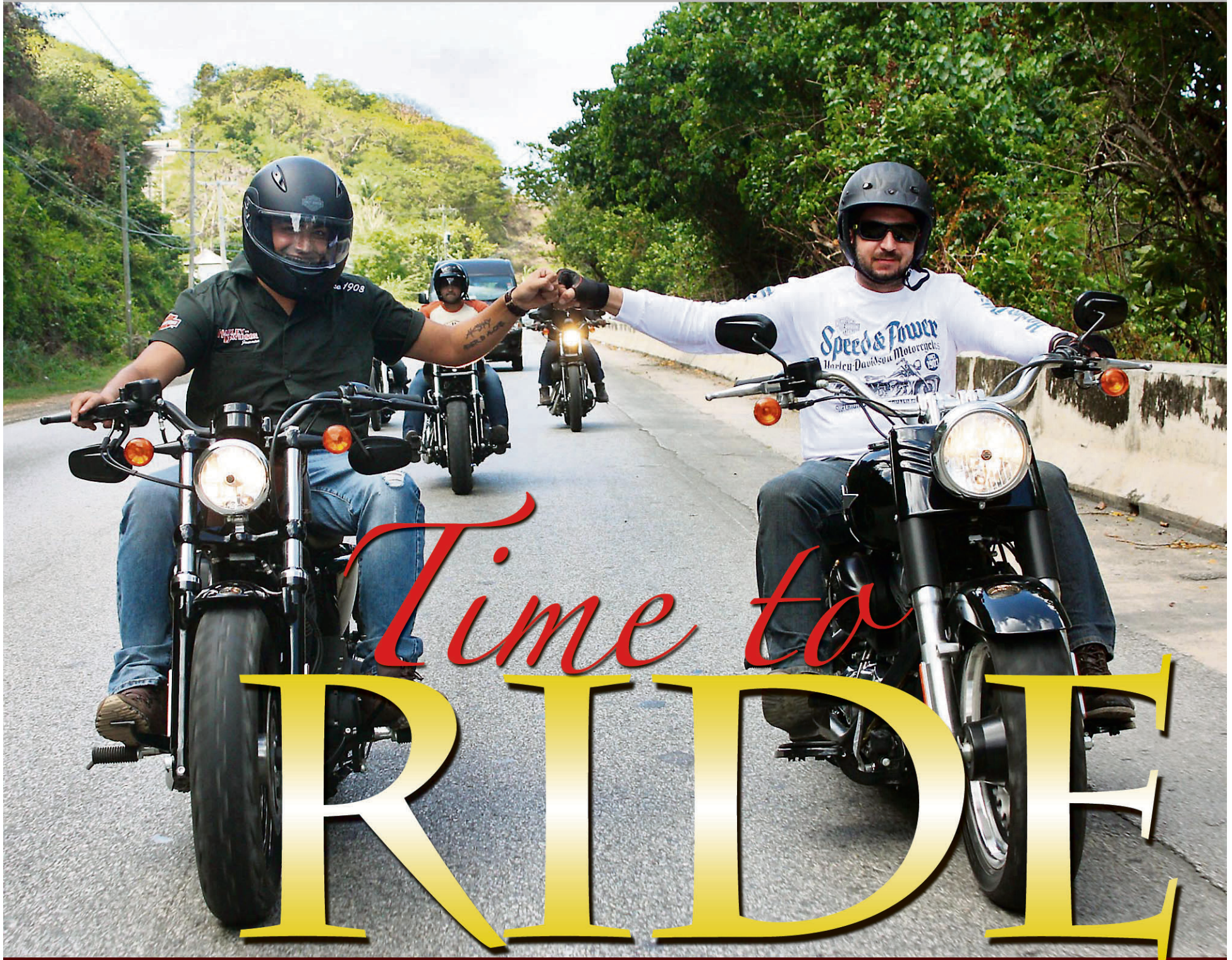


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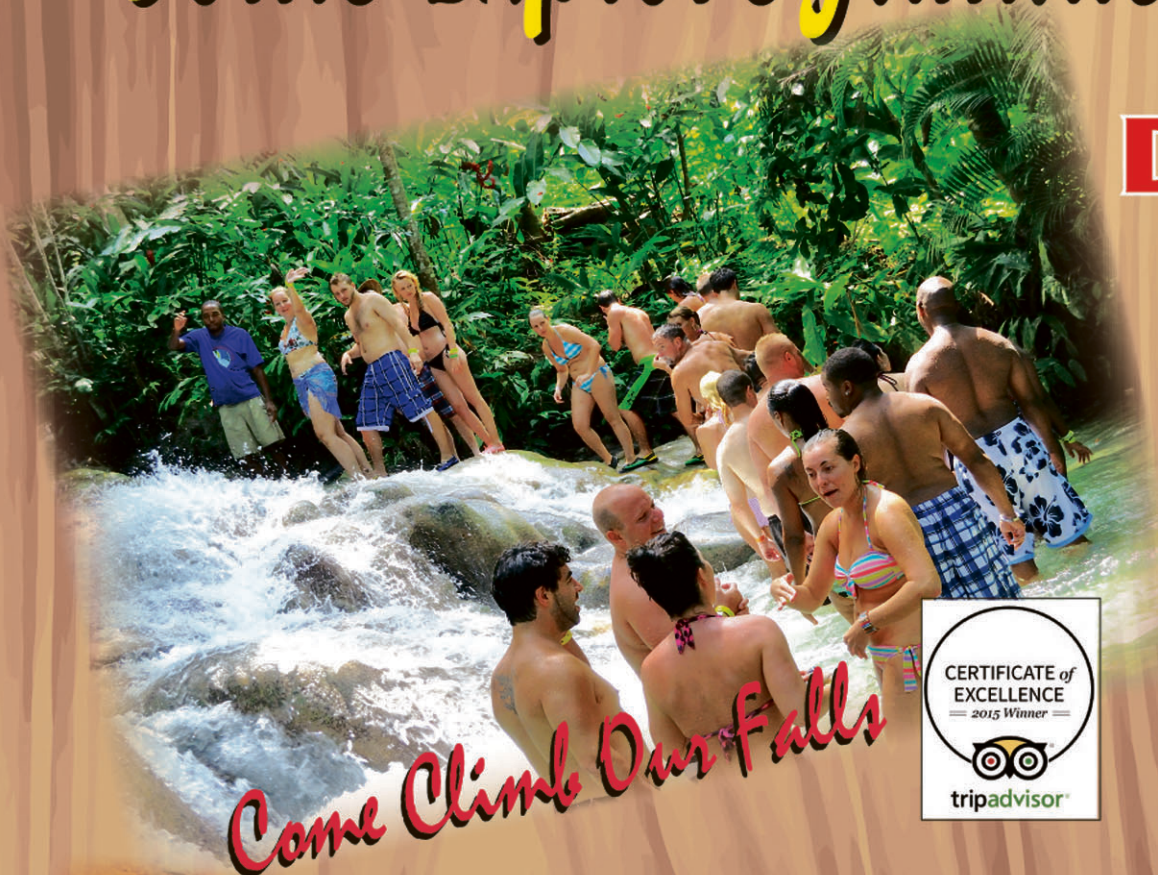
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Harley-Davidson to offer tours in Ja

Claudia Gardner

Hospitality Jamaica Writer

ANOTHER STEP has been made towards the diversification of Jamaica's tourism product offerings, as the iconic United States motorcycle company, Harley-Davidson, has selected the island as the place of choice to kick-start its tour operations in the Caribbean.

"We're proud to be able to introduce the bike tour to Jamaica for the very first time. We've signed an exclusive deal with Harley-Davidson to grow the motorcycle tour business throughout the Caribbean, so we're excited that we targeted Jamaica as the introductory market for such an exciting venture," chief operating officer at Viking Productions, André Dixon, told **Hospitality Jamaica**.

"We've focused on offering Harley-Davidson riders a well-organised guided tour on the great open coastal highways that Jamaica now offers. Naturally, we'll have designated off-road rest stops that will allow patrons to interact with Jamaica Tourist Board-authorised businesses and an occasional chat with the real-world vendors of Jamaica," he added.

Dixon said his entity has decided to focus on two "well-orchestrated tour destinations" – a three hour sunrise tour to Discovery Bay in the morning, and a five-hour sunset tour to Negril in the afternoon. Currently, all tours originate at the offices at Whitter Village in Ironshore, Montego Bay.

A fleet of 10 Harley-Davidson motorcycles will be available for the tour – three Fat Boy Lows, one Dyna Glide Wide, one Dyna Street Bob, two Dyna Fat Bobs, one XL1200C Sportster Custom, one Sportster 48 and one Sportster 883. He said all tours will be led by trained Team Jamaica-certified tour guides who were all carefully selected and who were pre-screened and pre-qualified candidates.

"Both tours will offer a stop for lunch while patrons enjoy the ride around the country at a controlled pace in a group setting," he explained. "We're going to offer participants an opportunity to book tours only for a while. We want to understand the dynamics of safety and the capabilities of qualified motorcycle operators before we offer (individual) rental options.

"All participants are required to attend a safety briefing at our facility in Whitter Village before beginning the tour. We discuss the entire route, what to expect in terms of highway conditions, the importance of adhering to defensive driving techniques in Jamaica and the importance of obeying the directions of our tour guides. We also provide a lead car that reports on road conditions ahead of the tour as an added safety precaution," he said.

He said the market for motorcycle tours is lucrative, as many Harley-Davidson motorcycle owners visit the island and would like to experience riding in Jamaica. In 2014, Harley Davidson's dealers sold 267,999 new motorcycles worldwide with full year revenue



CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Harley-Davidson riders on a promotional tour in Ironshore, Montego Bay.



An indoor Harley-Davidson motorcycle safety orientation session.

from the vehicles being \$4.39 billion, according to the company's annual report.

"Our competitive analysis studies and market surveys revealed that a large number of Harley-Davidson owners and bike riders in general seek options for riding motorcycles during their vacation. We definitely know that the market for riders is huge, based on brand value and the feedback and inquiries that we've received from affiliated motorcycle clubs around the world. Harley-Davidson controls more than 50 per cent of the motorcycle sales in the US market and the loyalty among its riders is unparalleled when compared to other motorcycle brands. The mystique of riding a Harley-Davidson

motorcycle is something that many riders look forward to," Dixon said.

Harley-Davidson was founded in 1903 by William S. Harley and brothers Arthur and Walter Davidson in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Historically, the company, had a longstanding association with the US military. According to historical records, their motorcycles were first used by the US military in 1916, during a conflict with Mexican revolutionary, Pancho Villa. At the time, the army used Harley-Davidson motorcycles with machine guns mounted in the sidecars, along with their other means of transport.

"The War Department soon ordered a dozen

motorcycles directly from Harley-Davidson, and a decades-long partnership began. With the strategic value of motorcycles proven to the military, the War Department relied heavily on Harley-Davidson following the entry of the United States into World War I. In fact, the first American to enter Germany one day following the signing of the armistice was riding a Harley-Davidson motorcycle. By the end of World War I, about one-half of all Harley-Davidson motorcycles produced from early 1917 to the end of the war had gone to the US military," a document titled **Harley Davidson and the US Military**, written by Archives manager, Bill Jackson, notes.

As for fostering key linkages with other areas of the Jamaican economy, Dixon has no doubt that the tour will contribute immensely to this.

"Local hotels will have an opportunity to offer our tours as an alternative to seeing Jamaica in a personalised and dynamic way. The transportation sector will be able to boast about the fact that Jamaica has enhanced its offerings by adding genuine Harley-Davidson motorcycles as an option. We want our tour to add value to the overall tourism product in Jamaica. We know that getting tourists to ride our motorcycles as a part of a tour will offer them an opportunity to uniquely connect with the natural environment of Jamaica and the local residents," he said.

The first Harley-Davidson store was opened in Jamaica in November 2006 by owners Anders Vestergaard and Paul Zar. There are two other stores in Negril and Ocho Rios. There are now 16 locations in the Caribbean, including Nassau and Freeport, Bahamas, Roatan, Honduras, St Thomas and St Kitts.



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THE BUSINESS OF TOURISM

The Thomas Cook saga A lesson for tourism business operators

VACATION is about happiness and fulfilling dreams. For this reason, tour operators, hotels, destinations, airlines, and service providers cultivate a positive image, a high reputation and encourage a feeling that they care. It means that when something goes wrong, it requires sensitive handling and an understanding that holidays are about more than a normal consumer transaction.

For this reason, the behaviour of the tour operator Thomas Cook over the deaths of two children on a holiday some years ago, is hard to justify. Thomas Cook had sold the holiday.

In outline, two children, ages six and seven, were found dead in a bungalow on the grounds of a hotel in the Greek island of Corfu in 2006 and their two accompanying adults in a coma. The children had been on a Thomas Cook holiday with their father and his partner, now wife, when they all breathed in carbon monoxide fumes from an unrepared faulty boiler.

In 2010, a Greek court found the deaths of the two children were the result of unlawful action by hotel employees. Two Thomas Cook representatives were exonerated, and the company reportedly received £3.5m (US\$5.35m) in compensation for loss of profits and other expenses. The family, however, received around one tenth of that sum.

Subsequently, and much later, after a formal inquest in the United Kingdom in May 2015, a jury returned a verdict of unlawful killing in the case and concluded Thomas Cook had "breached its duty of care".

By then, notwithstanding, the pervasive sense of a big company thinking only about its commercial interests had taken root, and the media had begun to focus on the company's failure to apologise, its legally advised decision not to answer questions in the coroner's court, and the inequity in the compensation awarded to the family by the hotel, after what for them had been an expensive legal battle.

Instead of the story then fading away with all concerned trying their best to have a dialogue about ways to mitigate the tragic loss and reputational damage, the story grew



David Jessop

bigger daily as the company failed on just about every count to respond in a humane manner, let alone suggest a business that wants to bring joy to its customers.

Instead, Thomas Cook unilaterally announced that it would give one third of the compensation it had received to UNICEF, a charity not remotely linked to the children or their vacation, and without consulting the family about its wishes; released, after strident media and political criticism, a video of its present chief executive apologising from behind a lectern, but declined to allow any broadcast interviews or to meet with the family; and told the media it had sent a letter of apology that the family had not even seen. To make matters worse, the individual who until last November was the company's chief executive said that she would donate around £3m to charity following a backlash for a massive bonus she had received from the company.

As a consequence, the family concerned is in despair, and days after the coroner's court ruling, there are calls for a consumer boycott, and Thomas Cook continues to receive highly critical media coverage with damning leading articles in newspapers that range from the **Financial Times** to Britain's tabloid press.

Thomas Cook, a company that sells holidays and cruises to many destinations including the Caribbean, ought to be seen as a company that cares about people and puts its customers first. Its failure to do so in this extraordinary case should be a lesson for everyone in business in the tourism sector.



SIMPSON MILLER

PM commends Sandals Group for continued investment in Jamaica

ON THE heels of Jamaica's recent top ranking in the Caribbean for ease of doing business, and being referred to as a "sweet spot for investments" in the region, Prime Minister Portia Simpson Miller has welcomed the Sandals Group's recent multimillion-dollar renovation and investment in Sandals Ochi Beach Resort.

Simpson Miller, who was delivering the keynote address at the launch on June 1, commended the Sandals Group for investing US\$60 million in the total makeover and renovation of its largest resort.

"On behalf of the Government and the people of Jamaica, I thank and congratulate the Honourable Gordon Butch Stewart and his team for their unfailing confidence and faith in Jamaica," Simpson Miller said.

"People and product are the key

ingredients behind the great success of Sandals. This is why they have won the World Travel Awards as the world's leading all-inclusive company for the 19th straight year!" she added.

In addition to the recent investment in Sandals Ochi Beach Resort, Sandals Resorts International has invested US\$156 million in Jamaica over the past five years. Simpson Miller said the Government will continue to play its part in creating the macroeconomic climate which encourages private investment by Jamaican and international investors.

In order to make investment in the sector more attractive, the Government of Jamaica undertook major tax reform that has significantly and positively affected the sector. In 2014, the old Hotel Incentives Act was abolished and the Fiscal Incentives Act, better known as the Omnibus Act, was introduced.


The Simpson Miller-led Government has also sought to create a level playing field for the productive sectors, including tourism, manufacturing, agriculture, and others, by having one incentive regime. These incentives include employment tax credits, lower corporate income tax, product input relief such as exemptions from, or reductions in, customs duty for raw materials and other inputs for their operations.

Over the past three years, the Government has also invested more than \$5.5 billion through the Tourism Enhancement Fund in product improvement and major infrastructure projects in resort areas. There have also been heritage site improvements to strengthen cultural tourism, as well as environmental projects in partnership with the National Environment Protection Agency.

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Bottle drive a success at Hilton Rose Hall

A TOTAL of 72,000 polyethylene terephthalate (PET) bottles, commonly called plastic bottles, were collected from various sites across Montego Bay during the Hilton Rose Hall Resort and Spa's interdepartmental bottle collection and recycling competition, which ran throughout the month of May.

The aim of the competition was to raise awareness of environmental conservation. It entailed each department using available resources to gather as many bottles as possible over a 31-day period. At the end, the Housekeeping Department won the competition, with the Accounts and Activities departments taking second and third place, respectively.

The competition was the brainchild of the newest member of the human resources team, Vanessa Uter, who saw the need to foster environmental conservation within the resort. She collaborated with the hotel's security manager, Rory Shepherd, to organise the competition.

The departments extended their bottle collection and clean-up efforts to neighbouring communities, including the Barrett Town Market, the Dump Up Beach on Gloucester Avenue in the city, as well as other garbage-strewn areas of the parish capital. The Human Resources Department cleaned up the golf course, two neighbouring basic



CONTRIBUTED

Hilton Rose Hall team members check the bags of bottles collected during the competition.

schools and the immediate environs of the hotel. So great was the enthusiasm that the Bratchers, an American family that visits the hotel each year and does charity work in the community, got involved and cleaned up a neighbouring school.

Over in St Ann, the Jewel Resorts also started their programmes and already collected more than 100,000 bottles just 10 days into the month of June.

According to the United Nations

(UN) Environment Programme (UNEP) Policy on plastics, economic growth and changes in consumption and production patterns have caused a sharp increase in plastic use, and consequently, waste plastic is becoming a major waste stream in developing countries.

"Due to the properties of the plastics, the high quantities being generated and the lack of efficient end-of-life management, this poses serious threats to the environment

and human health. Even in best cases, when plastics are disposed of in sanitary landfills, they occupy large spaces and prevent the proper decay of other waste," the policy document states.

In June 2014, the UN Environment Assembly expressed concern over widespread plastic waste and the imminent threat it posed to marine life, the financial damage of which was estimated at US\$13 billion.

A UNEP-supported report produced by the Plastic Disclosure Project and Trucost, titled **Valuing Plastic**, also noted that a large and unquantifiable amount of plastic waste enters the ocean from littering, poorly managed landfills, tourist activities and fisheries.

"Some of this material sinks to the ocean floor, while some float and can travel over great distances on ocean currents, polluting shorelines and accumulating in massive mid-ocean gyres," the report said. "There have been many reliable reports of environmental damage due to plastic waste that include mortality or illness when ingested by sea creatures such as turtles; entanglement of animals, such as dolphins and whales; and damage to critical habitats, such as coral reefs."

The **Valuing Plastic** report also found that "while consumer goods companies currently save \$4 billion each year through good plastic management, such as recycling, plastic use disclosure is poor. The report recommended that companies monitor their plastic use and publish the results in annual reports; and commit to reducing the environmental impact of plastic through clear targets, deadlines and efficiency and recycling innovations, and that by putting a financial value on impacts – such as plastic waste – companies can further integrate effective environmental management into mainstream businesses".

Grand Palladium opens staff wellness centre

Claudia Gardner

Hospitality Jamaica Writer

THE LUCEA-based Grand Palladium hotel officially opened its on-site medical centre, exclusively for its employees, at a ceremony held at the resort's Human Resources Department recently.

The centre was the brainchild of Leroy Peart, president of the hotel's staff association. According to him, the facility, which is named Point Ridge Health and Wellness Centre, is already staffed with a full-time nurse, has three doctors on call and will provide medical services to all employees free of cost.

"It is supplemented with a cadre of consultants for when the need arises. It is strategically aligned to hospital facilities 24/7. Part of its uniqueness and impressiveness is that this wellness centre is supported by an ambulance which is parked here on property 24/7. Tell me where else this exists. This is grand," Peart said during his address at the official opening ceremony.

"We have 1,400 team members, and sometimes it is difficult for them to access proper medical services given the fact that most of them work six days per week and are very busy people. This staff clinic will bridge the gap between our employees and their personal doctors by providing that first check or support while on property," he pointed out.

He said the facility came to fruition after the staff association made a submission to the management of the hotel to provide a health facility solely for the benefit and use of the general staff. He said the request was supported with basic justifications and site suggestions.

"The thought looked a bit too ambitious at the time, but all things considered, nothing is too ambitious for our staff, neither is there anything considered outlandish for our staff by our admired management," Peart said.

The Grand Palladium is located at Point Estate in Lucea, Hanover and has a total of 1,056 rooms and employs more than 1,400 members of staff.



Nicolette 'Foxxi' Livingston (left), Miss Grand Palladium 2015, and Sheryl Wilks, human resources manager, participate in the ribbon-cutting for the Point Ridge Health and Wellness Centre. The gentlemen opposite them are (from left) Leroy Peart, president of the Staff Association; José Morgan, general manager of the hotel; Wynter McIntosh, mayor of Lucea; and Dr David Stair, custos of Hanover.

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JHTA AWARDS SUPER ACHIEVERS

THE JAMAICA Hotel and Tourist Association (JHTA) recognised its super achievers of 2014 at its annual awards ceremony in Montego Bay recently. A summary of the awards are as follows:



Omar Robinson (right), first vice-president, JHTA, presents the Hotel Manager/Supervisor of the Year Award to Marcia Morris, executive housekeeper, The Jamaica Pegasus.

Hotel Manager/Supervisor of the Year

The JHTA's Hotel Manager/Supervisor of the Year award was presented to executive housekeeper of The Jamaica Pegasus hotel, Marcia Morris. The other nominees were George Beswick of Couples Sans Souci, Karen Rose Grant of the Round Hill Hotel, and Nicole Mason-Lowe of Couples Swept Away.

Morris scored 100 per cent in every category considered. She was dubbed a natural leader and motivator who is held in high esteem by colleagues and guests, and one who brings her values, energy, love for people and all her skills and talents to the workplace. She was also described as a committed conservationist who is always on the lookout for ways to save the organisation money, and as a manager who employs tight controls and creativity without compromising service standards.



Wykeham McNeill (left), minister of tourism and entertainment, congratulates Lifetime Achievement Awardee Joyce Wright, founder, Rondel Village Resorts.

Lifetime Achievement Award

The recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award was 95-year-old physiotherapist and founder of the Rondel Village in Negril, Joyce Wright. Described as charming, hospitable, creative and strong, Wright was praised as a "pioneering matriarch whose innovativeness got her family's tourism business going and kept it growing for more than 30 years. She was also heralded as a pillar of the Negril community who has made an invaluable contribution to the building of the Negril resort and Jamaica's tourism.

Abe Issa Award for Excellence

The Abe Issa Award for Excellence went to national swim champion, Alia Shanee Atkinson. This award is not limited to persons who work within the tourism industry, but is presented to individuals, groups and entities that have contributed significantly to the tourism industry and have achieved successes in promoting the reputation and image of Jamaica as a tourist destination, whether directly or indirectly and whose performance in any field brings honour, fame and glory to Jamaica. The award recipient must be of unquestionable integrity and high ethical standards.

Tourism Employee of the Year Award

The South Coast Resort area was not left out of the winnings as Christopher Bailey, maintenance cocoordinator/supervisor of the Appleton Estate Rum Tour in St Elizabeth emerged ahead of Blue Mountain Bicycle Tour's Robert Ricketts to cop the Tourism Employee of the Year Award. Bailey received accolades for being versatile and flexible and for being the go-to man in his organisation for everything relating to the general maintenance and upkeep of buildings, grounds and equipment.

Bailey scored full marks for the year's performance in every category and was described as possessing all the qualities required to excel in the tourism industry.

"A versatile and flexible team player, he assists in all areas of the operation, always extending himself to ensure that visitors have a first-class experience. Be it tour guiding or serving in the gift shop, he can be counted on to perform with excellence in any department. Professional to the core, he delivers above and beyond expectations Morale is very high among the award-winning team he leads. He ensures that the work gets done, for example, the grounds and the entire facility are kept in immaculate condition. Nevertheless, he manages to make the working environment very pleasant with his humour and positive outlook," Bailey's citation read.



Nicola Madden-Greig (right), president, JHTA, presents the Tourism Employee of the Year Award to Christopher Bailey, Appleton Estate rum tour maintenance cocoordinator/supervisor.



Earl Cummings (left), senior air conditioning and refrigeration technician at Sandals Royal Caribbean, celebrates his receipt of the JHTA Hotel Employee of the Year Award with JHTA executives Nicola Madden-Greig (second left), president; Adam Stewart, second vice-president; and Camille Needham, executive director.

The Hotel Employee of the Year

The Hotel Employee of the Year Award went to Earl Cummings, senior air conditioning and refrigeration technician at Sandals Royal Caribbean. The other nominees in that category were Rohan Gordon of Eden Gardens Wellness & Lifestyle, Vivian Panton of Sans Souci, and Francella Shaw of the Charella Inn Hotel in Negril.

No stranger to awards, Cummings has copped several of Sandals' top awards, including the Ultimate Team Member of the Year for his work ethic and the value to the engineering team and the resort. He was described as an intuitive, truly outstanding hospitality professional with a genuine love for people, as well as hard-working and dedicated to his purpose.



CEO of Sandals Resorts, Adam Stewart, shows off his Hotelier of the Year Award.

Hotelier of the Year

CEO of Sandals Resorts International, Adam Stewart won Hotelier of the Year award ahead of Kathleen Doehler, of Club Riu Ocho Rios and Professor Henry Lowe of Eden Gardens Wellness & Lifestyle.

"An innovator, he is driven by a determination not only to maintain the company's hard-won reputation, but also to keep the organisation striving towards higher and higher levels of achievement. His confident, inspired leadership motivates his team members to outperform themselves, raising standards and setting benchmarks for others to follow along the way ... he has kept the organisation moving forward ... breaking new ground ... entering into uncharted territories ... and engaging in multimillion-dollar expansions," Stewarts citation read.

"He has done the work, met the criteria and raised the bar in all aspects of hotel management, displaying extraordinary creativity and innovativeness. He has continued to serve his country and his region remarkably well as tourism leader and philanthropist in his own inimitable way. He is admired and respected by his business leader colleagues, the tourism industry and his own team members for his abilities, warmth, sense of humour and humility," it added.

Awards were also presented in the Allied Members category:

Purveyor of the Year

The Purveyor of the Year award went to the 190-year-old J. Wray & Nephew, which came out ahead of Rainforest Seafoods and Smith & Stewart Distributors. The Gruppo Campari Company was lauded as the oldest company in Jamaica with a "tradition of garnering kudos for excellence ... for quality brands ideal for the hospitality industry and excellent customer service, outstanding Corporate Citizenship and for providing consistent support of the JHTA and the tourism industry as a whole".

Attraction of the Year

There was only one nominee for Attraction of the Year Award, and that went to Dolphin Cove, which was cited as unique attraction which lends excitement to the list of things to do in Jamaica, appealing to young and old, adventurous and cautious, visitors and locals. The attraction was also praised for its visionary and innovative management; service excellence and meticulous maintenance of international quality standards.

Int'l Airline of the Year

The International Airline of the Year Award went to JetBlue Airways which came out ahead of their colleagues American Airlines and British Airways. Jetblue was commended for providing on-time service; exceptional, well-trained customer-focused staff; clean planes; comfortable travel space and enjoyable flights, as well as its dedication to increasing airlift and growing the market. It also received kudos for supporting community projects and charitable causes for sponsoring West Indies cricket.



Nicola Madden-Greig (centre), president, JHTA, presents Local Transportation Provider of the Year Award to Fred Smith of Tropical Tours Limited and Mary Chambers.

Local Transportation Provider of the Year

The Local Transportation Provider of the Year went to the Montego Bay-based Tropical Tours, which emerged ahead of Island Routes Caribbean Adventure Tours and Tourwise Limited. One of the largest destination management organisations in Jamaica, with over three decades of experience in the hospitality business, Tropical Tours was praised for its reliable transportation system, quality of its fleet of vehicles and its exceptional service delivered by well-trained, accommodating professional staff, including competent, knowledgeable drivers.

Jamaica House Toronto set to open during Pan Am Games

JAMAICA

TOURIST BOARD

WITH THE clock ticking, and with just over a month to go until the Toronto 2015 Pan Am Games officially open, Team Jamaica is making final preparations for their visit to Toronto this July. Jamaica House Toronto will be the home base for Jamaican athletes,

Jamaicans and friends of Jamaica from July 22 to 24 at Atlantis, Ontario Place in downtown Toronto.

Jamaica House Toronto will be organised by Toronto-based events company JACANA Group, with the Jamaica Tourist Board as the title sponsor. Visitors to Jamaica House

can expect to rub shoulders with Jamaican athletes, enjoy traditional Jamaican cuisine, live entertainment, and celebrate alongside Jamaicans and fans of Jamaica. Artistes include Rootz Underground, Cocoa Tea, I-Octane, Cham and Maxi Priest. Tickets for Jamaica House are on sale at various

locations across Toronto and online at www.teamjamaica.ca. All-inclusive VIP packages are also available.

"Jamaica House Toronto will be the place to be during the Pan Am Games," said Paul Pennicook, director of tourism. "Jamaica is known around the world for her heritage, sport, music and cuisine,

and we're looking forward to bringing three days of island excitement and sports enthusiasm to the city of Toronto and the Pan Am Games experience. We are also using this opportunity to raise awareness of travel to Jamaica and will have travel information and special packages available to Jamaica House guests."

JTB IN ACTION



CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Chef Samantha Davis, Jamaican chef tantaliser at Caribbean Week Jamaica, participated in several cooking demonstrations during Caribbean Week. Chef Sam prepared a number of her famous recipes, including jerk chicken bites, grilled corn with jerk aioli, and coconut cherry limeade spritzer. The menu utilised her favourite Grace products, including the jerk rub, coconut water and spices. Samantha was sponsored by the Jamaica Tourist Board and Grace Foods. The demos were held at Williams-Sonoma and Bloomingdales in New York City.



The Jamaica Tourist Board (JTB) hosted US travel partners and tour operators on a boat cruise to thank them for their support of the destination for many years. Attendees to the evening soirée around the Statue of Liberty enjoyed Jamaican cuisine and entertainment while observing the Manhattan skyline. Jamaica's director of tourism, Paul Pennicook (third right) and Donnie Dawson (third left), deputy director of tourism, USA Sales, JTB; pose with a number of the guests.



Paul Pennicook (fourth left), Jamaica's director of tourism, joins his JTB team members for a photo op before cutting the organisation's 60th anniversary cake. From left are Donnie Dawson, deputy director of tourism, USA sales; Marcia Sinclair, district sales manager; Chris Dobson, business development manager; Janice Allen, regional director; and Tony King, regional director, airline and tour operators.



Jamaica partnered with the Brooklyn Bridge Park Conservancy for their annual summer kick-off fundraising event titled Sunset Jammin'. The Jamaica-themed night featured live Jamaican entertainment and cuisine, a tent for children's activities and a silent auction. Three Jamaican vacations were auctioned at the event, including hotel stays at Jakes Hotel on the South Coast, the Hyatt Ziva Rose Hall in Montego Bay, and Moon Palace Jamaica Grande in Ocho Rios. The 15th Annual Sunset Jammin' fundraiser took place in the Empire Fulton Ferry section of the Brooklyn Bridge Park and brought more than 1,200 visitors to the festivities. All proceeds benefit the conservancy's educational, cultural, and recreational programming in the park.

Flanker: example of tourism dollars working for J'cans

TOURISM IS Jamaica's biggest foreign-exchange earner. However, some Jamaicans are of the view that the money earned from the industry is largely kept in the coffers of the industry players and not enough is spent in the communities from which the workers in the sector live.

There have been numerous studies which have been done in an effort to dispel that notion, and there have been glaring examples of communities benefiting from the tourism dollar, both directly and indirectly.

Montego Bay is home to 17 informal communities in which some of the island's best tourism workers reside. One such community is Flanker, which is the epitome of what the tourism dollar can do, not only for the development of its citizens but for the transformation of the area.

Flanker is home to approximately 10,000 residents, more than half of whom are below the age of 30. Over the years, several tourism entities have invested hundreds of millions of dollars in the development of the people of Flanker and in community infrastructure.

The Flanker Community sits a stone's throw from the Sangster International Airport and is neighbour to several of the nation's top rated all-inclusive resorts. Employment in the tourism industry from the community is reported to be 30 per cent.

The work of the community is largely carried out at the Flanker Resource Centre, which is operated by the Government, but continues to receive tremendous support from tourism entities in St James. The support comes in the form of social interventions which are aimed at developing the skills of the residents and also to train them in conflict resolution and entrepreneurship.

Donations from tourism entities have also resulted in the establishment of a community library which facilitates research as well as non-fiction reading material for members of the area. There is a continuous book drive to enhance and widen the type of books available in the library. Students are encouraged to come in and do their School Based Assessment. The centre currently offers CXC classes in mathematics, English language and principles of business.



CONTRIBUTED

Members of the Flanker Marching Band participate in a street parade in Sam Sharpe Square during the St James Parish Council's Independence Day Civic Ceremony in 2013.

Residents who access the services at the centre are more empowered as they take advantage of the capacity-building programmes which are offered. Some of these are Alternative Dispute Resolution activities, mediation services, a homework-assistance programme, adult education night classes (remedial and CXC), computer classes, a skills training programme, a parent-education programme, job search assistance, a welfare programme, a youth-at-risk programme, a marching band, a youth club, senior citizens club, Flanker Folks Cultural Group, Flanker Performance and Creative Arts group, domino club, the Youth Crime Watch Initiative and our sports programme.

Residents of the area have vowed to protect the tourism industry as they see it as the life blood of the community. Hotels have staffed reading programmes, health fairs, parenting workshops, environmental projects and other social events there which ensure that they see in real terms the tourism dollar working for them.

One of Jamaica's leading resort chains has also implemented a training initiative for the youngsters in the community, which has equipped them in gaining full-time employment in the tourism sector at all levels as well as on the overseas work programme, especially in the United States and Canada.

WE ARE MORE THAN SECURITY

MARKSMAN

Logos for various security and service organizations: a motorcycle, a dog head, a letter 'A', a police badge, and a 'GE' logo.



PHOTOS BY PAUL H. WILLIAMS

Raymond Whyte of Hillside, St Thomas standing beside his parents' first house, a wattle-and-daub structure.

Simon Taylor, Roselle Falls, and heartbreak

FOR THE past several weeks, I've been travelling to St Thomas for many reasons, more so to visit historical spots, especially those associated with the Morant Bay Uprising, which took place 150 years ago.

This eastern parish, though ravaged by man and nature, is replete with lore and lures. From my recent tours, there was so much to hear about and see, but three things/people that I keep reflecting on for many reasons are Simon Taylor's lands, Roselle Falls and Raymond Whyte.

Not far from Morant Bay, the parish capital, is Lyssons, named after Nicholas

Lycence, a 17th-century plantation owner and a member of the Jamaica Assembly. At Lyssons, many descendants of enslaved Africans live in informal settlements.

In their midst is a little 'cemetery' in which lie the remains of Alton Hope Phillipps, former custos of the parish; his wife, Phyllis Josephine; and J.H. Phillipps, a former member of the Legislative Council, and another former custos of the parish. There are also the tombs of Simon Taylor and his brother, John.

The brothers were initially interred at Vale Royal, then known as Prospect Pen Estate, in St Andrew. Upon the sale of the



Roselle Falls, October 2010.



Roselle Falls, April this year.



A section of the rocks over which Roselle Falls used to flow, June 1.

Prospect property, the bodies were exhumed and reburied at Lyssons. But the way in which Simon was brought to St Thomas didn't rest well with some who thought the remains of that man of influence and wealth should have been handled with more dignity.

The son of a Scottish merchant and Jamaica-born mother of British ancestry, Simon was born in St Andrew on December 23, 1738. He eventually owned more than 2,000 slaves on four estates, "leaving at his death 'the largest fortune ever accumulated by a West Indian' ... In today's currency, Taylor was a billionaire," writes Olive Senior in the 2003 **Encyclopaedia of Jamaican Heritage**.

Simon died in 1813. Shortly after he was buried at Prospect Pen Estate, he was removed from his grave and brought to Lyssons, another family property. The body was carried on the back of a mule-drawn cart.

"The Lieutenant-governor of Jamaica, Edward Morrison, wrote in a local newspaper that the whole process 'was done in not a very decent manner'. It was an insult to the memory of Simon Taylor, a leading figure and planter in the colony, for his body to be carried to its final burial on a 'common mule cart'," writes Meleisa Ono-George of the University of Victoria, in 2008, in a master's thesis titled, **The Planter's Fictions: Identity, Intimacy, and the Negotiations of Power in Colonial Jamaica**.

It was felt that "Taylor had worked to embody the very definition of respectability in the colony". So, on his tombstone, his epitaph reads, "Here lie the remains of the Honourable Simon Taylor, a loyal subject, a firm friend, and an honest man. Who after an active life, during which he faithfully and ably filled the highest offices of civil and military duty in this island, died."

I reflect on this story at many levels, but the element that I have thought about at length is that of reparation and landlessness. I believe it would be great if the lands that Simon Taylor possessed at Lyssons be divided and legally granted to the present dwellers to redress the injustice of enslavement that Simon Taylor and his family meted out to their enslaved ancestors.



This unfinished concrete structure at Hillside, St Thomas was partially covered in 1993 by a deluge of water, rocks and earth. It belonged to Raymond Whyte's parents.

To cool down, or heighten, the grievance a little, I want to segue to Roselle Falls, or the disappearance thereof. For years, the corner at Roselle, where water used to gush on to the main road and gutters, was a place where people from all over eastern Jamaica would gather to bathe and socialise and out-of-parish people, too.

I usually look forward to seeing it myself on my journeys in the parish. But I have been stunned (stung) repeatedly the last few times I travelled east. There is either a trickle or absolutely no water. The stories surrounding the disappearance of this treasure are varied, and I am still investigating. The truth, as painful as it could be, must be revealed. Roselle Falls' death is like losing a pot of gold. St Thomas people will tell you.

Another heartbreaking story is that of Raymond Whyte of Hillside, St Thomas, where a deluge of water, rocks and earth destroyed many homes and lives in 1993. Since then, nothing much has been done to assist the people affected by that catastrophe, and the vestiges of the tragedy



A resident putting back the pieces of John Taylor's tombstone at Lyssons, St Thomas.

of that fateful night are still embedded in the residents' minds and in mounds of rocks and earth.

The unfinished house of Raymond Whyte's parents is one such remnant. Above it is a collapsing wattle-and-daub two-room hut, his parents' first house in which he and his siblings were raised. He said a brother is still living in one of the rooms. His parents didn't get a chance to finish their 'wall' house. And they have since passed.

But it was the way in which Whyte's mother died that he seems to be still reeling from. He was moved to tell the story, for many reasons, and when he was finished, I



Simon Taylor's tombstone at Lyssons, St Thomas.



The little 'cemetery' at Lyssons, St Thomas.

could only stare at the gloss in his eyes and imagine the day when his mother met her demise.

She used to carry a machete around, the farmer she was. One evening, when Whyte, a male sibling, and their mother were on their way home, the youngsters, knowing that she knew her way, went ahead of her. But, when she didn't turn up as expected, their father sent them back to see what was going down.

They found her, all right, but she was lying unresponsive. By that time their father, too, was on his way. To their unspeakable horror, it seemed that the woman had fallen, and the machete she was carrying went right through her torso, killing her immediately.

On Simon Taylor's lands, Roselle Falls, and Raymond Whyte's heartbreak I am still reflecting.

Devon House



Historic houses of Kingston & St Andrew

Paul H. Williams
Contributor

THE PARISHES of Kingston and St Andrew have been the home of many famous and not-so-famous people who lived or worked in historic structures such as Devon House, Headquarters House, Gordon House, Vale Royal, King's House, Jamaica House, Trafalgar House, and Malabre House. Today, we revisit the history of the first four.

Devon House

The story of Devon House goes back to May 1667 when Charles II awarded 600 acres of land to Anglican Reverend John Zellers. Devon Penn was part of the property, on which a rectory was built. The property was owned by the Anglican Church up to 1881 when it was sold to George Stiebel, a coloured man born to a Jamaican housekeeper and a German Jew in the 1820s.

Stiebel quit school at an early age and became a skilled carpenter, but made his fortune trading gold in Venezuela. In 1851, he married Magdalene Baker, daughter of a

Moravian missionary. She bore him a son, Sigismund, and a daughter, Theresa.

Stiebel owned many properties. After he purchased 51 acres of the lands at Devon Penn in 1881, he commissioned contractor Charles P. Lazarus to build a mansion there. It came to be known as Devon House, which consisted of a library, a gaming room, a ballroom, sitting rooms, a sewing room, a dining room, and bedrooms. There were also adjoining and detached buildings.

After the Stiebels, the next family to own Devon House were the Lindos – Cecil and Agnes. When Cecil died, Agnes inherited Devon House, but she migrated to New York, and the property was put up for sale. Businessman Reginald Melhado later purchased 11 acres of it. Another 40 acres was subdivided to make roads. Melhado though, lived at Devon House for only five years.

RESCUED BEFORE DEMOLITION

When plans for the demolition of Devon was made public in 1965, the Government of Jamaica intervened by putting a restriction order on the property under the National Heritage Trust Act. English Architect Tom Concannon was hired to restore the property, and Devon House was officially reopened on January 23, 1968. It fell under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Finance and was operated by Things Jamaican.

In 1974, the mansion was refurbished for the second time in the Victorian style. More refurbishment came in the early 1980s, and in 1990, Devon House was declared a national monument by the Jamaica National Heritage Trust.

In the 1990s, when Things Jamaican closed, the property fell under the management of the Devon House Development Company Limited, which became operational in February 2002 to oversee the redevelopment of Devon House. Between 2007 and 2010, Devon House was closed again for refurbishment. The property and all it offers is now a very popular social space.

There are many anecdotes surrounding Devon House. The most popular is that Lady Musgrave couldn't stand the sight of magnificent Devon House since it was built by a Stiebel, a 'black' man. So the authorities built a road to bypass Devon House. That road is said to be Lady Musgrave Road.



Headquarters House

Headquarters House

Headquarters House, also known as Hibbert House, and originally built of brick, stone and wood in the 1750s, was first owned by Thomas Hibbert, a Kingston planter, merchant and member of the Jamaica Assembly.

The two-storey building has an attic and a basement and boasts a spiral mahogany staircase. It was said to be the result of a competition by four well-to-do Kingston merchants, including Hibbert, to build the most beautiful townhouse in the city.

In 1814, Hibbert House became the headquarters of the general in charge of the British troops, thus Headquarters House. In 1872, it was sold and became the office of the colonial secretary and the headquarters of the Jamaican Government. Located at the southern corner of Beeston and Duke streets, Headquarters House is now occupied by the Jamaica National Heritage Trust.

Gordon House

Up to 1960, Headquarters House was the official seat of the Jamaican Government. Since then, the Jamaican bicameral Parliament sits in George William Gordon House, located at the northern corner of Beeston and Duke streets.

It was named after National Hero George William Gordon, who was hanged on October 23, 1865 for his association with Deacon Paul Bogle, who was hanged on October 25 in the same year for his involvement in the Morant Bay Uprising of October 11. On May 31, 2001, Gordon House was declared a national monument by the Jamaica National Heritage Trust.



George William Gordon House



Vale Royal

Vale Royal

Vale Royal, located at Montrose in St Andrew, and the official residence of Jamaica's prime minister, is believed to have been built in the late 18th century. It was erected on the Prospect Pen Estate. One striking feature of Vale Royal is the lookout tower on the roof. From there, people could monitor the movement of ships in Kingston Harbour.

One of its owners was Simon Taylor, said to be the richest man of his time. Vale Royal was a social hotspot under Taylor's ownership. He and his brother, John, were eventually buried on the property. When the property was sold, the bodies of Simon and John were removed and reburied at Lyssons, St Thomas.

Today, two graves are still at Vale Royal. One belongs to Emily Jackson (died July 10, 1902), one of the past owners of Vale Royal. The other is that of George Scotland, Emily's uncle (died September 3, 1868).

In 1928, Vale Royal was acquired by the colonial government and was used as the official residence of the colonial secretary, and then as the residence of finance ministers. Though it is the official residence of the prime minister, it is more of a protocol house, where visiting heads of state and government meet.

Outstanding travel journalists celebrated at Caribbean Week

NEW YORK:

SOME OF the top travel writers and photographers from the Caribbean and the United States were celebrated at an exclusive event here in recognition of their outstanding coverage of the Caribbean region.

The Caribbean Tourism Organisation (CTO), the region's tourism development agency, presented awards to nine journalists for the exceptional role they played in 2014 in driving Caribbean tourism through their coverage of the region.

The awards were presented at the CTO Travel Media Awards Luncheon at the Wyndham New Yorker Hotel on Thursday, June 4, as part of the programme of activities for Caribbean Week New York. It was co-sponsored by the New York Times and Jamaica and was attended by several Caribbean tourism ministers, directors and dignitaries, as well as industry executives and other well-regarded journalists.

The following are the winners:

■ **Been There, Wrote That** – Best Feature Article in a Consumer Magazine, Jad Davenport – Islands – Proof of Paradise (Martinique)

■ **I Couldn't Have Written It Better Myself** – Best Feature In A Consumer Newspaper, Baz Dreisinger – **The New York Times** – On a Caribbean Rum Trail (Barbados/Jamaica/Martinique)

■ **Inner Circle King** – Best Feature Article in a Trade Publication, Brian Major – **Travel Pulse** – History Lessons Live at Martinique's La Savane des Esclaves (Martinique)

■ Virtual Visitor Award – Best Online Feature, Luisita Lopez Torregrosa – **The New York Times** – Seeing the Whole of Antigua (Antigua & Barbuda)

■ **Golden Mic** – Best Broadcast Feature Better Mornings Atlanta (CBS Atlanta) – Better Cooking segment with the Jamaican sisters, Michelle and Suzanne Rousseau

■ **Not Lost in Translation** (Best Feature by a US or Caribbean Journalist that appeared in Foreign Media) Samantha Diaz – **El Nueva Dia** – Una Francia en el Caribe (Martinique)

■ **From Infinity ... And Abroad!** (Best Feature by a Foreign Journalist that appeared in US or Caribbean Media) Eric Vohr – Dallas Morning News – Explore Volcanic Mountains in Dominica (Dominica)

■ **Oh Snap!** – Best Photograph accompanying a feature Michaela Urban – **The New York Times** – Explore Volcanic Mountains in Dominica

■ **No Anansi Story!** (Best Feature by a Caribbean Journalist) Peter Swain – MACO – Nevisian Fare (Nevis)

■ **They Like Me, They Really Like Me!** – Best of the Best Baz Dreisinger – **New York Times** – On a Caribbean Rum Trail (Barbados/Jamaica/Martinique)

A record 125 entries were received this year in nine categories and judged by a panel of media and public relations experts.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Members of the winning Little Bay team pose with their championship trophy. At front (from left) are Adonte Lindsay, Courtney Ann Jackson, Assauna Chae Donaldson (captain), and Ian Clayton. At back (from left) are Charlotte Wallace, general manager of Rockhouse; Marsha Stewart, quiz team member; Ruel Rowe, environmental manager; and teacher, Cleopatra Miller-Vacciana.

Little Bay All-Age cops Green Challenge Quiz trophy

Claudia Gardner

Hospitality Jamaica Writer

LITTLE BAY All-Age School copped the Rockhouse Hotel's Green Challenge Quiz after defeating Mount Airy Primary School 20-17 at the finals of the event, which was held at the Negril Branch Library in Westmoreland, last Thursday.

Little Bay took home the championship trophy plus \$15,000 prize money and also won passes to the Kool Runnings Water Park in Negril, while Mount Airy won \$10,000 and passes to Dolphin Cove.

Little London Primary School placed third and received a \$5,000 cash prize and passes to the Push Cart Restaurant for dinner.

Mount Airy had advanced to the finals after defeating Little London Primary School in the semi-finals, while Little Bay All-Age had beat Sheffield Primary School to advance to the final. Little London copped third place after defeating Sheffield in the third place playoffs.

According to environmental manager of the Rockhouse Hotel, Ruel



Members of the Little Bay team respond to a question during a Green Challenge Quiz Competition match. From left are Marsha Stewart, Ian Clayton, Assauna Chae Donaldson and Courtney Ann Jackson.

Rowe, he was happy with the competition and is already looking forward to the next contest in 2016.

"I was expecting more schools in this year's competition. Out of the 12 schools invited, only six participated. However, the competition ran smoothly and the kids seem to have had a wonderful time," Rowe said.

"The aim of the competition is to boost environmental awareness and conservational practices of students at the primary-school level in and around the Negril community to ensure that

Negril remains economically variable and sustainable for the future generation. A majority of the Westmoreland and Hanover area rely on the success of Negril to meet their economics needs, but this area is under threat from pollution and erosion," he said.

The Green Challenge Quiz was started in 2009 when Rockhouse pursued achieving Green Globe certification in meeting the environmental awareness component for certification.