

Heritage tourism could transform Spanish Town | Oncology massage therapy for cancer patients at the Jewel Grande Spa

The Gleaner

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WEDNESDAY, MAY 16, 2018

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PORT ROYAL REDEVELOPMENT
PLANS NOW IN MOTION



Port Royal development in motion

Paulwell welcomes development but has some concerns

EFFORTS TO redevelop Port Royal, the place once known for its wealth, loose living and infamous ‘wickedest city on earth’ status, are now fully in train.

Port Royal enjoyed all those tags, whether real or perceived, for less than 40 years, from 1655, when the English conquered the Spanish and established a naval base at the site that was some 55 acres at the end of the Palisadoes strip until 1692, when two-thirds of its land mass was plunged below the Caribbean Sea during the devastating Great Earthquake.

The hope is that the development will restore some of the lustre, if not some of the wealth that came to characterise the city that was also the home of buccaneers, privateers, as well as the rich and famous and who’s who of English society at the time.

Its drawing card will be its rich and diverse history, especially the period from 1655 to 1692.

LONG OVERDUE

After decades of talk, and with the country’s tourism product experiencing a boon – with an urgent need to diversify the offerings – industry watchers argue that the Port Royal development is timely; in fact, for some it’s long overdue. And it is receiving bipartisan support at the political level.

“I welcome the project because it provides tremendous economic



One of the many heritage sites in Port Royal.

opportunities,” said Phillip Paulwell, the member of parliament for East Kingston and Port Royal.

He noted that such opportunities were not only for the people of Port Royal. “The wider aim is to enable Port Royal to receive visitors but those visitors, in addition to spending time in Port Royal, will also be visiting other places close by, such

as Spanish Town, Trench Town, the Bob Marley Museum, Devon House and so on. So it’s really an opportunity for Kingston and its wider environs going as far as Spanish Town,” Paulwell told **Hospitality Jamaica**.

“So it is good. It is going to also enable the Norman Manley International Airport to be far more

profitable, because it could be the home port for those visitors who will be embarking on cruise ships, as that could be a starting point for cruise ships, so it is very positive.”

Despite the optimism, there are some concerns about a project of the proposed size and scale which could pose significant challenges in an area with a fragile ecosystem.

“I met recently with the Port Authority of Jamaica and I did express to them my own reservations which mainly concern the people of Port Royal,” Paulwell revealed. He said there are some prior things that need to happen (before the major development)

“because the infrastructure in Port Royal is really crumbling”.

He explained that there is a critical need for new housing, as the housing stock is not where it should be. He further explained that 50 persons had signed sales agreements for lots in Port Royal, but there have been some problems in finalising the sale with the National Environment and Planning Agency and the disaster management agency. Paulwell said that this needs to be cleared up so housing situation can be improved. And he said there needs to be proper sewage treatment facilities.

“So there has to be some



A historical fortress at Port Royal.



infrastructure groundwork done in tandem with the development so that the people in Port Royal would be able to welcome visitors, being themselves in a more comfortable position,” the member of parliament said. He also revealed that there is a high level of squatting in Port Royal.

Paulwell is also cognisant that a development on the scale that is proposed could cause damage to the natural environment. However, he noted that steps are being taken to ensure that the cruise ship pier to be installed is of a type that will ensure that there will be no damage to the natural environment.

Said Paulwell: “I have been assured that the sunken city will be fully preserved and will not be affected by the establishment of the pier. The pier represents modern technology for anchoring and receiving vessels. It won’t disturb the immediate area where it is going to be located, so I am satisfied about that, but we just have to be conscious and sensitive at all times because we are dealing with a very sensitive ecosystem out there.”

He also pointed to improved garbage collection and an upgraded drainage system as being major priorities ahead of the development.



This January 2013 photo shows Russian tourists on a visit to Port Royal.

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Heritage Tourism could transform Spanish Town – Grangé

WITH THE redevelopment of Port Royal officially under way with the construction of the cruise ship pier now taking place, talk of positioning Spanish Town as a heritage tourism site is back on the agenda.

Like Prime Minister Andrew Holness, Member of Parliament for East Kingston and Port Royal, Phillip Paulwell sees the wider Kingston, and as far away as Spanish Town, benefitting from the cruise passengers who will disembark at Port Royal.

For her part, Member of Parliament for St Catherine Central Olivia Grange, in whose constituency Spanish Town falls, says heritage tourism for the old capital is still being looked at in a serious way. She acknowledged that it could transform the town.

“Heritage tourism would give a much-needed boost to the economy of Spanish Town, providing employment opportunities in construction, as several buildings will have to be restored. In addition, there will be opportunities for tour guides, craft and souvenir development, as well as the establishment of restaurants,” Grange told **Hospitality Jamaica**.

She noted that the youth leaving the five high schools located within the town could capitalise on these opportunities.

The minister of culture, gender, entertainment and sport is more optimistic about heritage tourism getting off the ground now, than at any other time during her 20 years as a member of parliament for the area. She acknowledged that previous efforts would have been thwarted by “a relatively high level of crime and violence that has existed in Spanish Town for several years and which has negatively affected public perception of the town and prospects for heritage tourism development”.

However, there could be a silver lining as the state of public emergency that has been imposed in the St Catherine North police division since March 18 has led to a big decline in all major crimes, including murders.

“It is hoped that the sustained peace now being enjoyed in the area



NORMAN GRINDLEY/CHIEF PHOTO EDITOR

The Old Iron Bridge, in Spanish Town, St Catherine, was erected in 1801 at a cost of £4,000 and is the oldest bridge of its kind in the Western Hemisphere.

will galvanize all stakeholders to implement some of the plans for redevelopment and heritage tourism that were prepared several years ago. The plans are there, so the human and financial resources should now be put in place to implement those plans,” said Grange.

And she insists that she is just as passionate about heritage tourism today as she was 15 years ago. “Indeed, it is our responsibility to ensure that the historic structures in Spanish Town are protected for existing and future generations,” she emphasised.

Spanish Town was the Spanish and British capital of Jamaica from 1534 to 1872, and Grange said heritage tourism has long been planned for the town, given the significant number of historic structures that still remain. These include Old King’s House in Emancipation Square, from which the proclamation of the abolition of slavery was read in 1838; the Old House of Assembly; Rodney’s Memorial; the Cathedral of



The Old King’s House is situated in Emancipation Square in Spanish Town. After being burnt out, it was turned into a museum. In the colonial days, this was the governor’s residence until Kingston was renamed the capital of Jamaica in 1872.

St James (Anglican); the Old Barracks Building; Phillippo Baptist Church; and the Old Iron Bridge, which is one of only two Walker bridges that exist anywhere in the World.

The buildings presently located

in Emancipation Square were built by the British, not the Spanish. They include:

OLD KING’S HOUSE

The Old Spanish Hall of Audience was demolished in 1761

to make room for the official residence of the Governor, hence the name King’s House, in 1762. The structure was destroyed by fire in 1925 leaving only the main eastern facade and the stables.

OLD HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

This building was constructed in 1762. When the capital of the island was transferred to Kingston in 1872, the building was used for several purposes. It now houses the offices of the St Catherine Municipal Corporation.

RODNEY’S MEMORIAL

A tavern dating from the time of the Spanish occupation was demolished to make way for this edifice which was created in honour of the British Admiral, Lord Rodney.

Grange told **Hospitality Jamaica** that the Government continues to allocate resources to ensure that the structures are preserved. She said a crime-free Spanish Town will no doubt result in increased resource allocation.

Ja's first oncology spa facility opened at Jewel Grande

Spa will provide pre and post-care therapy for cancer patients

THE GRANDE Spa at the new Jewel Grande Montego Bay is the first Christine Clinton Cancer Care-certified centre in Jamaica.

The facility has a total of four specialists, who were recently trained by the ITEC (International Qualifications Institute) spa trainer, who conducted a series of workshops, culminating with the graduation of eight certified massage specialists from Grande Spa; Radiant Spa, Hilton Rose Hall; and The Jamaica Pegasus in Kingston.

Clinton worked in collaboration with Caribbean WE (Wellness), offering complete training and certification of the therapists in oncology massage therapy.

Expressing pride and joy at the accomplishment, Grande Spa director Sienna Creasy said the designation allows unprecedented opportunities that can result in the spa's ability to offer services of this nature to guests both on and off the property.

"Grande Spa will be the first massage care facility on the island to offer this specialised therapy, with certified products that will provide pre- and post-care for persons diagnosed with cancer and in survivorship," Creasy said, adding that this was merely the beginning of the innovative offerings that will be coming on stream as part of the spa's focus on wellness.

The treatments are available at both Grande Spa at Jewel Grande and its sister property, the Radiant Spa at Hilton Rose Hall Resort & Spa.

An oncology massage is a client-specific, customised massage session designed to meet the unique and changing needs of someone in treatment for cancer or with a history of cancer treatment. A safe massage plan generally revolves around the side effects (both short and long term) of chemotherapy, radiation and surgery.

Oncology massage can only be provided by a massage



Christine Clinton (front, centre) poses with the Jewel Grande Spa team who recently graduated with their certification from her institution.

therapist who has received training in the specifics of cancer and cancer treatment. This training is more about cancer and less about massage. "When you are receiving an oncology massage, you are receiving traditional, established massage therapy techniques that have been adapted to account for the unique health situation," explained Creasy.

The changes that might be made to a massage that make

it an 'oncology massage' can fall under any number of categories, but typically they will be related to session length, pressure, positioning and areas of specific compromise or concern, like mediports, bone metastases or skin reactions to treatment.

Patients and their caregivers report many and varied changes after massage. A therapist trained in oncology massage can provide a variety of positive effects – from

relaxation to scar tissue mobilisation to pain reduction – but the anecdotal evidence suggests that there are many benefits beyond even these that are enjoyed by people at all stages of the cancer journey.

GENERAL BENEFITS PRIOR TO SURGERY

- Deep relaxation.
- Reduced stress.
- Improved sleep.
- Eased constipation.
- Increased alertness and mental clarity.
- Reduced anxiety.
- Less nausea.
- Reduced pain.

FOLLOWING SURGERY

- Reduced anxiety.
- Easier recovery from anesthesia.
- Reduced post-surgical pain
- Improved mobility and appearance of surgical scars.
- Reduced swelling.
- Improved range of motion.
- Easier adaptation to implants and expanders.

FOLLOWING RADIATION OR CHEMOTHERAPY

- Reduced anxiety in advance of and during treatment.
- Reduced post-treatment fatigue.
- Improved appetite.
- Improved peripheral neuropathy.

EMOTIONAL BENEFITS

- Decreased anxiety.
- Decreased depression.
- Increased feelings of well-being.
- Being pleasantly distracted.
- Improved body self-image.
- Restored hope.
- Satisfaction in participating actively in a part of the healing process.

To book massage treatments or for more information, contact the Grande Spa at Jewel Grande Montego Bay www.jewelgrande.com/grande-spa or for more information on the Christine Clinton certification, visit www.christineclintoncancercare.com.

Expedia Group partners with Meliá Hotels International

Partnership to power package bookings in the US

EXPEDIA GROUP and Meliá Hotels International have announced a strategic technology relationship which will enable the global hotel chain to offer package bookings directly on www.melia.com.

Package bookings drive incremental demand for hotel partners as package bookings typically have one and a half times the length of stay than a standalone hotel booking and half the cancellation rate.

Meliá Hotels International was founded in 1956 in Palma de Mallorca, Spain, and is one of the world's largest resort hotel chains, as well as Spain's leading hotel chain. It currently provides more than 380 hotels in 43 countries on four continents under its seven brands: Gran Meliá Hotels & Resorts, Paradisus Resorts, ME by Meliá, Meliá Hotels & Resorts, Inside by Meliá, Sol by Meliá and TRYP by Wyndham, as well as Circle by Meliá, its unique and innovative vacation club concept.

By using Expedia Group's best-in-class technology, the company's new package booking option will enable its consumers booking on Meliá's US points-of-sale to combine their stay at a Meliá hotel with a flight booking from one of more than 550 Expedia Group airline partners, driving incremental demand and revenue for the hotel group.

This strategic technology relationship follows other international hotel chain's announcements, such as Marriott International, Inc's 'Vacations by Marriott' site, powered by Expedia Group technology.

ENHANCE THE JOURNEY

"By using Expedia Group's technology, we will be able to enhance our customers' journey and at the same time, we can now attract longer length of stays which are booked further in advance and with lower cancellation rates," said José Mar'a Dalmau, Senior vice-president of global business development at Meliá Hotels International. "Besides being a big win for us, this means a significant improvement in our customers' experience, as they can book everything to make their stay possible in just a few clicks on our site."

"The collaboration with Meliá Hotels International shows the importance and commitment of our heavy investment in technology innovation, and how this is paying off for our hotel partners. Agreements such as this one shows what extent hotel chains are looking to work with us on these ground-breaking initiatives which deliver value beyond distribution", said Luis Hurtado de Mendoza, senior director, key accounts EMEA-LATAM, Expedia Group.

The package path is now live on Meliá's point-of-sale.

THE BUSINESS OF TOURISM

Transiting security without losing your laptop

David Jessop

Hospitality Jamaica Writer

IF YOU are reading this, the probability is that you, like me, travel frequently and suffer the passing indignities and delays caused by airport security. Put in place principally to protect us against those who mean us harm, it involves a process, whether in North America, the Caribbean, Europe, or elsewhere that at times seems to defy logic.

At every regional international departure point in Cuba on arrival as well – various agencies responsible for national security are required to screen passengers in several ways. However, as every frequent flyer will have observed, when it comes to checking what you intend carrying on, the procedures lack consistency, involve electronic equipment of variable quality, and would appear to be controlled by staff trained to different standards.

Mostly, the agents responsible for processing you are polite and efficient, but sometimes one has to wonder about the questions asked or

searches, undertaken. Despite this we have all come to accept the inconvenience.

Recently, however, other concerns have arisen. They relate to the growing incidence of theft of high-value electronic items such as laptops and mobile phones as they precede travellers through airport electronic security scanners.

Earlier this month, a complaint by a passenger travelling through London's City Airport went viral. She had just had her laptop taken while waiting in a queue to pass through a scanner, but then, on discovering the theft, found that the airport's security staff would not act to find the culprit in a terminal small enough to easily identify whoever had taken it.

HELD TO RANSOM

The passenger, Fernanda Ardiles, a student, was on her way back to a university in Netherlands. She discovered that although the thief could be seen on CCTV taking her US\$1,250 MacBook, the airport was not prepared to pursue him immediately or even alert the



David Jessop

police. Worse was to follow. She was held to ransom by the thief for the return of her laptop, which contained her dissertation. Then the airport denied her access to the footage able to identify the criminal to the police because of what it described as data-protection rules. She would, they said, have to first make a complaint to the police before it would comply with any such CCTV request.

Her case will resonate with anyone who regularly has to place his

laptop in an open tray at airport security and then loses sight of it and his other possessions.

What Ardiles' case brought to light is the growing incidence of hand-held electronic equipment, car keys, and other valuables such as watches or jewellery, being taken by criminals or by other travellers before their rightful owner can catch up with their valuables. It also highlighted the absence of any standard protocols for dealing with such incidents.

Ardiles says that she was shocked that London City Airport did not appear to have a procedure for dealing with such thefts, something the airport, which is typically used by business travellers, has now said it will address.

Although airports claim that such events are rare, one only has to look online to find a significant number of reports relating to large busy airports such as Miami and New York's JFK, which indicate, anecdotally, a growing incidence of theft when passengers undergo

security screening.

Every sensible traveller accepts that the security arrangements at airports and sea ports overseen by every nation's civil aviation authorities and security agencies are a legal requirement and common sense. However, Ardiles' experience suggests that more needs to be done by airports to avoid the theft of high-value personal items at security.

Three responses are required. The first is that every airport should develop and implement a clear publicly available protocol that ensures that staff respond quickly to any theft, with police support using CCTV footage. The second is that consideration should be given to finding a simple solution as to how to address the problem of the theft from trays containing laptops, which airport authorities require being screened separately. And the third is that passengers need to think before they reach screening checkpoints so that as much of what they have that is valuable is tucked away in their carry-on bags.

Make people part of the process – *Stephens*

Chairman of Port Royal Redevelopment Company invites locals to develop town

LONG-STANDING CHAIRMAN of the Port Royal Redevelopment Company Robert Stephens, who has championed the development of the area for more than 25 years, has said that the people who now live in Port Royal must be part of the process to redevelop the town.

Like the member of Parliament, Phillip Paulwell, he, too, believes that there is enough money and expertise in Jamaica to get the job done by locals.

"I do welcome the fact that the development is going ahead," Stephens told **Hospitality Jamaica**. "Hopefully, they (Government) are going to get into the details

shortly," he added.

Stephens cautioned that as a country, Jamaica needs to ensure that this is not another development like Port Antonio, where there is a vastly underutilised marina, or Falmouth, where the most modern cruise ship pier in the country is also significantly underutilised.

Stephens said that the plans must include the community "so if the cruise ship pier has been ordered already, the people must be trained on how it will operate now and not after you have installed it."

He said that he would love to participate in the development but

appears uncertain as to how much he may or may not be involved. "It all depends on how the whole thing goes," he said.

Despite lingering uncertainties, what is certain for Stephens is that "this is Jamaica's heritage. It is our core history. We must interpret it correctly. It must not be handed over to a foreign entity to do so". In the meantime, Prime Minister Andrew Holness revealed during his contribution to the Budget debate in March that the long-talked-about development was well under way.

He described Port Royal as one of the most fascinating locations in the entire Caribbean "with well

over 500 years of incredible history full of the most interesting characters to ever live".

Holness noted that the sunken city that has sat below the waters for over 300 years following the devastating earthquake of 1692 is "an asset to Jamaica" that has sat "silently waiting".

The prime minister said that the Port Authority of Jamaica has identified modern technology that would allow berthing of cruise ships "while being highly respectful of the fragile and extremely important environment in Port Royal with specific reference to the sunken city".



Robert Stephens

He said that the technology to be used has already received the support of the National Environment and Planning Agency and the Jamaica National Heritage Trust. He gave the assurance that the residents would be included in the development.



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"Together, we made it happen." These two participants representing RIU were extremely happy about the race.



PHOTOS BY ASHLEY ANGUIN

The tourism industry came out in large numbers, and Hilton Rose Hall Resort and Spa, was among the thousands.



Second-place corporate group Courts' Glendon Lowe (left) and Danito Yates accept a plaque from University of the West Indies, Western Jamaica Campus, Student Services and Development Manager, Dian Bailey.

TOURISM WORKERS' RUN FOR EDUCATION

THE STREETS of the tourism capital, Montego Bay, came alive two Sundays ago with the 5th staging of the MoBay City Run. The event raises funds annually to provide scholarships for tertiary students struggling to remain in university. Close to 4,000 participants registered for the race, which attracted a large contingent of tourism workers. Again, the corporate plaque was won by RIU Resorts, which had 699 participants, from their properties in Montego Bay, Ocho Rios, and Negril. The Hyatt Ziva and Zilira hotel was recognised for being the first company to register. Hospitality Jamaica brings highlights of the day's event.



The Billy Craig Insurance Brokers team was out in their numbers at the 5th staging of MoBay City Run.



The Royalton team lit up the area in their gold race day shirts.



The Jetblue mist was one of the most popular aspects of MoBay City Run. Participants had fun walking or running through.



Repping Courts! These runners made up the 250 participants representing Courts.



The Grand Palladium runners and walkers were well represented at MoBay City Run.



The Iberostar team shares lens time at MoBay City Run.



Jamaica was warmly received by faith-based planners attending the World Conference of Religious Conference Management Association (RCMA) Emerge event in Omaha, Nebraska, earlier this year. The expo provided a great opportunity for Jamaica to promote the destination to planners who are actively seeking venues and destinations to host their events. John Woolcock, the Jamaica Tourist Board's (JTB) groups and conventions manager (right), and Mavoy Smith, director of sales for the Montego Bay Convention Centre (second left), met with planners Rachel Martin (left), Jessica Fitzhugh (centre), and Carol Elliott (second from right) to discuss potential business opportunities for Jamaica. Approximately 200-250 delegates attended. They interacted with members of the JTB team and collected information on Destination Jamaica. Interest remains strong for the destination as religious planners are taking a closer look at Jamaica for their faith-based groups.

Ja records increase in stopover arrivals from Latin America

JAMAICA'S TOURIST industry is reporting a strong first quarter for stopover arrivals from Latin America. Between January and March of this year, the destination welcomed over 9,000 stopover visitors from Latin America, an increase of 15 per cent over the same period last year.

This growth is as a result of the island positioning itself as the ideal destination for Latin American travellers. Specifically, the Jamaica Tourist Board has been working to increase arrival numbers through in-market sales, marketing, and public relations activities.

The destination's performance in Latin America during the first three months of the year comes as a result of increased arrivals from a few key markets. Argentina was the strongest-growing South American

JAMAICA
TOURIST BOARD

market, with a 25.4 per cent increase in arrivals, while Brazil recorded a 46 per cent increase. Panama from the Central American region grew by 5.6 per cent.

"Latin America remains a major focus for Jamaica, and we're pleased with the results for the first quarter of 2018," said Donovan White, director of tourism. "We are optimistic about what's to come as our team on the ground has been engaging consumers and members of the trade, and we continue to secure increased airlift to further help us grow in this market."

One initiative that is helping Jamaica to gain traction in the Latin American market is the PGA Tour LatinoAmérica, BMW Jamaica Classic. In 2017, the JTB entered into a three-year partnership with the event organisers, SportsMax and BMW, to host the event at the Cinnamon Hill Golf Course. With the second staging just ended, cumulatively, some 288 Pro-Am players from over 20 countries participated. This resulted in extensive media exposure for destination Jamaica on major sports networks to include FOX Sports and EstoEs PGA Tour LatinoAmérica, with over 100 million viewers.

These and other initiatives are instrumental in amplifying the JTB's overall growth strategy for the Latin American region.



A strong delegation was on hand recently at the World Conference of Religious Conference Management Association event in Omaha, Nebraska. Held at the Century Link Convention Center. The Jamaican contingent was led by John Woolcock (right, front row), Jamaica Tourist Board's (JTB) Groups and Conventions Manager, and Margaret Clarke Wheatley (front row, left), JTB's Business Development Officer. Completing the delegation were (back row, from left) Tomeika Flemmings, Holiday Inn; Mavoy Smith, Montego Bay Convention Centre; and Jenicha Barnes, Hilton Rose Hall.



Team members of Sandals Inn, Sandals Montego Bay and Sandals Royal Caribbean don linen-wear from Kokobeenz in a mini-fashion show at the recently held Women Empowerment forum.

Empowerment forum inspires women to 'GO FOR IT'

ST ANN South East MP Lisa Hanna was the guest of honour at the recent Women Empowerment forum hosted by Sandals Resorts in Montego Bay. Hanna spoke on the theme 'Go For It', sharing stories from her personal and professional journey with scores of female team members from Sandals Montego Bay, Sandals Inn and Sandals Royal Caribbean.

Hanna charged the women in tourism to put their emotional and mental health first as they pursue professional goals. Also in attendance were female high-school students, women from corporate Jamaica, representatives of women groups, including the Mount Salem-based Women Of Destiny, 2018 St James Festival Queen contestants, and women from the Flankers and Mount Salem communities in Montego Bay. Here are the highlights:



"Go For It!" Sandals Montego Bay's hotel manager, Dawn Smith (front, second right), leads the ladies of the women empowerment forum as they pledged to fervently pursue their professional and personal goals.



Member of Parliament Lisa Hanna (centre) encourages women from a pregnancy resource centre in Montego Bay to continue pursuing their dreams despite the challenges and setbacks they may encounter.



Ladies of the three Sandals resorts in Montego Bay share a group photo with Lisa Hanna (standing, fifth from right), moments after the South East St Ann MP delivered an inspiring and emotional session with close to 200 women of the Second City.



That's right! students of Mount Alvernia High School give a standing ovation as they listen to the personal story of one female attendee.



From left: Artist Ras Natango of Camrose in St James, his wife Tamika, employee Marcia Eulette, and son Ayale displaying their work at the launch of the Jamaica Tourist Board's 'Join Me in Jamaica' digital marketing campaign on Saturday, May 12, at Strawberry Hill in St Andrew. Ras Natango is one of the personalities featured in the campaign.



From left: Dancehall artiste Konshens, Ariel McFarlane of Solid Agency, and Director of Tourism Donovan White at the launch of JTB's 'Join Me in Jamaica' digital marketing campaign on Saturday, May 12, at Strawberry Hill in St Andrew. Konshens is one of the personalities featured in the initiative.

Jamaica Tourist Board launches 'JOIN ME IN JAMAICA'

Paul H. Williams
Hospitality Jamaica Writer

THERE WAS much food and beverage, Jamaican music, many well-known local personalities, and a big announcement from the top of Strawberry Hill on Saturday, May 12, as the Jamaica Tourist Board (JTB) launched its 'Join Me in Jamaica' digital marketing campaign.

"The campaign is a series of 90-second videos featuring local Jamaican celebrities and friends of Jamaica sharing unique stories about the love for their profession and their homeland, and what makes it a great place to visit," the JTB said.

The personalities who will be used to promote Jamaica's tourism and hospitality are Tessanne Chin, singer/songwriter; Chef Martin Maginley of Round Hill Resort and Villas;

Konshens, recording artiste; Edgar 'Puddin Man' Wallace; the Rousseau sisters, restaurateurs, caterers, and authors; Ras Natango, artist; Alton Bedward, coffee expert, Craighton Coffee Estate; and Bruce Croxon, entrepreneur and philanthropist.

"As part of the JTB's effort to capitalise on the power of social media, the video series is being used as a means of attracting and engaging potential visitors and to further grow its social media following," the JTB said. "Each video was created using the unscripted responses from each celebrity as narrative and accompanied by the spectacular visuals related to their natural surroundings."

At the launch on Saturday, Donovan White, director of tourism, said the videos are an "influencer campaign," part of a testimonial which provides

"content-rich communication to the world about what makes Jamaica special". The stories are told by "hardcore, well-enabled, well-entrenched Jamaicans" who have served the country in many ways.

The videos were produced by Jimmy Chaffin of Finn Partners and are being promoted via the JTB's social media channels, including Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube, as well as through a digital advertising campaign "aimed at reaching consumers where they look for inspiration while making travel decisions".

Chaffin, who also addressed the gathering, said the Join Me in Jamaica campaign is a "great call to action" as "it enables the people



From left: Dancehall artiste Jeffrey 'Agent Sasco' Campbell, and his wife Nicole, son Joshua, daughter Lauren and relative Leah Heron were popular with the cameras at the launch of the 'Join Me in Jamaica' digital marketing campaign, on Saturday, May 12, at Strawberry Hill in St Andrew.



From left: The chefs, Romeo Ferguson, Charles Sherwood, Craig Bancey and Bavion Taylor, were kept busy feeding the gathering at the launch of the Jamaica Tourist Board's 'Join Me in Jamaica' digital marketing campaign, on Saturday, May 12, at Strawberry Hill in St Andrew.



Kamila McDonald (left), author of 'Wake Up and Live', and Angiel Shaw, brand consultant and media manager.



Jimmy Chaffin of Finn Partners, and creative director and executive producer of the promotional videos of the Join Me in Jamaica digital marketing campaign, his wife Charlotte (left), and chairman of the Gastronomy Tourism Network, Nicole Madden Greig, look on as one of the videos is being screen on Saturday, May 12, at Strawberry Hill in St Andrew.

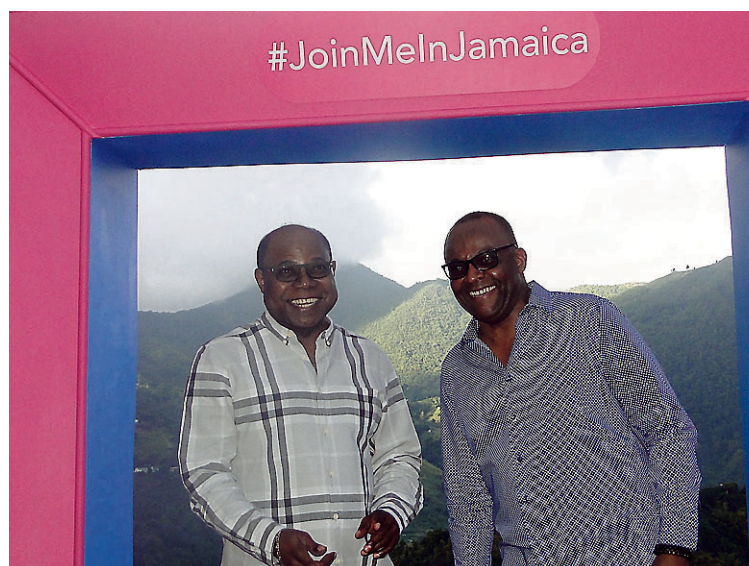
we talk with to say why join me in Jamaica. His experience in producing the videos, he said was "overwhelmed by peace, culture, food, real people, and love. I learned for the first time what 'one love' really was," he said.

White also told the gathering that "the Jamaica Tourist Board has begun a journey of process change and re-engineering its method and how we market the destination, because we have to begin to meet the demands of a global tourism industry that is far and wide and deep."

He said the change has to come because we have to compete. "In this area of continued growth, we have to begin to make changes at

the Tourist Board, to embrace these global paradigm shifts that are happening, and to become more technology enabled to deliver our goals of achieving five million visitors, US\$5 billion US dollars in five years," White said.

To this end, the Jamaica Tourist Board will in a few weeks launch a fully integrated website, an online travel portal "that will change forever the way we communicate, position and sell the destination of Jamaica," White announced. "This new data-rich, social media-driven integrated digital platform will evolve on a single axis, which means everything in it is vertically integrated to it," he said.



The men behind the Jamaica Tourist Board's marketing revolution, Tourism Minister Edmund Bartlett (left) and Director of Tourism Donovan White, at the launch of JTB's 'Join Me in Jamaica' digital marketing campaign on Saturday, May 12.

While making it fundamentally clear that the JTB will be abandoning traditional advertisements, White said, "The return on this investment to build this new technology platform is a move to embrace and re-culture the destination to smart tourism, and it will provide the ability to market the destination and manage the distribution of our content pervasively. What it means is that in this new space, we can reach more people in places that we could never think of

reaching them before."

Tourism Minister Edmund Bartlett, in his presentation, said Saturday evening was the start of the "new architecture of tourism marketing in Jamaica" and that the website, powered by Google, is a "predictive marketing approach, knowing outcomes before they happen", he explained, will enable us to connect to every market.

"We will be able, through big data, to be more precise, more targeted in terms of our marketing,



Romario Blackwood of JA Incredibles talks about his work in promoting Jamaican tourism products online, while Essie Gardner of the Jamaica Tourist Board looks on.

we will now market where we should market," Bartlett said.

Alligator Pond is a popular fishing village in south Manchester.



AROUND JA WITH PAUL H. WILLIAMS

ALLIGATOR POND REVISITED



An interesting rock at Alligator Pond in south Manchester.

ON WEDNESDAY, May 2, in this column, under the headline 'God's Well, artefacts and Tainos', I wrote, among other things, "At Alligator Pond, I was again fascinated by the black and greyish, sparkling sands and the big scavenger birds that swooped down to gobble up fish entrails tossed into the sea. Yet, the overall sight of the fishing village was most unflattering, so we pressed on."

Physically, I pressed on, indeed. But how could I mentally move away from somewhere that could be a tourist hotspot? There is so much to see, and I thought long and hard about the opportunities that that region – from Clarendon's Milk River Bath, through the Canoe Valley, to Manchester's Alligator Pond – could present for the residents.

The valley, which I travelled through recently, has some features worthy of visits, places such as God's Well, Guts River, Alligator Hole, and Round Hill, which is not in the valley itself, but can be seen from the valley in all its majesty. It is a geological feature that is the subject of much research.

The village itself has the longest sand dune in the Caribbean. It is its most fascinating feature on which people dwell. There is sand everywhere, blown from the dune. I get the feeling that the residents really have no idea how much of a tourist attraction the dune could be. It is their home, all right, yet it could be a place where people go to marvel at this massive mound of glittering, black and



Birds scavenging for discarded fish parts on the beach at Alligator Pond in south Manchester.

grey sands.

But before visitors are welcome, the residents need to embark on a major clean-up drive. They have deposited their solid waste all over the dune, covering its beauty with all sorts of discarded miscellaneous items. It really is disturbing to see the nonchalant attitude demonstrated towards preserving this gem that sparkles, literally under the

Caribbean Sun.

The beach stretches all the way to the border between Manchester and St Elizabeth. On a dry day, the wind sweeps the sand replete with mineral particles. Not much bathing goes on in the sea, where most of the fishers' activities take place for obvious reasons. Fish entrails are tossed into the water, which has an unpleasant scent. Bathing is



An unflattering sight near the beach at Alligator Pond in south Manchester.



One of the beautiful sights at Alligator Pond fishing village in Manchester.



A section of the sand dune at Alligator Pond in south Manchester.

done at a spot near the border where a river joins the sea.

If it were not for the beautiful scavenger birds, things would have

been worse. And apart from cleaning up the mess, these birds are fascinating to look at. Whether they are way up in the air soaring,

their dark silhouettes against a blue sky, or swooping down to dine, they are ever so graceful.

Built on the sands are a few seafood eateries. Collapsed concrete structures say much about people who built their houses upon the sand. Plastic and paper are everywhere. Nobody really cares, it seems. The spot where fish and other miscellaneous items are sold looks like a little shanty town. It is really unattractive and deserving of some intervention.

However, it should not be about building more concrete structures, but about developing a plan to establish an eco-friendly layout that give the place a certain rustic appeal, a fishing village where the beach is not just a place where eye-



People live on the sand deposits at Alligator Pond in south Manchester.



Round Hill is one of the sights to behold in the south coast's Canoe Valley.

catching birds devour unwanted fish parts.

Alligator Pond fishing beach has the potential to be a place that people could call idyllic and picturesque, a magnet for those

who embrace all that is rustic. It is laidback for sure, but something has scaled away its oomph, gutted its idyll, cooked its civic pride, eaten its charm, and digested the sparkles of its black sands.



Breadfruit, gnocchi shrimp, clams, and snapper in coconut rundown.



Marinated scallops with tuna ceviche, guacamole, and chilled tomato consommé.



Smoked pumpkin soup, with squash and apple. On the side-jerked pumpkin seed.

PHOTOS BY JANET SILVERA

Pounder gets sweet Jamaican welcome at Sugar Mill Restaurant

TOURISM STAKEHOLDERS joined Director of Tourism Donovan White two weeks ago, officially welcoming American actress CCH Pounder to the island.

Renowned for her role in the *Avatar* series of movies and the popular *NCIS New Orleans*, Pounder, who was born in Guyana, was fêted at a dinner at the award-winning Sugar Mill Restaurant.

Including in this intimate group were the Jamaica Hotel and Tourist Association president, Omar Robinson, directors of the Jamaica Tourist Board, and hoteliers.

Hospitality Jamaica gives an insight into those who turned out for the occasion.



PHOTO BY JANET SILVERA

Half Moon's Sugar Mill restaurant's executive chef, Mark Golding, created culinary waves with his fried chicken breast filled with rice and peas, jerk ackee and beetroot sauce on the side, during a dinner hosted by Director of Tourism Donovan White for actress CC Pounder last Thursday night.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

Veteran movie and TV actor CCH Pounder (left) is delighted with the John Powell creative art presented to her as a gift by Jamaica's Director of Tourism Donovan White. Pounder, who arrived in Montego Bay on Thursday, is seeing some of Jamaica's interesting sites during her trip.



Left: Sandals Resorts International's Wayne Cummings (left) and CCH Pounder's assistant, Frank Roman.



Right: CC Pounder (right) and Odette Dyer being served by a server at the Half Moon's Sugar Mill restaurant.