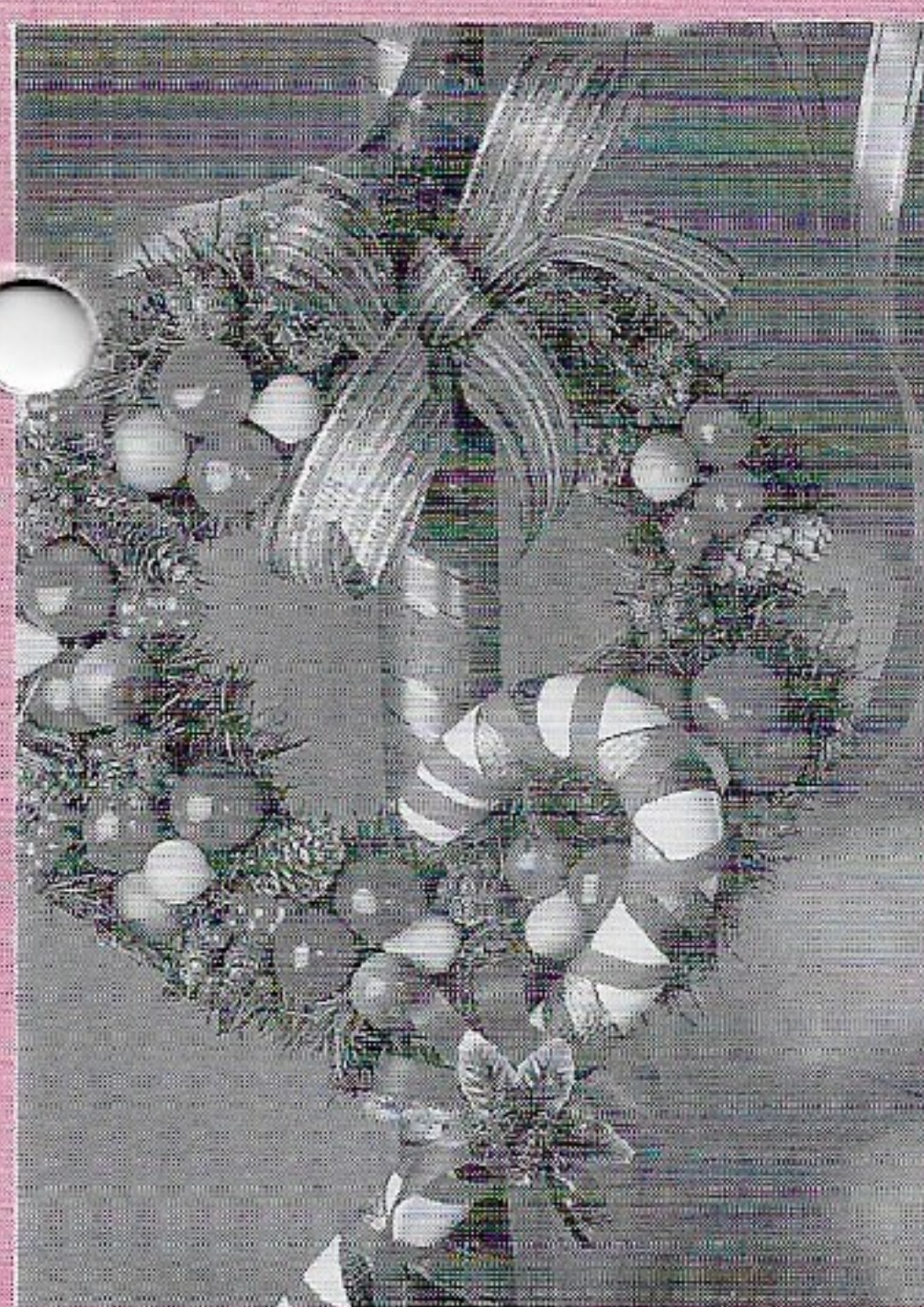


ARTIFACTS

Barbados
Museum
& Historical
Society

BARBADOS MUSEUM & HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

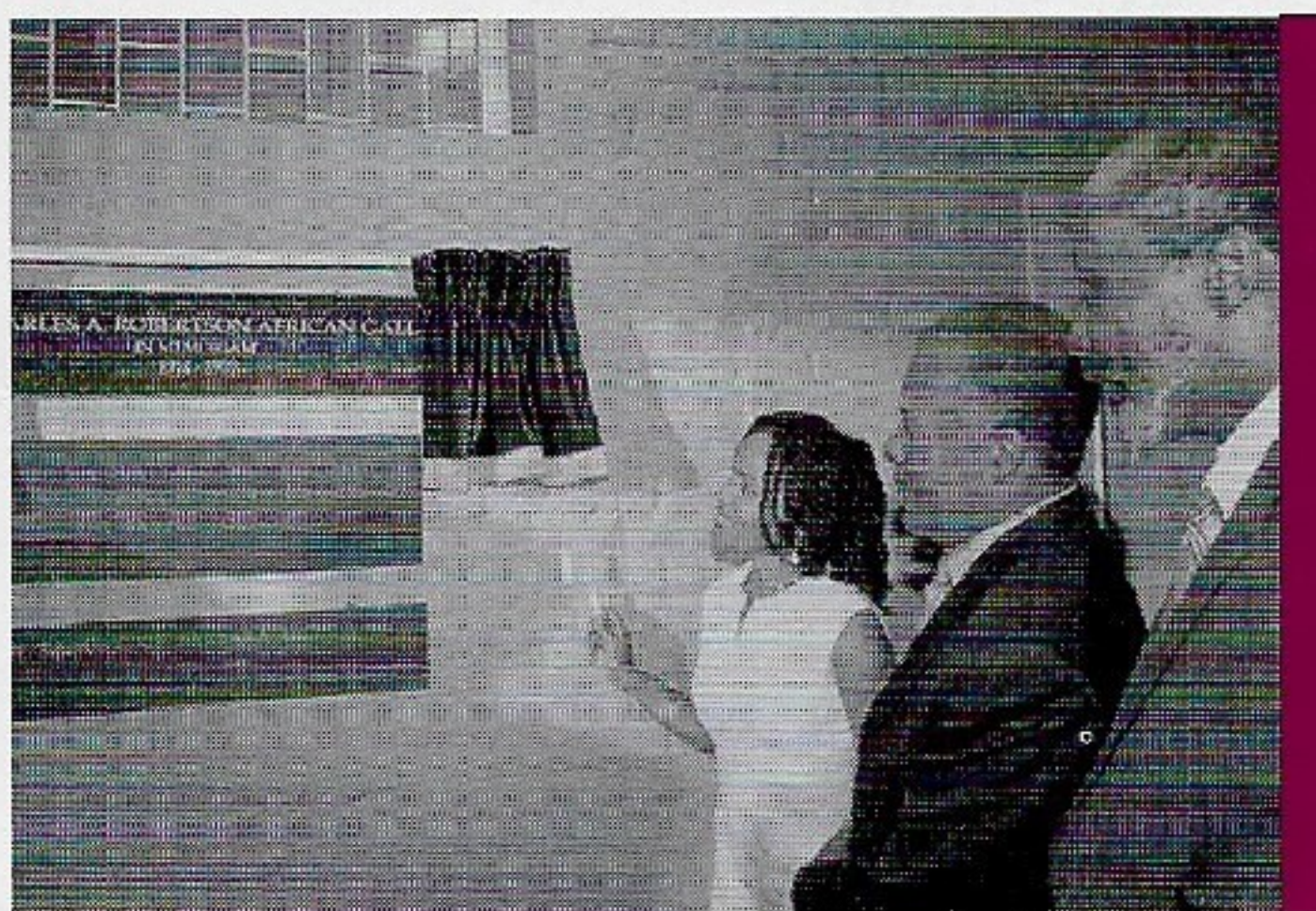
Dear Member,



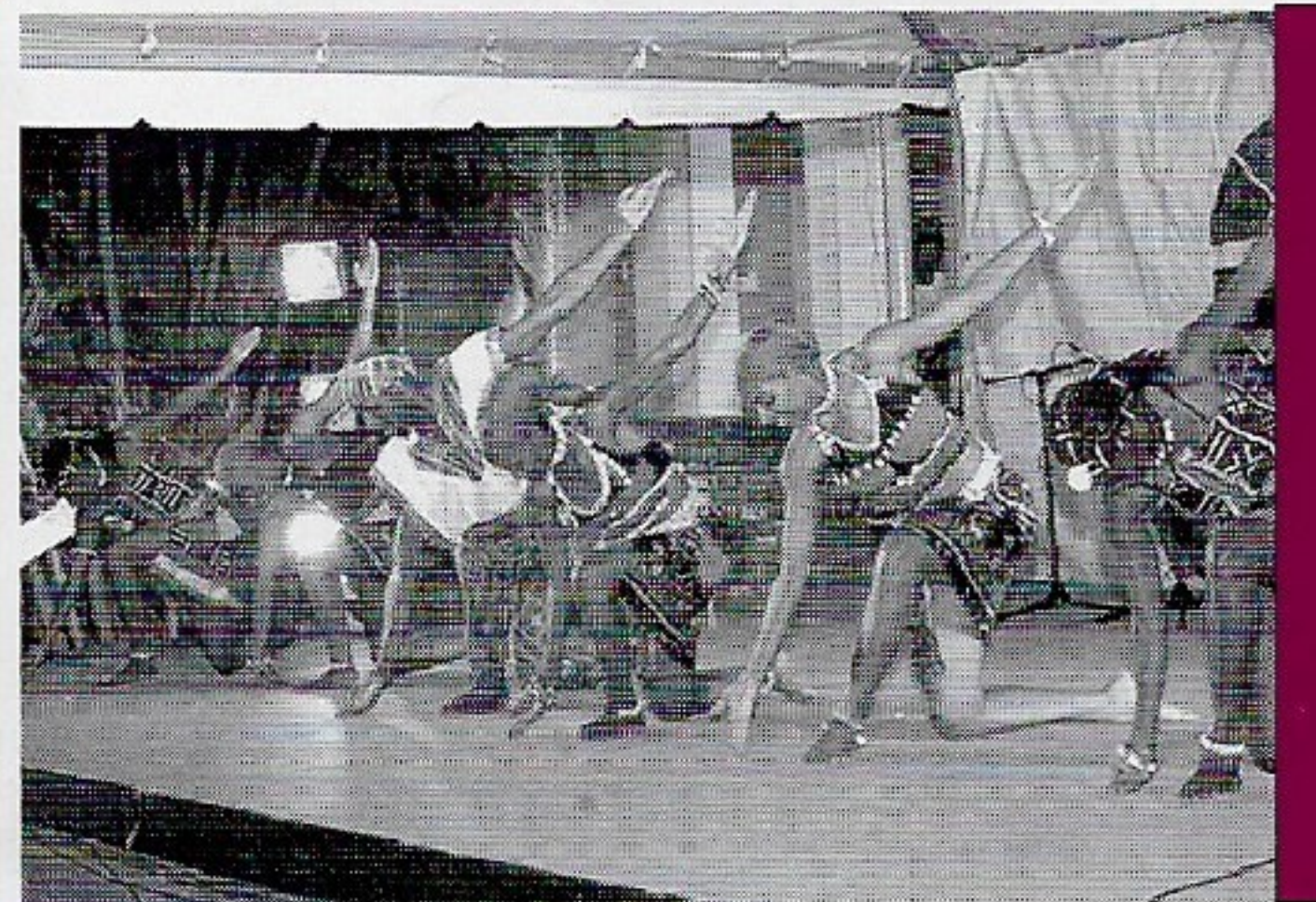
Your Christmas issue of Artifacts brings to you a wealth of information and news for the final quarter of 2004. This issue covers the grand opening of the new Charles A. Robertson African Gallery, the election of the Museum Director Ms. Alissandra Cummins to the position of President of ICOM (International Council of Museums) and goodbye to Mrs. Betty Shannon, the Museum's librarian for the past 20 years. I hope there is something of interest for all members, and on behalf of the Barbados Museum & Historical Society, we wish you:

A merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

AFRICAN GALLERY OFFICIAL OPENING



Mrs. Eric Robertson unveiling the plaque for the new African Gallery



Danny Hinds and Sankofa Productions performing the Mandian, social dance of Mali

Friday November 19th was a momentous day for the Museum with the official opening ceremony and celebration for the new Charles A. Robertson African Gallery and exhibit Africa: Connections and Continuities. With over 300 specially invited guests, dignitaries and the Prime Minister delivering the feature address, we were pleased to receive such tremendous support.

The packed programme for the evening was entertaining and educational with tours of the Gallery, spectacular African dance and performance and an impromptu speech by Mr Eric Robertson (the principle donor of the African Gallery, which was named after his father).

One of the highlights of the evening was the feature address given by the Prime Minister which dealt with issues of trade, heritage and education and recognized the efforts of the Museum to achieve these goals. In all a great evening was had by everyone.



The Rt. Hon. Owen Arthur P.M., delivering the feature address

CONTENTS

Past Members Remembered.....	2
Projects in Brief.....	3
Museum Events	4
About the Collection	5

News for Museum Members	6
Staff Matters.....	7
Museum Matters	8

THE MUSEUM REMEMBERS HONORARY MEMBER DAME ELSIE PAYNE



Dame Elsie Payne with Museum colleagues

The passing of Dame Elsie Payne on August 26th 2004 was a sad day for us all at the Museum. Dame Elsie became a member of the Museum on December 2nd 1968 and remained an active member until her death. She took Honorary Membership on September 19th 2001 and during her 36 years with the institution played a major role serving on the Museum's Council, and Journal Committee. She also had a keen interest in local folklore and Barbadian culture. She will be greatly missed.

Announcement

The Barbados Museum regrets the recent deaths of its former director and Museum member, Mr. David Devenish and Mr. Gordan Parkinson.

Mr. David Devenish

Mr. Devenish was Museum Director from 1982 to 1985 before he returned to England. He was a Life member of the Society.

Mr. Gordan Parkinson

Mr. Gordan Parkinson was a member of the Society for the past seventeen years and also served on the Museum's Council. The Museum extends its condolences to their families and friends.

NATURAL DISASTERS CONFERENCE



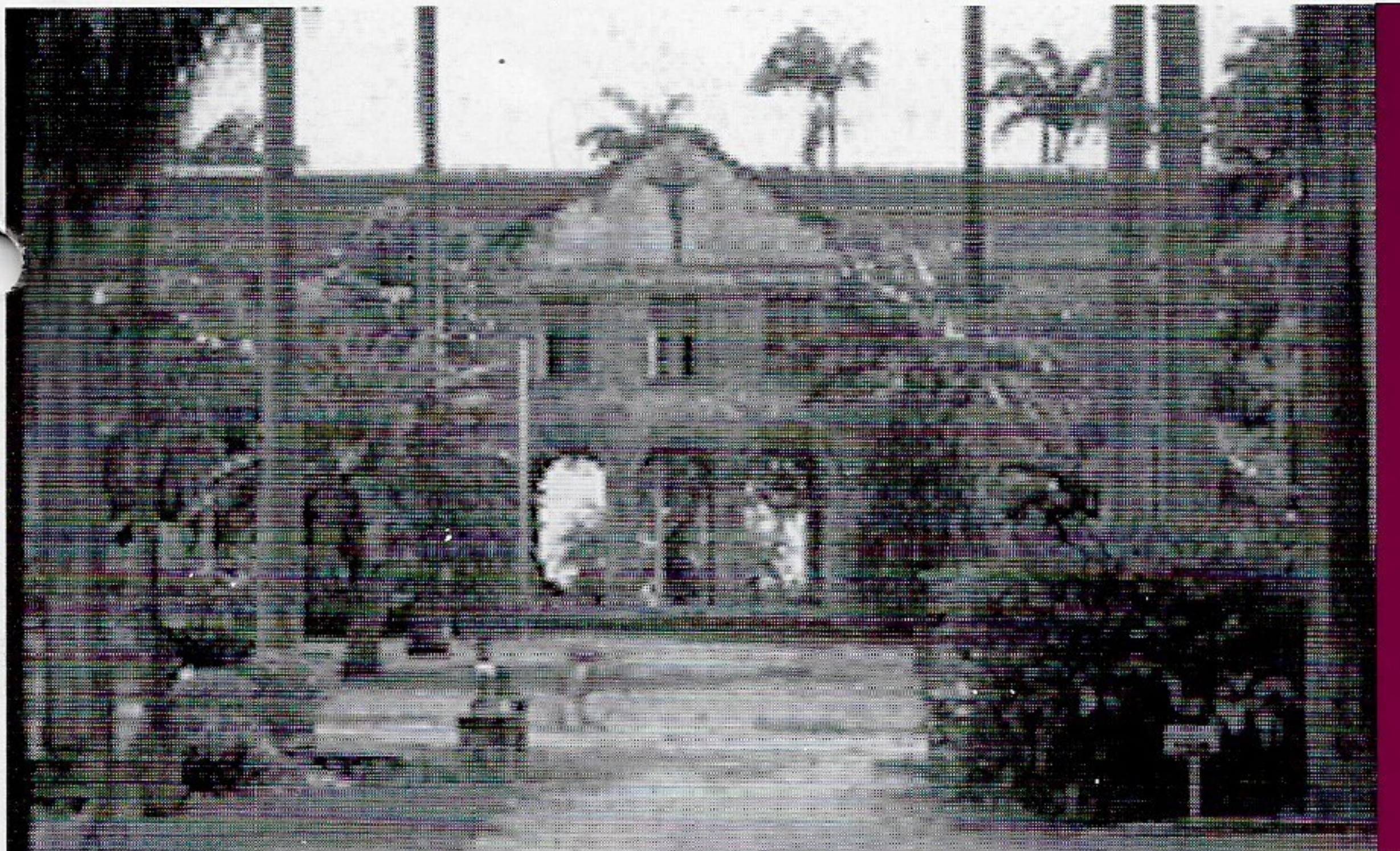
Flash flooding in Holetown
(Permission granted by Nation Newspapers)

As part of the Museum's continuous training programme for dealing with natural disasters Executive Officer Ms. Melva Yarde and Registrar Mrs. Angela Boyce attended the conference "Mitigating the Consequences of Natural Disasters for Caribbean Libraries and Archives." The conference, which was held in Trinidad, was organized by the Association of Caribbean University Research and Institutional Libraries (ACURIL) and the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA).

The objectives of the conference were to discuss the risks of hurricanes and other natural disasters, which are all too prevalent nowadays, along with how to deal with them and how to take adequate preventative measures in order to help alleviate their consequences.

This workshop was extremely beneficial for the Museum and gave us the opportunity to revise our present disaster plan, and to think seriously about the Barbados Museum in the situation of a disaster. The Museum already has a disaster plan in place which is tested and revised yearly; however, not having to test the plan in a real life situation we take the best precautions we can in order to deal with the realities of living in the Caribbean.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS AT CODRINGTON COLLEGE



Codrington College



Crews at work on the excavation

The on-going archaeological research project between UWI and the Museum continued from the summer. Dr. Thomas Loftfield, the leader of the project was assisted by students from the U.S. and Mauritius who undertook field work and excavations.

Excavations of the College were carried out in two areas. Firstly the continuing interest in the area of the original 17th century sugar factory, which this year, moved away from the remains of the curing house towards an unidentified house. Possible elements of its foundation were uncovered, but not sufficiently to enable any definitive conclusions about the size or use of the building.

The second area of investigation was the waster pile at the site of one of the Codrington pottery kilns. Following on excavations undertaken at the Pothouse, St. John, pottery kiln sites in 2001 and 2002, Codrington College is now in the early stages of excavation of a

possible kiln site. The connection here is that of the ceramics industry which arose on the island to meet the needs for sugar molds and molasses drip jars, examples of which are on display at the Museum.

Furthermore estates on the East Coast which had access to good quality clays often supplemented their incomes through the manufacture and sale of these wares which were essential for the production of sugar. The introduction of steam processing in the 19th century reduced the need for ceramic vessels (which declined dramatically), leaving the potters to eke out a living making bricks, roof tiles, and increasingly the monkey jugs, connaries, and gurglets which are typically associated with the Chalky Mount potteries, the last vestige of a once widespread and thriving Barbadian industry.

by Dr. Thomas C. Loftfield, Ph.D.

MUSEUM HIGHLIGHTS:

October



Director Ms. Alissandra Cummins becomes President of ICOM

Ms. Alissandra Cummins, Director of the Museum, has been elected President of the International Council of Museum's (ICOM) with effect from 8th October 2004. The election has been an occasion for two firsts. That of the region being represented at this level and a woman being elected to the position of President.

The International Council of Museums is an international organisation of museums and museum professionals which is committed to the conservation, continuation and communication to society of the world's natural and cultural heritage, present and future, tangible and intangible.

Her new position will be to lead the ICOM organisation, which comprises a network of 20,000 museums and museum professionals spread over five continents. In the next three years, Ms. Cummins will chair an extended Executive Council of 16 members from all 5 regions around the world, who were also elected during ICOM's 21st General Assembly in Seoul.



Models at the Fashion Show fundraiser

The Tea & Fashion Show Fundraiser, one of the major fundraising activities for the Museum was a great success, with over 180 patrons supporting our efforts.

With gifts donated by many organisations and the fashion show organised by Mrs. Pat Brancker, this Sunday event was one of the most successful held by the Museum. Special thanks go to Mrs Betty Shannon for her enthusiasm and fundraising skills extraordinaire.

November



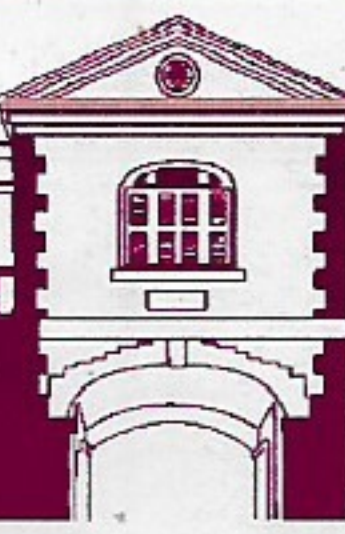
Mr. Eric Robertson, principle donor of the African Gallery

Mr Eric Robertson, the principle donor of objects to the African Gallery delivered his lecture called *African Art: Is it Relevant Today?* following the preview of the Gallery for members. The lecture was a personal and exciting discourse on African art set in an historical perspective in relation to other cultures and its impact on the global market today.



Dr. Watson at the launch of the Museum Journal

The launch of the 50th edition of the Journal on Friday 26th November was a key event in the Museum's calendar. Several important partners attended the event including Mrs. Annette Smith from the National Library Service and Mr. Paul Altman who attended the launch to mark the significance and celebration of 350 years of Jewish settlement in Barbados.



WHY NATURAL HISTORY?

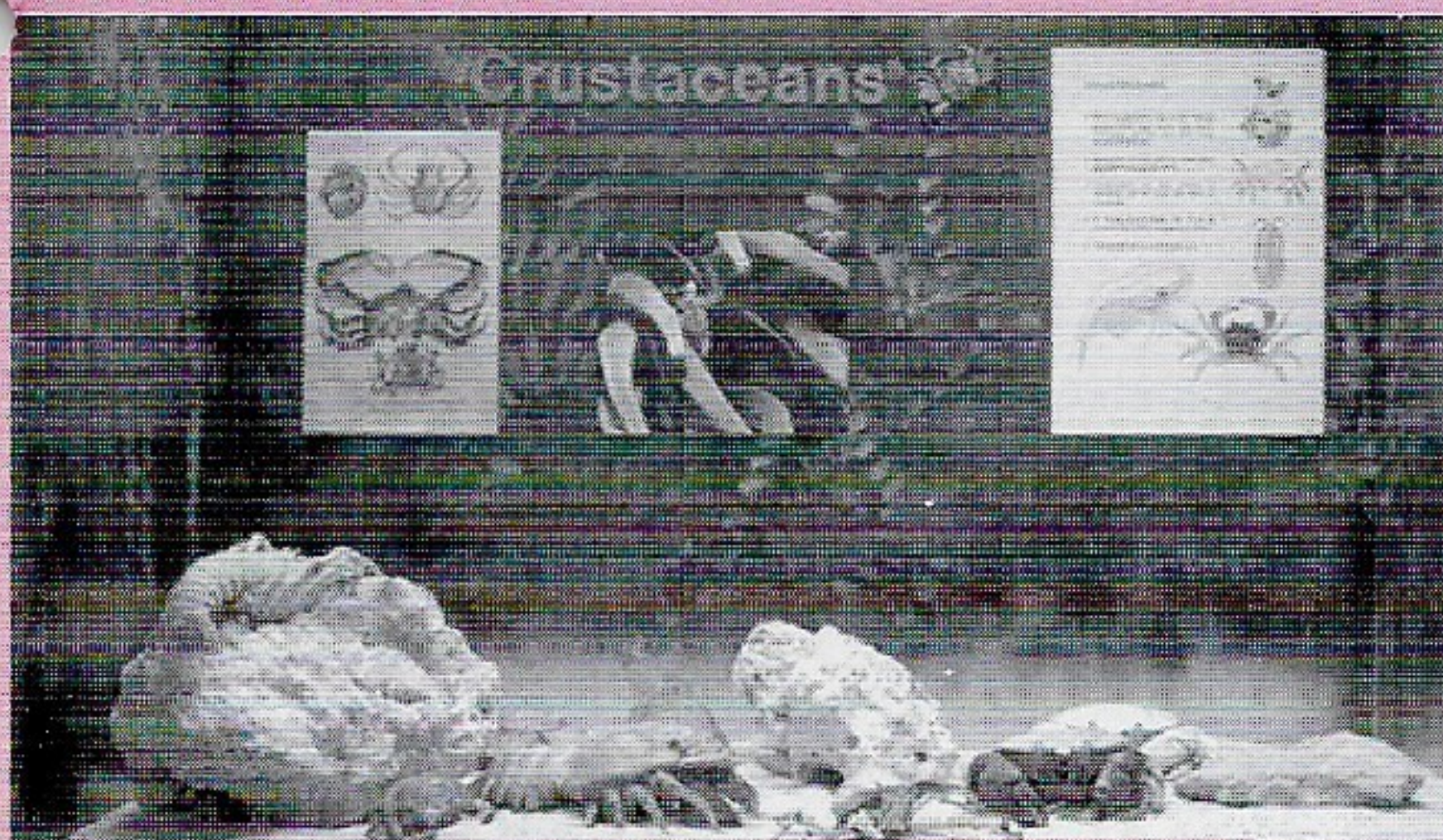
Ask the average person on the street what social history is and most of them will be able to tell you. Ask them what art history is and some of them will come up with a reasonable definition. However, if you ask what natural history is most will find it difficult to answer.

Natural History is defined in the Oxford dictionary of Biology as "The study of all natural phenomena." But what really does this mean? It means the study of all

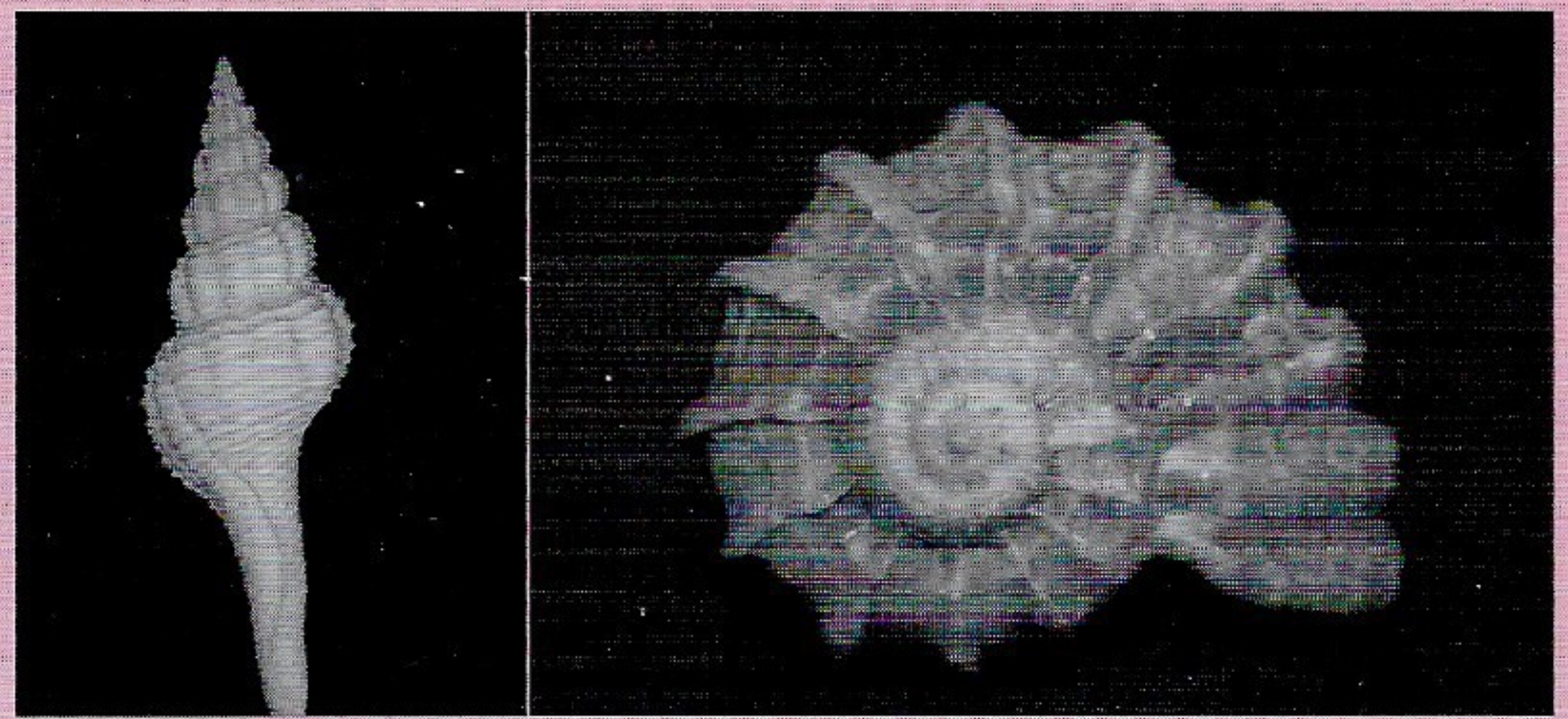
(collections of plant specimens). Unlike museums, most of these organisations do not collect with the purpose of long term specimen preservation, research, reference, and education of the general public.

Why should any museum have a natural history department? For several reasons:

Firstly, if we are honest with ourselves we will admit many of the plants and animals which we grew up with will not be around for our grandchildren to see and experience. A museum can provide an experience (albeit limited) with such plants and animals.



The exhibition on Crustaceans from the Natural History Gallery



Shells taken from the Natural History Collection

aspects of the natural world (living and non living) around us and their interactions with each other.

How does the Museum carry out its mandate in the area of natural history?

The Museum collects specimens of plants, animals, and geology which are evidence of our natural heritage. The specimens are prepared in ways which will, under the correct conditions, keep them intact over a period of many decades. Specimens can be used as teaching tools and research and scientific analysis of them can provide information to educate our people.

The Society is one of the very few Museums in the English speaking Caribbean which has an active and thriving natural history department. Many do not see the collection, storage, and maintenance of natural history specimens as important but the preservation of these collections is crucial to maintaining the "identity" of Barbados' indigenous plants and animal species, some of which are not seen anywhere else in the world.

It is true that most governmental agriculture departments collect insect specimen, zoos have live animals, and some universities have herbaria

Secondly many medical cures maybe lost with the loss of plant species. The preservation of portions of such species can facilitate scientific discoveries which can be helpful to mankind.

Thirdly if the Museum and other museums in the Caribbean do not actively take steps to preserve evidence of their natural heritage it will eventually be lost because no one else will do so.

Finally, *nothing exists without nature*; all other aspects of history and all disciplines are related to several aspects of the natural environment. Ancient and modern peoples have used materials which nature provided in order to survive. Ancient and modern artists have also used the materials and inspiration which nature continues to provide.

All museums, especially those located in places where the natural environment is threatened by "progress," should preserve evidence of their natural heritage. It would be folly to focus only on art and social history and ignore natural history which provides the context for these other disciplines.

by Monique Ifill-Assistant Curator, Natural History

NEWS FOR MUSEUM MEMBERS

Important Date to remember

The lecture series for next year has been confirmed as the **Preserving Paradise Lecture Series** and we invite all members to attend. The lectures will commemorate the life and work of the late Dr. Colin Hudson, and will cover a variety of areas such as the Environment and Ecosystems of Barbados, Economy versus Ecology? and Conservation in Action: The Barbadian Experience. Guest speakers are also drawn from various industries such as Professor Sean Carrington, Dr. Hans Machel and Mr. Winston Cox. **Watch this space for further details.**

Volunteers needed for the Museum

We are in urgent need of volunteers who are willing to be involved in various activities and programmes at the Museum. If you are able to help or know of anyone who can please call Denise Jones at 427 0201 or 436 1956 or email: musepr@barbmuse.org.bb

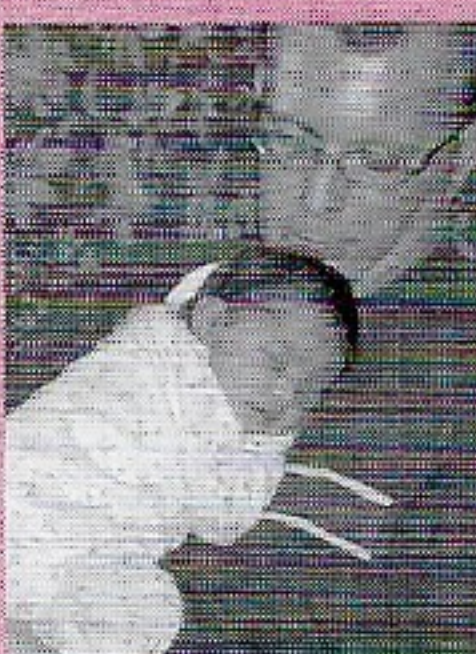
Library Closure

The Shilstone Memorial Library has been closed for restructuring and upgrading. We will keep you posted of further development.

NEW MEMBERS

The Museum extends a warm welcome to all its new members: Miss Janine Gilkes, Mrs. Hazel Burke & Mr. Noel Burke, Mr. Theodore White, Mr. Peter Blackett and the Barbados Tourism Investment Inc.

We also send our thanks to all of our loyal renewing members.



ANNOUNCEMENT

The Museum also congratulates Mr. James Marshall who is now the proud father of baby Kyle Edward Marshall born on the 27th October 2004.

James Marshall's new born son

WELCOME TO.....

Susanne Pöverlein, a student of Museum Studies in Berlin, Germany, is completing her practical semester from September 28th to February 2005. She is working with the Education and Marketing departments and is hoping to gain practical experience in the Museum's daily activities. Her aim is to make comparisons between the functioning of European and Caribbean institutions and to make a valuable contribution and become a worthwhile member of the Museum's team while she is here.



Museum Interns Nathalie Bilodeau (left) and Susanne Pöverlein

Nathalie Bilodeau, who has a Master's in Museum Studies, from Quebec, Canada, is attached to the Education department and is sponsored by the Commonwealth Association of Museums (CAM). From November 2004 to March 2005 she will be working on the CAM project "Children in Caribbean Museums" which is a follow-up to the successful 'Children in African Museums' project which was executed in Nairobi, Kenya.

She is undertaking research and working in preparation for the proposed Caribbean Museum Education Workshop which is scheduled to be held in Barbados in 2005. Museums in the Caribbean will benefit from the project because there has been limited work in museum education and programming in the region. with only six islands having educational programming to date.



NEW ACQUISITIONS - GUARDIAN OF OUR HERITAGE



Two of the lace bark doilies currently on display in the Jubilee Gallery

Ms. Gillian Leapman, a Barbadian collector of antique photographs, prints and postcards, who currently lives in England, has been donating and selling artifacts to the Museum for over ten years, sold eleven lace bark doilies to the Museum.

These rare early 20th Century intricately hand crafted doilies were used as ornamental pieces to decorate furniture or were used as drinks coasters and are made from local coconut and various ferns. Those purchased from Ms. Leapman show light borders which are cut out from the spatha of the Mountain Cabbage Palm and the dark borders cut out from the spatha of the Breadfruit Tree.

The doilies represent a cottage industry that has since declined with the advent of mass production.

PEOPLE CHANGES

GOODBYE TO.....

Librarian Betty Carrillo Shannon, born on March 24, 1924 left the Museum on the 29th November after over 20 years of supporting the Society as a part-time librarian and very successful fundraiser.

The ambitious mother of two sons and one daughter, has been involved in a number of high profile projects. In 1952 she received the Queen's Silver Jubilee Medal. From 1973 – 1976 she was the President of the

Museum Library. As I didn't want to stop meeting and helping people and I liked the environment of the Museum I stayed there. As you can see I stayed here quiet a long time! Plus a number of the individuals I worked with during this time kept in contact with me.

What have you enjoyed while you have been here?

I enjoyed employing volunteers and working with them; researching information for projects and requests. As part of my fundraising, (amongst other things), I asked



Mrs Shannon's final farewell to Museum staff members

Library Association of Barbados and also past President of the Soroptomist Club of Barbados. She was also the President of the Multinational Women's Group and of the Almair Home, and since 2001 has held the position of Vice President for the Home. But these are just a few of her interests while she makes time for dancing and swimming, and takes an interest in fashion, travelling and people. The Museum is not only going to miss her for her librarian and fundraising talents but also as a very good friend.....

Why did you join the Museum?

After my retirement in March 1984 a council member asked me whether I would like to work part time in the

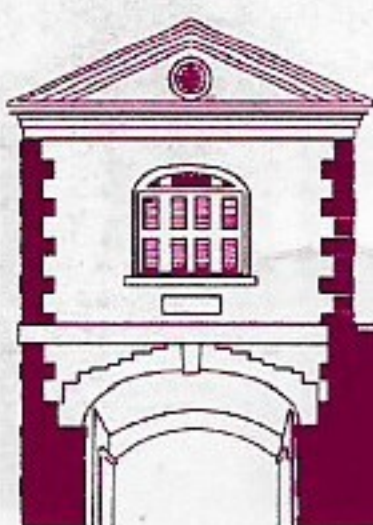
friends, visitors and colleagues for books that I could sell on to book and craft fairs.

Is there anything you would change here?

I wish the Library was open to the public for longer hours and there should be a move to a larger building.

Where do you think the Museum Library will be in 10 years' time?

I hope the Library will be in new surroundings with updated material, and that accessing information will be easier. Also those who will be working in the library will need to regularly attend librarian conferences to receive updated library knowledge and information.



A merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year

MUSEUM STAFF

Director
Alissandra Cummins
Executive Officer
Melva Yarde
Marketing Officer
Denise Jones
Education Officer
Peggy McGearry

Administrative Assistant
Accounts
Wendy Husbands
Assistant Administrative
Officer
Susan Boyce
Administrative Assistant
Marcia Griffith
Administrative Assistant
Cindy Corbin

Curatorial
Archaeology and History
Kevin Farmer
Art & Art History
Allison Callender
Natural History
Monique Ifill

Registrar
Angela Boyce
Curatorial Assistant
James Marshall

Library Consultant
Paulette Gooding

Technical & Maintenance
Jason Alfred
Stephen Layne
Reginald Riley
Pauline Stewart
Merna Bryan
Avni Rouse

Reception & Shop
Gail Bynoe

Security
Beresford Nurse
Royston Sargeant
Grantley Yarde
Rudolph Beckles
Rosalind Straker

MUSEUM COUNCIL

Patron
His Excellency
Sir Clifford Husbands
G.C.M.C. K.A.
Governor General of
Barbados

COUNCIL
President
Dr. Trevor Carmichael,
Q.C.

Senior Vice President
Prof. Woodville Marshall

Junior Vice President
Mrs. Kathleen Drayton

Ordinary Members
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Dr. Ronald Hinds
Mr. Adrian Deane
Mr. Geoffrey Ramsey
Mrs. Susan Mahon

Government Appointees
Mrs. Andrea Wells
Professor Hilary Beckles
Mr. Steven Devonish
Ms. Faye Burke
Mrs. Celia Toppin

ENCOURAGE YOUR FRIENDS OR COLLEAGUES TO **JOIN THE BARBADOS MUSEUM** — **WE VALUE YOUR SUPPORT!**

Member privileges when they join:

- * A year's subscription to the Artifacts Newsletter
- * Free admission to the Museum
- * Free use of Museum Library services
- * Complimentary copy of the Museum annual journal
- * Members discount in the Museum shop and more!

Title & Name _____

Occupation _____

Address _____

Tel _____ Fax _____

Email _____

- * Life \$690.00 * Firm / Company \$230.00 * Annual \$51.75
- * Joint Annual (husband & wife) \$69.00 * Student \$5.75
- * Junior (18 years & under) \$5.75

To join friends or colleagues need to complete details above, along with cheque or money order made payable to Barbados Museum & Historical Society, and send this to: St. Ann's Garrison, St. Michael, Barbados