Sunrise at Senglea
(Fritz photography)
B lack clouds have been on the horizon for many years. On several occasions the Maltese community had been repeatedly warned, however, although a shock, the official letter from Paul Martin, the chief executive officer of the NSW Education Standards Authority declaring the suspension of the Maltese language due to low national candidature of three consecutive years was expected.

In March last year, the Federation of Maltese Language Schools had warned that it was a dire situation that in the state of Victoria the Maltese did not have any students sitting for the VCE in this final year of the triennial allowance. Maltese must have a minimum of 15 students nationally.

The Federation has asked the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) and the NSW Education Authority (NESA) and SACE Board of South Australia for a deferment of twelve months to rally in students enrolments. It did not happen; hence the final axe as indicated by Martin’s letter.

Due to low national candidature over three consecutive years, the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) accepted the recommendation from the Australasian Curriculum, Assessment and Certification Authorities (ACACA) to suspend the Stage 6 (Years 11–12) Maltese Continuers course. NESA will suspend the Maltese Continuers course following the 2021 HSC examinations.

The suspension of the Maltese Continuers course will still allow students to undertake the Year 11 course in 2020 to continue and complete their HSC studies in 2021.

According to the Collaborative Curriculum and Assessment Framework for Language (CCAFL), Maltese may be reactivated if documented evidence can be provided of: (a) projected candidature nationally for a minimum of three consecutive years, of at least 15 students at HSC level; (b) sufficient subject/language expertise available nationally to provide: curriculum design and development examination setting, vetting and marking teams, including a Chief Examiner, in addition to teachers of Maltese Continuers in the HSC; (c) tertiary or equivalent expertise available to support the teaching and assessment of Maltese Continuers.

Should there be a school with students wishing to study Maltese after the suspension date, schools and community members are advised that students could undertake a School Developed Board Endorsed course.

Contacting The Voice of the Maltese, a former teacher said that although it may sound terminal, the majority of the students in NSW are not interested in sitting for the HSC. “I am sure that the school will continue teaching cultural and language classes as usual. However, there should always be a path for those willing to advance their study”.

From the State of Victoria

The president of the Maltese Community Council of Victoria, Marlene Ebejer told The Voice. “Unfortunately we faced the same news last year. A delegation met with the department to put forward ideas of how to boost numbers moving forward. We have lost the battle.

“Our numbers for community classes in the state of Victoria are around 20 to 30 enrolments per semester. With the flexibility of online classes, we are hopeful of increasing these numbers. Many of our adult students are 2nd or 3rd generation or people connected to Maltese families.

“If anybody is interested in finding out more about our community based Maltese language classes, they can view our website: www.mccv.org.au.

From the State of NSW

Emanuel Camilleri, President of the Maltese Community Council of NSW told us. “It was inevitable; we had been warned years ago; unfortunately, all our efforts to boost the number of students did not materialise. Maybe because we did not try hard enough or a lack of interest. I think the latter is more in order. Like all things, we have to look at the circumstances, and when interest falls than the end follows.”

Ivan Cauchi who teaches Maltese at the La Valette Centre, Blacktown wrote to us in Maltese:


The Voice of the Maltese is of the view that teaching of the Maltese language in Australia needs a complete overall, practical assistance from the business community and the Malta Government but most of all better use of our limited resource. We can no longer afford to have separate setups. Unity will give us the strength to recover.

Students at the Horsley Park NSW Maltese Language School
The Maltese community is proud of the fact that one of their own, Lisa Bright nee Muscat, President of the Festa Committee of Greystanes was recently awarded the Granville Woman of the Year in the annual awards run by the NSW State Government.

Lisa, who works for the Diocese of Parramatta as a Project Officer for the Pastoral Planning Office comes from a Maltese family. Both her parents were born on the island.

Her father Louis comes from St Paul’s Bay and moved to Australia with his family when he was still only nine years. He went back to Malta in the 70’s where he met her mum from Għargħur. They were married in Malta and her mum, then in her early twenties, emigrated to Australia. Her mother’s family still lives in Malta and Lisa has visited them quite a few times.

Lisa’s role as a Project Officer is to accompany parishes and faith communities to grow and share faith within their communities. It also includes helping teams prepare plans for how they can bring to life the mission of Christ in their communities.

Another one of her tasks involves training and formation in a variety of areas from preparing for effective meetings to forming and growing ministry teams.

Lisa has lived in the parish of Our Lady Queen of Peace her whole life. In her late teens she became very involved with the parish through youth and music ministry, then in her early 20’s she joined the Parish Pastoral Council and over the years has been on and off parish committees. She ministers in different areas of liturgy within the parish.

More recently, she was invited to join the OLQP Festa Committee and soon after was elected its President.

Requested to give more light about the awards, Lisa explained that each year there are seven state-wide categories. In addition; each electorate announces a local winner.

One day, Julia Finn, the local member for Granville, the electorate in which she resides, called and informed her that she was named the Local Woman of the Year.

“It was such a surprise,” Lisa told The Voice. “When Julia Finn phoned, I thought she was responding to the invitations to support our events that year – but no. The conversation was that I had been awarded the Local Woman of the Year for 2020 for my contribution to the local community through my parish and the Maltese community.”

She had met Julia Finn on a number of occasions as she regularly attends community events in the OLQP Greystanes Community and is a huge supporter of migrant communities. “She is very supportive of the OLQP Maltese Festa that has been a highlight of the Greystanes community for 55 years.”

But why her? “I asked myself the same question! The award is a wonderful recognition of women in general in our community, but also a wonderful recognition of the Maltese community,” Lisa said. “It was such a huge honour to have been considered to receive such an award. “To know that people appreciate the community events that myself and fellow team members coordinate, particularly at the level of local government, is really wonderful.”

Lisa shares this award with all the people who make it possible to do the work that she does. She believes that no one can do life alone and in fact many people constantly support her in order to do what she manages to do in her parish community.

“My family is very supportive of the work that I do, and I thank them whole-heartedly. My husband and my three children are very accommodating and put up with all the meetings, my moments of stress and/or exuberance. I also have an amazing network of extended family and friends for whom I am so grateful for their support.

“I have been blessed to have achieved many things in my life – in my personal and career. The biggest achievement has been to live the fullest of lives, with the grace of God and I pray that I can continue to be and do the best I can for as long as I can,” she concluded.
Pre-settlement Inspections: What do you look for?

by Paul Sant

Pre-settlement inspections are also known as final inspections. Purchasers, usually chaperoned by the sales agent, do such inspections. They are not compulsory, however are they are strongly recommended.

How many times can I inspect the property?

Before you exchange contracts to purchase, as purchasers you can usually make appointments to see the property as often as your heart desires (without driving the poor vendors bonkers)!

In addition to your personal appointments, purchasers will often engage inspectors who attend the property to conduct pest and building reports, or survey reports.

However, after the cooling off period has expired, and you are taken to have completed your investigations of the property, purchasers are usually entitled to one pre-settlement inspection.

When can I do my pre-settlement inspection?

Inspections are usually done in the last week before settlement. We generally advise that the inspection does not occur on the day of inspection.

If issues are raised during an inspection, which is occurring mere hours before settlement is scheduled to occur, it can be difficult to have them resolved without delaying settlement. It is a good idea to inspect the property a day or two before settlement is expected to occur.

Basically, you should pick a time before settlement and after the vendors have removed all of the personal property. The property should be empty when you go to do your inspection.

If the property is not empty, you may be entitled to a second inspection on a separate date to ensure that the items have been removed prior to settlement. More about this below.

What do I look for?

In general, there are a handful of issues you should address at the inspections. These are:

1. You should check that the property is in the same condition or state of repair as it was when you entered the contract. If there is some deterioration due fair wear and tear, then you cannot make a complaint. However if there is damage caused by the occupants of the property during the settlement period you should contact your solicitor.

It is at this stage that having conducted a building inspection at the time of exchange can be particularly useful, as it is objective historical proof of the previous quality of the building. Having a building report handy means that you can easily avoid arguments with the vendor as to who saw what at the time of exchange.

2. You should check that the occupants have removed all of their items from the property. If the property is sold with vacant possession, this means that you must have clear access to the property, without having to remove or dispose of significant items yourself. In the event that the vendor has left bulky items behind, you should inform your solicitor, who will be able to negotiate a resolution on your behalf.

3. If the vendor has promised to repair defects in the property, this is your opportunity to check whether those repair jobs have been completed. If you need to bring an expert with you, feel free to do so.

4. This is also an opportunity to check whether the vendor will be able to hand over keys and/or remotes for all of the doors, windows, gates and locks that require a key. The vendor is not obliged to provide you with a new key, if the vendor did not have one at exchange, however it can be a matter of negotiation. At the very least, you will know whether you will need to hire a locksmith on settlement date.

If there are issues on settlement and the vendor has agreed to rectify the issues, you should request a second inspection to verify that the vendor has rectified the issues. At times, vendor do not have the time or ability to fix certain issues, and may be willing to engage in negotiations to reduce the amount payable to them on settlement by the estimated loss the purchaser would suffer if they fixed the issue themselves. These are informal, but the speediest methods of resolution.

Each Australian State will have a different formal mechanism for dispute resolution within their format of Contracts for Sale of Land. Some involve the quarantining of a sum of money without delaying settlement, until an independent arbitrator resolves the purchaser’s claim.

Thereafter, the money is released to the successful party. You should obtaining specific legal advice about your particular contract, and the remedies available to you.

It may be that settlement can be delayed by a couple of hours, in order to allow for the vendor to remove the items, or a discount can be provided to the purchaser on settlement in order to compensate the purchase for the cost of removal of the items.

What do I look for?

And then what do I do?

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Learning about his heritage has been a journey

He has been performing for the Maltese community since the age of 14 years when his aunt, fortunately, got him in contact with the Maltese Cultural Association. Artist James Cassar told The Voice: “It is almost like the Maltese community has become my second family”.

James Cassar

James was born at the Liverpool Hospital and lived in Camden NSW most of his life, a 3rd generation Maltese Australian. His great grandfather came from Qormi. Since then his grandfather Allan Cassar Snr. and then his father Allan Cassar Jr. were born. His mother’s name is Roxanne Cassar.

James has been training and performing since age seven under the tutelage of his aunt Allanah. At age ten he took part in his first-ever stage musical and since then has performed in a great number of musicals and other events.

Some of his more notable musical roles include:
- Kurt Von Trapp – The Sound of Music
- Colin Craven – The Secret Garden
- Joseph – Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dream Coat
- Judas Iscariot – Jesus Christ Superstar
- Raul De Chagne – Phantom of the Opera
- Galileo Figaro – We Will Rock You

He was also a featured artist in the 2009 Schools Spectacular performed in the Sydney Entertainment Centre before it’s closure, in front of 10,000 people. He was one of the selected few to represent Australia in the “New Asia Singing Competition,” in Beijing, China. It was a fantastic opportunity for him, and many of the friends he made from different countries there, are still close friends today.

James was fortunate enough to perform alongside the great Frank Ifield in “The Frank Ifield Show.” This was performed at a few clubs around NSW and showcased many of the songs that were coming out around the time of Frank’s start and all the way through his stardom.

Of late James has been doing the rounds through clubs NSW and performing all around Sydney and the Central Coast. During this time he has also been teaching the musicians of tomorrow from his studio in the ways of the Voice, Guitar and Piano. An experience he finds most fulfilling.

He has been amongst us “forever”. He has performed at many functions, in many different venues, and for many different associations within the Maltese community, which he feels very fortunate to be a part of.

He told The Voice of the Maltese that since the birth of his grandfather, none of his family has been to Malta, not even to just visit. “I’m hoping to be the first one of my family to go and visit in the near future. I do consider myself a Maltese-Australian and am quite proud to call myself as such. Learning about my heritage has been a journey. I hope to take it even further”. 

James Cassar during one of his performances
Anzac day has come and gone. It has disappeared into the recesses of our mind until April 25th next year. But we mustn’t forget that right now 105 years ago young men were dying on the battlefield.

That was a battlefield created by stupidity. A battlefield created and enhanced by decisions of idiots in power. People who could not see beyond their own hubris and arrogance. People who could not see that others were as important as they were, regardless of their nationality or race. People who believed that violence was an answer. Violence between people in uniform and in civvies. Violence that was generated by different nation states proliferated by them and exercised by the mindlessness of those who were indoctrinated in the belief that blind obedience is God.

Violence between people; yes between people, human beings, those who love and feel sorrow and cry at their losses and celebrate the birth of their children. Violence that, when stepped back from and viewed with calm objectivity and a rational mind, makes absolutely no sense.

Forgetting the battlefield after Anzac Day until April 25th next year leaves us with a voided memory about the insanity of conflict until we see it again, and again, and again, and again when memory is refreshed; when memory stirs the sorrow deeply embedded in our souls. Violence between us hurts us all. We say that we learn from experience. I don’t think so.

I was prompted to write this because of the anger and sorrow around the world about violence. I write this because regardless of our anger and sorrow about violence we continue to proliferate it.

We forget that there is no such thing as ‘the enemy’, be they people of different nationality, colour, clothing or belief. We don’t seem to realise that tribal attachment is the enemy. Unless we transcend this tribal belief we will never save the planet.

*Cradled in Pietá has been written with reference to the fact that many Anzacs lie buried in Malta in the military Cemetery in the heart of Pietà that is a poignant mix of both war and civilian casualties. The Statue of the Pietà is so appropriate to the name of this cemetery given that it is the Holy Mother cradling her dead son in her arms. Her grief shows so deeply as must have the grief of all mothers whose sons now lie buried in Malta’s sacred ground.*

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**Opinion: Andy Busuttil**

**Cradled in Pietá**

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**CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) HELP LINES**

If you’re concerned, call your GP or the national Coronavirus Health Information Hotline 1800 020 080, operating 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

For translating or interpreting services, call 131 450.

Older citizens can also access the Older Persons Advocacy Network on 1800 237 981 from 8am – 8pm Monday to Friday.

Julie Owens MP FEDERAL MEMBER FOR PARRAMATTA

My office will continue to be available through email and phone: E julie.owens.mp@aph.gov.au P (02) 9689 1455

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*Authorised by Julie Owens MP, Australian Labor Party, 125 Smith Street, Parramatta. Printed by Jeffries Printing, 571a Mipona Rd, Reversby.*
Police constable of Maltese descent dies in tragic road accident

Aaron Vidal, 28, a NSW Police constable of Maltese descent, died after he was struck by a ute vehicle driven by a 17-year-old in the intersection of Windsor and Schofields Roads Rouse Hill, a suburb of Sydney, 43 kilometres north-west of the Sydney central business district.

Aaron was travelling home from work on a motorcycle from Sydney City Police Area Command where he worked for three years alongside his father, Chief Inspector David Vidal. He leaves behind a pregnant fiancée, Jessica, and six siblings. Aaron lived in Bligh Park. His parents were both born in Australia, but his grandparents were from Rabat, Malta.

Police alleged in court that 37-year-old Tommy Balla drove the ute through a red light at an intersection. Balla appeared in Blacktown Local Court on charges of dangerous driving occasioning death and negligent driving occasioning death. He was granted conditional bail and is due to appear before the same court on August 14. If found guilty he faces a maximum penalty for the offence of 14 years behind bars.

NSW Police Commissioner Mick Fuller said in a statement that Constable Vidal had been recognised within the force for his commitment to protecting the community. “On two occasions, he had been formally recognised for good police work by members of the community, which shows that he was held in high regard by not only his peers but the community he served,” Mr Fuller said.

Aaron (right) had been confirmed as a constable in December 2018 and was attached to the force’s proactive crime team. He was a man of service. Before he joined the police force, he served as a member of the armed forces.

Almost a year after she allegedly decapitated her mother’s head with kitchen knives, a young woman of Maltese descent, Jessica Camilleri, 25, has pleaded not guilty to the crime and wants a judge-alone trial.

In the NSW Supreme Court, Jessica Camilleri pleaded not guilty to the charge of murdering her 57-year-old mother, Rita, from Gozo, in their home in St Clair, a suburb of Sydney 39 km west of Sydney CBD.

The court was told that Jessica wanted to apply for a judge-alone trial – which prosecutors said they were against. The case was adjourned for hearing on the issue later in July.

Jessica said in court last year that she had several conditions including border autism, bipolar disorder, and anxiety and asked to be taken to a hospital where she could receive treatment. The police said the alleged crime was “up there with one of the most significant, most horrific scenes they had had to face.”

The Malta High Commission in Canberra advises that the Consular Offices will re-open to in-person appointments on the following dates:

• Consular Office in Canberra: from June 22
• Consulate General in Melbourne: from July 6
• Consulate General in Sydney: from June 16

The reopening of the Consular Offices to the public will require the strict observance of the COVID-19 precautionary measures, as follows:

• Persons accessing the offices are expected to practice good hygiene and must sanitise hands upon entry;
• Applicants will only be allowed access to the offices at the time of the pre-booked appointment – no more than two persons allowed per allocated booking or persons residing within the same household;
• Persons should wear a facemask to be taken off only when instructed by members of staff – to capture biometric images.

In-person appointments relating to applications for passport and citizenship, and other consular services, including the witnessing of signatures and identity, will be accepted by APPOINTMENT ONLY. To make an appointment one should contact our offices on:

Malta High Commission Canberra:
highcommission.canberra@gov.mt; (02) 6290 1724
Consulate General Melbourne:
maltaconsulate.melbourne@gov.mt; (03) 9670 8427
Consulate General Sydney:
maltaconsulate.sydne@gov.mt; (02) 9262 9500

The timeframe of application processing has been impacted by the current restrictive measures and are taking longer. Applicants must leave ample time to renew their passports. Visa applications remain suspended until further notice.

We look forward to welcoming applicants back and will appreciate your cooperation in making this a safe (COVID 19 free) experience for all.
Have your say / Xi tгid tghid?

History of Maltese islands full of great richness and diversity

Andy Busuttil from Hazelbrook, NSW writes:

I was delighted to read Joseph Cutajar’s article about the history of our homeland in the last edition (No. 230) of The Voice. The history of our Islands is of enormous depth and breadth. It is a history of great richness and diversity and shows the extent to which we, as a people, have endured the influences of so many other cultures yet managed to retain our uniqueness of quality and language.

In particular, and in the main with fewer exceptions than adherents, the ‘heart of Malta’ is a celebratory feature of our Island history and culture. I have always found the Maltese people to be characteristically generous and embracing.

Given the number of times that we have been invaded and dominated this is indeed extraordinary. This is perhaps a national attitude that the rest of the world would do well to embrace and replicate.

Maltese people would do well to study our history and be proud of what we have achieved in the face of much adversity over the centuries. The history of Malta itself is indeed the history of the world!

Very interesting and enjoyable reading

Doris Cannataci from Sliema writes:

How I enjoyed reading your first article in The Voice magazine “Where did the Maltese come from?” (Pages 2 and 3) I did quite a bit of research about it for my thesis. It is very interesting.

I felt a sense of pride reading about 22-year-old medical student Rebecca Caruana (page 3) and about Paul Zammit receiving the Order of Australia in the Queen’s Birthday honours (page 6).

It was also interesting to read about the obituary of Michael Lanzon: his wife Edith Storace was at Grammar School with me a grade or two lower than me. Reading Christine Muscat’s article about Covid-19, it would be good if she were to say what her father used to relate about the History of Maltese islands.

History of our Islands is of enormous richness and diversity and shows the extent to which we, as a people, have endured the influences of so many other cultures yet managed to retain our uniqueness of quality and language.

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Maltese people would do well to study our history and be proud of what we have achieved in the face of much adversity over the centuries. The history of Malta itself is indeed the history of the world!

Grazzi tal-artikli tassew interessanti

Norman Bonello minn The Ponds NSW jikteb:

Il-baned fil-festi Maltin

Il-bandha hija fattur importanti fil-festi tradizzjonali Maltin, u kulhadd jistenna jarmaha biex tooxq dami qawwi u sabihi. Sa ninn jiem qabel il-festa, il-paritarji jahdmu biex fil-festa l-bandha taghmel jiexx l-kad-finale taghhom. Fejn fir-rahal ikun hemm aktar minn banda wadha, ma jonqux l-piki.

Minhabba l-pandemija ta' din is-sena, dus-sajf se nkunu mingħajr festi tal-irħula, għalhekk il-bandha se jibgħu gsewwa u wara kollox anke jisħor finanzjarjament. It-tajeb hu li biex jittafla dan it-telf l-fis-socjetajiet tal-bandha, il-ġvern nidna fès biex dawn l-ghaqdiet igawdu minn għotja ta' €150,000.


Hekk b'xi mod it-tittafla l-kilba ta' dawk li jhoffu l-bandha u li tanti jentużjażmaw ruħhom fhejju l-bandha għall-festa li generalment jiijjaj laqwa tiegħu fil-marc ta' fijgħodu f'tjum il-festa mifnisfa, meta l-briju tal-paritarji, aktar l-bandha akkaniti, jidher bil-bkar b'kuluri tal-kad-finale u emblemi ohra jittbandlu u jixxejru mar-rimtu u l-kant tal-marc Malti.

Interessanti l-fatt li ż-żgħażagħ mimmlija energija jżidu fil-briju jgħabbu lil xulxin fuq l-ispallejn u jżidu mal-briju bl-jinjirfu sewwa minn dawk barranin. L-uniċi baned li jjerqihita l-ħajja u l-attività ekonomika u soċjali taghhom li 'Viva l-festa kbira tagħna' u 'Ma tagħna ma mużikali lil dawk li jżurru l-kapitali f'ħinijiet differenti tal-tagħmlu xejn'.

Il-bidu taghhom fi Sqallija


Fl-imghosti, in-nies l-aktar magħruża fir-rahal li jkunu f'tpożizzjonijiet finanzjarjaj tajb u fhaļ ahjaj minn dik ta' had-diemi li jaqqa' höbżu bil-gurnatta, bahl xi kuntrattur, avukat, nutar jew tabib, kienu jisb ġuħhom fil-kumitati tal-bandha, jekk jkunu mibbattiti, inkella jimbutaw huma biex jingħataw l-hatra.


Il-festa Sqallinja għandhom exeb kib ma' dawk l-Bandha Maltin imma naħseb li l-festi taghhom żviluppaw aktar u kabbarni-hom biex saru tassew il-festi taghhom.


Dan ma jfissirx li m'għadekx tara bandisti tassew tajbin, u mhegga biex joqgħdu għall-eżamijiet tal-mużika u jiksbu l-ahjar ġejjied ġużd jinkludu żjarat fil-irħula għax każini jkunna għall-eżamijiet tal-mużika, inkluż fl-imghosti l-irħula, u mħeġġa biex joqgħdu għall-eżamijiet tal-mużika, inkluż fl-imghosti l-irħula, u mħeġġa biex joqgħdu għall-eżamijiet tal-mużika u jiksbu l-ahjar ġejjied ġużd jinkludu żjarat fil-irħula, u mħeġġa biex joqgħdu għall-eżamijiet tal-mużika.
It-sospensjoni tal-Malti bhala suggett tal-HSC

B hal ma probabillment tafu, it-tagħlim tal-Malti fil-livell tal-HSC fi NSW se jintemm wara l-eżamijiet tal-2021. (Ara l-artiklu ewlieni f’pagina 2). Din kienet deċiżjoni li n-NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) ikkomunikat lill-Konslu ta’ Malta f’Sydney is-Sur Buhagiar.1 Ir-raġuni li nħoghat kienet l-għadd baxx ta’ kandidati għal dan l-ezami fuq tliet snin konsektivu.


On March 17 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Maltese Community Council of Victoria Inc. (MCCV) closed its centres. Therefore to ensure a continuity of service, support and socialisation to its most vulnerable consumers, that is, the Maltese older community, the usual on-site group sessions have been modified.

Social Support staff that normally facilitate activities at both centres are working currently together with the coordinator to provide the following services to members of the Maltese community in their homes. These include:

• Contacting consumers by telephone three times a week to perform welfare checks, determine support needs and identify the most isolated consumers who do not have family or services to support them.
• Providing information and contacts for services such as Beyond Blue, COVID-19 Hotline, Food bank and other relevant services.
• Conference calls allowing up to four consumers to chat together.
• Sending birthday cards to consumers, followed by a phone call on their birthday.
• iPad lessons and Loan service. Staff visit consumers and explain the use of the device and provide instruction booklets and telephone support.
• Weekly scheduled online activities including FaceTime morning tea sessions and virtual socialisation sessions.
• Window visits to consumers and more recently, in-home visits and assistance with shopping.
• Delivery of a fortnightly newsletter containing activities, Maltese recipes submitted by consumers, prayers, photographs of consumers participating in activities, ‘a day in the life’ consumer interviews, information about staying safe during COVID-19, puzzles and brain training activities.

These services allow consumers to maintain connections with the outside world in these uncertain times. Socialising and interacting, whether it is in person or via some form of digital or printed media is beneficial to our most vulnerable community members and assists in reducing social isolation and provide consumers with fun and stimulating activities.

Pictures show members of the Maltese older community that are served by the MCCV staff
The Venice Commission positively welcomes Government’s measures

The Government and the Venice Commission have concluded positively the first tranche of reforms, initiated soon after Prime Minister, Robert Abela took office. The Venice Commission positively welcomed the Government measures, which had been subject to a process of consultation.

Addressing the media with the Minister for Justice, Equality and Governance, Edward Zammit Lewis, the Prime Minister said that the process had the full commitment of the Government, which evaluated, consulted, and resulted, ultimately, in favourable approval by the Commission. These proposals are now to be tabled in Parliament so that the needed reforms to strengthen the rule of law, institutions and the betterment of Malta’s reputation abroad, can take place.

For his part, the Dr Edward Zammit Lewis pointed out the importance of the reforms concerned. They include the appointment of the President of Malta proposed to be elected and removed by a qualified majority of two thirds of the House of Representatives.

Other proposals include, the appointments of the Judiciary, the Chief Justice, the persons and positions of trust, of the Permanent Commission Against Corruption (PCAC), the Ombudsman, the Permanent Secretaries, and also the Prosecution, in that the Attorney General (Director of Public Prosecutors) is now separate from the State Advocate. The DPP will take over prosecutions of those offences that carry a punishment of more than two years (including corruption related offences), while the police will remain responsible for investigative work.

93% of adults in Malta are active savers

For the first time, Malta features in the OECD INFE 2020 International Survey of Adult Financial Literacy conducted by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). It reports that 93% of Maltese adults are active savers.

Malta participated in its first OECD INFE Survey on Financial Literacy in 2018 through an ESF co-financed project. It was undertaken by ĠEMMA on behalf of the Office of the Permanent Secretary within the Ministry for the Family, Children’s Rights and Social Solidarity.

The Minister for the Family, Children’s Rights and Social Solidarity Michael Falzon said that the aim is to invest more in these projects so that families, children and the elderly can benefit from them while learning how to save for their future.

Below are a number of the key findings of the OECD INFE 2020.

Only 15% have a private pension plan.

Making Ends Meet

64% of adults in Malta have not encountered a situation in which their income did not cover their living expenses in the last 12 months.

Of the 33% who experienced a situation where income did not cover expenses, 86% used existing resources like cutting back on spending.

Choosing and Using Financial Products and Services

31% considered various options from one company to choose their pension fund. 29% did not consider any other options at all.

Attitudes and Behaviour

62% of Maltese people keep a close personal watch on their financial affairs.

3 in 4 adults in Malta do not have too much debt right now, whilst 13% said that they do. 95% of adults in Malta always/often pay their bills on time.

Some 80% of adults in Malta always/often take careful consideration of whether they can afford to buy something prior to buying it. Some 95% of adults in Malta always pay their bills on time, whilst a low 1% never pay their bills on time.

Level of Financial Knowledge

44% rate their overall knowledge on financial matters as average; 21% consider themselves to possess a very high/quite high level of overall knowledge on financial matters.

Malta appoints new police commissioner

Angelo Gafà (right), has officially been appointed Malta’s new Police Commissioner, following approval by a Parliamentary committee meeting. He becomes the first PC to be appointed through a new process agreed upon by Government and Opposition after the Prime Minister relinquished his power to be the one to nominate him.

However, the Opposition boycotted the parliamentary committee meeting that conducted the public grilling.

Initially, Gafà was among 14 applicants following a public call for applications. After interviews, the Public Service Commission whittled the number down to two and passed the shortlist to the government that eventually opted for Gafà. Following a public grilling his nomination was endorsed.

The new commissioner is a former investigator and police inspector. For the past few years he acted as the police corps’ first CEO. He is also Visiting Lecturer on Criminology in the Faculty for Social Wellbeing at Malta’s University.

Financial Goals

84% of adults in Malta save in a savings/deposit account.

72% of adults in Malta are able to face a major expense equivalent to their income without having to borrow money or ask family members for help.

Active Savings and Financial Shocks

The study shows that 93% of adults in Malta are active savers, who save in different ways.

Planning and Managing Finances

The most popular way for keeping track of their household finances is by keeping a note of their spending - 46% of Maltese adults. 35% of Maltese people prefer reading about investment products in Maltese; another 35% prefer reading documentation in English.

Educational Committee Meeting

The study shows that 93% of adults in Malta are active savers, who save in different ways.

Planning and Managing Finances

In English.

Active Savings and Financial Shocks

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Educational Committee Meeting

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Roundup of News About Malta

July 1 Malta reopens and starts to welcome back the tourists

As of July 1, Malta is to reopen its doors to the tourists as the International Airport starts welcoming tourists from several countries that have been identified by government as safe for travel to and from Malta.

In an interview on CNN’s Quest show, the Minister for Tourism and Consumer Protection Tourism Julia Farrugia Portelli said that potential tourists to Malta would be visiting what she described as “the safest destination in Europe”.

Malta’s International Airport resumes operations July 1 to a limited number of countries. And would be lifting restrictions on all other flight destinations on July 15.

The first group of destinations reopening for travel comprise Italy (except Emilia Romagna, Lombardy, and Piemonte), France, Spain, Poland, Iceland, Slovenia, Cyprus, Lithuania, Latvia, Norway, Switzerland, Estonia, Denmark, Hungary, Austria, Luxembourg, Germany, Czech Republic, Ireland, and Finland.

Travellers arriving in Malta directly from the countries and regions on this list will not be required to observe a 14-day quarantine. They will be asked to declare they had lived in the country of origin for at least four weeks before travelling. They will also be asked to fill in a passenger locator form enabling the health authorities to trace them swiftly should the need arise.

The reasons Minister Farrugia Portelli gave for her assertion that Malta is “the safest destination in Europe”, are mainly its success in containing COVID-19 since it closed its borders last March. She said the island is well-prepared to start welcoming tourists.

“We put coronavirus first when we had the first issues popping up in February, and Malta was the very first European country to close its borders. We weren’t afraid to do so, despite tourism being high up on our agenda,”

She reiterated that Malta was one of the very first few countries that pledged and put forward the argument of having safe corridors. “Other countries followed but we saw a fragmented approach throughout the world. We’re an island that depends highly on tourism; the total input related to tourism goes up to 30% of our economy so we depend on incoming tourism,” the Minister said.

Her aim is that by the end of the year, Malta would have managed to receive around 700,000 tourists.

Neil Agius completes 104k record swim to raise awareness of environmental threat

Neil Agius, 34, successfully completed a 104 kilometres swim from Sicily to Malta, in a record time of 28 hours and seven minutes. His feat was part of the “Wave of Change” campaign to raise awareness over the environmental threat of plastic in the sea.

The swimmer, an anti-pollution activist, dived into the sea at Punta Braccetto in Sicily at 5 a.m. on Thursday and finished the swim, a distance of 103.66km at Balluta Bay, St Julian’s, just before 9.30 a.m. on Friday where he was accorded a great welcome by a large crowd. This was the longest distance ever undertaken by a Maltese swimmer. A similar swim but a shorter distance of 90 kilometres from Pozzallo in Sicily to Qbajjar in Gozo was undertaken 35 years ago, on July 28 1985 by Nicky Farrugia who completed the swim in 30 hours 17 minutes. Nicky was among the first to congratulate Neil for his achievement. He described it as a “fantastic swim”. He also congratulated Neil’s team for a “job well done”.

At the end of his long distance swim, a tired but satisfied Neil expressed the desire that his feat could help people to become aware of the fact that polluting the sea with plastic is not on.

Prime Minister Robert Abela said it was an “impressive record”. He admired the swimmer’s determination and his preparation. He hoped it would help raise awareness of the waste, particularly plastic, currently being dumped into the sea.

Opposition leader Adrian Delia described Neil as “a star” and “a beacon of perseverance, courage and determination”.

Gozo enjoys post COVID-19 bonanza

Thousands of Maltese spend Mnarja on the sister island

In the first long weekend of summer post-COVID-19 pandemic, domestic tourism was at its best as thousands of Maltese flocked to the neighbouring island to enjoy the Mnarja weekend.

Instead of the Buskett Gardens, one of the most popular of traditional holidays in Malta, also known as the feast of St Peter and St Paul on June 28, helped Gozo to recover from the pandemic in the best way they can.

With flights from and to Malta still suspended until July 1, thousands of Maltese chose the only destination out of the island open for them and celebrated the holiday by taking a 20-minute boat trip to the sister island.

According to Gozo’s Tourism Authority, most holiday accommodation in Gozo the past few days has been full to the brim, the beaches were crowded and restaurant owners rose to the occasion by accommodating their patrons.

While abiding by the fullest with the instructions of the health authorities by keeping social distance and playing is safe, the restaurateurs rose to the occasion and provided all that was needed of them.

This much-needed bonanza has helped jump-start the Gozitans’ economic recovery. It augurs well for a busy summer.
Wara d-dimostrazzjonijiet li wasslu ghat-tneħħija ta’ xi monumenti

Att redikolu jekk...

Sadamittant, il- Ministru tal-Kultura José Herrera qal li jekk jitneħħew monumenti tal-era kolonjali, dan ikun att redikolu. Tenna li bl-istess kejl għandha nneħħu wkoll l-istatwa ta’ La Vallette f’għajnejn tal-belt kapitali, Valletta.

Ir-Regina Vittorja

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Ir-Regina Vittorja

Att redikolu jekk...
Il-Kap tal-PN taħt inkjesta

Għan-naha tal-Gvern

L-inkwiet jissokta

Mizzjiet jir ukoll

Maltese Funerals

In conjunction with Hills Family Funerals.

"Let Our Family Help You Through"

Halli l-familja tagħna tghin lill-familja tiegħek
Global statue revolution

The global statue revolution continues with bronze and marble men of history – often with colonial and racist pasts - getting torn down across the world. And now attention has turned to Australia and its own colonial past, with calls for a similar revolution growing.

NSW Police were photographed (pictured right) standing guard around a Captain Cook statue in Sydney’s Hyde Park as Black Lives Matter protesters spread across the city, and later, two women were charged after the same Captain Cook statue in Sydney’s Hyde Park was defaced.

Police were alerted to the vandalism about 4am on Sunday and arrested two women, Charmaine Morrison-Mills, 27, and part-time Greens staffer Xiaoran Shi, 28. They were charged with destroying or damaging property and possessing a graffiti implement. The women were allegedly found with several spray cans in a bag. The two women were granted bail in Parramatta Bail Court.

Over the weekend the 110-year-old statue of Captain James Cook in Randwick was also defaced and painted with the words “no pride in genocide”. The graffiti was removed by Randwick City Council on Sunday.

And it isn’t just Captain Cook in the firing line. The statues of former Australian Prime Ministers Tony Abbott and John Howard were sprayed with red paint in regional Victoria. There are other statues in Western Australia and other States. Australia is following what is happening in the US.

University of Sydney history professor Mark McKenna said history, no matter how you look at it, was always going to be “problematic”.

Statues will always be important in sparking debate and bringing Australia’s bloody and colonial past into conversation.

Michael Mansell of Tasmania said “There’s no place in 2020, for the statues of racist people who have done so much damage to Aboriginal people, who today if they did it, would be given five years in jail for a criminal offence,” he said.

“Just because the people of that era in the 1800s honoured this man’s memory, doesn’t mean the rest of us to have to be stuck with it more than 150 years later.”

Unemployment figures “devastating”

Australia’s unemployment rate jumped to a seasonally adjusted 7.1 per cent in May, with 227,700 jobs lost during the month. The jobless figures are the worst since October 2001.

There was a decrease of 89,100 in people with full-time work and 138,600 people in part-time employment, figures from the Australian Bureau of Statistics showed. Prime Minister Scott Morrison said the numbers were not surprising given the impact of the coronavirus crisis.

“We are very aware of the significance of over 100,000 people with full-time work and 138,600 in part-time work by coronavirus face ‘devastating’ long-term impacts.”

Youth unemployment has risen from 14.1 per cent to 16.1 per cent. Young people have been most affected in these numbers.

Frydenberg added, “But my hope is that, equally as the economy opens up, they will hopefully also be the first to benefit from economy opening up.”

The sharp fall reflects the ongoing impact of strict social distancing measures imposed in late March, which led to business closures. Most economists had expected the unemployment rate to jump to 7.0 per cent with about 100,000 jobs lost in the month.

Covid-19 - Have they found a cure?

The steroid dexamethasone was shown to be the first drug to significantly reduce the risk of death among severe COVID-19 cases, in trial results hailed as a “major breakthrough” in the fight against the disease.

Researchers in England led by a team from the University of Oxford administered the widely available drug to more than 2,000 severely ill COVID-19 patients.

Among those who could only breathe with the help of a ventilator, Dexamethasone reduced deaths by one third, and by one-fifth in other patients receiving oxygen only, according to preliminary results.

Normally used to treat a range of allergic reactions as well as rheumatoid arthritis and asthma, Dexamethasone is an anti-inflammatory.

Daily doses of the steroid could prevent one-in-eight ventilated patient deaths and save one out of every 25 patients requiring oxygen alone, the team said.

“Dexamethasone is the first drug to be shown to improve survival in COVID-19. This is an extremely welcome result,” said Peter Horby, professor of Emerging Infectious Diseases in the Nuffield Department of Medicine, University of Oxford. “Dexamethasone is inexpensive, on the shelf, and can be used immediately to save lives worldwide.”
Employers stealing wages and entitlements from staff in the State of Victoria could be hit with hefty fines or up to 10 years' jail. The Victorian Legislative Council passed Australia's first legislation to make wage theft a criminal offence. (See picture left). Employers who dishonestly withhold wages, superannuation or other employee entitlements could be fined up to $198,264 for individuals, $991,320 for companies and be sentenced to up to 10 years' jail.

There are also new record-keeping offences to target employers who try to hide wage theft by falsifying or failing to keep proper account. The legislation establishes the statutory authority Wage Inspectorate of Victoria to investigate and prosecute wage theft.

Employers who make honest mistakes or who exercise due diligence in paying wages and entitlements will not be guilty under the laws.

But the Liberal Coalition and employer groups fear the laws duplicate the federal system, with scope for possible double punishment as the federal government is also developing its own laws to criminalise wage theft. At the same time, the Federal Fair Work Ombudsman similarly regulates employment issues without the threat of imprisonment. The new Victorian laws come into effect next year.

Collection plates at Church consigned to history

The Archdiocese Canberra-Goulburn will move to what will be a simpler form of collecting money for parishioners and parish staff. Out with the plate and in with technology, meaning tap and go terminals, direct debit and Qkr apps.

The scrapping of collection plates has come about because of the coronavirus pandemic. The ACT Government banned plates for hygiene reasons. The Archdiocese is encouraging tap and go terminals where people can tap their credit card and make a donation for a set amount.

The Qkr app involves parishioners downloading an app on their phone and choosing their payment amount. Direct debit programmes will continue to be promoted while collection points will allow for cash or planned giving envelopes. Will this new method be implemented across all catholic churches in Australia?
Taghrif dwar il-kitba Maltija u dawk li matul is-sekli hadmu ghall-iżvilupp tal-ilsien Malti


FRANS SAMMUT – l-paladin tal-kelma Maltija


Trilogija dwar konflitt


Frans miel wara marda qasira fl-ghmor ta’ 66 sena nhar l-4 ta’ Mejju 2011.


Fi ’żmien ta’ Dr Alfred Sant (1996) Frans kien ukoll konsulent kulturali u serva bhala segretarju fil-kummissjoni mwaqqa’ minn Dr Sant, habib biex tiegħu, dwar il-futur tal-familja Maltija.


Trilogija dwar konflitt


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Kien kabbitter prolificu u sa mill-ewwel pubblikazzjoni tiegħu, serie ta’ novella taħt il-titlu Labirint u Stejjer Ohra wieddit jil-
A
fter winning the 2019 ICMA Most Popular Country Music Duo of the Year, Thomas and Tessa Libreri (aka Destiny Band Oz) are once again finalists in the coveted Independent Country Music Awards of Australia.

The annual awards, which are a credit to the organisers and sponsors and are now open for the public vote that commenced on June 10 and ends at 6 p.m. on August 10.

Based in the Latrobe Valley of Gippsland east of Melbourne, Destiny Band Oz is a finalist in two categories: Most Popular Country Music Duo for their original song 'Great Courage', and Most Popular Country Music Video for their original song 'Peace of Mind'.

Anybody can vote, but can only cast one vote once per device i.e.: phone, computer, tablet etc. Destiny Band Oz are seeking our readers' and the Maltese community's support. Therefore spare a few moments? Go to https://www.indiecountrymusicaustralia.com/vote-now.php, and scroll down to the white voting box on the right hand side of the web page and click on your choice.

Here is some information about Destiny Band Oz's nominated songs:

**Peace of Mind** was written by Thomas Libreri originally in Maltese. It is about his parents emigrating from Malta to Australia in the late 1940s and is a touching tribute to his mother's great courage in travelling alone and so far from everything she had known, at such a young age.

It is really a beautiful song and quite moving. Lead vocals, bass and lead guitar by Thomas Libreri, backing vocals and English lyrics written by Tessa Libreri. Piano by Ron Armstrong, drums by Darryn Farrugia, sound engineering, strings and video production by Chris Gale of Rezonate Music.

The single was released in January 2020 and Thomas was chuffed that the song went to #3 on the International Joyce Ramgatie Mainstream Top 40 Airplay Chart and #4 on both the Country Songs Top 40 Australian Airplay chart and the Official Tasmanian Top 40 Country chart. It is also a finalist in the country song section of the LDM Radio Music Awards (New York).

Destiny Band Oz won the Best Group in the RRTCR World Indie Network Awards for Great Courage earlier this year. (Sadly Thomas' mum passed away in February 2020 but she was so proud and overjoyed that this song was written in her honour).

One can also watch the Great Courage official music video on: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kG7s0Eh3JfK

Both songs are from Destiny Band Oz's 'Changes' album (which incidentally won the Traditional Country Music of Australia Top 10 Album of the Year in Tamworth 2019).

In the meantime, Destiny Band Oz's is releasing its latest single Tuesday June 30.
Dun Anton Theuma, eks welder f’Parramatta mahtur l-Isqof il-ġdid tal-gżira Għawdxija

Fis-17 ta’ Ġunju, fis-Santwarju Nazżjonali tal-Madonna ta’ Pinu, in-Nunzju Apostoliku għal Malta Mons. Alessando D’Errico Mons ħabbar li Dun Anton Theuma ġie mahtur bhala d-disa’ Isqof tad-Djocesi Għawdxija. Tkellem ikoll dwar il-kwalitajiet li wasslu lill-Papa Frangisku jagħżlu għal din il-kariga.


Skola primarja ġdida fir-Rabat


Ordinazzjoni Presbiterali u Djakonali

Nharr is-Solemnità tal-Qalb ta’ Ġesu, fis-19 ta’ Ġunju, fuq iż-zuntier tas-Santwarju Nazżjonali tal-Madonna Ta’ Pinu, saret Ordinazzjoni Sagra ta’ Dun Mario Mercieca għall-Presbiterjat (fin-nofs), ta’ Fra Etienne Gilson ofm. Conv (xellug) u Andrew Grima għad-Djakonat (lemim).
Minkejja l-pandemija 3ZZZ xorta baqa’ jxandar il-programmi Maltin


Nhar ta’ Sibt baqa’ ddedikat għal kanzunetti Maltin, u xi dedikazzjonijiet li Paul kien jirċevi mingħand is-semmiegħa permezz ta’ programmi jiżna mill-qari u t-tifsir tal-Vanġelju tal-Ħadd li jkun ġej, kif ukoll novella ta’ Mary Meilak moqrija mill-Kavalieri Joe M. Attard mir-Rabat, Għawdex.


Permezz ta’ The Voice, ti-itjet xandara Maltin ta’ 3ZZZ xtaqu min-naħa taghhom jirringrazzaw lis-semmiegħa li wara kull programmi, permezz ta’ SMS, email jew telefonati, juru l-apprezzament taghhom.
Racism in sports in Australia addressed in amazing clarity by a soccer player

I n our view, Q&A, is one of the best current affairs programmes on the ABC. It is an Australian television panel discussion programme, presently hosted by Hamish Macdonald. It was for many years hosted by top journalist and broadcaster, Tony Jones.

The show usually broadcasts on Monday nights at 9:35, and has run since 2008. Its format is similar to Question Time on the BBC and Questions and Answers on RTÉ. This latest episode we look at, broadly examined the future of the sport in Australia, but the heart of the discussion focused more specifically on our various sporting codes’ failure to fully eliminate racism.

The panel featured interim NRL CEO Andrew Abdo, Richmond Football Club CEO Brendon Gale, sports broadcaster and journalist Tracey Holmes, Australian netball and AFLW star Sharni Layton, and A-League former star player and now Adelaide United’s Director of Football Bruce Djite.

The same underlying question popped up several times — why, when organisations like the NRL and AFL have consistently said “the right things” about racism, does it still persist?

Bruce Djite offered the most compelling answer. He pointed to a “lack of cultural competence” in the hierarchy of Australia’s sporting codes, which has slowed down the rate of progress.

“It doesn’t matter if it’s about racism. I tell you now if there was an Indigenous person on the AFL Commission, or as AFL CEO, during the time where Adam Goodes was getting racially vilified, it would have had a different reaction. The guy might still be actively involved in the sport,” said the former A-League star.

“If there were more women in high powered positions, entrenched in the sporting game, (women’s sport) would have greater media coverage; it would have greater investment.

“Without the people with the context knowledge — you can read all the content, you can be across it all you like, you can read a thousand books — if you haven’t felt it and don’t have that context knowledge, then you don’t get it. It’s impossible.

“It’s like me trying to understand what it’s like to be a female. I can listen. But I can never feel what it’s like. I will never have that context knowledge.

“So while there’s intelligent people, extremely smart people, extremely influential people in the hierarchy, as players, as administrators — if they don’t have the context knowledge, if we don’t entrench these people in the hierarchies of our sports, then change may come. But it will come much slower, with many more regrets, then if these people with those lived experience were in those positions.”

Macdonald then threw to Mr Djite, asking why sport administrations had failed to “produce the results” of stamping out racism, despite offering good rhetoric.

Racism starts with education

“Look, there’s no doubt that racism exists. At times it’s more dormant than others. In this current period, we are in the very divisive phase,” Mr Djite said. “People are more willing and able to come out and actually say what they’re thinking. At other times, where things are more calm, people have the same thoughts but they’re not articulating them. But the racism is still there.

“I think it starts with education. I really do. It’s only been the last couple of weeks when this Black Lives Matter movement has really come to Australia. And we start talking about Aboriginals and the Indigenous and what they’ve been through.

“I think sport is in a particular place where it’s able to improve society, and society cannot be improved if you are not giving a hand up to help the people who have been left behind.

And it’s time for the platitudes to stop and for action to be taken. And for organisations to be judged on the actions they take, not the words that they speak.”

Layton argued that clubs and larger organisations should publicly acknowledge the racism that’s occurred on their watch, and apologise to the players.

“I love seeing the AFL and the NRL taking a knee during the last two games. I wish it didn’t take Black Lives Matter for us to be paying attention to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, and I hope we do continue to use this momentum, but also remember to keep taking action rather than saying all of these words that we’re wanting to represent and change things,” she said.

We need to be stamping (racists) off social media. We need to be taking away those memberships and definitely not standing for that.

“This is my own personal opinion but I really believe that there needs to be an apology as well, and a public apology, because by doing that — those players that have spoken out have had to be so brave and they have copped so much for such a long time now.

“For those larger organisations to be able to come out and say this actually did go on and we’re sorry, that is the bravest and courageous thing you can do for those players at this current point in time.”
Maltese centres to re-open Thursday

A Valette Social Centre at 173 Walter Road Blacktown NSW will open its doors for business as from Thursday July 2 after having closed due to the pandemic. The Centre will open strictly in accordance with Government restrictions. The 50-person limit and four square-metre rule apply.

Charlie’s Family Restaurant will be open from Thursday for lunch and Saturday for dinner with a limited menu. Respite started face-to-face Flexible Respite last week, and the bus will be open from Thursday for lunch and Saturday for dinner with a limited menu.

The Hamrun Club at 100 Jackson Street Marsden Park will reopen on Sunday July 5 from 4 to 9 pm in accordance with Government restrictions.

As we went to press we have had no notices from other Maltese centres around Australia regarding their reopening.

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Important Notice

If you are unable to buy the next issues of The Voice from the usual sources, you can inquire about our subscription at: maltesevoice@gmail.com

We will deliver The Voice by mail to your address anywhere in Australia.

Notice to MCA members and friends

As you know on Monday March 16, we at the MCA had to cancel the Ludwig Galea concerts that were due to take place during the following weekend because of the Corona Virus Pandemic and in the best interest of the community.

For the very same reasons we also suspended until further notice all MCA activities. However, to ensure that the work of the MCA still gets done, the Management Committee meetings were still held by means of the Internet, through Video Conferencing.

Whilst hoping that this pandemic will soon pass, and we start to return to normality thus allowing us to safely organise functions such as a Mass of Thanks-giving and an AGM, later this year, we are also planning our activities for 2021.

Until then, we ask for your understanding. In the meantime, thank you, stay safe and take care.

Charles N. Mifsud (President)

Ghall-attenzjoni tal-qarrejja

Most sports disciplines have suffered huge difficulties as a result of the pandemic, but one of the most important organisations, the European Football Union, UEFA, has decided to resume almost all of its football competitions in August.

After postponing EURO 2020, the organisation has now set the calendar and venues for club and national team competitions.

**UEFA Champions League 2019/20**
- August 7-8: Remaining Rd of 16 second legs
- August 12-15: Quarter-finals (Lisbon)
- August 18-19: Semi-finals (Lisbon)
- August 23: Final (Benfica Stadium Lisbon).
- **UEFA Europa League 2019/20**
- August 5-6: Round of 16 (in Germany)
- August 10-11: Quarter-finals (Cologne, Duisburg, Düsseldorf, Gelsenkirchen)
- August 16-17: Semi-finals (Germany)
- 21 August: Final (Cologne).

The 2020 UEFA Super Cup will be played at the Puskás Aréna in Budapest on September 24.

UEFA has also decided the calendar and venues for the remaining matches of the Women’s Champions League 2019/20 and the UEFA Youth League 2019/20.

**Formula 1 Season resumes July 3-5**

After Formula 1 racing was put on hold because of the coronavirus outbreak, and as the world is starting to return to a new normality, the FIA has worked to put together a plan to allow the F1 season to begin safely. It begins with an initial eight-race calendar, starting in Austria on July 3-5.

The decision was welcomed with joy and relief in the neighbouring countries by governments, officials and players as they celebrated after the nations awoke to the news on Friday that their joint bid had won the race. The tournament is regarded as an important and timely boost for Australia and NZ as it enhances the truly global nature of football.

The losers are Columbia who were the other bidders to organise the event.

**ASA Message to competitive swimmers of Maltese origin**

As part of an exercise it is carrying out to update its records, the Aquatics Sports Association (ASA) of Malta is trying to establish contact with competitive swimmers of possible Maltese origin. The aim is to collect results information and be able to follow their performance with the possibility of maybe providing support and opportunities to further improve.

If any of our reads are aware of any competitive swimmers who might have Maltese origins, the ASA would love to hear from them, Therefore feel free to forward this message to whomever you think might assist.

David Bonello, the Secretary of the ASA’s Swimming Technical Committee told *The Voice* that anybody needing any clarification, should get in touch with the ASA, by Email: stcsecretary@asaofmalta.eu or phone: Tel | +356 21322884; Mob: +356 99461366.

**Man. Utd’s Rashford hailed as a hero on and off the field**

Manchester United’s 22-year-old England striker Marcus Rashford has proven to be a hero on the field, and off it after persuading British PM Boris Johnson to do a U-turn with his highly personal campaign that forced the change in Johnson’s about free school meals over the six-week summer period.

Rashford’s phone conversation with the Prime Minister, led to the decision of a one-off £120 million fund that would benefit some 1.3 million children in England over the period.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson praised Rashford for his highly personal campaign. Meanwhile, the footballer thanked the PM and said, “I’ve understood each other and I’m just gladful that the Prime Minister did change his decision and he understood. It’s a nice feeling but I’m just happy that people’s lives, and people’s summers especially, have been changed for the better.”

The Man. Utd. player is now also planning his next move to help struggling families all year round, and he now wants to learn “how we can help them best” in the future.

“I don’t want this to be the end of it because there are definitely more steps that need to be taken. So we just need to analyse the response.”

Marcus Rashford paid an emotional tribute to his mum, Melanie (above) after the government U-turn. His conversation with Johnson came after he had written an open letter a day earlier asking the Government to reverse its decision not to award free school meals vouchers to vulnerable children outside term time.

On that same day, a Department for Education spokesman had said that the scheme was not being extended. It would not continue beyond summer.

Rashford is one of five children in his immediate family and has been working hard to help those in a similar situation to the one he grew up in as a youngster.