

# ROCK TALK



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## Editorials

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Happy New Year! A new year brings new expectations - let us hope that 2017 turns out to be better in so many ways.... Whatever the outcome of BREXIT, it is clear that Gibraltar needs its Friends in the UK to support its aspirations and future challenges.

What is happening in Gibraltar with regards to heritage and urban development or, as some would insist, decay? The Development and Planning Commission (DPC), responsible for planning decisions, is increasingly becoming more scrutinised by the general public, estate agents and the Heritage Society. We are only a few weeks into 2017 and already the DPC has been in the news – for different reasons.

The manager of one of Gibraltar's estate agencies has publicly 'commented' on the DPC for some recent decisions. Quoted in the Gibraltar Chronicle, he has stated that there is a growing sentiment in Gibraltar that a number of decisions made in recent years are "not so much based on a forward looking perspective, but rather on a reactionary basis, that at times seem to be influenced by the political and economic pressures of the moment". He added, "I have lost count of the times people have said that Gibraltar runs the risk of becoming a concrete jungle." Gibraltar is an urban environment; we invite the readers to judge for themselves from some of the photographs included in the 'Around Gibraltar' section of this edition of Rock Talk.

In the same week, Gibraltar learnt of the fact that despite the DPC's recommendations to the MOD to retain the Guardhouse at Gun Wharf, its demolition is going ahead – to make room for additional parking (!) for the Gibraltar Defence Police's operational vehicles following its relocation from Rooke... The news angered the Heritage Trust which stated it was "extremely

frustrated" with the MOD's decision – calling for the introduction of the new Planning Act and Heritage Act which "will bind both the MOD and Government of Gibraltar to planning decisions and enable the listing of buildings". Friends have an important role to play in ensuring the protection and continuance of Gibraltar's rich historical environment....but we cannot be complacent. Space is limited in our small environment – but we need to protect and preserve our past.

**- Brian & Elizabeth Gonzalez**

It has been a busy year for the Society, set within a back drop of political change and developments both in the UK and Gibraltar. Some of these issues were picked up at the Annual Seminar, and we will see how they develop in 2017. It is certainly a challenging period for the Rock, and the Society will continue to support heritage activities, as well as assisting in making Gibraltar's voice heard. This issue includes reports on Society activities as well as presentations on topics that we hope will be of interest to members. We have updates on several of the projects that we are funding, and a number of articles that we hope will broaden our horizons. The theme report is on the Convent Murals, which have been an exciting discovery and whose refurbishment has been supported by the Society. We are delighted to see more contributions from within the Society, and the inclusion of an article covering a talk given to the Gibraltar Group of Professional Engineers on civil engineering in WW2. The journal is somewhat longer than previous issues, and we hope you will enjoy reading the content, as well as contributing to the next issue! –

**Vincent Mifsud**

# Chairman's Letter

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## Dear Friends of Gibraltar,

What a fascinating year 2016 was! Political and other events in the UK, in Europe, and in the USA shook us all and will shape the course of 2017 and years well beyond. But through all the uncertainty, the Friends of Gibraltar have stood firm and, indeed, have gone from strength to strength.

As you will read in this splendid edition of Rock Talk, our membership, our funds, and our plans are all in good shape and we are well set for another successful year. In particular, we now have a well-established 5-year rolling plan for our projects. Setting our work on this sound basis has helped us plan ahead and establish our priorities, and I intend that we underpin this work in 2017 by developing a longer term strategy for the Society.



The breadth of the projects in hand is impressive – from relatively minor refurbishments of the Regimental Mace and Drum to more ambitious and longer reaching projects such as Witham's Cemetery and the Oral History programme. You can read about them all in this edition.

Of particular interest and pleasure to me is the initiative to renovate the so-called Convent Murals, discovered in the cellars during building work in the Convent some years ago. I am delighted that the planets have aligned so positively and that the Friends, the Gibraltar Heritage Trust, the Government of Gibraltar, and, of course, the Governor have all come together to get this project on its feet.

I am also pleased that we have succeeded in establishing a bursary for the University of Gibraltar and that our aspiration to sponsor a Schools Award is well underway. These are particularly important initiatives as they support education and engage directly with the community.

Notwithstanding all the hard work, we have managed a lively social programme and also enjoyed some fascinating talks at Gibraltar House. Once again, a number of members visited Gibraltar in June and we held our second AGM of the year in Winchester in October. This will now become the norm and future years' AGMs will coincide with the Annual Seminar. Winchester was a great success marked by our key note speaker, Michael Llamas QC, Gibraltar's Attorney General, who gave us a unique insight into the challenges facing Gibraltar following the Brexit result in June. Work is in hand to fix a venue for the 2017 AGM and Seminar but I offer my thanks here to Janet Whitely who has stepped down as organiser after a number of years at the helm.

Finally, I would wish to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to those Board and Committee members who work so hard and give up so much time to make the Friends a viable and vibrant society. Thank you all, especially, of course the Editors of Rock Talk who have done a wonderful job once again.

In spite of the uncertainty we all face at present I remain confident in and excited by the prospects for the Friends of Gibraltar in this and coming years.

*Sir Adrian Johns*

## Society Grants in support of Heritage Projects

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As reported to the AGM (see below), the Friends will be encouraged to note that we now have a healthy number of both major on-going and smaller short term projects, which cover a wide range of topics but which all focused in one way or another on our charitable purpose of heritage. With these projects our emphasis, therefore, is to continue in our aim of preserving the heritage of Gibraltar and its historical links with the UK, but also to reach out and engage more closely with the people of



Gibraltar.

As reported in our last newsletter, we now have a healthy number of both major on-going and smaller short term projects, which cover a wide range of topics but which all focused in one way or another on our charitable purpose of heritage. An update to complement the information presented in the AGM is as follows:

### **University of Gibraltar Bursary**

In what are new and exciting initiatives for the Friends, following the launch of this initiative during the recent Friends June visit. We have just reached agreement with the new University of Gibraltar to provide an annual bursary in order to support a post graduate student in their heritage and environmental studies. This would help the student to attend short courses, seminars or undertake specialist research in the UK. It will also help build a closer relationship between the Friends and the University. Applications are currently being submitted and will be reviewed by the University Research and Degrees Committee early September, and subsequently recommended and endorsed by the University towards the end of the month ready to submit to the Friends Board.

Also and in addition, reaching out to younger people, we are giving some thought to providing a prize to school children who do well in the newly introduced secondary school module on Gibraltar history. To be updated, but good progress made recently.

### **Oral History**

Work continues at a steady pace to place the Oral History Archive on-line in order to make it available to members, along with all those in UK and Gibraltar who have an interest in the events of 1930 to 1960 as seen through the eyes of ordinary people who lived through this monumental period in Gibraltar's history. All of the interviews have now been transcribed and work is currently focussing on the introductory pages. Access to the web site for Friends will be available later this year.

### **Defence of Gibraltar**

This is a collaborative project with the Fortress of Gibraltar Group and the updated site at [www.defenceofgibraltar.com](http://www.defenceofgibraltar.com) is well worth looking at. A full update report is provided in this issue.

### **Witham's Cemetery**

This major project is managed by the GHT and work so far has concentrated on cutting back trees and clearing the cemetery. The contractor undertaking the work on the Plata Villa site plans to construct an entrance to the south and construct some pathways. One grave (shown being viewed during Friends visit in Jun) has been restored as a trial and work on a selection of graves will be subject to final Board approval in the Autumn. The best time for the restoration of the graves is currently being considered.

### **Convent Murals (Franciscan Frescoes)**

This Friends' funded restoration programme recently received headline news in the Gibraltar Chronicle. Managed on our behalf by the GHT, this project is described by the Government Archaeologist, Dr Kevin Lane, as being imperative before further erosion occurs. Consolidation and restoration will reveal more of the mural and will secure this unique fresco for future generations, while adding to our knowledge of this period in Gibraltar's history. HE the Governor, Lt Gen Davis said that with this project, we are preserving history for Gibraltar in a manner that also broadens and deepens the significance of The Convent.

The Franciscan Frescoes will form an integral part of Convent Tours. Work by the restorer Ainoa Rodriguez is now essentially complete, and evaluation of a second phase has started. Please see the full article later in this issue.

### **RGR Ceremonial Drum and Mace Restoration**

Works on the restored Drum and Mace are now both complete (see article on the drum).

The CO of the RGR, Lt Col Lopez said that the RGR is delighted with the meticulous work carried out on the Drum and it will be part of the regimental display at Grand Battery House.

Maj Ian Martinez said that the Mace has had a complete transformation and 100% of the visible damage has been repaired to an extremely high standard. The Mace will go straight back into use and a display case will be constructed so that the Mace can be displayed in the Band Room when

not in use. Suitable PR is being prepared for both the Drum and Mace.

### **University of Gibraltar Bursary**

The agreement with the new University of Gibraltar to provide an annual bursary in order to support a post graduate student in their heritage and environmental studies has seen its first iteration. The agreed process was followed, and the Board was pleased to endorse the selection made by the University for the first award. This will normally be presented during the Friends' Annual visit to Gibraltar.

### **Future Projects**

The Board is always very interested in candidate projects. If you have any ideas then please let us know. To date completed and candidate projects span from £100 to £10,000.

### **Calpe House Appeal**

Albert Poggio OBE GMH gave a brief outline at the AGM of the Calpe House Appeal which was launched in Gibraltar on the Trust's flag day, 18<sup>th</sup> December 2015. The new buildings are Grade II listed and the campaign has been launched to raise money towards the refurbishment costs. The properties are conveniently located just 3 minutes' walk from Queen Mary's Hospital in Paddington, they cost £8.5 million to buy and the refurbishment is expected to cost £5 million.

For individuals wishing to make a lasting contribution, the Trust are inviting them to set up a monthly payment, which will provide the Trust not only with immediate funding for the refurbishment, but also a long term budget to aid them in planning for the future.

Please visit the website [www.calpehouse.org](http://www.calpehouse.org) and click the DONATE button, where there is an option to select a one off or monthly payment.

## **Diary of Society Events for 2017\_\_\_\_\_**

The diary of events is maintained on the Society's web site, and in the frequent e-mail updates or correspondence. This year's programme will be based on the successful format developed over the past few years, and will be updated in due course.

### **Talk at Gibraltar House**

The Royal Naval Hospital Gibraltar by Surgeon Commodore Robin McNeill Love, to be held at Gibraltar House on 30th January 2017, at 18.00 hours. The talk will cover the rich history of this establishment in Gibraltar, and consider its impact and recent developments. There will be a reception afterwards. Admission is £12.00 for members, and £16.00 for non-members to cover the cost of drinks and light refreshments.

A further talk is planned for April; details will be confirmed in the Newsletter.

**Summer Party** will be organized for end of June 2017, date tbc.

### **Friends Annual Visit to Gibraltar – Commencing Monday 12<sup>th</sup> June 2017**

Dates are now confirmed, however the week's programme is at the early stages of planning. Visits should include some or all of – Gibraltar Heritage Trust offices, visit in collaboration with the Fortress Study Group (if diaries can be aligned), visit to the University, Queens Birthday Parade at Casemates. Additional suggestions are welcome at this stage to Janet who organises this annual visit.

Email: [janet.stockbridge@btinternet.com](mailto:janet.stockbridge@btinternet.com) – Tel 01794 523034 or 0780 194 8036

All Friends make their own arrangements for travel and accommodation; it is recommended that this is carried out as soon as possible with your airline provider to get the best rates. Most of the group still continue to prefer to stay at the colonial style Rock Hotel, which has been largely refurbished. Other choices include The Sunborn Gibraltar floating hotel at Marina Bay, The O'Callaghan Elliott Hotel, centrally located. The Bristol a 3 star hotel, or The Caleta Hotel located at Catalan Bay. You may wish to check out [MyGibraltar.co.uk](http://MyGibraltar.co.uk) for rates and bookings.

### **2017 Seminar, AGM and Dinner**

Dates for your diaries - planning date for the 2017 Seminar and Dinner is on 28th October 2017, venue to be confirmed. Accounts will be available at the AGM.

**Other Events** – will be notified to the membership through the bi-monthly newsletter.

# Reports of Events

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## Friends' Visit to Gibraltar 2016 *by Janet Whiteley*

Friends gathered over several days prior to the official week commencing, in anticipation of enjoying another full programme. There were a number of new members in the group this year visiting Gibraltar for the first time.

On Monday there was the customary warm welcome at GHT Main Guard, introduced by Janet Whiteley, who then introduced the Vice Chairman Ian Balestrino and other members of staff as the CEO Mrs Claire Montado was on maternity leave, and we all wished her well.

First visit was to the Cathedral of St Mary the Crowned, followed by a visit to the Art Gallery and Mayor's Parlour, before lunch at the Royal Gibraltar Yacht Club. In the evening the Friends were guests of the Management of the Rock Hotel at a delightful and generous Cocktail party.

The week included visits to the Convent, coffee with His Excellency the Governor, and a tour of the Convent Murals (Franciscan Frescos). In the afternoon we were met at the Garrison Library by Tito Benady who is donating many hundreds of his personal books into the library's safe keeping.

The Friends group was welcomed to the new University of Gibraltar by the Vice Principal, Mrs Daniella Tilbury, and her deputy Mr Darren Farr. After a very informative introduction of the aims and objectives, Janet Whiteley announced the launch of the Friend's student bursary, which is considered a very exciting initiative between the Friends and the University. In the afternoon we met the CBF, Commodore Ian McGhie, who gave the now customary overview of activity in the Strait, which prompted a lively debate with the Friends over drinks and canapés.

The Friends enjoyed the Queen's Birthday parade at Casemates, and a visit to Witham's Cemetery to assess the recent work. This has seen significant improvement after a Royal Signals unit exercising in Gibraltar undertook a community project to help tidy up this area.

Regrettably on the Friday we were not able to sail to Gorhams Cave with Professor Clive Finlayson due rough seas, so we diverted and went Dolphin watching in the Strait. The week concluded with a very congenial farewell supper at Charlie's restaurant at Marina Bay.



*Monday with Manolo Galliano (Cathedral visit)*



*Welcome to the Friends, and coffee with HE the Governor*





Student bursary award, University of Gibraltar



Visit to the Mayor's parlour

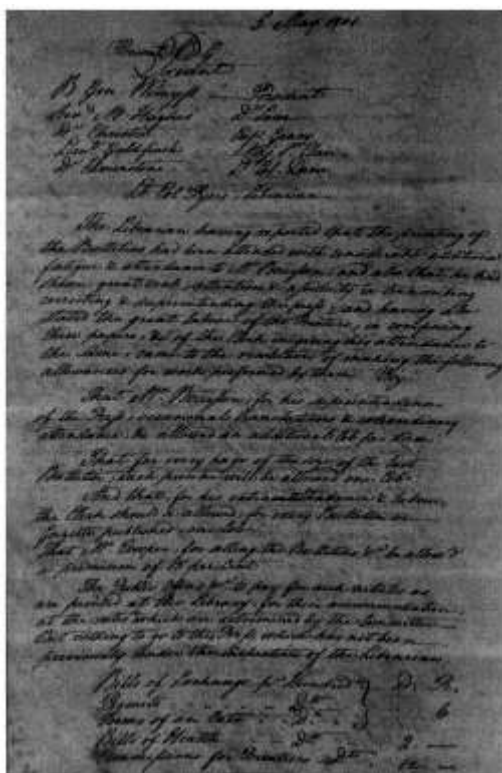
## London Talk by Dominique Searle – 18<sup>th</sup> Jan 2016 by the Editors

A good audience at Gibraltar House heard a broad-ranging presentation on the editorial mission of the Gibraltar Chronicle, presented by its editor of many years. Mr Searle reviewed the complex relationship between the newspaper and the military and civil authorities, and the local population. From an auspicious early years and its world-exclusive scoop in first reporting the Battle of Trafalgar, the publication has transitioned from being a garrison reporting medium to the popular and independent newspaper that it is today.

Issues reported in the early 1800s were dedicated to the sieges and military matters locally and in the Mediterranean, with many elements of local garrison housekeeping at the request of the Governor. The front page of the third issue summarises the mission of the publication at the time, which reinforces the minutes of a meeting held on 5 May 1801. Mr Searle shared an interesting news item that was reported in 1827, the round-the-world voyage, sponsored by King Louis XVIII of France (see photograph), of some corvettes – no mean achievement at the time. Close links with the Garrison Library (founded in 1793 by Drinkwater) have existed from the start, with the role of librarian and editor often being combined. The talk moved on to later editorial developments in the First World War, and to the transition that occurred around the Spanish Civil War, where the Chronicle started to respond to the need for news coverage for the local population. Some of the editors around this time were perhaps inclined to present views as much as facts, but the paper started to change dramatically after the return of the civilian population in 1946. The editors at the time pushed for independence from military guidance, and the paper became the true voice of the local community. Mr Searle covered the influence that the paper has had on the political scene in Gibraltar, and the development of competition from other publications. He discussed the role of the Chronicle in modern Gibraltar, reviewing the changes that have



Copy of front page of third edition of Gibraltar Chronicle occurred over the past ten years to ensure the viability of the paper into the future. He shared views on the economic model for such a publication, and issues associated with local printing, and the impact of the digital age to round of a very interesting talk that generated much discussion both in the lecture room and around drinks afterwards. As MR Searle said: "The reader is Gibraltar... and the paper is bigger than the owner".



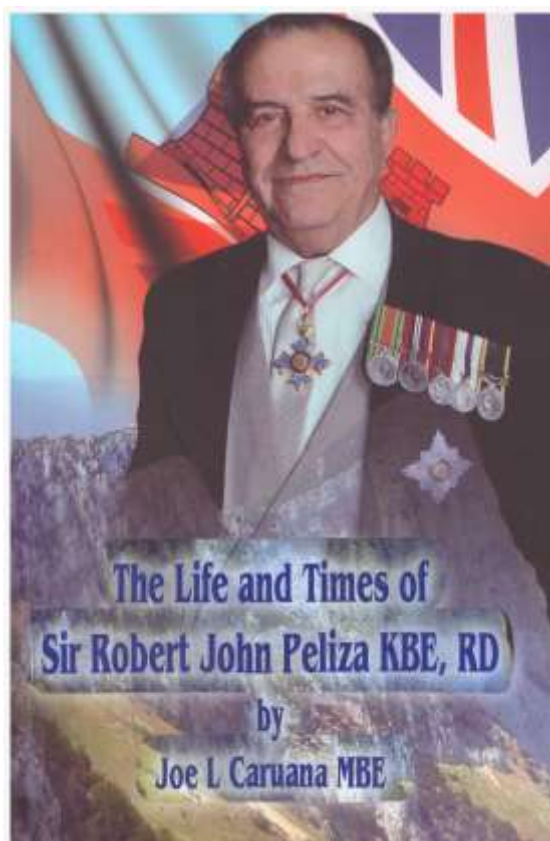
Minutes of meeting on role of Gibraltar Chronicle editor



Round-the-world voyage publicity

## London Talk on the life of Sir Robert Peliza by the Editors

Joe Caruana, author of a recent book on the life of Sir Robert Peliza, gave a presentation in Gibraltar House on 21 March 2016. Members of the Friends were introduced to the contribution that Sir Robert made to the development of Gibraltar after World War 2, and the various interactions within the civil and military circles that led to the vibrant community we have today. Members of his family living in the UK attended the talk, and there were several prominent members who had interacted with Sir Bob during his political career, leading to a lively discussion after the talk. It soon became clear that Sir Robert had led a full and varied life, combining military service with a full business career and, later, public service in government. The various personalities who interacted with him in leading the Gibraltarian community at a difficult time in the relationship with Spain were presented in a very frank and interesting way, and the complexities of the relationships were explored to place his contribution in a clear context. The challenges in collecting the information for writing such an impressive book were clear, and the author discussed the process, frustrations and pleasures of this endeavour. He was kind enough to sign copies of his book after the talk, and to take part in informal discussion around the subject at a drinks reception held after the formal part of the evening.





# Oasis beneath the Rock – the Alameida Gardens

## *Update by the Editors*

David Courtney presented a well-attended talk on the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the foundation of the Alameida Gardens on the 14<sup>th</sup> April, at Gibraltar House. His book was reviewed in the last issue of Rock Talk, and Mr Courtney expanded on several aspects of the history of these interesting gardens, to the delight of the audience. The talk was illustrated by historical slides covering the two hundred years, and placed the development of the Gardens in the context of the times. This interesting talk was followed by an informal reception, where the author signed copies of his book amid a lively discussion.

## Annual Seminar and Dinner – Winchester

17<sup>th</sup> October *by Janet Whiteley and Vincent Mifsud*

The first of the revised format annual seminars and dinners was held at the Winchester Mercure Hotel on the afternoon and evening of 17<sup>th</sup> October. The Board had decided that the Seminar would now include the Annual General Meeting of the Society so as to make this accessible to more members, so this was appended to the seminar session.

The Seminar was introduced by the Chairman, and included a keynote presentation and discussion led by Mr Michael Llamas, Attorney General and former Chief Legal Advisor to Her Majesty's Government of Gibraltar, on the subject of BREXIT and Gibraltar.

The AGM followed the usual pattern, with Board members presenting on their areas of responsibility, and the Society's accounts were also made available. The minutes are included as a record in this issue of Rock Talk.

Mr Llamas' most interesting talk ran through previous difficulties with Spain on the border, and drew parallels and contrasted the shutting of the frontier with the possible results of Britain leaving the EU. It is clear that the position is very different now, but the potential implications of any difficulties at the frontier on the economy and way of life in Gibraltar were clearly laid out in some detail. These were generally of concern, especially in the continuation of some of Gibraltar's core industries and the availability of labour, but would have just as significant an impact on the surrounding Campo area. Various arguments around the position of the border were explored, and the case that HMGoG would be discussing with HMG in London was outlined, though elements remain sensitive and subject to further work. The reasoning for the overwhelming pro-EU vote in Gibraltar was discussed, and was likely to have been influenced by concern at the attitude that Spain would take to Gibraltar should the UK leave the EU. Recent evidence has shown that Spain's attitude to Gibraltar remained a cause of concern, and that the EU was influential in restraining Spain from further unfriendly actions. There was a feeling that Spain would become even more difficult if this restraint was removed, and that leaving the EU would create opportunities for further negative actions.

The discussion that followed picked up on several of the points that Mr Llamas had raised, and sought to clarify some of the implications. It was clear that Gibraltar had a strong case for retaining an open border, but that this would be the subject of detailed negotiation in the transition period to Britain's departure from the EU. Mr Llamas urged all present to ensure that Gibraltar's position and concerns were made clear at every opportunity, as awareness must be raised to support an open border and



*Members listening to Mr Llamas' talk with interest*



*Mr Llamas in full flow; an expert presentation...*

equitable settlement.

The Chairman summarised the position of the Society, and the encouraging progress that had been made over the past year (reported in this issue). He thanked Mrs Janet Whiteley for her efforts in organising the event, and took questions from the audience.

After a short break, members convened in the Bar in preparation for a very enjoyable and well-attended dinner.

# Summer Event 2015 – Lansdowne Club, 14<sup>th</sup> July

by *Tim Lawson-Cruttenden*

The Friends held their Summer Party at the Lansdowne Club on 14 July 2016. This was preceded by the historic Brexit vote on 23 June, which provided a very topical subject for conversation. Robust discussions occurred between Remainists and Brexiteers, all in good spirits but in the knowledge that Brexit is not likely to be beneficial to the people of the Rock.

The Treaty of Paris 1783 was negotiated in the Lansdowne Club leading to the severance of the USA from the UK, so it was perhaps apt that this Club hosted the party following the historic event which may cause the UK to leave Europe formally, whilst retaining strong links and good relations. Whatever happens, Gibraltar will remain part of the UK and the Friends are determined to play their part in achieving this.

Vivat Gibraltar!

## Christmas Party

by *Tricia Johnson*

The Christmas Party was held during the evening of Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> December 2016 at the Lansdowne Club in Mayfair. It was well attended and, judging by the level of chatter and laughter throughout the evening, was enjoyed by those present. Several members met up with friends whom they had not seen for several years and new members were welcomed. It was pleasing to welcome members' friends and families too.

As is our aim on such occasions the bubbly and wine was plentiful and accompanied by a tasty selection of canapés. Many of the members had travelled to London from as far away as Andover, Berkshire, Durham, Kent, Sussex and Wiltshire and, therefore, some stayed overnight and enjoyed seeing the Christmas lights and a meal afterwards. A very good way to spend an evening in London.

Our Chair Sir Adrian Johns gave a very short speech thanking everyone, including our President, Baroness Gloria Hooper for attending the party. He thanked members of the Board for their hard work, Tim Lawson – Cruttenden for arranging the party and all members for their continuing support. He finished by wishing everyone a Happy Christmas and Prosperous New Year.



# MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S JOTTINGS

I do hope that you had a very Happy Christmas and New Year, and enjoyed all your celebrations. We especially enjoyed the Christmas Party at the Lansdowne Club on the 1<sup>st</sup> December.

Our numbers are about 513 and starting to rise again. You are our best recruiter – if you know anyone interested in joining then please let me know.

We offer the following in our New Year Sales!



Membership for £15 until Mar 18 as a New Years' gift for a relative or friend. I will write them a welcoming e mail saying that it is from you.

Free Package and Postage for a Friends' Tie for yourself or a relative/friend if ordered by 15 Feb 16. Only £21.

I would like to remind you of ongoing offers and benefits:

Free membership for those over 80. (Please be sure to let me know – some of you have not so far!).

Having informed me please cancel your Bankers Order. I cannot do this.

5 for the price of 4 Family Membership (4x£15). To be paid by Bankers Order.

For those with an appropriate award, a supported application for Membership of the Gibraltar OBE Association.

Note that free access to the Upper Rock with a temporary GHT Membership is no longer available.

## Change to Subscriptions

Chasing late payment from those who do not pay by Bankers Order consumes time which could be better spent, for example, on recruiting. The Friends' Board at their meeting at Winchester on 29 Oct 16 approved the change below. This change was announced in the subsequent AGM.

*"Membership Subscriptions are due in April each year. From April 2017 those who do not pay by Bankers Order will be asked to pay £17.50. HOWEVER if payment is made in April then a discount of £2.50 will be applied".*

## Updated Information

Please don't forget to contact me if your Gift Aid situation has changed and you no longer qualify or have moved. The next claim will be in May 17 for the period Apr 16 to Mar 17. Last year our claim raised a most useful £1,333.60.



Also, could I ask if you would let me know if you hear of Members who have not heard from us recently. Members change e-mail and their home addresses and we are not always informed. Sometimes e-mails and letters are returned to us but not in all cases.

## Membership List

I keep an overall Membership List with just Members names on. If you would like a copy, then I would be pleased to forward you one.

## Lost Contact

A few Members have taken advantage of me forwarding e-mails to those they have lost contact with.

## Location

I am sometimes asked where Friends are located. The map shows the situation last year.

## Feedback

We are always grateful for feedback on any issue affecting our Society. If you send one to me as your Membership Secretary, then I can assure you that your Executive Committee will consider it. This is your Society.

## Contact Details:

Commodore Richard Lord CBE MSc

Church Cottage, 4 Kingsbury Square WILTON SP2 0BA

richard.lord2@btinternet.com

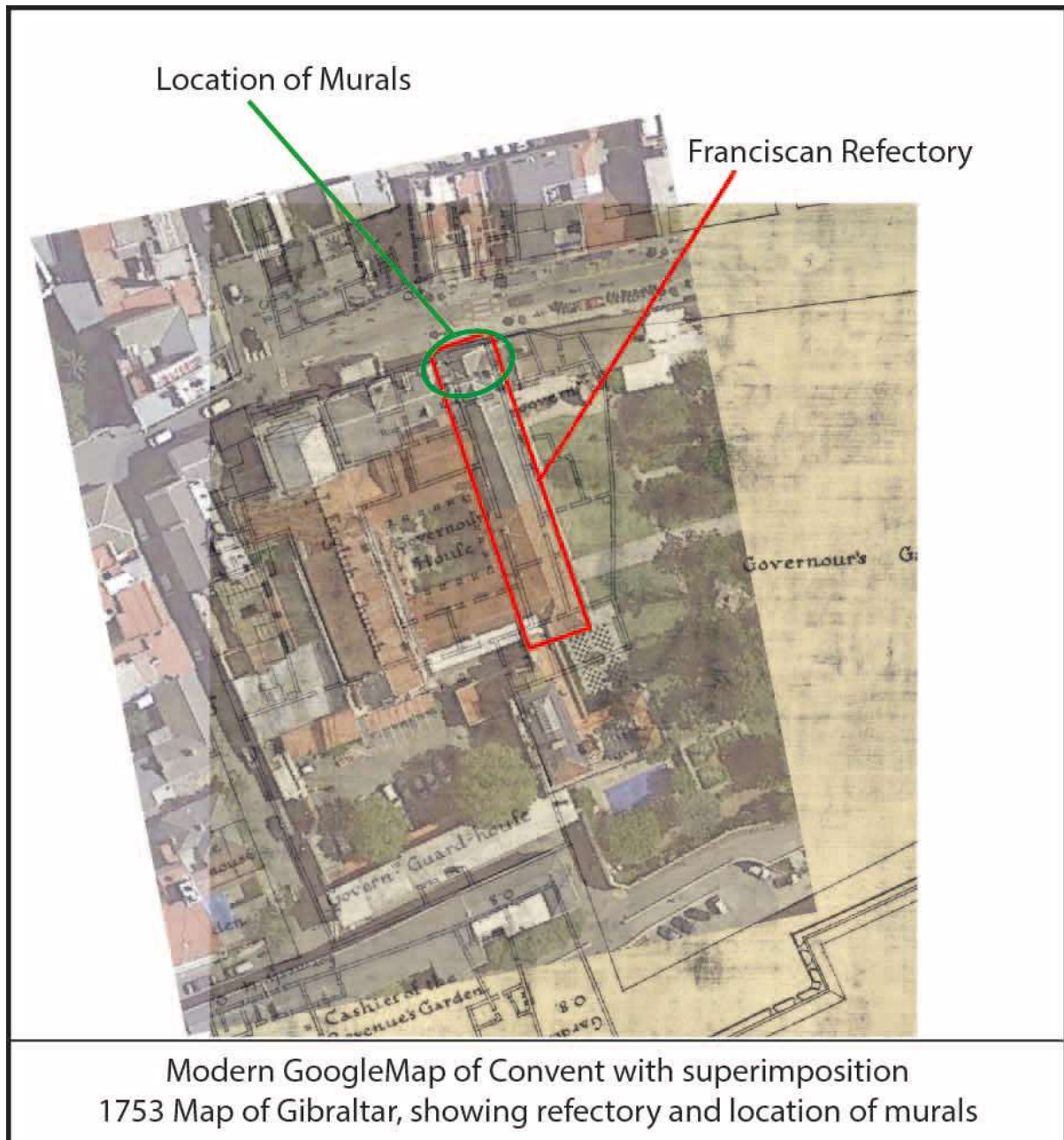
01722 743173 (Please leave a message if there is no reply)



# Convent Murals Restoration

*Lane, Kevin; Rodríguez Rueda, Ainoa; Asquez, Ryan; Galliano, Manolo; Farrell, Keith; Montado, Claire; Griffith, Tasmin*

This restoration project, funded by the Friends of Gibraltar and coordinated by the Government of Gibraltar Ministry for Heritage and the Gibraltar Heritage Trust, has preserved a set of Sixteenth Century, Spanish Franciscan frescos located in the old refectory of the then monastery. The old Franciscan monastery is today the governor's residence, otherwise known as The Convent. These frescos were discovered during routine maintenance works at The Convent during 2004 (Figure 1). Restoration of the Franciscan Frescos was undertaken by Ms. Ainoa Rodríguez Rueda, a professional conservator of the *Escola Superior de Conservació i Restauració de Béns Culturals de Catalunya*, Barcelona.



**Figure 1:** Plan of Site

This restoration has entailed five (5) different staged actions, including:

- I. Cleaning;
- II. Structural consolidation of the frescos;
- III. Surface consolidation of the frescos;
- IV. Material re-integration of eroded gaps on the fresco wall;
- V. Chronometric re-integration – this involves partial re-drawing of eroded areas of the frescos

Work on the frescos was completed in January 2017.

## Historical Background

The Gibraltar Governor's residence at The Convent is located on the site of a Spanish Period (1462-1704) Franciscan monastery. Francesco de Gonzaga, writing in 1587 dates the establishment of a Franciscan mission in Gibraltar to 1471, nine years after the conquest of Gibraltar by Christian forces in 1462. It is therefore, possible that the first buildings date to the late 1470's or 1480's, and as such the Franciscan Monastery and its attendant church probably constituted the first purpose-built Christian church on the Rock, as all the others at the time where converted ex-mosques (such as the Cathedral of St. Mary the Crowned).

The early Gibraltarian Franciscans belonged to the Conventual friars of that order. Increasingly in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Century the Franciscan order was riven between the more practical and less strict Conventuals, and the puritanical Observants. Pope Leo X made this division official in 1517. Against a backdrop of emergent Protestantism (post-1517) and leading up to the Catholic Counter-Reformation 1535-1648, the stricter Observants slowly took over from the Conventuals across Catholic Christendom.

In Gibraltar, the changeover occurred in the 1520's. By 1524 Gibraltar was the last Conventual chapterhouse left in Andalusia and by 1529 it to, had gone to the Observants. Writing in the Seventeenth Century – close to 100 years after the event – local juror and historian Alonso Hernández del Portillo was still lambasting the Conventuals for their opulent lifestyle. The arrival of the Observant Franciscans in Gibraltar was to radically change the monastery and it's standing in Gibraltar. In 1531, a large land grant and money to the tune of 70,000 maravedís (equivalent to £1.2 million nowadays) by local benefactor Francisco de Madrid, secured the standing of the Franciscan Monastery as the prime religious establishment in early Sixteenth Century Gibraltar.

It is likely that the frescos belong to this period of expansion, given the Observants penchant for iconography and the fact that in areas of the wall one can observe earlier windows and doorways covered by the frescos. These previously hidden features probably date to the first construction and the Conventual period (1471-1529). In 1704, Gibraltar fell to an Anglo-Dutch fleet commanded by Admiral Rooke. In the aftermath of this capture most of the local population fled. Three friars remained at The Convent, keeping it nominally operational. Yet by 1712 a visiting Spanish Inquisitor was already complaining about the use of the refectory for Protestant services, and in 1713 the British military had taken over the Church of Saint Francis (now King's Chapel). It is likely that the expulsion of the remaining friars occurred soon after. Already by October 1717, the Governors of Gibraltar were residing at The Convent. In 1728, Governor Lieutenant General Jasper Clayton (1727-1730) officially made it the governor's residence in Gibraltar, a role it has maintained to this day.

## The Frescos

The frescos are located at the Eastern end of what would have been the Franciscan refectory located along the Southern edge of the main Convent buildings, and physically below the current dining hall. The walls of the refectory seem to have been whitewashed soon after British occupation of the site, possibly to cover what would have been considered heretical and 'Popish' Catholic imagery. Although the frescos are in a fragile state, this initial whitewashing inadvertently helped preserve them by covering them from exposure to the elements.

Since then at least three further episodes of re-rendering have occurred. It is these works that have caused the most damage given that a wall had to be prepared through abrasive picking – sparrow picking – that leaves indentations. Nevertheless, this was not intentionally done to destroy the frescos, given that it is likely that by these later stages knowledge of the frescos existence had been lost.

It was during new works in 2004 that the frescos re-appeared. It is probable that they extend, or extended, further to the West into the adjoining rooms, a detailed survey of these is planned for a later date. During the Nineteenth Century the former refectory was converted into a cellar store that probably further preserved them given that after this juncture the room was transited less frequently.

Currently the frescos cover part of what would have been the Northern and Southern Panels of the refectory as well as the whole of the Eastern Panel. In total they depict seven (7) saints, 2 in the South and North panels, and three on the main Eastern panel. The saints are arrayed around a central cross that is located on the Eastern Panel with three (3) saints to each side. The art style used is archaic, and suggests the Spanish Lineal-Gothic

School of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Century. The use of this older style might suggest a certain conceptual naivety, or deliberate archaism on the part of the artist or artists.

The seven (7) saints depicted are as follows:

### **The East Panel:** (left to right)

#### **Left – Saint Anthony of Padua**

The Portuguese Saint Anthony rejected a life of comfort to dedicate himself to God. He was a renowned preacher, and by 1225 he was a *custos* (supervisor) of the friaries in the area of Limoges, France. He died in 1231, and was canonised in 1232. He is depicted here holding a book and a lily; two of his traditional symbols. The legend 'NIO' can be seen – the remains of 'S. ANTONIO' [Saint Anthony].

#### **Middle – Saint Francis of Assisi and the Cross**

The founder of the Franciscan Order, born in Assisi, Italy, Francis rejected a potentially wealthy lifestyle in order to dedicate his life to Christ. He died in 1226 and was canonised in 1228 by Pope Gregory IX – an extraordinarily rapid turnaround. He is here depicted as a youthful, tonsured figure, with a staff in his left hand – a symbol of pastoral authority.

#### **Right – Saint Bonaventure**

Born Giovanni di Fidanza (1221-1274), canonised in 1482 by Pope Sixtus IV. St. Bonaventure was the seventh Franciscan Minister General and Cardinal Bishop of Albano. He was instrumental in making the Franciscans the most powerful monastic order in Europe until the coming of the Jesuits.

### **The North Panel:**

#### **The North Panel, Right – Saint Louis of Toulouse**

The son of King Charles II of Sicily and a prince of the French royal house of Anjou, Louis rejected his royal inheritance to join the Franciscan Order. Appointed as bishop of Toulouse in 1296, he died in 1297 and was canonised in 1317. The legend S. LUIS – Saint Louis – is clearly visible. He is depicted here as a mitred bishop, holding his crozier. His Franciscan background, however, is emphasised as he wears a monkish rope belt with three knots emphasising the three vows of the Franciscan Order – chastity, poverty and obedience.

#### **The North Panel, Left – Saint Berard of Morocco (?)**

In 1219, Saint Francis sent Saint Berard of Carbio, the leader of the Proto-martyrs of Morocco, and his companions – Odo, Peter, Accursio and Adjutus – to preach in the Iberian Peninsula. Their attempts to spread the faith in Muslim Seville alongside the main mosque resulted in them being beaten and arrested. They were subsequently sent to Morocco to be tried, here the friars continued preaching from their cells. The Sultan had them executed in 1220. Venerated as early martyrs to the Franciscan Order their cult was particularly popular in Portugal where their relics were kept.

They were only canonised in 1481, during the Franciscan papacy of Pope Sixtus IV. It is possible that Saint Berard is depicted here. The figure has a scimitar stuck into his back and a dagger in his head, idealising the friar's martyrdom. Although the figure's left side is truncated, by a more modern arch the end of an inscription, describing the word 'MARUECOS' – a reference to the Martyrs of Morocco – can be clearly seen. This raises the possibility that along the wall to the East might be further depictions of the other members of this group of martyrs.

### **The South Panel:**

#### **The South Panel, Left – Saint Bernardino of Siena**

St. Bernardino of Siena was the main proponent of the Observant reform of the Franciscan Order that commenced in the early Fifteenth Century in Italy. His depiction here underscores the fact that these frescos belong to the Observant period of the monastery.

St. Bernardino was a renowned preacher who in 1438 was appointed Vicar General and Commissary General of the Observance in Italy. He died in 1444, and was canonised in 1450 – the first Franciscan to be canonised since Saint Louis of Toulouse in 1317. He is shown here as a tonsured, haloed and bearded figure. To his right is a blazing sun motif with a Christogram – IHS – a symbol of the Holy Name of Jesus depicted in the centre (See Figure 2). This motif was personal, and propagated by Bernardino himself.





**Figure 2:** Saint Bernardino of Siena and his blazing sun motif with a Christogram [Photo: V. Hermida]

The South Panel, Left – **Unknown Saint**

To the right of Saint Bernardino can be seen a fragment of another monk, including a habit with the Franciscan rope belt and knots. Above the figure can be seen the letters 'ELD'. We do not know the identity of this saint or blessed at the moment given that so little remains of him in the fresco.

### Interpretation of the Frescos:

The depiction of Saints Francis, Anthony, Bonaventure, Luis and Bernardino is in keeping with what we would expect of Franciscan visual hagiography. These five individuals represent the pillars on which the order was founded. Bernardino, in particular, highlights the Sixteenth Century ascendancy of the Observants versus the Conventuals. The Eastern Panel with three founding fathers of the Franciscan Order – St. Francis, St. Bonaventure and St. Anthony – would have overlooked the high table where the abbot and the leading monks would have sat commanding the longer tables of monks and novices set to the West. The other identified saint – St. Berard – has a much more local connotation. As a saint martyred in the general vicinity of Gibraltar he serves to pin this Franciscan chapterhouse within the context of the on-going struggle for Christian supremacy against Islam in the Strait Zone and further afield in North Africa. Given that the Observants held reign during this period in Gibraltar, the depiction an early martyr to the Order could well have served as inspiration for the novices, a fact of which they would have been visually reminded of at every mealtime.



Indeed, the depiction of Saints who gave their life in missionary work probably reflects on the role of this monastery as a school of Franciscan evangelisation leading the way in the attempted conversion of North Africa, and possibly even further afield.

**Figure 3:** Northern Panel showing St. Louis before restoration – July 2016  
[Photo: V. Hermida]

### A Conservation Timeline – The Northern Panel

Although work has been done on all the panels the greatest amount of effort has been invested on the Northern Panel to date. Here we show photos that depict all five stages of the fresco conservation process.

**Northern Panel July 2016:** (See Figure 3) State of the panel before restoration. St. Berard to the left cannot be seen and the figure of St. Louis is hard to make out aside from his mitre, staff and some detail of the monk robes.

**Northern Panel August 2016:** (See Figure 4) Detail of St. Louis's head after cleaning and structural/surface consolidation. It is clear, that even after some perfunctory cleaning, previously obscured details come to light.



**Figure 5:** Northern Panel showing St. Louis and the word 'MARUECOS' to the left of the photo [Photo A. Rodriguez]

In Figure 5 we can see the Northern Panel after all the sparrow pick marks have been covered following consolidation and restoration of the whole panel.

Figure 6 shows St. Louis in detail after full consolidation and restoration of the figure. All the sparrow pick marks have been removed.



**Figure 6:** Detail of St. Louis after Phase IV [Photo A. Rodriguez]





The figure of St. Louis shows greater detail, more vibrancy in colour and even dimensional shadowing as opposed to its previously unconsolidated state (Figure 4 above). Finally Figure 7 shows a fully restored St. Louis with reintegration of known parts of the painting, he cuts a much more dashing figure.

**Figure 7:** Restored St. Louis, after Stage V [Photo A. Rodriguez]

All in all, this restoration project has brought to light a series of early post-medieval frescos – the only ones depicting figures found to date in Gibraltar. The fact that they have survived for over 500 years is in itself remarkable. Furthermore, the scale and detail of these frescos reflects on their importance and probable expense. This underlines yet again, that in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century Gibraltar was a vibrant society fully integrated within a greater peninsula Spain. As such, these frescos serve to illustrate the piety and power at the heart of this Spanish society, a society that was just then entering

their brief Golden Age at the head of a mighty land-based and seaborne empire. An empire that held countless in thrall before their long drawn collapse in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Century.

*The following article provides some background to a restoration project that was funded by the Society. The editors are confident that it will be of great interest to members, providing context and relevance.*

## The Story of the Royal Anglian Regiment Drum

*By Richard Labrador MBE*

I underwent my National Service back in 1969 as part of the 36th Intake, The Gibraltar Regiment. Thoroughly enjoyed it. My personal drill was of a high standard and at the end of our basic training I was promoted to lance corporal, albeit unpaid! I was selected to form part of the Old Guard for the ceremonial guard mount at The Convent and I was expecting to be selected for the Escort to the Keys at the Ceremony of the Keys which was effectively our Passing Out Parade.



The whole Intake was formed up in the Buena Vista parade ground for a briefing by the RSM. He dismissed one individual whom he felt was unfit to form part of the Ceremony of the Keys parade (to his surprise this individual ended up winning the Shooting Trophy and on the day of the parade had to march out by himself to collect his trophy from the Governor). He then called out my name, "Cpl Labrador fall out, you will be collecting the drum". I went up to Cpl Lopez, permanent staff, and asked him what was this about. Louis Lopez, who retired as RSM and was awarded a MBE, told me an oil drum had to be moved about and I would have to do this. I could not believe it! Louis has always had a sense of humour and he was having me on. The 2nd Battalion The Royal Anglian Regiment, who were the Resident Battalion at

the time, were presenting the Regiment with a side drum to mark the affiliation between both Regiments and I had been selected to collect the drum. I had played the bugle, drum, and had been drum major with the 1st/4th Scout Band and thus knew how to carry a drum.

On the day of our Ceremony of the Keys, 4 April 1969, a Royal Anglian drummer carrying the drum and I assembled in Landport Ditch Tunnel. Once the Outpost Platoon arrived and settled at Grand Casemates Square, I gave the order to quick march and we formed up behind the Outpost Platoon. At a given point there was an announcement over the Tannoy system, "There will now be a presentation". This was my cue to give an "up" and we marched forward to the saluting dais where both The Royal Anglian CO and our CO were waiting. The Royal Anglian CO, Lt Col Akehurst, later to become General Sir John Bryan Akehurst KCB CBE, took the drum from his drummer and handed it to Lt Col Pop Gareze OBE JP, our CO. Pop handed it over to me, they exchanged a few words, saluted each other and it was time for me to give an "up" and we marched back to Landport Ditch. My ten minutes of fame were over.

I always kept an interest in this drum, however, at a given point the drum went missing. Throughout the years I approached several COs and RSMs but no one knew the whereabouts of the drum. We concluded someone must have taken it and had it at home as a souvenir. But in 2015 I asked Maj Ian Martinez MBE, who was QM at the time, and to my surprise he stated the drum was in his office. He had found the drum locked away in a cupboard. I went to see the drum, it was in a very poor condition with most of the paintwork having flaked off and the tension clamps rusty. Ian, now retired, had contacted the specialist company that works for the Regiment and they had quoted £1k to refurbish the drum. Ian asked me whether I could find the funding, I said I probably could but if not I would pay to have it refurbished, such was my interest in the drum.

I spoke to my friend retired Commodore Richard Lord CBE RN, and asked him whether the Friends of Gibraltar Society would be interested in funding this project. Richard is the Membership Secretary and a very active member of the Society. He felt it was worthwhile and proposed it to the committee. It was approved and the drum was delivered to the specialised company. The restoration was excellent, it brought the drum back to its original state.

The 26th November 2016 was chosen for the 'representation'. It coincided with the Royal Anglian Regiment Freedom of the City ceremony at the Garrison Library, the Royal Anglians were represented by Lt Gen Phil Jones CB CBE. Following the ceremony Richard Lord gave a short address; a brief history of the drum and its refurbishment. He then presented the refurbished drum to Lt Col Ivor Lopez.



In the photo: Lt Gen Jones Royal Anglian Regiment, Commodore Richard Lord, Friends' Director Janet Whiteley, Mayor Adolfo Canepa, Vice-Chairman Albert Poggio, Richard Labrador (with the drum), Lt Col Ivor Lopez.

The drum will be displayed in a cabinet at Grand Battery House. Ernest Victory, director at Charnwood Limited, very kindly offered to manufacture a suitable cabinet at no charge. The support of the Friends of Gibraltar Heritage Society in this restoration project is gratefully acknowledged.



# The Fortress Study Group

Patron His Royal Highness The Duke of Gloucester KG GCVO



## The Defence of Gibraltar Project

The Defence of Gibraltar Project, run in conjunction with the Friends of Gibraltar, has been going for a little of one year now and we have a total of 632 features on the map, with a lot more waiting to be processed and posted. The area of weakness we presently have in features from the early years, particularly the Great Siege period. This is something we need to concentrate on going forward.

In 2016 we carried out a total of three research visits, one in February, another in March and the last in September. The February visit was largely consolidating on work already done but without any special visits to awkward areas. The visit in March 2016 however was arranged through Kevin Lane, Archaeological Officer, Ministry of Sports, Culture, Heritage & Youth. Kevin had intended to accompany us on a visit to the South, Detached and North Moles to examine the remaining defences. Unfortunately, Kevin was called away for work, but the visit proceeded without problem. We were able to examine all of the old Twin 6pdr positions, remains of crew shelters as well as other 12pdr gun emplacements. Much has been lost, but what remains is worthwhile and of interest. The expedition would not have been possible without the assistance of David Seed of the Royal Navy, Paul Montegriffo, Higher Environmental Protection Officer and liaison by our own Richard Lord.



*Interesting inscription commemorating the completion of Detached Mole*





*The end of the mole showing where the booms, first installed in the early 1900s were mounted. These booms proved effective in WW2.*

The visit to North Mole revealed further interesting artefacts and facilities:



*The only surviving lighthouse, emplaced when the moles were constructed.*



*Date and makers name on the lighthouse.*

With the assistance of the Museum we also made a detailed visit to Parsons Lodge which is now thankfully open again for school visits and the like. They have done a lot of work to get the site cleaned up and we were very impressed with the whole layout. This is another site the FOG may like to visit going forward.



*A 6pdr gun emplacement from World War 2, Parsons Lodge.*

The visit in September 2016 was extremely productive. Kevin Lane had put our team in liaison with Dr Eric Shaw of the Helping Hand Trust who have a research base at Lower Bruce's Farm. The assistance given by Dr Shaw and his team was outstanding. They work on the Upper Rock on a daily basis caring for the Apes, and thus have an intimate knowledge of the terrain and features. They helped us locate several 'lost' items and get to some inaccessible places. We are most grateful to Dr Shaw and his great team. During this visit, we were able to finally get to most of the old Position Finding Stations, including some of the best preserved ones in the drug rehabilitation centre near Bruce's Farm. These Position Finding Stations were vital to the effective operation of the gun batteries from about 1890 onwards. Gibraltar probably has more surviving cells than any other location in the World but their importance in the defence of the Fortress is often overlooked.





*An example of one of the surviving position finding cells.*

We have also established a good relationship with Continent 8, who operate a Data Storage Centre within the old military command and control centre along Admiralty Tunnel. One of the rooms is being decorated as per the war time, while parts of the old control room remain little changed. A very interesting location being cared for by a private concern. On November 8, 1942, an amphibious operation was launched by United States and the United Kingdom against French North Africa. These landings were code-named 'Torch,' and the American President, Franklin D. Roosevelt visited the Rock and was photographed in this Admiralty Bunker. Luis Garcia, the General Manager, Continent 8 Technologies (Gibraltar) Ltd. is personally reconstructing the room where President Roosevelt sat to the 1942 condition. We presented him with an original USA Flag to place on the wall, this flag having been handed over by his son at a UK airbase. We also donated a Bakelite pen holder, similar to one shown in original images. If the FOG has not visited this underground complex, this can probably be arranged if there is interest (*Editors: This and other offers should be considered for the next Friends' Visit to Gibraltar, June 2017*)

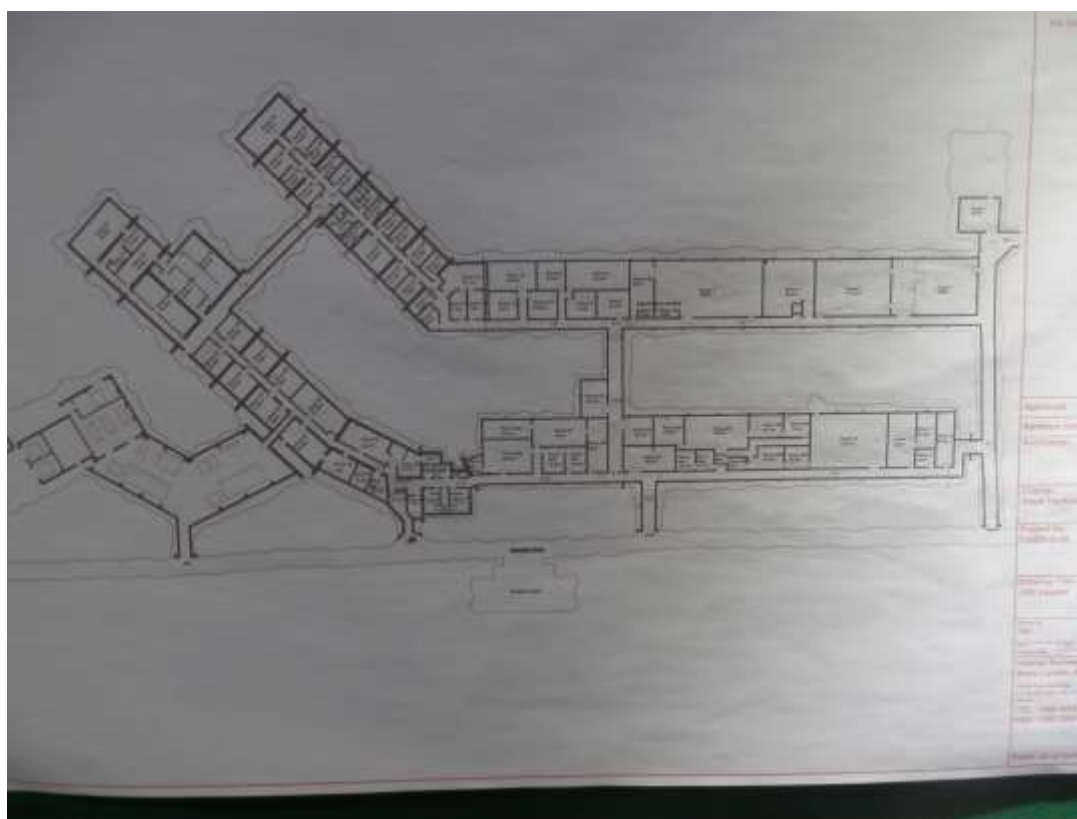
*The Editors would like to thank the membership for their support in contributing to this issue of Rock Talk, and for the feedback on previous issues.*

*Opinions expressed in Rock Talk are the author's and do not necessarily express Board policy*





*Roosevelt in the Bunker, note Bakelite pen holders*



*Plan of the bunker complex*

# Limited Edition Coin Set to mark HM The Queen Elizabeth's 90th Birthday

The Gibraltar National Mint has commissioned a special limited edition set of Fine Gold .999 24ct coins, which have been created in celebration of Her Majesty the Queen's 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday. The first set (00) was presented by Chief Minister Fabian Picardo to HRH The Princess Royal as a gift to Her Majesty on behalf of the people of Gibraltar.

In tribute to Her Majesty on her 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday, renowned sculptor, Raphael Maklouf, has created a new 2016 effigy and this effigy is seen throughout the set.

The special set, numbered 01-90, comprises of seven 24ct gold coins held within a beautifully designed bespoke wooden case and acrylic capsule both engraved with the Gibraltar Crest depicting the Rock of Gibraltar coin design within its centre. Each coin has a supporting Certificate of authenticity.

The collection begins with the Half Crown with the obverse design depicting the new 2016 Queen Elizabeth effigy and the reverse design [which is used on the half and full crown coin] inspired by the five shilling coin, symbolised by the shields of the Royal Arms, the three lion passant, Lion Rampant, the Hard, and St Edwards Crown. The set then moves to five one Crowns, each depicting the effigies created throughout the Queen's Reign; complete with the new 2016 effigy by Raphael Maklouf. The final coin within the set is the Double Crown using the Maklouf effigy on the obverse and then being completed with the Royal Coat of Arms on the reverse.

This limited edition set is offered for sale in Gibraltar at a special price of £10,000. Anyone interested in ordering a set can do so through The Gibraltar National Mint at the Gibraltar Savings Bank, where a £500 deposit will be required for pre-order.



# Gibunco Gibraltar International Literary Festival

*By Albert Poggio OBE*

The event, now in its fourth edition, took place on October 20-23, and is now honoured to have received Royal Patronage from HRH the Princess Royal.

The Literary Festival is an outstanding consequence of the Government's event-led tourism policy which is yielding fruit year after year and has had a tremendous positive impact on the Rock's social and cultural calendar.

Highlights from this year's event included former prominent British politician and Liberal-Democrat leader Paddy Ashdown of Norton-sub-Hamdon GCMG KBE PC who shared some thoughts on his latest book 'Game of Spies'.

Well known author Louis de Bernieres, renowned for his 1994 novel 'Captain Corelli's Mandolin' (which was later adapted into a successful film), and the former First Sea Lord of the Royal Navy, Admiral Alan West were among the leading speakers taking part in this year's prestigious event.

Ten television personalities, presenters and media celebrities returned due to popular demand. Revisiting the Rock were author Nick Rankin and university professor Maggie Gee for a joint event where they examined and discussed the creative process inherent to writing, focusing on local history from the Neanderthals to World War II. The husband and wife team are both well known in the UK literary circuit.

Professor Gee has written 14 books; some of her works examine post-colonial themes. Nick Rankin, a BBC Broadcaster for 20 years, is author of four books including 'Ian Fleming's Commandos, the story of 30 Assault Unit in WWII.'

Celebrity speakers included the popular broadcaster Nicholas Parson, actress Maureen Lipman, Chef Anthony Worral Thomson, Sky Sports Presenter and football commentator Guillem Balague, and journalist William Chislett.

New names for this year's festival included authors Giselle Green, who although born in Chiswick UK, lived in Gibraltar since the age of seven. An award winning, contemporary women's fiction author, her latest novel 'Dear Dad' has been described as a heart-warming love story that develops when a determined 9 year old desperately tries to find his father.

John Bentley's debut novel 'The Royal Secret' is a mystery thriller centred on a modern day woman's search for a famous Elizabethan, a quest which unravels not just his secret life, but also the influence of freemasonry and the Templars in modern day political events.

Local authors participating include Gibraltarian actress, singer, song-writer and renowned author Carmen Gomez together with poet David Bentata. Another poet Gabriel Moreno, a Gibraltarian folk-singer and lyricist, presented his latest work.

Clive and Geraldine Finlayson, directors of the local museum discussed the Gorham's Cave project and the successful bid for World Heritage status which was achieved earlier this year, and Justin Bautista, who has written two books of local kitchen recipes, led a discussion on Gibraltarian food, a topic enjoyed by all!

For further information on speakers and the full programme of this year's event, and advance information on next year's plans, visit the festival website at [www.gibraltarliteraryfestival.com](http://www.gibraltarliteraryfestival.com)



*Kevin Crossley Holland and Mercedes Acuirre in discussion*





*A concert in the King's Chapel at the Convent*

## And a personal view of some of the events...

*By Jennifer Scherr*

The annual Gibraltar International Literary Festival was moved last year, from its previous November slot, to 20<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2016. As ever, there was a packed and interesting programme, run from the Garrison Library, and with over 50 events at venues all over the Rock, and speakers from the UK, Gibraltar, Spain and beyond.

This change of date meant that the Festival happily coincided – for me, at least – with the annual Ceremony of the Keys at Casemates on the Thursday, and with the Trafalgar Day Commemoration at the King's Chapel followed by the Act of Remembrance at Trafalgar Cemetery on the Sunday.

World events accounted for a stronger than usual naval presence at Casemates and at the Trafalgar Day services. It was also fitting that the former First Sea Lord, Admiral the Rt Hon West of Spithead, who spoke on Nelson and Trafalgar for the Festival, had also been invited to give the address at Trafalgar Cemetery: on both occasions using his retired status to comment, in passing, on the state of the navy (and UK defence policy generally) today.

I'm sure the 2017 Festival will also be a great success and of considerable interest to members.



*The re-enactment society preparing to march*



*The Royal Gibraltar Regiment parading in Casemates*



*A Naval remembrance Service at Trafalgar Cemetery*



*The Governor arriving for the Ceremony*

## First Anniversary of Memorial Event

*By Richard Lord*

Following an initial discussion between Joe Brugada and Richard Lord at the Convent Garden Party in June 2016, the Friends were invited to participate in the first anniversary of the Memorial dedicated by the Government of Gibraltar and people of Gibraltar to the memory of those Gibraltarians who served in HM Armed Forces and died in conflict during both World Wars. The impressive memorial is located in the National Memorial Arboretum in Alrewas, Lichfield.

Richard Lord laid a wreath on behalf of the Friends and read out a tribute to those from Gibraltar who had lost their lives.

For those who have not been to the Arboretum, a visit is highly recommended. A full day should be allocated as the train ride there shows the size of the Arboretum and highlights many memorials to visit subsequently. The Gibraltar Memorial at the entrance to the Mediterranean area is worthy of an early port of call.



In the photo (courtesy of Janet Whiteley) are Joe Brugada – event organiser and representing the Government of Gibraltar, Commodore Richard and Denise Lord, Patricia and Harvey Johnson, Janet Whiteley and Eric Brooks representing the Friends.



# Removing the Rock

*Based on a presentation to the Gibraltar Group of Professional Engineers*

*By Dr Edward P F Rose, Honorary Research Fellow, Earth Sciences, Royal Holloway, University of London*

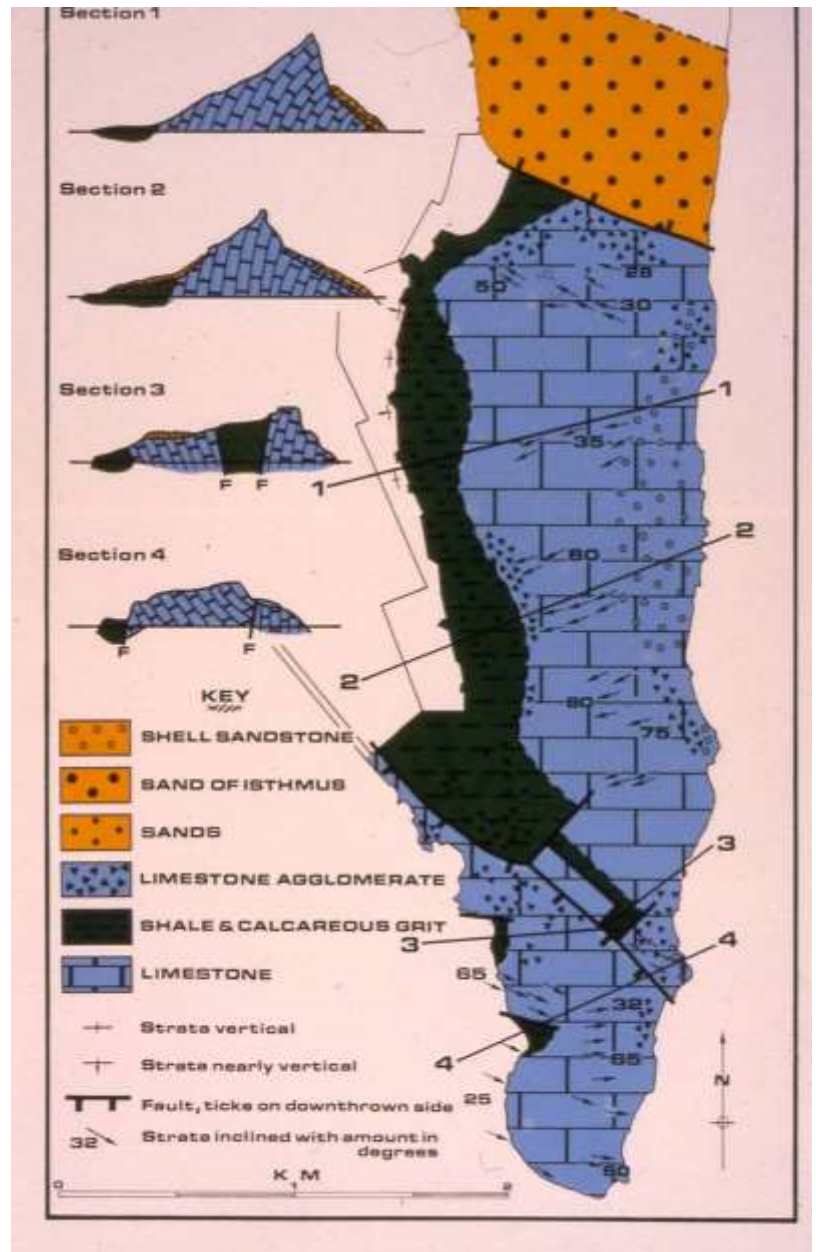
A pre-war understanding of Gibraltar's geology can be obtained by studying the geological map produced in 1876 by Ramsay & Geikie (see figure). The Rock is a mass of Jurassic limestone overlain by a single 'shale' unit to the West. A normal fault downthrows limestone at the North face of the Rock, and a NW-SE great main fault separates westward-dipping main ridge from the eastward-dipping southern plateaux limestone. Superficial deposits of sands and 'breccias' flank the bedrock, as can be seen on the map.

A number of major projects in World War II led to significant quarrying and change in understanding. Arguably the most important was the construction of an operational airfield. Unlike 856 airfields constructed in the UK, this project uniquely required an extension into the sea to provide sufficient runway length. On 27<sup>th</sup> October 1941, the Air Ministry ordered an extension of the emergency strip on the isthmus, which was mostly complete by October 1943.

Most of the work took place between February 1942 and July 1943. The initial decision was to extend the emergency landing strip west into the bay to a total length of 1550 yards, completed by November 1942. A further extension to 1800 yards was completed in July 1943. The Chief Engineer in Gibraltar at the time, Brigadier T W R Haycraft, described this work in some detail in the RE Journal in 1946.

The main purpose of the airfield in Gibraltar was as a staging post for aircraft in transit between the UK, Malta and Middle East Command in Egypt. It then served as an assembly point for aircraft supporting the Allied invasion of North Africa (Operation TORCH) in November 1942. The final main task was as an assembly point for aircraft supporting the Allied invasion of Southern France (Operation DRAGOON) in August 1944.

Earlier RE experience in bulk stone moving focused on Quarrying Companies RE, an innovation of WW1 for the Western Front. Thirteen were raised, using essentially manual effort to produce results.



*After: AC Ramsay & J Geikie (1876) © EPF Rose*





*A bulldozer and steamroller being used in the construction of the new aerodrome, December 1941  
By Dallison GW (Lt), War Office official photos (public domain)*

Eight Companies were reformed in WW2, initially to serve again on the Western Front, but the Dunkirk evacuation of British forces frustrated their assignment. The deployment of these companies is illustrated in the attached diagram, which shows that 855 Quarrying Company RE officially deployed to Gibraltar in July 1942 to August 1943.

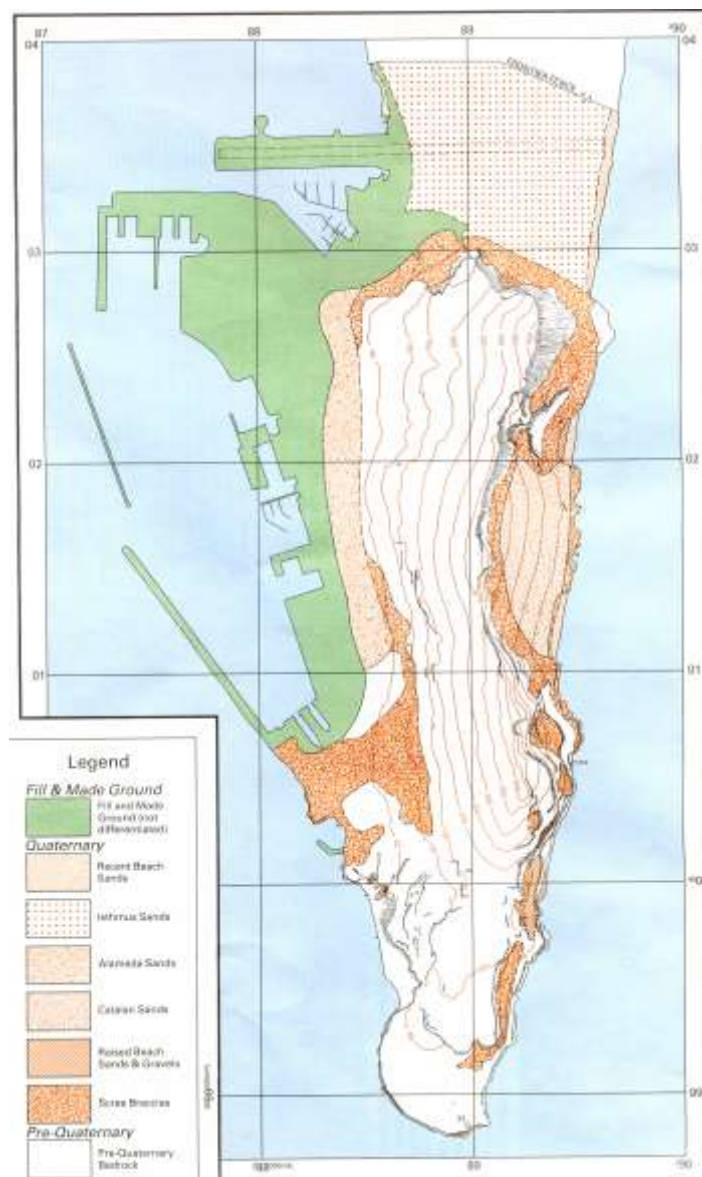


*First phase completed, pilot's view of the airfield before its second extension  
Source: Lt Col TB Protzman, veteran's testimonies, US Army Medical department web site*

These airfield extensions required considerable rock fill. Some fill for reclamation of land from the sea had earlier been quarried from the slopes of the Rock as fortifications had been developed after the British conquest of Gibraltar. Considerably more had been quarried at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century for the extension of the dockyard, and the construction of the large dry docks. However, the scope of the reclamation required far more fill than could be provided by tunnel spoil from the large extension to the network of passages and chambers developed within the heart of the Rock.

The Excavator Company, Royal Engineers, was charged with the duty of providing this fill. This is an almost unique unit, as there had been no provision before 1939 for the use of mechanical excavators in the British Army. Only 135 Excavator Company RE, formed in September 1939 and sent to France in October to assist in trench excavation, had borne the name (it was disbanded after Dunkirk). The Excavator Company in Gibraltar was commanded by Major H Wilkinson MM RE, and comprised of a headquarters, two mechanical equipment sections and a quarrying section, totalling 6 officers and 274 other ranks. It included a diamond drill section, drawn from the Royal Canadian Engineers, with specialist skills.

The primary source of fill was the scree breccias that flank the Northern and North-Eastern faces. These formed during the Quarternary period (the last 2.5 million years), a time of fluctuating changes in climate and relative sea level as Gibraltar was progressively raised from the sea by northward movement of the African tectonic plate. Breccias were quarried in Catalan Bay and at the North Face of the Rock (see map).



*Extract from Rosenbaum & Rose's 1991 Geological Map of Gibraltar,  
Royal School of Military Survey misc map 25*



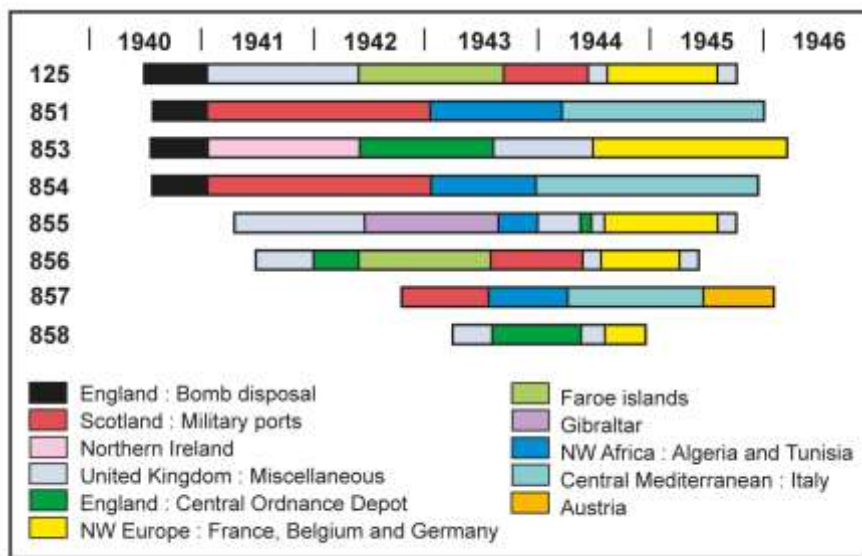
*Catalan Bay quarry site (photograph © EPF Rose)*

Quarrying was by drilling and blasting, extending to two-shift working from mid-March 1942 (07:00-20:00), and using water-jet from a modified flame thrower from April onwards, at the suggestion of the Canadians. Output averaged 2000-4000 cubic yards per day, an output very considerably greater than that provided by tunnel spoil: table below.

Year	6-month period	Total per month	Average per company/month
1940	(2 months only)	8,246	2,061
1941	1st	78,206	3,255
	2nd	148,398	5,956
1942	1st	141,816	5,909
	2nd	215,509	9,370
1943	1st	161,202	10,075
	2nd	106,960	10,696
1944	1st	69,210	11,535
	2nd	91,500	15,250
1945	1st	66,300	11,050

*According to Cotton, 1948*





© EPF Rose 2016

855 Quarrying Company had a strength of 4 officers and 180 other ranks. Of these 1 officer and 47 other ranks arrived as a first party in February 1942 to reinforce the Excavator Company. The OC, another officer and 71 other ranks arriving in June 1942. The rest of the unit remained quarrying for road building tasks in Wales (they were a Welsh unit). Additional support for the construction of the airfield was provided by 807 Road Construction Company RE, led by Major M Giles, working 7 days a week from 08:00- 16:40 on the airfield. Resource from 855 reinforced this unit as necessary. A final additional burst of effort to complete the airfield in time for planned operations led to the deployment of other specialist units – 116 Road Construction Company RE, 674 Artisan Works Company RE, 47 Mechanical Equipment Section RE and 207 Company of the Pioneer Corps to provide additional manpower. The extension to 1550 yards required some 750,000 cubic yards of fill and the second stage had increased this to 1.5 million cubic yards.

All this intense quarrying left its mark on Gibraltar's geological heritage. Shales were exposed in bedrock beneath the breccia at Catalan Bay Quarry, and at the North Face quarry as can be seen in the photographs. This led to a re-evaluation of the geology of Gibraltar.

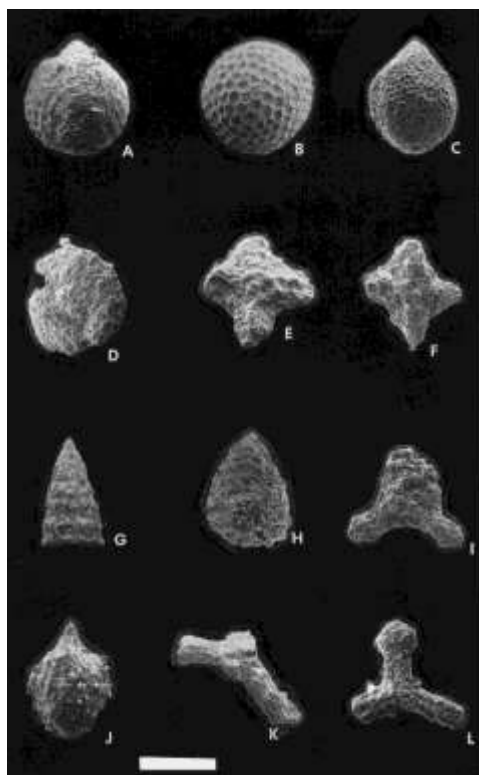


Exposed shales at Catalan Bay quarry site (photograph © EPF Rose)

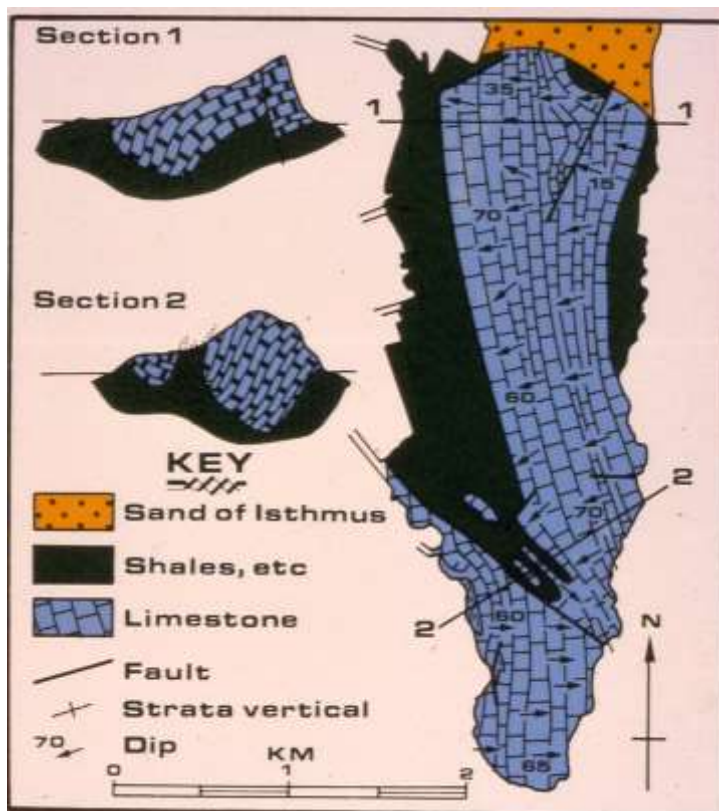


*Shales exposed in bedrock beneath breccia at North Face Quarry © EPF Rose*

The 'shales' contain radiolarian cherts; at least 17 genera/species were identified in thin sections by (Sir) Edward Bailey (1953), but this was extended to at least 30 in later work (2000) using stereoscan electron microscopy. These confirm Bailey's inference of a Late Jurassic dating for these rocks, and, interestingly, confirm his inference that the main ridge of the Rock is upside down, having been inverted by the tectonic movements that generated the Betic mountains of Spain.



*E Urquhart; in Rose (2000), Gibraltar Heritage Monograph 1*



*After: Quart Jour Geol Soc London (1953) © EPF Rose*

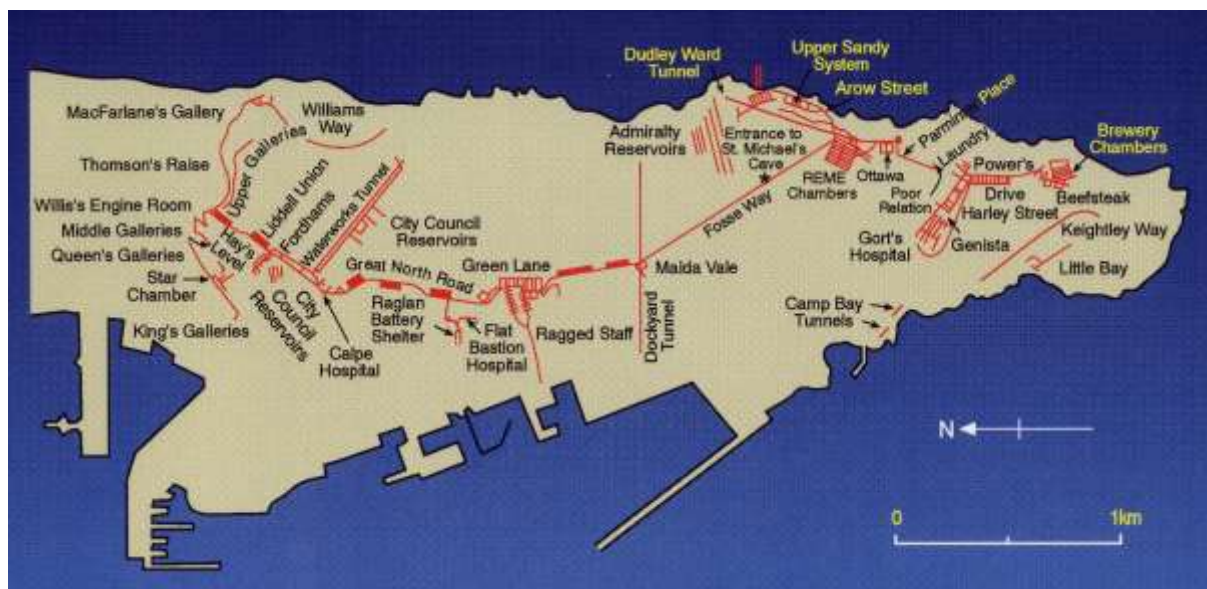


Sir Edward Bailey updated the geological map in 1953 (Quart Jour Geol Soc London), based on an earlier map and 1943 work by Sapper A L Greig. Sapper Greig was a graduate of the Royal School of Mines serving in Gibraltar as a driver, but was tasked with compiling a new geological map and report to update the 1876 map shown earlier. Shales are seen both West and East of the main ridge, and a single shale unit underlies the limestone. The North Face is now considered a transcurrent rather than normal fault. The Rock is an inverted 'klippe', thrust into place during the Betic orogeny.

As was mentioned earlier, significant amounts of tunnelling were also undertaken in the Rock itself. This was carried out principally by the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tunnelling (Engineers) Group RE, which arrived in August 1940. Six Companies formed part of this Group at various times, as can be seen in the attached table.

Company	1940	1941	1942	1943	1944
178	arr 28 Aug	operational	operational	dep 22 Apr	
180	arr 3 Oct	operational	operational	dep 6 Jul	
170		arr 10 Mar	operational	dep 9 Nov	
1 Canadian	arr 22 Nov	dep 11 Mar			
2 Canadian		arr 10 Mar	dep 14 Dec		
172				arr 26 May	operational

The principal tunnels and chambers are shown in the attached diagram. 178 Company RE began by working in the North, with 180 Company focusing on the South-East. Methods of excavation have been described by many authors, notably Major Wilson and Brigadier Haycraft, both in 1946. The attached photographs show a typical working face, and activity in constructing the REME Chamber, the largest of the military chambers with a length of 120m, a span of 16m and a height to crown of arch of 10 m.



After: Rosenbaum & Rose (1992): *The Tunnels of Gibraltar*, Gibraltar Museum © EPF Rose





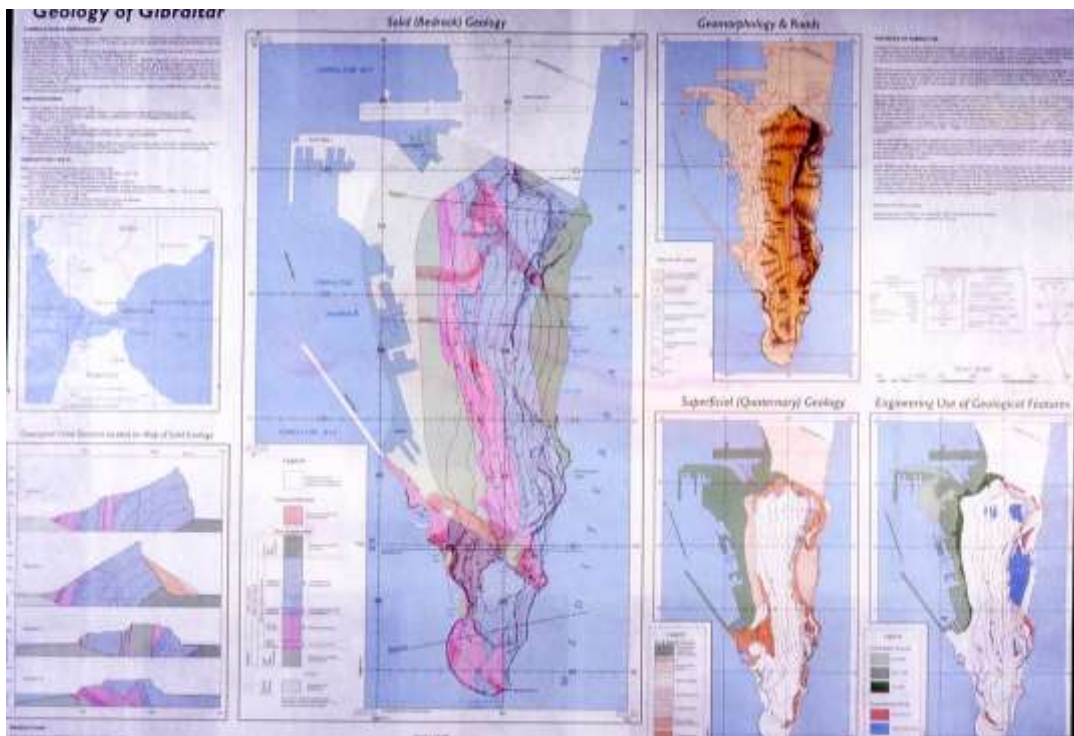
*Use of high-pressure water drill  
From: Wikipedia, Tunnels of Gibraltar*



*Excavation of cavernous REME Chamber  
From: Wikipedia, Tunnels of Gibraltar*

Sapper Greig discovered fossil ammonites in shales in Catalan Bay and North Face quarries, which were identified at the Natural History Museum. By comparison with better preserved specimens from elsewhere in the Mediterranean, it was possible to infer that these rocks dated from the mid-Liassic ear i.e. younger than the Early Liassic Gibraltar limestone above. Unfortunately, these ammonites were subsequently lost, and never drawn or photographed. This loss indicates the importance of conserving evidence from engineering of Gibraltar's geological as well as historical heritage.

The 1943 geological map and account by Sapper Greig, and the 1953 article derived from them by E B Bailey have now been superseded by a 1991 geological map published by the Royal School of Military Survey, and by a wealth of geological publications. These should be accessed for further information on the subject. However, the quarries and tunnels formed by partly removing the Rock provide a geological legacy of enduring significance.



After the end of WW2, 172 tunnelling Company was reduced in size to a troop, and became part of a re-constituted 1<sup>st</sup> Fortress Squadron RE, successor to the Company of Soldier Artificers founded within the fortress of Gibraltar in 1772 that became the first rank-and-file unit of the Royal Engineers. That troop was disbanded on completion of its final tunnel in 1967, 50 years ago this year.



© EPF Rose

2016 was an anniversary year for the Corps of Royal Engineers, which was founded in 1716 – the 'Sappers'. What is a 'Sapper'? He was described in 1855 as "This versatile genius... condensing the whole system of military engineering and all that is useful and practical under one red jacket. He is a man of all work of the Army and the public – astronomer, geologist, surveyor, draughtsman, artist, architect, traveller, explorer, antiquary, mechanic, diver, soldier and sailor; ready to do anything or go anywhere". The activities of the Excavator and Tunnelling Companies in Gibraltar during WW2 exhibited many of these qualities, and should be remembered as a significant achievement.



# Lions in the jungle of small bushes\*

By Paul Blake

Underrated, possibly, was the importance of the feline population of Gibraltar in the mid-eighteenth century. Not mere mousers these – they had an important job, saving the provisions from the vermin that occupied the storehouses of the Ordnance Office. These moggies were well catered for, with their own budget to keep them fed and watered, ready to take on the most determined murid rodent.

Ordnance Office Bill Books (TNA: WO 53) include many references to payments for the maintenance of the scourge of the rat population. A copy of the original document can be seen below, and a clearer copy of the wording is appended to emphasise their contribution. One wonders if similar requirements still exist...



Office of Ordnance  
Gibraltar 27<sup>th</sup> Mar. 1753

Received of George Deal Esq<sup>r</sup>.  
Paymaster &c<sup>a</sup>. to the said Office, three Dollars  
five Rials and Eleven Quarts for the Maintain-  
ance of three Catts kept in the storehouse to  
prevent the Stores from being devoured by Ratts  
between the 26<sup>th</sup>. December 1752 & 27<sup>th</sup>: ins<sup>t</sup>.  
inclusive  
at 4<sup>d</sup>. St<sup>s</sup>. each Catt per Week (Ex<sup>a</sup>. at 42<sup>d</sup> per  
Doll<sup>r</sup>.)  
purs<sup>t</sup>. to the Hon<sup>ble</sup>. Boards order of 19<sup>th</sup>. Dec<sup>r</sup>.  
1751

In Witness whereof I have Signed  
Two Receipts of this Tenor & date

Alex<sup>r</sup> M<sup>c</sup> Gregor

Doll<sup>rs</sup>. 3.5.11

Witness  
W<sup>m</sup>. Dixon

\* 'A cat is a lion in a jungle of small bushes' - Indian saying



# Llanitos in space!

*By John Borda*

I was reading through the news about ESA's busy programme for the year<sup>1</sup>, and came across a familiar-looking satellite. It's not that it looks like any other satellite, it's actually quite unusual- a very compact "arrow-like" shape, with small fins on it.

Over ten years ago, I was working for a scientific research firm (Oxford Instruments) testing superconducting materials, on a contract from ESA. While I can't claim to be the "brains" behind them, I was testing these materials to see if they could be made into more sensitive devices more reliably. One of these devices is known as a "SQUID" (Superconducting Quantum Interference Device), which are the most sensitive magnetic field detectors known to man.

To illustrate, they could sense a bunch of keys being jangled at the other end of the lab, and were impossible to test during rush-hour because of all the "noise" of the metal cars moving outside. (The lab later moved as far away from a major road as it could!). These are the detectors at the heart of the GOCE satellite<sup>2</sup>. Strategically placed around a "jumping-jack" shaped piece of niobium, they can detect tiny movements in all three dimensions as the satellite passes low over the Earth. These will allow the satellite to map tiny variations in the gravity field over the planet, and provide highly detailed data about the Earth, including sea levels, potential mineral deposits and the like.

I remember putting together an annual series of proposals about this satellite, including ground test rigs and other aspects of its design, which was sent to ESA for consideration. However my main contribution was to speed up the ability to change the many drafts it went through, as for the first version I was using a scalpel and several rolls of Scotch tape to "cut" and "paste" the proposal and it's many complex diagrams together- literally! (No Photoshop back then!) The next version was entirely electronic, down to the front cover (an artist's impression of the satellite), which I didn't have in electronic form. We didn't have a scanner in the office, but we did have a fax- so I faxed it to my computer modem, and was thus able to use the image!

Sadly, the nature of the ESA contract changed to something beyond my skills, so I was out of a job, but that image stayed with me, as it was, and still is, an unusual shape for a satellite. This is because it orbits so low it "grazes" the atmosphere, so it needs to be streamlined, to minimise any vibrations that might be caused by the usual solar panel "wings", which would interfere with the sensitive gravity detector.

I would have been one of a "cast of thousands" involved in getting this satellite built and launched. But, still, over a decade later, it was good to see it fly. GOCE launched successfully on March 16th 2009, and completed an active and successful programme<sup>3</sup> before de-orbiting.



## The Smir Rally 2016

*by Tricia Johnson*

On Friday 8th July 2016 three members of FOGHS set out from Queensway Quay to join a selection of over 40 boats for the annual rally from Gibraltar to Smir in Morocco. The flotilla consisted of sailing and motor boats. We, Harvey Johnson, Tricia Johnson and Richard Lord were aboard sailing yacht Enfys. This was the first time that any of us had sailed across to Morocco from Gibraltar in our own boat. We were so lucky with the weather and the sea state. There was beautiful blue sky, sunshine and a calm sea. However, there was little wind so we motor sailed the whole way. The journey took us approximately five hours, we arrived at about 18.00 hours. One brave member of the rally sailed all the way by tacking and catching as much wind as possible. It took him eleven hours, he won a well-deserved prize for his achievement. We had decided to motor sail because we are not avid sailors and wanted to ensure we reached our destination safely and in daylight!! We thoroughly enjoyed the trip taking time to view the Rock from the sea, photographing the scenery, the other yachts and the wildlife including dolphins. However, trying to photograph them was rather like a pantomime with Harvey and Richard saying, 'they're over there, they're behind you'. We were successful, as can be seen in the photograph. Another exciting visitor swimming beside the boat was a huge turtle with brown and yellow colouring. He was beautiful but no photographic evidence of this sighting, my camera was down below and I did not wish to miss seeing him.

<sup>1</sup> <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/sci/tech/7829668.stm>

<sup>2</sup> <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/sci/tech/7592689.stm>, <http://www.esa.int/SPECIALS/GOCE/>

<sup>3</sup> <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/sci/tech/8268942.stm>



Yachts preparing for the 'off'



Caught you – the elusive dolphins!

It was amazing when half way across the Straits, to look back and see Gibraltar which was getting smaller and smaller whilst, obviously, Morocco was becoming larger and clearer. The visibility was very good, enabling us to see our fellow sailors, both those in front and those following. We thought we were in the middle of the group sailing across. There was a lovely atmosphere amongst the crews who were supported by the Royal Navy in HMS Sabre..... very comforting should we have needed any help.



Half way across the Straits



The Moroccan Coast just past Ceuta

We travelled in a south easterly direction across the Straits and then due south down the Moroccan coast passing Ceuta, .....to Smir which was right in front of us as we approached. This was achieved with the good navigational skills of Harvey ably assisted by Richard and the North African Pilot Coastal by Graham Hutt. We were very relieved we didn't follow Graham's experiences in Smir - he was arrested along with members of his crew back in the 1980s!!!

On arrival we had to report into customs, this formality did not take long, Harvey reappeared within about 15 minutes. Richard had been to visit the Royal Navy boat, as he knew several of the crew. Once both were back on board we motored across to the berth we had been allocated, didn't like the look of it so went around to the other side, much easier. We were soon joined by other members of the rally. What an amazing atmosphere as we all arrived and helped one another to moor. We settled ourselves down before meeting with everyone at the end of the pontoon for welcome drinks and nibbles. We were given information about the weekend, we were free to explore the area during the day on Saturday and were invited to attend the fancy-dress party and prize giving in the evening.



Harvey leaving customs



Richard returning from HMS Sabre



Part of Smir Marina



A view of the beach in M'diq

We had not been to Smir before, therefore, we decided to walk around the harbour and marina area in the morning and to take a taxi to M'diq in the afternoon. Given that it was incredibly hot we made several stops for non-alcoholic liquid refreshment. We took a taxi from the local taxi rank and asked to go to the market in M'diq. The driver dropped us there and we arranged a location and time to meet. The market was a disappointment, not as anticipated with lovely spice stalls, vegetables, fruits and gold for sale. In fact, it looked as though many of the bags we fill to go to charity shops had ended up there and the contents of clothing and shoes just dropped onto the pavements. We left this area to walk along the promenade where we found the beautiful buildings and street lights painted in a stunning bright blue and white. Harvey and I had been in Morocco almost 37 years ago and were struck by the changes, the beaches which before had been almost deserted, were very crowded with local people, we appeared to be the only Europeans in the area.



The Promenade in M'diq



Fishing Harbour, M'diq



Having arranged the meeting place with the taxi driver, we walked to the agreed venue, he was not there! We began to mutter, thinking he would not turn up when around the corner he came. We did know who was the most relieved, us or the taxi driver who was smiling broadly. On the return journey we passed the Royal Palace and were told that the King was in residence, hence the guards dressed in traditional uniform. However, we were advised not to take photographs. This advice was given due heed, regrettably because it would have been another memory of our weekend.

It was now time to prepare for the Fancy Dress party. Harvey and Richard went as pirates and I took an easy way out and dressed in a white sheet – no not as a ghost – a Greek Goddess. Many of the crews took the dressing up very seriously and dressed in amazing costumes. The one that we all liked was a group dressed as members of Dad's Army, they were so well type - cast – very funny, especially Captain Mannering and Pike!! Another group was very nautical representing the name of their boat in nautical flags, very effective, others were Hiawatha and Minnehaha to name but a few. The whole evening was such fun, prizes were won over many different categories. The food was good and an amazing band from Gibraltar played and sang many 60's, 70's and 80's hits. We danced and danced then retired to our boats having enjoyed a wonderful evening.



The Pirates



The author in relaxed mood...

Sunday arrived, we had a leisurely breakfast and then set sail for home. The majority of boats had departed by midday, although, one could choose when to leave, a few visited Ceuta and returned to Gibraltar on the Monday. How lucky we were again, a very calm crossing made under sail and engine.



A fellow sailor on the way home.

The Smir Rally takes place each year and raises funds for a chosen charity, this year the funds were donated to the Gibraltar Red Cross. The organisers were very pleased to overtake their target raising over £10,000.

# OUT AND ABOUT IN GIBRALTAR

Developments on key sites around the Rock *by the Editors*



*Photo 1 (left): The redeveloped site at Casemates, northern entrance to Main Street. This is over the site of the old Spanish and Moorish wall. This is finally complete, though still awaiting shutters on the side facing Main Street, and is much improved.*

*Photo 2 (next page, upper): Mid Town Development with the new multi-storey car park in the background. This is on the site of the old Naval Grounds, and is a very large development very close to the old town. It has been the subject of much discussion.*

*Photo 3 (next page, lower): The old Police Station. The station has moved to a building opposite the Dockyard Entrance, with a local station in Casemates. The future use of this location is under discussion, but it is hoped that the façade will be retained and restored.*

*Photo 5 (next page, lower): The new World Trade Centre on Bayside Road, close to the Boys' Comprehensive and Victoria Stadium. It is hoped that this will further stimulate Gibraltar's commercial centre.*



*Aptly named mid-town development*





*The old Police Station*



*World Trade Centre, Bayside Road*





## **Appendix:**

### **Friends of Gibraltar Heritage Society**

#### **Minutes Annual General Meeting**

**Held on**

**Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> October 2016 at 14.00 hours, in the Wykeham Suite**

**At the Wessex Mercure Hotel, Winchester**

Present: - 38 members attended the meeting

1. The Chairman (Sir Adrian Johns (SAJ)) welcomed all those present to the AGM and thanked members for attending. He stated that this was the second AGM this year and that from now on they would fall into a different rhythm – October each year to ensure the accounts for the previous financial year were available and to coincide with the Seminar, thus capturing as many members as possible.
2. **Apologies** had been received from many members.
3. **Minutes of the last meeting.** The minutes from the AGM held on 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2016, that had been circulated prior to the meeting, were agreed. No questions or points were raised.
4. **Matters arising** – none.
5. **Report from Exco and the Board.** Chair of ExCo and Vice Chair of the Board (Albert Poggio (AP)) stated that both ExCo and the Main Board had very active committees. Members attend up to six meetings each year and work very hard in between these meetings. Lead committee members were then invited to provide their reports.

#### **Membership**

- a. Richard Lord (RL) stated that there had been a slight dip in the membership recently, though this has remained above 500. It had been agreed at the Board Meeting that AP would contact prospective members in order to re-establish an upward trend on the graph. RL thought that he would be able to manage a membership of 750 but did highlight the fact that administration related to each new member resulted in at least one hour of work.

There is also the on-going work resulting from changes of address and email addresses, and, checking email addresses when emails bounce back. Payment is received from the majority of members by Standing Orders, however, there are some members who prefer to pay by cheque. Payment by cheque does cause more work than payment through the BACS system. It has been decided this year that a discount of £2.50 will be available if payment by cheque is made before the end of April, thus the annual fee will be £15.00. However, for any member paying by cheque after the end of April, the full fee is £17.50. Members who are over 80 have free membership. Completion of the Gift Aid form was also encouraged, if possible.

The Gibraltar Heritage Trust (GHT) has withdrawn the provision of a free pass to the Upper Rock. RL is contacting GHT to try to have the free pass reinstated.

He reported that six members of FOGHS had attended the 1<sup>st</sup> Anniversary of the Gibraltar War Memorial at the National Arboretum on 13<sup>th</sup> October.

#### **Projects**

- b. RL commented on the range of projects currently in progress. This is in line with the expectations of the Charities Commission to ensure that monies are appropriately spent. GHT now requires money for projects to be delivered up front to enable timely

payment to contractors. Regular updates relating to progress and expenditure are received from GHT and the contractors. Funding projects in this way will be continued in the future providing it is appropriate. It must be remembered that projects do not stop upon completion – there is work required to ensure that aftercare is provided. Ideas for projects and more project leaders from the general membership would be very welcome.

A five year plan has been produced for management of projects detailing the expenditure involved and the anticipated timeframe.

**Trafalgar Cemetery and Dragons Teeth** are projects that have been completed but require upkeep, especially polishing the brass plaques at each venue.

**Oral History** - £12,000 has been spent to date. It was started in 2013 and covers the period of history from 1930 to 1945. Many interviews were completed and photographs donated. A website is being produced, 96 interviews have been uploaded. The website now requires testing through a Beta version – RL appealed for 10 volunteers to assist. On the question of accessibility to the website, it was thought that there should be an open area and an area requiring a password.

**The RGR Drum and Mace** refurbishment is now complete and both will be officially returned on 16<sup>th</sup> November at the Garrison Library.

**The Fortress Study Group** and FOGHS joint project to create a website where Gibraltar History can be accessed – still work in progress.

**University of Gibraltar** - FOGHS has agreed to provide a bursary of £1,000 each year to a PhD student, chosen by the University, who is studying a heritage related subject. The first student has been chosen. It is hoped to present the award in June 2017, during the FOGHS visit.

**Witham's Cemetery** is making slow progress. To date no money has been allocated to the project but £10,000 has been approved for the restoration of some of the graves. Care is required to ensure the refurbishment lasts and the cemetery does not become overgrown again. The construction company, Plata Villas, is making a significant contribution to provide footpaths.

**Schools Annual History Award** is in the negotiation phase. Two Senior Schools have been identified, one boys and one girls, for a pupil in each school to receive an award for their work related to the History of Gibraltar. The first award should be presented in June 2017 in the form of an engraved cup to be kept for a year, a certificate and £250 prize.

**Convent Franciscan Murals** – work is progressing very quickly. The Governor has been involved and security clearance for the restorers has been obtained quickly. It is hoped the restoration will be completed by December and a celebration held, possibly in early February.

### **Events**

- c. TLC stated that seven events are held each year two of which are held outside London, namely the Seminar and the visit to Gibraltar each June. There are three evening talks held during spring each year at Gibraltar House, the Summer Party and Christmas Party in London. The evening talks in 2016 covered the topics of the Gibraltar Chronicle, the Alameda Gardens and the Life of Robert Peliza. These talks were well received by all in attendance.

**Future Events** The next event is the **Christmas Party** which is being held on Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> December at 18.30 hours at the Lansdowne Club in Mayfair at a cost of £36.00 for members and £42.00 for non-members. Members were encouraged to attend and to bring a friend.

**Talk at Gibraltar House** – The Royal Naval Hospital Gibraltar by Surgeon Commodore Robin McNeill Love – 30<sup>th</sup> January 2017, at 18.00 hours.

**Summer Party** will be organized for end of June 2017, date tbc.

**Visit to Gibraltar** – will commence on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> June 2017, programme to be arranged.

**AGM and Seminar** - will take place on 28<sup>th</sup> October 2017, venue tba.

Given that five of the events are in London consideration is being given to holding events in other locations, possibly Birmingham, Bristol or Coventry. Members were then encouraged to book their place early on all events.

Janet Whiteley (JW) gave a brief report about the June visit this year, saying how well the visit had gone and that it had been enjoyed by all 44 persons who attended.

Members of Gibraltar Rotary joined the Boat Trip during this week and three have now joined FOGHS. JW would welcome ideas for visits/activities for the visit in 2017. At this point JW announced that she would be standing down from organising the seminar but continuing to organise the June visit.

The Chairman extended our thanks to JW for her very hard work and expressed gratitude that she is still going to be involved with the June visit.

### **Rock Talk**

- d. Vincent Mifsud (VM) announced that the format for next issue of Rock Talk would be similar to the last issue. Several articles have been submitted to date but more are required. Members were requested to submit ideas for consideration. VM will be contacting the Fortress Study Group regarding the work that has been done this year. It is hoped that the new issue will be ready to go to print by the end of December. The contribution of the editors in Gibraltar, Elizabeth and Brian Gonzalez was acknowledged, as was the support provided by Gibraltar House.

Paul Blake commented that he would prefer to receive Rock Talk in PDF format. VM responded that a web version can be produced and an email version but this is not always of the best quality.

The Chairman thanked VM for his hard work and stated that for a small organization Rock Talk is a high quality journal.

6. **Treasurer's Report** – Venetia Lawson-Cruttenden (VLC) stated that at the end of the financial year 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016 the total assets were £58,852; income for the year £10,128 which included £740 from a Barclays Bank account that had now been closed. Expenditure was £900 for the year, however, the bill for Rock Talk had not been received before the end of the year. Therefore, there will be two bills for Rock Talk in the next accounts to March 2017. Planned spending on projects over the next five years is £45,000. £8,500 has been paid to GHT for the Franciscan Frescos.
7. Suggestions for future events and projects from members – there were no suggestions made at the meeting but members were encouraged to contact Board Members with ideas.
8. AOB - Nil
9. Date for the next meeting – Saturday October 28th 2017 prior to the Annual Seminar and Dinner, timing and venue to be announced.

Finally, the Chairman expressed thanks to the Board and ExCo for their hard work. He asked if there were any members who would be interested in participating by leading on projects or organizing events. Please come forward if you would like to help.

The meeting closed at 15.00 hours.

TJ 04.11.16





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#### Front Cover:

The Convent (Governor's residence), site of the recently discovered Franciscan murals  
The Society is supporting restoration of these significant artefacts

## APPEAL FOR MORE VOLUNTEERS

*The Society would welcome additional volunteers from the membership to assist with the organisation of events, with the administration of the Society, and in any other way that might be appropriate.*

*Members are encouraged to contact any member of the Executive Committee, or to contact Gibraltar House for a telephone number or e-mail address.*

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