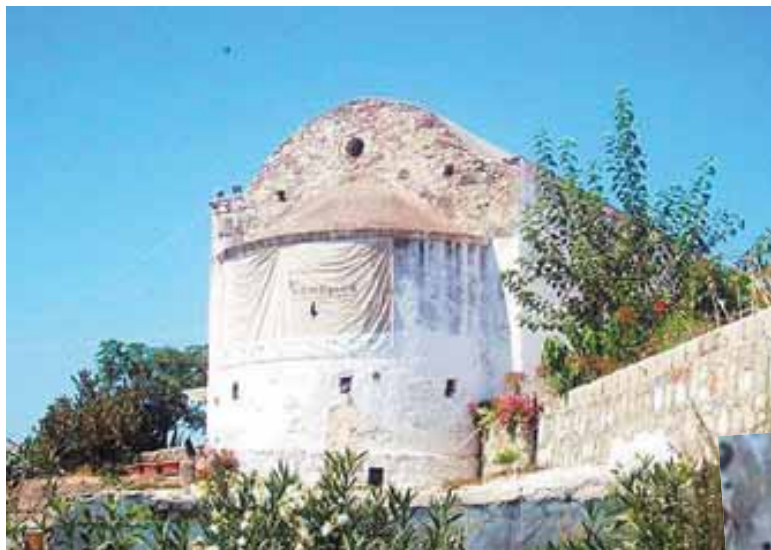


1,800-Year-Old Greek Church to be Restored in Bodrum, Turkey

A project is underway to restore and open to visitors a 1,800-year-old Greek church near the town of Bodrum (foto) in western Turkey, national media reported recently.



The Gara Church, according to the publication, is located within a tourism facility built by a private firm, NF Construction and Tourism, which has had a report prepared outlining ways to preserve and restore the church, and open it to visitors, the Hurriet Daily News reported.

The church dates back to the late Roman-early Byzantine era from AD 2 to 4, and boasts remains that are unique and important in terms of archeology and art history, Dr. Emine Tok of Ege University's art history noted in a report, cited

by the publication.

"The mosaics, especially on the church floor (foto), are the most important and rare kind," according to the report. "It is possible to restore the church and turn it into an asset for tourism. The building will not last long considering its current situation; it should immediately be repaired."

The church, which is 8 metres high, has a well, a cistern and water canals, one prayer room and two living quarters. The floor mosaic, thought to have been brought from Egypt, has images of four dolphins and a swordfish, symbols of the religious beliefs of the time. The plan for the restora-

tion of the church involves covering the mosaics with glass and turning it into a museum of culture and art.

Representatives of local tourism businesses, cited in the publication, claim that the church's restoration will contribute to the development of cultural tourism in the region, which is mostly known for as a destination for beach va-

them together, and will attract tourists from many countries, including neighboring Greece," Remzi Góngor, a tour operator from Bodrum, told the media.

So far, around 100,000 US dollars have been spent for scientific research and the restoration project, said Firat Φzbasar, an executive from NF Construction and Tourism, which operates the boutique hotel next to the Gara Church, adding that "an additional 300,000 US dollars is needed to turn the church into a museum and a cultural center."

"Maybe a different project can be completed at a much lesser cost, but we aim for the 1,800-year-old church to become an important religious location, not only for Bodrum but for Turkey and Europe," Φzbasar concluded.



Such a project will highlight the ties between different cultures and religions, bringing

Safely Dispose of Household Chemicals

Chemical Clean Out Day - 13 February

The Mayor of the City of Canterbury, Cr Robert Furolo MP, is encouraging residents to safely dispose of unused chemicals on Saturday 13 February, 2010 at our FREE Chemical Clean Out Day.

"Many households have countless chemicals which they no longer have any use for," Mayor Furolo said.

"We all understand the importance of storing chemicals in a safe place in our homes, out of reach of children, but what we don't think about, are the hazards of disposing of chemicals. "If chemicals are thrown in the bin, they will go to landfill and can be very toxic and dangerous for workers, our waterways and our environment. "By disposing of chemicals properly, we can help protect our environment. "The chemicals disposed at our Chemical Clean Out day, will be safely disposed and some may be even be recycled. "Common items which are always handed in at our Chemical Clean Out days include paint, car oils, garden pesticides and household cleaning chemicals, but we also accept car batteries, fire extinguishers, gas bottles and fluorescent globes. "Last year over 23 tonnes of unwanted chemicals were handed in from 715 residents. "I encourage residents to take advantage of our free Household Chemical Clean Out and dispose of their unwanted chemicals safely, to help protect our environment," Mayor Furolo said. The collections will occur on one day only, and residents must deliver their household chemicals by vehicle in a secure and labelled box. Pedestrian deliveries will not be accepted. Please note, only household quantities will be accepted - 20kg or 20L maximum. The City of Canterbury Household Chemical Clean Out is an initiative of the City of Canterbury Council; NSW Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water; and Chemsal. Chemicals can be dropped off at our Administration Centre Carpark in Shakespeare St, Campsie on Saturday 13 February, 2010 between 9.00am and 3.30pm. For more information on which substances and materials will be accepted or how to transport your chemicals safely, call the Clean Out Hotline on 1300 787 870.

Citizenship Minister urges community groups to lodge applications

NSW Minister for Citizenship, John Hatzistergos has today reminded community organisations across the State to lodge their applications for the 2009/10 Community Development Grants Program's sponsorship category.

Mr Hatzistergos said the Community Grants Program provides \$1 million in funding assistance to community organisations across NSW and is designed to enhance community engagement by supporting projects that address issues of cultural diversity.

"Promoting understanding and awareness of diverse cultures through workshops, exhibitions, festivals and support services will help us build stronger communities," Mr Hatzistergos said.

"These grants will help facilitate projects that encourage cultural diversity and provide networking opportunities and services for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds," he said.

Mr Hatzistergos said there are two other categories of funding under the 2009/10 Community Development Grants Program including General grants and Local Partnership grants.

Mr Hatzistergos said Sponsorship grants are available for special events such as annual festivals and major cultural events that will be held from 5 April



2010. Grants of up to \$5,000 will be awarded to not-for-profit incorporated organisations.

"In 2009 the NSW Government, through the Community Relations Commission completed a review of the Program and initiated changes so that grants more effectively meet the changing needs of communities across the state," he said.

Mr Hatzistergos said the enhanced Program better reflects shifting demographics and takes into account:

- newly-arrived and emerging communities or small ethnic communities;
- communities that are geographically or socially isolated;
- the promotion of community harmony and mutual understanding between and within communities of different cultural

and religious backgrounds;

- the development of community networks and structures; and
- projects addressing critical issues relating to cultural diversity at a local level.

"The Sponsorship grants program opens in April, August and December each year and the deadline for this quarter will close this Friday 5 February so it's important that applications are lodged before then."

For more information and to obtain an application form, please visit www.crc.nsw.gov.au/grants or contact the Community Relations Commission on 02 8255 6779.

Hon. John Hatzistergos MLC
Attorney General
Minister for Citizenship
Minister for Regulatory Reform