

THE COMMISSION NEWSLETTER

Conserve nature, preserve life



TOP NEWS OF THE MONTH

CODRINGTON HOUSE REFURBISHMENT & RESTORATION

THE REFURBISHMENT AND restoration of Codrington House - NCC's main office building - 'is on the home stretch'. NCC's team installed some of the external accessories, which included the window hoods and light fixtures.

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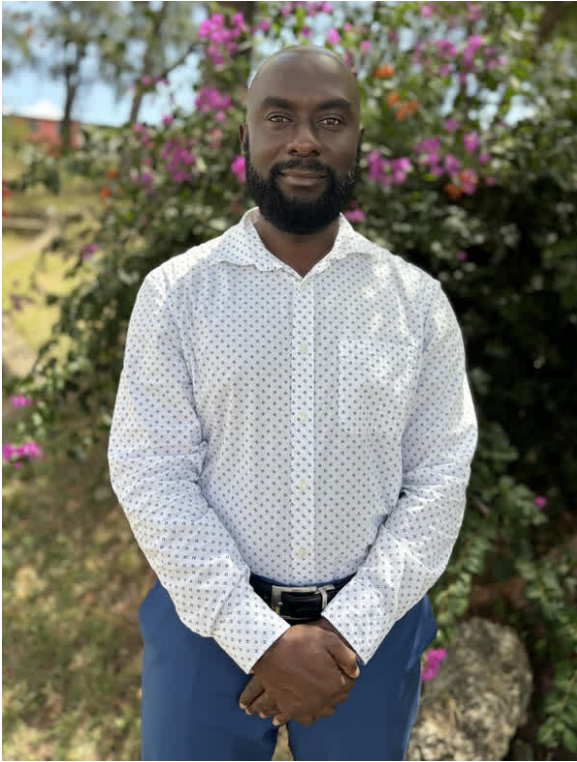
TURTLE-FRIENDLY LIGHTS were recently installed at three of the beaches facilities managed by the National Conservation Commission (NCC) to lower the risk of disorientation among the hatchlings.

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TURTLE- FRIENDLY LIGHTS INSTALLED

GM'S MESSAGE



Mr. Ryan Als
Acting General Manager
National Conservation Commission

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WITH IMMENSE JOY, I am extending my heartfelt appreciation to each employee for their outstanding contribution to the creation of breathtaking landscapes and providing exceptional service to our customers and our country.

Your dedication and creativity truly transforms our surroundings into veritable works of art. Every stroke of your brush, every careful placement of flora, and every meticulous design element reflects not only your professional expertise but also your passion for enhancing the beauty of our environment.

From lush gardens to vibrant parks, the collective efforts have woven a tapestry of natural splendor that uplifts spirits and inspires others.

But your contributions extend far beyond the mere aesthetics of our landscapes.

Through your unwavering commitment to excellence and your tireless work ethic, you have enriched the lives of countless individuals within our communities.

Each of you bring a unique blend of creativity, innovation, and passion to everything you do, infusing our projects with vitality and vision.

It is this spirit of collaboration and shared purpose that has allowed us to achieve such remarkable success, and for that, I am profoundly grateful.

As we celebrate together, let us take a moment to reflect on the journey that has brought us here and to savour the sense of fulfilment that comes from knowing that we have made a difference.

Let us also look ahead with optimism and determination, knowing that there are still new horizons to explore and new challenges to overcome.

Your talent, dedication, and passion are an inspiration, and I have no doubt that your future endeavours will continue to dazzle and delight.

Codrington House restoration is 'on the home stretch'



The exterior of Codrington House with the new window hoods and light fixtures.

THE REFURBISHMENT and restoration of Codrington House - the National Conservation Commission's (NCC) main office building - is 'on the home stretch'.

NCC's Acting General Manager, Ryan Als, told The Commission that the team has installed some of the external accessories, which included the window hoods and light fixtures.

"The final fitting of external accessories, hood and light fittings, are looking fantastic. On the inside, the doors, which are a work of art, are being fitted and adjusted," he said.

The floor finishes, Als added, are an area of significant improvement.

"The original floors were rotted, which was caused by a fabric that was laid over it and covered with wood tiles. This held moisture over many years however, it is being replaced along with the supports," he said.

On completion, the original wooden floors, which comprised a combination of pine and hardwood, will be restored and shall remain uncovered to prevent the reoccurrence of rotting - due to trapped moisture.

NCC's staff will also regain access to the original balcony on completion of the building's refurbishment, Als confirmed.

In the initial phases, the building's roof was completely removed as a result of deterioration that caused leaks, which contributed to the moisture problems.

Als indicated that the roof was never replaced although the building underwent several modifications over the years.

"After our assessment, a decision was taken that it would be prudent to refurbish the entire building, which also included the windows, ventilation, electrical and plumbing... we have worked on all areas," he explained.

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Refurbishment showcases talent and creativity



The door frames have been prepared for the installation of the new office doors.

Over the next few weeks, the team will install the new doors.

“The original tall doors, which are about nine feet in height, will be reinstated. We had three of these doors in the building and the team used their measurements and style to construct the new doors that will be installed,” he said.

Als noted that the decision to reinstate the ‘tall doors’ is based on the original architecture of the building, which they have sought to preserve throughout the refurbishment process.

While he reiterated that the repairs were ‘urgent’, Als opined that the journey has been ‘transformed into a showcase of talent and creativity from the staff of our Building and Works Department’.

He added: “When I look at these new walls, floors and fittings, I see pride and creativity, patience and good craftsmanship. I am also seeing a team that has emerged as a better and stronger unit”.

This development, Als stated, is due to the myriad of lessons learned in several key areas as well as the project’s intricacies.

“The timeline for such a major renovation is at least 12 months, but we have set the challenging goal to do it in 10 months and here we are on the home stretch,” he disclosed.

As Als looked at Codrington House with admiration, he concluded: “This building is a reflection of the great people who have rebuilt it and a tribute to those who will occupy it for many years to come”.

TRANSFORMATION TRACKER

Codrington House's ceiling restoration is closer to completion



A section of an office in Codrington House earlier this year during the initial phases.



Access to the balcony has been restored as part of the refurbishment of this section.

TRANSFORMATION TRACKER

The interior walls of Codrington House are being refreshed



A section of the Codrington House's interior wall prior to the repainting by the Artisans.



Another section of the Codrington House's interior wall after the repainting process.

TRANSFORMATION TRACKER

The construction and finishes of the doors are at an advanced stage



Close-up views of two doors that were being constructed for Codrington House.



Close-up full views of a door that was constructed and stained for Codrington House.

A golden touch is Sealy's signature style



Junior Sealy, one of NCC's Artisans, has refined Codrington House's staircase.

JUNIOR SEALY'S CRAFTSMANSHIP on the newel post and wooden balusters of the Codrington House's staircase has refined their rustic mahogany appearance.

The enthusiastic Artisan observed the rotted sections while he conducted work on the building's ceiling and sought to restore the staircase to its former glory.

Guided by his instinct, the former Samuel Jackman Prescod Institute of Technology (SJPI) student indicated that he retreated to the Building and Works Department's workshop to carve the replacement pieces of mahogany.

"This process came natural to me, I took my time and cut out the rotted pieces and replaced them... it took me a day or two to complete the task," Sealy explained.

The curved newel post, which had a large rotted section, required more of Sealy's dynamic skills and proved to be a task that he was prepared to tackle.

"I went back to the workshop and selected another piece of mahogany for the curve [newel post], I then began shaping it out and my colleagues were curious as to what I was doing," he disclosed with a smile.

Sealy persisted with the carving of the wood and achieved the desired curve, much to his delectation.

"I am naturally skilled with my hands; they are like gold and I make most things golden," he proclaimed.

On completion of the new post's installation, Sealy's multifaceted journey continued in the **Continued on page 8**

Sealy remains steadfast despite the obstacles



Junior Sealy examining his work on the curved newel post, a full view is inset.

building.

“I have been doing the whole works in and on the building. Besides the ceiling and the stairs, I have also done some work on the air condition units as well as painting and masonry,” he added.

And while there are some intricacies with the building’s refurbishment, Sealy remains steadfast.

“Given the age of the building, some of the work has been tedious. If you interfere with something, you have to expect that in some other areas, things will be impacted... but I never really focus too much on what could go wrong, I just do what I have to do and get the job done,” he asserted.

With humility and peace being the proverbial anchors of his life, Sealy said that he is proud to be one of the artisans

writing his name on NCC’s history pages.

“I feel good to be a part of what in time will be the history of the building’s refurbishment and to have been able to do work in so many areas is a good feeling as well,” he declared. Sealy’s can-do attitude has also yielded satisfactory results on other recent projects. “Although I did not do any of the tiling in the main building, I have done tiling on the Fountain in Queen’s Park and in the facility at Bathsheba,” he said.

NCC’s Acting General Manager, Ryan Als, saluted Sealy on a job well done and extended kudos to the building’s refurbishment team, which is led by Foreman, Verden Seale. Seale echoed Als’ sentiments and lauded the team for remaining committed yet flexible in their approach to the building’s refurbishment process.

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Meet NCC's Garden Centre Acting Supervisor, Kizzy Marville



Kizzy Marville is the friendly face of NCC's Garden Centre with a warm personality.

MARVILLE BY NAME, marvellous in nature and magnificently serves the National Conservation Commission's (NCC) customers; Kizzy Marville is the Acting Supervisor of NCC's Garden Centre.

For the past 15 years, Marville has demonstrated her unwavering commitment to NCC through her enthusiasm to learn as much as humanly possible about plants and to impart her knowledge on customers. This knowledge, she indicated, initially comprised basic information about Croton plants and the Pride of Barbados shrub. "When I came to NCC, it took me about six months to get familiar with the popular plants and I quickly recognized that there were certain plants that the customers preferred, all of which were not necessarily

popular, but I had to gain the knowledge so that I could better assist and advise the customers," she explained.

Marville credits her then Supervisor for extending grace and patience over her initial six month period at NCC.

With her enhanced knowledge, Marville quickly developed a rapport with the customers and today, she is the go-to person in the Garden Centre.

"Most customers will come and ask for me while others recommend that persons ask for me, when they are sending persons to the Garden Centre," she disclosed with a smile. Great customer service comes naturally for Marville, who developed this critical skill through the operation of a shop within her community, prior to joining the NCC.

As she gazed at the beautiful landscapes on

Continued on page 13

Marville values her relationships with NCC's Customers

on NCC's compound, Marville reflected on her journey.

"I came in as a Shop Assistant and I have been acting as the Supervisor of the Garden Centre for a little while now. I am one of the more senior persons in the Plant Nursery. I am proud of myself and I pleased to be a part of the NCC family," she declared.

Marville added that character building and personal development in terms of self-control and the enhancement of her personality are some of the key highlights of her career.

"I have learned and matured a lot in this job, especially in terms of understanding the importance of when, where and how," the plant lover opined.

The preparation for events, such as Agrofest, is one of Marville's favourite aspects of her job.

"Most of the customers look for me at these events and I enjoy interacting with them there as well. I really love the relationships I have with the customers and I do not mind going above and beyond to assist them," she asserted.

Marville credited NCC's social media platforms and the consistent promotion of the Garden Centre's products and sales, as a critical artery that has strengthened their relationships with customers.

The result, she outlined, includes the increased patronage of the Garden Centre and more traction at their booths during events.

The increased traction can also lead to the cultivation of interest among younger



Kizzy Marville is proud to be a part of NCC's family.

persons - particularly females - that may be keen on pursuing a career within this industry, and Marville believes that this is a good prospect.

"You don't need to have a green thumb... as long as you love plants and love to get your fingers muddy, you will love it. You will get to know the plants and you will be good to go," she said.

The requisite knowledge, she added, can be provided through NCC and its staff.

"This is a good opportunity for persons to pursue, especially in the area of landscaping. As long as you do a good job, you will get the work. At times, it can be a lot of hard work but it beautifies our environment and enhances its appearance, which is great to admire," she stated.

AMBROSE ACES AESTHETICS



Karen Ambrose, one of NCC's General Workers, has a great love for beautification.

KAREN AMBROSE'S LOVE for landscaping knows no bounds.

A 'perfectionist' by nature, her beautification journey began over 15 years ago at the National Conservation Commission (NCC), where she was initially assigned to the Codrington House headquarters.

The meticulous general worker, who is currently assigned to Jubilee Gardens, Independence Square and the historic Montefiore Monument on Coleridge Street, takes great pride in her work. "Beautifying these areas with the plants brings me peace and when you bring good energy to the plants, it also resonates with them and helps them to grow," she said. Ambrose alluded to awakening each day with the aim to care for the plants, and looks forward to greeting them on arrival

at the sites.

"I see the plants as gifts from God and I nurture them accordingly. When you treat the plants appropriately and you start to see them grow, it really touches your heart," she passionately expressed.

After a brief pause to acknowledge a compliment about her aesthetically-pleasing work from a passerby, Ambrose alluded to the landscaping knowledge shared with her along her journey at the NCC.

"My journey has been enriched by the persons that have guided me along the way. Thank God for the persons I have worked around because the knowledge they have shared with me has helped a lot. I have also done some research on my own and that has further helped," she disclosed.

Ambrose added that these persons primarily comprise her colleagues at the NCC.

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Ambrose is appreciative of knowledge and guidance

“When I first came to NCC, I had no knowledge of plants or landscaping, and it was the guidance from our current Acting General Manager, Ryan Als, and our then Foreman, Ruth Cumberbatch, that initially paved the path to knowledge for me,” she shared.

Ambrose noted that her knowledge was further enriched along the journey. “There is a lady that worked with me before, Charmaine Hall, and during that timeframe, she taught me a lot...,” she said before tears sprang from her eyes. Ambrose alluded to their mutually beneficial exchanges after she regained her composure.

“We worked together for a while but due to circumstances our journeys led to different directions, but I am so grateful for what she taught me,” she stated. Appreciation was also expressed for some of her other valued colleagues.

“I must also salute Shawn Phillips, he taught me so much and I will always thank him for the knowledge he shared. My colleague, Derrick, that also works with me at the Montefiore Monument must be highlighted as we have a good synergy,” she outlined.

Ambrose has combined the valuable knowledge they have shared with her ‘natural gift’.

“From the time persons are growing up, they tend to find that they have a gift,



Ambrose aspires to enhance her landscaping knowledge.

my gift is in my hands. Everyone asks me how comes everything I plant grows, it is simply because of the love I have within that I share with whatever I am planting and maintaining,” she declared.

In addition to her personalized techniques and the necessary tools, Ambrose alluded to ‘care’ as being a critical component of her job. As she gestured to her admirable work, Ambrose opined: “Karen is just naturally caring and the result of my care for the plants is what you see here”.

Ambrose, who also performs caretaker duties, aspires to further enhance her knowledge of plants and landscaping techniques - an opportunity that she hopes NCC will facilitate.

LOVELY LANDSCAPES

Karen Ambrose's beautification of the Montefiore Monument's environs



The Montefiore Monument's plaque is adorned with plants that are maintained by Ambrose.



The back view of the Monument's plaque which has some beautiful Plumbago plants.

LOVELY LANDSCAPES

Karen Ambrose's beautification of the Montefiore Monument's environs



These beautiful Hibiscus flowers accentuate this palm tree in the vicinity of the historic Monument.



Ambrose skillfully removes the weeds from plants and shrubs as part of her weekly maintenance.

LOVELY LANDSCAPES

Karen Ambrose's beautification of the Montefiore Monument's environs



Ambrose's techniques includes mitigation measures to reduce the impact of drought conditions.



The proper care and maintenance of plants and shrubs are critical factors to Ambrose.

LOVELY LANDSCAPES

Karen Ambrose's beautification of the Montefiore Monument's environs



The creation and maintenance of aesthetically-pleasing landscapes bring peace to Ambrose.



Passersby often voice their compliments to Ambrose, who ready acknowledges and accepts them.

CONSERVATION CHRONICLES

NCC installs turtle-friendly lights at some of its beach facilities



One of the turtle-friendly amber LED lights that was installed at the Pebbles Beach Facility.

TURTLE-FRIENDLY LIGHTS were recently installed at three of the beaches facilities managed by the National Conservation Commission (NCC) – Pebbles, Rockley and Hastings – to lower the risk of disorientation among the hatchlings.

This installation forms part of NCC's commitment to safeguard and enhance the beach conditions for sea turtle conservation, and to strengthen its partnership with the Barbados Sea Turtle Project (BSTP).

NCC's Senior Electrician, William Husbands, indicated that 10 beach facilities were earmarked for the installation of the lights, including the three aforementioned facilities.

The installations, he added, will continue in

the upcoming months at the Worthing, Brownes, Brandon's, Batts Rock, Fitts Village, Folkestone and Halfmoon Fort beach facilities.

"There were 50 light fixtures imported from Florida, each equipped with an amber LED turtle-friendly bulb that is shielded and does not disturb nesting turtles. They produce long wavelengths [of light] of up to 590 nanometers," Husbands explained.

NCC's selection of the amber Light-Emitting Diode (LED) turtle-friendly lights is in keeping with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission's (FWC) criteria to mitigate the impact of artificial light at night (ALAN).

The criteria outlines that the fixtures or lamp should have the lowest wattage or lumen output necessary.

The light sources, according to the criteria,

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CONSERVATION CHRONICLES

Selection of turtle-friendly lights meets international standards

should have wavelengths that are greater than 560 nanometers and should not include the use of filters, gels or lenses.

The fixtures must be kept shielded to ensure the lamps or glowing lens are not directly visible to the sea turtles.

The FWC has mandated that wildlife lighting must meet the full safe-lighting criteria to lower the risk of disorientation and disruption in the sea turtles' nesting habits. Ryan Als, NCC's Acting General Manager, said that the installation of the lights, which forms part of NCC's multi-pronged sea turtles conservation approach, is a mitigation measure that aims to protect the endangered hawksbill sea turtles that frequent these beaches.

He added that NCC's officials has the replanting of coastal vegetation along the beaches on the cards, as part of their short-term mitigation measures.

"We will also be reducing activities on the

beaches that are harmful to the turtles' population and nesting. Our team will also increase the public awareness and education in terms of the conservation of beach habitats in tandem with the BSTP," Als explained. Last month, the BSTP formally requested assistance from the Commission with maintaining and improving the environmental conditions of the Fitts Village Beach in St. James to support the sea turtles nesting and hatchling releases.

In the correspondence, Daniel highlighted the declining rate of nesting females for the third year in a row and stressed that "without human intervention, it will take very little for our population to crash".

Each year, hundreds of hawksbill sea turtles return to the shores of Barbados to nest.

In recognition of the need to preserve their population, Als and Daniel urged all beachgoers to support their efforts to safeguard these endangered species.



Another view of the turtle-friendly lights that were installed at the Pebbles Beach Facility.

NCC's Garden Centre Staff Selection

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National Conservation Commission