



Stone tower from the east



Location of Falayah

Ras al-Khaimah Heritage

Falayah



The mosque from the south-east



Government of Ras al-Khaimah



Department of Antiquities and Museums

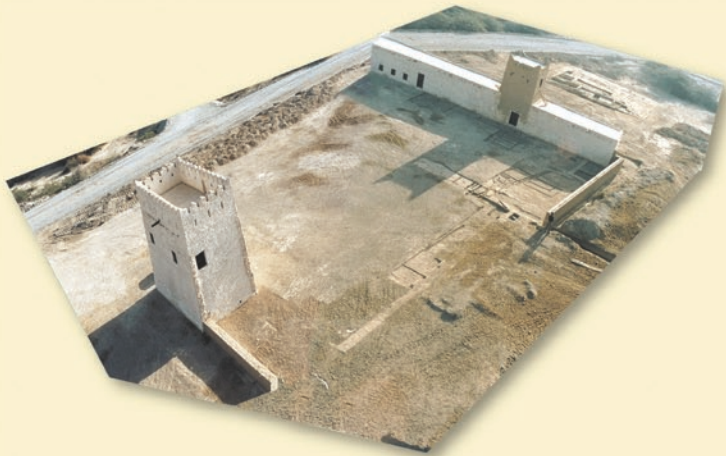
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Falayah

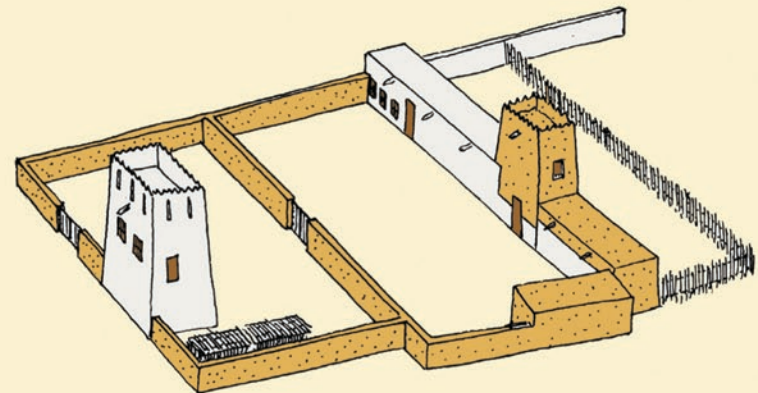
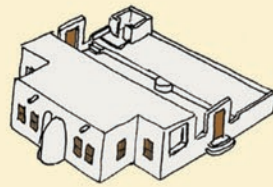


The residence with tower and main building from the south.

Falayah was built in the 18th century, serving as a summer residence for the ruling Quwasim family. Surrounded by palm gardens, it provided a pleasant retreat from the town of Ras al-Khaimah during the hot summer months.

Its historical importance dates back to the war between the Quwasim and the British / Omani forces in 1819. In the summer of 1820 a peace treaty between the Sheikhs of the Gulf coast and the British Government was signed in Falayah. This treaty can be seen as foundation of the United Arab Emirates.

Today, Falayah consists of three building units. A mosque in the west, a stone tower in the center of the complex and a main building with domestic quarters in the east.

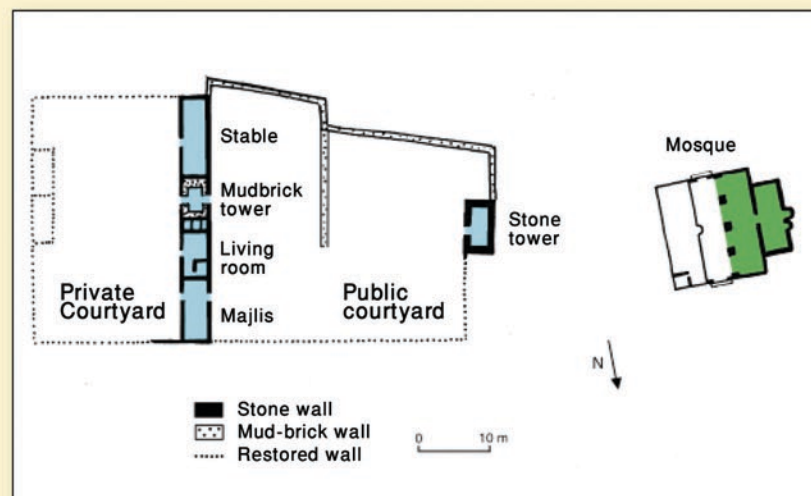


Reconstruction of residence and mosque.

Falayah's main building in the east was part of the residence's private area ("Hareem"). It combines a row of rooms with a mud brick tower in the centre and a courtyard in the east. The tower, with two doors on either side, may have been used as an entrance into the private complex. The rooms adjacent to both sides of the mud brick tower were used as a reception room ("Majlis"), a living room and a stable.

A large stone tower marks the western end of a second courtyard and both were used as the public part of the residence. A reception room is situated on the first floor and it may have been here where the treaty of 1820 was signed. The tower was also used as the central defence structure of the summer residence. Its entrance could be blocked with a large beam and the roof, surrounded with a crenellated wall and loopholes, was used as a fighting platform.

The mosque situated west of the residence was used by the Quwasim family and also served as the main Friday mosque for the area. It is one of the few surviving examples of a typical traditional mosque in the United Arab Emirates. Combining a courtyard with a prayer room, the latter is illuminated with light from low lying windows and ventilated by small holes in the upper walls. The courtyard is partly covered, giving shade to people praying there. Its eastern part is a raised platform, used as an open-air mosque during evening and morning prayers in summer. The minaret, used for the call to prayer, is a raised and walled area in a corner of this platform. Tall tower-like minarets have no tradition in this region and were only introduced in the 20th century.



The plan of the residence and the mosque