

Issue #100



Artifacts

BARBADOS MUSEUM &
HISTORICAL SOCIETY MAGAZINE

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Dear Member,

We hope you're enjoying the 100th issue of the Arti-facts newsletter!

We've come a long way from the 1980s until now and we look forward to having this publication continue to grow from strength to strength. We hope you're enjoying the journey as we take you behind the scenes at the museum, keep you in the know and show you what we're doing to preserve Barbadian heritage for future generations.

In fact, this issue is packed with articles on the exciting activities in which the Barbados Museum & Historical Society has been involved between April and June. Lecturers, a National Geographic Explorer-in-Residence, pioneering and budding artists – you'll find them all on these pages.

Remember, as long as you have given us your current email address you should be receiving monthly updates in your inbox. If you're not, please let us know by emailing musepr@barbmuse.org.bb.

And you can also go to www.facebook.com to join the BMHS Facebook group; it's a fantastic forum for getting up-to-the-minute news and information, airing your views and linking with others who share your interests.

We're making the most of today's technology to make the information you want more accessible and engaging. That's why we're constantly striving to improve both our print publications and our online presence. Check out the BMHS website at www.barbmuse.org.bb in September – you'll be pleasantly surprised!

Christine Skeete

Christine Skeete
Marketing Officer



On Cover:
Dr. Spencer Wells speaking
at the Barbados DNA Project
launch and public lecture



Dr. Spencer Wells listens to a question from the audience. In the background are Dr. Lyndon Waterman, who chaired the lecture, and Alissandra Cummins

spoke on the topic "Deep Ancestry: Inside the Genographic Project," on April 03 at the Museum. Earlier in the day he also presented the Genographic Project during a seminar for students at the University of the West Indies.

Dr. Wells, a leading population geneticist, author, and filmmaker, directs National Geographic and IBM's global Genographic Project, one of the most ambitious anthropological research initiatives ever undertaken, to understand how we as a species populated the planet from our first steps out of Africa.

Barbados-born members of the public were invited to submit applications at various locations around the island during April to participate in the Barbados DNA Project. 100 participants were randomly selected on May 11 to receive free Genographic Public Participation Kits.

April Breeze

Exclusive Cottons of the Caribbean Inc. invited the Barbados Museum to partner with it to put on the *April Breeze - a Benefit Champagne Soiree* at the Museum on April 11. On what was indeed a beautiful breezy afternoon, patrons enjoyed the "celebration of colour and cotton" on display through fashion, a bazaar and an exhibition curated by BMHS Natural History Curator, Kerron Hamblin. The exhibition entitled *A Cotton Experience: A Story of West Indian Sea Island Cotton* was officially opened by The Honourable Mr. Haynesley Benn, Minister of Agriculture.

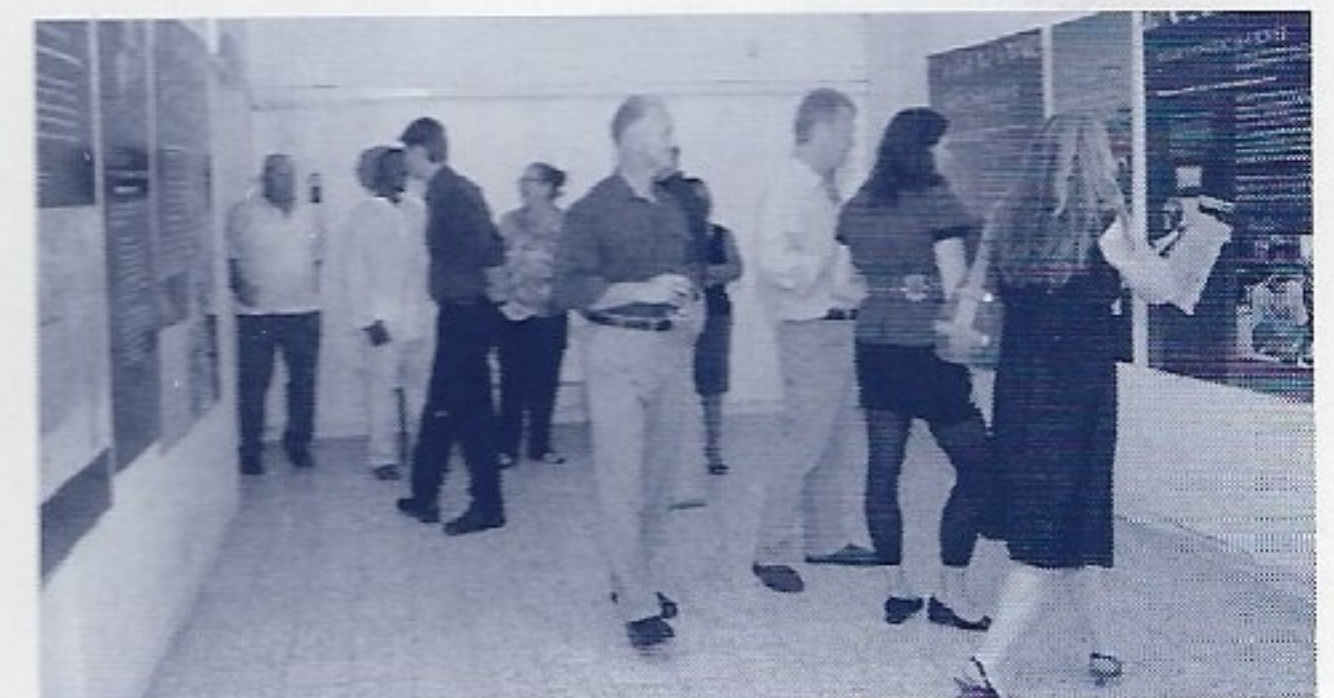
Discover Your Deep Ancestors

A large audience paid rapt attention as Dr. Spencer Wells, a National Geographic Explorer-in-Residence,

With a simple and painless cheek swab, participants send in their DNA to view their own interactive, personalized and confidential history online. Dr. Spencer Wells said, "Among other things, we hope that the findings from the project will underscore how closely related we are to one another as part of the extended human family".

The local initiative has been made possible through the support of the Peter Moores (Barbados) Trust and the US Embassy.

For information on the Genographic Project please visit www.nationalgeographic.com/genographic.



Sponsors of the project & BMHS partners viewing Genographic, Project panels during a cocktail reception. In the centre is John Roberts, Public Affairs Officer of the US Embassy. On the right are Glynnis Breen (backing), Communications Manager at National Geographic, and Dr. & Mrs. Wells.



Kerron Hamblin gives the Minister of Agriculture, The Honourable Mr. Haynesley Benn, a tour of the exhibition

The Minister of Family, Youth and Sports, Dr. The Honourable Esther Byer-Suckoo was also in attendance.

From the Antique to the Contemporary

The Barbados National Committee of the International Council of Museums (ICOM) recently offered members of the public the rare treat of seeing Lancaster Great House come alive with the beauty of authentic Barbadian furniture.

ICOM Barbados Treasurer and Barbados Museum Curator – History and Archaeology, Kevin Farmer explains, “The exhibition *From the Antique to the Contemporary: Barbados Furniture 1680-2009* illustrates the origin and evolution of Barbadian furniture, drawing on examples from the 17th century to contemporary times.”

The exhibition opened with a gala private view, hosted by ICOM Barbados and Sir Martyn & Lady Arbib, Trustees of the Barbados Community Foundation, on March 30 and continued through to May 30.

For information on the International Council of Museums, please see www.icom.museum



The eye-catching four-poster bed in the exhibition



From left to right: Peggy McGeary, Chair of ICOM Barbados; Lady Williams; Nerys Rudder; Martina Alleyne and Kevin Farmer



Some of the dancers reflected the Crop Over Festival, while others depicted folk culture



The acrobatic Shaggy Bears in motion

Fun for Everyone

On Saturday, May 23, the Barbados Museum & Historical Society marked International Museum Day, under the theme “Museums and Tourism”, by throwing its doors open for hundreds of Barbadian residents and visitors alike to enjoy free entry.

The day featured something for everyone – guided tours of the galleries, a Garrison Historic Area walking tour, a wellness demonstration, DJ music, the Purity Bakeries bread cart, local food, craft, vegetables and plants for sale, Lucky Dips, storytelling, a jumping tent and slide for children and performances by folk dancers, Shaggy Bears, tuk bands and the Barbados Landship. Many patrons spent almost the entire day on the premises and from all reports a grand time was had by all.

Myths & Realities of Caribbean History

Lecturer in Archaeology in the Department of History at the University of the West Indies, Augustine Campus, Trinidad, Dr. Basil Reid, launched his new book *Myths & Realities of Caribbean History* and delivered an intriguing public lecture to a packed audience on April 27 at the Barbados Museum. Copies of the book were presented to the Minister of Education, The Honourable Mr. Ronald Jones, Ms. Maureen Grazette, CXC’s Assistant Registrar - Examinations and the Museum’s Director, Alissandra Cummins. Get your copy today from the Museum Gift Shop for only \$45 for Museum members.

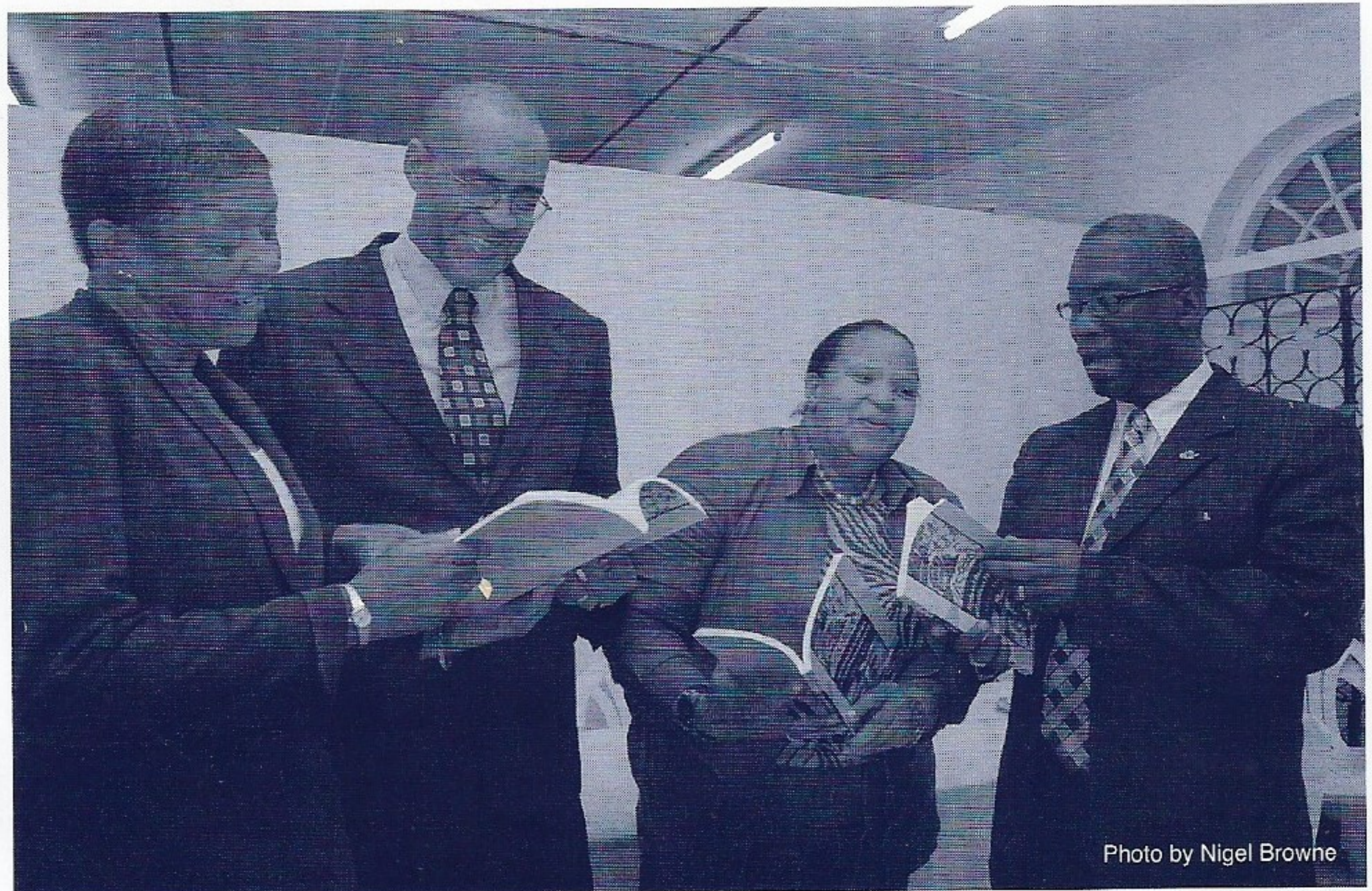


Photo by Nigel Browne

From left to right: Maureen Grazette, Dr. Basil Reid, Alissandra Cummins, The Honourable Mr. Ronald Jones

Museum Inspiration

On June 23, winners in the Museum's 75th Anniversary Art Competition for primary school children, entitled "Museum Inspiration", were rewarded for their creativity and hard work.

The Museum's Education Officer, Peggy McGeary, noted that children make up the largest segment of visitors to the museum. "With this competition, we were hoping that they would come in and see what they could reproduce," she explained.

Entrants in the competition were required to design clothing for a doll based on costumes and characters from the museum's galleries, or design or create a model of a toy based on a Barbadian artefact in the museum. Alternatively, entrants could create or draw a picture of a scene of old Barbados showing some types of transportation featured in the museum's galleries.

Prizes were awarded to:

Five to Seven Age Group

1. Duane Bispham, The Rock Christian Primary School - windmill with popsicle stick sails.
2. Akija Bennett, Belmont Primary School - model airplane from pep bottles.
3. Ifari Yearwood, West Terrace Primary School - dress design, complemented by a detailed outline of the concepts used in the creation.

Eight to Eleven Age Group

1. Myka Payne, The Rock Christian Primary School - large drawing depicting several aspects of the Museum's exhibits, including the penny farthing bicycle, donkey cart, chattel house and mauby woman.
2. Makala Springer, Roland Edwards Primary School - handmade doll's dress of national colours.
3. Shonita Broome, Roland Edwards Primary School - a Rachel Pringle dress design.

Special mentions were made of another Roland Edwards student, Jade Medford and Fetai Knight of West Terrace Primary School.

Sponsors were Atlantis Submarines Barbados Inc., Art Den, Barbados Concorde Experience, Chefette Restaurants, Days Books, Ocean Park Barbados and Dr. Trevor Carmichael, Q.C.



Adrian Bowen of Barbados Concorde Experience presents a prize to Myka Payne



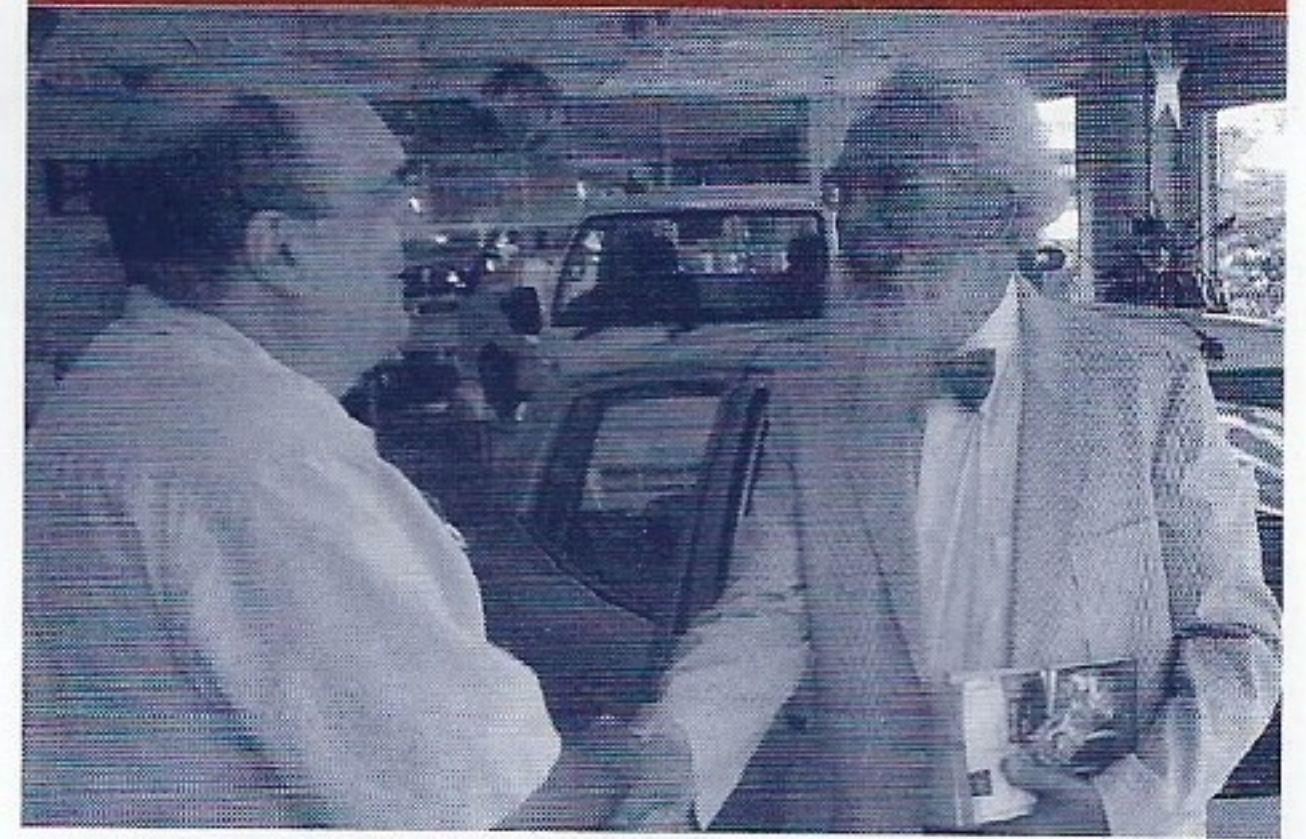
Duane Bispham receives his prize from Simone Gittens of Art Den



Karen Austin of Days Books presents a prize to Shonita Broome

75th Anniversary Raffle

And the Winner is...



Museum member Brian Clarke walked away with the Museum's 75th Anniversary Raffle grand prize – a brand new 2009 Kia Picanto. The grand prize draw was held on June 27 and was audited by Brian F. Griffith and Company Chartered Accounts.



John Francis, Director of Manufacturing of Williams Industries, with responsibility for the company's St. Lucia investments, was also on hand on July 02 at McEneaney Quality Inc. to present the runner-up prize of a complimentary stay for two at Almond Smuggler's Cove in St. Lucia to Gail Marshall. Airfare to St. Lucia was donated Chancery Chambers.

The winners of the April, May and June interim prizes were:



From left to right: Anthony Greene who accepted on behalf of the Nation Publishing Company and R. Carroll-Ann Gooding receive their prizes of a Sandy Lane dinner for two and an Earthworks collectible vase respectively from BMHS Deputy Director, Dr. Tom Lofffield.



BMHS Deputy Director, Dr. Tom Lofffield and Annabella Johnson, Hotel Manager of Butterfly Beach Hotel, present prizes to Michael Lewis (centre) who accepted on behalf of James Husbands of Solar Dynamics

75th Anniversary Raffle cont'd



Sharon Carmichael receives her prize of a Jill Walker original from Christopher Trew of Best of Barbados. In the in background is the BMHS Director, Alissandra Cummins



Sharon Carmichael receives a Winston Kellman original from the artist on behalf of Giles Carmichael



Sharon Carmichael receives Dr. Richard Cohen's prize from Bill Grace

Proceeds from this raffle benefit the re-development of the core exhibits and upgrades of the Harewood and Jubilee galleries.

Industries, Dacosta Mannings Inc., Indulgence Spa by Royal Westmoreland, Holder's Season, Bajan Blue Restaurant, Earthworks Pottery, Butterfly Beach Hotel, Best of Barbados, and artists Winston Kellman and Bill Grace.

The Museum is grateful to the generous sponsors of this initiative - McEneaney Quality Inc., Chancery Chambers, Williams

Panama Canal Donation

On June 05, Mr. Herbert Hutchinson presented to the Museum his collection of photographs, postcards and stamps which featured West Indians, and more specifically Barbadians, who laboured on the construction of the Panama Canal. Some of these images were used to illustrate his article in the current issue of the Journal of the Barbados Museum & Historical Society. This collection will be an integral part of documentation included in Barbados' nominations for Memory of the World designation.



Herbert Hutchinson discusses the collection

music from the estate of Vern Best, better known in the entertainment circles by his stage name El Verno del Congo. The donation, given by his daughter Oneka Best, chronicles some of the artistic achievements of El Verno, allowing us glimpses of his evolution over time from young artist performing in the Bel Air Jazz Club to elder statesman, acknowledged for his artistic achievements.

The collection illustrates the artistic endeavours of the man who disliked labels. He was a multi-faceted artist, singer, actor, songwriter, musician, dancer, choreographer, painter, mentor and muse. For many others he was more - a friend, father and supporter. He was the embodiment of the 1950s artistic tradition in which to be an entertainer one had to be versatile and consistent. One of the early few who performed the art of the limbo dance on the hotel circuit, he also sang 1950s' standards and played the clarinet, but it was the drum for which he came to be better known. The El Verno del Congo Collection also illustrates a little-known aspect of his artistic ability - he was a painter, specifically an intuitive artist who painted oil and watercolour pieces on canvas, masonite and paper.

In the collection, along with his paintings and prints, one also finds photographs of El Verno at various functions and performances, original music records,

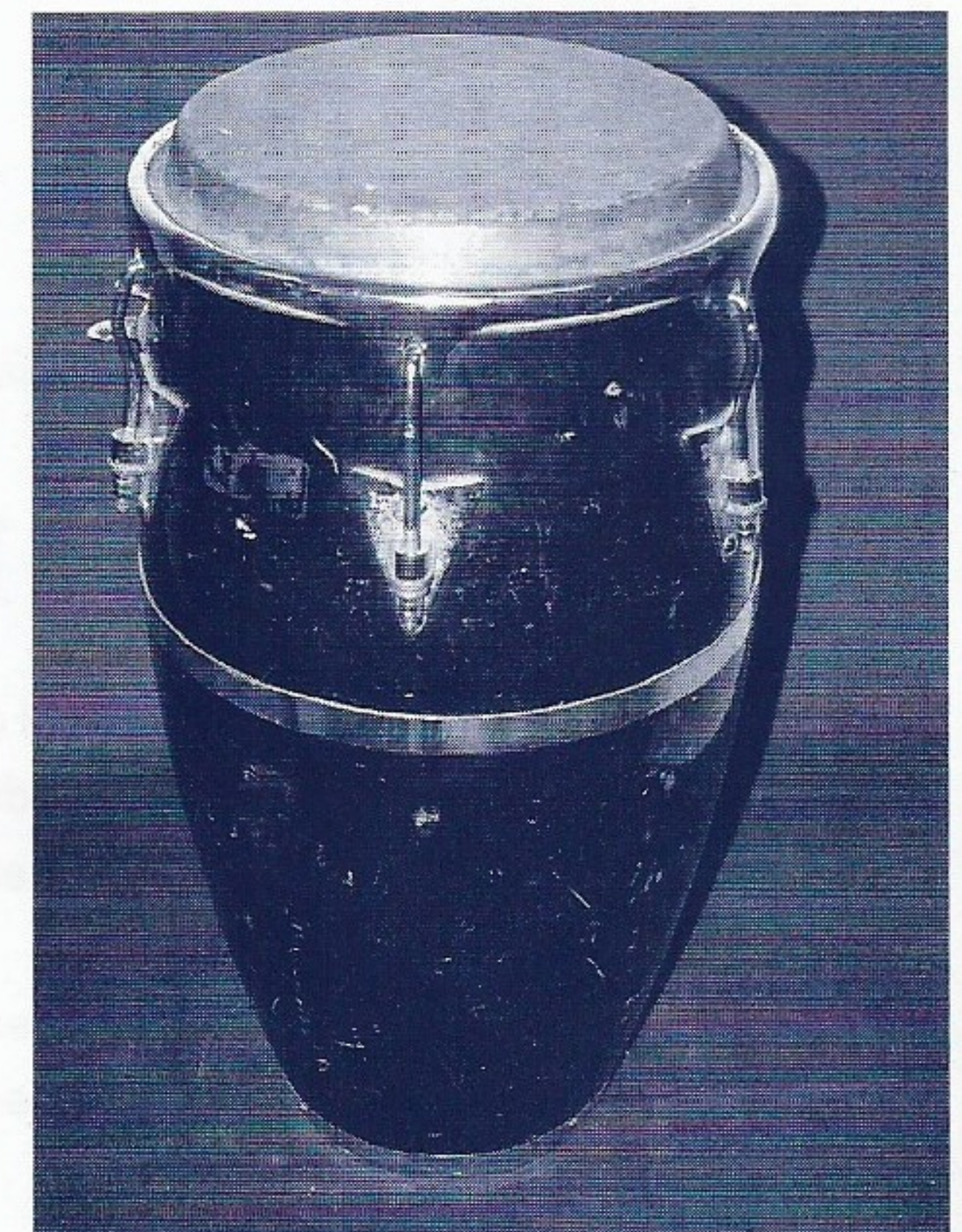
drums, music dictation book with notes and handwritten lyrics and trophies. The El Verno del Congo Collection is a testimony to this extraordinary artist and his life's work.



A 1975 El Verno del Congo record



A 1979 painting by El Verno del Congo



A talking drum from the El Verno del Congo collection

The Best Donation

The Barbados Museum and Historical Society was privileged to receive the donation of images, instruments and

Donor Acknowledgements

January 1, 2009 – June 30, 2009

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Aileen Hamilton Exhibition

Aileen Hamilton (1907-1987) is considered one of Barbados' pioneer artists. We invite you to share her love for portraiture through the exhibition "A Portrayal of Portraits". Dedicated to female portraiture, this exhibition also highlights her versatility in the use of various media and encourages viewers to examine the skills and techniques Aileen Hamilton uses in her works.

All are invited to view this exhibition between August 17 and September 19, 2009 at the Barbados Museum. This exhibition has benefited from the generous support of The Fast Frame Factory and Harris Paints Barbados (2003) Limited.

The Walled Garden at the Barbados Museum

by Kathleen Lofffield

The Friends of the Barbados Museum (FOM), have initiated a project utilising the currently unused portion of the museum property on its northeastern boundary. The area is already walled and gated but because of its proximity to the stables on its eastern side, it has always been left as a bit of unusable space.

FOM felt that with modern and updated stabling of the horses and their care, the area could be made into an attractive oasis in the historic Garrison confines. And the horses in the stables provide just what a good garden needs - manure!

In keeping with museum plans for parking space on the north side of this wall, the area seemed to offer the perfect spot for evening entertainment - so the idea of a walled garden theatre was born.

The project started some months ago with a clean-up of the site and planting of donated shrubs, ground cover and small trees -all with white blooms that are so visible in the evening. Many scented vines and shrubs are now in place: evening events will be enhanced by the white flowers which in general are pollinated by moths and so are scented



The Walled Garden

for attraction to insects. How lucky can we humans be?

Since there is no known 'white garden' on island, this in itself could become yet another aspect of public interest at the museum, as well as a splendid new facility for plays and concerts. Currently we have Rangoon creeper, commonly known as Lad's love, a heavenly-scented vine on the stable side, jasmines with their readily loved perfume and the white and ever blooming frangipanis planted everywhere. We have a night blooming cereus on the north wall and although this is a slow grower of the cactus family, it will be a dreamy site in the future!

Our workers and donors have most recently left the growing-on project in the

good hands of the two able gardeners at the museum but will be following through this fall with continuing plans.

HELP wanted!

Jenny Sisnett, an active FOM member and gardener, has already cleaned up the drip feature in the upper courtyard as this is such a good entree from the currently active museum side of things and a beautiful garden feature. Thank you, Jenny.

Sir 'Bertie' Graham with his love for plants, Lady St. John, Shirley-Anne Howell (another fine island gardener), Maria Adotey, with her love and consummate interest in the museum, and others whose ideas have been utilised, have all been active in this project. Thank you all. We would like to restart work on more aspects of the project this fall and a fundraiser is in the offing for your enjoyment and support - so stay tuned to museum news.

Let us make the best scented white garden theatre at the Barbados Museum and Historical Society!

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Artifacts

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- Free admission to the Museum
- Free use of Museum Library services
- Members discount in the Museum shop and more!

- **Life \$690.00 • Firm / Company \$230.00 • Annual \$51.75**
- **Joint Annual (husband & wife) \$69.00 • Student \$5.75**

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