

# VareseNews

## Varese and its archaeology (re)apply to UNESCO

**Pubblicato:** Venerdì 18 Febbraio 2011

Not all of the provinces are lucky enough to appear so often in the UNESCO list. Varese is in the list and makes its presence felt. The Sacred Mount and Mount Sangiorgio have already been recognised as World Heritage Sites, and the Isolino Virginia, the island in the Lake of Varese, and the Church of Saint Mary fortis portas, in Castelseprio, **have now applied for inclusion**. The reply for these last two will come by the end of the year, but in the meantime, the work of the Province, with the Region of Lombardy, and organisations in the area continues. “We have a considerable amount of important archaeological heritage in our province. Work has been done, and indeed more will be done, to develop and upgrade it,” **explained Francesca Brianza**, the Province’s councillor for culture and tourism.

The museum network and archaeological heritage in the Province, to which the website, [www.simarch.org](http://www.simarch.org), was dedicated in 2005, are currently being looked at. From the website, you can understand (and, most of the time, discover) the extent of the region’s wealth. Councillor Brianza pointed out, in particular, **the work carried out throughout 2010**: the publication and presentation of the book “Alle origini di Varese e del suo territorio” (“The origins of Varese and its territory”), the work of preserving, renovating and upgrading tourist routes in the archaeological areas, such as Castelseprio, which has applied to join the UNESCO Heritage List. “They’ve already been here for an inspection, and now we’re waiting for their reply. On 25 and 26 September last year, during the European day dedicated to the territory, we counted six hundred presences, placing us second in the region, in terms of the number of visits,” explained Maddalena Pizzo, from the museum network coordination.

**For 2011, the objectives are just as important**: cataloguing of the archaeological sites will continue, as will their restoration; work in the schools (“last year, we had 2500 children in the museums in Castelseprio,”); the tourist routes and the maintenance work on the Church of Santa Maria fortis portas. As Councillor Brianza pointed out, “These projects all serve also to **make the region more interesting for tourists**. Since 2008, the numbers of tourists have been on the increase. The aim now is to increase the amount of time that visitors stay.”

Attention is also being given to the **paintings in the hamlet of Arcumeggia**. “A phase of study will begin, to preserve them,” and there will be a book **about voluntary work in the museums**, that, as Maddalena Pizzo explains, emphasises “the important of their presence, given the need for more people in museums.” One event that has already been confirmed is a **conference, of national importance**, which will be held in the offices of Villa Recalcati, on 21 and 22 March, organised by the Region of Lombardy, which will tackle the theme of national heritage and how it should be managed.

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