

The St Helena Ambassador

... An Extraordinary Place on a Path to Prosperity



Issue 39 January 2016

Hokulea Canoe Visits



Hōkūle‘a (Hokulea, pictured above right), or ‘Star of Gladness’, began as a dream of reviving the legacy of exploration, courage, and ingenuity that brought the first Polynesians to the archipelago of Hawaii. The canoes that brought the first Hawaiians to their island home had passed into history. Cultural extinction felt dangerously close to many Hawaiians when artist Herb Kane dreamed of rebuilding a double-hulled sailing canoe similar to the ones that his ancestors had sailed.

Though more than 600 years had passed since the last of these canoes had been seen, this dream brought together people of diverse backgrounds and professions to build the vessel. Since she was first built and launched in



the 1970s, Hokulea continues to bring people together from all walks of life. Hokulea operates without modern navigational equipment, relying on ancient techniques such as using the stars, wind, and sea conditions to



Crew meets Acting Governor Sean Burns

navigate. At 16.45hrs on Friday 8 January 2015, Hokulea moored in James Bay for the first time. After a few days of provisioning and other preparations, Hokulea is now continuing to voyage across the Atlantic Ocean (also for the first time ever) and is expected to make landfall in South America at the coastal city of Natal, located in north-eastern Brazil, in late January.

To the Polynesians, she is more than a voyaging canoe - she represents the common desire shared by the people of Hawaii, the Pacific, and the world to protect their most cherished values, techniques and places from disappearing.

With each of her early voyages, Hokulea brought revelations of how their ancestors navigated across open ocean, found islands, and settled Polynesia.

Captain Bruce Blankenfeld said:

“Coming here to St Helena we didn’t know what to expect, but it is a beautiful Island. We are so lucky to be the guys on this voyage - to bring and share with the rest of the world. We have been on a tremendous learning experience, exposed to various cultures and the planet itself, which has been extraordinary. It has been wonderful, just as we expected it would be.”

Community Forest Project

St Helena's Community Forest Project (2013-2016) is a three-year Darwin Initiative funded project run by the St Helena National Trust - aiming to enhance local and endemic biodiversity and to provide educational activities on the Island. Through its trained Forest School Practitioner, working closely with the Education Directorate, the project has successfully set-up the first ever Forest Schools programme on St Helena.

This focuses on developing three sustainable endemic restoration sites at High Peak, Blue Point and Millennium Forest - as part of its outreach to schoolchildren, it also supports the development and maintenance of 'mini-forests' at each primary school.

Community Forests Coordinator, Cynthia LLAS, said: *"We held a volunteer event on 5 December 2015 which saw a good number of people enjoying the moment, learning about conservation and engaging in the community in the care of Millennium Forest endemic plants."*

Advertised in local newspapers and on the radio, the Community Volunteer Day is a monthly event which takes

place at one of the restoration sites - either at High Peak, Blue Point or Millennium Forest, or at the School - with activities depending on the site and the season: watering in the dry season, and weeding in the winter time.

Funds raised on the day are really appreciated and go to the St Helena National Trust to support its work in the conservation of the Island's heritage.

Cynthia concluded:

"We want the community to be involved as much as possible in our work, which is why we created our Community Volunteer day."



Albatross Visits

On Monday 11 January 2016, the Cruise Liner MV Albatross moored in James Bay around 11.45hrs - with 648 passengers and 358 crew.

Stalls were set up in the Mule Yard, a live band played, and tours were available - as well as food and refreshments. The MV Albatross had voyaged from Ascension Island and stayed in James Bay for the day, en route to Walvis Bay.



St Helena On the Move

The first ever 'St Helena On the Move' weekly challenge took place on Tuesday this week, 12 January 2016. The challenge is to run 3km, starting at the Honeymoon Chair at the wharf at 16.30hrs, progressing up Main St through to Napoleon St, then to Seales Corner, around St Johns flats and then back to the wharf via China Lane.

ESH and New Horizons will be holding this event for the next seven weeks, every Tuesday afternoon.

The first event saw around 37 people take part.



Participants who complete five of the seven races will receive a beautiful *St Helena On the Move* 2016 T-shirt.

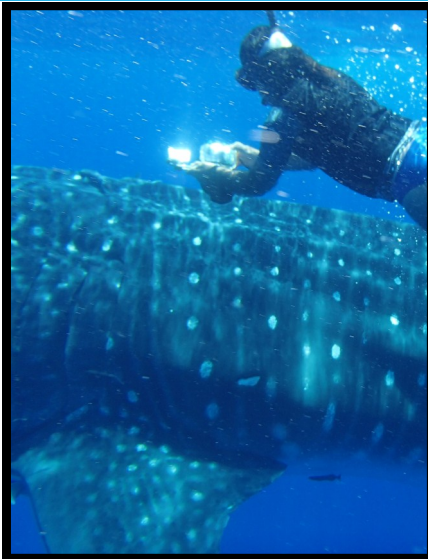
Although entry is free of charge, a donation to New Horizons is welcome.



Also at the event, information is available about how ESH can support your personal development in the year ahead in education, training, business development and tourism.

For further information, contact Chanelle Marais at the Tourism Office on 22158 or e-mail: chanelle.marais@tourism.co.sh

US Aquarium Team On-Island

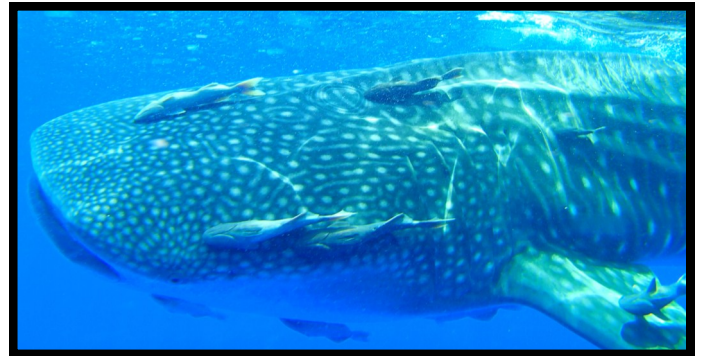


A specialist team from the Georgia Aquarium in the US arrived on St Helena for a second time on Monday 4 January 2016 - to conduct further research into the Whale Sharks in St Helena's waters.

This includes verifying the sex of the sharks, their size, and their geographical movements - information which will be entered into specialists databases worldwide. This information will also help ENRD to support sustainable marine tourism development.

The team will also be satellite tagging the Whale Sharks and collecting genetic samples, to help establish population numbers, movement and individuality.

Dr Al Dove, Director of Research & Conservation at Georgia Aquarium and collaborator Rafael de la Parra, are building on the research they conducted on their first visit.



This time they are joined by project coordinator Harry Webb, curator Chris Schreiber, and dive safety officer Jeff Reid.

They are working closely with an ENRD team led by Elizabeth Clingham.



Human Rights Office Opens



On Thursday 10 December 2015, a small group gathered to witness the opening of the Human Rights & Equality Office situated in the PWD yard at the Castle. The office, now in its permanent home, has actually been running for over seven years - during which time we have seen 'Rights' and 'Responsibilities' grow across all sectors of the community. Human Rights Commissioner, Cathy Hopkins, said: *"St Helena was the first overseas territory to receive human rights training under the initial Commonwealth Foundation and DFID-supported project. We were also the first territory to adopt a National Human Rights Action*

Plan and I suspect we may have been the first to establish a National Human Rights Commission. If this is the case, then it is something that we should be justly proud of.

"We expect the office to be as busy as it has been over the past few years, if not busier. I hope that over the next decade, St Helena will be proud of her work to uphold Equality and Human Rights for all of her community. I will simply say a very sincere thank you to everyone who has played their part along the way."

Mr Basil George, former Chairman of the Citizenship Commission, was then invited to part the ribbon and formally open the office.



Christmas Eve Parade through Jamestown



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