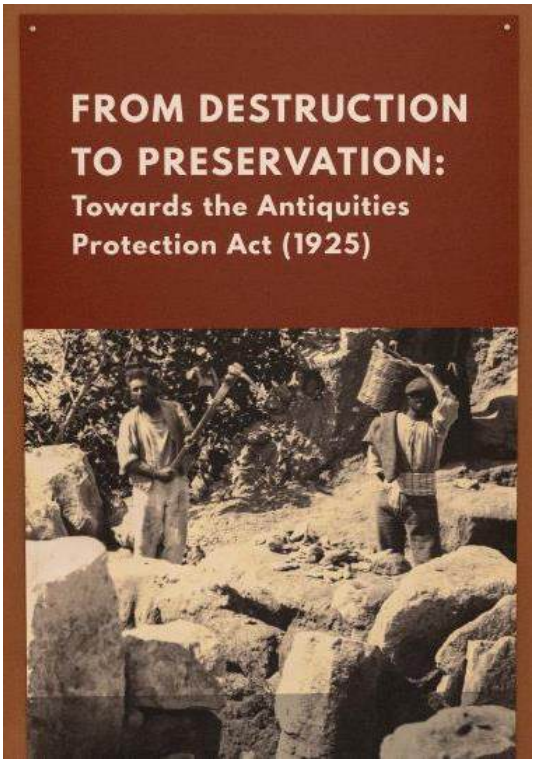
The facility, located on parish property, will be managed and operated by the Order of Malta, offering a secure, hospitable, and respectful environment for those most in need.

A Living Witness to Faith in Action

The chaplains of the Order of Malta Australia are more than spiritual leaders—they are living witnesses to the Order's Catholic identity. They remind members that prayer and charity must go hand in hand, and that our mission of service is ultimately an expression of God's love in the world.

Their leadership inspires members to live out their vocation with humility, courage, and faithfulness, ensuring that every act of service is rooted in Christ. As the Order of Malta continues to grow across Australia, the presence and guidance of its chaplains will remain essential - nourishing the spiritual life of the Order and anchoring its charitable works in a deep and lasting faith.

The St Paul Choral Society (SPCS) has recently returned from a five-day performing tour of Belgium, adding another chapter to their rich history of international performances. The choir, which has toured every two years for nearly two decades, has previously graced some of Europe's most illustrious venues in London, Paris, Spain, Vienna, Germany and Rome. This summer, the 60-strong ensemble focused its talent on four of Belgium's most historic and beautiful cities: Bruges, Antwerp, Ghent and the capital, Brussels. Under the guidance of the choirmaster Hugo Agius Muscat, assistant choirmaster Cecilia Agius Muscat and organist Elisabeth Conrad, the tour underscored the choir's dual commitment to artistic excellence and to representing Maltese choral music to its audiences.



Press Release | 8 October 2025

NEW EXHIBITION MARKS A CENTURY OF SAFEGUARDING MALTA'S HERITAGE

Heritage Malta has unveiled a new exhibition at the National Museum of Archaeology in Valletta, marking 100 years since the first law protecting Malta's heritage. The display reveals how the island's ancient past came to be recognised as a national treasure worthy of preservation. The exhibition runs until the end of January 2026.

Titled 'From Destruction to Preservation: Towards the Antiquities Protection Act (1925)', this latest entry in the Espresso series examines the key developments that led to the law which laid the foundations for heritage protection in Malta.

By the turn of the 20th century, Malta's archaeological sites were increasingly threatened by unregulated excavations and trade in antiquities. Early preservation efforts, including the founding of the national museum in 1903 under Dr Themistocles Zammit, helped establish the institutional framework and public awareness that ultimately enabled first the 1910 Protection of Antiquities Ordinance and later the 1925 Antiquities Protection Act.

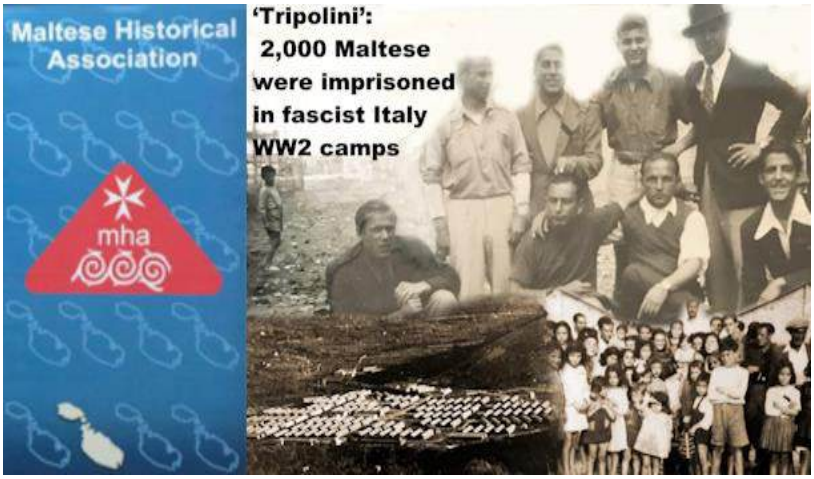
The exhibition features rare documents from the National Archives and photographs from the museum's own archive, including documentation of the now-destroyed Kerċem Neolithic site in Gozo and the Buqana site. As a result of the 1910 Protection of Antiquities Ordinance, the latter was in fact the first Neolithic burial ground discovered after the celebrated Ħal Saflieni Hypogeum which was systematically recorded. Nevertheless, damage to other sites, such as at Mtarfa, revealed the shortcomings of that ordinance, underscoring the need for stronger, more comprehensive legislation. By revisiting these crucial milestones, the exhibition invites visitors to reflect on a century of heritage management and on Malta's enduring commitment to protecting its cultural legacy.

The exhibition remains open until the 31st of January 2026. Until the end of October, the exhibition opens daily from 09:00 till 19:00, and subsequent times will be available on https://heritagemalta.mt/opening-hours/. Admission is free, and the exhibition space is fully accessible. An illustrated catalogue complements this exhibition – available at the museum and through Heritage Malta's online

IN LOVING MEMORY OF JOE CAMILLERI FROM VICTORIA - AUSTRALIA

It is with deep sorrow that we announce the passing of a remarkable man who touched the hearts of all who knew him. Joe Camilleri, (Madam President's husband), whose kindness, wisdom, and unwavering compassion left a lasting impact on countless lives, passed away on 22 October 2025. Throughout his life, Joe was a source of strength, inspiration, and warmth. Whether through his quiet acts of generosity, his infectious laughter his cheekiness, or his ability to make everyone feel seen and valued, he brought light into the lives of many.

His legacy is not only in the memories we hold dear but, in the love and kindness he shared so freely. He may be gone from our sight, but he will never be gone from our hearts. Condolences to his wife and family - Editor



MALTESE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION AUSTRALIA

This month's presentation will be held via Zoom on **Tuesday 28 October 2025**, starting at 7.20pm (**Australian Eastern Daylight Time).** Please note that this presentation is being held on the fourth Tuesday of the month instead of the usual third Tuesday. Our guest speaker will be Dr Mario Xuereb. His presentation will be on the Maltese living in Tripoli during the interwar years. This migrant community was caught between empires, languages and loyalties. More information about the presentation is available on the attached file. The link below allows you to join the meeting.

https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88541941156?pwd=HAlSJ1YHgLCs3w67Uq3y5KYILy3Wbp.1

Meeting ID: 885 4194 1156 Passcode: 133038

Best regards Mario Bonnici Acting Treasurer/Secretary

CAUGHT BETWEEN EMPIRES: THE MALTESE TRIPOLINI STORY

Dr Mario Xuereb presents a lecture that sheds light on the forgotten Maltese of Tripoli - a migrant community that during the interwar years was caught between empires, languages and loyalties. Drawing on original research, the lecture traces how the Maltese Tripolini found themselves in a precarious position as British subjects under Italian colonial rule. When Italian laws clashed with British regulations, hundreds of families - especially children born outside marriage - slipped through the cracks and became stateless. Dr Xuereb examines the human cost of bureaucracy, colonialism and empire, showing how ordinary people were forced to navigate shifting borders and competing claims of identity. Many Maltese Tripolini tried to hold on to their British nationality while resisting pressure to become Italian, and yet were often rejected by both. As war approached, their ambiguous status made them targets of suspicion and during the war the entire community was deported to internment and concentration camps on mainland Italy.

MALTESE TRIPOLINI

In June 1940 Italy set in motion a series of provisions for the internment of enemy aliens on the mainland and its colonies. Over the next few years, the entire community of Maltese Tripolini – all British subjects by birth or ancestry who for decades had been settled in Tripoli and Benghazi – faced detention, exile, expulsion, and deportation. The Italian Governor of Libya cited the need 'to repress the espionage inherent in treacherous elements' among the 'political and military reasons' for the deportations. Despite the nature of the circumstances, historiography has ignored the whole episode. Using untapped primary sources held in Maltese, British and Italian archives, this paper delves into the deportation of whole families from the Italian colony of Libya and explains the spatial, temporal, and legal contexts. These same sources have made possible the naming of all the anglo-maltesi , known to have been placed in concentration camps or subjected to *internamento in comune libero* . It concludes that 1,672 Maltese Tripolini were deported from Tripoli to Italy, equivalent to nine-tenths of the community. Sources also reveal the names of those born in concentration camps and the circumstances of those who lost their lives during internment.

CHEV. REV. FR JOSEPH SIKWESE PRIOR OF MALAWI VISITS GOZO AND MALTA

Knights of St Peter & St Paul

On Sunday, Oct12, 2025 the Confraternity of the Knights of St Peter & St Paul Chapter of Malta welcomed to Nadur Chev. Rev. Fr. Joseph Sikwese Prior of the Chapter of Malawi, Central Africa. Fr Joseph was presented with the medal and two volumes of the history of the Confraternity by Chev. Carmel Saliba, Grand Prior of the Chapter of Malta.

Mgr. Joseph Attard, assisted by Fr Joseph Sikwese, celebrated Mass at the Basilica of St Peter and St Paul in Nadur. Today, Monday, Fr Joseph was is invited to take part in the feast of the Apparition of Our Lady of Fatima at the parish of Pieta, Malta.

SERENITY

REFLECTION BY FR. MANUEL PARNIS MSSP

One of the most beautiful prayers that was written during the early stages of the 20th. Century is The prayer of Serenity. This prayer was attributed to the theologian Reinhold Neibuhr. The most important beneficiaries of these beautiful prayers were and are still, the members of the AA movement besides so many others in the whole world.

The author begins his prayer by saying: God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.

In a nutshell, it is based on peace promised to us by Jesus himself. Without peace, we will be in continuous limbo full of hopelessness and helplessness, stress and tension. This prayer encourages us to focus on God and urges us to invite Him to reveal to us the ways where we can stand up to al the woes with courage and hope for a brighter future. When crises overwhelm us, we need to face facts with God's help, influence and interference so that we won't continue to go down in our free fall. Therefore, we need to be honest and resilient with ourselves, pray constantly and believe in God's mercy and his conciliatory attitude besides thrust in him faithfully by surrendering ourselves to His good and eternal wisdom.

By being humble and well determined in our intentions, we need to be always ready to think wisely, to discern well regarding all that we can change or not. By dedicating ourselves to a radical change, we will be recuperating ourselves to a new vision and new horizon. By following a constant Utopian style vision and unfocused life, we will probably be quiet close to reach our very rock bottom situation and destination too. Perhaps that would be the most precious and important moment in our distracted life to come to terms with our emptiness and start crawling up once again to live a more decent, peaceful and mature life.

"Living one day at a time, enjoying one moment at a time accepting hardship as a pathway to peace, taking as Jesus did, this sinful world as it is, not as I would have it,
trusting that you will make all things right, if I surrender to Your will,
so that I may be reasonably happy in this life, and supremely happy with you forever in the next."

This is the challenge that we have to live with. We can fail by taking Christ as for granted, ignoring his truthfulness, love and his sense of powerlessness, and embark on our pride, egotism and false illusions. Yet, by adhering to His guidance, peace and fatherly attitude, we will live a life capable enough to gibe us that moral balance so as to be in harmony with God, with ourselves and with all those living around us.

FR RAYMOND PORTELLI – THE PRIEST-DOCTOR IN PERU

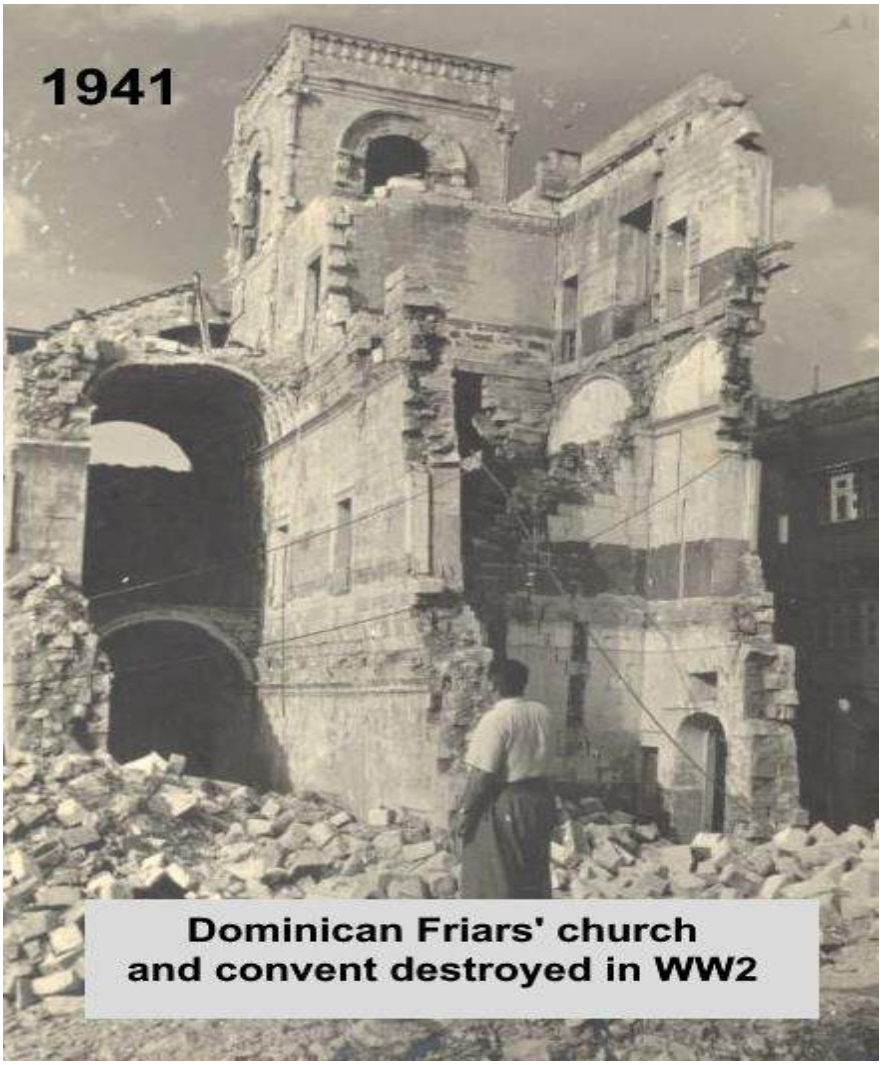
Fr Raymond Portelli, hailing from Nadur, Gozo, has dedicated the past 17 years of his life to serving in the heart of the Peruvian Amazon, specifically in the vibrant town of Iquitos, located just a two-hour flight from Lima. After completing his philosophy studies in Gozo, he was inspired to embark on a sabbatical year in Peru upon the recommendation of Fr Arthur Vella S.J., who was then the spiritual director at the Seminary of Gozo.

Since his arrival in Iquitos as a priest, Fr Raymond has been instrumental in organizing numerous religious activities. He oversees a dedicated group of 430 agentes de pastorales who assist him in managing the parish's various needs. In Iquitos, sadly, societal challenges are stark women often find themselves marginalized, treated as expendable. The scourge of AIDS and drug addiction is prevalent, with young girls as young as 12 or 13 often facing the expectation of early motherhood to secure the labour force for their families. Despite these challenges, the aspiration to become a doctor never faded for Fr Raymond.

After receiving approval from his superiors, he enrolled in the medicine program at the State University of Amazonas, conveniently located just half an hour from his parish. Now, while fulfilling his priestly duties, he also tends to the health needs of his parishioners and runs a clinic that handles around 20 patients each day. In recognition of his efforts, the city of Nadur honored him with the Ġieh in-Nadur award, which he graciously accepted. Upon his arrival, Fr Raymond encountered an abandoned government school; through his leadership, it has now flourished to accommodate 1,600 students across primary and secondary levels. Furthermore, he established a clinic dedicated to AIDS patients, featuring 15 beds.

While the government supplies the necessary medications, the average age of the patients is just 28. Even if they are not cured, they find solace in dying with dignity, receiving care in a proper environment. To combat drug addiction, he launched the Talita Kumi Centre, through which he actively seeks job opportunities for its attendees. Additionally, the parish has created Casa Betania, a shelter providing nightly refuge for the elderly. Amidst his myriad responsibilities, Fr Raymond also carves out time to teach philosophy and theology at the seminary, along with medical ethics at the university, showcasing his unwavering commitment to both spiritual and educational guidance.

The Maltese Journal is appreciated and valued
by over 12,000 readers in Malta, Gozo,
and many other countries worldwide.



DOMINICAN CHURCH AND MONASTERY OF BIRGU BOMBED

During World War 2 the enemy bombing in 1941 left the Dominican community of Birgu (Vittoriosa) without their convent and church, and drove them to seek temporary refuge beyond Birgu. But their need to fulfil their duties among their people urged them back to Birgu, where they asked to make temporary use of the Inquisitor's Palace.

Indeed, for almost two decades, the Palace became their home and temple. The current exhibition Dumnikani fil-Palazz: Home & Temple 1942 – 1960, at the Inquisitor's Palace, recounts this story that further strengthened the special place that the Palace enjoys in the Dominicans' hearts.

AIR DISASTERS IN MALTA

The Zabbar airplane accident can be considered as the biggest air tragedy in Malta since the crash of the Vulcan on Żabbar in 1975 – an incident which had also left five persons on board the plane dead, together with a Maltese woman.

Malta's aviation history records a number of incidents, some of which can be classified as tragedies, while others had less series consequences.

A news service on the 18th February 1956 recounts an air accident which occurred in Malta when an Avro-York plane crashed in a field in the area known as 'tal-Ġibjun' in Żurrieq shortly after take-off. 50 people on board the plane lost their lives. The aircraft was heading to Stansted in London when the pilot changed the route to Malta due to engine problems. For some reason, it did not land on the runway.

A more grievous tragedy occurred in Rabat, 29 years before. On the 4th of April 1946, a Vickers Wellington aircraft crashed in St Pubius Street. Four crew members and 16 Maltese citizens died; 18 houses sustained structural damages and 72 families ended homeless. The tragedy could have been bigger when the plane closely missed the primary school and St Paul's Collegiate.

Another tragedy hit a village near the airport occurred in the last days of 1952 in Luqa when a Lancaster aircraft caused structural damages to 14 homes and left its three crew members dead.

During a different event in June of 1982, a small plane crashed during the Malta Air Rally at 'Tal-Virtu' near the Seminary. Two people on board died.

In 2006, veteran pilot Gabor Varga was killed during an air display in the Grand Harbour on the occasion of the Aero Grand Prix of Malta.

The disappearance at sea of a Piper Lance in 1995 was another tragic air incident when the small plane flew to Sicily with a number of persons aboard, but their fate was never known.

Malta Police Force Commemorates Victims of the 1975 Żabbar Air Vulcan XM645 Crash

In a heartfelt tribute, the Malta Police Band performed a moving concert organized by the Ħaż-Żabbar Local Council, marking 50 years since the tragic crash of the Vulcan XM645, one of Malta's most devastating air disasters.

This poignant event honoured the victims of the 1975 tragedy, which left a deep mark not only on the Żabbar community but also on the entire nation.

During the ceremony, Police Commissioner Angelo Gafà placed a wreath at a newly dedicated memorial, paying homage to those who lost their lives in the accident.

The evening was a tapestry of emotion and reflection, uniting the community in remembrance and showcasing Żabbar's enduring commitment to honouring its past five decades later.

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BARMAIDS OF STRAIT STREET

The revival of Strait Street, along with the rest of the capital, has caused widespread intrigue about its raucous history.

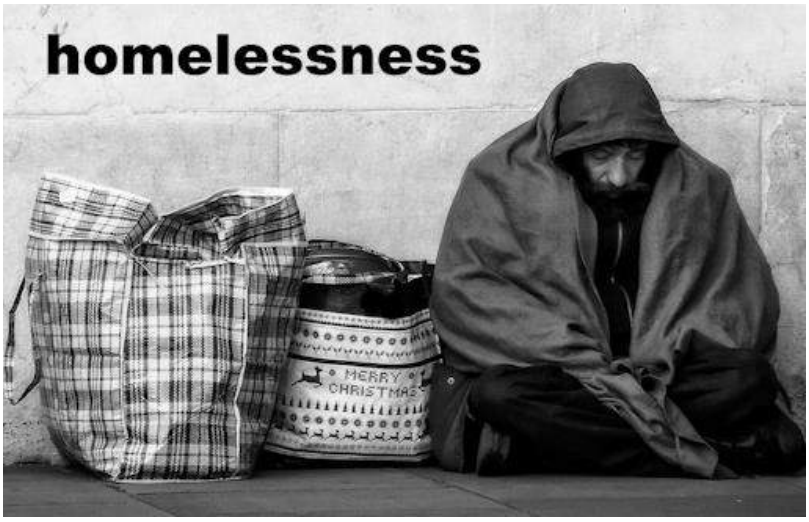
Malta has taken a significant step forward by eliminating outdated laws concerning the 'moral conduct of women' in the workplace, a practice that harked back to British colonial times. In September 2025, Legal Notice 185 of 2025 was enacted to dismantle regulations dating back to 1947 that specifically targeted women employed in bars, commonly referred to as "barmaids." These rules imposed a set of conduct guidelines that did not apply to their male counterparts. Among the now-defunct requirements were stipulations such as: - Female employees needed to be at least 21 years old and licensed.

- They were required to wear designated uniforms and badges.
- The establishment's licensee was held accountable for ensuring the "proper supervision and moral conduct" of their female staff.
- Women were prohibited from lingering near the bar's entrance.
- Their licenses could be revoked for supposed breaches of public morality, propriety, or decency.

STRADA STRETTA – STRAIT STREET - TRIQ ID-DEJQA – VALLETTA

Strait Street, or Strada Stretta, affectionately dubbed 'The Gut' for its lively yet risqué reputation, was a vibrant hub in Valletta where military personnel sought entertainment from the late 19th century to the mid-20th century. This era was a remarkable chapter in Malta's history, showcasing a blend of diverse nationalities, social backgrounds, and lifestyles, functioning almost as a microcosm of multiculturalism. Maltese locals mingled with British, American, and Italian visitors.

As night fell, Strait Street pulsated with life. In its heyday, the avenue teemed with bars, bordellos, music halls, restaurants, and venues where sailors, barmaids, musicians, and other revellers gathered to escape the burdens of wartime life and enjoy a night of merriment.



Homelessness in Malta is largely hidden due to strong family ties, but it is a real and growing issue driven by factors like rising rent costs and financial hardship. While there are no large visible street populations, organizations like YMCA report thousands of cases, with a significant number involving young people and men. Support services exist through the government's Homeless Service and NGOs, focusing on shelters, social housing applications, and support plans for independent living.

Contributing factors

- **Financial hardship:** A significant number of homeless cases are due to financial challenges and inability to afford rent.
- **Rising rent and cost of living:** The cost of living has increased significantly, particularly for rent, making it harder for those with stagnant wages to keep up.
- **Lack of affordable housing:** There is a considerable waiting list for social housing, and many people are at risk of homelessness due to the difficulty in finding and affording adequate housing.
- **Family and domestic issues:** Family problems and domestic violence are also significant contributors to homelessness.

Demographics

- **Age:** The largest group affected is young people aged 25–34.
- **Gender:** Men are disproportionately affected, with significantly more male cases of homelessness than female cases in recent years.
- **Maltese and foreigners:** While many Maltese citizens are affected, the issue is also seen among foreigners in Malta.

Support and services

- **Government support:** The government's Homeless Service provides social workers who assess situations and place individuals or families in emergency or long-term shelters. They create joint care plans to help people work toward independent living.
- **NGO support:** Organizations like YMCA Malta offer crucial support, including shelter, counseling, and assistance with job seeking and budgeting.
- **Challenges:** There is a significant waiting list for social housing, and many people leave shelters before their social housing application is processed.

Addressing the issue

- **Holistic approach:** Solutions need to go beyond emergency shelters and address the root causes, such as strengthening family structures, improving rental policies, and mitigating the rising cost of living.
- **Focus on prevention:** Efforts are needed to help those at risk of homelessness, not just those who are already homeless. This includes those living in inadequate conditions, those relying on friends or family, and those paying a large portion of their income on housing.

THE WORLD OF JOSEPH MUSCAT – CANADA
FINE ARTS & MULTI-DISCIPLINARY ARTIST
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Joseph Muscat is a graduate of the Ontario College of Art, University of Toronto and Glendon College, York University. Since 1981, he has exhibited his work in solo and group exhibitions in Canada, USA, Europe and South Korea. His work is in many Public, Corporate and Private collections. He has received numerous Ontario Arts Council grants and a Canada Council Travel Grant.

His work has been included in art textbooks and reproduced on book and magazine covers. He has lectured at the University of Toronto's Faculty of Architecture and has taught Visual Arts part-time with the Toronto District School Board. Joseph Muscat is a member of several Professional Artists Associations. He was Chair of Propeller Gallery, Toronto between 2010 and 2015, a founding member of Le Labo d'art and a past board director of the Toronto Outdoor Art Exhibition and BRAVOart.

He has sat on a number of arts' juries locally and nationally and is a member of Padejo, a three-artist working collective. Mr. Muscat is represented by David Kaye Gallery, Toronto, Danielle Wohl Fine Arts, Orinda, California, Guildworks in Bloomfield, Ontario and Gallery MIZ in Seoul, South Korea

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IT-TERRAMAXKA - KITARRA MAGICA (MAGICAL GUITAR)

Do you know what a TERRAMAXKA is? Entirely made of wood, it produces music through air passing through pipes.

Historically, the terramaxka provided entertainment during village festas and events such as the L-Imnarja feast in Buskett, Rabat, especially when no band was present.

Each terramaxka played about eight melodies, usually waltzes and mazurkas. Some versions featured small moving wooden statues and decorative flags, making them especially appealing to children.

Before the establishment of local bands, the terramaxka played a vital role in Maltese musical life.

Known as the KITARRA MAGICA (MAGICAL GUITAR), the TERRAMAXKA once reigned supreme in the Maltese islands. Different models came from places like France and Switzerland. This captivating instrument brightened local festas, contributed to carnival festivities, and even found its place in the rhythms of everyday life. Mari, who hails from Holland, arrived in Malta in 1977 while working on a ship at the drydocks. He fell head over heels for both the island and a charming Maltese woman, ultimately deciding to call Malta home. His admiration for the TERRAMAXKA drove him to restore one from 1929, breathing new life into it with some tender care. Sadly, fate dealt a harsh blow when it was lost in a store fire.

Today, Mari proudly owns the last TERRAMAXKA on the islands, and when it is spotted rolling through the capital, it sparks a flood of nostalgia for the locals. Regrettably, the other TERRAMAXKAS have either fallen to the ravages of time, been sold to collectors in America, or met unfortunate fates. Department of Information -Malta

GIEH LIL KANTANTI TAL-OPRA MALTIN B'KARRIERI INTERNAZZJONALI
KOMPOZITURI MALTIN RICENTI

Mill Cavaliere Tonio Portughese
Ricerkatur u Kritiku Muzikali

Malta ghandha patrimonju straordinarju fil-qasam tal-muzika u tal-opra. Wara li kont ipproducejt 24 programm ghar-radju tal-Universita' – Campus fm 103.7 dwar l-Istorja tal-Muzika u tal-Opra ta' Malta, qed inhoss li ghandna hafna esponenti ohra specjalment kantanti lirici li jixirqilhom inharsu s-successi taghhom.

Ir-ricerka tieghi tat spazju wkoll lil hafna kompozituri li bnew is-sisien tal-vjagg muzikali ta' pajjizna, ikkoncentrajt fuq il-muzika sagra, fosthom Giuseppe Balzano, Gerolamo Abos, Franceso Azopardi, Benigno Zerafa, Pietro Paolo Bugeja, Paolino Vassallo, Carlo Diacono, id-dinastija tal-familja Nani. Tajt ukoll taghrif estensiv dwar il-kompozitur Nicolo' Isouard, maghruf bhala Nicolo' de Malte ghall-produzzjoni muzikali tieghu fi Franza fejn kiseb diversi rikonoxximenti.

Ktibt ukoll dwar kompozituri aktar ricenti fosthom: Carmelo Pace u l-opri Caterina Desquanez, I Martiri, Angelica u Ipogeana (librett tal-mibki poeta u artista Vincenzo Maria Pellegrini li kien stidinni nikteb in-nota riassuntiva bit-Taljan li fiha emfasizzajt kif il-kompozitur Pace u l-librettista Pellegrini amalgamaw il-muzika u l-istorja lirika tal-Ipogew.

F'dan il-kapitlu ta' opri kontemporanja jidhlu wkoll Charles Camilleri bl-ewwel opra bil-Malti – Il-Weghda; u Compostella, librett tal-Professur Reverendu Peter Serracino Inglott, u The Maltese Cross esegwita f'Parigi.

U aktar ricenti l-mibki kompozitur Joseph Vella bl-opra kontemporanja Valeriana.

Hafna minn dan it-taghrif storiku hu dovut lil zewg ricerkaturi kbar: Alfred G Miceli – L-Istorja tal-Opra f'Malta (1631-1866), u Joseph Vella Bondin bil-volumi "Il-Muzika ta' Malta sal-Ahhar tas-Seklu Tmintax" u "The Great Composers of Malta".

Gejt ispirat hafna biex naghmel analizi ta' tliet kantanti u ghalliema fl-istorja operistika ta' Malta, diga' ktibt fil-wiesa' dwar it-tenur u attur Oreste Chircop,is-soprano internazzjonali Miriam Gauci u t-tenur famuz Joseph Calleja. Hassejt li ghandi naghti gieh lill-kontribut ta' tliet kantanti bi statura internazzjonali biex il-memorja taghhom ma tintilifx ghal kollox kif inhu r-riskju f'dinja mghaggla u li ghandha t-tendenza twarrab u tinsa lilll-aqwa fost uliedha li ghamlulha l-oghla gieh.

Laqtitni hafna l-osservazzjoni rilevanti tal-bijografa tat-Tenur u Ghalliem Paul Axiak – il-kittieba Ingliza Sue Brown fil-volum "The Life of Paul Asciak, tenor and teacher from Malta"

AN ASTONISHING ARRAY OF SINGERS HAS COME FROM THIS SMALL, OUT OF THE WAY PLACE"U BHALA EZEMPJI SSEMMI LIL GIUSEPPE SATARIANO U LIL PAUL ASCIAK.

Jixirqilhom ghaldaqstant kapitli dedikati:

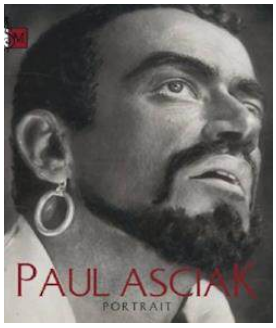
JULIET BISAZZA 1939 -2025 SOPRANO U GHALLIEMA

Juliet gejja minn familja ta' muzicisti maghrufa, u wriet it-talenti taghha bhala vjolinista u kantanta tal-opra, wara li studjat fir-Royal Academy of Music, l-Ingilterra, kemm damet Londra kienet tat recitals ghall-BBC. Fis-sena 1960 inghatat borza ta' studju fl-Italja, ghamlet id-debutt bhala Rosina fl-opra Il Barbiere di Siviglia ta' Gioacchino Rossini waqt l-istagun tal-opra fit-Teatru Manoel. Kompliet tipperfezzjona l-istudji taghha f'Milan,

Ir-repertorju taghha jinkludi l-opra Il Matrimonio Segreto ta' Domenico Cimarosa fit-Teatro dell'Arte ta' Milan u f'Voghera, kompliet tkanta f'diversi teatri tal-opra fl-Italja; irrapprezentat lil Malta fil-Festival Internazzjonali f'Lonigo, fil-provincja ta' Vicenza, fejn rebhet

id-diploma bl-ewwel grad. Kisbet apprezzamenti sbieh fil-media Taljana fosthom ta' Milano Musicale u La Notte: "…….. Giulietta Bisazza, a brilliant Elizabeth "
U " ……..soprano Giulietta Bisazza displayed a voice of excellent timbre, and volume, and she went about it with the grace of times bygone and which reminded one of the golden age."
Lura Malta qasmet l-esperjenza straordinarja taghha ma' hafna kantanti zghazagh li xorbu minghandha l-arti tal-kant.
F'kumment emozzjonali is-soprano Maltija Nicola Said, li tghallmet tahtha, ddeskrivietha bhala " a pillar of strength" bil-gentilezza, generozita' u appogg kostanti li effettwaw il-hajja ta' hafna u hafna studenti, il-legat ta' Juliet jibqa' jghix f'dawn il-vucijiet.
It-Teatru Manoel irrefera ghal Juliet Bisazza bhala soprano professjonali kif ukoll vjolinista tul karriera mimlija successi inkluzi dawk fit-Teatru Manoel.

GIUSEPPE SATARIANO 1895-1992 BARITONU
Imwieled il-Belt Valletta, Satariano issejjah mill-impresario tar-Royal Opera House, u ghamel id-debutt tieghu fil-5 ta' Novembru 1919 fi rwol minuri fl-opra Manon Lescaut ta' Giacomo Puccini. Kellu success fl-istagun 1922-23 bhala Albert fil-Werthe.opra b'erba' atti ta' Jules Massenet.Dan is-success fetahlu t-triq biex ikun ingaggat f'diversi teatri tal-opra fl-Italja, u gie deskritt minn kritici severi Taljani bhala "una rivelazione" meta fl-ahhar minuta issostitwixxa lill-baritonu Mariano Stabile fix-xoghol Dafni ta' Giuseppe Mule' f'Palermo.
Stabbilixxa ruhu bhala Baritonu bi statura internazzjonali u kanta f'teatri fit-Turkija, Istanbul, l-Amerika t'isfel, Tripli u l-Ingilterra fejn dam ighix ghal hafna snin.
B'kunsens generali l-interpretazzjoni tieghu fir-Rigoletto ta' Giuseppe Verdi kisbet akklamazzjonijiet.
F'Londra Satariano kanta fir-Royal Albert Hall. Lura Malta fis-sena 1957 interpreta b'talba generali r-rwol sinonimu mieghu ta' Rigoletto. Huwa rtira ghal kollox fis-sena 1962. Wiehed mill-aqwa kantanti li welldet Malta.



PAUL ASCIAK 1923-2015 TENUR U GHALLIEM
Paul Asciak twieled il-Belt Valletta u minn tfulitu wera it-talent potenzjali bs-sihala kantant.
Id-debutt fl-opra wasal fir-rwol primarju ta' Turiddu fil-Cavalleria Rusticana ta' Pietro Mascagni fis-sena 1946. Id-debutt fl-Italja sehh fis-sena 1950 bhala Manrico spalla ma' spalla mat-tenur mondjali Taljan Tito Schipa fl-opra Il Trovatore ta' Giuseppe Verdi fit-teatru Politeama f'Catanzaro.
L-istess Schipa u s-soprano Maria Caniglia meta kanta maghhom f'kuncert.
Fis-sena 1950 mar Ruma u fis-sena 105i Asciak rebah il-Concorso per Giovani Cantanti Lirici fi Spoleto.
Kiseb borsa di studio biex jistudja l-vuci fit-Teatro dell'Opera ta' Ruma fejn gie fdat ikanta l-parti ta' Radames ma' Anita Cerchetti fl-opra Aida ta' Giuseppe Verdi.
Beda jintalab jinterpreta rwoli primarji. Insemmu dik ta' Flavio fl-opra Norma ta' Vincenzo Bellini.
Svolta important sehhet fis-sena 1952 meta Paul intghazel bhala tenur solista ghar-Royal Opera Covent Garden f'Londra, kanta hafna drabi fuq il-BBC, film u radju. f'diversi teatri kif ukoll f'Wales fil-Missa da Requiem ta' Giuseppe Verdi.
Ir-rwoli tieghu jinkludu dawk ta' Melot fi Tristan und Isolde ta' Richard Wagner, Pinkerton fil-Madame Butterfly ta' Puccini, Flotow fil-Martha, Arvino fi I Lombardi alla Prima Crociata ta' Verdi, Il Trovatore, I Pagliacci, La Fanciulla del West (iffilmjata ghall-BBC u mxandra fuq it-televizjoni fis-sena 1954), Carmen, u Bohemian Girl ta' Michael William Balfe.

L-interpretazzjonijiet ta' Paul intlaqghu tajjeb hafna ghas-sahha tal-vuci, teknika tal-espressjoni u l-kontroll tal-mekkanizmu vokali. Il-climax ta' din il-karriera straordinarja hu mmarkat bl-Otello ta' Verdi, wiehed mir-rwoli l-aktar difficli ghall-kantanti maskili, ismu jibqa' marbut ma' dan ir-rwol ferm difficli. Fit-Teatru Manoel hemm ghall-wiri il-kostum li Paul libes fis-sena 1960 . ura Malta Paul ddedika ruhu ghat-taghlim permezz ta' pedagogija biex iwassal il-hiliet u kompetenzi lil numru zghir ta' student, fosthom it-tenur Joseph Calleja. Paul Asciak gholla u xerred isem Malta nhala Ambaxxatur bl-aqwa kwalitajiet u kredenzjali vokali,artistici u muzikali,GGANT fl-istorja u fil-patrimonju kulturali ta' pajjizna.

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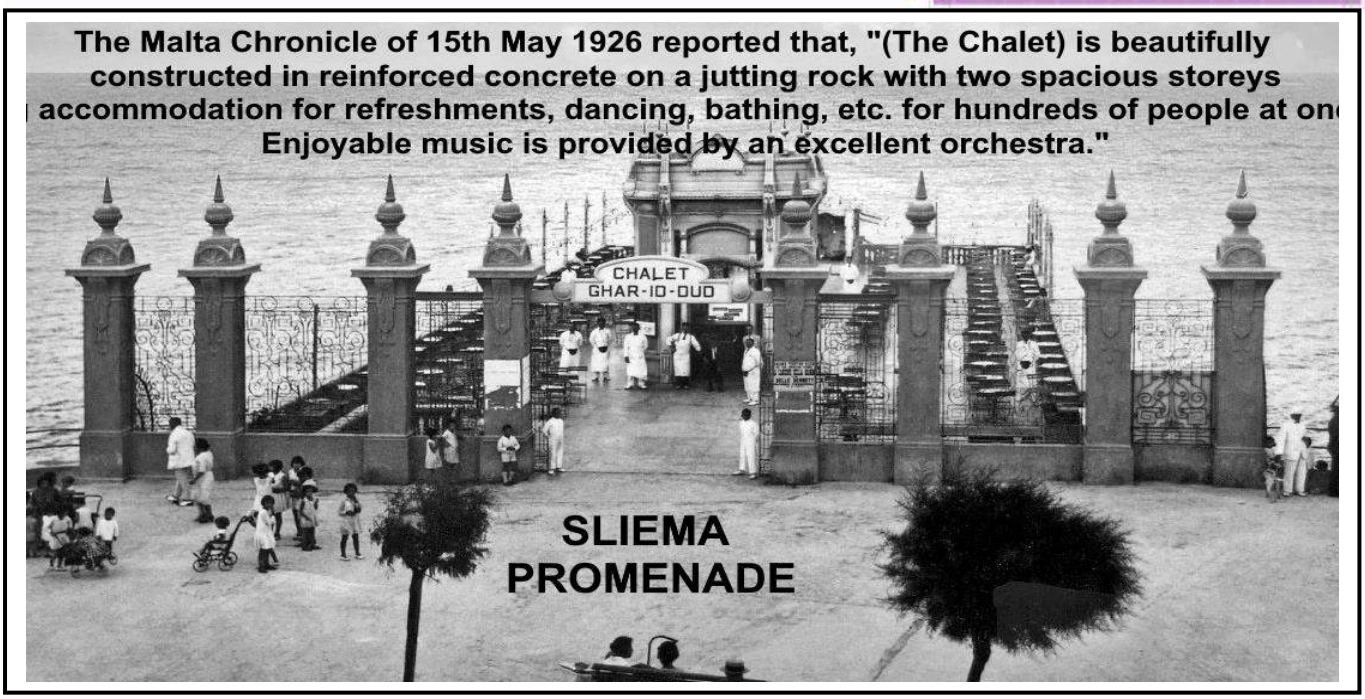
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