MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER

Journal for Maltese Living Abroad

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KARIN MARIA GRECH (1962-1977)

MALTESE IN UK

Michela Farrugia and Nenu Borg

CHEV. JOE M ATTARD

Kummissjoni Għolja tar-Repubblika ta' Malta
High Commission for the Republic of Malta

Press Release

Subject: Schedule of Pension Payment Dates 2026

The High Commission of Malta would like to inform the public of the 2026 pension payment dates under the Maltese Social Security Act.

This information is published on the Department of Social Security website: https://mysocialsecurity.gov.mt/Views/PaymentSchedules.aspx;

RETIRED **Retirement, Increased** **Retirement, Reduced National Minimum &** **Two-Thirds Pension National Minimum &** **Increased National Minimum Pension**	**WIDOW**	**INVALIDITY**
3 January 2026	**10 Jan. 2026**	**3 Jan. 2026**
31 January 2026	**07 Feb. 2026**	**31 Jan. 2026**
28 February 2026	**07 Mar 2026**	**28 Feb. 2026**
28 March 2026	**04 April 2026**	**28 Mar 2026**
25 April 2026	**02 May 2026**	**25 April 2026**
23 May 2026	**30 May 2026**	**23 May 2026**
20 June 2026	**27 June 2026**	**20 June 2026**
18 July 2026	**25 July 2026**	**18 July 2026**
15 August 2026	**22 Aug. 2026**	**15 Aug. 2026**
12 September 2026	**19 Sep. 2026**	**12 Sep. 2026**
10 October 4 2026	**17 Oct. 2026**	**10 Oct. 2026**
07 November 2026	**14 Nov. 2026**	**07 Nov. 2026**
05 December 2026	**12 Dec. 2026**	**05 Dec. 2026**

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MALTESE LIVING IN THE UNITED STATES EXPRESS CONCERN OVER DEPORTATION

Maltese residents living in the United States have expressed fear and concern over potential deportation, particularly in the context of stricter U.S. immigration enforcement measures and rhetoric.

They expressed their concerns about the possibility of being apprehended by enforcement agents and subsequently deported from their adopted homeland. Some individuals attribute their heightened vulnerability to their physical appearance. Despite their fluency in English and possession of valid documentation, Maltese residents report that their Mediterranean features, particularly their olive-toned skin, render them more conspicuous.

This apprehension has intensified following Donald Trump's return to the White House and amidst a renewed federal crackdown on immigration, which has recently resulted in fatalities. "I am providing you with an anonymous statement due to my fear of facing repercussions for stating objective truths," remarked one of the six Maltese individuals interviewed by Times of Malta. "I do not consider myself risk-averse; I have even willingly traveled to conflict zones. I am not one to shy away from expressing my opinions. Yet, here I find myself giving you an anonymous statement out of fear of the consequences of speaking objective truths.

" With the exception of two individuals, none of the Maltese respondents were willing to disclose their identities when approached by Times of Malta. Several declined to comment altogether, asserting that even the act of anonymously sharing their fears posed risks. Others requested that no communication occur via social media platforms, fearing that such exchanges could be intercepted by authorities, leading to their identification. The interviewee, who requested anonymity and chose not to disclose their gender or state, recounted their return from Malta last summer, feeling tanned and acutely aware of their olive skin in a country where such a physical characteristic can be conspicuous.

They reminisced about the sensation that "anything could happen": being stopped at immigration, detained without contact, with "due process out the window at the moment," despite possessing all necessary legal documents. Their apprehension mirrors a broader atmosphere since Trump's election, characterized by aggressive enforcement actions by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and federal agents in various US cities. The tension reached a boiling point on Wednesday after a 37-year-old woman was shot dead by an ICE agent in Minneapolis. Thousands of agents have been deployed to enforce immigration and customs laws, but concerns have mounted over their hardline tactics and racial profiling.

MALTA-UK: THE PEOPLE'S LINK
CONNECTING MALTESE IN THE UK WITH CULTURE, COMMUNITY AND A BRIDGE TO DECISION-MAKERS

COUNCIL OF MALTESE LIVING ABROAD (CMLA)
UK REGIONAL COMMITTEE

This page is run by volunteers of the CMLA UK Regional Committee. We serve the Maltese community in the UK—listening, connecting, and channelling your views to the right people. We act as a conduit, not the headline. *We have no official say; our thoughts are our own. Our aim is to help, encourage, and represent your voice with respect.*

Practical role of the UK Regional Committee The UK regional committee brings together 8 Maltese people from across the UK to share ideas and concerns. Our members come from different places and backgrounds, and we speak in our own personal capacity and through feedback—we don't have official authority. Different members have taken their roles on the committee at different times. Some have been on the committee for longer than 3 years, while others have been appointed this year. Our job is to listen, reflect the community's views fairly, and turn your ideas into clear, practical briefs.

The committee chair leads this process. As a member of the Council for Maltese Living Abroad (CMLA), the chair represents our regional committee within that council. Their role is to make sure every voice is heard, guide the group toward a shared position, and act as a bridge between the community and the institutions.

Once we've gathered and shaped your input, we pass it on to the Malta High Commission, the CMLA, and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. We do this to help, encourage, and ensure the voice of the Maltese diaspora in the UK is understood—so it can inform decisions and strengthen the connection between people and institutions. Email us: edgar.brincat@gov.mt

Discover new opportunities for Maltese in UK! Ever wondered how to connect with Malta's vibrant culture, education, or business from here? There's more happening than you think—find ways to get involved and make your voice heard. Join us on this journey!

MALTESE PEOPLE IN THE UNITED KINGDOM
IL-MALTIN FIR-RENJU UNIT

Prior to the passage of the Commonwealth Immigrants Act of 1962, there were few restrictions on Maltese migration to the UK. Malta had experienced significant emigration, particularly as a result of the collapse of a construction boom in 1907 and after World War II, when the birth rate increased significantly. In the nineteenth century, most migration from Malta had been to North Africa and the Middle East, with high rates of return migration, but in the twentieth century most emigrants went to destinations in the New World, particularly the United States and Australia. Numbers opting for the UK were smaller, despite the colonial links. Indeed, prior to World War I, there were very few Maltese in the UK, except for a community in Cardiff. The UK was seen as a distant and cold country by most Maltese. Between 1919 and 1929, 3,354 Maltese were recorded as sailing to the UK, with 1,445 of these returning in later years. The remainder did not necessarily all stay in the UK, however, with many subsequently moving on to Australia. Nonetheless, by 1932, a street adjoining Commercial Road in London was home to a Maltese community. Many of these Maltese people worked in London's docks. Similar communities existed around the docks in Chatham and Portsmouth.

After World War Two, Malta's Emigration Department would assist emigrants with the cost of their travel. Between 1948 and 1967, 30 per cent of the population emigrated. After 1962, Maltese people required vouchers to migrate to the UK, but these were relatively easy to obtain from the Emigration Department until 1971. The Emigration Department would arrange for prospective migrants to be interviewed by British firms in order to allow their passage to the UK to fill labour shortages. At this time, it was also common for Maltese women to marry British military servicemen, and for Maltese to join British merchant ships. Migration statistics recorded in Malta and the UK differ in terms of the number of Maltese migrants recorded. Maltese statistics suggest that 8,282 people left Malta for the UK between 1963 and 1970 (inclusive), with 949 recorded as returning. British statistics, meanwhile, suggest that 8,110 Maltese migrants arrived in the same period, excluding students, diplomats, seamen, visitors and their families. Between 1946 and the late 1970s, over 140,000 people left Malta on the assisted passage scheme, with 57.6 per cent migrating to Australia, 22 per cent to the UK, 13 per cent to Canada and 7 per cent to the United States.

Significant seasonal migration to the UK started in 1962. This year saw 70 Maltese women recruited to work in British fruit and vegetable canneries for six months. By 1967–69, 250 Maltese people per year were moving to the UK for seasonal work, mostly in the canning, ice cream manufacture and hotel and catering sectors. The seasonal migration of female workers was organised by the Emigrants' Commission of the Catholic Church in Malta.

According to the Malta Emigration Museum, between the end of World War Two and 1996, a total of 31,489 migrants left Malta for the UK. 12,659 subsequently returned to Malta. Net migration over the period was therefore 18,830.

The 2001 UK Census recorded 30,178 Maltese-born people resident in the UK. The Office for National Statistics estimates that the equivalent figure for 2009 was 28,000. By contrast, there were 46,998 Maltese-born residents recorded by the 2001 Australian Census, 9,525 by the 2001 Canadian Census and the 9,080 by the 2000 United States Census.

MALTESE IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

Edgar Brincat ·

It's always a special moment when you meet like-minded people who are kind, caring, and share great values. Yesterday, I had the pleasure of meeting someone I'd only met briefly before, Bronia Aquilina, but the conversation was so natural and flowing that it felt as though we'd known each other for years. We had a great brunch at Kember and Jones

She plays such an important role within the Maltese community as the executive officer at the **High Commission of Malta in the United Kingdom**, a role that's important for so many. Yet, beyond her position, she's a lovely person inside and out, and I'm so grateful for the introduction made by **Nerissa Sultana**—thank you! Hopefully, next time, Nerissa can join us too.

It's also fascinating how, whenever two Maltese people meet, even abroad, our passion and love for Malta becomes so vivid. We talk about our country like it's our family, deeply proud and protective. Even when faced with criticism—sometimes appropriate—it still hurts because Malta is part of our identity. These conversations are always a mix of heartfelt nostalgia, immense pride, and thoughtful reflection.

Unfortunately, we were so engrossed in our discussion that we forgot to capture the moment with a photo! For now, I'm sharing this image that represents a fusion of Malta and Scotland, symbolising the bond and connection we share across cultures.

This encounter reminded me of the beauty of spontaneous connections, which pushed me to write an article (will follow later), something I reflected on my drive home.

Here's to meaningful conversations, mutual respect, and the possibility of a wonderful friendship ahead.

A message from **Edgar Brincat**, UK Representative for the Council of Maltese Living Abroad. Our mission is to strengthen the diaspora and bring us together: united across England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. If we haven't met yet, get in touch. Know other Maltese? Encourage them to follow us and reach out. Is-Sena t-Tajba!

Through his role in the **Council for Maltese Living Abroad (CMLA)**, Edgar Brincat is eager to continue promoting Malta's interests and supporting the Maltese community abroad. His vision is to foster stronger ties between Maltese communities worldwide and create opportunities for collaboration, learning, and mutual support. He is particularly committed to helping Maltese nationals navigate life abroad, whether they've been in the UK for years or have just arrived.

MALTESE IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

PROFESSOR DAME CLARE GERADA

Maltese and UK national Professor Dame Clare Gerada was introduced to the **UK House of Lords**, as Baroness Gerada of Kennington in the London Borough of Lambeth. She sits as a non-party-political, or crossbench peer.

Baroness Gerada was supported during the introduction ceremony by Baroness Kennedy of The Shaws and Lord Patel of Bradford. She took the oath and signed an undertaking to abide by the Code of Conduct.

Her maiden speech has been noted for its focus on the values of general practice, emphasizing community, continuity, and compassion in medicine. She also made reference to her Maltese heritage and the values and work ethic she inherited. Baroness Gerada was appointed a life peer in recognition of her outstanding service to medicine and mental health, with a specific focus on the wellbeing of healthcare professionals

Her appointment makes her the first Maltese woman to sit in the House of Lords.

ANGELE LAUTIER

Meet Angele Lautier, a multidisciplinary artist whose work beautifully honours our Maltese heritage while exploring the stories that connect us all. Rooted in her deep fascination with Malta, Angele transforms traditions into powerful contemporary art that speaks to womanhood, migration, and unity. Her latest projects are truly inspiring—including 'Heritage and Home', a film documenting migration narrative created for Wandsworth Borough of Culture 2025, and stunning lacemaking installations exploring identity and generational connection. From her collectio✨ns 'Femella' and 'Motherhood, Middlescence and Me' to her interactive installations, Angele's practice creates spaces for reflection and human connection. She's a Fine Art graduate from Camberwell College of Arts and Royal College of Art—and a proud voice for our community.

www.angelelautier.com and. The Maltese Journal is proud of you, Angele!

FIFA World Cup 2026

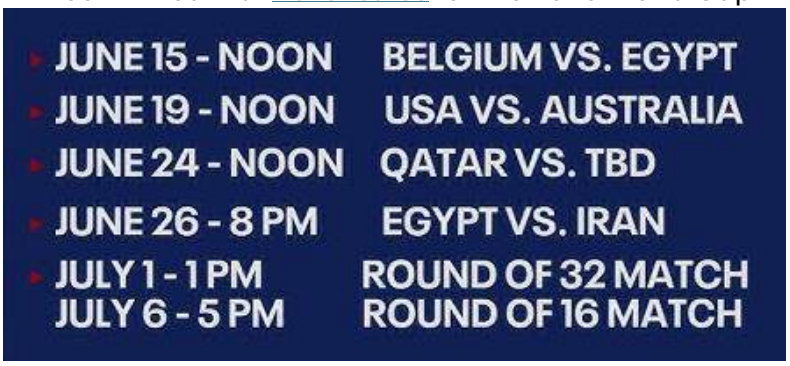
The countdown to the FIFA World Cup 2026 has begun, and excitement is already building. FIFA has announced that ticket sales will officially start next week, with entry-level tickets priced at $60. This is the start of a wave of global interest in the first World Cup hosted by three countries: the United States, Canada, and Mexico.

Beyond football, the 2026 World Cup is being framed as the largest sporting event in history, set to break records in scale, audience, and financial impact. However, as the tournament grows, questions about sustainability and climate accountability are surfacing more strongly than ever.

This article explores the key elements shaping the 2026 World Cup—from the scale of ticketing and stadium preparations to the climate debate and FIFA's promises on environmental management.

Ticket Sales and Record Demand

FIFA confirmed that ticket sales for the 2026 World Cup will start next week, with the lowest-priced tickets at $60. While this marks a lower entry point compared to past tournaments, demand is expected to outpace supply significantly.



The 2026 edition will host 48 teams for the first time, up from 32, and feature 104 matches across 16 cities in the U.S., Mexico, and Canada. This expansion increases the number of tickets available. FIFA projects that over 5.5 million tickets could be sold, surpassing the record 3.1 million sold in Brazil 2014 and the 3.4 million in Qatar 2022.

FIFA is also testing new ticketing models, including bundled packages for group-stage matches and hospitality programs.

Organizers are betting on the North American market's strong purchasing power to drive record-breaking revenue. It could potentially surpass **$11 billion in total tournament income**.

CHEV. JOE M ATTARD
One of our correspondents

OUR CORRESPONDENT'S BIRTHDAY
CHEV JOE M ATTARD

We wish our correspondent Chev Joe M Attard a happy 80th . Joe M. Attard was born in Victoria, Gozo on 1 January 1946, the son of Baskal and Dolores. He received his primary education at the Government School in Victoria and continued at the Ninu Cremona Lyceum in the same city.

After some time working as a tourist guide in Ġgantija and at the Archaeological Museum in the Citadel, and later with the Government Postal Department, he completed his two-year teacher training at St Michael's Training College of Education in Ta' Giorni, St Julian's (1967-1969).

He also studied at the Collegio Universitario Mario Braccita' Siena, Italy, where he followed a Course of Perfection in the Italian Language in 1972. He taught Maltese for over thirty years at the Ninu Cremona Com secondary School in Victoria and Maltese to foreign residents living in Gozo.

For a number of years, he was Assistant Head as well as Acting Head of the Sixth Form in Gozo. He also worked as an Examiner in the Matriculation Orals of Maltese at Intermediate and Advanced levels. Attard is a member of the Maltese Academy. He is the author of numerous poems, essays, and literary features – some of which were heard on Rediffusion, Radju Malta and Calypso Radio during Holy Week and at Christmas time. He rewrote the historical novel Nikol Abdul in Maltese, revised by the Academy and printed by the Maltese Book Club, which some years later also published his book **Kittieba Għawdxin matul dawn l-aħħar mitt sena**.

Joe was appointed a Knight of the **Unione Cavalleria Cristiana Internezionale** (UCCI) in 1984 and was the Secretary and Treasurer of the **Gozitan Journalists and Writers Association** since its establishment in 1960. For many years he was a member of the **Astra Dramatic Circle** and the Lyceum Players. He is the President of the Men's Branch of **Catholic Action in Victoria**, and was also PRO of the **Għaqda Ħbieb tal-Presepju**.

For thirty years he presented a two-hour live program once a week in the form of a chat show, which was very popular and sought after by Gozitan and Maltese listeners. He is a much sought-after presenter and still produces programmes for community radio stations, including Leħen il-Belt Victoria. Joe is also a regular contributor for the Kournal of Maltese Living Abroad maily poems nd reports in Maltese. Joe is the widower of Marija née Zammit; he was married in 1973 by Bishop of Gozo Nikol Ġ. Cauchi. He has three children – Nathaniel, Dun Geoffrey George, and Francesco Pio. **AD MULTOS ANNOS**

Your small donation keeps this journal alive

Bank - Commonwealth (Australia) BSB - 065106
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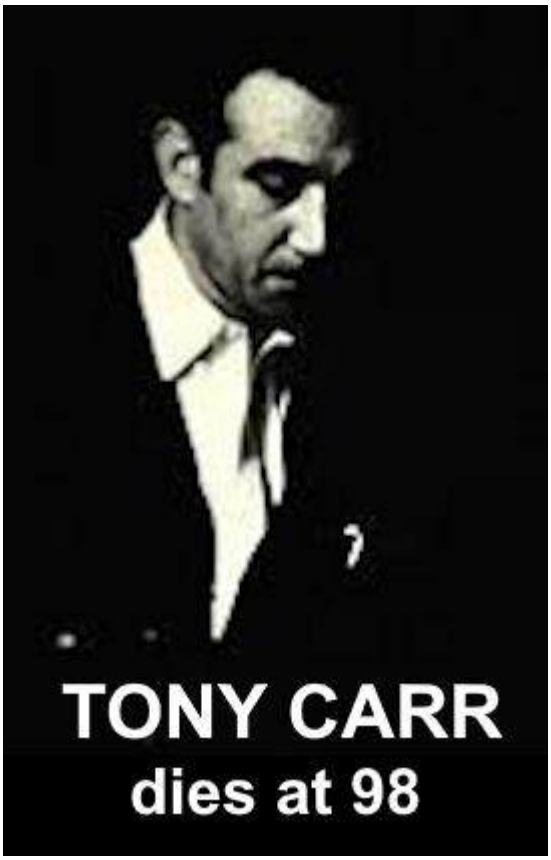


MALTESE JAZZ LEGEND, TONY CARR, PASSES AWAY AGED 98

The renowned Maltese drummer and percussionist passed away at he the age of 98. Carr, who was born George Caruana in 1927, in Valletta, Malta and was a highly regarded musician whose career commenced in the bars of Valletta's Strada Stretta and ultimately led him to perform alongside musical legends such as Ella Fitzgerald, Paul McCartney, and Dizzy Gillespie.

He played a crucial role in establishing the foundations of Malta's jazz scene, while also building an impressive career in the UK as a session drummer for some of the most prominent figures in music history. His formative years in London were characterized by challenges and a sense of longing for home, yet his determination resulted in a successful career. Among the notable moments was an invitation to Abbey Road Studios to record with Paul McCartney's Rockestra supergroup, which included members of Led Zeppelin and Wings. He also served as the session percussionist on the original recording of Hot Chocolate's worldwide hit, You Sexy Thing. In recent years, his legacy has been honored in Malta through the documentary Strait Street to Abbey Road, which is based on his biography by Ġużè Camilleri.

Camilleri portrayed Carr as a pivotal and versatile figure in contemporary music whose contributions warrant greater acknowledgment in his homeland. The esteemed British composer John Cameron paid homage to Carr, describing him as "a powerhouse in more than one sense" and "a force of nature." Carr's journey from the lively, post-war nightlife of Strait Street to the heights of the international recording industry represents an extraordinary chapter in Malta's cultural narrative.

HAMRUN CLUB

Gday Maltaussies Show

100 Jackson, St Marsden Park, New South Wales, Australia 2765

The Hamrun Club was founded in 1979 and is situated in Marsden Park. For 44 years, it has been serving the Maltese community with live shows, dinner balls, functions, etc. Each year in August, the club commemorates the feast of San Gejtanu with a Holy Mass, procession, accompanied by a brass band that follows the statue, along with the attendees. The committee members are President – Joe Borg, Vice President - Edward Ellul, Secretary – Adriana Stevens, Treasurer - Ray Muscat, Board Members – Lisa Rusmussen, Mary Attard, Tessie Rizzo, and Mark Tanti.

Gozo is officially having its moment and the international spotlight is firmly on Malta's sister island.

UK outlet Metro has named Gozo as one of Europe's rising travel stars for 2026, after new data revealed a massive surge in interest for the island.

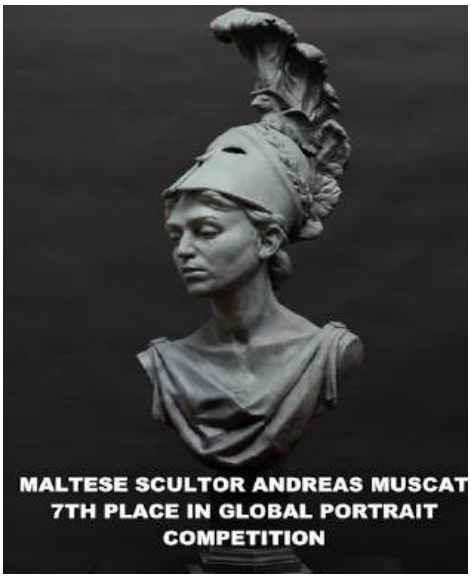
According to Travel Supermarket, searches for Gozo skyrocketed by an incredible 1,900%, turning it from what was once considered an "afterthought" into a must-visit destination.

Described by Metro as "what Malta used to be like", Gozo is being praised for its slower pace of life, natural beauty and authentic charm, offering a calmer alternative to the busier main island. The surge in interest comes as Malta continues to break tourism records, welcoming over 3.5 million visitors in 2024, with many now choosing to explore Gozo just a short ferry ride away.

Metro highlighted Gozo's rich history, breathtaking landscapes and unique character, from its ancient temples, some of the oldest in the world, to its dramatic coastline, red sands at Ramla Bay and crystal-clear waters. The island's mythical past, including its connection to Calypso and Odysseus, also featured as part of its growing appeal.

TravelSupermarket's Head of Holidays, Chris Webber, noted that Gozo's rise reflects a growing demand for more relaxed, authentic destinations, especially among travellers seeking culture, history and natural beauty.

With landmarks like the Ġgantija Temples, the Citadel in Victoria, the Blue Hole dive site and the iconic salt pans, it's easy to see why Gozo is fast becoming one of Europe's most talked-about travel destinations. *This article was written by Rebecca Spiteri on lovinmalta.com*



Maltese sculptor Andreas Paul Muscat has achieved an outstanding international milestone, placing 7th in the Portrait Society of America's Non-Commissioned Portrait Competition.

The category received over 1,000 entries from artists around the world, making his top-10 finish even more remarkable, especially as this was both his first international competition and his first attempt.

Muscat, who has dedicated just one and a half years to sculpting, described the achievement as deeply meaningful. He expressed gratitude to the jury and noted how honoured he is to be a current member of the Portrait Society of America.

"Humbled by the present, hungry for the future," he wrote, proudly representing Malta he global stage. A fantastic accomplishment for a rising Maltese artist. Well done to him.

LET US NEVER FORGET:
THE BARBARIC ASSASSINATION OF KARIN GRECH

Karin Maria Grech (1962–1977)

Karin Maria Grech (1962–1977) was a 15-year-old girl from Malta who became a significant figure in the island's history following her tragic demise due to a letter bomb attack.

The Incident happened on December 28, 1977, three days after Christmas when Karin opened a package addressed to her father, Professor Edwin Grech, at their family residence in San Ġwann. The package was wrapped in Christmas paper, leading both Karin and her 10-year-old brother, Kevin, to assume it was a holiday present.

Upon opening the parcel it detonated. She sustained severe burns and succumbed at St. Luke's Hospital approximately thirty minutes later. Her brother Kevin was also injured in the explosion but managed to survive.

The attack took place during a time of significant political and industrial turmoil in Malta: The Doctors' Strike: At that time, Maltese doctors were on strike against the Labour government. Professor Edwin Grech, a gynaecologist who had been practicing in the UK, returned to Malta at the government's request to lead the Obstetrics and Gynaecology department, effectively serving as a "strike-breaker."

Although the crime remains officially unresolved, it is widely perceived as a politically motivated murder. On the same day the Grech family received the bomb, another similar device was sent to a Labour MP, although it did not explode. Legacy Karin Grech's death is frequently referenced as one of the most tragic events in Malta's political history.

A garden in San Ġwann and the Karin Grech Hospital in Pietà are named in her honor. Despite years of investigations, no one has ever been charged with the murder. In 2010, a court awarded her family compensation, determining that the murder was indeed a consequence of her father's service to the government during the strike. Her father, Edwin Grech, passed away in 2023 at the age of 94 without ever witnessing the resolution of the case.

LUANA BUGEJA, Josuel's fiance, entered and won the Miss Priscilla 2026 competition here at Parkes - Australia
The look, the size, the make-up... all on point.
So proud of her

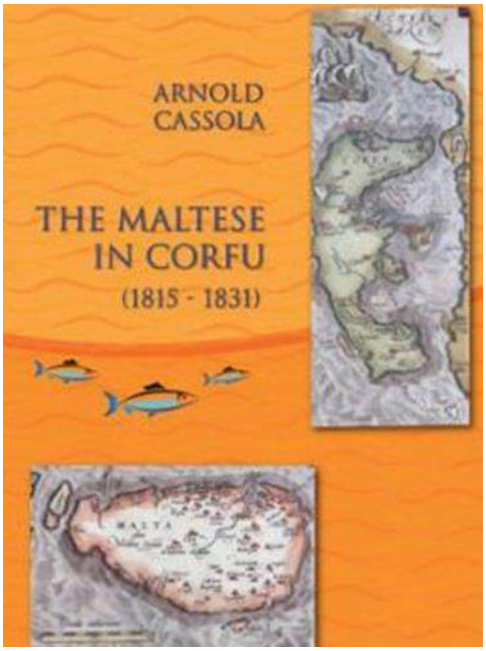
JOSUEL GRECH FROM MALTA
Today I had the incredible honour of unveiling my star at the Graceland Gates here in Parkes, Australia proudly carrying my name as the Champion of the 2025 edition.
To have a star with my name on it in a town on another continent, and to know I've made my mark in the history of Parkes, is something I could have only dreamed of.
This moment will stay with me forever.
Thank you Parkes Elvis Festival

JOSUEL - YOU ARE A STAR

Josuel stated on his Facebook page

When I went to top of the Sydney Harbour Bridge I met this "stranger" up there Lawrie Caruana – and honestly, together with his wonderful wife Ann-marie, they have been absolutely amazing. From taking such great care of me and Luana, to helping with my merchandise and making sure everything runs smoothly, they've truly **gone above and beyond.**
We're having an **amazing time** with them

SCENES FROM A MALTESE DIASPORA MALTESE IN CORFU (1815-1831)



Author: Arnold Cassola
Publisher: GA Enterprises & Co Ltd / 2025
Pages: 167

Corfu, or Kerkyra, is one of the Ionian islands in western Greece. It is the northernmost island on Greece's west coast. From medieval times and into the 17th century, the island, as part of the Republic of Venice since 1204, successfully repulsed the Ottomans in several sieges, was recognised as a bulwark of the European States against the Ottoman Empire and became one of the most fortified places in Europe.

In November 1815 Corfu came under British rule following the Napoleonic Wars and in 1864 was ceded to modern Greece.

The capital, Corfu Town, flanked by two imposing Venetian fortresses, features winding medieval lanes, a French-style arcade and the grand palace of St Michael and St George.

It is this last detail which brings to mind the connection with Malta. The palace was commissioned by Sir Thomas Maitland, the British Lord High Commissioner of the Ionian Islands. It was designed in the Greek Revival style of neoclassical architecture by the British architect George Whitmore.

The building primarily consists of limestone imported from Malta and Maltese workers were employed in its construction.

Of course, Maitland is the same "King Tom" so lampooned by the Maltese when he was Governor of Malta, succeeding Sir Alexander Ball. This palace is not the main palace on the island. That is the famous Achilleion, built by Empress Elizabeth (Sissi) in 1889. Equally famous is the summer palace of Mon Repos, birthplace of Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh.

The "Maltese" palace is today known as the Old Palace and was recently in the news because of an unauthorised pole dancing show.

This book tracks this rather small colony of Maltese workers from their arrival in 1815 to 1831. The author has previously written about other Maltese diasporas (perhaps the author ought to bring these studies together).

My general impression is that the colony in Corfu did not develop strong roots. It is easy to see why: the difficult language, the fact that most of the people who took up the offer were illiterate, and other difficulties.

When, a century later, Corfu was overran by the Nazis and the authorities wanted to deport the "Maltese" because they were "British subjects" the reply that came back was that these persons had so integrated they were indistinguishable from the natives.

One must acknowledge the extensive contribution by the author in his studies about Malta and its neighbours. And also the research that uncovered Turkish accounts of what we still call the Great Siege.

Apart from, of course, Arnold Cassola is the leader of a Maltese political party, secretary general of a pan-European party and a member of the Italian Parliament.

CORFU - PALACE OF ST. MICHAEL AND ST. GEORGE

The Palace of St. Michael and St George was built by the architect G. Whitmore in the years 1819-1824 A.D. when the British Commissioner Thomas Maitland was in office.
It is the most important monument of the British administration and one of the first neoclassical buildings in Greece. It was built from Maltese stone.
The name "Palace of Saints Michael and George" was chosen because in the building were not only offices and the residence of the British Commissioner, but also the headquarters of the namesake battalion. The facade is decorated with a series of Doric columns, interrupted by two majestic triumphal archways , and is curved at both sides defining the north end of the Espianada square. The cornice is decorated with the prow of a stone ship symbolizing Corfu. Originally, however, the statue of a woman symbolizing the British Empire was placed here. The building is crowned with the seven emblems of the Ionian Islands. Inside, the walls and ceilings of the main halls are rich in ornate bas-reliefs and paintings
Before the islands were united with Greece (1864) the Palace housed the Senate as well as the Ionian Parliament. Afterwards it was used as a Royal summer residence, while the archaeological collection of Corfu was also placed here for a short period. Nowadays it houses the Museum of Asian Art and the Municipal Art Gallery.

Key Connections to Malta & Maltese People:

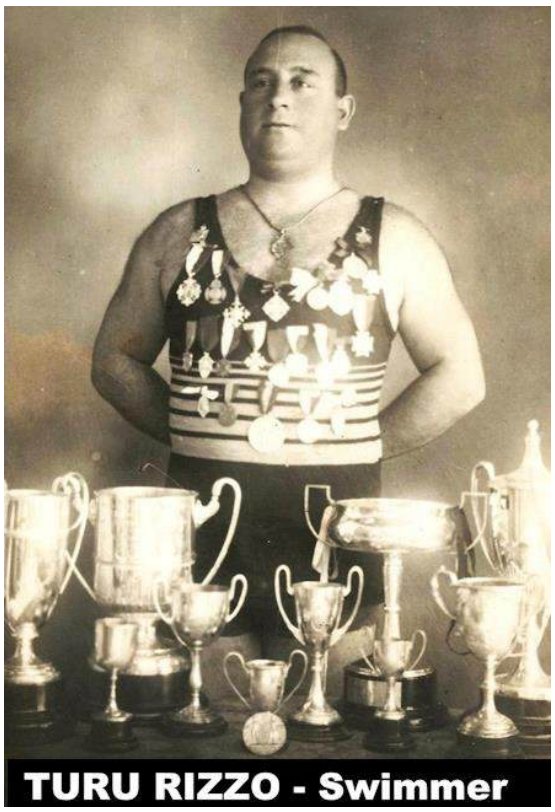
- **Building Material:** The palace was constructed from limestone quarried and transported from Malta, making Malta integral to its very foundation.
- **Labor Force:** A significant number of Maltese workers were brought to Corfu to build the palace, forming the initial Maltese community there.
- **The Order:** The palace housed the headquarters of the Most Distinguished Order of St. Michael and St. George, an order established to honor Ionian and Maltese subjects for service to British interests, with many Maltese receiving its honors.
- **Sculptors:** Maltese sculptors Vincenzo and Ferdinando Dimech contributed to the palace's sculptural elements.
- **Early Maltese Presence:** The palace's construction in the 1820s marked the formal beginning of a Maltese community in Corfu, though records suggest some Maltese were present even earlier.

About the Palace:

- **Purpose:** Served as the residence of the British Lord High Commissioner and the seat of the Ionian Senate.
- **Architecture:** A prominent neoclassical building designed by British architect George Whitmore.
- **Modern Use:** Today, it houses the Museum of Asian Art of Corfu.

THE LEGENDARY SWIMMER TURU RIZZO

A 1930s portrait of Turu Rizzo, with trophies and medals.



His prowess on land and sea remain truly remarkable, and his swimming endurance exploits credibly reached world record standards

The 1928 Olympic water polo pitch in Amsterdam where Turu Rizzo and the Malta team competed.

Malta cannot truthfully boast of athletes who reached the highest rungs of international fame. Swimming, which timidly started acquiring some popularity as a leisure and sporting activity only in the late Victorian era, had no one remarkable to showcase.

The barrier was shattered, and with a sonic bang, by Turu Rizzo (1894-1961). His swimming endurance exploits credibly reached world record standards.

A postcard map of the 1938 marathon endurance run by Turu Rizzo.

Today, a full-figure bronze monument and a road name honour his memory. I believe he is the only Maltese athlete to feature repeatedly in pre-war postcards, printed and photographic.

A postcard with Turu Rizzo's autograph

Turu Rizzo being helped out of the sea at the end of an endurance feat. Note the Sliema Ferries police station. A Result Studio postcard

Rizzo's prowess on land and sea remain truly remarkable. He first attracted attention when he beat British Services swimming champions deemed unbeatable by the locals. In 1926, he crossed from Ras il-Qala, Gozo, to Għar id-Dud, Sliema, in 10 hours, 31 minutes.

Three years later, he established a world record, water treading for just over 62 hours. He improved this in 1930 by swimming for 68 hours, breaking two world records – endurance and distance.

His grandson, Albert, 54 years later, pulverised this limit. He lasted in the sea for 132 hours (times and distances vary depending on the sources). Rizzo attempted to swim from Sicily to Malta in 1933 but unexpected stormy weather frustrated his efforts only a few miles from his destination.

He made up for this when he was 44 years old by running a 28-hour marathon over 130 kilometres across Malta. Displaying on his chest the myriad medals won during his career makes the hero look impressive, if rather bizarre. Nine children survived him.

An Olympic medal was awarded to Turu Rizzo for taking part in the 1928 Amsterdam games.

His athletic feats turned into crowd pullers. Postcard publishers instinctively realised their commercial potential. Richard Ellis and the Grand Studio in Sliema and the Result Studio in Sliema joined the thriving market.

ĠUŻI RISSO IS 100 YEARS OLD; HE RECOUNTS ON HOW HE MET HIS WIFE IN 1948 - TVM NEWS

Over these days, an elderly man from Sliema became 100 years old and he still lives in his own home with his children looking in on him to see whether he needs anything and sometimes he visits them.

TVMNews met with Joseph Risso in his home the day after he celebrated his 100th birthday and he had various experiences and memories to recount.

The youngest of eight children, but those who know him especially from the Sacro Cour Parish where up to a short while ago he was still active and known as Ġużi Risso. He was born of a Maltese mother and a father who came to Malta from Gibraltar. He lost his father when he was only aged 12.

His father's death was in 1944 and he said he started working because the school was closed because of the war and he went to the Victory Kitchen workshop.

He remained there until it was closed and later went to work at the Sea Transport Office and a few years later he began to work in silver-ware where he spent 43 years.

Ġużi is proud to say he always lived in Sliema and remembers how this was hit during the war. He remembers the bombs that fell on Strada Santa Rita and Sacro Cour and the bomb that remained dangling on a tree in Villa Portelli in front of the Savoy Hotel.

How did he meet his wife Tessie?

He remembers that in 1948 he accompanied Sliema Wanderers to Catania where they lost and conceded six goals ... he saw her there for the first time and their romance continued and they were married on 8th June, 1952.

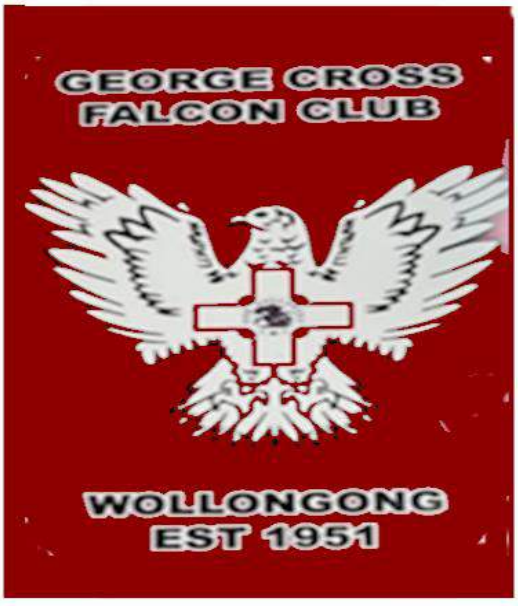
Ġużi and Tessie spent 72 years married until Tessie passed away. They had four female children – Vicky, Miriam, Dorothy and Catherine.

He recalls it was 72 years of ups and downs but they were a family and with the help of God everything went well. Ġużi Risso still lives alone and his children and grandchildren take care of him and keep his mind active.

We spoke to three of his children. Vicky Butters said twice a week he goes with Hospice and integrates with people and tells them of his life experiences and this keeps his mi9nd active. Miriam Ciantar said that education-wise he would tell us to learn because nobody can take that away from you. He always had a principle. As a parent he was very strict.

Dorothy Fenech said when I need advice I ask him and he always gives it to me.

One of Ġużi Risso's best experiences which he currently treasures is at the age of 98 being taken to Rome where he met and spoke to Pope Francis. He said the Pope embraced him and when he came to know he was from Malta he was very pleased.



George Cross Falcons Club

75th Anniversary Dinner

6pm Saturday 27 June 2026
Fraternity Club, Fairy Meadows NSW
ALL WELCOME

3 Course Meal

Live band (Rockin Xpress)
Tickets $57

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ŻEBBUĠ MIMLI – STUFFED OLIVES

from

Prof **Stephen Gatt**, Castle Balfour, 2026

The classic Maltese olive and anchovy filling, known as ***Żebbuġ Mimli***, typically uses a mixture of tuna, anchovies, and garlic to create a savoury paste for stuffing jumbo green olives.

Maltese Olive with Anchovy Filling (Żebbuġ Mimli bl' Inċova w it-Tonn)

This simple recipe results in a robust, flavourful appetiser or snack best served with a Maltese beer, eg Cisk Lager, or a spritzer.

Ingredients

- 1 large jar of jumbo/giant pitted green olives (around 800g - 1kg)
- 2 slices fresh sourdough bread (Hobz Malti, preferably)
- 1 tbsp Castle Balfour soft, fresh breadcrumbs or dried Panforte or Panettone
- 5 pinches (~1 tsp) of Gozo sea salt
- 1 can of tuna in olive oil, drained
- 1 can of anchovies in olive oil, with the oil
- [If marinated in saline, drain carefully and use additional extra virgin olive oil]
- 1 tsp anchovy paste, eg Peck's anchovette(
- 1 tsp kunserva (tomato paste)
- 3-4 cloves of fresh garlic, crushed
- ~20 baby capers
- 5 sprigs parsley, chopped finely or parsley flakes (optional)
- Plenty of freshly ground black pepper
- Olive oil (as needed for consistency and storage)

Method

Prepare the mixture: In a blender or food processor, combine the drained tuna, anchovies (with their oil), capers, anchovy paste, kunserva, bread/panforte, salt and pepper and crushed garlic cloves. You can also mash everything manually in a bowl.

Blend to a paste: Blend on low speed, gradually adding olive oil until you achieve a smooth, spreadable paste consistency. Add black pepper to taste. If using optional breadcrumbs or a slice of bread, incorporate them at this stage to help bind the mixture.

Stuff the olives: Using the rounded tip of a kiwifruit knife, a tiny spoon or a piping bag with a large nipple, carefully fill each pitted green olive with the mixture.

Store: Place the stuffed olives in a glass jar and cover them with olive oil.

Note:

The leftover filling can be used as a spread on crackers, bark or crusty bread or to stuff the leaves of globe artichokes (Qaqoċċ Mimli).

The Żebbuġ Mimli taste best when marinated overnight in the fridge to let the flavours meld.

The Maltese green olive is too small for this exercise. Even though the two native Maltese olive varieties are tastier, we use pitted Australian-grown Giant Spanish Olives.

PASTIZZI, ALJOTTA AND BIGILLA ARE NOW IN THE OXFORD ENGLISH DICTIONARY

In its latest update released in January the esteemed Oxford English Dictionary has incorporated four words derived from Maltese.

This addition is part of the Oxford dictionary's extensive collection of words originating from Malta and from communities that speak the English language. Indeed, numerous terms have been included from countries such as Japan, South Korea, and even various nations across the African continent.

In the context of Malta, three words have been introduced into the Oxford English Dictionary, including a specific phrase. One of the three words added in this recent update is **'pastizzi'**, which pertains to Malta's culinary traditional pasty that have also influenced other nations like Canada and Australia.

Additionally, the terms **'aljotta'** (fish soup) and **'bigilla'** (broad beans dip) have been included in the English dictionary, thereby reaching the millions of individuals who frequently utilize this resource. Both 'pastizz' and 'aljotta' have their roots in Sicilian, and the dictionary provides an explanation of their history, along with that of bigilla.

Furthermore, the phrase **'Maltese English'** has been added to the Oxford English Dictionary. This term describes words that adopt a Maltese form from English, as well as Maltese words that take on an English form. According to the dictionary, this 'Maltese English' has historical roots dating back to 1878.

Maltese migrants holidaying in Malta, often from countries like Australia, Canada, USA or the UK, enjoy returning to their ancestral home for cultural connection, family, and exploring the islands' history, with many sharing experiences of rediscovering Maltese life, food and scenery and old familiar places and faces.

Żejtune, the new feature film by Maltese filmmaker Alex Camilleri, has been selected for the International Competition at the Gothenburg Film Festival, where it will have its world premiere on 29 January 2026.

Michela Farrugia with Nenu Borg, who has made his screen debut aged 82.

Żejtune, a new feature film by Maltese filmmaker Alex Camilleri, director of the critically acclaimed film Luzzu, has been selected for international competition at the Gothenburg Film Festival. It will have its world premiere there on January 29 during the festival's forty-ninth edition.

The film will compete alongside productions from around the world and audiences will be invited to vote for the best international film.

Founded in 1979, the Gothenburg Film Festival is the largest film festival in Scandinavia and one of the world's most significant audience-driven festivals. In 2025 alone, it attracted over 270,000 visits, showcasing global cinema and emerging talent to both industry professionals and the public. Among a long list of established guests attending this year's festival are two-time Palme d'Or winner Ruben Östlund, acclaimed European filmmaker Agnieszka Holland and actress Roomi Rapace.

Żejtune tells the story of Mar, played by Michela Farrugia, a young woman ready to leave Malta behind. The death of her estranged mother offers her a way out, through the inheritance of three pieces of land she intends to sell.

As she embarks on a journey to claim her inheritance, Mar meets Nenu, portrayed by Nenu Borg (a veteran għana singer making his screen debut at the age of 82), whose vibrant folk music draws her into the colourful traditions of an island she is desperate to escape.

Commenting on the film's selection, director Alex Camilleri said: "Żejtune is a film meant to be enjoyed loud, on a big screen, and above all: together. The spirit of collective encounter is why Gothenburg is the perfect launchpad for our film — a rare major festival where the audience is at the heart of the experience."

The film was produced by Oliver Mallia of Pellikola, Ramin Bahrani of Noruz Films and Alex Camilleri of Solari Productions, with co-producers Fred Burle and Sol Bondy of One Two Films, alongside Rebecca Anastasi. It was made in co-production with ZDF Das kleine Fernsehspiel and in association with arte, Films Boutique and Nizza Films.

Alongside Michela Farrugia and Nenu Borg, the film features a wide range of local cast members, including the screen debut of Maltese singer-songwriter Michael Azzopardi in the role of Anġlu, and veteran Maltese actress Frida Cauchi as Mar's aunt, Annette.

Producer Oliver Mallia said: "It is always exciting to launch a film and presenting Żejtune at a prestigious event like the Gothenburg Film Festival is a great start to the film's journey on the big screen and a testament to the collective effort, dedication and belief of everyone involved in the project." The film will be released in cinema theatres in Malta in Spring, with a release date to be announced in early February.

THE TA' DUNA CHAPEL IN RABAT MALTA

This is considered to be a jewel of art and architecture together with many others found in the heart of Rabat, the church of Santa Marija ta' Doni is that it is internally totally decorated with all walls and the roof painted.

After 300 years these paintings and decorations are being restored in a professional manner.

This is found in the main road that from Villa Rumana leads to the Grotta ta' San Pawl in Rabat. Daily many hundreds of Maltese and tourists pass but have little knowledge of what is to be found in the church. In Rabat it is known as Ta' Duna.

Its presence in this locality goes back many centuries but its presence was built in the time of Grandmaster Nicolas Cotoner in the second half of the 17th Century.

Particularly outstanding is the internal decoration of the church, all painted rococo style.. However, over the years the effects of water, humidity and tremors have had their effects means there is now urgent need for great restoration.

Five years ago its administration was given to the Logotenenza Maltija tal-Ordni tas-Santissimu Sepulkru ta' Ġerusalemm with the thought of its becoming a spiritual centre.

The Malta Tourism Authority has provided the finance for the restoration of all paintings.

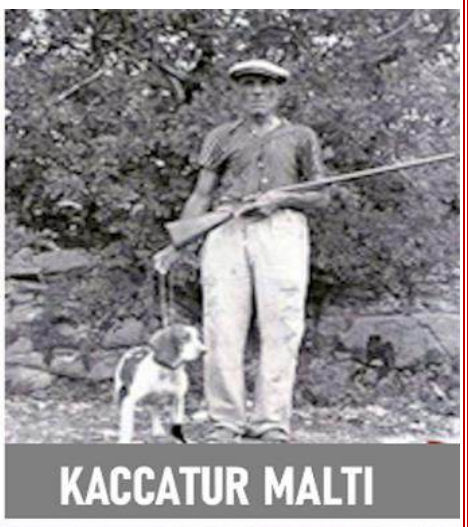
Carlo Micallef the Executive Head of the Malta Tourism Authority said the work will be on arts and the church structure which so satisfy the heart, a commitment appreciated by the Authority.

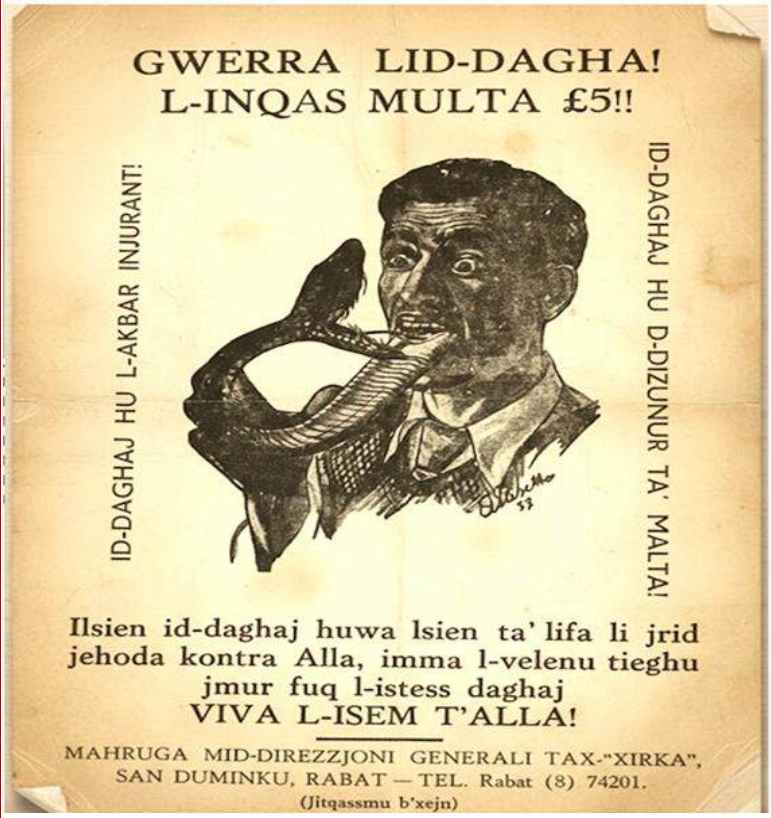
The administration of the Ordni tas-Santu Sepulkru in Malta said it would not be possible that the work began last September when the company Atelier del Restauro dedicated four restoration projects to this project.

Roberto Buontempo from the Logotenenza Maltija tal-Ordni tas-Santissimu Sepulkru ta' Ġerusalemm said without Government financing this type of work would not be possible and shows the strength of collaboration between the State and the Church for the benefit of the people and all those who visit the church.

After four months the work on the roof is well advanced but the restorers are aware of the difficulties which lie ahead in the lower part of wall paintings where coats have been loaded on and have to be removed and the original restored.

When the restoration is complete, this "hidden" Rabat jewel will once more be appreciated as a sacred place with an artistic and spectacular background for the benefit of people today and in the future.





Our Associations are now having a Christmas break and will re-open later this month.

STAY TUNED
WE KEEP
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