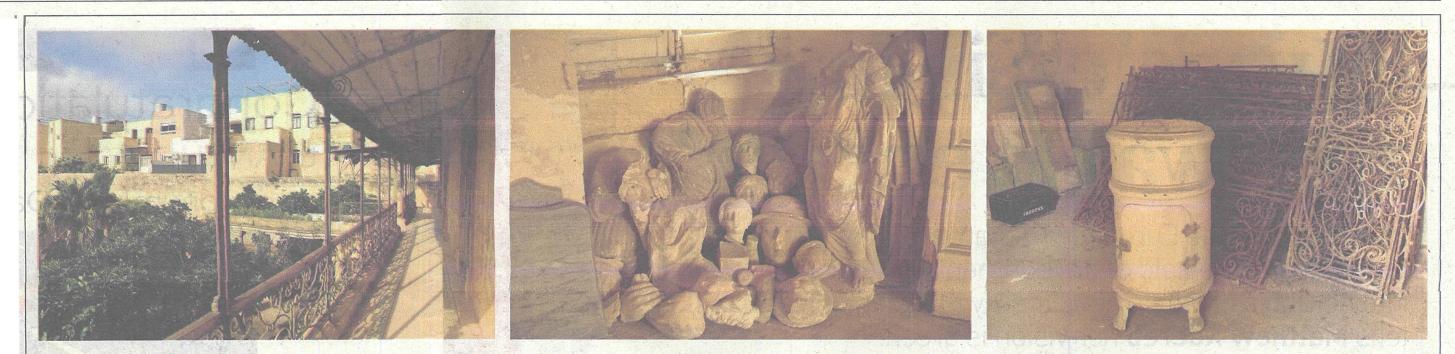
NATIONAL



## In search of the many missing pieces of the Queen's residence in Guardamangia

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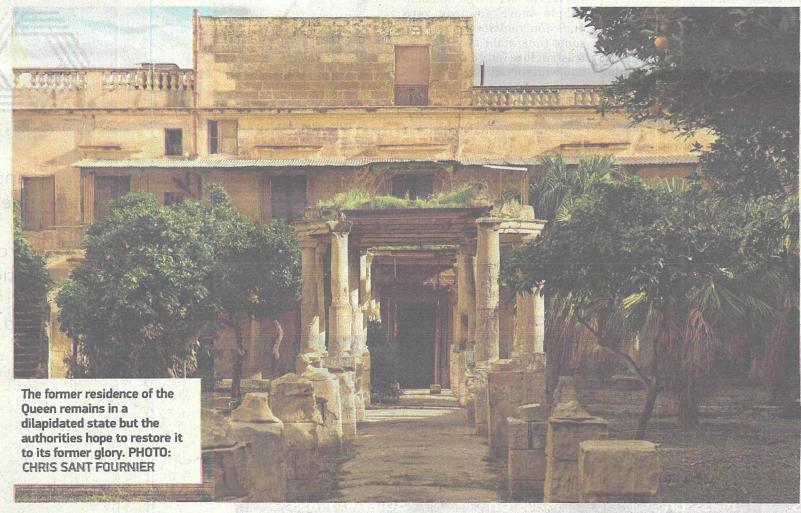
Number 49 on Guardamangia Hill is one of Pietà's first examples of villeggjatura and once hosted a mongoose pet and possibly a bear. Heritage Malta has also managed to trace one of its earliest proprietors - a Maltese priest who owned it in 1814.

But the most popular among Villa Guardamangia's series of habitants over two centuries remains Princess Elizabeth (later Queen Elizabeth II), when her husband, Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, was stationed in Malta as an officer of the Royal Navy between 1949 and 1951.

"We have managed to find some interesting facts, but several gaps remain"

Much like its current physical condition, the history of the residence is in pieces, possibly scattered around the island in documents that have been safely tion about the house, once fondly It is spread across an area of doorways and wooden aper- downstairs where most of the notarial deeds, planning agency join the puzzle pieces.

villa, scheduled at grade 2 due to and probably a bunker. its architectural, cultural and Despite its dilapidated state, historical value, has been en- the villa's large rooms with high trusted to Heritage Malta after it ceilings, patterned colourful



stowed away. Heritage Malta is was recently acquired by the Mal- tiles, remnants of intriguing carpet which Heritage Malta is Heritage Malta is therefore the younger daughter of Louis urging anyone with any informates government for €5 million. wall paintings, sculptured restoring, as were the rooms focusing its efforts on tracing Mountbatten (first Earl Mount- cannot come to these sites to at

referred to as 'home' by the Queen, 1,560 square metres and includes to come forward and help the 18 rooms, servants' quarters, several bathrooms, stables, a large The mid-18th century baroque garden, a garage, a war shelter...

rate sleeping quarters.

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tures could easily transport housework - the cooking, documentation, correspon- stayed at the villa before the "The experience will never any visitor to the days when the washing and ironing – used to dence and people's memories royal couple. royal couple hosted guests in take place. A washing machine, of the place. the drawing room upstairs, a cooker, a stove and a boiler, "Heritage Malta is currently another Pietà residence in pre- but will be helpful for, among situated between their sepa- which probably formed part of trying to put together several vious years, also owned a pet others, educators who are givthe central heating system, were pieces of the puzzle to get one bear, but it is yet unclear ing a class about some artifact The room was found bare ex- the only appliances of the period complete picture of the villa. whether the animal was also or site that form part of the na-

quite complex and goes back to Mapping out the at least the mid-18th century, so there is a lot more to be dis- villa in 3D covered. We have managed to find some interesting facts, Heritage Malta is documenting the but several gaps remain," the villa's current condition through agency's chief operating offi- 3D mapping, hoping the process cer Kenneth Gambin told will help researchers and restorers Times of Malta.

An 1814 document, which dence back to its former glory. names a Maltese priest as the proprietor, refers to 18th cen- through laser scanning and tury deeds that still need to be sourced and translated. The place was subsequently owned by the Sant Fourniers, Bartolos ing its indoors and outdoors in and Schembris.

It is believed that former manager Tony Cassar said. prime minister Dom Mintoff "This will help conservators visited Labour MP Joseph restore dilapidated areas and Schembri at the house, but Heri- eventually assist researchers tage Malta does not have any in carrying out comparative photos of the encounters yet.

From the information that the is completed." agency has so far, it is believed that the villa was extended in the 19th and 20th century and there are remains of a system cessible to the public on the through which the habitants agency's online platforms. would ring a bell to draw the attention of the servants in the downstairs extensions.

first half of the 20th century, the also digitally documenting the house hosted a mongoose, kept Tas-Silg site and the Valletta as a pet by Lady Pamela Hicks, underground tunnels. batten of Burma), whose family least access them virtually.

cept for a large Royal Air Force found in the servants' quarters. The history of the building is hosted at Villa Guardamangia.

in their efforts to bring the resi-

The 3D model is being built photogrammetry.

"The villa is currently in a very bad state, so we are documentgreat detail," digitisation project

studies once conservation

In future, the detailed digital mapping structure of the building will also be made ac-

Apart from Villa Guardamangia, in collaboration with the Planning Authority and Univer-According to a memoir, in the sity of Malta, Heritage Malta is

"This would allow whoever

replace the authenticity of the Her family, who also lived in ambience of the physical site, tional collection."

All and the second