

NEWSLETTER

THE BARBADOS MUSEUM AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

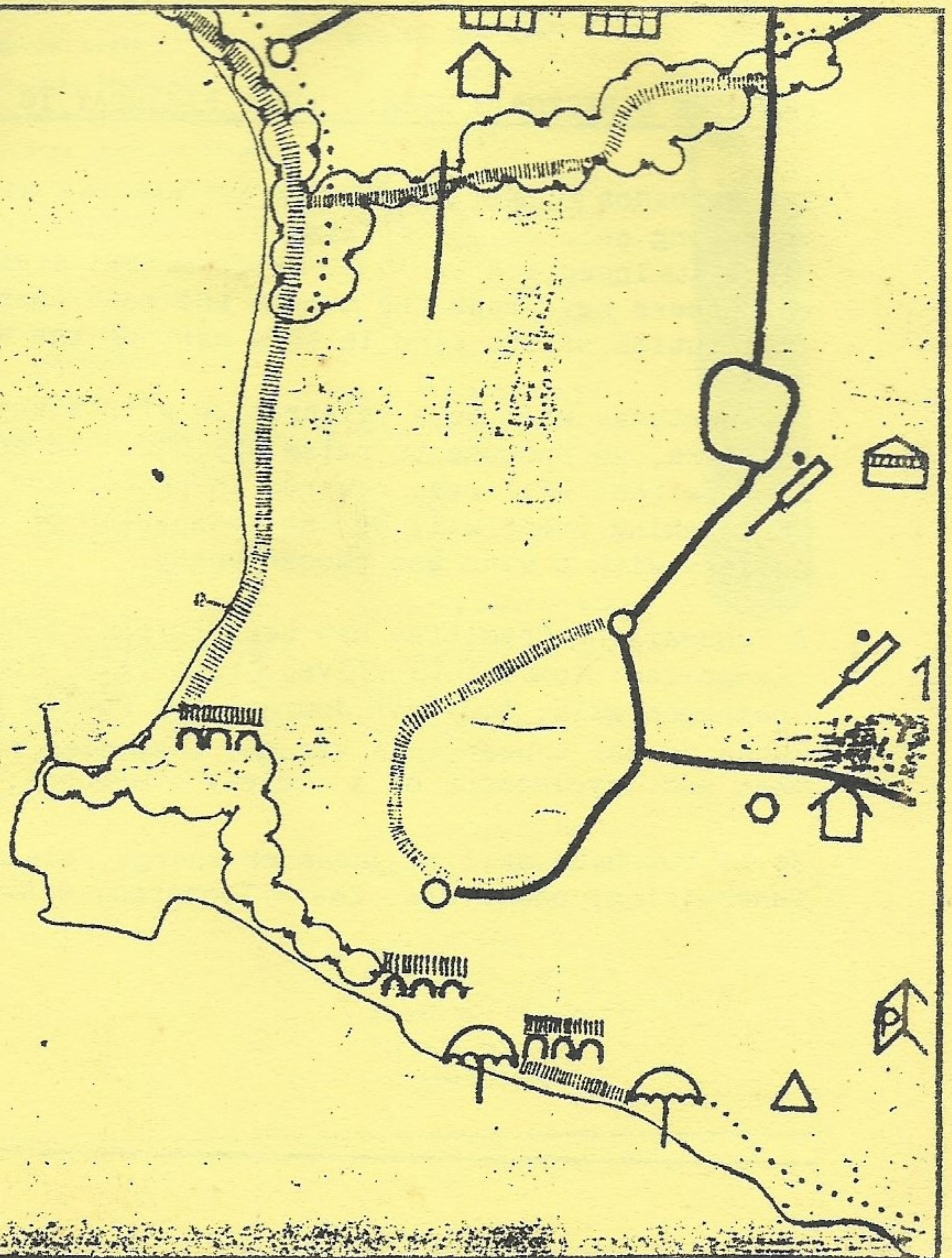
NO. 23

FIRST QUARTER

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OWN DEVELOPMENT PLAN POINTS AND MAP

-  Local road development
-  Major road development
-  Junction improvement
-  Office development
-  Multi-neighbourhood centre
-  Neighbourhood centre
-  Police station
-  Playing field
-  Beach access
-  Park development
-  Road side landscaping
-  Sidewalk development
-  New footpath, bicycle route



Cover: detail from cover of Development Plan for the Greater Bridgetown Area. (see article by Jill Sheppard p 2.).

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK: HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO US

The Barbados Museum and Historical Society will begin the year-long celebration of its 55th birthday in a few months. Since its inception in 1934, professional staff and dedicated volunteers have made the museum the most outstanding institution of its kind in this part of the world.

Our birthday will be a celebration with a purpose. For our 55 years, we propose to raise \$55,000. An energetic project, but one that will reap rewards in profit and satisfaction. The opening event will be the dedication of the Harewood Gallery with a wine and cheese party.

A Fundraising Committee has been formed, with the following categories: Membership drive, Craft fair, Concert series, Champagne gala, Souvenir Journal and Public Relations.

Funds do not appear in a vacuum; they come from the commitment and involvement of a society's members: you, dear readers.

So if you have skills, ideas or energy, please help with our fundraising; phone Mrs. Cheva Thompson, 424-4606.

An important aspect of the Museum's activities involves its cordial liaisons with other cultural groups. Here Jill Sheppard reports on co-operative efforts to protect the Garrison from "development".

PROPOSED "MAJOR ROAD DEVELOPMENT" FOR THE GARRISON CONSERVATION AREA

Although the Garrison Committee was well aware, from its perusal of the draft 'Physical Development Plan for the Greater Bridgetown Area', that a "major road development" was envisaged for the Garrison Road, extending round the Savannah from approximately the Museum to Brigade House, it was not until its regular weekly site meeting with the Minister responsible for the environment took place on 28th January that it realised the extent to which the proposed development, indicated also in the 'Proposed Measures to improve Traffic Circulation in Bridgetown and its Environs', would effect that part of the Garrison.

The business of the site meeting, on that occasion, was to look at plans drawn up by an architect, on behalf of the Museum, to landscape the small area between the road and the Museum perimeter in such a way as both to improve its aesthetic appearance and to provide satisfactory parking facilities, taking into consideration the fact that the Turf Club also utilised the same area. These plans envisaged the area available for improvement as being approximately as at present, and recognised the need to respect the footpath now used in the main by the pupils of the Garrison Secondary School and to preserve the existing trees. The detailed plans for the development of the proposed road, as presented on this occasion by a representative of the Ministry of Transport and Works, revealed however that the new road alignment to be cut at the North Gate of the Garrison would not only take

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away a large part of the land in front of the Museum but would also encroach on that part of the Savannah running alongside the existing Garrison Road. It also involved the construction of a roundabout at the junction of the Garrison Road and Highway 7 without, apparently, needing to acquire any private property.

While the construction of such a road would cause some dislocation in the area in front of the Museum as well as to the activities of the Turf Club, its major significance inevitably lies in the overall disruption it would bring to that most important part of the Garrison Historic Area, that which immediately surrounds the Savannah, which is, according to the Bridgetown Development Plan, to be designated a 'conservation area'.

In addition to the illogicality of the concept of a "major road" passing through a conservation area, the practical effects of such a development would be disastrous, in terms of the destruction of trees, the diminution of the Savannah - an important green 'lung' for the inhabitants of Bridgetown and its surroundings - and the effect on the buildings of increased pollution from motor vehicles. Furthermore, an area of outstanding architectural and historical significance, recognised as such by many Barbadians, and an important attraction for tourists, would have its character seriously eroded.

All the organisations concerned with the Garrison, including the Barbados Museum and Historical Society, the Turf Club, the Barbados National Trust and, above all, the Garrison Committee, are united in their opposition to these plans. Representations have been made to both the Ministries of Transport and Works and of Housing and Lands; in relation to the latter the Town and Country Planning Act makes provision for any

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objections to or representations concerning any development plans to be the subject of a public enquiry. There will, therefore, be an opportunity for amendments to be made to the proposals outlined above, in order to ensure that the Garrison maintains its present character and identity.

HERE COMES THE GROOM

Even as this Newsletter goes to press (or to Gestetner, to be more accurate), the Museum Courtyard will be the festive scene of the long-planned wedding of Dennis McCollin and Cheryl Sandiford.

Dennis is the Museum Technician, and the unsung hero of every exhibit; the one who knows where every nail, brush and ladder is when everyone wants everything at once.

In an environment full of deadlines, schedules and stress, Dennis endears himself to us by his sunny nature, sweet temper and unflappability. He locks his workshop to protect his tools from marauding curators, but is otherwise always ready with a helping hand. With a busy schedule, he squeezes in time for nice extras like the little "footprint" step to help small children peek in the Warmington Gallery.

Dennis and his lovely bride, Cheryl, will take their honeymoon following the wedding, and we will have to find our own stuff for a while.

We wish them a long and joyful life together.

HELP WANTED (AGAIN)

Our Newsletter cries for help have been so effective in finding specialized assistance, we think we'll try again.

With the departure of our Entertainment Manager and man-of-all-talents David Clarke, we will be sorely in need of photographic help.

We need a volunteer photographer with good darkroom skills: processing, printing, copywork. She/he should be a mature person, capable of working without direct supervision, maintaining records and keeping photo stock up to date. The ability to give a regular work session, once a week, is preferred. The volunteer will work under curatorial staff direction, and should be able to work with 35 mm and twin lens camera.

We already have a capable volunteer documenting one specialized aspect of the museum's collections. We need another, to do similar work and darkroom tasks. For the volunteer willing to do field work, there will be from time to time the opportunity to do photographic research-related work in art, archaeology, conservation and marine biology.

But it is not only specialized skills we can use. There is an ongoing need for volunteers, trained or untrained, for research or library work. And we would give a halo to someone willing to give regular clerical help with our backlog of collating, photocopying, label making etc!.

Interested? Phone Education Officer - 427-0201

Potential volunteers are welcome to join us to meet staff and volunteers at a coffee morning Thursday April , 11.00.a.m.

A busy term, with February a peak month: every day was booked out. There has been an excellent response to the Museum's school program.

Our student visitors come from an interesting and ever-widening base. This term included carpentry students doing a historical tour of wooden artifacts; young adult Health Science students studying social conditions in the early 20th century as well as the whole gamut of primary and secondary school pupils from all parts of the island.

Our educational thrust is two-tiered this year: with the schools program running smoothly, we are aiming at more intensive teacher involvement. There is a limit to the number of children we can effectively contact, but an enthusiastic teacher aware of museum functions will extend that contact tremendously.

To this end, classes have been offered in different subject areas. Four short workshops were given for secondary art teachers, to help show them how museum resources can be used by Fourth and Fifth form students doing the compulsory CXC illustrated Paper.

An intensive all-day seminar was given for Dip. Ed. students from U.W.I's School of Education. These students are all graduates, teaching English in Barbadian secondary schools. With them we spent a stimulating day discovering ways in which object-based learning (what museums call visual literacy) can be used in the language arts.

The encouraging follow up: several teachers have brought school groups and run their own museum workshops.

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The term has also seen the completion of the 3rd Children's Nature Series. Offered on Saturday mornings by volunteers John and Alice Lamoureux, this popular program was filled by 15 lively 8-12 year olds, who enjoyed craft activities, a field trip and environmental discussions.

All in all, it seems a promising beginning to creating a future generation of museum goers!

CONFERENCE OF CARIBBEAN HISTORIANS

The Annual Conference of Caribbean Historians, sponsored by the University of the Virgin Islands, will be held this year in St. Thomas, V.I., from March 27 - April 3.

The conferences' seven panel sessions involve prominent historians from the Caribbean, as well as from Britain and the United States.

Themes of the panel sessions include: "Historical Archaeology in the study of Caribbean History", "Slavery and Internal Economies of the Caribbean", "Economy and Society in the Hispanic and French Caribbean", "The Economic Consequences of U.W.I. on the Caribbean", "An Assessment of the Work of Local Caribbean Historical Societies", "Aspects of Danish - U.S. Virgin Island History" and "Politics and Constitutional Development in the 20th Century Caribbean".

Director Alissandra Cummins has been invited to attend the conference, and will report on its outcome in the next Newsletter.

TEMPORARY EXHIBITS: WHAT, WHY & HOW?

A major function of museums is to exhibit their collections. We, like most museums, have two main types of exhibit: the permanent and the temporary.

More than four-fifths of this museum's exhibit space is allocated to permanent displays. These rarely change in format, except when an artifact is rotated or removed for conservation purposes, or loaned to another institution. However the Museum has a commitment to upgrading each permanent exhibit on a rotating basis, perhaps once every 3 - 5 years.

The main characteristics of special or temporary exhibitions are their short duration and their specialized focus. They tend to focus on topical issues, highlighting events, personalities or anniversaries. They often elaborate on the interrelationship of objects within a particular social, historical or technical context.

Temporary exhibits take time and money, but they are worth their weight in gold. Through their interpretive power, they generate immediate response and awareness in the community.

Temporary exhibits can be organized in three ways:

- (1) an internal museum staff project draws on resource persons, scholars, volunteers to assist at various stages. Two such examples are the Golde White Retrospective and "Every Skin Teet' Ent a Laugh", depicting 191 years of Barbadian cartoons.
 - (2) Outside exhibitors may present an artist or group of artists. Examples that come to mind include Ras Akyem and Ras Ishi, Alison & Stanley Greaves, and the Barbados Arts Council.
 - (3) Overseas museums often have the resources to design and package a travelling exhibit using objects from their own collections. These are often used in conjunction with exciting posters, films, and (Cont'd)
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slides which enhance their interpretation. "Beauties of the Coral Reef" came from the Smithsonian Institution in Washington D.C., while "La Nacion : Spanish and Portuguese Jews in the Caribbean", started its long circuit from Israel.

How do we select a temporary exhibit?

Guided by the 1982-83 Development Plan and the Museum's mandate, we find many themes relevant if people can learn from them, and particularly if they are relevant to Barbadian or West Indian life:

For example, the multi-media culture kits from Surinam and Jamaica to be mounted in the Children's Gallery shortly.

However, we do not turn down opportunities to host travelling exhibits about other cultures. We've had an exhibition on Chinese art, and another on urban folk culture in Afro-American New Orleans, and various institutions include us on their travelling exhibit itineraries.

The temporary exhibition schedule for 1988-89 is already planned: many hours of labour lie ahead for the staff, since these exhibits are dependent on research, financing and promotion.

Another aspect of Caribbean art history will be documented in a museum - initiated Hector Whistler retrospective.

An intriguing show by the "naive" Carriacouau painter Canute Caliste will highlight painting as a vehicle for social commentary.

Tentative plans are evolving for a show that should be culturally and artistically exciting - Haitian art.

These examples reflect the Barbados Museum's role as repository, catalyst and interpreter of objects and ideas to the public which it serves.

ARCHAEOLOGY SURVEY CONTINUES

Recently winding up their third field trip to the island was the archaeology team from the University of London. Over a five-year period started in 1986, the team will be carrying out an extensive survey with the aim of unraveling some of the mysteries of pre-European human settlement in Barbados.

Along with surface collecting at some of our known Amerindian sites, the team has completed major excavations at Heywoods and Hillcrest, Bathsheba in 1986, at Chancery Lane in 1987 and at Hillcrest and Silver Sands in 1987/88. So far the interim reports of the first two field trips have been published in the journal of the Barbados Museum and Historical Society.

The most recent investigations at Hillcrest have uncovered an arrangement of post holes which Dr. Peter Drewett, the team director, thinks may have been a temporary dwelling. Readers may remember that last year, the first known remains of an Amerindian building in Barbados, were discovered at the Goddard's site in Kensington.

With rapid construction and changing land use in our country, the timeliness of this survey becomes ever more apparent and the Museum gratefully acknowledges the support of the public who give us information regarding newly discovered sites.

FIVE DAY TOUR TO PUERTO RICO

No, this is not a shopping trip! we shall be focussing on the history, art and craft of this interesting country. It is planned to hold this tour in June, when there will be the added interest of the Pablo Casals Festival for music lovers.

We are presently in contact with the Puerto Rican Tourist Association for more information on the festival and the availability of tickets, and will keep you informed.

With regard to the rest of the tour we will of course spend at least two days exploring old San Juan visiting its many historical sites and art galleries, such as: the fort of El Morro, the Church of San Jose and the Cristo Chapel, the San Juan Museum of Art and History, the Dominican Convent which has regular exhibitions of native arts and crafts.

We are, however, also planning to go "out on the island" with visits to Ponce, where the Museum of Art houses paintings by Gainsborough, Rubens, Van Dyck and Velazquez, and the Tibes Indian Ceremonial Centre; to El Yunque rain forest; to San Germán, a town which has retained much of its Spanish colonial architecture and charm; and, if time permits, the Phosphorescent Bay at Lajas.

Puerto Rico is well known for its excellent restaurants and nightlife, and we hope to include some evenings-out in the package.

What we need to know from you now is are you interested and can you go at the times specified? If you can't, what time (month) would suit you best? Please fill out and return to us as soon as possible the tear-off slip indicating your interest, so that we may provide you with further information as it comes to (Cont'd)

hand. We would like all replies in by April 11th.

The reply does not commit you to any involvement, financial or otherwise.

Name

Address.....

Tel. No.....

Yes, the dates (months) are suitable.....

No they are not.....

I would prefer to go in

Any other comments

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INTERNATIONAL MUSEUMS DAY

The Museum will observe International Museums Day Wednesday May 18th, with an Open Day, free to the public. Regular guided tours will be offered throughout the day (schedule to be announced) and we hope to mark the day with other special events. Do use the opportunity to persuade your non-museum-minded friends to convert.

The 1988 lectures began on January 5th, with a National Trust lecture on the conservation of windmills. There was a good turnout to hear Mr. Michael Newton discuss this specialized topic. As a postscript, Mr. Newton has invited any members visiting England to come and see his windmill at Stow Mill, Paston, near Mundesley, Norfolk.

On January 20th, Dr. Peter Drewett from the Institute of Archaeology, University of London, gave the annual lecture which brought the third visit of his team to a close. He describe the site digs of his 10 person archaeological team, summarizing the Barbados Archaeological Survey, which comprises all aspects of Barbadian pre-history. (more details P. 10)

Professional diver Bernard McDonald spoke on Marine Archaeology on January 27th. He discussed rescue archaeology in the U.K., and some basic measures to aid in the recovery and preservation of information from wreck sites. Mr. McDonald communicated his concern for Barbados' potential exploitation by unethical archaeological scavengers. Public awareness of the archaeological heritage, he emphasized, was necessary to protect against the kind of cultural exploitation that has already occurred in other Caribbean territories. It is interesting that a fortnight later, another archaeologist, James Parrent, warned against "treasure hunters and the exploitation of cultural resources for profit" and stressed that "present caretakers must prevent the destruction of their archaeological sites through neglect, unscrupulous use or ignorance of their importance" (Advocate, Feb 15, 1988).

A large, interested audience turned out to hear Professor Robert Speed give his presentation: "The Geology and Origin of Barbados". Professor Speed, who has studied Barbados' geology many years as consultant for the oil industry, finds Barbados "one of the most

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interesting areas for geological study in the world". Barbados, he explained, is not a simple coral structure, but the product of tectonics - the scraping of deep sea sediment from the Atlantic seafloor as the Atlantic crust underrides the bulldozer-blade-like front of the Caribbean crust.

Barbados, he noted, will be in an ideal position to exploit oil deposits when the technology to mine the area is developed.

Professor Inglis' articulate and hard-hitting March 11th lecture, "Black and White in Australian History", raised the thought-provoking question: is Australia's bicentenary really cause for celebration?

It is, however, cause for reflection. Professor Inglis led an absorbed audience through the devastating history of European impact on the fragile aboriginal cultures.

Even the most benevolent agents of imperialism had no concept of Aboriginal culture as an ancient and intricate system for co-existing with a harsh but delicately balanced environment. And the more brutal expansionists simply dealt with Aborigines as vermin to be exterminated.

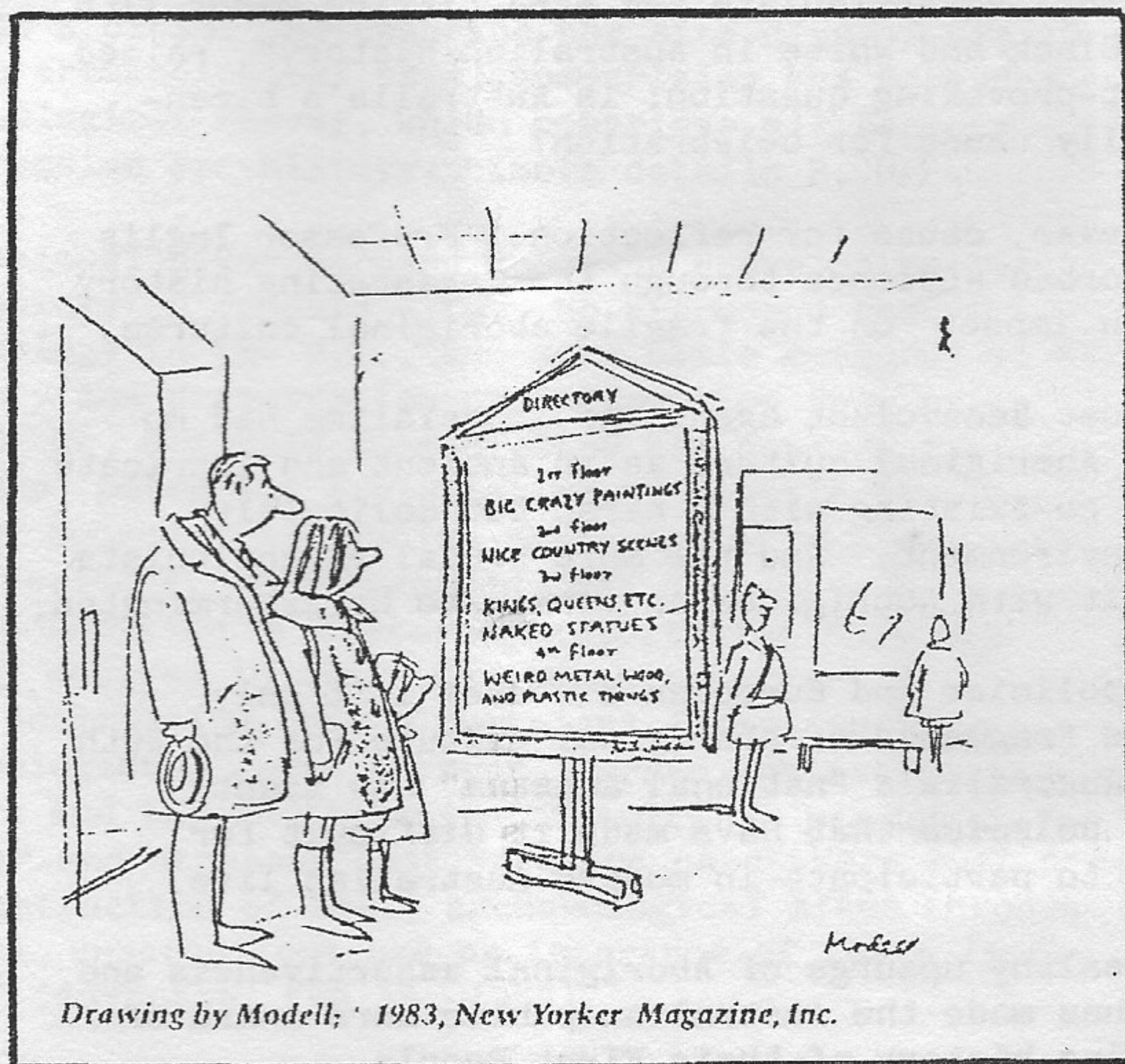
Genocidal policies and European diseases left only demoralized fragments of Aboriginal culture for the 20th century. Australia's "national amnesia" has meant neglectful policies that have made it difficult for Aborigines to participate in modern Australian life.

A recent healthy upsurge of Aboriginal assertiveness and activism has made the Australian public more aware of the troubling history of their First People.

Delights to come include lectures and exploratory walks arranged by the B.E.A. (Barbados Environmental Association) between March-October. See back cover for this quarter's lecture dates. On April 17th, the Pico Teneriffe walk, from Boscobelle to Cove Bay, (Cont'd)

will meet at Morgan Lewis Mill; 7.45 a.m. Turtle Walks will start in early April, with dates and times to be arranged.

On April 20th, 7.30 p.m. Dr. Gladstone L. Yearwood's lecture will be: "Aesthetic Traditions in Afro-American Visual Arts".



LIBRARY NEWS

Seventy-four researchers used the library in the Jan - March period. Several were from overseas, tracing their family histories. Some of the interesting visitors included Julian Byng, descendant of Governor Robert Byng (1739-40), T.E.V. Craig, Director of Christies, and Dorothy Ligon, descendant of Richard Ligon, whose fascinating "True and Exact History" of 17th century Barbados is well known. It is evident that more and more researchers are finding research in the Museum Library fruitful.

Thirty-nine new books were added to the collection. Worthy of note was the Robert Potter/Graham Dann Barbados: an excellent bibliography comprising annotated entries on Barbadian history, geography, economy and politics; its people, customs and social organisation.

For local archaeology buffs who might enjoy a study-holiday: The London Institute of Archaeology informs us that an exciting variety of summer school courses is being offered. About half the 400 students are expected to come from outside the United Kingdom.

Courses include all manner of specialized conservation areas, excavation, archaeology and palaeoecology, pottery restoration and environmental control.

Details and enrolment forms are available from: James Black, Co-ordinator, Summer Schools, Institute of Archaeology, 31-34 Gordon Square, London, United Kingdom WC1H 0PY.

HOLETOWN FESTIVAL

The Museum Staff extends a warm "thank you" to all those volunteers who helped with our stall at the Holetown Festival. As we did last year, we offered for sale items from the Museum Shop. One new item from the Shop is the Museum's new T-shirt. Those of you who have not already purchased one should do so now..... they were specially designed and feature drawings of artifacts in our collection.

Although sales were quite good, we must point out that the main purpose for participating in community organised activities such as this, is to boost the Museum's image as an educational and entertaining centre for all Barbadians. The involvement of our volunteers therefore is a major factor in helping us to achieve this aim.

Any suggestions from volunteers on new ideas for the stall next year would be most welcome!

HECTOR WHISTLER

The Barbados Museum is planning to hold a retrospective of the works of Hector Whistler in the latter part of the year. Research on the life and works of the artist is being carried out at the moment.

We would appreciate any assistance in finding paintings by the artist and piecing together the history of his life. Our first retrospective on the late artist Golde White was a success due, primarily, to the enthusiasm and generosity of the museum's members in sharing their collections and their memories. We look forward to your help in creating another success this year.

If anyone can help us with this project please call Museum Volunteer Joyce Gale at 436-6633 or 424-3293.

MUSEUM CALENDER

Museum Staff Hours

Monday - Friday

8.30 a.m. - 4.30 p.m.

Open for Visitors

Monday - Saturday

9.00 a.m. - 6.00 p.m.

April, BEA Turtle Walks

Dates to be announced

Mar 18-Apr 30

CARNEID exhibit of

multi-cultural kits

- Children's Gallery

Mar 27-Apr 3

Conference of Caribbean

Historians.

St. Thomas U.S.

Virgin Islands

Apr 4-23

Exhibition-Canute Caliste,

naive painter from

Carriacou, Grenadines

Apr 5 - 11.00 a.m.

Volunteers Coffee Morning

Newcomers welcome

Apr 11 Return tearoff

(P 12) if interested

in Puerto Rico trip.

Apr 17 BEA Pico

Teneriffe Walk. Meet

Morgan Lewis Mill 7.45 a.m.

Apr 20, Lecture

Dr. G.L. Yearwood:

"Aesthetic Traditions

in Afro American Visual

Arts" - Lecture Room

Apr 23, 1.00 - 6.00 p.m.

Sociologist Siesta -

Museum Grounds

Apr 25-May 31

B'dos Arts Council Exhibition

"Intuitive Painters of

of Barbados"

May 17: Lecture

Mr. G. Ramsay

"Environmental Planning &

its implications for the

Caribbean" - Lecture Room

May 18th,

International Museums

Day. Free admission

9.00 - 6.00 p.m. -

Guided tours through-

out the day

May 21st

Barbados Gold Award

Dinner - Museum

Courtyard

June: Puerto Rico trip.

Dates to be finalized.

June 11 Harewood Gallery

Opening. Wine & Cheese

June 18 Environmental

Education Open Day

Meetings

Philatelic Society

Meeting

Every 2nd Wed 7.30 p.m.

Archaeological Society

Meeting

Every 3rd Wednesday

7.30 p.m.

Docent Training Seminar

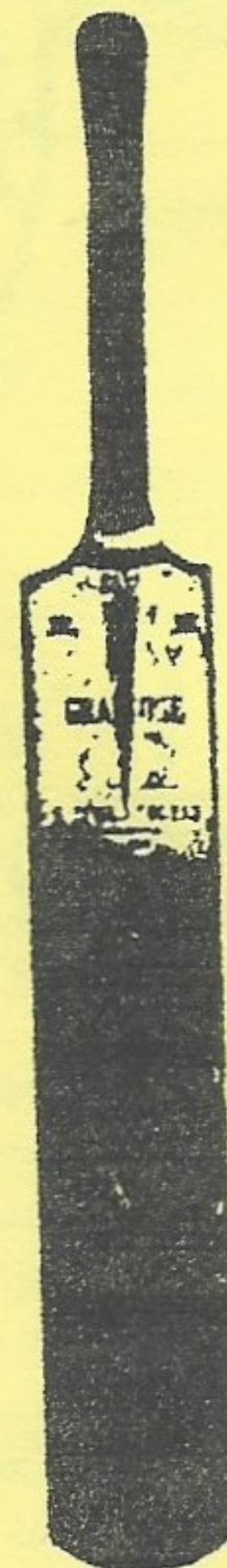
Every 2nd Thursday 12.00 p.m.

Museum Closed

Good Friday - Apr 1st

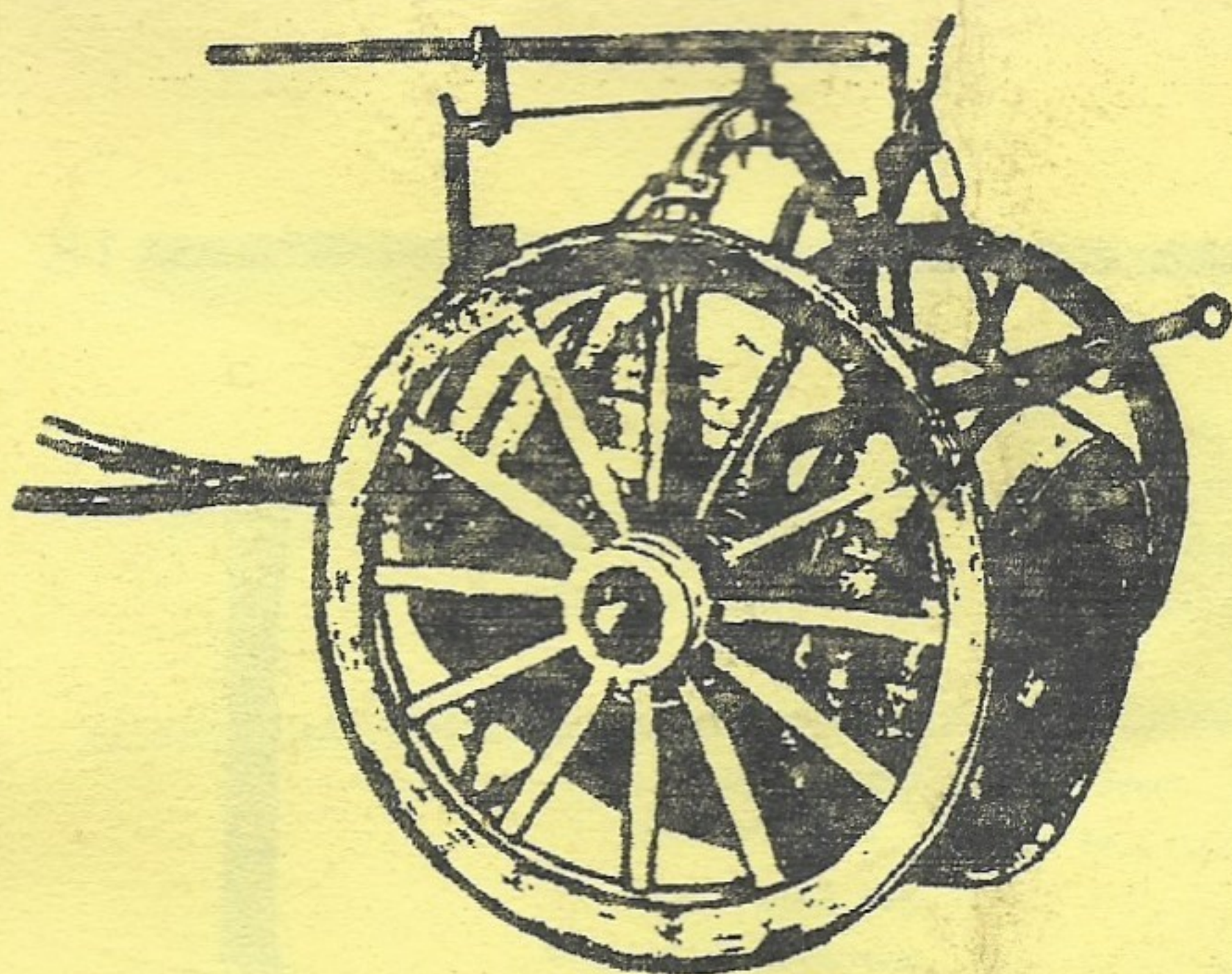
Easter bank holiday Apr 4th

May 2nd, May 23rd



THE BARBADOS MUSEUM AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

ON SERVICE



NEW MEMBERS

The Barbados Museum and Historical Society is very pleased to welcome so many new members to our list. We are very much encouraged by your growing interest and involvement in the development of the Museum and for showing your support in this way.

Mrs. Grace Anderson	Barbados	Annual
Mr. Ian D. Bayne	Canada	"
Mrs. Susan Chinnery	Barbados	"
Mr. G.J. Lewis	England	"
Mr. Alan Simpson	U.S.A.	"
Lady Barbara Stuart	England	"
Mr. George C. Webster	U.S.A.	"
Mr. Pedro Welch	Barbados	"
Dr. Guido Zerbino	"	"
Mrs. Tina Zerbino	"	"
Mr. & Mrs. Lionel Greenidge	"	Joint Annual
Judge & Mrs. Lewis Jones	U.S.A.	" "
Mr. & Mrs. Peter Laurie	Barbados	" "
Mr & Mrs. Arthur Streetly	"	" "
Dr. & Mrs. H. StC. White	"	" "
Mr. & Mrs. David Williams	U.S.A.	" "
Mrs. Edgar Stone	Canada	Life
Mr. Kevin Bloomfield-Chields	Barbados	Junior
Mr. Christopher Cooke-Johnson	"	"
Mr. Dominic Fichetford	"	"
Mr. Shai Sandford	"	"
Miss Deanne Wallace	"	"
Mr. Duane Wallace	"	"
Miss Alicia White	"	"
Mr. Jonathan White	"	"

