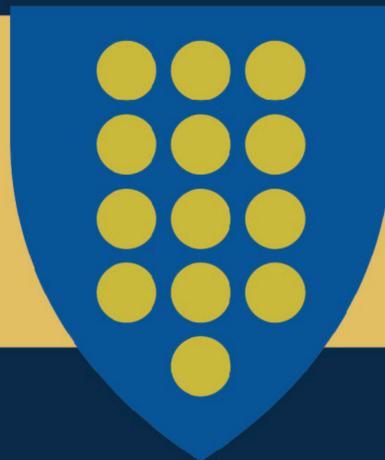


A TASTE OF THE
**HISTORY,
CULTURE AND
ENVIRONMENT**

of the Central Region of Malta



George Cassar
Photography Joseph Galea

A TASTE OF THE
**HISTORY,
CULTURE AND
ENVIRONMENT**

of the Central Region of Malta



A TASTE OF THE
**HISTORY,
CULTURE AND
ENVIRONMENT**

of the Central Region of Malta

Design and layout by Kite Group
www.kitegroup.com.mt
info@kitegroup.com.mt

First published in Malta in 2019
Publication Copyright © Kite Group
Literary Copyright © George Cassar
Printed by Print It, Malta

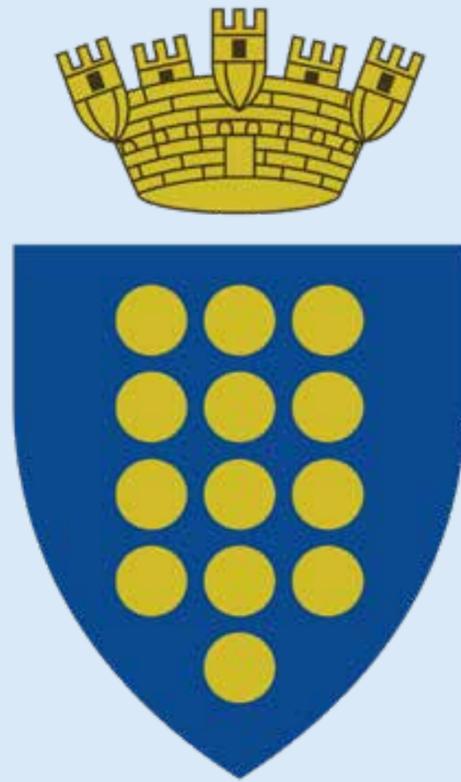
No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the author and the publisher.

ISBN: 978-99957-50-67-1 (hardback)
978-99957-50-68-8 (paperback)

George Cassar

Photography Joseph Galea

Kite

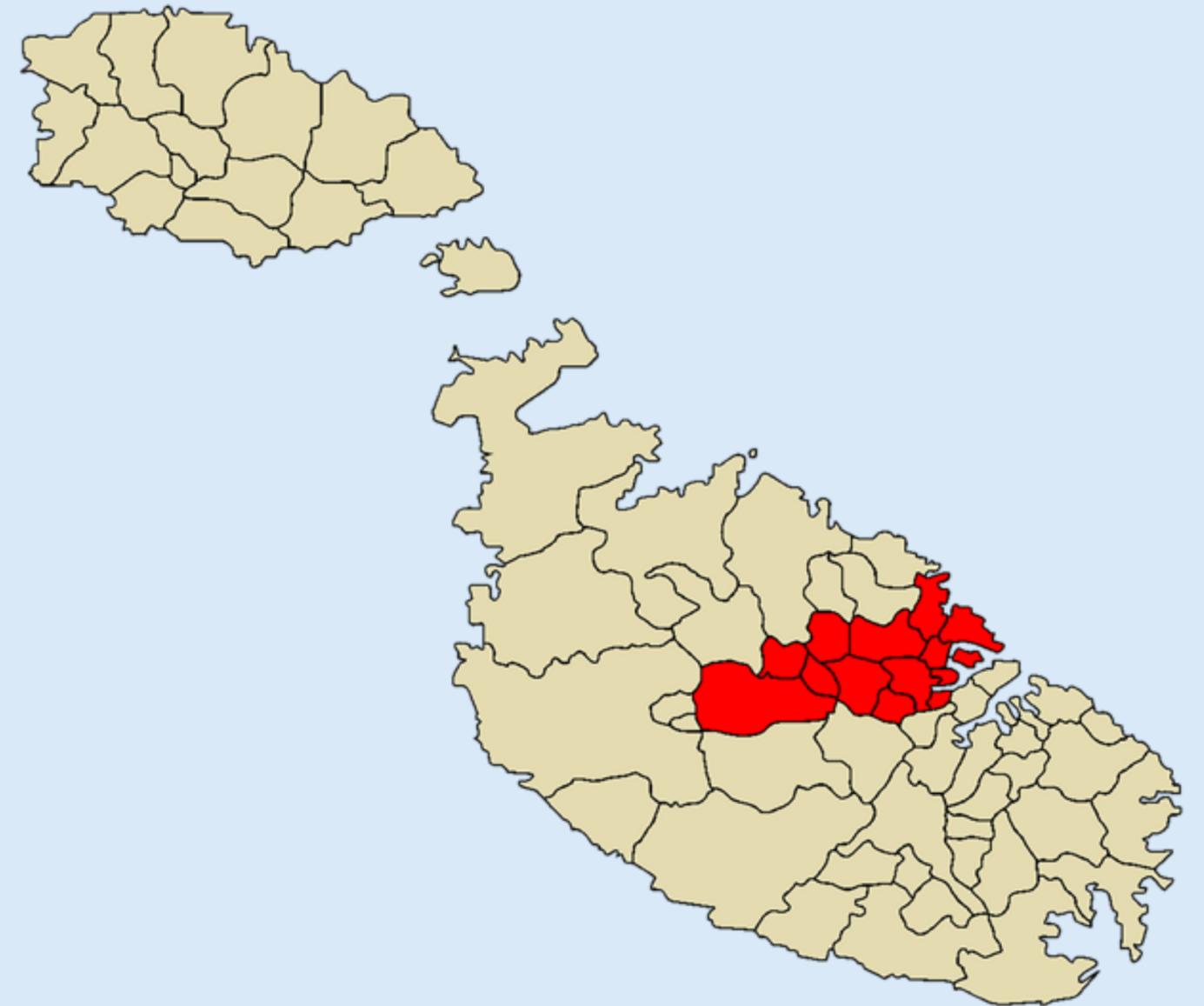


THE CENTRAL REGION

The Central Region is one of five administrative regions in the Maltese Islands. It includes thirteen localities – Ғ'Attard, Ғal Balzan Birkirkara, il-Gżira, l-Iklin, Ғal Lija, l-Imsida, Tal-Pietà, San Ġwann, Tas-Sliema, San Ġiljan, Santa Venera, and Ta' Xbiex. The Region has an area of about 25km² and a population of about 130,574 (2017) which constitutes 28.36 percent of the population of the country. This population occupies about 8 percent of the whole area of the Maltese Islands which means that the density is of around 6,635 persons per km².

The coat-of-arms of the Central Region was granted in 2014 (L.N. 364 of 2014). The shield has a blue field signifying the Mediterranean Sea in which there are thirteen bezants or golden disks representing the thirteen municipalities forming the Region.

The blazon is Azure thirteen bezants 3, 3, 3, 3 and 1, all ensigned by a mural coronet of five eschaugettes and a sally port Or.





Michael Fenech Adami
President
Central Region Committee



Jeanette Galea
Executive Segretary
Central Region Committee



L-Imnsida
Motto: *Novissima Surgo*
(The last to be erected)
Population 12,216
Mayor: Margaret Baldacchino
Cefai



Tal-Pietà
Motto: *Ubi Caritas*
(Where there is love)
Population 4,583
Mayor: Keith Tanti



H'Attard
Motto: *Florigera rosas halo*
(I perfume the air with my blossoms)
Population 11,134
Mayor: Stefan Cordina



Hal Balzan
Motto: *Hortibus undique septa*
(Surrounded by gardens)
Population 4,589
Deputy Mayor: André Grech



San Ġwann
Motto: *Ismek Tifhriek*
(Your name honours you)
Population 14,125
Councillor: Dominic Cassar



Tas-Sliema
Motto: *Celer Ad Oras Surgo*
(Quickly from the coast arisen)
Population 21,068
Mayor: Anthony Chircop



Birkirkara
Motto: *In hoc signo vinces*
(In this sign you will conquer)
Population: 23,570
Deputy Mayor: Rita Borg



Il-Gżira
Motto: *Recte Floreat*
(Flourishing with Justice)
Population: 10,784
Mayor: Conrad Borg Manchè



San Ġiljan
Motto: *Litoris Aquas Simuato Margine Cinge*
(With land I embrace the waterline)
Population 12,708
Mayor: Guido Dalli



Santa Venera
Motto: *Virtus in infirmitate perficitur*
(Virtue emerges best in misery)
Population 7,376
Mayor: Stephen Sultana



L-Iklin
Population 3,341
Mayor: Anthony Dalli



Hal Lija
Motto: *Suavi Fructo Rubeo*
(I glow red with sweet fruit)
Population 3,152
Mayor: Magda Magri Naudi



Ta' Xbiex
Motto: *Sole illuminata marique amplecta*
(Illuminated by the sun and embraced by the sea)
Population 1,928
Mayor: Max Zammit



CONTENTS

Hon. Owen Bonnici 10	Hon. Silvio Parnis 12	Hon. Robert Cutajar 14	Michael Fenech Adami 16	Joseph Galea 18	Prof. George Cassar 20
1	2	3	4		
Culture, heritage and architecture 24	Charity, health and education 84	Crafts, industry and business 120	Stories, myths and legends 138		
5	6	7	8		
Feasts, festivals and fireworks 152	Sea, ships and boating 196	Streets, alleys and passageways 212	Visitors, tourism and hospitality 234		
9	10	11			
Inscriptions, plaques and monuments 256	Sports, leisure and relaxation 268	Diplomats, ambassadors and politicians 298	Conclusion 334	References 336	Index 346

SHAPING OUR IDENTITY



Honorable Owen Bonnici
Minister for Justice, Culture
and Local Government

Our country's extensive history, has provided us with a rich culture, which has definitely played an integral part in the shaping of our identity as a nation. During recent years, this Government has invested thoroughly within the culture sector, transforming it into a sustainable and accessible one, providing us with an increase in professionalisation. All of this is giving us the necessary drive to keep on working to strengthen this sector further.

This publication aims to give us the chance to shed more light and discover more on the Central Region's history, culture and environment through a number of chapters, all with their specific topics and niches on this region, branching out to create more awareness and sharing knowledge on the subjects at hand.

This book was possible thanks to LESA, which has passed on funds to the Local Council Association with their main aim being that of providing the opportunity to Regions and Local Councils to utilise them for cultural initiatives such as this one. The funds were acquired through contraventions brought in by the Agency. It is through such initiatives that we are able to give back to our communities, by providing our constant support and to create an even wider outreach, leading to more audience development within the culture sector. It is also an ideal way to showcase and promote our local culture and heritage.

Thanks to numerous activities that happen on a local and regional level, we keep on highlighting the importance of culture in our daily lives. As a nation, we have a deep-

rooted history, which has greatly affected our traditions as a community, which in turn have shaped our present identity, and such a publication helps us to explore our culture and country.

This publication is achieving its criteria to immerse the reader into the region's characteristics present in this book, leading the actual reader to truly appreciate more what these localities located in the Central Region have to offer. Notwithstanding our size, our localities more often than not have distinctive features that differ from one place to the other, making them unique in nature and practice. It is thanks to books of this kind that we can truly appreciate these differences found within them whilst also providing knowledge on those sites and areas which may not have been very well known.

As a Government, we have always encouraged similar initiatives, which serve as a great outlet to provide us with more knowledge on our country's heritage, culture and history, now on a regional level as well.

This project is yet another way of giving back to our community. It also complements really well our policy to acknowledge our regions more, so much so, that for the first time, we saw a direct financial allocation towards Regional Committees within our Budget, and other measures are being taken and prepared to strengthen local and regional councils, in order to increase our efficiency and be closer to our citizens. Our efforts are to ensure that Local and Regional Councils are given distinct functions, which truly make them Local Government authorities whilst also placing the citizen at the centre.



Honorable Silvio Parnis
Parliamentary Secretary for
Local Government and Communities

RENEWING LOCAL GOVERNANCE

One of the hallmarks of a country's respect for democracy is its commitment towards strengthening civic participation in the decision-making processes. This includes measures regarding consultation with the public on proposed legislation, addressing major issues through public policies, ensuring freedom to participate in general and local elections, facilitating access to information, and ensuring that decisions are taken close to those who would be directly affected by them.

The recent developments in Local Government in Malta are a significant proof of the commitment by Central Government to renew local governance in a way that would positively affect the lives of local citizens.

Last year marked the 25th anniversary since the inception of Local Government in our country. We felt that that year offered the appropriate opportunity to undertake an in-depth assessment of the sector and to embark on a reform built on decentralisation and greater autonomy for our Local Government. The process leading to this reform involved an objective assessment of the Local Government set-up, which enabled us to determine which aspects of the system were functioning properly and which failed to meet expectations. Proposals were subsequently drawn up with a view to addressing the shortcomings identified.

The aim of this reform is to strengthen both Local and Regional Councils. One of the reform proposals is for Local Government to embark in the social field, where no citizen would be denied the opportunities or the services offered. In this regard, the

reform is to secure an improvement in the quality of life for everyone, including senior citizens and persons with special needs. There is also a need to deliver more, in terms of both quality and quantity, in relation to cultural events, sports and education, thereby ensuring that no one is excluded. I believe that this is the right time for us to register significant progress in terms of the quality of services rendered. This will ensure that Local Government will continue building on past achievements and, above all, that it will continue making a real difference in the lives of residents.

I can confidently say that the Regions are being given great value in this Local Council Reform. The Regional Committees were set up by SL 363.160, issued on 5th August 2011. These regulations established five Regional Committees (South, South East, Centre, North and Gozo). Each Region is made up of an average of 14 Councils.

It is being proposed, as part of the Local Government Reform, that the Regions would be allocated specific roles and increased responsibilities, as well as the necessary resources to carry out their functions. The proposals being made in relation to Regional Committees include: a change in nomenclature from Regional Committees to Regional Councils, the identification of the Regional Council as another level of Local Government, the transfer of certain responsibilities from Central Government to Regional Councils and the allocation of additional resources to Regional Councils to enable them to function effectively.

PROMOTING A CARING SOCIETY



Robert Cutajar

PN Spokesperson for Local Councils,
Communities and EU Funds

Last year has marked the 25th anniversary from the introduction of Local Councils in Malta – which remains one of the major milestones achieved by the Nationalist Party for the benefit of all the Maltese and Gozitan residents. This does not mean that everything is plain sailing. We, at the Nationalist Party, are updating our vision for the Local Councils and are suggesting ways of how they can develop in the future.

It is undeniably clear that the introduction of the Local Councils was an extremely positive development for our communities. Despite this encouraging experience, the main political parties' philosophy behind the objectives of these Local Councils seems to be still quite different. While the Nationalist Party is constantly proposing ways of how they can be of a better service to the citizens, the Labour Party strives to have the Local Councils at its service – in fact, the Labour Government slashed their executive powers for its sole benefit and all fingers are pointing at more downgrading of the Councils' remit. We at the Nationalist Party introduced and strengthened the Local Councils along the years. It is now high time that these councils are given more resources, authority and support to give you the best service possible. We are thus founding our 80 proposals on five major principles.

We want conscientious councils which are willing to support social action. The remit of Local Councils should not be limited only to road and pavement works. While these functions are important for the quality of life in the respective locality, councils should be pivotal in tackling social problems, which unfortunately are on the increase in our country and therefore in our localities. This offers the opportunity at attempting to solve these problems as early as possible with a better chance of finding plausible solutions.

We want more security and peace of mind in our localities. Local Councils should be empowered to confront any security issues – now more than ever before – knowing that residents' dynamics are constantly changing.

We want councils which cooperate and work collaboratively in regional organizations. The Nationalist Party introduced Local Councils for each and every locality knowing that this is the best way to improve all our different and distinct localities and communities. This does not exclude the most important collaboration between councils in the same region which benefits the councils and the region at the same time. It is therefore vital that Regional Committees are supported and strengthened without weakening the remit and authority of Local Councils.

We want better financed Local Councils. Unfortunately, lately, councils have experienced gross lack of public funding which is unacceptable since this might lead to the eventual disintegration of the Local Councils. We are insisting that public funding should be directed at helping as many residents as possible, and close to their homes.

We want Local Councils with improved, effective and efficient administrations. Local Councils represent an administrative level which brought about a cultural change in what regards better efficiency when carrying out works in the respective localities, in particular when it comes to awarding competitive tenders. Moreover, the vicinity of the local administration to the residents proved to be advantageous to have better administered localities.

The Nationalist Party strongly believes in politics by the people, for the people. The Nationalist Party is also confident that Local Councils can be the agents that promote a caring society.

A WORTHY BOOK ABOUT THE CENTRAL REGION



Michael Fenech Adami
President
Central Region Committee

It is with great pleasure that I welcome and promote this publication which, I feel, is a commendable tribute to the thirteen localities that form the Central Region. This book project has a number of aims and serves many purposes.

The first is that of showcasing the towns and villages of the Region. Undoubtedly and naturally so many features would be missed when one is not aware of them. Passing by a house, a statue, a niche, or along a street, does not mean that the walker-by knows what these are and what their significance is. This book presents varying narratives about the many characteristics, big and small, of the localities that have contributed and continue to give significance and sense to the place. Their story is the story of the people, the community, and the locality.

A second purpose of this book should be that of arousing an awareness of our cultural and natural heritage and through this awareness it is augured that we become more concerned with the harm and destruction that such heritage can suffer. Consequently one hopes that more people will strive to do their best to safeguard and defend the historical, cultural and natural environment that belongs to all of us, and which we all have the right to enjoy. We should realise that the protection of all that is our inheritance should surpass the many other considerations that may give us gratification in the short term but will ultimately destroy our future and that of those who come after us.

The educational aim has also to be a central one as it is through teaching and learning that we can form and bring up better and more civic-minded generations. This book needs to be available in all the public libraries of the Region and beyond, so that students would be able to consult it and obtain the help they require for their research, homework and projects, but also to satisfy their curiosity. Obtaining the information being sought will help our children and adolescents to garner that all-important knowledge which generates the wisdom they require for a brighter future. Teachers and other educators should also find the book handy for the preparation of their programmes and for their continuous professional development.

Another purpose that this book needs to serve is that of supporting any tourism initiatives being undertaken in the localities. To welcome effectively visitors and guests to our towns and villages needs all the supporting structures the locality can accumulate. Satisfied visitors are those who find the information they require to go around the streets and understand what they are experiencing. Tourism today is more complex than ever before as greater numbers of tourists are more discerning and culturally-minded. Books such as this will project the Region in a delightful and enticing way; exactly what visitors seek on their tours and excursions. Tourist guides and tour operators may also find inspiration to create more interesting and focussed visits to the various localities.

Finally I would consider this book to be a worthy gift to guests, family and friends. Its attractive and colourful design catches the eye at first glance. The narrative is varied and interesting, making it a good and stimulating read. Receivers of such a gift will surely appreciate it.

In concluding my message I am duty-bound to express my gratitude to all the mayors, executive secretaries and local councillors whose cooperation helped to make the process of this project a smooth one. My appreciation goes especially to the author of the book, Professor George Cassar, whose expertise in the fields of cultural heritage and history are very much apparent in the concept and the narrative that has created the running story for this book. His chosen text has managed to create the links among the many aspects of this Region. Photographer Joseph Galea has shown his appreciable skill and eye for detail through the many photographs that pack this publication. The publisher Kite Group also merits our recognition for a well-produced and designed book and for the necessary coordination between the various entities that have made this book a reality. Print It Printing Services have given us a final product which is a delight to have and enjoy. Thank you to all.

May you, the reader, enjoy this book and treasure it.

A PICTURE IS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS



Joseph Galea
Photographer

Through the lens, I have come to know several people, buildings and experiences. Photography is a means of communication. The lens does not build a barrier between photographer and subject; it strengthens, rather, their relationship, and that with the eventual viewer.

I was therefore enthused when I was contacted about this publication. Many thoughts passed rapidly through my mind. It was a challenge – I must admit – but an absorbing one. And today I feel hugely satisfied at the completion of this publication whose pictorial character is the result of my lens.

Today I look back on those weeks during which I walked up and down the streets of these 13 localities and I can fully grasp the wonder of this experience. I can appreciate how much I learned about the historical, architectural, cultural and social heritage of this central part of Malta. The many places I had never seen before, or which I had not really fully observed, even though I must have passed them who knows how many times.

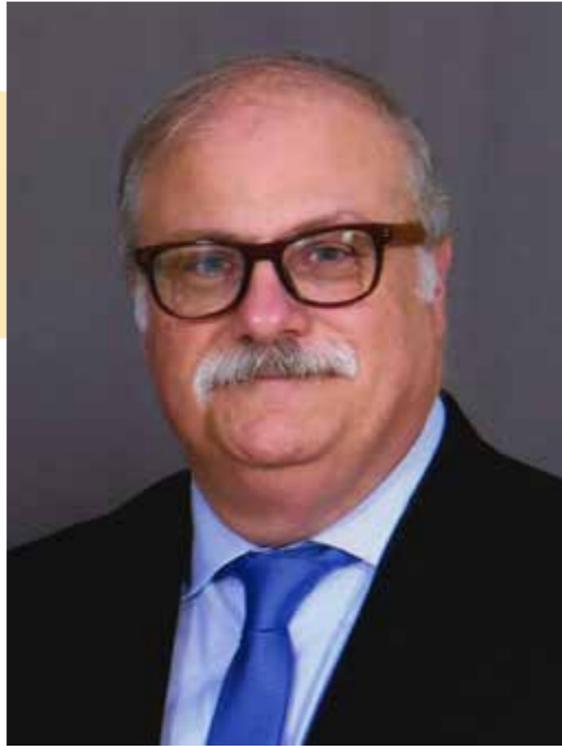
During those heady few weeks, I could see up close this heritage that enriches our islands, and as we explore them further, we become ever prouder of them. I was struck, above all – I must admit – by the humanity of the residents of these localities. I met people who were clearly apprehensive as I took pictures. They looked at me with hardly hidden suspicion as their eyes quickly ran over me, my camera, the subjects, and then me again, before I approached them to put their minds at rest about the photos I was taking. Then I saw them change, a wholesale transformation. They ended up not only passing on to me useful information about the subjects of my pictures, but even more: they gave me their rush of childhood memories about that chapel or this house, street, garden, monument. Some of them suggested more subjects for my lens, which street or square I should eternalise in a picture. The Maltese character at its best.

One particular example I cannot forget is that of a young man whom I caught staring at my camera, moving closer to me until

he could make out its brand name, and he started to comment about it. Asked whether he was interested in photography, he said that he was, but immediately he looked sharply at the lens I had left on the backseat of my car, exclaiming: “But I don’t have a lens like that one, you know!” He asked me why I had stopped to take pictures of that particular building and, as I briefly explained this project, he became ever so keen and loved the way his village is going to be included in this publication. He suggested some three places I could not miss to snap before I left. I offered my goodbyes and started moving towards the subjects he suggested, only to hear him call to show his surprise that I had left the big lens all ‘alone’ on the backseat of my car in full view of passers-by. It was too heavy to carry with all my other equipment, I replied. “So I’ll watch over it until you come back,” he offered. After about 20 minutes I returned to find him still there, guarding my car, and the lens, from evildoers.

Another moment I won’t forget is the sheer silence and devotion of the Sisters of St Clare as I snapped away while they prayed. I was struck by the fact that the clicking sound of the camera – even ‘louder’ in the silence – was no distraction from their focus on prayer; not one of them lifted her eyes to look at me. After about ten minutes, in came the Mother Superior, sweetly enquiring after my project, talking for a few seconds. And I walked surreptitiously away lest I disturb their piety. Still, I managed to get what I wanted from their convent... and today it’s in this book. I can go on relating my experiences of this delightful project. But there’s no need: the pictures in this book are worth thousands of words.

Without further ado, I just want to add my thanks, first of all, to Gordon Pisani of Kite Group who coordinated this publication celebrating the richness of the Central Region of Malta. I would also like to thank Professor George Cassar for his invaluable help in this quest. I learned a lot from him, and I very willingly admit that many pictures in this publication are the fruit of his vast knowledge of our history.



Professor George Cassar
Author

A VARIEGATED AND MULTIFACETED REGION

The Maltese landscape, seascape and streetscape are among the environments most profusely imbued with interesting features. Communities are no less intriguing as human versatility and uniqueness mix with the cultural vitality produced by the collective. These emerge from the values, traditions, mores and practices that permeate village and town life and produce those events and happenings for which the Maltese are renowned and acknowledged.

An eye for detail is central to the identification of what is popularly known, but more so if one is after unravelling that which is relatively or mainly unknown. To discover the cultural heritage and the natural assets of a territory, the observer needs more than a casual glance. The life and ambience of the Maltese islands are too rich and vast to be grasped in one cursive glance. Too much may be missed or overlooked; many things go unappreciated. Not to focus is arguably paying a disservice to all that is Maltese. This book seeks to do some justice to the wealth of natural and cultural heritage and human activity that endow the localities that are comprised within the Central Region (*Reġjun Ċentru*). This territory is formed of the communities represented by thirteen Local Councils – Ħ'Attard, Ħal Balzan, Birkirkara, il-Gżira, l-Iklin, Ħal Lija, l-Imnsida, Tal-Pietà, San Ġiljan, San Gwann, Santa Venera, Tas-Sliema and Ta' Xbiex – within which are also comprised Fleur-de-Lys, il-Kappara, is-Swatar, Gwardamanga, and Paceville.

The wealth of the Region is dosed by the variations within its landscape – rural and urban – and seascape – rocky coast, sandy beach, and promenade. It is enriched by architectural

and artistic manifestations represented by its churches, chapels, fortifications, gardens, palaces and stately homes, but also in no smaller way, by the vernacular and more modest dwellings of its inhabitants. Indeed in these houses one appreciates the resilience of the locals. A closer look picks up the admirable and elaborate workmanship but also the more functional and utilitarian structures. One will not miss admiring the innovative mixed with the traditional, and the old intertwined with the new and contemporary. The observer is also amazed by the multi-level buildings soaring high into the blue Maltese sky while further scrutiny would pick up the more numerous two-storey 'normal' town houses – alas, a dying breed in many localities!

The Region is a mix of large, small and tiny; of towns, villages and hamlets. Demographics vary between the tens of thousands and the much more modest quantities. People in the Region are highly active economically and culturally. Economic activity sprawls beyond the confines of the industrial estates which also include a crafts village, as various small and medium enterprises are found all over the Region. Cultural and religious manifestations take the form of local feasts and rituals, with the *festa* to the patron saint generally grabbing pride of place. Other cultural and artistic manifestations are expressed and enjoyed in theatres, schools, but also wherever else these are fostered.

Renowned also for the charitable works, these are present in their various forms in all the localities. This presence has contributed towards humanising the communities even further, fostering among the locals a candid spirit of generosity and benevolence. Particular philanthropists may stand out, but many other

benefactors – whose names may not have been recorded publicly – have also contributed to give a future to those less fortunate or to foster what they believed to be a good cause.

Educational institutions are manifestly present in the many towns and villages of the Region. They are topped by the University of Malta, but the many other educational levels in the nation's educational structure are all covered. Public and private schools abound and flourish while their services continue to expand in the search for excellence. Ultimately it is on these schools and colleges that the future of the country depends. Human resources are the principal, and nearly the only, asset Malta has and it is primarily up to the educational system to support, prepare and shape the islands' future generations for a stronger and more stable society.

The Region also scores high on the scale of health requirements. With all the main hospitals standing within its territorial limits, it is thus an important guardian of the nation's health and wellbeing. A people whose medical needs are provided and well-cared for, ensure a strong, safe and reliable country. Indeed, it becomes attractive to visitors and comforting and reassuring to the locals.

Undoubtedly tourism and hospitality are a main player in all the localities, though admittedly, and maybe fortunately, to varying degrees. Hotels, restaurants, Airbnb, bars, pubs, harbour cruises, sea sports facilities and so many other leisure and relaxation enterprises, keep the industry going strong. Many are geared to accommodate and serve all the visitors who come from near or far. After all tourism is one of the economic pillars of the country, and it requires hosts to possess a particular proactive energy, an entrepreneurial acumen, and the conviction that the industry can be sustained and improved.

Though it is a Region with a relatively affluent population when compared to the national average, this does not exonerate its inhabitants from other realities. Its high population density is three times that of the national density. It also tends to score high as an ageing population while natural replacement is precarious

due to the low fertility rate when compared to Malta's average. The Region's property market also registers relatively high prices, not easily affordable and many times beyond the means of many. It is indeed a Region of varying realities.

Diplomatic missions are concentrated in the Central Region. Ambassadors, *chefs de mission*, diplomatic staff and other representative of foreign states seem to have found a natural home, demonstrated by the embassies and residences that accommodate these officials for the duration of their term. Without doubt this diplomatic presence enhances significantly the status of the localities. It can be further argued that the various towns and villages have lent themselves well to this fundamental mission of international cooperation and global outreach.

On the political side the Region has also given the country a number of prime ministers and numerous other politicians. The political class is at times depreciated in the eyes of many among the public but others argue that if it were not for this category of public functionaries the State could not operate properly as it would lack the much needed laws and regulations.

The many facets of the Central Region are visible and tangible wherever one goes. They are manifested in the outstanding and modest features, and in the sounds and smells. They are seen on the faces and in the expressions of its inhabitants. The human, cultural and natural environments have a multitude of stories to recount. This book hopes to bring forth some of these human experiences while the narrative and the pictures convey to the reader at least a whiff of the rich and enticing atmosphere that permeates the Central Region. This is a book about the people whose efforts have been encapsulated in the towns and villages that they have created, fostered and inhabited, and which they continue to develop, alter and transform in a process of continuity and change



PERSPECTIVES OF A REGION

CULTURE, HERITAGE AND ARCHITECTURE

The spirit of a people is outwardly expressed by means of its culture – unique to it yet in many ways akin to that of others. The locals' intangible heritage is demonstrated through the manifestations of that community's values and beliefs. Architecture is one highly charged expression of culture which, with time, becomes a tangible heritage element of a people. The streets, spaces and districts in each of the 13 localities of the Central Region have much to show for its cultural realities – be these similar or distinct from those of the other 12. In culture one finds identity, and in identity one finds oneself.



Ħ'ATTARD PARISH CHURCH OF THE ASSUMPTION

Ħ'Attard, is a growing town whose parish church is an architectonic gem. This stands in the town core and is the work of Tommaso Dingli (1591-1666). This fine Renaissance church was built between 1613 and 1624. Later additions are the belfry completed in 1718-19, which houses a clock made by the master clockmaker Michelangelo Sapiano (1826-1912) in 1872, one sacristy of 1740 and a second completed between

1856 and 1857. Dedicated to the Assumption of Mary into Heaven, it presents a façade with Corinthian pilasters, topped by a triangular pediment. Decoration abounds around the portal and the capitals of the main doorway, possibly influenced by the Spanish silversmith or Plateresque style. Three niches on each side, holding statues by Francesco Saverio Sciortino (1875-1958) from 1945, flank the main entrance.



Ħ'ATTARD CHAPEL OF ST PAUL

In an area of Ħ'Attard known as *Taht ir-Raħal* (below the village) lies the church of St Paul Shipwrecked, completed in 1729. On the same site there previously stood a chapel dedicated to the Assumption of Mary which had been completed in 1692. The design of the present chapel follows the Doric order, while halfway up its façade there is the coat-of-arms of Bishop Alpheran de Bussan. The titular painting inside depicts St Paul accompanied by St Publius and St Francis of Paola, the work of Enrico Regnaud (1692-1764).



ĦAL BALZAN OLD CHURCH OF THE ANNUNCIATION

Standing in the old part of Ħal Balzan in an area known as *it-Tliet Knejjes* (the three churches), one finds the first parish church of the village when this was erected as a parish in 1655. The neighbouring churches are that of St Roque and the former St Leonard – which has now been turned into a private residence. The church of the Annunciation was already standing in 1575. Interestingly the church had two altars dedicated to the Annunciation – the main one and another. The parishioners thus asked their bishop in 1601 to be allowed to rededicate the second altar to St Paul the Hermit and this request was granted. By 1695 the new parish church replaced it and took over all its functions. While the church is now used for various functions, on the 25th of March, being the liturgical feast of the Annunciation, Mass is said in celebration of the patron saint of the *Balzanin* (the inhabitants of Ħal Balzan).



HAL BALZAN PARISH CHURCH OF THE ANNUNCIATION

The village of Hal Balzan, together with H'Attard and Hal Lija, form the 'Three Villages'. The parish church of Hal Balzan stands in the village core, a structure from the mid-seventeenth century. This parish of Hal Balzan was erected in 1655, carved from the parochial territory of Birkirkara and its parish church was to be the 16th century church dedicated to the Annunciation of Our Lady. Soon it was being felt that the church was becoming too small for the increasing population and a new church was erected, with the first stone laid in 1669. It was blessed in 1695. Though the architect is still unknown,

his design incorporated a Tuscan style exterior, with a Doric interior, while the dome is influenced by the Baroque which was in its initial stages in Malta at the time. The main entrance facing west is topped by a niche with a stone statue of Our Lady Immaculate and above it a rose window pierces the façade. The belfry was erected in 1708 while the dome was finished a year before. This parish church is thus interesting as it follows some different lines from the Baroque churches that dot the Maltese urban landscape.



HAL BALZAN CHURCH OF THE ASSUMPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

The third on the same site, similar to those before it this church is under the patronage of the Assumption of Our Lady into Heaven. The first was completed in 1574 while the second in 1675. The present church was erected in 1846 through the endeavours of Rev. Salv Sammut Pullicino who wished to build a church in line with the style that was becoming popular at the time. The façade follows the Ionic order while the interior adopts the style of the Composite order. During World War II the church became the temporary home of a number of refugees from the Cottonera area who sought shelter in Hal Balzan. It later became a teaching space for law students from the University of Malta. After the war it was transformed into a store for the statues used for the decoration of the streets during the village feast and then, after restoration, in more recent times it became an adoration chapel. In front of this church stands a statue of a crowned Madonna which may have been made in the early decades of the 19th century.

BIRKIRKARA CHURCH OF ST PAUL

The first church that stood on the site of the present church of St Paul is likely to go back to around 1538 and its design was simple and medieval, with a slanting roof. The present church, known popularly as *San Pawl tal-Wied* (St Paul's of the valley – it is in Valley Road) was built in 1852-1854 on plans drawn by Giuseppe Bonavia (1821-1885), an architect with the Royal Engineers. The clock installed in the church was made by the renowned Michelangelo Sapiano in 1891. It has two quadrants – one in the façade and the other in the belfry. The titular painting executed by artist Giuseppe Calleja (1828-1915), is a reproduction of the original found in the Tre Fontane church in Rome. The columns included in the elevation of the altar were taken from the chapel of the Holy Crucifix of St Mary's church – the old parish church of Birkirkara which was at that time in a derelict state – while the ceiling was painted by Prof. Giuseppe Briffa (1901-1988). The Archdiocese of Malta has granted permission for the celebration of the liturgy according to the Extraordinary Form of the Roman rite in this church. The Traditional Latin Mass, also called the Tridentine Mass, follows the Missal that originated with the reform resulting from the Council of Trent in the 16th century.



BIRKIRKARA CHURCH OF OUR LADY OF VICTORIES

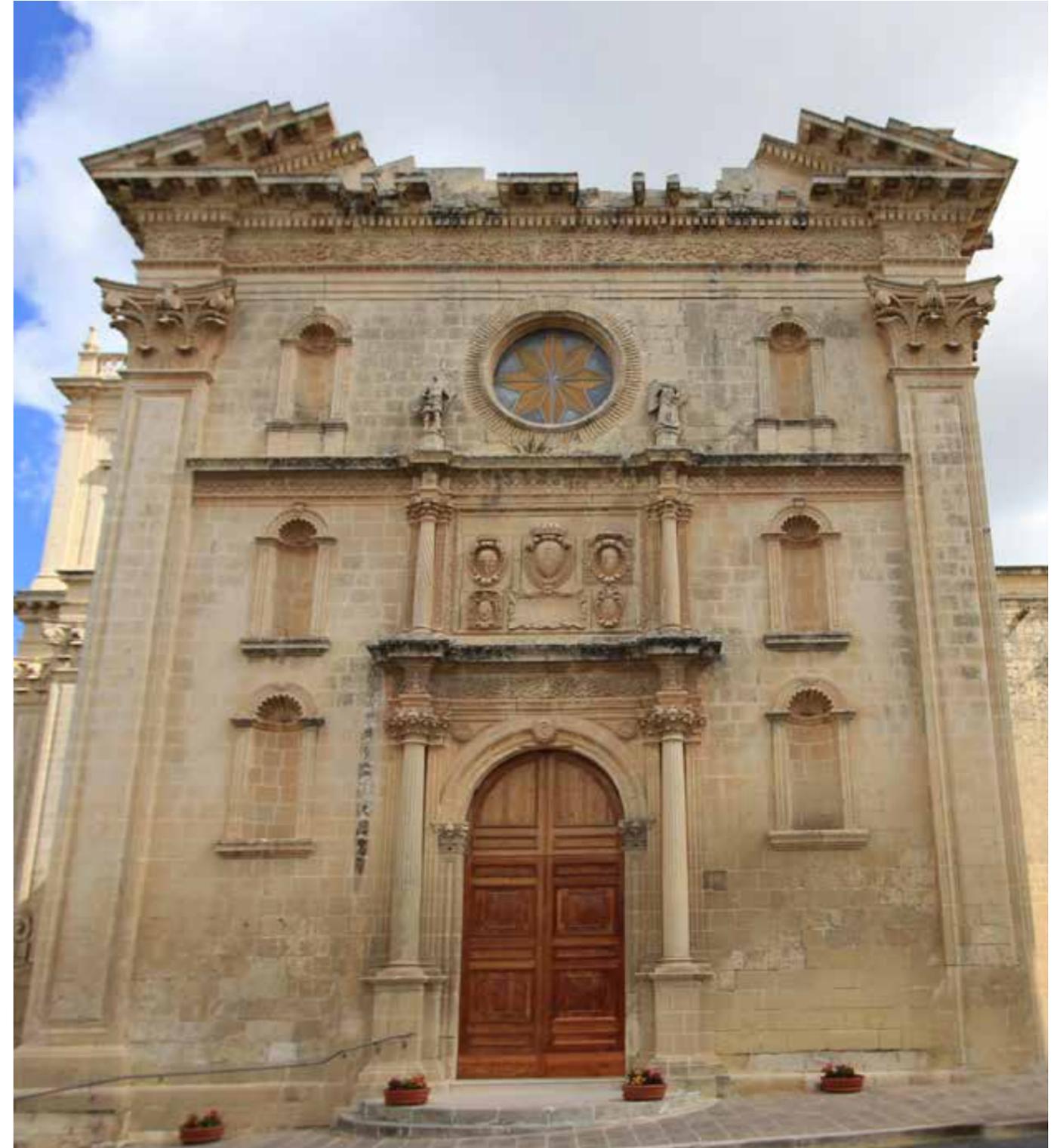
Immersed within the maze of narrow streets in the old part of Birkirkara, in the area known as *Has-Sajjed*, stands the small church dedicated to Our Lady of Victories. It is known that it was already standing in 1575. A curious period in its life goes back to the mid-17th century when the parish church of St Mary was being built. A quarry needed to be opened in the area of this church. It was therefore decreed in 1655 that this church would be dismantled up to its foundations so as to facilitate the transporting of the stones cut from this quarry. With the closure of the quarry the church was rebuilt in the period after the plague of 1676. The church continued to serve the faithful and on 23 February 1918 a decree of Pope Benedict XV granted all those who prayed in it an indulgence of 300 days as indicated by a plaque affixed to the church. The present church was built between 1728 and 1736 in the moderate Baroque style. The internal pilasters follow the Tuscan order and the dome has floral motifs and emblems of the Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The façade reflects the Spanish influence, which is quite rare in Malta.



BIRKIRKARA PARISH CHURCH OF ST MARY

Birkirkara has three parish churches each embracing a distinctive architectural style.

The oldest still standing of the three is the parish church dedicated to the Assumption of Mary into Heaven. Known to many as *il-Knisja l-Qadima* (the Old Church) due to its age, this beautiful church, or what remains of it, may be a combined architectural exercise of Vittorio Cassar (1550-c.1609) and Tommaso Dingli. It is at once apparent to the visitor that this church stands in an area far away from the present town core, which may come across as a curious observation. Yet, the positioning becomes less perplexing considering that this church, which replaced an older one that had been dedicated to the Assumption and to St Helen, is sited on high ground so that it could, during medieval times, defend itself better from corsair incursions. Architecturally, this 17th century church reflects Renaissance lines, which may have been inserted by Vittorio Cassar, though in the absence of clear evidence of this architect's involvement, this remains a moot point. The hand of Tommaso Dingli (1591-1666) is not in dispute, however. Suffice it to point at the church façade which mirrors Dingli's design of other façades, such as that of the parish church of H'Attard. The delicate decoration on the outside, as also on the inside of the church, boost the appreciation level of this interesting religious building where art and architecture mingle in a harmonious and elating cocktail experience. The Corinthian pilasters frame the arched main entrance which is flanked by three niches on each side. The door is crowned by an assembly of five escutcheons reminding the visitor about the time it was constructed. These include the coat-of-arms of King Philip II of Spain who owned Malta; Grand Master Alof de Wignacourt during whose administration the church was built; Bishop Baldassare Cagliares who was the Bishop of Malta at the time it was the parish church of Birkirkara; and Don Filippo Borg, the parish priest, the church's best benefactor and the one who managed to obtain permission from the Pope for it to be made the first collegiate church of Malta. After being relieved of its duties as a parish church in the 18th century, this church was given back its parochial status in 2005, making it the oldest and at the same time the most recent parish church in the locality of Birkirkara.



BIRKIRKARA COLLEGIATE PARISH CHURCH OF ST HELENA

While St Mary was still Birkirkara's parish church, the locals started to build a new church quite some distance away and within the village core. The result was an 18th century structure with a façade evoking that of the Mdina Cathedral as designed by Lorenzo Gafà. The new parish church of St Helena follows the Baroque school as interpreted by architect Salvu Borg (1662-1733) and executed by master mason Domenico Cachia. The inspiration from I-Mdina can be explained through the close connection of Salvu Borg with Gafà as the former was his understudy while the parish church dedicated to St Paul was being constructed in ir-Rabat.

When St Helena's (*Santa Liëna*) was ready (built between 1727 and 1745) it took over the duties of parish church from St Mary's which was thus reduced to obscurity and ruin. Travails

experienced by this church included damages caused by an earthquake that shook Malta in 1856 and whose epicentre was in Crete. The 7.7 magnitude tremor caused serious structural damage to many houses both in Malta and in Gozo, as well as inflicting damage to domes and walls of a number of churches.

The impressive building needed a spacious area to include a parvis, steps and a main square. This possibility was provided by one of Malta's heroes who distinguished himself during the 1798-1800 uprising against the French forces. It was Vincenzo Borg, known to one and all as 'Brared', who selflessly donated the large garden of his town house for this purpose. St Helena's was elevated to the status of Minor Basilica in 1950.



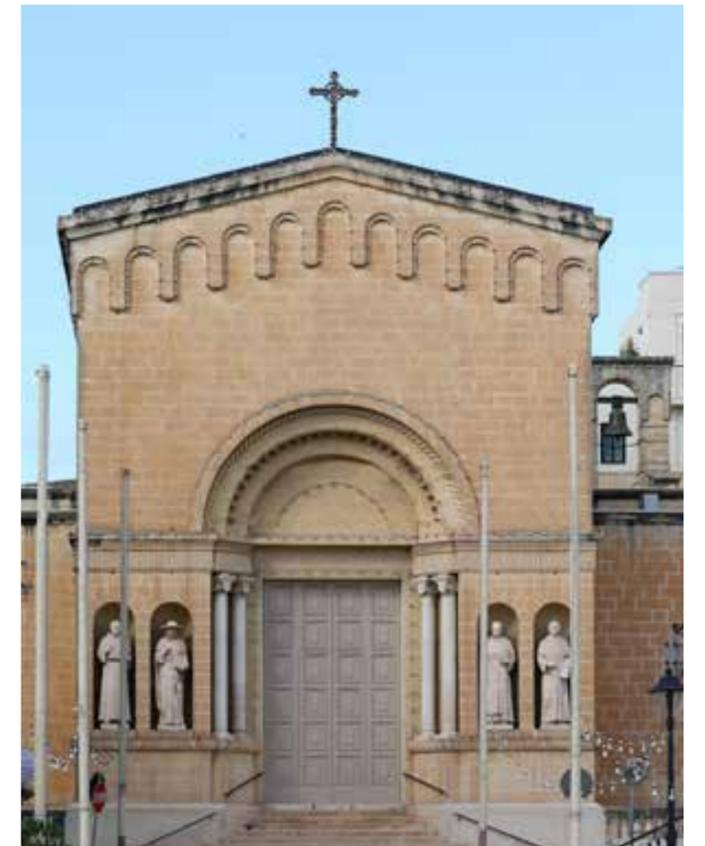
BIRKIRKARA CHURCH OF ST ALPHONSE LIGUORI

The church dedicated to St Alphonse Maria Liguori belongs to the Discalced Carmelites. Together with the nearby convent, both sponsored by Alphonse Maria Micallef, these were designed by architect Emanuele Luigi Galizia (1830-1906) and built in the years 1893-95. The church was used for the first time in its public role in November of 1896. An adjacent grotto with the statues of Our Lady of Lourdes and St Bernadette was constructed with funds provided by the Marquise Anna Bugeja. The church was enlarged in 1904 and again in 1909. Due to a lightning strike during a storm in 1959 which caused substantial damage to the belfry and the roof, it was decided to dismantle the former and to build a new church which is that dedicated to St Thérèse of Lisieux. St Alphonse Liguori has in recent years been converted into a meeting space and renamed Our Lady of Mount Carmel Hall.



BIRKIRKARA CHURCH OF ST FRANCIS OF ASSISI

With the declaration of war in June of 1940 the Conventual Franciscans left Valletta and went to Birkirkara where they settled in Villa Maria, a house donated to them by Joseph Pace. As their convent in Valletta soon suffered damages due to the continuous air attacks, they remained refugees in Birkirkara for three and a half years where they carried out some pastoral work and became acquainted with the people of the locality. As the war subsided the friars returned to Valletta in 1944, however, those they left behind wished them to remain, which prompted the provincial at the time to start a small community in Birkirkara consisting of four friars. They converted a garage into a provisional chapel and started to build a new convent. Thus they left Villa Maria in 1945 and moved in their new small convent. Two years later it was decided to buy a plot of land close to the garage/chapel and erect a convent and a church. The plans were drawn by architect Roger de Giorgio (1922-2016) who adopted the Romanesque style and the first stone was laid in 1953. The structure was completed in three years and the church accompanying the convent was dedicated to St Francis of Assisi.



BIRKIRKARA PARISH CHURCH OF ST JOSEPH THE WORKER

This parish church in Birkirkara is quite recent. Dedicated to St Joseph the Worker, it is architecturally much plainer with a hint of Romanesque and reflects more modern trends. It is the work of architects Arthur Stuart Mortimer (1907-1986) and Roger de Giorgio (1922-2016) with the first stone being laid in September 1965. The building was completed in 1967. It has a single altar and is meant for the congregation to gather around it. It was elevated to the status of parish church in 1973.



BIRKIRKARA SANCTUARY OF ST THÉRÈSE

In Maltese towns and villages the church that serves as a parish, or has a main role, is normally an imposing structure signifying its importance for the community it serves. Birkirkara has a church which, while not carrying the onus of a parish, is at the same time highly esteemed and renowned. This is the Sanctuary dedicated to St Thérèse of the Child Jesus or St Thérèse of Lisieux. The locals know it as *Is-Santwarju ta' Santa Tereza tal-Bambin Ġesù*, and its structure is quite unusual for Malta. The Discalced Carmelites (O.C.D.) take care of this church which is

substantially large, round in shape, and lacks the paraphernalia which is typical of the majority of Maltese churches. Built between 1965 and 1982, it exemplifies the “uncompromising Modernist style”, displaying a rotunda and a bell tower in the form of a crown and sceptre. The visitor will be astonished by the view of a reinforced-concrete folded-plate roof topping the rotunda, while a slender tower pierces the sky and dominates over the surrounding buildings. Designed by the Italian Giorgio Pacini, it is architecturally classified as a Brutalist building due to the exposed concrete finish.



BIRKIRKARA TAL-WEJTER TOWER

Sandwiched between modern buildings stands a Hospitaller watchtower, built around the late 17th or early 18th century on the orders of Grand Master Perellos. It was designed with box machicolations on each of the four sides so that liquids or other objects could be dropped on an attacking enemy when this was close to its walls, without exposing its defenders to any harm. Known in Maltese as *torri tal-miżjun* (liberally translated: a boiling water tower), it is today known as Tal-Wejter Tower. The geographic position of this tower indicates that it was erected to monitor the Birkirkara environs and was thus an inland watchtower. Designed as a square structure, it was originally a two-storey building, with one room on each floor, and topped by a high parapet roof. The tower's entrance is an arched doorway, rather medieval in shape. In 1968 an illegal attempt was made to demolish it but this was soon halted. That part which had already been dismantled was later rebuilt. The top space was at this time roofed to create a third chamber. Tal-Wejter Tower is private property.



BIRKIRKARA / FLEUR-DE-LYS PARISH CHURCH OF OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL

The area known as Fleur-de-Lys lies on the periphery between Birkirkara and Santa Venera and the community that developed there soon began to grow. The Carmelite Order which had taken responsibility of the parish of Santa Venera in 1918, soon saw the need to build a church in the neighbouring Fleur-de-Lys for the convenience of the residents there. A piece of land was identified and bought for the new church whose design was entrusted to architect Gużè Damato (1886-1963). As both side walls were ready due to the fact that the plot lay between residential buildings, the construction time was shortened. With the first stone of the church having been laid in January 1945, master mason Gużè Falzon and his son Toninu completed the work by December 1946. It was dedicated to Our Lady of Mount Carmel and while the Fleur-de-Lys Carmelite community became autonomous from that of Santa Venera in 1949, the area was elevated to the status of parish in 1975. The simple façade, fronted with a flight of steps, follows the Classical style. It incorporates four pilasters in the Ionic order, three arched entrances including a more prominent main doorway, and a pediment.



BIRKIRKARA / FLEUR-DE-LYS WIGNACOURT AQUEDUCT

A striking heritage feature, with its most significant structure standing at the entrance to Fleur-de-Lys, is the Wignacourt Aqueduct whose importance lies in its functionality – that of bringing water to Valletta, the capital city of Malta. It was at once recognised that a city without a regular supply of water cannot survive. The Order sought to address this necessity by bringing potable water to Valletta from ir-Rabat plateau where the perched aquifer could ensure an abundant supply of precious water. Although in 1596 the Council of the Order had decreed that such a project was needed, at that time funds were not readily available. However, with the accession of Grand Master Alof de Wignacourt the situation was about to change. The leader of the Order took it upon himself to solve the impasse by offering personal funds and thus the construction of almost 10 miles of aqueduct could begin in 1610. The work was concluded in 1615 and its presence gave the area its name. This is so as the coat-of-arms of Wignacourt contains three Fleur-de-Lys. Halfway along the aqueduct a triumphal archway was constructed at the point where the system running along Mdina Road crosses to the other side and descends along St Joseph High Road towards Valletta. The aqueduct project was entrusted to the hydraulic engineer and architect Bontadino de Bontadini (d. 1620) from Bologna. The original archway was designed by Bontadini with two smaller arches flanking a wider arch in the middle, all of the same height. Three Fleur-de-Lys crowned the central section of the structure.

This archway was destroyed in 1943 when it was pulled down after it was accidentally hit by an RAF crane. A replica of the Wignacourt Arch was built in 2015. It is the Wignacourt Arch known also as Fleur-de-Lys Gate.

See overleaf >

Wignacourt Arch known as
Fleur-de-Lys Gate



Wignacourt Aqueduct



BIRKIRKARA - L-IMSIDA / IS-SWATAR PARISH CHURCH OF ST GEORGE PRECA

When, in the early 1970s, building development began in the areas known as *Tas-Swatar* and *Tal-Qattus*, the pastoral needs of those who settled there had to be addressed. With time it became evident that a proper chapel and pastoral centre needed to be built. Work started in 1998 and in 2002 the centre's basement began to be used for the celebration of Mass. When the whole building was ready in 2004, the church was moved to the upper hall. Soon after is-Swatar became an Autonomous Pastoral Zone, as declared in 2006, while it was elevated to the status of parish in 2008. The parish church was dedicated to St George Preca, the first Maltese saint. It differs quite significantly from the traditional church architecture of Malta.



SANTA VENERA OLD PARISH CHURCH OF ST VENERA

Like some other localities, the growing town of Santa Venera still has its old and new parish churches. In the case of the old church of Santa Venera, the present building dates back to the 17th century when the church was rebuilt instead of an older one between 1658 and 1688. This building however continued to be altered and redesigned with the present structure dating to the 19th century. The church passed to the Carmelite Order in 1912 and when Santa Venera was made a parish in 1918, it became the first parish church of the village and continued to serve the parishioners till a new parish church was built on St Joseph High Road.



SANTA VENERA PARISH CHURCH OF ST VENERA

The new parish church was initially designed by architect Gužè Damato (1886-1963) with work starting in 1956 and continuing until 1967, then slowing down for some time. Yet its crypt, which was already available, began to be utilised as a temporary church as of March 1969. While the building was still under construction its original architect passed away and other architects took over the supervision of the project. Due to liturgical changes introduced by Vatican Council II, it became necessary to redesign the church, an exercise which was undertaken by Gužèppi Galea of ir-Rabat. In the meantime the parish church was transferred from the old church to the new one in December 1988 on the agreement that this would take over all the duties and rights of the parish church when works were finalised.

The foundation stone was laid in October 1990 and the main building was finished in 2005. The church, dedicated to St Venera, follows the Romanesque Revival lines and is still not completely ready as the belfries have still to be constructed.





SAN ĠWANN PARISH CHURCH OF OUR LADY OF LOURDES

With the population of San Ġwann, originally known as *Msierah*, gradually increasing in the post-World War II years, the Franciscan Capuchins who were entrusted with the locality, moved there in 1947. They began to build a friary in 1949 and by 1950 created a temporary chapel in one of the rooms of the new building. The new church was built between 1953 and 1959, and dedicated to the Virgin Mary of Lourdes. This became the parish church of San Ġwann when the locality was erected as a parish in 1965. The church is designed on the lines of the Papal Basilica of St Paul Outside the Walls by architect Joseph R. Colombo and built by master mason Ġużè Micallef.



SAN ĠWANN CHAPEL OF ST MARGARET

Standing today in the middle of a built up area, this chapel was quite solitary in the past. Originally built in the early 16th century, it was known at the time as *Tal-Arar* (*Tal-Gharar* – flood or *Gharġhar* – Sandarac tree). The history of this chapel is marked with years of abandonment alternating with others when it was better kept and functional. Moreover, it was nearly completely destroyed during World War II when it was directly hit in aerial attacks. With the insistence and enthusiasm of Father Donat Spiteri, in 1990 the chapel was restored following as much as possible the 17th century plans and inaugurated on 21 September of the same year, which marked the 25th anniversary of the erection of San Ġwann as a parish. In front of this chapel, variously known as *Tal-Hereb*, *Tal-Imsierah*, *Tal-Arar* and *Tal-Bakkar*, a monument was erected in 2003. Called *Kolonna Eterna* (Eternal Column), it is the work of artist Paul Vella Cretien. Also known as the Millennium Monument, it was commissioned by San Ġwann Local Council and unveiled by then Prime Minister Eddie Fenech Adami.



SAN ĠWANN CHAPEL OF ST PHILIP AND ST JAMES

On the outskirts of San Ġwann stands a chapel known as *Tal-Prepostu* (of the Provost) due to its direct connection with the Provost Rev. Giuseppe Gaspare Vassallo of the Collegiate Church of St Helena of Birkirkara. He built this chapel in 1732-33 to address the spiritual needs of the parishioners who lived in this remote area of the parish of Birkirkara, known as *Tax-Xwieki* (of the thorns) and *Tal-Ghorfa tal-Balal* (the storage room for the bales). Provost Vassallo wished his chapel to be dedicated to St Philip, St James and to the Souls of Purgatory who were most in need. The chapel has a pleasant façade and in each of the two corners it ends in a pilaster which is topped by a pyramidal pointed ball. A pediment on the façade consists of a belfry which once held a bell, at the top of which there is a stone cross. The inside of the chapel consists of a vaulted roof and the floor is paved with limestone flagging stones. Over the stone altar there is a corniced frame where once stood the original titular painting. The chapel has been restored in recent years and is in good condition.



SAN ĠWANN CART RUTS

Right in the midst of the built-up area there is an archaeological site which stands out for its interesting features. Delineated and protected by a wire fence, a collection of cart ruts meets the observer's eye and intrigues the visitor. Known also as *Tal-Mensija* Cart Ruts, these consist of one long and quite distinct curving cart rut and a number of smaller exemplars. These form a junction which is difficult to interpret as it seems that

only two pairs of ruts lead into the junction while just one pair exit from the other side! Another unexplained feature consists of two parallel lines that cut across the cart ruts, with further similar lines appearing in other areas of the site. While cart ruts have always presented a dilemma for the archaeologist to interpret, those at San Ġwann seem to complicate this enigma even further.





HAL LIJA PARISH CHURCH OF THE TRANSFIGURATION

Hal Lija is one of the quaint 'triplets' forming the Three Villages. It became a parish in 1594 while the present parish church was initiated in 1694. Designed by Giovanni Barbara (1642- 1728), with an interior following the Tuscan order and a hint of the Doric order, it was sufficiently finished by 1702; however works continued and it was completed in the year 1782. Of interest is the fact that both architect Barbara and Lorenzo Gafà were living in Hal Lija when the project for a new church was being contemplated. Asked to submit a design for this church, they both complied and in 1694 the choice fell

on Barbara's designs. The chosen architect did not ask for any remuneration but showed his wish to be interred under the high altar when he died. Quentin Hughes describes the composition of Barbara's church as sober and of simple design. He saw the dome as unassuming as it rises behind the cornice on a high drum. The church has a tall character, put more in evidence by the high towers that flank the façade. The central feature is a classical triangular pediment that rises above an entablature that goes round the side elevation. The church is dedicated to the Transfiguration of Jesus.



HAL LIJA OLD CHURCH OF THE TRANSFIGURATION

The old parish church of Hal Lija still stands today and is well conserved. Dedicated to Our Saviour, it is popularly known as *Is-Salvatur il-Qadim* (the old Our Saviour [church]) and held a fresco depicting the Transfiguration of Jesus on Mount Tabor on the main altar. While it was serving as the first parish church, transepts were added to the existing aisle, the work of the renowned Maltese architect Girolamo Cassar (c.1520-1592), which thus changed its square shape into that of a tau. Particular to this church is the first attempt at adding a dome to the roof of a Maltese church. This consisted of a small dome formed of an unassuming drum with windows and a convex top. It is

believed that the prolific Tommaso Dingli also had a share in this building as the intricate vine carvings on two columns standing one on each side of the main altar are evidently from his hand, showing his ability as *scalpellino* (stone carver) and reflecting his meticulous stone sculpting at the church of H'Attard. The old Our Saviour church fell into disuse after 1700 when the new parish church took over all its duties. It is today an exhibition space.





IL-GŻIRA PARISH CHURCH OF OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL

The present parish church of il-Gżira replaced a chapel that had been built in the first decade of the 20th century. This small chapel which had been dedicated to Our Lady of Mercy, but popularly known as Our Lady of the Stone (*il-Madonna tal-Ġebbla*), acted as vice-parish from 1913 when it was rededicated to Our Lady of Mount Carmel. After il-Gżira was erected as

a parish in 1921 a new church was soon built, following the Doric style and included two belfries. It was designed by master mason Antonio Sammut and the building was finished in 1935. Later on statues were added in the niches on the façade, the work of sculpture Marco Montebello (1915-1988).



IL-GŻIRA FORT MANOEL

The *Isolotto* became known as Manoel Island when Grand Master António Manoel de Vilhena decided to construct a fort there and pay for it himself. This was called Fort Manoel. Originally proposed and designed by the military engineer René Jacob de Tigné (1716-1801), the Order finally decided to start this fort project in 1723. Tigné was asked to modify his plans and the Order's resident engineer, and a friend and colleague, Charles François de Mondion (1681-1733), was entrusted with supervising the works. Shaped like a star, this fort incorporated a quadrangle, parade ground and arcade. It also had a chapel dedicated to St Anthony of Padua which suffered a direct hit during an air attack in March 1942. The main entrance of Fort Manoel, which faces Valletta, is a typical Baroque gateway. There was originally a bronze statue of Grand Master Vilhena that stood in the middle of the *piazza*, which was however removed during the 19th century to be placed first in Valletta and later on in Floriana. Restoration and development aim at bringing this fort into 21st century use.

See overleaf >

IL-GŻIRA CHURCH OF CHRIST THE REDEEMER

A church with an intriguing past is that dedicated to Christ the Redeemer. Its construction was funded by Albert Gixti and his wife Giorgina, while the plans were drawn by architect Arthur F. Galea. During the course of work Albert Gixti's son graduated as architect and thus the architectural supervision was taken over by him till the chapel was completed. There however cropped up a problem as no one had asked the Curia to approve the plans and to give permission for its construction. In such circumstances the Archbishop refused to bless the church and at that moment its future looked quite bleak. The building was thus leased to the Government in 1939 for use as a storehouse in the months prior to World War II. In the post-war period Albert Gixti and Archbishop Mgr Gonzi arrived at some agreement that led to the blessing of the chapel, which in 1951 was transferred to the Curia and put in the hands of the Augustinian Sisters. The Congregation had at that time been staying in a house next door to the chapel, which had also been built by Gixti.



Fort Manoel



 **L-IMSIDA
CHURCH OF THE
IMMACULATE
CONCEPTION**

At the innermost end of Marsamxett Harbour lies the coastal town of l-Imsida. When it was erected as a parish in 1867, carved out of Birkirkara, its first parish church was that dedicated to the Immaculate Conception which continued to serve as such until a new church was built a few meters away. The old church is partly troglodytic and it was dedicated to Our Lady of Perpetual Help in the 16th century. Its dedication was changed to that of the Immaculate Conception and it was also enlarged and a parvis added during the 17th century. The church still stands today and is in good condition.



**L-IMSIDA
PARISH CHURCH OF
ST JOSEPH**

Due to demographic growth a new church was built towards the end of the 19th century which was completed in 1889 and dedicated to St Joseph. Designed by architect Andrea Grima (1853-1918), it seems to follow the concept used by Lorenzo Gafà for the Baroque parish church dedicated to St Catherine in the town of iż-Żejtun. The façade incorporates two belfries and a series of bays, while three niches containing statues decorate the middle level. The interior follows a conventional pattern with three aisles and the Latin cross format. >



L-IMSIDA CHAPEL OF ST THOMAS MORE

Forming part of the University of Malta's main campus, an interesting chapel blends well with its surroundings. The origins of this chapel, dedicated to St Thomas More, go back to 1977 when its first stone was laid and blessed in January of that year by Archbishop Mgr Michael Gonzi. The same Archbishop had supplied funds for this project which also benefited from a donation from Pope St Paul VI. The patron saint was chosen as he had been a married man and actively engaged in public life by being a lawyer, a judge, and Lord Chancellor under King Henry VIII. For his religious principles, St Thomas More

sacrificed his life, suffering death by beheading. The organic modern design of the chapel, done by architect Carmel Gatt (1951-2016), followed the terraced field landscape existing at the time where the structure was to be sited and includes a dome in the shape of a rural *girma* (a dry stone field shelter). The interior consists of a semi-circular auditorium-style setup. Architect William Micallef supervised the building following Gatt's design, and the chapel started being used as from 1978 while it was still not fully finished.



L-IKLIN PARISH CHURCH OF THE SACRED FAMILY

L-Iklin is a recently formed community with a church which is small and modern but without any particular features. The building, including a pastoral centre, had originally been planned to serve as the parish hall on which a church would

then be constructed, but as no funds were available this project had to be shelved. Formerly part of the parish of Hal Lija, an Autonomous Pastoral Zone was erected in 2003 dedicated to the Sacred Family, which was later declared a parish in 2005.



L-IKLIN CHAPEL OF ST MICHAEL ARCHANGEL

Adjacent to the St Michael's Fireworks Factory there is a chapel dedicated to St Michael Archangel which also gives its name to the pyrotechnic complex. The original chapel goes back at least to the 16th century but the one standing today was built in 1615. It is a simple structure with a single door in the façade and a round window above it to allow light into the chapel. Inside it has an arched ceiling and a stone bench that follows the wall on the lower part of the chapel. When the pyrotechnic factory was built at the beginning of the 20th century, the chapel began to be cared for by the fireworks enthusiasts. The feast of St Michael is annually celebrated on the Sunday before the 29th of September with Mass and a varied programme including some fireworks, and it is only on this day that this chapel is opened.



TAL-PIETÀ / GWARDAMANĠA PARISH CHURCH OF OUR LADY OF FATIMA

The locality of Tal-Pietà includes within it the newer urban area of Gwardamangà. What later became the parish church stands on Gwardamangà Hill and was built between 1952 and 1955 as the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Fatima. Taken care of by the Dominican Order, it became the parish church of Tal-Pietà / Gwardamangà in 1968. The church is the work of architects Arthur Stuart Mortimer (1907-1986) and Roger de Giorgio (1922-2016) who adopted a simple modern design for this sanctuary.



TAL-PIETÀ CHURCH OF OUR LADY OF SORROWS

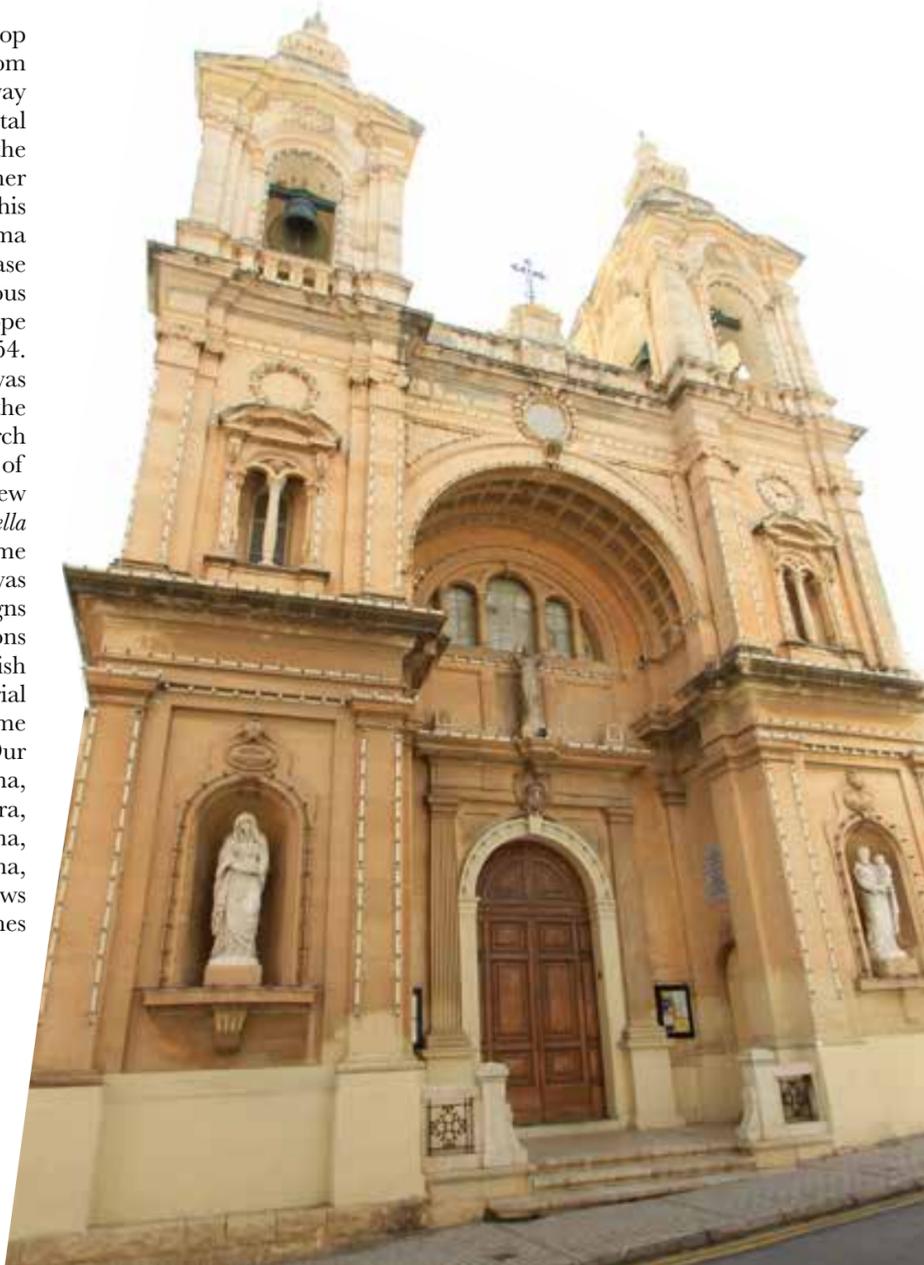
In the Tal-Pietà area stands the church dedicated to Our Lady of Sorrows which, when originally built in 1592, fell within the limits of Floriana. It was erected on the site of a plague cemetery and its first dedication was to St Roque, the patron saint of the plague victims. When the chapel was given to the Augustinians in 1617 who stayed here for some time, they added a small religious house next to it, while the church was rededicated to Our Lady of Sorrows (in Maltese also known as *Tal-Pietà*, meaning mercy), which thus gave the locality its present name. The Baroque façade includes the coat-of-arms of Bishop Fra Paolo Alpheran de Bussan. The church is also connected with St George Preca, who used to teach doctrine to members of the Christian Society (M.U.S.E.U.M.), which he had set up while he prayed in front of a painting of the Holy Crucifix found on one of the altars inside.





TAS-SLIEMA PARISH CHURCH OF OUR LADY STAR OF THE SEA

The town of Tas-Sliema began to develop during the mid-19th century. People from Valletta picked up the trend of moving away from the hustle and bustle of the busy capital city to a quieter place where to pass the summer season. This they did on the other side of Marsamxett Harbour. It is due to this reason that the oldest parish in Tas-Sliema is dated to 1878. The demographic increase caused a church to be built for their religious needs on the design of architect Giuseppe Bonavia (1821-1885) and finished in 1854. Dedicated to Our Lady Star of the Sea, it was enlarged later on under the scrutiny of the same Bonavia, and became a parish church in 1878 being separated from the parish of Birkirkara. This church was given a new façade in 1909 but the parish church of *Stella Maris* continues to be attributed to the same architect as it is believed that, though he was dead by this time, he had prepared designs for a new façade while the earlier alterations were being executed. In 2018 this parish church was elevated to an archpresbyterial status, with four other parishes having come out of *Stella Maris* along its history – Our Lady of the Heart of Jesus (Tas-Sliema, 1918), Our Lady of Mount Carmel (Gżira, 1921), St Gregory the Great (Tas-Sliema, 1943), and Jesus of Nazareth (Tas-Sliema, 1973). Architecturally the church follows the lines of the majority of parish churches of the Maltese islands.



TAS-SLIEMA PARISH CHURCH OF OUR LADY OF THE HEART OF JESUS

Architecturally similar to some extent to that of *Stella Maris*, this became the church of the second parish of Tas-Sliema. It was built in 1872 by a Valletta priest named Rev. Paul Vella. He felt that with the opening of Prince of Wales Road, the spiritual needs of the ever-growing Tas-Sliema population had to be addressed. This could be done if a new church was erected. The church was put under the care of the Order of the Friars

Minor of the Maltese province with the title of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart or *Sacro Cuor*. It was elevated to the status of parish church in 1918. The church follows a Roman-Ionic style as conceptualised by its architect, Giovanni Domenico Debono (d.1922), and was erected also through much free voluntary work on Sundays and feast days.



TAS-SLIEMA PARISH CHURCH OF ST GREGORY THE GREAT

Tas-Sliema continued to develop and this led to the creation of a third parish. This happened in December of 1943 when the church dedicated to St Gregory the Great was elevated to parish status. The church itself had come to be through the wish of Bishop Mgr Maurus Caruana O.S.B. with the first stone being laid in 1923. The design for this church belongs to architect Emanuele Luigi Galizia (1830-1906) with features in the façade reminiscent of the Romanesque style.



TAS-SLIEMA PARISH CHURCH OF JESUS OF NAZARETH

Parishes in Tas-Sliema increased again with a fourth being erected in 1973. Dedicated to Jesus of Nazareth, the foundation stone of this church was laid in 1893, with the project being financed by the Noble Carlo Ermolao Zimmermann Barbaro of the Marquis of St George, and his wife Victoria née Borg, and designed by architect Francis Wettinger. The church was donated to the Dominican Order in 1909 and it is still under their care to this day. The parish church of Jesus of Nazareth is affiliated to the Lateran Basilica and is a Sanctuary. Different from many parish churches, it is attached to other buildings which form the street along the Sliema promenade. The architectural mix includes arched windows, niches and a wide façade.



TAS-SLIEMA HOLY TRINITY ANGLICAN CHURCH

A church which is very much linked to the religious mix in Tas-Sliema, is that dedicated to the Holy Trinity. It belongs to the Church of England and was built for the Anglo Saxon community as it was felt that a bigger place of worship was needed in the gradually growing new town. Architect G.M. Hills was commissioned to design the church and the vicar's lodging. The neo-Gothic style was adopted creating a structure that evoked an English village church. The first stone was laid by Maj. Gen. William John Ridley who was Acting Governor in 1866, with the work being contracted to Webster Paulson who had four years previously finished supervising the building of the Royal Theatre in Valletta. Sited in Rudolph Street, the Church of the Holy Trinity provides a different architectural taste quite uncommon to the Maltese built landscape. Consecrated on 23 April 1867 by the Anglican Bishop of Gibraltar it continues to serve the Anglican community to this day.



TAS-SLIEMA TEATRU SALESJAN & SALESIAN ORATORY

Among the projects linked to the Salesians, which Alfons Maria Galea initiated and spurred on to completion, was a theatre (photo) in the heart of Tas-Sliema. This project, which he convinced the Salesians to take up, was to become the *Juventutis Domus*, and for its construction Galea supplied both the land and the funds. It consisted of a sizable theatre, a library and games room. This was a project intentioned to reach out to the professional and intellectual workers and the Salesians undertook to run it as this would be a good way to create a relationship with the intellectual and future political leaders of Malta. In this way the needs of the whole society, including the working classes for whom the Salesians dedicated their efforts, could be addressed. In 1908 the *Domus* was inaugurated, followed shortly in the same year by the establishment on the opposite side of the road, of a Festive Oratory (festive as it opened mainly on feast days and Sundays). Today this Oratory has become a Youth Centre. In 1910 the Oratory inaugurated the Salesian

Boys Brigade under the direction of Sargent Ġużeppi Mifsud of the K.O.M.R.M. Many years later, in 1989, the Salesian Girls Brigade was also set up.

The theatre in the 1930s also functioned as a cinema when 'talkies' were becoming the rage of the time. It was and remains, however, a place for the performance of plays and theatrical works. The auditorium hosts a fresco by the renowned artist Giuseppe Cali which was completed in 1910. In more recent years the theatre has experienced a makeover as it has moved from presenting works mainly by its in-house company to hosting shows that span from those by The Comedy Knights to others from the Globe Theatre's touring Hamlet. In 2018 the theatre experienced a broader and bolder transformation to give it more scope as required by the times. Yet, respect for a century and a decade-long heritage remained central in the renovation project. In this way the Salesian theatre will continue in its cultural mission among the people of Tas-Sliema and beyond.



TAS-SLIEMA CHURCH OF OUR LADY OF GRACES

Facing the Archpresbyterial Parish Church of *Stella Maris* stands the small but interesting church dedicated to Our Lady of Graces. Known among the *Sliemiżi* as '*il-knisja ż-żgħira*' (the small church), its history takes one back to a previous church which had been dedicated to the Nativity of Our Lady and which stood on the ground, later to be occupied by Fort Tigné, known as Dragut Point. This older church, the only one in the Tas-Sliema area for many years, was a reference point for the mariners who, while sailing in or out of Marsamxett Harbour, would salute St Mary. At the time the church was also known as *Tal-Qortin* after the name of the area where it was found. It was also called the church of *Porto Salvo* signifying a safe haven, or *del Felice Rotorno*, interpreted in the native language as *Tas-Sliema* which meant safe return – and which later on was adopted as the name of the locality. As the church began to collapse due to its exposure to the sea spray and the elements, it was rebuilt some distance away from the original site during the 18th century, and was finally pulled down during the French occupation of 1798-1800 as a precaution against it being used by the Maltese against them during their uprising.

Tas-Sliema was now without a church, and as it formed part of the parish of Birkirkara, the locals had to go to St Helena's parish church for their spiritual needs. At the turn of the 19th century a piece of land was donated by Giovanna Salvaloco for the building of a new church in Tas-Sliema which was ready by 1804 and was first dedicated to the Holy Name of Mary (*Nome di Maria*). Later on this was changed to that of Our Lady of Graces. It lost its importance among the local community when the new *Stella Maris* church was built in the second half of the 19th century, continuing to function until 1908 when it was closed by the Bishop.

The church is small and simple in design. The titular painting by an unknown artist is the same that had hung in the original Tigné church and is a copy of the original by Raffaello found in Rome. There are another two paintings by Mattia Preti. Of note is the tolling of one of its bells whenever an execution by hanging took place on St Philip's Bastion in Floriana as this was directly visible from the church at a time when there were no buildings to obstruct the view. The bell called on the people to pray for the soul of the condemned in those last moments of his life.

The church is well kept and is today used for various activities including weddings.



TAS-SLIEMA FORT TIGNÉ

On the farthest tip of the Sliema peninsula known as Dragut Point, jutting out into Marasmxett Harbour, is the strategically placed Fort Tigné. When built it was intended to protect both the entrance to the harbour and the flank of Valletta. This defensive structure was designed by Stephan de Tousard (present in Malta from about 1793 to 1798), chief engineer of the Order, in the shape of a large redoubt. Though not a large project by the standards of the time, it is argued that this fort was the most revolutionary and influential among the many fortifications of the Knights. At the time of its construction the superiority of bastioned fortifications was being disputed through the spreading popularity of the tenaille trace which produced a polygonal structure. Fort Tigné was one of the first exemplars of this novel military architecture and the last big defensive project of the Order in Malta. With the arrival of the British, the military mission of the fort continued. It was garrisoned by soldiers from 1805 up till the British left the island and was refitted and periodically upgraded in line with changing military exigencies. After decades of neglect, the area comprising Fort Tigné has now been turned into a retail and entertainment zone.



TAS-SLIEMA SLIEMA POINT BATTERY

Situated on Tower Road, Sliema Point Battery is popularly known as *Il-Fortizza* (the fort). Its appearance gives one the impression of being in front of some sort of Gothic castle. It was suggested by Colonel Jervois in his 1866 report on Malta to defend Marsamxett Harbour. Work on this fort began in 1872 and completed in 1876. It was designed in the shape of a fan with four casemates on the seaward side from where guns covered the harbour. By 1903 this fort had been turned into a searchlight position. When its military role ended it was converted into a catering and entertainment establishment and it continued as such to this day.

See overleaf >

Sliema Point Battery



TAS-SLIEMA ST JULIAN'S TOWER

The fifth of Grand Master Martin De Redin's (1657-60) thirteen coastal watch towers is situated in Tas-Sliema. Built in 1658, it was called *Torre di San Giugliano* (St Julian's Tower) and is presently more popularly known as *'It-Torri'* (the tower). In 1715 around this tower was constructed a large coastal battery and a redan. In the first weeks from the Rising of the Maltese against the French in September 1798, the tower was attacked and captured by Maltese troops from Vincenzo Borg's contingent. This tower served the Maltese to guard the vulnerable coastline in the area. In the 20th century the tower became a catering establishment and lost its redan which was demolished to make way for Tower Road.



TA' XBIEX PARISH CHURCH OF ST JOHN OF THE CROSS

The parish church of Ta' Xbiex finds its routes in 1948 when Baron Pietro Paolo Testaferrata Moroni Viani donated a piece of land to the Teresian Carmelite Fathers. The Discalced Carmelites built a priory, designed by architect Andre Micallef, and a church on this land. The first stone of the church, whose architect is the Genoese Luigi Ferrari, was laid in 1954, and when it was ready in 1958 the faithful began using it for religious worship. The design of the church incorporates the Roman Basilical style (in use from the 4th to the 13th century), and reflects a marked simplicity. When Ta' Xbiex was erected a parish in 1969, it became the parish church, with St John of the Cross as the patron saint.



SAN ĠILJAN PARISH CHURCH OF ST JULIAN

The present parish church of San Ġiljan was designed by architect Arturo Zammit and the first stone was laid in 1961. Following modern lines, the building was not yet ready when the church was used for the first time on Palm Sunday of 1968. It welcomed Pope St John Paul II when, on his first visit to Malta, he met the Maltese intellectuals.



SAN ĠILJAN / IL-BALLUTA PARISH CHURCH OF OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL

Il-Balluta was separated from San Ġiljan as a parish in 1974. The chosen parish church was that dedicated to Our Lady of Mount Carmel which has an interesting and rather complex history going back to at least 1858 when there already was a church at Balluta Bay designed by architect Giuseppe Bonavia on somewhat Gothic lines. In the 1870s it was rebuilt in the neo-Gothic style on the design of Emanuele Luigi Galizia (1830-1906) and extended in 1900. With the church passing under the care of the Carmelite friars, it was pulled down and rebuilt following the design of architect Gustavo R. Vincenti (1888-1974) and later of architect Joseph M. Spiteri (1934-2013), it being completed in 1974, the year when il-Balluta became a parish, with this church becoming the parish church.



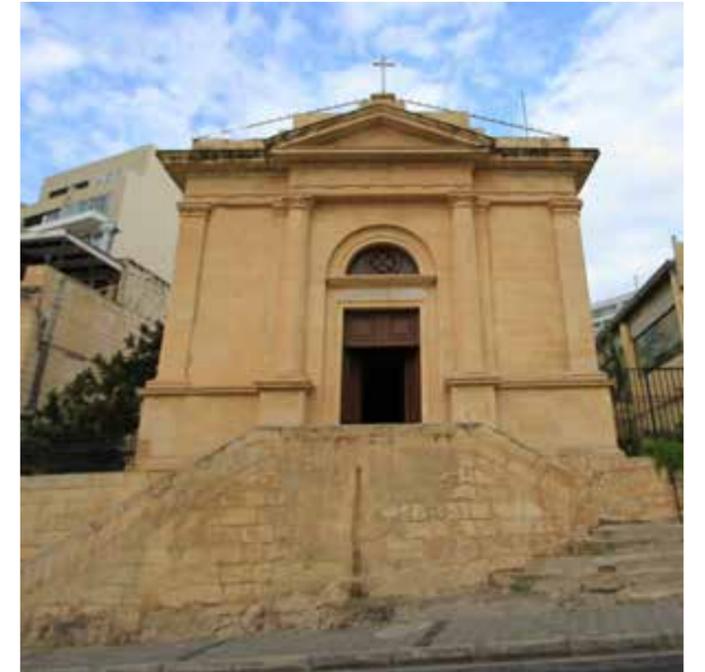
SAN ĠILJAN LAPSI CHURCH

The first parish church of San Ġiljan goes back many centuries. It is known that in 1580 there was already a small chapel standing in the place of the present church and this belonged to some knights of the Order of St John. Successive chapels were built on the same site with the third being designed by architects Vincenzo Casanova (b.1645) and Giovanni Barbara (1642-1728). The destructive earthquake of 1693 damaged this chapel dedicated to St Julian, and thus in 1716 instructions were given to Gużeppi Ciantar to rebuild it. As San Ġiljan became a summer resort during the British period, in 1849 the coastal village was created a vice-parish within the parish of St Helena (Birkirkara), and then became a fully-fledged parish in 1891. This former parish church of San Ġiljan is popularly known as *il-knisja ta' Lapsi* (Lapsi church) and continued to serve as such until it became too small and was replaced by a larger church in the mid-20th century.



SAN ĠILJAN CHURCH OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

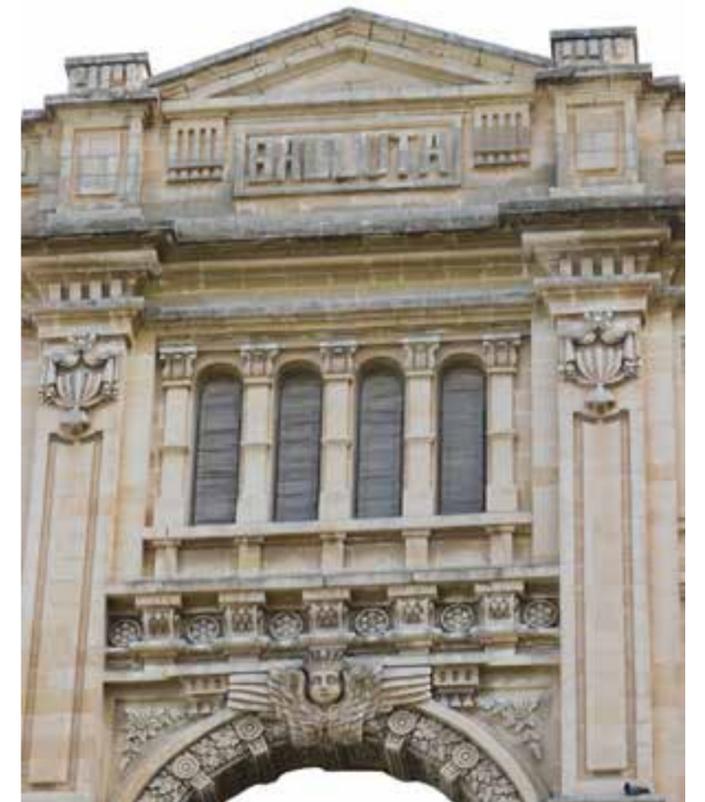
A stone's throw away from Spinola Palace there is a church dedicated to the Immaculate Conception, also built by Fra Paolo Rafael Spinola. The laying of the first stone took place on 16 June 1687, and it was consecrated on 10 September 1688. Its purpose was to serve Fra Spinola but also the fishermen who used the bay for their boats. In the early 20th century the structure was enlarged by about three meters while its façade was rebuilt in 1914. The titular painting is by Giuseppe d'Arena (1633-1719).





SAN ĠILJAN / IL-BALLUTA BALLUTA BUILDINGS

Facing Balluta Bay and with a *piazza* in front, is the iconic building which has been decorating this part of San Ġiljan since the 1920s. Known as Balluta Buildings from the environs where it stands, this block of Art Nouveau apartments was designed by architect Giuseppe Psaila (1891-1960) for Marquis John Scicluna and completed in 1928. Behind the imposing façade the 20 apartments were not only luxurious but also placed among the most spacious in Europe at the time. The site was originally part of the garden of the 19th century Villa St Ignatius. When the villa property was divided and sold in the 1920s, the first to be constructed were the Balluta Buildings. With an inscription 'AD MCMXXVIII' on the architrave below a central pediment, Balluta Buildings are divided into three blocks. Floral decorated arches with putto carvings on the keystones pronounce the Art Nouveau characteristics. It is considered as one of the finest among what remains of this architectural style in the Maltese Islands.



SAN ĠILJAN SPINOLA PALACE

Overlooking Spinola Bay is the palatial building that originally belonged to the knight Fra Paolo Rafael Spinola. After the initial fabric was erected in 1688, the building passed to Fra Giovanni Battista Spinola. On the latter's wishes, in 1733 Romano Carapecchia (1666-1738) was engaged to work on alterations to some of the rooms and also to create a more striking façade which included the installation of a clock; a quite unique feature among secular Baroque structures in Malta. Carapecchia's intervention managed to create a façade that merged classical features into the original rustic composition. The eventful life of the palace included it being damaged during the French invasion of 1798 when the crown over the clock on the façade was chipped off to signify the end of the Order's rule over Malta. By the beginning of the 19th century it became a possession of the Cathedral of Malta and which restored it in 1826. The British military used it

when the building was leased to them in 1860. It became Forrest Hospital. The hospital facilities were extended at the turn of the 20th century with the addition of tents in the garden. This role ended in 1922. During World War II it was used by those who lost their homes due to aerial bombing. Restoration works in 1984-6 led to the palace becoming the Museum of Modern Art – a short-lived role due to lack of visitors. For some time from 1989 it was the seat of the Malta International Business Authority. Then it served as the Ministry for Tourism from 1996 till 2002. More restorations took place in 2006-7 while in 2012 the missing crown was reconstructed to bring the clock back to its original glory. In 2007 the Government of Malta entered into an agreement with the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean for the building to serve as its Headquarters.



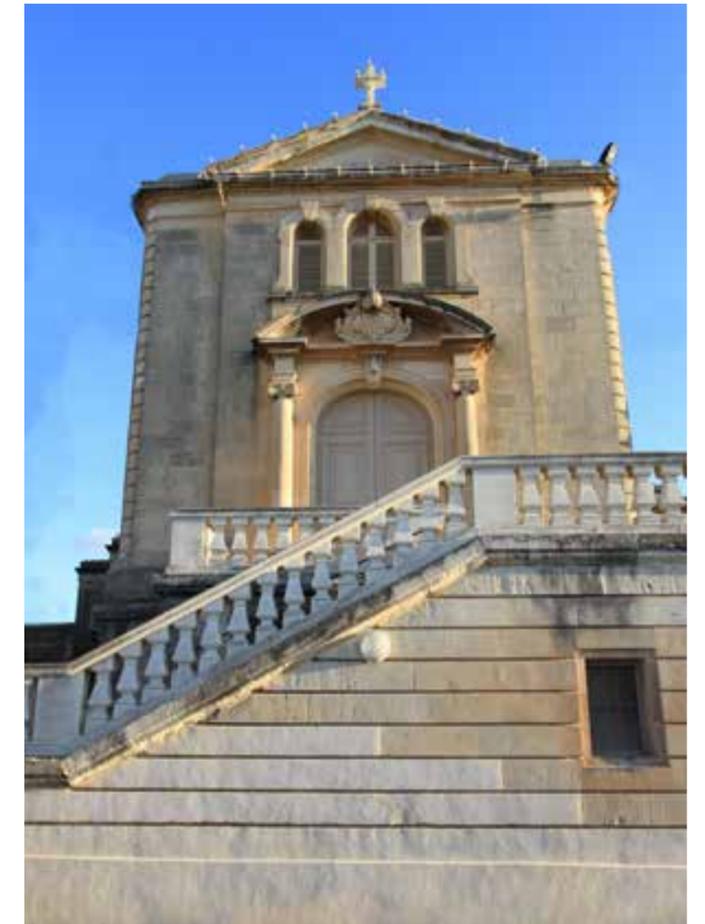
SAN ĠILJAN ST GEORGE'S TOWER

The coastal watchtower at San Ġiljan – built during the rule of Grand Master Juan de Lascaris-Castellar (1635-57) – was called St George's Tower. Its erection in 1637, and garrisoning, were financed by the *Universitas*. It continued its defensive role as a lookout tower for St George's Bay during British times until Fort Pembroke and later Pembroke Battery, were constructed. It was then turned into a Fire Control Station. During World War II it became a radio communication post and later on served as a warning station for civilian vessels to keep at a safe distance while there was live ammunition practise on the Pembroke Ranges. The Fire Control Tower erected by the British was removed in 1997 and St George's Tower was incorporated within the precincts of a hotel.



SAN ĠILJAN POOR CLARES' MONASTERY

The Poor Clares first arrived in Malta in 1914 as with the start of World War I the French community was expelled from Nazareth. On arrival they found shelter in the Convent of the Missionary Sisters of Egypt in Ħaż Żabbar. In 1920 they moved to San Ġiljan in a small house but they hoped a plot of land could be found where to build a proper monastery. While there they accepted a statue of the Infant Jesus of Prague which was given to them as a gift. A few days later their wish materialised when philanthropist Alfons Maria Galea helped them acquire the land on which the Community could build a monastery and an adjoining chapel. The first stone was laid and blessed in 1933 by Archbishop Dom Maurus Caruana. The work was carried out under the direction of master mason Ġanni Mifsud and the construction was ready in 1935. The chapel was dedicated to the Infant Jesus of Prague but is more popularly known as the chapel of St Clare (the Foundress of the Order of Saint Clare). The monastery was once in a quiet area, but with the opening of Regional Road and the buildings that continue to be erected much of this seclusion has now been lost. The Poor Clares are a congregation of cloistered contemplative nuns and their monastery is a refuge for persons who are seeking someone to listen to them and a place where to find peace and consolation. While up to some time ago the nuns could only speak to their relatives and friends from behind iron bars in the refectory, this has now changed with the gates having been removed and at times meetings being held also in a private room.





Poor Clares in prayer

SAN ĠILJAN / IL-BALLUTA CARMELITE CONVENT

The Carmelite Convent was finished in 1892 to house the community of monks that worked from the church dedicated to the Our Lady of Mount Carmel a short distance away. Before the building of this site, which had been procured by the Carmelites for this purpose, the monks lived in Miriam House and Casa Dingli, two villas on the other side of Balluta Bay opposite the church. The convent served as a government school during World War I when the local school was turned into a temporary hospital, with the monks taking up residence again in Miriam House. Later on part of the convent garden was built to create a college for those studying for the priesthood.



SAN ĠILJAN / PACEVILLE CHURCH OF OUR LADY OF GOOD COUNCIL

The history of Paceville's main church goes back to the early 20th century, when Dr Giuseppe Pace, a lawyer, built a small chapel next to a small house in Spinola. He offered it against payment to the Augustinian Province, which was accepted, and in 1936 the church was blessed and dedicated to Our Lady of Good Counsel. With the growth in its population, Spinola became the village of Paceville and the friars thought of building a new, bigger church. Architect Arturo Zammit was commissioned to design a modern church and convent and the foundation stone was laid in 1967. While the convent was opened in 1972, the church was inaugurated and consecrated in 1974.



SAN ĠILJAN / PACEVILLE THE MILLENNIUM CHAPEL

The Augustinians had long felt the need to delve deeper into the heart of their ministry in order to reach the young people and tourists who frequented the area of Paceville. In 1988, the community took on this work with greater commitment and on the initiative of Fr Hilary Tagliaferro work was started on the project of the Millennium Chapel built thanks to public donations. The chapel was opened in the year 2000. The Millennium Chapel Foundation takes care of the management of this place. Apart from the perpetual adoration of the Holy Sacrament, the Augustinian monks also thought of organising courses and meetings for specific social and religious groups in this place. 2004 saw the official opening of the WOW (Wishing Others Well – a motto created by Fr Hilary) centre, which takes care of the social aspects of the Millennium Chapel. The communication centre includes an auditorium, meeting rooms and other facilities. For those seeking some quiet time for reflection, the complex includes ‘The Word’ meditation garden. The architect of this project was Prof. Richard England.





The Millennium Chapel



CHARITY, HEALTH AND EDUCATION

An expression of sympathy and compassion are many a time encompassed within the sense of charity that a community embraces. Charity also comes from humanity's empathy with those who require the support of others who can help them. Charitable institutions are thus established for the needy and disadvantaged. The vulnerable are one category that cannot get by without the caring help of society and thus homes for the elderly and hospitals for the sick are vital institutions. Help is also tendered to those who are still learning and are thus seeking to get the skills and knowledge to become independent in the world. Schools, colleges and universities are basic requirements to foster these abilities.

 **SANTA VENERA
APAP INSTITUTE**

On St Joseph High Road one finds Apap Institute (known in Maltese as *Dar Apap*) where the Dominican Sisters of Malta care for the elderly. The original Villa Apap belonged to the merchant John Apap and his sisters who in the late 1930s left their property to the Dominican Sisters so that these could care for poor spinsters and the remaining Apap relatives. During World War II the building was hit by bombs and these relatives died under the rubble. In 1944 the Dominicans moved into the half destroyed villa and took in some spinsters according to the wishes of the Apaps.

Between 1951 and 1954, a charitable institute was built on the design of architect Gustavo Vincenti (1888-1974). It incorporates a semi-public chapel dedicated to Our Lady of the Rosary. The titular painting depicts two saints belonging to the Dominican Order standing reverently, one on each side, in front of Our Lady who is holding Baby Jesus. This is the work of artist Willie Apap (1918-1970).



 **HAL BALZAN
GOOD SHEPHERD
CONVENT**

The first groups of Good Shepherd Sisters, or *Tal-Bon Pastur*, arrived in Malta from Smyrna in 1858, but while they wished to set up their convent in Valletta, they could not find an adequate place in the city. Being offered a house in Hal Lija by Marquis Testaferrata, they accepted and settled there. They started their mission in Malta by setting up a boarding school for Maltese and Sicilian girls, and ran classes for orphans and for young and older women who wished to turn a new page away from a life without restraint. Wishing to expand their mission the nuns were offered a piece of land in Hal Balzan on which they built a convent with the generous help of various benefactors. The first stone was laid in 1868 and by 1870 the construction was ready and the chapel dedicated to St Joseph was blessed. Further houses were procured and joined to the convent which had become too small for the number of women being sheltered and helped. In the late 19th century it was decided to build a new church and other amenities, for which architect Vincenzo Busuttill drew up the plans adopting the eclectic style, and including a series of 14 interesting stone *muxrabiji* (a form of projecting oriel windows) at the first floor. The elegant chapel in Maltese stone, is dedicated to the Good Shepherd. It was blessed in 1901 and consecrated in 1952. The Sisters continue their pastoral and philanthropic work with single mothers, women victims of domestic violence and their children, and now with male refugees and their families who end up in Malta.



 **SANTA VENERA
ST JOSEPH'S HOME**

The original *Casa di San Giuseppe* was established by Mgr Can. Prof. Francesco Bonnici in a house in il-Hamrun found in the environs of Our Lady of Antioch Church (known as *Tas-Samra*). In this house Mgr Bonnici accepted poor and neglected boys. With the premises full and being asked to accept more boys, he needed to find a bigger place which he succeeded in doing in 1893. A large 18th century house, known at the time as *Il-Palazz l-Almar* (the Red Palace), was granted by the Government of Malta for 99 years in *emphyteusis*. Structural changes to the house were done under the rectorship of Mgr George Bugeja about the year 1906. Two new blocks were thus built. For a short period, until 1919, the Christian Brothers took care of the institute but this eventually passed to the Missionary Society of St Paul (MSSP) in 1922, with Mgr Giuseppe de Piro being the first director of the home until his death in 1933. In the institute the boys were introduced to a number of trades including that of printing. In more recent years the profile of the boys cared for in St Joseph's Home has changed as these now come from families that are severely traumatised, have experienced a breakdown, or are suffering from extreme social deprivation.

The Home also incorporates a church dedicated to St Joseph, built by the founder and consecrated in 1916. Two paintings – Our Lady of the Holy Rosary (1919) and Christ in the Gethsemane (1920) – are by the Maltese artist Lazzaro Pisani (1854-1932). In 1955 the human remains of Mgr Bonnici were brought from the Mdina Cathedral and reinterred in this church.





SANTA VENERA CONSERVATORIO VINCENZO BUGEJA

In present times the *Conservatorio Vincenzo Bugeja* is formed of two residential homes known as 'Fejda' and 'Jeanne Antide'. Here, adolescents and young adults are helped to regain their dignity by learning skills that enable them to cope in life. The origins of this institute go back to 1872 when the Marquis Vincenzo Bugeja thought of constructing a *conservatorio* for poor orphaned girls. Designed by architect Virginio Vespignani (1808-1882) of Rome, its first stone was laid in 1876 by Lady Charlotte Louisa, wife of Governor van Straubenzee, and the building was ready by 1880. The first 50 girls under the care of the Sisters of Charity entered the institute on its inauguration. There is also a neo-classical, one-altar church dedicated to St Vincent. The titular painting is the work of the Roman artist Domenico Bruschi (1840-1910). On the main entrance to the *Conservatorio* there is also a bronze bust of the founder done by the sculptor from Naples Tito Angelino (1806-1878). During World War II the building was requisitioned by the Government and housed the Lieut. Governor's Office, the Attorney General's Office, the Police Force and the Cavalry and the Special Constabulary. The Police continued to use the building until 1954. After the war the Sisters returned with the girls to resume their caring work in the *Conservatorio*.



 **SAN ĠILJAN
CASA LEONE XIII**

The building bearing the name of Pope Leo XIII originally belonged to the Sisters of the Little Company of Mary, known as the Blue Sisters because of the blue veil they wear. The Sisters were invited in 1894 by Archbishop Pietro Pace to come to Malta to manage a home for the sick. On their arrival they moved into provisional premises in Cathedral Street in Tas-Sliema and used to visit the sick in their homes. As their services were highly appreciated by both rich and poor, the Sisters were supported to open a bigger house for their mission. This proposal was fully endorsed by Governor Sir Arthur J. Lyon Freemantle who also personally donated a sum of money. Mgr E.M. Debono Cassia donated the land in il-Balluta, while Sir Adrian Dingli and his friends collected the remaining funds

required for the building. The plans were drawn by architect Paul Busuttill with the first stone being laid in June of 1898 by Governor Freemantle. The convent was ready in October 1900 and inaugurated by Governor Grenfell. It was named after Pope Leo XIII in honour of the same Pope who had approved the Little Company of Mary in 1882 and who was still alive. When the Blue Sisters were expelled from Malta in December 1980 this house was closed until new arrangements were concluded between the Archdiocese of Malta and the Maltese Government and a home for the elderly was opened in December 1985. *Casa Leone XIII* continues to operate in this role as one of the homes for the elderly under the Archdiocese of Malta.



 **SANTA VENERA
CINI INSTITUTE**

What is now known as Cini Institute on St Joseph High Road, was established by the Venerable Adelaide Cini (1838-85) and named *Istituto Sacro Cuor* (Institute of the Sacred Heart). It was built in 1864 and at the time was a pasta manufacturing factory and the home of the foundress who lived there with her parents. In 1884 she declared in her will that the building should continue to serve as a *conservatorio* for young women who roamed the streets and were in danger of losing their soul.

In 1904 the building was enlarged to receive orphaned female adolescents. During World War II the Institute became a maternity hospital. Before her death Adelaide Cini had asked the help of the Sisters of Charity as these cared for orphaned children and other minors who needed someone to look after them due to their difficult situation. This work continued until the late 20th century. From 2001 through arrangements agreed to between the Church and the State, the space within the Institute began to be utilised by needy families who live privately in flats which are allocated to them.

The early 20th century church which forms part of the institute was built in the courtyard and cannot be seen from the main road. In this church, which was blessed in 1919, lie the mortal remains of Adelaide Cini. The charitable complex has been under the care of the Sisters of Charity of St Vincent de Paul. In 2018 the Maltese Church signed an agreement with the Malta Hospice Movement for the former Cini Institute to be converted into St Michael's Hospice, thus becoming the first state-of-the-art complex in Malta dedicated entirely to providing comprehensive palliative care.



 **TAL-PIETÀ /
GWARDAMANĠA
ANGELA HOUSE**

In 1908 the Founder of the Ursuline Sisters, Mgr Isidoro Formosa, gave his Congregation a piece of land in Gwardamangà with the objective of building an institute which would include a crèche. The project was however hampered by the lack of funds. In 1910 work on the church which was to be dedicated to Our Lady of Loreto was begun, and in 1912 the Government asked the Ursuline Sisters to help children coming from problematic families but the financial subsidy paid was low and also the mothers could not contribute money to help the sisters in their mission and their institutes. The work on the Gwardamangà House began in 1914 but was stalled because finances were not readily available. Resumed in 1928 the building was ultimately completed. In 2010 the Ursuline Sisters inaugurated a monument to their Founder in front of Angela House which was unveiled by Archbishop Paul Cremona.



TAS-SLIEMA FATIMA HOUSE

The origins of Fatima House go back to 1895 when the philanthropist Alfons Maria Galea built a villa for his family. The architect commissioned to design what became Villa Bétharram was Francesco Zammit (1844-1917) who adopted the Palladian style for his creation. This villa at some point became known as Villa Rathnapoora. During World War II the villa served the parishioners of *Stella Maris* as a temporary place of worship when their parish church was damaged by bombs. In 1957 the villa passed to the White Sisters (Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of Africa), maybe also as Alfons Maria Galea's daughter, Sister Mary Xavier, was a member of this Congregation. The villa served as the White Sisters' study house preparing the nuns for mission work. While in Tas-Sliema there were some

vocations from Malta including Sr Carmen Sammut who later on became superior general of the Missionaries of Africa. The villa changed hands and function in 1960 as, through the initiative of the Archbishop of Malta Mgr Gonzi, the Sisters of St Dorothy turned it into a shelter for young women coming from institutes of the Church. Another Congregation, that of the Sisters of St Joseph, took over in 1965, and continued the work initiated until 2010 at which time they had to relinquish it due to lack of vocations. Thus the management passed to the Ursuline Sisters who continue with the caring of young women. Fatima House has also been known as Fatima Hostel and Fatima Working Girls' House.




TAS-SLIEMA URSULINE SISTERS CRÈCHE

Founded by the Maltese Mgr Isidoro dei Conti Formosa in 1887, the Congregation of the Ursuline Sisters of St Angela Merici have a number of homes in Malta including those in Tas-Sliema, Tal-Pietà, l-Imsida and Ħal Lija. Their mission is to take care of poor and abandoned children. The sisters established the Tas-Sliema crèche in 1894 in a house which soon proved to be too small and impractical for their needs. Mgr Formosa thus decided to build a convent and a chapel on a piece of land known as *tal-Bandieri* (of the flags). By 1902 it was ready and was inaugurated by Governor Lord Grenfell. The chapel adjoining the convent is dedicated to the Holy Family and was finished in 1904. The main painting in this chapel is

the work of Giuseppe Cali and was paid for by Alfons Maria Galea. With both the number of nuns and the children in their care on the increase, the house next door was soon joined to the institute in the years 1942-47. The nuns have continued to care for the poor children acting as their mothers. According to the changing circumstances, the Ursuline nuns took in refugee children from babies to toddlers. At the age of four years children are taken to Angela House in Tal-Pietà which is also run by the Ursuline Sisters.





SANTA VENERA DAR IL-HANIN SAMARITAN

The Society of Christian Doctrine (M.U.S.E.U.M.) manages this retirement home which was opened in 1996. Its purpose is to care for elderly members of the Society while it is also equipped to host retreats and seminars. The Society commissioned architect Richard England (b. 1937) to design the Home and a landscaped garden that would complement it. This space is meant to be a place of meditation and relaxation, an enclosed Mediterranean garden which offers a tranquil environment away from the confusion of the outside world. The design composition is imbued with colours, shapes and lights, and it is intended to arouse within the visitor a sense of wellbeing and an occasion to be one with the spirit.





SANTA VENERA ISTITUTO TECNICO VINCENZO BUGEJA

The Marquis Vincenzo Bugeja being the philanthropist he was, after building the *Conservatorio* on St Joseph High Road, decided to build another institute for orphaned boys which became the *Istituto Tecnico Vincenzo Bugeja*, now more commonly known as the Bugeja Technical Institute. This institute, built in 1880, was intended to provide a place where these disadvantaged boys could learn an industrial craft which would enable them to find work when they entered the adult world. Bugeja used his abundant financial resources to construct a palatial building on the neo-classical plans of architect Emmanuele Luigi Galizia (1830-1907). The institute has a symmetrical façade and an ornate central doorway which can be accessed by means of a flight of stairs. The central balcony is embellished with shell motifs and carved panels on the sides between the pilasters. On top of this a pediment with dentils incorporated the Bugeja coat-of-arms and foliage carvings.

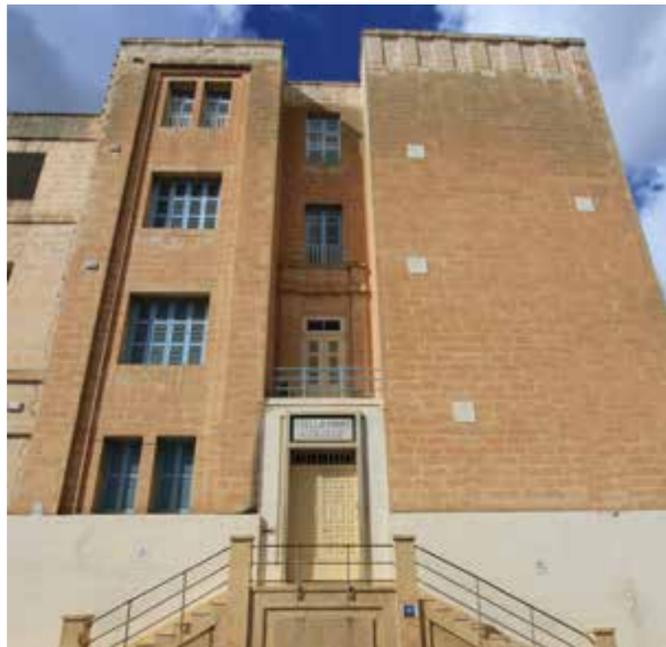
Of particular note is the main staircase inside, which is distinctive for its mural painted Art Nouveau floral motifs covering the walls and the ceiling. The building today is used as a centre for social work known as *Ċentru Hidma Soċjali*.





**IL-GŻIRA
STELLA MARIS
COLLEGE**

The present educational establishment under the name of Stella Maris College traces its origin to the arrival in Malta in 1903 of members of the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, otherwise known as the De La Salle Brothers or *Frères*. In 1904 they opened a school in Villa Schinas in Rudolph Street, Tas-Sliema, and named it Stella Maris after the patron saint of the parish in which they were established. Seeing the space in this building becoming evermore restrained due to the increasing numbers of enrolled boys, the Brothers decided to find a good piece of land to build their new college. This was found in il-Gżira behind the garages run by Gasan, and in 1937 architect Giovanni Sacco was commissioned to draw the plans. The structure was completed in 1938 and the boys transferred there from Tas-Sliema. During World War II the Brothers moved in for a short time with the Carmelites in San Ġiljan but shortly after returned to resume schooling in the College. A shelter had been cut for the protection of the students and staff while the ground floor and playground had been temporarily requisitioned by the Army. In 1958 the College was again enlarged after the designs of architect Salvino Privitera. Stella Maris College continues to serve its original mission, that of educating the youth; however the number of Brothers is much less while that of lay teachers much more.




**TAS-SLIEMA
ST PATRICK'S
SALESIAN SCHOOL**

Originally more popularly known as St Patrick's Institute, this educational establishment for boys was founded through the initiative of the Maltese philanthropist and Salesian old boy, Alfons Maria Galea, who not only appealed to Governor Freemantle to grant permission, but also offered the land and a sum of money for the building of an educational institute to be managed by the Salesians of Don Bosco. This request was accepted and the Council of Government gave its unanimous approval and voted funds for the construction works. On 17 December 1898 the first stone was laid by the Governor and the building was put under the supervision of master mason Carlo Dingli. At this same time another benefactor, Giovanna Pullicino, donated funds for the erection of a church which was to offer its services to the general public and was completed in 1905. The church, attached to the school, is dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and gives its services in English.

Talks continued between the Government of Malta and the Salesians resulting in an agreement by which the first members of the Society of Don Bosco arrived in Malta in 1903. The building was ready in 1904 and inaugurated by Governor Clarke being given the name of St Patrick's Salesian School. A musical band had been set up by 1906 and a printing press by 1907. Further enlargements of this school took place in the 1920s and then in the 1950s.

The school mission continues to be that of providing its students with a supportive learning environment to help them move on in life. It provides a residential service for young persons "who need a home away from home" because of particular circumstances in their life.




**L-IMSIDA
ĠAN FRANĠISK ABELA
JUNIOR COLLEGE**

This Modernist building was originally constructed to house the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST). The building was financed by the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund and UNESCO and designed by draughtsman Victor Anastasi (1913-1992) from the Public Works Department. The construction was carried out in the period 1962-1966 and MCAST was inaugurated on 16 July of the latter year by Governor-General of Malta Sir Maurice Dorman and blessed by Archbishop Mgr Michael Gonzi. A large painting by artist Esprit Barthet (1919-1999) was also unveiled by Prime Minister George Borg Olivier. Later on, as this work of art began to deteriorate, it was replaced by another large painting by artist Harry Alden (b. 1929). This institution was popularly known as the Polytechnic.

The building has a long and varied education history. Besides hosting the original MCAST departments, other educational

institutions later on gave service from this complex. These included the Malta College of Education which moved there in 1974 and became the Department of Educational Studies (up to 1978). MCAST was replaced by the New University which operated from the building for two years (1978-1980) until this joined the Old University to reconstitute the University of Malta with all the students of the New University transferring to the Tal-Qroqq Campus. This move made space for the accommodation of the Upper Secondary School (USS) also known as the Sixth Form, and the Giovanni Curmi Higher Secondary School (GCHSS). While the GCHSS moved out to take up its present premises at in-Naxxar in 1994, the USS was phased out with the setting up in 1995 of the Gan Franġisk Abela Junior College, managed by the University of Malta.



 **L-IMSIDA**
L-UNIVERSITÀ
TA' MALTA

The main campus of the University of Malta is at *Tal-Qroqq*, I-Imnsida. The Maltese university has a history that finds its roots in the *Collegium Melitense* established by the Jesuit Order in Malta in 1592. When the Jesuits were expelled from Malta in 1768, Grand Master Manuel Pinto de Fonseca took over their property and created Malta's own *Pubblica Università di Studi Generali* which was constituted and authorised by Pope Clement XIV in 1769. The first building housing the University of Malta was in Valletta (known as the Old University building, it is today the Valletta Campus).

The celebrations for the inauguration of the present main campus at *Tal-Qroqq* took place between 21 and 24 November 1969. The official opening was done by Charles, Prince of Wales, and the campus was blessed by the Archbishop of Malta, Mgr Michael Gonzi. The first blocks had been built through the help of the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund with the first stone being laid by Secretary for the Colonies Duncan Sandys on 22 September 1964, and blessed by the Vatican representative Mgr Iginio Cardinale. The design was handled by the English firm Norman & Dawbarn in consultation with the Maltese firm Mortimer & De Giorgio. As the laying ceremony had coincided with the Independence celebrations, Barclays Bank also donated funds for this project. At the time it was known as the Royal University of Malta, with the 'Royal' being dropped in 1974 when Malta became a Republic.

The University of Malta continues to grow every year with further buildings being added to accommodate the increase in student numbers and the addition of further courses on offer. Over 11,000 students, Maltese and foreigners, attend the University of Malta every year and study on a full-time or a part-time basis. There are 14 faculties and a number of institutes, centres and schools.



 **BIRKIRKARA
ST ALOYSIUS'
COLLEGE**

The building housing St Aloysius' College originated in 1896. It was built to serve as the House of Studies of the Jesuit students and was constructed by master mason Valentin called 'iċ-Ċ', the same *mgħallm* of the Blue Sisters House and Hospital now *Casa Leone XIII*, and the Zammit Clapp Hospital now Zammit Clapp Residential Home. When the British Jesuits who ran St Ignatius College in San Ġiljan were called back to England to open a college in Leeds, the Maltese students were going to end up without a school. Maltese parents petitions Pope Pius X asking for the Sicilian Jesuits who were in Malta to remain on the island and not be called back to open a college in Palermo. The Pope felt that this request was reasonable and granted it. Thus the House of Studies in Birkirkara was founded as a school for boys in 1907 and put under the patronage of St Aloysius. The chapel dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, which forms part of this College was opened in 1915 and its construction financed by the philanthropist Alfons Maria Galea. Besides the secondary school the College established its Sixth Form in a dedicated building in 1991 and added the Sports Complex in 1997.



 **TAS-SLIEMA
ST JOSEPH CONVENT
AND SCHOOL**

The Congregation of the Sisters of St Joseph of the Apparition was founded by St Emilie in Gaillac, France, in 1832. She believed in a humane education which went beyond the pure acquisition of knowledge and students were thus to be taught how to relate with the people around them. It is not known whether St Emilie de Vialar had intended to come to Malta to found a House for her Congregation or whether she ended in Malta by accident due to a storm while she was travelling from Tunis to France. However, once in Malta the foundations were laid in 1842 with the renting of two houses in Vittoriosa where a school was established. After moving to Cospicua in the 1850s, the Sisters managed to purchase a house and a garden in Cathedral Street in Tas-Sliema, and in March 1880 they began the building of St Joseph Convent, which was ready by 1881 and where today there is the Senior School. With time a Junior School was introduced, and other schools were opened in Blata l-Bajda and Paola, with a children's residence being established in Ħaż Żabbar.



 **SAN ĠILJAN
CONVENT OF THE
SACRED HEART OF
JESUS SCHOOL**

The first seven members of the Congregation arrived in Malta in 1903 and founded the Sacred Heart School. These sisters came on the express wish of a number of Maltese families who desired their children to have a Sacred Heart education like themselves. At first the sisters set up two schools, a day and a boarding school, in Villa Portelli, at the top of Rue D'Argens in Tas-Sliema. Shortly afterwards, however, they purchased a piece of land nearby and in 1905 the first stone of the school was laid by Cardinal Ferrata. As part of the school complex the sisters set up the Rosary School which catered solely for the

needy in line with the wishes of their Foundress, St Madeleine Sophie Barat. During World War II the school became a nursing home for wounded soldiers and then in 1944 it also served for some years as a women's teacher training college. The Sisters of the Sacred Heart then moved to Mater Admirabilis College of Education at Tal-Virtù, ir-Rabat, which was opened in 1954 and continued to form women teachers there until 1977. Today the school in Tas-Sliema is known as Convent of the Sacred Heart School Foundation and has a Junior School and a Senior School.



 **BIRKIRKARA
GOVERNMENT
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

A new elementary school to serve the children of Birkirkara was built in Brared Street as the old one had become too small. The construction of a two-floor school began in 1926 and was concluded by 1930. It was large and occupied the whole block within four streets. During World War II it was used as a hospital, while a third floor was added in more recent years. Though the school has undergone necessary refurbishment to serve its functions in a better way, it still retains its original architectural identity.



 **TAS-SLIEMA
GOVERNMENT
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

In Blanche Huber Street stands the pleasant-looking school building which was constructed in 1910 on plans drawn by architect Andrea Vassallo (1856-1928). The structure, which was built as an elementary school for boys and girls, is quite big and occupies the whole block, surrounded by four streets. The design includes two tower-like turrets in each of the four corners, while the verandah-like structure incorporates a continuous series of columns and pilasters along the four sides of the building. This style is present both on the ground as well as on the first floor, while the classes are set back from the façade so that these are afforded shade from the sun and are kept dry during rainy days. The coats-of-arms of Malta and Britain also emblazon the façade; a testimony to the colonial times when the school was constructed.



 **HAL BALZAN
FRANCISCAN
MISSIONARIES OF
MARY CONVENT**

The Franciscan Missionaries of Mary have been in Malta since 1911. Before settling in Hal Balzan the sisters first lived at the Old Seminary in l-Imdina and then moved to Villa Bologna, in H'Attard, where they stayed till 1914. This villa belonged to Sir Gerald Strickland who at the time was abroad serving as Governor in a number of countries. Following this the Missionaries found a house in Birkirkara and there ran a clinic and a pharmacy along with the school for children which they had established while in H'Attard. In late 1920 the sisters

obtained a house with a large garden and moved to Hal Balzan and by 1926 they had built a convent, a chapel and a school. Stella Maris School adopted the Montessori system of education in 1944 and by the 1950s kindergarten classes were added to the boys' primary school already in function. In 1971 there was an attempt to launch a secondary school but this was closed in 1974. Since 2008 Stella Maris School has been integrated with St Aloysius' College and its students move there for their secondary education.



**HAL LIJA, HAL BALZAN,
SANTA VENERA
STATUES OF ST ROQUE**

In many streets around Malta and Gozo one meets statues representing St Roque, the saint protector against the plague and other contagious diseases. These statues are usually public ex votos which the local communities put up following a plague epidemic in thanksgiving for their safe deliverance. Plague hit the islands on many instances with three of the most devastating being that of 1592-3 which took over 3,000 victims, that of 1675-6 killing 11,000 persons, and the one of 1813 accounting for 4,500 deaths. Some such statues are those found in Hal Lija, Hal Balzan and Santa Venera.



^ Hal Balzan
<< Hal Lija
< Santa Venera

 **BIRKIRKARA
CHURCH OF ST ROQUE**

The plague was in past centuries one of the most feared invaders of Malta. When it visited it was likely to leave behind death and devastation among the people. It was no wonder that this pestilence was extensively dreaded and caused the locals to turn to Heaven for consolation and deliverance. The saint most invoked for protection from plague is St Roque and chapels and churches have been built to invoke and thank him on the occasion of a strong attack of plague.

Some distance away from St Helena's Basilica stands a church that goes back to the late 16th century and which was built as a sign of gratitude to St Roque after the plague that had hit Malta in 1592. This pestilence destroyed the lives of around 3800 persons during the many months it raged among the people. In 1593 work began on the new church which was ready by the following year. The titular painting depicts St Roque and St Sebastian (another saint connected to the plague) both in reverence in front of Our Lady of Graces. Its origins are not known and neither whether it is the original or a copy of a

similar painting found in the old Our Saviour Church in Hal Lija. A statue of St Roque was also erected in front of the church during the reign of Grand Master de Rohan who gave his permission in 1796. The statue which is today found on the eastern façade of this church is attributed to Vincenzo Dimech (1768-1831). It was restored in 2010 with funding from the Birkirkara Local Council and the coordination of Din l-Art Helwa.

To those who recited a *Pater Noster* in front of this statue, 40 days of indulgencies were granted by Bishop Vincenzo Labini. The church continues to offer spiritual services to all those who frequent it to this day.

The church is also a place of devotion to St Rita – patron saint of the impossible. In 1965 a statue of this saint was donated to the church. From then on this statue is reputed to be miraculous and many devotees come to pray for the granting of a grace. There are about 100 ex votos, testifying to graces received, and some of these are exhibited in the church.



 **HAL BALZAN
CHURCH OF ST ROQUE**

Similar to numerous others, the church dedicated to St Roque in Hal Balzan was built when the plague of 1592-3 subsided. Architecturally this church is quite pleasant and besides the ornamental features on the façade, the inside is elaborately decorated but not overdone. The inside of the church served for the burial of the victims of the plague. The original titular painting incorporated the two saint protectors against pestilence – St Roque and St Sebastian – together with St Paul – patron saint of Malta. This painting is not in the church anymore and has been replaced by one depicting St Roque. The church is today generally closed while it is opened on special occasions for visits and exhibitions.



 **H'ATTARD
CHURCH OF ST ROQUE**

Following the devastating plague of 1675-6, the people of H'Attard built a church and dedicated it to St Roque as a sign of thanksgiving for the end of that calamity. With the church there was a cemetery in which the victims were buried. In modern times the church forms part of the complex run by the Society of Christian Doctrine (M.U.S.E.U.M.) where Christian doctrine is taught. On the former cemetery the M.U.S.E.U.M. members have erected a functional building from where to carry out their teaching mission. The titular painting which used to hang in the church was the work of Suor Maria de Domenicis (1650-1708), a student of Mattia Preti. The church of St Roque is today more commonly known as St Anne's.





**H'ATTARD
MOUNT CARMEL
HOSPITAL**

Mental health has always been a concerning condition which governments found necessary to address. Mount Carmel Hospital knows its origin to the mid-19th century. The previous building where patients with mental conditions had been accommodated from 1835 was *Villa Franconi* in Floriana – the former mansion belonging to Bali Fra Fabrizio Franconi of the Order of St John. With a pressing need to transfer the ever-growing number of patients, in 1852 a call for the submission of plans was made by the Government and the proposal submitted by the Sicilian refugee Gaetano Francesco Cianciolo was chosen while the new Asylum was to be built on a site in H'Attard surrounded with ample agricultural land for the engagement of the patients. While the building was in an advanced stage of construction it became evident that its design followed principles which had been discarded years before in Britain.

It also transpired that Cianciolo's plans had been copied from those done in 1818 for Wakefield Asylum. It was now too late to stop the project and the process continued even though the structure was not adequate for contemporary requirements. In July 1861 the patients were transferred during the night to the new building. The place was enlarged in 1889 while it was awarded a medal and certificate of special merit by the World's Columbian Commission set up by the U.S. Congress. This award was given on the strength of exhibited plans and photographs at the International Exhibition in Chicago. The jury felt that this asylum merited to be lauded for improvements in the structural and sanitary facilities and believed that these resulted in the general comfort and welfare of the patients.

The hospital is fully functioning and caters for various in- and out-patient services. It also has a forensic/prison ward.




**H'ATTARD
ST CATHERINE'S
HOME**

This Home knows its origins to the early 20th century. It was Carolina Cauchi, a Dominican lay woman, who in 1889 brought together a group of young women and followed the teaching of St Dominic. This was the birth of the Dominican Sisters of Malta who, in 1916, established a convent and a clinic in Hal Lija. As the medical services offered from this clinic were being increasingly sought after, the Sisters thought of building a new hospital. A site in H'Attard was identified and architect Gużè Damato (1886-1963) was commissioned to draw the plans. The first stone of St Catherine's Hospital was laid in 1953, the first operation was done in 1958, and the hospital was officially inaugurated in April of 1959. It was named after St Catherine of Siena as this Dominican was their model of a woman preacher. The medical services given to the community continued until 1980 when the Dominican Sisters closed the hospital and continued their apostolate by converting the building into a Home for the elderly. Besides the chapel which is open to the public for Mass, the Home is also used for meetings by various organisations.



See overleaf >



**TAL-PIETÀ /
GWARDAMANĠA
ST LUKE'S HOSPITAL**

During the administration of Sir Ugo Mifsud, Prime Minister from 1924 to 1927, provisions were made and funds were voted for the building of a general hospital, while the hill of Gwardamanġa was earmarked for this new project. It was during the administration of Prime Minister Sir Gerald Strickland that the first stone was laid by Governor Sir John Du Cane on 5 April 1930. The architectural firm Adams, Holden & Pearson was put in charge of the hospital while architect Frederick Charles Bonavia was Superintendent of Works. The building process took some years as it was halted twice due to international events – when Italy declared war on Abyssinia in 1935, and when the Italo-German treaty was signed in 1936. The construction eventually continued and when completed the hospital catered for a wide spectrum of medical requirements. In 1941 it served as an isolation hospital for infectious diseases. In the late 1940s St Luke's took up its role as a general hospital. It had general medical, surgical, gynaecological, paediatric, and from 1948, also radiology departments. Within its precincts the University of Malta had its Medical School. In late 2007 Mater Dei Hospital replaced St Luke's as Malta's general hospital.

St Luke's Hospital





SAN ĠILJAN ZAMMIT CLAPP RESIDENTIAL HOME

This building came out of the generosity of the American Henry Lyman Clapp and his Maltese wife Emilia née Zammit. They thought of constructing a hospital and fully equip it at their own expense, and then donate the establishment to the Government of Malta. The hospital was opened in May of 1910 but the deed of donation took place in June of 1911. The contract stipulated that the hospital was to be run exclusively and perpetually by the Nursing Sisters of the Little Company of Mary, popularly known as the Blue Sisters. It was to be named 'The Zammit Clapp Hospital' and only if the Sisters withdrew from Malta would the hospital be taken over by the Government, but would continue to be used solely as a hospital and under the same name. This eventuality was in fact triggered when the Blue Sisters were deported from Malta in 1980 and the hospital passed under the management of the Government. Interestingly, in February 1918 a change in name had been recorded and agreed to, in a separate notarial deed, so that it would now be called 'The Clapp Zammit Hospital', but this new name does not seem to have ever been taken up neither by the Blue Sisters at the time nor by the Government of Malta later on.

After sending the Blue Sisters away the hospital was closed and was only reopened in 1991 as a hospital for the care of the elderly, but was again closed with the opening of Mater Dei Hospital. The third time this building became operational was in 2012 when it now opened its doors as a residential nursing facility for the elderly and operates under the Public Private Partnership scheme.




L-IMSIDA MATER DEI HOSPITAL

Malta's acute general and teaching hospital is equipped to offer patients a full range of services along with a wide range of specialist services. Mater Dei, as it is popularly called, was built by the Swedish construction firm Skanska Malta JV. While it was inaugurated on 29 June 2007 by Prime Minister Lawrence Gonzi, the blessing was remanded until a cross from the time of the Order kept in the *Sacra Infermeria*, and which was later at St Luke's Hospital, was transported to take its place at Mater Dei. The hospital was thus blessed by Archbishop Mgr Paul Cremona on 19 November 2007, with the ceremony

taking place in the chapel. In 2010 a statue was inaugurated, representing the Mother of God in a sorrowful stance; the work of sculptor Christopher Ebejer (b.1979) and cast at Chetcuti Foundry of Luqa. As had been the case at St Luke's Hospital, the University of Malta set up its Faculties of Health Sciences, Medicine and Surgery, and Dental Surgery, in the new hospital, along with the Health Sciences Library. A later addition to Mater Dei was Sir Anthony Mamo Oncology Hospital which was built between 2010 and 2014.





Mater Dei Hospital



SAN ĠWANN CASTELLO LANZUN

Immersed in a rural landscape, in the 15th century there stood a typical farmhouse built in the Maltese vernacular architecture with the animals occupying the ground floor while the owner and his family inhabiting the chambers on the first floor. The roof was accessed by means of a staircase which exited from a turret. It was very probably a fortified building which would have given some protection to its inhabitants from imminent corsair raids to which Malta was frequently exposed, and resulting many times in the taking of slaves and extensive plunder. In the late 17th century it is known that this building was acquired by a certain Vincenzo Lanzun, a wealthy merchant from Vittoriosa. With the plague epidemic raging in the Cottonera area during 1676, Lanzun thought of finding a safe and secluded place and this farmhouse seemed an ideal choice. Lanzun did some alterations to the fortified farmhouse by building a small chamber on the upper floor; work which seems to have been done in 1713 according to the etched date over the window.

In the same year another three chambers and an extended courtyard were also added. During peaceful times the fortified tower also served as a hunting lodge and was used by knights of St John for this purpose. World War II ravaged the tower which had been utilised as an observation post for the identification of approaching aircraft.

After the war, Lt. Col. Robert Gayre of Gayre and Nigg, Laird of Lochore, bought the building and restored it, and in 1972 donated the property to The Commandery of the Castello – now the Grand Commandery. The tower acts as the International Headquarters of the Military and Hospitaller Order of St Lazarus of Jerusalem and was formally opened in 1973. The acquisition of Castello Lanzun gave the possibility to the Order of St Lazarus – an organisation whose sole purpose is to help lepers around the world – to once again have a permanent headquarters which it had lost by way of the French Revolution.




BIRKIRKARA DAR TAL-KLERU

Old priests who end up alone or become infirm, have a retirement home where they can find support in their daily needs. This home for the clergy is dedicated to *Christus Sacerdos* (Christ the Priest). Founded in 1964, it came about through the efforts of Mgr Prof. Salvatore Grima and the financial support of Angelo, his brother and a building contractor. The Church offered the land in Fleur-de-Lys on which the *Dar tal-Kleru* stands. The construction work was supervised by architect C. Micallef. From its opening the recovered priests were cared for by a community of nuns called *il-Qaddeġja ta' Ċenaklu* (the Servants of the Cenacle); women who took up the call of Mgr Grima to adopt as their mission the caring of the clergy. The chapel which forms part of this home is dedicated to the Saviour.



CRAFTS, INDUSTRY AND BUSINESS

Earning one's livelihood is basic to living a decent life. Some seek to gain an income through practising a craft. Others are employed in the various industries, while others yet seek to open their own business or join that of others. All these sectors are imperative for a healthy economy but they also give scope for those involved to show and develop their talents, skills and ingenuity. Be they industrial parks or shops, showrooms or factories, large enterprises or small businesses, all contribute to generate prosperity and a robust economic activity.



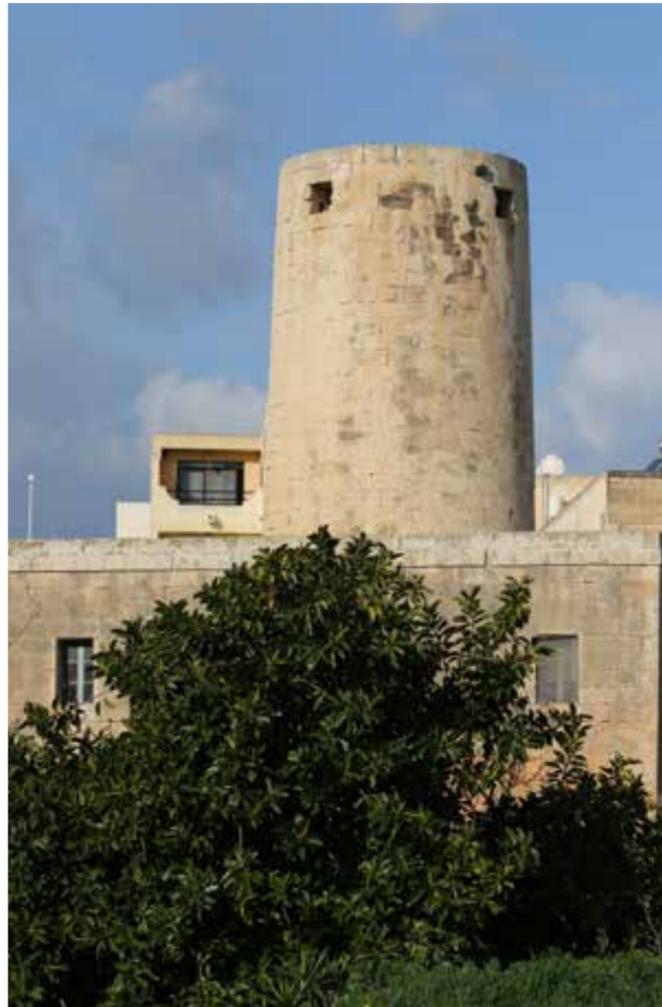
BIRKIRKARA TA' GANU WINDMILL

When wind power was not an alternative or green source of energy but a resource that human beings could harness, windmills were built. The machinery within the masonry was intended to grind grains into flour from which bread and other similar products could be made. The grinding stones turned when the sails attached to the blades at the top of the turret caught the blowing wind and moved the gear wheels inside. In the heart of Birkirkara, Ta' Ganu windmill (at times also known as *Tal-Mahlut*) was one of the many such windmills which were spread around Malta and Gozo. It was built in 1724 during the grandmastership of Manoel de Vilhena by the Manoel Foundation and was still being used until 1929 when the sails were removed. In the post-World War II years it was turned into a blacksmith's workshop. In the second half of the 1980s the building was restored and it became an artist's studio where ceramist Gabriel Caruana (1929-2018) exhibited his works and those of other artists. In one of the corners of its square base there is a niche which holds a statue of St Michael.



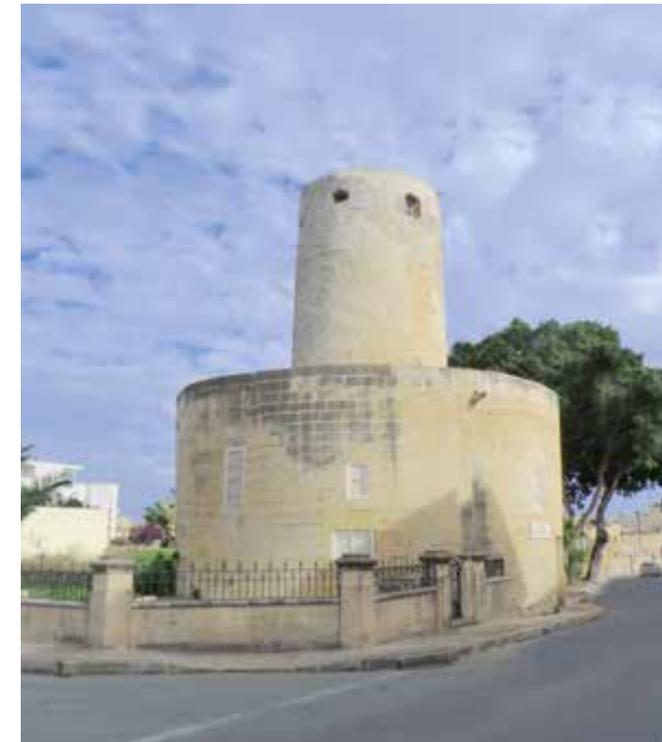

BIRKIRKARA TA' ĠĦAR IL-ĠOBON WINDMILL

This windmill is one of a number which had supplied the people of Birkirkara with the flour for their daily bread and was built by the Carafa Foundation in 1684. It is in the area known as *Has-Sajjed*. This square-based windmill is visible on the right hand side as one proceeds through the Birkirkara Bypass towards l-Imsida. It gave its service as a flour mill between 1684 and 1930. Afterwards its sails were taken off and it was turned into a private residence as it still is today.



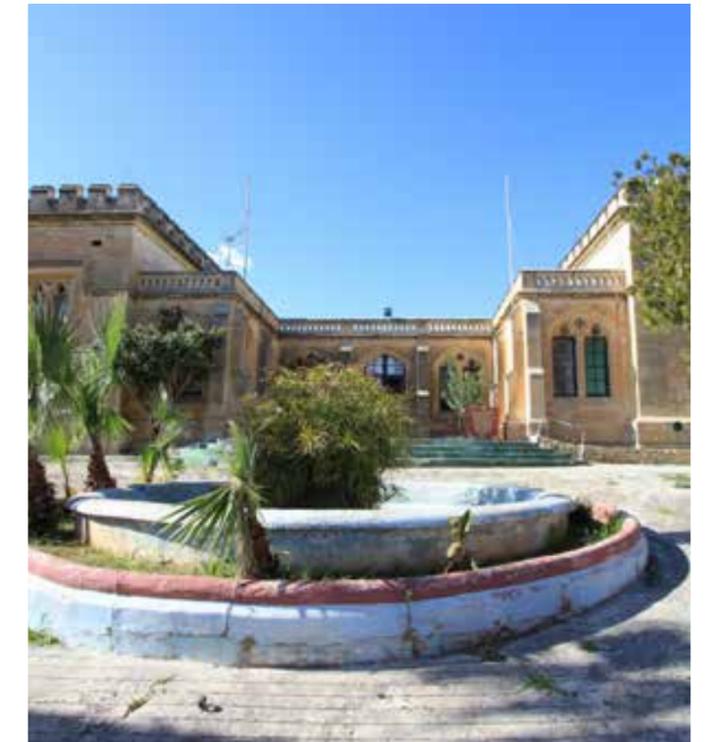

ĦAL LIJA TAL-MIRAKLI WINDMILL

In the area known as *Tal-Mirakli* stands a windmill with an interesting story. The windmill itself was built on the site where there stood before the church dedicated to the Assumption of the hamlet of Ħal Bordi. This is confirmed by the bones and graves unearthed when the foundations for this windmill were being laid. This hamlet, along with the neighbouring hamlet of Ħal Mann, joined Ħal Lija in 1610. The *Tal-Mirakli* windmill, which is also known as *Tal-Ghadiriet*, was built by the Cottoner Foundation around 1674 and continued to serve the community until 1889. The form of this windmill is unique due to its full-round base which is two-storey high. Another unusual feature regards it being constructed on a plain rather than on higher ground. After serving as a mill, it passed into the hands of the Works Department and later on a forge was installed for metalwork. The fire did much damage to the stonework and it is said that the windmill caught fire several times. In 1993 it was restored by the Ministry of Works and Infrastructure and devolved to the Ħal Lija Local Council in that same year.




IL-ĠŻIRA WATER AND SEWER PUMPING STATION

A striking neo-Gothic building, standing in Rue D'Argens, has its roots in the late 19th century, when a master plan was prepared for the creation of domestic fresh water and sewer infrastructure to serve the area around the Grand Harbour and Marsamxett Harbour along with its suburbs. The North harbour towns were serviced by this Water and Sewer Pumping Station designed by the architect and civil engineer Giorgio Schinas (1834–1894). Together with Capt. T.J. Tressider of the Royal Engineers, they were responsible for the design and construction of the infrastructure that would support the harbour towns with fresh water and sewer amenities. From the outside the pumping station did not reveal its real function as it could be easily mistaken for a high-class 'fortified' residence with its roof adorned with a crenellated parapet while it also transmitted its Gothic flavour through the lancet double light windows that pieced the façade.



**L-IMSIDA
L-GĦAJN
TAL-HASSELIN**

On the left of the road which from Birkirkara leads to the heart of L-Imnsida one sees a multi-arched structure which goes back to the 18th century. Known as *l-Għajn tal-Hasselein* (the washers' spring), this structure, built with funds offered by the Bali Philip Wolfgang de Gutenberg in 1750, provided a meeting place for many women from L-Imnsida and the neighbouring areas. Water channelled there was used by these women to wash their clothes and other items such as fruit and vegetables at a time when there was no supply of water in houses. It seems that the local fishermen also found the water of the *Għajn tal-Hasselein* convenient to keep their fish fresh and alive. One can also imagine a scene from yesteryear with women singing and rhyming (in Maltese: *ghana*) while scrubbing and rinsing their clothes in the abundant water of this spring.



FISHING

Several localities that have a seacoast were in the past fishing villages. San Ġiljan was one of these until it became the summer residence of many well-to-do families. Even though San Ġiljan is today an urban and very busy touristic zone, some fishermen can still be found. Spinola Bay also continues to provide shelter for many colourful Maltese boats while some extant old dwellings and boat houses remind one of the fishing past.

L-Imnsida too was a fishing village in past times but has now become quite urbanised. One still however finds a few fishermen who continue to operate from here. The same can be said for Tas-Sliema and Ta' Xbiex. With the modernisation of these localities, fishing activity has been reduced to a minimum and the fishermen in these areas have now become very few and continue to decrease with the passing of time.









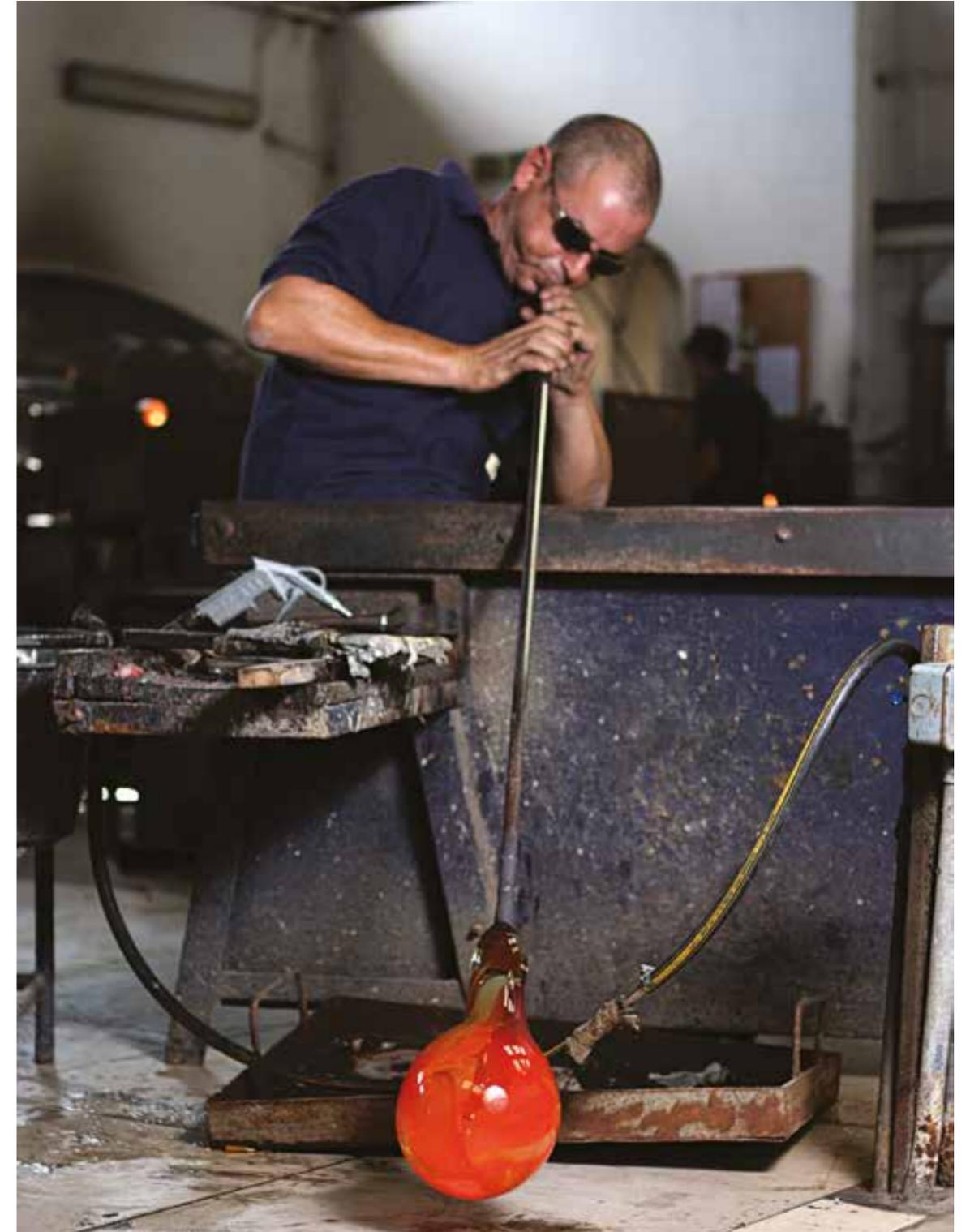
TAL-PIETÀ BOATHOUSE

An iconic structure that has dominated the Tal-Pietà seafront for many decades is the arched building with slanting roof that has, after restoration in 2008, become a restaurant. In the 19th century it served as a Marine Police Station from where contraband activities in the area could be monitored and prevented. When the Marine Section was amalgamated with the Customs Section in 1893, the building continued to serve as a Customs veranda, while more recently it had become a boathouse where many boat owners sheltered their vessels when these were not in use.



 **H'ATTARD
TA' QALI
CRAFTS VILLAGE**

Functioning as a centre for local crafts that can be showcased for locals and especially tourists, the various shops were housed in the RAF wartime airfield Nissen huts which were part of the Ta' Qali airfield. The airfield was originally built to take civil airplanes in the late 1930s but then became RAF Station Ta' Qali in 1940 with the outbreak of World War II. The local crafts exhibited include glassblowing, gold and silver filigree, ceramics, jewellery, art and sculpture and lace. In 2018 the crafts village area was renovated by the Government through a project funded from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), while the owners were expected to redevelop their outlets through a co-financed effort.



 **TAL-PIETÀ /
GWARDAMANĠA
PUBLIC
BROADCASTING
SERVICES (PBS)**

The building that houses the national broadcasting station was inaugurated on 23 January 1958 but broadcasting in Malta goes back to 1933 with the Naval Wireless Station in Rinella. The Rediffusion Group of Companies soon after set up a sound wired system and Rediffusion (Malta) Ltd began its transmissions in November of 1935. In September 1961 the services were expanded when a television station began to operate with transmissions launched in September 1962. *Radju Malta* was then established under the management of the Malta Broadcasting Authority. In 1975 Telemalta Corporation was established by an Act of Parliament, taking responsibility of broadcasting in Malta. The company, known as *Xandir Malta*, became responsible for *Radju Malta*.

The latest development took place in September of 1991 when PBS Ltd was set up thus taking over *Xandir Malta* and providing public broadcasting services in the Maltese islands.

The building from which PBS operates today was inaugurated in January 1958 by Governor of Malta Sir Robert Laycock and blessed by Archbishop Michael Gonzi. It was designed by Carmelo Falzon, a leading architect in private practice at the time, and the building is considered as one of the pioneering structures of the modern architectural movement in Malta. Defining architectural features include a cantilevered winged canopy sheltering the main entrance, and a continuous series of horizontal windows along the full length of the façade.



BUSINESS ALL AROUND

The Central Region is one of the most business-active and entrepreneurial areas of the Maltese island where, besides a number of industrial estates, there are a multitude of business enterprises which cover the whole spectrum of the economy. Roaming around the streets of the Region one will see modern and vibrant structures hosting firms, companies, associations, small- and medium-sized businesses and other entities which contribute to the national and local economies. One will also see abandoned business premises that were renowned in their hayday but which are now redundant or have been phased out. These too constitute an industrial heritage which has contributed in its own way to the wealth of the localities in the Region in past times.

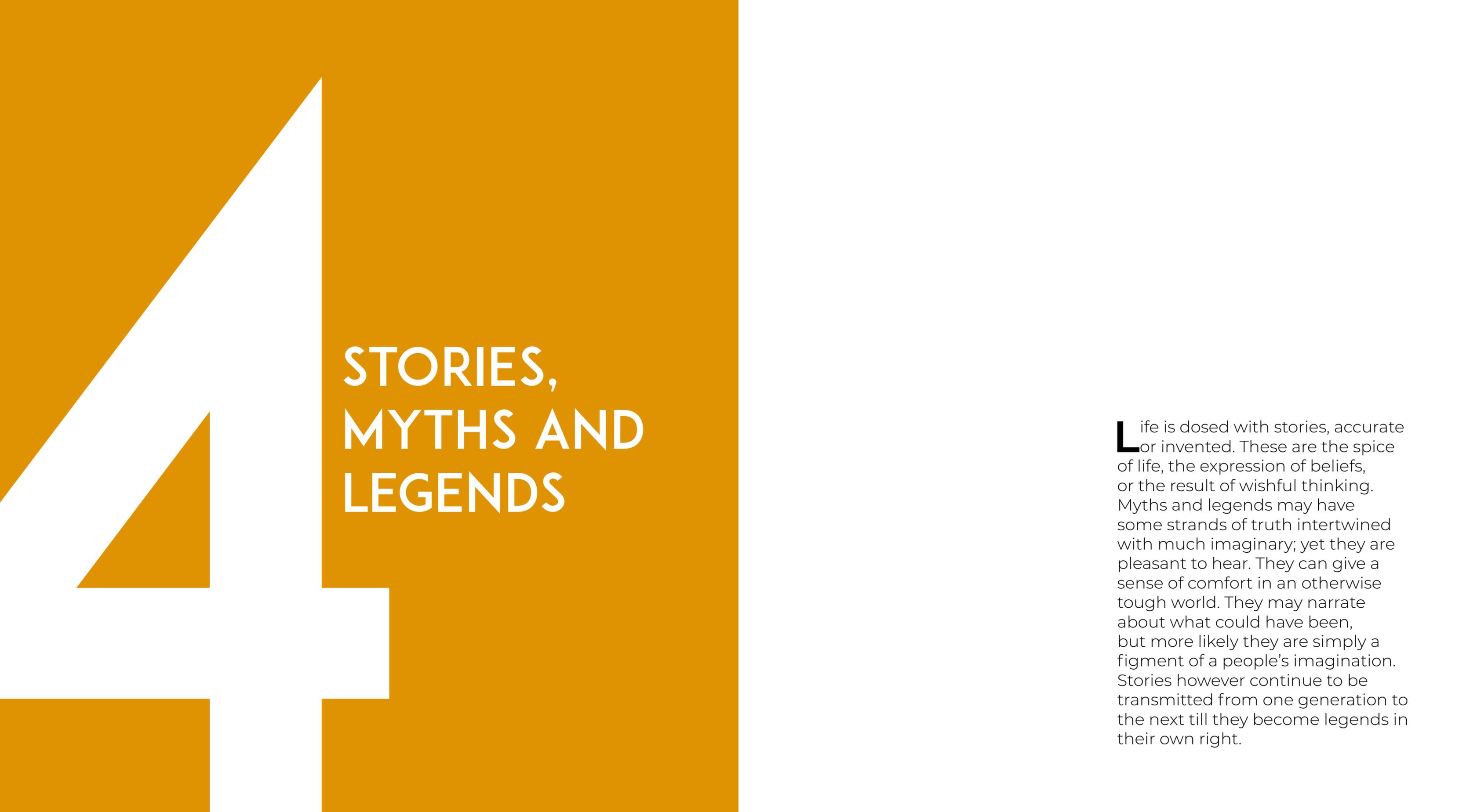




BIRKIRKARA MRIEHEL INDUSTRIAL ESTATE

One of the industrial zones in the Central Region is that of Mrieħel which stretched for about 100,000 square meters and is the seat of a number of manufacturing companies that deal in food, beverages, electronics and their components. The presence of retail financial and banking institutions make this area a more complete commercial and industrial park.





STORIES, MYTHS AND LEGENDS

Life is dosed with stories, accurate or invented. These are the spice of life, the expression of beliefs, or the result of wishful thinking. Myths and legends may have some strands of truth intertwined with much imaginary; yet they are pleasant to hear. They can give a sense of comfort in an otherwise tough world. They may narrate about what could have been, but more likely they are simply a figment of a people's imagination. Stories however continue to be transmitted from one generation to the next till they become legends in their own right.



SAN ĠWANN MENSIJA SANCTUARY

Although dedicated to the Annunciation of Our Lady and St Leonard, this troglodyte church has a story tied to it which explains why it is commonly known as the *Mensija* Sanctuary. This story recounts that at some time in the past a man had dug a hole which he intended to serve him as a kitchen for a house he was building. Later on a farmer bought a field which had a small house in it. One day, while night had fallen, the farmer was descending the steps to enter this house when he noticed a bright light coming out of a crack in the face of the neighbouring wall. He at once called his wife and children and all remained astonished. The farmer thought of investigating further and so he took a pick and began to break the stone wall and at last through the gap he could see that there was a niche with a painting of Our Lady. More surprising was the lamp hanging in front of the painting which was lit, but no explanation could be given for this. The farmer ran to the parish priest in Birkirkara and told him the whole story. The parish priest went to see for himself and decided to take the painting

home so that it could be put in the parish church. However the painting, inexplicably, was again found in the niche from where it had been removed. The parish priest brought it back again to his house but for the second time, without anyone touching it, the painting returned to its original place. The bishop was then informed and he ordered the painting to be brought to his house, but, as in the previous two instances, it was again found in its niche. The bishop thus visited the place and ordered that a stone altar was to be built, the cave cleared of all the rubble and the niche guarded by iron bars. The cave soon became a place of pilgrimage and the sanctuary was thus born.

As the cave and the painting had been forgotten (in Maltese: *minsija*) the church took the name of *Tal-Mensija*. Over the cave a chapel was constructed which, after being profaned in 1659 due to lack of maintenance, was again opened for the public later on when the required upkeep was taken care of. The principal painting is a triptych depicting St Leonard, the Archangel Gabriel and the Annunciation.



IL-GŻIRA OUR LADY OF THE STONE

In il-Gżira an episode that took place on 10 July 1902 is still quite vivid in the collective memory of the locals. This is so as they can still see an image of Our Lady, which is associated with this event, exhibited in their parish church.

On that fateful day at 5.00 in the morning, three drunk foreign soldiers, deciding that it was still too early to go to bed, searched for a place where they could continue their drinking bout. They banged on the door of Carmel Brincat's bar, in the lower end of Manoel de Vilhena Street, demanding he opened to serve them, but he refused. Infuriated, they began to throw stones at the window above the bar, and not able to take it anymore Brincat budged. On opening the door one of the soldiers hit him with a stick and then the trio ran away, only to be apprehended soon after. Looking at the façade of his bar, Brincat noticed that while throwing stones the soldiers had hit a glass niche hanging near the window and which contained the image of Our Lady. The glass had been smashed but one of the stones, quite big and heavy, had remained wedged within the shattered pane. It did not fall; neither its hefty weight nor the heavy wind that blew on that day could dislodge it. People were amazed and went to observe this strange happening with their own eyes. The ecclesiastical authorities intervened and appointed architects Galizia and Trevisan to look into the situation and report back. A priest from the parish of *Stella Maris* was given permission to bring the stone down and this was taken to the parish church in solemn procession and three days of prayer and atonement followed.

The image became known among the people as Our Lady of the Stone (*il-Madonna tal-Ġebbla*). Later on the holy image was put in a store house in il-Gżira very close to where the incident has taken place. Then a chapel was built which was declared a vice parish in 1913. Il-Gżira became a parish in 1921 and this led to the building of a big parish church dedicated to Our Lady of Mount Carmel instead of the existing chapel. The stone and the sacred image are now preserved in the il-Gżira parish church, a tangible memorial to the offence that had been committed in 1902.





HAL LIJA **CHURCH OF THE** **BLESSED VIRGIN**

The first known church in the area of Hal Bordi, was found on the spot where the *Tal-Mirakli* windmill stands today. It was dedicated to the Assumption of Our Lady into Heaven. In 1664 on the orders of Grand Master Nicholas Cottoner, a new, bigger church was built a short distance away. Following the Doric style, the construction work is reputed to have been done by the Hal Lija master mason Pietro Barbara, who was architect Giovanni Barbara's father. The plans are attributed to architect and sculptor Lorenzo Gafa (1639–1703). A sacristy was built in 1745 and in it there is a holy water font worked out of a stalactite. The titular painting by Mattia Preti represents the Madonna of the Snow holding the Child Jesus. St Peter and St Nicholas of Bari are paying homage to Our Lady, while a kneeling Archangel Raphael is also in the painting following the wishes of Grand Master Cottoner in memory of his bother Raphael who had preceded him as Grand Master of the Order.

The main attraction in this church is a triptych which goes back to the 16th century. On the central panel is Our Lady with the Child Jesus on her knee while on the two side panels there are St Peter and St Nicholas. It belonged to the previous church of *Ta' Ghadir il-Bordi*. It was already reported in 1661 by the parish priest of Hal Lija that this effigy was considered to be miraculous and that graces had been procured thus attracting pilgrims to it. In 1743 its miraculous attributes were enhanced when it was reputed to have sweated on the eve of an earthquake that hit Malta on 21 February of that year. Droplets, it was testified by the man who took care of the church, were seen on the Madonna's forehead, cheeks and bosom. Could these have been a result of humidity in the air, he asked himself. But he could not identify such a source and reported the occurrence to the ecclesiastical authorities. People flocked to the church to pray in front of this effigy and it soon became known as *Il-Madonna tal-Mirakli* (Our Lady of the Miracles). The devotion grew so much that various popes granted indulgencies to those who visit this church. It continues to draw devotees to this day.



SAN ĠWANN **CHAPEL OF THE** **BEHEADING OF** **ST JOHN**

Known popularly as the chapel of St John of Ghargħar, the original one was possibly erected towards the mid-16th century. In 1684 a second church was built replacing the former; emulating in size and characteristics the chapel of St Margaret which was close by. It became a *giuspatronato* of the Gatt family and continued in this state for many years.

A story tied to this chapel is linked to the rising of the Maltese against the French in 1798. It is said that as this chapel was quite visible from Valletta and the Marsamxett area including Fort Manoel, the commandant of the Birkirkara Company, Vincenzo Borg 'Brared', decided to order some of his men to each take an agricultural fork, put it on their shoulder and march round the chapel. This he did to give the impression that many armed men were marching to battle. The area *Tal-Ghargħar* where this chapel was situated, soon became one of

the strongly fortified zones from where the Maltese monitored French troop movements. Ta' Xindi farmhouse, a few metres from the chapel, also became the field quarters of Vincenzo Borg.

The chapel itself is quite simple in design with a relatively plain façade and an arched ceiling inside. The small belfry is topped by an eight-pointed cross, which however does not seem to be linked in any way with the Order of St John. Of interest is the fact that when the Capuchin friars arrived in San Ġwann in 1956, while they used the corridor of their convent as a provisional chapel, they also took under their care the chapel of St John. The translation of the Holy Sacrament to the new church of San Ġwann which later on became the parish church in 1965, began from this chapel.





SAN ĠILJAN DROGONARA PALACE

The palace is built on the peninsula which ends at Drogonara Point, a place which is shrouded in legend. There are undersea caves in the area and some held that these were so deep that they stretched up to Birkirkara. Local legends also recounted that in these caves lived a dragon as people heard sounds which they interpreted as some sort of roaring, but it was more plausibly the sound of the sea hitting the rocks or the howling of the wind. The story of the dragon was most probably spread by smugglers so that people would be afraid of approaching the area and they could thus carry on with their illegal business unhindered.

The area had been fortified by the Order of St John during their rule where they erected the Spinola entrenchment. The Maltese also put up what was known as Ta' Għemmuna Battery when they rose against the French in 1798.

The banker Emanuele Scicluna (1820-1886), who was made a marquis by Pope Pius IX in 1875, bought the whole peninsula from the Government in 1860 and by 1870 he had built a palace for himself which he used as a summer residence. It was designed in the neoclassical style and is sometimes attributed to the architect Giuseppe Bonavia (1821-1885). During World War I the palace was put at the disposal of the military authorities by the Marchioness Corinne Scicluna to be used as a hospital. During World War II, Marquis John Scicluna emulated the act of generosity started by his mother in the previous War and allowed a large number of refugees to stay in the palace and the grounds.

When in the early 1960s the tourism industry began to make significant progress, the palace was leased to the Anglo-German Kursaal Company Ltd. which turned it into a casino. The courtyard was roofed to create the casino's gaming room and the area for the slot machines, and this was designed by architect Dom Mintoff (1916-2012). The Dragonaro Palace Casino opened its door for business in 1964 and it was the first ever casino in Malta. The building has been expanded and developed and continues to play its part in Malta's tourism sector.

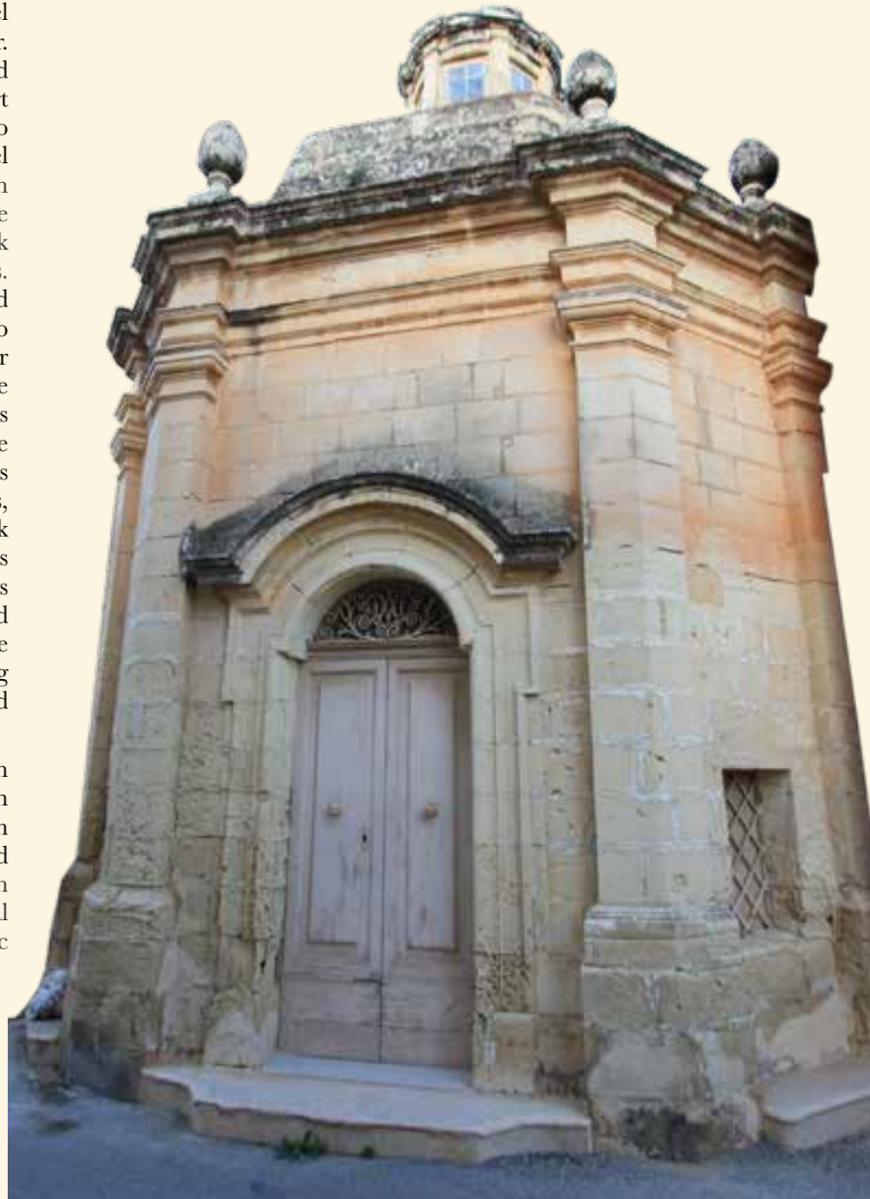




HAL LIJA CHURCH OF THE NATIVITY OF THE VIRGIN MARY

The first known chapel dedicated to the Assumption was constructed in the 16th century. During the early 17th century a second chapel was built to replace the dilapidated predecessor. This too fell in disrepair and in 1740 a third chapel – the present one – was erected a short distance away from the other and dedicated to the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin. This chapel is known as *tal-Belliegha*, an inheritance which it continues to bare from the 16th century. The meaning of *tal-Belliegha* ranges from a dark and bottomless hole to someone who gulps. This epithet is linked to a legend associated with this chapel and which is directly related to the third Commandment. Catholics consider Sunday and holy feasts as days reserved for the worship of God in church and manual work is not allowed. This was especially observed in the past. In olden days, behind the chapel there was a field and it was the feast of the Holy Cross, but the farmer who had been doing some work there, decided to continue with it also on this day. The legend continues that while he was ploughing, the earth opened up and swallowed him together with the animals that were pulling the plough. Many people have long assiduously observed this feast as they feared some misfortune.

The present chapel is octagonal in shape though only three sides are visible from the street. Each of the visible corners is composed of Tuscan style pilasters that hold an entablature and end at the top with a stone ornamental acorn on a pedestal. On the inside the church is oval in shape and Baroque in style with eight Ionic pilasters.



SANTA VENERA NICHE OF A RESTING ST PAUL

In front of the old parish church dedicated to St Venera stands a statue of the patron saint of the village, the work of sculptor Chris Ebejer, which was inaugurated in 2015. On the back of the pedestal lies a marble plaque with an inscription and above it a niche holding an old statue of a resting St Paul. The plaque speaks of a saying which has its roots in tradition. This rumour claims that while the Apostle St Paul was roaming the island preaching, after his shipwreck on Malta in the year 60AD, at one point he stopped to rest in that area. It is for this reason that the *Vendriżi* (as the inhabitants of Santa Venera are known) decided to include this niche so that this story is not forgotten.



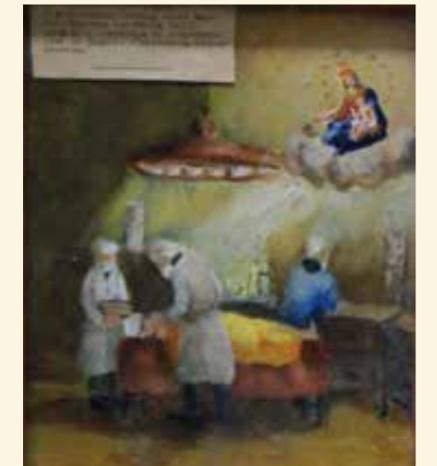
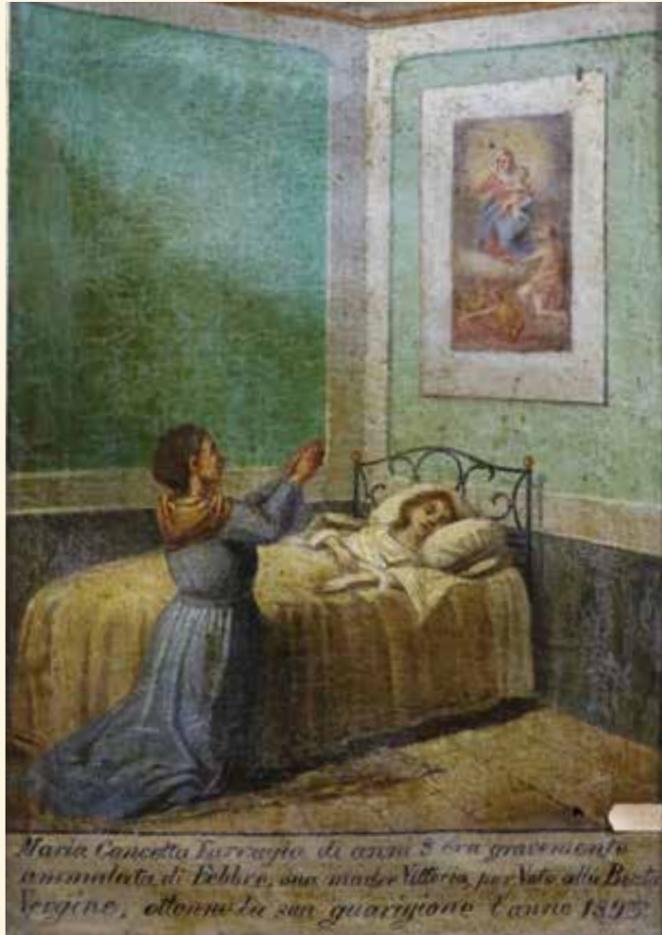
IT-TQEGHID TA' DIN L-ISTATWA ANTIKA
TA' SAN PAWL MISTRIEH GHANDHA
L-GHAN LI ŻZOMM HAJJA
T-TRADIZZJONI LI TGHID LI WARA
N-NAWFRAGJU F' MALTA
FIS-SENA 60 W.K. SAN PAWL WAQAF JISTRIEH
F' DAWN L-INHAWI WAQT LI KIEN
QIEGHED ITERRAQ MINN POST
GHAL IEHOR BIEX IXANDAR
IL-KELMA T'ALLA

BIRKIRKARA SANCTUARY OF OUR LADY OF TAL-HERBA

An interesting church that is nearly hidden to the passer-by lies in a dead-end street at the back of St Helena's Basilica. Known to have already been standing in the year 1575, at that time it was not specified by the name it bears today. The *Tal-Herba* title was however surely used by 1615, when it was already a place of pilgrimage, and the building was renovated in 1640. The event which brought this church to fame with the faithful regarded the healing of a man who had walking impediments. The story narrates, that as soon as this man heard the church bell while he was in the area dragging his feet with the help of crutches, he hurried as best he could to attend Mass. As he was entering the church the crutches fell from his hold and he could walk unaided. Filled with awe and gratitude, the man fell on his knees in thankful praise to God and Our Lady. As this event spread around, the church gradually accumulated fame and attracted more and more pilgrims with numerous accounts emerging of persons recovering from incurable illnesses by praying to Our Lady of *tal-Herba*.

Inside this sanctuary the titular painting shows the Virgin with Child, done during the period 1668-1679 and this is a replacement of an older painting now in the side chapel of this church. A *ganutell* bouquet on display originates from the time of the Great Siege of 1565 when it was presented to Grand Master de Valette in commemoration of his success in this ordeal. Particularly impressive is a room covered all over with ex voto paintings offered in gratitude for graces received. It is a place where healing is in the centre of the devotion which this sanctuary has enjoyed for centuries. The titular painting was solemnly crowned in 1910.





FEASTS, FESTIVALS AND FIREWORKS

Expressions of joy and celebration need to be externalised in such a way so that these can demonstrate the community's level of excitement and feeling. Maltese feasts and festivals are many times accompanied by fireworks as these top up the festive atmosphere and are a means by which the celebrators announce the event to those near and far. Inhabitants of different localities have chosen distinguishing ways of how to express their moments of celebration – some are more sombre, others are more colourful. While the statues of patron saints paraded through the streets of the various towns and villages are a demonstration of faith, they are also a renewal of annual tradition.

THE COLOUR OF CELEBRATION

The Maltese are a Mediterranean people who love a bubbly life spiced with feasting and merrymaking. Their character seeks ways how to express themselves such as gesticulating with their arms while debating and discussing anything under the sun. They are a people who do not generally take to silence; they are loud and at times boisterous; and that, for a large portion of the Maltese, is the norm rather than the exception. One way in which this euphoria is externalised and manifested is provided by the many religious feasts that take place around the Maltese islands throughout the whole year, but more intensely from June to September, peaking in August. Malta's Catholic traditions include the annual feast to the patron saint of the town or village and in some cases the celebration of a secondary feast and other minor ones, all of which are sought after by the locals. Some express their spiritual love and devotion for the saint, while others are more secular in their participation. Yet, all show their Maltese traits in more ways than one. The sounds of the feast are expressed by the marching bands, the fireworks, the food, the merrymaking, the ceremonial, the ritual and the carrying of the statue of the patron saint along the streets of the locality.

Maltese *festas* typically burst with local colour – the street decorations, festoon lights, illuminated facades, coloured fireworks or *murtali tal-kulur* in the sky, and *giggifogu* or ground fireworks, the procession with the vestments and the large standards, and the gilded and painted statue of the patron saint.



Religious procession



Main altar embellishment



Pilandra - street decoration



Liedna and lights



Festive church interior

Processional mace





Pavaljuni and other street decorations



The sound of music and singing



A baraxx in the night sky

Magestic murtalli tal-kulur



A PANOPLY OF SAINTS

Every parish in Malta has its own patron saint in whose honour an annual *festa* is celebrated, and which constitutes a focal point in the life of that community. It is important to note that in some localities there are more than one parish, and thus a patron saint is assigned to each of these parishes. Birkirkara embraces three parishes, San Ġiljan has two, while Tas-Sliema has four.

The Central Region has, therefore, its good share of feasts. Many celebrate St Mary or *Santa Marija* under various titles. Thus Ħ'Attard and one of Birkirkara's parishes honour the Assumption of Mary into Heaven (*l-Assunta* or *it-Tluġh fis-Sema tal-Madonna*). Our Lady of Mount Carmel (*il-Madonna tal-Karmelu*) is celebrated in il-Gżira, Fleur de Lys and San Ġiljan (Balluta area), while Our Lady of Fatima (*il-Madonna ta' Fatima*) is the main feast in Gwardamanga / Tal-Pietà, with Our Lady of Lourdes (*il-Madonna ta' Lourdes*) being celebrated in San Ġwann. The other titles of St Mary honoured as a patron saint in the Region are, Our Lady Star of the Sea (*Stella Maris*) and Our Lady of the Sacred Heart of Jesus (*Sacro Cuor*) both in Tas-Sliema, and the Annunciation (*il-Lunzjata*) in Ħal Balzan.

L-Imnsida and part of Birkirkara are dedicated to St Joseph (*San Ġużepp*), with the latter parish qualifying the saint as the Worker (*il-Ħaddiem*). Furthermore, Ħal Lija celebrates the Transfiguration of Jesus (*is-Salvatur*) while one of the Tas-Sliema parishes honours Jesus of Nazareth (*Ġesù Nazzarenu*).

Jesus, Mary and Joseph, that is, the Sacred Family (*il-Familja Mqaddsa*) is the annual titular feast in l-Iklin.

The rest of the localities forming the Central Region celebrate other saints. Thus: St Helena (*Santa Liëna*) in Birkirkara; St Julian the Hospitaller (*San Ġiljan*) in San Ġiljan; St Venera (*Santa Venera*) in Santa Venera; St Gregory (*San Ġirgor*) in Tas-Sliema; St John of the Cross (*San Ġwann tas-Salib*) in Ta' Xbiex, and the only declared Maltese saint, St George Preca (*San Ġorġ Preca*) in is-Swatar.



St Helena - Birkirkara



Our Lady of Mount Carmel - il-Balluta



The Annunciation - Ħal Balzan



St Joseph - I-Imnsida >

< St Julian the
Hospitaller - San Ġiljan





St Venera -
Santa Venera



The Transfiguration of Jesus - Hal Lija



Our Lady of Fatima -
Gwardamanga



Our Lady of Mount
Carmel - il-Gżira



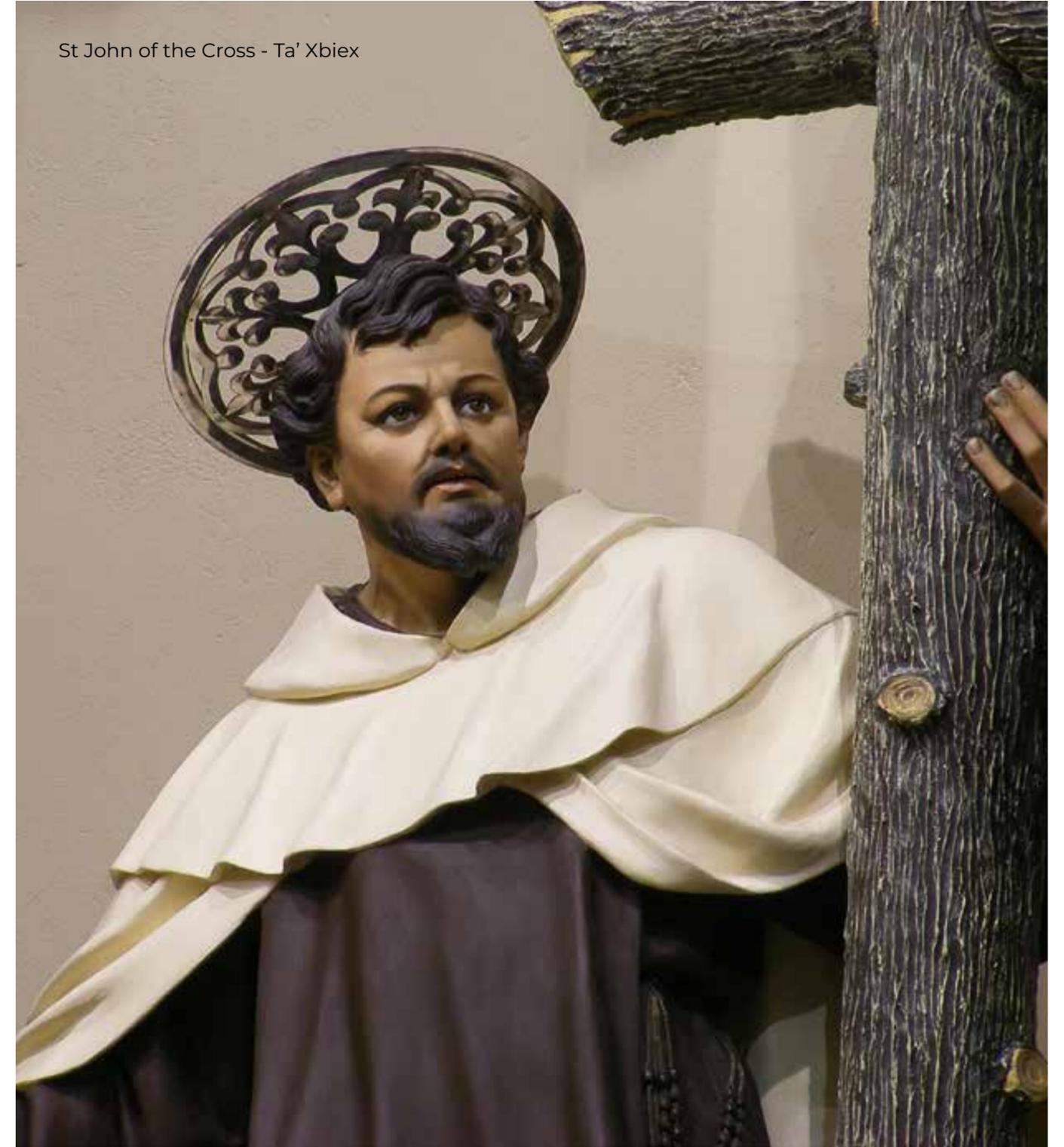
St Gregory - Tas-Sliema



St Joseph the Worker - Birkirkara



The Assumption of Mary into Heaven - H'Attard



St John of the Cross - Ta' Xbiex



St George Preca -
is-Swatar



Our Lady of Lourdes -
San Ġwann



Our Lady of the Sacred Heart of Jesus - Tas-Sliema



Our Lady of Mount Carmel - Fleur-de-Lys



Our Lady Star of the Sea - Tas-Sliema

A HINT OF LOCAL FOLKLORE

One can say that though we speak of *il-festa Maltija* (the Maltese feast), we cannot imply that all the *festi* are identical. Far from this assumption is indeed the case. Each locality and parish looks at its feast as unique and makes sure to certify this by the various features which distinguish one *festa* from another. The *dilettanti*, or feast enthusiasts, do their very best to bring novelty within their *festa* without departing too much from tradition. They are aware that culture needs to be respected and thus they have to guard against destroying their local cultural heritage. Yet, they also seek to stand out by presenting their *festa* as their own, unique and particular. Some of this uniqueness comes from the same traditions that these communities keep and cherish.

One instance would be the *gostra*. This rather difficult game sees men running up a 65ft (19.812m) pole tied diagonally to a barge, large boat or some other steady base, to clutch one of three flags, which are fixed at the end part of this pole. The complexity of the game is presented by the lard and other greasy material spread over the pole, which thus adds a slippery dose to the exploit. The running young men find their attempt to win the prize pretty difficult with their feet desperately trying to get a hold on the greasy pole but many times they fail. They plunge into the sea and try again!

This game has been with the Maltese since some centuries ago. It seems to have been born in the aftermath of 1565 when the Maltese began to celebrate the victory over the Ottoman forces marked by what has become known as the Great Siege. The Grand Harbour began to witness this new exploit for young and spirited men who rose to the challenge. With time many of the coastal villages began to organise the *gostra* on particular occasions which were tied to both religious and social events. Tal-Pietà, Tas-Sliema, and San Ġiljan organised the *gostra*, for example, in 1845 on the occasion of the feast of Our Lady of

Sorrows. L-Imnsida also entertained its inhabitants, and those who came from other localities, to *gostra* treats on different moments in its history such as on the anniversary of the consecration of its parish church. Since the first feast of St Joseph in 1892, for the *Misidjani* (as people from l-Imnsida are known) the *gostra* was a mainstay in the local waters and it was only suspended when the sea had become too polluted. It resumed in later years however, and continues to this day.

The *gostra* also features in the life of San Ġiljan, a tradition which also goes back to the nineteenth century. The *Ġiljanizi* (the people from San Ġiljan) from the local *gostra* club, take their chance up the greasy pole at 15-minute intervals, a process which serves them to 'clean' as much of the slippery material they can before making the real dash for the prize flag at the top end of that lethal shaft. The onlookers admire the courage and persistence of these men as they appear to be much less bothered about getting hurt and much more intrigued with achieving success. Not everyone can join in the fun as entry requirements stipulate that only residents of San Ġiljan can participate and furthermore they need to be part of a team of volunteers that help in the decoration of the locality for the *festa*,

A curious feature of the *festa* at San Ġiljan is the volley of blank shots produced by hunters firing their shotguns from the roof of the parish church while the statue of the patron saint is coming out of the main door. St Julian was a hunter while the area where the town sits today served for hunting when it was still a rural and rustic landscape. The hunting activity goes back to the time of the Order of St John. The shooting tradition from the roof of the church began in 1982 and it imitates the *musketterija* (firecrackers) which other parishes use for their salutes to the patron saint.

The *góstra*





FEASTS ALL YEAR ROUND

Malta is renowned for its feast calendar packed with more than 80 religious celebrations, and seasoned with all the pomp and fanfare typical of the Maltese *fešta* spirit. Within the Central Region two of its localities celebrate their patron's *fešta* in January and November. This means that in the Region, parish feasts stretch along nearly the whole year.

The feasts thus start off with the Sacred Family in January. The other *fešti* that can be enjoyed are those of St Joseph the Worker and St George Preca which are in May, and Our Lady of Fatima in June. July offers seven opportunities which are: Our Lady of Mount Carmel in three parishes; St Joseph, Our Lady of the Sacred Heart of Jesus; the Annunciation; and, St Venera.

August, which in Malta is *fešta* month *par excellence*, offers both Maltese and tourists eight opportunities to savour and live the *fešta* spirit: the Assumption in two parishes; Our Lady of Lourdes; the Transfiguration of Jesus; St Helena; Our Lady Star of the Sea and St Julian. In September there is St Gregory while the year tapers off with St John of the Cross in November.

The feasts in honour of the Holy Family in January, Jesus of Nazareth in February, St George Preca in May, the Assumption of Mary into Heaven in August (Birkirkara), and St John of the Cross in November, do not have all the external elements of the traditional village *fešta* and are largely celebrated on religious lines.

All parishes and local communities also join in celebrations which mark the Catholic calendar. Thus Holy Week finds its apex on Easter Sunday (*L-Irxoxl*). In many towns and villages exhibitions with Good Friday statuetes also abound. Visitors go from one exhibition to another admiring the artistic and devotional settings of the various exhibits.

The Christmas season is manifested everywhere in its various forms such as the *priedka tat-tifel* or the traditional sermon by a boy (in more recent times also by a girl) during Midnight Mass. There are processional manifestations with the statue of Baby Jesus by members of the M.U.S.E.U.M.; traditional crib (*presepiju*) exhibitions and competitions; and many other Christmas-related events and functions.



The traditional dash with the statue of the Risen Christ on Easter Sunday in il-Gżira



A live *presejju* with inhabitants from Ħal Lija representing the *pasturi*



ĦAL LIJA CITRUS FRUIT FESTIVAL

Ħal Lija is synonymous with citrus fruits, so much so that both its coat-of-arms and motto expound this to the full. The motto runs '*Suave fructu rubeo*' (I become red with the sweet fruit), while three oranges ornate the locality's shield. The annual festival is held in January when the fruits are ripe and deep orange, and their sweet smell permeates the air. It is an event which brings together various organisations in the village and is an opportunity to sell the citrus products as many seek the sweet oranges of Ħal Lija. Being one of the first such locality events it has been running since 2001. Ħal Lija-grown products have gone beyond citrus and now papayas, avocados and mushrooms, for example, also feature. Artisanal products on offer span from wine, honey, marmalade, and olive oil, to organic food. And a touch of art is also included with the Tal-Mirakli Windmill being an ideal exhibition venue.



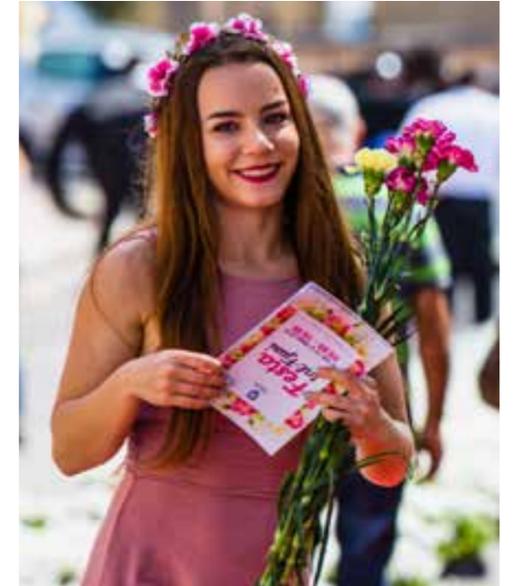
 **TA' XBIEX
CONNECTING
THROUGH CULTURE**

A festival which suits Ta' Xbiex perfectly is that celebrated in July under the title of Connecting through Culture which has been running since 2015. As Ta' Xbiex is home to a number of foreign embassies and diplomatic residences, this intercultural event brings together the contribution of countries and cultures. National foods and drinks, performances and other representations of peoples far and near form part of this intercultural event. Local and international artists make the event more and more culturally interesting. The participation of various embassies such as those of Italy, the United Kingdom, Australia, Turkey, Egypt, Ireland, Greece, the Netherlands, Spain, Germany, Japan, Libya, China, Ghana, Kuwait and Russia, along with Malta, are a manifestation of unity through cultural diversity. The event takes place at the Ta' Xbiex Yacht Marina



 **L-IKLIN
FESTA TAL-FJURI**

Fittingly celebrated in May, l-Iklin (which means rosemary) has since 2013 been organising its annual event with the name of *Festa tal-Fjuri*. Anton Buttigieg Street becomes the centre of cultural, educational and entertainment activities. Music, informative talks, ecological awareness, crafts and more accompany the exhibition of flowers in bloom where colour, sound and smell enhance the feeling of spring. A floral display decorates the street while stalls offer plants for those who wish to buy. Nature is further manifested through the blessing of pets by the village parish priest. Furthermore, a rosemary drink is promoted as part of a healthy diet along with fruit and fruit cake.





SEA, SHIPS AND BOATING

With a region that is washed on one side by the sea, the presence and activity of ships and boating cannot be missed. The blue waters entice those who love to sail. Enterprising others use the sea to carry out their business. The sea is a medium that has been exploited during war and peace. It continues to serve the maritime mission of these islands to become a hub of yachting through a build-up of marinas to serve this purpose.

MARSAMXETT HARBOUR AND ENVIRONS

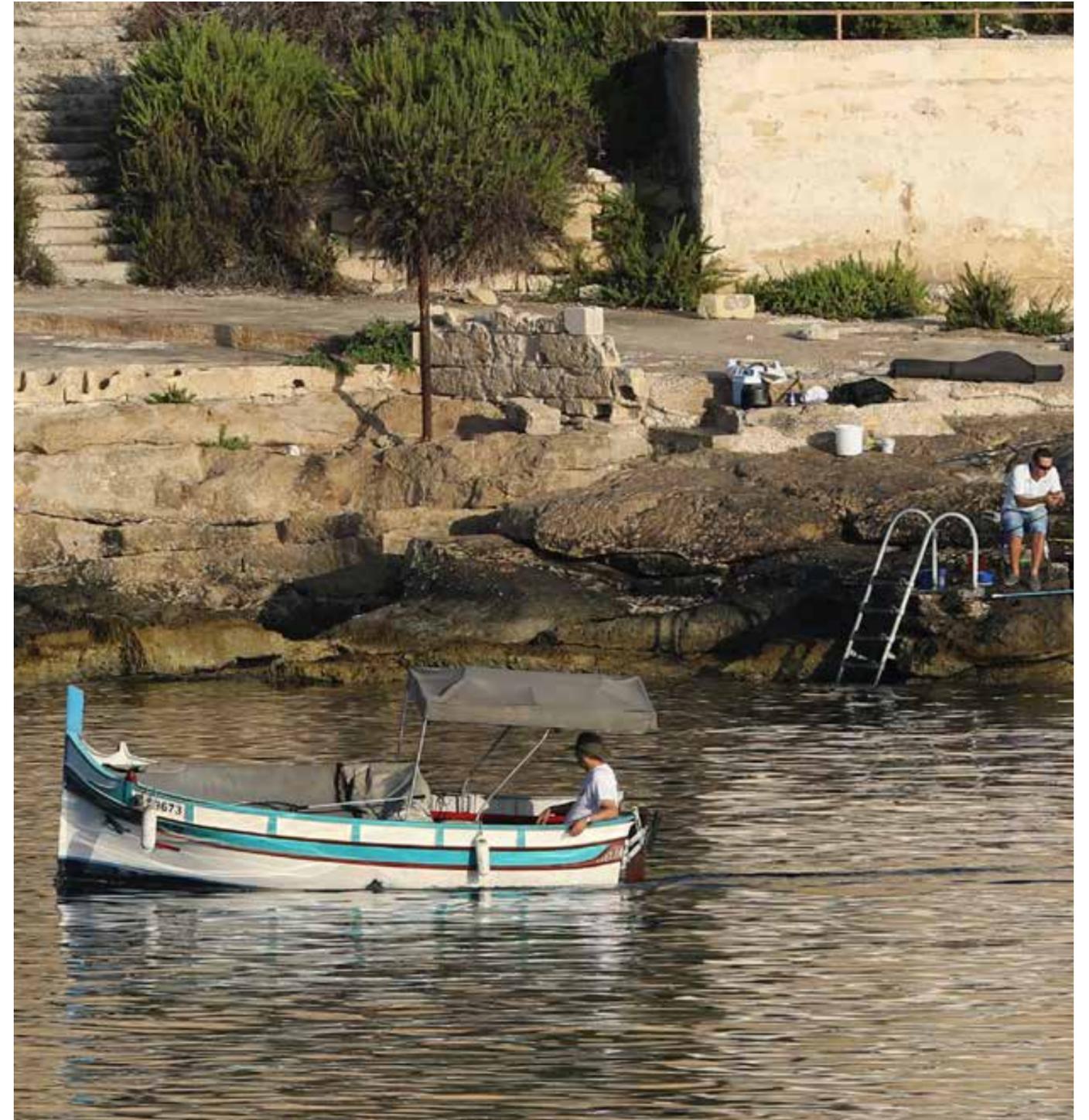
Marsamxett Harbour embraces a number of coastal localities that form part of the Central Region. These are Tal-Pietà, l-Imsida, Ta' Xbiex, il-Gżira and Tas-Sliema, while beyond, along the northern Maltese coast lies San Ġiljan. All have had their share of fishing activity, and the port localities have also experienced a long naval presence. One can mention the 1565 attack on Malta by the Ottoman forces sent by Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent. Initially the large fleet could not access the principal ports due to the menace of Fort St Elmo at the tip of the Sciberras peninsula (where Valletta was erected later on) assiduously defending the entrance to both Marsamxett and the Grand Harbours. It was after 23 June, with the fall of St Elmo, that part of the Ottoman fleet could take shelter in Marsamxett. There were yet no Maltese settlements on the coast opposite Sciberras and the Ottoman army set up its tents on the land that would later become the towns we know today.

Into the 19th century the coast opposite Valletta gradually became more and more populated; settlements were born and began to develop. When Malta eventually joined the British Empire, Marsamxett Harbour became a natural berthing place for the Royal Navy and its towns bustling with sailors. The strong presence of HM ships generated intense and profitable activity for many. In more recent times, and with Malta's Independence, this Harbour has become the birthing place of hundreds of yachts at a number of yacht marinas. The scene that dominates Marsamxett Harbour today is one of luxury yachts, holiday vessels and the myriad seacraft plying the calm blue sea.

Fishing has also been an activity of some importance in the area, with local fishermen preparing their *luzzu*, trawler and other fishing craft – these being a significant presence in the many coastal localities around Marsamxett Harbour.



Kajjik and other boats at Spinola Bay - San Ġiljan



Fishing for food and for leisure



Fishing craft tied to a quay - I-Imsida



Yachts and more - I-Imsida



Yacht Marinas galore - I-Imnsida and Ta' Xbiex





TA' XBIEX EX-MTB DEPOT

Ta' Xbiex is closely tied to the sea. It lies on a peninsula jutting out into Marsamxett Harbour. The name of this place seems to evoke the nets which fishermen use in their daily work. It is in fact argued that Ta' Xbiex derives from the word '*tax-xbiek*' which translates to 'the place where there are nets'. One cannot consider this reasoning as farfetched given that this settlement forms part of a port and the name of Ta' Xbiex could easily be a corruption of *tax-xbiek*.

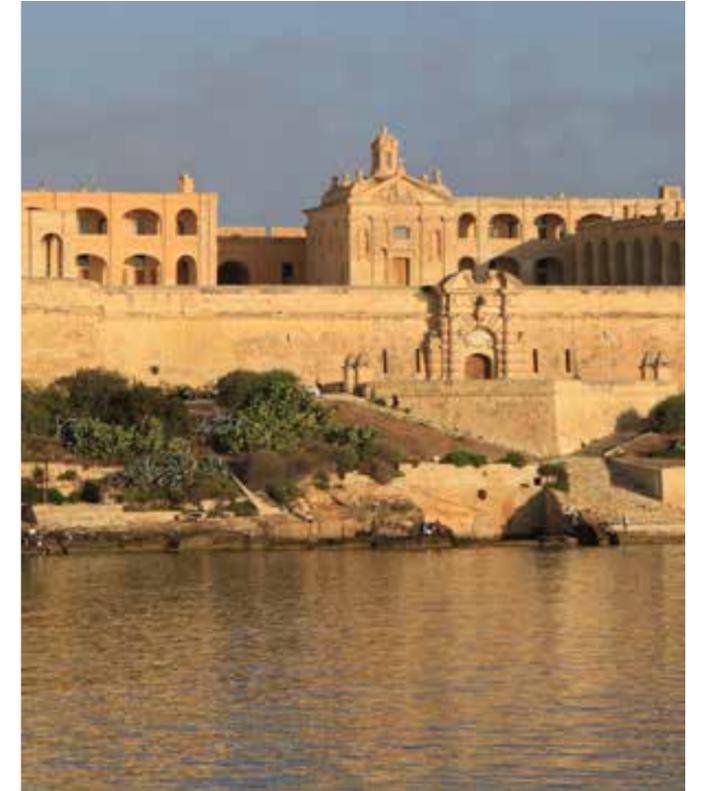
Ta' Xbiex hosted HMS *Gregale* which was a depot for MTBs (Motor Torpedo Boats). Having been authorised for construction in early 1939, HMS *Gregale* was commissioned on 5 March 1943 and Paid Off on 31 August 1946. This base consisted of four villas on the Ta' Xbiex Terrace with one of these hosting the HQ for the Captain Coastal Forces. The Women's Royal Naval Service (WRNS) were also based at Whitehall Mansions while garages underneath the ramp leading to this building served as workshops.

Today Whitehall Mansions serves other purposes including those for diplomatic and business entities, while the garages are privately occupied.



IL-GŻIRA EX-SUBMARINE BASE

Manoel Island and its fort served many roles along the centuries. During World War II it held the Royal Navy base for the 10th Submarine Flotilla and was known as HMS *Talbot*, later becoming HMS *Phaenicia*. The flotilla, nicknamed 'the Fighting 10th', was mostly made up of U Class submarines and it was based in Malta from early 1941. Manoel Island was equipped with workshops and with accommodation providing resting facilities for submarine crew members and for artificers or skilled tradesmen, while the submarines were moored alongside the island. Defence consisted of a good number of anti-aircraft guns as it received its good share of aerial attacks due to its proximity to Valletta. The base continued to function beyond the war years and as HMS *Phaenicia* it served as the headquarters of the Case Supply Officer who also occupied the position of Captain of *Phaenicia*. The base held the Pay Office and also the Signal Training Centre, the Navigation School and the Divers Training Centre. On Manoel Island entertainment was also provided for Services personnel and their families who came to watch films and also to play tombola in the evenings. The attractive prizes and the refreshments served between games were two reasons why so many frequented the island. The naval base was closed in the 1970s as the British left Malta in 1979.





IL-GŻIRA LAZARETTO

Along the coast of il-Gżira lies an island which was in the 16th century the property of the Bishop of Malta and known as *l'Isolotto* or *l'Isola del Vescovo* (the island of the bishop) as it had been acquired by the Cathedral Chapter in 1570. The island was used as a temporary lazaretto during the plague that hit Malta in 1592-93 as it was conveniently placed in the middle of Marsamxett Harbour which had been designated as a quarantine harbour. The Order, being the Government of Malta, in 1643 exchanged a piece of land called *tal-Fiddien* in ir-Rabat area with the Cathedral Chapter for the island so as to be able to build a proper quarantine lazaretto. From then on il-Gżira and Manoel Island saw all sorts of ships, from all nations, approaching and disembarking visitors and passengers who had to do quarantine to obtain their clean bill of health. Buildings erected by Grand Master Nicholas Cottoner after the plague of 1675-6 and others, included warehouses and a chapel dedicated to St Roque, the saint protector against the plague; however these were demolished in the 18th century. The island had a number of cemeteries and a shed for the quarantine of cattle; closer to our times this building was turned into a beer distillation facility.

The island continued to serve for quarantine purposes also during the British period and this meant a number of additions and alterations to the Order's structures. During Governor Bouverie's administration the Lazaretto was enlarged in 1837-8 and this included the building of a new plague hospital on the west side of the Order's Lazaretto. During the 19th century the hospital served for some time as married quarters for the troops until 1871 when a smallpox attack caused it to revert to its hospital role. Today, from the plague hospital, only the superintendent's house and a small chapel remain.



Cruiseliners approaching Malta as seen from Tas-Sliema



STREETS, ALLEYS AND PASSAGEWAYS

The veins of any locality are its streets, alleys and passageways. It is through them that every activity moves. It is within them that every feature that represents the characteristics of the local community are exhibited. The streets are the means by which the transactions of life are carried out. Adorned with all that is Maltese, the streets become the exhibition space which the community uses to announce itself to its visitors while these are moving along its passageways. In past times one could also see smoke puffing trains running along some of the Region's railway tracks, an activity which has since many years been relegated to redundancy.

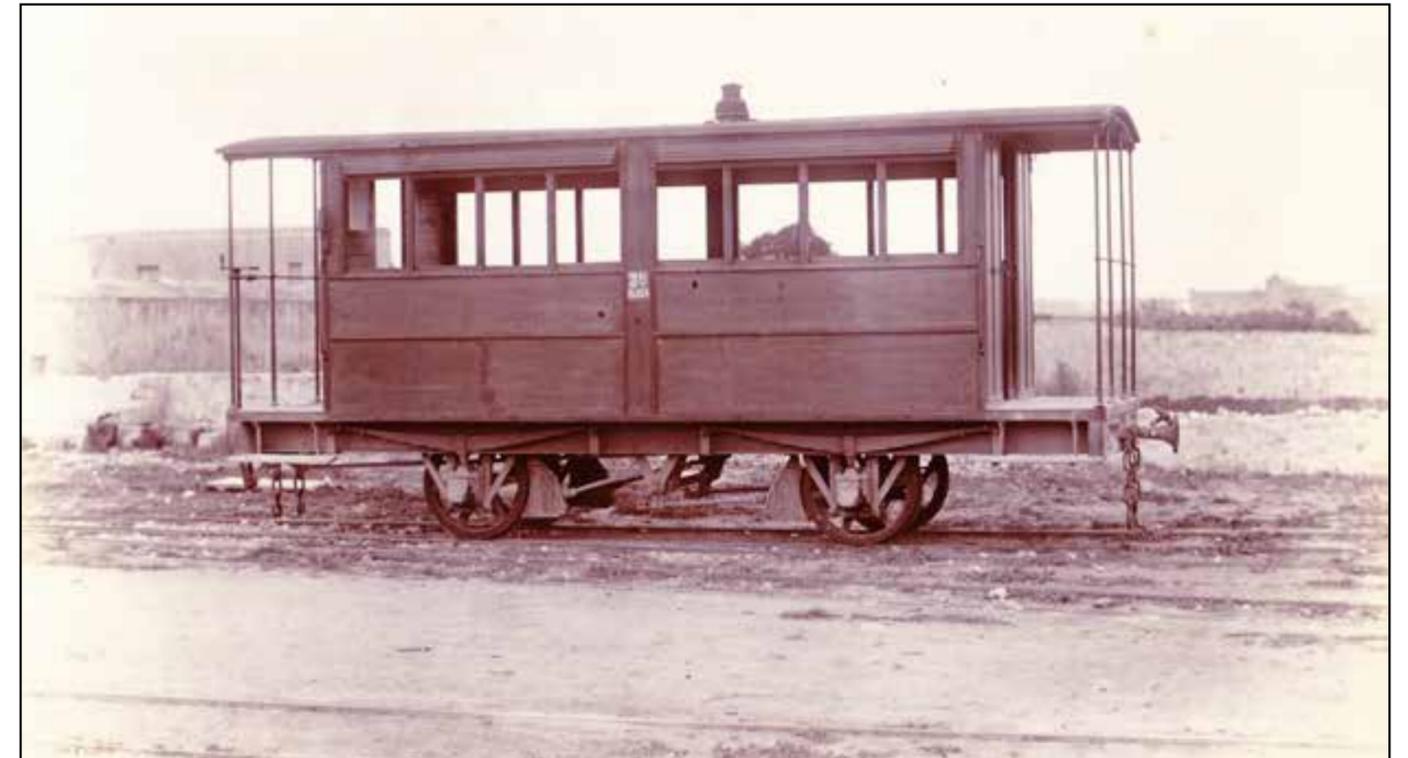


L-IMSIDA, SANTA VENERA,
BIRKIRKARA, HAL BALZAN,
H'ATTARD
MALTA RAILWAY

Malta's railway system is no more today but for some years from 1883 to 1931 one could see trains going up and down from Valletta to Notabile and later on to l-Imtrafa. The Maltese called it *Il-Vapur tal-Art* as they imagined the train like a ship with its fuming funnel travelling on land. It travelled on a single track in meter gauge and had a number of stations and other stops along the route for the convenience of commuters. Profits were problematic and the original proprietor under the name of Malta Railway Co. Ltd. soon went bankrupt and the service was stopped on 1 April 1890. The railway was thus taken over by the Government of Malta and the service was resumed as from 25 January 1892. By 1900 the railway track had been extended behind l-Imdina to cater for the military personnel at l-Imtrafa. With the coming of the tramway and its operations from 1905, the railway began to feel the crunch of direct competition, and this pressure became even more intense with the introduction of buses also from 1905 and which, by the 1920s had taken over much of the work of the other two mechanised means of transport operating in Malta. As a consequence the tram

service ended in 1929 and that offered by the train was stopped on 31 March 1931.

The railway route passed through many towns and villages while it was in operation. The train stopped at these stations: Valletta, Floriana, il-Hamrun, l-Imnsida, Birkirkara, San Antonio, H'Attard, San Salvatore, Notabile and Museum. The longest section of the route serviced the localities which now form part of the Central Region – from l-Imnsida to San Salvatore (in H'Attard near Mount Carmel Hospital) while it also passed through Santa Venera and Hal Balzan. Two of the stations are still standing today. That of Birkirkara in *Gnien l-Istazzjon* (Station Garden), is projected to become a Railway Museum and has the only surviving carriage which is being restored to its original glory. The other station, which is very close to San Anton Gardens, is found in *Gnien l-Istazzjon* of H'Attard, and the only remaining railway embankment is very close by. From 1998 the privately-run Malta Railway Exhibition / Museum was permanently established at 37, St Dominic Street, H'Attard, curated by Mr Nicholas Azzopardi.





HAL LIJA TRANSFIGURATION AVENUE AND THE BELVEDERE

An iconic structure today stands in the middle of a wide and tree-lined road. When Transfiguration Avenue was constructed in the 1950s, the Belvedere was orphaned from Villa Gourgion, as the new road was formed out of part of its gardens. A landmark structure, the tower had been designed by architect Giuseppe Bonavia in 1857 for Marquis Giuseppe de Piro's 17th century villa. Ornatly decorated, the globigerina limestone neo-Classical Belvedere was constructed as a folly in the midst of the Marquis' orange groves and gardens. It towered over the surrounding area and nearby villages, standing as a symbol of its owner's status, power and wealth, while also providing a place where the villa residents and their guests could be assured of a good measure of peace and relaxation. The four-level Hal Lija Belvedere, as it is popularly known today, provides a traffic island in the middle of the busy avenue that leads to the parish church of the Transfiguration.

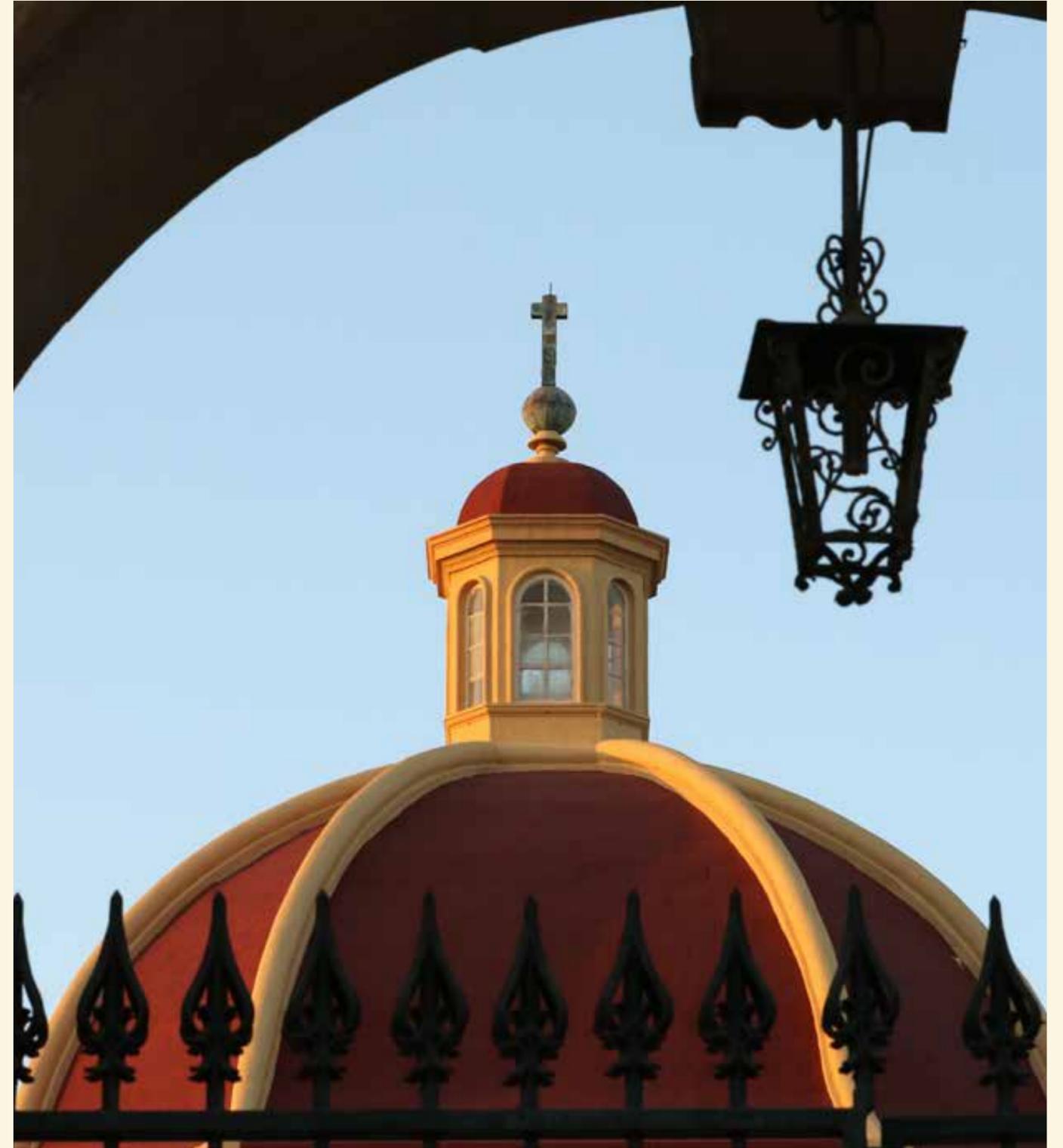


MALTESE STREETS

The villages and towns of Malta have their typical street furniture and decorations which are tied to faith, traditions, beliefs, values and appreciations. Walking around the various streets and roads and entering into alleys and other passageways, one cannot miss the variety of features, architectural as well as artistic, that imbue the rural and urban environs which distinguish the Maltese landscape. One can see statues, plaques, doorknobs, keyholes, niches, apertures, stone decorative features, and many other items that make Maltese streets what they are.











GULL MIN JINVISTA
 DIN IL GNISIA TAL VITTORIA
 JIRBAH 300 CIURNATA JNDULCENZA
 GULL DARBA.MOGHTIÀ
 MIL PAPA BENEDETTO XV
 B' RESCRITT TA 23 TA FRAR 1918



Il-Kappara Junction





Santa Venera tunnels



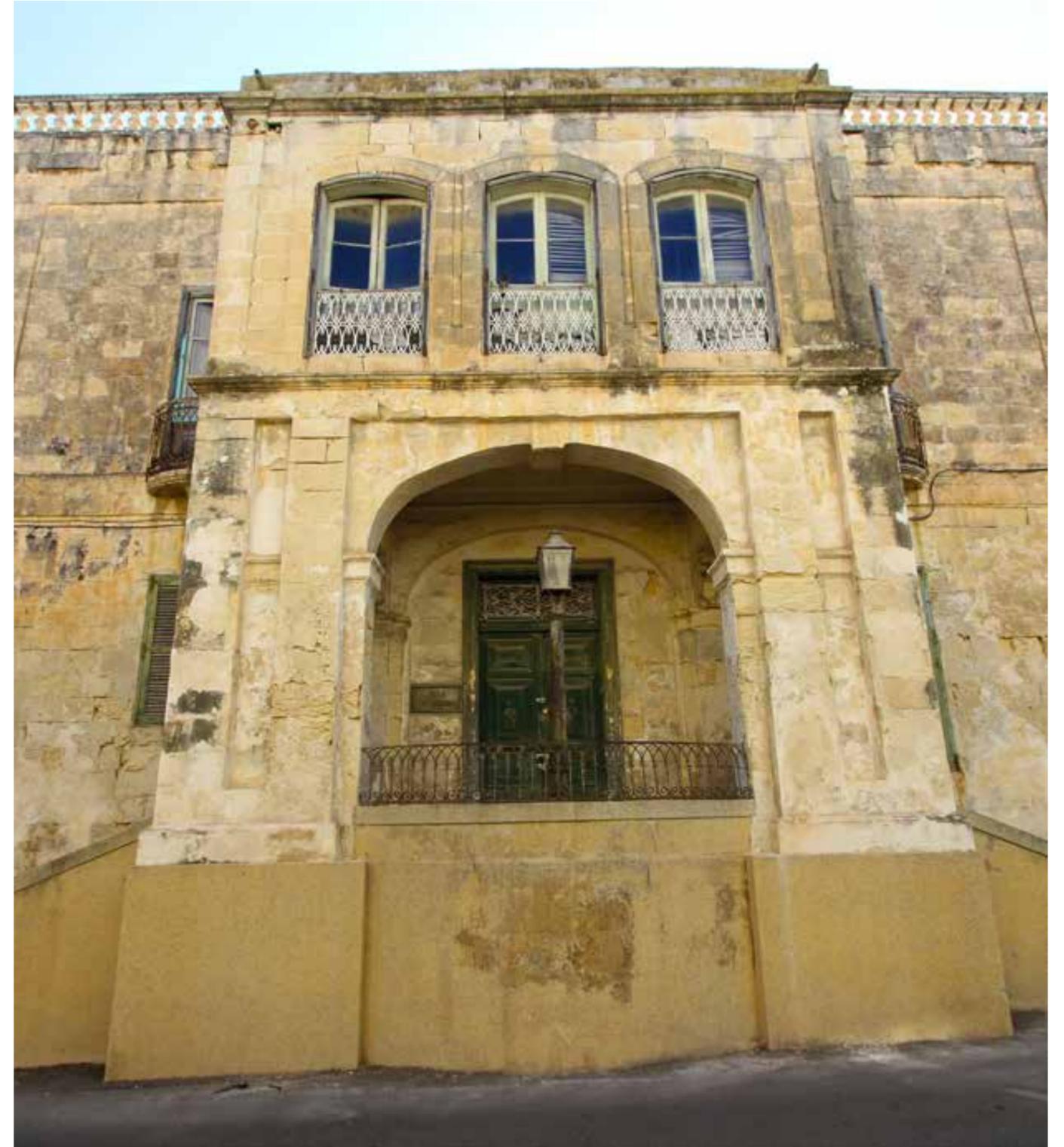
VISITORS, TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY

Malta has since time immemorial been a destination for travellers – some have remained as colonisers, others have moved on towards other places. Visitors have become tourists and these now come in the hundreds of thousands, indeed by now they have touched an annual two million and half and counting. These require a hospitality structure which serves their needs – restaurants, accommodation, and ancillary services. Hotels, food and beverage outlets have become abundant in the many tourist zones of the Region. Visitors range from the VIPs to the common traveller; from the sophisticated and cultured to the more easy-going and relaxation seekers.



TAL-PIETÀ / GWARDAMANĠA PRINCESS ELIZABETH IN MALTA – VILLA GUARDAMANGIA

A beautiful townhouse in Gwardamangia was once the home of the future Queen of the United Kingdom. Princess Elizabeth lived in this house when her husband, Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh, was a naval officer stationed on HMS *Chequers*, which was the leader of the 1st Destroyer Squadron based in Malta (1948-1954). The building was formerly known as Casa Medina but was later renamed Villa Guardamangia. Originally a farmhouse, the site was rebuilt in 1900 as a town house by Sir Augustus Bartolo, journalist, politician and judge. The house had first been leased in 1929 by Louis Mountbatten, 1st Earl Mountbatten of Burma, as it was conveniently placed close to Marsa with its golf course and horse racing track. The Mountbattens renovated the house as it had been divided into apartments and eventually bought it and lived there as the Earl was frequently in Malta due to his position of Commander-in-Chief of the Mediterranean Fleet during the 1950s. Earl Mountbatten, who was Prince Philip's uncle and a distant cousin of Elizabeth, passed on Villa Guardamangia to the Royal couple for them to reside there in the 1949-51 period of their stay in Malta, which Elizabeth fondly remembers as the only time when she could live 'normally' attended to by British servants in her daily requirements. The villa has an elaborate front porch accessed by a flight of stairs while the interior is spacious. It has a garden and over it there is a long terrace which connects the house with the far side of the garden. At one point the villa was owned by the philanthropist and politician Gużè Schembri who was for some time also a member of the Legislative Assembly. The house is now in a derelict state and in need of an immediate conservation intervention.



TAS-SLIEMA PRINCE CHARLES OF BOURBON – CAPUA PALACE

A *palazzo* in the heart of Tas-Sliema, originating in the early 19th century, can recount stories especially about one of its residents. Built by a Russian banker and called Selma Hall, the palace at one point became the abode of Prince Charles of the House of Bourbon, whose brother was King Ferdinand II of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies. Charles, Prince of Capua, in the winter of 1835 fell in love with the Irish Penelope Smyth who was at the time visiting Naples. Though King Ferdinand forbade his brother from marrying Penelope as they did not belong to an equivalent high social rank, Charles decided to have it his way and thus eloped with his love to Gretna Green where their morganatic marriage took place. This meant that the newlyweds

lost all their income from the Two Sicilies and their marriage was deemed to be null and void as it did not have the permission of the King. This resulted in Charles of Capua having to live in exile all his life. One place where he spent some time was Tas-Sliema in the neo-Classical style, colonnaded palace. This building, which came to bear his name, Capua Palace, was also the birthplace of his first-born son, Francesco. In modern times *Palazzo Capua* continues to host visitors as it has been furnished with hotel and events facilities and integrated with the Victoria Hotel. It also gave its name to the adjacent hospital which was known as Capua Hospital and which is today St James Hospital.



TAS-SLIEMA IMPERIAL HOTEL

Tourism in Tas-Sliema is marked by the great number of hotels, some of which go back to the 19th century. The Imperial Hotel which closed its doors for tourists in 2017, after 152 years of service, was originally the 18th century villa of a Maltese noble family. It later served British Governors as a hunting lodge until it became a hotel in 1865, carrying with it the strong Victorian features that have characterised this building for decades. The façade saw alterations along time. The hotel could boast of a rich history which included being captured on camera for a Roger Moore film in the 1970s. Besides the British actor, other illustrious personalities who stayed in this hotel include Princess Louise, a daughter of Queen Victoria of Great Britain, and Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, founder of modern Turkey. During World War II the garden of the Imperial Hotel received the first bomb that fell on Tas-Sliema. Later on the hotel housed members of the WRNS. In January of 2017 plans were approved for this oldest hotel in Tas-Sliema to be converted into a residence for the elderly.



TAS-SLIEMA SAVOY GUESTHOUSE

The building, dating back to the period that connects the 18th to the 19th century, is iconic in that it has given this area its name, and which is now known as Savoy (*is-Savoy*). The architectural design follows the Classical style, which is visible, for example, in the main entrance being flanked by two half-pillars and two columns structured in the Doric order. These support a timber balcony with 5 bays. The side elevation adopts the neo-Classical style favoured for British official buildings and introduced in Malta in the nineteenth century. Wide arched openings dominate the ground floor, while square ones pierce the first floor, while Doric columns support the horizontal lintels. The second floor has two wide openings with the remaining flat wall space being separated by pilasters of a stylized Egyptian design, and pierced by three smaller rectangular windows. Even more architecturally significant, on the side elevation is a multi-faceted bay window which projects from all the three floors and is in the form of a turret. In the years when tourism in Malta was still in its infancy this building was one of the guesthouses that supported the needed infrastructure.





HAL BALZAN VILLA CORINTHIA

The 19th century building which now forms part of the Corinthia Hotel was built in 1920 and was then Villa Refalo. It was the home of Professor Sir Michelangelo Refalo who served as Chief Justice from 1919 until the year of his death in 1923. Prof. Refalo was a brilliant legal mind who drew up the standing rules for the Legislative Assembly and was responsible for the legal framework of the Self-Government Constitution of 1921.

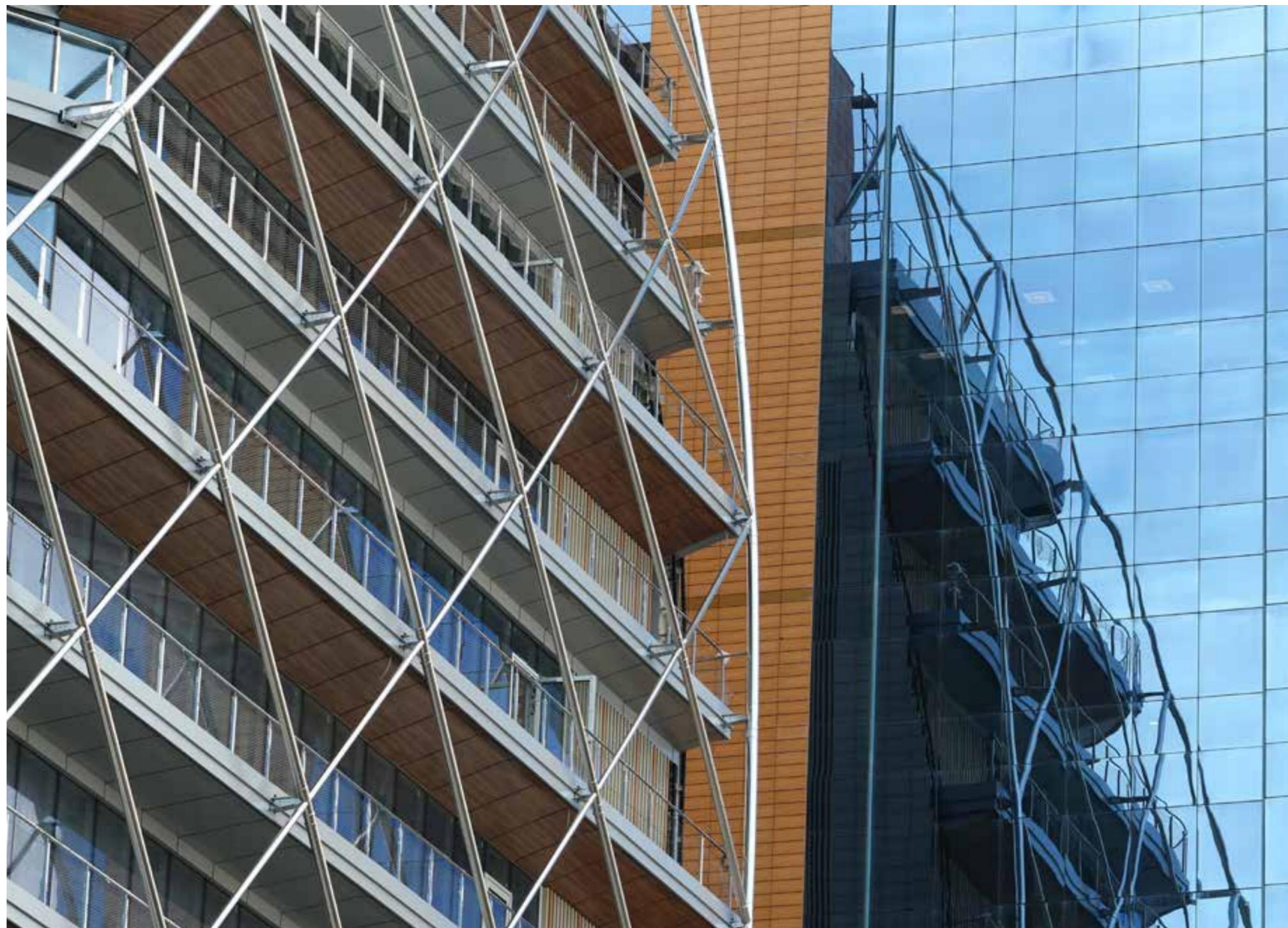
Villa Refalo was later utilised by the British forces to host high-ranking services personnel who during World War II were on visits to Malta. The Pisani Family acquired the villa in 1959 and eventually turned it into a restaurant complex. In 1968, what in 1962 had become known as The Corinthia Room Restaurant, was amalgamated into, and gave its name to, the Corinthia Palace Hotel, designed by architect Dom Mintoff (1916-2012), which had just been constructed on land that formed part of the former Villa Refalo.

The villa's new name was inspired by its interior classical architecture consisting of fluted stone columns crowned by highly ornate capitals. It was thus renamed Corinthia, reflecting this Classical Greek decor.





Spinola Bay, San Giljan – A tourism and hospitality hub



Hospitality and accomodation in San Ġiljan and Tigné Point



A reflection in the sea of hospitality on the Sliema Front



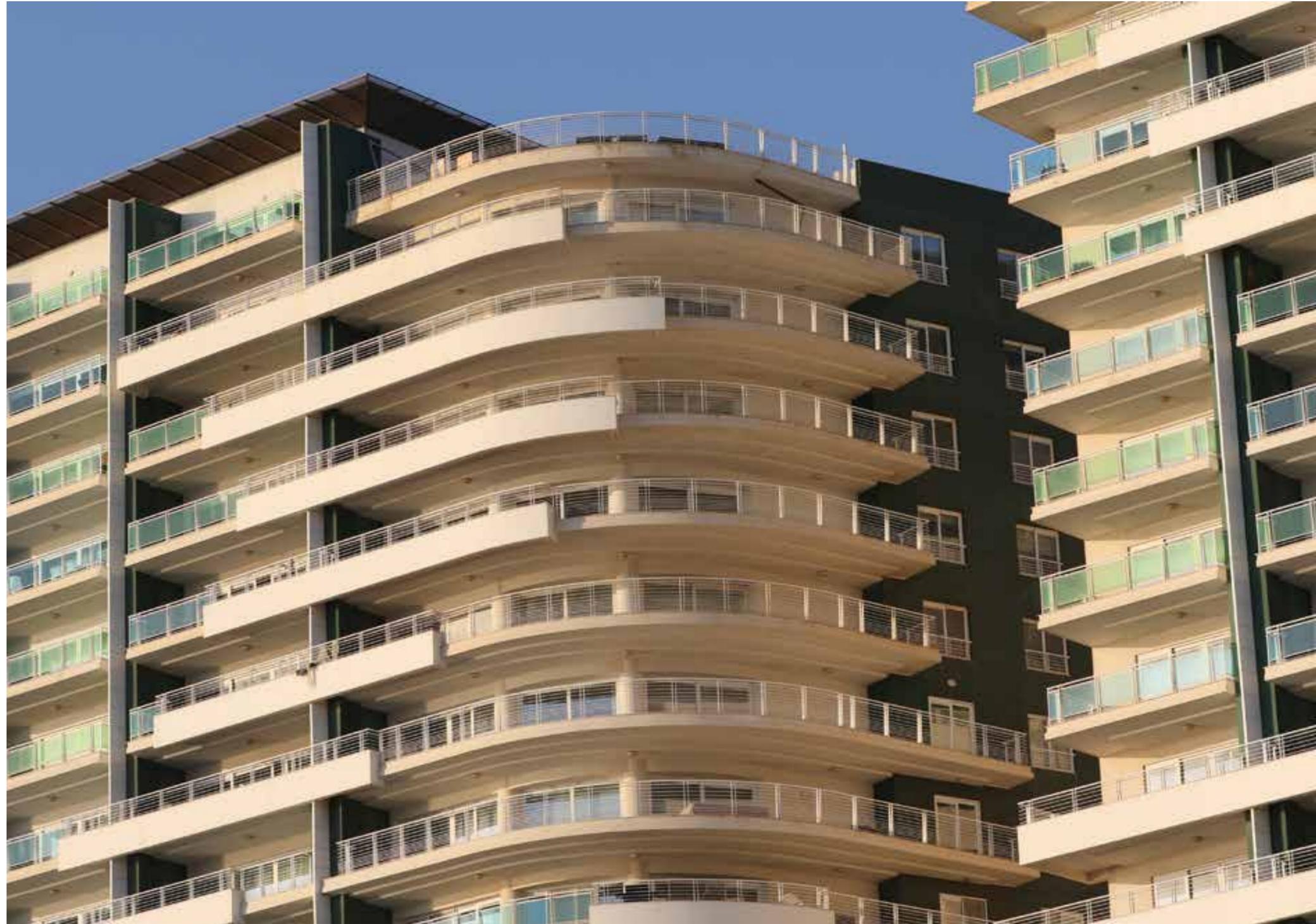
Mirrored hospitality at
Tigné Point

Eating and relaxing by the sea in Tas-Sliema

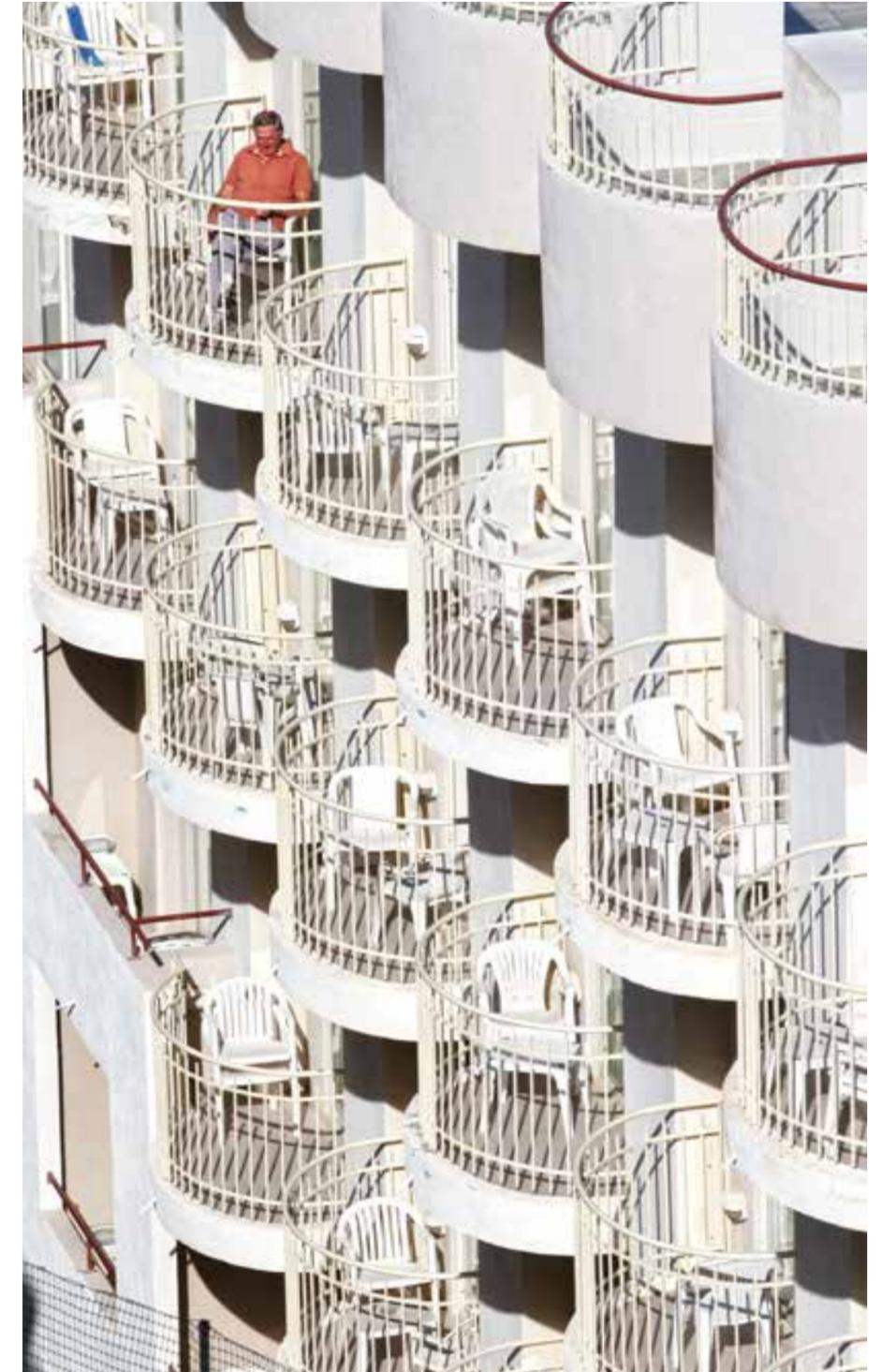


Modern-day Tas-Sliema geared for tourism and hospitality





Balconies galore in the name of hospitality and tourism





INSCRIPTIONS, PLAQUES AND MONUMENTS

Memory can best be kept alive and sharp when it is primed to remember and reminiscence. Inscriptions, plaques and monuments have just this purpose. They are also there to honour and pay tribute to individuals and events that are especially valued by a community. Mass media in past times have been limited when compared to the present, but even today inscriptions, plaques and monuments have not lost their primary function – that of transmitting a message of remembrance to us all. Roaming around one is bound to come face-to-face with such sources of information, each one telling a story, relating a detail, announcing a fact.



SAN ĠILJAN / IL-BALLUTA THE BALLUTA FOUNTAIN

A fountain and a plaque in Balluta Bay marks an important development in the area – the arrival of potable water to the district. It was in 1881 that a cistern situated at the intersection of Rudolph Street and Prince of Wales Road (now Manwel Dimech Street) was connected to the main aqueduct and filled with water. To mark the event a water fountain was set up in St Anne Square. Water pipes began to be laid so as to bring the water supply to more and more streets in Tas-Sliema and later on to those in San Ġiljan. The St Anne Square fountain was later on moved to Balluta Square where it continues to stand today. The plaque fixed to one of the four sides of the pedestal on which stands a statue, recounts the arrival of the water supply in Tas-Sliema. It announces that this was done with the support of Governor Sir Arthur Borton, while it was projected by the Chief Secretary Sir Victor Houlton and carried out by the Superintendent of Public Works Emmanuele Luigi Galizia.



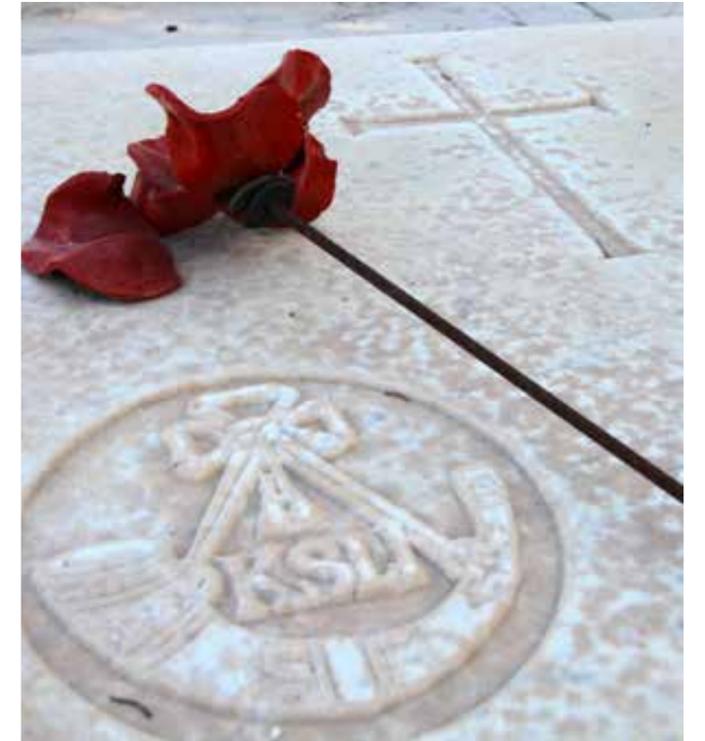
 **SAN ĠWANN
TA' XINDI FARMHOUSE**

On the outskirts of San Ġwann in the il-Kappara area stands a farmhouse which for a two-year period served as a military headquarters for one of the commanders in the Uprising of the Maltese against the French. The merchant Vincenzo Borg from Birkirkara, known as 'Brared', was in command of his home town battalion of Maltese volunteers and adopted the 18th century Ta' Xindi farmhouse, which belonged to him at the time, as his field command post. A plaque on the front wall of the building recounts this fact. The 18th century farmhouse was a short distance from the *Għargħar* or *It-Twila* (*Ta' Ittuila*) Battery, which is reputed as being the first structure in Malta on which the British flag was flown, as the plaque on the façade of the farmhouse continues to relate. Following this eventful period the farmhouse returned to normality and became a private residence as it continues to be today.



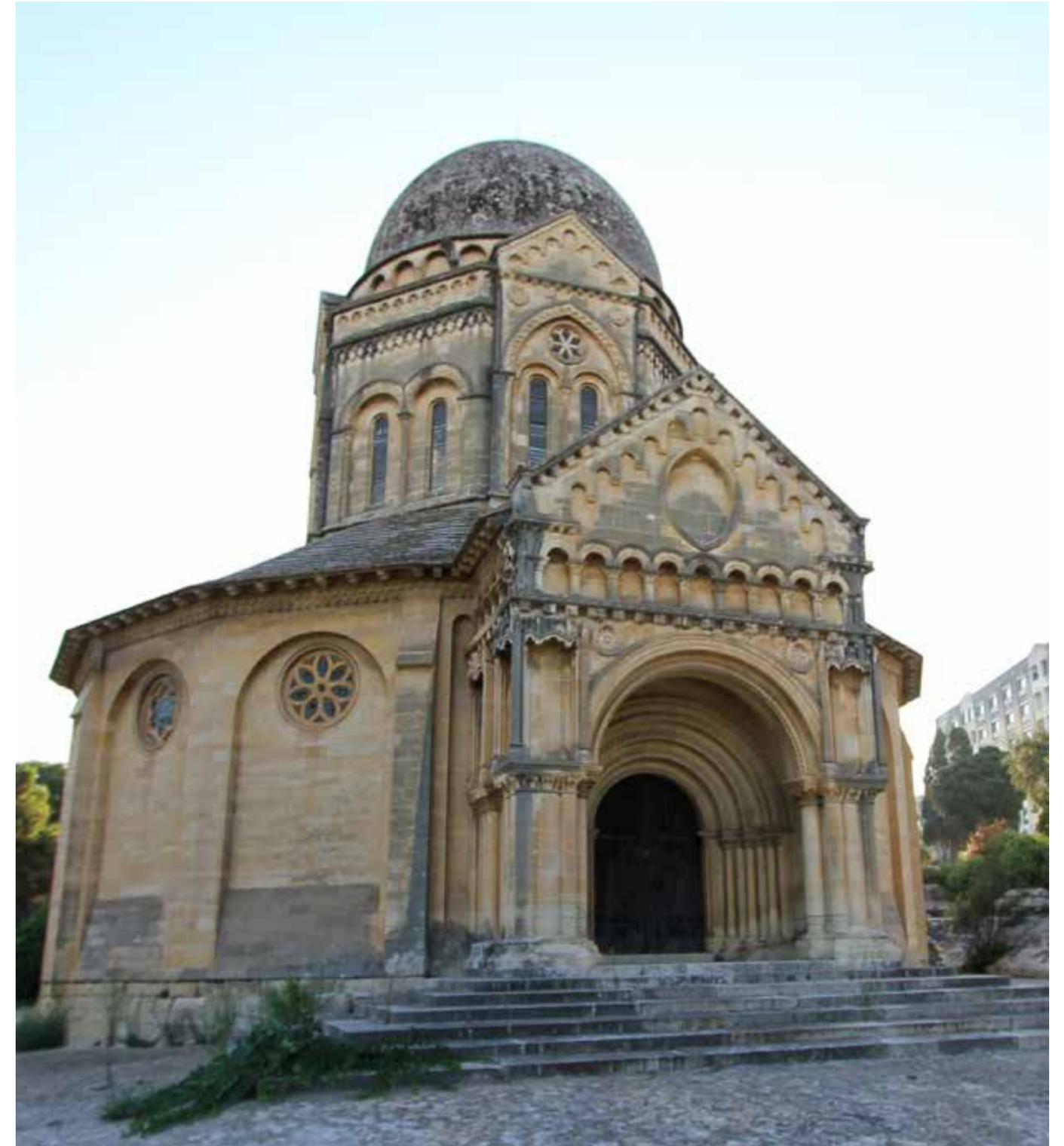
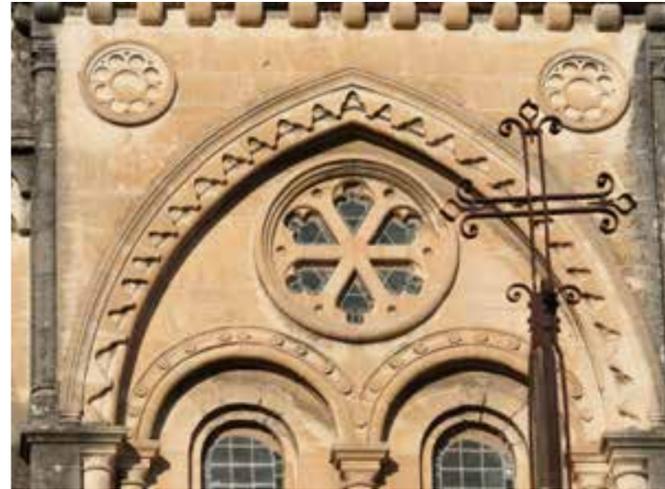
 **TAL-PIETÀ
MILITARY CEMETERY**

The cemetery, whose entrance is located in Our Lady of Sorrows Street, is cared for by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. There are 1,303 Commonwealth casualties buried or commemorated here from World War I. The cemetery holds another 166 burials from World War II and 15 war graves of other nationalities. A further 772 non-war graves complete the total of 2,241 graves. Many of the Commonwealth graves in this cemetery have flat headstones with multiple names as each holds more than one burial. Some of the interred are the bearers of particular stories such as Private Robert Hugh Martin who being shot in the chest prompted the first-ever complex heart surgery on the battlefield in 1918. Another is Dr Isobel Tate, who, besides being one of the few female medical doctors in the early 20th century, she also worked with the wounded soldiers during World War I. She finally died of typhoid in 1917. Included with the First World War Commonwealth forces are 20 soldiers, labourers and Ghurkhas commemorated by the Indian Memorial (now India, Pakistan and Nepal), who had been cremated at the Lazaretto cemetery.



 **TAL-PIETÀ
TA' BRAXIA CEMETERY**

In 1831, the Jewish financier Sir Moses Montefiore managed to persuade the colonial government to grant a strip of land to the Jewish community which could be used as a cemetery. This now adjoins the main cemetery of Ta' Braxia. Designed by architect Emmanuele Luigi Galizia, who at the time was only 25 years old, Ta' Braxia cemetery took two years to build and was opened in 1857. At the time of its building it created much commotion. Many opposed it as they feared that this was one way how the British colonisers would impose their religion on Catholic Malta. The architect had been instructed by Governor Reid to build a cemetery where non-Catholic British service officers could be buried. It became a burial place for anybody who died in Malta from any religion and denomination. The diversity of people interred here spans many cultures and nationalities – including British, Russians, Greeks and people from the Jewish faith. This is testified by the beautifully decorated tombstones and the inscriptions etched on them. A centrepiece in the cemetery is the High Gothic chapel, designed by London architect John Loughborough Pearson and built in 1893-94 on commission of Lord Stanmore in memory of his wife Lady Rachel Hamilton, who is buried behind the altar. This cemetery also holds five Commonwealth graves from World War I and another three from World War II.



L-IMSIDA WORKERS' MEMORIAL

Right in the heart of l-Imsida rises a monument honouring workers, which was inaugurated in 1980. The Workers' Memorial was proposed by the General Workers' Union in the mid-1970s and it was initially suggested that this would be set up in Valletta. After talks with the Government it was finally decided to place it in l-Imsida in the same area where a large workers' meeting on 5 October 1943 is considered to have given birth to the GWU. The design was done by sculptor Anton Agius (1933-2008). The base of the monument in travertine was done at Pietrasanta in Italy by the firm Sarti. The figures were modelled by Agius and founded in bronze by the firm Cipriani, also at Pietrasanta. The main figures depict the bond of a working family with their child. The base brings out the strength of the unity of the workers toiling with their everyday tasks. The memorial was unveiled by then Minister of Works and Sports Lorry Sant.



SANTA VENERA MANOEL FOUNDATION STABLES

Situated in the street at the back of *Casa Leoni*, a number of gardens in the area known as *il-Hamrija* (the soil) and *Santa Veneranda* (Santa Venera) were constructed around 1730. The plots had been purchased by the Manoel Foundation, which also maintained them. The Foundation, set up by Grand Master Manoel de Vilhena, also funded the construction of a stable building close to the rear of the *Casa Leoni* gardens (now Romeo Romano Gardens). An inscription in Latin throws light on the origins of these buildings. In English it translates into: Foundation of the Most Eminent and Most Serene Prince, Fra Don António Manoel de Vilhena, Grand Master.

The progress of time has obliterated the gardens which are now buildings, but the stables continue to bear witness to de Vilhena's magnificence.



 **SAN ĠILJAN /
IL-BALLUTA
MONUMENT OF
ĊENSU TABONE**

A monument in bronze commemorating Dr Ċensu Tabone stands in Balluta Bay, the work of sculptor Alfred Camilleri Cauchi (b. 1943). It was unveiled in December of 2014.

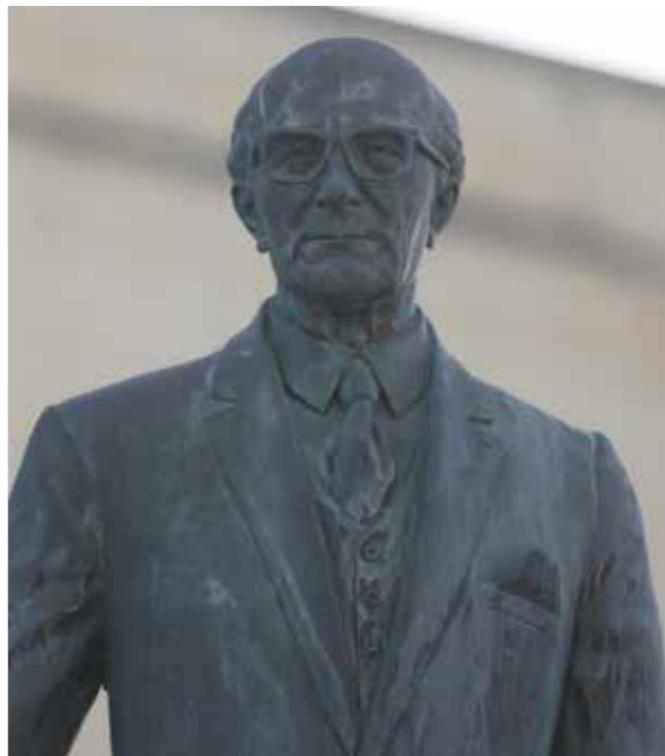
Dr Ċensu Tabone was the fourth President of the Republic of Malta from 1989 till 1994. Born in Gozo in 1913, he became a medical doctor and later specialised in ophthalmic medicine. Tabone was the founder of the Medical Officers Union (later becoming the Medical Association – M.A.M.) in 1954 and was for many years its president. His long political career in the interests of the Nationalist Party started in the early 1960s and he was elected and re-elected to Parliament from 1966 until his resignation in 1987. During the time when the Nationalist Party was in Government he was appointed Minister while he also occupied the post of Secretary General and later on that of the first Deputy Leader of his Party. Living for many years in San Ġiljan, Ċensu Tabone passed away in 2012.



 **BIRKIRKARRA
MONUMENT OF
ANTHONY MAMO**

In a small garden at the back of the Basilica of St Helena, a monument stands to the memory of Sir Anthony Mamo. It was done by sculptor Michael Camilleri Cauchi (b. 1951) on the initiative of the Birkirkara Local Council, and it was unveiled in 2012.

Born in Birkirkara in 1909, Anthony Mamo graduated as a lawyer and soon after joined the Public Service. Some time later he was entrusted with preparing a Revised Edition of all the Laws of Malta. Dr Mamo joined the Attorney-General's office in 1942 as a Crown Counsel and became Attorney-General in 1955. In the period 1943-1957 he was Professor of Criminal Law at the Royal University of Malta and then was appointed Chief Justice and President of the Court of Appeal with further Court appointments following later on. In 1959 he was awarded a Knighthood by Queen Elizabeth II. With Malta's independence Sir Anthony became the first and last Maltese Governor-General succeeding Sir Maurice Dorman, and with Malta becoming a Republic, he became the first President of Malta (1974-1976). Sir Anthony Mamo passed away in 2008.



 **Ħ'ATTARD
MONUMENT TO
POPE JOHN PAUL II**

In Ħ'Attard one monument reminds the viewer of the first-ever visit by a pope to Malta. It was in May of 1990 that Pope John Paul II paid a three-day visit during which he visited both Malta and Gozo. On that occasion Pope John Paul covered around 1600km of road. Around Malta a number of commemorative plaques and monuments were installed so that this visit, and a second one which the same Pope made in May of 2001, continue to be remembered by the Maltese. One such monument is found in Ħ'Attard near St Catherine's Home. It commemorates the visit of Pope John Paul in 1990 and the two nights spent at the Apostolic Nunciature in Ħ'Attard. The monument is the work of sculptor Joseph Casha (1939-2011).



 **TAS-SLIEMA
WHITE SHADOWS
MONUMENT**

A monument to the people who use the Sliema promenade is found in Tower Road in the *Font Ghadir* area. The work of Richard England (b. 1937), it was unveiled in 2002 in conjunction with, and to mark, the inauguration of the refurbished promenade. The sculpture consists of cut-outs in marble of four figures representing a family strolling along the seafront. The empty forms pick up the light which projects shadow on the accompanying platform according to the time of day and night. It is a monument that casts white shadows.



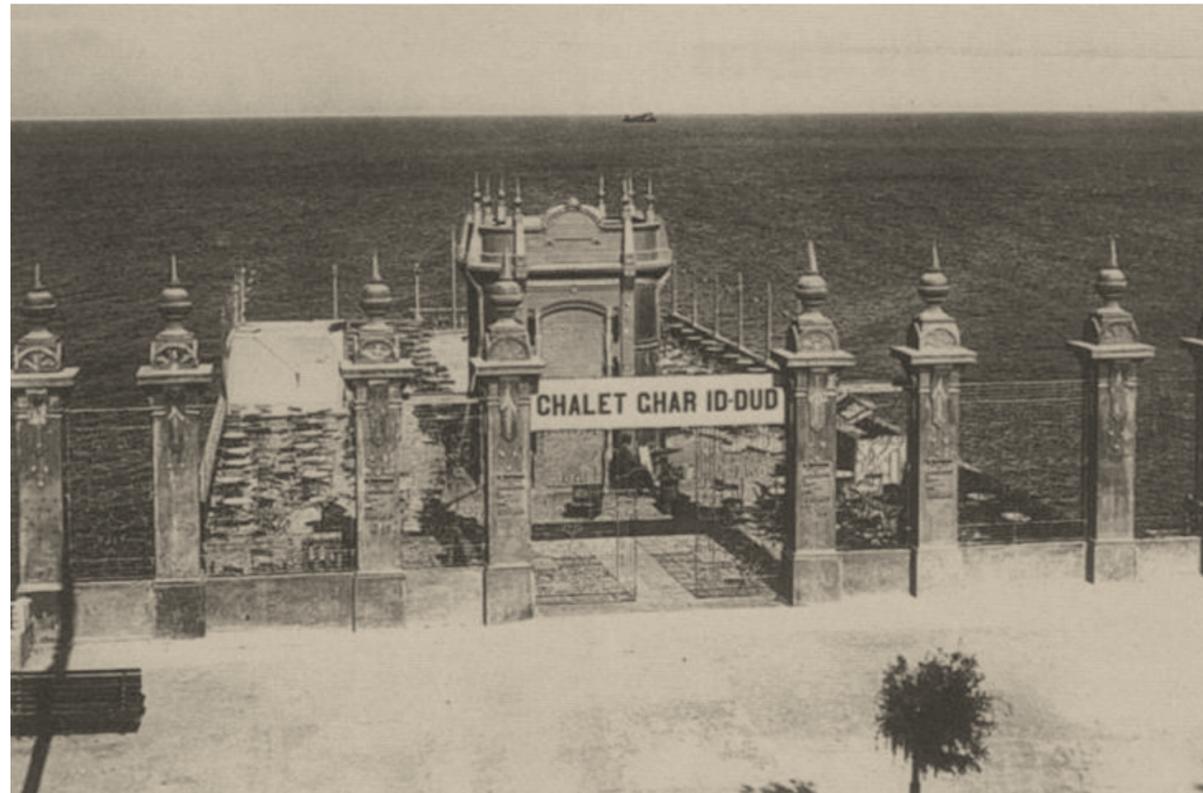
SPORTS, LEISURE AND RELAXATION

As the saying goes: *mens sana in corpore sano* (a healthy mind in a healthy body). Many believe that this applies to those practising sports activities, but it may also refer to those who seek leisurely relaxation as this relieves the stress accumulated by a life packed with the pressure of commitments. Facilities are available to help one to achieve a healthy balance, an escape, even if temporary, from the clock ticking towards the next appointment. Seeking some time for oneself or being with friends while breaking the drudgery of the routine, are recommendations which should be heeded.

TAS-SLIEMA CHALET

Walking along the promenade of *Ghar id-Dud* one comes across a quay jutting out into the sea which today looks lifeless and possibly pointless. This was not always so as that gutted platform was once a hub of entertainment and a venue where the Maltese used to congregate. The Chalet was one of the most well-known and iconic spots in Tas-Sliema. A call for tenders was issued in November 1923 by the Government of Malta for this public site at *Ghar id-Dud* to be turned into a new entertainment chalet with the winner being given a concession for 30 years. Carmelo Axisa was the chosen tenderer and he got a 30-year emphyteutic lease at the annual payment of £1.00. Designed by Royal Engineers architect Major Benjamin William Cordwell, the chalet was ready by 1926 and had a two-tier reinforced concrete structure. Following the Liberty and Art Nouveau style, it was lit with coloured electric bulbs and offered a place where hundreds of patrons could go for refreshments, dancing and bathing. Entertainment was provided by an orchestra and it had a full complement of catering staff. The

patrons came from various walks of life. Not to break the law, when dancing was taking place on the street level dance hall, shutters on the windows were closed as it was prohibited for children to see adults dancing. On the sea-level dance floor this same procedure was followed not to scandalise young bathers. Evening patrons included civil servants and people from the professions, and these would begin to gather at the Chalet from around 9.00pm where its two bars were connected by a service lift in the central structure which transported drinks, *pastizzi* and sandwiches. On Sunday evenings the lower deck, laid out with tables and chairs, hosted reserved patrons, entertained by a band, while dancing was not permitted and only those wearing a shirt and tie were admitted. With the outbreak of World War II from 1939 the Chalet closed its doors and in 1942 it was hit by a bomb which inflicted considerable damage. After the war rebuilding took place but in 1959 it was declared structurally unsafe and in 1963 it was permanently closed down by its owners. Stormy seas and strong winds continued to devastate the once charming Chalet and in 2006 what had remained of the structure was pulled down except for the foundations. Plans to reconstruct the Chalet site have been mentioned but up till now no definite developments have taken place.

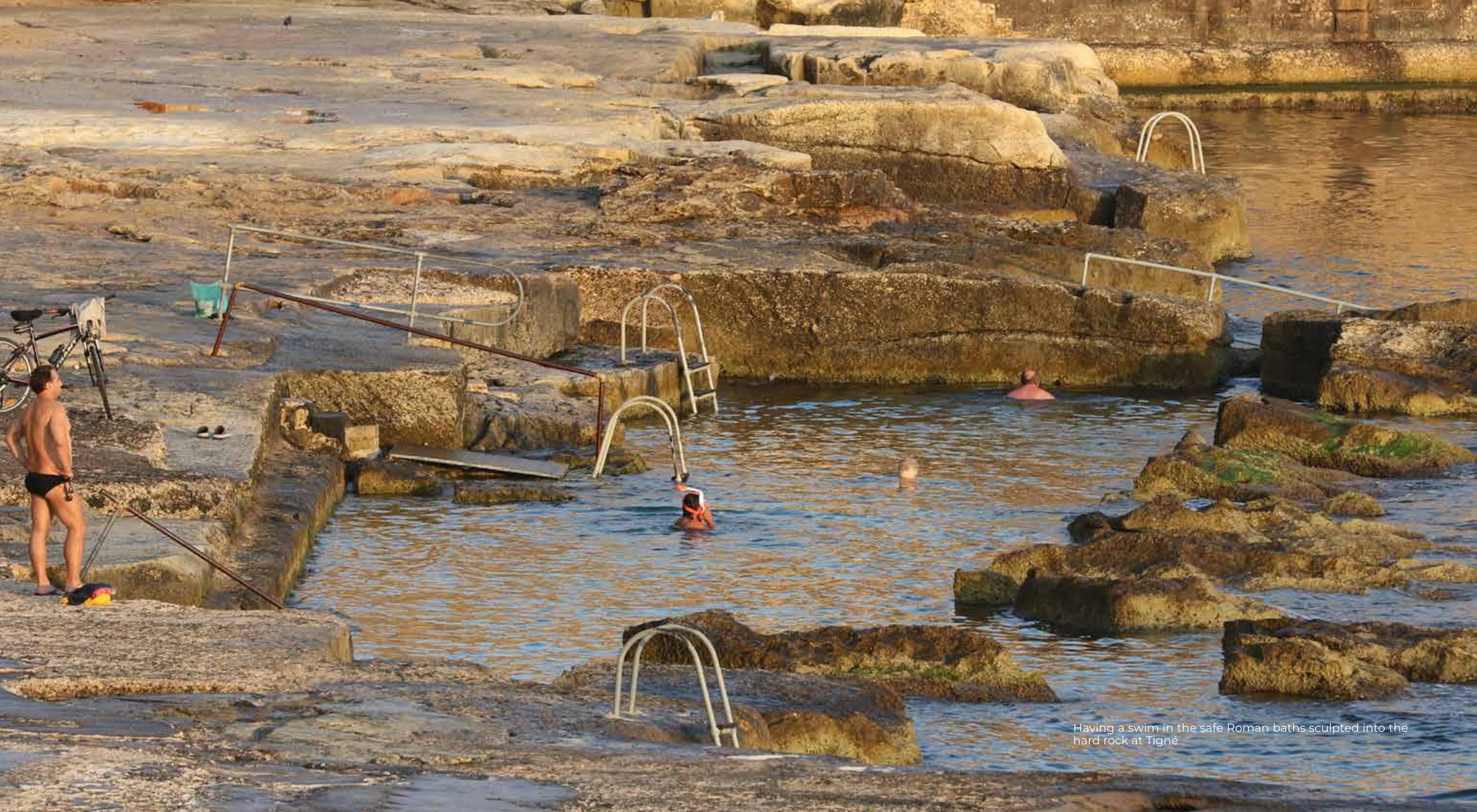




SWIMMING

The Tas-Sliema and San Ġiljan coastal zone is a preferred destination for swimmers. Summer is especially popular with those who love a dip in the blue seas of the area. People use the various facilities that pepper the coastline such as quays, Roman baths, sandy and rocky bays, swimming pools and water polo pitches, to mention a few.

Enjoying the sun on the quay in Spinola Bay



Having a swim in the safe Roman baths sculpted into the hard rock at Tigné



Swimming facilities at Sliema Point include a water polo pitch and the relatively sheltered inlet of Qui-Si-Sana



St George's Bay offers a small sandy beach which gives one the opportunity to sunbath, swim and relax just a few meters away from the hassle and bassle of Paceville



IL-GŻIRA EMPIRE STADIUM

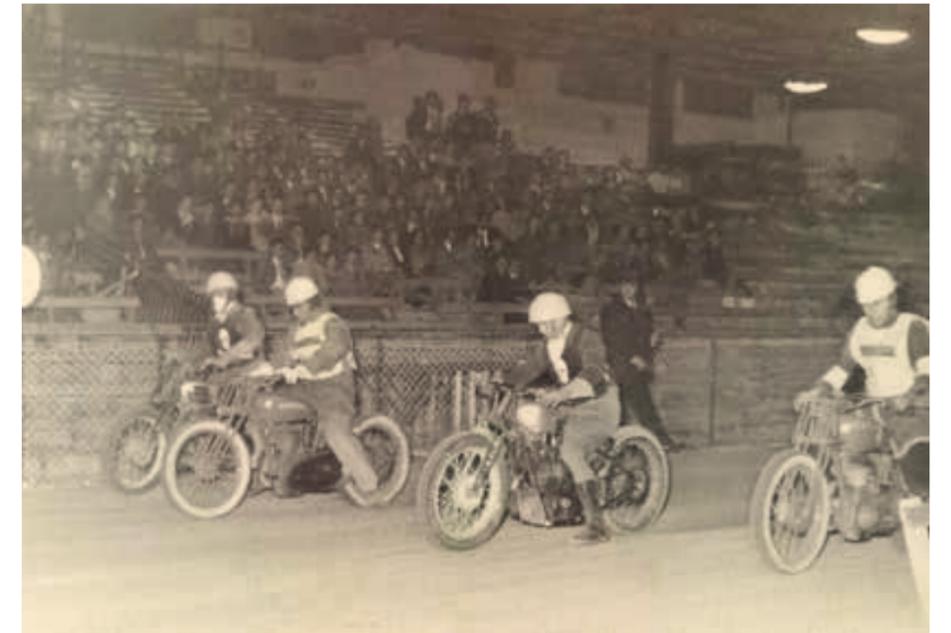
Now past its glory, Malta's international football stadium for many decades was inaugurated on 4 November 1922 with an exhibition match between the MFA XI and a team from HMS *Ajax*. Prior to the building of the multi-purpose Empire Sports Ground, the site had been used as a balloon station by the Royal Air Force during World War I. The owner of the land, Baron Testaferrata Moroni Viani, then leased it to his brother-in-law Carmelo Scicluna (known as is-Sur Meme) who built the stadium in il-Gżira. This replaced in importance the Mile-End Football Ground (limits of il-Hamrun) which had been the principal football pitch between 1912 and 1922. For some time in the early 1930s greyhound racing was practised in this ground until the structure was pulled down in the summer of 1933 and work on a new stadium began with the first match being played in the new, nearly completed, stadium on 24 December 1933. This match was between the Malta XI and the Czechoslovak team SK Plzen. The Empire Stadium also hosted boxing matches, athletics and motor-cycling. The Gżira Stadium was the venue of the first-ever international football match for Malta, played on 24 February 1957, and which the home side lost 2-3 to Austria. Football continued to be played at the Stadium, as it became known around 1964-65. The last matches played on this ground were those of Hibernians, Floriana and Sliema Wanderers; these teams played their home legs in the European club competition in 1982. The gates then closed forever and football was transferred to the new Stadium at Ta' Qali.



The pitch of the Empire Stadium under construction



The Gzira Stadium hosting a football match



Motorcycle races were sometimes held at The Stadium

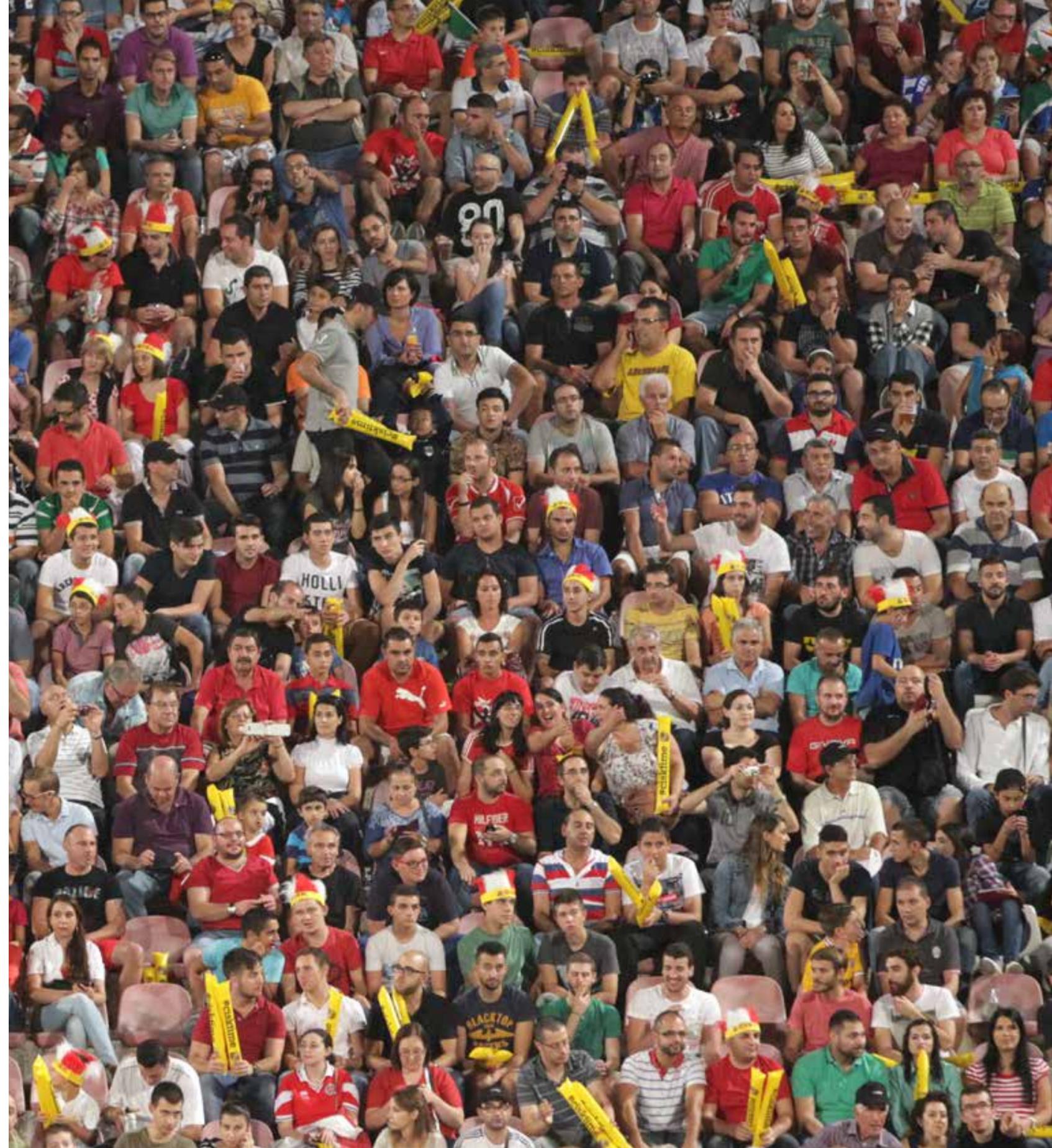


A track was also included at The Stadium for running races



H'ATTARD THE NATIONAL STADIUM

The National Stadium was inaugurated in December of 1981. It is equipped with all the necessary amenities and can hold up to 18,000 spectators. Within the complex there are also a gymnasium, a physiotherapy clinic and a Technical Centre. It is equipped with artificial turf and hosts both local and international football matches. The East Stand was rebuilt and is now called the Millennium Stand. Here are housed the Malta Football Association Headquarters, and a number of facilities such as executive boxes, a secluded spectator balcony and a foyer, along with facilities for indoor sports, such as an indoor swimming pool, among other provisions. The players of the Maltese national team have their own facilities under the West Stand including a state-of-the-art clinic for their fitness requirements, which are also available for players from member clubs and visiting teams.



NATIONAL STADIUM





WALKING

The Front which extends from Tal-Pietà up to San Ġiljan, offers an opportunity to those who love walking, jogging and running. The atmosphere is relaxing as one can enjoy views of the blue sea, boats and yachts tied to their anchorages, shore fishing enthusiasts trying their luck with the many fishes that shelter along the coast, and the variety of other features that this environment offers.

Strolling for leisure or exercise along the Sliema promenade



Having a wet stroll along the rocky shore with your faithful friend



Patently waiting for a fish to touch your bait – enthusiasts lining the quay and mingling with the berthed boats

This page and overleaf

Two faces of the same reality – the Tigné coastline during fine and stormy weather





DIPLOMATS, AMBASSADORS AND POLITICIANS

The globe is run by politicians, ambassadors and diplomats. It is undeniable that they make our world go round and manage its present and its future. They affect peoples near and far; beneficially, it is hoped, but alas, at times also negatively. The art of politics is indeed and truly a competence that one needs to master. It is believed that ambassadors and diplomats take it a step further from where politicians drop it. After all politics is more for home consumption while diplomacy is first and foremost an exercise in international relations.



TA' XBIEX WHITEHALL MANSIONS

The beautiful building on the Ta' Xbiex Seafront has a history of hosting foreign entities which goes back to the time when Malta was a naval base of the Royal Navy. Built in 1935, Whitehall Mansions became the Royal Navy's headquarters and from December 1943 it also served as the living quarters of the members of the WRNS (Women's Royal Naval Service) stationed in Malta and who carried out duties in various parts of the island. Many WRNS passed years in Malta and married in Whitehall Mansions or did their wedding reception there. WRNS recount that you were not allowed to enter Whitehall by the front steps except if one was getting married. The British connection with Whitehall did not end when the last military personnel left Malta with the closing of the military base on 31 March 1979. The British High Commission moved in later on and the premises were inaugurated by Princess Anne in May 2002. Other countries with embassies in Whitehall Mansions include Italy, Australia, Turkey, the Netherlands, Ireland, Greece, Spain, Japan, Egypt, France and Austria. Thus the largest concentration of foreign representations in Malta are at Whitehall Mansions.



 **HAL LIJA**
VILLA GOURGION

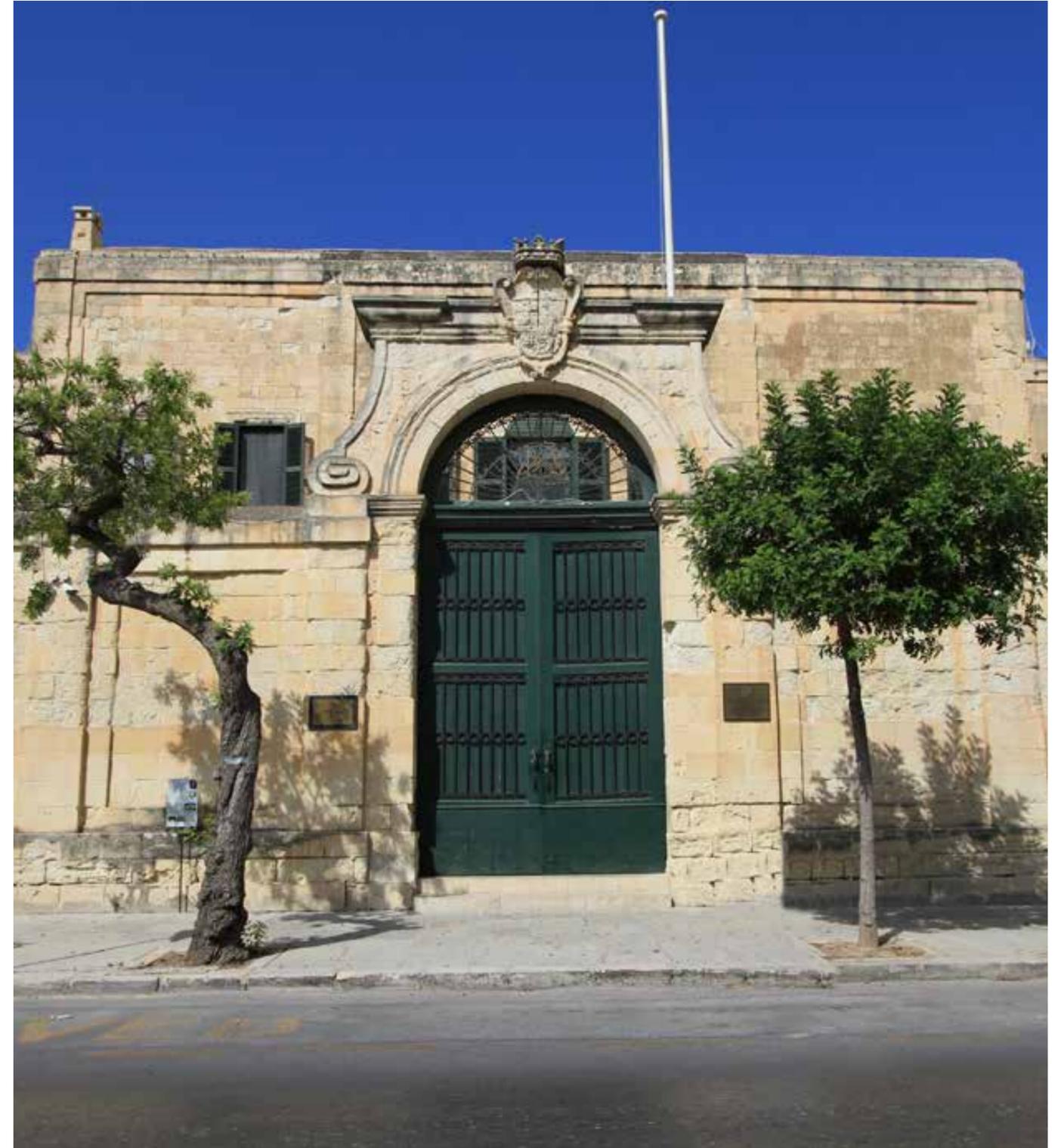
Standing in Sir Ugo Mifsud Street, a villa built in the late 17th century, the property of the Gourgion Depiro family, bares testimony to the wealth of its noble owners. The two-floor villa is adorned with frescos, architectural features and decorations and a garden which originally stretched up to the Hal Lija roundabout. This villa was the location for a number of meetings held by the National Assembly while it discussed constitutional matters leading to the granting of the Self-Government Constitution of 1921. The three meetings held in Villa Gourgion were those of 8 August 1919, 26 August 1920 and 27 May 1921. The large gardens were further adorned by a tower Belvedere in 1857 by Marquis Giuseppe de Piro, 6th Baron of Budach, who was an ardent gardener and had a great passion for building. After the mid-20th century the gardens belonging to this villa were extensively reduced in size due to being taken up for development including the opening of Transfiguration Avenue. The villa was also rented to various tenants, including ambassadors, during the latter half of the 20th and the beginning of the 21st century.





SANTA VENERA PALAZZO MANOEL / CASA LEONI

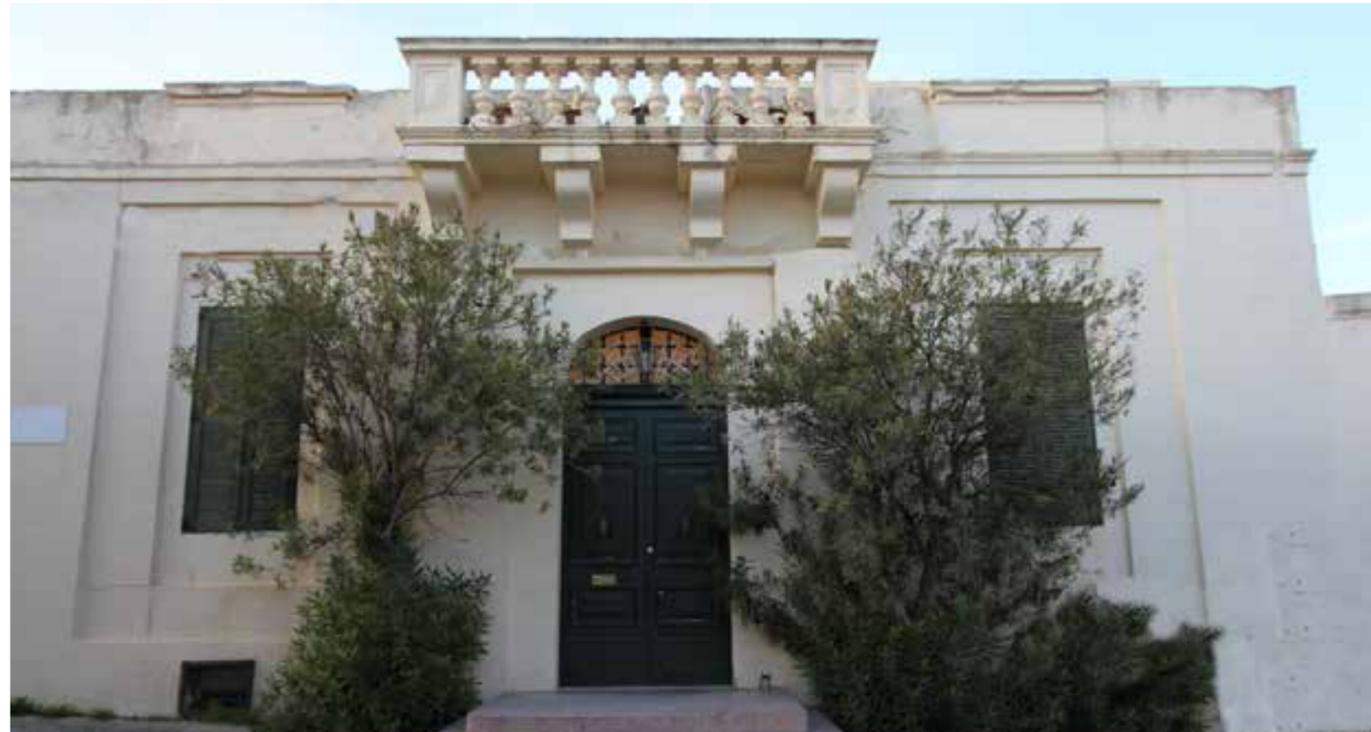
In St Joseph High Road one particular building catches the eye whose façade includes four lions, each clutching a coat-of-arms, on the front boundary wall. The building, in the Maltese Baroque style, is *Palazzo Manoel*, built in 1730 by Grand Master Antonio Manoel de Vilhena for use as his summer residence. This majestic palace, whose design is attributed to the French military engineer Charles François de Mondion (1683-1733), is today more commonly known as *Casa Leoni* (in Maltese *Dar l-Iljuni*) for the already-mentioned stone lions holding Vilhena's heraldic shield. The history of this building is variegated to say the least. It was used by government authorities all through its life and continues in this role up to this day. The main façade of the main building of this palace is composed of an arched doorway at ground level and an open balcony on the first floor which is crowned by a heavily moulded coat-of-arms placed centrally above the doorway. Inside there is an interesting staircase while a large garden situated behind the palace block complements the palatial setting. With the loss of Malta to the French, the palace was eventually adopted as a Maltese command base when the locals rose against the new rulers in September 1798. It had its own grenadier company with duties to guard *Casa Leoni*. With Malta passing into the hands of the British the building was used as a residence of the Governors of Malta. The coats-of-arms in the halls of *Casa Leoni* continue to bear witness to this. Also of note is the ownership of the *Casa* and the gardens by George Whitmore, Colonel Commandant of the Royal Engineers detachment in Malta (1811-29), and his family. They hosted the family of the Governor of Malta, the Marquis of Hastings (1824-26), in the 1820s for the local feast in honour of St Venera, whose church stood a few meters away from their residence. In the 1930s Sir Harry Luke and his wife Joyce lived in this residence and occasionally entertained their guests with theatrical productions. In the post-World War II years the Museums Department used *Casa Leoni* as a depository while it also served as a government primary school until 1968. Later on various Ministers used the palace as their Ministry. A big part of the *Casa Leoni* garden characterised by grid-iron flagstoned pathways, became accessible to the public from 1977 under the name of Romeo Romano Gardens. A feature of this garden was the *sienja* irrigation apparatus which served to draw water from the bell-shaped reservoirs which were cut into the rock during the 19th century.



 **HAL LIJA**
VILLA PARISIO

On Mabel Strickland Street in the village of Hal Lija, sited on one side of an open space into which three narrow streets converge, stands Villa Parisio, a residence with a long and interesting history. Its origins go back at least to the year 1567, and at that time it belonged to the Muscati family. When Simone Muscati married Margherita Giugale the couple made this their country home. In 1702 the villa is included in an inventory of the family Estate related to the marriage of the Noble Emmanuele Muscati to Margherita Sciberras. When the Muscati Estate was divided in 1769, the villa was inherited by their son Don Paolo Muscati who in 1735 had married the Noble Caterina Bonici. Their only daughter, Donna Anna, inherited the villa; she had married Don Domenico Parisio in 1760, the eldest son of an impoverished Noble Italian family from Reggio Calabria. After living there for some years, Anna left her husband and four of her children due to the unhappy marriage and returned to the island where she had been born and raised, accompanied by her youngest son Paolo, who had also been born in Malta.

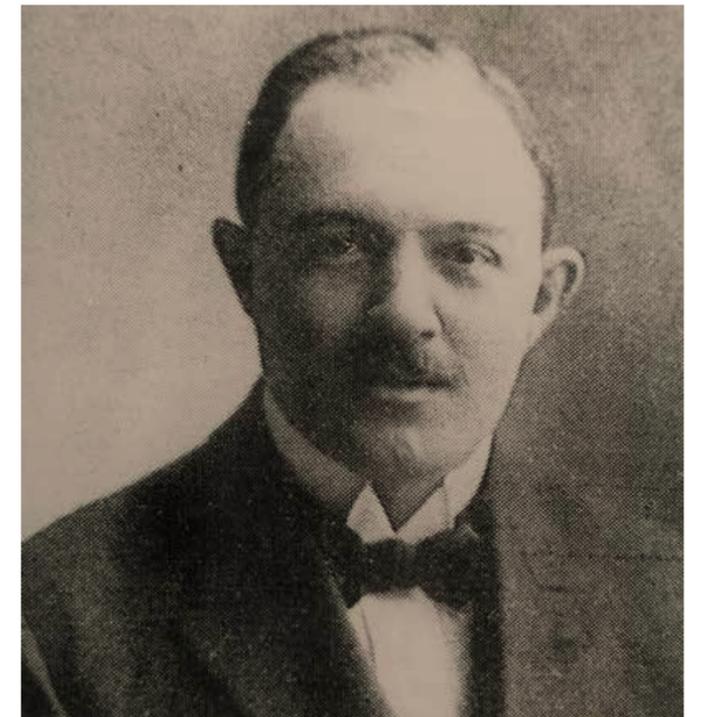
They lived at Villa Parisio. Paolo Parisio had become a Knight of St John and when his mother died in 1797 he inherited the residence. Paolo married Baroness Muscati Xara who was his second cousin, but as no child survived them, after Paolo's death, his widow married Baron Giuseppe de Piro and there ends the Parisio family. The de Piro family continued to own the villa until the early 20th century when, after having a number of successive owners it finally passed into the Strickland family and in 1943 was inherited by the Hon. Mabel Strickland who lived here until her death in 1988. The villa includes some exceptional antiques and paintings including those of a number of members of the family who had owned and lived here. Mabel Strickland set up the Strickland Foundation by public deed in 1979 with Villa Parisio being the seat from where this Foundation operates.



 **HAL LIJA**
VILLA FRANCIA

Preziosi Street in Hal Lija takes its name from a villa that stands in this street and which has a long history. It was originally a one-floor hunting lodge erected about the year 1757 by Francesco Presiosi in the tranquil and sparsely populated *casale* of Lija. It was, however, enlarged by the addition of a second floor and side wings later on. Baroque in style, it reflected the aspiration of certain well-to-do Maltese families towards higher status, though this compulsion at times led to financial ruin. The façade follows the Palladian design while the interior is in the Sicilian Baroque style. It was known as Villa Presiosi and in the 1830s a certain Dr Waugh lived in this luxurious villa, according to Thomas MacGill, in *otium con dignitatem* (the dignity of idleness), and this he could well afford after becoming wealthy from his medical profession which he practised in Malta. The name became Villa Francia when the residence passed to the Francia

family. Another prominent person who resided in it was Sir Ugo Mifsud, whose wife Maria Beatrice was a Francia. Sir Ugo occupied the villa during the years he served as Malta's Prime Minister (1924-27 and 1932-3). The Francias continued to own and use the villa until the last member of the family, William N. decided to bequeath the property to the State of Malta, in 1986. It serves as the official residence of the Prime Minister of Malta and is used for official functions and to host foreign delegations. The villa includes a coach room, a water mill, ten fountains and vast gardens.









H'ATTARD VILLA BOLOGNA

The first block of the villa which is a stone's throw away from San Anton Palace was built in 1745 by the powerful Fabrizio Grech, advisor to Gran Master Pinto. It was a father's gift to his daughter Maria Teresa on her wedding to Nicholas Perdicomati Bologna. As the spouse's family had been recently ennobled, Nicholas would later become the 2nd Count della Catena. As their daughter Angela, the 4th Countess della Catena, married Baron Sciberras, their son Nicholas Sciberras Bologna became 5th Count della Catena and inherited the villa in 1798. When he died without children it was decided that the title and the properties would pass to Gerald Strickland who was the great-grandson of Nicholas' mother and her husband Baron Sciberras. The Strickland family thus made this villa their home.

The 6th Count della Catena, Gerald Bologna Strickland, had a political career in both Malta and Great Britain. Raised to the peerage in the UK, he became Baron Strickland of Sizergh and served in the House of Lords. Before he had been Member of Parliament for Lancaster in the House of Commons for some time, and an ambassador to a number of British colonies for a number of years. In Malta he became Leader of the Constitutional Party and then Prime Minister in 1927. On the death of Sir Gerald, Villa Bologna passed to his nephew Gerald de Trafford, the eldest son of his daughter the Hon. Mary Constance Horneyold Strickland and has remained in the family to this day.

It is not known who the architect of the villa was but some attribute it to Andrea Belli who during the first half of the 1740s was involved in the reconstruction work on the Auberge de Castile. Its front façade follows the Mediterranean Baroque style and it is especially adorned with an open balcony which spans the whole front of the building. In the 1920s Lady Strickland continued to develop the villa and also its grounds. The grounds include a large nymphaeum and a pavilion and there was also an aviary. During World War II a shelter was dug under the house in 1942 to become one of the largest private shelters in Malta.

The garden and shelter of Villa Bologna are today open to the public and it is being used also as a venue for corporate and private functions.





TAS-SLIEMA RESIDENCE OF GEORGE BORG OLIVIER

A plaque on the façade of a house marks the place where Dr George Borg Olivier and his family lived in Tas-Sliema. The iconic house designed by architect Francesco Zammit was built in the last years of the 19th century in the neo-Gothic style. It is found in what was formerly called Victoria Avenue but which today bears the name of Giorgio Borg Oliver. The marble plaque recounts that in that house lived the father of Independent Malta who was Prime Minister of Malta and Leader of the Nationalist Party.

George Borg Oliver was born in 1911 in Valletta and graduated as Doctor of Laws in 1937. Borg Oliver was elected to the Council of Government in 1939 and then elected to the Legislative Assembly in 1947 also filling the position of Deputy Leader of the Opposition later on. Elected again in 1950, with the demise of Dr Enrico Mizzi in December 1950, Borg Olivier became Prime Minister of Malta. During this period he occupied the premiership from 1950 till 1955.



After a series of talks with the British Government, Borg Oliver managed to gain political independence for Malta, which was approved in a national referendum and endorsed by Parliament. Malta thus gained Independence on 21 September 1964. Borg Olivier's second period as Prime Minister was from 1962 till 1971. He passed away in 1980 and was given a state funeral.



BIRKIRKARA PRIME MINISTERS

EDWARD FENECH ADAMI

Born in 1934 in Birkirkara, Edward Fenech Adami became a lawyer in 1959 and joined the Nationalist Party (*Partit Nazzjonalista* – PN) some time later. He first entered Parliament in 1969 and after occupying senior administrative positions in the PN was elected to succeed Dr George Borg Olivier as Party Leader in 1977. Popularly known as 'Eddie', Dr Fenech Adami occupied both the position of Leader of the Opposition and that of Prime Minister (1987-1996; 1998-2004). A firm believer in Malta's membership in the European Union, he strived to achieve this aim which was realised in 2004. After his long political career, Dr Fenech Adami served as President of Malta between 2004 and 2009.



ALFRED SANT

Alfred Sant was born in 1948 and is from Birkirkara. He served in the Maltese diplomatic service in the early 1970s and later on, in 1979, obtained a DBA from Harvard Business School, USA. After serving in a number of administrative roles with Government entities, he embarked on his political career in 1982 with the Malta Labour Party (*Partit Laburista* – PL) and some time later he became President of the PL. While he entered Parliament in 1987, he was then elected Leader of the MLP in 1992. Besides serving as Leader of the Opposition, Dr Sant was also Prime Minister of Malta between 1996 and 1998. In 2014 he was elected Member of the European Parliament. Dr Sant is also an established author.





H'ATTARD SAN ANTON PALACE AND GARDENS

San Anton Palace, which has throughout its existence hosted the Grand Masters, Governors and Presidents of Malta, is situated in an idyllic setting surrounded by its own gardens and in relative seclusion from the hustle and bustle of everyday life. The palace owes its birth to a summer residence erected by the Knight of the Order of St John Fra Antoine De Paule in the early years of the 17th century. After De Paule became Grand Master in 1623, he expanded his country house and its gardens thus turning it into a palace. This was around 1625 and he called it San Anton in honour of his patron saint, St Anthony of Padua. The generously spacious palace was adequately equipped to accommodate De Paule's numerous staff and the guests who were hosted from time to time in this building. Later grand masters continued to use this countryside palace as one of their residences as it was closer to Valletta than Verdala Palace.

With the takeover of Malta by the Republican French and the subsequent Maltese uprising, this palace continued to be in the heart of decision-making as it provided the meeting place for the leaders of the Maltese when in 1799-1800 they had their National Assembly. Captain Alexander Ball who led the Maltese forces and later on occupied the position of Civil Commissioner of Malta, operated from, and resided in, San Anton Palace until he died here in October 1809.

During the British period this palace experienced some structural alterations and became the official residence of the Governors of Malta. These included the construction of a balustrade walk around the main courtyard. The public was given access to part of the gardens as from 1882. With the attainment of political independence in 1964, the palace became the residence of the Governors-General and then in 1974, when Malta became a Republic, it provided the official residence of all the Presidents of Malta.

The palace has hosted numerous dignitaries including Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom who stayed here while on royal visits to Malta in 1954, 1967 and 2005. It was also the place of birth of Princess Victoria Melita of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha whose father, Alfred, Duke of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha, was at the time serving in Malta as a Royal Navy officer.

Many distinguished visitors to the palace have left a sign of their presence by planting trees in San Anton Gardens which can be located as these are marked by commemorative plaques. The Annual Horticultural Show makes use of these gardens which also offer themselves as an open-air theatre for performances during the summer months.



The Central Region of Malta

In 2018 the refurbishment of a number of staterooms was the occasion for naming or renaming various rooms in the palace in memory of past Presidents of the Republic and other personalities. These are today: Sala Antoine de Paule; Sala Agatha Barbara; Librerija Anton Buttigieg; Sala Ugo Mifsud Bonnici; Sala Pawlu Xuereb; Sala Ċensu Tabone; Mikiel Anton Vassalli Suite; Sala Guido de Marco, Sala Eddie Fenech Adami and Sala George Abela.

The palace has two chapels. That dedicated to Our Lady of Pilar was built by Grand Master Manoel de Vilhena in the 18th century and has a barrel-vaulted nave. The other, called the Russian Chapel, is dedicated to St Anthony, and was built in the 19th century on the designs of Gen. Sir George Whitmore (1775-1862) of the Royal Engineers. Originally a Protestant chapel, it was later turned into a Russian Orthodox chapel to serve the requirements of the Grand Duchess Maria Alexandrovna of Russia who was the wife of Alfred, the Duke of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha. Later on it became a Roman Catholic chapel.













RESIDENTS OF SAN ANTON PALACE



SIR MAURICE DORMAN
1964-1971
GOVERNOR-GENERAL



SIR ANTHONY MAMO
1971-1974
GOVERNOR-GENERAL
1974-1976
PRESIDENT OF MALTA



ANTON BUTTIGIEG
1976-1981
PRESIDENT OF MALTA



AGATHA BARBARA
1982-1987
PRESIDENT OF MALTA



PAUL XUEREB
1987-1989
ACTING PRESIDENT OF MALTA



ĊENSU TABONE
1989-1994
PRESIDENT OF MALTA



UGO MIFSUD BONNICI
1994-1999
PRESIDENT OF MALTA



GUIDO DE MARCO
1999-2004
PRESIDENT OF MALTA



EDWARD FENECH ADAMI
2004-2009
PRESIDENT OF MALTA



GEORGE ABELA
2009-2014
PRESIDENT OF MALTA



MARIE-LOUISE
COLEIRO PRECA
2014-2019
PRESIDENT OF MALTA



GEORGE VELLA
2019-
PRESIDENT OF MALTA

SAFEGUARDING OUR HERITAGE

It is wonderful to discover what cultural and natural wealth the Central Region possesses. It is however much more important to realise that all this can vanish in thin air if we do not conserve it and treasure it so that it may be passed on to the generations that will follow. Our heritage is a delicate asset; if it is not taken care of we are bound to lose it forever. This book should serve as an eye-opener. To hold on to our cultural and natural inheritance we need to believe in its worth, strive to protect it, and make sure to educate others so that they may understand what they have been entrusted with, so that they too may cherish it and guard it from those who may care less about its significance.

Let this appeal be a challenge to us all, and may we be successful in fulfilling it.

REFERENCES

- Abela, S., *Il-Karmelitani f'Santa Venera 1913–2000* (Malta, 2000).
- Abela, A., Abdilla, N., Abela, C., Camilleri, J., Mercieca, D. & Mercieca, G., 'Study 1: Considering the Effects of Institutional Placements on Children Under 5' (2012), ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=16040&langId=en
- Abela-Wadge, A., 'This is why I love Msida!', *Married with Passports*, (22 Sep 2017), <http://www.marriedwithpassports.eu/this-is-why-i-love-msida/>
- Acton, H., *The Last Bourbons of Naples (1825-1861)* (London, 1961).
- Agius, P., 'Restored chapel', *Times of Malta*, (2 Nov 2016), <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20161102/letters/Restored-chapel.629738>
- Ameen, J., 'The jewel in Lija', *Times of Malta*, (31 Aug 2009), <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20090831/local/the-jewel-in-lija.271598>
- Archdiocese of Malta, 'Church property worth €8 million to become Malta's first state-of-the-art Hospice palliative care complex', (16 Apr 2018), <http://thechurchinmalta.org/en/posts/76296/church-property-worth-8-million-to-become-maltas-first-state-of-the-art-hospice-palliative-care-complex->
- Archdiocese of Malta, 'Parishes', <http://thechurchinmalta.org/en/posts/category/parishes>
- Archdiocese of Malta, 'The Congregation of the Ursuline Sisters of St. Angela Merici', (8 Oct 2009), <http://thechurchinmalta.org/en/posts/1726/the-congregation-of-the-ursuline-sisters-of-st-angela-merici>
- Archdiocese of Malta, 'The Franciscan Missionaries of Mary', (8 Oct 2009), <http://thechurchinmalta.org/en/posts/1687/the-franciscan-missionaries-of-mary>
- Archdiocese of Malta, 'The Good Shepherd Sisters', (8 Oct 2009), <http://thechurchinmalta.org/en/posts/1680/the-good-sheperd-sisters>
- Attard, A., 'Fleur-de-Lys', *Kumitat Amministrattiv Fleur De-Lys*, (18 Nov 2012), https://web.archive.org/web/20141006075504/http://fleurdelys.org.mt/?page_id=851
- Attard, E., *Il-Pulizija ta' Malta 1814-1956* (Malta, 1994).
- Azzopardi, A., *Jesuit Schools in Malta, vol. II – St Aloysius' College 1907-1934* (Malta, 2004).
- Azzopardi, J., 'A Survey of the Maltese Muxrabijiet (Part 2)', *Vigilo*, 42 (Oct 2012), <http://dinlarthelwa.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/Vigilo-42.pdf>
- Azzopardi, N., 'Malta Railway Museum', (17 May 2003), <http://maltarailway.com/Malta+Railway+Museum/malta+railway+museum.html/>
- Baldacchino, C., 'Gates close at Gzira ground after 60 years', *Times of Malta*, (10 Apr 2008), <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20080410/sport/gates-close-at-gzira-ground-after-60-years.203577>
- Bezzina, C., 'Il-Knisja ta' Santa Marija – Hal Balzan', *Kappelli Maltin*, http://kappellimaltin.com/Il-Kappelli/Sett12/BZN_S_Marija/bzn_s_marija.html
- Bezzina, C., 'Il-Knisja tal-Lunzjata – Hal Balzan', *Kappelli Maltin*, http://kappellimaltin.com/Il-Kappelli/Sett08/BZN_Tal-Lunzjata/bzn_tal-lunzjata.html
- Bezzina, C., 'The Chapel of the Good Shepherd in Balzan', *The Malta Independent*, (4 Jan 2009), <http://www.independent.com.mt/articles/2009-01-04/letters/the-chapel-of-the-good-shepherd-in-balzan-218468/>
- Bishop, A., 'Monuments explained: Workers' Memorial, Msida', *GuideMeMalta.com*, <https://www.guidememalta.com/en/monuments-explained-workers-memorial-msida>
- Bonavia, S., '105 sena mit-twelid ta' Monsinjur Salv Grima u 25 sena minn mewtu: Biddel il-hajja tas-sacerdoti b'hajtu u bid-Dar tal-Kleru', *Lehen is-Sewwa* (6 Dec 2015), http://www.laikos.org/LSw_06122015.htm
- Bonnici, A., *L-Istituti ta' Hajja Kkonsagrata* (Malta, 2000).
- Bonnici, J. & Cassar, M., *A Chronicle of Twentieth Century Malta* (Malta, 2004).
- Bonnici, J. & Cassar, M., *The Malta Railway*, rev. edit. (Malta, 1992).
- Brincat, J., 'Il-Knisja ta' Santu Rokku – Birkirkara', *Kappelli Maltin*, http://www.kappellimaltin.com/Il-Kappelli/Sett11/BKR_Santu_Rokku/bkr_santu_rokku.html
- Brincat, V., 'Health Policy under Self-Government, 1921-1934', *Storja 2001*(Malta, 2001).
- Busuttil, C., 'Mater Dei Hospital inauguration tonight', *Times of Malta*, (29 Jun 2007), <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20070629/local/mater-dei-hospital-inauguration-tonight.12977>

- Busuttil, R., ‘Il-Knisja ta’ San Mikiel Arkanglu – Iklin - limiti ta’ Hal Lija’, *Kappelli Maltin*, http://kappellimaltin.com/Il-Kappelli/Sett03/IKL_San_Mikiel/ikl_san_mikiel.html
- Busuttil, R., ‘Il-Knisja ta’ Santu Rokku – Hal Balzan’, *Kappelli Maltin*, http://www.kappellimaltin.com/Il-Kappelli/Sett01/BZN_Santu_Rokku/bzn_santu_rokku.html
- Busuttil, R., ‘Il-Knisja tal-Madonna tal-Mirakli – Lija’, *Kappelli Maltin*, http://kappellimaltin.com/Il-Kappelli/Sett01/LJA_Mirakli/lja_mirakli.html
- Busuttil, R., ‘Il-Madonna tal-Grazzja – Tas-Sliema’, *Kappelli Maltin*, http://kappellimaltin.com/Il-Kappelli/Sett13/SLM_Tal-Grazzja/slm_tal-grazzja.html
- Busuttil, R., ‘Santa Margerita tal-Hereb – San Ġwann’, *Kappelli Maltin*, http://kappellimaltin.com/Il-Kappelli/Sett10/SGN_Margerita_tal-Hereb/sgn_margerita_tal-hereb.html
- Buttigieg, C., ‘Kif twieled il-proġett tad-Dar tal-Kleru’, *Lehen is-Sewwa* (6 Dec 2015), http://www.laikos.org/LSw_06122015.htm
- Calleja, J., *L-Imsida il-bierah u llum*, 2 vols (Malta, 1990).
- Carabott, M., ‘A Subdued Malta’, *The Malta Independent*, (9 Apr 2005), <http://www.independent.com.mt/articles/2005-04-09/news/a-subdued-malta-73992/>
- Carabott, S., ‘Balzan church to get total exterior makeover’ *Times of Malta*, (17 Jun 2016), <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20160617/local/balzan-church-to-get-total-exterior-makeover.615710>
- Carabott, S., ‘Restored Russian Chapel at San Anton Palace inaugurated’, *Times of Malta*, (22 May 2013), <http://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20130522/local/restored-russian-chapel.470831>
- CareMalta, ‘Zammit Clapp Home’, <https://www.caremalta.com/private-homes/zammit-clapp/>
- Casa Rocca Piccola, ‘The de Piro Family’, <https://www.casaroccapiccola.com/the-de-piro-family/>
- Cassar, D., ‘Did you know that Ta’ Braxia cemetery in Pietà had caused huge uproar?’, *TVM*, (26 Feb 2018), <https://www.tvn.com.mt/en/news/did-you-know-that-ta-braxia-cemetery-in-pieta-had-caused-huge-uproar/>
- Cassar, P., ‘A tour of the Lazzaretto buildings’, *Melita Historica*, 9/4 (1984), 369–80.
- Cauchi, M., ‘The chapel in Pietà’, *Times of Malta*, (14 Nov 2016), <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20161114/letters/The-chapel-in-Piet.630975>
- Cilia, J., ‘The seven newly refurbished state rooms at san anton palace revealed in their stunning glory’, *Lovin Malta*, (4 Apr 2018), <https://lovinmalta.com/news/local/watch-the-seven-newly-refurbished-state-rooms-at-san-anton-palace-revealed-in-their-stunning-glory>
- Cini, G., ‘Wrens return to Malta to remember the good old days’, *Times of Malta*, (1 Oct 2002), <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20021001/local/wrens-return-to-malta-to-remember-the-good-old-days.166101>
- Coastal Forces Veterans Forum, <https://cfv.org.uk/forum/viewtopic.php?t=96>
- Commonwealth War Graves Commission, ‘Pieta Military Cemetery’, <https://www.cwgc.org/find-a-cemetery/cemetery/11200/pieta-military-cemetery/>
- Commonwealth War Graves Commission, ‘Ta’ Braxia Cemetery’, <https://www.cwgc.org/find-a-cemetery/cemetery/11202/ta-braxia-cemetery/>
- Conservatorio Vincenzo Bugeja, ‘About us’, <http://youthincaremalta.org/about-us/>
- Cutajar, T.C. ‘Il-Leggenda tal-Mensija’, *Kappelli Maltin*, <http://www.kappellimaltin.com/Il-LeggendaTal-Minsija.pdf>
- Demajo, D., ‘Chalet’s architect’, *Times of Malta*, (9 Jul 2017), <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20170709/letters/Chalet-s-architect.652779>
- Diacono, H., ‘Villa Guardamangia - A most controversial building in the news’, *Azure*, <http://www.azure.com.mt/words-from-henri/the-residence-of-queen-elisabeth-the-second-in-malta.html>
- Dimech, Ġ., *Hal Balzan – Ġrajjetu sa l-1999* (Malta, 2004).
- Dimech, J., ‘Balzan Parish Church History’, *Balzan Parish Online*, <http://www.balzanparish.com/history.htm>
- Din l-Art Helwa, ‘Ta’ Braxia Cemetery, Pietà’, (6 Oct 2011), <https://dinlartelwa.org/properties/our-properties/ta-braxia-cemetery-pieta/>
- Dominican Sisters of Malta, ‘Who we are’, <http://dominicansistersofmalta.org/index.php/who-we-are>
- Duncan, H., ‘The Carmelites in Santa Venera’, *Times of Malta*, (24 Jul 2016), <https://app.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20160724/life-features/The-Carmelites-in-Santa-Venera.619861>
- Dykes, G., ‘Killicks’ Course’, Ch. 11, http://www.godfreydykes.info/chapter_11AM.htm
- Fabri, A., ‘Society of the Sacred Heart marks its centenary’, *Times of Malta*, (13 Oct 2002), <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20021013/education/society-of-the-sacred-heart-marks-its-centenary.165266>
- Falzon, C., ‘New St Venera parish church will be consecrated today’, *Times of Malta*, (17 Jul 2005), <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20050717/local/new-st-venera-parish-church-will-be-consecrated-today.83865>
- Fenech, L. & Ciantar, N., ‘Il-Knisja tal-Vitorja “Tal-Belliegħa” – Lija’, *Kappelli Maltin*, http://kappellimaltin.com/Il-Kappelli/Sett15/LJA_Vit_Belliegħa/lja_vit_belliegħa.html
- Find a Grave, ‘Ta’ Cini Institute’, <https://www.findagrave.com/cemetery/2460640/ta%27-cini-institute>
- Fiorini, S. (ed.), *San Ġiljan mitt sena parroċċa 1891-1991 The centenary of a parish St Julian’s* (Malta, 1991).
- Gatt, I., ‘The Archbishop unveils Mgr. Isidor Formosa Monument’, *Archdiocese of Malta*, (20 Mar 2010), <http://thechurchinmalta.org/en/posts/7615/the-archbishop-unveils-msgr-isidor-formosa-monumentl-arcisqof-jikxef-il-monument-ta-mons-isidor-formosa>
- Gauci, M. ‘New Light on Webster Paulson and his Architectural Idiosyncrasies’, in C. Vella (ed.), *Proceedings of History Week 2009* (Malta, 2012).
- German, L.J., ‘A wrongly named hospital?’, *Times of Malta*, (13 Jun 2004), <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20040613/opinion/a-wrongly-named-hospital.120476>
- Govè, J., ‘Celebrating ‘Mater’ ’, *The Archbishop’s Seminary*, (1 Nov 2016), <https://seminary.org.mt/2016/11/celebrating-mater/>
- Government of Malta, ‘Churches: Christ the Redeemer Chapel [Roman Catholic]’, *localgovernment.com.mt*, <https://localgovernment.gov.mt/en/lc/Gzira/Pages/Locality/Churches.aspx>
- Government of Malta, ‘Churches: Parish Church - Our Lady of Mount Carmel [Roman Catholic]’, *localgovernment.com.mt*, <https://localgovernment.gov.mt/en/lc/Gzira/Pages/Locality/Churches.aspx>
- Government of Malta, ‘Dr Alfred Sant (1996 - 1998): Prime Minister of Malta (1996 - 1998)’, *gov.mt*, <https://www.gov.mt/en/Government/Government%20of%20Malta/Prime%20Ministers%20of%20Malta/Pages/Dr-Alfred-Sant.aspx>
- Government of Malta, ‘Dr Censu Tabone: President of Malta (1989 – 1994)’, *gov.mt*, <https://www.gov.mt/en/Government/Government%20of%20Malta/Presidents%20of%20Malta/Pages/Dr-Censu-Tabone.aspx>
- Government of Malta, ‘Dr Edward Fenech Adami: President of Malta (2004 – 2009)’, *gov.mt*, <https://www.gov.mt/en/Government/Government%20of%20Malta/Presidents%20of%20Malta/Pages/Dr-Edward-Fenech-Adami.aspx>
- Government of Malta, ‘Dr George Borg Olivier (1950 – 1955, 1962 – 1971)’, *gov.mt*, <https://www.gov.mt/en/Government/Government%20of%20Malta/Prime%20Ministers%20of%20Malta/Pages/Dr-George-Borg-Olivier.aspx>
- Government of Malta, ‘L.N. 364 of 2014 LOCAL COUNCILS ACT (CAP. 363), Coat of Arms for the Regional Committees Order, 2014’, <http://justiceservices.gov.mt/DownloadDocument.aspx?app=lp&itemid=26367&l=1>
- Government of Malta, ‘Manoel Island’, *localgovernment.com.mt*, <https://localgovernment.gov.mt/en/lc/Gzira/Pages/Locality/Manoel-Island.aspx>
- Government of Malta, ‘Mater Dei Hospital’, *health.gov.mt*, <https://deputyprimeminister.gov.mt/en/MDH/Pages/Home.aspx>
- Government of Malta, ‘Msida: About the locality’, *localgovernment.com.mt*, <https://localgovernment.gov.mt/en/lc/Msida/Pages/The-Local-Council/About-The-Locality.aspx>
- Government of Malta, ‘Public Broadcasting Services’, *justice.org.mt*, <https://justice.gov.mt/en/ministry/Pages/Public-Broadcasting-Services.aspx>
- Government of Malta, ‘School History: Birkirkara Primary School’, *Skola*, https://stc.birkirkara.skola.edu.mt/?page_id=69
- Government of Malta, ‘Sir Anthony J. Mamo: President of Malta (1974 – 1976)’, *gov.mt*, <https://www.gov.mt/en/Government/Government%20of%20Malta/Presidents%20of%20Malta/Pages/Sir-Anthony-J-Mamo.aspx>
- Government of Malta, ‘St Julian’s: About the locality’, *localgovernment.com.mt*, <https://localgovernment.gov.mt/en/lc/StJulians/Pages/The-Local-Council/About-the-Locality.aspx>
- Government of Malta, ‘St Julian's Local Council – History’, *localgovernment.com.mt*, <https://localgovernment.gov.mt/en/lc/StJulians/Pages/Locality/History.aspx>
- Grand Commandery of the Castello, ‘Castello Lanzun, Mensija’, <https://grandcommanderymalta.org/the-castello>

- Guillaumier, A., *Bliet u Rhula Maltin*, 3 vols (Malta, 1987).
- Hoe, S., *Malta: Women, History, Books and Places* (Oxford, 2015).
- Hughes, Q., *Fortress Architecture and Military History in Malta* (London, 1969).
- Hughes, Q. & Thake, C., *Malta, War & Peace: An Architectural Chronicle 1800-2000* (Malta, 2005).
- Hughes, Q. & Thake, C., *Malta: The Baroque Island* (Malta, 2003).
- IHI PLC, ‘The Sparkling Palace’, *INSIDER+*, <https://insider.ihiplc.com/the-sparkling-palace/>
- ISEP, ‘University of Malta’, <https://search.isepstudyabroad.org/University/Detail/0e233d83-c5a7-4ff9-a3f5-497752af3462>
- Island of Gozo, ‘Apap Institute Overview in Santa Venera, Malta’, <http://islandofgozo.org/place?id=233&item=apap-institute>
- Jesuits in Malta, ‘St Aloysius’ College: Our History – An Outline’, <http://www.saintalloysius.edu.mt/content.aspx?id=224044>
- Kamra tal-Periti, *Modernist Malta: The Architectural Legacy* (Malta, 2009).
- Lanfranco, G., ‘Stella Maris College - 100 scholastic years’, *Times of Malta*, (13 Mar 2005), <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20050313/education/stella-maris-college-100-scholastic-years.96513>
- Leone Ganado, P., ‘After 152 years, a final checkout at the Imperial Hotel: From Atatürk to Roger Moore, the Sliema hotel had a colourful clientele’, *Times of Malta*, (10 Feb 2017), <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20170210/local/after-152-years-a-final-checkout-at-the-imperial-hotel.639054>
- Leone Ganado, P., ‘New act for Salesian Theatre, 110 years on’, *Times of Malta*, (1 Feb 2018), <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20180201/local/new-act-for-salesian-theatre-110-years-on.669444>
- Lija Local Council, ‘Our Saviour Church’, <http://lijalocalcouncil.com/our-saviour-church/>
- Lija Local Council, ‘The New Parish Church of Our Saviour’, <http://lijalocalcouncil.com/the-new-parish-church-of-our-saviour/>
- Lija Local Council, ‘Two Depiro Villas’, <http://lijalocalcouncil.com/two-depiro-villas/>
- L-Università ta’ Malta, ‘Chaplaincy – History’, <https://www.um.edu.mt/chaplaincy/about/history>
- L-Università ta’ Malta, ‘History’, <https://www.um.edu.mt/about/history>
- MacGill, T., *A hand book, or guide, for strangers visiting Malta* (Malta, 1839).
- Mallia, C., ‘The New Church’, *Attard Parish*, (11 Aug 2015), http://attard-parish.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=11&Itemid=9
- Malta Football Association, ‘The National Stadium’, <https://www.mfa.com.mt/en/mfa-facilities/facilities/1/the-national-stadium.htm>
- Malta Industrial Parks, ‘Mrieħel Industrial Estate’, <http://www2.mip.com.mt/mrieħel>
- Malta Today, ‘Maquettes for the de Marco, Mintoff and Tabone monuments chosen’, (9 Dec 2013), <https://www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/national/32208/maquettes-for-the-de-marco-mintoff-and-tabone-monuments-chosen-20131209>
- malta.com, ‘Mount Carmel Hospital’, <http://www.malta.com/en/local-information/health-care/hospital/mount-carmel-hospital>
- malta.com, ‘Ta’ Qali Crafts Village’, <http://www.malta.com/en/attraction/shopping/ta-qali-crafts-village>
- maltapanoramas.com, ‘Jesus of Nazareth Parish Church Sliema – Malta’, <http://www.maltapanoramas.com/JONCHURCH/mainJON.htm>
- Maltese Augustinian Province, ‘Paceville & St Julians’, <http://www.agostinjani.org/en/who-we-are/our-communities/paceville-2.html>
- Maltese History & Heritage, ‘Airfields – Ta’ Qali’, <https://vassallohistory.wordpress.com/airfields/>
- Maltese History & Heritage, ‘Earthquakes in Malta’, <https://vassallohistory.wordpress.com/earthquakes-in-malta/>
- Maltese History & Heritage, ‘Windmills’, <https://vassallohistory.wordpress.com/windmills/>
- Martin, I., ‘Updated: Appeal for Queen Elizabeth’s former home to be restored – Government embarked on process to restore property ‘long ago’’, *Times of Malta*, (25 Apr 2015), <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20150425/local/updated-appeal-for-queen-elizabeths-former-home-to-be-restored.565455>
- Martin, I., ‘Rebuilding Sliema’s Chalet is on the cards - Tourism Minister – 50 years after it shut down, iconic site could make a comeback’, *Times of Malta*, (2 Jul 2017), <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20170702/local/rebuilding-sliemas-chalet-is-on-the-cards-tourism-minister.652107>
- Massa, A., ‘Mater Dei Hospital inaugurated’, *Times of Malta*, (1 Jul 2007), <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20070701/local/mater-dei-hospital-inaugurated.12725>
- Meli, J.J., & Meli C., ‘Ta’ Xbiex mimli fatti storici’, *Parroċċa San Ġevann tas-Salih, Festa 2018*, https://issuu.com/lawrencezahra/docs/ta_xbiex_festa_magazine_2018
- MIDI, ‘History of the Island’, <http://www.manoelisland.com.mt/en/history>
- MIDI, ‘Restoration of Fort Tigné’, <http://www.midimalta.com/en/fort-tigne>
- Mifsud, N., ‘Tifkira ta’ Santa Venera fil-pjazza tal-lokalità li hadet isimha’, *TVM*, (3 May 2015), <https://www.tvm.com.mt/mt/news/tifkira-ta-santa-venera-fil-pjazza-tal-lokalita-li-hadet-isimha/>
- Military Architecture, ‘Fort Tigne - 1792-95’, <http://www.militaryarchitecture.com/index.php/Fortifications/fort-tigne-1792-95.html>
- Mousù, S., ‘St John of the Cross church, Ta’ Xbiex, marks two anniversaries’, *Times of Malta*, (18 Nov 2018), <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20181118/life-features/st-john-of-the-cross-church-ta-xbiex-marks-two-anniversaries.694588>
- Msida Gostra, <https://www.facebook.com/msida.gostra/>
- Muscat, B., ‘Brief history of the lazaretto (1)’, *Times of Malta*, (27 Oct 2008), <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20081027/letters/brief-history-of-the-lazaretto-1.230650>
- Muscat, F., *The Baroque architecture of the basilica of Saint Helen in Birkirkara*, (unpublished B.A.(Hons.) History of Art thesis, University of Malta, 2011), <https://www.um.edu.mt/library/oar/handle/123456789/3790>
- My Guide Malta, ‘San Anton Gardens – Malta’, <https://www.myguidemalta.com/sights/san-anton-gardens>
- National Inventory of the Cultural Property of the Maltese Islands, ‘Niche of St. Roque’, NICPMI Inv. No. 00842, https://culture.gov.mt/en/culturalheritage/NICPMI_Database/00842.pdf
- National Inventory of the Cultural Property of the Maltese Islands, ‘St Mary’s Parish Church (Il-Knisja l-Qadima)’, NICPMI Inv. No. 00293, <http://www.culturalheritage.gov.mt/filebank/inventory/Chapels and Niches/00293.pdf>
- National Inventory of the Cultural Property of the Maltese Islands, ‘Government School’, NICPMI Inv. No. 01235, https://culture.gov.mt/en/culturalheritage/NICPMI_Database/01235.pdf
- National Inventory of the Cultural Property of the Maltese Islands, ‘Balluta Buildings’, NICPMI Inv. No. 01212, https://culture.gov.mt/en/culturalheritage/NICPMI_Database/01212.pdf
- National Inventory of the Cultural Property of the Maltese Islands, ‘San Antonio Palace and Gardens’, NICPMI Inv. No. 01152, <https://web.archive.org/web/20160507201705/http://www.culturalheritage.gov.mt/filebank/inventory/01152.pdf>
- National Inventory of the Cultural Property of the Maltese Islands, ‘Villa Gourgion’, NICPMI Inv. No. 01177, https://culture.gov.mt/en/culturalheritage/NICPMI_Database/01177.pdf
- National Inventory of the Cultural Property of the Maltese Islands, ‘Church of St Alphonse’, NICPMI Inv. No. 00286, <https://web.archive.org/web/20160822023350/http://www.culturalheritage.gov.mt/filebank/inventory/Chapels%20and%20Niches/00286.pdf>
- Pace, S., ‘Sisters and mothers’, *Times of Malta*, (27 Jan 2013), <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20130127/life-features/sisters-and-mothers.455645>
- Papagiorcopulo, K., ‘“Mater Dei” Statue Inaugurated’, *Archdiocese of Malta*, (25 May 2010), <http://thechurchinmalta.org/en/posts/9682/mater-dei-statue-inauguratedinawgurata-l-istatwa-mater-dei>
- Parroċċa Familja Mqaddsa, l-Iklin, ‘Parroċċa żghira b’qalb kbira’, <http://parroccaiklin.com/il-parrocca/taghrif/parrocca-zghira-bqalb-kbira/>
- Parroċċa Fleur-de-Lys, ‘Storja: Fleur-de-Lys – 40 Sena Parroċċa’, <http://www.fleurdelysparish.com/rizorsi/storja>
- Parroċċa San Ġiljan, ‘Storja’, <http://www.stjuliansparish.org/storja/>
- Parroċċa San Ġuzepp Haddiem – Birkirkara, ‘Storja’, <https://www.sanguzepphaddiem.com/storja>
- Parroċċa Santa Venera, ‘Storja tal-Knisja l-Qadima’, <https://web.archive.org/web/20180130113037/http://www.parroccasantavenera.org/storja-tal-parrocca/knisja-qadima>
- PKF, ‘Regional Economic, Social and Cultural Community Plan (ESC Plan): An assessment of the Economic, Social and Cultural Community of the ‘Central Region in Malta’, (Mar 2017).
- restoration.gov.mt, ‘Spinola Palace - St. Julians’, <https://restoration.gov.mt/en/otherprojects/ongoingprojects/Pages/Spinola-Palace---St-Julians.aspx>
- Sacred Heart Education Heritage & Horizon, ‘Convent of the Sacred Heart School Foundation, Malta’, <http://www.heritageandhorizon.ie/schools/sacred-heart-schools-network/convent-of-the-sacred-heart-school-foundation-malta/>

- Said Vassallo, C., ‘Villa Parisio and the Strickland Foundation’, http://users.waldonet.net.mt/fournier/villa_parisio.htm
- Salesians of Don Bosco, ‘The History of Salesians in Malta’, <http://www.salesiansmalta.org/who-we-are/history/>
- Saliba, R., ‘Il-kappella ta’ San Pawl – H’Attard’, *Kappelli Maltin*, http://kappellimaltin.com/Il-Kappelli/Sett07/ATD_San_Pawl/atd_san_pawl.html
- San Gwann Local Council, ‘Churches and Chapels’, <http://www.sangwannmalta.org/churches.htm>
- Sansone, K., ‘It’s finally happening.. the Ta’ Qali crafts village’, *Times of Malta*, (22 Sep 2017), <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20170922/local/its-finally-happening-the-ta-qali-crafts-village.658617>
- Savona-Ventura, C., ‘Mental Disease in Malta’ (Malta, 2004), <http://staff.um.edu.mt/csav1/books/psychiatry.pdf>
- Scerri, J., ‘Churches and Chapels of Malta and Gozo – Attard’, <http://www.malta-canada.com/churches-chapels/Attard.htm>
- Scerri, J., ‘Churches and Chapels of Malta and Gozo – Msida’, <http://www.malta-canada.com/churches-chapels/Msida.htm>
- Scerri, J., ‘Churches and Chapels of Malta and Gozo – Santa Venera’, <http://www.malta-canada.com/churches-chapels/Santa-Venera.htm>
- Schembri Orland, K., ‘Crafts Village operators and craftsmen relieved that long overdue project is underway’, *The Malta Independent*, (17 Jan 2018), <http://www.independent.com.mt/articles/2018-01-17/local-news/Crafts-Village-operators-and-craftsmen-relieved-that-long-overdue-project-is-underway-6736183719>
- Schembri Orland, K., ‘PA Board approves application that will see Imperial Hotel turned into home for the elderly’, *The Malta Independent*, (19 Jan 2017), <http://www.independent.com.mt/articles/2017-01-19/local-news/PA-Board-approves-application-to-see-Imperial-Hotel-turned-into-home-for-the-elderly-6736169270>
- Sciberras, S., ‘Ftit Storja: L-istorja tal-knisja u tal-komunità tagħna’, *Parroċċa Santa Marija, Birkirkara*, <http://www.santamarrijabirkirkara.com/minahna/fit-storja/>
- Society of Christian Doctrine, ‘Dar il-Ħanin Samaritan’, <https://www.sdcmuseum.org/Page.aspx?menu=2&pv=aGTfzyEFgig>
- Spiteri, A., ‘How the Lija Belvedere ended up as a roundabout’, *TVM*, (13 Jan 2017), <https://www.tvn.com.mt/en/news/how-the-lija-belvedere-ended-up-as-a-roundabout/>
- Spiteri, S.C., ‘French Blockade Batteries’, *Maltese History & Heritage*, <https://vassallohistory.wordpress.com/french-blockade-batteries/>
- Spiteri, S.C., ‘Maltese ‘Siege’ Batteries of the Blockade 1798-1800’, *Arx-Online Journal of Military Architecture*, 3/6 (2008), 6-51, <http://www.militaryarchitecture.com/images/stories/Arx/arx6-2008.pdf>
- Spiteri, S.C., *British Military Architecture in Malta* (Malta, 1996).
- Spiteri, S.C., *Fortresses of the Cross* (Malta, 1994).
- St John of the Cross Parish Church Ta’ Xbiex Malta, ‘History of our parish’, <https://www.stjohnofthecross.net/about/history-of-our-parish?lang=en>
- St Joseph School Sliema – Senior School, ‘Our History’, <http://stjosephsliema.edu.mt/about-us/our-history/>
- St Patrick’s Salesian School, ‘About Us’, <http://www.spmalta.org/school%20main%20page.html>
- Stivala, A., ‘Carmel (Lino) Gatt’, *Times of Malta*, (26 Feb 2016), <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20160226/social/Carmel-Lino-Gatt.603770>
- Stroud, J., ‘The Maltese Army of 1798’, *On Parade*, 37 (2010).
- Ta’ Xbiex Local Council, ‘About the Locality’, <https://localgovernment.gov.mt/en/lc/TaXbiex/Pages/The-Local-Council/About-the-Locality.aspx>
- Teatru Salesjan, ‘Historical Foundations of Teatru Salesjan’, <https://tsmalta.com/history/>
- Terribile, T., *Teżori fil-Knejjes Maltin – H’Attard, Hal Balzan, Hal Lija* (Malta, 2003).
- Testa, M., ‘Pietà landmark to be restored and converted’, *Times of Malta*, (23 Aug 2007), <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20070823/local/piet-agrave-landmark-to-be-restored-and-converted.7245>
- Thake, C., *Contemporary Architecture in Malta* (Malta, 2016).
- Thake, C. ‘Influences of the Spanish Plateresque on Maltese Ecclesiastical Architecture’, in J. Abela, E. Buttigieg & C. Vassallo (eds), *Proceedings of History Week 2013* (Malta, 2013).
- The Apostolate of St. Paul Malta, ‘The Traditional Latin Mass in the Archdiocese of Malta’, <http://www.aspm.org.mt/latin-mass/>
- The Malta Independent, ‘Palazzo Capua Renovated to offer conference and banqueting facilities’, (26 Jul 2005), <http://www.independent.com.mt/articles/2005-07-26/local-news/Palazzo-Capua-Renovated-to-offer-conference-and-banqueting-facilities-78429>
- The Malta Independent, ‘200-year-old History in an old musty archive’, (11 Mar 2012), <http://www.independent.com.mt/articles/2012-03-11/news/200-year-old-history-in-an-old-musty-archive-307055/>
- The Malta Independent, ‘Citrus Fruit Festival Today in Lija’, (17 Jan 2009), <http://www.independent.com.mt/articles/2009-01-17/news/citrus-fruit-festival-today-in-lija-219035/>
- The Malta Independent, ‘Dragonara Casino re-opens after €10 million investment project’, (30 Jul 2016), <http://www.independent.com.mt/articles/2016-07-30/company-news/Dragonara-Casino-re-opens-after-10-million-investment-project-6736161728>
- The Malta Independent, ‘Former Navy British Pensioners visit Whitehall Mansions: Malta over the years’, (14 Jun 2008), <http://www.independent.com.mt/articles/2008-06-14/news/former-navy-british-pensioners-visit-whitehall-mansions-malta-over-the-years-209014/>
- The Malta Independent, ‘Iconic Lija Belvedere to be restored by Planning Authority’, (6 Nov 2018), <http://www.independent.com.mt/articles/2018-11-06/local-news/Iconic-Lija-Belvedere-to-be-restored-by-Planning-Authority-6736198917>
- The Malta Independent, ‘Poor Clare Sisters move along with the times’, (17 Aug 2009), <http://www.independent.com.mt/articles/2009-08-17/news/poor-clare-sisters-move-along-with-the-times-262244/>
- The Malta Independent, ‘President Makes fresh calls for constitutional revisions’, (30 Apr 2012), <http://www.independent.com.mt/articles/2012-04-30/news/president-makes-fresh-calls-for-constitutional-revisions-309425/>
- The Malta Independent, ‘St Joseph Children’s Home - No Future without a past’, (20 Mar 2011), <http://www.independent.com.mt/articles/2011-03-20/news/st-joseph-childrens-home-no-future-without-a-past-289501/>
- The Malta Independent, ‘The Conservatorio Vincenzo Bugeja’, (11 Sep 2011), <http://www.independent.com.mt/articles/2011-09-11/news/the-conservatorio-vincenzo-bugeja-298559/>
- The Malta Independent, ‘Veteran Corinthia Palace ‘Maitre’ Calls it a day’, (7 Jun 2009), <http://www.independent.com.mt/articles/2009-06-07/news/veteran-corinthia-palace-maitre-calls-it-a-day-226089/>
- The Malta Independent, ‘Villa Francia Restored to original beauty and open to the public’, (9 Sep 2009), <http://www.independent.com.mt/articles/2009-09-09/news/villa-francia-restored-to-original-beauty-and-open-to-the-public-263002/>
- The Malta Windmill Database, ‘Ta’ Għar il-Ġobon Windmill’, <http://www.windmillsofmalta.nl/db.cgi?p=detail;r=28>
- The Maltese Province Saint Paul Apostle of the Conventual Franciscans, ‘Community of Birkirkara’, <http://www.ofmconvmalta.org/comun/bkr.htm>
- The Millennium Chapel, ‘An Oasis of Peace’, <https://www.millenniumchapel.org/wow-xperience/an-oasis-of-peace>
- The Victoria Web, ‘The Carmelite Church, Balluta Bay’, <http://www.victorianweb.org/art/architecture/galizia/1.html>
- Times of Malta, ‘Attard railway embankment to be restored’, (9 May 2018), <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20180509/community/attard-railway-embankment-to-be-restored.678687>
- Times of Malta, ‘Capua Palace refurbished’, (23 Nov 2003), <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20031123/business/capua-palace-refurbished.135917>
- Times of Malta, ‘Collegiate parish church dedicated to St Helen, Birkirkara’, (6 Sep 2011), <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20110906/environment/Collegiate-parish-church-dedicated-to-St-Helen-Birkirkara.383495>
- Times of Malta, ‘Fleur-de-Lys arch to be rebuilt’, (9 Apr 2012), <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20120409/local/council-planning-to-rebuild-fleur-de-lys-gate.414782>
- Times of Malta, ‘Fleur-de-Lys archway nearly finished’, (1 Dec 2015), <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20151201/local/fleur-de-lys-archway-nearly-finished.594121>
- Times of Malta, ‘Flower feast in Iklin street’, (11 May 2018), <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20180511/community/Flower-feast-in-Iklin-street.678785>
- Times of Malta, ‘Food and art cross the cultural divide in Ta’ Xbiex’, (22 Jul 2016), <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20160722/social/Food-and-art-cross-the-cultural-divide-in-Ta-Xbiex.619569>
- Times of Malta, ‘Gems of old restored’, (22 Apr 2005), <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20050422/local/gems-of-old-restored.92658>

Times of Malta, ‘Grand design: Andrea Faye Christians gets a tour of the historic Balluta Buildings’, (21 Jan 2015), <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20150121/life-features/Grand-design.552800>

Times of Malta, ‘Lija celebrates citrus and more’, (20 Jan 2018), <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20180120/community/Lija-celebrates-citrus-and-more.668391>

Times of Malta, ‘Lija’s iconic Belvedere Tower to be restored: It was designed and built in 1857’, (6 Nov 2018), <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20181106/local/iconic-lija-belvedere-to-be-restored.693598>

Times of Malta, ‘Mater Dei Hospital blessed’, (19 Nov 2007), <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20071119/local/mater-dei-hospital-blessed.184770>

Times of Malta, ‘New monument’, (28 Feb 2003), <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20030228/local/new-monument.155619>

Times of Malta, ‘One World - Protecting the most significant buildings, monuments and features of the Maltese islands (18): Istituto Tecnico Bugeja, Sta Venera’, (9 Jul 2009), <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20090709/opinion/one-world-protecting-the-most-significant-buildings-monuments-and.264258>

Times of Malta, ‘Our Lady Star of the Sea (Stella Maris), Sliema’, (5 Nov 2011), <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20111105/environment/Our-Lady-Star-of-the-Sea-Stella-Maris-Sliema.392262>

Times of Malta, ‘Palazzo Manoel – Casa Leoni, Sta Venera – Protecting the most significant buildings, monuments and features of Malta (14)’, (10 Nov 2012), <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20121110/environment/Palazzo-Manoel-Casa-Leoni-Sta-Venera.444681>

Times of Malta, ‘Protecting the most significant buildings, monuments and features of Pembroke (17) - St George's Tower, St George's Bay’, (2 Mar 2010), <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20100302/opinion/protecting-the-most-significant-buildings-monuments-and-features-of.296338>

Times of Malta, ‘Richard England sculpture gives intriguing touch to newly refurbished Sliema promenade’, (9 Jun 2002), <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20020609/local/richard-england-sculpture-gives-intriguing-touch-to-newly-refurbished.173796>

Times of Malta, ‘Sacro Cuor parish, Sliema, celebrates its centenary’, (18 Sep 2018), <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20180918/life-features/sacro-cuor-parish-sliema-celebrates-its-centenary.689443>

Times of Malta, ‘Sliema, Gzira properties given high-protection status: Buildings include Salesian School and former pumping station’, (7 Jun 2018), <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20180607/local/sliema-gzira-properties-given-high-protection-status.681108>

Times of Malta, ‘Sliema’s Stella Maris church becomes an Archpresbyterial’, (27 Jun 2018), <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20180627/community/sliemas-stella-maris-church-becomes-an-archpresbyterial.682949>

Times of Malta, ‘St Joseph, Msida’, (20 Oct 2011), <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20111020/environment/St-Joseph-Msida.389897>

Times of Malta, ‘St Julian's feast celebrated with gostra and hunting traditions’ (30 Aug 2015), <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20150830/local/st-julians-feast-celebrated-with-gostra-and-hunting-traditions.582581>

Times of Malta, ‘Swatar today becomes St Ġorġ Preca parish’, (8 Nov 2008), <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20081108/local/swatar-today-becomes-st-gorg-preca-parish.232338>

Times of Malta, ‘Ta’ Xbiex cultural event’, (14 Jul 2018), <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20180714/arts-entertainment/ta-xbiex-cultural-event.684329>

Times of Malta, ‘The St Thomas Moore chapel at University’, (4 Oct 2012), <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20121004/environment/The-St-Thomas-Moore-chapel-at-University.439557>

Times of Malta, ‘Updated: Oncology Hospital welcomes first patients’, (22 Dec 2014), <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20141222/local/updated-oncology-hospital-welcomes-first-patients.549300>

Times of Malta, Visitors throng to Villa Francia, (13 Sep 2009), <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20090913/local/villa-francia-restored.273068>

Times of Malta, ‘When the Pope came to Malta’, (2 Apr 2005), <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20050402/local/when-the-pope-came-to-malta.94609>

Vassallo, R., ‘The wrong side of history’, *Malta Today*, (20 Sep 2009), <http://archive.maltatoday.com.mt/2009/09/20/t17.html>

Vella, C., ‘Rare distinction for two Maltese nuns’, *Times of Malta*, (1 Sep 2013), <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20130901/letters/Rare-distinction-for-two-Maltese-nuns.484326>

Vella, C., *L-Imtiehen tat-Thin tal-Qamħ fil-Gżejjer Maltin* (Malta, 2011).

Weapons and Warfare, ‘The Malta Submarines’, (2 May 2016), <https://weaponsandwarfare.com/2016/05/02/the-malta-submarines/>

WEBO29, ‘Modernist Mayhem 2 - St. Therese of Lisieux Sanctuary, Birkirkara, Malta’, *Lomography Magazine*, (16 Feb 2011), <https://www.lomography.com/magazine/59988-modernist-mayhem-2-st-therese-of-lisieux-sanctuary-birkirkara-malta>

Welsh, A.N. & Gatt, C.A., ‘Remembering the dead at Ta’ Braxia cemetery’, *The Malta Independent*, (1 Nov 2015), <http://www.independent.com.mt/articles/2015-11-01/local-news/Remembering-the-dead-at-Ta-Braxia-cemetery-6736149485>

Wikipedia, ‘Birkirkara Tower’, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Birkirkara_Tower

Wikipedia, ‘Dragonara Palace’, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dragonara_Palace#cite_note-24

Wikipedia, ‘Fatima House’, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fatima_House#cite_note-archive-7

Wikipedia, ‘Mater Dei Hospital’, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mater_Dei_Hospital#cite_note-7

Wikipedia, ‘St Luke’s Hospital, Malta’, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St._Luke%27s_Hospital,_Malta#cite_note-nicpmi-2

Wikipedia, ‘Villa Bologna’, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Villa_Bologna

Xuereb, P., ‘Il-Knisja ta’ San Filippu u San Ġakbu, magħrufa wkoll bħala “Tal-Prepostu” f’Tal-Balal – limiti ta’ San Ġwann’, *Kappelli Maltin*, http://kappellimaltin.com/Il-Kappelli/Sett08/SGN_Tal-Prepostu/sgn_tal-prepostu.html

Xuereb, P., ‘Il-Knisja ta’ San Pawl tal-Wied – Birkirkara’, *Kappelli Maltin*, http://kappellimaltin.com/Il-Kappelli/Sett01/BKR_SP_Tal-Wied/bkr_sp_tal-wied.html

Xuereb, P., ‘San Ġwann tal-Għargħar – San Ġwann’, *Kappelli Maltin*, http://kappellimaltin.com/Il-Kappelli/Sett18/SGN_SG_tal-Għargħar/sgn_sg_tal-għargħar.html

Xuereb, P., ‘Is-Santwarju tal-Madonna tal-Ħerba – Birkirkara’, *Kappelli Maltin*, www.kappellimaltin.com/Il-Kappelli/Sett01/BKR_Tal-Herba/bkr_tal-herba.html

Zammit Mangion, J., *Education in Malta* (Malta, 1992).

Zammit-Pace, R., ‘The Franciscan Missionaries of Mary celebrate 100 years in Malta’, *Times of Malta*, (27 Jan 2011), <https://www.timesofmalta.com/articles/view/20110127/life/the-franciscan-missionaries-of-mary-celebrate-100-years-in-malta.347260>

INDEX

A

Abela, George (President of Malta), 318, 333
 Abyssinia, 111
 Agius, Anton, 264
 Alden, Harry, 99
 Anastasi, Victor, 99
 Anne (Princess), 300
 Apap, Willie, 86
 Art Nouveau, 72, 96, 270
 Atatürk, Mustafa Kemal, 239
 Attard / H'Attard,
 Chapel of St Paul, 27
 Church of St Roque, 109
 Malta Railway, 214
 Monument to Pope John Paul II, 267
 Mount Carmel Hospital, 110
 Parish Church of the Assumption, 26
 San Anton Palace and Gardens, 316
 St Catherine's Home, 111
 Ta' Qali Crafts Village, 132
 The National Stadium, 284
 Villa Bologna, 312
 Augustians, 49, 56, 79, 80
 Australia, 194, 300
 Austria, 280, 300
 Azzopardi, Nicholas, 214

B

Ball, Alexander, Sir, 316
 Balzan / Hal Balzan,
 Church of St Roque, 109
 Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, 29
 Franciscan Missionaries of St Mary Convent, 106
 Good Shepherd Convent, 86
 Malta Railway, 214
 Old Church of the Annunciation, 27
 Parish Church of the Annunciation, 28
 Statue of St Roque, 107
 Villa Corinthia, 240

Barbara, Agatha (President of Malta), 331
 Barbara, Giovanni, 46, 71, 142
 Barbara, Pietro, 142
 Baroque, 28, 30, 32, 49, 52, 56, 74, 146, 304, 307, 312
 Barthet, Esprit, 99
 Bartolo, Augusto, Sir, 236
 Benedict XV (Pope), 30
 Birkirkara,
 Church of Our Lady of Victories, 30
 Church of St Alphonse Liguori, 33
 Church of St Francis of Assisi, 33
 Church of St Paul, 29
 Church of St Roque, 108
 Collegiate Parish Church of St Helena, 32
 Dar tal-Kleru, 119
 Government Primary School, 104
 Malta Railway, 214
 Monument of Anthony Mamo, 266
 Mrieħel Industrial Estate, 137
 Parish Church of St Joseph the Worker, 34
 Parish Church of St Mary, 30
 Sanctuary of Our Lady of Tal-Ħerba, 148
 Sanctuary of St Thérèse, 35
 St Aloysius' College, 102
 Ta' Ganu Windmill, 122
 Tal-Wajter Tower, 36
 Blue Sisters, 90, 102, 114
 Bonavia, Frederick Charles, 111
 Bonavia, Giuseppe, 29, 58, 70, 144, 216
 Bonici, Caterina, 306
 Bonnici, Francesco, Mgr Can. Prof., 87
 Borg Olivier, George (Prime Minister), 99, 314, 315
 Borg, Filippo, 30
 Borg, Salvu, 32
 Borg, Vincenzo, 68, 143, 260
 Borton, Arthur (Governor), 258
 Bouverie, Henry (Governor), 208
 Briffa, Giuseppe, 29
 Brincat Carmel, 143
 Britain, 105, 110, 238, 312
 British, 65, 71, 74, 75, 102, 198, 207, 208, 236, 239, 240, 260, 262,

300, 304, 312, 314, 316

Brutalist building, 35

Bugeja, Vincenzo, 88, 96

Busuttil, Paul, 90

Busuttil, Vincenzo, 86

Buttigieg, Anton (President of Malta), 198, 318, 330

C

Cachia, Domenico, 32

Cagliares, Baldassare (Bishop), 30

Cali, Giuseppe, 63, 93

Calleja, Giuseppe, 29

Camilleri Cauchi, Alfred, 266

Camilleri Cauchi, Michael, 266

Carafa Foundation, 122

Carapecchia, Romano, 74

Cardinale, Iginio Mgr, 100

Carmelites, 37, 43, 70, 98

Caruana, Gabriel, 122

Caruana, Maurus (Bishop), 60, 75

Casanova, Vincenzo, 71

Cassar, Girolamo, 47

Cassar, Vittorio, 30

Cassia Debono, EM, Mgr, 90

Cauchi, Carolina, 111

Charles of Bourbon (Prince of Capua), 238

Chectcuti Foundry, 115

China, 194

Christian Brothers, 87

Cianciolo, Gaetano Francesco, 110

Giantar, Giuseppe, 71

Cini, Adelaide, 91

Clapp, Henry Lyman, 114

Classical style, 37, 46, 74, 238, 239, 240

Clement XIV (Pope), 100

Coleiro-Preca, Marie Louise (President of Malta), 333

Collegium Melitense, 100

Colombo, Joseph R., 44

Commonwealth War Graves Commission, 261, 262

Composite Order, 29

Conventual Franciscans, 39

Cordwell, Benjamin William, 270

Corinthian style, 26, 30

Cottoner, Nicholas (Grand Master), 142, 208

Council of Trent, 29

Cremona, Paul (Archbishop), 91, 115

D

Damato Ġużè, 37, 43, 111

d’Arena Giuseppe, 71

de Bontadini, Bontadino, 37

de Bussan, Alpheran (Bishop), 27, 56

de Domenicis, Maria, 109

de Gutenberg, Philip Wolfgang, 124

de Lascaris-Castellar, Juan (Grand Master), 75

de Marco, Guido (President of Malta), 318, 332

de Mondion, Charles François, 49, 304

de Paule, Antoine (Grand Master), 316, 318

de Piro, Giuseppe Mgr, 87, 216, 305

de Redin, Martin (Grand Master), 68

de Tignè, Renè Jacob, 49

de Valette, Jean Parisot (Grand Master), 148

de Vilhena, António Manoel (Grand Master), 49, 122, 141, 265, 304, 318

de Wignacourt, Alof (Grand Master), 30, 37

Debono, Giovanni Domenico, 59

Degorgio, Roger, 33, 34, 57, 100

dei Conti Formosa, Isidoro Mgr, 91

Dimech, Manwel, 258

Dimech, Vincenzo, 108

Din l-Art Ħelwa, 108

Dingli, Adrian, Sir, 90

Dingli, Carlo, 98

Dingli, Tommaso, 26, 30, 47

Dominican Order, 57, 61

Dominican Sisters of Malta, 86

Doric order, 27, 28, 46, 48, 142

Dorman, Maurice, Sir (Governor-General) 99, 266, 330

Du Cane, John (Governor), 111

E

earthquake, 32, 71, 142

Ebejer, Christopher, 115, 147

Egypt, 194, 300

Elizabeth II (Queen), 236, 266, 316

England, Richard, 80, 94, 267

F

Falzon, Carmelo, 134

Falzon, Ġużè, 37

Falzon, Toninu, 37

Fenech Adami, Eddie (President of Malta / Prime Minister), 44, 315, 318, 332

Ferdinand II, King, 236

Ferrari, Luigi, 68

Fleur-De-Lys,

Parish Church of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, 37

Wignacourt Aqueduct, 37

Forrest Hospital, 74

Fort St Elmo, 198

France, 102, 300

Francia, Maria Beatrice, 307

Franciscan Capuchins, 44

Freemantle, Authur J. Lyon (Governor), 90, 98

French, 32, 64, 68, 74, 75, 118, 143, 144, 260, 304

Friars Minor, 59

G

Gafa’, Lorenzo, 32, 46, 52, 142

Galea Alfons Maria, 63, 75, 92, 93. 98, 102

Galea, Arthur F., 49

Galea, Ġużeppi, 43

Galea, Mary Xavier, 92

Galizia, Emanuele Luigi, 33, 60, 70, 96, 141, 258, 262

Gatt, Carmel, 54

Gayre, Robert, 118

General Workers’ Union, 264

Germany, 198

Ghana, 194

Giovanni Curmi Higher Secondary School, 99

Giugale, Margherita, 306

Gonzi, Lawrence (Prime Minister), 115

Gonzi, Michael, Sir, (Archbishop) 49, 54, 92, 99, 100, 134

Gothic style, 65, 70, 262

Gozo, 32, 107, 122, 266, 267

Great Siege, 148, 185

Greece, 194, 300

Grenfell, Francis (Governor), 90, 93

Grima, Andrea, 52

Grima, Salvatore, 119

Grixti, Albert, 49

Grixti, Giorgina, 49

Gżira,

Church of Christ the Redeemer, 49

Empire Stadium, 280

Ex-Submarine Base, 207

Fort Manoel, 49

Lazaretto, 208

Our Lady of the Stone, 141

Parish Church of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, 48

Stella Maris College, 98

Water and Sewer Pumping Station, 123

H

Henry VIII (King), 54

Hills, G.M., 62

HMS *Ajax*, 280

HMS *Chequers*, 236

HMS *Gregale*, 206

HMS *Pheonicia*, 207

HMS *Talbot*, 207

Huber, Blanche, 105

Hughes, Quentin, 46

I

Iklin / L-Iklin,
 Chapel of St Michael Archangel, 56
 Festa tal-Fjuri, 195
 Parish Church of the Sacred Family, 55

India, 261

Ionic order, 29, 37, 146

Ireland, 194, 300

Italy, 111, 194, 264, 300

J

Japan, 194, 300

Jesuits, 100, 102

John Paul II St, (Pope), 69, 267

K

Kursaal Company Limited, 144

Kuwait, 194

L

Labini, Vincenzo (Bishop), 108

Lanzun, Vincenzo, 118

Latin cross format, 52

Laycock, Robert (Governor), 134

Leo XIII (Pope), 90

Libya, 194

Lija / Ғal Lija,

 Church of the Blessed Virgin, 142
 Church of the Nativity of the Virgin Mary, 146
 Citrus Fruit Festival, 193
 Old Church of the Transfiguration, 47
 Parish Church of the Transfiguration, 46
 Statue of St Roque, 107
 Tal-Mirakli Windmill, 123
 Transfiguration Avenue and the Belvedere, 216
 Villa Francia, 307

Villa Gourgion, 302

Villa Pariso, 206

Louise (Princess), 239

Luke, Harry, Sir, 304

M

Malta Broadcasting Authority, 134

Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology, 99

Malta Football Association, 284

Malta Hospice Movement, 91

Malta International Business Authority, 74

Mamo, Anthony, Sir, (Governor-General / President of Malta), 115, 266, 330
 Manoel Foundation, 265

Marsamxett Harbour, 52, 58, 64, 65, 123, 143, 198, 206, 208

Mater Admirabilis College of Education, 103

Micallef, Alphonse Maria, 33

Micallef, Andre, 68

Micallef, C., 119

Micallef, Ġuzè, 44

Micallef, William, 54

Mifsud, Gianni, 75

Mifsud, Ġuzeppi, 63

Mifsud, Ugo, Sir, (Prime Minister), 111, 302, 307

Mifsud Bonnici, Ugo (President of Malta), 318, 332

Military and Hospitallier Order of St Lazarus of Jerusalem, 118

Mintoff, Dom (Prime Minister), 144, 240

Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of Africa, 92

Missionary Society of St Paul, 87

Mizzi, Enrico (Prime Minister), 314

Modernist style, 35, 99

Montebello, Marco, 48

Moore, Roger, 239

Mortimer, Arthur Stuart, 34, 57, 100

Mountbatten, Louis, 236

Msida / L-Imsida,

 Chapel of St Thomas More, 54
 Church of the Immaculate Conception, 52
 Ġan Frangisk Abela Junior College, 99
 L-Għajn tal-Ғasselin, 124

Malta Railway, 214

Mater Dei Hospital, 115

Parish Church of St Joseph, 52

University of Malta, 29, 54, 99, 100, 111, 115, 266

Worker’s Memorial, 264

Muscata, Emmanule, 306

Muscata, Paulo, 306

Muscata, Simone, 306

N

Naples, 88, 238

Nepal, 261

Netherlands, 194, 300

Neo-Classical, 88, 96, 144, 216, 238

Neo-Gothic, 62, 123, 314

Norman & Dawbarn, 100

Nursing Sisters of the Little Company of Mary, 114

O

Order of St John, 37, 49, 65, 71, 74, 110, 115, 142, 143, 144, 185, 208, 316

Ottoman, 185, 198

P

Pace, Giuseppe, 79

Pace, Pietro (Bishop), 90

Pacini, Giorgio, 35

Pakistan, 261

Palladian style, 92, 307

Pariso, Domenico, 306

Paul VI (Pope), 54

Paulson, Webster, 62

Pembroke battery, 75

Perellos y Roccaful, Ramon (Grand Master), 36

Philip (Prince of Wales), 59, 100, 158, 236

Philip II (King), 30

Pietà / Tal-Pietà

 Angela House, 91

 Boathouse, 131

 Church of Our Lady of Sorrows, 56

 Military Cemetery, 261

 Parish Church of Our Lady of Fatima, 57

 Princess Elizabeth in Malta - Villa Guardamangia, 236

 Public Broadcasting Services, 134

 St Luke’s Hospital, 111

 Ta’ Braxia Cemetery, 262

Pinto de Fonseca, Manuel (Grand Master), 100, 312

Pisani, Lazzaro, 87

Pius IX (Pope), 144

Pius X (Pope), 102

plague, 30, 56, 107, 108, 109, 118, 208

Plateresque style, 26

Preca, Ġorġ, St, 42, 56, 166, 180, 190

Preti, Mattia, 64, 109, 142

Preziosi, Francesco, 307

Privitera, Salvino, 98

Psaila, Giuseppe, 72

Pullicino, Giovanna, 98

R

Rediffusion (Malta), 134

Regnaud, Enrico, 27

Renaissance, 26, 30

Ridley, William John, 62

Roman-Ionic style, 59

Romanesque style, 33, 34, 43, 60, 68

Rosary School, 103

Royal Air Force (RAF), 37, 132, 280

Royal Engineers, 29, 123, 270, 304, 318

Royal Navy, 198, 207, 236, 300

Royal Theatre, Valletta, 62

Russia, 194

S

Sacco, Giovanni, 98

Salesians Boys Brigade, 63

Salesians of Don Bosco, 63, 98

Salvaloco, Giovanna, 64

Sammut Pullicino, Salv, 29

Sammut, Antonio, 48

Sammut, Carmen, 92

San Ġwann,

- Cart Ruts, 45
- Castello Lanzun, 118
- Chapel of St Margaret, 44
- Chapel of St Philip and St James, 45
- Chapel of the Beheading of St John, 143
- Mensija Sanctuary, 140
- Parish Church of Our Lady of Lourdes, 44
- Ta' Xindi Farmhouse, 260

Sant, Alfred (Prime Minister), 315

Sant, Lorry, 264

Sapiano, Michelangelo, 26, 29

Schembri, Ġużè, 236

Scicluna, Carmelo, 280

Scicluna, Corinne, 144

Scicluna, Emanuel, 144

Scicluna, John, 73, 144

Sciortino, Francesco Saverio, 26

Servants of the Cenacle, 119

Sir Anthony Mamo Oncology Centre, 115

Sisters of Charity of St Vincent de Paul, 88

Sisters of St Clare, 19, 75

Sisters of St Dorothy, 92

Sisters of St Joseph of the Apparition, 102

Sisters of the Little Company of Mary, 90, 114

Sisters of the Sacred Heart, 103

Sliema / Tas-Sliema

- Chalet, 270
- Church of Our Lady of Graces, 64
- Fatima House, 92
- Fort Tigné, 65
- Government Primary School, 105
- Holy Trinity Anglican Church, 62

- Imperial Hotel, 239
- Parish Church of Jesus of Nazareth, 61
- Parish Church of Our Lady of the Heart of Jesus, 59
- Parish Church of Our Lady Star of the Sea, 58
- Parish Church of St Gregory the Great, 60
- Prince Charles of Bourbon - Capua Palace, 238
- Residence of George Borg Olivier, 314
- Savoy Guesthouse, 239
- Sliema Point Battery, 65
- St Joseph Convent and School, 102
- St Julian's Tower, 68
- St Patrick's Salesian School, 98
- Teatru Salesjan & Salesian Oratory, 63
- Ursuline Sisters Crèche, 93

Smyrna, 68

Society of Christian Doctrine (MUSEUM), 56, 94, 109

Spain, 30, 194, 300

Spinola, Giovanni Battista, 74

Spinola, Paolo Rafael, 71

Spiteri, Donat, 44

Spiteri, Joseph M., 70

St Catherine's Hospital / Home, 111, 267

St Julian's / San Ġiljan

- Balluta Buildings, 73
- Carmelite Convent, 78
- Casa Leone XIII, 90
- Church of Our Lady of Good Council, 79
- Church of the Immaculate Conception, 71
- Convent of the Sacred Heart of Jesus School, 103
- Dragonara Palace, 144
- Lapsi Church, 71
- Monument of Ċensu Tabone, 266
- Parish Church of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, 70
- Parish Church of St Julian, 69
- Poor Clares' Monastery, 75
- Spinola Palace, 74
- St George's Tower, 75
- The Balluta Fountain, 258
- The Millennium Chapel, 80
- Zammit Clapp Residential Home, 114

St Michael's Hospice, 91

St Venera / Santa Venera

- Apap Institute, 86
- Cini Institute, 91
- Conservatorio Vincenzo Bugeja, 88
- Dar il-Ħanin Samaritan, 94
- Istituto Tecnico Vincenzo Bugeja, 96
- Malta Railway, 214
- Manoel Foundation Stables, 265
- Niche of Resting St Paul, 147
- Old Parish Church of St Venera, 43
- Palazzo Manoel / Casa Leoni, 304
- Parish Church of St Venera, 43
- St Joseph's Home, 87
- Statue of St Roque, 107

Strickland, Gerald, Sir, (Prime Minister), 106, 111, 312

Strickland, Mabel, 306

Swatar / Is-Swatar

- Parish Church of St George Preca, 42

T

Ta' Xbiex,

- Connecting through culture, 194
- Ex-MTB Depot, 206
- Parish Church of St John of the Cross, 68
- Whitehall Mansions, 300

Tabone, Ċensu (President of Malta), 266, 318, 331

Tagliaferro, Fr Hilary, 80

Tate, Isobel, 261

Testaferrata Moroni Viani, Pietro Paolo, 68, 280

Tunis, 102

Turkey, 194, 239, 300

Tuscan style, 28, 30, 46, 146

U

United Kingdom, 194, 236, 316

Ursuline Sisters of St Angela Merici, 93

van Straubenzee, Charles Thomas (Governor), 88

van Straubenzee, Charlotte Luisa, 88

V

Vassalli, Mikiel Anton, 318

Vassallo, Andrea, 105

Vassallo, Giuseppe Gaspare, 45

Vatican Council II, 43

Vella Critien, Paul, 44

Vella, George (President of Malta), 333

Vella, Paul, 59

Victoria Melita (Princess), 316

Victoria (Queen), 239

Vincenti, Gustavo R., 70, 86

W

Wettinger, Francis, 61

White Sisters, 92

Whitmore, George, 304, 318

Women's Royal Naval Service (WRNS), 206, 239, 300

World War I, 78, 144, 261, 261, 280

World War II, 29, 44, 49, 74, 75, 86, 88, 91, 92, 98, 103, 104, 118, 122, 132, 207, 239, 240, 261, 262, 270, 302, 312

X

Xandir Malta, 134

Xuereb, Pawlu (Acting President of Malta), 318, 331

Z

Zammit, Arturo, 69, 79

Zammit, Emilia, 144

Zammit, Francesco, 92, 314

Zimmermann Barbaro, Carlo Ermolao, 61

PHOTO CREDITS

Mark Micallef Perconte

Pg 34 Parish Church St Joseph the Worker
Pg 174 Our Lady of Fatima
Pg 175 Our Lady of Mount Carmel
Pg 177 St Joseph the Worker
Pg 179 St John of the Cross
Pg 180 St George Preca
Pg 181 Our Lady of Lourdes
Pg 182 Our Lady of the Sacred Heart of Jesus
Pg 183 Our Lady of Mount Carmel
Pg 184 Our Lady Star of the Sea

St Michael's Fireworks Factory

Pg 56 St Michael's Fireworks Factory

Light Design Solutions

Pg 80 The Millenium Chapel
Pg 94 Dar il-Hanin Samaritan

University of Malta

Pg 100 University of Malta

Mdina Glass

Pg 133 Ta' Qali Crafts Village

Simonds Farsons Cisk plc

Pg 136 Farsons Brewery

Local Council San Ġiljan

Pg 159, 162, 164 Lapsi Church
Pg 168 Our Lady of Mount Carmel
Pg 170 St Julian the Hospitallier

Ian Noel Pace knisja.mt/ritratti

Pg 158 Liedna and lights
Pg 160 Il-Mazzier

Ivan Saliba

Pg 167 St Helena

Daniel Muscat Caruana

Pg 169 The Annunciation

Dominic Cachia, DC Photography

Pg 171 St Joseph

Local Council Santa Venera

Pg 172 St Venera

Local Council Tas-Sliema

Pg 176 St Gregory

Local Council H'Attard

Pg 178 The Assumption of Mary to Heaven

<https://cfv.org.uk>

Pg 206 Ex-MTB Depot

www.navsource.org

Pg 206 Ex-MTB Depot

Imperial War Museum © IWM (A6927)

Pg 207 Ex-Submarine Base

Paul Galea collection

Pg 214 & 215 Malta Railway

Mark Scicluna

Pg 280 – 283 Gżira Empire Stadium

Dr Charles Paul Azzopardi

Pg 303 Villa Gourgion

René Rossignaud

Pg 308 & 310 Villa Francia

Office of the President

Pg 319 – 329 Staterooms

Department of Information

Pg 330 – 333 Residents of San Anton Palace

GEORGE CASSAR

Comm. Prof. George Cassar is Associate Professor of Heritage and Cultural Tourism at the University of Malta. He is a historical sociologist and a pedagogist. Besides publishing extensively on History, Education, Social Studies, Sociology, Culture, Heritage and Tourism, he is also editor of numerous books and journals.

Prof. Cassar forms part of the committees of the Malta Historical Society, History Teachers' Association (Malta), the Friends of the National Archives of Malta, the Malta Tourism Society, and the Sacra Militia Foundation. He has participated in a number of EU projects: Cultexchange, Archaeotur, Rebacka, Heland, HISA, and Certess, in various capacities including that of project manager. He led two EU projects which enabled the restoration, conservation and presentation of Ta' Bistra Catacombs. Since 1998 he has been cooperating with various Local Councils on cultural, heritage and historical aspects and events, and sat on the organising committee of the cultural event Qargħasel organised annually by the Mosta Local Council. He has also sat for a number of years on the Malta Tourism Authority Board of Directors.

Awards conferred on Prof. Cassar are: Ġieħ il-Mosta by the Mosta Local Council; Grazzi Badge by The Scouts Association of Malta; and, Commendatore pro Merito Melitensi by the Sovereign Military Order of Malta.

JOSEPH GALEA

Joseph Galea was born in il-Ħamrun on 1 December 1970. He was educated at St Augustine's College in Tal-Pietà and later on attended the School of Arts in Valletta where he took up drawing lessons. He worked with a company of designers and was also employed for a number of years with Stamperija Indipendenza, at which time he covered various events. He was one of the youngest photographers present for the historic Bush-Gorbachev Malta Summit of 1989, while in May 1990 he was photographer for the first visit of Pope John Paul II to Malta. While presently employed at the Freeport, he has continued to supply photographic services to local newspapers.

Joseph argues that while many believe that they have become photographers, also because of the use of mobile phone cameras, it is not the equipment that makes one a good photographer but the artistic talent and the skill of choosing the right moment to take a photo with speed and precision. He has learnt this through his experience in photographic journalism.

A TASTE OF THE
HISTORY, CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT
OF THE CENTRAL REGION OF MALTA

“ This book presents varying narratives about the many characteristics, big and small, of the localities that have contributed and continue to give significance and sense to the place. Their story is the story of the people, the community, and the locality. ”

Michael Fenech Adami

President

Central Region Committee

Kite

