

The Gleaner
Hospitality **Jamaica**

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WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2017

**Decameron
Hotels opens
third resort in
Jamaica**

**Pinnacle
missing out
on Rasta
tourism**



JIMMY

CLIFF

takes ecotourism to Somerton



CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Jimmy Cliff (left) and former Prime Minister Percival James Patterson.



Jimmy Cliff greets Minister of Tourism Edmund Bartlett.

JIMMY CLIFF

takes ecotourism to Somerton

Lennie Little-White
Contributor

LONG BEFORE the global phenomenon of Usain Bolt, Jamaica's greatest international ambassadors were Dr Jimmy Cliff and Bob Marley – undoubtedly the country's greatest and best cultural icons.

It was Jimmy Cliff who first garnered national attention and acclaim, when he was only 14 years old, with his first hit recording – **Hurricane Hattie**. History will show that it was Cliff who opened the musical door for an apprentice welder named Bob Marley to become a recording artiste.

While Marley was walking downtown city streets still in awe of the boy wonder, Cliff listened to a few of Marley's compositions and then introduced him to Leslie Kong of Beverly's Records. The rest is history.

Marley made his heavenly transition at 36 years old. Today, Dr Jimmy Cliff is 68 years old

and still proudly carries the musical torch that he lit 54 years ago. Despite his senior years, Dr Cliff continues to mesmerise audiences on all continents, with no sign of slowing down.

MULTIPLE AWARDS

His more than 300 compositions have earned him an honorary Doctor of Letters from the University of the West Indies, two Grammy Awards and his induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. His iconic acting performance as Ivan in the movie **The Harder They Come** has led to more starring roles in **Club Paradise** and **Marked for Death**. His is a creative spectrum unmatched by any other Jamaican – dead or alive.

When Irie FM decided to name Cliff as the first recipient of its Lifetime Achievement Award on Sunday, February 12, it was in front of an audience frontlined by former Prime Minister P.J. Patterson, Minister of Tourism Edmund

Bartlett and Mayor of Montego Bay Homer Davis. In his honour, a battery of artistes, including Lady Ifrica, Yasus Afari, Bushman, Shuga, Tony Greene, Dwight Richards and the L'Acadco Dancers, all performed compositions by Cliff.

Already, Dr Cliff has funded a cricket and football field and a community centre for the district, but now he has more lofty ambitions that will bring not just recognition to Somerton, but real economic benefits for all. Cliff announced to the large audience that his next ambition is to develop Somerton as an "ecotourism district". This was music to the ears of Bartlett, who is also the member of parliament for the area.



Justine Henzell, daughter of the late Perry Henzell, creator of 'The Harder They Come', addresses the audience.



Queen Ifrica performing at the event.



A large painting of Jimmy Cliff at the Irie FM Lifetime Achievement event in Somerton, St James.

Like a painting of the late intuitive artist, Kapo, Somerton with its winding country roads running parallel to long dried-up river beds, still has a bevy of quaint gingerbread houses set against a backdrop of a plethora of stone-wall buildings that house diverse religious denominations. Even from afar, curious visitors could see Dr Cliff's impressive residence as a photo-op similar to Elvis Presley's Graceland.

VILLAGE LIFE

A template has already been established by Chukka, with its open-back safari trucks and 'country bus' to take curious visitors to experience a different side of Jamaica. Lazy canefields stand beside towering banana trees with waving windmill-like leaves to provide marginal income for the small rural farmers of Somerton. With parliamentary legislation now in place to legitimise Jamaica's precious native herb, Somerton could be the prototype for 'village life' that combines music, religion, cuisine and agriculture-focusing on traditional crops, plus the now legal one that 'flourish' in the middle of your palm. If anyone can do it, Dr Cliff will. It would be good for this



L'Acadco Dancers performing at the award event to honour Jimmy Cliff.

template to become a reality long before Cliff makes his transition to join Bob Marley.

While the ecotourism attraction is still only an idea in Cliff's head, he is known to be a man of his word. Shortly after returning to his roots to build a palatial residence on a property which he could not

walk in as a child, he dug deep into his own pocket to establish social amenities to benefit the youth of Somerton and adjoining districts.

Nine Miles in the hills of St Ann – the birthplace of Bob Marley with his mausoleum, is now an established stop for visitors who want more than sun, sea and sand.

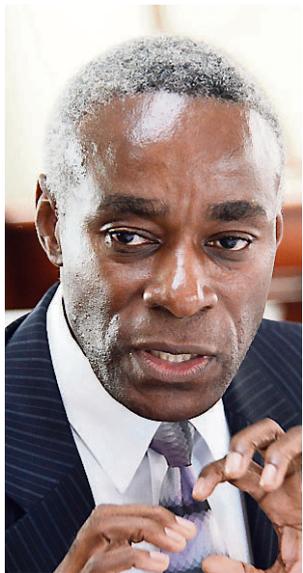


Somerton All-Age School performing.

Somerton sits halfway between Montego Bay and Falmouth and will be much more accessible with the completion of the planned Montego Bay bypass highway.

Yes, Jamaica has many great-houses and waterfalls, but only one Dr Jimmy Cliff – a living legend in the island's cultural rainbow. 'It's Been a Hard Road to Travel' so Somerton has been 'Sitting in

Limbo' since the migration of its sons and daughters like P.J. Patterson, Reverend Herro Blair and my sister, the late Dr Heather Little-White. Despite 'Many Rivers to Cross', Dr Cliff – the prodigal son – is preparing to start an ecotourism venture that will enable him 'To Treat the Youths Right', while teaching them that, like him, 'They Can Get It If They Really Want It'.



Professor Alvin Wint



Danny Roberts



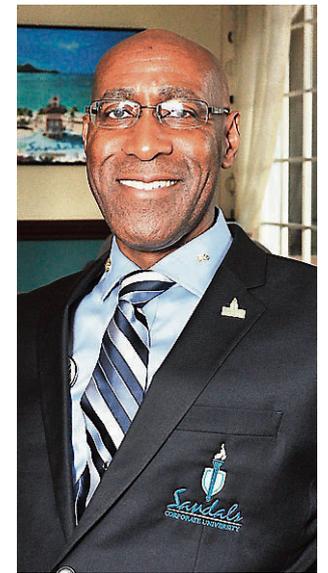
Omar Robinson



Camille Needham



Dr Carolyn Hayle



Dr Phillip Brown

High-level committee established to develop new tourism institute

MINISTER OF Tourism Edmund Bartlett has established a high-level committee to spearhead the development of a new tourism institute to aid in the ministry's push to strengthen the island's human capital.

"The members of this high-level committee have been tasked with developing strategies and finalising plans for the establishment of the institution by 2018. We intend to have this committee morph into the board of management for the soon-to-be-established Jamaica Centre for Tourism and Innovation," said Bartlett.

The committee, which met for the first time two weeks ago, includes Minister of Labour and Social Security Shahine Robinson; Minister of Education, Youth and Information Senator Ruel Reid; and Donald Hawkins, Professor Emeritus of management and tourism studies, George Washington University, who is also leading a team that is in the process of producing a business plan that will serve as the official guide for the initiative.

Other members include former pro-vice chancellor of the University of the West Indies (UWI), Professor Alvin Wint; senior programme officer and senior lecturer at the UWI, Dr Carolyn Hayle; Dr Phillip Brown, principal of the Sandals Corporate University; head of



CONTRIBUTED

Minister of Tourism Edmund Bartlett (centre) gesticulates as he explains the concept of the ministry's tourism institute, which is being developed to aid in the ministry's push to strengthen the island's human capital. Bartlett was addressing the inaugural meeting of a high-level committee established to spearhead the initiative. Listening keenly are committee members, Minister of Labour and Social Security Shahine Robinson (right) and Professor Donald Hawkins, Professor Emeritus of management and tourism studies, George Washington University. The committee has been tasked with developing strategies and finalising plans for the establishment of the institution by 2018.

the Department of Government at the UWI, Dr Lloyd Waller; head of the Hugh Lawson Shearer Trade Union Education Institute, Danny Roberts; president of the Jamaica Hotel and Tourist Association (JHTA), Omar Robinson; executive director of the JHTA, Camille

Needham and coordinator of the Hotel School and Artisan Villages, Carol RoseBrown.

The institute will offer a practical curriculum and will complement the current hospitality programmes at the country's tertiary institutions. This is primarily

because the institution will operate as both a functional hotel and world-class training institution. It is intended to support development in areas such as culinary management, spa management and hospitality management.

"This centre is novel to the

region. It is entirely new and will go beyond merely academics. While academics will be an important component, we will be focusing primarily on training and boosting competence to increase the capacity of persons to deliver at a high level in the industry so that supervisory staff, who do not have academic qualification, can transition through the centre and be fully equipped to occupy high-level positions in the sector," Bartlett explained.

GLOBAL CERTIFICATION

He added that "graduates from tertiary institutions across the region would also be able to transition through the centre to attain global certification. In essence, it will operate like the Norman Manley Law School, which provides the requisite accreditation for lawyers across the region, as the centre will provide TedQual certification."

TedQual is the accreditation of the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and is carried out by the UNWTO. According to the UNWTO TedQual is a certification of a voluntary nature which seeks to facilitate the continual improvement of tourism education, training and research programmes through the definition of a set of minimum standards of quality for tourism education.

Kingston City Run hosts self-defence boot camp

Fitness series to prepare modern woman to protect herself

THE ORGANISERS of the fifth staging of the Kingston City Run (KCR) are taking a practical stand with regard to the issue of violence against women and children. The team, alongside their 2017 ambassadors, will host a self-defence boot camp series as part of training for the annual half-marathon, 10K 5K, titled KCR Presents: Self Defence for the Modern Woman.

PRACTICAL WAYS TO TACKLE CRIME AGAINST WOMEN

The boot camp series will be held on the grounds of Shortwood Teachers' College in partnership with Stokely Rose of Train Fit and their 'Run Heroes', a team of fitness thought-leaders and professionals who have gathered around the cause to educate, empower, and give back to end the issue of homelessness in Jamaica. A major pain point is the fact that many of the patrons who are part of Kingston City Run and who organise the event are women.

Co-chair of the annual run, Nicola Madden Greig, said: "Initially, the plan was to prepare our patrons for the run by providing them with the essential plans, tips, and advice as they tackle the 5k, 10k, and half-marathon. However, given the fact that so many of our patrons are women, at least 75 per cent, we have added this component to prepare them not only for the run, but for their own safety as a practical way to put a stop to the violence against them and children."

KCR LIFESTYLE AND WELLNESS EXPO

The boot camps are set to begin on Saturday, February 11, nearly a month before the run, commencing at 6:30 a.m., and they are also a lead-up for the Lifestyle and Fitness Expos slated for Saturday, March 11, part of the weekend of activities lined up by KCR.

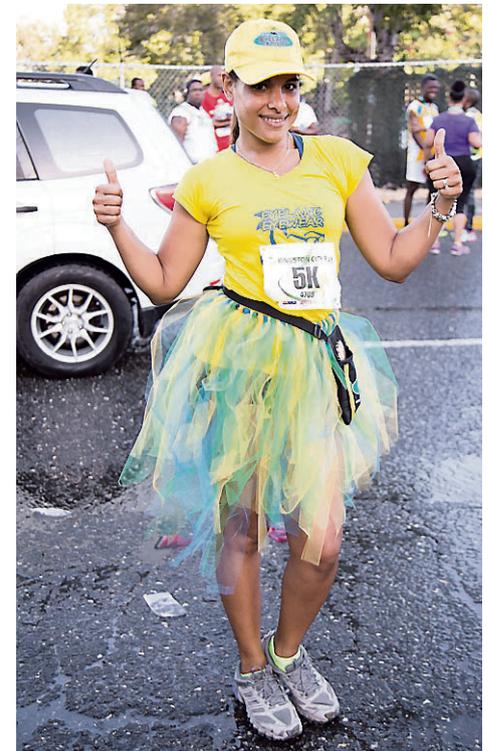
"We'll look at issues such as exercise as a means of boosting alertness, defence, and speed against perpetrators to even simple but effective topics such as common household items to make your own 'pepper spray'. We're also on the defensive side to show techniques to disarm. And what is the role of self-defence, exercise, and running for health, productivity, and safety" said Stokely Rose of Train Fit.

The annual run is set for March 12, 2017, with a start time of 5:45 a.m. for the half-marathon; 6 a.m. for the 10K; and 6:15 a.m. for the 5K. The weekend of activities engages the local and overseas running communities,



CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

The Voltaren team poses for the camera at last year's Kingston City Run.



Enjoying every minute of the Kingston City Run.



The Norman Manley International Airport team at the 2016 Kingston City Run.

beginning with a Bacchanal party on Friday, March 10; a lifestyle and fitness expo on Saturday, along with a pre-race party; and

culminating in the big run on Sunday.

To sign up for the 2017 Kingston City Run, please visit www.kingstoncityrun.com.



'Two thumbs up' is what this 10K runner seems to be saying at last year's Kingston City Run.

The importance of sustainability

David Jessop



FOR MOST visitors, a central part of a vacation is the pleasure of eating out at hotels and restaurants; having alternative choices at each meal; being able to taste local cuisine; and having the experience of doing so in a beautiful and different environment.

Increasingly, however, something new is creeping into visitor perception. It is the related issues of sustainability and authenticity.

To understand how this has become a matter of interest and concern to a growing number of visitors, and especially better-off millennials and their children, one only has to walk around New York, London, or Berlin to see the emergence in restaurants, and better supermarkets and shops selling groceries, signs making clear the origin of what they are selling, indications of the distance it has travelled (its carbon footprint), and whether it comes from a sustainable source.

Moreover, in answer to the question being asked by increasing numbers of consumers, 'is it local?', it is also now common to see on menus the origin of the meat or fish or other produce that is going into a meal.

So, for example, eating recently in a restaurant in a rural part of England, the menu I was given made clear the exact farms, the names of the farmers, and the provenance of all that was on offer. This made me feel connected to the local environment in a manner that enhanced the positioning and marketing of all of those concerned.

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT

Clearly, in a Caribbean context, this has obvious limitations, especially in small islands where there is no option but to import many food-stuffs. However, there is a growing interest in the industry worldwide to develop greater awareness in hotels and restaurants of the importance of sustainability, not just for marketing reasons, but to retain foreign exchange, job creation,



FILE

Setting that makes dining more enjoyable.

and local development.

One outcome is that regional industry organisations, like the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA), have been paying increased attention to encouraging environmental and social sustainability through responsible food purchasing.

This involves the development of guidance to all of those in the tourism and hospitality sector who purchase food. The aim is to encourage them to develop supply chains that embrace a responsible environmental approach, to boost local economies through the local and regional production of food-stuffs, and to create employment

offering fair working conditions.

The initiative also seeks to demonstrate that the use of local products represents sound marketing by adding significantly to the uniqueness and value of a tourism experience.

In helpful online material – Four Steps Towards Sustainability in the Hotel Sector – CHTA, with others, point out the importance of a joint public-private sector approach to analysing what it possible when it comes to substituting imports with local products and services. They also provide a step-by-step guide to professionals in the industry on how to address the issue, most

importantly, how pursuing sustainability can result in a shared commitment among employees and suppliers, and how it can help a hotel or restaurant to develop a more positive image.

Interestingly, the document also contains case studies. One it cites is a community-based project in the Yucatán Peninsula in Mexico, which created its own sustainable jam-making business based on sales to local hotels and tourism. There, Jungle Jams, using local fruit, and with the support from the tour operator, TUI Travel, and the Travel Foundation, led to local hotel groups used by TUI not only providing the product, but the

women's cooperative involved going on to sell its product more widely.

As the project progressed, the benefits became apparent. It enabled local hotel operators to better understand the importance an international tour operator placed on sustainability, involved TUI and local staff in an inspirational local project, and has enabled all involved to highlight the project to guests and potential guests, thereby enhancing their commercial offering.

It and similar schemes are examples of what needs to be adopted across the Caribbean region.

high tide



low tide

Relax responsibly!



Decameron Hotels opens third resort in Jamaica

DECAMERON ALL-INCLUSIVE Hotels & Resorts, one of the largest and most dynamic hotel groups in Latin America and the Caribbean, continues its expansion and development of the holiday tourism market, opening a third hotel in Jamaica.

The Royal Decameron Cornwall Beach Resort is positioned as the newest all-inclusive hotel in Jamaica, the second of the chain in the Montego Bay area and the fourth project that the multinational hotel group offers in the Caribbean.

Jamaica is easily accessible by its many flight carrier options, both scheduled and charter, from all over the world, which makes it an ideal holiday destination. This island in the Caribbean Basin is one of the most popular tourist places, recognised for its tropical climate throughout the year, appetising Caribbean cuisine, typical dances, world-renowned reggae music, idyllic stretches of white sand beaches, and crystal-clear waters and adventure tours that highlight the cultural roots of this region.

With 146 sea-view rooms, combining comfort with modern Caribbean style architecture, this resort is comfortably located on the northwest coast of the island, on one of the best beaches in the Montego Bay area, five minutes from the Montego Bay International Airport, and close to shopping areas and the vibrant centre of Montego Bay.

MULTIPLE RESTAURANTS

As part of the all-inclusive offering, the Royal Decameron Cornwall Beach Resort has buffet and à la carte restaurants offering Caribbean, Mediterranean, international and Jamaican fusion cuisine, as well as a gym, spa, bars, swimming pools for adults and children, marina for non-motorised water sports, nightly entertainment programmes, gift shop, wedding services, events and the possibility to use the facilities of the Royal Decameron Montego Beach Resort, which is next door, as a free complementary service.

Also, as tourist options to get to know and enjoy this destination, Decameron Hotels offer the service of transfers and excursions to places on the island such as Dunn's River Falls, Blue Mountains National Park, rafting on the Martha Brae River, The Bob Marley Museum, and golf courses, to live and enjoy a vacation experience Decameron style.

As a tourist project, Royal Decameron Cornwall Beach Resort generated 100 direct jobs, 200 indirect jobs and had an investment of US\$24,830,320.



PHOTOS BY JANET SILVERA
Jamaica Tours Limited's Burt Wright (left) and Senator Noel Sloley converse during the official opening of Royal Decameron Cornwall Beach Resort.



Honorary Consul to Ecuador, Clelia Barretto, poses with Decameron's Jairo Berrio, sales manager for Latin America and the Caribbean, during the opening of the Royal Decameron Cornwall Beach Resort.



From left: Among the local travel agents out to celebrate the official opening ceremony of Royal Decameron are Island Trotters' Deidre Brown, Travelmania Limited's Shani Lawrence and Ruth Fullerton, Unlimited Connections' Rowena Minott and Damali Fullerton, also of Travelmania.



Director of Bilateral Affairs in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, Shorna-Kay Richards, shares lens time with Diversey's Metty Scarlett-Jones at the official opening of the Royal Decameron Cornwall Beach Resort.



Attorney-at-law Courtney Hamilton and his wife Judy Farmer at the official opening of the Royal Decameron Cornwall Beach.



United States Ambassador Luis Moreno (left) and Prime Minister Andrew Holness.



Mayor of Montego Bay Homer Davis poses with acting executive director of the Tourism Product Development Company (TPDCo), Joy Roberts, during the official opening of the Royal Decameron Cornwall Beach Resort.



Decameron dancers (from left) Fabian Arnold, Tracy Thompson, Mark Ricketts and Sheckena Daley.



From left: Spanish Court Montego Bay's Christopher Issa, Digicel's Joy Clark, and water sports operator and hotelier Ernie Smatt share lens time at the opening of the Royal Decameron Cornwall Beach Resort.



Director of Tourism Paul Pennicook and local architect on the Royal Decameron project, Isiaa Madden.

Special-interest tourism a growing trend

JAMAICA IS set to benefit significantly from what has become a growing trend in special-interest tourism. More and more, travellers are craving enriching experiences that transport them from the hum drum of their everyday lives to a place of cultural immersion, social engagements, and environmental respite. Jamaica delivers.

The Jamaica Tourist Board (JTB) invests heavily in presenting Jamaica as a diverse destination, the ideal place for persons wanting these escapades off the beaten path. The island offers some of the prime activities that tick the boxes of special-interest travellers, including hands-on gastronomic experiences, sports tourism, and heritage and culture tours. In support of this approach, the JTB continues to host numerous influencers and special-interest media groups, exposing them to Jamaica's unique adventures.

Keeping abreast of the key motivating factors that excite people to travel is a sure way of positioning the destination with packages tailored to the experiences in demand. In pursuit of authentic encounters and experiences, special-interest tourists are drawn to meaningful interactions with community members, gastronomic experiences, heritage tours, fashion catwalks and exposés, health and wellness offerings, musical performances, and tours. Some of the media and influencer groups that the JTB has hosted feature fashion trend-

JAMAICA TOURIST BOARD

setters Revolve; *Elle Magazine*, a lifestyle publication; My Green Pod, a blog that highlights eco-lifestyle; and a Puma tour that focused on Jamaica's athletic prowess.

GOOD FIT

Jamaica's offerings are a good fit for special-interest travellers given the scope and depth of the island's tourism product. With the most diverse attractions and accommodation offerings in the English-speaking Caribbean, Jamaica stands to benefit greatly from the growth in this niche market. Travellers have a plethora of accommodations, sites, eateries, events, and activities to create a dynamic and interesting itinerary that will definitely satisfy their discerning tastes.

Catering to special-interest travellers is an excellent way to drive year-round arrivals to the island as visitors are not inhibited by seasonality issues. Rather, they are motivated to travel any time of year to satisfy their desire.

This is a great match for Jamaica's year-round industry that is vibrant and alive. And note, travellers in this niche are a small, yet profitable, group of consumers who are willing to pay for their experiences.

Negotiating airline partnerships for Jamaica



CONTRIBUTED

Jamaica participated in Routes Americas 2017, the travel event that provides opportunities to meet with senior decision makers from the region's airlines to discuss new market opportunities and the evolution of existing services. The delegates-only event was held from February 14-16 in Las Vegas in the United States. Director of Tourism Paul Pennicook led the Jamaica Tourist Board delegation as they engaged the world's leading airlines in negotiating travel routes to the island. Above, the Jamaica team is shown in discussions. From left to right are Director Pennicook; Audley Deidrick, president, Airports Authority of Jamaica and CEO, Norman Manley International Airports Limited; Alfred McDonald, senior director, commercial development and planning, Norman Manley International Airports Limited; Francine Carter-Henry, manager – tour operators and airlines, Jamaica Tourist Board; Donnie Dawson (standing), deputy director of tourism, sales, Jamaica Tourist Board; and Nicholas Han (behind the desk), senior analyst route planning, JetBlue Airways.

CONTRIBUTED

From left: Federico González-Denton, associate vice-president, government relations of Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd (RCCL); Paul Pennicook, director of tourism, Jamaica; Adam Goldstein, president of RCCL and the Florida-Caribbean Cruise Association; Edmund Bartlett, minister of tourism, Jamaica; and Delano Seiveright, senior adviser to Bartlett.



Growing interest in Jamaica-Cuba cruise itinerary

ON THE heels of Jamaica hosting a combined six cruise vessels in one day in the ports of Falmouth, Montego Bay, Ocho Rios and Kingston, Jamaica's Minister of Tourism Edmund Bartlett recently visited Miami, Florida, for a series of meetings with cruise executives.

The discussions focused on the growing interest in a Jamaica-Cuba cruise itinerary, which forms part of the tourism minister's

overall goal of securing five million visitors by 2021.

Accompanying the minister were Director of Tourism Paul Pennicook and senior adviser to the minister Delano Seiveright. The group met with Florida-Caribbean Cruise Association's (FCCA) new president Adam Goldstein and Royal Caribbean Cruise Limited associate vice president Federico González-Denton.



CONTRIBUTED

Minister of Tourism Edmund Bartlett (sixth right), Mayor of Falmouth Colin Gager (seventh right) and acting permanent secretary in the Ministry of Tourism, David Dobson (fifth right), lead off a sensitisation march through the town of Falmouth dubbed 'Falmouth Invasion'. The march, which was held on February 8, was aimed at encouraging residents and business interests to keep the resort town clean and foster civic pride. Following the march, participants gathered in Falmouth Square for a high-energy, lunch hour 'awareness-raising concert'.

Falmouth poised for major tourism growth

MINISTER OF Tourism Edmund Bartlett has revealed that the historic Georgian town of Falmouth is poised for major growth as it is on its way to becoming the newest tourism centre of the Caribbean.

As testament to its growing importance, the Trelawny capital was chosen by the Ministry of Tourism to kick-start a series of activities locally to celebrate the designation of 2017 as the United Nation's International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development.

These activities will culminate with a major United Nations World Tourism Organization global conference, which will be hosted by

Jamaica from November 27 to 29 at the Montego Bay Convention Centre.

Hundreds of students and other tourism partners gathered in Water Square on February 8 for a sensitisation march, dubbed 'Falmouth Invasion', through the streets of the town. The march was aimed at encouraging residents and business interests to keep the resort town clean and foster civic pride. Following the march, participants gathered in Falmouth square for a high-energy lunch hour 'awareness-raising concert'.

Outlining the growing importance of Falmouth as a tourist destination, Bartlett noted that "soon it will be the only discreet town,

carefully developed to facilitate all elements of tourism".

In addition to the just over \$300 million spent building the Caribbean's largest cruise shipping port in the town to receive the largest passenger vessels sailing the seas, he said the ministry was spending close to another \$300 million "in building out the experience in the town over the next four to five years".

VARIOUS DEVELOPMENTS

Included are an artisan village, restoration of heritage properties and sites, a landscaping project now under way, and "building out a financial programme for some of the small and medium tourism

enterprises in the Falmouth area so that people in the town can begin to become entrepreneurs and benefit directly from the tourism sector", Bartlett told the gathering.

In listing other major developments that will benefit Falmouth, he added that on March 30, ground will be broken for a new 325-room hotel to come on stream in 2018, and which will be expanded to 750 rooms by 2021.

"Another company is in discussion with me now, and they have already indicated to the mayor, their interest in a facility at Coral Spring that will bring another 750 rooms into the Falmouth area," the minister disclosed.

Further, Bartlett said he had been advised that "progress is being made with the long-awaited Harmony Cove project. We are in discussions about the way forward and before the year is out, a date will be given for groundbreaking activities to see that Harmony Cove project coming to fruition."

Adding the expansion of the Royalton to the new developments, Bartlett said that along the corridor from Falmouth to the Queen's Highway, there will be close to 5,000 rooms by 2025. He stressed, "We have to ensure that the buy-in is here from the people of Trelawny and that you protect the destination of Falmouth and keep it clean."

AROUND JA WITH PAUL H.



PHOTOS BY PAUL H. WILLIAMS

A view of the North-South Highway from Pinnacle.



A section of the ruins of Leonard Howell's house at Pinnacle.

Pinnacle missing out on Rasta tourism

FOUNDED BY Leonard P. Howell in the 1930s in Jamaica, Rastafarianism has evolved into a significant religious movement with converts and followers from all over the world.

But at the beginning, Rastafarians faced severe persecution as they were regarded as anti-Church and anti-government. Their actions, teachings and messages were seen as seditious. Their properties were often raided, and many were jailed, imprisoned, and verbally and physically abused.

Despite the pushbacks, the number of converts grew, and Howell established a settlement near Sligoville in St Catherine. On the top of a hill in the settlement, Howell built a house which had amenities that were considered modern at the time. The hilltop and the surrounding lands were eventually called Pinnacle.

From Pinnacle, there is a panoramic view of the lands below and over yonder. On the rocky lands, the Rastafarians developed and led a semi-autonomous and self-sufficient lifestyle, which drew the attention of the authorities.

There were two major militia raids on the property, in 1941 and 1953. Howell was imprisoned for sedition after the former, and during the latter, the settlement was totally destroyed. That was the end of the Howell era, for although some Rastafarians had returned, things were never the same.

Ownership claims had been made over the

lands for some time, especially lot 1998, the subject of a court case. And in 2014, Pinnacle was engulfed in a major ownership dispute, which got much media coverage. A private developer had claimed ownership of the hundreds of acres.

ISSUE OF OWNERSHIP

The whole affair was mired in confusion, and the government of the day commissioned an investigation into the ownership of the land. No official report has since been made public. When **Hospitality Jamaica** visited in October last year, a protected National Heritage plaque was noticed at the Jamaica National Heritage Trust, not far from the ruins of Howell's house. We were told that it was installed without fanfare a few months earlier.

Apart from the remnants of the house and the bakery, not much of the original structures is visible. There is also a tabernacle where nightly vigils were held in January 2014, at the height of the ownership dispute.

Many Rastafarians, some from overseas, had converged on to the property with the intention to reoccupy Howell's former community, but as the dispute fizzled, out people scattered back from whence they had come.

Despite it being a heritage site, protected by law, nothing much goes on there. And



A visitor to Pinnacle looking at the ruins of the foundation of Leonard Howell's house.

PLEASE SEE **RASTA**, 13

AROUND JA WITH PAUL H.

Jamaica African Dance Arts and Culture Festival returns

THIS PAST weekend, drumming and dancing took over the lawns of JAMVilla and Villa Loyola in Mammee Bay Estates, St Ann, as the second Jamaica African Dance Arts and Culture (JADAC) unfolded. It included dance and drumming workshops, the screening of *Queen Nanny Legendary Maroon Chieftainness*, an art exhibition, performances and wellness sessions.

The festival was conceived out of the need to help in the preservation of Jamaica's indigenous cultural forms, which were bequeathed us by people whose ancestors were brought here from west Africa to work on plantations owned by Europeans.

The enslaved Africans came in chains, without any personal belongings. They were stripped of everything, including their names. But embedded in their brains were the alphabets of their drums, which they made and played clandestinely. And in their limbs lived the movements to the beats of their drums.

MUSICAL RETENTIONS

Slavery is long gone, but the beats and the movements have been retained by some of their descendants, thus Jamaica's rich heritage of indigenous drumming and dancing, which has transcended and influenced popular Jamaican culture.

As part of the retention process,



A scene from an African dance workshop at JAMVilla on Friday, February 17.

many local institutions have African drumming and dancing as part of their repertoire and programme; and since last year, two women, Amaniyea Payne and Sophia Walsh-Newman (APSWN), have been organising workshops through the JADAC Festival.

"The JADAC Festival focuses on the dances, drumming, arts and

culture of this beautifully rich island and the retention of the African presence," APSWN said, "We return to Jamaica to continue to highlight, celebrate and engage in the rich African heritage found in the cultural and religious practices, language, music, food, and every area of Jamaican life, as well as share with Jamaica some dynam-

ic African teachers," APSWN said.

This year's confirmed master drum teachers included Marie Basse-Wiles, Medoune Yacine Gueye, Souleymane Solo Sana, L'Antoinette Stines, Idy Ciss, Amanyea Stines, Linda Johnson, and Amaniyea Payne with drummers Moustafa Reds, Foluso Mimy and Clifton Robinson leading the

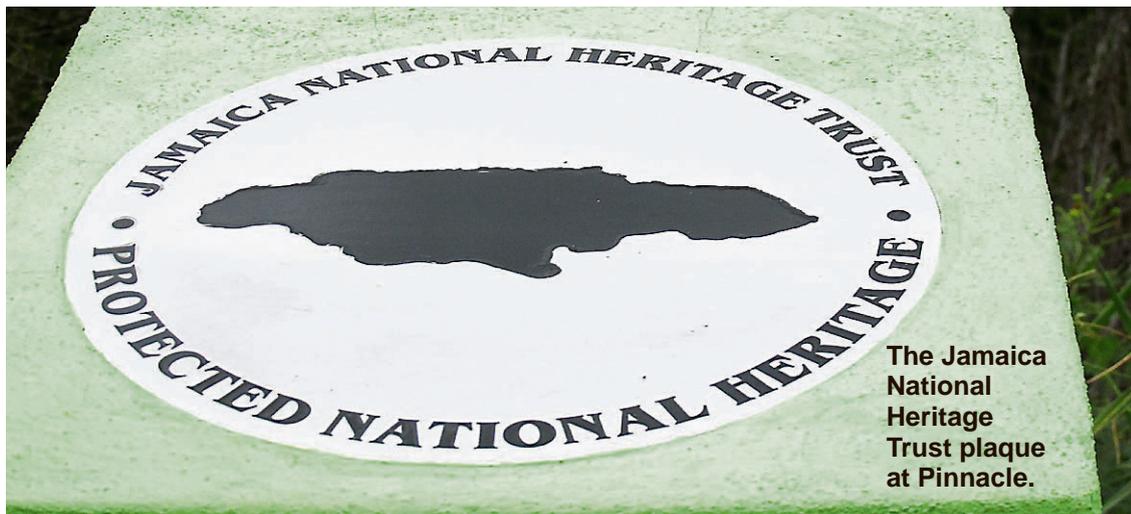


CONTRIBUTED

Amaniyea Payne (left) and Sophia Walsh-Newman, the organisers of Jamaica African Dance Arts and Culture Festival.

indigenous and African drumming.

"We welcome and provide economic opportunities for local vendors to provide delicious food, specialised goods and services to participants and visitors of the festival and associated events," APSWN said.



The Jamaica National Heritage Trust plaque at Pinnacle.

RASTA

CONTINUED FROM 12

what is the real ownership status of the rest of the land? Nobody seems to know. Last year, the minister of culture said that an announcement would have been made soon.

And while Pinnacle is sitting at the top of uncertainty and looking down on the lack of commitment from the Rastafarians themselves and government, other Rastafarian communities have

been opening their gates to visitors from near and far.

These villages are a major part of the community tourism landscape, where people go to immerse themselves into Rastafari culture, religion and lifestyle. Some noted communities are Bobo Hill in St Andrew, the Rasta Indigenous Village in St James, Lancaster Village in south Manchester, and the School of Vision, near Newcastle in the hills of St Andrew, which provides a variety of sleeping accommodations for guests.

Knutsford Court Hotel hosts Japan Calendar Festival

Paul H. Williams

Hospitality Jamaica Writer

THE BLUE Mountain Suite at the Knutsford Court Hotel in New Kingston, St Andrew, was a beehive of activities last Saturday, February 18, as scores of people turned up to be immersed in Japanese culture at the 2017 Japan Calendar Festival.

Calendar-making in Japan is big business, and much artistry is applied to the making of these date pieces, 20 of which were displayed in the auditorium. In addition, patrons got the opportunity to design their own calendars from a common template, but they were also given Japanese calendars of various designs and sizes to take home.

In addressing the gathering at the start of the event, Counsellor Shinichi Yamauaka, chargé d'affaires at the Embassy of Japan in Jamaica, Belize, and The Bahamas, said, among other things, "Japan Calendar Association donated 166 calendars this year to promote mutual understanding between the people of Japan and Jamaica, and at the same time, to create synergies between the two countries."

There were people from other countries in the mix, and there was much going on. From Japanese calligraphy, origami, ikebana, yukata wearing, to semba-zuru (paper cranes) making, patrons tried their hand at everything. Posing in the yukata (traditional Japanese dress) was a popular social media moment for many.

MARTIAL ARTS

The martial arts presentations were truly a demonstration of the mutual cultural exchanges of which Yamauaka spoke. There were several Jamaican participants, including 2012 taekwondo Olympian Kenneth Edwards, in the Japanese martial arts disciplines of karate and aikido and gymnastics.

And there could not be any festival without some entertainment, so the Embassy of Japan's coordinator for Grass Roots and Human Security Project, Koji Yamaguchi, accompanied on the piano at one stage by



PHOTOS BY PAUL H. WILLIAMS

These patrons seem pleased with their choice of yukata (Japanese traditional dress).



Taekwondo 2012 Olympian Kenneth Edwards striking a karate pose.



Patrons learning the art of Japanese calligraphy.



Pop Dynamix strikes a pose before dancing to 'Gokuraka-Jodo', a Japanese pop song.



From left: Kyoko Machida and Yujin Hasebe get ready for their Naginata duel.



A display of 2017 Japanese calendars.

Joshiko Nakagawa, revved up the vibe with his saxophone, delivering some well-received, lively pieces of music.

Pop Dynamix, an emerging Corporate Area modern dance ensemble, moving to a Japanese song, **Gokuraka-Jodo**, brought on the funk, dressed in Japanese-inspired costumes. There was more dancing as the University of the West Indies Mona Campus's Japanese Club climaxed the event with a Bon-odori dance workshop, after which patrons

executed what they had learnt, while dancing around the room.

The event was compered by Sheena Jarrett, a Jamaica Japan Exchange and Teaching Association alumnus. The programme gives teachers the opportunity to serve as assistant language teachers in public and private schools and/or local boards of education in Japan. Participants must have an interest in the promotion of mutual understanding between the participating countries.



Above: Two gymnasts showing how the somersault is done.



At left: Japanese artist Reiko Nagase was present with some of her artwork.

Enterprise Jamaica launches local referral scheme

LEADING JAMAICAN car rental company Enterprise Jamaica has launched a unique and innovative referral programme that will see Jamaican residents receiving cash just for recommending a car-rental booking through Enterprise Jamaica.

Mark Pike, general manager of Enterprise Jamaica, commented, "This is an absolute win-win for everyone and so simple. If you have a friend or relative visiting Jamaica from overseas and they

■ New initiative gives cashback for rental referrals

■ Jamaicans who encourage rental bookings receive five per cent cash back

■ 15 per cent off booking for Enterprise customers too

are looking for a car to get around while they're in Jamaica, recommend Enterprise Jamaica, and not only will we reward you five per cent cash back on the rental cost for the referral, but we'll also

offer the person renting the car a huge 15 per cent off their rental, too, depending on the class of car rented. The more referrals you make, the more money you get!"

The referral initiative is designed to encourage tourists and returning members of the diaspora to take to the open road and take in more of Jamaica than they would relying on public transport.

"If someone is flying into Montego Bay from, say, New York or Florida, rather than relying on

taxis or friends and family for rides, why shouldn't they consider renting a car and take in as much of Jamaica as they can when they're home? A rental car buys you total independence and helps you do so much more. Get over to Hellshire or Middle Quarters, visit relatives in St Mary, hit the beach in MoBay or Ochi. Whatever you want to do, you can with your own ride. What's more, we've got the newest rental fleet in the country and have convenient locations in both Montego

Bay and Kingston. With Enterprise Jamaica, you're guaranteed a brand-new, reliable Honda, exceptional service, and competitive rates, and now, it pays to encourage visitors to 'hit the road'!"

The initiative relates to all rentals from Enterprise Home City locations and requires each member to join the Ambassador Referral Club through a simple sign-up process. Registration can be completed by calling 1-888-5286 or 1876-906-0084.

CHIEF, Taste of the Caribbean to be held in Miami

TWO OF the Caribbean's premier tourism events will be staged concurrently in June in Miami during Caribbean-American Heritage Month.

The Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA) announced that the Caribbean Hotel Industry Exchange Forum (CHIEF), usually held in the fall, will now take place during the first week of June alongside the popular Taste of the Caribbean educational experience, cultural showcase, and culinary competition.

CHIEF will be held from June 2-4, 2017, while Taste of the Caribbean is slated for June 2-6. Both events will be held at the Hyatt Regency Miami.

"CHIEF brings together the right information, the right people at the right time, and by producing this event in Miami, we expect many more Caribbean stakeholders to benefit from the educational sessions and invaluable peer-to-peer exchange," said Bill Clegg, chairperson of CHTA's membership committee who also serves as CHIEF's programme chair.

Clegg, regional vice-president of product development for Choice Hotels International, explained that CHIEF, previously held on two occasions in Puerto Rico, would now be more accessible to Caribbean hoteliers and industry partners who can benefit from wider flight selection and more affordable air options into Miami.

CHIEF incorporates a variety of educational tracks led by experts from many travel, tourism, and hospitality industry segments and

features roundtable panels with one-on-one discussions on environmental sustainability, operations, sales and marketing, and technology.

BOTTOM LINE BENEFITS

Taste of the Caribbean, the region's premier culinary competition and cultural showcase, also provides a forum for gathering practical information, developing skills, sampling, purchasing, strengthening supplier relationships, and meeting new vendors. One goal of the popular event is to help attendees build food and beverage businesses and yield bottom line benefits.

The 2017 edition of Taste of the Caribbean will also bring innovative educational sessions for food and beverage professionals that promise to enhance individual skills and will feature a major consumer component soon to be unveiled.

"There are so many workshops that you can learn from," said Maureen Bowers, former Caribbean Pastry Chef of the Year (2010) from Antigua and Barbuda, speaking on the value of Taste of the Caribbean. "Social networking is also good for professionals. You can even learn from the competitions as well – the practical, physical work of what (other chefs) do."

For additional information about CHIEF and Taste of the Caribbean, including pre-registration, visit www.caribbeanhoteland-tourism.com or call +1 305 443-3040. For sponsorship opportunities, contact Matt Cooper at matt@caribbeanhoteland-tourism.com or +1 786 476-8620.

Sandals inspired during National Career Week



CONTRIBUTED

From left: Sandals Montego Bay's Training and Development Manager Sigourney Hastings and Environment, Health, and Safety Manager Haniff Richards describe the exciting career opportunities available within the Sandals chain to Cornwall College students Ragel Mitchell, Deshawn Cooke, and Geovani Merchant. Last Friday, February 16, Sandals Resorts in the Montego Bay region was one of many participants that joined forces with the Ministry of Education as they recognised National Career Week under the theme 'Expanding Horizons for Vision 2030'. Hundreds of students from various high schools across the western region were exposed to organisations that provided options that would facilitate their decisions on the next phase in achieving their career goals. The luxury-included chain not only provided information on the product and services offered, but built awareness of the resort chain being one of the most preferred employers within the tourism industry. Students also had a chance to learn more about the opportunities available through the Sandals Corporate University such as the Sandals hospitality training programme. National Careers Week is an initiative of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Information, HEART Trust/NTA, and Junior Achievement Jamaica. The initiative is observed in the second week of February each year and is aimed at helping to inspire wiser career decisions across Jamaica towards better engaging youth and adults alike in helping to establish the country as a globally competitive nation.