

The Gleaner

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WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 26, 2015



NO VENDING

**ST PETER'S LOCKS
OUT CRAFT SELLERS,
ACCUSES THEM OF
HARASSMENT**

- **CUBA: THE CARIBBEAN'S WAKE-UP CALL**
- **AT PEACE AMONG THE ROCKS**
- **AIRLINES TO EARN US\$29.3B NET PROFIT**

St Peter's locks out craft vendors, accuses them of harassment

Janet Silvera

Hospitality Jamaica Coordinator

THE FALMOUTH Parish Church, the St Peter's Anglican, has closed its doors to the tourism sector, citing visitor harassment by vendors outside its gates.

The church, the oldest public building in the historic town, said it was forced to take this drastic action because of harassment, unruly behaviour and defiance on the part of the vendors to pay rental fees for the spaces occupied.

"The harassment is not only bad for the church, but bad for the community," Archdeacon Justin Nembhard told *Hospitality Jamaica* last weekend.

The doors were closed five weeks ago and the gates three weeks ago, after one of its workers was threatened by the vendors, said a letter written by the church to the police.

Archdeacon Nembhard was uncertain of a reopening date. In the meantime, some 20 art and craft vendors have been affected as well as several cruise ship tourists, who buy the tram tour of Historic Falmouth.

According to the archdeacon, the vendors must learn to protect the product and their own welfare.

"We have to operate under certain conditions and control. We can't have harassment of the visitors on our property," he said.

OCCASIONAL VIOLENCE

Fights, he added, have occurred at the church gate between vendors, with some matters ending up in the courts.

"The fact is, it shouldn't have gone there," said the archdeacon.

The church was built in 1795 on lands donated by Edward Barrett, part of whose estate had been bought to lay out the town.

Constructed in brick and stone, the church is a good example of vernacular architecture derived from classical forms, said a description by the Jamaica National Heritage Trust. There are two galleries in the church, one to the north and the other to



Vendors operating outside the church.



HICKEY

the west. Four massive and monumental timber columns support the roof. The monuments on the interior walls of the building date from the early 19th Century. The church organ was donated by John Tharpe Esq, the original owner of Good Hope Estate in the same parish. Graves spanning more than 200 years can be found in the churchyard.

Due to its historical value, the church has become very popular among tourists and has been listed on the tours organised by local tour operators.

According to Archdeacon Nembhard, the facility has always been an attraction, long before

the port was developed in Falmouth.

"Tour operators know this and they sell it as part of their tour, we are also looking at that situation," said Nembhard, adding that it was not in the interest of anyone for the site to be closed down. "However, we can't reopen our gates until we are all on the same page."

Hospitality Jamaica understands that since the church became somewhat of a rest stop, its water bill has increased considerably and the building has been affected by the wear and tear.

A beneficiary of the Tourism Enhancement Fund, the church was given a facelift valued at millions

of dollars as part of the fixing-up of the town to meet the new port eight years ago.

However, even the Tourism Product Development Company's (TPDCo's) executive director, Dennis Hickey, agrees that the church must find ways and means of sustaining itself.

SELF-SUFFICIENCY

"The church has to find ways and means to be sustainable so that it doesn't come back to the Government to ask for help in paying its bills," he stated, adding that it was important to establish some sort of contract or rules of engagement with the vendors.



NEMBARD

Hickey described it as a principle based on economics. He also expressed concerns about the harassment situation, saying it has to stop.

Archdeacon Nembhard noted that the space occupied by the vendors was the church's parking lot.

"On days when there are funerals or weddings, we have no access to those areas," he stated, adding that the vendor numbers will be decreased as they are being offered contracts which they will use on a rotation basis.

It is not uncommon in the tourist industry to have art and craft vendors operate on rotation at certain resorts or on the cruise ship ports.

Going forward, the Anglican head said the vendors will be expected to display goods, littering of the area would have to stop, and only general good behaviour would be accepted.

"The fee they now pay will also be revised in their favour, but we won't open our gates until we are on the same page," said Nembhard.

Checks with president of the Falmouth Craft Vendors Association Evadney Brown-McKeller revealed that a number of the persons plying their wares outside the church were not members of the association.

"It's the bad behaviour why they are in the current situation. However, from what I understand, the church has been behaving in a dictatorial manner," said Brown-McKeller.



St Peter's Anglican Church

Pennicook: ‘Colonel Lumsden represented the endeavours we should all strive for’

THE JAMAICA Tourist Board (JTB) and its agency partners said it is deeply saddened at the death of Colonel Frank Lumsden of the Charles Town Maroons.

“Colonel Lumsden represented the endeavours we should all strive for – the pursuit, preservation and exhibition of Jamaica’s cultural heritage,” said a statement from Paul Pennicook, director of tourism.

Colonel Lumsden was a visionary and a transformative leader, and under his guidance, Charles Town became a recognised place of history, culture and entertainment, said the statement.

According to the tourism director, the JTB, as the marketing agency of Destination Jamaica, is always happy to showcase Jamaica’s rich cultural heritage.

“To this end, we are pleased to include a tour of the Charles Town community on the itineraries of our international industry partners. Through the facilitation of Colonel Lumsden, we have had the pleasure of taking countless international media, travel agents and tour operators to do the tour of the Charles Town Maroon community.”

MEETING THE MAROONS

He added: “The participants have always responded with delight at the opportunity to engage in face-to-face interactions with persons who are descendants of the Maroons, champions in our fight for free-



Charles Town’s Colonel Lumsden talks to Chinese Ambassador Dong Xiaojun about how the Maroons use the machete in warfare, while Barlow Whyte (centre), Maroon drum maker, looks on.

dom. They always leave the experience empowered and more appreciative of our heritage and indomitable spirit.”

Under Colonel Lumsden’s guidance, the concept of community tourism flourished in Charles Town, continued Pennicook, noting that

the late Colonel included Maroons and other members of the community in ventures that increased the financial and social capital of the



LUMSDEN

Charles Town community.

This and other similar initiatives, he stated, were testament to his selfless persona and inclusive-leadership approach.

“In this time of grief and immense loss, we hope that the Charles Town community will be inspired by Colonel Lumsden’s courageous and audacious spirit – the same spirit that propelled his vision, his passion and his very life.”

FILE

Airlines to earn US\$29.3b net profit in 2015

THE INTERNATIONAL Air Transport Association (IATA) announced that the second edition of the World Financial Symposium (WFS) will focus on industry efforts to support sustained financial health.

The WFS will be held on September 14-17 in Barcelona, Spain against a backdrop of improving industry profitability. Airlines are expected to earn a net profit margin of four per cent, which will equate to a \$29.3 billion net profit in 2015.

“After many years of hard work and restructuring, the airline industry on average is finally earning its cost of capital. This is a significant achievement, but it needs to be put into perspective. Firstly, we must recognise that for any other

industry, earning the cost of capital is not an extraordinary achievement, rather it is the minimum performance expected,” says Tony Tyler, IATA’s director general and CEO.

He added that airlines would have to generate these “normal returns” regularly to attract the \$5 trillion of capital to support the doubling of demand expected over the next two decades. And second, sustainable profitability needs to be widespread.

“Over half of the industry’s profit this year is expected to be generated in North America.

Some airlines are doing very well. But for many, keeping revenues ahead of costs is still a real struggle where success is anything but guaranteed,” Tyler stated.

He underscored that the World Financial Symposium provides a forum for experts to analyse the challenges to attaining long-term financial stability so that aviation can continue to provide the connectivity that drives the global economy.

Symposium highlights will include a keynote address by Luis Gallego, CEO of Iberia, and the chief financial officer panel will be

moderated by Michael Bell, partner – Aviation, Aerospace and Defence, Spencer Stuart, with participation from:

- Enrique Dupuy, CFO, IAG
- Alex Mbugua, CFO, Kenya Airways
- Daniel Ho, CFO, Qatar Airways

Other topics to be discussed at WFS include: risk management, cyber security; improving airline credit ratings; the impact of the New Distribution Capability on revenue accounting; modernising the agency distribution network; taxation management; and the financial and operational aspects of mergers and acquisitions.

The popular CFO Summit also will return for a second edition; it is open to senior financial executives from airlines, business partners and key suppliers.





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Cuba: The Caribbean's wake-up call

FOR FAR too long, the Caribbean has taken tourism for granted, according to a white paper issued by the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA) entitled **Cuba: The Great Disruption for the Good of the Caribbean**. The paper states that the country that many regard as the least capitalistic in the region is about to teach its neighbour governments, capitalists and free market adherents a lesson.

The white paper stresses that through the years, the governments of the Caribbean have shown a preference for revenues from commodities and agriculture to revenues from tourism. Cuba has long recognised that the great advantages of tourism are that it not only brings much-needed foreign exchange, but also delivers broad-based employment, establishes linkages throughout the economy, and is sustainable over time.

The CHTA aims to raise awareness about both the challenges and the opportunities to the region with the pending removal of travel barriers to Cuba. The paper stresses that the anticipated increase of US visitors to Cuba should prompt the region's public and private sector leaders to take positive steps to improve their global competitiveness or face negative economic and social consequences.

WELCOME CHANGE

CHTA president and St Maarten hotelier, Emil Lee, states that "we want to be clear that the CHTA welcomes the lifting of the US travel embargo and Cuba participating with the rest of the Caribbean as a tourism partner. This



United States (US) Secretary of State John Kerry watches the raising of the American flag at the newly opened US embassy in Havana, Cuba. Kerry presided over the flag raising ceremony in Havana as the US and Cuba re-establish diplomatic relations after more than 54 years.

would eliminate a significant barrier to improving regional cooperation and integration". The paper also describes trade and investment opportunities, how Cuba can learn from the region, and how the region can learn from Cuba about improving destination and regional competitiveness.

Lee said: "Cuba should not be a point of fear for the region; rather, it should be a rallying point

for opportunity. Failure to act will result in a diversion of Americans and travellers curious to experience Cuba before it changes, many who would otherwise go elsewhere in the Caribbean."

According to Lee, "Cuba is already well-established as a destination for many direct long-haul flights and shows great potential to be a regional air hub, much like San Juan. By example, we believe travel to the Caribbean

could be stimulated significantly by adopting policies and practices which eliminate visa and travel barriers, reduce regional and US-based high air-travel-related taxes and fees, speed up the traveller's clearance and processing time, and support a more cooperative approach among industry stakeholders. Advancing these ease of travel and cost of travel strategies would drive more business to the region."

THE ISLAND'S SUCCESS

"The region can't blame Cuba for its success," said CHTA CEO Frank Comito, adding: "We need to look at those factors which have contributed to its success – product diversity, infusing culture and history into the visitor experience, investments in education and training, competitive pricing, lower operating costs. We need policies and practices which drive business, and not drive away business."

The paper candidly states that "relatively little effort has been spent on turning the most tourism dependent region in the world into the most tourism competent. The coming Cuban disruption just might be the tonic that the countries need individually and collectively to build the kind of strategic approaches to tourism development that will yield sustainable results for its citizens."

The CHTA proposes that the US government, the region's governments, and public and private-sector tourism industry stakeholders work together to create a Caribbean basin tourism initiative which the CHTA recommended recently to the United States International Trade Commission.

David Jessop



THE BUSINESS OF TOURISM

ACCORDING TO the North American trade publication, **Travel Weekly**, US tourism to Cuba is now growing at such pace that the country is experiencing a shortage of both highly trained Cuban professional guides and non-Cuban-certified tour directors to accompany the tours that US Treasury regulations require almost all US visitors to take.

It is just one indication of a situation that may change as the year goes on, as this year goes on, may change, if as seems likely, the US administration allows its citizens to travel to Cuba on an individual basis.

At present, it is only possible for most US passport holders to visit Cuba for one of 12 specified purposes through a tour operator holding a general licence. However, a new approach being considered by

the Obama administration, when taken with two other developments, could all but free US travel to Cuba by the end of this in what will almost certainly effect US visitor arrivals elsewhere in the region.

It has been clear for some time now that the US administration has been preparing to ease the procedures that restrict individual travel to Cuba, but in the last two weeks, US officials have confirmed that the president is considering changes by executive order that would allow US citizens to book tickets for travel to Cuba by simply attesting online or at an airport, as they buy a ticket, to compliance with the US Treasury licensing rules.

AIR SERVICE

The development coincides with separate negotiations between the US Federal Aviation Administration and their Cuban counterparts to develop a new bilateral air services agreement. This is expected to

lead to the resumption of scheduled commercial flights by major US and Cuban carriers, possibly as early as the end of this year.

In addition, the US Treasury is considering removing remaining impediments to the use of US credit cards in Cuba so as to overcome US banks' legal and practical caution about acting on previous permissions. Such regulatory changes will also facilitate the establishment of correspondent banking arrangements in Cuba.

The new policy may also be extended to licensing individual travel on US-based ferries and cruise ships that will start sailing to Cuba early next spring.

Although the US government's intention is that people-to-people contact will bring about a change in thinking and attitudes in Cuba, the most likely immediate practical outcome will be the near to full liberalisation of US travel to Cuba.

All of which suggests that from the latter part of this year on, The Bahamas, Puerto Rico, Jamaica, Cayman, Cancun and the Dominican Republic may begin to feel the impact, and then later, if US cruise visitor regulations are eased, other regional destinations may see ships withdrawn as they begin to sail around Cuba.

According to Cuban reports, the number of US visitors it received increased by 36 per cent in the first five months of 2015. More generally, Cuba has already become, according to the Caribbean Tourism Organisation, the second most popular tourism destination in the region after the Dominican Republic, with the arrivals gap between the two narrowing. Cuba itself believes that it will become a strong regional competitor if the US market fully opens with the country first at risk in the region being Puerto Rico.

The conundrum for the rest of the region is how best to respond.

For the longer term, urgent government attention is need to be aid to the thoughtful recommendations in the recently produced Caribbean Hotels and Tourism Association paper **Cuba: The Great Disruption for the Good of the Caribbean**.

REGIONAL COLLABORATION

This asks how much of the US\$3 billion per annum in future new business Cuba expects to earn from an opening to the US will be at the rest of the region's expense and argues for collaboration with Cuba in every aspect of tourism. It also calls for a new tourism development agenda involving high-level discussions with the Cuban authorities and industry, and for a US Caribbean basin tourism initiative' that supports the development through tourism of a economically viable, safe and stable Caribbean.

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Sometimes the world really is your oyster.

JHTA celebrates fifth annual food and wine pairing

HOPING TO raise \$2 million for its annual charity, the Jamaica Hotel and Tourist Association's (JHTA), Montego Bay Chapter last Saturday night hosted another successful celebration of fine Jamaican cuisine at the Rose Hall Great House.

Hospitality Jamaica brings you highlights of this food and wine pairing event, which is now in its fifth year.

Sponsors this year included Appleton Estate, Caribbean Producers Jamaica, Coyaba, Royalton, Grand Palladium, Round Hill, Half Moon, Sandals, RIU Montego Bay, The Tryall Club, Holiday Inn Resort, Crazy Jim, HEART Kenilworth Campus, Best Dressed Foods, Hilton Rose Hall, GCG Catering, Triple Glar Lighting, Island Beat Entertainment, John Swaby, Kiuki Tours, and Rose Hall Developments Limited.



IAM Jet Centre's Barry Foster (left) shares lens time with his brother, Gladstone Foster; and sister-in-law, Joy, who are celebrating 41 years of marriage. The three were spotted at the JHTA's celebration of fine Jamaican cuisine last Saturday night at the Rose Hall Great House in Montego Bay.



From left: Wisynco's Thedia Hemmings, Palm View Guest House's, Doris Morgan and her friends visiting from the US, Alwena and Paul Cooper, at the JHTA's celebration of fine Jamaican cuisine last Saturday night at the Rose Hall Great House in Montego Bay.



General manager of Montego Bay Convention Centre, Dittie Guise (left), shares lens time with Billy Craig's Karlene Maye at the JHTA's celebration of fine Jamaican cuisine.



Royalton's Nickesha Rowe and Alessandro Fielding cooling down after serving patrons all night at the JHTA's celebration of fine Jamaican cuisine.



Waitresses of Royalton White Sands, Stacey Napier (left) and Audra Dolphy, at the JHTA's celebration of fine Jamaican cuisine.



Adam Khodabaccus (left) and the man tagged 'head, cook and bottle-washer', Delwin Rochester, planner of the JHTA's celebration of fine Jamaican cuisine, share lens time last Saturday night at the Rose Hall Great House in Montego Bay.



From left: Executive chefs Ravi Anne of Jewel Resorts; Michael Danneker, Hilton Rose Hall; Steve Sowa, Half Moon; and Best Dressed Foods' Andrew Allen, at the JHTA's celebration of fine Jamaican cuisine last Saturday night at the Rose Hall Great House in Montego Bay.



Deputy director of tourism, Sandra Scott (left), and former regional manager, Jamaica Tourist Board, Rosemarie Johnson, at the JHTA's celebration of fine Jamaican cuisine.



Half Moon's Conroy Gordon pares the bacon wrapped served sausage stuffed porkloin at the JHTA's celebration of fine Jamaican cuisine last Saturday night at the Rose Hall Great House in Montego Bay.



Jamaica Tours' Michelle Whittaker and her sons Garey (left) and Gareson at the JHTA's celebration of fine Jamaican cuisine last Saturday night at the Rose Hall Great House in Montego Bay.



The Tryall Club led by executive chef, Ansel Beason (second left). With him are (from left) Richard Reid, Andrew Grant and Dwayne Scott at the JHTA's celebration of fine Jamaican cuisine last Saturday night at the Rose Hall Great House in Montego Bay.

JAPEX 2015 set to focus on Eastern Europe, Caribbean, Latin America

THE 25TH annual Jamaica Product Exchange (JAPEX), set to take place at the Montego Bay Convention Centre from September 20-22, will place special focus on the markets of Eastern Europe, the Caribbean and Latin America. A one-of-a-kind exhibition, JAPEX is the island's premier travel trade show and serves as a forum for leading Jamaican suppliers of the island's tourism product to meet with travel wholesalers and tour operators.

Registration is now under way for the travel trade show hosted by the Jamaica Hotel and Tourist Association (JHTA) and the Jamaica Tourist Board (JTB), which will again feature the industry seminars and the tourism linkages hub. Last year's JAPEX attendance featured 113 buyers along with 277 participants from 105 supplier companies, and approximately 30 media members from the US, Canada, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean.

"This annual trade show provides the ideal opportunity for qualified international buyers, travel wholesalers and tour operators to learn about the island's tourism product from our top suppliers," said Paul Pennicook, Jamaica's director of tourism. "It's an important marketing and networking forum, providing a great opportunity for our local tourism partners, particularly the smaller companies, to meet directly with the trade industry and update them on what's new in our marketplace."

HUNDREDS EXPECTED

According to Nicola Madden-Greig, president of the JHTA, it is anticipated that over 200 buyers will attend this year with more than 100 travel agents expected. She indicated that this year, special focus will be placed on attracting buyers from Eastern Europe, the Caribbean and Latin America.

"With the expansion in both hotel room stock and attractions, as well as major upgrades of several products across the destination, tour operators who have not previously sold Jamaica should take a closer look and participate this year because the island is in demand. The market is loving Jamaica, and they should not miss an opportunity to sell what is becoming a truly magnificent product," noted the JHTA president.

For more information on JAPEX, visit www.japex.org. For information on travelling to Jamaica, go to www.visitjamaica.com.



Scores of patrons participate in JTB's Experience Jamaica

Tradeshow: The Jamaica Tourist Board (JTB) held its Experience Jamaica Trade Show at the New Kingston Conference Centre on August 19. The trade show was a success as over 500 attendees interacted with the tourism partners who participated. At left, some of the exhibitors share information with patrons as they plan on island leisure and vacation. The Experience Jamaica campaign is the JTB's domestic marketing campaign that encourages Jamaicans to vacation on the island. Persons have until November 15, 2015 to benefit from the 20 to 60 per cent discounts on offer from over 70 tourism partners.



Mystic Mountain engages patrons at Experience Jamaica

Tradeshow: Ricardo Allen, resort sales supervisor at Mystic Mountain, shares information about the offerings of the attraction's rainforest adventures. Mystic Mountain was among the approximately 20 tourism partners that participated in the Jamaica Tourist Board's Experience Jamaica tradeshow held at the New Kingston Conference Centre on August 19.

Burson-Marsteller appointed as agency for Euro markets

THE JAMAICA Tourist Board (JTB) has appointed Burson-Marsteller as its public relations agency for the UK, Ireland and Northern Europe region. The agency was appointed following a competitive pitch and has begun work under the leadership of Burson's UK brand communications director, Rachael Coomber-Nolan.

Jamaica, the 'Home of All Right', has been seeing steady growth in arrivals from the UK, Ireland and the northern Europe region, and it is on this success that Burson-Marsteller



will continue to build. The destination boasts over 175 attractions, a world-class convention centre in Montego Bay, and a very active calendar of events. These include

beaches for which it is renowned, breathtaking mountains, rejuvenating rivers, iconic waterfalls, historic sites, and a plethora of music and cultural festivals all year round.

"From the start, the team at Burson-Marsteller showed they understood the distinctive value and offerings of Destination Jamaica. The team offered the level of insight, creativity and marketing expertise that will complement the strength of our brand across multiple channels," said Paul Pennicook, director of tourism. "We are happy to have

them on board as we continue to make Destination Jamaica the place of choice for unique holiday experiences," he added.

"There is something special about Jamaica which captures the imagination and ignites the senses," said Rachael. "It is a destination which offers adventure and excitement as well as being a picturesque, relaxing and luxurious idyll. We're absolutely thrilled to be working in partnership with the JTB to tell that rich story across a variety of channels."

Atlantic Submarines Barbados fights sargassum

AS THE Caribbean, and specifically Barbados, battles the sargassum problem that has plagued them with increasing frequency and magnitude over the past three years, Atlantis Submarines Barbados has so far escaped the onslaught. There is a perception that there is seaweed everywhere, but nothing can be further from the truth. The submarine dive site is as clear and as pretty on the surface as always, so far. Atlantis Submarines Barbados dives one mile off the west coast of Barbados, and as this 'gold' coast, which is home to some of the most luxurious properties, has been minimally affected so far. In comparison, the east and south coasts have taken the brunt of the impact.



In this July 15, 2015, file photo, tourists walk past large quantities of seaweed piling up on the beach in the Mexican resort city of Cancún.

General manager, Roseanne Myers, has updated on their internal response by saying, "Though the west coast, where we dive, has been unaffected, our safety team has met to discuss and put monitoring mechanisms in place. In our assessment, the sargassum invasion is not likely to have a serious effect on the submarine tour. We have been experiencing the bump in business from Crop Over 2015 and this has remained strong for the first few weeks in August."

Myers added: "We dive from 50 to 150 feet below the surface (about 15 to 45 meters), therefore, as the seaweed is mainly a surface dweller, the underwater and visibil-

ity down to that depth is unaffected. On the surface, the submarine can operate anywhere, and with the surface control boat always on alert, if there are areas of seaweed, the submarine will be directed simply not to emerge or submerge in the midst of it. So far, the most we have seen are a few handfuls, at worst."

Atlantis Submarines operates two 48-passenger submarines in Barbados that provide the opportunity to see the underwater world in safety and comfort and enjoy the reef and other marine life during the day and at night. This adventure is one of the most unique and highly recommended attractions in Barbados.

End monopoly on solid waste management

Claudia Gardner
Hospitality Jamaica Writer

IT HAS been long argued that the perennial problem of improper solid waste management in Jamaica's resort towns and other communities could be alleviated if the responsibility for garbage collection and management is returned to the island's municipal authorities.

The problem was first highlighted in Jamaica's **Master Plan for Sustainable Tourism Development**, which was prepared for the Government of Jamaica in 2002 by the Commonwealth Secretariat. The plan challenged the capacity of the Parks and Markets Corporation, (now National Solid Waste Management Authority) to properly manage waste in the island.

"There is an important policy change that must be implemented for the issue of solid waste to be dealt with effectively, and that is to end the monopoly that the parastatal Parks and Markets Corporation enjoys to provide this service. The organisation does not have the resources to fulfil its mandate effectively. Further, the principle of granting a monopoly to an unaccountable, central government organisation to provide local services must be questionable to say the least," the document stated.

"The responsibility for providing

local services must lie with the local authority, usually the parish council or in Negril, the Negril Green Island Local Planning Authority and Kingston, Kingston and St Andrew Corporation. The local authority should be free to find the most cost-effective provider of the service, be it the regional Parks and Markets corporation, in-house provision or the selection of private contractors," the **Master Plan** continued.

The document proposed that funds set aside by the local authorities plus those currently provided by central government to the authority, be pooled to pay for services and that any shortfall in funds could be met through the levying of user charges.

"The selection of the service provider should be through open and transparent public tender," the **Master Plan** noted. It also recommended the creation of partnerships between the public and private sectors to undertake development and provide public services in the resort areas of Negril, Montego Bay and Ocho Rios.

"If such resort partnerships are formed, they may well serve as the ideal vehicle for organising the provision of solid waste services. The policy change to remove the monopoly and to empower the local authority remains a prerequisite," it added.

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Nicola Madden-Greig
The President of the Jamaica Hotel & Tourist Association (JHTA)
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Canada



Monica Caesar
Aisle Plan Your Day
Canada



Danielle Andrews Sunkel and Tracey Manallesc
co-founders of WPIC Inc.
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Sandra Daley-Francois
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Kings, queens, injustice and 'The Price of Memory'

Paul H. Williams

Hospitality Jamaica Writer

ON WEDNESDAY, August 12, I found myself outside of my regular assignment locales – King's House. I was the media representative in the delegation that made a courtesy call on the governor general to discuss the commemoration of the 1865 Morant Bay Uprising.

While we waited to be taken to Sir Patrick Allen, our governor general, I saw a picture of Queen Elizabeth and one of her husband, Prince Phillip. I got a photo of me sitting beneath the pictures taken just before the *aide de camp* briefed us. I don't know why I was moved to do so.

In the reception room, Sir Patrick greeted us individually. And he accommodated us longer than is customary. I found him to be a nice and knowledgeable person who is not affected by pretentiousness, which is my word to describe people going around behaving hoity-toity. Sir Patrick is real, only that he occupies a position that is so redundant, in this age of Independence.

BEAUTY QUEENS

On the way down the stairs after the reception, I saw a lobby of people milling around. Two women wearing sashes caught my eyes. They were Miss Jamaica 2014, and the reigning Miss World, Rolene Strauss from South Africa, who was in the island for the 2015 coronation of the Miss Jamaica pageant. The queens were making a courtesy call on the British Queen's representative in Jamaica.

Suddenly, some members of my delegation and I started taking pictures with the queens and striking up conversations. I shook hands with Julia Morley, president of Miss World, while telling her I watched her announcing the winner of Miss World on TV for years.

Yes, I was a big fan of beauty contests, and even said in a high-



Lorian Peart-Roberts presenting a copy of the St Thomas Parish Profile to Governor General Sir Patrick Allen at King's House recently. Also in the picture (from left to right) are Mayor of Morant Bay Ludlow Mathison, Custos of Portland Marcia Bennett, Member of Parliament for eastern St Thomas Fenton Ferguson, and Member of Parliament for western St Thomas James Robertson.



Hospitality Jamaica writer Paul H. Williams sitting below pictures of Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Phillip.

school yearbook that my ambition was to marry Miss World 1984, Astrid Carolina Herrera Irrazabal. And when Lisa Hanna won in 1993, I was a student at UWI. We celebrated loudly. I knocked the metal rails on my dorm with a piece of board in my youthful exuberance. I have grown to regret that moment, for many reasons.

Over the years, beauty contests have become meaningless to me. I still keep track of the winners for professional reasons, but I really don't believe people should subject themselves to be judged by others based on their physical appearance. It is so wrong, corrupt, if I may.

So, in retrospect, I took those pictures with the queens at King's House because I have always wanted to know what it is like to meet a Miss World. Strauss is really pretty, and in this age of Facebook, and bearing in mind what people know about how I feel about certain things, I smiled like a Cheshire cat between the two queens. I was in glee because I got the opportunity to get people talking. It was my most liked Facebook photo ever. I could tell it would have been.

OPPOSITES ATTRACT

In reflecting on the photo, the juxtaposition is stark. I am a descendant of Africans brought across the Atlantic to work as slaves. Miss Jamaica is possibly a descendant of the Chinese, brought here as indentured labourers after slavery ended. Miss South Africa is possibly a descendant of the perpetrators of apartheid, that official system of segregation and repression in which many black South Africans were killed.

The next day, I travelled to Great Huts at Boston Bay, Portland to participate in Cinema Paradise. Karen Marks Mafundikwa's monumental reparation documentary, **The Price of Memory**, was the movie shown that night. I was seeing it for the second time. The movie explores the efforts of people

who are seeking justice from the British government for the part it played in slavery.

It was just as disturbing as the first. The queen, under whose picture I sat at King's House, is the beneficiary of the proceeds of slavery in Jamaica by way of her ancestors. The British monarchy, represented by Jamaica's governor generals, supported and benefited from enslaving my ancestors for over 300 years.

After the movie, I sat in a swinging chair in a hut on a cliff looking into the dense dark. The Caribbean Sea below roared. In the distance, lightning illuminated clouds from time to time. It was a thunderstorm over the sea. I thought about the dreadful conditions in which my ancestors travelled in the dark, perhaps undergoing some of those terrifying lightning phenomena. I didn't sleep well. I was really disturbed.

Then on the Friday following, I saw **Cry Freedom**, which tells the story of the life and death of the South African civil right activist, Steve Biko, and I thought about Miss South Africa, Biko, and injustice. Then I again reflected on the queen, King's House and beauty pageants. What are those anachronisms really good for? Shaking my head, and biting my lip.

At right: Governor General Sir Patrick Allen (fifth from left) and members of the delegation from St Thomas who paid a courtesy call on him on August 12 at King's House.



Governor General Sir Patrick Allen chats with Mayor of Morant Bay Ludlow Mathison (second left) on August 12 at King's House.



Governor General Sir Patrick Allen greets members of a delegation at King's House on August 12.

St Fergus Mitchell of Drapers, Portland, displaying one of his thought-provoking pictures of stone objects. Notice the stone-encrusted frame.



At peace among the rocks

Paul H. Williams

Hospitality Jamaica Writer

ST FERGUS Mitchell of Drapers, Portland is a very interesting person, complex if you will. A conversation with him will reveal his dynamism and diversity, and with all his complexities, he seems to be happy, and at peace with himself. But like all human beings, he has not escaped the impact of the vicissitudes of life.

One place where he goes to offload some of his stress is his stone art garden retreat, in which there is a stone art museum. He likes to call it his de-stressor park. Located at the front of his yard, the park consists of trees and figures made of piles of stones or stones shaped like animals.

Born and bred in Portland, Mitchell said he has been collecting rocks for many years, even when he was residing in the States. "I just

arbitrarily started to collect rocks, anywhere I go and see a rock I take a picture; these rocks made me into a very, very good photographer. I just take the picture of the rock, usually where I find it, and then I take the rock home," Mitchell told **Hospitality Jamaica**.

ANIMAL FACES

When he looks at certain rocks, he sees a story, a shape, and invariably it's an animal that he sees. "The rocks that I saw, they started to look like animals, they had faces, it's abstract, so you are going to see more than one thing, it's like abstract art," Mitchell explained.

Mitchell has no formal training in art, but he embraces the art that nature gives him, and he has turned to modern technology for a little assistance. He uses the computer to adjust, to embellish, to re-create the stone creatures in his photographs, turning them



Betty



Kissing seals.



St Fergus Mitchell straddling a 'horse'.



Rock fountain.



Peacock?



Underwater 'creatures'



Some of the 'creatures' in St Fergus Mitchell's rock art museum at Drapers, Portland.

into thought-provoking images, such as the stone that urinates.

And years ago when he wanted something artistic, but different and cost effective to do, he turned to his rocks, to which he said he has a spiritual connection. There are other things, like driftwood, that he said he could work with, but has stuck with the rocks. He wanted to mix the rocks with the wood. It's all about the energy coming from them.

He said, even in the middle of the night he would get up to work with his rocks, "to perfect the art, to turn it into a science. I feel like I am with company when I am among the rocks, I don't feel alone, I feel like the rocks have life, they are part of nature," Mitchell said of the rock art creatures in his garden. They include dogs, lions, peacocks, seals, dragons, serpents, pigs, goats".

He has extended his spiritual connection to

his rocks to the religious. He's a preacher who has named his church, Rock of Ages Ministry Church of God. "I named it after what I do, rocks. Christ is my rock. On Christ the solid rock I stand, I just love rocks," the man who plays many musical instruments said.

FUTURE PRODUCTS

And many people find him strange for pre-occupying himself with rocks. But St Fergus Mitchell said he's happy and his products are

going to make him rich. He plans to turn the computer-enhanced pictures of his rocks into tablemats, etc, and produce a music video of the rocks for relaxation purposes.

"Listening to the music of the slide show, you would be amazed what that does to you," Mitchell said of his "de-stressor video", "You will be totally tranquilised". And that's the same effect his rock garden has on him. He's among his rock and a peaceful place.

THE TWIN-ISLAND nation of Antigua and Barbuda has opened one of the most modern international airports in the Caribbean. The 23,000 square meters new terminal for the destination, more than doubles the capacity of the adjacent previous terminal, making way for an increase in passenger use of the V.C. Bird International Airport as an all-important airline hub and the largest gateway to the Eastern Caribbean.

There are four jet bridges, and a unique, state-of-the-art baggage sorting and scanning system. With faster immigration processing times, user-friendly innovations and features, the near-US\$100-million terminal that opened for operation on August 24 will greatly improve the visitor experience, allowing travellers expedited access to Antigua and Barbuda and maximum sun time on the destination's 365 beaches.

For those departing, there are 46 check-in counters and 15 self-check-in kiosks. A bigger departure lounge offers more space to relax, modern comforts, multiple gates, and an enhanced shopping and dining experience. The facility houses 30 retail units, including International brands Dufry, Colombian Emeralds, Café Britt, Café Player and Subway. Free WiFi and Internet service is available for the tech-savvy traveller, while travellers with pets can take advantage of the airport's pet-friendliness by enjoying the pet restroom.

NEW LOUNGES

There are three brand-new lounges: A VVIP lounge, a VIP lounge, and an Airport Executive Lounge. The airport executive lounge, with outdoor balcony, offers remarkable views of two of Antigua's offshore islands – Long Island and Maiden Island, giving passengers the opportunity to bask in the last rays of sunshine before their flight.

Antigua and Barbuda officially opens new airport terminal



The new V.C. Bird International Airport.

The modern facility, funded by a China EXIM Bank concessional loan, and by a Chinese government interest-free loan, has also been specially designed with elevators, escalators and ramps to serve the travel needs of passengers requiring special assistance.

The terminal building will also see an innovative feature intended to further advance Antigua and Barbuda's reputation as a leader in

sustainable tourism and sustainable development within the region. This involves the establishment of a three megawatt solar photovoltaic facility, to provide green energy solutions to the considerable demand for electrical energy in the new terminal.

Antigua and Barbuda Minister of Tourism, Economic Development, Energy and Investment Asot Michael said, "What we are cele-

brating today as we cut a ribbon is the largest single infrastructural investment in the development of our young nation. This facility is one that we can all be proud of and of which I am confident will help ensure the bright and successful future of Antigua and Barbuda. It will further cement our position as a premier tourist destination of choice in the Caribbean.

"We are responsible for ensuring

a major part of this by ensuring that our islands are exactly what we promise: welcoming, beautiful, safe and enjoyable; from the point when visitors touch down to their departure, we will ensure that their experience is one that is unforgettable and that they take back only warm and lasting memories of their time spent in our beautiful country."

For the upcoming winter season, JetBlue Airways will begin direct service to Antigua's new international airport, from New York's JFK International Airport on November 5. In December, Alitalia will begin weekly service from Milan, and Seaborne Airlines will begin direct service from San Juan.

SERVING MULTIPLE AIRLINES

The V.C. Bird International Airport currently offers service to more than 50 destinations worldwide on Air Canada, American Airlines, British Airways, Caribbean Airlines, Condor, Delta Airlines, LIAT (1974) Ltd, St Barth Commuter, ABM Air, Thomas Cook Airlines, Tradewinds Aviation, United Airlines, US Airways, Virgin Atlantic Airways and WestJet.

The new terminal will operate 24 hours a day. The previous terminal building which processed over 860,000 passengers per year will continue to be used partially for administrative purposes.

The new and greatly improved V. C. Bird International Airport terminal is the latest jewel in the country's tourism crown and will position Antigua and Barbuda for unprecedented growth in the travel and tourism industry.

B'dos to host meeting and incentive travel exchange

BARBADOS IS determined to increase its share of the US meetings, incentives, conference and exhibitions travel market, also known as the MICE tourism niche.

Director for the USA at the Barbados Tourism Marketing Inc, Petra Roach, revealed that they were well on their way to realising this goal with the island set to host 165 top-tier North American MICE planners at Hilton Barbados for the 2016 Caribbean Meeting &

Incentive Travel Exchange (CMITE).

CMITE is part of the Global Meeting & Incentive Travel Exchanges portfolio of events, which are owned by the Questex Travel Group.

These meetings bring together buyers and suppliers who generate millions of dollars in business for host countries of these MICE events. Many of these events fall during the softer fall months,

reducing the seasonality of the tourism sector. They also utilise the services of several ancillary tourism players including entertainers, equipment rental companies, app developers, meeting stand developers, etc.

Marilyn McHugh, vice-president of global events at Questex Travel Group, joined Roach in making the announcement at this year's sold-out event, which is underway at the all-inclusive Hard Rock Hotel &

Casino Punta Cana in the Dominican Republic.

McHugh stated that Barbados is known for its gracious and hospitable people, world-class beaches and fine-dining restaurants.

"Barbados truly will be an exciting destination for our incentive travel buyers and suppliers," she said. "We couldn't be happier to share this news."

"Hosting 165 of the top US buyers on the island lends us the per-

fect platform to showcase the renowned hospitality, sights and sounds that Barbados has to offer," Roach stated.

"We are absolutely thrilled at the confidence invested in us by Questex in choosing Barbados as host destination for CMITE in 2016. Thanks to additional service by Delta and JetBlue airlines and newly opened resorts, now is the perfect time for the travel industry to reacquaint itself with Barbados."