

THE MALTESE PRESENCE IN NORTH AMERICA



E-NEWSLETTER

Issue 13

APRIL 2020



GAMES NIGHT AT DE PIRO HALL, TORONTO, ONTARIO, FRIDAY, MARCH 6TH

Dr. Raymond Xerri

(see page 14)

**The Maltese Presence
in North America**
Issue No. 13 April 2020

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EDITORIAL COMMENT

Here we are in the midst of the Coronavirus Pandemic. This is undoubtedly the worst crisis the world has experienced since the Second World War and most of us were not born or are too young to remember much about it.

COVID-19 is far worse than the SARS outbreak of 2003. By the time that outbreak was contained, the virus had spread to over 8,000 people worldwide and killed almost 800.

As of 4:30 a.m., GMT, April 3rd there have been 1,015,877 reported cases of COVID-19 and 53,218 resulting deaths. And the number keeps climbing!

This brings to mind the Spanish Influenza Epidemic of 1918-20, the most severe pandemic in recent history. The number of related deaths is estimated to have been at least 50 million worldwide with about 675,000 of these occurring in the United States and 55,000 in Canada.

But all is not doom and gloom during this present crisis.

Our health care systems and knowledge of this virus is much more advanced than in 1918-20. Our governments in both Canada and the United States have been more proactive and earlier.

Of the 1,015,877 cases worldwide mentioned earlier, 212,993 of those individuals have recovered.

Funeral directors are reporting that owing to the self-isolating measures being undertaken they are seeing the death rate over the past couple weeks as lower than normal for this time of year. Social distancing is stopping regular colds and the “common” flu dead in their tracks!

Currently in China far fewer people have died of COVID-19 than would have commonly been the case owing to smog and other forms of pollution. More people are alive in China during the past few weeks because of the shutdown of factories, etc.

Fr. Mike Prieur’s “Planetary Sabbatical: A Reflection,” pages 4-5, gives us hope as well as a time to reflect.

There was a saying during the First World War that there were no atheists in fox holes. So too now people are turning to a “Power” greater than ourselves.

In his Sunday bulletin of March 21st-22nd, Fr. Mario Micallef, pastor of St. Paul the Apostle Parish, Toronto, Ontario, wrote: “I was struck by the number of people who express sadness for not being able to celebrate Eucharist. And not all of them were regular churchgoers!” He was also “struck by the number of people who wanted to make sure they could follow one of the Masses being streamed live on the media.”

I am also moved by the acts of kindness and generosity shown by individuals and businesses as noted in the media.

I see a lot of good worldwide, despite this current pandemic and can’t help but agree with Fr. Mike that “God is providing us with a ‘Planetary Sabbatical’.”

In addition, to the spiritual insights of Fathers Mario and Mike, this issue contains accounts of some

functions within various Maltese communities prior to self-restrictions or impositions by our governments, as well as actions taken since. (pages 1, 11-12, 13-16, 22, 24)

While the March issue mainly featured articles relating to the Maltese who settled in the United States, this issue has more Canadian content.

This includes an account of John Cachia Zammit Slythe (pages 5-8) and the two Cavarra brothers (pages 17-21), all three of whom arrived in Winnipeg, Manitoba in 1906. Then there is a contemporary opinion of the first Maltese to arrive in Brantford, Ontario (pages 8-9).

Finally, I would like to draw your attention to the public group web page [Malta DNA & Genealogy](#), managed by Stephen Asciak on Facebook. This is yet another tool by which one can delve deeper into one’s Maltese ancestry.

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GLEANINGS FROM THE SUNDAY BULLETIN

PASTOR'S THOUGHTS...



Fr. Mario Micallef, M.S.S.P., 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.

Facing Our Demons

Lent is a time during which we are invited to face our demons. The good news is that I am not expected to do this alone, relying solely on my strengths. I am given tools to do this. In prayer I ask God's help, humbly acknowledging that without Him I can do nothing. Fasting, or some other sacrifice, helps me realize that I can remove what is not essential in my life to be able to focus on what really matters. Acts of charity help me look beyond myself and my needs, and see those of others. For it is in the face of the Other that I can see the face of God.

Without Beauty, Our Soul Dies

As we journey through our own desert during this lent, let us really listen to that voice saying: "This is my son...listen to him!" And as we listen, we start experiencing what Peter did in that short moment: it is good to be here. Let us really enjoy the beauty of his presence, of his word.

Because without beauty, our soul dies.

Do I Thirst for What Truly Nourishes Me?

Every time we celebrate Eucharist, may we truly understand what – or, rather, who – we are celebrating. May we always thirst for that which truly nourishes us, which truly quenches our thirst.

And may the Lenten Journey lead us to a rediscovery of the person of the risen Jesus, the only one who can fulfil our deepest desires.

Some Maltese immigrants to North America changed their surnames in an attempt to blend in more with the non-Maltese population, especially in the United States.

What We Make of This Current Pandemic Is Almost Entirely up to Us

...Many things do not make sense. Many questions remain unanswered. And what was, up to a few days ago, taken for granted, is being taken away from us.

Nothing more is sound and secure. Whether it is our health system or our coming together to celebrate Eucharist as one body – all is being challenged. All aspects our life, both spiritual and physical, seem to be on shaky ground. A fasting has been imposed on us during this Lent for which we were not prepared. Still, what we make of it is almost entirely up to us. The fact that the way we are living this year's Lent is not how we would have planned it does not necessarily mean that it is bad. On the contrary, it might end up being the best one ever!

With Jesus Life is Possible Again

As we continue with our journey towards the celebration of Easter, we realize that in our lives we often share Mary's and Martha's experience. We find ourselves in situations where hope seems to be lost, when we feel the need to express anger at the Lord: Where have you been when I needed you? What took you so long? During this time of pandemic, I've heard it said, "Where is God in all this?" In our sorrowful, desperate prayer Jesus enters. Like he did with the two sisters, he journeys with us. He is not indifferent. He shares with us the pain, the sorrow, the struggle, the fear and the tears. But not to stay there. Once more, he invites us to come out of our misery, giving us power to be set free, free from our fears, from our guilts, from our past, to experience new life.

Never has such a message been as appropriate for us as it is this year. Covid-19 invites us to lose hope, to see only darkness, to think there is no way out. Many of us might be suffering due to loss of a job, due to fear (or, rather, terror!) at the first sign of a cough or sore throat, or due to the death of a loved one. The celebration of Easter which we are soon to celebrate invites us to remember that yes, all this is read. Jesus did experience death. But he proved to be more powerful than that.

With him, life is possible again.

**Fr. Mario Micallef, M.S.S.P.
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By 1925 there were some 2,000 Maltese-born individuals in Brooklyn alone. Others were to be found in the area between the Bronx and Bay Ridge, and in parts of Manhattan in New York City

PLANETARY SABBATICAL: A REFLECTION

Fr. Mike Prieur

Editor's note: Fr. Mike Prieur is Professor Emeritus of Moral and Sacramental Theology, St. Peter's Seminary, London, Ontario

March 21, 2020

The Coronavirus Pandemic

From God's perspective, nothing happens by chance. Everything has an ultimate meaning.

This novel virus had an unfortunate origin, and now it is on the loose. I am saddened by the vast human suffering and inconveniences, as well as all the deaths that it is causing. My prayers go out for all those affected.

It is interesting to note that all the weapons in the world, from nuclear bombs to guns and ammunition, are totally useless in the face of the virus. The virus is immune to walls and borders. It is invisible, and it can remain undetected, but still contagious, in people for days and weeks. No military force imagined such an enemy right in our midst. It is worse even than a massive cyber-attack.

On the other hand, we now see the WHOLE PLANET working TOGETHER to discover how to protect ourselves from the virus. Political barriers are dissolving to do this. Businesses and governments are cooperating in war-time speed, efficiency and financial resources. People are for-getting their differences in creative efforts to reach out to their neighbors in countless ways. The news channels have changed their content from daily stories of violence, robberies, and killings to stories of compassion, positive creativity, and joyful serenading. To be realistic, we are also seeing new examples of companies and individuals doing terrible things to others, especially the vulnerable and the elderly. It is a time to see both the best and the worse right in our faces. But overall...

THE PEOPLE ON OUR PLANET HAVE CHANGED
OVERNIGHT FOR THE BEST.

At present, I think God is providing us with a "Planetary Sabbatical". Of course, we know that "Sabbath" means "rest". Not just a good sleep-in, but an occasion to slow down, to "stop/-look/listen", to not just look at everything but to try really to SEE everything, and its true meaning. With all the free time we now have, we can try to see what is truly essential from what is not.

With this in mind, I offer the following reflection, followed by a key selection from the gospel according to Matthew and a prayer from Søren Kierkegaard, the

Lutheran philosopher from Denmark.

A Planetary Sabbatical

God has given us all a special time in our lives.

- a time to slow down, read, relax, do nothing, look at the sky, the birds, the spring flowers...
- a time to pray, learn to meditate, contemplate, read scripture, reflective books...
- a time to put our social media aside and play cards, games, or tell stories with our families...
- a time to use our social media to encourage others, tell them we love them, give them joy...
- a time to forgive others, to be reconciled with others, to begin to speak to family members...
- a time to share our own riches with those who do not have any of these riches...
- a time to sing and dance from our balconies and porches and patios...
- a time to walk quietly in nature, without anything in our ears, to hear God's symphony...
- a time to watch spring come alive with new flowers, scents, birds, sounds, new mating...
- a time to simply praise our wonderful Creator for so many blessings in our lives.
- a time to realize that "any day is a good day to be born, and any day is a good day to die".

(St. Pope John XXIII)

Matthew 6:25-34

That is why I am telling you not to worry about your life and what you are to eat, nor about your body and how you are to clothe it. Surely life means more than food, and the body more than clothing! Look at the birds of the sky. They do not sow or reap or gather into barns, yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they are? Can any of you for all his worrying, add one single cubit to his span of life? And why worry about clothing? Think of the lilies growing in the fields; they never have to work or spin; yet, I assure you that not even Solomon in all his regalia was robed like one of these. Now, if that is how God clothes the grass in the field which is there today and thrown into the furnace tomorrow, will he not much more look after you, you people of little faith? So, do not worry; do not say, "What are we to eat? What are we to drink? How are we to be clothed?" It is the pagans who set their hearts on all these things. Your heavenly Father knows you need them all. Set your hearts on his kingdom first, and on his righteousness, and all these other things will be given you as well. So do not worry about tomorrow: tomorrow will take care of itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

Prayer

Father in heaven! That which we in the company of other people, especially in the throng of humanity, have such difficulty learning, and which, if we have learned it ourselves, is so easily forgotten in the company of other people – what it is to be a human being and what, from a godly standpoint, is the requirement for being a human being – would that we might learn it, or, if it has been forgotten, that we might learn it anew from the lily and the bird, would that we might learn it, if not all at once, then learn at least something of it, little by little – would that on this occasion we might from the lily and the bird learn silence, obedience and joy!

¹ Clare Carlisle, *Philosopher of the Heart – The Restless life of Søren Kierkegaard*, UK, Penguin Books, 2019, p. 263. (The reference is to *Matthew 6:26-29*.) Author’s footnote: “From the beginning of Kierkegaard’s *The Lily of the Field and the Bird of the Air: Three Godly Discourses* (1849), translated by Bruce H Kirmmse.”

**TRAGEDY BEFALLS THE SIBLINGS
OF ONE OF THE FIRST
MALTESE IMMIGRANTS TO WINNIPEG**

Dan Brock

Tuesday, April 7, 1942, saw the worst raid on Malta during World War II. Within 24 hours there were 17 raid alerts and 273 bomber attacks. At 5:49 p.m., 156 JU 88s and Stukas attacked Valletta, dropping hundreds of high explosive bombs. The Market, the Castille, the Royal Opera House, the Lyceum and many other buildings were destroyed. One of those other buildings was 19 St. Paul’s Street, killing four Cachia Zammit Slythe siblings: Luigi (age 60), Helen (age 58), Rev. Robert (age 55) and Rosina (age 50).

They were the children of Dr. Giuseppi Cachia Zammit, a Valletta lawyer and his wife, the former Carolina Slythe. The couple had decided to add a third-barrelled surname for their children. Giuseppi’s double-barrelled surname came about when his paternal grandparents, Dr. Matteo Cachia, also a Valletta lawyer, and M’Anna Zammit were married in 1829 and decided that their children would bear the unhyphenated surname Cachia Zammit.

The older brother of the four Cachia Zammit Slythe siblings was John, who was born in Valletta on May 25, 1876, and baptised John Paul the following day at St. Paul Shipwreck Church.



PATER ET PATRONUS PRINCIPALIS

Ego infasciatus Canonicus Vicarius Curatus Perpetuus
S.INS. COLLEG. MATRICIS ET PAROCHIALIS ECCLESIAE
S. PAULI AP. NAUFRAGI

IN CIVITATE VALLETTA INSULAE MELITAE

Considens et singulis has literas lecturis, fidem facio ac testor in Libris Parochialibus, quae sequuntur, scripta inveniri:

Acta: Dni Millesimo, c. clingentesimo septuagesimo sexto (1876)

Dni . . . nigerimo . . . sesto . . . sive 12. Mensis. Martii . . .

*Ego Vincentius Farnagius, Canonicus Curatus loco infantem
hinc natum esse legit: Dno: Josepho Cachia Zammit L.L.D.
et Dna: Carola Slythe conjuges, cui impo: est nomen:
Joannes Paulus, Patrisque Illius: Dno: S. M. Brod
Indese Salvatore Nandi L.L.B. fil. optm: Illius Dni: Indicis
Francisci: et Illius Dna: Elisabeth uxore eius etc
has Civ: Valletta*

In cujus rei fidem has praesentes literas propria manu subscripsi:

Datum Valletta, die 15. mensis Martii an. 1906

*Jo: Farnagii
Archidiaconi*

*Antoni Philippus Camilleri
Vicarius Curatus Perpetuus*

**Baptismal Certificate for John Cachia Zammit
Slythe**

Nothing further is known about John Cachia Zammit Slythe until March 16, 1906 when he applied for a passport to travel to England. At the time, he was living on St. Ursula Street.

The passport was issued the following day and was assigned # 47. Number 48 was assigned to Henry Cavarra, also from Valletta. The two men were obviously acquainted with one another. Next, we find John and Henry with the latter’s older brother, Arthur, boarding the *Majestic* in Liverpool on April 4, 1906 en route, via New York, for Winnipeg, Manitoba. All three men were single at the time.

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17.5.06

DECLARATION TO BE MADE BY APPLICANT FOR PASSPORT.

I, the Undersigned, (a) Valluta 6th March 1906
sending at 140, Sla-St. Circolato hereby declare that I am

(c) ~~For a MARRIED WOMAN OR WIDOW (to be struck out in other cases) Particulars of HUSBAND'S birth to follow~~
(c) ~~the wife of _____ and that my husband is _____~~
(d) British Subject having been born

at Valluta on the 25 day of May 1876

~~FOR PERSON BORN ABROAD, who derive British nationality from a father or paternal grandfather born within His Majesty's Dominions (To be struck out in other cases.)~~
~~my (his) father _____ has, or has been, within His Majesty's Dominions at _____ on the _____ day of _____~~

and not having lost the status of British Subject thus acquired, and I hereby apply for a Passport for the purpose of travelling to (e) England

(f) Signed John Cachia Zammit Slythe

AND I, the Undersigned, (g) Bernardo Vaid Kobay
reading at Floriana, Pjazza Fenech, 48 hereby declare that to the best of my knowledge and belief the above made Declaration of the said John Cachia

Zammit is true, and that he is a fit and proper person to receive a Passport,
Signed Bernardo Vaid Kobay

(h) Insert name of Place and Date
(i) Christian Names and Surname of the applicant in full, and present address.
(j) In the case of a MARRIED WOMAN OR WIDOW, the particulars of both required are those of her HUSBAND OR LATE HUSBAND— not of the applicant herself.
(k) Note whether a British born Subject or a naturalized British Subject. IN THE CASE OF A NATURALIZED BRITISH SUBJECT, PARTICULARS OF BIRTH WOULD NOT BE GIVEN.
(l) Note whether proceeding, and Names of persons by whom recognized (such as they hold passports, &c.), accompanied by his wife, A, and children B and C, with their Dates, D, E, and a Guarantor, F, G, and a Blood-Surety, H, K, and Visa for exit, L, M (for British Subjects). The Christian Names and Surname of each person must be given in full. In the case of persons proceeding to Russia, the ages of children should be stated, and the religion of the applicant will be mentioned in the passport on production of a Baptismal Certificate or other satisfactory evidence.
(n) Where the applicant is unable to write, a declaration should be made by him or her in the presence of the person verifying the Declaration.
(o) Name and Qualification of person verifying the Declaration, viz.— Assistant British Merchant, Member, Consulate of Ladjos, Pnysson, Turgova, Bazarov, or Sibirer (to the same may be, govt., professional or business address). Recommendations from Banking Firms should have the printed stamp of the Bank.

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After disembarking from the ship on April 12th, the three men probably travelled by rail to Winnipeg, the "Gateway to the West." They must have parted company shortly after arriving in Winnipeg, as the Canada Census of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, taken in June-July 1906, shows John working as a hired hand near MacDonald, MB, some 68 miles (110 km), northwest of Winnipeg, while Arthur and Henry Cavarra were working for different French Canadian, probably Metis, families in the vicinity of St. Pierre, Provencher, some 31 miles (50 km) southeast of Winnipeg. (See pages 9-11 for the account of the Cavarra brothers.)

We next encounter John when he crosses over into the United States in March 1909. The cold winters in Western Canada must have been too much for him.

With the outbreak, in August 1914, of what became known as the Great War, John's British patriotism must have gotten to him as well. On October 5, 1916, he set sail on the *Baltic* for Liverpool and on September 9, 1917 enlisted in the Royal Army Medical Corps. During the remainder of the Great War, John served as a private on the *H.S. St. David* and *H.S. Aberdonia* and was awarded the British War and Victory medals after the war.

In early 1919 he petitioned for repatriation to Malta and was eventually successful.

We next hear of John in late April 1930 when he applied for a passport for himself and Giuseppina Zammit, the widow of Antonio Busuttil, to be completed and sent to the Customs House on Sunday, April 27th, as the couple were to be married that day. John was living on Via Zejtun in Birzebbuga at the time.



**John Cachia Zammit
Slythe, Age 53, April
1930**

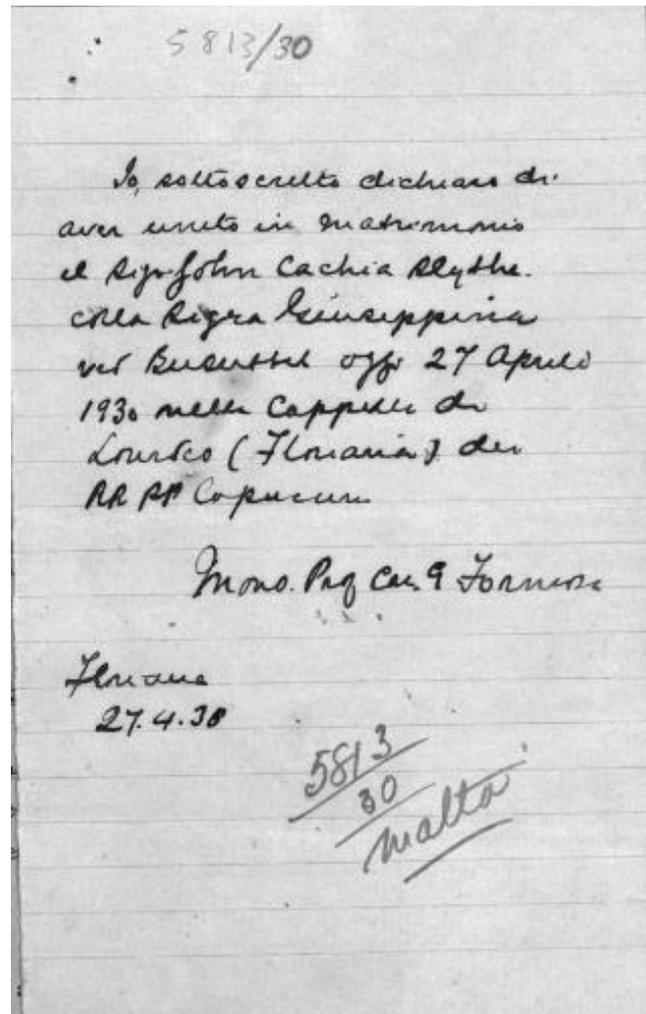
They were married at the Chapel of the Madonna of Lourdes, near the Customs House in Floriana and no doubt boarded a ship later the same day at the dock nearby. Officially, the couple were "travelling to Italy – France – Paris[?] – Switzerland for the purpose of Pleasure."

This is the last we hear of John Cachia Zammit Slythe.



**The Customs House
as Seen in a Mid-20th Century Postcard**

(Courtesy of Richard S. Cumbo)



**Official Documentation, Written in Latin
and Attached to the Passport Application,
That the Couple Had Been Married**



Giuseppina (Zammit) Busuttil, Age 47, April 1930

Documents and photographs courtesy of
National Archives of Malta

THE FIRST MALTESE TO ARRIVE IN BRANTFORD, ONTARIO MADE A POSITIVE FIRST IMPRESSION

Editor's note. It is often said that first impressions count. Such appears to have been borne out in the case of the more than 100 Maltese immigrants who arrived in Brantford, Ontario in early 1913.

This article appears in The Brantford Expositor, May 16, 1913, pages 1 and 7. Typographical errors have been corrected and notes added at the end of the article.

Some Interesting Information About the Maltese, a Number of Whom Have Located Here Recently— Left Home Because Labor Market is Overcrowded.

British born, English-speaking, well educated for men of their class, many of them having had a training in the British militia, the latest recruits to the laboring classes of Brantford, the Maltese are credited with being the finest lot of men, from every standpoint, who have come from Europe.

The word "foreigners" hardly describes the 120 odd Maltese who have already come here. True, they are of Italian blood, but in other respects they are good Britishers.

How They Became Britishers.

When the Knights Templar [actually the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem], a militant order whose first duty it was to defend Jerusalem, were ejected from that city, they took up the defense of Acre. Here they were again overpowered, and after a 20-year stay at Cyprus they took up their residence in the island of Rhodes, below the peninsula, of Asia Minor. After withstanding the attacks of the Moslems for many years, they were forced to retire from Rhodes, Suleiman the magnificent being too powerful for the Knights.

After casting around for some time the Knights in 1565 selected the island of Malta, made famous by St. Paul's miracle of casting off the snake. This they strengthened until the island, and especially Valletta, became one of the greatest strongholds of the world. It remained with the Knights until they disbanded, the title then going to the Emperor of Russia, as chief commander of the order. He could not prove his title, being too far away, and it became the property of the French, from whom it was captured by the English, who have retained it since, strengthening the defenses of the island until it is a veritable fortress bristling with arms. Being with Gibraltar and Aden the protection of the trade route to India, the island is of vast importance to Great Britain.

When the Knights occupied the island, they needed a vast amount of labor. This was secured in two ways—by the forcible impressment of those captured in Turkish vessels and in piratical vessels captured and by the bringing of Italians from Italy. The latter remained in Malta, intermarrying with other nationalities who settled there, there being a goodly proportion of Greeks in the old days, and in more modern days the French. When Great Britain took over the island, these islanders became British subjects, and such they have remained since.

Good System of Education.

There is a splendid system of education on the island, and practically all the residents have received a good instruction along elemental lines. English is, of course, the official language, and is also taught in the schools, Italian coming second. Practically every man who has come to Brantford is able to read and write in one language, Maltese being a "lingue franca," or mixture of several languages, which for many years formed a basis of conversation all along the Mediterranean. It can be spoken, but not written. The greater part can speak, and some of them, write the English language, all of them being able to converse to some extent in this language.

Acquainted with British Laws.

Naturally, being resident of British territory, and conversant with English customs, they are fully cognizant of the fundamental principles of British law.

They are loyal British subjects—none more so. Many of them have served in the regiments in garrison in Malta. In Brantford they look up to Epifanio Gauci¹ as their leader, and he is a typical Maltese. He has served a term of five years' enlistment in the Royal Malta Artillery, with credit, and is a bright specimen of manhood.

Are Willing Workers.

The Maltese are a race of willing workers, being of good physique and in fine health. A number of them have been employed at the Grand Trunk freight sheds, getting \$1.58 per day, but most of them are endeavoring to secure work on the line of the Lake Erie

and Northern. Some of them worked on the building of the railway in Malta, others on the public building there, and all of them are well qualified for general labor work.—As was stated by Mr. E. Sweet at the annual meeting of the Brantford Evangelical Union, these Maltese are the most intelligent and have the best education of all so-called foreigners who have taken up their residence here.

There are no Maltese women in the city so far, but many of the men are married and it is their intention to bring their wives out as soon as they can. They were sent for by local companies, owing to a shortage of labor in Brantford and other manufacturing centres.

Their Market Overcrowded.

Malta is one of the most over-crowded countries in the world.² Since the time of the Templars the population has increased by leaps and bounds, the Maltese being prolific. The result is that there is a great deal of poverty in the island. This is known to all tourists who visit there by the number of beggars who gather on “Starvation Steps,” leading from the wharf, and make pitiful pleadings for some money. The Maltese are very fond of flowers and music, the Strada Reale, [now Triq ir-Repubblika] the main street of the island, being flocked by large numbers of fair Maltese girls selling flowers. In fact, the Maltese call it “The Island of Flowers,” and as such it attracts thousands of tourists yearly.

Notes

1. Epifanio Gauci arrived in New York Harbor, on board the *Corsican* on Nov. 27, 1912. He gave his destination as Toronto, where he had a brother, but may have gone directly to Brantford. He, Gio Battista Bonello of Dingli and the three natives of Rabat—Carmelo Calleja (the murderer of Gio Battista Bonello in 1917), Francesco Camilleri and Giovanni Muscat—may very well have been the first Maltese arrivals in Brantford.
2. Today, Malta is described as the most densely populated country in the European Union and one of the most densely populated countries of the world with a population density of about 1,397 persons per square kilometer. Its official population in 1807 was 93,054. It was 211,564 in 1911 and 441,543 in MARCH 2020.

LEHEN MALTI

(Maltese Voice)

OMNI 1 Southern 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.

OMNI British Columbia/Pacific

Saturdays 2:00 p.m.

OMNI Alberta/Prairies

Saturdays 2:00 p.m.

TWO 200-YEAR ALABASTER VASES ONCE BELONGED TO ST. GEORGE PRECA

Dan Brock

Malta's first native-born saint, George Preca, was given two alabaster vases, with the monogram of Our Lady on the front, by his parents when he celebrated his first Mass on December 25, 1906. The vases, estimated to have been about 100 years old at the time, were placed in Dun George's private chapel in his home, first in Hamrun and later in St. Venera, Malta, and remained there until his death in 1962.

The vases were then passed on to Antonia Zammit, the daughter of Dun George's sister, Leonara (Preca) Zammit. In later years, Antonia, who never married, went to live with her niece, Maria Concetta, who was married to Frank Farrugia. “Cettina” was a granddaughter of Leonara Zammit and, therefore, a great-niece of Dun George. Before she died, Antonia, gave the vases to Frankie and Cettina Farrugia.

Now Frankie had a sister, Emanuela Depares Valenzia, whose daughter, Maria Magdalena, was married to Richard S. Cumbo and living in Toronto, Ontario.

While vacationing in Malta in 1999, “Madlene” and Richard Cumbo visited “Aunty Cettina.” Much to their surprise, Cettina asked them if they would like the two vases in question. It was only after they had seen and agreed to accept them that the Cumbos were informed that the vases had once belonged to Dun George. Heretofore, Madlene had only known that there was some connection between her aunt Cettina and Dun George Preca.

The Cumbos brought the vases to Toronto and gave them an honoured place in their living room.

In 2016, when they heard that Father Manuel Parnis, MSSP, then the pastor of St. Paul the Apostle Parish in Toronto, was building an altar to St. George Preca, the Cumbos decided to donate the two vases for the altar, the stipulation being that should the church ever close they were to be returned to the Cumbo descendants. Fathers Manuel Parnis and Dominic Cachia were extremely happy to receive this priceless memento of the Saint.

Father Parnis, however, felt the vases would be safer locked in a showcase in the Maltese-Canadian Museum/-Archives.

On Ash Wednesday, February 26, 2020, Richard Cumbo, curator of the Museum/Archives and Mike Gouveia, a volunteer, placed the two valuable and holy possessions of St. George Preca in a new showcase.



Mike Gouveia and Richard Cumbo Standing Beside the Display Case Containing the Two Alabaster Vases, Ash Wednesday, February 26th. Note the Ashes on Richard's Forehead

Courtesy of Richard S. Cumbo

**READER COMMENTS
RELATIING TO THE MARCH ISSUE**

Read the whole newsletter. Thank you. It's like getting a box of candy each month, so much joy and information. But it doesn't stick to your hips.

Rena Xuereb, Metro Detroit

I want to congratulate you again about yet another issue of "The Maltese Presence in North America". I truly enjoyed reading the newsletter. It's very interesting and informative to all us readers. Keep up the good work....

Carmen Galea, Toronto, ON

Congratulations again for producing another very interesting newsletter! Thank you for your hard work and great effort to produce this informative newsletter monthly....

George Xuereb, President, Melita Soccer Club, Toronto

...well done. We are happy with you covering your area....Keep up the good work.

Lawrence Dimech,
co-editor, *The Voice of the Maltese*, Australia

PAINTING OF OUR LADY OF TA' PINU

Dan Brock

In the choir loft of St. Pius X Church, 2305 Bloor Street West, Toronto, hangs a 4 x 6-foot oil painting of Our Lady of ta' Pinu. The plaque to the lower right of it explains who commissioned, painted and donated it to St. Pius X. The plaque itself was donated by the Maltese-Canadian Society of Toronto.



McCarthy's Painting of Our Lady of ta' Pinu

Courtesy of Paige Souter

The work was commissioned in 1988 by Chev. Reno DeGiorgio for St. Paul the Apostle Church on Dundas Street in Toronto. The artist of the painting was an Irish-Canadian, James McCarthy.

The Franciscan pastor of St. Paul's at the time, however, said there was no space for it in the church and it was subsequently donated to St. Pius X Church.

On June 27, 1998, a special blessing of the painting and Mass was celebrated by Fr. Michael Holmes. Originally, the painting hung to the left-hand side of the altar.

**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**

CORRECTIONS TO MARCH ISSUE

Dan Brock

On page 14, column 1, the caption for the second photo should also read "Q & A at the Malta Band Club, Sunday, February 16th".

**Bħalma dejjem għamilna flimkien tul is-sekli
... nieħdu ħsieb xulxin bħal aħwa
Maltin fil-Kanada**



**Dr. Raymond Xerri,
Il-Konslu Ġenerali /
Consul General**

Il-poplu Malti u Għawdxi, bħal kull poplu ieħor, kellu storja mżewġa b'avvenimenti koroh u anke fi stat ta' agunija u oħrajn sbieħ u anke trijonfanti. Però fis-siegħa tal-prova, mhux kull poplu jirnexxielu joħroġ minnha sħiħ, isalva jew ikun aktar b'saħħtu wara burraxka. L-istorja ta' pajjiżna turina illi matul avvenimenti kbar, sbieħ jew koroh, il-poplu Malti u Għawdxi żamm sod u wara, ħareġ aktar b'saħħtu. L-aħwa, kellna diversi eżempji fl-istorja tagħna, u li s'issa kienu ħafna għar mill-COVID19 jew l-imxija Korona.

Il-pesta ta' bejn Ġunju 1592 sa Settembru 1593 ħalliet 3,000 mejta; dik ta' bejn Diċembru 1675 s'Awwissu 1676 ħalliet 11,300 mejta u l-iktar waħda riċenti bejn Marzu 1813 u Jannar 1814 ħalliet 4,500 mejta. Il-marda tal-Polio, ħalliet mijiet ta' tfal Maltin u Għawdxin immankati għal għomorhom, id-deni iriq fis-snin għoxrin tas-seklu li għadda, kif wkoll it-tuberculosis u brucellosis ikoll ħallew il-marka tagħhom fuq il-poplu tagħna.

Dawn l-avvenimenti koroh ħallew eluf ta' nies mejta u ftiit kienu l-familji Maltin u Għawdxin li ma kellhomx xi membru jew ieħor tal-familji tagħhom affettwati. Dak iż-żmien daww il-eluf mejta kien ifisser bejn 6 u 11 fil-mija tal-popolazzjoni kollha ta' pajjiżna u ma kienx hemm kura.

Veru li l-anqas illum m'hemm kura għall-COVID19, però hemm differenza kbira minn dak iż-żmien u llum. Bil-pesta kont tinduna bis-sintomi, għaliex kienu jitfaċċaw fuq il-ġisem tal-bniedem u finalment jisfigurawh, l-imxija tal-COVID19 invizibbli u s-sintomi huma aktar interni – deni, nuqqas ta' nifs, eċċ.

Qed niġu mitluba biex naħslu idejna ta' spiss, naħdmu mid-dar, nibqgħu kemm jista' jkun id-dar u nżommu d-distanza bejnietna. Qegħdin fi stat ta' gwerra, però mhux qed nintalbu biex niġġieldu bl-armi bħall-Assedju tal-1565 jew fl-ewwel u t-tieni Gwerrer Dinjija. Qed niġu mitluba noqgħodu d-dar. B'ftit tbatija mentali u psikoloġika, mhux fiżika. Ejjew nobdu u nagħmlu sagriċċju għall-ġid tagħna, tal-oħrajn u biex nirbħu din il-gwerra kemm jista' jkun malajr.

Li ktibtilkom fil-messaġġ tiegħi tax-xahar li għadda biex tieħdu sehem sħiħ fl-attivitajiet tal-komunità tagħna mniżzla fil-Kalendarju tal-Attivitajiet, issa m'għadux

**As we always did over the centuries ... let's
look out for each other as one Maltese-
Canadian Community**

Maltese and Gozitans, like other peoples, had a colourful history of tragic and agonising events and other joyful and triumphant events. In the test of time, however, not all peoples manage to leave a crisis, to survive intact let alone to emerge stronger than before. The history of our country is littered with such big events, great and tragic, and despite this fact, the Maltese and Gozitans remained sound and eventually emerged not only victorious but stronger. Dear brothers and sisters, our history is testimony of events, worse than COVID-19 or the Coronavirus.

The plague from June 1592 till September 1592 killed 3,000 souls; the next plague from December 1675 to August 1676 left 11,300 dead and the last plague between March 1813 and January 1814 left another 4,500 lifeless. Polio left hundreds of Maltese children permanently handicapped. Tuberculosis and brucellosis in the twentieth century left their mark on the Maltese Islands.

These horrible events touched thousands of lives and few Maltese and Gozitans families were left unscathed. Those thousands of deaths constituted between six and 11 percent of the total population of the Maltese Islands at the time and with no cure in sight.

It is true we face a similar situation of no vaccine as yet for COVID-19, but there is a big difference today from those times. With the plague, symptoms were visible throughout the human body, with COVID-19 it's an invisible virus and symptoms are primarily internal – fever, shortness of breathe, etc.

We are being asked to wash our hands more frequently, work from home if possible, stay at home for the rest of the time and keep a distance from each other. We are in a state of war, but we are not being asked to pick up arms to fight as in the Great Siege of 1565 or as in both World Wars. We are being ordered to stay at home, with all the mental and psychological efforts, not physical, possible to muster. Let us obey orders and make these sacrifices for our own good, and that of others to win this war.

What I had written in my last message was to wholeheartedly participate in Maltese community events listed on the Maltese-Canadian Calendar of Events. In this message, today, I tell you the opposite. In reality, there are no more events. The Office of the Consulate General is closed to the public, the Maltese-Canadian Church of St Paul The Apostle and Maltese clubs are closed and all events have been cancelled. The April 2020 Maltese-Canadian Calendar of Events will not be published since there are no planned events.

jghodd. Illum ngħidilkom bil-kontra, ibqgħu d-dar u fil-fatt l-attivitajiet kollha ġew mħassra. Il-Konsolat Generali, il-Knisja Maltija-Kanadiża ta' San Pawl, I-klabbs Maltin kollha magħluqa u għalhekk l-attivitajiet kollha tħassru. Il-Kalendarju tal-Attivitajiet Maltin-Kanadiži għax-xahar t'April, mhux ser jiġi ppubblikat għaliex l-attivitajiet kollha ġew kkancellati.

Appell wiehed ta' għaqda

Il-Kummissarju Għoli Malti għall-Istati Uniti u l-Kanada, l-E.T. Keith Azzopardi u jien ħriġna appell imqanqal lill-komunità kollha sabiex tobdu d-direttivi tas-Supretendenza tas-Saħħa fil-Kanada u biex nieħdu ħsieb ta' niesna – ħutna l-Maltin. Żommu kuntatt kontinwu ma' ħutna l-Maltin u Għawdxin, speċjalment jekk tafu b'xi anzjani li forsi jkollhom bżonn ta' xi ħaġa tal-ikel, xorb jew mediċini minn barra. Kunu solidari magħhom u wruhom li jimpurtakom minnhom ħalli ma jhossuhomx weħidhom jew minsijin. Hekk irnexxielna nsalvaw fil-passat meta kellna esperjenzi simili, u hekk biss nistgħu nirbħu din il-gwerra tal-lum, tal-COVID19. Aħna lkoll aħwa Maltin.

Ma ninsewx li missirijietna dejjem irrikorrew għat-twemmin nisrani li għal ġenerazzjonijiet sħaħ żammew b'għożża liema bħala. San Rokku, San Sebastjan u Santa Rożalija kienu l-qaddisin li fiż-żmien il-pesta kienu jirrikorru għalihom. L-istatwi, niċeċ, kappelli u knejjes iddedikati lil dawn il-qaddisin huma xhieda tal-intervent tagħhom matul l-istorja ta' pajjiżna u tal-poplu tagħna.

Jien qiegħed hawn għalikom

Bħala Konslu Ġenerali takom, jien qiegħed hawn fostkom, għalkemm bħalissa qed naħdem mid-dar kif qegħdin jagħmlu il-kumpliment tal-istaff tal-Konsolat, xorta tistgħu tikkuntattjawna jekk ikun hemm xi emerġenza fuq maltaconsulate.toronto@gov.mt jew ċemplu fuq in-numru tas-soltu:- 416 207 0922 jew 416 207 0989 inkella f'każ ta' emerġenza fuq 416 832 4607. Jiena u l-familja tiegħi minn qalbna nixtiequ lil-lek u lill-familji tagħkom, l-Għid Imqaddes. Nitlob lil Kristu l-rxox jimliena tama li noħorġu rebbieña fuq dan l-għadu invizibbli.

O Mulej, bierek dejjem lil Malta u lill-Kanada.

Dr. Charles Mattei, Malta's Medical Officer of Health and secretary of the Malta Emigration Committee visited Victoria, British Columbia in June 1912. There he contacted employers and political leaders about the possibility of sending Maltese workers to that province. He was informed that there were jobs available in such fields as forestry, fish canning, fruit growing and on the railways. Premier Sir Richard McBride of British Columbia assured Dr. Mattei of his support with immigration authorities in Ottawa.

One united appeal

The Ambassador of Malta to the United States and the High Commissioner to Canada, H.E. Keith Azzopardi, and I issued a strong appeal to all our community to obey all directives issued by the Superintendent of Health of Canada and to look out for each other – look out for our fellow Maltese. Keep in touch by phone, Skype, etc with our fellow Maltese especially with the elderly who might need food, drink or medicines from the grocer or the pharmacy. Show solidarity and that you care and make them feel secure and not forgotten. Caring for each other has always been a hallmark of our Maltese character in the past. Keep in mind that this is the only way we can win over COVID-19—today's war. We are all Maltese-Canadians.

Furthermore, our forefathers always kept a staunch Christian faith that was passed from one generation to another. Saint Rocco, Saint Sebastian and Saint Rosyne were the saints our forefathers always referred their prayers to in similar times of plague and such struggles. The numerous statues, shrines, chapels and even churches dedicated to these saints, thanking them for their interventions in similar situations faced by our people throughout our history are a testament to this.

I am here at your service

As your Consul General, despite being thousands of miles from my family and our country, I am here, amongst you, working from home as is the rest of the staff of the Consulate. We can be contacted in case of an emergency at maltaconsulate.toronto@gov.mt or call at the usual numbers:- 416 207 0922 or 416 207 0989 otherwise at 416 832 4607.

My family and I wholeheartedly wish you and yours a Holy Easter. May the Risen Christ fill us with determination and hope that we shall prevail over our invisible enemy. O Lord, always bless Malta and Canada.



Francis Borg was the first Maltese emigrant to settle in Leamington, Essex Co., Ontario. He had arrived at Halifax, NS on board the Marine Perch, in May 1948. "Frank" was a former employee of Allied Malta Newspapers and his first job in Canada was as a mechanic with the Leamington Post and News. His wife, Rose, and five sons joined him in March 1949.

**ACTIVITIES WITHIN
THE MALTESE COMMUNITIES**

Dan Brock

The Bay Area, California

Maltese-America Social Club of San Francisco

The St. Patrick's Day Dinner/Dance, scheduled on Saturday, March 14th, was cancelled owing to the Coronavirus Pandemic.

A Family Bingo and Pasta Dinner is tentatively slated for Saturday, April 18th and a Mother's Day Dinner Dance for Saturday, May 9th.

The Greater Toronto Area, Ontario

Consulate General of the Republic of Malta

Jason Borg, the Maltese-Canadian Youth Ambassador and Youth Ministry Coordinator of St. Paul the Apostle Parish, paid a courtesy call, early in March, to the Consulate General's office.

Paulo "Paul" Gaffan was the first Maltese to settle in Kingsville, Essex Co., Ontario.



Jason Borg and Dr. Raymond Xerri

Fr. Carm Borg, MSSP, former pastor of St. Paul the Apostle Parish, accompanied by the present pastor, Fr. Mario Micallef, MSSP, also paid a courtesy call on Dr. Raymond Xerri in early March.



**Fr. Carm Borg, Dr. Raymond Xerri
and Fr. Mario Micallef**

Consulate General of Malta to Canada webpage

Malta Band Club

There was a full house for the Feneka dinner on Saturday March 4th.



Some of Those in Attendance

Photo by Fred Portelli

On Tuesday, March 17th the Club announced that, owing to COVID-19, it would be closed until Monday, April 6th. At that time, it would reassess the situation

Maltese Canadian Federation

The Federation held its **Annual General Meeting** on Tuesday, March 3rd, and a new committee was elected. (See the back page for further details.)

St. Paul the Apostle Parish

Both the **Seder Meal** and the **Maltese Mission** planned during Lent were cancelled because of the Coronavirus outbreak.

Maltese-Canadian Museum Archives and Visitors Centre

Owing to COVID-19, the Museum Archives is closed until further notice.



Deborah Lightfoot, Carmen Galea, Manuel "Mani" Mifsud, Richard Cumbo (curator), Michael Gouveia, Rose Cassar, Fr. Mario Micallef, MSSP (chairperson)
 Photo by Fr. Karm Borg, MSSP

St. Paul the Apostle Youth Group

A **Games Night** was held in Depiro Hall in the St. Paul the Apostle Complex on Friday, March 6th. There was fun for the whole family with Nintendo Switch, PlayStations 3 and 4, Xbox One, Wii and Wii U, soccer, ping pong and bingo. By all accounts, it was a huge success.



Ping Pong Was but One of the Activities Available
 Consulate General of Malta to Canada webpage

Hamilton, Ontario

The **Maltese Canadian Association of the City of Hamilton (MCACH)** held a **Pub Night**, on Saturday, February 29th at The Powerhouse, on Jones Street, in Stoney Creek. Music was provided by David Tabone's band, Reflexion.

An Afternoon of Bowling is tentatively planned for Sunday, April 19th, between 2:00 and 4:00 p.m. at Splitsville, 1525 Stone Church Rd. E., Hamilton. Members \$10; non members \$15. Includes bowling, shoe rental, pop and pizza. RSVP at:

mcach1964@gmail.com OR with a committee member by April 10th
<https://www.splitsville.ca/hamilton-bowling/>.

A picnic is planned for Sunday, June 21st, at Dundas Driving Park. Further details to follow.

London, Ontario

The Knights of Columbus of St. George's Parish, London, ON, held a pancake dinner on Shrove Tuesday, February 25th.



Albino Ellul Making Pancakes
 Courtesy of Albino Ellul

Just under 30 members and friends of the Maltese community gathered for **lunch** at the Mandarin Restaurant on Hyde Park Road in London on Thursday, February 27th.



One of the Tables at the Mandarin
(l to r) **Barbara Gauci, Marlene & Frank Mifsud, Monica & Mannie Micallef, Ted Gauci**

Dan Brock

The **March luncheon** which was to be held at the Swiss Chalet on Fanshawe Park Road East on Thursday, March 26th, was cancelled after all dining in restaurants was cancelled following a declaration of emergency by the Premier of Ontario on Tuesday, March 17th.

Mario Vella's Victory Against ALS 10th Anniversary Dinner Dance which was to take place at the Marconi Club of London, on Saturday, March 28th, was postponed to Saturday, May 30th.

A **summer picnic** is planned at Weldon Park, in Arva, between 1:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m., on Sunday July 5th.

The late Fr. Lawrence E. Attard learned from a relative living on Long Island, New York that he made his first acquaintance with the United States in the following manner: "...because my father had entered the U.S.A. in 1902 we were automatically U.S.A. citizens. It took us some seven days to cross the Atlantic. When we disembarked we had to show that we had twenty-five dollars as a requirement before gaining admittance into New York City. We would get through the gate at Ellis Island and put the twenty-five dollars in our caps. Then we would pass our caps through the fence to someone in the line who did not have the twenty-five dollars. The same money would be used again and again". (Attard, Early Maltese Emigration (1900-1914), page 30.)

Malta United Society of Windsor, Ontario

The traditional **Ravioli Dinner** was held at the club on Saturday, February 29th.

With Premier Doug Ford's declaration of an emergency, the Society issued the following statement:



Malta United Society of Windsor
2520 Seminole St, Windsor, ON

March 17, 2020

Dear Members and Friends,

Due to the ongoing developments in relation to the COVID-19 Virus, the Government of Ontario has set forth a mandate for the closure of all restaurants, bars and places of gathering in an effort to contain the spread of the virus. We value the health and well being of our members and volunteers, therefore, the Malta United Society will be closed effective immediately, and until further notice.

We appreciate your patience and understanding during this trying time for all of us. Please follow the guidelines being recommended by health officials in order to keep you and your families safe. Please check your email and our Facebook page for updates as they become available. Stay safe and we hope to see everyone soon.

Best Regards,

Executive Committee

Metropolitan Detroit

Maltese American Benevolent Society (Detroit)

On Monday, March 23rd it was announced that, owing to the present pandemic, its facilities would remain closed through Wednesday, April 13th

Maltese American Community Club of Dearborn

Owing to the recent coronavirus outbreak and the health of its members, the Club is closed, until further notice, for all Friday dinners and classes. The figolli-making class, scheduled for March 22nd was also postponed until further notice.

The Club is open, however, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays for pastizzi sales.

By 1924 there were probably 5,000 members of the Maltese community in Detroit. Most of the men worked in the automobile industry. "The Americanization Committee of Detroit established a Maltese Information Bureau which printed a circular letter in Maltese. The letter contained important information on many matters which would interest those who had just arrived in the city. The Bureau was under the direction of a Maltese immigrant, Mr. Ed Camilleri. This gentleman was active in his community and in 1927 he was given the responsibility to help in the process of Americanizing the Maltese by giving them all the help they needed to assimilate." (Attard, Early Maltese Emigration, p. 41)

New York City

Maltese Dolphins

The Dolphins tentatively plan to play the Melita Soccer team in Toronto on Sunday, May 24th.

NORTH AMERICAN MALTESE COMMUNITY CUP 2020

MALTESE DOLPHINS

TORONTO TRIP **MAY 22 - 25**

DEPART: THE MALTESE CENTER
FRIDAY MAY 22 (evening)

Bus tickets:
\$125 to \$150 per person
*valid passport required

HOTEL: **HYATT PLACE**
Toronto/Mississauga

Rate per night:
\$155 Single/Double
\$10 each add'l person
max 4 per room

SCHEDULE
May 22 NYC→TOR
May 23 DINNER DANCE
May 24 DOLPHINS vs MELITA
May 25 TOR→NIAGARA→NYC

FOR BOOKING CONTACT:
Eddie Debono (917-807-2874)
Daniel Attard (646-556-5447)

DEADLINE TO BOOK APRIL 10







JOHN GRIMA: A VICTIM OF COVID-19

It's my sad duty to report that **John Mary Grima** the Maltese Canadian actor died, in Toronto, on the evening of Sunday, March 29th. He was diagnosed with COVID-19 the previous Thursday. John was 87 years old.

A two-part article about him appeared in the December 2019 and January 2020 issues of this e-newsletter.

May God grant him everlasting peace!

"Mr. J. Robertson" of Detroit Identified

In his book *The Great Exodus (1918-1939)* (1989), p. 35, the late Fr. Lawrence E. Attard made mention of "Mr. J. Robertson," "a useful spokesman" who came to the defense of Detroit's Maltese community in 1921 in the face of the efforts of American authorities "to check the flow of aliens into the country."

Robertson declared: "I am one of the oldest emigrants from the Island of Malta. I have been resident of this country for twenty-six years. I give a helping hand to the newly landed, especially my compatriots from Malta."

In fact, James Robertson was born on December 12, 1876 in Cospicua to James and M. Concepta "Alice" (Lepre) Robertson and had arrived in New York Harbor, on board the *Majestic*, on June 25, 1896.

ARTHUR AND HENRY CAVARRA: EARLY MALTESE MIGRANTS TO WINNIPEG WHO MOVED ON TO GREENER PASTURES

Dan Brock

April 12th marks the 113th anniversary since three Maltese emigrants—Arthur and Henry Cavarra and John Cachia Zammit Slythe—first set foot in North America. Cachia Zammit Slythe is featured on pages 5-8. This article will focus on the Cavarra brothers and Henry in particular.

Arthur, born about 1877 in either Sliema or Valletta, and Henry, born November 26, 1886, in Valletta, were the sons of Major Alfred Cavarra, R.M.A.

The earliest information we have on Arthur is when, as a student, he applied on March 14, 1899 for a passport to travel to England, possibly to further his studies, as he listed himself as a student. No subsequent passport application has been found for him.

34
04 399

Application for Passport

A Passport is required for *Arthur Cavarra*
son of Major Alf Cavarra late R.M.A.

Profession: a *Student*

Country: Native of *Valletta.*

and a British Subject to enable him to proceed from hence
to *England*

If accompanied by wife or children or servants, state

Date *14 March 1899*

Signature of the Applicant
Arthur Cavarra

This application properly filled up is to be left at the Chief Secretary's Office before the hour of 4 and 1/2 of each day (Sundays or other holidays excepted) when the requisite Passports will be granted (gratis) to the applicant between the hours of 2 and 4 p.m.

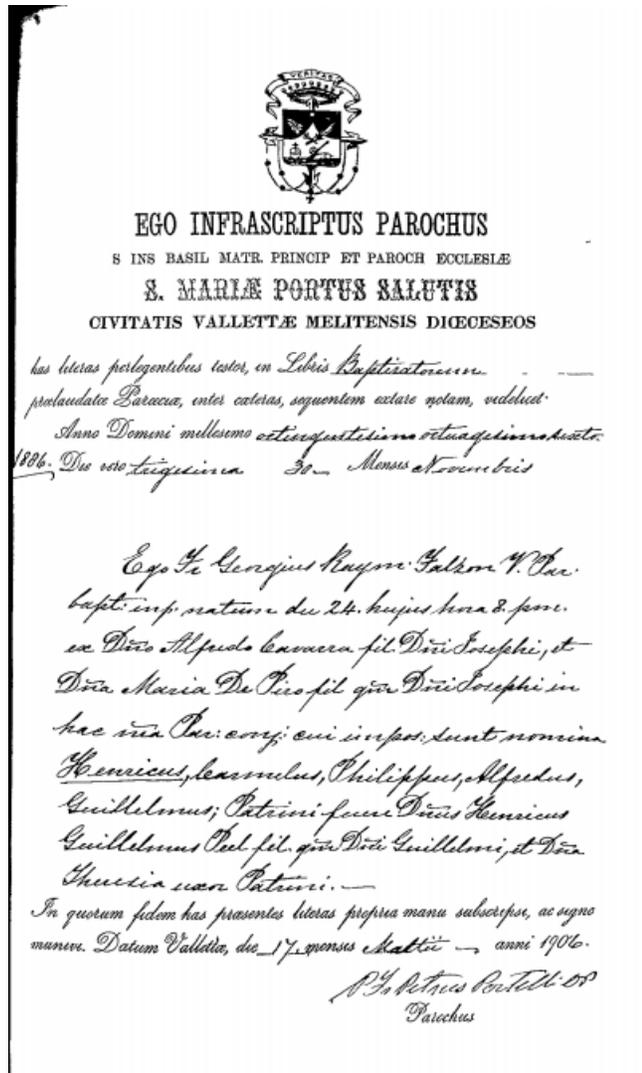
Applicants to arrive after 12 o'clock will stand over till the afternoon of the following day

11-111
17 11 99

Arthur Cavarra's Passport Application, March 14, 1899

We first hear of Henry on March 14, 1906 when he also applied for a passport to travel to England. He gave his address as Strada Torres, Sliema. Attached to the application was Henry's baptismal certificate, issued three days earlier. It indicates that Henry was baptised

at Our Lady of Safe Haven (St. Dominic's) Church in Valletta and that his full name was Henry Charles Philip Alfred William Cavarra.



Henry Cavarra's Baptismal Certificate

Arthur and Henry Cavarra, together with the aforementioned John Cachia Zammit Slythe, disembarked from the *Majestic* at New York on April 12, 1906. As noted earlier, all three were single and each was destined for Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Very few Maltese had ended up in Winnipeg prior to 1906. Benjamin Waday gave Winnipeg as his destination in 1903. So did Edgar Camilleri in 1905. W.S. Galea, a native of Hants., England, but probably of Maltese birth, also gave Winnipeg as his destination in 1905. Of these three, only Waday was found on the Canada Census of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta taken in June-July 1906. He was then a boarder living in Winnipeg.

On arriving in New York Harbor, having boarded the *Majestic* in Liverpool on April 4, 1906, the Cavarra brothers and Cachia Zammit Slythe, as already noted, probably travelled by rail to Winnipeg, the "Gateway to the West."

The three men appear to have found employment on farms almost immediately. By late June 1906 John Slythe was working as a hired hand near MacDonald, MB, some 68 miles (110 km), northwest of Winnipeg, while Arthur and Henry were working for different families in the vicinity of St. Pierre, Provencher, some 31 miles (50 km) southeast of Winnipeg.

Arthur crossed over into the United States at Swanton, Vermont in August 1909. At the time of the US Census for 1910, Arthur was a teacher in Colchester, VT. We lose track of him after this in the United States.

Sometime afterward he returned to Malta where on February 27, 1919 he married Beata Boulad.

Their first child, Maria, is believed to have been born on December 4, 1919, followed by Martha on September 20, 1921 and Elen on April 4, 1926. All were born in Malta. Nothing further is known of Arthur and Bertha.

Elen, who married on September 7, 1952, appears to have lived all her life in Malta and died there on June 20, 1978. Martha moved to England. There, in Southampton in 1948, she married George Arthur Garnet Waters and raised a family. She died in North Cotswold on August 23, 2007. Maria, who never married, appears to have migrated to England as well but nothing further is presently known about her.

Meanwhile, Arthur's younger brother, Henry, was adjusting well to life in Manitoba. According to his grandson, David Pullicino of Malta, Henry worked for some time as a trapper. By 1913, however, he was a manager in Winnipeg.

That same year, Henry returned for a visit to Malta. Whether by chance or by design, he met, probably for the first time, his maternal first cousin, Emma Josephine DePiro.

Emma was born in Aden (Yemen) on June 16, 1883 and was the daughter of Antonio G. DePiro, a brother of Henry's mother, the former Maria DePiro, and Antonio's first wife, Louisa Borg.

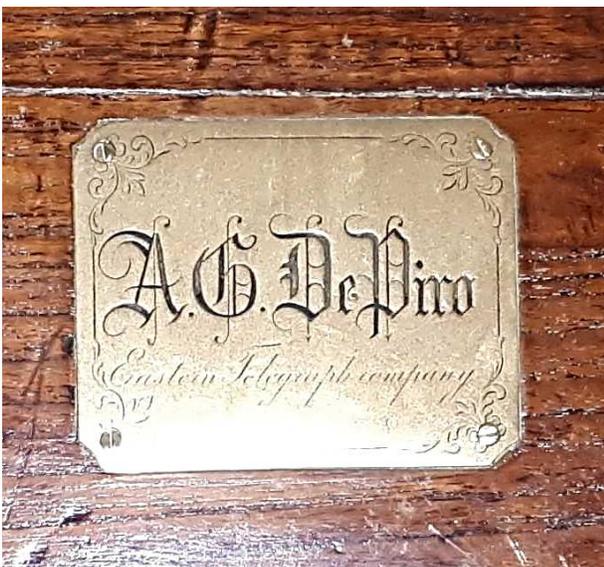
Maria and Antonio's parents were Guiseppe and Maria Antonio (Mizzi) dePiro/DePiro.

Their lineage can be traced back to Cosimo or Gusmano de Piro who arrived as a child in 1530 with the Order of St. John. He was likely under the protection of the Grand Master at the time and served in the Court of the Grand Master. Later, he was appointed Commander of the Arsenal in Malta.

As for Antonio G. DePiro, he was working for the Eastern Telegraph Company in Aden at the time of Emma's birth.



Louisa (Borg) DePiro, Emma's Mother



**Engraved Nameplate on Mahogany Travel Chest
which Once Belonged to Emma's Father**



Eastern Telegraph Company, Aden



**Emma Josephine DePiro with
an Unidentified Woman, c. April 1884**

Emma had trained as a nurse at St. Thomas Hospital, in London, England and left there in May 1912, intending to seek permanent residence in Malta.

The cousins fell in love during Henry's visit to Malta.

Henry returned to Winnipeg, via Liverpool and Quebec, on board the *Tunisian*, in July of 1913. Sometime thereafter Emma joined him and they were married in nearby St Boniface on February 28, 1914.

Their first child, Laura, was born in Winnipeg on March 23, 1915.

The family, however, "could no longer stand the cold in Canada" and later in 1915 moved to New York City where Henry became a salesman for a sporting goods store. According to David Pullicino*, his grandfather

“became a manager of the hunting department of a ‘large store’” while in New York.

Henry and Emma’s son, Joseph, was born in New York City on November 11, 1917.

The US federal census for 1920 shows the family living in Grant City, Staten Island, NYC.

Sometime after this, the family returned to Malta. There, according to David, Henry imported equipment for woodworking, “the first at the time, and built a thriving business making wooden doors and windows.” Unfortunately, the Second World War put an end to this.

Meanwhile, the Cavarra family was living at “Eileen” on Howard Street in Sliema when, in the summer of 1934, Henry and Emma went on a tour of “Italy and other European countries.”



Henry Cavarra, July 7, 1913



Emma J. Cavarra, age 50, June 1934



Laura Cavarra, February 6, 1919
Photos courtesy of David Pullicino, Laura’s eldest son



Laura Cavarra, Age 22, May 1937



Joseph Cavarra, Age 19, May 1937

The family was living at 2 Victoria Junction, Sliema in mid-1937 when they went on a tour of Italy.

Henry Cavarra died at the age of 60, in Sliema, Malta, on March 17, 1948. His widow Emma passed away at the Blue Sisters Hospital in Sliema in 1969.

Their son Joseph died in Sliema on June 12, 1955. Laura, their daughter, married Philip Pullicino on June 3, 1942 and had four sons. She died at Casa Arkati,

Mosta, on April 10, 2010.

*Most of the information that David has contributed was drawn from conversations he had with his mother when at times she recalled her family experiences in Canada and Staten Island.

THIS FORM MUST BE RETURNED TO THE PASSPORT OFFICE AT LEAST THREE CLEAR DAYS BEFORE THE PASSPORT IS REQUIRED.

No. 13008
Date - 6 JUNE 1934

*** Surname of applicant to be written in Block Capitals and UNDERLINED.**

A
DECLARATION TO BE MADE BY APPLICANT FOR PASSPORT. (A)

(a) Sliema 2 June 1934

I, the Undersigned, (b) Emma J. Cavarra
at present residing at "Gileu" Howard St Sliema hereby declare that I am

(c) wife of Henry Cavarra and that my husband is
deceased

(d) British subject by birth having been born at Valetta on the 25 day of November 1886.

(e) my (his) father having been born within His Majesty's Dominions at
paternal grandfather on the day of

and not having lost the status thus acquired, I hereby apply for a Passport for travelling to Italy & other European countries for the purpose of touring UNITED KINGDOM AND ALL COUNTRIES IN EUROPE

(f) (accompanied by my wife (and children under the age of 16, as indicated in the margin, who do not possess separate Passports)

(g) I declare that I have not previously been granted any Passport whatever, and that I have made no other application for a Passport.

(h) Signed Emma Cavarra

AND I, the Undersigned, (i) Joseph Zapparda Maglabre
85 La Lenoxia Valetta hereby declare that to the best of my personal knowledge and belief the above made Declaration and description of the said Emma Cavarra is true, and that I can FROM MY PERSONAL KNOWLEDGE of him vouch her as a fit and proper person to receive a Passport.

Signature of Recipient } Emma Cavarra

Signature of Endorser } Joseph Zapparda Maglabre

Received of the Passport Office
Passport No. 13008
- 6 JUNE 1934

DESCRIPTION OF APPLICANT:
Age 51
Profession housewife
Whether married or single married
Domicile or ordinary place of residence Sliema
Maiden name of widow or married woman DePiro
Place of birth Aden Arabia
Date of birth 16 June 1883
Height 5 feet 4 inches
Colour of eyes Blue
Colour of hair Brown
Visible distinguishing marks or peculiarities

DESCRIPTION OF WIFE OF APPLICANT IF TO BE INCLUDED ON THE PASSPORT:
Name in full
Age
Profession
Place of birth
Date of birth
Maiden name
Height feet inches
Colour of eyes
Colour of hair
Visible distinguishing marks
Signature of wife of applicant

Children under the age of 16 if to be included on the Passport:
Christian Names - Surnames - Date of Birth - Sex.
(1)
(2)
(3)
(4)
(5)

IMPORTANT
Applicants and persons recommending them are warned that should any of the statements contained in their respective declarations prove to be untrue the consequences to them may be serious.

For official use
Pais
Th

Passport Application of Emma J. (DePiro) Cavarra, June 2, 1934

Passport application and photos courtesy of National Archives of Malta

**THE MALTESE CANADIAN CLUB OF LONDON
OPENS ITS OWN BUILDING
32 YEARS AGO**

Editor's note: Tuesday, April 9th marks the 32nd anniversary of the opening of The Maltese Canadian Club of London's own facilities. An account of its opening, is found in the April 1988 issue of the defunct L-Aħbar, published in Toronto. For those like myself who know little or nothing of the Maltese language a glossary of some of the Maltese words has been

provided to help you get a sense of the contents of this article.

Sadly, the facilities were sold off early in 2018 and the Club itself disbanded in December of that year.

**KLABB ĠDID F' LONDON
MALTESE CANADIAN CLUB
LONDON, ONTARIO**

Nhar is-Sibt 9 t'April, 1988, sar il-ftuħ uffiċjali tas-sala u każin ġdid tal-Maltese Canadian Club of London. Iċ-ċerimonja tal- ftuħ saret fis-siegħa a' wara nofs in-

nhar u fiha hadu sehem is-Sur Terry Clifford, M.P. (London-Middlesex), is-Sur Jack Burghardt, Deputy Mayor ta' London, is-Sur Lou Bondi, il-Konslu General ta' Malta f'Toronto, Fr. Tony Busuttil, u s-Sur Tony Vella, il-President tal-għaqda.

Wara l-ftuħ uffiċjali, il-mistednin gew imdawwra mal-post u ntwerew il-faċilitajiet kollha konnessi ma' dan iċ-ċentru. Wara sar riċeviment żgħir għall-okkażżjoni.

Iżda l-festi kbar saru fil-għaxija, meta mijiet ta' Maltin minn London, attendew għall-ewwel attivita miżmuma fis-sala, iċ-ċelebrazzjoni tal-ftuħ tal-każin il-gdid.

Il-post li jinsab f'70 Charterhouse Crescent, huwa attrazzat b'sala sabiħa li tesa mat-300 ruħ. Hija fornuta bi kċina kbira u moderna li tista' tintuża għall-kull okkażżjoni. Il-foyer hu mibni fuq stil modern bil-faċċata u l-kamra tat-taraġ mibnija b'madum tal-ħgieg li jagħti dehra arjuża u mdawla.

Fuq quddiem tas-sala, fit-tieni sular hemm sala iżgħar li tista' tintuża għal okkażżjonijiet familjali, jew tista' tintuża bħala parti mis-sala l-kbira peress li hija konnessi bi wieqi li jagħtu minn sala għal oħra.

Wara ikla eċċellenti l-MC, is-Sur Peter Campbell, introduċa ħafna personalitajiet li attendew għal din l-okkażżjoni. Fil-kliem tiegħu is-Sur Tony Vella qal li s-sala kienet riżultat ta' ħidma tremenda, saġrifici personali u dedizzzjoni li saret minn bosta membri. Huwa riżultat li jimla lil kulhadd bi kburiya. Huwa riżultat li jgħin biex inżommu t-tradizzjonijiet Maltin.

Is-Sur Vella kompli jgħid, li bħala Maltin Kanadiżi aħna nuru il-wirt uniku tagħna u nikkommettu ruħna għal futur sabiħ u sodisfaċenti, "għax ma rridux biss li niftakru fil-passat iżda rridu nuru lin-nies ta' London id drawwiet u t-tradizzjoniziet Maltin.

Huwa temm id-diskors tiegħu billi ir-ringrazzja lill-Ministeru taċ-Ċittadinanza u Kultura għall-għajjnuna finanzjarja li l-każin irċieva taħt il-Programm ta' Titjib fil-Faċilitajiet Komunitarji.

Wara kien hemm diskorsi minn mistednin ta'l-unur li ħafna minnhom ipprezentaw tabelli u rigali bħala tifkira tal-okkażżjoni.

Għal din iċ-ċerimonja attendew ukoll is-Sur Terry Clifford M.P., is-Sur Jack Burghardt, is-Sur Lou Bondi, kunsilieri oħra ta' London, u nies li taw għajjnuna lil Maltese Canadian Club.

Rappreżentanti ta' għaqdiet oħra Maltin attendew minn ħafna bliet oħra. Fosthom kien hemm rappreżentanti tal-Melita Soccer Club u l-Malta Band Club ta' Toronto, tal-Cottonera Maltese Society u Malta United Society ta' Windsor u Maltese American Community Club ta' Dearborn, Michigan. Attendew ukoll rappreżentanti tal-programmi televiżivi u l-gurnal Maltin. Mistieden speċjali kien is-Sur Johnny Catania, li bħal ma semma l-MC Peter Campbell għandu assoċjazzjoni twiela mal-klabb ta' London.

Dan ir-riżultat juri x'jistgħu jiksbu għaqdiet Maltin bil-koperazzjoni u ħidma lejn għan wieħed. Il-komunita

ċkejna ta' London urietna li fejn hemm ir-rieda kollox jista' jsir, basta t-fassil u x-xogħol isir bir-reqqa u għall-ġid tal-komunita kollha.

Maltese-English Glossary

aħbar (n.f.) - news
 attendew – they attended
 bil- - with the
 bħala (adv.) - as
 bliet (n.f.) – cities
 diskorsi (n.m.) - speeches
 fil-għaxija (n.f.) – evening
 fosthom (prep.) - among
 ftuħ – opening
 għaqdiet (n.u.f.) – associations
 hemm (adv.) - there
 ħafna (adj.) - many
 ħidma – toil
 huwa – he
 jew (conj.) - or
 każin (n.m.) - club
 kbira (adj.m. plur) - large
 kien (v.i.) - to be (was)
 klabb (n.m.) – club
 kollha – all
 lejn (adv.) - towards
 lil (prep.) – to
 mal - with
 Maltin (n.m. pl.) - Maltese
 mibni (pp.) - built, constructed
 minn (prep) - from
 nhar (+ def. art.) - on
 nies (n.pl.) - people
 nofs (n.m.) - half
 għal (prep.) - for
 għajjnuna (n.f.) - help, assistance
 għandu - has
 oħra (pron.f.) – other
 post (n.m.) – place, venue
 riċeviment – reception
 ringrazzja - thanks
 riżultat (n.m) – result
 ruħ (n.f.) - soul, person
 sala (n.f.) - hall
 sehem (n.m.) - portion, part
 Sibb (n.m.) - Saturday
 siegħa (n.f.) – hour
 Sur. – Mr.
 temm - ended
 twiela - strong
 uffiċjali (a. inv.) – officials
 ukoll (adv.) also, too
 wara – following, afterwards
 wara nofs in-nhar – at noon
 wirt (n.m.) - inheritance
 żgħir (a.m.) - little, small

**A LETTER FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALTA
AMBASSADOR VANESSA FRAZIER**



Addressed to the Maltese Community in New York-New Jersey-Connecticut
"In view of the current coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, as declared by U.S. President Trump and New York Governor Cuomo as a state of emergency, the Permanent Mission of Malta to the United Nations and the Consulate of Malta in New York will be limiting access to the general public. This measure is being taken in order to protect the health and safety of our staff whilst ensuring that business continues.

Despite the limited access, the Mission and the Consulate remain ready to assist Maltese nationals residing or travelling within the tri-state area of New York, New Jersey and Connecticut. For any urgent assistance or queries, members of the Maltese Community can reach the Foreign Ministry's 24hr helpline on +356 2204 2200 or the Consulate on +1 212-725-2345 consul.newyork@gov.mt. As a precautionary measure to contain the pandemic, consular appointments that have already been fixed are postponed. We invite those that have had fixed appointments to contact the Consulate on consul.newyork@gov.mt or call on +1 212-725-2345. On this note, we augur that the Maltese Community is safe and healthy."

MALTESE ORGANIZATIONS IN NORTH AMERICA

Festa San Gejtanu Association

c/o 5745 Coopers Avenue, Mississauga, ON
L4Z 1R9
647-232-8845

Festa San Gorg Association of Toronto

c/o 36 Sequoia Road, Vaughan, ON L4H 1W6
905-216-8432/416-277-2291

Gozo Club Toronto

c/o 1205 Royal York Road, Toronto, ON M9A 4B5
416-231-9710
gozoclub@gmail.com

Inanna on Stage

www.joannedancer.com
c/o 356 Pacific Avenue, Toronto, ON M6P 2R1
416-707-2355
desertdancer001@yahoo.ca

Knights of Columbus - Canada – Council # 12782

c/o St Patrick's Church, 921 Flagship Drive,
Mississauga, ON, N4Y 2J6
905-270-2301 (Church)
stpatricksmi@archtoronto.org
Grand Knight Amadeo Cuschieri

Lehen Malti

<https://www.omnity.ca/shows/lehen-malti>
c/o 2387 Chilsworthy Avenue., Mississauga, ON
L5B 2R4

Malta Band Club

5745 Coopers Ave., Mississauga, ON L4Z 1K9
905-890-8507
www.maltabandclub.com

maltabandclub@bellnet.ca

Malta United Society of Windsor, Ontario

2520 Seminole St., Windsor, ON N8Y1X4
519-974-6719
maltaunitedsociety.windsor@gmail.com
Opening hours: Saturday 6:30 p.m.-12:00 a.m.

Malta Village Association (Est. 1995)

c/o 3256 Dundas Street West, Toronto M6P 2A3
Tel: 416-769-2174
Fax: 416-769-2174
maltabakeshopltd@gmail.com
att: Antonia Buttigieg

Maltese American Benevolent Society

1832 Michigan Ave. Detroit, MI 48216
313-961-8393
<http://detroitmaltese.com>
Opening hours:
Thursday & Friday 5:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.
Saturday 12:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.
Sunday 12:00 p.m. -9:00 p.m.

Maltese American Community Club of Dearborn

5221 Oakman Blvd, Dearborn, MI 48126
313-846-7077
info@malteseamericanclub.org
Opening hours: Monday, Wednesday & Friday
10:00 am. – 1:00 p.m.
Dinners served: Friday evenings 6:00 p.m. – 10:00
p.m.
Before and after 7:00 p.m. first Friday
Mass

Maltese-American Social Club of San Francisco

924 El Camino Real, South San Francisco, CA 94080
650-871-4611

contact-us@Maltese-AmericanSCSF.org

Opening hours: Tuesday 5:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.
(every 2nd Tuesday of the month only)
Thursday 5: p.m. – 10:00 p.m.
Friday 5:00 – 1:00 a.m.
Sunday 9:00 am.- 5:00 p.m.

Maltese Canadian Association of the City of Hamilton (MCACH)

c/o 381 Fairview Drive, Brantford ON N3R 2X7
mcach1964@gmail.com

Maltese Canadian Association (Gozo)**Maltese Canadian Business & Networking Association (MCBNA), (Toronto)**

c/o 2387 Chilsworthy Avenue, Mississauga, ON
L5B 2R4
416-980-1975
mcbna2018@gmail.com

Maltese-Canadian Cruisers

c/o 5745 Coopers Avenue, Mississauga, ON
L4Z 1R9
416-524-2573
att: Gianni Borg

Maltese-Canadian Cultural Association (Est. 2018)

c/o 2387 Chilsworth Avenue, Mississauga, ON
L5B 2R4
416-571-3944
joesherry@rogers.com

Maltese Canadian Federation, The (Toronto)

c/o 2387 Chilsworth Avenue, Mississauga, ON
L5B 2R4
416-571-3944
joesherry@rogers.com

Maltese-Canadian Museum Archives and Visitors Centre

St. Paul the Apostle Church Complex
3224 Dundas St. W., Toronto, ON M6P 2A3
416-767-7054

Maltese Canucks

c/o 3336 Dundas Street West, Toronto, ON,
M6P 2A4
416-909-7357/416-670-2662
carl@isgtransport.com/b_azzo18@yahoo.com

Maltese Center, NYC

27-20 Hoyt Ave. S. Astoria, NY 11102
718-728-9893

info@maltesecenter.com

Opening hours:
Wednesday and Friday 5:00 p.m. – 11:00 p.m.
Saturday and Sunday 8:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Maltese Cross Foundation of California

PO Box 698, San Carlos, CA 94070

Maltese Culture Club of Durham

c/o 124 Ribblesdale Drive, Whitby, ON L1N 7C8
289-939-8377
mmmpastizzi@gmail.com

Maltese Heritage Association San Francisco Bay Area

maltesheritageassociation@gmail.com

Maltese Heritage Program (Toronto)

c/o 59A Terry Drive, Toronto, ON, M6N 4Y8
Coordinator: Carmen Galea
416-766-5830
gormija@sympatico.ca

Maltese Historical Society (San Francisco)

c/o leprofess@aol.com

Melita Soccer Club Inc.

3336 Dundas St. W., Toronto, ON M6P 2A4
416-763-5317

msc@melitasoccerclub.com

Opening hours:
Monday-Thursday 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Friday 6:00 p.m.-1:00 a.m.
Saturday 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Sunday 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

St. Paul the Apostle Parish

3224 Dundas St. W. Toronto, ON M6P 2A3
416-767-7054

stpaulmssp@gmail.com

www.saint-paul-maltese.com

St. Paul the Apostle Parish Mission Group

c/o 281 Gilmour Ave., Toronto, ON M6P 3B6
416-708-8627

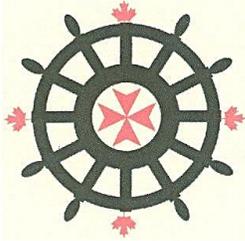
giovanvel@sympatico.ca

www.facebook.com/john.vella.1044186

St. Paul the Apostle Youth Group (Toronto)

3224 Dundas Street West, Toronto, ON M6P 2A3
647-524-1115

jason.borg@hotmail.ca/sborg@rogers.com



**Maltese Canadian
Federation**

*Incorporated 1988
3224 Dundas St. W.
Tor. On. M6P 2A3*

*St. Paul the Apostle
Maltese-Canadian Parish
1930*

*Lehen Malti, T.V.
1972*

*Gozo Club
1973*

*Festa San Gorg
Association
1987*

*Maltese Canucks
2000*

*Maltese Canadian
Business Network
Association
2019*

*The Malta Club of
Durham
2018*

*The Knights of
Columbus
Mississauga
2018*

*St. Paul the Apostle
Youth Group
2019*

*St. Paul the Apostle
Mission Group
2020*

Maltese Canadian Federation:

A Success Story.

On Tuesday 3 March 2020 the Maltese Canadian Federation held its annual General Meeting where a new committee was elected for 2020.

The new committee is as follows:

President	Joe Sherri
Vice –President	Brandon Azzopardi
Secretary	Teresa Bugelli
Asst – Secretary	Giselle Sherri Migliore
Treasurer	Paul Portelli

I am very happy to announce that the community volunteering spirit is well and alive in our Maltese community. The Maltese Canadian Federation is presently made up of 10 groups and associations including St. Paul's The Apostle Church that are very active with their initiatives and agendas while supporting each other and the community.

Three of the latest members to join the Federation are the St. Paul the Apostle Youth Group, The Maltese Canadian Business Networking Association and the St. Paul the Apostle Parish Mission Group. These three groups are made up mostly of first- and second-generation Maltese Canadians who have brought in with them a new energy, fresh ideas and the proper utilization of social media to communicate with their members, with the other groups and the community.

Their activities are well organized, well attended and inter supported by the other Federation members. What these groups have in common is a strong sense of commitment, their pride in their Maltese heritage and a sense of belonging and making their mark in the Maltese community.

We encourage all those individuals who would like to get involved, to reach out and to contact any of these Federation member groups for further information.

The Maltese Canadian Federation would like to invite all of the Maltese Canadian community members and friends to come and join us on the 26th June in celebrating Malta Celebration Day/ Imnarja at Runnymede Park.

Thank you

Maltese Canadian Federation

President

Joe Sherri

info@maltesecanadianfederation.com Phone # 416-571-3944.