



THE *Scout* ASSOCIATION
OF MALTA



Victoria Scout Group

N E W S S H E E T

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[April - May] June 2023

From The Group Scout Leader

Jesmond Scerri

Participating in international camps such as the Jamboree is an unforgettable and enriching experience which a Scout carries throughout his life, and as a Group, we have always encouraged our members to do so. This year is no exception! With the 25th World Scout Jamboree in South Korea round the corner, the Group is doing its utmost to support our 27-strong contingent in both logistic and financial manners. For this reason, a Figolli Sale and the traditional Santa Luċija Dinner were organised. Proceeds from these fund-raising events allowed the Group to sponsor both the kits of all our members, as well as all the expenses for activities held in preparation for this event. Both fundraising activities were very well-received and attended, and this always demonstrates the support shown by parents and friends of the Group.

As part of the Easter activities, the Group organised the Way of the Cross at Għammar Hill in Ta' Pinu, where, apart from our uniformed members, parents and relatives were also invited. A Mass by Fr. Krystof Buttigieg was celebrated in the amphitheatre on top of Għammar Hill. Easter Camp, one of the main activities in our calendar, saw a full complement of members sleeping under canvas. A first during recent years was an invitation to Cub Scouts' parents to come for tea and games at the campsite. During this camp, we also used the newly acquired marquee tent purchased through funds obtained under the Ministry for Gozo NGO Scheme.

Throughout this quarter, we also had the Annual Rally in Valletta, a highly-anticipated activity not only for our Group, but for the whole Scout and Guide Associations in Malta and Gozo. Through this activity, members from most of the local Scout and Guide Groups marched through the streets of Valletta - an event witnessed by many eager supporters. It was a spectacle to see so many uniformed members!



At the Annual Rally

On the 17th June, we saw 20 new Scouts and Cubs being invested. Investiture is a very important event in our Scouting calendar as, through this ceremony in the presence of parents and the whole Group, our young new members recite their Scout Promise to demonstrate their commitment to Scouting. Through this they are officially welcomed into the Victoria Scout Group and the worldwide Scouting brotherhood.

Helping other people is an integral aspect of Scouting and indeed part of our Scout Promise. We strive to instill this principle into our young members, and a tangible way to do so is by putting it into practice. We recently organised a fund-raising lunch in aid of the "Friends of the Sick and Elderly Gozo". The proceeds from this lunch were rounded up to €1000 from the Group's funds and a cheque was presented to Mr. Paul Zammit, the president of FSEG. Mr. Zammit addressed the members, describing the support that this NGO offers to those in need within our community.

As already announced in a previous edition of our newsheet, our Group will be organising an international event through an Erasmus+ grant of the European Union. This event will bring together youths from Gozo,

Continued overleaf...

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Germany and Hungary this summer. Such activities allow our members to share experiences, forge new friendships and build memories that they shall undoubtedly carry throughout their lives. In preparation for this, at the end of May, we hosted 2 leaders from each of the countries involved and together we planned this visit, discussed logistical issues and also visited a number of local landmarks, which shall be included in our event programme.



Group photo at Easter Camp

These are only a few of the activities carried out during the last 3 months, all being part of the 60th Anniversary celebrations of the Victoria Scout Group. Furthermore, in the pipeline we have several other exciting activities including a thanksgiving mass, celebrated by His Eminence Cardinal Mario Grech at Ta' Pinu National Shrine, the Summer Camp including the BBQ and campfire, the 25th World Jamboree and the EU Camp 4.0. All this goes a long way to show to the ongoing commitment of our leaders and council members in providing a holistic educational programme for our members.



GSL Jesmond Scerri presents a cheque with the proceeds of the fund-raising lunch to Mr Paul Zammit, President for the Friends of the Sick and the Elderly Association, Gozo.

Awards and Badges

- April to June 2023

Packs

Tenderpaw Badge: Neil Bajada, Erik Buttigieg, Jake Camilleri, Gabriel Gatt, Thomas John Gatt, Jaydon Grech, Rafael Grech, Jake Mifsud, Leon Puglisi, Kurt Saliba, Luca Spiteri, Gabriel Tabone and Myles Zahra.

Membership Badge: Neil Bajada, Erik Buttigieg, Jake Camilleri, Gabriel Gatt, Thomas John Gatt, Jaydon Grech, Rafael Grech, Jake Mifsud, Leon Puglisi, Kurt Saliba, Alexey Scicluna, Luca Spiteri, Gabriel Tabone, Adam Zahra and Myles Zahra.

Giorgio Anici Camilleri – Pet Care, Hobbies, Local Historian, Sportsman, Botanist

Neil Bajada – Book Reader

Massimo Buhagiar - Botanist

Jake Bugeja – Hobbies

Jake Camilleri - Musician

Gabriel Cutajar – Altar Server

Lucas Debono – Altar Server

Gabriel Gatt – People and Places, Botanist

Jake Galea - Collector

Jaydon Grech – Altar Server

Rafael Grech – Sportsman

George Mercieca – Altar Server

Jake Mifsud - Sportsman

Leon Puglisi – Sportsman

Thomas Rapa – Craftsman, Astronomer

Jan Sacco - Astronomer

Kurt Saliba – Bird Lover

Alexey Scicluna – Computer, Musician

Luca Spiteri – Altar Server

Luke Spiteri – Altar Server, Hobbies

Liam Sultana – Altar Server

Gabriel Tabone – Musician, Craftsman

Mateo Xerri - Collector

Ayden Vella – Computer, Bird Lover

Michael Zammit – Collector

Sven Zerafa – Altar Server, Hobbies

Congratulations!

Scout Gabriel Grech is GLOBE Malta's student vlogger for 2023 – 2024.

Congratulations to 11-year old Scout Gabriel Grech who has been chosen to represent the GLOBE Programme Malta as its student vlogger for our country. This year, a total of 20 vloggers were picked from all applicants from across the world.

The Global Learning and Observations to Benefit the Environment (GLOBE) Programme is a worldwide Science and Education Programme. The U.S. National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) is one of the sponsors for this programme.

GLOBE works to build a collaborative, worldwide community of students, teachers, scientists and citizens to conduct real-world research. It gives students a hands-on approach to the scientific method and the opportunity to better understand the Earth system and global environment.

In the coming months, Gabriel will be sharing his experiences and his perspectives through vlog-style video content for the GLOBE YouTube channel and all of GLOBE's social media platforms.

We look forward to what Gabriel will be doing, learning and discovering. Well done Gabriel!



Congratulations Gabriel Grech.

Posts in the Gozo University Group

Congratulations to AVSL Matthew Grech and Rover Scout Presley Clark on their being elected on GUG's Executive Committee for 2023/24 as Social Policy Officer and International Officer respectively.

The (Gozo University Group), GUG is an organisation which represents Gozitan students on campus and at national level. It strives to cater for the particular challenges and needs which Gozitan students may encounter while at University in Malta.



Congratulations AVSL Matthew Grech



Congratulations Rover Scout Presley Clark

Global Action Days (GAD)

Leave the world a little better than you found it.

- Lord Robert Baden Powell,
Founder of the Scout Movement

Lord Baden-Powell knew that words alone were not enough. He called for actions – not big global campaigns, but small local actions because each small change in “my world,” adds up to a significant change in “our world”.

Between the 18th and the 28th April, the Group took part in the GAD campaign. This involved reflecting on different types of pollution and carrying out various actions aimed at reducing it and consuming more responsibly.

It was coordinated by Nature Trust - FEE Malta and the Foundation for Environmental Education.

The 2023 Global Action Days were all about the 5Rs - Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Recycle and Repurpose.

Since the inception of the Scout Movement in 1907, Scouts have done their best to protect the environment. Whether they are

- protecting their campsite by keeping it clean, picking up litter and “leaving no trace behind”,
- or getting creative and giving objects a second life (by creating their own fresh water distillers and rafts out of used plastic water bottles and in the process learn more about the importance of water conservation),
- or repurposing used food cans, scraps of corrugated cardboard from old boxes as well as some candles to create an alternative cooking source, a Buddy Burner and a Hobo Stove
- or reducing the amount of wood consumed during a campfire by choosing a Swedish torch, an eco-friendly alternative to the traditional campfire,
- or investing in an off grid solar photo voltaic system to replace the fuel-powered generator used at camp, thus making use of a clean renewable energy source, sunlight which results in no negative environmental impact,
- or installing a set of PV panels on the roof at headquarters
- or using energy efficient LED lights at camp
- or building an underground water reservoir at headquarters which collects rainwater and conserves water, the Victoria Scouts were doing their best to reduce pollution.

Our actions matter!

#globalactiondays



Annual Guide and Scout Parade

- Sunday 7th May 2023

And we were there too!!

Well done to all our members who attended this parade which brought together all the Scout and Guide groups in Malta and Gozo.



Easter Camp 2023

Another Easter Camp has come and gone and left all those involved with lots of happy memories and experiences.



Food glorious food



All packed and ready to return to headquarters at the end of camp



Flagdown at camp



Up goes the new marquee tent



Parents as guests at camp

Thank You!

The Victoria Scout Group would like to thank Global Safety Malta for their kind donation of a number of fire extinguishers and fire safety equipment. This equipment will continue to help the Group to offer a safe environment at headquarters where our members meet on a weekly basis.



Point to Ponder with the Editor Anita Muscat 1963 – 2023: 60 years of the Victoria Scout Group.

The year 2023 is a very special one for the Victoria Scout Group because it proudly marks its 60th anniversary. The Group was founded by the late Joseph G. Grech who served as its Group Scout Leader from 1963 to 1990. In 1990, Skip, as Mr Grech was known, was appointed as Chief Commissioner for the Scout Association of Malta and so the post of GSL became vacant. Mr Lorrie Saliba then took over the helm and led the group for the next 30 years, till 2020. Since then, Mr Jesmond Scerri has been serving as the Group Scout Leader.

A house belonging to Skip's mother, Ġorġa Grech, who generously lent her house at Ġhajn Qatet Street, served as the Group's first headquarters. What was intended to be a short period of time ended up being 26 long years. On the 8th July 1989, the Group opened its new headquarters in Santa Dminka Street. This was the first-ever building in Malta and Gozo, to be purposely built to be used as a Scout headquarters, another first for our Group.

During these 60 years, so many children and youths have benefited from the educational programme that Scouting offers its members. Scouting's purpose is that of helping young people develop physically, intellectually, socially, and spiritually. Scouting is all about building confidence and self-esteem, learning important life skills and leadership skills, (which skills they will need for school, university, the job interview, the important speech, the tricky challenge and the big dreams), team building, outdoor adventure, education, and fun! Scouts learn how to make good choices and to take responsibility for their actions so that they are prepared for their adult life as independent persons.

Along the years, our Scouts did all this and more. They lived through different experiences, made new friends locally and beyond our shores, created so many indelible memories, participated in international camps and World Jamborees, learned a myriad of new things, helped others, cared for the environment, and lived up the Scout Law and Promise.

Besides having 3 excellent Group Scout Leaders, the Group was also blessed to have had dedicated and hard-working leaders and Council members who always had the Group's interest at heart and continuously did all they could to improve on what the Group had enjoyed so far.

Ad multos annos, Victoria Scout Group!!!!



8.7.1989 – Official opening of the present headquarters in Sta Dminka Street by H.E. the President of Malta Dr Ċensinu Tabone



18.7.1963 Official opening of the first headquarters in Ġhajn Qatet Street by H.E. Mons Giuseppe Pace, Bishop of Gozo



(Left to right) The former GSL Lorrie Saliba, the present GSL Jesmond Scerri with the bust of the first GSL of the Group, Joseph G Grech.

An interview by Carm C. Cachia with Mr. Lorrie Saliba, former Group Scout Leader of the Victoria Scout Group in Gozo, on his 60th anniversary as member of the Group and of the World Organisation of the Scout Movement. - Part 1

Mr. Saliba, this is your 60th anniversary as member of the Scout Movement. To what extent do you consider that Scouting has been influential in the building of your personality and in your life in general?

Yes, this is my 60th year as a member of the Victoria Scout Group and so also as a member of the World Organization of the Scout Movement. I was one of the first members of the Group when it was formed in 1963 and the only member who is still active today. My application form is dated 12th June 1963. Scouting has affected greatly the formation of my character and has had a great impact on my life. I spent my childhood under the leadership of Group Scout Leader Joseph G. Grech, better known as Skip. Joe Grech was a true Scout. His teaching and his advice helped me learn to be always of service to others. I hope that I have been able to live up to this ideal.

You were Group Scout Leader for a good number of years and, for some time, you even were District Commissioner for the Scout Association of Malta in Gozo. How did this post affect your personal life?

I was the Group Scout Leader of the Victoria Group for 30 years: from 1990 to 2020, a rather long period of time for such a position. Besides, I was District Commissioner for Gozo for 6 years during the same period. This latter position did not involve much work as there are only two Scout Groups in Gozo. However, I never missed a meeting of the Executive Council held in Malta once a month and sometimes even more often.

Being Group Scout Leader is another matter. I tried to lead the Group on the same lines my predecessor did. However, I have my own style of leadership. Moreover, Group Scout Leader Grech was a bachelor and I had a family to cater for. This situation did make a difference in our lives, and it was never plain sailing. Because of my position in the Group, sacrifices had to be made, even by members of my family.

What about your relationship with the other members of the Group, especially with the other leaders?

I have always tried to keep a healthy relationship with the other leaders. I am glad to say that they too do their best to cooperate with me for the good of the Group. This means that sacrifices also have to be made on their part. One must remember their participation

in the running of the Group is voluntary and they too have their own private life. Throughout my 30 years as GSL, I had a good relationship with all the leaders that formed part of the Group and with the members who served on the Group Council as well. Even though sometimes we disagreed on certain issues, we tried to reach a compromise for the good of the Group.

What important role did the Group Council have during your tenure as Group Scout Leader?

The Group Council has served as mainstay for the Group since its inception. This applies more so to the 30 years during which I led the Group. One cannot lead a Scout Group without the help of the Council. However, I must point out that the Council has always taken care of the Group headquarters and matters related to it, such as fundraising, procurement of equipment, etc., but has never interfered with the running of the Group where Scouting is concerned.

I would like to add that our Group Council is the first Scout Group Council that has been instrumental for the erection of the first Scout headquarters ever to be built in either Gozo or Malta. And then again, the Council has helped the Group expand its existing premises and eventually also acquire a store for the Group's camping equipment. The Victoria Scout Group headquarters is a monument for various members of the Council and the leaders that were part of the Group over the years.

To be continued

June 1963 - Lorrie's admission form

Lorrie's progress sheet

Venture Unit and Rover Crew report

by VSL Jesmond Scerri

During the past 3 months, attendance for the weekly meetings was somewhat affected by exams. In spite of this, several Ventures and Rovers met regularly at headquarters to carry out much-needed maintenance work, clean-ups, clearing of things which are not needed anymore in the Group's garages and yard, and checking of Group equipment.

Ventures and Rovers also helped out in Group activities such as Easter camp, the lunch in aid of the Sick and the Elderly Gozo and the fund-raising dinner held at Santa Luċija. They also helped the organisers of the Bis-Saħħa Festival at Santa Luċija by acting as car parkers.

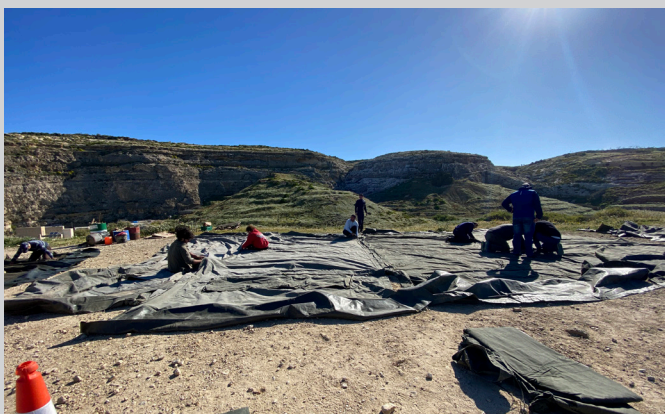
Yes, we can always count on the Venture Unit and Rover Crew to be there to give a helping hand. And you can rest assured that they always provide service with a smile.



Helping out at the Friends of the Sick and the Elderly lunch



And we're off to Easter camp



Up goes the new Marquee tent



Santa Luċija dinner

Troop report

by ASL Charles Tabone

One of the most exciting moments in our Scouting year is undoubtedly Easter Camp. Last April, our troop wrapped up yet another thrilling Easter camp at Dwejra, creating new memories and forging new friendships along the way. This action-packed camp, although relatively short, had it all - from pioneering and orienteering to backwoods cooking and Scoutcraft. And let me tell you, based on the feedback we gathered, our Troop cherished every single minute of it.

The main Scoutcraft project we embarked on during this camp was the construction of hobo stoves. These makeshift stoves, crafted from recyclable materials like old cans, strips of cardboard, and candle wax scraps, turned out to be a fantastic challenge for each member of the Troop. Not only did they successfully construct their stoves but several of our Scouts claimed that they managed to whip up the most mouth-watering pasta sauce that they have ever tasted!

Now, I want to take a moment to invite you, parents, to reflect on the tremendous impact this experience has had on our young Scouts. Some of you may have had doubts about sending your son on a camping adventure, especially with exams looming around the corner. But as an educator myself, I firmly believe that camp provides a type of education that far surpasses what can be taught within the confines of a classroom. It offers an experiential context where Scouts acquire valuable life skills that will help them throughout their life's adventure.

From the importance of trust and teamwork to the value of confronting fears outside the comfort of home and assuming responsibility, these young Scouts have been pushed beyond their limits in ways they never imagined. And given the opportunity, they not only rise to the occasion but also astonish us with their capabilities. The relentless winds that threatened to tear their tents apart stood no chance against the trust they placed in one another and the skills they had acquired. Witnessing them work together to set up and take down their campsites with precision and care was truly awe-inspiring. Every Scout had something valuable to contribute, and together, they achieved seemingly impossible tasks, even when faced with unfavourable weather conditions. Their resilience always managed to shine through. And this sense of responsibility didn't end with the lowering of the flag at Easter Camp. In fact, Patrol Leaders, under the guidance of their Scout leaders, are currently meticulously planning and organising their own Troop meetings - a commendable feat indeed.

Camp is not just about fun and games; it also involves healthy competition among Patrols. Sometimes they win, sometimes they lose. In a world where success is often the only measure of achievement, we tend to forget that

failure is an integral part of the journey. Yes, some Scouts may have planned and tried but ultimately failed in their projects. However, during their camping trip, these young boys learned that it's okay to stumble and try again. They also discovered that living with others is not always easy, and mistakes are bound to happen. But what's important is owning up to those mistakes and understanding the consequences of their choices.

I want to take a heartfelt moment to cast a light on the incredible dedication of these fellow leaders who play an integral role in shaping your son's educational journey through Scouting. They are a beacon of light, embodying the volunteering spirit that is regrettably fading from our communities. Witnessing the unwavering commitment of leaders like our GSL Jesmond, Lorrie, our senior Scout Leader, who ignited the spirits of our feisty teens on their hike to Baloo's cave, and the exceptional kitchen tent leaders Anita, Patricia, and Leli, who ensured that every Scout was nourished with warm meals, filled me with profound admiration. I cannot forget to mention my fellow Troop leaders David, Jean Pierre and Noah who make time to make a difference. Their selflessness and unwavering dedication serve as a shining example for all, reminding us of the profound impact one person can have when fuelled by a genuine desire to uplift and empower others.

Another significant event on our Scouting calendar is the national parade. A time when our Troop emerges, radiating strength and pride, each Scout donning their smart uniforms. It's a sight that fills us with rightful admiration as they march in perfect unison. Yet, amidst this display, we hold a profound understanding: it's not the meticulously ironed khaki fabric and badges that make our Scouts. No, it is the Scout who breathes life into the uniform, who embodies the transformation from follower to leader. It is this incredible journey that shapes them into the guiding lights of tomorrow, ready to illuminate the path for others to follow.





The Patrol Leaders take over the meetings.



Pioneering projects at camp



Hobo Stoves at camp



Preparing the Hobo stoves.

A new Marquee tent for the Group

Thanks to the Ministry for Gozo Non-Governmental Organisations Assistant Scheme 2022, the Group now has a new marquee tent. This was used for the first time during the Easter camp at Dwejra.

The Ministry for Gozo Assistance NGO Scheme was designed to provide support and facilitate the realisation of small projects, activities and initiatives by voluntary organisations on the island of Gozo.

The marquee is a focal point at camp. It serves as a preparation corner for meals, a dining shelter, an activity hub, a craft centre, a washing up corner, a chapel where mass is celebrated at camp, a welcoming point for guests at camp or a get together point for the campers or their sleeping quarters, and a myriad of other uses as the need dictates.

The Group would like to thank the Ministry for Gozo, for the opportunities provided and their constant support throughout this and other projects.



Saturday and Seonee Packs Report

by Cub Scout Leader Anita Muscat

This 3 month period started off with Easter Camp. 33 Cubs spent 2 days at Dwejra. A full programme of activities awaited them. They went on a nature hike and also visited the Qattara Pond and the Marine Environmental Education Centre. They searched for Easter eggs in a Treasure Hunt. They made clay models of hedgehogs with Catherine from the Pottery Barn. They took part in games and a campfire. During a special occasion to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the Victoria Scout Group, they welcomed their parents at camp. Cubs and parents formed teams and competed against each other in various games. They then offered them tea and refreshments. It was a very enjoyable experience for the young and not so young.

A good turnout of Cubs attended the Annual Rally in Malta where some of them experienced Scouting and Guiding on a national level for the first time and saw so many other Scouts all marching together.

Weekly meetings included the usual fare – games (old favourites and new entries), songs, discussions, quizzes etc. However during these last few months, badge work featured on top of the list as lots of Cubs started off, continued with or finished some Interest and Proficiency badges. Cubs shared their hobbies, collections, passions, handcrafts and knowledge regarding this or that subject in order to gain various badges. Well done to all! Keep it up Cubs!

16 Cubs completed their Tenderpaw Badge and were invested in June. We welcome Adam S, Adam Z, Alexey, Eric, Gabriel G, Gabriel T, Jake C, Jake M, Jaydon, Kurt, Leon, Luca, Myles, Neil, Rafael and Thomas John into our Scouting family and wish them a fun-filled and adventurous journey in Scouting.



The newly invested Cubs, all 16 of them..... with the Group Scout Leader and the Cub leaders



The Cubs and their leaders at Easter Camp



Welcome to our humble abode at camp, our tent.



Eat me if you can, says the marshmallow



Go, Go, Go! Tug of war between the Cub Scouts and their parents at Easter Camp

EU Camp 4.0 – Maltese edition

Theme: At the Interface of Nature and Culture by CSL Anita Muscat

Following the Group’s participation in EU projects in Tuttlingen, Germany, in 2018 and in Budapest, Hungary in 2022, it was now the turn of the Gozitans to host the next youth exchange.

Between Friday 26th and Monday 29th May, the Victoria Scout Group welcomed Mr Szöllősy and Ms Boróka Zoltán from Hungary and Mr Marcus Sell and Mr Gunther Roth from Germany at its headquarters.

During this preparatory visit, the leaders from all 3 countries, drafted the programme for the joint summer camp to be held in August, when 51 youths from Gozo, Germany and Hungary will participate in an 8 day project in Gozo. The focus of this project will be the interaction between nature, culture and well-being.

The leaders visited some of the locations which will host activities during the camp. There was also time for them to watch fireworks at a village festa.

The leaders and the participants involved will continue with the discussion and planning of the activities in the coming months.

#Erasmus +programme - Co-financed by the European Union @Erasmus+ & European Solidarity Corps - EUPA Malta



Gone Home

The Group would like to offer its heartfelt condolences to

- Council member Maria Mercieca and her family on the loss of their mother Rose Lanzon.
- The family of Ġużepp Bugeja from Santa Luċija. Mr Bugeja was always ready to help the group during its fund-raising dinners held at the square in Santa Luċija.
- The family of former Scout Leader Edwin Borg.

May they rest in peace.
Please remember them in your prayers.

