Entry type: Person
Entry ID: AWE6127

Zammit, Josephine

(1925 - 1989)

Born	19250806, St Julian's / San ?iljan Eastern Region Malta
Died	19890514, Sydney New South Wales Australia
Occupation	Actor, Broadcaster, Community worker

Summary

Josephine Zammit emigrated to Australia from Malta with her husband Charles in 1952. In the late 1960s the couple became Australian representatives of the Malta Emigrants' Commission and Josephine became involved in radio broadcasting as part of her welfare work with migrants. She was a pioneer of ethnic station 2EA in Sydney and continued her active involvement with ethnic radio broadcasting until the mid-1980s.

In 1978 she was awarded an MBE in the 'ethnic community' category, the first Maltese woman in Australia to be honoured in that way.

Details

Josephine Darmenia was born into a middle class family of six children in St Julian's, Malta, on 6 August 1925. Axis bombing of Malta's south-east coastal cities led to the children's evacuation inland. After the War, she became a school teacher and in 1947 married Charles Zammit, of Hamrun, who ran a building company.

Josephine Zammit (nee Darmenia), MBE, emigrated to Australia from Malta with her husband Charles in 1952. In the late 1960s they became Australian representatives of the Malta Emigrants' Commission and Josephine became involved in radio broadcasting as part of her welfare work with migrants.

In the 1960s, she was involved with the Malta Single Young Women's Scheme which assisted young women travelling alone in their settlement in Sydney and Melbourne.

Her Maltese broadcasts in Sydney began in 1971 with station 2CH, run by the NSW Council of Churches. During the Whitlam government years, with ethnic radio now supported by government, she was a pioneer of ethnic station 2EA and continued her active involvement with such broadcasting until the mid-1980s.

A woman of immense energy and perseverance, in the early 1970s, she established the Maltese-Australian Women's Association and later the Maltese-Australian Social and Welfare Association.

She was a foundation member of the NSW Ethnic Communities Council and the NSW Ethnic Consultative Council which later became the NSW Ethnic Affairs Commission.

In 1978 she was awarded an MBE in the 'ethnic community' category, the first Maltese woman in Australia to be honoured in that way.

While personally socially conservative and a devout Catholic, Josephine was typical of the new Maltese women after the War who did not want to be tied to the home. Her faith and her mother's example of kindness and joviality led her to devote herself in Sydney to the service of newcomers in need.

She died in Sydney on 14 May 1988.

Archival resources

National Library of Australia, Manuscript Collection
Papers of Josephine Zammit, 1964-1985 [manuscript]

National Library of Australia
[Biographical cuttings on Josephine Zammit, Maltese community worker, containing one or more cuttings from newspapers or journals]

Author Details
Barry York

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