



Heritage Malta

ANNUAL REPORT 2023



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Foreword

2023 was Heritage Malta's first full year of freedom from the brunt of pandemic restrictions since Covid-19 reared its ugly head in 2020. The tremendous turn for the better experienced in the second half of 2022, once restrictions were lifted, was sustained throughout 2023, as witnessed by extremely encouraging visitor numbers that reached and indeed surpassed pre-pandemic levels, an impressive array of events and projects, and exceptional achievements on all fronts. 2023 was truly a year of renaissance for Heritage Malta!

This sense of rebirth and renewed zest for life was quite befitting, as 2023 marked the 20th anniversary since Heritage Malta's inception. Fully aware that it would not have gone from strength to strength without the support of its two main pillars – namely its workforce and the public – the agency celebrated this milestone with two open days for the public's enjoyment and with the formal recognition of current and retired employees' contributions to its success. Usually hosting exhibitions by local and foreign artists at its museums and sites, this time Heritage Malta organised an exhibition of artistic works by its own employees, in celebration of their extraordinary talents as one of the events commemorating its anniversary.

The agency's main focus during 2023 was undoubtedly the Grand Master's Palace restoration project – the largest ever implemented by Heritage Malta – which by the end of the year was nearing completion and awaiting inauguration in January 2024. In parallel, restoration works at the Malta Maritime Museum continued unabated, with the museum's partial reopening set for February 2024.

Preparations were also in full swing for the first ever Malta Art Biennale to be held in 2024. By the end of the year under review, it was quite evident that the Biennale had developed into an outstanding international event, attracting more than 2500 applications from all over the world, including some of the most renowned contemporary artists. Another major initiative was the launch of the world's first deepwater archaeological park off Xlendi, enhancing Gozo's cultural heritage as well as its tourism product.

In 2023, Heritage Malta's responsibilities increased with the inclusion of Villa Portelli in its portfolio, following the Government's announcement that it had entrusted this historical gem in Kalkara to the agency. This sense of trust was echoed throughout the year by members of the public who generously donated some of their most treasured possessions to our national collections, safe in the knowledge that these artefacts will be well looked after by Heritage Malta.

This was also a special year for the National Museum of Natural History, which celebrated the 50th anniversary since it opened its doors at Palazzo Vilhena in Mdina. The announcement that the museum would benefit from a considerable financial investment in 2024 was just one example of the improvement works that are in progress practically in all our museums and sites, including preparations for the Villa Guardamangia project.

The output of Heritage Malta's publishing arm grew by leaps and bounds during the year in question, with remarkable increases in both book sales and local market share.

Our international profile continued to be consolidated through several exhibitions held abroad, most notably an exhibition of artworks by Mattia Preti loaned from our national collection to be displayed at the Presidential Palace in Warsaw, and the loan of the Cippus to Louvre Abu Dhabi, which has paved the way for further collaboration with our counterparts in the Middle East. The agency also signed a number of memoranda of understanding with foreign institutions to further strengthen its position in the international cultural heritage scene.

Internally, much effort has been put into further progress in our restructuring process, investment in human resources through training and other support to employees, as well as further investment in technology. Our Collections Management System, off to a great start at the Malta Maritime Museum, is now extending to other museums and sites, ensuring the safe digital storage of artefacts for present and future generations.

We have achieved so much in just twelve months! As new opportunities arise and the lessons of resilience in our recent past guide us forward with more determination and optimism than ever, a bright and promising future beckons.

Sustained by last year's promising result, by the product and the experience we offer, as well as by tourism forecasts, Heritage Malta looks forward optimistically to another fruitful year.



Noel Zammit
Chief Executive Officer



CAPITAL WORKS

Cottonera Region

Routine maintenance and conservation works were carried out at the **Inquisitor's Palace** in the lower courses of the Castellania courtyard, including the necessary works for the setup of a satellite kitchen and staff room at ground floor level and the opening of the bottigliera to the general public. The project entailed removing modern flagstones and routing power cables from the main distribution board to the kitchenette and sectioning this space into a back of house area and an area leading to the bottigliera (wine cellar) made accessible through the Castellania courtyard. Flagstone in the latter was completely removed to gain headroom and establish floor levels to the historic use of the space. The underground spaces consisting of a stairway hewn into rock and interconnected wells, which were in turn cleared of volumes of debris in the 1990s, were cleaned and repointed as necessary. Lights were introduced via surface line pipework.

During the past year, further studies and designs were developed in order to see how the accessibility within the palace can improve. The plans which were prepared have also been discussed with the Superintendence for Cultural Heritage. The planning application will be submitted in 2024. Another planning application will also be submitted for the restoration and conservation of the main façade and the side façade and another aimed at improving the accessibility within the palace. A tender for the restoration of the interiors of the palace was also drafted and will be issued next year. The second phase of the Cancelleria was completed and installed, while for phase three, carpentry works are completed, and the painting process has commenced. The main sculpture is also in an advanced stage of completion. The stripping and repainting of the prison complex doors continued, with a present surprise of a painted 'Cellar' inscription on the probable 19th century door leading to the public cells corridor.

Attention was also given towards the upkeep of the **Birgu Armoury**, namely cleaning and first aid interventions to the waterproofing of the roof and repairs to the rainwater downpipes to limit water ingress and render them safe. General cleans were also carried out in view of various filming requests. An architectural survey was commissioned, and a plan of some remedial works has been drafted in view of the Malta Biennale of 2024.

Besides the standard roster of regular maintenance, works at **Fort St Angelo** comprised the repointing of all internal blocks and the outer walls of the ramp outside the main gate, the repainting of the main gate, and the installation of electrical modules in preparation for a new intelligent lighting system around the fort. The crypt at Upper Fort St Angelo was also lidar scanned. In November, Infrastructure Malta started a project to restore and rebuild the bridge which connects Fort St Angelo to the Birgu waterfront. This project has limited vehicular access to the fort and is envisaged to be completed in May 2024.

Now that a decision has been taken that **Heritage Malta's Head Office** will continue to function from part of the Bighi ex-Royal Naval Hospital, a working group has been established to plan the necessary upgrading of the current facilities to the increased operational needs of the agency. Planning permits have already been acquired for the restoration of the conservation labs block and the smoking shed, with a tender already issued for the latter and works expected to start early next year. In the meantime,

our Mastri are carrying ad hoc emergency maintenance works to the elevations of the main buildings. The regular maintenance and repairs on the electrical distribution system for both buildings is still ongoing, while several charging points for all electrical vehicles have been installed.

During the Helios storm in February, part of the surrounding retaining wall around Bighi complex overlying a cavernous rockface that had collapsed into Rinella Bay likewise collapsed. Immediate discussions were held with Infrastructure Malta to plan the necessary marine works needed to replace the collapsed cavernous rockface and provide an alternative foundation quay to eventually support the reconstructed wall. Following agreement on the nature and extents of the civil engineering works required, Infrastructure Malta engaged a contractor to start these works, and this is planned for early 2024.

HM has been entrusted with the care of **Villa Portelli** and its gardens at Kalkara. During summer technical staff have cleared the villa from all modern accretions, ensured that the main roof is waterproof, and repaired several apertures. A working group has been set up to plan the works needed to get the property into use. In the meantime, a memorandum of understanding has been signed with Project Green aimed at restoring the gardens of the villa and opening them as a green open space for the community. Emergency waterproofing, remedial propping and stone replacement and/or reconstruction of partially collapsed areas has started. These are mainly focusing on the perimeter walls, parts of which have collapsed, while others are in a structurally dangerous condition with signs of imminent collapse. A CCTV system has also been installed together with security lighting.

At the **Malta Maritime Museum**, the main civil works of Phase 1 were completed in October last year, and in 2023 only snagging works outstanding from the CT3029/20 contract remained. The second part of the Phase 1 contract awarded to the same original contractor saw the completion of the restoration works in the areas adjacent to the arsenale and the roofing works and reconstruction of the elevation over the same section. The internal flagstone floors were patched, replaced and/or redone completely and the areas that will house the temporary exhibition are in their final stages. Phase 2 of the project has entered its preliminary design completion. The masterplan for the building and integration of the remaining spaces that need to be refurbished were presented and analysed in detail, including the design for sustainability and passive systems for environmental control. Last year's reconstructed doorways above the courtyard were adorned with apertures, the largest in the museum. The ongoing apertures project with a third party has lagged behind, however it is being tackled with the assistance of museum staff. Major cleaning is still going on from all areas of the museum.

Preparation works for the upcoming exhibition have been ongoing. This will include a 'taster' of the larger, long-term, vision for the museum. These include the design of the exhibition, the fabrication of structures and furniture, the selection of artefacts in order to create an experience and a storyline for the visitor, and an immersive experience. The exhibition launch is planned for February 2024.

Valletta Region

Works at the **Grand Master's Palace** proceeded at a fast pace. The works, apart from the ERDF funded areas, were focused in the State Rooms, especially the winter apartments and upper levels, which shall eventually be used as the offices of the President. Furthermore, the stables (former Armoury) were restored, and works commenced on the 'turreta' and Pinto's clock tower. The works in the former included the demolition of accretions, the replacement of the roof slabs, unblocking of apertures and the restoration of the external fabric. Works are expected to be completed in the first half of 2024. Works on the clock tower included the demolition of the room at roof level (accretion), restoration of the external and internal masonry fabric, including major structural works, the clockfaces and the bronze figures. The works on the clock mechanism and the figures are at an advanced stage.

The restoration of the state rooms, formerly the summer apartment, are now complete except for the chapel. Works in the chapel have been delayed due to the discovery of the historic decorative layers of the soffit which were uncovered during the testing/documentation phase. Hundreds of mahogany and steel armour mounts, an altar for the chapel and other new apertures and wooden cornices for several halls and corridors, including round frames (lunetti) for the Uccelliera, were manufactured. The original revolving door of the armoury was repaired and re-varnished, and much electrical work was done on several chandeliers.

A number of deep cleans were carried out at the **Church of Our Lady of Pilar** in preparation for rental events. Following conservation work, the two church bells were reinstalled on 11 January. The restoration works tender for the **Main Guard** has been finalised and will be issued next year. This process also necessitated a design proposal for the future of the site.

Fort St Elmo's permanent maintenance team conducted several routine and scheduled maintenance works. Other works included the continuation of the restoration of parade ground arches, exposing original historical fabric, the commencement of restoration of the gardjola above the parking, repairs on the upper parts of bridge leading to the main gate, repainting of the main gate, St Anne church main door and various doors and apertures, the manufacture of new doors at prison cells, and the installation of new lights on the cavalier platform.



Urgent maintenance works had to be carried out at **Villa Guardamangia** following a partial collapse of a small section of the wall along one side of its garden during the Helios storm. These works lead to the urgent reconstruction of the collapsed section and the consolidation of this side of the wall to prevent further damage and possible damage to third parties. The drafting of the tender specifications and bills of quantities for the restoration works have been completed, aiming at publication in the second quarter of 2024. In December the application for the ERDF funding was published and is being compiled to be submitted by March 2024.

Further progress was registered at **Villa Frere**. During 2023 restoration works focused on Villa Hay (external and internal repointing, internal repainting, aperture repairs, replication and repurposing) and a substantial section of the lower gardens' wall (reconstruction of buttress structure and finishing) were continued till almost completion, while there was further progress on the Gardener's Cottage (reconstruction of spiral staircase, roof balustrades and colonnade together with finishing). Sundry interventions such as the repairs to stormwater channels, deffun and flagstone paving and general maintenance around the gardens were also carried out.

South Region

Work at **Għar Dalam Park** continued, mainly on the restoration and renaturing of Wied Dalam. Project Green assistance led to the further clearance of invasive and alien plants and trees from Wied Dalam and part restoration of the rubble wall along an old country path linking Wied Żembaq to Ta' Kaċċatura. Further restoration works on rubble walls within the park were completed. New wooden planks were installed to stabilise the existing walkway inside the cave. This is a temporary measure until a new walkway is installed. Additional lighting was also installed inside the cave (outer regions) to illuminate darkened areas of the cave.

Works on the reconstruction of the walkway between **Hagħar Qim and Mnajdra** were underway during the past year, however these had to be stopped since the quality of work was not to the expected level on such an important site. A process has started to continue these works through a different contractor. The new security huts for both sites have been installed through another contract of works. Stretches of rubble walls in the archaeological park were also restored and funded through the CORALLO Project. A design has been prepared for the re-organization and landscaping of the visitor car park, to be followed with a planning application. The visitor centre will undergo a series of radical interventions to the elevations and a complete reconstruction of the roof deck and waterproofing; these are expected to happen by mid-year 2024.

Plans for better management of the parking area were drawn up. These will ensure the safety of visitors, by introducing pedestrian access zones, better traffic management and landscaping. Plans will also allow for the closure of the parking area during the night, following concerns that were raised with regards to the use of the area during the night. A PA application for the works in the parking area will be submitted in 2024. In the meantime, parking lines were repainted and a pedestrian crossing was relocated to a safer crossing area. Double yellow lines were introduced in areas where the parking of cars presented safety concerns. Efforts to reduce the spillage of light across the park through security lighting within the park resumed this year, with the fitting of barndoors to security

lights around the perimeter of the visitor centre. This diminishes light pollution in one of the areas in the Maltese islands where the night sky can still be observed. Nighttime darkness is also important for the safe return of shearwaters to their nests. New CCTV cameras were installed around the perimeter of the visitor centre, providing full coverage of the parking area at all times. Temporary repair works to the roof of the visitor centre were carried out, with full-scale works for the replacement of the roof being planned for 2024. Directional and informational signage throughout the park was introduced and/or replaced, while discussions with the Qrendi and Żurrieq Local Councils were held to introduce signage promoting the park at the Wied Iż-Żurrieq parking area.

Maintenance, repair and the installation of additional units as part of the CCTV security system at the **Hal Saflieni Hypogeum** were also carried out to ensure better security of the site. In addition, public WiFi was also installed in the visitor area of the site to provide visitors with internet access. This will particularly be useful since visitors often need to access their pre-purchased tickets online. Further preparations were made for the installation of a firefighting system, an automated notification system as well as a back-up HVAC system for the site. These various systems have been integrated into one using the latest technology whereby the system that controls the conditions at the site will also; (1) send notifications should certain parameters that are not conducive for the preservation of the site be detected, (2) switch to a fire-fighting mode should certain risk parameters be detected, (3) switch to a back-up system should the primary HVAC system develop a fault. The pedestrianisation of Triq iċ-Ċimiterju, in front of the site has been completed. The works included the paving with local hardstone, creating an ambient which is more befit to a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The final phases of the project involved the installation of street furniture, benches, and planters, including their landscaping. An HVAC system was installed during the EEA project in 2017 to control both the temperature and humidity levels inside the Hal Saflieni Hypogeum. In 2023 it was decided to install an additional chiller to serve as a backup to the existing system. Its design has been completed, procured, and will be installed in the first weeks of 2024.

Works on the construction of a boundary wall along the northern extent of the **Tarxien Prehistoric Complex** commenced with part of the boundary wall that had to emulate the construction of an old boundary wall being completed. The rest of the boundary wall is envisaged to be completed in 2024. Maintenance on the visitor walkway around the site, particularly in areas exposed to the elements, took place throughout the year. However, considering the amount of repairs necessary the surface of the walkway needs to be changed to a stronger material. These changes will be implemented in 2024. The annual maintenance on the protective shelter was carried out in October and concerns were highlighted in a report submitted by the contractor responsible for this maintenance in November. The concerns described in the submitted report will be addressed and discussed in 2024. Discussions and preparations were made for the installation of a new CCTV surveillance system at the site to be installed in 2024.

In parallel to these works, preparations were made for the landscaping of the large field enclosed by the new boundary wall, immediately to the north of the known archaeological remains. In this regard HM signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Alfred Mizzi Foundation who will be providing funds for the supply of all plant species to be planted there, the necessary irrigation system and any ancillary facilities for the area. Curatorial input for this project was provided in the form of

research into the archaeological remains found in the area, identification of plant species growing on the Maltese islands in the prehistoric period as identified in various archaeological fieldwork across the Maltese Islands. As part of this project, all preparations were completed for the installation of water tanks to collect part of the rainwater runoff from the protective shelter of the site to be used for the irrigation of the area. As part of the same Memorandum of Understanding, a smaller area along the entrance to the site has been turned into a Ġnien Dinja Wahda with the help of BirdLife Malta. The aims of this space are to host various school groups providing input to educational activities related to an understanding of nature and environmental protection.

Basic infrastructural works were carried out at **Kordin III Megalithic Site** which included the installation of an electrical supply and security lighting around the perimeter wall of the site. The lighting is intended to provide added security for the site. Plans have also been made for the installation of a CCTV surveillance system to be installed in 2024. Assistance was given to a police investigation into a theft that was made from the neighboring Capuchin Friary.

Regular maintenance was carried out on site at **Fort Delimara**, including cleaning of water gutters and access passages around blocks in parade ground, and the completion of the cleaning of extensive parts of ditch by Parks Malta. Internet was introduced on site, which was also lidar scanned. The restoration of the main gate by the Public Works Department is projected for next year. Wood panels were manufactured for external gatehouse apertures, and metal covers for open hatches. The south-facing external door of the gatehouse was repaired, and more fencing was installed to close off dangerous areas. Measures were taken to replace the security system around the fort, while preparations are underway for the installation of a new CCTV system. The casemates tunnel was thoroughly cleaned by Farsons Group, while the barracks and communication passage were cleaned by other voluntary groups, who also removed farm ramps which re-exposed the original stairs in the latter passage. The remaining accretions pertaining to the time when the fort was used as a farm will be completely removed in the coming year.



Tonnes of inert waste were removed from the ditch and communication passage.

North Region

The necessary planning permit for the project at **San Pawl Milqi** has been issued. This was developed in consultation with the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage and aimed at implementing the first phases of the management plan, focusing on the provision of an access for all to the chapel and sacristy and the reinstatement of the parvis. The design also includes the replacement of the existing rooms previously built by the 'Missione'. An application was submitted to ARMS for the removal of electricity cables currently attached to the external wall on the chapel's rear.

New toilet facilities were installed at the ground floor of the **National Museum of Natural History** as a result of the MED9 summit held in Malta on 29 September. Several doors overlooking the upper courtyard, and three windows overlooking the entrance to the Mdina Dungeons, were stripped and repainted. The display areas, including the activity hall on the ground floor, were whitewashed and new lighting fittings installed. In May HM conservators cleaned and treated GM Antonio Manuel de Vilhena's bust on top of the main door and re-attached St Paul's hand on the statue located in the secondary stairway. Two site visits were carried out to examine the structure stability of the collapsing south wing side of the palace, particularly the possible detachment of the two large round boulders, and the upper corners of the police station. Both areas were cordoned off as a safety measure.



Restoration of GM de Vilhena's bust

The environmental management of the Bidnija Olive Grove continued throughout the year. The contract for the restoration and reconstruction of the rubble walls has been awarded following a call for tender issued by Ambjent Malta. Works will be starting in 2024.

Gozo Region

In March, a location at the edge of the olive grove in the **Ġgantija Archaeological Park** was earmarked for the realisation of a children's excavation pit. This will provide a fun, educational and hands-on experience for young audiences in the outdoor areas at Ġgantija. The area is shaded by mature carob and olive trees and enjoys wonderful views of the Neolithic monument and the surrounding landscape. Drawings and artistic renders of the project were drawn up and a number of artefacts to be replicated in resin for mock excavation were identified. The sandpit is currently awaiting manufacture and installation.

The exit point at Ġgantija was chosen as one of the locations in Gozo for the installation of an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) as part of a joint project between the Ministry for Gozo and the Malta Cadets Corps. Internal preparatory works included the manufacture of a concrete platform and provision of an electrical supply, which were finished in May. The AED machine was installed the following month. Discussions between HM and MGOZ are underway to provide staff training for general First Aid and the use of AED machines.

In May, a discussion was held regarding the consolidation of the fibreglass walkway inside the Neolithic monument. It was agreed to order all the material necessary to carry out repairs to the wooden slats and to the handrail in certain areas. The slats were delivered onsite in September. Manual work is being carried out in-house. The Gozo maintenance team also addressed the boundary wall of the North Cave at Ġgantija that was showing signs of possible collapse. In June the wall was increased in height to ensure visitor safety and to protect the cave itself.

Twenty new showcases were delivered and installed by Fibula Museum Showcase from Istanbul, Turkey in June. All artefacts belonging to the Ġgantija permanent display were placed in the new showcases and the Interpretation Centre was reopened to visitors immediately upon completion.

At **Ta' Kola Windmill**, the drainage system was rerouted following consultation with and provision of permits from Transport Malta and the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage. This marked the completion of the first phase of the refurbishment of the restrooms in this heritage site. Works will resume in 2024.

A number of heavily-eroded stones forming part of the lower courses on the façade of the **Old Prison** were replaced during February and March. The exercise was carried out in-house. The wooden stocks outside the Old Prison were repaired in May. A repeater was installed in the same premises in October to facilitate wireless telephony reception. At the **Gozo Museum of Archaeology**, the walls of the main stairwell were repainted between September and October.

Following the partial collapse of the garden boundary wall at the **Gran Castello Historic House** during the heavy storm of 10 February, the damages were assessed and the reconstruction of the wall using the same rubble was undertaken soon after. Several onsite meetings were held to discuss the way forward for a CCTV system, due to the fact that the current one has long been un-operational. The layout of the new network was established in order to minimise interventions on the architectural fabric as much as possible.

National Monuments

With the final designs now detailed and completed on the **Great Siege Bell**, the last step is to publish the negotiated bid and award the tender. The specialist service provider is to execute a structural reinforcing and restoration intervention based on a specialised 'design and build intervention' that has been determined, designed and co-ordinated with HM. Given the very exposed nature of the site, the expected interventions are anticipated to last till end 2024.

The official launch of competition for a monument to **Dr Karmenu Mifsud Bonnici**, in collaboration with the Ministry of National Heritage and under the auspices of the office of the Prime Minister, took place on 19 June at Palazzo de la Salle. The submitted proposals were not of the desired level, and discussions are in process to commission the monument separately.

The bronze bust of former HM Chairman **Mario Tabone** by Joseph Scerri in consultation with Dr Tabone's family, was unveiled at a ceremony attended by family members, friends, colleagues, and various agency staff at HM's head office at Bighi on 29 November.

Dr Tabone was one of the founders of the agency and served as its Chairman practically from the beginning in 2003 till 2008. During his tenure, HM established itself as the guardian of our country's heritage and laid the foundations for years to come



The figurative bronze monument in honour of **Prof Oliver Friggieri** was inaugurated by the Prime Minister on 11 December at Floriana. The monument – located opposite the one honouring national poet Dun Karm Psaila – was designed by Gozitan artist John Grima and consists of a full-size representation of Friggieri on an imposing pedestal, reflecting his colossal stature in the Maltese academic fora and beyond. The monument also features etchings of one of Friggieri's most popular poems, entitled 'Jekk'. Friggieri's monumental contribution to the literary world, his indelible mark on our nation's psyche, and his deep humanity were all highlighted during the inauguration ceremony, in touching contributions by family and friends, speeches by honoured guests, and artistic slots by actor Mario Micallef and musician Vince Fabri. Besides the monument itself, works included the construction of the foundation platform for the monument, landscaping works and architectural lighting.



EU CO-FUNDED PROJECTS

The **ERDF 05.016 – The Grand Master’s Palace Regeneration Project**, is now in its final stages with inauguration set for January 2024. The restoration works in the Palazzo Del Monte, Prince Alfred Courtyard, Orangerie, Armoury, Piano Nobile Corridors and Uccelliera are now complete. The site has been open informally to visitors as from 18 December. In 2024, it is expected to complete the snagging phase and finalise the works on the Nymphaeum and access for all in the Orangerie courtyard.

The Digitisation Unit is directly involved as a partner in two Horizon Europe projects, **ENIGMA** and **STECCI**. Each project focuses on the role of digitisation techniques in preserving tangible cultural heritage and providing means for researchers, creative artists, and the public to engage with this heritage.

<https://steccihorizoneu.com>, led by University of Sarajevo, focuses on preservation of limestone monuments across Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Croatia using 3D digital technologies. Sustainability and climate change scenarios are the focus of this project. The Digitisation Unit is providing expertise in various 3D capture techniques that enable scientific analyses of limestone decay, with a major goal being to develop 3D visualisations, virtual 3D and 360 tours of the sites, and educational games that communicate the shared impact of the climate crisis on our stone heritage monuments. The project runs until 2027.

<https://eu-enigma.eu>, led by AUTH University, Greece, is developing the expertise and digital tools needed for identifying, monitoring and safeguarding cultural heritage goods and endangered heritage sites from illegal trading. Involving twelve partners from seven countries, Enigma is creating pan-European solutions for protecting cultural heritage through digital technologies, with HM's role being largely centred on the role a comprehensive CMS plays in enabling this. The project runs until 2026.

CORALLO +SÌ funds under the Interreg-Italia Malta Programme (2014-20) were officially approved in December 2022. The project was entitled ‘Capitalization project for Smaller Islands, Natural Parks and Marine Protected Areas’, with the main aim being the creation of greater awareness among the end users of Natura 2000 sites about the existing biodiversity resources. In the case of Gozo, the main objective was to create more awareness about the 13 terrestrial Natura 2000 sites on the island, including Comino, aimed at diverse audiences. The project was led by Consorzio Plemmirio of Syracuse, Sicily, and involved other Sicilian partners and the University of Malta, the Environment and Resources Authority and the Ghajnsielem Local Council.

One of the first deliverables of the project was the creation of a fully-illustrated educational activity book aimed at schoolchildren (7 to 11 years), to be distributed in all Gozitan primary schools in 2024. One of the main features of the activity book is a map of Gozo and Comino indicating all the 13 Natura 2000 sites and why they are important. The map can be pulled out to function separately from the book. An A3 colouring sheet featuring local flora and fauna was produced simultaneously, to be

able to reach younger children. High quality pencil cases and tote bags in organic/recycled cotton, featuring the same map of Gozo and Comino with the highlighted Natura 2000 sites, were also printed for free distribution. Other important deliverables included the production of two audio-visual documentaries to form part of the permanent display at the Gozo Nature Museum in the Ċittadella. One audio-visual encompasses the islands of Gozo and Comino, highlighting important Natura 2000 sites and specific flora and fauna supported by these habitats. The second video focusses on the Ċittadella, a Natura 2000 site in its own right. Two LED monitors, 65" and 50" respectively, were procured through the same funds, for the presentation of these audio-visuals. An interactive kiosk will be placed in the same museum and will contain interactive content about the same topic.

The first steering committee meeting for the project was held in Ortigia, Syracuse on 10-11 July. The Senior Curator presented the overarching objectives and gave an update of the project implementation. The second steering committee meeting was held in Ustica, Sicily on 16 September. HM representatives joined remotely. The entire CORALLO +SĠ Project involved detailed research about Natura 2000 sites and the ecosystems they support, assisted by the Senior Curator of Natural History throughout. A closing event funded through the same project was organised in the Ċittadella on 27 October. This involved a presentation of the main aims and deliverables of the project, the official launch of the children's activity book, as well as a walkabout on the bastions of the Ċittadella that focused on protected flora and fauna found in this location, particularly bats.

The same project also saw the installation of various interpretation and educational media and tools at Haġar Qim and Mnajdra Archaeological Park, Ġhar Dalam Cave and Museum, and the National Museum of Natural History. These interpretation facilities included various information panels, an interactive robot, an interactive totem, touch screens and tables, virtual reality tools, as well as binoculars. The project also included the restoration of rubble walls in the Haġar Qim and Mnajdra Archaeological Park improving the stability, aesthetics, and natural habitats around the park. In addition, a mobile exhibition on the nature and importance of Maltese coasts promoting their environmental and cultural protection was manufactured by HM as part of this project. It is aimed that this mobile exhibition will be used at various venues including different localities, HM sites and schools. This year, HM's participation in this project included participation in the 1st BlueMissionMed Stakeholder Forum held under the patronage of the European Commission in Palermo in June.



CORALLO-SĠ educational material at the Ċittadella, Gozo

Green initiatives

HM has the environment at heart. It is not only as an essential element of our heritage, but its protection is also paramount to improve people's wellbeing. With this in mind, during the past year HM took several green initiatives.

After getting four leased electric vans and an electric car in 2022, in the past year we have replaced the ICE leased vehicles with nine new electric vehicles. Moreover, the two leased diesel trucks were also replaced with another two modern diesel trucks which are less polluting. We have also continued with the replacement of old lighting bulbs and fittings to LED ones in order to reduce energy consumption. The same happened to old air-conditioning units, which were replaced with modern ones. Improvements have also been made to waste management in our sites, with waste separation bins introduced at Fort St Elmo. In the meantime, the waste collection and separation data kept being recorded for every HM operational site. This data, besides being forwarded to Wasteserv Malta monthly, also assists management to plan any improvements required in our operations with a view of targeting waste reduction.

HM also took a proactive to increase greenery in various sites through the planting of shrubs and trees. At the Tarxien Prehistoric Site, a new garden – **Ġnien Dinja Wahda**, designed by Birdlife Malta, was set-up with the generous support of the Alfred Mizzi Foundation. This garden includes a pond and the planting of many indigenous plants and shrubs, all aimed at attracting local fauna to the area. In the meantime, a design has been prepared for the landscaping of the field on the same site, with planting of trees and shrubs planned for 2024. This initiative is also being sponsored by the Alfred Mizzi Foundation. A tender has also been issued for the rehabilitation of the semi-circular open space in Triq it-Tempji Neolitici, along the perimeter wall of the site and close to the current entrance to the visitor centre. Works, which will be partly funded by the Ministry for Tourism, are planned to commence in the first quarter of 2024.

Several trees and shrubs were planted at Għar Dalam Park to improve the natural habitat and prevent soil erosion. Most of these were grown from seedlings in HM's own nursery at Għar Dalam. Other trees and shrubs, also grown at the same nursery, were planted at Haġar Qim. The newly installed security huts at Haġar Qim and Mnajdra, besides being built with appropriate insulation materials, will also be furnished with a small roof-garden planted with indigenous plants found in the surrounding garigue habitat.

To commemorate World Environment Day, celebrated on 5 June, the HM Green Committee and the HM Activities Committee joined forces and decorated the two verandas of the main block of the Agency's Head Office with sixteen large pots planted with indigenous plants and shrubs. These have not only introduced greenery in our working environment but are also serving as a new natural habitat to insects such as the swallow tail butterfly and its caterpillar. Moreover, in order to improve the maintenance of green spaces, gardening staff have attended the Tree Care Specialists course organised by MCAST and successfully obtained the relative certification.

Plants, shrubs and trees planted in 2023

Heritage Malta Site	Amount
Għar Dalam Park	530*
Ġnien Dinja Waħda – Tarxien	125
Haġar Qim	85
HM Head Office	88
TOTAL	795

* 200 of these have been donated and planted by ERA in the terraced fields overlooking Wied Dalam

Traditional rubble walls provide important habitats to local fauna. The restoration of rubble walls in traditional rubble construction helps the renaturing of the areas in which they are. HM has embarked on a number of initiatives in different sites aimed at restoring rubble walls, and in 2024 similar works will be carried out at Bidnija Olive Grove with the assistance of Ambjent Malta.

Restored rubble walls

Location	Length (m)	Assisted by
Haġar Qim – Mnajdra Park	400	Funded through CORALLO
Haġar Qim – Mnajdra Park	20	HM Mastri
Wied Dalam – Għar Dalam Park	70	HM Mastri
Ta’ Kaċċatura – country path	85	Project Green
Ta’ Kaċċatura – country path	50	MCAST
TOTAL	625	



CONSERVATION

ORGANICS DEPARTMENT

Paintings, Polychrome Sculpture and Wood

Interventions on the wall paintings in the 'Bar Room' of the **Main Guard** were completed. The image of one of the skeletons beneath the arches, a full-length image of a friar and the full-length soldier facing the side staircase were also completed. Interventions mainly included photographic documentation, evaluating the state of conservation of the paintings, basic historical research and compilation of reports pertaining to each painting, consolidation of detachments, delamination and flaking of the pictorial layers, removal of overpainting, infilling of losses, levelling of infills and retouching using the puntini technique. Research was carried out with the help of Mr Denis Darmanin.

Works on the South Wall of the Salon at the National Museum of Archeology also proceeded in earnest. The interventions on the panel over the balcony door (facing the main doorway) and the adjacent panel were completed. The lower dado of this section is in the retouching phase. Three other sections in the central panel are also in the retouching phase. Most panels of the north wall, excluding the doorways, are completed from conservation, but parts of the 19th century painting surrounding the newly discovered niche are still not completely conserved. These will be finalised after carrying out necessary structural works in the niche. The Bank of Valletta sponsorship for the conservation of the Salon was renewed for another two years.

Constant monitoring was carried out during all works at the Grand Master's Palace to ensure proper conservation/restoration ethics. The Ambassadors Room and the Pages room were fully completed and are now being used by the Office of the President. The department was also involved in the monitoring of artefacts in connection with environmental issues at the MUŻA. Routine monthly condition assessment together with surface cleaning of all the artefacts on display were affected all year round.

The senior conservator is also representing HM as a member of the Warrant Board tar-Restawraturi. Other duties carried out by the paintings laboratory included the conclusion and implementation of a memorandum of understanding with the National Galleries of Scotland, the presentation of a paper on the research and conservation of the triptych by Frank Portelli (Triumph of Neptune) at the Greenwich conference, superficial cleaning of all paintings in the Palace Armoury, the decoration of wooden cabinets for the chancery at the Inquisitor's Palace, the decoration of wooden arches at the Grand Master's Palace, and preparation and delivery of practical sessions on historical manufacturing techniques for university students.

Worthy of mention are also the signing of memorandum of understanding with the Jesuit Church Foundation 27 September regarding the conservation of the painting Holy Family by Battistello Caracciolo, which is being undertaken at HM's paintings conservation laboratory, and the signing of a collaboration agreement with the National Galleries of Scotland in April for the exchange of expertise and experiences in conservation.

During the year under review the following conservation projects were completed:

- Landscape, R. Caruana Dingli, framed canvas painting, HM16/18/2022, 66522, MUŻA
- View of Marsamxett Harbour, 18th century unknown artist, framed canvas painting, HM16/31/2020, 66577, Malta Maritime Museum
- Grand Master's Possession of the Fleet, 18th century unknown artist, framed canvas painting HM16/48/2020, 66577, Malta Maritime Museum
- St Simon, Stefano Erardi, framed canvas painting, HM16/ 21/2023, 51430, Inquisitor's Palace
- Still-life, Style of Giuseppe Recco, framed canvas painting, HM16/04/2020, 63324, Inquisitor's Palace
- Portrait of Bishop Gaspare Gori Mancini (copy), unknown artist, framed canvas painting, HM16/109/2022, 51504, MUŻA
- Large 17th century landscape, unknown artist, framed canvas painting, HM16/114/2019, 80790, Grand Master's Palace
- Sta Flora, 18th century Neapolitan, unknown artist, framed canvas painting, HM16/102/2022, 51453, MUŻA
- St James the Greater, Stefano Erardi, framed canvas painting, HM16/14/2023, 70304, Inquisitor's Palace
- Portrait of an Aged Knight, Francesco Zahra, framed canvas painting, HM16/ 141/2022, 85410, Grand Master's Palace
- Portrait of GM Garzes, unknown artist, framed canvas painting, HM16/105/2022, 51942 Grand Master's Palace
- Portrait of GM Ximenes, unknown artist, framed canvas painting, HM16/12/2023, 51599, Grand Master's Palace
- Portrait of an unknown British Army Officer of the Order of St Michael and St George, attributed to Charles Allingham, framed canvas painting, HM16/56/2020, 64086, Grand Master's Palace
- Allegory of the Order of St John (copy), unknown artist, framed canvas painting, HM16/64/2018, 61611, Grand Master's Palace
- Nativity of Our Lady (copy), 18th century unknown artist, framed canvas painting, HM16/ 63/ 2020, 51092, Grand Master's Palace
- St John the Evangelist, Stefano Erardi, framed canvas painting, HM16/147/2022, 51898, Inquisitor's Palace
- Gregorio Mirabitor Figurehead, 19th century self-portrait, wood sculpture, HM16/15/2023, 85664, Malta Maritime Museum
- Neo Gothic, decorative frame of painting depicting St Bartolomew, unknown craftsman, wood, HM16/21/2022, 66638, San Anton Palace
- Decorative frame of painting depicting Fra Henri Chavet, unknown craftsman, gilded wood, no project and object number provided, Grand Master's Palace
- Superficial interventions on the Portrait of GM Vilhena, Enrico Regnaud, framed canvas painting, no project and object number provided, Grand Master's Palace
- Crib, 19th century Papier Mache, wax figurines, HM16/44/2018, 72139, Inquisitor's Palace
- Rudder, unknown 20th century craftsman, wood, HM16/47/2023, 55318, Castello Historic House
- Artefacts for the Dockyard Exhibition, unknown craftsman, wood, HM16/54/2023, Badge

- 881796, HMS Illustrious Badge 83298, Signitur 87256, Mejlaq 87257, Mazzola 87260, Buvett 87258, Cipp 87259, Malta Maritime Museum
- Hand Driven Grinder, unknown craftsman, wood, and hard stone, HM16/129/2022, 74174, Inquisitor's Palace
- Bellow, 19th century unknown craftsman, wood, leather and metal, HM16/16/2023, no object number provided



Sharing conservation techniques with the general public during an open day

Textiles

- Sleeveless Top with Nazi Eagle, HMI6.18.2023, 54967, NWM 3671, National War Museum
- One shell dressing made in the Commonwealth of Australia, HMI6.18.2023, 85862, NWM 3673, National War Museum
- M.A. Arm Band, HMI6.18.2023, 85860, NWM 3675, National War Museum
- Original Cap Talley HMS KENYA, HMI6.18.2023, 54951, NWM 3676, National War Museum
- Two miniature Jolly Roger flags of ORP SOKOL & ORP DZIK, HMI6.18.2023, 54952, NWM 3677, National War Museum
- Blazer badge and Shoulder Title of the Royal Signals, HMI6.18.2023, 54955, NWM 3680, National War Museum
- One shoulder strap Royal Malta Regiment, HMI6.18.2023, 85861, NWM 2481, National War Museum
- Two 'SO' Patches, HMI6.18.2023, 54964, NWM 3689, National War Museum
- Pair of green gloves used by Plotters, knitted by the donor, HMI6.18.2023, 54965, NWM 3690, National War Museum
- Box for a sword, HMI6.14.2022, 67066, MMU 317, Malta Maritime Museum
- Camel saddle, HMI6.02.2023, 72905, ex-depot
- A blanket, HMI6.02.2023, 66709, ex-depot
- Jacket, HMI6.117.2022, 86001, NWM 3499, National War Museum
- Jacket, HMI6.117.2022, 86002, NWM3500, National War Museum
- Beret, HMI6.117.2022, 50254, NWM3511, National War Museum
- Hearse four parts fabric pieces, HMI6.26.2022, 73160 i-iv, ETHN/W/382 i-iv, Inquisitor's Palace
- Small pack, HMI6.117.2022, 84418, NWM 4009, National War Museum
- Large pack, HMI6.117.2022, 84419, NWM 4010, National War Museum
- Ammo Pouches, HMI6.117.2022, 84420, NWM 4011, National War Museum
- Gunpowder pouch, HMI6.17.2023, 85529, G/ETHN/F/580, Gozo Museum
- Ribbon of a medal Star, Africa Star, Italy Star, War Medal, HMI6.01.2023, 85578, NWM 240, National War Museum
- White convoy Escort Pit cap with cover belonging to Admiral McKenzie, HMI6.10.2023, 85577, NWM 812, National War Museum
- 1 white gala RAF waist jacket with epaulettes and a badge, HMI6.10.2023, 60343, NWM 819, National War Museum
- KOMR jacket, HMI6.10.2023, 60342, NWM 1489, National War Museum
- RMA uniform jacket, waistcoat, and trousers, HMI6.10.2023, 85621, NWM 1293, National War Museum
- Luftwaffe M1943 field cap, HMI6.10.2023, 85622, NWM 2351, National War Museum
- Shirt used by the donor in service 1959-1961, HMI6.10.2023, 85623, NWM 249, National War Museum
- Two yellow feathers in plastic pocket, HMI6.10.2023, 85624, NWM 2424, National War Museum
- Lancashire Fusiliers battle dress jacket, HMI6.10.2023, 85625, NWM 2418, National War Museum
- Pair of woollen long socks, HMI6.10.2023, 85626, NWM 2422, National War Museum

- Pair of Woollen gloves, HMI6.IO.2023, 85627, NWM 2423, National War Museum
- Berret, HMI6.IO.2023, 85628, NWM 2421, National War Museum
- RAF trousers, HMI6.IO.2023, 85629, NWM 2417, National War Museum
- Parachute cap end marked P', HMI6.IO.2023, 85630, NWM 2429, National War Museum
- British life jacket dated 1944, HMI6.IO.2023, 85631, NWM 3995, National War Museum
- Large box containing a visor cap, shoulder titles, ranks, epaulettes, belts, etc, of the AFM: over 1000 items, HMI6.IO.2023, 85632, NWM 3684, National War Museum
- Visor cap, HMI6.IO.2023, 85633, NWM 3635, National War Museum
- AFM two pairs of black shoes, HMI6.IO.2023, 85634, NWM 4052, National War Museum
- Patched coloured blanket/quilt, HMI6.IO.2023, 85635, NWM 4053, National War Museum
- British Army green jacket and trousers of the East Lancashire Regiment pertaining to Major John Arrigo, HMI6.IO.2023, 85636, NWM 2619, National War Museum
- RAF jacket - summer uniform, HMI6.IO.2023, 85637, NWM 2381, National War Museum
- RAF service jacket and trousers, HMI6.IO.2023, 85638, NWM 4050, National War Museum
- Khaki shirt, HMI6.IO.2023, 85639, NWM 2958b, National War Museum
- One army jacket belonging to a Captain, seven ribbons, two ribbons war medal 1914-18, Victory medal, six textile stars on hands, two artillery grenades collar badges (green), HMI6.IO.2023, 85640, NWM 813, National War Museum
- RASC Field Service Cap, HMI6.IO.2023, 8564, NWM 4051, National War Museum
- Belt Royal Signals, HMI6.IO.2023, 85641, NWM 4030,
- Bush hat, HMI6.IO.2023, 85642, NWM 4020, National War Museum
- Cleaning of four armchairs from Auberge d'Aragon
- Cleaning of eleven wall hangings with the coat of arms of grand masters (Auberge de Castille)
- First aid and documentation Interventions Malta Maritime Museum
- Purple dalmatic, HMI6.20.2023, 70626, ETHN/F/503, Inquisitor's Palace
- Red dalmatic, HMI6.20.2023, 71469, ETHN/F/1416, Inquisitor's Palace
- Purple chasuble, HMI6.20.2023, 70384, ETHN/F/384 Inquisitor's Palace
- Altar frontal, HMI6.20.2023, 71471, ETHN/F/1418, Inquisitor's Palace
- Grandmaster Ramon Rabasa de Perellós y Rocafull embroidered Coat of Arms, HMI6.20.2023, 71398, ETHN/F/514, Inquisitor's Palace
- First aid interventions, slings, covers for uniforms, hangers, and documentation interventions National War Museum
- Wedding dress, HMI6.268.2013, 74407, ETHN/F/989, Inquisitor's Palace
- Wedding dress, HMI6.19.2023, 70698, ETHN/F/816, Inquisitor's Palace
- Wedding dress of Katy Attard, HMI6.19.2023, 73451, ETHN/F/2547, Inquisitor's Palace
- Wedding dress, black skirt, HMI6.19.2023, 72894, ETHN/F/2385, Inquisitor's Palace
- Wedding dress, black blouse, HMI6.19.2023, 72532i, ETHN/F/2049i, Inquisitor's Palace
- Wedding dress, Josette Sacco, HMI6.19.2023, 74406, ETHN/F/2556, Inquisitor's Palace
- Black dress, Katya Saunders, mannequin in preparation for Be Loved exhibition
- Acqua marine dress and chiffon jacket - Katya Saunders, a mannequin in preparation for the BeLoved exhibition
- Oddy test in collaboration with DSL
- Canvas analysis collaboration with DSL
- Canvas analysis in collaboration with DSL and Paintings department



Wedding dresses during conservation at the Textiles Laboratory

Books and Paper

- Monument f'għieħ il-Haddiema mejtin u lit-Tarzna, HMI6.54.2023, 86616, MMM
- Crowning with Thorns, circle of the Zuccari, HMI6.41.2023, 52498,1661-2, MUŻA
- Lamentation over the body of Christ, Has Speckaert, HMI6.41.2023, 52496, 1657-8, MUŻA
- Study for the Allegory of the Hours, Circle of Giorgio Vasari, HMI6.41.2023, 52494 1653-4, MUŻA
- Figure of Christ, after Carlo Maratta, HMI6.41.2023, 52751, 32115-6, MUŻA
- Ecstasy of a female saint, 17th century, HMI6.41.2023, 52503, 1671-2, MUŻA
- Study for a kneeling figure, Cristofano Allori, HMI6.41.2023, 52651, 14949-50, MUŻA
- Education of the Virgin, Benedetto Luti, HMI6.41.2023, 52506,1677-8, MUŻA
- Banquet, Giacomo Cestaro, HMI6.41.2023, 52768, 32159-60, MUŻA
- Flagellation, after Francesco Solimena, HMI6.41.2023, 52757, 32127-8, MUŻA
- Rinaldo mourning Armida, after Guercino, HMI6.41.2023, 52639, 14919-20, MUŻA
- St Catherine of Alexandria, style of Luca Cambiaso, HMI6.41.2023, 52767, 32157-8, MUŻA
- Juno with Peacock, style of Luca Cambiaso, HMI6.41.2023, 52513 1691-2, MUŻA
- Saint at a table with other figures, 16th century, HMI6.41.2023, 52497, 1659-60, MUŻA
- Study of a frontispiece, 16th century, HMI6.41.2023, 52512, 1689-90, MUŻA
- A monk blessing the faithful in a church (Charles Martel doing Penance), Giovanni Balducci, HMI6.41.2023, 52500, 1665-6, MUŻA
- Hagar in the desert, 17th century, HMI6.41.2023, 52678,15725-6, MUŻA
- Immaculate Conception, after Federico Barocci, HMI6.41.2023,52752, 32117-8, MUŻA
- Bataille Navale, Bonaventura Peeters, HMI6.41.2023, 52230, 16137-8, MUŻA
- Male nude, Guercino, HMI6.41.2023, 52795, 32277-8, MUŻA
- St Carlo Borromeo, Circle of Carracci, HMI6.41.2023, 52688, 15765-6, MUŻA
- Kneeling saint, 17th century, HMI6.41.2023, 52766, 32155-6, MUŻA
- Study for the daughters of Moses, Venetian 17th century (R&V), HMI6.41.2023, 52509, 1683-4, MUŻA
- Education of the Virgin, Benedetto Luti, HMI6.41.2023, 52506, 1677-8, MUŻA
- Study for a mythological scene, Francois Boucher, HMI6.41.2023, 52505,1675-6, MUŻA
- Shipwreck, Adrien Manglard, HMI6.41.2023, 52685, 15759-60, MUŻA
- St Firminius (R), Saint refusing an idol (V), HMI6.41.2023, 52676, 52677,15721-2, MUŻA
- St Francis Preaching, 17th century, HMI6.41.2023, 52501, 1667-8, MUŻA
- Roman soldier, 16th century, HMI6.41.2023, 52790, 32259-60, MUŻA
- Marriage of the Virgin, 16th century, HMI6.41.2023, 52495, 1655-6, MUŻA
- Landscape with wooden huts, Adriaen van der Velde, HMI6.41.2023, 52780, 32217-8, MUŻA
- Study of a kneeling youth, Jacopo da Empoli, HMI6.41.2023, 52502, 1669-70, MUŻA
- Study for the Martyrdom of St Ursula, Lorenzo Pasinelli, HMI6.41.2023, 52507, 1679-80, MUŻA
- Concert with female musicians, Venetian 17th century (R&V), HMI6.41.2023, 52510, 1685-6, MUŻA
- Zeus with Eagle, Antoine Favray, HMI6.41.2023, 52641, 14923-4, MUŻA
- Drawing of a shepherd boy among bathing woman, Antoine Favray, HMI6.41.2023, 52487, 347-8, MUŻA
- Landscape with figures, 18th century, HMI6.41.2023, 52781, 32219-20, MUŻA

- A beggar, Donato Creti, HM16.41.2023, 52777,32205-6, MUŽA
- Crowning with Thorns, after Francesco Solimena, HM16.41.2023, 52756, 32125-6, MUŽA
- St Joseph Calasanctus, Domenico Scaramucci, HM16.41.2023, 52762, 32145-6, MUŽA
- Dogs in a landscape, Giovanni Domenico Tiepolo, HM16.41.2023, 52508, 1681-2, MUŽA
- De Palmeus Map, HM16.100.2019, 80242, MUŽA
- View of Wooded Landscape, Filippo Giuntotardi, HM16.41.2023, 52236, 16227-8, MUŽA
- Temple of the British Empire to the Unknown Soldier: Exterior view, View of the lateral facade, Antonio Sciortino, HM16.87.2023, 28547-8, MUŽA
- Temple of the British Empire to the Unknown Soldier: Exterior view, View of the lateral facade, Antonio Sciortino, HM16.87.2023, 28545-6 (i), MUŽA
- Temple of the British Empire to the Unknown Soldier: Exterior view, Study of cloud formation over the lateral facade, Antonio Sciortino, HM16.87.2023, 28545-6 (ii), MUŽA
- Isola di Malta Olim Melita, by Vincenzo Coronelli, HM16.110.2012, 50741, 30439-40, MUŽA
- Reclining Angel, Mattia Preti, HM16.13.2013, 80761/60333, 311-2, MUŽA
- St Andrew, Mattia Preti, HM16.100.2019, 80764/60208, 307/8, MUŽA
- Three Leather Cartridge Pouches, 18th century, HM16.87.2019, 96061, Grand Masters Palace
- 18th century Maltese and Foreign coins, HM16.85.2019, 81946, Grand Master's Palace
- Malta by P. Savona, HM16.29.2023, 85665, MMM005107, Malta Maritime Museum
- Register 1944 Letter F, HM16.9.2022, National Museum of Archaeology
- Map Council of Europe, HM16.8.2022, 67059, M3368, National Museum of Archaeology
- Map Hal Saflieni Hypogeum, HM16.8.2022, 67058, M1241, National Museum of Archaeology
- Map of the Mediterranean Sea showing Malta, HM16.321.2011, 50616, 30247-8, MUŽA
- Map of Malta (with text), HM16.48.2011, 50048, 30461-2, MUŽA
- Map of Valletta, HM16.56.2011, 50056, 31471-2, MUŽA
- Map of Valletta and Malta, HM16.7.2022, 80158, 30605-6, MUŽA
- Map of Valletta and three cities, HM16.7.2022, 80253, 31547-8, MUŽA
- View of Old Marina, HM16.7.2022, 52855, 1373-4, MUŽA
- Map of Malta, HM16.7.2022, 80299, 31643-4, MUŽA
- Map of Malta, HM16.7.2022, 80154, 30543-4, MUŽA
- Valletta with only the fortification walls, HM16.7.2022, 80183, 31113-4, MUŽA
- Map of Malta, HM16.7.2022, 80062, 30579-80, MUŽA
- Map of Malta, HM16.7.2022, 80091, 30419-20, MUŽA
- Map of Malta, HM16.7.2022, 80079, 30327-8, MUŽA
- Map of Malta (coloured), HM16.7.2022, 80075, 30317-8, MUŽA
- Map of Grand Harbour, HM16.7.2022, 80199, 31375-6, MUŽA
- Map of Malta, HM16.7.2022, 80089, 30365-6, MUŽA
- Map of Grand Harbour, HM16.7.2022, 80203, 31383-4, MUŽA
- Preparatory sketch for a King Carnival float, HM16.26.2023, 73082, ETHN/GZ/036, INQ
- Mark Schembri, design in colour for a King Carnival float, HM16.26.2023, 73081, ETHN/GZ/035, INQ
- Float registration numbers for Carnival floats, HM16.26.2023, 73076, ETHN/GZ/30, INQ
- Float registration numbers for Carnival floats, HM16.26.2023, 73077, ETHN/GZ/31, INQ
- Float registration numbers for Carnival floats, HM16.26.2023, 73078, ETHN/GZ/32, INQ
- Float registration numbers for Carnival floats, HM16.26.2023, 73079, ETHN/GZ/32, INQ.

INORGANICS DEPARTMENT

Metal, Ceramic, Glass, Stone and Underwater Archaeology

During this year team members were provided with further training in conservation to strengthen their knowledge, skills, and ethical considerations. Focused training, in collaboration with the International Conservation of Underwater Archaeology in Zadar, Croatia (ICUA), was provided on the conservation of inorganic and organic archaeological material retrieved from the sea. This training was held in the specifically set up Conservation Lab for Underwater Archaeology at Bighi. It facilitated the conservator-restorers to be more flexible and assertive in their performance. Other continuous professional development sessions took place throughout the year.

The department was involved in various projects that entailed the conservation-restoration of a substantial number of artefacts from the Grand Master's Palace Ġhajn Klieb and Ġhajn Qajjet, the Gozo Museum, the Xrobb l-Ġħajin archaeological site, Grenfell's Egyptian figurines collection, and various artefacts from the National War Museum. The major priority focused on items from the Grand Master's Palace, mostly the restoration of steel armour and the armorial shields sculpted in limestone and marble. Another major project was the Ġhajn Klieb and Ġhajn Qajjet project, in which case various silver and copper-alloy jewellery, excavated from the site tombs, were conserved. The Gozo Museum Collection, together with the collection of over 200 Egyptian figurines making part of Lord Grenfell's collection, were also completed.

The ongoing conservation of the megalithic temples of Haġar Qim continued. Another two archaeological sites that were given specific attention were Tas-Silġ and Xrobb l-Ġħajin. In the first case, a section of the flooring of a specific area was detached to expose the underlying strata for archaeologists to excavate. In the second case, the condition of each stone member was assessed before the site was reburied. Ongoing conservation was not limited to archaeological sites but also practised on monuments/memorials prior to the commemorative date, as deemed required. These included the Sette Giugno 1919 monument, the Indipendenza monument, and Dun Karm Psaila monument, apart from a general clean-up of the Enrico Mizzi monument.

At the end of last year, personnel from the Gozo maintenance team were identified to receive hands-on training from the Inorganics Conservation Lab, to be able to carry out routine conservation work at Ġgantija. Before setting off, a full condition assessment report was carried out on the Neolithic monument, including both the inner areas and outer megalithic wall. This took place in April and was carried out jointly between conservators and curatorial staff. Gozo curatorial staff was assisted by the Prehistoric Sites Department and the same *modus operandi* applying to megalithic sites on the mainland was adopted for Ġgantija. Following the condition assessment, a template was prepared to provide the basis for documenting each maintenance intervention. Training sessions took place both in Gozo and at Haġar Qim. Interventions on Ġgantija were carried out regularly throughout the year, with the Gozo maintenance team now being fully trained in the application of plastic repair, addressing mainly alveolar deterioration, repair of cracks and fractures, and in the application of lime-wash that slows down the surface deterioration of the stone fabric. The maintenance team always works under the supervision of a warranted conservator.

Throughout this year, assessment and ongoing maintenance were undertaken at the sites of the Hal Saflieni Hypogeum, the Domus Romana, Ġhajj Tuffieħa Baths and MUŻA. Other conservation projects included the assessment and conservation of artefacts for exhibitions abroad, such as those held in Gerace and Corsica.

This year the Inorganics Conservation Department and the Digitisation Department collaborated consistently on the application of 3-D scanning and 3-D printing in conservation. This included the construction of a support for part of a medieval glass bowl, and the reconstruction of a lacunae of a 20th century ceramic plate, using inert material. The main objective was to minimise the use of invasive interventions to stabilise the artefacts.



Conservation works in progress at Ġgantija

The projects undertaken during the year were the following:

- HM16/5/2022, seven amphorae, Gozo Museum of Archaeology
- HM16/6/2022, juglet, Gozo Museum of Archaeology
- HM16/19/2022, black figure ware vase, National Museum of Archaeology
- HM16/23/2022, conservation of already desalinated material excavated from Quarantine Hospital, National Museum of Archaeology
- HM16/24/2022, desalination of material excavated from Quarantine Hospital, National Museum of Archaeology
- HM16/31/2022, excavated material in 2001, off Manoel Island, National Museum of Archaeology
- HM16/33/2022, Grenfell's Egyptian collection, National Museum of Archaeology
- HM16/37/2022, glass perfume bottle, MUŻA
- HM16/38/2022, plaster cast of a brother and sister, MUŻA
- HM16/39/2022, bust of Edward Caruana Dingli, MUŻA
- HM16/40/2022, five ceramic amphorae, in fragments, Gozo Museum of Archaeology
- HM16/41/2022, St Angelo Battery panel, Fort St Angelo
- HM16/47/2022, two prehistoric sherds, Gozo Museum of Archaeology
- HM16/48/2022, fragmented carinated bowl, Gozo Museum of Archaeology
- HM16/50/2022, ceramic strainer bowl, Ggantija
- HM16/52/2022, conservation of artefact which came apart from old restoration, National Museum of Archaeology
- HM16/53/2022, re-assembly of clay statuette, Inquisitor's Palace
- HM16/56/2022, general maintenance of the Sette Giugno monument, in situ
- HM16/57/2022, St Joseph holding baby Jesus, Inquisitor's Palace
- HM16/60/2022, large pottery vessels, National Museum of Archaeology
- HM16/61/2022, 'Stampede' plaster by V. Apap, MUŻA
- HM16/66/2022, various metal artefacts, National War Museum
- HM16/68/2022, three Bone hairpins, Domus Romana
- HM16/69/2022, cleaning of mosaic flooring and artefacts, Domus Romana
- HM16/72/2022, stone stopper, St Paul's Catacombs
- HM16/73/2022, amphora, St Paul's Catacombs
- HM16/75/2022, intervention at Tas-Silġ, in situ
- HM16/76/2022, nocturnal, Malta Maritime Museum
- HM16/77/2022, hanger, Malta Maritime Museum
- HM16/78/2022, Ottoman Kilij, Malta Maritime Museum
- HM16/79/2022, half-balls chain shot, Malta Maritime Museum
- HM16/80/2022, artillery range finder with GM Manuel Pinto da Fonseca coat of arms, Malta Maritime Museum
- HM16/81/2022, iron treasure corsair box, Malta Maritime Museum
- HM16/82/2022, bone dice (set of three), Malta Maritime Museum
- HM16/83/2022, telephone room sign, Fort St Elmo
- HM16/84/2022, two limestone urns, MUŻA
- HM16/85/2022, additional artefacts, National War Museum
- HM16/86/2022, bust portrait of Ruth Cierco by Joseph Mary Genuis, MUŻA

- HM16/87/2022, bust portrait of a young man by Giorgio Borg, MUŻA
- HM16/88/2022, bust portrait of George Fenech by Edward Pirotta, MUŻA
- HM16/90/2022, smoking pipe & cranium excavated from the Hypogeum, National Museum of Archaeology
- HM16/92/2022, two sickles, Gozo Museum
- HM16/93/2022, four agricultural tools, Gozo Museum
- HM16/94/2022, metal plough, Gozo Museum
- HM16/95/2022, Siege armour, showcase 36, Palace Armoury
- HM16/97/2022, two horns from Tarxien Temples, National Museum of Archaeology
- HM16/98/2022, desalination of material excavated from Salina in 2022, University of Malta
- HM16/106/2022, banju taż-żingu, National War Museum
- HM16/107/2022, RAF Safi cup, National War Museum
- HM16/108/2022, Forty-one marble and stone armorial shields, Grand Master's Palace
- HM16/113/2022, small bowl from the rython glass showcase, Domus Romana
- HM16/114/2022, two mess tins, National War Museum
- HM16/115/2022, British bomb tail, National War Museum
- HM16/116/2022, condition Assessment of Xrobb l-Għagin archaeological site, in situ
- HM16/118/2022, grindstone, Malta Maritime Museum
- HM16/122/2022, architectural fragment with leaf decoration, Gozo Museum of Archaeology
- HM16/123/2022, halberd, Palace Armoury
- HM16/125/2022, seven plaster casts from the School of Arts, MUŻA
- HM16/127/2022, two 3.7-inch AA cartridges, National War Museum
- HM16/128/2022, organic finds excavated from Dockyard Creek, Malta Maritime Museum
- HM16/146/2022, reinstatement of warrior's head, NHM
- HM16/9/2021, Għajn Tuffieħa Roman baths; backfill monitoring, in situ
- HM16/28/2021, 35 peaked morions, Palace Armoury
- HM16/30/2021, cleaning and assessment of the Gerace pharmacy jars, MUŻA
- HM16/60/2021, five fire-post signs, Fort St Elmo
- HM16/63/2021, maintenance Dun Karm Psaila monument, in situ
- HM16/70/2021, decorated armour, Palace Armoury
- HM16/73/2021, items from Mesquita Square, Mdina 1998 - batch 2, National Museum of Archaeology
- HM16/75/2021, items from Mesquita Square, Mdina 1998 - batch 1, National Museum of Archaeology
- HM16/77/2021, Plates from Villa Guardamangia
- HM16/84/2021, stabilisation of two stones in neolithic niche, Borġ in-Nadur
- HM16/86/2021, marble plaque at Maċina, Senglea, in situ
- HM16/96/2021, reinstatement of apses SE and SW, Borġ in-Nadur
- HM16/98/2021, drilling of holes within sacrificial layer of floor for installation of anti-slip plates, Hypogeum
- HM16/100/2021, reinstatement of toppled megalith at Skorba, in situ
- HM16/101/2021, cleaning of Hypogeum pillar 15, in situ
- HM16/102/2021, catacomb numbers, St Paul's Catacombs
- HM16/108/2021, two elephant tusks and ceramic handle, Gozo Museum of Archaeology
- HM16/111/2021, set of seven weights, Gozo Museum

- HM16/112/2021, fishmonger scales, Gozo Museum
- HM16/113/2021, fishmonger licence plate, Gozo Museum
- HM16/114/2021, boat builder tools, Gozo Museum
- HM16/116/2021, desalination and conservation of excavated material from underwater sites, University of Malta
- HM16/121/2021, Ghajn Klieb and Ghajn Qajjet artefacts, St Paul's Catacombs
- HM16/74/2020, harness, Gozo Museum
- HM16/27/2019, 2 4.5-inch cartridges from SS. Talabot, National War Museum
- HM16/37/2019, ongoing maintenance at Haġar Qim
- HM16/97/2019, set of bowls by Moore Brothers & Minton, MUŻA
- HM16/120/2019, honey extractor, Gozo Museum
- HM16/122/2019, cannon balls, Gozo Museum
- HM16/45/2018, small iron cannonball, National War Museum
- HM16/463/2014, Dangerous Sport sculpture by A. Sciortino, MUŻA
- HM16/151/2011, painted plaster cast of Cynthia Turner, MUŻA
- HM16/185/2011, padlock, National War Museum

DIAGNOSTIC SCIENCE LABORATORIES (DSL)

The DSL continued its important implementation of projects to support the curatorial and conservation domains. DSL has also been contributing towards Bighi's regeneration with the responsibility to represent all labs at head office. Meetings to date have identified short and long term targets. Short term restructuring measures at Bighi also sees DSL having to change its setup slightly to accommodate the new extra-departmental setup.

In July DSL's FTIR scientist visited the University of Bologna Ravenna campus to follow a tailored training course to DSL's needs under the direction of Prof Rocco Mazzeo (see Figure 1). The passed-on knowledge was immediately implemented in DSL's daily workload. This year also saw a DSL representative attend the ECSITE conference, hosted at MCC in Valletta. The conference focussed on science communication and emerging world issues, such as those of a political and environmental climate change nature.

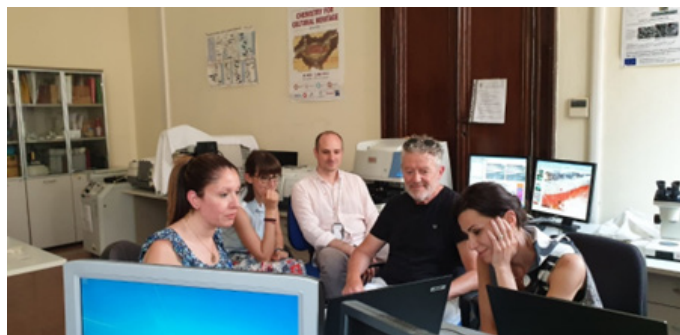


Figure 1. The DSL scientist (left) together with the FTIR lab specialists during the advanced training visit in Ravenna, Italy.

IAEA representation continued successfully with HM's submission for the 2024/25 National TC project cycle. Project award success is to be communicated in December or January 2024. This year also saw HM submit its scientific plan for inclusion with the 2024/28 Country Programme Framework (CPF). DSL identified key areas needing IAEA support, partly focussing on the 2024/25 objectives and planned targets.

In 2023, DSL joined a consortium drafting a facial reconstruction COST action application. Sadly, the lead coordinator resigned due to another project of theirs being accepted. For this reason, the COST action plan has been dissolved. IPERION-HS funds were sourced for three major separate research projects. All three applications were successful. A DSL member together with a National Museum of Archaeology curator visited the SciLifeLab Ancient DNA (aDNA) facility in Uppsala, Sweden, to hand over teeth pertaining to two skeletons (Figure 2a) as part of an aDNA study. These skeletal remains were excavated from Haġar Qim and the Hypogeum. Following aDNA submissions, the remaining tooth samples were sent to Isotoptech in Debrecen, Hungary for dietary and provenance analysis. The second project consisted of synchrotron XRF application on Knights Armour from the Palace Armoury Collection. Transnational access was awarded for SXRF PUMA beamline use at the Soleil Synchrotron in Saint Aubin, France. This study is being led by a University of Malta student, whilst a DSL member is co-supervising. The third successful project that obtained IPERION transnational access is the study of HM's ancient carbonized Roman bread dough. The latter study is being concluded and one final application was to render in 3D its internal structure. Since its matrix consists of features as small as 7 microns in diameter, nano CT was applied on 0.5 – 2 mm loose fragments at the microscopy laboratory within the CENIEH facility in Burgos, Spain (see Figure 2b). DSL also initiated a scientific application campaign on prints from the MUŻA collection, as part of the Getty project.



Figure 2. (a) The hypogeum skull, one of the skulls in this project, being CT scanned in Malta prior to initiating diagnostics abroad; and (b) the CENIEH nCT scanner used to image the carbonized dough fragments (see bottom left inset).

In terms of outreach and dissemination, DSL contributed towards both the general public and academic settings. The 2022 plan to see BBC 4Tech film DSL in Malta came to fruition, with filming taking place in January. Filming at the Inquisitor's Palace showcasing live analysis, as well as filming at DSL and conservation labs was undertaken. The footage was released on BBC 4Tech and all BBC online platforms in March, presenting great exposure for DSL. October saw HM hosting an open day at its Bighi Head Office (see Figure 3). Aside from tours, DSL also contributed with a hands-on activity for children, in conjunction with our Education and Outreach Department. The remainder of the year saw many students visiting DSL as part of their education programme. Students from the University of Malta, MCAST and sixth forms consisted of the larger segment of visitors.



Figure 3. The general public being shown around DSL's setup

DSL assisted three students as part of their academic studies. Laura Zerafa (Department of Metallurgy and Materials Engineering (DMME), Faculty of Engineering) was provided with scientific analysis on ancient armour and was also being co-supervised by a DSL staff member. She successfully completed her studies. Andrew Sammut, another student from DMME, is also being supervised by a DSL staff member and successfully completed, together with DSL staff, a visit to the Soleil synchrotron. A DSL staff member is also supervising Jermone Douglas on white paste characterisation from Għar Dalam phase pottery. This is in relation to his Masters study at the University of Malta Department for Classics and Archaeology.

A group of Earth Systems students were also given the opportunity to carry out their design and management project at HM. This was done in collaboration with the Paintings Conservation Laboratory and DSL. They successfully presented this work to their peers and DSL and conservation representatives at Campus Hub, Msida. Finally, a French student intern was hosted at DSL for a period of five weeks, as part of her French education in management, focussing on a personal assistant role. She supported the DSL manager and staff with admin duties, as well as organisation of laboratory schedules for maintenance etc.

As part of a restructuring setup to aid DSL and the Preventive Conservation Unit focus more on their specific tasks, the latter moved under the responsibility of the Paintings Conservation Laboratory. DSL still maintains consultative support during this transitional period. Following this transition, as with

any other HM department, DSL will work closely with the Preventive Conservation Unit by way of scientific analysis and consultations.

Resource upgrades for DSL included a €40,000 SEM-EDS PC upgrade due to operating system updating issues. This resulted in system software on two PCs frequently bugging, impacting analysis success. The new PCs have solved the issues given that a new operating system was installed with new drivers, system software etc. A new pH and conductivity meter was also procured. 2023 also saw DSL introducing a new water test by way of water hardness testing. This was done to support our projects and conservation departments. The microscope system also suffered from severe misalignment and image clarity issues, especially when visualising our samples on the University of Bologna microscopes as part of training. An emergency decision was taken to upgrade the laboratory system microscope, which caters for visible, polarized and UV fluorescence examinations. The accompanying stereo microscope also needed changing in order to maintain the same imaging quality throughout the imaging process. An order was therefore submitted for two microscopes at a total cost of €90,876.

Four new headcount positions were approved for DSL this year; a biologist, two chemists and a technician. The posts for these vacancies will be advertised to the public in January 2024. Finally, to compliment the analytical investments made by way of infrastructural upgrades, the human resource setup will be strengthened, to cater for the growth in analytical services demand, most especially in relation to research and conservation support.

The introduction of an annual budget allowed the DSL to better manage its operations. This allowed maintenance to take place in a timelier manner. During this year DSL concluded a total of thirty-four projects and services. These were split into fourteen HM conservation and curatorial projects and twenty external services. Due to DSL's schedule being full for several months, some private service requests were rejected. Projects still not concluded amount to twenty-six, twenty-three of which are internal conservation and curatorial initiatives, while three are external projects. These will be transferred to 2024.

External projects undertaken by DSL brought an income of €28,454 (exclusive of VAT). Of this sum, €1,970 (exclusive of VAT) were waived as part of a service rendered to the Restoration Directorate. The current secured open external projects load will bring in an additional income of €3,145 (exclusive of VAT), part of which is waived by agreement with the Parishes of Senglea and Vittoriosa. The latter agreements include collaborations consisting of joint public dissemination ventures.

COLLECTIONS
& RESEARCH

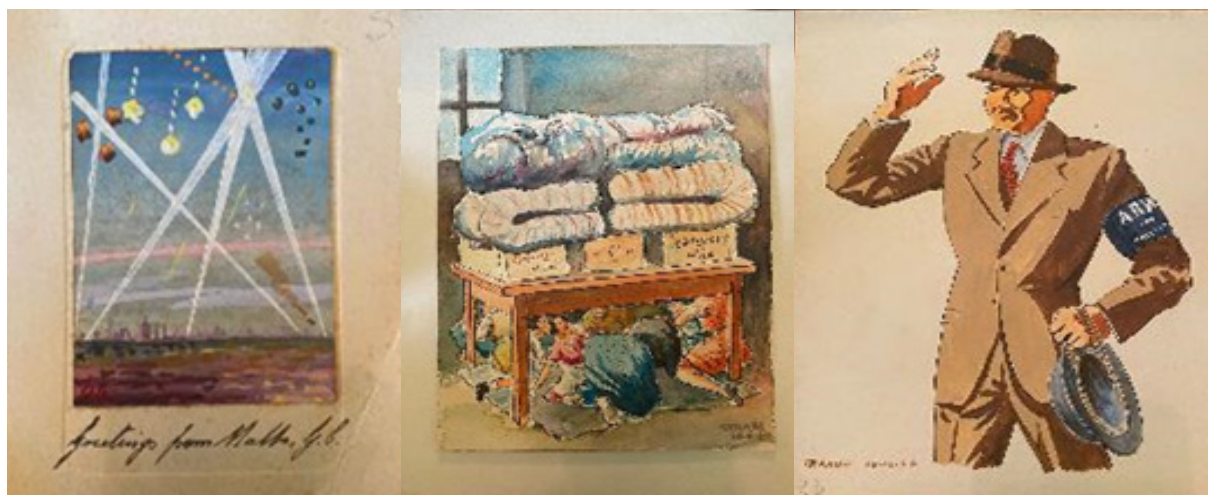
Hundreds of cultural heritage items and natural specimens were once again acquired for the National Collection during the year under review. For a full list with all details please refer to Appendices 2, 3, 4 and 5 respectively.

Acquisitions

In total 134 donations (covering thousands of items), were registered. Notable among the donations made were a typewriter used by the former President of the Republic of Malta Anton Buttigieg, presented by his son John, a number of paintings and other items from the late Fr Marius Zerafa OP through the Sliema Dominican community, the 19th century figurehead of Maltese shipbuilder Gregorio Mirabitar donated by Maryanne Falzon, 742 designs on paper and other items of artist Giuseppe Galea of Rabat presented by his children, a painting by Esprit Barthet presented by Joseph Demarco, and an 18th century painting of a Maltese corsair ship entering Marsamxett harbour with prize in tow by Hili Ventures Ltd to commemorate the 100th anniversary of Carmelo Caruana Ltd, apart from a considerable number of clothes for the costume collection.

Furthermore, the agency also acquired cultural heritage items through direct purchase. Forty-four purchases were registered, the most noteworthy of which are the original clay bozzetto of 'Disaster of a Submarine' by Antonio Sciortino, a full-length oil on canvas framed portrait of Grand Master de Rohan preparing for the Otto Settembre procession signed and dated Antoine Favray 1775, a magnificent sword of honour presented by Napoleon to admiral Decres for his bravery in Malta, an octagonal inlaid table by Carmelo Micallef for the 1924 British Empire Wembley exhibition, 184 wartime watercolours by Alfred Gerada, and other sculptures and paintings by modern Maltese artists, including Frans Galea, Giorgio Preca, Isabelle Borg and Victor Pasmore. Another seven paintings were purchased by various ministries and registered in the national collection.





Moreover, full use was made of the budget allocation for **Modern and Contemporary Art Acquisitions** through Line Vote 5557. A considerable number of works were acquired, fully described in Appendix 2. The same applies for Line Vote 5842 regarding the acquisition of artworks and other items for the **Gozo Museum**. Twenty-five acquisitions were registered, including artworks and ethnographic items.

IN line with international recognised good practice followed by the Museums Association and the ICOM code of ethics, a deaccession policy has also been drafted and approved in collaboration with the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage, seeking alternative ways how to make the best possible use of certain items in the collection.

The **Collections Management Department** continued with its incessant work of cataloguing existent collections and registering all new acquisitions. Extensive work was done on the Collections Management System, focusing mainly on the maritime collection. Similar work is also being done on the National War Museum inventory. Moreover, all inventories of ministries and government departments are being updated, including those of the three presidential palaces.

The department is also responsible for the registration of conservation projects, generation of their related files, including monitoring of timeframes, recording mobility of the collections, updating, and concluding all the documentation in these files. A total of ninety-eight conservation projects by the six conservation laboratories and the Diagnostic Science Laboratories were registered, covering the conservation treatment of 247 artefacts. As from this year, the Registry was also added to the responsibilities of this department.

Following a series of interviews for the post of curator **Natural History**, Mr David Cilia was the candidate chosen for the post. He commenced work on 1 July and has a solid background in various topics, mainly in the fields of botany and malacology. At the same time, the process for a curator of Geology and Palaeontology is underway.

Ten new cabinets were purchased for tertiary fossils, and the collection was transferred from its original room to the ex-entomological room. The latter has increased considerably, and a larger space was required. Digitisation of the collection is underway. 110 tailor-made cardboard boxes lined with plastazote were constructed to hold individual long-bones and 'lots' of molars, vertebrae and other small bones. The Quaternary collection is being re-organised and new storage cabinets were purchased. 125 custom built boxes lined with plastazote were also constructed for the palaeontology collection. Two Hepa-Filter dehumidifiers for the entomology collection room were purchased, together with two trolleys for the movement of heavy objects/specimens.



Mr Ivan Zahra, ex MCAST student, was employed on a 20-hour week contract to continue cleaning the mounted fish specimens in preparation for a new display planned for 2024. The Maltese land-snail collection was re-organised according to the new nomenclature by the museum volunteers assisted by the curator. A catalogue on the Maltese terrestrial collection is being compiled. Since Ms Stephanie Sammut resigned from her position as curator, very little work was carried out on the wet collection. The new curator will undergo training, kindly provided by Ms Sammut next year.

As in past years, the museum benefitted greatly from the assistance of the 'resident' volunteers, namely Paul Sammut, Charles Sammut, Constantine Mifsud and Charles Cachia, who continued their sterling work on the Conchology collections. Apart from the cataloguing of the collection, they also donated numerous specimens to the museum's collection. Ms Myra Camilleri, B.A. (Arch) student volunteered her time throughout much of this calendar year in cataloguing the Quaternary collection.

The major acquisition of Mr Anthony Seguna's collection has created a storage issue due to its volume. The entire collection was moved from its original room and shifted to another room, almost twice the size. The Lepidoptera collection is being reorganised according to families and species. The digitisation and re-organisation of the entomology collection progressed at a steady pace. The

exercise of collating all the same species together, irrespective of donor/collector is also progressing.



New hall holding the ever-growing entomological collection.

The ornithology collection continued to grow exponentially. The continuous influx of donations and confiscated specimens is creating a major storage issue. Six metal cabinets were purchased to hold the passerine and exotic species. The re-organisation and digitisation of the collection continued. Next year will see the publication of the book "Glass Eyes and Dried Feathers" the history of the Bird Collections, including the catalogue of the collection. Preparation is also underway for setting up a new display on bird families, replacing the habitats' display. The reason is two-fold, a major request by Maltese visitors to the museum who expect to see more birds on display, and the lack of storage space in the study collection area.



With respect to the herbarium, Michael Briffa reorganised the algae and seeds collection, cataloguing and updating the nomenclature according to POWO (Plants of the World Online – Kew). The same applies to the 'Valletta (Girl School) Herbarium' and the Mycology collection. First year MCAST student Mikael Lia assisted the curatorial team on a number of projects and with his artistic skills, he made a collection of line drawings of Carmelo DeLuca's herbarium. Apart from the ongoing work on the specimens, this year the entire historic photographic collection, consisting of several hundred b/w photos, was digitised. Moreover, over 4,000 photographs were shot, including specimens from the birds, quaternary bones, tertiary fossils and entomology collections.

The senior curator participated in various conferences. On 4 March he was a guest speaker at the Museo Civico di Storia Naturale of Comiso for a one-day seminar with a presentation entitled *Mezzo Secolo di Museo di Storia Naturale di Mdina*. On 21-24 September he was invited by the Gibraltar Museum to deliver a paper on the 'Role of the British in the advancement of Natural Sciences in the Maltese Islands'. The conference organised by the Gibraltar Museum was held at the University of Gibraltar. As in past years, he participated in the annual visit to Lampedusa and Linosa to monitor the breeding colonies of Scopoli's and Yelkouan Shearwaters as well as Storm-petrels. The visit was held in May in collaboration with the institute of Earth Systems (University of Malta) and the University of Palermo. The curator represented the museum in an ESPLORA event for Halloween, showcasing some representative specimens from the collections. A joint activity was held with BirdLife Malta at the Salina Nature Reserve. The aim of this activity, targeting early teenagers, focused on the role of pellets in the identification of prey remains, target species being the short-eared owl. Pellets collected from Comino were dissected under the supervision of the senior curator, who guided the participants in the identification of the remains. The senior curator served as a scientific consultant to a well-received series of TV documentaries (second season), prepared by Mr Saviour Bonnici.

Assistance and guidance is also being provided to local and foreign students and researchers. Daniela Furtado, MA Archaeology student, was helped with the identification of animal bone remains from the Salina underwater excavations, while MA student Rochelle Lorraine Xerri was assisted in her research on Quaternary micro-mammals collected from Ghar Tuta and Ghar il-Fkieren respectively, by providing insight on identification techniques and making available the Quaternary collections at the museum. An undergraduate student from the Institute of Earth Systems is being assisted with his dissertation on the abundance and feeding behaviour of the European Bee-Eater in Malta. The curator is co-supervising with Prof David Mifsud (IES) Mr James Ciarlo on his MSc dissertation entitled: PALEOSIM (PALEOclimate modelling of Small Islands in the Mediterranean and possible impacts on arthropod habitats). Four teams of biology undergrad students (BSc) carried out mini projects on the museum collections. The themes of the projects were skeletal support in relation to size among vertebrate species (one major group to be selected); shell morphology in gastropods as an adaptation to habitat requirements; convergent evolution in flying vertebrates: differences and similarities; differences and similarities between feathers and fur for thermoregulation; and dentition in different mammalian families. Presentation of results will be held at the University in 2024.

Furthermore, in March the senior curator provided field support (ornithology and mammals) during a field excursion with MSc student to Madeira. Technical assistance was also provided to the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage. Kay Mallia (zoo-archaeologist) was helped with the identification of bone remains from two archaeological sites in Rabat (Għajn Qajjed and Għajn Klieb), while Bernardette Mercieca Spiteri (osteologist) was assisted in the examination of animal bone remains unearthed from archaeological sites in Malta. She also visited the museum collections to observe some of the key difference in the identification of bovids, pigs and bird bones. On the other hand, a number of requests for the identification of specimens in collections or sites were made this year by HM curators, conservators and scientists. The identification of specimens was most requested. Following a storm in February where a large wall below HM offices in Kalkara collapsed, a reddish patch in the rocks appeared and a site visit by the senior curator was carried out. However, it resulted that the patch was not a Quaternary deposit as suspected from the photographs.

Research work on human molars GHD001 and GHD002 for the **Malta molars project** continued with a two-week visit to the Natural History Museum, London, Oxford University, and the National Oceanic Institute in Southampton. GHD001 was cut in half and samples were taken for a series of tests (uranium, Isotope, Carbon dating etc). Further tests will be carried out next year. In relation to this project, a small sample of hippopotamus bones from Ghar Dalam were sent to Austria and onwards to Australia for an in-depth analysis. All specimens were eventually returned to Malta. Further on, we have also been approached by the University of Malta to provide samples of speleothems from Ghar Dalam for a study on the paleoclimate of the Maltese Islands. Results on these projects will be available to the general public once it is published.

The monitoring of local avifauna in the museum grounds continued unabated. This year's breeding birds included the following species: Collared Dove *Streptopelia turtur* - two pairs; Common Swift *Apus apus* - two pairs; Sardinian Warbler *Sylvia melanocephala* - one pair; Blue Rock Thrush - one pair; Spanish Sparrow *Passer hispaniolensis* - twenty-four pairs; Tree Sparrow *Passer montanus* - four pairs. The resident pair of Blue Rock Thrushes bred again in the usual nest near the Mdina Local

Council office. Two broods were raised and fledged successfully. Timing of fledging was not optimal as in both occasions filming was taking place. The first brood of three chicks were caught and ringed with both metal and colour rings, while in the case of the second brood, the chicks could not be ringed. A note on the feeding of chicks from hatching to fledging was published in the journal *Naturalista Siciliano*. Data was collected from the museum pair. Moreover, following ten years of trying to attract the Common Swift to nest in the palace, this year a pair of these rare breeding visitors managed to raise two chicks in one of the nest boxes and for the first time ever, Common Swift chicks were ringed in Malta. The ongoing data collection on Maltese Mammals for the European Mammal Atlas continued. In 2024 the data will be analysed and forwarded to the project leaders.

Curatorial staff authored the following publications:

- Catania, A., Seguna, A., Borg, J.J. & Sammut, P. (2023), *Opogona sacchari* (Bojer, 1856) a new record from the Maltese Islands (Lepidoptera: Tineidae). *SHILAP Revista de lepidopterología*, 51 (202): 229-31.
- Borg, J.J. (2023), The National Museum of Natural History – 50 years in Mdina 1973-2023, a photographic journey.
- Borg, J.J., (2023), Feeding of Blue Rock Thrush *Monticola solitarius* chicks from hatching to fledging. *Naturalista Siciliano*, S. IV, XLVII (2), 2023, pp. 117-20.
- Seguna, A., Catania, A., Sammut, P. & Borg, J.J. (2023), *Hyphantria cunea* (Drury, 1773) new for the Maltese Islands (Lepidoptera: Erebidae, Arctiinae, Arctiini). *SHILAP Revista de lepidopterología*, 51 (202): 255-57.
- Zeimbekis, C., Zaminos, G., Cilia, D.P. & Manousis, T., (2023), On the first recorded occurrence of the invasive tropical snail *Allopeas gracile* (T. Hutton, 1834) (Gastropoda, Achatinidae, Subulininae) in Greece. *Xenophora Taxonomy*, 40: 43-47.

Other contributions are in press.

Work on the new mammals' display is underway with a new large display case installed to hold the carnivores, while eight small showcases will display the primates and the local mammalian fauna. The stuffed Maltese Cow will have a prominent place. Display is planned to open next year. A new didactic display for conchology has been drafted by the curator, to be implemented next year. A new marine display is also under preparation, focusing on two major marine habitats (pelagic and benthic), the first showcasing our collection of sharks, rays and pelagic fish, and the second focusing on bottom dwelling species. The bird's display in the Gozo Nature Museum will be dismantled and replaced with a display highlighting Natura 2000 sites in Gozo. The large glass showcase, currently holding a selection of stuffed and mounted birds, will be dismantled and transferred to Mdina. This will be set up in the Birds Hall where a small diorama highlighting vultures, eagles and buzzards will be setup, be in line with the new display showcasing bird families from across the globe. An elephant (*Palaeoxodon mnaidriensis*) molar was loaned for the Mattia Preti exhibition in Poland.

On 15 May Dr Victoria Herridge from the Natural History Museum, London, along with Dr Eleanor Scerri and Dr Nicholas Vella (University of Malta) accompanied by the senior curator, visited **Għar Dalam** in preparation for a minor excavation to collect 'clean' bone material for testing as part of the Malta molars project. Another visit was carried out on 12 June with the aim of sampling speleothems for a paleoclimate study. This was followed by another visit later in the year. Throughout the year, the senior curator continued mapping and documenting all the remaining deposits within the cave. The deposits were 3D scanned. Rock-movement monitoring continued this year by Terracore Ltd. The atmospheric data loggers continued to collect data within the cave system.

The flora and fauna inside the cave continued being monitored as in the previous year (2022-23). Logging of sightings on all species occurring inside the cave are inputted in a database. To date, forty-three different species of biota ranging from birds to bats to moths, have been recorded. The aim of this is to compare results with those reported for the years 1983-84 in a study carried out by the previous curator (Zammit-Maempel, G. 1985. The Biology and Ecology of Għar Dalam Cave. Atti della Società Toscana di Scienze Naturali Residente in Pisa, Memorie, Processi Verbali, Serie A. 1985, Vol 92, pp 351-74; Illustration).

The senior curator continued monitoring the fauna present in the gardens and surrounding areas on a weekly basis, including weekly bird ringing sessions (Mondays) to monitor the resident as well as the migrants/wintering birds in the Għar Dalam grounds. The audio-guide was up and running, providing narration in Maltese, English and other languages.

At the **National Museum of Archaeology**, significant progress was registered on the digitising and cataloguing of glass negatives transferred from the Malta Maritime Museum. The same applies for rare books in order to minimize handling. In August the senior curator and manager DSL visited the University of Uppsala in Sweden for a research project on the Haġar Qim and Hal Saflieni Hypogeum skulls. It is hoped that radiocarbon dating, stable isotope analyses and DNA tests will provide much desired information on the timeframe in which these people lived, what they ate, drank and where they came from. The HM official guidebook to **Underground Valletta** was published, and the senior curator co-authored the article 'Equality and Survival in Neolithic Malta' together with the senior curator prehistoric sites (south) for the BeLoved exhibition catalogue.

Monitoring of works and **archaeological investigations** continued at the Grand Master's Palace, in the area of the Nymphaeum (Room 31). Interesting 18th century ceramic assemblages were recovered. Two drafts were submitted to be published in 2024 regarding the façade development of the Grand Master's Palace (Ferrara Conference), and on Valletta residence plans (call for articles of the Accademia di San Luca, Rome).

The archaeological investigations at Salina Bay were resumed by the Department of Archaeology of the University of Malta. The principal curator provided technical assessment of the numerous ceramic artefacts being recovered during this investigation. These ceramics are important evidence documenting how Salina Bay had a long and intense history of commercial use during the Middle Ages. Archival research continued at the National Library in 17th and 18th century manuscripts to collate historical information relating to material culture of the Knight's period, and various architectural

monuments of the period. This information proved important for the organization of the Fare Convito exhibition and will contribute to the development of other future public events and publications. The principal curator presented such studies during the HM research seminar in February.

The study of various archaeological/historical collections continued unabated, including inventory work, research, identification, and conservation. This work included material assemblages from the following sites and museums: a collection of late Victorian British stoneware plates discovered at Villa Guardamangia during the ongoing restoration project; medieval ceramics and glass from Mesquita Square, Mdina (MSQ1998); early modern materials from Auberge d'Auvergne, Valletta (VLT1965); late 16th / early 17th century materials from the Palace Armoury investigation; and various medieval fragments from the National Museum of Archaeology, loaned to MUZA for display. This project aimed at characterizing various local medieval ceramic fabrics was also continued this year, in collaboration with Dr Maxine Anastasi of the Department of Archaeology of the University of Malta, focusing on collections at the National Museum of Archaeology and the Gozo Museum of Archaeology. Work also continued on data organisation and post-excavation processing of the data recovered from the Auberge d'Aragon in view of the publication of a short report.

As from April the **Prehistoric Sites Department** was restructured and split into two departments based on regions; Prehistoric Sites (**North**) covering Gozo, the North and the West regions of Malta thus including Ġgantija Archaeological Park (responsibility for which is shared with the Senior Curator for Gozo), Skorba Prehistoric Site, Ta' Haġrat Megalithic Site, and Haġar Qim and Mnajdra Archaeological Park, and Prehistoric Sites (**South**) covering the Harbour and South regions including Tarxien Prehistoric Complex, Kordin III Megalithic Site, Hal Saflieni Hypogeum, Borġ in-Nadur Prehistoric Complex as well as Tas-Silġ Archaeological Complex (responsibility for which is shared with the Phoenician, Roman and Medieval Sites Department) and Xrobb l-Għaġin (responsibility for which is shared with Nature Trust). This was done so that each department would focus more on the ever-growing requirements of the sites in its care, while laying the ground work for further capacity building in both departments.

Both departments continued to be consulted by the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage on planning applications in the buffer zones of sites inscribed on the World Heritage list managed by HM. These consultations are documented on the department's database, noting the Agency's recommendations and whether these were taken on board. In addition to requests for consultations, the departments also monitors new applications submitted to the Planning Authority every two weeks. Members of both departments also contributed to excavations of the prehistoric structure at Tas-Silġ and at Xrobb l-Għaġin, where they continued to uncover megalithic remains that are threatened by erosion.

The conservation maintenance programme continued in Apses 1 and 2 at **Haġar Qim**. Work included pointing and repair, supporting unstable megaliths and replacing previous repair with portland cement with a specially produced mortar mix that had been approved by the Scientific Committee for the Conservation of the Megalithic Temples. Interventions were documented and a conservation report produced. Before and after photos were uploaded on HM's photo repository, each labelled with the inventory number for the relevant megaliths. Clamps forming part of scaffolding holding up some megaliths in Apse 6 at Haġar qim were inspected regularly.

A Neolithic bowl that had been found at **Mnajdra** and restored in the past, on display at the Visitor Centre, was taken to the laboratory for further conservation. Its fragments, particularly broken edges, were cleaned from plaster, plasticine and different glues. These were then reattached and the bowl was put back on display. Monthly pest control was conducted and accumulated dust was brushed from megaliths in the south structure at Mnajdra.

The collaboration between the Prehistoric Sites Department (North) and the University of Malta's Faculty for the Built Environment continued with constant monitoring and studies into the role of protective shelters in the conservation of the Megalithic Temples. The collaboration was extended to HM's Digitization Unit, who are assisting with developing a methodology for laser scanning sample megaliths in the study area, in order to conduct a year-long study to monitor the rate of deterioration of these megaliths. Two trials were carried out on site and the results of these trials are being analysed for the actual study to commence in 2024. As part of this collaboration, a seminar was given by members of the Faculty for the Built Environment to HM's senior management and interested staff members. Following this seminar, a focus group was set up to continue to work towards identifying a way forward for the long-term maintenance of the protective shelters over Haġar Qim and Mnajdra. Through this focus group, it will be ensured that results of the research carried out by the Faculty for Built Environment feed into this way forward, enabling informed decisions on the maintenance of the protective shelters. Environmental data continues to be collected at regular intervals and from specific areas within the site.

Several initiatives relating to the maintenance of the environment within the park were undertaken. Invasive pennisetum was removed from a large area behind the North structure at Haġar Qim, and from next to the picnic room. Following a report made by ERA of illegal movement of soil, planting of fava beans and construction of a rubble wall by unknown persons on the garigue next to Mnajdra, works were conducted to reinstate the garigue to its original state. The fava beans were removed, the rubble wall dismantled and indigenous shrubs already present in the area – Mediterranean thyme, Tree spurge, Maltese spurge and Mediterranean stonecrop – were planted in agreement with ERA. A number of indigenous shrubs were also planted in the picnic area, and adjacent to the perimeter fence at Haġar Qim. Indigenous shrubs and trees were also planted in flower beds within the parking area and next to the visitor centre. In a separate exercise, all material from these excavations stored at the Haġar Qim artefact store was checked and organized by area and material. A detailed inventory was also created for the material, with the aim of facilitating future work.

The senior curator, who is also National Focal Point for Periodic Reporting in World Heritage Sites, coordinated the Third Cycle of Periodic Reporting for the Maltese islands for **UNESCO**. An internal seminar among curatorial staff from all departments working at world heritage sites was organized to give an overview of the Periodic Reporting Process, particularly Section 2 of the report which dealt specifically with the inscribed sites. During the seminar, attributes that convey outstanding universal value at the Megalithic Temples of Malta were also discussed and agreed on. The Focal Point was responsible for completing Section 1 of the Questionnaire – which consisted of general information regarding world heritage in Malta. Data for this Section was collated from several entities, including the Office of the Permanent Representative to UNESCO, the National Commission to UNESCO and the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage. The Focal Point also completed Section 2 of the Periodic

Report, which assessed the state of conservation of the Megalithic Temples of Malta and coordinated and checked the reports for the City of Valletta and the Hal Saflieni Hypogeum. All reports were submitted to the World Heritage Centre in July. As a follow-up to the Periodic Reporting Process, the Focal Point attended two workshops organized by the World Heritage Centre in Kotor, Montenegro and in Paris, aimed at identifying common challenges in the management of world heritage sites and drafting a Regional Action Plan for Europe and North America for 2024-30. The Regional Action Plan will be submitted to the World Heritage Committee in 2024. Capacity building on the Enhancing Our Heritage and Heritage Impact Assessment Toolkits was also conducted during these workshops.

The department was consulted on several issues related to development applications in the buffer zones of world heritage sites by the National Technical Committee for World Heritage. In collaboration with the Field Team, maps of all six components of the inscription The Megalithic Temples of Malta were created on GIS. Maps also include buffer zones as approved by the World Heritage Committee in 2015. These maps were requested by the World Heritage Centre as part of the Retrospective Inventory, in order to update all data relevant to sites inscribed on the World Heritage List in the past, when such data was not yet a requirement for inscription.

The senior curator concluded the year-long course on Interpretive Planning, organized by the UNESCO Office in Venice and Interpret Europe. The second part of the course, initiated in 2022, consisted of the preparation and drafting of a comprehensive Interpretation Plan for a specific site. A proposal for a plan for Ta' Hagrat was presented as a final project for certification, which was awarded in November. A final online event where participants presented each of their projects was organized in December.

An evaluation of the Management Plan for the Megalithic Temples of Malta was carried out. The existing Plan was reviewed, identifying actions that have been carried out and others that are still in progress or pending. These were then compared to the requirements of UNESCO's Helsinki Action Plan, in order to identify priorities that have still to be considered for this World Heritage Site. This research will feed into a revision of the Management Plan that will be carried out in the medium term.

A photographic inventory of the **Ġgantija** megalithic monument was carried out between July and November. A numbering system was adopted to reference every single megalith or group of smaller stone. This inventory will facilitate the documentation process of any conservation or structural interventions carried out onsite. The entire permanent display at the Ġgantija Interpretation Centre was digitised. Updates in the site inventory were carried out simultaneously. All photos were uploaded on Fotoware, and metadata was inputted for the entire collection. The information panels in the external spaces of the archaeological park and within the Neolithic monument were updated. A number of Neolithic artefacts were identified in the reserve collection of the National Museum of Archaeology and were added to the permanent display. This exercise involved further research and the updating of the interpretive content at Ġgantija, which also involved the replacement of some information panels. Additional research was carried out to identify material discovered from Gozo sites throughout the FRAGSUS Project, compiling an inventory of lithic and ceramic material in the process.

Following a 40-hour course with Interpret Europe (the European Association for Heritage Interpretation) in Ljubljana, Slovenia, last year, by the Principal Curator Xaghra Sites, a revised interpretation strategy for Ġgantija was prepared. This formed part of a certificate course in Interpretive Planning offered by the same association. The new plan proposes a rethinking in the way themes are presented and communicated to the public and focuses on a core message that feeds into every aspect of the interpretation and the overall visitor experience. The new interpretation plan provides tangible examples of interpretive themes and supporting interpretation tools. It will provide the basis for future interpretation projects at Ġgantija, based on best practices and the strategic objectives outlined by UNESCO for World Heritage properties. The principal curator was also invited to participate as a panellist in an online panel discussion held on 20th April by the Global Alliance of Heritage Interpretation, alongside officials from the UNESCO Venice Regional Bureau and other representatives in the European heritage sector. Further research about evidence of Neolithic huts in Gozo continued. A way forward for the reconstruction of two Neolithic huts was established so that actual works may commence in 2024.

Excavations were not conducted at the **Xaghra Circle** this year, with the time dedicated for this project spent conducting specialist post-excavation work and documentation, in order to be able to test the outcomes of the new methodology trialled in 2022. This work was split over two months, April and November, when all artefacts were sorted according to material, stratigraphic unit and year of excavation and inventorized. This will facilitate any further work to be carried out on the material in the future. The Field Team's osteologist updated the information being documented on bones excavated in Spits in 2022 to include details on taphonomy, pathology, age and sex. Osteological analysis of all of Spit I was concluded, as well as cleaning of delicate bone remains that required the input of osteologists. Photographic documentation of pathologies was also carried out. In parallel, skeletal remains are being inventorized according to HM's central system, in preparation for their transfer to the national collection in the future. This is being carried out at this stage to avoid double handling of fragile artefacts. Work on several aspects of documentation was also carried out. This included the digitization of a sample of the manually drawn plans, running of 3D models and digitization of the site notebook. An inventory system for all documentation was also discussed and agreed on. This work will be resumed in 2024. Preliminary visual analysis of all ceramic material from this excavation was also concluded and needs for future work identified.

An onsite meeting was held in May to discuss the way forward for the long-term preservation of the site. Essential steps include the removal of the old backfill, procurement and delivery of new backfill material, and the consolidation of fragile areas. American student Alessandra Robson carried out an internship from 5 to 27 July. She worked on the Gozo Museum of Archaeology permanent display inventory, inserting images and updating dimensions and references, especially relating to material from the Xaghra Circle. She updated conservation project numbers in same inventory, and also catalogued a small collection of beads from the Xaghra Circle currently in reserve.

Desktop research and meetings with stakeholders were carried out to draft a comprehensive interpretation plan for **Skorba**. An episode of HM's Treasure to Meet You focussed on the main entrance of **Ta' Haġrat** and the role of the Mġarr community in the management of the site. Social media presence was kept, with regular posts on Facebook and Instagram throughout the year.

A large stone bowl that was excavated at the **Tarxien Prehistoric Complex** in 1915 and then restored and placed in an adjacent chamber to its find-spot, was restored and relocated to its original place. Restoration was carried out following research into its original form, various restoration attempts and original location, as well as detailed documentation of each of its fragments. In preparation for the improved visitor interpretation of the site, all information panel contents have been revised together with provisions for children's interpretation and educational activities, as well as sensory forms of interpretation. It is expected that the design, production, and installation of these panels will be completed in 2024. To complement this interpretation, the audio guide of the site is also being revised. The script in English has been prepared and finalized and HM is currently awaiting translations of this script into various languages for proofing prior to recording and launching of the audio guide with visitors. Members of the department also coordinated post-excavation work in relation to the excavations for walkway and shelter foundations at the Tarxien Prehistoric Complex carried out in 2010-15. The excavation notebooks for these excavations were digitized, with the assistance of a student of the Masters in Archaeological Practice course undertaking a placement with the department. Entries from the various site notebooks were also organized by date, and information was organized in different categories. This will facilitate the identification of priorities for post-excavation work to be undertaken in the future.

The ongoing monitoring of the environmental conditions and biological activity in the **Hal Saflieni Hypogeum** was continued to ensure the site's long-term preservation. This included liaising with the contractor engaged in the upkeep and maintenance of the monitoring equipment installed at the site and who carry out monthly inspections and maintenance works. Active and preventive conservation measures to limit the impact of biological organisms on the preservation of the site have also been carried out, including visual monitoring of species, their location and spread, cleaning of black mould and discussions on various conservation measures. In addition, research remained ongoing on various methods to limit, and where possible, eliminate causes of deterioration.

Following the lease of a government-owned property adjacent to the Hal Saflieni Hypogeum to HM, the property was cleared and cleaned, and pest-control carried out in it. A part of it is now being refurbished for use as a staff room for staff on duty at the site. The intention for the property is to eventually integrate it with the rest of the site by housing additional interpretation, visitor and staff facilities. The collaboration between HM and St Martin's Institute of IT continued to be strengthened. The virtual tour of the Hal Saflieni Hypogeum launched in 2019 continued to be enhanced and developed and is now exploring further developments using AI for a more interactive and innovative virtual experience of the site. Discussions on the possibilities of giving live virtual tours of the site using the virtual tour as a platform for presenting and discussing information about the site also took place and will result in the first such tour being held in 2024. This was accompanied with the launch of a project for the recording and archiving of the aural history of the site as part of the Memorja Project in collaboration with the National Archives of Malta. Further marketing of this initiative and data collection will take place throughout 2024. The senior curator also co-authored an article on equality in the Neolithic, Equality and Survival in Neolithic Malta as part of a HM publication, [Be]Loved Malta; Stories of Sexual and Gender Identity published on the occasion of the Europride Valletta.

2023 saw the preparation of the Periodic Report for the Maltese Islands as required by UNESCO.

Periodic Reporting is a core monitoring mechanism of the World Heritage Convention whereby every eight years each State Party is invited to submit a report on the application of the World Heritage Convention to the World Heritage Committee. Following reports submitted in 2006 and 2015, as part of this process, a Periodic Report was prepared for the Hal Saflieni Hypogeum World Heritage Site and submitted to the World Heritage Committee. Furthermore, in line with the Operational Guidelines of the World Heritage Convention, an update report on the works and condition of the Hal Saflieni Hypogeum was submitted to the UNESCO Ambassador for his endorsement and submission to the UNESCO World Heritage Committee. A proposal for a Minor Boundary Modification which will see the recognition of a buffer zone for the Hal Saflieni Hypogeum was submitted to the UNESCO Technical Committee for endorsement and submission to the UNESCO World Heritage Committee.

Following the purchase of land adjacent to, and in the vicinity of the **Borġ in-Nadur Prehistoric Complex** in 2022, HM is now in the process of purchasing land adjacent to the Neolithic remains. This will provide direct access from the Neolithic remains to the Bronze Age ones. While the promise of sale was signed this year, purchase will be completed in 2024.

The focal point of action at the **Ta' Mintna Catacombs** has been geared towards conservation. The proximity of private residences, either constructed on or adjacent to the catacombs, presents a unique challenge. Investigations have unveiled an almost horizontal fissure along the walls of the catacombs, a condition that is progressively deteriorating over time. One of the major factors contributing to the structural deterioration is the weight exerted by private vehicles. Discussions are underway with the Mqabba Local Council to devise a viable resolution to this pressing concern, by installing bollards to deter parking directly atop the complex, thereby alleviating the structural strain inflicted upon the catacombs. The catacombs hosted an open day on 22 October, which witnessed an encouraging turnout of visitors.

On the occasion of the European Archaeology Days (17 June) HM organised a guided tour within the precincts of the **Salini Catacombs**, which traditionally remain secluded from public access. Regrettably, a significant amount of refuse was discovered on the premises, alongside indications of recent unauthorized usage. The concerns have propelled considerations to close off the site completely. Discussions are currently underway with the present owners of the lands through which the access path passes. A notable development was the conclusion of a comprehensive 360-degree tour of the catacombs to increase virtual accessibility of the site. In a similar vein, **St Augustine Catacombs** was made accessible during events held at St Paul's Catacombs, capitalising on the influx of visitors from the larger complex. **Ta' Bistra Catacombs** continued welcoming visitors on the last Sunday of every month.

The community garden initiative at the **Abbatija tad-Dejr Catacombs** is going strong. Two tenants wished to relinquish their responsibilities and were quickly replaced by others who had previously expressed an interest in managing a plot in May. Pursuant to the notes of Sir Temi Zammit, a significant discovery was made pertaining to a well that had hitherto been obscured by the modern staircase leading to Hypogeum 4. Cleaning is currently underway.

A new display at **St Paul's Catacombs** is nearing completion. It focuses on the facial reconstruction of a skeleton discovered onsite named 'Elsa'. This multifaceted project encompasses several key components aimed at enhancing visitor engagement and experience. A monitor will serve as a digital window, offering visitors insights into Elsa's era and the reconstruction process. Complementing this visual narrative is an audio-visual component, designed to provide an immersive auditory experience. Lastly, a selfie point with Elsa will be established outside the display area, to encourage visitor engagement in a personal and memorable way. Moreover, discussions on the installation of a permanent display focusing on the three sealed Phoenician tombs from Ghajn Klieb continued. This new display will bring forward significant changes to how the visitor facilities within the site function. Another initiative is the dark tourism guidebook, focusing on Rabat and Mdina, and inviting exploration of our sites through a unique lens. Concurrently, the compilation of the St Paul's Catacombs' guidebook is also underway. At Catacomb 3, a significant issue arose when a drainage leak from a government pipeline occurred. The area was thoroughly cleaned and restored.

The restoration of the extant pieces and reconstruction of the missing parts of the altar at **San Pawl Milqi** is underway. Any development applications in the buffer area of the site are being closely monitored. The permit for the replacement of the entrance gate and boundary wall, the installation of a new walkway and a viewing platform was issued in September. Rock detachments and collapse that took place beneath the site's perimeter wall during the second half of October and blocked the road leading to the site were cleared.

By the beginning of the year under review, a number of new interpretation aids at the **Domvs Romana** were completed. These included a new information panel for the water trough outside the Domus Romana and a panel indicating the exact spot of the first-floor mosaic discovery. The HSBC Malta Foundation together with SEIFERT Ltd coordinated a Voluntary Leave Day consisting of cleaning works by around fourteen employees in March. The works focused on cleaning rubbish and removing dead vegetation from the fields across the old train station road. The exercise was also useful to have the site prepared for the coming excavations forming part of the Melite Civitas Romana Project. Participants were also given a curatorial tour of the site and an explanation of the Melite Civitas Romana Project excavations. In preparation for the continuation of the excavations in June, an amount of recent and disturbed debris reaching a height of about one metre above cultural deposits and features in Area 1 adjacent to the Domus Romana was mechanically cleared away to facilitate the archaeological excavation in that area. Thick vegetation and prickly pear trees obstructing the remaining areas across the rest of the site were also cleared away. This year's excavation was spread over four weeks: from 12 June to 7 July. The excavations during the fourth week were carried out by students from the Department of Classics and Archaeology of the University of Malta. Two tours of the excavations were held respectively on 22 and 27 June for classes from the Rabat schools. Following the tours, the students were involved in post-excavation work at St Paul's Catacombs. On 23 June, an open day with guided tours was organised for the general public while, on 28 June, another tour was organised for HM employees. A small exhibition space to highlight the Melite Civitas Romana Project excavations and their results has been proposed in the area of the old shop. Preparations are underway.

To facilitate the conservation maintenance that takes place yearly on the floor mosaics in the peristyle

area and in its adjoining areas, parts of the hand railing surrounding both peristyle area and adjacent areas were modified to allow easy and safe access to the mosaic floors for the conservators working on them. The yearly monitoring and maintenance on the mosaic floor and artefacts was carried out in June. To ensure better climatic conditions for the mosaics and for the artefacts in the peristyle area, preparations are underway to install an HVAC system and a new skylight over the floor mosaics. Data-loggers were installed to record environmental conditions.

Towards the end of April, a glass flask (Obj. ID No 100959) on display in one of the showcases was damaged when it fell off the shelf as a result of a tremor in the Rabat area. It was put back in its showcase following restoration in July. Following a number of scientific analyses on what was held to be bread found at Ta' Gawhar round tower to determine its age and the nature of its contents, preparations were taken in hand this year to have it displayed permanently at the Domus Romana. As a result of the said analyses, in fact, it was found to have been unbaked dough. In the meantime, a new showcase has been procured and installed. When complete, the showcase containing the dough will be accompanied by an audio-visual presentation highlighting the analysis which the dough went through. Furthermore, there will be also accompanying information panels and a reconstructed catillus / grain mill to highlight the process of bread making in Roman times. The reconstructed mill will be made up of a lower part currently held at the Domus Romana and an upper part from the National Museum of Archaeology which had been found in Hal Far.

In May the Digitisation Department was tasked to upload a 3D model of **Għajn Tuffieħa Roman baths** on HM's website. This model had been recently completed as part of the documentation exercise of the site prior to its backfilling in June 2021. Work at Ta' Kaċċatura was minimal, but still significant. First and foremost, work on a Management Plan for the Roman villa and cistern at **Ta' Kaċċatura** was taken in hand. This Management Plan addresses the said site within its broader context and in relation to other sites lying within its buffer area. It is expected to be submitted by the end of the same year under review. Moreover, following the issuing of the Planning Application for the repairs of all the rubble walls around the site, works have commenced with obtaining approval and finalising all the necessary documentation with the SCH prior to commencement of these works. Repair works and reconstruction of these rubble walls is expected to start in 2024.

Works at **Tas-Silġ** focused on the excavation of the small prehistoric structure uncovered during excavations in 2022. These excavations were concluded between March and April and uncovered parts of a structure, possibly originally dating to the Tarxien Period, and used extensively in the Borġ in-Nadur phase, as evident by the numerous artefacts. The structure itself is of great interest architecturally, but this can only be investigated fully once the excavation is extended further. This is not being planned as long as the road is not removed. Once completed, the excavated trenches were backfilled once again with specialised gravel to ensure preservation. Efforts on the removal of the road are still ongoing. These are being spearheaded by the SCH but HM keeps provided back-up on all aspects as and when required.

Works at **Ras-ir-Raheb** were minimal, being restricted to regular maintenance and inspections. Plans to clearly mark out the HM property are still being discussed and should be implemented in 2024. On the other hand, activity at **Bidnija** was substantial. Apart from regular maintenance and research

works being carried out in collaboration with Ambjent Malta, the most significant work was the tender issued by Ambjent Malta for the restoration of all the rubble walls of the site. Discussions ensued with all tenants concerned. Works shall spread over three years and will provide easier access to all fields, while closing off the site to people without a permit. Work should start early in 2024. Progress was also made on the research front, on which HM is collaborating with the SCH and the University of Malta. Discussions resumed on the planned excavations of the ancient structures on site, planned to start in summer 2024.

The **Archaeological Field Team** was active on various fronts. The **Xaghra Circle** Project, though primarily run by the Prehistoric Sites Department, is greatly supported by the HM Field Team. Works this year focused on post-excavation processing of the material collected thus far. Two research sessions were held: one in April and the other in November. During these sessions, 3D models of the site were rendered, documentation was organised, and work began on the osteological analysis and cataloguing of the skeletal remains extracted during the 2022 excavation season. These research periods have allowed us to confirm that the newly adopted excavation procedure is appropriate for the research questions currently being tackled. It has also enabled us to identify minor shortcomings in the methodology and rectify them before the start of the next excavation season.

The third season of the **Xrobb l-Għajin** project involved the excavation of four grids, each measuring 4m x 4m. This resulted in the further exposure of the megalithic structure and identification of the limits of a trench; likely dug during the 1914-15 excavation seasons. We are yet to find many of the megaliths forming part of the central passage, as recorded by Ashby in 1915. The suspicion is that these stones may have been removed, or perhaps collapsed into an underlying trench. This will need to be further explored during the following excavation season. One must point out that this year's season was two months shorter than planned due to delays in the delivery of the tower crane. As in previous years, the area was recorded via photogrammetry and a condition assessment of the exposed structure was carried out by conservators. Results of this evaluation will be considered while planning a strategy to lift and relocate the megaliths; thereby salvaging them from the impending cliff collapse.

Excavations at **Tas-Silġ** continued in collaboration with the Prehistoric Sites Department and the Department of Classics and Archaeology of the University of Malta. Work focused on the investigation of an apsidal megalithic structure discovered in 2021. The intention was to gain a better understanding of site-use, construction period and techniques. To accomplish this, a trench was dug, specifically positioned to incorporate not only the structure, but also a 1m width space within the structure and a 1m width space outside of the structure to identify site-use and construction techniques. The presence of a Roman cocciopesto floor covering the apsidal structure highlights that the structure was already out of use and partially dismantled during the Roman period.

Removal of the cocciopesto flooring and excavation of underlying preparation layers exposed a series of deposits within the limits of the structure, ranging in date from the Punic to Bronze Age period. The occasional shallow pit was also present, displaying evidence of multiple controlled burning activities. Unfortunately, as with many such sites, the chambers appear to be void of deposits dating to the Temple Period itself, having likely been cleared out prior to the re-use of the site by the Bronze Age population. Excavations within the structure continued down to bedrock, allowing

for the examination of the flooring material. Three distinct layers of flooring were present, possibly built up over time as repairs were needed. Post-excavation analysis of the cultural material collected from these layers should allow us to better date the various flooring activities. A rubble layer present underneath the flooring was noted to include possible stone chippings of the same geology as the megaliths, suggesting that the megaliths may have been at least partially shaped on site.

The structure is placed within a round foundation cut in the bedrock. Only the central niche and eastern apse have been exposed, as the remainder of the structure continues beyond the current limits of excavation. However, from the structures exposed thus far, we can infer that the complex is in a North-South alignment, with the entrance to the South. At this stage we were still lacking the material necessary to help us date the structure itself. It was only until one of the smaller horizontal megaliths was temporarily lifted, and the deposit immediately underneath excavated, that we were able to find possible datable material; in this case, a diagnostic pottery sherd which is pending specialist analysis. To this effect, Ms MariaElena Zammit and Prof. Davide Tanasi have been appointed as experts to study the Bronze Age Material. The other material will be studied by experts from the University of Malta and HM. Upon completion of excavation, conservators carried out a condition assessment of the megaliths and consolidated the stones as necessary. The site was covered with a protective layer of geotextile and backfilled using specialised expanded clay gravel.

Collaboration on the **Għajn Klieb** project continued between HM, the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage, the University of Malta. Regular update meetings are being held on ongoing post-excavation processing of finds, conservation treatment and research.

The **Melita Civitas Romana** project is a collaboration between HM and three foreign institutions: Intercontinental Archaeology, the University of South Florida, and the University of North Alabama. These entities are overseeing the archaeological excavation of selected areas surrounding the Domus Romana. This year also saw the participation of students from the University of Malta as part of their training programme. To cater to their training needs, the project was extended to four weeks instead of the usual three. The role of the Field Team was to assist in the set-up of the excavation including the organisation of equipment, setting up of trenches, basic surveying, supervision of the volunteers and training university students.

Excavations were very fruitful. In area 1, the main discovery was the identification of some of the edges of one of the trenches opened by Zammit in front of the museum structure in 1924, whereas on the side of the same building, a raised path was discovered, possibly meant to lead to the public garden present on the site before Zammit started excavations in 1920. Works in area 2 continued the investigation of three baulks left by Zammit with a full stratigraphic sequence now obtained from one, and the process of cleaning starting on the other two. Works also commenced on the excavation of two small trenches meant to answer questions on the large level difference between area 2 and area 3. These have not been completed and shall be continued in 2024. Area 3 was the one that provided the greatest results, with 2-metre-high walls from an unidentified structure providing the highlight of this year's dig. In area 4, works continued on clearing the section along Triq l-Istazzjon, which continued to give glimpses of the massive walls still visible beneath the soil.

The Field Team is overseeing archaeological excavations of a raised garden bed located at the back of the garden at **Villa Guardamangia**. The feature appears to be a later addition to the garden, with several re-used architectural pieces immediately visible within the stone walls forming the enclosure. The aim of the project was to excavate this raised garden bed and collect the architectural fragments to determine whether they had previously formed part of the villa, with the intention to reinstate them where possible. Among the excavated deposit fragments from a stone statue were also found. These were handed over to the conservators who determined that they had broken off from one of statues previously lining the central garden passage and currently undergoing restoration. Excavation eventually exposed two levels of flagstone floors, possibly the base of a wooden structure such as that of a henhouse, aviary, or some other form of animal pen. Works will resume next year with the excavation of a trench, with the hope of determining when the garden was built.

Members of the Field Team have been appointed as archaeological monitors for works at Ta' Kola Windmill, Hal Tarxien Prehistoric Complex, the Hagar Qim and Mnajdra Archaeological Park, Bidnija and Ta' Kacċatura. The monitors are responsible for communicating with the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage, preparing the necessary documentation, and ensuring that ongoing works on site are in line with the Cultural Heritage Act. The Field Team has also assisted with the monitoring, cleaning, surveying, and photogrammetric sessions for the trenches being excavated at the Grand Master's Palace in Valletta. The team also assisted during open days at Borġ in-Nadur and San Pawl Milqi, where visitors were taught how to knap obsidian for tool use and washed pottery respectively. Other forms of outreach include school visits as well as 'bone sessions' carried out in collaboration with the Education and Outreach Department and the National Museum of Natural History.

Members of the Field Team assisted the Department of Classics and Archaeology of the University of Malta and students of the Global Maritime Archaeology programme with the survey campaign in Marsaxlokk. The main aim of the fieldwork was to document and map in high resolution, and, for the first time, the submerged remains of the area known as il-Maghluq. The field team followed and collected the topographic documentation by means of a robotic total station and with the GNSS.

Members of the Field Team contributed with the preparation of maps in GIS format, outlining boundaries of the six components that make up the inscription 'The Megalithic Temples of Malta' and their respective buffer zones. These maps were requested by the UNESCO World Heritage Centre as part of the Retrospective Inventory. The team was also involved in the creation of the Heritage Malta Gis Platform. The main aim of this project is to centralize all the geographical data within all the HM Departments in one main platform and allow every user to visualize, analyze, and interpret them. Phase I of this project commenced with the creation and setting up of the main GIS structure and with the uploading of the main resources into a dedicated server. Following this task the platform started to be populated accordingly.

The team was also involved in the design for the new display case for the skeletal remains of 'Elsa' at St Paul's Catacombs, the ongoing research on the skulls from the Hal Saflieni Hypogeum, including the selection of samples for chemical analysis, the post-excavation works for past excavation of St Augustine's Catacombs, monitoring filming works at Abbatija tad-Dejr, and drafting of several chapters of the 'Malta Archaeological Manual'.

Underwater Cultural Heritage Unit

Two other sites have been added to the Underwater Malta Virtual Museum platform, www.underwatermalta.org, namely the SS Polynesian and the Xlendi Underwater Archaeological Park. Documentation for the launch of future sites was carried out throughout the diving season in preparation for the launch of new sites in 2024. Visitor numbers during the year reached 21,900. This is a significant increase from previous years. The top visiting countries being Malta, UK, US, France, and Germany.

The popularity of underwater sites was confirmed this year as follows:

Site	Number of divers
B24 Liberator	63
JU88	22
JU88 - south	1
L72	29
Nasturtium	87
Polynesian	238
Schnellboot	45
Southwold Bow	66
Southwold stern	25
Spitfire	5
Xlendi Park	9
Trusty Star	3

Dive School/Club	No. of divers	Amount
Atlantis Diving Centre	69	769
Dive Systems W.S. LTD	85	1180
DiveWise	176	1800
Maltaqua	2	30
Orange Shark Diving Centre	2	30
Seashell Dive Centre	19	180
Technical Diving Malta LTD.	41	377
Underwater Enterprises LTD	35	564
Water World Malta	29	274
Atlam dive club	106	N/A
Calypso dive club	22	N/A
Total	586	5204

Regular patrols were carried out at sea at HM underwater sites. These patrols serve to ensure that no illegal diving or fishing activities are taking place, while patrols are also carried out during permitted dives to ensure that divers are complying with terms and conditions. The UCHU is currently planning drone courses for early 2024 to add offshore drone patrols to site monitoring and protection.

The third season of fieldwork on the Tower Wreck Project proceeded in July. The aim was to continue with the documentation of the site. Since 2021, a total of 12,895m² has been surveyed and documented (fig. 3). The installation of the CCTV system and the solar panels on the Xlendi tower was completed and are now operational (fig. 4-5). Panels for the public display at the Xlendi Tower were installed and the tower is now open to the public (fig. 6).

The Malta International Airport Foundation sponsorship for the launch of the **Xlendi deep-water archaeological park** was announced. The park was officially launched in a public ceremony in Xlendi bay on 8 August. Banners were set up along the Xlendi waterfront (fig. 7). An outdoor photographic exhibition was set up in the Xlendi car park. This will be installed annually in Spring-Autumn (fig. 8). Documentation was prepared for the valorisation of the site, including its archaeological, historical, natural, and socio-economic value. The Park was also launched on the virtual museum Underwater Malta. A Zodiac rib was procured and will be used exclusively to monitor and manage the park. The zodiac is currently at Head Office awaiting finalisation of its protective covers (fig. 9). Several presentations on the Xlendi Underwater Archaeological Park were held as part of the outreach for the Park.

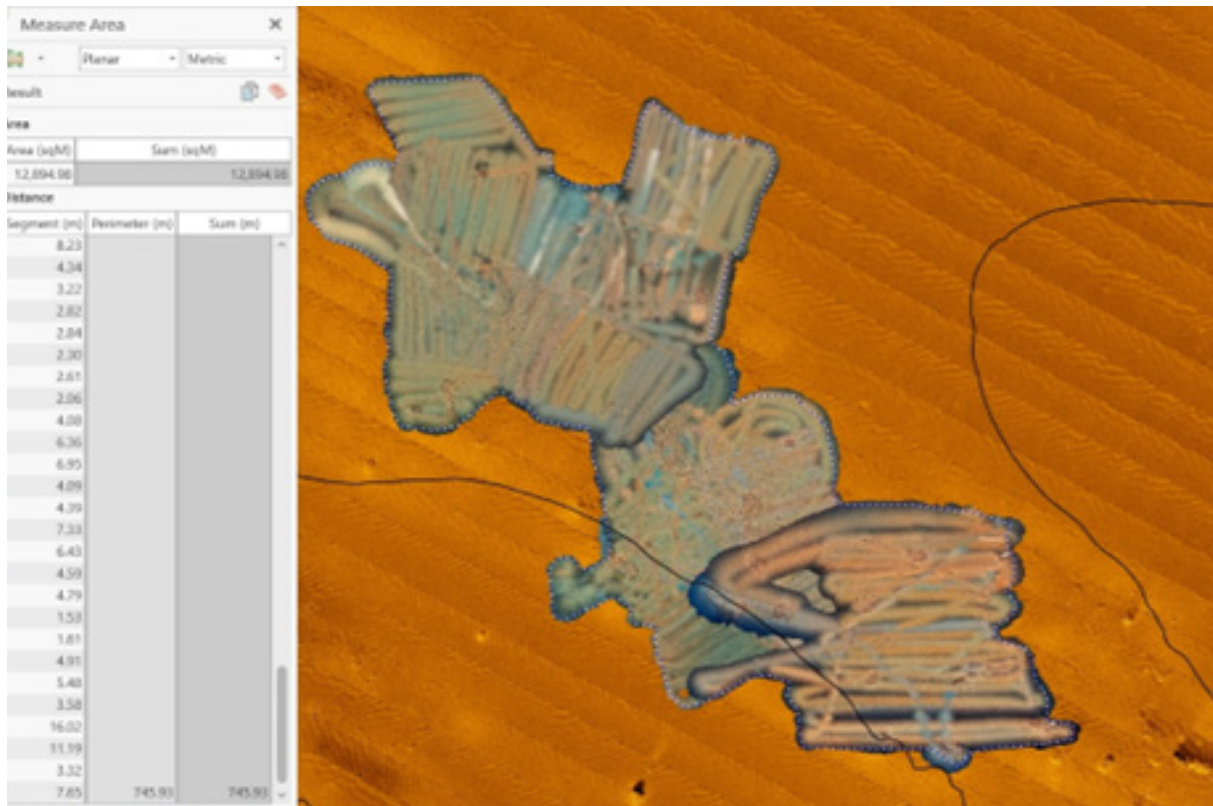


Fig. 3: Total area surveyed 2021-23



Fig. 4: CCTV camera installed on the roof of the Xlendi Tower



Fig. 5: HM and Munxar local council solar panels on the roof



Fig. 6: HM public display in the lower level of the tower



Fig.7: Banners installed on the Xlendi waterfront.



Fig. 8: Outdoor exhibition in the Xlendi carpark



Fig. 9: Zodiac rib procured for the park

The UCHU organised three fieldwork projects and participated in another two projects organised by the Maritime Archaeology Programme at the University of Malta. The sampling of sediments around historic wreck sites started in March. This is an ongoing project in collaboration with Basecamp Research following the signing of a collaboration agreement with HM. Permits were obtained from ERA and the Continental Shelf Department and a total of six sites were sampled. The purpose of the sediment sampling project is to gain an understanding of how these wrecks are impacting the surrounding environment and vice versa. From the sediment samples, environmental DNA (eDNA) will be extracted, which will then be shipped to Basecamp in the UK for further analysis (fig. 10). In May scientists from Basecamp Research travelled to Malta to setup a mobile eDNA extraction lab at HM head offices. This is part of the collaboration agreement with Basecamp and the purpose of the mobile lab is to allow HM to become independent in the sampling and eDNA extraction process.

May saw the 3D photogrammetric survey of the ORP Kujawiak (L72), a Polish destroyer from the Second World War and a historic wreck under the management of HM. The survey was completed successfully. The 3D documentation is carried out as part of UCHU's valorisation of underwater cultural heritage sites as well as producing material for public outreach purposes. <https://sketchfab.com/3d-models/l72-final-45b45d509f904f14bbfd9ff1cd87822d>

UCHU personnel participated in the Salina Bay excavation in June, an underwater training excavation conducted for students sitting for the MA in Global Maritime Archaeology. UCHU personnel assisted in the organisation of the project as well as in diving operations.

In July the UCHU also carried out several dives on the Renaissance Wreck. This site was first discovered in 2020 with the AUV operated by UM but had never been dived before. Located off the Sannat Cliffs at a depth of 126m, diving operations necessitated a lot of logistical planning and coordination between all members of the team. The dives on this site formed part of a documentary that HM contracted in 2020.



Fig. 10: Diver collecting sediment samples from around the Schnellboot S-31

The **Dive into History 360 project** is a collaboration between the UCHU and the Digitisation Unit. The experience that is offered at schools in Malta and Gozo includes a 15-20-minute presentation on

maritime archaeology and underwater cultural heritage in Malta, followed by the 360 experience (fig. 7). A circular was distributed, and several schools, local councils and associations responded positively. The UCHU has until now hosted around seventy such events. Feedback forms are being distributed after events and an exact count of participants is being kept. Dive into history 360 was also brought to the Boot fair in Dusseldorf in January as part of the MTA stand and part of the UCHU stand at EUDI Dive show in Bologna in October.



Fig. 7: Dive into History 360 session held at a school in Pembroke in April.

The UCHU was granted the third floor of the Fortification Interpretation Centre at Valletta to use as office and lecturing space. The space has been used for a number of outreach events; including events for the Deaf Association, the Malta Archaeological Society and InventaLand. A talk on HMS Urge was organised on the 81st anniversary of its loss. Objects from this year's Salina Bay excavation were transferred to the Underwater Conservation Lab, together with metal and ceramic objects recovered from the Renaissance wreck. The organisation of a GIS database for maritime sites is actively being populated by UCHU personnel. To-date approximately 200 sites have been added to the database. UCHU personnel also lectured on the MA in Global Maritime Archaeology on the management of UCH in Malta and the curation of an underwater virtual museum. UCHU team members travelled to Haifa, Israel to deliver two presentations on the excavation of the Phoenician shipwreck, and the management of underwater cultural heritage in Malta. This was followed by diving activities in the ancient harbour of Caesarea, where the Maltese delegation led a workshop on photogrammetric documentation.

Other initiatives worthy of mention were the publication of various articles on both popular and academic publications, the launch of Ship Graffiti website - <https://maltashipgraffiti.org/>, participation in the Lungomare Festival of Diplomacy event organised in Rome in October, with a presentation on underwater cultural heritage and the environment, and the organisation and hosting of Rebreather Forum 4 held at the Old Campus of the University of Malta with the participation of leading rebreather manufacturers and consumers. The event was over a week in Malta and included the option for participants to dive in Malta and/or Gozo the week prior to or after the event. Local dive centres hosted those participants that were interested in diving and several of these opted to explore HM's historic wrecks - <https://rebreatherforum.tech/>

HISTORY

During May, the Gozo curatorial team embarked on a visual assessment exercise of the condition of the permanent display at **Ta' Kola Windmill**. Further discussions were held with the Inorganics Conservation Lab to identify a possible way forward to address conservation problems on the display artefacts in the miller's workshop. The tool collection on permanent display at Ta' Kola Windmill was cross-referenced with the site inventory, identifying particular tools that were not properly listed, and filling out any missing data. This paved the way for the eventual photography of the artefacts and also of the windmill's grinding mechanism, which was never professionally photographed since the restoration project. Regular housekeeping activities were carried out both at Ta' Kola Windmill and at the **Gran Castello Historic House** – two period houses with open displays which require regular cleaning of artefacts that are exposed to dust. These activities were carried out with the assistance of MCAST apprentices in Heritage Skills based in Gozo. Two interventions were also carried out onsite on two separate 'graffiti' made by visitors recently. The treatment was applied to minimise the visibility of these scratches.

The permanent display at the Historic House continued to be improved by the addition of new artefacts and furniture. A wooden platform for the wine barrels display was manufactured in-house. The area representing household activities including weaving was relocated to another room, while a birthing room was reconstructed in the room originally occupied by the weaving loom. These changes took place in September following the acquisition of a fine 18th-century wrought-iron bed that was placed in the children's bedroom. A scullery was also reconstructed in a room supplied by water by means of a well, and previously occupied by showcases exhibiting clay statuettes of traditional trades. Three pairs of handwoven curtains, woven in the traditional manner on a weaving loom, were produced by local weaver Alda Bugeja. These were hung in the main bedroom of the central domestic unit, as well as in the scullery. Draft audio-guide text for the entire experience at the Gran Castello Historic House was submitted in August. Research was carried out to locate several archive images of the premises and a short video was produced for the permanent display, in connection with the 40th anniversary celebrations from the inauguration of the Folklore Museum.

Digitisation of the same display was resumed and brought to completion. All items on display were properly catalogued, labelled, and professionally photographed. A Digital Arts student worked from the Gozo Area Office once a week during summer. Towards the end of her job exposure, she provided the Gozo curatorial team with 3D plans of the Gran Castello Historic House, which will eventually be used as an orientation tool for visitors. Wood conservator Michael Formosa from MCAST paid a visit to the Gran Castello Historic House in January. He was accompanied by three students in Heritage Skills who have chosen wood as their main subject of interest in conservation techniques. They were provided with a guided tour of the site, followed by an onsite lecture dedicated to wooden artefacts, frames and apertures.

In May, HM launched a new website about historic ship graffiti forming part of Malta's rich maritime heritage. A selection of maritime graffiti from the **Old Prison** can now be enjoyed by the general public through this website. A Masters student in Heritage Interpretation with the Institute of Tourism Studies, Joanne Vella, conducted her student placement in Gozo between October 2022 and

November. She held meetings with several teachers in Gozitan schools, providing useful insights from teachers regarding the difficulties they encounter when visiting local museums. She also reviewed the national curriculum where local history is concerned, and made useful observations and cross-relations between HM's Gozo sites and museum collections and the curriculum itself. Towards the end of her placement, she carried out audience research at the Old Prison.

At the Gozo Museum of Archaeology, the permanent display of the classical period was enhanced by the addition of a Gozo coin of the 1st century BC bearing the legend 'GAYLITON'.

Gozo curatorial staff featured in the series 'Treasure to Meet You'. The senior curator focused on a watercolour view of Rabat seen from Sannat, by British artist Edward Lear, dated 1866. The Principal Curator Phoenician, Roman and Medieval sites focused on a Punic/Late Roman lead anchor stock with astragals that hold a superstitious meaning. The Principal Curator for Xaghra Sites spoke about a ceramic sherd from Ġgantija bearing incised birds decoration. A research paper focusing on the works of Henry Mayo Bateman (1887-1970) was published in the summer issue of the Treasures of Malta by the senior curator.

Gozo curatorial staff attended two workshops at the Digitisation Unit in January and March respectively, focusing on the new Collections Management System (CMS). Another workshop was held in Gozo in April. Since some of the Gozo Collections, especially the archaeological collection, have been digitised in their entirety (excluding the reserve collection), this facilitated migration of data from Fotoware to CMS. Transfer of data of the Gozo Museum of Archaeology permanent display was also initiated.

Following a comprehensive bat survey carried out in the Ċittadella between April and June 2022 by Ric Smith, an amateur volunteer in the study of Chiroptera fauna and Echolocation, three acoustic detectors were installed in the Ġgantija grounds in May and June. These will help assess bat activity in the area under consideration. This is part of a wider research project being carried out to collect data on bat species and their presence across Gozo.

The Huntingford library collection continued being catalogued between January and August, with the assistance of the MCAST apprentices, totalling over 1050 entries. These include architectural journals, reference books on architecture and art history, encyclopaedias, books on English literature, history books, and others. All material was organised in the original bookcases belonging to Perit Huntingford himself. The ex-Gozo Area Office on St Martin's Quarter Street in the Ċittadella now houses a substantial part of the reserve collection – with most artefacts being earmarked for the Gozo Museum, the Huntingford collection, the Gozo Reference Library, as well as a space dedicated to digitisation of artefacts. Dehumidifiers were installed to keep the climate better controlled.

During summer, the MCAST apprentices prepared acid-free paper sleeves for thirty volumes of the Malta Government Gazette forming part of the Gozo Reference Library. They also helped organise and label ethnographic items in the reserve collection. They produced a few custom-made storage boxes for artefacts in conservation-grade cardboard and helped reorganise a number of liturgical

vestments in the reserve collection in conservation-grade storage boxes. In July, the Gozo Area Office purchased a professional scanner. This enabled the scanning, in high resolution, of close to 2000 slides belonging to Perit Joseph Huntingford. This task was carried out by a new MCAST apprentice who joined the team in July. A number of medieval artefacts that formed part of the temporary exhibition 'An Island in Transition, 700 to 1700 AD' organised last year, were transferred from the Victoria stores to the Ċittadella in February. The material was better organised in labelled crates, and the cooking pots were studied during June by representatives from HM and the University of Malta, as part of an ongoing research project. A basic catalogue was drawn up of the paintings, prints and drawings collection. The works were also labelled with the respective catalogue and object numbers.

On 7 July, the Planning Authority upgraded the status of **Fort Delimara** as a Grade I Structure. Research was continued throughout this year. A visit to the Royal Artillery Museum at Salisbury, UK, yielded more historical documents on the history of the fort between the late 19th century and the Second World War. Cataloguing of historical graffiti on site was also carried out. The text for the publication of the site's guidebook was submitted in December. The collection of Fort Delimara increased by one item during this year: a historical 1938 crest commemorating the gun crew of one of the fort's breech loading guns, found in situ within the parade ground. The site suffered no intrusions or vandalism during the period under review. However, the police reports lodged in 2020 are still open and unsolved.

No. 3 & No. 4 guns were given full conservation treatment, together with all metal features in the casemates tunnel, communication passage and barrack block. Three military stone crests at the main entrance were also conserved and consolidated.



Research on the history of **Fort St Angelo** progressed further following a trip to the Royal Artillery Museum in Salisbury, UK, in March, which yielded more information about the British history of the fort, including new historical images. Another research project entailed the documentation of historical

graffiti found on site. Concurrently, the historical maps' inventory of the site comprises a total of 749 maps. The inventory of historical images of the site comprises a total of 1,492. Two objects were added to the fort's collection, which now totals 451 items. These included the purchase of a historic document and the donation of a Royal Navy summer uniform set presented by Mr Spiridione Cassar (FSA/451).



Interpretation around **Fort St Elmo** was augmented. Two historical stone crests which originally adorned one of the gardjolas on the Carafa enciente were relocated on site from the National Museum of Archaeology, while a new audio-visual was set up at Abercrombie bastion focusing on the Italian attack on the Grand Harbour of 26 July 1941.



Research on the site's history continued. More transcripts of original documents researched at the National Archives UK were procured. A trip to the Royal Artillery Museum in Salisbury, UK, yielded more historical images and documents on the history of the Fort between the mid-19th century and the Second World War. Cataloguing of historical graffiti on site was done. Concurrently, the historical maps' inventory of the site comprises a total of 359 maps. The inventory of historical images of the site comprises 279 files. A study of all items within the National War Museum collection was conducted to identify items which have a direct association with Fort St Elmo. Through this effort, a total of 399 items were marked and catalogued. An item related to Fort St Elmo donated this year was the original Fort Record Book (FSE/398) of which a copy had already existed in the archives. The HM Official Guidebook on Fort St Elmo was published in September.



With respect to the **Malta Maritime Museum**, the main aims of the Collections Management System (CMS) were to upload catalogue records into TMS, and thus testing and setting up the back-end of the system; and present these records into the eMuseum, thus testing and setting up the front-end of the system. Priority was given to those objects which will feature in the exhibition 'An Island at the Crossroads', and the digitisation of the Dockyard portion of the exhibition. These were digitised using professional photography, 3D scanning or photogrammetry, and 2D scanning in the case of archival material. These items were also catalogued according to the museum's inventory system, using cataloguing standards and terminology. In addition, catalogue records of objects that were digitised in previous years (2021-22) were also migrated into TMS. This was approached by Object Type, such as badges and paintings, as well as archival material such as photo albums and ship logbooks. So far, circa 650 records have been imported into TMS. This process will keep on well into 2024. Since audio-visual material, such as interviews, will also be uploaded into the CMS, it was essential to identify a cataloguing method for these assets. It was decided that the nomenclature MMM.AVx, where AV is Audio Visual and x is the number consecutively starting from 1, will be used. This will be in line with other Object Types in the museum collection which require a unique identifier, an example being rare books, which carry the nomenclature MMM.RBx.

A major part of the work conducted by the curatorial team this year was the conclusion of the Jimmy Farrugia bequest. Some of the donated objects have already been collected and will be catalogued next year. The temporary closure of the museum gave the models workshop the opportunity to carry

out several restoration tasks on models that were on display and those chosen to be included in the next exhibition. The Light Frigate Hull (MMM 000576) and the Dockyard Catamaran (MMM 000118) models underwent restoration. The former model was one of the last models restored by the late Joseph Muscat, however certain interventions from 2010 had started to cause problems to the model and have now been reversed. The model of a Maltese Galley (MMM 000588) was loaned for a temporary exhibition on the Langue of Italy at MUŻA. A special jig was designed to hold the model in place inside a transport box. With assistance from an apprentice from the MCAST Heritage Skills course, the sailor art model of HMS Hood (MMM 005042) underwent restoration and cleaning, while every model featuring in the exhibition 'An island at the crossroads' was cleaned. The process of integrating the collection into the CMS proceeded briskly. A system of classification was devised to distinguish between various model types, along with the procedure of appending appropriate metadata. The process of determining the scale in percentage terms for all models chosen for the MMM exhibition has begun with a scientific analysis. The remaining sections of the collection that contain scale models will also include these additional metadata. The Gharghar Gun Battery diorama project is nearing completion and will be on display next year. New information and research discovered have been incorporated into the diorama, and additional metadata has been gathered to complement an interactive kiosk in the future.

The salient work of the two boat restorers was the restoration work on a kajjikk and the restoration of the frame of a traditional firilla, considered to be the oldest full-sized boat in the national collection. The Dghajsa tal-Latini project also continued, but at a lesser pace in view of the upcoming exhibition. The expertise of the boat restoration staff was also instrumental for the transfer (as part of a donation) of a frejgatina from Gozo. The boat has unique qualities in view of its build and use, and was always a missing link in the national collection. It now completes the frejgatina types which are housed in the national collection. The boat workshop was transferred to a new location in view of the current works.

The **National War Museum** was particularly busy on the publications front this year. Considering that there was a total lack of general information on the military history of Malta from pre-history to 1530, the curator published a series of five papers on the military history of Malta from Prehistory to Late Middle Ages on Treasures of Malta. Two articles on the Mgarr pillboxes were also published, while the official guide book of the museum was published. The soft bound version was sold out and had to be reprinted again. The curator also published several articles on various aspects of WWII on local newspapers and Maltese Band Club booklets.

The curator is being assisted by an Italian researcher conducting research in three Italian military archives, namely the Ufficio Storico della Marina, Aeronautica and Esercito. The research is being done to find any documents and other material about the Italian Fascist activities and action against Malta in WWII. Much material was already digitised and research is still being carried out.

Members of the British Army 1st Mercian Regiment visited Malta to view the Cheshire concrete crest at the premises of the old museum. They held a one minute silence to pray for their former wartime comrades in Malta in WWII. Australian authors who researched all the names of Maltese ANZACs contacted the museum about any information about the same subject. Unfortunately, the answer was in the negative, but they kindly forwarded a copy of all their researched material about the Maltese

ANZACs and their wartime service.

The medals of Chief Petty Officer Paul Camilleri, who had served on the Polish submarine ORP Sokol, were temporarily exhibited at Warsaw, Poland at the Royal Lazienki Palace. Several other NWM artefacts were also loaned to be part of Women in WWII exhibition at Balzan, while five Greek vases from the museum's display were exhibited temporarily at the National Museum of Archaeology. In October the HMS Indomitable bell was loaned to the British High Commission during a service held at the Anglican St Paul's co-Cathedral in the morning and later at the residence of the British High Commissioner at Naxxar, to commemorate those who served on HMS Bedouin (which was lost) and HMS Indomitable, which participated in Malta convoys.

Mr Adrian Davis from Australia was so impressed with the Convoy Operation 'Pedestal' section at the National War Museum that he donated a portrait of his uncle Captain Dudley Mason, the skipper of the tanker ss. Ohio. Two ERASMUS interns volunteered to work for three months at the museum, mainly on listing of reserve collection artefacts boxes, translating German documents and transcribing documents. Collaboration with the Malta Aviation Museum continued on the reconstruction of Gloster Sea Gladiator N5519 CHARITY. Members of the Aviation Museum came often to the museum to take measurements and dimensions of several parts of our Gloster Sea Gladiator N5520 FAITH. The Aviation Museum is aiming to reconstruct CHARITY in flying condition.

During the year, the Historical Re-enactment Group of Malta (HRGM) were permitted to use the Piazza d'Armi. They wore the uniform of the Reggimento di Malta and performed marching and weapons drills in the proper place where a detachment of the real regiment was stationed at Fort St Elmo, until Malta fell in June 1798. The curator was interviewed by both local and foreign TV stations. One of the interviews was broadcasted on FLiving TV station, about the commemoration of Remembrance Day on 7 November at the Memorial of the National War Museum. It was addressed by the Minister for the National Heritage, the Arts and Local Government and the senior curator.

This year was marked by a number of publications for the **National War Museum Archives**. A HM hardback publication consisting of material almost totally from the National War Museum Archives has been published and is selling well. The diary of leading airman Ben Jinks, with the title The War in Malta As I Saw It, has been rediscovered by volunteer David Vassallo while cataloguing the land section within the Donation fond. Jinks' very human way of narrating 1942 and 1943 is the perfect showcase for what the archives stand for. The publication is full of varied material from different collections within the archives. The archives have also provided most of the images for another book published by HM. Tifkriet tal-Gwerra features interviews with people who have lived through the war. It is lavishly illustrated, almost solely from the National War Museum Archives – a true testament to the variety of material found within this repository.

Apart from activities for school children, the archives have also hosted different groups who were shown material deemed to be of interest to that group, such as the George Cross Island Association, who visited the archives in April. This was followed by the Royal Army Dentistry Corps and Spero (a group for the visually impaired) in May, and the British Residents' Association in October. A talk for members was organised in December, focusing on Christmas stories from the War Museum Archives

from WWI and WWII.

In October the British High Commission held a ceremony in order to commemorate the inclusion of HMS Indomitable and HMS Bedouin on the naval memorial at St Paul's Anglican Cathedral. A ceremony was held at the memorial followed by a small reception at the residence of the British Commissioner. The National War Museum Archives provided images and footage related to HMS Indomitable which was screened during the reception. This occasion also prompted a search within the archives for material about HMS Bedouin whereupon it was discovered that we have no catalogued material whatsoever related to this destroyer. In order to amend this, contacts with relatives of crew members of the ship was made. Thanks to this occasion an interview was held with a family member who had done a great lot of research about the ship on which her grandfather used to serve. Other relatives sent us biographies and photographs and this material was added to our repository.

Several donations were also registered. Of note is the letter by a Greek prisoner of war in Malta at WWI in which prison conditions are discussed. A letter sent by a crew member who went through the Illustrious attack in 1941 is another prized donation. The original Fort St Elmo Army book discovered at the Fort after the takeover by the Maltese Government was also donated (we had previously held only a copy of it). Some material was sent for fumigation.

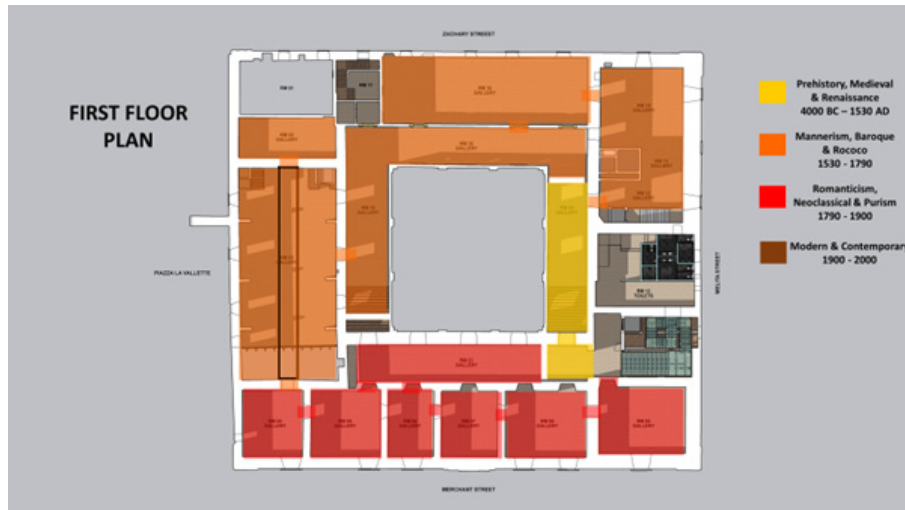
The Maltapost digitization project is now in its second year, and almost half of the film negatives have been processed. Internal digitization has also continued with material of a manageable size being digitized at the National War Museum itself and other material being processed by the Digitisation Unit. An increase in the number of researchers consulting the archives has been registered this year. The requests have been varied – from seasoned researchers to notaries researching the history of a property on behalf of their clients. The goal for next year is to make the Archives of the National War Museum better known to the general public and to start making some of its holdings accessible online.

Research continued unabated concerning **Villa Guardamangia** and its owners, which have now been traced to the late eighteenth century, while the restoration of the surviving appliances and stone statues adorning the garden have been completed. A small excavation in the garden, behind the staircase previously leading to the elevated walkway, has shed information on the garden's use along the years. On 10 February the property was visited by the British foreign affairs minister and the British high commissioner, accompanied by the Maltese foreign affairs minister.

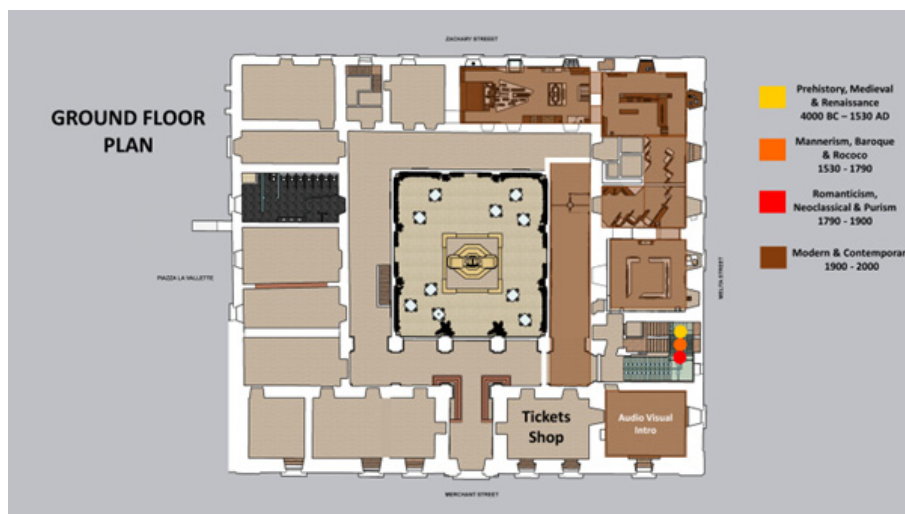
The general reorganisation of the displays at **MUŻA** has commenced with the reinterpretation of two galleries: The 'Island with a View' gallery as part of the 'Empire' narrative has been revisited following the erection of the three dividing walls in the first-floor galleries which create a fixed route. The new gallery, in the same space FF_RM_21, renamed 'Views of an Island', was finished early in the year. It has been reinterpreted to mimic the route that a 19th-century traveller would take when visiting Malta and Gozo. Some finishing touches, such as sub-section panels, are still in progress. This will be one of the last galleries that visitors will walk through in the new route. The former 'Religion and Ritual' gallery in area FF_RM_20, which formed part of the 'Mediterranean' narrative, has been replaced with the new 'Pre-history to Renaissance' section of the museum. Items from the archaeological and Gozo collections were loaned to MUŻA to showcase the birth and development of art from prehistory, to

classical, Arabic and Medieval sections.

In order to implement the changes in these two galleries, access to some areas of the museum was blocked off temporarily and the route modified until the galleries' rehanging was finalised in May. These two new galleries feature the new colour-coding of the museum route, with four sections divided by period, featuring four colours used in the new interpretation panels and captions.



The route on the first floor now starts from the Prehistory to Renaissance section, through to the Baroque and 19th-century galleries. Due to the changes, whereby the route is no longer selected by the visitor, stickers with colour-coded arrows have been placed on the floors so visitors can follow the fixed route. The museum experience still starts on the ground floor with the Modern art section and continues on first floor as the movement of the turnstiles to the museum shop/reception, leading to the planned orientation room and the stairs to the first gallery upstairs, has not been implemented yet. Once done, the ground floor modern and contemporary galleries will be restructured to accompany the planned route below and will be the final part of the museum experience.



Two large glass partitions with doors have been placed in the ground floor corridors which are currently part of the public space. These are in preparation for when they will be closed to create the final contemporary art gallery that completes the museum experience, once future planned restructuring continues and is finalised. The bronze sculpture 'Les Gavroches' by Sciortino was moved forward closer to the current turnstiles so that the glass partition could be erected behind it. The monitors on the ground floor have been removed from their former locations close to the turnstiles. Two were placed at the Merchants' Street entrance leading to the courtyard while the others, which will be placed at the beginning of each museum section, are currently in storage. One audiovisual will be dedicated to a brief history of the national art collection, while the other will focus on the history of the Auberge d'Italie. Scripts have been finalised and supporting images have also been put together.

The ground floor unisex restrooms, originally conceived to be available to the general public, was creating significant problems with the upkeep, and were installed with an access-code system whereby the restrooms can only be accessed by museum visitors, who have the code printed on their entrance tickets, and by restaurant customers who are given the code by personnel.

With respect to **collections**, with the assistance of the Inorganic Objects Conservation Laboratory, our collection of decorative artefacts, including ecclesiastical silverware, snuff boxes, needle and toothpick cases, jewellery, medals, pocket watches, silver cutlery and other small objects, were organised and stored in the reserve collection drawers with silver cloth lining and Plastazote partitions and sealed under glass. These conservation-grade materials ensure that the items will not stain while in storage.

Due to the continuous growth of the museum collection, including large installations forming part of recent acquisitions, and numerous works being brought from Government institutions, a plan to extend the reserve collection to accommodate more artworks was initiated. Towards the end of the year, the museum ordered additional wall meshes and pull-out painting racks to be installed in the inner room of the current reserve collection area. The large shelving racks in this room will be moved to the adjacent room which used to house the library and which now houses the plan chests for unframed works on paper and the archives in the upper mezzanine. These racks will be used to store large sculpture, furniture and packed installations.

Throughout the year, the Book and Paper Conservators have been opening, measuring and assessing the condition of the various rolled works on paper in different sizes which form part of the reserve collection. These include large drawings and plans by Antonio Sciortino for his 'Monument to the Unknown Soldier' project. This information will enable us to plan for and implement suitable storage solutions for their better preservation and accessibility.

A substantial number of artworks which have been in the collection for years but had not been registered were catalogued with new inventory cards containing photos. Works were organised for better storage wherever possible. The catalogued works include hundreds of 19th-century drawings by Pietro Paolo and Raffaele Caruana, modern works on paper by local and international artists which entered the collection following exhibitions in the last five decades or so, artworks acquired through the Contemporary Art Fund 5557, and works transferred from other government buildings. New acquisitions were also recorded in Object Entry Forms and catalogued as per above. Contemporary

Video Art Works which were acquired throughout the years were listed and saved in HM's server which will later form part of the CMS.

Additional humidity and temperature sensors were installed on the bridge and in the ex-library. Their data can be accessed remotely by the Preventive Conservation Unit. Remote access issues with the Building Management System software made it difficult to maintain constant monitoring throughout the year. The dehumidifiers in the building were adjusted as humidity levels changed with the seasons. The two large dehumidifiers installed in the Camerone and in the Mattia Preti Gallery proved to be inefficient in controlling humidity levels. Discussions regarding finding a new permanent solution for environmental control at MUŻA are underway. The algorithm installed to maintain the ACs at a standard temperature automatically was also inefficient.

The paper-drying room on the second floor has been in use all year. The first batch of items with mould which had been stored in the reserve collection was placed in the room and the humidity was lowered gradually with the aim of drying out the mould. This was partially efficient as, as the paper dried, some of the mould also dried up but other types of mould seemed to be resistant. It was decided to treat the artworks with alcohol to remove the mould. The humidity is being gradually raised to reach a stable level that matches the reserve collection where they will be placed in the cleaned drawers under glass. Once this is finalised, we will start putting the contents of one of the plan-chests in the paper-drying room. The air purifier in the paper-drying room was always kept switched on. Air sampling to determine if and what type of mould is present in the reserve collection rooms will be done in 2024. UV filters were installed on the glass of the wooden doors and windows in the second-floor corridor. This was done to reduce any potential light damage to works of art in this space.

In view of the increasing number of contemporary art works within the collection, urgent measures are required. With the assistance of an intern specialised in Contemporary and Conservation Rosanna Sage, a small project in relation with this matter materialised. Sage researched the collection and selected a number of works as case studies. Further research was done on the material, current state and possible easy forward to better conserve each piece. This project was presented to HM's conservation team in the first quarter.

Digitisation of artworks continued throughout the year. This included digitisation of requests for images for research, publication and reproduction from internal and external parties, works sent on loan to exhibitions to be included in catalogues and related material, approximately 150 old master drawings, recto, verso and over a light sheet to record watermarks, temporary exhibitions and newly acquired artworks, other unframed works on paper, and inputting of metadata and organising images on Fotoware by interns and volunteers.

The Malta Study Center at the Hill Museum and Manuscript Library agreed to provide the images of MUŻA's old master drawings digitised in 2017-18 to be used on the microsite about such drawings which will be launched mid-2024 and for inclusion in our future online Collections Management System. They have made their images freely available for use with proper attribution under CC BY 4.0 laws. Once we have updated our metadata, it will be shared with them so they can update their records on the online platform at www.vhmmml.com/museum

HM has invested in a Collections Management System, TMS, to be used to contain information about all artefacts in its collection. The e-museum module will allow the general public to search and learn about our collection online. MUŻA's curatorial team is using the Old Master Drawings project to familiarise themselves with the TMS and to make these artworks accessible digitally. Ongoing discussions with the Digitisation Department have led to the establishment of fields of metadata for the fine arts collection to be used in the TMS.

The **Getty project** 'Learning about Old Master Drawings through the Malta National Art Collection' has progressed further in order to create an online educational platform to teach about the field of study of old master drawings. Following the hire of a research assistant for the project, on a one-year contract basis, initial focus was placed on collecting the metadata of drawings into one excel sheet that can be imported into the Collections Management System which will be connected to the microsite. The fields of required data were determined together with the Collections Management Unit and the Digitisation Department. The process of collecting the data and research for each drawing is taking longer than expected. It was decided to focus only on the drawings which will be used to illustrate the content of the five sections of the microsite so that when users click on the images, they are redirected to the full metadata of the artwork on the e-museum platform. The rest of the drawings will be uploaded in due course.

The online platform will have five sections: Subject Matter, Provenance, Materials and Techniques, Schools and Periods and Function of drawings. Work is underway to structure the content and start writing. The aim is to have text which is approachable, not too technical, for the general public to understand, with further material for children. In preparation for this content, research in the archives of the National Museum of Archaeology has been carried out with the hope of uncovering provenance information. Discussions are ongoing with two local artists to create raw materials such as iron-gall ink and charcoal, and record the process to be featured on the Materials and Techniques section of the microsite. We have had discussions with international experts to assess attributions, some of whom visited the museum to study the drawings. Public events and digital outreach about the project were organised throughout the year. As part of the project, forty drawings were conserved, with the material being acquired through the grant. The drawings are in various states of conservation, with some requiring laborious interventions, and others needing a new mount. These drawings were also analysed using XRF and UV with the Diagnostic Science Lab.

The **provenance of artworks** placed on display in the two new galleries was researched and included in the new captions. The painting 'Allegory of the Good Government of the City of Antwerp' by Theodoor Van Thulden was donated by Salvina Zahra of New York in 1964. Research has unveiled that it was sold twice at auction at Christies, London in 1963. Further research is ongoing to track its location before that. Discussions are ongoing with Van Thulden expert Dr Suzanne van de Meerendonk, Bader Curator of European Art, Agnes Etherington Art Centre, Queen's University and Dr Nadia Groeneveld-Baadj from the Het Noordbrabants Museum, the Netherlands.

In connection with this project, Grant Lewis, Milein Cosman Project Curator for the British Museum's Late Michelangelo exhibition, visited in April to study the collection of old master drawings and discuss attributions and schools. He also gave a public talk on the drawings of Mattia Preti for the ceiling of St

John's Co-Cathedral. Dr Stefania Lumetta, PhD, Specialist, Old Master Paintings and 19th-century art at Bonhams, Paris, who had researched the drawings acquired by Vincenzo Bonello for the museum for a postgraduate degree, visited in October to study all the drawings in the collection and give us her insight. She gave a public talk about the acquisition of Bonello of sixty of the old master drawings. Dr Margaret Morgan Grasselli, former Curator of Old Master Drawings at the National Gallery of Art, Washington, visiting senior scholar for drawings at Harvard Art Museum, and visiting Lecturer of History of Art and Architecture at Harvard University, spent a week in Malta in November to share her valuable knowledge and experience about drawings and study our collection. Martin Royalton Kisch, former Curator of Northern Drawings and Prints at the British Museum, collaborated with the curatorial team on the old master drawings and on the scientific analysis of the tronie portrait by the Rembrandt workshop which was studied at the Diagnostic Science Laboratories. Prof. Ingrid Rowland, an art historian, author and lecturer on Classical Antiquity, the Renaissance and the Baroque for general and specialist audiences and readers, visited MUŻA to view and study the few works by Giorgio Grognet de Vasse' (1774-1862), a Maltese artist, architect and antiquarian of French origin.

The long-term collaboration with the University of Malta's Department of Geography yielded its fruits through an onsite class held inside MUŻA's library. This is an annual event involving first-year Geography Department students who are brought to MUŻA by their lecturer. A number of maps from MUŻA's cartographic collection were brought out for this session and which served as didactic resources for the students to apply map-reading and map-analysis skills which form part of their first-year University curriculum. The aim is for students to come in close contact with authentic cartographic material and, by doing so, to appreciate different styles and types of old Maltese cartography.

Work also progressed at the **library and archives**. Some crates with books were emptied and the books were placed on shelves labelled according to the subject. There are still some boxes that need to be sorted as well as donated and new books. The volunteers who had been working on the cataloguing of the library did not continue their work due to the task being difficult and time consuming without proper Library management software. They also need guidance and training on book classification since they are not librarians. Books which had been catalogued using the Library of Congress cataloguing system years ago are being re-catalogued using Dewey Decimal Classification numbers. Discussions are underway with Malta Libraries to determine how to set up the library and make it accessible to the public. Work in the archives included updating of artists' dossiers for modern and contemporary artists with new material added and new boxes opened for additional artists. Digital copies are also retained on the server. Interns listed and counted all booklets and leaflets from past exhibitions. These are being organised in bundles to be donated to public and institution libraries in Malta and Gozo. Others will be sold in bundles or given away. Dr Albert Ganado gave his archival research and notes about Alfred Gerada's war-time drawings to the museum as part of the acquisition of said drawings.

This year registered notable progress in presenting a historic house-approach for the **Inquisitor's Palace**. The bottigliera was open in time for the Birgu by candlelight weekend (14 October) and was unofficially inaugurated through a Taste History public event by the name of 'Embit – Wine at the Inquisitor's Palace on 24 November.' This was another step forward in the curatorial vision of improving the museum experience with a reinstatement of a historic-house approach in the spirit of

the proposal submitted in 2022 - entitled 'Il Trattarsi Splendidamente – a proposal for the Inquisitor's Palace to live up to its name'.

Installation of the second phase of the early 18th century reconstruction of the Cancelleria took place in September and work is in progress on the third phase. This includes an ornate decorative frame sculpted in wood. Significant progress was also registered on the historic collections on display. The first, from a set of three 18th century sottospecchi featuring the coat of arms of Inquisitor Ludovico Gualtieri is on display in the Sala dei Staffieri after conservation. We also secured through collaboration with the Fine Arts section a painting of Virgin and Child with St John the Baptist attributed to Sebastiano Conca, which is now on display in the same hall. To date, it is the only artwork believed to be an Inquisitorial present to a Grand Master in the national collection. This is based on Carmel Testa who in "The Life and Times of Grand Master Pinto", referring to Inquisitor Passionei, writes "His gifts to the Grand Master (Pinto) included a beautiful picture of the Madonna with the Holy Child and the infant St John the Baptist, by Del Concha, this picture is now in the Museum of Fine Arts, Valletta." (Lib. 208. F.67; AOM269 in C. Testa, 1989, p.70). Along with this painting we also managed to secure a good selection of tableware intended for eventual display in the Inquisitor's credenza. These are in line with the research being carried out in the historic inventories and consist of glassware, silver and maiolica from the Fine Arts section – these will be studied in greater detail and properly accessioned next year.

Archaeology is the other source of information. The ongoing works include the cataloguing and conservation works of deposits which have been recovered from the prison cess-pit and respective courtyard in 1998 and the works carried out in 2002 in a torture chamber, and the adjacent prison cells carried out in 2016 and 2017, and the garden shaft in 2020. Following this, one must add the potentially intriguing excavations that still need to be carried out.

Further to the accessions already hinted at within this report, the section managed to secure significant artefacts through purchases and donations (refer to appendix). Most remarkable for the history of the Inquisition is a 1688 copy of Relation de l'Inquisition de Goa inclusive of all the insightful plates for our library. As to the ethnography and industrial heritage collections, the section managed to secure some notable accessions. As anticipated, the remarkable donation of documentation and memorabilia linked to Carnival made by George Zahra last year, has instigated more donations, including a remarkable collection of original photographs. Another interesting donation made by Miriam Fenech consisted of 94 confectioner's metal chocolate egg moulds and moulds for a chocolate rabbit and rooster. Toys were also secured through donation including a miniature porta-ombrelli and wardrobe, an early 20th century doll made of compressed cardboard, together with a toy stove range inclusive of toy metal utensils donated by Catherine Scicluna. Worth mentioning are an Imperial typewriter formerly belonging to President and poet Anton Buttigieg, donated by his son John Buttigieg, a range of hand tools donated by Maria Darmanin and a 19th century wooden close stool/water closet donated by Christopher Camilleri. Several significant purchases were also registered, comprising an important collection of mid-20th century commercial printed labels for local or imported products including canned food, beverages and cigarettes among others printed by Bonavia Offset Printers of Sliema. This collection, purchased in collaboration with the Fine Arts Section, also included posters among which one dates to 1941 advertising a Carnival dance and cabaret by the Vernon United Services Club.

In line with previous years, this proved to be a fruitful one for the **National Costume Collection**. Apart from a flow of donations and acquisitions, ongoing inventory updates, educational and outreach programmes, activities and events, much of our focus went towards the temporary display of 'The Maltese Bride, 19th and 20th century bridal wear in Malta'. A second remarkable deliverable for this year was the thirteen 5-minute programmes entitled 'Tessuti u Bizzilla' between October and December on national television every Wednesday, with various repetitions. This series highlights some of the many interesting items in the National Textiles Collection and is an effective means to improve upon accessibility. It was well-received, generating positive feedback, increased awareness and more donations. Several textile related acquisitions were accessioned (refer to Appendix V).

A significant number of accessions were registered. Further to dresses and photographs related to the bridalwear exhibition, are a substantial collections of original print designs donated by Cynthia Psaila, and paper dresses for paper dolls dating to c.1960 donated by Antida Agius. Worth mentioning this year are the purchases of an early 19th century "lacemaker's" oil lamp, five pairs Maltese lace bone bobbins, and a 1580 print of 'Donna dell'Isola di Malta' by Nicolas De Nicolay. Updating of the inventory is progressing steadily and progress in the digitisation of designs donated last year registered significant progress. Three sets of embroidery prints donated by Ms Cynthia Psaila and the Carmel Gerada design collection were completed. Moreover, the Adelaide Cini pattern collection was sorted and listed this year and will be digitised in 2024. The cataloguing of Maltese lace designs at the National Library progressed steadily between April and September. High resolution scanning of designs on the large wax papers was completed. For this year the section also benefitted from the precious input of apprentices and volunteers.

Environment conditions in both collection and display areas remained stable throughout the year except for a spike in relative humidity (RH) in February when air conditioners and dehumidifiers were switched-off due to power failure caused by the storm. A drastic improvement in the matter was the replacement, on 5 June of data loggers with others which are WI-FI operated.

This year also witnessed several collaborations. The curator was invited to contribute on Maltese lace and the Holy Week during 'Niskopru l-artiġjanat fi żmien il-Ġimgħa l-Kbira' – a conference held by the Southern Regional Council in Qormi on 18 March. On 16 April she was also invited to Gozo Lace Day to talk about the progress on the application of Maltese Lace as intangible cultural heritage on UNESCO's list. A selection of five ecclesiastical vestments were exhibited in the Sala dei Cavalieri of the Malta Society of Arts, Valletta on Thursday, 22 June during 'Garments of the Grandmasters'. A black beaded evening dress (ETHN/F/1104i-ii) also featured in an exhibition catalogue edited by Maria Theuma for 'Decadence, Now' – an exhibition by Luke Azzopardi, curated by Andrew Borg Wirth, which took place at the Malta Society of Arts, Palazzo Del La Salle, Valletta from 11 to 31 May. HM is also currently collaborating with Fondazzjoni Patrimonju Malti for an upcoming costume exhibition at Palazzo Falson Historic House Museum, Mdina in April 2024.

The curator and the principal conservator had the opportunity to attend for the 20th OI DFA World Lace Congress in Nova Gorica, Slovenia between 31 July and 7 August. (OIDFA is an international bobbin and needle lace organisation founded in 1982 with the aim of bringing together people of different nationalities to share and learn artistic ideas and specific lace art forms through various disciplines

including costumes and textiles). They were both invited by OIDFA's Executive Committee to present a lecture: 'Behind the doors of HM's National Textiles Collection – Curatorial and Conservation of Maltese Lace'. This was a very positive experience with benefits in networking, continuing professional development and a donation of Maltese lace from the UK.

Worthy of note also is the assistance given to the conservation department in uploading on Euroweb - the European Textile Network online site - terms related to clothing and textiles translated from English to Maltese. This was possible through a collaboration in July and August between HM and Prof Manwel Mifsud from the Faculty of Arts, University of Malta. A two-hour button art workshop for 13 autistic adults was organised on 18 February. The curator also spearheaded group lace-work demonstrations at MUŻA on 25 June to celebrate International Lace Day and during the open weekend at Villa Portelli in Kalkara on 14 and 15 October.

Since March 2022 the Inquisitor's Palace has been benefitting from a full-time in-house researcher. Up until September, her focus was research for the interpretation and exhibition catalogue for the temporary exhibition [Be]Loved Malta: Stories of Gender and Sexual Identity. Following this her research focused on the patentees of the Inquisition. This decision was reached as much scholarly attention has been given to the processi criminali, but so far, minimal research has been conducted on the patentees of the Inquisitors - some of whom resided in the Palace. Biographical case studies on the patentees are being drawn up. One of them, namely on the librarian of the Inquisitor's Palace, will be published in Tesserae. The research being conducted on the patentees will be presented in a lecture, the fourth in a series of public lectures in Maltese, which will be delivered in February 2024. Eventually, all this research will be utilised for the interpretation of the Cancelleria reconstruction. Furthermore, the 18th century inventories of the Inquisitor's Palace discovered in 2022 were transcribed. Another set of 24 inventories for the 17th century have been discovered and will be transcribed. An agreement with the Mdina Metropolitan Chapter has been reached to digitise these inventories with the help of HM's Digitisation Department.

With the help of Kealey Kennedy, a summer student from the University of Western Ontario in Canada interned at the Inquisitor's Palace, research extended to a manuscript housed at the National Library, which includes inscriptions that were found in early modern Malta. The intern transcribed all the inscriptions found at the Inquisitor's Palace. This exercise has helped us identify the rooms within the Palace that once included inscriptions on the walls which are no longer there. A number of interviews were also secured. Most were linked to the exhibitions set up this year. This is being spearheaded by the curatorial coordinator who is currently drafting a programme of interviews for 2024, with the aim of documenting important insights linked to our ethnographic collections and the experience being proposed for an eventual new Ethnography Museum. Further to this, the senior curator worked on a first draft for a paper on the artistic treasures at the Parish Basilica of St Mary of Porto Salvo and St Dominic, to be published in 2024.

As regards **Industrial Heritage**, most of the progress in this collection for this year centred around the upkeep, reorganisation, and improved documentation. On 24 January HM was invited to participate in 'A Future for Industrial Heritage in Malta' a national conference under the auspices of H.E. the President of Malta, organised at San Anton Palace by The Industrial Heritage Platform

at the University of Malta. The curator delivered a presentation highlighting HM's contribution in the field. This was a good opportunity to showcase the collection and the work that has been going on throughout the years. Worthy of note are a number of accessions that were secured including commercial lithographic printed material from Bonavia Printers in Sliema (in conjunction with MUŽA), a Heidelberg Platen 10" x 14" (Windmill) (which belonged to Print Plan Offset Printers in Qormi which in turn they purchased from the Gozo Press in Għajnsielem), and a LUDLOW Typograph Machine with original manual and a Ludlow slanted type storage cabinet from MaltaPost, originally belonging to the Maistre Stationers in Valletta.

The curatorial section has also worked on a proposal for an ethnography museum at the **Birgu Armoury**. It is still at a concept level, yet it aims to consider an encompassing experience linked to Malta's cultural identity following a journey through the path of life from birth to death. This proposal sees to treat the subject with its deserved dignity and resources, banking on the work which has been done in the past decades and maximising out of the collections we have. This document will also serve as a guide to the sections' workplans in terms of research and collections in matters concerning ethnography.



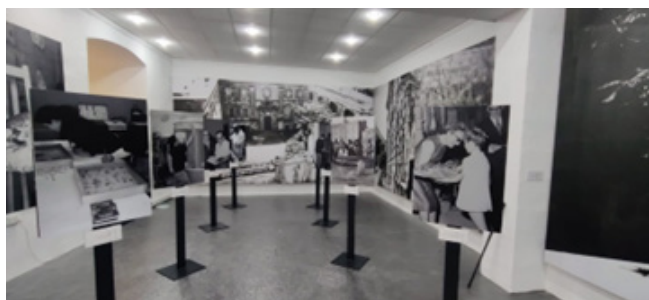
EXHIBITIONS & EVENTS

Viva Viva l-Karnival. The George Zahra donation was held at the second floor of the Inquisitor's Palace, from 3 February to 9 April. The display celebrated Carnival traditions through the personal journey and the donation presented by George Zahra, who has participated in the last 71 editions of Carnival, 52 of which as a member of the national organising committee. Parallel to this exhibition was a very busy calendar of educational activities.

MUŻA hdejk: Niċcelebraw lil ... Francesco Zahra, was the first of a series intended as outreach by MUŻA to local communities. The exhibition was held on the occasion of the 250th death anniversary of the artist, at the Oratory of the Holy Crucifix, Senglea Parish Church, from 3 to 22 May, and was accompanied by a publication. The idea behind this exhibition scheme is to enhance the accessibility of the art collection by bringing it literally closer to home. By means of selecting works from the MUŻA Collection, that are relevant to the theme or the artist being celebrated or commemorated, such an exhibition of this kind is intended to attract the local community whose residence would precisely be the venue of this very same exhibition. Consisting of works, including paintings, a map, coins, archival documents belonging to MUŻA, the National Museum of Archaeology and Senglea's Parish Archives, this particular exhibition was a celebration of the art of Francesco Zahra, not only because it was the year of his 250th death anniversary but also because he was born, bred and worked in Senglea until his marriage when he then relocated to Valletta. The Oratory of the Holy Crucifix was the right venue for the exhibition as it is adorned by a 'Passion of Christ' cycle of oil-on-canvas paintings by the young Francesco Zahra, and by the architectural sculpture, which was the work of his father, Pietro Paolo, considered to have been one of the topmost 'scalpellini' of 18th-century Malta. A canvas painting ('The Taking of Christ') from the Curia also formed part of this exhibition. Dating to the 1760s, it served as an opportunity to show Zahra's artistic evolution since the early phase of his career when he was commissioned to paint the four works at the Oratory. This exhibition also featured a lecture at the same venue by Prof Keith Sciberras on Francesco Zahra – protagonist tal-arti barokka f'Malta, on 10 May. On the same theme, from 11 June to 3 September HM also participated in an exhibition entitled 'Francesco Zahra 1710 – 1773: 250th death anniversary', organised by the Fondazzjoni Belt Victoria at Il-Ħaġar Heart of Gozo, Victoria, Gozo.

From Aphrodite to Eros. Mythology on the Greek vases in the national collection was held at the National Museum of Archaeology from 27 May to 21 September and was accompanied with a catalogue. It provided an insight into the vases' manufacturing techniques, what they were used for, and when they were produced, and explained the mythology surrounding them.

The National Museum of Natural History 50 years in Mdina, a photographic journey, at the National Museum of Natural History, which this year celebrated 50 years since it opened its doors to the general public on 22 June 1973. Celebrations of the fiftieth anniversary commenced with Carmen Forder's 'Botanical Portraits' exhibition of paintings from mid-March to mid-April. On 23 June a commemorative celebration was held in the courtyard of the museum. A commemorative book *The National Museum of Natural History 50 years in Mdina, a Photographic Journey*, and a photographic exhibition were launched on the day. A collection of historical photographs from the museum's archives was displayed. The exhibition closed on 31 December. On 12 December the senior curator delivered a public lecture about the history of the Natural History Museum and the collections.



The Langue of Italy, building an identity, was an inter-agency initiative together with the History and Archives Department of the University of Malta and the Design and Architecture Department of the Politecnico di Torino, funded by MCST IPAS+ scheme. It was held at MUŻA from 11 August to 24 September and also included lectures, seminars, and the digitisation of archival material which led to a publication. The exhibition is available online: https://digitaltwin.heritagemalta.mt/wp-content/uploads/360/Muza_Italian_auberge/index.htm

[Be]Loved. Stories of sexual and gender identities, was held at the Main Guard, Valletta, from 6 September to 11 November, on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the decriminalisation of homosexual acts in Malta (1973) and on Malta's first hosting of the EuroPride. The display explored how society dealt with diversity over the centuries – through a number of historical human stories which unfolded in Malta, and a series of interviews to sample insights into the current LGBTIQ+ community. The main messages that the exhibition sought to put across was that diversity should be embraced in all its forms and that the queer community is not a modern invention but different modalities of gender identity and sexual expression have existed since the beginning of human civilisation. Thousands of people flocked to see the exhibition, with the number of visitors totalling around 4,000. Promotion for this exhibition involved a series of installations along Republic Street in Valletta; banners on the façade of Main Guard; daily social media posts cross-shared on LGBTQ+ pages on Facebook and on MGRM and ARC socials and EuroPride; a listing on the main event page of the EuroPride website; a listing on the international Gay Travel website; an advert on Il-Bizzilla in-flight magazine; and appearances on TV as well as on M&C's regular channels outlined below.



Exhibition

[BE]LOVED

Stories of Sexual &
Gender Identity

Main Guard, Valletta

6 September 2023 - 11 November 2023

For more information visit:
heritagemalta.mt/whats-on/

The Maltese bride; 19th – 20th century bridal wear in Malta, at the costumes display area within the Pannellini Quarters of the Inquisitor's Palace, from 13 October until the end of the year. The display included five wedding dresses from the national collection, including recently donated ones, and explored the developments and changes in style during the last two centuries, focusing on the human element of their previous owners through photographs and interviews. A bilingual catalogue accompanies this exhibition. This was the first in a series of yearly rotational displays.

Fare Convito. The archaeology of banqueting in Hospitaller Malta (16th to 18th century), was held at the National Museum of Archaeology from 27 October to 31 December. It explores the food-culture of Renaissance and Baroque Malta through the medium of fine ceramic tableware. A total of fifty high quality maiolica and porcelain artefacts were on display, all sourced from local archaeological sites, museums and archives including the National Museum of Archaeology, the Inquisitor's Palace, MUZA and the Gozo Archaeological Museum. The exhibition also includes graphics of manuscripts kindly provided by the Malta Libraries and by the Mdina Metropolitan Chapter (Archive and Museum). An exhibition booklet was also produced which documents the main themes making up the event. The exhibition adopts a multi-disciplinary approach to the archaeology of post-medieval society, including detailed archaeological and archival research alongside art-historical and anthropological approaches. Most of the artefacts and documents used in the exhibition have never been put on public display before and are an original contribution to the study of Maltese food history. Following its closure, the exhibition will be relocated to the Inquisitor's Palace for a further three months.

Il-Malti. Il-mixja sal-għarfen uffiċjali, traced the main milestones and personalities until Maltese obtained recognition as an official language. It was held in collaboration with the Akkademja tal-Malti, Malta Libraries, and the National Archives, under the patronage of H. E. the President of the Republic, at the National Museum of Archaeology from 22 February to 31 April, and was accompanied by a fully illustrated exhibition catalogue. It presented an account of the Maltese language's long road towards official recognition and honoured those who worked incessantly for Maltese to be duly acknowledged. Spread across ten themes, the exhibition covered the history of the Maltese language from its Semitic roots until it was declared Malta's national language in 1964 and one of the European Union's official languages in 2004. Subsequently, the exhibition also featured at the Malta Fairs and Conferences Centre, Ta' Qali, in collaboration with the Malta National Book Council from 17 to 22 October, and even at the LEX Building, EU Council, Brussels, in collaboration with the Maltese Language Institute in Brussels.



On 24 February, in conjunction with the exhibition, the Gran Salon at the National Museum of Archaeology hosted a public lecture by Dr Mario Cassar about **the Maltese language** during the rule of the Order of St John. The lecture was a resounding success, with an audience of nearly 200 people that comprised academics, authors and members of the public who have the Maltese language at heart. At the end of the lecture, Dr Cassar answered several questions by attendees. A recording of the lecture was later made available on YouTube.

HM also hosted **The crib's journey with St Francis / Il-Mixja tal-presepju ma' San Franġisk**, a crib exhibition on the occasion of the 800th anniversary from the first crib by St Francis, by the Għaqda Hbieb tal-Preseppi Għawdex-Malta and the Universalis Foederatio Praesepistica, in collaboration with the Malta Community Chest Fund, at the ex-Armoury of the Grand Master's Palace, from 18 November to 21 January 2024. The exhibition also featured Christmas cribs from the national collection, including a selection from the McCarthy crib collection.

The MUŻA Exhibition and Residency Programme continued with the following exhibitions:

- 'Turning Tables', by Glen Calleja and Francesca Balzan, at the Camerone, from 30 March to 7 May
- 'My Body (is)/(not) Your Business Card' residency & performances, by Charlene Galea, at the Community Space, from 14 April to 14 May
- 'Joseph Chetcuti: the sculpture and bronzesmith', by Lisa Gwen and Funderija Artistika Chetcuti, at the Camerone, from 19 May to 25 June
- 'Shrine', by Alexandra Aquilina, at the Camerone, from 8 July to 13 August.
- 'NOUS', by Joseph Farrugia, at the Camerone, from 21 August to 1 October.
- 'Pathos', by Chris Ebejer, at the Camerone, from 29 October to 10 December.

Moreover, in April the MUŻA exhibition public call for the next programme was launched. Four different strands were put forward. These were General Exhibition Proposal, Artists in Residence, Site Specific Installation, and Works in Dialogue. The call closed on the 30 June and 38 submissions were received. Those selected will exhibit at MUŻA between September 2024 and January 2026.

maltabiennale.art

baħar abjad imsaġar taż-żebbuġ / white sea olive groves

An open call for the Malta Pavilion was launched on 16 May and all interested were to submit their application by 31 August. The theme proposed for the pavilion was Sejbiet u Stejjer/ Findings and Fantasies. By mid-October the artists representing Malta were selected and works started accordingly. A memorandum of understanding was signed on 4 December between HM and the Arts Council, Zfin Malta, Kor Malta, Teatru Malta, Malta Philharmonic Orchestra, Valletta Cultural Agency, Festivals Malta regarding the Malta Biennale 2024, at the Gran Salon, National Museum of Archaeology. The Malta Biennale is turning out to be a major international event with more than 2,500 applications from all over the world, and a full events programme, which will be fully dealt with in next year's annual report.

It is being held under the distinguished patronage of the President of Malta and UNESCO.

Exhibitions abroad

Undoubtedly the major initiative undertaken this year was the exhibition **Mattia Preti – Discovering the baroque secrets of Malta**, in collaboration with the Royal Lazienki Museum, which was inaugurated at the same venue in Warsaw, Poland on 19 October and will go on until 3 March 2024. Its main scope was to provide a general appreciation of Mattia Preti (1613-99), who left an indelible mark on Maltese art and culture. It was aimed at visitors who know very little about this artist. Owing to Preti's very strong connection with Malta, the exhibition included a Malta component in order to introduce the visitor to the island's rich history and to present the context against which the greater part of Preti's life unfolded. This introductory section cast light on the artist's formative years, travels, artistic education, stylistic development and important commissions before transferring permanently to Malta in 1661. The culmination of this exhibition focused on Preti's most ambitious project which was the painting of the vault of St John's Co-Cathedral in Valletta. Visual aids served to highlight the decorative scheme of the vault in a spectacular way. Subsequent areas of the exhibition threw light on other important aspects about Preti: the materials and techniques used for wall and canvas painting, information emerging from the conservation and restoration of his works, and the scientific investigations assigned to them. Another part was about paintings lacking in documentary evidence, a fact that is typical of Preti due to his extraordinarily prolific output. The exhibition was closed off by highlighting his enormous legacy of his paintings across the world. Two paintings from the National Museum in Warsaw and the Royal Castle in Warsaw - Museum were also part of this exhibition. A 110-page HM publication was issued in English and in Polish. The initiatives accompanying the exhibition included an online lecture on 'The work and life of Mattia Preti' by Bernadine Scicluna on 15 November.

Another noteworthy achievement was represented by the display of the Cippus at the Louvre Abu Dhabi for the exhibition **A Story of the Cippi of Malta: Decipherment and Reunification**, inaugurated on 31 May and planned to go on for one year. The two renowned Cippi were discovered in Malta centuries ago and were separated when one of them was sent to France by Grand Master de Rohan. They have been reunited – albeit temporarily – in this exhibition after 241 years apart. The Cippi date back to the 2nd century BC. Besides their great aesthetic and historical value, they are a symbol of language decipherment and of diplomatic relations.

Moreover, artefacts from the national collection were also loaned to feature in the exhibition **Vittore Carpaccio: Master storyteller of Renaissance Venice**, at the Palazzo Ducale, Venice, from 18 March to 18 June, in the exhibition 'Faster, better, more beautiful – the design of progress', at the Design Museum Den Bosch, The Netherlands, from 4 March to 3 September, and in the exhibition **The Mark of Jorge Juan – The Legacy of an Enlightened Scientist**, held at the Museo Naval de Madrid, Spain, inaugurated on 23 November and which will go on until 31 March 2024.

Events

In mid-January, HM launched its events calendar for the first six months of the year, offering a wide variety of activities and experiences to be enjoyed by people of all ages. The jam-packed calendar targeted children, teenagers, scholars and the general public. Events ranged from fun-filled, hands-on edutainment kids' activities to large-scale and smaller exhibitions, re-enactments, members events, curatorial talks, thematic tours, public lectures, special openings of closed sites, harbour cruises, heritage trails, as well as Taste History's exclusive gastronomic delights.

Calendar of Events

July - December
2023



At the end of June, HM launched its events calendar for the second half the year. Activities for the Student Passport Summer Programme, aimed at increasing accessibility to our cultural heritage among children and young teens during their school holidays, were also announced. This year, the themes of the events in this programme were all related in one way or another to natural history, since 2023 marked the 50th anniversary of the National Museum of Natural History, which is very popular among children.

A series of very popular historical **guided tours** by Mario Coleiro around Rabat on 19 March, Valletta on 29 April and Floriana on 21 September. A social event for past and present HM employees was organised at Fort St Elmo on 29 September to celebrate **HM's twentieth anniversary**. The design brief

for this celebration was to showcase what makes the Agency so unique – in this instance its members of staff. In keeping with the brand philosophy, the design team developed a branding strategy by designing a logo showcasing the protagonists of the Agency. An exhibition featuring HM's members of staff talents was also designed and put together, comprising some 25 pieces. It ran until the end of the year and the public could visit it as part of the experience at Fort St Elmo. This was followed with a special open day of all HM museums and sites on the following day, and with an open day of HM's head office and conservation laboratories on 1 October, where visitors could have a close look at how the agency accomplishes the tasks entrusted to it.



A very first special opening with events and education programmes was held at **Villa Portelli** on 14-15 October, while a weekend-long fair including activities and events for children and adults, entitled **Christmas at the Fort**, was held at Fort St Elmo on 2-3 December. The usual open days at **Villa Frere** gardens, in collaboration with Friends of Villa Frere, were held every first Sunday of the month, foremost of which was 'Villa Frere goes Regency', a special opening including re-enactments and talks, on 4 June.

A seminar on **Narratives about the past, challenges and opportunities for the future: the multi-period archaeological site of Tas-Silġ, Marsaxlokk**, was held in collaboration with the Istituto Italiano di Cultura, the University of Malta, the Missione Archeologica Italiana and the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage at the Gran Salon of the National Museum of Archaeology on 19 April. **Aphrodisiacs** was a special dinner inspired by historical love magic stories, in collaboration with Taste History and Etikett, was held at the Inquisitor's Palace and the Malta Maritime Museum on 14 February.

7 July saw the inauguration of the **Xlendi tower restoration project**, in collaboration with the Ministry for Gozo and the Munxar Local Council, followed by official launch of the **Xlendi underwater archaeological park**, in collaboration with the Malta Airport Foundation, the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage, the University of Malta and the Munxar Local Council, at the Xlendi waterfront on 8 August. Sponsored by the Malta Airport Foundation, this unique park encompasses a rectangular area of significant archaeological value, covering a total of 67,000m². It is located approximately 540 metres south-west from the coastal watchtower of Xlendi Bay.



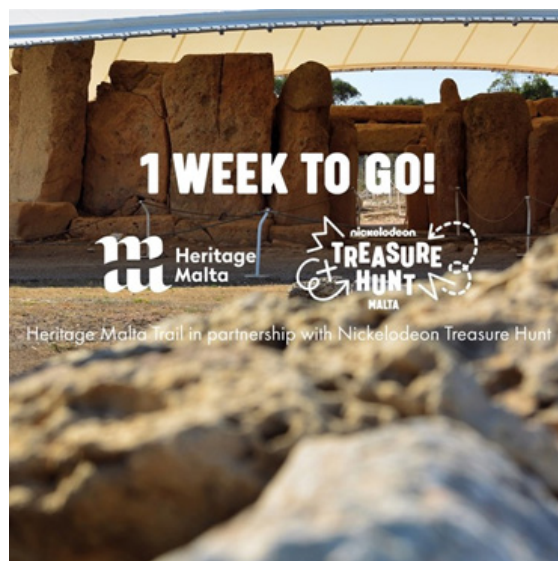
A commemoration of the fallen on the occasion of Remembrance Day, in collaboration with the Kumitat Festi Nazzjonali and Festivals Malta, took place at the Memorial of Fort St Elmo on 8 November:

The Gran Salon of the National Museum of Archaeology saw the launch of Professor William Zammit's new book on 24 March. The book, entitled **Slavery, Treason and Blood**, is the fourth in an exclusive series of HM monographs and sheds new, intriguing light on the foiled revolt by Muslim slaves in 1749. A set of drawings included in the publication were exhibited for the first time at the launch. Originally totalling 24, these drawings were passed on to the Malta Museum around 1909/10 by J.R. Barlow. Prof Zammit's research prompted the cleaning and restoration of the drawings by HM. They are the handiwork of an artist whose identity is yet unknown but who must have witnessed the gruesome events, given the detail and the historical accuracy depicted.



Subjugated in body,
but not in spirit

HM entered a partnership with the **Nickelodeon Treasure Hunt** and issued a special discounted ticket – ‘The Heritage Malta Trail Combo Ticket’ – allowing access to Għar Dalam, Haġar Qim and Mnajdra Archaeological Park, St Paul’s Catacombs, and the National Museum of Natural History. The Treasure Hunt, which was organised from 26 May to 4 June, encouraged participants to assist their favourite Nickelodeon characters in completing their missions within these sites and receive a Nickelodeon Treasure Hunt stamp on their map. HM Senior or Student Passport holders, and two accompanying adults or youths, were able to access all the sites for free. Furthermore, participants and their guardians benefited from a 15% discount on all items at the trail’s four sites’ gift shops.



On 29 September the **National Museum of Natural History** hosted eight European Prime Ministers who were here in Malta for the MED9 meeting. Two boat trips around Filfla were organised on 9 and 16 July, both of which were fully booked. Another visit to Comino, highlighting its cultural and natural heritage, was similarly successful.



The Filfla boat tours are very popular and much sought after by the general public.

One event was organised at **Fort Delimara** on 22-23 April. The special weekend opening for the general public included guided tours and free roaming of site and attracted 2,195 visitors.



Other third-party events on site included laser tag activities on 29 May, 28 September and 16 November, and the filming of international productions 'Band of Spies' between October and November; and 'Gladiator 2' and 'Count of Monte Cristo' in December. A HM Facebook page dedicated to Fort Delimara was set up and is being followed by 771 people.

Several events were hosted at **Fort St Angelo**, foremost among which were re-enactments with the active participation of various groups which it animated the site as a medieval enclave or as an early modern fortification. These took place on 29 January, 29 April - 1 May, 21 October, 29 October, and 19 November, and were always very popular.



Other noteworthy events were the 'Fireworks Festival from Fort St Angelo' on 30 April, 'Victory Day: a Tale of Two Sieges' on 8 September, 'Dark Tales of Fort St Angelo' on 13 October, and 'Birgufest' on 14 October. As per previous years, the site was also rented for third party events including conferences, meetings, weddings and other social gatherings. Fort St Angelo's official Facebook page is followed by 9,513 people.



Several events were hosted at **Fort St Elmo**, including various In Guardia parades focusing on the site during the period of the Order of St John. Other events included 'Night at the Museum' on 9 June, which took place after hours with the participation of various re-enactment groups, 'A Harbour for Nations' on 22 October, during which with the fort was revived with displays focusing on 16th century military life, and the hugely successful 'Christmas at the Fort' on 2-3 December, when the site was transformed into a Christmas village with several educational, entertainment and culinary activities. The site was also rented out for other third party events including conferences, meetings, weddings, and other social gatherings. Fort St Elmo's official Facebook is followed by 4,628 people.



Several noteworthy events were also held at **Gozo**. An evening tour followed by light refreshments was held at Ġgantija 30 April for the occasion of Jum ix-Xaghra. Complimentary entrance was offered to Xaghra residents to Ġgantija and Ta' Kola Windmill during the same day.

The European Heritage Days were marked on 8 October during a special opening of the Gran Castello Historic House was organised to commemorate the 40th anniversary since the official opening of the Folklore Museum in 1983. Guided tours were offered in Maltese and English, while hands-on activities included traditional trades like weaving and lace-making, and games for children. Lejl Imkebbes was celebrated on 30 June with late night opening of the Gozo Museum of Archaeology, the Gran Castello Historic House and the Old Prison, as part of this yearly event in the Ċittadella, in collaboration with the Ministry for Gozo.

Even though hampered with the ongoing constructions works, events at the **Malta Maritime Museum** continued unabated in the circumstances. The public was invited to visit the museum construction work and project design on two occasions, attracting a good number of visitors. The yearly IPMS Malta model expo Minjatura was once again held at the museum and brought together international and local model makers. Moreover, after a few years, sessions for kids devoted to the art of model-making were reintroduced. Children had the opportunity to build and paint a replica of the figurehead of HMS Hibernia. The figure head was a miniature 3D print made from a scan conducted in 2022.

In June, a sunset tour of **Haġar Qim and Mnajdra Archaeological Park** was conducted. Apart from Haġar Qim and Mnajdra, the tour included visits to Misqa Tanks, the Hamrija Tower and the Congreve Memorial. The tour was followed by an informal discussion in the Ochre Hall, where visitors could also enjoy a Maltese platter and wine. The equinox and solstices were once again celebrated at Mnajdra with sunrise tours. Haġar Qim was also opened to the public for the observation of the solstice sunrise in June. The spring equinox was followed by breakfast at the Ochre Hall, recalling how the sharing of food has always been practiced, even in the Neolithic. The social story for the park was concluded, in collaboration with Prisms NGO, in order to make it more accessible to visitors on the autism spectrum. It will be published on HM's website. The department also collaborated with the Service Dogs Malta Foundation, whose members visited the park with their four-legged friends. A number of outreach activities were held in the Ochre Hall for various audiences throughout the year. Presentations on the work of an archaeologist were given to students of St Edward's College by curatorial staff.

Social media presence was maintained all year round, with regular posts on both Facebook and Instagram. Curatorial staff contributed regularly to interviews as part of several local and international documentaries, as well as HM's own 'Treasure To Meet You' with the episode on a carving of a building found at Mnajdra aired this year. The park continued to be a source of inspiration, and was the chosen location for a number of activities such as a presentation and tours regarding the EU Structural Funds project 2004-06, the Nickelodeon National Treasure Hunt and the Interfaith Celebration organised in collaboration with Drachma LGBTI as part of EuroPride week. This included a short lecture delivered by the senior curator, several tours to all 120 participants and a celebration in the area reserved for events within the precincts of Haġar Qim.

A lecture about the history of **Ta' Haġrat**, in commemoration of the 100 years from the start of excavations at the site, was given to the public in collaboration with the Mġarr Local Council. An overview of the excavations was also given as part of the Ġieħ l-Imġarr Ceremony organized by the Mġarr Local Council. To commemorate the same anniversary, a curator's tour of both sites was held. The event was attended to capacity and was very well received. Both Ta' Haġrat and Skorba were opened to the general public at a reduced price during FestaFrawli, an annual community event. Tours in Maltese and English were conducted at Ta' Haġrat throughout the day. The event held at the **Borġ in-Nadur Prehistoric Complex** in June 'Stone to Metal' was fully booked and included a guided tour of the site as well as obsidian-knapping and prehistoric tool demonstration. At **Tarxien**, the event In Temi Zammit's Footsteps held in May proved popular and included a tour of the site as well as readings from Temi Zammit's literary works for which he is less well-known.



EDUCATION,
PUBLISHING &
OUTREACH

This year was full of thematic and outreach activities delivered to all independent, church and government schools. Delivery was a mix of live and virtual sessions, depending mainly on the request of the school. Apart from inviting students to museums, the staff also visited different schools to talk about topics ranging from history to careers within cultural heritage. Around 650 students were reached through virtual live sessions, with five different online programmes offered, focusing on The Hypogeum, Neolithic Life, Holocaust Memorial Day, World War II, and Id-Dgħajjes tal-Latini.

Throughout the academic year 2022-23, a variety of cross-curricular activities were conducted, each directly aligned with the Learning Outcomes Framework of the National Curriculum. These thematic activities are centred around specific historical events or periods covered in classroom instruction, making museum visits an integral and meaningful part of the learning process. The museum experience allows students to engage more deeply with the primary sources mentioned in their textbooks. Given the interdisciplinary nature of most activities, the seamless connection between different subjects is apparent. Many of these thematic activities were collaboratively designed with Education Officers responsible for the relevant subjects and enjoy full support from the ministry's education division. These activities were accessible to all schools, catering to every educational level, from kindergarten to post-secondary.

The thematic programmes offered during the year are listed in Appendix I – Events Calendar. Moreover, apart from organised school visits, a total of 41 different programmes were delivered over 177 sessions, which reaching hundreds of students. As per every year several activities organised by various departments within the Ministry of Education were also hosted in HM sites and museums. These included collaborations with the Mathematics Department, National Literacy Agency, the Maltese Department, the Art Department, the Geography Department, the Fashion and Textiles Unit, the Drama Unit, Directorate for Digital and Transversal Skills, Directorate for Learning and Assessment Programme DCLE, the Institute for Education and the History Department were strengthened, and programmes and plans are being drafted for the next scholastic year. The unit also helped with the delivery and organisation of various COPE and SDP sessions.

Text for a children's audio guide for Għar Dalam, the Inquisitor's Palace and the National Museum of Archaeology have been prepared and are waiting to be recorded.



The **HM Passport Student Scheme** extended into this year, catering to students embarking on Year 1. This means that for the fifth year running, another 5,000 students and accompanying adults were given free entry to all HM sites and museums. Furthermore, special activities were organised for Visa passport holders, which give students and adults the chance to visit sites that are not usually open to the public and/or to attend special events and activities. These included the Grand Master's Palace on 18 March, meet & greet the Buskers at MUZA on 12 April, and Life under the Sea activity as part of the Corallo Project on 18 August.

This year also marked the fifth edition of the Summer Programme, delivered between July and September. The programme provided students with engaging talks and activities at HM's sites and museums. Emphasizing the natural environment, the focus was on commemorating the 50th anniversary of the relocation of the National Museum of Natural History. Topics covered spanned art, history, science, underwater cultural heritage, home economics, traditions, and geography. With a total of seventeen workshops offered, reaching 255 students, this year's programme achieved tremendous success. A noteworthy 95% of tickets were swiftly sold, accompanied by frequent requests from the public for the repetition of activities. Other activities offered to student passport holders are also listed in Appendix I.

The **HM Senior Passport scheme** also continues to prove successful. Several well-attended activities were also held for Senior Passport holders, included in Appendix I.



Recognizing the diverse learning capacities and skills among individuals, the department has expanded the range of activities offered to its audiences in order to increase accessibility and outreach as much as possible. Several events worthy of mention were organised targeting the following groups:

Visually Impaired:

Viva, Viva, I-Karnival – An outreach activity at Spero Foundation, Qormi on 2 February.

Underwater Archaeology at Fort St Elmo on 15 December.

Hearing Impaired:

Dive into 360 at Fortress interpretation Centre delivered by the Underwater Cultural Heritage Unit for the Malta Deaf Association on 24 June.

Helu Manna activity in sign language at the Inquisitor's Palace in celebration of the International Deaf

Awareness Day on 23 September.

Autism Spectrum Disorder: Together with speech language pathologists from the Primary Healthcare Department, the activity Discovering St Paul's Catacombs was held on 6 January. Youths on the autism spectrum were also targeted by working with PRISMS: Viva, Viva I-Karnival at the Inquisitor's Palace on 18 February, and a visit and art activity on portraits at MUŻA on 26 December.

The Optimist group, an organisation that follows children who need help with their studies co-organised a cook-along activity at the Inquisitor's Palace on 2 August.

Down Syndrome – Neolithic Art at Haġar Qim Archaeological Park on 17 June.

Fluency Camp – Weeklong activities delivered with the Speech Language Pathologists aimed at helping students who stutter at the National Museum of Natural History on 31 July – 4 August.

Service Dog Week – Food and Friction in Neolithic Times an activity for people who use service and guide dogs at Haġar Qim and Mnajdra Archaeological Park on 10 August.

Resource Schools

Discovering the Catacombs delivered with the Speech and Language Department, attended by all the students of Guardian Angel resource school on 3-5, 8-11 May.

Hidden Treasure at Haġar Qim and Mnajdra Archaeological Park for students attending San Miguel Resource Centre on 27 October.

Passport activities were also held for students with different abilities, as follows:

Hidden Treasure at Haġar Qim and Mnajdra Archaeological Park for students with special needs on 28 October.

A walk through Valletta on Christmas at Fort St Elmo (part of the Xmas at the Fort) on 3 December

Tote-ally awesome Stone activity at Haġar Qim and Mnajdra Archaeological Park on 10 December

Other audiences targeted with the aim of making sites and museums more accessible are the I Belong group, a series of familiarisation visits for groups of foreigners who have permanently moved to Malta, in collaboration with the University of Malta (49 visits, 901 participants) and the Caritas Inmate Programme, aimed at introducing culture to inmates. The department also participated or organised events during various occasions, including open days, events for HM staff, staff development sessions, and other.

During the period under review Heritage Malta's publishing house produced the following titles:

China in Maltese Eyes; ISBN 978-9918-619-07-8
Cottonera: Three Cities behind Brothers-in-Arms; ISBN 978-9918-619-15-3
Traditional Cuisine of Malta & Gozo: Flavours of Winter; ISBNs (HBK) 978-9918-619-19-1, (Pbk) 978-9918-619-20-7
Young Heritage Expert Manual: St Paul's Catacombs; ISBN 978-9918-619-21-4
Il-Malti: il-Mixja sal-Għarfien Uffiċjali; ISBN 978-9918-619-22-1
Colouring Malta & Gozo – Cities, Towns & Villages; ISBN 978-9918-619-23-8
Malta's Prehistoric Treasures (2nd Edition); ISBN 978-9918-619-24-5
Joseph Mallia Edukatur, Illustratur, Pittur; ISBN 978-9918-619-25-2
Niccelebraw lil Francesco Zahra; ISBN 978-9918-619-26-9
Heritage Malta Annual Report 2022; ISBN 978-9918-619-27-6
The Heritage Malta Official Guide to Underground Valletta; ISBNs (Hbk) 978-9918-619-28-3, (Pbk) 978-9918-619-29-0
From Aphrodite to Eros; ISBN 978-9918-619-30-6
Tesseract 13, Spring 2023; ISBN 978-9918-619-31-3
The National Museum of Natural History: 50 Years in Mdina, 1973-2023; ISBNs (Hbk) 978-9918-619-32-0, (Pbk) 978-9918-619-33-7
CORALLO Project: Correct Enjoyment and Awareness Raising of Natura 2000 Locations; ISBN 978-9918-619-34-4
Maltese Heritage Fun Activity Story Book: Life with Milly; ISBN 978-9918-619-35-1
Ben Jinks: The War in Malta as I saw it; ISBN 978-9918-619-36-8
The Langue of Italy: Building on Identity; ISBN 978-9918-619-37-5
The Heritage Malta Official Guide to Fort St Elmo; ISBNs (Hbk) 978-9918-619-38-2, (Pbk) 978-9918-619-39-9
Beloved Malta: Stories of Sexual & Gender Identity; ISBNs (Hbk) 978-9918-619-40-5, (Pbk) 978-9918-619-41-2
Tifkiriet tal-Gwerra; ISBN 978-9918-619-42-9
Traditional Cuisine of Malta & Gozo: Flavours of Summer; ISBNs (Hbk) 978-9918-619-43-6, (Pbk) 978-9918-619-44-3
The Heritage Malta Regional Guide to the Ċittadella; ISBNs (Hbk) 978-9918-619-45-0, (Pbk) 978-9918-619-46-7
Mattia Preti: Discovering the Baroque Secrets of Malta; ISBNs (Hbk) 978-9918-619-47-4, (Pbk) 978-9918-619-48-1
Mattia Preti: Odkrywanie Barokowe Tajemnice Mality; ISBN 978-9918-619-49-8
Fare Convito: Banqueting under the Order of St John; ISBN 978-9918-619-50-4
The Maltese Bride: 19th-20th century bridal wear in Malta; ISBN 978-9918-619-51-1
Office of the Chief Herald of Arms of Malta: The Way Forward; ISBN 978-9918-619-52-8
Il-Misteru tal-Gran Kastell; ISBN 978-9918-619-53-5
Dr Mario Tabone: A Celebration of His Life; ISBN 978-9918-619-54-2
Antoine Camilleri's Prayer: A Critical Analysis; ISBN 978-9918-619-55-9
Christus Natus Est: A Photographic Essay Commemorating 800 Years from the first Christmas Crib staged by St Francis of Assisi, 1223-2023; ISBN 978-9918-619-56-6
ERDF 05.016: The Grand Master's Palace Regeneration Project; ISBN 978-9918-619-58-0



CORPORATE AFFAIRS

Several internal promotions were issued this year by the **Human Resources Department** in view of HM's restructuring process; this was needed to strengthen the human resources in various HM departments and because new departments were created in line with the requirements of the agency. These include the customer relations, food and beverage, research, branding & design, collections & knowledge management, and technology & experience development. These promotions varied from headship positions, senior managers, managers, and others in different collective agreement grades. Around 136 employees, or 41% of HM staff, were affected in the internal mobility process.

HM currently employs 334 full-time employees; 212 male (63%) and 122 females (37%). The agency also employs 43 apprentices, trainees, and students, apart from twelve employees on loan. This year a total of 31 employees left the agency for various reasons. Nineteen employees resigned, five retired, two were terminated due to the expiration of definite contract of employment, while five employees left since their loan agreement was terminated. A total of 2,290 instances were reported as absent due to sickness by various employees. The highest rate of absenteeism was January (10.3%), followed by August and November (9.4% & 9.3% respectively). The lowest rate of absenteeism was in December and February (4.8% & 7.4% respectively). This year, absenteeism was registered 59.9% by male employees and 40.1% by female employees.

This was another challenging year as regards recruitment. The department continued working on the capacity building for each department by prioritising the needs in line with HM restructuring. HM was allocated new posts for curators and curatorial support mainly in the Archaeology, Prehistory, Roman Period and Palaeontology, and new posts to strengthen the Diagnostic Science Labs. HM also was allocated new definite positions for architects linked to specific projects and other roles linked to the Horizon projects. The Agency also continued with recruitment to fill in replacement of retirements and resignations.

This year marked the 20th anniversary of the agency. HM past and current staff were recognized for their hard work and commitment throughout these twenty years. Some important milestones were also reached, and new initiatives were introduced. After the signature of HM staff collective agreement last year, this year we focused on the new financial package for managerial staff where there was a positive increase in the basic pay and new benefits were also introduced. We managed to conclude the discussions and implement them in the third quarter of the year.



Various training continued being offered to employees. This varied from in-house training, refresher courses, info sessions, CPD training to the warranted conservators and other staff with different warrants, team building activities, days out of the office, induction courses, training in collaboration with other entities, online training, conferences, sponsorships and training abroad.

HM strongly believes in keeping the staff updated with the latest information and invests in providing in house training and refresher courses for the different departments. This year internal training focused on workshops by different curators, health & safety such as risk assessment, manual handling & personal protective equipment, and chemical handling. Conservators also provided basic internal training to maintenance staff at Gozo. Refreshers and update training on fire-fighting awareness, fire warden training, and customer care were also provided. Info sessions were also provided by the IT department on JIRA fundamentals, file storage, Word, Excel & PowerPoint. Another induction course for new recruits was organised between 31 October and 3 November to make them feel welcomed and confident, and provide them with a better understanding of the agency's processes and mission. This four-day programme included introductions and updates by the CEO and COO and other departments, visits to the DSL and conservation labs, the workshops, and short tours of various HM sites and museums in Malta and Gozo.

HM strongly believes in lifelong learning and professional development for all staff to keep employees involved and motivated. The agency continued to invest in providing a list of CPDs to warranted conservators and to other HM staff on complimentary basis. The courses content followed the guidelines for CPD issued by the Warrants Board. Some courses were applicable for a targeted audience only, such as a course on adhesive for ceramic, glass and other materials which was specifically for the inorganics department, while other generic courses were also available to other HM conservation employees, other HM employees and the public. These included the standardisation of report writing & documentation, collection management systems for documentation and conservation in the conservation sections, learning about artistic styles and attributions in art objects among others. A certificate of attendance was issued to all attendees for each course.

HM continued also to support staff who expressed their wish to follow any CPD in the different forms such courses, seminars, webinars, conferences, lectures etc. The themes of these CPDs varied from courses related to architecture, finance sector and social inclusion. The HR team joined a good number of CPDs during the year, which tackled the following topics: Suicide prevention and postvention, precision interviewing skills, bullying and ostracism at the workplace, occupational health and safety legal obligations for directors and management, and the national employee engagement survey conference.



The HR office also assisted a number of employees from the Masonry Restoration Unit, Conservation Department and Manufacture and Upkeep Department to submit their application for Heritage Skills Registration with the Bord tal-Warrant tar-Restawraturi. Two staff have successfully received the heritage skills card, while others are in process to obtain this recognition. We also continued to assist

various employees from the Masonry Resoration Unit and Manufacture and Upkeep Department to apply and obtain their Construction Industry Skill Card from BICC. Two curators have been certified as 'Interpretive Planners' by the European Association for Heritage Interpretation after a 40-hour training course, in November. The Agency also continued to sustain its employees by issuing a good number of sponsorships to sixteen members of staff to be able to follow specific courses related to their duties.

Training was also provided in collaboration with third parties. This included Front Office Skills, Office Behaviour and Office Procedures; award in health and safety awareness certificate; award for tree care specialists; cultural Intelligence and Diversity Course; sales technique training course; building effective teams; an Introduction to the Maltese language to all foreign staff; refresher courses on AED training sessions, food handling, paediatric first aid and basic first aid. HM in collaboration with the Institute for Public Services (IPS) has again provided different training courses for staff from different departments. This included building effective teams, basic management skills, report writing, procurement by contracting authorities and evaluators training for e-Tenders. HM in collaboration with MITA continued to provide training on government modern workplace and digital technology at the workplace.

The agency strongly believes that regular team building activities are important in order to enhancing communication, encouraging creativity, building trust, discovering strength and weaknesses, and developing confidence in team members. This year we continued organising days out of the office for different teams. This year there was the participation of the Activities Committee team, the HR and office of the CEO, the visitor services and curatorial teams at Gozo, the Xrobb I-Għagin project team, the finance & procurement teams, the textiles & paper conservators, and the Diagnostic Science Laboratories. Activities varied from fun activities to organised visits in closed sites.



HM once again organised a good number of social events through the Activities Committee, including sports, social gatherings, team building activities, educational gatherings, and activities involving employees' immediate families and friends, three dress down days, a Filfla tour, apart from the fully-fledged activity for HM's twentieth anniversary. The committee is continually seeking the feedback of staff in order to organise events in line of what the staff is suggesting.

Work placements

HM in collaboration with other institutions, offered different work placements to students in different areas. These were possible through the Institute for Tourism Studies (ITS) where students following the courses of tour guides and the diploma in travel and tourism were offered placements to help with the manning of reception and performing duties of custodianship in various HM sites & museums. Sixteen students benefitted from this scheme.

Other work placements were also possible thanks to the collaboration with Jobsplus where this year, HM embarked into the Work Exposure Scheme. Students were offered different placements in various areas such as curatorial, digitisation and projects. Four students benefitted from these schemes. Other placements were possible thanks to the collaboration with MEYR where students attending the sixth form were given a number of hours in a limited period. Placements were varied, such as conducting custodian duties, processing senior passport applications, helping curators collecting or processing some data. Thirty students participated through this scheme. HM also offered placement to ten students through the MITA student placement programme. Placements were affected at the Digitization & Digital Outreach team & Branding & Design section. We also offered one placement at MUZA in collaboration with Agenzija Zghazagh. We also collaborated with MCAST and provided five working placements for students following the MCAST Award in Vocational Skills and four working placements of 100 hours each at MUZA for students attending specific courses at MCAST.

HM continued to strengthen its collaboration with MCAST as regards to the apprenticeship scheme. This year, HM managed to employ 29 new students on apprenticeship. Students are currently following full time courses at MCAST. Courses vary from masonry restoration to advanced diploma in heritage skills, marketing, business administration, IT networking, multimedia, and fashion and retail. These students are learning on the job-training and at the same time are contributing to HM by giving their service in different areas. Active apprenticeships stand at thirty students, while 16 students ended their apprenticeship since they conducted successfully their academic course at MCAST. The agency also embarked on the trainee scheme offered through IPS. This scheme offers the opportunity of part-time employment with the Malta Public Service to students pursuing a tertiary educational course of studies. This scheme is aimed at complementing students' area of study while introducing them to a working environment within the public service. This year, HM engaged twelve students through this scheme, and they are contributing in different departments including curatorial, marketing, digitisation and international affairs.

The **Visitor Services Department** has studied the statistics of shop sales vs admissions, the number of regional combos sold, and the number of upsold guided tours. The way forward will be discussed and presented to all in the first quarter of 2024.

During the first quarter we have introduced a new section in the monthly audit, where principal officers must check a random shop receipt of clients that have purchased an item from the gift shop. The Front of House manual was updated regularly. Some of the updated procedures are the Malta Discount Card, the EYCA card, the BOV membership card, and the EODR section. During the second quarter, we implemented the new rostering system. This was needed to reduce manual work and to be more accountable. This was done in phases. The first phase was the training part, where we started using the back end to practice. The second phase was introducing the Scheduler to the Site Principal Officers and then to the Front of House. During the second phase the roster was being published on the scheduler and it was also being sent via email, simultaneously. FOH were being informed of changes by email and by notification via Scheduler. The last phase is to eliminate the roster pdf format and the emails completely, so that the Front of House will only view the roster through the Scheduler.

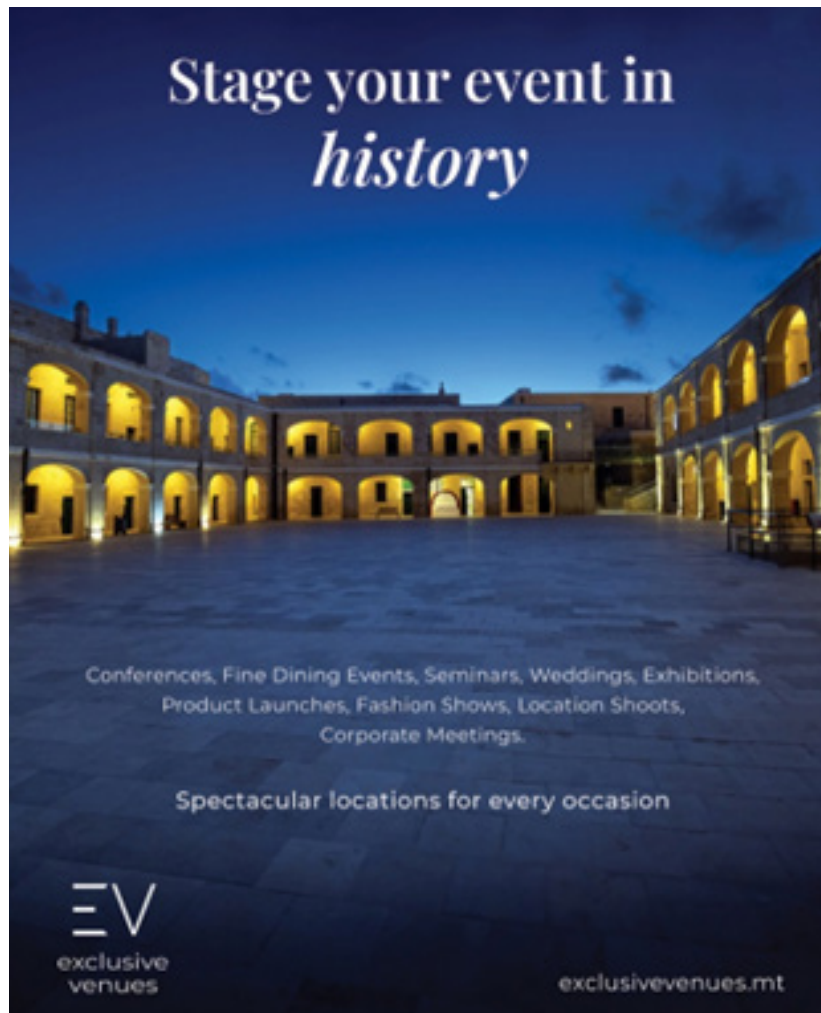
In September we collected the statistics of all guided tours sold by the regional pools to our customers. Each pool was reimbursed according to their sales. This incentive is still active and monitored. The department also has kept a strong relationship with the MTA Quality Assurance office to start the process for the remaining sites to have the quality assurance award.

In April HM has set up a **Customer Relations Unit** following the formalisation of the agency's strategy through its re-branding exercise, which has put the customer at the centre of its operations. Through this department HM intends to build and develop long term customer loyalty and customer retention. The department has mainly focused on the back log of generic emails sent by customers, the processing and issuing of a back log of senior passports and memberships. New policies and procedures have been introduced to have a more efficient way how the customer can be given the immediate attention for any feedback, complaint or query. The department is looking to implement an online based IT system to integrate all social media reviews to be able to monitor and reply to any social media posts and requests.

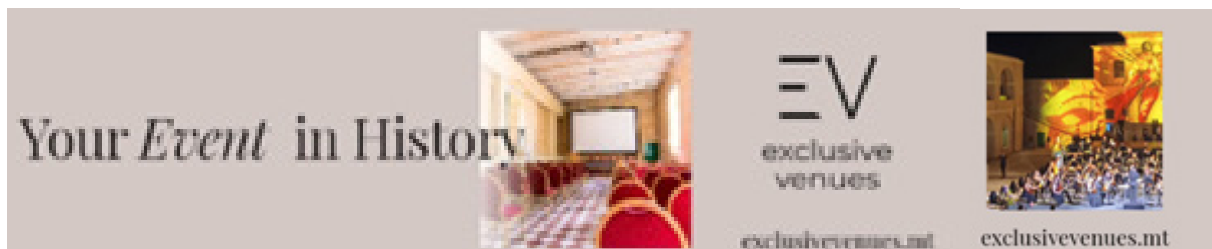
The **Branding and Design department** continued to develop HM's new brand framework. The team focused on building on last year's new strategy, implementing new design strategies through exhibitions, one-off events, re-branding of interpretation material for various sites, and day-to-day site requirements.

Apart from its direct involvement in the promotion of all events of the agency, the **Marketing and Communications Department** was also actively involved in the following activities.

On 4 January, freelance journalist Ali Oudjana spent a day with HM, covering the in-depth scientific investigative and analytical work carried out by the Diagnostic Science Laboratories (DSL), featured on BBC Arabic 4Tech and other BBC media platforms. Oudjana also visited the Paintings Conservation Laboratory and the Inquisitor's Palace, where he interviewed the senior curator and filmed a non-invasive analysis of the metals constituting one of the Inquisitor's coffee pots. Oudjana's visit provided an excellent opportunity for the department to record the tour and various interviews and compile a fact sheet detailing the DSL Unit's activities and upcoming projects for ease of reference and promotion.



During the year, HMSL's rebranded **Exclusive Venues** were marketed using diverse channels, including a series of banners featuring daily on Malta CEOs website, with a focus on subjects rotating on a quarterly basis promoting HM's sites as stellar locations for concerts, weddings, fashion shows, and corporate events. Exclusive Venues banners featured on Times of Malta and Malta Today websites at various intervals during the year too.



Two 30-second adverts, produced in-house and featuring various HM sites dressed as wedding locations, were aired during the following TV programmes throughout the year: Sue Rossi's 'Gateway

to Miss World' and 'Miss World Malta' broadcast on One TV; Nettuno (TVM); Gran Bazaar (One TV); Styles (TVM) and Tessuti u Bizzilla (TVM), as well as during local football matches at the Ta' Qali National Stadium.



Wedding venues were also promoted with photo shoots and advertorials in several editions of the niche wedding 'I Do' magazine; in 'Bliss' magazine; and the Times of Malta 'Wedding Supplement' in November.

On an international level, Exclusive Venues was marketed on the front cover and a double-page spread in the exclusive magazine Malta Invest, which has extensive overseas distribution, and in the London Biennale edition of ArtPaper magazine.

Dovetailing with the international release of Ridley Scott's epic film 'Napoleon' on 22 November, HM teamed up with the Malta Film Commission to produce two short documentaries, one in Maltese and

one in English, using scenes from the film and interviews with a HM historian and a Film Commission professional to promote HM sites as unbeatable locations for films, television series, fashion and photography shoots as well as Malta itself, as a destination for screen tourism.

The department also created and conducted several surveys as part of a committed process to evaluate the success of its operations and identify areas for improvement. In February, as part of an inter-departmental endeavour, it was responsible for coordinating and compiling a set of questions to evaluate visitor feedback to Viva Viva I-Karnival, an exhibition showcasing George Zahra's donation to the agency. We also contributed to conducting the surveys on-site at the Inquisitor's Palace. During July and August, 665 surveys were conducted at several HM museums and site gift shops to evaluate visitors' perception of HM merchandise. The surveys sought to seek whether visitors would recommend HM products to their friends, what products they would like to find for sale in the agency's gift shops and how much they were willing to spend on individual products.


In September, the department was responsible for compiling and carrying out a survey on 121 visitors to the LBTQI+ themed [Be]Loved exhibition held in Valletta, in order to determine the efficacy of marketing channels used, the response to the interpretation and whether the media employed was successful in conveying the main messages of the exhibition. We also created a survey to be handed out to participants at individual HM events and adapted an existing one for attendees at events created specifically for student passport holders and their parents.

Twenty-one episodes of 'Treasure To Meet You' were uploaded to our social media on a fortnightly basis. Most episodes were also accompanied by an article shared on HM's website. Additionally, many of these 3-6-minute features were sent to PBS to be used as fillers during their programming. The intimate documentaries represented an inclusive effort to appreciate curatorial input and put the spotlight on individual artefacts within the national collection, providing socio-cultural context whilst increasing their accessibility outside the confines of the museum.



Specific **HM TV** features continued to be uploaded most Thursday evenings on HM socials, highlighting behind-the-scenes conservation efforts and other work undertaken by the agency meriting special attention, often not directly visible to the public. Several HM TV features worthy of mention include: features on the history of Villa Bichi, documenting the collapse of the Bighi boundary wall as a result of Storm Helios in February 2023 and plans for its consolidation and restoration; interviews documenting the Melite Civitas Romana Project in June and the visits of the Australian High Commissioner Jenny Cartmill and that of Angela Cervetti from the American Embassy as well as the general public to the excavations in Rabat; historian and author of 'Fortress Malta: An Island

Under Siege 1940–43' James Holland's visit to Bighi; the shipment of the Phoenician Cippus to Abu Dhabi and the Mattia Preti paintings to Poland; the model created by Mario Coleiro for Hal Tarxien Prehistoric Complex; hands-on activities held for visitors with hearing impairment and those with dementia; and a series of mini-documentaries documenting the restoration progress made at Villa Frere.



The advertisement is set against a solid red background. In the top right corner is the Heritage Malta logo, which consists of a stylized 'm' made of three vertical bars of increasing height, followed by the text 'Heritage Malta'. The main headline, 'Experience **MORE HISTORY** for Less', is written in a large, white, sans-serif font. Below this, the text 'MULTISITE PASS' is in a smaller, bold, white font, followed by 'GET ACCESS WITH 1 TICKET!'. A paragraph in white text states: 'Visit Heritage Malta Sites and Museums* PLUS the Malta National Aquarium and the Cittadella Visitor Centre.' Below this, it says 'From megaliths to forts, shipwrecks to sharks, catacombs to palaces. Something to interest everyone. This is your one-stop shop to access the very best Heritage Malta has to offer.' A line of small text at the bottom left reads: 'For more information about the Multisite Ticket visit - heritagemalta.net/store'. To the right of the text, three overlapping images of the Multisite Pass are shown. The top card is a 'Site Ticket' for the 'Grotto of St. Peter' and features a photograph of a cave interior. The middle card is a 'Site Ticket' for the 'Cittadella' and features a photograph of the fortifications. The bottom card is the 'Multisite Pass' itself, which is red with the Heritage Malta logo and the text 'Part of the Multisite Pass'. A QR code is located in the bottom right corner of the advertisement.

A concentrated effort was made to promote **HM's Multisite Pass**. Adverts marketing the pass featured in the following platforms targeted at incoming tourists: 'Le Fute' website and Guidebook, MTA's 'Discover Malta' magazine, Routard's website, 'Malta Insider' magazine, Air Malta's 'Bizzilla' in-flight magazine, 'Oh My Malta' magazine, and 'Hilton' magazine. A 15-second advert was created in-house and displayed on a large screen at MIA, which all inbound visitors on European flights had to walk towards upon arrival. Artwork was also created for the two trusses in Valletta, the Malta Aquarium Kiosk and all HDTV monitors within HM sites and museums, along with a printed leaflet explaining the whereabouts of the sites to which the multisite pass allows access. QR codes were wrapped on three of HM's vehicles pointing towards the multisite entry on the HM online store. Furthermore, a special edition of the multisite pass artwork featuring the War Museum was printed in the Malta vs England match programme targeted at visiting English football fans.

Our Prehistoric **SLEEPING BEAUTY**

heritagemalta.mt/explore



HM's Neolithic sites received promotion through two advertorials: one in a spread within Hilton magazine and another featured in the Virtu Ferries magazine. Additionally, the Maltese Camino heritage trail was highlighted in a dedicated spread in the Virtu Ferries magazine. The Sleeping Lady artwork and the Grand Master's Palace opening were both advertised in the Hilton magazine.

The marketing strategy extended to articles in Encore Magazine, where content was strategically utilised to promote MUŻA's exhibitions scheduled for March-May '23, HM publications, as well as the [Be]Loved, Maltese Bride, and Fare Convito exhibitions. Copy and photos were also provided to Whizz Air's in-flight magazine and Lonely Planet to spotlight the Solstice and Equinox phenomena at Haġar Qim and Mnajdra Archaeological Park.

In the realm of media outreach, Marketing and Communications orchestrated interviews on behalf of the Office of the CEO, effectively communicating HM's vision to Global Trend Monitor and Who's Who magazines. Simultaneously, content and visuals were shared with Malta Insider magazine and an advert placed within the Malta Tour Guide annual diary to showcase the diverse array of museums and sites under HM. Bizzilla in-flight magazine served as a platform to promote the Multisite Pass, the [Be]Loved exhibition, and the Crib's Journey with St Francis exhibition.

Artpaper Magazine featured editorial content and adverts, effectively marketing the 'Pioneers of

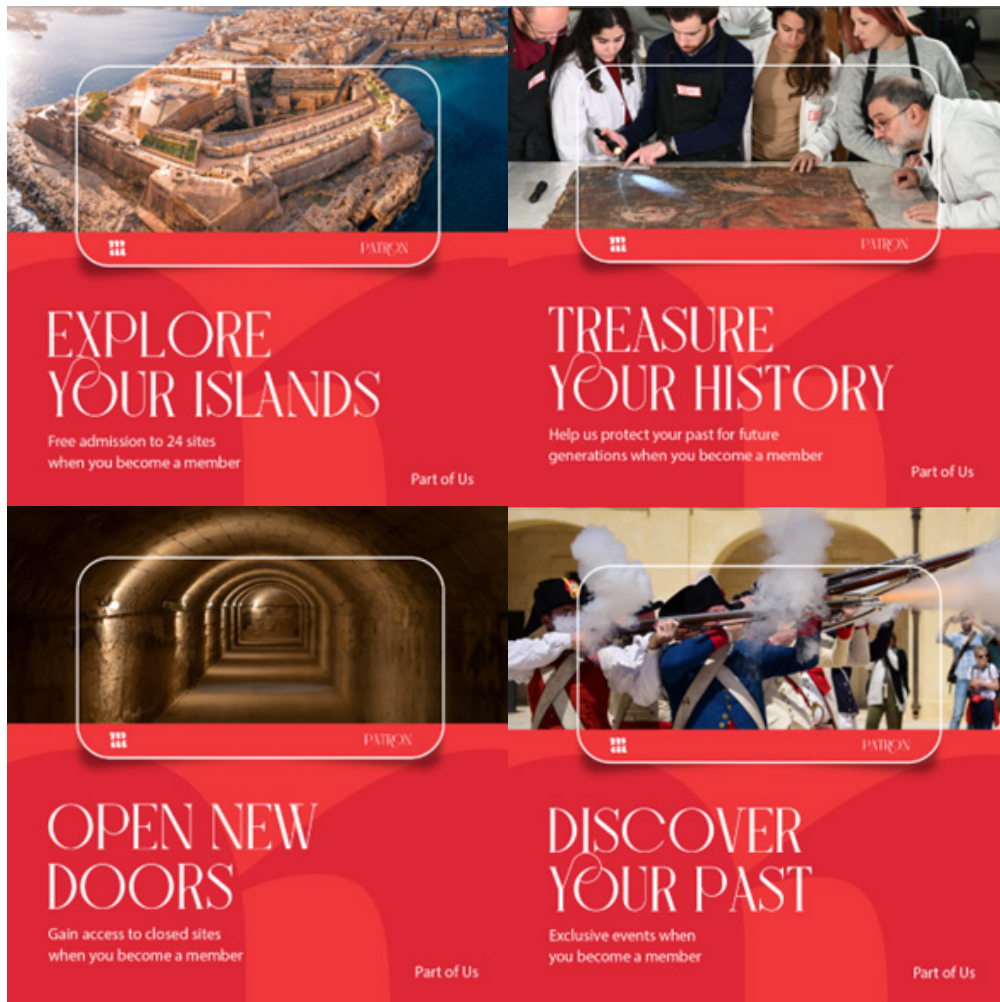
Modern Art' publication and the 'Fare Convito' exhibition. 'Oh My Malta' magazine also featured ads for the Multisite Pass and Christmas at the Fort, ensuring comprehensive visibility for HM across various media outlets.



Patronage



An umbrella term encompassing five separate strands including corporate sponsorship, individual donations, membership, volunteering, and partnerships with external agencies, the Patronage concept encourages a philosophy of cooperation and belonging while enabling the agency to become self-sufficient and supporting its mission to conserve and protect the national collection for future generations. Following the coordination of a mini-website platform which was launched in November, the marketing arm of the department embarked on a campaign to promote HM memberships in time for Christmas. The campaign kicked off with three billboards located in strategic localities in Malta and Gozo (Marsa, Birkirkara and Xewkija) featuring Trevor Zahra, a popular, well-known Maltese author and previous HM Brand Ambassador. Two 30-second adverts were shot, also featuring Trevor Zahra, and aired on national TV stations as well as on HM social media platforms. Additionally, the tail-end of one of Malta transport's buses was wrapped, for the duration of one month, with a photo of Mr Zahra holding aloft a HM membership card. The bus was used in one of the adverts. In the meantime, a series of four distinct artworks were created and shared on various HM digital platforms as well as printed for dissemination on our site and museum front-of-house displays. The artwork introduced the Maltese public to the concept of patronage, each ad promoting different perks associated with becoming a HM member.



Over December, the Exclusive Venues banners on Malta CEOs, Malta Today, and Times of Malta platforms were replaced with banners promoting HM membership. Generic banners promoting membership and patronage are also being shared on the MFA website. During the Grand Master's Palace special opening on 26 December, a booth was set up featuring banners and leaflets created and printed for the occasion, along with a screen installation of past members events to help promote HM membership.

Indirect marketing involved gifting three HM memberships as prizes for two campaigns (Lovin Malta / Science in the City) in December and a prize presented to Joven Grech (DJ-Tenishia) on the programme Manicolo & Co – aired following the 7:30pm news bulletin on One TV. As part of an HMTV feature, Mr David Vassallo, a retired general surgeon with the Royal Army Medical corps, was filmed talking about his experience volunteering with the National War Archives at Fort St Elmo and now features on the patronage website.



Promotion of publications and merchandise was also high on the agenda. Three Heritage Explorer Kits: 'Knights of Malta', 'Prehistoric Malta' and 'Widnet il-Baħar' were created by the Publications Department. Each kit features a themed HM t-shirt, a HM daily year planner, an insulated HM travelling cup, a 'Museums and Sites: the Mediterranean in a Nutshell' guidebook, and a HM tote bag. These Explorer kits were gifted to each of the 40 participants taking part in the Eurovision Song Festival quarter-finals over the weekend beginning 13 January. Furthermore, they were also made available for the public to purchase online via our HM website store. The department came up with the name of the kit and coordinated the creation of artwork for social media and the HM online shop. Descriptions of the contents of each kit were sent to PBS and uploaded to our online shop. Three social media posts during January were boosted to promote the kit on HM's social media.

Heritage Explorer Kit **Maltese Rock-Centaury**

€50

www.heritagemalta.mt/store



Other campaigns during the year included an article in the Times of Malta and boosted social media posts to market the book 'Slavery Treason & Blood'; an advert in ArtPaper magazine; boosted social media posts and cross-sharing with various art enthusiast groups; direct marketing via the MCAST and UOM art departments and their social media to promote the book 'Pioneers of Modern Art'; social media posts and an article in Encore magazine to promote five HM publications covering World War II, amongst them 'Ben Jinks' War Diary', 'The Malta War Papers – Chronicles of an Island-Fortress, 1939-45' and 'Tifkriet tal-Gwerra'; several adverts including an endorsement by popular local musician Ira Losco to boost the sales of the [Be]Loved merchandise; and paid FB posts to promote the catalogues

accompanying the exhibitions 'From Aphrodite to Eros', '[Be]Loved', 'The Maltese Bride' and 'Christus Natus Est'.

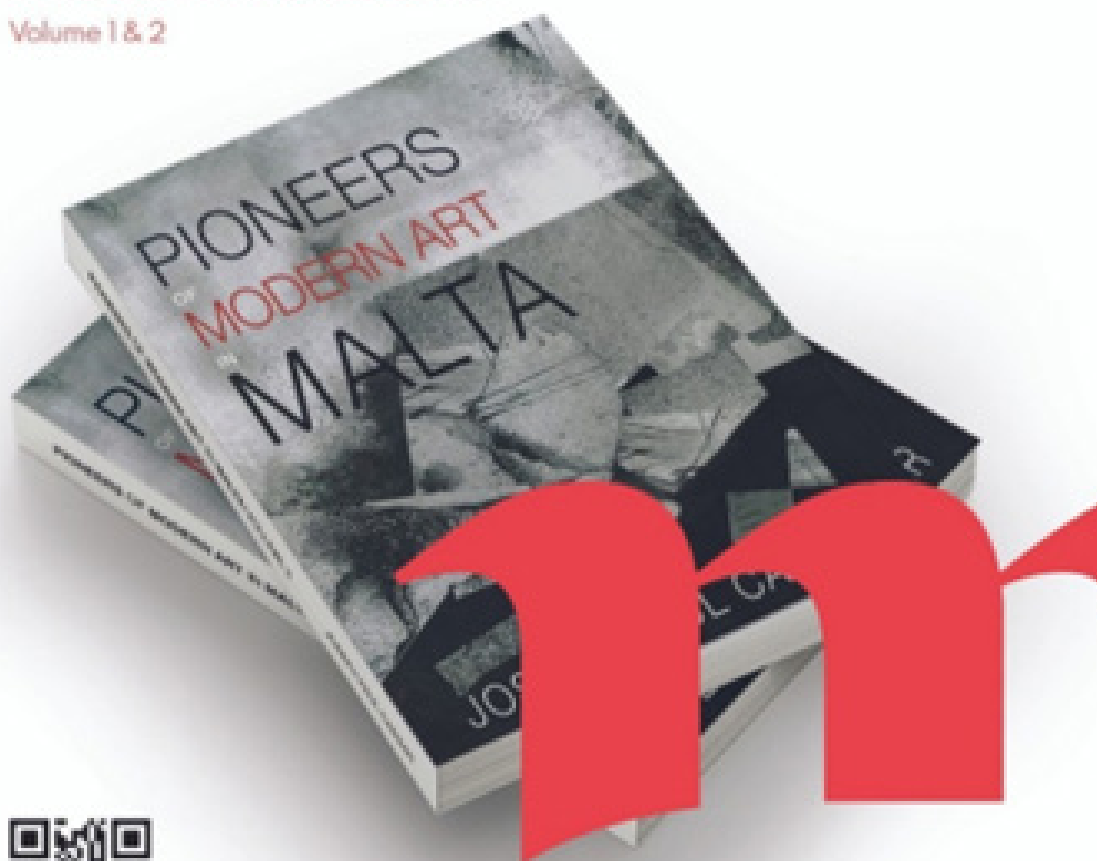


Discover the groundbreakers

PIONEERS OF MODERN ART IN MALTA

BY JOSEPH PAUL CASSAR

Volume 1 & 2



www.heritagemalta.mt/store



Get More Out of Your Visit

**PURCHASE AN OFFICIAL
GUIDEBOOK AND RECEIVE A
SPECIAL DISCOUNT ON
YOUR ADULT TICKET**



Price Enquire at reception for further details

Marketing continued to perform as the liaison between the Visitor Services Department and Design and Branding, providing text and images and coordinating requests for various offers, including merchandising, publications, and ticketing combinations, as well as providing content, visuals and proofreading services for signage, leaflets and other printed material such as the new location leaflet.

In mid-November the department co-created a Christmas merchandising campaign. An advert was filmed at the Grand Master's Place promoting HM's honey, jams, olive oil and carob syrup and boosted on our social media as well as aired on several TV programmes. Two in-house photo sessions produced a series of visuals which were used individually to boost sales in a 5-week social media campaign to promote HM publications, cookery books, children's colouring books and puzzles, silk scarves, other merchandise, and also HM membership.





Much effort was also invested in the promotion of Student and Senior Passports. Two 30-second advertisements, each tailored for a specific type of passport, were created and broadcast on various TV programmes. In particular the popular programme 'It's a Knock about' aired on One TV featured 14 x 4 30 sec spots promoting the Senior Passport. Simultaneously, these adverts were strategically promoted on our social media platforms. Special one-stop stalls were established during HM's 20th anniversary, Villa Portelli and Grand Master's Palace special openings. These stalls facilitated visitors in renewing or directly applying for their passports on-site. An advert was also placed in L-Anzjan magazine. Moreover, as part of the promotional activities for the 'Viva Viva l-Karnival' initiative, informative posters in Maltese detailing the application process for senior citizens were distributed across day care centres, football clubs, band clubs, and local councils within the Cottonera region. This outreach aimed to provide accessible information and assistance to the target audience during the campaign.



Marketing and PR strategies synergize to promote HM's weekly calendar of events, with a specific emphasis on special openings and major exhibitions. This comprehensive approach involves a minimum two-week schedule of social media posts, stories, and TikTok reels. These multimedia elements are cross-shared on external event listing pages and targeted Facebook groups, complemented by the creation of a dedicated Facebook Event Page and a What's On HM website listing. The promotional efforts extend to direct mails, audio-visual features, live Facebook and Instagram feeds for special openings, press releases, and the coordination of artwork for various platforms such as social media, the HM website, and online and printed banners. The dissemination also encompasses sandwich boards, HDTV monitors, on-site posters, the Aquarium kiosk, and MUŻA HDTV screens. Additional channels used may include radio ads, TV ads and billboards ('HM 20' and 'Become a Member' campaigns).



Some events, such as the Grand Harbour, Comino and Filfla cruises, the Summer Student Passport Programmes, Mario Coleiro's heritage walks, the Inquisitor's Palace talks, and workshops associated with major exhibitions, were given an extra marketing drive.

For the Aphrodisiacs Taste History event, we teamed up with the Arts Council and Lovin Malta to create a competition in order to help boost sales. Similar paid campaigns involving a combination of banners, editorials, Facebook-boosted posts and Instagram carousels were advertised on the following news and lifestyle portals: Malta Today, Newsbook, Times of

Malta, Gwida, Guide Me and Lovin Malta.

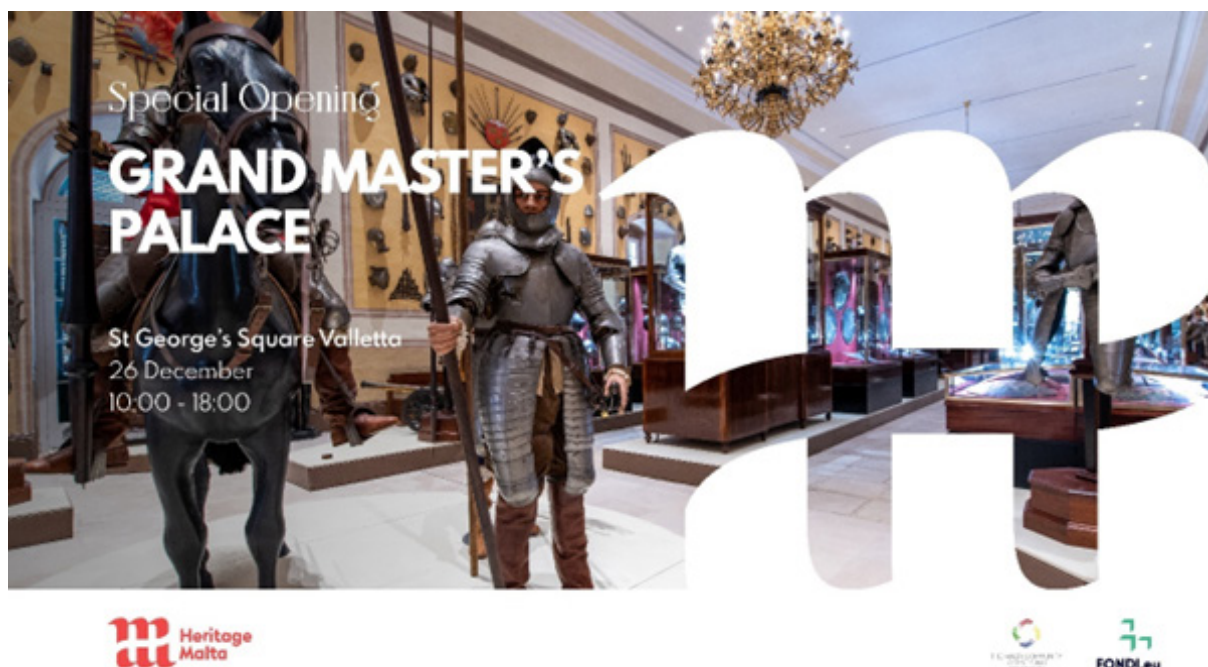
Where possible, as in the case of promoting the Villa Portelli memory room, HM 20, the Grand Master's Palace open days, the after-hours opening of St Paul's Catacombs, and the exhibitions Viva I-Karnival and The Crib's Journey with St Francis, we roped in the respective local councils to help distribute posters among day care centres, band clubs, football clubs and parish church halls.



With other events, such as the launch of the Event's Calendar or the Summer Student Passport Programme, or the President's visit to the special openings at Grand Master's Palace, the organisation of a press conference plays a crucial role in enhancing public visibility and engagement with HM's activities.



Marketing & PR strategies contributed to the successful turnout for the following special openings: 1556 visitors toured Fort Delimara on 22-23 April; 11,000 visitors stepped over the threshold of HM's museums and sites open for free on 30 September, whilst over 800 visitors accepted the open day invitation at the Bighi HM headquarters the following day. 2700 visitors turned up to explore Villa Portelli in the open weekend organised on 14-15 October; 5085 visitors attended the Christmas at the Fort activity at Fort St Elmo on 2-3 December; and over 3500 visitors toured the special opening of the Grand Master's Palace on 26 December. Poignantly, €15,000 was generated from donations collected during the latter two activities and presented to the Malta Community Chest Fund.



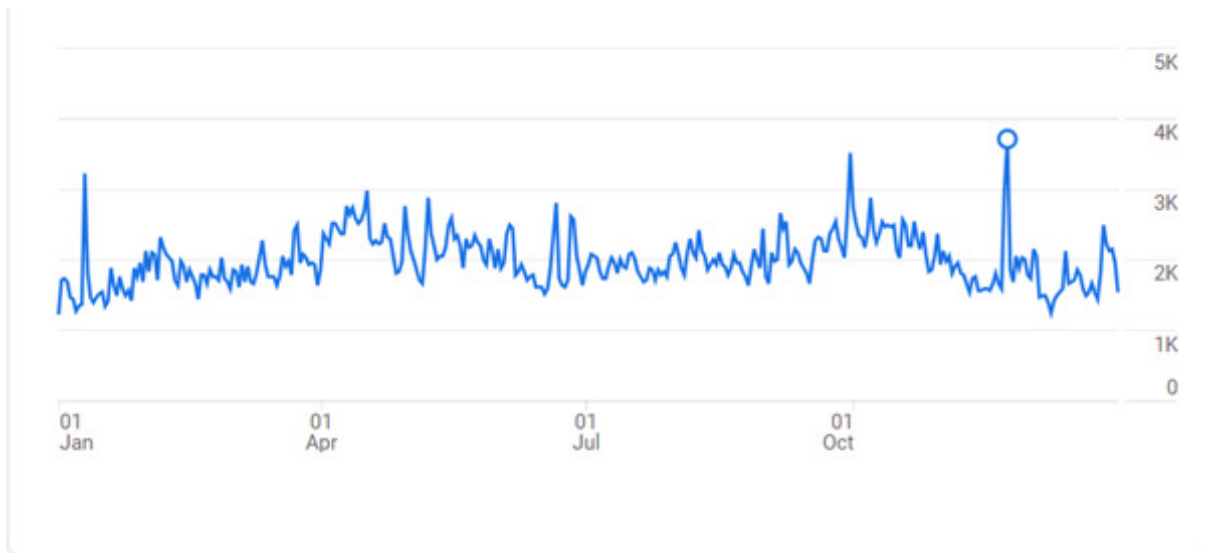
From a conventional media perspective, the agency resorted to different ways of conveying its message. A total of **59 press releases** were issued, **118 appearances** were registered on television programmes, **33 interviews** were conducted on radio programmes, and 16 articles were published in magazines. Heritage Malta was mentioned in 612 articles published online (mainly on tvn.com.mt, timesofmalta.com, maltatoday.com.mt, independent.com.mt, one.com.mt, netnews.com.mt and illum.com.mt), and in **394 articles** in local and foreign newspapers.

Social Media – HM Annual Report 2023

HM website statistics

- **Users:** 580,339
- **Page Views:** 2,417,094
- **Average time per user:** 2 minutes 03 seconds

Chart Stat:



User Aquisitions

1. **Organic Search:** 299,044
2. **Direct:** 178,383
3. **Organic Social:** 66,862
4. **Referral:** 28,881
5. **Paid Search:** 1,668

Demographics: 580,339

1. **Malta:** 257,850 (44.4%)
2. **United Kingdom:** 64,605 (11.1%)
3. **United States:** 35,698 (6.2%)
4. **Italy:** 31,770 (5.5%)
5. **Germany:** 26,259 (4.5%)

6. **France:** 24,288 (4.2%)
7. **Spain:** 18,184 (3.1%)
8. **Poland:** 17,221 (3.0%)
9. **Australia:** 10,812 (1.9%)
10. **Netherlands:** 9,643 (1.7%)

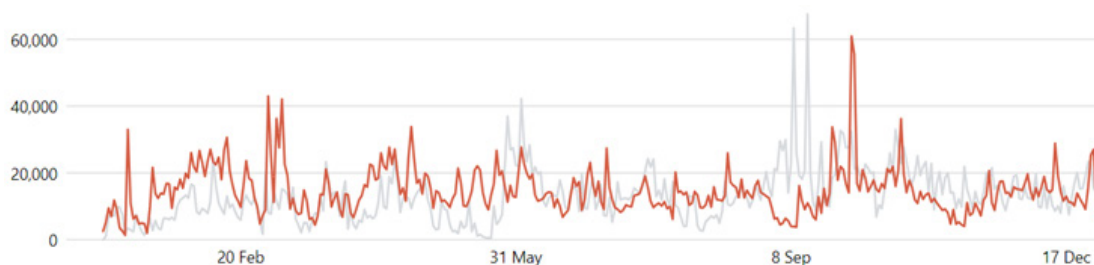
Top ten museums and sites on HM Website (Page views)

1. **Hal Saflieni Hypogeum:** 309,639
2. **Online Store:** 190,658
3. **Main Page:** 177,200
4. **Sites:** 154,395
5. **What's On Page:** 98,642
6. **Underground Valletta:** 82,277
7. **Haġar Qim and Mnajdra Archaeological Park:** 70,578
8. **Checkout:** 61,780
9. **Fort St Elmo - National War Museum:** 57,525
10. **Ġgantija Archaeological Park:** 56,194

Top 5 news items on website:

Social media statistics – Facebook HM Page

- Users Reached: 609,744
- Likes & Reactions: 90,334
- Comments: 6,335
- Shares: 8,884
- Link Clicks: 62,736
- Followers: 48,027
- Facebook Page Likes: 43,246
- New Followers: 3,954
- Visits: 195,613



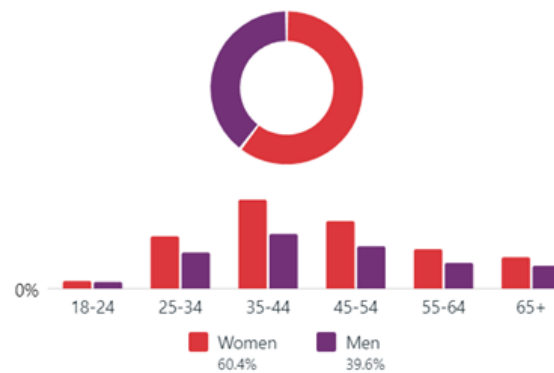
Demographics

• Age & Gender

Facebook followers ①

48,027

Age & gender ①



Top 5 Countries

1. Malta – 73.9%
2. United Kingdom – 4.6%
3. Italy – 3.8%
4. Australia – 2.9%
5. United States – 2.4%

Social media statistics – Instagram Heritage Malta Page

- Users Reached: 68,143
- Followers: 6,880
- Visits: 15,713
- New Instagram Followers: 1,724

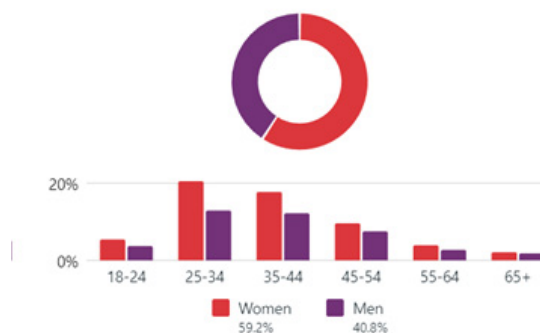
Demographics

• Age & Gender

Instagram followers ⓘ

6,880

Age & gender ⓘ



Top 5 Countries

1. Malta – 57.9%
2. United Kingdom – 6.1%
3. Italy – 4.9%
4. United States – 3.3%
5. Australia – 3.2%

Youtube Heritage Malta Profile

- Impressions: 652,600
- Views: 97,087
- Subscribers: 2,705

Top 5 Countries

1. Malta – 40.0%
2. United Kingdom – 7.0%
3. United States – 3.0%
4. Italy – 2.2%
5. Germany – 1.6%

Watch Time:

- **Non-subscribers:** 86.8%
- **Subscribers:** 13.3%

Gender Demographics:

- **Male:** 53.2%
- **Female:** 46.8%

Age Demographics:

- **35–44 years:** 31.6%
- **45–54 years:** 25.1%
- **25–34 years:** 22.0%
- **55–64 years:** 13.0%
- **65+ years:** 7.4%
- **18–24 years:** 0.9%
- **13–17 years:** 0%

The Information Technology (IT) and Digitization departments converged into a single entity, the **Technology and Experience Development Unit** (TED Unit). The consolidation of these departments into one stems from a strategic imperative to foster synergies, poised to adeptly address the escalating demands placed on the agency. Upon the establishment of the unit, a concerted effort was promptly initiated to enhance internal operational standards. It obtained the ISO 9001:2015 certification through the esteemed international accreditation entity Goldman Sachs, within a few months of its inception - the first within HM to attain this prestigious certification.

The Unit has played a dynamic role within the Commission Expert Group on the Common European Data Space for Cultural Heritage (CEDCHE). Serving as Malta's representative in both the primary committee of experts and two subgroups, the unit actively contributes to CEDCHE's endeavours. Its involvement extends to supporting the European Commission in shaping the Common European Data Space for Cultural Heritage and establishing connections with other data spaces under the Digital Europe Programme (DIGITAL). This engagement underscores the unit's commitment to fostering collaboration and advancing initiatives at the intersection of cultural heritage and digital innovation.

HM has strategically prioritized collaboration with Europeana, the continent's premier digital platform granting access to a myriad of cultural heritage items from museums, galleries, libraries, and archives across Europe. With the recent implementation of the Collections Management System, the integration of Malta's national collection with Europeana is now within reach. Following the government's

appointment of the TED unit as the national data aggregator for cultural heritage data, efforts have been directed towards obtaining official recognition from Europeana, expecting completion in 2024.

Simultaneously, the TED unit assumes a pivotal role as the national contact point for the innovative Twin It project. This initiative seeks to amplify Europeana's impact by introducing cutting-edge technologies for cross-border digital collaboration in cultural heritage. Serving as a nexus for partnerships, knowledge exchange, and the development of collaborative tools, the Twin It project spearheaded by the TED unit aims to elevate the accessibility and engagement with Europe's rich cultural treasures. This multifaceted approach underscores HM's commitment to leveraging digital platforms and collaborative projects to enhance the preservation and accessibility of the nation's cultural heritage on a global scale.

The unit continues its concerted efforts to establish and fortify vital networks with prominent research centres, solidifying collaborations to advance knowledge in the field of digitization. Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) have been successfully executed with both the University of South Florida and the University of Technology of Cyprus. These partnerships facilitate knowledge exchange and collaborative initiatives with key research entities specializing in digitization, a rapidly evolving scientific domain where remaining at the forefront is paramount. Furthermore, the unit is actively implementing cutting-edge European research on 3D digitization as outlined in the seminal report titled "Study on Quality in 3D Digitization of Tangible Cultural Heritage."

The culmination of the four-year COST action, CA18110 "Underground Built Heritage as a Catalyser for Community Valorisation," marks a significant milestone. This research and networking initiative focused on advocating for the recognition and preservation of Underground Built Heritage, emphasizing its potential for sustainable reuse and valorisation to bolster local community development. HM played a pivotal role as an active partner, particularly in dissemination efforts and contributions to areas such as digital tools for cultural heritage valorisation, design thinking methodologies, and audience development. The Head of the Unit assumed the role of science communication manager for the action, delivering lectures in five training schools and contributing to three publications on underground cultural heritage valorisation.

The Information Technology (IT) projects department has played a pivotal role in steering numerous projects that left an indelible mark on the overall efficiency of HM, including the acquisition of the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) software, which represents a paradigm shift, ensuring data is readily available at the fingertips of those who need it. The department has engaged in a thorough cost-benefit analysis (CBA) to reveal the various benefits that will stem from its forthcoming implementation. Not only does the agency stand to recover the costs associated with the ERP, but it is also poised to gain a substantial amount of time and resources that were previously entangled in the labyrinth of disparate standalone software and cumbersome manual processes. This marks a crucial milestone, setting the stage for the implementation phase in 2024.

Furthermore, our agency has actively participated in a collective, government-wide initiative to acquire ArcGIS by ESRI—a decision that underscores our commitment to staying at the forefront of technological innovation. ArcGIS by Esri is more than just a geographic information system (GIS)

software suite; it is a powerful tool designed for mapping, spatial analysis, and data management. Already operational in select departments such as Field Archaeology and UCHU, ArcGIS is set to be a cornerstone in our technological repertoire. This software expansion enables us to collect a broader spectrum of data beyond the ERP's capabilities, placing HM in a favourable position in the contemporary landscape where information is the lifeblood of effective decision-making.

Beyond external initiatives, the IT department has turned its gaze inward, undertaking two substantial internal projects—the regeneration of server rooms and the revitalization of the network infrastructure at head office. While the server rooms remain technologically up-to-date and functional, they require a structural revamp to align with contemporary standards. This encompasses the installation of a new industrial air conditioning system, raised flooring for cable management, state-of-the-art fire suppression mechanisms, and a dedicated power line with redundant uninterrupted power supplies. Complementing these features is an on-site generator, ensuring continuity in operations even in case of power disruptions.

Simultaneously, the department is embarking on a comprehensive overhaul of the network infrastructure at Bighi. The aging wiring and ports, coupled with the exponential growth in HM's network requirements, staff, and systems, have led to a bottleneck in service delivery. Recognizing this challenge, our aim is not just to address the immediate concerns but to future-proof our network architecture. The substitution of copper cables with fibre optic cables marks a strategic shift, wiring them instead to network cabinets. This transition heralds a departure from a centralized network system to a distributed network architecture. The advantages are multi-fold: segregation of systems, shorter network paths, and the potential for higher transfer rates and enhanced reliability. We are also ensuring comprehensive WiFi coverage in each office.

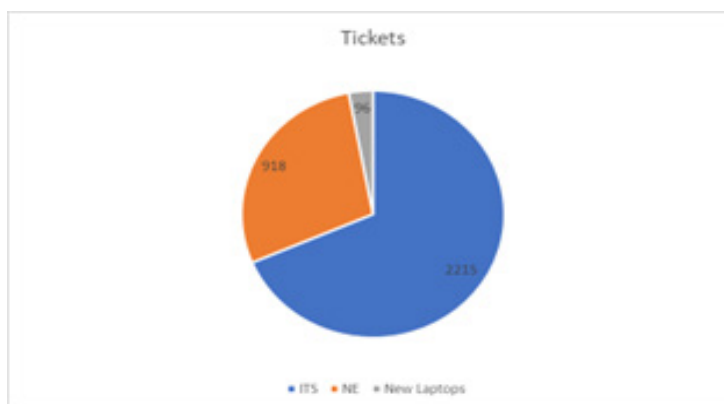
In addition, the department is engaged in several other forward-looking projects. One such project is the implementation of a Laboratory Information Management System (LIMS). This sophisticated software not only enhances the efficiency of our laboratory operations but also ensures the seamless management of data and resources, elevating HM's scientific capabilities. Collaborating with the Conservation Department, we are also pioneering a Sensor Cloud System, leveraging cutting-edge technology to monitor and collect data on environmental conditions crucial for the preservation of cultural heritage. Furthermore, we are developing an Exhibition Resource Platform with the strategic aim of reducing the cost of exhibition resources. Through software, we are creating a comprehensive catalogue of traceable exhibition modules, allowing us to efficiently reuse them from one exhibition to another. This innovative approach not only optimizes resource utilization but also enhances our ability to curate captivating exhibitions with a cost-effective and sustainable approach. Lastly, our Data Aggregation project seeks to consolidate and streamline data from diverse sources, fostering a holistic approach to information management. These initiatives collectively exemplify our holistic approach to technological innovation, ensuring HM remains at the forefront of advancements in the cultural heritage sector.

The year has seen a myriad of transformations within the IT department, marked notably by the inception of a new unit and an extensive restructuring of the department, thus introducing a diversification of roles within the support team while steadfastly upholding the fundamental core services. The ongoing

provision of daily support remains a cornerstone encompassing essential tasks. These include the establishment of accounts for new employees and the termination of accounts for departing staff. This intricate process involves not only the deployment of hardware and software for new recruits but extends to the strategic placement of these resources in museums and sites.

The IT support team has adeptly navigated a spectrum of challenges, ranging from telephony issues to sporadic turnstile malfunctions. A critical facet of their responsibilities involves managing ticketing-related requests, a task that transcends mere issue resolution to encompass the dynamic enrichment of the website with new tickets, memberships, and pertinent information related to museums and sites. This demanding endeavour requires vigilant monitoring to ensure an unblemished experience for visitors. Moreover, the team has successfully overseen the installation and setup for numerous new tour operators, thereby underscoring the widening scope of our services within both Maltese and foreign communities.

We utilise two main Jira projects: ITS caters for all users' issues, and NE is related only to new employees' requests such as creation of accounts, setting up of laptops, terminations, change in departments etc. Below one can see some numbers as regards to all tickets closed for 2023.



A noteworthy augmentation to our operational repertoire this year has been the meticulous installation and maintenance of ticket point-of-sale (POS) systems for events, which includes either merchandise POS or a combination of both. We have made commendable strides in this realm by acquiring combination POS units, integrating touch screens with barcode scanners, chit printers, and RFID scanners, rendering them particularly suitable for events in sites with constrained bench space.

This year has witnessed an intensified focus on Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) cameras, with notable projects including the Maritime Museum initiative, demanding extensive internet wiring for seamless functionality. This initiative has further extended to include Wi-Fi installation for temperature monitoring and CCTV deployment. This year we also deployed CCTVs at prominent locations such as Hagar Qim and Fort St Elmo. In tandem, the IT department has introduced a new suite of robust and highly efficient printers across most sites. This transition has streamlined print monitoring, toner replacement, and issue resolution.

Maintaining an ongoing collaboration with the Malta Information Technology Agency (MITA) for government accounts and related issues remains a continuous priority. The team has addressed over 2200 support tickets, nearly 1000 new employee requests and variations, and deployed approximately 100 new laptops, in addition to repairing and refurbishing existing ones. The department is also entrusted with the management of Jticket, our comprehensive ticketing system, and its online counterpart. The team oversees the intricate configuration of events, new ticket types, and other settings. Furthermore, the team has played a pivotal role in the development and deployment of a new kiosk—an automated ticketing machine to make its debut during the Grand Master's Palace opening.

Within Jticket, the introduction of the Membership RFID system has been a significant advancement. Cards are now intricately linked with RFID technology, with this innovation extending to turnstiles, enabling them to read both physical tickets and RFID cards seamlessly. Presently, the team is engaged in collaborative efforts with an external developer to integrate Jticket with Power BI, a project aimed at providing users with personalized dashboards for comprehensive statistical insights.

As part of the Unit's restructuring, the department is responsible for technology-related matters in all the temporary and permanent exhibitions and events organised by HM. From the introduction of directional audio in the Carnival exhibition to the complete automation of the Be-Loved exhibition, and the design and construction of a custom hologram unit for the National Aquarium, this team went through a very interesting learning curve, and is now bringing this acquired knowledge to the upcoming exhibition at the Malta Maritime Museum, where together with the Digitization Team they will be creating an amazing tech-exhibition, including the five-storey silo equipped with a High-Tech Control Room, and a reduced-scale working replica of a Dockyard Travel-Crane (entirely designed and built in-house). All this equipment will give life to a show that will launch the visitor into an immersive experience showcasing the ex-Malta Drydocks.

Commitment for the procurement of high-end professional equipment has been undertaken with the aim to put this unit in the position from where it can offer state-of-the-art setups and services. All info-screens are being upgraded with new cloud-controlled multimedia players. This will make it possible to have the content updated remotely, while also having the option of scheduling. This means that for each content, it will be possible to create a schedule specifying the start and end date of when that specific content will show. The marketing department will thus be finally able to control the content of all info-screens remotely, ensuring maximum benefit.

An asset management system is also currently in process of being introduced, enabling the use of equipment and other assets in a more efficient and effective manner while at the same time keeping track and of all its assets.

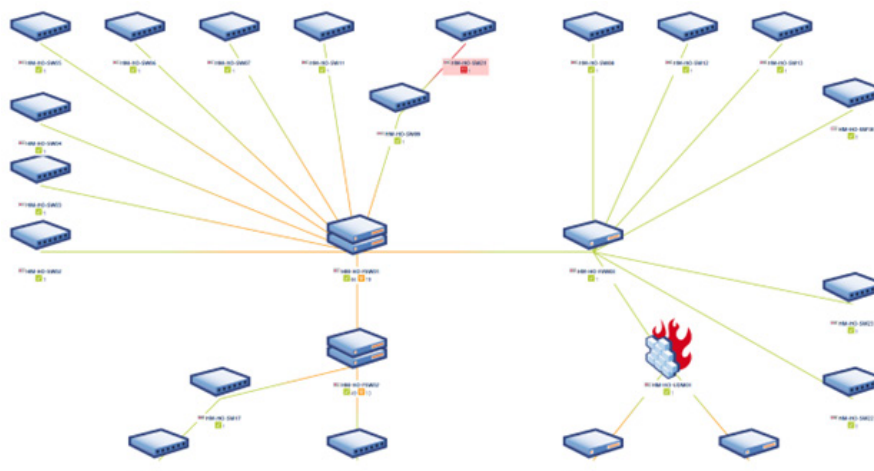
Implementing UDM Pro's across our sites brought a centralised management system to our network, streamlining operations and enhancing security measures. The User Interface Dashboard (UID) provided real-time insights and control, allowing for efficient monitoring and management of network related activities. The UDM Pro acts as an all-in-one system, as it acts as a Wireless Controller (WLC), Door Access Controller and will also act as a redundant firewall to the primary MITA firewall, albeit

with a redundant Internet Service Provider (ISP). This will ensure that all staff, clients, and guests stay always connected to the Internet, hence minimizing the chances of potential downtime.



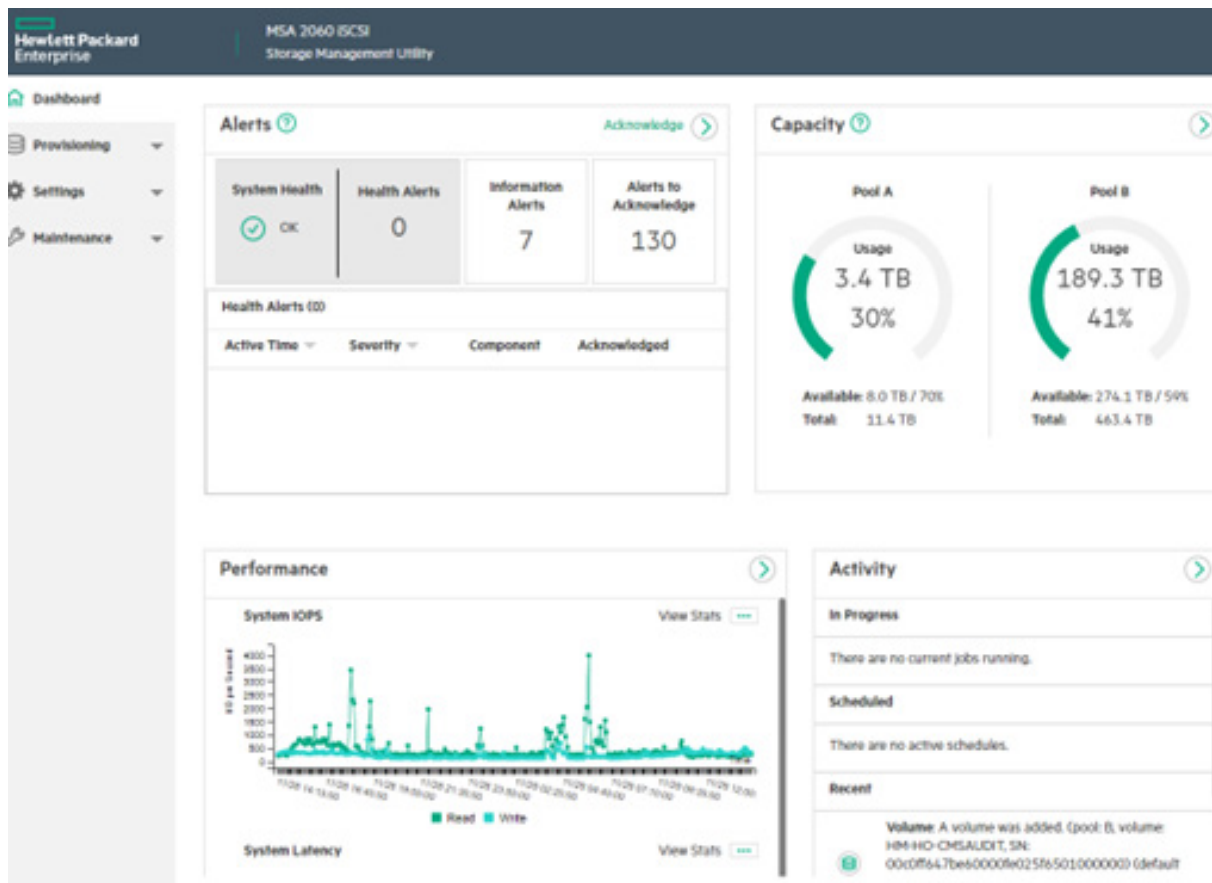
UDM dashboard

The replacement of home-grade access points, such as TP-Link's, with Ubiquiti access points revolutionized our WiFi services. This resulted in increased reliability, expanded coverage, and improved user experiences across HM sites. A complete changeover for all sites is planned for 2024, which will also cater free guest WIFI, and a redundant Internet connection. The design and implementation of comprehensive network topologies, exemplified by PRTG maps, facilitated better visualization, and understanding of our network architecture. These maps proved invaluable in planning, troubleshooting, and optimizing our network infrastructure, especially where we have limited documentation.

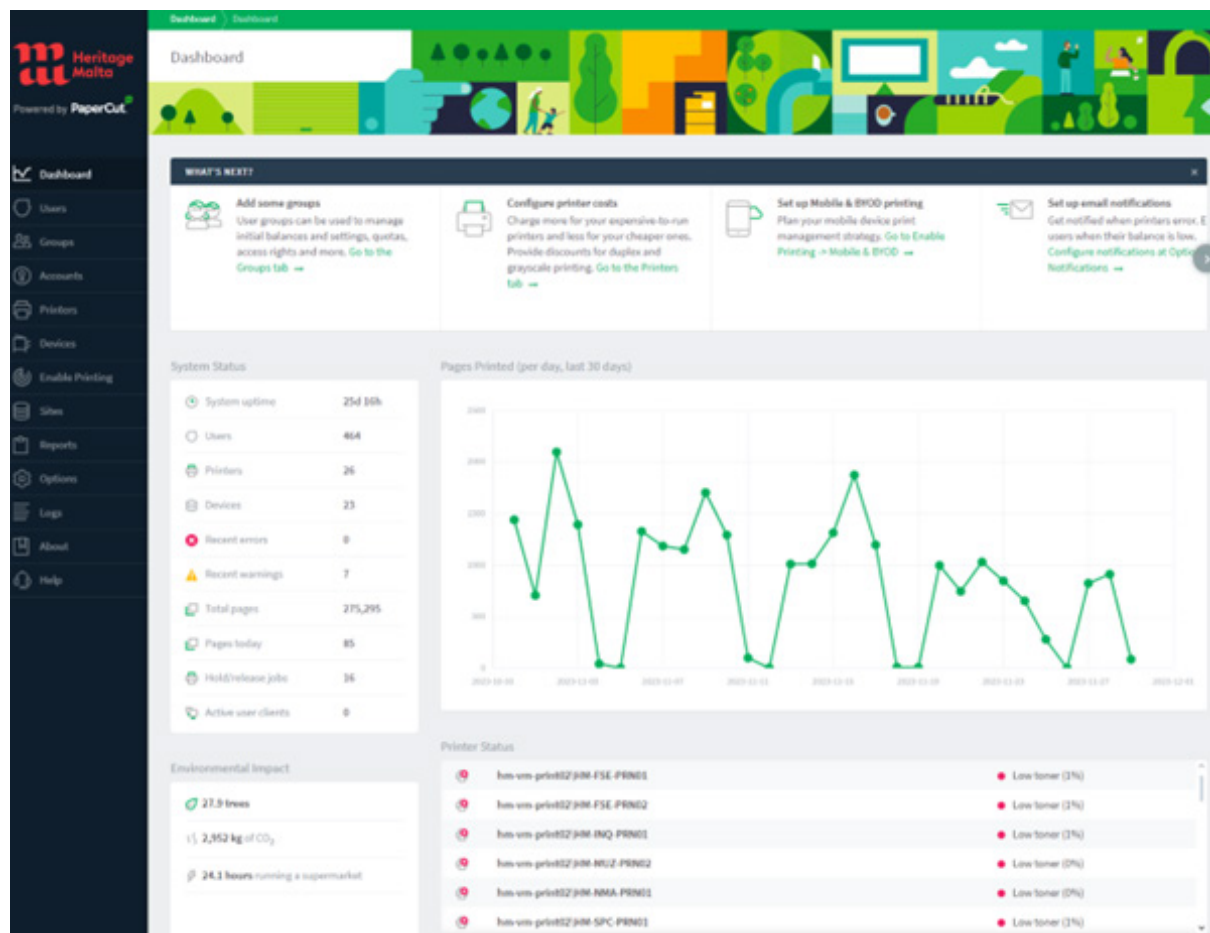


Network topology of HMO via PRTG

HM also underwent a significant infrastructure upgrade by introducing new Ubiquiti aggregator switches. We have already provided 10G access switches to the Digitization department, which enhanced the network by ten times. These enhancements fortified our network capabilities, ensuring high-speed connectivity and reliable data transfer. A fundamental shift also occurred in our server infrastructure in terms of migration from Windows OS to VMware ESXi. This allowed for the introduction of virtual machines, enhancing flexibility, scalability, and resource optimization. The primary aim was to standardize our sites and museums' server infrastructure to mirror that of Head Office. The ongoing transition from Cisco to Ubiquiti switches continued to streamline our network infrastructure, ensuring uniformity and simplified management across all sites. To meet escalating data storage requirements, HM expanded its Storage Area Network and Network Attached Storage systems. These bolstered our live and backup data storage capacities, accommodating increased data volumes efficiently. Another significant milestone was the deployment of print management solutions, offering streamlined processes, enhanced cost-efficiency, and standardized controls for print-related activities.



SAN expansion of archival Pool B via new expansion unit



PaperCut MF dashboard

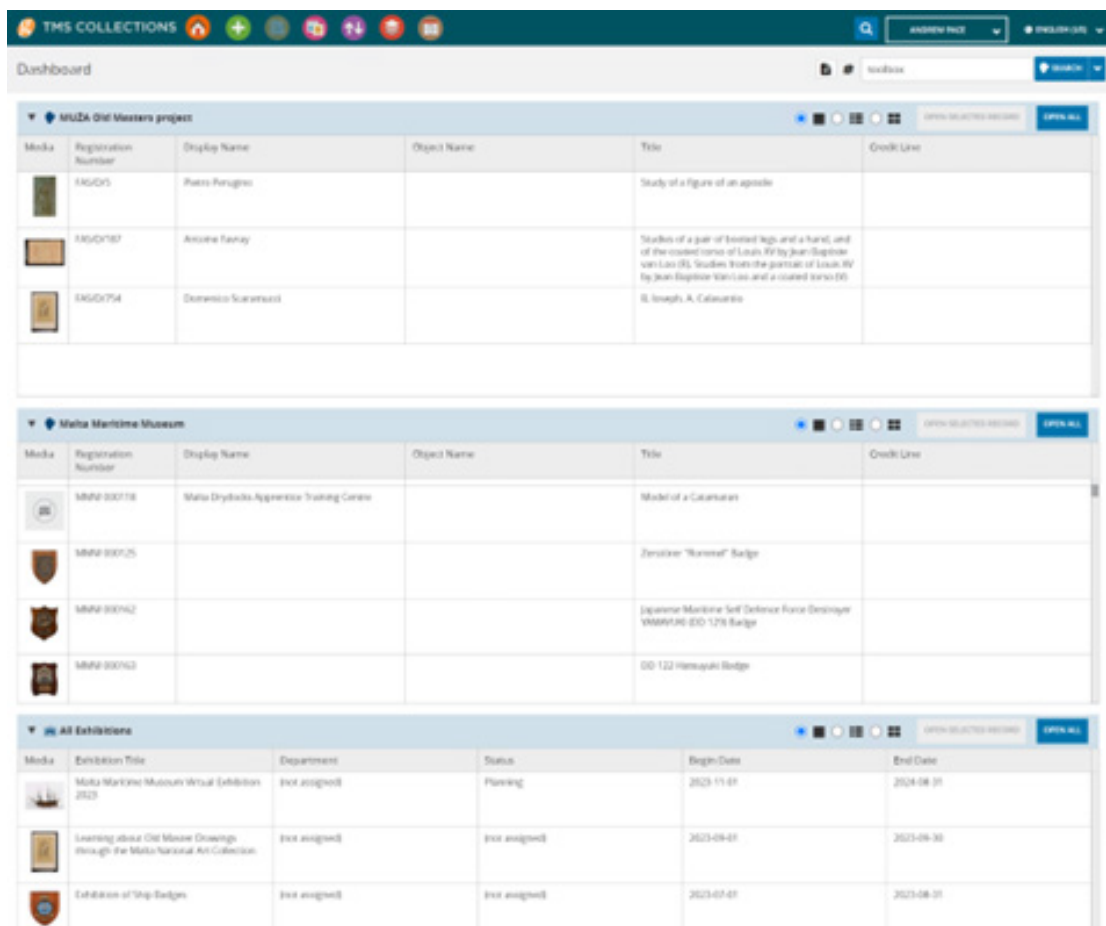
The focus on achieving ISO 27001 certification for our head office server rooms involves comprehensive steps towards ensuring information security compliance. This initiative encompasses rigorous assessments, audits, and enhancements in physical and digital security measures within the existing server rooms. The goal is to align these spaces with ISO 27001 standards, fortifying data protection, access controls, and risk management protocols to safeguard critical information assets effectively.



Prospective server room upgrades

With respect to the **Collections Management System**, the TMS suite of core applications have been implemented in the workflows of three departments: Malta Maritime Museum, MUŻA and the Digitisation Unit. TMS Collections, the cataloguing module, is being used by the Maritime Museum and MUŻA in test-bed scenarios comprising objects undergoing active research and cataloguing. Media Studio, the digital asset management system, is being rolled out within the Digitisation Unit as the store for images of objects and of site and event/exhibition photography, video features, and in project management. Finally, eMuseum, the public-facing platform to share our collections catalogues, is being used primarily by the Malta Maritime Museum to share objects relating to the upcoming exhibition in 2024.




Nearly 650 items from the Malta Maritime Museum have been imported to TMS Collections, along with around 2,000 images of those objects. This represents a portion of the 'clean' data and images produced between the museum and the Digitisation Unit during the past three years through the EEA Norway Grant project. A catalogue of around 6,500 objects has been produced and is expected to be migrated to TMS Collections in 2024, at which point staff will transfer the cataloguing process from spreadsheets to live-entry into TMS. This will represent a major change to HM's research, cataloguing, and collections management workflows, allowing staff from multiple departments to access live and accurate data about objects from one portal.







TMS COLLECTIONS

Dashboard




MUŻA Old Masters project

Media	Registration Number	Display Name	Object Name	Title	Credit Line
	MSGD5	Peter Perugino		Study of a figure of an apostle	
	MSGD167	Antonio Tavar		Studies of a pair of booted legs and a hand, and of the coat of arms of Louis XIV by Jean-Baptiste van Loo (R), Studies from the portrait of Louis XIV by Jean-Baptiste Van Loo and a seated torso (R)	
	MSGD754	Domenico Scarsini		S. Joseph A. Calabrese	

Malta Maritime Museum

Media	Registration Number	Display Name	Object Name	Title	Credit Line
	MMH 000718	Malta Drydock Apprentice Training Centre		Model of a Cutaway	
	MMH 000725			Zensikei "Warrior" Badge	
	MMH 000742			Japanese Maritime Self Defence Force Destroyer Minehunter DD-129 Badge	
	MMH 000743			DD-122 Minehunter Badge	

All Exhibitions

Media	Exhibition Title	Department	Status	Begin Date	End Date
	Malta Maritime Museum Virtual Exhibition 2023	Not assigned	Pending	2023-11-01	2024-08-31
	Learning about Old Master Drawings through the Malta National Art Collection	Not assigned	Not assigned	2023-09-01	2023-09-30
	Exhibition of Ship Badges	Not assigned	Not assigned	2023-07-01	2023-08-31

Similarly, at MUŽA, 150 objects and around 500 related images are being migrated from spreadsheet data to TMS as part of the Getty-funded 'Old Masters Drawings' project. MUŽA's data has also been converted to a structure and format that is compatible to import into TMS Collections and Media Studio. The templates produced for both museums can now be used to quickly migrate large amounts of data with minimal manual refinement. Creating these templates and understanding the structure of raw data from each museum has been a significant task. Templates have also been produced to extract collections data from Fotoware, which holds a significant amount of catalogue data for collections at MUŽA and at Gozo, whose collections relating to Ġgantija represent the most recent phase of data migration underway in December.

Training sessions are underway with curatorial staff responsible for inputting and checking data in TMS, who will in turn be the main contact point for other staff within their museums who will use TMS in the future. This arrangement will encourage greater ownership of the platform within each museum, while enabling the Collections Management Unit, Registry and the upcoming Collections and Knowledge Management section to devote more time to higher-level management of the system, including refining the global HM cataloguing manual, identifying and implementing features, and determining the next steps to improve the system – including the audit manager and conservation modules, digitising location management and loans procedures, and establishing an institutional archive system that interlinks with collections data.

A draft cataloguing manual is being produced to act as the main reference for describing all collections within HM. In this manual each field within TMS Collections is described and its parameters explained, to enable staff to understand how their data should be inputted consistently. These fields have been carefully established to represent a compromise between historic internal cataloguing practices and international cataloguing and metadata standards, so that this data can be shared with external bodies, such as Europeana. This is another major endeavour that is being undertaken collaboratively and will be refined over several years as more collections with specific needs are migrated to TMS. A CMS working group was established to review implementation updates and to gather feedback on ongoing projects.

The public catalogue portal for all HM collections, **eMuseum**, will be launched in 2024 as part of the exhibition marking the end of the EEA Norway Grant project, featuring several hundred collection items relating to this project. This platform will be the single point through which objects from different museums can be accessed in a user-friendly interface. While being a fully searchable catalogue, these objects can be grouped to reflect physical (or virtual) exhibitions, person-records with biographies can be linked to those objects, and site records can be created that document in-situ monuments. In short, all cultural heritage that HM is responsible for can be linked together through this platform, enabling public access to a vast amount of information that previously was not available. eMuseum is also the portal through which collections data can be exposed to Europeana, the Europe-wide cultural heritage aggregation platform. eMuseum will provide a stable platform through which we can share our collections with such organisations, opening our heritage to a much wider audience for research and education.

Works

REFINE RESULTS

Artist / Maker / Culture

Classification(s)

Commemorative / Badges (114)

Models (19)

Manuscripts (17)

Art / Drawings (15)

Armaments / Ammunition (9)

Tools and Equipment (9)

Tools and Equipment / Fishing (9)

Art / Paintings (8)

Navigation and Timekeeping /

Magnetic and Astronomical

(not assigned) (4)

Load all Classification(s)

Online Collection

Ship Badges (30)

Old Masters Drawings (3)

Malta Dockyard Interviews (1)

Date

Museum

Malta Maritime Museum (238)

MUZA (3)

IMAGE AVAILABLE

ON VIEW

SORT: Registration Number (Ascending)

Images

View PDF

241 results

ADD TO FAVORITES

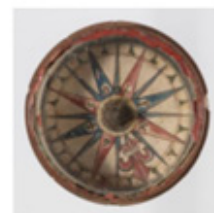
IMAGE AVAILABLE

CLEAR ALL FILTERS


Study of a figure of an apostle
Art / Drawings
1481-1482

Studies of a pair of booted legs and a hand, and of the coated torso of Louis XV by Jean Baptiste van Loo (R). Studies from the portrait of Louis XV by Jean Baptiste Van Loo and a coated torso (V)
Art / Drawings
1744-1798

B. Joseph. A. Calasancio
Art / Drawings
1751

Oar Mace of the Malta Vice-Admiralty Court
Armaments / Ceremonial Weapons
1775-1803

Mariner's Compass
Navigation and Timekeeping / Magnetic and Astronomical

Nocturnal
Navigation and Timekeeping / Magnetic and Astronomical
1574


Argentinian Navy Training



The Media Studio module of TMS will replace and expand greatly upon the functionality of Fotoware, our current digital asset management system. Media Studio is already used as a repository for images documenting museum collection objects. However, this module can also cover project management, such as mapping the process of digitising a 3D monument or site: tracking the types of files generated, their location on internal servers, and other core information that helps to make sense of the relationships between complex data typically produced during 3D digitisation projects. This repository will also hold video features that can be searched and downloaded by staff, grouping together promotional material from exhibitions and events (including linking objects to these media records), making sure that the most updated version of a video is always accessible. Crucially, Media Studio will allow copyright holders and copyright statements to be embedded within each media file and attached to media projects, greatly improving the speed and accuracy with which we can decide how to reuse our media files.

The main focus of collection research and digitisation exercises at the Malta Maritime Museum was the 2024 exhibition. The artefacts to feature in the exhibition were identified surrounding seventeen

main themes on Malta's extensive maritime history. These artefacts were catalogued, researched and digitised at the highest standards using professional photography methods, 3D scanning or photogrammetry, and 2D scanning in the case of archival material. This material was presented for upload into TMS, and hence will be featured in the eMuseum.

As part of the exhibition, the Dockyard is being treated as a subject matter to present to the EEA Norway Grants project. The interviews with ex-Dockyard workers were the backbone that led to the extraction of the themes of this section and presented them into six main pods. Detailed research was done into each theme to embellish the interactive touchscreens supporting each pod. Videography played an important role, as identified ex-Dockyard workers were re-interviewed with specific questions, and their footage will be used to introduce each theme. Several artefacts were identified to further support the subject. A series of 1960s engineering models produced by Dockyard Apprentices were rendered functional by conservators and served as a base for the stop motion choreography. All artefacts to feature in the pods were digitised, using professional photography methods, 3D scanning or photogrammetry, and 2D scanning.

The **multimedia team** has undertaken the scanning, recreation, documentation, and interpretive development of more than 100 sites and artefacts, such as the Gregorio Mirabitar figurehead, the Cippus, parts of the dockyard collection, a Roman anchor, and the documentation of the pre- and post-restoration phases of the Delimara cannon in 3D. The department was also tasked with scanning the Tarxien Bowl, to determine if it could fit in its original location. The digitization process commenced by gauging the stone basin's fit in its original spot through an initial scanning session. Initially tapping into the combined powers of photogrammetry and laser scanning, we later streamlined the approach, opting solely for photogrammetry for the basin itself. Once the fit was confirmed, a virtual 3D model paved the way for a systematic numerical labeling of components. With the stone basin disassembled into sixty parts, each segment was scanned individually with a handheld laser scanner. The ensuing virtual assembly, orchestrated by AI alignment, unveiled the strategic placements of cement during the initial restoration. Bridging the realms, we translated the digital blueprint into the physical space using architectural modeling software and triangulation for precision.

The department has continued to enhance its impactful outreach initiatives through the development of immersive 360-degree virtual tours. This year witnessed the creation of sixteen virtual tours, including otherwise inaccessible locations such as Villa Guardamangia, Villa Frere, and underwater heritage sites. A notable highlight was the crafting of seven underwater virtual tours in partnership with UCHU and Ambjent Malta for the 'Saving Our Blue' campaign. Additionally, three videos were produced for UCHU, featuring explorations of the JU88, B24, and POLY wrecks, contributing significantly to awareness and preservation efforts.

An important development involved the integration of new tools, notably the Leica LIDAR scanner, alongside a concentrated emphasis on architectural surveying. This technological infusion empowered the department to embark on various surveying and documentation projects, including the meticulous surveying of Villa Guardamangia, Villa Frere, Villa Portelli, the collapsed section of Bighi, and the scanning of St Angelo Bridge. These initiatives marked substantial progress in the comprehensive digitization of these heritage sites, ensuring their preservation through digital means. Parallel to

the scanning endeavours, the department sustained its efforts in crafting high-quality architectural visualization videos. Projects like the Villa Portelli Open Day, the National Aquarium project, the St Paul's Catacombs sarcophagus room, and the Hagar Qim trail were all planned and developed using these methodologies. Research is also underway, exploring the realms of BIM modelling and the amalgamation of various tools and scanning methods to achieve superlative models in precision and image quality. This has also facilitated the creation of high-fidelity 3D replicas of sites like Fort St Angelo, Fort St Elmo, Cittadella, Ricasoli, and several coastal towers brought to life through precise 3D printing techniques. The department also enhanced several exhibitions and outreach initiatives, including Villa Portelli's open day, the Aquarium display, and next year's Maritime Museum exhibition.

The **Audio-Visual Department** embarked on a diverse array of projects. One of the notable endeavours was the continuation of the "Treasure to Meet You" short documentary series, exclusively crafted for HM TV. This series delved into captivating narratives, offering viewers an immersive experience into various facets of historical treasures and cultural marvels. The Underwater Cultural Heritage Unit played a pivotal role in documenting expeditions and external work for multinational travel channels and documentaries. Notably, the department collaborated with OceanX, contributing to a series exploring the depths of the world's oceans, uncovering submerged historical wonders and preserving their tales for global audiences. The department also took charge of the audio-visual content for the Beloved and the Maltese Bridal Wear exhibitions, the production of audio-visual and marketing content for HM's twentieth anniversary, and coverage of all HM events.

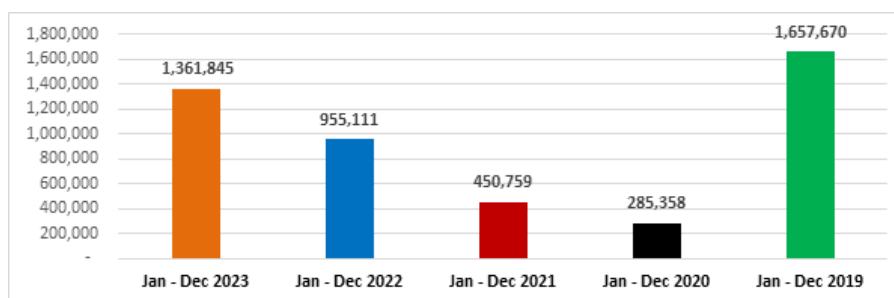


VISITOR & REVENUE STATISTICS

Paying visitors

In 2023 HM increased its number of admissions compared to 2019. It is evident that the agency managed to recover the number of visitors lost during the height of the pandemic. Compared to last year, the agency increased its admissions by more than four hundred thousand visitors. These results coincided with a booming tourism activity as inbound tourism went up from 2,286,597 in 2022 to 2,975,670 in 2023, equating to a 30% increase.

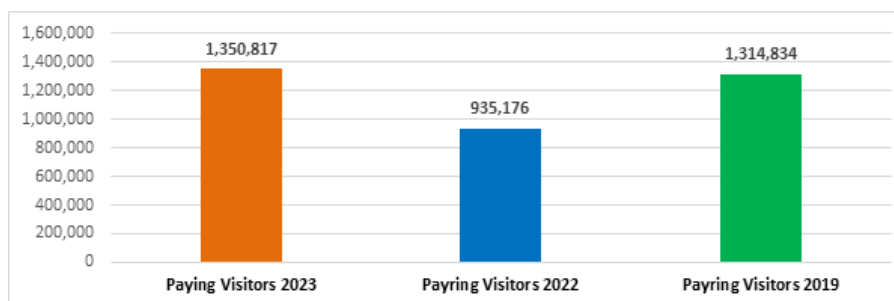
Over the span of five years the number of paying admissions stood at 1,657,670 in 2019, plummeted to 285,358 in 2020, soared to 450,759 in 2021 and increased to 955,111 in 2022. In 2023 the number of paying admissions went up to over 1.3 million visitors. Refer to Graph 1.



Graph 1: The number of paying admissions 2023 vs 2022 vs 2021 vs 2020 vs 2019

Adjusted paying admissions

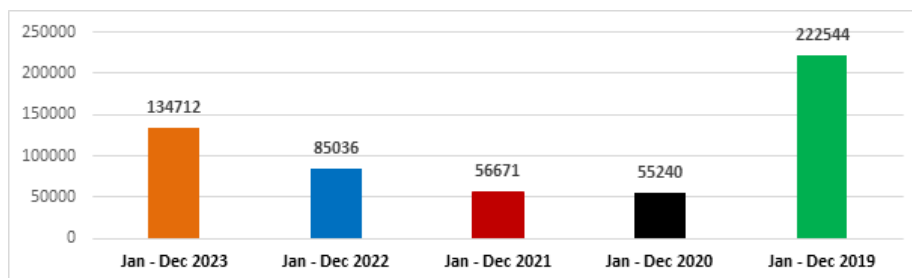
During the period under review, HM seems to have suffered a loss in the number of paying of visitors of -17.85 %. Throughout the year, the Grand Master's Palace and the Malta Maritime Museum were closed due to the implementation of major infrastructural projects. When this is taken into consideration, HM would have registered an increase of 2.74% over 2019. Therefore, the number of admissions seems to have reached the pre-pandemic 19 levels. Refer to Graph 2.



Graph 2: The number of paying admissions (adjusted) 2023 vs 2022 vs 2019

Non-paying visitors

Compared to previous year, the number of non-paying visitors increased by more than 50%. However, when the same figures are compared to pre-Covid levels, the number of non-paying entries remain short by -39.46%. During the last five years the number of non-paying admissions plummeted from 222,544 in 2019 to 55,240 in 2020. The number of admissions went up from 56,671 in 2021 to 85,036 in 2022. As at 31 December 2023, the number of non-paying admissions went up to 134,712. Out of a total of one thousand thirty-four walk ins, thirty-three thousand visits emanated from the use of student passport scheme, while the senior passport scheme lured over ten thousand visits. Refer to Graph 3.

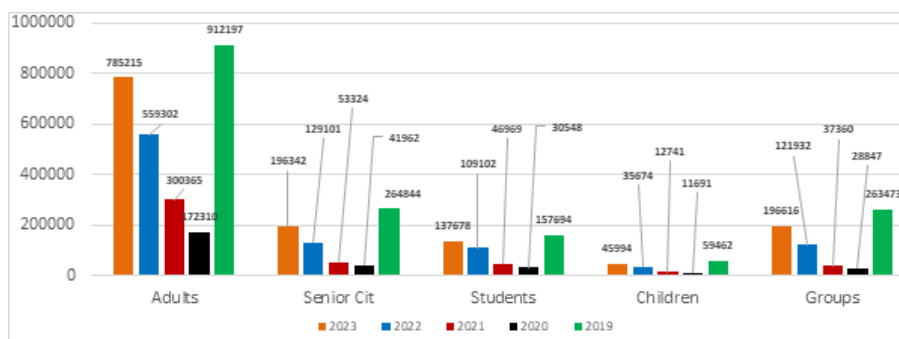


Graph 3: Non – Paying Visitors 2023 vs 2022 vs 2021 vs 2020 vs 2019

Market Segmentation (2023 vs 2022 & 2023 vs 2019):

Individual and tour operator admissions analysed with 2023 figures, all segments of paying admissions soared by an average of 40%. A staggering increase of 61.25% has been noted in the number of group entries. Another notable increase of 52.08% was noted across the senior segment. During the same period the number of adult visitors grew by 40.39%. The students and the child categories withstood an average increase of 26.19% and 28.93% respectively.

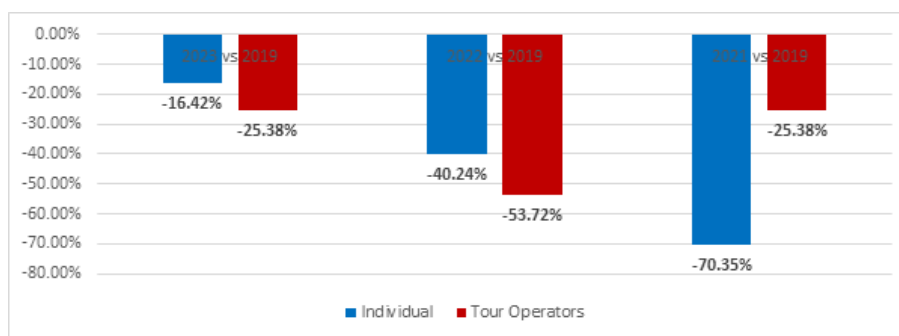
Related to pre-pandemic statistics, all segments of the paying admissions held an average gap of -20%. The smallest disparities were logged in the adult and student categories. Both sustained an average decrease of -13%. Meanwhile the senior and groups sustained a loss of -25% each. Had the Grand Master's Palace and the Malta Maritime Museum been open in 2023, HM would have entirely bridged the disparity between the current and pre-Covid level of admissions. Refer to Graph 4.



Graph 4: Paying admissions segmented into five main categories
2023 vs 2022 vs 2021 vs 2020 vs 2019

Post pandemic analysis - Individual vs tour operator admissions

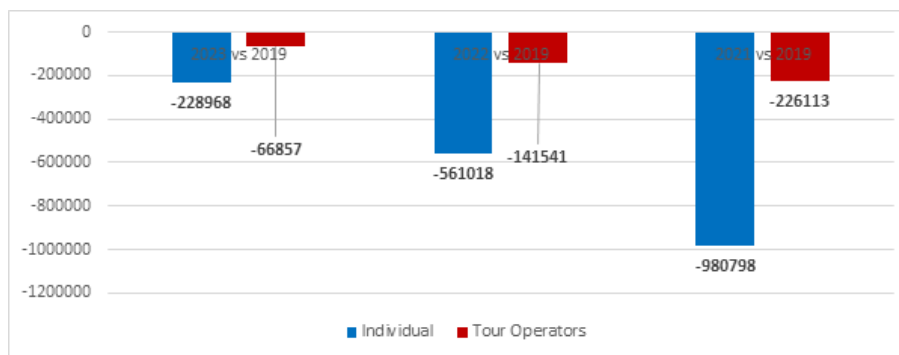
In 2023, the number of individual admissions shifted by -16.42% compared to 2019. In the meantime, a significant improvement has also been recorded in groups entries. By the end of 2023 the gap between the current year and pre-Covid levels stood at -25.38%. Unprecedentedly, the worst results were recorded at the height of the pandemic. In 2021 individual entries dwindled by -70% whereas group entries cushioned a lesser decrease of -25%. In 2022 both group and individual entries showed signs of recovery but remained in a negative territory. Refer to Graph 5.



Graph 5: Percentage changes in the number of paying admissions split by individual visitors and tour operator admissions between 2023 vs 2019; 2022 vs 2019; 2021 vs 2019.

Numerical post pandemic analysis

A deeper numerical analysis reveals that the disparity between 2023 and 2019 admissions stood in the region of two hundred and twenty-eight thousand visitors, while the tour operators amassed a reduction in the region of sixty-six thousand visitors. During the last two years, the number individual visitors has constantly and gradually bridged with pre-Covid levels. Individual visitors recorded a stunning decrease in 2021 of nine hundred and eighty thousand visitors, followed by a lesser reduction in the region of five hundred and sixty-one thousand visitors in 2022. Refer to Graph 6.

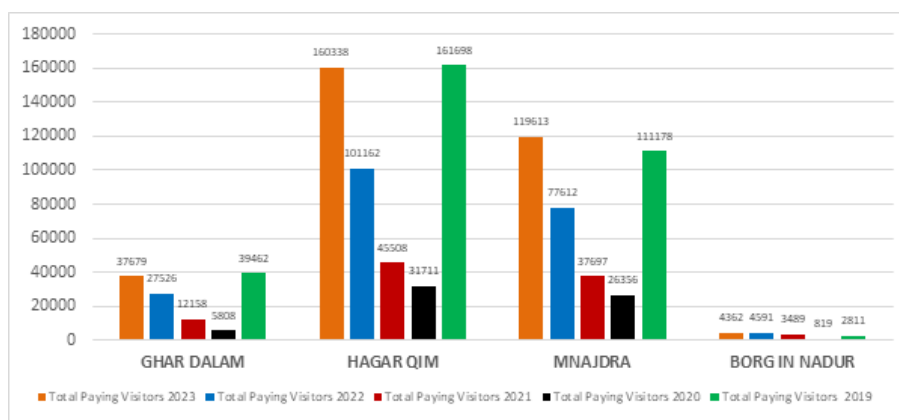


Graph 6: Changes in the number of admissions (individual and group entries) throughout the last three compared to pre pandemic levels.

Regional statistics

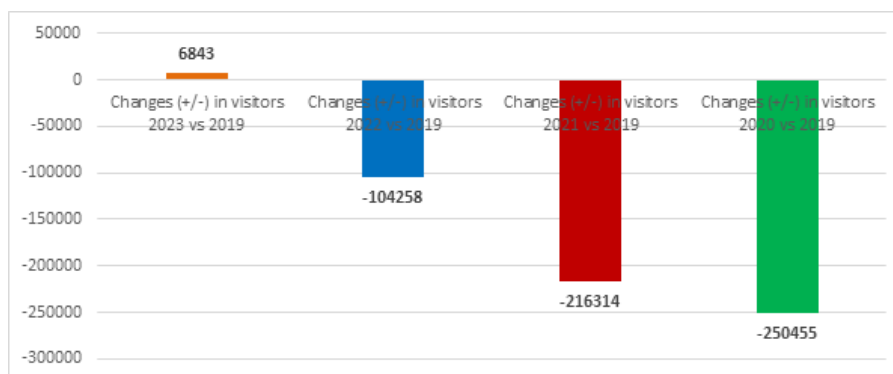
Southern region

Total paying visitors amounted to 321,992. Assessed with 2022, the global number of paying admissions in the region rose by a further one hundred and eleven thousand. Compared to last year, all sites have recorded positive increase except for Borġ in-Nadur, which recorded a marginal decrease. The number of admissions at Mnajdra surpassed the pre-pandemic levels, an increase of 7.5%. Simultaneously, Borġ in-Nadur logged a stunning increase of 55% when compared to 2019. Meantime, Ghar Dalam and Haġar Qim almost edged the disparity between the current and the pre COVID-19 levels of admissions. Refer to Graph 7 & Annex I.



Graph 7: Paying visitors 2023 vs 2022 vs 2021 vs 2020 vs 2019 in the Southern region

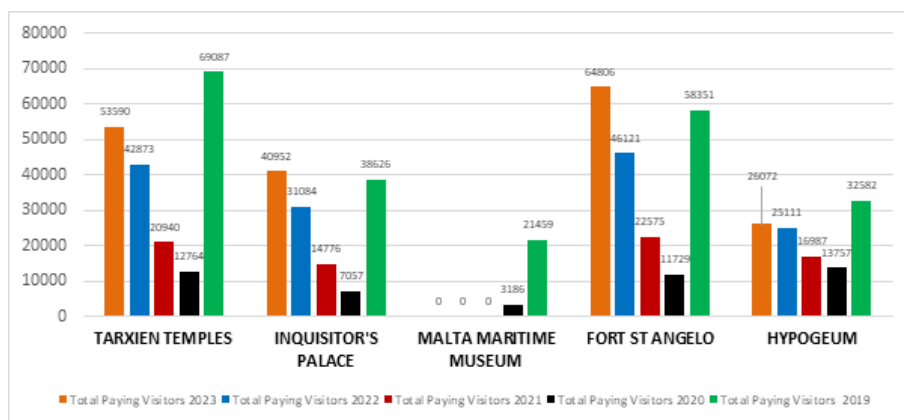
Globally, the number of admissions in the southern region have exceeded the pre-pandemic levels by more than six thousand visitors. The biggest losses in the number of admissions were recorded at the height of the pandemic in 2020. With the lifting of the travelling restrictions in June 2022, inbound tourism started to show signs of immediate recovery. During the last three years paying entrances in the southern region have shown signs of gradual recovery. Refer to Graph 7A.



Graph 7A: Numerical changes/shifts in the global admissions in the Southern Region between 2023 - 2019

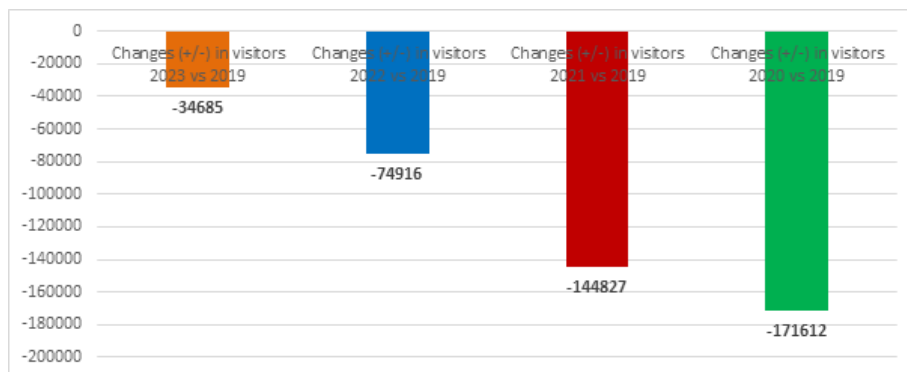
Paola, Tarxien and Cottonera Region

During the period under review regional sites situated in Cottonera, Paola and Tarxien have all strengthened their position. Compared to 2022, all sites managed to lure a broader spectrum of visitors except for the Malta Maritime Museum, which was closed. Matched with 2022, Fort St Angelo outperformed all sites in the region with a robust increase of 40.51%. Moreover, the Inquisitor's Palace and Tarxien Temples recorded a double-digit increase. The Malta Maritime Museum closed its doors to the public in March 2020 due to structural works. Refer to Graph 8 & Annex I.



Graph 8: Total Paying visitors 2023 vs 2022 vs 2021 vs 2020 vs 2019 in the Paola, Tarxien and Vittoriosa region

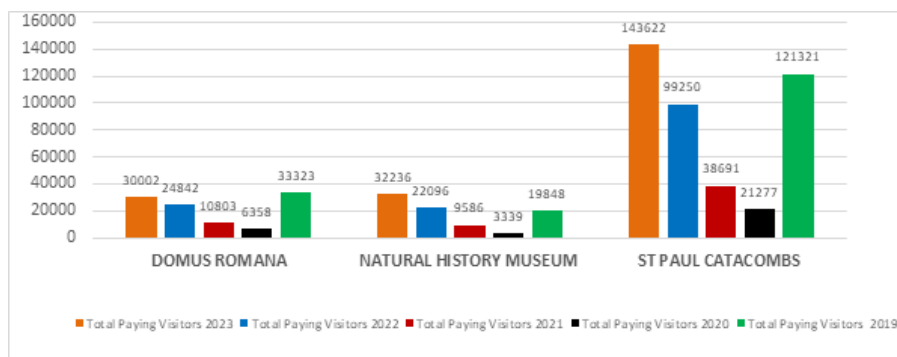
Cumulatively, the region has gradually narrowed the pandemic gap. Losses of material nature were logged between 2019-20 & 2021. In first year of the pandemic, total paying entrances dwindled by one hundred and seventy-one thousand visitors. With the lifting of travelling restrictions, the region started to show signs of rapid recovery. Compared to 2019, the region is still performing in a negative territory as the gap stood in the level of minus thirty-four thousand visitors. Refer to Graph 8A & Annex I.



Graph 8A: Numerical changes/shifts in the global admissions in the Paola, Tarxien and Vittoriosa between 2023 - 2019

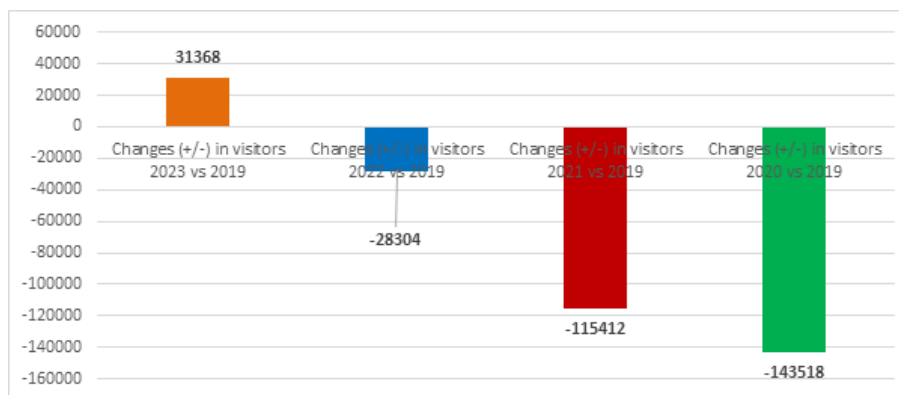
Rabat Region

In 2023 St Paul's Catacombs and the National Museum of Natural History recorded significant increase in the number of walk-ins. Analysed with 2019, St Paul's Catacombs lured an additional twenty-two thousand visitors. A similar trend was also noted at the Natural History Museum where the current levels of admissions has surpassed the pre-pandemic levels. The number of paying admissions jumped up from nineteen thousand visitors in 2019 to thirty-two thousand visitors in 2023. Compared with last year, the Domus Romana registered positive results. Unlike the other sites in the area, the Domus Romana seems to be gradually recovering back visitors lost during the pandemic but remains in a negative territory. Refer to Graph 9 & Annex I.



Graph 9: Paying visitors 2023 vs 2022 vs 2021 vs 2020 vs 2019 in the Rabat/Mdina region

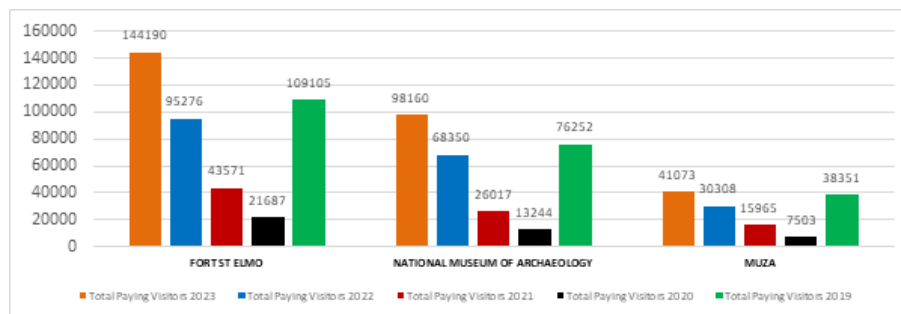
Comprehensively, the Rabat region seems to be showing signs of fast and robust recovery. Official data shows that the disparity between current level of visitors and pre-pandemic levels has not just been bridged but also surpassed. Rabat sites managed to register a surplus in visitors, exceeding thirty-one thousand visitors. Both St Paul's Catacombs and the National Museum of Natural History contributed significantly towards this trend. Compared to pre-Covid figures, together they landed an additional thirty-four thousand visitors. Meanwhile the Roman Domus managed to recover 90% of its visitors prior to the pandemic. Refer to Graph 9A.



Graph 9A: Numerical changes/shifts in the global admissions Rabat/Mdina region – 2023 - 2019

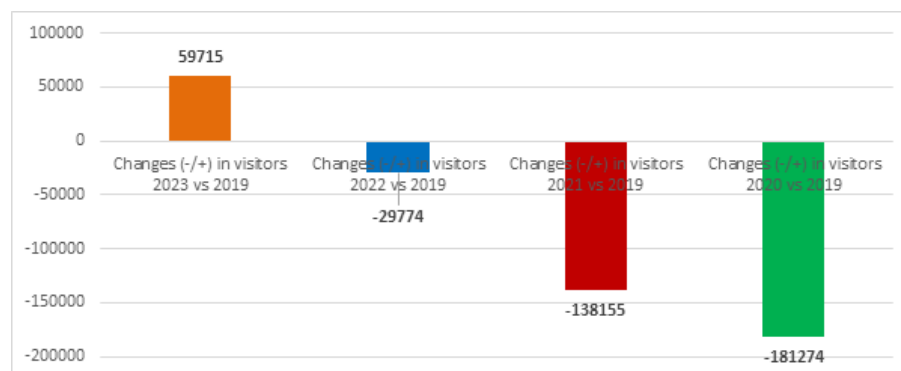
Valletta Region

Throughout the period under review, Fort St Elmo, the National Museum of Archaeology & MUŻA emerged relatively stronger than previous years. All three together superseded pre COVID-19 figures. Fort St Elmo managed to exceed the number of admissions when compared to 2019. Another bold increase was registered at the National Museum of Archaeology, which increased paying admissions by 28.73%, while admissions at MUŻA went up by 7.09%. The Palace Armoury and State Rooms are currently closed due to a major structural project. In view of this context, no analysis can be done. Valletta Underground and the Fortress builders will be analysed in another section. Refer to Graph 10 & Annex I.



Graph 10: Paying visitors 2023 vs 2022 vs 2021 vs 2020 vs 2019 in the Valletta Region

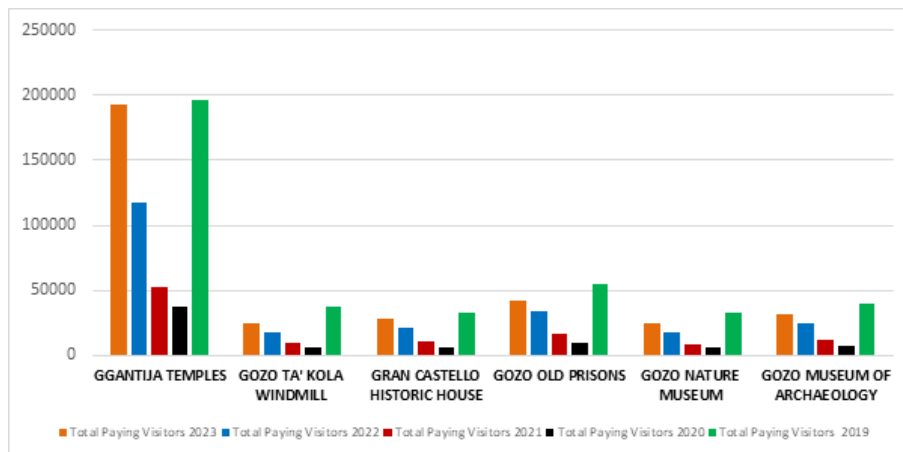
For the purpose of analysing regional data correctly, the Grand Master's Palace, Valletta Underground and the Fortress Builders have been opted out for the reasons specified earlier. The aggregate number of visitors outperformed the aggregate number of admissions prior to COVID. Analysed with pre-pandemic figures, the three sites together landed an additional fifty-nine thousand visitors. Official data shows that Fort St Elmo re-emerged relatively stronger, as additional thirty-five thousand visitors were lured on site. The National Museum of Archaeology placed the second-best increase. Encouraging results were also noted at MUŻA, as forty-one thousand visitors were lured on site, equivalent to an increase of 7.09% over 2019. Refer to Graph 10A.



Graph 10A: Numerical changes/shifts in the global admissions in Valletta region excluding the Palace, Fortress Builders and Valletta Underground 2023 – 2019

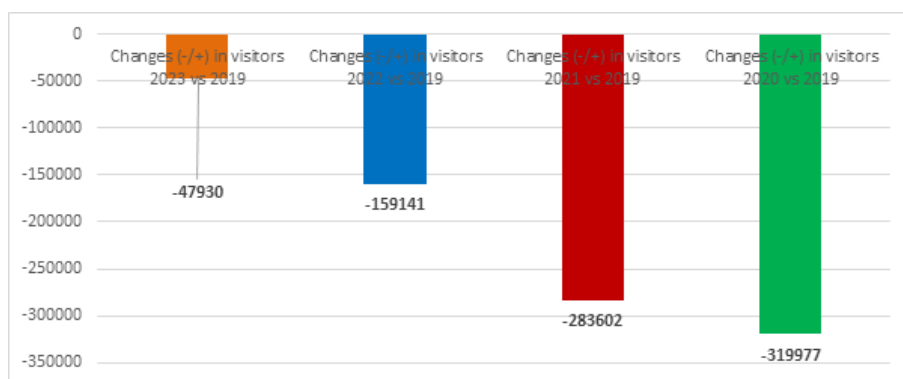
Xaghra Region and Citadel sites

In 2023, Ġgantija lured the biggest amount paying admissions. The number of paying entries reached over one hundred and ninety-two thousand visitors. Related to pre-pandemic levels, Ġgantija recorded a decrease of -1.86%. The remaining sites in the region remained in a negative territory too. Globally, Gozo as region logged a reduction of -12.20%. Refer to Graph II & Annex I. Analysed with previous year, all sites and museums in Gozo have all ended in positive territory. In terms of numbers, Ġgantija recorded the most significant increase in the total admissions. Refer to Graph II & Annex I.



Graph II: Paying visitors 2023 vs 2022 vs 2021 vs 2020 vs 2019 in the Xaghra Region and Citadel sites

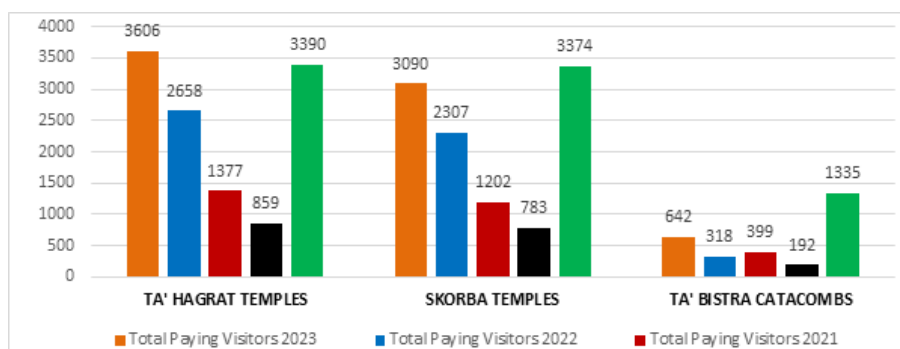
Throughout the last four years, the gap in the number of visitors driven by the COVID-19 pandemic has gradually diminished but remains in a negative region with a short fall in visitors amounting to forty-seven thousand visitors. In 2023, Ġgantija alone lost more than eighteen thousand visitors in group entries. Compared to 2019, the reduction represents a loss of -22.97%. Refer to Graph IIA.



Graph IIA: Numerical changes/shifts in the global admissions in Gozo region 2023 - 2019

Small sites (Skorba, Ta' Haġrat & Ta' Bistra Catacombs)

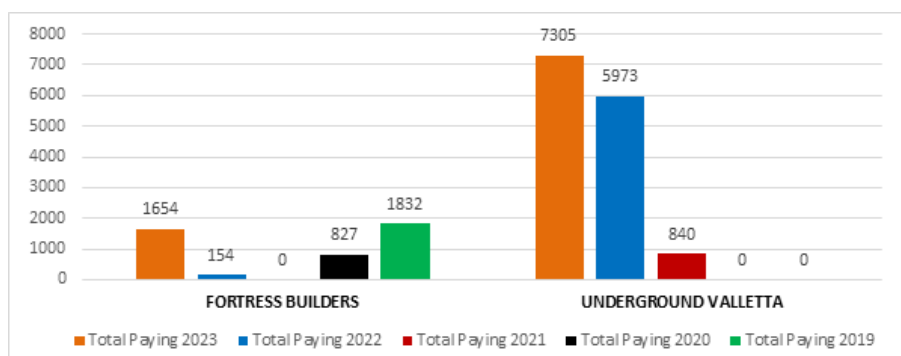
During the period under review, Skorba and Ta' Haġrat registered positive results. Both doubled the number of walk-ins. Admissions at Ta' Haġrat superseded pre-Covid levels for the first time in four years. This represents an increase of 6.37% over 2019. Analysed with 2022, Ta' Haġrat recorded gains of 35.6% while Ta' Skorba remained in a negative territory in comparison with pre-Covid levels. Ta' Bistra catacombs reopened to the public in October 2022. It is opening on the last Sunday of every month. Compared to last year, Ta' Bistra doubled its admissions. Nonetheless, the site remained with a disparity of -51% when matched with 2019. Refer to Graph 12 & Annex I.



Graph 12: Paying visitors 2023 vs 2022 vs 2021 vs 2020 vs 2019 – Skorbra & Haġrat Temples & Bistra Catacombs

Small sites (Valletta Underground & Fortress Builders)

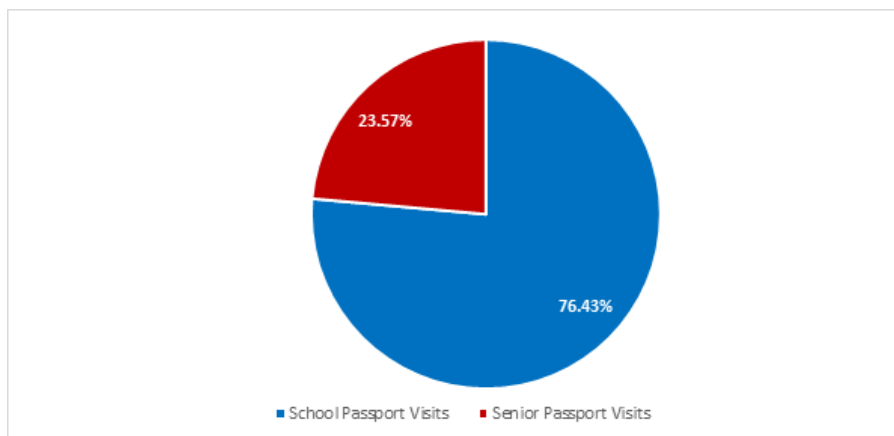
In November 2021, HM opened the Valletta Underground. Over a span of twelve months since its opening, Valletta Underground accumulated a total of over six thousand visitors. In 2023 the number of visitors saw the second upward increase. Numerically, it landed an additional one thousand and three hundred visitors, representing 22.3% increase over last year. The Fortress Builders Interpretation Centre re-opened in quarter four of last year. In 2023 the Fortress Builders attracted more than one thousand and six hundred visitors. Refer to Graph 13 & Annex I.



Graph 13: Paying visitors 2023 vs 2022 vs 2021 vs 2020 vs 2019 – Fortress Builders and Underground Valletta

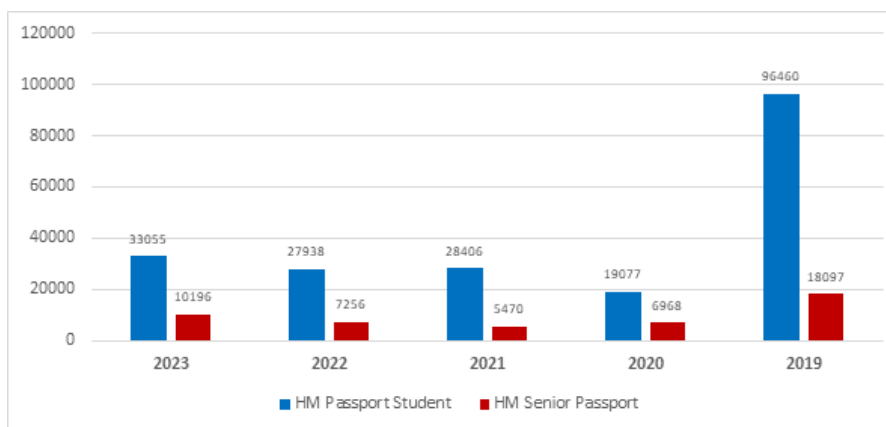
The passport schemes

As at 31 December 2023, the student and senior passport schemes attracted a total of 43,251 visitors. 23.57% emanated from the senior passport while 76.43% originated from the use of the student passport scheme. In numeric terms visitors using the school passport amounted to thirty-three thousand visits. Throughout the same period, senior passport holders tallied more than ten thousand visits. Refer to Graph 14.



Graph 14: Share of visits split by attribution to the student passport and senior passport schemes – 2023

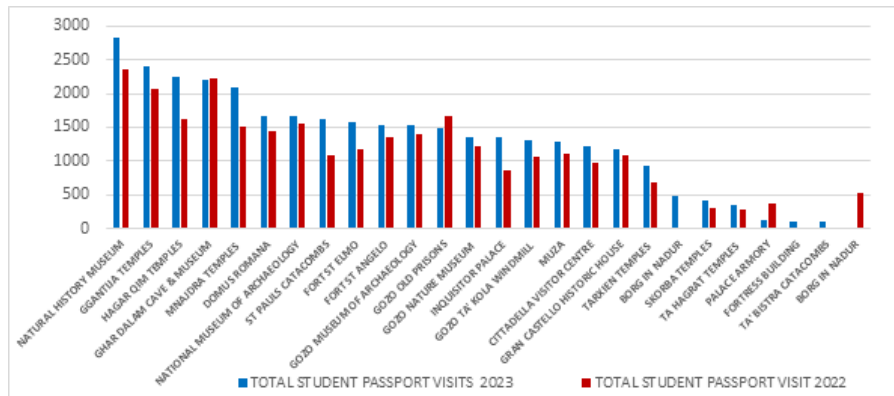
Official figures show that in the last five years since the implementation of both schemes, the number of visits seems to be normalising to their natural levels. In the first year of operation both schemes landed over one hundred and fourteen thousand visitors. At the height of the pandemic, student visits plummeted by -80%. Simultaneously, the number of visits through the senior passport dwindled by -61%. In 2023 both the student and senior passport schemes landed more than forty-three thousand visits together. Analysed with 2022 the total visits from the student passport scheme increased by 18.31% whereas the senior passport admission rose by 40%. Refer to Graph 15.



Graph 15: The number of visits through student and senior passports 2023-2019

The student passport scheme

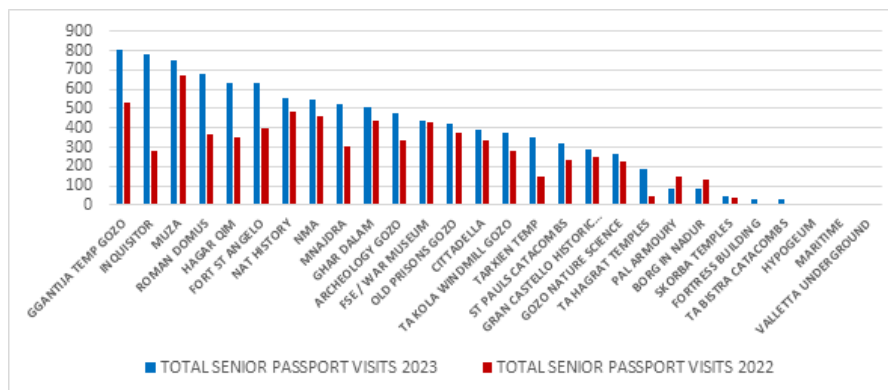
The National Museum of Natural History, Ġgantija, Haġar Qim, Għar Dalam & Mnajda ranked as the five most popular sites among student passport holders. Nearly three thousand student passport holders visited the National Museum of Natural History. Haġar Qim saw an upward increase of 16.5% over last year. Compared with last year, most sites registered an increase in visitors except for the Gozo Old Prisons, the Palace Armoury, Għar Dalam and Borġ in-Nadur. Refer to Graph 16.



Graph 16: The number of elderly visits using the student passport scheme in 2023 & 2022 per site

The senior passport scheme

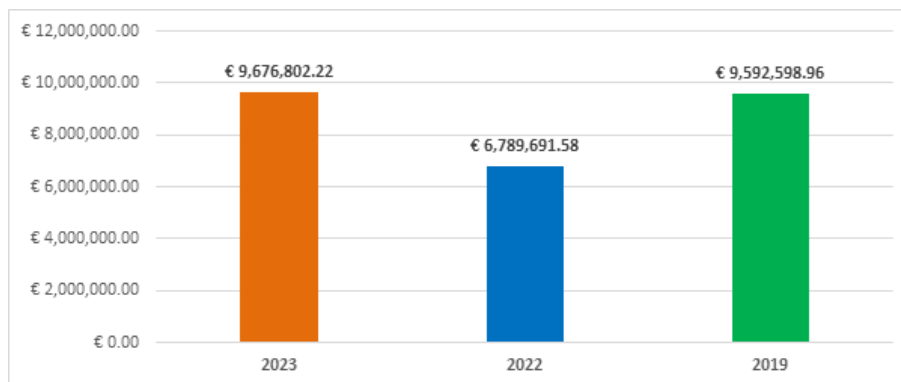
The senior passport scheme registered positive results as well. Yearly figures reveal an upward shift of 40.52% over the previous year. Ġgantija ranked the most popular among senior passport holders. The Inquisitor's Palace and MUŻA attained not more than eight hundred visits each. Most sites lured additional visitors over 2022. The Gozo Museum of Archaeology recorded a swift increase in visitors. Similar trend was noted at Ta' Haġrat as well. Meantime, Borġ in-Nadur and the Palace Armoury saw a drop in the number of admissions. Refer to Graph 17.



Graph 17: Visitors using the student passport scheme in 2023 & 2022 per site

Revenue analysis and sales segmentation

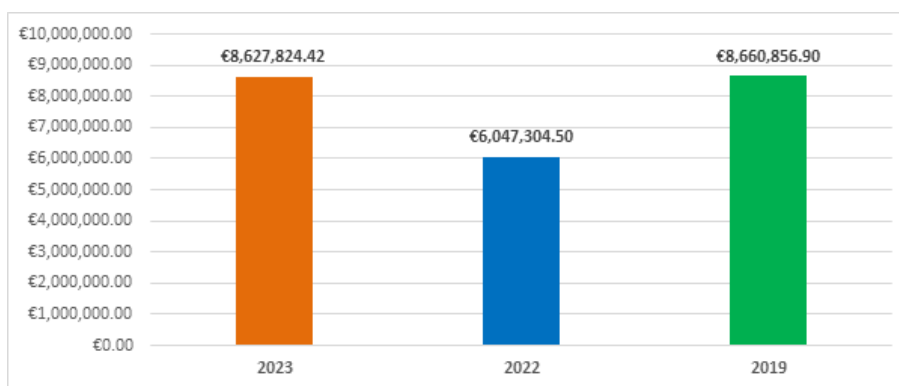
As at 31 December, total income generated from entrance fees and museum shops amounted to €9.6 million. Over a period of twelve months, total income grew significantly by €2.8 million. HM's income has reached the pre-pandemic levels as in 2019 all museums reached an amount of €9.5 million worth of entrance fees and gift shop sales. Refer to graph 18.



Refer to graph 18: Entrance fees 2023 vs 2022 vs 2019

Entrance fees

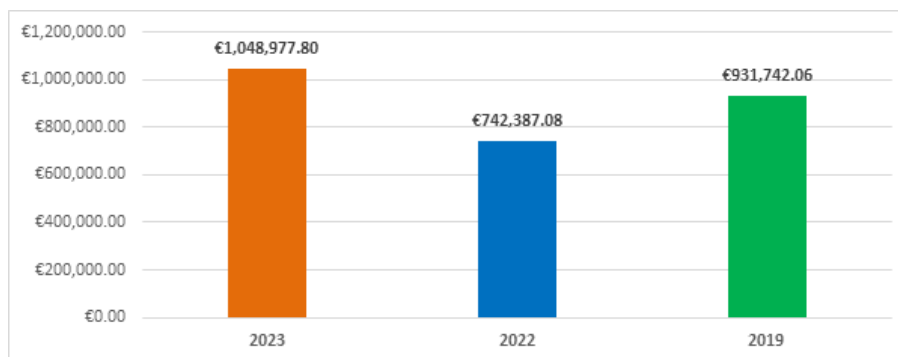
€8.62 million were generated from entrance fees while the rest resulted from museum shops sales. All museums were able to generate additional €3.5 million in sales of tickets, which percentagewise equates to an increase of 42.6% over the previous year. Fort St Elmo generated the biggest share of entrance fees, tallying to €1.5 million. Ġgantija & Haġar Qim together generated €2.64 million in tickets sales. Prior to Covid-19, HM generated a record amount of entrance fees totalling €8.66 million. In 2022, €6.04 million worth of admission tickets were sold. Refer to graph 19.



Refer to graph 19: Entrance fees 2023 vs 2022 vs 2019

Museum shop sales

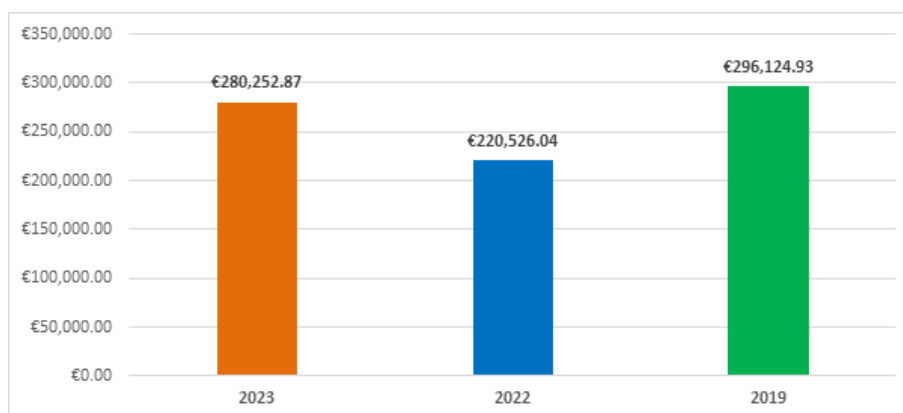
Sales arising from museum shops amounted to €1.04 million. Museum shop sales soared from €742,387 in 2022 to €1,048,977 in 2023, rising by 12.56% when compared with pre-Covid 19 figures. Positive results were noted in 2023 as gift sales grew by 41.2% over the previous year. The Ġgantija gift shop alone sold worth of two hundred thousand Euro in sales. Haġar Qim and Fort St Elmo together attained more than a quarter of a million Euro in gift shop sales. Refer to graph 20.



Graph 20: Gift Shop Sales 2023 vs 2022 vs 2019

Publications segment

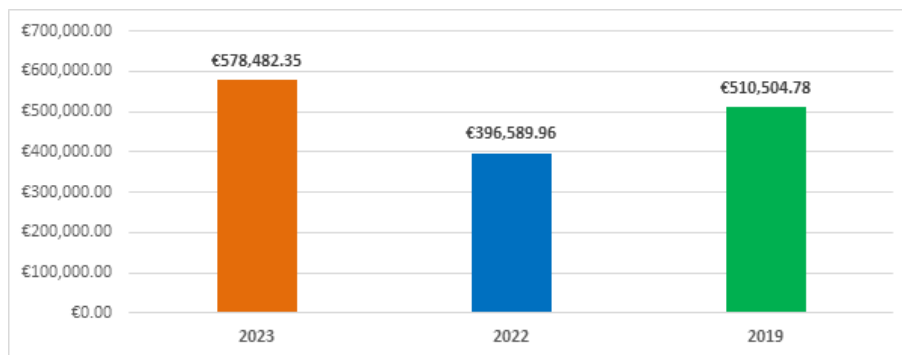
Publications sales amount to 26.72% of the entire museum shop sales in 2023. Compared to the previous year, turnover from publications increased by sixty thousand Euro, a major upward shift of 27%. Among all HM sites, Ġgantija and the National Museum of Archaeology generated the highest share in publications sales. In comparison with pre-pandemic levels, the current sales are still lower by -5%, which is equivalent to less than sixteen thousand Euro. Refer to graph 21.



Graph 21: Revenue emanating from sales of publications 2023 vs 2022 vs 2019

Merchandise

During the reference period merchandise sales exceeded pre-Covid figures. By end of 2023, merchandise sales reached a new record high, totalling five hundred and seventy-eight thousand Euro, representing an increase of one hundred and eighty-two thousand Euro over the previous year. Analysed with pre-pandemic figures, merchandise sales expanded over sixty-six thousand Euro, which represents an overall increase of 13.3%. Refer to graph 22.

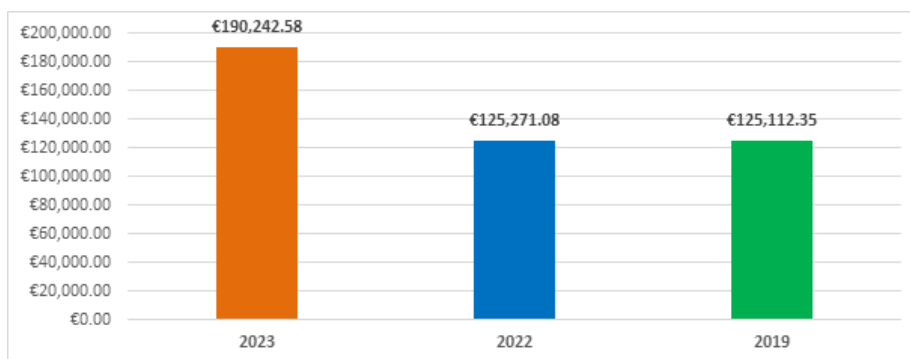


Graph 22: Revenue emanating from merchandise sales 2023 vs 2022 vs 2019

Food and beverage

The food and beverage sector saw a robust increase in sales. This year HM shops sold over one hundred and ninety thousand Euro in food and beverages. This is a new record high as numerically this sector landed additional sixty-four thousand Euro worth of sales. Ġgantija and Fort St Elmo contributed significantly towards these encouraging results. Għar Dalam and the National Museum of Natural History saw a rapid expansion in sales too. In 2022 sales trivially decreased by -0.56% over 2019 figures.

The food and beverage sectors are increasing their share of the gift shop sales. Sales figures suggest that in 2023 the food and beverages sector shared a total of 18.14% from the total gift shop sales. Prior to the pandemic, the total share of the food & beverages represented 13.4% share of the total gift shop sales. Refer to graph 23.



Graph 23: Revenue emanating from food & beverages 2023 vs 2022 vs 2019

Annex 1

SOUTHERN AREA	Total Paying Visitors2023	Total Paying Visitors2022	Total Paying Visitors2021	Total Paying Visitors2020	Total Paying Visitors2019
GĦAR DALAM	37679	27526	12158	5808	39462
HAGAR QIM	160338	101162	45508	31711	161698
MNAJDRA	119613	77612	37697	26356	111178
POALA & TARXIEN	Total Paying Visitors2023	Total Paying Visitors2022	Total Paying Visitors2021	Total Paying Visitors2020	Total Paying Visitors2019
HYPOGEUM	26072	25111	16987	13757	32582
TARXIEN	53590	42873	20940	12764	69087
VITTORIOSA	Total Paying Visitors2023	Total Paying Visitors2022	Total Paying Visitors2021	Total Paying Visitors2020	Total Paying Visitors2019
INQUISITOR'S PALACE	40952	31084	14776	7057	38626
MALTA MARITIME MUSEUM	0	0	0	3186	21459
FORT ST ANGELO	64806	46121	22575	11729	58351
RABAT	Total Paying Visitors2023	Total Paying Visitors2022	Total Paying Visitors2021	Total Paying Visitors2020	Total Paying Visitors2019
DOMUS ROMANA	30002	24842	10803	6358	33323
NATIONAL MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY	32236	22096	9586	3339	19848
ST PAUL'S CATACOMBS	143622	99250	38691	21277	121321
VALLETTA	Total Paying Visitors2023	Total Paying Visitors2022	Total Paying Visitors2021	Total Paying Visitors2020	Total Paying Visitors2019
NATIONAL MUSEUM OF ARCHAEOLOGY	98160	68350	26017	13244	76252
MUZA	41073	30308	15965	7503	38581
FORT ST ELMO	144190	95276	43571	21687	109105
PALACE ARMOURY	0	13849	18476	16164	155686
PALACE STATE ROOMS	0	0	0	7237	165691
GRAND MASTER'S PALACE	3723	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
VALLETTA UNDERGROUND 7305	5973	840	0	0	
FORTRESS BUILDERS	2036	154	0	827	1832
XAGHRA	Total Paying Visitors2023	Total Paying Visitors2022	Total Paying Visitors2021	Total Paying Visitors2020	Total Paying Visitors2019
ĠĠANTIJA	192819	117571	52650	37253	196472
TA' KOLA WINDMILL	24612 17601	9573 5968	37087		

CITADEL SITES	Total Paying Visitors2023	Total Paying Visitors2022	Total Paying Visitors2021	Total Paying Visitors2020	Total Paying Visitors2019
GRAN CASTELLO					
HISTORIC HOUSE	28350	20993	10277	6559	32214
GOZO MUSEUM					
OF ARCHAEOLOGY	31932	25192	11813	7027	39331
GOZO NATURE					
MUSEUM	24976	17983	7987	6091	33155
OLD PRISONS	42059	34197	16776	9803	54419
SMALL SITES	Total Paying Visitors2023	Total Paying Visitors2022	Total Paying Visitors2021	Total Paying Visitors2020	Total Paying Visitors2019
TA' HAĠRAT	3606	2658	1377	859	3390
SKORBA	3090	2307	1202	783	3374
TA' BISTRA CATACOMBS	642	318	399	192	1335
BORĠ IN-NADUR &					
OTHER SMALL SITES *	4362	4704	41515	819	2811
TOTAL	1361845	955111	450759	285358	1657670

*Includes Tas-Silg & Abbatija tad-Dejr



APPENDIX I
CALENDAR OF
EVENTS

EXHIBITIONS HOSTED BY HM

10-12 February: **Minjatura 2023. Malta scale model expo**, an exhibition of intricate scale models at the Malta Maritime Museum.

17 March – 16 April: **Botanical portraits**, an exhibition of paintings by Carmen Forder, at the National Museum of Natural History.

30 March – 7 May: **Turning tables**, by Francesca Balzan and Glen Calleja, at MUŻA.

14 April – 14 May: **My body (is) / (not) your business card?**, by Charlene Galea at MUŻA.

18 May – 25 June: **Joseph Chetcuti, the sculptor and bronzesmith**, by Nathalie Chetcuti and Lisa Gwen, at MUŻA.

7 July – 13 August: **Shrine, finding solace in the chaos of life**, by Alexandra Aquilina, at MUŻA.

25 August – 1 October, **NOUS**, by Joseph Farrugia, at MUŻA.

27 October – 10 December: **Pathos**, by Chris Ebejer, at MUŻA.

17 November – 31 December: **VERSUS**. An installation by Paul Scerri, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

18 November – 21 January 2024: **The crib's journey with St Francis / Il-Mixja tal-presepu ma' San Franġisk**, on the occasion of the 800th anniversary from the first crib by St Francis, by the Għaqda Hbieb tal-Presepi and the Universalis Foederatio Praesepistica, in collaboration with the Malta Community Chest Fund, at the ex-Armoury, Grand Master's Palace.

EXHIBITIONS ORGANISED BY HM

1 December 2022 – 8 January: **The twelve days of Christmas**, a small exhibition on the Christmas carol, at the National Museum of Natural History.

9 December 2022 – 29 January: **100 years: Commemorating Frank Portelli's art and life**, at the Camerone, MUŻA.

3 February – 9 April: **Viva Viva I-Karnival. The George Zahra donation**, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

3 – 22 May: **MUŻA hdejk: Niċcelebraw lil ... Francesco Zahra**, at the Oratory of the Holy Crucifix, Senglea Parish Church.

27 May – 21 September: **From Aphrodite to Eros. Mythology on the Greek vases in the national collection**, at the National Museum of Archaeology.

24 June – 31 December: **The National Museum of Natural History 50 years in Mdina**, a photographic journey, at the National Museum of Natural History.

11 August – 24 September: **The Langue of Italy, building an identity**, at MUŻA.

6 September – 11 November: **[Be]Loved. Stories of sexual and gender identities**, on the occasion of Malta hosting the EuroPride, at the Main Guard.

29 September – 31 December: **From within, exhibition of artworks by HM employees to celebrate HM's twentieth anniversary**, at Fort St Elmo.

7 October: **Il-Gran Mastru Manoel de Vilhena**, on the occasion of the Notte Bianca, at the Office of the Prime Minister, Auberge de Castile.

13 October – 31 December: **The Maltese bride; 19th – 20th century bridal wear in Malta**, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

27 October – 31 December: **Fare Convito. The archaeology of banqueting in Hospitaller Malta (16th to 18th century)**, at the National Museum of Archaeology.

EXHIBITIONS IN COLLABORATION WITH OTHERS

3 November 2022 – 31 January: **Honor Frost's Malta. A pioneer in the centre of the Mediterranean**, in collaboration with the University of Malta, the Honor Frost Foundation and the Malta Tourism Authority, at the National Museum of Archaeology.

22 February – 31 April: **Il-Malti. Il-mixja sal-għarfien uffiċjali**, in collaboration with the Akkademja tal-Malti, Malta Libraries, and the National Archives, under the patronage of H. E. the President of the Republic, at the National Museum of Archaeology.

15 September – 30 October: **Il-Malti. Il-mixja sal-għarfien uffiċjali**, in collaboration with the Maltese Language Institute in Brussels, at the LEX Building, EU Council, Brussels.

17 – 22 October: **Il-Malti. Il-mixja sal-għarfien uffiċjali**, in collaboration with the Malta National Book Council, at the Malta Fairs and Conferences Centre, Ta' Qali.

19 October – 3 March 2024: **Mattia Preti – Discovering the baroque secrets of Malta**, in collaboration with the Royal Lazienki Museum, at the Royal Lazienki Museum, Warsaw, Poland.

EXHIBITIONS IN WHICH HM PARTICIPATED

25 November 2022 – 14 April: **Women in WWII: unseen and unheard**, at the Storm Petrel Foundation, Attard.

16 December 2022 – 8 January: **Presepi u Bambini**, at the Għaqda Muzikali Beland, Żejtun.

15 March – 16 June: **Memorabilia from Malta vs Italy and England games**, organised by the Malta Football Association, at the Malta Football Museum, Ta' Qali.

18 March – 18 June: Vittore Carpaccio: **Master storyteller of Renaissance Venice**, at the Palazzo Ducale, Venice.

26 March – 28 May: **Esprit Barthet, a life of colour**, organized by the Fondazzjoni Belt Victoria at Il-Haġar Heart of Gozo, Victoria, Gozo.

2-30 April: **In harmony, folk music in Gozo**, organised by the Gozo Cultural Unit at the Cittadella Cultural Centre, Gozo.

11 – 31 May: **Decadence now, carrying on the spirit of an age**, by City of Art, at the Malta Society of Arts, Palazzo de le Salle, Valletta.

31 May – June 2024: **A story of the Cippi of Malta: Decipherment and reunification**, at the Louvre Abu Dhabi.

11 June – 3 September: **Francesco Zahra 1710 – 1773: 250th death anniversary**, organised by the Fondazzjoni Belt Victoria at Il-Haġar Heart of Gozo, Victoria, Gozo.

22-23 June: **Garments of the Grand Masters**, organised by Festivals Malta as part of the Malta International Arts Festival, at the Malta Society of Arts, Palazzo de la Salle.

26 June – 7 July: **Premju Ġieħ l-Artiġjanat Malti**, organised by the Malta Crafts Foundation, at the Valletta Local Council.

30 October – 31 December: **The 1948 Gozo Luzzu Tragedy**, at the National Archives of Malta – Gozo Section

23 November – 31 March 2024: **The Mark of Jorge Juan – The Legacy of an Enlightened Scientist**, at the Museo Naval de Madrid, Spain.

1 December – 30 March 2024: **In the footstep of the Hospitallers: 900 years of Chivalry, Faith and Charity**, at the National Library of Malta.

LECTURES ORGANISED / HOSTED BY HM

21 January: **The Getty Project of the old master's drawings at MUZA**, for HM members.

28 January: **The Melite Civitas Romana Project – Season 1 update**, an online seminar on the first year of excavations at the Domus Romana.

24 February: **L-Ilsien Malti fi Żmien l-Ordni (1530-1798)**, by Dr Mario Cassar, at the National Museum of Archaeology.

3 March: **Lecture on the National Museum of Natural History** by the senior curator, for the inauguration of the refurbishment of the Museo Civico di Storia Naturale di Comiso, on the occasion of the World Day of Wild Fauna.

13 April: **Drawn to Malta – Mattia Preti's thinking on paper**, by Grant Lewis, as part of the Getty Project, at MUŻA.

10 May: **Francesco Zahra – protagonist tal-arti barokka f'Malta**, by Prof Keith Sciberras, at the Oratory of the Blessed Crucifix, Senglea.

20 June: **The Tribunale degli Armamenti**, online lecture by Liam Gauci, in collaboration with HMML's Malta Study Centre and the National Archives of Malta.

22 September: **The pygmy elephants of Malta and the British impact on Malta's natural history - 1800 to present times**, by John J. Borg, at the Gibraltar Museum.

6 October: **Roman expansion in the Mediterranean**, by Jordan Sant, on the occasion of the European Heritage Days, at St Paul's Catacombs.

25 October: **The Old Master Drawings collection at MUŻA: highlights from the Vincenzo Bonello acquisition (1933-1934)**, by Dr Stefania Lumetta at the Community Space, MUŻA.

2 November: **The history of the Baker flag, by Charles Beal**, hosted online.

8 November: **The history and culture of Malta**, online by Vanessa Ciantar, as part of the events in connection with the Mattia Preti exhibition in Warsaw, Poland.

9 November: **L-Inkwizzjoni. Meta? Min? Kif u għaliex?**, by Kenneth Gambin, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

15 November: **The work and life of Mattia Preti**, online by Bernadine Scicluna, as part of the events in connection with the Mattia Preti exhibition in Warsaw, Poland.

6 December: **The Order of Malta**, by Christian Mifsud, as part of the events in connection with the Mattia Preti exhibition in Warsaw, Poland.

7 December: **Il-Palazz tal-Inkwizitur**, by Kenneth Cassar, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

12 December: **The History of the National Museum of Natural History and its collections**, by John J. Borg, at the National Museum of Natural History.

EVENTS ORGANISED BY HM

4 January: **Assemble and paint – a model-making activity** for holders of the HM student passport, at the Malta Maritime Museum.

6 January: **Buried History** – an experience for children on the autism spectrum at St Paul's Catacombs.

6 January – **Discovering St Paul's Catacombs**, an activity targeted at children on the autism spectrum, at St Paul's Catacombs.

10 February: **Special opening of San Pawl Milqi**, including mass and guided tours.

12 January – **Dive into History 360°**, an outreach activity by the Underwater Cultural Heritage Unit, at Savio College, Dingli.

12 January – **Guided tour** for the Birżebbuġa and Hal Luqa Active Ageing Unit, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

13 January – **Dive into History 360°**, an outreach activity by the Underwater Cultural Heritage Unit, at Kirkop Middle School.

16, 17 January – **Career orientation visit** for students of St Augustine College, at Bighi Conservation Labs and the Inquisitor's Palace.

19 January: **Official launch of HM's calendar of events** January - June 2023, at Fort St Elmo.

20, 24 January – **Niskopru s-Sigrieti tad-Dokumenti**, for students of Żejtun Secondary School, at Fort St Elmo.

27 January – **Niskopru s-Sigrieti tad-Dokumenti**, for students of De La Salle College, at Fort St Elmo.

28 January – **Site visit** by university students' group Dream Project, at Haġar Qim and Mnajdra.

30, 31 January – **The Hypogeum**, an outreach talk for students of St Michael Foundation.

1 February – **Viva, Viva I-Karnival** activity for the Naxxar Active Ageing Group, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

2 February – **Viva, Viva I-Karnival** activity for the Mgarr Active Ageing Group, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

4 February – **Site visit** by the I Belong University of Malta group, at Haġar Qim, Fort St Elmo and the National Museum of Archaeology.

6 February – **Legġendi Maltin**, delivered by teachers from the Drama Unit, for Marsascala San

Ġwakkin and Qormi San Ġorġ Primary Schools, at Fort St Angelo.

6 February – **Dive into History 360°**, an outreach activity by the Underwater Cultural Heritage Unit for the Marsascala Local Council Active Ageing group.

6 February – **Viva, Viva l-Karnival** activity for Sta Venera and Bormla Active Ageing Groups, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

6 February – **Guided tour** of San Pawl Milqi for students of St Paul's Bay Primary School.

7 February – **Viva, Viva l-Karnival**, activity for St Paul's Bay Active Ageing Group, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

7 February – **Science in the City** team activity including pottery making, for students of Ġharghur Primary School, at Haġar Qim Visitor Centre.

8 February – **Legġendi Maltin** at Fort St Angelo delivered by teachers from the Drama Unit, Xgħajra Primary, Marsaxlokk Primary.

9 February – **Science in the City** team activity including pottery making, for students of Thai Lakin School, at Haġar Qim.

9 February – **Legġendi Maltin**, delivered by teachers from the Drama Unit, for Cospicua, Floriana, Senglea, Dingli, Qormi and Hamrun Primary Schools, at Fort St Angelo.

13 February – **Dive into History 360°**, an outreach activity by the Underwater Cultural Heritage Unit at the National Sport School, Pembroke.

13 February – **1,2,3 Niżfnu l-Parata tal-Karnival**, for students of De La Salle College, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

14 February – **1,2,3 Niżfnu l-Parata tal-Karnival**, St Paul's Missionary College at Inquisitor's Palace.

15 February – **1,2,3 Niżfnu l-Parata tal-Karnival**, for students of Siggiewi and Vittoriosa Primary Schools, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

16 February – **1,2,3 Niżfnu l-Parata tal-Karnival**, for students of Cospicua Primary & Birkirkara St Francis Schools, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

16 February – **Dive into History 360°**, an outreach activity by the Underwater Cultural Heritage Unit, at the National Sport School, Pembroke.

17 February – **Dive into History 360°**, an outreach activity by the Underwater Cultural Heritage Unit at the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage, Valletta.

17 February – **Cloth Dyeing**, a HM Student Passport Activity, at the Gozo Nature Museum.

18 February – **Viva, Viva I-Karnival**, for members of Prisms a youth club on the Autism Spectrum, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

20 February: **Natural dyes and textiles**, a student passport activity at the Gran Castello Historic House, the Citadel.

20 February: **Cook-along! Carnival edition**, a student passport activity including the cooking of the traditional Xkumvat, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

20 February – **Viva, Viva I-Karnival**, a cook-along a HM Student Passport Activity, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

21 February – **Viva, Viva I-Karnival**, a cook-along and costume making activity for HM staff children, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

22 February – **1,2,3 Nizfnu I-Parata tal-Karnival**, for students of Paola Primary School, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

23 – **Viva, Viva I-Karnival**, for the Marsascala Active Ageing Group, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

23 February – **Dive into History 360°**, an outreach activity by the Underwater Cultural Heritage Unit, at St Thomas Moore College, Żejtun.

24 February – **Dive into History 360°**, an outreach activity by the Underwater Cultural Heritage Unit, at St Thomas Moore College, Żejtun.

24 February – **1,2,3 Nizfnu I-Parata tal-Karnival**, for students of De La Salle College, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

24 February – **Textiles Workshop** at the Inquisitor's Palace.

25 February – **Dive into History 360°**, an outreach activity by the Underwater Cultural Heritage Unit, at the Qormi Scout Group.

25 February – **Site visit** at the National Museum of Archaeology and Fort St Elmo by the I Belong (UoM group).

25 February: **Special tour of Viva Viva I-Karnival exhibition** exclusive for HM members, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

26 February: **Special opening of Kordin III prehistoric site**, with guided tours.

27 February – **Leggendi Maltin**, delivered by teachers from the Drama Unit, to students of St Joseph

Sliema, Żebbuġ Primary, Mosta Primary B Schools, at Fort St Angelo.

27 February – **Il-Malti fl-Istorja**, for students of St Nicholas' College, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

28 February – **Dive into History 360°**, an outreach activity by the Underwater Cultural Heritage Unit, at St Augustine College.

28 February – **Legġendi Maltin**, delivered by teachers from the Drama Unit, for students of Hamrun, Mqabba, Għargħur, Mosta B, Marsascala Primary Schools, St Joseph Sliema and St Paul Missionary College, at Fort St Angelo.

28 February – **Guided tour** of Valletta Underground, for students of Żabbar Primary School B.

1 March – **Legġendi Maltin**, delivered by teachers from the Drama Unit, for students of Pembroke and Marsascala San Ġwakkinn Primary Schools and St Paul Missionary College, at Fort St Angelo.

1 March – **Dive into History 360°**, an outreach activity by the Underwater Cultural Heritage Unit, at the Foundation for Transport.

1, 6 March – **Il-Malti fl-Istorja**, for students of Kullegġ San Benedittu, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

2 March – **Viva, Viva, I-Karnival**, an outreach activity for the visually impaired at the Spero Foundation, Qormi.

2 March – **Legġendi Maltin**, delivered by teachers from the Drama Unit, to students of Paola, Birkirkara and Rabat Primary Schools, at Fort St Angelo.

2, 8 March – **Il-Malti fl-Istorja**, for students of Kullegġ Santa Tereza, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

3, 9 March – **Il-Malti fl-Istorja**, for students of Kullegġ Marija Regina, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

3 March – **Legġendi Maltin**, delivered by teachers from the Drama Unit, for students of Żebbuġ, Tarxien and Marsascala Primary Schools, at Fort St Angelo.

3 March – **Guided tours** and art activity, for Mrieħel St Therese College art students, at MUŻA.

4 March – **Site visit** at the Domus Romana and St Paul's Catacombs by the I Belong (UoM group).

7 March – **Il-Malti fl-Istorja**, for students of St Nicholas' College, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

7-8 March – **Viva, Viva, I-Karnival**, tour and activity for the Balzan old boys association and Għaqda Banda Żejtun.

7 March – **The Romans and Excavations**, an outreach in collaboration with the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage, followed by a site visit at Ta' Mintna Catacombs, for students of Kirkop Middle

School.

10, 13, 14 March – **Cultural Trail at Mgarr**, for students of St Benedict's College, Kirkop Middle School.

13-16, 20 March – **Il-Malti fl-Istorja**, for students of St Thomas Moore College, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

14 March – **The Romans and Excavations**, an outreach talk in collaboration with the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage, for students of Żejtun Intermediate School.

13-17 March – Knights Programme delivered by Department of Early Childhood and Primary Education, for students of the Cottonera Primary Schools, at Fort St Angelo.

15, 16, 17 March – **Cultural Trail** at Mgarr, for students of Sr Benedict College, Kirkop Middle school.

18 March – **Grand Master's Palace guided tour**, a HM Student Passport VISA activity.

18 March – Guided tour for members of the **Malta University History Society**, at MUŻA.

18 March: **Tours of the Grand Master's Palace**, exclusive VISA student passport activity, at the Grand Master's Palace.

19 March: **Rakkonti fir-Rabat, Inkomplu fejn hallejna**, historical guided tour around Rabat with Mario Coleiro.

20-21 March: **Spring Equinox**, guided tours and breakfast at Mnajdra.

20 March – **Il-Matematika fil-Katakombi**, for students of Mqabba Primary School, at St Paul's Catacombs.

21, 24 March – **Il-Matematika fil-Katakombi**, for students of Attard Primary and St Paul's Missionary College, at St Paul's Catacombs.

22 March – **Il-Matematika fil-Katakombi**, for students of Attard and Baħrija Primary Schools, at St Paul's Catacombs.

23-24, 28-30 March – **Induqu l-Helu tal-Għid**, for students of Fgura Primary School, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

24 March: **Official launch of the publication Slavery, Treason and Blood**, by William Zammit, including exhibition of nineteen drawings depicting the execution of slaves in 1749, at the Gran Salon of the National Museum of Archaeology.

25 March: **Special tour of the Grand Master's Palace project** exclusive for HM members, at the Grand Master's Palace.

25 March: **Site visit** at the National Museum of Natural History, the National Museum of Archaeology, Underground Valletta and Fort St Elmo, by the I Belong (UoM group).

25 March: **Site visit** at the Domus Romana and St Paul's Catacombs by the I Belong (UoM group).

30 March: **Workshop about Islands**, for students of the Bishop's Conservatory School, Gozo, at the National Museum of Natural History.

1 April: **Site visit** at Ghar Dalam, Tarxien Temples, the Inquisitor's Palace and Fort St Angelo by the I Belong (UoM group).

3 April: **Induqu l-Helu tal-Ghid**, for students of Fgura Primary School, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

3-4, 17, 19, 21 April: **Ġnien Dinja Waħda** educational programme for students of Fgura Primary School, at Ghar Dalam.

4 April: **Induqu l-Helu tal-Ghid**, for students of Baħrija Primary School, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

8 April: **Site visit** at Fort St Angelo by the I Belong (UoM group).

10 April: **Easter egg hunt**, Student Passport activity at Ghar Dalam.

15 April: **Dive into History 360°**, outreach activity by the Underwater Cultural Heritage Unit at Sta Venera Scout Group.

16 April: **Reduced admission and guided tours** on the occasion of Festa Frawli, at Ta' Ħaġrat and Skorba.

17 April: **Fashion and textiles workshop** on natural dyes and materials for VET fashion students, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

18 April: **Ġnien Dinja Waħda** educational programme for students of Baħrija Primary School, at Ghar Dalam.

19 April: **Site visit** by the Pembroke Active Ageing Group, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

19 April: **Dive into History 360°**, outreach activity by the Underwater Cultural Heritage Unit at Marsaxlokk Primary School.

20 April: **Ġnien Dinja Waħda** educational programme for students of St Paul's Bay Primary School, at Ghar Dalam.

21 April: **Natural cloth dyeing** educational activity for the Sta Maria College students, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

22 April: **Meet and Greet with The Busker**, Malta's representatives at the Eurovision Song Contest, a HM Passport VISA activity at MUŻA.

22 April: **Site visit** at Fort St Angelo, the Inquisitor's Palace and Haġar Qim by the I Belong (UoM group).

22-23 April: **Special open weekend with guided tours**, re-enactments and performances by the Police canine and cavalry sections, at Fort Delimara.

24, 28 April: **Pax Romana** educational programme for students of St Michael's Secondary School, at the Domus Romana.

25-28 April: **Pax Romana** educational programme for students of St Augustine's College, at the Domus Romana.

25, 28 April: **Dive into History 360°**, outreach activity by the Underwater Cultural Heritage Unit at Kirkop Middle School.

27 April: **Dive into History 360°**, outreach activity by the Underwater Cultural Heritage Unit at Maria Regina School, Mosta.

27 April: **HI5 Mathematics competition** at the National Museum of Natural History.

29 April-1 May: **Castrum Maris, The Marquisate of Malta**, re-enactments of life during the reign of Martin I of Sicily, at Fort St Angelo.

29 April: **Mixja madwar il-Belt Valletta**, historical guided tour by Mario Coleiro exclusive for HM members.

30 April: **Late opening for the Malta International Fireworks Festival** from Fort St Angelo.

30 April: **Sunday monthly opening** at Ta' Bistra Catacombs.

30 April: Free entrance to Ġgantija and Ta' Kola Windmill to all Xagħra residents and **evening guided tours** at Ġgantija Archaeological Park, on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the inauguration of the Ġgantija visitor centre and Jum ix-Xagħra.

1 May: **Reduced admission and guided tours** at Tarxien Temples, Għar Dalam and Borġ in-Nadur.

2 May: **Pax Romana** educational programme for students of St Michael's College, at the Domus Romana.

2-3 May: **Ġmiel il-Hrafa** education programme for students of Mqabba Primary School, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

3 May: **Ġnien Dinja Wahda** educational programme for students of Fgura Primary School, at Ghar Dalam.

3-4 May: **Ġmiel il-Hrafa** education programme for students of St Paul's Missionary College, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

3-5, 8-9, 11-12 May: **Discovering the catacombs**, education programme delivered through the Speech and Language Department for students of the Guardian Angel Resource School, at St Paul's Catacombs.

4 May: **Ġmiel il-Hrafa** education programme for students of Cospicua Primary School, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

5 May: **Art competition award ceremony** and treasure hunt for students of St Theresa College, at MUŻA.

9-10, 12 May: **Ġmiel il-Hrafa** education programme for students of Attard Primary School, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

11 May: **Ġmiel il-Hrafa** education programme for students of Bahrija Primary School, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

11 May: **HI5 Mathematics competition** at the Fortress Interpretation Centre.

14 May: **Dive into History 360°**, outreach activity by the Underwater Cultural Heritage Unit at Gozo Museum of Archaeology as part of Science in the Citadel yearly event.

18 May: **Free entrance to the National Museum of Archaeology**, Fort St Elmo and MUŻA on the occasion of International Museums Day.

18 May: **HI5 Mathematics competition** at Fort St Elmo.

20 May: **Dive into History 360°**, outreach activity by the Underwater Cultural Heritage Unit at the Qormi Local Council.

24-26 May: **Nivvjagġaw lura fiż-żmien**, education programme for students of Mqabba Kindergarden and St Cecilia Kindergarden, at Haġar Qim.

27 May: **Ready, Set, Action!** – Special event for HM members at the Malta Film Studios.

27 May: **Dive into History 360°**, outreach activity by the Underwater Cultural Heritage Unit at the Hamrun Local Council.

28 May: **Heritage trail** on the history, flora and fauna of Comino.

30 May: **Cook-along ftira activity and guided tour** for Italian study abroad students, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

1 June: **Animals in prehistory** education activity for students of St Cecilia Kindergarten, at Tarxien Temples.

2 June: **Official presentation of a donation** of an extensive entomological collection by Anthony Seguna, at the National Museum of Natural History.

3 June: **Site visit** by students of the I Belong Group (University of Malta), at St Paul's Catacombs and the Domus Romana.

6 June: **Hlejjaq li jghixu madwarna** education programme for students of the Bahrija Primary School, at the National Museum of Natural History.

6, 10 June: **Dive into History 360°**, outreach activity by the Underwater Cultural Heritage Unit at the Hamrun Local Council.

8 June: **Harbour cruise** of WWII and underwater cultural heritage, on the occasion of World Ocean Day.

8 June: **Hlejjaq li jghixu madwarna** education programme for students of the St Cecilia Kindergarten, at the National Museum of Natural History.

9 June: **Night at the Museum** – Special extended opening hours with re-enactments and guided tours of at Fort St Elmo and the National War Museum.

9 June: **Curator's tour of Fort St Elmo's Cavalier**, exclusive for HM members, at Fort St Elmo.

15 June: **Making the traditional ftira**, for students of Thai Lakin School, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

16 June: **Making the traditional ftira**, for students of Cospicua Primary School, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

16 June: **Sunset tour of Haġar Qim and Mnajdra** Archaeological Park, on the occasion of European Archaeology Days.

17 June: **Pre-booked guided tours at Salini Catacombs**, on the occasion of European Archaeology Days.

17 June: **Neolithic art** education programme for students of Prisms Down Syndrome Group, at Haġar Qim.

17 June: **Site visit** by students of the I Belong Group (University of Malta), at the National Museum of Archaeology, MUŻA and Fort St Elmo.

18 June: **Neolithic art** education programme for the Birżebbuġa Active Ageing Group, at Haġar Qim.

18 June: **Stone to Metal – Guided tour and obsidian tool-making demonstration** at Borġ in-Nadur Prehistoric Complex.

19 June: **Neolithic art** education programme for the Qormi Active Ageing Group, at Haġar Qim.

20 June: **Neolithic art** education programme for the Naxxar Active Ageing Group, at Haġar Qim.

20-21 June: **Guided tours at the Haġar Qim and Mnajdra** Archaeological Park, on the occasion of the summer solstice.

21, 27 June: **Excavation experience** for students of the Rabat Primary School, as part of the Melite Civitas Romana project, at the Domus Romana.

22 June: **Neolithic art** education programme for the St Paul's Bay Active Ageing Group, at Haġar Qim.

23 June: **Special opening of the Domus Romana** in conjunction with the Melite Civitas Romana archaeological excavation project.

24 June: **Site visit** by students of the I Belong Group (University of Malta), at the Inquisitor's Palace, MUŻA and Fort St Elmo.

24 June: **Dive into History 360°**, outreach activity by the Underwater Cultural Heritage Unit for the Malta Deaf Association, at the Fortress Interpretation Centre.

24 June: **Fiftieth anniversary event and launch of the publication** The National Museum of Natural History 50 years in Mdina, a Photographic Journey, at the National Museum of Natural History.

25 June: **Sunday monthly opening** of Ta' Bistra Catacombs.

26 June: **Official launch of HM's calendar of events** for the second half of the year, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

10 July: **Lwien il-holqien** education activity as part of the HM Passport summer programme, at the National Museum of Natural History.

2, 9 July: **Filfla guided tour on boat**, on the natural and cultural heritage of this island.

14 July: **Pygmy elephants time**, educational activity as part of the HM Summer Passport Programme, at Għar Dalam.

14 July: **Neolithic times**, educational activity for the Hoi Polloi Summer Club, at Haġar Qim.

15 July: **Super Natura**, educational activity as part of the HM Summer Passport Programme, at the National Museum of Natural History.

15 July: **Site visit** by students of the I Belong Group (University of Malta), at the Inquisitor's Palace.

16 July: **Filfla guided tour on boat** for HM staff.

17 July: **Sea turtles**, educational activity as part of the HM Summer Passport Programme, at the National Museum of Natural History.

18, 20 July: **Harbour cruise along Marsamxett** and the Grand Harbour focusing on the Great Siege of 1565.

20, 27 July: **Art workshop** for St Edward's summer camp students, at MUŻA.

21 July: **Linji u dwawar**, educational activity as part of the HM Summer Passport Programme, at MUŻA.

21 July: **Bats and moths**, educational activity as part of the HM Summer Passport Programme, at Għar Dalam.

21 July: **Rain age workshop** for the Hoi Polloi Summer Club, at Għar Dalam.

21 July: **Neolithic life**, education workshop for the Arena Summer Club, at Haġar Qim.

24 July: **From scales to feathers**, educational activity as part of the HM Summer Passport Programme, at the National Museum of Natural History.

28 July: **Special guided tour for HM members**, at MUŻA.

30 July: **Sunday monthly opening** of Ta' Bistra Catacombs.

2 August – **Visit to Bighi Conservation Laboratories** by the Fortini Resource Centre Summer Club.

2 August – **Cook-along activity** for The Optimist Club, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

4 August – **Roman Times** activity for the Hoi Polloi Summer Club, at the Domus Romana.

2, 4 August – **Helu Manna**, part of the HM Passport Summer Programme, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

10 August: **Food and Friction in Neolithic Times**, an activity for Dog Service Week, at the Haġar Qim and Mnajdra Archaeological Park.

11 August: **Roman Times** activity for the Hoi Polloi Summer Club, at St Paul's Catacombs.

11 August: **It's All about Times**, part of the HM Passport Summer Programme, at St Paul's Catacombs.

18 August: **Corallo project awareness activity** as part of the HM Passport Summer Programme, at Haġar Qim Visitor Centre.

18 August: **Life Under the Sea activity** (Corallo project) exclusively for HM Student Passport VISA holders, at Haġar Qim Visitor Centre.

25 August: The Knights, an activity for Beano Summer Club, at Fort St Elmo.

25 August: **Animals and Brushstrokes** activity as part of the HM Passport Summer Programme, at MUŻA.

25 August: **Curator's tour of Ta' Kacċatura and Għar Dalam**, exclusive for HM members.

27 August: **Sunday monthly opening** of Ta' Bistra Catacombs.

28 August: **The Blue World activity** as part of the HM Passport Summer Programme, at Fort St Angelo.

31 August: **Maths, Art and Archaeology** activity for St Edwards School Summer Camp, at the National Museum of Archaeology.

1 September: **Threads and Tints** activity as part of the HM Passport Summer Programme, at Fort St Angelo.

5 September: **Visit to Bighi conservation laboratories** by the National Council of Women Summer Club.

8 September: **Victory day; a tale of two sieges**, special opening with various activities at Fort St Angelo.

9 September: **Site visit** by the I Belong (University of Malta group), at the Haġar Qim and Mnajdra Archaeological Park.

11 September: **Annimali u Kuluri** part of the HM Passport Summer Programme, at the National Museum of Natural History.

13 September: **Helu Manna** activity for Senior Passport holders of the Marsaskala Active Ageing, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

14 September: **Helu Manna** activity for Senior Passport holders of the Nanniet Malta (Iklin) group, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

15 September: **Story Telling** as part of the HM Passport Summer Programme, at the National Museum of Natural History.

18 September: **Helu Manna** activity for Senior Passport holders of the St Paul's Bay Active Ageing, at

the Inquisitor's Palace.

20-21 September: Special guided tours on the occasion of the **autumn Equinox**, at Haġar Qim and Mnajdra archaeological park.

21 September: **Mixja ma' Mario Coleiro: Imxi magħna fil-Furjana**, heritage trail around Floriana.

23 September: Curator's **guided tour of 'The Langue of Italy' exhibition** for members of the Italian Institute of Culture, at MUZA.

23 September: **Helu Manna** activity in sign language, in celebration of the International Deaf Awareness Day, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

23 September: **Site visit** by the I Belong (University of Malta group), at the Haġar Qim and Mnajdra Archaeological Park.

29 September: **Social event for past and present HM employees** to celebrate HM's twentieth anniversary, at Fort St Elmo.

30 September: **Site visit** by the I Belong (University of Malta group), at MUZA, the Domus Romana, St Paul's Catacombs and the National Museum of Natural History.

30 September: **Helu Manna** activity for the Malta University Historical Society, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

30 September: **Curator's tour of Abbatija tad-Dejr and St Augustine's Catacombs**, exclusive for HM members.

30 September: **Special open day of all HM museums and sites** on the occasion of HM's twentieth anniversary.

1 October: **Open day of HM's head office** on the occasion of HM's twentieth anniversary, at Bighi.

7-8 October: **Il-Birgu – Ġawhra ta' storja u arti fi-tradizzjonijiet tal-Ġimgħa l-Kbira u l-Għid il-Kbir**, guided tours, including the Inquisitor's Palace.

8 October: **Special opening of the Gran Castello Historic House**, with guided tours and activities, on the occasion of the European Heritage Days and the fortieth anniversary of the opening of the museum.

11-12 October: **Food and Music of the Holy Week**, as part of the celebrations of the Holy Week European Network, for Senglea and Cospicua Primary Schools, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

13 October: **Dark tales at Fort St Angelo**, guided tour on the dark history of the fort, at Fort St Angelo.

14 October: **Site visit** by the I Belong (University of Malta group), at MUŻA the Domus Romana, St Paul's Catacombs and the National Museum of Natural History.

14 October: **Site visit** by the I Belong (University of Malta group), at Fort St Angelo and the Inquisitor's Palace.

14-15 October: **Open days at Villa Portelli**, special opening with events and education programmes, at Villa Portelli.

16 October: **Fuq il-Passi tal-Ordni**, programme for Year 6 students of Żabbar Primary B and Gudja Primary, at the Grand Master's Palace.

20 October: **Futur fil-Passat**, education programme for Year 8 students of Savio College and Ta' Paris Middle School, at the Grand Master's Palace.

20-21 October: **A harbour for nations 1565-1571**, re-enactment at fort St Elmo, Fort St Angelo and the Inquisitor's Palace.

22 October: Special opening of **Ta' Mintna Catacombs**.

23 October: **Fuq il-Passi tal-Ordni**, education programme for Year 6 students Żabbar Primary B and Qala Primary, at the Grand Master's Palace.

26, 27 October: **Tradizzjonijiet ta' Novembru**, education programme for Year 5 students of St Agatha College, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

27 October: **Futur fil-Passat**, education programme for Year 8 students of St Michael's School Sta Venera, at the Grand Master's Palace.

27 October: **Hidden Treasure** activity for students attending San Miguel Resource Centre, at Haġar Qim and Mnajdra Archaeological Park.

28 October: **Hidden Treasure** activity for students with special needs, at Haġar Qim and Mnajdra Archaeological Park.

28 October: **Turkish military cemetery tour**, exclusive guided tour for HM members.

30 October – **Guided tour** for the participants of the Comic Conference, at MUŻA.

30-31 October: **Sleep over activity** for St Edward's College students, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

1 November: **Roman Mosaics** activity for the Soċjetà Duttrina Kristjana Tarxien, at the Domus Romana.

3 November: **Journey Through Time – Explore Careers**, activity targeted at Year 7 to Year 8 students together with parents, at the Grand Master's Palace.

3 November: **Back to basics with stones, bones and shells**, as part of the HM Student Programme at Ġgantija.

6 November: **Fuq il-Passi tal-Ordni**, programme for students of Żabbar Primary B, Santa Marija Regina College, San Benedittu Kirkop, at the Grand Master's Palace.

7-9 November: **Il-Malti fl-Istorja**, for students of St Ignatius College, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

10 November: **Il-Malti fl-Istorja**, for students of St Michael's College, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

11 November: **Ġewż, lewż, qastan**, tin activity as part of the HM Student Programme, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

11 November: **Site visit** by the I Belong (University of Malta group), at the Domus Romana and St Paul's Catacombs.

13 November: **Fuq il-Passi tal-Ordni**, education programme for students of St Francis School Gozo and St Thomas Moore College Marsascala, at the Grand Master's Palace.

13 November: **Visit to MUŻA** by Caritas Malta Youth Group.

14 November: **Il-Malti fl-Istorja**, for students of St Ignatius College, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

15 November: **Il-Malti fl-Istorja**, for students of St Claire College, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

16 November: **Il-Malti fl-Istorja**, for students of St Therese College, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

17 November: **Il-Malti fl-Istorja** for students of St Nicholas College, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

17 November: **Futur fil-Passat**, education programme for students of St Margaret College Cospicua, at the Grand Master's Palace.

18 November: **Site visit** by the I Belong (University of Malta group), at the Inquisitor's Palace and Fort St Angelo and Haġar Qim and Mnajdra.

20 November: **Fuq il-Passi tal-Ordni**, education programme for students of St Nicholas College Baħrija, and St Edward's College Cospicua, at the Grand Master's Palace.

21, 22 November: **Il-Malti fl-Istorja**, for students of St Therese College, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

23 November: **Il-Malti fl-Istorja** for students of St Claire College, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

24 November: **Embit – wine tasting event** by Taste History for the official opening of the bottigliera at the Inquisitor's Palace.

23 November: **Muża u Immaġinazzjoni**, education programme for students of Bahrija Primary, at Tarxien Temples.

24 November: **Il-Malti fl-Istorja**, for students of St Benedict College, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

25 November: **Site visit** by the I Belong (University of Malta group), at the Domus Romana and St Paul's Catacombs.

25 November: **Visit and art activity** for Prisms Youths on the Autism Spectrum group, at MUŻA.

27 November: **Fuq il-Passi tal-Ordni**, education programme for students of Rabat Primary Gozo and St Thomas Moore College St Anne Marsascala, at the Grand Master's Palace.

28-30 November: **Il-Malti fl-Istorja** education programme at the Inquisitor's Palace.

29 November: **Muża u Immaġinazzjoni**, education programme for students of St Nicholas College Mtarfa Primary, at Tarxien Temples.

30 November: **Muża u Immaġinazzjoni**, education programme for students of St Benedict College Gudja Primary, at Tarxien Temples.

1 December: **Futur fl-Passat**, programme for students of St Augustine's College Pietà, at the Grand Master's Palace.

1 December: **Il-Malti fl-Istorja** at the Inquisitor's Palace.

2 December: **Book Festival** organised by the National Literacy Agency, at the Malta Maritime Museum.

2-3 December – **Christmas at the Fort**, a weekend-long fair including activities and events for children and adults, at Fort St Elmo.

4 December: **Fuq il-Passi tal-Ordni**, programme for students of St Francis School Cospicua, at the Grand Master's Palace.

4 December: **Nativity in Art** activity aimed at people living with Dementia, at MUŻA.

4 December: **Il-Malti fl-Istorja**, for students of St Theresa College, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

5 December: **Il-Malti fl-Istorja**, for students of St Benedict's College, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

6 December: **Official launch of the Hypogeum pedestrian area**, at the Hypogeum.

6 December: **Il-Malti fl-Istorja**, for students of St Margaret's College, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

6 December: **Valletta and the Knights** talk at Pembroke Active Ageing Centre.

7, 11-12 December: **Tradizzjonijiet tal-Milied**, programme for students of Maria Regina College San Pawl il-Baħar, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

9 December: **Site visit** by the I Belong (University of Malta group), at the National Museum of Natural History.

9 December: **Water from History and Science** show, as part of the HM Student Programme, at Fort St Angelo.

10 December: **Tote-ally awesome Stone** activity aimed at students with disabilities, at Haġar Qim and Mnajdra Archaeological Park.

12 December: **Fuq il-Passi tal-Ordni**, programme for students of Sacred Heart College, at the Grand Master's Palace.

14-15 December: **Tradizzjonijiet tal-Milied**, programme for students of St Paul's Missionary College Rabat, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

16 December: **Il-Pudina u Imbuljuta**, a cook-along activity as part of the HM Student Programme, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

16 December: **Puddings and baubles meet science for Christmas**, educational programme for Student Passport holders, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

16 December: **Christmas chronicles – an adventure in WWII archives**, exclusive for HM members, at Fort St Elmo.

27 December: **Food and Friction during Neolithic Malta**, activity at Haġar Qim and Mnajdra Archaeological Park.

28 December: **Puddings and baubles meet science for Christmas**, educational programme for St Edward's school Japanese group, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

EVENTS HOSTED BY HM

15, 22 January: **In Guardia!** Historical re-enactment by the Malta Tourism Authority at Fort St Elmo.

5, 12, 25 February: **In Guardia!** Historical re-enactment by the Malta Tourism Authority at Fort St Elmo.

10 February: **Tour of Villa Guardamangia and HMS Urge Memorial** at Fort St Elmo to the British Foreign Secretary, followed by a bi-lateral meeting with the Minister of Foreign Affairs at the National Museum of Archaeology.

5, 12, 26 March: **In Guardia!** Historical re-enactment by the Malta Tourism Authority at Fort St Elmo.

16 April: **Historic motorcycle club of Malta international rally 2023**, at Fort St Elmo.

23, 30 April: **In Guardia!** Historical re-enactment by the Malta Tourism Authority at Fort St Elmo.

27 April: **Event on HMS Urge**, including 360 dives, in support of the restoration of the Anglican Cathedral's spire, by the Underwater Cultural Heritage Unit, at the Fortress Interpretation Centre.

27 April: **Wreath-laying ceremony** on the first anniversary of the HMS Urge monument, Fort St Elmo.

7, 14 May: **In Guardia!** Historical re-enactment by the Malta Tourism Authority at Fort St Elmo.

24 June: **Connecting with nature: placemaking and the urban garden**, seminar organised by MICAS at the Gran Salon of the National Museum of Archaeology.

17 June: **Official visit by the Grand Master of the Order of St John**, Fra John T. Dunlop, to the President of Malta, at the Grand Master's Palace.

25 June: **International lace day**, live demonstrations at MUŻA.

10 July: **Conservation of the Great Siege mural – end of project information**, by the Department of Conservation and Built Heritage, University of Malta, at the Throne Room, Grand Master's Palace.

12 July: **Fusion at the Fort. 100 years of music**, concert by the Police Band on the occasion of Police Week, at Fort St Elmo.

27 October: **Lejlet il-waħx**, thematic event at St Paul's Catacombs.

29 September: **EU MED9 summit**, meeting of nine prime ministers from the Euro-Mediterranean region, at the National Museum of Natural History.

22, 29 October: **In Guardia!** Historical re-enactment by the Malta Tourism Authority at Fort St Elmo.

5 November: **Blessing of animals' ceremony** by the Dominican community of Birgu, at the Birgu Armoury.

EVENTS ORGANISED IN COLLABORATION WITH OTHERS

8 January: **Open Day at Villa Frere gardens**, in collaboration with Friends of Villa Frere.

9 January: Information session on **Malta as part of the Camino de Santiago**, in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Malta Tourism Authority, at Fort St Angelo.

29 January: **Castellammare** – historical re-enactment of the medieval era, in collaboration with

Compagnia Castellammare, at Fort St Angelo.

5 February: **Open Day at Villa Frere gardens**, in collaboration with Friends of Villa Frere.

14 February: **Aphrodisiacs**, special dinner for Valentine's day inspired by historical love magic stories, in collaboration with Taste History and Etikett, at the Inquisitor's Palace and the Malta Maritime Museum.

5 March: **Open Day at Villa Frere gardens**, in collaboration with Friends of Villa Frere.

1 April: **Il-Festival tal-Letteratura**, including reading session involving local authors, organised by Inizjamed and the Gozo Regional Council, at Ġgantija.

2 April: **Open Day at Villa Frere gardens**, in collaboration with Friends of Villa Frere.

5 April: **Il-Purċissjoni s-sewda**, with relics of the passion of Christ, in collaboration with the Birgu parish, at the Inquisitor's Palace.

15-16 April: **Open weekend with guided tours** on the occasion of the fourth anniversary of the presidency of Dr George Vella, including a photographic exhibition entitled Presidenza b'Differenza and In Guardia re-enactments, at the Grand Master's Palace.

19 April: **Narratives about the past, challenges and opportunities for the future: the multi-period archaeological site of Tas-Silġ, Marsaxlokk**, seminar in collaboration with the Istituto Italiano di Cultura, the University of Malta, the Missione Archeologica Italiana and the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage, at the Gran Salon of the National Museum of Archaeology.

3 May: Signing of a memorandum of understanding with the **Malta Football Association**, at the Malta Museum of Football, National Ground, Ta' Qali.

6 May: **The Harbour Fire Command Station** open to the public, at Fort St Elmo.

7 May: **Open Day at Villa Frere gardens**, in collaboration with Friends of Villa Frere.

20 May: **Lejl Imkebbes** – Special opening of HM's Citadel sites.

21 May: Event organised by the **Xaghra Scout Group** at the Ġgantija Archaeological Park, as part of the group's 15th anniversary celebrations.

26 May – 4 June: **HM trail and treasure hunt** at Għar Dalam, Haġar Qim, Mnajdra, St Paul's Catacombs and the National Museum of Natural History, in collaboration with Nickelodeon.

4 June: **Villa Frere goes Regency**, special opening at Villa Frere gardens, including re-enactments and talks, in collaboration with Friends of Villa Frere.

17 June: **Da Venezia alla Calabria. La maiolica secentesca di Gerace riscoperta**, book presentation

and seminar at MUŻA.

19 June: **Official launch of competition for a monument to Dr Karmenu Mifsud Bonnici**, in collaboration with the Ministry of National Heritage and under the auspices of the office of the Prime Minister, at Palazzo de la Salle.

23 June: Official signing of **memorandum of understanding between HM and the Institute for Digital Exploration** of the University of South Florida, at the Domus Romana.

24 June: **Dive into History 360 video**, in collaboration with Deaf People Association Malta, at the Fortress Interpretation Centre.

2 July: **Open evening at Villa Frere gardens**, in collaboration with Friends of Villa Frere.

4 July: Signing of agreement between the **Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem** and Heritage Malta, at Fort St Elmo.

25 July: **Official inauguration of the marker of the Camino Maltès**, in collaboration with the Ministry for Foreign and European Affairs, the Malta Tourism Authority, and the International Federation of the Associations of Friends of the Camino de Santiago, at Fort St Angelo.

31 July: **Day of fluency camp**, in collaboration with the Primary Health Care Department, at the National Museum of Natural History.

31 July: **'Opera vs Pop'** open-air orchestral concert, at the Ġgantija Archaeological Park.

2-4 August – **Fluency Camp: Dream, Speak, Live** in collaboration with Primary Health Care Department, at the National Museum of Natural History.

6 August: **Open evening at Villa Frere gardens**, in collaboration with Friends of Villa Frere.

8 August: **Official launch of the Xlendi underwater archaeological park**, in collaboration with the Malta Airport Foundation, the Superintendence of Cultural Heritage, the University of Malta and the Muxxar Local Council, at the Xlendi waterfront.

9 August: **Signing of a memorandum of understanding with the Senglean Organisation** of Culture and Ecclesiastical Patrimony.

3 September: **Open evening at Villa Frere gardens**, in collaboration with Friends of Villa Frere.

14-15 September: **Seminar on the results of the project** to study traditional deffun roofs in comparison with modern roofs, by the Department of Conservation and Built Heritage of the University of Malta, at the Gran Salon, National Museum of Archaeology.

19 September – **Maths Camp** in collaboration with the Directorate for Learning and Assessment

Programmes, at St Paul's Catacombs.

26 September: **Signing of memorandum of understanding with the Alfred Mizzi Foundation** regarding tree-planting project at Tarxien, at the Tarxien Prehistoric Complex.

27 September: **Signing of memorandum of understanding with the Jesuit Church Foundation** regarding the conservation of the painting Holy Family by Battistello Caracciolo, at the paintings conservation laboratory, Bighi.

1 October: **Open Day at Villa Frere gardens**, in collaboration with Friends of Villa Frere.

7 October: **Xalata ta' Kitba**, in collaboration with the National Literacy Agency, at the National Museum of Natural History.

27 October: **Official launch of the Ċittadella walkabout and book** on Gozo's Natura 2000 sites, as part of the Corallo Interreg Italia-Malta project, at the Ċittadella Cultural Centre, Gozo.

27 October: **Official presentation of the donation** of an eighteenth-century view of the harbour painting to HM by Hili Ventures Ltd, to commemorate the hundredth anniversary of Carmelo Caruana Co. Ltd at the Malta Maritime Museum.

29 October: **Castellammare** – historical re-enactment of the medieval era, in collaboration with Compagnia Castellammare, at Fort St Angelo.

5 November: **Open Day at Villa Frere gardens**, in collaboration with Friends of Villa Frere.

8 November: **Commemoration of the fallen** on the occasion of Remembrance Day, in collaboration with the Kunitat Festi Nazzjonali and Festivals Malta, at the Memorial of Fort St Elmo.

11 November: Free evening admission to Ta' Kola Windmill as part of **Autumn Fest** organised by the Xagħra Local Council.

25 November: **Xalata ta' Kitba** in collaboration with the National Literacy Agency, at the Domus Romana.

3 December: 1 October: **Open Day at Villa Frere gardens**, in collaboration with Friends of Villa Frere.

4 December: **Signing of memorandum of understanding** between HM and the Arts Council, Zfin Malta, Kor Malta, Teatru Malta, Malta Philharmonic Orchestra, Valletta Cultural Agency, Festivals Malta regarding the **Malta Biennale 2024**, at the Gran Salon, National Museum of Archaeology.

11 December: **Official inauguration of the monument for Oliver Friggieri** by the Prime Minister, in collaboration with the Office of the Prime Minister, at Floriana.

15 December: **Crib making activity** for the visually impaired at the Spero Foundation, Qormi.

EVENTS IN WHICH HM PARTICIPATED

24 January: **A future for industrial heritage in Malta**, conference organised by the Industrial Heritage Platform of the University of Malta, at the Antoine de Paule Hall at San Anton Palace.

5 February: **'100 years from the excavation of Ta' Haġrat (1923)'** in collaboration with the Mgarr Local Council on the occasion of Ġieħ l-Imġarr.

27 February: **Lungomare Mediterraneo/Submerged testimonies of modern Europe**, a conference on underwater cultural heritage organised by the Embassy of the Republic of Croatia in collaboration with the EC Representation in Malta, at the European Commission Representation in Valletta.

7 March: **Careers' day**, organized by Business and Professional Women Malta, at the Malta Fairs and Conferences Centre, Ta' Qali.

16 March: Annual **Careers day at De La Salle College**, Vittoriosa.

25 March: Switching off the lights for one hour on the occasion of **Earth Hour**, at Ta' Kola Windmill.

20 April: Online **seminar on interpretive planning at World Heritage Sites**, organised by Interpret Europe within the Global Alliance for Heritage Interpretation.

18 May: **Inter-generational art appreciation session**, in collaboration with MCAST Gozo, Il-Haġar and Active Ageing Gozo, at Ġgantija Archaeological Park.

7 July: **Inauguration of the Xlendi tower restoration project**, in collaboration with the Ministry for Gozo and the Munxar Local Council.

30 July: **Lighting up of Ta' Kola Windmill** in blue on the occasion of the United Nations World Day against trafficking in persons.

19 August: **Presentation of David Trump's publication SKORBA 1961-63 excavations: a revisit to the report and site after 50 years**, by the Mgarr Local Council to HM, at Skorba.

26 August: Translazzjoni of the **feast of St Dominic of Vittoriosa** through the Inquisitor's Palace, in collaboration with the Prince of Wales Own band club, Vittoriosa.

6-7 September: **The sociology and management of the arts**, roundtable conference in collaboration with the European Sociological Association and the Department of Sociology of the University of Malta, at MUZA.

7 October: **Notte Bianca**, extended hours and free admission to the National Museum of Archaeology, MUZA, and the Grand Master's Palace.

14 October: **BirguFest**, extended opening hours and reduced admission at Fort St Angelo and the

Inquisitor's Palace.

26 October: **Commemoration ceremony regarding HMS Indomitable**, at the British High Commission, Naxxar.

26 November: **National Archives open day**, at the National Archives of Malta, Rabat.

14 December: **Gold medal award ceremony**, at the Malta Society of Art, Valletta.



APPENDICES II-V ACQUISITIONS

Appendix II: Purchase of Modern and Contemporary Artworks (Line Vote 5557)

Seller	Obj. No.	Object description	Price €
Ryan Falzon	87494-97	Three paintings titled: Another lockdown party in the Blue villa, In full bloom, and everyone wants to be a gangster; one print titled: push it to the limit; and two drawings titled: MUZA mould and tal-Muzew	10,320
Isabelle Borg	86833	Reaching for Mars	8,000
Victor Pasmore	86834	Points of contact	12,000
Albert Ganado	In process	184 watercolour drawings about WWII in Malta by Alfred Gerada	85,000

Appendix III: Acquisition of Natural History Specimens

Two stuffed bird donations were registered this year.

One stuffed and mounted Eagle Owl *Bubo bubo* encased in a glass display case was donated by the Gozo Law Courts in June.

Mr Stephen Baldacchino of Valletta, donated the following on 4 November

Anser anser Greylag Goose	ad
Branta bernicla Brent Goose	Juv
Alopochen aegyptiaca Egyptian Goose	ad
Anas platyrhynchos Mallard	ad M
Anas platyrhynchos Mallard	ad F
Anas strepera Gadwall	juv M
Anas acuta Northern Pintail	ad M
Anas clypeata Northern Shoveler	ad M
Anas clypeata Northern Shoveler	ad F
Anas penelope Eurasian Wigeon	ad M
Anas penelope Eurasian Wigeon	F
Anas crecca Eurasian Teal	ad M
Anas crecca Eurasian Teal	ad F
Aythya ferina Pochard	juv M
Aythya ferina Pochard	ad M
Aythya fuligula Tufted Duck	ad M
Aythya fuligula Tufted Duck	ad F
Tadorna tadorna Shelduck	ad M
Phasianus colchicus Pheasant	ad F
Phoenicopterus roseus Flamingo	ad
Ardea cinerea Grey Heron	Juv

Ardeola raloides Squacco Heron	ad
Nycticorax nycticorax Night Heron	ad
Circus pygargus Montagu's Harrier	ad M
Circus macrourus Pallid Harrier	ad M
Circus aeruginosus Marsh Harrier	ad F
Circus aeruginosus Marsh Harrier	ad M
Pernis apivorus Honey Buzzard	Juv
Accipiter nisus Sparrowhawk	ad M
Falco subbuteo Eurasian Hobby	ad
Falco naumanni Lesser Kestrel	ad M
Falco naumanni Lesser Kestrel	ad F
Fulica atra Eurasian Coot	ad
Gallinula chloropus Moorhen	ad
Rallus aquaticus Water Rail	
Haematopus ostralegus Oystercatcher	ad
Pluvialis apricaria Golden Plover	
Pluvialis apricaria Golden Plover	
Pluvialis squatarola Grey Plover	
Vanellus vanellus Northern Lapwing	ad
Numenius arquata Curlew	
Gallinago gallinago Common Snipe	
Lymnocyptes minimus Jack Snipe	
Croicocephalus genei Slender-billed Gull	ad
Columba palumbus Wood Pigeon	
Columba oenas Stock Dove	
Streptopelia turtur Turtle Dove	
Streptopelia decaocto Collared Dove	ad
Picus viridis Green Woodpecker	
Cuculus canorus Common Cuckoo	ad F
Cuculus canorus Common Cuckoo	ad M
Asio otus Long-eared Owl	
Asio flammaeus Short-eared Owl	
Otus scops Scops Owl	
Merops apiaster European Bee-eater	ad
Upupa epops Hoope	ad
Turdus viscivorus Mistle Thrush	
Oriolus oriolus Golden Oriole	ad M
Corvus corone Carrion Crow	
Pica pica Magpie	ad
Garrulus glandarius Eurasian Jay	ad
Sciurus carolinensis Grey Squirrel (mammal collection)	

The Police, Wild Birds Regulation Unit and the Environment and Resources Authority deposited numerous confiscated specimens in the museum which are still awaiting court judgement.

The largest and most significant donation was that of Mr Anthony Seguna of Naxxar, who donated his entire collection of Lepidoptera and other insects collected during four visits to French Guiana in the north-east coast of South America. In 2024, the collection, containing thousands of specimens will be digitised and catalogued.

Ms Denise Azzopardi of Madliena donated a specimen of a young Western Whip Snake *Hierophis viridiflavus* found dead on her property.

Mr Paul Sammut of Rabat, a regular donor to the museum, deposited several entomological specimens at the museum. These included various specimens of moths from different species as well as coleoptera species. All specimens, as in previous donations, were set and labelled by Mr Sammut before being deposited.

Mr Mario V. Gauci of Xemxija donated a small collection of animal bones (bovids) found in a field in Rabat in the 1980s.

BirdLife Malta donated a large format photograph (9.5 x 2.4 mts) of Mellieha that was used as a backdrop for the NETTV program on Maltese nature NATURALMENT. This has been setup in the veranda overlooking the inner courtyard.

Mr Daniele Barragioli donated a fragmented cetacean jaw and loose bones from same specimen, collected from the seafloor in the north-west coast of Malta.



Professor Louis F. Cassar donated a small collection (31 specimens) of insects consisting mainly of Orthoptera, two sphingid moths and a specimen of *Goliathus regius* from Africa.

Mr Constanine Mifsud of Rabat donated eight (8) specimens of the barnacle *Chelonibia testudinaria* (Linn, 1758) from Madagascar.

Mr David Cilia presented his personal herbarium (c. 150 specimens) and these were integrated with museum collection.

A series of Oak Eggars *Lasiocampa quercus*.
Part of Paul Sammut's donation

Appendix IV:

Purchase of items for the Gozo Museum (Line Vote 5824)

Object No.	Description	Author	Supplier	Price €
89025-27, 89038-55, 89240	Lot of ethnographic items from Gharb Folklore Museum, including agricultural and quarry tools, quarry wagon, traditional toys, textiles and other items	n/a	Silvio Felice	8,000
89032	Watercolour and gouache 'Gharb' - 2006	Mary Fedden (1915-2012)	R&J Gingell Littlejohn	9,700
89036	Mid-20th century priest's alb with Maltese balla lace belonging to Mons. Carmelo Scicluna (1935-2005)	n/a	Joseph Mario Vella	4,000
n/a	Painting of St Francis Square with Tapie's Bar - 2020	Richard Cole (b.1942)	The artist	4,500
n/a	Watercolour view of the Citadel with mule-driven cart - 1967	Richard Cole (b.1942)	The artist	600

Appendix V

Acquisition of Cultural Heritage Items

i. Purchases

Purchased from	Object number	Object description	Collection	Reference number	Price €
Annamaria Gatt	74258	Commemorative coin of ex-Prime Minister Enrico Mizzi	Ethnography	ETHN/M/877	20
Anton Cassar	74409-51, 74493	Labels, posters, documents of Bonavia Offset Printers	Ethnography	ETHN/PAP /644-86; ETHN/PAP/691	3,835
Catawiki	74494	Donna dell' Isola di Malta engraving by Nicolas De Nicolay, 1580	Ethnography	ETHN/PAP/692	129.54
Jane Staff	74500	Post card of a dungeon, Inq Palace circa 1930s	Ethnography	ETHN/PAP/697	3.73
Daniel Saliba	74498 i-x	Two sets of bone bobbins used for	Ethnography	ETHN/B/I i-x	300

Gigi's Antiques	74501-2	Maltese lace			
		Two framed prints from the 1920s depicting the good and bad death	Ethnography	ETHN/FR/38-3	945
Miriam Bartolo	74554	Maltese cotton weave double bed mattress	Ethnography	ETHN/F/2573	70
David Debono	75022-36	A collection of twenty items related to the Eucharistic Congress held in Malta on 23-27 April 1913	Ethnography	ETHN/PAP /1143-51, ETHN /M/900-904, ETHN/SIL/8	2,100
David Camilleri	74503-04	A letter press printing machine and a print down frame	Ethnography	ETHN/M/898- ETHN/M/899	300
Belgravia Auctions	75124	Nun's penitence cord	Ethnography	ETHN/F/2591	35
Florin Antiques	75253	19th century hermaphrodite bronze sculpture figurine	Ethnography	ETHN/S/703	1,745
Eleno Mamo Auctions	75266	Maltese bobbin lace coffee table cloth	Ethnography	ETHN/F/2596	200
Eleno Mamo Auctions	75263-65	A set of three pieces of glassware	Ethnography	ETHN/GL/132-134	340
The British Museum Shop	75297				
Warren Cup pewter REPLICA.			Ethnography	ETHN/M/926	583
Federico Vennarucci (Ebay)	76097	Magazine page advertising AIRMALTA from 1974			
Ethnography	ETHN/PAP/1245				
	17.49				
Gonnelli Casa D'Aste	75952	Histoire Naturelle, Hermaphrodites by Charles-Joseph Panckoucke, hand coloured etching, 18th century	Ethnography	ETHN/PAP/1217	355
Bonnici's Press	76075-77	90 tombola 'pedini', tombola caller card, Neapolitan tombola wicker basket	Ethnography	ETHN/W/424 (i-xc), ETHN/PAP/1243, ETHN/WK/18	20
Maria Rosaria Zammit Abouzid	76070-73	A collection of different coloured nylon rope bags	Ethnography	ETHN/PL/72-7552	
Interencheres Auction, Paris		Sword presented by Napoleon to Admiral Decres for his bravery in Malta			
Malta Maritime Museum			MMM		265,000
Galerie Gerda Bassenge	83442-47	Six etchings from the 12-part series 'Recueil de Differentes charges Dessignees a Rome per Carlos Van Loo'	MUŻA	FAS/PR/1049-54	2,169
Obelisk Auctions	85864	St Francis of Assisi by Antoine Camilleri	MUŻA	FAS/PR/1055	1,600
Obelisk Auctions	85865	Cyclist sculpture by Frans Galea	MUŻA	FAS/S/446	

13,000
Obelisk Auctions 85863 Crucifixion painting by Giorgio Precà MUŻA FAS / P / 2727
17,000
Anton Cassar, Bonavia Offset Printers 86004-13 Seven posters and three labels MUŻA FAS/
PR/1056-65 3,000
Anton Cassar, Bonavia Offset Printers 86014 Lithographic stone for various labels MUŻA FAS/
MISC/225 250
DAMS Casa d'Aste, Rome 86385-6 A pair of framed etchings in laid paper by Adrien
Manglard MUŻA FAS/PR/1066-67 256.12
Fichter Kunsthandel, Germany 86434-35 Two engravings of St Simon and St Andrew by Franz
Keller after Overbeck MUŻA FAS/PR/1068-69 250
Bonhams, London 86917-18 Two framed watercolours by Sebastiano Ittar M U Ż A
FAS/D/1814-15 13,399
Galerie Gerda Bassenge 87262-70 A collection of printed engravings by Ferdinand
Ruscheweyh MUŻA FAS/PR/1075-83 457
Galerie Gerda Bassenge 87247 A print of a bust of a coloured man by Giuseppe Longhi
MUŻA FAS/PR/1074 635
Izegem, Belgium 89626 Engraving of St Paul and the viper by Hendrick Goltzius after Jan van
der Straet MUŻA FAS/PR/1130 693
Kiefer Book and Art Auctions 89623 Engraving portrait of Louis XIV by Pierre Drevet after Hyacinth
Rigaud MUŻA FAS/PR/1131 364
R & J Gingell Littlejohn Auctions 88039 Wood engraving titled Hamrun by Robert Gibbings
MUŻA FAS/PR/1127 582
Paul Galea, Carmen Micallef, Mariuccia Darmanin, Giovanni Galea 88041 Clay model set in
marble enclosed in a wooden box with glass – Disaster of a Submarine by Antonio Sciortino
MUŻA FAS/S/568 100,000
Anthony Vincent Grech 87858-59 Certificate and bronze medal awarded to O. Mangion for
Stone Sculpture at the Malta Preliminary Show 1923 for the British Empire Exhibition 1924
MUŻA FAS/PR/1124, FAS/MET/381 270
Belgravia Auctions Octagonal inlaid tilt top wooden table by Carmelo Micallef for the
1924 British Empire Wembley exhibition MUŻA FAS/F/668 23,298
Caesar Attard 87499-520, 87524 A collection of drawings, prints and other designs by Caesar
Attard MUŻA FAS/MISC/227-33, FAS/D/1799-1803, FAS/PR/1084-94 21,700
Ann Marie Mintoff 87200-13 Lot of agricultural and other antique items from Għasri
Gozo Ethnography n/a 245.00
Joseph Zammit 89037 18th century wrought-iron bed Gozo Ethnography 325.00
Haber Antiques 89034 Ceramic washbasin Gozo Ethnography n/a 45.00
Johann Cuschieri 89033, 89035 Glazed ceramic washing set on stand, together with towel
Gozo Ethnography n/a 65.00
Obelisk Auctions n/a Two 18th century copper pots Gozo Ethnography n / a
90.00
Obelisk Auctions n/a 18th century painting still life with fruits Gozo Ethnography n/a
900.00
Obelisk Auctions n/a 18th century painting still life with flowers Gozo Ethnography
n/a 950.00

Purchases by Government Entities

Artist	Obj. No.	Description	Ministry
Joseph Farrugia	86703	Painting 'Wing 2021', charcoal and soft pastels on cardboard	Ministry for Public Works and Planning
Fabio Borg	86704	Painting 'Al Tramonto, acrylic on canvas	Ministry for Public Works and Planning
Christopher Saliba		Painting 'Mdina'	Ministry for Agriculture, Fisheries and Animal Rights
Luciano Micallef	86722	Abstract composition 19A, acrylic on wood	Ministry for Agriculture, Fisheries and Animal Rights
Luciano Micallef	86723	Abstract composition 19B, acrylic on wood	Ministry for Agriculture, Fisheries and Animal Rights
Luciano Micallef	86724	Abstract composition 19C, acrylic on wood	Ministry for Agriculture, Fisheries and Animal Rights
Luciano Micallef	86725	Abstract composition 19D, acrylic on wood	Ministry for Agriculture, Fisheries and Animal Rights

ii. Donations

Donor	Obj. No.	Object description	Collection	Ref number
Neriku Catering	86290	Seven solid silver coffee spoons of the Royal Malta Yacht Club	Malta Maritime Museum	MMM 005109.7
Lawrence Callus	74256-57	National Insurance Act card	Ethnography	ETHN / PAP/632-33
Joseph Caruana	74461-66	Stone work tools (pipe cutters, mason's iron hammers, mason's wedges, and hand drill)	Ethnography	ETHN/M/879-84
Anton Cassar	74452-60	Tin can labels, tear-away calendar, page from a receipt book, poster and bottle labels	Ethnography	ETHN/PAP/635-43
John Buttigieg	74408	Typewriter 'imperial' used by ex- President Anton Buttigieg	Ethnography	ETHN/M/878
Catherine Scicluna	74467	Toy 'porta ombrelli' made of cane with a round mirror	Ethnography	ETHN/W/405
Catherine Scicluna	74468	Toy wardrobe	Ethnography	ETHN/W/406
Neville Galea	74476-79	Four postcards of Gozo from the mid to late 20th century, originally purchased from an antique bookshop 'Livraria Chaminé da Mota' in Porto, Portugal	Ethnography	ETHN/PAP/687-90
Michael Barbara	74471	Plastic Air Malta Boeing 737 souvenir model with stand (1980s livery)	Ethnography	ETHN/PL/61
Michael Barbara	74472	Plastic British Airways Boeing 737 souvenir model with stand (1984 livery)	Ethnography	ETHN/PL/62
Michael Barbara	74473	Glass one-gallon candy/cracker/ spice mason jar (missing lid)	Ethnography	ETHN/G/131
Michael Barbara	74474	Alka ceramics ashtray, mother of pearl colour scheme, ceramic		

(makers mark on the bottom) Ethnography ETHN/CER/124

Michael Barbara 74495 Child's jig saw puzzle 1950s Ref no: TRG 100-IDEthnography
ETHN/PAP/693

Michael Barbara 74496 Child's jig saw puzzle 1950s Ref no: TRG 100-2A
Ethnography ETHN/PAP/694

Michael Barbara 74497 Child's jig saw puzzle 1950s Ref no: TRG 100-2C
Ethnography ETHN/PAP/695

Michael Barbara 74499 Toy flash card game "let's go shopping" Ethnography E T H N /
PAP/696

Dylan Cachia 74480 Shell shaped souvenir for Żurrieq carnival celebrations hosted by the Nigret
Youth Club in 1991 Ethnography ETHN/CER/125

Charles Dimech74482-92 Two shop signs, silversmith punches, wall mounted wire rolling
machine, standing wire rolling machine, an industrial press and a work table Ethnography
ETHN/PL/63 - 64, ETHN/M/893-897, ETHN/W/407

Josette Sacco 74406 1979 cream-coloured crepe Georgette wedding dress Ethnography
ETHN/F/2556 (i-v)

Nicoline Sagona 74508-20 Former girl and boy school uniform of the Bishop's
Conservatory Primary School Ethnography ETHN/F/2558-2570

Tamara Burr 74555 Navy blue clip-on tie of AirMalta Ethnography ETHN/F/2571

Tamara Burr 74556 Brown tie of the Malta Central Bank Ethnography ETHN/F/2572

Jane Parnis 74552 1950s black crochet raffia hat Ethnography ETHN/F/2574

Jane Parnis 74553 1960s black weave raffia hat Ethnography ETHN/F/2575

Jane Parnis 74552-53 Black crochet raffia hat and black woven raffia hat
Ethnography ETHN/F/2574-2575

Jacqueline Borg Apap 74565 1944 christening gown set (dress, cape, bonnet and handkerchief)
Ethnography ETHN/F/2576 (i-iv)

George Zahra 74557-64 Trophies, ephemera, frame and sample of voting system, all related
to Carnival Ethnography ETHN/GZ/307-14

Xavier Busuttil 74566 Cream coloured baby bonnet and a cream coloured skull cap
Ethnography ETHN/F/2577 (i-ii)

Pauline Abela 75016-21 Three ghonnella, male wedding suit, christening set, confraternity
habit Ethnography ETHN/F/2580-2585

Edward A. Kelly-Cook 75037-39 75047 Lace top, bookmark, tablecloth, soft-toy
Ethnography ETHN/F/2586-89

Emma Borg 75125 A collection of fabric and thread samples E t h n o g r a p h y
ETHN/F/2590

Anton Miceli 75254-55 Malta Carnival Trophy and Commiseration prize
Ethnography ETHN/S/704; ETHN/FR/40

Catherine Borda nee Micallef 75287-91 Three sets of floral curtains complete with valances,
Single and half bed mattress cover, Blue and brown floor loom cotton sheet of two lengths sewn
together for a double bed. Ethnography ETHN/F/2600 - 2604

Joseph & Josephine Gatt 75286 Robotron 'ERIKA' typewriter E t h n o g r a p h y
ETHN/M/924

Maria Rosaria Żammit Abouzid 75295 Fourteen-piece paper doll set (with original box).
Ethnography ETHN/PAP/1211

- Christopher Camilleri 75292 19th century wooden close stool/water closet Ethnography
ETHN/W/409
- Rose Zammit 75296 Ostrich feather ball point plume pen Ethnography ETHN/F/2605
- Catherine Scicluna 75293-94 20th cent. doll and a toy stove with accessories
Ethnography ETHN/D/67, ETHN/M/925i-ix
- Michael Gatt 75298 Woollen scarf souvenir for MOSTA FC, c.1980. Ethnography
ETHN/F/2606
- Transferred from Hypogeum following house acquisition 75299-302 One holy
communion photo (c.1950), one wedding photo (c.1960), one confirmation photo (c.50s-60s) and a
Nationalist party mug Ethnography ETHN/FR/42-43, ETHN/PH/204, ETHN/CER/126
- Hugo Agius and Lucienne Cumbo 75139-43 Cardboard box 1960 filled with paper
clothing and paper dolls Ethnography ETHN/PAP/1181, -ETHN/PAP/1185 (i-ix)
- Hugo Agius and Lucienne Cumbo 75261-67 1950s pair of curtains and 1958 wooden
curtain rail Ethnography ETHN/F/2595 (i-ii), ETHN/W/408
- Annamaria Gatt 75268-71 1950s soap bar, 1960s face powder, 1970s plastic jewellery,
1960s Malta Licence Book Ethnography ETHN/WAX/10, ETHN/PAP/1209, ETHN/PL/65, ETHN/
PAP/1210
- Annamaria Gatt 75272-73 Six pieces of loom woven fabric with red thread; six pieces of
loom woven fabric with light blue thread Ethnography ETHN/F/2597 (i-vi), ETHN/F/2598 (i-
vi)
- Mario Coleiro 75126-36 A set of eleven embroidery patterns Ethnography E T H N /
PAP/1169-1179
- Cynthia Psaila 75082-88 Cynthia Psaila family photos Ethnography ETHN/PH/164-170
- Cynthia Psaila 73464-666 Original print designs Ethnography ETHN/PAP/375-577
- Lucienne Cumbo 75137-38 Commemorative bandana and paper papal flags used for
Pope Francis visit 2022 Ethnography ETHN/F/2592, ETHN/PAP/1180
- Joseph and Josephine Gatt 72560 1940s white christening gown Ethnography
ETHN/F/2594
- Jane Parnis 72575 Wedding suit (jacket and trousers) Ethnography ETHN/F/2599 (i-ii)
- Annamaria Gatt 75995 Studio photograph of a couple 1922; J. Cassar Photo Studio,
Hamrun Ethnography ETHN/PH/764
- Treasure Antiques 76074 Early 20th century small handmade satin beaded evening bag
Ethnography ETHN/F/2636
- Josephine Camilleri 76081-84 1914 black silk wedding dress: blouse and long skirt; identity
card of Josephine Camilleri from Naxxar; marriage certificate; half of the memorial card of Paul
Camilleri Ethnography ETHN/F/2640 (i-ii), ETHN/PH/765, ETHN/PAP/1244, ETHN/PH/766
- Nazzareno Fenech 74263-64 Mid-20th century common doll (no dress) and a wedding
portrait in original frame Ethnography ETHN/D/66, ETHN/FR/37
- Marisa Caruana nee Attard 76092 Wooden plaque given to Mr Emmanuel Attard at the 25th
anniversary of Local Councils Ethnography ETHN/W/988
- Catherine Borda nee Micallef 75287-91 Three sets of floral design curtains with valances;
single and half bed mattress cover of red and white floor loom cotton weave fabric; blue and brown
floor loom cotton sheet made of two lengths sewn together for a double bed Ethnography
ETHN/F/2600, ETHN/F/2601 (i-iii), ETHN/F/2602 (i-iii), ETHN/F/2603-04
- Anne Borg 75049-63 Various lace designs of Gerada Ethnography ETHN/PAP/1152-66

Lina Callus 75259 Early 20th century black silk fabric for ghonnella on original cartoon roll and black silk fragment Ethnography ETHN/F/2593 (i-ii)

Marie Louise Falzon 76080, 76087-91 A baptism dress set sewn by nuns, baby christening dress with smocking, satin baby cot pillowcase, two hand embroidered pillowcases, two hand embroidered double sheets, hand fan with blue ostrich feathers and Air Malta plastic bag Ethnography ETHN/F/2639 (i-vi), ETHN/F/2643, ETHN/F/2644, ETHN/F/2645 (i-iv), ETHN/F/2646, ETHN/PL/76

Helen Sciberras 75991-93

76094-96 19th century British A. Kendrick & Sons cast iron coffee mill, 19th century French Peugeot Freres coffee mill and wooden coffee grinder w/stool, and photos of Joseph Baldacchino, owner of grocery at Lija Ethnography ETHN/M/930, ETHN/M/931, ETHN/W/410

Catherine Scicluna 75293-94 20th century articulated doll w/costume and a toy strove/ range- 19th century early 20th century w/eight accessories Ethnography E T H N / D / 6 7 , ETHN/M/925 (i-ix)

Annamaria Gatt 76085-86 White cotton tote bag and white cotton tea bag handed out during UoM Fresher's week 2023 Ethnography ETHN/F/2641 (i-v), ETHN/F/2642 (i-iii)

Annamaria Gatt 75957-58, 76078 1960s samplers in various patterns, colour and materials Ethnography ETHN/F/2631-2632, 2637

Pauline Abela 75016-21 Black silk ghonnella left handed, black cotton ghonnella left handed, black silk ghonnella right handed, male woollen wedding suit: jacket and trousers, white christening set: dress, bonnet, skull cap, bib and handkerchief, confraternity habit: garb, cape, capirote/hood Ethnography ETHN/F/2580-82, ETHN/F/2583 (i-ii), ETHN/F/2584 (i-v), ETHN/F/2585 (i-iii)

Annamaria Gatt 75766-69, 75954-56 One brown and one black synthetic leather portable hand luggage/ bags, two pairs of 1970s DENTS gloves, one pair of light brown and one pair of dark brown, three scarves of the Malta Labour Party, Nationalist Party and the 1976 Canada Olympics Ethnography ETHN/L/29-30, ETHN/F/2626-27, ETHN/F/2628-30

Josephine Wrigley (ka Joyce) nee Cassar 75996-97 Red and white plastic shopping bag with wooden handles (tac-Cina), Black and white plastic shopping bag with wooden handles (tac-Cina) Ethnography ETHN/PL/70, ETHN/PL/71

Josette Ellul 76067-69 Europride Malta 2023 official T-shirt, tote bag and hand fan Ethnography ETHN/F/2633-35

Dylan Cachia 76093 25th anniversary commemorative aluminium (bronze colour) medal for Maltese Independence Day Ethnography ETHN/M/987

Maria Darmanin 75998-76066; 76028; 76051-64 Set of stone masonry tools used in 20th century Malta Ethnography ETHN/M/932-961, 962-986; ETHN/W/411-422

George Zahra 74233-37, 74239-51, 74265-405, 74505-07 Carnival related items and memorabilia Ethnography ETHN/GZ/145-306

Dylan Cachia 75953 Rainbow flag Europride Malta 2023 Ethnography ETHN/F/2625

Anna Galea Lowell and Cynthia Galea Lowell 75759-60 Fox fur cape and an FOB watch Ethnography ETHN/F/2610, ETHN/M/929

Anna Maria Gatt 75641 Photograph of John Raimondo B. pharm Ethnography ETHN/PH/468

Miriam Fenech 75275-85 A set of different sized chocolate egg moulds Ethnography ETHN/M/913-20 (i-iv)

Josette Sacco 74406 1979 cream-coloured crepe Georgette wedding dress, underskirt, machine-

lace cape with hood, fascinator and one glove Ethnography ETHN/F/2556 (i-v)

Pierre Bonello 74259-62 Post-war Rediffusion speaker/ set with one knob, a print of 'Maria Bambina' in remembrance of the coronation of the processional statue in 1921, remembrance card for Joseph M. Bonello SJ, holy picture card of the 'Sacra Famiglia' stitched onto embroidered fabric. Ethnography ETHN/W/404, ETHN/FR/36, ETHN/PAP/634, ETHN/F/2555

Alfred Xuereb 75262 Hand-operated Reliance 20th century ice-cream maker made by Husqvarna in Sweden 1900-30. Ethnography ETHN/M/912

Fr Charles Said, Salesians, Sliema 75048 Set on nine art deco 20th century theatre style seating Ethnography ETHN/M/911

Joseph Gafa, Maltapost CEO 74469-70 Ludlow typograph machine and accompanying storage cabinet with twenty slanted drawers and working top, formerly at Maistre's printing press, South Str, Valletta Ethnography ETHN/M/885-86

Dylan Cachia 75089-101 Collection of thirteen photos by Mr Parascandalo of details from statues used in the Good Friday procession of St Lawrence parish, Birgu Ethnography ETHN/PH/171-83

Xaghra Scout Group 86920 Marble plaque with the inscription 'TORRE DEI GIGANTI - VIETATO L'ADITO SENZA IL PERMESSO DEL PROPRIETARIO' Gozo Ethnography G/ETHN/MAR/1

Karin Grech 88028 Gozo lace using cream silk thread with a Maltese cross design and the 'moska' Gozo Ethnography G/ETHN/F/583

Victoria Galea 88023-4 Wooden scrubbing brush and a large wicker basket G o z o Ethnography G/ETHN/W/161; G/ETHN/WIC/35

Joseph Gerada 89257-319 Various clothing items and accessories including hats and ties, shoes, bed linen, blankets and throws, wooden coat hangers Gozo Ethnography G / ETHN/F/587-647, G/ETHN/R/2, G/ETHN/SIL/2-3

Joe Demarco 86974 Portrait of a Dominican Friar Philip Mallia by Esprit Barthet M U Ż A FAS/P/2729

Dr Joseph Paul Cassar 83830-31 Two drawings (both untitled) by Joseph Paul Cassar MUŻA FAS/D/1786-87

Ramon Azzopardi Fiott 86975 Triton, print MUŻA FAS/PR/1071

Captain Gregory John Cassar 87492 Portrait of Capt. Gregory's late mother Dolores Maria Cassar nee Bonnici MUŻA FAS/P/2738

Joseph Messina 87831 Bust of Magistrate John Formosa by Alfred Camilleri Cauchi MUŻA FAS/S/463

Mary Attard 86973 Stilt fisherman photograph by Charles A. Herbert MUŻA F A S / PHOTO/418

Marius Zerafa tru' Fr Claudio Borg OP, Dominican Prior 87276-81; Seven portraits of Fr Marius Zerafa; one plaster mask to the ETHN Collection MUŻA FAS/P/2739-42, FAS/D/1816, FAS/S/454, FAS/S/456

Mario Caffaro Rore 87492 Portrait of Dolores Maria Cassar nee Bonnici, by Mario Caffaro Rore MUŻA FAS/P/2734

Adrian Abela 89697 Model of the paper memory machine 2014-16 by Adrian Abela MUŻA FAS/MISC/242

Carla Gatt 89693 Installation work by Charles is-City Gatt MUŻA FAS/MISC/240

Glen Calleja / Francesca Balzan Book of patterns: objects from the national collection MUŻA FAS/D/2272

Charlene Galea	Documentation of concept and residency at MUŻA	MUŻA	N/A
Chris Ebejer	89565 Hercules – patinated terracotta	MUŻA	FAS/S/471
Joseph Farrugia	88040 Lazarus' wardrobe, painting	MUŻA	
Alexandra Aquilina	87872 Seashell Niche 1 + 2	MUŻA	FAS/PR/1123
Christopher Chetcuti	87873 Torso, by Joseph Chetcuti	MUŻA	FAS/S/455
Paul Galea, Carmen Micallef, Mariuccia Darmanin & Giovanni Galea	88175, 88178, 88180, 88185, 88207, 88209-II, 88219, 88223, 88236, 88238-42, 88252, 88266-368, 88370-617, 88655-89027		
	742 designs on paper by Giuseppe Galea of Rabat	MUŻA	
Paul Galea, Carmen Micallef, Mariuccia Darmanin & Giovanni Galea	88028 Two decorative plaster busts	MUŻA	
Paul Galea, Carmen Micallef, Mariuccia Darmanin & Giovanni Galea	88029 Gesso cast model of silver plate presented to Queen Elizabeth II in 1967	MUŻA	
Major Mark Galea	86996-97 Two water colour drawings of man-of-war in full sail in Marsamxett harbour and a view of the Grand Harbour from Marsa	Malta Maritime Museum	
	MMM 005120, MMM 005121		
Maryanne Falzon	85664-66 Figurehead of G. Mirabitor, a water colour of "Malta" by P. Savona and a half model of the Mirabitor	Malta Maritime Museum	MMM 005106-5108
Mr Lawrence Debono	86800 Seven cast lead musket balls recovered underwater off Fort Tigne	Malta Maritime Museum	MMM 003481.7
Dr Edward De Marco	87595 Model of HMS Jonas Galleon	Malta Maritime Museum	MMM 005213
Dr Edward De Marco	87596 Nautical flags signalling box	Malta Maritime Museum	MMM 005214
Hilli Ventures Limited	88265 A Maltese corsair ship sailing in Marsamxett Harbour with prize in tow	Malta Maritime Museum	MMM 005219
Kenneth Valencia	89320 Original Army book	National War Museum	15/2023
Jakie Wake	89321 Hand written letter written by a Greek POW held in Malta in WWI	National War Museum	18/2023
Heather Foster	89322 Seventeen black and white 1950s photographs	National War Museum	22/2023
David Russell	89323 Letter sent after Illustrious Blitz by Lt Cdr Douglas Russell dated 14 January 1941. Letter from HMS Illustrious dated 9 November 1940	National War Museum	25/2023
Spiridione Cassar	89369 Royal Navy 1960s summer uniform consisting of jacket, trousers, collars, ankle gaiters and one belt	Fort St Angelo	FSA/451
	Found at Fort Delimara 88159 Cement plaque listing gun detachment of one of the BL guns at Fort Delimara, 1938	Fort Delimara	FD/10
Karin Grech	88028 Lace maniple	Gozo Ethnography	n/a
Victoria Galea	88023 Scrubbing brush	Gozo Ethnography	n/a
Victoria Galea	88024 Large wicker basket	Gozo Ethnography	n/a
Alfred Xuereb	Old surveying equipment and foreign and local items	National Museum of Archaeology	20169-71, 21073-75
Catherine Grech	Frejgatina with equipment	Malta Maritime Museum	MMM 005210
Catherine Grech	ALBIN O-II Marine Engine	Malta Maritime Museum	

MMM 005211

Catherine Grech Instruction Book ALBIN Marine Engines O-11, O-21, O-41 and O-411

Malta Maritime Museum MMM 005212

Catherine Grech Dr Umberto Grech and his two daughters posing with a large catch of fish Malta Maritime Museum MMPHOT 7360

Catherine Grech Dr Umberto Grech posing with his youngest daughter in St Paul's Bay Malta Maritime Museum MMPHOT 7361

Catherine Grech Dr Umberto Grech with his daughter and an unnamed man in St Paul's Bay Malta Maritime Museum MMPHOT 7362

Albert E. Larner Passport of Mr Albert E. Larner Malta Maritime Museum M M M 005224

Albert E. Larner 'Son and Me at Races' Mr Albert E. Larner Malta Maritime Museum MMPHOT 7588

Albert E. Larner Daughter in Law of Mr Albert E. Larner Malta Maritime Museum MMPHOT 7589

Albert E. Larner Races and having meal Malta Maritime Museum MMPHOT 7590

Vince Pulis A large collection of photographs, documents, books, and plans related to Malta Drydocks Malta Maritime Museum In progress

Anon donation Quarantine instructions issued by Malta quarantine officials on 6 June 1747 Malta Maritime Museum MMM 005220.MS64

Anon donation Letter of congratulations by Grand Master Emanuel Pinto to the King of the Two Sicilies Ferdinand I on his formal accession to the throne in July 1760 Malta Maritime Museum MMM 005221.MS65

Anon donation Document attesting to the state of health on the Maltese Islands in 1814 Malta Maritime Museum MMM 005222.MS66

Rowena Cutajar, Caroline Marmara, Felicity Camilleri, Vanessa Attard 17th century drawing of the Mograbina, re-christened the Santa Maria, captured by the Order of St John in Rhodes Malta Maritime Museum MMM 005233

Transfers from other museums to the Malta Maritime Museum

Registration Number Title Provenance

Q/P 55 Solar wheel sherd National Museum of Archaeology

NHM_Pal.2001 Shark's tooth National Museum of Natural History

NHM_Pal.2065 Shark's tooth in Globigerina National Museum of Natural History

ETHN/F/285; ETHN/F/171 Malta Light Infantry uniform (jacket and trousers) Inquisitor's Palace

MMM 005228; 005229 Two gold medals awarded to leaders of the Maltese for their courage during the defence of their country and for offering themselves to represent their casali in the National Assembly National Museum of Archaeology

MMM 005230 Silver medal of Giovanni Maria Cassar National Museum of Archaeology

MMM 005231 Silver medal of Paolo Borg National Museum of Archaeology

MMM 005202 Istituto Idrografico della Marina Italiana badge National War Museum

MMM 005203 Inclinator National War Museum

MMM 005204 Rangefinder National War Museum











