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GASTRONOMY

the catalyst for MoBay's tourism expansion?

Dwayne Clayton's long-standing relationship with the ocean



I love to touch people's hearts, says RIU's new director of sales

Opportunity for gastronomy

The catalyst for MoBay's tourism expansion?

Claudia Gardner

Hospitality Jamaica Writer

JAMAICA'S THRUST towards becoming a major global gastronomy destination is to be bolstered by the country's hosting one of the United Nations' most crucial conferences on sustainable tourism.

The event, set for December 2017 in the tourism capital, Montego Bay has been dubbed an "opportunity for gastronomy; not only for the health and wellness network, but particularly for entertainment and music to help showcase Jamaica's food, which will be on display", Minister of Tourism Edmund Bartlett announced last Wednesday at the Hilton Rose Hall.

He was speaking at a Gastronomy of Fats and Oils 'The Art of Choosing, Preparing and Cooking Good Food' seminar at the Montego Bay resort. Hosted in association with the Seprod Group, the event entailed a series of presentations by chefs and experts on how to effectively use fats and oils to further enhance culinary delights within the tourism sector.

Gastronomy is one of the passion points being touted by the minister as ways of taking Destination Jamaica to the next level.

Uncertain of the exact date the event will take place, Bartlett said these were both private and public sector arms of the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) coming together to put on a global event for the first time.

FIRST GLOBAL CONFERENCE

Beaming with pride, the tourism minister said that with the declaration of 2017 being named International Year for Sustainable Tourism Development, "little Jamaica has been selected as the venue for the first global conference on tourism development and sustainability".

The Montego Bay Convention Centre has been selected as the venue.

On show will be special presentations of rum, special presentations of coffee, and the various foods that the island boasts.

According to the tourism minister, a focus on gastronomy could be the catalyst for the expansion of Montego Bay's tourism product.



PHOTOS BY CLAUDIA GARDNER

Tourism Minister Edmund Bartlett tests some butter made by Seprod at the Gastronomy of Fats and Oils seminar at the Hilton Rose Hall in Montego Bay on Wednesday. At right is general manager of Caribbean Products Company Clement Burnett, while to the left are marketing manager at Seprod, Matthew Samuda; Director of Tourism Paul Pennicook, and Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Tourism, Jennifer Griffith.



Moon Palace Jamaica Grande's Nicholas Grant arranges dishes for sampling at the Gastronomy of Fats and Oils seminar at the Hilton Rose Hall in Montego Bay on Wednesday.



Executive chef at Moon Palace Dennis McIntosh serves a sample of chilled pumpkin bisque during a live cooking demonstration at the Gastronomy of Fats and Oils seminar at the Hilton Rose Hall in Montego Bay on Wednesday.

He is convinced that the conference will offer a huge platform, with 157 ministers of tourism worldwide in attendance, plus 500 tourism-aligned companies and delegates from the UN's development agencies.

Internationally, the UN has designated eight metropolitan areas as Cities of Gastronomy: Popayan in Colombia; Chengdu and Shunde in China; Ostersund in Sweden; Tsuruoka in Japan; Jeonju in South Korea; Florianopolis in Brasil; Zahle in Lebanon; and Tuscon in Arizona, USA.

To be designated a City of Gastronomy, the UNESCO requires that that city shows, among other things, how its food system, food economy, and food culture can serve as a driver of development; describes how its cultural and culinary assets played an important role in its history and economic development; lists the related food festivals, conferences, and special events aimed at professionals, the public, and tourists; and presents examples of food-related programmes and projects that support vulnerable social groups and strengthen connections between the city, the private sector, and academia.

DEVELOPMENT TOOL

"While we talk about gastronomy in the broad sense of consumption, it is also a development tool because it gives an opportunity for infrastructure development within the areas. Montego Bay has to be looked at in this way. In fact, I am determined that we need to reinvent the product in Montego Bay and create a new vista for expansion and growth. Montego Bay can't grow unless there is a new destination created, and I think that the new destination can definitely revolve around food and entertainment," Bartlett said.

He added that to build out gastronomy is to create a dynamic and distinctive stream of visitors into Jamaica. Eighty-eight per cent of people who visit other places go in search of food, and in our largest market – the United States research has shown that 23.7 million people travel every year for gastronomy experiences "Jamaica could do well with two million of that. And if we do that, we would have doubled our visitor arrival out of the United States and we would have been well ahead of our five million projection," he said.

Next year's conference is part of the UNWTO's 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production, which is a global framework of action to accelerate the shift towards sustainable consumption and production patterns in both developed and developing countries.



Executive chef at Moon Palace Dennis McIntosh and his assistant, Shantalle Brown, add passion fruit vinaigrette as the final ingredient to this salad-in-a-glass delicacy consisting of grilled breast of chicken and vegetable kebab.



Executive chef at Moon Palace Dennis McIntosh removes a platter of fish cutlets from the oven during a live cooking demonstration using fats and oils at the Gastronomy of Fats and Oils seminar at the Hilton Rose Hall in Montego Bay on Wednesday.



Moon Palace Jamaica Grande culinary staff member Sarie Whyte is flanked by Nicholas Grant (left) and Shantalle Brown. The three were in attendance at the Gastronomy of Fats and Oils seminar at the Hilton Rose Hall in Montego Bay on Wednesday, where they provided support to the executive chef at Moon Palace, Dennis McIntosh.



Minister of Tourism Edmund Bartlett checks out a cutting implement at the Appliance Traders booth at the Gastronomy of Fats and Oils seminar at the Hilton Rose Hall in Montego Bay on Wednesday. At right is Product Manager Erica Wallace.



Executive director of the Jamaica Manufacturers' Association Imega Breese-McNab (front right) shows off a selection of authentic Jamaican sauces and dressings made by Springvale to Tourism Minister Edmund Bartlett. To the rear are marketing officer of Things Jamaican Helen Watt and managing director of the Seprod Group of Companies Richard Pandohie.



Moon Palace Jamaica Grande culinary staff members Sarie Whyte (right) and her colleague, Nicholas Grant, carry out preparatory work at the Gastronomy of Fats and Oils seminar at the Hilton Rose Hall in Montego Bay on Wednesday. The seminar was staged by the Ministry of Tourism and the Seprod Group of Companies.

Dwayne Clayton's long-standing relationship with the ocean

Claudia Gardner

Hospitality Jamaica Writer

DWAYNE CLAYTON has had a longstanding relationship with the ocean since he was a young boy growing up in the coastal community of Esher in Lucea, Hanover.

So it was not surprising that the 39-year-old's journey resulted in him conceptualising and operating his own business, Beach Pro-tech, one of western Jamaica's fastest-growing beach-care and protection companies, which services the tourism sector.

Beach Pro-tech was established in August 2015 after Clayton recognised that there were huge opportunities for beach maintenance and protection services at hotels. This he could fulfil with his skill set and experience, which included three decades of seafaring and six years at Hydros Coastal Solutions, a coastal-restoration company.

Since then, Beach Pro-tech has been providing services to four of the north coast's major hotels, providing employment for 22 persons in Hanover, Trelawny, and St James. The company serves Melia Braco, Royalton White Sands, Grand Palladium, and a strip at the Tryall Club.

"Beach Pro-tech provides the highest level of beach maintenance you require. We will clean your beach – anywhere on your property that sand lies. Beach Pro-tech will protect it from storm water, from rough seas, and from heavy weeds coming in," Clayton told *Hospitality Jamaica*.

EXQUISITE SERVICE

"At the Melia Braco, we offer an exquisite service from 5 a.m. to 8 p.m. We arrange the chairs, clean the areas, make it free of cups, plastics, stones, and debris washed up on the beach is removed to a dumping site that has been approved by NEPA," he added.

According to Clayton, there are times guests say they don't want to walk on the beach because it is too pretty. "Two of my staff at Melia have been highlighted on TripAdvisor."

Clayton said although Beach



PHOTOS BY CLAUDIA GARDNER

Operator of Beach Pro-tech Dwayne Clayton and his Lucea-based team pose for a photo at the Bull's Bay public beach in Lucea, Hanover, during a voluntary beach-cleaning and alignment exercise recently.



Operator of Beach Pro-tech Dwayne Clayton assists his team to align sand at the Bull's Bay public beach in Lucea, Hanover during a voluntary beach cleaning and alignment exercise recently.



Dwayne Clayton speaks to 'Hospitality Jamaica' during a break from a voluntary beach-cleaning and alignment exercise at the Bull's Bay public beach in Lucea recently.

Pro-tech adheres to strict environmental practices.

"We have a no-plastic-bag policy. It is strictly tarpaulin or buckets," he said. "If seaweed comes in, we will take them back out to the depths of the sea, because a lot of times, the seaweed comes in with parts of coral reefs on it."

Clayton does not hide the fact that he is from humble beginnings. He said his journey to success was not always easy as he always had to work to support his family, even while at primary and throughout high school, missing crucial examinations, including CXCs, while attending the Green Island High, as a result.

"I grew up in Esher in a poor family. I didn't do the Common Entrance exam because I was at sea fishing with my grandfather while the exam was going on. Because he was old, I had to row the canoe with him all over. Back then, many people didn't attend school on Fridays. I ended up doing evening class at JAMAL, and that's where I learnt basic maths. I started fishing from about age 10 on Fridays, mornings, evenings ... I was always at sea," he said.

Pro-tech is headquartered in Lucea, he ensures equity by hiring staff members who reside within the locale of the respective hotels he services and who learn through on-the-job training.

"At Melia, I have six staff. The majority of them are from the Rio Bueno community and other areas in Trelawny, so people don't have difficulty getting to work. At Royalton, I have four persons from St James and the Rio Bueno area," he said.

"At Palladium, the staff is from Lucea – three on the water crew that travels on the boat daily to clean the buoys and remove debris and five work on land. One person is stationed at Tryall, where he does a small strip, about 20 metres, and the poolside and lawn. He makes up the mobile team at times," Clayton said.

The beach pro hopes to attract new clients across the entire north coast and Jamaica's southern and eastern coasts. As someone who has been dependent on the ocean almost all his life and who appreci-

I love to touch people's hearts, says RIU's new director of sales

Janet Silvera
Hospitality Jamaica Coordinator

BORN AND raised in Havana, Cuba, RIU Hotels and Resorts – Jamaica's new director of sales, Niurka García-Linton started visiting the island in the 1990s before moving here permanently in 1998.

"I have been tremendously impacted by this beautiful island and its people. Jamaica welcomed me with open arms and made me one of her own. I will be forever grateful," said the woman who admits that the hospitality industry has been one of her greatest passions for over 20 years.

Having had experience of being a Destination Management Company representative in Cuba, García-Linton, who is married to a Jamaican, said she has been privileged to work with amazing companies, including



CONTRIBUTED
Niurka García-Linton, director of sales, RIU Resorts.

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Dollar-denominated tourism and sterling

David Jessop

Hospitality Jamaica Writer

AS NOVEMBER begins, many, if not most, Caribbean tourism ministers, hoteliers, and others in the industry will be heading to World Travel Market (WTM) in London. This is the very large annual international trade fair at which, traditionally, buyers and sellers meet to strike deals for the year ahead.

The 2016 event and its collateral industry discussions will be of particular significance as the event comes in the wake of the United Kingdom electorate's June 23 decision to leave the European Union (EU), and more important, from the perspective of the Caribbean, the recent and likely continuing collapse in the value of sterling.

By way of background, it has become clear in the last few weeks that the UK government may be heading for what has become known as a hard Brexit. This means that the UK, next March, may decide to withdraw from both the EU and its customs union, ending its free-trade relationship with Europe while introducing controls on the free movement of EU nationals into and out of the UK.

Recognising the likely impact on



David Jessop

UK economic growth and the short- to medium-term implications for the British economy, the markets have responded by effectively devaluing sterling by around 17 per cent since the vote.

The consequence has been, taking the average UK bank rate for international payments, that the pound has slid from US\$1.54 in mid-October 2015 to an average now on the same date in 2016 of US\$1.18.

This is clearly not good news as far as Caribbean tourism is concerned; particularly for those



CONTRIBUTED

Carol Hay of the Caribbean Tourism Organisation presenting the CTO Industry Report at the World Travel Awards in London

nations that not only have a high dependence on UK visitors, but have been seeing, after a period of slow or no growth up to 2014, significant increases in UK visitor arrivals.

According to the Caribbean Tourism Organisation (CTO) statistics, the countries benefiting the

most from the 1.2 million British visitors who travelled to the region in 2015 were Barbados, Jamaica, the Dominican Republic, Antigua, Cuba, St Lucia, Trinidad (presumably meaning Tobago), Grenada, St Vincent, and The Cayman Islands, in that order.

What CTO's figures also suggest is that countries like Barbados, St Lucia, and others in the OECS that have not significantly diversified their markets or airlift and still have a very high overall proportion of UK visitors may suffer more than others.

NUMBERS TO DECLINE

Although the industry suggests that forward UK bookings remain strong across this coming winter season – when typically, high-end British visitors who are less likely to be affected by currency fluctuations travel – there is a sense that from the spring of next year onwards, middle- and lower-end UK visitor numbers may begin to decline if, as is likely, the value of sterling continues to remain weak.

Although at present anecdotal, there is growing parallel evidence in the UK media and from the UK travel trade that there has been a surge in middle-market staycations and in weekend breaks in English cities and the

countryside.

Equally unscientific, but another probably reliable indication of a likely decline in UK arrivals, is the reaction of the price-sensitive Caribbean diaspora in Britain. At a recent conference unrelated to tourism, it became clear to me that not only was the collapse in sterling causing concern about how frequently this important group of visitors travelled home, but if they did, how long in the future they could afford to stay, and what may happen to air fares as the input costs for UK aviation increase.

Recent commentaries from the IMF and other international financial institutions suggest that in the short to medium term, the outlook for the UK economy will worsen and that sterling may remain weak for some years.

For all these reasons, this year's WTM will be a litmus test of sorts.

It will provide a first medium-term indication when deals are being struck between hoteliers and the airlines and tour operators for 2017 and promotional incentives agreed with governments and tourist boards of how those involved in UK outbound tourism are thinking about the future demand for dollar-related markets like the Caribbean.

RIU

CONTINUED FROM 5

the international chain, RIU, which has a portfolio of more than 100 hotels in over 15 countries.

“Working with these specialist companies has allowed me to develop a broad-based background in tourism, leisure, and hospitality, which, combined with an entrepreneurial drive and business-management skills, has resulted in my being able to effectively lead

change in competitive business environments,” García-Linton told *Hospitality Jamaica*.

Extremely confident, creative, proactive, and strategically focused, García-Linton has no fear explaining her plans and commitment to meeting the objectives of the organisation to which she is employed.

“These include, but are not limited to, continually, growing market share, revenue, and profit.”

García-Linton's professional strengths include successful management of inventory of over 2,600

rooms, yield management, being a strategic and critical thinker, business plan development, account management, contract negotiations, budgeting, and forecasting.

She complements this with customer-relationship management, sales and marketing management planning, business growth realisation with established and new accounts, revenue-development strategies, group and meeting management and incentives, marketing analysis, leadership, mentoring, and also, effective team building.

“I value honesty, integrity, transparency, and humility, not only professionally, but also personally. I believe they are the foundation of a healthy working and personal environment. I love people, value others' opinions and the simplicity of life. I believe in leaving a legacy – a positive one. I love to touch people's hearts even if with a smile,” said García-Linton.

Outgoing, detail oriented while still looking at the big picture, García-Linton's colleagues will tell you she is organised and loves structure,

is loyal, optimistic, practical, and very persistent.

In the midst of her journeys, God has showered His grace upon her life in many areas, “including my family and my career. Nothing I have accomplished so far would have been possible without Him”.

It is her vision to continue this journey and to fulfil the purpose for which she was created, was how she emphasised the relationship that she has with her Creator.

García-Linton has worked at RIU Resorts for the last nine years.



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Iberostar turns 60

SPANISH CHAIN **I**BEROSTAR, a family-owned company that operates three resorts in Rose Hall, Montego Bay, has turned 60.

In a statement from the chain, the owners paid tribute to their thousands of customers, employees, and stakeholders for helping to position the brand at the forefront of the global-tourism industry.

"It is our customers, employees, and stakeholders who have managed to keep alive the enterprising spirit that has characterised us since our early days," said the statement.

Owned by the Fluxa family, it was their entrepreneurial spirit that led their members to venture into new territory in 1956 when they entered the tourism sector.

Their first hotels were situated on the finest beaches of Spain. Guided by the star of the Iberostar brand, the company embarked on an international expansion strategy in the Caribbean that took it to the world's finest holiday destinations.



Beach Olympics at the Iberostar Grand ... management against guests

CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Later came the business challenges such as The Grand Collection hotels and the opening of new urban hotels tailored to meet the changing needs of their guests.

VARIOUS PROPERTIES

In Jamaica, the group opened its first Jamaican property Iberostar Rose Hall Beach and Spa Resort in 2007, followed by Rose Hall Suites Resort in 2008, and the adult-only luxurious Iberostar Grand Rose Hall Resort in 2009.

Besides being a family-owned company with global recognition, Iberostar has also been promoting social action and education for the sustainable development of the countries in which the group operates, with the creation of the Iberostar Foundation

"We would like to thank all of you that have accompanied us on this thrilling journey. Iberostar has been making dreams come true for 60 years now, being able to transform vacations into unforgettable moments," the group said.



The Iberostar Grand team poses for the camera during the hotel group's 60th anniversary celebration on Saturday night.



From left: Fabricio Villanueva, assistant general manager at Iberostar Beach; Tamika Higgins-Baker, sales and marketing manager; Celia Ferran, general manager; and Andrew Wright pose in front of the 60th Anniversary mural painted earlier by the kids in-house at Iberostar Beach.



From left: Nordia Bennett, Jodane Russell, and Janielle Fuertardo.



Jimmy and Leanne from Newfoundland, Canada, enjoying Iberostar's 60th anniversary celebration.



Iberostar Beach guests having a blast at the 60th anniversary celebration of Iberostar Rose Hall Beach & Spa Resort.



From left: Maxime Henriques, Ricardo Traile, Valeria del Rayo.



General manager of Iberostar Beach Celia Ferran (centre) is flanked by her team at the 60th anniversary celebration.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Deanroy Bromfield (right), principal, Excelsior High School, and members of the school's Tourism Action Club, receive the appreciation plaque from Matthew Blake (left), librarian, Jamaica Tourist Board.

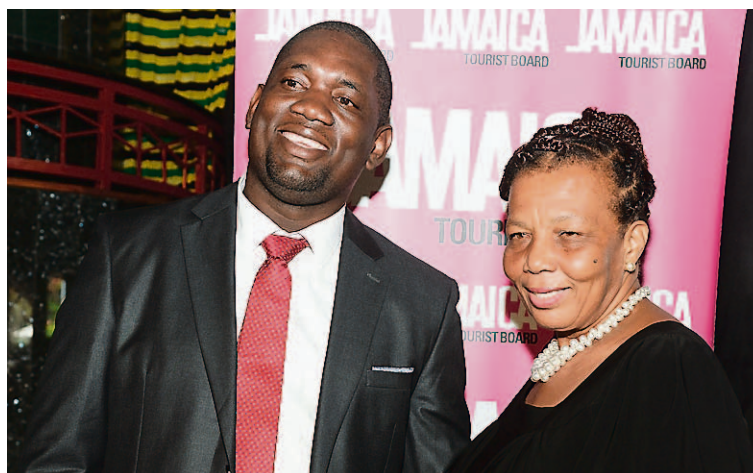


Tourism Action Club – 20 years of making a big difference

SMALL JAMAICANS Making a Big Difference' is the motto of the Tourism Action Club (TAC), and over its 20-year history, the club has lived up to this maxim. Through the TAC, young people across the island have been exposed to experiential learning and have been empowered to contribute to the continued success of tourism.

The TAC is an initiative developed and spearheaded by the Jamaica Tourist Board (JTB) to enhance students' knowledge and appreciation of the tourism sector. Students at the secondary and tertiary level learn about tourism in fun and exciting ways. The initiative, which began with 36 schools, has mushroomed into a vibrant organisation which now boasts over 100 clubs across the island.

The mandate of the TAC is to sensitise the students to the benefits of the industry to all Jamaicans – from the individual to the national level. The JTB continues to engage the students in topical issues, trends and best practices in the industry. Equally, the students have been valuable contributors, sharing their



It was a TAC reunion for Audrey Francis, former principal and Tourism Action Club staff adviser at the Oberlin High School, and her former TAC student, Gavin Myers, events coordinator, National Integrity Action. Francis was guest speaker at the luncheon and Gavin Myers offered remarks on behalf of former TAC members.

experiences and ideas about what they want to see in the industry. They also participate in international fora such as the Global Travel and Tourism Partnership Research Awards and the Caribbean Tourism Organisation Youth Congress.

Staff advisers play a vital role in the success and sustainability of the TAC machinery as they help to make the concepts come alive. The advisers' resourcefulness and creativity help students to develop more than a cursory interest in the industry,

with them often becoming tourism ambassadors.

Said Essie Gardner, marketing, communications manager, JTB: "It is amazing to see how the Tourism Action Club has influenced our young people over the years. Whether they have pursued careers in medicine, education, politics or tourism, they see the connection and importance of tourism. That is the purpose of the club – to help our learners understand that regardless of their final career choice, there is always a link to tourism."

ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Excelsior High School, which has the distinction of being the first institution to form a Tourism Action Club, was the venue for the Tourism Action Club 20th Anniversary Celebration and Poster Exhibition. The event saw the participation of a number of schools and provided the opportunity for the JTB to publicise the successes and benefits of the club.

Highlights of the day included the announcement of St Jago High School as the winner of the TAC 20th Anniversary Poster Competi-

tion. Additionally, there were radio interviews with former TAC members Floyd Green, minister of state, Ministry of Education, Youth and Information; Gavin Myers, events coordinator, National Integrity Action; and Dr Alfred Dawes, senior medical officer, Savanna-la-Mar Hospital. Other interviewees were Radcliffe Haynes, former staff adviser at Excelsior High School who started the club 20 years ago; principal Deanroy Bromfield; and current TAC member Aisha Downer. All lauded the TAC for its role in their academic and personal development.

Excelsior High School was presented with an award for its unbroken commitment to tourism education as the inaugural Tourism Action Club.

The TAC is one of the initiatives of which the JTB is most proud, as the investments made in the lives of young tourism enthusiasts continue to bear fruit. The TAC will continue to be a very relevant medium for empowering today's students to become tomorrow's industry leaders.

Jade Mountain gets gold for being green

THE US Green Building Council (USGBC) has announced that St Lucia's Jade Mountain resort has become the first hotel in the Caribbean to receive the coveted LEED GOLD certification status.

"Achieving LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Gold, as Jade Mountain has done, demonstrates an exceptional level of leadership in the industry. I congratulate both the owners (Nick and Karolin Troubetzkoy) and the project team for this significant achievement," said Rick Fedrizzi, CEO and founding chairman of the USGBC.

"LEED certification is a tremendous tool for the hospitality industry, not only as a path to achieving operating efficiencies for property owners, but also as a way to let guests know that their accommodations have been designed to provide the most comfort and the least impact on the planet," added Fedrizzi.

Nick Troubetzkoy, who designed and built the multiple award-winning resort, which overlooks the Piton Mountains rising from the Caribbean Sea in front of Jade Mountain, said: "The beauty of St Lucia's landscapes, the warmth and character of its people, and the



Jade Mountain

unlimited potential to create something very special here captured my imagination."

A RESPONSE TO EVERY HOTEL

Troubetzkoy described Jade Mountain, artfully sculpted into the mountainside, as "a response to almost every hotel I've ever visited ... where I found myself disappointed by what I encountered".

So he set about redesigning the basic concept of a holiday-related

hotel experience. "I wanted to create individualised spatial environments that would enable guests to forget the fact they're in a hotel room – and, in essence, to forget every preconception and to experience the psychology of a dynamic and monumental space on an intuitive and primal emotional level."

Eliminating the fourth wall in all rooms, or sanctuaries as they are known on property, gave Jade Mountain another clear distinc-



Nick Troubetzkoy, owner and designer of Jade Mountain.

tion: "We aimed to give our guests the feeling of entering a private space fully integrated into the island's ecology, where they could simply relax, breathe in the air while basking in the surroundings and enjoying a wonderful sense of calm and peace, versus being boxed into a traditional hotel room breathing recirculated, machine-processed air," said the visionary.

Troubetzkoy's devotion to sustainable design means that the resort has its own rainwater-fed water purification plant system and recycles treated sewage water, which irrigates a nursery, which, in

turn propagates thousands of tropical plants for landscaping.

The design, which merges the free flow of air and the free flow of water through the infinity pools and waterfalls of the sanctuaries, according to Troubetzkoy, is a direct reflection of the natural attributes of the land of St Lucia itself: "When you combine water with air and the Earth itself in this way, you unlock a profound potential for an almost magical level of enjoyment and celebration – a magic that may very well be the ultimate achievement of Jade Mountain and St Lucia."

The Green Building Council adjudicators certainly believed that Troubetzkoy had succeeded and noted: "This is a very impressive accomplishment for such a unique project, and we congratulate you and your team on implementing some pioneering, non-traditional approaches to the LEED prerequisites and credits."

The US Green Building Council (www.usgbc.org) monitors the way buildings are designed, constructed, and operated through LEED, a leading third-party verification system for sustainable structures around the world.

UNWTO, Egypt to host summit on tourism

THE WORLD Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) and the Government of the Arab Republic of Egypt are organising the 5th Global Summit on City Tourism: 'Cities: Local Culture for Global Travellers' from November 1-2, 2016, in Luxor. During the summit, the UNWTO will launch the Mayors for Tourism Initiative.

Tourism has become a central component of the economy, social life, and geography of

many cities in the world and is ideally positioned to seize the opportunities provided by urbanisation. Yet many challenges are emerging, including the need to effectively manage the growth of tourism in many cities around the globe.

The 5th Global Summit on City Tourism: 'Cities: Local Culture for Global Travellers' will discuss city tourism trends and debate themes such as sustainable development, spatial organ-

isation and rejuvenation, innovation in city tourism, cross-cultural behaviour, and new business models, or the so-called 'sharing economy'.

CLUSTER DEVELOPMENT

The development of clusters that engage public and private players from all sectors is central to the new paradigm of city tourism development in which tourism needs to be a tool for social cohesion and cultural

preservation beyond its fundamental contribution to economic activity.

As part of the action plan of the UNWTO City Tourism Network, the UNWTO will launch a new initiative gauged at gathering mayors and decision makers in cities around tourism issues. The Mayors for Tourism Initiative aims to promote the important role of tourism as a driving force for socio-economic development in cities and place the sector as a priority in the

urban agenda.

Mayors of world cities have been invited to share best practices in managing the challenges and opportunities that tourism presents to local administrations and to propose formulas to align their tourism-related policies with those of national governments.

The summit will be preceded by the 104th Session of the UNWTO Executive Council, taking place in Luxor from October 30 to November 1, 2016.

Memories of Sunset Beach

PHOTOS BY
PAUL H. WILLIAMS

Marine erosion has reduced the size of Sunset Beach in Montego Bay, but the shallow water is still clean and refreshing.



I SPENT many of my childhood days on Sunset Lodge Beach, along Kent Avenue in Montego Bay, St James. We called it Sunset, and it is now referred to as Dead End or Buccaneer Beach.

For me, it was always sheer joy when it was beach time, and Sunset was my favourite beach. The sight of airplanes descending over the sea to land at the nearby Sangster International Airport was really fascinating. For us children, it was the closest we could have got to an airplane.

Kent Avenue goes around the airport to the fishing community of Whitehouse, and we would walk along the road, but would look out for planes coming in. We heard that the breeze caused by the planes could blow us into the sea. Red, double-decker buses, too, used to ply that route. And there was a concern over how close the alighting planes were getting to them as the planes flew over the road moments before they made the touchdown.

Eventually, the buses disappeared, and the road was cut off



The once-popular Buccaneer Inn along Kent Avenue in Montego Bay is now a hall of residence for UWI Mona-Western Jamaica Campus students.

with a wall, thus the current name, 'Dead End Beach'. But, we would still walk around the wall from the beach to get to the other side of the road to go explore for crabs and other marine creatures.

Yet, it was the clean, natural scent and feel of the water that I really liked, especially when it got into my nostrils. Throughout my life, I have been using that sensation as a benchmark for good

beaches. They must not smell, taste, or feel as if they are 'dead'. If they do not smell and feel like Sunset, then I am not totally satisfied.

And a beach outing at Sunset was not complete without the col-

lecting of shells. There was a great variety of shells on Sunset Beach, and we would go home with many. I also remember collecting sea urchins, washed up starfish, and soldier and hermit crabs. We would sit on the seawall and watch schools of little colourful fishes, wishing we could take some home.

The place was also overrun with aged tourists in dark glasses and straw hats, carrying straw baskets of craft items bought along the way. I couldn't understand why our Jamaican females were so afraid to be seen without clothes, yet these wrinkled people were walking on the streets in 'badin' suits.

The beach used to be full of people, especially on Sundays and public holidays. Among them were the aged tourists, sunbathing. I used to find it funny to see these older people rubbing 'suntan' oil all over their bodies before lying on towels atop the sands. And I recall standing over a woman and laughing until she left the beach. It was not the oiling that brought me to happy tears, but I dare not say what.

Fast-forward to the present. I



Birds nesting on the lights, which guide descending airplanes to Sangster International Airport in Montego Bay.

have grown up, and ageing myself, and the things I found funny then will soon be creeping up on me. And, I have been frequenting Sunset on my recent weekly trips to MoBay. I must say the calm and shallow water is still smelling and feeling clean. The morning temperature is also great. Yet, marine erosion has significantly reduced the size of the sand area.

The tourists, and the shells, like the 'double-deckers', have disappeared. Some crabs still abound, and so do some birds whose names I don't know. Buccaneer Inn, which was formerly the Sunset Lodge, a once-popular hotel, located directly across the road from the beach, is now a UWI Mona-WJC hall of residence. Those lucky students!

At Sunset Beach, things have certainly changed. It's only the refreshing scent and feel of the water that have remained a constant, not just a wistful memory of my childhood days.



The shells and tourists have disappeared from Sunset Beach in Montego Bay, but birds, such as this one, still flock to it.



This resort, not far from Sunset Beach, along Kent Avenue in Montego Bay, was never around when 'Hospitality Jamaica' writer Paul H. was a youngster frolicking on the beach.

Challenges and opportunities in tourism and linkage industries

Paul H. Williams

Hospitality Jamaica Writer

LAST THURSDAY, the University of the West Indies, Mona-Western Jamaica Campus (WJC), hosted its first research symposium under the theme 'Challenges and Opportunities in Tourism Linkages Industries'.

Prior to the commencement of the activities, Hospitality Jamaica spoke with Patrick Prendergast, campus director, about the objectives of the symposium. He said it was "essentially an opportunity for us to demonstrate how the UWI, Mona-Western Jamaica Campus in particular, needs to be engaged with the community".

He reasoned that the campus does not exist in isolation, but is part of the city of Montego Bay, the capital of tourism in Jamaica. And so the campus needs to engage with the rest of the city as there is a "significant gap", which the university is seeking to close, especially through research, as this drives academic and institutional development.

In essence, research carried out by the university should benefit the wider Montego Bay community from a developmental perspective. Research then, should minimise and find solutions to the challenges that exist between tourism and linkage industries such as agriculture, transportation, manufacturing, and entertainment.

EDUCATIONAL TOURISM

Prendergast also said that while people are focusing on the linkages between tourism and other mainstream industries, "There are linkages to be made in terms of education ... even the possibilities of educational tourism or tourism in education".

The symposium also aimed to give an opportunity to young researchers at the university to expose the work that they are doing.

"This research symposium is ... a commitment to our academic staff, students, and the wider society that we believe in engaging the academic world with the practical world" Prendergast stated to the gathering.

In keeping with the theme, Robert Headley, chairman of the



PHOTOS BY PAUL H. WILLIAMS

From left: Richard Bourke of the Trelawny Chamber of Commerce; Jamaica Tourist Board Regional Director Janice Allen, chairman of the Jamaica Hotel and Tourism Association Montego Bay Chapter; Robert Headley; moderator, Patrick Prendergast; Hope Markes of Hope Markes Villas; and Montego Bay Chamber of Commerce and Industry third vice-president Brian Brown form the panel in a round-table discussion at the UWI Mona-Western Jamaica Campus research symposium on Thursday, October 13, in Montego Bay.



Jamaica Tourist Board Regional Director Janice Allen wants universities to share their research findings with the wider society 'with speed'. Beside her is Richard Bourke of the Trelawny Chamber of Commerce. They were panellists at the research symposium held at the UWI Mona-Western Jamaica Campus on Thursday, October 13.



From left: Patrick Prendergast, UWI Mona-Western Jamaica Campus director and keynote speaker; and Robert Headley, chairman of the Montego Bay Chapter of the Jamaica Hotel and Tourism Association, spoke with 'Hospitality Jamaica' prior to the commencement of activities at the research symposium held on the said campus on Thursday, October 13, in Montego Bay.

Jamaica Hotel and Tourist Association, Montego Bay chapter, said, “The major challenges in tourism linkage with the domestic economy include the inability to supply in large quantities; inconsistencies in supply; inferior quality of products, namely in agriculture; and for the manufacturing sector, the challenge of support in promoting locally produced goods to foreign investors”.

The solutions that Headley recommended were the creation of agro-parks in which farmers pool their resources to satisfy tourism-sector demands; the engagement of the Rural Agriculture Development Agency and the Ministry of Industry Commerce Agriculture and Fisheries in the monitoring of the quality of produce to ensure that they meet the standards set by the hospitality industry; and the promotion by JAMPRO of local products to international investors.

The plenary address was given by Nadia Grant-Reid of the Western Jamaica Campus’s Department of Economics, who spoke about ‘Models of Partnership: Academia and Industry’. She said that a synergy could exist between the university and the industries, with both sides benefiting from the symbiotic relationship.

However, Grant-Reid also said it was difficult to forge successful relationships between universities and industries as there is a gap between the two sides. Hospitality was singled out. “There seems to be an absence of a ... research culture in the faculties of hospitality in many universities,” she said. “The problem is magnified in developing countries such as Jamaica.”

RESEARCH NOT APPLICABLE

She also noted that “many practitioners in the hospitality industry do not believe that the research put out by these faculties is applicable to real-world situations”.

Yet, Grant-Reid cited the examples of Stanford University, the University of Melbourne, and the University of South Carolina, which have established very successful partnerships with industries.

“No more should the goal of academia be to advance knowledge for the sake of knowledge, but for the sake of innovation and economic growth,” Grant-Reid said in closing.

In the round-table discussion on ‘opportunities and challenges in the tourism industry’, one of the stand-out observations concerning the university partnering with tourism and linkages industries came from Janice Allen, Jamaica Tourist Board regional director.

She said that the time was ripe for the university to be more proactive and to be at the forefront of what the sector needed to know about the industry, both from the side of academia and the side of the practitioner, but it must be with speed.



Lalesa Grant (Red blouse), third-year media student at the UWI Mona-Western Jamaica Campus, is happy to be among some Cornwall College fifth-formers who attended the research symposium on the said campus on Thursday, October 13, in Montego Bay.



From left: Miguel Anderson, Nicholas Beckford, and Lady Janice entertaining the gathering at the research symposium held at the UWI Mona-Western Jamaica Campus on Thursday, October 13, in Montego Bay.



Montego Bay Community College Lecturer Edris Johnson and her final-year BSc Hotel and Tourism Management students in attendance at the UWI Mona-Western Jamaica Campus research symposium on Thursday, October 13, in Montego Bay.



At left: Chairman of the Montego Bay Chapter of the Jamaica Hotel and Tourism Association Robert Headley, who gave the keynote address at the research symposium held at the UWI Mona-Western Jamaica Campus on Thursday, October 13, in Montego Bay, receives a gift package from Mona Deen Supria of the said campus.



At right: Nadia Grant-Reid of the UWI Mona-Western Jamaica Campus Department of Economics spoke about ‘Models of Partnerships: Academia and Industry’.

Bartlett courts Armenian tourists

Claudia Gardner
Hospitality Jamaica Writer

TOURISM MINISTER Edmund Bartlett says his ministry has engaged in a partnership with a major tour operator in the European country of Armenia to attract members of the Armenian diaspora to Jamaica.

Bartlett was addressing journalists following his address at a gastronomy seminar held at the Hilton Rose Hall in Montego Bay last Wednesday.

Bartlett, who was forced to spend two extra days in Armenia recently because of Hurricane Matthew's passage in the region, said he used his time to connect with the largest tour operator in Armenia and one of the significant

tour operators in Russia, the Czech Republic, and Istanbul in Turkey.

"Seven million Armenians are dispersed around the world, two million of whom are in the United States and one million of whom are in California itself. They travel all over the Caribbean, but they don't come to Jamaica, for some reason. So now we were able to forge a partnership with this very important tour operator," he stated optimistically.

Bartlett revealed that coming out of the initial contact was an invitation for them to come to Jamaica for a familiarisation tour in December and also attend the Tourism Outlook Seminar.

Armenia is landlocked and is located in the South Caucasus, bor-

dered on the north and east by Georgia and Azerbaijan, and on the south and west by Iran and Turkey. The United States established diplomatic relations with Armenia in 1992, following its independence from the Soviet Union. Some popular Armenian-Americans include Cher, Kim Kardashian, and André Agassi.

DIASPORA ALL OVER AMERICA

According to a BBC article published earlier this month titled 'Glendale Armenians in shadows of the past', there are currently more than 200,000 Armenians living in the greater Los Angeles metropolitan area of the state of California, and the city of Glendale there has a population "that is roughly 30 per cent

Armenian".

The article says Armenians first started arriving in California early in the 20th century as a direct result of the unrest in their homeland and "worked in the fertile agricultural valley" in that state. It said that some Armenian immigrants settled in Glendale – and were later joined by friends and relatives – where they founded a church and engaged in economic activities by opening shops and restaurants that offered Armenian cuisine.

"What began as a trickle turned into a series of waves – a result of the war and economic disruption in areas the Armenians had subsequently settled. They fled the Iranian revolution in the 1970s, the Lebanese Civil War in the 1980s,

the break-up of the Soviet Union in the 1990s, the Iraq War in the 2000s, and, in the past few years, the Syrian civil war," the article noted.

The World Bank's most recent **Economic Outlook** notes, among other things, that Armenia's economy performed better than expected in the first half of 2016, with "three per cent growth year to year, driven by increased exports of agri-products to Russia". It also said that "with the expected recovery of the global economy and bottoming out of Russia's recession, Armenia's growth is expected to pick up over the medium term, reaching approximately three per cent in 2016 and staying at similarly modest levels for several years".

BSJ Awards Sandals Royals Caribbean



CONTRIBUTED

Sandals Royal Caribbean copped the Organizational Focus award for the service sector at the National Quality Award (NQA) ceremony, which was hosted by the Bureau of Standards Jamaica. The event, which took place at The Jamaica Pegasus hotel, saw the Luxury Included resort as one of only two hospitality entities that was recognised for upholding high standards and quality systems in its operation. The observed emphasis on corporate social responsibility, leadership, environmental awareness, workflow systems, and employee training and development were also highlights that landed the resort the coveted award. The resort has also been a repeat winner for this sectional prize in previous years and thus, has been able to raise the bar each year, with its products and services being offered to its guests. Here, the team from Sandals Royal Caribbean proudly shows off its award at the NQA ceremony. (From left-right) are Tracie Shortridge, training and development manager; Gerald Christ, general manager; Theresa Hemans, sales executive assistant; Prime Minister Andrew Holness; and Ophir Gayle, regional public relations coordinator for the Montego Bay region.