

The St Helena Ambassador

... An Extraordinary Place on a Path to Prosperity



Issue: 17. March 2014

St Helena Gets Ready for Commonwealth Day

Commonwealth Day is an opportunity for member



Team Commonwealth
The 2014 Commonwealth theme

nations to promote understanding of global issues, international cooperation and the work of Commonwealth organisations. It is celebrated each year on the second Monday in March.

This year, Commonwealth Day falls on Monday 10 March and the theme is 'Team Commonwealth' - which expresses the spirit of friendship and motivation towards the shared goals and values that exist between Commonwealth members.

This year St Helena's participation on the day is being led by Legislative Council Members and planned activities (opposite) will involve Councillors and some 26 schoolchildren from the Primary Schools and Prince Andrew School - with the focus being on 'Team Work'.

Councillor Les Baldwin, who heads the Councillors' Commonwealth Day Working Group said:

"As a new Council, we very much see ourselves taking the lead on many issues involving the public. And we remember the excellent guidance we received from a visiting CPA delegation and thought this would be an opportunity to give them an update on what we have achieved since our induction training. Bearing in mind the theme for this year's Commonwealth Day is Team Commonwealth we are keen to emphasise that very little is achieved on St Helena that does not involve close teamwork."

Commonwealth Day Programme

9am Commonwealth Assembly at all Schools

Student Participation - Team Projects

9.30am Spruce Project, Harford Primary School

10am Tree Planting, Millennium Forest

10.45am MotorCross Track at Bradleys, then Airport Site at Prosperous Bay

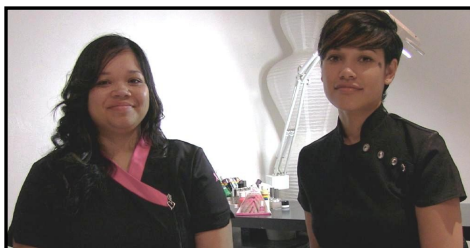
12pm Spruce Project, St Paul's Primary School

1pm Recycling, SHAPE, New Ground

Video Conferences with:

11.30am St Helena and Welsh Youth Parliaments

2.30pm Legislative Council and CPA Delegation



“ Working as a team we are able to offer the client the whole package. It makes it a lot easier for customers - offering a one stop shop for their convenience. It has definitely become an advantage working together. **”**
Sisters in business, Natalie Lawrence and Noleen Fowler



“ No one Councillor can achieve anything without the support of other Councillors. It is therefore imperative that you gain support for your initiatives and work together as Team **”**
Councillor Baldwin



“ Teamwork is very important at New Horizons. We do a lot of sport here, but teamwork is not only essential in sporting activities but also for our other aims such as building life skills and preparing our young people for life as adults. **”**
Nicky Stevens, New Horizons

The new Head of the Governor's Office, Sean Burns, accompanied by his wife Marina, arrived on Island in early February.

Sean joins the Governor's Office having previously served as the Administrator of Tristan da Cunha.

At a reception hosted by Governor and Mrs Capes on Saturday 15 February 2014, Sean and Marina were welcomed to the Island.

Governor Capes remarked:

"I'm delighted to welcome Sean and Marina to St Helena. Sean, a Diplomatic Service colleague, comes to St Helena having served for three years as Administrator on Tristan da Cunha. I worked with him for the last two of those years and found him to be an impressive and thoroughly reliable operator. He brings with him much valuable experience having also served in a number of other diplomatic postings around the world."

"The work of the Governor's Office is increasing steadily; it is much busier today than it was when I arrived two years ago. With Sean taking up his share of the strain I will be able to devote more time to getting out and about in the community, to be more accessible to those who want to talk with me about the issues of the day."

Sean added:

"Before Marina and I came to St Helena we were assured by our friends on Tristan that we would receive a warm welcome on the Island. We have not been disappointed and we thank everyone who has made our arrival so special. My wife and I are delighted to finally be on St Helena."

"We were also told to prepare ourselves for some spectacular scenery and although it is only early days, we already appreciate just how beautiful the Island is, and we look



L to R: Sean, Marina, Governor Capes, Tamara Capes

forward to seeing much more during our time on St Helena.

"I am not here however to admire the scenery but to do a job and I am delighted to be joining the Governor's team to offer support in what is going to be a very busy and critical time for the Island. I also look forward to working with colleagues across Government, the private sector and the community in general as the Island prepares itself for the opening of the Airport and the significant changes already taking place."

Sean is a member of Her Majesty's Diplomatic Service and his posting to St Helena is expected to be three years. As the Head of the Governor's Office on St Helena Sean will among other duties carry out the role of Acting Governor in the Governor's Absence.

Devoted Lace Maker Honours Life Long Tradition

Devoted St Helena Lace Maker, Jessica March, aged 87 of the Community Care Complex, has from a young age made and taught people how to make lace - an openwork fabric patterned with open holes.

Jessica has even made lace for Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and has made it her goal to present a piece of embroidered lace to every Governor who serves on St Helena during her lifetime. Jessica said:

"I have made friends with every Governor that has come here during my life, and I always give them a gift."

Jessica was seventeen years old when she met Governor Major William Bain Gray. The Governor's wife, Lady Bain Gray, after seeing Jessica's mother's lacework became friends with Jessica. Jessica was offered the chance to go to Scotland, but unfortunately wasn't allowed because her father and brother did not approve.

Jessica said:

"Lady Bain Gray told me that I must learn how to make lace for myself and I did. The only time I don't make lace is on a Sunday which is my rest day".

Jessica has made lace from a young age and has previously taught schoolchildren the embroidery work.

Jessica presented His Excellency Governor and Mrs Capes with a Lace Embroidered Tray Cloth at Plantation House on

Friday 14 February 2014. The tray cloth (pictured) features the St Helena Crest, the famous Wirebird and the Arum lily.

Governor Capes and Mrs Capes

remarked on Jessica's gift:

"There is only one in the world, and it's absolutely beautiful - thank you."

"Jessica is a special and amazing lady - she is always so positive and cheerful."

Jessica first met Governor Capes at Christmas 2011. The Governor recalls Jessica busy in her room making lace, and giving him a lace bookmark which he calls 'Jessica's Lace'.



publicrelationsofficer1@sainthelena.gov.sh



+ 290 22470



www.sainthelena.gov.sh

Governor Capes recently hosted two friends and colleagues at Plantation House for a short stay on St Helena Island.

Sir Richard Gozney KCMG, former Governor of Bermuda and former Ambassador to Indonesia, and Gordon Wetherell CMG, former Governor of Turks and Caicos - accompanied by their wives - enjoyed an eight day stay at the Georgian residence and were able to sample many of St Helena's delights.

In an interview with SAMS Radio 1 before they left the Island, both Sir Richard and Gordon remarked on the uniqueness of the Island and the opportunities they can see for the Island in the future.

Below are some excerpts from the Interview:

Tourism and Opportunities for Saints

"There are three characteristics here that are very promising for tourism - one is the warmth of the people who are genuinely helpful to visitors and want to see visitors having a good time. There's some very special scenery - the coastal scenery contrasting the dry volcanic rock with the deep blue sea down below and the green wooded areas up above - that's special too. And then there's the unique Napoleonic link for example.

"Tourism will not happen overnight because this is not a known holiday destination and you may find that it develops organically in stages as word of mouth gets around - the possibilities are here but it will take time.

"You're beginning in many ways with a blank sheet and you can develop tourism in ways that suit you best and in doing so making sure that the identity of the Island does not get spoiled in the process." - **Sir Richard Gozney**

"St Helena is very homogenous compared to some other Islands and I think this is partly because whereas in many of our Islands in the Caribbean, the big issue is how to control Immigration and how to retain their identity and not lose control over the destiny of their Islands. Here it seems to me that you've had to deal with something of the opposite - emigration from the Island - I think the challenge, indeed the opportunity you face with the Airport, is one of giving the opportunity to the Saints



L to R: Gordon Wetherell, Governor Capes and Sir Richard Gozney

overseas to integrate into the mother Island. The good opportunities for tourism and jobs for local Islanders coming back and the prospects for the future should be very good.

"The Island has some unique selling points and as time goes on and people get to know the Island, the distinctive things that St Helena has which no one else has." - **Gordon Wetherell**

Media in a Small Community

"It's good in a small community to have one or preferably two radio stations and two print media, that come out every week - like you have here - so that people can get not one but a couple of views of what's happening. It keeps everyone on their toes and you get a genuine sense of information which then encourages debate" - **Sir Richard Gozney**

"If you've got a good professional press service whether in the written word or in the media it can bring these issues to light and make sure that people understand them. People can get confused at times of great change, they're uncertain they don't know what's happening, the old certainties have gone, and it's a big responsibility for the media to bridge this." - **Gordon Wetherell**

Sir Richard Gozney and Gordon Wetherell are former colleagues of Governor Capes and both have long and distinguished careers in the Diplomatic Service.

Queen's Baton Visits St Helena



publicrelationsofficer1@sainthelena.gov.sh



+ 290 22470



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Are You a Litter Bug?

Litter has always been a major concern on St Helena as it defaces many of the Island's natural beauty spots.

One such area is Plantation Forest, where many Islanders and visitors alike go for a peaceful stroll in the trees.

Regular walkers through the Forest, Governor and Mrs Capes and their dog Wellington, have noticed the amount of litter strewn on the path behind the Agriculture and Natural Resources Directorate at Scotland. In less than 20 minutes, on one of his regular walks, Governor Capes was able to gather a vast variety of litter and bottles and cans which had previously contained alcohol.

Governor Capes remarked:

"It is a sad fact that some people among us see nothing wrong with littering a public place, but it seems even more offensive when they litter a place of such great natural beauty as Plantation Forest, where so many people enjoy a stroll with their children or their dogs."

"Many bottles we found were broken, leaving jagged pieces of glass in the grass. It really is hard to fathom such foolish and irresponsible behaviour. Rusty cans with sharp edges also present a risk to those walking in the area. Less hazardous, but nonetheless offensive, are the many cigarette packets, polystyrene food containers and other food wrappers dropped by the thoughtless few."



Littering around the Island could also pose a potential threat to St Helena's tourism future.

Governor Capes explained:

"We aspire to develop an economy based on tourism and to attract more tourists when we have air access. The uncaring minority, who spoil our public places with litter, endangering the health of the community, are also damaging efforts to grow our economy and preserve our environment."

To echo Governor Capes - **please keep the Island litter free. "If we all do our bit, no matter how small, we can keep the Island clean."**

Wheelie Bins for St Helena

As part of modernising domestic waste collection on the Island, St Helena Government (SHG) is soon to receive 1300 x 240 litre wheelie bins and 36 x 1100 litre wheeled bins to be distributed for use by households.

A contract between SHG and British Bins was signed on Monday 24 February 2014 for the procurement and supply of these bins, said Mike Durnford, Solid Waste Management Project Manager. He explained:

"The new bins are compatible with the lifting mechanism being retro-fitted to the new Refuse Collection vehicles, currently on order."

"The Anthracite Grey coloured bins will also be embossed with numbering on the lid to assist with the distribution process and future bin identification."

The bins will arrive later this year and distribution to

households will be managed by the Environmental Management Division (EMD) in line with the distribution strategy currently being drafted.

It is hoped that the bins will be in use by June 2014 to coincide with the completion of the Solid Waste Management Project. EMD thanks stakeholders for their support during the procurement process.



St Helena Government is now on Facebook :

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/St-Helena-Government/292300047580382>