

An app created by students for the Cairate Monastery

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At midday on 16 December, a mobile phone app is being presented, in the **Aula Magna of the Keynes High School in Gazzada** (Via Morazzone, 37). The app, which has been created by students, is for the **Cairate Monastery**, which has recently reopened to the public.

“The idea came from **Cairate Town Council**, who wanted to promote and make the **most of this valuable asset** in a different and special way, and start collaborating with the schools in the area,” **Pietro Fontana, Cairate’s Councillor for Culture and Tourism**, explained. “The app provides an essential opportunity to tell new generations know about this architectural treasure, **the Monastery of Santa Maria Assunta**, which has just been restored, also with a completely new museum area to be discovered. This app will also be very useful **during Expo 2015**, when the Monastery will be the starting point for a tour of the old Seprio countryside, with all of its archaeological treasures. The creation of this app, which will soon be available for iPhone and Android, provided a good opportunity to collaborate with the schools. For this reason, I’d like to thank **Simona Gamberoni in particular**, who coordinated the project, which has been completed in almost a year of practical school work, teachers **at the Keynes High School and at the Frattini Art High School** and, above all, the students who really did a great job. I feel I should mention two in particular, **Marco Speziali and Alessandro Maggio**, who were always so accommodating and polite, as well as extremely qualified and competent.”

The presentation of the project was also by a school. “At first, we only collaborated with the **Keynes High School in Gazzada Schianno**, but later on, we got the **Frattini Art High School in Varese** involved. This was no accident, as both schools have subjects on their curricula (**Marketing & International Relations at the Keynes High**

School, and Graphic Design at the Art High School) that can easily be exploited in promotion activities. Furthermore, at the Keynes High School, in the Computer Science Department, two students in the fourth year were able to try out their app programming skills on Android and IOS platforms, “in the field”. The collaboration between the two high schools and the fact that their skills complemented each other, enabled the students to work on all aspects of the app, from its conception, to making it available to the public.”

These were the stages of the work. “At first, the students **were taken to the Monastery, and were shown around it by a professional guide, Simona Gamberoni**, who also supervised the project, as an external consultant. This enabled the students to learn about the archaeological site and its surrounding area. From this essential visit, the routes and points outside the **Monastery building that might be interesting to tourists** were decided upon, the texts were written, the photos, chosen, the graphical layout, planned and created, and the beta versions of the app, designed. It was all done while in a constant communication with the council, which the students perceived, throughout, as their client. The app that is being presented today **was, first and foremost, a very interesting teaching opportunity** that allowed the students to try out their skills “in the field”, with an uncommon client, namely, a public authority. Indeed, this is one of those rare cases of school and work combining where it is not private companies involved, but a public authority. At the same time, it has provided a good working model for a new and up-to-date way of promoting our local treasures and for exploiting new and promising opportunities to collaborate in increasingly interdisciplinary fields, **to train the future professionals.**”

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