

The Antigua and Barbuda High Commission Official Newsletter



**“Each
Endeavour-
ing all
Achieving”**



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Statement By The Hon. W. Baldwin Spencer On the Passing of Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela – Former President of South Africa

“It is with great sadness that I learnt of the passing of the first black president and Father of South Africa, anti-apartheid icon and model political leader Nelson Mandela. The world has truly lost a champion for peace, human equality and freedom. In more ways than one, Nelson Mandela has managed to inspire countless of individuals around the world through ordinary human actions.

The ‘Madiba’ phenomenon (service for the people) has had a great deal of influence on political leaders around the world including your humble servant.

From his release from prison in February of 1990 he mounted a campaign of service to his people until his illness and subsequent passing. As a trade unionist and politician, I have treasured the lessons from his life and his unquenchable desire to spend himself for the well-being of others.

I shall always remember and be guided by a particular quotation from one of his speeches after his release from pris-

on. It reads, “What counts in life is not the mere fact that we have lived. It is what difference we have made to the lives of others that will determine the significance of the life we lead.”



**Hon Dr W. Baldwin Spencer
Prime Minister of Antigua and
Barbuda**

What has also stuck with me since his release from prison in 1990, was his poise and presence. He exhibited traits that set him apart as the consummate public servant. Taking into context the era in South Africa during his release from prison – a time of subjugation, violence and racism, he did not appear angry nor did he exhibit a thirst for revenge. Instead, he exhibited a disposition that would lead to others being inspired to build a new South Africa. In fact, he inspired other leaders around the world to fight peacefully for their people.

For most leaders across the region, including myself, Nelson Mandela’s life has inspired us to lead lives of service to our people. In his first speech immediately after getting out of prison, he al-

so said, “ I stand here before you not as a prophet but as a humble servant of you, the people.”

Those words mean a great deal to me in my everyday work for the people of Antigua and Barbuda. In my estimation, Nelson Mandela’s greatest and most notable achievement was his ability to unite a deeply divided country, a skill for which all politicians of today greatly yearn. Nelson Mandela will always be one of the greatest civil servant and politician to have graced the earth in the 20th and 21st centuries. May his life and work continue to inspire others to service.

To our South African and African brothers and sisters in Antigua and Barbuda and around the region, take comfort in knowing that the lives of ordinary South Africans at home have been positively impacted by the work of Nelson Mandela”.

In honour of his life and work, Antigua and Barbuda observed a week of mourning from Friday 6th to Friday 13th December. Flags were flown at half-mast on all government buildings including the Antigua and Barbuda High Commission London during this period.

High Commissioner's Message



His Excellency Dr Carl B W Roberts, CMG
High Commissioner to the Court of St James's

“He who has not Christmas in his heart will never find it under a tree ”

Roy L. Smith-

During Christmas every home takes on a special beauty, a special warmth, and despite of where we live it is whom we love that matters most. Let us continue to care for one another this season, give value to simplicity, share kindness and commemorate the love of family.

At this special time of year, we celebrate the divinity of Jesus Christ born in Bethlehem, whom with his life taught us assurances of salvation, harmony and good life upon earth. As suffering can have the effect of making Our Lord and Saviour seem far away, removed from our concerns or indifferent to our cries, Christmas reminds us that by trusting in His teachings we can never lose our way.

This day reminds us that all children are special, they are a gift from Our Lord and Saviour; gifts far beyond any price money can buy. In their laughter and joy and in our devotion to their upbringing lies the true meaning of Christmas.

Sons are a heritage from the LORD, children a reward from him. Like arrows in the hands of a warrior are sons born in one's youth. Blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them. They will not be put to shame when they contend with their enemies in the gate.

Psalm 127: 3-5

In cherishing our children, may Christmas enlighten the powers of family and unity. During these times together, we have held hands through many distinguished achievements, as many moments of grief lie yet still unforgotten. It has been our compassion nonetheless, as Antiguans and Barbudans that has always held us together, under one flag, one family, one Christmas that we share.

“Our human compassion binds us the one to the other - not in pity or patronizingly, but as human beings who have learnt how to turn our common suffering into hope for the future.”

- Nelson Mandela -

Any sport brings with it the culture of discipline, dedication and teamwork. In recent years our nation hosted the 2007 Cricket World Cup, we made a significant run in the qualification for the 2014 FIFA World Cup, and were furthermore represented, for the first time in history, at the Para Olympics in 2012. May our past achievements be used as building blocks of inspiration for the young athletes of tomorrow and may the spirit of Christmas accompany their endeavours.

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Education lies as the building block of any society and since today local students of Antigua and Barbuda have been pursuing their education in Cuba, Serbia, as well as here in London, others have adventured to Switzerland, Japan and many parts of the United States and Canada. Today we have seen the highest of number of students in the history of our country, exploring the realms of global education. We must be proud and optimistic of a future in the hands of a multi-cultural and globalized youth, willing and able to move our country forward in the name of Our Lord.

“It is not possible for civilization to flow backwards while there is youth in the world. Youth may be head-strong, but it will advance its allotted length”

- Hellen Keller -

Our economy, furthermore, has had equivalent stories of great success. With approximately 80% dependent on tourism, the Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority, here at The High Commission, has played its influential role in looking ahead and ensuring economic prosperity for the years to come. This year alone, they have launched a new website, placed Antigua and Barbuda as the Caribbean's Leading Honeymoon Destination and attracted celebrity programs such as the X-Factor. With increasing flights and a new airport development underway, optimism for the 2014 season is at its peak.

“The tourism industry has gone through a challenging period in recent years. However, not dwelling on what I cannot change, I look forward to building on the success of our accomplishments in 2013 and confidently entering the New Year positively with anticipated growth”

- Cherrie Osborne, Director of Tourism UK & Europe -

Christmas becomes then a time to reflect on past achievements, recognize faults and pursue those objectives that give honour to our name. As our nation rises to glory and becomes increasingly recognized within the International Political and Social world system, so will it do its people; for a nation without its citizens is a horse without its limbs.

As is my custom since my appointment as High Commissioner to the Court of St. James's in 2004 and in a spirit of great gratitude for what we have been able to achieve together, I wish you all the most joyful of holiday seasons and may we welcome this New Year with smiles on our faces and hope in our hearts.

His Excellency Dr Carl B W Roberts, CMG
High Commissioner to the Court of St James's



The High Commission for Antigua and Barbuda, London An Intern's Perspective

By Roberto Falangola

"Human progress is neither automatic nor inevitable... Every step toward the goal of justice requires sacrifice, suffering, and struggle; the tireless exertions and passionate concern of dedicated individuals".

Martin Luther King, Jr.

"Progress", "development"; two concepts understood as individual ambitions and/or societal, political or economical objectives. My name is Roberto Falangola, and I have been privileged enough to take part in an internship program here at The High Commission of Antigua and Barbuda, London. Programs like the one in which I honorably take part, are fruits of aspirations in the development of the individual; but what is of most significance is the ability to prepare a noble future based on the foundations of education through opportunity for all.

Our nation has become increasingly recognized within this Global Political and Social system, and the responsibilities of the High Commission play a crucial role in appropriately representing the ambitions of our people, addressing Global concerns and pursuing local action.

Throughout this experience, I have been exposed to the tireless efforts' and admirable patience's' that keep the various functions and roles of this diplomatic mission running effectively. It becomes important to acknowledge the collective action of members of this "family", who honorably and professionally represent our nation in the most gallant of fashions, keeping our flag waving proudly at 45 Crawford Place.

The High Commissioner to the Court of St James's His Excellency

Dr Carl B W Roberts, CMG, has been the cornerstone towards the pursuit and development of this mission since he first came into office in 2004. I previously had the opportunity to speaking with him, either between and during lunch breaks or more formally in his office.

On Friday 6th December, nonetheless, he opened his door to my streamline of enquiries that came with my trademark as intern. We spoke about the role of the High Commission holistically and his ambitions since he took office.

"The High Commission focuses on bilateral relationships of trade, investment and tourism. In orchestrating this mission, our image needs to reflect professionalism, efficiency, responsiveness and attention to customer service. When I took office in 2004, these ethics were as dispersed as our location. My initial ambition was to relocate to 45 Crawford Place, focusing on the correct portrayal of professionalism through accessibility and atmospheric conduciveness"

His Excellency's ways were modest, gestures were kind yet confident and as described by Dr. Goheer, a notable diplomat holding the positions of Director of Strategic Planning and Evaluation Division (SPED) and Secretary to the Governing Boards of the Commonwealth Secretariat in London;

"A man very well respected, by myself and amongst diplomats and state representatives throughout the Commonwealth Secretariat. He Chaired a committee through the revision and ultimate approval of a re-assessed Commonwealth Scale of Contributions , a task that had not been accomplished in over 20 years. When that task was completed His Excellency was elected to Chair the Board of Governors of the Commonwealth Secretariat and led them to a restructured Commonwealth Strategic Plan, inclusive of key elements of youth, education and health domains;; an extremely difficult negotiating task "

Throughout his time as High Commissioner to the Court of St. James's,

His Excellency took part in many global and regional decision making processes that have helped connect Antigua and Barbuda within the international community.

The Commonwealth Secretariat is the main intergovernmental agency and central institution of the Commonwealth of Nations. It is responsible for facilitating co-operation between members; it organizes meetings for members to discuss global and Commonwealth issues; promotes members' interests at international forums; offers advice; and provides experts who share their skills and experience with governments and institutions.

"At the Secretariat, I Chair the Board of Governors in approving work plans and budgets; contributing to the social and economic development of its Member States. " (The High Commissioner to the Court of St James's His Excellency Dr Carl B W Roberts, CMG)

The High Commissioner's most poignant responsibility to date would most certainly be the finalization of the Commonwealth Strategic Plan; a plan to progress and maintain a balance of outcomes, allocation of efforts between longstanding democracy and development of pillars of the Secretariat's work for the period 2013/14 to 2016/17.

"I formulated the details of the New Strategic Plan, which holds a pillarist budget framework for the organization inclusive of programmes and activities to bring benefits to Member States of the Commonwealth. It will stand strong in history for the next 3-4 years" (The High Commissioner to the Court of St James's His Excellency Dr Carl B W Roberts, CMG)

The Bureau of International Expositions (BIE) is an intergovernmental organization created to supervise international exhibitions, such as the upcoming Dubai Expo 2020.

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Its agenda is to oversee the calendar, the bidding, the selection and the organization of World Expositions and to establish a regulatory framework under which Expo organizers and participants may work together under the best conditions. Antigua and Barbuda is one of its 168 Member States.

“To date, I hold the position of Vice President of the organization, a position I was elected, for a period of two years from among the delegates of Member States. Within the BIE, I have further been elected as President and Chair of its Administration and Budget Committee, which exercises control over the management of activities and financial management of the BIE, establishing its annual budget and submitting it to the General Assembly for approval” (The High Commissioner to the Court of St James’s His Excellency Dr Carl B W Roberts, CMG)

This organization serves as an excellent platform for development through international cooperation,

benefitting our twin island state by exposing our strengths and attracting interests within the economic and political arena. In October 2011, the Commonwealth Heads of Government welcomed the creation of The Commonwealth Youth Orchestra, for which His Excellency furthermore holds its Honorary Vice Presidency.

The aims of the Youth Orchestra are to give students of the Commonwealth (aged 18 – 25) the opportunity to perform concerts throughout all the 53 countries of the Commonwealth, give composers of the Commonwealth international opportunities to have their music performed, give conductors of the Commonwealth international opportunities to conduct a world-class orchestra and to give young soloists of the Commonwealth opportunities to perform with a world-class orchestra. This organization promotes Youth Development in defeating barriers of culture, race or religion, through the love of music and its ability to harmoniously transcend international dialogue.

5
“One good thing about music, when it hits you feel no pain. So hit me with music, hit me with music now” (Robert Nesta Marley)

In 2012, His Excellency was most awarded with the Companion to the Most Distinguished Order of St. Michael and St. George, an order of chivalry founded in 1818 by King George IV cherishing the values of service in relation to foreign and Commonwealth affairs.

To conclude, exposures to diplomatic relations, simple to complex conversations amongst peers, adjustment to a set of rules and regulations through understanding, listening and self discipline, and the overall appreciation of accomplishment from hard work, has been an unforgettable experience. Our future is based on the foundation of an educated youth, for as late Nelson Mandela once said, *“education is the most powerful tool which you can use to change the world”*, may we take heart.

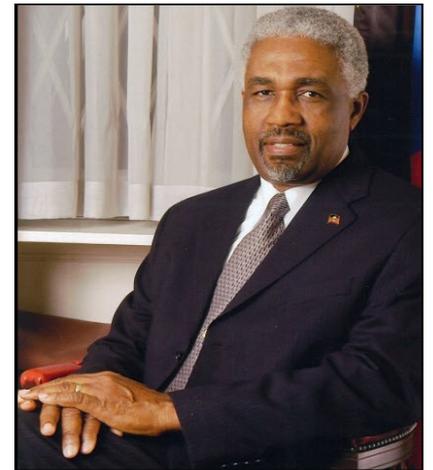
National Hero Sir Vivian Richards to Represent Nation at Nelson Mandela Funeral



Antigua and Barbuda’s living National Hero Sir Vivian Richards was selected by the Honourable Prime Minister to represent the nation at the Official Funeral of Former President and Father of South Africa Nelson Mandela on 15 December. Sir Vivian Richards who is on broadcast duty in Australia for the Ashes Series, was unable to fly to Qunu in the Eastern Cape for the funeral of the world renowned and revered freedom fighter who passed away on December 5 following a long battle with a lung infection. In his letter of appointment of Sir Vivian Richards to attend the funeral on be-

half of the people and government of Antigua and Barbuda, Prime Minister Spencer reminded the cricketing hero of his links to Nelson Mandela and the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa.

“I am also cognizant of your contribution to building solidarity and support for the ‘Anti-Apartheid’ movement both in Africa and around the world, and your personal sacrifice in honour of the struggles of all South Africans for continued freedom and equal rights. In this regard I am appointing you to head the Antigua and Barbuda delegation to attend the official funeral ceremony for the late Nelson ‘Madiba’ Mandela, to be held on Sunday 15 December 2013, in South Africa.” In 1982, Sir Vivian Richards refused an offer of an open cheque to be a part of a West Indies rebel team to tour South Africa during the height of the anti-apartheid era. Of the decision, Sir Vivian Richards recently remarked that, “you (he) felt seriously embodied with the folks who were suffering in South Africa. Human injustice was taking place for so many years.” Sir Vivian Richards also re-



marked that his most precious moment off the field of play was meeting Nelson Mandela in 2000 at the Laureus World Sports Awards in Monaco, during which time Nelson Mandela thanked him for his actions in helping to bring an end to apartheid in South Africa. **Antigua and Barbuda’s High Commissioner to the United Kingdom, His Excellency Dr Carl Roberts, CMG attended the State Funeral on Sunday 15 December 2013.** Unfortunately Sir Vivian was unable to attend. Ambassador Colin Murdoch represented Antigua and Barbuda at the Memorial Service for Nelson Mandela on 10 December.***

Cabinet expresses sympathy at the passing of former Commander of the Antigua Defence Force



Cabinet at its weekly session on

Tuesday 26th November paid respects to the life and work of Former Commander of the Antigua Defence Force (ADF) Major (Ret'd) Herman Dudley Blackman, GCM who passed away on Sunday 17th November.

Cabinet expressed its sympathy to his wife Mrs Gloria Blackman, children Lawrence, Dorothea and Vernon and the extended family and noted his sterling service to the nation as Commander of the Antigua Defence Force from 1971-1979, Aide-de-Camp to Governor General Sir Wilfred Jacobs until 1993, Protocol Officer in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs from 1993 to 1996 and Commandant of the Antigua and Barbuda National Cadet Corps from 1996 up until his retirement in 2003.

"For over 40 years Major Herman Blackman served Antigua and Barbu-

da with distinction. He was of strong character and a distinguished son of Antigua and Barbuda who was always willing to be of service to others. His passion for the development of Antigua and Barbuda and the Antigua Defence Force, now the Antigua and Barbuda Defence Force was demonstrated in his rise to the top position in the institution, following in the footsteps of his late father who also served in the force. He will be greatly missed by the people of this nation whom he committed his life to serving".

In accordance with the Queen's Regulations, Major Blackman was accorded a funeral with full Military Honours. The Funeral was held on Friday 29th November 2013 at the Spring Gardens Moravian Church at 1:00 p.m.



*"We will remember
them"*



Remembrance Sunday in Antigua and Barbuda

membrance for those who fell in the World Wars 1914-18 and 1939 – 45.

The day was marked with the annual



Sunday 10th November was observed as the National Day of Re-

service at the War Memorial on Independence Avenue where Four Sentries were in attendance along

with Ex-Service men and women and the Defence Force Band.

The Service also included a blessing by the Dean of the Anglican Cathedral, Buglers sounding the Last Post, a two-minute silence, Buglers sounding the Reveille and the Sentries will Order and Present Arms.

Wreaths were laid by a number of dignitaries including Governor-General Dame Louise Lake-Tack, Acting Prime Minister the Hon. Harold Lovell, Chief of Defence Staff Colonel Sir. Trevor Thomas, Commissioner of Police Vere Browne, members of the Diplomatic Corps, the National Cadet Corps and other uniformed bodies.

A Tribute to Major Herman Blackman From Mr Arnold Mason (a long-time friend)

"Those friends thou hast and their adoption tried Grapple them to thy soul with hoops of steel"

I was deeply shocked and saddened by the news that my very dear and close friend Herman had passed away on Sunday 17 November, although I knew for some years that he was not enjoying the best of health. Herman and I had been friends close to seven decades. It all began when we were both employees for the then Antigua Syndicate Estates and the friendship crystallized later as we became members of Oscar Bird's Old Boys Union "Spartro". We participated in all the activities: cricket, football, volleyball, plays, camping/mountaineering and The Choral Group. Herman and I had also received body building training from his dad. It was at this point in time I knew that Herman had a genuine sense of loyalty. He was always calm and organised. I also admired his unflappable coolness and good earthy and unpretentious humour.

In 1958, however, I emigrated to England but my departure did not in any way diminish our friendship. On the contrary it expanded. I got married in 1959; Enid and I had our first born in 1960 and Herman became first choice as Rhonda's Godfather.

Approaching the mid-Sixties I met up with Herman's "intended", Gloria who was studying to be a nurse, in England. In 1970, Rhonda with Enid met her Godfather and the new Mrs Gloria Blackman, in Antigua. 1972 was my turn to visit and my son Stuart and I were treated to a most memorable picnic at Long Bay where, ever since, Stuart has become hooked on plantains. Of course I had the problem later that night as he complained of tummy aches. I think he must have eaten all of Gloria's plantains.

And how could I ever forget Herman's stint at Sandhurst. I was at lunch in the office canteen, London, when this female colleague, all excited, handed me this note with a telephone number saying that one "Captain Herman Blackman at the Military Academy Sandhurst" would like me to phone him. Thereafter whenever we met up I would address him accordingly.

As ADC to Governor Jacobs we were invited to Government House on the visit of HMS Hydria - the warship that was involved in The Falkland Islands War. Enid and I attended test matches at the ARG with Herman and his brother Ickford (Snooks) and we were both at the weddings of Lawrence and Dorothea.

Two years ago Vernon with his Dad, picked up Mrs Agnes Tomlinson and me and took us for a long drive. And as the three fuddy-duddy octogenarians yapped away and rocked their heads off with laughter as they reminisced of stories of yesteryears, I could see how happy Vernon was for all of us: our families lives had become so intertwined.

And so to Herman's Soul Mate, - the ever-loving, caring and devoted Gloria, Lawrence & Family; Dorothea & family; and Vernon; Brother Ickford (Snooks) Benjamin; sister Arah (Junie) Armstrong; sister Eleanor Blackman; from the Masons - Arnold, Enid, Goddaughter Rhonda, Stuart and Family and John Gonsalves who wished to be remembered; do accept our heartfelt condolences and may the soul of **CAPTAIN HERMAN DUDLEY BLACKMAN OF THE MILITARY ACADEMY SANDHURST UK, REST IN PEACE.**

Antigua and Barbuda Pensioners' Social Security Life Certificates

Kindly note that Pensioners' Life Certificates can be witnessed and signed at the
Antigua and Barbuda High Commission, 2nd Floor, 45 Crawford Place, London W1H 4LP
For more information or to make an appointment please Telephone 020 7258 0070

Two Antiguanus were knighted at the Independence Day Ceremonial Parade

Two Antiguanus were knighted at the



Seen above Her Excellency Dame Louise Lake-Tack, GCMG, Governor General presenting Mr Selvyn Walter with his award, KCN

Independence Day Ceremonial Parade on Friday 1st November 2013.

The event laced with pomp and splendour formed part of the twin island state 32nd Independence anniversary celebrations.

Journalist Selvyn Walter was conferred with Knight Commander of the Most Distinguished Order of the Nation (KCN) for contributions to journalism, community development and service to the church.

Veteran calypsonian Paul "King Obstinate" Richards was also named Knight Commander of the Most Distinguished Order of the Nation (KCN) for his contribution to culture and the arts.

Also given awards were 28 citizens for their outstanding contribution to nation building. Please visit: www.antigua-barbuda.com for more information. *****



Seen above Her Excellency Dame Louise Lake-Tack, GCMG, Governor General presenting Veteran Calypsonian Mr Paul "King Obstinate" Richards with his award, KCN

Decompression Unit for Antigua and Barbuda

to raise funds to acquire a Decompression Unit to serve Antigua and

people to enter and exit. It releases a supply of compressed breathing gas to raise the internal air pressure. The hyperbaric chamber provides a supply of oxygen for the users and can be used for a number of clinical conditions and side effects relating to scuba and deep sea diving accidents, which is a major concern for Antigua and Barbuda and the Region as a popular tourist destination.

There have been other efforts to raise funds by Ms Geraldine Philip, a national of Antigua who first brought the project to the attention of the High Commissioner to gain support of the High Commission/Government of Antigua and Barbuda to have such a machine in the region to help individuals recover from, for example, spinal injuries as a result of diving accidents. Another such group is Antiguan born Councillor Sydney Knight formerly Mayor of Luton and his Team.

On 6th December 2013 Councillor Knight and his Team visited the High Commission to present to His Excellency with a cheque to the tune of £10,000 which will go towards the cost of the Decompression Unit. Thank you to Councillor Knight and his Team.
(More details in further issues of the newsletter)



Seen above left to right: John Ball, Councillor Knight, His Excellency Dr Carl Roberts, CMG and Mr Zulfiqar Ahmed (Ball and Ahmed accompanied Councillor Knight)

For the past few months, His Excellency Dr Carl Roberts, CMG, High Commissioner in the UK, has been working with a group of individuals

Barbuda and the Eastern Caribbean. A Decompression Chamber (Bends Chamber) is a sealable diving chamber with hatches large enough for

The Establishment Of The Three In One Initiative

A significant event took place in the Grays Green Community on Thursday 7th November, 2013, where residents gathered on the compound of the Grays Farm Health Centre to witness several events.

On that day, there was the commissioning of the new motorized ambulances, donated by the United Arab Emirates (UAE), the formal announcement of extended clinic hours



vices offered. She said that the quality and the availability of the care offered at the facility were second to none.



and the opening of the new Vision Centre.

The chairperson of the event was Elnora Warner, Principal Nursing Officer (PNO) in the Ministry of Health. During her remarks she encouraged residents to access the ser-

According to health officials, the extended hours now being offered at the Centre should greatly reduce the number of persons accessing care at the Mount St. John's Medical Centre as well as accommodate those who are unable to visit the clinic during

normal working hours. Two doctors and three nurses will be rotated and the pharmacy will be opened until 9pm.

Officials are hopeful that the new Vision Centre will be fully operational in a few weeks. According to the representative of the Caribbean Council for the Blind and Visually Impaired Persons Arvel Grant, "the right to sight is a global initiative." Mention was also made of the "the haves and the have nots," those who can afford to pay and those who cannot afford to pay due to financial constraints. Based on statements made, "there will be National Eye Care services available for everyone, free of cost." Plans are also in the pipeline to establish vision centres in other communities such as Johnsons Point, Clare Hall, and Barbuda.

Due to this initiative, blindness will be preventable if not eliminated. Scholarships were made available for the training of four persons and these four persons will be employed as refractionists for the Eye Care Facility.

The Prime Minister, who gave the keynote address, and who is also the parliamentary representative of the area, spoke of the government's holistic approach to health care by bringing it to the doorstep of the community.

11th November 2013

Crowd funding tapped in bid to produce ancient rum



Black Caesar rum

A local entrepreneur is seeking crowd-sourced funding in an attempt to bring an ancient Antiguan rum into production, according to a release. Gerald Daniel is aiming to raise US \$150,000 by January

20, using the crowd-sourced funding web site Indiegogo. The funds, according to the release, will be for equipment such as a reverse osmosis system, labeler and corker – to be used in the rum factory.

Daniel hopes to produce a brand of rum called Black Caesar using a recipe, he said, has been passed through his family for generations.

In a YouTube video released as part of the campaign, Daniel said the rum has its roots in a tale of an African chief turned pirate.

Daniel said Black Caesar was an African chief known for his strength and intelligence, who, after being tricked aboard a slave

ship in Africa, escaped during a hurricane in the Atlantic Ocean.

Crowd-sourced funding is a collective effort of individuals who network and pool their money, usually via the Internet, to support efforts initiated by other people or organizations. The method of raising funds is used in support of a wide variety of activities, including disaster relief, citizen journalism, political campaigns, start-up company funding and scientific research among others.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rj6xLSpxpIU>

<http://www.indiegogo.com/projects/black-caesar-rum--2>

11th December 2013

Antigua and Barbuda Appoints new Director of Tourism for UK and Europe



The Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority (ABTA) announced the appointment of Cherrie Osborne to the position of Director of Tourism UK and Europe. As incoming Director she is charged with the responsibility of directing and managing the European efforts to market and promote the island of twin island destination in the UK and Europe.

Ms. Osborne began her career in the UK tourist office in 2006 and was later promoted to Sales and Marketing Manager in 2009, where she has served with distinction in developing strong links with British tour operators and airline partners. She has ably

deputized in the position on numerous occasions and brings to the role a wealth of experience and contacts relevant to promoting Antigua and Barbuda in the UK.

In making the announcement Minister of Tourism the Honourable John H. Maginley said, "After serving as second in command for the past six years Cherrie has shown that she possesses the maturity and capacity to lead our tourism promotion efforts in the UK and Europe. She has a keen understanding of the product, and a wealth of experience working with the UK travel industry. I look forward to her leadership in reinforcing the destination's image and promoting brand Antigua and Barbuda in Europe.

I also thank her immediate predecessor Mr. Hilary Modeste for his leadership of the UK and European team over the past 5 years and wish him well on his well earned retirement.

On learning of her promotion, Ms. Osborne said "I am excited about the opportunity, to lead an experienced team, in the development of Antigua and Barbuda's tourism industry, building on the vision through dynamism, innovation and through strong relationships with our tourism industry partners. The tourism in-

dustry has gone through a challenging period in recent years. However, Antigua and Barbuda's Tourism product remains resilient. We continue to adapt to the changing environment. As we enter into 2014, we must continue to build on our successes of the last year. I am confident, working together we will achieve our growth targets."

Chief Executive of the Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority Colin C. James said the Miss Osborne has been particularly effective in building a large network of business relationships, with European tourism partners. Additionally the PR projects such as the recently successful X-Factor TV episodes that Cherrie has spearheaded, has resulted in immense exposure for our destination.

On behalf of the entire team, I would like to extend heartfelt congratulations to Cherrie. It a great achievement for her and this promotion is well deserved.

With the increase in airlift from the UK for the upcoming winter season and the recent marketing efforts in building brand Antigua and Barbuda, the UK is expected to return to growth in overall visitor arrivals this year.

11th December 2013

Antigua and Barbuda at The Commonwealth Fair

*** THANK YOU ***

Antigua and Barbuda took its usual place at the Commonwealth Countries League fair on Saturday 9th November at Kensington Town Hall, London.

Once again the favourite brands of Antigua and Barbuda were on sale including Susie's Hot pepper Sauce, English Harbour and Cavalier Rum, fudge, sugar cake, peanut sugar cake, (made by Mrs Molly Richards), sorrel (made by Mrs Ernie Joseph) and calendars of Antigua and Barbuda recipes. Ms Geraldine Philip sold a variety of natural hair products, oils, manmade soap, glassware with a map of Antigua and Barbuda and a sample headdress made from the Madras cloth (orders could be placed). Proceeds from the fair went to the CCL Education for Girls fund.

This event could not have been a success without the support of all our nationals and friends. A special thanks and appreciation go to Ms Geraldine Philip and Mrs Ernie Joseph for their time, hard work and contribution.

Christmas in the Caribbean Thomas Cook Airlines' Inaugural Flight to Antigua

Earlier this year, Thomas Cook Airlines announced a new range of flights to the Caribbean from Manchester Airport, bringing the only routes outside London to St Lucia and Antigua and one of only a handful to Barbados.

A 'new to Thomas Cook Airlines' fully refurbished Airbus A330 arrived in November – registration G-CHTZ – and undertook its first flight to Saint Lucia and Barbados.

On Thursday 19th December, saw the inaugural flight to Antigua, and representatives from Thomas Cook Airlines and the Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority celebrated the occasion by cutting a traditional cake, assisted by Anthony Cotton from Coronation Street, representing the Thomas Cook Children's Charity, at Manchester Airport.

Christoph Debus, CEO Thomas Cook Airlines UK said, "Today saw yet again another full flight to the Caribbean, with our new A330 aircraft starting our second weekly flight taking our customers to the beautiful island of Antigua.

"Our new route to Antigua is yet again great news as we continue to develop Manchester Airport as our long haul hub and is another step as we aim to become the best sun and

beach leisure airline."

Cherrie Osborne, Director of Tourism for UK and Europe, Antigua and

"We were delighted to see Thomas Cook's inaugural flight to Antigua depart today, the demand for direct flights to the Caribbean from the



Seen Above left to right at the Inaugural Reception: Anthony Cotton, Coronation Street star, Joel Henry, Marketing Executive Business Development. Thomas Cook Official and Cherrie Osborne Director of Tourism UK Europe, Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority

Barbuda Tourism Authority said, "We are thrilled that Thomas Cook has decided to launch a service from Manchester to our beautiful islands, making our destination more accessible to holiday makers in the North of the UK ." She added "With temperatures averaging 27°C this is the ideal time of the year to visit and indulge in Antigua and Barbuda's natural beauty, vibrant culture and stunning beaches."

Stephen Turner, Aviation Commercial Director at Manchester Airports Group (MAG), said:

North of England is incredibly strong at the moment.

"This new route means we are the only other airport outside of London to offer a direct service to Antigua and St Lucia. This highlights our continued dedication to offer passengers a wealth of routes locally, without having to travel further afield to congested Southern airports."

For more details visit:
www.flythomascook.com/



Save The Date

England in the West Indies 2014:

Three-One Day International Match series:
28th February, 2nd & 5th March
Sir Vivian Richards Cricket Ground, Antigua

Government Breaks Ground For New Secondary School in Five Islands

Describing the ground-breaking for a new secondary school as historic and a momentous occasion, Minister of Education Dr. Jacqui Quinn-Leandro said the new institution when completed, will cater to students of various intellectual capabilities.

Turning of the sod signalling the start of construction of the new EC \$ 40 million facility at Five Islands made possible through a grant from the People’s Republic of China, took place, with a 24 month period given for completion.

The Education Minister said with a capacity to hold 800 students, the new school will cater for every child that enters its doors, all in keeping

tem has got to change with it. We cannot educate our students in antiquated ways and expect them to be successful in a modern world of work.”

The operationalization of the new school will see additional job creation, with 70 new teachers along with ancillary and maintenance staff expected to be hired.

The additional school will serve students in the surrounding areas of the Grays/Green communities, stretching as far as Martins Village will relieve existing institutions including Princess Margaret, Ottos Comprehensive, and Antigua Girls’ High School of their large student populations.

Minister Quinn-Leandro addressing critics who doubted the project encouraged them to “use positive ener-

ceremony that her government is serious about educating the nation’s youth.

“Ladies and gentlemen, this government means business when we talk about ensuring access to education. But more than access the Ministry is also ensuring that with our rigorous emphasis on teacher training we provide a high quality education product. When our Antiguan and Barbudan students leave these shores and compete in the global marketplace, they will continue to stand head and shoulders above many others and hold their own, having benefitted from the strong foundation acquired in our education system,” she said.

The new school to be constructed by China Civil Engineering and Construction Company is one of two that will be added to the existing complement of public schools. The other institution will be built at Tomlinson’s, through a loan from the Caribbean Development Bank.

The 6,650 square meter state of the art school at Five Islands will feature science laboratories, a music room, multi-media room, and an agricultural technology classroom among other amenities.

“I say to the people of Antigua and Barbuda that this is a big deal. I say to the people of this area that the Five Island Secondary will be a land mark in this community; take care of it. Cherish it among all the things you so proudly hail and claim as your own.

“I daresay this; alongside the primary school will be the most important. This institution under your care and watch will outlast your lifetime and educate generations of your families to come,” Dr. Quinn-Leandro concluded.

18th November 2013



with her Ministry’s efforts to advance Universal Secondary Education (USE).

“This school will cater to the academically gifted as well as those geared toward the arts and those who are gifted in the technical and vocational areas. The particular attention paid to these technical subject areas again demonstrates our commitment to USE and our commitment to developing the whole student. The world is ever changing and our education sys-

gy twinned with our vision for education along with the goodwill and beneficence of the Chinese government to our advantage as a people, for the benefit of our young people”. She highly commended her ministry’s staff and technicians within the public works department, along with the Chinese officials who have worked overtime in arriving at this stage.

She told those at the ground-breaking

Useful Telephone Numbers in Antigua and Barbuda

Registrar of Births, Marriages, Deaths—001 268 462 3725

Land Registry—001 268 462 3745 Or 562 3943 or 562 3894

Newest centenarian celebrates milestone



Birthday lady Eugenie Jude was all smiles on 26th November 2013 as she celebrated her 100th year of life amongst friends and family.

She is agile and charismatic with a youthful spirit but don't let Eugenie

Olive Jude's vibrant personality fool you; she is actually Antigua's newest centenarian.

A devoted Methodist, Jude is extremely articulate, has sharp hearing and reads without the aid of eye-glasses.

"The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is

the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? When wicked men, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell," Jude said, reciting some verses of Psalms 27, her favourite Bible scripture.

Born on St John's Street on November 26, 1913, the centenarian told *OBSERVER media* she attended Point Government School and moved to Christian Street, in 1928, when she was 15 years old, after a severe hurricane devastated her home and her mother could not get accommodations elsewhere.

Jude has worked as a cook at the Teachers' Training College. Jude never bore any children but admitted to being a caregiver for all her sister's children. Her great-nephew, Dr Dane Abbott, now cares for her.

Throughout the day, Governor General Dame Louise Lake-Tack, members of the Ministry of Social Transformation, villagers and friends stopped by to wish the birthday lady continued life.

27th November 2013

Briggins resident celebrates 100



Centenarian Edna Richards celebrated in grand style in the company of seven of her children. She received a birthday greeting from Queen Elizabeth II and a bouquet from Governor General Dame Louise Lake-Tack. (Photo courtesy Joe Martin)

Edna Richards of Briggins Estate became the latest resident to reach the age of 100 and she was surrounded

by family members and friends as she celebrated the milestone.

The well-spoken centenarian has lost some hearing in one ear but that did not prevent the devout Ebenezer Methodist Church member from praising the Lord.

Joined by Governor General Dame Louise Lake-Tack and staff of the Ministry of Social Transformation, Richards lustily rendered her favourite hymn "Bind Us Together."

Birthday greetings from Queen Elizabeth II and a bouquet of flowers from Dame Louise brought a big smile, that lit up the whole room, to Richards' face.

Originally from Liberta, Richards married George Kingston Liverpool Richards in 1942 and moved to John Hughes and Folly Hill before moving to Briggins Estate 25 years ago. She was an entrepreneur who

worked as a seamstress, baker, farmer and shopkeeper. Richards, whose husband died 46 years ago, had eight children, three stepchildren, 40 grandchildren and 35 great grandchildren. She was pre-deceased by her first-born and one stepchild.

Her favourite meal is fried dumplings and fungee. "Rice she does not particularly like, she will have a little of it. At one time she used to love a lot of vegetables but for right now she doesn't like too much vegetables but she will eat it," her daughter Cromwell Richards Joseph said.

Another daughter, Dethrocia Richards added that her mother enjoys a hearty breakfast to include salad, bread, fruits and cereal, and snacked throughout the day.

6th December 2013

Off to Serbia to pursue studies



Barbudan, Lincoln Burton Jr. commenced studies in the Republic of Serbia under the World in Serbia Scholarship programme in conjunction with the Prime Minister's Scholarship Programme.

Lincoln Burton Jr., joined Antigua

and Barbudan students Shanice Christian, Donly Browne, Wintley Burton, Connell Joseph and Kayla Samuel who are in their 2nd and 3rd years pursuing degree studies in the republic located in the Balkan Peninsula which links Europe and Asia. As part of his degree studies, Lincoln will be given a year-long emersion course in Serbian language and culture before commencing studies in Marine Biology.

Prime Minister Spencer, while stating that he is delighted that Antiguan and Barbudan students are being given the opportunity to pursue studies in the Republic of Serbia which will create a meaningful bond between that country and Antigua and Barbuda, outlined that one of the goals of the government's scholarship programme is to create world class citizens. He said that while it is important for them to make contributions in Antigua and Barbuda upon the completion of their studies, his government will be proud of them wherever they decide to

make contributions around the globe.

"I am pleased that the Government of the Republic of Serbia has agreed to partner with Antigua and Barbuda for a third year in our quest to provide the best education for our people. We appreciate this partnership greatly," said PM Spencer.

National Security Minister, Dr. the Hon. L. Errol Cort who was on hand at the airport for Lincoln's departure to Serbia, outlined that the government is investing a great deal of effort and finances in training the young people of the country and commended Lincoln for taking up the opportunity to pursue studies in Serbia. He admonished Lincoln to work hard and remain focus.

Lincoln Burton Jr. is a graduate of the St. Joseph's Academy and the Antigua State College. Lincoln will pursue undergraduate studies at the University of Belgrade.

28th November 2013

NOTTINGHAM YOUNG MUSICIAN OF THE YEAR 2013 AWARDS

On Sunday 10 November 2013 Nottingham County's most talented musicians took a bow at The Young Musician of the Year Awards, in the Djanogly Recital Hall, at the University of Nottingham.

The overall winner of The Seventh Biennial Competition was JENEBA KANNEH-MASON who received The Windblowers Trophy, and a cash prize of £400. And in keeping with the custom, Jeneba has been invited to give the lunchtime concert in the Great Hall at The Southwell Music Festival in August 2014.

The eleven year old Jeneba, by far the youngest of the finalists, gave a stunning performance. In particular, the adjudicator commented on her musicality, composure and the mature manner in which she connected with the audience. Those attributes were very much in evidence.

Jeneba's programme was:

Mozart, 1st Movement, Sonata in C, K330

Glinka-Balakirev, The Lark (L'Alouette)

Scarlatti, Sonata in C, K159

Chopin, Fantasie-Impromptu, Opus 66



Jeneba Kanneh-Mason holds the Entrance Scholarship from The Royal

Academy of Music Primary Academy studying piano with Patsy Toh and cello with Ben Davies. She gained Grade 8 distinction on the piano at age 9, winning The Nellie Greenhill Memorial Prize from The Associated Board for the highest marks in the Nottingham area. Jeneba also has grade 7 distinction on the cello. And (jointly with her sister Konya) has won the Senior Piano Recital at The Derby Arts Festival and the open piano Recital at Grantham music Festival, this year.

Jeneba commenced her secondary education at The Trinity Catholic School in the Autumn Term 2013, and plays the piano and cello in the school's chamber orchestra.

For her pastimes, Jeneba enjoys middle and long distance running with her dad and two brothers.

His Excellency Dr Carl and Mrs Pauline Roberts and staff of the Commission wish Jeneba Kanneh-Mason every success in her musical journey and general education in the years ahead.

Visitors experience an *Antigua Then* excursion



If you drove to the Precision Centre at Paynter's, you would have been transported back in time. It was all about *Antigua Then*.

A time of the Harvest Festival, first celebrated in 1843 as Lammas or Loaf Mass, when farmers made loaves of bread from the new wheat crop, giving those fresh loaves to the churches for communion.

A time of the market lady with her tray of sweets like fudge and "dutt gyal". A time when backyard gardens produced everything for the table and the garden's produce was converted to sauces (pepper) and liqueurs (sorrel); meats and fish were dried and hung from a strip of wire for later use; and eggs came from the fowl cooped in the backyard. A time

of wattle and daub houses; aloe planted at the entrance to keep spir-

its away; a grass bed overlaid with patchwork sheet and pillows for sleeping; a mat made of scraps alongside; with the sod iron and coconut bough broom as household implements; kitchen aids like the coal pot and grinding stone – the latter for sharpening things or grinding corn; a galvanize wash tub for bathing in; the hoe and sickle propped up for the next day's work.

The exhibition was well researched and the exhibits quite visual. In recreating the wattle and daub, builders like Dave Laviscount did their best to replicate the techniques of the builders of yesteryear – intertwined wood overlaid with a mixture of mud, sand, grass, and dung with limestone to mask the smell and a roof of wattle and coconut bough. There were

games like Journey, a Precision Centre creation that may yet be marketed, styled on board games like Candyland, with coloured cards pointing to bits of Antigua and Barbudan trivia for family play time.

And that wasn't the only game; the young ones had fun pursuing activities such as putting together a puzzle that when formed showed the flag of Antigua & Barbuda and lining up for donkey rides. In another tent, grown folks indulged in warri and other adult games. The music tent, meanwhile, consisted of everything from the tambourine made of bottle tops to the pan, which invited novices to beat out a tentative version of *Mary had a little lamb*.

The exhibits acknowledged the various influences on what we now know as Antiguan culture: referencing the Victorian era songs "we plough the fields and scatter" that might have been heard in the fields and giving a sample of the fashion and culture of the various peoples who have touched this soil from the Amerindians to the Europeans to the Africans to the Chinese to the Middle Easterners and others, mannequins adorned in clothing representative of the various groups.

The folks behind all of this are the members of the Precision Centre, a place of worship, which has seemingly embraced the mission of reconnecting Antigua & Barbuda with her past.

11th November 2013

Government Spreads Holiday Cheer with Christmas Barrel Initiative



The Christmas Barrel Initiative for the

2013 Yuletide season will be from 2nd December 2013 and run until January 7, 2014. Under this initiative each household will be allowed to import clothing, foodstuff and toiletries for personal use in a standard size shipping barrel.

Barrels will be free of import duty and will not attract the Antigua and Barbuda Sales Tax (ABST). However they will be subject to the 10 per cent Revenue Recovery Charge on the value of the contents, and an administrative charge of EC\$10.

Items other than food, clothing and toiletries will attract the normal duties and taxes. A maximum of two individuals will be allowed to examine any barrel, and at no time would more than 100 people be allowed at the port in general, as part of new Port Authority security measures.

In order for consumers to qualify under the initiative, imported barrels must reach the island within the time period outlined.

www.antiguabarbuda.gov.ag

Bravery awards for Homerton firefighters who risked their lives in blaze at hostel

for drug addicts which was opened by Princess Diana in the early 1980s and was being used as a squat. Crew manager Kevin Connor and

Meanwhile Mr Fenton and another fireman Lee Andrews, who has declined the award on the grounds he was just doing his job, broke through a locked door during a search of the premises and rescued a man who was unconscious.



Pictured from left is Speaker Michael Desmond, fire fighter Angelo Comparini, fire fighter Dean Fenton, crew manager Craig Feuner, crew manager Kevin Connor, fire fighter Justin Thomas (former Administrative Assistant, Antigua and Barbuda High Commission London, Borough Commander Steve Dudeney.

Five firefighters have been honoured at a special awards ceremony at the town hall after a heroic rescue from a fatal blaze.

The brave men from Homerton fire station risked their lives to save four people who were trapped in a boarded up and disused former hostel ablaze in Lower Clapton Road, Clapton.

Around 40 firefighters tackled the raging inferno in the early hours of August 4 at the former rehab centre

firefighters Dean Fenton, Angelo Comparini and Justin Thomas scaled walls, fences and ladders during the rescue operation which was overseen and directed by crew manager Craig Fenner.

Mr Comparini and Mr Thomas rescued three men and a woman who were stranded on a porch roof trying to escape the billowing blaze, although one of the men jumped 25ft before the firefighters could reach him and he died in hospital several months later from his injuries.

Mr Comparini, 38, of Essex, said: "I saw lots of smoke and realised it was quite a serious fire. I was not scared, we are trained to do it.

"I would say we were just doing our job. Most firefighters would have done the same thing.

"But it's always nice to be recognised for the job you do every now and then as there's a lot of people who don't get recognised."

It's unusual for fire commendations to be given and this is one of only a handful to be held in the borough in the last 15 years. London Fire Brigade borough commander Steve Dudeney led the commendation ceremony.

Homerton Fire Station manager Norman Perry said: "I and the borough commander are extremely proud of the work the men did saving people. It was not a straightforward rescue. It was quite risky."

An investigation was carried out into the cause of the fire, but the results were inconclusive.

One other man was found dead in the blaze.

Hackney Gazette
15th November 2013



V.C. Bird International Airport Launches New Website

On October 30, 2013, the V.C. Bird International Airport launched its new website. This new tool is equipped to assist passengers, airport partners and the general public with flight and passenger information as well as help them learn about the airport's history. This new website is a contribution to a positive airport experience for all users. Visit www.vcbia.com for more details.

International Warri Championship

Warri, the national mancala (board game) of Antigua and Barbuda, was brought to Antigua and Barbuda by African slaves who were brought to work primarily on sugar plantations in the early 18th century, and is still



a game widely played in the Antiguan and Barbudan society today.

Warri is said to mean 'house' and many of the other names also translate to mean 'house' in other African languages. Warri originated in Africa over 5000 years ago, and is alive and well in the Caribbean particularly in our twin-island state where the best players are known to originate.

Game boards can be of different sizes and shapes, however, in Antigua, boards are typically rectangular, made of wood and have two rows of

six round, hollowed-out depressions or cup-like scoops in each row running the length and either side of an imaginary middle line in the board's centre. On either end of the rows is a bigger scooped out hollow, which is a roundish rectangular depression, perpendicular to the rows of hollows in the middle.

There are many tournaments held in Antigua and Barbuda to keep the spirit of Warri alive such as The Taxi Drivers' Warri Tournament which is held at the Heavenly Hill Art Gallery in Johnson's Point. The Women's International Warri Championship, which is held at the Jolly Beach Resort and the most recently held International Warri Festival (also known as The Antiguan Open International Warri Tournament) that was held at the end of October at the Multi-Purpose Cultural Centre at Perry Bay in St. John's. The International Warri Tournament was held

on November 3rd 2013 with participation from seven different countries which included Switzerland, Belgium, France, Ghana, Kazakhstan, India and England with the best players from Antigua being Trevor Simon, September Christian and Pumpkin Lewis.

Antigua reigned supreme when Trevor Simon again took first place in the Masters Division defeating runner up Terrence 'Kambui' Charles on the final count of warri seeds which showed Simon at 122 seeds and Charles at 118 seeds. The annual games are organized in the National Warri Association which is presided over by Everton Jacobs.

World Warri Champion Trevor "Simple" Simon retained his crown in a keenly contested final in the Antigua International Warri Festival at the Multi-Purpose Cultural Centre.

Trevor "Simple" Simon has been playing warri for many years. Simon is the most domineering player in world warri, having won the title 11 out of 12 times. The only time he lost was years ago to another Antiguan, September Christian. Simon intends to keep playing and teaching the sport to the upcoming generations so that the sport is kept alive in Antigua and Barbuda for many years to come.



Exciting News for Antigua And Barbuda at World Travel Market



Antigua and Barbuda's Minister of Tourism, The Hon. John Maginley today expressed confidence in the destination's upcoming winter performance as he met with trade partners at the World Travel Market business-2-business travel industry exhibition taking place in London this week.

"Increased airlift, and a new airport terminal built to handle a greater capacity, will ensure that we are poised for growth for 2014" remarked the Tourism Minister. Maginley, who is accompanied by CEO of the Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority Colin James, UK & Europe Marketing Manager Cherrie Osborne and the Tourism Authority's UK Team, has spent the last three days in negotiations with airline and tour operator partners, at WTM.

The Minister of Tourism announced that Antigua will as of December 19 benefit from a new flight out of Man-

chester with Thomas Cook. "We have focused on expanding as well as building up new routes for the destination", said Maginley. "And, this new route will boost travel to Anti-

gua and Barbuda particularly from the areas north of London during the winter."

Virgin Atlantic will also increase their service to Antigua from three to four flights with more first class and premium seats available while British Airways will maintain their daily flights.

Tourism Authority CEO, Colin James, said "we are extremely pleased with the additional airlift coming out of the UK for the winter as well as looking ahead into the summer". "Antigua's product is heavily upmarket, and the reconfiguration by the airlines to allow for more upper class seats will bode well for the destination. It demonstrates the confidence by our airline partners in the consumers' demand for Antigua's luxury product, and in our ability to fill these seats."

The tourism officials also used the

World Travel Market platform to share the news on Antigua and Barbuda's recent accolade 'Caribbean's Leading Honeymoon destination' and nomination as 'World's leading honeymoon destination' for the 2013 World Travel Awards.

Further enhancements to the new visitantiguabarbuda.com official tourism website, with an integrated social media platform, and the development of high-quality social media apps for mobiles and tablets, have also been shared with journalists.

Cricketing legend, Sir Vivian Richards joins the Antigua and Barbuda delegation as Tourism Ambassador, and has been drawing crowds to the stand, for photo and autograph signing sessions. Richards addressed media on the country's latest developments in sports tourism as it relates to cricketing tours for schools and clubs, and the England vs. West Indies One Day International Series taking place in February and March 2014 in Antigua.

Hoteliers and DMC's who have also joined the Antigua and Barbuda Ministry of Tourism and The Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority, on the stand this year to discuss ways to drive business to the destination, are Blue Waters, Hermitage Bay, Sugar Ridge, Carlisle Bay, Jolly Beach Resort and Spa, National Tours and Services, Carib World Travel, St. James Travel and Tours and Suntours Antigua.

Representatives from tourist guides, The Antiguan, and The Treasure Islands Guide, are also on stand.

8th November 2013



Virgin brings Airbus, increases flights



Passengers disembark the inaugural Virgin Atlantic Airbus A330 flight at the V C Bird International Airport on Saturday. (Photos by Tameika Malone)

Passengers travelling between London and Antigua will have more flying options for the winter season on Virgin Atlantic, as the airline has increased flying days to four per week.

Beginning Saturday, a smaller but more economical aeroplane replaced the Boeing 474 that has been servic-

300 series which although it is a smaller airplane, it's a more fuel efficient aeroplane – all of the latest technologies and flight navigation are on board," Ho told OBSERVER media.

On Saturday, the fully loaded flight arrived at the V C Bird International Airport to a water salute – two fire tenders on both sides spouting water over the plane.

The airport manager said the company is moving towards faster operations and a higher frequency.

"With a bigger airplane, you have more empty seats. You need to be able to fill those seats in order for the flight to be profitable," He said.

"We prefer for our Antiguan clientele to be able to fly them from here non-stop to London and this is what this airplane has enabled us to do."

Virgin has been operating in Antigua for nearly 13 years, starting with the Boeing 747-400 series. But Ho said that era has come to an end, giving rise to newer technologies.

Flights will leave Antigua on Tuesdays, Thursday, Fridays and Saturdays.

Government signs agreement for Multi-Million dollar Beaches Resort Project



The government of Antigua and Barbuda signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with Sandals Resort International on Monday for a multi-million dollar Beaches Resort project. Prime Minister Dr. Hon. Baldwin Spencer and Chairman of the resort group Gordon "Butch" Stewart

signed the agreement during a pre-budget consultation held at Sandals Grande Antigua Resort.

Minister of Finance Hon. Harold Lovell told the gathering that the Beaches resort is the first project to benefit from the newly crafted Tourism and Business Special Incentives Act 2013. The law is a "sunset" legislation, meaning that it has a built-in lifespan after which it will be automatically terminated. Minister Lovell added that the expansion of the Grand Pineapple Resort property at Long Bay to a high-end Beaches Resort will see the facility transformed into a 4.5-star operation, with the new section of the property a five-star facility.

"This investment will triple the employment currently in the Pineapple

property from 180 jobs to over 700 jobs. In addition, during the construction phase, we expect to have another 250 jobs," Lovell said.

Meanwhile an upbeat Stewart described yesterday's proceedings as a great day for his company. "We inked an agreement, which has been a long time coming. I believe that this is the beginning and start of a lot of good things to come." Stewart said.

The Beaches Long Bay resort will boast an ice-skating rink and rock climbing facility, 125 family suites, a water park, 12 restaurants, a movie cinema and comprehensive family entertainment programme.

3rd December 2013

Opening times

Christmas 2013 and New Year 2014

Antigua and Barbuda High Commission

The High Commission will open normal hours 9.30am to 5.00pm up to Thursday 19th December 2013

Friday 20 th December 2013	CLOSE 3.00pm
Monday 23 rd December 2013	CLOSE 3.00pm
Tuesday 24 th December 2013	CLOSE 1pm
Wednesday 25 th December 2013	CLOSED
Thursday 26 th December 2013	CLOSED (Boxing Day holiday)
Friday 27 th December 2013	CLOSED
Monday 30 th December 2013	CLOSE 3.00pm
Tuesday 31 st December 2013	CLOSE 1pm
Wednesday 1 st January 2014	CLOSED (New Year's Day holiday)
Thursday 2 nd January 2014	NORMAL HOURS (9.30am to 5.00pm)



Tour to the Holy Land
Led by the Reverend Tom Maginley
(Antiguan born)
(Telephone 0121 523 3415)

Sunday 15th June 2014 to Sunday 22nd June 2014

For more information including booking form, itinerary and cost contact World-wide Christian Travel, 36 Coldharbour Road, Bristol BS6 7NA Telephone 0845 458 8308 or email: info@christian-travel.com