

The St Helena Ambassador

... An Extraordinary Place on a Path to Prosperity



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ST HELENA MUSEUM AND POST OFFICE COLLABORATE ON ARCHIVES

The project currently under way to rescue historic documents from the cellar of the Post Office in Jamestown has its origins in a visit by Barry Burns and Bernard Mabbett, well known philatelic specialists for St Helena, in 2009. They were allowed only brief access to the space, though this was sufficient time for them to appreciate the potential for important documents to survive. The Post Office approached the Museum of St Helena for help with sorting the records, and Edward Baldwin volunteered to take on the task during 2010. But due to management changes at the Post Office, he was unable to do the work at the time. Late in 2012, Barry and Bernard advised the Governor that they had



arranged their current visit for March/April 2013. Their visit is being partly funded by the award of a UK based philatelic scholarship. They arrived on 11 March 2013 with two friends, Wilf Vevers and Stefan Heijtz. Wilf's special interest is the postal history of Ascension Island, the Anglo-Boer War camps on St Helena and the Falkland Islands and its dependencies. Stefan is a leading authority on the philately and postal history of the Falkland Islands, as well as early St Helena postal history. The philatelists volunteered to carry out a comprehensive survey of the Post Office cellar - and the Museum of St Helena engaged the services of Edward (Acting

Director of the Museum) to supervise and to take care of the conservation side of the project. A preliminary survey had shown that in addition to the usual pests of paper, paper mites and silverfish, the cellar contents had been attacked by cockroaches and white ant. To ensure safe archival storage of any retained material, it would be necessary to freeze it to at least minus 18°C for a minimum of 48 hours, to kill off the insects. In addition to Post Office files, they found quantities of papers relating to the Government Savings Bank and copies of Government Gazettes and Public Notices. There were also post boxes, and canisters used for the experimental mail airdrop from a Hercules aircraft onto Prosperous Bay Plain in 1982. All the retained material has been moved to the 20ft reefer container, generously lent to the Museum for the project by Gregory Cairns-Wicks. The refrigeration was turned on over the first weekend and achieved a temperature of minus 19°C.

Continued on page 2



To date, items of interest rescued include:

- Records of mails arriving and despatched on Royal Mail Ships, 1860s onwards.
- Project files for most new stamp issues from 1959 to 1998, including initial design ideas, printers' proofs and printing and sales statistics.
- Records of stamp stocks held, transferred and sold from the 1880s to the late 1990s. Plus some recent stamp issues of St Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha as displayed as sales notices in the Post Offices, late 1970s to 1990s.

- Government Gazettes, Public Notices, numerous Government reports and Budget Estimates.

Staff Lists and other material have also been retained for checking against the Castle Archive holdings in order possibly to fill any gaps. Any duplicates will be offered to Rhodes House, Bodleian Library, Oxford, which has large holdings of St Helena archive material.



EDDIE PALMER DEPARTS



Eddie Palmer (DfID Representative on St Helena), arrived on Island in June 2006 and will return to the UK on 22 April 2013. Eddie's role has been focused on building the relationship between DfID (Department

for International Development) and St Helena Government. He communicated to DfID the problems that St Helena was facing in terms of progress and development, in turn building the profile of DfID on St Helena. Eddie was on-Island when the first airport procurement process fell through, but has remained to see the first steps of construction. 'I am happy to be involved in aiding St Helena in becoming ready for economic development' said Eddie. Although sad about leaving, Eddie is happy about doing the job he set out to do. He commented 'I want to see ordinary Saints benefit from an expanding economy, I want people to think how the airport can benefit them and possibly partner up with outside investors and get involved in economic development.' Continuing, Eddie said that in time St Helena can become self-sustainable and will no longer need DfID.

OWEN JAMES DEPARTS

Government Economist Owen James arrived on St Helena in April 2011 and will be returning to the UK on 22 April 2013. Owen has been involved in a range of projects, including taking the lead on a variety of areas in the MOU, which played a vital role in securing the airport. He also produced the *Sustainable Development Plan* and *Sustainable Economic Development Plan*. These two documents have shaped the direction the Island has moved in and will continue to do for a number of years. Owen said: 'I have really enjoyed myself. I've just tried to shape everything towards getting the Island prepared for air access, getting investors, reducing the size of Government and growing the private sector. The thought of flights landing in less than three years is immensely rewarding, although I hope Saints do all they can to grasp the opportunities.' Owen is returning to London to work for the UK Government, employed by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills as an Economic Adviser.



During March a series of public participation events were held around the Island, conducted by Social Policy Planner Paul McGinney. Paul is responsible for developing and implementing a national Social Policy Plan that supports the Island's Sustainable Development Plan and the overall vision of SHG for **'strengthened community and family life through vibrant economic growth, effective management of the environment, with opportunities for all to participate, within a framework of effective government and law.'**



From the participation events and meetings held at various organisations, such as the Community Care Complex, Shape and New Horizons, to community public meetings, sessions with Councillors, plus surveys - a full range of residents have expressed their views and will have a direct input into the plan. Paul said that a number of common themes were raised and many positives were drawn out that the public felt should be protected in the future, such as strong community and social cohesion, cultural traditions, an increasing population and achievements in sports. Continuing, Paul said 'Many members of the community were equally concerned about other groups as well as themselves. The young wanted better care for the elderly; the elderly wanted more opportunities for the young.' One of the main points was about how to achieve an equal and fair society for all. The current developments on the Island naturally proved to be a subject of interest, raised by many residents, with some wanting to know how the airport would positively affect

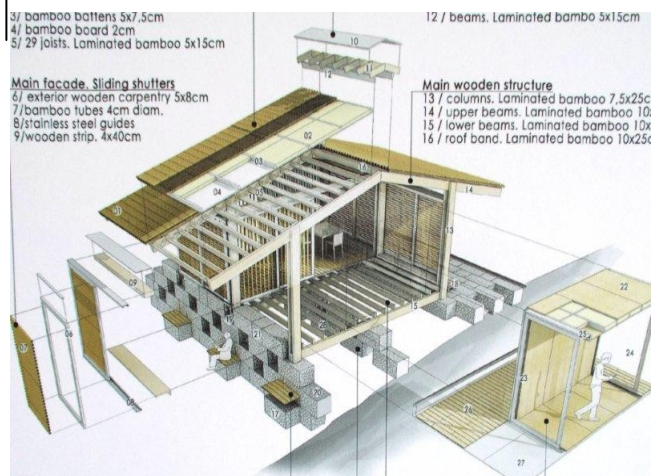
them and their families.

From all the issues raised, key objectives will be established alongside actions to achieve them. The draft Social Policy Plan will then be made available to members of the public, to give further comments before going through the political process.

The main aim for all who contributed in these social policy events was to make St Helena **'a better place to live, a better place to work and a better place to raise a family.'**

HOMES OF THE FUTURE

Alongside the international architectural design competition, was a competition created for the students of Prince Andrew School. From 5 – 30 April students will be able to see their designs for a St Helena House of the Future alongside the finalists of the international architectural competition. Prince Andrew School Headteacher Vanessa Tissington said: 'We are very keen to say to the students that there's a career in architecture and building waiting for them if they have the drive and the imagination. Seeing the looks on the faces of the students when James Stewart (the Government's Architectural Advisor) gave a presentation on design, it was clear that this is a subject that excites them all.'



A Finalist of the International Architectural Competition

St Helena's Sustainable Economic Development Plan highlights that whilst tourism will be the largest activity driving development of our economy, it will not be the only activity. After a period of detailed consultations and a workshop with stakeholders of the agriculture sector -



'Growing Forward' a draft Policy and Implementation Strategy - has been produced. This will guide development of the sector over the medium term.

Darren Duncan, Director of Agriculture and Natural Resources said: 'The National Agriculture Policy and Implementation Strategy has been established to guide development of our agriculture sector going forward. This framework will be used as a national tool to guide more joined-up and co-ordinated annual planning and implementation of agriculture programmes and activities that support agriculture. This will benefit us nationally, principally through improved contributions to our food supplies and better management of our production assets and environment as a whole'.

Martin Joshua of Joshua Brothers Covered Production Ltd represents the agriculture industry on the Board of Enterprise St Helena. Martin has polytunnels at Harpers which provide the Island with a sustainable supply of crops. The policy will encourage and guide individuals like Martin to contribute to the Island's agriculture and provide direct benefits to members of the community.

Growing Forward was published on 26 March for public comment, for a period of six weeks ending Friday 3 May 2013.

An electronic copy of the document is available on the homepage of the SHG website (www.sainthelena.gov.sh)

All responses will be considered by the policy team and presented to the Natural Resources, Development and Environment Committee, as part of the process to agree a final draft for ExCo approval.

SPIRE APPEAL

The Appeal for replacing the spire on St James Church was launched on 28th January 2013, by His Excellency the Governor. The other patron of the Appeal is the Lord Bishop of St Helena, Richard Fenwick. Donations have been received from people on Island and overseas. **Please note that the appeal fund account details have changed to the following:**

- Bank of St Helena Account with Lloyds TSB.
- Payable to: LLOYDS TSB
- Account Name : BANK OF ST. HELENA
- Account No: 02936318
- Sort Code: 30-00-09

Beneficiary Reference: Bank of St Helena for payment to the St James Restoration Account.

Fundraising activities are being arranged. This will start off with a sponsored walk up Jacob's Ladder on 20 April, led by Father Roy Doxley in his robes, who extends an invitation to anyone who wishes to join him. Proceeds from the climb will be shared by the appeal and SHAPE.

