

Historical and Archaeological Society

The Museum of Antigua and Barbuda

“Knowledge to be of any Value must be Communicated”



HAS Newsletter NO. 118

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Barbuda Archaeological Research Centre Opens with New Projects on the Horizon

By Dr. Sophia Perdikaris

This past January marked the official opening of the Barbuda Archaeological Research Centre (BARC) in Codrington Village, Barbuda. Since January 2007, an archaeological research has been conducted in Barbuda under the direction of Dr. Sophia Perdikaris of Brooklyn College, New York as part of the National Science Foundation-funded project, Islands of Change.

The Islands of Change project seeks to understand global climate change by comparing archaeological and modern data from three islands in the North Atlantic: Iceland, Manhattan, and Barbuda. Through the use of archaeological evidence, along with historical and modern weather data, the research undertaken seeks to examine how weather and climate change effects ecosystems on a global scale. For instance, could a disruption in the ecosystem in Barbuda from a hurricane effect fishing yields in Iceland?

One of the areas that we have been able to make great progress is in studying how extreme weather events, like hurricanes, may have impacted life in prehistoric Barbuda. One of the sites has a very clear stratigraphy that demonstrates that the site was used, hit by a storm event that deposited a large layer of sterile sand, and then reused. We can couple this archaeological evidence with new cutting edge research on whelk shells. By measuring the growth cycles on whelk shells, we can actually anticipate seawater temperatures and how they changed throughout the life of the whelk. Sudden changes in seawater temperatures might point to storm events, thus giving insights into how frequently hurricanes hit Barbuda in its deep past.

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Barbuda Archaeological Research Centre Opens with New Projects on the Horizon (cont.)



Dr. Sophia Perdikaris and Mr. Finch stand next to the newly installed NASA Weather Station in Barbuda.

Though the larger scope of the project is a global comparative model, the research conducted in Barbuda also greatly helps to inform how sustainable lifestyles and practices can be built locally in Antigua and Barbuda as well. Recently, the sustainability of fishing the Barbuda lobster has come into question. Not only would this be devastating in terms of biodiversity, but it would also hugely impact the economy of Barbuda as many Barbudan fisherman depend on the lobster for their livelihood. With not just environmental but also community sustainability in mind, one of the new projects we are embarking on is an aquaponics station at BARC.



CUNY Graduate Student, Mr. Norie Manigault speaks to a group of Barbudan school children who visited BARC this spring.

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Barbuda Archaeological Research Centre Opens with New Projects on the Horizon (cont.)

Working with Mr. John Mussington, we have been able to integrate the development and maintenance of an aquaponics station into the secondary curriculum in Barbuda. Students would not only be responsible for maintaining the aquaponics station, raising fish and growing vegetables, in terms of an agricultural project, but are also responsible for making it sustainable as part of their business curriculum.

In addition to working with schoolchildren in Barbuda, we are also seeking ways to integrate the entire community into the work we do. One of the areas archaeologists are interested in is in the historic and cultural use of landscapes. A new project launching this summer engages youth with elders in the community by having schoolchildren interview Barbudan elders about how they used to live. We expect this will give young Barbudans newfound appreciation for their homeland by emphasizing traditional practices and local histories.

While we are launching these new projects this summer, the main focus of BARC is in protecting the heritage of Barbuda. BARC provides a facility from which researchers can work during field seasons but also provides a secure place for the storage of artifacts from Barbuda. We have also been able to dedicate some of the space in BARC to the development of exhibits so that schoolchildren, locals, and tourists alike can engage with the research being conducted in Barbuda and learn more about the island's heritage.

Betty's Hope 2012 Field Season

By Dr. Georgia Fox

Each year, when we come out to Betty's Hope, we can never be sure what we might find; the 2012 summer field season, which ran from June 2 to June 30, was no different. This year, we anticipated finding more floors and walls in the kitchen area of the Great House complex, yet these features, as well as others proved more spectacular than we could ever imagine.

For those of you who know, and for those of you who are just reading about this for the first time, I have been conducting archaeological investigations at Betty's Hope since the summer of 2007, under the aegis of the Betty's Hope Trust, directed by island archaeologist and UNESCO Representative, as well as Director of Heritage Research and Archaeology for Nelson's Dockyard National Park, Dr. Reginald Murphy. Archaeological work is conducted through a four-week field school through the Department of Anthropology at California State University, Chico (CSU Chico); also know more affectionately as "Chico State." During their four-week stint in the field, students learn the methodologies of field archaeology, which encompasses mapping and surveying, field excavation techniques, and processing the recovered artifacts.

This year, we had 10 field school students, including: Michele Bechtel, Mark Belloni, Sofia Bikadou, Arik Bord, Jenna Farrington, Michele Garcia, Charlotte Goudge, Mary Swearingen, Alina Tichinin, and Megan Webb. Students came from California, as well as Indiana, and Britain. Three graduate students— Cate Davis, Genevieve Godbout, and Alexis Ohman— returned for a second year to carry out their respective research projects.

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Students normally spend long days in the field during the week, with a cooling off at the beach at the end of a busy day, followed by a weekly evening lecture, dinner, artifact cataloguing, and kitchen duty, and finally some down time. As students must be up and at breakfast by 6:00 am, morning arrives all too quickly! Weekends are spent on tours, visiting the island's points of historical interest, as well as Nelson's Dockyard, downtown St. John, and Antigua's lovely beaches.



Student in the 2012 Betty's Hope Field School working on mapping the excavated remains.

This year, in addition to our normally scheduled field program, we had a student film crew from the CSU Chico Department of Anthropology's Advanced Laboratory for Visual Anthropology (ALVA). This was made possible by a grant from the university to create a film on archaeological field methodology to show to our archaeology courses during the academic year.

The film crew, which comprised Santy Gray, Jake Martin, and Erin Smith, not only filmed at the site, but also went around the island, interviewing both tourists and locals about their thoughts on archaeology and cultural heritage tourism. Additionally, a crew from the BBC was present to

film about the island's history. They came out to Betty's Hope for part of a day with their cameras—we were thrilled to have them at the site.

In terms of the archaeology, it was a banner year, thanks not only to all of the students, but also to my trusty expert Teaching Assistants for the project, Christopher Waters and Cory Look. Chris is an MA student at Bristol University, England, and Cory is a doctoral student at Brooklyn College in New York; each brings their individual areas of expertise and skills, which greatly enhance the project, while working with the students. Both Chris and Cory have spent time in Antigua, and are fully adept at getting around the island. In fact, Chris came as a field school student himself for two field seasons, but was "promoted" to TA.

Last year, in 2011, we uncovered several walls and floors of the Great House kitchen, which might have been a separate building. At the end of the 2011 field season, we opened up an area at the side entrance to the house, opposite the windmills. We had originally excavated the area in 2007, but backfilled it with dirt for future excavation. In trying to determine the size of the Great House, the goal in this instance, was to follow a structural wall, known as Feature 33, to see where it ended.

Instead, what we got was something that we had not anticipated, but had always hoped for; a privy or "night soil" dump, which had excellent stratigraphy and artifacts dating from the seventeenth through nineteenth centuries. Unfortunately, because it was discovered at the end of the field season, we had to stop excavating, as time ran out. This feature will possibly be revisited at a later date, time permitting, as it was quite deep, and also revealed a very substantial structural wall that will need to be further investigated.

Following the 2011 field season, the goals and objectives for this 2012 field season were to continue excavating the kitchen area of the Great House complex, more site survey and mapping, and

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more shovel tests to further explore tantalizing clues for other structures on the site. This includes the complex north of the Great House that is currently obscured by thick vegetation, as well as the area west of the Great House.

Indeed we did find more floors and walls! As with most archaeological excavations, some of these features were discovered at the end of the field season, only to be investigated in 2013. Some of the artifacts we recovered this year included more buttons, imported ceramics, iron implements, and many hundreds of pieces of window glass and corroded iron nails.



Some of the excavated remains of the planter's house uncovered during this summer's field season.

At this juncture, our real "treasure" at the site encompasses the walls and floors of these amazing structures. We also discovered to our surprise and delight that these features are matching up well with the archival documents in the Codrington Papers. Next year, we hope to continue exploring these promising areas. Chief among our goals is to locate the pre-emancipation slave housing, not an easy prospect, due to the ephemeral and organic nature of wattle and daub housing, which probably disintegrated long ago. Further impediments include the thick acacia and other vegetation that will have to be negotiated with a cutlass or two. Due to the lack of rainfall this field season, however, some features were much easier to see, unlike 2011, when it was much more prolific.



The 2012 Betty's Hope Field School team.

On a final note, next year, 2013, marks the 20th anniversary of Dr. Murphy and his lovely wife, Nicki, hosting archaeological field schools, beginning with the Trent University Field School, the University of Calgary Field School, and then followed by Chico State. We owe a great deal of gratitude to the Murphy's and all of our colleagues and friends who continue to support our research efforts at Betty's Hope.

Fun Fact!

Did you know that J'ouvert is a contraction of the French words "jour" and "ouvert" meaning daybreak? Thus j'ouvert literally refers to the breaking of dawn when the Carnival party happens!

170-Year-Old Building Demolished

By Agnes Meeker

Just a few weeks ago a 170-year-old building with the date '1842' etched in the corner stone above one of the entrances to the building, met its fate with the wrecking ball. The two story building had been derelict for a number of years and was not only an eyesore in a predominantly tourist section of St John's, but had been and probably still was, home to several vagrants. The place emitted a strong stench, was filled with debris and garbage and was probably infested with rats.

The building definitely needed to be removed and the area cleaned up. However, it would have been prudent to retain the lower front facade for its historical value and to incorporate it into whatever plans the owner/developer has in mind.

Since this did not happen, it is hoped that whatever building replaces '1842' that the architect will bear in mind that we are in the Caribbean, that we depend on tourism and design a structure that will enhance and retain our heritage.

See Newsletter article done on this building in 2010 for further information.



This 170-year old building in Redcliffe Quay was recently demolished.



The cornerstone of the building marks the date it was built.

Archaeological Site Surveys Underway

By Dr. Samantha Rebovich

This summer, staff from the Heritage and Environment Departments of the National Parks Authority (NPA) are revisiting archaeological sites in Antigua to assess their status and develop a Geographic Information System (GIS) map that will be used by the government and the Museum. Over 526 archaeological and natural sites have been identified in Antigua and Barbuda, mostly through the pioneering efforts of Desmond Nicholson. Many of these sites, though, have been disturbed or destroyed by the ravages of time, natural disasters, and development. The NPA is developing a cultural heritage map in which archaeological sites and historic structures will be identified and ranked according to their cultural importance and state of preservation. To date, 86 sites have been visited and mapped with the help of interns from the University of the West Indies-St. Augustine. Creating this map will allow other government departments, such as DCA, Survey, and APUA to check for heritage sites before conducting work or approving development in Antigua. This should help to preserve our heritage better and make us all more responsible in protecting Antigua's past.

BBC Documentary: 18th- Century Industrial Revolution

By Agnes Meeker

A group of four from the BBC directed by Charles Colville, recently spent four days in Antigua to put together part of a 60-minute documentary depicting the Industrial Revolution in England during the 18th century (1700's). It was an era when steam was developed and it was driven and attributed to the wealth of the sugar barons of the West Indies.

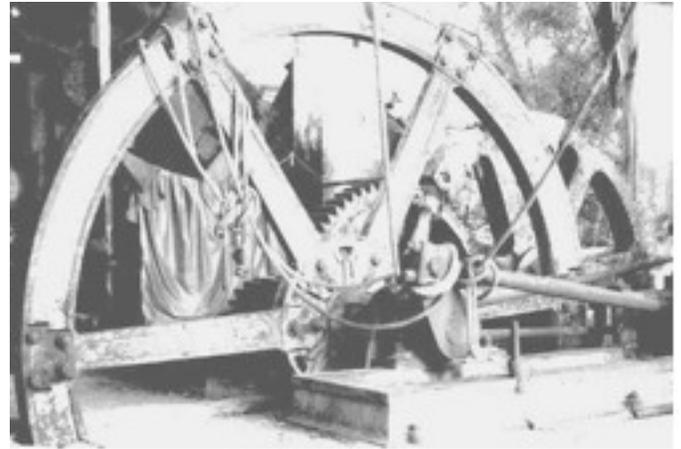


The BBC team spent four days in Antigua filming for their upcoming documentary.

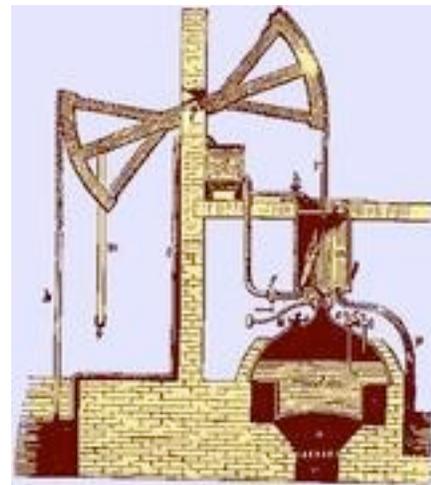
The original steam engine was a massive affair developed by Thomas Newcomen in 1712. This was later further developed and refined by a Scot James Watt to whom this invention has been attributed. By the end of the 1700's there were over 2,100 steam engines. The steam locomotives and boats came into being around 1815.

Areas visited in Antigua not only included some of Antigua's well known sites such as Half Moon Bay, the Dockyard and Shirley Heights but hidden historical treasures such as Montpelier Sugar Factory, Herbert's estate house built in 1742, Royals estate settled by Isaac Royal in the late 1600's, the Tranquil Vale slave dungeon and a stand of sugar cane which was the hardest to locate.

The narrator for the series, due to air in January of 2013, is Professor Jeremy Blade from Exeter University. The BBC has promised a copy to the Museum of Antigua & Barbuda and we will have a showing to the public upon receipt in the hope that not too much of the Antigua footage ends up on the cutting floor!



This old photograph shows the steam engine at Montpelier Sugar Factory. The engine is dated 1890 and was manufactured in Glasgow by McOnie, Harvie, and Co.



A 1712 Plan of Thomas Newcomen's original steam engine.

The St. John's Cathedral Restoration Update

By Bruce Arrindell

Since 201 the St. John's Cathedral has been closed to undergo repairs and restoration. The Cathedral overlooks our capital of St. John's and her twin towers serve as a landmark for the city and its environs as well as a navigation mark for the fisherman. Besides the historical and religious significance to Anglicans, the Cathedral is also regarded with reverence and affection by many Antiguans who are not of the Anglican faith. Efforts are now underway to pass the necessary legislation to declare the St. John's Cathedral a National Heritage Site.

Work continues to rebuild the Cathedral and restore it to its former glory. Most recently, the roof over the sanctuary has been completed. It was decided to replace it with a concrete roof. All of the old timbers under the roof were removed and replaced with new lumber. Metal sheets from the old roof were reused as part of the formwork for the concrete roof. The stones in the parapet wall were cracked and loose in places so a short wall was cast behind them to hold them together.

Because the sanctuary roof is relatively small and intricate, concrete could not be pumped up to the roof and instead was mixed in the churchyard and hauled up the old-fashioned way, bucket by bucket. Once the drains in the Cathedral are completed, the entire roof and drain system within the Cathedral will be brand new. This marks a huge step forward in the completion of the restoration.

If you would like to follow and contribute to the restoration of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine you can do so at the websites listed below:

www.stjohnthedivineantigua.com
<http://stjohnsrestoration.blogspot.com/>



Buckets are used to bring concrete up to the roof over the sanctuary.



The two statues of St. John that mark the entrance gate to the grounds of St. John's Cathedral were captured from a French ship.



The Cathedral before development encroached upon its grounds.

Muse News

By Michele Henry

Every Board Counts!

The Historical and Archaeological Society has had to undertake emergency repairs to the ceilings in the Museum of Antigua and Barbuda. The Public Works Department is assisting with the labour and we are providing all of the materials for the repairs. The Historical Society is the keeper of the cultural patrimony of Antigua and Barbuda and, as such, we need to preserve it in a safe environment.

We understand at this time you may not be able to give a substantial amount but any little bit helps towards every single board.

The emergency repairs have meant that we have had to suspend some of our planned events at the museum for the summer.

Hopefully, in late July, ceilings repairs will begin in the Research Library and the Gift Shop and the Museum can remain open for the duration of this work.



Walter Berridge, Chairman of the Historical and Archaeological Society, accepts a cheque from State Insurance for \$10,800 for the restoration of the ceilings!!



Country Manager of RBTT, Cassandra Ryan, signs the Donor Board while Country Manager of RBC, Robin Shaw, looks on. The merged banks made a generous contribution to the project.



Walter Berridge, Chairman of the Historical and Archaeological Society, presents copies of Dr. Nicholas Fuller's book to RBTT Manager, Cassandra Ryan, and RBC Manager, Robin Shaw, as a token of appreciation.

Restoration Donors

- Government of Antigua and Barbuda
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- Price Water House Coopers
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- Anthony Bento
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- Cecil A. Camacho
- Richard Dingwall
- Louise Sandiford
- Alicia Lee Isaac (Life member)
- Janet Kipling

Mys-toric Tours of St. John's

Museum/GARDC certified tour guides are offering mys-toric tours (mystery and history) tours of St. John's. The tours include:

1. The 350 year old City – to find the 100 window house, and where King Court lived
2. St. John's Harbour – Would you believe that St. John's Harbour started from Five Islands?
3. Pirates and Privateers – Why did Antiguan Governors employ pirates and privateers?
4. City Walk, Historic Architecture – The mystery of stone, wood, and masonry architecture
5. From Market to Table – the Public Market, fruits, vegetables, and secret recipes
6. National Heroes Tour – King Court, Sir Vivian Richards

Whether you are a child or an adult, these authentically researched tours will fascinate you. Come join us, get to know about your history in a relaxed way. You choose your own time. Tours offered to schools, church groups, family reunions, camps, or individuals. Just call 462-4930/462-1469 to book your tour. Special rates apply. Adults \$10.00/Children \$5.00



Children get ready to embark on a Mys-toric Tour!

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
 Tel/Fax: 268-462-1469, 462-4930 E-mail: museum@candw.ag Website: www.antiguamuseum.org

Historical and Archaeology Society

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Upcoming Events

Please note all events at the Museum have been cancelled due to emergency repairs to the ceiling of the building. Please check our website and Facebook page for updates and events as they are schedule!

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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Family	\$ 100 EC/\$ 45US (mailing included)
Life	\$ 500 EC/\$ 200US
Business Patron	\$ 500 EC