



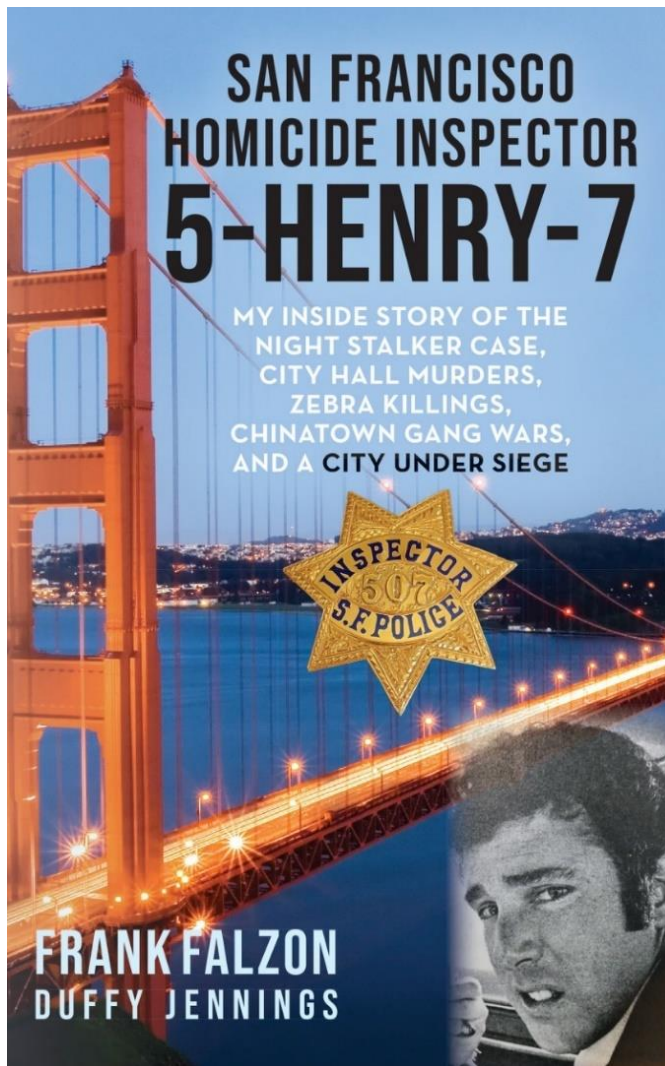
THE MALTESE PRESENCE IN NORTH AMERICA



E-NEWSLETTER

Issue 42

SEPTEMBER 2022



See pages 5-6 and 16 for more details.

**The Maltese Presence
in North America
Issue No. 42 September 2022**

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EDITORIAL COMMENT

Again, there were several time-sensitive items which not only expanded the size of this issue from the one in August, but also crowded out articles simmering on the back burners for months now.

The current items included the upcoming Virtual Youth Forum (pages 25, 30-31), this month's feature article, Lisa Buttigieg-LiGreci's "Annual Bob Farr Tribute Picnic" (pages 17-22), the death of Mgr. Philip Calleja (pages 26-27), the showing of the film *Carmen* (page 16), the celebrations of the feasts of *San Gejtanu* (page 4), *Santa Marija* (page 15) and Malta Day (pages 11-12) and the launching of Frank Falzon and

Duffy Jennings' book on the legendary San Francisco Homicide Inspector Frank Falzon, the son of a Maltese immigrant (pages 5-6). It was Dr. Charles J. Vella of the Bay Area who made me aware of this book.

Likewise, it was the Consul General of the Republic of Malta to Canada, Ms. Denise Demicoli, who brought the film *Carmen* to my attention. Had it not been for Denise I might very well have missed the movie's London, Ontario showing and become aware that the opening scenes of the film fitted in so well with Mark Caruana's and my findings concerning the life of Gioacchina Grech (pages 23-25), which we were already working on for this issue.

Again, I'm grateful to Fr. Mario Micallef for allowing me to share some of his thoughts from the weekly Sunday bulletin of St. Paul the Apostle Maltese Parish, Toronto with the readership (page 3). The same holds for the Maltese recipes supplied by Mary Rose Aquilina (pages 7-10) and Lisa Buttigieg-LiGreci (pages 12-15).

I wish to publicly thank the newsletter's proof reader, Mona Vella Nicholas and copy editors Mark Caruana and Maria Pia Gauci, living in the United States, Australia and Malta respectively, who, each month, take the time from their busy lives to correct errors, see that proper Maltese is employed where needed and improve the general appearance of each issue. Such work requires considerable time and patience.

Once again, I encourage various Maltese organizations and associations to use this newsletter to promote themselves and their activities. I also invite individuals to use this venue to share accounts of the Maltese in North America. These can be broad, such as a particular community, or focused on a family or individual.

To see past issues and the

updated "Table of Contents, courtesy of Evelyn and Dennis Simmons of California, Go to "News & Resources" at <http://maltese-americanscsf.org/home.aspx> on the website of the Maltese-American Social Club of San Francisco.

Comments and suggestions from the readers are appreciated. Those of the past month are found on page 10.

If you have ideas to share or wish to be put on the free, bcc electronic mailing list, etc., I may be reached at danbrock62@gmail.com. Note my new email address.

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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.

He Will Come and Serve Us

Jesus can visit us any time. So, it is important that we are always ready to greet Him when He visits, dressed for action, with our lamps lit. Again, it is not necessarily at the moment of death that Jesus visits us. He constantly knocks on the doors of our lives telling us that the Spouse is here, inviting us to join Him into his banquet-hall, to leave behind us that which is not really important so that we can embrace what is of His Kingdom. Am I ready to greet Him when He knocks, to change direction if He asks me to do so, to embrace the Kingdom of Love?

"Do not be afraid" is the refrain that keeps echoing in our minds as we journey with Jesus. Changing direction, letting go of that which gives us security or comfort, can be difficult at times and also scary. But really, there is no need to be afraid. If we are ready, if we recognize Him and welcome Him, He will "come and serve us". That is his promise. What could be more comforting than this?

What Kind of Fire Do I Have Burning inside Me?

....Fire implies light, warmth, passion. It can also burn, destroy and purify.

As we journey with Jesus, being his disciples, we are invited to share in his mission of spreading this fire. So the first question that comes to mind is: "Do I have the fire burning inside me?" Because the simple Truth is that, unless I have it, I cannot share it with

others. We all have something we are very passionate about in our lives. So, a better question would be, "What kind of fire do I have burning inside me?"

The fire which Jesus brought to the world is the fire of Love. Everything He did was a living expression of this Love. He did not hesitate to say that Love is the greatest commandment of all the laws that the Jews had to adhere to. When He was about to leave this world, the instruction He gave to his disciples was simply to love one another as He had loved them.

Unfortunately, not everybody is willing or ready to accept the message of Jesus. Some people tend to put their own interest before anything else. This can cause divisions, as people who do not share the same values might not approve of our decisions. How often have we been called stupid or old-fashioned for sticking to the values of Jesus Christ? Sometimes, these people can be our own friends or family members. Jesus spoke openly about this, so that we will not be taken by surprise when such things happen in our lives.

As Christians, as followers of Jesus, all we have to do is to keep walking in the footsteps of our Master. Often, a small good action can have great effects. It is like a small spark, which can spread and become a huge fire. To share in the mission of Jesus we might not be asked to do great things. St. Catherine of Siena reminds us: "Be who God meant you to be, and you will set the world on fire."

What Do I Want the Outcome of My Life to Be?

Do I know where I am heading? What do I want the outcome of my life to be? As we know, being part of God's Kingdom is not a matter of what's going to happen to me after death. I am invited to be part of this Kingdom here and now, in my everyday life....

The Kingdom of Jesus knows no boundaries...We are all invited. We are all expected to be included. Through our baptism, we are all called to walk in the footsteps of the One who called us, showing with Him the mission of bringing God's message of love wherever we may be.

Let us continue our journey together. With our presence and with our prayers, let us continue to support, strengthen, and build each other on this journey, passing through the narrow door, with our eyes firmly set on our destination.

MALTA BAND CLUB HOLDS *FESTA SAN GEJTANU* 2022**Dan Brock**

The *Festa* was held at the Club on the evening of Saturday, August 6th. The dinner consisted of a traditional Maltese *fenkata* with coffee and dessert. Entertainment was provided by the Malta Band and a DJ. Festivities culminated with fireworks in the parking lot. Among those present were Ms Denise Demicoli, Consul General of the Republic of Malta to Canada.



Photos by Ms. Denise Demicoli

FRANK FALZON: A SAN FRANCISCO POLICE DEPARTMENT LEGEND

Dan Brock

July 27, 2022 saw the release of the book *San Francisco Homicide Inspector 5-Henry-7* by Frank Falzon and Duffy Jennings. Frank Falzon is a retired San Francisco Homicide Inspector and this is a true crime memoir of his career during the violent 1970s and 1980s.



“5-Henry-7” was Falzon’s individual radio call sign in the department. The number 5 designated the Inspectors Bureau, Henry was phonetic for the H in Homicide, and he was inspector number 7 in the detail.



Frank is a highly decorated and accomplished police inspector who investigated more than 300 murders and other cases during his 28-year career with the San Francisco Police Department.

He played a key role in breaking the notorious Night Stalker case. Richard Ramirez, the “Night Stalker” had murdered, raped, tortured and terrorized dozens of people in Southern California and San Francisco for months. Falzon was involved in investigating the Zodiac and Zebra murders—the latter the murders of random white victims by extremist Black Muslims—the Juan Corona serial murder investigation, Chol Soo Lee and the Chinatown gang murder that inspired the acclaimed Hollywood film *True Believer*, the execution-style killing of prison reformer Popeye Jackson by underground radicals, a savage Potrero Hill home invasion and a streetcorner shootout with an armed robber in an era one national crime historian calls “the golden age of serial murder.”

He also was the lead investigator in the shocking November 1978 assassinations of San Francisco Mayor George Moscone and Supervisor Harvey Milk in the City Hall offices by former city supervisor and police officer Dan White. White was a childhood friend of Frank’s. They had gone to the same schools and, as a police officer, White was at the same station as Falzon.

Frank's father, Frank Tabone Falzon, was one of four brothers, the sons of Salvatore and Concetta (Tabone) Falzon, all born in Cospicua, Malta who came to the United States.

The first to come to North America was **Carmelo "Charles" "Charlie"**. He arrived as a stowaway in 1909 and was probably sent back to Malta. Born on October 4, 1889 or 1890, he was issued a passport on October 13, 1919 and first went to France. He said he arrived in New York City on December 18, 1919. Charles may have returned to Malta as I have him also arriving at St. John, New Brunswick in March 1922. His mother, Concetta, was living in Tarxien at the time. By May 10, 1922, Charles was in Detroit where he was issued a declaration of intention to become a permanent citizen of the US. He married a divorcee on August 18, 1945, in Detroit. He was 55 years old at the time and this was his first marriage.

His brother **Giuseppe "Joseph" "Joe"** (b. Nov. 18, 1886) was issued a passport on November 5, 1919, arrived at NYC on December 11, 1919, and lived in Toronto, Ontario until about September 1922. He then crossed over to Detroit from Windsor, on September 14, 1922 and joined his brother, Charles, at 539 Bagley Avenue. Joe, like his younger brother Frank, died young. His death occurred in Detroit on October. 23, 1932.

Lorenzo T. "Laurence" "Lawrence" Falzon (b. May 5, 1893), appears to have first arrived on April 16, 1920, returned to Malta and then made his way back to the US on August 13, 1922. He married in Detroit on October 24, 1925. One of the witnesses was his brother, **Frank Falzon (Francisco Tabone Falzon)**.

Frank Falzon's declaration of intention, dated July 1924, states that he was born on August 20, 1902, sailed from England on board the *Celtic* and arrived in New York Harbor on March 19, 1923. While there is no reason to doubt the latter, no record of Falzon can be found on either the passenger or crew lists of the *Celtic* in March 1923. Nor is there a passport found for him in the National Archives of Malta.

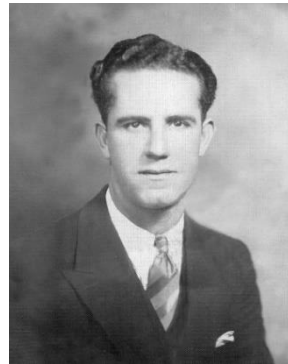
Could he have been a stowaway on board the *Celtic* and eluded getting caught? This seems doubtful as there is no record of anyone else on board who was Maltese and, therefore, could have assisted a fellow countryman.

Frank, the former homicide detective, raises two interesting points about his father. One is that he vaguely remembers stories his uncles, Charlie and Lawrence, "sneaking my father into the United States (Detroit) through Canada." In any case Frank, Sr. was living at 2021 4th Street in Detroit by July 1924.

The other curious point is that the younger Frank Falzon believes the photo on his uncle Lawrence's

passport, issued in March 1920, is not that of Lawrence but of his father, Frank.

Photo on Lawrence Falzon's Passport



Known later photo of Frank Tabone Falzon

In any case, sometime between 1925 and 1934, Frank Tabone Falzon moved from Detroit to San Francisco where he met and married Catherine Fox in 1934.

Their son, Frank, the third of four children, was only eight years old when his father died of melanoma on April 4, 1951. The boy who grew up to be a San Francisco Police Department legend was featured in the popular 2021 Netflix documentary, *Night Stalker: The Hunt for a Serial Killer*. He has been depicted in movies, plays, and video games and has been featured internationally in numerous documentaries, media interviews, magazine articles and books.

For additional information on Frank Falzon, his career and family background, including family photos, consult

<https://timesofmalta.com/articles/view/watch-maltese-american-inspector-caught-killers-living.977009>, which article appeared in the *Times of Malta*, Sunday, August 28th of this year.

I wish to thank Charles J. Vella of the Bay Area for drawing my attention to the book and to Frank Falzon himself. Thanks to correspondence with the renowned former San Francisco Homicide Inspector, further light was shed on his father.

THE ULTIMATE HEARTY SOUP: MALTESE *MINESTRA*



Mary Rose Aquilina

This is Malta's National vegetable soup. Different from Italy's *minestrone*, it contains more veggies. This is a warming hearty dish, and once you have the basics down, you can adjust it to your taste by adding or taking out what are your preferences.

Although a simple dish to prepare, *minestra* and its preparation can result in much discussion between families as to its vegetable content and its method of preparation. Some people think that our *minestra* is much the same as the Italian *minestrone* of which there are a number of variations. The Maltese *minestra*, however, is a very different dish. It is always very thick with the vegetables in large pieces or mashed and we don't, as a rule, use haricot beans or green beans either – preferring split fava beans or, as in my case, chickpeas and small tubettini pasta.

Minestra is also a big part of Maltese heritage and culture and is considered a traditional meal for the winter time. You will find, in fact, that it's cooked all year round. Passed from generation to generation, this recipe has been around for as long as anyone can remember and most families have created their own variations of it.

With Malta being so tiny, you'd think there's just one recipe for *minestra*. This is not the case. You will find there are a number of regional variations. I remember my mother used to add pasta to the soup to make it more filling, so I do as well. Some Maltese families serve it with crusty bread but it's hearty enough on its own.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 medium onion diced
- 1 medium diced turnip or any similar root vegetable
- 2 medium potatoes diced
- 4 celery sticks chopped
- 400 grams pumpkin chopped (or butternut squash)
- 1/2 medium cauliflower chopped
- 1 vegetable stock cube crushed or 1 tbsp vegetable powder stock
- 6 cups + water to fill pot (water can be brought to a boil before adding the veg)
- 2 - 3 tablespoons tomato paste
- 2 cups cooked, canned chick peas
- Olive oil and salt and pepper
- 150 grams small pasta pre-cooked (tubettini)
- Hard cheese and chopped parsley to serve
- Additional optional ingredients - be sure to add more water (1-2 cups) if you add the optional ingredients
- * 1 marrow or zucchini chopped
- * 1 kohlrabi diced
- * 1 parsnip chopped





You can add any root vegetables to your liking. Some folks like to also put in a knob of butter in the soup when it's served, along with a sprinkling of parmesan cheese and parsley.

METHOD:

- In a large pot, fry the onion for five minutes until soft.



- Add all the other vegetables and continue sautéing for about 10 minutes to caramelize.
- Fill the pot with water making sure the vegetables are well covered.



- Add the vegetable stock and season with salt and pepper, and bring to a boil.
- Reduce heat and simmer for a good 30 minutes until vegetables are cooked through and softened.



- At this point you can leave the soup in chunks but you can also puree to as smooth a consistency as you like.



- Add in the parsley and parmesan cheese and serve.



- Add in the chick peas and cooked pasta and cook for a further few minutes to heat through.



FIRST PERSON OF MALTESE BIRTH TO BE ORDAINED A PRIEST IN CANADA

Dan Brock

September 18, 1998 is the 24th anniversary of the death of Fr. Grace Joseph Agius, CSB, who holds the distinction of being the first person of Maltese birth to be ordained a priest in Canada.

Grazio Giuseppe (later known as Grace Joseph) Agius, a son of Giuseppe and Marianna (Spiteri) Agius, was born on September 3, 1915, in Zebbug, Malta.

In July 1920, he came to Toronto, Ontario, with his mother and several siblings. His father and one of Grazio's brothers had come out the year before and were living at 99 Maria Street, in Toronto.

Grace was enrolled at St. Michael's College School in Toronto at the age of 14. This private, Catholic boys' high school was administered by the Basilian fathers. After finishing fifth year (grade 13) in 1934, Grace entered St. Basil's novitiate and made his first profession a year later.

While pursuing his undergraduate studies in Windsor at Assumption College, an affiliate college of the University of Western Ontario in London, he worked with the boarders at Assumption College School, another private boys' high school administered by the Basilian fathers. He received his B.A in 1938 and taught the following year at Assumption College School.

Following a year of theological studies, Grace studied at the Ontario College of Education in Toronto and earned his teaching certificate in 1941.

He then resumed his theological studies at St. Basil's Seminary and was ordained a priest in the Basilian order on December 19, 1942, in Toronto, by Archbishop (later Cardinal) James Charles McGuigan.

Between 1943 and 1946, Fr. Grace taught at his alma mater St. Michael's College School. He also occasionally assisted in St. Paul the Apostle Maltese Parish on Dundas Street, following the death of its first pastor, Fr. Alphonse Cauchi in October 1943.

Fr. Grace was appointed farm manager of the Annesi Jersey Farm, St. Basil's Novitiate, Aurora, in 1946.

Between 1951 and 1954, he taught at Catholic Central High School in Detroit, also administered by the Basilians.

He was assigned to Assumption College in 1954. It was here he had done his undergraduate studies in the 1930s.

His last posting was to Assumption High School (formerly Assumption College School). There he lived out his remaining years. Following his death in 1998, he was interred in the Basilian section of Heavenly Rest Catholic Cemetery in Windsor.



READERS' COMMENTS

Thanks again for putting together this wonderful publication.

Rachael Cini Darin,
Michigan

Thank-you Dan...It's always interesting to learn of the many Maltese organizations that remain active in North America and in particular Southwestern Ontario.

Mario Aquilina,
Sarnia, Ontario

I don't always have the time to acknowledge the receipt of your Journal, or indeed to read it as soon as I receive it.

However, I do appreciate receiving it, and I eventually do get around to reading most of your publications.

John Aquilina, Ambassador,
Brasilia, Brazil

Dan that was a very interesting article on the name "Zammit"love reading the newsletter you put out, keep up the good work.

Yvonne Mitchell,
London, Ontario

**MALTA DAY CELEBRATED
AT THE MALTA BAND CLUB**

Mary Rose Darmanin

Malta Day was celebrated at the Malta Band Club in Mississauga on Saturday, August 27th.



Mary Rose Darmanin & Charles Schembri

The Maltese flag was raised, in front of the building by Ms. Denise Demicoli, Consul General of the Republic of Malta to Canada, while the national anthem was played.



**Raising of the Maltese Flag by the Maltese
Consul General, Ms. Denise Demicoli**



Malta Band Club



**Long-time Zabbarin Friends
Henry Grech, Carmen Grech
and Charles Schembri**



Enjoying a few Maltese dishes after the event – *bragoli*, *imqarrun il-forn* and Maltese fried rabbit – prepared by the hard-working, wonderful team of ladies in the Band Club’s kitchen



Yummm!



Awesome statue of Santa Maria on the Malta Band Club stage

**QARABAGHLI MIMLI FIL- FORN
(STUFFED COURGETTES)**

**Lisa Buttigieg-
LiGreci**



I love this time of the year when home gardens and farmer’s markets are filled with the bounty of summer. Recently I visited a farmer’s market in Port Sanilac, MI and came across a gigantic zucchini that inspired this month’s recipe. One of my favorite varieties of squash is zucchini. Normally you would not use a zucchini this large, but I just couldn’t help myself and had to take it home with me to stuff for this recipe.

I wasn’t quite sure what to call this recipe because depending on where you live, the main ingredient has many different names, i.e., marrows, courgettes, squash, or zucchini. In Europe the most common term is courgettes or marrows. I never knew the difference between them, so I did a little research.

On one website it stated that courgettes and marrows are both members of the same species. Both are *cucurbita pepo*. But they are not the same. Just as a pug and a beagle are both dogs, but they are not the same. It’s about breeding. The difference is in the physical characteristics but both are the same *species*. Some are bred to be harvested small and are normally called courgettes. Those bred to produce fruit that is bigger when it is ready to harvest are called marrows. However, courgettes could never be marrows and vice versa.

Another website says that zucchini and courgettes are the same. Courgettes is the French term and Zucchini is the Italian term. On yet other website, it claims that marrows are indeed courgettes that have been allowed to grow larger, which completely contradicts the first website I mentioned. So yeah, I’m still confused.

In Malta, *qarabaghli mimli* is traditionally made with marrows. Marrows are round in shape like small pumpkins as opposed to the long slender shape of the zucchini. Unless you grow your own, marrows are not available in most North American markets. Zucchini is readily available year-round and makes

Stuffed marrows originated in the region of the former Ottoman Empire from the Balkans to the Levant and Egypt. The Ottoman Empire was one of the mightiest and longest-lasting dynasties in world history. This Islamic-run superpower ruled large areas of the Middle East, Eastern Europe and North Africa for more than 600 years so it doesn't surprise me that this recipe has made its way into Maltese cuisine and is very common in the Maltese household.

Stuffed marrows can be stuffed with meat or rice and sometimes breadcrumbs and cheese. They can be cooked on the stovetop in a broth or in the oven and baked to delicious perfection.

I hope you take advantage of this year's harvest of marrows, courgettes, squash or zucchini, whatever you call them, while they are in season and make this recipe for you and your loved ones.

These are the measurements I needed to fill my extra-large zucchini, but this recipe can easily be cut in half to make a smaller batch.

INGREDIENTS:



- 8 zucchini/marrows or 1 very large zucchini
- 1 lb. ground beef
- 1 lb. ground pork
- 2 large onions, finely diced
- 2 cloves of garlic, minced

- 4 dry bay leaves
- 6 large tomatoes, diced
- 4 Tbs. tomato paste
- 4 eggs
- 8 Tbs. of grated parmesan cheese
- 4 Tbs. vegetable oil
- 2 Tbs. olive oil
- 1 cup bread crumbs as needed (not pictured)
- Salt and pepper for seasoning
- Cooking spray

DIRECTIONS:

1. Heat the vegetable oil in a large pot. Cook the onion, garlic and bay leaves on medium high heat until soft.



2. Add the tomato paste and cook for a few minutes to get rid of the raw taste.
3. Add the chopped tomatoes, salt and pepper. Simmer for 5 minutes.



4. Add the beef and pork to the onion and tomato mix and cook on medium high until the liquid is completely reduced and all moisture is gone. This will take some time, so stir often to avoid scorching the bottom of the pot.



7. Roughly chop the zucchini flesh, place in a clean cheesecloth or tea towel and twist tightly to remove the moisture. You may have to do this in several batches.
8. Taste the meat mixture for seasoning. Add more salt and pepper if needed.
9. Stir in the chopped zucchini flesh with the meat mixture.



5. While the meat is cooking, cut the zucchini lengthwise in half and scoop out the seeds with a spoon and discard.



10. Immediately remove from the heat and allow to cool. The zucchini will cook in the oven.
11. Once cool, fish out the bay leaves.
12. Beat together the eggs and cheese.
13. Add the eggs and cheese to the mixture. Stir to combine.
14. Taste for seasoning and add if needed.
15. If the mixture is too loose, slowly add up to 1 cup of breadcrumbs until you get the consistency needed.
16. Preheat the oven to 350° F
17. Rub the zucchini shells on all sides with the olive oil and season with salt and pepper.
18. Fill the zucchini halves with the mixture.

6. Now scoop out about half of the flesh leaving some flesh around the edge.



19. Place in a baking tray covered with a baking sheet prepared with cooking spray.

20. Add about ½ inch of water in the baking dish. This will help cook the zucchini and prevent it from burning.
21. Bake on the middle rack for 45 minutes to 1 hour or until the meat mixture is golden and crisp. Depending on the size, you may need more or less time. My giant zucchino took over 1 ½ hours. Smaller ones may need less time.
- COOKS NOTE:** Many Maltese cooks make a one pot dish by adding potatoes. (*Qarabagħli mimli fil-forn bil-patata*) Simply layer the bottom of the baking dish with peeled and sliced potatoes and onions that have been tossed in olive oil, salt, pepper, fennel seeds, and a little tomato paste. I would still add some water to the baking dish to aid in the cooking process. Place the stuffed zucchini on top and bake.



22. Serve with your favorite marinara sauce and top with more grated cheese.



Round Marrows May Also Be Used



**CELEBRATING FESTA SANTA MARIJA
(THE ASSUMPTION OF OUR LADY)**

Michael Anthony Cutajar

Festa Santa Marija was celebrated on Monday, August 15th, at the Maltese American Benevolent Society in Downtown Detroit.

It was 80 years ago that the Axis Siege on Malta ended with the arrival of the Operation Pedestal (Santa Marija) Convoy after weeks of air and sea attacks by Nazi Germany and the Fascista Italia of Mussolini.

August 15th is a major holiday in Malta. Hoorah!!!



CARMEN**Dan Brock**

Carmen opened in select theatres in Ontario and in Vancouver, British Columbia on Friday, August 19th. This Maltese-Canadian film stars Natascha McElhone and is directed by Valerie Buhagiar, a Maltese Canadian residing in the Greater Toronto Area.



Valerie Buhagiar, who was born in Mosta, Malta, is an actress and television host as well as a film director. Her debut as a filmmaker was *The Passion of Rita Camilleri*, which won the Silver Plaque at the Chicago Film Festival in 1993.

The film *Carmen* was shot entirely in Malta, largely on the island of Gozo. The setting is Malta in the 1980s. While mainly in English, there is a good deal of Maltese spoken, with English sub-titles.

As is seen in the article on pages 23-25 in this issue, Gioacchina Grech devoted her life to serving her cousin, a priest, as his housekeeper. This was not unusual in Malta. Valerie Buhagiar's aunt, Rita, the youngest daughter in the family, became the housekeeper for her older brother who was a priest.

Valerie used this latter information as the starting point for her latest film. *Carmen* (played by Natascha McElhone) became her brother's housekeeper at the age of 16. Thirty-four years later, her brother the priest dies. Suddenly, *Carmen* is on her own with no

family or other relatives on whom to rely. Suddenly, she has to rediscover her own life and desire. What follows is a journey of self-discovery.

As one reviewer has written:

Carmen is a tale of a woman finding her bliss again, of a life rediscovered, and passions rekindled. A lovely, comforting character study that feels like a warm hug (and will make you want to travel). The very definition of a feel-good movie and one to watch when you have the chance.

My wife and I got to see the movie at the Hyland Cinema in London on the evening of Saturday, August 27th. Valerie was present, after the showing, for questions and answers.



Valerie Buhagiar at the Hyland Cinema on Saturday, August 27th, with Assistant Manager Mike Klassen

Carmen will be shown in Detroit on September 23rd. For further details and to learn of other venues, dates and times in the United States, contact Emma, the publicist, at emma@eg-pr.com.

In Canada, the publicist is Angie Power at angie@route504pr.com.

ANNUAL BOB FARR TRIBUTE PICNIC

Lisa Buttigieg-LiGreci

It was a great summer day at the Maltese American Community Club of Dearborn (MACC) Annual Bob Farr Tribute Picnic in Kensington Metropark, Milford, Michigan. Our events coordinator, Margaret Muscat-Purdy and her band of volunteers did an outstanding job setting up the site and putting together all the activities.

As was the case last year, Fr. Paul Tarabay, of the Maronite Order of the Blessed Virgin Mary, celebrated Mass, with the help of Mary Theresa Cutajar leading us in song and Emmy Vella serving as the lector.



Bob Farr Tribute Picnic in Kensington Metro Park



This way to the picnic! Margaret Muscat-Purdy & volunteers, i.e. her family and others, got there very early to set up the site and all these signs. It's no easy task in a park that's 4,481 acres!



The day started with an outdoor Mass



Fr. Paul was the celebrant and homilist.



Mary Theresa Cutajar served as the cantor and lead us in song



Emmy Vella served as the lector and read both readings.



Communion

We had a delicious lunch which included a bounty of sides and desserts brought by everyone to share. David and Al grilled up the burgers and dogs, courtesy of Robert Farr, Bob Farr's son.



After Mass, with everyone very hungry, David and Al grilled up the burgers and dogs



**Emmy Vella and Fran Farrugia
making *hobz biż-żejt***



Dig in boys!



Tom Vella passing out squares of *froġa*



**No shortage of sweets!
My favorite – the homemade Maltese sesame
cookies called *qagħaq tal-ġulgħien*.**



Sam Sultana's centerpiece.







Brian Vella stealing a kiss...Mary Azzopardi not having any of it...lol

After lunch, the kids enjoyed the craft table and many participated in a rousing game of tug of war which was followed by an equally rambunctious water balloon fight.



No picnic would be complete without a good tug of war.

The rain came a little later, but it didn't stop us all from having a wonderful day.



And then the rain came



The kids really liked the seashell decoration station.



After the rain stopped, a game of volleyball broke out.



Water balloon toss



Another very successful picnic

IN SEARCH OF GIOACCHINA GRECH**Dan Brock and Mark Caruana**

Some months ago, Mark Caruana sent an email to Dan Brock stating: "Hi Dan, I cannot find much on Gioacchina Grech from ancestry.com. Can you?" Attached was Mark's abstract from two Canada-United States border crossings as seen below.

On checking out ancestry.com, Dan was, at first, able to find but one reference to Gioacchina Grech, namely that for the May 5, 1913 border crossing into the United States from Blairmore, Saskatchewan by way of Neche, North Dakota. (See border crossing abstract for 05.05.1913.)

In examining the actual manifest, Dan saw that Gioacchina had arrived at the City of Quebec, Canada on June 22, 1912, on board the *Royal George*.

Date of Issue	Surname	Name	Occupation	Age	Place of Birth	Address	Literacy	Destination	Remarks
05.05.1913	Grech	Gioacchina	housekeeper	28	B'Kara	Canada, Saskatchewan Blairmore	Y	USA, Dakota North, Bottineau	
24.09.1923	Grech	Gioacchina	housekeeper	37	B'Kara	Canada, Saskatchewan Shaunhaven	Y	USA, California Los Angeles	Mother Mary Ann lives at Vancouver. Single

No entry, however, was found on Ancestry for Gioacchina's arrival in 1912. A search was then made of the passenger list for the *Royal George*. It was found that the vessel had actually arrived on June 19th from Avonmouth, near Bristol, England. An examination of that list revealed that there were three passengers from Malta aboard, all with the surname "Gerch." Michael, age 25, was listed as having been a clerk back in Malta; Andrichata, age 23, was listed as a housewife; and Jochan [Joanne?], age 27 as a domestic. All three intended to occupy these same positions in Canada and were headed for Frank, Alberta.

A check of our database for persons of Maltese birth or blood immigrating to Canada revealed that Gioacchina Grech and her younger brother, Michael, had been issued passports in Malta on March 28, 1912, that Gioacchina was born on August 11, 1885 and Michael on September 4, 1887 in Birkirkara (B'Kara) and were living at Strada Fleur-de-Lys, 38 and that their father was Michele Grech.

This led us to believe that two of the three "Gerch" passengers on board the *Royal George* in June 1912 were indeed Gioacchina and Michael Grech. In fact, it was Gioacchina who should have been listed as age 27 and a domestic and "Jochan Gerch/Grech as age 23 and the housewife. Presumably, she was the wife of Michael Grech and that the couple were

married sometime after passports were issued to Michael and Gioacchina.

As for the destination of the Grechs being Frank, Alberta, it's possible that Michael Grech may have already been promised employment as a clerk with the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) which passed through that village. A portion of this village, 15.7 rail miles east of the Crowsnest Past in the Rocky Mountains, had been obliterated on April 29, 1903, when a large section of Turtle Mountain had slid into the valley. As well as between 70 and 90 villagers being killed within seconds, a portion of the CPR line was also buried by the landslide.

A motivation for immigrating to Alberta and possibly even to this area, as subsequent research would show, was undoubtedly the fact that Fr. Antonio Sammut, who had arrived in New York Harbor on March 10, 1911, on board the *König Albert*, had given his destination as St. Albert, Alberta and the contact person as Émile-Joseph Legal, the bishop of that province whose see was then in this town, several miles to the northwest of Edmonton at the time.

Like the Grechs, Fr. Sammut, was a native of B'Kara, He was also their cousin. On latter documents, both Fr. Sammut and Gioacchina Grech listed M. Grech of B'Kara as their contact person in Malta.

Gioacchina, no doubt, had made arrangements to become her cousin's housekeeper before leaving Malta, as she was described as a domestic on that island and was intending to continue as one in Canada, according to *Royal George's* passenger list for June 1912. By 1913 she was Fr. Anthony Sammut's housekeeper in the town of Blairmore to the northwest of Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.

In May of that year the cousins crossed over into the United States at Neche, en route for the parish in Bottineau, North Dakota.

The whereabouts of Michael Grech is unknown for the next couple of years. By August 1916, however, he is back in Malta and living in Hamrun. Employed as a commission agent, he was successful in obtaining a passport to travel to Marseille, France, to open an agency. All this in the midst of World War I!

As for his sister, Gioacchina, the 1916 Canada census for Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta finds her employed as a housekeeper for Fr. Anthony Sammut in Maple Creek, in the Cypress Hills, in the southwest corner of Saskatchewan. Gioacchina will continue as her cousin's housekeeper for the rest of her life.

No record of either Fr. Sammut or Gioacchina has been found in the 1920 census for the United States or the 1921 census for Canada.

By 1923, however, they were living in Shaunavon, SK, some 50 miles (80 km) to the southeast of Maple Creek. On September 24th, Fr. Sammut and Gioacchina crossed over into Seattle, Washington from Vancouver, British Columbia en route to Los Angeles, California. Gioacchina was described as a "house keeper" and stated that her mother, Mary Ann Grech, was living in Vancouver, BC at the time. Fr. Sammut is listed as a clergyman and noted that his mother, Rose Sammut, was then living in the province of Ontario. It's most probable that both mothers were widows at the time.

We next encounter Fr. Sammut and Gioacchina in the 1930 US Federal census on Edison Avenue in Sacramento, CA. It stated that they both arrived in the United States in 1923, that Anthony Sammut was a priest and that Gioachina [*sic.*] Grech was his servant.

The last mention we have for Gioacchina appeared in *The Sacramento Bee* on Saturday, September 15, 1934. There it was noted that "Miss Gioachina Grech, a cousin of Rev. Father A. Sammut of North Sacramento" and of Charles Sammut of San

Francisco, had died the previous day in Mercy Hospital. Her funeral was to be on Monday, September 17th and her interment in St. Mary's Lawn Cemetery. No mention is made of her mother, Mary Ann Grech, or her brother Michael Grech.



The Sacramento Bee, Sacramento, California, Saturday, September 15, 1934

This then is all we know of Gioacchina Grech who had dedicated most of her comparatively short life—she was only 49 years old when she died—in the service of her cousin the priest. As Toronto-based actress and film director Valerie Buhagiar notes (see pages 16) such a life-style was not uncommon in Malta, especially if a priest had a younger sister.

As for Fr. Anthony Sammut, he may have ended up in the Sacramento area as early as late 1923 and celebrated Mass at the church in Broderick until the arrival of a permanent paster in 1926. He is said to have been the former pastor of the Catholic Church in Davis prior to his retirement, probably owing to poor health.

He was living near Ben Ali a suburb of Sacramento when he died of a heart attack on Wednesday, December 11, 1935, at the age of 55. His brother, Charles, found him slumped over in his chair, where

he had been reading. In addition to Charles, Fr. Sammut was survived by his mother, Rose Sammut. A solemn Requiem High Mass was celebrated on Monday, December 16th, and his remains too were interred in St. Mary's Lawn Cemetery, but, in his case, in the priests' plot.

Any further information on Gioacchina Grech, her brother Michael and their cousin, Fr. Anthony Sammut, would be most welcomed.



**ACTIVITIES WITHIN
THE MALTESE COMMUNITIES**

Dan Brock

VIRTUAL YOUTH FORUM

This online forum will be bringing together young Maltese and descendants of Maltese from all over the world, to get to know each other better and to discuss what the Maltese language, culture and identity mean to them.

For those living in Canada and the United States, this forum will be held on Friday, September 16th, beginning at 3:15 p.m. in San Francisco and Vancouver and 6:15 p.m. in Detroit, New York and Toronto. (See pages 30-31 for more details.)

**The Greater Toronto Area, Ontario
St. Paul the Apostle Parish**

On the weekend of August 13th-14th, **St. Paul the Apostle Mission Group** launched another campaign in preparation for the next container to be sent to the MSSP (Missionary Society of St. Paul) mission in Peru. This is being planned for the end of October.

Tribute was paid to the **Feast of the Assumption of Our Lady (Santa Marija)**, on Sunday, August 14th, during the 10:30 Mass in Maltese. Fr. Victor Paul Farrugia, O. Carm. of Malta was the main celebrant.

The **Annual Mass for the Faithful Departed** was celebrated on Wednesday, August 17th, at 7:00 p.m., at Assumption Cemetery. Bishop Ivan Camilleri was the main celebrant.

The **Seniors' Group** resumed its regular meetings after a summer break. This is an opportunity to have a chat, a drink and play a few games of bingo. The first gathering took place on Wednesday, September 7th, beginning at 12:30 p.m. on Wednesday, September 7th.

A **Mass** in honour of the **feast of the Birth of Mary (Il-Bambina)** will be celebrated on Sunday, September 11th at 10:30 a.m.

Malta Band Club

Festa San Gaetano was held on the evening of Saturday, August 6th. (See page 4.)

A **bus trip to Casino Niagara** took place on Saturday, August 20th.

Malta Day was celebrated on Saturday, August 27th with the raising of the Malta flag, traditional Maltese food and the participation of the Club's band. (See pages 11-12.)

The latest **Friday Nite Dinner** was held on September 2nd and consisted of spaghetti with seafood sauce.

The season finale of the Malta Band Club **Show & Shine** takes place between 12:00 p.m. and 3:00 p.m. on Sunday, September 18th.



Lehen Malti

<p>LEHEN MALTI (Maltese Voice)</p> <p>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.</p> <p>OMNI British Columbia/Pacific Saturdays 2:00 p.m.</p> <p>OMNI Alberta/Prairies Saturdays 2:00 p.m.</p>
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London**Maltese Canadian Community**

The **monthly luncheon** for **August** was held on the 18th at the **Eleven Sixty Bar & Grill**, Wellington Road South. (See pages 29-30 for further details.)

Luncheons are planned for **Thursday, September 22nd**, at **East Side Mario's**, 94 Fanshawe Park Road East, on Thursday, September 22nd, at 12:30 p.m., **Saturday, October 1st**, at the **Mandarin Restaurant**, Wellington Road South, at 12:30 p.m. and on **Thursday, October 20th**, at 12:30 p.m., in the Knights' Room, at the **Pickle Barrel**, in the same plaza as the Mandarin Restaurant.

For some time now, a number of the group have been **meeting** on **Tuesday afternoons**, for the most part, at **Springbank Park**, for conversation, food and drinks and playing bingo.

Metropolitan Detroit**Maltese American Benevolent Society Inc.**

The Club celebrated Festa Santa Marija on Monday, August 15th. (See page 15.)

The **13th Annual Festa tal-Vitorja** is to be held on Sunday, September 11th. Mass will be celebrated at 11:00 a.m. at Most Holy Trinity Catholic Church on Porter Street. Food will be available at the Club from 1:30 p.m. Among the entertainment are free kids craft table activities.

The **General Membership Meeting** is to be held on Sunday, October 24th at 3:00 p.m.

Maltese American Community Club of Dearborn

The **Annual Bob Farr Tribute Picnic** in Kensington Metropark in Milford on Sunday, August 7th. (See pages 17-22 for further details.)

New York City**Maltese Center, NYC**

Il-Madonna tal-Vitorja and **Victory Day** will be celebrated with a **BBQ Party** beginning at 6:30 p.m. on Saturday, September 10th.

Maltese language classes are being conducted for children ages 5-12 (beginner), 5-8 (intermediate), 9-14 (intermediate) and adults (18+). Those 15-17 years old may join the adult class if a parent is a member. For further details see the Center's Facebook page.

San Francisco**Maltese-American Social Club of San Francisco**

The **Santa Maria Dinner** was held on Saturday, August 13th.

A **Casino Bus Trip** took place on Saturday, August 20th.

A **Malta Day Gala** will be held on Saturday, September 24th.

The Club's **First Annual Car Show** will be held on Saturday, October 8th.

MALTESE AMERICAN SOCIAL CLUB
FIRST ANNUAL
CAR SHOW
 SPECTATORS FREE!
SATURDAY OCTOBER 8, 2022
10am - 3pm
 Santo Cristo Hall
 41 Oak Ave
 South San Francisco CA
 94080
 For assistance or questions, please contact
 Pauline Henderson (650-245-1774) or
 Brian Clappara (650-952-7970)



**SOME ONTARIAN MEMORIES OF
 MGR. PHILIP CALLEJA**

Dan Brock

Mgr. Philip Calleja died at the age of 93, on August 16th, at Dar tal-Kleru in Fleur-de-Lys, Malta. He was born in Valletta on December 8, 1928 and ordained a priest on August 2, 1953.

In 1950, he had founded the Migrants Commission within the Maltese Catholic Action movement in response to the great exodus of Maltese people to other countries, and was appointed its first director. Mgr. Alfred Vella succeeded him as director in 2003.

Among the holdings of the Western Archives at the University of Western Ontario in London are the records of the Maltese Canadian Club London – Ontario. Within them are letters from and to Father Philip Calleja in 1957 relating to the death of Paul Sciberras, a young Maltese immigrant to the city.

Richard Cumbo of Toronto writes:

Mons. Philip Calleja and I had been friends for nearly 40 years, in Toronto....Mons. was an individual who thought of others before himself. He was like a mentor to me in my early days of writing and researching; he was always supportive and encouraging...

I presented to him for the "Migrants Museum" this copy of the Maltese-Canadian Society of Toronto flag in 2019.

He was truly a great person.

As for me, I was in correspondence with Mgr. Calleja when editor of the newsletter for The Maltese Canadian Club of London, the city's third and last such organization for members of the Maltese community.

My wife and I were introduced to him by Mgr. Alfred Vella on one of our visits to Dar L-Emigrant in Valletta's Castille Square.

A reprint of an article relating to Charles Buttigieg's biography of Mgr. Calleja, entitled *Phillip Calleja*, appears in the February 2020 issue of this newsletter and was reprinted from the December 22, 2019 edition of *The Times of Malta*.



MONTHLY LUNCHEON IN LONDON

Dan Brock

Thursday, August 18th saw over 30 individuals, largely members of the Maltese Canadian community in London, meet for lunch at the Eleven Sixty Bar & Grill (formerly Tony Roma's) on Wellington Road South.



This month's venue had been arranged by Helen Ditchfield and Carol Hilton. Two draws were made for a free lunch at a later date at the restaurant. Miranda Catania was the winner of the first draw and Tony Vella of the second.



Mgr. Philip Calleja Presented with a Copy of the Maltese-Canadian Society of Toronto Flag



Tony Vella presented with the coupon for a free lunch by Helen Ditchfield



Connie Hislop and Janet Peckham



**Monica & Manny Micallef, Jennifer Cranney,
Tessie Spiteri, Melrose & Larry Paquet**



**Marlene & Frank Mifsud
and Vince & Lu Mifsud**



**Tony & Doris Schembri, Deo Catania,
Tony Vella, Rose Mizzi and Mary Testa**



**Mike Ditchfield, Lynda & Tony Galea,
Terry Rogers, Carol Hilton and Helen Ditchfield**



**Doris Schembri, Deo & Miranda
and Salvina Said**



**Deo & Miranda Catania,
Joyce Vella, Censa & Tony Vella**

Photos courtesy of Tony Galea



**THE FIRST OBSERVANCE OF MALTA
NATIONAL DAY BY THE MALTESE CANADIAN
CLUB, LONDON — ONTARIO**

Dan Brock

Editor's note: Much of this article is reprinted from the September/October 2017 issue of The Maltese Canadian Club of London Newsletter. Photos courtesy of Yvonne (Zammit) Mitchell.

On Monday, September 6, 1954, the recently-formed Maltese Canadian Club, London — Ontario, observed its first Malta National Day. This was held on the 6th, as opposed to the 8th, so as to take advantage of the Labour Day holiday. Thus, members would not have to take time off from work if the Day were observed on Wednesday.

Prior to Monday, the CFPL radio station had announced the observance for the benefit of all Maltese Canadian residents in London and area and Club secretary David Leeks had contacted members by telephone.

The day began with the celebration of a Requiem Mass at 10:30 at St. Peter's Cathedral by Father Emidio Cremona, OFM, of St. Paul the Apostle Parish in Toronto. It was probably after Mass that the Club's Committee posed for the photograph seen on page 30.

Following Mass, a parade was held, under police escort, proceeding east along Dufferin Avenue, to the Cenotaph in the southeast corner of Victoria Park. Vince Rizzo carried the Maltese flag and

Dominic Micallef carried the Union Jack. (This was before Canada adopted its present flag.)

At the Cenotaph, Peter Campbell and David Leeks laid the wreath. Two minutes of silence were then observed in honour of the dead in the Siege of Malta of 1565 and of the Maltese, British Empire, Allied and American forces who died in World War II.



**The Procession proceeded from the front of
St. Peter's Cathedral to Dufferin Avenue**



**It then moved east
along Dufferin Avenue to the Cenotaph**

The evening marked the unofficial opening of the Club's new premises at 62 Dundas Street—now the site of the Court House and Land Registry Office. In addition to soft drinks provided by the Club, cakes, candies, peanuts, etc. were donated by Tilbest Food Limited on Wharncliffe Road South, where Walter Attard, a Maltese Canadian non-member of the Club, worked.

Executive members in front of St. Peter's Cathedral, London, Ontario, Canada



(l. to r.) Vince Rizzo, collector; Charlie Pace, sports officer; George Mizzi, entertainment officer; Peter Campbell, chairman; Lawrence Darmanin, treasurer; Fred Pellegrini, assistant secretary; David George Leeks, secretary; Joe Abela, vice-chairman; Roger Harmsworth, assistant treasurer and Dominic Micallef, collector with Tony Cassar

VIRTUAL YOUTH FORUM

If interested in this Virtual Youth Forum, noted on the next page, and qualify as to age, and being a Maltese national or of Maltese blood, read on as to how to register.

- Żgħażaġh Maltin li jgħixu barra minn Malta jistgħu jirreġistraw għall-Forum Virtwali taż-Żgħażaġh fuq foreign.gov.mt/events/VYF1. Dan il-forum onlajn ser jgħaqqad żgħażaġh Maltin u dixxendenti tal-Maltin mill-erbat irjeh tad-dinja, sabiex isiru jafu lil xulxin



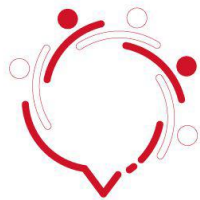
aħjar u jiddiskutu bejniethom xi tfisser għalihom il-lingwa, il-kultura u l-identità Maltija.

Maltese youth living abroad can register for the Virtual Youth Forum on

foreign.gov.mt/events/VYF1. This online forum will be bringing together young Maltese and descendants of Maltese from all over the world, to get to know each other better and to discuss what the Maltese language, culture and identity mean to them.



GOVERNMENT OF MALTA
MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN AND
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS AND TRADE



VIRTUAL YOUTH FORUM

*The Ministry for Foreign and European Affairs and Trade
in collaboration with Aġenzija Żgħażaġh is proud to announce
the First Virtual Youth Forum for Maltese Living Abroad with the theme*

I Want to Connect Maltese Language, Culture and Identity

Date and Time: Saturday, 17th September 2022 at 0015hrs (CET)

Young Maltese nationals and young persons of Maltese descent aged between 16 and 30 years, may register on the following form: foreign.gov.mt/events/VYF1

Contact Details

Directorate for Consular Services and Maltese Living Abroad

✉ malteselivingabroad.mfet@gov.mt

☎ (+356) 22042478



MALTA DAY CELEBRATIONS TORONTO, SEPTEMBER 8, 1945

Dan Brock

This first photographic copy was sent to me some months ago by Richard S. Cumbo. It was he who, more than two years ago, sent me the second photographic copy from the same original photo. The latter appears on page 28 of the October 2020 issue of this newsletter. By looking closely at both images, it can be seen that they are two different copies of the same original photograph but the one recently sent to me by Richard has been cropped. In the photos, Joseph & Carmela Cachia, Grezju Borg, Fr. Vincent Egan, pastor of St. Paul the Apostle Church, Joseph & Catherine Vassallo, Johnny Giordmaine (the magician), John "il-Gudra" Zammit and Charles Baldachine (MST President) have been identified. We would be interested in learning the identities of others in these photos.

