THE MALTESE E-NEWSLETTER

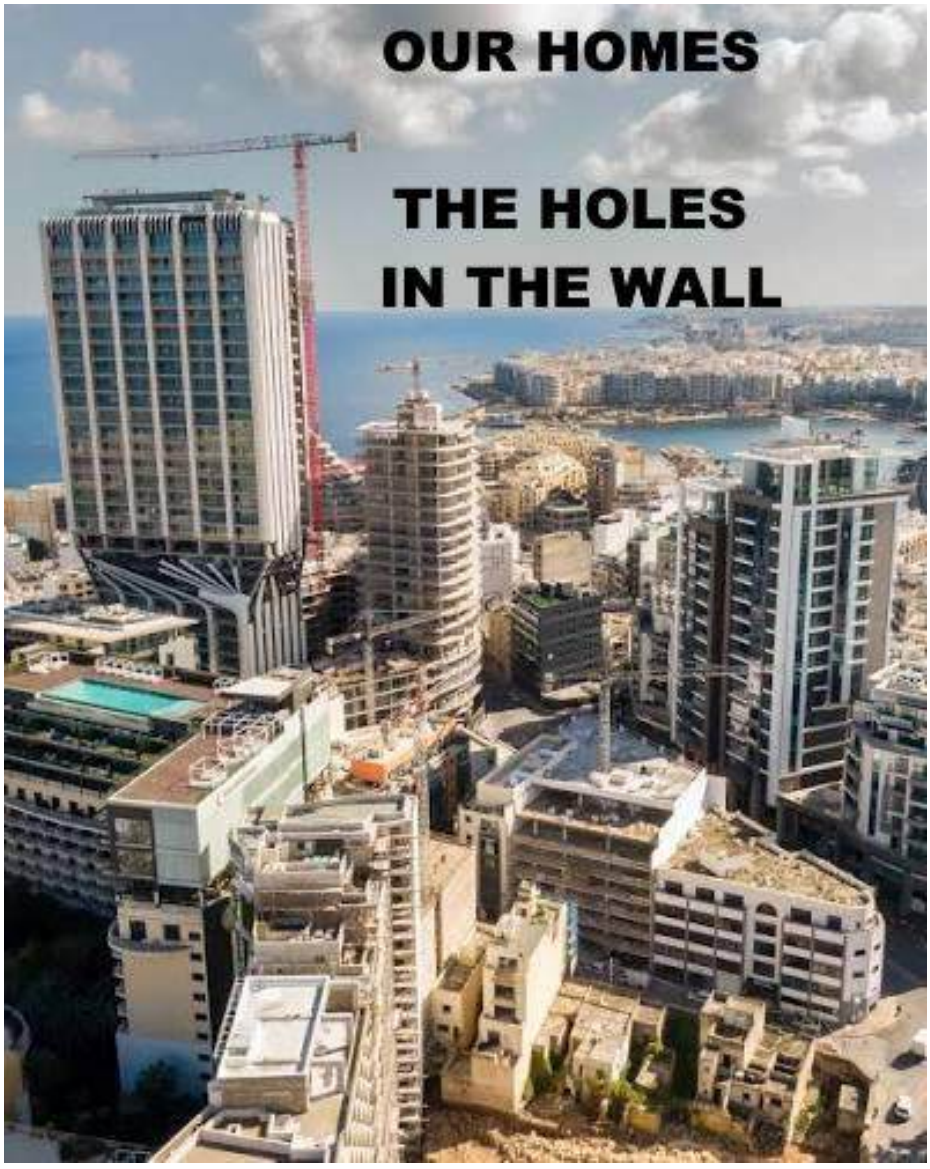
Journal for Maltese Living Abroad

Editor: Frank L Scicluna OAM MQR JP Email: maltesejournal@gmail.com

GEORGE CROSS FALCONS
COMMUNITY CENTRE
20 SEPTEMBER

MARSA -SIGGIEWI
GHARB -GOZO
BIRZEBBUGIA - HAL QORMI

REGATTA 2026
Wollongong Harbour
NEW SOUTH WALES
AUSTRALIA



Desmond Scifo

How I wish I were there...in the fields of open spaces.

Somewhere with space. Somewhere where a home actually feels like a home, rather than simply a place where we sleep.

I live on a street perhaps seven metres wide. Cars are parked wherever space allows, buildings rise three storeys or more, and walls seem to surround us from every direction. There is little space between one building and the next, little room for nature, privacy or simply breathing space.

And the truth is, I am living like millions of other people living in cities and densely built commercial areas. We have created an extraordinary civilisation, but somewhere along the way we also created a strange way of living.

We build upwards because we have run out of space. We divide buildings into apartments, divide apartments into rooms, and then divide those rooms according to what we can afford.

Sometimes I look around and think:

We are becoming like mice. Each of us has our own little hole in the wall.

We decorate it. We furnish it. We fill it with technology and possessions. We call it home.

And yes, it is home.

Because home is not simply bricks and concrete. It is where our memories live, where families grow, where we feel safe and where our lives take place.

But perhaps we should still ask ourselves whether the way we build our homes is also the way human beings are meant to live. A home should give us more than shelter.

It should give us light, air, privacy, greenery, space to think and somewhere to escape the noise of the outside world.

Perhaps progress should not simply mean more buildings, more floors and more people packed into less space. Perhaps progress should also mean learning how to build places where people can actually live well.

MCAST Gozo Academic Publishes Research on Supporting Educators in Inclusive Classrooms

Dr Vanessa Saliba, Senior Lecturer at the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST) Gozo Campus, has published a peer-reviewed article in *Studies in Social Wellbeing*, an international open-access journal focusing on wellbeing from a social perspective.

In her article, *"Support Needed by Educators Working with Students with Autism in Mainstream Primary Schools: The Maltese Perspective"*, Dr Saliba highlights the importance of ensuring that educators receive adequate support when working in inclusive educational settings. The study emphasises that educators' experiences of inclusive education can significantly influence their attitudes towards inclusion.

Building on her previous research, which identified the need for additional resources and services and training to help educators better accommodate the needs of students with autism, Dr Saliba's latest study reveals the importance of broader forms of support, including increased human support for educators working in mainstream classrooms.

Drawing on the study's findings, Dr Saliba outlines a number of practical recommendations aimed at strengthening support systems for educators and enhancing the effectiveness of inclusive education.

Commenting on the research, Dr Saliba said: "It is vital that educators' support needs are fulfilled. This will not only maintain educators' wellbeing, but also foster the development of positive attitudes towards inclusive education and, consequently, make inclusion more effective."

The research was fully funded through the ENDEAVOUR Scholarships Scheme.

The article can be accessed here:

Saliba, V. (2026). Support needed by educators working with students with autism in mainstream primary schools: the Maltese perspective. *Studies in Social Wellbeing*, 5*(2)*, 9-38. https://www.um.edu.mt/library/oar/handle/123456789/148503

The following are other related articles by the same author:

Saliba, V. (2025). Training needed for educators to work with autistic students in mainstream primary schools: the Maltese perspective. *Malta Review of Educational Research*, 19*(1),* 135-157. https://www.um.edu.mt/library/oar/handle/123456789/142773

Saliba, V. (2023). Resources and services needed by educators to work with autistic students in mainstream primary schools: the Maltese perspective. *Malta Review of Educational Research*, 17*(2)*, 89-110. https://www.um.edu.mt/library/oar/handle/123456789/117678

Or GOOGLE- Dr. Vanessa Saliba

Cheese maker Philippa Abela embodies a lifetime of Maltese cheese-crafting

By Liam McNally

Pastizzi, traditional pastries from Malta, are one of Philippa's specialties. *(ABC News: Yasmine Wright Gittins)*

Eighty-year-old cheesemaker Philippa Abela has been practising a craft passed down by her mother, who emigrated with her from Malta when Philippa was a child. She wakes every morning to milk her cows and make cheese at her property at Habana, in North Queensland. Mrs Abela thinks younger generations are getting more interested in the slow, natural way of producing food, and the owner of a cheesemaking supplies company has seen a similar trend.

Every day, 80-year-old Philippa Abela wakes before the sun rises to make her cheese.

She heads out to the milking shed on her property that is tucked among sugarcane fields at Habana, near Mackay in North Queensland.

When she arrives at the shed's gate, Meg, a Jersey-Swiss Brown cross cow, eagerly greets her.

"You've got to keep out of her way because she runs in," Mrs Abela laughs.

The whirring of the milking machine cuts through the early morning bird song, and with only two milking cows, she is normally done by 6:30am.

It is then time to stir rennet into the warm milk to form solid curds and liquid whey.

Philippa Abela milks each morning at around 6:30am.

Carrying on traditions Mrs Abela's family came to Australia from Malta in 1950 to escape a post-war depression. Her "courageous" mother brought four girls under the age of five after her father arrived in Australia six months earlier. The family purchased a cane farm in Habana and kept dairy cows to supply milk to the local butter factory. "It was a hard life, but a good life," she says.

Philippa Abela lives in Habana, a suburb north of Mackay.

Using cow's milk, Mrs Abela's mother taught her how to make cheese that would have been a staple from sheep's milk back home — soft ricotta-like cheese for pastizzis and a firm, vinegar-pickled pepper cheese. Mrs Abela has since perfected about 13 types of cheese, but in Habana, with its strong Maltese roots, the original two are crowd favourites. "I've got friends who I've been supplying for a long time," she says. "One year, I made about 90 kilos [of pepper cheese]. "If there's a street party, and you go without, it's 'where's the pastizzis?

'Never stop learning' Mrs Abela says the best cheese needs a well-fed cow that lives a relaxed life.

The next important step is having clean equipment and precise temperature control for cheeses that require heating.

"Each cheese has its own process; you never stop learning," she says.

Once rennet is added, the milk separates into curds and whey. *(ABC News: Yasmine Wright Gittins)*

Mrs Abela makes a basic fresh cheese by straining the whey after stirring it carefully and meticulously watching the temperature for about 30 minutes.

The remaining curds are then ready to eat or used in cooking.

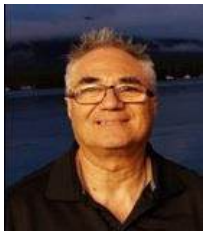
Some days she will make other types of cheese, such as halloumi and mozzarella, by adding cultures to the whey, which is then heated, pressed, dried or aged depending on the desired product.

Philippa said she gets around 10 litres of milk a day from her milking.

Mrs Abela has passed down her knowledge of cheese-making to family and occasionally runs classes for eager students in the community.
She says more people are becoming interested in her slow, natural way of cheesemaking.
"The old ways are becoming more popular again," she said.
Shift from 'convenience generation' A supplier of cheese-making ingredients and equipment says there is a growing interest as consumers embrace slow food trends and become weary of fast-paced 'convenience culture'.
Michael Zannella, the general manager of Cheeselinks, says the retail side of his business, which supplies hobbyists and small farmers, has grown more than 200 per cent in the past few years.
Philippa Abela makes a variety of different cheeses.
Mr Zannella says he is noticing a generational shift among younger customers who value artisan production. "The craftsmanship and the story behind what you're consuming ... that is more important now than ever," he says.
"My parents never considered those sorts of things. I think we maybe had a convenience generation.
"The microwave was popular. It was about how convenient can we make our meals?"
Philippa flips the moulded cheese to drain as much whey as possible before they set.
A lifelong ritual Mrs Abela and her late husband stopped commercial dairying about 30 years ago when the market was deregulated. Since his death two years ago, she is busier than ever, feeding a dozen or so beef cattle, mowing, and weeding.
Retaining a couple of milkers allows cheesemaking to continue to be an important part of her life.
Philippa Abela says the old ways of cheesemaking are becoming popular again.
"I think you've got to contribute to society, you can't stay idle. I don't know what idle is."
And while she doesn't sell her cheese commercially, she says it is always in demand from friends and family. "I also thought, 'I don't want to be milking the rest of my life', but here I am at the age of 80, still milking," she laughs.

WISTIN AND CHRISTIAN VELLA HAVE OFFERED €28,000 TO CARRY THE MĠARR STATUE OF STANTA MARIA.

The auction-style competition for the privilege of carrying the statue of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary was established in 1923 to generate funds for the construction of the church and has been conducted annually since, with proceeds benefiting the parish. This year's auction-like contest occurred on Sunday, just hours before the Sta Marija statue was paraded in the locality. The competition featured two participants, Wistin Vella and Christian Vella. Wistin won the right to uphold the tradition after committing to a pledge of €28,000. Last year, Wistin Vella also obtained the right to carry the statue with a pledge of €35,200. The highest recorded bid for carrying the Santa Marija statue was €46,000, achieved in August 2022 by a group led by Wistin Vella. The parish priest noted that, despite the tradition, individuals not affiliated with the winning team will still have the opportunity to carry the statue along a specified section of the procession route. The feast of Sta Marija is celebrated across numerous towns and villages in Malta and Gozo.



MALTESE SENIOR CITIZENS ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA INC
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2026
From the President Godwin Gauci

The members of the Maltese Senior Citizen Club have been gathering consistently at the Kilburn Community Hall every Friday for the last forty years. They take pleasure in conversing with fellow Maltese individuals while enjoying traditional pastizzi alongside their tea and coffee. Regrettably, we have lost many members over the years, and a couple of years ago, our numbers dwindled to just 38. However, the club has now grown to one hundred and forty-five financial members, featuring numerous new and somewhat younger faces.

Annual General Meeting 2026

On August 14th, the association conducted its Annual General Meeting, attended by over 70 members. The A.G.M. took place after lunch, following the usual routine, with many members mingling, engaging in conversation, enjoying food and drinks, and some even participating in games and having fun, which embodies the spirit of the club. The committee and volunteers organized the lunches, which included ham or tuna rolls filled with cheese, lettuce, and tomatoes, accompanied by hot chips and dessert.

The meeting commenced at 1.30 pm, with the President, Mr. Godwin Gauci, welcoming the members, followed by a short prayer recited by Antony Jackson. The President expressed gratitude to all AND thanking the committee members and volunteers for their commitment to maintaining the club's vibrancy. He also acknowledged the Multicultural Aged Care (MAC) for its essential support and for providing our members with a printed copy of the Maltese E-Newsletter – the Journal for Maltese Living Abroad. The secretary, Mr. Charles Mifsud, read the minutes from last year's AGM, followed by the treasurer's report presented by Mr. John Mangion.

Subsequently, the committee members stepped down. Mr. Frank Scicluna, the returning officer, thanked the committee members and read the nomination forms for all positions. A new committee was elected, with two former members stepping down and new members joining. Mr. Gauci expressed his appreciation to Mr. John Mangion, the former treasurer, for his over 30 years of membership and his long-standing service as treasurer.

The new committee 2026/27

President Mr Godwin Gauci
Vice-President Mr Antony Jackson
Secretary Mrs Bernadette Jackson
Treasurer Mr Frank Muscat
Committee Members Helen Hunt, Jane Grima, Charles Mifsudi and Tony Calleja.
Auditor Frank Scicluna and **Trustees** Frank Scicluna and Dolores Muscat.

THE MALTESE SENIOR CITIZENS ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA AND THE MALTESE JOURNAL convey their thanks to the MULTICULTURAL AGED CARE (SA) for their support and for providing the e-Newsletter every Friday

'Snow on Comino' by Alfred Sant: 1970s novel translated into English after 50 years
By Maria Christina Mallia

Snow falling on Comino is as unusual as snow falling in the Sahara, so Alfred Sant used the event to represent the emotional and cultural upheaval Malta was experiencing in the early 1970s. Around 50 years after it was written, the novel Silġ fuq Kemmuna has now been translated into English, allowing the literary work to reach an international audience. However, in an interview with Maria Christina Mallia, the author and former Prime Minister expressed concern that reading has declined significantly both in Malta and around the world.

Written between 1970 and 1973 and first published in 1982, Silġ fuq Kemmuna is considered one of the works that marked the development of modern Maltese narrative. Now, for the first time, Alfred Sant's novel has been fully translated into English under the title Snow on Comino, making it accessible to an international audience.

The 780-page book is set in Malta in the early 1970s, a period of profound social and cultural change. It follows a group of young people who, amid the uncertainties of a country undergoing transformation, try to understand their ambitions, relationships and identity.

The title is built around an impossible image: snow falling on the island of Comino. The image reflects the emotional and cultural distance felt by the characters, caught between tradition and modernity. Dr Sant told TVM News that translating such a lengthy work, written around 50 years ago, was a challenge. At the same time, he expressed concern about the decline in reading.

I'm sorry about that, but I understand why, because the environment has changed, and people act according to the environment they find themselves in. It is a shame that there is no longer as much reading, and perhaps the situation will change again and there will be more reading in the future. This has already started happening in certain parts of the United States, for example.

Dr Sant said that despite the effort made to make the book available in English, he remains doubtful about how many readers such a lengthy literary work will find in today's environment. But what prompted him to take on the project nonetheless?

Reading has declined significantly, not just in Malta but almost everywhere around the world. So it is another challenge. Even though you know it may not be widely read, you still do it. But you cannot go against the course of time. You have to accept reality as it is. The launch of Snow on Comino at the National Library brought literature and music together, with artist Kersten Graham performing Maltese songs including Viva Malta and Xemx. Through its English translation, the work that helped broaden the boundaries of Maltese narrative is now being given the opportunity to reach readers beyond Malta's shores.

REFLECTION

Noel Bianco MSSP

This is Monday morning at our Provincial House and usually we have a slow start after the Liturgical Commitments of the weekend. There is a tiredness that come over us!! The three of us usually celebrate 3 or more masses in 24 hours and then there are baptisms/marriages and home visits. Traditionally Monday is a day off for priests and it is very common to hear people complaining that there is no mass on Monday, you cannot find a priest in the presbytery, you find it hard to have a funeral etc. etc..... but priests do not need to break from their place of work also.

Most people until Covid used to go to work and then come home, in our case our home is also most of the time is our work place. Sunday evening can also be a difficult moment for priests like me, I like to be with people because it is a dead night. I do have a couple of families that I can go to. This applies to widows/ers who did not chose to live on their own and yet they are. I like to use the weekend to see as many families, in their homes, as possible. This is the traditional way to do ministry in Australia when there were the communication gadgets that we have today.

To go to the home of our people is very important to see their environment, their style of living and to be able to really understand them and help them where they are. Yesterday I went to a young couple with 3 children, and the children know me and are very affectionate towards me. Leo the seven-year-old drew pictures for me and he drew Jesus on the Cross, the Resurrection and the feeding of the crowds. This little boy was aware of the 3 main events of our salvation history- it is indeed very nice and comforting to see and experience that there are many good families in our community. These parents are teaching their children well and for Leo to come with those three pictures.

I am continuing this message on Saturday morning- somehow or other I couldn't get to it again because of the happenings in my life. What struck me this week was Psalm 84 which says:

"How lovely is your dwelling place, Lord Almighty God... my soul yearns, even faints, for the courts of the Lord.....My heart and my flesh cry out for the living God..... Even the sparrow has found a home, and the swallow... (find a place where) she may have her young—a place near your altar,.... Blessed are those who dwell in your house; they are ever singing your praise.

Blessed are those whose strength is in you They go from strength to strength, till each appears before God in Zion..... Better is one day in your courts than a thousand elsewhere.....I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of the wicked.... he the Lord bestows favour and honour; no good thing does he withhold from those whose walk is blameless. Lord Almighty, blessed is the one who trusts in you."How true this is we can spend many days in the wrong places and never find our peace but with the Lord WE CAN ALWAYS FIND WHAT WE NEED FOR OUR HAPPINESS.- we simply have to be receptive!

nest radio
Music - Voices - Community
KEEPING THE MALTESE VOICE ALIVE
Emmanuel Brincat - Producer and Presenter
Programs Monday 7- 8pm Friday 6-7pm

FROM MALTA TO WOLLONGONG: A CELEBRATION 75 YEARS IN THE MAKING

by Jeremy While

Louis Parnis accepts Prime Minister's award from MP Alison Byrnes.

Australians debate whether the nation should be monocultural or multicultural, the region's proud Maltese migrant community continues to do what it's always done: rejoicing in Australian life while continuing to share and celebrate the traditions of their country of birth.

It was exactly 75 years ago, in the winter of 1951, that the first group of post-war Maltese migrants arrived in the Illawarra region, to put down new roots and make a new start.

Back then, labels such as multiculturalism were decades away. For this first batch of Maltese migrant pioneers, labels didn't matter. They were just excited to be welcomed (in the most part) to a place very different to the islands they'd left behind, and alongside them many others who'd made the same journey.

Sadly, almost all of those first Maltese migrants are gone but their stories and memories live on.

On June 27, nearly 450 people packed the Fraternity Club at Fairy Meadow to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the arrival of Maltese people and culture in these parts.

Remembering trailblazers

There were memories of the earliest trailblazers Lorry Pavia, John Mallia, Joe Cassar, Joe Margo, and so many others who decided very early on their arrival in the Illawarra to create a Maltese club and community centre.

Louis Parnis, president of the George Cross Falcons Community Centre, picks up the story.

"On the 10th of June 1951, a group of Maltese who'd recently arrived in Cringila found themselves missing their families and activities they were accustomed to, like church feasts and other celebrations."

Louis said the George Cross Association was quickly created. A small committee meeting was held in a tin shed scout hall across the road from where the club now stands in Lake Avenue, and one of the first decisions was that each club member would pay a small weekly fee (the equivalent of about 10 cents) to create a building fund.

Regular dances and film screenings boosted fundraising efforts, and in 1953, two blocks of land were purchased for 200 pounds each, and in the years that followed, the club rooms were built almost entirely by volunteers, buying one cement bag at a time as money came in. Word has it that the only paid worker was a Hungarian electrician.

Franca Facci, chair of the Migrant Heritage Project, says the Maltese Illawarra migration story deserves to be shared.

Franca Facci, who heads the Migrant Heritage Project, says the story of Wollongong's Maltese migrants deserves to be told alongside those from Britain, Italy, Germany, Holland, Poland, Greece, Spain, and every other nationality which has sought out “a better life” in the Illawarra. Her vision, and that of her team, is to create a museum of people, country and industry on vacant BlueScope land at Port Kembla.

Franca said Wollongong’s Maltese migration story was no different to so many others. “Their club was a welcoming place to gather with other Maltese people, a place to find consolation, to talk about the home country, to share new experiences, and help each other out. It was also a place where you could find familiar food, hear music, dance and play bocce, and where someone might be able to help you find work and learn English.”

Welcoming newcomers

Maltese migrants who settled in Wollongong and could speak English would go to Sydney Harbour to welcome the new arrivals when their ships docked at Circular Quay. They’d bring them direct to Port Kembla to find them accommodation and employment, mainly at the steelworks.

This "welcome service" was offered to all Maltese newcomers, and without fail, every new arrival was signed up as a new member of the George Cross Association.

George Bartolo OAM was a leader in the local Maltese community for decades.

Among the second wave of Maltese migrants was the late George Bartolo OAM, who arrived in Wollongong in 1959 seeking a two-year adventure. Even before setting foot in Australia, he was already helping migrants as an interpreter on the voyage.

Most people who packed the ballroom at the Frat for the 75th celebration knew George, or were well aware of his remarkable contribution as a member of the George Cross Club. He volunteered as a translator for newcomers, helped secure funding for the club building and organised the club’s first soccer team.

In 1966, he was elected president, and from 1962 until its last publication in 2013, George was Wollongong’s representative on the Maltese Herald, a national weekly publication.

George’s influence was everywhere. He was a foundation member of the Maltese Community Council of NSW, represented the local Maltese community on the Good Neighbour Community Project and organised the inaugural migrant section of the annual Wollongong Show.

He was also a founding member of the Illawarra Ethnic Communities Council, later to become the Multicultural Community Council of Illawarra. George received many awards, including an Order of Australia Medal in 2018. He died in March 2025 but his memory lives on.

Awards aplenty

Multiple awards were presented at the recent 75th anniversary celebrations – five in total.

The most prestigious, a congratulatory message from Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, was presented to Louis Parnis by Member for Cunningham Alison Byrnes.

The PM's message read: "Congratulations on a remarkable milestone. For 75 years, the George Cross Falcons Community Centre has supported the Maltese community in the Illawarra, welcoming new migrants and providing them with accommodation and employment support. The community centre has supported the Maltese community by offering essential services and activities that promote social cohesion. Programs such as the George Cross Falcons Club Men's Shed, the Maltese language school, and the monthly craft group foster a sense of belonging and contribute to the George Cross Falcons' legacy of cultural pride."

Alison Byrnes MP added her congratulations to Louis, Elizabeth and their team of volunteers, praising the organisers of "one of my favourite performances - the father and son Elvis tribute show duo Paul and Anthony Fenech."

"In 2025, Louis organised Wollongong's first regatta where we cheered the participants on with ic-cuqlatja made by the Men's Shed. The regatta is happening again in 2026, on the 20th of September at Wollongong Harbour," Alison said. In accepting the awards, Louis said they were only to be seen "as good, if we continue to do the good work we've started".

Ensuring the younger generation stay connected to the organisation, the president of 21 years has introduced a 3D printing room, sponsored by Community Bank Wollongong Bendigo, "making sure our young generation get the opportunity to learn new skills".

Louis also encouraged members of the public to visit the Museum of Art in Cringila and to pay their respects at the Shrine of Remembrance, a monument built to remember the Maltese soldiers who fought together with the Australian Army during World War I.

The early challenges

Through the Migrant Heritage Project, which captures thousands of stories from the region's multicultural past, Franca Facci recounts some of the many challenges which faced the region's new arrivals. Like so many other migrant groups, the Maltese created their own places to socialise.

"We don't need reminding that in the 1950s and beyond, racism and discrimination was quite visible, and many Australian clubs and venues rejected new migrants," Franca said.

"RSLs explicitly excluded anyone who was non-British. Doormen and bouncers often prohibited southern European and Asian migrants from entry on arbitrary grounds 'just to keep the peace', and there was a great deal of pressure to force many migrants to abandon their languages and culture, openly criticising people for speaking their own language. Dances have been a regular highlight for the Maltese community. Feeling that sense of exclusion, many migrant communities felt the need to gather together, creating clubs, associations and meeting places.

Standing proud

Franca says the local Maltese community can stand proud as a migrant group which has maintained tradition while embracing change and a new home.

"The club has morphed over time but it has always held its doors open for the broader community which has been its salvation. Now, many people living in Cringila and surrounds, from a range of different backgrounds, visit the club as their local venue.
"Their social clubs have served as life savers for many who in the early years were lonely and missed their homes and village. But they were never exclusive, and they have played an important role as places to experience other cultures, food and languages, as well as contributing greatly to the local economy.
"As the early migrant community has aged, many clubs now provide socialisation and meeting spaces for older people to reminisce and share stories while enjoying a meal. The Maltese George Cross Falcons Club and its members deserve to be congratulated for maintaining a community space that welcomes everyone, wholly managed by volunteers."
Louis Parnis and his hard-working committee are always trying to refresh the activities available to their members.
"In September last year we introduced a popular regatta for boat racing on Wollongong Harbour in partnership with Wollongong Surf Life Saving Club," Louis said.
"It was wonderful to see the harbour packed and full of activities. It was a great success."
This year's regatta, to celebrate Malta's Independence Day, will be held at the harbour on September 20 from 9am. Racing will start at around 10.30am and everyone in the Illawarra is invited to attend.
Later in the afternoon the club holds a Solemn High Mass at St. Francis Parish Church Warrawong in honour of Our Lady Queen of Victories and the National Day of the Republic of Malta.

THE QUEENSLAND MALTESE AUSTRALIAN COMMUNITY

is a welcoming group dedicated to celebrating and preserving Maltese culture, heritage, and traditions in Queensland. We bring people together through cultural events, social gatherings, and community support, fostering connections across generations and sharing the richness of Malta with the wider Australian community.
Connecting Maltese Australians across Queensland, we take pride in celebrating our rich heritage, vibrant culture, and cherished traditions. Our community is built on a shared love for Malta—its history, language, food, and values—and we warmly welcome anyone who wishes to be part of this journey.
Whether you have Maltese roots, a passion for Maltese culture, or simply want to meet others in a friendly and inclusive environment, our doors are always open. We host cultural festivals, traditional celebrations, social gatherings, and provide opportunities to learn, share stories, and support one another.
Together, we not only honour our Maltese identity but also create lasting connections, ensuring that the Maltese spirit continues to thrive here in Australia for generations to come.

Upcoming Event

QMAC INAUGURAL MALTESE INDEPENDENCE DAY DINNER

Celebrate our Maltese heritage with family and friends at a very special evening hosted by the Queensland Maltese Australian Community (QMAC)!

Saturday, 19 September 2026
ANFE Italian Club, 42 Station Road, Stafford

Arrival: 6:00 pm | Dinner: 6:45 pm Event concludes: 10:30 pm

TICKETS QMAC Members: $99 per person Guests: $125 per person
Virtual Supporter Ticket: $50

Can't attend on the night? Purchase a Virtual Supporter Ticket to show your support! Virtual ticket holders will receive a special mention during the evening while helping QMAC grow and strengthen our community. Your ticket includes: Traditional three-course Maltese shared-style dinner Live entertainment by Mark Andrew Tabone Elvis tribute performance ᴛ Special appearance by Marku – The Maltese from Gozo Raffles, dancing and much more!

Cash bar available throughout the evening Not a QMAC member? Join today to receive the discounted member ticket price and enjoy the many benefits of belonging to Queensland's growing Maltese community.

Come along for an unforgettable evening of delicious food, outstanding entertainment and community spirit as we proudly celebrate our Maltese culture and heritage!

Please note: This event is for guests aged 15 years and over.

Book your tickets today:
https://www.trybooking.com/DODWC

SAINT CATHERINE'S SOCIETY OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Welcome to our new committee
Bernadette Buhagiar, Ted Camilleri, Jimmy Fenech,
Debbie Cosford, Antony Jackson,
Tina Camilleri, Bernadette Jackson,
Rita Abdilla Farrugia and Tony Abdilla.

MALTESE COMMUNITY IN MACKAY, Queensland

How Maltese migrants united to shape Mackay's sugarcan

One of the Maltese men, Sam Bezzina, cast in bronze.

For decades, conversations in Maltese could be heard on the corner of Wood and Victoria Street in Mackay. Men like Emanuel Camilleri often sat there, laughing and chatting about everything from the price of sugar to who was new in town.

"He was a rat bag," said his wife, Domenica Camilleri. **"He was rowdy, he was loud. But everyone loved him."**

Domenica Camilleri and her daughter Jo Lean hold a photo of Emanuel Camilleri.

A statue of the former cane farmer, who died last year, will soon join fellow migrants Sam Bezzina and John Vassallo at the "Maltese Corner" in Mackay.

The family members of the three men have been involved in shaping the look of the bronze statues. His wife was a little emotional when she came face-to-face with a bronze replica of the man she married more than 50 years ago.

Domenica Camilleri and her family visited Kay Paton's studio to help refine the statue of Emanuel.

Mrs Camilleri said that when Emanuel came to Australia, "all he knew was farming".

But through years of labour, he was able to purchase a sugarcane farm just after they married and, on that corner, support the next generation of newcomers.

From Malta to Mackay

Carmel Baretta is a local historian documenting the experience of Maltese migrants in Mackay.

In 2021, Mrs Baretta helped form the Maltese Corner Fundraising Group, which secured more than $300,000 in community donations within 18 months for the statues.

Carmel Baretta has been leading the campaign to get the bronze statues installed for the past five years. *It* is a personal journey for her as well.

Her father, Sam Bezzina, migrated to Australia in his youth, like many Maltese men after World War II. Sam Bezzina migrated to Australia from Malta in his 20s.

"They'd work as hard as they could, raise as much money as they could with the idea of actually purchasing a farm," Mrs Baretta said.

"But because they had no collateral and very little savings, they depended on established Maltese farmers who actually had a little bit of money put aside."

Percy Zammit, Sam Bezzina and John Vassallo were three people regularly seen on Rockman's Corner, also known as the Maltese Corner. That was when men like Mr Bezzina and Mr Camilleri came in to secure the next generation's future.

"They'd pool their collateral, go to the bank and say, 'Well, this young man wants to buy a farm,'" Mrs Baretta said. **"And that's how they enabled many people to become settled in Mackay."**

Carmel Baretta's research into the experience of Maltese migrants in Mackay informed her book.

And while her father was one of the three men depicted, she said it was about commemorating the broader Maltese community's contributions to the region.
"It's caused quite a bit of interest, and I'm hoping that people will learn a little bit more about Mackay's history as a consequence," she said.
"Hopefully they'll be there forever." Carmel Baretta's father Sam Bezzina is one of the Maltese men who will be immortalised in bronze. The task of capturing the men in bronze fell to self-taught sculptor Kay Paton. Kay Paton has sculpted the three Maltese men out of bronze.
In a large shed on her property in Nebo, about an hour's drive south-west of Mackay, each statue started out with just a steel frame. Layers of foam and plasticine clay were moulded before individual sections were cast in bronze and assembled.
"It's been a huge honour to actually be part of this depiction of our history," Ms Paton said.
"Our family were always great admirers of the Maltese community, so I feel my father would be very proud that I was actually asked to do this job."
The "full-on" five-year process involved visits from the families of the men to her workshop.
It brought the old, boisterous community together again.

Homemade scones and date slice piled on the Camilleri's table. *(ABC News: Yasmine Wright Gittins)*
"They've been great visits and I've got to hopefully form friendships over this time," Ms Paton said, describing noisy gatherings where as many as 15 family members would crowd around for tea and a chat as she worked.
It was one of those trips to Ms Paton's workshop that stood out.
Emanuel's daughters Carmel Evetts and Jo Lean, along with their mother Domenica Camilleri (middle).Mr Camilleri was the only man directly involved in the process of forming his own statue before he died. "The photo of Mum seeing the statue, that was just such a moment," her daughter Carmel Evetts said.
"Because he's so life-sized, she said, 'Oh my God, I just want to hug him," her other daughter Jo Lean said."I think it's different for us to the others because we've only just lost Dad ... it's still pretty raw to the whole family." The Maltese men statues installed at the Maltese Corner. While men no longer gather at the corner, the three bronze statues sit as a silent, enduring reminder of the informal network that helped a generation of migrants turn hard labour into land ownership.

OLIVE TREEES IN MALTA

Phoenician traders (700 BC) are likely responsible for the widespread cultivation of olive trees in Malta. This was capitalised on by the Romans (218 BC-533 AD). At San Pawl Milqi, an excavated Roman villa that was in use until the end of the Byzantine Period (600-870 AD) still contains several *trapetum* - huge stone mills that were used to crush olives to an oily paste. Several Maltese towns and villages that were named during the Arab period (870-1090 AD) indicate that, by then, the cultivation of olive trees and olive oil production was widespread. *Zaytun* is Sicilian-Arabic for 'olive' and we find place names such as *Iz-Zejtun* meaning ' where olives are cultivated for oil production,' and *Ghajn Zejtuna* meaning 'spring of olive oil,' as well as *Bir id-Deheb* meaning 'well of gold' (olive oil was referred to as liquid gold), *Birzebbuga* meaning 'well of olives,' and *Haz-Zebbuġ* meaning 'village of olives.' September is picking and pressing season. *Zejt iz-Zejtun*, an annual event held in the city of Zejtun, celebrates the olive picking season, and olive pressing for oil will be held in Żejtun on 28 to 29 September.

During the Roman rule of Malta one of the main characteristics of the Maltese landscape was the relatively large number of villas which included an area set aside for the processing of olive oil and for other agricultural activities.

Maltese Olive Oil is cultivated in any soil, but favors the Mediterranean climate, including Malta but not the wind-swept areas. It requires very little care and it is fully exploitable: as wood, leafage, fruit and sub-products.

The poor quality, alkaline soil that we find on the Maltese hillsides and valleys contribute to the extremely low acid content in our soil, which is below 0.5%. Olives coming from older trees are practically devoid of acidity. Gozo Olive Oil is definitively one of the favorites!

RECIPE FOR STUFFED OLIVES

Ingredients

- 800 g olives
- 100 g tuna 1 can
- 1 slice bread without crust
- 2 anchovy fillets
- 1 tsp capers
- 4 garlic cloves
- 1/2 tsp chili flakes
- 1/2 tsp hot sauce
- 1 tsp cumin
- 1/2 tsp paprika
- 1/2 tsp black pepper
- 1 tbsp mint chopped
- 1 tbsp parsley chopped
- 3 tbsp olive oil

Instructions

1. In a blender, place the bread and pulse until it's all crumbs.
2. Add all the remaining ingredients except the olive oil and blend together. Gently stream in the olive oil and continue to blend until you get a smooth paste. At this stage, you can taste the mixture and see if any additional salt is needed. Be careful, not to over salt.
3. Fill a piping bag with the mixture. Take each olive and stuff the hollowed centre. Do not worry if the stuffing oozes out slightly.

Place the olives in a bowl, drizzle with olive oil and sprinkle some extra parsley on top. Mix well. Place in the fridge prior serving.

MALTESE COMMUNITY IN USA

AFM Air Wing technician receives prestigious Master Technician Award

The Armed Forces of Malta proudly congratulate Staff Sergeant Lisa Micallef on becoming the first Maltese person to receive the Master Technician Award from FlightSafety International in Wichita, Kansas, United States.

This elite milestone requires completing an intensive, multi-course curriculum focused on advanced troubleshooting, safety, and operational excellence. Staff Sergeant Micallef's dedication to mastering this specific aircraft directly translates to higher dispatch reliability and the highest safety standards for our fleet.

The award follows the successful completion of six specialised aviation technical training courses on the King Air B200 series, covering mechanical and avionics systems, advanced troubleshooting, and operational maintenance.

During her nine years with the Air Wing, Staff Sergeant Micallef has achieved several significant professional milestones, including becoming:

The first female technician in the section to obtain an EASA Mechanical Aircraft Maintenance Licence.

The first female technician in the Air Wing to obtain an EASA Avionics Aircraft Maintenance Licence.

The first member of the Air Wing to hold both EASA Mechanical and Avionics Aircraft Maintenance Licences.

She has also successfully completed an Advanced Diploma in Aviation Maintenance at the University of Malta.

Her achievements reflect dedication, technical excellence, and a strong commitment to professional development, contributing to the continued enhancement of the Air Wing's capabilities.

Ambassador-designate **Marco Micallef** attended an event in Detroit held on Santa Marija weekend which brought together 200 attendees from the Maltese clubs in Dearborn, Detroit and Windsor.

Many thanks go to the committees, donors and volunteers of all three clubs for joining forces to continue keeping Maltese culture and heritage alive and strong in the USA

The **Maltese American and Canadian clubs** in the Detroit-Windsor transborder region represent a historic, tightly knit diaspora community. The three clubs—located in **Windsor (Ontario), Downtown/Corktown Detroit, and Dearborn (Michigan)**—frequently collaborate to host major heritage events, such as the annual *Santa Marija* (Feast of the Assumption) summer picnic on Belle Isle.

The three major organizations anchoring this community are profiled below:

1. Malta United Society of Windsor (Windsor, ON)

- **Location:** 2520 Seminole St, Windsor, ON, Canada
- **The Vibe:** A warm, welcoming cultural hub on the Canadian side of the river where visitors are frequently immersed in the Maltese language.
- **Highlight:** The society is highly regarded for serving authentic, freshly made **pastizzi** (traditional savory flaky pastries).

2. Maltese American Benevolent Society (Downtown / Corktown Detroit, MI)

- **Location:** 1832 Michigan Ave, Detroit, MI, USA
- **The Vibe:** Located right on Michigan Avenue in the historic Corktown neighborhood (just west of downtown Detroit), this long-running institution preserves the deep history of Maltese auto workers who migrated to the Motor City in the mid-20th century.
- **Highlight:** It functions as a historic pillar for social gathering, community support, and cultural preservation on the Detroit side.

3. Maltese American Community Club (Dearborn, MI)

- **Location:** 5221 Oakman Blvd, Dearborn, MI, USA
- **The Vibe:** An all-ages community center featuring a large hall and a highly welcoming, family-friendly environment.
- **Highlight:** The club is famous for its **Friday Night Dinners**, which feature a rotating menu of home-cooked Maltese delicacies alongside a steady supply of frozen pastizzi to take home.
- **Another vibrant group holds its function at theMALTESE CENTER, ASTORIA, NEW YORK**

MALTESE IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

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.[2] 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% of the population emigrated.[3] 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.[3] 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.[5] The Office for National Statistics estimates that the equivalent figure for 2009 was 28,000.[6] 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.

In the 2021 UK census, 23,501 people in England were recorded as having been born in Malta, as well as 973 in Wales,[7] and 205 in Northern Ireland. The census in Scotland was delayed by a year until 2022 and recorded 1,672 residents born in Malta.

ORDER OF MALTA

This year, Ordine di Malta - Poste Magistrali celebrates 60 years of history. Established in 1966 by Grand Master Fra' Angelo de Mojana di Cologna, the postal service of the #OrderofMalta continues to tell centuries of faith, service, and humanitarian commitment in support of those in need through their stamps.

To mark this milestone, a special miniature sheet was issued featuring four stamps dedicated to Blessed Gerard, Saint John the Baptist, the Order's caregiving activities, and the Magistral Palace in Rome, accompanied by the publication of a comprehensive book dedicated to the history and philanthropic work of the Order through philately.

NEWPORT MALTESE ASSOCIATION AND SENIORS GROUP MELBOURNE -AUSTRALIA 2026

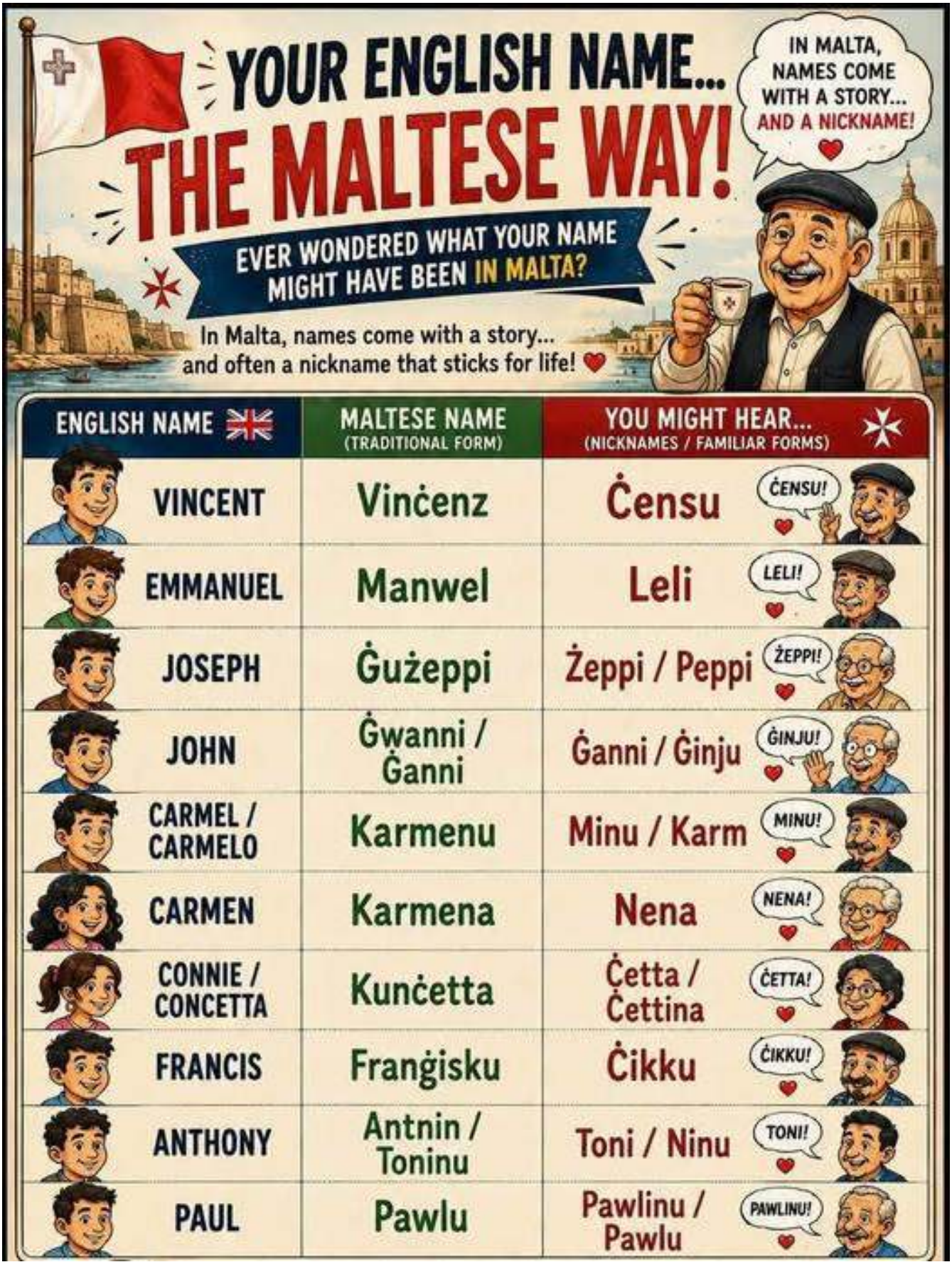
A BIG THANK YOU

The President, Toni Scicluna and the committee would like to thank all the members who attended the Annual Fathers Day Dinner Dance. It was another fun night with lots of lovely food served by the attentive staff at Ferraros. Our DJ Dominic again did not disappoint as he had everyone on the floor for most of the night dancing.
But without you, the members this would not be possible so thank you once again for your attendanceand support.

DONATE

Bank - Commonwealth (Australia) BSB - 065106
Account No. - 00502597 Name - Frank Scicluna

FOR OVERSEAS DONORS - CommBank's BIC/SWIFT Code: CTBAAU2S



ENGLISH NAME	MALTESE NAME (TRADITIONAL FORM)	YOU MIGHT HEAR... (NICKNAMES / FAMILIAR FORMS)
VINCENT	Vinċenz	Ċensu
EMMANUEL	Manwel	Leli
JOSEPH	Ġużeppi	Żeppi / Peppi
JOHN	Ġwanni / Ġanni	Ġanni / Ġinju
CARMEL / CARMELO	Karmenu	Minu / Karm
CARMEN	Karmena	Nena
CONNIE / CONCETTA	Kunċetta	Ċetta / Ċettina
FRANCIS	Franġisku	Ċikku
ANTHONY	Antnin / Toninu	Toni / Ninu
PAUL	Pawlu	Pawlinu / Pawlu

QMAC
QUEENSLAND MALTESE AUSTRALIAN COMMUNITY INC.
Inaugural
MALTESE INDEPENDENCE DAY DINNER
Celebrate Our Maltese Heritage
★ WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS ★
The Queensland Maltese Australian Community Inc. (QMAC) warmly invites you to join us for our Inaugural Maltese Independence Day Dinner as we celebrate our rich Maltese heritage, culture, traditions and community.
SATURDAY, 19 SEPTEMBER 2026
ARRIVAL: 6.00 PM FOR A 6.45 PM DINNER
ANFE ITALIAN CLUB
42 Station Road, Stafford
DRESS CODE: ELEGANT DINNER ATTIRE
ENTERTAINMENT BY
MARK ANDREW TABONE
with a special appearance from
MARKU
The Maltese from Gozo
YOUR EVENING INCLUDES
Traditional 3-course shared-style Maltese dinner
A night of Entertainment Dancing Raffles and Much more
A wonderful evening of Maltese music, friendship and celebration
TICKET PRICES
QMAC MEMBERS
$99.00
GUESTS
$125.00
TICKETS ON SALE NOW!
Tickets are on sale through Trybooking link.
https://www.trybooking.com/DODWC
CASH BAR WILL BE AVAILABLE
WANT TO BE A QMAC SPONSOR?
Become an Event Sponsor
And be part of this very special occasion. Your support helps make this memorable event a success for our community.
SPONSORSHIP ENQUIRIES:
Sandra Micallef
0416 331 101
EVENT ENQUIRIES:
Antoinette Aquilina
antoinetteaquilina@me.com
Viva Malta!
Celebrating our heritage, preserving our culture, inspiring future generations.