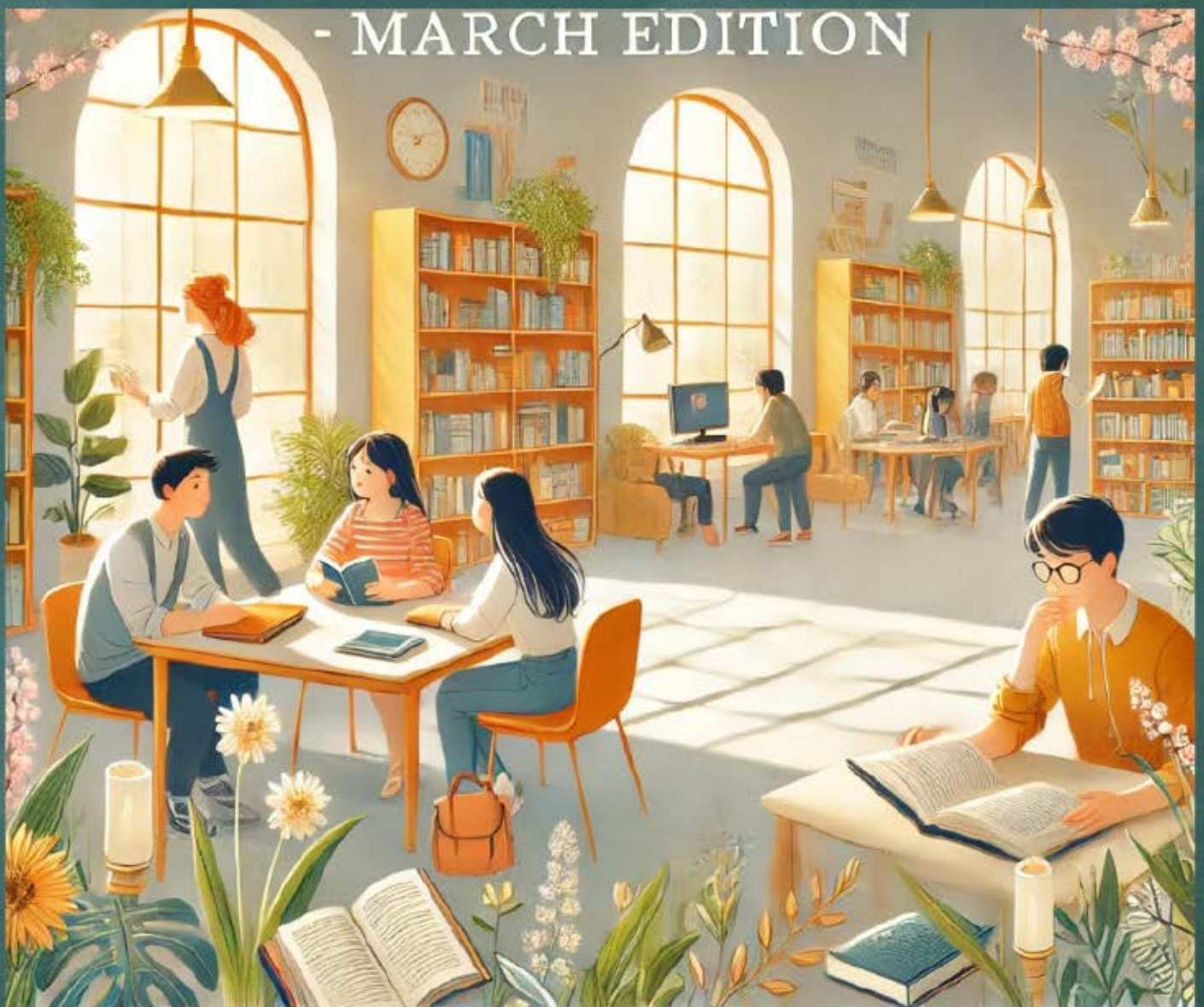


Issue 11 Mar 2025
De La Salle College
Senior School



LibraryLink

- MARCH EDITION



The Senior Library Team
Editor: Mr C Saliba

LibraryLink



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The Use of Library Link

Library Link serves as a vital resource for connecting readers, educators, and students to the world of books, knowledge, and creativity. It provides updates on new arrivals, highlights key literary events, and shares insightful articles to inspire a love for reading.

With engaging content and curated recommendations, Library Link helps foster a vibrant reading community.



March in Malta: A Season of Festivities and Change

March in Malta marks the transition from winter to spring, bringing milder temperatures, blooming landscapes, and a lively calendar of events. As the days grow longer, locals and visitors alike embrace the outdoors, enjoying the island's rich cultural heritage and natural beauty.



One of the most significant events in March is Malta's Feast of St. Joseph, celebrated on the 19th in Rabat. This traditional festa features religious processions, fireworks, and local band marches, drawing crowds to honor the patron saint of workers.

March is also synonymous with Carnival celebrations, which sometimes spill over from late February. The streets of Valletta and Nadur in Gozo come alive with vibrant parades, elaborate costumes, and satirical performances. The Nadur Carnival, known for its spontaneous and quirky nature, contrasts with Valletta's more structured festivities, both offering a unique cultural experience.

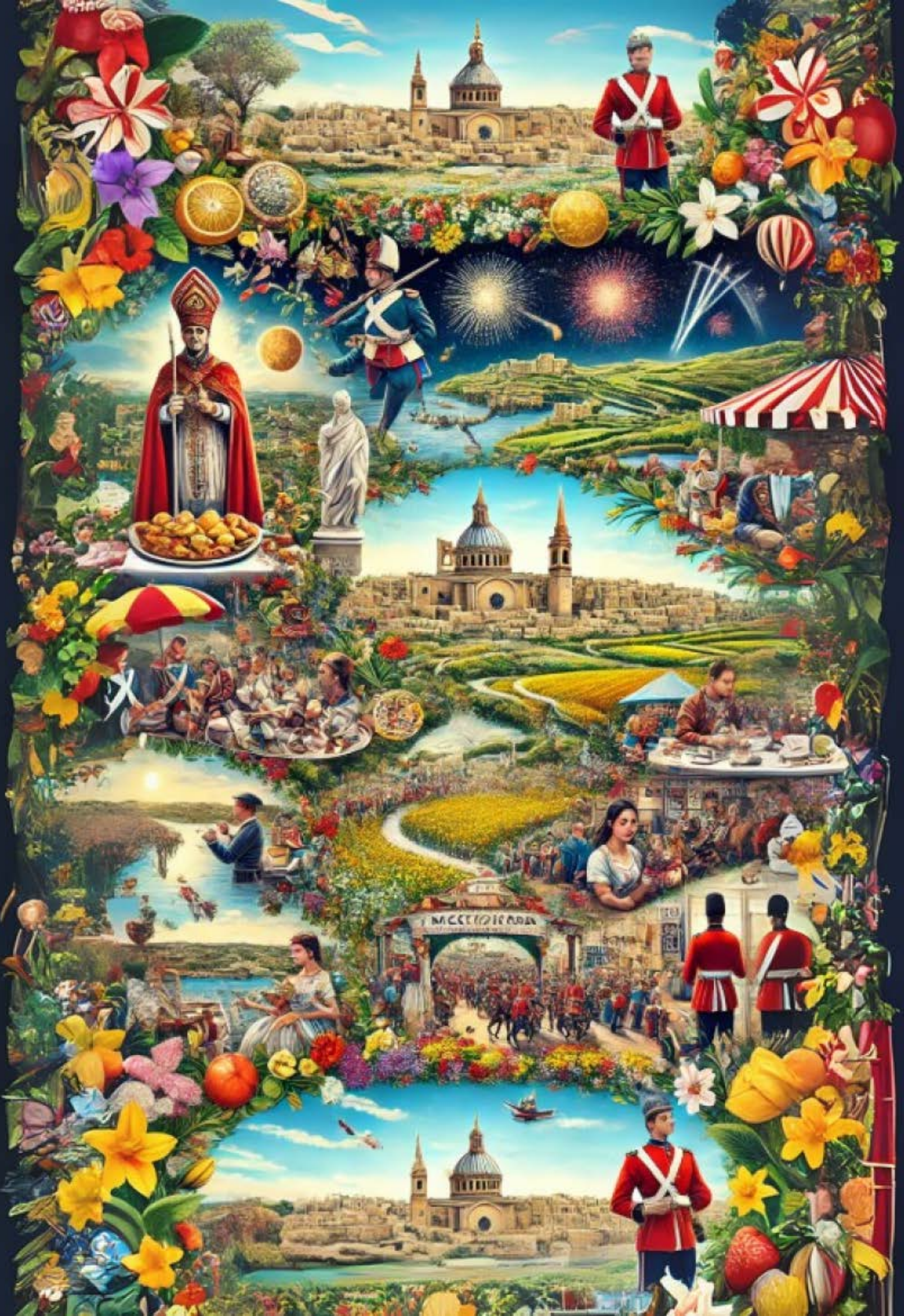




For nature lovers, March is an ideal time to explore Malta's countryside. The Maltese spring bloom begins, with fields and cliffs covered in wildflowers, making it perfect for hiking in places like Dingli Cliffs, Għajn Tuffieħa, and the Victoria Lines.

Additionally, March often sees the start of the Strawberry Festival in Mġarr, a much-anticipated event celebrating locally grown strawberries with fresh produce, desserts, and traditional Maltese treats.

Whether through religious feasts, outdoor adventures, or cultural celebrations, March in Malta offers something for everyone, blending tradition with the fresh energy of spring.



March's Author Spotlight: Celebrating Great Writers

March is a month of literary celebration, highlighting the works of influential authors who have shaped the world of literature. As spring unfolds, it's the perfect time to immerse ourselves in the words of great writers, discovering new perspectives and timeless stories.



One of the most notable literary anniversaries in March is World Poetry Day on the 21st, an occasion to honour poets who have enriched language and culture. From the thought-provoking works of William Wordsworth, who celebrated nature and the human experience, to the revolutionary verses of Maya Angelou, poetry remains a powerful tool for expression.

This month, we also recognise the literary legacy of Gabriel García Márquez, the Colombian novelist known for *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, a masterpiece of magical realism. His storytelling continues to captivate readers worldwide, making him a perfect author to explore in March.



Additionally, March is a time to appreciate contemporary authors making an impact today. Whether it's the fantasy worlds of Neil Gaiman, the historical narratives of Hilary Mantel, or the science-fiction brilliance of Isaac Asimov, there's a book for everyone to enjoy.

At the library, we encourage readers to discover and celebrate great writers. Whether diving into a novel, poetry, or nonfiction, let March be a month of literary exploration and inspiration!

Historical March: Events That Shaped Malta and Beyond

March has witnessed key moments in Malta's history and beyond, shaping the island's identity and influencing global events. From military conflicts to political milestones, this month has played a crucial role in history.



One of the most significant events in Malta's history occurred on March 28, 1566, when Grand Master Jean Parisot de Valette laid the foundation stone of Valletta. Following the Great Siege of 1565, the Knights of St. John fortified the city to strengthen Malta's defense against future Ottoman attacks. Valletta remains one of Europe's most historic and well-preserved capitals, recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Another pivotal moment in Maltese history took place on March 31, 1979, known as Freedom Day (Jum il-Ħelsien). On this day, the last British military forces departed from Malta, marking the end of foreign military presence on the island. This event is commemorated annually with a ceremony at the Freedom Monument in Birgu.



Beyond Malta, March has also seen global events that shaped history. On March 25, 1957, the Treaty of Rome was signed, establishing the European Economic Community (EEC), which later evolved into the European Union. This agreement laid the groundwork for European integration, an important development that would eventually include Malta's accession in 2004.

From the fortification of Valletta to Malta's independence from foreign rule, March holds deep historical significance, reminding us of the resilience and progress of both the island and the world.

Scale Modelling

Q&A

Join us for a Q&A with Mr. Hermann Grech!

🔍 Discover the fascinating world of scale modelling!

❓ Have questions? Get expert insights!

🍷 From tiny details to grand designs – learn all about the craft!

🔧 Whether you're a beginner or a pro, this session is for you!

JUL 2025
17

Date: 24th March



Time: Midday Break



Location: Library

HERO OR TRAITOR?

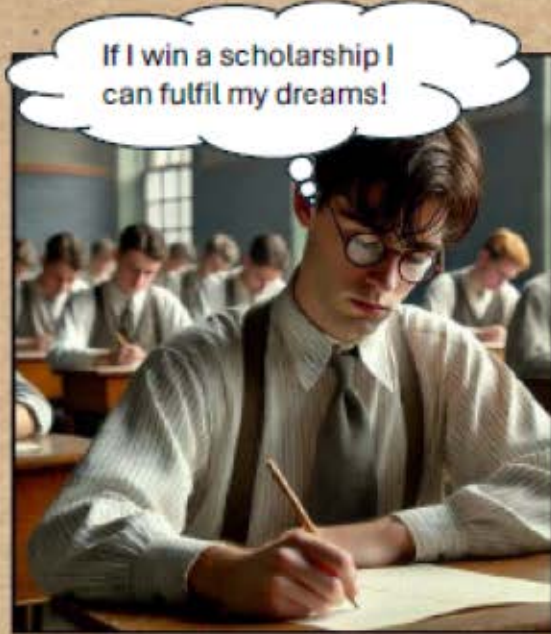
The Story of Carmelo Borg Pisani

Our story today starts in the harbour town of Senglea on the 10th of August 1914 when a child was born into a normal working class family. The boy was christened Carmelo. He had a normal upbringing for a child at the time - playing street games and going to church. Young Carmelo was sent to the Umberto Primo - an Italian school which was based in Paola and in Valletta.



Most probably, at school Carmelo fell in love with all things Italian. At the time Malta was ruled by the British and opinion was divided between the pro-British and pro-Italian political parties. Carmelo was firm in the belief that our island would be better off if it were ruled by Italy rather than Britain. He was a very keen artist and his greatest ambition was to practise art in Italy.

At the time, the Italian government offered generous scholarships to Maltese students who wished to study in Italy. Carmelo sat for the examination twice before finally being accepted to continue studying art in Rome with all the expenses paid for by the Italian government.



In 1937, Borg Pisani was accepted as a student at the Accademia delle Belle Arti in Rome. Carmelo's wish was becoming true - not only would he study art but also he would live in the country he loved above all else!



Since 1922, Italy had been ruled by the fascist dictator - Benito Mussolini - who abolished parliament and stamped out democracy. Carmelo had a deep set admiration for Mussolini. He was an ardent admirer of the Italian dictator.



In Rome, Carmelo was very happy. He belonged to a group of Maltese students who lived and studied in the Italian capital city. They toured museums, ate good Italian food and of course, worked hard at their studies.

Michelangelo, Leonardo, Caravaggio ... Italian art is simply the best. The glory of the Roman Empire will return under Mussolini.



Italian food is the best in the world!

And don't forget the music!



Carmelo and his friends loved all things Italian. Nearly all of them belonged to a club which promoted Malta's Italian identity. Some of them like Carmelo wanted their island to pass on to Italian rule. On the 1st of September 1939, bad news reached the students. Germany had invaded Poland. Two days later Britain and France declared war on Germany. The Second World War had started. Some of the students returned back to Malta but Carmelo stayed in Rome!

At first, Italy remained neutral and did not enter the fighting. However by the end of May 1940, it became clear that Mussolini did not want to be left behind by the Germans who were his friends and allies. On the 10th of June 1940, Mussolini declared war on Britain and France.

THE DECLARATION OF WAR HAS ALREADY BEEN HANDED IN TO THE AMBASSADORS OF FRANCE AND GREAT BRITAIN! OUR AIM IS VICTORY ... AND WE SHALL WIN!



The Maltese community in Rome was in a quandary - would they return to Malta before it was too late or would they stay in Rome? Carmelo Borg Pisani decided to stay put. Later he said that he did not have the money to get back to Malta, but now it is generally accepted that he did not want to leave. He wanted to fight for Italy and perhaps see his wish fulfilled - to see Malta passing under Italian rule.

I do not want to be a British subject any more. Here is my passport! As from today, I am Italian!



I thank the Ambassador for his kindness, but now I am Italian, I do not need the protection of the USA!



In 1940, Carmelo volunteered for the Italian Army, but he failed his medical examination as his eyesight was very poor. In the meantime, he was called in by the American Embassy. At that point in time, the USA was not in the war yet and the US Ambassador in Rome took up responsibility to safeguard the British subjects in Italy. Carmelo refused the American Ambassador's help and he even handed in his British passport, to which he was entitled as a British subject born in Malta. Carmelo tried to join the Italian Army again in 1941 and this time round, he was accepted. He joined the Reggimento San Marco, Reparto Artisti. Carmelo took part in the Italian occupation of Greece and then he was posted to Sicily.

I am honoured to be part of the Italian army!



Our job as part of the Reparto Artisti is to prepare maps for the army.



Back in Italy, Carmelo became very worried about the situation in Malta. The Italians and their German allies were pounding the island with daily air-raids. His hometown of Senglea had been very hard hit



In October 1941 Carmelo Borg Pisani offered himself as a volunteer for a mission in Malta. We do not know his motives. He knew it was dangerous. Later on he said that he was worried about his relatives and this seemed to be the only way to return to Malta. Some others said that he had had a bad break-up with a girlfriend and he wanted to do something drastic. Most probably his zeal and his wish to see Malta becoming part of Italy played a part too. He asked advice from Carlo Mallia, the leader of the Maltese community in Rome, who tried to dissuade him from going on such a dangerous mission, but Carmelo was determined.



Carmelo, don't go my son, it's too dangerous!



I know the risks involved and I am prepared for the ultimate sacrifice.

Borg Pisani was dropped off at night by an Italian fast boat beneath the cliffs at Ras id-Dawwara on the west coast of Malta on the 17th of May 1942.



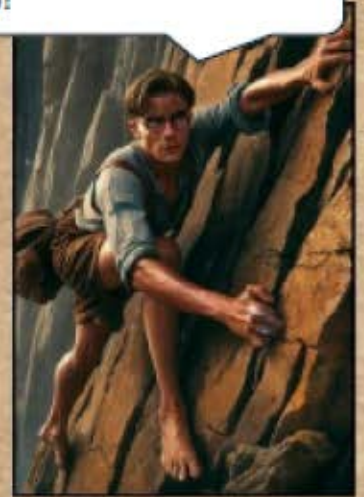
Carmelo had to get information about the situation in Malta, especially about a 'ghost ship' which the Italians thought was bringing in supplies to Malta.

Borg Pisani soon found out that he had been dropped at an impossible spot. He carried a lot of equipment with him - including clothing, food, weapons a radio transmitter, batteries and money. It was impossible for him to climb up the cliff face. He threw away the equipment in the sea and tried to scale the cliffs - something which he was not fit to do. Finally he gave up and after finding refuge on a rock, he started calling out desperately for help.

This is useless!

I will never get out of here in one piece!

Dammit...I must call out for help!



Who goes there?!
Identify yourself!



Luckily for Carmelo, someone heard him calling out and the soldiers in a nearby lookout post were alerted. A rescue launch was called and made its way to the cliffs at Ras id-Dawwara. Borg Pisani was picked by the rescue boat. At first it was thought that he was a pilot who had bailed out from an aeroplane but soon they found out that he was Maltese. He informed the crew that he had arrived by boat from Italy and that he had been on those rocks for 3 days!

On arriving on land, an ambulance was called for and Carmelo was taken to the military hospital at Mtarfa.

Who is the
doctor on duty?

It's Captain Warrington
tonight.



As fate would have it, the first doctor to see Carmelo at Mtarfa was Tommy Warrington - a Maltese doctor in the British army who was born in the same street as Borg Pisani in Senglea. As children they had known each other well.

Aren't you Carmelo? Don't you recognize me? It's Tommy Warrington. Aren't you supposed to be in Rome?



...and you came by boat from Sicily right? How long had you remained stranded on the rocks?

I was there for three days.



Dr Warrington recognised Carmelo and remembered that he was supposed to be in Italy! The patient was famished, so the doctor ordered sandwiches, tea and brandy for him and in the meantime alerted the authorities. Officers from the Intelligence or Spies' Department of the British Army were sent in to investigate. After his recovery, Borg Pisani was taken to a 'safe house' in Sliema - where he was guarded night and day. Officers from the army and the police interrogated him many times.

What was your mission about? If you help us, we can help you!

I had a radio transmitter, 200 pounds in cash a pistol and food. I threw everything in the sea. The Italians have no contacts in Malta - that's why they sent me!

What did you get with you?

Who are your contacts in Malta?



Professor Mallia is in Rome - he had nothing to do with this!

What about Carlo Mallia?



When no more information could be obtained from Borg Pisani, he was transferred to prison in Kordin. His trial started on the 12th of November 1942. The charges against him were very serious.

Carmelo Borg Pisani, you are charged with high treason. You have taken up arms against His Majesty's Government and its Allies!

You are also charged with the act of spying or attempting to spy for a power with whom His Majesty's Government is at war!

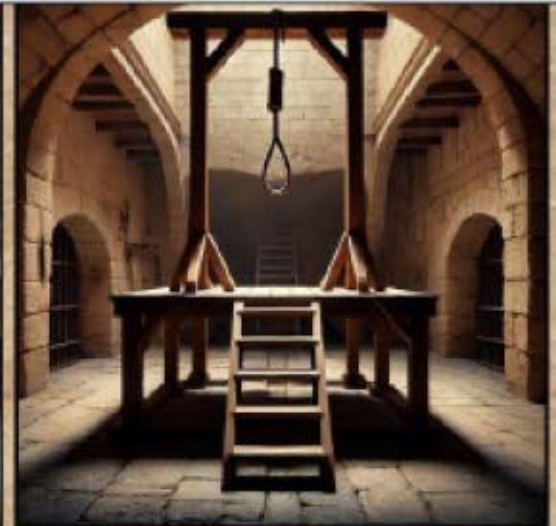


Carmelo Borg Pisani, you have been found guilty of conspiracy, espionage and high treason. You are sentenced to death by hanging!

Due to the emergency situation during wartime, the jury system was suspended and it was the judges who decided whether the accused was guilty or not. Carmelo Borg Pisani was found guilty and condemned to death by hanging.



I have tried to do what is best for my country! I trust my soul to God, whom I love with all my heart!



In the days before his execution, Carmelo behaved courageously and the priests who assisted him were impressed with his calm and resignation. He was hanged in prison on the 28th of November 1942. Carmelo was buried in the prison's cemetery. To this day, his life and deeds are the subject of debate and controversy....What is your opinion? Was he a hero or a traitor?



Thank you!

If you have any questions or would like to submit your own article, feel free to reach out to us via the email below.

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