



# THE MALTESE PRESENCE IN NORTH AMERICA



## E-NEWSLETTER

Issue 33

DECEMBER 2021



**HON. DR. JOSÉ HERRERA,  
MALTA'S MINISTER OF NATIONAL HERITAGE, ARTS AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT IS  
WELCOMED TO A MEET AND GREET AT THE MALTSE CENTER, ASTORIA, NEW YORK**  
Courtesy of the Maltese Center, NYC (See page 4)

**The Maltese Presence  
in North America  
Issue No. 33 December 2021**

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**EDITORIAL COMMENT**

This issue completes the third full year since the launching of the newsletter. The issue of last December, consisting of 40 pages, was the largest to date. Since then, the February, November and this issue have also consisted of 40 pages while the October issue reached 44.

Again, as was the case at this time last year, the COVID-19 pandemic is still with us and we continue to face new variants, the latest being Omicron which appears to have originated in southern Africa.

This issue introduces a new contributor, Joanne (Zammit)

Prince, who has several other accounts of the Maltese Canadians in Toronto to share with us. I have allotted the “centrefold” position in this issue to her account of her maternal grandparents, Thomas and Michelina Vella. (See pages 21-23.) What is truly remarkable is that Joanne has photos of their parents, back in Malta, to share with us. A special thanks goes to Richard Cumbo for connecting Joanne and me.

Another “newcomer” to the newsletter is Maria Calleja. In this issue, she shares with us something of her growing up partly Maltese Canadian in Toronto, Ontario and visiting Malta to more fully connect with her Maltese roots and heritage. (See pages 27-30.) I happened upon this article on her blog and Maria was gracious enough to consent to having me reprint it here.

A third article I would especially draw your attention to is that by the late Bernice Stewart, on the Maltese in Detroit at the end of the second decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This appeared in the December 12, 1920 issue of the *Detroit Free Press*. (See pages 12-14.)

I would like to express a special thanks to all who contributed in some way to this issue as well as the previous ones during the past year. You are what makes this newsletter!

All back issues and the latest “Table of Contents” are to be found on the web page of the Maltese-American Social Club of San Francisco at <http://maltese-americanscsf.org/home.aspx>. A debt of gratitude is owed Dennis and Evelyn Simmons of San Francisco for posting the newsletter.

If you have ideas you wish to share, wanting to be put on the free, bcc, electronic mailing list, etc., I can be reached at

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**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.*

**Jesus' Invitation**

The same invitation which Jesus gave to the man in the gospel (Mk. 10:21) is being offered to us...Even though we might not be rich in terms of money and possessions, still, looking at our lives we might realize that there are things to which we are too attached—things because of which we are not free to love God above all else. These could be material possessions, but they could also be things such as our ideas which we are not willing to adjust, or our past and memories of things done to us in our lives, just to name a few. Whatever it is (because each of us has his and her unique story), we know that it is not easy to let go.

**We Must Be Servants of All**

....According to Jesus' logic...anyone who wants to feel important must be a servant of others. "For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve...and to give his life as a ransom for many." The life of the disciple must be modelled on that of the Master.

...how often do we look down on others? How often do we judge others when we notice their mistakes or "sinful life"? How often do we refuse to forgive, or even to be the first to seek some form of reconciliation, when we hurt each other: The words of Jesus keep reminding us that, if we want to be His disciples, we must be servants of all. We must be willing to give our life for them. And this, even when they do not deserve it!

**The Kingdom of God**

The kingdoms of the world and the Kingdom of God are very often opposed to each other. While one tells you to look after your own interests, the other tells you to be ready to even give your life to others. While one tells you to seek vengeance (often disguised as justice), the other tells you to forgive.

At the end of our liturgical year, having journeyed with Jesus and listened to his teaching for a whole year, we are now being invited to make a decision. To which kingdom do I belong? How much do I allow his works and his teaching to guide and enlighten all that I do in my life? This King is not a fairy tale. Rather than seeking to be served He is one who, true to his words, made of his kingdom a life of serving and giving of himself to others.

**Preparing for the Arrival of the Christ Child**

....We all feel frustrated or angry when we see things that are not right or whenever we witness injustice. The coming of Jesus brings light where darkness seems to reign. The bright light that filled the skies around Bethlehem is a great and graphic symbol of what the birth of Jesus is all about.

Christmas is not just a reminder of something that happened two thousand years ago in Bethlehem. It is not even a re-enactment in our minds or otherwise of the birth of Baby Jesus. It is, rather, a real reminder of God's presence in our lives, in our world. It is, as we shall hear over and over again during these weeks, the coming of the "Emmanuel". "God is with us." We all know that we need this presence in our lives.

It is for this reason that the Church gifts us with this season where we are invited to really prepare ourselves well for Christmas. There is no better way to do this than taking time to be with Him. To listen and reflect on His word, to let Him speak to us in our lives. As the great spiritual writer Catherine Doberry would say, "Listen to God's speech in his wondrous, terrible, gentle, loving, all-embracing silence." Surely, the greatest gift we could give to ourselves for Christmas is to become better persons. There is always room for improvement, and this we can only do with His help.

The Son of God who was born two thousand years ago in Bethlehem is "God-is-with-us." He is always present, if only we would allow Him. Let us clear some space for Him during this Advent so that He can be born in our lives, in our families, and in our homes.

**MEET AND GREET  
HELD WITH HON. DR. JOSÉ HERRERA**

**Dan Brock**

Hon. Dr. José Herrera, Malta’s Minister for National Heritage, Arts and Local Government, along with his delegation, Ambassador Vanessa Frazier, Permanent Representative to the United Nations and Giovanni Buttigieg, Consul of New York, visited the Maltese Center, Astoria, New York on the evening of Friday, November 12<sup>th</sup>.



**Minister Herrera, Ambassador Frazier  
and Consul Buttigieg**



**Minister Herrera Is Welcomed**



**Minister Herrera’s Delegation**



**Il-Karrettun Makes an Appearance**



**More Maltese Language Workbooks Are  
Presented to the Center by Minister Herrera**  
Courtesy of the Maltese Center, NYC

**PORK ROAST AT TAL-PEFFU FARM\***

**Dan Brock**

A Pork Roast was held at "Tal-Peffu," the farm of Alfred Camilleri, in Nadur, Gozo, on the afternoon of Saturday, November 13<sup>th</sup>.



**Front row: Carmen Tabone, Rose Zammit  
Diane Tabone, Carmelo "Il-Buq" Xerri  
(age 88 of Xaghra), Rose Saliba and Gina Hili  
Back row: Saverina Xerri and Maria Azzopardi**



**Rose Zammit**



**Gina Hili**

Above photos taken by Rose & Joseph Zammit



**Carmen Tabone**



**Pauline Mercieca, Martina Zerafa  
and Diane Tabone**



**Charles Azzopardi, Louis Zammit,  
Tony Saliba, Mike Azzopardi,  
Joe Hili and Peter Tabone**



**Gabriella Mifsud  
with Her Grandfather, Alfred Camilleri**



**Carmen Tabone**



**At back: Diane Tabone, Pauline Mercieca  
and Martina Zerafa**



Front right: Martina Zerafa



Gina Hili and Alfred Camilleri

Photos by Emanuel Tabone



Front left: Charles Azzopardi



Mike Azzopardi, Louis Zammit,  
Charles Azzopardi

\* My thanks to Gina Hili for most of the captions.

**LAMB DINNER  
AT THE MELITA SOCCER CLUB**

**Mary Ann Piscopo**

A Lamb Dinner was held at the Club on Saturday, November 13<sup>th</sup>. The dinner was cooked by Willie Borg and Tony Saliba.



The Maltese Presence in North America

December 2021

Fun was had by all who attended.



**Tony Saliba (chef) and Charlie Grixti**



**Nick Cassar, Jimmy Dimech and Chris Galea**



**Zjana Pulo, Adele Spiteri (standing)  
and Charlie Tanti**

The Maltese Presence in North America

December 2021

One of the attendees was Dr. Raymond Xerri.



**Dr. Raymond Xerri with Lucy Chircop and Charlie & Tina Dalli**



**With Lucy & John Chircop**



**With Phyllis & Joe Abela**



**With Willie Borg (chef), Tony Cristina and Others**

**MEMORIAL SERVICE  
AT THE MALTA BAND CLUB**

**Dan Brock**

**A Memorial Service** was held at the Malta Band Club in Mississauga, Ontario at 3:00 p.m. on Sunday, November 14<sup>th</sup>.

Some 150 people were present, including the Consul General of Malta to Canada. Fr. Mario Micallef, MSSP, presided over the service.



**Some of Those in Attendance**



**Mary Sammut Doing the Readings**



**Fr. Mario Micallef, MSSP**



**David Debono Plays the Last Post**

Photos by Alfred Cini

**ANNUAL MALTA BAND CONCERT  
& ROAST BEEF DINNER**

**Dan Brock**

The **Annual Concert & Roast Beef Dinner** was held on the evening of Saturday, November 20<sup>th</sup>, at the Malta Band Club in Mississauga, Ontario.



**Dr. Raymond Xerri Was Among Those Present**



**Fr. Ivano Burdian, MSSP  
Was Also in Attendance**



Photos by Alfred Cini

**READERS' COMMENTS**

How nice of you to once again send me the latest edition of the newsletter for the current month **THE MALTESE PRESENCE IN NORTH AMERICA**. Packed with interesting articles and pictures that really portray the way of life that the Maltese people know how to live wherever they can be in some country around the globe. Cooking recipes, get togethers, Halloween parties and dinners, social club feelings, family histories and much more. I truly find this publication a means of making us Maltese remember a past that can never be forgotten. Keep up the good work dear Dan.

Sincere best regards and well done for the last newsletter.

George Stagno Navarra, Sliema, Malta

Thank you! Excellent work. I enjoy reading it again. Well done, Dan.

Maria Pia Gauci, Malta

Very interesting read Dan.

Deborah Lightfoot, Toronto, Ontario

Thank you so much for both issues (October and November) of your very interesting and informative newsletter of "The Maltese Presence in North America".

I just started reading the November issue....quite interesting.

Thanks a lot, and 'hats off to you' for your sterling work.

Carmen Galea, Toronto, Ontario

**COURTESY VISIT BY KEVIN MICALLEF**

**Dan Brock**

On Friday, November 5<sup>th</sup>, Kevin Micallef paid a courtesy visit to the Consul General of Malta to Canada.



**Dr. Raymond Xerri and Kevin Micallef**

Photo by Amanda Vella

Kevin, a renowned Maltese Canadian film director, animator and writer, is a son of Charles and Rose Micallef who were mentioned in last month's issue. A native of London, Ontario, Kevin went to Regina Mundi College in that city before attending Sheridan College in Oakville, Ontario where he graduated with full honours in the Animation Program.

Kevin has worked with George Lucas in San Francisco and Disney Studio in Toronto and has received numerous honours and awards over the years. In 2017, he was Nina's World Cablefax Prize Winner for "Best Animated Series."

Among the works with which he has been involved are *Detentionaire* (2011-14), *Grossology* (2008-09) *Lido & Stick* (2002) and *Osmosis Jones* (2001).

**DETROIT'S MALTESE COLONY IS  
LARGEST IN AMERICA**

**Between 6,000 and 7,000 Men  
From the Tiny Mediterranean Island  
Have Come Here to Rear Their Children and  
Spend the Rest of Their Days**

**Bernice Stewart**

*Editor's Note: Scholars such as the late Fr. Lawrence E. Attard and Marc Sanko have made reference to this nearly full-page article which appeared in the Detroit Free Press on page 112 of the December 12, 1920 issue. This may be the first time the full text of this valuable piece has been reprinted.*

DETROIT possesses a larger Maltese colony than any other American city—its numbers being close to 7,000. The majority of our Maltese have been in America from six months to two years, many of them coming over last spring.

Previous to the last two years, Detroit had had but a few hundred settlers from the little island south of Italy. Those few had come here, identified themselves with all sorts of trades, and done well. Many of them had found work in car automobile factories. Some of them had entered office. Some had even gone into stores as clerks. They were quiet, industrious and unostentatiously successful. Many of them set up homes in Highland Park. Thus[,] they proceeded on their unspectacular way.

***The Dockyards of Malta.***

When the war swept the world, the small island of Malta, for the last hundred years under British control, became a center of marine activity. Immense dock-yards were built. Hundreds upon hundreds of Maltese were set busy in offices connected with the yards. Great warships were constantly steaming in and out of the splendid harbor. The little island city, Valletta, seethed with activity. Transport after transport anchored in its safe waters. These transports bore English, Portuguese, Russians, French, Egyptians, Greeks, Hindus, Japanese, every race, in fact.

Malta's younger generation was caught in the turmoil. Those who didn't go to sea with the English forces were mainly swept into the work of the dockyards. Here they came in contact with the English. Those in the more responsible positions began to pick up the English manner[?] of speech and many of their [customs?].

Then when the armistice was signed the [key?] industry of Malta, other than farming, was suddenly forced to [surrender?] hundreds of its employees. [With?] the shutting down of the dock-[yards?], a great proportion of the inhabitants of this historical little island found themselves as they find themselves in Detroit today, with [no?] work to do.

They[?] remembered tales they'd [heard?] of this land over the sea. They called letters that [...]was reputed to have[...]setting forth the glory of the[...]we take so much for [granted?]. They began to wonder if they too might not go to the new [land over?] the curve of the globe and [find?] their fortunes. Most of them were young boys who had come up [during?] the war and whose first [and only?] work had been in the [dockyards?] of Valletta. They knew[...]to which they might-[...]their own island.

#### ***Up Michigan Avenue.***

*Move over,* their island was overpopulated. The whole of Malta is but [122?] miles square. The British authorities were urging them to emigrate. So, they got together what belongings they had and set out. At [first as individuals?], then dozens, then hundreds and finally thousands[...]ty headed straight for [Detroit?] passing over New York and other interesting cities on the way[...] their noses in the air. [...]over in the vicinity of Michigan Avenue and Fifth street[...]a great colony of them. [...]home of the picturesque-[...]the Italian immigrants. T[...]adopted our dress and[...]y about the streets, so that except for the strange tongue, half Arabic, half Italian, which they speak they are hardly distinguishable from Americans. It is their hundred years of association with the English that makes them so easily adaptable to our ways.

In the big Maltese colony are all classes and conditions of people. The majority are laborers and ex-farmers. But there is a certain number of well-educated Maltese among them who speak English fluently and hold responsible positions in the city. A few of them work in downtown banks. A few of them are salesmen. A few of them are typists and office clerks. Most of them are young. Many of them are unmarried.

Of course[,] it is among the laborers, especially the laborers with families, that the present temporary employment problem is most pressing. The public welfare department has done what it can to aid them, the more prosperous of their number have given what aid they can and the church has done its part. But still their condition is a problem for the city.

The Maltese have formed an association among themselves and taken club rooms at 434 Michigan Avenue. They hold frequent meetings and talk over their impressions of the land of their adoption. They even produce plays here and give musical entertainments. They have put on Shakespearean plays in their own language. Before the formation of the club their recreation was decidedly limited. It was confined mainly to walking up and down the streets gazing in the store windows and sitting about their crowded rooms talking with each other.

#### ***Father Borg's Arrival.***

Very recently the church sent Father Michael Borg all the way from Malta to look after the spiritual welfare of these people and to establish a parish here. He holds service in Equity Hall over on Fort and Second streets, and hopes some day to have a church.

Malta is a devotedly Catholic country and the life of the Maltese immigrant is closely bound to the life of the church. This close relationship is easily traceable to the history of the island which has been ardently religious since the founding of Christianity there at the time when St. Paul was shipwrecked on its shores in 60 A. D. The story goes that Publius, "the chief man of the island," accorded Paul a very cordial welcome, giving him lodging for three days and being converted to the Christian faith. From that time on the island was Christian. Even when the Arabs ruled it, from the ninth century to the thirteenth, it did not yield its Christian faith. When in 1530 the islands of Malta and Gozo were given to the Order of St. John of Jerusalem, afterward known as the Knights of Malta, the Christian faith of the island was greatly strengthened. Many of these crusading knights of the Middle Ages were buried in Malta. Thus, it is easy to understand why the people of Malta feel so attached to the church. Thus, it is easy to understand why the Maltese here in Detroit were so delighted when Father Borg arrived about a month ago.

Father Borg is a quiet, smiling man in his early thirties, very gentle and concerned about his people and very interested in the rushing city in which he finds himself. He knows so little about the secular side of our industrial life that it is difficult to see how he will be able to give his parishioners the advice about material ways and means that they so patently need. But he will beyond doubt be the means of getting his people into a more firmly organized body, of bringing them together for mutual helpfulness so that those among them who have met with success

can give aid and encouragement to the less fortunate of their members and can save them from exploitation at the hands of the unscrupulous.

***Much Like Americans.***

The Maltese are on the short side of medium height and haven't quite the ruggedness of Italians

or Austrians. In complexion they vary almost as much as we do from fair skin and blue eyes to olive skin and very dark eyes, On the whole they look rather like Americans. Their children especially are like the American children in looks and manners.



*All these children were born in Malta but they giggled and chattered like American kiddies when they were allowed a few minutes recess from school to have their pictures taken.*

The youngsters photographed on this page were as lively and jolly as our own youngsters when they were called out of their classes at the parish school at the corner of Porter and Brooklyn avenues to pose before the camera. Father Borg spoke to them in Maltese and they plied him with dozens of questions. Was the camera man also a Maltese? When would they see their pictures? Did they have to go back in school as soon as their pictures were taken? And so on—

In Malta the women wear English clothes with the exception of the head-dress. In place of a hat they wrap a large dark scarf over their head and shoulders known as the "faldetta." The "faldetta" in no way resembles the shawls of the other European women.

It is much more suggestive by its heavy flowing lines, of the monk's cowl. But Detroit's Maltese women have abandoned their picturesque head-dress and go about hatted as we are hatted. These women are attractive, with large eyes set far apart, round chins and bright red lips. They are industrious, fond of their children of whom they have a goodly number, and used to hard work. All of them are skilled needle women. They make the most exquisite laces in the world, gossamer delicate handiwork such as the average American has never even laid eyes on. One piece I saw was easily a foot wide and yards and yards long. Every stitch of it was done by hand and the finished result was like some foamy cobweb. They embroider equally well with colorful silks.

## TORTA TA' SAN MARTIN (ST. MARTIN'S CAKE)

Mary Rose Aquilina

St. Martin of Tours was a Roman soldier with a good heart. After cutting up his cloak to assist a poor beggar on the street, he had a dream which led him to convert to Christianity. St. Martin's feast, locally known as *il-festa ta' San Martin*, falls annually on 11th November, the same as Remembrance Day. Right up until the Middle Ages, there was a tradition of fasting for 40 days before Christmas, starting on 11th November, the day of St Martin. Traditionally, people ate and drank heavily on the eve of St. Martin as a final indulgence before the fast. With St. Martin also being the protector of wine makers and tavern owners, the farmers would traditionally enjoy the first wine tasting from the previous summer's harvest on St. Martin's Day.

Figs are also largely associated with St. Martin. Traditionally, this precious winter dessert was also first opened on St Martin's Day, along with the wine. Sun-dried figs (*tin imqadedd*) were prepared in August according to the family's secret recipe and packed in a wooden or tin box lined with paper. Layers of sun-dried figs, chopped toasted almonds, fresh bay leaves and fennel seeds were pressed and sprinkled with anisette, ending with a layer of bay leaves. This would be the forerunner of the St. Martin's Cake (*It-Torta ta' San Martin*) that's made from a mixture of fruit and nuts similar to that in the bag, perhaps with a hint of cinnamon or liquor.

Speaking of the St. Martin's Bag (*il-Borza ta' San Martin*), this is what the children looked forward to on the Feast of St Martin. The bag of St Martin traditionally includes an apple, an orange, a tangerine and a pomegranate, as well as walnuts, hazelnuts, chestnuts, almonds and figs. A glazed 'St Martin's bun' is typically included as a sweet. The nuts in the bags (except the almonds sometimes) come still in their shells. Children did not covet their bag only for

the goodies to eat but also for the many games to play with them. They used to enjoy playing Maltese traditional games involving nuts including:

- *Kastelli*, with at least five walnuts for each player marble balls.
- *Boċċi*, using hazel nuts instead of small marble balls and used a large hazel nut, *bubun - mamma*, a larger marble to hit the smaller nuts.
- Nuts were also used as a winning reward when playing *qabza u qabda - żewġ jew fart - it-trija - il-qriba - xixu - intekkuh - ic-ciptatu* which were played with shelled almonds.

Children saved the nuts to play for a long time and ate them when they got broken. And, of course, we all remember the rhyme we recited even as children .....*Ġewż, lewż, qastan, tin, kemm inħobbu l' San Martin!* (Walnuts, almonds, chestnuts, figs; oh, how I love Saint Martin!")

### DATE PASTE:

- 1½ c chopped dates (220g/about 30 medium)
- Rind and juice of two oranges,
- Rind and juice of 2 mandarins,
- Rind and juice of 2 lemons
- 1/3c (30 ml) sambuca liquor,

Put the fruit juice in a pot over a low flame and add dates. Cook until they dissolve.



Add the sambuca and mix.



### CAKE BATTER

- 1¼ c (200 g) self-rising flour
- ½ c (100 g) castor sugar
- 1/3 c (30 ml) sunflower oil
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon mixed spice (½ tsp cinnamon, ¼ tsp nutmeg, ¼ tsp cloves)
- 2 tablespoons cocoa powder
- 3 beaten eggs
- ¾ c (100g) roasted walnuts
- ¾ c (100g) roasted hazelnuts
- ¾ c (100g) roasted almonds
- some chopped glazed cherries
- some cherries to decorate (save some to decorate the top of the cake)
- some honey to glaze



Ingredients

### METHOD

- Mix the sifted flour with the baking powder, sugar and cocoa powder.
- Add the mixed nuts, leaving some to

decorate the surface.

- Add the spices, rind, oil, and eggs.



- Add some chopped glazed cherries. Leave some halves to decorate.



- Mix in the date paste into the dry ingredients. If the batter feels too thick to mix, add some orange juice a bit at a time.



- Pour into a lined 23 cm (9-inch) wide and 8 cm (3-inch) deep pan.



- Decorate with additional glazed cherry halves and roasted almonds



- Bake at 180C (350F) for around 35 minutes, covering with the parchment paper for the last 20 minutes so the nuts won't get burnt. (If the pan is a springform pan, the cake is easier to remove from the pan when cool.)
- Insert a toothpick in the middle to find if the cake has cooked well. Leave to cool and pour some honey for a nice glazed look.
- Decorate with nuts and cherries on top.

YIELD: one 23 cm (9-inch) round cake



## ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE MALTESE COMMUNITIES

Dan Brock

### CALIFORNIA

**Maltese-American Social Club of San Francisco**  
The **Graton Casino Bus Trip** took place on Saturday, November 6<sup>th</sup>.

### GOZO

#### **Maltese Canadian Association (Gozo)**

A **Pork Roast** was held at "Tal-Peffu," the farm of Alfred Camilleri, in Nadur, Gozo, on the afternoon of Saturday, November 13<sup>th</sup>. (See pages 5-7.)

**Marlene Muscat**, the Association's President, passed away on Monday, November 22<sup>nd</sup> after a short battle with cancer. While living in Canada, she volunteered for many years on the *Leġen Malti* television program, along with Frank Attard, Valeria Borg and Gina Hili.

### MICHIGAN

#### **Maltese American Community Club of Dearborn**

A **Craft Show** was held at the Club, on Sunday, November 28<sup>th</sup>. (See page 37.)

## MALTESE AMERICAN COMMUNITY CLUB

*Presents its annual*

# Craft Show

**Maltese Crafts & Merchandise**

**Food~Pastizzi~Bake Sale**

**November 28th, 2021**

**11:00 A.M - 4:00 P.M**

**MALTESE AMERICAN COMMUNITY CLUB**

**5221 OAKMAN BLVD, DEARBORN**

**Support small businesses**

**& Support MACC**

On Sunday, November 21<sup>st</sup>, the Club celebrated a **Mass** in remembrance of **ALL** deceased members. (See pages 15-16.)

**NEW YORK CITY**

**Maltese Center: Astoria**

**Bingo** took place in the Lower Hall on Sunday, November 14<sup>th</sup>.



This year's annual **New Year's Eve Dinner Party** will be held on Friday, December 31<sup>st</sup> at the Astoria World Manor.



A Festive Day for everyone is to take place on Saturday, December 4<sup>th</sup> with the Centre open from 3:00 p.m. until 11:00 p.m. A festive day is planned with a **Model Train Show**, **North Pole Mailbox**, a visit from **Santa**, **Children's Christmas Party** (5:00 p.m.), **Christmas Carols**, **Nativity Scene** and the **Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony** (7:00 p.m.), **Ugly Sweater Contest** and more.



**ONTARIO**

**Greater Toronto Area**

**Malta Band Club**

A **Memorial Service** was held at 3:00 p.m. on Sunday, November 14<sup>th</sup>, followed by a **Bake Sale**. (See page 10.)

The **Annual Concert & Roast Beef Dinner** took place on the evening of Saturday, November 20<sup>th</sup>. (See page 11.)

The **Children's Christmas Party** will be held on Sunday, December 12<sup>th</sup>.

The **Members' Dinner** will be held on Saturday, December 19<sup>th</sup>.

There will be a **New Year's Eve Celebration**, on Friday, December 31<sup>st</sup>.

The **Annual General Meeting and Elections** will take place on Sunday, January 23, 2022.

**Maltese-Canadian Museum Archives and Visitors Centre**

On Tuesday, November 16<sup>th</sup>, Rose Cassar, one of the volunteers, was surprised with a birthday cake.



**Mike Gouveia, Rose Cassar and Debbie Lightfoot**

**LEHEN MALTI  
(Maltese Voice)**

**OMNI 1 - Ontario**  
Saturdays 8:30 a.m.  
Tuesdays 11:30 a.m.  
Thursdays 8:30 a.m.

**OMNI BC**  
Saturdays 2:00 p.m.

**OMNI Alberta**  
Saturdays 2:00 p.m.

**Melita Soccer Club**

A **Lamb Dinner** was held on Saturday, November 13<sup>th</sup>. (See pages 7-9.)

A **Memorial Service** was conducted on Friday, November 19<sup>th</sup>. (See page 15.)

A **Bus Trip to Casino Rama** took place on Saturday November 27<sup>th</sup>.

The **soccer team** held its **Christmas Dinner** at the Club on the evening of Saturday, November 27<sup>th</sup>. (See pages 36 and 37).

The **Christmas Dinner Party** is to be held on Saturday, December 11<sup>th</sup>.

**Melita Soccer Club Inc.**

**Christmas Celebration**

**December 11**

**\$25**

**Menu: Veal, Rice, Potatoes, Veggies, Cake**

Please call Mary Ann at 647 290 4856  
BEFORE December 8 to reserve your ticket

There will be a **New Year's Eve Dinner Party** on Friday, December 31<sup>st</sup>.

The **Annual Meeting and Election** will take place on Sunday, January 16, 2022.

For further information, contact the Club at 416-763-5317 or Mary Ann Piscopo at 647-290-4856.

**St. Paul the Apostle Parish**

**Fr. Karm Borg, MSSP**, a former pastor here between 2001 and 2015, died of a heart attack in Rabat, Malta on Tuesday, November 23<sup>rd</sup>. He is a cousin of Fr. Mario Micallef, MSSP, the present pastor. A Memorial Mass was held for Fr. Karm at the church on Tuesday, November 30<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m.

A Memorial Mass was held for **Marlene Muscat** at 7:00 p.m. on Friday, December 3<sup>rd</sup>. A former parish-ioner, she died in Gozo on Monday, November 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**London**

A **luncheon** for members of the Maltese Canadian community of the London area and friends was held at 12:30 p.m., at the **Mandarin Restaurant**, in the Victoria Place Mall, 387 Wellington Road, on Friday, November 26<sup>th</sup>. (See page 33)

The next luncheon will be held at **East Side Mario's**, in the RioCan Shopping Mall, 94 Fanshawe Park Road East, at 12:30 p.m. on Thursday, December 16<sup>th</sup>.

**Windsor**

**Malta United Society of Windsor, Ontario**

A **Rabbit/Fenek and Spaghetti Dinner** was held on Saturday, November 20<sup>th</sup>. (See pages 20-22.)

**CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PARTY 2011  
THE MALTESE CANADIAN CLUB OF  
LONDON**

**Ted Gauci**

We held the Christmas Party for our children this year on Sunday, December 11<sup>th</sup> from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. The children ranged in age from three months to 10 years. We were very lucky with the weather this year, and all 14 children who were signed up were present.

For the first hour or so Linda Szabo kept the children busy with games and art making while Eva Lambkin provided them with hot dogs and drinks.



**Some of the Children  
Constructing Christmas Bells**



**The Children Watch and Listen Attentively  
as Linda Szabo Reads to Them**

At approximately 3:00 pm Santa and Mrs. Claus appeared at the door and the children became very excited. They all sat on the carpet while Santa talked to each one, and with most he even knew their name.

Then came the time for the gifts to be distributed. Each child got to sit on Santa's knee and receive a gift. During this time many pictures were taken by parents and grandparents alike.



**Four-Year-Old Spencer Bugeja  
Receives His Present from Santa**

Photos by Ted Gauci and Tony Galea

**THOMAS AND MICHELINA VELLA**

**Joanne (Zammit) Prince**



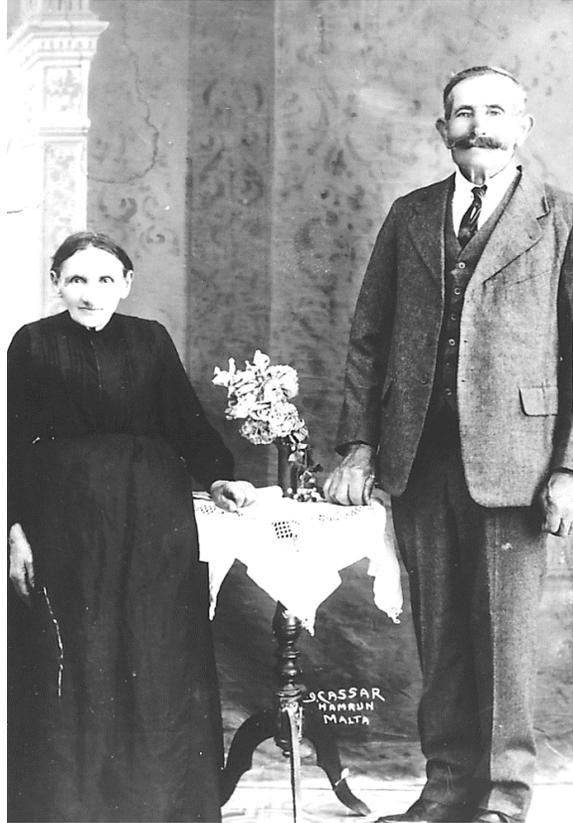
*Joanne Prince is a granddaughter of Thomas and Kelina Vella and a daughter of Mary (Vella) Zammit and lives in Mississauga, Ontario*

Tommaso 'Thomas' Vella was born on February 5, 1888, in Rabat, Malta to Giovanni 'John' and Maria Carmela (Tonna) Vella. The family lived at 35 Sda Nuova (believed to now be Triq Navarra) in that town.



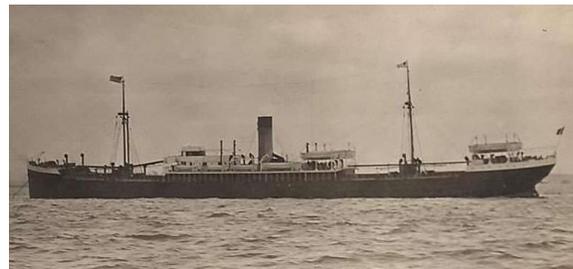
**Carmela & Giovanni Vella,  
Thomas' Parents**

On April 30, 1911, in Mellieha, Tommaso married Michelina "Kelina" Debono a daughter of Andrew "Pajpaj" and Anna (Grech) Debono of Mellieha. Kelina was born on October 28, 1893.



**Anne (Grech) [b. abt. 1855] &  
Andrew 'Pajpaj' Debono [b. 1853]  
in Mellieha, Malta, Parents of Michelina**

With his wife pregnant with their first child, Tommaso applied for a passport, on February 25, 1913 to go to Toronto, Ontario, Canada. He indicated that he was a gardener and was literate. Most Maltese immigrating to Canada at this time were not. After travelling to Le Havre, France, Tommaso boarded the S.S. *Floride* and arrived in Halifax, Nova Scotia, on April 4, 1913.



**S.S. *Floride*, Shipwrecked in 1915**

By this time, his destination had changed to Brantford, Ontario where, at the time, more Maltese were momentarily living than anywhere else in Canada. His purpose was to find a better place to live for his wife and soon-to-be-daughter, Carmela. Meanwhile, Kelina continued to live with her in-laws, Giovanni and Carmela Vella in Rabat. In those days it was typical that she become a type of servant and was expected to cook and clean for them. It was too much for her after Carmela was born and upon complaining to her father about it, he told her to stay only with them in Mellieha. She had previously been spending part of the year with her parents.

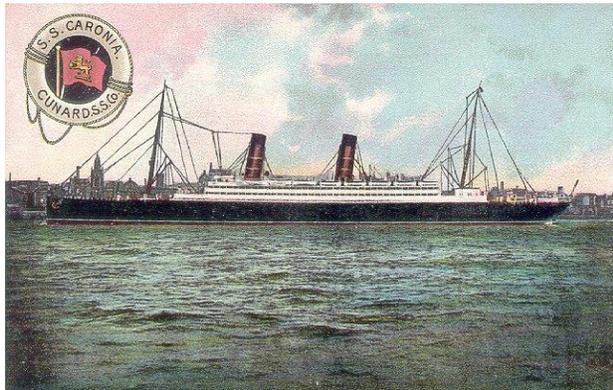
At the time their only communication with each other was by postal mail and this is how Thomas and Kelina kept in touch for the next several years.

While many of the Maltese males living in Canada enlisted or were conscripted into the Canadian Armed Forces during the First World War, there is no record of Thomas having done so.

By September 1918, we find Thomas living at 366 Adelaide Street in Toronto and working as a painter. He was very good at it and even did faux painting too. We had his tools at one point but lost track of them over the years.

Thomas was still living on Adelaide Street in 1920 when he returned to Malta, by way of St. John, New Brunswick, to bring his wife and child back to Ontario with him.

He, Kelina (pregnant with their second child, Annie) and young Carmela (who had been born in Rabat on August 19, 1913, while Thomas was living in Ontario and Kelina was living with her in-laws) sailed on the S.S. *Caronia*, from Liverpool, on June 12, 1920, and arrived at Halifax on June 19<sup>th</sup>.



**S.S. Caronia, Launched in 1904**

Eventually, Thomas's sisters: Josephine (Vella) Micallef and Theresa (Vella) Micallef and his brother, Frank Vella, came too.

He rented a flat on Simcoe Street for his small family to prepare for baby Annie, who was born later in 1920, Thomas got a small hospital grade crib. This crib was passed on through the family, but that is a story for another time.



**The Vella Family, About 1924**  
**Front row: Annie and Mary**  
**Back row: Kelina, Jean (the baby), Carmela and Thomas**

In 1923, the family moved to Dundas Street. By 1927, they were living at 778 Gladstone Avenue in the Bloor and Dufferin area. Finally, they settled at 3245 Dundas Street.

Meanwhile, four more children were born: Mary in 1922, Jean in 1923, Audrey in 1925 and lastly, a son, Joe, in 1929. At the time of this writing, Annie (101), Mary (99) and Joe (92) are still with us.

Thomas, my Nannu "Mosu," died in Toronto on February 8, 1958, three days after his 70<sup>th</sup> birthday. When my Nanna Kelina died on January 4, 1982 all six of her children and their spouses were still alive. At the time, she had 33 grandchildren and 43 great-grandchildren. Three more grandchildren were born later that year: David to Annie & Joe Carwana, Jim to Audrey & Tony Saliba, and Gerald to Joe & Carmela Vella.



**Thomas & Kelina Vella, 1956**

**FACEBOOK POSTINGS FROM THE  
EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALTA  
TO THE UNITED STATES**

**Dan Brock**

Ambassador Keith Azzopardi joined the EU Delegation and other EU Ambassadors during a trip to Delaware on Monday, October 18<sup>th</sup> for a series of events and meetings with Senator Chris Coons, Governor John Carney, State Representatives and Senators, Bishop Silvester Beaman and many others.



**Ambassador Keith Azzopardi on Left**

On Monday, October 25<sup>th</sup>, the Embassy of Malta in Washington DC and the Permanent Representation of Malta to the UN co-hosted an event on Jewish Heritage Malta, in collaboration with the Malta Tourism Authority and the Israeli Ministry of Tourism under the auspices of the Culture Diplomacy Fund of the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs.

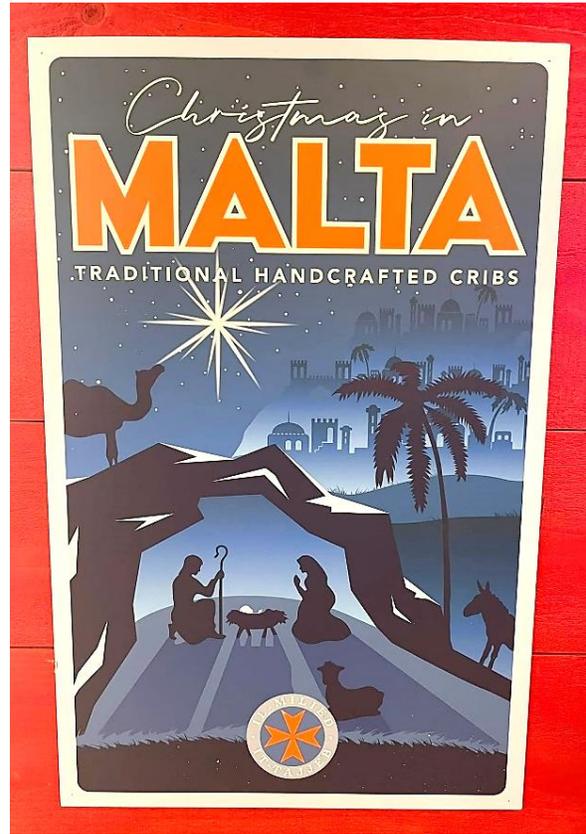


**Ambassador Keith Azzopardi**



Photos by Vitaliy Piltser

On Saturday, November 13<sup>th</sup>, Hon. Dr José Herrera, Malta's Minister for National Heritage, the Arts and Local Government opened the exhibition 'Christmas in Malta', showcasing Maltese traditional hand-crafted cribs at the Museum of the Bible in Washington DC, which will remain open to the public until February 6, 2022. For further information visit <https://www.museumofthebible.org/christmas-in-malta>



Hon. Dr José Herrera

On November 16<sup>th</sup>, Frank Giordano, Malta's Honorary Consul for the States of Pennsylvania and New Jersey and President of the Philly POPS was honored with the prestigious Crystal Award by the Union League of Philadelphia, for his outstanding contribution in arts, music and the humanities.



Honorary Consul Frank Giordano

**Marthese Fenech's** TV Pilot, *Empires of Smoke* is the **2021 winner** of the Circa Historical Screenplay Competition. Congratulations Mar!



**The Crystal Award**

*Information obtained largely from the Facebook page of the Embassy of the Republic of Malta to the United States.*

**MONTHLY LUNCHEON, LONDON, ONTARIO**

**Dan Brock**

On Friday, November 26<sup>th</sup>, 33 of us met at 12:30 p.m., at the Mandarin Restaurant on Wellington Road South, as the snow was falling, for lunch and to socialize. We had a private room to ourselves, which made it more conducive to socialize.



Photo by Charles Micallef

**MELITA SOCCER CLUB  
MEMORIAL SERVICE**

**Mary Ann Piscopo**

A **Memorial Service** was conducted at the Club by Fr. Mario Micallef, MSSP, on Friday, November 19<sup>th</sup>.



**Fr. Mario Micallef, MSSP**



Photos courtesy of Dr. Raymond Xerri

The organist was Freddie Fenech. Elsie Attard, Bernadette Logan and Tessie Vella comprised the choir while I said the readings.

This service was for all the club members who had passed away since November 2019.

These are:

- |                  |                  |
|------------------|------------------|
| Charlie Cristina | Mario Muscat     |
| Jimmy Dalli      | Larry Said       |
| John Farrugia    | John Spiteri     |
| Leli Gatt        | Tarcisio Spiteri |
| Joseph Mercieca  | Fred Vella       |
| Carmel Micallef  | Leli Zammit      |
| Charlie Micallef |                  |

May they all rest in peace.

**DAY OF REMEMBRANCE AT THE  
MALTESE AMERICAN COMMUNITY CLUB  
OF DEARBORN**

**RENA XUEREB**

About 60 people attended the Rosary, Mass and buffet dinner in remembrance of the deceased members of the Club.

Mary Debono led in the praying of the Rosary in Maltese. This was followed by the celebration of Mass by Fr. Joseph Mallia. Father Joe is currently pastor of Holy Family Parish, Memphis and St. Augustine Parish, Richmond on Michigan's M-19 to the northeast of Metro Detroit.

During the Mass, Josephine Axiak and Angela Borg read out the names of each deceased club member while Natalia Suchyta rang the bell after the calling of each name.



**Dr. Raymond Xerri  
Was among Those in Attendance**



Father Joe Is Seated in the Left Background while Mary Debono is in the Right Foreground

### FAMILY, PASTIZZI AND THE MEDITERRANEAN\*

Maria Calleja



*Maria Calleja is a journalist who writes articles on travel, life, community and political topics. She has been published on the Torontoist and HuffPost Canada websites. You can find her writing at [mariacallejawriter.com](http://mariacallejawriter.com).*

Following the Mass, members enjoyed their chicken parmesan dinner.



My whole childhood I had to describe the country of Malta. I am half Maltese and when I would share this information most people would respond with a quizzical, "Where?" I had a form sentence that I would shoot back with, "It is a country that is an island. It is south of Sicily." North Americans don't seem to be too familiar with the Mediterranean destination but in Europe it is a popular sunny vacation spot. Until Malta's independence from the UK in 1964, Queen Elizabeth II was the Queen of Malta and there are still about 500,000 visitors from the UK to Malta each year.

Even though I became an unofficial childhood ambassador for Malta, I had never actually been to Malta. I was happy to finish off plates of my nanna's imqarrun, a yummy oven baked pasta dish, and plates of pastizzi, and I spent time chatting with other Maltese families at the Malta Bake Shop in the Junction in Toronto, Canada.

Since my Maltese father passed away when I was 13, I had felt disconnected from the country and the culture, but I felt that the Mediterranean warmth was still part of my character. I wanted to hear the familiar Maltese accent which always sounded like a mix of Italian, Arabic, and Persian to me. I wanted to sit with large groups of family, who spoke loudly and dramatically, as my nanna did. So, I connected with family I had never met before and flew into the Maltese International Airport not really knowing what to expect.

I was met by my uncle's cousin and the family knew me only as George's daughter. I had not been called George's daughter in a long time and it helped to create an image of my father in my mind and I could feel a bit of his presence again. I met family member after family member and felt as if I had uncovered something brilliant. There was a whole band of people now in Msida, Malta who were happy to have me in their home and share their Maltese culture with me, because I was family.

My family showed me all of Malta and its neighbouring island of Gozo and shared bits of the country's history. Malta has an international flair as it has been conquered by so many different countries. It is a strategic piece of land in between Sicily and Northern Africa and has been the military outpost for several cultures, like the Romans, Byzantines and Arabs, but most recently for the British during the World Wars. The island was heavily bombed in World War II and it lost 10,761 buildings during the siege, including Valletta's Grand Opera House. Walking around the streets of Malta I could still see British influences as there are still some classic red phone booths standing and British home shops. They also have visions of my Canadian childhood manifested in Marks and Spencer and Bata shoe stores.

Malta's multicultural history also comes from the Order of St. John, a group of knights who supported the sick in Europe and then became a military organization. The Knights ruled Malta from 1530 to 1798 and had members from all over Europe. The rotating leader of the order was called the Grand

Master and this honour was given to various European countries over the years.



This made me think that some of my DNA might be coded with all of these years of European and multicultural influence, as I have always been drawn by the allure of new and fascinating cultures. The idea of the Knights seemed to be an early version of what a UN might be, as knights from all over Europe ruled and designed a lot of the structures that can be seen in Malta today. The Knights built Fort St. Angelo and the Grand Masters' Palace in Valletta which housed Malta's parliament for many years. There are also other structures remaining in Malta from this era displaying the engineering skills of the Order, which include watch towers, aqueducts, churches and cathedrals.

I checked out St. John's Cathedral in Valletta which houses the remains of several knights of the order. I have been in numerous cathedrals over Europe, but this one stood out for me as there are chapels for all of the countries included in the order. For example, France's chapel is covered with fleur de lys, statues and paintings.

I felt comfortable walking through the streets of Valletta as my family stopped every few minutes to chat with family friends, eating on patios or simply browsing in the streets. They introduced me to one man as George's daughter, and he began to tell us stories of when my father came back to visit Malta as an adult. He didn't realize it but it was as if he had given me a warm handshake or blanket as he described a view of my father as he existed outside of my world view. He said that George tried hard to show that he still knew some Maltese and that he talked about scuba diving, which was one of his passions.



**The Majestic Azure Window before Its Collapse**

Also, in the streets of Valletta the colourful bay windows that adorn buildings remind me of British structures. Hanging out of these windows were of course nannas surveying the street to see who was doing what and when. They also were bringing in laundry lines that criss-crossed overhead on some narrower streets.

Between meals of pastizzi, and pigeon pie, my family also took me to see the ancient city of Mdina which was founded by the Phoenicians and was Malta's capital in the Middle Ages. The Arabs changed the name of the city to Mdina from the Arabic Medina. The city is quiet as there are enforced noise regulations and the remaining residents are lucky to own some properties with some luxury price tags. Visiting the city was almost a holy experience for me as the quietness was a soothing comfort and the lightness of the limestone walls made me feel as if I were in the valleys of Jordan viewing the city of Petra.

My family also took me to the Mosta Dome which was one of those moments where I had to take a seat to take in the gorgeous dome and hanging chandeliers. The dome is the fourth largest in Europe and is dedicated to the Assumption of the Virgin Mary. It has a special place in the hearts of the Maltese as a bomb, which didn't explode, was dropped in the rotunda in 1942. The Maltese of course attributed this to the help of the Virgin Mary.

Other must sees include St. Paul's Bay which has a variety of restaurants and resorts.



**Maltese Fishing Boats**

And to see the famous Maltese multicolour fishing boats you can visit the fishing village of Marsaxlokk. When we visited the fishing village, I felt the warmth of the Maltese people again as there were houses

that were labelled with the first names of the owners. There was also one of the many festivals that happen in Malta going on at the local church. There was a big band playing and a classical singer belting out a soothing song. In the background were all of the lights and tinsel decorations that were set up for that town's religious festival. It seemed like everyone was continually celebrating a religious saint or community as I travelled through Malta, which gave me insight into the joyous nature of the Maltese.

My family and I also walked along the seaside promenade of Sliema. The walk seemed perfect at dusk as the temperatures cooled off and families strolled the path after dinner. Another night for some ice cream we checked out the club and bar district of St. Julian's which is popular with backpackers. We would also find seaside cafes where we drank Kinnie, the Maltese soft drink, and tried other seafood and pasta dishes. Near one of those cafes, I spent an afternoon on the rock face which was like an improvised beach for the Maltese. Everyone was stretched out over the rocks laying on their towels. There was a ladder that had been attached to the rock for entering the water. It was here that I tread water and looked around at the ancient buildings around me in awe.



**A Gentleman Relaxing and Fishing**



**Sunset off the Island of Malta**

I knew that the emotions and inspirations of this trip would not be duplicated and I wished I could stay longer to feel the comfort and warmth of the Maltese people. I will definitely be returning for pastizzi soon.

*\* This is a slight revision of the article which appeared on Maria's blog on November 4, 2021.*

**NEW STORY BOOK ABOUT CHILDHOOD IN THE PAST IN MALTA\***

**Submitted by Charles Buttigieg**

**Editor's Note:** *This children's book has been included in this issue, with those of Maltese blood as well as those of Maltese birth living in North America in particular in mind, as it should "offer new generations easy to read and pleasing anecdotes that would help them get to know and understand better the kind of village culture and environment children of years gone by were brought up in. At the same time, the stories also offer some nostalgic reading to elders, especially those who like to read and recount stories to children about the time when they themselves were still very young."*

*Karamellu tar-Raħal t'Isfel – l-Ewwel Ktieb* is a collection of 10 stories in Maltese, accompanied by specifically designed colourful visuals, about childhood in a Maltese village at a time still without the arrival of washing machines, television, computer, internet and mobile.

Karamellu represents a boy born and brought up in a worker's family that used to live in the part of the village of Żejtun which is known as Ir-Raħal t'Isfel.

The author of the stories is this boy: the writer Charles Buttigieg who in the book signs as In-Nannu Karm.

The book was launched on October 26, 2021, at the Żejtun Primary School, the school which the author used to go to when he was still young, with the kind permission and cooperation of the Heads of the two sections of the school, Mr Saviour Sammut (Primary School A) and Mr Edmond Pace (Primary School B).

Also present were Ms Maria Dolores Abela, the Mayor of Żejtun, and Mr David Muscat, Chief Executive Officer of the National Literacy Agency.

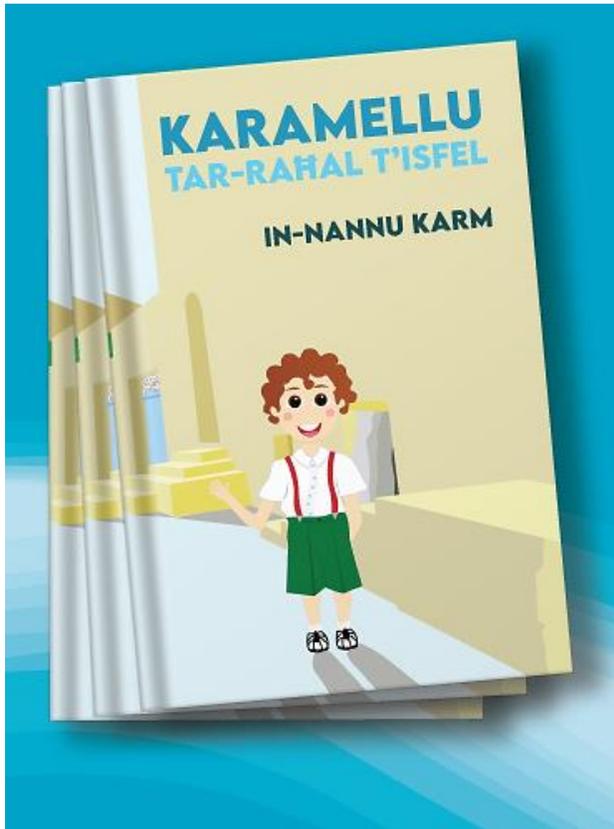
The 100-page book has been published with the cooperation of the National Literacy Agency.

Some of the Karamellu stories were inspired by true experiences of the author. Other stories introduce the reader to how certain people and characters in the life of the author, as a small boy, used to live and

behave.

In general, the narratives offer an idea of the life pattern of children and their families many years ago, together with their way of life in a calm and serene environment where everybody used to know everybody and where there was no shortage of exciting moments or happenings (*praspas*).

The main aim of the Karamellu stories is to offer new generations easy to read and pleasing anecdotes that would help them get to know and understand better the kind of village culture and environment children of years gone by were brought up in. At the same time, the stories also offer some nostalgic reading to elders, especially those who like to read and recount stories to children about the time when they themselves were still very young.



The idea to start compiling the Karamellu stories in books is rooted in the impressive support the stories received when they started to be posted on Facebook at the time of the Covid-19 lockdown, with many readers soliciting the publication of the stories in book form.

Facebook has seen 65 Karamellu stories to date.

Running through the heart of the stories one discovers natural examples of how children can live happily with what they have while also looking forward to a better life, the joy of understanding, respecting and helping others especially those within one's own community, the abundant benefits of personal communication, and how wonderful it is to remain open-minded in the face of progress.

The designers and setters of the book are CN Creative Designs.

More information may be obtained from the Karamellu tar-Raĥal t'Isfel website:

<https://nannukarm.org>.

\* An article by Charles Buttigieg, entitled "Dar l-Emigrant's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary: A Fitting Tribute" appeared in the March 2021 issue of this newsletter.

**RABBIT/FENEK AND SPAGHETTI DINNER  
MALTA UNITED SOCIETY OF WINDSOR\***

**Dan Brock**

A **Rabbit/Fenek and Spaghetti Dinner** was held at the club on Saturday, November 20<sup>th</sup>. Maria Gristi prepared the fresh *imqaret*.





# The Maltese Presence in North America

December 2021



\* Found on the Society's Facebook page.

**Doris Vella** died in Guelph, Ontario on February 3, 2010. She was the wife of Frank Vella whom she had married in Scarborough, Ontario on September 25, 1965. Before arriving by plane in Montreal, she had lived in Paola, Malta. Her parents were Lawrence "Lorry" and Concetta (Patiniott) Agius. Doris was born in Vittoriosa on October 30, 1933 and was baptized Maria Dolores Ludgarda at the parish church in Vittoria.

Doris was survived by her husband Frank and son John.

**CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR'S MESSAGE  
FROM THE HON. EVARIST BARTOLO,  
MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AND EUROPEAN AFFAIRS – 2021**

**Bringing Maltese and Gozitans together**



We might be a small country in size, but we have a big family spread all over the world and it is my pleasure to talk to you today and wish you a good year ahead, knowing full well that we will still be faced by the challenge of Covid-19 both to our health and livelihood. It has turned our lives upside down. Please stay safe and take all the necessary precautions to protect your health and that of those around you.

Maltese and Gozitans have been emigrating to all corners of the world for centuries. At first most of our people who had to emigrate because of unemployment and poverty, sought a better life in neighbouring Mediterranean countries.

Then since the 1800s they started venturing in faraway countries like Argentina, the United States and Australia. Today there are Maltese and Gozitans and their descendants in around 194 countries, practically in every country in the world. Like thousands of other Maltese and Gozitans I have relatives in at least three other countries on different sides of our planet.

There are about 120,000 first generation and 300,000 second and third generation Maltese living in other countries. This means that we have a diaspora of about 420,000, as many Maltese and Gozitans as we have in our islands.

A 2019 World Bank report shows that even today 24 per cent of all Maltese live outside Malta, putting the rate of emigration for the Maltese population as the highest out of any EU country. The destinations have changed as today we have new diasporas in Brussels and Luxembourg reflecting our membership of the European Union.

Despite all this I still feel that in our islands we are still not aware enough of the reality and history of emigration of our people throughout the centuries. I still feel that we still consider our history and reality of emigration as parallel to our history and reality on the islands.

I think that we need to address this and move towards becoming more aware and forging more links among the Maltese and Gozitans in the whole wide world and considering ourselves as one.

The technology of communication is at least making it more possible to have a closer community and to be more in touch with each other across the continents. We must strive to get even closer. May I wish you a healthy and prosperous 2022.

Evarist Bartolo  
Minister for Foreign and European Affairs

**MONTHLY MESSAGE FROM THE CONSUL GENERAL  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALTA TO CANADA**

**Malta might be a tiny country in its physical size but its Diaspora has a global outreach... Maltese Canadians are an integral part of Global Malta being the second largest community outside Malta**



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

Yes, Canada hosts the second largest Maltese community outside Malta and this fact makes Maltese Canadians part of a larger Maltese and Gozitan global family. Your ancestral country is not just the Maltese Islands but wherever there are Maltese and Gozitans living beyond the shores of Malta in a concept I like to call Global Malta. Global Malta means that the Maltese Islands have a global dimension and extend to 197 countries and territories around the globe. “Global” is not unique to Malta. Every country and territory around the world has a global dimension. For some its importance is larger than for others, owing to the simple fact that a number of countries have more of their citizenry and persons of ancestry beyond their homeland. Malta is one of 10 European countries which have a larger population outside the homeland. The same can be said of Ireland, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, San Marino and others.

**Many more educational resources for the Maltese Canadian Libraries in the GTA. Many more on its way from Malta and Gozo**

More publications – historic, children stories, Maltese and Gozitan legends – continue to be made available in the indicated libraries for all Maltese Canadians to consult. Not surprising, these publications are increasing interest amongst parents, children and the elderly alike. Now that such publications are available to all, children and students can easily access them for doing their homework and assignments about different aspects of Maltese life in their

ancestral country, reading sessions and/or bedtime reading.

**Maltese Canadians mourn two personalities who gave so much to them**

Fr Karm Borg (1951-2021), who served as pastor of St Paul the Apostle Maltese Canadian Church for 15 years between 2001 and 2015, passed away. Maltese Canadian Marlene Muscat also died during the month of November. She was a very active member of the Maltese Canadian community in Toronto at St Paul The Apostle Church, the Gozo Club, a decade with *Leĥen Malti-TV*, the Maltese Language School with Carmen Galea’s group and President of the Maltese Canadian Association in the Maltese Islands. Memorial Masses were held at 7:00 p.m., at St Paul the Apostle Maltese Canadian Church, for Fr Karm Borg on Tuesday, November 30th, and for Marlene Muscat on Friday, December 3rd. O Lord grant them Eternal Life.

**Omicron follows Delta+ of COVID-19**

The Consulate General of Malta to Canada will continue to provide all services despite the gradual increasing numbers of COVID-19 and now the fast spreading new variant called, Omicron. We are entering the fourth wave of this pandemic and the Consulate like any other office is also subject to the City of Toronto, Province of Ontario and Canadian Federal Government health regulations. So if you require a service please contact us and do leave adequate time before the actual document, etc. is needed. For example, if your Maltese passport expires from January 1st on, unless you have your birth certificate and/or marriage certificate, no urgent passport can be issued because of the new changes to the rules of issuing a Maltese passport to those living in Canada. Please follow the ‘Consulate General of Malta to Canada,’ on Meta (formerly Facebook) for new posts explaining the legal changes to registrations of Canadian birth and marriage certificates.

**More Maltese Canadian personalities continue to make us proud in Malta and in Canada**

In all of my messages, I like to bring to light the successes of Maltese Canadians who are the true ambassadors of Malta in Canada and around the world. In this message, I would like to mention the

Micallef family from London, Ontario, Charlie and Rose and their three sons, Darren, Jason and Kevin. Charlie and Rose own the Sprucedale Care Centre in Strathroy, Ontario with 96 beds managed by their son, Darren Micallef. This Care Centre is a winner of a number of awards for its high standard of service.



Entrance to Sprucedale Care Centre

Their son Kevin is a renowned Maltese Canadian film director, film animator, second unit director/-assistant director, film writer and artist known for a number of productions and has received numerous honours and awards. Jason, another son, is a well-established advertising producer and generates websites and promotional material for top companies in Canada.

**December the month of Christmas and the month we change over the year**

In Malta, December is the month we especially think about the Maltese and Gozitan individuals and families in dire need, especially those who are assisted to seek cancer treatment in other European hospitals. The people of Malta have always been considered to have a big heart and are very generous in donating financial contributions towards such good causes like *L-Istrina*. Organised events, usually throughout the year, culminate in a one-mega-day event marathon the day after Christmas. The Malta Community Chest Fund is a national fund to be applied in such circumstances and administered by the Office of the President of the Republic of Malta. Another such fundraising event is held for persons with very special needs who reside at *Id-Dar tal-Providenza* (The House of Providence), located in the Maltese town of is-Siġġiewi. This event is organised the day after New Year's Day. For the last two years, on both days, I have had the

honour to present to these two very important organisations in Malta, donations from Maltese Canadian individuals and families.

Finally, from the bottom of our hearts, my wife Marlene, our children Armando Antonio and Felicity Ann and I wish all Maltese Canadians throughout this great country and in Malta, a very Holy Christmas full of joy and a prosperous 2022. Hopefully, it will be better than 2021, full of peace, hope and good health.

O Lord, always bless Malta and Canada.

**MELITA SOCCER CLUB TEAM OF TORONTO HOLDS ITS CHRISTMAS DINNER**

**Dan Brock**

The Melita Soccer Club team held its Christmas Dinner at the Club on the evening of Saturday, November 27th. Among those present were the Consul General of Malta to Canada, Dr. Raymond Xerri as well as his daughter, Felicity Ann Xerri, who is visiting from Malta.





**CRAFT SHOW AT THE DEARBORN CLUB,  
SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 28TH**

**Dan Brock**

Photos by Felicity Ann Xerri



**One of the Vendors and Her Crafts**

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*A Merry Christmas  
and a Happy New Year  
from Our Home to Yours*



Photo by Loretta Brock

## 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](mailto:gozoclub@gmail.com)

### **Inanna on Stage**

[www.joannedancer.com](http://www.joannedancer.com)  
c/o 356 Pacific Avenue, Toronto, ON M6P 2R1  
416-707-2355  
[desertdancer007@yahoo.ca](mailto:desertdancer007@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](mailto:stpatricksmi@archtoronto.org)  
Grand Knight Amadeo Cuschieri

### **Legion of Mary – “Our Lady of the Migrant”**

c/o St. Paul The Apostle Parish  
3224 Dundas St. W., Toronto M6P 2A3  
Tel: 416-767-7054  
[www.saint-paul-Maltese.com](http://www.saint-paul-Maltese.com)  
[stpaulmssp@gmail.com](mailto:stpaulmssp@gmail.com)  
President: Mary Vella

### **Lehen Malti**

<https://www.omnitv.ca/shows/lehen-malti>  
c/o 2387 Chilsworth Avenue., Mississauga, ON  
L5B 2R4  
Contact Person: Joe Sherri  
416-571-3944  
email [lehenmalti@hotmail.com](mailto:lehenmalti@hotmail.com)

### **Malta Band Club**

5745 Coopers Ave., Mississauga, ON L4Z 1K9  
905-890-8507  
[www.maltabandclub.com](http://www.maltabandclub.com)  
[maltabandclub@bellnet.ca](mailto:maltabandclub@bellnet.ca)

### **Malta United Society of Windsor, Ontario**

2520 Seminole St., Windsor, ON N8Y1X4  
519-974-6719  
[maltaunitedsociety.windsor@gmail.com](mailto: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](mailto:maltabakeshopltd@gmail.com)  
att: Antonia Buttigieg

### **Maltese American Benevolent Society**

1832 Michigan Ave. Detroit, MI 48216  
313-961-8393  
<http://detroitmaltese.com>  
Opening hours:  
Friday 5:00 p.m. – 9:00 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](mailto: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](mailto:contact-us@Maltese-AmericanSCSF.org)  
Opening hours: Tuesday 5:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.  
(every 2<sup>nd</sup> 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](mailto:mcach1964@gmail.com)

**Maltese Canadian Association (Gozo)**

c/o Trillium, Sqaq Nru 1, Triq it-Tigrija, ix-Xagħra  
Tel: 011 356 21560656  
[mcagozo@hotmail.com](mailto:mcagozo@hotmail.com)

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

c/o 2387 Chilsworthy Avenue, Mississauga, ON  
L5B 2R4  
416-980-1975  
[mcbna2018@gmail.com](mailto: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  
[joesherri@rogers.com](mailto:joesherri@rogers.com)

**Maltese Canadian Federation, The (Toronto)**

c/o 2387 Chilsworth Avenue, Mississauga, ON  
L5B 2R4  
416-571-3944  
[joesherri@rogers.com](mailto:joesherri@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  
416-909-7357/414-670-2662  
[carl@isqtransport.com/b\\_azzo18@yahoo.com](mailto:carl@isqtransport.com/b_azzo18@yahoo.com)

**Maltese Center, NYC**

27-20 Hoyt Ave. S. Astoria, NY 11102  
718-728-9893  
[info@themaltesecenter.com](mailto:info@themaltesecenter.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  
[mmpastizzi@gmail.com](mailto:mmpastizzi@gmail.com)

**Maltese Heritage Association San Francisco Bay Area**

[maltesheritageassociation@gmail.com](mailto:maltesheritageassociation@gmail.com)

**Maltese Heritage Program (Toronto)**

c/o 59A Terry Drive, Toronto, ON, M6N 4Y8  
Coordinator: Carmen Galea  
416-766-5830  
[qormija@sympatico.ca](mailto:qormija@sympatico.ca)

**Maltese Historical Society (San Francisco)**

[c/o\\_leprofess@aol.com](mailto:c/o_leprofess@aol.com)

**Melita Soccer Club Inc.**

3336 Dundas St. W., Toronto, ON M6P 2A4  
416-763-5317  
[msc@melitasoccerclub.com](mailto:msc@melitasoccerclub.com)

**St. Paul the Apostle Parish**

3224 Dundas St. W. Toronto, ON M6P 2A3  
416-767-7054  
[www.saint-paul-maltese.com](http://www.saint-paul-maltese.com)  
[stpaulmssp@gmail.com](mailto:stpaulmssp@gmail.com)

**St. Paul the Apostle Parish Mission Group**

c/o 281 Gilmour Ave., Toronto, ON M6P 3B6  
416-708-8627  
[www.facebook.com/john.vella.1044186](https://www.facebook.com/john.vella.1044186)  
[giovanvel@sympatico.ca](mailto:giovanvel@sympatico.ca)

**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](mailto:jason.borg@hotmail.ca/sborg@rogers.com)

**St. Paul's Maltese Choir**

c/o St Paul The Apostle Parish  
3224 Dundas St. W., Toronto M6P 2A3  
416-767-7054  
[www.saint-paul-maltese.com](http://www.saint-paul-maltese.com)  
[stpaulmssp@gmail.com](mailto:stpaulmssp@gmail.com)  
President: Lino Debono

**RABBIT/FENEK AND SPAGHETTI DINNER  
MALTA UNITED SOCIETY OF WINDSOR, ONTARIO**

