



GWL

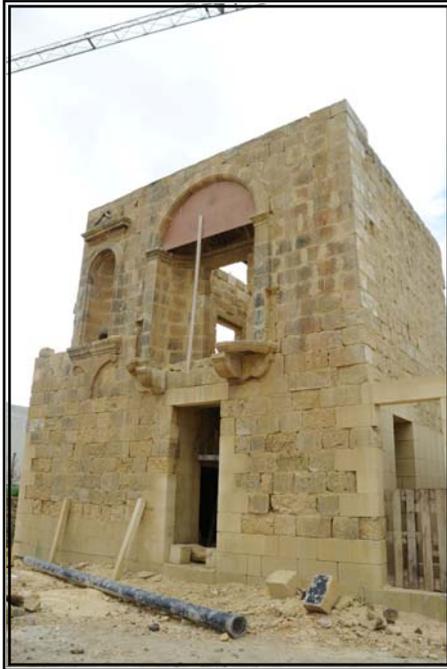
The word for *Ghawdex* in Punic inscription

Wirt Ghawdex NEWSLETTER No1/12



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It is with immense pleasure that I address this message to the Members of Wirt Għawdex. At long last we have managed to acquire premises to serve as our main headquarters. The historic



Dar il-Gvernatur which is an elegant eighteenth century building has been entrusted to Wirt Għawdex by the Minister of Gozo to whom we are very grateful. The building itself is of a historic nature as we are told that it was used by the Governor of Gozo to welcome important personages visiting Gozo in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century. The building itself after hundreds of years, found itself in the way of major road works. It was therefore found necessary to move the house brick by brick and rebuild it on a nearby site. The opportunity is taken to provide it with all conveniences and utilities. We are hoping that the ground floor will be turned into a reception where visitors will become aware of all the sites entrusted to Wirt Ghawdex. The top floor will house our offices.

Another historic site entrusted to us is the late Medieval Chapel of St Cecilia which is sited near the Heliport. We are very excited about this site as it is the only medieval chapel existing in Gozo. It has been saved from certain ruin and with the generous sponsorship of the Baron Group of Companies and funds from the [eco-gozo](#) project and the Ministry for Gozo an ambitious restoration programme has been successfully undertaken. We look forward to the official opening including the presentation of

an interesting monograph on this Chapel. In the meantime we have held a soft opening hosting there a lecture by Dr. Paul George Pisani and we are pleased to report that attendees were very impressed by the restored building.

Managing these new sites in addition to the ones we currently have, places a heavy strain on our volunteer resources and I would therefore kindly ask members to come forward to help out. The enthusiasm and indefatigable work of our committee members has to be supplanted by more volunteering from our members. As Wirt Għawdex assumes an increased workload we would like to maintain the efficient way in which we manage our sites. Only when members come forward can we discharge our increasing duties correctly and professionally.

I take this opportunity to wish all our members and friends a Happy Easter.

Franco



Mark your calendars :

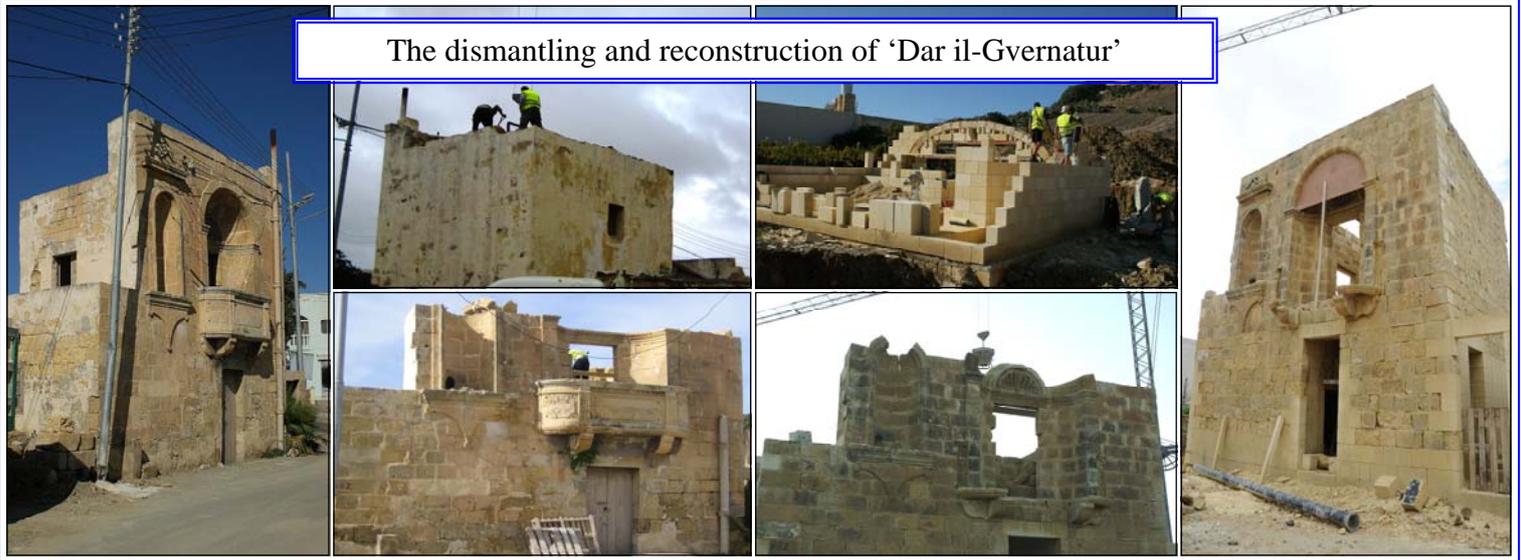
Our next lecture is scheduled for Friday April 13, 2012. It's titled '**Neolithic Malta** *what we lost... what we have....*' and will be delivered by Daniel Cilia. It will be held at the newly restored Santa Cecilia Chapel starting at 6:30pm.



The following lecture is scheduled for Friday, June 8, 2012. It's titled '**Maltese Jewellery**' and will be delivered by Ms. Francesca Balzan. More details will follow closer to the date.



The dismantling and reconstruction of 'Dar il-Gvernatur'



Restoration of old 'antiporta' church door

In 2000, the Franciscan Friars put in a new 'antiporta' (inside door) at **St. Francis Church** in Victoria. The old door was still in relatively good shape and they donated it to Wirt Ghawdex for safekeeping. It had been in storage these past 11 years until it was decided that it should be put out on display.



The door needed some restoration work and some of this year's Sixth Form students were eager to help out with this. Franklin, Maria and Francesca can be seen hard at work in this pictures.

We did some research to find out more details about the history of the door and our efforts paid off when we tracked down the original bill! It shows a date of **26th May, 1899** and includes details of the carpenter who made it, the friar who raised the funds for it, the cost of each component of the door and also the transportation costs to bring it to Gozo.

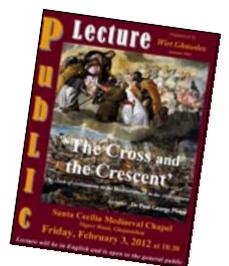
The door is now on permanent display at the Santa Cecilia chapel and we hope many of you will be able to see it when you visit the chapel.



Soft Opening of the newly restored Santa Cecilia Chapel

The first activity held at the chapel was a lecture on February 3, 2012 titled 'The Cross and The Crescent' delivered by Dr. Paul Pisani. It turned out to be one of the best attended lectures and over 80 people squeezed into the chapel to listen to Dr. Pisani bringing the Battle of Lepanto to life. For many, this was a first opportunity to see the finished chapel and the positive reactions from everyone were a source of great satisfaction.

Since then, the landscaping of the surrounding area has been done and the back room has been set up as an information centre about the history of the chapel.



Our thanks and appreciation go to local artist Victor Spiteri for his generous donation of an original pen & ink drawing of the Santa Cecilia Chapel. This donation will bring much-needed funds when it is auctioned off by silent auction at the official opening of the chapel on March 24, 2012.



Wirt Ghawdex (founded 1981)

Member of:
- Voluntary Organisations VO/0227
- Gozo NGOs' Association

Address:
Dar il-Lunzjata,
Wied il-Lunzjata
Rabat VCT 1680,
Ghawdex, Malta

Website: www.wirtghawdex.org
E-mail: info@wirtghawdex.org
Mobile: 79771981

Editor: Ms. Sandra Jackson
gw@wirtghawdex.org

Mission Statement

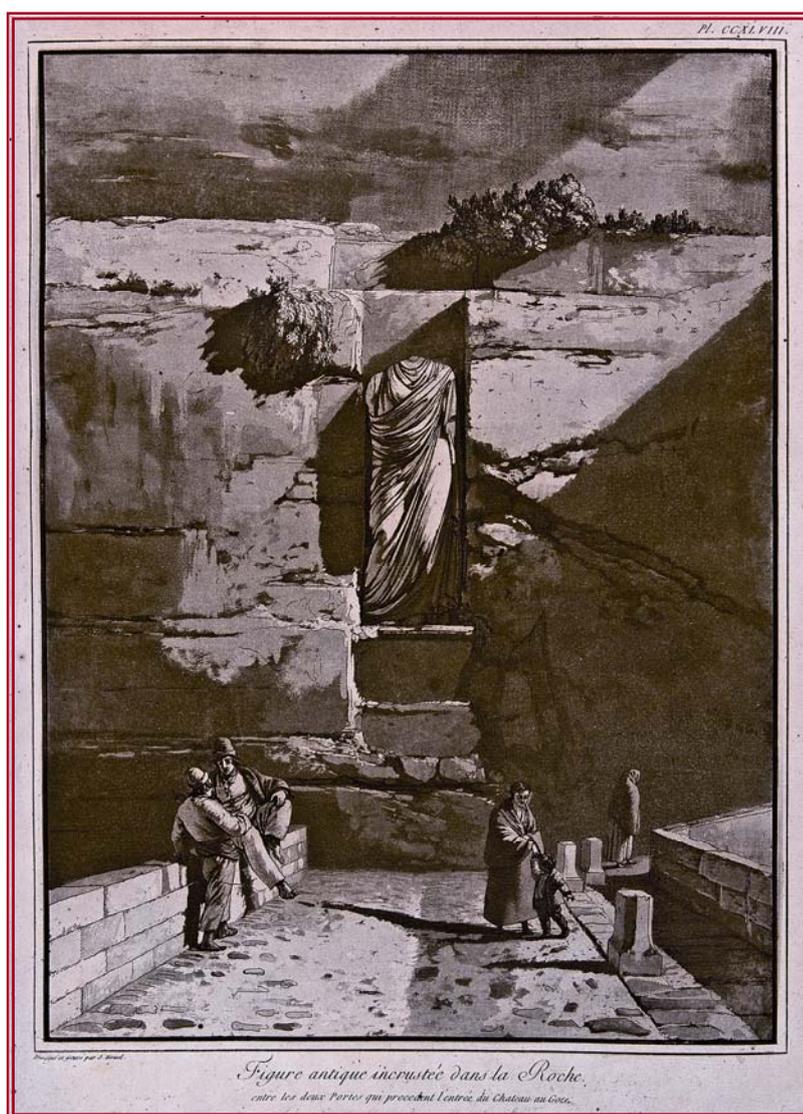
"To Foster the Knowledge of And Safeguard the Natural, Archaeological, Historical and Anthropological Heritage of the Islands of Gozo and Comino."

Gozo in print by John Cremona, committee member.

Before the invention of photography, the most economic and efficient means to produce images in large quantities was through the process of engraving or lithography. The number of engravings and lithographs of Gozo related subjects produced over a span of three centuries (1600 – 1900) is impressive indeed with the major number of prints being produced during the nineteenth century. This article is a free translation of one from a series of articles relating to engravings and lithographs of Gozo published in the Gozo Diocese monthly magazine 'Il-Ħajja f'Għawdex'. Hopefully, the translation of the other articles will continue to be featured in future editions of 'GWL'.

A drawing befitting an empress.

The engraving about which I shall be speaking in this article was published in the fourth volume of the monumental work 'Voyage Pittoresque des îles de Sicile, de Malte et de Lipari' published by Jean Houel in 1786. The engraving which bears plate number CCXLVIII (248) shows a roman statue which existed in a niche at the entrance to the Cittadella. Today this statue is on display at the Gozo Museum of Archaeology. The artist who is also the author of the book gives a detailed description of the original entrance to the Cittadella which up to that date had not yet been subjected to major modifications. He says that upon arriving on the spot (where he is drawing the view) and walking in the direction of the woman and turning on the right, one finds himself at the gate to the Citadel. The position from where Houel painted this view must have been on the old bridge which spanned between the ravellin and the curtain wall, today breached by the large arch into Cathedral Square, roughly following the last part of the stairs which lead to the Cittadella. The niche, today blocked with stones, is still visible immediately to the left of the breach. In the painting, Houel places several figures wearing traditional Gozitan costumes.



Houel states that he has “drawn it faithfully, from the original, as well as all the other features in this picture: they are exactly as I show them here”. He also mentions the numerous classical architectural fragments which adorned the way up to the Cittadella.

An interesting observation by Jean Houel is that these classical remains together with remains of burials of the same age attest to Gozo’s glorious past “when the arts stood in a position of honour” and that “this island has known days of glory”. He also says that he was shown a marble head which could belong to the statue but it was so mutilated that it was no longer recognizable. Apart from this, the head which was to be found in a tailor’s shop in Rabat was spattered with ink stains.

The original gouache of this engraving was acquired by Catherine the Great of Russia and today it is conserved in the Hermitage together with other exquisite drawings of Malta and Gozo by Jean Houel. The engraving is titled 'Figure antique incrustée dans la roche entre de deux portes qui précèdent l'entrée du Château au Goze' and measures 375mm x 260mm.



The newly restored Santa Cecilia chapel is proving to be very popular. Even before it was officially opened, we received requests for permission to use it for various functions. There have already been 2 lectures, 2 Masses, local council group tour etc. and we are still getting other inquiries.

In an effort to give an opportunity to as many people as possible to see it, we have planned to have an 'Open House' on **Sunday March 25/12** and again on **Saturday & Sunday March 31 and Apr.1/12** respectively. On those days, we would like to have it open from **10:am to 2:00pm** if we have sitters. If anyone is interested in volunteering some time (it doesn't have to be for the whole 4 hours), please contact us on membership@wirtghawdex.org and we will give you all the necessary details. Those who sit will not need to know a lot of the chapel's history since there are self-explanatory information panels installed.

After the open days, we would also like to have it open for a few hours on Saturdays on a regular basis. Again, we would need involvement from you, our membership, in order to make this happen. Please contact us if you are interested in doing some very satisfying volunteer work.

MEPANOTICE Customer Contact service - The new customer care contact number is **22902019**. For issues related to *Planning or Environment* the customer care representative is *Ms Yoanne Muscat*, while for *Enforcement* issues the customer care representative is *Mr Brady Paris*. The public is encouraged to contact these **Customer Care** representatives through email address: customercare@mepa.org.mt. Through this service MEPA is committing itself to provide its customers with a reply within five (5) working days. ***** **24 hour Emergency Service - 2069 9595** *****



Lectures:

- Fridays, April 13, June 8, September 7, October 12, November 23, 2012

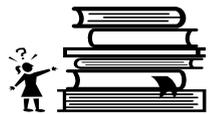
Guide book - May 2012

Lejlet Lapsi (May 18 - 20) launching new interpretation panels at our Cittadella site along with an associated guide book

Open house of Santa Cecilia Chapel

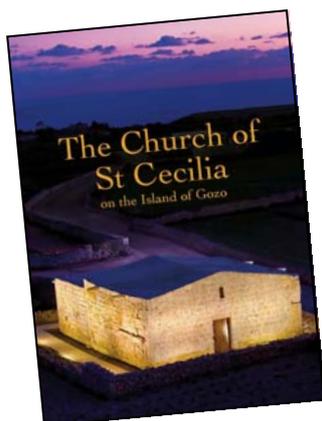
- March 25,31 & April 1 (10:00 - 14:00).

Competition



Q. What was the date of the original bill of the recently restored antiporta?

First correct answer to the editor (address on page 2) will receive a Café Jubilee voucher for €20 thanks to:



Wirt Ghawdex's 6th publication is out

Thanks go to :

The author : David Mallia B.E.&A. (Hons.), L.R.S.M., Dip. Cons. (Milan), Ph.D. (Milan)

Photography and design : Daniel Cilia

Copy-editing : Joe Zammit Ciantar

A copy of this book can be obtained by sending a request by e-mail to publications@wirtghawdex.org or from our sites.

