



The *ANZAC experience in Malta* is a set of four self-guided tours to the principal sites associated with the personnel of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps (ANZAC) during, mainly, the First World War.

These tours will show you where wounded Anzacs where hospitalised, convalesced, were entertained, and the locations where those who lost their personal battles are buried.

Tours may be followed in one of two ways: circularly, ending where they begin, or in a linear fashion. The walking man (♢) and car (🚗) pictograms denote travel directions on foot or by

car, whilst the reading man (♢) indicates information about the locale and provides historical insights. A map is recommended for car tours, otherwise one is not necessary.

The tours also highlight points of interest on the islands – places where recovering servicemen and off duty personnel may have visited, and so can you.

## Tour 3 - Recovery

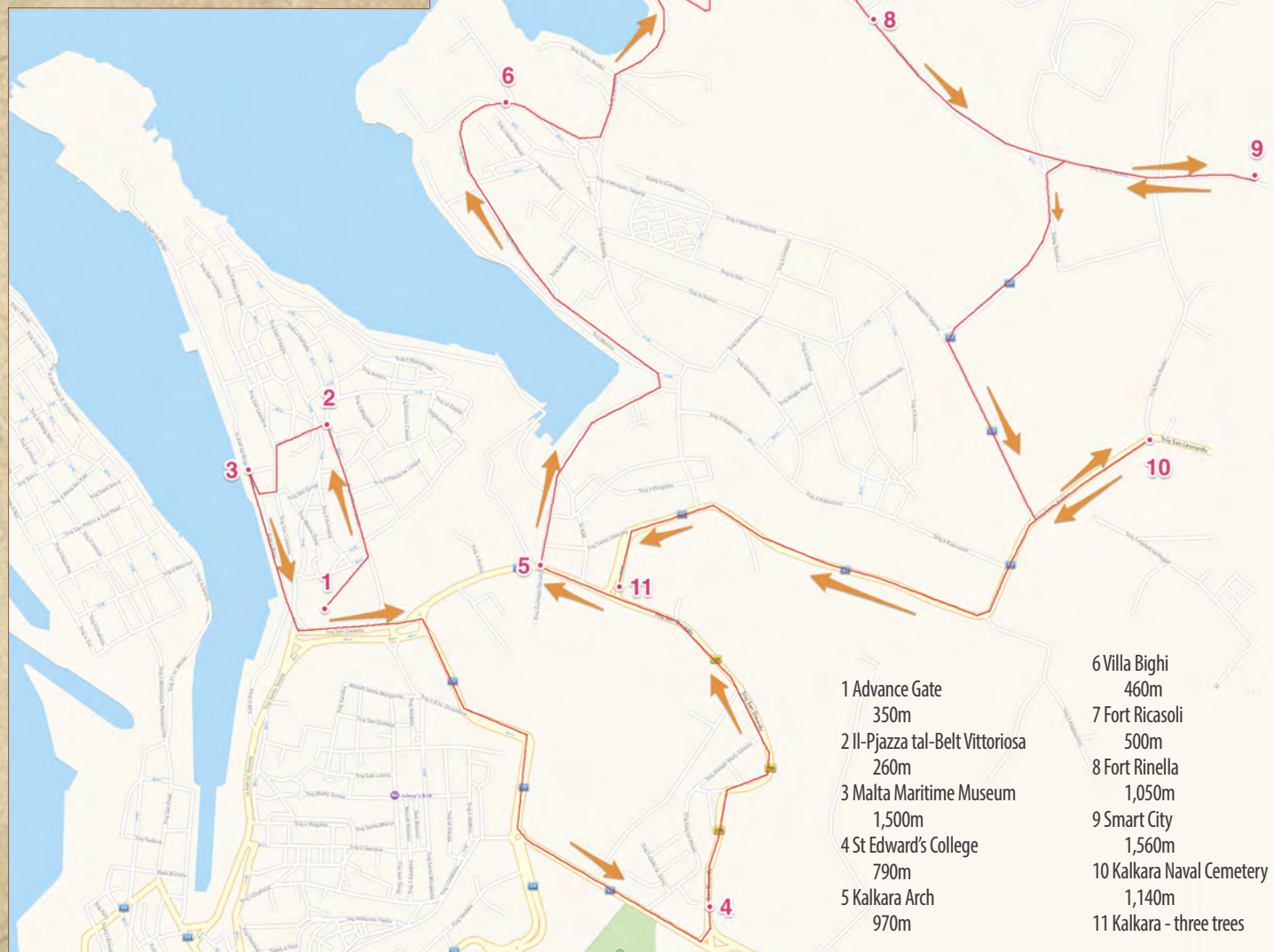
**Birgu, Cottonera, Kalkara and Rinella**

**Mode:** Circular, on foot and (mostly by) car

**Start:** Advance Gate, Birgu

**Distance:** 8.5kms, excluding wandering off-route in Birgu

**Duration:** approx 2.5hrs, including tour of Birgu but excluding museum visits



Background map - Apple Inc



Birgu may not have played a part in the healing of wounded servicemen in WWI, but it no doubt welcomed recovering soldiers to its bars and cafes from the (reasonably) nearby hospitals.

Birgu did, however, have a major role in WWII. It was here that the Royal Navy's Mediterranean Fleet had its headquarters, in Fort St Angelo. Consequently, it suffered heavy bombing and because of its proximity to the dockyard.

Yet it is still studded with fine examples of mediaeval architecture. Historic buildings that were damaged during the war, particularly along the waterfront, have been restored. And the town once again is well on its way to a new era of prosperity and is certainly worth a visit - if only to see how its population survived the aerial bombardments.



*Birgu's Advance Gate is the starting point for this tour*

The starting point is the Advance Gate in Birgu (35°53'8"N, 14°31'21"E). You'll find a small car park opposite.

⚔ When the Order of St John took possession of the islands in 1530 the knights based themselves in Birgu, in preference to Malta's capital - Mdina.

Birgu soon became the administrative centre of the island and, after the fall of Fort St Elmo in what is now Valletta, bore the brunt of the siege laid by the Ottoman Turks in 1565. In recognition of its valour Birgu was given the honourable title of *Città Vittoriosa* - the Victorious City.

After the Great Siege Birgu's defences were rebuilt, and what we see today is the product of more than a century of modifications.

Three gates - all set at right angles to each other - guard the entrance to the town; the first is Advance Gate, also known as the Gate of Aragon. Built in 1722 it was adorned with magnificent engravings that were partially damaged during the rising against the French in 1798.

Immediately past the entrance

is the *Malta at War Museum*. Housed in a wartime police station the museum combines a permanent exhibition on the

Birgu's oldest recorded building was a Phoenician temple dedicated to the goddess Astarte, located at the peninsula's tip. This was succeeded by a Greek shrine to Hera and later by a Roman temple to Juno. Over this temple, in 828, the Arabs built a fortress.

Nearly 400 years later it became known as *Castrum Maris*, the castle by the sea. Eventually becoming known simply as *il Castello*. In 1530 Grand Master Philippe de l'Isle Adam took up residence in the *Castello*, renamed Fort St Angelo.

The town that grew beyond its walls became known as *il Borgo del Castello* or, in Maltese, Birgu (meaning town).

Birgu has been a populated centre for millennia and remains one of the most densely inhabited areas on the islands. In mediaeval times it welcomed Venetians, Pisans, Genoese, Aragonese and Castilians who introduced the cult of St Lawrence. The church dedicated to him was Malta's first parish and dates from 1090, when Count Roger of Normandy invaded Malta and overthrew the Arabs.

St Lawrence originally served as the conventual church of the Order of St John before St John's Co-Cathedral was built in Valletta.

The present church is a fine example of baroque design. The area in front of St Lawrence was used as a graveyard during the siege and later St Joseph's chapel and the Crucifix chapel were built on the burial site.

A small museum, entrance through *Triq San Lorenzo*, is located next to the parish church where de Valette's hat and sword are showcased.

Second World War and a vast air raid shelter. A visit also includes the viewing of *Malta G.C.*, produced in 1942 by the Crown Film Unit on the wishes of King George VI "who, impressed by the super human resistance of the island against great odds, wanted the whole world to learn about it". The film was produced after he awarded the George Cross to Malta.

The shelter beneath is a maze of tunnels and chambers that are more than a kilometre long and could accommodate up to 500 people.

The museum showcases an impressive collection of period memorabilia and illustrates how shelters were dug.

Just past the museum, the gallery on the right was recently modernised and now houses the town's library and a conference hall. The ditch on the left doubled as Senator Gracchus's (played by Derek Jacobi) garden in the 2000 epic *Gladiator*, starring Russell Crowe.

Couvre Porte, reached by a short bridge, is the second gate and was built between 1716 and 1730.

Finally, facing what looks like a courtyard is the Gate of Provence. Also known as the Main Gate it is the original, main portal to Birgu.

⬆ As you exit the Gate of Provence you'll face *Triq il-Vittmi tal-Porvlista*, turn right and then left into *Triq San Duminku*. Walk down it, passing the Inquisitor's Palace - now a museum and the only inquisitor's palace in the world that is open to the public.

For a short while, from December 1826 to about 1835, the palace was a British regimental hospital for troops stationed in the Cottonera area.

Farther along you will reach Birgu's main square, *il-Pjazza tal-Belt Vittoriosa*.

It is worth taking the time to wander around Birgu. Beyond the square you'll come across the various auberges of the knights and the Order's original hospital, now a nunnery.



Back at *il-Pjazza tal-Belt Vittoriosa*, head for the two bollards, behind and to the left of the victory column and to the left of *Triq Nestu Laviera*. Go down the stairs to the parish church of Birgu, dedicated to St Lawrence.

At the foot of the stairs the church will be on your left, the Freedom Monument – that commemorates the departure of British forces from Malta on 31 March 1979 – and Dockyard Creek in front of you. Walk towards the creek and turn right, under the archway, and into what was a Royal Navy base.

Just past the entrance you'll see the *Malta Maritime Museum*, the giveaway is the anchor by the entrance.

⛪ Housed in the former naval bakery, the museum charts Malta's maritime history from prehistory to the present. It's worth a visit.

Past the parade of eateries, and at the tip of the peninsula stands Fort St Angelo. From 1801 to 1912 it was used by the British Army as barracks, the Royal Navy then took it over and designated it a stone frigate known as *HMS Egmont* but in 1933 it was renamed *HMS St Angelo*. During WWII it suffered 69 direct hits. The fort ceased to be a "ship" in 1979 when it was handed to the Maltese gov-

ernment. At the end of 1998 the government granted the Order of St John the upper part of Fort St Angelo, including the Grand Master's House and the Chapel of St Anne, with limited extraterritoriality; meaning that part of the fort is not Maltese territory.

⤴ Head back to your car. The next stop will be the former Cottonera Hospital.

🚗 Drive up *Triq it-8 Ta' Dicembru*, at the roundabout take the third exit into *Triq il-Gublew tal-Fidda*. The bastions of the Santa Margherita Lines will be on your right. At the next roundabout, take the first exit – you are now driving up *Triq Kottonera* towards Notre Dame Gate, also known as Zabbar Gate.

Just before reaching the gate, turn left into *Triq San Dwardu*. The building on your right is St Edward's College, formerly Cottonera Military Hospital (35°52'55"N, 14°31'44"E).

⛪ In the mid-19th century there were just four military hospitals on the islands, and these were considered "unsatisfactory". A 1863 report to the British parliament by the Barrack and Hospital Improvements Commission, titled *The Sanitary Conditions and Improvements of the Mediter-*



Terence Mirabelli

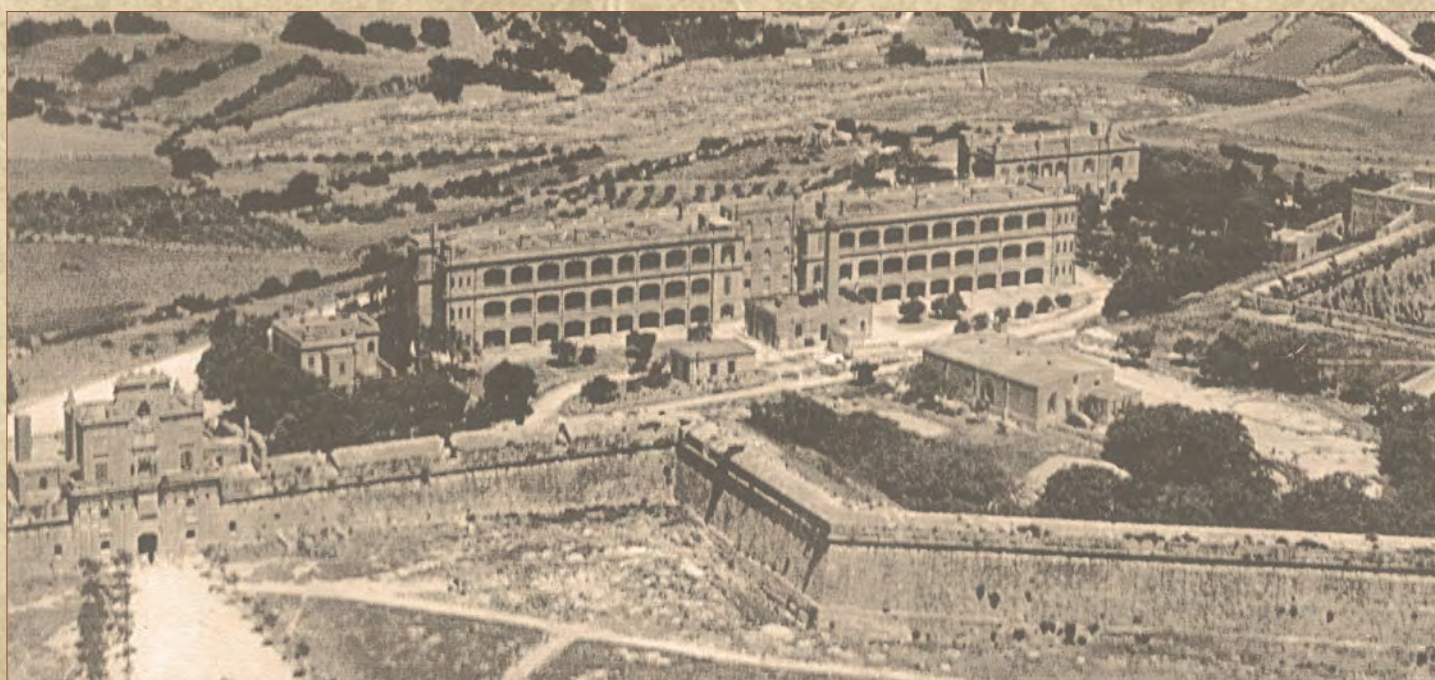
At the end of 2014 St Edward's College unveiled a permanent exhibition highlighting the history of the building and the role it played as the Cottonera Military Hospital, with an emphasis on the First World War.

The display may be seen by appointment. Call 27881199 or email [marketing@stedwards.edu.mt](mailto:marketing@stedwards.edu.mt).

*anean Station*, recommended that two hospitals be built, one in Valletta and the other in Cottonera.

Florence Nightingale, who had visited Malta on her way to Crimea in 1854, endorsed this.

The Valletta hospital was never built, however, on 16 November 1870 land was bought near



Courtesy St Edward's College

Cottonera was a state-of-the-art hospital, considered one of the best in southern Europe. When it opened in 1873 it had just 148 beds in four wards, by 1916 there were 802 beds available



Notre Dame Gate and the Cottonera hospital got the go ahead.

Designed by the Royal Engineers, the new hospital was built with wards occupying two end-to-end pavilions with large verandas for ventilation and an administration block in between. "The kitchen and stores were housed in outbuildings behind the hospital, so that there was nothing in the hospital proper except the sick and what was immediately needed for their treatment and nursing, as proposed by Nightingale. Hot and cold running water was laid throughout the building<sup>1</sup>.

"The hospital was built on three floors, with two large wards each containing 32 beds, and two two-bedded wards for special cases on each of the first and second floors. There were another two wards in the basement, one for prisoners and the other for patients with contagious diseases. A day convalescence room was located on the second floor. The ground floor was mainly taken up with wait-



Courtesy John Mizzi Estate

*Sick and wounded arriving at Cottonera Hospital. It retained its position as a specialist centre for both surgical and the more serious medical conditions until the end of the war*

the full length of the main wards and the ground floor were verandas nine feet wide, which allowed for the free circulation of fresh air while at the same time providing shelter from the sun and rain. The wards opened onto the veran-

concerns highlighted in the commission's report and was soon considered one of the best hospitals in southern Europe.

An outbuilding, formerly a powder magazine and referred to as the barrack room, had a sanitary annexe provided and was converted into a ward in WWI. It was used for isolation purposes and, as the need arose, as a ward for prisoners of war. "This building was constructed between 1719 and 1745 as part of the Cottonera Lines. These fortifications, which form the eastern perimeter of the Cottonera Hospital grounds, were built on the orders of Grand Master Nicolas Cotoner... Construction, which began in 1670, was spread over decades and was never fully complete"<sup>1</sup>.

Cottonera Hospital - that cost £21,000 to build, including the price of the land - opened on 28 August 1873 with 148 beds and was originally intended for regiments serving in the Cottonera district. However, just six months before it opened, on 1 March, the system of regimental hospitals was abolished. Patients would now be treated in general military hospitals and Cottonera Military Hospital took on the role of a general hospital.

At the outbreak of the war Cot-



Richard Ellis Archive Malta

*Ward Four at Cottonera Hospital with its large windows, as recommended by Florence Nightingale. Great emphasis was placed on ventilation for rapid recovery*

ing rooms and surgeries.

"In line with the commission's findings and Nightingale's proposals, great emphasis was placed on ventilation. Running

das via large windows extending to within 18 inches of the ceiling".

Cottonera was a state-of-the-art hospital, meeting all the



tonera Hospital had 167 beds and by April 1915 the 'beddage' had been increased to 277 by using the verandas and the Royal Army Medical Corps' barrack room (today it's a chapel). This was still insufficient and another 37 beds were added in the summer.

Many of the stories of Cottonera Hospital are sad like Corporal Howard McKern's of A Company, 4th Battalion, 1st Infantry Brigade, Australian Imperial Force. Shrapnel had fractured the 21-year old farmer's left leg in combat at Lone Pine. On 12 August 1915 he was transferred to Malta from the 1st Australian Casualty Clearing Station on Lemnos. Four days later he died from blood poisoning and gas gangrene and is buried at the Pieta Military Cemetery.

But there are also heart-warming stories, such as this one told by the Rev Albert MacKinnon in *Malta The Nurse of the Mediterranean*.

"Another lad had a strange story to tell, and the wounded men beside him were able to corroborate his statement. A fierce battle was raging, and in face of overwhelming numbers the British force was retiring to their trenches. Suddenly the lad heard the cry of a wounded man calling for water. He stopped and stooped over the prostrate form. Meanwhile bullets were whizzing on every side. Quickly he unslung his water bottle and held it to the other's parched lips.

"Only drink half,' he said; 'I may yet need the other half myself.'

"Then, taking pity on the

wounded man, and knowing that it would likely mean death to be left out there exposed to the enemy's fire, he called a comrade and asked him to give him a hand in trying to carry the helpless soldier to shelter. Together they staggered under their load, the target now of many bullets. At last they reached the trench, and simply rolled their living burden over, then hastened to spring after him. At that instant a shell caught the rescuer on the shoulder, shattering the bone, and he fell beside the man he had helped.

"His prophecy was true; he needed the other half of the bottle.

"Days passed, during which the narrator of the story was carried down to the beach, put on board ship, and brought to Malta. He was taken to Cottonera Hospital, and it was there that I found him, and that the strange sequel of the story took place.

"One day a wounded soldier, who is now convalescent, entered the ward. Suddenly he stopped in surprise at the first bed on his left, and looked curiously at the pale face on the pillow.

"Why, you are my rescuer!' he exclaimed with delight; 'the man who gave me that drink, which I will never forget, and which I can never repay.'

"They did not know each other's names, but that mattered little, blood had cemented a friendship stronger than death. The half-bottle of water and the heroic deed are already reaping their reward in life's richest gift of a loyal comrade-

ship"<sup>2</sup>.

Meanwhile, the number of sick and wounded arriving from Gallipoli was on the increase and still more beds were required. Not just here, but in all hospitals on the island. Cottonera Hospital expanded to 314 beds, and by October 1916 "a further expansion to 802 beds was made by tentage".

"Cottonera retained its position as a specialist centre for both surgical and the more serious medical conditions up to the end of the Great War. It was also a referral centre for diseases of the eye, and a mental clinic was started there. It housed one of the five leading radiology departments and one of the six well-equipped and well-staffed laboratories"<sup>1</sup>.

Cottonera Military Hospital was closed in 1920 and was replaced by a newer, purpose-built military hospital at Mtarfa. The building and land were leased to St Edward's College on 29 May 1929. The new school, founded by Lady Strickland was to be a Catholic college for Maltese boys, run on the lines of a British public school. The college admitted the first students in October 1929 (*see the sidebar on the following page*).

➡ Continue driving down *Triq San Dwardu*. Ignore the first intersection that indicates a right turn to Kalkara; however, at the next mini roundabout take a right, go through the arch, making for the Kalkara seafront. Drive around the bay and up the hill, following the signs for Fort Rinella.

At the crest of the hill, the road curves and (on your left) you'll see three large buildings with



Like almost all other military hospitals, Cottonera eventually had to resort to tents. By 1916 it had 802 beds, most under canvas. Today, a sports complex stands on the site of the tented hospital

Courtesy St Edward's College



Lady Strickland, Countess della Catena, was the second wife of Gerald Strickland, 6th Count della Catena, and 1st Baron Strickland.



Strickland, who was born on 24 May 1861 in Valletta, was a Maltese and British politician and peer. He served as Governor of the Leeward Islands from 1902 to 1904. He was then appointed Governor of Tasmania, and served there from 1904. In 1909 he was named Governor of Western Australia and held the post until 1913, whereupon he was appointed Governor of New South Wales.

Strickland returned to Malta in 1917 and 10 years later his party won the 1927 general elections and he became prime minister until June 1930. He died in 1940.

Doric columns. This is the former Royal Naval Hospital Bighi (35° 53'34"N, 14° 31'31"E). Park here. The main, central, building is now known as Villa Bighi and is the headquarters of Heritage Malta – the quango responsible for museums and archeological sites.

Although construction of the hospital began in 1830, the choice of the site had been identified in 1803 by Dr John Snipe. He had been instructed by Lord Nelson to find a suitable location for a naval hospital so as “not to have thrown the trouble of attending our seamen on the medical skill of the Army”.

Dr Snipe travelled to Malta aboard *HMS Narcissus* and on 9 December 1803 sent the following report to Nelson: “My Lord, In addition to my letter of the 7th instant, I beg leave to acquaint Your Lordship that, with Sir Alexander Ball [the first British Civil Commissioner in Malta], I have examined the Palace of Bighay which is a most desirable situation for a Naval Hospital, in Summer it is cooled by a refreshing sea breeze, and in Winter perfectly dry. A convenient landing place, close to the Palace, and sufficient

Ground belonging to it, in a high state of cultivation, to produce abundance of vegetables for the use of the sick, and if Lemon and Orange trees were planted, the Fleet, on this station, might be amply supplied with those antiscorbutic fruit. I carefully examined every spot in and about the Harbour of Malta, and there is no situation so well calculated for a Naval Hospital as Bighay, it being nearly insulated, and some distance from any other houses. The present building is in want of much repair, and although it has the appearance, from the sea, of being very extensive, there is very little room within the walls, and could not accommodate above one hundred and sixty patients. If it is the intention of Government to have a permanent Naval Hospital at Malta, and properly prepared for every causality a Fleet is liable to, there ought to be a Hospital capable of receiving four or five hundred patients, and if Bighay is the place fixed upon, there will be required two wings to be built to the present Palace, each capable of holding a hundred and twenty patients, besides Storehouses, Kitchen, Dispensary, Wash-houses, etc. There is no part of the Service that requires more to be regarded than the choice of a proper situation for a Hospital, and the right management of it, on which the

health and strength of a Fleet so much depends, for in wet and unwholesome seasons, if any infectious diseases get in into the Hospital, which probably might have been prevented by proper care, they often weaken a fleet more than the sword of the enemy”<sup>3</sup>.

The palace Dr Snipe referred to was a villa originally owned by the knight Giovanni Bichi in the late-1600s.

It was not until 1830 that works began on the new hospital, designed by Colonel (later Major General) Sir George Whitmore of the Royal Engineers. Whilst digging the foundations, workmen uncovered some Egyptian type stele that were eventually transferred to the British Museum. The Commander-in-Chief of the Naval Forces and Commissioner of the Navy in the Mediterranean Vice-Admiral Sir Pulteney Malcolm laid the foundation stone on 23 March 1830. The stone was adjusted into place with a silver trowel in the northeast corner of the building after gold and silver coins of the reigning sovereign were deposited under it.

Construction was completed two years later at a cost of £20,000. Bighi was described as being “capable of containing 250 patients having two large and four small wards, besides rooms for officers, in each pavil-



“The Palace of Bighay...is a most desirable situation for a Naval Hospital, in Summer it is cooled by a refreshing sea breeze, and in Winter perfectly dry”. It was a hospital for 138 years

Malta Tourism Authority/Mike Watson Photography



ion. One of the best things in the establishment is a corridor, ten feet wide and one hundred and sixty feet long, which runs through the centre of each wing ventilating it in all directions<sup>4</sup>. A surgical, also known as the General Hospital Block, and a zymotic block, for acute infectious diseases, were built in 1901 and 1903 respectively. The cot lift was also built in



One of the unique features of Bighi Hospital was its cot lift and dedicated jetty

1903.

Fast forward to May 1915, when the number of arriving sick and wounded from Gallipoli rapidly outnumbered the available hospital beds, "all existing naval and military beds were pooled and made available for either service, depending on need.

"The Royal Naval Hospital Bighi was thus able to release 200 beds for the first influx of patients from Gallipoli"<sup>5</sup>.

Soon it, too, had to accommodate patients in verandas, "cor-



The influx of sick and wounded from Gallipoli required that patients be accommodated in Bighi's verandas, "corridors and ditches"

ridors and ditches".

During the Second World War, meanwhile, a number of its buildings were damaged or destroyed including the cot lift, but this was back in service by 1956.

Bighi Hospital was closed on 17 September 1970 when the naval medical services were transferred to David Bruce Military Hospital in Mtarfa.

In 1977 a trade school occupied Bighi's central and east blocks, while the other buildings were used as a secondary school. In 1984 the central block was abandoned, after its ceiling was declared "too dangerous". Soon after all the buildings were vacated, but in 2010

Heritage Malta relocated its head office to Bighi after extensive restoration. The other buildings are being converted into an interactive science centre, due to open to the public in late 2015.

🚗 Just beyond Bighi you'll see a roundabout, take the first exit into *Triq Ir-Rinella* – follow the sign for Fort Rinella – and drive down the hill to Rinella Bay. In case you're wondering, this area is called Rinella!

At the bottom of the hill there's a pleasant, little sandy beach and at your 10 o'clock, Fort Ricasoli. Unfortunately, this is about as close as you can get to the fort; it's been closed to the public for several years.





Terence Mirabelli

*A bronze catafalque symbolising the burial of the unknown soldier at sea, it overhangs the bastion parapet in Valletta, whilst in the background stands Fort Ricasoli - used as a hospital for just four months during the First World War*

✚ Built on a promontory, gruesomely known as Gallows Point, between 1670 and 1693 the fort is named after Fra Giovanni Francesco Ricasoli, a Florentine knight of the Order of St John who financed a large part of the construction. Together with Fort St Elmo in Valletta, Fort Ricasoli guards the approaches to the Grand Harbour.

The fort continued to be used by the military well after the departure of the Order of St John in 1798. First and very briefly by the French, then by the British as a temporary naval hospital from the late 1820s until 1832, when Bighi hospital was opened.

Given its position, the fort bristled with guns that “were replaced several times between the 1860s and early 1900s”. Additionally, a Brennan torpedo station was also installed here (see the sidebar on page 4 of tour 2).

With the onset of the First World War, and “the alarming rush of casualties from Gallipoli

during September (1915) and the grave possibilities of the future made expansion (of hospitals) imperative at the time, so it was accordingly considered that use could be made of the barrack rooms and parade ground of Ricasoli”, writes Dr George Bruce in his history of military hospitals<sup>6</sup>.

In Fort Ricasoli’s favour “were a healthy site, close to the sea at the southern entrance of the Grand Harbour, its isolation and its convenience for disembarkations,” Dr Bruce writes.

“Accommodation was found for 800 patients, 224 in eight barrack rooms and 576 in tents pitched on the large parade ground. The hospital was prepared and equipped during October, received its first convoy on 6 November, and up to the end of the month 503, mostly sick, were admitted.

“During December 1915 and January 1916, 942 were admitted, but after 27 January no further cases were sent there. The bloodless evacuation of Gal-

lipoli had by this time markedly reduced the numbers of sick and wounded arriving and the Salonica expedition had not as yet started to use Malta to any extent. Accordingly Ricasoli and also Spinola were closed as general hospitals at the end of March; they had served their purpose for the time being”.



Richard Ellis Archive Malta

*Fort Ricasoli was considered healthy and conveniently sited for disembarkations*





Capt Lawrence Dalli/www.maltaphotos.com

Fort Ricasoli's barrack rooms and vast parade ground were used as a hospital for Gallipoli sick and wounded. More recently it has been the backdrop for several movies, including *Gladiator* – the set of the Roman amphitheatre is clearly visible in the bottom right of the photograph

Meanwhile, records show that Anzacs were treated at Fort Ricasoli; for instance, Private Charles Jenour of Perth's 10th Light Horse Regiment contracted the measles at Gallipoli. On 7 June 1915 he was admitted to the hospital ship *Gallipoli* and transferred to Malta, arriving on the island a week later and was taken to Mtarfa Military Hospital. He was discharged from Mtarfa on 26 June and went to Fort Ricasoli. Three weeks later, by now declared fit for duty, Jenour rejoined his unit at Gallipoli.

He later served in France where he was promoted to Second Lieutenant. Jenour was discharged in April 1920 and reenlisted in December 1939.

Fort Ricasoli reverted to a purely military function after 1916 and was very active during the Second World War, suffering heavy damage from Axis air raids. In 1947 it was commissioned as *HMS Ricasoli* and was used for training by the Royal Navy until 1958.

Film buffs are probably and un-

knowingly more familiar with Fort Ricasoli as the backdrop for several big-budget movies.

Huge sets were built within its walls in 2000 for *Gladiator*, *Troy* in 2004 and *Agora* in 2009. In these movies the fort stood in as Rome, Troy and Alexandria respectively.

The 2002 TV mini series *Julius Caesar* and the 2003 production *Helen of Troy* were also partly filmed at Fort Ricasoli. A set dubbed as the Roman Road was built for *Julius Caesar* and this has been retained and used for other films. The first season of *Game of Thrones* used various parts of the fort to represent the Red Keep<sup>7</sup>.

🚗 Drive around the bay and up the hill, following the signage for Fort Rinella. At the roundabout, take the second exit. In the distance you should see a British Union Flag flying – that's your next stop, Fort Rinella (35°53'40"N, 14°31'57"E). Today the fort is a live museum, and anyone interested in re-enactments will enjoy a visit.

Throughout the year volunteers dressed as late 19th Century Victorian soldiers present interactive displays that focus on various aspects of British military life and skills.

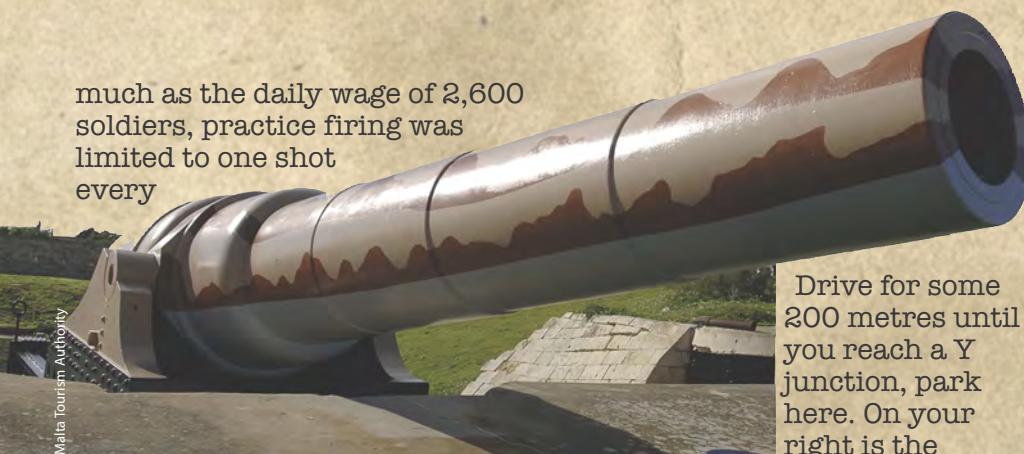
🏰 Commonly referred to as Fort Rinella, although never classified as such, this is a Victorian gun battery built in the last quarter of the 19th Century, at a time when the islands were threatened by the supremacy of the Italian navy. Rinella was one of a pair; however, the gun at Cambridge Battery, near Tigné Point in Sliema, no longer exists.

Fort Rinella housed a single Armstrong Whitworth gun that weighed 156 tonnes and had an 11-metre long barrel with a 45-centimetre calibre. It could fire a one-tonne shell that could pierce 65 centimetres of armour at 13 kilometres.

The guns at Cambridge and Rinella were in active service for only 20 years and were withdrawn in 1906, without ever firing a shot in anger. Because a single shell cost as



much as the daily wage of 2,600 soldiers, practice firing was limited to one shot every



The Armstrong Whitworth gun could fire a one-tonne shell a distance of 13 kilometres and pierce armour 65 centimetres thick

Drive for some 200 metres until you reach a Y junction, park here. On your right is the Kalkara Naval Cemetery, also known as the Capuccini Naval

three months.

After the Armstrong gun was retired, Fort Rinella was used as an observation post for the guns at Fort Ricasoli. During World War II the Royal Navy used it to store supplies, in 1956 it gave up the site<sup>6</sup>.

🚗 Now for a spot of time travel, from Victoriana to Silicon Valley Malta style. Continue down *Triq Santu Rokku* to Smart City for a spot of refreshments at a pub or a snack at the bistro (both are located on the seaward side of Smart City).

🏰 Smart City is a technology park intended to transform the Ricasoli Industrial Estate into a state-of-the-art information technology and media city. The project was unveiled in 2007 and the first offices came on stream in 2010. The whole development, which covers an area of 360,000 square metres, is to be fully completed by 2021<sup>7</sup>.

🚗 Once refreshed and back in your car, backtrack 100 metres, past Smart City's security gate, and turn left at what looks like an obelisk. At the second obelisk - it's a T junction - turn left, you are now on *Triq il-Missjoni Taljana*. And at the next intersection you'll see a sign indicating left for Xaghajra, follow it. There's also a much smaller sign pointing the way to the Capuccini Naval Cemetery.

Cemetery.

🏰 The cemetery, which once belonged to the Royal Navy, is divided into two sections, Protestant and Roman Catholic. Most of the 351 Commonwealth burials of the First World War form a triangular plot in the Protestant section, the rest are scattered elsewhere.

Among those buried here are 27 Australians and seven New Zealanders. Of the Australians, three were buried during WWI and the remaining 24 during the Second World War.

All seven New Zealanders buried here died during WWII.



Thirty-four Anzacs are buried at the Kalkara Naval Cemetery

Also buried at Kalkara are Japanese, French and Germans from WWI plus Poles and Italians from WWII.

🚗 Retrace your route back to the intersection with *Triq il-Missjoni Taljana*. However, instead of turning right, go straight and take the second right into *Triq Santa Liberata* (on your right you'll see the Capuchin Friary).

Continue down this road until you reach its end, easily identified by the three trees at the intersection with *Triq San Dwardu*. Turn right, at the second roundabout you'll be back at the starting point of this tour.

## Sources

<sup>1</sup>*Cottonera Hospital and Malta as the 'Nurse of the Mediterranean'* (Alfred Cassar Reynaud and John Portelli in *The Sunday Times of Malta* of 22 June 2014)

<sup>2</sup>*Malta The Nurse of the Mediterranean* (Rev Albert G MacKinnon MA, Hodder and Stoughton 1916)

<sup>3</sup>*Naval Hospitals in Malta* (Charles Savona-Ventura, vassallohistory.wordpress.com/naval-hospitals-in-Malta)

<sup>4</sup>*Naval Hospital* (*Malta Penny Magazine* of 24 October 1840)

<sup>5</sup>*Military Hospitals in Malta during the Great War 1914-1918* (Walter Bonnici, www.maltaramc.com)

<sup>6</sup>*Malta Military Hospitals 1915-1917, a short account of their inception and development* (George Bruce, MA, MD, DPH, Capt, RAMC, (SR), Specialist Sanitary Officer, Malta)

<sup>7</sup>Wikipedia



Proudly sponsored  
by  
**CommBank Europe Limited**

Written and designed by Terence Mirabelli, Island Publications Ltd, on behalf of the Australian High Commission in Malta.

**Australian High Commission:** Ir-Rampa Ta' Xbiex, Ta' Xbiex XBX 1034. Tel 2133820 Fax 2134405 Site [www.malta.highcommission.gov.au/mlta/home.html](http://www.malta.highcommission.gov.au/mlta/home.html)

**Island Publications Ltd:** 36/38 Triq l-Isperanza, Mosta MST 1309. Tel 21431864 Site [www.travelmalta.com](http://www.travelmalta.com)

Copyright © 2015 Australian High Commission, Malta. Island Publications (IPL) was unable to locate the copyright holder of some photographs used in this document. IPL will pay a usage fee to the legal copyright holder if he identifies himself with proof of title.