



**GOVERNMENT OF GIBRALTAR**  
**MINISTRY FOR CULTURE, HERITAGE, SPORT & LEISURE**  
310 Main Street  
Gibraltar

**PRESS RELEASE**

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**Museum Lecture Series: The Heritage Crusades: Have we got it horribly wrong?**

The closing lecture of the Gibraltar Museum's 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary series promises to be a must for all those who have an interest in heritage. In it Professor Clive Finlayson, Director of the Gibraltar Museum, will attempt to answer the burning question - what is heritage? The lecture will include a history of the last five decades that have seen the rise of heritage as a powerful social and political force across the western world. He will use his own eyes and personal experience from Gibraltar and work he has conducted abroad, including missions carried out for UNESCO, since the 1970s to provide a commentary and a personal take on heritage and its meaning. The lecture will emphasize the distinction between history and heritage which are often equated but are very different concepts and world views. Following the arguments developed by Professor David Lowenthal of University College, London, over a decade ago, Professor Finlayson will argue that heritage must not be confused with history, which is the academic study of the past. Heritage is, instead, largely a social construct – it is a fabrication based on how people at any point in space and time choose to define it. Thus heritage reflects a peculiar and particular take on history's legacy which is imbued with a high dose of subjectivity, personal and communal choice and, often, an element of forgetting what may be seen as inconvenient or unworthy of commemoration. Does this mean that heritage is meaningless? Professor Finlayson will argue that, so long as we see it for what it is, heritage can have an important social and economic function in the improvement of the quality of life of communities. But, he warns, it can also be a tool wielded in the interests of sectorial nationalisms... The lecture will be delivered on Tuesday, 7<sup>th</sup> December, 2010, in the John Mackintosh Hall at 2030 hours. All are welcome.

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**Note to Editors:** For further information please contact Marie Mosquera at the Gibraltar Museum on 200 74289. Alternatively, email: [musadmin@gibraltar.gi](mailto:musadmin@gibraltar.gi)