



MISSION STATEMENT OF THE MUSEUM

St. Mark's Coptic Museum is a cultural institution that celebrates the rich spiritual and cultural heritage of the Copts and is a witness to Coptic art as a living tradition. The Museum is one of the Canadian Coptic Community's contributions to Canada's multicultural heritage.

Museum Board of Directors

President: Father Marcos Marcos
Vice President: Father Misail Atalla
Treasurer: Iman Nashed
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Members-at- Large:
Programme: Alice Hanna
Youth: Marion Hanna
Coptic Canadian Village:
Labib Mousa
Volunteer Curator, ex officio:
Helene Moussa

Museum Activities

Welcome to the first issue of St. Mark's Coptic Museum Newsletter! This is one of several ways we want to inform you about Coptic art and the many activities of the Museum, your Museum. Many of you may think that the Museum is that room on the second floor which always seems closed and has black cloth over some of the display cases! Or that it is open only every third Sunday of the month. But did you know that in this past year we received over 600 visitors? Who are these visitors? Members of St. Mark's congregation, visiting bishops and priests from overseas, members of Orthodox churches in the city and from other Christian denominations and faiths, visitors from other Museums (one afternoon we received 53 visitors from the Royal Ontario Museum), students and faculty from various university departments and people from other walks of life. Several of our visitors have come a second and even a third time. You will always see a new acquisition and learn more

about our wonderful Coptic cultural heritage. We have almost doubled our collection in the past four years and are regularly rotating exhibits and learning more about Coptic art and its history.

The Museum offers more than "tours". It is a place where a lot of research goes on to find out more about the history of the artefacts and the artists, such as Marguerite Nakhla. We are now planning to produce a catalogue about her life and works. Our volunteer curator has also attended conferences in the US, France and Egypt where she has presented papers about our Museum, the icons of Drs. Bedour Latif and Youssef Nassif and of course on Marguerite Nakhla. Last October, the Museum sponsored a very special afternoon on Orthodox icons with seven iconographers and their students: "Icons: Windows into Spirituality". Over fifty icons of different sizes were exhibited. One of the visitors described the afternoon perfectly

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"The Wise and Foolish Virgins" by Marguerite Nakhla

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when she said the exhibit was "... an incredible feast for the eyes".

To have a Museum also means "managing" the collection. For the past two years we have been cataloguing information about each of the artefacts in our collection, as well taking digital photographs. We are pleased to say that we have reached a collections management standard that we were able to respond to the Royal Ontario Museum's project on ancient Egyptian artefacts in Canadian museums: "Searching for ancient Egypt in Canada."

Recently we were selected among of five Ontario Museums that the Ontario Museum Association will offer special training to digitalize our catalogue of artefacts.

Future newsletters will feature stories about specific artefacts such as an icon, or highlight a new acquisition, or write about new insights into Coptic art and its glorious history. We welcome hearing from you and receiving your contributions. I would like to conclude by introducing the Board of Directors of the Museum, appointed last May by our Church's Board of Deacons. Their main task for the next few years is to prepare, God willing, for the day when the Museum will have a home of its own on the Coptic Canadian Village site.

I feel that upholding our Coptic Heritage is a ministry that we should all share for the glory of God.

Father Marcos Marcos

Useful Link

Explore the wonderful renovations of the Coptic Museum in Cairo - second best to an actual visit!

A direct link if you visit St. Mark's Coptic Museum website!:

<http://www.copticmuseum.gov.eg/english/internal/gallery.asp/>

News about Cultural Events

Coptic Orthodox Church Cultural Centre - Egypt

Thanks to the generosity of H.H. Pope Shenouda III, the entire building within the Patriarchate compound in Cairo is now going to be developed as the "Coptic Church Cultural Center". St. Mark Foundation (SMF) has been put in charge of coordinating this historic project. According to Dr. Fawzy Estafanous, the *President of SMF*, the project will include the originally proposed St. Mark Coptic Library. This will be in addition to a church, conference center, specialized centers for ecclesiastical services, research, documentation, and restoration of church treasures, and facilities for exhibitions and social activities. A 40-member Board of Trustees has been appointed by His Holiness. They have already met and are actively working on the project. For updated information on the project visit SMF's website: www.coptic.history.org/
Source: St. Shenouda Coptic, Quarterly 2, 4. pp31-32

VISITORS CORNER

Young enthusiasts Monica and Marina are regular visitors to the Museum and have also volunteered at the reception table during the Coptic Festival and Orthodox iconographer's exhibition last October 2006.



Marina Ibrahim:

I like the Museum because all the icons are unique in their drawing and their spiritual message too."



Monica Riad:

"I like the Museum because of all its beautiful icons. My favorite painting is "The Wise and Foolish Virgins" by Marguerite Nakhla because of all the details and also because it helps us understand that we have to be prepared to go to Heaven."

Just Published!

Two new books on Coptic art published by the American University in Cairo and available in St. Mark's Coptic Museum's Reference Library:

1. The Treasures of Coptic Art in the Coptic Museum and Churches of Old Cairo
By Gawdat Gabra and Marianne Eaton-Krauss.
2. The Illustrated Guide to the Coptic Museum and Churches of Old Cairo
By Gawdat Gabra and Marianne Eaton-Krauss.

To order your personal copy write to the Canadian distributor for both books:
Login Brothers Fax: 1-800 665 0103