

Historical and Archaeological Society

The Museum of Antigua and Barbuda

“Knowledge to be of any Value must be Communicated”

HAS Newsletter NO. 117

April, May, June 2012



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Royals Visit Antigua

By Dr. Samantha Rebovich

On the 6th and 7th of March, Their Royal Highnesses Prince Edward, Earl of Wessex and his wife, Sophie, Countess of Wessex, visited Antigua and Barbuda as part of a tour of the Eastern Caribbean to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth. Prior to visiting Antigua, the Earl and Countess had visited a number of countries in the Eastern Caribbean including Barbados, St. Lucia, Montserrat, and Anguilla. Antigua was the final stop on their tour and though the royal couple may have been tired, they did not show it!

The Earl and Countess arrived in Nelson's Dockyard on M/Y *Leander* on the morning of Tuesday 6th March. They were greeted on board the ship by Her Excellency Dame Louise Lake-Tack, Governor-General of Antigua and Barbuda before disembarking to meet the Prime Minister, Baldwin Spencer, and members of Parliament. Prince Edward then went on to inspect the Guard of Honour which was called out specifically for the occasion of their arrival. As the Guard played *God Save the Queen* the Union Jack was hoisted in Nelson's Dockyard along with the Royal Standard to indicate that royalty was in residence.

The couple then moved into the Copper and Lumber Store Hotel where they met and mingled with our very own National Heroes, individuals who have been recognized by the Government of Antigua and Barbuda with merit awards or knighthoods. Following that, Prince Edward and Countess Sophie got a private tour of the Dockyard Museum by Dr. Reg Murphy and were sure to take a glimpse of the "Royal Palm" that Edward's mother, Queen Elizabeth, planted in the Dockyard in 1966.

Royals Visit Antigua (cont.)

A brief rain shower cut short the tree planting ceremony in Nelson's Dockyard, but the two royals did manage to each plant a *Lignum vitae* tree near the Officers' Quarters building before escaping the rain with a tour of the Dow's Hill Interpretation Centre at Shirley Heights. Following their morning of historic site visits, the couple enjoyed a lunch at the Admiral's Inn in Nelson's Dockyard hosted by the Prime Minister. On Tuesday evening, the Governor General hosted an official State Dinner for the couple at the Mill Reef Club.

During the second and final day of their visit to Antigua and Barbuda, the Royal Couple took time to visit institutions that are close to their personal charity work. The Countess visited the Children's Ward at Mount Saint John's Medical Centre, Princess Margaret School, and the Adele School for Special Children in St. John's while the Earl visited the Duke of Edinburgh Award Programme and the Antigua Grammar School. The couple finished off their morning with a tour of St. John's Cathedral.

To close their visit to Antigua and Barbuda, Prince Edward and Countess Sophie enjoyed a Diamond Jubilee Lunch at the Jumby Bay Resort on Long Island.

Antigua and Barbuda were honoured to have had the pleasure to host the Royal Couple and we were especially excited to be able to highlight our nation's heritage and culture. The people of Antigua and Barbuda send their loyal greetings to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II on the occasion of her Diamond Jubilee.



A sign hung in Nelson's Dockyard to extend our greetings to Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II.

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TRH Prince Edward, Earl of Wessex and Sophie, Countess of Wessex after disembarking from M/Y *Leander* in Nelson's Dockyard on 6th March.



Countess Sophie visited the Children's Ward of Mount Saint John's Medical Centre on Wednesday, 7th March (Photo courtesy of Mount Saint John's Medical Centre)



Prince Edward and Dr. Reg Murphy look at some of the exhibits on display in new cases (donated by Colombian Emeralds!) in the Dockyard Museum.



Countess Sophie smiles alongside MSJMC staff during her visit (Photo courtesy of Mount Saint John's Medical Centre)

Summer Research Plans

By Dr. Reg Murphy

We are gearing up for our summer research season with three major projects on the horizon.

Betty's Hope Field School
4 June -29 June 2012
California State University-Chico



Excavations at Betty's Hope undertaken by CSU-Chico began in 2007

For the sixth consecutive year, Dr. Georgia Fox of California State University-Chico will be directing the Betty's Hope Field School. The 2011 field school consisted of eleven students and excavations again focused on the Great House. In 2011 the team uncovered more of the walls and floors of the Great House, helping to delineate the northern limits of the house as well as the adjacent kitchen area. The team thinks they may also have come across an 18th-century privy but, as in all archaeological excavations, this discovery came near the end of the season so the privy has not been fully identified nor excavated as of yet. The goals of the summer 2012 excavations are to connect the Great House to the adjoining kitchen through continued excavations in the general area, while continuing surveys and testing to locate other features of the site including slave housing and other buildings associated with the workings of the plantation.

The field school consists of a mixture of lectures, field experience, and historic site visits for the students. The field team is typically on site from Monday-Friday during the field school so if you have a chance, be sure to stop by Betty's Hope and see all the great work that is being done there!

Historic Lead Study
June 2012 and ongoing
Lakehead University



Dr. Tamara Varney on site at Green Castle Estate in the summer of 2008

Dr. Tamara Varney will be visiting Antigua for her sixteenth time this summer to continue some research based on excavations undertaken in 2004 at the Naval Hospital outside Nelson's Dockyard and other sites. Dr. Varney's research focuses on human remains and human osteology and in the past she has done groundbreaking work in Antigua and other islands of the Eastern Caribbean to evaluate health and disease in the 18th century and nutrition in the 18th century.

Dr. Varney is continuing that research with an exciting study of lead poisoning in the 18th century. Using comparative samples from the Naval Hospital and plantation settings Dr. Varney will be measuring the levels of lead in human bone to determine to what extent people in the 18th century suffered from lead poisoning. By comparing samples from different populations she can see how pervasive lead poisoning was throughout 18th-century Antiguan society. She hypothesizes that individuals from the Naval Hospital might have

higher levels of lead in their bones because of the Navy's daily rum rations since 18th-century rum was usually distilled using lead-lined pipes and containers. This research will be the first of its kind in the region and uses cutting edge technology to determine lead levels in human bone. She will be returning to the island this summer to take some more samples from already excavated materials and to do some additional excavations on other known naval burials in the English Harbour area.

Historic Site Inventory

June – August 2012

Antigua & Barbuda National Parks Authority



Dr. Samantha Rebovich and Nigel Bardoe of the Antigua & Barbuda National Parks Authority are teaming up with other government agencies and departments including the Environment Division, Forestry, the Survey Department, and the Fisheries Division to reinventory the historic and archaeological sites of Antigua.

Heading up a team from the National Parks Authority, the pair will use GPS and Geographic Information Systems to create an accurate map of the historic sites on the island to be used by many different government departments. Having an accurate map of historic sites will make it much easier for different departments to avoid them in the work that they do and consult with the island's heritage experts in development questions. The new inventory will include a wealth of data including geologic and environmental datasets that accompany each site, historic resource value rankings, and previous research so that more informed decisions about our country's heritage can be made.

Antiguan Roots to American Pie

By Agnes Meeker

Henry Copperthite was born in Antigua in 1847 to indentured servants who landed here after the religious wars in Scotland. His family eventually won freedom and moved to Connecticut, USA where in 1861, at the age of 14, he enlisted to fight on the side of the North in the American Civil War. He joined the 79th Highlanders of New York as a wagon driver and traveled to Washington, D.C.

After the war he returned to Connecticut and used his wagon-driving skills to make deliveries for a pie maker. Unsatisfied with being a delivery man, Copperthite spent the next 20 years learning the baking business. In 1885 Henry and his wife moved to Georgetown, where he had been stationed during the war and on Thanksgiving Eve began their new business with nothing more than a horse, a wagon, and \$3.50. By 1900, Henry was a millionaire.

The Connecticut-Copperthite Pie Company made more than 50,000 pies a day and had factories throughout the D.C. area. The company employed 15,000 workers, making it one of the largest employers in Washington in its day, and provided pies to members of the U.S. Congress and the Armed Forces, especially during World War I. Because of the millions of pies sold to the Armed Forces, the word "doughboy" was coined. Henry Copperthite died in 1925 and in 1959 his pie company was bought out by Ward Baking Co.

Recently, Michael Copperthite visited Antigua in the hopes of learning more about his family's Antiguan roots. He was also interested in learning about Antiguan society during the middle of the 19th century. Mr. Copperthite was able to successfully find the baptism records of his great great grandfather, Henry who was baptized in St. John's. His family was indentured servants at the Dunbars Estate before buying their freedom and moving to the United States.

A Bit of Railroad History

By Dr. Susan Lowe

Once the Antigua Sugar Factory was established in 1905 and began to grind “white” sugar—which was actually grey but lighter than the muscovado sugar produced at Montpelier—it quickly dug its tentacles deep into the Antiguan economy. In 1924, it urged the government to pass the Antigua Sugar Factory (Land Acquisition) Ordinance, which would allow it to acquire by “compulsory purchase” land to build a railroad to connect it with Bendals. Bendals had long struggled to get enough cane from the surrounding area and had never reached its full grinding capacity of 3,000 tons. The ASF, on the other hand, argued that it needed Bendals’ capacity when its own factory was overloaded.

On December 3, 1924, E.O. Camacho applied to the Colonial Office from 33 Walton Street, Jamaica, NY, appealing the expropriation of private property in order to build the railroad. The petition protested the speed with which the decision had been made, the fact that those who endorsed the act were only petty landholders and did not even own the houses they lived in, and that this was all for the benefit of a private company—the ASF. The petition was signed by other Camachos—Frank E., Leo P., Oliver, and John M. [CO 152/395/Camacho, 3 December 1924]. A copy was sent to the governor.

George Moody-Stuart, who was at that time in charge of the ASF, then went directly to the Colonial Office to put his case [CO 152/395/Moody-Stuart, G., 29 December 1924]. He noted that all the proprietors along the route—the “petty landholders” the Camacho petition had referred to—had agreed except the owners of Herberts and Briggins. The argument he made—that no “private” owner had the right to stop a project that would benefit the island—shows the extent to which the factory believed that its interests were synonymous with those of all Antiguan [CO 152/395/505, 8 December 1924]. The Camachos vigorously disputed that the land was being taken

for the benefit of the island as a whole, arguing in their response that if this was so, a private concern could “exercise absolute control of the entire sugar industry” [CO 152/398/Camacho, 20 March 1925]. Not only, they wrote, did the bill give over to a private company a power that only the government had heretofore had, but it gave the factory, which already controlled the price of sugar and labor, control over the land of Antigua as well [CO 152/398/Camacho, 22 April 1925].

The discussion must have continued for some time, because in June 1925 the governor sent the Colonial Office a poster protesting the land expropriation that he reported had been circulating around the island [CO 152/398/Camacho, June 1925]. It was headlined “The Wheels of Empire” and put the case thus:

An English corporation [cane sugar factory] doing business in a small British possession [Antigua] has prospered and grown into a monopoly, and an English governor is using Crown Colony system of government to coerce local owners to sell this corporation the fee simple of a railway track cutting right through their land and giving them immediate possession, at their own price and on their own terms...No give and take, take all.

Whatever sympathy this proclamation may have aroused in the general population—and it is not known whether it did or not—the bill passed in 1925 and the building began. The irony was that because of decreased production due to drought, the ASF did not need the capacity and the railroad was not immediately used. Much later, in 1936, a loan was granted to extend the railroad to other factories, in this case with the argument that the extension would assist peasant farmers. The extension continued in 1938.

Historical Bus Tour a Success

By Walter Berridge

On 5 March, Agnes Meeker gave a historical bus tour to members of the International Women's Club resulting in one of the best-attended fundraisers for the museum in recent months.

The bus tour began just outside of town and the first stop was at the carpentry shop of Mr. Renford Daley. He is building all of the doors and windows for St. Peter's Church in Parham as part of their renovation project and is an extraordinary local craftsman. After passing by the remains of the Antigua Sugar Factory, the group stopped in Sea View Farm at Elvie's Pottery to see some of the locally-produced earthenwares in Antigua. Fortunately for the group, Hyacinth had just finished baking a load of large garden pots that were still cooling.

The tour carried on to Betty's Hope where visitors can take photos of the iconic double windmills. Gilbert's Chapel on Zion Hill was another focal point of the tour where the members of the Women's Club were introduced to the pioneering work of Gilbert as one of the earliest Methodists in Antigua. The group stopped at Potworks Dam for lunch and the final stop on the tour was at Diamond's Estate, now a government agricultural centre.

Throughout the tour, Mrs. Meeker highlighted the history of the sugar plantations in the area since many of the sites had ties to the sugar industry. Among the estates that were highlighted was *Clare Hall Estate (Nugents)*. In 1690 Walter Nugent bought the land and named his Antiguan plantation after County Clare in Ireland where he also owned property. The plantation was originally 500 acres in size and was sold to Robert Skerrett in 1773. In 1899 a botanical garden was built in this area but as the land was relatively flat it was too exposed to hurricanes and thus the Botanical Garden was moved to its current location. In 1913 the model

village of Clare Hall was laid out as an example of rural development.

Paynters Estate, now the home of Sunnyside School, was also featured in the tour. The estate was owned by Leonard Henzell, a manager of the Antigua Sugar Factory who named the locomotives used to transport cane after his daughters: the Lena, the Joan, and the Marion. Mrs. Henzell used her own money to purchase Long Island.

Cochranes Estate consisted of 328 acres in 1839 and had 306 enslaved laborers working the sugar fields. The corner field used to be full of red Easter lilies, which grew up after the cane had been cut.

In Parham, three estates—Parham New Works, Parham Hill, and Parham Lodge—were all owned by the Tudway of Wells Family and together consisted of 1096 acres with 587 enslaved laborers in 1829. The mill, cistern, ruins of the sugar works, and an avenue of mahogany trees are still present on the site.

The tour also included a drive past *Gilbert's Estate*, now home to the GARD Centre. In 1839 the estate consisted of 313 acres and had 158 enslaved laborers. Nathaniel Gilbert founded the estate and was speaker of the House of Assembly. He is also responsible for bringing Methodism to Antigua in 1760 after being introduced to the teachings of John Wesley in England by his brother. He instructed the enslaved laborers in Methodism from the steps of his estate house who, upon his death, kept the religion alive for many years before a Methodist minister was sent out from England.

In total, the tour featured 28 sugar estates as well as other historical and modern points of interest. A strongpoint of the tour is in highlighting the local craftsmanship of Antiguan today. We look forward to offering this bus tour and additional ones in the near future!

Muse News

By Michele Henry

New Exhibits at the Museum

The Museum is pleased to announce a new interactive exhibit of a model of a 19th-century working steam engine, which was recently refurbished by Architect Eric Smith. Thank you to Colombian Emeralds for donating the case for the exhibit!



Mrs. Lisa Nicholson was the first to operate the switch to turn on the new exhibit.



Mr. Walter Berridge, HAS Chairman, also tries out the new exhibit.

The Digital Project-Funded by Mill Reef

Thirty-three reels of Microfilm including the Tudway Papers and the correspondence of Samuel Martin have been digitized and are now available and open to the General Public for viewing. Please be advised that looking through these records can be difficult to read, because of style changes and the other big differences between our world and the world of long passed writers. You will have to pay attention to details to decipher the often cryptic pages. The newly digitized collection also includes the *Antigua Free Press Newspapers 1829-1895*. These records are much easier to read as they are in type print. Persons wishing to view the information must call the Museum library to make an appointment. 462-4930.

The Historical Society and Museum of Antigua and Barbuda would like to thank the Mill Reef Fund for helping us to preserve the past to enrich the future.

Re-launch of *Shipwrecks* book a Success

On February 2, 2012, the Museum re-launched the book, *Shipwrecks and other Marine Disasters* by Desmond Nicholson. The re-launch also included a presentation on the *Freelance*, the Antiguan sailboat that represented the country in the 1976 Bicentennial Parade in New York, USA. The evening began with a short presentation by Mrs. Lisa Nicholson who gave an overview of how the *Freelance* made its way to Antigua, starting out as a charter yacht owned by the Nicholson family and then becoming the pride of the Caribbean by being the only yacht with an all black crew to sail in the Bicentennial parade, captained by Sir Hugh Bailey.

The evening continued with a presentation by Mr. Gerald Price who gave those in attendance an inside view of the voyage of the *Freelance*. From rum parties to almost sinking off the coast of Bermuda, the story of *Freelance* is a truly Antiguan tale full of

laughs, mishaps, but in the end perseverance and much-earned pride. The event was very well attended and we were honoured to have Her Excellency Dame Louise Lake-Tack, Governor General of Antigua and Barbuda in attendance as well.

Stephen Hayes donates U.S. Consul Archives to the Museum

Mr. Stephen Hayes has graciously donated several archives to the Museum including U.S. Consular correspondence dating to the nineteenth century. Mr. Hayes' great grandfather served as the first U.S. Consul to Antigua in the nineteenth century and the archives reveal not just information about relations between Antigua, and other British Caribbean Colonies, and the United States, but also gives great insights into Antiguan society during this time period. We are grateful to Mr. Hayes for this generous donation!

Faunal Collection to be moved to Brooklyn College

Dr. Reg Murphy recently visited the Carnegie Museum in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania to move an extensive faunal collection, excavated in Antigua between 1990-1991 by Martin Fuess, to Brooklyn College. The collection had been sent to the Carnegie Museum to be analyzed but lack of funding and staff meant the task was never finished. It was decided the collection should remain at the Carnegie, though, because of the lack of proper storage and conservation space for the collection here in Antigua. The collection is being moved to Brooklyn College where Dr. Sophia Perdikaris, who is undergoing research in Barbuda, will oversee the analysis of the collection. Dr. Perdikaris is a faunal expert specializing in fish studies.

New Members

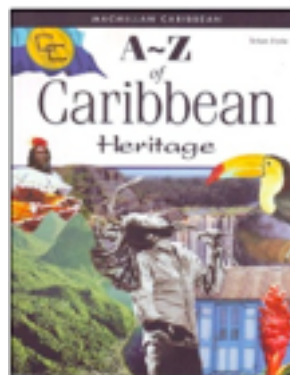
The Historical and Archaeological Society and the Museum of Antigua & Barbuda would like to welcome our newest members:

- Marc and Christine Bowers
- Margaret White

New Acquisitions

For donating to the Museum Library, special thanks are going out to:

Brian Dyde for his latest magnificent book entitled, *A-Z of Caribbean Heritage*



Former students of St. John's Girls School who donated two lovely framed pictures of the St. John's Girls School which was established in the 1990s and a pamphlet containing the names of teachers and some of the students of the old St. John's Girls School.

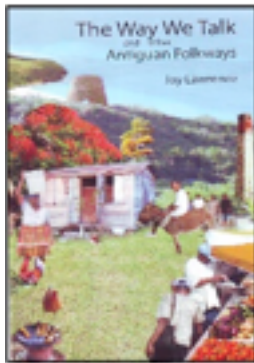


The Old St. John's Girls School

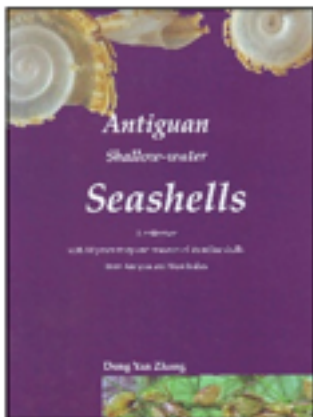


Bird-eye view of St. John's Girls School

Joy Lawrence for her lovely book in the newest version, *The Way We Talk and Other Antiguan Folkways*



Deng Yan Zhang who donated a magnificent copy of his book called, *Antiguan Shallow-water Seashells: A Collection with 18 Years Study and Research of Shore-Line Shells from Antigua and West Indies*.



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

April, May, June 2012 HAS NEWSLETTER, No. 117

Upcoming Events

May

TBA *Myths, Legends, and Secret Places* Presented by Dr. Reg Murphy

June

June 4-June 29: The California State University: Chico field school will be underway for the sixth straight year at Betty's Hope under the direction of Dr. Georgia Fox. Be sure to stop by the site to see how the excavations are going!

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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|-------------------------------|---|
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| Student | \$ 15 EC |
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