

AUGUST 2023

# THE ST HELENA AMBASSADOR



## Editorial

Hi, welcome to the St Helena Ambassador!

In this edition you can read about 'milling' works which was carried out on Ladder Hill Road; a community event that took place to commemorate the 1st anniversary of the reburial of the liberated Africans; and about green turtle hatchlings that were released at Sandy Bay beach. Did you know that female green turtles reach maturity at 25 to 35 years, and every two to five years they undertake reproductive migrations and return to nest on a beach in the general area where they hatched decades earlier? With that in mind, we hope to see the hatchlings return to St Helena in the future!

If you'd like to contribute a story to the St Helena Ambassador, please feel free to contact me on tel: 22470 or via email:

[jodie.s-constantine@sainthelena.gov.sh](mailto:jodie.s-constantine@sainthelena.gov.sh).

**Jodie Scipio-Constantine**  
SHG Press Officer

## IN THIS ISSUE

**GREEN TURTLE  
HATCHLINGS  
SUCCESSFULLY  
RELEASED INTO THE  
OCEAN**

**ROADS SECTION  
CARRIES OUT MILLING  
WORKS ON LADDER HILL  
ROAD**

**TRIBUTE HELD IN  
REMEMBRANCE OF 1ST  
ANNIVERSARY OF THE  
REBURIAL OF LIBERATED  
AFRICANS**

# Green turtle hatchlings successfully released into the ocean



Turtles making their way to the ocean

At the time of publishing this article, 22 green turtle hatchlings were successfully released at Sandy Bay beach following a three-month incubation period. Here's the story:

On 10 May 2023, the Marine & Fisheries Conservation Section (MFCS) and the St Helena National Trust (Trust) were informed that a green turtle had attempted to nest at Rupert's beach.

Members from the MFCS and the Trust visited the beach and found that the turtle had attempted to create three nests. After a period of excavating each nest, the eggs were found in the nest closest to the entrance/exit of the beach. There were 144 eggs in total that were very fresh and covered in a mucus sack.

Rupert's is a small beach which meant that the nest could become flooded during high tides. For this reason, the teams decided to carefully excavate and relocate the eggs to an artificial nest which they created above the beach line.



Excavating the eggs from the nest

Green turtle eggs are laid and incubated in the nest and hatch around the 60 day mark. However, given that the eggs were laid during the winter period when St Helena experiences rain and cooler temperatures, the teams suspected that the hatching period would take slightly longer.

After the 60 day period, on 19 July 2023, the teams excavated the artificial nest chamber to check the development of the eggs. On assessment the eggs were deemed still viable and were re-covered with sand to continue their incubation period. The nest was monitored closely for progress during the following weeks.

On 10 August 2023, following another nest check, it was found that 11 hatchlings were fighting their way to the surface with more eggs below beginning to hatch. These hatchlings were removed from the artificial nest chamber and safely secured whilst the remaining eggs were re-covered to continue the hatching process.



Releasing turtles at Sandy Bay beach

Later that evening, the teams travelled to Sandy Bay beach to release the 11 hatchlings into the ocean. The same process was repeated as and when the turtles hatched.

It was decided to release the hatchlings at Sandy Bay beach because Rupert's beach is located in an industrial area with heavy artificial lighting and a jetty which could impair the natural biology of the newly hatched turtles, lowering their chances of making it to the ocean. While at Sandy Bay beach the turtles were given an area of beach to scurry to the ocean; this allowed their natural process of imprinting, meaning the hatchlings can remember St Helena from smell and magnetic fields which will allow them to return in the future to continue the life cycle.

*All photos featured in this article are courtesy of Cerys Joshua*

# Roads Section carries out milling works on Ladder Hill Road



Bobcat machine with sweeper attachment on Ladder Hill Road

St Helena Government's Roads Section has recently carried out 'milling' road surface works on Ladder Hill Road.

Milling is the process of removing the top layer of tarmac on a road without disturbing the underlying sub-base.

The Roads Section uses a Bobcat machine that has a milling drum attachment. The attachment consist of a milling drum 300mm wide, equipped with tungsten steel tips. The drum rotates and is lowered into the top surface, normally 3-5mm deep. The Bobcat machine then slowly drives forward and the road surface is milled. On completion of the milled section, the milling drum attachment is replaced with a sweeper (mechanical broom) attachment that enables the cleaning of the milled area.

The millings are then transported to Donkey Plain and re-used / recycled in day-to-day operations of road maintenance.

Milling works are carried out on selected parts of the road network for a number of reasons:

During road maintenance works over the years, layers of tarmac were added to the existing road surface. The surface layer has thickened and on hot sunny days, the thick surfacing layer becomes soft and pliable and with vehicle movement and gravity, the layer moves and creates an uneven driving surface.

On sunny days the thick layer also starts 'bleeding'. This is when the tarmac is softened from the heat and sometimes sticks to the tyres of vehicles.

Adding additional layers of tarmac over the years also adds further weight to the road which has a negative effect on the retaining walls along Ladder Hill Road. The retaining walls were originally constructed by hand in the 1600's and were not designed for the weights of vehicles in use today. Removing some of the excess tarmac, lessens the weight of the road which contributes to the durability and longevity of the road.

The milled surface also have a positive effect on the grip of the road, as the road is less smooth with better traction for vehicles, especially in wet weather conditions, which contributes to overall safety on the road.

Although the milled section of road might appear to be quite rough, over time with enough sunny hot days, the road surface will return to looking like any other road on-Island.



Bobcat milling an uneven section of roadway at the pedestrian crossing in Jamestown

# Tribute held in remembrance of 1st Anniversary of the reburial of Liberated Africans

A Tribute and Reflection event, in remembrance of the 1st Anniversary of the reburial of the liberated Africans, was held at Rupert's Valley between 10am and 3pm on Sunday, 20 August 2023.

The event was organised by the Liberated African Advisory Committee (LAAC) and the Saint Helena National Trust.

At 10am Head of Tourism, Matt Joshua, led a walking tour from Jamestown to Rupert's via Mundens. Walkers observed a bird's-eye view of Rupert's Valley, including the new developments in Rupert's, such as the Container Park, the historical landmarks, and the extent of the burial



grounds in the Valley where over 8,000 liberated Africans are buried.

Museum Director and member of the LAAC, Adam Sizeland, led two guided walking tours from Rupert's Beach through Rupert's Valley to the 'upper burial ground' where the 325 liberated African remains were exhumed in 2008, and reburied a year ago. During the tour participants were able to put themselves in the shoes of the liberated Africans as Adam spoke about their arrival to the Island and the ordeals they experienced while living on St Helena. The tours concluded at the 'upper burial grounds' where Adam discussed the discoveries made from the 325 exhumed remains.

Prior to the event 325 pebble stones were collected from Rupert's beach to represent the 325 individuals that were reburied in August 2022. School pupils from the three Primary Schools - Pilling, Harford and St Paul's - created a special tribute by placing their handprint, painted in different colours, on the stones. Throughout the day, the community were encouraged to place a stone on the Liberated African Cemetery gravesite as an act of tribute and reflection.