



# NEWSLETTER

VALLETTA ALIVE FOUNDATION

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May 2007 – Issue No 8

## **1 New Website for Valletta**

After months of preparation and discussion, VAF signed an agreement with Multi-Services International Ltd. for the setting up of a website. MSI was selected following a call for quotations.

Multi-Services International Ltd. was set up in 1978. In May 1997, Multi-Services International ventured into the world of IT and since then, it has been steadily building up and constantly improving its image and presence on the worldwide web. The flagship portals of the company are Malta Online, Europe Online and Flexi booking.

MSI runs websites on a commercial basis whereby income is generated from advertising to cover costs. It is intended to operate the new website in a similar manner. A formula has been agreed upon whereby the income from advertising and listing will be shared between MSI and VAF.

MSI have guaranteed that the income generated during the first 12 months will be sufficient for VAF to recoup the website capital cost of Lm500. If this objective is not achieved, MSI are committed to refund the difference to VAF. In this manner, the website will be set up at no cost to the Foundation.

It was VAF's original intention to start up with a basic website with information on Valletta and the Foundation, and then venture into a listing or directory for every service provider, catering establishment, entertainment provider, cultural establishment etc. in Valletta. Following a call for quotation

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and initial discussion with MSI, it was decided to venture into the business directory from day one.

**The website will be first and foremost a website for Valletta. The idea is that by making information on Valletta as easily accessible as possible more and more people are likely to make use of the services available in the City.** Apart from commercial information there will be information of cultural, historic and tourist information on Valletta. Information on the Foundation will also be included.

In the agreement with MSI, **VAF have arranged for current and new members (small business and corporate) to be offered a free basic listing in the business directory.** More details on the website and how to have listing in the business directory will be circulated in a separate email. The website is to be up and running by the end of June.

Thanks to Geoff Pisani Bencini, John Ebejer, Claude Zammit Trevisan and Dr. Kari Pisani for their involvement over several months including the preparation of website proposals and discussions with those who submitted quotes.

## **2 Streets Alive 2007**

Bank of Valletta has agreed to sponsor Streets Alive 2007. **The event will take place over six consecutive Friday evenings starting on the 20<sup>th</sup> July and ending on the 24<sup>th</sup> August.** Preparations are well in hand and the programme for each evening is taking shape. A theme will create added interest (for example Valletta Kreativa or Valletta Storika).

Groups of people including Foundation officers are meeting every two weeks to prepare for the event. The Ministry for Tourism and Culture has kindly offered the assistance of the Events section within the ministry. In particular, Mr. Martin Morana from the Ministry is instrumental in preparing an interesting and varied programme.

BOV Streets Alive does not receive any financing from government (even if the assistance of the Events Section is

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invaluable). The various activities are financed through sponsorship. **To be sustainable in the long run BOV Streets Alive has to be able to generate funds also from those who will most directly benefit from the event, mainly bars and restaurants but also some retail outlets.** VAF has prepared a scheme by which catering outlets and shops can contribute some funds which will directly benefit their establishment as well as supporting the overall BOV Streets Alive event. The content of a letter sent out to commercial establishments is given as an Addendum A.

### **3 Annual General Meeting**

The Foundation's Annual General Meeting was held on Thursday the 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2007 in the chamber of commerce, Valletta. Perit David Felice made a presentation on "Interior spaces in Valletta". Foundation secretary Perit John Ebejer made a report on the various initiatives during 2005 whilst Mr. Anthony T. Camilleri the Foundation treasurer presented the financial report. Thanks to Mr. Anthony M. Attard of Attard Giglio & Co for his services in preparing the Foundation's Accounts for the AGM.

### **4 "Valletta Day" Dinner**

The Foundation organized a dinner to celebrate "Valletta Day" on Thursday the 29th March 2007 at 7.30pm at "Spezzo" in Archbishop Street Valletta. This was a great success with 83 guests enjoying the excellent food and the evening.

**Kindly note that this year's VAF Annual Dinner as part of the BOV Streets Alive is being held on Friday the 10<sup>th</sup> of August 2007 at the Upper Barrakka Gardens during the Delicata Wine Festival. More details will be given at a later stage.**

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## 5 Introduction of CVA – A New Beginning for Valletta

2<sup>nd</sup> May 2007 is a very important date for Valletta. The Controlled Vehicle Access was introduced. This is the corner stone of Governments' overall accessibility strategy for Valletta.

**The Valletta Alive Foundation supported Government's accessibility strategy for Valletta and actively took part in the public consultation.** The overriding positive aspect of these changes is that they are being carried out within the context of an overall accessibility strategy for Valletta. Changes are interrelated to each other and together they will result in numerous advantages.

With the Controlled Vehicle Access parking within the city during office hours will be against payment for non-residents in accordance to the time spent. People wishing to spend some time in Valletta for shopping or for leisure will now find a parking place without difficulty.

Several streets have been pedestrianised. The quality of spaces has improved for pedestrians, including for the many tourists who visit our capital. Shopping becomes a more enjoyable experience and historic buildings can be properly appreciated. Repaving and pedestrianisation will result in a complete transformation of Merchants Street.

A number of parking spaces across Valletta have been reserved for residents. The perennial problem residents face with parking during office hours has been resolved.

Transport facilities to and from Valletta have been improved. The park and ride was a tremendous success and the announced extension of the facility is most welcome. Escalators/lifts will be provided to connect the Customs House area to Castille square. A new public transport service was recently introduced around Valletta, which also includes the Cruise Passenger Terminal. The parking in the ditch is to be reorganized and properly managed. Electric taxis will provide a new transport service within the city. Direct public transport services from Mosta and Zurrieq have been introduced by ADT.

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It will take some time for people to get used to the system and realize its many advantages. Previously, for example, for many thousands of drivers without a V-licence entering Valletta by car was not an option. Today they can enter Valletta at a reasonable cost and make use of the multitude of commercial, cultural and leisure facilities the City has to offer. People have yet to realize that parking outside office hours is free (daily after 5.30pm, Saturday after 1.00pm and Sundays). Going to dinner in a restaurant or spending some leisure time in the evening in Valletta are now much easier. The same can be said for attendance to a cultural event at the Centre for Creativity or Manoel Theatre.

**The changes being carried out are a new beginning for Valletta.** The Valletta Alive Foundation commends the ministries, the government agencies, the Valletta Local Council and others who were involved in the drawing up of the accessibility strategy for Valletta and/or who are actively involved in its implementation.

## **6 The Relocation of the Valletta Market**

Merchants Street in Valletta become headline news during May because of the protests by the *monti* hawkers who set up stalls in the Valletta market. The hawkers wanted to go back to their current location after works on the repaving of Merchants street will be completed. They also wanted to set –up the market in Freedom Square pending completion of works.

**VAF issued a press release on the 17<sup>th</sup> May** which so happened to be a day or two before agreement was reached between Government and the *monti* hawkers. See Addendum B for the full text of the press release. On the same day, another press release on the subject was issued jointly by GRTU, Republic Street Business Community and Merchants Street Business Community (who are in fact three of the seven founding members of the Foundation).

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## ADDENDUM A

15<sup>th</sup> March 2007

### Letter to catering outlets and shops in Valletta

BOV Streets Alive will yet again bring life to the streets of Valletta over six consecutive Friday evenings this summer.

Valletta Alive Foundation has been approached by a number of establishments showing an interest in organising an activity within their street. VAF would like to involve in a more direct way the establishments which at the end of the day will benefit from the staging of this event.

Moreover, for BOV Streets Alive to become an annual event, there needs to be a formula to generate additional funds over and above income from sponsors.

VAF is offering two schemes with which commercial establishments (catering outlets and shops) can be involved as follows:

**Scheme A** - Staging of an activity: VAF is willing to cover part of the cost of an activity organised by an establishment or a group of establishments within its/their street. The percentage to be covered by VAF is subject to discussion and could be anything between 40 and 60 per cent.

**Scheme B** - Marketing: Establishments may contribute Lm30 to cover part of the marketing cost of BOV Streets Alive. In return, names of contributing establishments will be featured in a newspaper advert once a week for six weeks. In addition the name of the establishments will be featured in the flyer issued for the event.

If you are interested or would like to have more information please contact the Foundation's Co-ordination Officer Mr. Geoff Pisani Bencini on mobile No. 79027902.

Alfred Zahra  
Chairman

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## ADDENDUM B

### Press Release

From the Valletta Alive Foundation

17<sup>th</sup> May 2007

The Valletta Alive Foundation was one of many organisations who were consulted by Government on proposals for Valletta pedestrianisation including the relocation of the *monti*. VAF is a lobby group which works in the interest of Valletta and its position in relation to this issue is inspired by what it believes to be in the best interest of the City and its many users.

VAF fully supports Government in its decision to relocate the *monti* further down Merchants Street.

The embellishment and pedestrianisation of Merchants Street would allow for the appreciation of the streets' cultural heritage. Leaving the *monti* in its current location would undermine this objective.

It is our desire that this issue does not become a political football. Therefore we are concerned with the comments made by the leader of the opposition, and appeal for consultation with all interested parties before taking a firm stand on the issue.

The solution as proposed by Government is supported by VAF because it takes into account the interests of all concerned including the shop employees, shop owners as well as the *monti* hawkers.

The Foundation supports the efforts being carried out by GRTU, Republic Street Business Community Association and the Merchants Street Business Community Association, which are three of the seven Founding Members of the same Foundation.

VAF augers for an early solution to this issue and strongly recommends that the authorities adhere to the plans on pedestrianisation as was originally intended.

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