MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER

Journal for Maltese Living Abroad

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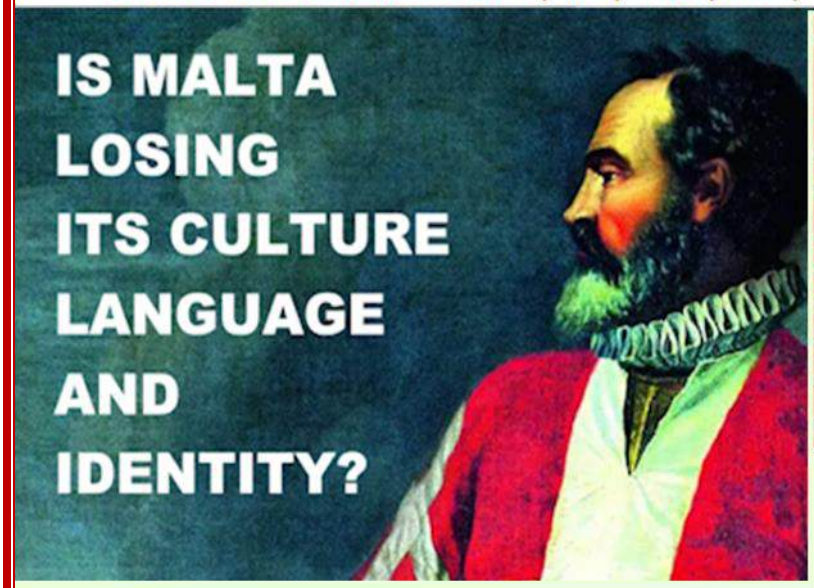


THIS JOURNAL IS READ, LOVED AND RESPECTED BY THOUSANDS OF MALTESE AROUND THE WORLD

Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina

Due to overpopulation and unemployment in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, thousands of Maltese emigrated to distant countries like USA, Canada, Australia and UK and in 2025, foreigners make up a qauter of Malta's population.

COUNCIL OF MALTESE LIVING ABROAD (Maltese)

STQARRIJA MILL-UFFIĊĊJU TAD-DEPUTAT PRIM MINISTRU U MINISTERU GĦALL-AFFARIJIET BARRANIN U T-TURIŻMU: Titħabbar Skema ta' Btala ta' Xogħol għaż-Żgħażagħ ta' Dixxendenza Maltija.

Id-Deputat Prim Ministru Borg jiftaħ is-17-il Laqgħa Annwali tal-Kunsill għal Maltin Jgħixu Barra

Id-Deputat Prim Ministru Ian Borg ħabbar skema ta' Btala ta' Xogħol (*working holiday*) għaż-Żgħażagħ ta' Dixxendenza Maltija, li se tagħmilha aktar faċli sabiex dawn ikunu jistgħu jżuru Malta għal xogħol jew studju, filwaqt li jesploraw l-għeruq Maltin tagħhom.

L-iskema, li se tibda f'Jannar 2026, se tagħti lill-persuni ta' dixxendenza Maltija bejn it-18 u t-30 sena l-opportunità li jiltaqgħu mal-familji tagħhom f'Malta filwaqt li jiksbu esperjenzi ta' xogħol jew jitgħallmu ħiliet ġodda.

Dr Borg tkellem dwar din l-iskema meta kien qed jiftaħ is-17-il Laqgħa Annwali tal-Kunsill għall-Maltin li Jgħixu Barra minn Malta, din il-ġimgħa. “Il-Ministeru għall-Affarijiet Barranin u t-Turiżmu, flimkien m'awtoritajiet oħrajn, qed iħeġġu lil dawn l-ambaxxaturi żgħażagħ ta' Malta u Għawdex minn madwar id-dinja sabiex jiġu u jitgħallmu dwar il-kultura u t-tradizzjonijiet tal-gżejjer tagħna," hu spjega.

Is-17-il Laqgħa Annwali tal-Kunsill hija l-ewwel waħda minn meta daħlu fis-seħħ emendi fl-Att dwar il-Kunsill għall-Maltin li Jgħixu Barra minn Malta, sabiex issa żdied għal 21 membri, għal rappreżentanza iżjed ġusta u mqassma aħjar.

Dr Borg laqa' lill-membri li qed jingħataw dan l-irwol għall-ewwel darba, u ħeġġiġhom sabiex joffru ideat u perspettivi ġodda, filwaqt li rringrazzja lil dawk li qed ikomplu jservu fuq dan il-Kunsill mis-snin li għaddew, għall-kontribut siewi tagħhom. Fl-istess waqt, wera l-apprezzament tiegħu lil dawk li temmew il-mandat tagħhom din is-sena, hekk kif faħħar l-impenn ta' Joseph Xerri, li ser ikun qed jirtira wara snin twal ta' servizz eċċellenti bħala s-Segretarju tal-istess Kunsill.

Id-Deputat Prim Ministru enfasizza l-bżonn għal kollaborazzjoni sabiex jiġi żgurat li l-missjoni tal-Kunsill tintlaħaq b'mod effettiv. “Is-saħħa tal-preżenza globali ta' Malta tinsab fil-konnessjonijiet li nżommu mad-diaspora tagħna," hu żied jgħid, hekk kif saħaq dwar l-irwol ewlieni tal-Kunsill fit-trawwim ta' dawn il-konnessjonijiet.

Il-promozzjoni tal-lingwa Maltija tibqa' prijorità ewlenija, bit-twaqqif ta' 10 libreriji f'missjonijiet Maltin madwar id-dinja, li jservu bħala ċentri kulturali u edukattivi. Il-Ministeru nieda wkoll kors online tas-sajf fil-Malti bħala lingwa barranija, bil-għan li jsaħħaħ il-lingwa Maltija fost id-dijaspora.

Għaż-żmien li ġej, Dr Borg saħaq dwar l-importanza ta' Kunsill dinamiku, li kapaċi jirreaġixxi, u ffukat fuq il-futur, hekk kif ħeġġeġ lill-membri jkomplu jiftħu l-orizzonti tagħhom għal dawk madwarhom, u jikkollaboraw flimkien fil-ħidma biex jingħelbu l-isfidi li jiffaċċjaw il-komunitajiet Maltin madwar id-dinja.

COUNCIL OF MALTESE LIVING ABROAD (English)

PRESS RELEASE BY THE OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND TOURISM: Working Holiday Scheme for Young People of Maltese Descent Announced

Deputy Prime Minister Borg opens the 17th Annual Meeting of the Council for Maltese Living Abroad

Deputy Prime Minister Ian Borg has announced a working holiday scheme for Young People of Maltese Descent, which will make it easier for them to visit Malta for work or study, while exploring their Maltese roots.

The scheme, which will start in January 2026, will give people of Maltese descent between the ages of 18 and 30 the opportunity to meet their families in Malta while gaining work experience or learning new skills.

Dr Borg spoke about this scheme when he opened the 17th Annual Meeting of the Council for Maltese Living Abroad this week. “The Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Tourism, together with other authorities, are encouraging these young ambassadors of Malta and Gozo from around the world to come and learn about the culture and traditions of our islands,” he explained.

The 17th Annual Meeting of the Council is the first since amendments to the Council for Maltese Living Abroad Act came into force, increasing its membership to 21, for fairer and better-distributed representation.

Dr Borg welcomed the members who are being given this role for the first time, and encouraged them to offer new ideas and perspectives, while thanking those who have continued to serve on this Council for the past years, for their valuable contribution. At the same time, he expressed his appreciation to those who completed their mandate this year, as he praised the commitment of Joseph Xerri, who will be retiring after many years of excellent service as the Secretary of the same Council.

The Deputy Prime Minister emphasised the need for collaboration in order to ensure that the mission of the Council is achieved effectively. “The strength of Malta's global presence lies in the connections we maintain with our diaspora,” he added, as he stressed the key role of the Council in fostering these connections.

The promotion of the Maltese language remains a top priority, with the establishment of 10 libraries in Maltese missions around the world, which serve as cultural and educational centres. The Ministry has also launched an online summer course in Maltese as a foreign language, with the aim of strengthening the Maltese language among the diaspora.

Looking ahead, Dr Borg stressed the importance of a dynamic, responsive and forward-looking Council, as he encouraged members to continue to open their horizons to those around them, and to collaborate together in working to overcome the challenges faced by Maltese communities around the world

Honouring the Fallen: We will Remember Them

The Maltese Ex-Servicemen's Association RSL Sub-Branch held its annual Remembrance Day Service at the De Piro House Chapel in Darlinghurst — a solemn occasion dedicated to honouring the courage, service, and sacrifice of Maltese servicemen and women who served in times of war.

The Mass was reverently celebrated by Fr Tarċisio, conducted in both Maltese and English, allowing all present to unite in remembrance and gratitude.

Prior to the commencement of Mass, the names of Maltese ex-servicemen from World War I and World War II were respectfully read by the Secretary, Mrs Doris Pocock. This was followed by the sounding of The Last Post and the Ode of Remembrance, delivered by Mr Andrew Magro, reminding all of the enduring legacy of those who served.

The Consul General of Malta in Sydney, Ms Anneliese Sammut, contributed to the service by delivering the First Reading, adding to the heartfelt spirit of the commemoration.

Following the conclusion of the Mass, the Acting President, Mr Charles Mifsud, read the names of the seven Maltese ANZACs who made the ultimate sacrifice, ensuring their memory remains alive within the Maltese-Australian community.

The service also marked the official launch of the book Thou Shalt Not Grow Old — a publication that preserves the stories and history of Maltese veterans. Guests were invited to share light refreshments following the ceremony.

Copies of *Thou Shalt Not Grow Old* are available for purchase at $35 plus postage. To order, please contact Andrew Magro on 0402 060 239 or via email at maltesersl@live.com.au

Doris Pocock Secretary

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

CELEBRATE OUR STATE AT THE 2025 MULTICULTURAL FESTIVAL As Minister for Multicultural Affairs, I am thrilled to share that the state's annual flagship event for promoting and showcasing multiculturalism will take place on **Sunday 23 November 2025 from 12pm to 6pm**.

Last year's Multicultural Festival was such a success that I am so pleased to announce the event is growing even bigger again this year – covering all of **Victoria Square/Tarntanyangga** for the first time.

This free, family-friendly event is a wonderful celebration of all the positive impacts that flow from our shared experience, and a fantastic opportunity to build even stronger connections and deepen cultural awareness.

Join around 85 community groups who will share their heritage on the day, representing 65 cultures and highlighting the valuable diversity that is such an intrinsic part of our community.

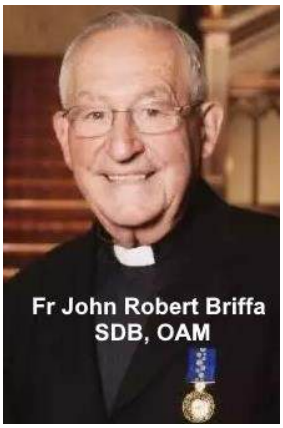
An exciting new feature this year will be a number of cooking demonstrations, complementing the incredible array of mouthwatering treats on offer on the day – totalling more than 150 dishes from across the 41 stallholders.

There will also be 30 stage performances of traditional and modern dance and music, which are always a highlight of the energetic entertainment on offer, as well as 14 hand-on activities, and a vibrant variety of cultural displays, art, craft, interactive demonstrations and cultural presentations.

The BreastScreen SA mobile screening unit will be at the festival for the first time offering free screenings for women over 40. Even more free health checks and helpful information about health and community services from over 15 organisations and state government agencies can be found in the new Community Services Hub.

This year we are hoping to welcome more than 12,000 people to this fantastic event and join in the fun activities for people of all ages, together, in the heart of Adelaide.

Visit **www.multicultural.sa.gov.au/festival** for more information and to see the full program and follow Multicultural SA on Facebook to stay up to date on the festival.



FAREWELL FR JOHN BRIFFA SDB OAM

In the late hours of Wednesday 22nd October 2025, Father John Briffa answered the Lord's call to come and receive the reward of the just and faithful servant, at the age of 97. He was born in Sliema, Malta on 6th February 1928, and joined the Salesians in England. After his Ordination as a priest in 1957, Father Briffa came to Australia, on the invitation of the legendary Fr Ciantar, SDB (also from Malta).

Father Briffa spent most of his priestly life and ministry at Engadine - apart from one year in Perth WA and a few years back in Malta. From 1968 to 1991 he was Parish Priest of the St John Bosco Parish, and then served for several years as Chaplain of John Paul Village, now under the care and administration of St Vincents Care Services, at Heathcote. In 2009, he was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) in recognition of his outstanding service to the Church and the wider community.

He concluded his life on earth in the Village which he founded 40 years ago. Last Friday 17th October, Father Briffa was able to be present as the guest of honour at the celebration of the Ruby Jubilee Mass of the foundation of John Paul Village, also attended by the Premier of NSW. A Funeral Mass for Fr Briffa SDB, OAM was held in the Shrine of St John Bosco, Engadine NSW on Tuesday 4 November 2025. We give thanks for Fr. Briffa's faithful witness, his kindness, and his presence among us. May he rest in the peace of Christ.

IL-POETA NAZZJONALI MFAKKAR F'MALTA U F'GĦAWDEX

L-E.T. l-President ta' Malta għal darb'oħra tat il-patroċinju tagħha għal Jum Dun Karm organizzat mill-Akkademja tal-Malti u l-Kumitat Festi Nazzjoni fi ħdan Festivals Malta. Il-kommemorazzjoni saret fil-Palazz ta' Sant'Anton nhar l-14 ta' Ottubru 2025 u l-programm tmexxa mill-kantanta Corazon Mizzi li għas-sekwenzi mużikali kienet akkumpanjata mill-Arpista Jacob Portelli.

Matul din il-kommemorazzjoni l-organizzaturi ħadu ħsieb jorbtu u jfakkru żewġ anniversarji importanti: dak ta' għeluq il-100 sena mill-ewwel ħarġa ta' *Il-Malti* mill-Għaqda tal-Kittieba tal-Malti – pubblikazzjoni li għadha magħna sal-lum – u għeluq il-mitejn sena mill-ħatra ta' Mikiel Anton Vassalli bħala l-ewwel lettur tal-Malti fl-Università.

Fid-diskors tagħha, il-President ta' Malta saħħqet fuq il-ħtieġa li ngħożżu l-valuri li ċċelebra Dun Karm fil-poetika tiegħu u li jorbtuna u jagħmluna nazzjon magħqud. Saħqet li lsienna jinsab f'salib it-toroq u jeħtieġ li l-Malti għandna nħaddmuh b'mod xieraq f'kull qasam tas-soċjetà u minn kull ġenerazzjoni tas-soċjetà tagħna.

Diskors ieħor sar minn Joseph P. Borg li fakkar kif wara biss ħames snin mit-twaqqif tagħha, l-Għaqda tal-Kittieba tal-Malti bdiet tippubblika r-rivista *Il-Malti* bil-ħsieb li tkattar aktar kitba ta' livell għoli bl-alfabett u l-grammatika l-ġdida tagħha, kif imfissra fit-*Tagħrif fuq il-Kitba Maltija* (1924).

Is-serata kienet imżewqa b'qari ta' poeżiji, fosthom is-sunett *Lil Mikiel Anton Vassalli* ta' Dun Karm moqri mill-Prof. George Farrugia. Poeżiji oħra nqraw minn Charles Coleiro, Daniel Attard u Anthea Enriquez. Corazon kantat ukoll medley bl-innijiet reliġjużi ta' Dun Karm, fosthom *Nadurawk, Ja Ħobż tas-Sema*, *Tina l-Ħlewwa*, *Fil-Ħlewwa ta' Mejju* u *Reġa' Sebaħ ja Mulejja*. Fi tmiem is-serata sar diskors minn Dr Owen Bonnici, Ministru għall-Kultura, l-Artijiet u Gvern Lokali.

Kommemorazzjoni oħra f'ġieħ Dun Karm saret f'Għawdex nhar il-Ġimgħa, 24 ta' Ottubru 2025, bil-għajnuna tal-Kumitat Ċelebrazzjonijiet Nazzjonali u Reġjonali fi ħdan il-Ministeru għal Għawdex u l-Ippjanar flimkien mal-Akkademja tal-Malti li fakkru lill-Poeta Nazzjonali b'serata fi Triq id-Dejqa, ir-Rabat, bit-tema "Dun Karm minn Lil Hinn".

Matul is-serata ħadu sehem il-kantanta Francesca Bezzina akkumpanjata mill-pjanista Edward Mifsud flimkien mal-qarrejja l-Kav. Joe M. Attard u s-Sinjuri Mario Caruana, Maria Caruana, Christiana Farrugia, Rita Saliba u Ħaley Xuereb.

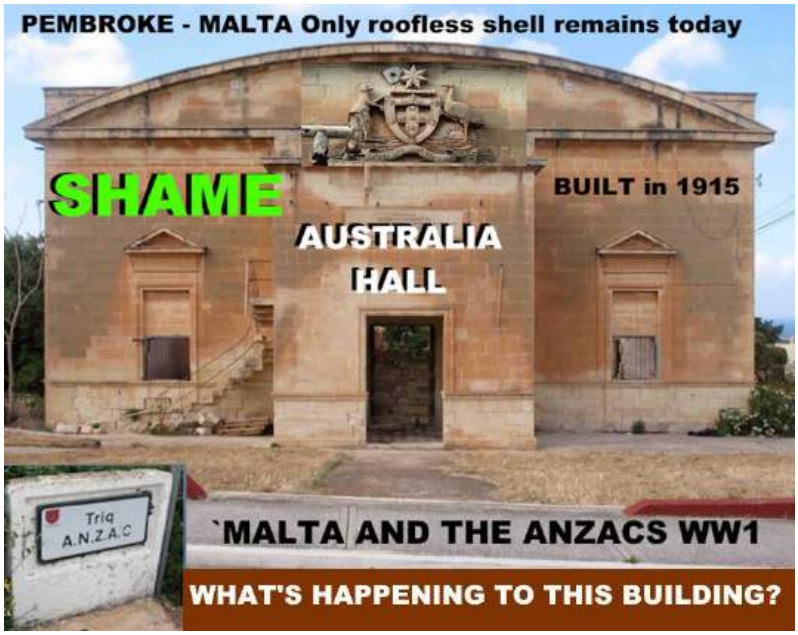
Is-serata mużiko-letterarja ħadet is-sura ta' intervista ma' Dun Karm Psaila imżewqa b'qari ta' wħud mill-aqwa sunetti u poeżiji mmużikati minn Mro Dominic Galea.

Għas-serata attendew mistiedna distinti, fosthom bosta awturi membri tal-Akkademja li kkontribwew fl-oqsma letterarji u lingwistiċi ta' lsienna.

Il-kommemorazzjoni hi aċċessibbli mill-istazzjon tal-Akkademja tal-Malti fuq YouTube mill-ħolqa https://youtu.be/OJSp7WkaQSQ kif ukoll mill-paġna tal-Akkademja fuq Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/akkademjatalmalti/

AUSTRALIA HALL

Australia Hall is a former entertainment hall in Pembroke, Malta, which was built by the Australian Branch of the British Red Cross Society in 1915. The building burnt down in 1998, and only its roofless shell remains today.



Australia Hall was built by the Australian Branch of the British Red Cross Society as an entertainment venue for wounded soldiers of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps who were being treated in Malta during World War I. The hall was built in November 1915 and was officially opened on 22 January 1916 by Governor Paul Methuen. The hall could accommodate up to 2000 people, and it was used as a theatre, and also included a library. The building was subsequently used by the Navy, Army and Air Force Institutes, and it also served as a cinema after 1921.

In 1978, the British military vacated Pembroke, and the hall became property of the Government of Malta. A year later, the building was transferred to the Malta Labour Party in exchange for some property in Marsa.

In 1996, the hall was listed as a Grade 2 National Monument by the Malta Environment and Planning Authority. The building burnt down in December 1998, possibly in an arson attack. The fire destroyed the hall's roof and interior, but its roofless masonry shell is still intact, although it has been vandalised and its walls are covered in graffiti.

In 2010, the Labour Party was taken to court because it did not keep the hall in good condition, as was agreed upon in the 1979 contract. The charges were dropped in October 2013, when the Labour Party was in government. In 2014, the Labour Party sold the hall and some surrounding land to A. H. Development Ltd for a sum of €582,343. This amount was described as "grossly far off the current market price" by property agents, and the sale of the building has been described as controversial. This has resulted in a court case, with the Labour Party appealing that it is exempt from paying the tax on the sale. It is estimated that the Australia Hall together with the surrounding gardens are actually worth €5.5 million.

We call upon the Maltese authorities to restore and preserve Australia Hall which we believe is a unique and irreplaceable piece of World War I and ANZAC history. Restoring Australia Hall would be a powerful gesture of remembrance as it would be a living tribute to sacrifice, and an educational legacy for Malta, Australia, New Zealand, and ultimately the world.

TMID Editorial:
SLIEMA: FROM SEASIDE GEM TO URBAN NIGHTMARE

Once celebrated as Malta's shining seaside jewel, Sliema is fast losing its charm. The town that once drew people for its elegance and coastal beauty has now become a sprawling construction site where chaos reigns supreme. For residents, daily life has become an exercise in endurance - a battle against noise, dust, traffic diversions, and an endless series of road closures that make even the simplest journey home a challenge.

Everywhere one turns, streets are barricaded or blocked by cranes and construction trucks. In some areas, roads next to each other are closed simultaneously, leaving residents stranded or forced to take long, convoluted detours just to reach their front doors. Visitors struggle to find their way around the maze of diversions, and delivery drivers often give up entirely. The situation is, quite frankly, unsustainable.

The local council, for its part, insists that it has no real control over much of this work. Yet, when residents' patience runs out - and who can blame them - it is the council that faces their ire. The reality is that the coordination between various authorities, developers, and contractors is woefully lacking. Everyone seems to be digging, building, or demolishing at will, while the people who actually live in Sliema pay the price.

Gone are the days when Sliema's streets were lined with charming townhouses. Those quaint homes are being demolished one by one, replaced by towering apartment blocks that blot out the sun and suffocate what little open space remains. The once-graceful skyline has been disfigured by cranes and scaffolding, a constant reminder that the construction never seems to end. The town now looks shabby and worn - its pavements broken, its roads pockmarked with potholes, its air heavy with dust. What used to be an idyllic seaside community has morphed into a dirty, noisy, and overbuilt urban jungle. Finding a parking space has become another nightmare altogether. Residents circle the streets for half an hour - sometimes more - only to end up parking far from home. With cranes occupying sections of the road and construction vehicles stationed along side streets, parking has turned into a game of chance that few ever win. Those who once loved Sliema for its convenience and accessibility now dread the daily grind of simply getting around.

Even walking through Sliema has become an obstacle course. Pavements are broken or uneven, and pedestrians often find themselves forced into the street because the sidewalks are blocked - either by cranes, construction debris, waste still to be collected or the rows of tables and chairs from restaurants that have spilled out onto public space. Not to mention being forced to walk beneath scaffolding with construction work taking place above. For all pedestrians, particularly elderly residents and people with mobility issues, this is not just an inconvenience; it is a safety hazard.

What Sliema desperately needs is better organisation - a coordinated effort to restore some sense of order and liveability. Development cannot continue to run unchecked, without regard for residents' quality of life. Authorities must step in to ensure that works are planned sensibly, that streets near each other are not all closed at once, and that public spaces are respected. The town deserves better than to be treated as a construction zone with no end in sight.

Sliema was once a place people aspired to live in - a graceful blend of seaside beauty, history, and modern life. Today, it stands as a cautionary tale of what happens when development runs amok.

Ħamsin sena mill-mewt tal-għannej
Fredu Spiteri ("il-Levarist")
10 ta' Novembru l965

Sewwa sew ħamsin sen'ilu
Għawdex tilef iben kbir;
kien għannej tal-"prima klassi"
kulfejn mar qala' tifħir!

Sfortunat kien Fredu tagħna
għax miet mewta bla stennija
illi ħasdet lin-nies kollha.
Għaliex, Mulej! Hekk bikrija!

Fredu kien dejjem jitbissem,
raġel ħelu u ċajtier,
ma kienx jaf x'inhuma d-dwejjaq –
artist veru, muskettier!

Ma naħsibx li hawn palk f'Għawdex
fejn Fredu ma meddx saqajh,
bil-kitarra mdendla m'għonqu
lin-nies ġennen għal warajh.

Jien niftakru n-nies iferraħ
fil-jiem sbieħ tal-Karnival.
Min jaf kemm il-kostum libes
biex idaħħak kbar u tfal!

Għall-makjetti w għall-istejjer
bħalu żgur ma kien hawn qatt;
kien iqabbel bl-akbar ħeffa
u jbellah lil kulħadd.

Ried illi joħloq tbissima
fuq fomm morda w imnikktin;
lilhom xtaq inessi d-dwejjaq
u jagħmilhom ftit henjin.

Għal warajh kien jiġbed folol
hekk kif jaqbad il-kitarra –
kellu lsienu jħollok, jaqta'
aktar minn ta' ximitarra.

Fuq ix-xogħol lil sħabu jżommhom
fl-isbaħ u fl-aqwa burdata;
għalih l-għixien m'hux piż iebes
iżda żgur l-isbaħ xalata.

Ħalli hawnhekk nislet strofa
milli smajtu darba jqabbel;
Ingliż, Malti, ħaġa waħda,
u lil moħħok żgur iħabbel!

"*O what happened*, x'biċċa ġratli,
ma niflaħx, *I am too sick*;
mindu ġie l-inbid minn Sisli *(Sicily)*
donni *wagon* mingħajr *crick*!".

Nofs ta' seklu issa tgerbeb
mindu tlifna 'l dal-ġentlom,
ma ridtx nibqa' jiena lura
biex dal-versi lilu ndomm.

Jiena naħseb illi Fredu
għadu għaddej bl-għana tiegħu,
b'dawk il-kordi tal-kitarra,
bl-anġli kollha mdawra miegħu!

Fid-dmir aħna lis-Setgħani
nitolbuh jagħti l-mistrieħ
lill-għannej Fredu Spiteri
u l-Ġenna dlonk jagħtih.

Kav Joe M Attard 2025
Victoria Għawdex

Fredu Spiteri, also known as il-Lavarist was a renowned Maltese folksinger from Gozo known for his traditional songs and comedic sketches (makjetti). He was also a comic actor, radio host, and a founding member of the theatre company Muskettieri Ghawdxin. He died tragically in a motorcycle accident in November 1965 at the age of 36.

RABAT RESIDENTS URGE ERA TO HALT THE DESTRUCTION OF A HISTORIC 19TH-CENTURY SITE,

They emphasise the need for transparency in the ongoing archaeological investigation.

Residents of Rabat are voicing their strong opposition to the demolition of a significant archaeological site located on Triq il-Buskett, as outlined in proposal PA/02441/25 submitted to the Planning Authority. This proposal seeks to replace the historic farmhouse with a large five-storey development that would feature 83 underground garages, 30 apartments, 10 penthouses, 9 maisonettes, and a retail shop.

The site has sparked controversy over the past few months, leading residents to protest against the planned development. They contend that this initiative signifies not development but rather environmental destruction. Alarmingly, excavation work has commenced even as the planning application is still under review by the Planning Authority.

Opponents of the project highlight the removal of soil and long-established trees, some of which are legally protected, despite an archaeological investigation underway by the Superintendent of Cultural Heritage (SCH). This investigation aims to assess the site's significance and will provide insights for the Planning Authority to consider before deciding on the application to demolish the 130-year-old farmhouse.

Approximately 1,000 objections have been lodged against the proposed development, with lawyer Claire Bonello and architect Tara Cassar representing 296 additional objectors. They claim to possess evidence, including photographs and videos, indicating the discovery of at least one grave at the site, which has not been disclosed. While residents welcome the SCH's investigation, they have voiced concerns over the lack of transparency throughout the process, calling for the publication of all relevant details.

Those opposing the development are appealing to the Environment and Resources Authority (ERA) to conduct an immediate investigation into the removal of protected trees and to cease any further excavation activities. They also urge the Planning Authority to prevent the SCH and ERA from contributing to the degradation of this important sites.

Maltese living abroad enjoy reading news about Malta, and similarly, those in Malta and Gozo are interested in what's happening with Maltese expats. This is because many families in Malta have relatives or friends living overseas especially in Australia, Canada, USA, the UK and Europe

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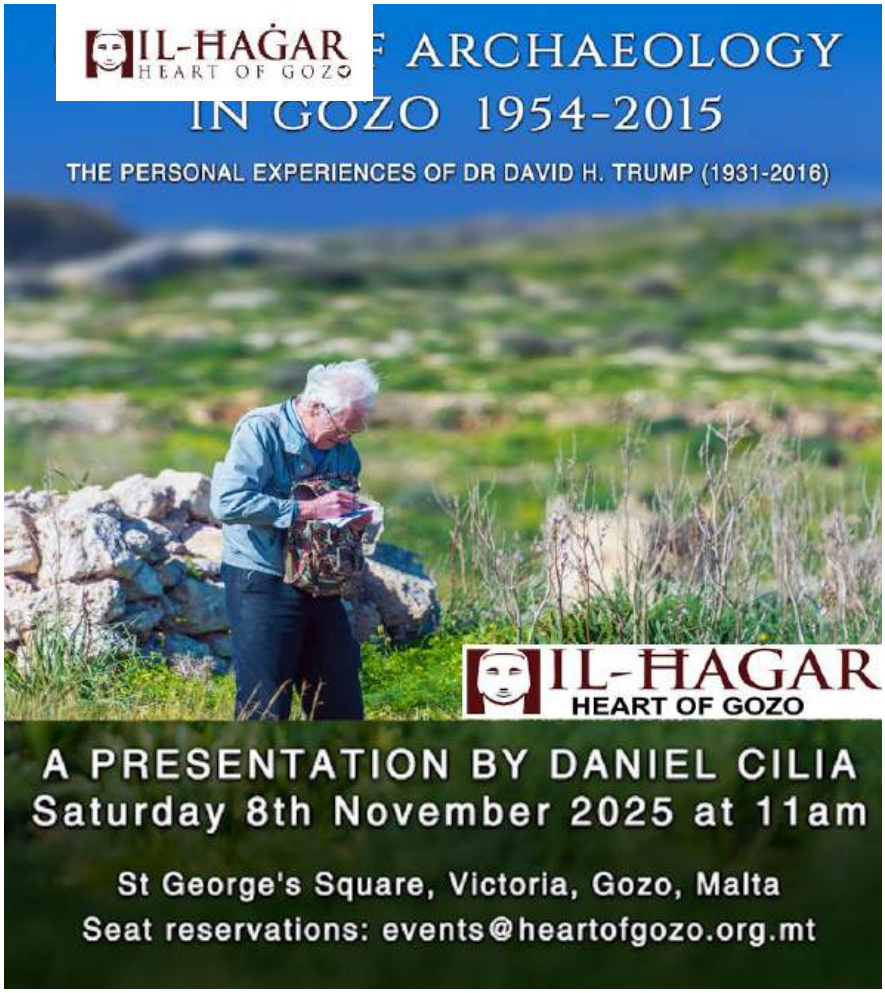


CONNECTING WITH GOZO

Dear Mr Scicluna, I am very happy to share . I myself am Australian born to Gozitan parents who returned to Gozo and raised me in their homeland. I am still very attached to my Australian heritage and still have family there. I consider it important to keep both sides alive so sharing with you what we do at our Museum, Il-Ħaġar, in Gozo, is truly a privilege.

For further information or support, please do not hesitate to contact me.

With thanks & regards,

Ms Monica Borg Debrincat c/o Il-Ħaġar - Heart of Gozo Museum

JOSEPH MUSCAT

About the work:

Joseph Muscat is a multi-disciplinary Toronto Canada artist. In this most recent series of paintings titled **More than meets the I**, pun intended, as the title might suggest, the work represents a visual exploration of the various hidden depths, situations and complexities of our realities today. With our constant exposure to Artificial Intelligence, Chat GPT and Deepfake, where truth is never a given, one should always question. The colourful profusion of images, some brush-painted and others stencilled, swirling against various backdrops and markings, aim to create a sense of uncertainty. Muscat's iconic and omnipresent "cabin" visible in each of his works, is a symbolic place of refuge one might seek amid this turmoil and confusion.

À propos des œuvres :

Joseph Muscat est un artiste multidisciplinaire torontois. Dans sa plus récente série de peintures, intitulée **« More than meets the I »,** un jeu de mots voulu, plus que ce que le titre suggère, l'œuvre explore visuellement les multiples profondeurs, situations et complexités de notre réalité contemporaine. Face à notre exposition constante à l'intelligence artificielle, aux chatbots et aux deepfakes, où la vérité n'est jamais acquise, il est essentiel de toujours s'interroger. La profusion colorée d'images, certaines peintes au pinceau, d'autres au pochoir, tourbillonnant sur divers fonds et motifs, vise à créer un sentiment d'incertitude. La « cabane », élément iconique et omniprésent dans chacune de ses œuvres, symbolise un refuge où l'on peut chercher un havre de paix au milieu de ce tumulte et de cette confusion.

Joseph Muscat OSA AOCA Visual Artist / Art & Exhibition Consultant
muscat@interlog.com www.josephmuscatartist.com

WHO IS JOSEPH MUSCAT?

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.

A VISIT OF FR. TESTA TO CRINGILA CENTRE

By Louis Parnis - President

Father Leonard Testa has now been living in a nursing home located in the Albion Park region of the Illawarra,NSW which is conveniently accessible for his family and friends. On Monday, the George Cross Falcons Community Centre at Cringila NSW commemorated All Souls Day, and with the assistance of his brother John, Fr Testa was able to attend the service. Despite being in a wheelchair, those present were eager to extend their best wishes to Father Testa. The kitchen provided a baked dinner featuring pork chops; however, Father expressed a desire for pastizzi, as he had not had the chance to enjoy them for quite some time

ABOUT FATHER TESTA

Fr Leonard M. Testa OFMConv is a member of the Conventual Franciscans (Greyfriars). His mother often reminded him of his date of birth in Malta during the war an event she would refer to as collateral war damage, namely that "as he was coming out the Germans were coming in" notwithstanding, they wanted a large family but only had thirteen children. He is the third born and given the name of Carmel after our Lady of Mount Carmel.

In 1951 the Testa family migrated to Australia and lived till 1994 in Cringila NSW. In 1956 barely sixteen, he returned to Malta to join the Franciscans (Greyfriars) the first from Australia. He had his religious formation in Assisi-Italy, at the Shrine of St Francis, and continued with his formation in Rome at the Order's international college, the Seraphicum. He was ordained in Rome in 1966, returning to Warrawong fraternity in Australia a year later.

He did his pastoral year at St Benedict's Sydney, under Monsignor William Murray, later Bishop of Wollongong. In 1969 he was appointed parish priest of the newly established parish at Kellyville NSW. Then chosen as Custodian of the Greyfriars followed as Parish Priest at Springvale Vic. to be appointed to Assisi for four years, followed by nine years in Turkey, and back in Australia in 1990 where he worked since then in Warrawong parish. He is now living in retirement after 60 years as a Franciscan and 54 as a Priest.

Technology can be both a blessing and a challenge.

When we're unhappy with someone or something, it's all too easy to respond with a quick text!

This kind of reaction is often driven by emotion rather than being the result of a thoughtful and balanced response.

How valuable it is to cultivate certain disciplines that help guide our behaviour!

Many of us have come to expect quick and instant solutions to problems. The art of slowing down for the greater good is becoming increasingly rare.

The greater good is never simplistic, nor is it a knee-jerk reaction. It's not about revenge or simply venting our frustration to get things off our chest.

The virtue of patience goes hand in hand with wisd

AYOR OF BRUNSWICK, VICTORIA AUSTRALIA

Loreto York, the first Maltese mayor in Australia who was renowned for his sense of humour and irreverent wit died on October 5, 2009 at the age of 90 after a five-month battle with cancer.

Born as Loreto Meilak in Sliema in 1918, Mr York, who played a pioneering role in local government in Melbourne and was the first non-Anglo, non-Celt to sit on the Brunswick Council.

In an interview recorded for the Australian National Library in 1989, Mr York spoke frankly about the obstacles placed in the way of newcomers within his party, the Australian Labour Party. Yet, he was indispensable to them. Multiling

ual - Maltese, Italian, English, Arabic and smatterings of French, German and Greek - charismatic and endowed with great energy, he could directly communicate with migrants who did not feel comfortable speaking English.

He also played an important role in the Storemen & Packers' Union, especially its 1970s campaign for equal pay for women in the cosmetics manufacturing industry.

Born into a family of 11, his merchant seaman father, Salvatore Meilak, was away at sea for long periods which made life for his mother very hard. Mr York only had four years of schooling but eventually obtained an apprenticeship as a ladies' hairdresser at a Sliema salon, which catered for the wives of the British Admiralty.

He was a handsome and charming man with a bevy of girlfriends well into his 80s. As a young apprentice hairdresser, he was noticed by Mrs Vanderbilt, wife of one of the world's wealthiest men who was vacationing in Malta.

She had asked his employer whether she could take the young apprentice to Europe with her as her gigolo. Nothing came of the offer but Mr York's charms contributed to a highly interesting life, including an affair with an Egyptian princess during the war.

Stationed in London after the war, he changed his name from Meilak to York as he felt a foreign name in London stood in his way of personal advancement.

In 1947, he married Olive Turner, an English photographic assistant, and their son Barry was born three years before they emigrated as "£10" migrants in 1954.

Expecting Melbourne to be a smaller version of London, Mr York was bitterly disappointed with what he saw as its backwardness, intolerance and racism.

As mayor of Brunswick, he reversed the official protocol at the annual mayoral ball to allow the aboriginal leader, Pastor Doug Nicholls and his wife, to enter the Town Hall first, as head of the official guests, instead of the state Governor and MPs.

He never fully embraced Australia and always thought of himself as Maltese - heaven help anybody who ever said a word against his motherland in his presence.

He was a working class intellectual who thought deeply about life. He was spiritual but not religious. One of the songs he requested for his funeral, John Lennon's Imagine, appealed to him for the lines about having "no religion" and "no countries".

THE GREAT SIEGE OF MALTA-1565: AN EPIC POEM

Dear Friends of Valletta, guests and friends

I would like to thank you again for attending my talk 'The Great Siege of Malta, 1565', on 16 September, whether online or in person, and for showing your appreciation. I'm very glad you enjoyed it. The recording is now available on the Friends of Valletta website, https://www.friendsofvalletta.org/talks/. The direct link is https://youtu.be/YAeLbKzfHtY. Please feel free to listen to it again, and to share these links.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank also Laurence Zerafa and his siblings for allowing me to edit and bring their late father Joseph's magnificent epic poem to light.

My thanks also to Daniel Cilia for his excellent photographs of the newly restored Great Siege wall paintings by Matteo Perez d'Aleccio at the Grand Master's Palace, by kind permission of Heritage Malta, specially taken to illustrate and enhance this poem.

I am pleased to announce that Heritage Malta has now published this work as a fully illustrated hardback, 'The Great Siege of Malta - An Epic Poem'. It is available at Heritage Malta outlets and online at https://heritagemalta.mt/store/the-great-siege-of-malta-1565-an-epic-poem/.

It is also my pleasure to announce, as a tribute to Joseph Zerafa and all those involved in bringing this work to publication, that the President of Malta has graciously accepted to receive a copy of 'The Great Siege of Malta - An Epic Poem' on 14 November at a formal Presentation at San Anton Palace, Malta. With very best wishes and many thanks to you all **Col (retd) David Vassallo**

THE GREAT SIEGE OF MALTA-1565: AN EPIC POEM

In 1980, Joseph Lawrence Zerafa (1917-1985), a poet from Żurrieq, began composing this epic poem on the Great Siege of Malta of 1565. Comprising more than a thousand stanzas, the poem remained unpublished during his lifetime. It was later transcribed by his family and archived, until some forty years later when Zerafa's son Laurence brought it to the attention of David Vassallo.

ABOUT DAVID VASSALLO

About the speaker - Col (retd) David Vassallo

David Vassallo, originally from Malta, is a consultant military general surgeon who served for 35 eventful years in the Royal Army Medical Corps before retiring in 2018. He has extensive field hospital experience in war zones, his first deployment being to the First Gulf War, followed by multiple tours in Bosnia, Kosovo, Sierra Leone, Iraq and Afghanistan.

David has a passion for military and military medical history, attested by three books and many articles, as well as chapters on the history of Operations Telic and Herrick for the official medical history of these campaigns. He has a Masters in the History of Warfare from King's College London, his dissertation being on the transformation of the UK's Defence Medical Services in recent conflict. His talk '*The role of the medic in modern warfare'* will draw on his deep insights into historical developments and lessons that have materially influenced the saving of life on the battlefield and beyond, and their relevance for today's conflicts – and tomorrow's.

He is now Chairman, Friends of Millbank (the former Royal Army Medical College in London), whose website www.friendsofmillbank.org is full of historical resources. He organises monthly talks, open to all, which celebrate the history, achievements and ongoing relevance of military medicine. BMMHS members are especially welcome at these talks.

CHEV. JOE BAJADA KHS HONOURED WITH THE PRESTIGIOUS 'ĠIEĦ GĦAWDEX' AWARD 2025 WITH THE PRESIDENT OF MALTA MYRIAM SPITERI DEBONO

During the Gozo Day ceremony held on Sunday, 26 October 2025, Chev. Joe Bajada KHS was formally presented with the distinguished 'Ġieħ Għawdex' award by Her Excellency Myriam Spiteri Debono, President of Malta. This recognition stands among the highest honours bestowed upon individuals who have made exceptional contributions to the social, cultural, and economic advancement of Gozo.

Established by the Circolo Gozitano in 2005, the 'Ġieħ Għawdex' celebrates people and organisations that have worked tirelessly to preserve and promote the unique Gozitan identity. It also recognises those whose achievements have brought honour to Gozo at a national or international level.

Upon receiving the award, Chev. Bajada expressed deep gratitude, describing the recognition as a profound honour for himself, his family, Gozo, and Malta. He reflected on more than 50 years of commitment to sports administration in the Maltese Islands and on his longstanding role in promoting international collaboration through major cycling institutions, including the Union Cycliste Internationale (UCI) and the Union Européenne de Cyclisme (UEC).

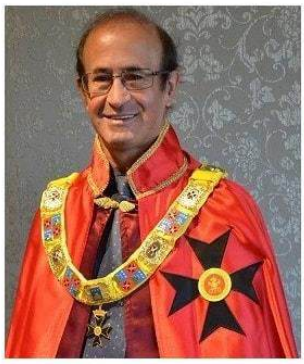
Chev. Bajada dedicated the award to his family, acknowledging their ongoing support throughout his career. He concluded his remarks with a message of encouragement, stating: "Every individual can make a difference through their potential to contribute to our society and communities."

On behalf of the Circolo Gozitano, Secretary Joseph Camilleri extended his congratulations, noting: "Chev. Joe Bajada has been a pillar of dedication and leadership, continuously working to promote sports and community values in Gozo and Malta. His lifelong commitment reflects the very essence of what the 'Ġieħ Għawdex' Award stands for."

About Chev. Joe Bajada KHS

Chev. Joe Bajada has been actively engaged in sports administration in the Maltese Islands for over five decades, holding senior positions across multiple national sporting bodies. His influence extends internationally, particularly in the field of cycling, where he has served within the structures of the UCI and UEC. Throughout his extensive career, Chev. Bajada has championed youth development, sports accessibility, and the representation of Gozo and Malta on the global stage.

Confraternity of the Knights of St. Peter & St. Paul
Seat of the Confraternity: Melbourne. Vic. Australia
Website: http://www.knightsofstpeterandstpaul.com/
Email: grandmaster.knightsstpeterpaul@gmail.com
Confraternity News
Issue 156 October 2025



Grand Master's Message
Confraternity of the Knights of St. Peter & St. Paul

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As Grand Master of the Confraternity of the Knights of St. Peter & St. Paul, I extend my heartfelt greetings and blessings to all members and friends around the world.

Our Confraternity stands as a beacon of faith, charity, and brotherhood, founded upon the unshakeable example of our patron saints St. Peter, the rock upon which Christ built His Church, and St. Paul, the tireless missionary of the Gospel. Together, they remind us that our calling as Knights is one of service, humility, and unwavering devotion to God's will.

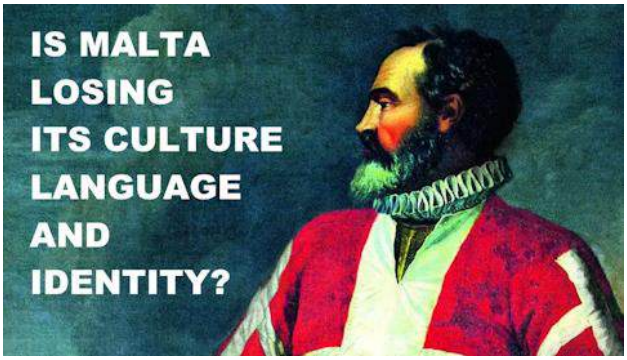
In a world often marked by division and uncertainty, we are called to be instruments of peace and compassion. Through our charitable works, our support for the needy, and our witness to the values of Christian chivalry, we continue to uphold the noble mission of the Confraternity to *serve God by serving others*.

Let us remain steadfast in faith, united in purpose, and generous in spirit. May our actions always reflect the light of Christ, inspiring others to walk the same path of love, justice, and mercy.

May St. Peter and St. Paul guide and protect us all in our mission.

With my blessings,

H.E. Chevalier Peter Paul Portelli *Grand Master*



Maltese are becoming strangers in their own country and that should alarm us all.

Concerns about Maltese identity loss stem from rapid modernization, globalization, and the erosion of traditional practices like the Maltese language, traditional customs and Catholic religious observance. Factors include the influx of immigrants, the dominance of English in public and professional life, and the rapid societal changes that have outpaced the consolidation of a stable identity.

This is attributed to various reasons: the strong influx of foreigners working in our country, the significant increase in tourists visiting the Maltese Islands, the rise in Maltese traveling abroad, our membership in the European Union, the influence of the internet, and more.

If we consider the number of foreigners in our country alongside the drastic decline in birth rates among Maltese, it quickly becomes apparent that in a few years, we risk becoming a minority in our own homeland.

Moreover, the foreign workers and tourists come from diverse backgrounds and cultures that are quite different from ours. This has introduced a wealth of new ideas about daily living—some positive and progressive, while others, such as the decline of moral values, pose challenges and even regressions.

Joining the European Union has significantly increased the number of Maltese traveling to various European countries for work, study, or leisure, reaping the benefits that our EU membership brings. This exposure means that countless Maltese are continuously encountering lifestyles and ideas that, for many of us, starkly contrast our traditional upbringing.

Additionally, it's impossible to overlook the technological and social revolution brought on by the internet. We now live in a globalized world where events occurring on the other side of the planet reach us almost immediately thanks to online connectivity.

However, all these changes have also led to troubling consequences for our identity as Maltese. Take the Maltese language, for instance today, many Maltese speakers are more proficient in English than in Maltese, often spending hours on their mobile and internet.

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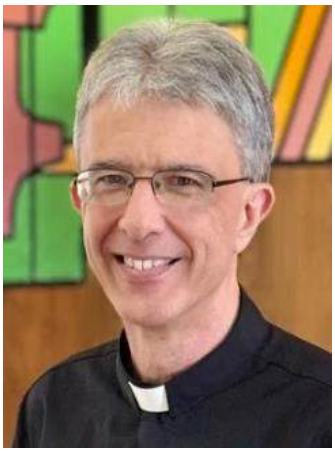
FR. MARTIN GALEA MSSP POVINCIAL WILL VISIT MELBOURNE



Fr. Martin Galea MSSP, a 53-year-old from Malta, holds a science degree. After joining the MSSP, he studied philosophy and theology in Malta, followed by pastoral leadership studies in Dublin. Ordained on June 26, 1998, Fr. Martin prepared for his ministry of formation with studies in Rome. Since then, he has been deeply involved in vocational work and formation in Malta and the Philippines. He has also served in the General Administration for the past 18 years.

The MSSP community is thrilled to welcome their Superior General, Rev. Fr. Martin Galea MSSP, who is visiting Melbourne.

He will be in Parkville on November 10th, 11th, and 12th. On Wednesday, November 12th, he will celebrate Mass at St. Paul's Chapel, Parkville.

Following Mass, he will visit the Centru Malti to meet with the Newport Maltese Association and all those attending. We encourage members of the Maltese community of Victoria to join us

A NIGHT TO REMEMBER

On Sunday the 19th of October the **MALTESE QUEEN OF VICTORIES BAND OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA** committee organised and hosted a Current and Former musicians reunion event at the Hope Inn in Hindmarsh. The event was attended by over 90 guests, including 20 current band players, 30 former musicians and musical Directors, along with their partners and 14 children.

The reunion proved to be a great idea by the current committee. It was a fantastic and successful afternoon of reconnection and celebration, with many renewing old friendships, some reuniting for the first time in over 20 years. The atmosphere was warm and filled with nostalgia as members reminisced about the band's proud history and enduring community spirit.

A special memorabilia display showcased an impressive collection of some musical instruments, trophies, certificates, souvenirs, posters of former and present musicians, Musical Directors, committees and members photos. On three monitors a slideshow showing the band since its inception in 1981 and random photos of former and current musicians and performances both in Adelaide and Victoria were also on show for all to see and reminisce.

The band played three favourite triumphant Maltese marches to the delight of the former musicians that haven't played or heard them in a long while.

Was good to see some of the former musicians join in on trumpet, percussion and Clarinet. *Wouldn't it be nice if some of them came back?*

A special thanks go to the staff of the **Hope Inn** for their excellent service and hospitality throughout the day, and to those who delivered speeches, sharing heartfelt memories and reflections on the band's journey and legacy.

The committee sincerely thanks everyone who attended and contributed to making the reunion a memorable and heart-warming success. Ray Grima – Adelaide SA

WE ALWAYS SUPPORT THE MALTESE ASSOCIATIONS OPERATING IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA, OTHER STATES IN AUSTRALIA AND IN THE MALTESE DIASPORA

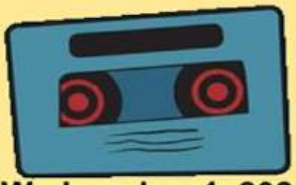
THE MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER
Journal for Maltese Living Abroad

Well done Mr Scicluna. This Maltese journal has truly filled a significant gap in our community around Australia and other countries. Without its contributions, we would have been unaware and of the events unfolding around us and beyond. Thank you for all that you've accomplished so far for us, and for your continued efforts on our behalf. Frank Zammit - Pendle Hill NSW

Prosit Sur Scicluna! Din il-gazzetta baqghet timla vojt vast li kieku ma kienx mimli xi ftit biha, il-komunita' taghna kienet tibqa' muta u truxa ghal dak kollu li qieghed jigri madwarna u lil hinn minna. Awguri ghal dak kollu li diga' ksibtilna u ghal li ghad jirnexxilek tikseb ghalik u ghalina. Frank Zammit, Pendle Hill, NSW

MALTESE QUEEN OF VICTORIES BAND OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

JAM NIGHT



Wednesday, 1, 2025
9 November
7:30PM
Church Parish Hall
456 Henley Beach Road,
Lockleys, SA

BRING YOUR INSTRUMENT, YOUR APPETITE, OR JUST YOURSELF! JOIN US FOR A CASUAL NIGHT OF MUSIC, AND A MEAL! EVERYONE'S WELCOME!!
RSVP LILY 0420966835

The Maltese Guild of South Australia opens every Tuesday for lunch from 10am till 3.00pm

The Maltese Seniorr Citizens Association opens every Friday from 10am till 3pm for lunnch and social activities.

THE MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER

Published in Adelaide, Australia since 2013
free, bilingual and non-political
The editor and team produce this journal mainly for Maltese living abroad.

OUR AIM IS TO INFORM, SHARE, CONNECT AND EMPOWER MALTESE LIVING AROUND THE WORLD

To contact us or/and send a donation email us
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IF YOU HAVE A STORY, A POEM OR A PHOTO WHICH YOU WOULD TO PUBLISH IN THIS JOURNAL SEND IT TO US AND SHARE IT WITH OTHERS

12 Years of Service to the Maltese Diaspora

Your small donation keeps this journal alive

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