

Contribute, preserve, maintain and make better known Malta's heritage

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Industrial heritage is not exclusively a product of the 19th and 20th centuries. Industrial heritage existed in all phases of human development but the Industrial Revolution was an unprecedented catalyst for progress. The achievements and grandiose constructions which started off in that era set off a momentum which carries on unabated to this day, and which continues to pervade our lives.

This momentum was fuelled by human inventiveness. As a result of that same inventiveness, these very same industrial sites ended up literally victims of their own success when they had to make way for new facilities employing more advanced technology and innovations developed in those older industrial sites.

Farsons is considered to be one of the pioneers of industrialization in Malta. It is fitting that this conference was convened in what nowadays is referred to as Farsons' 'Old Boardroom', where part of the industrial heritage we enjoy today was decided upon in the late 1940s.

I feel it is apt and of interest to refer to a short quote from Dr Edward Sammut's book entitled the "Saga of Simonds Farsons Cisk". The contract to build this Brewery was based on the preliminary drawings of Mr Lewis V Farrugia, the father of the present Chairman, who was an architect as well as an industrialist. In reality, he was the man who built this company in more ways than one. Dr Sammut writes and I quote:

...the designs for the Board Room... are a throw-back to the Art Nouveau he had learned during his stay at the Milan Polytechnic in the early twenties. With its lofty glazed loggia, dog-toothed friezes and other decorations it might very well be the drawing-room of a country villa, rather than a room in an industrial establishment (Sammut, 1988, p.63).

The last few years have seen an increased interest in understanding our heritage but, to my mind, a greater awareness of the importance of industrial heritage is called for if we are to truly respect our past on a holistic basis.

It was with pleasure and without any hesitation that the Board of Administrators of The Farsons Foundation agreed to join forces with the Department of the Built Heritage within the Faculty for the Built Environment of the University of Malta in organizing this conference. One of the objectives of our Foundation is to "contribute,

preserve, maintain and make better known Malta's heritage". This conference falls squarely within the Foundation's objectives and must be regarded as one of the best initiatives to which the Foundation has lent its name.

One hopes that this conference, and in turn this publication, will serve to stimulate an engaging debate on Malta's industrial heritage and on the ways to focus on this aspect of our country's history.

The Farsons Foundation is proud to support this initiative and to raise further awareness about Malta's industrial heritage.

References

Sammut, E., 1988. *The Saga of Simonds Farsons Cisk*. Malta: Simonds Farsons Cisk Ltd.