

The Gleaner  
**Hospitality Jamaica**

KEEPING YOU CONNECTED TO THE BUSINESS OF TOURISM

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 11, 2014



PHOTO BY  
CLAUDIA GARDNER

Hand-crafted leather producer and designer Baldwin 'Jessie' Dulston, of Baland Design in Montego Bay, was among the microentrepreneurs who were specially invited to showcase their products at the Fifth Caribbean Microfinance Forum at the Iberostar resort in Montego Bay last week.

# WEBBER BATS FOR TOURISM MICROENTREPRENEURS

**JHTA  
awards  
tourism  
workers**

**San San,  
Portland:  
A story of  
exclusiveness**



**Coco  
lessons in  
cocoa walk**





The Gleaner's Janet Silvera (second left) shares lens time with officials of the Half Moon, A Rock Resort and their top-producing wholesalers and travel agents at the Travel Partners Dinner and Awards Ceremony at the Aretsky's Patroon Townhouse in Manhattan.



The Gleaner's senior tourism writer, Janet Silvera, accepts an award from Guy Stewart III, chairman of Half Moon, for media support of the Rock Resort at the resort's Travel Partners Dinner and Awards Ceremony at the Aretsky's Patroon Townhouse in Manhattan on June 4.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

## THE BUSINESS OF TOURISM

# Vacationers want the real thing

**David Jessop**  
Contributor

A FEW years ago, I was talking to a group of Caribbean tourism ministers in London who had recently arrived from Dubai, where they had been attending a major international tourism event.

For many of them, it was the first time they had visited that country and most were hugely impressed by what they saw. They spoke almost with awe about the luxury and the scale of the tourism facilities that had been created there almost from nothing. They said it was in a location which, apart from constant hot sunshine and easy access from key visitor-feeder markets, had no pre-existing natural attributes, but had risen from the sands as a result of many millions of dollars of investment.

But how did it feel, I asked? The answers were illuminating.

Although what had been



JESSOP

constructed in Dubai was magnificent and impressive, two of the ministers said that as a tourism destination, it had no sense of place. It lacked depth and authenticity. While it offered everything from shopping to artificial ski slopes, it was, I was told, sanitised and not easy to sense the nature of where was being visited. To do so, it was necessary to go out either into the desert or to

see the truly gritty areas where many local people lived.

Dubai's success demonstrates the growing trend to manufacture destinations and experiences.

The most recent example of this and what is becoming known as replica tourism, is a decision by the Egyptian authorities to, quite literally, recreate the tomb of Tutankhamun, about a mile from the original. In an effort to conserve the real tomb from alarming deterioration resulting from it having too many visitors, master restorers, using the latest printing and other techniques, have created a detailed facsimile of the real thing. The consequence is that, in future, most visitors will never see, let alone experience, the authentic and original tomb and its treasures.

In a similar way, but driven largely by a desire to capture as much income as possible, while presumably keeping visitors away from the reality or any less pleasant

experiences, Disney and other cruise lines have constructed artificial Caribbean destinations on small islands in The Bahamas, not far in sailing time from Miami.

In these locations, a kind of fictitious Caribbean has been created with many non-Caribbean employees being brought in to, as it were, populate the island and its facilities and serve a pastiche of Caribbean cuisine.

While there is a large and distinct lower-end market for these offerings and for the huge branded themed hotels that are emerging across the region, what is interesting is how much this runs counter to the view by marketing experts and those who study trends in the industry. They believe that the desire of tomorrow's visitors at the higher end of the market will be to have an authentic experience, surround themselves with what is natural and not artificial, and to meet local people.

This, they suggest, is what will dramatically increase hoteliers and governments' income.

Interestingly, reading some of the blogs and online comments about Tutankhamun's 'new tomb' and Disney's Castaway Cay to the north of Nassau is how some visitors sense the lack of depth in these replicas and instead want the real thing. They suggest that the artificial lacks the aura and ambience of the original and imply that they somehow feel cheated.

What this suggests is that the region ought to think carefully about its natural built-in advantage and ensure that it does not squander its heritage or its vernacular architecture by constructing hotels that have no connection with the region's heritage or damage its actual or visual environment though bad planning decisions, in the mistaken belief that big, international and culturally safe are best.

# Webber bats for tourism microentrepreneurs

**Claudia Gardner**

*Assignment Coordinator*

**P**ROGRAMME MANAGER of the Caribbean Capacity Building Microfinance Project II, Maureen Webber, said she is challenging microfinancing institutions (MFIs) to generate more creative loan and financing products, specifically targeting microentrepreneurs within the tourism industry, to enhance their financial growth and development.

In an interview with **Hospitality Jamaica** at the Fifth Caribbean Microfinance Forum (CMF V) at the Iberostar Resort in Montego Bay, last Thursday, Webber said due to the seasonality of the tourism industry, tourism micro-entrepreneurs are in a unique, yet precarious position where their cash flow is concerned and require special attention from micro-financiers to meet their needs.

"I think what we need is more unique loan products for our entrepreneurs in the tourism sector because, really, with the tourism sector, it's not like you are always selling Red Stripe Beer at the bar and you know that your regulars are there. It is seasonal, and has a slower period, so there has to be a move away from credit, but towards financial products which could be a type of equity-type investment in the enterprise, as opposed to a loan which you have to start repaying the next morning," Webber said.

Webber said, bearing this in mind, the organisers of the CMF V had specifically invited several microentrepreneurs within the Jamaican tourism sector to display and sell their produce at the event. These microentrepreneurs, she said, were creators of all the goods which they had for sale, and were not the typical "buy-and-sell vendors". She said this decision had enabled microfinanciers in attendance to have an opportunity



**MAUREEN WEBBER**

to interface directly with these micro-entrepreneurs and to get a better understanding of their needs.

"When you talk to some of these producers (creators of leather products), and listen to the time they go through to get the hide, cure the hide, do the work, and you say to yourself, 'if he is doing all those things for, say, a period of three weeks, where would his income be to service a loan or to pay a loan?'" she said.

Senior specialist at the Inter-American Development Bank, Wayne Beecher, also agreed with Webber. He said the cash-flow issue faced by microentrepreneurs within the tourism sector could be appeased through trade financing by microfinanciers.

"The tourism industry ecosystem consists of a larger player like a hotel or a restaurant, and smaller players, which provide them, with supplies and provisions, and so on. So the players I speak of would be the farmers, the smaller hotels, the craft-market persons who sell craft and small tour operators," he said.

"They are always in demand for financial services – particularly the farmers who sell to the hotels. The hotels have a very long repayable



**PHOTO BY CLAUDIA GARDNER**

Microentrepreneurs Jessica and Nigel Haughton are the proprietors of Nigel's Sweet Jamaican Almond Oil company. Based in Negril, the two produce hand-pressed almond oil, which is supplied to several spas and gift shops within the tourism Mecca of Negril and its environs.

cycle, so they normally take 30 to 60 days to pay the farmers for their produce, and that creates a cash-flow issue for them. And so, what microfinancing could do is create trade financing, to allow the farmer to continue to buy new produce, buy new seeds for planting and harvesting, and to bridge that cash-flow gap created by the terms offered by the hotel," Beecher, a former Jamaica Defence Force officer, added.

He said the same solution could be applied to the smaller hotels, as their operations are cash-flow intensive, and their income, for the most part, is seasonal.

"For the craft persons, it (trade

financing) could help them to get started. They need only a small amount of financing to get started in craft – few produce, few raw materials, and that could have a significant impact on their ability to start and to sustain their businesses – that would be reflected by the seasonality of the tourism sector," he said.

The Development Bank of Jamaica (DBJ) has been designated as the Government of Jamaica's lead agency for the coordination of MFIs in Jamaica. According to the DBJ's website, the organisation has lent more than \$2 billion to MFIs since the Microfinance Window was established in 2009. According

to the DBJ, it also continues to provide wholesale funding to eight MFIs for on-lending to entrepreneurs.

The DBJ lists its 'current accredited MFIs' as: Access Financial Services Limited, JN Small Business Loans Limited, NationGrowth Microfinance Limited, Micro Credit Limited, St Thomas Co-operative Credit Union, St Elizabeth Co-operative Credit Union Limited, First Heritage Co-operative Credit Union, McKayla Financial Services Limited and First Union Financial Company Limited.

[claudia.gardner@gleanerjm.com](mailto:claudia.gardner@gleanerjm.com)

**We provide**

- **Chef Jackets**
- **House Dresses and Housekeeping Uniforms,**
- **Wait and Restaurant Staff Uniforms**
- **Managerial Attire**

**ULTIMATE**  
VISIONS

*Uniform division of Heffes Sales Company*



**Manufacturers and Retailers of Work & School Uniforms**

Visit us at: 10 Shortwood Rd. Kingston 8 • Tel: 969-1777 / 925-9256 • Email: [ultimatevisions@flowja.com](mailto:ultimatevisions@flowja.com) • Open- Mon. - Fri.- 10am - 6pm & Saturday 10am - 4pm

# JHTA awards tourism workers



PHOTOS BY JANET SILVERA

JHTA Lifetime Achievement awardee, Merrick Fray (centre) of Sandals Resorts International, is flanked (from left) by Minister of Tourism Dr Wykeham McNeill; immediate past president of the JHTA, Evelyn Smith; Adam Stewart, and Wayne Cummings, after being presented with the award at the JHTA 53rd Annual General Meeting at The Jamaica Pegasus in Kingston on May 31.

## Janet Silvera

Senior Gleaner Writer

WESTERN BUREAU:

**S**ANDALS RESORTS International's gardener, Strickland Smith, and hotel manager, Dawn Smith, were the big winners at the Jamaica Hotel and Tourist Association's (JHTA) 53rd Annual General Meeting and Awards Ceremony, recently.

Strickland Smith, described as a master artist at work, was named Hotel Employee of the Year, while Dawn Smith, who has earned 26 years of invaluable experience in the industry, copped the Manager/Supervisor of the Year at a special luncheon at The Jamaica Pegasus in Kingston.

This latest accolade comes as no surprise to Strickland, whose brilliance and dynamism, over the years, has won him numerous staff awards, including the Sandals Foundation Team Member of the Year Award for Community Service, and the General Manager's Award for Outstanding Performance.

"He produces more additional revenue than anyone else on the property and has been described as the embodiment of the ultimate tourism worker – bright, passionate, vocal, and proud to be one of its ambassadors," was how the JHTA presented him.

His colleague, Dawn Smith's profile was just as impressive. Smith freely shares her years of experience and knowledge by mentoring young people through the Sandals Hospitality Training Programme, "patiently providing them with one-on-one



Sandals Resorts International's Dawn Smith, Manager/Supervisor of the Year, and her colleague, Hotel Employee of the Year Strickland Smith, share lens time at the JHTA 53rd Annual General Meeting at The Jamaica Pegasus in Kingston on May 31.

training", said the JHTA.

The two, based at Sandals Grande Riviera and Sandals Montego Bay, shared the spotlight with Hotelier of the Year, Aram Zerunian, general manager of Half Moon, A Rock Resort and Lifetime Achievement awardees Merrick Fray and Francis Tulloch.

Fray, a member of the Sandals executive, was credited for his role in guiding the organisation to

international acclaim on the basis of world-renowned service standards, and Tulloch, a former tourism minister, was lauded for opening the doors to the Jamaica Tourist Board for JHTA directors to become board members.

Songstress Tessanne Chin received the 2014 Abe Issa Award for Excellence for her role in promoting the reputation and image of Jamaica as a tourist destination; Tricia Hagley, a



Hotel Manager/Supervisor of the Year, Dawn Smith, of Sandals, is being congratulated by Minister of Tourism Dr Wykeham McNeill.

supervisor at VIP Attractions, was named Tourism Employee of the Year, while the Purveyor of the Year went to J. Wray and Nephew Limited.

For its exceptional customer service, continuous improvement and environmental friendliness, Dolphin Cove took home the Attraction of the Year title, sharing the accolades with Jetblue Airlines and Jamaica Tours Limited, who were recognised as

International Airline and Local Transportation providers, respectively.

With energy conservation and efficiency being an important aspect of the hotel sector, the Jamaica Public Service rewarded the resorts with the 'Best Use of Energy' for hotels under 100 rooms to Negril Palms and hotels more than 100 to Jewel Dunn's River Beach and Spa.

[janet.silvera@gleanerjm.com](mailto:janet.silvera@gleanerjm.com)



PHOTOS BY JANET SILVERA

Immediate Past President of the JHTA Evelyn Smith presents the Local Transportation of the Year plaque to Noel Sloley Jr, managing director of Jamaica Tours Limited, during the JHTA's 53rd Annual General Meeting at The Jamaica Pegasus in Kingston on May 31.



Team members (from left) Latoya Hammond-Lee, Jermaine Crigland, Cordelia Blake, Margaret Brown and Sydney Irving are all smiles from the fact that their teamwork contributed to Negril Palms Hotel being selected as the winner of the JPS Best Use of Energy Small Hotels awardee for 2013, at the recent JHTA Annual Awards held on May 31, 2014 during the Association's Annual General Meeting.



From left: General Manager of Sunset Beach Resort in Montego Bay, Evatt Bloomfield, poses with the big three, Hotelier of the Year, Aram Zerunian, general manager, Half Moon; Merrick Fray, Sandals; and Francis Tulloch, both Lifetime Achievement awardees, at the JHTA 53rd Annual General Meeting at The Jamaica Pegasus in Kingston on May 31.



Immediate Past President of the Jamaica Hotel and Tourist Association Evelyn Smith (left) presents the Attraction of the Year Award to Marilyn Burrowes.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Invest Caribbean Now's Felicia Persaud presents an award to hotelier Gordon 'Butch' Stewart.

## Gordon 'Butch' Stewart receives 2014 Invest Caribbean Now Leadership Award

CHAIRMAN OF Sandals Resorts International, Gordon 'Butch' Stewart, was honoured with the 2014 Invest Caribbean Now (ICN) Leadership Award, at the Harvard Club in New York City, on June 4.

Stewart was honoured this year for his investment, commitment and dedication to the Caribbean. Past ICN honourees have included Sir Richard Branson and Royal Caribbean Cruises International. The ICN is the biggest global summit on the Caribbean, held outside of the region.

"It is an honour to be considered a leader among those serving and succeeding in the Caribbean," said Stewart. "My work here, the companies we have built, the jobs we have created and the people we have served are the best example of what is possible in the Caribbean and why we must continue to invest here, at home."

### SANDALS' INVESTMENT

Over the last five years, Sandals Resorts International has invested more than US\$500,000 into product improvement and new developments across the Caribbean. In the past year alone, the resort company has celebrated the grand opening of Sandals LaSource Grenada and the Key West Luxury Village at Beaches Turks and Caicos; acquisition of properties under renovation and development in Antigua and Barbados; and also announced the Caribbean's first-ever over-the-water suites at Sandals Royal Caribbean.

"For hoteliers, so much of the focus is on the guest experience," Stewart added. "And that is true for Sandals, too. But we serve another audience, too, which is as critical to our mission, central to our values and one of the most fulfilling aspects of my job – and that is the promise of what resort development means to the people of the Caribbean."

The ICN event was attended by global professional investors, entrepreneurs, and business leaders including a delegation of Chinese business leaders and dignitaries; Hollywood Actor Malik Yoba; Sergio Millian, president of the Russian-American Chamber of Commerce; Colin Childress, CEO/founder, Global MedChoices, Turks & Caicos; Paul Angelchik, MD, founder and CEO, American World Clinic – Barbados; Anthony A. L. Adjasse of the Allied African Nations Chamber of Commerce; Hollywood fashion designer, Woody Wilson; and Qahir Dhanani, private sector development specialist of the World Bank Group.

Additionally, Caribbean government ministers and dignitaries from across the region were in attendance, including premier of Nevis, Vance Amory; minister of trade, industry, investment and communications, Trinidad and Tobago, Vasant Bharath; minister of agriculture of Barbados, Dr David Estwick; minister of tourism and international transport of St Kitts, Ricky Skerritt; Jamaica's ambassador to the United Nations, Courtney Rattray; several CARICOM consuls general to New York, and the secretary general of the Caribbean Tourism Organisation, Hugh Riley.

## Carrole Guntley cops CTO's Lifetime Achievement Award

JAMAICA'S FIRST female director of tourism, Carrole Guntley, is the recipient of this year's Lifetime Achievement Award, the Caribbean Tourism Organisation's (CTO) most prestigious honour.

Guntley was presented with the special award during the Allied Awards Luncheon at the Wyndham New Yorker Hotel last Friday, June 6.

The Jamaica Tourist Board (JTB) in saluting Guntley, who led the agency between 1984 and 1990, described her as a regional tourism stalwart most deserving of this recognition. With almost four decades of service to tourism in Jamaica and the Caribbean, Guntley has established an international reputation for innovation and leadership in the field.

It was during her tenure as Jamaica's tourism director that the island achieved the landmark target of welcoming one million visitors in a calendar year.

"Carrole is a respected and tireless advocate for Caribbean tourism and especially for Jamaica," said Dennis Morrison, chairman of the JTB. "She is truly deserving of this latest accolade. We extend our sincere congratulations to her on this significant honour."

Guntley was also responsible for developing the first Tourism Teacher's Guide and pictorial map of Jamaica for schools and launched the island's premier tourism trade show, the Jamaica Product Exchange (widely known as JAPEX).

Her career with the JTB dates back to the early 1970s while she attended the Ryerson Polytechnic Institute in Toronto, Canada. Up until 1978, she worked summer and vacation jobs with the organisation, both in Jamaica and Canada. Her various positions included telephone communications operator and administrative assistant in the Product Department.

While at Ryerson, she received numerous accolades in recognition of her exceptional academic achievements. The awards included: The Inaugural Pringle Scholarship in Hotel Management awarded by the JTB; the Ryerson and Korey Gold Medals for exceptional academic achievement, and extensive participation in co-curricular and extra-curricular activities.

### AFTER HER DEGREE

On receipt of her degree in hotel and tourism management, she worked from 1976 to 1978 as executive sales manager of the Jamaica Pegasus Hotel in Kingston; and from 1978 to 1983 as director of sales and public relations at the Rose Hall Inter-Continental Hotel and Country Club in Montego Bay. In 1983, she was appointed special assistant to then minister of tourism, Anthony Abrahams, before her appointment a year later as director of tourism.

Her contribution to Jamaica's tourism has not gone unnoticed, and in addition to her numerous citations and awards, Guntley is a recipient of the Order of Distinction, Commander Class, presented by the Government of Jamaica. She most recently served as director general in Jamaica's Ministry of Tourism and Entertainment.

Her impact on tourism spans the entire region, having served as area manager for Jamaica, St Maarten and Western Caribbean for BWIA, and European marketing manager for the CTO.

"What a privilege and a pleasure it is to be able to honour Carrole Guntley with the Lifetime Achievement Award," said Hugh Riley, the CTO's secretary general. "This is just a small way of saying 'thank you' to Ms Guntley for the tremendous contribution she has made to the life of CTO and to Caribbean tourism in general. Congratulations Carrole; it's well deserved."



Jamaica's first female tourism director, Carrole Guntley (centre), receives the Caribbean Tourism Organisation (CTO) Lifetime Achievement Award from CTO chairman, Beverly Nicholson-Doty (left) and CTO secretary general, Hugh Riley.

# The Drinking Man's Scotch



Join us to enjoy TRUE SCOTCH at select retailers islandwide on Saturday June 14, 2014

Available at retailers island wide. Must be 18 years and older to drink. Enjoy Dewar's responsibly.





PHOTO BY COLIN WILLIAMS

From left: Regional director, tour operator and airline liaison, Jamaica Tourist Board, Anthony King; Michael Erskine; Marcia Erskine, managing director, Marcia Erskine and Associates; Baz Dreisinger, freelance journalist; and Jamaica's deputy director of tourism, USA Sales, Donnie Dawson.

## JTB honours outstanding travel industry individuals

THE JAMAICA Tourist Board (JTB) last week presented two distinguished travel industry individuals – Marcia Erskine, managing director of Marcia Erskine and Associates; and Baz Dreisinger, freelance writer – with awards of excellence for their efforts in marketing the Caribbean as a premier travel destination.

Erskine was presented with the Marcella Martinez award, while Baz Dreisinger received the Marcia Vickery-Wallace award. The recipients, who were chosen because of their commitment to covering and marketing the Caribbean as a premier travel region, were presented with their awards during the Caribbean Tourism Organization's Caribbean Media Awards Luncheon held at The New Yorker Hotel as part of activities to mark Caribbean Week in New York, 2014.

The Marcia Vickery-Wallace and Marcella Martinez awards honour the significant achievements of individuals whose work have shared the Caribbean experience with the world.

### MARCELLA MARTINEZ AWARD

Established in 2004, the Marcella Martinez Award is presented annually for unparalleled achievement in the design and implementation of successful programmes to strengthen and



Following their departure from Jamaica, the Clipper race are headed to New York. Chairman of the Jamaica Tourist Board (JTB), Dennis Morrison, along with business development manager Chris Dobson welcomed the crew at North Cove Marina during the annual Caribbean Week in New York. Pictured above are Chairman Morrison (left) and Business Development Manager Chris Dobson (centre) of the JTB, skipper, Pete Stirling, and the Jamaica Get All Right crew at North Cove Marina. The eighth leg of the race to Derry-Londonderry, Northern Ireland began on June 7.

support Caribbean tourism. The award is named in honour of Jamaican Marcella Martinez, who dedicated her extraordinary career as a public relations professional to the promotion of tourism in the Caribbean.

Jamaica's deputy director of tourism, Donnie Dawson, presented this year's Marcella Martinez Award to Marcia Erskine. According to Dawson, "Marcia embodies the spirit behind this award. And those who

know her, know that her passion for the region is undeniable. Her impact is far-reaching, having developed and implemented public-relations support for several tourism-related entities, including the Jamaica Hotel and Tourist Association, British Airways, Delta Airlines, BWIA, Half Moon Resort, The Jamaica Pegasus hotel, Hotel Four Seasons, the Wyndham Kingston Hotel, as well as ESPN Caribbean."

In the Caribbean, Erskine served



The recently concluded Calabash Literary festival transported its audiences to unexpected, yet fulfilling literary heights. Dubbed 'Globalishus' to reflect the diversity of this year's participants, the event was a delectable feast of rich literary content, soul-stirring music, gastronomical platters and great Jamaican vibe. Add to that the sublime backdrop of Treasure Beach. Among this year's featured authors were Salman Rushdie, Zadie Smith and Jamaica Kincaid. Rushdie's works include the Booker Prize-winning 'Midnight's Children' and the bestselling 'The Satanic Verses'. Rushdie (centre), is shown above with Jamaica Tourist Board's (JTB) Jason Hall (left), deputy director of tourism, cruise, events and attractions; and Missy Brody, Rushdie's guest. The JTB is a sponsor of Calabash.



as public relations representative for British Airways, spanning the entire region with responsibility for Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Cayman Islands, The Bahamas and the Turks and Caicos Islands. She has also led teams of Jamaican hoteliers on overseas marketing missions throughout the Caribbean, the United States and Europe. Her company has had the distinction of representing the Barbados Tourism Authority for several years, and during that time, hosted a number of Crop Over Festival promotions in Kingston.

### THE MARCIA VICKERY-WALLACE AWARD

The Marcia Vickery-Wallace Award was established in 1987 as a tribute to Marcia Vickery-Wallace, former editor of *Brides Magazine*. Each year, the JTB, in conjunction with the CTO, dedicates an award in her memory to a journalist who has followed in her footsteps with the same dedication to promoting the Caribbean region. This year, Jamaica's regional director in charge of airline and tour operators, Tony King, presented the award to freelance journalist, Baz Dreisinger. She writes about Caribbean culture, travel and music for *The New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Village Voice* and the *Wall Street Journal*,

among other outlets. She also writes and produces on-air segments for National Public Radio.

Baz, whose love for the Caribbean, its culture, music and lifestyle is unparalleled, earned this award for her dedication and commitment to reporting on the Caribbean region. She is well travelled and has written numerous stories that reflect each island's cultural nuances – going beyond the sun, sand and sea to explore off-the-beaten-path locations.

"While Baz finds it hard to sum up what excites her most about the Caribbean, an apt phrase is 'my spirit takes to it'. Baz, who has been covering the region for many years, describes the Caribbean as a legacy of paradoxes: joy and struggle, beauty and complexity, peace and exhilarating energy," King said, in presenting the award.

Baz has written extensively about the Caribbean and describes her most compelling features as two *New York Times* cover stories in which she got to explore the history of Caribbean rum and cocoa.

Another such feature includes one she penned for *Caribbean Travel and Life on Carnival in Trinidad*, where she played mas for the first time. King noted that while every island has a piece of her heart, Baz lists Jamaica as her most memorable. Currently, Baz serves as an associate professor of English at John Jay College.

The Jamaica Tourist Board is a co-sponsor of this year's Caribbean Media Awards Luncheon.

# Tourism, health agencies sign partnership agreement

**T**HE CARIBBEAN Tourism Organisation (CTO), the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA) and the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA) have created a partnership to establish and promote health and safety protocols and practices in the tourism workplace in the region.

CTO secretary general and chief executive officer, Hugh Riley; executive director of CARPHA, Dr James Hospedales, and CHTA director general and CEO, Jeffrey S. Vasser, signed the memorandum of understanding (MOU) at a news conference last week at the Wyndham New Yorker Hotel in New York City, home of the annual CTO Caribbean Week which celebrates Caribbean tourism

and the rich heritage and culture.

## CARIBBEAN'S PRINCIPAL EARNER

"As the Caribbean's principal economic earner, the tourism sector must be vigilant and proactive regarding health and safety issues that can adversely affect the health of our tourism workforce or that of our visitors. As the organisation leading sustainable tourism in the Caribbean, the CTO is pleased to partner with the regional public-health agency and the umbrella tourism private-sector entity to face these challenges head-on in a structured and collective manner," said Riley.

For his part, Dr Hospedales said the work of the partnership will further improve the quality, resilience and competitiveness of the regional tourism industry with triple bottom-

line returns; to health, to economic resilience, and to the environment.

"CHTA has always been a proponent of training and professional development opportunities for hospitality staff, and by working with CTO and CARPHA to create the best practices promoting health and safety throughout the tourism sector, we will enhance the knowledge of our workforce, thereby ensuring the safety and security of the employees and guests throughout our 600-plus member hotels and more than 30 member destinations," stated Vasser.

Through the MOU, the three organisations will collaborate in the following areas: food and environmental safety training and certification; public-health information, monitoring and response systems for hotels and cruise ships to provide

timely alert and a rapid coordinated response to adverse health, safety and environmental issues; health, safety and environmental standards certification, and recognition systems to improve the health, safety and environmental quality in the tourism workplace.

Health and wellness programmes to encourage and promote a healthy tourism workforce; awareness raising and promotion of multisectoral and multiagency approaches to address the health, safety and environmental issues associated with tourism; and partnerships, networks and business strategies for sustainability of the tourism and health programme are among the other areas on the agenda.

The agreement is for an initial two-year period.



Kool Runnings Adventure Park.

## Team WLSL set to break world record on June 20

KOOL RUNNINGS Adventure Park will serve as Jamaica's official host location for the World's Largest Swimming Lesson (WLSL), which will take place on Friday, June 20.

Tens of thousands of children and adults at aquatic facilities around the world will unite for the fifth year in a row, at 11 a.m., Eastern Standard Time (3 p.m. GMT) in an attempt to break the Guinness World Record. Kool Runnings Adventure Park is the only aquatic facility in the Caribbean featured on the official

WLSL rack card.

Team WLSL holds the current Guinness World Record for the largest simultaneous swimming lesson, which stands at 32,450 participants, representing 13 different countries across five continents. The 2013 WLSL event generated more than 50 million media impressions, spreading the event's important message to hundreds of thousands of families.

The event is aimed at building awareness about the importance of teaching children to swim in a



**CONTRIBUTED**  
A lifeguard (standing in background) watches as a group of children enjoy the pool at Kool Runnings Water Park in Negril.

bid to help prevent drowning. Swimming is a life-saving skill for children and a vital tool to prevent drowning, which is the second-leading cause of unintended, injury-related death for children ages one to 14. The WLSL was created to serve as a

platform to help aquatic facilities and worldwide drowning-prevention organisations to work together to tell this important story on a local and national level.

Research shows participation in formal swimming lessons can reduce the risk of drowning by 88

per cent among children ages one-four, yet many do not receive formal swimming or water-safety training.

Parents are invited to learn more about this event by visiting [WLSL.org](http://WLSL.org) or [www.koolrunnings.com](http://www.koolrunnings.com).



Pastor Hibbert arriving with water and soup ingredients.



A patch of minty coco plants.

“**H**OG inna mi coco jus a root out mi minty,” goes a line from one of our popular folk songs. But what does it mean? Have you ever stopped to think? Some people take it at face value, while some have taken sexual metaphors from it.

I will leave the metaphors to those who are into metaphors, and take it literally to say that hogs love coco, a tuber that has many varieties, and the minty is one of them. So the song is about a hog in someone’s coco field rooting out his minty (smile). And for the first time in my life, I was introduced to a piece of minty (smile broadly), recently.

It was when I visited a group of farmers in Hopewell, Portland, on a ‘work day’. They are members of the Hopewell Farmers’ Association, and they had gathered to give assistance to Pastor Delbert ‘Glen’ Hibbert in maintaining his cocoa walk. It is a communal system in which farmers take turns in helping one another on their farms without payment for work done. The host farmer, however, provides lunch and refreshments.

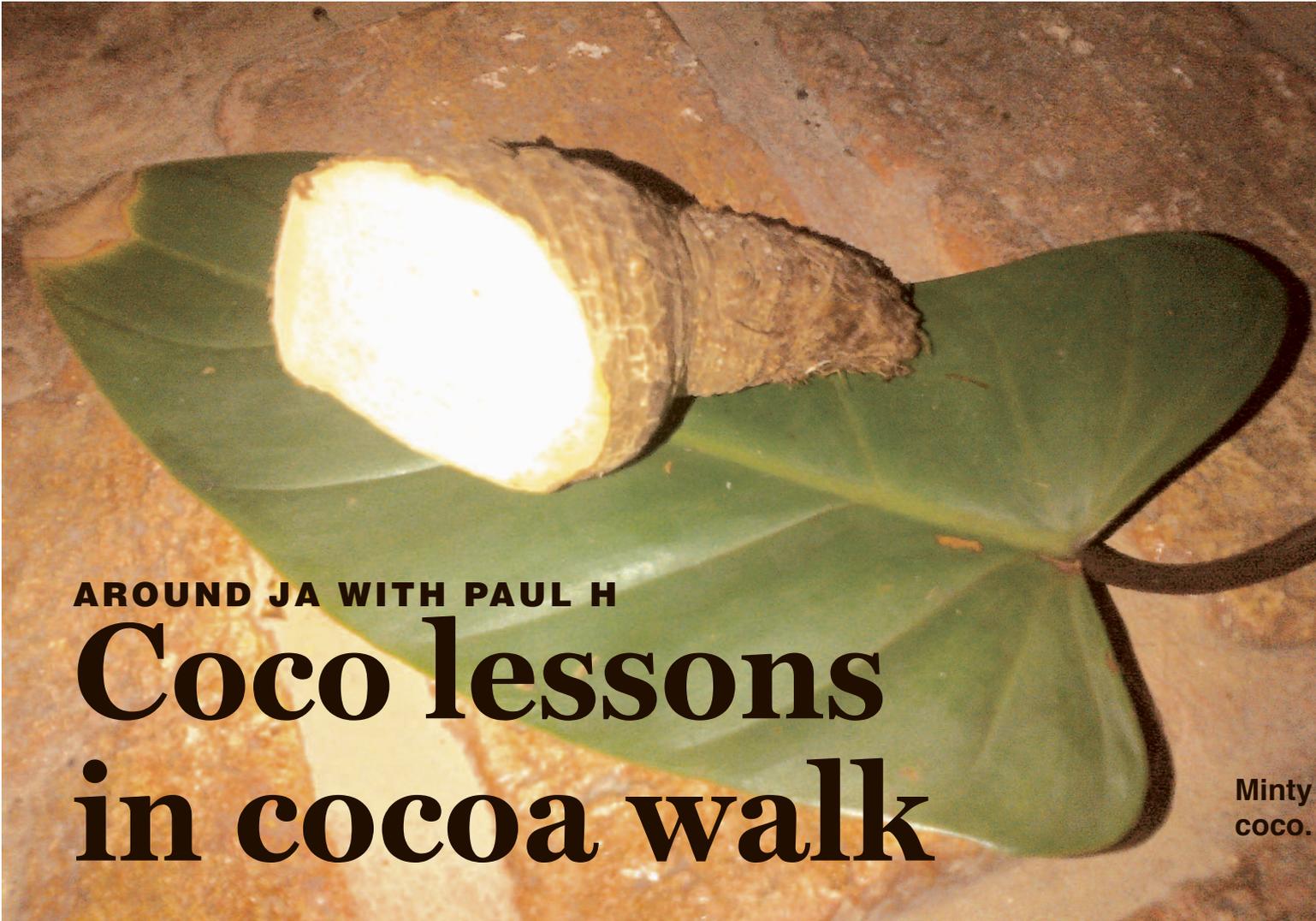
I heard of the work day when I was trying to get information on another story, and felt that it would be good to see how it works. When I arrived at the agreed time, the group, dressed for the bush, was waiting for me, on flat ground. After the greetings, we turned off the road into bushes and thickets.

We travelled through a strip of land being cleared until we came to the foot of a hill. It was a gully of sorts, as it was sandwiched by two hillsides; one was bare as it was being prepared for farming, the other was covered with trees, Pastor Glen’s cocoa trees, among others. Soon after arrival, Pastor Glen disappeared among the trees with the cooking utensils.

An argument then ensued over where the food should be cooked. The women wanted the fireside on the cleared piece of land, so he was called to address the matter. Pastor Glen, who reappeared with a piece of coco in his hand, insisted the cooking would be on his hillside since it was his land that was being worked on.

After much egging, Pastor Glen was not moved, neither by the spirits nor by the wails of the mortals. I was not pleased, because it meant I would have to climb the hillside. I love the life, but it’s the fitness, or the lack thereof, that is the problem. Anyway, I was placated with a big jelly coconut that seemed to contain quarts of water.

All this time, the women were



Two of the persons who turned up on May 14 to give assistance to Pastor Hibbert.



This piece of yam added nothing but toughness to the pot. Whatever became of it?



PHOTOS BY PAUL WILLIAMS

Sally (left) and Jook coco.



Members of the Hopewell Farmers' Association who turned up on May 14 to assist Pastor Hibbert (sixth from right) in his cocoa farm.



Time to eat and chat. **At right:** Jackie Cousins peeling coco for the soup pot.



calling for a Sylvia to join the group. I didn't see any house, but there were unintelligible responses. As we waited for Sylvia Walker, the assistant secretary, to arrive, a discussion on the types of coco ensued. It was triggered by Pastor Glen's introduction of the minty, which he had brought out of the bush.

My brain opened up to absorb the info, being the coco lover I am. So the group came up with 'leftman', 'sally', 'minty', 'jook', and another that starts with 'D'. Brain didn't register that one. And what didn't register in Sylvia Walker's

brain were the many urgent calls for her to join the group. I remarked that she could be putting on her wig, to which some members of the group laughed. I got the feeling I was right. Unfortunately, we had to take the group picture without Sylvia Walker.

After the pictures, it was time for work, and one by one, everybody mounted the hill. I was slow behind. The place was damp, and the surface uneven. I found myself in a cocoa walk, and among the cocoa trees were coco plants, including minty. Machetes were flashing left, right and centre as the

men chopped down unwanted plants. It is a practice in the cultivation of cocoa that has been going on for decades, it seems.

Edward Long, in *The History of Jamaica, Volume 1*, first published in 1774, wrote on page 697, "*When the cacao is six months old, the planter, from this period, must not be fond of cleaning the walk from grass and herbage, because they keep the ground cool, but all creeping, climbing plants, and such weeds as grow high enough to overtop the cacao, should be destroyed.*"

A similar explanation was given by the men as I questioned them as

they worked. Meanwhile, the women were above us cooking away. I was busy taking pictures of minty coco plants and young and old cocoa seed pods, when Sylvia arrived in a long, black wig, singing, "Mi no want no botheration, oh". Well, she was not in the group picture.

We greeted and spoke about many things, and when I mentioned that I could attend Career Day by the primary school, Sylvia Walker started to make calls, and eventually left to prepare herself for the 'media' visit. But I changed my mind as I just could

not go to and fro in that hill-and-gully place.

I scrambled up the hillside until I reached the cooking spot. And that was where the fun was. More discussions on types of cocos, man and woman stories of infidelity, unrequited love, separation, 'dead-lef' land, the two cock soup sachets destroyed by rats. It was chat, chat, chat until the pot of soup was ready.

After eating and more chatting, it was time to go, for it was really time to go. Nature was calling in the heart of nature, and from lessons learnt in the past, coco leaves are no good.

# Tourism in action



Minister of Tourism and Entertainment Dr Wykeham McNeill (left) admires the Jamaica Hotel and Tourist Association (JHTA) certificate of membership that is being displayed proudly by marketing and events manager of Devon House, Andre Reid. Looking on is group and meeting manager, Royalton White Sands Resort, Stayce Ingram. Both Devon House and Royalton White Sands became JHTA members at the 53rd Annual General Meeting of the JHTA, held Saturday, May 31, 2014, at The Jamaica Pegasus hotel, New Kingston.



Minister of Tourism and Entertainment Dr Wykeham McNeill (left), seems to have the rapt attention of (from left): Opposition Spokesperson on tourism Shahine Robinson; outgoing director of tourism, John Lynch; president of the Private Sector Organisation of Jamaica, Christopher Zacca; immediate past president of the Jamaica Hotel and Tourist Association (JHTA), Evelyn Smith; and JHTA executive director, Camille Needham. The occasion was the 53rd Annual General Meeting of the JHTA, held Saturday, May 31, 2014, at The Jamaica Pegasus hotel, New Kingston.



The Kingston Skål Club's John Lynch (left) and Diana Marley (second right) welcome interCaribbean Airways chairman, Lyndon Gardiner (right); and country manager, Jamaica, Carole Fox, at the Skål reception at The Jamaica Pegasus last week.



Kingston Skål Club member Jason Hall (right), deputy director cruise, events and attractions, Jamaica Tourist Board, welcomes interCaribbean Airways chairman, Lyndon Gardiner (left); and the airline's country manager, Jamaica, Carole Fox, to the Skål reception at The Jamaica Pegasus last week. interCaribbean Airways is bridging the travel gap between Montego Bay and Kingston with their twice-per-day domestic service launched last month. The airline is also offering international flights to the Turks and Caicos Islands, The Bahamas, the Dominican Republic and Haiti. The Skål Club is an international organisation of professional travel and tourism leaders around the world, dedicated to promoting global tourism and friendship.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

# The end of an era ... JTB's Clive Taffe passes

THE MINISTRY of Tourism and Entertainment and the Jamaica Tourist Board (JTB) are deeply saddened at the passing of Clive Eugene Taffe, an extraordinary colleague and former member of staff.

His lifetime of work was dedicated to the JTB as he worked in various capacities promoting destination Jamaica. His passing marks the end of an era as he was the only employee to have served with every director of tourism.

Dennis Morrison, chairman of the JTB, said, "Clive served the Jamaica Tourist Board for a remarkable 50 years. This was not limited to the geographic borders of Jamaica, as he held key positions in Chicago, Philadelphia, and Los Angeles as sales representative, district manager and regional manager. The entire organisation regrets his passing and extends condolences to his family. We will never see another Clive Taffe."

During Clive's tenure, the midwest region grew exponentially. His commitment to the industry continued after retirement as he also served as consultant to the director of tourism. In recognition of his unstinting service to the tourist industry, he was honoured with numerous awards to include the Order of Distinction from the Government of Jamaica in 2006.

In offering his condolences, Minister of Tourism and Entertainment Dr Wykeham McNeill said, "On behalf of the Ministry of Tourism and Entertainment, I wish to express my profound regret at the passing of our friend and colleague, Clive Taffe, and offer my sincere condolences to his family and loved ones. His 50 years of outstanding service to the Jamaica Tourist Board have contributed significantly to the development of Jamaica's vibrant tourism sector. Mr Taffe was an exceptionally committed and faithful worker who brought vision and drive to the various portfolios he held throughout his tenure. He was truly a shining example as a public servant. His memory will live on and he will be greatly missed."



A confident Cleveland Wright smiles for the camera.

PHOTO BY KARRIE WILLIAMS

## PEOPLE IN TOURISM

# Cleveland Wright eats, sleeps and dreams Round Hill

**Karrie Williams**

*Hospitality Jamaica Writer*

**T**O MANY persons in Hopewell, Hanover, the name Cleveland Wright is synonymous with the Round Hill hotel in the parish.

Why? Wright has the distinction of being the longest-serving male employee at Round Hill, where he has been working for 42 years, and where he made his mark as an advocate for staff benefits.

"Cleveland is an extremely dedicated employee who has a deep love and passion for Round Hill and its employees," declared Nathalie Saunders, director of human resources and training. "He has been integral in getting a lot of the benefits the staff enjoys today, to include being the brainchild behind our own credit union ... I believe he eats, sleeps and dreams Round Hill."

When *Hospitality Jamaica* caught up with Wright in Round Hill's ocean view

lobby, the environmental officer appeared every bit in love with the hotel as Saunders claimed. He proudly explained the daily responsibilities of the job where he practically grew up, having started his employment at the age of 17.

"I use data to examine the water and electricity usage on a daily basis to see how much we use and the impact on our bills. My department also scrutinises safety in chemical usage and we foster a lot of in-house and community initiatives which target best practices to reduce our footprints on the environment," Wright explains.

Under his watchful eyes, each department at Round Hill performs from a standard operating procedure which he says is in place "to ensure the property maintains its environment sustainability and friendliness within the community so guests who come here can feel safe in our environment".

Exuding a great sense of commitment to task, Wright said facilitating the upward mobility of his

colleagues is a passion, and praised managing director, Josef Forstmayr, for allowing him the latitude he needs to do just that.

"I wanted to make a change to the circumstances as they were when I first began working at Round Hill ... I wanted to contribute to the development of the workers. I wanted to uplift them and I needed them and myself to have a right to the resources the hotel industry has to offer," Wright said.

A father of seven children, Wright, who enjoys a wide range of sporting activities in his spare time, said he depends on the teachings of National Hero Marcus Garvey to motivate and inspire him.

"He appeals to us as a people to have self-confidence and has pointed out to us that no one will help us unless we try to help ourselves ... that inspires me to believe that I can do anything I want at anytime and propels me to try and create those possibilities," he said.



Patrons enjoying the vibes at the recently staged Jamaica Beer Festival.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

# Jamaica Beer Festival a hit!

**S**CORES OF beer lovers, including tourists, turned out to witness the first-ever Jamaica Beer Festival at the Barbican Beach, recently. Red Stripe, the world's coolest beer, introduced to the public numerous ways to enjoy Heineken, Guinness, Talawah, Dragon, Malta and Smirnoff Ice.

Live performances by reggae acts including Kabaka Pyramid, No-Maddz, CK and Black as Cole, were featured at the event. Patrons were also able to take full advantage of board games such as dominoes and darts, as well as pool and football, in order to win prizes.

Assistant brand manager at Red Stripe, Andrew Anguin, said the event was a huge success. He said one of the goals of the event was to boost beer consumption across the island by increasing consumer interest the company's various brands. He said that as the festival grows, it is expected that so too will the demand for beer.

"Patrons enjoyed every minute of the festival, and that made it a massive success for us. The inspiration for hosting the Jamaica Beer Festival came from



A patron pours a drink of Guinness.

the leading beer festivals across the world, where thousands of consumers celebrate their love for beer. We wanted to treat beer lovers to a similar larger-than-life experience that only the Jamaica Beer Festival could deliver," Anguin said.



Dianne Ashton-Smith, head of Corporate Relations at Red Stripe (centre) plays the perfect hostess to (from left) Manley Burrowes, Sara Downer, Winfried Schäfer, head coach of the Reggae Boyz; and Paul Smith, during the Jamaica Beer festival.

"Red Stripe is quite focused on selling Brand Jamaica, and this festival is true demonstration of that fact. What better way to sell Jamaica, than showcasing so many elements of our culture in one venue? We were fortunate as everything worked out in our favour. The weather was great, patrons turned out, and without a

doubt, they enjoyed the good food, good music and great beer," he added.

Anguin said the Red Stripe team plans to make the Jamaica Beer Festival a yearly, if not a biannual event. Planning has already begun for the next staging of the event.

"The team is already

brainstorming new ideas to make the next staging bigger and better. Of course, improvements are being made where necessary, and in time, we will share more as we solidify our plans," he said.

Digicel, Pepsi, CB Chicken and Rainforest Seafoods were among the other associate sponsors of the event.



Some of the villas that line the coast from the Blue Lagoon to San San Bay in Portland.



The Blue Lagoon is the biggest allure on Portland's San San hip strip.



A section of the sprawling Goblin Hill property.



# SAN SAN, PORTLAND

A story of  
exclusiveness

The family of the late Baron Hans Heinrich Thyssen-Bornemisza owns an eight-acre property and home at the tip of Alligator Head.

**Paul H. Williams**  
*Hospitality Jamaica Writer*

IT DOESN'T have the hustle and bustle that is characteristic of hip strips the world over, but San San, Portland, with its rustic charm, luxurious villas, blue waters, cool, hilly hideaways among its luxuriant vegetation, is as hip, and as exclusive as can be.

This extensive stretch of prime real estate that runs from the beguiling Blue Lagoon to the less opulent community of Drapers is not for the moneyless. The juxtaposition of the wealthy against the struggling is stark, and while Drapers has its fair share of guests houses and extravagant residences, it doesn't have the element of exclusivity that San San has.

The exclusiveness of San San began when banana mogul, Captain Lorenzo Dow Baker started taking tourists to Jamaica on his banana boats. He bought Cold Harbour Estate in 1902 from the Government, and after he

died in 1911, his sons bought Fairfield, in the eastern section, from the Government. The extension continued with the purchase of Pompey to the east of Fairfield. Cold Harbour Limited bought the Bakers' property when the family resettled in Boston, Massachusetts, in 1941.

#### EXCLUSIVITY STEPPED UP

Eight years later, the owners of Cold Harbour Estate stepped up the exclusivity of San San to the rich and famous with the division of the estate into 300 lots of various sizes. When in 1951 Denis Smith-Bingham, a British diplomat, was appointed resident director of Cold Harbour Estate, the rich and famous were targeted for the purchase of the lots. At the time, it was fashionable for notable Americans to have winter residences at San San.

Some of the then notable residents of, and visitors to, San San were author Robin Moore, Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan, who married Nina Dyer, the former wife of Baron Hans

Heinrich Thyssen-Bornemisza, who owned an eight-acre property at Alligator Head. Pellew Island, in San San Bay, was given as a gift to Nina Dyer, and is now called Princess Nina Island. In 1955, Princess Margaret stayed briefly at Alligator Head.

The year 1956 saw the sale of a portion of Cold Harbour Estate to the cocky Canadian millionaire, Garfield Weston, who came under pressure from Cold Harbour Development Company to create a high-end hotel in San San to enhance its prestige, as agreed on in the sales contract. The rich property owners wanted to keep San San in a certain way, and certain people of certain backgrounds could not acquire land at San San.

But Weston and his son didn't want just another hotel. They constructed 18 separate houses and one great house all over the 45-acre Frenchman's Cove property. Completed in 1960, Frenchman's Cove, reputed to be the most expensive and exclusive hotel in the world in its heyday, offered top-class, all-

inclusive services to its wealthy guests, including royalty, prime ministers, presidents, movie stars and musicians.

Frenchman's Cove's repute as a haunt for high-end society people declined in the 1970s, but it is still one of the places of interest on the San San strip, with its very popular beach. Some of the other points of interest and places to stay on the sinuous coastal strip of San San are Blue Lagoon, Tropical lagoon, Norse Point, San San Beach, Wilks Bay, Moon San Villa, Fern Hill Hotel, San San Tropez and Kanopi House. In the San San hills, Geejam, Goblin Hill and Gremlin Hill are also on the list of places to go.

However, despite exclusiveness, it is not known how San San really got its name. All the research sources say it may have been the alias of the Chinese girlfriend of a gentleman, from Portland, who built a house for her in the area. Whatever the source of the name, San San represents high-society nuances and ethos among the greenery of Portland.



Frenchman's Cove was once regarded as the most expensive and exclusive hotel in world, hosting prime ministers, royalty, movie stars, etc.



Pellew Island, also known as Princess Nina Island, was a wedding gift to Princess Nina Aga Khan from her husband Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan.



San San Bay, with its circular white-sand beach, is a popular spot on the San San hip strip in Portland.



PHOTOS BY PAUL WILLIAMS

The properties in the San San area of Portland land are listed on attractive signage at intersections on the San San strip.