



THE TOBAGO HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

# UP DATE MAGAZINE

ISSUE 1

AUG - SEPT 2013

**WIN** a  
Sony Digital Camera  
details inside

## THE TRUE MEANING OF **INDEPENDENCE**







# Contents

## INDEPENDENCE GIRL



## 13 Dutch wrecks to rise

- 4 A word from The Chief Secretary
- 6 Scarborough Enhancement Programme
- 10 OCS Strategic Plan
- 11 Heritage highlights
- 14 Questions and answers
- 16 THA in action
- 18 The environment
- 19 Remembering our icons
- 24 THA profile

## COMPETITION:

### Win a Sony Digital Camera

#### Rules:

1. Answer the question.
2. Only THA employees can enter the competition.
3. Submit your answer to the address below with your name, department, division, address and contact details.
4. Only correct answers will go to the final draw.
5. The winner will be informed and featured in the next issue of UPdate.
6. Only one entry per person.

#### UPdate Magazine

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#### Question:

What year was the first bicameral legislature setup in Tobago?

#### Hint:

The answer is in this issue of the magazine.

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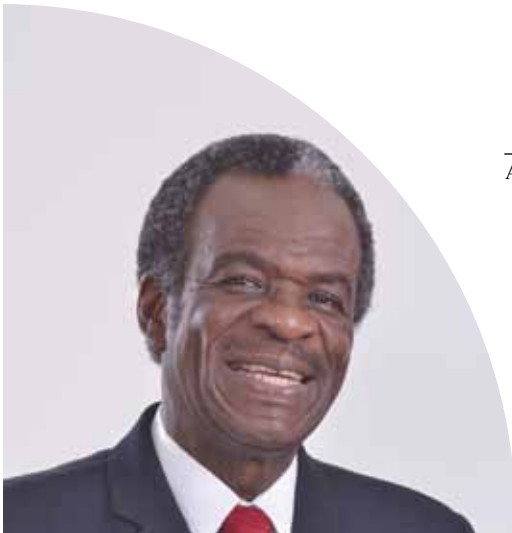
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A WORD FROM THE CHIEF SECRETARY  
ORVILLE LONDON



## The true meaning of independence

*“For me, it means responsibility.”*

Independence is, at first glance, a simple word. The impact of the internet, global reach of media, film and television has made the word familiar to billions of adults and children all over the world. Like in Trinidad and Tobago, there are many independence day celebrations around the world to mark when we ceased being a British colony. And like in Trinidad and Tobago, the focus is mainly with food, drink and music, but that is just the public face of the celebration. Just as a marriage is a lot more than wedding gifts and promises, independence is a lot more than flag-waving and yearly parades.

So what does independence really mean? For me, it means responsibility. Just as the teenager who leaves home enjoys a rush of freedoms, but then realises that the laundry does not magically get done, an independent country is faced with a wealth of challenges and discoveries, not all of them pleasant.

*“On August 31, 1962, a country will be free, a miniature state will be established, but a society and a nation will not have been formed. After August 31, 1962, the people of Trinidad and Tobago will face the fiercest test in their history –whether they can invest with flesh and blood the bare skeleton of their national anthem, “Here, every creed and race find an equal place.” That is their challenge. They may fail... but merely to make the attempt, merely to determine to succeed, would be an enormous tribute to their capacity, a powerful inspiration to frustrated humanity.”*

Those words were written by Dr. Eric Williams in 1962, after he and a delegation had returned from London with the prize that everyone anticipated – independence. Dr. Williams was focusing there on the diversity of the population that made up these islands. More than 50 years later, though, I think it is clear that there is a lot more to independence than equality and integration.

The people of Trinidad and Tobago are extremely fortunate in a number of ways. We live in arguably one of the most beautiful regions of the world. We have valuable natural resources that enable us to play a significant part on the world stage. We have a wonderful cultural mixture thanks to our multi-ethnic population – many are proud to be “Trinbagonians” while just as proudly tracing

their ancestors back to entirely different continents. We have enjoyed the wisdom and world respect of statesmen such as Dr. Eric Williams and ANR Robinson. And, for such a small nation, we have produced a surprisingly large number of internationally famous high-achievers in academia, politics, sport, music, media, literature, theatre, law, art... the list is gratifyingly long and, no doubt, will continue to grow.

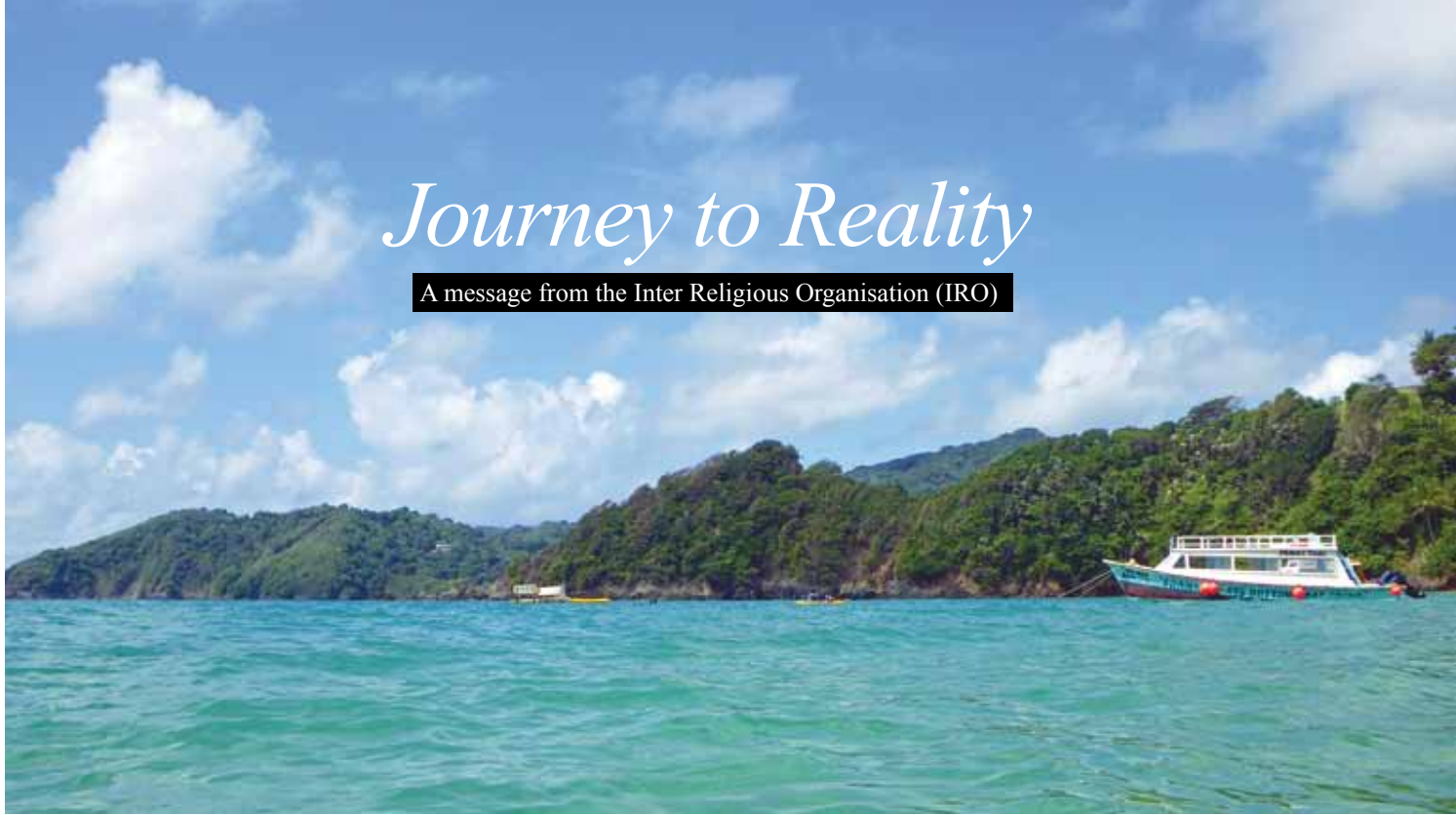
But we still have a lot of work to do. Embarrassingly, we are ranked number 80 in the perceived public sector corruption index compiled by Transparency International in 2012. Denmark is first, and Somalia is last at number 174, which places us somewhere in the middle. Is this how we want the world to see us? Of course not, but what can we do about it?

We have largely taken responsibility for our own nation, mostly driven our own development, and more or less asserted our own place in the world. But I do not think anyone would disagree that we are still a work in progress. Tobago, for example, this Independence Day is still struggling for greater autonomy and internal self-governance in the sovereign democratic state. As we recognise the commitment of Dr Eric Williams and the team and our forefathers who achieved in 1962, it is hoped that the same level of commitment would also propel us as we strive for internal self-governance. It seems to me, then, that independence is not only something to be celebrated, but it is also something to be worked at and respected and improved.

Independence is not a trophy to take off the shelf once a year for dusting and polishing. Independence is a way of life, with all its ups and downs, its twists and turns, its challenges and rewards. Independence is about taking responsibility for our small corner of the world, improving Trinidad and Tobago in myriad ways while limiting our harmful impact on the environment and other negative effects on society because of our action or inaction. As Tobagonians join our brothers and sisters in Trinidad we have the responsibility to make our parents and our children proud of who we are and what we have achieved. It is a huge responsibility, but would anyone dare to say that Trinbagonians are not equal to the task? Let us try to ensure that the answer is no. ■

# Journey to Reality

A message from the Inter Religious Organisation (IRO)



It is quite common –and natural– that most individuals will, at some point, seek self-empowerment. These attempts come in a variety of ways and very often, material possessions are considered the benchmark of success.

However, you may agree that success means more than just being “the winner”, but rather, it is also heavily measured by the experience gained on the road to being where you are today.

There are many eminent persons who are willing to speak honestly and in sharing their inner thoughts and feelings, they will tell you of challenges that have caused frustration and sadness, even in the throes of ‘success’. In spite of possessing a house, land, luxury, brand-name vehicles and having much more than is necessary in terms of food and clothing –or all the basics for assumed happiness– what is their real state of mind? One may have a family and yet feel burdened or frustrated in trying to maintain healthy relationships –is this real? Is this the outcome of hard work and sacrifices? Is it worth it?

This may be the reason that so many people appear to wander into the ‘wilderness’. Why is the mind racing with close to 100,000 thoughts per day, rather than the average of 60,000? In search of what?

If, after great efforts, you possess all that you thought would make you happy, and yet you sometimes feel lonely, sad, and depressed, then surely there is reason for concern. What is the quality of your health? Do you sometimes, or more often than

normal, experience emotional, psychological, or mental instability? Do you sometimes hear the inner voice of fear, doubt or lack of self-confidence speaking to you?

Indeed, it is essential to fulfill these basic physical necessities. However, are these truly the resources that you can depend upon in a time of need? Are these assets so readily available that they can be at hand for you and your family? If not, why? Resources are supposed to be readily available and ideally, unlimited.

This is where and when many begin the journey within. When, in reality, it should have been the first conscious step to empowerment, many wait to be forced into action by negative thoughts and emotions, borne of situations that seem to be without a clear path or solution. This is when the task truly seems to be too difficult.

Our innate qualities are our true resource and strength, and should always be our first priority. Your sense of belonging, your peace, love, happiness and self-confidence are priceless and should always be heavily guarded.

We seek to improve our relationships with many, without realising that this is only possible when you are able to experience, firstly, a stable relationship with none other than yourself. Have you ever experienced anger? What happens when you are angry? Have you ever taken the time to evaluate yourself thereafter? Did you feel good about yourself and about the behaviour you displayed? What about your tone of voice,

your attitude and body language?

Upon true or sincere reflection, surely there will be the feeling of regret or remorse, realising that your reaction and behaviour were not what you wanted for yourself or for others.

Why? Because, in the state of a cool and calm mind, you were able to analyse what is really of the most benefit to you. Not the rage or outrage, but the sense of peace and contentment within that you crave.

So, let us begin this journey of self-analysis early, as of now. Before long, you might realise that the greatest and most precious resource you can have is the privilege of inheriting is your inner –and natural– capability to feel and display humility, care, compassion, peace, love, contentment and happiness. Do not lose them, but rather, preserve them at any cost, for they are the true you.

Harrypersad Maharaj  
President  
Inter Religious Organisation  
of Trinidad and Tobago ■





# Scarborough: a space for the people

## Scarborough Enhancement Programme

“The public peace –the sidewalk and street peace of cities– is not kept primarily by the police. It is kept primarily by an intricate, almost unconscious network of voluntary controls and standards among the people themselves, and enforced by the people themselves.” (*The Death and Life of Great American Cities* by Jane Jacobs)

**T**obago’s capital, Scarborough, is no exception to the story of any public space, where people congregate on a daily basis.

“City centres should be a place where people of all ages and from all walks of life can come together to share a common space for different reasons, to support various activities, yet feel safe.” (*Draft Scarborough Master Plan 2012*)

In common with all cities around the world, Scarborough needs to manage its ever-increasing number of occupants, vehicles, and infrastructure facilities in a manner that respects the needs and wishes of all. Can it be done?

That’s the aim of the THA’s *Draft Scarborough Master Plan* (DSMP) under the Scarborough Enhancement Programme (SEP). The plan recognises that citizens will move in, out, through, and around a city and its environs at different times and reasons.

Therefore, the intention should be to adequately accommodate both human and vehicular traffic, while managing to keep Scarborough a place “where people of all ages and from all walks of life can come together to share a common space.”

The DSMP also considers the principles of the Congress for New Urbanism, a leading organisation on modern mixed-use neighbourhood development, recommends the creation of “livable streets arranged in compact walkable

blocks; a range of housing choices to serve people of diverse ages and income levels; schools, stores and other nearby destinations reachable by walking, bicycling or transit services.”

The Plan discusses the growing trend in many developed countries towards the conversion of one-way streets to two-way: This reduces traffic and can ease congestion by creating easier access to destinations.

Of paramount importance, too, is the fact that the natural environment must not suffer unnecessarily.

Major events such as the Great Race bring benefits and enjoyable diversions, but they also highlight the lack of adequate facilities for the increasing number of pedestrians and vehicles, and these are considered in the DSMP.

This year’s Great race saw a smoother flow of people and vehicular traffic as a result of some of the recent structural improvements under SEP.

Dr. Ellis Burris, the Chief Administrator of the THA, explains: “It is clear to us that we should not only study the overall public benefit of an infrastructure proposal for Scarborough; equally thorough investigations should also be undertaken

*There is also a  
bridges and rep  
as usage outgro  
were originally a*



on how to cause the least impact to the surrounding environment.

“This is vitally important as we cannot improve the city at the expense of the environment, and nor can we strive for efficiency by negatively affecting the place where people live. That’s what the DSMP is about: finding the right sustainable balance.” There is also a need to build new

*need to build new roads and repair those being steadily eroded as usage outgrows the capacity for which they were originally designed.*

roads and bridges and repair those being steadily eroded as usage outgrows the capacity for which they were originally designed.

**Some considerations under the DSMP:**

- While recognising the role that “PH” taxis play for commuters it addresses the need to relocate this informal taxi stand from the FCB car park, where it contributes to daily gridlock
- Looking at proposed new roads and upgrading existing ones to address lack of interconnectivity in the capital
- The overall concept allows for increased East-West and North-South connectivity, improved sidewalks and the strengthening of roads and bridges along Milford Road
- Improvement of pedestrian access to beach and fishing areas in nearby neighbourhoods, such as Lambeau
- Extension of the Esplanade

**Completed and Ongoing projects under the Scarborough Enhancement Programme**

**The Tobago House of Assembly is doing work in five key areas.**

**1. Road upgrades to ease traffic congestion:**

- The Gardenside to Bay Street Connector Road
- Bay Street to Northside Road Connector (the road was made straighter)
- Claude Noel Highway to Gardenside was completed and eases traffic on Wilson Road
- Burnett Street public staircase

**2. Street Scape Improvement to increase the safety of pedestrians:**

- The construction of a pedestrian walkway along Carrington Street. Natural, teak was used for the walkway
- The reconstruction of the port wall to accommodate the walkway
- Relocation of the taxi stand to Lower Castries Street to improve vehicular/ pedestrian traffic
- Esplanade extension: widening of sidewalk to 12 feet to become more physically challenged friendly and landscaped. Work has already begun to enhance pedestrian accessibility and improve the aesthetics of the Scarborough waterfront
- Corner Park to be created with an information booth and a digital signage that shows a directory and map of Scarborough. It will include room for advertising and a digital clock
- Gardenside Mural: Local people and recognisable cultural icons and buildings

in Tobago depicted on the wall, done by local artists

**3. Commercial Upgrade**

- The removal of unauthorised structures
- Enhance the aesthetics of Scarborough
- Improve sanitation and health
- Engage businesses along Carrington Street to enhance their storefront facades

**4. Restoration projects**

- Scotts Kirk (Anglican building) to which THA donated \$1.57 million
- Scarborough Methodist Church to which THA donated \$800,000
- The Ark (Roman Catholic building) to which THA donated \$1 million
- Old Works building which houses the Heritage Festival Committee and Town and Country Planning, also received \$900,000 from THA

**5. Health and Environmental projects**

- Regularisation of the Boat Repair Centre at Lower Castries
- Waste management –Continuation of the programme already initiated by Public Health which includes the installation of bins throughout town to address the growing infestation of rats and organising the trash for a comprehensive pick up
- Public conveniences in Scarborough – Identification of additional locations for public conveniences throughout Scarborough
- Cleaning of rivers and drains
- Tree planting and soil stabilisation
- Trimming of existing trees
- Added vegetation and foliage
- Cleaning of drains leading to open ocean
- Removal of derelict marine and terrestrial objects
- Repair of pier. ■

# *Have Your Say: Face to Face*

**S**INCE the new administration was installed, the Tobago House of Assembly (THA) has taken steps to bring governance closer to the citizenry, with its monthly community meetings being a key part of the process.

Following the People's National Movement sweeping victory at the polls in January 2013, the Executive Council took the decision to host a series of open fora, of which there have been six so far.

people the chance to attend and have their say, by voicing their concerns, satisfaction and to make suggestions.

Sanctioned by Chief Secretary Orville London, the meetings allowed members of the public to join the 'conversation' with regards to meaningful governance, to make recommendations and to contribute to the development of their communities.

London said the series was "linked to the process of getting communities

*The Executive Council saw the meetings as an opportunity to deepen the democratisation process*

The meeting will continue the second Thursday of every month until all electoral districts are covered.

The Executive Council saw the meetings as an opportunity to deepen the democratisation process, as they engaged communities and also offered up a medium through which to account to the population.

The meetings, which are usually held from 7:00 p.m on the second Thursday of each month in a different electoral district, with a specific theme, allows all

involved in the governance of the island." So far, meetings have been held in six districts: Canaan/Bon Accord, Charlotteville/Delafor, Roxborough/Delafor, Bethel /Mt. Irvine, Buccoo/Mt. Pleasant, Goodwood/Belle Garden.

Members of the public may also call the Information Desk, in the Office of the Chief Secretary, at 639-3688, or e-mail [chesec@tstt.net.tt](mailto:chesec@tstt.net.tt), to raise any issue related to governance, or check out our website for the other meeting times and locations. ■



— BETHEL /MT. IRVINE



— BETHEL /MT. IRVINE







— CANAAN/BON ACCORD



— CHARLOTTEVILLE/DELAFOUR



— GOODWOOD/BELLE GARDEN



— ROXBOROUGH/DELAFOUR



— CANAAN/BON ACCORD



— BUCCOO/MT. PLEASANT



# OCS Strategic Plan

“ *The Office of the Chief Secretary (OCS) is an overarching networking mechanism responsible for effectively guiding, facilitating and co-ordinating the activities of the various Divisions of the Tobago House of Assembly (THA).*

*The principal responsibility of the OCS is to ensure that all services offered by the THA are in conformity with established principles, policies and procedures.*

*The OCS is led at the administrative level by the Chief Administrator, who is supported by 14 heads of departments/units, who are responsible for the day-to-day management of the Division’s operations.*

*To ensure its organisational effectiveness, the OCS embarked on its first 3-year Strategic Plan 2012-2015.*

**D**esigning, implementing, and evaluating a Strategic Plan are critical initiatives for the success of any organisation. The Office of the Chief Secretary went through an extensive process to design and implement its first Strategic Plan, for 2012-2015.

The Strategic Plan has become an integral tool of everyone’s daily activities, with the vision, mission and values at the core.

This plan has been established through a highly participative, integrated, and customised Balanced Scorecard Strategic Planning Process. The process has been led and managed by the Strategic Planning Teams, the Management Services Unit (MSU) and championed by the Chief Administrator.

This Strategic Direction provides a clear road map for the OCS moving forward. The departments and units have used this to define their strategic objectives and operational plans. The Strategic Plan has fostered greater synergy between the departments making for more successful implementation. This has ensured that all staff not only understand the key elements of the plan – such as the vision, the mission, and the core values – but also embrace the spirit of those elements to make their daily work more efficient, more effective, and more enjoyable. Here, Eunice Quamie and Mary Ann

Braithwaite-Leyonce, both of the MSU, explain how the vision, mission and core values of the OCS were developed.

“With help from external consultants, the team from the MSU visited each department of the

OCS to determine what they believed the vision, mission and core values should be. The process included all staff, from messengers and drivers to heads of sections; everybody participated in the workshops and we were all excited to work together in this unique action.”

Throughout the exercise, staff members were divided into teams to brainstorm ideas of what they thought reflected the vision, mission and core values. Each of which was then voted on, until by a process of elimination, the remaining statements were adopted. Dr Ellis Burris, Chief Administrator of the THA, puts these statements into context: “The OCS is unusual in the way it operates so transparently with internal and external stakeholders, so we strive to continually empower internal stakeholders in the various divisions to better serve their external stakeholders in every way.”

He added: “While we still have a lot of work to do we have begun to see progress. For example, making the payment process smoother, making information promptly available to the public, ensuring that policies are clearly communicated across the THA.” ■

**Vision**  
*The Premier Division committed to excellent service delivery while empowering our people.*

**Mission**  
*To provide exceptional and equitable service to all customers through the use of technology and a well trained professional workforce, leading to the development of Tobago.*

**Core Values**  
*Accountability, Commitment, Integrity, Professionalism, Service, Teamwork*

# Heritage Highlights

The 2013 Tobago Heritage Festival with the theme Community Treasures: Reflections, sought to bring an educational element to the stories of Tobago's past and its culture.

The annual festival, now in its 26th year, aims to define a way for everyone to reflect and showcase the indigenous aspect of what makes Heritage in Tobago a unique cultural art form.

Secretary of Community Development Councillor, Dr. Denise Tsoiafatt-Angus, said the investment in the staging of the annual celebration of Tobago's history, culture and customs is an investment in a the future of all the lives of Tobagonians to ensure that "we know about our heritage, we treasure it and that we are able to live it in some form and be able to continue to hand it down authentically because we know the meaning of it."

A lot of new stories made it to the stage as participants were challenged by Dr. Tsoiafatt-Angus "to go in, look at stories that have not been told before, stories that have not been told in a long time." ■



# Heritage Highlights





## Dutch wrecks to rise

In the 17th century, they were considered the masters of the sea for their ship-building secrets and, soon, the Dutch will once again rise in Tobago's waters. In an historical move, the Tobago House of Assembly (THA) has agreed to work with the University of Connecticut and the Institute of Nautical Archaeology of the United States to bring to the surface three Dutch wrecks in the Scarborough harbour area – a project that could see Tobago become the leader in underwater cultural resource management and protection in the Caribbean.

The ships would have sunk to their watery graves in the harbour after battling with the French and theirs may be the first of many resurrections to come.

The project is being led by Dr. Kroum Batchvarov, assistant professor of Maritime Archaeology at the University of Connecticut and a specialist in 17th century ship construction.

Batchvarov is no stranger to the world of delicate underwater wrecks, having worked on Sweden's world-famous 'Vasa' project. The Vasa is the longest maintained shipwreck of the modern world, currently commanding its own museum and attracting over one million visitors annually.

In Bermuda, he was part of the Warwick Project, a 2011 excavation of the midsection of the hull of the merchant ship that sank in October 1619, during a hurricane.

Funding for the Tobago project has been confirmed by the Global Exploration and Oceanic

Society, whose president, Jason Paterniti, accompanied Batchvarov to Tobago earlier this year and returned with the team for the preliminary survey in June this year.

Batchvarov believes many more wrecks, lie beneath Tobago's calm seas, each waiting to whisper its own compelling tale of the highly romanticised period when Tobago was a coveted lady and was fought for with vigour.

*the Dutch were the most advanced shipwrights of their time and there has been little study of sailing vessels from that period.*

Preliminary work has begun, with Batchvarov's marine team having confirmed the locations of the ships, and further preliminary work began in June to survey the wrecks to determine their sizes and assess the sites to plan the way forward.

Cultural Caribbean history aside, Batchvarov said the Dutch were the most advanced shipwrights of their time and there has been little study of sailing vessels from that period. He said "exceptional" material was waiting to be discovered from what he termed "dynamic centuries."

With studies published on ships from that time, his team hopes to learn from the coherent structure of the ships themselves. But it will not be so simple as raising the wrecks to the surface and probing them for answers.

Maintaining the structures, which have spent centuries in an entirely different element, is "intricate and – often lengthy – process", he said. Surfaced wrecks must be kept wet to stop the timber from collapsing and sometimes

disintegrating. The wood of the ships has to be kept waterlogged and is sprayed with specialised chemical agents to give the cells volume. According to Batchvarov, the Vasa was sprayed for nearly 12 years and stored in a building with a year-round temperature of 16 degrees Celsius.

But bringing the Dutch vessels to the surface may be just the beginning of what this project could yield for Tobago. As for funding, Batchvarov confirmed that several organisations have expressed interest in the project, including National Geographic.

Confirmed funders include the Global Exploration and Oceanic Society, are just

some of the possible offshoots of the underwater project and, best of all, they will always be the property of the people of Tobago.

Also, in keeping with best practice with regard to historical data, every detail, no matter how small, will be recorded.

Batchvarov is excited, to say the least, about being something of a pioneer in Tobago with this project. He loves the island, he says, and looks forward to any contribution he can make to Tobago's development.

After three visits, he is yet to see and explore all that he wants to – and 2013 will be a period of intense work in getting the project started, he said.

He has much admiration for Tobago's efforts to preserve and record its history, that may be in the making. He also praised the members of the Trust, whom he called "wise" and who appear to understand the depth of the treasures possessed by the island. ■

# Questions & Answers



**Huey Newton Cadette**  
 SECRETARY DIVISION OF SETTLEMENTS AND LABOUR

*Get to know the THA  
 by knowing its members.*

*If you have questions for your Assembly members,  
 submit them to [cdinfo@tha.gov.tt](mailto:cdinfo@tha.gov.tt)  
 Your questions could be featured here.*

**When did you know that you wanted to be in politics? Can you recall the moment?**

**A:** [Laughs] I think for quite some time, I've been involved in community organisations, Tobago Youth Council, Tobago Football Association, National Youth Fellowship in the Church of God, the National Youth process, the Caribbean Federation. In 2008 I felt that if I wanted to contribute at higher level I had to get involved in politics.

**Who inspires you?**

**A:** [Hmm] A number of people inspire me for different reasons. I get inspiration from Chief Secretary Mr. London in terms of his whole approach to treating people and developing Tobago. I get inspiration from my grandmother who brought me up, my aunts, parents, teachers.

**If you were not a Secretary, what would you be?**

**A:** [Closes eyes in deep thought] A youth worker. I love youth work and I still see myself involved in youth work. I still consider myself a youth worker.

**What is the issue you care most about the most? (And what have you done for it)**

**A:** The issue I care most about is ensuring that Tobago continues to develop and youth issues.

**What is your biggest accomplishment?**

**A:** My family on a personal level and my three sons and looking at them growing. Professionally, being able to be elected and being a member of the THA and a representative of the people.

**What is the latest accomplishment of your Division?**

**A:** The home ownership programme! We have started three new developments at Adventure Phase II, service lots at Courland and service lots at Belle Garden. We also continue to assist with home ownership grants to ensure people are getting the right help for better living conditions.

**What is your favourite memory/experience as a Secretary?**

**A:** Some years ago as Assistant Secretary we did The Fatherhood Initiative. We brought fathers and sons together for Father's Day, a bonding dinner at Coco Reef. To this day fathers ask when are we having that again.

**What has been your most challenging experience?**

**A:** Not having the financial and human resources you would like to do the things that you want to do, such as building homes.

**If you could meet anyone in the world, dead or alive, who would that be and what would you say to them?**

**A:** Jesus for his selflessness and temperance. Nelson Mandela and Martin Luther King I would like to know how they stay focused in the face of attacks. Mahatma Ghandi for his selflessness. I would ask any of them, did you ever want to give up?

**What is the best thing about politics?**

**A:** Being part of change and being part of development, being able to help people. Making an impact in the lives of people.

**What is the worst thing about politics?**

**A:** Two things. One, ensuring that you strike a balance between your personal life and your office. Two, ensuring that you have enough time to make things happen because people have expectations. Managing expectations is one of the challenges of politics.

**If you had to do over something what would you do differently?**

**A:** I might have gone away and studied. Have some period of tertiary education abroad.

**Describe yourself in three words.**

**A:** Focused and caring.

**If you did not live in Tobago, where would you live?**

**A:** A few places, but if I had to narrow it down, Canada. The people are very welcoming and have appreciation for different cultures.

**Have you changed as a result of politics?**

**A:** For every experience there is some change. If you don't change, something is wrong. The nature of politics will change you. Your sleeping habits have to change, eating habits – I used to love to watch television, sit down and watch movies.

Your work schedule – you don't have much time to relax and chill out, you have community events to go to, you have people to visit, your approach in dealing with people has to change. Perceptions change.



## *HOPE: A little village with a big name*

**I** was looking for inspiration on Saturday and discovered a village called Hope. I couldn't help but wonder whether the place could live up to such a promising name, so I decided to take a trip there.

Before my road adventure, I learned about a few of its people. Tony "Pan Jumbie" Williams, a steel pannist and master arranger, was from Hope. His dedication and love for music took him around the world. Eutrice Thornhill, a Hope resident, excelled in public service and business.

Interestingly, a Prime Minister residential home is also to be found in Hope. It was built in the 1970s

and rarely occupied. It seemed Hope had promise. I wanted to see its charm, soak up its rays of optimism, and make my 'blah' day brighter.

A short distance after the Dwight Yorke stadium, I came around the winding bend in the road. The steady waves of the Atlantic Ocean rushed to shore, on my right, and a small, unofficial-looking sign on the left said, "Welcome to Hope." If you turned your head or were engrossed in conversation,

you could easily miss the sign and the town altogether. This community is neat and unassuming. The village had a school, a church across the road, and a cemetery next door. It has farming and estate land for sale, pubs, businesses, government offices, and a picturesque bay.

The village lies mostly to the west of the main road, which runs along the sea. Its long, tentacle-like side roads stretch up into God's choir like the breath of hope.

I took one of those roads. Two women

sat on their porch and enjoyed the day's breeze. I asked them why the village was called Hope.

The younger one, her head elegantly wrapped in colorful fabric, smiled at me and, before she answered, turned to the older lady and repeated my question to her.

The older lady offered a semblance of a smile as though she had heard my question before, shrugged, and looked into the wind.

The younger lady answered. "Because it's beautiful here," she said. "It has hope. Hope is a good thing." Indeed it is. As I travelled along the main road, an elderly man rested on a stump, children played in the school yard, a young man swept in front of his place, and a well-dressed elderly lady gripping her purse with both hands waited on a pavement for nothing in particular.

I stopped for a soft drink, went to Hope Bay, and sat near an almond tree. A slim, young man was out for a run on the beach, and another played in the water. My eyes were

like a camera taking snapshots of the simple beauty of life. It all made for a better day,

and I began to write.

I think hope is that we may rise each day and do what is intended; to live with purpose and peace; to have a community, sense of self, and commune with the earth; and to help create a way for those who come after us. Hope Village was the muse I needed that day.

—By Nigel Barto

Submit your community feature for our next issue to [cdinfo@tha.gov.tt](mailto:cdinfo@tha.gov.tt) ■

*I think hope is that we may rise each day and do what is intended*



# Highlights of THA in Action

## GOVERNANCE

- **Have Your Say: Face-to-Face** community meetings. Understanding and creating synergy between THA and stakeholders.

- **Public Interest Desk** established. All Tobagonians can share their perspectives, views and opinions on governance.

## INFRASTRUCTURE

- 5 Retaining walls at Les Coteaux
- Zion Hill, Belle Garden
- Cocoa Watty Trace, Mason Hall
- Bethel

## New and upgraded drains at

- Bloody Bay/Roxborough Road
- Queen Street, Betsey's Hope
- Prince Street, Roxborough
- Scarborough Secondary School
- Highlands Road, Moriah



## 20 schools repaired and upgraded

- Early Childhood Centres
- Buccoo
  - Montgomery
  - Les Coteaux

## Primary Schools

- Whim AC
- Scarbrough RC
- Black Rock Government
- Signal Hill Government
- Lambeau AC
- Tablepiece Government
- Mason Hall Government
- Golden Lane Government
- Montgomery Government
- Buccoo Government
- Belle Garden AC
- St. Andrew's AC
- Belle Garden Government
- Ebenezer Methodist
- Charlotteville Methodist
- Mt. St. George Methodist
- L'Anse Fourmi Methodist
- Delaford AC

## Secondary Schools

- Goodwood High
- Scarborough Secondary
- Signal Hill Secondary
- Roxborough Secondary
- Harmon's School of SDA

## Special Schools

- School for Visually Impaired
- School for the Language Impaired and the Deaf

## Installed at lighting at five recreation grounds

- Shaw Park
- Mason Hall
- Moriah
- Speyside
- Signal Hill

## TOWARDS A HEALTHY TOBAGO

- WETEC for families with domestic violence
- I'm For Youth and Healthy Lifestyle Campaign
- Workforce Expansion: 75 employed at Health & Social Services
- Talk it Out not Fight it Out Mediation Expansion
- Work started for Substance Abuse Rehabilitation Centre

## EDUCATION AND SPORT DEVELOPMENT

- Lalonde Gordon Sports Fund established
- Y-Zone introduced –first of seven youth spaces, opened at Calder Hall
- Free Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) classes for athletes
- Calder Hall Play Park Opens
- Tech-Voc Centre Disability Affairs Unit relocates and expands

## FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

- Over \$4.2m distributed in Housing Grants
- \$900,000 in assistance for 49 entrepreneurs
- 6 Village Councils receive \$151,000 in funding
- More than \$150,000 given to religious organisations
- \$730,000 given to organisations for cultural programmes
- \$98,000 to NGOs
- \$353,000 to fishermen for boat repairs after natural disaster.

## TOBAGO CULTURE

- Launch of Centenarian Awareness & Award programme
- First Buccoo Night Market
- THA facilitated making of film/documentary "Tobago 1677"

## TOBAGO BUSINESS

- Calder Hall Micro-centre opens with 9 business tenants
- Winter arrival of Apollo: New Scandinavian Charter Flight
- Start-up of Goldsborough Tissue Culture Lab
- River trenching, beach and ravine waterway clearance in 8 locations ■





# Fisherfolk receive THA assistance for repairs

**F**OLLOWING what was, in some instances, severe damage to fishing gear and boats during aggressive sea action in January of this year, the Tobago House of Assembly has assisted a number of fisherfolk in returning to their livelihood.

The early part of 2013 brought with it massive wave action in both Trinidad and Tobago and resulted in heavy losses for some of Tobago's long-standing fisherfolk.

In August, cheques totalling \$353,892.13 were distributed by Chief Secretary Orville London, accompanied by Secretary of Agriculture, Marine Affairs,

Marketing and the Environment, Godwin Adams, and Assistant Secretary Hayden Spencer, at the Calder Hall Administrative Complex, Scarborough.

The funds were directed at repairing up to 13 boats that had been damaged during displays of what the Trinidad and Tobago Meteorological Services had termed "above normal seas."

The Chief Secretary said he was not interested in being recognised for his role in securing the funding but wanted, simply, to see the fisherfolk who had been affected re-equip themselves for a return to the industry, where they could continue their vital role of providing food for the citizenry. ■



— ALISON BUNTIN AND ALLAN STEWART, DIRECTOR, TOBAGO EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY



— BERTRAM THOMAS AND HAYDEN SPENCER, ASSISTANT SECRETARY, DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE, MARINE AFFAIRS, MARKETING AND THE ENVIRONMENT



— DAVID SMART AND ALLAN STEWART, DIRECTOR, TOBAGO EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY



— EUSTACE WOODS AND ASSEMBLYMAN GODWIN ADAMS, SECRETARY, DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE, MARINE AFFAIRS, MARKETING AND THE ENVIRONMENT



— LOKEITHA CALLENDER AND ORVILLE LONDON, CHIEF SECRETARY, THA



## ENVIRONMENT: *Lionfish in Tobago*

Their beauty may, to the unknowing, seem an asset to reefs that are in danger of losing their potency from human and environmental threats.

Yet the lionfish, which has made its way into Tobago's waters, may now very well be the most immediate danger to our coral reefs.

A voracious predator of reef fish of all kinds, few natural predators of its own and prolific at spawning, the lionfish has, in other parts of the world, decimated reefs in record time. While not deadly to humans, they can deliver a painful sting, via their bodily spines, which carry a toxin that can be fatal to other sea creatures.

The upside is that lionfish, when properly filleted, are delicious. This has led to drives, in areas that they have previously invaded, to teach the population how to safely capture and handle the lionfish.

Now being called the new king of Tobago's waters, lionfish has sparked a similar exercise in Tobago, led chiefly by Coral Reef Ecologist, Jahson Alemu I. Alemu I said lionfish are "not aggressive towards humans. Stings are extremely painful but not usually life-threatening." He warned sea lovers to keep an eye open for the colourful but greedy reef prowler.

*Stings are extremely painful but not usually life-threatening*

Someone stung by a lionfish should treat the affected area with hot water for up to 30 minutes, Alemu said.

He added that "heat prevents the venom from spreading and de-natures the protein in the toxin." All injuries should be referred to a physician, he said.

With regard to reef damage, Alemu emphasised that "the real danger the fish poses initially is to coral reef ecosystems."

In addition to overfishing, pollution, coastal development and mass coral bleaching in Caribbean reefs, ecosystems are battling "further declines in fish species, reductions in food availability with the food chain and increased algal growth on coral reef substrates due to fewer herbivorous fish, leading to stress and possible coral mortality."

The lionfish feeds heavily on fish such as the snapper and grouper, which are the mainstay of a lot of local fishermen. The threat to their livelihoods is real and time is ticking as the lionfish rapidly reproduces. These are just two of the 50 Caribbean fish species that the lionfish loves to dine on. Alemu said: "The lionfish can fatally harm the integrity and biodiversity of

Tobago's coral reef ecosystem, livelihoods of fishermen and tourism-related jobs."

A pole spear is the recommended method of safe capture and the fish should be handled with very thick gloves. Where possible, the fish should be removed from the water quickly. While the lionfish fish is edible and tasty, persons unfamiliar with handling the creatures are best not attempting it, as they could come into contact with the spines.

If you spot or capture a lionfish, send your report with the location, depth of water and size of fish to:

- Department of Marine Resources and Fisheries, THA 639-4446; 639-4354
- Institute of Marine Affairs 634-4291 ext. 2406
- Fisheries Division, Ministry of Food Production 623-6028; 623-8542



—**PHOTO:** Students from Castara Government Primary School get a lionfish lesson

# Remembering our Icons

## Luise Kimme

Professor Luise Kimme was a rare soul and gifted sculptor, whose dedication to Tobago showed that one need not be born to a place to consider it home. Kimme, who sadly passed on April 18th, 2013, at the age of 74, had lived in Bethel since 1979, where she also established her studio and the Luise Kimme Sculpture Museum.



German by birth, she became world-renowned for her fascinating human figures that were based on Tobago's rich cultural heritage and often, on its 'ordinary' citizens.

Most of her work, a legacy that has enriched Tobago, was carved with respect to natural growth of the wood she used, some of it native and some of it brought in from Europe.

Kimme had, in an interview just before her passing, stated that the inspiration for her work was simple.

"Michelangelo, Maillol, Lehbruck, Kolbe, Barlach all had their own one face," she said. "I love the beautiful Tobagonians. They look like Egyptian paintings, tiny waists, broad shoulders, long

necks. "Stately walk, velvet voices, they sing like angels and crack up with laughter. My father took us to the Kunsthalle in Bremen almost every Sunday. Awestruck, I watched Rodin's 'L'aged'airain', and Maillol's Venus, thinking then, as I do now: 'This is what I want to do'."

More of Kimme's life is best explained in her autobiography, where the artist herself said: "I found myself in a valley in Tobago, looking around if anyone from England, U.S.A. or Germany could see me, leant a tall cedar tree against a cluster of breadfruit trees and began to carve 'Banana Lady'. I was 40."

At 16, Kimme left home for Plymouth, England to be an 'au pair' with a vicar's family.

"Later I worked as a student trainee with a German car company in London, and while modeling at various art schools. Kimme recalled in her memoirs. In 1972, Kimme got a job at the famous Rhode Island School of Design as instructor in the Sculpture Department for two years.

In 1990 a storm felled forests in Northern Europe and Kimme bought 59 oak trees and as she described it, had been "chopping out dancers in May and June each year ever since."

After one year of drying, the trees would be shipped to her studio in Tobago. "It takes 3 to 5 years from

start to finish. What is that in the face of 300 years old giants who stand 2 metres high in the barn."

She described it as "love at first sight", from whence she would make mistakes, add and plan but still have to work with the "dictates" of the tree.

"I carve strictly in profiles, first the head to set the mood, the body follows," she said.

"Colour and form belong together like in all ancient sculpture."

Though the title was never officially bestowed on this prolific artist, who chose the southern-most isle of the Caribbean as her home, in place of the bright lights and big cities that once tried to woo her, it is safe to say that Kimme stands, unofficially, as an icon of Tobago.



# Remembering our Icons

## Rodill Clarke

FONDLY called “Pargy” after his love of the fish and, at times, “Joshua”, after his unforgettable character in the local television hit of the 1980s, “Turn of the Tide”, Rodill Clarke enjoyed a colourful and productive life. Clarke’s love of people and country was manifest in his work, which many have had the great luck to be a part of or to witness.

**B**orn in 1934, Clarke died on Friday 5th July, 2013, and will forever be remembered as a prime example of a well-rounded son-of-the-soil.

Clarke was raised by his grandmother in Mt. Grace, a strict upbringing that also ingrained in him the virtue of working hard. From an early age, he toiled in the family garden and would tote bags of produce in the traditional manner –on his head and from long distances.

At one point, Clarke’s Fridays were spent in the garden instead of the classroom. This practice stopped when the then principal of his former primary school, Whim Anglican, spoke with Clarke’s grandmother about his potential and the necessity of a full school week for that potential to be achieved.

Clarke went on to prove an all-round student, excelling at sports, becoming a valued member of the Scouts and joining the school and church choirs.

He also served as an altar boy and was recognised as a reader and orator, a skill he is likely to have honed when he had to read the newspaper to his grandmother every day.

His first step down the path of what was to be recognised as his greatest skill, occurred in primary school at age ten, when he played the lead role in a school stage production.

Later, at Bishop’s High School, he continued acting, and he established himself as the lead actor of the Thespians which would eventually become The Tobago Players led by Jim Bryan.

While many high school peers left the

island to study abroad, Clarke stayed, and in the midst of acting made an effort to keep both Tobago’s Cricket and Football at the top of the national standings.

His most notable performance came with Horace Wilson’s 13-episode series, “Turn of the Tide” in which Clarke played the



key role of “Joshua Walker.” Wilson and Clarke would later create The Caribbean-American Film Production Company Limited (CAMPRO), a company dedicated to producing films of international quality in Tobago.

A true patriot, Clarke continued writing, producing and directing for the Heritage Festival.

Eventually, he also became a teacher at Plymouth Anglican, followed by one of his most serious real-life roles yet –as national cricket coach.

Not long after that, while doing a course in

England, Clarke was interviewed by the British Broadcasting Company (BBC) and graduated with the MCC Advanced Cricket Coaching Course.

He went on to become the manager of the West Indies under-20 Cricket Team and worked throughout Trinidad & Tobago in coaching and administration. While playing cricket for Tobago, he also coached a number of outstanding cricketers who progressed to the national team.

He successfully completed several international courses in football and eventually ascended to highest rank, that of a FIFA Lecture Coach. In the local football league, he was an outstanding left-winger and also a goalkeeper for Tobago and has coached several teams locally and in the United States.

Not one to be left out of the development of the national instrument, the steelpan, he formed the ‘Esso Silver Harps’ steel band of Whim.

Later on, Clarke founded the Whim United Sports & Cultural Club, where football, cricket, table-tennis and All Fours, among other cultural favourites, found a home.

He also assisted with carnival productions and judging at varying levels, the latter for the last 15 years.

This is but a snapshot of the life of Rodill “Pargy” “Joshua” Clarke, an individual who found a purpose for every minute of the day and who gave as much as he could to life and his country.

His contribution and one of his most amazing traits –his refusal to settle for anything but excellence– will not be forgotten. ■



# Brain teasers

Exercise is a major factor for brain health.



## Greatest Area

A farmer challenges an engineer, a physicist, and a mathematician to fence off the largest amount of area using the least amount of fence.

The engineer made his fence in a circle and said it was the most efficient.

The physicist made a long line and said that the length was infinite. Then he said that fencing half of the Earth was the best.

The mathematician laughed at the others and with his design, beat the others. What did he do?



## Riddles

1. Johnny's mother had three children. The first child was named April. The second child was named May. What was the third child's name?
2. A clerk at a butcher shop stands five feet ten inches tall and wears size-13 sneakers. What does he weigh?
3. Before Mt. Everest was discovered, what was the highest mountain in the world?
4. How much dirt is there in a hole that measures two feet by three feet by four feet?
5. What word in the English language is always spelled incorrectly?

## Riddles

6. Billie was born on December 28th, yet her birthday always falls in the summer. How is this possible?
7. In British Columbia you cannot take a picture of a man with a wooden leg. Why not?
8. If you were running a race and you passed the person in 2nd place, what place would you be in now?
9. Which is correct to say, "The yolk of the egg is white" or "The yolk of the eggs are white?"
10. A farmer has five haystacks in one field and four haystacks in another. How many haystacks would he have if he combined them all in one field?

### Answers:

1. Johnny.
2. Meat.
3. Mt. Everest. It just wasn't discovered yet.
4. There is no dirt in a hole.
5. Incorrectly (except when it is spelled incorrectly).
6. Billie lives in the southern hemisphere.
7. You can't take a picture with a wooden leg. You need a camera (or iPad or cell phone) to take a picture.
8. You would be in 2nd place. You passed the person in second place, not first.
9. Neither. Egg yolks are yellow.
10. One. If he combines all his haystacks, they all become one big stack.

### Answer:

The mathematician made a small fence around himself and declared himself to be on the outside.

## DID YOU KNOW?

About hundred billion neurons comprise the brain all in a squishy mass about the size of a cantaloupe. Using about 17% of your body's energy and 20% of its oxygen, while only containing 2% of its mass, the brain consumes between 10-23 watts of power when awake —enough to light a bulb.

*There are no pain receptors in the brain. That's why surgeons can perform brain surgery on a patient while they are still awake. ■*



## *SPORTS AT THE ZENITH: making Champions*

**W**ith their workout moves ingrained and a healthy respect for Head Coach, Gerard Franklyn, the boys and girls of Zenith Athletic Club can carry themselves through a drill on their own.

Caught in the midst of a session on a Friday afternoon, they moved seamlessly



through a series of ups, downs and glides as they tackled their hurdles. Asked about Franklyn, they responded: "We know what to do. Coach sent our workout for us. He's

on his way. We don't have to wait." This was just one example of the discipline of the youth of the Zenith's Athletic Club. The following Monday's training session had a peculiar tag.

"Today is 'Dread Day!'," they said, "Whenever Coach comes in a red track suit, it's Dread Day. The workout is tough!" Sure enough, there was Coach Franklyn, in a red track suit.

"Dread day" has obviously worked, though, having gifted the national community with Olympic and World Championship athletes such as Kelly Ann Baptiste, Renny Quow and Semoy Hackett and twice Double CARIFTA Gold medallist, Mark London.

The club was founded 32 years ago by Franklyn, his brother Wade and a host of other sport enthusiasts Elton Belfon, Dexter Henry, Eutrice Henry, Amrol Thomas and George Rowley. Franklyn always loved running and was quite the local village sports champ in the 1970s and 1980s.

He studied at the Port-of-Spain Teachers College from 1977–1979. He returned to Tobago determined to form a club, which he did in August 1979 with one member. He registered with the National Association of Athletics Administration (NAAA) one year later.

The success of its athletes at the national level "quickly attracted persons outside of Mason Hall, particularly students of Scarborough Secondary School and

Bishop's High School," Franklyn said. The demand led to the club being moved from Mason Hall to the Shaw Park recreational grounds, where it remains today. The Club's membership now stands at 130 active athletes.

Over the years, the Club has had to work with some financial challenges to cover limited sporting equipment, endured limited access to sport medicine and travel for meets.

He added that some challenges were overcome with the assistance of the Tobago House of Assembly (THA), which stepped up to help with travel, accommodation and meals. The shortfalls, he said, were met by "Divine Intervention, parents, coaches and when the club achieves surplus in its finances." Franklyn said too that "the Club purchases almost all training and competition equipment."

The LaLonde Gordon Sports Fund, launched earlier this year by the THA to honour the island's Olympic Bronze Medalist, is also meant for sports development as advocated by the Zenith coach. Since the club's inception, athletes have trained without having to pay any fees, but for others, the club has been forced to implement a monthly payment, which started in January 2013.

Franklyn listed among his most memorable achievements as a coach the transition of Tobago's athletes from mediocrity to national champions. ■



## 2013/14 OCS Art Competition

*La Diabliesse, battles between the Old World giants who once sailed Tobago's waters, the scenery beneath the seas and a glimpse of golden days past, when life was happily lived in simple homes.*



These were but a few of the characters and pieces of history that sprang to life from the fertile minds and talented hands of the young people in Tobago's Secondary Schools, with the Office of the Chief Secretary's Art Competition 2012/2013.

The competition was tough, with works of a high standard that portrayed culture, heritage, food, sport, Tobago's famous landmark and scenery and even childhood toys. One grand prize winner and 11 finalists were awarded prizes totalling more than \$30,000.

appear at lonely roads in the early hours of the morning, from where she would lure men deep into the forest. Waldron received the grand prize of \$3,000, while her school was awarded \$10,000 and each young finalist received \$1,500. Other pieces featured were

of the Scarborough Secondary School, whose work, "Old Time Wooden House", was featured on the Office of the Chief Administrator's 2012 Christmas Card.

The aim of the competition and the calendar is to provide a public forum for Tobago's youngsters to showcase their talent and to draw public attention to the wealth of creativity contained among the island's more youthful citizens.

The opportunity for Tobago's resourceful youngsters to express themselves as they did in 2012 will come again, as the Office of the Chief Secretary of the Tobago House of Assembly (THA) will soon launch this year's competition to create the 2014 OCS calendar.

Last year's competition was the first of its kind for the island. Using a variety of media – inks, oil paints, 3D decoupage, pastels and leatherwork– an array of work was submitted by 50 young Secondary School

*The opportunity for Tobago's resourceful youngsters to express themselves*

This year's competition will take on a similar note. Nedra Waldron of Scarborough Secondary School, whose winning piece, entitled "Dawn", was featured on the cover of OCS 2013 Calendar.

"Dawn" starred one of local folklore's best-known characters, La Diabliesse, a mythical creature who would

a fine art depiction of the sea battle between the Dutch and French off Tobago's Rockley Bay in 1677, by Speyside High School pupil, Hakeem Charles, as well as a scene extracted from Tobago's famous coral city at Buccoo Reef, by Scarborough Secondary School's Aleena Murray. The UTC sponsored a \$500 account in a special gesture towards Jabari Duke

The 2013 Calendar was unveiled by the Chief Secretary, Orville London, at a prize-giving ceremony in The Atrium at Gulf City Mall.

No theme will be prescribed for the competition. Pupils are advised to get ready, as the THA prepares to announce the start date of this year's competition. ■



# THA Profile: Chief Administrator

## Faith, Fairness and Equality with Dr Ellis Burris

### RECORD OF SERVICE

**D**r. Burris has worked in and out of Trinidad and Tobago in a long career that began as a Water Treatment Plant Operator at the Water and Sewage Authority (WASA). He holds a BSc (Hons.) in Civil Engineering from the University of Massachusetts, USA and a MSc. in Structural Engineering from Washington University and is the holder of a PhD in Coastal Engineering from the University of Strathclyde, Scotland.

Last year he was listed in the International Who's Who of professionals. Dr. Burris spent 25 years in the service of the state, having worked on such projects as the L'Anse Fourmi/Charlotteville Link Road, the upgrade of the then Crown Point International Airport (now the Arthur NR Robinson International Airport) and extension of the Scarborough Port Jetty. He also served at various ministries as Deputy Permanent and Permanent Secretary.

He was part of the development team of the Utilities Corridor Project and also worked on creating a new postal code for Trinidad and Tobago in the Ministry of Public Utilities. Last June, he became the first Tobagonian to be made a "Fellow of the Association of Professional Engineers of Trinidad and Tobago" (APETT). Dr. Burris is also a member of the National Honour Society of Engineers (TAU BETA PI) in the US. From 1998 to 1999 he won the award for Who's Who in Science and Engineering and 1989 he received a fellowship from the Organisation of American States (OAS) He was recently honoured by the IRO for religious and spiritual service to this country. ■

**Y**EARS in and out of public service have failed to whittle away Dr. Ellis Burris's enthusiasm for change and progress – or his belief that Tobago can rise to the challenge of an increasingly dynamic tourism market.

Nor has time and its fair share of disappointments along the way managed to compromise his insistence on excellence in service delivery.

Dr. Burris is, quite simply, results-oriented and has brought with him a work ethic that can at times move paces ahead of the existing culture. He refuses to be frustrated and is known among his employees and

interview (see pages 6&7 for details of the Scarborough Enhancement Programme). "It has to be re-worked and aesthetic, functionality and hygiene are tops on our list of priorities.

Scarborough should be a one-stop for all – from something as simple as paying bills to being a self-contained destination for the working tourist, which is a growing market around the world as more people take their work with them on vacation."

With the boardwalk almost complete and the Scarborough Enhancement Programme advancing, Dr. Burris is ready to step up the rate of delivery.

Dr. Burris's ability to juggle his responsibilities with a firm but fair hand

*Dr. Burris believes in the equality of man, regardless of creed or race*

peers as determined. He is well-known for speaking his mind –such as his pronouncements that Tobago's capital, Scarborough, cannot compete at the global-level unless it is transformed from a "shanty-town" to a place that citizens and visitors can enjoy and respect.

The re-birth of Scarborough is one of the projects for the island that is closest to Dr. Burris's heart, as he believes it is the start of a new and competitive chance for Tobago as a place of business and leisure in the Caribbean.

"Scarborough is, at present, not befitting of Tobago," said Dr. Burris during a recent

can be credited, in a large part, to his faith. A member of the Baha'i religion since his youth, Dr. Burris believes in the equality of man, regardless of creed or race and is therefore moved by his own nature to see well beyond the loyalties of party politics or tribalism.

"I simply will not operate at a level that sees anyone treated according to political orientation, nationality, race and so on.

I believe in the unity of humankind and so far, I have managed to be an administrator who gets results without having to compromise that. I find that a source of hope." ■



# Public Interest Desk

**A**S part of its continuing efforts to create windows for citizens into the process of governance, the Office of the Chief Secretary has introduced a **Public Interest Desk**.

The Desk is yet another tool designed to engage the public in improving THA's own service, as it follows its mandate from the people in the January 2013 elections.

Assistant Secretary in the Office of the Chief Secretary, Deon Isaac, said the Public Interest Desk was being undertaken "in the interest of ensuring that the democratisation process of governance in Tobago is fully ensured and fully ventilated."

It is hoped that the initiative will ensure that all Tobagonians are given the opportunity to bring their perspective to the forefront of governance in Tobago, Isaac said during a weekly Post Executive Council briefing.

To complement its efforts in making the people an integral part of its function, the THA also began hosting *Public Day*, every Tuesday .

These meetings begin at 8:00 a.m. and persons wishing to participate are asked to be on the first floor of the Unit Trust Corporation Building, in Scarborough, before 9:00 a.m.

The Public Interest Desk can also be contacted at: 635-0754, 635-2165 or 635-1362, as well as via email, at [publicinterestdesk@tha.gov.tt](mailto:publicinterestdesk@tha.gov.tt) ■



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## **PUBLIC INTEREST DESK**

**Tobago** **HAVE YOUR SAY**

your *perspective* | your *opinion* | your *view*

Phone: 1 (868) 635-0754 / 2165 / 1362

Email: [publicinterestdesk@tha.gov.tt](mailto:publicinterestdesk@tha.gov.tt)

[www.tha.gov.tt](http://www.tha.gov.tt)  

OFFICE HOURS: TUESDAYS 8AM - 4PM  
FIRST FLOOR, UTC BUILDING, SCARBOROUGH, TOBAGO





# *Tobago Heritage Festival Miss Heritage Personality 2013*

Raina Alleyne captured the Tobago Heritage Festival Miss Heritage Personality 2013 crown from a field of nine contestants, earning herself a \$25,000 educational scholarship from the main sponsor of the show, First Citizens Bank. She also won the prize for the “Most Intelligent” and the “Best Talent” at the competition at the Cyd Gray Complex in Roxborough. The other top four places in the competition went to Maurisa Abraham in second position, Chelsye Miller in third position, Rome Haywood was fourth and Loniee Farmer in fifth place.



— **PHOTO:** Left to right, Miss Calder Hall, Maurisa Abraham, second runner up; Miss Heritage Personality Raina Alleyne, Carnbee/Mt Pleasant; Secretary for Community Development and Culture, Councillor Dr. Denise Tsoi-Fatt Angus and First Runner up Chelsye Miller, Miss Les Coteaux.

# *Retirement of Administrators*



The Office of the Chief Secretary said goodbye to some hardworking administrators who served tirelessly with the Tobago House of Assembly.

They were honoured at a small and intimate get-together with Chief Secretary Orville London and the Chief Administrator, Dr. Ellis Burris, at the Sea Horse Restaurant.

— **PHOTO:** From Left to right; Dr. Ellis Burris, Chief Administrator; Heather Caruth, Division of Health and Social Services; (behind) Vanessa Cutting Thomas, Clerk of The Assembly; Orville London, Chief Secretary; Kelvin Charles, Presiding Officer; Ethel Berkley Sylvester, Division of Agriculture, Marine Affairs, Marketing and the Environment; Jennifer Lezama, Division of Education, Youth Affairs and Sport Education; Thomas Erol Ceasar, Division of Settlements and Labour.



— **PHOTO:** Janice Harris, who served at Community Development & Culture

# Tobago House of Assembly Members & Divisions

The Tobago House of Assembly (THA) is this country's oldest political institution. The Assembly is older than Trinidad and Tobago itself, since the twin-island union was set up in 1889 by the British government, and the THA's first incarnation was in 1768.

Today's Assembly was created by Act 37 of 1980 for "making better provision for the administration of the island of Tobago and for matters therein."

The Assembly is divided into two main arms. The Legislative Arm (Assembly Legislature) is where all members of the Assembly meet in plenary and/or in select committees to make policy decisions with respect to its operations. These functions

are supported by the Assembly Legislature Secretariat which is headed by the Presiding Officer, with the Clerk of the Assembly responsible for the discharge of functions as they relate to the conduct of the business of the Assembly.

The Executive Arm of the Assembly is headed by the Chief Secretary in his capacity as leader of the Executive Council, which has individual and collective responsibility for carrying out the functions of the Assembly through the Divisions.

Each Division is headed by a Secretary with an Administrator serving as Accounting Officer with responsibility for operations. The Chief Administrator is the most senior public officer in the administration and is attached to the Office of the Chief Secretary.



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