



# THE MALTESE PRESENCE IN NORTH AMERICA



**E-NEWSLETTER**

Issue 66

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## THE MALTESE AMERICAN COMMUNITY CLUB OF DEARBORN MISS MALTA PAGEANT



**Contestants: Gabriella Jakubczak, Abigail Cassatta, Sophia Vella, Carmela Schembri,  
Avery DeBrincat, Mara DeBrincat, Elayna Paull, & Emma Paull.**

See pages 16-20.  
*Photo courtesy of Lisa Buttigieg LiGreci.*

**The Maltese Presence  
in North America**  
Issue No. 66 November 2024

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**EDITORIAL COMMENT**

November has certainly been an active month for many of the Maltese clubs and also for the diplomatic missions in North America. In fact, no issue of this newsletter has had so many items relating to the latter.

A first for this newsletter are reports on activities at Maltese consulates in the Bahamas and in Puerto Rico. (See pages 29 and 39.)

I'm very grateful to the many Maltese organizations and individuals who give permission for their postings on Facebook to be published in this newsletter. Ditto for *The Times of Malta* and Frank Scicluna's newsletter from Australia.

Case in point, issue 541 (November 2024) of Frank's *Maltese E-Newsletter* had a very informative article by Tony Mamo concerning the development and evolution of the keeping of vital statistics in Malta. Frank was kind enough to give me the author's email address and Tony graciously permitted me to reprint the article, with a few changes, in this issue. (See pages 35-37.)

Meanwhile, many have come to learn of *The Maltese Presence in North America* by going to the web page of the Maltese-American Social Club of San Francisco at <http://maltese-americanscast.org/home.aspx> and then clicking onto "News & Resources."

One such person is Michael Marinaccio of New York City who is researching the Maltese in the United States and the status of the Maltese language therein. Expect to hear from Michael in the December issue.

Larry Brock (see page 37) is a nephew of mine.

If you have ideas to share, wish to be put on the free, bcc electronic mailing lists, would like to learn the newsletter's advertising rates, etc., I may be reached at [danbrock62@gmail.com](mailto:danbrock62@gmail.com).

The various Maltese organizations, associations, and diplomatic missions in North America are encouraged to use this e-newsletter to promote themselves and their activities.

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**ST. PAUL THE APOSTLE PARISH,  
TORONTO, CANADA**

**From our Pastor's Desk...**



*Fr. Roy Farrell, a diocesan priest within the Archdiocese of Toronto, is pastor of St. Paul the Apostle Parish, Toronto, the only Maltese parish outside Malta worldwide.*

**Parish Bulletin for November 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup>**

**November: A Month of Remembrance and Hope:**

As we step into the month of November, it is a profound time for us Catholics to remember our beloved deceased and reflect on the Church's teachings about life after death. This month is dedicated to praying for the souls in purgatory, aligning with the Catholic tradition of seeking to assist those who have departed from this world.

Why do we devote November to praying for the dead? The Church teaches that our prayers can help those in purgatory achieve that purification necessary to enter heaven. This belief is rooted in the understanding of the communion of saints, which emphasizes that the living and the dead are spiritually connected through Christ.

**The Practice of Going to the Cemetery:**

Visiting the graves of loved ones is a tangible way of showing our love and respect for those who have passed. It serves as a reminder of our own mortality and the hope of resurrection. During November, many Catholics make it a point to visit cemeteries to pray for the souls of the faithful departed, reinforcing the bond between the living and the dead.

**Obtaining an Indulgence in November:**

The Church offers the opportunity to obtain a plenary indulgence for the souls in purgatory during this month. By visiting a cemetery and praying for the dead, alongside fulfilling the usual conditions (confession, communion, and prayers for the intentions of the Holy Father), we can obtain this indulgence. It is a beautiful act of mercy and love, helping to expedite the purification process for the deceased.

**Offering Masses for the Dead:**

Catholics believe in the power of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass to benefit those in purgatory. By offering Masses for the dead, we provide them with the spiritual graces needed for their journey towards heaven. It is an act of charity and solidarity, recognizing our responsibility to pray for those who have gone before us.

**Catholic Teaching on Purgatory:**

Purgatory is a state of purification for those who have died in God's grace but still need to be purified from venial sins or have not fully atoned for transgressions. The Church teaches that while purgatory is temporary, the purification process is essential for the soul's ultimate union with God. Our prayers, sacrifices, and Masses can aid those in purgatory, bringing them closer to the joy of eternal life.

**Parish Bulletin for November 9<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup>**

**Advent: Preparing for the Feast of Christmas:**

Advent is just around the corner, and it offers us a wonderful opportunity to prepare our hearts and homes for the celebration of Christmas. This season of anticipation and hope calls us to reflect on the true meaning of Christmas and to find ways to help others during this joyful time. Consider how you can make a difference in the lives of those around you, whether through acts of kindness, charitable giving, or simply spreading the message of love and peace.

**The Importance of Confession:**

As we prepare for the Christmas season, let us not forget the importance of going to confession regularly. Confession is a powerful sacrament that allows us to make a moral inventory of our weaknesses and seek God's healing grace. It is so good for the soul to reflect on our actions, ask for forgiveness, and renew our commitment to living a life of faith and virtue.

**Parish Bulletin for November 9<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup>**

As disciples of Jesus, we should prepare for the celebration of Christmas. **Advent**, which begins this year on the weekend of November 30<sup>th</sup>/December 1<sup>st</sup>, is a time for us to open our hearts and lives to Jesus especially.

Advent is not just about preparing for Christmas; it's a season that offers us a vision of our lives as Christians, showing us what is possible. The vision of Advent is twofold: it looks back to Christ's first coming in Bethlehem and forward to his second coming. Between these two events, we find meaning for our lives as Christians.

**Advent brings us a magnificent vision of life and hope for the future.** It is our time to become more involved and caught up in the meaning and possibilities of life as a Christian community. We are preparing not just for Christmas but also for Christ's Second Coming; this means that when He comes again, we will be awake and watchful. He will not find us asleep.



**CELEBRATING HALLOWEEN  
THE AMERICAN WAY**

**Embassy of Malta  
to the United States of America**

Ambassador Godfrey Xuereb and his spouse, Dr. Kay Xuereb, celebrated Halloween the American way! Decorations and an assortment of treats were ready for all the trick-or-treaters in the neighbourhood 🇲🇹🎃



**CATS OF MALTA**

**Dan Brock**

Malta was represented at the 2024 European Film Festival in Canada from November 14<sup>th</sup> until November 28<sup>th</sup> with *Cats of Malta*.

This 58-minute, 2023 movie provides a journey through Malta's colourful cat colonies, cafes, parks, and streets to meet the volunteer feeders and artists whose lives are enriched by stray cats. The film was directed by Sarah Portelli and edited by Ivan Maleki. Portelli and Maleki are also its producers.



The screening in Toronto took place: at the Spadina Theatre, Alliance Française, Toronto on November 18<sup>th</sup>; at the Ottawa Art Gallery, Ottawa, on November 19<sup>th</sup>; and at The Cinematheque, Vancouver, on November 21<sup>st</sup>. It will be online from December 1<sup>st</sup> until December 17<sup>th</sup>.

### ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE MALTESE COMMUNITIES

Dan Brock

#### CALIFORNIA

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

Posters depicting the 95-year-old history of the Club were on display on Sunday, November 3<sup>rd</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>.

The Holiday Market & Craft Fair was held on Saturday, November 9<sup>th</sup>. (See pages 13-15.)

The Club's 95<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dinner/Dance took place on Saturday, November 16<sup>th</sup>. (See pages 21-28, 40.)

The Children's Christmas Party will be held on Saturday, December 7<sup>th</sup>.

The New Year's Eve Dinner/Dance will take place on Tuesday, December 31<sup>st</sup>.

#### MICHIGAN

##### Maltese American Benevolent Society, Inc

A Member Appreciation & Scholarship Luncheon was held at the Club on November 3<sup>rd</sup>.

##### Maltese American Community Club of Dearborn

The Miss Malta Pageant Gala Dinner & Dance was held on the evening of Saturday, November 9<sup>th</sup>. (See pages 1, 16-20.)

On Sunday, November 21<sup>st</sup>, at 5:30 p.m., Mass was celebrated by Fr. Joseph Mallia, in remembrance of ALL deceased members of the Club. The Rosary was recited in Maltese prior to the Mass. A buffet dinner followed immediately after.

The Annual Craft Show took place on the afternoon of Sunday, December 1<sup>st</sup>. (See December issue.)

The New Year's Eve Party will be held on Tuesday, December 31<sup>st</sup>.

#### NEW YORK CITY

##### Maltese Center: Astoria

An All Souls Memorial Mass was celebrated by Fr. Anthony Saliba at the Center on Saturday, November 9<sup>th</sup>, at 7:00 p.m. (See page 12.)

A Christmas Family Party will be held on Saturday, December 21<sup>st</sup>.



www.themaltesecenter.com

The New Year's Eve Party will take place on Tuesday, December 31<sup>st</sup>.



\*funds allocated to operating budget



**ONTARIO**

**Greater Toronto Area**

**Consulate General of Malta in Toronto**

**Ms. Ruth Farrugia** succeeded Ms. Denise Demicoli as **Consul General** and will hold this office until April 2025.

An **Open Day** will be held at the Consulate General between 11:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. on Thursday, December 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Lehen Malti**

**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.

**Malta Band Club**

A **Memorial Service** was held for deceased members at 3:00 p.m. on Sunday, November 10<sup>th</sup>.

A **Candlelight Concert** took place on Saturday, November 23<sup>rd</sup>.

The **Children’s Christmas Party** was held on the afternoon of Sunday, December 1<sup>st</sup>

The **Annual Christmas Party** will take place on the evening of Saturday, December 7<sup>th</sup>.

**Maltese Canadian Cultural Association**

The Association will host a **Senior’s Christmas Luncheon** at St. Paul the Apostle Parish Hall on the afternoon of Sunday, December 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**Maltese-Canadian Museum**

**Kartolino mill-Kanada**, a site visit at the Museum by **Magna Żmien** took place on November 16<sup>th</sup>-24<sup>th</sup>. (See also page 37.)

**Melita Soccer Club, Inc.**

A **Memorial Service** for deceased members was held at 7:00 p.m. on Friday, November 15<sup>th</sup>.

A **Bus Trip** to the **Niagara Falls Casino** took place on Saturday, November 23<sup>rd</sup>.

A **Children’s Christmas Party** is planned for the afternoon of Sunday, December 15<sup>th</sup>.

**St. Paul the Apostle Parish**

A **Mass in English** was celebrated at 6:30 p.m. on Friday, November 8<sup>th</sup> to honour loved ones who had passed away this past year.

A **Parish Trip** to the **Winter Festival of Lights** in Niagara Falls, Ontario, is planned for Friday, December 6<sup>th</sup>.

There will be the **Anointing of the Sick** at the 12:00 noon Mass on Sunday, December 22<sup>nd</sup>, followed by the **Senior’s Christmas Luncheon**.



**London**

The local Maltese community and friends and relatives got together for a **Luncheon** at the **East Side Mario’s Restaurant** in north London on Thursday, November 21<sup>st</sup>. (See pages 31-33.)

A **Christmas Luncheon** will be held at the Marconi Club, on Clarke Road, at 12:00 noon, on Friday, December 13<sup>th</sup>.

**Windsor**

**Malta United Society**

**Kawlata**, a traditional Maltese vegetable and ham soup, was served on Saturday, November 30<sup>th</sup>.

The annual **Children’s Christmas Party** will take place on Saturday, December 7<sup>th</sup>.

On Saturday, December 21<sup>st</sup>, the annual **Adult Christmas Party** will be held.

**WASHINGTON, DC**

**Embassy of Malta**

A **Malta Day Concert** celebrating 50 years of being a republic was held on the **Millennium Stage** in the **Kennedy Center** at 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday, November 20<sup>th</sup>. (See pages 38- 39.)

**THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER  
THE HON IAN BORG ADDRESSES  
THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE COUNCIL  
FOR THE MALTESE LIVING ABROAD\***

\* Reprinted from Maltese E-Newsletter, issue 540 (November/Novembru 2024), page 2



"We firmly believe that the strength of Malta's global presence lies in the bonds we maintain with our citizens abroad, which is why the Council for the Maltese Living Abroad is pivotal in its contribution to our country."

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign and European Affairs and Trade Ian Borg reaffirmed the Ministry's commitment to continue strengthening this Council when he was delivering the opening address of its 16th Annual Meeting, which was held on Wednesday and Thursday, 30-31 October at Palazzo Spinola, St Julian's.

The Annual Meeting brought together council members representing Maltese diasporas from different countries, to discuss the future direction of the Council and the global Maltese diaspora.



While he commended the contributions of all past and present members of the Council, the Deputy Prime Minister encouraged them to continue working together to support Maltese communities across the world. "Together, we can ensure that the interests of the international Maltese community are well represented, well served, and ever evolving," he said.

Minister Borg noted that in the past year, international challenges such as the climate crisis, geopolitical conflicts and worldwide supply chain disruptions have led to significant shifts in global mobility. Technological advancements and evolving economies are also reshaping movements and interactions across borders.

"These shifts are not just challenges but also opportunities for our diaspora, which continues to integrate and excel in all corners of the globe. The Maltese people have always been known for their resilience, adaptability, and strong sense of identity, and this remains true today. The importance of connectivity, especially in the face of the global challenges the world is facing presently, can never be overstated," the Deputy Prime Minister affirmed.

He praised Malta's active role in international diplomacy, citing its involvement in the United Nations Security Council and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) as examples of the country's growing influence. He stressed that the Maltese diaspora plays an essential part in Malta's global presence and future development.

Reflecting on recent initiatives, the Deputy Prime Minister mentioned the success of the Consul-on-the-Move programme, the joint information session between the Directorate for Consular Services and Maltese Living Abroad and Xjenza Malta, aimed at fostering collaboration among Maltese researchers living abroad, as well as the Maltese Citizenship Award initiative, now in its second year. One crucial item discussed in this year's annual meeting is the legislative amendments to the Council for Maltese Living Abroad Act, which are currently in the final reviewing stages. These amendments are aimed at strengthening the representation of Maltese communities living abroad.

The agenda for this year's meeting also included discussions with Ċentru tal-Ilsien Malti, as well as Xjenza Malta, amongst others. The Council for Maltese Living Abroad has 15 members, including representatives from Australia, the United States, the European Union, Canada, and the United Kingdom.

## THE PRESIDENT OF MALTA COURTESY CALL WITH THE COUNCIL FOR MALTESE LIVING ABROAD\*

\* Reprinted from Maltese E-Newsletter, issue 540 (November/Novembru 2024), page 3

President of Malta Myriam Spiteri Debono received a courtesy call from the members of the Council for Maltese Living Abroad.

The Council for Maltese Living Abroad was established by means of Act XX of 2011 following the Emigration Conventions that were organised in 1969, 2000 and 2010 which conventions recommended the establishment of a Council composed of representatives of Maltese communities and others with the aim of promoting the rights and interests of Maltese living abroad. Act XX of 2011 was amended by Act XXIV of 2024 which passed into law on the 12th of July 2024, and put into effect amendments necessary to take care of the evolving situation.

The Council is composed of 15 members, and it is chaired by the Minister for Foreign Affairs (ex-officio).

Ten of the members are appointed from amongst Maltese nationals who are members of Maltese communities living abroad and they are appointed, for a term of three years, by the Prime Minister.

Another five members who have special knowledge and experience of the needs and interests of Maltese living abroad, are appointed by the Prime Minister for a term of three years, after consultation with the Leader of the Opposition.

The Council for the Maltese Living Abroad convenes once a year in Malta and its members convene in Malta for this annual meeting.

This meeting is characterised by discussions, proposals, recommendations, and decisions which serve as a basis for action by various ministries, departments and other entities in order that the aims for which the Council was set up are achieved. This Council also provides the opportunity to councillors to submit proposals, all throughout the year, present grievances and issues related to the people they represent.



## BUNNY ASPHAR'S ANCESTRY AND THE ORIGINS OF THE ASPHAR SURNAME\*

Dan Brock

\* This is a somewhat revised version of the article which appeared in The Maltese Canadian Club of London Newsletter, Issue 47 (September/October 2013), 13-14, 15

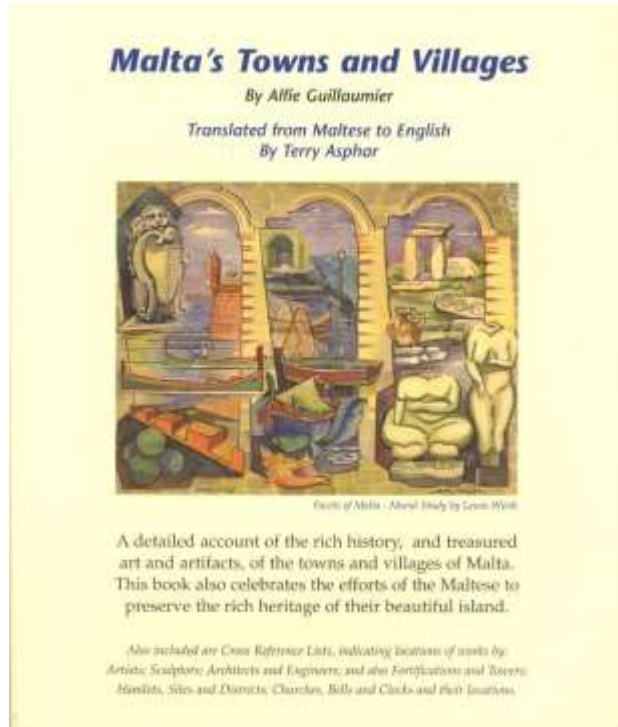
In his work, *The Surnames of the Maltese Islands*, Mario Cassar states that, by 2003, Asphar was one of "Some Other Extant Surnames in Malta," along with such surnames as Alford, Asare and Azzi.

In the October 2024 issue of this newsletter, pages 24-25, it was mentioned that Bernard R. "Bunny" Asphar briefly lived in London before joining family members in the United States.

Thanks to his daughter, Stephanie Prior, we now know that Bernie was a younger brother of Terry Asphar, the woman who translated Alfie Guillaumier's *Bliet u Rhula Maltin* into English as *Malta's Towns and Villages*.

It's Terry who dedicated the translation to her parents, Alfred Francis Asphar L.L.D. and Violet Pace Bardon. Alfred Francis was born in 1889, in Calcutta, India to John Francis Asphar (1864-1935) and Mary Vella.





John Francis Asphar was born in Malta. The inlaid marble plaque on the floor of the Church of the Assumption in Gudja confirms that he had three living sisters in 1873—Elizabeth or Elisa, Mary or Maria, and Theresa/Teresa—and that they were living in Malta at the time.

Their parents were John Joseph Fattulah Hannah Asphar (1831-1897) and Angelica (1838-1873), a daughter of Emanuele Bonavia and Giulia Casolani. Angelica was from Valletta, but John Joseph was born in Calcutta, India. It was probably complications associated with the birth of Theresa which led to Angelica's death in 1873.

Twenty years later, in 1893, their daughter, Elizabeth or Liza (1869-1957), would marry Alfons Maria Galea (1861-1941). Galea had taken over his father's fabric business at the age of 19. His father-in-law, John Joseph F.H. Asphar, traded in fabrics and gems. Galea, popularly known as *Sur Fons*, became a philanthropist, author, and Maltese senator. A street in Birżebbuġa is named in his honour and, in 1975, a £2M coin was issued bearing his image and name. His wife is still known as "Aunt Liza" among the descendants of her brother John Francis.

Liza (Asphar) Galea had a male first cousin living in India who, in turn, had a daughter, Mary Josephine Simeon (1903-1964). Mary Josephine, who was better known as Mollie, was orphaned at the age of 16 and "sent to her relatives, the Galeas in Malta." These Galea relatives were none other than Fons and Liza Galea.

While in Malta, Molly met and married Charles Herman Asphar (1895-1986), another son of the aforementioned John Francis Asphar and brother of Alfred Francis Asphar L.L.D.

In 1924, Charles and Molly immigrated to Australia and became the progenitors of the Asphars there.

Mollie Simeon-Asphar worked as a journalist in Australia and did much to promote the good name of Malta in Western Australia, where the Asphars had settled.

In 1954, Mollie and Mabel Strickland, who was then an Anglo-Maltese journalist and newspaper proprietor in Malta, formed the Australia-Malta Association. It was under the patronage of Senator Agnes Robertson of Western Australia and its aim was to develop cultural interests and friendship between Australia and Malta.

As for John Joseph F.H. Asphar, the father of John Francis Asphar and Liza (Asphar) Galea, we find him, in September 1844, attending St. John's Catholic College in Calcutta and excelling in such subjects as English grammar and composition, the use of the globe and geography, elocution and reading arithmetic and sacred history. By 1870, he had a wife and family and was living at 10 Strada Seconda, Floriana, Malta.

His parents, Fathollah Hannah Asphar, Esq. (c.1771-1852) and Therezia Eyoob (c.1805-1889), were married on October 19, 1829, in Calcutta. Therezia was the eldest daughter of Jacob Eyoob, Esq. (c. 1769-1842) of Bombay and his wife, Mary Ann (c.1788-1842). She was also the sister of Molly Simeon-Asphar's paternal grandmother, Catherine Maria (Eyoob) Simeon (c.1814-1849).

With "Esquire" after their names, Fathollah and Jacob were recognized as men of consequence. In fact, they were both merchants. In 1831, F.H. Asphar is listed as a merchant on Moorgyhuttah Street in Calcutta. He was still there in 1841 and his father-in-law was a merchant on Sukeas' Lane. In *The Bengal and Agra Annual Guide and Gazetteer* for that year, both are listed under "Armenian Merchants and Agents." This would seem to imply that both F.H. Asphar and Jacob Eyoob were of Armenian blood.

While Eyoob's birthplace is not presently known, F.H. Asphar is said to have been born in Aleppo, Syria, the son of Hannah Botros Asphar. "Botros" is Arabic for "Peter," while "Fathollah" is a Muslim male name meaning "Victory granted by Allah" or "Victory of Allah."

Fathollah Hannah Asphar, however, was Roman Catholic by the time he became a merchant in Calcutta. In January 1835, both he and Jacob Eyoob are among the Catholics who signed a petition to Lord William Cavendish Bentinck, governor-general of India, requesting that Most Reverend Robert St. Leger, DD, be fully recognized as Vicar Apostolic of Bengal over the claims of the Portuguese clergy attached to Goa. Asphar is believed to have been a member of the Armenian or Syrian Catholic Rite while living in Aleppo.

In 1835 or later he supported the suit of his sister-in-law, Maria M. Gonsalves, for a legal separation from her adulterous husband with such an argument that one of the lawyers for the defence stated that, "Mr Asphar who has married her sister and who brings to the matter all the astute wiliness of a native of Isfahan says oh yes she may go back but you must first break up the settlement give her the interest of 50,000 rupees and the rents of the two houses make her wholly independent of her husband and then she shall go back."

Isfahan, now in Iran, was once the capital of the Persian Empire and had a significant Armenian population, as did Aleppo. Is the lawyer suggesting that the people of Isfahan itself were wily or is it only those of an Armenian background, as was F.H. Asphar? It is rather stretching things, but could the surname "Asphar" in Aleppo have originated from an ancestor of F.H. Asphar having come to Aleppo from Isfahan, before the advent of surnames, and have been known as, say, "Missak of Isfahan"?

In Dr. Cassar's book, I cannot recall any Maltese surname as being of Armenian origin. He does, however, list "Armeni," and its related Italian forms—"Armenia," "Armenise," "D'Armenia" and "Darmenia"—as meaning "Armenian." This would imply that there are individuals in Malta today of Armenian blood. If there is any truth to the "Isfahan-Asphar" connection, "Asphar" may very well be the only Maltese surname—a sister of Bunny Asphar was living in St. Julians in 2013—which is of possible Armenian origin rather than denoting in the Italian language someone from Armenia.

More plausible, however, are the contents of a 2013 email to me from Mario Cassar where he stated that the surname "Asphar" is probably from the Arabic "asfar," meaning "yellow," in Maltese "isfar." Barbara Asphar, a niece of the late Bunny Asphar, agrees that the surname "Asphar" is probably an Anglicization of "Asfar" and that the "f" was changed to "ph," either in Syria or in India, to make it more English.

Indeed, credence may be given to Barbara's hypothesis when we look at an English translation of 1 Mac. 9:32-33 from the Old Testament: "Bacchides, when he heard the news made plans to kill Jonathan. But this became known to Jonathan, his brother Simon and all his supporters, and they took refuge in the desert of Tekoa, camping by the water of the cistern at Asphar." In Polish, to cite but one example, the last words are rendered as "*przy wodzie cysterny Asfar.*"

As for Asphar or Asfar, in the desert of Tekoa, it was possibly in the vicinity of the modern Takuais, some 10 km south of Bethlehem.

Adnan Asfar of Beirut, Lebanon has another theory or rather hypothesis for the Asphar vs. Asfar surname. Based on "historical and geographic evidence," he has traced the origins of the Asfars back to the 7<sup>th</sup> century. At the time, they were Syriac Orthodox. In an anonymously written book in 1919, Adnan has come "across two patriarchs and a bishop," in the Syriac Catholic Church, bearing the surname "Asfar." He then implies that this could be "proof enough of the 'schism' that befell the Asfar/Asphar family of the Levant." From this, I would infer that it was the Syriac Catholic branch which began spelling their surname "Asphar." This is reminiscent of the Catholic "Cronin" and Protestant "Cronyn" among the Irish.



Emblem of the Syriac Orthodox Church of Antioch



**MEET & GREET WITH THE NEW  
CONSUL GENERAL OF NEW YORK  
MS. DENISE DEMICOLI**

**Embassy of Malta  
to the United States of America**

On Sunday 3 November 2024, Consul General in New York, Ms. Denise Demicoli, had the pleasure to join the President, the Executive Committee, and members of the Maltese Center NYC. While learning of the rich history of the Center, Ms Demicoli & Mr Debono discussed ways in which to increase engagement in the future as the Center strives to welcome more Maltese & Gozitans in the area.

The current executive committee and numerous volunteers dedicate their time and efforts consistently to the upkeep & organising of events at the Maltese Center. As the sole remaining club for Maltese in New York & the Tristate area, it's a great place to gather.



**Eddie Debono, President of the Maltese Center  
NYC and Ms. Denise Demicoli**



### US ELECTIONS COVERED BY TELEVISION MALTA

#### Embassy of Malta to the United States of America

Tuesday, 5 November 2024 was an eventful Election Day for the Embassy of Malta to the US 🇺🇸

A crew from Television Malta flew out to Washington DC to cover the US Elections and interview Ambassador Xuereb about the said Elections as well as the process governing them.



#### ALL SOULS MEMORIAL MASS

#### Embassy of Malta to the United States of America

On Saturday, 9 November 2024, the Maltese Center in NYC hosted a commemorative Holy Mass, celebrated in Maltese by Fr Anthony Saliba, in honour of the dearly departed.

Consul General, Ms Denise Demicoli, had the honour to join the Maltese & Gozitan community in New York to pay respects.



The Maltese Center is a little bit of Malta in America. *Proset* to the Committee, Advisory Board and all the members and volunteers who keep this treasure alive and vibrant. A huge thank you to the President Eddie De Bono who served for many years and still contributes so much to the Community. The Maltese Center keeps our traditions and heritage alive and vibrant for past, present and future generations. (BTW, the pastizzi made here are phenomenal.)



### OUR HOLIDAY MARKET & CRAFT FAIR

Rita Borg

This year's Holiday Market & Craft Fair was held at the Maltese-American Social Club of San Francisco on Saturday, November 9<sup>th</sup>.







**Maltese Cookies**







**Soap and Body Butter**



**MISS MALTA PAGEANT**

**Lisa Buttigieg LiGreci  
and Margaret Muscat Purdy**

*Grazzi ħafna* to everyone who helped bring the Miss Malta Pageant back to the Maltese American Community Club of Dearborn (MACC), on the evening of Saturday, November 9<sup>th</sup>, after a hiatus of five years!



Rita Vella Cruz is truly the one who worked so many months along with Lisa Montoni, Danielle Alexander and Thomas Sanday to bring it back to our Maltese Community! Eve Muscat spent two days helping set up beautiful table arrangements with Rena Xuereb-Compos.



**Some of the people without whom this event would not have happened Eve Muscat, Margaret Muscat-Purdy, Rita Vella-Cruz (event chairperson), and Rena Xuereb-Compos**

Thomas Sanday (MACC's first Mr Malta), looked pretty dashing in his suit and did an outstanding job as our MC for the evening!



**Our MC, Thomas Sanday**

Our thanks goes to Brian Vella, our club president, for supporting our events.



**MACC President Brian Vella and the Pageant Committee Chairperson Rita Vella-Cruz.**





**Table setting**



**Rena Xuereb-Compos and  
Mary Motowski taking tickets**

Joe Formosa, with Neil and Doris Durkin, cooked all day to provide such a delicious meal. The Borg brothers, Tony and Joe, served the dinner. The one and only John Abela, we can never thank enough for cleaning the kitchen, washing dishes, putting out the trash, and cheerfully being the last one to leave and locking up!



**Our chef, Joe Formosa**



**A buffet dinner**



**One of the desserts**



Holly and Chris happily kept everyone hydrated at the bar.



**Our bartenders, Holly and Chris**

Mark Purdy manned the spotlight and our favorite DJ Jim Esparza provided us with an evening of music.



**Our DJ, Jim Esparza**

Our thanks goes to John and Tom Muscat for selling the raffle tickets and Paul Borg for helping with the raffle and an even bigger thank you to Paul Borg (Printwell) for printing our beautiful programs!



**John Muscat selling raffle tickets**

**Maltese American Community Club Executive Committee:**  
*President: Brian Vella Vice President: Rita Vella Cruz*  
*Treasurer: Mary Muscat Motosubi Financial Secretary: Lisa Defelice*  
*Recording Secretary: Mary Muscat Micallef*  
*Trustees: Margaret Muscat Purdy, Rena Xuereb Compos, Doris Durkin, Neal Durkin and John Abela*

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By Joe Mallia  
*Operational Director*  
 Paul Borg  
*Printwell, Consul of Malta*

*Children in Traditional Maltese Costume*  
 Serafinia Borg  
 Savior Borg



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**THE JUDGES:**  
*Dr. Donald B. Welker, MD – Family Practice- Dearborn*  
*Kathy Abel-Huk – Owner of N.J Diamonds of Dearborn*  
*Anne Nickert – Vice President of Detroit Good Fellows*

**MASTER of CEREMONY: THOMAS SANDAY**

**Miss Malta Pageant Chairman & Committee**  
 Chairman: Rita Vella Cruz  
 Committee: Thomas Sanday, Lisa Montoni, Margaret Muscat Purdy, Danielle Alexander, Rena Xuereb Compos and Joe Formosa

**Prize Contributors**  
**Winner – Awarded a Trip to Malta or Scholarship by the Maltese American Community Club**  
**1st Runner Up – Prize of Jewelry was donated by a former Miss Malta.**  
 We would like to thank all the individuals and companies who helped us make this event a great success and also in participating in our celebration.



**Raffle prizes**

Savier Borg and his sister Serafina Borg, who were dressed in Maltese traditional costumes and greeted our contestants as they walked up to the stage, were just lovely indeed!



**Miss Malta throne  
with cape, sash, and crown**



**Serafina and Savior Borg**



**Miss Malta trophies and prizes**





**Our contestants with their escorts**

We couldn't have had a Miss Malta contest without our judges who said there was some tough competition and, no surprise, a three-way tie with Sophia Vella answering the tie breaker question becoming our Miss Malta 2024!



**The Judges: Anne Nickert, Vice President of Detroit Goodfellows, Dr. Donald B Walker, M.D., Family Practice-Dearborn, Kathy Abel-Huk, owner of NJ Diamonds of Dearborn**

We truly want to thank all of our sponsors, the jewelry donation, and people who donated gift cards.



**Miss Malta 2024: Sophia Vella**

A huge *grazzi* goes to Lisa Buttigieg LiGreci for being our club photographer, spending her evening taking a thousand awesome pictures then editing and captioning. Visit our Maltese American Community Club Photos Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/517245228795347> for all of our events Lisa covers.



**A NIGHT TO REMEMBER**

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

*Photos courtesy of Evelyn Headley Simmons*

Saturday, November 16<sup>th</sup> was a milestone in the history of the Maltese-American Social Club of San Francisco as its 95<sup>th</sup> anniversary was celebrated with a dinner and dance.



**The Meal**



**The cloakroom attendant**



**A premeal drink**



One of the cakes



Table settings







Some of the guests at their tables







With Fr. Andrew











**Rita Borg and Mary Vella Gomes conducting draws**



**A proud winner**



**Mary Vella Gomes, the posters depicting the history of and families belonging to the Club, and the DJ**







The bar scene



After the lights are turned down







At the end of a memorable evening



**A REMEMBRANCE CELEBRATION  
IN THE BAHAMAS**

**Embassy of Malta  
to the United States of America**

Malta's Hon Consul to The Bahamas Mr. Gerard Wirth represented Malta at the 2024 Remembrance Celebration held in Nassau, Bahamas on Sunday 10 November. The Honorary Consul joined Government officials and members of the diplomatic community in remembering those who gave their lives to protect freedom and liberty in the World. Through their sacrifices we can live in a 21st Century that is more democratic and free 🇲🇹🇧🇸



**A COCKTAIL PARTY AT  
CARTIER JEWELRY STORE**

**Consulate of the Republic of Malta  
to Puerto Rico**

The Consul of Malta to Puerto Rico celebrated a cocktail party of Saturday, November 16<sup>th</sup>, at Cartier in San Juan with a select group of distinguished guests to welcome the renown Maltese film director Rebecca Cremona.



The Consular Corps of Puerto Rico, UMA members, Maltese Puerto Rican community members, and friends to our consulate were present to meet and greet our Maltese star. We thank Cartier, Fornaio Fine Gastronomy, and Derma Spa.

**Consul Dr. Luis E. Santaliz-Ruiz with  
Maltese film director Rebecca Cremona**



### A LECTURE ON CARAVAGGIO'S PAINTINGS

Embassy of Malta to the United States of America

On the evening of Sunday, November 17<sup>th</sup>, Ambassador Godfrey Xuereb, his wife and the rest of the team attended an immersive lecture on Caravaggio's beautiful paintings by Prof Keith Sciberras at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. It was an honour to have one of our very own sharing his extensive knowledge at such a distinguished artistic gallery 🇲🇹🇺🇸



Prof. Keith Sciberras, Head of the Department of Art and Art History, University of Malta, and Ambassador Godfrey Xuereb



### THE SCREENING IN OTTAWA OF CATS OF MALTA

High Commission of Malta to Canada

There was a full house 🎬 at the screening of , Malta's 2024 entry at the European Union Film Festival - Ottawa at *Ottawa Art Gallery - Galerie d'art d'Ottawa* on the afternoon of Tuesday, 19 November. It is a seemingly lighthearted documentary that speaks volumes about community life and our collective humanity. A big thank you to the director Sarah Jayne, Affarijiet Barranin Consulate General of Malta in Toronto, the Maltese Canadian Cultural Association, and the Canadian Film Institute \* *Institut canadien du film*.



High Commissioner Mark Pace



Sarah Jayne

**LUNCHEON AT EAST SIDE MARIO'S**

**Dan Brock**

London's luncheon group met in November on Thursday, 21<sup>st</sup> at East Side Mario's in the RioCan Shopping Mall, on the northeast corner of Fanshawe Park Road East and Richmond Street North.

This month's luncheon was arranged by Joyce Vella.



**Loretta Brock and Joyce Vella**



**Evelyn Rowles  
and her cousin Miriam McLean**



**Linda Clifford, Lois Hyde,  
Janice & Charles Vella, and Ron McLean**



**Dan & Loretta Brock**



**Charles Vella, Ron McLean,  
Dolores Harmsworth  
and her cousin Maryanne Aitken**





**Jim McDonald, Ted and Barbara Gauci, and Mannie & Monica Micallef**

Nearly 30 of us spent almost three hours in great conversation over a very enjoyable meal. Plans are already in the works for the December luncheon.



**Gerry & Joe Borg**



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



**Melrose Paquet and Charles & Rose Micallef**



**Janet Peckham and Connie Hislop**

After the meal, a cake was brought out to celebrate Barbara Gauci's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday.



**Barbara Gauci, the birthday cake, and Melrose Paquet and Manny & Monica Micallef**



**THE PASSING OF  
GEORGE LAWRENCE XUEREB**

**Dan Brock**

George Xuereb, the President of the Melita Soccer Club, passed away after a brief battle with cancer, on Tuesday, October 29<sup>th</sup>. He had served as president of the Club for 25 years. For three years previous to this, he was the Club's treasurer.



Nazareno Innocenzo George Xuereb was born in Qormi, Malta, on May 22, 1939, the eldest child of Joseph and Josephine (Zarb) Xuereb. His siblings were: Helen, Reno, Charlie, and Tony.

George immigrated to Toronto, Ontario, at the age of 19, having already been a teacher in Malta. At Jarvis Collegiate, he took math and graduated first in his class in all Ontario. He then completed his Chartered Accountant Certification through Kingston's Queen's University.

His entire career was spent as a chartered accountant, auditor, and American tax expert.

Some 60 years ago he married Hilda Palmer. They had three children: Jean, Michael, and George.

George was passionate in promoting the Maltese Canadian culture. In addition to his work with the Melita Soccer Club, he was a founding member of the Festa San Gorg Association of Toronto. Over the years, he brought the feast of his home town and patron saint to thousands in Canada and the United States.

He also helped numerous Maltese immigrants become acclimated to the Canadian way of life.

His Funeral Mass was celebrated on Monday, November 4, at 11:00 a.m. at the Nativity of Our Lord Parish, Rathburn Road, in Etobicoke, Ontario.

In July 2019, George had provided me with a copy of the obituary of Sr. Paulina M. Xuereb, R.S.C.J., which had appeared in the *San Francisco Chronicle* on January 14, 2004. This obituary and a little write-up on Sr. Paulina subsequently appeared in the January 2020 issue of this newsletter.



**MALTESE CROSS FOUNDATION  
OF CALIFORNIA**

**Dan Brock**

This foundation was established in 1984. Its current president is Louis J. Vella who is also the Honorary Consul General of Malta in San Francisco.

The deadline for applications for the 28<sup>th</sup> annual Vella-Dankwerth Cultural Scholarship for students of Maltese descent, residing in Northern California, which the Foundaton manages was April 27, 2024.

A Mass for departed loved ones was held in St. Dunstan's Church, 1133 Broadway Avenue, Millbrae, in November 2024.

The photos below were posted on Facebook by Christopher Sherry, on November 12, 2023, for last year's memorial service.



## THE REGISTERS OF BIRTHS, DEATHS, AND MARRIAGES IN MALTA AND GOZO Dedicated to our ancestors

Tony Mamo

This article looks at the registers of births, deaths, and marriages since the arrival of the Hospitallers (Knights of St John) in 1530. From then on, the Church kept registers of these events until 1889 when the Public Registry of the Maltese Colonial Government assumed responsibility for this function.

In Europe, the 16th century was a period of great religious turmoil that divided people, towns, and nations. The Catholic Church, which for centuries was the dominant religion, had lost its way, as corruption, greed, nepotism, and immorality undermined the very foundations of this great institution. An anti-Catholic movement known as Protestantism quickly grew and spread across northern Europe and “threatened to annihilate” the Catholic Church.

Alarmed by the spread of Protestantism, Pope Paul III (1534–1549) convened the Council of Trent (1545–1563) to reform the Church and to repel the spread of Protestantism.



**Council of Trent**

Painting in the Museo del Palazzo del Buonconsiglio,  
Trento, Italy

Among the Council's many reforming decrees were two which are essential to this article: (i) parish churches were to keep registers of births, deaths, and marriages and (ii) aspirants to the priesthood were to be trained and educated in a diocesan seminary.

The parochial registers contained details of practising Catholics. Anyone not on the registers was presumed to be a non-practising Catholic or a Protestant and could be investigated by the Inquisition. This reform imposed certain rights and obligations on the parishioners.

Baptism was the entry point to the Catholic Church. Therefore, a Catholic family was obliged to baptise their new-born baby and the officiating parish priest was required to record the event in the Register of Births.

A Catholic couple had a right to marry in the parish church, subject to satisfying certain conditions, including that they were free to marry for life. Again, the officiating parish priest was required to record this event in the Register of Marriages.

Finally, there was the *Liber de Statu Animarum*, a register kept by the parish priest containing details such as names of family members, relationships, births, address, and sacraments such as confirmation, confession, communion, marriage, and death.

After the Council of Trent, the Church started recording every important life event of parishioners in the parochial registers.

Despite this registration system, the Church in Malta faced many external and internal threats. Protestantism arrived in Malta and found adherents among the educated people. These also acquired and read books forbidden by the Church. Then there were religious crimes including sorcery, witchcraft, bigamy, breaking the rules of fasting and abstinence, blasphemy or swearing, and apostasy. These religious crimes were likely to be prevalent in the crowded streets, houses, and taverns of Valletta, Vittoriosa, Senglea, and Cospicua. In these cosmopolitan harbour towns, the Maltese mixed with foreign sailors, visitors, and merchants, some coming from Protestant countries. They exchanged news on happenings in Europe or money for a book forbidden by the Church.

In an attempt to stop the spread of anti-Catholic behaviour, the Pope established the Inquisition, a Church tribunal or court with its own judges, prosecutors, prisons, etc. to investigate, prosecute, and punish heretics and people who committed religious crimes. The Inquisition encouraged Catholics to denounce people whose behaviour was suspicious.



The punishment for these religious crimes depended on the nature of the crime: some offenders received a spiritual punishment (e.g. going to Mass), some were flogged, some were exiled from Malta for a number of years, some were executed in public (burning), some were condemned to rowing on the galleys, and some were fined and had their assets confiscated.

In July 1574, Pope Gregory XIII (1502-1585) sent the Italian Mgr. (Monsignor) Pietro Dusina to Malta to ensure that the Church had taken steps to implement the reforms of the Council of Trent, to stamp out heresy and religious crimes and to resolve the differences between Bishop Martin Royas de Portalrubio and the Grand Master Jean de la Cassière.

Mgr. Dusina was the first full time inquisitor of Malta. He was an energetic and hard-working priest who, during his short stay in our islands, visited about 430 churches and chapels and wrote a detailed account of the religious life in our islands. In his role as inquisitor, Mgr. Dusina presided over 25 cases including those against Judge Dottor Ludovico Platomone and Don Pancratio Michallef, Archdeacon of the Cathedral, who were found guilty of conversing with heretics. In Malta the Inquisitor's Court was located in Birgu.

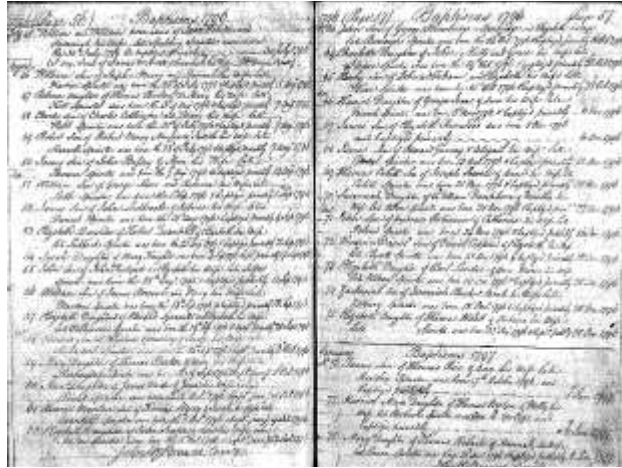


**Inquisitor's Court (Palace), Birgu**

Wikipedia

The Hospitallers came to rely on the four registers kept by the Church to estimate the population of our islands and the amount of grain required to be imported from Sicily to feed the population of our islands.

England, our colonial masters, also relied on the Church of England parish registers, which did not include the births, deaths and marriages of Catholics and non-conformists.



**Register of baptisms**

Wikipedia

Accordingly, on 1st July 1837 the British government introduced the civil registration of births, deaths, and marriages which applied to all people living in England, irrespective of their religious beliefs.

In Malta, civil registration was introduced on 3rd August 1889, when the Colonial Government established the Public Registry, which took over responsibility for the recording of births, marriages, and deaths.

The records of the Public Registry, however, go back to 1864. So, if you want to get a birth certificate of one of your ancestors who was born before 1864, you have to go to the parish church. If he/she were born after 1863 you have to go to Identita` Malta.

The registers of births, deaths and marriages for some parishes have been microfilmed and are freely available on the Maltese Diocesan Archives website (<https://archives.church.mt/>).

The family tree on my father's side includes the names of my ancestors and their date of marriage. Recently I was able to trace their marriage in the microfilmed parish records. My earliest known ancestor married in 1595 in Siggiewi and he was probably born in 1575. It is fair to say that his father probably fought in the Great Siege of 1565.

At the time of the visit of Mgr. Pietro Dusina in 1574-75, the Church did not have seminaries for the formation of priests. He recommended the establishment of a seminary in Malta.

The education of priests started to improve after the 1570s. The Dominicans established a school in Valletta for the education of Dominicans and lay priests. Then, in 1593, the Jesuits established a college in Valletta which was also a seminary. Afterwards this college became the University of Malta. In 1703, Bishop Fr Davide Cocco Palmieri (1632–1711) founded the seminary in Mdina.

The improvement in the education of priests is evident from the marriage records of my ancestors:

one marriage record of 1632 had three lines, the handwriting was not neat and the lines were slanting; on the other hand, the marriage record of 1722 had eight lines, the handwriting was very neat and the lines were straight.

\* *This article appeared in the Maltese E-Newsletter, Issue 541 (Nov. 2024), pages 18-19, and is reprinted here with the permission of the author Tony Mamo and the editor Frank Scicluna who live in Australia.*



## CELEBRATING MALTA'S 60<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY

### High Commission of Malta to Canada

Some images from the Malta High Commission's first diplomatic event in Ottawa. It was a pleasure, during the Malta High Commission's first diplomatic event in Ottawa, to celebrate 🍷 Malta's 🇲🇹 60th Anniversary as an Independent State as well as 60 years of diplomatic relations with Canada 🇨🇦

The newly inaugurated Maltese High Commission in Ottawa welcomed diplomats and dignitaries to introduce them to the Kartolini mill-Kanada project, that is in collaboration with the Maltese Canadian Museum in Toronto and supported by the High Commissioner Mark Pace and the @artscouncilmalta International Cultural Exchanges scheme 🇲🇹



We thank the Hon Rob Oliphant MP Parliamentary Secretary for foreign affairs for honouring us with his presence. We also thank Indri Mangu Andrew Alamango & Andrew Pace of Magna Żmien for their presentation on their project Kartolini mill-Kanada - a beautiful tribute to the Maltese-Canadian Community, which includes The Hon Larry Brock who also honoured us with his presence. Who would have said that there are so many Maltese in Ottawa? 🤔



During this presentation, Magna Żmien introduced this project which is attempting to save the memories of thousands of Maltese persons who traversed thousands of kilometres and rebuilt their lives in Canada during the 20th Century.



**Larry Brock, MP, Brantford-Brant and His Excellency Mark Pace**



### MALTA DAY CONCERT AT THE KENNEDY CENTER

Embassy of Malta  
to the United States of America

Reference Number: Press Release Issue  
Date: Nov 25, 2024

The Embassy of Malta in the United States of America celebrated Malta’s 50th Anniversary of becoming a Republic with Maltese music, culture, and talent, on the evening of Wednesday, November 20<sup>th</sup>. The Embassy organised a special concert at the world-renowned Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C., which is the National Cultural Centre in the United States of America. The full-house event was attended by a varied audience that included members of the Diplomatic Corps, representatives of the Mayor of the District of Colombia, officials from the State Department, Maltese citizens who came from across different States within the US and others.

Maltese artists Davinia Pace, Pamela Cibrano, and Kristian Schembri as well as Aiveen Gallagher-Schembri were the main protagonists of this celebration. The programme constituted a myriad of musical artistry ranging from Maltese composers to well-known opera pieces. The evening also included an original musical composition celebrating Maltese elements and traditional poetry. The concert gave space for the Embassy to showcase original Maltese music through the performance of a medley of band marches and the use of the Maltese language, something which had never taken place within walls of the US National Cultural Centre. The attendees were in awe of what they were truly witnessing at such a prestigious musical location.





Ambassador Xuereb extends his heartfelt thanks to the Kennedy Center for offering the Embassy the platform to showcase Maltese talent for the very first time in history at such a location, as well as the Artists who travelled to Washington, D.C. to share their talent and passion for music and poetry. Furthermore, the Embassy would like to thank the members of the Maltese Diaspora who came all the way from Michigan, Maryland, and Virginia as well as those who tuned in online from San Francisco and other States, to watch history being made at the Kennedy Center. In a nutshell, this year’s Malta Day Concert was indeed a first for Malta in many respects.



### A HOMAGE TO DON ANTONIO J. MOLINA MOLINA

#### Consulate of the Republic of Malta to Puerto Rico

The Consul of Malta and the Committee of Arts and Culture of the Consular Corps of Puerto Rico organized a homage to the late President of the Asociación Puertorriqueña de la UNESCO, patron of the arts and “ambassador” of Puerto Rican and Cuban arts and history, art critic, Secretary to Academia de Artes y Ciencias de Puerto Rico, Secretary to Asociación Internacional de Críticos de Arte, Don Antonio J. Molina Molina, Esq. Don Antonio was the first Knight of Malta in Puerto Rico, adviser to the Consulate of Malta in Puerto Rico, former attaché of several consulates such as Norway, Denmark, and France. His Majesty Juan Carlos I of Spain granted him the Order of Isabel La Católica in 1992.

For the occasion, the renowned painter José Galarza unveiled his masterpiece titled “El Caballero de Malta” as a posthumous homage to Don Antonio J. Molina. Antonio was a pillar who inspired Galarza to pursue a prolific and magnificent career as a painter.



Consul of Malta Dr. Santaliz-Ruiz highlighted the distinguished contributions of Don Antonio to the arts, culture, theater, music and history in Puerto Rico, Cuba, and Europe.

Consul Emeritus of France Dr. Marc Passerieu Dit Jean-Bernard underlined the superb work and collaboration of Don Antonio with the Consulate of France, Louvre Museum and UNESCO.

We are very thankful for all who participated in the activity and to UMA Capítulo de Puerto Rico Oficial for their attendance.



## MALTESE-AMERICAN SOCIAL CLUB OF SAN FRANCISCO



**Past and present presidents of the Club  
Joe Debattista, Louis Vella, Mary Vella Gomes (present), Brian Ciappara, and Joe Tanti**



*Photos courtesy of Evelyn Healey Simmons*