

Historical and Archaeological Society

The Museum of Antigua and Barbuda

“Knowledge to be of any Value must be Communicated”



HAS Newsletter NO. 120

January, February, March 2013

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President's New Year's Message

By Dr. Reginald Murphy

And so another year has come and gone. First of all, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Board of Directors of the Historical and Archaeological Society and the Director and staff of the Museum for guiding us successfully through 2012. It was a year of serious financial challenges and major frustrations as we completed more repairs and updated our legal status, but in retrospect we have come out in the end stronger and better for it all.

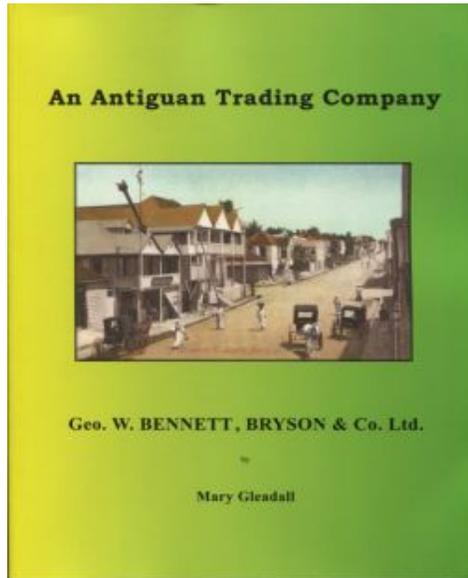
To the new Board members I say welcome. Working with HAS is an interesting, educational, rewarding experience. But like all organizations it will only be as strong or as weak as its members. I am confident that we will reach new heights in 2013 and to this end I would like to share some of our research and activity plans.

Firstly, we will have a new sister organization on Barbuda. In addition to the new and now active Barbuda Archaeology Research Centre plans are now being implemented by Dr. Sophia Perdikaris and colleagues from CUNY to develop a museum on Barbuda.

Secondly, I also take this opportunity to welcome Chris Waters to the HAS and museum community. He has already completed a major cataloguing exercise of the collections at the museum including the Seawall Project materials remaining in storage. This activity will continue throughout 2013 at the Dow's Hill Research Lab/Storage and then the old storeroom in the cells at the Museum in St. John's. In the process he is training our museum technician Wassim Braithwaite who will then be responsible for the museum collections on Chris' departure in the fall.

(Continued on page 6)

Mary Gleadhall's "An Antiguan Trading Company".....



During the past century nearly every family in Antigua had an association with Bryson's as it was affectionately known. The Museum of Antigua and Barbuda was pleased to host the launch of the book on Saturday 17th November 2012 in the upstairs gallery. This book is an historical trip through time, from 1830 to present day, when Bennett and Bryson arrived in Antigua and formed the profitable partnership that benefited many Antiguan and endures even until today with Bryson's Shipping and Insurance on Friar's Hill Rd.

Mary Gleadhall's "An Antiguan Trading Company" is the latest historical book on Antigua to be published. Almost twenty years of research has gone into the telling of the story of Geo. W. Bennett, Bryson & Co. Ltd. coupled with historical events as they occurred time wise and highlighted with many old photographs from 1830 to present day.

The story begins with Lloyds of London and John Bennett (1) who was appointed Joint Master of Lloyd's in 1795 and the appointment of John Bennett (3) as Lloyd's insurance representative in Antigua in 1830. Joshua Kentish was the first representative in 1811. Brysons as a company has run the gambit over the years, weathering storms, fire, economic up and downturn and unscrupulous management. Brysons has been one of Antigua's main employers over the years and been part of our lives through insurance, shipping, merchandise, beer and soft drinks. They continue to serve Antigua.

This book would make a fine addition to anyone's home library and a welcome gift. Limited copies available. Cost \$139 and available exclusively at the Museum Gift Shop on Long St.

(Continued on page 3)

Board of Directors

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Heritage Interpretation
Museum Attendant

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Cleaner

Mary Gleadhall's "An Antiguan Trading Company" (cont.)



Antiguan ladies waiting for their remittances sent by husbands and brothers working on the Panama Canal.

Caribbean Connections- Bioarchaeology Issue

By Dr. Samantha Rebovich

The most recent issues of Caribbean Connections, an online journal dedicated to the study of the Caribbean region and its connections throughout the world, is now available online:

<http://journal.fieldresearchcentre.org/Issues.html>

This special issue is dedicated to the bioarchaeology of the region and features articles from Tamara L. Varney, Hayley L. Mickleburgh, Anne van Duijvenbode, and Hillary Sparkes.

The journal continually accepts submissions for its general issues. More information can be found on the website.

Loco Update

By Agnes Meeker

We are once again on stream with Mr. Lawrence Gamieson from the UK, who has extended the MOU with the Government of Antigua & Barbuda and the Museum in regard to refurbishing four locomotives. Though they will never run again but they will be restored to their former glory and will provide a memory into the history of Antigua's sugar era. Once complete they will be stored at Betty's Hope for everyone to enjoy.

The first of the four locos chosen for renovation, is 'Marion' (pronounced Merion) which was cleaned and measured up a few weeks ago. Mr. Gamieson keeps in touch as he goes forward behind the scenes in England prior to his returning in March of 2013 when the "Marion" will be given new life. Below is his last email.

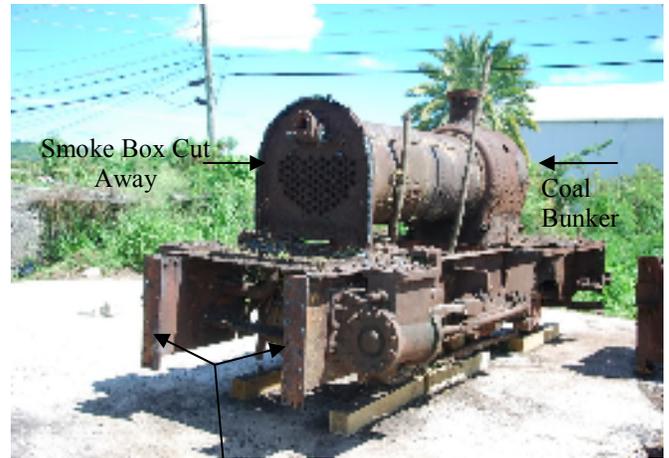
"Hello everyone, I had a meeting with an engineer from Leighs paints today, they supplied the special paint that has been used on the Forth railway bridge in Scotland, they also did Tower Bridge in London, they will supply us for the locos, which means Marion, Bessie & co should look good for at least 25 years. They will help out on the price, for publicity on their website.

I will be sending a colour chart over to Doug along with 3 test pieces, of what we think the colour is close to. I want you to decide between you, what shade of green is correct. I am collecting the second compressor needed for sand blasting tomorrow, and will receive the other one on Thursday. I will start fabricating the cab, fuel bunkers, smokebox & water tank in December.

*Kind Regards,
Lawrence."*

Marion Cosmetic Restoration Loco photos ...

The old smokebox on the front of the loco has been cut away; the front buffer plate and beam have been taken off, also the coal bunker from the left hand rear. All these parts will be up new, along with the cab, and water tank. More photos will be posted as they are fabricated.



Front Buffer Plate and Beam



Seventy Journey to Antigua by Canoe

By Dr. Reginald Murphy

A canoe carrying 70 persons from Port Louis, Guadeloupe arrived at Nelson’s Dockyard on Saturday 27th October 2012. The canoe was built by the Ka’lina Amerindians in French Guiana from a single tree. That was the mode of travel from South America to Cuba. There used to be a lot closer contact between the people of Antigua and Guadeloupe prior to the advent of air transport.

The K’nawa project was started in 2010 with the main objective of building strong cultural ties with Guadeloupe and its English speaking neighbours.



Sam and Nigel tie the knot

By Walter Berridge

Nigel Bardoe of Cobbs Cross has acquired a beautiful and rare museum object in the form of Dr. Samantha Rebovich . Sam, as she is affectionately known, has been on the Museum board for the last 2 years and has been the Editor of the Museum newsletter. We wish Sam and NiegI all the best in their future.



Westerby Monument Vandalized

This Victorian style monument in the form of a drinking fountain commemorates Bishop George Wall Westerby’s missionary work in Antigua. He died in Antigua on 22 November 1886, and in 1888 the drinking fountain memorial was erected to his memory. It is well situated at the foot of High Street near the old landing jetty of St. John’s Harbour, where all visitors to Antigua arrived and departed in the old days. At one time the monument held gas lamps for street lightening, while all four sides once held drinking fountain apparatus. The east and west panels (which was recently vandalized) shows identical dedications.



Monument near the old landing jetty of St. John’s Harbour in the 1900’s



A side panel of the monument which was recently vandalized

The Moravian Church restored the monument to its former historic elegance in 2002. It is no longer a drinking fountain, but an important heritage landmark of independent Antigua and Barbuda.

Glimpses of Christmas Past

By E. T. Henry

Every West Indian town has its favourite street. In the 1930's Market Street was a beehive of activity on Christmas Eve, there were elderly folk doing their last minute shopping for presents to be sent out on Christmas Day and there were children running up and down the street blowing horns and whistles. It was one great cacophony of sound. Rich and poor alike were enjoying themselves.



Drawn by E. T. Henry

As always Christmas was a time for children and there were those in the society who went out of their way to make sure that the indigent and underprivileged were well looked after. Lolly Athill a well-known magistrate in the city gave a gally party for all the children he could accommodate at his premises on St. Mary's Street. A band was provided for their entertainment and at the close of the function the good magistrate made sure that every child who attended the party was given a Christmas present. When he moved to Falmouth he continued this philanthropic practice.

The junction of Market Street and St. Mary's Street was the focal point of all activity. There were acrobats who rhythmically stomped their feet in time to the accelerating beat of the kettle and bass drums and the poignant notes of the fife. There were five men along each side each other on their hands and knees, a sixth sat on the ground holding a large garden fork pointing skyward with his back to the acrobats at the other end. One acrobat lined himself up for the jump, stomping, dancing and gyrating all the while to the hypnotic rhythms. As the music

reached a crescendo it suddenly stopped, the acrobat ran, leaped in the air with forward momentum, hands touched the back of the kneeling accomplices and he somersaulted clear past the threatening fork at the end. It was a performance invariably greeted with applause and coins thrown down by the onlookers who looked down from the windows of the houses adjoining the street.

Christmas in St. John's was a joyous occasion. Cricket or football and shooting matches were organized. Beyond these events there was not much by the way of public entertainment, except perhaps for the visit of some itinerant circus. Children entertained themselves at the appropriate season with kite flying, playing marbles spinning tops, stones ect. The older ones played warri, dominoes and card games. The Leeward island cricket matches played an important part in stimulating insular pride, rivalry and prestige; this was understandable since cricket was the national game.

The celebration of Christmas past was something more than "playing mas" or having a good time. It was the season of conviviality where relatives and friends got together from all parts of the island or distant lands to renew their family ties and long friendships and to cast aside petty differences.

It was also a time that exemplified the fusion of cultures. Cultures bought together to mark a celebration of Christmas in the first instance for two different reasons. One the one hand the early planters celebrated the birth of Christ (Christmas) by going to church and observing the Christmas holidays. At Christmas time slaves were customarily granted three days holiday, but to the enslaved Africans to whom Christianity was not introduced until 1757 and who had their own religious practices, it meant nothing more than a day of rest and recreation. In fact in 1701 Major Samuel Martin of Greencastle Plantation was killed by his slaves when he compelled them to work on the days appointed for Christmas holidays. In the course of time the enslaved celebrated the days of rest and recreation by the revival or dormant

customs and practices, hence the introduction of the distinctly African John Bull, Pow and the Jump-a-Ben or Moco Jumby. One has only to refer to the Sensay dancers of Guinea or the practices of Ghanaian culture to obtain clues of their origin. The introduction of Highlanders with their vestigial kilts at the Christmas festivities is part of the Scottish legacy in our culture. The fusion of these and other cultures in an Antiguan and Barbudan celebration of Christmas is truly what the spirit of Christmas is all about.



The John Bull
Drawn by E.T. Henry

*You can read about Christmas in the good old days
By visiting:
<http://antiguastories.wordpress.com/holidays-and-celebrations/aunty-ester/>*

AQUISITIONS

For donating to the Museum of Antigua and Barbuda, special thanks are going out to:

Ann Krolowitz, for the gift of two lovely traditional dresses from Nigeria.

NEW MEMBERS

The Historical and Archaeological Society & Museum of Antigua & Barbuda would like to welcome our newest members:

Barbara Paca

New Life Members

C.E. Ruth Francis
Alicia Lee Isaac

President's Message

(Continued from page 1)

Our organization has its roots in archaeology, particularly hands on fieldwork. This year we have plans to return to Indian Creek to excavate a series of new units in close proximity to the 1970s Yale excavation units.

The goal is to use modern methods and to compare the results with the now 42 year old methods. Back then the focus was on macro-findings, primarily pottery for establishing the ceramic based cultural chronology of the Eastern Caribbean. They dug in 12 layers with pick and shovel, recovering artifacts primarily from the screens.

Today we recover at a micro level and we are interested in "everything" from the soil to residues on tools and ceramics. It will be a low budget field project involving only a small number of students and professors from different Universities.

The project should take about 3 field seasons to complete and provide the Museum with many new artifacts and information from the pre-Columbian past. I hope to involve the HAS in the fieldwork and even preliminary analysis and cataloguing. As the museum will be the repository of the artifacts and information, I hope we will return to our roots and have some fun in the field once again. This project will begin in June and finish mid-July.

To conclude, welcome to all new members of our society and a special thanks to all who assisted in making 2012 an amazing success, and information, I hope we will return to our roots.

Muse News

By Michele Henry

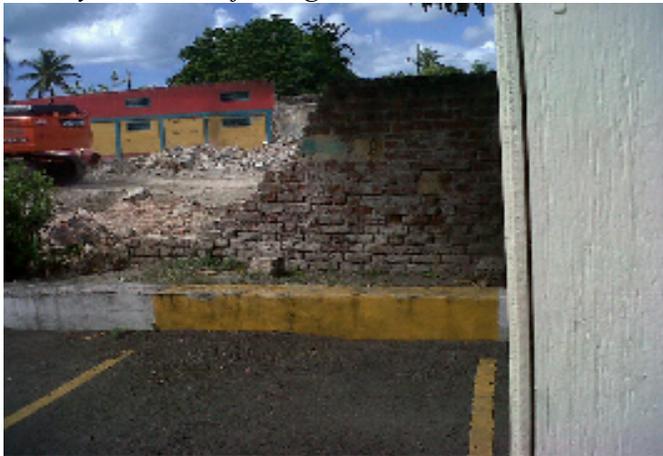
Christmas Party

The Museum Christmas Party was celebrated for the first time in the museum courtyard with a record number of members and friends. The Expression Choir was exceptional, performing in the new space, on the museum steps. Santa hats sat happily on the heads of our guests. (2013 will see a decorated Santa hat theme), Children and adults lined up to enjoy the hamburger and hotdog grill, and the Christmas table and bar were well stocked with the usual delicacies. Thank you everyone for celebrating the Museum Christmas Party. See you in 2013.

This Old Brick Wall

By Dr. Reginald Murphy

Gone but not forgotten by the Historical Society/Museum of Antigua and Barbuda.



Not many persons are aware that the 250 year old brick wall, located in the former Bryson's Lumber Yard/Dock Area at the bottom of Newgate Street was demolished to make way for a car park.

The old brick wall at Bryson's dock area in St. John's, formerly the wall of Wapping Beach presents an interesting study in ballast bricks. At least four types of old bricks can be observed. The largest are the "Glenboig" fire bricks that could be

found at one time in large quantities at the Sugar Factory. They also were used for making pathways, stairs and gun platforms because of their thick size and hardness. Another type seen is the "London Yellow" bricks that were used to build the Copper and Lumber Store Building in the Nelson's Dockyard. Then two variations of common red bricks can be seen. Many bricks were brought across to these islands in the holds of ships. They made ideal ballast stones and many could be packed tightly into the cargo holds of the ships. On the return passage they were sold and the ballast replaced with rum, sugar and other commodities. An interesting wall from a bygone era.

New Board Members

The Historical and Archaeological Society & Museum of Antigua & Barbuda would like to welcome our newest board members

Mr. Sekou Luke and **Mr. Chris Waters**

Sekou Luke has been a member of HAS since 1993, he was the former Vice President of the Youth Arm of the Museum. He pursued a degree programme at Mercy College in Literature and Sociology. He now teaches a history class once a week to the inmates at Her Majesty's Prison.

Chris Waters is no stranger to Antigua for he has been active with the Betty's Hope Chico field school for about three seasons. He recently completed his Masters at Bristol and will be studying the fortification systems of Antigua and the Eastern Caribbean for his doctoral research. Chris is now an intern at the Nelson's Dockyard Museum and will be working as curator and field archaeologist for one year.

The Historical & Archaeological Society Newsletter is published at the Museum quarterly in January, April, July, and October. HAS encourages contribution of material relevant to the Society from the membership or other interested individuals

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Historical and Archaeology Society

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Upcoming Events

February 2nd: Upstairs Gallery (date to be announced): “ Rum and Coco Cola the Legacy of the American Bases in Antigua during the Second World War”. Multimedia - Dr. Susan Lowes. \$25.00 includes wine, sodas, finger foods and Rum and Coco Cola

March: “Hidden Places Secret Views Part 11” (date to be announced): Multimedia presentation by Dr. Reginald Murphy

March: Temporary Exhibition Main Gallery: Extracts from 18th and 19th Century Antigua Newspapers

Join HAS! Discover & Preserve Antigua & Barbuda’s Heritage

TO BECOME OR REMAIN A MEMBER OF THE SOCIETY, FILL IN & SNIP OFF. Mail to P.O. Box 2103, St. John’s Antigua.

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CIRCLE MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY	
Individual	\$ 50 EC/\$ 25US (Mailing included)
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