

Extra-curricular Activities at the University Gozo Centre (January - June 2006)

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The Gozo Lace Day

On 30 April, the Lace-Making Programme at the University of Malta Gozo Centre organized the annual event 'Gozo Lace Day' for the tenth consecutive year. The event was held at the University Gozo Centre premises and consisted of a number of exhibitions and demonstrations of Gozo lace and a number of talks on matters related to lace-making. Present for the event were Hon. Anton Tabone, Speaker of the House of Representatives, His Excellency Mons. Nikol Cauchi, and Ms Consiglia Azzopardi, coordinator of the Lace Making Programme.



Ms Consiglia Azzopardi delivering her introductory speech.

In her introductory talk, Ms Consiglia Azzopardi mentioned the three-year course on Lace making, which has been offered at the University Gozo Centre for many times. She stated that the idea of offering a University course leading to a Diploma in Lace Studies has become a reality. In fact the first Diploma in Lace Studies course started in October last year. Ms Azzopardi said that this course is covering various aspects of lace studies such as History of Art, Lace History in Malta & Europe, Economic Aspects, Lace Textiles in Costume and Vestment, Modern Design and Lace in Islands of Europe.

In his talk the Hon. Anton Tabone, praised the initiative taken by the University of Malta to

approve the Diploma course in Lace Studies and he said that he is very happy that the course started last year. He referred to lace making as an art and he said that Gozitans should feel proud that such a craft has been practiced for a great number of years in Gozo without interruptions. Hon. Tabone also augured that the next step would be that of upgrading this unique course in Lace Studies to a Degree. Finally, he congratulated the students who successfully completed courses in Lace Making for which they were to be awarded by a Certificate.

His Excellency Mons. Nikol Cauchi, delivered an interesting speech on the history of crafts guilds in Europe including the Maltese Islands. He described how guilds originated and how they developed over time. Mons. Cauchi also said that nowadays cooperatives are being set up instead of guilds. He described what a cooperative is and showed how important cooperatives are to our society.

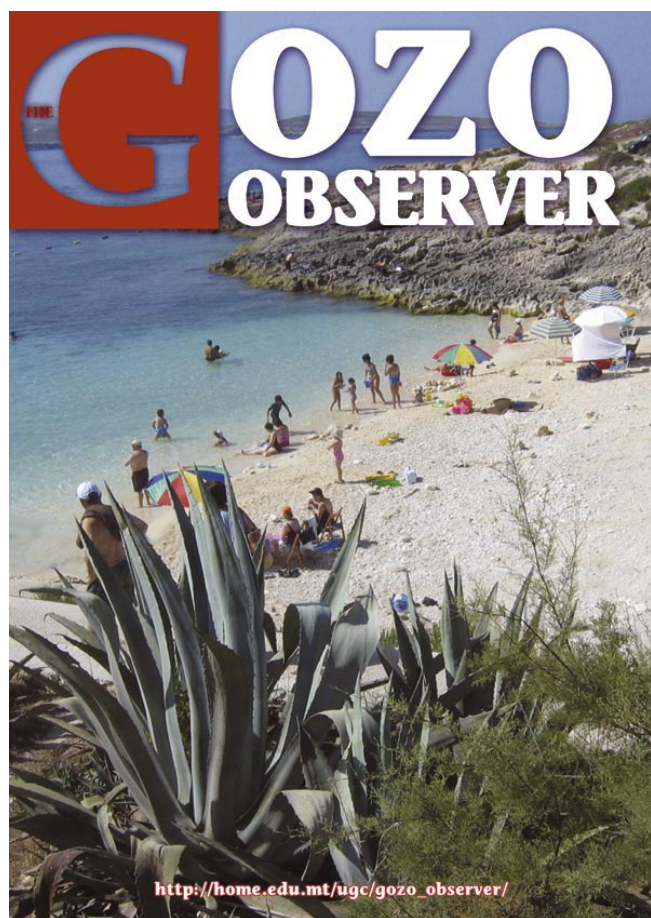


Ms Consiglia Azzopardi showing exhibits to participants

The event then continued with the award of certificates by Ms Consiglia Azzopardi to a number of students. Those present were then invited to visit the exhibitions of Lace Programme projects and textile crafts. Other exhibitions were mounted by the International Organisation of Needle and Bobbin Lace (OIDFA) and by the Malta Lace Guild. There were also demonstrations of sprang, embroidery, tulle Lace, ganutell, card weaving and information about short courses in different aspects of Maltese Lace. A number of stands were mounted by the Koperattiva Ghawdxija tal-Bizzilla u Artigjanat with lace making materials.

Publications

The fourteenth edition of the Gozo Observer was published in January. It contained a number of interesting articles, including an article by George Said analysing the relationship between sea level changes and the physical size of the Maltese Archipelago.



Godwin Vella wrote on the exploration campaign executed by A.A. Caruana in 1891 in Victoria, Gozo, while Raymond Ellul and Martin Saliba

described the work carried out by the 'Background Trace Gas Monitoring Station' on Gozo. An interesting article was written by Gordon Cordina, who gave a description of the draft socio-economic development plan for Gozo. Other articles related to the effect of increase in the price of ferry tickets on Gozo's economy and the future of the agro-industry in Gozo.

Ġieħ Ghawdex Awards

On 29 December, the Circolo Gozitano organised the first event of the Ġieħ Ghawdex awards. The occasion, which marked the 200th anniversary on the birthday of Saverio Cassar, honoured persons and organisations who have distinguished themselves for their contribution to Gozo and the Gozitan people.



Prof. Lino Briguglio receiving the Ġieħ Ghawdex award

The awards were conferred at a dinner held at Palazzo Palina Hotel ta' Ċenċ, Sannat. One of the recipients of the awards was Professor Lino Briguglio for his contribution to higher education in Gozo. When receiving the 'Ġieħ Ghawdex' medal Professor Briguglio said that the award was an honour for him and for the University, and he said that it was a privilege for him to be able to contribute to the welfare of the Gozitan people.

The other recipients of the award were:

Dr Ċensu Tabone (Former President of Malta)
 Prof John Cremona (Former Chief Justice)
 ET Nicholas Cauchi (Former Bishop of Gozo)
 Il-Hajja F'Ghawdex (Monthly Magazine)
 L-ARKA Foundation

International Course in Lace-Making

The Lace Making Programme of the University Gozo Centre organised, for the sixth consecutive year, the 'International Course in Lace-making'. The course was held at the University Gozo Centre between 7 and 13 June 2006 and was attended by four foreigners. It included twenty four hours of tuition in the making of Maltese lace using the Maltese pillow and bobbins.



The participants of the International Course in Lace-making together with Ms Consiglia Azzopardi (1st from left)

The programme of the course also included various activities and excursions. The participants had the opportunity to visit a number of museums, churches and private lace collections, as well as other historical landmarks on the island. They also visited a local village festa and were taken for a full day excursion in Malta.



A practical session of the course in progress

Visit by the Prime Minister

In March, the Prime Minister Dr Lawrence Gonzi, accompanied by Hon. Giovanna Debono, paid a visit to the University of Malta Gozo Centre.



The Prime Minister Dr Lawrence Gonzi talking to Prof. Lino Briguglio during a video lecturing session. Also present are Hon. Giovanna Debono, Minister for Gozo and Mr Joseph Calleja, administrator of the University Gozo Centre

During his visit, Dr Gonzi was called at various classes and saw the students following various courses, some of which are partly financed by the European Social Fund under the Structural Funds Programme for Malta 2004-2006. He also had the opportunity to speak to Professor Lino Briguglio, Director of the University Gozo Centre, through the video conferencing system. Dr Gonzi stated that he was impressed with the number of courses being held at the University Gozo Centre and with the technological advances made in education.



The Prime Minister making a point during a lecture on G.I.S. applications, as part of a course leading to the Masters in Islands and Small States Studies.

Joseph Calleja is the administrator of the University Gozo Centre.