EDITORIAL COMMENT

Dan Brock

Once again, so much has taken place, particularly in the Greater Toronto Area, that this issue, too, had to be expanded, in this case, to 28 pages! This issue could almost be called the GTA edition. Certainly, it is highly centred on events, past and present, in Canada. And to think that in the early issues of this journal the GTA hardly got a mention!

Certainly, the person most responsible for this change is Dr. Raymond Xerri, the present Consul General of the Republic of Malta in Canada. I have shamelessly used the photos he has posted on Facebook both for information and ideas.

This issue’s feature article is the account of the women and children who mainly came to Canada on the Radnik to join their husbands and fathers in October 1948. (pages 15-17) This year marks the 71st anniversary of that ordeal on board the Yugoslavian vessel.

As well as the commemoration of this anniversary, two events have taken place which need to be drawn to the reader’s attention, one happy and the other sad.

This summer saw the first of a two-year archaeological dig on the site of Louis Shickluna’s shipyard in St. Catharines, Ontario. (pages 5-6) It also witnessed the demise of the oldest Maltese organization in Canada, namely the Maltese-Canadian Society of Toronto. (pages 7-9)

And then there are the features in part generated by the current Consul General. One of these is his visits to Maltese businesses in the GTA. (pages 26-27) There is also his notice of the expansion of the weekly Maltese-language, television program into western Canada (page 18), and his visits with the executive members of the Maltese Canadian Federation (page 1) and the Gozo Club of Toronto and the Festa San Gorg Association of Toronto (page 20).

Dr. Charles Farrugia, Director of the National Archives of Malta, was in the GTA in the latter part of August and early September and, with Dr. Xerri, toured the Maltese-Canadian Museum/Archives at St. Paul’s Church Complex. (page 4). It is through the National Archives of Malta that we have that splendid photograph of the banquet held by the Maltese Community in Winnipeg on September 8, 1913. (page 13)

Richard Cumbo’s account of the demise of the Maltese Canadian Society of Toronto (pages 7-8) and the October 1941 poster of the Malta Relief Fund Benefit Show and Dance (page 14) held to the article on Charles Baldacchin (pages 9-10) and correspondence with two of his grandchildren.

Denis A. Darmanin’s letter to the editor, which appeared in The Times of Malta on September 19th, prompted the article on Orlando E. Caruana. (pages 10-12)

Page 12 also contains more comments from our readers.

I’m very pleased to note many of the forthcoming activities within the Maltese communities and of events which have taken place within the past month or so. More than seven pages have been devoted to this! (pages 18-25)

My thanks to those who have assisted me with material for this section of the journal. I would encourage members of the various organizations to send information on them to me as in some cases I have to resort to going to their websites on line. At least one club doesn’t appear to have a webpage. I would also encourage the various institutions to forward copies of their e-newsletters to me so that I can spread the word about their activities.

Finally, I’ve gotten around to attempting to list the various Maltese clubs in North America. (page 25)

The back of the journal, page 28, has a full-page notice of the annual Lehen Malti Gala. I can personally attest to it being an event well worth attending and for a worthy cause.

My thanks goes out to the many individuals who have helped to make this issue possible, to those who contributed materials, who responded to my queries, who proofread various portions and to those who have expressed words of encouragement.

For those wishing to get in contact with me, I can be reached at dbrock40@worldline.ca.

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Do I Know Where I Am Heading?

Perhaps the first question I am invited to ask myself today is: Do I know where I am heading? What do I want as the outcome of my life? As we know, being part of God’s kingdom is not a matter of what’s going to happen to me after death. I am invited to be part of this kingdom here and now, in my everyday life.

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

You Are Important

First of all, remember that you are God’s work of art, God’s masterpiece. That’s what St Paul tells us in his letter to the Ephesians. Just imagine God, like a great artist, the day you were born looking at you and saying, "Wow, I made that!" Remember this when you feel bad about yourself. Then there is the fact that we are God’s children. Nothing can change that. Irrespective of what you’ve done in your life, you are a child of God, His son or His daughter. Often in life children of important people use this birth-privilege of theirs to their advantage, saying, "I am the son/daughter of so-and-so"! What greater privilege is there than being the child of God?

We Have to Make Choices in Life

Basically he [Jesus] is telling us: if you want to really follow me, you have to make choices in life, which may, sometimes be difficult. Jesus, who is resolutely journeying towards his ultimate sacrifice in Jerusalem, wants us to help him set the world on fire by making certain definite choices. It’s about choosing to go through the narrow door, about consciously seeking the lowest places, about not being too concerned about one’s own rights—definitely not putting your rights over and above loving your neighbour…or your enemy.

….There might really be trials and difficulties as I struggle to follow Jesus in my life. But it is all worth it, because I know that, ultimately, the victory is mine. through my baptism I am not only called to carry my cross like he did, to share with him in his passion and death, but am also assured of a share in his resurrection.

Who Is God for Me?

I’m not sure what idea you have of God. What image comes to mind when you think of God. The idea that Jesus, the Son, would like to convey to us of his Father is a happy, joyful, loving, feast-loving, merciful one….

A question that we should ask ourselves today is: how is my relationship with God? Who is God for me? What image comes to my mind when I think of God?

Perhaps if we do not find joy in our Father’s house it is simply because we have not understood who He really is.

Who or What Is My Master?

…Jesus is not saying that worldly wealth, riches and money are bad. He is simply telling us not to let them become our “master” in life. All these things are good. Often, they are God-given gifts, but I cannot allow them to control my life….

As we continue on our journey as disciples of Jesus, it’s good to ask ourselves a couple of questions today. First of all, who or what is my master? On what criteria do I base my decisions in life? Then, how do I use what God has given me? Do I use it for the good of others, to help grow and strengthen relationships?
A VISIT TO THE MALTESE-CANADIAN MUSEUM-/ARCHIVES AT ST. PAUL’S CHURCH COMPLEX

Richard S. Cumbo

On Sunday, August 25th, after attending the 10:30 a.m. Maltese-language Mass with his family at the Church of St. Paul the Apostle in Toronto, the director of the National Archives of Malta Dr. Charles Farrugia visited the Maltese-Canadian Museum-/Archives at St. Paul’s Church Complex. Dr. Farrugia is in Canada visiting family.

Owing to his interest and dedication regarding Maltese migrants and their historical significance to their country of adoption he visited the museum/archives and some Maltese organizations.

The curator Richard Cumbo, the pastor of St. Paul’s Father Mario Micallef, MSSP, as well as the new and popular Consul General of Malta Dr. Raymond Xerri gave Dr. Farrugia and his family a personal tour of the museum. Museum volunteers Ms. Carmen Galea, Ms. Rose Cassar and Mr. Manuel “Mani” Mifsud were also present. Dr. Farrugia was impressed with the holdings of this the only Maltese museum/archives of its type in North America.

Dr. Farrugia’s visit and tour were videoed by Mr. Alfred Fenech.

Dr. Farrugia told the curator that he looks forward to the continuous co-operation between the National Archives of Malta (NAM) and the Maltese-Canadian Museum/Archives. Dr. Farrugia said that, "The museum is a jewel we should all be proud of".

After the tour, Father Mario hosted a small reception (with goods from Malta Bake Shop) in the dining room of the rectory of St. Paul. Richard Cumbo added that, with the arrival of the new pastor at St. Paul’s and the new Consul General of Malta, interest in the community and museum has already increased. Dr. Xerri stated that the Consulate is more than ready to assist the museum wherever possible. Dr. Farrugia on behalf of his family thanked all present for their hospitality and in the work they are doing to preserve and conserve the important history of the Maltese in Canada.

Mani Mifsud, Carmen Galea, Dr. Xerri, Dr. Farrugia, Richard Cumbo and Fr. Mario

A Small Reception Is Held in the Dining Room of St. Paul’s Rectory

Photos by Rosette Farrugia-Bonello, courtesy of Consulate General of the Republic of Malta to Canada
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORK ON THE SITE OF THE SHICKLUNA SHIPYARD, ST. CATHERINES, ONTARIO

Dan Brock

In late August Marc Shickluna of London, Ontario informed me of the archaeological research project along Twelve Mile Creek, near the Bourgyne Bridge in St. Catharines, Ontario. This is the site of the former shipyard owned and operated by Louis Shickluna from 1838 until his death in 1880.

Louis Shickluna’s Shipyard, 1864
Showing the Valletta in the Foreground and the Perseverance and Enterprise in the Centre of the Photograph. Three Hundred Men Were Employed at the Time

At one time Louis Shickluna was the largest shipbuilder on the Great Lakes in Canada. He is also recognized as the first Maltese emigrant to settle in what is now Canada.

The project, under the direction of Kimberly Monk, a maritime archaeologist and adjunct professor with the Department of History at Brock University, St. Catharines, is a two-year study of the Shickluna shipyard site and is funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.

It involves students and faculty from Brock, McMaster (Hamilton) and Trent (Peterborough) universities and brings together experts in history, digital reconstruction and natural sciences.

John Bonnett, Associate Professor of History at Brock is working with 3D modelling of artifacts and features found at the site. Colleen Beard, from Brock’s Map, Data and GIS library, will be contributing her extensive experience with Geographic Information Systems and the geovisualization of the historic Welland Canal.

Michael Pisarc, Professor with the Department of Geography and Tourism, will be examining paleoecological indicators to help understand climate change in the Niagara Peninsula. Joe Boyce, Assistant Professor of Earth Sciences at McMaster University, will use geophysical and geo-archaeological methods to document coastline changes.

Louis Shickluna (1808-1880)

This year, excavation on the site began on Thursday, July 18th. The team was made up of 10 students taking the new course, HIST 3M60 Field School in Local Historical Archaeology at Brock, as well as several community volunteers.

The staff, faculty and students at Brock University got to visit the site on Wednesday, August 14th. Public tours were held on the weekend of August 17th-18th. Among those who took advantage of the public tours was Marc Shickluna.

Mark is a great-great-grandson of Salvatore Scicluna/Shickluna. Salvatore came out from Malta with his wife and four children in 1872 to assist his uncle Louis
Shickluna and eventually became a shipbuilder himself at Port Colborne.

Salvatore’s mother, Giovanna Scicluna, was an older sister of Louis’ and had married Giovanni Maria Scicluna. Giovanna and Giovanni were distantly related on the Xicluna/Scicluna side, their common Xicluna ancestor being Raimando/Diamente Xicluna who lived in the sixteenth century. Raimando’s son, Santo Xicluna was Giovanna’s direct ancestor and Tomaso/Masi Xicluna, Santo’s younger half-brother, was Giovanni’s direct ancestor.

Dig Near Burgoyne Bridge, August 2019

Some of the Artifacts Found on the Site and Being Examined at Brock University, August 2019

Shickluna Shipyard Project, Visitors’ Tour, August 2019

Salvatore “Salvo” Shickluna
Courtesy of Marc Shickluna
THE END OF AN ERA:
THE DISBANDMENT OF THE MALTESE-
CANADIAN SOCIETY OF TORONTO

Richard S. Cumbo

It was truly a sad day in the Toronto Maltese-
Canadian community with the closure of the 97-year-
old Maltese-Canadian Society of Toronto (M.C.S.T.).
The building at 3132 Dundas Street West, in West
Toronto “The Junction” was sold in August, 2019.
According to Ms. Merrica Bonett, who was at the
Society these past few years, she said that a Croatian
gentleman bought the building.
The main reason for the founding of the Society in
downtown Toronto (Dundas and McCaul Streets
area) in 1922 was to promote the establishment of a
Maltese Roman Catholic church. The small Maltese
community at the time was using the church of Our
Lady of Mount Carmel and its hall. The Society’s main
goal was achieved with the erection of the first St. Paul
the Apostle Church at 3224 Dundas Street West in the
“Junction” in 1930.

In 1934, when Toronto was celebrating it’s first 100
years as a city, the float which the Society had
organized for the centennial parade won first prize.
During WW II the Society was in charge of the
“Malta Relief Fund” for the beleaguered Island of Malta.
When a new and larger church was required by the
community the founders and members of the Society
were involved in this undertaking as well, the new
church was completed in 1956 and the auditoriums in
1960. The Society kept financially supporting St. Paul’s
until it began to rent premises for its own use in the late-
1960s.

Founders of the M.C.S.T. in 1922
Joseph Vassallo, Sr. (seated). Standing l. to r. Ant.
Debatisse, Em. Borg and John Zammit. Abs. A.
Scicluna. Photo Taken in St. Paul’s Parish Hall
During the Society’s 40th Anniversary Celebration

During its illustrious history the Maltese-Canadian
Society of Toronto played an integral role in the lives of
Maltese migrants settling in Canada, especially
Toronto. Through the following decades the M.C.S.T.
(until more clubs were founded in the 1960s) was the
main voice of the Maltese in Toronto.

The Society’s Float in the 1934 Parade
Celebrating the Centenary of Toronto as a City

M.C.S.T.’s Knights of Malta Committee with the
Society President Charles Baldacchin Holding the
First Prize Trophy Won for Its 1934 Float.
The Trophy is Now on Display in the
Maltese-Canadian Museum/Archives.
It was during this time that other Maltese associations/clubs were forming in the Junction and the importance of the M.C.S.T. began to falter. When other clubs were purchasing their own buildings, it took many years for the M.C.S.T. to do likewise since it had been supporting St. Paul's. The "heart" of the Society was taken away when its large adult band decided to leave in 1971 and formed the Malta Band Club. With a shrinking and aging “Junction” Maltese community and no new emigrants from Malta coming to Toronto it was difficult to find volunteers to serve the Club.

The Executive Committee of the M.C.S.T.
Taken at the Flamingo Banquet Hall, 
3278 Dundas St., W., Toronto
Front Row l. to r. Louis Borg, Rosa Mallia, 
Alfred Goggi (president), Virginia DeBatiste 
and Espedito Falzon
Back Row l. to r. Robert Cutajar, Publius Falzon, 
Tony Mallia, Josie Mizzi, Richard Cumbo, 
Frans Camilleri and Charles Portelli

Front Façade of Former Club
3131 Dundas St., W., “The Junction,” Toronto
Trevor Parkins-Sciberras

The Society struggled to remain active and it was served for many years by dedicated executive commit-
tees and M.C.S.T. members. With a shrinking and aging “Junction” Maltese community and no new emigrants from Malta coming to Toronto it was difficult to find volunteers to serve the Club.

The Flag of the Former M.C.S.T. Displayed 
at the Maltese-Canadian Museum/Archives. 
(l. to r.) Front row: Julie Woods (volunteer), 
Rose Cassar and Mani Mifsud (committee 
members), Christine Gambin (volunteer). 
Back row: Andy Woods (volunteer), Richard 
Cumbo (museum curator), Evan Woods
(Photo by Laurin Woods)

Information about the Maltese-Canadian Society of Toronto is preserved at the National Public Archives of Canada at Ottawa, as well as other archives here in Canada and in Malta. The Maltese-Canadian Museum/Archives at the St. Paul the Apostle Church Complex houses many old photos, archival documents, memorabilia and the last remains of the Maltese-Canadian Society of Toronto.
WHO WAS CHARLES BALDACCHIN?

Dan Brock

In his article on the demise of the Maltese-Canadian Society of Toronto (see page 7 above), Richard S. Cumbo mentions Charles Baldacchin as president of the M.C.S.T. in 1934. But who was he?

The late Fr. Lawrence E. Attard devoted a paragraph to him on page 79 of The Great Exodus (1918-1939) and denotes him as Charles Ellul Baldacchino. Fr. Lawrence stated that Baldacchino came out with his “young family in 1927” but, in fact, Carmelo Baldacchino arrived in Canada, at the age of 26 on board the Empress of France in September 1923. He intended to join his friend, Tony Deguara, who lived on Clendenan Avenue, north of Dundas Street West, in West Toronto, i.e. The Junction.

Carmelo Baldacchino

as He Appeared on His 1923 Passport Application

Carmelo was 15 years of age and living in Cospicua when he was given parental consent to travel to Egypt. His father was also named Carmelo and his mother was the former Rosaria “Rosa” Ellul.

By 1923, the younger Carmelo could read and write Maltese, Italian and English, was married to the former Maria Concetta Darmanin and had three children.

In contrast to Carmelo, Concetta was illiterate. She was born in Zurrieq on November 21, 1899 to Francesco and Carmela (Mifsud) Darmanin. Thanks to the work of Charles Said-Vassallo of Australia, her Darmanin line has been traced back directly to Prince Eugene Matteo de Armenia (1466-1536), Titular King of Cyprus, Jerusalem and Armenia and Titular Prince of Antioch, Tripoli and Galilee.

In 1923, Concetta and the three children were living in Zeitun, the same town in which her husband Carmelo was born on January 13, 1897 and baptised as “Carmelus, Hyeronimus, Felix, Salvator.”

According to Fr. Attard, “Charles knew Canada years before he had decided to emigrate because he used to travel to North America with his father who was then a tobacco merchant.” None of this, however, has been substantiated.

It would appear that Carmelo returned to Malta some time in 1925, as his daughter Giovanna was born on September 3, 1926. While in Malta, Carmelo made arrangements to bring out his family. He returned to Toronto, in October 1926, by way of Cherbourg and Montreal, again on board the Empress of France.

Concetta, born in Zurrieq on November 21, 1899, came out with their four children, Carmela, Giuseppa, Rosario and baby Giovanna, in June 1927, on board the Montroyal by way of Cherbourg and Quebec City. Carmelo was living on Quebec Avenue, two blocks east of Clendenan Avenue and also north of Dundas Street West, at the time.

While the passport application photo of Concetta Baldacchino and her four children (see below) had been water-damaged and rust-stained before rescued by from the lower part of Fort St. Elmo by the National Archives of Malta, a contemporary photo exists, presumably taken with Concetta’s sister, Mary (see next page).

The Water-Damaged and Rust-Stained Photograph of Concetta Baldacchino and Her Four Children Attached to Her 1927 Passport Application

Courtesy of The National Archives of Malta

Carmelo was a member of the Toronto Maltese Club, the earlier name for the Maltese-Canadian Society of Toronto. As such he was one of those who petitioned the Archdiocese of Toronto to have both a Maltese national church and a Maltese speaking priest. In 1928, Fr. Alphonse Cauchi was appointed pastor of the Maltese community. Again, according to Fr. Attard, Charles “worked hard to provide the priest [Fr. Cauchi] with a decent rectory to live in.”

At some point Carmelo Baldacchino became known as Charles Baldacchin and added Ellul as his middle name.
Fr. Attard goes on to say that, “Charles was interested in drama and when the Melita Dramatic Company was formed he was producing and directing a number of plays most of which were in Maltese.”

One of Baldacchin’s plays *Pia De’ Tolomei* was performed on Saturday, October 11, 1941, at St. Andrew’s Society Hall in Detroit on behalf of the Malta Relief Fund Benefit Show and Dance. (See page 14 below) Whether this “Great Dramatic Drama in Four Acts” was performed as an opera and in Maltese, Italian or English is presently unknown but it is almost certain that it was inspired by Gaetano Donizetti’s two-act tragic opera of the same title.

Not only did Baldacchin write the drama performed that October evening, but he directed it as presented by the Toronto Maltese Dramatic Club “Melita.” He also played the male lead with his daughter, Carmela, playing the role of his wife, Pia. Another daughter, presumably Giuseppa, was also a member of the cast.

By 1940, Charles was a carpenter and lived on the north side of Dundas Street West, west of Gilmour Avenue and hardly a block from the present Malta Bake Shop to the east.

He and Concetta were living on the east side of Gilmour Avenue, south of Vernon Street, by 1953. They were still living there in 1958 but Charles was now an aircraft worker rather than a carpenter.

According to Fran Baldacchin Burnett, one of their granddaughters, Charles died on November 15, 1958 in a car accident on his way to the cottage in Fenelon Falls and was interred in Holy Cross Cemetery, Thornhill. Concetta died on February 12, 1984. The Baldicchins had 14 children in all, eight of whom lived to adulthood. The last of the eight died within the past year.

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**Concetta Baldacchin “Nanny” with Her Children and Presumed Sister Mary**

*Front row (l. to r.) Carmela “Carm”, Giovanna “Jean”, Rosario “Russ” and Giuseppa “Josie”*

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**A Tin Wall Hanging**

*About the Size of a Small Plate, with the Image of Concetta and Charles Baldacchin, about 1930*

*Courtesy of Fran Baldacchin Burnett*

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**ORLANDO E. CARUANA REVISITED**

Dan Brock

On Saturday, September 14th, the article I had in the September issue of this journal was essentially the one reprinted in *The Times of Malta*. On Wednesday, September 18th I received an email from a member of the *Times* staff which included a letter to the editor from Denis A. Darmanin of Valletta pointing out that the photo I had used purporting to be Private Orlando E. Caruana was in fact Giovanni Bastiantini [Bastianini?], Gunner No. 339, Royal Malta Fencible Artillery (1861-1889), who was awarded the Army Long Service and Good Conduct Medal.

My main source for the image I used was the piece by M. Chiara entitled “This Badass Belti [resident of Valletta] Won a Medal of Honour During The American
Civil War” which appeared in Lovin Malta on May 21, 2018.

According to Darmanin, the above photo appears in Gherug Beltin [Valletta Roots] by his good friend Victor Scerri. Why Chiara claimed this was a photo of Orlando E. Caruana is, therefore, a mystery.

Another photo purported to be that of Orlando E. Caruana is that which is actually of Sgt. Schuyler J. Murden (1844-1881) of Company H. 51st New York Infantry. Murden was from Westchester County, New York. Darmanin in his article entitled “Orlando Emanuel Caruana - an American Civil War hero,” The Sunday Times of Malta, December 7, 2014, shows this photograph of Sgt. Murden, identifies him as such and states that the Union Civil War uniform worn by Caruana would have been similar. (see following page)

Both Darmanin and I have been in contact with descendants of Caruana but neither of us have been able to find an actual photograph of Caruana in his Civil War uniform.

As can readily be seen from the photo above and on the next page, the uniforms and caps worn by Murden and Bastiantini bear no resemblance.

Photo, Purported to Be Orlando E. Caruana, Accompanying M. Chiara’s Article and Used by Me in Both my September Articles

In his recent letter to the editor of the Times, Darmanin provides photo below of Giovanni Bastiantini.

Giovanni Bastiantini
of the Royal Malta Fencible Artillery
Original in possession of Joseph Scerri another good friend of Denis A. Darmanin

Schuyler J. Murden of the 51st New York Infantry
Contributed by Mike Serpa
to the New York State Military Museum
In my defence, while I had previously read Darmanin’s 2014 article in the *Times*, and, therefore, was aware that the above photo purported to be Caruana was in fact Murden I had not read anything at the time to disprove the photo we now know to be that of Giovanni Bastiantini or Bastianini. Of course, if I had come across Darmanin’s article entitled “Orlando Caruana photos,” I would not have misidentified the Bastiantini photo and would have been aware that no Civil War photo of Caruana is known to exist.

Having said this, I was aware of the photo below published in the *Washington Post*, September 14, 1917, page 11, after the death of Caruana. This shows Caruana in later years while a member of one of the several veteran associations to which he belonged.

![Orlando E. Caruana in Later Years](image)

Curiously, in studying this photo of Caruana and that of Bastiantini one cannot help but notice similar facial features and the fact that each parted his hair high on the left side.

In conclusion, I’m indebted to Denis A. Darmanin for pointing out my error in the identity of the photograph I originally thought to be that of Caruana and for the research done over the years on this Maltese American Civil War hero by this resident of Valletta whom I have come to learn “is a household name in local and international military historical studies.”

Thank you so much for the Issue #6 of “The Maltese Presence in North America”. I’m truly finding your issues both very interesting and informative, and I always look forward to receive these issues from you. Keep up the good work!!

Carmen Galea, Toronto, ON

Dan, just an idea, you may want to include a “Do You Remember” column about Maltese-Canadian volunteers who are no longer with us but who had dedicated so much time and effort for the community. For example, Mr. Angelo Cutajar, former president of the Maltese-Canadian Society of Toronto who was in charge of the “Malta Relief Fund” during the WW II and who had also contested an alderman’s seat in Toronto (he did not win), Mr. Paul Gauci who founded the band at the Maltese-Canadian Society of Toronto in 1968, then later the band left in 1971 and founded the Malta Band Club and magician Johnny Giordmaine (1899-1974). There are so many individuals who over the years did so much for the community. Another is Father Lawrence Bonavia, O.F.M. as well as Father Alphonse Cauchi, O.S.A. of St. Paul the Apostle Church.

Richard S. Cumbo, Toronto, ON

I have spread 5,980 copies of the newsletter in four locations: The Consulate General waiting room, at St Paul The Apostle Church, Melita Club and the Malta Band Club. All picked up by visiting.

Dr. Raymond C. Xerri, Consul General of Malta (Canada), Toronto, ON

Thank goodness you’ve taken this up as your passion.

As you may or may not know, we Maltese are a passionate lot who treasure our heritage. However, it’s not always the easiest task to get something of this magnitude off the ground. Kind of like herding cats. LOL

Joan Mizzi-Fry, Orillia, ON

I would like to suggest for you to add on your paper your contact information because I am getting a lot of inquiries from people that want to get on your mailing list. Keep up the good work.

Joe Sherri, Toronto, ON

Thank you for your service to the Maltese Community!

Alex Ciappara, Toronto

...and well-done to you. It’s a great service you are doing for the Maltese community.

Fr. Mario Micallef, MSSP, St. Paul the Apostle Parish, Toronto

...the second largest [Maltese Canadian] community outside the GTA is the Greater Vancouver Area with over 8,000 people from our citizenship and passport records. We have far less than this number in London.

Dr. Raymond C. Xerri, Consul General of Malta (Canada), Toronto, ON
COMMEMORATION, ON SEPTEMBER 8, 1913, BY THE MALTESE COMMUNITY OF WINNIPEG
OF THE RAISING OF THE GREAT SIEGE OF 1565

Dan Brock

In the January/February issue of this journal, pages 18-19, an account was given by John D. Crawford of the early Maltese emigrants to the Canadian Prairies. Crawford made particular mention of those who settled in Winnipeg and stated that “by 1913 there was a community of more than 300 Maltese in the area” based on the report of the Maltese Protective Association formed that year.

The late Fr. Lawrence E. Attard, in his book *Early Maltese Emigration (1900-1914)*, pages 43-44, stated: “The Protective Society of Winnipeg held an important meeting in October 1913 at St. Mary's Hall, St. Mary's Avenue, and the minutes of the meeting tell that in the previous month the Maltese Community had commemorated the lifting of the Great Siege of 1565 by organising a banquet at the Manitoba Hall. The table was decorated with red and white roses, the national colours of Malta. Rignel’s String quartet provided the appropriate musical background. For the occasion the Maltese invited their Canadian friends and toasts were made to King Edward VIII [George V?], to the victory of 1565, the Pope and to Canada. In his speech Captain [Henry William] Parnis [the president of the Society and spokesman for the Maltese community in Winnipeg] spoke of the Imperial bond linking Malta and Canada; he praised the country which had accepted a number of Maltese immigrants but he also admitted that on September 8th, a very dear date to every Maltese, he felt a pang of pain at being absent from his Island Home.

My thanks goes to the National Archives of Maltese which posted the photo below on Facebook and to Mark Caruana of Australia who drew this to my attention.

![Banquet photo](image-url)

Courtesy of the National Archives of Malta
THE MALTESE OF TORONTO

AND

THE MALTESE OF DETROIT

Join Hands To Help

“MALT A” And Its Civilian Population In Distress!

MALTA RELIEF FUND

BENEFIT SHOW AND DANCE

Under the Auspices of

THE MALTA WAR RELIEF SOCIETY OF DETROIT

Affiliated With the British War Relief Society, Inc.

ST. ANDREW’S SOCIETY HALL

431 East Congress Street Detroit, Michigan

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 11, 1941 At Eight P. M. Sharp

PROGRAM

First Part

THE TORONTO MALTESE DRAMATIC CLUB “MELITA”

Under the Direction of Mr. Charles E. Baldacchin

Presents

PIA DE’ TOLOMEI

A Great Romantic Drama in Four Acts by Chas. E. Baldacchin

THE PLAYERS

Countess Pia de’ Tolomei, wife of Miss C. Baldacchin

Count Nello della Pietra. Governor of Siena C. E. Baldacchin

Maria, their daughter Miss F. Caruana

Lord Tolomei, Pia’s father P. Sapiano

Ugo, Administrator E. DeBattista

Ariherto, a soldier from Siena C. Faciol

Giorgio, keeper of the Castle of Maremma A. DeBattista

Beatrice, widow Miss J. Baldacchin

Vala Frido, a valet G. Attard

Angelic Spirit Miss N. Cassar

Saracenic Spirit C. Faciol

First Soldier J. Borg

Second Soldier J. Agius

Third Soldier A. Mifsud

Prompter: Paul Ebejier

Second Part

GRAND BALL

Music Furnished by George Franklin and His Orchestra

IMPORTANT!

Refreshments will be served in between the acts of the Drama and during the Ball.

Tickets are on sale at—

St. Paul’s Maltese Church and Rectory: Sons of Malta-St. Mary’s A. S. C.:

Maltese American Social Club: Knights of Malta Post 129;

Rambler Benevolent Society: Xerrri and Xerrri.

Admission: Adults 75 cents—Children 25 cents

God Bless America! Long Live the President of the U.S.A. God Save the King!

Courtesy of Richard S. Cumbo
THE ARRIVAL OF THE WOMEN AND CHILDREN ON BOARD THE RADNIK, OCTOBER 1948

Dan Brock

Following their arrival in southern Ontario in May and June of 1948, as noted in the May/June issue of the journal, the men in this new wave of Maltese emigration to Canada were adjusting to life in their new surroundings that summer.

Maple and oak trees had replaced the familiar carob and olive trees. The abundance of grass and fresh water was a source of amazement. Traffic lights, trains and the even fauna such as squirrels, raccoons and skunks fascinated them. The larger buildings, many of frame construction, were in sharp contrast to the limestone buildings of their homeland. Baseball was a confusing game but at least there was football (soccer) in some of the larger cities such as Toronto and London. Another novelty was the ubiquitous soft drink advertisements. A few months later there would be the cold weather, heavy snow falls and piles of snow remaining for months.

Many were family men and, while they liked their new home, they missed their wives and children and were looking forward to the day when accommodations could be found for them.

In October, the Honourable John J. Cole, Malta’s minister of emigration and labour, and his colleague John F. Axisa, director of emigration, were on a fact-finding tour of Canada, the United States and Australia. While in London, Ontario on Tuesday, October 12th, Cole addressed 40 of the Maltese emigrants and declared: “I urge you to be patient and you will eventually have your families out here with you.”

For at least four of the men who had arrived in London in June the dream of being reunited with their loved ones had already become a reality as noted in last month’s issue. For many others, their families were already making the Atlantic crossing.

Just after dawn on Monday, October 4th, the Yugoslavian ship, the Radnik, entered the Grand Harbour.

The Radnik

Already, the Customs Wharf was thronged with hundreds of prospective passengers, their families and friends.

Mainly Mothers and Children on the Customs House Wharf Waiting to Board the Radnik

A little after 7:00 a.m. the passengers, mainly women and children bound for Canada to be reunited with their husbands and fathers, bade a hurried last farewell to family and friends and started entering the Customs House.

Those women with very young children were permitted to take an unlimited supply of tinned milk with them. After passing through the passport office the emigrants gathered on the quay and waited. It was two hours later before they began embarking on the Radnik. Family and friends moved from around the Customs Wharf to the Fish Market off which the ship was berthed. Then came an even longer wait as the vessel didn’t leave the
Harbour until about 8:00 in the evening, more than 12 hours after the embarkation process had begun!

A Newspaper Clipping
Probably from The Times of Malta

After leaving Malta the Radnik made a stop at Marseille where a number of other passengers were picked up, including some Jewish orphan children of the Holocaust, accompanied by two elderly gentlemen en route to New York. Leaving there on October 7th, the ship stopped at Gibraltar before entering upon the Atlantic Ocean. Many of the women and children became seasick on the rough sea.

One emigrant, a seven-year-old girl at the time, later recalled eating meals at one long table. Another, then a young boy, remembered sleeping on the top of one of the three-tiered narrow bunks. His sister slept on the middle bunk and his mother on the lower. Another woman, a child at the time, related that her family was near the kitchen where it was warmer and extra food could be obtained. One of the wives was later to say that the crew spoke little English and few of the passengers were fluent in that language either.

The Radnik finally entered New York Harbor on the morning of Saturday, October 23rd. The flags of Communist Yugoslavia were then lowered. Presumably, all pictures of Josef Stalin and Marshal Tito as well as hammer and sickle insignias were removed or covered as well.

When the ship docked in Brooklyn the previous June, a large number of dock workers refused to continue loading the vessel after seeing portraits of Stalin and Tito in the Radnik’s main lounge. The Cold War was in full swing. As one longshoreman summed it up: “If it’s Joe’s stuff let him come over and load it himself.”

The first stop was Ellis Island. There, at least one mother with her five children was fortunate enough to take leave of the ship as the woman had cousins in New York City and her husband had arranged to meet her in New York.

After leaving Ellis Island, the ship had made its way to the Smith Street Dock in Brooklyn where it was only to spend a few hours unloading cargo and the Jewish refugees before taking the Maltese emigrants destined for Canada on to Montreal. But, while one woman was later to describe the trip over as “like a nightmare,” this ordeal was still far from over.

After the ship docked it was locked down and, over the next few days, a thorough search was made on it by American authorities, including the FBI. Some of the passengers believed the authorities suspected that the Radnik carried contraband or black-market goods. According to the late Fr. Lawrence E. Attard, however, during the crossing, the passengers had been treated apparently to an overdose of Communist propaganda.

“The Americans got to know about this and were afraid that the migrants might be used as tools of Communist infiltration at a time when the Cold War was at its worst. For this reason, the Custom authorities refused permission of the passengers to land.”

Immigration officials also swarmed the Radnik. Meanwhile, food among the Maltese emigrants was getting low.

But word of the plight of these emigrants had gotten out to the Maltese community in New York City, several of whom had relatives on board. One woman is believed to have been allowed to leave the vessel temporarily in the custody of her American relatives. Relatives managed to smuggle one of the women off the ship for a while to visit and do some sightseeing while her children were cared for on board ship by others. One of the men who arrived in Ontario in June had made the trip to New York City where he had relatives. He visited his wife and children for a few hours on board ship, gave them some American and Canadian currency and then returned alone to Ontario’s Niagara Peninsula.

While many Maltese living in the area came to the ship with food, and especially milk for the infants, the person who appears to have played the key role in the days which followed was Joseph Edward Doublet.

As noted in the March/April issue of this journal, Doublet was a native of Msida, had immigrated to the United States in 1920 and settled in New York City. There, the 19-year-old found work with the Pennsylvania Railroad. He remained with the Railroad
the rest of his working life and “was to move quite high within the ranks.” As he did so, he worked to help his fellow countrymen and other immigrants. In the 1920s he found work for 215 Maltese. During the Great Depression, he helped more than 600 Maltese in finding work and helping them with food, clothing and accommodations.

When contacted by a customs guard as to the plight of the passengers on board the Radnik Doublet left immediately for the ship taking a medical doctor with him. “He then contacted the Port Authorities and convinced them that the Maltese had nothing to do with Communists. He also asked philanthropic societies to donate money, food, milk and toys.” Eventually, instead of the Maltese emigrants remaining on board ship until it finally was allowed to clear port and sail for Montreal, Doublet was able to order three large buses to transport those destined for Canada to a special train, at Penn Station. On, Friday, October 29th, this train crossed over into Canada, by way of St. Albans, Vermont, en route for Montreal. From there many of the passengers took different trains to once more be reunited with their husbands and fathers.

How many of the passengers on board the Radnik were actually Maltese? An English language newspaper in Malta at the time gave the number as 250. In doing a hand count of the passenger list submitted to American authorities, I arrived at a total of 230, two less than the number published in the New York Times of October 23, 1948. Of the 197 destined for Canada, there were 117 children under the age of 16, 63 women and only 17 men, i.e. males age 16 and over.

As an aside, one of those who arrived in London, Ontario, on Sunday, October 31st, thought Canadians celebrated Carnival rather late in the year when she saw all the children on the street that evening in costumes. Halloween was not celebrated in Malta at the time.

Shipping news from the New York Times, October 23, 1948

Maltese-Canadian Museum Archives and Visitors Centre
St. Paul the Apostle Church Complex
3224 Dundas St. W.,
Toronto, ON, M6P 2A3
1-416-767-7054

Dr. Raymond C. Xerri
Consul General of Malta
Sun Life Financial Centre
3280 Bloor Street W.
Suite 1060, 10th Floor–Centre Tower
Etobicoke, ON M8X 2X3
Phone: 1-416-207-0922
Fax: 1-416-207-0986
E-Mail: maltaconsulate.toronto@gov.mt
Dear Friends,

The Consulate General of Malta is happy to announce that Lehen Malti, a Maltese Television program produced in Canada, will now be broadcast not only in Southern Ontario, but also in British Columbia and Alberta as well. Lehen Malti promotes events happening within the Maltese Community in Canada as well as showing documentaries and programs of interest about Malta and our culture. As of September 9th, you can watch Lehen Malti on OMNI tv during the following timeslots:

**OMNI 1 Southern Ontario:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Saturdays @ 8:30am</th>
<th>Mondays @ 3:30am</th>
<th>Tuesdays @ 11:30am</th>
<th>Wednesdays @ 11:00pm</th>
<th>Thursdays @ 8:30am</th>
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**OMNI British Columbia/ Pacific:**

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<th>Saturdays @ 2:00pm</th>
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**OMNI Alberta/ Prairies:**

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<th>Saturdays @ 2:00pm</th>
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You can follow Lehen Malti on Facebook or contact them by email at lehenmalti@hotmail.com

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**ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE MALTESE COMMUNITIES**

**Dan Brock**

**The Greater Toronto Area, Ontario**

At one time “The Junction” and vicinity was the area having the highest concentration of Maltese in Canada. Today, it is in and around the City of Mississauga to the southwest but still in the Greater Toronto Area. The Maltese Band Club in Mississauga may be said to have taken the place of the Maltese Canadian Society of Toronto in the Junction in years past.

**Fr. Charles Michael Grech, OFM,** will be installed as pastor of St. Jane Frances de Chantal Parish, Toronto, by Auxiliary Bishop of Toronto John Boissoneau on Saturday, October 5th. Fr. Grech has been at this parish, first as assistant pastor and then as administrator, since November 2016.

The 55th anniversary of Malta’s independence was observed with a flag raising ceremony at Queen’s Park on Friday, September 20th.

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The Consul General of Malta (Canada) Delivers His Speech at Queen’s Park in Front of the Ontario Legislative Building before a Record Number of Maltese Canadians
Following the Raising of the Maltese Flag, a Reception was Held at which Maltese Foods Were Provided.

Another flag raising ceremony was held at Malta Park on Sunday, September 22nd, followed by Mass in Maltese at St. Paul the Apostle Church nearby.

Honour Guard During the Procession at the Beginning of the Mass in Maltese at St. Paul the Apostle Church.

Flag Raising Ceremony in Malta Park.

Reception in the Parish Hall Following Mass.
Complementary Printed Copies (Lower Left) of the September Issue of This E-Journal at the Back of St. Paul the Apostle Church Thanks to Consulate General of Malta in Canada

New Logo of the St. Paul the Apostle Youth Group

The St. Paul the Apostle Youth Group held its 19th Annual Bonfire at Fire Pit #1 in Home Smith Park on Sunday, September 15th

The Executive Committee of the Gozo Club of Toronto (est. 1973) Met with the Consul General of Malta (Canada), Thursday, August 29th (l. to r.) Doris Mizzi, Paul Portelli, Doris Portelli, Dr. Raymond Xerri (Consul General), George Haber, MaryAnn Grech and Angelo Grech

The Executive Committee of the Festa San Gorg Association of Toronto (est. 1987) Met with the Consul General of Malta (Canada) on Friday, September 13th (l. to r.) Joe Sherri, Phillip Abela, Dr. Raymond Xerri and George Xuereb
The Melita Soccer Club held a 50s/60s Dinner Dance on Saturday, September 21st.

The Malta Band Club will be holding its Mro Paul Gauci Concert on Saturday, October 19th.

The Malta Band Club Incorporated presents the 2019 Maestro Paul Gauci Concert

DATE: Saturday October 19th at 7:00 P.M.
LOCATION: 5745 Coopers Avenue, Mississauga

This year the Malta Band will present an evening of music made popular by the Hollywood motion picture industry.

The Malta Band Club Incorporated encourages everyone to join us as we commemorate the contributions of the late Maestro Paul Gauci to our band and our organization.

The Maltese Canadian Cruisers held a Show & Shine at the Malta Band Club on Sunday, September 22nd in support of Jumpstart

Some of the Old and Vintage Cars Exhibited
The Malta Band Club held its Santa Maria & Il Vittorja Dinner Dance on Saturday, September 14th.

Dr. Joseph Muscat, Prime Minister of Malta, and his delegation were on a three-day visit to Toronto, September 26th-28th. On the evening of Friday, the 27th, a cocktail reception of the Prime Minister and his delegation in Mississauga. (Details in next issue.) A trip to Casino Fallsview is planned by The Malta Band Club for Saturday, October 26th followed the next day with the Kids Halloween Concert.

Malta United Society of Windsor, Ontario
A Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser was held on Saturday, September 7th in support of the Detroit Roller Derby AllStars.
An Independence Day Dinner was held on Saturday, September 21st. Dancing to music provided by a DJ followed the traditional patata il-forn dinner.

London, Ontario
A picnic luncheon was held by members of the Maltese community, on Wednesday, August 28th at the pavilion in Weldon Park in Arva.

Melita S.C. Inc.
Halloween Dance
Saturday October 26
Melita Soccer Club, Main Floor
Doors open at 6:30 p.m.
Hot Buffet Dinner, Cash Bar, DJ
$25 per person
Costume Competition
For tickets, please call
416 763-5317
Tickets must be picked up by October 20

Some Played Bocci
This past month’s luncheon was held on Wednesday September 26th at the Marconi Club on Clarke Road in London. More than 50 persons were in attendance.
A Delicious Hot Buffet Dinner Was Provided

Enjoying a Great Meal and Conversation
Photos courtesy of Tony Galea

Some of the Guests Partying before the Opening Ceremonies. Debbie Scerri (above) in Black Gown

Debbie (with microphone) in front of the Flagbearers

October’s luncheon will also be held at the Marconi Club and Dr. Raymond Xerri, the Consul General of Malta in Canada, is expected to be in attendance.

The Maltese Heritage Association held its 1st Annual Sonoma County Wine Tour on Saturday, September 21st.

The Maltese-American Social Club of San Francisco celebrated Malta Day and the Club’s 90th Anniversary at the Elks Club in San Mateo on Saturday, September 14th. Debbie Scerri, a singer in Malta and native of Toronto, ON, was the featured entertainer. She is also the mother of Nicole Vella who was crowned Miss World Malta in Valletta on Friday June 7, 2019.
Some of the Guests in Attendance

Joe Barbara (centre) Showing Photos to His Daughter Shannon and Her Husband

Debbie Leads a Dance Procession
Photographs courtesy of Evelyn Simmons

The Maltese Heritage Association and The Honorary Consul General of Malta, Louis Vella, would like to invite you to join us in representing MALTA in the Italian Heritage Parade. This will be our 7th year participating in this grand parade through North Beach in San Francisco! © Moving place and time to be announced ©

For more information or to participate, please contact:
Julie Orton (415) 299-8428 / malteseheritageassociation@gmail.com or Carmen Orton (415) 857-0593

WALK WITH US
Anyone is welcome to walk for FREE with the group.
Route is 1.5 miles beginning in Fisherman’s Wharf area and ending in North Beach’s Columbus Square

CELEBRATE
Please bring individually wrapped candies to hand out to the crowd!
Traditional Maltese outfits or patriotic Red & White are highly encouraged!

New York City
The Maltese of New York and the Maltese Center NYC hosted an Il-Vittorja/Labor Day BBQ at the Center on the evening of Saturday, September 7th. On the evening of Wednesday, September 25th they hosted the Prime Minister of Malta, Dr. Joseph Muscat, and his delegation.

Prime Minister Joseph Muscat and Carmelo Abela, the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade Promotion, attended the Climate Action Summit at the United Nations General Assembly in New York City on Monday, September 23rd.

ITALIAN HERITAGE PARADE

WHEN
Sunday, October 13th 2019 @ 12:30pm

WHERE
Fisherman’s Wharf S.F.

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Maltese America Heritage Day was observed by both the Dearborn and Detroit clubs at the Michigan State Capitol Building in Lansing on Thursday, September 19th.

MALTESE CLUBS IN NORTH AMERICA

Dan Brock

In the first issue of this journal it was suggested that: “Just having names, addresses, telephone numbers and hours of opening of the Maltese clubs scattered throughout the continent would be useful.” Here is a first attempt at providing such information to the best of my knowledge.

Owing to space constraints in this issue, I’ll only list the names of the clubs of which I’m aware. Any additions or corrections are most welcomed.

Festa San Gorg Association of Toronto
Gozo Club Toronto
Malta Band Club
Malta United Society of Windsor, Ontario
Maltese American Benevolent Society
Maltese American Community Club of Dearborn
Maltese-American Social Club of San Francisco
Maltese Canadian Association of the City of Hamilton
Maltese Center, NYC
Maltese Culture Club of Durham
Maltese Heritage Association San Francisco Bay Area
Melita Soccer Club
SOME MALTESE BUSINESSES IN THE GREATER TORONTO AREA
VISITED BY THE CONSUL GENERAL

Joe's Pastizzi Plus
Front Façade (above) and Interior (below)

Hector Sanchez with Dr. Raymond Xerri

Le Tréport Wedding and Convention Centre,
Mississauga

Dr. Raymond Xerri with Mary Calleja, wedding coordinator at Le Tréport

Malta Bake Shop
Front Façade (above) and Interior (below)
Malta’s Finest Pastries
Front Façade (above) and Interior (below)

Paul Refalo (president of Melita Travel Service Ltd.) with Dr. Raymond Xerri

Nannu’s Pastizzi, Mississauga
(exterior above; interior below)

Melita Travel Service Ltd., Toronto

Photos courtesy of the Consulate General of the Republic of Malta in Canada
SPECIAL PERFORMANCE BY MALTA'S VERY OWN
MARK TONNA

LEHEN MALTI
GALA

$70
Adults
$45
Kids Under 12

SATURDAY
OCT. 26
DOORS OPEN
5:30PM

FULL COURSE MEAL | 2 BOTTLES OF WINE
| KINNIE ON EVERY TABLE | CASH BAR

LE TREPORT WEDDING & CC
1075 QUEENSWAY E
MISSISSAUGA, ON

A PORTION OF THE PROCEEDS WILL GO TO ID-DAR TAL PROVIDENZA

FOR TICKETS Joe Sherri | joesherrri@rogers.com | 416.571.3944

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