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WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 24, 2016



The *spirit* **of Appleton**

Appleton Estate Rum Tour:

The making of the world's finest rum

Janet Silvera

Hospitality Jamaica Coordinator

TWO HUNDRED and sixty-seven years of continuous rum making, and today Jamaica's Appleton Rum Estate boasts the indisputable position of being home to the world's finest rum.

Last Wednesday, 12 adventurous JamaicaRoadTrips.com followers and an affable driver by the name Michael Pearson of Tropical Tours ventured out on a fact-finding mission of one of Jamaica's oldest attractions, Appleton Estate Rum Tour.

The group left Fairview in Montego Bay, St James, at 9 a.m., reaching the Appleton Estate, located in Nassau Valley, St Elizabeth, by 11:40 a.m. With only two stops en route – one in Ferris, Westmoreland, and the other just outside Middle Quarters, St Elizabeth – they were on target to avoid the regular afternoon rain.

Founded in 1749, Appleton sits on more than 11,000 acres of land, but at the rate at which the world is drinking rum, the most eloquent tour guide in the world, Norman Murray, thinks they may be forced to buy more lands.

WIDE DISTRIBUTION

"Don't get me wrong, enuh (you know)," he quipped, "we are not complaining, just keep drinking. Presently, we are distributing to over 50 different countries," he told the specially invited road trippers.

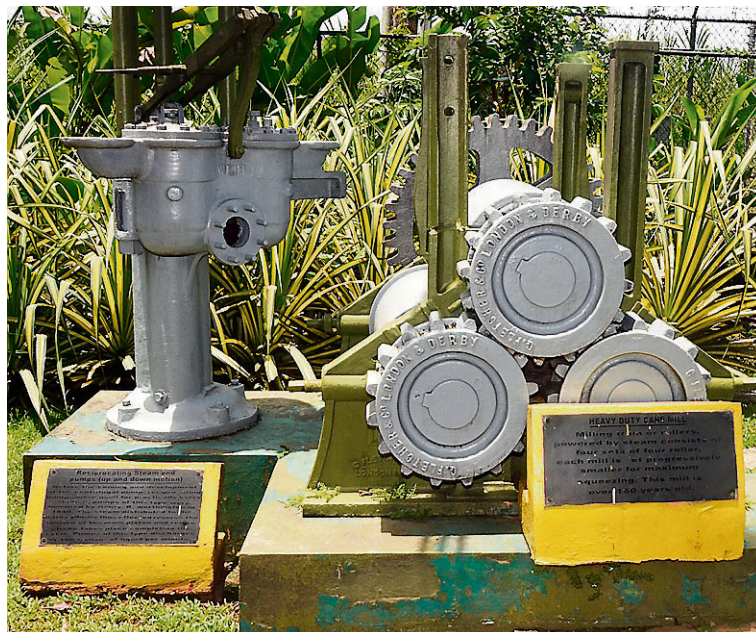
There is only one distillery that supplies the world with Appleton rum, and it's in St Elizabeth.

Taking the group, which included Cecile Levee, Mary-Ann Chung, Nadine Powell, Norah Blake, Damian Royes, Kathi Cooke, Ophelia Sinclair, Dacian



PHOTOS BY JANET SILVERA

The road-trip team in a jovial mood, (from left) Mary-Ann Chung, Ophelia Sinclair, Dacian Alexander, Nadine Powell, Cecile Levee, Kimberly England, Kathi Cooke and Warren Johnson. In the back row: Damian Royes.



A heavy-duty cane mill that is more than 150 years old. Now it's one of the many artefacts at Appleton.



The various types of Appleton rum, including the famous 21-year-old that was a hit with the road-trip team.

Alexander, Warren Johnson and Kimberly England through the rum-making process, Murray gave them unforgettable insight into the actual rum factory.

Murray described how the sugar cane, a giant member of the grass family, if allowed would grow long, in some cases to as tall as 20 feet. In some countries, it takes anywhere from 10-24 months to ripen, but here in Jamaica, because of the soil and climatic conditions, the cane is harvested between 10 and 12 months.

Harvesting, Murray added, occurs between December and May each year.

While harvesting closes off during the rainy months, the factory remains open because the molasses that is produced from the cane, and which is in storage, allows the factory to carry out the making of rum.

Murray started the tour at the now modern facility, which still boasts remnants of the past. The first stop was to watch a donkey being used to squeeze juice from the cane.

Of course, Appleton is no longer using donkeys. Today, it's all mechanically done. With the donkey, they were able to squeeze 65-70 per cent of the juice out of the cane. But with the advent of modernisation, they are now able to squeeze up to 98 per cent.

Pointing out that nothing is wasted at Appleton, Murray said the shredded cane, which produces bagasse, and is used to make board of the same name, is used to generate steam for the turbines that run the factory.

"So while we are not into the board-making business, we burn the bagasse to generate electricity,

ROAD TRIPPERS PRAISE APPLETON ESTATE TOUR

Negril hotelier Cecile Levee:

"What an informative and educational experience! For someone who thought they knew a lot about rum, I had no idea of the nuances, as complex as wine-making, the climate, rainfall, variety of sugar-cane ... who knew? And to culminate the end of the guided tour led by the charismatic Norman Murray

was the tasting by Judy Douglas, with all her passion for the product and, oh, oh, oh, the 21-year-old – not the cane cutter, the rum. Appleton Estate, you are a gold winner for offering a truly wonderful experience. I am officially putting out my desire to the universe for a bottle of the 50-year-old.

Banker Ophelia Sinclair

A seminar was included where we learnt of the different mixes and blends. A tasting session was included that introduced our taste buds to the different rums. I can now truly identify the different rums and blends from just whetting my buds, or a simple sniff.



PHOTOS BY JANET SILVERA

Tour guide Norman Murray showcasing one of the many processes sugarcane undergoes.



A worker explaining the process to extract juice from sugar cane with the use of a donkey, as was done in olden days.



Unofficial driver Mary-Ann Chung (centre) checking out the old Appleton Estate truck, while Ophelia Sinclair (left) and Dacian Alexander, look on.

and the ash that is left, we put it back into the field as a form of fertiliser, so nothing goes to waste. We are utilising every single thing," Murray said.

He noted that when Appleton stopped using donkeys, a number of mills were installed as replacement. "We have since graduated from the original mills and are using some huge rotary mills," he explained.

The tour, which could last between 45 minutes and an hour, gave an insight into the large cuppers that were used to boil the cane juice in the past. The road trippers got an opportunity to see how cane juice is boiled more than once, then dumped into a centrifuge, which spins and separates the liquid from solids.

The liquid generated is called molasses and the solid becomes known as brown sugar. "That's how simple we get molasses and brown sugar. You squeeze, carry out all the boiling, then you centrifuge molasses and brown sugar," Murray explained.

FERMENTED SUGAR

The sugar is fermented and the molasses is used to make rum. "Rum is a fermented spirit from sugar cane, so don't go home and ferment some prunes, grapes or apples and get some alcohol and think you can call it rum. It does not work," he warned, laughingly.

Grown in the Nassau Valley of St Elizabeth, Appleton Estate is surrounded by mountain ranges,



In a Bolt mood are members of the road-trip team, (from left) Nadine Powell, Kimberly England and Norah Blake.



Some visitors to the island watching the process of juicing of sugar cane.



Tour guide Norman Murray showing the bagasse, one of the end products of sugar cane.



A storage house for the barrels of rum.

giving it a 360-degree view. The soil in which the sugar cane is planted is located within a karst. The landscape is formed from the dissolution of soluble rocks such as limestone, dolomite, and gypsum. It is characterised by underground drainage systems with sinkholes and caves. It has also been documented for weather-resistant rocks,

such as quartzite, given the right conditions.

The soil at Appleton Estate is extremely rich, and that richness lends itself to the sugar cane, which also reflects in the characteristics of the rum. "So it's a very ideal and unique location for us," Murray said.

Not satisfied with boasting about the rum company he works for,



The manual process of extracting cane juice.

Murray said what makes their rum different from others is the soil. "So if you are making your rum the same way we do ours, and you use a different type of sugar cane, the taste profile of my rum is going to be different from yours."

The climatic conditions, including sunny mornings and tropical showers in the afternoon, which

are very conducive to the growing of sugar cane, are the basic factors that set Appleton Estate rum apart.

An environmentally friendly estate, Murray said they have been trying to reduce their carbon footprint by generating enough electricity to supply the estate houses where some of the workers live with their families.

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ROAD TRIPPERS PRAISE APPLETON ESTATE TOUR

Mary-Ann Chung

Touring the world-famous Appleton Estate rum factory has been on my bucket list for several years now. I finally got the opportunity to make it a reality by being invited to be part of an amazing group of people. Although not a rum drinker, I was

fascinated by the process, but more important, I just needed to know what made our Appleton so special.

Truth be told, Jamaica being one of only three countries that boast our infamous Cockpit Country which creates our special limestone-enriched valley with its

own natural spring filtered water [is amazing]. I learnt this was the perfect condition to harvest the perfect sugar cane to produce the perfect rum.

In addition, the world-renowned first female master blender is our own Joy Spence. Once again, I'm so proud to say I'm Jamaican.

Norah Blake, consultant

The tour was good. I gave it nine out of 10, even though I somehow expected more. Our tour guide was *par excellence*. I envisioned going on the train and travelling out into the fields to view the process. They have, however, effectively confined it to make it into a short tour, which covered everything in terms of showing the process

from raw material to the finished products. The participation at the end in producing the juice was brilliant. A bit more history in the area of life on a plantation would have been welcome. The spirit sampling and education at the academy by Judith Douglas was really a learning experience that has left me more knowledgeable.



A scale used to weigh logwood, utilised in the making of dye, on show at Appleton.



Molasses, one of the end products of sugar cane.



The back of an old truck used to haul sugar cane in the past.



The Appleton Sugar Estate.

PHOTOS BY JANET SILVERA



From left: Jorge Gonzalez, director, production supply chain, J. Wray and Nephew, on a tour of the St Elizabeth plant with the Jamaica Public Service Company Limited's Marvin Campbell, regional director, East, and Kelly Tomblin, president.



Rum expert Judith Douglas of Wray & Nephew giving classes on how rum is made.

ROAD TRIPPERS PRAISE APPLETON ESTATE TOUR

Damian Royes, student

It was such a wonderful experience being able to tour the oldest rum-production plant in the Caribbean. It was nostalgic in the sense that it brought back childhood memories of growing up in the Hampden Estate sugar belt. Our tour guide Norman was awesome, and I would recommend the rum tour to all my fellow Jamaicans. It created a positive, lasting impression in my mind.

Warren Johnson, businessman

The Appleton Estate Tour was a great and enjoyable learning experience that could easily leave a teetotaler into a guilt-ridden journey for not supporting the efforts of such a significant part of our past that contributes so much to our present. The contributing human factors that made the tour all the more a joy: Norman is a prized tour guide who is not only knowledgeable and informative but entertaining; the presentation by Judith Douglas was of a learned professor preparing students for an examination; and the hospitality of Mrs Sinclair and her team was first class.



PHOTOS BY CLAUDIA GARDNER

Tryall Fund's secondary and preparatory school scholarship awardees.



Tryall Fund's college and sixth-form scholarship awardees.



Members of the Tryall Fund.

Tryall Club awards 60 scholarships

Claudia Gardner

Hospitality Jamaica Writer

THE DONOR arm of the Tryall Club in Hanover presented 60 academic scholarships to students at varying levels of the education system at its annual presentation ceremony which was held at the resort recently.

The awardees included already-enrolled students and new applicants studying at the university, college, high-school and preparatory levels, who were recommended by staff members from the hotel.

"We give scholarships to the most deserving students, taking into account extenuating circumstances within that family," Paula Kovinsky, president of the Tryall Fund, told **Hospitality Jamaica**.

She said the Tryall Fund was

established in the 1960s as a means of enabling homeowners at the property to give back to the parish of Hanover by raising funds to support education and health projects.

"We have one big annual charity event, which is the Taste of Tryall which is set for November 25 this year. We do have homeowners that make direct donations as well, but we try to really get our bulk at Taste of Tryall," Kovinsky said.

"The scholarship applications are distributed to all the staff at Tryall and all the applicants need is a sponsor (recommender) who is an employee of Tryall. So those applications are ready for distribution in the second week of January; they are to be returned to us by April and we have our scholarship committee that does the selection process," she said, in explaining the application process.

Kovinsky added that students who have been supported year-to-year for the duration of their programmes of study have done exceptionally well, and the fund's board is largely impressed.

"They have all done really, really well. Where we have noticed the greatest decline in their scoring, is

actually with medical students. But that makes sense, because their course load gets heavier. It's harder, they have more labs, so as their level of instruction increases, they are still doing well, but their GPA (Grade Point Average) score may drop by a point or two," she said.

"We grant the scholarship from

the time that they apply. If we feel they are worthy of it, we will continue to fund them, but they have to maintain that certain GPA. If somebody has really dropped off, we then look into it further because, many times, there are circumstances that we do not know about," she added.



Tryall Fund's university scholarship awardees



Kingston: Shop 20, Premier Plaza Tel: 960-8862, 399-2399, 929-8109

Montego Bay: 12 Market Street Tel: 952-5861, 881-5112, 289-9930, 449-7934

Spanish Town: LOJ Mall Tel: 749-3966, 276-8669

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David Jessop
Contributor

A FEW weeks ago, I received an email asking me how many five-star hotels there were in the Caribbean.

I replied that there was no recognised or adjudicated star system anywhere in the Caribbean other than in the French Département d'outre-mer, so hotels chose their own classification largely based on their marketing preference.

This meant, I said, that it is impossible to know how many five-star hotels there are or how valid the classification is. Not only were more and more non-indigenous hotels in the region using the description to try to denote ultra-exclusivity but, I noted, the uncertainty this was creating was leading to greater reliance being placed on travel guides such as Michelin or Forbes, on booking engines, and on TripAdvisor, all of which now award star ratings based on their own criteria.

Since then, I have looked into the issue further, and it is apparent that that few locations in the world have official systems that are well regulated or enforced. While

Star ratings and Caribbean hotels

ordered hotel classification systems do exist in countries including



JESSOP

France, Germany, Italy, South Africa, and Canada, there are huge variations in the way they operate and the varying degree of control by their public authorities.

Moreover, what emerges when one looks further into such systems is

that it becomes clear that some star-rating systems are voluntary, tied to groups of chain hotels or to membership of a trade body.

Confusingly, even when there are such systems in place, the criteria vary from country to country.

For example, in the case of France, since January 2016, there

has been a nine-page table that sets out the criteria for a tourist hotel within the scheme to be rated at between one and five stars or to have the designation 'Palace' if they have an exceptional geographic, historical, aesthetic, or heritage characteristic.

DETAILED CRITERIA

So detailed are the 241 criteria that everything from room size to the ways that rooms are furnished and the heating or environmental standards are set out for each category. The small print also makes clear some special opt-outs from some aspects for France's widely scattered overseas territories. Similar tables also exist in Germany and Spain, where it is not unknown for hoteliers to go to court to ensure a more beneficial adjudication against the set criteria.

However, nothing of the kind came to pass, and today, four parallel approaches exist.

The first is for hotels, principally owned by international operators to establish their own star rating. The second is for external organisations such as AAA's diamond rating system to be applied and a guide published annually. The third is for search engines to apply stars, seemingly based on the recommendation of third parties such as travel agents. And the fourth is for alternative criteria, such as Green Globe, the global travel and tourism industries' certification programme for sustainable tourism to be developed.

More recently, some marketing sites have emerged that attempt to bring together a number of different ratings so as to try to map out in a more objective and comparative way star ratings for Caribbean properties.

All of which proves, for me at least, that nothing works better, when it comes to choosing a Caribbean hotel than a word-of-mouth recommendation, a carefully read well-written personal review on a site like TripAdvisor, and personal experience remain the best guides to choosing a hotel, irrespective of its claimed or designated star rating.

**PHOTOS BY
JANET SILVERA**

Caribbean Producers Jamaica Limited's Chief Executive Officer Dr David Lowe poses with scholarship recipients at his company's annual award ceremony last Friday in Montego Bay.



Caribbean Producers Jamaica Limited (CPJ) Chairman Mark Hart shares time with children of his employees who are recipients of the CPJ Scholarship at the organisation's annual awards last Friday in Montego Bay.

Janet Silvera

Hospitality Jamaica Coordinator

FORTY-NINE students were awarded scholarships during Caribbean Producers Jamaica (CPJ) Limited's annual presentation at its headquarters at Montego Freeport last Friday.

In addition, 15 youngsters were beneficiaries of books. The recipients, offspring of employees attached to the company, will benefit from approximately \$2 million in financial assistance from the company.

"This is a commitment that we

49 get CPJ scholarships

take seriously. CPJ is committed to supporting the thrust for quality education as we believe in nation building. We also believe that the seed we sow today will be reaped over time – some years from now and some in the very near future," the company's human resources director, Debbie Clarke, said.

She added that as a result, CPJ

encourages the recipients to continue to go above and beyond as they strive to achieve their educational goals.

"This is an investment that we are making in you to create the foundation for future generations. Years from now, any one of you could be standing here, making this appeal to other beneficiaries of the CPJ scholarship. You will then be the face of

success and a worthy representative," she said to the recipients.

The beneficiaries, ranging from primary to university students, were lauded by Mark Hart, chairman of CPJ, as being integral to the company. "This is one area of the business that we would not cut back on," he told **Hospitality Jamaica**, expressing his wish to see the numbers increase to 100.

"It is an important part of the well-being of our employees – supporting their children's success in school."

CPJ's chief executive officer Dr David Lowe agreed, stating that the activity was an important part of connecting with the parents of the kids, while watching them achieve academic excellence.

He told the students that although school might not be enjoyable for them now because of the hard work, one day, they would look back and see all the work put in was not in vain.

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high tide



low tide

Relax responsibly!





From left: Treasurer of the JHTA Montego Bay Chapter, Mary Chambers, president of the Montego Bay Chamber of Commerce, Gloria Henry, and Caleigh Reid were among the hundreds of attendees at the event.



President of the JHTA Omar Robinson (centre) poses with (from left) Stayce Ingram, groups and meetings manager at Royalton White Sands; Joy Roberts, acting executive director of the Tourism Product Development Company; Kerry-Ann Quallo Casserly, regional sales and marketing director at Blue Diamond Resorts; and Shari Russell Edwards, rooms division manager, Deja All-Inclusive Resort.



Royalton White Sands' culinary team cooked up a storm. From left: Gareth James, Mark Gordon, Chris Hanson, Marlon Ricketts, Zamar McKail, Demar Graham and Easton Vidal.



Christopher and Lisa Binns of Stush in the Bush were among those who exhibited at the event.



Members of Round Hill Hotel's team served some classic Jamaican dishes. From left: Odain Palmer, Roushell Riley, Marvin Robinson, Tanisha Webster and Andrew Dundas.



PHOTOS BY CLAUDIA GARDNER

Former minister of tourism, Dr Wykeham McNeill, and St James Parish Councillor Suzette Brown turned out to give their support.



Mayor of Lucea Wynter McIntosh Wynter and his wife, Andrea (centre), were in attendance along with their friend, Dawn Ramsay.



Angele Nunez, manager operations of Great House, speaks with Granville Morgan, coordinator of the Jamaica Tourist Board's Meet the People Programme about the Rose Hall Great House tour.

JHTA celebrates fine Jamaican cuisine

Claudia Gardner
Hospitality Jamaica Writer:

THE LUSH lawns of the Rose Hall Great House in Montego Bay provided the perfect setting for the Montego Bay Chapter of the Jamaica Hotel and Tourist Association's (JHTA) fundraiser dubbed A Celebration of Fine Jamaican Cuisines', on Saturday night.

Chapter chairman Robert Headley told *Hospitality Jamaica* that he was as impressed with the turnout as he was with the culinary

delights offered by some of St James, Hanover and Trelawny's most exquisite hotels.

"This event has seen one of the best turnouts we have had. We are very happy with what we have seen. It's all in aid of charity programmes that we are involved in, and this is one of our main fundraisers. We usually cater to somewhere between 250 to 300 people. Tonight I am seeing that we have somewhere between 300 to 350 people, so it has been very good in terms of public support," he said.

Headley credited his planning and coordinating team, whom he said once again put on another stellar event, and the corporate sponsors in the hospitality sector whose efforts ensured the event took place.

IMPRESSIVE QUALITY

"The quality of food and beverages is very impressive. And I want to say thank you to the machinery behind it – the JHTA members that came behind and put this together," he added.

"I am happy with the support of all the

sponsors and the hotels that came and put this together. The sponsorship support has been very good," he said.

Among the sponsors of the event were Royalton White Sands, Appleton Estate, Caribbean Producers Jamaica, Hilton Hotels and Resorts; Round Hill Hotel and Villas; Sandals Resorts, Heart Trust NTA, Riu Resorts, Half Moon Resorts, Holiday Inn Resorts, Holiday Inn Resorts, The Tryall Club, Crazy Jim Ice Cream, Melia Braco Village and the Rose Hall Great House.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Prime Minister Holness (second left) participates in the ribbon-cutting with (from left) Jason Hall, Jamaica Tourist Board's deputy director of tourism, cruise, attractions and events; Olivia Grange, minister of culture, gender, entertainment and sport; Mike Fennell, president of the Jamaica Olympic Association; Alison Stone-Roofe, Jamaica's ambassador to Brazil; and Christopher Samuda, secretary general, Jamaica Olympic Association.

Ja paints Brazil black, green and gold

JAMAICA HOUSE 2016, #ReggaeRocksBrazil, the island's hospitality hub was the hotspot in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. With attendance exceeding expectation. The music, the vibe, the food and live entertainment were a hit among visitors to the house. But the biggest pull to Jamaica House was the superb performances of our athletes in track and field.

The camaraderie was unmistakable as members of other Olympic teams were seen at the venue enjoying the Jamaican experience. A resident DJ, along with performances by some of Jamaica's music ambassadors – Nature, I-Octane, Luciano, and Ky-Mani Marley, rocked the house on respective nights. Add to that, Sandals Group executive chef Glenroy Walker prepared mouthwatering Jamaica fare for the capacity crowds who gathered to watch Jamaica's performances each night.

Jamaica House also served as the nucleus for business meetings between Jamaica's tourism officials and representatives from the emerging market in the Latin American region. An initiative of the Jamaica Tourist Board, Jamaica House was designed to create destination awareness and leverage the global focus on our athletes, Jamaica House 2016 was staged in collaboration with Digicel, Sandals Resorts International, Red Stripe and Appleton.



Prime Minister Andrew Holness (left) and Minister of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport Olivia Grange arrive for the official opening of Jamaica House on August 13.



'Bom Dia Rio de Janeiro', one of Rio de Janeiro's most popular morning shows, chose Jamaica House as its location for its live broadcast from The Jockey Club. The programme featured Chef Glenroy Walker (right), Sandals Resorts International, cooking Jamaican favourite of escovitech fish and jerked chicken. Jason Hall (centre), Jamaica Tourist Board's deputy director of tourism, cruise, attractions and events and coordinator of Jamaica House, is seen during an interview with host of the show, Flavio Fachel (right) on the set of 'Bom Dia Rio de Janeiro'.

JAMAICA TOURIST BOARD



Prime Minister Andrew Holness (right) gets in on the action at Jamaica House with an enthusiastic Jamaican fan taking a selfie. Holness was among thousands who gathered to watch Jamaican athletes create history in each of their disciplines in Brazil.



Reggae artiste Nature delivers a scintillating performance to a capacity audience at Jamaica House. Nature, I-Octane, Luciano, and Ky-Mani Marley rocked Brazil with musical vibrations at Jamaica House.



Jason Hall (second right), Jamaica Tourist Board's deputy director of tourism, cruise, attractions and events, is delighted to welcome members of Great Britain's rowing team to Jamaica House. The athletes were happy to soak up the Jamaican atmosphere as they watched our athletes dominate in track and field. Jamaica House at The Jockey Club, South of Rio, was transformed into a Jamaican headquarters that served authentic Jamaican meals along with the island's iconic Appleton Rum and Red Stripe beer. There was also live broadcast of track and field events, live music performances and a resident DJ.

Devon Garcia

– guided by nature

HAILING FROM the small community of Freeschool, Port Antonio, Portland, Devon Garcia grew up in an environment that provided great inspiration for his career as an artist. Being a shy person allowed him to retreat to quiet places to perfect his craft. He credits nature for being one of the great influences that shine through his pieces and notes that his keen attention to detail allows his work an air of uniqueness.

While a student, Garcia recalls everyone having aspirations of becoming the proverbial doctor, lawyer or teacher while he sat in a quiet corner and sketched. He recounts a particular scene in class when the students reported him to the teacher who, after investigating and found him sketching a replica of the classroom setting, stated, “He’s doing something, what are you doing?”

For Garcia, art was an escape. He found solace in his drawings. From drawing, he gradually transitioned into the more tangible form of woodcarving and that was when his true talent began to shine. His love for carving started coincidentally, from him picking up a piece of wood and sharpening a screw-



‘Don’t Bend Down’ – piece sculpted from wood by Devon Garcia

driver. Being a self-taught artist has made Garcia’s work more special.

Working assiduously for several years in the field, there came a point when Garcia



CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

‘Jamaica’s National Heroes’ in papier mâché, done by Devon Garcia.

wanted to give up. He felt that his art was going nowhere and the benefits he expected weren’t forthcoming. However, he was approached by a fan of his work who was concerned about why he was missing on the art scene and was encouraged to continue.

EMBARKING ON PAPIER MÂCHÉ

This instance, coupled with many similar situations, gave Garcia the confidence he needed and taught him to never lose faith in his work as an artist. He states that the moti-

vation he receives from his clients, and sometimes mere admirers of his work, are what keep him going.

After several years spent mastering woodcarving, Garcia was introduced to the art of papier mâché by Lois Lake Sherwood. To date, that has been one of the greatest moments in his life. At first, he had no idea what papier mâché was. However, after spending time to better his art, he found that it was an easier material to work with, mistakes are easily corrected and it was versatile. Papier mâché is a malleable mixture of paper and glue or paper, flour and water that becomes hard when dry. This is definitely an advantage since raw materials are easily accessed.

When asked if he had to choose between the two art forms, which would he prefer, he responded by saying, “I am known for mastering my carving and that is the same level of recognition I would like to see for my work with papier mâché”.

The simplicity in his work is due to his mantra, ‘the simple things in life are always the best’. This is clearly reflected in his work as Garcia prefers working with more natural-looking colours and those are the ones his clients gravitate towards.

Garcia has had the opportunity to teach papier mâché to about 30 artisans operating in a cluster in Maggotty, St Elizabeth, who were a part of the recently concluded OAS/TPDCo Craft Enhancement Project co-sponsored by the Tourism Enhancement Fund.

Garcia may be contacted at devongarciaart100@gmail.com or 323-9416.

Article contributed by the Community Awareness Department, Tourism Product Development Company Ltd

Paul H. Williams

Hospitality Jamaica Writer

A CLIFFHANGER is a thriller that pulls you to the edge of your seat. It is a situation full of tension or suspense, because it is not clear what will happen next. It makes you edgy and fidgety – uncomfortable, if you will.

But not so with Cliff Hanger Restaurant and Lounge, located at Ross Craig, in the green parish of Portland. It is situated along a cliff, but it does not make you anxious. It is about resting, relaxation and rejuvenation, according to Managing Director Brett Hanna, who is also responsible for marketing.

The property was designed and constructed by Brett’s father, Errol, who is an experienced builder, among other things. It is several feet above the sea, where ‘white horses’ continually rush to shore – making it ideal for surfing.

It is first and foremost a restaurant with a cliff-top appeal, and the Hannas want it to be known for its delectable cuisine. This award-winning eatery is already recognised as

Truly a cliffhanger



PHOTOS BY PAUL H. WILLIAMS

Brett Hanna (left) and his father Errol, operator of Cliff Hanger Restaurant and Lounge at Ross Craig in Portland.

the lionfish place, says the younger Hanna. There are many dining areas, including the deck overlooking the sea.

But the piece de resistance is the bar. Imagine sitting at a bar located

a few feet from the edge of the cliff, sipping while the panoramic view of the sea unfolds before your eyes, and the roar of the waves rises from below. That is what you will find at Cliff Hanger.



The façade of Cliff Hanger Restaurant and Lounge belies the fantasy view of the sea from the back.



A bar on the edge.

The senior Hanna said some cruise ship tourists compared the ambience to sitting on the deck of a ship looking out to the wide open sea.

And away from the bar, there are seats at the very edge of the cliff. For the faint-hearted, these seats are truly cliffhangers. Yet, for those with guts of steel, they are perfect for hanging out.

Construction started in January

2014, and the property opened for business seven months later. Errol Hanna said the restaurant and lounge is open to walk-in visitors, and everyone is welcome to dine and mingle.

The property has much green space, and families are welcome to have a day-out and picnic. Camping is allowed, and it is also ideal for wedding receptions and parties.

**AROUND
JA WITH
PAUL H.**

PHOTOS BY PAUL H. WILLIAMS

The Phillippo Baptist Church in Spanish Town, St Catherine, is in a well-preserved state.



A Vigil **in Spanish Town**

ON SUNDAY evening, August 31, a small group of people, mostly grown-ups, some wearing bandana and the national colours, turned up at Phillippo Baptist Church at Spanish Town in St Catherine for an Emancipation vigil, organised by the church. I turned up because of the history of the church, and the part its founder played in the emancipation of enslaved Africans here in Jamaica.

The last vigil I went to turned out to be a personal disaster, one that I will always remember. This time around, I knew I was not going to stay up all night shivering, and more importantly, for whatever reason, there are certain places that I don't want to be in after dark, and Spanish Town is one of them.

As expected, it was not an all-night vigil, and the patrons seemed to have enjoyed themselves thoroughly, if for no other reason than

because of the antics and utterances of the affable master of ceremonies, who did a splendid job, and reminded the engaged audience of the importance of Spanish Town in the Emancipation story. He said he was there to learn, but he also shared his knowledge.

The master of ceremonies, Andre Alleyne, a churchman himself, gave personal anecdotes of his involvement with the church and run-ins with his father, a well-known Baptist. And then there was the choir, in the person of one church sister, who led the audience into singing some traditional folk and patriotic songs. I have never seen a one-woman 'choir', and sat waiting to hear if she would sing alto, tenor, bass and sopranos to make up for the absence of everybody else.

The karaoke segment was the most memorable for me. I still smile to myself when I remember the woman, who really cannot sing,



Slavery-day shackles are said to be buried among the roots of this tamarind tree in the churchyard of Phillippo Baptist Church in Spanish Town, St Catherine.



Two seniors dancing to 'Long Time Gyal Mi Neva See Yuh'.



The inscription on this monument says it all.



A section of the audience that attended the Emancipation vigil at Phillippo Baptist Church in Spanish Town on Sunday, July 31.

but made an appearance three times. It was not the quality of her voice, but the song selections, comedic timing, and her loveable personality that endeared her to the crowd.

The gathering was addressed by pastor of the church and Custos Rotulorum of St Catherine Reverend Jeffrey McKenzie. In the fun-and-games segment, the goodly reverend was coerced into 'dropping some legs'. When he got up it was sheer excitement. The fact that he danced with two women in the presence of his smiling wife was not lost on the MC. That is the marriage, he said, he wants. The audience loved every bit of his banter, mischief, I would say.

But with all the fun, there was reflection for me. I was at a place where our history and heritage unfolded. The Phillippo Baptist Church was established in 1818, 20 years before Emancipation. In the churchyard there is a big tamarind tree, around which it is said some of the slavery-day shackles are buried.

INFLUENTIAL VOICE

James Murcell Phillippo, a Baptist missionary working in the Spanish Town area of St Catherine during the years leading up to Emancipation, was one of the influential voices among antislavery agitators. He set up the first village in Jamaica, Sligoville in St Catherine, and his work with Robert Smith, an enslaved African in Jamaica, is well documented.

Smith fled to England to find his absentee owner, after the agent from whom he had bought his freedom wanted to repossess him. He found his former owner and got his freedom. Phillippo took him all over England to tell his story. This was one of the strategies Phillippo used in his campaign against the brutal system.

And the evening could not have ended without some scrumptious traditional Jamaican food and beverages, the icing on the cake, perhaps. The potato pudding and cocoa tea were nearly perfect. And the lemonade? Refreshing!



PHOTOS BY PAUL H. WILLIAMS
A senior showing off her bandana outfit in the 'modelling contest'.



A view of the Long Bay Beach in Portland from the main road.

PHOTOS BY PAUL H. WILLIAMS

Portland's Long Bay big on community tourism

Paul H. Williams

Hospitality Jamaica Writer

THERE ARE three popular beaches in Portland – Winifred, Boston Bay, and Long Bay, which is arguably the longest beach in the parish. It curves at both ends, making it the bay that it is.

The tall coconut trees that rise from its powdery white sands into blue skies are a perfect picture of idyll. It is not uncommon to see people sunbathing under those trees that sway in the winds. Its shallow waters also makes it an alluring place, even for a seaside party in the park covered with green grass.

Another pulling factor to Long Bay is that it is not remote and is not far from other attractions. The main road runs through it to Port Antonio in the west to Morant Bay in the east, and it is not far from the Boston jerk centre. The community that stretches a few miles also extends from the beach to the foot of the hills.

Over the years, it has evolved into a tourist destination of sort. It is one of the places that nature



The park at the Long Bay Beach in Portland.

tourists flock to. Along the stretch of road there are many shops and eateries that are set up to just provide services for visitors, local and overseas.

But tourism in Long Bay is not just about having a bellyful and a

suntan and moving on. There are some backpackers who head to Long Bay to live in people's houses, or guest houses. This has been going on for years, and the doors are still open.

Some of the returning guests



This sign speaks to the popularity of community tourism in Long Bay, Portland.

Hospitality Jamaica spoke with said they have been going to Long Bay because of the easy access to the beach and for the warm Jamaican hospitality. They get a chance to see how regular Jamaicans live and use their domestic spaces. And the traditional Jamaican food that they would not normally get at resorts, they are able to partake of.

The residents understand very well the importance of tourism to their community. So they are mindful of the need to prevent harassment, robbery, and physical harm. They know that bad publicity will destroy the industry in their community. Apart from tourism, and small-scale farming, there is not much else going on in terms of employment opportunities.

Yet, a bar owner who was sitting at her bar looking out when **Hospitality Jamaica** visited said there has been a decline in the number of visitors. And it has to do with the treasure in the community the beach. It is losing its rustic charm because of the regular deposit of manmade garbage. Much of it comes to shore from the sea, and some of it is strewn about because of irregular collection of refuse by the authorities.

The bartender was supported by two women with whom she was talking. And a walk along the beach confirmed what they said. There were a few piles of garbage and litter all over, but it is not something that cannot be easily removed if the residents pool their resources and become proactive.



Long Bay Beach in Portland seems to be losing its popularity because of garbage pile-ups.

Sandals, SDC awaken the spirit of entrepreneurship

TODAY, SMALL businesses have played a vital role in generating growth in the Jamaican economy. However, many lament the shortage of support received from stakeholders from the private and public sector in order to sustain themselves.

Nonetheless, Sandals Resorts in the Montego Bay region recently partnered with the Social Development Commission (SDC) to host a health, business, and social fair to showcase the offerings provided by the small business enterprises located in the Cambridge community.

The event, which was held at the Montpelier Agricultural Showground, was used as the platform to build awareness and to exchange ideas on various ventures and opportunities. Agriculture, agro-processing, craft, and horticulture were the main products on display at the show.

SOLID GUIDANCE

The SDC in the western region has been championing small businesses for some time now and has attempted to offer solid guidance on strategic business proposals, financing, and marketing opportunities. Last year, the organisation hosted an entrepreneurial training, which was sponsored by Sandals Montego Bay, Sandals Royal Caribbean, and Sandals Carlyle, gathering 35 aspiring business owners from the Cambridge community to gain more insight into how to effectively manage a successful business.

Regional public relations manager, Khadine Daley noted: "We are very



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Basil Edwards (right) shows off his hand made slippers to Sandal Montego Bay general manager Carl Beviere (left) and Melton Blackwood, chairman of the Cambridge Development Area Committee, at the recent Business Health and Social Fair held at the Montpelier Agricultural Showground.

impressed with the quality of products displayed by the local and small business owners. We support their efforts and are delighted in partnering with the SDC to host workshops that will help to further develop the skills and provide management and operational training these entrepreneurs.

Jude Martin of 'Yahad' products, a participant said, "I am happy to be a part of this fair as it has provided me with the exposure needed to move forward with my business. After 20 years of selling my products on the street, I was encouraged by SDC to register my company in 2011. Patrons are now aware of my product and I have since had increased interest in buyers."

GOAL ACHIEVED

Randy Hayle, parish manager for the SDC, also noted, "We have certainly achieved our set goal, and that is to create an opportunity to expose our small businesses. We have worked closely with the Local Economic Initiative and have seen a transition from training and support into established businesses. We are grateful for the partnership with Sandals and look forward to the continued support in providing impactful training for those who wish to equip themselves with the knowledge on how to operate a business."

He encouraged, "There must be further sustained network and technical support from other inter-entities in order to gain more start-ups and prospects for potential and viable small businesses."

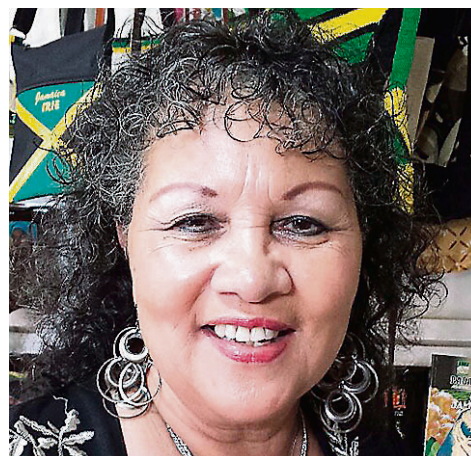
Later this month, Sandals Resorts will once again host a follow-up training workshop for the business enterprises and hopes to collaborate with the Small Business Association of Jamaica, the SDC, and the Cambridge Development Committee to educate its members on how to help each other to remain sustainable.

McIntyre-Pike to be inducted into African Diaspora World Tourism Hall of Fame

THE INAUGURAL African Diaspora World Tourism Awards launched in May 2014 in Atlanta has taken a giant leap ahead into the future through a seeming alchemical transformation in just three years as a major showcase of African royalty and cultural heritage in the Americas.

The African Diaspora World Tourism Awards (ADWT-Awards) and Travel Expo, are set to take place from August 26-28, 2016, in Atlanta at the Westin Atlanta Airport.

Jamaica's internationally recognised pioneer of community tourism, Diana McIntyre-Pike, will be inducted into the ADWTA Hall of Fame and will receive an award for her work in community tourism during a formal awards session. McIntyre-Pike has also been



Diana McIntyre-Pike

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nominated as the Pan African Cultural Heritage Tourism Ambassador for Jamaica.

She is the founder-president of Countrystyle Community Tourism/Villages as Businesses and has headed the International Institute for Peace Through Tourism (IIPT) Caribbean for over 24 years.

WORLD-CLASS EVENT

"The awards ceremony is a world-class event honouring movers and shakers in black cultural heritage tourism. Dignitaries, notables, professionals, and cultural heritage and travel enthusiasts from all over the world will be in attendance," said Kitty J. Pope, African Diaspora tourism publisher.

Returning to the ADWT-Awards and Travel

Expo will be Sharon Parris-Chambers, tourism consultant, founder of the Caribbean Health Tourism & Spa Conference (2005-2009) and IIPT Caribbean Advisory Board member, who has received the African Diaspora World Tourism Flame Keepers Awards for Online Publication, Websites and Online Media, which has done much towards promoting black travel and black cultural and heritage tourism in 2014. She has also been nominated as Pan African Cultural Heritage Tourism Ambassador for the Caribbean and is in contention for other awards.

Joining the all-star honourees this year is Lou D'Amore, founder and president of the International Institute for Peace through Tourism serving as an international chair for the 2016 African Diaspora World Tourism Awards.

TPDCo launches ‘Falmouth Pride’ public education programme

THE TOURISM Product Development Company Ltd (TPDCo) last week launched its newest community initiative, dubbed ‘Falmouth Pride’, with the slogan ‘Fi wi Falmouth, Fi wi Pride’.

A pilot of the tourism public education programme, it seeks to increase awareness of the importance of the sector and reduce harassment in Falmouth and, by extension, the parish of Trelawny.

The intention is to engage students at the primary and secondary levels so that they may learn and convey tourism information to their peers and family members, as well as to sensitise and build awareness among citizens’ associations, neighbourhood watches and youth groups.

Fifty micro business operators will also be targeted for training in the areas of customer service, cultural sensitivity, self-development, business basics and the history of Falmouth.

Joy Roberts, acting executive director of the TPDCo, in outlining the strategies and tactics that will be employed for its success, said “the programme is being embarked on because of the prevailing perceptions of the industry by some residents of the parish. Some persons have no strong conviction that they are benefiting from the tourism product. In some instances, persons don’t see the linkages. This initiative



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Members of the tourism family take time to peruse the comic strip, ‘The Adventures of Sprucey & Limey’, which is part of a tourism public education programme dubbed ‘Falmouth Pride’, which was launched on August 18, 2016, in Falmouth, Trelawny. From left are Sheldon Headley, anti-harassment manager, Tourism Product Development Company Ltd (TPDCo); Robin Delisser, director, TPDCo; Charles Scarlett, director, visitor safety and experience at TPDCo; Clive Blair, superintendent in charge of Trelawny; Joy Roberts, acting executive director, TPDCo; and Evatt Bloomfield, chairman of the Montego Bay Resort Board and director of TPDCo.

is intended to inform and educate persons about tourism and its many benefits, while encouraging positive attitudinal and behavioural changes towards the sector, the environment, locals and visitors alike.”

VARIED COMPONENTS

The programme components include the distribution of an educational comic, **The Adventures of Sprucey & Limey**, designed by interns in the on-going Spruce Up Jamaica Tourism Summer Intern Programme, a quiz competition for primary-school students, focusing on the history of Trelawny, Jamaican attractions and places of interest with emphasis on Trelawny, tourism awareness, tourism organisations, civics, geography, customer service, environmental awareness, cultural awareness and Jamaican heritage. An art competition for high/secondary-school students with the theme ‘Where does the tourist dollar go?’ will also be launched at the start of the new school year.

An anti-harassment video, dubbed **Cum Yah**, will also be produced to promote the message of taking care of the tourism product and several community sensitisations are also planned. A ‘Tourism Corner’ will be established in libraries across the parish with relevant reading materials.

Funding for the programme has been provided by the Tourism Enhancement Fund, to the tune of \$4 million.

The programme, which will run until March 2017, will see TPDCo collaborating with various stakeholders, including the Social Development Commission, through the Community Development Council; the Jamaica Constabulary Force, through the neighbourhood watches; the Resort Board; the Trelawny Library Service network of libraries; and other private-sector entities in the parish.

ONE OF the world’s best known online marketplaces for accommodation has been confirmed to present at the region’s leading tourism gathering.

The San Francisco, California-based Airbnb has confirmed its participation in next month’s State of the Tourism Industry Conference (SOTIC) in Barbados.

The home rental company’s regional manager for the Caribbean, Mikel Freemon, will join a panel on the sharing economy at the September 14-16 conference organised by the region’s tourism development

Airbnb for tourism conference

agency, the Caribbean Tourism Organisation (CTO).

“The sharing economy is a US\$26-billion sector and Airbnb is one of the most successful architects of the accommodation component of this sector, disrupting the traditional hotel industry and raising concern among the incumbent firms. We are delighted to have Airbnb share its success model as we examine this hybrid market model and discuss the challenges, risks and opportunities for the

Caribbean tourism sector,” Sylma Brown, director of the CTO’s New York office, said.

Airbnb is a US\$25.5-billion business and has served over 60 million people since it was formed in 2008. The community marketplace has over two million listings in 191 countries and earned nearly US\$1 billion in revenue last year.

Freemon will be joined on the panel by Khalil Bryan, a Barbadian entrepreneur and co-founder of Caribbean Transit Solutions, which

provides on-demand and real-time information on taxis and buses, and Frank Comito, the chief executive officer of the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association. It will be moderated by Paul Pennicook, Jamaica’s director of tourism.

The session on the sharing economy takes place on Friday, September 16.

The State of the Tourism Industry Conference, which has as its theme ‘Honouring Our Legacy, Defining Our Future’, is the pre-

eminent tourism gathering in the region. It brings together tourism decision-makers, including ministers, commissioners and directors of tourism, hotel and airline executives, travel agents, students, the media and persons directly and indirectly involved in tourism. It is preceded by CTO business meetings, including meetings of the board of directors and the Council of Ministers and Commissioners of Tourism.

For more information on SOTIC, including how you can register, participate and benefit, visit www.sotic.onecaribbean.org.