

# THE DEVELOPMENT OF MALTESE FORTIFICATIONS

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**St Mary Tower, Comino – built through the munificence of Grand Master Aloff de Wignacourt (1601-1622) in 1618.**

One of the most important physical and geographical features of the Maltese islands is surely the central position within the Mediterranean. Nature has also provided the islands with good, deep and natural harbours, besides the excellent soft globigerina limestone. Apart from this, the islands attracted all the main sea-powers of the Mediterranean, who aimed at controlling this important Sea throughout the past millennia. Unfortunately this placed the islands and its inhabitants at the centre of attraction all the time. Numerous attacks were planned against the islands and its rulers, and this eventually led to the building of a number of fortifications.

The physical remains of these defences are still around us, a reminder of different and difficult times. Due to the fact that there still survives such a rich heritage, it is also possible for us to follow the trends, the fashion and even the needs of the defenders while building the lines of fortifications to defend their positions as well as the people from the numerous attacks.

A course of 16 hours is going to be delivered to members of the University of the Third Age (University of Malta) between February and April 2016, by Vincent Zammit. This course of lectures will look into the historical background of the fortifications, the military engineers, and the benefactors and other stories that illustrate this very important heritage. Lectures will be backed by photographs as well as diagrams, thus making it easier for the audience to follow the lectures better.

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