

NO. 97 3RD QUARTER, 2008

ARTI-FACTS

Barbados
Museum
& Historical
Society

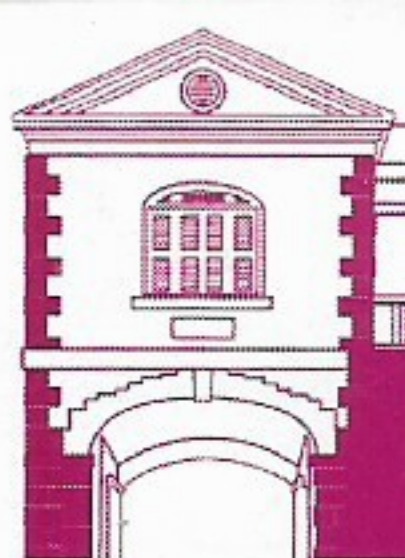
BARBADOS MUSEUM & HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER



A photograph from the Crop Over installation
Photograph by William Cummins

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Dear Member,

Welcome to the July to September issue of the Arti-facts Newsletter. We hope that if you live in Barbados or were in the island in July, you were able to join us for the inaugural Ye Olde Rum Heritage Festival and the opening of the 75th Anniversary Exhibition. An enjoyable time was had by all who joined us for these and other events hosted by the Museum during the period under review.

The Rum Heritage Festival celebrated an aspect of our heritage that has helped to place Barbados on the map. Dating back to over 300 years ago, the history of rum is an integral part of the island's history. Yet, until now, there has been no series of events to highlight the role the spirit has played in Barbados' development.

While we're on the subject of topics that are seldom discussed, in recent months you may have been hearing about the UNESCO Slave Route Project. Here we reveal the plans for the new heritage trail and tours that will educate locals and visitors alike on a part of our history that has traditionally been viewed as difficult to present.

The BMHS is doing its part to uncover unusual, fascinating and even controversial themes for us to explore. We encourage you to play your part by getting involved.

Don't forget to send your current email address to musepr@barbmuse.org.bb in order to receive regular updates on upcoming activities. We look forward to hearing from you and seeing you at the next event

Christine Skeete
Christine Skeete
Marketing Officer

DID YOU KNOW

UNESCO Slave Route Project

On the 27th August, a plaque was unveiled in Bridgetown to launch the Slave Route Signage Project. This plaque identifies the area between the Lord Nelson statue and Chefette Restaurant in Upper Broad Street where "the cage" was located.

What was the cage, you may wonder. It was a temporary prison, made of wood and wire, which was established by an Act of Parliament in 1688, to detain minor offenders and to hold runaway slaves until their owners arrived to reclaim them. In 1818, "the cage" was removed from its original site and transferred to Pierhead following a petition from the Bridgetown merchants to Parliament to have the structure, and its accompanying noise and stench, removed. "The cage" was abolished after emancipation.

Curator - History and Archaeology of the BMHS, Kevin Farmer, addressed the audience present for the unveiling ceremony. He noted that the project draws on research to identify and locate sites of memory in relation to both the period of enslavement and post-emancipation in Barbados.

He noted that the plaque "signals a new type of interpretation in which signage is used to tell the story of places on our landscape." Mr. Farmer pointed out that "for far too long we have depended on oral history to define our space and our memories to locate specific sites on the landscape. It is time we augment this with the creation of properly signed areas that will speak to our history as a nation from pre-historic times to modernity."

The Slave Route Signage Project began in 2000, following the second Caribbean workshop on the Slave Route Project

(UNESCO/WTO). The lead agency for the project is the Ministry of Tourism and the Museum is working closely with this entity to develop a trail system for both guided and self-guided tours that will cover the 14 sites that have been identified as appropriate venues for the erection of informative slave route signs.

These sites are:

Newton Slave Burial Ground
St. Nicholas Abbey

Drax Hall

Bayley's Plantation

The Emancipation Statue

The Cage

Codrington College

Signal stations (Gun Hill, Cotton Tower, Greande Hall)

Pierhead

Rock Hall, St. Thomas

Sweet Vale, St. George

Bourne's Land, Christ Church

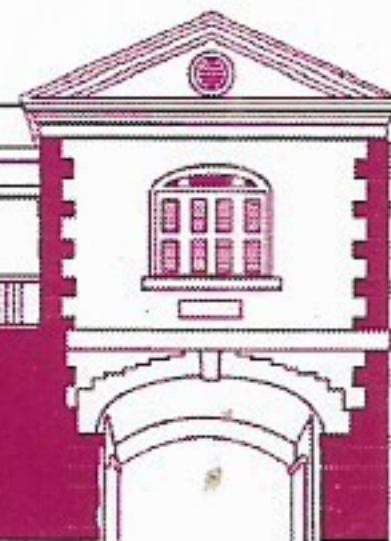
Lowther's, Christ Church

Marchfield, St. Philip

Mr. Farmer notes that these signs will allow the local and visitor to explore the history and heritage of the island. The textual information on the signs has been provided by historian Ronnie Hughes, who conducted special research for this purpose. The UNESCO Slave Route Project is expected to enhance Barbados' cultural and heritage tourism offerings while commemorating aspects of a past that holds a shared memory for the African Diaspora.



Newton Slave Burial Ground



Museum Highlights

Rum Heritage Festival

The inaugural BMHS Ye Olde Rum Heritage Festival was staged in July and featured four well-received events. The Festival was supported by Mount Gay Distilleries Ltd., Rum Refinery of Mount Gay Ltd., R.L. Seale & Co. Ltd., Cockspur/Hanschell Inniss Ltd., St. Nicholas Abbey, Bakers Choice Ltd and Tall Ships Cruise Management Ltd.

The Festival was supported by Mount Gay Distilleries Ltd., Rum Refinery of Mount Gay Ltd., R.L. Seale & Co. Ltd., Cockspur/Hanschell Inniss Ltd., St. Nicholas Abbey, Bakers Choice Ltd and Tall Ships Cruise Management Ltd.



Left to right: Dr. Trevor Carmichael, Chef MacPherson and Dave Broom at the July 6th Authentic Rumbullion Experience, featuring an auction and gourmet fundraising dinner at L'Acajou Restaurant, Sandy Lane Hotel.



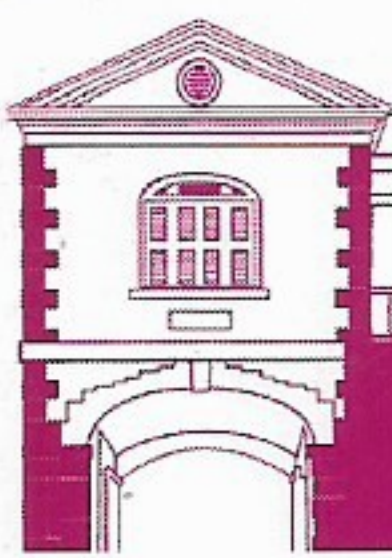
Patrons enjoying rum cocktails and hors d'oeuvres at Foursquare Rum Distillery & Heritage Park on 11th July, following talks by Peter Laurie, Richard Seale and Keith Laurie



The bus tour stopped at various rum producers on 12th July



Philip 7 performing at the Museum Lime, bringing the Rum Festival to a close on 12th July. Philip 7 recorded his music video at the Museum in 2007.



Museum Highlights

75th Anniversary Exhibition

// Barbadians owe it to themselves to understand and to accept the fact that the Barbados Museum is no longer the exclusive domain of the elite, nor of any group of intellectuals. It is not here simply as a tourist attraction. It belongs to all of us. It is our Museum." These were the words of Minister of Community Development and Culture, The Hon. Mr. Steve Blackett, on the occasion of the opening of the Museum's 75th Anniversary Exhibition on 13th July. The opening was well attended by Museum members and other specially invited guests and received significant coverage in the media. The minister's presence at the opening followed on from an official visit to the Museum on 7th May.



Minister Blackett addresses the guests



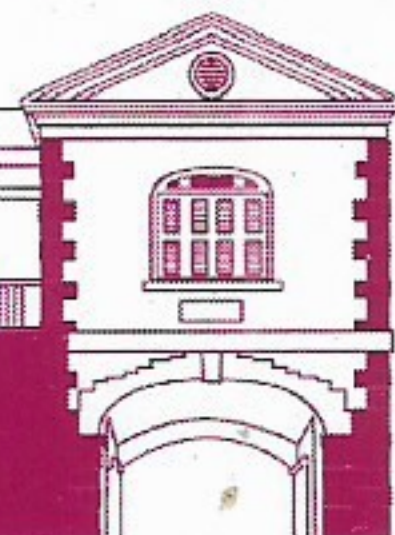
Museum member Anita Daniel at the exhibition opening. Ms. Daniel celebrated her 75th birthday along with the Museum!

Crop Over Exhibition

The media launch for the Crop Over exhibition was held on 30th July. An Artist's Talk by Sonia Boyce on the Crop Over Exhibition was coordinated by the National Art Gallery Committee and the BMHS. It was held in the Museum's Cunard Gallery on 2nd August and a lively discussion was the result.



A section of the audience listening to Sonia Boyce during the Artist's Talk



Museum Highlights

Intern in the Curatorial Department

Ms. Zara Gardner conducted her internship at the Barbados Museum from 8th July to 7th August. During this time, she worked mainly to photograph two-dimensional objects from the museum's photographic collections including photo-albums, postcards, stamps, sketchbook drawings, depicting mainly scenes of old Barbados, and has photographed over 1500 photographs.



One of the photos from the BMHS photograph collection

Ms. Gardner noted that while reviewing the collection she recognised that the focus was on either the island's tropical environment where the photographers depicted mainly urban landscapes, and focused on documenting the island's architectural structures and historic monuments, along with the island's working class people.

Ms. Gardner is currently a second year student enrolled at the University of Guelph, Ontario completing her Bachelor of Arts Degree majoring in Studio Art.

BMHS Presentation at the US Embassy

The Education Officer, Peggy McGeary, and Curator - History and Archaeology, Kevin Farmer, were invited to make a presentation on 24th September on Barbadian history for the newly-arrived staff of the US Embassy. It was well received and a lively question and answer session followed the presentation. The Museum was one of several organisations, including the Barbados Tourism Authority, invited to make cultural presentations to the consular staff.

Visits by Conservators

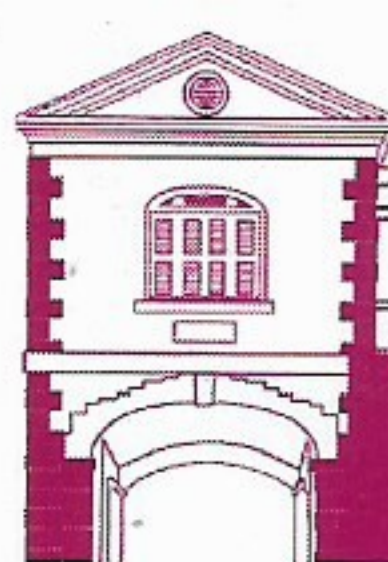
Anne Bancroft and Angel "Archie" Santiago Torres were present at the Museum during the period under review to advise on and conduct conservation on paper and objects respectively.

BMHS Race

On 27th September, the Barbados Turf Club put on a BMHS Condition Race as part of the Paying Tribute to the Heritage of the Garrison Historic Area Race Day. The BMHS Deputy Director, Dr. Thomas Loftfield presented the winner with a trophy.



Miguel Pena and Dr. Tom Loftfield present the trophy to the winner



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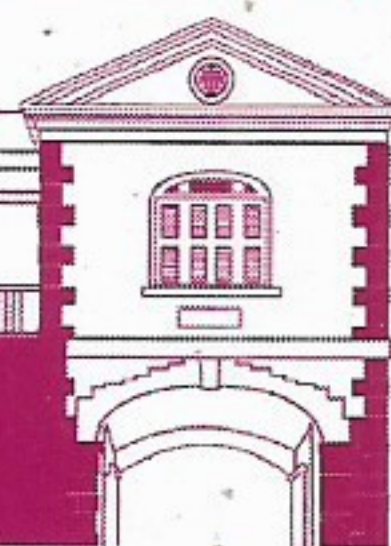
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All lists reflect giving in 2007 and
2008, as of September 30, 2008.



Announcements

New Acquisitions

- A collection of ICC Cricket World Cup West Indies 2007 souvenirs
- Pen and Ink sketch of Broad Street, Bridgetown dated 1962
- Coloured signed poster of Rihanna holding an umbrella
- Silver and black umbrella signed by Rihanna
- A Facit Typewriter
- A silver porcelain water jug approximately 80 years old
- A pair of wooden Tennis Rackets
- Four female dolls from an antique doll collection
- A pair of silver Trinket Trays



One of the antique dolls

History Group

Would you like to help promote research and publication of Barbadian history with others who share a similar personal or professional interest?

The new BMHS History Group is underway. For further information, please contact Kevin Farmer, Curator - Archaeology and History at Tel: 427-0201 or Email: arch@barbmuse.org.bb."

Passing of Lesley Barrow and John Matshikiza

The Museum regrets to announce the passing of Ms. Lesley Barrow who dedicated 17 years of excellent service to the BMHS and to the development of the heritage sector, and of Mr. John Matshikiza, writer of the Turning the Tables play and acclaimed South African columnist and actor.

Staff Update

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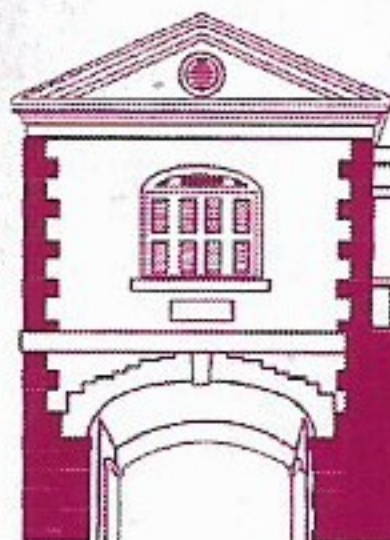
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