

THE MALTESE PRESENCE IN NORTH AMERICA



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**VINCENT MIFSUD (SEATED), HIS SON AUSTIN MIFSUD AND
HIS SISTER-IN-LAW LILIAN MORLEY ON THE OCCASION OF VINCENT'S 100TH BIRTHDAY,
MAY 1981, IN VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA**

(from Fr. Lawrence E. Attard, *Early Maltese Emigration (1900-1914)*, 40)
(see "First Maltese Emigrant to British Columbia Lived to be 100 years Old, 7-9)

EDITORIAL COMMENT



Dan Brock

Apart from the Greater Toronto Area and London, Ontario, and apart from annual picnics, the summer appears to be a slow time for the other Maltese communities in North America. On the other hand, there seems to be no end of articles and potential articles. Often, this is serendipity.

Take, for example, the article in the July issue on the Hermann-Grima House and Felix Grima of New Orleans. This prompted Fred Aquilina of California to mention Xavier Calleja, another early Maltese settler in Louisiana and that some members of Fred's family came to the United States by plane in January 1947. Both of these facts will, hopefully, lead to articles in future issues of this journal.

Then, I received an email from Charles Said-Vassallo of Australia, also featured in the last issue, with a brief note: "Any interest to You..?". In his email was some correspondence between him and an Anne White, who was attempting to link her Mifsud ancestry to Charles' maltagenealogy.com data base. Ann had shown her paternal grandfather as Vincent Mifsud, who had immigrated to Canada, where he married in 1909 and, in 1910 had his only child, Austin Vincent Mifsud.

I immediately recognized that this Vincent Mifsud was the same person noted by the late Fr. Lawrence E. Attard on page 39, of his *Early Maltese Emigration (1900 – 1914)* and whose photograph, on the occasion of Vincent's 100th birthday appears on the following page!

Correspondence with Anne White

of Ventura, California and with her two daughters has led to Anne and my joint article on her grandfather, who was anything but the typical Maltese immigrant to Canada prior to the Second World War. (pages 1, 7-10).

In mentioning this article on Vincent Mifsud, I would also like to draw your attention to his passport application in column one, page 8. This form of passport application was in use in Malta by 1886 and continued until 1905. Mark Caruana, a "neighbour" of Charles Said-Vassallo, has made a study of the Maltese passports up until the Second World War and has written about this. It is hoped that in future issues he will contribute a series of short articles illustrating the evolution of these passport applications over time, held at the National Archives of Malta, and the data contained therein. Like the article on Charles Said-Vassallo and his maltagenealogy.com site, such articles will be of immense value to those doing research on their Maltese connections.

With this in mind, I refer you to Richard S. Cumbo's article "Maltese-Canadian Museum Archives and Visitors Centre St. Paul the Apostle Church Complex. (see page 12) Not only does the Museum Archives contain a wealth of paper records and artifacts relating to the Maltese in the Greater Toronto Area but also beyond as well. For example, when The Maltese Canada Club of London sold its facilities and later dissolved, many of its artifacts and such paper records as newsletters were handed over to the Museum Archives.

The other article by Richard Cumbo, "In Search of Malta," (page 11) has an added interest for the younger reader in that it serves to recall how research was done before the time of computers and the web. It meant putting boots on the ground and doing research at the library almost exclusively.

Memories of the recent FIFA Women's World Cup, recently held in France, seemed a fitting setting

to recycle and update articles written a few years ago on three generations of soccer players with particular focus on London and St. Thomas, Ontario. (see pages 4-6)

I wish to publically thank Brenda Bandy, Joe Buttigieg, Mark Caruana, Richard Cumbo, Fr. Mario Micallef, Doree Morse, Mona Vella Nicholas, Charles Said-Vassallo, Albert Vella, Charles Vella Anne White, and Toby White for the roles they played, either directly or indirectly in the production of this issue.

You are encouraged to make suggestions as to how this journal can be improved, to keep others informed of events in your area and to contribute articles.

One person, who received the July issue and who lives some six hours away by motor vehicle, wrote: "I see where the San Francisco Club is having their 90th anniversary celebraton upcoming in Sept at the Elks Club in San Mateo. I know people there and am thinking of asking if they would like to attend as friends of the Maltese and find out what the group is up to! Maybe."

Let's continue to let one another know what is happening or has taken place to promote Maltese heritage in your area. Let's share one's experience as an emigrant from Malta or as a person of Maltese ancestry.

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GLEANINGS FROM THE SUNDAY BULLETIN

PASTOR'S THOUGHTS...



Fr. Mario Micallef, M.S.S.P., is pastor of St. Paul the Apostle, Toronto, the only Maltese national parish in North America. These "Pastor's thoughts..." are extracts from his commentaries on the Sunday readings which are published in the Parish's Sunday Bulletin.

We Must Love Unconditionally

Jesus loved his disciples, not because they were perfect. Neither it is because they loved Him in the same measure in return. It's enough to look at Peter and his triple-denial. Yet Peter's sin did not diminish in any way Jesus' love for him. We also know that Jesus shared the meal with Judas too, in spite of the fact that He knew what he was about to do. He even washed his feet, with those of the rest of the twelve. This is precisely what Jesus is asking of us, as his followers in today's world. To love without any condition, to keep loving even in the face of denial, treachery or deception. Jesus says that it is through this that people will know that I am His follower. It is not through the kinds of prayers I say, or the number of liturgies I celebrate. Those are important, as tools to help me live this command. Because I know that, without His help, I am totally incapable of loving the same way He loved me. My prayers, my celebrations, have to be translated into love in its most concrete and tangible form.

The Disciple Is One Who Follows the Master

...the disciple is one who follows the Master, which means that he has to be attentive to see where the Master is leading him. Sometimes, following Jesus might give you some surprises. Joseph DePiro was one who had accepted to follow Jesus throughout his life. "I follow you wherever you go" was, in fact, his life-motto. This made him change course mid-way through his legal studies to enter the seminary. This also led him to found a Religious Congregation with the aim of sending missionaries where they were needed....June 30, is the anniversary of when, back in 1910, the first members joined DePiro to start what we now know the M.S.S.P. It is an opportunity to thank God for this great man who,

as a true follower of Christ, was able to listen and go wherever his Master led him.

We Are Called to Follow Jesus with Passion and Love

Wearing the Raptors jersey for a couple of weeks in the year does not make you a Raptors supporter. The true supporters are those who are there throughout the year; they follow with passion all that the team goes through throughout the whole year....Last week [Sunday, June 30th] we have seen Jesus embarking on a journey, during which he calls some to follow him. In the gospel he had already sent the twelve apostles "to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick". Now he sends another seventy-two disciples....The twelve, the seventy-two, eventually changed the world. They shared the same passion for the well-being of humanity that Jesus had. They were not people who wore the colors of Jesus every once in a while. This is what we are called to be: people who, with passion and love, bring his peace wherever we are sent.

Love One Another

As someone once said: Love one another. It's as easy as this, as difficult as this.

God's Fruitful Presence

It is only when I allow Jesus to have a real place in my heart that my actions can give fruit. Because welcoming the Lord is always an act which gives fruit....May we always be able to find those moments of stillness where we can experience God's fruitful presence in our lives.

Fr. Mario Micallef, M.S.S.P.
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London, Ontario has a Valletta Street and Kingsway Avenue in West London's Oakridge Acres.

READER COMMENTS

Keep up the great effort; it really seems to be catching on everywhere around the world and I really like the fact that is going to a monthly!....Thanks so much for resending the newsletters today! I decided to print them all off and put them in a binder for my Mum (Jane Porter) so she could read them at her leisure. She does not have a computer and I thought this was the best way for her to simply take her time and read them instead of trying to read them on an iPad. She was very happy to see all of them together today. Here's a photo of her on her balcony this afternoon reading through one of the newsletters!



Brenda Joan Bandy, Sarnia, ON

THREE GENERATIONS OF SOCCER PLAYERS: THE BUTTIGIEGS*

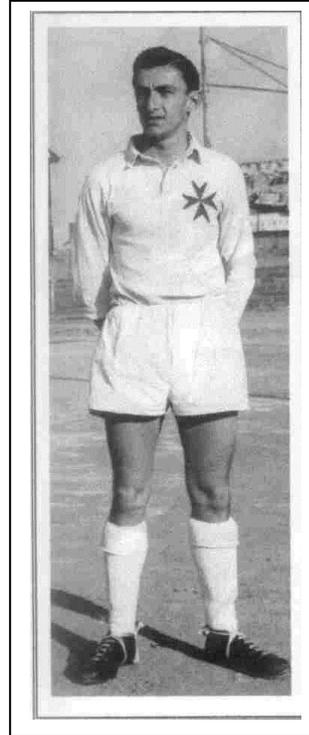
Dan Brock

With the United States winning the 2019 FIFA Women's World Cup by a score of 2-0 over the Netherlands on Sunday, July 7th, still fresh in our minds, this seems a good opportunity to mention the three generations of Buttigieg who played soccer on at least continents.

Three brothers, the sons of Joseph Buttigieg and Carmen Cassar played soccer in Malta. Guzi "Joseph" (1923-1998) was well known in the sport, played for Valletta and Hamrun and represented Malta on Malta Football Association (M.F.A.) teams in various matches. Walter played for the Hamrun Spartans in the late 1940s and early '50s, before immigrating to Australia.

A third brother, Paul (1935-2018), born in Hamrun in 1935, began his soccer career with the Hamrun Eagles "Under 16s," a very popular team in the 1950s. As the Hamrun Spartans had a very strong "Under 18" team at the time, Paul decided to join the Tarxien Little Rainbows, where he played for one year. At the age of 19, he was good enough to be signed by the Spartans

and played on the Reserves squad. There, Paul earned the nickname "Ta' L-Illjun," owing to his rapid speed. He turned semi-pro in 1956 with a signing bonus of £200. The following year, Paul was promoted to the senior team, where he played for almost 10 years.



During those years, he travelled with the team to Benghazi, Tripoli, Messina, Catania and Rome. When in Benghazi, Paul played a great game; the Spartans won 4-2 and Paul was offered a contract to stay and play for the Benghazi team. He resisted the temptation.

In the early 1960s, Paul played on two Malta Football Association teams. For him, the best game of his career came on April 27, 1963, when the Spartans won 2-1 over the Hibernians, with Paul, who played outside-right, scoring one of the goals.

Paul was offered £M500 and a job in 1965 to play for the Maltese George Cross team in

Melbourne, Australia, but he was not prepared to leave Malta at this time. He had married Mary Vella Anastasi in 1960 and, by the mid-'60s, had two sons: George and Joe. Ironically, he and his family immigrated to Australia in 1967 and lived there some three years.

The family returned to Malta in 1970 where their third son, Adrian, was born. Four years later, in 1974, the Buttigieg family immigrated to Canada and settled in London, Ontario. There, all three sons became actively involved in soccer.

George, who played soccer while at Saunders and Wheable secondary schools, later played in a men's league with the London Fury. He coached his brother, Adrian, for a year. Adrian was playing soccer in 2000.

Their brother, Joe, played for London City in the National Soccer League, between 1979 and 1985, and was its captain and MVP in 1984-85. During his first year of varsity soccer, Joe was one of three players from Fanshawe College in London to play on the West Division All-Star Team in the OCAA (Ontario Colleges Athletic Association). Between 1986 and 1990, Joe played for the Men's Premier London Hungarian and in 1989-90 in the Provincial Soccer League. He played for the Men's Premier St. Thomas Soccer Club between 1991 and 1998. Since 2007, Joe has played in the St



Thomas Masters. In 2008 the Masters were the Third Division Champions with an undefeated 19-0 League record.

Joe married, Mary Rose Bezzina, also of London, in 1987. They have two children, Andrew and Nicole "Nikki". George has three children: Randy, Nathan and Jodie.

For about seven years, George and Joe coached the London City Falcons while their daughters were with the club. Under their coaching, the girls won numerous tournaments in Niagara Falls, Quebec, London and

Woodstock and several league and cup titles.



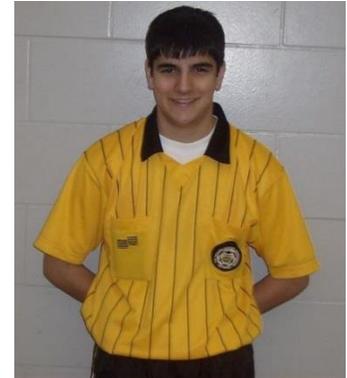
A "Thank You" to George Buttigieg as a Coach for the London City Falcons

Meanwhile, Andrew was also involved in soccer. In 2000, he was playing on the Maltese Youth Soccer Team. Later, he refereed, coached, and at one time was convenor for the St. Thomas Futsal Club, a member of the St. Thomas Futsal League. In 2010 Andrew coached the Rams, a boys' team, which were the Futsal League winners.



Nikki Buttigieg in her Early Years with the Falcons.

Andrew Buttigieg as Referee in 2009



As for his sister, Nikki, who has been playing soccer since the age of four, she was invited to try out for a provincial team 10 years later. In 2008, she was a member of her high school team, St. Joseph's, in St. Thomas, which went to OFSAA (Ontario Federation of School Athletic Associations). Nicole played, in 2011, for the Ingersoll Flyers, a Second Division team in the London and Area Women's Soccer League. She was also a level IV district referee for the Ontario Futsal Association.

Jodie Buttigieg with the Falcons in Cincinnati, Ohio



Meanwhile, her father, Joe, has been working with the Western Counties Soccer Association since 2006. Then, using his contacts with the Malta Football Association and raising funds from local groups and organizations, including The Maltese Canadian Club of

London, he was able to take Nicole to Malta to try out there for the Women's National Football Team. After a 30-day tryout with the team last autumn and training with the Mosta FC (Football Club) of the first division, Nicole got to play in a "friendly match" with the National Team, against Luxemburg, on November 24th.

This is probably still the high point of her soccer career as, not only did she play in her first international game in Europe but, 10 minutes into the second half she doubled the lead of her team. This proved to be the winning goal as the score ended 3-1 for Malta.



The Malta Women's Soccer Team After Its Match against Luxemburg, Nov. 24, 2011. Nicole is No. 17.

Nicole Buttigieg and her Proud Father, Joe, Nov. 24, 2011



(Photos courtesy of Joe Buttigieg)

Nicole was a forward, and the only Canadian, on Malta's Women's National Football Team in 2011-12. She was then majoring in psychology at the University of Malta. Later, she switched to social work and graduated in 2017 with an Honours BA. Her schedule necessitated her dropping off the Team and, for awhile, she played for the Mgarr FC.

Nicole had planned to return to Canada after graduation, until she met and fell in love with a young Maltese man. They were married in Santa Venera in May 2019 and Nicole currently works for Agenzija Sapport in Malta.

Undoubtedly, the Buttigieg soccer tradition will not be broken and we can expect it carried on into a fourth generation.

**This write-up is mainly an updated version of that which appeared in The Maltese Canadian Club of London News-*

letter, Issue no.42 (November/December 2012), 4-5 and Issue no. 62 (March/April 2016), 10.

"CHAIN MIGRATION": A CASE STUDY IN THE BAY AREA

Dan Brock

My research into Maltese migration to both Canada and the United States has uncovered many examples of what might be called "chain migration." Often it occurs over several years, but there are many cases in which it stretches over many decades. The story of the Vassallo and Vella family members who settled in the San Francisco area is one such example of the latter.

Angelo Vella, a native of Mgarr, Malta, arrived in New York Harbour, on board the *Brasil*, with his wife and three children, on June 16, 1950. The family was en route to San Francisco.

Emmanuel, an older brother of Angelo, had immigrated to San Francisco in August 1947, having crossed the Atlantic on board the *Marine Tiger*.

An older brother of both Emmanuel and Angelo, Frank Vella, was then living on Newcomb Avenue in San Francisco. He had sailed on the *Saturnia* in May 1939, en route to San Francisco by way of New York.

The Vella brothers had a maternal uncle, Albert Vassallo, who had arrived in New York, by way of Le Havre, France, on October 17, 1907. Albert, who was then known as Bartolomeo, gave his destination as New Orleans. On the ship's passenger list for the *President Lincoln*, it would appear that Bartolomeo Vassallo had a cousin by the name of what looks like "Tomy Borgi" on the ship's passenger list and who then lived on what appears to be Dominican Street, in New Orleans.

The 1910 Federal Census shows "Alberteo Vassallo" as a laborer in a construction camp in San Mateo, California. Several other Maltese men were in this camp, including a "Thomas Buggie." Could this be the same person as "Tomy Borgi"? If so, this would seem to be Tommaso Bougeia [Bugeja] who arrived in New York Harbor on board the *Blücher* on August 14, 1907 en route to join his brother, Joseph Bougeia [Bugeja] living on Hamilton Road in San Francisco.

Giuseppe Bugeja [Joseph Bougeia] had arrived at New York, via the *Cedric*, on February 23, 1906, and was en route to San Francisco where his friend Gate [Gaetano] Vella was living on Washington Street.

Based on Dr. Charles J. Vella's Maltese Immigration to the San Francisco Bay Area Project, it would appear that this Gate Vella was Gaetano Vella, who was born in Malta, on November 25, 1870, but whose year of immigration to the United States varies from 1882 to 1899. The only other background information known about Gaetano is that his father was Frank [Francesco?] Vella.

FIRST MALTESE EMIGRANT TO BRITISH COLUMBIA LIVED TO BE 100 YEARS OLD

Dan Brock and Anne White*

Vincent Mifsud was not your typical, pre-World War II, Maltese immigrant to Canada. Not only was he literate, but very well educated for the time. He was a free thinker and eshewed any formal Christian religion. He is believed to have been the first person from Malta to settle west of the Rockies in Canada and, lastly, he was the first Maltese immigrant in Canada to live past 100 years.

It was perhaps as early as September 1904 that Vincenzo Giovanni Paulo Francesco Domenico Publius Mifsud first set foot in Vancouver, British Columbia. He had departed from Malta in August 1904 and on the 25th boarded the *Citta di Torino* in Naples. The ship sailed into New York Harbor on September 10th. From here, Vincenzo probably made his way by rail to Vancouver, his intended destination, according to his passport application (see following page). As he is believed to have been the first person from Malta to settle in British Columbia, we are at a loss as to what motivated him to select Vancouver as his destination.

Vincenzo was born on May 12, 1881, the eldest child of Amabile and Adelaide (Galdes) Mifsud. While born in Floriana, the family home, at least in later years, was at 359 Fleur de Lys Road, Birkirkara. The Mifsuds were to have at least two other sons: Giuseppe (b. 1883) and Giovanni (b. 1885).

Young Vincenzo had “acquired a good education up to university level.” A person of his education immigrating to Canada at this time was remarkable as most of those emigrating from Malta then, and for years to come, could not even sign their name. Vincenzo was living in Valletta on the eve of his departure and was employed as a clerk.

On arriving in Canada, he had intended to find similar work but “was only offered manual work on the construction of railways.”

Vincent married Gertrude Laura Mabel Morley, the daughter of William Austin and Mary (Born) Morley, on January 27, 1909 in Vancouver. The bride was known by her middle name, Mabel.

Mabel had been born in Streatham, Surrey, England on April 24, 1880. She had arrived at Halifax, Nova Scotia in April 1908, on board the *Kensington*, with her four-year-old son, Harold Malcolm Vaughan, intending to travel to Revelstoke, BC with a younger married woman. Mabel was noted as Mabel Vaughan on the passenger list, but whether she was ever married to the mysterious Alfred William Vaughan, whom she was to claim was an actor and had died shortly after their son's born, is not known.

On arriving in British Columbia, Mabel was to find

work as a cook on a ranch near Vancouver and it was there that she met Vincent Mifsud, who drove the supply wagon with groceries for the ranch house kitchen. Indeed, Vincent was listed as a gardener a month after his and Mabel's wedding, when he crossed into the United States to visit a friend in Seattle, Washington.



Vincent and Mabel Mifsud, with Unidentified Woman, Capilano Canyon near Vancouver, October 11, 1909

Vincent and Mabel's son, Austin Vincent, was born on September 10, 1910. Austin was later to state that he was born in the shack in which his parents were living “at Still Creek on the Copley Ranch, West Green.” which was then outside Vancouver. Possibly this was the very same ranch on which Vincent and Mabel first met.

The couple and the two boys, Harold and Austin, were to move several times thereafter, according to the latter. They were living at 2440 – 26th Avenue East, in Vancouver, at the time Vincent enlisted, on February 27, 1917, at Victoria, BC, in the Canadian Over-Seas Expeditionary Force. His regimental number was 525184 and he served both in Britain and in France. March 1918 found him encamped at Abergele on the

northern coast of Wales.

While in England, he visited his wife's family and it is said that some of his family members also visited him. One of these may have been his brother, Giuseppe. A letter from him to Vincent, written in Italian and sprinkled with both a Maltese and Latin proverb, survives and is dated November 16, 1915.



S ARCHIPRESBYTERALIS ET PAROCHIALIS ECCLESIA
 DIVO PUBLICO EPISCOPO ET MARTYRI PRINCIPI MELITÆ
 CIVITATIS VILIBENÆ VULGO FLORIANA
 MELITENSIS DIOECESeos
 DICATA

OMNIBUS ac singulis ad quos spectat fidem facio ac testor, Ego subscriptus Archi-
 presbyter et Parochus in Libro Baptizationum Vol II Fol 297
 hujus Parochie, reperto inter ceteros, sequentem natalem, videlicet
 Anno Domini millesimo octingentesimo octogesimo primo (1881)
 Die vero decimatercia (13^a) Mensis Martii

Ego D^o Paulus Jarron Arch^o et
 Parochus baptizavi sub conditione
 infantem huius nati in D^o Ana
 ble Mifsud et delayde Galdes con
 jugibus huius Parochie, domi in
 nimenti nostro percussa a fathame
 1899 sine Angel. obsecro probata bap-
 tizatum cui imposita est nomina
 Vincentius, Franciscus, Paulus,
 Joannes Dominicus, Publicus Datum
 in D^o Francisco Galdes filij q^o
 Pauli et hae Parochie, et D^o Catharina
 Mifsud videlicet Vincenti deq^o Valletta



In corpus 297 fidei has presentes lito as p^o q^o in nomine subscriptus

Datum Floriana, die nona mensis Augusti anno 1904

Franciscus Mallea
 Archip^o et Parochus

**Vincenzo Mifsud's Passport Application
 Consisting of His Baptismal Certificate
 and a Few Brief Notations**

Courtesy of National Archives of Malta

Private Mifsud arrived back in Halifax, on board the *Lapland*, on March 1, 1919 and was discharged in Vancouver on March 31st.

In 1921, Mabel and her two boys visited England and stayed for several months in the home of her late father, who had died in 1918. Meanwhile, according to the 1921 census, Vincent was boarding in Point Grey, a municipality which merged with Vancouver in 1929. He was listed as a clerk in a railway office. His granddaughter describes him as working as a night clerk for

the Canadian Pacific Railway and having a very beautiful script, which was probably useful for keeping books by hand.

duplicate
 No. 525784
 Folio.

A.M.C. Training Depot No. 1, G.E.F.
ATTESTATION PAPER.
 CANADIAN OVER-SEAS EXPEDITIONARY FORCE.

QUESTIONS TO BE PUT BEFORE ATTESTATION.
(ANSWERS)

1. What is your surname? Mifsud
- 1a. What are your Christian names? Vincent
- 1b. What is your present address? 2440... 26th Avenue, East, Vancouver B.C.
2. In what Town, Township or Parish, and in what Country were you born? Malta
3. What is the name of your next-of-kin? Mrs. Mabel Morley Mifsud
4. What is the address of your next-of-kin? 2440... 26th Avenue, East, Vancouver B.C.
- 4a. What is the relationship of your next-of-kin? Wife
5. What is the date of your birth? May 12th 1881
6. What is your Trade or Calling? Railway Employee
7. Are you married? Yes
8. Are you willing to be vaccinated or re-vaccinated and inoculated? Yes
9. Do you now belong to the Active Militia? No
10. Have you ever served in any Military Force? Yes No
If so, state particulars of former Service.
11. Do you understand the nature and terms of your engagement? Yes
12. Are you willing to be attested to serve in the Canadian Over-Sea Expeditionary Force? Yes

DECLARATION TO BE MADE BY MAN ON ATTESTATION.

I, Vincent Mifsud do solemnly declare that the above are answers made by me to the above questions and that they are true, and that I am willing to fulfil the engagements by me now made, and I hereby engage and agree to serve in the Canadian Over-Sea Expeditionary Force, and to be attached to any arm of the service therein, for the term of one year, or during the war now existing between Great Britain and Germany should that war last longer than one year, and for six months after the termination of that war provided His Majesty should so long require my services, or until legally discharged.

Date FEB 27 1917 Vincent Mifsud (Signature of Recruit)
W. B. Campbell (Signature of Witness)

OATH TO BE TAKEN BY MAN ON ATTESTATION.

I, Vincent Mifsud do make Oath, that I will be faithful and bear true Allegiance to His Majesty King George the Fifth, His Heirs and Successors, and that I will as in duty bound honestly and faithfully defend His Majesty, His Heirs and Successors, in Person, Crown and Dignity, against all enemies, and will observe and obey all orders of His Majesty, His Heirs and Successors, and of all the Generals and Officers set over me. So help me God.

Date FEB 27 1917 Vincent Mifsud (Signature of Recruit)
W. B. Campbell (Signature of Witness)

CERTIFICATE OF MAGISTRATE.

The Recruit above-named was questioned by me that if he made any false answer to any of the above questions he would be liable to be punished as provided in the Army Act.
 The above questions were then read to the Recruit in my presence.
 I have taken care that he understands each question, and that his answer to each question has been duly entered as replied to, and the said Recruit has made and signed the declaration and taken the oath before me, at VICTORIA, B. C. this FEB 27 1917 day of 1917.

W. J. Johnston (Signature of Justice)
 Mayor
 G. C. A. M. C. Training Depot No. 1, G.E.F.

**Attestation Paper for Vincent Mifsud
 Dated Victoria, BC, February 27, 1917**

During the Great Depression in the 1930s, Austin felt there was little opportunity for him in Canada and went to England to work. He brought his fiancée, Mary Doree Roach, accompanied by his mother, Mabel, over in 1938, and Doree and Austin were married, June 16th, in Margate, Kent.

Austin and Mary's only child, Anne Carew Mifsud, was born in Ramsgate, Kent, England on June 2, 1939. That same year, the young family sailed for Canada.

Mabel, who has been described by her granddaughter as "a proper English lady with very strong views," died on March 8, 1944, in Vancouver and was interred there in Mountain View Cemetery. Both Mabel and Vincent had been very devoted to one another and shared an interest in culture and travel which, in turn, they passed on to their son, Austin.

Austin and his family moved to San Francisco in 1947, but Vincent chose to remain in Vancouver. He loved “the grey sky” of the city rather than the sun and hot sirocco winds of Malta or anywhere else in Europe for that matter. He continued to travel, by means of reduced rates as a former CPR employee, mainly to London, Paris and Rome in Europe and to visit family in California, often staying for months at a time. He always felt at home wherever he was.



**Vincent Mifsud, in Uniform, 1917
with His Father in Law, William Austin Morley**

Living in Canada, Vincent belonged to no particular Christian denomination and did not impose his beliefs on his children. While he was later to say that he didn't like the pressure put on him to become a Roman Catholic priest and so “escaped” to Canada, overpopulation in Malta and better economic opportunities abroad, as mentioned in Giuseppe Mifsud's letter of 1915 to his brother, were probably stronger motives at the time (1904).

Fluent in English and Italian, as well as Maltese, a great deal of time in later years was spent in libraries, researching many topics. His favourite writings were the essays of Montaigne. His military hero was Napoleon. He also championed the ideas of Savonarola, the Italian Dominican friar and preacher active in Renaissance Florence. Indeed, Vincent's paternal grandmother's brother, Antonio Catania, who became a wealthy banker and philanthropist in Messina, Sicily, had invaded Calabria with Garibaldi in August 1860.

As a child, Vincent's granddaughter remembers her grandfather discussing the achievements of his first cousin, Sir Hannibal Scicluna, who was the son of

Maria-Carmela (Galdies) Scicluna, a sister of Vincent's mother. Hannibal (1880-1981), one of Malta's foremost historians, also lived to be a centenarian.

Despite his family connections, his scholarly pursuits and his liberal ideas, Vincent had a “winning personality” and his favourite pastime was “having a chat” with anyone who came his way, regardless of that person's beliefs or status in life.

He loved attending the opera but was equally at home going to current movies or watching TV westerns and cop shows. Roseline Russell, “a fine woman,” was one of his favourite actresses.

Vincent neither smoked or drank alcohol, but consumed a whole loaf of French bread every day. He was used to late hours and could often be found reading the *Encyclopedia Britannica* in the middle of the night and enjoying a snack of salami and olives at the kitchen table.

Small in stature, with a wide girth in later years, he liked to dress well in the old style and looked quite dapper in his three-piece suit, with a watch and chain and often wearing a beret and was larger than life. More than 37 years after Vincent Mifsud's death, his only grandchild is wont to say: “We all miss our little grandpa to this day and wish he was on his way to visit us as usual on the next train coming in.”



“Little Grandpa,” about 1973, with Julie Roach, Anne (Mifsud) White's first cousin, on his right knee and Doree White, His Great-Granddaughter on his Left Knee, His Other Great-Granddaughter, Toby White is on the Lap of Annie (Stewart) Roach, mother of Doree (Roach) Mifsud. Anne (Mifsud) White, Vincent Mifsud's Granddaughter, is in the Back Row, Flanked by Her Parents, Doree and Austin Mifsud

**Anne White, Austin Mifsud's only child and the only blood grandchild of Vincent Mifsud, lives in Ventura, California. In addition to her reminiscences and documents in the possession of her daughters, Doree Anne Morse and Toby Nicole White also of California, use has been made of the many sources available through ancestry.ca.*

ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE MALTESE COMMUNITIES

Dan Brock

The Bay Area, California

The Maltese – American Social Club of San Francisco, Inc. is holding a dinner-dance at the Elk's Club in San Mateo, on Saturday September 14th, to mark its 90th anniversary.

The Greater Toronto Area, Ontario

Fr. Ivano Burdian, MSSP, who has been appointed associate pastor of St. Paul the Apostle Parish, arrived in Toronto on Monday, July 8th. For the past six-and-a-half years, he was Superior of the MSSP in Australia. Fr. Ivano has been very close to migrant communities in Australia, particularly Italian and Maltese, through his diverse ministries in that country.

During the week of July 21st, Fr. Mark Grima, the Superior General of the Missionary Society of St. Paul and Fr. Frankie Cini, one of the general councillors assisting in the administration of the MSSP arrived at St. Paul the Apostle Parish en route to Malta from Peru.

The Malta Band Club held its Family Day Picnic on Saturday, July 20th. A trip to Casino Rama took place on Saturday, July 27th. The Club's semi-annual meeting was held the next day. The San Gaetano Dinner & Dance will be held on Saturday, August 10th. A trip to Casino Fallsview takes place on Saturday, August 24th.

The Maltese Canadian Cruisers Show & Shine was held at the Malta Band Club on Sunday, July 21st. the next Show & Shine will be held there on Sunday, August 25th.

Dr. Raymond C. Xerri, the new Consul General of Malta to Canada, made his first visit to St. Paul the Apostle Church at the 10:30 a.m. Mass on Sunday, July 28th. A reception was held in the parish hall afterwards.

London, Ontario

A picnic for the Maltese community of London and area, their relatives and friends was held at Weldon Park in Arva on the afternoon of Sunday, July 7th. Over 40 persons were in attendance, including Albert and Therese Vella who drove in from Scarborough the day before.

The former facilities of the now-disbanded Maltese Canadian Club of London, at 70 Charterhouse Crescent, in London, opened as the Sanatan Hindu Temple on Saturday, July 20th.

On Tuesday, July 23rd, nearly 40 members and friends of the Maltese community gathered for the monthly luncheon. This time, it was held at Tony Romas on Wellington Road South.

A picnic luncheon is planned for Wednesday, August 28th at the pavilion in Weldon Park in Arva.



At the Picnic on July 7th, Most Were Engaged in Playing Bingo in the Pavillion While a Few Played Bocci as Can Bearly Be Seen to the Right

(Photo by Dan Brock)

Metro Detroit

The Annual Maltese American Community Club of Dearborn Bob Farr's Tribute Picnic, hosted by Margaret Muscat Purdy for club members, kids, grand kids, family and friends, was held at Kensington Metro Park, Milford, MI, on Sunday, August 4th.

Windsor, Ontario

The Annual Family Picnic, organized by the Malta United Society of Windsor, was held in Lacasse Park on Sunday, July 28th.

TWO ERRORS CORRECTED

Dan Brock

In last month's article entitled "Longest-Living Male of the Maltese Diaspora Dies in London Ontario" (July 2019, 6-7), two errors have been uncovered regarding Vincenzo Mifsud.

First, he born in Floriana, not Birkirkara.

Secondly, his month of birth was May, not December. While his date of birth has been recorded over the years as both May 12, 1881 and December 5, 1881, it appears that this discrepancy has possibly originated from perhaps "12.5.1881," some misinterpreting the 12 as the month rather than the day of Vincenzo's birth.

Verification of this data has been determined from an official copy of his birth certificate bearing the date August 9, 1904 and his 1976 Canadian passport. See pages 7-10 for more on Vincent Mifsud.

LEHEN MALTI

(Maltese Voice)

Omni 1 TV

Toronto, Ontario

Saturdays 8:30 a.m.

Tuesdays 3:30 a.m. & 11:30 a.m.

Wednesdays 11:00 p.m.

Thursdays 8:30 a.m.

IN SEARCH OF MALTA

Richard S. Cumbo

I had first heard about Malta, Ontario about 50 years ago, from a person who was doing research on the great 19th century Maltese Canadian shipbuilder Louis Shickluna. This individual had told me that Shickluna had founded a small lumber camp in Northern Ontario, and in this camp built a small chapel dedicated to St. Paul one of Malta's patron saints. The lumber was used for the many ships Shickluna had built at his St. Catharines shipyard.

I have since lost track of the person who gave me this information. I had never stopped looking, however, for Malta, Ontario.

I purchased a 1913 *Canadian Almanac* while on an antique hunt near Barrie in the summer of 1979. In it was proof that Malta did exist in Ontario. I doubt, however, whether it's the same place founded by Shickluna because during my research I came across no relationship between Shickluna and the village of Malta.

The name "Malta" was first officially recorded in 1873 in the Ontario Geographic Names Board. The early settlers in the area were predominantly Welsh. Malta was four miles from Severn, Ontario, near Kilworthy Station, which was six miles south of Gravenhurst. In the 1907 *Ontario Gazette*, it states that "Malta is in Morrison township, Muskoka District. Kilworthy is the nearest railway point. The nearest bank is at Gravenhurst. It has a post office and a saw mill run by A. McPherson and Company."

In 1874 it had the aforementioned post office and saw mill, probably on the Kashe River, and a church. The name Malta also appeared on an 1881 map of the Free Grant District. In those early days, for a town to have a post office was a sign of its importance as a centre. The first Malta Post Office was opened on December 1, 1874; the first postmaster was A.B. Campbell. On June 6, 1875, however, the post office was closed. The original building was still standing in 1979 but was in a ruinous state.

The post office was reopened on January 1, 1876. Thomas Whyte was the postmaster until June 1, 1899. His sister, Hannah Whyte, then became the new postmistress and held this position until January 15, 1919.

Her home, a beautiful white clapboard farmhouse, also served as the post office. The property was owned by the Augustine family in 1979 and served as a small resort area known as "Hillbilly Estates."

With the Malta post office being transferred to Kilworthy, it appears the name Malta was no longer used for the village.

The local historian at the Kilworthy post office in 1979

was Mrs. Edna McKenzie. Her husband, John Kenneth McKenzie, has been postmaster for over 25 years. I am indebted to Mrs. McKenzie for her time and as a main source for the post office information.

In the area there were five Malta school sections. Only two of the schools were standing in 1979, one of which, Malta School # 5, was built in 1867. The building had been moved from its original site owing to a new corduroy road which was being built. By the late Seventies, it was known as the Little Red Schoolhouse Antique Shop and was owned by Mrs. Mary Counter of Toronto.

The Presbyterian Church Synod Office in Toronto shows that, in 1909, the Malta Presbyterian Church only had 14 families in the congregation, with eight communicants, and was, therefore, closed. This church stood on the Ab Millar property. The present Kilworthy Cemetery had originally been known as the Malta Cemetery.

An interesting fact I learned on my trip in 1979 to the site of the community of Malta was that there was a legend about an Englishman who in early days used to discharge his canon at a promontory called Gibraltar. This would mark the arrival of special guests or an occasion of significance. The McLelland Sand and Gravel Company occupied the site of "Gibraltar" in 1979.

One reason why I had a difficult time in finding Malta was because the name had not been used for 60 years. After finding it, I could not learn who named the community, not more probably the post office, Malta. It could well have been a Britisher who once had been stationed on the beautiful and historic Mediterranean Island.

**This is a slightly amended version of the article which appeared in the Bloor West Villager, May 1980, A20.*

Editor's note: There was a Malta Post Office, opened January 1, 1856, just north of the present Inverhuron Provincial Park in Bruce Township, Bruce County, on the shore of Lake Huron and immediately north of Port Bruce. For awhile, the community rivalled Kincardine in size and importance, but the swamp fire of July 4, 1862 wiped out both Malta and Port Bruce. Neither community was rebuilt and became ghost towns, the Malta Post Office having closed on December 31, 1866.

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

**MALTESE-CANADIAN MUSEUM
ARCHIVES AND VISITORS CENTRE
ST. PAUL THE APOSTLE CHURCH COMPLEX***

Richard S. Cumbo

It would appear that the initial beginnings of St. Paul's Museum began in the 1980s with the arrival of the young and highly-artistic Franciscan, Father Raymond Falzon, OFM. During this time, the "museum" was more of a depository for works of art by the talented and much-respected Father Raymond and other Maltese artists. At the same time the upper hall of St. Paul's Auditorium was used to house the early history of the parish, with displays of old St. Paul's church vestments, religious articles and photographs. Photographs depicting the contribution of the Maltese Canadian Society of Toronto, established in 1922, and of early Maltese settlers were also displayed.

Over the decades, individuals and Maltese organizations began to donate various pieces of memorabilia and documentation relating to the early Maltese community in West Toronto "Junction." Others began to donate handmade Maltese crafts, such as Maltese lace, hand-carved Maltese limestone objects, Maltese pottery and coin collections from the time of the Knights of Malta and of the French and English occupations of the Maltese Islands. There is also a collection of Maltese stamps and various medals.

Others donated replicas of objects from the Islands' ancient past. Prime examples are replicas of deities from pre-Christian Malta, oil lamps from the Roman era and a multitude of other objects of interest. This growing collection was usually only viewed when a special event was taking place in St. Paul's Upper Hall; it wasn't being promoted or actually open to the general public.

This all changed with the arrival of the dynamic and highly energetic Father Manuel Parnis, MSSP in late 2015. (In 1999, St. Paul the Apostle Parish, which had been under the jurisdiction of the Order of Franciscan Minors-OFM since 1951, was transferred to the Maltese-founded Missionary Society of St. Paul-MSSP.)

Although Father Parnis had a large parish to maintain and administer, which also included extensive and expensive repairs, he wanted to literally put the museum "on the map." Because of his busy and hectic schedule, he decided to form a committee to oversee the museum. The original committee—Father Parnis, Emanuel Calleja and myself—met every week, starting in September 2016. Also present as advisers were Mr. Chris Sears, president of the West Toronto Junction Historical Society and Ms. Barbara Taylor, a former

employee of the Archives of Ontario. Mr. Quentin Schesnuik of the R.C. Archdiocese of Toronto assisted with the "Deed of Gift" forms. Later on, Mr. Joe Sherri, president of the Maltese-Canadian Federation, and Ms. Carmen Galea, head of the Maltese Language Program, as well as other volunteers, joined the then steering committee.

On January 29, 2017, after Mass at St. Paul's, the depository/collection was officially inaugurated, and rightly so, as the Maltese-Canadian Museum Archives and Visitors Centre. Speeches were given by Mr. Joe Sherri, Ms. Hanan El Khatib, consul general of Malta, Mr. Chris Sears, MPP, Ms. Cheri DiNovo and myself. The ribbon cutting was conducted by Father Manuel and Ms. El Khatib.



Interior View of the Maltese-Canadian Museum

(Photo courtesy of Mark Zammit Cordina)

One of Father Manuel's many goals was to make the Museum a Toronto tourist attraction and a useful and active institution in the community. To oversee this undertaking, he appointed this writer as the first museum curator. Although the Museum was still "a work in progress" it was open to the public twice a week, since February of 2017, and took bookings for private tours.

As well as providing tours for schools and other interested groups, the Museum became a venue for researchers and special exhibitions and a gathering place. A small group of dedicated volunteers assisted Fr. Manuel and me in this undertaking. Admission was free, but donations were appreciated to help with the upkeep. An attractive brochure and flyer were designed by Mr. Trevor Parkins-Sciberras and myself.

With the arrival of the new pastor at St. Paul's, Father Mario Micallef, in January 2019, plans are in the works for the museum/archives to reopen in the near future with this writer again as curator.

**This article is mainly that which appeared in The Maltese Canadian Club of London Newsletter, vol. 38, no. 1 (May/June 2017), 17.*