

Issue #101

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Museum
& Historical
Society

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BARBADOS MUSEUM &
HISTORICAL SOCIETY MAGAZINE

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visit us at www.barbmuse.org.bb

Dear Member,

What if you woke up one day without any memory – with no knowledge of who you are or where you came from? The UNESCO Memory of the World programme seeks to ensure that we never forget and never lose sight of who we are. The programme was set up in 1992 to guard against collective amnesia. The exhibition "Uncover, Recover, Discover" was housed at the Barbados Museum and featured original materials from Caribbean memories that have already been inscribed on the International Memory of the World Register. See our recap of this important programme.

In this issue, we continue to reveal some of the hidden treasures in our collection, focusing on portraiture this time around.

We are also offering an exclusive opportunity to Museum members to show off their talents and be a part of a proposed exhibition. Read on to find out more.

November and December will be busy months at the Barbados Museum. You are invited to join us by attending the events or choosing from several ways to be involved. Check out the Member Update section for more information.

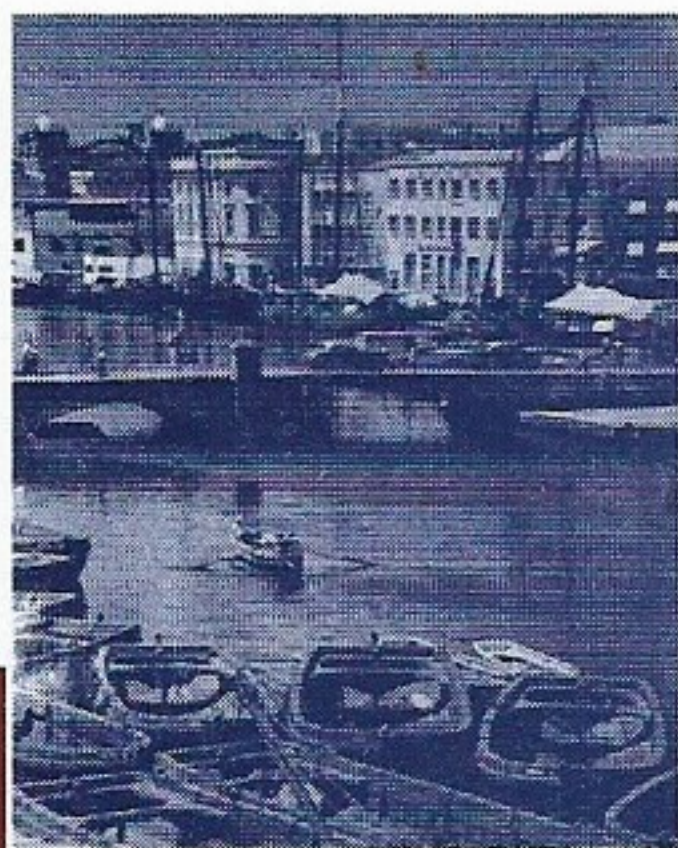
Look out for monthly updates by email in your inbox. If you're not receiving these, please let us know by emailing musepr@barbmuse.org.bb.

You can also go to www.facebook.com to join the BMHS Facebook group.

We want to hear from you!

Christine Skeete

Christine Skeete
Marketing Officer



On Cover:
The Careenage, Bridgetown, 1958

An Opportunity for Young People

The Barbados Museum's Junior Curator programme was recently completed. This summer programme continues to attract young people from secondary schools, the Barbados Community College and the University of the West Indies.

BMHS Education Officer, Peggy McGeary, enhanced the young people's knowledge of heritage attractions and the information they reveal. The attractions they visited were the Arlington House Museum in Speightstown, George Washington House and the Nidhe Israel Museum and Jewish Synagogue. Some members of the group also participated in a hike through Turner's Hall Woods, which was organised by the Curator - Natural History and the Education Officer for Museum staff in celebration of World Environment Day.

One report in particular indicates that the training benefited the Junior Curators significantly. Danielle Lythcott, a student of the University of the West Indies, wrote: "We gained experience and increased our confidence about speaking as authorities on our island's history and culture..... when ever we had to speak to non-national visitors and school aged visitors."

"We were taught about the storing artefacts in the case of an emergency such as fire, storm or severe flooding... as well as... about the importance of the preservation of many artefacts through temperature control, the use of UV lighting and the use of acid free paper and boxes for the storage of artefacts."

Her final paragraph sums up her experience: "My stint as a Junior Curator was very enlightening. I learnt more about the operations of a museum, was able to interact with persons from all strata of society and felt as though I was playing a part in the preservation of Barbados' heritage. I have developed a greater appreciation for the efforts of various groups to preserve our heritage, and a greater understanding of the need to ensure that aspects of the heritage of 'marginal' groups be preserved as well."

Do you know someone who may be interested in the 2010 Junior Curator programme? We would love to hear from them. Please ask them to contact the Education Officer, Peggy McGeary, at Tel: 427-0201.



The Junior Curators with Peggy McGeary

Barbados' Emerging Heritage Tourism Sector

Russia was the venue for the International Council of Museums' Marketing and Public Relations Committee, and there Christine Skeete, Marketing Officer, made a presentation on the topic **Museums and the Emerging Heritage Tourism Sector** in Barbados. The theme for the conference was "Museums and Tourism" and participants benefited from thought-provoking discussions and first-hand experience of some of Russia's most prestigious museum estates where visitors are immersed in culture and heritage through a range of activities.

Between 23rd and 29th August, the group visited the Puskin Museum in Moscow, Leo Tolstoy Museum Estate in Yasnaya Polyana and estates related to the life of Nobel Peace Prize-winning author Mikhail Sholokov.

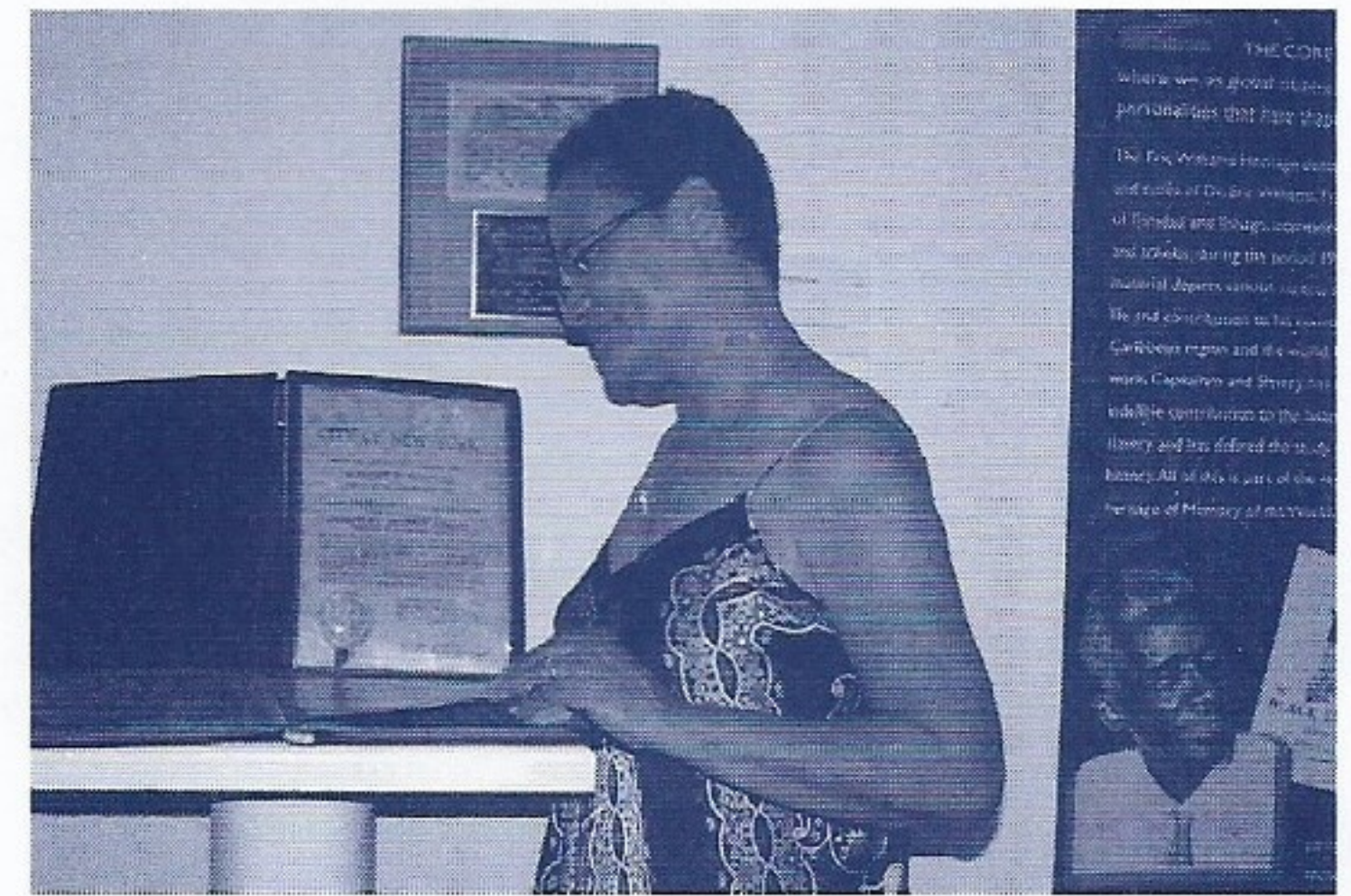
Memory of the World

On 28th July, a reception for delegates attending the meeting of the International Advisory Committee of the UNESCO Memory of the World programme at the Documentary Heritage of Enslaved Peoples of the Caribbean was held at the Barbados Museum. The Minister of Community Development & Culture, The Honourable Mr. Steve Blackett, delivered the feature address and presented citations to representatives of the respective agencies. BMHS Director, Alissandra Cummins, accepted the citation for the Documentary Heritage of Enslaved Peoples of the Caribbean. Mr. Blackett also declared the exhibition officially open.

The Barbados Museum served as the venue for the exhibition and featured original materials from Caribbean memories that have already been inscribed on the International Memory of

the World Register. These collections are The Eric Williams Collection, The C.L.R. James Collection and The Derek Walcott Collection and the Documentary Heritage of Enslaved Peoples of the Caribbean.

UNESCO took the initiative in 1992 to create the Memory of the World Programme to guard against collective amnesia. Its premise is that the world's documentary heritage belongs to us all, and therefore should be preserved, protected and permanently accessible to everyone.



Joie Springer viewing the exhibition

Love in Miniature

How might a nobleman have encouraged potential suitors to request his daughter's hand in marriage? He may have sent a courier to them with her portrait.

Portrait miniatures began to flourish in 16th century Europe and the art was practiced during the 17th century and 18th century. They were especially valuable in introducing people to each other over distances. Soldiers and sailors sometimes carried miniatures of their loved ones while travelling, or a wife might keep one of her husband while he was away.

"Portrait Miniature", refers to a miniature portrait painting. The word "miniature" comes from the Latin word 'miniare' meaning colour (red lead or vermillion) used for the capital letters. According to the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, hand-written books had to compete with printed books during the 1460s, and miniaturists such as Simon Bening continued to illustrate

expensive books, but also offered patrons independent miniatures. Some of these were for private worship and others were simply desirable objects.

Usually executed in gouache or watercolor, portrait miniatures first appeared in the 1520s, at the French and English courts. Like medals, they were portable, but they also had realistic colour. The earliest examples were painted by two Netherlandish miniaturists, Jean Clouet working in France and Lucas Horenbout in England.

The first miniaturists used watercolor to paint on stretched vellum, but in the 18th century, miniatures were also painted on ivory and Vitreous enamel. In the second half of the 19th century, the development of daguerreotypes and photographs contributed to the decline in popularity of the miniatures.

The Barbados Museum currently has a

collection of over 60 portrait miniatures including portraits in watercolors, gouaches, daguerreotypes and photographs. Some of the frames are just as exquisite as miniatures themselves. Portrait miniatures are known to be as small in size as 40 mm or 30 mm, and the smallest miniature is 2.3 cm. Six of these are on display in the Jubilee Gallery, including the portrait of King William IV.



Rare Photographs Now in the Museum's Collection

Between July and September the Museum acquired an impressive 96 items into the collection.

These included:

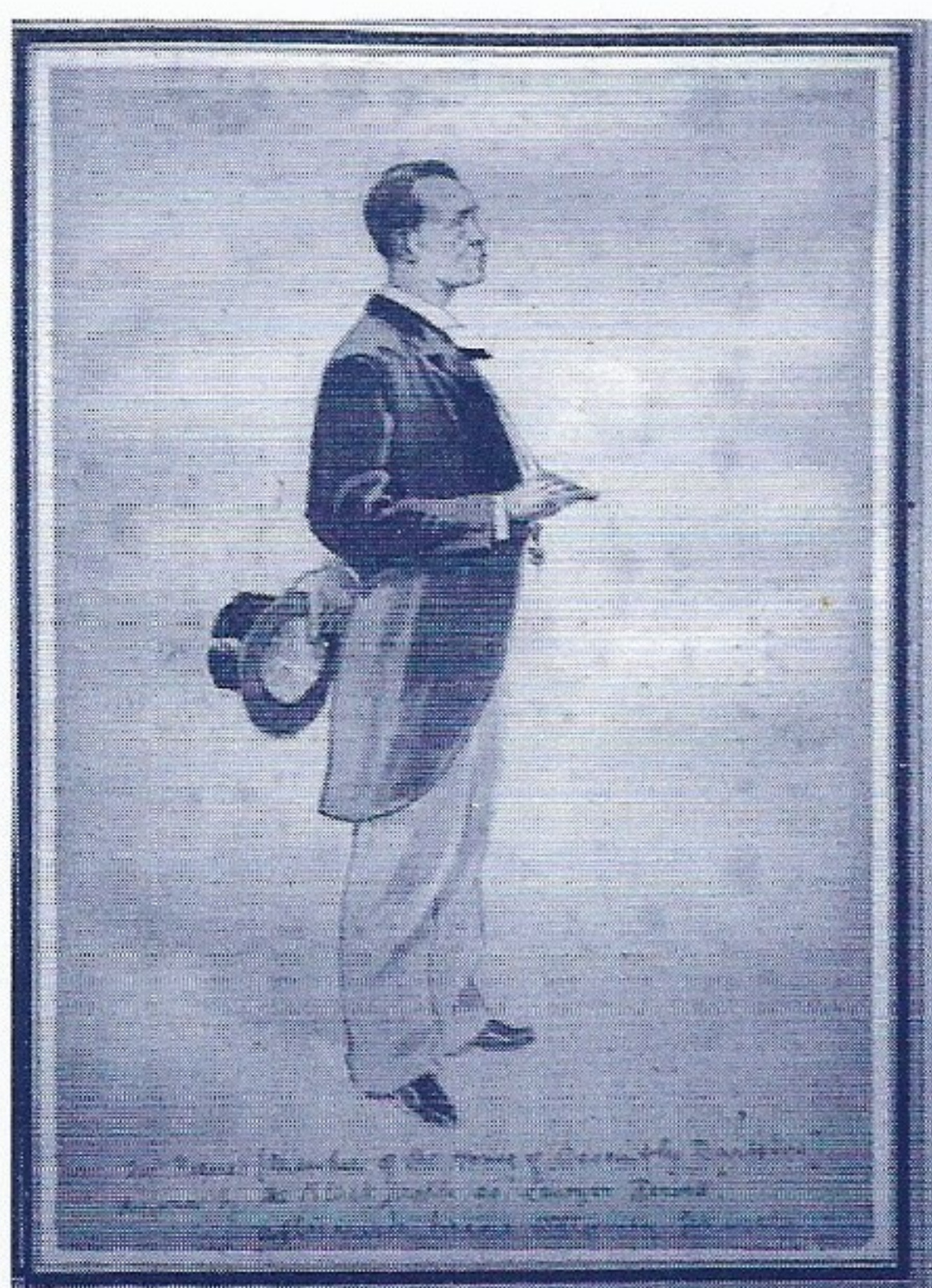
- Original photographs dated 1958 showing the Careenage (pictured on the cover)
- Two oil on canvas paintings depicting a Brazilian in the Caribbean
- Memorabilia from the National Conservation Commission highlighting the event of the 100th Anniversary of Queen's Park on June 10, 2009.
- Original photographs showing the Seawell Airport tower construction and the electrical wiring of the runway at Seawell during the 1950s and 1960s.
- Collection of American, West Indian and Canadian jazz albums by artists such as Art Tatum and Oscar Peterson.
- A collection of original documents dating from 1851 to 1919.

Exhibitions by You for You

Do you, or does anyone you know, have works to loan to the Museum for an exhibition on Grimston Fawkes? Then contact Allison Callendar, Curator – Art & Art History, at Tel: 427-0201 or Email: curator@barbmuse.org.bb. This exhibition is tentatively scheduled for the middle of 2010.

The BMHS invites its members to produce works of art, prints, photography or mixed media for a special member-driven exhibition. Members will be asked to submit a minimum of two works and a maximum of four works in any size and medium, at least two months in advance of the opening date. Particularly large works will have to be limited to two, because of their size and the space they will occupy in the gallery. The Exhibition Committee will select works for the exhibition according to criteria that will be outlined on the registration forms. The exhibition is tentatively scheduled for October to December 2010.

Prior to the exhibition, the Museum will offer members the exclusive opportunity to participate in a one-day workshop on mounting exhibitions. All members are



invited even if you do not plan to participate in the exhibition.

Please contact Allison Callendar, Curator – Art & art History, at Tel: 427-0201 or Email: curator@barbmuse.org.bb to indicate your general interest in the exhibition and the workshop.

Closing Dates

Please note Administration office and Shilstone Memorial Library will be closed, while the galleries remain open on the following dates in December:

December 24

December 31

The entire Museum will be closed as usual on public holidays:

December 25 (Christmas Day)

December 26 (Boxing Day)

Upcoming Events

Prehistoric Barbados exhibition

November 09, 2009

to January 15, 2010

Launch of the 2nd annual Festival of Trees – 4th December, 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

The Barbados Museum's galleries will be decorated with Christmas trees and BMHS members are invited to view the trees and spend some time in the galleries as we kick off the Christmas holiday season in a festive manner!

2009 Fine Craft Festival – December 05, 2009, 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

We really need your help to make this event a success. If you're willing to donate used Christmas gift wrap paper or items for the Lucky Dip, to volunteer at the door, in the children's Art Corner, or in any of the numerous other areas, please let us know!



Heywoods 1997

Donor Acknowledgements - January 1, 2009 – October 12, 2009

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Christmas tree decorated and sponsored by Angela Simpson & Discoveries Ltd.



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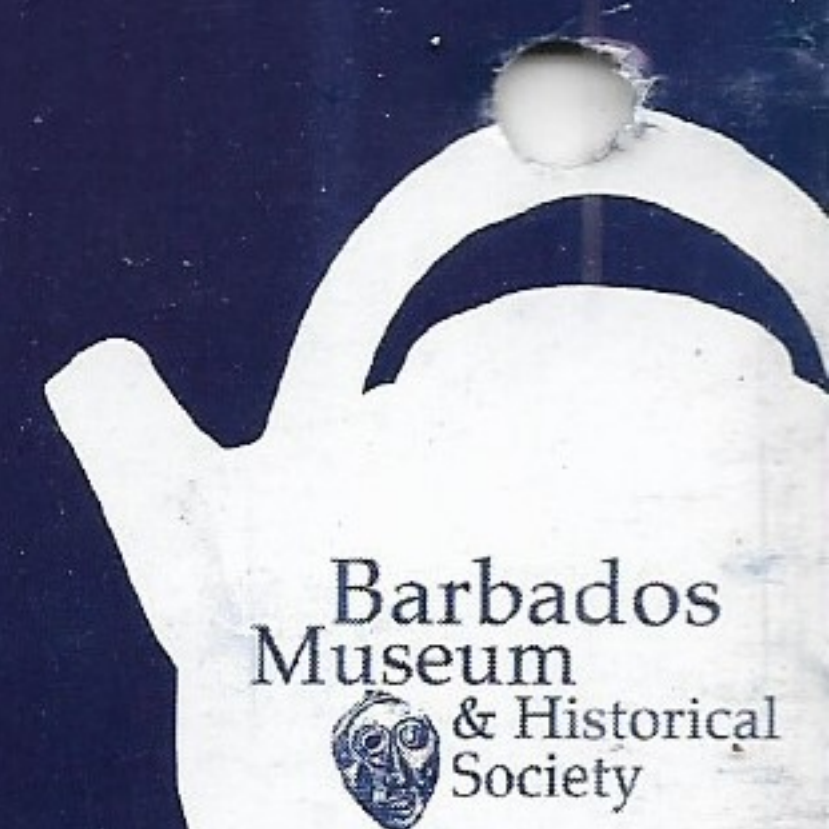
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