 Fifty Years Ago, on the 10th of July 1965, Fort St. Elmo was handed over to the Maltese at a symbolic handing-over ceremony.

Present were the Acting Prime Minister and Mrs. G. Felice, Mrs. G Borg Olivier, wife of the Prime Minister. Major General Frost, General Officer Commanding Malta and Libya, and Commander Malta Land Forces and a distinguished gathering. Both the R.M.A. and the Malta Land Forces provided a ceremonial parade of one Major and 32 gunners and a key escort of one Subaltern and two Warrant Officers. The R.M.A. parade was under the command of Major Kenneth Valenzia while the Malta Land Forces parade was under the command of Major J. M. Galea. Lt. Col. E. C. Micallef Eynaud handed over the Fort to Lt. Col. J. M. Cremona. Malta Land Forces. Major Peter Manduca. R.M.A., handed the Fort’s key to Captain Joe Bonello of the Malta Land Forces who received it on behalf of the Maltese Government. The R.M.A. Band, under the direction of Bandmaster Magri, played “Auld Lang Syne”. The R.M.A Depot pennant was lowered and that of 3rd Regiment M.L.F. was raised. The band played the Maltese National Anthem as the Maltese flag was raised above the Fort by W.O. Il Bonello. Many of those witnessing the ceremony recalled that on July 10. 400 years ago Toni Bajada had swam from Marsa to Senglea with a message that 83 galleys and other vessels were assembled at Messina ready to sail for Malta to help the Knights. The Turkish banner was hoisted over St. Elmo on June 23, 1565. 400 years later still another flag flies from its ramparts.

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