



# THE MALTESE PRESENCE IN NORTH AMERICA



## E-NEWSLETTER

Issue 46

FEBRUARY 2023

### NICKY CONTI: A WORLD WANDERER AND STREET PHOTOGRAPHER



**Nicky Conti at the opening of her first solo photography exhibition “Memories of My Island” wearing a dress created from the photograph seen to our right.**

(See pages 9-11 and 16)



**On the Great Wall of China**



**Spinning prayer wheels at Labrang Monastery, Tibet**



**On top of Cradle Mountain, Tasmania, Australia**

**The Maltese Presence  
in North America  
Issue No. 46 February 2023**

*Editor*  
Dan Brock

*Proofreader*  
Mona Vella-Nicholas

*Copy Editors*  
Mark Caruana  
Maria Pia Gauci

*Contributors to This Issue*

**CANADA**

**Ontario**

Richard Cumbo

**USA**

**California**

Evelyn and Dennis Simmons

**New York**

Nicki Conti

**AUSTRALIA**

**New South Wales**

Mark Caruana

**EDITORIAL COMMENTS**

This has been another of those occasions in which the feature article is also being represented on both the front and back out covers as well. (See pages 1, 9-11, 16) Like Lisa Buttigieg-LiGreci's article on the Annual Car Show, hosted by the Maltese American Community Club of Dearborn (see issue of July 2022), the photographs provided by Nicky Conti just lend themselves to be showcased on the front and back covers, as well as used in the feature article.

Several pages of this issue are devoted to the departure of the Missionary Society of St. Paul priests, after 24 years, from St. Paul the Apostle Maltese Parish on Dundas Street in Toronto. (See pages 4-6)

The words of the new administrator, Fr. Roy Farrell, that he will be faithful "to the traditions of the Maltese community" (see page 4) are very encouraging.

Two examples of these words being translated into actions occurred last weekend with the celebration of the Feast of the Shipwreck of St. Paul at all weekend Masses and the dinner-dance, in honour of this feast, held in the DePiro Hall on the evening of Saturday February 11<sup>th</sup> (see page 7).

As well as being the spiritual centre of the Maltese of the Greater Toronto Area and beyond, St. Paul the Apostle Parish is also the home of the Maltese-Canadian Museum Archives and Visitors Centre. The Parish Hall contains the paper records and artifacts of many persons of Maltese birth or blood and numerous defunct clubs throughout southern Ontario.

One of those defunct clubs was The Maltese Canadian Club of London. Now, more than four years after its demise, many of its former members and a few others try to come together once a month over lunch. Last month, the venue was Fionn MacCool's on Wellington Road South. (See page 11.)

Also, last month, I received six issues of *Forum Melitense* from Mark Caruana of New South Wales, Australia. Mark has contributed several articles to this newsletter and is one of its copy editors.

The late C.A. "Camelo" Caruana began publishing this quarterly in Toronto about the mid-1970s. With the issue dedicated to Louis Shickluna [Vol. 6, no. 2 (Spring 1980)] the name of the quarterly changed to *Maltese Forum*. The journal ceased with Camelo's death in early 1985.

With the issues received from Mark, I now have all except volumes 1, 2 and 10 and issues 1 and 2 of volume 5.

Over the years, I've been mining this journal for information relating to the Maltese of North America.

The two items in this issue relating to the late Dominic Meilak (pages 8 and 13) were taken from the Winter 1976-1977 issue of *Forum Melitense* received from Mark.

Again, my thanks to the various clubs and individuals who provided material for this newsletter. I would encourage all clubs to send forward information, including photos of events within your organization. At least post such photos, etc. on your Facebook page so that I can, with your permission, access and use such material in this newsletter.

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

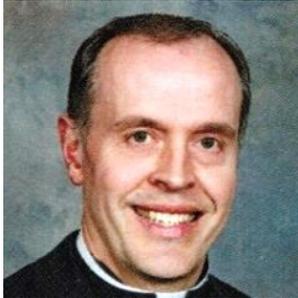
If you have ideas to share or wish to be put on the free, bcc electronic mailing lists, etc., I may be reached at [danbrock62@gmail.com](mailto:danbrock62@gmail.com). You may also contact me through this email address should you be interested in advertising in this newsletter.

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## GLEANINGS FROM THE SUNDAY BULLETINS

**Fr. Roy writes...**



Dear Parishioners of St. Paul the Apostle,

Thank you so much for the lovely, warm welcome you gave me since my arrival on January 8th. Over the years I have forged many strong connections with Maltese people and feel very much at home here.

It really touched me from the minute I arrived and experienced Fr. Ivano's hospitality and approachability.

And so, we are off on a new chapter in the life of St. Paul the Apostle parish community, I am indeed grateful for the Missionary Society of St. Paul priests' dedicated service for the past twenty-four years. Such a successful long-term ministry is a wonderful testimony for your work together.

As we begin, please know that I am committed to helping the church be, above all else, faithful to Jesus Christ, the teachings of the Church, and the traditions of the Maltese community. Besides performing all the usual tasks of ministry, I'll be working closely with the parish on all aspects of parish life.

I will be available to you by the parish phone number (415-767-7054) and e-mail at [fr.roy@rogers.com](mailto:fr.roy@rogers.com).

One of my favorite sayings is "There is much work to be done in the church!" I look forward to doing that work together with you!

In Christ's love.

Fr. Roy.

### **Be Aware of the Presence of God in Our Lives**

We can easily get caught up in the events of life. These moments may be as mundane as driving children to activities, or as serious as a health crisis or marital problems. These matters can cut us off from the presence of God in our lives.

....When we pay attention to our experiences in the present moment, we can start to see God's hand in everything. An awareness of God's presence will change the way we see ourselves and how we relate to the world among us. Our situations may not change but our ability to move through the situation will change. Aware of God's presence in our lives, we will live in a way that is different from the world around us....

Anthony Chezzi, vol 28, no.11, page 135

### **Invite in the Holy Spirit**

There is a beautiful stained-glass window in St. Andrew's Cathedral, Victoria, BC, that depicts two young boys playing. They are the cousins John and Jesus. How perfect that John, who knew Jesus so well, came as the last great prophet to prepare the way for Our Lord.

John's love for God was infectious. People came from all over to hear him proclaim God's word. What made them come? What made them believe?

Those who believe, listen. Believers can accept the inspiration of the Holy Spirit in their hearts; believers can see sins that prevent them from growing in the truth. Believers yearn to have their sins washed away.

Those who do not believe, who have hearts like the Pharisees, are not able to grow. They may have the right religion; they may be well-read; but their pride prevents them from allowing the Spirit into their hearts .

How can we infect those around us with our love for Jesus in the way that John did? How can we get to know Jesus better? For each of us the way is different, but the means are the same: we can invite the Holy Spirit in.

*Liz Summers, vol. 28, no. 12, page 38*

### **Faith**

....Faith is both witnessing what God is at work doing in the world and choosing to place our hope in the goodness we see even without the guarantee of certainty.

....We grow to love Jesus because others who follow show us the way to Love.

We prepare a place for Jesus to come to us again, so that we can go out and carry the Godchild to others. So, meet Love here again and then go and tell others about the miracles Jesus has worked in your presence.

*Leah Perrault, vol. 28, no. 12, page 66*

**ST. PAUL THE APOSTLE PARISH,  
TORONTO, CANADA: THE END OF AN ERA  
GLEANINGS FROM PARISH BULLETINS,  
ETC. - FAREWELL MESSAGES**

**Fr. Mark Grima, MSSP, Superior General**



Dear brothers and sisters with whom we share this journey of faith, the time is near to bid farewell to each other. It's never easy to leave people, places or work that you love. Paul, our patron saint, had to do this very often when he left one community to move to his next mission. As a missionary he knew too well that loving people meant that one day he had to suffer this loss. But it was worth the pain and effort, because for him sharing Christ was his primary goal.

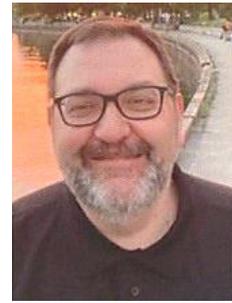
Like him, today, we feel this sense of grief because relationships were built, while joys and sorrows were shared during these last 24 years. Our desire as MSSP was always to share with you our faith in Christ, build the Maltese Christian community, and be of assistance to all those in need. I do hope that, with all our limits, we managed to come near to our goal.

Thank you all who were always close to our MSSP priests in their ministry and needs. We remember the many brothers and sisters in this Maltese-Canadian community who are no longer with us and are interceding for us in heaven. Our desire is the same as that of our founder Joseph De Piro. Let us continue to share the faith that St. Paul has brought to us, particularly with the new generations.

God bless you all, and we promise to keep each other in our prayers.

**Fr. Ivano Burdian, MSSP**

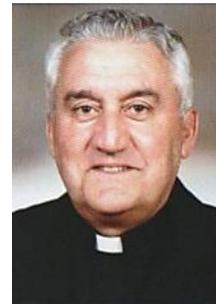
My dear brothers and sisters of the parish, the time has finally come to say goodbye. When I arrived in 2019, I was a bit hesitant because I was thinking what am I, an Aussie-Italian, going to do among the Maltese-Canadian community?



That hesitancy disappeared pretty quickly due to the warm welcome I received and the relationship we built over these years. Together with Fr. Mario, it has been a true privilege to walk in faith with you and to be of service. We have laughed and cried, shoveled plenty of snow, and met Christ in many ways. Despite the sadness I feel, I have been blessed with this experience with you. I ask you to hold me in your prayers as I take my next step, as I promise to hold you in my heart and prayers as you move into the future together with Fr. Roy.

May our faithful God bless you all.

**Fr. Dominic Cachia, MSSP**



Dear Parishioners, I spent seventeen years (1999-2015) among you, a special and blessed time. Recently, I had the unexpected opportunity to be with you once again. I was glad to see you again, as you were happy too to see me again. Once again, we shared happy and sad moments. We had moments too of socializing, especially at the New Year's Eve dinner dance and other events. With Fr. Ivano I shared the ministry of celebrating Mass, funerals and both hospital and home visits. Now that the time has come for the MSSP to move, I encourage you to continue to love and support the Maltese/Canadian Parish of St. Paul by coming to worship together and help the new Administrator Fr. Roy to continue to bring you closer to God. You are in my love and prayers. God bless you all.

**Fr. Mario Micallef, MSSP, Pastor 2019-2022**

Times of transition are never easy. Ever harder are times when one has to say goodbye. And yet, these are part of the life of every human being and of every group where people gather. The parish community is not immune to this.



As we, Paulist Missionaries, say goodbye to St Paul's in Toronto, I find myself reflecting on my own time shared with you as your pastor. During this time, friendships were formed, happy moments shared, and tears joined in moments of sadness. I know sometimes I might have hurt or disappointed someone, through human weakness rather than bad intent, and for this, I am truly sorry. Yet thankfully the good times by far outweigh the bad ones. Many beautiful memories shared with many of you will stay etched in my memory for a long time to come.

As the parish moves into new, uncharted waters, I assure you of my prayerful support. As what happened to St. Paul on the road to Damascus, moments of complete darkness and a sense of loss can lead, with God's grace, to a wonderful and bright future. God's providence has never failed us. I strongly believe it will not do so now. May God abundantly bless each and every one of you.

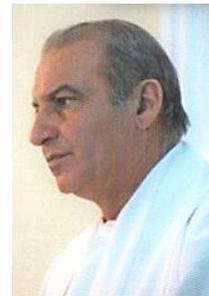
**Fr. Giovann Tabone, MSSP**



Dear all, looking back, albeit still very fresh, my time with you last year was indeed a great blessing. Even if it was brief and most of my time was occupied with my studies, yet you made it literally living at home away from home.

Your hospitality, friendship and truly 'being Maltese' have made my sojourn a blessing indeed. For this thank you. While for us as MSSP, this chapter is certainly a bitter time of letting go, yet for myself, joining the chorus of other MSSP brothers who ministered and stayed at our beloved Maltese community in Canada, it was an honor and great delight. May you continue to be a seed of true witness to our Christian faith and heritage. Blessings.

**Fr. Emanuel Parnis, MSSP, Pastor 2015-2019**



I wish to take this opportunity of our departure from St. Paul the Apostle Parish on Dundas Street to thank the parishioners for all the support they gave me during my time there, I wish you all the best and I promise to keep you in my prayers. May God bless you and keep on guiding you in your spiritual journey.

**Fr. Karm Borg, MSSP, Pastor 2001-2015**



[Fr. Borg died in Malta on Tuesday, November 23, 2022.]

**Fr. Frankie Cini, MSSP**

I was a deacon at St. Paul's during my studies in Canada in 2000-2002. Over thirty people then came over to Zebbug, Gozo, on the 18<sup>th</sup> of August 2002, for my first solemn Mass. My memories of St. Paul's are etched in my heart even at this sad time of parting.

In those days with Frs. Mark Demanuele, and the late Fr. Karm Borg, and Fr. Dominic Cachia, I found my feet as a young minister and was shaped by the friendliness of the parishioners. The lasting genuine friendships nurtured and that time have remained special gifts on my journey! I have faith that this new chapter in the history of the Parish is an invitation to explore new ways of seeking the Lord's calling to faithfulness and joy. And if ever in Malta, our MSSP places are your home, always!



**Fr. Mark Demanuele, MSSP, Pastor 1991-2001**



Dear Parishioners at St. Paul's, Dundas Street, Toronto!

I still remember the first days with you when I came to the Parish. I was anxious and did not know what to expect. However, the warm welcome, the joy, and the love of the Maltese community changed everything. It's been a while since I left, but I assure you that you are always in my heart, as that was my first assignment out of Malta. You made it easier for me, and even though I was still young, you helped me grow and mature in my ministry. Thank you for all the love you showed and, even if the MSSP community was unknown to most of you, you welcomed us with open arms. I am sad that we must let go of a beautiful community, but circumstances are not encouraging. However, I cherish every day I was in the parish as the first MSSP parish priest. Though we passed through hard times, we overcame them, making the parish beautiful and welcoming to many other people of different nationalities.

## **BIDDING FAREWELL TO FR. IVANO**

**Richard S. Cumbo**

The parishioners of St. Paul the Apostle, Toronto, Canada, bid farewell to Fr. Ivano Burdian, MSSP on Sunday, January 29<sup>th</sup>.

There was a very good turnout for the 10:30 a.m. Mass celebrated by Fr. Ivano, who also gave a very moving speech. Most Reverend Robert Kasun, CSB, Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Toronto, with oversight of the needs of the Central Pastoral Region, delivered the homily. Fr. Roy Farrell, incoming parish administrator, was also on the altar. John Vella and Paul Camilleri were the readers. Some of the readings were in Maltese. Other participants were Lino Debono (organist) Sue Ann Ellis (main singer in the choir loft) and Doris Portelli, the mother of Fr. Frank Portelli at St. Michael's Basilica, one of the participants from the pew.

A reception followed in DePiro Hall. I presented Father Ivano with a gift of appreciation on behalf of the group of volunteers of the Maltese-Canadian Museum Archives and Visitors Centre.



**Fathers Ivano and Roy  
with the Museum Volunteers**  
Back row: Richard Cumbo (curator),  
Fr. Roy Farrell  
Front row: Rose Cassar,  
Fr. Ivano Burdian, MSSP, Philip Fenech,  
Marthese Fenech, Carmen Galea,  
and Mani Mifsud

Photo courtesy of Peter Muscat

**ACTIVITIES WITHIN  
THE MALTESE COMMUNITIES**

**Dan Brock**

**NEW YORK CITY**

**Maltese Center: Astoria**

A **Bingo** was held, in the *Lower Hall*, on the afternoon of Sunday, February 5<sup>th</sup>.

A **Mass** commemorating the **Feast of St. Paul's Shipwreck** was celebrated on the evening of Saturday, February 11<sup>th</sup>, by **Fr. Anthony Saliba**. This was followed by a complimentary **Ravioli Dinner**

A **Tailgate Party** in connection with **Super Bowl LVII** was held all day on Sunday, February 12<sup>th</sup>.

A **Carnival Mardi Gras Party** will take place the evening of Saturday, February 18<sup>th</sup>

The **Annual All Members Meeting & Committee Elections** will be held in the **Lower Hall** on Sunday, February 26, 2023.

**Bingo** will take in the **Lower Hall** at 1:30 p.m. and 4:00 p.m. on Sunday, March 12<sup>th</sup>

**ONTARIO**

**Greater Toronto Area**

**Malta Band Club**

A **dinner**, consisting of *brunġiel* (eggplant), roast potatoes, and other vegetables, was held on Friday, February 3<sup>rd</sup>.

**Super Tombla** took place on the afternoon of Sunday, February 5<sup>th</sup>.

2	27	48	83	97
18	26	55	74	81
13	38	49	53	77
3	10	33	55	69
6	16	45	64	75
14	31	44	72	86
8	21	40	58	70
19	34	50	67	83
5	25	37	68	82

A **spaghetti and meatball dinner** will be held on Saturday, February 18<sup>th</sup>

**Casino bus trips** will take place on Saturday, February 25<sup>th</sup> and Saturday, March 18<sup>th</sup>.

**St. Paul the Apostle Parish**

A **special Mass** bidding farewell to **Fr. Ivano Burdian, MSSP**, and to the **Missionary Society of St. Paul** took place at 10:30 a.m. on Sunday, January, 29<sup>th</sup>, followed by a reception. (See page 6)

**Fr. Roy Farrell**, the new administrator, was **officially welcomed** by the parishioners on Sunday, February 5<sup>th</sup>, at the 10:30 a.m. Mass.

The **Feast of the Shipwreck of St. Paul** (February 10<sup>th</sup>) was celebrated as a community at all the **weekend Masses** on February 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>.

In honour of the **Feast of the Shipwreck of St. Paul**, a **Dinner-Dance** was held on Saturday, February 11<sup>th</sup>. All 160 tickets were sold days in advance of the event.

**LEHEN MALTI**  
(Maltese Voice)

OMNI 1 - Ontario  
Saturdays 8:30 a.m.  
Tuesdays 11:30 a.m.  
Thursdays 8:30 a.m.

OMNI BC  
Saturdays 2:00 p.m.

OMNI Alberta  
Saturdays 2:00 p.m.

**Maltese American Benevolent Society**

A **Super Bowl Watch Party** was held at the Club on Sunday, February 12<sup>th</sup>. Food was available for purchase and there was a cash bar.



**THE LATE CHEV. DOMINIC MEILAK**

*Editor's note: This letter to the editor appeared in the Volume 3, No. 1 (Winter 1976-1977), on page 5 of Forum Melitense. As I don't presently have access to vol. 2, no. 4, I have no knowledge of the tribute its editor, Carmelo Caruana, paid to Dominic Meilak. Carmelo Caruana's biography of Dominic Meilak is reprinted on page 13 of this issue of the newsletter.*

*As for Meilak, his name appears as Dominico Meilak on his passport application issued on April 4, 1913. He had been born in Vittoriosa, was literate and the son of Salvatore and Annie Meilak. In April 1913, he was living with his parents at 118 Sda Sammat in Paola. No record of his arrival in Canada has been found, but it was almost certainly in 1913.*

*His wife, Olga, was born in Mars Les Bains, Somme, France. They apparently married in France in 1918.*

Thanks ever so much for the complimentary copy of FORUM MELITENSE, Vol. 2; No. 4.

I was very pleased to read the obituary note about my late husband, Chev. Dominic Meilak, O.S.J. It was also very nice of you to pay tribute in the FORUM to the late Chev. John Giordmaine and to the late Rev. Fr. Cefai of Detroit. Both were very good friends of my husband and myself. As my husband had served for five years in France (during World War I) with the Canadian Army, and later on with the Canadian Legion, he founded the Post 129 Canadian Legion – Knights of Malta – when we ultimately settled in the U.S.A.

On the occasion of my husband's demise, the O.S.J. Order, whose Grand Bailiff and Grand Prior is Professor Gaston Tonna Barhet, sent me a very nice letter of sympathy. I also received many other letters of sympathy which, along with FORUM MELITENSE'S tribute to my husband's memory, were very comforting to me in my bereavement.

Please, accept my humble donation to help you a little in the many expenses required in the publication of this magazine for our two North American Maltese Communities... May all these good people who have left us to return to God, rest in peace. --- Thanks, and best regards.

Mrs. Olga Meilak (Detroit)

**London**

A **group luncheon** was held on Thursday, January 26<sup>th</sup>, at the **Fionn MacCool's** on Wellington Road South. (See pages 12-13.)

The next **luncheon** for members of the Maltese community and friends will take place at **Archie's Seafood Restaurant**, on Huron Street, at 12:30 p.m. on Thursday, February 23<sup>rd</sup>.

**Windsor**

**Malta United Society of Windsor, Ontario**

A **Valentine's Dinner & Dance** was held on the evening of Saturday, February 11<sup>th</sup>. The dinner consisted of roasted chicken, potatoes, penne, garden salad, bread and butter, dessert and coffee or tea. **DJ service** was provided by **Tommy Rajic**.

**Malta United**



**METROPOLITAN DETROIT**

**Maltese American Community Club of Dearborn**

February 11<sup>th</sup> being the second Friday of the month, it was **Hobz biż-Żejt Night**. Also available were fish & chips, ravioli, hot pastizzi (both meat and cheese), as well as Kinnie and Strohs beer. Children were welcomed. There were crafts and treats for them, as well as a special guest and a children's book from Malta.

**NICKY CONTI:  
A WORLD WANDERER  
AND STREET PHOTOGRAPHER\***

**Dan Brock**

Nicolette Conti, better known as Nicky Conti, is a native of Mosta, Malta. Since 2012, she has been living in New York City, spending most of her free time doing street photography.



**Photographic self portrait of Nicky Conti**

In 2005 at the age of 28, Nicky left Malta and went to live in the United Kingdom, settling in Newbury, West Berkshire. She spent about three years there and worked for Vodafone, a British multinational telecommunications company.

At one point, she decided to take a two-month sabbatical to travel to Africa. Nicky spent most of her time in Tanzania, where she climbed Mount Kilimanjaro, then volunteered to teach English to kids in Arusha, during which time she helped with setting up a new school.



**With some of the school children she taught in Tanzania**



**At the top of Mount Kilimanjaro, Tanzania**

After brief visits to Zanzibar and Cape Town, Nicky returned to the UK, leaving her job shortly afterward to pursue a new adventure, that of traveling across Asia with the intent of living in Australia for at least a year.

In October 2007, she began her travels through China, Tibet, Nepal, Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam, and Thailand, finally landing in Australia in January 2008. Although mainly based in Sydney, she toured the country and briefly lived on an organic farm close to Perth on the West Coast, earning her stay by working in the fields and caring for livestock.

During the months she spent in New South Wales, she waited tables at Pastizzi Cafe, a coffee shop with Maltese roots in Newtown, a western suburb of Sydney. Nicky loved her time there and met lifelong friends.



**With Freddie, a Maltese Australian co-worker and eventually a lifelong friend**

Before she knew it, Nicky was offered a job with Vodafone Australia. Her year in Australia was coming to an end and, despite being offered a permanent visa to stay in the country indefinitely, she decided to move back to the UK. She was missing Europe. Before returning, however, Nicky spent two months trekking the North and South Islands of New Zealand, an adventure with nature she will never forget.

Back in the UK, her career took a turn. Nicky went from being a web manager to becoming a digital experience designer. She loved her new role so much that she decided to further her studies, this time at University College London. She lived in London for another year after earning her Master's Degree in Human Computer Interaction until she accepted an offer to join a digital web agency in New York.

Nicky has been living in New York for over 10 years, earning her green card (permanent residency) in the meantime. She found New York suited her creativity and love for arts.

In 2014, two years after she settled in the City, her parents, Alfred and Monica Conti, and her aunt, Maria Galea, paid her a visit, one that would open up a new and unexpected chapter for Nicky.



**Nicky with her parents and aunt**

During their visit, Aunt Maria, who was struggling to take photos with her tiny digital camera, assigned Nicky the task to shoot as many photos as she could to ensure they had a good photo memoir of their one-and-only visit to New York. Nicky took the task at heart and, by the end of the two weeks, her aunt not only thanked her but was also impressed by the photos Nicky had taken.

Just before she flew back to Malta, Aunt Maria gave Nicky the cash, \$200, that she didn't use on the trip and told Nicky to take the money and use it to buy herself a new camera because *"You're good at taking photos."* Nicky was surprised. It never struck her that she could be a good photographer.

After a couple of months, Nicky decided to follow her aunt's advice and bought her first professional digital camera, which cost \$2,000. She spent the next four years learning and practising photography in her spare time. She learned and experimented with different genres—from portraiture to landscapes to photo documentary, etc. It wasn't until the end of 2018, however, that she found her own *"voice"* in photography.

Nicky started following a British street photographer, Alan Schaller, on Instagram. She loved his monochromatic work and was very eager to attend his weekend-long street photography course during his visit in New York. Alan was an inspiration as well as a great teacher, not to mention an eye opener for Nicky. From that weekend onwards, her focus became street photography.

Nicky's photography is characterized by compelling narratives and intriguing ways of looking at streets and urban surroundings. She achieves this by utilizing environmental geometric shapes and patterns. She also creates visual aesthetics and painterly effects using sunlight or street light. Her mission is to create extraordinary moments from ordinary, everyday street scenes. A travel enthusiast, Nicky challenges herself to capture the essence of the places she visits through the landscape of their streets, including those of her home country.

Her first solo photography exhibition, *"Memories of My Island"*, was held last summer at the Malta Postal Museum in Valletta. The exhibition showcased her spin on typical Maltese streets.



**Some of the frames at the exhibition**

It was also partly instigated by her romantic nostalgia for Malta, a feeling that Maltese immigrants experience having lived away from their homeland for decades. Aware of this, she wanted to permeate those “memories” by keeping them alive among Maltese Americans and, somehow, fulfilling that longingness with her photography. She thought of useful, practical products in which to present her Maltese street photography.

Toward the end of last year, Nicky created and sold calendars, coasters and photo books. These proved to be small treasures for those who bought them, as well as those who got them as Christmas gifts. Just recently, she has launched a set of placemats.

Nicky continues to capture memories every time she visits Malta, which is generally twice a year. When she’s back in New York, she roams the streets for hours on the hunt to capture those ordinary but poignant moments.

Nicky’s online shop offers items that can be shipped anywhere in the United States. Those in Canada who are interested in any items are asked to contact her at [nickycontiphotography@gmail.com](mailto:nickycontiphotography@gmail.com). Her online shop is open 24 hours and can be found by visiting [www.nickycontiphotography.com/shop](http://www.nickycontiphotography.com/shop).

*\*I wish to thank Nicky Conti for furnishing the photographs and material for this article. It is very much appreciated.*



**Set of four coasters with photo silhouettes of the Mixta Cave, Gozo**



**Light blue door placemat**



## LUNCH AT FIONN MacCOOL’S

**Dan Brock**

On Thursday, January 26<sup>th</sup>, a group of 21 of those of Maltese birth or blood and friends, gathered at Fionn MacCool’s on Wellington Road South in London, Ontario, Canada for their usual monthly luncheon.

This month, it was Ted Gauci who selected the venue and arranged the day and time.



**Clockwise: Jim McDonald Mary Melvin, Brian Groulx, Barbara and Ted Gauci**

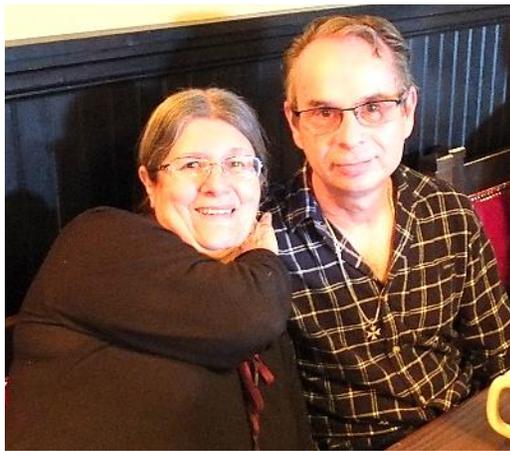
For many of us, it was our first visit to this Irish corner pub. By all accounts, the group enjoyed the relaxed ambience, the service and the food.

Joining us for the first time was Brian Groulx of nearby St. Thomas. Brian has done extensive research relating to his Maltese ancestry on his mother's side.

If you have used the family trees on Ancestry to research your own Maltese family history, chances are very good you will encounter Brian's work. This has been my experience when researching Maltese names in Western Canada, Detroit and San Francisco in connection with articles for this newsletter.



**Connie Hislop and Janet Peckham**



**Mary Melvin hamming it up with Brian Groulx**

Mary Melvin has made arrangements for the next luncheon to be held, Thursday, February 23<sup>rd</sup>, at Archie's Seafood Restaurant on Huron Street.



**Loretta Brock, Lisa Patton,  
Helen Ditchfield and Mike Ditchfield**



**Monica & Mannie Micallef**



**Terry Rogers, Carol Hilton, Mary Testa,  
Janice & Charles Vella**

## **THE STORY OF A MALTESE IMMIGRANT Chev. Dominic Meilak**

**Carmelo Caruana**

*Editor's note: This article appeared on pages 14-15, in Volume 3, No. 1 (Winter 1976-1977) of Forum Melitense. I've taken the liberty of making some editorial revisions.*

Dominic Meilak was born in Vittoriosa, Malta on 28<sup>th</sup> July, 1891, and died on 15<sup>th</sup> June 1976. He immigrated to Canada in 1913 and settled in Toronto. From Eastern Canada, Dominic left for the West and lived in Calgary, Alberta.\* In September 1914, Mr. Meilak enlisted in the Canadian Army Medical Corps. He served five years in France, and on his return to Canada in June 1919, he was honourably discharged.

In July 1920, the Meilaks went to live in Detroit, U.S.A., and eventually became American citizens. His unsullied character, his profound faith in God and Man, and his Samaritan work were, in time, officially recognized by the O.S.J. Order of Malta and he was made Missionary Knight of Grace. Besides his endeavours for the betterment of his environment, Chev. D. Meilak founded Post 129, Canadian Legion, Knights of Malta, incorporated in November 1939.

Since that remote date, the late Dominic Meilak dedicated his energy for the Knights of Malta Post 129, through which he could better serve the two Maltese Communities of North America, Detroit and Windsor, as well as both countries on each side of the border.

The task he had undertaken was indeed a very difficult one, often fraught with apathy and lack of co-operation by those very same people he had vowed to serve.

Even so, Dominic never gave up, and succeeded in preserving intact Post 129, which is still in full operation today\*\*

His patriotic love for the Old Country while still remaining a valuable asset for both Canada and the U.S.A. was unquestionable.

It was Chev. Dominik Meilak who started the Malta Day Celebrations in Detroit after World War II. On one of these occasions, he proudly wrote: "At the Malta Day Celebrations, a large number of Maltese people and friends took part with (Post 129) members and the Auxiliary. Everyone assembled around the flag pole. The Knights and their Ladies marched in formation to the flag pole.

The Star Spangled Banner and the Maltese National Anthem were played as the (Maltese) flag was raised to the mast 40 feet high. The raising of the flag was carried out by Comrade Joseph Kamm, adjutant, and Pius Scerri, 2<sup>nd</sup>. Vice-Commander, Post 129. The Address was delivered by Dr. Paul L. Vella, Maltese Consul to the U.S.A., and a long time member of Post 129. Two minutes' silence were observed as the flag was lowered to half mast. The bugle sounded the LAST POST, and was followed by a prayer to our fallen comrades of the two sieges of Malta in 1565 and 1945. The ceremony came to a dignified end by the Lament and Reveille, played by bag pipes."

The late Chevalier Dominic Meilak was an elevating inspiration to Maltese and non-Maltese alike. May the patriotic flame he has kindled never be extinguished.



The late Chev. Dominic Meilak (1891 - 1976)

*\*Here, Caruana stated that Meilak went to Calgary with his wife, Olga, but they don't appear to have married until the summer of 1918. On August 1, 1918, Meilak had his pay transferred to Olga, an apparent war bride living in Le Tréport, France. Up until this time, Dominic's father, Salvatore Meilak of Paola, Malta, received his son's pay and was listed as his next of kin.*

*\*\*It was dissolved on October 1, 1979, just a few months after Dominic Meilak's death.*

## MALTESE ORGANIZATIONS IN NORTH AMERICA

### **Festa San Gejtanu Association**

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

### **Festa San Gorg Association of Toronto**

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

### **Gozo Club Toronto**

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

### **Inanna on Stage**

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

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

c/o St Patrick's Church, 921 Flagship Drive,  
Mississauga, ON, N4Y 2J6  
905-270-2301 (Church)  
[stpatricksmi@archtoronto.org](mailto:stpatricksmi@archtoronto.org)  
Grand Knight Amadeo Cuschieri

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

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

### **Lehen Malti**

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

### **Malta Band Club**

5745 Coopers Ave., Mississauga, ON L4Z 1K9  
905-890-8507  
[www.maltabandclub.com](http://www.maltabandclub.com)  
[maltabandclub@bellnet.ca](mailto:maltabandclub@bellnet.ca)

### **Malta United Society of Windsor, Ontario**

2520 Seminole St., Windsor, ON N8Y1X4  
519-974-6719  
[maltaunitedsociety.windsor@gmail.com](mailto:maltaunitedsociety.windsor@gmail.com)  
Opening hours: Saturday 6:30 p.m.-12:00 a.m.

### **Malta Village Association (Est. 1995)**

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

### **Maltese American Benevolent Society, Inc.**

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

### **Maltese American Community Club of Dearborn**

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

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

924 El Camino Real, South San Francisco, CA  
94080  
650-871-4611  
[contact-us@Maltese-AmericanSCSF.org](mailto:contact-us@Maltese-AmericanSCSF.org)  
Opening hours: Tuesday 5:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.  
(every 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month only)  
Thursday 5: p.m. – 10:00 p.m.  
Friday 5:00 – 1:00 a.m.  
Sunday 9:00 am.- 5:00 p.m.

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

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

**Maltese Canadian Association (Gozo)**

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

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

**Maltese Canadian Business & Networking Association (MCBNA), (Toronto)**

c/o 2387 Chilsworth Avenue, Mississauga, ON  
L5B 2R4  
416-980-1975

[mcbna2018@gmail.com](mailto:mcbna2018@gmail.com)

**Maltese-Canadian Cruisers**

c/o 5745 Coopers Avenue, Mississauga, ON  
L4Z 1R9  
416-524-2573  
att: Gianni Borg

**Maltese-Canadian Cultural Association (Est. 2018)**

c/o 2387 Chilsworth Avenue, Mississauga, ON  
L5B 2R4  
416-571-3944

[joesherri@rogers.com](mailto:joesherri@rogers.com)

**Maltese Canadian Federation, The (Toronto)**

c/o 2387 Chilsworth Avenue, Mississauga, ON  
L5B 2R4  
416-571-3944

[joesherri@rogers.com](mailto:joesherri@rogers.com)

**Maltese-Canadian Museum Archives and Visitors Centre**

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

**Maltese Canucks**

c/o 3336 Dundas Street West, Toronto, ON,  
M6P 2A4  
416-909-7357/414-670-2662

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

**Maltese Center, NYC**

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

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

Opening hours:

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

**Maltese Cross Foundation of California**

[PO Box 698, San Carlos, CA 94070](mailto:PO Box 698, San Carlos, CA 94070)

**Maltese Culture Club of Durham**

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

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

**Maltese Heritage Association San Francisco Bay Area**

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

**Maltese Heritage Program (Toronto)**

c/o 59A Terry Drive, Toronto, ON, M6N 4Y8  
Coordinator: Carmen Galea  
416-766-5830

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

**Maltese Historical Society (San Francisco)**

[c/o leprofess@aol.com](mailto:c/o leprofess@aol.com)

**Melita Soccer Club Inc.**

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

[msc@melitasoccerclub.com](mailto:msc@melitasoccerclub.com)

**St. Paul the Apostle Parish**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**St. Paul's Maltese Choir**

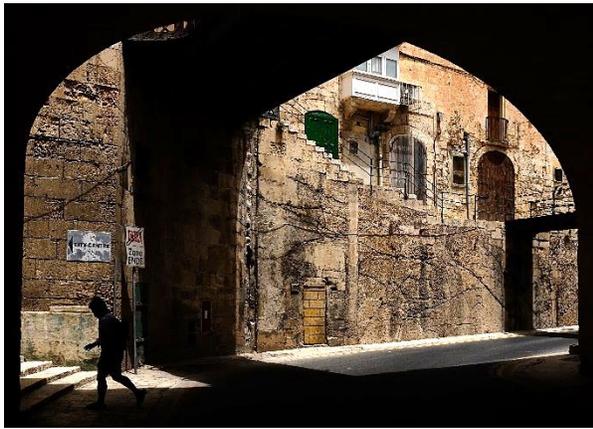
c/o St Paul the Apostle Parish  
3224 Dundas St. W., Toronto M6P 2A3  
416-767-7054

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

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

President: Lino Debono

**NICKY CONTI: A WORLD WANDERER AND STREET PHOTOGRAPHER (CON'T)**



***Under the Gate, Valletta***



***The guardian***

One of the photos displayed at  
"Memories of My Island"  
photography exhibition, July-Aug 2022



***The Staircase, Birgu***

Second Prize winner for  
"Women in the 21st Century"  
theme competition for the  
IV International Biennial of Photography,  
Ecuador, May 2022



***Night Stroll, Valletta***

Auctioned online in aid of  
The Malta Community Chest Fund Foundation,  
December 2021

(See pages 1 and 9-11)