



# THE MALTESE PRESENCE IN NORTH AMERICA



**E-NEWSLETTER**

Issue 67

DECEMBER 2024

## A NATIVITY SCENE CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PARTY MALTESE-AMERICAN SOCIAL CLUB OF SAN FRANCISCO



See pages 21-28.  
*Photo courtesy of Evelyn Healey Simmons.*

## The Maltese Presence in North America

Issue No. 67 December 2024

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Dr. Raymond Xerri

### EDITORIAL COMMENT

While much of this issue centres around Christmas parties, I would like to draw particular attention to two articles: the one by Allyson Bozenski and the other by Michael Marinaccio.

Allyson, who is third generation Maltese American on her mother's side, traces her Maltese heritage from Mosta, Malta, to Metro Detroit,

Michael who, like myself, is neither of Maltese birth or blood, demonstrates his love of the Maltese culture, his interest in linguistics, and how the Maltese language is spoken, particularly in both the United States and

Canada. He then offers the diaspora an opportunity to contribute to his field of research.

Yes, this being the Christmas season, the bulk of the December issue centres on Christmas parties, especially Children's Christmas parties. It's a pleasure to see how many clubs in both Canada and the United States held such parties. Members of one club, the Maltese American Benevolent Society, Inc., even went a step further and helped out with a large children's Christmas party in one of the parishes in the southwest part of Detroit. (See page 6.)

From past experience as a member of the executive of the now defunct Maltese Canadian Club of London, I can't urge enough the membership of these clubs to support activities and events organized by your respective executives.

Likewise, I appeal to others, of Maltese heritage in particular, but not necessarily, to join the local club and take a leadership part in it. In the case of the London club, we had a woman, of neither Maltese birth nor blood, who was elected its president and did an excellent job.

The Achilles' heel of the London club, however, was that very few under the age of 60 were members and the bulk of the work was being done by a handful of devoted individuals in their 70s and 80s. Try not to let this happen to your club. I've seen this happen in several clubs in Southern Ontario over the past few decades.

Owing to the kindness and efforts of Evelyn and Dennis Simmons of California, all issues and the latest "Table of Contents" are posted on the web page of the Maltese-American Social Club of San Francisco at <http://maltese-americanscsf.org/home.aspx>.

Click on to "News & Resources."

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 and associations in North America are encouraged to use this e-newsletter to promote themselves and their activities.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

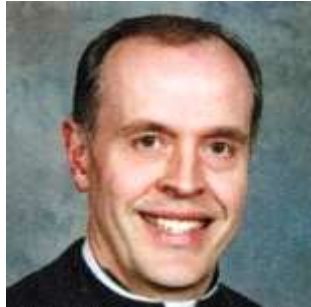


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## ST. PAUL THE APOSTLE PARISH, TORONTO, CANADA

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 Nov. 30<sup>th</sup>-Dec. 1<sup>st</sup>

#### Advent:

Advent reminds us to pause and reflect on our path of discipleship. This season is a spiritual journey to encounter Christ in various ways, not just a countdown to Christmas. Advent is a time to step back from the hectic pace of our lives and the business of the holiday season. It's easy to get caught up in the preparations for Christmas—shopping, decorating, cooking—and lose sight of the true purpose of this period. Advent calls us to slow down and remember that we are not just celebrating an historical event but expecting the second coming of Christ and recognizing His presence in our lives today.

**Week One:** On the First Sunday of Advent, we are called to ponder how we will greet Christ when He comes again. This is a powerful reminder that Advent is as much about the future as it is about the past. How are we preparing our hearts and minds for His return? What changes do we need to make in our lives to welcome Him fully?

**Weeks Two and Three:** The Second and Third Sundays of Advent invite us to reflect on how the people of Jesus' time reacted to John the Baptist, who prepared the way for Christ. Their responses challenge us to consider our own readiness to receive Christ. Are we open to His message? Are we willing to change our lives in response to His call?

**Week Four:** the Fourth Sunday of Advent reminds us that those with deep faith can help Christ come into the world in unexpected ways. Just as Mary's faith brought Christ into the world, our faith can make His presence known in our daily interactions and acts of love and kindness.

One of the classic Advent songs is Psalm 25. Try praying it slowly each day this week and let its words of trust and longing settle deep within you. Allow this practice to centre your spirit and guide your reflection through the Advent season

Let this Advent be a time for you to deepen your faith, refocus your priorities, and prepare your heart for the coming of Christ. By embracing the true meaning of this season, we can experience a more profound and joyous celebration of Christmas.

### Parish Bulletin for December 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>

In this week's corner I want to reflect on the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, a feast that holds profound significance in our Catholic faith. The solemnity, usually celebrated on December 8<sup>th</sup>, is transferred to December 9<sup>th</sup> this year as the 8<sup>th</sup> falls on a Sunday. This solemnity provides us a moment to ponder and celebrate the divine grace bestowed upon the Blessed Virgin Mary, who was conceived without original sin.

The dogma of the Immaculate Conception was formally declared by Pope Pius IX on December 8, 1854. This declaration affirmed that from the very first moment of her conception, by a singular grace and privilege of Almighty God and in view of the merits of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the human race, Mary was preserved immune from all stain of original sin.

As we reflect on this great mystery, we are reminded of Mary's unique role in salvation history. Chosen to be the mother of our Lord, she was graced with a purity that prepared her to bear the Son of God. This feast invites us to grow in our love and devotion to Mary, recognizing her as our model of faith and obedience to God's will

To grow in our love for the Blessed Virgin Mary, we can:

**Pray the Rosary:** This beautiful prayer helps us meditate on the significant events in the life of Jesus and Mary.

**Seek her intercession:** Mary is always ready to intercede for us with her Son. Let us bring our petitions to her with confidence.

**Imitate her virtues:** Mary's life was one of humility, obedience, and unwavering faith. Let us strive to embody these virtues in our own lives.

As we honour Mary on this solemn feast, let us also deepen our commitment to living out our faith with the same devotion and trust that she exemplified.



**MERRY CHRISTMAS FROM OUR HOUSE TO YOURS****READER COMMENTS  
OF THE PAST SEVERAL WEEKS**

Every time I read your newsletter and see the amazing photos, I always wonder with whom and with how many of these people I may be related.

As my ancestry involves many Maltese surnames as well as the DOUBLET(T) and INGUANEZ surnames, many of the names I read are connected in my family tree – including the FENECH surname. I have a FENECH cousin and his family residing in Malta at this present time. He is a wonderful man and we remain in contact since we met in Malta some few years ago.

How I would love to know if any of the people in your photos are my relatives?

I would be very happy for you to put my email address [muzzy05@outlook.com](mailto:muzzy05@outlook.com) out there and I would love to hear from anyone who thinks we may be related.

Marion Atkinson, Queensland

Dan, as usual well done. Thank you for continuing to do this to bring many people from our heritage together.

Racheal Cini Darin, Michigan

Lovely job as always, Dan!

Marthese Fenech,  
author of the Knights of Malta trilogy, Ontario

Thanks for the newsletter this month, especially for the photograph contributed by my father (quite a nice surprise)!

Gary Cauchi, California

Thanks, Dan for your newsletter. As always, it is greatly appreciated.

Nazzarene Zerafa, Queensland

As always you do an amazing job....Thank you so much for all the work you do.

Rita Borg, California

Thank you so much for crediting me in your newsletter. I deeply appreciate all that you do to bring the Maltese communities far and near together. A wonderful thing you do for many! Dennis and I are happy to hear the website is helping more people become acquainted with the newsletter; it's also bringing more people to the website! A win, win for all!!

Evelyn Healey Simmons, California

Another great newsletter, so full of colourful pictures from various activities.

How nice it is to note happy faces meeting and socialising and enjoying the company of each other with family and friends. I loved reading the write-up of George Xuereb. I did not know that George hailed from Qormi. He was one of the members of ALPS – The Association of Lyceum Past Students.

Many a time when he visited Malta, George would call me and we would meet for a spot of lunch to remember our Lyceum days. May he rest in peace – Amen.

Dan your dedication to keeping Maltese persons in contact with each other in Malta and in North America, is highly commendable. Keep up the good work dear friend.

George Stagno Navarra, Malta

Thank you for keeping us posted.

Godwin Darmanin, Ontario

Thank you for sharing. It was truly an eventful month as I can see from the newsletter.

The article on the registration of births, marriages and deaths is very interesting.

Stephanie Schembri, Archives Assistant,  
National Archives of Malta

Thank you, Dan, I found this document interesting as usual. A Maltese presence in the Caribbean, surprising.

Joe Spiteri, Ontario



**ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE MALTESE COMMUNITIES**

Dan Brock

**CALIFORNIA**

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

The **Children’s Christmas Party** took place on Saturday, December 7<sup>th</sup>. (See pages 1, 21-28.)

The **Annual Membership Meeting/Election** will be held on Sunday, December 29<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**

The **Children’s Christmas Party** took place on the afternoon of Sunday, December 8<sup>th</sup>. (See pages 30-32.)

MABSI members supported **Most Holy Trinity’s Annual Children’s Christmas Party** on Saturday, December 14<sup>th</sup>. (See page 6.)

**Maltese American Community Club of Dearborn**

The **Annual Craft Show** was held on Sunday, December 1<sup>st</sup>. (See pages 8-12.)

A **First Friday Mass** was celebrated at 6:30, on December 6<sup>th</sup>. Dinner was available either before or after Mass.

The **Children’s Christmas Party** was held on Sunday, December 8<sup>th</sup>. (See pages 15-18, 40.)

The **New Year’s Eve Dinner/Dance** which was to take place on Tuesday, December 31<sup>st</sup>, has been **Cancelled**.

**NEW YORK CITY**

**Maltese Center: Astoria**

A **Christmas Family Party** took place on Saturday, December 21<sup>st</sup>.

A **New Year’s Eve Party** will be held on Tuesday, December 31<sup>st</sup>.



**ONTARIO**

**Greater Toronto Area**

**Consulate General of Malta in Toronto**

An **Open Day** took place 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**

The **Annual Children’s Christmas Party** was held on the afternoon of Sunday, December 1<sup>st</sup>. (See page 7.)

The **Annual Christmas Party** took place on Saturday, December 7<sup>th</sup>.

The **Malta Band** performed for the residents of **The Village of Humber Heights**, a long-term care facility in Etobicoke, on Monday, December 9<sup>th</sup>. This is the Band’s third performance here.

**Maltese Canadian Cultural Association**

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

**Melita Soccer Club, Inc.**

The **Annual Christmas Dinner Party** took place on the evening of Saturday, December 7<sup>th</sup>. (See pages 12-13, 40).

The **Annual General Meeting and Election of Officers** was held on Sunday, December 8<sup>th</sup>. (See page 14.)

A **Bus Trip** to the **Fallsview Casino** in Niagara Falls, Ontario, took place on Saturday December 14<sup>th</sup>.

A **Children’s Christmas Party** was held on the afternoon of Sunday, December 15<sup>th</sup>. (See pages 34-35.)

A **Bus trip** to **Casino Rama** will take place on Saturday, January 25, 2025.

**St. Paul the Apostle Parish**

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

**Confessions** in both English and Maltese were heard on the morning of Tuesday, December 17<sup>th</sup>.

The **Anointing of the Sick** took place at the 12:00 noon Mass on Sunday, December 22<sup>nd</sup>, followed by the **Senior's Christmas Luncheon**.

A **New Year's Eve Dinner & Dance** will be held on Tuesday, December 31<sup>st</sup>.

**London**

A **Christmas Luncheon** took place at the **Marconi Club**, on Clarke Road, at 12:00 noon, on Friday, December 13<sup>th</sup>. The guest of honour was the Consul General of the Republic of Malta to Toronto **Ms. Ruth Farrugia**. (See pages 19-20.)

**Windsor**

**Malta United Society**

The annual **Children's Christmas Party** was held on Saturday, December 7<sup>th</sup>.

On Saturday, December 21<sup>st</sup>, the annual **Adult Christmas Party** took place.



**MOST HOLY TRINITY'S ANNUAL CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PARTY**

**Tanya Caruana**

Thanks to all our Maltese American Benevolent Society, Inc. members—Gerry Abela, Ninfa Cancel, Chris Caruana, Grace Caruana, Lucas Caruana, Tanya Caruana, Xander Caruana, and Joe Said—who supported Most Holy Trinity's Annual Children's Christmas Party for 500 kids in Southwest Detroit on the afternoon of Saturday, December 14<sup>th</sup>.





## CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PARTY

### Malta Band Club

The Malta Band Club was full of many very excited children as the Club welcomed Santa Claus and Mrs. Claus to the Club for the annual Children's Christmas Party on Sunday, December 1<sup>st</sup>. It was great to see the Club at full capacity and everyone enjoying a fantastic afternoon!





### CRAFT SHOW

Lisa Buttigieg LiGreci

Another successful craft show took place at the Maltese American Community Club of Dearborn (MACC) held on Sunday December 1<sup>st</sup>. This year's show was bigger than ever, so much so that it was moved to the hall upstairs to make room for the over 20 crafters selling their goods.



Sisters of the heart



Graceful stained glass



The crafters setting up their tables



Vicky's Knitting





**Petite Patriots**



**Hooked on a flame**



**Pauline Sculpts**



**K & K Creative Crafting**



**Dorothy Ballard**



**Al the Turner**



The shoppers perused all the tables of homemade crafts to find just the perfect item for their gift lists. Then they enjoyed a relaxing lunch of authentic Maltese soup and *pastizzi*. Thanks to Tom Muscat for preparing the *minestra* and Joanne Axiak for the *kusksu* soup. They were absolutely delicious, made a perfect pairing with the *pastizzi*, and tasted just like they were straight from the old country.



**Knit 2 Beads**



**MACC Maltese merchandise**



**Purdy Plants**



**Rena Xuerub,  
*Courage of a Maltese Immigrant***



**Goodies Galore General Store**





**Falcon Leather**



**Scrunch Up Your Life**



**Korkosini Creative Custom Designs**



**Seeking Serenitea**



**Marie made threads**



**Melina made it**





Me with *Mom's Maltese Cookbook*



Joe Borg and Doris Durkin selling pastizzi and soup



### OUR ANNUAL CHRISTMAS DINNER PARTY

#### Mary Ann Piscopo

Fun was had by all who attended our Christmas Dinner Party, at the Melita Soccer Club, on Saturday, December 7<sup>th</sup>.

Dinner was started with a delicious salad with feta cheese and sun-dried tomatoes made by Mary Tanti. Tony "Loloj" Saliba cooked a delicious penne pasta with sun dried tomatoes, olives, olive oil, etc. He also cooked the delicious roast beef, potatoes, and Brussels sprouts. And for dessert we had a lemon cake.







**With Fr. Roy Farrell,  
Pastor of St. Paul the Apostle Parish**



Lorraine won the 50/50 raffle.  
Music was provided by Pauline Zahra.  
Merry Christmas everyone.



## ANNUAL MEETING OF THE MELITA SOCCER CLUB INC.

**Mary Ann Piscopo**

The annual meeting of the Club was held on Sunday, December 8th.

The 2025-26 Committee elected is as follows:

**President:** Mary Ann Piscopo  
**Vice-President:** MaryAnn Schembri  
**Treasurer:** Tony Cristina  
**Secretary:** Catherine Bonnici  
**Directors:** Joe Cassar, Tony Saliba,  
 Mary Tanti and Ross Zammit  
**Auditors:** Joe Zammit and Frank Apap  
**Trustees:** George Mallia, Joe Bond, and  
 Tony Saliba

Thank you to all the members who attended the Annual Meeting.



## THE PASSING OF RALPH TALIANA

**Dan Brock**

On its Facebook page the Melita Soccer Club noted the passing of Fred Taliana on the evening of Sunday, December 8th.



Ralph "Freddie" Taliana, a son of Vincent and Rita Taliana, was born in Valletta on April 13, 1938.

He is survived by his wife Barbara, children Vince, Tina, and Amada, six grandchildren, five great-grandchildren, one great-great grandson, two adopted children and two adopted grandchildren, and his sister Veronica.

Freddie will be remembered for "his infectious smile, love and kindness."

Visitation was on Thursday, December 12<sup>th</sup>, at Lynett Funeral Home, on Dundas Street West, Toronto. The funeral service was held at St. Paul the Apostle Church the next day and was followed by a reception at the Melita Soccer Club.

## DEATH OF JOSEPH FENECH ONE OF THE FOUNDERS OF THE MELITA SOCCER CLUB

**Dan Brock**

As noted on the Facebook page of the Melita Soccer Club, Joseph "Marquis" Fenech passed away on the morning of Wednesday, December 11<sup>th</sup>.



Joseph was born in Mellieha, Malta, on August 12, 1940, a brother to Vince, Esther, Vicky, Charles, and Doris.

Joseph had a deep passion for soccer and, in 1963, having immigrated to Toronto, Canada, he organized a soccer team with individuals such as Sam Sherri and Charlie Theuma. The name "Melita" was selected for it. Joe, aka "Marquis", worked very hard for both the team and the Melita Soccer Club.

Joseph's sport's interest also extended to horse racing.

He was noted for his "warmth, sense of humor, and down-to-earth nature".

Joseph's wife Jean died in 2007. He is survived by his children, Murray and Jamie, five grandchildren, and a great-granddaughter.

Visitation was held at the Jerrett Funeral Home on St. Clair Avenue West in Toronto on Sunday, December 15<sup>th</sup>. The Funeral Mass was celebrated at St. Paul the Apostle Church the next day and was followed by a reception at the Melita Soccer Club.



## CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PARTY

Margaret Muscat Purdy

The Children's Christmas Party, at the Maltese American Community Club of Dearborn on Sunday, December 8<sup>th</sup>, was enjoyed by everyone!

### Kids' crafts



Maeve is very serious



Kids' games



Mexican hat dance?







**Pin the heart on the Grinch**



**First and second place winners**



**All of our Christmas trees**



**Everyone had five minutes to wrap someone like a Christmas tree**



**All the kids waiting for Santa**







Here comes Santa and his elf



Kids getting their gifts



Rita Vella Cruz and Joe Borg



The Muscat family







A great big thank you to the following people; Santa and Elf (John and Eve Muscat); Joe Formosa, Neil Durkin, and Marty Micallef for preparing a delicious Christmas dinner; Tony and Joe Borg for helping serve along with Marty Micallef who said Grace and had the toughest job of all dismissing tables of very hungry people; to Doris Durkin for helping with the dessert, to John and Eve Muscat, Mary Micallef, and Rita Vella Cruz of the entertainment/decorating committee; to Holly Ivy for serving up all the thirsty people; to John and Tom Muscat for selling 50/50 tickets; to Jim Esparza our DJ cranking out the tunes; to Paul Borg and Nick Suchyta for judging our Christmas tree contest; to John Abella, whom we can never thank enough for cleaning up the kitchen and locking up; and to Rob Farr for providing the poinsettias.

The biggest thank you goes to everyone who came to the party and to the member donations.





**CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON  
AT THE MARCONI CLUB**

**Dan Brock**

On Friday, December 13<sup>th</sup>, over 40 of us gathered for our usual monthly lunch, this time at the Marconi Club on Clarke Road here in London, Ontario.

As usual at the Marconi Club, we had a room to ourselves and partook of a buffet luncheon.



**Charles Vella, Rose Micallef, Janice Vella,  
Connie Hislop, and Janet Peckham**

What was unusual was that Ms. Ruth Farrugia, the interim Consul General of the Republic of Malta to Toronto, was our guest of honour. It has been more than 10 years since Ms. Farrugia has served Maltese Canadians in this capacity.



**Melrose Paquet,  
Consul General Ms. Ruth Farrugia,  
Charles & Rose Micallef**



**Joe & Tessie Mallia and Tessie Spiteri**



**Dan & Loretta Brock  
and Dolindo & Maria Bugeja**



**Linda Clifford, Gloria Heffler, Lois Hyde,  
Margaret Calleja, Joyce Vella, and Marg Won**



**Carol Hilton, Terry Rogers, Lynda & Tony Galea**



**Charlene Paquet, Elsa Zammit, Mary Vella and Carmen Farrugia**



**Mike Ditchfield, Debbie Ditchfield, and Helen Ditchfield**



**Miriam & Ron McLean and Tony & Doris Schembri**

Most of us stayed afterwards for a few games of bingo.



**Gerry & Joe Borg, Ted & Barbara Gauci**



**Joe & Bernadette Gall and Miranda & Deo Catania**



**IL-PREMJU ĠIEĦ IL-QALA 2024 BESTOWED UPON CHEV. DR. RAYMOND C. XERRI**

**Dan Brock**

*Il-Premju Ġieħ il-Qala*, the highest honour for the village of il-Qala, Gozo, where he resides, was bestowed upon Chev. Dr. Raymond C. Xerri on the evening of Friday, December 6<sup>th</sup>, at the Anton Buttigieg Hall there.



**Dr. Xerri with his family**

A son of Gozitan emigrants, Dr. Xerri was born in New York City. He returned to Malta in 1991 and has dual American-Maltese citizenship.

As a career diplomat, Dr. Xerri served with distinction as Consul General of the Republic of Malta to Canada between 2019 and 2022. No doubt, during that time he played a large role in the Republic establishing a High Commission in Ottawa in 2024.

Dr. Xerri was honoured for his longstanding service to il-Qala, its former residents throughout the diaspora, and to Gozitans in general. Many Gozitan Americans and Canadians attended the ceremony, which was live-streamed for the benefit of the thousands of il-Qalin living worldwide.



**CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PARTY AT THE CLUB**

**Evelyn Healey Simmons**

The Children's Christmas Party was held at the Maltese-American Social Club of San Francisco on Saturday, December 7<sup>th</sup>.



***Presepu u pasturi***





“Joseph”, “Jesus”, & “Mary”



The arrival of Santa & Mrs. Claus





















Candid shots of the children





**Some of the adults present**



**Mona Vella-Nicholas (far left),  
the proofreader of this newsletter**



**Mary Vella Gomes, Club President,  
behind the bar**





## GROWING UP A THIRD GENERATION MALTESE-AMERICAN

**Allyson Bozenski**

On my mother's side, I am a third generation Maltese-American. On my father's side, I am of Polish descent. I was raised with European influences on both sides while acculturating to the American lifestyle.

With multiple achievements under my belt, I strive to continue to make my family proud, especially my nannu Paul and my nanna Jane.

My maternal grandparents' story starts in the city of Mosta, Malta back in the early 1930s. Both Paul and Jane grew up on Eucharistic Congress Road (Triq Il-Kungress Ewkaristikku) within blocks of the famous Mosta Dome.

Paul Micallef, Jr. was one of six children born to Paul, Sr. and Jane (Galea) Micallef.

Jane Buhagiar was one of 11 children born to Emmanuel and Josephine (Cassar) Buhagiar.

Because of World War II, one's lifestyle in Malta was much different than what we could imagine today. Food, education, and health were all limited in the midst of the Germans' attack. Both grandparents had fled to separate shelters during the bombings. Paul's was located underground in Mosta, while Jane's was in Mġarr and Gnejna off the sea.

Jane recalled eating the freshest of seafood because they were able to fish off the rocks. She also remembered the soldiers living near them so food was never that scarce. "They would bring us corned beef; they watched out for us".

After the War, both grandparents continued to go to school until about the 6<sup>th</sup> grade.

Being the youngest son in a somewhat smaller family, Paul recalled his love for automobiles and began working full-time at age 14. His father who had been in New York before the War, was working hard to send his family to America but there was always an issue with the paperwork.

In 1953, Paul, Jr. immigrated to Canada via the Maltese Work Visa Program. He arrived in Ajax, Ontario, after a long 14-day journey via the *Nea Hellas* ship. From there, he traveled to Windsor, where he lived for three years, working mostly mechanic-like jobs. In 1956 he received his papers to move to Detroit where he began to work at the Ford Motor Company as a mechanic.

In 1953, Jane also immigrated to North America landing at Ellis Island, New York City, via the SS *Atlantic*, which she says was a very nice ship. From there she, her few older sisters, and father took the train to the Detroit Central Station and started to look for housing.

During the train ride they met the comedian, Jimmy Durante, who was on his way to do a show at Detroit's Fox Theater. He bought Nannu and his daughters sandwiches and continued to crack jokes to ease the stresses they were experiencing.

Jane's father, Emmanuel, bought a home on Dragoon Street in Detroit. Throughout 1953 the rest of the family came to the States.

Paul and Jane had met as children in Mosta and started dating in their mid teens.

They married in Detroit in 1955 and bought a house of their own on Central Street. During this time Jane worked at Maureen's Coats and Co. along with her eldest sisters. Paul was still at Ford.

In 1956 they welcomed their first child Josephine "Josie", who was the first granddaughter for both the Micallef and Buhagiar families. In 1960 their second daughter Jane Ann "Joanne" was born. That same year, fearing racial tensions, Paul and Jane decided to move out of Detroit and settled in Riverview, a few miles to the southwest.

Their daughters, Josie and Jane, both made adjustments, being second generation American and only knowing the Maltese language. They, too, had their trials and tribulations acclimating into the public school system and adapting into the so called "American Lifestyle". Much like the successes of their parents, Josie and Jane became hard working and family oriented.

Josie worked odd jobs until she married her soulmate, another Maltese man, Norman Mintoff. They had two children and also lived in Riverview until their unexpected passings in 2014 (Norman) and 2019 (Josie).

Jane also married, but to a Polish man, Mike, who had much of the same family values as she did. Jane opened and ran her own hair salon for 30-plus years, with her parents by her side. Jane, Sr. would wash hair, run the cash register, and keep everyone in line, while Paul would sip on his coffee and chat with all the customers. They are very loved and respected in the downriver community. Mike and Jane had two children, Allyson (me) and Andrew, who are now representing our family as proud third generation, Maltese and Polish Americans.

Andrew and I grew up with many Maltese influences. We spent a lot of time with our maternal grandparents as children. I moved in with them when I started my nursing career in 2016. As they age, I continue to care for them. While not busy at home with Nanna and Nannu, I am working at Henry Ford Health as a neonatal nurse.

Though I have many hobbies, I am more known for my singing career and have been involved in the Maltese community since a child. I began singing the national anthems and "Ave Maria" for our feasts and special occasions. It was an honor to be asked to sing for President George Vella when he visited the country in 2023. It took some practice to nail down the Maltese Anthem. My grandparents were very harsh critics, but I think I did an ok job.

I have also performed with my band, Packin Heat, at many of the Maltese American Community Club of Dearborn events, including last year's New Year's Eve dance.



**New Year's Eve 2023**  
**Seated: my nanna and nannu**  
**Jane & Paul Micallef**  
**Standing: me and my brother Andrew**



**New Year's Eve 2023, with me in the center**

I am proud to represent my family and the community. I always want to see my grandparents smiling. They sacrificed so much in their lifetime and I believe I owe them as much thanks as I can give.

Maintaining my Maltese heritage, I now attempt to make my own dough (*għaġina*), cook poor man's soup, make *gbejniet*, *ħobż biż-żejt*, *fażola* with the parsley and garlic, trifle, and much more! *I am* inspired by my grandparents' efforts to create a better life for themselves and their family.



**CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PARTY**

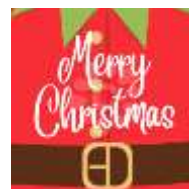
**Tanya Caruana**

The Maltese American Benevolent Society of Detroit held its Children's Christmas Party on Sunday, December 8<sup>th</sup>.

We had 19 children from the ages of six months to 10 years.













**MALTESE DIALECTS  
AND A REQUEST FROM THE DIASPORA**

**Michael Marinaccio**  
[mmarinaccio@nyu.edu](mailto:mmarinaccio@nyu.edu)



*Michael Marinaccio is a recent graduate from the University of Malta Institute of Linguistics and Language Technology. He resides in New York City and is continuing his research on the Maltese language.*

By all metrics, the Maltese language is an intriguing one. With grammatical roots in Arabic and a heavy dosage of Italian vocabulary, Maltese has married the linguistic landscape of the northern and southern coasts of the Mediterranean and, owing to its interesting linguistic history, has become a language with quite unique linguistic structures. It is precisely for this reason that, in 2022, I moved to Malta to pursue a master’s degree in linguistics at the Institute of Linguistics and Language Technology at the University of Malta.



**L-Università ta’ Malta**

In the year that I lived in Malta, I was fortunate enough to participate in several Maltese traditions, including *il-Gostra*, beach barbeques, and numerous summertime *festi*, and I was able to indulge in all of the classic Maltese foods, such as *pastizzi* (*tal-pizelli* are my favorite!), *imqaret*, *ftajjar*, *qagħaq tal-għasel*, *aljotta*, *gbejniet*, *stuffat tal-fenek*, *figolli*, and the list goes on.



**Imqaret**



**Ftira**



**Pastizzi and qassatat**

In addition to learning about the Maltese customs and traditions, I also began learning Maltese thanks to the free courses offered through the Department of Maltese at the University of Malta. The Maltese experience was rounded out by visiting each of the Heritage Malta historical sites, like Haġar Qim and Mnajdra, Ġgantija, and the Hypogeum.



**Haġar Qim**

Believe it or not, I was even able to get some studying done while living in Malta! My research and dissertation focused on a very specific element of Maltese grammar, the broken plurals. Broken plurals are called as such because when the noun is made plural, it is as if the noun is 'broken' and then put back together. Some common broken plurals are listed below.

ħobż → ħbejjeż 'bread/s'  
 sena → snien 'year/s'  
 knisja → knejjes 'church/es'  
 furketta → frieket 'fork/s'  
 mappa → mapap 'map/s'  
 ġakketta → ġkieket 'jacket/s'  
 triq → toroq 'street/s'  
 ħanżir → ħnieżer 'pig/s'  
 lejł → ljieli → 'night/s'  
 žiemel → žwiemel 'horse/s'

To be frank, the findings of my master's research are probably dull for non-linguists, so I won't bore you here. The crux of my experience in Malta occurred in September of 2023, just two weeks before I moved back to the United States. I presented my research at the 8th International Conference on Maltese Linguistics (*8th Lingwistika Maltija*), alongside several prominent Maltese linguists.

In many ways, it was the ultimate culmination of my Maltese adventure: I shared my year-long research in front of many of my Maltese friends and colleagues. Among some of the most intriguing presentations at the conference were those that discussed the research surrounding the dialects spoken across Malta and Gozo.

Just as one can identify where someone is from in the United States and Canada based on their English dialect, so, too, can Maltese speakers oftentimes identify where other Maltese speakers are from based on their Maltese dialect. Dialects can differ from one another in subtle ways, such as changes in the pronunciation of a vowel, or in much more salient ways, such as utilizing different words for the same concept.

Linguists from both the Institute of Linguistics and Language Technology and the Department of Maltese at the University of Malta conducted a questionnaire with around 1,200 participants from across Malta and Gozo to capture the differences in vocabulary usage across speakers. The images below, reproduced from *malti.mt*, a website that shares the findings of this dialect research and other insights into Maltese, illustrate how the Maltese words for 'carrot' vary across localities.



**Participants from the 8th Lingwistika Maltija**





Distributions of the words *zunnarija* (above) and *zfunnarija* (below)



Distributions of the words *karrotta* (above) and *karrottu* (below)



Each map represents the distribution of a given word based on the responses to the questionnaire. Localities are colored a certain way based on these responses. Dark red indicates that the word is very common in a given locality, orange indicates that the word is used somewhat often in a given locality, and yellow indicates that the word is used rarely in a given locality. From these maps, we can surmise that, for the word 'carrot', speakers from the south of Malta are more likely to use the word *zunnarija*, speakers from Gozo are more likely to use *karrotta*, speakers from Mġarr are more likely to use *karrottu*, and speakers from Qala are only slightly more likely to use *zfunnarija* over *karrotta*.

Although the exact boundaries of dialect areas are debated amongst linguists, there are three dialect areas in Malta and Gozo that linguists generally agree on. These are the Cottoneran dialect area (*Kottoneran*), spoken in the area around the Three Cities (Birgu, Bormla, and L-Isla), the 'Southern' dialect area, spoken in the southeast of Malta (around Marsaxlokk and Żejtun), and the Gozitan dialect area (*Għawdxin*), spoken on Gozo. These dialect areas can be further decomposed into smaller, distinct dialects, such as the *Żejtuni* and *Xlukkajr* dialects in the south and the *Naduri* and *Sannati* dialects in Gozo. Other dialects around Malta include the *Mġarri* and *Qormi* dialects and the dialects spoken in Sliema, Mosta, and Mellieħa. In short, don't let its size fool you: Malta and Gozo host a diversity of dialects across all 68 localities.

Over the past few decades, there has been a growing interest in the dialects of Maltese that are spoken outside Malta and Gozo, specifically in Australia (*Maltraljan*). In fact, there are more than 10 articles detailing different aspects of the *Maltraljan* dialect, with more certainly in the works. There are much fewer articles about the Maltese dialect(s) spoken in the United Kingdom, but they do exist. At the time of writing this article, however, there are (to my knowledge) no articles about the Maltese dialect(s) in North America, and I'm hoping to change that. I have begun a study to learn more about the Maltese spoken in North America, and I am looking to you, members of the diaspora, for help with this study. I have created a short online questionnaire that can be accessed through the following hyperlink which I hope you will consider filling out: <https://forms.gle/6V1W8Psy4EW2UEoa6>.

Although the primary focus of this research is the Maltese diaspora in North America, members of the diaspora from around the world are encouraged to participate. You do not need to know Maltese to complete this questionnaire, and individuals of all ages are welcome to complete it. The answers that you provide in the questionnaire will be invaluable to this new research project and your identity will be strictly confidential.

You can also scan this QR code to take the questionnaire.



Maltese is spoken by over half a million people worldwide, nearly 15% of whom live outside Malta and Gozo. The dialect(s) of Maltese spoken in North America have yet to be documented, but it is my hope that this will soon change. The study of the Maltese language abroad doesn't merely describe the linguistic situation of the diaspora; it tells the story of immigration and the perseverance of the Maltese people to begin a new life abroad while safeguarding the Maltese language and traditions.



## CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PARTY

Mary Ann Piscopo

A Children's Christmas Party was held at the Melita Soccer Club on Saturday, December 15<sup>th</sup>.

Thanks to Carl Azzopardi for bringing the soccer team's children and for arranging Santa to visit us from the North Pole.

Thank you, Vicky Elizabeth for keeping them entertained.







Thanks to Mary Tanti for the treat bags, cooking the pizza, chicken nuggets, potato tots, donuts, and juice boxes Thanks to the rest of the Committee for helping as well. It takes a team to have successful functions.

We're glad the children liked their gifts from Santa.



## MALTESE ORGANIZATIONS IN NORTH AMERICA

### Festa San Gejtanu Association

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

### Festa San Gorg Association of Toronto

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

### Gozo Club Toronto

c/o 1205 Royal York Road, Toronto, ON M9A 4B5  
416-231-9710  
[gozoclub@gmail.com](mailto:gozoclub@gmail.com)

### Inanna on Stage

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

### Knights of Columbus - Canada – Council # 12782

c/o St Patrick's Church, 921 Flagship Drive,  
Mississauga, ON, L4Y 2J6  
905-270-2301 (Church)  
[stpatricksmi@archtoronto.org](mailto:stpatricksmi@archtoronto.org)  
Grand Knight Amadeo Cuschieri

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

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

### Lehen Malti

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

### Malta Band Club

5745 Coopers Ave., Mississauga, ON L4Z 1K9  
905-890-850  
[www.maltabandclub.com](http://www.maltabandclub.com)  
[maltabandclub@bellnet.ca](mailto:maltabandclub@bellnet.ca)



### Malta United Society of Windsor, Ontario

2520 Seminole St., Windsor, ON N8Y1X4  
519-974-6719  
[maltaunitedsociety.windsor@gmail.com](mailto:maltaunitedsociety.windsor@gmail.com)  
Opening hours: Saturday 6:00 p.m.-12:00 a.m.  
(Except holidays)

### Malta Village Association (Est. 1995)

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

### Maltese American Benevolent Society, Inc.

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



### Maltese American Community Club of Dearborn

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





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

924 El Camino Real, South San Francisco, CA  
94080

650-871-4611

[contact-us@Maltese-AmericanSCSF.org](mailto:contact-us@Maltese-AmericanSCSF.org)

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

**Maltese Canadian Association of the City of Hamilton (MCACH)**

c/o 381 Fairview Drive, Brantford ON N3R 2X7  
[mcach1964@gmail.com](mailto:mcach1964@gmail.com)

**Maltese Canadian Association (Gozo)**

c/o Trillium, Sqaq Nru 1, Triq it-Tigrija, ix-Xagħra  
Tel: 011 356 21560656

[mcagozo@hotmail.com](mailto:mcagozo@hotmail.com)

**Maltese-Canadian Cruisers**

c/o 5745 Coopers Avenue, Mississauga, ON  
L4Z 1R9

416-524-2573

att: Gianni Borg

**Maltese-Canadian Cultural Association**

c/o Carl Azzopardi

[info@themcca.ca](mailto:info@themcca.ca)

**Maltese-Canadian Museum**

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

**Maltese Canucks**

c/o 3336 Dundas Street West, Toronto, ON,  
M6P 2A4

416-909-7357/414-670-2662

[carl@isgtransport.com/b\\_azzo18@yahoo.com](mailto:carl@isgtransport.com/b_azzo18@yahoo.com)

**Maltese Center, NYC**

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

[info@themaltesecenter.com](mailto:info@themaltesecenter.com)

Opening hours:

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

**Maltese Cross Foundation of California**

PO Box 698, San Carlos, CA 94070

**Maltese Culture Club of Durham**

c/o 124 Ribblesdale Drive, Whitby, ON L1N 7C8  
289-939-8377

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

**Maltese Heritage Association San Francisco Bay Area**

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

**Maltese Heritage Program (Toronto)**

c/o 59A Terry Drive, Toronto, ON, M6N 4Y8  
Coordinator: Carmen Galea

416-766-5830

[carmengalea4949@gmail.com](mailto:carmengalea4949@gmail.com)

**Maltese Historical Society (San Francisco)**

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

**Melita Soccer Club Inc.**

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

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

**St. Paul the Apostle Parish**

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

[www.saint-paul-maltese.com](http://www.saint-paul-maltese.com)

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

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

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

[www.facebook.com/john.vella.1044186](https://www.facebook.com/john.vella.1044186)

[giovanvel@sympatico.ca](mailto:giovanvel@sympatico.ca)

**St. Paul the Apostle Youth Group (Toronto)**

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

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

**St. Paul's Maltese Choir**

c/o St Paul the Apostle Parish

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

[www.saint-paul-maltese.com](http://www.saint-paul-maltese.com)

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

President: Lino Debo

**WAITING FOR SANTA  
CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PARTY  
MALTESE AMERICAN COMMUNITY CLUB OF DEARBORN**



See pages 15-18.  
Photo courtesy of Margaret Muscat Purdy.

**CHRISTMAS PARTY  
MELITA SOCCER CLUB**



See pages 12-13.  
Photo courtesy of Mary Ann Piscopo.