

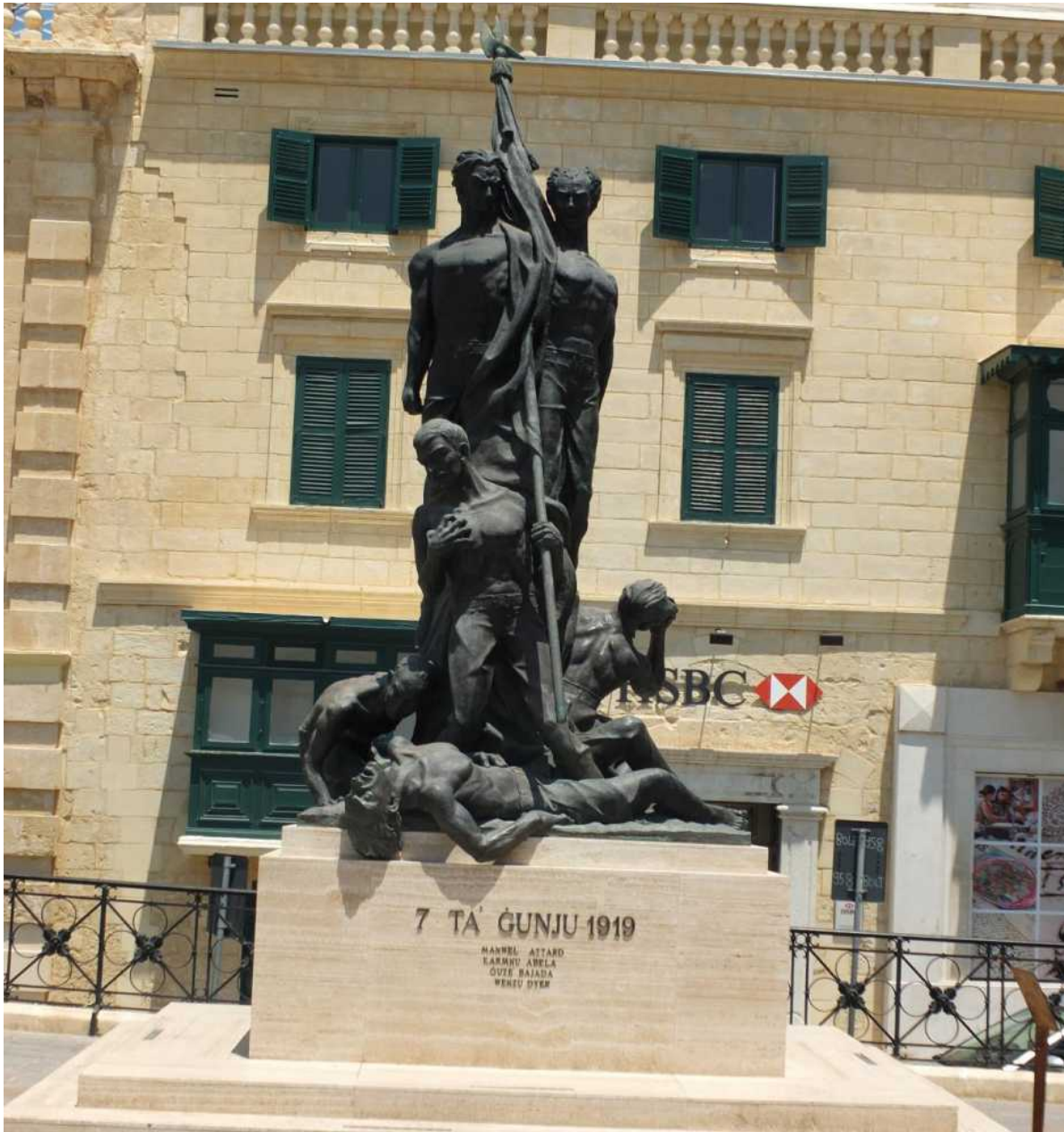
# THE MALTESE PRESENCE IN NORTH AMERICA



## E-NEWSLETTER

Issue 3

MAY/JUNE 2019



**SETTE GIUGNO MONUMENT, ST. GEORGE (PALACE) SQUARE, VALLETTA**  
by the late artist sculptor Anton Agius

*(Photo by Dan Brock)*

*(see article by Dr. Aaron Attard-Hili  
in commemoration of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Sette Giugno, pages 15-22)*

## EDITORIAL COMMENT



Dan Brock

Welcome to the third issue of *The Maltese Presence in North America*.

I've decided to refer to this publication as a journal, rather than as a newsletter, as many of the articles therein tend to be other than current. This issue, however, tends to be the exception! In fact, there was so much material which could be considered time sensitive, that an extra four pages were added to this issue.

June 7<sup>th</sup> marks the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of what has become known as *Sette Giugno*. This has a Canadian connection and through Mark Caruana of Sydney, Australia, I have been introduced to Dr. Aaron Attard-Hili of Xagħra, Gozo, who was gracious enough to write a ground-breaking article on the Canadian connection for this journal. (pages 1, 15-21)

As I worked on a photostory of last year's visit to North America by Malta's then President Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca and her delegation, (pages 27-28) Mona Vella Nicholas of the Bay Area, California, introduced me to Peter Abela. His Facebook page alerted me to the performance of *Star of Strait Street – On Tour*, which was held in Millbrae, CA. The result has been the articles appearing on pages 4 and 11-14.

I couldn't let this time of the year go by without noting the 71<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the beginnings of post-World War II settlement of the Maltese in Canada, (pages 5-8). The articles on the first Maltese in Windsor, Ontario (page 9) and the first full-time mayor of Twinsburg, Ohio (page 10) have a connection

to Maltese immigration to Canada in 1948.

Nor could I ignore the death of our beloved Maltese Canadian priest Fr. Henry Cassano of the London Diocese. (pages 23-24)

I happened upon Joseph Calleja being honoured in Naples, Florida and thought it should be shared. (page 4)

The short article relating to the ancestry of Joseph Doublet is a direct result of international cooperation in the field of Maltese family research. (page 22)

While the United States received a new ambassador of Malta last September (page 4), Canada is to receive a new consul general of Malta in July. (page 25)

You are encouraged to pass this journal along to others to whom it might be of interest. Since the last issue, several more have gotten in touch with me to be put on the mailing list.

You are also urged to use this journal to promote the various Maltese organizations and associations throughout North America and their activities. Some of you have been gracious enough to send me information about events in your area (pages 25-26) and I would like to particularly single out Brian Muscat of Windsor, Ontario and Susan Schembri of Coquitlam, British Columbia for their contributions.

My wish is that this publication will, with each issue, become more and more **your** journal. Again, as well as informing the reader of past and coming events in your area, you are invited to use this journal to tell the story of an individual or group of Maltese who came to North America or, as in the case of Giuseppe Bajada and *Sette Giugno*, have a North American connection.

With the performance of the musical play *Star of Strait Street*, in Millbrae, California, written up by Stefanie V. Nimick, I thought it necessary to give some background on the true-life individuals, Christina Radcliffe and Adrian Warburton, even though they never set foot in North America!

You will note that the articles relating to *Sette Giugno*, those who came to Canada in May and June of 1948 and that on the ancestry of Joseph Doublet all point the way as to how you, too, can learn more about your Maltese roots.

It is planned, in future issues, to direct the reader to institutions, web sites and individuals who can be of assistance in this regard. Charlie Vella and his Maltese Immigration to the San Francisco Bay Area Project, noted on page 20 of the January/February 2019 issue, is but one of many such features envisioned.

## CONTENTS

2. Editorial Comment
3. Pastor's Thoughts...
4. H.E. Keith Azzopardi: Ambassador of Malta to the United States
4. Joseph Calleja Honoured in Naples, Florida
5. The Beginnings of a New Wave of Maltese Immigration to Canada
9. First Maltese in Windsor
9. First Maltese in Windsor: A Supplement
10. Tony Perici (1920-2010): First Full-Time Mayor of Twinsburg, Ohio
11. New Musical *Star of Strait Street* Shines in San Francisco
13. *Star of Strait Street*: Some Background
15. Giuseppe Bajada: A Maltese Emigrant Whose Dream of Settling in Canada Was Fatally Shot Down
22. Joseph Edward Doublet Indeed a Direct Descendant of the Secretary of the Grand masters De Rohan and von Hompesch
23. Fr. Henry Cassano (1929-2019): 63 Years a Priest
25. Malta's New Consul General of Malta to Canada
25. Activities within the Maltese Communities
26. Opinion
27. The Former President of Malta and Her Delegation in North America: April-May 2018

## GLEANINGS FROM THE SUNDAY BULLETIN

### PASTOR'S THOUGHTS...



*Fr. Mario Micallef, MSSP, is pastor of St. Paul the Apostle, Toronto, the only Maltese national parish in North America. These "Pastor's thoughts..." are extracts from his commentaries on the Sunday readings which are published in the Parish's Sunday Bulletin.*

#### The Transfiguration

"It is good for us to be here". This was Peter's spontaneous expression on Mount Tabor as he witnessed the transfiguration of Jesus. Peter, the most spontaneous of them all. Peter, the one who always spoke what came out of his heart, before processing it through his mind. It is good, it is beautiful, it is wonderful. He could not help express his desire to keep enjoying the experience, as Jesus reveals himself for who he really is.

This is faith. This is faith, at least, as it is supposed to be. How often have we thought that faith is a matter of do's and don'ts? How often have we been made to believe that faith is a burden, rather than joy? In Jesus' presence, Peter discovers that it is good, it is beautiful.

#### Our Journey

As we move on in our own journey, God may show us that we, too, have our own areas of darkness, our little masters that enslave us. With the help of prayer, and strengthened by the practices of fasting and almsgiving, Lent is the ideal time when we can experience our own exodus. With God's help, we too can experience the movement towards a freer, happier, more fulfilled life.

#### The Prodigal Son

It would be a good idea if we tried to apply this story to ourselves. Perhaps sometimes I am a bit like one of the two sons, while in other times I might act more like the other. What matters is, who is the Father for me? What kind of relationship do I have with the Father? My answer will very likely determine how I live my life as a Christian.

## The Woman Caught in the Very Act of Adultery

In the life of that woman there is the life of each and every one of us. We are aware of our sinfulness. Sometimes we feel guilt crushing us, its finger pointed to us like that of each of those who were accusing the woman in the Gospel. And yet, Jesus tells us that all is not lost. With Him, there is always hope.

#### Stay the Course

...Jesus' glory was not of this world, he had told that crowd over and over again. This is not what he came for. Things change, and the same crowd that sings Hosanna yells "crucify him" a mere four days later. Our challenge is to stay with him, to continue with the journey. His disciples fled. Those whom he had personally chosen, through whom he had planned to expand his mission, were too confused and too scared to witness what was happening. They just could not handle it.

#### Good Is Stronger than Evil

It is not easy to believe in the resurrection, that good is stronger than evil. Perhaps, unfortunately, we are too accustomed to bad things happening around us. Whether it's in the news or in our family, it seems that bad things constantly happen everywhere. The message of Easter does not deny this. His death was real, and the power of evil was really at work. But what Easter tells us is that the story does not end there. "Why do you seek him amongst the dead? He is not here. He is risen!". Indeed, there is life after death, there is hope after disillusion.

#### The Need of Being Together in Community

It's true, Jesus returns for the sake of Thomas. This reminds us of how important each and every one of us is for Jesus. Do you remember that one lost sheep of the parable? But then again, one could argue that Jesus could have gone to meet Thomas wherever he happened to be on that Sunday evening. But no, Thomas had to experience the risen Christ when he was with his community. It is there, while the disciples are gathered again the following week, that Jesus comes to meet Thomas. It's as if Jesus wanted to remind Thomas – and, indeed, each one of us – that one can meet the risen, living Jesus only when one is in communion with the rest of the community. Even if it is an imperfect, broken community like the one of those first disciples. How often do I hear people say they feel it's enough to pray to God, without the need of being together with the believing community! Somehow, that does not work.

**H.E. KEITH AZZOPARDI: AMBASSADOR OF  
MALTA TO THE UNITED STATES**

**Dan Brock**

In September 2018, H.E. Keith Azzopardi succeeded H.E. Clive Agius as Ambassador of Malta to the United States and Canada. Ambassador Azzopardi is married to Daoruang Pimpila and they have a daughter, Kimberly.



**Ambassador Azzopardi  
with His Wife, Daoruang Pimpila  
and President Donald Trump in the Oval Room**

Keith Azzopardi was born on February 9, 1978, in Rabat, Malta and received his education at Savio College, Dingli and Junior College, Msida. He holds an Honours degree in International Relations from the University of Malta (2001) and a Masters degree in Diplomatic Studies from the Mediterranean Academy of Diplomatic Studies (2202).

Ambassador Azzopardi served as Malta's Ambassador to Austria and as Permanent Representative of Malta to the Organization on Security and Cooperation in Europe and international organizations in Vienna, including the United Nations between 2013 and 2018.

For several years, he worked as a political advisor in the European Parliament in Brussels, mainly in the Committee of Foreign Affairs and the sub-Committee on Security and Defence. His particular areas of responsibilities were the European Neighbourhood Policy and the Eastern Partnership, and participated in various Parliamentary Cooperation Committees, Assemblies and other delegations and missions to this region. He also formed part of various election observation missions as well as other inter-parliamentary delegations. In the past, he also held various positions in different youth organisations and committees.

Ambassador Azzopardi presented his Letters of Credence nominating him as the Ambassador of Malta to the United States to President Donald Trump, on September 17<sup>th</sup>. The ceremony of the presentation of the credentials was held at the White House in the Oval Office.

On March 27, 2019, Ambassador Azzopardi was present at the performance of *Star of Strait Street – On Tour* in Millbrae, CA. (see story on pages 11-12)

**JOSEPH CALLEJA  
HONOURED IN NAPLES, FLORIDA\***

**Dan Brock**



Malta-born Joseph Calleja, 41, one of the most acclaimed and sought-after tenors internationally came to Opera Naples directly from New York and his role as Cavaradossi in the Metropolitan Opera's current production of Puccini's *Tosca* which was to run through April 6<sup>th</sup>.

In Naples, Calleja was honoured by Mayor Bill Barnett who presented him with the key of the city and pro-

claimed March 21, 2019 as Joseph Calleja Day!

On the same day, Calleja performed at a solo concert, accompanied by Naples' Maestro Ramón Tebar at the piano, that was described as unforgettable.

He shared the news with his Facebook followers, saying: "So this happened yesterday in Naples Florida. I was given the 'key' to the city and the 21st of March was officially declared as 'Joseph Calleja' day!"

Accompanying the post was a photo of a written declaration by Naples' mayor. The presentation of the key is an old tradition that symbolizes the access, freedom and the respect that the city has towards Joseph Calleja.

**LEHEN MALTI**

(Maltese Voice)

Omni 1 TV

Toronto, Ontario

Saturdays 8:30 a.m.

Mondays 3:30 a.m.

Tuesdays 11.30 a.m.

Wednesdays 11:00 p.m.

Thursdays 8:30 a.m.

**THE BEGINNINGS OF A NEW WAVE OF MALTESE IMMIGRATION TO CANADA\***

**Dan Brock**

This year marks the 71<sup>st</sup> anniversary of the beginnings of a new wave of Maltese immigration to Canada. While there was a trickle of Maltese immigration in the nineteenth century, it was only in the few years immediately prior to and following the First World War that large numbers of emigrants from Malta began arriving in Canada. And then, after 1921 and until 1948, the Canadian Government all but closed emigration from such places as Malta.

It was on May 8, 1948 that the first contingent, consisting of 131 men, left Malta for Canada on board the *Marine Perch*. They were joined by another 380, on board the *Vulcania*, which took its leave from the Grand Harbour on June 17<sup>th</sup>.

After years in which the doors had been closed, or partly closed, to Maltese immigration, Allison Glen, Canada's Minister of Mines and Resources, had announced, on December 19, 1947, that arrangements had been made with the Government of Malta to allow 500 men into Canada. "A joint announcement to this effect was made in Valletta and in Ottawa on March 1, 1948."

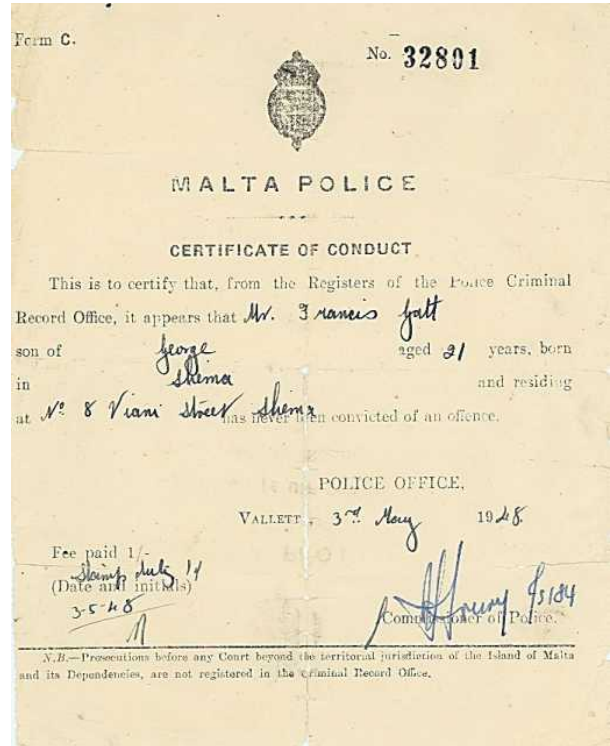
As the late Fr. Lawrence E. Attard has noted, despite the "heroic stand that the people of Malta made against the Axis forces during the Second World War, racial prejudice against the Maltese was never far from the surface." On March 10<sup>th</sup> F.B. Cotsworth, Canada's Acting Superintendent of European Migration, wrote that "the rate of tuberculosis among the Maltese could be high" and "single men should be preferred because most married men in Malta liked to father many children." Moreover, "the Maltese could be troublesome."

J. Robillard, a member of the Canadian selection team to Malta, who was then stationed in Rome, "was afraid that some Maltese could carry in them traces of Arab or Asian blood in their veins." Once he had completed this work and had personally met a number of the prospective emigrants, however, "his fears were assuaged and he was of the opinion that Canadians had nothing to fear from the Maltese as they were physically and civilly of a very good standard."

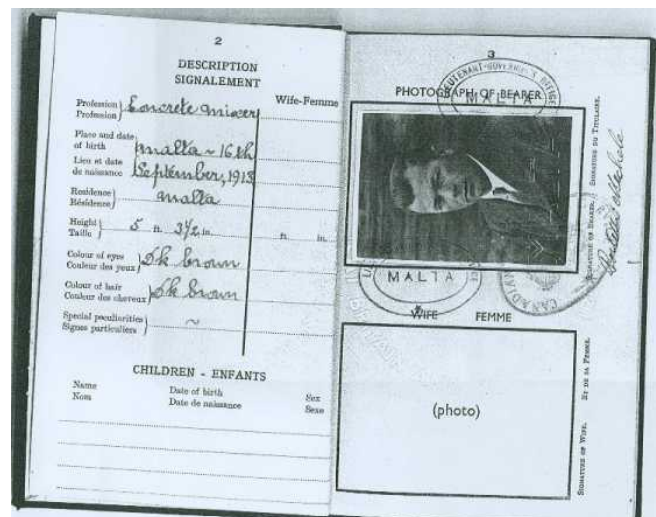
Of the more than 2,000 applicants it was believed that only 1,364 were really serious about living in Canada. Of these, 300 were thought to require further questioning and only 36 were rejected outright as being considered too old or unsuitable for the Canadian market.

W. Carnhill, the Labour representative from Ottawa on the selection team, "believed that the men he interviewed would be readily accepted by most Canadians

anywhere and that they had the makings of solid citizens." He further noted "that the candidates spoke good English, had good manners and were prepared for hard work." He also thought that the Maltese officials underrated those they classified as unskilled because these would be readily acceptable to Canadian employers looking for good workers."



**Certificate of Good Conduct for Frank Gatt, One of the Emigrants on Board the *Vulcania***



**Inside Pages of the Passport for Mike Portelli, Another of the Emigrants on Board the *Vulcania***

BIRTH CERTIFICATE	
Extract from the "Baptismal Records" kept in the Parish Church of Gudja.	
Child's Christian Name	Edward Scicluna
Parents' Name and Surname	Joseph Scicluna Rosalina Vella
Date of Birth	11 <sup>th</sup> January 1908
married to	Josephine Muscat
The above is true and correct 14 <sup>th</sup> Day of March 1949	
Parish Priest's Office Gudja.	Rev. Antonis Rapa Parish Priest.

IMMIGRATION IDENTIFICATION CARD	
(THIRD CLASS)	
THIS CARD MUST BE SHOWN TO THE EXAMINING OFFICERS AT PORT OF ARRIVAL	
Name of passenger	SCICLUNA Edward
Name of ship	VULCANIA
Name appears on document, date	16 <sup>th</sup> 1948
Medical Examination Stamp	Halifax, N. S. R.M.
London Immigration	

**Birth Certificate and Immigration Identification Card for Ed Scicluna, Another of the Emigrants on Board the *Vulcania***

Dr. Paul Boffa, Malta's Prime Minister, and John J. Cole, Malta's first Minister of Emigration, were well aware that this experiment with the 500 "pioneers" being selected to re-settle in Canada had to succeed, as "the future of Maltese settlement in Canada" depended on it.



**John J. Cole, in London, Ontario, October 1948, Shakes Hands with Bunny Asphar, One of the Immigrants Who Had Arrived in June of That Year**

While initially transport to Canada was to be the responsibility of the Maltese authorities, according to Fr. Attard, interviews with some of these "500" leads this writer to believe that each had to pay half the fare of £21 Sterling, and the Canadian government paid the other half, on condition that the immigrant remain in Canada for at least a year.

The American Export ship *Marine Perch* had left Naples on Saturday, May 8<sup>th</sup>, arrived in Malta's Grand Harbour the same day and then left with the 131 men bound for Canada and a handful of other Maltese emigrants en route to New York Harbor.



**Some of the Emigrants on Board the *Marine Perch* Taking Part in the Mandatory Safety Drill**

The ship arrived at Pier 22, in Halifax on Wednesday, May 19<sup>th</sup>, and cleared port the same day for New York City.



**Rosaria Muscat (back centre) Was One of the Few Maltese Emigrants on Board the *Marine Perch* en Route to the United States.**

Most of the 131 men who disembarked from the *Marine Perch* at Halifax were brought by special train to London, Ontario.



**The Arrivals in London, Ontario, on May 21st**

A few may have been lured by employers while still on the dock in Halifax, eager for the skills many of these men had. As a case in point, 21 of the Maltese immigrants were hired on the spot by INCO in Port Colborne, Ontario. A few others may have left the train when met by relatives and acquaintances at Union Station in Toronto. This was to be even more the case with those arriving in June.

After arriving in London early on the afternoon of May 21<sup>st</sup>, the men were taken "in big army trucks" to the former World War II, Royal Canadian Air Force bombing and gunnery station at Fingal, less than 40 km to the southwest of London.



**Four of the New Arrivals at Fingal in May**

Employers quickly hired these men, who found employment in nearby St. Thomas, London and Woodstock, as well as further afield, in Ontario, in St. Catharines, Collingwood and Peterborough.

On Thursday, June 17<sup>th</sup>, a second American Export ship, the 24,400-ton, Italian liner, *Vulcania*, left Naples for Malta, en route to Halifax and New York. The number of immigrants picked up in Malta that same day was 380.



**Some of Those Waiting at the Wharf to Embark on the *Vulcania*, June 17, 1948**

Their families were at the dock to see them off and, as they boarded the ship, a band played in the background. One of the last tunes it played was "Auld Lang Syne". One of the emigrants, Anthony Grima, a capable young singer with the voice of a tenor, sang the last song, "Maria Christina," at the dock in Malta. Another of the emigrants, Karmenu Sapiano, read his own farewell poem, "To Malta My Native Land," over the microphone at the dock.



**Some of the Wives rented Dgħajjes to be Rowed out to the *Vulcania* to Say Farewell to Their Husbands One Last Time**

The total number of passengers on board ship was 1,252. Among these were a large number of Jewish refugees from Continental Europe.

At about 5:30 p.m. on Saturday, June 19<sup>th</sup> the ship

entered Gibraltar Harbour.



**Passengers and Crew on Board the Vulcania as It Enters Gibraltar Harbour, Saturday, June 19<sup>th</sup>**

A number of boats came out to meet the ship. The occupants had wine, etc. to sell to the passengers on the *Vulcania*. After the money for the goods was lowered in buckets to the boats, the boats took off with the money without giving the passengers the goods for which they paid!

The *Vulcania* docked in Halifax on June 25<sup>th</sup>. The next day it cleared the harbour for New York.

Meanwhile the 340 Maltese emigrants who had disembarked at Halifax, went through customs and immigration and then boarded a Canadian National Railway train for St. Thomas, Ontario. The train made at least two stops—at Campbellton, New Brunswick and a French-Canadian village in Quebec—before reaching Montreal. At each of these stops the immigrants were able to get off the train and stretch their legs before re-boarding.



**Tony and Frank Gatt Stretch Their Legs in Cambellton, New Brunswick**

Along the way to St. Thomas some were met by relatives and friends. The Debono brothers— Amadeo and Tony—were met by relatives at Toronto and stayed.

Accompanied by A.J. Murray of the Department of Labour at Ottawa, those who remained with the group, like those in May who had preceded them, were taken to "the Dominion Department of Labor's hostel at Fingal," where they arrived about 3 p.m. on June 27<sup>th</sup>.

As with those who arrived in May, many of these men quickly found work in nearby St. Thomas and London and it is from both these groups that the foundation for making the London area the second largest Maltese Canadian community in Canada, after Toronto, was laid.

Some of these new arrivals ended up in Hamilton, Ontario. Joseph Cassar, Joseph Tabone and Johnny Camilleri knew Tony Vella, a school friend of Cassar's, who had immigrated before the War and was living in Stoney Creek, near Hamilton. Tony telephoned them while they were at Fingal and they took a taxi and met him in Hamilton. Camilleri was the only one of the more than 500 men at this time who had been able to bring out his entire family, consisting of his wife and four children.

A few others settled in Brantford. Edward Scicluna had been met at Union Station in Toronto by his oldest brother, Charles, whom he had not seen since about 1913. The latter advised his youngest brother that his prospects for work would be better in Brantford where Joe Gatt, an acquaintance of Edward's who had come out with the first group, had settled, than in Toronto. Coincidentally, Scicluna and his fellow companions on board the *Vulcania*, Mike Portelli and Paul Chetcuti, worked for a time at the Brantford Glue Factory, as had some of the Maltese arrivals to Brantford early in 1913.

The wives and children of these two groups would start arriving later in 1948, others would follow in the succeeding years. The work ethic and law-biding characteristics of these first post war groups from Malta would open the doors for the many thousands who followed in the succeeding decades. To these first post war arrivals by way of the *Marine Perch* and the *Vulcania* a great debt of gratitude is owed by those who followed in their wake and by their children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

*\*This article is based on interviews with many of Maltese immigrants to Canada in May and June 1948 and with their family. To them I'm most grateful for their stories, photos and documents. The text here is largely the same as that which appeared in The Sunday Times of Malta, June 17, 2018, 56-57.*



## FIRST MALTESE IN WINDSOR\*

### Angelo Dougall

In 1948 a very large group of Maltese emigrants left Malta on the *Marine Perch* in May and on the *Vulcania* in June of that year and not less than 250 settled in Windsor to work there, many in the car industry and some to work just across the river in Detroit, Michigan.

Later that year, a friend of mine, the late Mrs. Nina Mifsud, joined her husband Lawrence (from Birkirkara) walked down Ouellette Avenue, in downtown Windsor, wearing the faldetta and, as she told me everybody stared at her!

The previous year, at least three persons I know of settled in Windsor, having been allowed to go to Canada under some privileged priority scheme. I personally know one of them, a friend of mine, Mr. Joe Vella, of Marsa, who worked in Detroit, Michigan.

During the twenties, thirties and forties, there were between 35 and 40 Maltese families living in Windsor, excluding single persons. This information was given to me by none other than Fr. Michael Z. Cefai, pastor of the Maltese Community of Detroit.

Among the residents of Windsor there was a Joseph Borg, a restaurant owner on Wyandotte Street East, who a week before going on active service in the Royal Canadian Navy in 1942, was found murdered. What followed is well known as those convicted of the murder were two Polish Americans. They were the last to be judicially hanged in Windsor Provincial Prisons.

During the first decade of this century there were many Maltese living in Windsor. One could find them listed in the City directory but, unfortunately, they were classified in census reports as "unplaced British."

Among them were such names as Agius, Borg, Caruana, Carabez, Fenech, Micallef, etc. A John Carabez, from Floriana, ran a billiards pool room in downtown Windsor from the mid-twenties to the late forties.

During my long stay in Windsor, I made a long and patient research about the Maltese in that city. It was a rewarding effort for I came across some very early settlers in that city.

A Carmelo Fenech settled in Windsor during the pioneering years of that city in the mid-1880s. He was later joined by two brothers of his and together they ran a tailoring business in the very heart of Downtown. At times they were listed in the City Directory as "Fenwich."

The Fenechs were close relatives of two Italo-Maltese families, the Lombardos of London, Ontario and the de Marcos of Windsor, Ontario.

I was told by a descendant of the Fenech family, a Mr. John Fenech, that the Lombardos and the de Marcos were from the Aeolian Islands. The former family gave us the legendary Guy Lombardo of the Big Band era

fame and in the mid-70s the Dean of the Law Faculty of the Assumption University of Windsor was professor Demarco.

As far as I could find out, the earliest Maltese to settle in Windsor was a man from Senglea with a most non-Maltese surname – a Joseph Smith who married an American and had a son, Henry.

Joseph settled in Windsor around the mid-1870s and ran a sail making business on the Riverfront, now called Riverside Drive East.

This Smith had no relatives and should not be confused with a later arrival in Windsor, the late Henry Smith, also from Senglea, who settled in Windsor in 1948.

This Henry Smith was an indefatigable worker for the Maltese community of this city, a past Post Commander of Post 129 and the Great Lakes Region of the Royal Canadian Legion.

Since the amalgamation of the border cities into one city called Windsor, Ontario, in the last century, there have always been Maltese settlers living there, made welcome and earning a good reputation.

*\* This article is a slightly modified copy of that which appeared in Lil Hutna, Jan.- Gun. 1983, page 16. Attempts to contract Mr. Angelo Dougall for permission to reprint this article have been unsuccessful.*

## FIRST MALTESE IN WINDSOR: A SUPPLEMENT

### Dan Brock

*I found Angelo Dougall's above article so interesting that I just had to follow up on his research.*

The Fenech surname is not to be found on the federal census until 1891, and then only in London.

Vincenzo "Vincent" Fenech was born in Italy, in 1863, a son of Bartholmeo "Bartolo" and Gratia "Grace" (Lombardo) Fenech. By 1878, he was in London, Ontario, where he boarded with Carmelo Paladino and worked in his tailoring shop.

Frank Fenech joined his brother in 1881 and also boarded with and worked for Carmelo Paladino. Ten years later, Frank married Paladino's daughter Jane. Vincent was a witness of his brother's marriage, in November 1891. The marriage records for St. Peter's Cathedral in London, lists Vincent's residence at the time as Windsor.

Vincent was married in 1895, in Windsor to Rose Verduyn, a French Canadian.

Meanwhile, in 1888, a third Fenech brother, Joseph, had married Maria Dambra of London, whose father was also a tailor there.

In mentioning the three Fenech brothers, Angelo Dougall was apparently unaware of Frank as a fourth brother, Anthony Fenech arrived in Windsor in 1895

and, in 1903, in Detroit, married Agnes G. Kelly.

In 1901, Jane's sister, Angelina, married Gaetano Lombardo, another boarder and employee of Carmelo Paladino. Two years later, Gaetano and Angelina would become the parents of the future band leader, Guy Lombardo.

Both the Paladino and Dambra families had arrived in London, in 1874, from Lipari, the largest of the Aeolian Island in the Tyrrhenian Sea off the northern coast of Sicily. The Fenech brothers and Gaetano Lombardo were also natives of Lipari.

By 1901, Joseph had joined his brother, Vincent in Windsor, while Frank was still in London. All three brothers were engaged in the tailoring trade in their respective cities.

Now, while the Fenech brothers were most likely related to the Lombardos of London, Ontario through their mother, the former Gratia Lombardo. Although Lombardo and Demarco are Maltese, as well as Italian surnames, I do not know whether the Italian Lombardos and de Marcoss in southwestern Ontario in fact had Maltese ancestors but, there is a good probability that the Fenechs did.

On his website Malta Genealogy, Charles Said-Vassallo of Glebe, New South Wales, Australia, shows, in his "ArabSicilyMalta" database, that one Francesco Fenech migrated to Lipari from Lija, Malta, sometime between 1728 and 1752. Charles also notes that, between 1752 and 1793, three of Francesco's sons and one of grandsons had married on the island of Lipari.

Thus, the Fenech brothers who migrated to southwestern Ontario could very well be direct descendants of Francisco Fenech of Lija.

No such Maltese surnames as Agius, Borg, Caruana, Carabez, Fenech or Micallef were found in the 1921 federal census for Windsor, Ontario. The names, however, were found of Peter Mifsud and Mose Vassallo. Both were born in Malta of Maltese parents. lodged at the same house on Wyandotte Street and were 29 years of age. Peter had arrived in Canada in 1912 and Mose in 1920. The former was employed as a foreman and the latter as a labourer.

As for those with the Fenech surname, living in Windsor in 1921 and born outside the country, the place of birth is given as Sicily or Italy.

As to Joseph Borg, he was 42 years old at the time he was shot to death, in the early morning hours of October 2, 1942 in an attempt to prevent a robbery at the White Spot Restaurant he operated at 714 Wyandotte Street East.

Stefan Ogrodowski, age 25, and Bruno Kisielewski, age 21, were hanged at the Essex County Jail for Borg's murder on August 24, 1943.

## TONY PERICI (1920-2010): FIRST FULL-TIME MAYOR OF TWINSBURG, OHIO

Dan Brock



Reference was made to Tony Perisi, In the article on Pete Buttigieg in the last issue of this journal (page 20).

While Buttigieg was born in the United States and his father was a native of Hamrun, Malta, Perici was born in Senglea Malta. Antonio A. Perici was born in 1920, the son of Antonio and

Giulia Perici.

Three months before young Antonio's birth the father, a labourer, had immigrated to Detroit. He appears to have returned to Malta a year or two later and there had a daughter, Emanuela.

The elder Antonio, now a boilermaker, immigrated to Yonkers, New York in 1927. His wife and two children joined him a year later. But, owing to the wife's declining health, the family returned to Malta.

After graduation from high school in Malta, young Anthony enlisted in the Royal Navy. During his naval career, he was awarded the Africa Star and the Victory Medal.

Later, while stationed in Egypt, he met Rosita Rosetti. Three months later they were married and returned to Malta. There, they had a daughter, Dorothea. She was but a few months old then Tony, now an engineer, was one of the men who immigrated to Canada, in May 1948, on board the *Marine Perch*. (See above article.)

While some of the group settled in places like London and Brantford, Ontario, Anthony appears to have ended up in Guelph. There, his wife and infant daughter joined him in early November 1948, having come out with many other wives and children on board the *Radnik*.

Tony's parents, Antonio and Giulia, came to Canada in September 1953 and apparently joined his son's family. Meanwhile, Tony and Rosa had another daughter, Sharon, and by the early 1960s were living in Brantford.

There, the Pericis became good friends of Joe and Nina Gatt. Joe had come out on the same ship as Tony, had worked in Egypt for a number of years as a carpenter and, like Tony, had taken a wife while in Alexandria.

By 1962, the Pericis were living in Shaker Heights, east of Cleveland, Ohio. A few years later, they moved several miles to the southeast to the town of Twinsburg, Ohio. By this time, they had a third daughter, Robin. Tony worked as a manufacturing engineer at the nearby Ford Motor Co. plant in Walton Hills until his retirement 25 years later.

He was elected a town councilor of Twinsburg in 1974. Two years later, he became the town's mayor, a part-time position. He became the town's first full-time mayor in 1978 and continued to serve in this capacity until 1987.

The Pericis moved to Florida after Tony left office. He was living in Fort Myers at the time of his death, from cancer, on April 6, 2010. Tony was described as having a brilliant mind, being a student of history and one who had a great love of family. His daughters also said that he loved to travel and ballroom dance.

*\*This article is largely based on The Maltese Canadian Club of London Newsletter, vol. 37, no. 6 (March/April 2017), 17-18.*

**NEW MUSICAL STAR OF STRAIT STREET SHINES IN SAN FRANCISCO**

**Stefanie V. Nimick**

On Friday, the 29<sup>th</sup> of March, nearly 500 members of the Maltese-American community of San Francisco and beyond gathered at the Mills High School Auditorium in Millbrae, California to attend the first ever Maltese musical stage production, performed in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Based on the true-life love story of Christina Ratcliffe, during the height of World War II, the musical by Philip Glassborow, starring Polly March and Larissa Bonaci, with music by Geoff Thomas, takes us back to a fascinating and dangerous time, on one of Valletta's most infamous streets, "Strada Stretta".

Prior to the show, guests were invited to visit tables represented by local Maltese-American charitable, social and philanthropic groups, all of which collaborated with the Maltese Embassy of Malta in

Washington, DC and the Office of the Honorary Consul of Malta in San Francisco to make this historic event possible.

The evening began with an address from The Honorable Louis J Vella, Hon. Consul General of Malta in San Francisco, followed by a ceremony honoring local Maltese-American Vietnam War Veterans. This part of the program was organized by the Maltese Historical Society (MHS) in coordination with the Consul General. Each veteran was awarded a Vietnam Veteran Challenge Coin which was acquired especially for this occasion.



**Viet Nam Veteran Fred Aquilina (far right) with Ambassador Keith Azzopardi and Hon Consul General Louis J Vella**

The ceremony concluded with a standing ovation from all those in attendance followed by a group photo.



**The Maltese American Vietnam Veterans with Hon Consul General Vella and Ambassador Azzopardi**

The Mayor of the city of Millbrae presented a proclamation which was followed by a message from His Excellency Keith Azzopardi, Ambassador of Malta in Washington, DC, who traveled to San Francisco to attend this momentous occasion.



**Ambassador Keith Azzopardi**

As the auditorium lights dimmed, the audience was riveted by a stellar performance from Polly March; as one audience member stated, “She’s not acting; she’s living it”.



**Polly March**

Larissa Bonaci captivated the crowd with her voice, taking them back to a time of uncertainty, secrecy, and wartime entertainment, with elegance and grace, while Geoff Thomas complimented the storyline perfectly with every stroke of the keys. The show would not have been complete without a few “encores” as the crowd cheered and applauded; as both Ms. March and Ms. Bonaci commented “This is by far the largest audience we have ever performed in front of.” to which the

audience responded with a thunderous round of applause.



**Larissa Bonaci (as Christina Radcliffe) and Geoff Thomas**

Following the performance, audience members got the opportunity to meet and talk with the actors, to take pictures with the cast and share stories about the island home, that drew such a large crowd together that night.



**Meeting and Greeting after the Performance**  
(All photos courtesy of Peter Abela of Abela Photography)

The evening proved to be a resounding success, and a wonderful time was had by all.

**ABELA PHOTOGRAPHY**

**Peter Abela**  
[www.abelaphoto.com](http://www.abelaphoto.com)  
[abelaphoto@gmail.com](mailto:abelaphoto@gmail.com)  
[www.facebook.com/abelaphoto](http://www.facebook.com/abelaphoto)  
 650-219-1234

## **STAR OF STRAIT STREET: SOME BACKGROUND**

**Dan Brock**

In this musical play, written by the playwright, lyricist and composer Philip Glassborow, Christina Ratcliffe arrives at The Morning Star in "The Gut" to entertain the troops. Then she meets the dashing RAF air-ace, Flying Officer Adrian "Warby" Warburton. The love story of Christina and Warby is retold, using extracts from Christina's own writings and Paul McDonald's *Malta's Greater Siege and Adrian Warburton* (2015)

The play was first performed at The Splendid, on Strait Street, in Valletta on April 4, 5 and 6, 2017 by Strada

Stretta Concept (under artistic director Giuseppe Schembri Bonaci) and was produced under the auspices of The Valletta 2018 Foundation.

It was presented in collaboration with the 2017 Maltese presidency of the Council of the European Union, with the assistance of Fondazzjoni Wirt Artna, the Arts Council Malta, The Malta Film Commission and the writer and aviation enthusiast Frederick R. Galea.

In the musical

In May 2017, the play was performed at the MADC (Malta Amateur Dramatic Club), on Santa Venera Square in Santa Venera.

The performance at the Teatru Salesjan on Howard Street in Sliema occurred in February 2018.



**The Performance at Teatru Salesjan, February 2018**

On May 15<sup>th</sup>, the cast performed at the Hotel Phoenicia in Floriana.

The play was then taken on tour and, also in May, performances were held in Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide, Australia. It was performed in London and in Winchester, England, in November 2018.

But who were Christina Ratcliffe and this air ace Adrian Warburton on which this musical play is based?

Christina Ratacliffe was born in Dukinfield, Greater Manchester, England in 1914. She appeared in the 1935 film *Charing Cross Road* as a dancer.

After this, she had intended to travel across Europe while working as a cabaret artiste. She first came to

Malta in 1937 and worked as a cabaret performer at the Morning Star on St. Nicholas Street in Valletta. Christina also performed in Morocco in 1937 and again in 1938 and 1939.

She returned to Malta with her group, in March 1940, to perform as a cabaret dancer. They had planned to leave in June but Italy's June 10<sup>th</sup> declaration of war on Britain and France thus delayed this. Finding themselves unemployed, the group set up an ensemble which they called the Whizz Bangs and found employment by entertaining the troops at barracks, gun sites and other spots. As the war raged on, Christina enrolled as a civilian plotter in the Operations Room at

Lascaris.

In June 1942, 53 female civilian plotters worked there, some as young as 14. Christina was eventually appointed captain of D Watch and then became assistant to the Controller. This meant having to abandon the Whizz Bangs group. Six of the civilian plotters, including Christina, were decorated for gallantry. She was described in the *Times of Malta* in 1942 as “Christina of George Cross Island” and was reported as saying Malta “is carved on my heart.”



**Christina Ratcliffe (left)  
Walking Along a Bombed Valletta Street  
with Her Young Friend Lisa Debattista**

Meanwhile she had met Flying Officer Adrian Warburton. In her later writings Christina was to admit that with his golden hair and his beautiful blue eyes, “Warby” resembled a Greek god.



**Adrian “Warby” Warburton (1918-1944)**

Warburton was born in Middlesborough, England and had become a pilot. He had married Eileen Mitchell, in 1939, after a very brief courtship but, allegedly, had left her at once when he found out that she was divorced and had a child.

It was on September, 6, 1940 that Warburton arrived at Luqa Airfield after being transferred on duty to Malta. He soon gained a reputation for being a fearless photo-reconnaissance pilot and his dare-devil acts were also the reason why he crashed some of his planes during missions.

Thus, when he went missing over Germany, during his last flight in April 1944, there was disbelief that he was dead. Christina was one of those who clung to the hope that, somehow, he was still alive. But her life changed drastically.

While she had chosen to spend the rest of her days in Malta, the island she had grown to love, she became a recluse, preferring to live in isolation in her apartment at 7/3 Vilhena Terrace, Vilhena Street, Floriana.

Meanwhile, for years after the War in small corner cafés and bars in Malta, people talked about a remarkable RAF photo-recce (photoreconnaissance) pilot called Warby and his stunning companion Christina.

The English newspaper *The Star* carried a five-part article, “One woman goes to war,” written by Christina herself on her wartime experiences. In 1974, the Maltese newspaper *Malta News* expanded this story, under the heading “Carve Malta on my heart,” in a 15-part series. She later wrote a further four articles, which appeared in *The Sunday Times of Malta* in 1974, 1975, 1980 and 1982.

But her last few years were unhappy ones. Trying to drown her loneliness in alcohol, Christina had become withdrawn and impoverished.

She became so poor that at the time of her death in 1988 the neighbours had to collect the necessary funds to provide her with a proper burial. Her body was interred in the common area of the Commonwealth section of Addolorata Cemetery in Paola.

In 1991, an individual bearing the surname Ratcliffe, bought a grave for her so that her remains would not be lost in the common ossuary. This grave, marked no. 4, is situated in the East Division, Section MA-D.

As for Adrian Warburton, his fate was finally learned in 2002 when his remains were found in the cockpit of his wrecked plane, buried some two metres deep in a field near the Bavarian village of Egling an der Paar, 34 miles west of Munich. An examination of his aircraft showed that one of the propellers had bullet holes in it, thus indicating that Warburton had been shot down on his reconnaissance flight over Germany on April 12, 1944.

Meanwhile, Frederick R. Galea, an aviation enthusiast, had learned about Warburton and, in turn, about Christina. Galea ended up writing *Carve Malta on My Heart And Other Wartime Stories* (2004). He also edited *Women of Malta: True Wartime Stories of Christina Ratcliffe and Tamara Marks* (2006).

Just this year, on January 29<sup>th</sup>, Paul McDonald’s book *Ladies of Lascaris: Christina Ratcliffe and the Forgotten Heroes of Malta’s War* was fittingly launched in the Lascaris War Rooms, Valletta.

*The accounts of the performances of Star of Strait Street, both in Malta and on tour, as well as data on Christina Radcliffe and Adrian Warburton have been gleaned from many on line sources.*

**GIUSEPPE BAJADA: A MALTESE EMIGRANT  
WHOSE DREAM OF SETTLING IN CANADA WAS  
FATALLY SHOT DOWN<sup>1</sup>**

**Dr. Aaron Attard-Hili**

*Aaron Attard-Hili is an advocate by profession and is a judicial assistant at the Courts of Law in Gozo. He is a researcher in local history and a regular contributor of articles, mainly relating to art and of local interest. He is currently researching and compiling a history of Sette Giugno with particular attention to Giuseppe Bajada. Aaron was commissioned to design a free-standing memorial marking the event and Giuseppe Bajada next to Bajada's former residence in Xagħra.*

The annual commemoration of the *Sette Giugno* riots in Malta is mostly associated with the granting of the first self government constitution to Malta in 1921. The nomenclature of 'Sette Giugno' is the Italian version of 7<sup>th</sup> June 1919 which fell on a Saturday. The riots were the culmination of a number of social and political factors which went into a hiatus for four years, during the First World War, but erupted again following the end of hostilities.

Unfortunately the riots claimed the lives of four persons: Carmelo (Carmel)<sup>2</sup> Abela, Manwel (Emmanuel) Attard, Giuseppe (Joseph) Bajada and Wenzu (Laurence) Dyer. The third victim, Giuseppe Bajada, is of particular interest for the purpose of this article because he is closely associated with the government attempts to send its surplus Maltese population to English-speaking countries like Canada and Australia.

Giuseppe Bajada was born at home to Antonio Bajada, age 27, and the former Maria Carmena Grech, age 20, on Tuesday, 8<sup>th</sup> March 1881. He was the first among seven siblings. The family lived at 32, Bullara Street, in the village of Xagħra which at the time was referred to as Caccia<sup>3</sup> in Gozo.

The childhood of Bajada was similar to other children of his age. Probably he attended the village's 25-year-old or so primary school because emigration records show that he was a literate person. He could have attended also the night classes set up purposely by the government for the would be emigrants. No one can be sure, however, because school records were not properly kept and there was no obligation on the part of head masters to do so.

Bajada travelled to the adjacent island of Malta to seek better opportunities for work in his twenties. He could easily settle in there because his relatives had already established themselves, with their families, in Msida. During the first years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century there was a lot of work in Malta in connection with the construction of the Grand Harbour breakwater and the building of one of the dockyards.

Eventually Bajada took up residence on Capucchins Street in Zabbar, a stone's throw away, from the Cottonera—the three adjacent cities of Bormla (Cospicua), Birgu (Vittoriosa) and L'Isla (Senglea)—the hive of the work activity.

In the meantime, the colonial government was establishing its contacts with the British Dominions around the globe and trying to convince them to accept emigrants from Malta. It endeavoured to break the decades-old tradition of Maltese emigrants who immigrated to such Mediterranean ports as Algiers, Tunis and Marseille in search of work.

The government was always faced with a shortage of job opportunities for the ever-growing population of Malta every time that large infrastructural projects came to an end. For some reason or other, however, the Maltese people were not favourably looked upon when it came to questions of language and race. This was particularly so in the case of the United States and Canada.<sup>4</sup>

An opportunity arose in April 1913 when the International Eucharistic Congress was organised with great pomp in Malta. A number of church prelates from all over the world attended for the week long congress. Among of them there was Bishop Joseph-Médard Emard of the Valleyfield Diocese in Quebec, Canada.

He was assisted also by another Canadian priest, Fr. Phillip Casgrain, formerly a soldier stationed in Malta at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Fr. Casgrain was very familiar with the Malta environs and even learned the Maltese language.

At one point, Bishop Emard, was invited by the Malta Emigration Committee for a meeting during which he was encouraged by the Maltese authorities to be a voice with the Canadian authorities for new Maltese immigrants to be let in and establish themselves in

1. I would like to acknowledge the help of the editor Dan Brock for his sterling help in providing me with documentary sources as far as Bajada's travelling details to Canada are concerned. Without this help the account of this facet of Bajada's life would not have been possible. I would also like to acknowledge the help of Mark Caruana of Sydney, Australia, in establishing contacts outside Malta and in providing documents and data originating with the National Archives of Malta.
2. The names in bracket are the English versions of the Italian. As was the custom at the time Italian, rather than Maltese or English, tended to be the official language.
3. *Caccia* is the Italian version of the Maltese word *Qaċċa*, a locality in Xagħra. It was first named on 29<sup>th</sup> April 1688 by Bishop Cocco Palmeri when he established the village as a separate parish with the chapel of St. Anthony the Abbot at *Il-Qaċċa* as its first parish church. *Qaċċa* means a high land. The site of the chapel is on the highest elevation in Xagħra.
4. Correspondence in Council Papers 32/1910-11 in *Maltese Forum*, v.9, n.2.

Canada.

In 1907 Bajada attempted to immigrate to England. For some unknown reason, however, he shelved this plan. England was not looked at favourably for immigration purposes because of its climate.



Giuseppe Bajada: 1881-1919

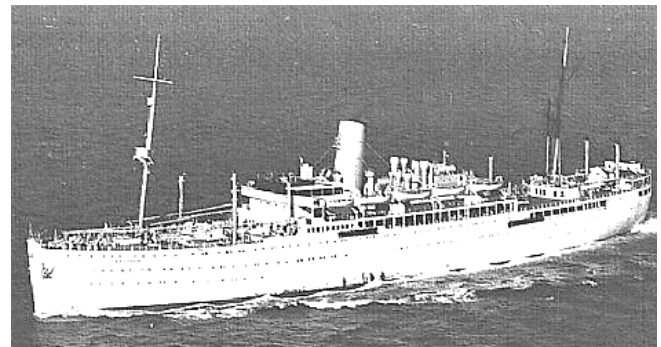
Canada because of the current government discussions and propaganda for immigrants to the transatlantic land following Bishop Emarđ's commitment to the Maltese emigrants' cause some days before.

Francisco Gauci, also of Xagħra, and an acquaintance, if not already a friend, of Bajada's also applied for a passport to Montreal in May 1913.



Francisco Gauci (b. 1893)

The two men embarked on the ss *Ville d'Alger* in the Grand Harbour on their first step of the long voyage to Canada. At the time, Bajada's imother was dead<sup>5</sup> and his father was a widower left looking after his six other siblings the youngest being 12-year-old Giovanna.



s.s. *Ville d'Alger*

Despite a lacuna existing in the departure register of the ships at the National Archives of Malta in Rabat, the 6<sup>th</sup> June 1913 issue of *Lloyd Maltese* noted the *Ville d'Alger* had left for Tunis the day before. Presumably, the final port of destination of the ship was Marseille, France.

68  
17.4.1907

DECLARATION TO BE MADE BY APPLICANT FOR PASSPORT.

I, the Undersigned, (1) Giuseppe Bajada 1907  
residing at San Gwann, Victoria, Gozo hereby declare that I am  
(2) single and that my husband is  
a (4) widow having been born  
at San Gwann, Gozo on the 12 day of April 1881  
(3) For Persons born within His Majesty's Dominions (To be struck out in other cases)  
and not having lost the status of British Subject thus acquired, and I hereby apply for a Passport  
for the purpose of travelling to (6) England

(5) Signed Giuseppe Bajada

AND I, the Undersigned, (8) Antonio Labadie, Gozo  
residing at San Gwann, Victoria, Gozo hereby declare that to the best  
of my knowledge and belief the above made Declaration of the said Giuseppe  
Bajada is true, and that he is a fit and proper person to receive a Passport

Signed Antonio Labadie, Gozo

(1) Insert name of Place and Date  
(2) Christian Name and Surname of the applicant in full, and true status.

**Giuseppe Bajada's Passport Application  
Dated 17<sup>th</sup> April 1907**

(Courtesy of the National Archives of Malta)

Again Bajada applied for a passport in May 1913, this time with the destination being listed as Montreal, Canada. Maybe Bajada was enticed to immigrate to

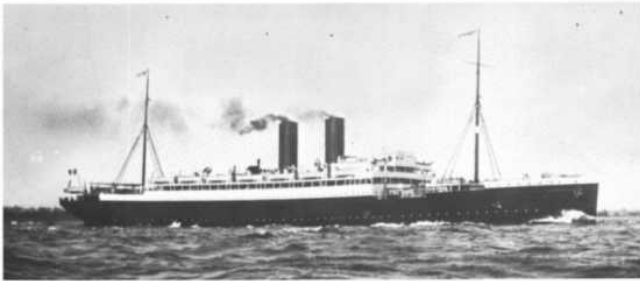
5. Bajada's mother, Maria, died at the comparatively young age of 50, at Gozo's Victoria Hospital, on Thursday, 15<sup>th</sup> August 1912, at the height of Gozo's traditional annual festa of Santa Marija (The feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary into Heaven).



There were a number of other Maltese emigrants on board this ship to Marseille though it is not presently known what was their final respective countries of destination.

Finally Bajada and Gauci managed to make it to the port of La Havre, by taking a train from Marseille to Normandy to the north of France. There they were checked for their bill of health and other details including their financial means to sustain themselves till their final destination of Montreal.

On Saturday, 14<sup>th</sup> June, the two emigrants from Xagħra embarked on board the passenger ship *ss Chicago* to New York and on Tuesday, 24<sup>th</sup> June, they saw the Statue of Liberty for the first time when the ship sailed into New York Harbor.



**s.s. Chicago**

On disembarking from the ship, the Port authorities went through the arrival list of the passengers and put down personal characteristics of each of them as was the regular procedure for immigrants.

Bajada was registered as being five feet tall, of good complexion, auburn hair and brown eyes.<sup>6</sup> His race was described as being "Italian South"<sup>7</sup>

He spent five days in New York before catching a train for his final destination of Montreal on Sunday, 29<sup>th</sup> June. It is not yet known about his sojourn in Montreal or whether he sought work elsewhere. It is presumed that he came in contact with a locally based association which catered to the new immigrants and helped them to seek shelter and eventually a job. In Canada there were already established two communities of Maltese: one in the Dundas and McCaul streets area of Toronto, and the other in the West Toronto Junction.<sup>8</sup>

At this stage the author is bereft of any document which may elucidate the whereabouts of Bajada in Canada. It is not excluded, however, that Bajada sought work where the major part of the settled Maltese and the new immigrants became employed especially in the construction of a transcontinental railroad and other industries in connection with agriculture.<sup>9</sup>

Bajada spent about three years in Canada before returning to Malta. Probably this was owing to the sudden news of his father's passing away on Monday, 3<sup>rd</sup> January 1916, at the age of 60, at Gozo's Victoria

Hospital.

Bajada arrived in Malta on Sunday, 27<sup>th</sup> August of the same year on the board the *ss Mossoul* passenger ship directly from the port of Marseille. How he crossed the Atlantic is not presently known. Nor is it presently known whether Francisco Gauci returned at this time as well, although it is known that he too was back in Malta by 1919.

Back in his native village of Xagħra, Bajada stayed with his siblings in the Bajada home. At this stage no records are available indicating whether he sought any work on his arrival home. It is certain, however, that Bajada would have found much activity taking place around the Grand Harbour. Malta had become the land of refuge for thousands of people during the First World War which was raging throughout the European continent. Ironically the war created a lot of commerce and jobs in Malta and many Maltese were actively engaged at the dockyards maintaining the many ships which sailed to Malta bringing over the fleeing people from the East as well as the injured soldiers. At the time Malta was considered as the Nurse of the Mediterranean.

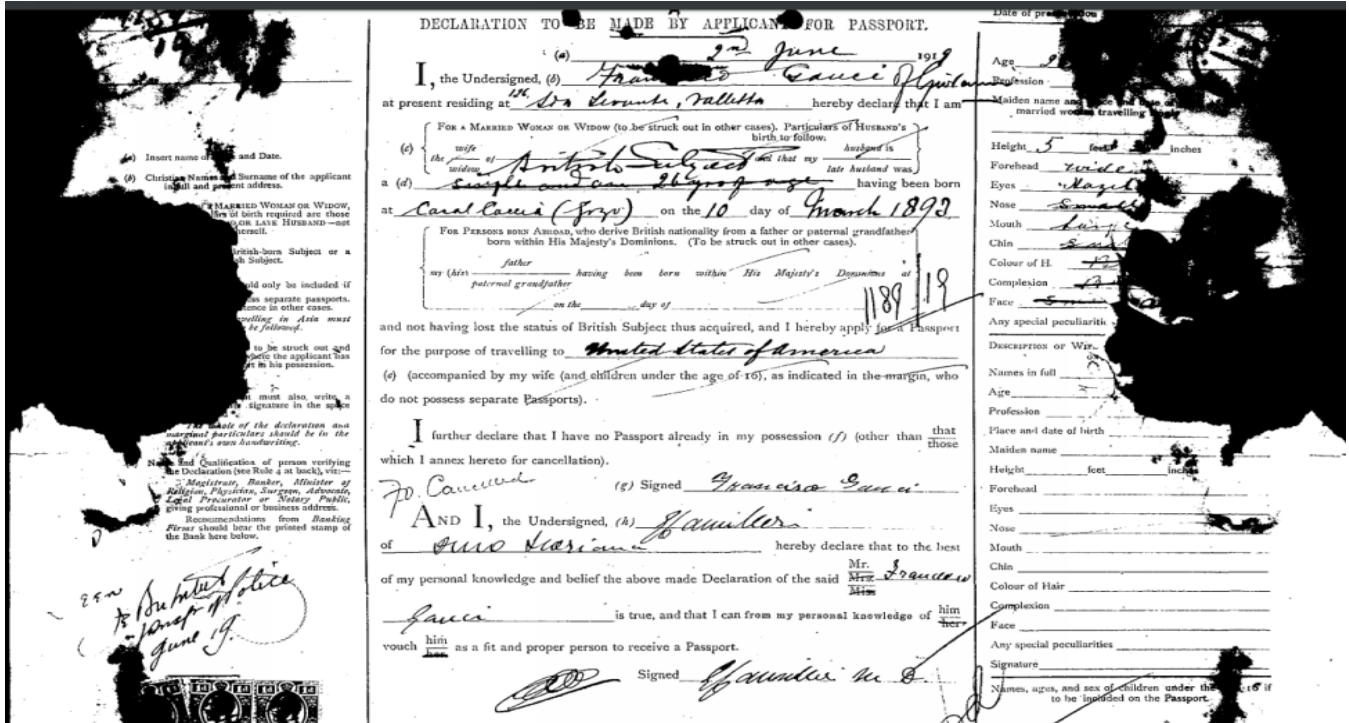
What is known is that Bajada remained on the Maltese islands for the next two years. Being the eldest sibling of the family, probably he took the management of the family into his hands. Whether he returned to tilling the fields of his family in Gozo or whether he found a job in Malta is yet not known. But it is certain that, by May 1919, he decided to immigrate again to

6. This is the only description of Bajada found in official documents. British passports issued in Malta did not contain any physical features of the passport holder until 1916, when, from this year onwards, all passport applicants had his/her physical features put down on the application.
7. In filling out "Alien Manifests" by the American authorities, "Italian (South)" for purposes of defining race was denoted as "that portion of Italy south of the River Po." The River Po runs east to west south of Milan and Venice but north of Genoa and Bologna. Interestingly, while the islands of Sicily and Sardinia were mentioned by name, no actual mention of the Maltese Archipelago was on the printed form, yet it was understood that the natives of Malta were to be denoted as Italian South in race. Today, the ongoing Maltese Genome Project headed by Prof. Alex Felice, Dr. Joseph Borg and Clint Mizzi of the University of Malta indicates that the DNA of the Maltese confirms that they owe their "roots to Sicilian settlers with a strong Arab sub-culture." Such genealogical data bases, as AncestryDNA and Charles Vassallo-Said's Malta-Genealogy further confirm this.
8. Tony Ruprecht, "The Maltese Community," *Toronto's Many Faces* (Canada), 5<sup>th</sup> Edition, 2011, 292
9. Erica Gagnon, "Settling the West: Immigration to the Prairies from 1867 to 1914," a research paper published on <https://pier21.ca/.../immigration.../settling-the-west-immigration-to-the-prairies-from-1>.

Canada.

It is sure that the money he earned in Canada during his sojourn there, coupled with the fact that many workers were laid off after the cessation of the First World War, could have enticed him to immigrate to secure a job and financially support both himself and his siblings.

Local lore has it that both Bajada and his friend Francisco Gauci, as well as a third person from their home village, Carmelo Hili, were intending to sail from Malta on the first leg of their journey to North America on Sunday, 8<sup>th</sup> June. According to his passport application, however, Gauci was planning to go to the United States.



**Francisco Gauci's Passport Declaration, Dated 2<sup>nd</sup> June 1919.**  
**Note Parts of the Document Are Missing, Possibly Evidence of Being Eaten Away by Vermin**  
(Courtesy of the National Archives of Malta)

As for Carmelo Hili, there is no verifiable evidence that he had applied for a passport in 1919 and was intending to accompany Bajada and Gauci on 8<sup>th</sup> June. He was, however, issued a passport for Detroit in February 1920, and arrived at New York Harbor, 21<sup>st</sup> May, on board the *Adriatic*.

Tradition, however, has it that, even though Gauci was living in Valletta at the time, the trio rented space in Floriana for their luggage so that they could be a stone's throw away from the point of embarkation at the Grand Harbour on 8<sup>th</sup> June.

The account goes that on Saturday, 7th June, around 5 o'clock in the evening, the three entered through Porta Reale (the City Gate) into Valletta, probably going on a stroll towards Fort St. Elmo. They walked along Strada Forni (Old Bakery Street) to avoid the upheaval then taking place on Strada Reale (Republic Street).

At the time there were riots going on in Valletta springing up from a number of accumulated circum-

stances over a long period of years, mainly the demand for self government as well as the recent rise in the price of bread and lack of employment.



**Carmelo Hili (b. 1892): Note the Stain from the Iron Pin which Attached This Photo to His 1920 Passport Application**  
(Courtesy of the National Archives of Malta)

At some point a mob went to attack the home of the merchant and importer Anthony Cassar Torreggiani on Strada Forni. The throng, amounting to about 1,000 persons, broke into and destroyed the interior of Cassar Torreggiani's house.

At the request of the unarmed police a troop of Marine soldiers were deployed to Strada Forni to control the mob. The soldiers positioned themselves into an attack position with their bayonets and rifles pointing in the direction of the mob. Noticing this, the mob withdrew and sought the shelter of nearby streets and door entrances except for a small number of persons who stood in the middle of the street facing the soldiers, one of them being Bajada himself.

Bajada assumed that the soldiers were only harassing the mob and did not really mean to actually shoot live ammunition. In fact, in a somewhat loud voice, he said to the persons next to him that the soldiers were of no danger to them and that their rifles were loaded with blank cartridges.<sup>10</sup>

Suddenly some people from behind him started to throw pieces of wood, metal and broken glass. On noticing Bajada making gestures with his arm and without receiving any orders from their commanding officer, the soldiers fired at and killed him presuming Bajada to be one of the ringleaders.

Another innocent person present, Manwel Attard, was also killed.



**Manwel Attard: c. 1890-1919)**

Other persons were injured when the soldiers opened fire although they did not suffer any life threatening injuries.

After the lapse of a short period of time, Wenzu Dyer, fell victim to gun shot wounds at St. George's Square in front of the Grandmasters' Palace.

Another person, Carmelo Abela, succumbed to complicated injuries incurred during the riots and died 15 days later.

The victims were taken to the Floriana Central Hospital where they were certified dead.

Francisco Gauci, Bajada's friend, was brought in as witness by the hospital authorities to identify Ġużè's lifeless body.



**Wenzu Dyer: c. 1897-1919**



**Marine Soldiers Keeping the Rioters Back in Front of the Malta Courts of Law**

(from *Rajt Malta Tinbidel*, vol. I)



**Carmelo Abela (d. 1919)**

10. This is the oral tradition related to me by a person whose father from Xagħra actually happened to be present at the scene of the riot and who heard Bajada utter such words. This may be corroborated by one of the witnesses, in front of the official inquiry held some days afterwards. This witness quoted the actual words he heard someone say, although he did not mention the person by name.

Gauci asked for the belongings of Bajada including the bloodstained passport and the key, kept by Bajada in his pocket, to the Floriana lodging where they had their travelling belongings. Naturally Francisco Gauci, still in great shock, was not in a position to proceed with his travelling plans the day after and so he hastily cancelled his trip.<sup>11</sup>

The riots went on the day after, Sunday, 8<sup>th</sup> June. They calmed down after the Auxiliary Bishop of Malta, Monsignor Angelo Portelli, intervened with the rioters



**A Gathering on the Site  
Where Bajada and Attard Were Killed  
Looking Southwest on Strada Forni  
with St. John's Cavalier in the Distance**  
(Courtesy of the Fortunato and Nerik Mizzi Foundation)



**Mgr. Angelo Portelli: 1852-1927**

The new Governor, Sir Herbert Plumer, declared martial law and asked the Bishop of Malta, Monsignor Mauro Caruana, to hold the funeral at St. Publius Church, Floriana to avoid any fresh outbreaks of riot attempts by the mourners present were it to be held in Valletta.

On Monday, 9<sup>th</sup> June, the first of the three victims—Bajada, Attard and Dyer—were laid to rest at the

Addolorata Cemetery in Paola after a high mass at the Floriana parish church.

In 1924, a tombstone, designed by the Maltese artist painter Gianni Vella, was erected in this cemetery. It marked the four persons who died as a result of *Sette Giugno*



**Sir Herbert Plumer: 1857-1932**



**The Funeral Possession for the First Three Victims**  
(Courtesy of the Fortunato and Nerik Mizzi Foundation)

Regrettably, in the succeeding years, few attempts were made to give such pivotal events national importance and official recognition until the early 1970s.

11. *It is presently not known if, when and to where Francisco Gauci immigrated. As for Carmel Hili, my paternal great uncle, he had earlier immigrated to Algiers some years before returning to Malta and then leaving for Detroit in May 1920.*



**The Final Resting Place of the *Sette Giugno* Victims in Addolorata Cemetery**

As for *Sette Giugno*, three postage stamps commemorating this tragic event were officially issued on 7<sup>th</sup> June 1985, the 66<sup>th</sup> anniversary.



**Postage Stamps Commemorating *Sette Giugno***

The following year, on 7<sup>th</sup> June 1986, the *Sette Giugno* monument, sculptured by the late Anton Agius, was unveiled on St George Square (Palace Square) in Valletta. (see page 1).

*Sette Giugno* was declared, by the Maltese Parliament, on 21<sup>st</sup> March 1989, to be one of five national days of the country with the first official remembrance of the day occurring the following 7<sup>th</sup> June.

Also, in 1989, a stone plaque commemorating Guiseppe Bajada was unveiled on the wall of the residents on the site of his former home on Bullara Street in Xagħra, Gozo.

**Maltese-Canadian Museum Archives  
and Visitors Centre  
St. Paul the Apostle Church Complex  
3224 Dundas St. W.,  
Toronto, ON, M6P 2A3  
1-416-767-7054**



**Giovanna, Giuseppe Bajada's Youngest Sibling, and Her Husband, Joseph Xerri, in Later Years**  
(Courtesy of the National Archives of Gozo)



**Mainly Relatives of Guzeppi Bajada  
Standing Near the Site of the Former Bajada Home**  
(Courtesy of Joseph Camilleri, Victory Photo Studio, Xagħra)



**Detail of Stone Plaque on the Wall of the Residence on the Site of the Former Bajada Home**  
(Photo by author)

On 7<sup>th</sup> June of this year, the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of *Sette Giugno*, the memorial to Giuseppe Bajada, designed by me, modelled by Marvic Muscat and erected next to Bajada's former residence by the Gozo Ministry will be unveiled. There will also be a commemoration mass at the Basilica of Our Lady of Victory on Xagħra.



**Model of the Memorial to Guisepppe Bajada**  
(Photo by author)

© 2019

**JOSEPH EDWARD DOUBLET  
INDEED A DIRECT DESCENDANT OF THE  
SECRETARY OF THE GRAND MASTERS  
DE ROHAN AND VON HOMPESCH**

**Dan Brock**

In the last issue of this journal it was mentioned that

the Maltese immigrant to New York City, Joseph Edward Doublet, was a descendant "of Pierre-Jean Louis Ovide Doublet (1749-1824), secretary of Grand Masters De Rohan and von Hompesch from 1781 to 1798. (March/April, 22-23).

Thanks to Fr. Simon Sciberras, pastor of St. Joseph's Parish, Msida, Malta, and the parish office helper, Emmanuel Vella, it was learned that Joseph Doublet was the son of Antonii Doublet and his wife the former Joanna Cassar.

To determine whether Joseph Doublet was indeed a descendant of Pierre-Jean Doublet, I then enlisted the help of a good acquaintance Charles Vassallo-Said of New South Wales, Australia. Charles did not have any such connection in his genealogical file entitled "The Noble Family of Messina" which, in turn is found in his free online Malta Genealogy data base. He did, however, enlist the aid of his friend David Lanfranco of Lanfranco Genealogy Services in Malta.

Armed with the information I had on Joseph Doublet and his parents, based on the baptismal register at St. Joseph's Church, Msida, David was able to learn that Joseph's father, Antonio, was a son of Aloisio Ovidio Doublet and Giovanna Ruggier and that on February 20, 1900, in Floriana, he had married Giovanna, a daughter of Francesco Cassar and Maria Teresa Toriglia.

Aloisio Ovidio Doublet, Joseph's grandfather, was a son of Vincenzo Doublet and Vittoria Mizzi and on October 5, 1852, in Cospicua, had married Giovanna, the daughter of Antonio Ruggier and Carmela Crawford (aka Crockford).

This last piece of information was enough to connect me with what Charles Vassallo-Said had in his "The Noble Family of Messina" file!

It turns out that Vincenzo Doublet was in fact a son of the Doublet progenitor in Malta, Pierre-Jean Louis Ovide Doublet (1749-1824) and his wife *Contessa* Elizabetta Magri-Scicli.

As for Vincezo Doublet, he had married Vittoria Mizzi, in 1817, in Valletta.

As well as shedding light on the Doublet ancestry of Joseph Edward Doublet, my intent has also been to help point the way for the reader who might be interested in tracing his/her ancestry back in Malta.

Of the many genealogical queries I have passed on to Charles, and the few needing further research by David, only in one to date have we encountered the genealogist's proverbial "brick wall." (In Malta I guess this would be a "stone wall.")

That "stone wall" was Zeferino Said noted in the last issue (pages 20-22). Despite Said's rare first name and the fact that his parents were Riccardo and Rosina Said, we have no idea where in Malta Zeferino was baptised or his parents married.

**FR. HENRY CASSANO (1929-2019):  
63 YEARS A PRIEST\***

**Dan Brock**



Fr. Joseph Henry Cassano died peacefully at Mount Hope Centre for Long Term Care, London, ON, on March 19<sup>th</sup>, the feast day of his namesake St. Joseph and two days after the 63<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood.

Father Henry was born, January 31, 1929, in Senglea, Malta, to “a very religious family.” The third of four boys, he was named “Joseph” after this father.

While attending high school at the Jesuit-run St. Aloysius College on Old Railway Road (*Triq il-Ferrovija l-Qadima*) in Birkirkara (B’Kara), he was told by his teachers that he would make a good priest and they wished him to become a Jesuit. Young Joseph had other plans, however, and, after high school attended the Technical School in Hamrun, the forerunner of the present St. Joseph Technical School in Paola.

By his second year at the technical school, he felt he did have a vocation to the priesthood. His spiritual director while in Hamrun was the parish priest at San Gaetano (Gejtanu) (St. Cajetan of Thiene) Church. The priest thought Joseph would make a good missionary and suggested the Society of St. Paul (SSP), founded in 1910, in Malta, by Monsignor Joseph De Piro.

After a few sessions with the priest, Joseph informed his parents, Joseph and Emily (Brincat) Cassano.

Later, his father went with him to St. Agatha’s Motherhouse in Rabat to give his consent and Joseph entered the novitiate there.

As a novice, Joseph studied Latin and had to select a religious name from a choice of three. He chose “Henry.”



**Members of Henry’s Immediate and Extended Family on the Maternal Side in 1949 While He was in the Novitiate**

In the succeeding years, while living at St. Agatha’s Motherhouse, Henry attended classes at the Augustinian Seminary in Rabat. His ordination took place, March 17, 1956, at St. John’s Co-Cathedral in Valletta. Father Henry was one of 30 men ordained and of three from his order. After his ordination he was posted to the Don Bosco Youth Centre, run by the Salesian Fathers, near the Oratory in B’Kara.



**First Solemn High Mass Celebrated at St. Agatha’s Church, Rabat, Malta, April 8, 1956**

Fr. Henry was sent to Swanbourne, in Western Australia, in November 1960. From there, in 1965, he was transferred to Sydney, Australia.

In early 1969 Fr. Henry was sent to the diocese of London in Ontario, Canada where the Paulist priests had been active since 1959. For the next several decades, he was to serve in several parishes throughout the diocese.



**With Parents, Two of His Brothers, His Sister-in-Law and His Niece after First Solemn High Mass**

His first posting was to St. Joseph Parish in Ashfield (Kingsbridge), Huron County, which was served by the SSP. This parish also ministered to two mission churches: St. Mary’s in Lucknow and St. Augustine’s, in

St. Augustine. That November, Father Henry became the pastor and also the superior of the SSP in the diocese. There were two SSP priests at St. William, Emeryville, in Essex County. Fr. Henry remained at St. Joseph until June 1972.

While in Ashfield Fr. Cassano was asked by Bishop G. Emmett Carter, in 1972, to undertake a survey of the many Maltese living in the diocese. Fr. Cassano found that they were concentrated in Windsor, St. Thomas and London.

One of the first families he met in London was that of the Vellas and he was especially welcomed by their grandmother, Raffaella Mizzi, who was so happy to once again speak with a Maltese priest.

Between September and December, Fr. Henry was at St. Gabriel in Windsor. From there he was sent to St. William, Emeryville where he remained until August 1976.

From September 1976 until February 1979 Fr. Henry was an assistant pastor at Holy Cross Parish in London. By this time, he had been asked by Bishop Carter if he would like to become a diocesan priest. Fr. Henry agreed and, after the usual period of discernment he was incardinated into the diocese of London.

Early in 1979 Fr. Henry was asked by Bishop Carter's successor, Bishop John M. Sherlock to serve at St. Peter, in Churchill Falls, Labrador in the diocese of Labrador-Schefferville, under Bishop Peter Sutton, OMI, who had been a priest-teacher at Catholic Central High School in London. The parish had been without a permanent priest for five years. Fr. Henry "accepted the challenge" and served there from February 1979 until June 1980.

He then returned to the London Diocese and took up his new posting as pastor of St. Mary's, Hesson with the mission church of St. Joseph's, Listowel.

In May 1984 he was transferred to St. Columban Parish in St. Columban where he served until the following year when he was posted to Blessed Sacrament Parish in London.

Following his London posting Father's transfer, in June 1986, was to St. Michael, Dresden, in Kent County.

He returned to Huron County in June 1990 as pastor of St. James, Seaforth. Effective July 1, 1994, Father Henry served at St. Martin, London, for the next year, before becoming an assistant to the rector, Msgr. J.B. O'Donnell, at St. Peter's Basilica, London.

Father Henry continued to serve at the Basilica until his "retirement" in August 2002. He then took up residence in St. Patrick Parish, London which was clustered by this time with Blessed Sacrament, Father's former parish.

He was in residence at St. Mary Parish, also in London, by 2004, where he remained until September 2015. Fr. Henry then took residence at the Amica

Retirement Home in London before going to the Mount Hope Centre for Long Term Care in the spring of 2017.

The Maltese Canadian Club of London hosted an open house to celebrated Fr. Henry's 60 years as a priest on May 15, 20016.



**Fr. Henry Celebrates His 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary as a Priest with Members of the Maltese Canadian Community While Serving at St. Peter's Basilica**

(All photos courtesy of the late Fr. Henry Cassano)

Fr. Henry had taken up residence at the Amica Retirement Home in London, in September 2015, before going to the Mount Hope Centre for Long Term Care in the spring of 2017.

He was known for his sense of humour. His answering machine would announce: *Henry is my name. Salvation is my game.*

It also reflected his humility and commitment to the priesthood.

*To the shrine of love divine,  
My lowly feet have trod,  
I crave no fame, no other name  
But this: a priest of God.  
Please leave a message.*

Fr. Henry's Funeral Mass was celebrated at St. Mary's Church, London, and his remains were interred in St. Peter's Cemetery, London.

He was predeceased by his brothers Charles and John of Malta and Robert of Bayport, NY. He is survived by his niece, Monica Cassans, of Long Island, NY.

*\*This article is largely based on that which appeared in "Fr. Henry Cassano: 60 Years a Priest," The Maltese Canadian Club of London Newsletter, vol. 37, no. 1 (May/June 2016), 11-12; vol. 37, no. 5 (January/February 2017), 4 and Fr. Henry's obituary which appeared in The London Free Press, March 23, 2019, C5.*

\*\*\*

*Between 1946 and the late 1970s, over 140,000 people left Malta through the assisted passage scheme with 13% immigrating to Canada and 7% to the United States. Australia received 57.6% and the United Kingdom 22%*



## MALTA'S NEW CONSUL GENERAL TO CANADA\*

**Dan Brock**



Dr. Raymond Xerri will succeed Ms. Hanan El Khatib as Consul General of Malta to Canada, effective July 1, 2019. He concluded his two terms in office as Director on the Council for Maltese Living

Abroad (CMLA) on March 31<sup>st</sup>.

Raymond Christian Xerri was born in Manhattan, New York City in 1969. Both his parents were from Qala, Gozo. The family returned to Qala in 1977 and young Raymond continued his education at the primary school there before attending Sacred Heart Seminary School in Victoria, Gozo in 1981.

In 1986, he returned to Manhattan and attended the Jesuit Brothers College here, graduating in 1990 with a BA (Hons.) in political science and international relations. This included his being awarded a European Community Scholarship, in 1989, to study European community law at the Institute for European Studies at the Albert-Ludwigs University in Freiburg-im-Breisgau, in Germany.

Raymond returned to Qala in 1991, obtained dual American and Maltese citizenship and continued his postgraduate studies at the Mediterranean Academy for Diplomatic Studies (MADS) at the University of

Malta. There, he earned a certificate (1991), a diploma (1993) and an MA in diplomatic studies (1994).

In March 1994 Raymond was appointed as First Secretary and Commissioner of Oaths in the Diplomatic Corps of Malta and served his country at the Malta High Commission in Canberra, Australia (July 1995-1998). In 1998 he became Gozo's first ever Policy Co-ordinator and EU Office Co-ordinator at the Ministry of Gozo serving a three-year term till 2001. Between 2001-2005 he served Malta as Counsellor at the Malta High Commission in London, in the United Kingdom.

In 2002, Raymond was admitted into the PhD program at Victoria University, Melbourne, Australia becoming the first student from Malta ever to graduate in Diaspora Studies from any university in the world and the first student of Gozitan or Maltese extract to graduate at the doctoral level at the same university.

His thesis "Gozo in the World and the World in Gozo" explores the meaning of migration and return migration between Gozo and Melbourne.

In 2015 Dr Xerri was responsible for organizing the IV Convention for Maltese Living Abroad in 2015.

Between July 2013 and February 2016, he represented the CMLA as one of the vice-presidents on the Board of *The European Throughout The World* (ETTW) in Brussels, Belgium and in February 2016 became the eighth President of ETTW – Europe's largest non-government organization representing over 350 million Europeans world-wide.

Dr Raymond Xerri has addressed, chaired and mentored many local, national, continental, regional and international conferences, seminars and gatherings related to politics, diplomacy, international relations, the environment and particularly in the area of Diaspora studies.

He is an author, editor and producer of a number of publications, multimedia and multilingual productions.

Dr. Xerri is also a founder, co-founder and active member of a number of Gozitan, Maltese and internationally based organizations. Dr Xerri was the main organizer of 28 editions of the Gozo International Celebration.

A resident of Qala, with his wife, Marlene and children, Armando Antonio and Felicity Ann, he has written such books as: *Gozo and the Gozitans* and *Gozitan Crossings*. As a life member of the Australian Qala Association since its founding, Dr. Xerri is the author of *A decade of Australian Qala Association 1995-2005*

*\*This article is largely dependent on Maltese E-Newsletter #260 (April 2019), 2 and <https://euromonde.eu/blog/circulum-vitae-new-e-t-t-w-president/> accessed March 30, 2019.*

## ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE MALTESE COMMUNITIES

**Dan Brock**

### The Bay Area, California

The musical play *Star of Strait Street* was performed in Millbrae on the evening of Friday, March 29<sup>th</sup>. Among those present were Ambassador Keith Azzopardi (See pages 4 and 11-12 for more.)

While in the Bay Area, Ambassador Azzopardi visited the Maltese-American Social Club of San Francisco and addressed the annual meeting of its members.

### British Columbia

I have an important message for all Canadians living in Canada. The Consul of Malta, Hanan El Khatib, will be returning to Malta in June, as she has completed her term. The "Consul on the Move" programme will continue, under the direction of the new Consul of Malta, Dr. Raymond C. Xerri. Not sure of the day he will be arriving in Toronto to take over the office.

Hanan will be in British Columbia the first week of May, executing applications for Dual Citizenship and other documentation. This will be Hanan's last trip to B.C. I am organizing a get together with the Maltese

community for a dinner on May 5<sup>th</sup> at ABC Restaurant in Coquitlam, in honour to bid Hanan farewell and thank her for the great service she has provided the Maltese Community in British Columbia and wish her well in her new endeavours. Everyone is welcome.

As for the Regional Committees I touched on in my last article we have not received further information. I will keep you posted as I receive the information from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Susan Schembri

Coquitlan, British Columbia

### The Greater Toronto Area, Ontario

The Texas Hold 'Em Tournament was held on Friday, April 27<sup>th</sup>.

This year's Festa Ta' San Gorg was held on May 4<sup>th</sup> at the Rizzo Banquet Hall in Etobicoke.

The Malta Band Club will be holding a dinner and dance on Saturday, May 25<sup>th</sup>.

The Maltese Canadian Cruisers will hold their season opener on Sunday, May 26<sup>th</sup>, from 10:00 a.m., at Carl's Catering, The Glen, Brampton. Their "Show & Shine" will be held at the The Malta Band Club, Mississauga, between 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m., on Sunday, June 23<sup>rd</sup>. This is a display of classic cars and trucks, special vehicles, classic and modern muscle cars and modified or custom vehicles and bikes.

Sometime in July, St. Paul's the Apostle Parish will be receiving an associate pastor in the person of Fr. Ivano Burdian, MSSP. Fr. Ivano is a native of Australia of Italian parents and has worked very closely with the Maltese Community Council of Victoria in Melbourne, as well as the MSSP Maltese Chaplaincies in Sydney and Blacktown, New South Wales.

### London, Ontario

The "Maltese Community in London, Ontario, Canada," a public group on Facebook founded by Masisa Madigan (see photo of Spinola Bay, Malta, below which heads the webpage) is very active with new postings almost every day.



Two monthly luncheons, involving those connected with the Maltese Canadian community in the London area, were held since the last issue of this journal. The March gathering was at Angels in London and in April they met at the Wayside Dining Lounge in Talbotville.

Many get to socialize at the semi-monthly bingos held at the Marconi Club in London. Then there are the sad occasions where they meet at visitations and funerals.

On a happier note, a Maltese Summer Picnic is planned for the afternoon of Sunday, July 7<sup>th</sup>, at Weldon Park in Arva.

### Malta United Society of Windsor, Ontario

Figolli classes were held on the evenings of April 15<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup>.

The annual general membership meeting and committee election was held on Saturday, April 27<sup>th</sup> and was followed by a *ghagin il-forn* dinner.

The K of C stuffed artichoke dinner was held on Saturday, May 4<sup>th</sup>.

A Mother's Day dinner will be held on Saturday, May 11<sup>th</sup>.

The Father's Day BBQ dinner will be held on Saturday, June 15<sup>th</sup>.

An Imnarja rabbit dinner will be held on Saturday, June 29.

The annual Maltese Family Picnic will be held at Lacasse Park on Sunday, July 28<sup>th</sup>.

### OPINION

Excellent issue. (Albert Vella, Scarborough, ON)

Your dedication to creating a quality product is truly laudable....Congratulations on a great newsletter. (Mona Vella Nicholas, San Francisco, CA)

...a great second issue!!! (Richard Cumbo, Toronto, ON)

Beautifully done....Great reading. (Toni Poole, London, ON)

What you are doing with this newsletter is a wonderful thing. (Peter Abela, Abela Photography, San Francisco, CA)

Looks simply fantastic and very informative. (Milo Vassallo, Toronto, ON)

...heartfelt congrats.....I'm very impressed with your very interesting and informative newsletter. Keep up the good work!! All the articles are of utmost importance. (Carmen Galea, Toronto, ON)

...thank you for doing a very good job keeping us all in the loop. (Sam Magro, Port Dover, ON)

**PRESIDENT OF MALTA  
AND HER DELEGATION IN NORTH AMERICA:  
APRIL-MAY 2018\***

**Dan Brock**



**Hon. Carmelo Abela and Mr. Edgar Preca,  
April 27<sup>th</sup>, with Members of  
The Maltese Canadian Society of London, ON**

**Hon. Carmelo Abela, Minister for Foreign Affairs  
and Trade Promotion of Malta (right), April 27<sup>th</sup>, at  
Maltese American Benevolent Society, Detroit, MI**



**Attendees at Reception for the  
President of Malta and Her Delegation,  
Rizzo Hall, Etobicoke, ON, April 28<sup>th</sup>**



**Attendees at Reception for the Maltese Delegation,  
Maltese American Community Club, Dearborn, MI,  
April 27<sup>th</sup>**



**Meeting with the Youth in Mississauga, ON**



**Mr. Edgar Preca Greets One of Those  
at the Reception Held at the  
Malta United Society, Windsor, ON, April 27<sup>th</sup>**

**Fr. Mario Micallef, MSSP  
St. Paul the Apostle Church,  
3224 Dundas St. W. Toronto, ON M6P 2A3  
1-416-767-7054**



**President and CEO Connie Dejak (right) Shows President Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca the Therapy Rooms at Runnymede Healthcare Centre, Toronto, ON**



**President Coleiro Preca, Mr. Preca, Louis Vella and Charlie Catania Admiring Charlie's Maltese Boat which had been Towed in Front of the Pullman Hotel, Redwood City, CA where a Dinner Reception was to be Held**



**Sue Schembri and Sara Meli Welcome Guests, at the Marriott Hotel, Burnaby Conference Centre, Burnaby, BC, May 2<sup>nd</sup>**



**Mosta Grove in Millbrae, CA, Sunday, May 6<sup>th</sup>**



**The President of Malta and Some of the Members of Her Delegation Participate in the Cake-Cutting Ceremony at the Marriott Hotel**



**Mr. Preca and President Coleiro Preca Shown a Scrapbook in the Melitensia Library of the Maltese-American Social Club of San Francisco, May 6<sup>th</sup>**

*\*Photos taken at the Marriott Hotel courtesy of Sal Schembri, those at Mosta Grove and the Maltese-American Social Club courtesy of Peter Abela, uncredited photos mainly courtesy of DOI – Clifton Fenech.*