

# The St Helena Ambassador

... An Extraordinary Place on a Path to Prosperity



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## MV Saga Pearl II Visits

**J**amestown is a hub of activity today (7Feb) as the Island welcomes its second Cruise Liner visit for 2014. The MV Saga Pearl II arrived in James' Bay early this morning with 389 passengers on board. Solomon's Shipping Agency indicated that around 215 passengers had booked for pre-arranged tours. Passengers booked on these tours will be able to see views from Two Gun Saddle, Napoleon's Tomb, Napoleon's House, Stitches Ridge, Plantation Grounds, Ladder Hill and Jamestown. Also planned for the day are stalls selling local crafts and souvenirs in front of St James's Church and at Longwood Green. Sally Hickling will be selling locally made spirits at the Mule Yard and SHAPE will be selling refreshments at the top of Jacob's Ladder for those braving the Jacob's Ladder climb. Longwood House and the Tomb are open to the public and Napoleonic tour guides and attendants were at both sites to assist visitors and ensure a great experience. Tourism Manager, Merrill Joshua, said: *"As always, we are delighted and grateful for the visit of yet another cruise ship. MV Saga Pearl II is delivering 389 visitors to our Island and the aim of today is to give the private sector an opportunity to gain profit in exchange for a good visitor experience. Residents are key in the success of a cruise ship visit like this as we are the main attraction. If we do what we do best and be our friendly selves, I am confident that we will exceed any expectations our guests have of our Island. Thank*



*you to all who are supporting this cruise ship visit."* En-route from Cape Town to Ascension, this is the MV Saga Pearl II's first visit to the Island.

**L to R:** MV Saga Pearl II and RMS St Helena in James' Bay



## Achievements in IT

IT Development and Support Officers, Jessica Young, Craig Williams and Christine Henry, from SHG's IT Section have recently completed training courses (funded by SHG) to become internationally certified Technicians in their fields.

Between them, Jessica, Craig and Christine have worked within Government IT for just over 17 years. Christine started in 2003 as the Executive Officer and transferred in 2010 to her current role. Craig underwent work experience in the IT Section while at school, before being employed in 2009 as the IT and AV Technician at Prince Andrew School, where he worked for one year before moving into his current post. Jessica took over from Craig in 2010 and within the last year transferred to work with the IT Development and Support Team.

Jessica is now certified at CompTIA A+ Level, having studied a 12 month course via distance learning. Jessica's course covered the fundamentals of Computer Technology, Installation and Configuration of PCs, Laptops and related hardware and Basic Networking. Jessica was also able to gain skills in configuring PC operating systems as well as configuring common features for mobile operating systems such as Android and Apple iOS. To complete her course, Jessica sat two exams covering maintenance of PCs, mobile devices, laptops, operating systems and printers.

Jessica said of her achievement:

*"I am the first person in IT to have completed this course via distance learning and sat both my exams on Island. Studying alongside my normal job role with only online resources and no dedicated tutor was challenging but the end result is rewarding. Now that I am certified I am proud to have come this far."*

Craig and Christine completed their training in Cape Town, with IT Training Company, 2KO International.

Both Craig and Christine studied for the Microsoft Certified Solutions Associate (MCSA) and the Microsoft Certified Solutions Expert (MCSE) qualifications.

Craig passed the first two exams and qualified as a Microsoft

Certified Professional and is Network + certified. He will now sit his final exam on-Island to become a Microsoft Certified Solutions Associate.

Craig said:

*"I am very pleased with my achievements and that I have an international qualification to show for my hard work."*



*Studying in Cape Town was challenging because prior to the training I was not really exposed to servers - but instead worked more in a supporting role. I am glad to have been able to work towards my certification."*

Like Craig, Christine is Network + certified but is also a Microsoft Certified Solutions Associate (MCSA). Christine needs to sit two more exams to become a Microsoft Certified Solutions Expert (MCSE). Christine's training in Cape Town saw her study for the MCSA: Windows

Server 2012 qualification, where she covered modules in Installing and Configuring and Administering Windows Server 2012 and Configuring Advanced Windows Server 2012 Services.

Christine said:

*"Being certified is a very big achievement for me having started out in the IT Section as an Executive Officer and working my way up to my current role. To be certified within two years of becoming an IT Development and Support Officer is great and through my hard work and dedication I feel I have done really well to have achieved this."*

Both Craig and Christine studied in a class based environment undertaking both theory and practical work – learning how to install and build systems - and actually building the systems on individual computers.

Jessica will leave the Island on 19 March 2014 to undergo the same training programme as Craig and Christine to become MCSA and MCSE certified.

Jessica, Craig and Christine would like to thank their families and the SHG IT Team for their help and support in enabling them to become qualified.

## New Bus Shelters

In celebration of the Queens Diamond Jubilee (a celebration in 2012 marking the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Accession of Queen Elizabeth II), His Excellency Governor Capes donated three bus shelters to St Helena.

Two shelters have already been erected, one at White Gate and one more recently at Tern Drive, near Three Tanks. The third will be installed at Ropery Field, Longwood.

The bus shelters are Georgian style, made of perspex in a metal frame and offer the public and schoolchildren a shelter from unfavourable weather conditions when waiting for transport.



## Queen's Baton - 11 Days Away

**S**t Helena is gearing up for the arrival of the Commonwealth Games Queen's Baton on Wednesday 19 February 2014.

The Baton is currently in South Africa and will be handed over to the Captain of the RMS on Friday 14 February, when a reception will be held on board while the ship is in port in Cape Town.

An on-Island programme has been prepared by the National Amateur Sports Association (NASAs) of St Helena which will give most people the opportunity to see and touch the Baton as it travels throughout the Island during its three day visit.

NASAs Chairperson, Mr Eric Benjamin commented:

*"I am personally honoured to be a small part of a universal team who are managing local activities related to the Queen's Baton Relay. I know that my local colleagues also share that happy experience."*

*"This will be our third Queen's Baton Relay celebrations. The first took place in May 2005 and the second in February 2010. On each past occasion St Helena has captured international acclaim for its jubilant reception of the Queen's Baton."*

*"The Queen's Baton Relay raises the profile of St Helena and gives us outstanding international publicity. And we are more fortunate than many other Commonwealth countries in that everyone here can have the opportunity to see and touch the*

*Baton."*

The Baton will be received on St Helena by HE Governor Capes, at the Seafront, with schoolchildren and members of the public looking on. The Baton will then be passed to participants of past Commonwealth and Island Games before the Primary Schools relay the Baton across the seafront to Jacob's Ladder. It will then be carried up the ladder by Prince Andrew School students, before being transferred back to Jamestown by members of New Horizons.

The Baton will tour the whole of the Island during its stay, including making visits to the Airport site, the Schools, the Hospital, the Community Care Complex, Barnview and sheltered accommodation.

The community are encouraged to view and touch the Baton at the various assembly points and take part in this international event.

The Queens Baton will be accompanied by Commonwealth Games Federation Representative Mrs Louise Martin, Queen's Baton Relay Team Member Ms Shona Purves, three members of the BBC Team and a Queen's Baton Relay Photojournalist.



## St Helena Immigration in the UK

**S**t Helena Immigration Officers, Fiyanna Maggott and Tina Yon were recently funded by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's Queen's Diamond Jubilee Fund, on placements in the UK.

Fiyanna and Tina travelled around the UK on exposure visits to Stansted Airport, Farnborough Airport and others covered by the Heathrow Small Ports Team. They also attended training events in Liverpool and Hounslow.

During their various placements, Fiyanna and Tina studied forgery and counterfeit documents, interview techniques and risk profiling. At Stansted Airport, London, training included observation of Immigration operations within the Airport.

The officers commented on their experience:

*"There are similarities between the methods used by UK Border Force and St Helena Immigration at the border, but also differences which we can learn from. The classroom training was very helpful, especially with regard to improving our knowledge in forgery detection."*

*"The airport visits were really important. There is a much wider nationality profile passing through the border every day in the UK. We are preparing for a slightly different set of challenges on*

**Immigration Officers Tina Yon and Fiyanna Maggott with Mike Hurst, UK Border Force, at Farnborough Airport.**



*St Helena. The visit to the airport at Farnborough was especially relevant, as it is small compared to others and has measures in place that we can adopt on Island when working at the Airport."*

Immigration Executive, Lewis Evans added:

*"We asked the UK Border Force and the Nationality Directorate to provide a tailored programme of training for St Helenian Immigration Officers. We wanted to make sure the training delivered to Fiyanna and Tina was informative, useful and relevant to St*

*Helena. I am really pleased with the programme and believe it struck a good balance between classroom learning and operational visits. Without the support from colleagues in the UK it would have been impossible to achieve exposure to airport immigration operations ahead of the Airport opening on St Helena, so we are especially grateful for that opportunity."*

Fiyanna has been with Immigration for 23 years and has been on training previously, covering aspects of passports and nationality. Tina has been with the Immigration Office for two and a half years. Both thanked the Governor's Office, the Police Directorate and the UK Border Force and Nationality Directorate for making this training possible.

## 'Don't Listen to Those who Say You Can't' - Successful Saint Abroad

**N**ineteen years ago, St Helenian Mario Gough, formerly of the Briars, left the Island to embark on an Engineering course in the UK. In later years after his course, Mario decided for a change and opted instead to study film directing. Since then Mario has never looked back and has gone on to make a name for himself in the world of film. Self-funded, Mario underwent an intense six month course in 'Digital Production' at City University, while still working as an Engineer. Mario explained:

*"I chose to study an intense six month course, rather than a three to four year degree in filming, because it was precise and to the point. Mostly everyone who comes out from studying a long degree has limited 'know how' on filming because lectures teach a lot of film history. That didn't interest me because I'd already read about it, and I wanted to get into the action."*

Choosing this method of study meant Mario worked long hours during the day and attended night classes. But Mario still proclaims he 'loved it'. Since then, he has set up his own company, 'Piller2post' Productions, which has just recently merged with London company 'Synced'. So far they have produced music videos, commercials and short films which Mario has written and directed himself and which are often featured at film festivals.

Mario's filming has also taken him to Cuba, where he made a documentary on 'Who is Assata Shakur', Godmother to well-known music artist Tupac.

Mario explained:

*"Being part of a movement against racism called the Black Panthers, Assata was the forefront. She was framed for supposedly killing a police officer. Her friends got her out of America into Cuba, so we went in search of her and her story."*

Mario has also travelled to the Maldives to film a documentary on corruption after the massive tsunami in 2004 devastated the Islands.

Mario said:

*"I shot the film for a girl who came from the Maldives and who knew that money raised was only given to the tourist Islands - and not for the locals on the southern Islands."*

During their stay in the Maldives things got a bit hairy and the Mario was followed, his calls traced and his luggage was searched before he could return to the UK!

Mario has recently landed a contract with Michelin Star Chefs filming their various dishes for other chefs to view. There is one memorable experience which Mario will never forget. He was asked to be behind Set as a runner by a director. Arriving dressed in his black suit



with a height of 6ft 2", Mario was perfect to play the part of a celebrity's bodyguard on camera when an actor didn't show up. He commented ironically:

*"It was so funny that when I wanted to act I didn't get anywhere, and when I wanted to be behind camera I had to go in front of camera to play a part. My friends will never let me live down the embarrassing pose I had to do."* One of Mario's future goals is to make a film on St Helena about Napoleon. One of his favourite directors is Stanley Kubrick, who was obsessed with Napoleon but never succeeded in making a film. Mario's inspiration comes from a book called 'Stanley Kubrick's Napoleon: The Greatest Film Never Made'.

Mario explains his idea:

*"I want to film about a great Emperor who was on top of the world and all of a sudden he is broken and left stranded on St Helena. That must really mess with your head."*

Mario visited St Helena over Christmas and filmed the work of SHAPE (St Helena's Active Participation in Enterprise) in the hope of gaining more publicity through their website etc.

Mario returned to the UK in early February and is to travel to Italy and Scotland to do more filming.

When asked whether he felt he had accomplished a lot since he left the Island Mario said:

*"I suppose I have achieved in the fact that I started off with no funding and have learnt and taught myself so much. I think if you are a young person, chase your dreams, especially creative ones. **Erase the negativity and don't listen to those who say you can't.**"*



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