

ARTI-FACTS

Barbados
Museum
& Historical
Society

BARBADOS MUSEUM & HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Dear Member,

Welcome to the April-June issue of the Arti-Facts Newsletter!

The Barbados National Committee of ICOM (International Council of Museums) designated 13th to 19th May, Cultural Heritage Week in order to comprehensively highlight local cultural institutions around the time of International Museum Day, which is celebrated annually around the world on May 18.

The theme for this year is "Museums and Universal Heritage", and it encourages reflection on the relationship between universal heritage and individual responsibility and between individual heritage and universal responsibility. One of the extraordinary aspects of the worldwide community of museums is the collective responsibility for preserving the heritage of humanity, and what makes that responsibility more exceptional is that it must be undertaken according to the needs and expectations of the nation and people whose heritage is being preserved.

Throughout Cultural Heritage Week, the Museum and other local ICOM members hosted a wide range of activities that served to educate the public through imaginative offerings.

We have also managed to continue our work on initiatives with various partners throughout what was a bitter-sweet period for the Museum staff body.

As always, we invite you to forward your comments on Museum activities or the Arti-Facts newsletter, by mail or Email: musepr@barbmuse.org.bb.

Christine Skeete
Christine Skeete
Marketing Officer

Cultural Heritage Week

– Barbados Museum & Heritage Attraction Development



Museum staff at the Folk Museum

On 14th May Cultural Heritage Week kicked off with a day of fun and educational tours for the hardworking Museum staff. The aim was to present to everyone the results of the Museum's advice and consultancies on the development of other heritage sites around the island.

The first stop was the West Wing of Parliament in Bridgetown to have a firsthand look at the new Museum of Parliament and National Heroes Gallery, for which the Barbados Museum was the lead consultant. The visit included the Cricket Exhibition, curated by the BMHS, in the Exhibition Gallery upstairs. Staff members enjoyed the privilege of viewing these exhibits before they were opened to the general public.

The recently-opened Barbados Concorde Experience next to the Grantley Adams

International Airport was the second attraction on the day's itinerary and it lived up to the high expectations of the group. Loans and donations of all artefacts on display in the hangar and on the Concorde have been made to the Barbados Museum & Historical Society (BMHS). As a result, the Thorpe T 18 Butcher plane and the Gnome rotary engine on display at this new attraction actually belong to the BMHS collections. The impressive Concorde G-BOAE (Alpha Echo) continues to be owned and maintained by British Airways.

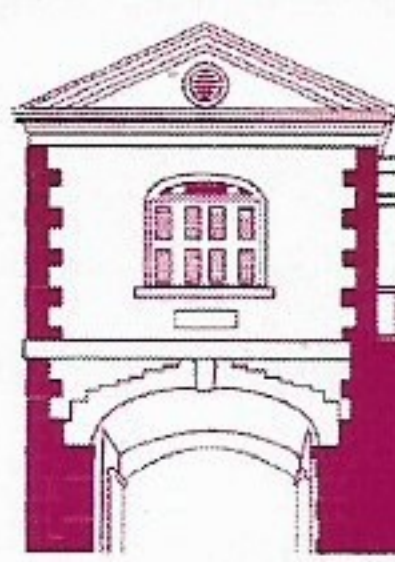
Those who had never had the opportunity to tour a historic plantation house benefited from a lunch stop at Sunbury Great House in St. Philip, followed by a complimentary tour.

Staying in the same parish, the group moved on to the Folk Museum at

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ACTIVITIES AT THE MUSEUM

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Heritage Park, which is also home to the Foursquare Rum Distillery. Museum staff had a sneak preview of the exhibit, which is currently under re-development and is nearing completion. At the request of Sir David Seale, this exhibition was first installed in 2001 using objects from the Museum's collections that reflect the

folk history of Barbados. This site provided a fitting conclusion to the day's exploration of the contributions made by the Barbados Museum & Historical Society to the island's heritage tourism sector.

Museum Highlights

Museums & Universal Heritage - Museum Open Day

In celebration of International Museum Day, the Barbados Museum threw its doors open on 19th May with free admission all day and four free guided tours. But that's not all - each person through the door received a free gift and could take advantage of a Museum Shop sale and tempting traditional Bajan sweets like sugar cakes, nut cakes, glassies, and comfits, along with other refreshments.

Just a few steps away, George Washington House jointly marked International Museum Day by inviting everyone to enjoy their Open Day with an international craft display and free tours all day.

Throughout the week, members of The Barbados National Committee of ICOM celebrated this year's theme of Museums & Universal Heritage at their respective institutions.

ICOM member Janice Whittle was the Curator for an exhibition entitled "Journey: Emancipation of the Spirit", which continued to 1st June, in three spaces - Queen's Park Gallery, Zemicon Gallery, and Errol Barrow Centre for Creative Imagination. Ms. Whittle, who is also Curator at the Queen's Park Gallery, was assisted by the National Art Gallery Committee project staff and Committee members. This important exhibition by the National Art Gallery Committee, in collaboration with the National Cultural Foundation and the Errol Barrow Centre for Creative Imagination, commemorated



A guided tour during the Barbados Museum's Open Day

the Bicentenary of the Abolition of the Slave Trade.

On 18th May, Folkestone Park hosted its annual Open Day featuring free museum and visitor centre tours, music, food and drink stalls, a band from the St. James Secondary School, a tuk band, the Barbados Landship, and health checks, among other activities.

The Barbados National Committee of ICOM is made up of 17 local members in a combination of institutional representatives including professionals from the National Art Gallery Committee and the National Cultural Foundation, as well as artists who are individual members. The Executive Committee is comprised of Peggy McGeary, Allison Callender and Christine Skeete of the Barbados Museum, Chairperson, Secretary and Public Relations Officer respectively; Penny Hynam of George Washington House, First Vice-President; Allison Thompson of Barbados Community College, Second Vice-President, and John Nicholls, Manager of the National Conservation Commission's Folkestone Park and Marine Reserve who is Treasurer.

The International Council of Museums (ICOM) was formed in 1946 as the international organisation of museums

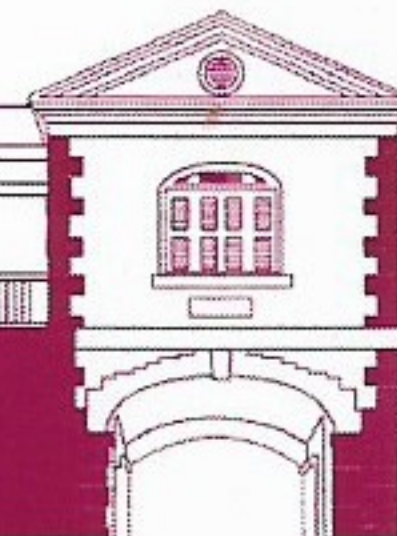
and museum professionals which is committed to the conservation, continuation and communication to society of the world's natural and cultural heritage, present and future, tangible and intangible. Since October 2004 Alissandra Cummins, Director of the Barbados Museum and Historical Society, has been President of the entire ICOM body. Ms. Cummins notes, "We are all responsible for universal heritage. This year, more than ever, we need to raise consciousness about the role of museums in teaching individual and collective responsibility for global heritage." She explains that ICOM's International Museum Day has high purpose in promoting access to museum collections to focus on how cultural diversity and universal heritage go hand in hand.

For ICOM, universal heritage means both natural and cultural heritage, the tangible objects that make up collections as well as the intangible discourses, knowledge, and creative expressions that accompany these. As stated in the ICOM Code of Ethics for Museums, museums are responsible for preserving and promoting this heritage. In short, ICOM's answer to globalisation is encouraging a new universal responsibility for heritage in all its culturally diverse expressions.

For more information on becoming a member of ICOM, check out <http://icom.museum> or contact Peggy McGeary or Allison Callender at the Barbados Museum & Historical Society, Tel: 427-0201 or 436-1956 or Email: museum@caribsurf.com.



**BARBADOS NATIONAL
COMMITTEE OF ICOM**



Museum Highlights

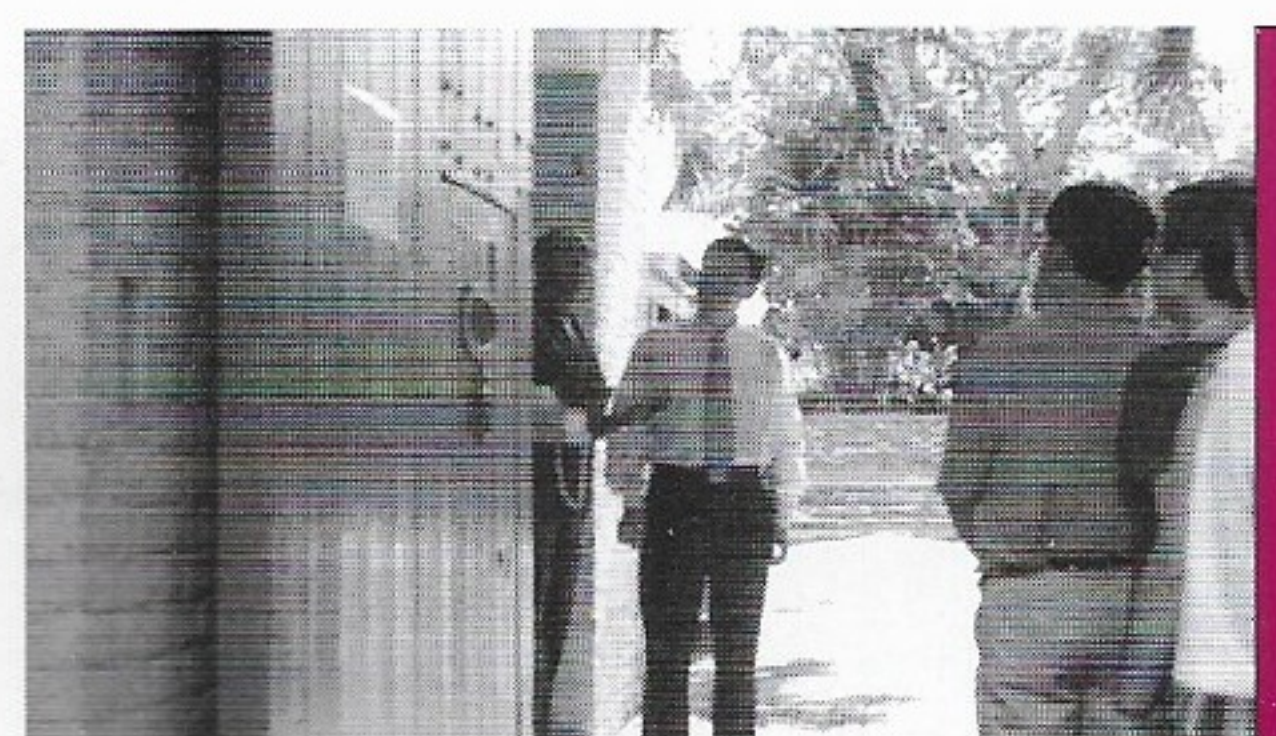
British Deputy PM Visit

A tour of the Barbados Museum was featured in the programme of activities for the Deputy Prime Minister of Britain, the Honourable Mr. John Prescott, during his visit to the island. Mr. Prescott's trip was organised by the British High Commission and the Prime Minister's Office, with an emphasis on his interest in the commemoration of this year's Bicentenary of the Abolition of the Slave Trade. In recognition of this focus, a small slave trade display was mounted of documents and artefacts from the Museum's collections.



The touring party in the Cunard Gallery. Foreground: The British High Commissioner and BMHS Director and Deputy Director. Background: British Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State in the Prime Minister's office.

Chinese Ambassador Visit



BMHS Education Officer, Peggy McGeary, introduces the group to the Museum

Chinese Ambassador to Barbados, His Excellency Mr. Liu Huanxing, along with his wife and staff of the Chinese Embassy,

visited for a tour of the galleries on 3rd May. This visit formed part of the orientation of the new embassy employees to life in Barbados. The ambassador presented the BMHS Director with a gift, and he in turn received a gift of Museum publications and merchandise.

2007 Lecture Series

This year's Lecture Series "An Outrage to Humanity": The Course and Abolition of the Atlantic Slave Trade continued during April, May and June.

"The Organisation of the Trade"

- Dr. Fitz Baptiste

"The Middle Passage"

- Dr. Karl Watson

"American/Caribbean Destinations & Transit Points" - Dr. Pedro Welch

"The Impact of the Trade on Western Africa" - Prof. Alvin Thompson

"Changes in Metropolitan Opinion on the Slave Trade" - Prof. Alan Cobley

"The Abolitionists: Profiles and Objectives" - Dr. Heather Cateau

"Petticoat Campaign: Women and the Abolition Campaign"

- Prof. Verene Shepherd

"Assembling the Case for Reparations"

- Prof. Hilary Beckles

The lectures were all well attended and provocative discussions were sparked during the question and answer segments.

Presentation to the Lodge School

A presentation of copies Volume 52 of the Journal of the Barbados Museum & Historical Society (BMHS) was made on 4th April to the Principal and representatives from the History Department of the Lodge School at the school in St. John. The educators were familiar with past issues of the journal and expressed an interest in continuing to receive new Museum publications. The

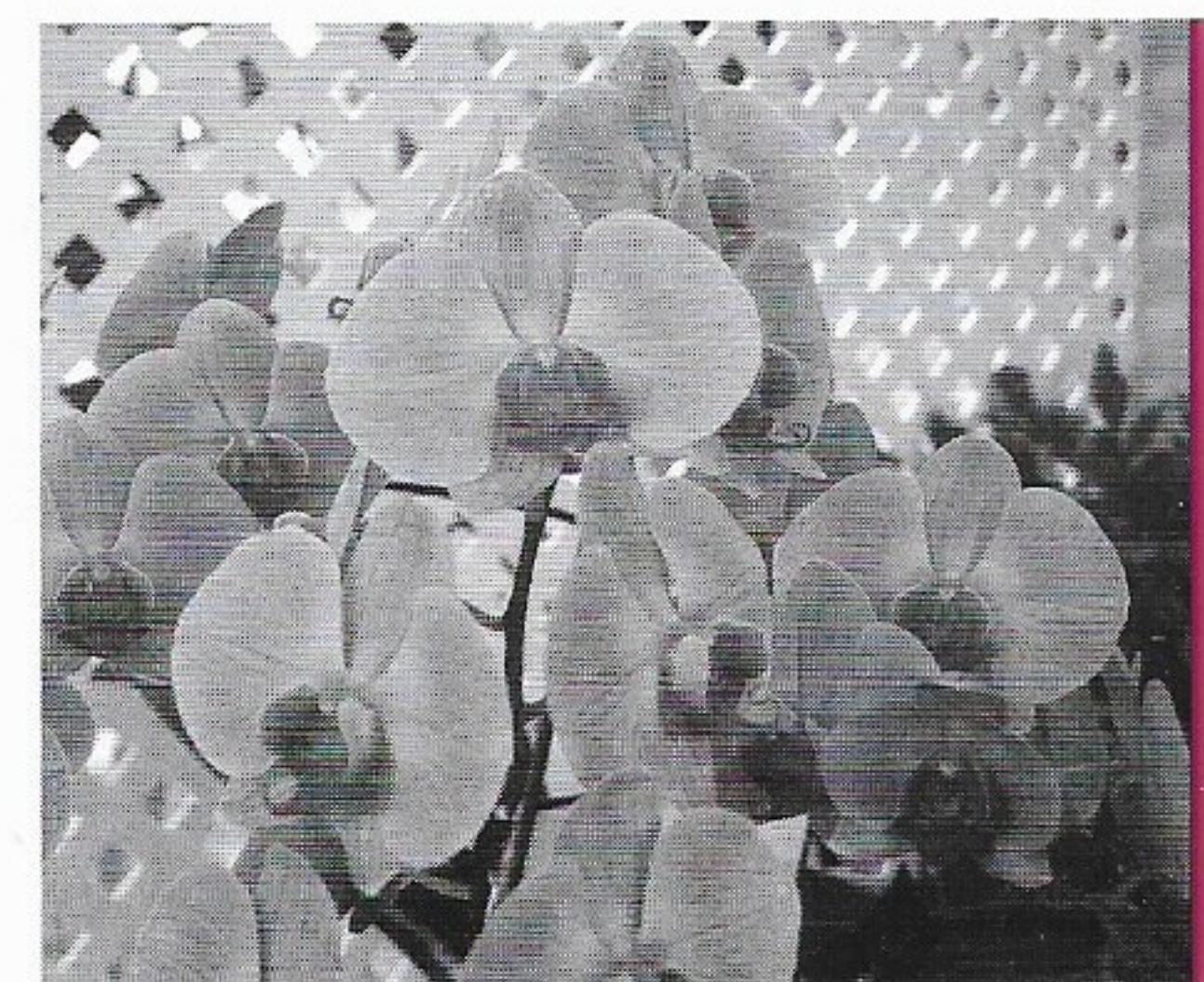
journals for the Lodge School, as well as Foundation and Deighton Griffith Schools, were sponsored by Sheraton Mall/Oran Limited.



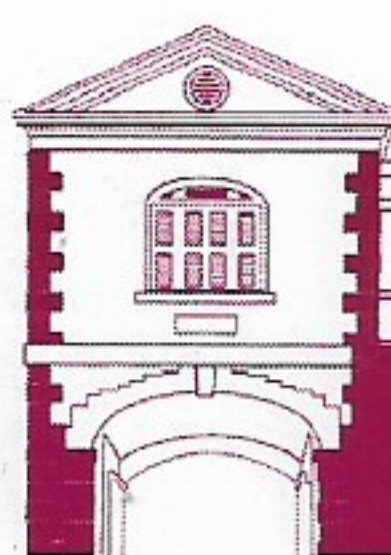
Rev. Henderson Guy and other teachers from the History Department, along with the Principal (2nd from right), receiving copies of the journal from the BMHS Marketing Officer.

Orchid Show

From 30th March to 1st April the Museum's courtyards became a place of the exotic beauty as The Orchid Society of Barbados put on their 2007 Orchid Show. The official opening was by United Nations Development Programme resident representative, Dr. Rosina Wiltshire and an address by the Minister of Agriculture, Senator the Honourable Erskine Griffith addressed the audience at the opening ceremony. Some individuals also took in the Museum's exhibits, as the galleries were open for viewing throughout the weekend.



Some of the orchids on display at the Exotic Treasures show



ACTIVITIES AT THE MUSEUM

Museum Highlights



The ICOM group at Barbados Concorde Experience

ICOM Activity at Barbados Concorde Experience

Members of the Barbados National Committee of ICOM and interested persons toured the Barbados Concorde Experience on 22nd June and benefited from an informative presentation by Oneka Small who was the Liason Exhibit Designer on the project. ICOM Barbados Chairperson, Peggy McGeary, also informed the group of opportunities available through membership in ICOM.

FROM THE COLLECTION

Dioramas

– Three-Dimensional Works of Art

Some of the earliest art pieces in the BMHS collection which demonstrate the art of recreating scenes are two dioramas by the Surinamese artist Gerrit Schouten (1779-1839). These dioramas were donated to the Barbados Museum & Historical Society in November 1960 by Mr. Ronald Tree, Esq. Schouten was primarily known in The Netherlands for his intriguing dioramas – vibrant painted papier-mâché structures portraying a range of topics such as slave dances, Indian villages and plantations.

What is a diorama, you may wonder. A diorama is a three-dimensional scene of limited depth enclosed in a cabinet or box. It is a recreation of a natural setting which shows a specific moment in time. The current, popular understanding of the term “diorama” denotes a partially three-dimensional, full-size replica or scale model of a landscape typically showing historical events, nature scenes, cityscapes, etc., for purposes of education or entertainment. Each scene is skillfully manipulated, hand-painted and intricately constructed using paper, card and natural fibres.

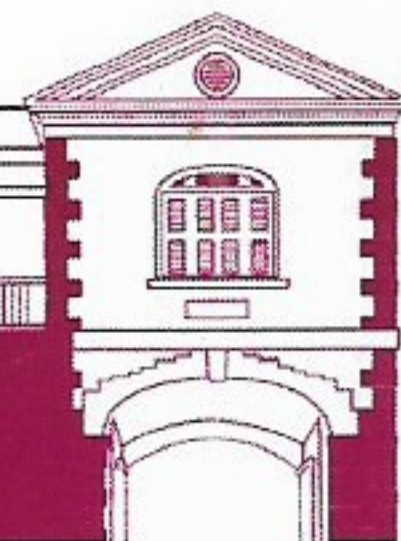
The two Schouten dioramas currently in storage are signed and dated mid-1800's and depict nature life in Papua [Papua is the

province of Indonesia comprising a majority part of the western half of the island of New Guinea and nearby islands]. Each of these dioramas is constructed in a wooden box, with a painted background using a series of multi-layered card, paper and natural fibers, and intricately assembled figures.

The painted background or sky in many dioramas conveys a sense of distance and is painted on a continuous curved surface so that the viewer is not distracted by corners, seams, or edges. All of these techniques are employed in order to present a realistic view of a large scene in a compact space. A photograph or single-eye view of such a diorama can be especially convincing since in this case there is no distraction by the binocular perception of depth.

The next time you visit the Museum, keep an eye out for a larger locally- made diorama in The Jubilee Gallery and a smaller circular one featuring birds, which is encased in glass in the Dining Room of the Warmington Gallery.

Content provided by Allison Callender, Assistant Curator – Art & Art History





ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Barbados Museum & Historical Society regrets to announce the passing of Finance Officer, Ms. Anthea Burgess, on 25th April 2007. A service of thanksgiving for her life was attended by Museum staff and Council members. This vibrant member of the Museum family will be greatly missed by all who knew her.

New Acquisitions

The Museum recently received the following gifts to its collections:

- Carpenters tools dating from the 1950's.
- Wooden Serving Tray dated 1944.
- Transcript of a letter dated August 18th 1831 giving details of the damage caused by the hurricane of 11th August 1831 in Barbados.
- Copies of Insurance plans of Bridgetown Barbados Fire Maps dated January 1895, a general key plan of the suburbs.

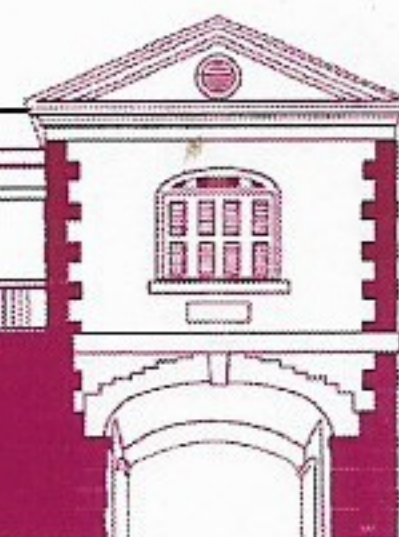
70th Annual General Meeting Of The Barbados Museum and Historical Society

NOTICE TO MEMBERS

Members are advised that the Annual General Meeting of the Society will be held on 30th August 2007 at 5:00 p.m. at the Garrison, St. Michael. All members are invited to attend.

AGENDA

1. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of 24th August and 13th September 2005
2. Matters Arising Therefrom
3. President's Report
4. Report of the Council and the Accounts of the Society
5. Election of Officers to the Council
6. Election of Members to the Council
7. Any Other Business



New Staff Members

The Museum recently welcomed two new employees into its fold. Jacqueline Stephenson has joined the staff as Finance Officer. Of her experience to date with the institution Jacqueline says, "I have found the Museum a stimulating environment within which to work and I look forward to making my contribution."

Linda Branch has been charged with the task of directing and managing fund-raising activities, including a major capital campaign in her role as the new Development Officer. Linda notes, "The Museum surroundings are very pleasant within which to work. I look forward to collaborating with my new colleagues in building the foundation of public and private partnerships, and funding support, necessary for the Museum to adequately serve all sectors of our society."

Simultaneously, Marian Ward, who has been with the Museum since the beginning of this year, was appointed to the position of Administrative Assistant – Accounts.

We welcome these ladies and look forward to benefiting from their skills and experience as the Museum continues on its path of growth and development.



Marina Ward

Council & Staff Update

MUSEUM COUNCIL

Patron
His Excellency Sir Clifford
Husbands G.C.M.G. 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
Mr. Adrian Deane
Mrs. Joyce Gayle
Mr. Richard Goddard
Mr. Humphrey Metzgen
Mr. Peter Simpson
Stella Lady St. John

Government Appointees

Mrs. Andrea Wells
Dr. Richard Goodridge
Mr. Andre Hoyte
Ms. Sharon Trotman
Mrs. Celia Toppin

MUSEUM STAFF

Director
Alissandra Cummins
Deputy Director
Dr. Thomas Loftfield
Finance Officer
Jacqueline Stephenson
Development Officer
Linda Branch
Education Officer
Peggy McGearry
Marketing Officer
Christine Skeete
Librarian
Greta Payne

Administrative Officer
Susan Boyce

Administrative
Assistant - Accounts
Marina Ward

Administration
Assistant - Merchandising
Marcia Griffith

Event Coordinator
Cindy Corbin

Receptionist & Shop Assistant
Kandacey Rollock

Curatorial

Archaeology and History
Kevin Farmer
Art and Art History
Allison Callender
Registrar
Angela Boyce

Technical and Maintenance

Stephen Layne
Reginald Riley
Pauline Stuart
Merna Bryan

Security

Peter Graham
Cecilia Payne
Grantley Yarde
Roslyn Straker

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 Arti-facts Newsletter
- Free admission to the Museum
- Free use of Museum Library services
- 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

PAYMENT DETAILS

To join friends or colleagues need to complete details above, and payment detail below.

- A cheque or money order made payable to: Barbados Museum & Historical Society
- Payment by credit card: VISA/AMEX /MASTERCARD

Credit card number:

Expiry date:

Month Year

- Send your cheque or money order to: Barbados Museum & Historical Society, St. Ann's Garrison, St. Michael, Barbados.
- Credit card payment can be faxed to the Museum on **429 5946**.