

Maltese heroes remembered



Re-enactors of the Napoleonic era on Sunday marched down Merchant Street to Independence Square in Valletta to pay homage to Dun Mikiel Xerri and other Maltese heroes who were executed for plotting against the French army of occupation in 1799.

Members of the Historical Re-enactment Group of Malta and others from the Czech Republic, Italy, Sweden and the UK representing the Maltese Light Infantry, Royal Marines, Reggimento di Malta, British Infantry, the Royal Navy, contingents from the French Army of the Orient and Maltese insurgents, all joined together in a commemorative wreath-laying event on the monument erected in memory of these patriots, close to where Dun Mikiel used to live.

The General Salute was given, followed by a minute's silence.

The event was organised in coordination with the Malta Tourism Authority.

Comments

Martin Degiorgio (3 days, 1 hour ago)

Our own cultural ignorance coupled with our former English masters' political convenience have caused this important period to be forgotten and misinterpreted over the decades. As somebody mentioned, the toll in Maltese lives was staggering with fighting and famine accounting for up to 10,000 people - indeed more lives than those lost in WWI and WWII combined, or than those lost during the 1565 siege!

Since no government official / authority / agency seems interested in doing so, the suggestion of HRGM commemorating the execution of M. Xerri on the anniversary of the event is a good idea that should be adopted!

Denis A. Darmanin (4 days, 3 hours ago)

Mr Mercieca:

And thanks to our forefathers, Britain was able to firmly establish herself in the Mediterranean, good or bad, for the next 150 and more. And we weren't even allowed to enter Valletta, further less being amongst the signatories in the capitulation!

C'est la vie!

t mercieca (4 days, 7 hours ago)

I agree that the fallen of 1798-1800 should be commemorated, they played a major role in our history. But it seems that these Maltese are forgotten by most, as the French Period (as these 2 years are known) was a short period. And the majority of the Maltese have no idea what happened at all, for some it's just the French came, left a garrison, the Maltese rose and the French were blockaded behind the walls till they surrendered!

Little do most people know that these Maltese did a lot more than was expected during the early days of the blockade, they managed to hold the French till British and later Neapolitan troops arrived, constructed artillery position, manned and did guard duty, and fought the French when these came out for much needed food supplies. And apart from that, they volunteered to join in the Maltese Light Infantry (a detachment of which fought at ELBA in 1800), joined the Royal Navy as sailors and Royal Marines. The Later were also present during the Naval battle of Trafalgar in 1805

Denis A. Darmanin (5 days, 2 hours ago)

I can only comment for my part of the event. Since I knew that the parade was to be held from a short article in The Times of some two days previous, I wanted to take some photographs for my records. I didn't see a single policeman nor any other official about and had to act as an ad hoc marshal for the re-enactors. Even the gate on the grille around the monument was locked!

The cars probably belonged to ex-servicemen attending the religious service being held at St. Paul's Cathedral at the time since it was Remembrance Day.

I recommend that this commemoration can become an annual event in respect to the fallen patriots and for government along with the Valletta Local Council to co-ordinate a short re-enactment of the event along with a speech, followed by wreath laying. It can also serve as another attraction for the city.

Well said Mr Ebejer and others, we commemorate the fallen of 1565, 1919 and WW2, so why not those of 1798-1800?

j n ebejer (6 days, 11 hours ago)

It is about time we start researching and interpreting history as Maltese, taking in consideration the Maltese and Maltese point of view and re evaluating the merits. The

more we do the more we can start talking of Maltese Heritage.

The French period was one of the most dramatic were many Maltese lost their lives, probably more than did during the second world war. Yet we have memorials for the IWW victoms in every corner of every villiage of Malta but we hardly ever mention or remember these.

One needs to thank Mr. Darmanin for sending these photos and I believe the write up, because otherwise such an event would have gone unnoticed. Pity no better publicity or organisation was dedicated to this event. The situation with the parked cars just right against the monument was shameful.

Pierre Brincat (6 days, 13 hours ago)

I quite agree with M.Ellul, as such Heroes should have deserved better from their descendents, a little of respect to modern traffic regs. would have at least cleared the monument area, as cars were parked on double yellow lines!!!

Jesmond Micallef (6 days, 20 hours ago)

The execution of Dun Mikiel and the others was a bloody chapter during the two year period of French occupation in Malta. This happens everytime when somebody occupies somebody else's land and disturbs the well established system, whatever that might be. Historically, one may argue alot here, maybe even when one considers the history of education in Malta, for example. I pay my respect to these fallen people, too.

Mario Ellul (1 week ago)

Pity that the square had not been cleared of the cars parked all over the place - in other places and for other events, it is customary to post notices to the effect a night/day before