



# CURRENTS

Vol. 10 No. 2

The Newsletter of The Bahamas National Trust

August 1993

## Council Tackles Big Agenda

**T**he Council of The Bahamas National Trust spent two days hard at work earlier this year, successfully tackling an enormous agenda. Convening on April 30, Council attendees included all but two of its six overseas members, five of six Bahamas Government appointees, and eight of nine elected Trust members. With such great attendance productive discussion filled the marathon meetings.

The 1993 Council agenda included many critical issues, including, among others, longline and other fishing methods in The Bahamas, the accelerated rate of proposed development for the Family Islands, the impact of ecotourism on our National Parks, the need to increase overall BNT effectiveness, and a strategy to fund and design a national sustainable development plan.

A few highlights of the meeting and decisions made are outlined below...

- ♦BNT should continue to meet wide-ranging environmental challenges and seek to expand its influence with Government as much as possible.

- ♦Council unanimously moved to oppose the use of longline fishing gear and call on the Department of Fisheries to completely outlaw its use in The Bahamas. The following resolution was also passed:

*The Bahamas National Trust strongly urges the Department of Fisheries to formulate a fisheries development plan which is guided by the principles of sustainable use of our resources for the greatest economic benefit of the entire Bahamian people.*

- ♦With regards to ecotourism Council resolved: *The Bahamas National Trust supports economic development in The Bahamas through*

*the use of ecotourism based on the protection of non-renewable natural and cultural resources and sustainable use of renewable natural resources. The Bahamas National Trust advocates a joint effort by Government and private industry to develop and implement a national ecotourism strategy.*

- ♦Council commended the BNT Historic Preservation Committee for its fine work and many accomplishments in the past year, including the production of "Nassau's Historic Mile" and the presentation of the National Historic Register (New Providence) to Cabinet. Council stressed that all possible preservation incentives be included in the development of historic preservation legislation.

- ♦It was noted with great enthusiasm that 1994 will be the 35th Anniversary year of The Bahamas National Trust and Council agreed that a full schedule of special events should be prepared.

- ♦Special efforts are to be undertaken to elevate the seriousness of park bye-law offenses in the eyes of the courts. This action follows a series of disappointing case verdicts and sentencings earlier this year.

- ♦International agencies will be sought out to fund a natural resource assessment of The Bahamas. The resulting product will be detailed information on what we have, where it is and in what quantity. Sustainable development policies towards our resources will be developed based on the information accumulated.

**C**ouncil agreed, in light of the rapid growth in BNT's environmental responsibilities, to meet again this year and will do so in October.

## Officers Elected for 1993-1994 Year

BNT Council concluded its meetings with the annual election of Officers and appointments to Council. The results were as follows:

**President:** Mr. Pericles Maillis ♦ **Deputy President:** Mr. John F. Bethell  
**Treasurer:** Mr. Ernest Grinrod ♦ **Secretary:** Mr. Macgregor Robertson

BNT Council comprises the following:

**Representing His Excellency The Governor General:** Mrs. Lynn Holowesko and Mr. Oris Russell  
**Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries:** Mr. Colln Higgs ♦ **Ministry of Education:** Mrs. Eleanor Garraway  
**Ministry of Health:** TBA ♦ **Ministry of Tourism:** Mrs. Keva Hanna-Lawrence  
**American Museum of Natural History:** Dr. C. Levitt Smith  
**National Audubon Society:** Mr. Alexander Sprunt IV ♦ **New York Zoological Society:** Dr. Donald Bruning  
**Smithsonian Institution:** Dr. David Challinor  
**University of Miami Rosenstiel School:** Dr. Samuel Gruber  
**U.S. National Parks Service:** Mr. Richard Ring  
**Elected from BNT Membership:** Mr. Pericles Maillis, Mr. John Bethell, Mr. Basil Kelly, Mr. Durward Archer, Mr. Glen Bannister, Mrs. Robin Symoneffe, Mr. Michael Albury, Mrs. Sandra Buckner, Mr. Geoffrey Johnstone

## Message from The Director

"How is The Trust doing?" This question is asked constantly both here in The Bahamas and abroad. The most concise and accurate answer is that The Trust is doing remarkably well. This present positive position can be directly attributed to: the foresight of our founders, the support of our members, and the dedicated work of our volunteers and staff.

The Trust is involved in a continually wider range of areas each year. The scope of our work is truly amazing and much of the time, indeed overwhelming. Many people are involved in one or even a few of these areas, but most are not aware of the complete depth and scope of our work.

Since the new government took over nearly one year ago we have been besieged with increased requests for assistance, recommendations, approvals

and positions. Our real involvement has and continues to be requested from the Prime Minister and other Ministers and Government Departments in such diverse areas as: establishing a Cabinet level Secretariat to deal with all environmental and sustainable development matters, developing a realistic and implementable Ecotourism Plan, providing our substantiated recommendations on fisheries regulations and use of fishing gear/methods (including longline fishing), organising effective implementation of a Keep Bahamas Beautiful program, reviewing all development proposals for potential environmental impact, preparing a master plan of land usage for New Providence and adjacent waters, determining what additional sites throughout the country need protection...

Besides these heavy additional demands placed on us, The Trust

continues to carry out its traditional responsibilities in the broadly defined areas of: building and managing The Bahamas National Parks System, historic preservation, environmental protection, natural resource/wildlife conservation, school and public education.

Our expenses are continually rising. In 1982 our annual expenses were \$100,000; this increased to \$415,862 in 1992. As a self supported organisation, we have to find the income to meet our expenses each year. In 1992 our income came from: Heritage Fund Endowment (55%), Memberships (22%), Donations (16%), Sales/fees/tours (5%) and Government Grants (2%).

This brief overview is what goes through my mind when I answer the question "How is The Trust doing?" I hope you agree that it is indeed doing remarkably well... to say the least!

Gary E. Larson

## BNT Staff Travel to Puerto Rico

For the past five years RARE Center for Tropical Conservation has committed financial resources to funding innovative conservation education programs throughout the Wider Caribbean Region. The Bahama Parrot Conservation Project is one such program which benefited from this support.

The Bahama Parrot Conservation Project is one of RARE's shining examples. Under the leader-

ship of The Bahamas National Trust the program was remarkably successful and is now being used as a model for other countries just beginning similar programs.

With the complete sponsorship of RARE Center The Trust's Director of Education, Mrs. Susan Larson, and its new Junior Education Officer, Miss Monique Clarke, will represent The Bahama Parrot Conservation

Project at a meeting in Puerto Rico in mid-August. They will make a short presentation on The Bahamas' program highlighting some of the innovative conservation education activities developed by The Trust during the past two years.

The Puerto Rico meeting will bring together for the first time representatives from over ten Caribbean countries in which RARE has worked. Also attending will be board members of RARE Center and U.S. conservation agencies such as the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and Tropical Forestry which are major funders behind RARE's programs.

The ultimate goal of the meeting is to develop a network among the agencies involved in RARE's conservation/education programs in order that ideas may be more easily exchanged, cooperative approaches to problem-solving be established, and professional and social relationships with all players in the RARE program network be formed.

## Bahamas to be Site of the 1995 World Congress on Ecotourism

Mr. Gerry Mallet, President Adventure Travel Society, visited The Bahamas in May as part of a site finding mission for the 1995 World Congress on Ecotourism and Adventure Travel. Mr. Mallet's visit included stops in Grand Bahama, New Providence and Inagua.

The Inagua trip was one of the highlights of Mr. Mallet's Bahamas visit. He was accompanied by BNT Executive Director, Gary Larson, and Ministry of Tourism ecotourism staff Eugene Gibbs and Cynthia Bowe. The group toured Inagua National Park with BNT wardens James and Henry Nixon and held an ecotourism "town meeting" in Matthew Town.

On the evening of Thursday, June 3rd, Mr. Mallet addressed a Hospitality Sales and Marketing Group and interested members of The Bahamas National Trust at the Comfort Suites, Paradise Island. After a brief introduction by BNT President Pericles Maillis, Mr. Mallet gave an interesting and informative talk on "The En-

vironment - Marketing Our Natural Resources". He suggested the key to marketing The Bahamas as an ecotourism destination was to organize small, exclusive, ecotourism excursions. He also emphasized the importance of involving family island communities in ecotourism projects and said that some of the most enjoyable moments of his trip had been spent talking to the local people and learning about the islands from them.

Mr. Mallet announced at the end of his presentation that The Bahamas would indeed be the site of the 1995 World Congress on Ecotourism and Adventure Travel.

Mr. Mallet signed an agreement with the Director General of Tourism, Mr. Vincent Vanderpool Wallace, in July. At that signing both Mr. Vanderpool Wallace and Minister Symonette spoke very highly of the work of The Bahamas National Trust and looked towards closer cooperative efforts between The Trust and the Ministry of Tourism.

### **Bahama Parrot Music Video Available at BNT**

The highly acclaimed music video "QuincyRap" is now available at the BNT Offices at "The Retreat", Village Road.

This four and a half minute video is based on Tony McKay's recording of The Trust's own "QuincyRap", written by Lynn Gape and Monique Clarke. It is a great educational video as well as very entertaining!

The music video premiered on ZNS' "Electric Air" earlier this month.

### Christmas Jollification!

December 4, 1993 at "The Retreat". This Christmas Festival of plants, arts & crafts, food, gifts and Bahamian delights should be a delightful way to start the season as well as an excellent opportunity to get some Christmas shopping done. Organised by "The Retreat" Committee. Anyone wishing to participate in the Arts & Crafts section should call Mrs. Godfrey Higgs at 324-2002.

## Make Note of These Special Events!

### Third Annual Art & Wine Festival

November 6th, 1993 at "The Retreat", Village Road, Nassau. Once again, Wholesale Wines and Spirits will offer a superb selection of wines from around the world for guests to taste while viewing an exceptional collection of art work. These events require a lot of volunteer help to pull off. Please call BNT (393-1317) if you're interested in helping.

If you're interested in helping out with nature hikes, bird watching trips, etc. please call and let us know!

The Trust would like to offer similar trips on a more regular schedule, but more volunteers are needed to help with this type of activity.

BNT committee members were thrilled with the turnout, which was more than double what was expected! The interest and enthusiasm for this BNT project extended way beyond Trust membership and was very exciting to see.

Participants were treated to a tour of historic Adelaide Village. They also hiked to the creek mouth and saw the tremendous amount of work which has gone into restoring this vital ecosystem. During Earth Week 1990 Adelaide Creek was reopened to the sea, after years of being closed off, with the help of many volunteers. The Adelaide Nature Walk ended with hot dogs and sodas provided by Esso Bahamas on the Mallis beach.

organise an activity that would create an awareness of the Bahamian Environment. Mr. Sands had worked with the BNT's Historic Preservation Committee and he approached them with his idea. Our President, Pericles Mallis, organised and trained members of the Historic Preservation Committee and members of the Adelaide community to act as

On Sunday, May 16th, 1993, over 500 people converged on The Mall at Marathon to board Convent City Transit buses and travel to Adelaide Creek. Such was the overwhelming response to the "Back to Nature" Hike.

## Adelaide Back to Nature



"Back to Nature" guides.

## "Nassau's Historic Mile" Premieres on ZNS Television

As part of The Bahamas' 20th Anniversary Celebrations, "Nassau's Historic Mile", the first in our series of historic videos, premiered on ZNS on Monday, July 5th. This special television showing was arranged with the cooperation of the Broadcasting Corporation of the Bahamas and Commonwealth Bank.

Members are reminded that this video is available at "The Retreat" in Nassau and The Rand Nature Center in Grand Bahama at a cost of \$25 each. Proceeds of the sales go back into The Trust's Historic Preservation work.

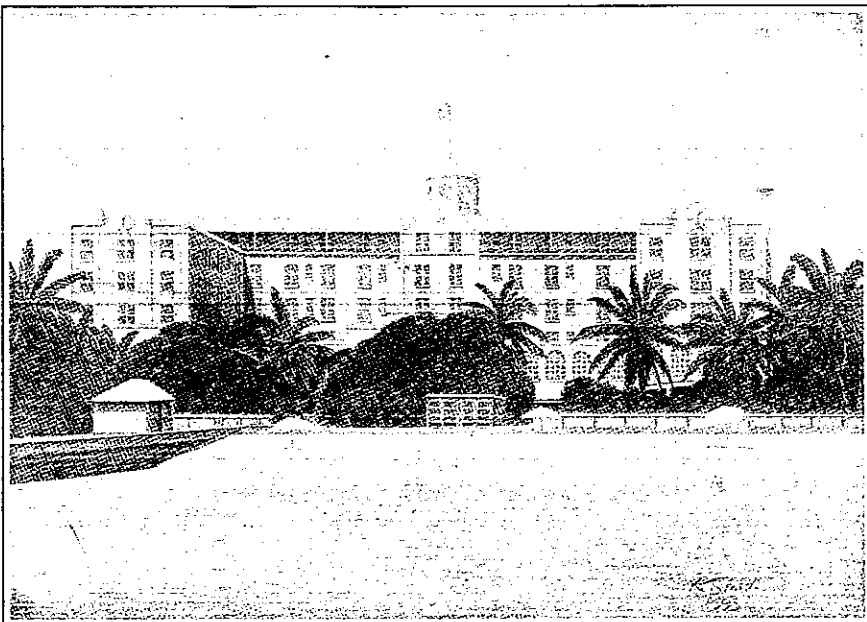
The videos are excellent educational tools and make great "Bahamian" gifts as well!

## Excavation at Promised Land Plantation

An exciting and significant historical-archaeological excavation got underway in July at the Promised Land Plantation in S.W. New Providence.

The excavation was conducted as a field school under the direction of Dr. Paul Farnsworth, Assistant Professor of Anthropology, Louisiana State University and coordinated by Mr. Tony Aarons, Consultant Archaeologist/Athropologist at the Department of Archives and a member of The Trust's Historic Preservation Committee.

The field team consisted of graduate and under-graduate



## Historical Happenings

students at LSU, staff members of the Department of Archives and members of The Trust's Historic Preservation Committee.

The Promised Land Plantation was a small Loyalist period livestock and small crop farm and was one of several properties owned by Messrs. William and James Moss. The resulting report from the excavation is expected to add significantly to our knowledge of this interesting period of Bahamian history.

One of the most exciting natural history discoveries in The Bahamas was recently made by a BNT member when he happened upon a skull of *Crocodylus rhombifer*, an ancient crocodile species not known to have occurred in The Bahamas beyond the first decade of the 19th Century.

Realising the find was something very special, our fast thinking member notified the Department of Ar-

A special offer of Limited Edition Prints of "The Montagu Beach Hotel, by Kim J.L. Smith, is available to BNT members.

This limited edition of 250 is usually \$50.00 per print. BNT members will

## Gone But Not Forgotten

be able to purchase prints for \$40.00 and for each print purchased 10% of the purchase price will be donated to the BNT Historic Preservation Committee in support of their projects. This special offer is only good until September 15th or as long as supplies last.

## Ancient Crocodile Skull Found

chives and arrangements were made to send the skull to Florida State Museum, University of Florida Gainesville, for a complete analysis.

This is the first complete skull of *Crocodylus rhombifer* ever found in The Bahamas and it lends support to accounts in Columbus' log of giant dragons and sea serpents. We'll keep you informed!

# Quality Educational Programs Continue

The Trust's commitment to environmental education is very much evident in the scope and frequency of activities and events which have occurred in the past year.

The Trust's Education Office has had a full schedule of educational programs which targeted school teachers, students, civic groups and service clubs, law enforcement agencies, professionals, continuing education programs, etc. With quality programs in hand The Trust continues to expand its educational influence in the country.

A new and important relationship has been developed with the Ministry of Tourism. The Trust is participating fully in the Bahamasost program which reaches every sector of the hospitality industry. Our Public Relations and Education Officer, Lynn Gape, has presented The Trust's program on Ecotourism to some 400 Bahamasost participants, including a group in Great Harbour Cay, Berry Islands. Our Assistant Executive Director and Director of Edu-

cation, Susan Larson, was guest speaker at the recent Bahamasost 15th Anniversary Conference where she addressed over 700 Conference goers.

In recognition of World Environment Day, and with the cooperation of the United States Information Service and the sponsorship of Candian Imperial Bank of Commerce, The Trust held an exhibition at The Mall at Marathon entitled "Environmental Action!" The poster exhibition was accompanied by a slide presentation and a display of native trees. Although the exhibition was intended for general viewers it specifically aimed to preview The Trust's "Green Pledge" Program for schools.

"The Retreat" is fast becoming a favorite outdoor classroom site for many schools and community groups. Numerous schools, Bahamasost groups, civic and service clubs, and a Police Junior Command class, have toured the gardens. "The Retreat" also had a very special visit from the Palm Society of South Florida. Students

have used the gardens to practice map drawing skills, get acquainted with native vegetation, explore general ecology principles and get into art in the great outdoors. Some visits have included video presentations and a special look at Bahamian endangered species.

BNT President, Perilces Maillis, participates at an enthusiastic level in The Trust's educational programs. He has addressed Rotary Clubs and school groups and given island tours to a growing number of clubs, school, special interest groups, etc. Most recently he spent time in Nassau and Inagua with The Audubon Naturalist Society of Maryland and conducted an in-depth naturalists tour of New Providence for a group of European Tour Operators.

There are a variety of educational programs in place which target almost every sector of our community. If you are interested in more information please contact our administrative offices (393-1317) or visit "The Retreat" on Village Road, Nassau.

## Public Education Committee

The Bahamas National Trust continues to earn a great reputation for its quality educational programs. Particularly, the monthly evening presentations, organised by the Public Education Committee, draw increasingly larger audiences and the demand for The Trust to do more continues to grow. Highlights to this year's Public Education Committee schedule follow:

### JANUARY

♦ "Sharks, Magnificent and Diverse: Can They Survive into the 21st Century?" Dr. Samuel Gruber, University of Miami's Rosensteil School of Marine and Atmospheric Sciences.

♦ "Marine Mammals of The Bahamas" Dr. Kenneth Balcomb, Bahamas Marine Mammal Survey.

### FEBRUARY

♦ "Ecotourism: How far Can We Go?" Ms. Elizabeth Boo of The World Wildlife Fund U.S.

♦ "Nassau's Historic Mile" a new

video on our Capital's architectural heritage premiered under the patronage of The Honorable Prime Minister.

### MAY

♦ "Hummingbirds: Jewels of the Jungle" Esther and Robert Tyrrell, among the world's foremost authorities on hummingbirds. The Tyrrells also visited several New Providence schools and gave a public meeting in Grand Bahama.

♦ "The Cancer of Extinction" Dr. John A. Phillips, Deputy Director

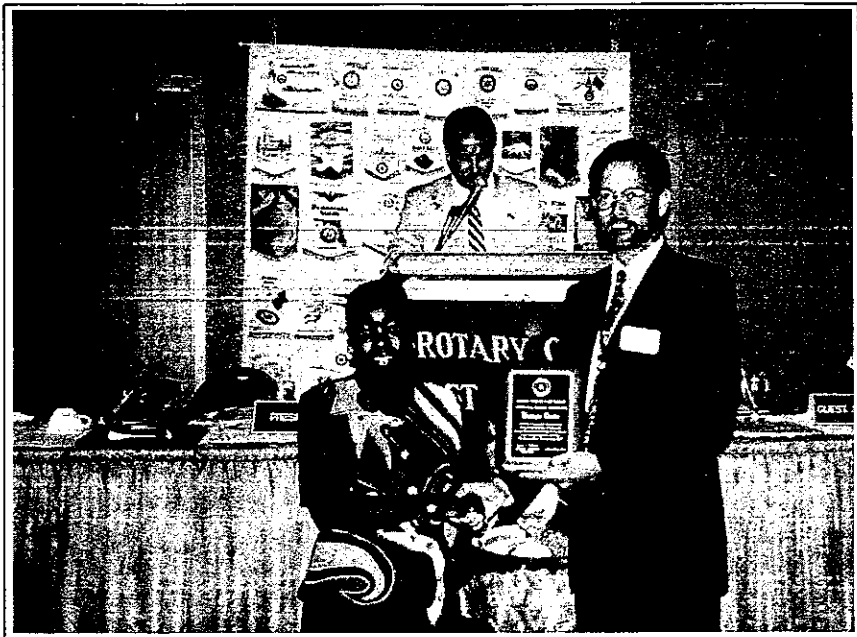
of Research for the Zoological Society of San Diego.

## JULY

♦"Everything You Wanted to Know About Conch But Were Afraid to Ask!" Guest speakers were Jack Sobel of the Center for Marine Conservation and Dr. David Philipp, Director of the Center of Aquatic Ecology. The Trust is grateful to BNT member Keith Bishop who made this meeting possible.

## BNT Education Staff Increases

Some of you may have noticed a familiar, but new face at the Trust Education Office. Ms. Monique Clarke, Project Coordinator of the Bahama Parrot Project joined the BNT staff at the beginning of June. She is the Junior Education Officer and will be working closely with schools and educators. Monique was recently awarded a Vocational Service Award from the Rotary Club of East Nassau for her work in promoting the preservation of our Bahama Parrot.



## BNT Past President Attends Environmental Law Seminar

Our immediate Past President, Lynn Holowesko, recently returned from Santiago, Chile, where she attended a seminar on Environmental Law and Policy in Latin America and the Caribbean. The seminar, and Mrs. Holowesko's trip, was sponsored by the InterAmerican Development Bank (IDB) as part of the Bank's follow-up to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) which was held in Brazil in 1992.

The purpose of the Law Seminar was to examine legal and institutional issues related to the implementation in this region of the decisions adopted by UNCED and incorporated in the companion international environmental treaties which led up to the Rio Conference.

Mrs. Holowesko presented a paper at the Seminar which emphasised the need for a na-

tional conservation strategy for The Bahamas and foreshadowed the creation of a Commission for the Environment to effectively coordinate the activities of the various Government Ministries whose work impacts the environment.

Said Mrs. Holowesko, "Our entire regulatory framework including laws, regulations and enforcement procedures needs review to discover inadequacies which may exist and where revision may be necessary. This is imperative if we are to promote the orderly and sustainable development of our country and enable The Bahamas to meet its commitments under the international treaties which it has signed."

Mrs. Holowesko said the IDB Law Seminar was informative and useful and exposed the need for a full review of environmental legislation in The Bahamas.

## Special Thanks!

The Bahamas National Trust extends its thanks and appreciation to

### Media Enterprises Ltd.

for their generous assistance in helping to develop the design and artwork for The Trust's "new look".

Member of

# IUCN

The World Conservation Union

The Bahamas National Trust has been a member of IUCN/The World Conservation Union since 1968.

---

## **BNT Membership Privileges**

The list of personal advantages for your membership keeps growing!

◆10% discount off all Powerboat Adventures ◆1/2 price admission ~ Coral World ◆1/2 price admission ~ Ardastra Gardens & Zoo ◆15% discount ~ The Body Shops (In The Bahamas) ◆10% discount ~ Modernistic Gardens & Pet Supplies ◆10% discount ~ Mr. Photo ◆10% discount ~ Fox Hill Nursery ◆10% discount ~ G.R. Sweetings ◆10% discount ~ Cotton Ginny ◆10% discount ~ encyclopedias from Bahamas Research Book Club ◆Free admission to National Trust properties around the world.

### **BNT 35th Anniversary**

The Bahamas National Trust will celebrate its 35th Anniversary in 1994. Be sure to watch for details on special events!

## **BNT Calls for Ban on Longlining**

Since our last newsletter was published The Trust has continued its research into the longline fishing technique and, as reported in our cover story, the issue was discussed extensively by Council.

Council resolved that The Trust would remain "unequivocally opposed" to longline fishing in The Bahamas and has called on the Department of Fisheries to ban the use of longline gear in The Bahamas.

In a recent communication informing Government of Council's decision and giving explanation for the same The Trust stated it cannot support initiatives to implement the use of fishing methods that have been reported to be detrimental to the marine environment and therefore outlawed

by other countries. Nor can The Trust support practices which will undermine the sustainability of the resources generally and particularly target species which are known to be over-exploited. The Trust has taken heed of data which clearly illustrates that longlining is destructively non-selective in nature, disproportionately impacts fishstocks, has serious by-catch consequences, and, in some cases, damages the habitat which support our fisheries.

The Trust has urged the Department of Fisheries, in conjunction perhaps with the Ministries of Finance and Tourism and The Trust, to develop an equation whereby the total value of a given resource is calculated and used in developing policies governing the use of that resource.

---

**Bahamas National Trust**  
**P.O. Box N 4105**  
**Nassau, Bahamas**

---

**Conservation and Preservation For A Better Quality of Life**

---