Malta’s Industrial Heritage

A collection of researched contributions relating to aspects of Malta’s industrial past has been published as a book entitled ‘Approaches to Industrial Heritage: What works?’ The papers were presented and discussed during a conference held in February last year at Simonds Farsons Cisk Brewery.

Considered as the first initiative in Malta to tackle this complex subject in an open forum, Approaches to Industrial Heritage: What works? was jointly launched by the Farsons Foundation Chairman Mr Bryan A. Gera and the Pro-Rector of the University of Malta Prof Joe Friggieri, in the presence of the Parliamentary Secretary for Local Government and Culture Dr José A. Herrera and Simonds Farsons Cisk Chairman Mr Louis A. Farrugia.

On 1st February 2013, The Farsons Foundation in collaboration with the University’s Department of the Built Heritage within the Faculty for the Built Environment, hosted a one-day conference focusing on the diverse approaches which could guide the preservation and presentation of industrial heritage in Malta, and more particularly that held by Simonds Farsons Cisk plc.

The Foundation Chairman Bryan A. Gera said: ‘One of The Farsons Foundation’s objectives is to contribute, preserve, maintain and make better known Malta’s Heritage. Last year’s conference on Industrial Heritage and this new publication fall right within the Foundation’s mission. We augur that they serve to stimulate further appreciation, research and developments on Malta’s industrial heritage.’

Co-edited by Professor JoAnn Cassar and Dr Reuben Grima from the Faculty for the Built Environment at the University of Malta, the publication features 15 contributions. These have been penned by Mr Timothy Ambrose, Dr Ing. John C. Betts, Professor JoAnn Cassar, The Hon. Dr Mario de Marco, Mr Louis A Farrugia, Mr Michael Farrugia, Mr Bryan A Gera, Professor Robert Ghirlanda, Dr Reuben Grima, The Hon. Dr José A Herrera, Mr James Licari, Mr Joseph Magro Conti, Mr Ray Polidano, Professor Alex Torpiano, and Mr Godwin Vella.

University of Malta Pro-Rector Prof Joe Friggieri said: ‘This publication focuses on an important aspect of our culture. It shows why the industrial heritage matters to us and why we should invest in its preservation.’

Mr Louis A Farrugia stated that the professional contribution of the panel members and participants contributed to make last year’s conference a success. ‘Following the positive feedback received, we pursued the idea of drawing on the workings of the conference and recording them in a publication. From a uniquely novel conference that we organised last February, we are today marking another milestone in the history of Simonds Farsons Cisk plc with this new publication. As a company we want to preserve and treasure our heritage and most importantly share it with the community.’

The Hon. Dr José A Herrera said: ‘The Government cannot be the sole operator of the vast quantities of cultural heritage material that exists in Malta. The conference and publication about industrial heritage are a step in the right direction. Through its agencies and legislative powers, the Government has to be one of the main instigators to set the framework, however government needs the help of the private sector, working hand in hand to create best practices and to give direction.’

The publication is available on request through an email to sfc@farsons.com against a donation of EUR 7.
The First Dean’s Award of the Faculty for Social Wellbeing

The University of Malta’s Faculty for Social Wellbeing organised the first Dean’s Award ceremony on 21 February 2014. The Dean’s Award honors the best students of the Faculty. There were twelve candidates eligible for the awards, seven of whom were awarded the Outstanding Master Students’ Award and five whose name was placed on the Dean’s List for excellence in their undergraduate studies.

The Faculty for Social Wellbeing was established by the Council of the University in July 2012. The setting up of the Faculty brought together a number of entities of the University which address different aspects of ‘social wellbeing’. These were either existing departments, institutes or centres of the University, or were newly created with the establishment of the Faculty for Social Wellbeing. The Faculty comprises the departments of Counselling, Criminology, Family Studies, Gender Studies, Psychology, Social Policy and Social Work, Youth and Community Studies and the Disability Studies Unit.

This being the first Dean’s Award ceremony, students who graduated from the Faculty in 2012 were also recognised for their excellence. The Social Commitment Award intended to acknowledge students’ input in this area has been set up, but as there were no nominees for it this year, the Faculty expressed confidence that this award will be given in a future edition of the Dean’s Award ceremony.

The Dean’s Awards were awarded to Svetlana Bezzina, Tereza Bugeja, Sara Jayne Mizzi, Rosalind Vella, Elaine Schembri Lia, Paul Cutajar, Stephanie Caruana, Robert Azzopardi, Leonid McKay, Ruth Farrugia, Carla Borg and Martina Reinecke. The Faculty would like to thank its sponsors.

Taking Mainstreaming of Gender Issues Seriously

The newly set up Department of Gender Studies within the Faculty for Social Wellbeing, University of Malta, recently held a meeting with stakeholders in society who take the mainstreaming of gender issues very seriously. The associations attending included both government bodies and agencies and NGOs working in the area.

Dr Marceline Naudi, Head of Gender Studies, said that it was the desire to make the Department’s research relevant to life outside campus that had encouraged her and her academic colleagues, Dr Brenda Murphy and Dr Jos Ann Cutajar to ask the opinion of stakeholders. Dr Naudi explained that the Department is going to offer a Master degree by research this coming October and plans to offer a taught Master degree starting in October 2015. ‘It is important’, said Dr Naudi, ‘that these students are guided to do research in subjects that really need the kind of deep understanding that a Master degree can offer to all those concerned.’ It was also noted that the Department is ready to accept applications from researchers wishing to read for a Ph.D.

All the representatives present engaged in a lively discussion about diverse aspects of gender issues, each from his or her own standpoint, and Dr Naudi declared that she and her colleagues were delighted both with the turnout and with the research suggestions put forward. Some of the associations also offered placement opportunities for the future Master students which, Dr Naudi said, would be of invaluable help. She asked all present to keep the suggestions coming in and promised to keep in close touch with everyone involved in this field. encourage their staff and students to lend a hand both in the run-up, as well as during the unfolding of these events.
Charlene Vella, Assistant Lecturer in the Department of History of Art, has just published her research on The Mediterranean Artistic Context of Late Medieval Malta: 1091-1530.

This book, published by Midsea Books, goes through the 439 years before the arrival of the Knights of the Order of St John, which was a period of transition for the Maltese Islands. This period saw Malta go from a Muslim island, conquered in 870, gradually changing into a bulwark of Latin Christianity, and in the meantime being ruled by several powers: the Normans, Swabians, Genoese Counts, Angevins and the Aragonese, all of which left their impact on the islands, and on its art and architecture.

The book is the result of four years of research carried out locally and abroad. Its publication was made possible thanks to the kind support of Dragonara Casino, St Julians. During her research, Ms Vella has managed to have a Renaissance painting that had been entirely repainted in the seventeenth century studied and restored thanks to the University of Malta Research Programme and Banif Bank plc. Another surprise was the rediscovery of a medieval white marble capital in the reserve collection of the Museum of Archaeology in Valletta which was thought to be lost or misplaced, but which Dr Nicholas Vella perceptively spotted. An image of this capital was used on the front cover of this new book. The book builds on the research of Professor Mario Buhagiar, who was the supervisor for this research.

The book was launched under the patronage of H.E. the President of Malta, Dr George Abela.

International Song Circle

The International Song Circle, part of the Degree Plus programme at the University of Malta, is once again in full swing this semester. A wide repertoire of popular and not-so-familiar Maltese, English and other international songs are on the agenda as students, administrative staff and academic staff join weekly to relax and enjoy a feast of tunes and musical genres, supported by Frank O'Neill and his intrepid guitar.

Any type of voice is welcome: from the never-sang-in-my-life type to the seasoned chorist.

The international song circle welcomes additional members to our Friday noon appointment in Gateway Building Room 214. For further details, contact Prof. Godfrey Baldacchino.

Jobs Connect and Placements Scheme

A new website through which companies can promote any job opportunities that they may have

[www.um.edu.mt/jobsconnect](http://www.um.edu.mt/jobsconnect)

See also [www.um.edu.mt/placements](http://www.um.edu.mt/placements) launched through the DegreePlus programme and the Knowledge Transfer Office.

ANOTHER MARINE ALIEN IN OUR MIDST

Researchers from the Department of Biology have discovered a thriving population of the Red-throated Sea Squirt, an alien species that had never before been recorded from the central Mediterranean. An increasing trend in the rate of arrival of non-native marine species has been observed in Maltese waters in recent decades. While some of these species may have reached the Maltese Islands under their own steam, more often than not transport of alien species is facilitated by human activities such as shipping, commerce and tourism.

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