

UK OVERSEAS TERRITORIES



THE NEWSLETTER OF UKOTA · SEPTEMBER 2016



OTs at the Olympics |

Pre-Joint Ministerial Council 2016 |

New Minister for the OTs |

RMS St Helena final London visit |

Turks and Caicos Government Hosts Pre-JMC 2016



From left: Hon. Donaldson Romeo – Premier of Montserrat, Hon. Roger Edwards – Falkland Islands, Hon. Fabian Picardo – Chief Minister of Gibraltar, Hon. McNeil Rogers – Minister of Social Development, Anguilla, Dr. Hon. Rufus Ewing – Premier of Turks and Caicos Islands, Dr. Hon. Orlando Smith – Premier of British Virgin Islands, Hon. Michael Dunkley – Premier of Bermuda and Hon. Alden McLaughlin – Premier of Cayman Islands.

In July, Premier Dr. Hon. Rufus Ewing welcomed leaders and delegations from the British Overseas Territories to a pre-Joint Ministerial Council meeting, the first to be held in the Islands.

Leaders and delegations met in Providenciales and Grand Turk on 20th and 21st. Their talks addressed the OTs' relationship with the European Union following the United Kingdom's 'Brexit' vote – the EU is a major economic partner, supporting sustainable development in the OTs,

in areas such as climate change, renewable energy and marine biodiversity, it also provides a market for the fisheries of the Falkland Islands and Tristan da Cunha. Other issues discussed included sustainable economic development, the UK Government's relationship with the OTs, pensions, health, financial services and child safeguarding.

Delegates also experienced TCI culture, with a museum visit, an Island fish-fry, and a reception with key members of the Islands' community.

New Minister for the Overseas Territories



Baroness Anelay

In the Government reshuffle that took place in June, Baroness Anelay of St. Johns DBE was appointed Minister with responsibility for the Overseas Territories at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

Baroness Anelay will combine her OT duties with responsibility for the Caribbean and the Commonwealth, FCO business in the House of Lords, human rights, the UN, climate change and international energy security policy.

In a letter to OT Leaders Baroness Anelay said, "I am delighted to have been re-appointed as Minister of State and to have the privilege of taking on responsibility for the Overseas Territories, with whom we enjoy a unique relationship and shared history."

Thomas Russell CMG CBE



It is regret that we have learnt of the passing of our former colleague, Thomas 'Tom' Russell, who died on 5th July, aged 96, in Melrose, Scotland.

Tom was born in Scotland in 1920. After war service he joined the Colonial Administrative Service, posted to Fiji and the Solomon Islands. He became the longest-serving Governor of the Cayman Islands, appointed in 1974. On retirement in 1982 he established the Cayman Islands Government Office in London. He retired as their Representative in 2000, aged 80.

Tom was a founding member of UKOTA, and was Chairman from 1997 to 1998. In retirement he took an active interest in our work and attended many events, including a reception in the House of Commons to mark our 20th anniversary in 2014.

Eric Bush, the Cayman Islands Government UK Representative, gave a tribute at Tom's funeral; a memorial service was held in the Cayman Islands at the same time. UKOTA was represented at the funeral by Sukey Cameron MBE, Representative of the Falkland Islands Government.

OT athletes in Rio's Olympic spotlight



The BVI athletes and support team

The Overseas Territories were represented in the Rio de Janeiro Olympics; with teams from Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands and the Cayman Islands taking part, along with Delano Williams from the Turks and Caicos Islands who participated as a member of Team GB.

Williams ran in the 4x400 relay. He trains and studies in Jamaica, as a member of the Races Track Club – which also nurtured Olympic gold medallist Usain Bolt.

Bermuda's Flora Duffy finished 8th in the final of Women's individual triathlon. The Island holds the record as the least-populated nation in history to win a medal at the Summer Olympics (Clarence Hill's boxing bronze in 1976). The 2016 squad of

eight athletes saw action in a variety of sports, from sailing to long-jump.

The Cayman Islands' official flag-bearer was Olympic veteran 110m hurdler Ronald Forbes. He said: "It's an honour to carry the nation's flag, not only for what it represents but for who it represents, and that's something I take with great responsibility and great pride".

The BVI fielded a team of four: Olympic veteran 100m sprinter Tahesia Harrigan-Scott; flag-bearer and 200m sprinter Ashley Kelly; shot-putter Eldred Henry; and swimmer Elinah Phillip. Sixteen year-old Phillip was placed third in Women's 50m Freestyle Heats.

BERMUDA



Continuing reign as industry leader

With the recent turbulence of the world's financial markets, the EU has pushed to reduce the risk of insolvency amongst insurance providers. The Solvency II Directive was introduced in 2009 with the aim of ensuring that insurers and reinsurers can survive difficult periods, such as catastrophic events and global financial crises.

First recommended by the European Commission in November 2015, Bermuda is now one of two non-EU jurisdictions (alongside Switzerland) recognised by the EU member states and considered as being in line with the new insurance regulations being adopted across the EU. Having achieved full Solvency II third-country equivalency has proved that Bermuda operates to the same tough standards as those being adopted across the EU. Global insurers and reinsurers doing business in Bermuda, are not competitively disadvantaged when dealing in the EU.

As a leading reinsurance supplier into Europe, in the UK's Prudential Regulation Authority (PRA) market-wide stress tests, Bermuda's reinsurers cover 20-40% of EU natural catastrophe recoveries and 40% of recoveries for 1-in-200 events, including:

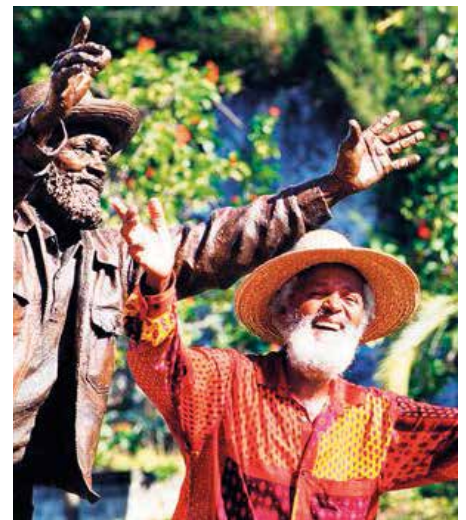
- 50% of reported losses for the 2012 Costa Concordia cruise liner sinking;
- 37% of reported liabilities for Europe's 2010 windstorm Xynthia;
- 22% of the \$1-billion market loss for the 2009 Air France crash; and
- 62% of claims for the UK's largest peacetime fire and explosion, the Buncefield oil terminal fires of 2005.

Bermuda represents a significant economic partner for the European Union, particularly in the insurance and reinsurance markets. One of the world's three major insurance centres, alongside London and New York, Bermuda houses 16 of the top 40 reinsurance companies in the world. Additionally, Bermuda is also the single most important property and catastrophe insurance market, the largest captive insurance market, and has the world's largest share of insurance linked securities listings.

With these recent endeavours, Bermuda has created a world-class regulatory regime which is in line with the toughest in the world, a testament to the benefits of doing business in Bermuda.

No More I Love You's

Bermuda prides itself in having a reputation for being home to some of the friendliest people in the world, so much so that our friendliness is recognised worldwide. This Bermuda spirit cannot be personified any more than when describing Johnny Barnes, who has died aged 92: a man whose simple mission in life was to tell everyone he came into contact with "I Love You".



Standing daily on a very busy roundabout, extending arms and blowing kisses to commuters on their way into the Island's capital, uttering "I Love You", Johnny Barnes did this consistently for 30 years to Bermudians and visitors alike. Ultimately he became a local icon whilst intriguing much of the outside world. He was immortalized through art, as statues of him were erected not only in Bermuda, but also as far as Ontario, Canada. He also was the subject of a short film entitled 'Mr. Happy Man,' attesting to the international attention he garnered through his humble actions and philosophy.

A true Bermudian national treasure, the entire Island of Bermuda is saddened over the passing of Johnny 'Mr. Happy' Barnes, a truly iconic figure forever to be remembered.

Bermuda – At a Glance

Capital: Hamilton | Size: 53.3 sq km | Population: 64,237 (2010 estimate) |
Currency: Bermudian Dollar (BMD) | Time Zone: Greenwich Mean Time -4 hours |

British Virgin Islands

New UN role to push Caribbean development



ECLAC Executive Secretary Alicia Barcena and UK Representative Benito Wheatley

In its new United Nations (UN) role as a Vice Chair of the Caribbean Development Cooperation Committee (CDCC), the BVI will advocate for the greater economic integration and cooperation of Associate Members of the UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).

The BVI Government will also support the new CDCC Chair, the Government of St. Kitts & Nevis, in advancing the approved work programme of the UN subsidiary body. The UK Representative, who is also the Senior International Strategist in the Premier's Office, Benito Wheatley, commented on the achievement saying, "To serve as a Vice Chair of the CDCC is a progression in the BVI's relationship with

ECLAC with whom we have had a longstanding relationship as an Associate Member. ECLAC support for the BVI and other members of the CDCC can contribute significantly to our development in the Caribbean sub region". The BVI was unanimously elected a CDCC Vice Chair at the 26th Session of the CDCC on 22nd April and will remain in the post until the 27th Session in 2018. The BVI joined ECLAC in 1984 and is the oldest Associate Member of the regional commission.

New leader of Global Islands Partnership

The BVI has been selected as a new Co-Chair of the Global Islands Partnership (GLISPA). The territory joins Palau, Seychelles and Grenada as GLISPA Leaders of the partnership that is a global platform for islands.

GLISPA promotes the conservation and sustainable use of invaluable island natural resources that support people and their culture and livelihoods in island societies. The BVI will work alongside GLISPA Members such as the United Nations Development Programme and the Convention on Biological Diversity Secretariat to achieve this goal.

Support for B20 work on anti-corruption

The BVI has supported the work of the B20 at workshop in May which considered business leadership's role in realising the G20 High-Level Principles on Beneficial Ownership.

In furthering the work of the B20 Anti-Corruption Task Force, the participants discussed best practice in beneficial ownership transparency at company level. In his contribution, Benito Wheatley, UK Representative, outlined the BVI's beneficial ownership regime, regulatory model and compliance with OECD and FATF standards. The B20 supports the work of the G20 by engaging policy-makers globally, advocating for policies that contribute to global growth and job creation, and offering policy recommendations to the G20.

British Virgin Islands – At a Glance

Capital: Road Town (Tortola) | **Size:** 153 sq km | **Population:** 28,000 |
Currency: US Dollar (US\$) | **Time Zone:** Greenwich Mean Time -5 hours |

Cayman Islands

More than 100 children saved by 'Have a Heart Cayman' at Health City

Before her life-saving surgery at Health City Cayman Islands, two year old Yenifer Lopez Giron complained of a constant pinching pain in her chest, caused by a hole in her heart. Her mother Cecilia said they waited nearly the entirety of her daughter's life for help, not knowing if it would ever come. Ms. Giron says her tears of sadness are now replaced with tears of joy and thanks: "I have no words to explain how my daughter improved".

In its first two years, Have a Heart Cayman Islands has helped 104 children from all over the world receive free, life-saving heart surgery. It is committed to facilitating life-saving cardiac surgery for children regardless of race, sex, religion or social or socio-economic status. The mission is simple: to help as many children as possible. Next year, the non-profit foundation aims to provide at least one procedure each day.

Have a Heart has brought children from several countries in the region, including Jamaica, Haiti, El Salvador, and some from as far away as Bolivia and Mongolia. One child was from Kenya, after all other options had been exhausted in that region.

"We know we're just at the beginning of

something incredible," Have a Heart manager Jennifer McCarthy said. "It's not just another story, it's not just another non-profit. It's an extraordinary thing."

That extraordinary thing began with Harry Chandi, a businessman based in Cayman who is originally from India. Twenty years ago, he was awaiting news of his father's emergency heart surgery in Manipal, India. The surgeon was Devi Shetty, known for being Mother Teresa's personal physician.

At the hospital, Mr Chandi ran into a woman who worked as a volunteer, raising money for children who could not afford heart surgery. He promised to fund procedures for four children, but he would go on to help many more.

Shortly after Dr. Shetty's hospital, Health City Cayman Islands, opened in Grand Cayman in early 2014, Have a Heart Cayman was formed. The organization partners with local and international organizations, including Health City, Ascension, Samaritan's Purse International Relief, Haiti Cardiac Alliance, World Pediatric Project, Impact 345, Digicel and FSH Design. Have a Heart and its sponsors subsidize approximately half of the cost



Dugasuren Alungua holds her son Dashnyam, left, and Munkh-Ulzii Adjyasuren. Both children are from Mongolia and received lifesaving heart surgery thanks to Have a Heart Cayman Islands.

of the surgeries, while Health City Cayman Islands bears the rest of the cost.

Parents of children helped by Have a Heart are quick to mention not only the skill of the doctors and other staff at Health City, but also their gentleness and kindness – the way they care.

Chief cardiac surgeon Dr. Binoy Chattuparambil says the incidence of children's heart problems is the same in every part of the world, with one in every 150 children born with some type of heart problem. Many of the heart problems, such as tiny holes in the heart, are easily solved with surgery. If the children do not receive medical care, however, they can die.

Dr. Chattuparambil came from Dr. Shetty's first hospital in Bangalore, where the aim was that no child should go without treatment because of a lack of money. He says "I am very happy that we're bringing the same philosophy to this part of the world and helping children with heart disease in the Caribbean, particularly, and in other countries that need this type of help".

New UK Representative for Cayman Islands



Eric Bush JP has been appointed UK Representative for the Cayman Islands Government, taking up his post in London in July. His career has spanned key roles in the Islands' public and private sectors.

After university, Eric joined the Royal Cayman Islands Police Service (RCIPS). He served on uniformed patrol, in the RCIPS armed section, and in the Financial Crimes Unit. Eric was awarded a Commissioner's Commendation for his work which led to the conviction of high level government officials in another Territory.

Next Eric ventured into the private sector, taking senior human-resources roles in the hospitality/hotel industry and with the Cayman Islands' national flag-carrier, Cayman Airways. He returned to public service as Deputy Chief Officer in the Portfolio of Internal and External Affairs, specifically responsible for the uniformed services.

He was promoted to Chief Officer of what became the Ministry of Home Affairs. The largest Ministry within the Cayman Islands Government, it has

responsibility for over 1000 employees and ten different departments, from Police to Computer Services.

After almost ten years serving as Deputy and Chief Officer, Eric requested a transfer to become the Cayman Islands Representative to the United Kingdom and the European Union.

Eric intends to transform the Government Office in London, having set high goals and expectations. His areas of focus are to:

- Improve the relationship and create partnerships with the UK and EU;
- Enhance the UK and European experience, and create better opportunities, for Caymanian students and the Islands' diaspora;
- Promote the Cayman Islands within the UK and Europe and to create opportunities, and;
- Identify synergies within the UK Civil Service for the benefit of the Cayman Islands.

Cayman Islands – At a Glance

Capital: George Town | Size: 264 sq km | Population: 58,440 |
Currency: Cayman Islands Dollar KYD | Time Zone: Greenwich Mean Time -5 hours |

Falkland Islands

Fisheries protection and enforcement



Fishery Patrol Vessel MV Protegat

Fines totalling £573,000 in two separate cases have sent a clear message to the international fishing community that the Falkland Islands will not tolerate poor practices and licence breaches within the fishery.

Development and protection of natural resources are of the utmost priority for the Falkland Islands, and indeed many of the British Overseas Territories. In 2008, a group of independent scientists described the Falkland Islands' fishery as 'one of the best-managed in the world' in terms of scientific research, investment into the industry, licence regulations and enforcement.

This year has seen two high-profile licence enforcement cases reach the Law Courts of the

Falkland Islands. The cases, involving four separate vessels, two Spanish companies and two Falkland Islands companies, all related to misreporting of catches within the Falkland Islands fishing zone. Licences had been granted to the parties involved for a particular fin-fish species (rock-cod) and reports of catches submitted to the Department of Fisheries as part of the licence condition showed catches of rock-cod. However, searches of the holds by Fisheries Officers revealed lower quantities of rock-cod than expected and higher quantities of a more lucrative species.

The catches were seized and forfeited to the Falkland Islands Government, and charges brought forward for (a) using fishing vessels in breach of the terms of fishing licences contrary

to Section 167 of the Fisheries (Conservation and Management) Ordinance 2005 and (b) providing false information in fishing reports contrary to Regulation 61 of the Fishing Regulations Order 1987.

In March, a case against a Spanish company as the owner of three fishing vessels and a Falkland Islands company, as the charterer of those vessels, concluded with guilty pleas against a total of 45 charges under the above-mentioned legislation. The vessel's owners were ordered to pay fines of £200,000 with the charterers paying £190,000 in fines with an additional confiscation order issued for the fish caught.

In July, a second case involving a different Spanish vessel owner and a different Falkland Islands charterer concluded with another successful conviction.

In total, 585 tonnes of fish were confiscated from the vessels and sold on behalf of the Falkland Islands Government, with the proceeds being entered into public funds. Prosecution costs totalling £16,000, across the two cases, were also awarded.

The Attorney General of the Falkland Islands, Peter Judge MBE, commented, "These successful prosecutions, and the significant penalties imposed in these cases, demonstrate that the Government of the Falkland Islands takes the protection of the maritime resources of this country very seriously. The Fisheries Officers deserve congratulations for their hard work and professionalism."

Convention on Biological Diversity extended

The United Kingdom ratification on the Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD) was formally extended to the Falkland Islands on 29th June.

The CBD is an agreement on environmental management and best practice and originated from the 1992 Rio Conference on environment and development.

The CBD is supported by the Falkland Islands Government Biodiversity Framework and supporting strategies (www.fig.gov.fk/epd/index.

<http://www.fig.gov.fk/epd/index> php/environment/biodiversity-framework). This document was formally endorsed by the Falkland Islands Government in January 2016 and provides a 15 year policy document which identifies priority conservation objectives for the Islands. These objectives meet local requirements and also identify how this meets the targets set out under the CBD.

In a letter congratulating the Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) on the extension of the CBD, Dr. Tim Stowe, Director of International Operations at the RSPB said "This important

Convention, to which 196 international states are party, provides much of the framework in which global environmental management operates. By joining this respected forum, the Falkland Islands Government will be able to further showcase its ongoing commitment to responsible environmental stewardship and sustainable development."

Several of the UK Overseas Territories have joined the UK ratification to the CBD in recent years, including St. Helena and South Georgia.

Falkland Islands – At a Glance

Capital: Stanley | Size: 12,173 sq km | Population: 2,563 |
Currency: Falkland Island Pound | Time Zone: Greenwich Mean Time -3 hours

Caves inscribed into UNESCO's World Heritage List



Deputy Chief Minister, Joseph Garcia at Gorham's Cave

Gorham's Cave, its sister caves and surrounding cliffs, have been inscribed onto UNESCO's World Heritage List. The decision was taken by the World Heritage Committee at its 40th Session, held in Istanbul, Turkey.

This is Gibraltar's first site to be inscribed on the prestigious list; with it the United Kingdom's list of World Heritage Sites reaches 30. The Gorham's Cave Complex thus joins a select club of United Kingdom sites that includes the Palace of Westminster and Westminster Abbey, the Giant's Causeway, Stonehenge and the Tower of London.

In his speech, The Hon Fabian Picardo QC MP, Chief Minister, recalled how the Rock of Gibraltar had been one of the universal markers of the known world in ancient times, with mariners stopping and paying tribute to the gods precisely in Gorham's Cave. He spoke of how the Neanderthals, chief protagonists in the caves, had drawn the short straw when it came to being recognised as a part of humanity. "This is the forgotten dimension of humanity's universality and it is a humbling privilege to be participating actively in redressing the situation", added Mr Picardo.

Reacting to the news Deputy Chief Minister, Joseph Garcia, who has been spearheading the bid on behalf of Her Majesty's Government of Gibraltar said: "I am delighted that Gorham's Cave and the surrounding area has been inscribed as a World Heritage Site. I want to congratulate all those who have worked hard over so many years in order to make this bid a success, particularly Professor Clive Finlayson, Director of the Gibraltar Museum and of the new World Heritage Site, and Dr Geraldine Finlayson and their team. This degree of international recognition is a tribute to their hard work and the outstanding universal value of the site. It is something that all in Gibraltar can be proud of."

Dr John Cortes, Minister for the Environment, added: "I am of course delighted. I have supported this proposal for many years and my Department has been working hard with the Museum team to provide all the information and support possible. It is deserved recognition for what is a spectacular historical and biological feature, particularly well preserved and fully protected by law. We will ensure that the site now flourishes even more and takes its rightful place in the extraordinary network that World Heritage Sites represent."

Eco Wave Power's Energy Project officially opens

Eco Wave Power's Energy Project was formally opened by the Chief Minister, The Hon. Fabian Picardo QC MP, and by the Minister of Health, Environment and Climate Change, Hon. Dr. John Cortes, in June and is now exporting electricity into Gibraltar's power grid.

The Project is the first grid connected Eco Wave Power plant and the only wave power plant anywhere in Europe, operating multiple wave units, under Commercial Power Purchase Agreement terms. The innovative Eco Wave Power floaters move up and down with the movement of the waves, and create pressure which drives a hydro motor and a generator. The technology also provides a smart automation system that controls the power station's storm-protection mechanism and the stable transmission of clean electricity to the grid.

At the launch, Minister Cortes noted that "in the last four and a half years, we have been through a lot. People were coming with these magic black boxes, stating that with the right funding they will give us the power. Nothing ever worked. This is clearly working. I think that the future is bright and the future, like the past, is in the power of the sea all around us."

Charles H. Collinson, EU Director of European Programmes, who co-funded the power plant in Gibraltar, said that "on behalf of the EU Commission and the EU programme Secretariat in Gibraltar, I wish every success to Eco Wave Power. May it expand and produce a lot more renewable energy and I hope we are able to collaborate in future expansion of this project".

Gibraltar – At a Glance

Capital: Gibraltar | Size: 6.5 sq km | Population: 34,000 (2014) |
Currency: Gibraltar Pound | Time Zone: Central European Time

Montserrat

Hundreds of rare Montserrat Spiders hatch at a Zoo in the UK



A gravid female Montserrat tarantula

A rare species of spider found only on the Caribbean island of Montserrat has been successfully bred at a zoo in the UK.

Chester Zoo has reported that a clutch of 200 Montserrat Tarantula has been hatched.

This is the first time that this spider endemic to Montserrat has been bred in captivity.

After observing the spiders in the wild for some time, Dr Gerardo Garcia, Curator of Lower Vertebrates at Chester Zoo, brought a number of the tarantulas to the UK in 2013, hoping to discover more about this species of spiders about which so little is known. Over the past three years, the scientists have been monitoring the creatures and one female tarantula has produced a clutch of 200 baby spiders.

In a statement, Dr Garcia said: *“Breeding these tarantulas is a huge achievement for the team as very little is known about them. It’s taken a lot of patience and care to reach this point.*

“The data we’ve been able to gather and knowledge we’ve developed, over the last three years since the adults first arrived, has led us to this first ever successful, recorded breeding and, hopefully, these tiny tarantulas will uncover more secrets about the behaviour, reproduction and life cycle of the species.”

Territory to Territory Partnership

An agreement has been signed between the Governments of two UK Overseas Territories - Montserrat and the Falkland Islands - to transfer knowledge and skills from the South Atlantic to the Caribbean. The transfer will focus on information management and marine spatial planning. The project is facilitated by the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC).

The Hon. Claude Hogan, Minister of Environment for the Montserrat Government, said “This Agreement represents a major breakthrough by the Government of Montserrat to manage and co-ordinate developments in Montserrat’s marine environment.”

Speaking on behalf of the Falkland Islands Government, the Hon. Michael Poole MLA said “Sharing expertise and experience between Territories has always been something that the Falkland Islands Government has proactively worked on. We set up the South Atlantic Environmental Research Institute (SAERI) to have a territory-based, territory-led research institution that can develop expertise within the region and beyond.”

The partnership project is working towards a visit in November by Falklands’ experts, including Dr. Paul Brickle, SAERI Director, to undertake a consultation with their Montserrat counterparts.

Petroglyphs found

In January 2016, two local hikers – Shirley Osborne and Vaughn Barzey - were trekking through the forest in the vicinity of the dry waterfall when they came upon an exposed cliff face covered with ancient carvings. Ms Osborne, who is the Speaker of the Island’s Legislative Assembly, and her companion reported the sighting to the authorities, but the Montserrat National Trust kept the discovery secret until experts had a chance to examine the carvings and determine their authenticity.

The petroglyphs are thought to be between 1,000 and 1,500 years old, pre-dating any European settlements on the Island. The artworks appear to be illustrations of beings and geometric shapes and are said to be similar to Amerindian carvings found in other Caribbean Islands.

Evidence of the inhabitancy by Amerindians had previously been found on the Island, but although petroglyphs have been found throughout the Caribbean, this is the first to be found on Montserrat.

The discovery of the petroglyphs is an exciting addition to Montserrat’s unique tourism product, alongside the modern Pompeii, the buried capital of Plymouth which was annihilated by deposits from the volcanic eruption of twenty years ago.



Montserrat – At a Glance

Seat of Government: Brades | Size: 102 sq km | Population: 4,922 |
Currency: Eastern Caribbean Dollar (ECS) | Time Zone: Greenwich Mean Time -4 hours |

St Helena



RMS St Helena arriving at Tower Pier



HRH Princess Royal and Mrs. Kedell Worboys MBE

RMS St Helena makes historic visit to London

The RMS St Helena, a passenger and cargo ship purpose built to serve St Helena, was built in Aberdeen and made her maiden voyage from Cardiff in November 1990. The RMS, as she is affectionately known, is a Lloyds registered class 1 passenger ship and can carry up to 156 passengers and 92 20ft containers, of which 17 can be refrigerated. She is one of only four remaining Royal Mail ships and unique in that she is the only ship operating in international waters to officially carry the Royal Mail. Carrying everything for the Island from food to medical supplies, building materials to animals, she has been, and still is, the lifeline for the people of St Helena.

The RMS was scheduled to be decommissioned in July 2016 and was put up for sale, but will now continue in service until July 2017 whilst a solution to the wind shear issues identified at the airport is found.

On her final voyage to the UK, she arrived in Tilbury on 5th June after a 14 day journey from St Helena. After discharging her passengers and cargo, she sailed up the river Thames on the afternoon of 7th June to moor next to HMS Belfast. During the three days in the Pool of London, several receptions were held to mark her historic visit, 26 years of sterling service and to promote St Helena as a tourist destination. This was certainly achieved; BBC Breakfast, ITV London and Meridian TV programmes covered

her arrival and the banks of the Thames were lined with well-wishers waving their flags.

HRH The Princess Royal, who travelled from Ascension Island to St Helena on board the RMS in November 2002, attended a reception on board on 8th June. Also attending were representatives of 'Saints' serving in HM Armed Forces, students, Councillor's from St Helena, members of the St Helena All Party Parliamentary Group and UKOTA.

Guests at the lunch receptions were treated to meals prepared by the RMS Head Chef, Roy Richards and guest chef Matt Gillan, a Michelin star chef and winner of the Great British Menu, with his signature goat dish. Matt's mother is from St Helena and he travelled on the maiden voyage with his family.

The Director of Tourism, Chris Pickard, hosted some 100 guests from the travel and trade industry at a reception on the evening of 9th June.

Working with Royal Mail, pupils from the Mount Stuart School in Cardiff (chosen because of the links with the RMS) had written letters to their pen pal students in St Helena. They made the long trip from Cardiff to London on 10th June to deliver their letters for the students in St Helena to Captain Rodney Young, and to receive their letters that had been brought by Captain Andrew Greentree.

Leaving London on the afternoon tide of 10th June, the RMS made her way back to the London Cruise Terminal in Tilbury, where some 600 visitors attended an 'Open Day'. People travelled from as far as Germany, Belgium and Scotland to see the RMS for the last time.

It was then time to load the cargo at Tilbury docks, host a reception and reunion of the ex-officers and crew, which was both a joyous and emotional occasion, before getting ready to sail.

The cruise terminal at Tilbury was full with relatives and friends of the passengers embarking on this final UK departure. With invited guests waving flags on the balcony of the cruise terminal, the music of the Geoff Moore's Premier Brass Military Marching Band, confetti and water cannons, the RMS left a UK port for the final time at 16:00 on 14th June.



RMS St Helena leaving Tilbury

St Helena – At a Glance

Capital: Jamestown | Size: 410 sq km | Population: 4,289 |
Currency: St Helenian Pound | Time Zone: Greenwich Mean Time

Tristan da Cunha

Fight to save World Heritage albatross



A campaign to rescue the critically-endangered Tristan albatross is underway. The birds breed on Gough Island, part of the Tristan da Cunha group, but vast numbers of chicks are being eaten alive by non-native predatory mice.

Gough is part of Tristan's UNESCO World Heritage site; the Island Government and the RSPB have developed an ambitious plan to restore it to a pristine state. Eradicating the mice is a huge logistical challenge in a remote

and rugged location, but is crucial because more than 600,000 seabird chicks are being killed each year. A programme to eradicate an invasive plant species, *sagina procumbens*, is also planned.

A £7.6m fund-raising campaign has begun with an appeal to the UK Government, whose role in preserving Gough is enshrined in international treaties. Trusts and individuals will also be approached. To donate, please search online for Gough Restoration Donation. If the target is hit, work will start in the southern winter of 2019.



The Tristan albatross has not evolved to recognise the threat from invasive mice: chicks can be fatally wounded by mouse attacks while their parents look on.

Royal wishes for a celebration of two centuries

In August, the world's remotest community toasted 200 years as part of the British family. Settled in 1816, briefly as a military garrison and then as a mutually-supportive civil society, Tristan da Cunha has survived and prospered despite extreme isolation. Today its economy is based on fishing for the world's finest lobster, and Islanders act as stewards for a stunning array of wildlife across a vast tract of ocean.

HRH the Duke of Edinburgh, who visited Tristan da Cunha in 1957 aboard HMY Britannia, sent a special message saying that he has followed Island activities ever since his visit and wishing Tristanians "a wonderful time marking this very important anniversary".



Children's races and a barbecue featuring Tristan's famous gourmet lobster were part of the celebration

Chief's record re-election

Ian Lavarello has been re-elected Chief Islander, becoming the first ever to serve three consecutive terms of office. Ian is a descendant of Gaetano Lavarello from Camogli, Italy, who chose to settle after being shipwrecked at Tristan in 1892. He and the Island Council will serve until March 2019.



Tristan da Cunha – At a Glance

Capital: Edinburgh of the Seven Seas | Size: 98 sq km | Population: 265 |
Currency: Pound Sterling | Time Zone: Greenwich Mean Time |

Turks and Caicos Islands

Support for Entrepreneurs

On the 1st April, the Government of the Turks and Caicos Islands (TCI) commenced the Micro Small and Medium Enterprise (MSME) programme which will be managed by Invest Turks and Caicos with support from the Centre for Entrepreneurial Development (CED) and Ministry of Finance.

The creation of the programme is an acknowledgement of the importance the Government places on small businesses. The Hon. Washington Missick, Minister of Finance, Investment and Trade, stated 'The SME sector is the lifeblood of any economy. In TCI, it accounts for 90% of all established businesses; contributes to around half of our GDP; and employs around 40% of the Islands' workforce. It is extremely important that we recognise and support these operations and create the business climate which



Island products



facilitates growth, and encourages budding entrepreneurs to set up their own businesses.'

The MSME Ordinance makes provision for the Government to provide Concession Orders to

qualifying businesses which operate in identified priority business sectors. The Concession Orders will permit the company or start-up to specific benefits or reliefs depending on the size of the business.

Economic stability demonstrated

Global ratings agency Standard & Poor's (S&P) has maintained its BBB+ rating with a stable outlook for the Islands.

The June announcement by S&P, is the third in consecutive years with such a strong grading. A team from S&P made the annual visit to the Islands in May and met with a range of officials as part of the review process.

"This rating represents continued recognition of TCI's economic growth and stability due to sound fiscal policy and prudent financial management. However, as pointed out by S&P, growth is now restricted by short supply in available [hotel] rooms" said Minister of Finance, Washington Misick.

The S&P report reiterated that TCI's relationship with the UK provides a benefit to local economic policies and judicial and institutional stability, all of which further support the ratings. The report states:

"TCI continues to see strong economic growth in its tourist-based economy, largely due to the ongoing economic recovery in its largest visitor market, the U.S. However, we expect that with existing hotels at capacity, tourist activity is likely to moderate in 2016, with real GDP growing about 3%, down from nearly 6% in 2015. Real GDP growth has been very strong in recent years and we expect it to return to more sustainable levels in the medium term. We project that per capita GDP growth could average 1.3% annually in the next three to four years."

The BBB+ rating is a strong factor in attracting foreign direct investment to TCI and building confidence amongst its existing business community.

Ministry of Education Announces Record Scholarship Awards

The Ministry of Education, Youth, Sports and Library Services is pleased to announce 170 scholarship awardees for the year 2016/2017.

All of the awardees were successful, based on the identified priority areas, grade point averages and other criteria. The recipients will be studying locally at the TCI Community College, regionally at University of the West Indies (Jamaica) and internationally. Twenty awardees will be studying in the United Kingdom, a number of them will also be studying through distance learning offered by accredited institutions.

Priority areas of study include: Education, Tourism, Medicine, Law, Engineering and Environmental Studies.

Turks and Caicos – At a Glance

Capital: Cockburn Town | Size: 98 sq km | Population: 36,689 (2015) |
Currency: United States Dollar (US\$) | Time Zone: Greenwich Mean Time -4 hours |

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