

The Gleaner
Hospitality Jamaica

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WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2017



AAA takes sleep
comfort
to the skies



Heroes Park for Heritage Week

Paul H. Williams

Hospitality Jamaica Writer

ONE GREAT place to go to reflect this Heritage Week is National Heroes Park in Kingston, where there are monuments erected in honour of our six national heroes ... five males and one female. The lone female, of course, is Queen Nanny of the Maroons.

The Order of National Hero is Jamaica's highest national award.

The honourees have shed blood, sweat and tears for various causes, and have contributed significantly in one way or the other to the evolution of our history and heritage, thus deserving of their memorial spots in this hallowed space situated on land previously known as Race Course.

In 1973, it was renamed National Heroes Park. The section of the park which is reserved for the monuments for the heroes is known as the 'Shrine'. Adjoining it is the area set aside for the interment of other notable Jamaicans.

At the farthest western end of the Shrine is Samuel Sharpe's monument. Designed like a 'Bakongo Cycle', by Compass Workshop Ltd, it was dedicated on October 14, 1999. "The elements of the structure are designed to tell the story of massive resistance. The cross represents passivity, and the Greek cross echoes Sam Sharpe's Baptist belief," the storyboard for Sharpe's monument reads.

Baptist Deacon Sharpe is said to have instigated, but did not start, the Christmas Rebellion of 1831 in western Jamaica. Many lives were lost and plantations burned to the



George William Gordon's bust at Heroes Park.

ground in the uprising. The repercussion for dissenters was just as bloody. Sharpe and other protesters were hanged in Montego Bay. The uprising and the brutal reaction to it added more fervour to the antislavery movement in Britain. They are said to be one of the reasons why slavery ended two years before it was supposed to.

Not far from Sam Sharpe's is the monument shared by Paul Bogle and George William Gordon. At one end is a bust of Gordon, at the other end is one of Bogle. Behind each are five 'fingers' "roughened to symbolise hands that they once toiled during slavery". At the centre of the monument is a mounted piece of amorphous marble, "a freedom symbol".

Both men, from St Thomas, were land owners who were concerned about the economic hardship and social injustice that the people were



PHOTOS BY PAUL H. WILLIAMS

Alexander Bustamante's monument in National Heroes Park.

facing. While Gordon, a member of the Local Assembly, was the mouthpiece, Bogle was the activist who led protest marches, which included the one from Stony Gut to Morant Bay on October 11, 1865.

The protesters and the authorities clashed at the Morant Bay courthouse, which was gutted by fire. Many lives were lost during and after the mayhem. More than 500 people perished, the great majority being the peasants who protested. They were killed by the authorities. Bogle and Gordon were hanged for the role they played, but their work was not in vain.

FIRST PRIME MINISTER

Alexander Bustamante was a trade unionist and labour leader who fought for the rights of the working class. He founded the Bustamante Industrial Trade Union and the Jamaica Labour Party in 1943. He was premier of Jamaica from 1944-53, and chief minister until 1955. He became Jamaica's first prime minister in 1962 and resigned in 1967. His arch monument, simple, yet powerful, represents Bustamante's strength.

Norman Washington Manley, scholar, lawyer, athlete, soldier, was



Paul Bogle's bust at Heroes Park.

another man who championed the rights of the people, becoming chief minister of Jamaica from 1955-1962. He founded the People's National Party in 1938, and led the team that negotiated Jamaica's independence from Britain in 1962. His monument was designed by H. D. Repole in 1972 and "depicts the notable aspects of his life".

The first person to be bestowed with Jamaica's highest honours was civil rights activist Marcus Mosiah Garvey. The native of St Ann was born in 1887. He became a

printer/publisher before travelling extensively, witnessing wherever he went, the hardship and discrimination that black people faced. He preached racial pride, self-acceptance, self-reliance, African unity and equal rights for all. In 1914, Garvey founded the Universal Negro Improvement Association, which evolved into a worldwide network.

Nanny of the Maroons also fought for the freedom and survival of her people. Not much is known about her early years on Earth, but she is said to be a woman of great mental fortitude and physical prowess, which she used to wear down the resolve of the British who waged war against the Maroons up to 1839, when Captain Quao signed a treaty of peace and friendship with them.

Though Nanny refused to sign the treaty, she and her people were granted 500 acres of land by King George II. She was declared a national heroine in 1975, and her monument, designed by Compass Workshop Ltd, was dedicated in 1999. The abeng, the sound of which was critical to Maroon tactics, forms an integral part of her monument.



Monument in honour of Paul Bogle and George William Gordon in Heroes Park.

AA takes sleep comfort to the skies

Janet Silvera
Senior Gleaner Writer

FORT WORTH, Texas:

ENGINEERED FOR comfort, boasting innovation with purpose, United States sleep products manufacturer Casper is American Airlines' latest partner in the air.

As of December, customers seated on long-haul international and intercontinental flights in first or business class and premium economy class will have access to a suite of advanced sleep offerings designed by Casper's award-winning engineering team, said the airline.

The announcement was made during the 2017 Media and Investor Day seminar at the Hilton in Grapevines, Fort Worth, Texas, last Thursday.

The partnership has been described as a major coup by American Airlines passengers who frequently fly with the carrier.

"The Casper sleep experience is like no other ... I'm extremely excited about the partnership," said Debra Lee, an American Airlines frequent flyer.

Lee further added that the Casper bedding was life-changing. "Based on my personal experience with Casper, you don't ever want to leave your bed."

This observation has obviously



Kurt Stache, senior vice-president for marketing, loyalty and sales, American Airlines.

not been lost on the USA's largest carrier, as American Airlines will carry the full line, which includes a mattress pad, duvet, pillow, day blanket, lumbar pillow, pajamas and slippers on its flights, with the offering varying based on the route.

According to the airline, Casper studied the travel environment for months to better understand the challenges of in-flight sleep. Casper's sleep engineers then applied their renowned expertise in sleep research and sleep science to design innovative products specifically for air travel and made exclusive for their carriers.

A NEW STANDARD

"Customers and crew members who tried Casper on our flights said they loved it," said Kurt Stache, the airline's senior vice-president for marketing, loyalty and sales. "Casper has set a new standard for premium sleep products and our new line showcases their attention to detail and design, and their commitment to providing the best for American Airlines customers."

Founded in 2014, Casper has researched more than a dozen versions of the onboard pillow and tested it with a variety of fibres to find the perfect balance of support and breathability for customers, said



PHOTOS BY JANET SILVERA

The famous Casper pillow.

the airline in a media release.

Inspired by performance outerwear, Casper's signature duvet are created to provide comfort at all altitudes, and its sewn-through seams create small, rectangular chambers for a consistent distribution of air to stay fluffy and in place.

The airline said the designs were tested with customers on some of its longest flights, including Los Angeles, USA, to as far as Auckland, New Zealand. The airline also depended on the expertise of some of its most frequent travellers, its flight attendants, for advice on fit, durability and comfort.

This is the first time Casper has applied its sleep expertise beyond the home to world travel. The company's mission, when founded, was to improve sleep while modernising the mattress industry.

"Our mission has always been to create products that help people dream their way to a better life," Casper's co-founder and CEO Philip Krim was quoted as saying in the media release.

Casper products will be available on select routes, including Boston to Los Angeles; New York John F. Kennedy to Seattle; Miami to Seattle; Miami to San Francisco; and US to Hawaii, among others.

These are in addition to traditional long-haul international and transcontinental routes.

janet.silvera@gleanerjm.com



Casper sleepwear on show at the American Airlines Media and Investor Day in Texas.



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Expedia reports Jamaican growth

Announces new revenue management tool at JAPEX 2017

EXPEDIA HAS announced its newest tool for Jamaican hoteliers.

The travel and tourism company, one of the leaders in the hospitality sector, made the announcement during the Jamaica Hotel and Tourist Association's Jamaica Product Exchange (JAPEX) last week at the Montego Bay Convention Centre.

The tool, tagged Rev+, is designed to provide hotel partners with smart, actionable data and analytics. As part of Expedia PartnerCentral (EPC), the company's supplier extranet, which helps hotels manage their property's availability and rates on the Expedia group websites, Rev+ provides hoteliers with more robust analytics regarding the Expedia marketplace, allowing them to make smarter, more informed pricing decisions to

help them optimise their revenue.

Rev+, an essential tool for revenue managers, comes at no costs to hotel partners and doesn't require additional sign-up.

Excited about the prospect, JHTA's President, Omar Robinson, said he was thrilled to be partnering with Expedia for the first time with a grand event on the final day of JAPEX 2017.

STRONG RELATIONSHIP

"This partnership reaffirms the strength of a mutually beneficial relationship with our travel partners as we work together to enhance the visibility of Destination Jamaica with the aim of increasing visitor arrivals."

During JAPEX, the Expedia group honoured top-performing lodging partners, while announcing the destination's continued growth.

The Expedia group reported that Ocho Rios had the highest increase in travel demand for the first half of the year, compared to the same period last year with over 20 per cent growth. Jamaica's growth has also been highlighted by the Jamaica Tourist Board (JTB), which projected that the Caribbean island would set a new record and host 4.2 million visitors by the end of 2017 and surpass last year's 3.6 million. According to the JTB, the hospitality sector is also expanding, and is expected that Jamaica will obtain an additional 15,000 rooms by 2021.

"It's our pleasure to host one of our key partners, Expedia, during JAPEX 2017. Their insights and expertise play an integral role in helping us sell our portfolio and position our brand across a diverse

customer base. We are thankful for a close-knit partnership that allows us to continue increasing our sales within the Caribbean and look forward to their event, where they have partnered with Chukka and JHTA," stated Bethany Ward, senior manager of OTA Business at Playa Hotels & Resorts.

Additional Jamaican markets that experienced growth during the first half of 2017 YOY included Montego Bay, with nearly 20 per cent growth and Negril with more than 15 per cent growth. The Expedia group also reported that the top inbound markets for Jamaica were the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, Germany, as well as Brazil, with a significant interest from Brazilian travellers at an increase in demand of nearly 240 per cent.



Omar Robinson

"Expedia continues to support Jamaica's tourism growth with its local presence and consistent roll-out of effective solutions, including Rev+. As properties continue to benefit from the company's wide range of tools, technology, and expertise, we continue to build long-term relationships with hotel partners who see the benefit of Expedia," said Rafael del Castillo, senior director, Resorts Lodging Partner Services.

"Attending JAPEX gives us the opportunity for some face time with our valued Jamaican partners and allows us to announce our newest product as well as report on the strong growth we are seeing for Jamaica."

Negril Palms Hotel gets second Expedia award in three years

EXPEDIA HAS named Negril Palms its Best of Jamaica Small Hotel Partner for 2017.

The resort was recognised during Expedia's Partnership Appreciation Event at Japex 2017, last Tuesday.

Joseph Smith, general manager of the hotel, credited the award entirely to the hard work and dedication of the resort's staff.

This is the hotel's second Expedia award in three years. In 2015, the 35-room property became the first Jamaican hotel to win the Small Hotel Partner award for the Caribbean.

A popular vacation choice for Jamaicans here and abroad, Negril Palms offers an intimate tropical hideaway, centrally located along Negril's famed seven-mile beach.

Expedia Inc is one of the largest online travel companies in the world, with an extensive brand portfolio that includes some of the world's leading online travel brands.



CONTRIBUTED
Well done! Negril Palms team members (from left): Tamesha Russell, Deloris Grant, and Stacyann Miller are all smiles over Negril Palms winning the coveted Expedia Best of Jamaica Small Hotel Partner award for 2017 for the hotel's outstanding performance and partnership.

David Jessop

Hospitality Jamaica Writer

FEW OF us, when booking a flight, hotel, or a rental car, think twice about the process, or the absence of interaction with another human being.

Over the last decade, we have largely come to trust the websites we visit to book our travel, and their ability to hold securely the information we have provided. It is little different when we use a travel agent or an intermediary. We take for granted that they will be doing much the same, working mainly online to pull together the itinerary we require.

This is because tourism as an industry, perhaps more than any other, has fully embraced e-commerce. Information technology, has enabled the sector to grow rapidly, using booking engines and other platforms able to perform complex in-house tasks in ways that make hotel management more efficient and profitable.

So pervasive has IT become in travel and hospitality that statistics from respected industry bodies suggest that in Britain, 76 per cent of all travellers now source and book their vacations and travel online. In the US, 88 per cent do so when it comes to hotels, and around 90 per cent now use the Internet to book flights.

For most travellers, hoteliers and the industry more generally, it should be stressed that such online tasks for the most part, take place seamlessly and without problems. Unfortunately, however, industry experts suggest that the sector has become a major target for cybercriminals.

This is because it is an industry that accumulates large amounts of data on its clients, involves significant sums of money per transaction, has a high turnover of sales, and stores payment information relating to transactions that are likely to take place months in advance.

CRIMINALS GOING FURTHER

Industry experts also say that beyond a growing number of attempts to hack into hotel IT systems – in 2015 major chains, including Hilton, Hyatt and Trump all admitted that their payments systems had been compromised – cybercriminals are now going further. They are stealing and trading in loyalty points, and there has been an increase in the number of ransom related denial-of-service attacks on hotels.

As this column has noted before, there is also growth in vacation-related fraud, using fake websites, false advertising, bogus phone calls and email scams, with research showing that fraudsters are most likely to target those booking self-catering villas and apartments.

It is also the case that new vulnerabilities are emerging because of the dramatic rise in the number tourists with access to Internet-connected devices.

Despite this, many Caribbean hoteliers have not considered their financial or logistical vulnerability, let alone undertaken a full professional audit in this

THE BUSINESS OF TOURISM

cybersecurity and the hospitality sector



area. Moreover, few Caribbean jurisdictions have the necessary legislation, regulations or infrastructure to address cybercrime, for example, to make it punishable to violate a network.

It is also far from clear whether regional law-enforcement agencies have the legal cover or capacity to cooperate with external law-enforcement agencies in this area, given that most cybercrimes are extraterritorial in their execution.

While it is rare for Caribbean cases of cybercrime to ever become public because of the perceived reputational damage, the few available reports reveal not just a lack of appropriate security, but the existence of outmoded IT systems and software.

The Cipher Brief, a digital, security-based platform that connects the private sector with the world's leading security experts, recently noted that the number of attacks that target the Latin American and Caribbean region is escalating.



DAVID JESSOP

Despite this, Caribbean governments, companies and police forces have yet to fully understand the threat cybercrime poses to tourism; an industry that all professionals agree is now dominated by the need for constant connectivity, and that has become dependent for its survival on being able to market and sell online.

That said, some countries are taking the threat more seriously than others. For example, a recent report published by the Organisation of American States and the Inter-American Development Bank suggested that the only countries in the anglophone Caribbean that are well prepared are Trinidad and Jamaica.

None of which should be a cause for alarm, but rather to suggest that it is very much in the interest of the tourism industry in the region to adopt global best practice and the levels of cybersecurity that their guests have the right to expect.

China's exploding outbound travel and Jamaica's position for growth – Part 3

David L. Shields
Contributor

IT IS important to note that both the United States and Canada have been making big gains in attracting the lucrative Chinese outbound visitor through initiatives which can have residual benefit to Jamaica and the Caribbean. In 2016, both former US President Obama and President Xi of China proclaimed the year as the US-China Tourism Year.

This was done to recognise the importance of travel and tourism between the two nations. This important initiative was implemented to allow both countries to review policies, processes and product offerings to ensure that Chinese visitors to the US have an enjoyable travel experience.

It was in 2016 that the Canadian government declared 2018 the 'Year of Canada-China Tourism', and, as well, announced additional visa application centres in Chinese cities to facilitate that country's visitors to Canada. A new memorandum of understanding was signed by both countries, aiming to strengthen the tourism relationship.

The USA and the Canadian agreements

are significant to provide the opportunities for Chinese visitors to those countries to now add Jamaica to their typical multi-destination itineraries, given the excellent air access to Jamaica from most USA and Canadian cities. Traditionally, most Chinese visitors to Jamaica would visit via European airports, but the recent expansion in US and Canadian carriers providing direct and non-stop service from major Chinese cities makes transit via North America to Jamaica a very attractive option.

Air China in December 2015 commenced the first flight from Beijing, China to Havana, Cuba and it signalled the first connection to the Caribbean from anywhere in Asia by an Asian carrier. There has been mixed review of the direct service which stops in Montreal, Canada. This route shortens the flight time to around 19 hours.

Finnair will be competing with Air China for the Chinese visitors to Cuba when they launch the Helsinki-Havana flights on December 1, 2017. This seasonal twice-weekly service will operate until March 23, 2018, and will bring more attention to the ease of travelling to Cuba, with a one-stop option and travel duration of under 23 hours.

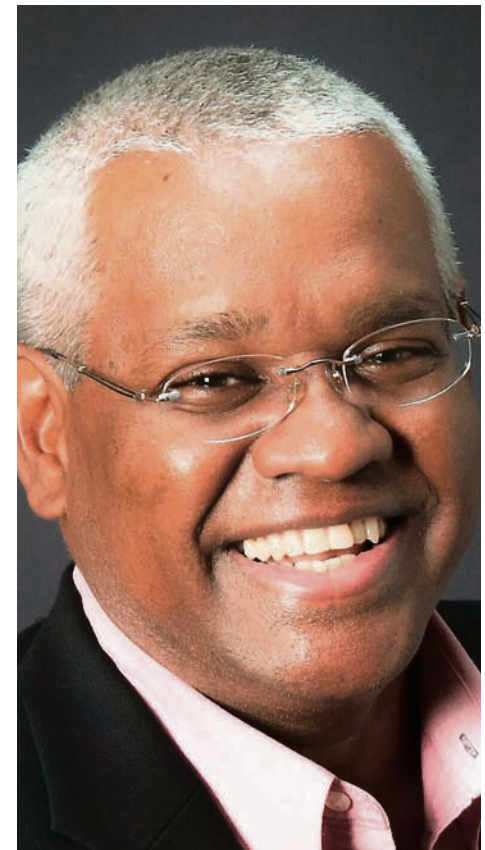
The reviews have been mixed on the success of the China-Cuba air service, but the opportunity to promote the flight as a hub flight for Jamaica, via Havana, is worth consideration by Jamaica.

We could ensure connecting guests are received from the long-haul flight and expedited to Montego Bay. Additionally, it could be proposed that the Air China flight be shared between Havana and Montego Bay, with service in a possible triangular pattern, following the routing of China-Havana-Montego Bay-China or reverse.

JAMAICA MUST BE READY

Travel companies in China are already looking for the next region to promote and with reliable air access. Jamaica must present its product as being ready to welcome these new visitors. Accommodations must be ready to host the visitors, ensuring sensitivity to the cultural practices and nuances of the guest – from the use of specific room numbers, breakfast menu items and basic cable entertainment packages, among others.

Tours and activities must be escorted by a Mandarin-speaking guide. Tours must include the destination's features – and should not be limited to coffee plantation visits, waterfalls,



David Shields

and cultural and heritage sites – which are significant to the socio-political life of the citizens and all connections to the history of Jamaica's relationship with China.

■ *David Shields is a former deputy director of tourism in charge of marketing. He is currently regional director of Island Routes in the eastern Caribbean. Email: hospitalityjamaica@gleanerjm.com*

Tryall Club appoints new director of club operations

THE TRYALL Club has appointed Richard Ferdinand as its new director of club operations.

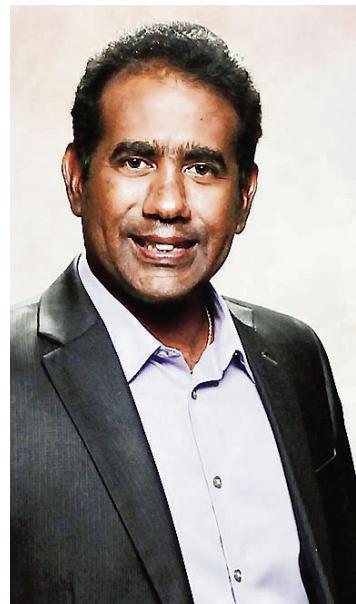
Ferdinand will oversee general operations of the club, including developing and maintaining standard operational procedures relating to guests and staff.

After an international career as a tennis pro, working at clubs and resorts in Trinidad; Houston, Texas; Palm Desert, California; Hawaii Islands; Malaysia; British Virgin Islands and Anguilla, Ferdinand joined the Tryall Club with the intention to spend six months. Those six months, however, have translated into 22 years of service, during which time he has given exceptional service to the organisation.

Ferdinand has served in several

roles at the Tryall Club, including director of tennis, recreation director, and guest services, tennis and gym director. During this time, he implemented successful initiatives to raise the profile of the company, including leading the charge of Tryall receiving four Diamond 'AAA' award five years in a row, becoming the first hotel in Jamaica to receive Hospitality Assured certification; obtaining Green Globe certification for five straight years; and winning the TripAdvisor Choice award.

Amid his professional commitments, Ferdinand has remained committed to supporting the development and increased accessibility of tennis to children in western Jamaica. He spearheaded the Tryall Tennis Summer



FERDINAND

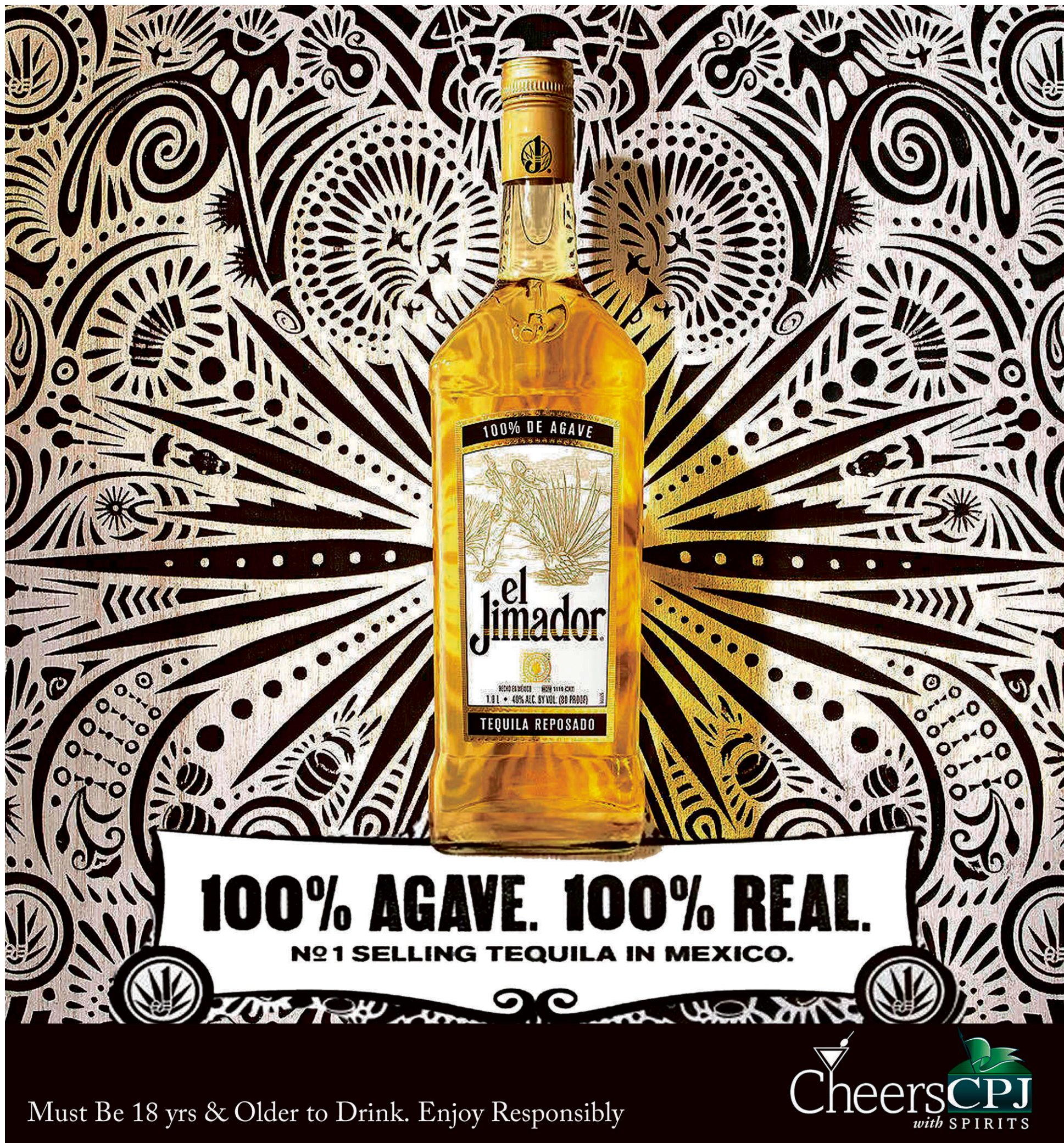
Camp which caters to more than 150 children each summer for the past 22 years; mentored and trained tennis sensations Dustin Brown and Winfried Weinbeer and hosted several Grand Slam tournaments.

Commenting on the appointment, Aram Zerunian, Tryall's managing director said, "Richard's wealth of local and international experience, professional track record and industry knowledge made him the obvious choice for the role of director of club operations. His appointment signals our commitment to finding innovative ways to meet the demands of our customers and stakeholders, even as we remain true to the exceptional legacy that the Tryall Club has built over

the years".

Ferdinand is elated about his promotion and reiterated his commitment to Tryall's development and will be embarking on a goal to further elevate the club's standing as a premier luxury destination in the Caribbean.

A member of the steering committee for the MoBay City Run, Junior Achievement, Jamaica, and University of the West Indies, Western Jamaica Campus, Ambassadorial Corps, Ferdinand is a former member of the International Tennis Hall of Fame Board and a Davis Cup coach for Trinidad and Tobago. Ferdinand studied hotel management at Cornell University and is currently pursuing his MBA at the University of the West Indies.



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Doctor's Cave honours staff at *Evening of Excellence*



Anthony Morris (left), director at Doctor's Cave Bathing Club, presents Rupert Arnold with a brand-new sofa chair for his contribution of 50 years of service.



Anthony Thomas (right), makes a presentation to Howard Daley.

DESIGNED TO honour and show respect, recognise and reward its most special team members, the world-famous Doctor's Cave Bathing Club awarded its workers at what was tagged an Evening of Excellence recently.

Held on the premises of the premier attraction in Montego Bay, the long-service award event was in sync with the Club's 110th anniversary celebrations.

"Almost 75 per cent of our staff have worked here for 10 or more years; three for more than 25 years, and two for more than 50 years. Recognition of their outstanding contribution was necessary," said Clive Lee, manager of the facility.

Lee commended the team for the sterling effort made over the



Ash-Lee Williams (left) and Lotoya Buckley.

years in helping to maintain the club's standards and reputation, imploring in the same breath, "We are now one of the premier attractions in Jamaica, but we must continue to build and improve this iconic attraction, a gem in the city of Montego Bay."

He also used the opportunity to pay respect to a number of stalwarts who had passed away in the last year, namely former manager, John McDonald; Chairman Emile Martin, and security guard, Lawrence Rowe.

Former Chalice band member, Wayne Armond, and Richard McDonald of Warm and Easy, provided the evening's entertainment.

Hospitality Jamaica brings you highlights of the milestone occasion.

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CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Five of six persons who receives the Long-Service and Excellence Award pose with their plaques. From left: Rupert Arnold, Sonia Haughton-Nelson, Brian Bent, Janet Birch, and Merlene Morris.



From left: Trudy Morris poses with Anthony Morris, director at Doctor's Cave Beach, and Christopher Issa, owner of the Spanish Court Hotel.



Clifton Percy-Jarrett and his wife, Kedisha Percy-Jarrett.



Lloyd B. Smith (left), Editor of the Western Mirror, presents an award to Gerald Hill, who has been with Doctor's Cave for 55 years.



Kennedy Lyn (left) and Nakita Johnson



Sonia Haughton-Nelson collects her 32" Samsung LED TV prize from Anthony Thomas.



Lloyd B. Smith presents Janet Birch with the Long Service and Excellence Award.

JTB stages first pop-up shop in NY

JAMAICA TOURIST BOARD

THE JAMAICA Tourist Board (JTB) launched its first interactive 'Feel the Vibe' pop-up shop in New York City at 393 Broadway in SoHo. Consul General of Jamaica Trudy Deans delivered the opening remarks at the media welcome event. The shop, a retail space created to build interest in Destination Jamaica, especially among pedestrian traffic, was opened from September 21-24 from 12 noon to 8 p.m., and transformed SoHo into an island oasis, complete with a sandy beach.

During her remarks, Deans spoke with great expectations of the exposure that Jamaica will gain from the 'Feel the Vibe' pop-up shop. The visuals and vibe of the shop were constantly causing passers-by to stop and experience true Jamaican hospitality.

Over four days, visitors to the pop up shop enjoyed exciting interactive Jamaican experiences as Grace Foods provided lunch-time cooking demonstrations; Golden Krust had patties on offer along with Grace Coconut Water and juices during the Jamaica Patty Hour each afternoon. In addition, each evening, visitors were treated to a fashion show by Jamaican designer D'Marsh Couture, while Irie Jam Radio DJs and LargeUp resident DJ, Dave Susser, filled the air with the sounds of Jamaican music.

So that visitors can experience



Golden Krust was one of the partners who offered culinary delights to the scores of visitors who attended the Jamaica Tourist Board's 'Feel the Vibe' pop-up shop in New York. Golden Krust also sponsored the daily Jamaica Patty hour.

“The 'Feel the Vibe' pop-up shop in New York City was a huge success as we were able to engage hundreds of customers at SoHo, one of New York's top shopping destinations.”

more of Jamaica after the promotion had ended, there were giveaways, including gift certificates to Miss Lily's, the celebrated Jamaican restaurant located in downtown Manhattan; tickets to Lee 'Scratch' Perry's upcoming concert at Output; Jamaica-themed gift baskets, and the grand prize of a trip for two to the luxurious Half Moon Hotel

in Montego Bay.

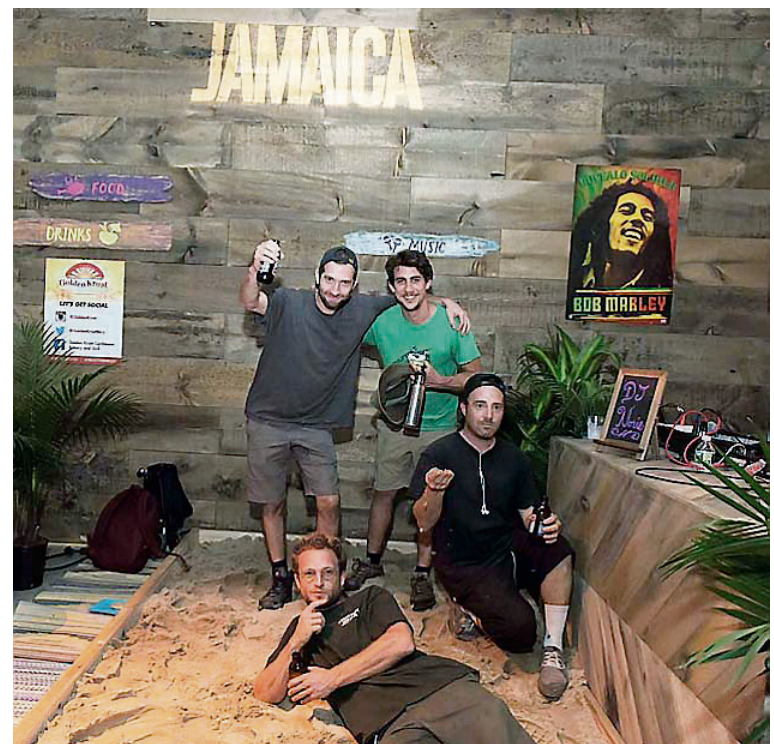
Retail travel and cruise company Liberty Travel was on hand and gave New Yorkers the advantage of benefiting from exclusive, specially priced packages to Jamaica during the pop-up shop promotion.

“We are always excited about promoting Destination Jamaica, because we truly believe in our



CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

A representative of D'Marsh Couture's fashion and lifestyle products engages customers at his booth at the Jamaica Tourist Board's 'Feel the Vibe' pop-up shop in New York. D'Marsh Couture's was a hit during the four-day event as patrons had the opportunity to buy their products at discounted rates.



Visitors enjoying the beach by the DJ booth at the Jamaica Tourist Board's 'Feel the Vibe' pop-up shop. The event was staged in SoHo, a trendy shopping destination that attracts high-end clients.

amazing tourism product,” said Marcia McLaughlin, deputy director of tourism, marketing at the JTB. “The 'Feel the Vibe' pop-up shop in New York City was a huge success as we were able to engage hundreds of customers at SoHo, one of New York's top shopping destinations. All the features of the offerings over the four days resonated with the

customers, from the food, to the music to the giveaway, as we whet their appetites on what is to come when they book Jamaica as their next vacation destination.”

For more information about Jamaica, or to plan your next vacation getaway, check out www.visitjamaica.com. Share on social using #FeeltheVibe Jamaica.

Falmouth to benefit from newly appointed tour guides

TEN NEWLY appointed tour guides participated in an awards ceremony last Tuesday after completing a two-week training in Team Jamaica and tour guiding skills.

The appointment of the tour guides in the Falmouth area is one of the initiatives to curb visitor harassment in the cruise shipping town.

Tagged the Falmouth Guide Services, the programme was created through the efforts of Dr Horace Chang, minister without portfolio, economic growth and job creation, who is also the chairman of the Falmouth redevelopment Committee, in partnership with the Tourism Product Development Company Ltd (TPDCo), which provided training for the graduates.

Expressing his commitment to redevelop Falmouth by way of improving cruise shipping, which has an impact on the tourism sector and will provide job opportunities for Jamaicans, Dr Chang told the graduates, “You have made Falmouth what it is, and it is only appropriate that you can participate in the economic activity that gives you a sense of involvement and the monetary benefits that come along with it”.

Also addressing the graduates, Dr Andrew Spencer, executive director of TPDCo, charged them to perform their duties with diligence as they contribute to the growth and development of the tourism sector.

“As tour guides, you have the responsibility to educate both the



CONTRIBUTED

Dr Horace Chang (back row, centre), minister without portfolio, economic growth and job creation, with the newly appointed Falmouth tour guides. Accompanying him (third left, back row), Joy Roberts, executive director, Jamaica Vacations; Dr Andrew Spencer (back row, fourth right), executive director, TPDCo; Councillor Colin Gager (second right), Mayor of Falmouth and Harold ‘Paul’ Muschette (right), Custos Rotulorum of Falmouth. The tour guides participated in an awards and closing ceremony after completing a two-week training course in Team Jamaica and Tour Guiding Skills courtesy of TPDCo. The initiative comes as part of efforts to curb visitor harassment in Falmouth.

visitors and locals about the importance of the industry. You have a responsibility to talk about the history, the heritage, culture, and what is unique and diverse about us as a people,” he said.

The Falmouth Guide Services programme is the first of many initiatives by Dr Chang to

redevelop Falmouth. Some of the other projects include improving the craft traders’ area, sensitisations and consultations with stakeholders, increase in public health inspections, and a security system attached to the municipal corporation to assist in the efforts to curb harassment.

The activities surrounding the

redevelopment of Falmouth are envisioned to benefit not only the capital town, but the entire country.

According to Dr Chang, tourism represents a key element of growth in the area, as Falmouth is known for its busy cruise port and unique Georgian style architecture,

features which he says he plans to utilise to attract more visitors.

The plans to redevelop Falmouth will include partnerships with agencies such as the Port Authority of Jamaica, the Municipal corporation of Falmouth, the Urban Development Commission and TPDCo.

Sandals South Coast to strengthen ties with Western TVET

SANDALS SOUTH Coast is in the process of strengthening its ties with the Western Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Institute while intensifying its search for the ideal candidates to fill key positions as the resort gets ready to expand.

The resort will add 12 new over-water bungalows by December 2017.

“Of all the candidates we’ve interviewed for these new positions, we were most pleased with the calibre of the candidates from the Western TVET cluster of institutions,” said Sandals South Coast General Manager Adrian Whitehead.

With more than 170 trainees seeking to graduate from the Western TVET cluster of institutions in the coming month and potentially seeking to join the job market, Principal Colin Hitchman sees this opportunity as a definite win all around.

“Developing the closest possible link between our training entities and the employers within the hospitality industry is critical to lifting the standards within the tourism industry,” said Hitchman.

He also noted that close ties with industry employers like Sandals Resorts will become increasingly useful in helping

training institutions to mitigate the constantly evolving demands of the industry and better prepare their students with the competencies required.

Among the positions to be filled at Sandals South Coast over-water bungalows are housekeeping supervisor, butlers, room and AC technicians, watersports attendants, room attendants, cooks, and gardeners.

Interviews and discussions with the Western TVET Institute are currently under way, from which short-listed candidates will be selected for a two-month training programme to be carried out by the resorts’

training and development department.

“During this two-month training, we will instruct our short-listed candidates on what it takes to execute their jobs at an international level and what it means to deliver the luxury-included service,” said Lennox Lawrence, training and development manager.

According to Whitehead, the clientele booking the resort’s over-water bungalows are not only affluent and well-travelled, but will demand the highest level of service. He therefore noted that it was critical that the resort selects the right team, one that can deliver on this service.



PHOTOS BY ASHLEY ANGUIN

Tannisha Miranda (left), National Key account manager, along with Red Stripe hostesses, presents an appreciation basket to Minister of Tourism Edmund Bartlett at JAPEX 2017.

JAPEX 2017 ends with A BANG

THE 27TH annual Jamaica Product Exchange (JAPEX) ended last Tuesday on a high note for the island's tourism stakeholders who had access to over 1,000 one-on-one meetings with their travel partners over three days.

The event, official opened by Prime Minister Andrew Holness last Sunday night at the Montego Bay Convention Centre, was sold out

well in advance, said Omar Robinson, president of the Jamaica Hotel and Tourist Association (JHTA), organisers of the trade show.

JAPEX provided the platform for the renegotiating of room and transportation rates, the writing of new contracts, and the development of existing relationships.

Speaking at the opening ceremony, Robinson said more than 105 tour



The Royalton team (from left): Jimena Soto, Andre Hudson and Kerry-Ann Casserly at JAPEX 2017.



Front desk supervisors at Altamont Court Kingston, Dacoda Allen (left) and Margaret Allen at their booth at JAPEX.



From left: Katrin Casserly of Schatzie meets with Finn Partners' Gail Moaney and deputy director of tourism, marketing, Marcia McLaughlin during JAPEX.



Deidre Brown (left), sales manager, Royal Decameron, gives information on her properties to a patron at JAPEX.



From left: Matthew Khoury, William Massias, Elena Deidrick and Kevin Bourke of Brawta.



VIP Attraction's Shelly-Ann Fung and Elite Media Concepts' Edward Bourke at the Club MoBay booth at JAPEX.

operators, 150 travel agents and a large contingent of members of the international media attended the function. According to him, the registration reflected the growth in emerging markets, such as Latin America.

"Eastern Europe was also represented and, of course, there were several representatives from our long-standing source markets, USA, Canada and the UK."

During the three days, three new resorts were unveiled as well in the tourism capital, Jewel Grande Montego Bay Resort and Spa, Zoetry, and Breathless, both under the AMResorts umbrella.

In addition to the three properties, Chukka Good Hope had the official opening ceremony for its new adventure park. Their latest investment is valued at US\$4 million.

Hospitality Jamaica brings you highlights of the trade show.

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Guests checking out the Rural Agricultural Development Authority booth.



Unique Vacations' Libby Thornton and Silvio Paez at the Sandals booth.



PHOTOS BY PAUL H. WILLIAMS

A section of the ruins of the foundation of Leonard Howell's mansion at Pinnacle in St Catherine.

A PINNACLE IS defined as the highest point. Nothing is above it ... period. And for romanticists like me, there is a place in St Catherine called Pinnacle, one of the spots that I love to visit. At the highest point, there is a 360-degree view of the lands below it.

Whenever I visit, I get the feeling that I am at the top of the world, a sense of priceless liberation. And that is the essence of Pinnacle, freedom, where Leonard P. Howell, the 'First Rasta', set up a Rastafari community in the 1940s, away from it all.

Howell was born in the parish of Clarendon on June 16, 1898. At an early age, he migrated to the United States, where he joined Marcus Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA). Soon, Howell became one of Garvey's top-brass members. Garvey and the UNIA were, however, constantly under the radar of US authorities, and he was eventually arrested and charged for mail fraud. Garvey was deported in 1928, and Howell was to follow him in 1932.

But Howell's activism switched from 'Garveyism' to one that focused on the importance of His Imperial Majesty Haile Selassie I. He saw Selassie as the great 'Black Messiah', and he established the King of Kings Mission out of respect for Selassie and appointed himself Selassie's representative in Jamaica.

In 1933, soon after his return to Jamaica,

AROUND JA WITH PAUL H. WILLIAMS

On the Pinnacle of liberation



A section of the mountainside that was cut away to build the North-South Highway in St Catherine.

Howell stepped up his preaching on Selassie, which, in addition to his faith-healing practices, earned him a huge following. Howell was preaching 'doctrines' that were considered by the authorities as anti-church and anti-government.

He was charged and sent to prison for sedition. But imprisonment did not shake the foundation of Howell's beliefs. Upon his release from prison in 1940, he set up the first Rastafarian village in Jamaica on 400 acres in Sligoville, St Catherine.

The settlement was called The Pinnacle because of its high hilltop elevation, and the residents became self-sufficient farmers. Howell's influence spread outside of The Pinnacle, and Rastafarian communities were set up across the country.

ARREST AND RETURN

In 1941, government forces swooped down on Pinnacle and arrested many of Howell's followers. Howell fled, but he was eventually arrested, and on August 20, he was tried again for sedition and sentenced to two years in prison. When he was released in 1943, he returned to Pinnacle.

For almost a decade after his return, Pinnacle flourished as the residents were left alone to carry on their lives. Trading and farming were their major sources of income. The population also boomed as people saw Pinnacle as a place where they could go to prosper on their



Remnants of a water tank at Pinnacle, St Catherine.

own. But the good life was not to last forever.

In 1954, government militia invaded Pinnacle and completely destroyed the village. The residents fled, but they were to subsequently return. Yet, Pinnacle never really got back to its heyday. People gradually moved away, and the original brick-and-stone buildings have fallen into ruins. There are still remnants of the bakery, the kitchen, the foundation of Howell's mansion, his bathroom, and a water tank.

Howell died in obscurity in 1981 at age 82, leaving the legacy of a movement that transcends races and classes, which has electrifying

tentacles all over the world, and which is the subject of many studies, research, and college and university papers.

The dispute over the ownership and occupation of Pinnacle flares up and ebbs from time to time, but it is clear that Pinnacle's glory days are gone, at least for now. Yet, the breathtaking views from there seem to be forever, especially on a clear day.

From the misty hills to the north, vistas of Portmore, Kingston, and St Andrew to the east and south, to the sun-drenched communities of St Catherine to the west, it's an eyeful. And when night comes, the lights are dazzling, if not dizzying.

Of late, there is another view, that of the mountainsides that were cut to accommodate the North-South Highway, for which I have mixed emotions. It gives me an understanding of where the highway runs, but the unsightly scars among the greenery make me want to fall from Pinnacle in utter disgust.



The tabernacle at Pinnacle.



A view of Portmore and the Kingston waterfront from Pinnacle in St Catherine.



A view of a section of the North-South Highway from Pinnacle in St Catherine.



A section of the remnants of Lenard Howell's kitchen at Pinnacle, St Catherine.

Voting Opens Now

Select the 'best of the best' in tourism

- Best Family Resort
- Best Street Food
- Best Destination Management Company
- Best All-inclusive Under 300 Rooms
- Best All-inclusive Over 300 Rooms • Best Small Hotel/Bed & Breakfast
- Best Eco-Sustainable Resort
- Best Business Hotel • Best European Plan Resort • Best Boutique Resort • Best in Cuisine • Best in Entertainment • Most Authentic Jamaican attraction • Best Purveyor
- Best Nightlife Experience



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