

JAMAICA,
BARBADOS
DOMINATE
SANDALS
ENCORE

CONVINCE
CRUISE
VISITORS TO
TAKE LAND
VACATIONS

'TOURISM
HAS GREATEST
POTENTIAL
TO CREATE
WEALTH'

The Gleaner

HospitalityJamaica

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2015

KEEPING YOU CONNECTED TO THE BUSINESS OF TOURISM



APPLE
LEISURE
GROUP

CONTINUES
CARIBBEAN
GROWTH

CHEF'S CORNER



THOMAS

Michael Thomas — chef at The Jamaica Pegasus

The road to the Taste of the Caribbean 2015 began in October 2014, with the staging of the Taste of Jamaica 2014. Seven gruelling months of practice, meetings, and selection led to the final team being selected to compete and represent the country.

Chef at The Jamaica Pegasus in Kingston, Michael Thomas, was among the powerful Jamaican team that represented the country at the actual event in Miami, Florida.

For five days, teams from all over the region competed. At the end of the five days, Jamaica won medals in each category entered.

The following medals were received:

■ Rochelle Grindley – Gold Medal

– Chef of the Year category

■ Team Jamaica (Mark Cole leading the team); Chef Rochelle Grindley, team captain; Chef Shakera Cassie, pastry chef; Chef Marlon Brown, Junior Chef; Chef Warren Rowe, team member; Chef Cadayne Wynn, junior apprentice and Bartender Adrian Johnson, Gold Medal – Team of the Year category

■ Tiffany Grant – silver medal – Cheesecake category

■ Adrian Johnson – silver medal – Bartender of the Year category

■ Michael Thomas – bronze medal – Beef and Seafood category

■ Shakera Cassie – bronze medal – Pastry Chef of the Year category

■ Marlon Brown – bronze medal – Junior Chef of the Year category.

Convince cruise visitors to take vacations on land

David Jessop

THE BUSINESS OF TOURISM

AS THIS is being written, the US Treasury and its Department of Commerce have announced that from September 21 on, American cruise ships carrying 'authorised travellers between the United States (US) and Cuba only' and 'without stops in third countries' can provide services under a general license. The new regulations will also allow 'the temporary sojourn' of cruise ships and ferries in Cuba.

Put more simply, what this means is, subject to the agreement of the Cuban authorities, it will be possible for any US citizen or their family to travel from a US port on US-based cruise ships or ferries to Cuba as long as the traveller attests that they are travelling there for one of the 12 specified reasons that range from educational purposes to business. It also means that for US visitors, Cuba will remain a discrete market as no other destination can be included on the itinerary.

This dramatic new development occurs as a number of recent reports make clear that cruise ship tourism on vessels large and small is set to be one of the fastest-growing hospitality sectors in the world.

Recent statistics produced by the analysts Cruise Market Watch suggest that worldwide, the number of cruise passengers will increase from 22.2 million in 2015 to 24 million in 2019. For the Caribbean, which remains the premier cruise destination in the world, this is good news as it sug-

gests that despite the previous relocation of many vessels to the Mediterranean, overall demand for this type of vacation is set to grow significantly.

Moreover, the industry body, the Florida Caribbean Cruise Association, indicates that despite the growth in interest in cruising being global, the Caribbean accounts for more than a third (35.5 per cent) of the industry's global ship deployment capacity. They also report that responding to demand and the increase passenger numbers, their members are diversifying their product in terms of ship size, the length of cruises available, offering a wider range of alternative destinations and on-board amenities, and developing new shore-side activities.

NEW MARKETS

What is also clear is that there is a huge untapped supply of new travellers, with different sets of statistics suggesting that when it comes to the region's core North American market, somewhere between 20 per cent and 24 per cent of the whole US population have never taken an ocean cruise.

More significantly perhaps for the regional economy, industry research suggests that around 80 per cent of existing cruisers say that it allows them to sample destinations they would like to visit again. This is despite the fact that cruising has a repeat business rate of 69 per cent according to the US industry body, the Cruise Lines International Association.

While there seems to be no research that details the conversion rate or the destinations chosen, if even 10 per cent of those suggesting they might return as long-stay visitors decide to do so, the economic value

would be considerable.

In the past, the arguments between those on-shore and the cruise lines about the value of cruising to Caribbean economies have been well rehearsed: Cruise companies play off one destination against another to reduce levels of taxation on their visitors; cruise passengers on-shore spend is low in comparison to stay-over visitors; the cruise lines are permanently able to undercut the fixed costs, high levels of taxation and other constraints that the land-based industry faces; and they have little interest in the short-term impact their transient presence has on destinations.

SPENDING AMOUNTS

The amount that the average cruise visitor spends varies, depending on who is providing the statistics and the destination, it would seem to be between about US\$116 and US\$158 per day compared to the average visitor arriving via air who spends between US\$200 to US\$250 per day.

The difference is significant given the longer stay of those arriving by air, but the reality is that hundreds of thousands of visitors are gaining their first impressions of the Caribbean from one-day stops on board cruise ships.

As the global growth figures demonstrate, and the likely rapid development of the Cuban cruise market suggests, the challenge for the region as a whole is now to develop programmes such as those in the Dominican Republic that actively try to convert cruise visitors to taking a future vacation on land; and to encourage, as some countries have done, the cruise lines to home port in the Caribbean.

Apple Leisure Group continues its growth in the Caribbean

New boutique resort deal in Jamaica

Janet Silvera

Hospitality Jamaica Coordinator

ON THE heels of taking over the management of Sunset Beach Resort and Spa, Montego Bay, AMResorts has announced that it will bring its luxury boutique brand, Zoetry, to the Coyaba Beach Resort and Spa.

Coyaba is owned by Kevin and Joanne Robertson, who also operate Country Country in Negril, under their Marina Resorts company.

AMResorts is a subsidiary of Apple Leisure Group, operators of Secret Resorts. Coyaba is the 15th new resort deal for the company, which said it would market the 50-room Montego Bay resort under the Zoetry Wellness and Spa brand.

The hotel will undergo extensive refurbishing, closing its doors next April and reopening for the winter 2016 season.

The plans include enhancement of the guest accommodations and facilities to offer the brand's signature Endless Privileges vacation concept amenities, including: no check-in or check-out times, maid service three times daily, 24-hour concierge service, private in-suite dining and more. A new spa and fitness centre, meeting rooms, new pools, and a wedding gazebo will complete the experience.

"By the end of 2018, AMResorts will have 56 resorts in 25 destinations, reaching the 20,000-room milestone," said Apple Leisure Group's CEO, Alex Zozoya, in a media release distributed at the Jamaica Product Exchange (JAPEx), which was held the Montego Bay Convention Centre, over the past two days.

According to him, the high demand for Caribbean vacations was here to stay, consistently making the region an ideal choice for hotel owners.

"Our extensive knowledge of the region and the luxury all-inclusive sector makes Apple Leisure Group the right partner for those seeking to capitalise on this rewarding opportunity."

For Joanne Robertson, this deal signals the true test of a global partnership that allows an international brand to fuse its uniqueness



Owners of Coyaba, Kevin and Joanne Robertson (left and right), in conversation with JAPEx delegates at their booth at the speed networking event.



Inside photo of Coyaba.

with the authenticity of a solid Jamaican resort.

Robertson said she admired the way AMResorts does business.

"They have a proven track record of delivering high standards."

She said the rustic Country Country in Negril will remain under the Marina Resorts' management.

In the meantime, Apple Leisure Group's executive vice-president and chief strategy officer, Javier Coll, described Montego Bay, where the hotel is located, as one of the most popular destinations in the Caribbean.

NATURAL FIT

"The ease of arrival from several major North America hubs combined with its natural beauty makes the destination a natural fit for the luxury traveller looking to experience Zoetry's boutique resort offerings."

Situated on a white sand beach, the intimate property will feature 46 finely appointed guest rooms, three gourmet a la carte restaurants offering an assortment of organic food and beverage selections and two bars serving unlimited top-shelf spirits. The resort is located within a five-minute drive from Sangster International Airport, and activities including golfing, diving and horseback riding are only a few minutes away.

"Zoetry Montego Bay Jamaica will go beyond the expected all-inclusive offering, to provide travellers with an intimate yet luxurious ambience that is perfect for relaxation," said Gonzalo del Peon, president of AMResorts. "Travellers seeking a resort where they can unwind and be catered to have found a new place to call their home away from home in beautiful Montego Bay."

Other AMResorts properties in the destination include adults-only Secrets St James Montego Bay and Secrets Wild Orchids Montego Bay, which will soon be joined by Sunscape Splash Resort and Spa and Sunscape Cove Resort & Spa on December 23, 2015 (Sunset Beach Resort and Spa), and Breathless Montego Bay Resort & Spa in late 2016.

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Minister of Tourism and Entertainment Dr Wykeham McNeill (right) and president of the Jamaica Hotel and Tourist Association (JHTA), Nicola Madden-Greig (left), greet the Montego Bay Convention Centre's Donald Thompson and Sandra Daley-François during a tour of the Jamaica Product Exchange at the Montego Bay Convention Centre.



David Hall (right) of VIP Attractions and his team meeting with a tour operator at the Jamaica Product Exchange at the Montego Bay Convention Centre.

Speed networking introduced at JAPEx

Claudia Gardner

Hospitality Jamaica Writer

THE JAMAICA Hotel and Tourist Association (JHTA) introduced speed networking for the first time at the Jamaica Product Exchange (JAPEx) trade show, which was again staged in Montego Bay this year and facilitated by the Tourism Linkages Council (TLC).

The speed networking sessions were established to bring together buyers seeking exposure to new markets as well as to expand their pool of vendors. More than 100 of Jamaica's manufacturers and suppliers to the tourism industry showcased their products and services at JAPEx 2015, which ended yesterday.

President of the JHTA Nicola Madden-Greig said the move to introduce speed networking was in keeping with the JHTA's thrust at embracing change and innovation. She said it was made possible through an ongoing partnership the TLC had established with JAMPRO, the Jamaica Manufacturers Association, Jamaica Business Development Corporation, and the Rural Agricultural Development Authority.

"JAPEx 2015 is being hosted at a time of great optimism, change, positivity and innovation," Madden-Greig said at the opening ceremony of the event on Sunday night. "We have assembled over 230 of the



Chairman of the Jamaica Tourist Board, Dennis Morrison (left), shares lens time with RIU's Angella Bennett (second left), Niurka Garcia-Linton (right) and TravelBrands' Wayne Noseworthy at the Jamaica Product Exchange at the Montego Bay Convention Centre.



From left: Exclusive Holidays' Fred Smith converses with TravelBrands' Dalia Martinez and Wayne Noseworthy at the Jamaica Product Exchange at the Montego Bay Convention Centre.



From left: Sun Country Airlines' Katie Bellows meets with the Jamaica Tourist Board's Donnie Dawson and Tony King at the JTB booth at Jamaica Product Exchange at the Montego Bay Convention Centre.



The Rose Hall Development group (from left): O'Neisha Brown-O'Reggio, Tanya Sue-Young and Wyley Sweeney at the Jamaica Product Exchange at the Montego Bay Convention Centre.

PLEASE SEE **JAPEx**, 8

ALWAYS ON



GUARDSMAN



929-3299

Tourism has greatest potential to create wealth – *McNeill*

“THE TOURISM sector has the greatest potential to create wealth and can be a catalyst for development,” stated Jamaica’s minister of tourism and entertainment and chairman of the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) executive council, Dr Wykeham McNeill, when he addressed members of the UNWTO Working Group on Official Development Assistance (ODA), at its meeting in Medellin, Colombia, on Saturday (September 12).

The sub-committee was established by the world body, whose main role is to promote tourism as a driver of economic growth, inclusive development and environmental sustainability and offer leadership and support to the sector in advancing knowledge and tourism policies worldwide.

Initiated and chaired by South Africa, the ODA Fund was established to address the unacceptable levels of donor funds to tourism. The sub-committee, whose members include Egypt, France, Kenya and Mexico, held its first meeting in London two years ago to set up the fund, and approval for its existence will now go to the Congress of the UNWTO for ratification and approval.

Dr McNeill’s recommendation to the meeting that the sub-committee should continue to exist in order to help define the use of the fund was agreed to by UNWTO Secretary General Taleb Rifai.



Minister of Tourism and Entertainment Dr Wykeham McNeill (second right) and the Ministry’s permanent secretary, Jennifer Griffith (right), at the United Nations World Tourism Organization Working Group on Official Development Assistance in Medellin, Colombia, on Saturday, September 12, 2015.

WITH THE tourism industry currently helping to drive Jamaica’s socio-economic development, the Ministry of Tourism and Entertainment, its agencies and industry partners will seek to further raise awareness about the transformative power of tourism through Tourism Awareness Week (TAW), which will be observed from September 27-October 3, 2015.

The week-long celebration commences on World Tourism Day (WTD) and will be celebrated under the United Nations World Tourism Organisation’s (UNWTO) theme

Ministry of Tourism and Entertainment celebrates Tourism Awareness Week

for WTD: One Billion Tourists, One Billion Opportunities. It promises to be engaging, with a wealth of activities which will help to raise awareness about the vital contribution the sector is making to Jamaica.

In 2012, international tourist arrivals crossed the threshold of one billion in a single year for the first



MCNEILL

time, and according to the UNWTO, we will reach the two billion mark by 2030. Therefore, the theme being observed this year emphasises the fact that the tourism sector has grown significantly over the decades and will continue to positively impact global development. On an international scale the theme also seeks “to raise awareness amongst decision makers and the general public of tourism’s

global socio-economic impact and its capability to drive positive change in countries, communities, and ultimately people’s lives across the world.”

“Over the past few years, tourism has proven to be a strong and resilient sector and a significant contributor to the global economic recovery. International tourist arrivals reported by destinations around the world reached 1.1 billion in 2014, a 4.7 per cent increase over the previous year,” stated Minister of Tourism and Entertainment Dr Wykeham McNeill.

Locally, the theme also highlights the tremendous opportunities tourism provides to a myriad of sectors. This is of utmost importance to the ministry, and several strategies have been implemented to increase the impact the sector has on the livelihood of Jamaicans and communities across the island. McNeill

explained that “one such venture, is the formulation of the Tourism Linkages Hub, which has not only analysed opportunities offered across the sector but also seeks to continuously find innovative ways to enhance linkages between tourism and key sectors such as: manufacturing, agriculture as well as entertainment and the creative industries”.

The week of activities for Tourism Awareness Week will include: a social media competition, the launch of a poster and essay competition; a Jamaica Tourist Board 60th Anniversary Exhibition and Public Lecture on Thursday, October 1 at the Kingston and St Andrew Parish Library (Tom Redcam Library); and a special TAW/Experience Jamaica Exhibition on Friday, October 2, downstairs the ministry’s offices at 64 Knutsford Boulevard.



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Nadean Rawlins (left), area manager for Guardsman Alarms Western Region, shares a light moment with fellow team members of Guardsman Limited at the company's booth at the Jamaica Product Exchange trade show (JAPEx) on Monday. From left are Roxan Wais, customer service and business development manager; Desmond Barnett, zone chief; Sunil Bunsee, area manager for Montego Bay; Sheila McNeill, director of marketing at Guardsman Limited and David Whittaker, managing director of Guardsman Limited.

JAPEx

CONTINUED FROM 4

best in Jamaica's hospitality and tourism industry, including hotels, airlines, attractions, and allied members of the JHTA to meet with over 300 delegates representing the world's major wholesale, tour operators, travel agents and media..."

Minister of Tourism and Entertainment Wykeham McNeill expressed satisfaction with the Tourism Linkages Hub in operation at JAPEx, which he said is enjoying great success due to the outstanding level of cooperation, collaboration and partnership between his ministry and the private sector.

"Our linkages initiative is a critical

component of our strategy to achieve this objective. The creation of the Tourism Linkages Hub seeks to ensure that the products and indeed the services, which are utilised in the sector are grown or manufactured in Jamaica. We have now received proof that the programme has great potential not only for local producers to provide goods and services to the sector, but equally, for export," the minister said.

"This is undeniable proof of the potential of the sector to be of measurable benefit to our people. The linkages programme can create greater demand for our products locally and overseas. It can provide sustainable jobs and improve the standard of living of our people," he added.

PLEASE SEE **JAPEx**, 16



Wexford Hotel's Densioa Stephenson and Carlyle Allen at the Jamaica Product Exchange at the Montego Bay Convention Centre.



The Half Moon team, Sharon Logan (second left) and Julie Obrieter (second right) stopped working to pose for our camera with Steven Lassman (left) and Nicky Farquharson of Villas by Linda Smith at the Jamaica Product Exchange at the Montego Bay Convention Centre.



Chukka's Yanique Russell (left) and Paola Byles showing off a segway and a bicycle at the Jamaica Product Exchange at the Montego Bay Convention Centre.

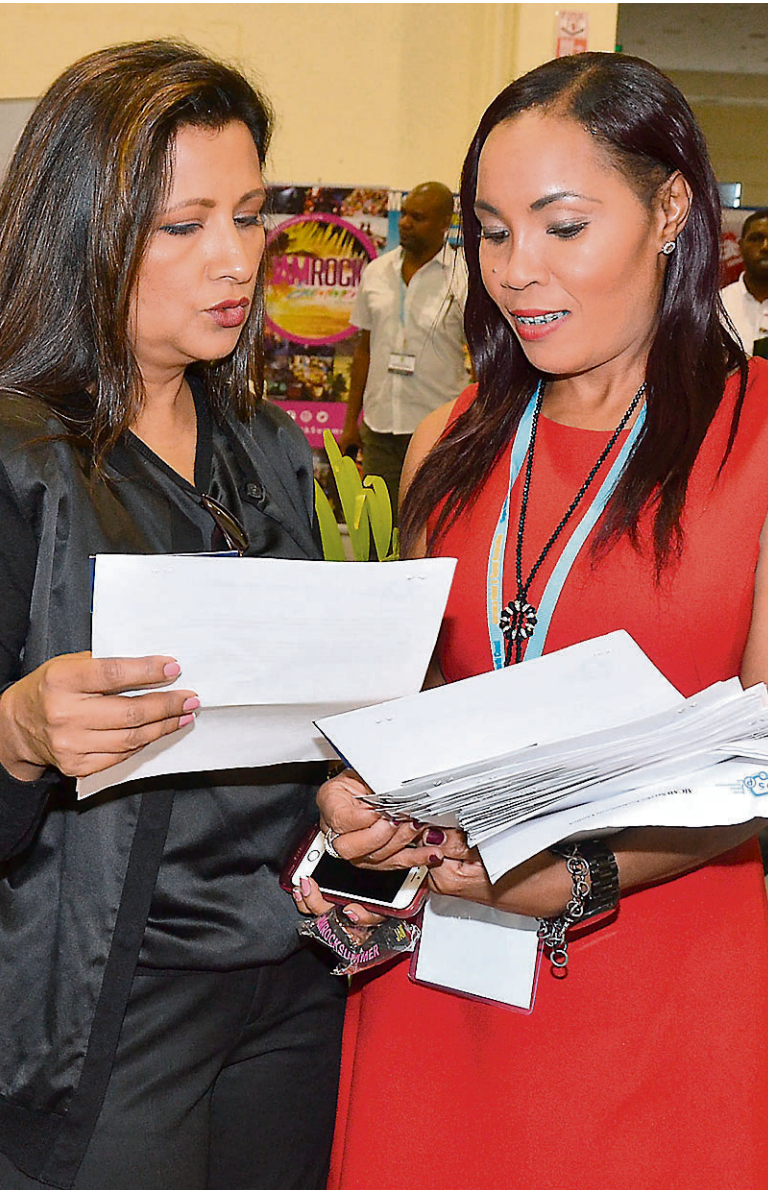


Jamaica Tours' Michelle Whittaker and Noel Sloley Jr at the Jamaica Product Exchange at the Montego Bay Convention Centre.



At left: Hospiten's Sam James Jr attends to Livingsocial's Thao Nguyen at the Jamaica Product Exchange at the Montego Bay Convention Centre.

At right: Aicad Service Professional's Dacia Smith (right) seeks out business from the Guardsman Group's director of marketing, Sheila McNeill, during the speed-networking event.



A taste of Jamaican hospitality at TUR

THE JAMAICA Tourist Board (JTB) will be offering TUR visitors the chance to experience a taste of the Home of All Right with samples of the island's famous Blue Mountain coffee at the inaugural public fair at TUR in Stockholm, Sweden. Sampling Jamaica's world-class coffee will be just part of the Jamaican hospitality available at the Jamaica Tourist Board stand.

Throughout the travel show at the Stockholm Waterfront Congress Centre September 26-27, Donovan Donaldson, business development manager at the Jamaica Tourist Board, will interact with the media and consumers to the Jamaica stand, providing them with a flavour of what the island has to offer.

In addition to a welcome coffee break, Donaldson will also provide visitors with the latest information on Destination Jamaica. They will be apprised of the menu



of offerings in accommodation and attractions, along with an overview of the vibrant culture, natural beauty and adventure that is uniquely Jamaican. He will also share a list of the yearlong calendar of events.

Donaldson will also have the opportunity to share a presentation with the consumers that will bring to life the Jamaica experience at 11.30 a.m. on Saturday, September 26, at the Stockholm Waterfront Congress Centre.

Donaldson is anticipating the show and had this to say: "With an increase in flights from Sweden to Jamaica, there is a keen interest from people across Sweden to visit Destination Jamaica. The Jamaica Tourist Board is looking forward to sharing the flavours of the 'Home of All Right', with trade visitors under our continued partnership with TUR."

For more information on Jamaica, visit www.VisitJamaica.com.

Countdown to launch of direct routes from Gothenburg and Oslo to Jamaica

JAMAICA TOURIST BOARD

TRAVEL TO Jamaica is about to get even easier for Swedish visitors with the autumn launch of two new direct flights. Bookings for the new routes are selling well.

The hotly anticipated additional flight routes with VING from Gothenburg via Oslo will launch on November 29, 2015 and will operate throughout the peak season with a fortnightly rotation until April 2016. VING will also continue to operate flights out of Stockholm fortnightly.

The new routes have been added due to increasing demand from Scandinavians who want to travel to Jamaica. The two-week stopover will ensure that the visitors can maximise the time they spend enjoying an idyllic holiday at the 'Home of All Right'.

In addition to VING's current direct service from Stockholm, this new route will take travellers approximately 11½ hours to travel to Jamaica. This means VING is



doubling its capacity to the island, from the capital Stockholm, as well as from Gothenburg via Oslo. VING is part of the Thomas Cook Group.

Fritidsresor, a TUI Nordic brand, will also continue to operate their

successful direct weekly flights to Montego Bay from Stockholm, as well as their direct flight from Copenhagen and Helsinki on a fortnightly basis for the winter 2015/2016 season.

Paul Pennicook, director of tourism at the Jamaica Tourist

Board, said: "We're seeing increased demand for Jamaica holidays from Scandinavia, so these new direct routes will open up greater opportunities for holiday makers to experience Jamaica's diverse tourism product. With

bookings going well, it is clear that Scandinavians are eager to return to the warmth and vibe of Jamaica, as well as explore the laid-back culture of the island."

For more information on Jamaica, visit www.VisitJamaica.com.

Ja, B'dos dominate Sandals ENCORE

Claudia Gardner

Hospitality Jamaica Writer

BARBADOS AND JAMAICA dominated the Sandals Resorts International's ENCORE Talent Search and Model Competition which was held last weekend at the Beaches Negril and Sandals Whitehouse resorts in Westmoreland.

The event culminated at the Sandals Whitehouse resort in eastern Westmoreland last Saturday night, following Night One, which was held at Beaches Negril the night before.

The Best Female Vocalist award went to Patricia Callendar of Sandals Barbados, who put on a spirited rendition of Tina Turner's **Simply the Best**. Clad in a red sequinned minidress, Callendar proved she meant business from the get-go as she shimmied and strutted across the stage, belting the lyrics to the song in true Turner style, compelling the audience to rock to her beat. Her compatriot, Dario Piggott, also of Sandals Barbados, came out on top in the Best Male Vocalist category, ahead of contenders from Jamaica, Antigua, Grenada, St Lucia and Turks and Caicos.

TOP MODELS

The Top Female Model title was snagged by Sandals Ocho Rios' Nicota Cooper and her colleague Emmanuel Tyson of Sandals Barbados strutted away with the male prize. The other Jamaican to top a category on Saturday night was Andrew Smith, also of Sandals Ocho Rios Beach Resort and Spa, who took home the award for the Best National Costume. Smith also showed his versatility as a model in the male competition.

It was the Jamaicans who stole the show on Friday night, taking home the Dance, Group Dance and Spoken Word titles, while the instrumental category was won by Grenada.

ENCORE is the brainchild of former creative director at Sandals Resorts International, Weston Haughton. It was initiated in a bid to foster and develop talent within the Sandals and Beaches hotel chain.



Best Female Vocalist, Patricia Callender of Sandals Barbados.



Top Female Model Nicota Cooper, of Sandals Ocho Rios.



Top Female Model Nicota Cooper, of Sandals Ocho Rios during the female costume segment.



Tyron Barnett copped the Solo Dance award.



Tyron Barnett



Top Male Model, Bardadian Emmanuel Tyson in formal wear.



Andrew Smith of Sandals Ocho Rios during the formal wear segment.



Top Male Model, Bardadian Emmanuel Tyson in his National Costume.



Top Male Model, Bardadian Emmanuel Tyson in swimwear at the Sandals Resorts International ENCORE Talent and Model Search Competition.



Andrew Smith of Sandals Ocho Rios copped the Best National Costume Award.

'QUEEN NANNY'

to premiere at United Nations Headquarters on Heroes' Day

Paul H. Williams

Hospitality Jamaica Writer

QUEEN NANNY: Legendary Maroon Chieftainess, a film written, directed and produced by Roy T. Anderson of Action 4 Reel Flimworks, will have its world premiere on Heroes' Day, Monday, October 19, at the United Nations Headquarters in New York City.

The screening and discussion are part of the UN Remember Slavery programme of activities for 2015, which include a solemn commemorative meeting of the UN General Assembly, film screenings, round-table discussions, an exhibit, among other events.

It is a special red-carpet event sponsored by the Permanent Mission of Jamaica and the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago to the United Nations, in partnership with the UN Department of Public Information and Action 4 Reel Flimworks.

Following the world premiere will be the Jamaican premiere to be held in the Sir Kenneth Standard Lecture Theatre in the Basic Medical Sciences building at the

University of the West Indies, Mona campus, on Friday, October 23, at 6:30 p.m.

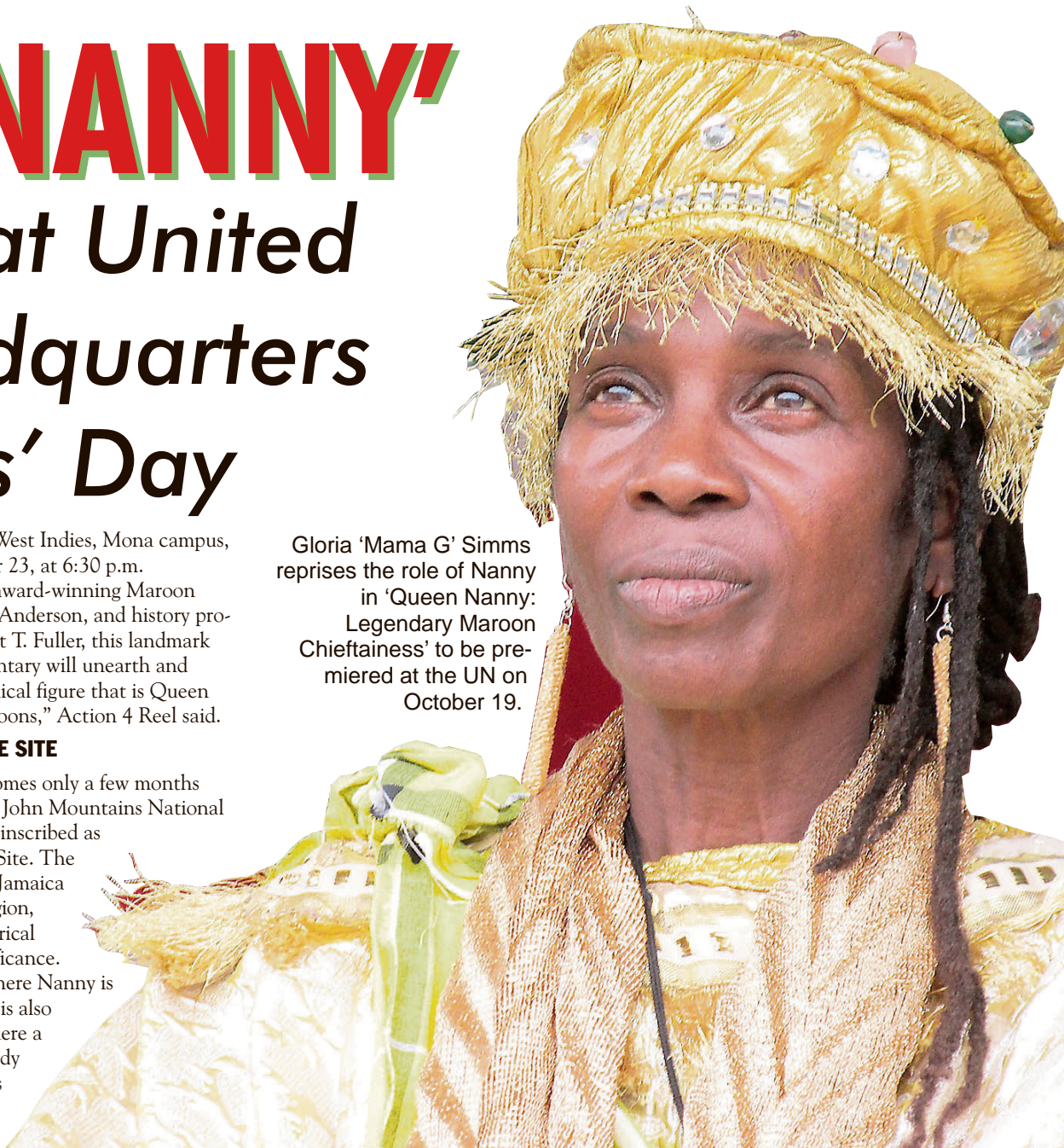
"Conceived by award-winning Maroon filmmaker, Roy T. Anderson, and history professor, Dr Harcourt T. Fuller, this landmark one-hour documentary will unearth and examine this mythical figure that is Queen Nanny of the Maroons," Action 4 Reel said.

WORLD HERITAGE SITE

The premiere comes only a few months after the Blue and John Mountains National Park was officially inscribed as a World Heritage Site. The story of Nanny in Jamaica unfolded in the region, known for its historical and heritage significance.

Moore Town, where Nanny is said to have lived, is also part of the site, where a monument is already erected in Nanny's honour. In 2003, UNESCO also recognised the

Gloria 'Mama G' Simms reprises the role of Nanny in 'Queen Nanny: Legendary Maroon Chieftainess' to be premiered at the UN on October 19.



The 'Queen Nanny' film was shot at many locations in Portland, including Sambo Hill.



Isaac Bernard, expert abeng blower, Maroon linguist and oral historian, shares his knowledge in 'Queen Nanny: Legendary Maroon Chieftainess'.



Moore Town Maroons who trekked to Old Nanny Town last year June to participate in the shooting of the 'Queen Nanny' film.

international significance of Maroon culture by naming their musical heritage “masterpieces of the oral and intangible heritage of humanity”.

“The film documents the struggle for freedom of the Jamaican Maroons, led by the indomitable Granny Nanny (portrayed by paramount Maroon chief, Gama’an Gloria Simms). A spiritual leader, skilled in the use of herbs and guerilla warfare tactics, from her mountain stronghold at the source of the Stony River in the Blue Mountains, she directed the warfare that effectively neutralised the vaunted British firepower,” Action 4 Reel said.

One of the highlights of the film is the documentation of a three-day trek to the rugged hills of Old Nanny Town in the Blue Mountain region of Jamaica. Legend has it that only the bravest Maroons or those “free of bad deeds” can safely venture up to this sacred spot where Nanny’s powerful spirit is said to still inhabit.

“As we seek to uncover the history and legacy of Queen Nanny, her intriguing story will also be told through songs, performances, art, poetry, and a series of re-enactments,” Action 4 Reel said, “Most of what we know about Queen Nanny comes through Maroon oral tales and folklore, and therefore quite difficult to verify because not much is written about her in historical texts.”

IMPACT OF WOMEN

The film also features interviews with scholars – who are experts in Caribbean history, slavery, colonialism and resistance – while exploring the role of Maroon and non-Maroon women in Jamaican history and society today. Maroon women and women from the wider Jamaica society, too, talk about Nanny’s influence and legacy.

Such speakers include University of the West Indies (UWI) professor, Verene Shepherd, director of the Institute of Gender and Development Studies; athletics great, Shelly-Ann Fraser-Pryce; reggae icon, Rita Marley; culture expert, Olivia Babsy Grange; Prime Minister Portia Simpson Miller; Yvette Clarke, US Congresswoman; and Una Clarke, former New York City councilwoman.

“Shot in Jamaica, Ghana, the United Kingdom, the United States, and elsewhere over the course of two years, this documentary will also serve as a prelude to the dramatic telling of the epic story of this larger-than-life mythical figure,” Action 4 Reel said.

Members of the public are invited to the premiere for which there is no admission cost. A second screening is expected to take place at Moore Town, Portland on Saturday, October 24. Patrons are expected to be seated by 6:30 p.m. for the Jamaica premiere at the UWI.



The journey to Old Nanny Town in Portland is a brutal and tiring one.



Gloria Simms on location in her role as ‘Queen Nanny, Legendary Maroon Chietainess’.



The Blue and John Crow Mountains where Nanny fought the English is a rugged, but mesmerising place.



The Sir Kenneth Standard Lecture Theatre at the University of the West Indies, where the Jamaica premiere of ‘Queen Nanny: Legendary Maroon Chietainess’ will take place, on Friday, October 23 at 6 p.m.

AROUND JA WITH PAUL H.

I went on a Kumina binge

IT ALL started at Moore Town on Friday, September 11. After traditional food and drinks, we were treated to Maroon drumming. But the Moore Town Granny Nanny Cultural Group segued into some Kumina. In the light of day, the drummers, singers and dancers entertained us in their green and yellow bandana.

The Kumina was good, but I am wondering whether the home-made ginger beer was better. Tasty and refreshing, it was.

I left Moore Town with the intention of going to Seaforth, St Thomas, for more Kumina. But between the bumpy ride through 'The Junction', the food and the ginger beer, my tired body went to sleep.

I didn't reach the 'nine-night' ritual for Kumina King Jerald 'Maas Jimmy' Walker'. I had told myself I wouldn't miss it for the world. I met Maas Jimmy twice, and had promised to go see him again to talk about the K'Congo language, of which he spoke bits and pieces. Kumina is a Congolese tradition.

When I woke Saturday morning, I accepted the fact that I was tired and needed rest, so I didn't pine over what could have been. I just decided I wasn't going to miss much more, so I left Kingston very early – too early.

Upon arriving in Seaforth, everything was quiet. People had gone to sleep after a night of Kumina pandemonium. Those I saw kept saying: "Bwoy, yuh miss sumpn." I wanted them all to be quiet.

'BADWUD DOMINO'

I spent the morning and afternoon interviewing Kumina king apparent Ronald 'Cha Ben Ben' Perry and one of Maas Jimmy's daughters, Jacinth. I also got a 'treat' of 'badwud domino'. The players were gambling and every other word was a 'badwud'. It was almost entertaining.

Shortly before two, I left the cussing for Maas Jimmy's thanksgiving service. Upon arrival, Kumina music blared from the hearse. While waiting for the start, I saw a very slim, elderly woman dressed in a very 'eclectic' way entering the premises. She was walking and dancing.

And she danced most of the time before the service started, sweat



The Moore Town Granny Nanny Cultural Group of Portland entertaining visitors on Friday, September 11.



A scene from the Kumina session after the funeral of Jerald 'Maas Jimmy' Walker on Saturday, September 12, at Seaforth, St Thomas.



Beulah Brown, who has been dancing for most of her life, said she was born in the 1950s.



Beulah Brown of Hillside, St Thomas, dances up a storm at the funeral of Kumina great, Jerald 'Maas Jimmy' Walker, on Saturday, September 12.

washing her face as she moved in the heat. People stared and took pictures. Born in the '50s, her name is Beulah Brown.

The service didn't last very long. Towards the end, the Kumina drums were arranged in a circle. The drummers, eager to play, started a little drumming, but were told to wait until the end. When that came, the drums started. During the interment and some minutes after, the Kumina session went on with Beulah Brown still dancing.

The celebrations continued near where Maas Jimmy used to live. It

was a Kumina party, with food and drinks being served. Cha Cha Ben's frantic drumming kept me enthralled, but I had to go. Missed him the night before, now night was drawing nigh.

From Seaforth, I travelled to John's Town to another Kumina session. I was invited, so staying over was in the mix. It was another good session from the group from Prospect. The vibes were good, and my feet could not keep still. I wanted to dance, and dance I did. Soon, I was drenched in sweat, and it felt so good.

When the ritual shifted to another spot in the dark, the mood got more intense. There, a woman went into a different realm, and it took minutes to get her back into our reality, where she and others danced over the fire created by rum lit on the ground.

The music was sweet, but my brain was asking for sleep, some minutes before midnight. I obeyed and went to rest. But the sounds of the drum I heard in my sleep. Then I realised the party had moved back to where it had started, very near where I was sleeping. And they played all night.

ACTIVE IN SINGING

About five in the morning, I got up to do some writing, but it couldn't work. I went outside. Most of the people had gone. The band was still going. I joined them. The call-and-response session came, I was moved to joined in.

I introduced 'Mine How Yuh Sid-dung Deh', and then delved into 'Moon a Shine a 'Notto Bay Road'. It was such a defining moment for me, singing with a Kumina band. Man, I sang with gusto. Journalism might not be what I should be doing. Well.

While I was singing 'Moon a Shine', the glare of the rising sun could be seen on the clouds over the eastern hills. After a few more songs, they eventually stopped. It was daybreak. The party was over. But the Kumina binge was not.

Last weekend, I ended up at another Kumina. It was on the Social Development Commission field in St Thomas. It was another enthralling session where Cha Cha Ben was present, among other excellent players.

But it was when Cha Cha Ben played that the 'intervention' took place. A woman who danced holding a variegated fowl at points got possessed. She went into a trance-like state, her eyes looking wild. To the hypnotic drums, she gyrated, twirled, and convulsed, especially after a man snapped the head from the variegated fowl's body, and threw it to the ground.

He held the possessed by a cloth



This variegated fowl had no idea what its fate would be at the Kumina held at the SDC field in Morant Bay, St Thomas last Friday.



A man and woman dancing over a fowl on fire at the Kumina held on the SDC field in St Thomas last Friday night.

around her waist, guiding her. Around the circle, they went. Then the woman threw herself on to the ground, among the drummers. In the centre, she rolled and convulsed in the dirt. Then she rose, and headed for the body of the fowl, took it up, sprinkled rum on to it, and threw it on the ground.

People called for a lighter; it was delivered. The rum-drenched fowl was lit. Together, the man and the woman danced over and around the burning fowl. More rum was poured on to the fowl. More fire, more dancing. Then they moved away, leaving the singed fowl. But the band played on.

At minutes to 11, I left the Kumina. I saw the man and the woman sitting together, very subdued. She was back to this realm, and I was gone to my bed, to get the Kumina drums out of my head. "Moon a shine a 'Notto Bay, Oh! Moon a shine a 'Notto Bay, Oh!"



The last of the revellers' early Sunday morning, September 13 at John's Town, St Thomas.



An interesting scene from the Kumina held at John's Town, St Thomas on Saturday, September 12.



The Moore Town Granny Nanny Culture Group of Portland.



From left: Minister of Tourism and Entertainment Dr Wykeham McNeill in conversation with Director of Tourism Paul Pennicook and head of Sagicor Bank, Donovan Perkins, at the Jamaica Product Exchange at the Montego Bay Convention Centre.



Boss Furniture's Peter James (left) and Omar Azan.



Janelle Brown of Honey Bun Jamaica (left) poses with Antoinette Morgan-Burt of Buccaneer Rum Cake.



From left: The Jamaica Tourist Board's Gregory Shervington is all smiles as he shares a business card with the Spanish Court's Lee-Ann Godfrey and Zarna Drummond at the Jamaica Product Exchange at the Montego Bay Convention Centre.



Fern Tree Spa's Tanya Vassell (left) has Professor Harvey Reid and Althea Mitto of Country House Products in stitches.