

ALPS Administrative report 2024 by Mark Darmanin new Secretary General

The year 2024 was the second year with a change in the administration of the Association of Lyceum Past Students. The new president was Mr. George Galea, replacing George Stagno Navara after 21 Years and new Secretary General Mark Darmanin replacing Alex Borg after 29 years. Both George SN remained as the immediate past president and Alex Borg remained as Assistant Secretary General. Unfortunately, Mr. David Abela Hon Treasurer has passed away in March 2023 and his position was taken also by Mr Alex Borg. The year 2024 was a special year for ALPS as was 30th anniversary since it was formed and operated all these years with endless activities and memories for members and their relatives and friends. We also organized special event to commemorate this 30th Anniversary.

The first monthly virtual council of administration meeting was held in January 2024 through TEAM link. This had been made possible again by the help of council member Mr. Carlo Farrugia who continuously throughout the year offered to host the virtual council meetings by sending the appropriate links for each monthly council meeting during 2024. We had also opportunity to meet on line every council meeting with new council member Godfred Sultana from Australia that replaced Mr. Oreste Aquilina waking up early 4am in morning. Also, Milo Vassallo from Canada that also connected with the ALPs virtual link almost every time. Again, this year May to June, he visited Malta and was present special council meeting at School in June had farewell council meeting before he departed back to Canada.

The first Activity this year Started with Annual Valentine's week-end at The Radisson Golden Sands in February, we had a sizeable number of members who responded and booked for a week-end of leisure and pleasure. We celebrated the event with a great dinner. A special menu was prepared by the chefs who never fail to amaze the diners with their food presentations. That function went down pretty well with those who have attended. Then in the month of March 2024, ALPS held its annual general meeting at the Lyceum boardroom Hamrun. Unfortunately, attendance was rather weak and we hardly had a quorum to proceed with that meeting.

An Interesting cultural visit was organized to the new Farson Trident park Mriehel on 27th April 2024. Guided tour inside the old brew house with full explanation regarding the process to produce beer and other beverages by the Farsons group. It included product tasting / sampling at Tap bar on 5th Floor of old building of original Factory. Nice group of 27 people attending all had wonderful tour of new permanent exhibition of beer process and original factory process equipment and large photos and videos. Afterward almost everyone had lunch at one of the established food eateries within the Farsons Trident park.

To keep to the ALPS traditions, the association has taken a number of its members to Gozo for an annual retreat at Manresa Victoria Gozo during the month of May from 24th to 26th 2024. A wonderful message comes from such event and all participants carry with them some interesting lessons bestowed on them by the chosen speaker Fr. Dominic Sultana. We had very interesting session on the holy spirit and good session of Adoration.

This year again a good number of ALPS members and friends ventured out of the island and embarked on an unforgettable cruise holiday aboard the Vasco da Gama Cruise ship. The trip lasted 12 days and has taken the holiday makers to eight countries visiting in the Adriatic coast between the 30th May and 10th June 2024.

A day tour to sister island of Gozo in June 15th on the ALPS almanac was one of the most preferred outings years after year. An interesting program was arranged for members and friends who quickly responded to an email announcing the event. The program consisted of visiting various places of interest including Victoria, visiting the

Hagar Museum & St. Georges Cathedral Museum where Chev. Joe M Attard who was engaged as the tour guide for the full day tour. Then an interesting visit followed a visit to Xewkija Church and the Rotunda plus the panoramic view from dome terrace by the lift. The group then were taken by coach to Marsafora for lunch at the Lantern Restaurant. After lunch they proceed to Mass in St. Lucia Church where parish priest celebrated Mass. Afterwards the group had last short visit to Old Ghajnsielem Church where then we returned to Mgarr from where all got on the ferry boat back to Malta.

Back in Malta and the team of energetic council members went on to present other events before the hot summer season. Festa Sant Anna was celebrated at the Pwales chapel in early July. We had again special presence of Emeritus Archbishop George Frendo who celebrated mass too. This was followed by a successful summer barbeque on the open terraces of the Radisson Golden Sands Resort Ghajn Tuffieha. Raffles were drawn and members and friends of the association wished each other happy holidays for the summer months. This gave to the organizing committee a merited rest up the month of September 2024 when an end of summer B-B-Q ended the hot summer days with a week-end stay at The Paradise Bay Hotel in Cirkewwa. It was well worth the effort for ALPS to see its members and friends enjoying themselves one more time.

October saw the re-start of Holy Mass at the Pwales chapel. Many turned up for the monthly get together in prayer with always a good sermon delivered by Fr. William Bartolo. Needless to say, our dear friends from the Pwales hamlet always clean and prepare the chapel to receive a congregation. We thank the Bezzina / Vella families for their kind help to our association. Nevertheless, we have kept our tradition of remembering our Founder President Dr. Guido Saliba and all deceased members, friends, Liceo teachers, Pwales hamlet residents who have lost some of their loved ones during recent years. At Thanksgiving mass in 13th December, all names were mentioned and special prayers offered that they may all rest in peace.

The last function for the year 2024, was the 30th Anniversary Celebration truly awaited and week-end with special 30th Anniversary dinner. This was held at the Radisson Golden Sands. In a well decorated grand ballroom and with an amazing number of participants that have reached nearly 200. At the start of the dinner ALPS President and secretary General gave short speech of the Occasion and gave as commemorative Key chain to present members. George Stagno Navara the immediate Past President gave overview speech highlighting 30 years of activities and service to its members. It was memorable occasion so nice to see so many happy and cheerful members who come for commemorative event bring with them family and friends for this occasion.

Thanks god we managed to organize a good number of events. We continue to have confidence in each other and recognize the importance of the role of our association always offering social, cultural and civic activities. Each event that we may succeed to organize for ALPS members and friends is always considered in a special way as a reunion. I wish to thank the President and the council of administration for their enthusiastic efforts and support throughout the year by working together as a united team. Let us look positive for the future in order to fulfil the true aims of the Association of Lyceum past Students by meeting and reminiscing from the old day of THE LICEO. We have to work hard to attract more recent members as the current members are unfortunately passing away or not in the form to attend most of the activities.

Mark Darmanin
ALPS Secretary General