



LIONS CLUB GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY YEAR AUGUST NEWSLETTER

A HISTORY OF LIONS CLUBS

“A History of the Lions Clubs” is a publication published to commemorate the 75th Anniversary from the Foundation of our Association. I am sharing what is written on the fly-leaf of the book which though written several years ago is still relevant today.

“WE SERVE” – a history of Lions Clubs is an international success story. It tells the tale of how practical-minded visionaries banded together 75 years ago in Chicago to create an organisation that now operates nearly 40,000 clubs in more than 170 countries. One and a half million men and women proudly claim the title of “LION”.

But “WE SERVE” is not only the story of how Lions International Organisation developed; it is the story of its actual work with the blind, the deaf, and the people in need – stories that warm the heart and inspire action.

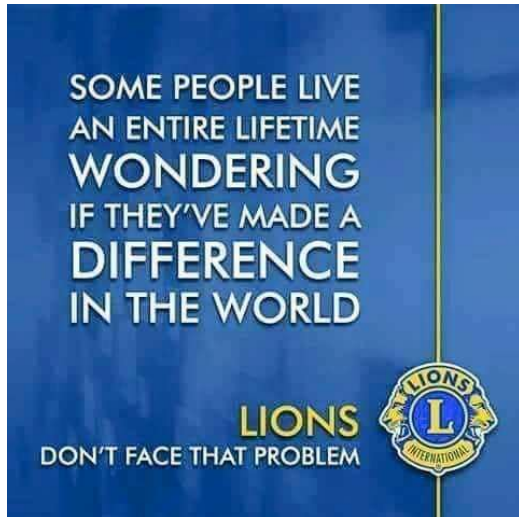
Helen Keller once said she was “happy and proud to be a Lion”. Her words have been echoed by the many beneficiaries of Lions services who are happy and proud to know a Lion, and of course by the Lions themselves who have learnt the joy of service.

With Clubs practicing philanthropy from famine ridden Ethiopia, to war torn Lebanon, to France, to down home USA, with programmes ranging from drug-awareness to organising recreational activities for the disabled, the Lions Clubs show that what men and women of goodwill can do for humanity.

They also prove – In deeds that help others – what men and women can do with the fruits of advanced technology to assist those battling diabetes and other serious illnesses, and how that medical research can be forwarded.

Perhaps more importantly, WE SERVE explains what it means to be a Lion. The LION magazine noted in 1931: "Our name was not selected at random, neither was it a coined name. From time immemorial the Lion has been the symbol of all that was good and because of the symbolism that name was chosen.

Four outstanding qualities: "Courage, Strength, Activity and Fidelity" had



largely to do with the adoption of the name. The last mentioned of these qualities, "Fidelity", has a deep and peculiar significance for all Lions. The Lion symbol has been a symbol of Fidelity through the ages and among all nations, ancient and modern. It stands for loyalty to a friend, loyalty to a principle, loyalty to a trust.

"WE SERVE" shows how the Lions have maintained and expanded on that loyalty.

SAINT AGATHA CRYPT & CATACOMBS

Lions Club Sliema have been active to preserve the Maltese Heritage for a long time. One major project was the restoration of St. Agatha's Catacombs in Rabat. The project was started in 1983 and took five years to complete. Thirty frescoes' dating from mediaeval times were restored. The Club managed to raise funds to complete the project which was officially inaugurated by the late Dr Vicent Tabone, President of Malta, when Lion Victor Borg Barthet was Club President. The crypt is an underground chapel, hewn in the rock. Originally it was a small chamber which was enlarged to its present state in the early Middle Ages. The main altar of the crypt was built over another rock altar in 1666 AD. It was made to accommodate the alabaster statue of St. Agatha which is presently exhibited at the St. Agatha's Museum adjacent to the church and convent which is the mother house of the priests of the Missionary Society of St. Paul. A visit to the crypt, catacombs and e museum is worthwhile. Lions Club Sliema is proud to have been involved in the restoration of the frescoes.

Ed. Note: the above article was published in the Club's newsletter some years ago. It is worth mentioning that Lion Alfred Micallef Attard was responsible to oversee the restoration of the frescoes and also had the task to obtain funds for its restoration. Lions Club Sliema is proud to have been involved in this national project.

MEDITERRANEAN SOLIDARITY OBSERVATORY

The Mediterranean Solidarity Observatory brings together Lions Clubs from across the Mediterranean with a conference being held annually at different countries bordering the Mediterranean. In 1986 Lion Renato Cacciola, member of Lions Club Taormina came up with the idea to organise a yearly conference at Giardini Naxos in Sicily to discuss the environment of the Mediterranean amongst Lions hailing from the region.

From its humble beginnings, the conference soon became known to various Lions and after the 1996 Conference in Naples, it was decided that the conference would be held annually at a different country bordering the Mediterranean littoral. The 1997 Conference was held in Beirut, Lebanon. Two years later the conference was held in Malta at the Corinthia San Gorg Hotel St. Julian's. Malta also organised the 2016 Conference.

The Observatory aims to have the conference held in various countries. The conference was held in Morocco, Egypt and Algeria thus giving Lions the opportunity to learn more about these African countries.

Year by year participation at the Mediterranean Lions Conference, as it is known, increased. Each Mediterranean country is represented by a leading Lion who is appointed for a two-year period. Moreover, it was deemed necessary to also appoint a Coordinating Committee formed by two representatives from the northern part and two from the southern part of the Mediterranean. The main task of this Committee is to coordinate the conference together with a Coordinator who is appointed for two years and a Secretary/Archivist.

The main activity of the Observatory is to organise the annual Conference which is a yearly meeting for all Lions to the Mediterranean littoral who meet, leaving culture and national differences out of consideration for the following purposes:

- To promote friendship and mutual understanding among the Lions of the Mediterranean Sea.
- To compare different Lionistic experiences and to discover themes and activities related to the aims of the Association.
- To realize common service activities.
- To discuss and deal with subjects of common interest.

A GOOD START TO OUR FUND RAISING

The second fund-raising activity for the Lionistic Year 2024/25 was held on Saturday August 25 at the Royal Malta Yacht Club Port 21 Roof deck. Several members and their guests were present for this event. The atmosphere of friendship, the excellent food and the service of the catering staff made this event an enjoyable evening for the 90 persons present.



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View of the setup taken by Lion Norman Wilson

Whatsmore the event was a success since a good sum of money was raised towards our Club's current project to help "Villa Bianca" the Centre for Music & the Arts which gives children and young people with disabilities free access to the Arts.

The next fund-raising event is the "Spare Ribs Night" which is being held at the Marsa Sports Club on Saturday September 14. Further details will be sent to members by the Club's Fund-Raising Sub Committee. The "Spare Ribs Night" is a popular fund raiser and it is hoped that a good number of Lions and their guests will attend.

The Fund-Raising Committee are preparing a programme of other fund-raising activities thus enabling the Club to raise more funds for this year's main project and to also have enough funds to meet any demands for aid which may arise.

WE SERVE

THINK AWHILE

People may destroy your image and stain your personality, but they cannot take away your good deeds because no matter how they describe you, you shall still be admired by those who really know you better.



Service doesn't have to be big to be meaningful. Sometimes it's the smallest acts of kindness that have the most impact.

Wear the LIONS Badge (or pin) with PRIDE. Many a time people enquire what the badge represents, hence you must be able to tell who are the LIONS and what do they do to help those in need. It is great to show that you are a LION. The badge should not only be worn at all Club meetings but always. If someone asks about the badge be proud to explain who are the Lions.

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TIPS FOR MEMBERSHIP GROWTH

- Make sure that the Club is open to accepting new members and the new ideas they bring.
- Be enthusiastic when you talk about being a Lion. When you are excited your enthusiasm will transfer to the person you are talking to.
- Invite friends to participate in activities and experience the joy of serving your community first hand. Side effects include bonding, team building, learning and having fun.
- We do our service projects and get the news of these projects to people.
- You can never invite enough people or ask them enough times to be a Lion.
- A compelling story is our most powerful tool for attracting new members, incorporate personal stories highlighting the impact of your club's work to connect with potential members and inspire a sense of belonging and purpose.

NB: Reproduced from a recent issue of LIONS international magazine.

PEARLS OF WISDOM: I expect to pass through life but once. If therefore, there can be only kindness I can show, or any good thing I can do to my fellow being, let me do it now and not defer or neglect it, as I shall not pass this way again.

