



Wirt Għawdex

OPENING OF SILO PITS – at the Citadel, Victoria

Dr. Stephanie Jean Coppini – P.R.O. *Wirt Għawdex*

On Friday, 8th May, 2009, a number of silo pits, dating back to the time of the Knights of the Order of St. John, situated behind St. John Cavalier at the Citadel in Victoria, Gozo, were opened, with the assistance of the Water Services Corporation and the Ministry for Gozo. In April, *Wirt Għawdex*, the only Gozitan voluntary cultural heritage NGO, signed a heritage-management agreement with the Water Services Corporation, whereby the management, preservation and conservation of this group of silo pits, until some years back used as water reservoirs, was granted to *Wirt Għawdex*. The society will consequently see to managing, preserving and conserving this cultural heritage, with the intention of opening the silo pits to the public after full restoration is completed, and once all safety measures are adhered to. Entrance to these silo pits is through the tunnel leading to the St. John Battery, behind the Gunpowder Magazine, both of which sites are already being managed by *Wirt Għawdex*. Each visitor to the Citadel must surely stop at these silo pits to gain an insight of the procedure for the storage of grain built by the Knights to have enough staple food in store for the people of Gozo in times of siege.

These silo pits, although restoration is still underway, were opened for the first time to the general public by *Wirt Għawdex*'s volunteers during the May Lejlet Lapsi Notte Gozitana event, and aroused so much interest that they were visited by several hundreds of Gozitans, Maltese and foreigners, including the President of Malta, the Prime Minister and the Minister for Gozo. This encourages *Wirt Għawdex* to continue with its work in aid of the conservation and restoration of Gozo's cultural heritage, making it accessible to all.

Anyone interested in becoming a member of *Wirt Għawdex*, or for more information, please log on to www.wirtghawdex.org or e-mail pro@wirtghawdex.org.

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The Silo Pits from the Interior

