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# HERITAGE TRUST NEWSLETTER

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NEWSLETTER

Spring 1995

## FOREWORD BY CHAIRMAN

I am convinced that 1995 will be a momentous year for the Trust. Parson's Lodge Battery will be officially opened to the public and, as I write this, the Government is in the final stages of signing the contract with the contractors for work to start by the 1st March on the long awaited restoration of the City Hall.

I hope that the realisation of these two ambitious projects will convince the people of Gibraltar that the Trust is determined, despite the odds, to take positive and practical steps to preserve our heritage.

Those of our members who follow closely the work of the Trust will understand the mammoth efforts carried out by the Board during 1994 to continue with our restoration work at Parson's Lodge Battery, and to coordinate the efforts to restore the City Hall. For an organisation such as ours which is not adequately supported by a realistic and meaningful legislation and does not receive any regular and secure financial revenue, anything achieved could be classified as a near miracle.

During 1994, the Trust raised a total of £35,000.00. This is a record not only in comparison to what we have raised in the past, but I am sure that no other similar charitable organisation in Gibraltar has ever topped that amount.



Much of that amount was spent in the restoration of Parson's Lodge Battery.

However, much more money has been spent on the Battery if one were to quantify the enormous amount of voluntary work carried out during the year. A typical example of this was the work undertaken by 53 (Louisburg) Battery, The Royal Artillery.

This Battery, visited Gibraltar from 12th September to 15th October and adopted Parson's Lodge Battery as their community project. The Battery employed 30 men each day during their stay. Their efforts supervised by Christopher Terry, advanced our restoration work by at least six months. Other organisations and individuals have contributed in one way or another, and to all of them we are eternally grateful for their efforts.

Another aspect which is most gratifying and is helping us to increase our efforts, is our growing membership. We have now topped the 1200 in our books. This demonstrates the growing realisation in our community of the unique and rich heritage that we are so fortunate to have.

I have often stressed that the preservation of an historical building is as important as its use. We must understand that the conservation and faithful exploitation of our historical monuments will enhance our environment and logically our tourist trade should increase. If properly managed our heritage can reap us many benefits. However, the commercialisation of our historic sites should not be solely regarded as a revenue raising measure to boost our coffers. The money reaped as a result of entrance fees etc should be ploughed back to maintain the site, carry out further restoration on the site or embark on the restoration of another site. This is the case in most parts of the world. The aim should be to enhance the product to increase the number of visitors who will then spend their money in the high street which benefits the whole community. The trust would wholeheartedly support the establishment of such a policy.

To achieve our many aspirations the Trust must have the full support of all its members. I therefore urge you all to continue to help us in our struggle. No matter how small your contribution may be, I can assure you that it will be received with open arms and gratitude.



## THE KING OF GIBRALTAR

We think of Gibraltar as a town subject to one power or another - Moorish, Spanish or British. Recently voices have been raised suggesting that Gibraltar could survive as a sovereign state. For one brief period in the past, of less than three weeks, Gibraltar was in fact an independent kingdom!

In the year 1356, during the second Moorish occupation, Gibraltar was under the rule of Phares Abu Anan, the King of Morocco. The Governor, or Wali, he appointed was one Isa Ebn Alhasan, who one fine day declared himself King of Gibraltar, taking advantage of the fact that his master was busy putting down revolts in other parts of the Kingdom.

Isa is described as being extremely avaricious, corrupt and cruel. His violent and tyrannical behaviour further weakened his already untenable position, for instead of seeking the support of the inhabitants of his new kingdom, he persecuted them cruelly, and succeeded only in making himself generally hated.

The people soon tired of this reign of terror; after twenty days of tyranny they rose up in revolt against him. His supporters quickly deserted him, and Isa was obliged to flee to the Moorish Castle to escape being torn to pieces by his subjects (These were more direct times: people did not write letters to the newspapers or wait to register a protest vote at the next election!) He soon had to surrender. He and his sons were sent in fetters to Ceuta, where King Abu Anan caused them to be put to death with the most cruel and unparalleled tortures, as the reward of their disloyalty and rebellion.'

*S.G. Benady*

## PROGRAMME OF EVENTS

### *Saturday 25th March* **WORLD WAR II TUNNELS TOUR**

Meeting point: outside the tunnel entrance at Maida Vale at 10am. Please bring flat rubber-soled shoes, a torch and £1 (to cover MOD insurance). Exit at William's Way. Mr. E. Vallejo will conduct the tour round the World War II systems including the accommodation area, hospital, Calpe Power Station, Brigade Headquarters and Wilson's Cave. Eventually you will join the 18th Century tunnels by Jock's Battery and from these proceed down narrow tunnels to William's Way.





*Monday, 27th March at 8pm at the John Mackintosh Hall*  
**"THE ROOTS OF THE GIBALTARIAN"**

A talk by Professor Larry Sawchuk of the University of Toronto.

*Monday 10th April to Thursday 13th April, 9pm*  
*at the John Mackintosh Hall Theatre*

The Fortress Study Group whose patron is H.R.H. The Duke of Gloucester, is an international group concerned with all aspects of fortifications and their armaments. Their chairman is Brigadier Jock Hamilton-Baillie M.C. The Group will be visiting Gibraltar from 7th April to 17th April. Members of the Trust are cordially invited to attend. Please make a note in your diaries. The visit of F.S.G. will coincide with the launching of a book entitled "Strong as the Rock of Gibraltar" written by Professor Quentin Hughes and Athanasios Migos.

*Saturday 22nd April, 10am*  
**VISIT TO WATERWORKS**

Meeting Point: Entrance to Waterworks at the top of Willis's Road, almost opposite the Moorish Castle.

After an introduction to the organisation and distribution of the water supply to Gibraltar, the tour will lead through the tunnel, visiting two of the reservoirs, and come out on the eastern side of the Rock in the middle of the Water Catchments.

*Saturday 20th May*  
**ANNUAL HERITAGE PAINTING COMPETITION**

Theme: Castle Street and surrounding area.  
Register at junction with Castle Ramp from 10am.

*Tuesday 30th May, Charles Hunt Room,*  
*John Mackintosh Hall at 9pm*  
**"THE CHARACTER OF GIBALTAR'S  
ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE"**

A talk with slides, by Lionel Culatto who will outline the importance of techniques applicable in the conservation of Gibraltar's buildings from a legal and practical point of view.

**TRIP TO TARIFA - (Date to be confirmed)**

It is hoped to organize a trip on Saturday 3rd June to the historic town of Tarifa know for its Moorish architecture. With only limited seats available on the coach members wishing to book for this tour will be selected on a first come first served basis. Final arrangements have yet to be completed, but names should be submitted by 12th May.



*Saturday 24th June*  
**A WALK WITH HISTORY**

*Meeting point: The lobby of the Queen's Hotel at 3.30pm.*

Mr. Pepe Rosado will be taking you via Southport Gates and along Main Street, weaving in and out of Town Range and Line Wall Road up to John Mackintosh Square. This walk will cover some of the rich history of our City.

*Friday 28th July*  
**GIBALTAR HERITAGE TRUST FLAG DAY**

All those wishing to help please contact Mrs. B. Soiza at Wellington Front on 42844.

**"WISH YOU WERE HERE...!"**

Collecting old postcards and early photographs of Gibraltar is much in vogue these days. Exhibitions devoted to the subject are surprisingly well attended. Television programmes that focus on the Rock's colourful past help generate greater interest in it, and there appears to be a healthy trade in this type of memorabilia, with collectors of old postcards demonstrating as much enthusiasm as philatelists in their search for the rare and unusual.

The appeal of the hobby is obvious. It's another and charming way of gratifying our insatiable curiosity, especially where our forebears are concerned, seeking clues to their lifestyles and the environment in which they lived. It's a means perhaps of gleaning something about them that the history books or family diaries have overlooked. Postcards often give away those small intimate details that help revive long forgotten memories or add another dimension to an existing mental picture. There are occasions, however, when studying public reactions to these pictorial records is even more of a revelation!

It is astonishing to discover how many people register surprise and delight when confronted with the evidence of Gibraltar's former elegance. But then, the Rock's natural beauty has always provoked comment - and not just from our contemporaries. It's appeal has been the source of inspiration to writers and travellers throughout the centuries.

The Roman scholar, Pliny the Elder (AD c 23-79), author of the encyclopedic "Historia naturalis", mentioned it in his writings. In 1837 the Frenchman, Edmund Boissier devoted a section to it in his "Voyage Botanique dans le Midi de l'Espagne", in which he comments on the botanical significance of the Rock's eastern slopes. He also describes a walk to Europa Point: "...passing charming country-houses, situated in the shades of orange and fig-trees, surrounded by flower-gardens, and where English industry had found means of even cultivating turf."





He writes about the Alameda: "All year round are walks planted with exotic trees, of which the most common is the *Phytolacca dioica*". Sadly, this species, once so prolific in the South District and elsewhere, is fast disappearing, especially in those green areas where development eats so rapaciously into what little remains of that natural beauty.

Although the Gibraltar Heritage Trust, and the Gibraltar Ornithological and Natural History Society, are doing their utmost to save these vulnerable assets, the support and co-operation of the public are also needed if these conservationists are to succeed. We must prevent any further dilution of those characteristics which mercifully keep Gibraltar what it just still is - unique.

#### ASSETS

Whilst nature hawks her colours green to gladden every eye,  
man schemes to purge them from the scene: uproot and let them die!  
His greed destroys in one deft stroke what's taken years to grow.  
He treats most protests as a joke when cash begins to flow.  
And thus a landscape, once so fair, becomes a dust-bowl dry,  
ingesting concrete layer by layer to rise as tower block high.  
With pride he alters nature's face and stamps his mark on earth,  
but nature's skills he can't replace, nor time his wrongs reverse.

Marjorie Hoare, Feb 1995

#### NEW BOOKS ON GIBRALTAR

***Civil Hospital and Epidemics in Gibraltar***  
by Dr. S.G. Benady, *Gibraltar Books, 1994 - £12.95*

An important contribution to the study of the people and institutions of Gibraltar, tracing the long history of what is now St. Bernard's Hospital. The second section is on the epidemics which have afflicted the Rock, and there is also a section of brief biographies of many of the doctors who have served Gibraltar in the past.

***GIB by M. Cavilla, Medsun, 1994 - £7.50***

A series of articles on many aspects of Gibraltar, written over the years by the old master.

***Gibraltar - The making of a people***  
by Dr. J. Garcia, *Medsun, 1994 - £12.00*

An analysis of the development of civil politics in Gibraltar from the Second World War to the present day.



***Strange but True Stories of Gibraltar II* by R. Reynolds, Helvern, 1994 - £5.95**

The author has delved deep to uncover more stories with a Gibraltar connection.

***Strong as the Rock of Gibraltar***  
by Quentin Hughes & Athanassios Migos

Introduced by Field Marshal Sir John Chapple GCB CBE, Governor and Commander-in-Chief, Gibraltar, and with a foreword by General Sir Willaim Jackson GBE KCB MC, former Governor and Commander-in-Chief, Gibraltar, 1978-82

The story of the military history, the defences and the fortifications of Gibraltar is told in a fine new book to be published in April 1995. Five hundred copies, each copy numbered and signed by the authors are offered for sale.

The volume will be bound in hardback and will have about three hundred pages, about half of which will be photographs and drawings, many of them in colour. The first part of the book tells of the power struggle in the western Mediterranean, the control and defence of the Rock and the story of the building of its fortifications from Moorish times right up to the end of the Second World War.

The second part is a gazetteer in which most of the bastions, walls, gates and batteries are described and illustrated.

Gibraltar was one of the most strongly fortified places in the world and this book is a tribute to those who protected it.

***Gibraltar Heritage Journal No. 2, Gibraltar Books 1994***  
**£9.50 (£5.00 to members of the GHT)**

Members are reminded that issue no. 2 of this journal - the first to be produced by the Gibraltar Heritage Trust with the Friends of the GHT - is now on sale. It is on sale to members at the GHT office at Wellington Front for £5. The price to non-members is £9.50, so encourage your friends to join the Trust - they'll save almost half the subscription by buying the journal.

The Editorial Committee would welcome articles on Gibraltar's Heritage, so if you have something to tell about Gibraltar's past, don't be shy - write us an article of 2000 words or so and submit it to the Trust before 31st May 1995.

If you have some short piece of information which you wish to record, or if you have some question about Gibraltar's Heritage, send it to the 'Notes and Queries' section of the Journal.

The contents list of the present journal speaks for itself. Don't miss your chance to get a copy.

Some copies of the first (1993) issue of the Journal are still available at the Trust Office.



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