

MANIAL PALACE - Site visit

30 August 2008

On Saturday August 30, 2008 a group of 14 members were taken around the work in progress at Manial Palace Museum by Eng. Mohamed Abu Zeid.

The group visited the following:

- A new Gazebo put in the place of a restaurant which used to be run by the Club Mediterranee. The gazebo is made of wood in an arabesque style and will overlook an Andalusian style fountain. This is intended as a shaded area where visitors will be able to rest and enjoy the garden.

- The covered walkway is being restored in that part of the garden.

- Our group then saw a large concrete structure which will be covered in Mauresque tiles and will form the base for an impressive cascade which will fall into a pond, the water then being taken around the garden in the original conduits which have been restored.

- We then saw the ground floor of the private residence where very extensive work is in progress to fix the original tiles, repair the woodwork, the marble floor etc. We all felt that this work was being carried out very well.

- The group admired the entrance of the Private Museum which has been cleared and has regained its perspective. We could not enter because of the extensive work in land.

- We then visited the new carpet museum which is being built in place of the old EGOTH administrative building.

1. The basement will comprise an extensive textile restoration workshop which is intended to become the main textile restoration workshop for all Egyptian museums. There will be a large lecture hall and meeting room as well as administrative offices.

2. The first floor will become the carpet museum and exhibition hall.

3. The roof will be dedicated to entertainment and will be made available for parties, weddings and the like instead of the garden or the golden room.

Conclusion: The target for completion of the project is June 2009. Our group was generally impressed by the quality of the work. Several members commented on the new additions, their relevance and their design. In particular I have serious reservations regarding the Gazebo and the water fall. This will probably continue to be the subject of much discussion.

We asked to meet the Italian architect of the carpet museum and will keep members informed if we are able to arrange for a presentation by him.

Ihab Chafik Head of Premises Committee.