



CLUB NEWS



CULTURAL VISIT—Well done to the organisers who have been raising funds from such visits. €84 were raised from the last cultural visit.

The next cultural visit is the historic FORT ST. ANGELO on Sunday March 26 followed by lunch at Karrot & Co. Further details will be circualised in due course. This should be an interesting visit.



The 20th Mediterranean Lions Conference is being held in Alexandria, Egypt from March 30 to April 1.

As far as it is known Malta is not being represented at this Conference. However anyone interested can find further details on the Conference website.

SPONSOR:

Further to Lion Victor Borg Barthet's article on Page 5, we thank our new member Lion Egor Noskov who donated 400 euro towards the examination fees for Refugee students to study English.

While thanking Lion Egor we hope that more sponsors are found to help other students to further their studies of English.



FEBRUARY 2017

PRESENTATION OF CHEQUES

During the first meeting in February, Lion President John Rusher presented cheques to the Helen Keller Resource Centre, the Malta Guide Dogs for the Blind and to the Ursuline Sisters of St. Angela Merici of Sliema.

The cheques were from the proceeds of the two successful concerts by the New Choral Singers which were held last December at St. Paul's Anglican Cathedral in Valletta and St. Publius Parish Church Floriana.

In a short speech prior to the presentation of cheques, Lion President



John Rusher stated that the Club was pleased to have sponsored the two concerts and thanked all those who contributed towards their success. The President stated that Lions Club International is synonymous with Helen Keller who had called the members of our Association "KNIGHTS OF THE BLIND" since one of the Association's main aim is to help the blind and to

eradicate preventive blindness.

Representatives of the three recipients of funds thanked the Club for the donations.

The gentleman who received the cheque on behalf of the Malta Guide Dogs for the Blind stated that since he was given a guide dog his life changed completely since he was able to go out of his house without any

PROGRAMMES FOR YOUTH

Two programmes which do not take much publicity which are encouraged by Lions Club International are the Youth Exchange Programme and the Youth Camps.

Lions Club Sliema has always encouraged youth exchange and also participated in several international youth camps organised by Lions in Italy, England and Cyprus. Participants were chosen amongst secondary school students who had to submit an essay on a topical subject like the environment and its preservation.

In 1986 the Club organised an international youth camp in Malta. Youths from several countries were hosted in Malta for a fortnight during which they visited various historical and cultural sites, discussed themes relation to youth and had an opportunity to learn more about the Maltese way of living.

In 2012 through the initiative of Past President Lion Alfred Micallef Attard a group of Maltese youth were give an opportunity to visit Trapani (Sicily) for a few days to meet youths from that city who later visited Malta. In July 2014 a Maltese youth participated in the Campo Vesuvius in Naples and was hosted by a Neapolitan family.

Organising a youth camp is time consuming and also expensive as participants do not pay any fees. Unfortunately if one had to organise such a camp in Malta it is also difficult to find local Lions who are willing to host a youth for a few days with them, more so if they do not have any children of the same age as the foreign student.

However the Club can always sponsor a Maltese youth to participate in the various Youth Camps organised by European Clubs. Italian Lions organise at least two major camps namely Campo Italia and the Campo Vesuvius, while similar camps are organised by Multiple District 105. Perhaps the Board may consider sponsoring once more a student to participate in one of these camps. The main scope being (although it is hardly ever achieved) is to encourage youth to know more about Lions so that later they would themselves become members of our great Association.

GUEST SPEAKER

The guest speaker at our February meeting was Mr Tony Terribile who has written several books and articles on the churches and chapels in Malta and Gozo.

Mr Terribile was introduced to the meeting by Immediate Past President Lion Chris Borg Cardona.



Lion Chris introducing Mr Terribile to the audience

The guest speaker gave brief history of several churches and chapels around Malta with special reference to those in the Sliema area.

Unfortunately his talk was in Maltese and a translation had to be made for the benefit of Club members who are not conversant with our language. Nonetheless his talk was appreciated by all those present.

The next talk will be on the Wednesday March 15.

Problem and can enjoy life better. He thanked our Club for the donation.

The Mother Superior of the Ursuline Sisters thanked the Club for the donation stating that this would help them to look after the children in their care.



Lion President presenting cheque and club bannerette to the Mother Superior of the Ursuline Sisters., while in the photo on page 2 Lion President is presenting cheque to the representative of the Malta Guide Dogs for the Blind.

The attendance at both concerts was beyond expectations as was the money collected. This augurs well for future events with the New Coral Singers.

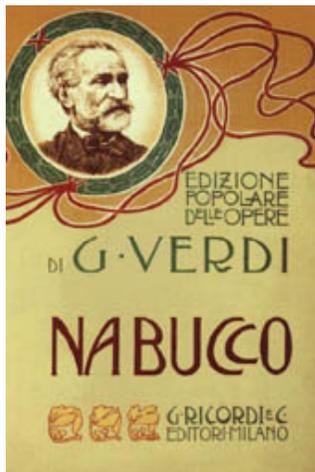
WE SERVE
Wherever there is a Lion help is at hand.
Be proud to be a Lion

CULTURAL VISIT

Lion Margaret Frendo reports

In order to give Club members a cross section of cultural experiences the February cultural outing, held on the 19th was to the opera at St. James Cavalier.

We saw Verdi's NABUCCO, one of the composer's first operas, written at that point in Italy's history when the Italians were seeking freedom from Austria's rule. What could have been an exhilarating experience was slightly marred by recording problems, which the occasional split second interference. This was explained as having been caused by bad weather affecting satellite transmission. Happily part two of the screening proceeded with less mishaps.



Putting this aside, the opera was an uplifting experience. The orchestra under the baton of James Levine was sublime to put timidly, as was the acting and the singing. Placido Domingo in the role of King Nabucco rose to the occasion portraying himself as a strong and ruthless King of Babylon when vanquishing Jerusalem then changing to a weak and vulnerable father when begging for mercy for the life of his daughter.

Dimitry Blosselskiy in the role of Zaccaria, an Israeli priest, was outstanding as also wee Liudmyla Monastyrka as Abigaille, the slave who usurped Nabucco temporarily from his throne. Jamie Barton was Nabucco's daughter Fenena.

The opera ends on a positive note. After temporarily losing his senses and throne, he disowned his god Baal and evoked the intercession of Jehovah. He is then restored to his throne. Abigaille takes poison and Nabucco sets the Israeli prisoners free. The Israeli and Babylonians are united in praise of the Israele God.

SUPPORT FOR REFUGEE STUDENTS

Past President Lion Victor Borg Barthet writes

This initiative started when the volunteer group Spark 15, working under the auspices of Integra, made so university professors aware of a number of refugees whose studies had been interrupted through war or other calamitous events in countries such as Syria, Libya, Sudan and Somalia. Before becoming refugees, these students had been following high level courses in their countries to become doctors, dentists, IT specialists, architects, teachers etc.

Once they had obtained refugee status in Malta they wanted to continue their studies in our higher education institutions. The main challenge is the lack of English qualifications as they would need internationally recognize certificates such as Cambridge or IELTS to qualify for university entrance.

Working with Spark 15 and Integra, the university professors have organized English language study programmes that will prepare these students to sit for their exams in English language. The lessons are taking place in some rooms at the University Chaplaincy, which the Jesuits have very kindly made available for the purpose.

The problem that remained was to find funds to pay the examination fees. The approximate fee, set by a foreign examining board, for each exam is in the region of €200 and there are ten students taking the exam over the next eighteen months.

Lions Club Sliema was approached about the possibility of funding these examination fees and after careful consideration of the initiative, it was decided that Lions would find sponsors for these exam fees. The students will benefit enormously in continuing their studies. They will graduate and contribute to Maltese society. Their insertion into the community will also help their families and their friends to integrate with their host society as well.