



The Gleaner

Hospitality Jamaica

KEEPING YOU CONNECTED TO THE BUSINESS OF TOURISM

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2015

The 'Home of All right' more
popular than ever!

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Moore Town Granny
Nanny Cultural Group
reigniting the allure

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NEW JETTY FOR PORT ROYAL

CONGRATULATIONS ADAM STEWART Caribbean Hotelier of the Year

Adam Stewart, CEO Sandals Resorts International (second right) accepts his award from Emil Lee, President of CHTA and General Manager of Princess Heights Hotel in St. Maarten (right) as Frank J. Comito, CEO and Director General of CHTA and Kerry Cannon, Managing Director Orlando MMGY, share in the moment.



The Chairman, management and staff of Sandals Resorts International and the ATL Group, extend heartiest congratulations to our Chief Executive Officer/Deputy Chairman, Adam Stewart who was recently named Caribbean Hotelier of the Year by the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association, following on a similar award from the Jamaica Hotel and Tourist Association earlier this year.

The region and indeed the world have come to know him as we have always known him – as a caring, driven and dynamic leader with a passion for people and the hospitality industry. To say we are proud would be a gross understatement and we join with him in celebrating this well-deserved accomplishment.

Under his leadership and wise guidance, Sandals

Resorts International has grown from strength to strength, repeatedly earning the coveted title of World's Leading All Inclusive Company at the annual World Travel Awards. In addition, the company has experienced 'game changing' developments such as its first resorts in Barbados and Grenada, the addition of the Italian and Key West Villages at Beaches Turks & Caicos Resort Villages & Spa and the launch of Sandals Emerald Bay in the Bahamas in 2010. Motivated by his passion for sharing the Caribbean with others, Stewart also launched the Caribbean's premier luxury tour company, Island Routes Adventure Tours, which offers countless unique island experiences in 11 countries throughout the region.

His commitment to human resource development has been evident through the launch and continuous

growth of the Sandals Corporate University, the return of the Management Trainee Programme and the introduction of several other training and development initiatives.

As President of the Sandals Foundation, a nonprofit organisation that fulfills the promise of the Caribbean community through investment in sustainable projects in education, community and environment, our CEO has led the charge on all our philanthropic efforts, driving home the importance of always giving back.

A young leader with vision, purpose and promise, there is none more deserving of this honour than Adam Stewart and we are happy to call him our own.

Mr. CEO, you continue to make us proud!

CONGRATULATIONS & WELL DONE!

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Jamaica Customs Agency a pleasure craft destination



The Tank-Weld team busy constructing the new jetty at Port Royal.



Major Richard Reese (left) head of customs, points out an area of an interest to Rainford Ward, technical support officer during a recent visit to see the progress of the new jetty being built by his organisation in Port Royal.

Janet Silvera

Hospitality Jamaica Coordinator

CHANGING THE way it is viewed as a 'hard face' collector of revenue, the Jamaica Customs Agency (JCA), is diversifying its offerings, securing the country's standing as a pleasure-craft destination.

Yachts, cruisers, and powerboats will, as at the end of November, have access to a new \$19.9 million jetty currently under construction by the JCA at the historic Port Royal, one of Jamaica's untapped jewels.

The historic town, which was made famous for trade, was destroyed by an earthquake in 1692. Among the fabric of that history is intertwined the customs office, which has been established since the 1940s.

At 54 feet long and eight feet wide, the structure, which projects from the land into the water, will have the capacity to accommodate up to two 65-foot vessels at any given time, said commissioner of customs, Major Richard Reese.

"Between January and August, we have processed 47 pleasure

crafts at Port Royal," Reese told **Hospitality Jamaica**, excited about the fact that his agency's partnership with the Maritime Authority and the Ministry of Tourism and Entertainment is helping to transform the service being offered in the hospitality sector.

"How we interact with these tourists on a daily basis will definitely increase the number of tourists entering our shores, and as such, foreign exchange will increase thus seek to foster economic growth. It must be noted that expeditious processing of all vessels will also seek to enhance the tourism industry when compared to neighbouring competitors such as Barbados, St Lucia, and Antigua and Barbuda," he also added.

The jetty is the first of a two-phased Port Royal renewal project customs has embarked on in the area. Phase two will see the construction of a sea and a boundary wall with the neighbouring fishing village.

The small port, destroyed by hurricane in the 1980s, also

PLEASE SEE **CRAFT**, 4



Perched on a small fishing boat, these birds were a beauty to behold.

CRAFT

CONTINUED FROM 3

time, said customs supervisor, Dorothy Bailey Chambers, who has been the biggest advocate of having this project become a reality.

"We are at a point at which we receive not only pleasure crafts, but commercial cargo ships that come here for repairs and inspection," she said.

The most important function of the unit, Bailey Chambers said was the constant monitoring of vessels that go into the port to load and unload cargo and proceed to another destination.

As an exception, the custom supervisor said vessels report for even bunkering and crew change.

"Bunkering is the process of providing fuel to ship for their own use," she explained, adding that the unit fosters a good shipping relationship between Jamaica and its

international trade partners.

"We also aid in the fight against the guns-for-drugs trade, food-for-guns trade, and by extension, the protection of the Jamaican borders."

In addition, her unit performs functions on behalf of the Ministry of Agriculture and Health, among others.

Most important, when small vessels dock in Port Royal, the small close-knit community benefits, said Reese.

"They buy provision, they tour the historic town and dine at the famous Gloria's, while staying an average of two weeks," he said.

There are vessels that visit once per month, giving the town hope for this fledging market.

"This is offering immense potential for Port Royal," said Reese, admitting that although a jetty existed before, his team was forced to board the craft at sea.

With the new jetty, access will be easier, he stated, particularly from a

customer-service point of view.

"We are able to provide better service," he pointed out, underscoring the fact that his agency had so many new areas implemented including the recruitment of a hybrid officer, who will be capable of doing the work of three persons.

"There is a thrust to improve the service we now offer," Reese said, revealing that locally based vessels would also have access to docking at the new facilities.

Sixty-five foot vessels can dock at the new facility, he said, announcing plans to extend the length by another 20 feet in the next financial year.

"Then we will be able to accommodate even larger vessels, and at least two small ones at the same time," he said.

To complement its operation islandwide, customs has also acquired three 27ft Boston Whalers (boats) from the Jamaica Constabulary Force.



A custom boat being steered by coxswain Nicole Reid, one of 16 licensed coxswains in the country.



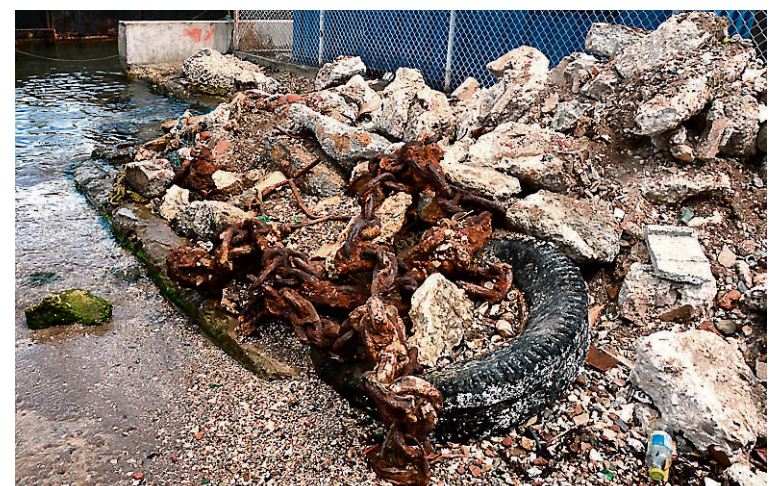
From left: Wilberforce Johnson, Tank-Weld supervisor, Dorothy Bailey Chambers and Peter Lim-Tom.



The customs office, which adjoins the police in Port Royal.



The new jetty being built by the Jamaica Customs Department in Port Royal.



Remnants of the old Jetty that was worn and out of use.

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THE BUSINESS OF TOURISM

Disruptive innovation's impact on tourism

David Jessop
Contributor

IT IS far from clear how much notice the Caribbean tourism industry is taking of the appearance in many developed and some developing nations of 'disruptive technology' and 'disruptive innovation'.

By this, what is meant is new technology or innovation that helps create a new market or value network by disrupting existing networks in ways that the market may not expect.

Its normal effect is to increase competition, reduce prices, and restructure a market in ways that often result in finding new consumers and changing the behaviour patterns of an existing market.

Typical examples are electronic taxi-hailing services of which Uber is the best known; and Airbnb, which enables individuals to rent out their usually privately owned properties to visitors.

Both are disruptive. In nations in which such services are available, they are causing significant numbers of consumers to abandon the often ultra-conservative vested interests that operate near cartels on taxi services or enable visitors to stay at locations other than hotels in order to have a more authentic experience of being in a destination.

WELL-ESTABLISHED TECHNOLOGIES

Some technologies of this kind are already well established. For instance, when it comes to booking hotels, flights, and car hire, we now take for granted the numerous sites offering such services discounting or selling-up vacation add-ons. We are also all becoming accustomed to the many new direct and indirect marketing variations that have emerged as a result of social media.

Other forms of disruptive innovation, however, are still emerging, in some cases, with an uncertain outcome. These include Bitcoin, which sees itself as a transmittable global digital currency beyond the control of individual states, but which has also been associated with criminality; three-dimensional printing, which when scaled up, is capable of constructing buildings, including hotel rooms, and producing *in situ*, for example, even battlefield weapons and body parts; and big data that in future will be brought together from multiple global sources to enable marketing to the individual of almost anything on a personally tailored level.

There is also the real possibility of passenger-carrying unmanned electric aircraft and

vehicles that may do away with pilots, drivers, and traditional forms of energy for propulsion.

While some may think this unlikely, all of these developments, and more, are already being trialled and are likely to be rolled out in the not-too-distant future.



JESSOP

For the Caribbean, as the most tourism-dependent region in the world, each of these developments poses challenges.

However, this is not just because taxi drivers have political clout and can find willing politicians prepared to defend the *status quo*, or hoteliers placing pressure on Government to impose equivalent levels of taxation on those who

rent out their properties.

Instead, the challenge in the longer term will be about the type of destination that each Caribbean nation and its industry wishes it to be; and in the medium term, the extent to which it can meld the new technologies that more and more visitors come to expect in ways that provide local advantage. It will also be about knowing when to respond when disruptive technologies come to be the new normal in the mind of consumer.

Governments, too, will have to determine how to compromise between local political pressures, any erosion of their tax base, and changing trends in visitor demand.

These are interesting issues as it may also be that in some smaller Caribbean destinations, the industry, or governments, may themselves wish to consider disruptive approaches. For instance, as some hotels in Jamaica, Barbados, and elsewhere have discovered, there are niche markets for those who want to avoid technology and want the peace and quiet of the natural.

There are also other possibilities. For example, the increased prevalence of some of these technologies could enable a greater actual and marketing emphasis on service, hospitality, cuisine, and other people-oriented skills. Others, however, in larger destinations where numbers matter, may see things differently.

To understand how challenging disruptive innovation may be to tourism, one only has to look at online comments in relation to the non-appearance so far of an Uber taxi service in Puerto Rico, or the decision by the city of Paris to tax Airbnb rentals. They, and other examples in India, London, and elsewhere demonstrate how vocal consumers can become when they are seeking to attract online audiences to place pressure on destinations to change their approach.

These are matters to be considered now, rather than to be left to the future and chance.



From left: Latoya Grant, acting customer service manager; Lesline Chisholm, customer service director; Jennifer McDonald, CEO; and Stephanie Gordon, customer service manager (recruitment).

PICA pulls off awards coup

Janet Silvera
Senior Gleaner Writer

IN WHAT has been described as an unprecedented move, the Passport Immigration and Citizenship Agency (PICA) pulled off an awards coup recently when it copped four trophies at the Government of Jamaica Customer Service Awards Ceremony in Kingston.

PICA was recognised for being 'Most Creative and Innovative', 'Most Socially Aware', 'Best Modernised Entity', and runner-up of the 'Most Improved' at the event now in its seventh staging.

The event was held at the Terra Nova All Suite Hotel.

Beaming with pride, PICA's chief executive officer, Jennifer McDonald, said, "We are always looking for better ways to serve our customers, and we seek partnerships with our stakeholders in the tourism sector, such as the Tourism Enhancement Fund and the airlines."

Late last year, through this partnership, the agency introduced at both international airports – automated border control machines (kiosks), and by the end of the winter tourist season, 18 per cent of the passengers at both airports were processed by this method.

Some 80 per cent of passengers no longer go through an immigration desk but are monitored electronically.

"That is truly innovation," said McDonald, boasting of the fact that the type of kiosk in

the island's airports was the first of its kind in the world.

She noted that the machines carried facial-recognition features. "It also uses the advanced passenger information, which allows us to pre-screen the passengers."

PICA competed against shortlisted government agencies, namely the National Housing Trust, which copped the first place for 'Best Customer Service Officer' and runner-up for the 'Prime Minister's Trophy'; the National Land Agency, National Health, which received the 'Prime Minister's Award for Multiple Locations'; the Firearm Licensing Authority, which won the 'Most Improved' prize; and the Jamaica Cultural Development Commission.

Formed in 2007, PICA's mandate is to secure the country's borders, safeguarding Jamaica's sovereignty.

Last year, the organisation served five million passengers at both airports, processed more than 200,000 applications for passports and 2,000 applications for citizenship.

"We are currently implementing facial recognition in our passport-processing system, which will identify incidents of double identity and help to make the passport more secure for the holder," said McDonald.

This new innovation is expected to be completed before the end of 2016, she revealed.

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The Jamaican winning team with their trophies at the World Travel Awards at the Sandals Emerald Bay in The Bahamas last Saturday night.

Sandals reigns supreme at World Travel Awards Caribbean

SANDALS RESORTS International has claimed the title of Caribbean's Leading Hotel Brand for an unprecedented 22 times at the World Travel Awards Caribbean & North America Gala Ceremony 2015, cementing more than two decades at the top.

On a night of high drama at host hotel Sandals Emerald Bay in The Bahamas, Delta Airlines took the titles of North America's Leading Airline and North America's Leading Airline to the Caribbean, while Caribbean Airlines was recognised as the Caribbean's Leading Airline.

In a special presentation, Bahamas minister of tourism Obediah H. Wilchcombe was recognised as the Caribbean's Leading Travel Personality 2015.

World Travel Awards president Graham Cooke said: "What a night for Sandals! Over the past two decades, the brand has grown into an institution here in the

Caribbean, and that success has been recognised by our voters this evening.

"My congratulations, too, to all our winners tonight, all of whom are working tirelessly to drive up standards in the competitive Caribbean and North American hospitality markets."

Sandals copped all of 25 awards.

The event was hosted by stars Andrew Kennedy and Anastagia Pierre, while guests were treated to performances from The Royal Bahamas Police Force Pop Band, Alia Cole, and Crusaders Junkanoo Group.

Also among those tasting success on the night were the Jamaica Tourist Board, recognised as the Caribbean's Leading Tourist Board; Go Jamaica Travel, Caribbean's Leading Tour Operator; Montego Bay Convention Centre, the Caribbean's Meetings and Conference facility; Club MoBay, Caribbean's Leading Airport Lounge; and Spanish Court Hotel,



From left: Spanish Court Hotel's Andres Cope; Club MoBay's Shelly-Ann Fung; Go Jamaica Travel's Dave Chin Tung; and Trafalgar Travel's Steven Kerr.



The winning Sandals team (from left): Gary Williams, general manager, Sandals Royal Bahamian; Jeremy Mutton, general manager, Sandals Emerald Bay; Ramel Sobrino, general manager, Sandals Ochi Beach Resort and David Latchimy, general manager, Sandals Negril.

Jamaica's Leading Business Hotel.

It was definitely a night for Jamaica and its hospitality industry players, and this was evident when the island was recognised as the Caribbean's Leading Cruise Destination, while the Sangster International Airport was named the Caribbean's Leading Airport.

New kids on the block Hyatt Zilara Rose Hall, Montego Bay, took the title of Caribbean's Leading New Hotel, while the trophy for Caribbean's Leading Hotel Suite went to Rock Star Suite at Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Punta Cana.

Oracabessa's home of the rich and famous, Goldeneye, was named the Caribbean's Leading Boutique Resort, while Island Car

Rentals took home the top rental-car agency for the region.

Trafalgar Travel was named the Caribbean's Leading Travel Agency, while Jamaica Inn copped the 'Jamaica's Leading Hotel' award.

Las Vegas also starred, taking the trophy for North America's Leading Destination among a clutch of awards, while the famous Las Vegas Strip was recognised as North America's Leading Tourist Destination.

World Travel Awards Gala Ceremonies are widely regarded as the best networking opportunities in the travel industry, attended by government and industry leaders, luminaries, and international print and broadcast media.



The Leading Caribbean Tour Operator, Go Jamaica Travel's managing director Dave Chin Tung shares lens time with the Caribbean's Leading Convention and Meeting facility, general manager of the Montego Bay Convention Centre, Dittie Guise.



Nicola Madden-Greig (right) joins the winning team members from The Courtleigh Hotel & Suites, The Jamaica Pegasus, and The Knutsford Court Hotel, who participated in the annual Taste of Jamaica culinary competition in Montego Bay recently.

Taste of Jamaica 2015

THE HENDRICKSON group topped the 2015 Taste of Jamaica competition, outpacing all other competitors in trophies and medals.

The competitors, representing the Holiday Inn, The Jamaica Pegasus, The Knutsford Court, Hotel and Courtleigh Hotel and Suites, at the end of the two-day event staged at the Montego Bay Convention Centre were victorious in the Best Dressed Chicken, CPJ Beef, Rainforest Seafood, and Copperwood Pork-sponsored competitions.

According to the organisers of the event, the Jamaica Culinary Federation (JCF), this year saw some upsets and surprises. There were a number of new properties, schools, and individuals entering the various competitions.

"It is important to note that competitors competed not against each other, but against a set standard, which means more than one individual or team qualified for medals," said the JCF.

For the organising team, the results this year are a testament to the teams and individuals who have worked hard over the year, practising their entries and delivering their best at the appointed time.

Hospitality Jamaica brings you

the results of the winning Hendrickson Group team.

BEST DRESSED CHICKEN COMPETITION

First place: Tameka Robinson – Jewel Paradise Cove Beach & Spa

Second place: Jamique Mair – Knutsford Court Hotel

Third place: Jermaine Aarons – Holiday Inn Resort

CPJ BEEF COMPETITION

First place: Richard Pinnock – The Jamaica Pegasus

Second place: Wellesley Thomas – Holiday Inn Resort

Third place: Dwayne Lamont – Knutsford Court Hotel

Fourth place: Michael Thomas – The Jamaica Pegasus

RAINFORST SEAFOOD COMPETITION

First place: Derren Luke – Holiday Inn Resort

Second place: Richard Pinnock – The Jamaica Pegasus Hotel

Third place: Damion Gordon – The Jamaica Pegasus

COPPERWOOD PORK COMPETITION

First place: Dwayne Lamont – The Knutsford Court Hotel

Second place: Shanika Clarke – The Jamaica Pegasus

Third place: Marlon Brown – Secrets Resorts & Spa

ELLE & VIRE CHEESECAKE COMPETITION

First place: Amelia Baker – The Jamaica Pegasus

Second place: Tavia Shepherd – Beaches Negril Resort & Spa

WEDDING AND CELEBRATION CAKES

First place: Sharyne Stultz – The Jamaica Pegasus

Second place: Oshane Robinson – Secrets Resorts & Spa

Third place: André Campbell – Secrets Resorts & Spa

TRADITIONAL PUNCH COMPETITION

First place: Jamique Mair – The Knutsford Court Hotel

Second place: Dwayne Lamont – The Knutsford Court Hotel

Third place: Calmin Lawrence – Goddard Catering Group

Fourth place: John Samuels – Grand Palladium

BARTENDING COMPETITION – NON-ALCOHOLIC

First place: Adrian Johnson – Rockhouse Resort

Second place: Roy Lawrence – Grand Palladium

Third place: Gossett Brown – Rockhouse Resort



Jason Hall, the Jamaica Tourist Board's (JTB) deputy director of tourism, pays keen attention to Carol Jones, executive assistant in the Policy and Monitoring Unit of the Ministry of Tourism and Entertainment, as she explains the work of the participants during the recently concluded Caribbean-Canada Emerging Leaders' Dialogue. The JTB hosted a farewell party for the group of Caribbean and Canadian nationals who were on the island to participate in a two-week intensive programme.

Below: Jason Hall (left) welcomes Bruce Bowen, Scotiabank's senior vice-president, Caribbean International Banking, to the Caribbean-Canada Emerging Leaders' Dialogue (CCELD) farewell party. The event, hosted by the JTB at Devon House, gave the CCELD participants a touch of the Jamaican experience through food and music with the ambience and warmth of the historic location. The CCELD gives participants the opportunity to develop critical leadership competences.

The 'Home of All Right' more popular than ever!

Jamaica's year-on-year tourist numbers up more than 16%

ACCORDING TO figures from the Jamaica Tourist Board, the number of United Kingdom (UK) tourists visiting the island in the period January-August 2014, compared to January-August 2015, increased by 16.6 per cent. Jamaica is hosting more tourists than ever before and is set to become the number-one Caribbean destination among UK holidaymakers this year, overtaking current leader, Barbados.

There are a number of reasons the 'Home of All Right' continues to be such a hit with British holidaymakers: the people, the natural beauty, the cuisine, the culture, the music, the sport, the sense of adventure and romance, and, of course, the beaches.

Likewise, the opening of a raft of new resorts means there are more places than ever for holidaymakers to rest, relax, and recharge. Hyatt, Royalton, Sensatori, and Moon Palace have all recently opened stunning new resorts. Others, including the

JAMAICA

TOURIST BOARD

Grand Bahia Principe Runaway Bay and the Sensatori, are adding rooms to increase capacity.

Other factors, like the continued strength of the pound against the dollar, a reduction in fuel surcharges, the UK's growing economy, cruise liners continuing to home port in Montego Bay, and the popularity of eco-tourism and sustainability, both of which are thriving on the island, are also helping to make Jamaica the 'must go' destination for Brits in the Caribbean and the growth is set to continue in 2016.

The total number of airline seats will increase by more than 11,000 in the 2015-2016 winter season, compared to the previous year. The number of airline seats in the 2016 summer season will also increase from the previous year.

A programme of new openings is

also planned: The Marriott Courtyard in Kingston; the Meliá Braco Resort; Sunscape Cove and Splash Resorts; Zoetry Resort, and the reconstruction of the Royalton Grand Lido in Negril, formerly known as the Grand Lido Negril, which is due for completion in the middle of 2016.

"The UK's love affair with Jamaica is going from strength to strength," said Paul Pennicook, Jamaica's director of tourism. "We are working hard to promote the island and make it the Caribbean destination of choice for holidaymakers. We are targeting all sectors of the UK market, with a particular focus on driving demand in the north of the UK, and in building and strengthening our relationships with agents and partners, and it's paying off."

Across Europe, too, more and more holidaymakers are choosing to feel the Jamaican vibe. Overall numbers are up 8.1 per cent, with Denmark, Finland, and Ireland showing the strongest growth.



IT WAS the philosopher Aristotle who said, “Pleasure in the job puts perfection in the work.” This rings true for craftsman Roxroy Dinham aka ‘Bourbon’, who does what he loves and loves what he does.

More than 30 years ago, Bourbon decided that, as a Rastaman, he did not want to go to the ‘system’ to look for a job, so he created work for himself by going around and watching others carve, especially a man called Crooks from the Rose Hall area of St James.

“I just used to pass through and watch him carve a lot of bulls. He was a very good carver.”

This self-taught artisan watched, picked up the skills, got himself some lumber and tools and jumped right in. Interestingly, in those early days, Bourbon hid under a tree and carved, as he didn’t want anyone to see him learning to carve. Yet it has led to a career from which he has been able to make a living for himself.

Bourbon recounts his only formal training 12 years ago, when he benefited from a one-month Tourism Product Development Company-sponsored training in craft improvement with trainers from Vietnam.

According to him, “It was very, very good. I am grateful for that opportunity.”

Even before the training, Bourbon would take his carvings to the United States yearly and demonstrate.

“I would carve with lumber from the States – oak, maple, walnut. This enhanced [my craft] more because seeing other carvers and their attention to detail inspired me. The trainers instilled the importance of detailing in craft.”

After the training, Bourbon was sent back to his community to give 10 days back to other craft producers. He printed fliers, got a tent from the Urban Development Commission, and material from Wyndham, but was left sorely disappointed.

“For the first four days, there were a couple of guys with me, but by the second week, I was alone with probably one other person. It was like those guys were not serious, and so after 10 days, I locked shop.”

Specialising in functional pieces such as plates, trays and bowls, Bourbon also does decorative pieces such as fishes and birds. From doing craft, he advanced into making furniture. Because of the quality of craft and the care he takes in selecting his material, he has a great demand and his clients have high praises for him.



Bourbon with an array of his freshly done wooden pieces.

“I love what I am doing. Sometimes, my kids or wife say, ‘Bourbon or Daddy, you are not leaving out of the shop? Come out of the shop, nuh!’ because I would be there until 11 or 12 o’clock in the night. But the thing is, I love what I am doing. It motivates me, so I do it to the best of my ability.”

THOUGHTS ON JAMAICAN CRAFT

When asked about his general feelings about craft in Jamaica, Bourbon expressed some apprehension.

“You go into a place and see five carvers and three will be making giraffe and two elephants and I will say to them, why one of you don’t make something different like an angel? A lot of the craft persons I know work together and they end up doing the same thing. What I find is a lot of them don’t spend the time to finish the work properly. They will use green wood first of all and when they take it to the wholesale market, they will not get the right value for it. If it’s worth \$5, they might get \$2.50 because they have not spent the time to do it properly.”

According to him: “If my client is

going to give me \$8 for a \$10 job, I will do a \$10 job because I am not only doing that job for that client. When somebody else sees it and asks, ‘who did that job?’, they will send them to me. That is how I get most of my jobs.”

Bourbon believes the craft industry can grow, but it needs a push for the producers who, most times, are left behind.

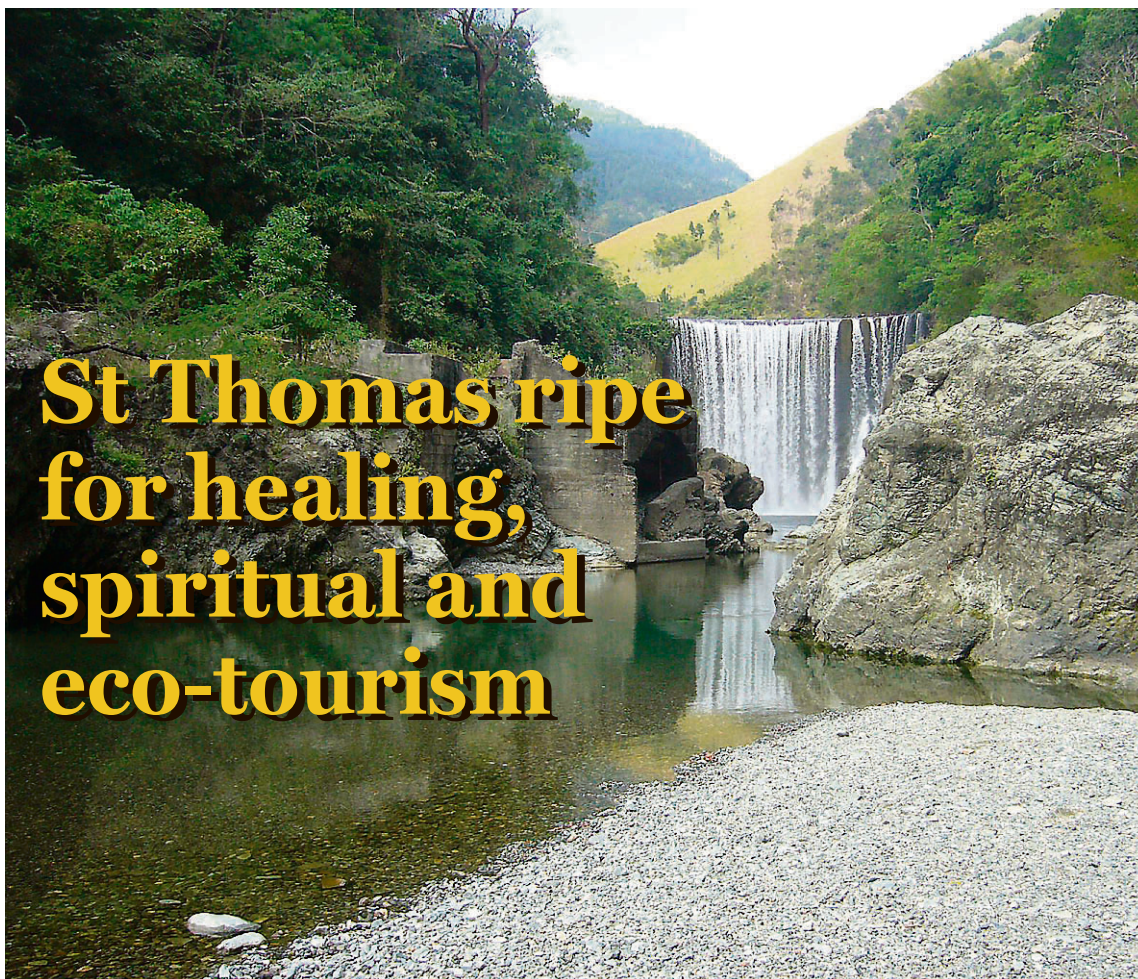
“If the Government invests in the producers, they will produce better quality and more. They will make more and the traders will also benefit.”

He insists on finishing his work to high standards.

“I say to people, you have to know what you are buying because, many times, we do things short-hand just to make a money, but for me, I take time to find out about the products I am going to use because I really am in love with my craft!”

Bourbon can be reached at bourboncraft@yahoo.com.

■ Article contributed by the National Craft Council/TPDCo. Email: marlined@tpdco.org



Reggae Falls at Hillside, St Thomas.

Paul H. Williams
Contributor

JAMAICA'S MOST easterly parish, St Thomas, is widely regarded as one of the nation's poorest and most backward. Yet, over the years, successive governments have not made any significant effort to eradicate these unflattering designations to the parish's name.

It's a name that has also been associated with witchcraft, Paul Bogle and the Morant Bay Uprising, and the curse of the queen – factors which people have claimed to be the reasons for the parish's neglect. But despite the romance and the juicy anecdotes, the parish has natural, material and spiritual resources to make it one of Jamaica's most prosperous.

Nature has given St Thomas more than its fair share of beauty. It's a nature lover's destination with its lush vegetation, long, majestic mountain ranges, meandering rivers, waterfalls, the powdery, pinkish sands at Mammee Bay, hiking trails, coffee plantations, and of course, the cloud-covered Blue Mountains at the extreme north of the parish. The fascinating Yallahs Salt Ponds have their own story, and so does the therapeutic Bath Fountain.



People at the Bath mineral spring in St Thomas.

But the natural beauty of St Thomas is not for its own sake. It can be a source of healing for the physically and emotionally afflicted. A walk in the botanical gardens at Bath really kills your blues, and up the road, the piping hot, sulphuric waters of the bath fountains can take away your pain.

The thundering waters of Reggae Falls at Hillside might not sing you a lullaby, but the water crashing on to water will certainly put you to sleep right there at the riverside, a riparian bliss of sorts. The area

directly around the falls is ideal for a day-out picnic. And within the beauty of nature are man-made structures that tell so much about the parish's history and heritage.

All over the parish are well-preserved historical buildings and ruins. A tour of it is like walking through an open-air museum, and the pages of a Jamaican history book in which you see Three-Finger Jack's monuments, brick towers, the ruins of the Morant Bay Courthouse and the cannon-guarded fort at the back, the old



Remnants of old sugar works at Old Pera, St Thomas.

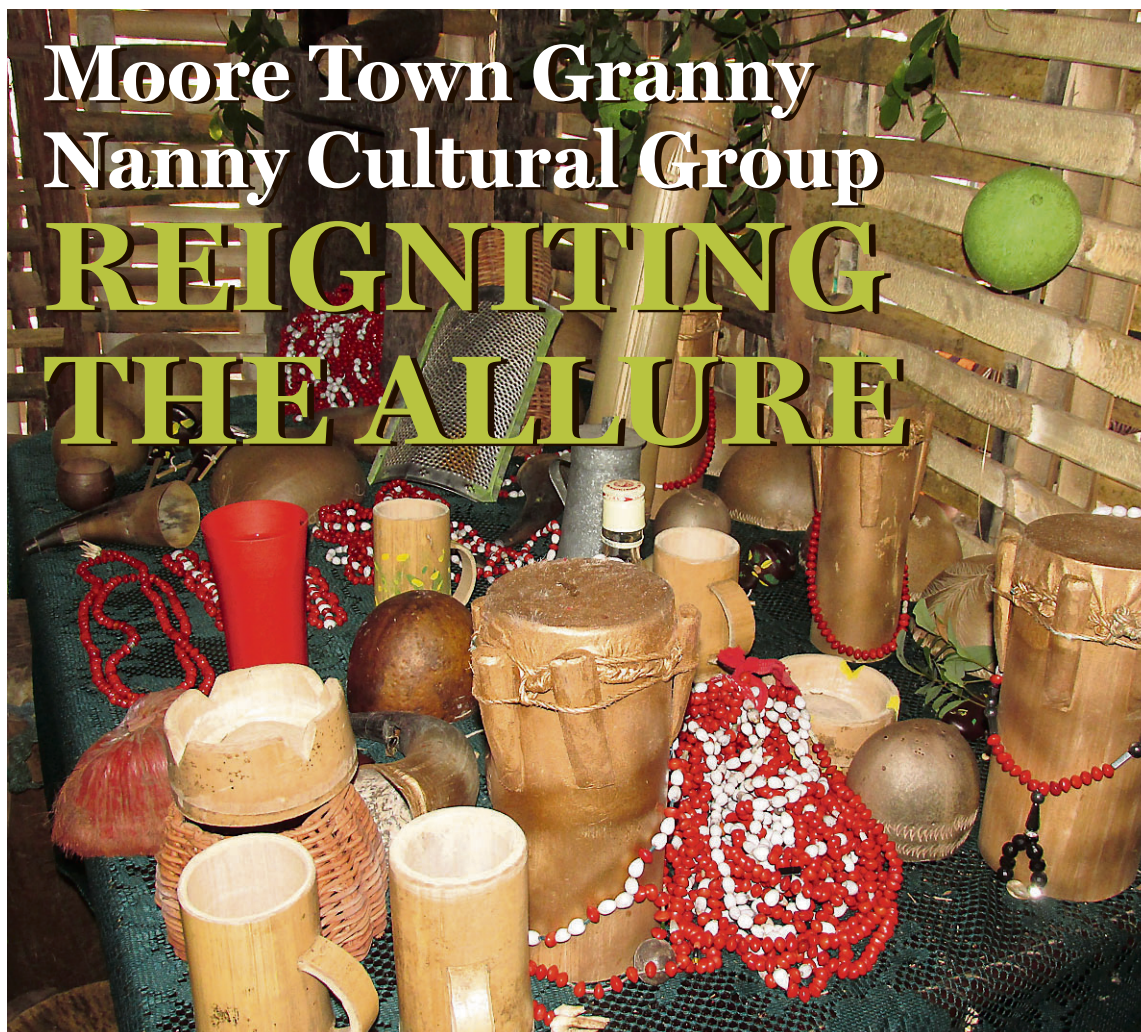


Brick tower at Old Pera, St Thomas.

Bowden wharf, Stokes Hall castle ruins, the old cemetery at Lyssons, remnants of plantation sugar works, and the Morant Point Lighthouse.

So, there are the natural and material allures of St Thomas, but the parish also has a great potential to be developed into a herbal and

spiritual healing destination. People do have such needs, and St Thomas has a plethora of people who can meet them. It's also a place where the Kumina tradition is rich and strong, a place where people, natives and tourists, should be flocking to, removing it from the list of the poorest.



Craft items produced by the Moore Town Granny Nanny Cultural Group.

Paul H. Williams
Contributor

MOORE TOWN, Portland, is well known for its Maroon history and heritage. National Heroine Nanny, it is said, used to live there. At Bump Grave, there is a monument erected in her honour and memory. And in 2003, United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization recognised the international significance of the Maroon culture by naming Moore Town musical heritage a “Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity”.

The ancient Maroon village is a part of the Blue and John Mountains National Park which was recently inscribed a World Heritage Site for its natural and historical significance. Later this month, a monument will be erected at Nanny Falls in recognition of this important designation.

Yet, over the years, Moore Town, despite its annual Nanny Day celebrations on Heroes’ Day, has lost much of its allure. It needed something to pull visitors into that historical place. The World



The Moore Town Granny Nanny Cultural Group is a talent group of drummers, singers, dancers and oral traditionalists.

Heritage Site inscription is one such pull factor, and it should contribute to the development of tourism in the region.

But even before the official announcement, some residents, who are aware of the significance of their Maroon story and culture, have reignited the same. The Moore Town Granny Nanny

Cultural Group they say have been around since 1995, performing mostly at Maroon events.

It has been officially registered for two years now, and the more-than-100 members are hoping to help make Maroon Town into a must-visit community tourism destination. They have talented drummers, singers, and dancers –



Deshawn Robinson (right) blows the abeng as Richard Francis appeases the ancestral spirits with some libation.



Deanne Keating Campbell (right) of the Tourism Product Development Company Ltd is about to remove a piece of dukunno from Judith Aarons’ dish.



Some members of the Moore Town Granny Nanny Cultural Group pose with visitors recently.

some very young – who can hold an audience spellbound. And they are as versatile as they are talented. Their repertoire is not restricted to Maroon cultural forms, and their performances are not limited to Maroon-related events.

A visit to the village in Moore Town is a total experience of singing, drumming, dancing and oral traditions. Trips and hikes are also available, as well as art and

craft. Traditional Maroon-Jamaican food and drinks are served with a smile. The members intend to set up traditional Maroon accommodations for overnight stays to add to the richness of the experience.

They are aware of the importance of the World Heritage Site designation and want to contribute to the significance, and are thus playing their part.

AROUND JA WITH PAUL H.

Faces in the dark, and then the rain came.



Only the rain could stop this young woman from dancing around the Kumina ring at the Paul Bogle vigil.

At left: Patrick Henry, of Roselle, St Thomas, telling the Maroon story at the Paul Bogle Vigil at Stony Gut, St Thomas.

AS I watched and listened the Kumina during the vigil at the Paul Bogle Memorial Park at Stony Gut, St Thomas, on Saturday, October 10, I looked at the faces of the people whose ancestors came here from Africa centuries ago.

In the very dark night, I knew people were around me, and cellphone lights illuminated the faces of the ones near to me. Beyond them, I could see nothing much.

In the dark, we were singing, drumming and dancing, perhaps just as our ancestors did before they marched to Morant Bay. And I imagined their militant faces in the dark. The music they had bequeathed to us we were playing now.

The LED light affixed to my camera brightened up the actions and the faces as people danced around the drummers. Each face had a different essence, a different angle to our story, the story of African people born in Jamaica. Some of them will tell me they are



Melsefeta 'Nanny' Hanse of Bellevue, St Thomas said she has a Nanny story and believes she is deeply connected to the national heroine.



King David (left) brought the Revival vibes to the vigil with his Revival table.



There were many Rastafarians at the Paul Bogle vigil at Stony Gut, St Thomas.

not Africans. It's their story.

At the point where the light shone on an elderly black-skinned woman, I stopped and stared. Her facial bone structure, her skin, her eyes, her head wrap, her dress all pulled my eyes to her. She looked like the iconic image of Nanny on the \$500 note, but moreover, I saw a story in her stoic face.

I asked her permission. She nodded. I took her picture many times and went back to the Kumina. Yet, I kept looking back at her face, barely visible in the dark. In the dark night when our ancestors were transported across the Atlantic.

I saw my ancestors in her face and turned around, moved towards her and hugged her tight. She didn't move. In the morning when I saw her again, she told me she is Nanny, and that she indeed has a story, a Nanny story.

I didn't look back at her after the hug. Busy taking pictures. And suddenly, the LED bulb affixed to my camera died. The dark was like a wall from which cellphone lights reflected. It was impossible to move around easily in that dense space.

Then it started to rain. I slowly made my way across the park to a covered bridge which spans a gully of sorts. In the vehicle in which I was sheltered, I wondered whether the rain would put a damper on the process. My thought was obliterated by sudden flashes of red lights. The area where the Kumina drummers were was illuminated twice.

I grabbed my camera, left the vehicle and crossed the bridge to see what was creating the glares. The rain was still sprinkling the place. So, I was cautious.

A fire dancer was the one brightening up the trees, but the rain was not helping him. He put his act on hold, it seemed, but the rain was not holding up. And celestial fireworks replaced his flaming sticks.



Kumina in the dark at the Paul Bogle vigil at Stony Gut on Saturday, October 10.



Members of the Port Morant Kumina group from St Thomas.

As I was about to take in some more of the Kumina, the water from the sky got very heavy, and a race in the dark ensued. I didn't join as I knew the grounds and walkway were uneven.

Some of us stood under a tree because the rain was pouring by then. The water from leaves had begun to soak us when flashes of lightning heightened the fear factor. I heard movements in the dark as people ran towards the bridge.

I was worried about my camera, so I, too, headed towards the crowded bridge. It could accommodate no one else; and those already on it were not budging. I stood in the downpour in

extreme horror. My camera and sneakers were my concern. What was I to do? I felt as if I were locked out of Noah's ark.

Then I saw people rushing towards the northern side of the gully. They were jumping in and climbing up an incline to circumvent the bridge. I contemplated doing the same. I have a slipped disc in my spine which causes excruciating pain at times, and that night was one of such times. But, for my camera's sake, I jumped.

I attempted to climb a section of the incline. It was slippery. I returned to the middle of the gully where I stood in the downpour, upset and



A patron holding the fire dancer's stick just before it rained on the vigil at the Paul Bogle Memorial Park at Stony Gut, St Thomas.



A section of the Revival table.

confused. In pain I was in the rain until I chose to climb the incline again. So I went to another area.

I had to sink my fingers into the soft earth covered with grass. Halfway up, I couldn't move. I rested on my belly, but when I realised I was going to slide and hurt myself, I had to find the strength to claw my way up as a youngster took all the time in the world to assist me.

When I was on my feet again, at the top, I told him no thanks. He was late. Hiding from the rain near the only structure on the property. That building has two restrooms.

There was no water in them and there were no outside pipes. Only the rain was pouring. In it I

walked, very, very upset. I could see people were still not leaving the bridge. There was nowhere else to go.

I was bruised and covered with mud. My sneakers were soaked, and I wanted so much to see the people who invited all of Jamaica to come to a 12-hour vigil at a place where there were: no tents to shelter should it rain, no lighting in a pitch-dark village, no running water, and malfunctioning toilets.

But, they were nowhere to be seen. There were no incompetent faces in the dark, only the disappointed ones of our ancestors and mine.

Dominica welcomes back visitors

“DOMINICA IS open for business and ready to welcome visitors to its shores,” so said minister for tourism and urban renewal, Robert Tonge. This comes after the island was hard-hit by Tropical Storm Erika on August 27, 2015.

At a recent press briefing, the minister provided an update on the status of the island’s tourism industry.

Air access to the destination has resumed with LIAT, Seaborne, and WINAIR offering daily flights between Dominica, from Antigua, Barbados, San Juan, Puerto Rico, St Maarten, St Thomas, and St Croix. Flights operate from the main airport – Douglas Charles Airport and the smaller one, Canefield Airport, which is 15 minutes from the capital Roseau.

Road access has been greatly improved with the installation of three Bailey bridges along the west coast. Most roads are passable and access to the main sites and attractions is fairly simple.

Popular sites like the Trafalgar Falls have been made even more breathtaking by Mother Nature, as well as the Emerald Pool, and Middleham Falls. Visitors can also enjoy our black-sand beaches at Mero and Purple Turtle, or visit the Kalinago Barana Aute in the east for an authentic Kalinago (Carib Indian) experience.

For the more adventurous nature lover, seven of the 14 segments of the Waitukubuli National Trail – the Caribbean’s longest hiking trail, are open to hikers. Divers and snorkellers can continue to enjoy the picturesque dive sites along the north, west, and south coast; including the popular Champagne Reef with its underwater geothermal springs which produce the effect of swimming in a glass of champagne.

More than 80 per cent of the island’s accommodation is open to welcome guests. Visitors can select a wide variety of accommodation including boutique hotels, intimate guest houses, and quaint inns.

Dominica’s director of tourism, Colin Piper noted: “We invite all potential guests to visit Dominica. Tourism is a leading growth sector for Dominica’s economy and your visit allows for a sustainable rebuilding and recovery process post-Tropical Storm Erika. We are confident that you will have a transformational experience.”



Sir Richard Branson and the Club MoBay team (from left), Anastacia Irving, Kadia Sutherland, and Shadae Allen got together for a photo op when the Virgin Group’s boss passed through the club on a recent visit to the island.

Below: Eaton Hubbard (left), Virgin Atlantic Airlines airport manager, celebrates the announcement in Mobay with Shelly-Ann Fung (second left), commercial director of VIP attractions; Amy Reed, Virgin’s third-party lounge development coordinator; and Kerry-Ann Miller, Virgin’s service delivery manager.

Jamaica’s Club MoBay voted Best Loved Lounge by Virgin Atlantic

CLUB MOBAY at the Sangster International Airport, has been voted Best Loved Lounge by Virgin Atlantic, a British airline serving over 30 destinations worldwide throughout North America, the Caribbean, Africa, the Middle East and Asia.

Club MoBay won the coveted Best Loved Lounge Award from a nomination field of over 20 lounges across Virgin Atlantic’s worldwide network. The Lounge Leader programme allows customers to rate all aspects of their lounge experience including overall experience, look and feel, food choice and quality, introduction to lounge, and service provided by the lounge staff.

Virgin Atlantic’s third party lounge coordinator, Amy Reed presented the award recently to Shelly-Ann Fung, commercial director of VIP Attractions, owners and operators of both Club Kingston and Club MoBay, at a special recognition in the lounge at Club MoBay.

“This award reinforces global confidence in Jamaica’s tourism sector and enhances the nation’s global business competitiveness, as a country with an investor-friendly climate that’s open for business,” Fung noted.

“Our accomplishment is a reflection of our team’s dedication, commitment, and passion to exceed expectations as well as enhance our product, people and partnerships.”

In its first year, the Virgin Atlantic’s



Lounge Leader Awards recognise excellence within its network of partner-operated lounges worldwide.

David Hall noted: “The timing of this award, October 2015, was just fantastic, where it gives the whole Club MoBay team a great morale boost right before the new tourist season in Jamaica, which promises to be the best ever for the country! The dedication and hard work that the team displays is getting recognised all around the world and is special when it comes from a world-class company like Virgin Atlantic, we are truly grateful.”

Virgin Atlantic was founded by entrepreneur Sir Richard Branson 31 years ago after he decided the UK aviation industry needed shaking up. On June 22, 1984, Virgin Atlantic’s inaugural flight to Newark took place on an aircraft filled with personal

friends, celebrities, and the media. Today, Virgin Atlantic flies to more than 30 destinations worldwide, including locations across North America, the Caribbean, Africa, and the Far East. At the start of 2014, Virgin Atlantic entered into a joint venture with Delta Air Lines, creating an expanded trans-Atlantic route network and enhancing competition between the UK and North America.

Virgin Atlantic has recently launched a new service to Detroit, along with three new routes into Atlanta. The airline has also increased daily frequencies to popular destinations including Los Angeles, San Francisco, New York, and Miami. Virgin Atlantic currently has a fleet of 38 aircraft, which includes Boeing 747s, Airbus A340-600s and its newest addition to the fleet, Boeing 787-9 Dreamliners.