



NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2022

HISTORY OF LIONS CLUB SIEMA

Lions Club Sliema was recognised and approved on July 2nd 1974. The official charter document was presented to the First Club President Lion Valhmar Borg, by Lion President A. Formosa of the Malta Lions Club. The official charter document and scroll was presented during the first Lions Club Sliema Charter Night.

In 1974 the Club had 26 members of whom 17 were Maltese and the rest British. The club soon become multi-racial and continued to be so. In the 10th Anniversary commemorative booklet, Lion Secretary John Fletcher stated that: *“Though most have left the Island now we have 45 British, one Libyan, three Pakistani, a Swede, a Canadian and three Germans. This must be good for Lionism. The members at the end of September (1984) were 93 Maltese and 9 others”.*

In his report Lion John Fletcher wrote: *“The Club has a very good growth record; we have received Club Growth Awards on four occasions and these are framed and cared for by the Lion Tamer who is also responsible for the hundreds of bannerettes received from visiting Lions and our members who exchange them when they travel abroad. Our membership has been static for the last 2 years, partly due to members leaving the Island, but we hope for a big increase during this Presidential year”.*

“Members have earned a number of Awards – over 40 received the 100% Attendance Award, 22 the Key Member Awards, 7 Membership Advancement Key Awards, 4 Master Key Awards and 22 Growth Awards.

In 1977 the Club formed a Lioness Club which had a very successful year. However, there were no volunteers to fill the working posts for the second year and the Club was disbanded.

In 1980 we and Lions Malta sponsored jointly the Gozo Lions Club and in 1982 we sponsored our Leo Club. The Leos are doing well and we look forward to the day when they start transferring to our Lions Club. We next sponsored the Lions Club St. Paul’s Bay in 1983. The Club was formed by Lion Lino Debono who was our Immediate Past President”.

The Gozo Lions Club had a short history as after the third year of its existence, the first Club President who served for two years and the incoming President in 1983 had a personal litigation on matters unrelated to Lionism. Despite efforts by our Club to keep the Gozo Club going, the Club was closed down.

Likewise, the Leo Club was disbanded in 1985. Notwithstanding the efforts of the parent Club to keep it going, only a few members were willing to serve. The few remaining members were also pursuing studies and had no time to devote to the running of the Leo Club.

Only three members from 1984, namely Lions Victor Borg Barthet, Albert P. Mamo and Tom A. Restall are still members of our Club. All three have served as Presidents. Lion Albert P. Mamo was Club President in 1986/87, Lion Victor Borg Barthet was President in 1988/89, 1999/2000 and 2013/2015, while Lion Tom A. Restall was President in 2003/2004. Lion Tom also acted as Club Secretary from 1980 to 1997.

While Lion Victor Borg Barthet and Lion Tom A. Restall are still active members in the Club, Lion Albert P. Mamo though not active is one of the Club members who is always ready to support any project that the Club is involved in.

As at July 2022 there are now 52 members with 14 expatriates hailing from England, France, Italy, Switzerland and Tunisia

The LIONS motto is “WE SERVE” ARE YOU SERVING? If not, follow this motto and involve yourself in the Club’s activities. You will get more satisfaction in life. BE A BETTER LION INVOLVE YOURSELF.

LIONS CLUBS IN AFRICA

The first ever Lions in the African continent was in Cairo, Egypt in 1954. Unfortunately, the Club was cancelled in 1968 when President Gamal Nasser banned Lions clubs. However, in 1976 the Cairo club was re-chartered and



Lionism is now flourishing in this African Arab country and more clubs have been chartered since then.

In 1956 Lions Club Khartoum in Sudan was chartered, while in 1960 Ethiopia became the third African country to have a Lions Club. In 1962 a Lions Club chartered in Libya. Unfortunately, Lions Clubs are now banned in both Libya and Sudan.

However, Lions Clubs can be found all over the big African Continent with several clubs being prominent in helping their respective people and also other Lions' causes all over the world.

Lions Club Sliema has been twinned with Lions Club Sfax Thyna in Tunisia since 1990 when Lion Frank Galea was President. We had reciprocal visits between the two Clubs over the years. The Club also donated a complete Encyclopaedia Britannica to a secondary school in Sfax and also French books to a school in a village in Tunisia. We were also twinned with Harare in Zimbabwe but the club has since been disbanded.

Our Club has always responded to appeals to help African countries by LCIF (Lions Clubs International Foundation), as for example when there was a devastating earthquake in Algeria.

On another occasion after receiving an appeal for stationery items from Burkina Faso, our Club appealed to students to donate such items. After a few weeks we were able to send several items including books to Burkina Faso with the cooperation of Multiple District 108 ITALY since the Lions of Italy are involved in various humanitarian projects in this African country, including drilling for water and providing medical assistance.

Lions Clubs in the African countries bordering the Mediterranean Sea are members of the Mediterranean Solidarity Organisation. Lions in Morocco, Tunisia and Egypt have also organised one of the yearly conferences which bring together Lions from all over the Mediterranean littoral.

TWINNING BETWEEN CLUBS

After the decision taken during the meeting held on August 7 that our Club twins with Lions Club Martina Franca Valle d'Itria in Puglia, Italy, the Club that Lion Edward Zammit was transferred to after going to Italy, I thought of writing an article about Twinning.

An important way to get to know other Lions and what their respective club is doing to further Lionism is through twinning. Our Club has been twinned with several Lions Clubs mostly in Europe besides the United States and Africa. Unfortunately, several twinning initiatives disappear whenever there is a new Club President who has no interest in continuing the initiative taken by his predecessor. Often the incoming President of a foreign twinned Club has his/her own programme and fails to continue a project agreed upon by the two twinning clubs, that is our Club and the foreign Club.

Lions Club Sliema has been twinned with foreign Clubs for several years. One of these clubs is Lions Club Millbrae in California which incidentally had also several Maltese born members on their roster. They were always anxious to learn what our Club is doing and also supported some of our Club's projects. A few years ago, the American Club which had members hailing from Mosta sponsored the planting of trees at an avenue in Mosta. Eventually this avenue is now called Millbrae Avenue.

When two of our Club members, namely Lions Albert P. Mamo and Tony Bonello and their wives attended the International Lions Convention in San Francisco, they were surprised to be met at the airport by Maltese members of the Millbrae Club. Our Club used to exchange newsletters with Millbrae for a long time. Unfortunately, this stopped when there was a change of officers at the American Club. Despite efforts to revive the twinning, there was no response from Millbrae.

Our Club was also twinned with two African Clubs namely LC Harare Host in Zimbabwe and LC Sfax Thyna in Tunisia. The twinning with Harare came about when an English Club member who had worked in Harare and was a member of the Zimbabwean Club proposed the twinning. We used to keep contact with the African Club through correspondence. We also used to send used eye glasses to Harare, courtesy of Balkan Air which had a weekly stopover flight in Malta on its way to Zimbabwe. Several boxes of eye glasses were sent until

the Customs authorities in Harare requested Balkan Air to pay custom duties for the consignment of used eye glasses.

As mentioned elsewhere in this newsletter, in 1990 our Club, at the request of LC Sfax Thyna donated a complete Encyclopaedia Britannica to a Secondary School in Sfax. It was easy to purchase the encyclopaedia, the problem was how to deliver the books. At that time, I was working at the Meteorological Office at Luqa Airport and knew that a private aircraft transported oil rig workers to Sfax several times a week. I made contact with the owner asking him to deliver the books to Sfax. He offered me a seat on the aircraft to make the delivery. After contacting the President of LC Sfax Thyna he suggested that they will meet me at the airport to take delivery of the books and then I would return back to Malta the same day. This was arranged. However, the problem was where to stow the books, as the Piper Comanche aircraft did not have a cargo hold. The problem was solved as we unpacked the 14 books from the cardboard boxes and stowed them in compartments in the wings of the aircraft.

We arrived safely at Sfax where I was met by the Club President Ahmed Fahfah and two others. We had a short chat and a coffee and I boarded the aircraft for our flight back to Malta. I was the sole passenger. We landed safely at Luqa and the aircraft taxied to Park One just below the Meteorological Office where light aircraft used to park. As I was going up the stairs to my office, I saw a police van in front of the aircraft, and two policemen talking to the pilot who was eventually escorted to Police Headquarters for flying a private aircraft when he was still waiting for his pilot licence. Little did I know that I was playing with fire to dare to go on that trip. A few months later this aircraft crashed on its way to Malta from Sfax with the loss of all the people on board.

WE SERVE

We must make up our hearts to be neighbours to those in need.

To put hope where there is fear.

To put laughter where there is heartache.

To put courage where there is pain.

To put love where there is loneliness.

To put ourselves, the LIONS, where there is nobody else.

CLUB NEWS



MEETINGS: The meetings scheduled for October will be held on Wednesday 5 and Wednesday 19. Meetings start at 1830 at the IMPERIAL.

EVENTS: The Events/Fund Raising Sub Committee chaired by Lion Director Doreen Davis is planning to organise various activities during the next few months. A "Quiz Night" is scheduled to be held on Saturday October 22. Details will be sent nearer to the date. A Christmas Party at a date to be fixed, A Sixties (60's) Night on January 21st 2023, a Carnival Party on February 18th. It is also planned to have a fund-raising bazaar in March and a visit to the Meridiana Winery in April. An "Afternoon Tea Party" is earmarked for May. It is also hoped that an Art Exhibition will be held during this Lionistic Year. Club members will be organising a party for Ta' Sawra inmates. Two "In House Raffles" will also to be held. On June 24th it is envisaged to hold an "Awards/Handover Night".

This is a tentative programme. Members will be informed nearer to the date of each event.

CHARTER CELEBRATION: As previously announced the annual Charter Celebration will be held at the Ballroom of the Hotel Phoenicia on Saturday November 19. During this event it is envisaged to have the official twinning of our Club with Lions Club Martina Franca Valle d'Itria. Hopefully members of other twinned Clubs will be joining us for this celebration. Just a reminder that members do not pay for this event. However, wives and/or husbands will have to pay.

=====

WHO IS A LION? S/He who achieves success, lives well, laughs often, loves all human kind, gains the respect of intelligent people and the love of little children; s/he fills his/her niche, does well his/her work, and makes God's world a better place than it was by just a brighter flower, a perfect poem, a human soul awake to its own loveliness; s/he feels the glow of beauty in all life, and never fails to voice his/her praise of it; s/he sees the best there is in fellow beings and gives to them the best there is in her/him, her/his life is one vast inspiration. **THAT WOMAN ... THAT MAN IS A LION.**

=====

MEDITERRANEAN SOLIDARITY ORGANISATION



The 2023 Conference of Mediterranean Lions will be held in Tangier, Morocco from 23 to 27 February. Two important topics have been chosen for this Conference, namely “*Lions Commitment on Social Impact of Climate Urgency*”, and “*Supporting the role of women in Mediterranean Society*”.

The Organising Committee is inviting Lions from the Mediterranean Littoral to attend this conference. The Committee is also asking Lions wishing to contribute these two themes to submit their proposals by not later than November 30, 2022. Details about hotel accommodation and costs for attending the conference will be communicated in due course. Further information will be sent in due course. In the meantime, if any member wishes to submit a contribution on the above-mentioned subjects is kindly requested to inform me as I still represent Maltese Lions Clubs in the Mediterranean Solidarity Organisation.

CLUB WEBSITE and FACEBOOK PAGE: Members are invited to visit our Club’s website which is being updated with Club news by Lion Dr Marie Therese Cuschieri. The website is: www.lionsliema.com. The Club has also its Facebook page (Lions Club Sliema) which is kept up to date by Lion Secretary Lorna Farrugia.

=====



Presenting Club banner to Lion Michael

LION TREASURER VISIT

While in Germany, Lion Treasurer Alex Arena and his wife Silvana paid a courtesy visit to Lions Club Rheda Ems President Michael Rottkemper and his wife at their home. The activities carried out by both Clubs were shared as well as ideas as to how new fund-raising activities could be planned. Lion Alex was invited to attend their meeting on September

21 during which he addressed the members. Lion Alex conveyed regards from our Club President to Lion Michael and invited him to Malta to reciprocate his visit.

SPARE RIBS NIGHT

The last Summer Fund Raising Event was held at the Marsa Sports Club on Saturday September 24. A good number of Lions and their guests came for this popular fund-raiser. Special mention is due to our new member Lion Yvonne McElhatton who brought a group of her friends to the event.

The food was very good and the wine and water kept flowing. A delicious dessert and coffee were also served. All those present enjoyed the evening and seemed reluctant to go back home. Besides having an enjoyable evening, the members and their guests raised just over Euro 900 towards our philanthropic funds current project to purchase a boat for the Paralympics. Special mention must also be recorded to Mrs Victoria Wilson, wife of our President, whose enthusiasm to raise funds helped in no small measure to make the raffle a great success.

Our next fund-raising activity is the “Quiz Night” scheduled for Saturday October 22. On November 19 we will have our Charter Night at the Hotel Phoenicia Ballroom. Further details about these two events in due course. It is also planned to have an “In House” lottery for good prizes in early December.



