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KEEPING YOU CONNECTED TO THE BUSINESS OF TOURISM

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 6, 2014



PHOTO BY JANET SILVERA

The crowd at the Xtreme Wet and Wild at the Kool Runnings Waterpark in Negril on Sunday, August 3.

# Smirnoff Dream Weekend **ROCKS** **NEGRIL**

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## THE BUSINESS OF TOURISM

# Tourism-related casino gambling ... Is this the light at the end of the tunnel?

**David Jessop**  
Contributor

CASINOS ARE fast becoming a major part of the new tourism offering across the Caribbean, despite local objections from religious and other groups. Their rise is now particularly apparent as investors, mainly from China, propose ever bigger resorts with casino-linked complexes.

Recently, Yida International Investment, a Chinese group, signed a memorandum of agreement with Antigua's new government to construct a US\$2 billion 1,500-acre destination resort with a casino. The development, which includes five hotels, 1,300 private residences, a golf course, a conference centre, a marina, and other attractions, including a very large casino, will be larger than the Baha Mar resort development in The Bahamas. There, a 100,000-square-foot casino, also backed by Chinese money, and operated by a major US gaming company, will open at the end of this year.

What is striking about these two developments and others being considered for Jamaica and elsewhere in Caribbean is that almost without exception, these new mega resort projects now include large internationally run casinos that are central both to the marketing and profitability of what is being planned.

### HARMLESS PLEASURE FOR MANY

Personally, I have always been opposed to gambling on moral grounds and to what I consider the soulless ethos of every casino that I have ever seen or passed through, but that said, I accept that for many, they bring harmless pleasure and excitement and form an essential part of their vacation



**JESSOP**

and the region's tourism offering.

Like them or not, casinos have become a major industry. In the US, since the 1980s, the number of states that have legalised casino gambling has grown from two to 29, largely as a means to encourage tourism-linked economic development, employment, new sources of tax revenue, and increased local retail activity. This growth, according to the US National Gambling Impact Study Commission, also resulted from more favourable attitudes among the public towards casinos, and concern that failure to adopt similar legislation would see such investment going to neighbouring states.

While there appear to be no figures for the growth of casino gambling in the Caribbean, the industry in the US has become very large. According to the American Gaming Association (AGA), total consumer spending at casinos in 2012 stood at US\$37.34 billion, and is again growing. The industry also contributed US\$8.6 billion in gaming taxes at state and other levels.

What is particularly interesting from the AGA

report and others is that the demographic for casino gambling is gradually changing and the trend appears to bear some relation to the new younger or retired higher-spending category of visitors that tourist boards and hoteliers are seeking.

According to independent surveys produced for the AGA, 39 per cent of casino visitors across the US are now between 21 and 35 years old, of which category, 42 per cent finished college. While the overall profile remains largely in the older demographic, the suggestion is that this might be changing.

### VISITOR SPEND

What is less clear is how much casino-attracted visitors spend on a vacation. Research suggests that 53 per cent budget under US\$100 for a day's gambling while more than 90 per cent budget less than \$300 per visit. However, it appears that of those hotel guests using a casino, 69 per cent spent money on fine dining; 55 per cent saw a show or other live entertainment; 45 per cent visited a bar or club; and 42 per cent went shopping.

These headline numbers could change significantly in the Caribbean if, as some Chinese entrepreneurs suggest, they may establish special all-business-class charters to bring in high stakes gamblers of Chinese or other origins seeking new 'exotic' locations where they might risk their money.

US experience would seem to suggest that, from a national economic perspective, tourism-related casino gambling, if well regulated and properly taxed, may have much, therefore, to offer Jamaica and other regional destinations new to the casino



Something seems to be highly amusing as CNN anchor in New York, Michaela Pereira, and Minister of Tourism and Entertainment Dr Wykeham McNeill flip through a copy of 'Jamaica Heritage in Pictures', produced by the Jamaica National Heritage Trust. McNeill presented the book to Pereira as a gift when she paid him a courtesy call at Half Moon, A Rock Resort, on Saturday, July 19. She was in the island to trace her genealogical roots in Cambridge, St James, Jamaica.

## DNA connects CNN anchor to Cambridge, Jamaica

A DNA test for her job as CNN anchor has led Michaela Pereira of Canada to Cambridge in St James, Jamaica, to unearth her genealogical roots.

"I was adopted as an infant in Canada and I always knew that one part of my heritage came from Jamaica," she related. But she was unsure of how the connection came about. "I didn't know if one of my parents was Canadian-Jamaican or Jamaican," she said.

Now living in New York, and working with CNN, she needed to do a DNA test for her job and an idea emerged. "We decided to tell the story of each of our anchors that present on air and we discovered that my roots on my paternal side came from Jamaica, but specifically from Cambridge, St James."

With the curiosity of Alex Haley (author of the book, **Roots**), Pereira decided she wanted "to connect with my roots". That decision led her to Jamaica, supported by her husband and a film crew, and a journey to Cambridge in south St James. She said her visit was aimed at "really looking to connect with my ancestors, place and time and contacts".

Pereira and her film crew did not find anyone alive who could be identified as a direct family member, but she did find some graves that offered a link with her past and she has "learnt so many interesting facts" about Jamaica.

Prior to her departure, Pereira paid a courtesy call on Minister of Tourism

and Entertainment, Dr Wykeham McNeill, on Saturday (July 19), at Half Moon, A Rock Resort, and was presented with a hardbound copy of the book, **Jamaica Heritage in Pictures** produced by the Jamaica National Heritage Trust and which captures captivating images of Jamaica.

"This is my first visit to Jamaica, and I'm ashamed to say that," she admitted, but hastened to add, "I'm here now and I can come back as many times as I want."

Pereira ended her four-day visit on Sunday having learned many things and praising the Jamaican people. "First of all, the thing that has struck me the most, everyone without fail – rich, poor, black, white, young old – have said welcome home and it makes me cry."

"The second thing I have learned is how beautiful and warm and welcoming Jamaicans are. Everywhere I've gone they greet you with a smile and a hug – and not just me, there are five people travelling with me and they welcomed everybody as if they were a member of the family. We leave with new friends," she said beaming.

So overwhelming has been the welcome she received, Pereira said, "I don't feel like someone who came to visit Jamaica, I feel like Jamaican emphatically."

McNeill said, "I found Mrs Pereira's visit very interesting and was pleased that she regarded what she has found to be so amazing. We welcome her home to Jamaica with open arms."



# Smirnoff Dream Weekend rocks Negril

**Janet Silvera**

*Hospitality Jamaica Coordinator*

**T**HE THRONG in the parking lot at Hedonism II Negril spilled onto the road outside its main gate, and this was normal for most of the resorts in the Capital of Casual, as thousands invaded the resort town for Smirnoff Dream Weekend (SDW).

Far more than a weekend, in fact SDW lasted for six days and 10 parties, between August 1 and 6. This year, the numbers seemed to have doubled as the yuppies changed gear, making way for a crowd with superior spending power.

Now in its sixth year, SDW has surpassed last year's projection of injecting one billion dollars into the Negril economy.

"Dream Weekend brings a different feel to tourism around the Negril area, in particular entertainment," said hotelier, Kevin Levee of Hedo II.

He added that he has seen a remarkable growth in the number of locals and members of the diaspora staying at his property, "which is good for business. We welcome them, and invite more to experience our resort".

Levee's observations have been endorsed by chief executive officer of Sandals Resorts International, Adam Stewart, who disclosed that in addition to all his properties being full, the other hotels in and around Negril also do very good business at this time.

Checks with Grand Lido, TenSing Pen and RIU resorts in Negril revealed the same, with overbooking being the order of the day.

Like the hoteliers, the organisers said that from all indications, this year's event was bigger and better than in previous years.

Director of Dream Entertainment, Kamal Bankay, said this year's event had even greater appeal and reached people from as far away as Samoa and Europe.

"Smirnoff Dream Weekend has broadening appeal and this makes it the best party series in the Caribbean," Bankay claimed.

According to him, easily, a billion dollars was generated for the parish of Westmoreland during this period.

"When you consider that six to seven thousand rooms are solidly



TVJ's Intense presenter, Scott Wilson (centre), had intense heat around him as he was sandwiched by these ladies at Wet and Wild at the Smirnoff Dream Weekend party at Kool Runnings Waterpark in Negril on Sunday, August 3.



PHOTOS BY JANET SILVERA

**The foam pit at Xtreme Wet and Wild at the Kool Runnings Waterpark in Negril.**

booked at an average of US\$250 per room, that alone translates into over US\$2 million. In addition to this are taxes and meals, which on average amounts to about US\$170 per day per person," he said.

The six-day event attracted approximately 18,000 patrons who, on average, spent about J\$80,000 each for the weekend, including the cost of their season pass of bands for each event.

The news has been welcomed by Clyde Harrison, executive director of the Tourism Enhancement Fund, who in a release to **Hospitality Jamaica**, noted that the benefits have been quite noticeable.

"These events have helped Jamaica. It is all about the best of Jamaica's music and our ability to put on good events," Harrison stated.

The investment being made by Dream Entertainment results in tangible spin-offs for the communities, something Bankay said without blinking an eyelid.

"Our investment in western Jamaica is quite significant and translates into hundreds of jobs, new business opportunities and several other economic and social spin offs. As the promoters of the renowned event, we are happy to know that it is contributing to the development of Negril and the country's overall progress," he continued.

Jermaine Bibbons, brand manager, Smirnoff, concurred. He said the economic benefit to Jamaica is one of the major reasons his organisation has continued to

be a part of the event.

"We create many economic opportunities for each person, from the streetside vendor to the restaurants to the hotels and taxi services. Each business and business person makes something extra during this period," Bibbons pointed out.

"One billion dollars, 10 amazing parties ... who wouldn't want that every year? So Smirnoff is absolutely proud to be a part of these larger-than-life experiences," he concluded.

Carla Hollingsworth, brand manager, Pepsi Cola Jamaica, also expressed similar sentiments stating that Pepsi has long supported events of this nature.

"The boost to the vendors, restaurants and hotels at this time of the year is quite positive and we are happy to be a part of that," she said.

Storeowners and restaurateurs as well say that during this period they experience a 20 per cent increase in sales, reported the organisers.

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





Baha Mar Casino and Hotel Tower.

# Baha Mar opening delayed

**Janet Silvera**  
*Hospitality Jamaica Coordinator*

**D**ESPITE REASSURANCES that the Caribbean's largest single-phased luxury resort development, Baha Mar, in Nassau, Bahamas, would be ready for a December opening, news out of that country suggest a new deadline of spring 2015.

A letter from the organisation's president, Tom Dunlap, to his staff last week, which was released by Bahamian television station NB 12 last Friday, reveal that only preview openings will take place in December.

"We are in the process of working through details with our partners and expect to know more by October," Dunlap told his staff.

The news comes months after speculations of a delay and the continuous denial of Robert Sands, Baha Mar's senior vice-president of administration, said

NB 12.

Tagged the new Bahamian Riviera, the 3,500-room, US\$3.5 billion development will redefine the whole lodging experience in the Western Hemisphere, said stakeholders in the industry.

The resort development is expected to employ in excess of 4,000 persons on completion.

Baha Mar as a game changer, is fully owned by the Swiss/Armenian family Izmirlian, who are residents of The Bahamas. The project is being financed in part by the EXIM Bank, which pumped US\$2.6 billion into it, while the rest of the money is equity from the owners.

According to Robert Sands, the first of four resorts that the destination will carry – the Baha Mar Casino and Hotel, will be home to 100,000 square feet of gaming excitement, rivaling the best casino floors around the world. The flagship when opened

will be followed by some of the world's best brands, Rosewood, Mondrian and the Grand Hyatt, all scheduled to open on a phased basis.

A Jack Nicklaus-designed 18-hole championship golf course and a large convention centre are just a few of the features attached to the multi-billion dollar resort.

Set alongside 3,000 feet of uninterrupted white-sand beach and crystal-clear turquoise waters, Baha Mar captures the spirit of the region, merging the most elite collection of hospitality brands in the world with authentic Bahamian culture and architecture.

"Baha Mar will be the enclave of excitement and glamour of our generation – the new Riviera," stated Saun Lightbourne, director of destination marketing during a press conference unveiling the project in January 2012.

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



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## Google official for CTO State of the Industry Conference

A TOP official of the search engine giant, Google, has been confirmed as a speaker for the region's premier tourism development and networking event, the Caribbean Tourism Organisation's (CTO) State of the Industry Conference (SOTIC).

Senior economist at the multi-billion dollar company, Dr Qing Wu, will be part of a panel discussing how to use data and technology to grow our tourism business. He will help delegates uncover tourism insights using Google search trends.

"Google search trends can be used as a realtime and global-scale source of consumer insights. This presentation will use search trends to showcase how economy, weather, accident and other events impact vacation planning in key markets," Dr Wu said of his anticipated presentation.

Dr Wu has been with Google for eight years and has worked on a wide range of analytic projects that include forecasting, the impact of macroeconomics, auction and bidding, and user and advertiser behaviours.

The 'Big Data' session will take place on Thursday, September 18, and the panel will be led by the international maritime and logistics consultant, Dr Fritz Pinnock.

The CTO has confirmed a



**DR QING WU**

number of high-level regional and international presenters, all of whom are prepared to examine critically all of the major developments impacting Caribbean tourism in keeping with the conference theme, Realising the Vision: Positioning Caribbean Tourism for Major Change. The conference is being organised in collaboration with the United States Virgin Islands (USVI) department of tourism and will take place at the Marriott Frenchman's Reef Resort on St Thomas, USVI, from 17-19 September. It will be preceded by a Caribbean Aviation Day programme and CTO business meetings, which include the election of a new chairman and board of directors for CTO.

For a list of presenters and how you can participate in SOTIC, visit [www.OneCaribbean.org](http://www.OneCaribbean.org).



## Buzzfeed, Twitter for WTM 2014

TWO OF the biggest social media brands – BuzzFeed and Twitter – are already confirmed as keynote speakers at World Travel Market (WTM) 2014, the leading global event for the travel industry.

Both companies are presenting as part of WTM Travel Perspective programme which will concentrate on social media and digital content as part of the standalone Travel Tech Show at WTM's event programme.

Buzzfeed launched in 2006 and describes itself as 'the media company for the social age'. It is at the vanguard of new business models for online publishing, combining news reporting, produced by in-house journalists, with entertainment and celebrity content sourced from its community of readers. It is also leading the way in 'social advertising' generating revenues from advertising which is intended to be shared, disrupting traditional online advertising models.

Buzzfeed will be represented by Will Hayward, vice-president of advertising (Europe). He oversees its business operations, social advertising partnerships, growth strategy and expansion in Europe. Since Hayward joined BuzzFeed last September, the site's UK traffic has increased by 400 per cent.

His background includes The Wall Street Journal and The Economist. The presentation – 27 Things You Really Need to Know about BuzzFeed and Content Marketing – will look at a number of successful social advertising campaigns it has run with travel companies and destinations. The keynote takes place on Tuesday,

November 4, at 10:35 a.m. in South Gallery Rooms 23-26.

Furthermore, Twitter has confirmed that it will be presenting the keynote the following day. Twitter will concentrate specifically on examples of how its UK and Ireland team is working with the travel and tourism sector. The keynote will delve into the concept of 'second screening' – the phenomenon of people watching TV at the same time as using Twitter on a separate device – and how travel companies can increase awareness and bookings as a result.

Twitter is speaking on Wednesday afternoon.

Travel Technology Show at

WTM, sales manager, Jo Marshall said: "Securing two of the biggest names in social media and content marketing so early in our planning is a testament to how important the Travel Technology Show at WTM has become over the past few years. "Furthermore, it also confirms that travel and tourism is the most important vertical for social media and that WTM is the place for the business conversations to take place."

The Travel Tech Show at WTM is the UK's largest travel technology event with more than 10,000 visitors. Introduced in 2013 following the phenomenal success of the technology region at WTM, the event will be twice the size it was four years ago.

# BAY VIEW

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# SHINTON DIXON

## Sandals Montego Bay's shining star

### *Bartender among Sandals' crème de la crème*

BORN IN the inner-city community of Salt Spring, St James, Shinton Dixon never dreamed of working for an internationally recognised hotel chain, let alone to be recognised as a top employee.

Dixon gained his first job as a food and beverage cashier in the hospitality industry in 1989. Though he excelled in this area and managed to remain gainfully and happily employed, he felt there was something missing, and in July 2000, he finally realised what he really wanted to do.

Dixon was hired as a bar porter at Sandals Montego Bay. Though he was mainly responsible for stocking the bars, he enjoyed watching the resort's charismatic bottle-flipping bartenders who often became popular among the guests. As such, Dixon diligently absorbed all that he could behind the bar, from learning how to mix various concoctions to managing bar costs. He soon realised that he had to move quickly to improve his skills and develop his vocation. This he did successfully and was soon promoted to bartender. "I was happy for the promotion as I was now able to show off my skill as a bartender. I felt I was now on show and I was motivated to perform at my best."

The perceived introvert never missed a beat when serving and interacting with his guests. His smile and soft-spoken bar talk won them over, and soon, his name started appearing frequently on guests' comment cards.



Over the years, Dixon has continued to shine and is highly respected by his fellow team members. He has received numerous awards, and being the Resort Team Member of the Year for Sandals Montego Bay is definitely the icing on the cake.

"Determination and focus are the things that have made me successful in my career," he says. "My job is second nature to me now, it's what makes me happy, and it's what I'm passionate about, which make it easy for me."

Dixon has many fans at Sandals Montego Bay and among them is food and beverage director, Florian Seifert, who considers him one of his best employees. "Shinton is committed to his job. He never says no; despite how many tasks he is doing, it is incredible to see him get it all done within a short space of time."

He is a self-motivated team member, dedicated to his craft and to pleasing his guests. He is also fully engaged in several professional development courses that will allow



**SHINTON DIXON**

him to reach his ultimate goal of becoming a bar manager. But until then, this Sandals ambassador will continue to reach for the stars and etch his name into the flagship experience, one cocktail at a time.

Speaking of cocktails, Dixon is always happy to share his latest creations with guests visiting the resort, and now he's serving up one of his personal favourites for you to try at home.

### SHINTON'S SPECIAL

*Makes one glass*

1 oz Coconut rum  
1/2 oz Peach schnapps  
1/4 oz Blue Curacao  
1/2 oz Crème de Banana  
Orange juice  
Dash of freshly squeezed lime juice  
Frozen strawberry daiquiri

#### METHOD:

Add all other ingredients (except strawberry daiquiri) to shaker can without ice, shake well and put aside. Blend strawberry daiquiri and pour into high ball glass to half of glass. Add ice. Gently pour mixed ingredients over ice. Garnish with a fresh strawberry and an orange wheel or as desired. Serve.

### Chukka Belize helps HEAL students at Jaguar Paw

CHUKKA BELIZE hosted a group of primary-school children on their annual field trip as part of Chukka's continued community outreach and awareness efforts. Students from the evening division of the St Martin de Pores School and project HEAL visited the Chukka Jaguar Paw location.

The school sponsors a four-week summer programme each year for children who require additional help and tutoring, in an effort to boost their academic performance, and through extracurricular activities, motivate them to become high achievers.

"Initiatives such as these are important building blocks and essential for the continued growth of our thriving communities," stated country manager, Valerie Woods. "It certainly is a phenomenal effort on behalf of the children of the project HEAL and Chukka Belize is excited to be a part of it."

The programme not only helps to solidify the fundamentals for reading, mathematics, and English, it also exposes them to arts, dance (Zumba) and drumming classes, and sports. It also provides opportunities for them to experience a Belize outside of their norms through field trips to different parts of the country.

Chukka is proud to host the first of two scheduled field trips for the group this summer. The group, ranging in age from 10 to 13 years old, experienced the Jaguar Paw adrenaline-pumping zipline canopy tour. To learn more about Chukka Belize's active adventure and team-building opportunities, visit [www.chukka.com](http://www.chukka.com) or call 501-610-4452.





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Travel agents from Barrhead Travel in a Jamaica-branded taxi to highlight all-inclusive holidays with flights from just £795.

## JTB livens up Glasgow during Commonwealth Games

AT THE start of the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games, the Jamaica Tourist Board (JTB) spread Jamaican vibes across Glasgow with a fleet of 50 Jamaica-branded taxis.

The traditional black cabs arrived in the host city emblazoned with 'JAMAICA Get All Right' branding. The colourfully-designed taxis will operate across the city until August 10 and will showcase a special offer for all-inclusive holidays to Jamaica.

From July 23, 29 Private Members Club became Jamaica House Glasgow, the hub for all things Jamaican. Opened to both members and non-members, 29 was the place to watch the Jamaican athletes during the Games. Attendees

were served a specially created menu with authentic Jamaican recipes including Reggae Reggae Chicken Kebabs and Jamaican Jerk Flank Steaks. Jamaica's favourite, Red Stripe beer, was served alongside an exclusive Appleton Rum cocktail list.

Jamaica's director of tourism, Paul Pennicook, along with Jamaica's minister of tourism and entertainment, Dr Wykeham McNeill, were in attendance to support the Jamaican athletes and further strengthen the close links between Scotland and Jamaica.

Tourist arrival to Jamaica from Scotland is expected to flourish throughout the peak winter season, as for the first time, Thomson Airways will offer direct flights from

Glasgow to Montego Bay between November 2014 and March 2015.

Elizabeth Fox, regional director for UK and Northern Europe at the JTB said: "The staging of Jamaica House in Glasgow was all about championing our great island at a time when Jamaica's sporting excellence looks set to dominate the Games. With great offers for holidays to Jamaica from Barrhead Travel and with the increased airlift from Scotland to Jamaica, thanks to Thomson Airways, there's never been a better time to visit the island. Opening the doors to Jamaica House Glasgow 2014 was our opportunity to show the world what Jamaica has to offer."



Bill Munro (centre), chairman of Barrhead Travel, poses with crew from Virgin Atlantic during Jamaica House Glasgow 2014. The Jamaica Tourist Board partnered with Barrhead Travel and Virgin Atlantic to host the event which promoted destination Jamaica during the staging of the Glasgow Commonwealth Games. Guests at Jamaica House Glasgow were treated to Jamaican cuisine and music as they watched the Jamaican athletes' exploits during the Games.



Paul Pennicook (left), Jamaica's director of tourism, congratulates Jamaica's 50m freestyle swimming athlete Jevon Atkinson (right), at Jamaica House Glasgow 2014. Atkinson was among the specially invited guests who attended celebratory events at Jamaica House Glasgow in honour of the Jamaican athletes' heroics at the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow.



Paul Pennicook (fourth left), Jamaica's director of tourism, and Elizabeth Fox (centre), regional director for UK and Northern Europe at the Jamaica Tourist Board (JTB) along with Bill Munro (fourth right), chairman of Barrhead Travel, and his team celebrate Jamaica's success at The Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games. The celebrations were held at Jamaica House Glasgow 2014 at 29, a Private Member Club, in Glasgow. The JTB, in association with Barrhead Travel, hosted events during the Games to applaud the prowess of Jamaica star athletes. Guests enjoyed an array of Jamaican food and drinks during the festivities.





Minister of Tourism and Entertainment, the Hon Dr Wykeham McNeill (second right) enjoys the company of (from left) Jamaica Tourist Board's (JTB) Regional Director for UK and Northern Europe, Elizabeth Fox; Jamaica's high commissioner to the UK, Aloun Ndombet-Assamba; and Jamaican female boxer, Sarah Joy Rae, as they cheer on Jamaica's athletes at Jamaica House 2014. Minister McNeill was in Glasgow, Scotland, to participate in several activities aimed at marketing destination Jamaica during the 2014 Commonwealth Games, which were held from July 23 to August 3, 2014. The JTB again activated the Jamaica House concept for this year's Commonwealth Games to leverage the anticipated global focus on the Jamaica track and field team at this major sporting event.



Destination Jamaica is definitely on show in Scotland. Starting with the Glasgow Commonwealth Games through to August 10, taxi cabs are decorated with the JAMAICA Get All Right tag line, promoting the destination. Minister of Tourism and Entertainment Dr Wykeham McNeill (front) and Director of Tourism Paul Pennicook are all smiles as they take a ride in one of the cabs. The promotion is a partnership comprising the Jamaica Tourist Board in collaboration with Barrhead Travel, which is offering special all-inclusive holidays to Jamaica, including flights. McNeill and Pennicook were in Glasgow to support the Jamaican athletes and further strengthen the close links between Scotland and Jamaica.



Match Ready! From left: Gabriella Gonzales, flight attendant; Daniel Vettori, Jamaica Tallawahs; Brian Lara, Caribbean Airlines ambassador; Dwayne Bravo, Trinidad & Tobago Red Steel; Chris Gayle, Jamaica Tallawahs; and Melanie Williams, flight attendant.

## Caribbean Airlines – the official carrier of CPL T20

**W**HEN THE six Caribbean Premier League (CPLT20) teams meet in high-energy 20/20 matches, they do so powered by travel with Caribbean Airlines, the official carrier of the series.

“As the Caribbean’s hometown airline, it is our honour to participate in the CPLT20, which is as much a celebration of the spirit of the Caribbean, as it is a world-class sporting cricket event,” said Alicia Cabrera, senior marketing manager, Caribbean Airlines.

“We are excited that the fans who are following the series around the islands start their experience with Caribbean Airlines.”

As the official carrier of the Caribbean Premier League,

Caribbean Airlines has taken the teams to matches in Trinidad, Barbados, Jamaica, Guyana and Grenada. Additionally, Caribbean Airlines Facebook fans have the opportunity to win match tickets to any of the airline’s North America destinations.

“When you look at the challenges of holding a major international sports league across the Caribbean islands, it becomes obvious that the most obvious strategic partner for any such event is Caribbean Airlines. With that in mind, we are delighted to have Caribbean Airlines onboard as Official Airline of the CPL,” said Jamie Stewart, commercial director, and Caribbean Premier League. “Whether it be in terms of getting the players across the

region as per their hectic playing schedule, or making sure that fans can follow their teams as they progress, Caribbean Airlines is playing a vitally important role and we are delighted to have their support.”

Legendary cricketer Brian Lara, who is also a Caribbean Airlines ambassador, recently hosted several players for a rap session. Joining Lara were, Daniel Vettori, Jerome Taylor and Captain Chris Gayle of the Jamaica Tallawahs and Dwayne Bravo, captain of the Trinidad & Tobago Red Steel. Speaking to the players, Lara said, “You gentlemen have the unique opportunity to bring a new generation of fans into cricket, and it’s exciting to watch this happening now.”





### JTB director congratulates Tessanne at Sumfest

Tessanne Chin delivered a stellar performance at the recently held Reggae Sumfest. Director of Tourism Paul Pennicook (left) was among the many she mesmerised during her set. She delivered hits such as 'Tumbling Down', 'Count On My Love', 'Redemption Song', 'Every Little Thing Reminds Me of You', and 'Heaven' from her recently launched album, 'Count On My Love'. The Season 5 winner of NBC's hit show, 'The Voice', Chin was one of the headliners for the closing night of the reggae festival. Pennicook used the opportunity to congratulate Chin on her superb performance at the show as well as the added attention she brings to destination Jamaica. Reggae Sumfest is a JTB-sponsored event.

## JTB, Ziggy Marley launch Fly Rasta summer tour

REGGAE FANS across the United States can experience the Marley magic this summer as the Jamaica Tourist Board (JTB) has joined forces with Grammy award-winning reggae artiste Ziggy Marley for his 2014 Fly Rasta North American Tour. **The Fly Rasta** album, released earlier this year, is the marriage of distinctive Jamaican reggae with elements of rock, funk, soul and pop. The tour, which started on July 19, will run through August 24.

The JTB has also partnered with SiriusXM Satellite Radio for a 12-week promotion to celebrate the Jamaica Fly Rasta tour by offering listeners a chance to win a five-day/four-night stay for two at The Oasis at Sunset Resort in Montego Bay, Jamaica. Airfare is courtesy of the JTB.

"Jamaica is a place known throughout the world as the birthplace of reggae, and Ziggy Marley is a major contributor to keeping this reputation alive. Given the success we have enjoyed in the past as a result of our relationship with Ziggy, we were eager to partner again this summer," noted Donnie Dawson, deputy director of tourism – sales at the JTB. "Ziggy continues to blaze a trail and is a great



ambassador, not just for reggae music, but for Jamaica."

Travel agents have not been left out of the action as the JTB is offering them an opportunity to see Ziggy Marley live in concert in their local city. To qualify for this offer, Jamaica travel specialists must book at least three trips to Jamaica between now and August 24.

The JTB will have booths in the following cities:

August 9 – Lake Superior Big Top Chautauqua, Washburn, WI

August 12 – Weesner Amphitheater (Minnesota Zoo), Apple Valley, MN

August 23 – The Oregon State Fair, Salem, OR

August 24 – BECU ZooTunes Summer Concert Series, Seattle, WA

■ **For more information on the Ziggy Marley tour and his new album, *Fly Rasta*, go to [www.ZiggyMarley.com](http://www.ZiggyMarley.com).**

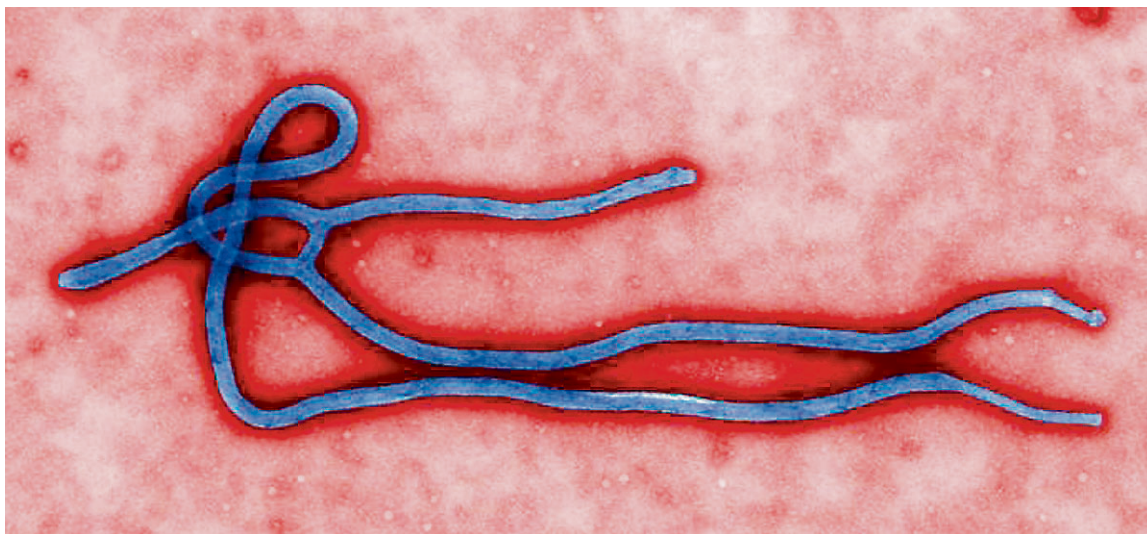


## LOTS TO SMILE ABOUT

JAMAICA'S DIRECTOR of tourism, Paul Pennicook (centre), shares a light moment with top reggae artistes Beenie Man (left) and Mr Vegas during the Reggae Sumfest press conference at Iberstar Rose Hall. Mr Vegas entertained thousands of fans on Dancehall Night while Beenie Man, the King of the Dancehall, was the closing act on International Night 1. Now in its 22nd year, Reggae Sumfest was held at Catherine Hall in Montego Bay. The Jamaica Tourist Board is a major sponsor of the event.







This photo provided by the CDC shows an Ebola virus. United States health officials are monitoring the Ebola outbreak in Africa, but say the risk of the deadly germ spreading to the United States is remote.

# IATA's take on Ebola outbreak

**A**N EBOLA virus disease outbreak has been reported in Sierra Leone, Liberia, and Guinea. The International Air Transport Association (IATA) is coordinating closely with the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) with respect to potential implications for air connectivity.

WHO's current risk assessment for travel and transport is not recommending any travel restrictions or the closure of borders at points of entry. Further, WHO states that "the risk of a tourist or businessman/woman becoming infected with Ebola virus during a visit to the affected areas and developing the disease after returning is extremely low, even if the visit included travel to the local areas from which primary cases have been reported. Transmission requires direct contact with blood,

secretions, organs or other body fluids of infected living or dead persons or animals, all unlikely exposures for the average traveller. Tourists are, in any event, advised to avoid all such contacts".

Similarly, WHO advises that transmission of the Ebola virus only occurs when patients are displaying symptoms of the disease which are severe. Symptoms of Ebola include fever, intense weakness, muscle pain, headache and sore throat; followed by vomiting, diarrhoea, rash, impaired kidney and liver function, and at advanced stage, both internal and external bleeding. It is highly unlikely that someone suffering such symptoms would feel well enough to travel.

In the rare event that a person infected with the Ebola virus was unknowingly transported by air, WHO advises that the risks to other passengers are low. Nonetheless, WHO does advise public-health

authorities to carry out contact tracing in such instances.

In line with WHO guidance, awareness-raising activities and initiatives are being conducted for travellers to and from the affected region. As always, passengers are advised not to travel if they are unwell. And any traveller developing symptoms of the Ebola within three weeks of returning from an affected region is advised to seek rapid medical attention.

The air transport industry has dealt with several outbreaks of communicable diseases in recent years. The global response to communicable diseases is governed by WHO's International Health Regulations. Airlines follow guidance material which has been developed by WHO, ICAO and IATA.

IATA will continue to monitor developments closely in the Ebola outbreak in close coordination with the WHO and ICAO.

## JUTA Lucea still going strong after seven years

**Claudia Gardner**

*Hospitality Jamaica Writer:*

PRESIDENT OF the Lucea Chapter of the Jamaica Union of Travellers Association (JUTA) Lucea, Dwight Parkinson, says seven years after its formation, the organisation is still going strong.

"Since the inception of JUTA Lucea at the start of the world economic crisis, we got registered and obtained a joint contract with JUTA Negril at the Grand Palladium. So far, we are still holding on to that contract and things are going smoothly," Parkinson told **Hospitality Jamaica** in a recent interview.

"The relationship with the Grand Palladium includes transportation service from the hotel, transportation of VIPs and other requests. We have a relationship with tour representatives on property and we fulfil their requests as well. Our chapter started out with 57 members and we now have 172 members," he added.

Parkinson said that of this figure, 95 are operational members, meaning those who are equipped with vehicles and are carrying out duties relating to ground transportation. He said the others are registered members who are not on the island at the moment, but still maintain their membership.

"We have relationships with JUTA Negril and JUTA Montego Bay in relation to airport-to-hotel transfer, and transportation from the cruise ship piers. Otherwise, there are members who just do their own freelancing," Parkinson explained.

He admitted there were challenges over the years, with, for example, loan procurement,

however, "we have never lost a vehicle to a bank. Even though they might be struggling, everybody is keeping their heads above the water", he said.

Parkinson said among the future plans of the organisation are the acquisition of a new coaster bus, and the development of its own website.

JUTA Lucea was established following a six-year Supreme Court battle with the directorship of JUTA.

Officially established in November 2006, JUTA Lucea was the seventh chapter to be formed on the island.

The first meeting of the chapter was held in December 2000 and was convened by the late Alfred Tomlinson, who was also instrumental in forming the Negril Chapter in 1974.

In 2000, Tomlinson had made a proposal to the JUTA all-island president at the time, stating that there was a group of more than 50 operators within the Lucea area who wanted to establish their own chapter. Tomlinson had outlined that the JUTA constitution states that a group of 50 or more operators in a clearly defined geographical area or region, can apply to the board of directors for chapter status.

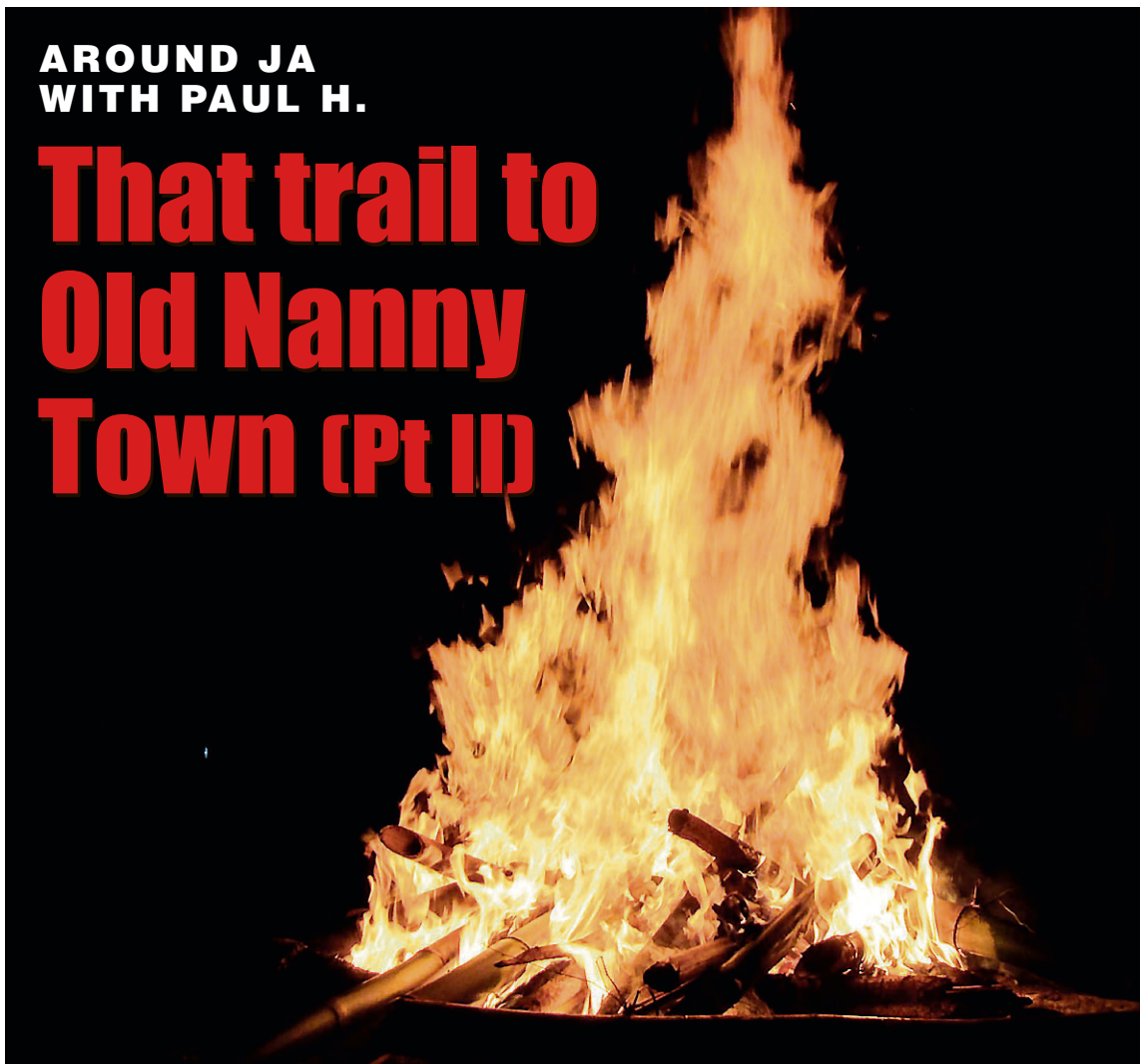
The group was nonetheless denied a chapter, and subsequently wrote to then prime minister, P.J. Patterson, who instructed them to meet with Dr Wykeham McNeill – who was then the junior tourism minister – and the late Benjamin Clare, who was then the Member of Parliament for Western Hanover.

The matter was taken to the Supreme Court and Lucea was allowed to have its own chapter in November of 2006.



AROUND JA  
WITH PAUL H.

# That trail to Old Nanny Town (Pt II)



PHOTOS BY PAUL WILLIAMS

A spectacular bonfire that lit up the dense dark at base camp, right beside the Stony River.

SO, AFTER 10 hours of walking over brutally rugged terrain *en route* to Old Nanny Town in the Blue and John Crow Mountains, I collapsed under a makeshift shelter by a stream. It was supposed to be a rest stop for a few minutes, but I knew I was going no farther.

Other members of the group had already gone way ahead of us, the stragglers. After gulping down spring water, some people who had initially wanted to stay decided to press on, and wanted the others to follow their lead. Things got a little tense as the bonfire made by chief hunter, 'Brooky' West lit upon the stream side.

I got upset because I couldn't imagine they wanted me to travel in the dark on those narrow ledges and steep inclines in my moribund state. My entire being shook, and not one of them could say how much farther I would have to go. I defied them, and when they realised I wasn't moving, they left three of us, including Brooky, beside the stream and the bonfire.

Side by side, we lay on matted coconut fronds, chatting about



Deputy colonel of the Scotts Hall Maroons in St Mary, Yuri Prehay, blowing an abeng at base camp.



The Moore Town Maroons who made a recent expedition to Old Nanny Town in the Blue and John Crow mountains. Their knowledge, entertainment and spirit of camaraderie added much richness to the total experience.



At base camp, Clinton 'Brooky' West demonstrating how to set a wild-hog trap.

what had just happened. The now-dying bonfire was reignited and was a succour for my throbbing big toes. I asked Brooky to shine his flashlight on them to see whether they had turned black. They hadn't.

After an hour of restlessness, we heard footsteps. They belonged to two guides who had returned for us. I made it clear that I was not going anywhere. I was in bed. I preferred to be squeezed to death by a Jamaican boa constrictor or bitten by big, black scorpions. We were trespassing in their place, after all. With that, they left with a promise to return in the morning.

And as much as I was tired, I couldn't sleep straight. I was in and out of it, and my big toes hurt. Moreover, the coconut fronds were uneven and tough. While my fellow campers slept, I lay looking

into the depths of darkness from which giant fireflies darted and spiralled as if dancing to the cacophony created by toads, frogs, crickets, birds, lizards – all of them.

It was so horrendous, I shone the flashlight into the dark at one point, only to see bats flying in and out of the shelter. I turned it off and remained still, in the still of the night,

The babbling waters of the stream were soothing, despite my mixed emotions. I was happy to be laying in the luxurious lap of nature, but had I known the trail to Old Nanny Town would be so taxing, I would not have embarked upon the expedition in my serious state of unfitness. My heart was in it, but my body was not ready for that test.

At the crack of dawn, while my colleagues were still sleeping, I took



a bath in a little pool in the stream. Surprisingly, the water temperature was bearable. I washed my dirty clothes, hoping my body heat would dry them, but when I put my shirt back on, I started to tremble. I yanked it off. Soon after, my colleagues aroused themselves. It was daybreak.

As we were getting ready to continue, Gregory 'Spider' Crawford, one of the guides, turned up. Soon, we were on our way, two guides and two stragglers. Right away I knew it would be as rough as the day before, and it eventually turned out to be the most disheartening leg of the trek.

Moreso, my big toes were hurting like crazy.

With the prodding of Brooky and Spider, we did everything to keep up and be safe. I was struggling, sometimes on all fours, and on my backside, scaling, crawling, walking up and down steep, long, bumpy, rocky mountainsides with the assistance of sticks, holding on to vines and slender trees. But, in all of it, the narrow ledges going around the mountains were the worst. On them, I was between insurmountable and steep slopes.

It was on one of these ledges that the only moment of serious despair came. The path was about two feet wide. On the right was a steep gutter of millions of loose pebbles. It runs all the way down, down into bushes. The hunters and the other stragglers crossed first, and then I froze. That was the end of the road for me, and I couldn't turn back. I sat on a tree root, and anger, fear, weakness, and regret locked me in their jaws.

When Spider realised I was affixed to the spot, he made across the ledge as a sure-footed wild hog. The others looked on. I don't know whether it was anger or impatience, but Spider looked cross. I tried to cooperate, but my nerves were in tatters. I was instructed to turn sideways like a crab, face the hills, not to look down the gully, put my left hand on the banking, while he held my right. Step by step, we crawled along the ledge. His grip on my right hand was tight. Right above the gully, I took a deep breath, until we passed it. I exhaled.

But there were more ledges to cross, which I did with his and Brooky's help.

Halfway into the trudge, we met two of the soldiers on the trek. They had returned for us as promised. Also heartening was the sound of the river from way above. So near, but so far. When we eventually reached it, we had to crisscross several times because of inaccessible spots along it.



The group that made a recent expedition to Old Nanny Town in the Blue and John Crown mountains.

ACTION 4 REEL PHOTO



ACTION 4 REEL PHOTO

Above: An overhead view of base camp from a JDF helicopter.

PHOTOS BY PAUL WILLIAMS

At left: The hunters and guides who were towers of strength during a recent expedition to Old Nanny Town in the Blue and John Crow mountains. From left: Ewart 'Wooly' West, Clinton 'Brooky' West, Jeff Campbell, Wayne Crawford, Gregory 'Spider' Crawford, Isaac Campbell, (stooping from left) Gerald West and Marvin Gray.

Finally, the smoke from base camp was seen wafting from among the trees. Unbridled joy. A few more mounts and fallen trees and I was there. Barefooted and shirtless, I made my triumphant entrance into base camp to huge applause. I felt like a star with burning big toes.

Soon after, rain came, and I lay on a bamboo bench until I was soaked. What a catharsis!

Under instructions, I didn't go to Nanny Town, two hours away from base camp, the next day.

Disappointed I was, but the two days and nights I spent by the Stony River I will always cherish. And the trek that caused me to lose my two big toenails? Ironically, an invaluable experience.

Yet, it is the 10-minute JDF helicopter ride back to Windsor that I am still struggling with words to describe.



Charles Town Maroons Rodney Rose (left) and Paul Atkinson preparing the crayfish they caught in the Stony River.





PHOTOS BY PAUL WILLIAMS

The St John's Anglican Church was built in 1840, in Sligoville, St Catherine. It started out as a private chapel for John Augustus O'Sullivan, his family and servants.

# Highgate Park House now in ruins

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

**J**OHAN AUGUSTUS O'Sullivan, born 1798, was the son of John Sullivan of Richings Park, Buckinghamshire, England, and who was a member of Parliament, a Lord of the Privy Council, and undersecretary of state for the War and Colonial offices from 1801-1806.

When O'Sullivan was six years old, he was given the post of provost marshal general of Jamaica. He got it through his father from King George III, as a royal grant. However, he couldn't take up the offer before the death of the then holder, Richard Neville Aldworth, The second Baron of Braybrooke.

Baron Braybrooke died in 1824 when O'Sullivan turned 26. However, the office of provost marshal general was assumed by Anthony Davis, a local planter who later became a member of the House of Assembly, and by Joseph S. Geoghegan, subsequently. John Augustus had to stay in England to protect his many business interests.

When he finally arrived in Jamaica in 1831 to take up office, he was already very wealthy. He bought properties at Spanish Town, Bridge Pen, Hampstead, Winchetser, Langibby and Fulham Park in St Catherine. From his home in Spanish Town, he moved to the cool hills of Sligoville, which was formerly called Highgate. The name was changed

in honour of Peter Howe Browne, The Second Marquess of Sligoville, governor of Jamaica 1834-36.

In 1840 O'Sullivan built a mansion at Highgate and named his property of 145 acres Highgate Park. The residence was, and still is, regarded a Great House. He also built a private chapel on it for his family and servants. His family life included three wives and eight known children, five sons and three daughters.

It turned out that O'Sullivan was not a chaser of only women. He was also an avid hunter under the button of Highgate Park Hunt. He pursued wild hogs with hounds imported from Britain and Cuban bloodhounds.

The hounds were disbanded in



A section of the front of the ruined Highgate Park House in Sligoville, St Catherine.



From left: Brothers, George and Bartley Bailey, of Sligoville, St Catherine, have known Highgate Park House all their lives. Built in 1840, it is now in ruins. A section of it is behind them.



A section of the ruined Highgate Park House at Sligoville, St Catherine.



about 1847 or 1848 after it was said that they killed a human being.

O'Sullivan lived at Highgate Park until his penniless death at 75 in 1873. He was buried in the cemetery at Highgate Church, now known as St John's Anglican. After his death, Highgate Park was inherited by his eldest son, Reverend Augustus O'Sullivan, an Anglican clergyman.

The O'Sullivan's ownership of Highgate Park ended with the death of John Augustus' daughter, Albinia, at age 88 in 1932. Her remains, along with that of her mother, Aliza, and a brother and sister who died very young are also interred in the cemetery, beside John Augustus, in whose honour a marble plaque is mounted in the church.

After Albinia's death, the Anglican Church owned the property, which was subsequently relinquished to a James McKay, who in turn sold it to one Arthur Bennett. In 1940, Cecil Hamilton Browne, a solicitor and member of the Privy Council, bought the property. He is said to be a descendant of Howe Peter Browne, The second Marquess of Sligo.

On a recent visit to Sligoville, **Hospitality Jamaica** spoke with a George Bailey, who was born not far from Highgate Park, for which he was a caretaker. He said his grandfather used to do work for Cecil Browne and his wife, who didn't live at Highgate Park permanently, but would visit occasionally. The property he said consisted of acres of oranges and grapefruits. He said the Brownes were at Highgate Park until the late 1960s.

The Jamaica Journal of March 1969 corroborates Bailey's story. In an article called **The Highgate Park Hunt**, Peter Tamlyn said a

Mr C. H. Browne, B.A. is "the present owner of Highgate Park". And in 1972, Highgate Park was sold again, this time to a real estate developer, Pat Chung. Four years later, one Terrence C. Causwell, a racehorse breeder, possessed it. It is said he was the one responsible for removing the top floor because of severe weathering.

In 1978, the Government of Jamaica got legal ownership of the property, which was partially damaged by Hurricane Gilbert in 1988. Residents said the house was refurbished and used at one time by the Peace Corps for training of their officers after Hurricane Gilbert.

After the Peace Corps left, the Sligoville Support Committee used Highgate Park House as a centre of activities, including camping, weddings, skills training, literacy classes, but leaking and structural decay caused them to cease operation and relocate elsewhere.

When the Chinese were building the Sligoville mini-stadium in the early part of the new millennium, some of them lived in Highgate Park House, and that was another story, one not too palatable, residents said.

However, in return for the hospitality of the Sligoville people, the Chinese, in conjunction with the Jamaica National Heritage Trust (JNHT), wanted to restore the building.

They went ahead and drafted building plans. Residents said the JNHT wanted the Chinese to replace the top floor, but there were no funds for that, and the plans and the buildings began to crumble. The house is now in ruins, and so are the rest of the buildings on the property, a serious source of discontent for the residents.



PAUL WILLIAMS PHOTO

A section of the sprawling Highgate Park Estate in Sligoville, St Catherine. The buildings on it are in ruins.



The graves of John Augustus O'Sullivan, his wife Aliza, his daughters Albinia and Fannie, and his son Robert, in the cemetery at St John's Anglican Church in Sligoville, St Catherine. John Augustus built the chapel as a place of worship for his family and servants.

1.0 NAME OF PROJECT:

1.1 The Restoration and Refurbishing of the Sligoville Great House.

1.2 The Rehabilitation of the Road in the Centre of Sligoville.

2.0 PROJECT SUMMARY

2.1 The project has the following components:  
Restore and refurbish the existing Great House which includes:

a) Repair of roof

b) Repair of plumbing system

c) Upgrade of bathrooms, lunch areas, office, documentation and historical centre.

d) Establishment of a gift shop area

e) Upgrade of dormitories

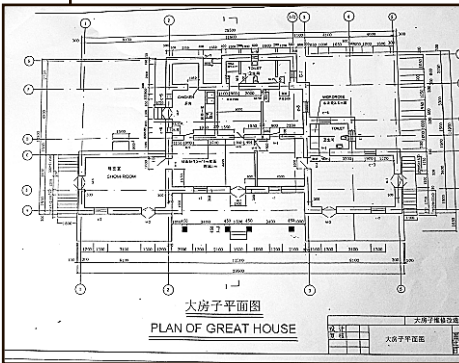
f) Establishment of a picnic area adjacent to the Great House

2.2 Rehabilitation of road at the centre of Sligoville:

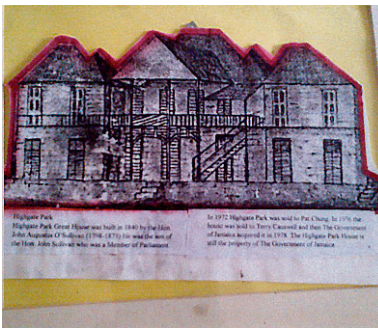
a) Lifting the road

b) Installation of proper drainage

2.3 The designs for the aforementioned can be seen in Appendices 1 & 2 (note that these designs were done by the Engineers of the China Shanxi Construction Engineering (Group) Corp. (CSCEC), Project Managers of the Sligoville Sports Complex. It was necessary to incorporate the services of CSCEC because of the severe work load of local planning authorities and dire scarcity of funds to do same.



The building plan drafted by the Chinese around 2007/8 for the restoration and refurbishment of Highgate Park House in Sligoville, St Catherine. The plan didn't materialise.



The artistic impression of Highgate Park House built by wealthy Irish migrant, John Augustus O'Sullivan, at Sligoville, St Catherine in 1840. The house is now in ruins.

A copy of a page from the proposal by the Chinese to restore and refurbish Highgate Park House in Sligoville, St Catherine. The project fell through much to the chagrin of residents.



# New CHTA president elects regional VPs

**E**MIL LEE, president of the Caribbean Hotel & Tourism Association (CHTA), has selected two Caribbean tourism industry professionals who will serve as regional vice-presidents during his presidency. Clarisa Jimenez, president and CEO of the Puerto Rico Hotel & Tourism Association (PRHTA), will assume the post of regional vice-president effective immediately. José Rivera Campos, vice-president of development for AMResorts in Cancun, will continue his service as regional vice-president under Lee after first being appointed under Richard Doumeng's presidency in March 2014.

"The future of the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association is dependent on working with executives from all National Hotel Associations (NHA) in order to ensure success for all stakeholders," said Lee. "Working with experienced leaders such as Clarisa Jimenez and Jose Rivera in their role as regional vice-president will allow us to reach the membership in their destinations as well as leverage their expertise to benefit other



The Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA) inaugurated Emil Lee (centre), general manager of Princess Heights Hotel, St Maarten, as the new president at its annual general meeting on July 1, 2014. Richard J. Doumeng (right), immediate past president of CHTA and managing director of Bolongo Bay Beach Resort, St Thomas, USVI, ceremoniously turns over the gavel to Lee along with Jeffrey S. Vasser, CHA, director general and CEO of CHTA.

NHAs that are still developing," Lee added.

Jimenez has more than 30 years of experience in the tourism industry including 14 years at the Puerto Rico Tourism Company (PRTC). She is responsible for the operation of the 560-member PRHTA where she develops and executes strategic plans to ensure the association's maximum effectiveness.

Rivera serves on the Board of Directors of Asociacion de Hoteles de Cancun and Puerto Morelos, where he is the CHTA representative. As vice president of development for AMResorts, Rivera has served since 2004 as the point person for all development projects and has overseen the construction of eight new properties as well as the refurbishment of four

properties and expansion of three resorts. He also seeks out new growth opportunities for AMResorts.

Previously, Rivera was CEO for Mansion Imperial Acapulco, focusing on the construction of this five-star hotel group. He also served as CEO for Expo & Convention Center Las Americas, opening the city's first world-class convention centre.

## Blogger Speed Networking for World Travel Market

WORLD TRAVEL Market (WTM) 2014, the leading global event for the travel industry, is introducing Blogger Speed Networking as a further addition to its hugely popular Blogging Programme.

WTM has been running a standing-room only blogging programme, in association with Travel Bloggers Unite, attended by both bloggers and exhibitors since 2011. The Blogger Speed Networking session will further facilitate relationships between bloggers and exhibitors.

The event will help exhibitors achieve extra coverage through the world's leading travel bloggers, while offering those bloggers unrivalled contacts and ideas for articles. The Blogger Speed Networking session will take place in the A Taste of ILTM at WTM Lounge on Thursday 6 November at 10.30am.

It will see 60 of the industry's top bloggers seated and holding meetings with exhibitors looking to gain coverage on their blogs. Bloggers for the session will be recruited in September. Exhibitors can turn up to the session on the day. World Travel Market, senior director, Simon Press, said: "WTM has been running a highly popular Speed Networking programme for exhibitors and buyers for the past five years. This programme played a significant role in WTM 2013 facilitating more than £2.2 billion in travel industry deals.

"The Blogger Speed Networking is a natural extension, which will significantly help exhibitors improve their return on investment from exhibiting at WTM, by giving them the opportunity to expand the knowledge of their produce around the world." Furthermore, WTM 2014 will also host the Family Holiday Association's annual conference for the first time on Thursday 6 November. TUI CEO Peter Long is president of the charity which helps more than 2,000 UK families a year in extreme poverty experience a holiday.

## UNWTO Awards 2014 – Open for applications

UNWTO HAS opened the call for applications for the 11th edition of the UNWTO Awards for Excellence and Innovation in Tourism. Interested candidates can apply until October 31, 2014. The award ceremony will be held during the Madrid International Tourism Trade Fair FITUR in Spain on January 28, 2015.

The awards recognise innovative tourism initiatives and contributions to the sector, in line with the principles of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism. Since its inception in 2003, the UNWTO Awards have acknowledged more

than 70 scholars, visionaries and institutions, from the public and private sectors, as well as non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

The UNWTO Awards distinguish the following categories:

Awards for individuals:

■ The UNWTO Ulysses Prize for Excellence in the Creation and Dissemination of Knowledge

■ The UNWTO Award for Lifetime Achievement (not open for nominations)

Last year, Dr Tej Vir Singh, a scholar with lifelong dedication to tourism education and

research, was awarded the Prize for Excellence in the Creation and Dissemination of Knowledge and journalist Richard Quest with the Award for Lifetime Achievement. Both have contributed to inspire competitive and sustainable tourism development, be it through academic research or reporting.

Awards for tourism initiatives:

■ UNWTO Ulysses Award for Innovation in Public Policy and Governance

■ UNWTO Ulysses Award for Innovation in Enterprises

■ UNWTO Ulysses Award for

Innovation in Non-Governmental Organisations

■ UNWTO Ulysses Award for Innovation in Research and Technology

For the second consecutive year, the UNWTO Awards ceremony, taking place on January 28, 2015, will be co-hosted by UNWTO and IFEMA/FITUR, the Madrid International Tourism Trade Fair. The day before the ceremony, the UNWTO Awards Symposium will highlight the importance of innovation in tourism and share the knowledge and achievements of UNWTO Awards finalists.