

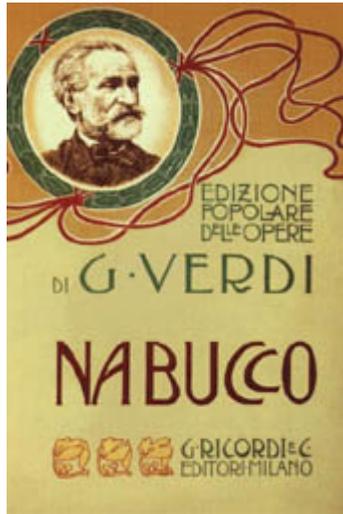


CLUB NEWS



CULTURAL VISIT:

The next cultural visit is on Sunday February 19th. This is an evening occasion as it will be to St. James Cavalier in Valletta for the live screening of the opera **NABUCCO** of Giuseppe Verdi with the participation of the legendary Placido Domingo as Nabucco.



The story of the opera is the fall of Jerusalem in the time of the Emperor of Babylon Nebukadnessar.

The opera will be screened direct from the Metropolitan Theatre in New York starting at 5.00 p.m.

Tickets are €15.

EXCEPTION TO THE RULE:

Though it was agreed that we do not include personal messages in the newsletter, an exception is being made to wish our colleague Lion Alfred Micallef Attard a speedy recovery from his recent back operation. Lion Alfred is a stalwart of our Club and I felt it was appropriate to wish him well.

Personally I am on the mend but not yet 100% fit. I am hoping to be able to attend meetings soon once the weather gets warmer.

Tom A. Restall



JANUARY 2017

ORGAN DONATION

Recently the Ministry of Health enacted a law whereby people would authorise the donation of organs without obtaining prior authorisation from their relatives. This law has been in the pipeline for quite a while and it is a good step that finally it has been enacted.

The initial donor card which was first introduced by Lions Club Sliema in 1996.



In 1996 our Club launched the "Organ Donation Campaign" and together with the Media Centre and the Health Education Unit of the Ministry of Health launched a nationwide campaign to make people aware of the importance to donate organs and give life to those needing a transplant. This campaign was a success with over 15000 potential donors. The campaign is still ongoing though the Club has since passed on this project to the Transplant Donors Association.

When the campaign was launched Club members used to go to various public manifestations like the Trade Fair at Naxxar to encourage people to register as potential organ donors. It was not easy to persuade people to simply register and we had to explain to them that organs would be taken for transplant once it was ascertained that the donor was dead.

The biggest problem was to keep an updated register of potential donors. Eventually with the new law a register is now being kept by the Health authorities. Any one having the old donor's card (above picture) is encouraged to re-register.

Lions Club Sliema is proud to have been the forerunner to launch the Organ Donation Campaign in Malta.

LIONS CLUBS INTERNATIONAL & HELEN KELLER

Helen Keller who was well known all over the world for her courage and determination despite her misfortunes had her first encounter with Lions Clubs International during the Lions 9th Convention held on June 30, 1925 at Cedar Point, Ohio, USA.

At the Convention she was accompanied by her remarkable teacher Anne Sullivan Macy, who explained to the 5000 persons attending the Convention who she helped Helen to learn how to speak despite being deaf and blind. She recounted that Helen was an unusually alert and bright young girl who contracted an illness when she was 18 months old that was diagnosed as congestion of the brain and stomach. It left her without sight or hearing.

After talking to Alexander Graham Bell her parents were advised by Bell to hire a teacher from the Perkins Institute for the Blind in Boston. 19th year old Anne Sullivan Macy was hired and Helen's life blossomed.

Helen's journey from the beginning of 1887 to the Convention in 1925 was recounted movingly to the Lions by her teacher who explained how she taught Helen to speak. Anne's speech was greeted with a resounding applause.

Helen Keller was the next to speak. She spoke in her own way with Anne repeating them. Helen explained how Anne taught her to speak despite being deaf. Helen ended her speech as follows:

"Will you not help me hasten the day when there shall be no preventive blindness; no little deaf, blind children untaught; no blind man or woman? I appeal to you Lions, you have your sight, your hearing, you are brave, strong and kind. Will you not constitute yourselves Knights of the Blind in this crusade against darkness?"

From that day LIONS CLUBS INTERNATIONAL have devoted much of their voluntary work (through LCIF) to eliminate blindness through various projects like SightFirst.

PS. Data from WE SERVE - A History of The Lions Clubs (P. Martin)

GUEST SPEAKER

As stated elsewhere by Lion President on January 18 the Club had Prof. Lino Cutajar was the guest speaker. Prof. Cutajar gave a very interesting talk on David Livingston Albert Swcheizer, two legendary medical missionary philanthropists in Africa.



Lion President presenting a Club bannerette to Prof. Cutajar in the presence of Immd. Past President Lion Chris Borg Cardona.



During the same meeting the Club welcomed a new member namely Elisa Sulimani who will be officially inducted as a member at the first official ceremony.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Happy New Year to everyone. A New Year brings for some, New Year's resolutions and new understandings. We as Lions already are refreshed to seek to serve where and when we can. Past Zone Chairman Tom Restall put in the last newsletter a brief roundup of the events of 2016. We can be proud of our achievements.

In particular we recall the most recent events, these being the collation and distribution of food hampers to the parishes undertaken and led by Lion Louis. Also the carol concerts held to raise funds led by Victoria and her team. Those who attended realised how many people came and contributed. Overall we raised over Euro 3700. This is a great achievement, and the funds will be distributed by presentation February. 2017 can also be another year of pride in our Lions Club.

Looking forward to 2017, Past President Lion Victor has proposed some ideas relating to our centennial celebrations combined with a gathering and exhibition and concert. All Sliema Lions are requested to contribute at the events and in their preparation. Already we are gathering *email* addresses to send notification to our fellow Lions abroad

Meanwhile a group of Lions will be going to Italy in April and we are looking forward to this visit.

We also had on the 22nd January our first outing to Santa Scholastica and on the 18th we had our first speaker, Professor Lino Cutajar who gave a very interesting talk on David Livingston and Albert Swcheizer, two legendary Medical Missionary Philanthropists in Africa. There was even a connection to Malta.

So there is plenty going on and lots to do.

WE SERVE

CULTURAL VISIT

Lion Margaret Frendo reports:

The visit to the monastery of Santa Scholastica at Vittoriosa followed by lunch at the Marsa Sports Club was well attended with a total of 42 members accompanied by friends.

We were welcomed to the monastery by the Mother Superior or the "Badessa" as she is called by the nuns, Sister Maria Tiralongo.

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was however Sister Anna who very patiently toured us around the monastery and answered the many questions put to her.

Sister Anna gave us a detailed history of how the Santa Scholastica community of nuns was formed in the late 15th century, when a nun from the Benedictine convent in Mdina decided to leave the Mdina convent and with six other women formed the new community of nuns.

Santa Scholastica is a community of cloistered nuns. As expected, the day of these nuns is centred around prayers. They pray together as a group seven times a day. >>>> 5

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The rest of the day is taken up with all that is necessary to keep the convent going, which involves cooking, cleaning and seeing to the repairs to the historic convent they live in. The convent is in what used to be the first hospital of the Knights of S. John. When the new city of Valletta was built, in around 1572 the hospital was moved to Valletta and the empty hospital building was given to the nuns.

We appreciated the fact that we were made very welcome by all the nuns, who happily mixed with us and were happy to spend time with us. Despite the fact that these nuns are closed in and are only allowed to leave the convent to go to hospital all the nuns had a very serene disposition. Before leaving the convent we were offered coffee and delicious biscuits and cake.

Lion President John Rusher presented the Badessa with a donation of €100 for which we were thanked as the convent needs repair works for which the nuns have to find the means as they get no outside help.

No visit would be complete unless it is followed by lunch. Lions Isabelle Micallef and George O. Attard organised a delicious set menu at the Marsa Sports Club which was enjoyed by all.

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Editor's Remarks: Thanks to the initiative taken by the ladies these cultural tours are becoming very popular and also a source of raising funds. €110 were raised from among participants on this particular occasion, with other sums collected previously.

These cultural visits when friends of members attend can also serve to attract new members. The important thing is to make guests aware of who are the Lions and what they do to help others. One can invite prospective members to attend our Club meetings to become aware of what Lions Club Sliema is all about.