



Trust News

Saint Lucia National Trust

A New Direction

Since the start of this year the Saint Lucia National Trust members, Council and staff have been engaging in an exercise to develop a new strategic plan for the organization. This is a timely undertaking as the Trust prepares to celebrate its 34th anniversary on September 26th, 2009. According to the Council, it is time to revisit the mandate, structure and mode of operation against the background of the considerable changes in the national and international environment and heritage conservation landscapes.

The new strategic plan will cover the period 2009 to 2018 and will chart a new direction for the organization in what is expected to be a challenging and exciting epoch in its history. Some of the areas highlighted at the meetings include a Financial review and recommendations for enhancing revenue streams; Strategic Directions and proposed functions of the Trust for the next ten years; and Proposed Amendments to the SLNT Act of 1972.

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According to Consultant, Dr. Vasantha Chase next on the agenda is the completion of the Draft Strategy which will be ready for consultation by the second week of July. The Trust wishes to thank all members who have participated in the various consultations and encourages others when called upon to use this opportunity to share their vision so that the organization will better fulfill its mission to conserve Saint Lucia's rich heritage and meet your expectations.



Members attending the Strategic Directions Paper Consultation

Calling Young Advocates !

The number of applicants for the Saint Lucia National Trust's first ever Youth Environment Forum (YEF) is steadily increasing. The Forum, which is being organized in collaboration with various environmental agencies and ministries, is scheduled for July 13-17, 2009 and targets youngsters from all districts across the island between the ages of 7 and 18 years. The main objective is to empower youths to become advocates for environment and heritage conservation.

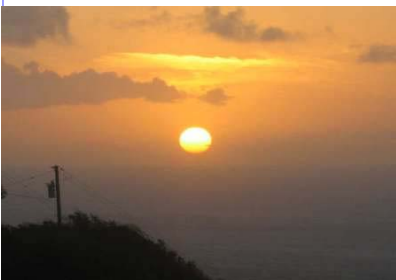
The programme of activities was practically designed by the youth, for the youth, with technical assistance from the SLNT, the SDES Section and the Department of Youth and Sports. As such, participants can rest assured that it will be a week of exciting educational activities, experiments, interactive sessions and field trips. Educational field trips have been scheduled for July 15th and the closing activity will be held at the Pigeon Island National Landmark on the fifth day, July 17th. ***The entire forum is absolutely free and transportation will be provided for participants from Soufriere, View Fort and surrounding areas.***

We trust that many parents and teachers will see the merit of this initiative and encourage their children/wards or students to apply in order to meet the extended deadline of June 26th. Thereafter, applications will be brought before a panel and some 90 to 100 students will be selected to participate in the Forum.



SLNT Southern Group Celebrates Earth Day

On April 22nd 2009, the SLNT Southern Group hosted Sòlèy Kouché to mark International Earth Day at the Moule-a-Chique Lighthouse. Over 100 people were in attendance including the Parliamentary Representative, Honorable Dr. Kenny Anthony, the Honorable Alva Baptiste, Saint Lucia National Trust members, friends and as part of our advocacy and outreach mandate students from the community also participated.



Attendees were treated to an earth day message from Mr. Anderson Lake, the Chairman of the SLNT. There were also presentations on the importance of looking after Mother Earth for future generations from Augier Combined School and Vieux Fort Primary School. The Coordinator of the Southern Group, Mr. Brian Evans gave an impassioned speech on the need for conservation and preservation of our natural resources and culture for posterity and prosperity for both Saint Lucians and visitors alike. Invited singer, Calixta performed a traditional folk song, accompanied by Tambou Mele, they also recited a traditional story accompanied by the audience with great gusto! While musician, Mano filled in gaps in the proceedings with music from his pan. At sunset everyone turned to watch the sun descend below the horizon from the wonderful vantage point of the lighthouse surroundings and to reflect on the fact that preserving the earth and environment is everyone's responsibility.

The Southern Group extends heartfelt thanks to SLASPA for their cooperation in allowing the use of the lighthouse, to Shernell's Pizza for the refreshments and to everyone who worked hard to ensure the success of the celebration.

*Contributor: Diana Theodore
Assistant Coordinator of the SLNT Southern Group*

World Environment Day 2009

World Environment Day (WED) was observed on June 5th under the theme “**Your Planet Needs You-UNite to Combat Climate Change**”. Climate Change is a global phenomenon which must be addressed at all levels as its impact will affect all spheres of human life. As such the Saint Lucia National Trust has decided to observe WED over a period of one year instead of just one day, from June 5, 2009 to June 5, 2010.

As we continue to fulfill our mandate to protect and conserve the island’s patrimony, we call on all Saint Lucians and visitors alike to join us as we unite to combat climate change and “Green Fair Helen”. The Trust, in collaboration with the Sustainable Development and Environment Section published a World Environment Day Supplement in the Star newspaper on June 4th, 2009. “Eat what you grow” is the title of one of the pieces. Please go to www.slunatrust.org for the entire supplement.

Eat what you grow

You cyan just sit and complain about de prices
Damn hypocrites come true.
You wit' your foreign-based mind and foreign vices
And foreign fruits is yours too
Tell dem hold deh nectarine
Check your scene not just de prices
Deh apple, grapes and pears
So much fruits for yout's to eat and make juice
So my advice is
"Eat what you grow down here". I say

Chorus

Eat what you grow
Harvest what you sow
Then you won't just complain about the prices
Just take my advice I say
Eat what you grow
Harvest what you sow
Then you won't just complain about the prices
Just take my advice

Macambu, plantain and dasheen and yam grow in de yard
Eat your sweet potato man before it go bad
Grow peas, your sweet cassava, dem sea plants for power
and de herbs to season food is in your yard
Tell dem hold de cancer-causing, over-subsidized, synthetic-fertilized
refined ting dem call food
It's the mind not just de prices that constitute the crisis
Open your mind, belly and eyes good, I say

by Nkrumah Lucien

Going Back to our Roots

"I never knew that there was so much open space, trees and things to see here!" remarked one of the participants who spent Saturday morning exploring the Southern part of Saint Lucia. Fifteen individuals, mostly members of the Saint Lucia National Trust Southern Group were guided by historian, Dr. Gregor Williams on a fascinating tour of View Fort.

The tour which was held on June 13th, 2009 was another activity on the calendar of events for the vibrant SLNT Southern Group. The expedition began at the Old Sugar Mill at Beane Field near the Vieux Fort quarry. There the participants actually saw ruins of sugar mills and a well. This was followed by a walk to the Pointe de Caille Amerindian Site at Saltibus Point.

The trek from the main road to the Saltibus Point was particularly educational, as it gave the participants an opportunity to delve into their rich ancestral past. At the site they saw and held



Historian Dr. Gregor Williams (centre) headed the expedition from the Old Sugar Mill to Honeymoon Beach in Vieux Fort

remains of pottery, conch shells and conch tools. According to Dr. Williams over 50 burials have been found at the Amerindian Site. He went on to paint a vibrant picture of how the Amerindian settlement was set up, "There was a bay rich in marine life and tons of crabs crawled through the mangroves (crab soup was their favorite dish)." He also showed the group where there would have been flat land for gardening purposes and other activities. With a conch shell in hand he explained, "The conch shell was used to make a whole range of tools such as kitchen utensils; saucers, knives, boat building tools; axe and chisels, gardening tools; hoes and axe and various instruments; whistles and horns."

However, Dr. Williams warned that the site is at serious risk not only from natural elements but from developers. He noted that in the 1980's an excavation team from the University of Vienna in Austria established that some 500 years of the Amerindian settlement had already been washed away by the sea and heavy rains. The excavation project was a joint initiative between the Saint Lucia Archaeological and Historical Society and the University of Vienna, with some assistance from the Trust. He also said fortunately several previous plans by developers to build hotels on the property have not materialized. "We cannot lease and give everything to developers... it's big enough for both of us to enjoy it. It's the young people - like you, who have to start making noise, it cannot be left to one or two people alone", the Historian emphasized. Dr. Williams said it was suggested that that a geodesic dome be built over the burial area and to preserve the Pointe de Caille Amerindian Site at Saltibus Point for Saint Lucians and visitors alike and for future generation.

The next destination was Honeymoon Beach, however, Mother Nature decided to grace the group with heavy showers. Although the rain momentarily halted the expedition, the participants suited up in their rain gear and umbrellas and headed to a winery and honey factory at the Canelles junction. Here the group got an opportunity to taste local wine and honey and the proprietor gave an in-depth explanation of how these products were made.

The next activity on the Saint Lucia National Trust Southern Group's calendar is an "Illegal Sand mining Awareness Campaign" in July. This energetic group meets every 2nd Tuesday at the Pointe Sable Interpretation Centre (View Fort) at 6:15 p.m. The group invites interested individuals to join today and encourage existing members to renew their passion and play their part to conserve Saint Lucia's rich culture.

SLNT's Southern Membership Group Visits Her Excellency's Residence



Southern Membership group poses with Her Excellency

On Saturday 30th May 2009, the Southern Membership Group of the Saint Lucia National Trust visited the Governor General's museum and residence. Representatives of the National Trust Council along with a number of secondary school teachers and students from the South accompanied the Southern Membership Group on this one of a kind visit.

Upon arrival at Her Excellency's residence, a tour guide gave a brief history on the grounds before leading everyone to Le Pavillion Royal Museum. The museum contained a wide range of historical state, military, and cultural artifacts as well as prestigious collections of ornaments and cutlery used by previous governors. Despite the tour guide's informative lectures, partici-

pants were eager to ask many questions throughout the tour.

Moving on from the museum the group was ushered outside to take a walk around the well maintained and picturesque garden including a number of national plants and trees - all planted by members of the Royal family. From the gardens, the group moved on to the dining hall, where they were welcomed by walls adorned with photographs and artwork representing Saint Lucian life and culture, including scenes of Anse La Raye fish fest and a picture of a Choiseul carnival queen in action.

To end the tour, the group assembled in the main living area in time for Her Excellency's arrival. As she entered the room with her courteous warm smile, she was very interested in finding out what the younger students had learnt throughout the tour, before engaging the older participants in a discussion on the significance of their visit.

The group continued to ask Her Excellency questions about her residence but not before inviting her on future National Trust membership activities – to which she expressed interest in, as long as there was not too much walking involved. An appreciation card along with a framed collage of Southern Membership Group events and activities was presented to Her Excellency, which she accepted with her warmest gratitude. The group was then invited to join Her Excellency in having some light refreshments on the balcony.

Overall, the tour was a great success and the group left the grounds with a large amount of information on the historic and cultural assets of the Government house. A visit most enjoyed by all.

*Contributor: Danielle Richards
Member, S.L.N.T. Southern Group*



Thought for the Quarter

We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children.

Native American Proverb

International Earth Day: Sòlèy Kouché Ceremony
Call to Action; What will you do to make Saint Lucia Green?

Speaker after speaker made a united call for Saint Lucians to play their part in “Greening Fair Helen” at Sòlèy Kouché on the Saddle at Pigeon Island National Landmark on Wednesday, April 22nd, 2009. The event, staged in observance of International Earth Day was organized by the Saint Lucia National Trust (SLNT) in collaboration with its Southern and Western Branches and was also held at the Moule-a-Chique Lighthouse in Vieux Fort and at the Soufriere Town Square.

The ceremony began shortly after 5 p.m. with a procession from the Gatehouse to the Saddle. Celebrants didn't seem to mind the afternoon sun as they made the 15 minute trek to the musical accompaniment of the Mamay Kweyol Folk Band. Once on the Saddle, they got a breathtaking view of Pigeon Point, Gros Islet and Rodney Bay on one side and on the other, miles of blue sea as far as the eyes can see. In addition to simply basking in the glow of the afternoon sun, the Master of Ceremony- Mr. Laurent Jn Pierre of the SLNT encouraged those present to inhale the clean, fresh untainted air, and prepare for musical and poetic treats. However, little did they know that they were going to be challenged to preserve what is left of Fair Helen's natural beauty.



Her Excellency playing her part in Greening Fair Helen



Sunset view from the Saddle at PINL

In his welcome address and remarks, SLNT's Director, Mr. Bishnu Tulsie expressed his concern that “...one day we might just wake up and realize that everything is gone” if we continue to give up our natural resources, specifically our coastline in the name of development. He pointed out that the Trust is in favour of development but emphasized that it must be pursued in a “green” way that is people centered and not infrastructure centered.

Dr. Vasantha Chase, a member of the SLNT, encouraged other members, the Council and Staff of the Saint Lucia National Trust to initiate the Greening of Fair Helen. Dr. Chase said the “Greening Fair Helen” initiative must be a Solution Campaign aimed at motivating “people across the length and breadth of Fair Helen to reverse environmental decline through a renewed focus on grassroots actions”. She went on to urge celebrants to “practice Earth Day Every Day” because making simple changes in our lifestyle can have a significant impact on Fair Helen, for example, refusing a plastic bag at the supermarket or planting trees in our gardens. In closing, Dr. Chase told participants that “It is when we each begin to live our environmental lives to the fullest that we will begin to change the state of this planet for the good”.

The call to action continued with these words, “It’s not only up to the Trust or the Forestry Department but it’s everyone’s responsibility to be pro-active and take care of the environment”. Deputy Forestry Officer, Mr. Michael Bobb like the other speakers charged the gathering to make Earth Day an everyday affair instead of once a year. He described Fair Helen as “a web that’s being dismantled” in the name of development. He too like the SLNT Director, said development is important and is a natural part of growth, however, Saint Lucians need to “slow down and ask where are we going and what do we want for Saint Lucia?” He left the Earth Day celebrants to consider that “Whatever negative things we do to the environment now, will have a negative impact on us later”.

Upcoming Activities

- Re-launch of the Saint Lucia National Trust Website - July/August 2009
- SLNT Youth Environment Forum – July 13- 17, 2009
- Completion of the Draft Strategy for SLNT. Will be ready for consultation - 2nd week of July
- Completion of the SLNT Eco-drama/East Corridor Video Project – July 2009
- “Illegal Sand Mining Campaign” July, 2009; This initiative will be organized by the Southern Group and the wider membership is encouraged to participate.
- World Wide Views (WWViews) on Global Warming; On September 26, the Trust will join over 40 countries in hosting WWViews ahead of UN Climate Change Meeting in Copenhagen in December, 2009. (See www.slunatrust.org for more information).

New (and not so new) faces at the Trust



Denia George:
Programme Officer - Heritage
Conservation

Below: Laurent Jn Pierre:
Site Manager, Pointe Sable
Environmental Protected Area
(PSEPA). OPAAL Project



Karetta Crooks Charles:
Communications and Advocacy Officer

Members speak on the impact of Jazz on the Pigeon Island National Landmark

It is estimated that thousands of patrons gathered at the Pigeon Island National Landmark (PINL) for the annual Saint Lucia Jazz from Friday, May 8th to Sunday, May 10th, 2009. The grounds sustained the usual damages to the lawns and the heavy rains which fell before and during the event resulted in many parts of the ground being waterlogged for days.

Prior to the hosting of Jazz 2009 we invited members to share their thoughts on Jazz being held on Pigeon Island.

Some of the responses are reproduced below:

It is my opinion that the impact of each event (mass or otherwise) be assessed on its merit. If it is determined that events of a given scale or nature will compromise the integrity of our National Landmark and mitigative measures are either non-existent or too expensive to implement, then such events should not be allowed at the Landmark.



In the past, members of the PINL committee were stationed on Pigeon Island during the Jazz Festival events to help monitor a number of things:

- 1) to ensure that vehicles kept to strictly assigned routes and did not take short cuts across the grass (very important when the ground is soft).*
- 2) to inspect the booths selling food and drink to make sure that protective sheets were in place on the ground to catch bottle caps and other debris that might end up embedded in the soil.*
- 3) to check constantly that the 'no glasses or bottles' rule was being observed.*

During this type of activity it is also important to have adequate notices and barriers in place to prevent access to other areas of the park. Teenagers frolicking in the ruins are a distinct and undesirable possibility as are spectators who decide to hike up to the fort or to lookout point.

Finally, I noticed on all of the occasions that I was involved that there was always a significant number of people slipping in from the beach and even, at times, over the wall. Security should be made aware of this. When the police were used in the past they seemed to think that their only requirement was to stroll around looking official. I trust this has changed!

I hope some of this has been useful and you have a successful and trouble free celebration.



Two things stood out for me:

The mobile washroom was inadequate and there was a lot of liquid flowing from it.

Would it be possible next year to put more emphasis on separating cans and PET bottles? I realise that as an island nation we are far behind the rest of the world in our recycling of useful waste, but the Trust could set out on an education campaign at big public events such as this. The question, I suppose, is what to do with the collected materials. I think we should be at least shipping it to recycling centres elsewhere, which I believe is what goes on in places like Northwest Canada and Alaska. As I understand it, they have regular boats transporting recyclable waste - presumably including scrap automobiles etc.- to the contiguous states.

If you have any thoughts on this subject please share them with us within the next two weeks so that we may take them on board when we hold our review meeting with the Tourist Board.

This is a publication of the Saint Lucia National Trust. Should you have any comments or suggestions, please feel free to contact us at:

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You can also visit us on the web at: www.slunatrust.org