



GIBRALTAR HERITAGE TRUST

The last six months have seen a great deal of activity at the Trust. the report on page 8.

The Trust has been busy reorganising the office, consolidating its databases and preparing the foundations for a number of events that will be happening throughout next year.

Our annual programme of events for members has been up and running since February and has been very well supported. Read all about the visits on pages 12 to 16.

A long standing event, the Trust's Painting competition, was a success and saw a good number of participants. Now in its 20th year, the competition is well established as an event in the local community. The Trust is once again grateful to the Friends of Gibraltar Society for providing the cash prizes.

The Trust also successfully hosted the annual visit from the Friends of Gibraltar Society. A group of around 20 visited Gibraltar between the 7th and 14th June. As usual a programme of events was organised for them by the Trust. Details of the visit are on page 16.

The Working Groups which were created at the beginning of the year and announced in our February newsletter have been meeting on a regular basis and tangible projects are now starting to come to fruition. The first of these was the Trust's participation on this year's Clean Up the World Campaign. See

It is important as a Trust to focus on, and celebrate, the positive heritage related projects which have been completed within our community and the individuals and groups which consistently contribute to the improvement of our historic environment. As a Trust we have a great many battles to fight, but there are some success stories and it is these that we celebrate through the Heritage Awards.

Our Heritage Awards for 2009 saw a good selection of quality projects being awarded. Standards were very high and the Board did not have an easy time choosing this year's recipients which you can catch up with on page 5. There are many more buildings and projects worthy of recognition so we urge members to keep an eye out for them and keep them in mind for the next round of nominations.

The Trust continues to be represented on the Development and Planning Commission where we have an input on upcoming developments and building reform proposals. The new Gibraltar Development Plan goes a long way towards addressing some of the long term issues that the Trust has wrestled with as regards building conservation in Gibraltar. We are keen to see this comprehensive document, still in draft form, officially adopted by Government and its comprehensive policies and guidelines for conservation areas and the Upper Town put into action.

We eagerly await the new and long promised Heritage Act. The Trust continues to be firmly of the view that to ensure the long term preservation and sustainable management of Gibraltar's Heritage, this document is essential.

Gibraltar is immensely rich in heritage assets; however we are yet to unlock our full potential. The new Act will give us the tools and provide a framework within which to take heritage management in Gibraltar into a new era. It is sorely needed and we look forward to it with anticipation and optimism.

So what can you do as a member of the Trust?

Promote heritage awareness in your everyday lives. If you are a property owner, think about what you do to your building and the materials you use to do it with. Walk to work every now and again rather than using your car. You'll not only be helping the environment by reducing congestion on our roads, but you'll have the opportunity to look more closely at the buildings that surround you on a daily basis. Visit our local sites of interest, our caves, tunnels, bastions and fortifications, our museum and historic gardens. Engage with your historic environment and appreciate it for the gem that it is.

Our programme of events for members continues for the remainder of the membership year. Details can be found on the centre pages of this newsletter. They are not to be missed, so take a look, and mark the dates in your diaries now.

GIBRALTAR HERITAGE TRUST PAINTING COMPETITION

Saturday 9th May 2009 saw the Gibraltar Heritage Trust's painting/sketching competition get underway. Now, in its 20th year, the Painting/Sketching Competition has been a Trust annual event since 1991 and enjoys participation from of a wide spectrum of the Gibraltar community from locally established artists, to amateurs, to school children and families alike.

The aim of the competition has always been to encourage participants to take a closer look at the heritage that surrounds them on a daily basis and reproduce it through artistic media. Past themes (all historic buildings, monuments and sites that have featured in Gibraltar's history), include Parson's Lodge, the Moorish Castle, Trafalgar Cemetery and the Mount. There are few rules, the crucial one being that the painting has to be carried out between 9am and 5pm on the day of the



competition - a challenge for any artist! However, despite the short time scales, the competition compels the participant to take the time to stop, look at a site or monument, and create a study of it through art, in the process affording them with a greater understanding and a deeper appreciation of the history and importance of the site.

This year's subject, the Dockyard, industrial by its very nature, was not a particularly picturesque site to paint. However the Dockyard and Dry Docks have played a major role in shaping the Gibraltar of today both physically and more complexly in the makeup of Gibraltarian Society. The construction of the Dockyards had a hugely significant effect on Gibraltar. As well as altering the western

coast of the Rock through the construction of the docks and moles, the influx and subsequent settling of workers, stonemasons and their families from places such as Malta also contributed to making today's Gibraltarian community cosmopolitan.

A dull and dreary day on the morning of the competition did not bode well for the competition; however artists did turn up and at the end of the event there were 71 entries, comprising of 43 in the children's section, 16 in the juniors and 12 adults. Two schools participated this year, with St. Mary's First School entering the children's section and Loreto Convent pupils entering in the Junior Section.

The Friends of Gibraltar Society have been contributing the prizes for the competition for a number of years now and the Gibraltar Heritage Trust is most grateful for this support. The adjudicator this year was Mr. John Langdon, architect and long time supporter of the Trust. The results were as follows:

Children's Section

1st Prize	Francis Devincenzi	(£75 art voucher)
2nd Prize	Katie Norton	(£50 art voucher)
3rd Prize	Katherine Stone	(£25 art voucher)



1st Children's Section

Junior Section

1st Prize	Kayleigh Buttigieg	(£125 art voucher)
2nd Prize	Timothy Canessa	(£100 art voucher)
3rd Prize	Amy Mesilio	(£75 art voucher)
Commended	Anna Garcia	



1st Junior's Section

Senior Section

1st Prize	Peter Parody	(£300 cash)
2nd Prize	Christian Hook	(£200 cash)
3rd Prize	Michelle Stagnetto	(£100 cash)
Commended	Vin Mifsud, Karen Sisson	



1st Adult's Section



1st Prize (Child)
Francis Devincenzi



2nd Prize (Child)
Katie Norton



3rd (Child)
Katherine Stone



1st Prize (Junior)
Kayleigh Buttigieg



2nd Prize (Junior)
Timothy Canessa



3rd (Junior)
Amy Mesilio



1st Prize (Senior)
Peter Parody



2nd Prize (Senior)
Christian Hook



3rd (Senior)
Michelle Stagnetto

HERITAGE AWARDS 2009



The results of the Trust's annual heritage awards were announced in June of this year:

The **Senior Heritage Award** was conferred on **John Frendo** in recognition of the many years he has dedicated to the preservation and protection of Gibraltar's Heritage. Mr Frendo's eye for detail and his positive attitude towards heritage preservation is an example to all.

The first **Group Heritage Award** was awarded to **The Town Range Barracks** in recognition of the redevelopment of this early 19th Century row of military barracks into apartments.



Town Range

The second **Group Heritage Award** was granted to **The Old Naval Hospital** in recognition of the sensitive way the site has been redeveloped.



Old Naval Hospital

In both instances, the heritage-sensitive approach to the redevelopment of these sites is a credit to all involved, developers, architects, contractors, and the residents who are now the custodians of these buildings.

The first **Individual Heritage Award** was awarded to **Richard Labrador** for the restoration of **John Snow House** an ex-MOD married quarter in the South District dating to 1903.



John Snow House



5 Hargrave's Parade

The second **Individual Heritage Award** was awarded to **Wayne Estella** for the recovery of **5 Hargrave's Parade** an example of Gibraltar's local architecture which has been brought back into use as a home from near-derelict condition.

The Awards were presented by the Hon. Peter Caruana, Chief Minister, at the Trust's office, the Main Guard.



The recipients with their awards.

Left to right: Gavin Sharrock, Peter Jackson, Richard Labrador, Hon. Edwin Reyes, Hon. Peter Caruana, Dr. Diane Sloma, Wayne Estella, James Ramagge, John Frendo

BOOK REVIEW

Gibraltar: Conquered by No Enemy

by Marc Alexander.

The History Press, 2008

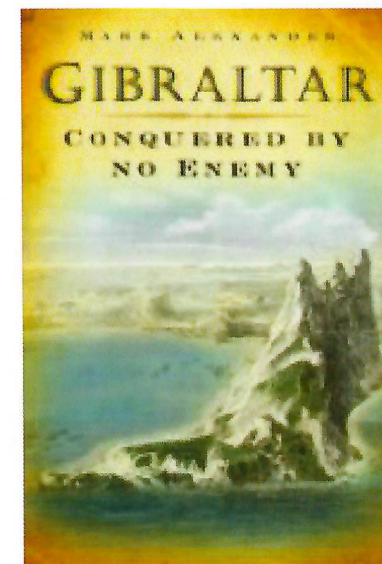
This book is described in the blurb as "the first full history of the Rock for many years." Sir William Jackson might have disagreed. It is, in fact, a recapitulation of previous histories, interlarded with relevant chunks of Spanish history.

The author is less sure of himself when it comes to events in Gibraltar, and there are many omissions and some gross errors.

There is no mention of, for example, the disastrous epidemics which assailed Gibraltar in the 19th century, except for a bare mention of "yellow fever" in 1854 – that year it was actually cholera – and in page 163 we read the extraordinary statement: "The first step towards a democratic society came in 1821, with the establishment of a City Council..." Sir George Don is a favourite of mine, but surely even he was not that democratic!

Thirty six pages later, we learn, in 1921, of "...the setting up of...the City Council..." Again!

The last words of the book are "...the people of the Rock will remain proud of its motto, Nulli Expugnabilis Hosti – 'Conquered by no Enemy'. Oh, so that explains the title of the book, and the photo of the badge at the end of each chapter.



But, Mr Alexander, that's actually the motto of the Royal Gibraltar Regiment. The motto of Gibraltar is the rather boring Montis Insignia Calpe – "The Badge of the Mountain of Calpe!"

There is indeed a need for a modern and well-researched comprehensive history of Gibraltar, but this is not it.

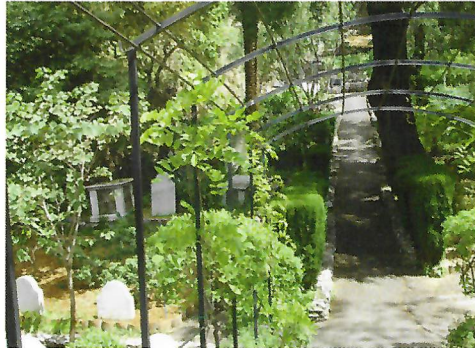
In the meantime, *Our Gibraltar*, by Dorothy Ellicott, is again available, having been reprinted by the Gibraltar Bookshop. It gives a rather breathless potted view of the main events in Gibraltar's history.

Reviewed by Sam Benady

RECENT PROJECTS

Trafalgar Cemetery:

The Trust has just completed a number of small improvements and essential maintenance works to the Trafalgar Cemetery.



Arbour-Trafalgar Cemetery

The arbour over the entrance path to the cemetery has been planted with Wisteria which has taken well and is already starting to work its way up and over the frame. The Trust is very grateful to Greenarc for providing the plants and continuing to care for the cemetery planting with such attention.

Greenarc has also recently completed a prune of the large trees on the site, removing dangerous branches well in advance of the rainy season. They have also created a number of extra benches from the felled trees which add nicely to the amenities in the area.

The Trust has added a small slope at the entrance to the cemetery to make access for wheelchairs and the less mobile slightly easier. Repairs were also carried out to the gate and to the pillar at the southern most entrance. Earlier in July of this year the First Sealord

and Chief of the Naval Staff unveiled a new grave register at the Trafalgar Cemetery. The register which shows a diagram of the cemetery and gives a list of those buried there was produced by the Maritime Data Centre at Windmill Hill. The Trust is very grateful for this asset which adds to the visitor experience of the Cemetery.

Cleaning up our city walls:

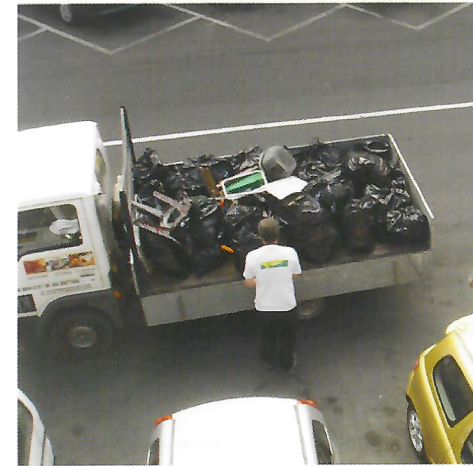
On Sunday 20th September, The Gibraltar Heritage Trust took part in the ESG's Clean Up the World Campaign by conducting a litter pick and rubbish clearance of the section of curtain wall above West Place of Arms (part of North-West Counterguard).



The site before clean up

A group of 15 eager volunteers started work clearing the site early on Sunday morning and as the day progressed a noticeable difference was made. A total of three large truckloads of household waste, scrap metals and discarded items of furniture were removed from the site. The fact that this amount of debris had been allowed to accumulate came as a surprise to all. The group lacked the equipment required to remove larger items such as construction rubble left by irresponsible builders and

hope that this is something that can be addressed in the future.



Gibraltar is probably one of the most fought over and most densely fortified places in Europe and with this comes a vast complex of defenses, bastions and walls. The city walls, once marked the edge of the city and fortress of Gibraltar but in a number of places have

now been absorbed into the town, with stretches becoming derelict and seemingly forgotten. Government has started the slow process of recuperating these assets, the latest being the Orange Bastion and Montagu Counterguardscheme, which is to be welcomed and has made a great difference to the area, but as always there remains a great deal more to be done. Our city walls are an untapped resource. They run from north to south, practically intact, and together constitute the potential for car-free walkways or cycle paths, running from north to south. The proposal of a linear park is not a new one, but one that should be looked into seriously once again.

The Gibraltar Heritage Trust would like to thank all the volunteers that turned out on the day and also Janet Howitt and the ESG who provided the picking equipment and logistical support for the removal of rubbish from the site.



About West Place of Arms:

West Place of Arms actually refers to the space between the North Bastion and its counterguard. It was originally a large troop assembly point and was protected by the guns on the counterguard and by a ditch. The Counterguard was built in 1804 and in 1834 it was armed with thirteen 24-pdrs and two 9-pdrs. The site is typical of those around the city of Gibraltar. The evolution of warfare and ordnance can be seen in this short stretch- cannon embrasures and traverses which have been adapted into machine gun posts and bunkers dating from the Second World War.

Date	Event	Time	Duration	Location
Saturday 7th November	Architectural Tour of Gibraltar's Old Town Led by Carl Viagas	10:00am	Approx. 2 hours	Meet at Casemates Square
Saturday 23rd January	A visit to Flat Bastion Magazine	10:00am	Approx. 2 hours	Meet at Flat Bastion Magazine, Flat Bastion Road
Tuesday 9th February	Anecdotes from the Great Siege with Pepe Rosado	10:00am	Approx. 1 hour	Main Guard exhibition room, John Mackintosh Square
7th, 14th or 21st March (Wind must be westerly)	Bird of prey migration watching Led by Mario Mosquera	11:00am	All Day	Meet at GOHNS Field Station, Jew's Gate Please bring binoculars and why not a packed lunch

New Gibraltar Heritage Trust website



Click onto:

www.gibraltarheritagetrust.org.gi

PROGRAMME OF EVENTS

The Trusts programme of visits for members has been well supported so far this year.

This year's programme kicked off on Saturday 21st February with a visit to the Maida Vale - Calpe Hospital stretch of World War II tunnels. An eager group of Trust members, led by Trustee John Murphy, set off, torch in hand, to explore this section of Gibraltar's rock maze.

The first tunnels in Gibraltar were the Upper Galleries started in 1782 by the then named Company of Soldier Artificers (later to become the Corps of Royal Engineers). Initially designed to be a simple passageway leading to the promontory on the North Face of the Rock known as the Notch, tunnelling dust from blasting necessitated ventilation holes to be opened up along the face of the rock and it was soon realised that these ventilation holes made perfect embrasures for cannon. So the plan changed with the tunnel now becoming a gallery.

Since these first tunnels, some 30 miles of tunnels, halls and chambers have been excavated from the rock creating a labyrinth. During World War Two there was virtually a second city operating inside the rock with hospitals, telephone exchanges, barrack accommodation, cold stores, reservoirs and even a road network!

Following on from the tunnels and keeping on the theme of fortifications and defences, the first of March's events was a guided

tour of the King's Bastion and the section of city walls from the King's Bastion to Orange Bastion. Darren Fa gave a very comprehensive and in depth tour pointing out items of interest as the walk progressed. Tours such as this make it apparent just how much there is to see in Gibraltar; historical artefacts we walk past every day and do not notice or understand the full significance of.



Tour of City Walls with Darren Fa

The last Sunday in March was filled with birdwatching at Jews Gate. The weather conditions were just right. A clear day with good visibility and the necessary westerly winds that would bring migrating birds towards the Rock.

Situated at the southern end of Gibraltar and with a clear view of Africa and the Strait, Jews Gate is an ideal spot to await these long distance travellers. As if the distance and exhaustion was not enough for these migrants to cope with, the larger birds had another obstacle to overcome once they near the Rock. Awaiting them are our Yellow-legged Gulls, who defend their territories by dive bombing the larger eagles and vultures, often pushing them to the ground.

The morning started off quietly with the odd Black Kite and Short Toed Eagle making an appearance, but numbers and the variety of birds soon started to increase towards midday. With Trustee Mario Mosquera on hand to identify the birds, the sheer number and variety of species that pass through Gibraltar on their way to their breeding grounds soon became apparent.



Short-toed Eagle

By the end of the day sightings included Black Storks, Montagu's Harriers, Swallows, Marsh Harriers, Booted Eagles, Sparrow Hawks and Egyptian Vultures as well as one of our resident Kestrels which breeds in the area of the Windmill Hill flats. The event was an eye-opener to those who attended, many of whom did not realise that thousands of these magnificent creatures pass over our heads each day whilst we go about our daily business.

April saw a visit to all four Synagogues, led by Mr. Momi Levi. The visit proved very popular with over 40 members attending. The visit started at the Nefusot Yehudah, or Flemish, Synagogue at Line Wall Road. The group was told how the foundation stone for this building, the largest synagogue in Gibraltar, was laid in 1799 and how in

1951, the explosion of the ammunition ship 'Bedenham' caused the roof to fall in and the windows and chandeliers to shatter. Once repaired, the redecoration and intricate relief stucco work was completed by a number of artisans brought from Granada. The finished product is a testament to their craft as the interior would not look out of place in the Palace of the Alhambra. A visit to the Shar HaShamayim Synagogue in Engineer Lane followed. This is Gibraltar's oldest Synagogue and has a turbulent history. Having been built in 1724, it was severely damaged by a storm in 1766 and was subsequently rebuilt in 1768 and then again in 1812 after it was destroyed by fire one night in 1781 at the height of the Great Siege. The outing continued with a visit to the two remaining smaller Synagogues in Parliament Lane and Irish Town, known as the Abudharam Synagogue and the Etz Hayim Synagogue respectively. Those interested in finding out more about Gibraltar's Jewish Heritage may be interested in the publication 'Jewish Heritage in Gibraltar: an Architectural Guide' by Dr. Sharman Kadish. Copies are available from local bookshops as well as from the Trust Offices in John Mackintosh Square.



Interior of the Nefusot Yehudah Synagogue



ComCen Tunnels

A late addition to the programme was a visit to the ComCen tunnels. This was the second visit by the Trust to the facility which was in the process of being converted into a high security data storage centre by Vault Technology Services. ComCen standing for 'Communication Centre' functioned until very recently as a strategic command centre for Britain and NATO's defences at the Western end of the Mediterranean. It was enlarged from an earlier storage area and became operational in 1940 as Allied Forces HQ (AFHQ) for the World War II invasion of North Africa, code named Operation Torch. It later became known as the Joint Operations Centre (JOC). The location, deep inside the heart of the Rock was ideal. With 420m of solid Jurassic limestone overhead, the facility was and remains totally bomb proof, securable, and most importantly in case of a security breach, defensible to this day.

The facility is a massive feat of engineering, built in 5 separate interlinking tunnel branches. The 'living space' itself consists of single story, steel lined rooms and corridors, but we were told that in places the caverns excavated from the Rock continue upwards

for another 5 to 10 metres. Small 'hatches' all along the corridors allow you to 'slip out' to the rock face and see it for yourself. In one room one of these hatches leads to natural lake, the source of which is unknown but is probably formed from rainwater that seeps down through the rock. In fact, the facility is so deep inside the Rock that it can take some time for the first rains of the season to seep through. Some days it is a glorious sunny day outside and 'raining' on the roof of the complex. It takes some 39 pumps to take the water away. Additionally, fresh air is pumped in, keeping the temperature inside the facility constant all year round.

The JOC was in fact split into two with the Eastern half being known as the Comcen which included the Comcen itself and the SCP (Systems Control Point)/Crypto Room the other areas within the Comcen half of the JOC were for the administration of the engineering functions and workshops, telephone exchange and Flight Watch as well as special handling areas for highly confidential signal traffic. The Western half of the JOC was known as the Maritime Headquarters (MHQ) and included offices for the ComGibMed/ Flag Officer Gib (now known as Commander British Forces (CBF) staff officers and administrative staff. The MHQ half of the building included areas for the control of operations as well as Intelligence gathering.

The highlight of the visit for many was the 'Eisenhower Room', the very spot from which General Dwight Eisenhower commanded the invasion of North Africa in 1942. In the weeks building up to invasion there were more than four hundred aircraft of all types crammed into the dispersal areas around

the Gibraltar Runway. Fighters had been shipped out in crates and assembled on the airfield. Every available cubic foot of storage was taken up with ammunition, fuel and other essential supplies. One hundred and sixty-eight American pilots were housed in the RAF messes at North Front. On 5th November 1942 General Eisenhower joined his staff on the Rock and took over from General Mason-Macfarlane as the Allied commander in Chief Gibraltar. He worked out of what is now known as 'the Eisenhower Room' in the heart of the ComCen. At his first press conference he said 'Never in my wildest dreams... did I ever think that someday I, an American General, would ever command a Force from the British Fortress of Gibraltar'. The success of operation Torch and the foundations it lay for the eventual allied victory is well recorded in history. Sadly, nothing from the period remains as the original room collapsed on itself many years ago, however the room today functions as a meeting room and is kept as a memorial to the General and WWII.



ComCen Tunnels War Plot Room

The visit continued with a visit to the War Plot Room. With floor to ceiling maps of the Mediterranean area, one would be

forgiven for thinking you had wandered onto the set of a James Bond Movie. It was a sobering thought that at times when civilian life on the 'surface' was continuing as normal, those working and meeting in the ComCen were making some very difficult decisions on whether to go to war or not. A more recent example of this being the first Gulf War of 1991 which was commanded from this facility.

In June, members were treated to a visit to Victoria Battery and the City Fire Station. The group were given a tour of the Fire Station building, one of the few examples of typical 1930s art deco architecture we have in Gibraltar. The facility was purpose built for the Fire Brigade over the Victoria Battery – the sister site to Napier of Magdala 100 ton RML gun position. When in 1898 the gun at Napier of Magdala Battery split during practice firing, the Victoria gun was moved there instead. The Gibraltar City Fire Station was built on the right flank of this battery in 1937. The group was given a tour of the station by Manolo Rocca and colleagues and the group also visited some of the elaborate underground works of the battery which still exist. The City Fire Brigade Heritage Division had put together an exhibition on the history of the Brigade showing historical images of the brigade and the advances made in fire fighting technology over the decades. The tour was a superb visit which was enjoyed by all who attended.

A visit to the Gibraltar Museum finished off the programme ahead of the summer break. The visit was led by Clive and Geraldine Finlayson who showed the group around Museum and gave detailed information on the varied collection of artefacts in the museum.

This included a guided visit of the Moorish Baths. The highlight of the visit was to the new gallery and research wing which is based around the rich fossil collections held by the museum. The group was told how this vast archive has built up over the last two decades through a painstaking process of excavation in Gibraltar's caves. The new research wing provides a comfortable research environment for visiting researchers and features many re-exposed architectural features such as fireplaces and reconditioned floorboards.

The Trust's programme of events continues to March 2010.



The Group at the visit to the City Fire Station

FOGS VISIT

In June this year members of the Friends of Gibraltar Society were in Gibraltar on their now traditional visit to the Rock. The trip forms part of their annual member programme of events and was this year led by the Friends' Hon. Secretary Janet Whitely.

The week proved to be a very busy one with a variety of events, visits and activities co-ordinated by Trust staff and Trustee George Russo.

The week started with a welcome coffee morning and visit to the Trust's Offices at the Main Guard where the Trust received presentation of a cheque for £1,000 toward prize monies of the Trust's Annual Painting Competition which had taken place earlier in the year. The group then moved onto the Gibraltar Museum where they were given a tour of the new Natural History galleries by Prof. Clive Finlayson.



FOGS Visit

The following day a visit was paid to the Convent courtyard to view the restored Marshman Murals which the Trust had recently completed restoration of with funding from the Friends.

At the invitation of the Commander British Forces, the group attended the Queen's Birthday Parade at Casemates Square, and the Garden Party at the Convent, hosted by His Excellency the Governor and Lady Fulton.

The Thursday was a rather full day with the group being given a tour of the Shrine of Our Lady of Europe which was celebrating its 700th year. Shortly after this they embarked on a visit to the Waterworks and Pumphouse at Hay's Level, and that evening were given a

tour of the Admiralty Tunnels (COMCEN). The end of the week saw a guided tour of the Alameda Gardens by Dr. Keith Bensusan and a talk by Dr. John Cortes at the gardens, followed by an afternoon tea at the Garrison Library kindly provided by Lorna Swift and colleagues.

The group also took a trip into Spain and visited the chapel in Algeciras where the statue from the Shrine of Our Lady of Europe was taken for safe keeping from 1704 to 1864.

The Trust was like to thank all those involved in the organisation of the visit.

REFURBISHMENT PROJECT

Earlier in March this year, the Trust took on a small project to refurbish three marble plaques located at the Boulevard on Line Wall Road.

The grubby condition of the plaques had been pointed out by a Trust member due to their location at ground level, and this meant that they were not easily noticed by the many pedestrians that pass through the area on a daily basis.

Each of the plaques commemorates a different event. The first, commemorates the building of the esplanade and steps in 1921 by the then Governor General Sir Horace Lockwood.

The second plaque, dedicated to the 'Heroes of Gibraltar and the Straits Patrol' was dedicated by the Association of Gibraltar



Plaque Before



Plaque After

Residents in the Argentine.

The third plaque, laid on 21st July 1945, was also a bit of an enigma until by pure chance find of a copy of the English newssheet 'Illustrated London News' in a Spanish flea market helped fill in some of the gaps. By pure luck a photograph of the plaque laying ceremony had been published in the newspaper in 1945 and was spotted by Trustee Gil Podesta whilst browsing through the stalls. By coincidence Gil Podesta was at the time in the process of refurbishing the plaques! The photograph shows the plaque being laid by Lieut. L. Hansen a Belgian Liaison Officer in the presence of the then Governor and Commander in Chief Sir Ralph Eastwood amongst other dignitaries.



From Illustrated London News, 1945

they can be better appreciated. The refurbishment together with their new prominent location enables the plaques to be read with greater ease and helps ensure that the events they commemorate are remembered.

The plaques have now been installed at a higher level along the boulevard steps where

GEORGE PALAO, B.E.M.

The Gibraltar Heritage Trust was saddened to hear of the passing away of George Palao, a long time supporter and keen promoter of Gibraltar's heritage.

George Palao was born in Kensington, London, on the 4th October, 1940 after his parents were evacuated from Gibraltar with most of the civilian population during World War II.

After the war the family returned to Gibraltar and he studied at the Gibraltar Technical and Dockyard School. In 1958 he joined the Public Works Department Drawing Office. Some twelve years later he decided to further his studies and in



George Palao

1970 enrolled on a two year course at the South East London Technical College where he attended the Department of Building and Structural Engineering.

Since 1965 he had been heavily involved in research into the Rock's history, pre-history, geology and archaeology. This led him to discover and excavate a great deal of valuable material in the Gibraltar Caves. In the late 1950s and 1960s George Palao led the Gibraltar Cave Research Group. Many of these finds are now in the Gibraltar Museum.

His profound interest in historical and archaeological matters saw him gain membership of the Royal Archaeological Institute and the Prehistoric Society of Britain. In 1976 his work in this area of research was publicly recognised and awarded the British Empire Medal (B.E.M.) in Her Majesty the Queen's Birthday Honours list.

George Palao wrote numerous articles and delivered countless lectures to societies, clubs and schools on Geology and Pre-history. He was also a keen diver and this saw him involved in a number of underwater excavations along Gibraltar's shoreline.

Perhaps George Palao's best known research work are his five books published between 1975 and 1985, entitled 'The Guns and Towers of Gibraltar'; 'Gibraltar: Our Forgotten Past'; 'Gibraltar: Our Heritage'; 'Gibraltar: Genesis and Evolution'; 'Gibraltar: Tales of

our Past'. All these books brought Gibraltar's rich history and heritage to the attention of the general public as never before. His vision and his mission when writing these historical booklets, was 'to increase the understanding and appreciation of Gibraltar's vast historical assets by those who live on the Rock and visitors alike'. He can be justly proud that his books have more than achieved their aim.

As well as a researcher he was a gifted illustrator – his simple yet detailed line drawings of representations of events, people, costumes, warfare technologies, monuments and artefacts are to this day still used as a valued resource in a number of local schools. His graphical work includes numerous technical drawings of caves and historical sites in Gibraltar. Lesser known to the general public is his skill as a model maker, something he also excelled at. His illustrations were also commissioned for the book "The Rock of the Gibraltarians" authored by the late Sir William Jackson in 1987 and which is considered to be the most complete history of Gibraltar and her people.

George Palao leaves a rich legacy behind him that stands as a testament to his lifetime dedicated to research work on Gibraltar's history and archaeology.



Pick up your ideal Christmas presents from the
Gibraltar Heritage Trust's stall at the Convent Christmas Fair
on 26th November.



Trust Calendars

Cards

Journals

Books

Gibraltar-related souvenirs



Open from 12pm to 6pm



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Published by

GIBRALTAR HERITAGE TRUST

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13 John Mackintosh Square E-mail: heritage@gibraltar.gi
PO Box 683 www.gibraltarheritagetrust.org.gi
Gibraltar

Designed and printed by Roca Graphics Ltd.
Tel: 20059755

Printed on ecological paper