



**Forty Fourth Annual General Meeting  
of the Saint Lucia National Trust  
Report of the Chairperson, Alison King**

**PROGRAMME REPORTS**

**CONSERVATION:**

The Conservation Department continues to maintain and monitor our sites. Trees were pruned back on some sites to improve tree health and visitor safety. Safety features including rails were reinforced and installed on selected sites. Tools and equipment were procured and maintained regularly to improve productivity, and supplies were procured and par stocks maintained to facilitate the continued maintenance of the Landmark.

**Built Heritage**

**Listing of Buildings** - Despite challenges of the COVID 19 pandemic, the 2019 Register of Historic Buildings was updated as part of a summer internship programme with eight students from Sir Arthur Lewis Community College - Division of Technical Education and Management Studies. The students surveyed districts island-wide and added approximately ten new buildings and sites to the list. The new additions will be vetted and approved by the Technical Steering Committee.

The legal officer in the Department of Physical Development, who is part of a focus group comprising stakeholders from local cultural heritage organizations, met over a period of weeks to review the draft legislation for the conservation of historic buildings, objects and sites. This initiative is ongoing.

**Married Women's Quarters** - The Trust is currently in discussion with a friendly government to provide technical support to undertake an engineering assessment at the site. We hope this assessment will make recommendations for remedial measures to address the structural damage to the building and to develop architectural and engineering plans for its restoration. This will be the next step in fulfilment of our mandate to convert the property into a national museum.

**Walcott Place** - The SLNT convened a meeting with group of artists and friends of Sir Derek and Roderick Walcott and proposed to name the group “Friends of Walcott”. This group will spearhead developing programmes to foster sustainability of Walcott House Museum.

The 2020 Nobel Laureate Festival activities continued, and the Trust was pleased to add a new activity to the programme of activities. Under the patronage of Her Excellency Dame Pearlette Louisy, the Annual Walcott Open House successfully kicked off with Kindling: under Walcott’s Light, a poetry evening in the courtyard of Walcott House Museum.

A new poster rack was mounted at Walcott House containing twenty-two original posters of Sir Derek Walcott’s readings regionally and internationally. This new addition will complement the already existing material at the Home Museum.

The Trust continues to receive support from the Castries Constituency Council (CCC) to maintain the building and to keep the museum open. FLOW continues to provide telecommunication support towards the opening of the Museum. We thank both the Castries Constituency Council and FLOW for their continued support.

**White Breasted Thrasher** - The Trust is in partnership with the Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust and the Department of Forest and Lands of the Government of Saint Lucia to implement communications and outreach activities under the Betty Petersen Conservation funded project. This project is being implemented by Durrell with support from the other agencies.

**PSEPA Management Plan Implementation** - Natural Resource agencies within the Government, along with the Trust and other stakeholders within the PSEPA, continue to pool resources to implement needed actions to manage and improve the resources in the area, and to develop livelihood opportunities for nearby communities.

The ongoing work programmes of revegetation with mangrove seedlings propagated in the nursery at the Má Kôte Mangrove continued over the period.

**Species Conservation** - The Trust continues its monitoring work programme on the Maria, Praslin and Rat Islands to ensure that alien invasive species are not introduced to the islands.

Efforts continue under a grant from the Organisation of American States (OAS) under their Reef Check programme, and with support from the Aupicon Charcoal and Agricultural Producers Group to implement a Marine Turtle Conservation Programme within the Point Sables Environmental Protection Area. These activities

include marine turtle awareness and marine turtle nesting and hatching data collection for improved marine turtle conservation.

**Training:** Staff within the Conservation Department received refresher training in the following areas:

- Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool (SMART) for improved conservation and mapping of trends;
- National Environmental Information Systems under the GEF funded Multilateral Environmental Agreements Project – contribution of environmental data to national data for monitoring of MEAs;
- BIOPAMA Protected Areas Management Effectiveness Training (PAME) – improve monitoring and management of protected areas

**Grant Proposal Writing:** Two grant proposals were written seeking international major donor funding in the following areas:

- Mexican Embassy Heritage Conservation and associated livelihoods project – this project is in the final stages of approval and implementation is scheduled to begin in the first quarter of 2021. A cohort of Mexican heritage management experts visited the island in late 2020 to ground truth the various components of the project proposal and to better understand the activities to be pursued. Meetings and site visits to the various project sites were conducted over a four-day period. This activity was facilitated by the Mexican Embassy and Office of the Prime Minister.
- Caribbean Biodiversity Fund Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA) facility Proposal – PINL and PSEPA – the major project activities include:
  - ✓ Mangrove assessment and rehabilitation plan and ecosystem valuation;
  - ✓ Coral Reef assessment and ecosystem valuation for PSEPA and PINL;
  - ✓ Coastal Stabilisation Study and related recommendations for the PSEPA;
  - ✓ Rehabilitation of sand dunes and restored coastal vegetation in targeted areas within the PSEPA; and
  - ✓ Public awareness and outreach on the importance of ecosystems in enhancing climate resilience.

## **EDUCATION AND ADVOCACY:**

Notwithstanding the restrictions imposed by the national response to the Covid-19 pandemic, this programme area delivered an impressive work output, the highlights of which are presented below:

**Conservation Talk:** Restrictions related to the Covid-19 pandemic reduced our direct engagement with schools from 19 last year to 7 this year, and these were done virtually. We also delivered an in person presentation to the Saint Lucia Aquatics Federation Learn to Swim Summer Camp.

**Advocacy Support – Cabot Development:** A social media plan to support our advocacy campaign against the Cabot Saint Lucia project was developed and rolled out on March 11<sup>th</sup> to raise awareness about the development and garner support for our efforts to protect the heritage assets and public access to the coastal resources. A Press Conference was convened on August 26<sup>th</sup> and a series of interviews with stakeholders recorded for later use. Our efforts to engage the developer and government agencies to ensure our concerns are continuing and we have written to the Canadian National Contact Point for the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development for Multinational Enterprises operating in developing countries to seek their intervention to ensure that Cabot Saint Lucia complies with their guidelines.

**World Heritage Day:** A social media plan was developed and rolled out over a period of 10 days to raise public awareness of the value of heritage in the development process. Additionally, a Press Release for World Heritage Day, which was observed on April 18<sup>th</sup> under the theme “Shared Cultures, Shared Heritage, Shared Responsibility” was sent to the media and placed on our website and social media accounts.

**World Biological Diversity Day:** We launched a Citizen Scientist competition as a virtual commemoration of World Biodiversity Day, from 22<sup>nd</sup> May to the end of August. We encouraged persons to take photographs of changes they noticed in nature since Covid-19 began and 7 winners were randomly selected over the three months of the competition. The winners all received prizes from Massy stores as well as SLNT membership.

**Celebrate Islands Video and Presentation:** We submitted a video for the Celebrate Islands initiative on the impact of the Coronavirus on heritage conservation organisations. Additionally, we participated in, and made a presentation at a Webinar on ***Building Resilient and Sustainable Islands*** on June 3<sup>rd</sup>.

**World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought:** We participated in a Land Degradation Field Trip on June 18<sup>th</sup> and a tree planting exercise organized by the Forestry Department in commemoration of this international observance

**World Snake Day:** For World Snake Day the Education and Advocacy Department collaborated with the Conservation Department to stage a Snake Art Competition in collaboration with the Forestry Division, Eco South Tours and Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust. This was launched on 17<sup>th</sup> July and was open to children within the 8-12 years and 13-16 years age categories. Four winners from each age category were chosen based on a combination of judge selections and Facebook voting. The first place winners in each category received 8-inch tablets sponsored by the Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust, and the second, third and fourth place winners received art sets and school supplies sponsored by Eco South Tours and the Trust respectively.

**Coastal Day:** We had a presence at a Coastal Day Underwater clean up organised by the Department of Sustainable Development and the Saint Lucia Dive Association on Friday, September 18, 2020.

**Who are you?** In October, we provided support for the Who are you? Quiz sponsored by Velika 'XyLaw' Lawrence, Counselor and Activist. Ms. Lawrence submitted questions based on the film, 'Who are you?', to which members were encouraged to respond for a chance to win a copy of the film.

**Customer survey:** In June 2020 we conducted a Customer Survey in an effort to better understand why persons visit our sites, to seek their views on how we may improve their experiences and to gauge the likelihood of them visiting during the Covid-19 pandemic. The results of the survey informed plans for site enhancements and variations to visitor experiences, all of which were, unfortunately, overshadowed by heightened restrictions at our sites.

**SLNT's Anniversary Activities:** As part of our 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations, we hosted the 7<sup>th</sup> edition of our annual Trust Pioneers Lecture on 26<sup>th</sup> September under the theme "Patrimony or Patricide: the Natural and Human Impacts Threatening our Archaeological Heritage". The guest speakers were renown Historian and Archaeologist, Dr. Corinne Hofman from Leiden University and Dr. Winston Phulgence, Anthropologist and Head of Social Sciences and the Knowledge Society at the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College. We also launched our **45 Activities for 45 Years of Conservation** initiative at the event.

We also had wide media presence during the anniversary observance with appearances on the Morning Heat – Blazin FM on October 13<sup>th</sup>, The Lunch Room – RCI on September 17<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>; the Morning Riot – MBC Real FM on June 5<sup>th</sup> and September 29<sup>th</sup> and Straight up - HTS on October 26<sup>th</sup>

**Crowdfunding:** We collaborated with the International Organisation of National Trusts to launch a crowd funding initiative on the Global Giving platform to raise funds to support our conservation work. The results are not as expected and as at November 16, 2020 we raised US\$1502.

**Our Heritage:** We were able to revive the SLNT's 'Our Heritage' programme on Facebook in a week-long series running from September 23<sup>rd</sup> to September 30<sup>th</sup> under the theme "Caribbean Women Advocating for Better Environmental Governance". This was a series of interviews conducted with six distinguished professional women from across the Caribbean.

**SLNT FAQs:** Based on input from staff and Council, we prepared the script for the Trust's FAQs about who we are and what we do. Videos will be produced on each FAQ subject and members, staff and Councillors will be asked to serve as the talent for these, which will be placed on social media and shared widely. Volunteers are welcomed.

**Escazú Agreement (Access Rights 'Principle 10'):** The Trust maintained its advocacy efforts for Saint Lucia to ratify the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Participation and Justice in Environment Matters (Escazú Agreement).

We were invited by the Department of Sustainable Development to make virtual presentations about the role of civil society in advocating for the implementation of the agreement to the National Workers Union and the Bar Association in 2020. We also presented to the virtual Advocacy course conducted by CANARI, in which three staff members participated. We also participated in a CANARI's chat series dubbed 'Escazú is for you' on November 11<sup>th</sup> and their social media campaign 'If we had Escazú' launched during the week of November 16<sup>th</sup>. The Trust received grants of US\$7,985 from CANARI and US\$18,000 from the World Resources Institute for promoting the Escazú Agreement and Climate Justice. In 2020, we prepared two Escazú case studies to communicate our advocacy work on the proposed Dolphinarium and the Queen's Chain and on November 11, 2019 we staged a workshop in collaboration with the UN ECLAC and the Government of Saint Lucia for civil society and public servants on environmental justice. On the same evening a similar event was staged for youths from various groups around the island.

**Social Media Presence and Press Releases:** Our social media presence continued to grow during the period under review. We have used Facebook to share the numerous projects and programmes being undertaken by the Trust and like-minded organizations who share our conservation mandate. Many of our posts continue to reach thousands of people locally, regionally and internationally. As at November 16, 2020 our Saint Lucia National Trust Facebook page had 5,788 people who liked the page and 6,462 people following compared to the figures reported at last year's AGM of 4,640 likes and 4,823 respectively. We also have 2,002 followers on Instagram as at November 23<sup>rd</sup>. We started the Throw Back Thursday posts on social media which are highly interactive as we gauge our followers' knowledge on the places featured in the photograph. We also created infographics for social media in observance of Protected Areas Day.

Several articles, including for World Heritage Day, World Forest Day, World Turtle Day, Earth Day and the EbA launch amongst others were produced and disseminated through the print, electronic and social media platforms.

**Trust News:** We continue to use Constant Contact to produce our quarterly Trust News. This interface gives our newsletter a professional feel. We encourage members and like-minded agencies to contribute their work that is in keeping with our mandate.

**Girls of a Feather:** We were invited by Girls of a Feather (Saint Lucia) to speak about our series 'Caribbean Women Advocating for Better Environmental Governance' as well as our accomplishments and work in heritage conservation in Saint Lucia at their Story tell(her) Boot camp Closing Ceremony on October 18<sup>th</sup>.

**Beautification Drive:** In December 2019, we were approached by longstanding Trust member, Victor Price of Harris Paints to provide information for a beautification drive at the Vieux Fort roundabout. The information was used for signage to raise awareness about various species and historic sites found in the South.

**Documentation Centre:** During the period under review, the Documentation Centre received 16 requests for information. The Documentation Centre is also

being reorganized so that the materials are grouped per subject heading and plans are being formulated to place the collection on-line.

## **MEMBERSHIP:**

The national response to the Covid-19 pandemic forced the cancellation of a number of planned membership activities and the few that were held were done remotely. These include:

- Our first quarterly meeting on May 16, 2020 at which members approved the revised Organisational Structure for the Trust and Council presented the first three-year action plan developed to implement the 2020 - 2030 Strategic Plan. Additionally, a feature address was delivered by Ms. Natalie Urquhart, President of the Museum Association of the Caribbean and Director of the National Gallery of the Cayman Islands, who spoke about the *Impact of COVID-19 on the Cultural Heritage Sector*;
- An emergency meeting of Members, which was convened on May 30, 2020 to discuss the recent demolition of the Royal Gaol and to seek the guidance of members on how the Trust should deal with the matter;
- A virtual Children's Art Tutorial and competition, held on June 12, 2020 in observance of World Oceans Day and a similar event for adults on June 21, 2020;
- A photographic competition featuring photographs of sunrise or sunset, held in commemoration of International Earth Day, 2020;
- A membership drive at the Derek Walcott Square on June 2, 2020; and
- Our staff and members participating in a clean-up of the Robert Devaux Drive on February 29, 2020 coordinated by The Landings and the National Conservation Authority.

During the year under review we made greater use of social media to reach out to members, including our "Membership Mondays" and "Wildlife Wednesdays", which have proven to be quite popular. Additionally, on June 2<sup>nd</sup> we staged a Membership Drive at the Derek Walcott Square in Castries.

## **CORPORATE AND BUSINESS SERVICES:**

**Staff Matters:** Over the past year the Trust welcomed five new staff members. Mrs. Jeannine Compton-Antoine joined the Trust as its Corporate Services Manager in December 2019, followed by Ms. Jessie Mayers in February 2020, as the Programme Assistant/Membership and Ms. Joanne Norville in March 2020, as the Programme Assistant/Communications and Advocacy. Following a short internship at the Maria Island Interpretation Centre (MIIC), under the USAid Basic Life Employability Skills (BLES) programme, Shenelle Samuel Ms joined the team on a

short term contract at MIIC and Ms. Raquel Wilson joined the Conservation Department under the EbA project in October of this year.

The Corporate Services Department received assistance from the BLES Programme, in the form of interns in housekeeping, Customer Service and Safety Representatives and Administration. Although the internships were only for three weeks, the four young ladies made useful contributions to the organisation at their duty stations at Pigeon Island National Landmark and MIIC.

Interviews were conducted for Maria Island Tours Guides in October of this year and three individuals were selected from a pool of over fifty applicants. These persons have undergone the necessary Tour Guide training specifically to conduct Maria Island Tours and tours will commence once Covid-19 Certification from the Ministry of Tourism is received.

**Staff Development:** The Trust continues to explore training opportunities to develop staff skills to better serve the organisation, a few of which are mentioned below.

The Corporate Services Manager participated in an EbA Workshop through the Ecosystem based Adaptation (EbA) Facility of the Caribbean Biodiversity Fund (CBF), which was held in Santo Domingo from 25 -26 February 2020.

From June to July 2020, staff from the Conservation and Advocacy Departments participated in a virtual short course on effective advocacy for Caribbean Civil Society Organisations (CSOs). This course provided participants with practical guidance and capacity building on tools, techniques and best practices in designing and conducting effective advocacy on environmental and development issues at the local, national, regional and international levels.

In addition to the external meetings and workshops, the Corporate Services Department implemented a monthly half day meeting and training day. During these sessions, staff participated in team building exercises and short in-house training in a variety of areas including in product and souvenir development. Staff were trained in cold process soap making, making lemongrass hand sanitizer, body scrubs and basic composting. The Corporate Services Department is now looking to work with the Bureau of Standards to further train staff in standards, labelling, packaging and bar codes. It is envisaged that this training will commence in 2021.

The Corporate Service Department also commenced a “discovering Saint Lucia’s historic sites” and in conjunction with the Conservation and Membership departments, started visiting sites around Saint Lucia and having discussions with local stakeholders. Sites visited included Balembouche estate, where the team toured the property and discussed issues with the property owners regarding the use of the two-hundred-year old aqueduct and the River Doree aqueduct and associated plantation ruins with assistance from the River Doree Revival Group. The River Doree Revival Group is keen to collaborate with the Trust to ensure that the history

of that area is preserved, as well as utilizing these areas to provide livelihood for the people in the community.

In May and August, 2020, staff participated in a staff survey and retreat under the title “**enhancing sustainability through improvement**” as part of an exercise to improve the functioning of operations of the organization. Staff were introduced to such techniques and focal areas such as “C.R.I.S.P.” (**C**reate, **R**esearch, **I**dentify current situation, **S**trategize and **P**lan-Do-Check-Act), organisational structures and strategies to improve team performance. These exercises were aimed at showing staff how to identify gaps in work areas, address problems, develop and implement actions and how to move forward in achieving their goals.

**Job Descriptions:** A working committee of Council was established to review job descriptions in accordance with the approved positions in the new structure which was approved by members in May, 2020.

**Security:** CCTV cameras were installed at Pigeon Island and at the Southern Office as part of a continued effort to improve security of SLNT sites. Over all, night security at MIIC has improved with the commissioning of the new security partner, Icon Security.

**Trust Operations:** In the Middle of March 2020, the Trust sites and office operations were suspended as mandated by the national shutdown due to the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic. Offices and sites operations resumed in early July, 2020. During the shutdown, employees who were able to, were asked to work from home. A work from home policy was developed and adopted to guide this new norm.

**Staff Welfare:** With the advent of the Covid-19 pandemic, the SLNT staff underwent a rigorous programme of training in March 2020, July 2020 and October 2020 to ensure that they were familiar with the protocols and requirements needed to curtail the spread of the virus and to ensure the safety of staff and visitors to Trust sites. Staff continue to be updated on a weekly basis of any changes to the safety protocols.

Additionally, the Trust purchased personal protective equipment for all staff, including masks, face shields, hand sanitizer, disposable gloves, aprons and infrared thermometers. In collaboration with the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Tourism, the Trust developed Covid protocols to facilitate the safe reopening of PINL, MIIC and the Walcott house. Pigeon Island was approved for reopening in July 2020, with MIIC following shortly thereafter. In October 2020, following the passing of the Covid-19 Bill, the Trust’s Covid-19 response plan was updated and approved and PINL, MIIC and Maria Islands have been approved to receive international visitors.

**Business Services:** As stated earlier, the travel restrictions imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic caused a significant decrease in all Trust revenue streams,

particularly from the Pigeon Island National Landmark. All pre-booked events were cancelled and new bookings have been also cancelled due to the rising number of cases in Saint Lucia and the new government restrictions to curtail the spread of the virus. The number of weddings has also reduced from forty-eight weddings in 2019 to eleven in 2020 and visitation to the Landmark is down to a trickle. All major marketing efforts were placed on hold and short to medium term interventions in the form of discounted packages on Trust services were developed and promoted in an effort to generate much needed revenue. However, we do not anticipate any significant return to normalcy until the pandemic is brought under control.

**Alison King**  
**Chairperson**  
**Saint Lucia National Trust**