

World Heritage

papers

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## Caribbean Wooden Treasures

Proceedings of the Thematic Expert Meeting  
on Wooden Urban Heritage in the Caribbean Region

4–7 February 2003  
Georgetown, Guyana

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*Compiled and edited by R. van Oers and S. Haraguchi*

# Foreword

*Under the Global Strategy for a Balanced, Representative and Credible World Heritage List, adopted by the World Heritage Committee in 1994, the Caribbean Region was earmarked as being under-represented as regards the wealth and diversity of its natural and cultural heritage. In response, the World Heritage Centre designed an Action Plan to assist Caribbean States Parties in the identification, protection and conservation of their heritage and to provide financial and technical support to build capacity.*

*These proceedings of a Thematic Expert Meeting on Wooden Urban Heritage in the Caribbean Region, held in Georgetown (Guyana) in February 2003, report on a series of specialized workshops organized by the World Heritage Centre to identify and document particular categories of heritage pertinent to the Caribbean region. Other than gaining an understanding of what exists and what needs to be preserved, these workshops also served to increase public awareness among stakeholders and shareholders of the way cultural heritage may form an important asset within the process of cultural development. Unfortunately, low priority is still given to cultural development and heritage preservation in terms of the attitudes of government officials, legislators, community and business leaders, whether on financial support for programmes or the conception of cultural heritage as an integral part of sustainable development policies and programmes. Furthermore, individual UNESCO Member States may lack the means (finance and expertise) to become real interlocutors for cultural heritage (including World Heritage).*

*In recognition of these deficiencies, the World Heritage Centre organized a Regional Training Course on the Application of the World Heritage Convention and its Role in Sustainable Development and Tourism in the Caribbean (Dominica, 2001), as well as an assistance programme to a selected number of States Parties for the drawing-up and implementation of national – or, if appropriate and possible, (sub)regional – policies and work plans for the application of the Convention. This programme preceded the Expert Meeting on Wooden Urban Heritage.*

*To take all this a step further, the Centre has established a World Heritage Programme for Small Island Developing States (SIDS), which will focus attention on the special challenges and needs of SIDS as identified through the Periodic Reporting process and emphasized during the Mauritius International Meeting (January 2005), providing for enhanced assistance to co-ordinate and develop World Heritage related activities on the islands of the Caribbean, Atlantic, Indian and Pacific Oceans. During its 29th session in Durban (South Africa) in July 2005, the World Heritage Committee approved this SIDS Programme and provided seed money to start programming.*

*The outcomes of the specialized workshops, including the Expert Meeting on Wooden Urban Heritage, will serve to inform further assistance to and development of the States Parties in the Caribbean region and beyond.*

**Francesco Bandarin**  
Director, UNESCO World Heritage Centre  
Paris, France



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# Introduction and Summary Report of Expert Meeting (with Declaration of Georgetown)

*by Ron van Oers, Chief of Unit a.i.  
for Latin America and the Caribbean,  
UNESCO World Heritage Centre*

## **UNESCO thematic expert meetings**

The Thematic Expert Meeting on Wooden Urban Heritage in the Caribbean Region was organized by the UNESCO World Heritage Centre in co-operation with the Government of Guyana, the UNESCO Office for the Caribbean in Jamaica and the Organization of the Wider Caribbean on Monuments and Sites (CARIMOS), with financial support from the Netherlands Funds-in-Trust at UNESCO, in February 2003 at Georgetown (Guyana). It was part of a series of thematic studies and related expert meetings involving the Caribbean region, initiated under the Global Strategy Action Plan of the World Heritage Centre, aiming to facilitate the identification, protection, conservation and nomination of specific categories of heritage pertinent to the Caribbean region – in this case the particular type of vernacular wooden architecture as part of larger urban ensembles.



*Gravenstraat in Paramaribo (Suriname) with its Cathedral: a fine urban ensemble in wood*

The meeting originated from the clear recognition of the vulnerability of the historic wooden architecture remaining in cities and towns of individual Caribbean islands today and the urgency of documenting and preserving this heritage, which is disappearing rapidly due to socio-economic changes, natural disasters, lack of maintenance and neglect. The expert meeting was an effort to identify and map the various types of

wooden heritage still present in the Caribbean region and exchange information on issues of protection and conservation. Furthermore, part of the meeting aimed at debating the role of this heritage in strengthening cultural identity, both of individual islands and the Caribbean region as a whole, and what opportunities exist in terms of sustainable development, in particular for tourism.



*Chess Hall in Georgetown (Guyana): situation in 2002, it collapsed soon after and has disappeared from Georgetown's historic streetscape*



*A section of Gravenstraat in the heart of historic Paramaribo (Suriname) that was destroyed by fire some months after this photo was taken in 1996*

For the implementation of this activity a co-operation was established with CARIMOS, which was created in 1982 as a ten-year project by the Organization of American States (OAS) and transformed into a regional non-profit organization in 1994. Pursuing its initial goal to identify and study the historic monuments of the Caribbean region, CARIMOS has contributed to training activities, published the findings of its research



## Introduction and Summary Report of Expert Meeting (with Declaration of Georgetown)

and activities, and provided technical assistance in the restoration and preservation of the cultural heritage of the region. Furthermore, it has completed the inventory and mapping of the principal historic sites and sponsored exhibitions that have been presented in many countries, resulting in a synthesis publication, *Monumentos y Sitios del Gran Caribe*, published in 2000 as the culmination of ten years of work.<sup>1</sup>

This expert meeting succeeded earlier meetings with similar objectives as part of the World Heritage Committee's Global Strategy for a representative and balanced World Heritage List, which was adopted in 1994 and earmarked the Caribbean as one of the under-represented regions. Under this strategy and as part of an action plan for the region, four categories of cultural heritage were identified as of particular significance for the Caribbean: fortifications, plantation systems, wooden heritage, and archaeological sites. Subsequently, meetings have been organized on Fortifications (Cartagena, Colombia, 1996), Cultural Heritage (Martinique, France, 1998), Natural Heritage (Paramaribo, Suriname, 2000), Plantation Systems (Paramaribo, Suriname, 2001), Wooden Urban Heritage (Georgetown, Guyana, 2003) and two meetings on Archaeological Sites (Dominican Republic, 2003; Martinique, 2004). With these, an eight-year cycle of World Heritage thematic expert meetings was closed and now the Caribbean States Parties have to translate debates and recommendations into national heritage inventory lists, Tentative Lists and, eventually, nominations of sites of potential outstanding universal value. In response to a request from Caribbean States Parties representatives, these proceedings also contain summary reports of the earlier expert meetings (Annex D).

### Caribbean vernacular heritage

In the preface to his *Architectural Heritage of the Caribbean*, Gravette writes: 'Nowhere else on Earth can boast such a melting pot of architectural styles, ranging from Mudéjar mansions to Islamic mosques, from Gothic cathedrals to Georgian great houses. The variety of architectural styles mingles Italianate and Romanesque with Baroque and Art Nouveau, while palatial Palladian mansions rub shoulders with tropical Regency halls. ... By no means least significant in the

rich tapestry of the Caribbean's architectural heritage is the wealth of vernacular structures, which reflect the development of the social order of the region. From simple case and 'chattel' houses, like those on Antigua and Barbados, to elaborately embellished town or country residences, like those on Haiti and Guadeloupe, true Caribbean architecture contrasts with those early buildings, which replicate traditional European styles. It is in the detail of these locally designed structures that we see how the influence of European architecture has been adapted and refined to suit the needs and climate of the tropical Caribbean'.<sup>2</sup>



**Georgetown's City Hall:**  
*an extraordinary example of Gothic architecture in a tropical context, executed in wood with cast-iron elements*

By the end of the sixteenth century, three distinctive architectural trends had emerged. The architecture of colonial towns and cities in the Caribbean in general reflected the styles of the European ruling nations of the time. A wide variety includes Gothic and Romanesque influences dating from the early 1500s, as well as Baroque of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, in the Spanish settlements on the main islands of Cuba, Hispaniola and Puerto Rico. In many of the smaller islands of the Eastern Caribbean, the British introduced stately Georgian and Victorian architecture, while the French brought their roof styles, and the Dutch and Danish imported their traditional gables. Next to the colonial towns and cities, the first industrial architecture relating to technology and

1. *Monumentos y Sitios del Gran Caribe*, Santo Domingo (Dominican Republic), CARIMOS, 2000.
2. A. Gravette, *Architectural Heritage of the Caribbean*, Kingston (Jamaica), Ian Randle Publishers, 2000, pp. ix-x.

mass-production was introduced through the plantation system. And thirdly, from the indigenous *bohío* (wooden shelter) local populations informed a rural style of building. From these three areas evolved a new, Caribbean style of architecture, drawing on this wide variety of local and external influences.

'It is difficult, therefore, to discriminate and say that the architecture of the Caribbean either begins with the advent of Europeans or with the introduction of Africans, or that Caribbean style evolved entirely from indigenous building and construction methods. The Caribbean is as much a melting pot of architectural styles as it is a meeting of the cultures, beliefs, languages, habits and social structure of the Caribbean peoples themselves. It is a pot-pourri of architectural styles, evolved by the close juxtaposition of cultures from around the world and with a piquancy of its own, the Caribbean touch, making it unique in the world'.<sup>3</sup>

One of three major research projects and exhibitions of CARIMOS involved 'Vernacular: the Traditional Architecture of the Greater Caribbean', the others being 'Fortifications of the Caribbean' and 'Monuments of the Greater Caribbean'. The vernacular exhibition comprised valuable photographic documentation, in black-and-white and colour, comprehensively representing the rich traditions to be found in the wider Caribbean.

As a variation in the interpretation of the criteria for vernacular architecture according to socio-cultural and physical material dimensions, it is described by Eugenio Pérez Montás as 'a popular form of architecture that meets the needs of a family unit and its way of life, and other structures for complementary community activities, making use of mostly natural materials and in general constructed by artisans with the active participation of the inhabitants'. It is the result, he writes, of traditions handed down by builders to give shape to human settlements and therefore it is an important part of the cultural heritage.<sup>4</sup>

The expert meeting attempted to differentiate between wooden architectural heritage, comprising various architectural expressions in wood including stand-alone grand monuments in rural areas, and wooden urban heritage: the focus was on the vernacular architecture clustered in urban ensembles of sufficient size,



**Georgetown's  
vernacular  
wooden  
architecture**

which could be of interest for World Heritage listing. At the moment only one such property in the Caribbean, Paramaribo in Suriname, is featured on the World Heritage List. With fewer than twenty towns or cities with any significant population in the whole of the Caribbean – many people continue to inhabit small villages – the scope was rather narrow by definition.

### **Outcomes of expert meeting**

The meeting produced alarming results in this respect: many Caribbean countries and islands have seen large-scale destruction and disappearance of their wooden urban heritage, either by natural disasters or recent urban developments. Fragmentation and serious alteration of existing wooden building stock are more the norm than the exception. Lack of appreciation of the local vernacular architecture is one reason; insufficient resources, both financial and human, are another. While one can debate if size matters, it can be established that few Caribbean cities remain today containing a critical mass of urban ensembles in wood, which would allow a full appreciation of the city's foundation, social and economic development reflected in urban patterns and streetscapes, and architectural history. Perhaps one of the finest remaining examples, Georgetown in Guyana, experiences the loss of several historic wooden buildings a year, due to fire, lack of maintenance and wanton destruction.<sup>5</sup>

3. Gravette, op. cit., p. 17.

4. E. Pérez Montás, 'Vernacular and traditional architecture of the Greater Caribbean', in *Monumentos y Sitios del Gran Caribe*, op. cit., p. 4.

5. See B. van Raaij, Outline for a conservation plan for Georgetown, Master's thesis, Delft University of Technology, the Netherlands, September 2003.

## Introduction and Summary Report of Expert Meeting (with Declaration of Georgetown)

The ICOMOS International Wood Committee (IWC) is one of nineteen international specialized expert committees of the International Council on Monuments and Sites. IWC was established in 1975 with the objective of promoting international co-operation in the field of preservation of wood in buildings and structures, and to advise on the development of ICOMOS programmes in this field. The activities of IWC include organizing meetings, preparing publications and gathering and disseminating information.

In discussions similar to those in Georgetown, it had already been established a decade ago that one of the major problems in preservation work was the lack of timber of sufficient quality. 'In the historic temple and palace buildings [of Nepal] a native hardwood – sal (*Shorea robusta*) – was preferred in the original construction. Sal trees need to grow for about 120 years before they are mature enough to be used in construction work. As there has been no conscious reforestation program in Nepal, sal is today very difficult to obtain and the small quantity available is extremely expensive. ... During the meeting in Nepal, therefore, the IWC adopted as a strategic goal for its future work the promotion of the establishment of Historic Forest Reserves: these reserves will provide trees from which appropriate timber can be obtained, on a selective basis, for the preservation of historic buildings'.<sup>6</sup> This was one of the expert recommendations set down in the Declaration of Georgetown, the principal result of the Expert Meeting on Wooden Urban Heritage.

### Caribbean Action Plan in World Heritage

With the presentation of the Periodic Report on the State of the World Heritage in Latin America and the Caribbean at the 28th session of the World Heritage Committee in Suzhou (China) in July 2004, a new cycle of activities was initiated. Based on a Caribbean Action Plan in World Heritage, which was developed by twenty Caribbean States Parties representatives and the World Heritage Centre in February 2004 in Castries (Saint Lucia), the information gathered from the thematic studies and expert meetings will be used in programmes and projects focused on the four strategic objectives established by the World Heritage Committee in 2002: Credibility, Conservation,

Capacity Building and Communication. These aim to better structure and guide individual States Parties' actions with regard to World Heritage conservation and management.

Today, as a result of all this increased attention and programming, World Heritage is on the agenda of almost all Caribbean countries and islands. At the time of writing, initiatives were ongoing in Anguilla (preparation of a Statement of Significance for the Fountain Cavern), Barbados (preparations for a dossier to nominate Bridgetown), Belize (development of a national strategy in World Heritage), Cuba (nomination of Cienfuegos), Dominica (consideration of Morne Diablotin as an extension to Morne Trois Pitons World Heritage site), the Dominican Republic (nomination of the Route of the Sugar Mills), Grenada (submission of Tentative List and feasibility study into nomination of St Georges Fortification System), Guyana (preparations for revised nominations of Kaieteur Falls and Georgetown), Jamaica (establishment of National World Heritage Committee and Tentative List), the Netherlands Antilles (preparations for separate nominations on the islands of Curaçao, Bonaire and Saba), Saint Kitts and Nevis (restoration of Brimstone Hill Fortress World Heritage site), Saint Lucia (inscription ceremony for Pitons Management Area World Heritage site) and Suriname (development of an Inter-American Development Bank sponsored programme on site management of Paramaribo), while both the Bahamas and Trinidad and Tobago, as the two Caribbean states which had not yet joined the 1972 Convention at the time of writing, were working towards ratification.

### Contents of proceedings

These proceedings of the Thematic Expert Meeting on Wooden Urban Heritage in the Caribbean Region are structured within three main sections followed by the Annexes: the Introduction and Summary Report of the Expert Meeting (this section), including the Declaration of Georgetown; a series of papers on the context of

6 K. E. Larsen and N. Marstein (eds), *ICOMOS International Wood Committee (IWC), 8th International Symposium, Kathmandu, Patan and Bhaktapur (Nepal), 23–25 November 1992*, pp. 7–10.

Caribbean wooden urban heritage; and a series of papers on case studies from the Caribbean.

In the first context paper, *Bernd von Droste zu Hülshoff* addresses the tourism potential of the Caribbean region. In view of the fact that 'the Caribbean region is very close to major centres of origin of world tourism in North America, which helps to boost touristic development, any failure to exploit the potential of such an ideal location could surely be blamed on a lack of vision, insufficient willingness to make the associated investments or poor marketing skills', he provides insights and tools for heritage promotion and management that are currently under development in Europe.

*Lennox Honychurch* addresses the wide variety of Caribbean heritage, of which the vernacular of smaller wooden houses is only one element. Explaining the possibilities of reuse as part of strategies for sustainable development for the islands, he shows that quality preservation can be achieved in spite of all the odds and that 'these projects actually help to solve socio-economic problems and do much to enhance the quality and character of life in each community'.

The present author then discusses the issue of the complementary nature of Caribbean heritage, to be seen as a mosaic to be fully appreciated. This is illustrated by an outline for a comparative analysis between Paramaribo (a World Heritage site) and Georgetown (a nomination under preparation), arguing that 'to fill existing lacunae in this regard ... a Caribbean-wide research and documentation programme involving wooden cities has to be initiated'.

Finally, *Patricia Green* classifies the environment of wooden urban heritage, of which 'both Creole and Vernacular are the most significant categories of the cultural landscape of the wooden urban heritage in the Caribbean', by suggesting categories and thematic associations for analysis and interpretation that were used to group the various presentations of the Caribbean experts during the meeting.

These context papers are followed by eight case studies. *Steve Devonish* from Barbados provides an insider's view of the living heritage of the chattel house and many of the values associated with it. He convincingly

demonstrates that 'chattel houses are high-maintenance structures requiring a profound understanding of timber construction', something that has gradually been lost with the introduction of modern, Western-style bungalows.

*Nilson Acosta Reyes* from Cuba argues that 'the wooden architecture defined in great measure the character of our first cities' and he highlights examples of urban groups representing wooden vernacular architecture on the island of Cuba.

*Iris de Mondesert* from the Dominican Republic warns against the disappearance of the vernacular wooden architecture from the historic city centres of the Republican Period. Stating that 'the possession of a historic property is a privilege, therefore it is a civic responsibility to maintain it', she describes the efforts and constraints to safeguard this category of heritage in her home country.

*Elise Johnston-Agar* from Dominica explains how in the 1980s the accelerated construction on the island, in the wake of Hurricane David and new harbour developments, triggered the establishment of a non-governmental organization that was eventually successful in the safeguarding and promotion of Roseau's local built heritage, because 'architecture is an art and a language describing one's culture'.

*William Harris* from Guyana takes a slightly different road – in describing the handsome culture of timber craft that existed in pre-colonial times he deviates from the notion of wooden urban heritage. However, dealing with issues of settlement patterns, housing types, materials and spatial concepts of indigenous vernacular architecture, he recognizes that 'the first conservation levels are associated with knowledge ... it is therefore necessary to consider documentation as a moral, social and educational issue', by which his valuable contribution complements the others.

*Suzanne Gordon* from Saint Kitts and Nevis describes with full admiration the local housing style on Nevis as 'products of imagination, creativity and common sense'. While distinctive for the island's charm and identity, nevertheless this heritage is losing ground because on Nevis, as elsewhere in the Caribbean,

## Introduction and Summary Report of Expert Meeting (with Declaration of Georgetown)

building in concrete 'represents newness, affluence, and the signs of a more promising future ... it also eliminates the social stigma connected with wooden houses: the days of enslavement, poverty, and living on someone else's land'.

However, not all is doom. *Duane Marquis* from Saint Lucia explains the efforts undertaken to preserve the natural and cultural heritage of his island by the Saint Lucia National Trust, established in 1975, which has recently developed a programme in architectural heritage protection. He describes an evaluation methodology used by a multidisciplinary architectural heritage committee that serves as 'a guiding principal in preparing a policy containing incentives for owners of these heritage gems'.

Lastly, *Vel Lewis* from Trinidad and Tobago (not at the time of writing a State Party to the *World Heritage Convention*), presented a general overview of efforts to preserve the wooden urban heritage of his two-island nation since independence in 1962. While still at the development stage and at the expense of the loss of significant examples of local architectural heritage, finally in July 2000 the first Council of the National Trust of Trinidad and Tobago was established, creating opportunities to preserve and protect the wooden urban heritage of this state.

### Summary report of expert meeting

At the invitation of the UNESCO World Heritage Centre, a Thematic Expert Meeting on Wooden Urban Heritage in the Caribbean Region was held in Georgetown (Guyana), from 4 to 7 February 2003, with the financial support of the governments of the Netherlands and Guyana. The meeting, which was organized by the UNESCO Offices in Paris and Kingston, CARIMOS and the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport of Guyana, brought together thirty experts from the Caribbean region (see List of Participants, Annex B).

The meeting was officially opened by the Prime Minister of Guyana, Mr Samuel Hinds, and addressed by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr Rudy Insanally, and the Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports, Ms Gail

Teixeira. The Director of the UNESCO Office for the Caribbean, Ms Hélène-Marie Gosselin, spoke on behalf of the Director-General of UNESCO, Mr Koïchiro Matsuura, followed by welcome addresses by CARIMOS representative Ms Patricia Green and World Heritage Centre representative Mr Ron van Oers.

The meeting was organized along the following chapters: material and interpretation, authenticity and connections, and conservation and controls (see Programme, Annex A). One of the objectives was to lay the basis for improved representation of the heritage of the Caribbean region on UNESCO's World Heritage List. So far, only one wooden urban property had received World Heritage recognition (Historic Inner City of Paramaribo, 2002). In a number of countries of the region, work to identify suitable candidate World Heritage sites had started. However, the majority of countries still lacked the inventory work that was fundamental to the whole process.

The experts presented case studies of wooden urban heritage in their respective countries, revealing a high degree of common problems as well as some marked differences. All speakers underlined the fragility of the unique wooden heritage of the Caribbean, which was rapidly disappearing through neglect, lack of resources and socio-economic changes, resulting in the increasing fragmentation of the urban tissue and the disappearance of wooden urban ensembles.

A marked difference within the region was the degree of acceptance by the public at large of investing in the preservation of wooden urban heritage. Participants therefore agreed that raising public awareness and education were crucial. In this connection, attention was drawn to secondary-school teaching material that UNESCO had prepared, such as the World Heritage in Young Hands kit.

Documentation of wooden urban heritage, it was stated, was a moral, social and educational obligation. It facilitated the safeguarding of the memory of those properties and sites that could not be physically saved, while it was an important basis for conservation work and monitoring of changes. However, proper documentation was largely missing due to the lack of resources. Moreover, in the absence of earlier docu-

mentation and publications, the history of conservation work for an individual building was often little known.

Part of the documentation process should involve a regional comparative analysis, as was presented for Georgetown and Paramaribo, to indicate what distinct values and qualities are to be found within the Caribbean region, how much various sites differ from, or resemble, each other and where they can complement a general picture of the cultural history of the Caribbean region to be presented to the world.

Concerning the protection of wooden urban heritage, the participants pointed out insufficiencies such as the lack of enforcement of existing legislation, even in the case of already registered properties. This was in many cases exacerbated by the absence of a suitable institutional framework for control and monitoring, and overall by the lack of resources.

As far as conservation work itself was concerned, the necessary repair and maintenance work was often not undertaken due to high costs, non-availability of suitable materials and absence of craft skills. As a result, wooden buildings and hybrid buildings with a wooden supporting structure were being replaced by contemporary designs and materials less vulnerable to damage by fire and insect attacks.

Participants made many suggestions to remedy this situation, including the establishment of a National Trust or similar institution where one did not yet exist, as had been done in Guyana or Trinidad and Tobago; appropriate training schemes to recruit the necessary human resources for conservation; and the protection and set aside of forest reserves for future material supplies. In this connection, participants asked UNESCO to take the lead in setting up a training strategy in close co-operation with the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM) and CARIMOS.

As a result of inadequate protection and questionable restoration practices, wooden urban ensembles were increasingly breaking down. However, positive cases were presented. For example, in Dominica flexibility and creativity allowed the characteristics of the town



*Georgetown's St. George's Cathedral (1892) is entirely constructed in wood*

to be maintained. This triggered a lively discussion on the notion of authenticity. Some participants were of the opinion that preserving the spirit of the place is more important than other aspects of conservation, such as formal design aspects. Others pointed out the need for functional and socio-economic adaptation.

Wooden urban heritage, if protected, well presented, conserved, including risk preparedness (such as fire prevention), managed and monitored, could become an important asset for finely tuned cultural tourism for which a market could be created in the Caribbean. This could have important spin-offs for the local economy and, where benefits were properly shared, provide income for appropriate conservation and management.

Participants gratefully acknowledged the site visits and explanations of the wooden urban heritage of Georgetown, which they considered to be uniquely outstanding and thus worthy of inscription on the World Heritage List.

## Recommendations

### 1. World Heritage process

Each country in the Caribbean region should take stock of and map out its wooden urban heritage, selecting properties and sites that need national protection and, moreover, those properties likely to meet World Heritage criteria for inclusion in the national Tentative List for World Heritage.

In order to facilitate the World Heritage nomination process, Tentative Lists should be reviewed on a regional basis to permit a fully fledged comparative analysis before preparation of nomination dossiers.

For conservation purposes, the countries should also include hybrid buildings in the category of wooden urban heritage as long as their supportive structure is made from wood. Further research needs to be sponsored to deepen knowledge of the different types of wooden urban heritage to be found in the Caribbean, such as those classified as Aboriginal/Amerindian, Colonial, Creole, Vernacular and Modern.

### **2. Protection and institutional framework**

Countries should share information on suitable legislation and review the institutional framework, if necessary. A National Trust or similar institutions should be established, whenever possible, and the training of non-governmental organizations in the field of cultural heritage conservation should be encouraged.

### **3. Conservation and management**

In the necessary maintenance and repair of the wooden urban heritage, the greatest care should be exercised in guaranteeing the authenticity of wooden urban ensembles, including the integrity of the surrounding environment. In so doing, properly selected and/or treated wooden materials meeting generally agreed standards should be used to protect against natural hazards, such as insects and fire.

Incentives should be created for house owners to maintain their wooden heritage. Moreover, advisory services should be made available through the National Trust or similar institutions, free of charge where possible, to facilitate informed restoration. To enhance the role of the wooden urban heritage ensembles in the local community and in society at large, authorities are encouraged to promote cultural events (e.g. jazz concerts, carnivals, etc.) to take place wherever possible at these locations.

Countries should adopt/adapt management and risk preparedness guidelines for cultural properties as produced by UNESCO in co-operation with ICOMOS and ICCROM.

Participants recommended that the assistance of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations should be sought to address the issues of

wood conservation, preservation, timber trade and market access to satisfy the needs of Caribbean domestic markets to preserve and renew wooden heritage.

### **4. Training, education and research**

Participants urge the establishment of a regional training strategy to recruit the human resources needed as well as to revive craft skills. In addition, countries should run public information campaigns on the significance of the wooden urban heritage in the Caribbean and use appropriate training modules in schools, such as the UNESCO World Heritage in Young Hands kit. Schools are encouraged to adopt a wooden urban building for caretaking under professional guidance and, where possible, integrate the topic in the curriculum.

Sharing of information and documentation on international research into wood conservation and preservation, within the Caribbean region and elsewhere, is necessary given the lack of available know-how and documents within the region. Research into wood conservation and preservation within the Caribbean region should be encouraged by setting up research programmes, if possible in co-operation with institutions in countries with an extensive wooden heritage, such as Brazil, Canada, Japan and the Scandinavian countries.

### **5. Networking and follow-up**

It is recommended that UNESCO should co-operate with relevant governmental, inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations (such as ICOMOS, CARIMOS) to strengthen networking and facilitate regular meetings of experts in wooden urban heritage. At the national level, fora should be established to discuss wooden urban heritage conservation issues. Such meetings should serve to examine the implementation of the above recommendations, chart out the future with an action plan for the next five to ten years, and thus assist UNESCO and countries in conservation work. In so doing, advantage should be taken of best practices elsewhere in the world and, with this in mind, exchange of information and experts should be pursued under the auspices of UNESCO.

### **Declaration of Georgetown**

**Acknowledging** the unique historical evolution of the Wooden Urban Heritage of the Caribbean region and the rich cultural diversity stemming from the contributions of the Amerindian, European, African and Asian peoples to this heritage;

**Cognizant** of the significance of such heritage to regional history, cultural richness and the architecture of the Caribbean city, town and village as a tangible manifestation of the social milieu, structure, norms, behavioural patterns and lifestyle of Caribbean peoples;

**Recognizing** the impact and vital contribution of this architecture in the development of Cultural Tourism and the derived benefits to Cultural Industries in pursuit of national development and the alleviation of poverty within regional economies;

**Aware** of the urgent need for technical skills to preserve and restore the Wooden Urban Heritage and to orient professionals and skilled craftworkers in the best architectural and conservation practices to ensure the survival, preservation and authenticity of this heritage;

The Meeting of Experts on the Wooden Urban Heritage of the Caribbean Region in Georgetown (Guyana), 5–7 February 2003, organized by the UNESCO World Heritage Centre, the UNESCO Caribbean office, CARIMOS and the Government of Guyana, urges the countries of the Caribbean to:

- **Protect and Preserve** the aesthetic, social, cultural, functional and historic values, integrity, authenticity and cultural veracity of the Wooden Urban Heritage of their countries through the training of professionals and craftworkers to ensure that the spirit of Caribbean urban life and culture is maintained and enhanced by safeguarding those unique approaches to architecture and town planning that retain the historic spaces and ensembles, that validate the unique ambiance of the Caribbean urban setting and which nurture such forms of human and artistic expression;

- **Allow** for policy-makers to provide participatory mechanisms that involve professional, technical and non-governmental organizations in the decision-making process for effective policies, legislation, management structures and incentives for urban conservation programmes, including the continuation of the CARIMOS Regional Inventory in all the territories of the Association of Caribbean States (ACS) and the inclusion in that inventory of the Wooden Urban Heritage as an ensemble, thus encouraging its preservation, maintenance, adaptive use, longevity, and socio-economic strategies including urban traffic flow and personal security to mitigate potential natural and human disasters;

- **Redouble** efforts to have ensembles of the Wooden Urban Heritage inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List by declaring them national historic sites, including them on Tentative Lists, and submitting them as candidates for inscription while pursuing studies to assess the social and economic importance of this heritage as a vital part of the cultural tourism product that should be monitored and promoted by the Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO) and the World Tourism Organization (WTO) in their continuing work in the Caribbean region;

- **Recognize** the need for extensive research in wood preservation and conservation, methodologies and scientific investigations into the existing situation of the timber industry of the Caribbean, while fostering regional dialogue, commerce and exchanges on technical and scientific issues of historic preservation and wood technology;

- **Create** among the general public an awareness of the unique and valuable nature of the Wooden Urban Heritage and the necessity of preserving it through formal and informal educational programmes and promotional campaigns (particularly through the use of electronic media) so as to strengthen the understanding of the citizenry of the region of their role as custodians of this heritage in the national and regional interest, for all humanity and for generations to come.

Adopted in Georgetown, 7 February 2003



# Map of the Caribbean region as defined by UNESCO



**As of July 2005** ● World Natural Heritage site ▲ World Cultural Heritage site

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| ▲ 1 Old Havana and its Fortifications (Cuba -1982)                                       | ▲ 11 Viñales Valley (Cuba -1999)  |
| ▲ 2 National History Park - Citadel, Sans Souci, Ramiers (Haiti -1982)                   | ▲ 12 Brimstone Hill Fortress National Park (St. Kitts and Nevis -1999)                              |
| ▲ 3 La Fortaleza and San Juan Historic Site in Puerto Rico (USA -1983)                   | ▲ 13 Archaeological Landscape of the First Coffee Plantations in the Southeast of Cuba (Cuba -2000) |
| ▲ 4 Trinidad and the Valley de los Ingenios (Cuba -1988)                                 | ● 14 Central Suriname Nature Reserve (Suriname -2000)   |
| ▲ 5 Colonial City of Santo Domingo (Dominican Republic -1990)                            | ▲ 15 Historic Town of St George and Related Fortifications, Bermuda (UK -2000)                      |
| ● 6 Belize Barrier- Reef Reserve System (Belize -1996)                                   | ● 16 Alejandro de Humboldt National Park (Cuba -2001)   |
| ▲ 7 San Pedro de la Roca Castle, Santiago de Cuba (Cuba -1997)                           | ▲ 17 Historic Inner City of Paramaribo (Suriname -2002)   |
| ● 8 Morne Trois Pitons National Park (Dominica -1997)                                    | ● 18 Pitons Management Area (St. Lucia -2004)   |
| ▲ 9 Historic Area of Willemstad, Inner City and Harbour, Netherlands Antilles (NL -1997) | ▲ 19 Urban Historic Centre of Cienfuegos (Cuba -2005)   |
| ● 10 Desembarco del Granma National Park (Cuba -1999)                                    |   |

No.	Caribbean States Parties to the <i>World Heritage Convention</i> (as of November 2004)	Year of adherence
1	Antigua and Barbuda	1983
2	Barbados	2002
3	Belize	1990
4	Cuba	1981
5	Dominica	1995
6	Dominican Republic	1985
7	Grenada	1998
8	Guyana	1977
9	Haiti	1980
10	Jamaica	1983
11	Saint Kitts and Nevis	1986
12	Saint Lucia	1991
13	Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	2003
14	Suriname	1997

No.	States Parties with territories/dependencies in the Caribbean region	Year of adherence
15	Guadeloupe, Martinique, St Barthelemy, St Martin (France)	1975
16	Aruba and Netherlands Antilles (Netherlands)	1992
17	Anguilla, Bermuda, Cayman Islands, Montserrat, Turks and Caicos Islands, Virgin Islands (United Kingdom)	1984
18	Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands (United States)	1973

No.	Non-States Parties in the Caribbean region <sup>7</sup>	Year of adherence
19	Bahamas	–
20	Trinidad and Tobago	–

7. Trinidad and Tobago has since ratified the Convention (16 February 2005) and the Bahamas is working towards ratification.



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# The growing World Heritage tourism market: a major challenge for conservation management

*by Bernd von Droste zu Hülshoff  
(Advisor to UNESCO)*

1

Ever since the spectacular rescue of the Egyptian temples at Abu Simbel from the rising waters during the construction of the Aswan High Dam, UNESCO has been renowned the world over for its role as a guardian angel of the world's heritage. The media not only report each new addition to the UNESCO World Heritage List, but also the dangers to which World Heritage is exposed, both in wartime and times of peace. We have recently read accounts of the oil spill off the shores of the Galapagos Islands and watched reports about the theft of sculptures from Angkor. In 2001 the press headlined the barbaric destruction by the Taliban of the giant Buddha statues at Bamiyan in Afghanistan. A year later, terrible storms heavily damaged the fragile old wooden churches of Chiloé in Chile.

Events such as the earthquake that destroyed the famous historic centre of Arequipa in Peru, or the fire that destroyed the historic centre in Lima, focus the eyes of the world on the ever-present risk surrounding World Heritage. The power of modern media is able to draw citizens in all parts of the world into the human drama being played out on site, amplifying the sense of loss experienced locally and heightening identification with those affected.

Stimulated by the high visibility of the losses accompanying natural cataclysms (such as the fire that devastated the famous Rova, the fortified royal enclosure, of Antananarivo in Madagascar), professionals have been focusing during last years more on conservation strategies aiming at prevention, rather than on periodic curative interventions.

This seminar therefore seems the right place to underline the importance of developing a fire prevention strategy for wooden World Heritage properties in the Caribbean region. Such a prevention strategy has to take into account increasing touristic visits with all the problems they entail, including fire hazards. In this context, attention should be drawn to the booklet on risk preparedness, a management manual for World Cultural Heritage, which UNESCO prepared jointly with ICCROM and ICOMOS and which was published in 1998. The manual outlines the key elements of a fire prevention strategy including reducing risks, strengthening resistance to fire, and fire detection and monitoring. A special chapter is devoted to developing a fire response plan and technical and planning measures.<sup>8</sup>

### Growing market for World Heritage tourism

It is important to underline that it is thanks to the media that UNESCO and World Heritage in general have become extremely well-known throughout the world. This high degree of familiarity and, above all, the association of

UNESCO with World Heritage already represents tremendous marketing potential. Indeed, this is one of the main reasons why registration on the World Heritage List is so sought after today and why projects relating to World Heritage are now being sponsored by corporate industries, at least in Europe.



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Rapa Nui National Park, Easter Island, Chile (inscribed in 1995)

Does World Heritage status have tourist appeal? The answer is yes. World Heritage sites such as Rapa Nui National Park (Easter Island, Chile) or the Historic Sanctuary of Machu Picchu (Peru) are some of the most unique sights on Earth, magnificent testaments to mankind's cultural achievements that draw large numbers of visitors from all over the world. Between 1950 and 2001, the number of international tourists skyrocketed from 25 million to 693 million, and by 2020 this figure is expected to top 1.5 billion visitors.

How many tourists actually visit the 730 UNESCO World Heritage sites located in 125 different countries (as at February 2003)? What economic impact does their World Heritage status have? Unfortunately, very few studies have investigated these questions.

Worldwide, international tourism is growing by some 4.5% and the income generated is increasing by around 3% each year. However, since the 11 September 2001 attacks tourism growth decelerated for the first time since 1982: at that time the international situation was seriously aggravated by the Falkland Islands/Las Malvinas war and the conflict between Israel and Lebanon. Nevertheless, today tourism already generates a turnover equivalent to US\$474 billion a year (US\$1.3 billion per day). Tourism accounts for more than 7% of all jobs, making it by far the largest sector of the world economy. At a rough estimate, the 730 World Heritage sites contribute some 5% to these US\$474 billion (US\$23.5 billion per year).

The future of the tourism market of the Caribbean region and the role of World Heritage therein is unclear because, unfortunately, there are hardly any studies available on this important matter. Currently, the only one is a tourism market study for the marine protected areas in the Eastern Caribbean, prepared by the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) in 2002.

8. H. Stovel, *Risk Preparedness: a Management Manual for World Cultural Heritage*, ICCROM, UNESCO-WHC, ICOMOS, 1998.

Specific data on World Heritage tourism have not been collected, perhaps because only recently has World Heritage become an important issue in the region, and the implementation of the *World Heritage Convention* therefore has a long way to go. So far, there are only six natural sites and twelve cultural sites, located in eleven Caribbean States Parties and Overseas Territories. Therefore only some general remarks can be made, based on the CANARI study.

Two particular dynamic facets of the development of the tourist industry in the Caribbean need mentioning. First, the cruise industry is the most dynamic growth category in the entire leisure market. Since 1980 it has had an annual increase of 7.6% with over 7 million passengers taking a cruise in 2000. The Caribbean is the premier destination, receiving over 50% of all passengers.

Tremendous growth potential exists for the cruise industry. For the next five years the cumulative market potential is estimated at US\$50–90 billion. Within the next four years the industry estimates over US\$7 billion in construction orders, representing twenty-four very large new ships with a total of 40,000 berths. At least 50% of this new capacity will cruise in the Caribbean. Unfortunately, the cruise industry is characterized by main consumption on board and not on land, therefore there are few spin-offs for the local community and yet the temporary pressure on local touristic destinations becomes exceedingly high.

Second, nature and heritage tourism are a significant and rapidly growing segment of the sector. Exact statistics of the size of the market do not exist. However, United States tour operators report that each year 4 to 6 million people travel from the US overseas for nature-related trips. Nature and heritage tourism will add to the tropical beach leisure vacation in the Caribbean to provide for balance and variety to the tourist stay.



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Historic District of Québec, Canada (inscribed in 1985)

Speciality travel, which means heritage tourism and ecotourism, is rapidly becoming big business throughout the world. It is estimated that this type of tourism now accounts for approximately 7% of all international travel expenditures. Recent research by the travel industry shows that the number of speciality tourists is increasing by 15–20% annually, the fastest growing segment of the world market. Studies have shown that this type of tourist stays longer, spends more, and is more respectful of local cultural traditions and the environment than other tourists. Therefore every attempt should be made to develop this type of tourism, under the condition that the main objective of conservation of an irreplaceable heritage for future generations will not be challenged.

## Two examples from Europe

As part of research supervised in 2002, the directors of Germany's World Heritage sites were asked about the tangible effects of being awarded with World Heritage status. Relating to the Maulbronn Monastery Complex, which to all intents and purposes qualifies as a representative example, it was explained that tourist interest in the region dramatically increased after it was declared World Heritage in 1993, thanks to the use of the UNESCO World Heritage Maulbronn Monastery Complex label. The awarding of World Heritage status also attracted intense attention in the media, including extensive reporting in the international press. World Heritage status also made it easier for the region to find sponsors to promote cultural projects. What is more, the number of visitors has risen, prompting the establishment of more professional visitor centres and facilities. New jobs involving guided tours have also been created, while trade and industry have certainly benefited, too. The UNESCO emblem is used in advertising material, albeit not as part of a well-defined strategy.

Efforts to develop a joint marketing approach for World Heritage sites within a particular country, which is essential and definitely a good thing for all those involved, are still in their early stages. Some developments in Germany and Austria are described below.

In 1992, a number of World Heritage sites joined forces to form the *Werbegemeinschaft der UNESCO Welterbgüter in Deutschland* (German World Heritage Marketing Association), aiming to generate capital from the country's World Heritage sites, to highlight the importance of Germany's UNESCO World Heritage to tourists and to promote greater awareness of the different sites by conducting a joint, co-ordinated and uniform marketing campaign.

An internal document produced by the Marketing Association voiced the following criticism: 'Towns and cities, communities and regions are attempting to position themselves on the market by each promoting their own different and unique characteristics – a marketing strategy as a Unique Selling Proposition (USP). Most such USPs



highlight traditional attractions, such as nature, landscapes, health and sport, and as such find it very difficult to really stand out from their competitors.'

The document goes on: 'An excellent market position can be gained by marketing culture professionally and concentrating on a culturally significant theme, as a number of examples in Germany have shown, for instance the Documenta art exhibition in Kassel'; and concludes: 'There can be no doubt that the UNESCO World Heritage is an excellent and unique attribute that can make a town or region stand out on the market and generate strong demand.'

Many people are increasingly spending their free time pursuing various cultural interests. This trend is also making itself felt in the tourism sector, with opportunities to experience history in a more-or-less authentic setting proving particularly popular. According to the European Travel Monitor, around 75% of all tours and 60% of all visits paid to towns and cities are inspired by the culture they have to offer. Many of these tourists are young people between the ages of 15 and 29. The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Freizeit (German Leisure Association), an organization that conducts research into leisure behaviour, puts the number of people who visit German churches, castles and monuments each year at some 200 million.

Museums and exhibitions are moving with the times and transforming themselves into modern purveyors of culture and cultural services. They are also receiving more visitors than ever before: in Germany, some 90 million every year. Clearly, people want to experience history, art and culture – but under different conditions.

UNESCO World Heritage sites are surely ideal places for authentic encounters with art, culture and history. However, efforts need to be made to make such visits even more of an experience.

A particularly high proportion of cultural tourism takes the form of day trips. The average German goes on thirty excursions a year, each lasting around eight hours and to destinations located some 70 km away. Various attractions, sights and cultural events are by far the commonest reasons for making such trips. Assuming a 'catchment area' of between 70 km and 100 km around every World Heritage site in Germany, it soon becomes apparent how important the market volume is in terms of excursions and day-trips to towns and cities within a given region. To gain a better idea of the Middle Rhine's tourism potential, the latest figures relating to tourism in Europe are presented below.

Today, Europe is still the most popular tourist destination in the world. In 1999 France, with some 73 million visitors, came out top, ahead of the United States, Italy and Spain. As a tourist destination, Germany ranked twelfth. However, it can be established that in terms of the income generated by tourism, which is of particular interest,

Germany jumps to the top of the list. The fact that the Middle Rhine enjoys an extremely favourable location, in relation to the main regions from which European tourists come, is a major asset that should be fully exploited.



© R.van Oers

Paris - Banks of the Seine, France (inscribed in 1991)

By analogy, the Caribbean region is very close to major centres of origin of world tourism in North America, which helps to boost touristic development. Any failure to exploit the potential of such an ideal location could surely be blamed on a lack of vision, insufficient willingness to make the associated investments, or poor marketing skills. 'Milking' the marketing potential of World Heritage is particularly important in areas where new stimuli are urgently needed to boost the local economy.

At this point, one of the strengths of the region can be established: outstanding cultural assets and the potential of the landscape to establish a new economic niche, one whose basic commodities are also symbols, and the focus of which is cultural tourism. Economic considerations are indispensable here. The successful marketing of local products and tourist attractions can make all the difference in preventing more people, especially the younger generation, from leaving the area.

Some observations may also be made with respect to the strengths and weaknesses of the cultural landscape of the Middle Rhine Valley region as part of a SWOT (Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats) analysis, which is a helpful tool in planning for conservation management in relation to tourism.

### Strengths

- Uniquely beautiful landscape
- Wealth of castles, monuments and antiquities, historic city and town centres
- Huge diversity of cultural and natural resources
- Well-organized, romantic tours (boat trips with wine served on board)
- Easy to reach from major cities and availability of very good transport links
- Already world renowned

## Weaknesses

- Low quality in terms of cuisine (geared towards mass tourism)
- Inadequate hotel infrastructure
- Poor presentation of castle monuments and other attractions
- Poor sense of customer service
- High level of noise pollution
- Steady, gradual loss of characteristic features of the landscape, above all as a result of the growing tendency to abandon the vineyards situated on the region's steep slopes
- Fragmented administration and communication hinders co-operation not only between local communities and towns, but also between expert authorities and regional associations

What can be done in such a situation?

The main objective is to create a kind of Rhine-Loreley 'umbrella brand' that covers all the main attractions in the region. These attractions can then be offered in a uniformly designed and clearly profiled package of products and professionally marketed. A newly established planning and development company should own the Rhine-Loreley brand. The aim of this concept is to create a comprehensive new tourist product for the region by providing visitors with an experience which they perceive as interlinked. State-of-the-art presentation technology would be used to join the various touristic elements together to form an interesting and exciting theme park, without sacrificing any of the region's local identity or values.

The local towns, cities and communities, trade and industry, crafts sector, small businesses, and the agriculture, forestry and wine-growing industries are all operating individually in the tourism market by carving out their own particular niches in which to offer their products and services. Given today's competitive climate in Europe and around the world, this is a hopeless undertaking in which everyone will lose out.

In many cases, the problem of the lack of co-operation between communities, towns or cities and other important players was solved in the course of the World Heritage nomination process. This was certainly true of the Middle Rhine Valley. Other sites developed joint marketing strategies, such as Hadrian's Wall, stretching 118 km across England, parallel to the border with Scotland; and the Road of Saint James (Le Chemin de Saint Jacques in French and Il Camino de Santiago in Spanish), which winds through the Pyrenees from France to the sepulchre of Saint James the Apostle at Santiago de Compostela in Spain. The World Heritage nomination process encouraged local communities to be more outward-looking and not focus exclusively on the religious aspect.

A fine example in this respect is the marketing of World Heritage in Austria, which has fully recognized the significance of the country's eight World Heritage sites in terms of high-quality tourism focusing on culture and natural landscapes. The main marketing objectives are to enhance the country's image and boost tourist-related revenue. The maxim reads: 'The concept of World Heritage (and of UNESCO) is a guarantee of a serious approach and high quality in the cultural domain.'



*Historic Centre of Vienna, Austria (inscribed in 2001)*

In this respect, Austria already enjoys an excellent reputation, but one which is limited primarily to classical music, the theatre and festivals. The well-targeted marketing of cultural World Heritage sites would enrich the country's cultural image by adding the decisive World Heritage factor, which encompasses far more than merely its architectural and cultural value. The increase in tourism generated by such purposeful marketing leads to higher occupancy rates. This is particularly important during slack periods when bookings are few. A marketing campaign focusing on a programme that is not dependent on the weather can in the long run help to reduce seasonal fluctuations and extend traditional visiting periods.

One common feature of advertising campaigns in Germany and Austria is that they set out to go beyond the use of traditional material like brochures, posters and mass-mailings and incorporate electronic media such as DVDs, the internet and virtual tours. The Austrian concept aims to adopt a thematic approach and sell the country to visitors by offering a 'World Heritage Austria' package.

Both examples highlight the importance of making effective use of the press. The Austrian marketing concept is geared towards co-operation with so-called 'incoming travel agencies'. Meanwhile, its advertising has been probing the possibilities of marketing the country's World Heritage in different parts of the world. Indeed, even countries as far away as the United States and Japan are considered to be very promising markets. In this connection, Austrian advertisers recently started organizing 'Travel Seminars' in some cities to boost sales.

The unique character and universal importance of World Heritage is recognized the world over, and it is this that makes World Heritage sites some of the top tourist destinations. It is essential to learn not only how to make the most of our good fortune, but also how to handle this new-found status as sensitively as possible.

Meanwhile, although trips to World Heritage sites are being marketed worldwide, they are often being arranged without any consideration as to well-managed tourism at the destination itself. Seldom does tourism make a sufficient financial contribution to ensure the long-term protection and conservation of cultural or natural heritage. Consequently, in the near future the costs associated with catering for the sharp rise in tourist numbers ought to be more firmly incorporated and the proceeds passed on to the owners of the sites in question, so that they can take any steps required to protect them in the long term. This is particularly important when taking care of unique cultural landscapes.

### **Balancing tourism against conservation needs**

What is the situation in other countries regarding the balancing act between protecting World Heritage and catering to the demands of international tourism? Sites such as the ancient temple of Abu Simbel in Egypt, the Grand Canyon in the United States, the Taj Mahal in India, the Borobudur Temple Compounds in Indonesia, Easter Island in Chile and Venice in Italy were already world famous long before being awarded World Heritage status. Their prestige and renown can hardly be boosted any further. In fact, some of these bastions of tourism are desperately battling against the onslaught of mass tourism.

At present, every year over 7 million people make trips to the lagoon city of Venice. This popularity is making it extremely difficult for the local inhabitants to go about their normal daily lives, and Venice finds itself faced with the threat of becoming more of a museum than a functioning city. Many Venetians have already fled from the tourist-infested city centre and moved into outlying areas. The city is doing all it can to try and halt the exodus: one attempt enlisted the help of top photographer Oliviero Toscani, famous for the shock value of the photographs he took for Benetton's 'anti-advertising' campaign. Advertisements were duly published in the media depicting St Mark's Square overflowing with rubbish and dead pigeons, the idea being to make the images as revolting as possible.

The other extreme involves cases where World Heritage sites keep at least some of their treasures hidden away from the public in an attempt to prevent them from suffering any irreparable damage. An aggressive marketing campaign would be misplaced in such circumstances.

This is typically the case with extensive rock carvings scattered across a large area, such as at Tanum in Sweden, Valcamonica in northern Italy or Tassili n'Ajjer deep in the interior of Algeria, where it is more or less impossible to monitor and protect sites against vandalism.

In France, the famous Lascaux cave in the Vézère Valley had to be closed following damage caused by visitors' respiration. In the meantime, however, the high-quality replica site created in a neighbouring cave has proved very popular with visitors and a great success. A marketing campaign explaining to the public the need for and advantages of a replica has paid off for all concerned. Indeed, the example set by Lascaux just goes to show that the actual conservation of World Heritage has to be the top priority, rather than commercial gain. The example of Lascaux also shows that skilful management can reconcile the interests in both protecting our heritage and encouraging tourism, and do so in a manner that allows local areas to benefit from a substantial, lasting income from tourism.

# Caribbean heritage: its uses and economic potential

*by Lennox Honychurch*  
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**The built and immovable heritage of the Caribbean is a lasting resource that can be adapted and utilized for the benefit of the region today. The massive investments that were made in early city planning, fortifications, harbours, naval dockyards, plantation buildings, religious buildings and domestic architecture can continue to reap dividends for today's societies. Even if traditional uses for these structures and sites are no longer applicable or viable, there are other current uses to which they can be put. The management of heritage sites in this way makes an important contribution to sustainable development within small nation-states. These opportunities now available to planners and community leaders come at a time of reduced economic activity from traditional revenue earners such as agriculture and manufacturing. While the careful use of these sites provides added resources for tourism development, it also complements the national education systems and reinforces a community awareness of each country's heritage.**

### Pre-Columbian heritage

The indigenous heritage of the Caribbean was almost literally wiped from the face of the earth during the violent conquest of the islands in the sixteenth century. The work of archaeologists in the last fifty years has revealed a vibrant and creative pre-Columbian society. Much of what has been found is displayed in museums across the region, most of which are in historic buildings associated with colonization. Immovable indigenous sites are few, given that the methods of construction and shelter depended mainly on the use of organic material. However, sites of ceremonial 'ball courts' in Cuba and the Dominican Republic and the outline of the only pre-Columbian communal house excavated in the Lesser Antilles on the island of St Eustatius, provide markers for our indigenous heritage. At the ceremonial ball court site at Cuguana near Utuado in central Puerto Rico, a museum, reconstructed houses, as well as craft shops and restaurants in the neighbouring village, provide a focus for additional incomes in this rural area. On Anguilla, Fountains Cavern, which comprises an



Pre-Columbian Heritage

ancient freshwater spring, a site with petroglyphs and a centre for indigenous gatherings, is now being developed as a national park. Petroglyphs on Guadeloupe, Saint Kitts and Saint Vincent are used as the basis for craft design as well as being visitor sites. The mythic geography of the region, where natural sites are associated with the cosmology of the Amerindian people, is a novel area of study. A renewed interest in pre-Columbian cultures of the Caribbean is being influenced by new information that is being provided by the archaeology of the region.

### Architecture

Because of the loss of so much of the indigenous heritage, it is the colonial and Creole elements of regional history that come to the fore where heritage and sustainable development are concerned, concentrated around our architectural heritage. Caribbean architecture has become the focus of lively debate in recent years, not just among the growing number of Caribbean architects, but perhaps even more so among conservation groups, town planners, environmentalists, tourism agencies and government departments – anyone in fact who has any interest in the urban landscape of these islands. Where a particular building or project is concerned, the debate is usually five-pointed, dealing with aesthetics, the possible uses for the site, the type of materials or methods to be used, the skills available, and the cost of renovation and maintenance.

The dilemma of the sensitive Caribbean architect is how to effectively adapt traditional style to modern uses and demands. Valuable lessons have been learned from 500 years of constructing various forms of shelter in this region, which should be studied by every architect who intends to build in the tropics. Wherever these time-tested examples have been disregarded we find buildings that are hot, noisy and generally uncomfortable.

The 1960s was perhaps the worst decade for Caribbean building construction. At first there was little or no public concern, because awareness of the architectural heritage of the region was in its infancy. Yet there was money available in those pre-oil-crisis days: tourism was expanding, foreign aid funds for public infrastructure was beginning to flow and private housing estates were blossoming around the suburbs of every state capital. Most prospective homeowners took their house plans straight out of North American magazines, with few concessions to the climate.

The combined result of all this was some of the ugliest hotel complexes and public buildings in our history, and the emergence of a pattern of suburban housing which one Trinidadian architect dubbed as 'Diego Martin Style' after a housing district in Trinidad: flat roofs, echoing concrete rooms and bad ventilation and air circulation. Many imposing historic buildings were torn down rather than being renovated and adapted, as is more commonly done today. Yet in the last twenty years there have been several

success stories. The examples mentioned here come mainly from the Eastern Caribbean but they are representative of what is going on in the wider Caribbean. Together, and in their various ways, they show how heritage sites are contributing to sustainable development.

### The Caribbean city

Almost too late, captains of the tourism industry realized that West Indian architecture was actually a tourism product, that the verandahs and fretwork, the arched porticoes, courtyards and jalousie windows were part of what people were coming to see, rather than a vast concrete imitation of the apartment block which they had just escaped from back home in the northern metropolitan countries. A growing cultural pride and self-awareness over the last two decades has also had its effect, both on the public and on the architects themselves. Governments and resort planners now tend to be more sensitive in linking new developments with traditional urban patterns.

The Caribbean city began with Spanish town planning based on medieval Iberian layout, established on the islands in the years immediately following the arrival of Columbus. Santo Domingo on Hispaniola, San Juan on Puerto Rico and early towns in Cuba remain examples of these. World Heritage sites of urban heritage in Cuba include Old Havana and its Fortifications, and Trinidad and the Valley de los Ingenios. The old Jamaican capital of Spanish Town inherited an earlier Hispanic layout for its first British capital. Subsequent additions around the main square of the town during the height of the eighteenth-century Jamaican sugar boom has produced one of the best examples of tropical Palladian architecture in the world. Of a much later vintage is Ponce in southern Puerto Rico, where an economic boom in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries fuelled city planning and house construction on a grand scale. Much of this has now been restored and provides a vibrant cultural and business centre for southern Puerto Rico.

Waterfronts are significant areas for Caribbean capital cities, most of which were built around ports. Now they are the main reception points for an ever-increasing number of cruise ships. The challenge is to provide adequate facilities for both islanders and hordes of cruise ship tourists. The project for Redcliff Quay and harbour site in St John's, Antigua, the Roseau waterfront and Old Market in Dominica, the Basseterre historic district in Saint Kitts and changes to the Careenage at Bridgetown, Barbados, are examples of this. Since the 1970s much has been done to research and preserve the seaside towns of Christiansted and Fredricksted on St Croix in the US Virgin Islands. The whole city of Willemstad on Curaçao combined a port, trading centre and administrative capital within a system of fortification that is outstanding in many respects. Its Dutch-influenced architecture is on a scale that makes it unique in the region.

The Careenage (inner harbour) and city of St Georges, Grenada, is probably the best example of a Georgian sea-port town in the Americas, featuring in all the tourist promotion of the island. Keeping the character of the place is crucial to maintaining a continuous appeal for an ever-increasing number of visitors. Preservation of the historic features of St Georges sustains a vital sector of the country's tourism market. In most cases there are postcards, brochures and booklets giving information about these towns, and the sale of craft items inspired by references to the sites also help to promote the economic sustainability of the location.

For several years various plans have been proposed for the renovation of Port Royal in Jamaica as a site combining cruise tourism, historic archaeology and museums on a spit of land at the entrance to Kingston harbour. Port Royal is famous as a centre for buccaneering and because of the devastating earthquake that levelled the town in 1692. Here, as elsewhere, historical associations are as important as the physical fabric of the place. References to events and personalities associated with the sites are vital to interpretation for visitors. Where there is an educational component involving regular school visits, the management of the site must take this into account when providing material.

### Industrial architecture

With a history based mainly on the production of sugar and coffee, the West Indies possesses a wealth of mechanical paraphernalia scattered in estate yards throughout the islands. The mills for crushing sugar cane varied considerably from island to island. In Barbados, Antigua and the French island of Marie-Galante, the windmill was well-suited to the trade winds' constant energy and their hollow shells dot the landscape. Morgan Lewis mill on Barbados and Betty's Hope Plantation mills on Antigua are fine examples of what can be achieved in the field of historical conservation.

On the well-watered Windward Islands and Jamaica, the much more expensive watermill was introduced and although a few are still in operation at places such as River Antoine in Grenada and Macoucheri Estate in Dominica, many lie abandoned, their huge wood and iron wheels rotting and rusting or overgrown with weeds. The canals that fed these mills required aqueducts and the simple arches rising out of the foliage are among the most interesting features of West Indian watermills. One aqueduct forms the centrepiece of the grounds of Mona Campus of the University of the West Indies. In Saint Vincent, a series of these arches forms a dramatic backdrop to a resort and in Jamaica a watermill forms the centrepiece of a golf course.

The cattle mill, another variation on the theme, was used in areas where neither water nor wind was in constant supply. The rollers stood upright in the centre of a circular area while cattle, lashed to the main beam, trod round and

round. The beam was attached to the rollers that crushed the canes. Few examples of these mills remain. One is still in use in Martinique. Although cattle no longer power this mill, a jeep lashed to the main beam and set to move in a perpetual circle turns it. At Whim Plantation in Saint Croix, an important tourism and educational site, a fine reconstructed cattle mill is on display.

The early methods of sugar production were relatively simple in comparison to the giant factories of the modern West Indies. The system of teaches, ladles, moulds and hogsheads is no longer used but one can visit a number of silent ruins where the process can easily be understood by inspecting the rusting machinery and primitive production line. New River factory on the east coast of Nevis or l'Habitation Ciron in northern Martinique are examples. The railways that were constructed in certain islands to transport sugar to large centrally located factories are in some cases still working. In Saint Kitts, for example, where the railway is only used during crop time, there are plans to utilize the rolling stock for rides around the island as an additional income earner.

The premier historic coffee plantation on Puerto Rico, Hacienda Buena Vista, has been transformed into an educational visitor site, a working museum that combines nature walks and meals with guided tours of the production of coffee. Small coffee estates on Basse-Terre (Guadeloupe) have adopted a similar technique. In Cuba, the Archaeological Landscape of the First Coffee Plantations is a UNESCO World Heritage site.

### Plantation houses

Along with Jamaica, Barbados possesses many of the finest plantation 'great houses' in the British Caribbean. The owner-planters on these islands built in a style of architecture that was popular among the English gentlemen in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries who could afford to build manor houses. The difference was that these houses were built from coral and volcanic stone and often had verandahs and other details to accommodate the tropical climate, but they had the same gabled roofs running lengthwise as their English models, with other gables on the side to let in light and air. Several Jamaican great houses were designed in Palladian style with pillared neoclassical porticoes then popular in Britain. In Saint Kitts, Nevis and Antigua, which were the prominent sugar islands of the Lesser Antilles, the style is more modest although the landscaping and layout still denoted power. In the mountainous Windward Islands, the estate houses, built mainly for attorneys, were much less elaborate and have a quiet charm rather than the extravagant luxury evident among the great houses of the more prosperous sugar islands. On the island of Curaçao there are several Dutch plantation houses, the *landhuizen*, that combine visitor sites with museums, restaurants and places for cultural performances.

The French-influenced houses of the Windward Islands are particularly charming with their grey volcanic stonework and wide hip roofs. The habitations of Martinique are among the oldest examples of domestic architecture in the Eastern Caribbean. Whether they are built from wood or stone, these handsome houses have stood the test of hurricane winds and earthquakes for over 300 years to prove their worth. In most cases they consist of a large central room that can be closed with heavy shutters. This room is itself surrounded by an enclosed gallery often lined with *jalousie* louvres. During a hurricane this outer gallery acts as a first line of defence against the powerful winds, while the family and plantation staff are secure in the central core. Today many of these houses are open to the public.

Great houses such as l'Habitation Clément in Martinique form part of a rum distillery complex where the produce of the plantation is sold to visitors who may also visit the house, museum and botanic gardens. The site has become a venue for receptions and state occasions, as in the case of a meeting between President François Mitterrand of France and US President George Bush Sr in 1992. Its role as tourist attraction adds value and income to the business of rum production. The plantation houses of the Caribbean lend themselves to this sort of treatment: small hotels, museums, botanic gardens and centres for craft production and sales can all be accommodated in converted plantation buildings.

### Forts and garrisons

To protect the islands, vast sums were invested in the construction of forts. European regiments and naval forces sweltered and perished in batteries and barracks placed at strategic points on each colony, each of which have their fair share of military cemeteries.

These military outposts vary considerably in size and significance. Brimstone Hill on Saint Kitts, most of which has recently been restored, is probably among the most impressive in the area. Brimstone Hill Fortress National Park was declared a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1999, the first cultural site to be so designated in the anglophone Caribbean. It is almost matched in size by Fort Delgres at Basse-Terre, Guadeloupe. The famous English Harbour on Antigua is also a well-preserved example of colonial military and naval presence. It forms part of Nelson's Dockyard National Park and is the focus for Antigua's important yachting industry. This is an example of the continuous maritime use of a historic site. Hundreds of jobs are associated with the yachts, bars, hotels and services around English Harbour. Pleasure craft and the annual Antigua Sailing Week have replaced the activity of the warships and naval manoeuvres of the past.

The rambling fortress of Cabrits Garrison on Dominica lies untouched amid the luxuriant secondary forest and the walls lean precariously before their final fall. Part of it, at the garrison headquarters of Fort Shirley, has been cleared

of most of the trees and has been stabilized. A cruise-ship berth and visitor centre located at Cabrits Garrison provides an attraction to the second town of Dominica. In Barbados, St Anne's Garrison has attracted much interest in recent years by combining a link between buildings that continue their role as defence force headquarters and the use of other military buildings for an art gallery, museum, offices and the site of George Washington's only place of residence outside the United States.

Other smaller visitor sites that are important to the islands of the Lesser Antilles are Fort Charlotte in Saint Vincent, Pigeon Point in Saint Lucia and Fort Fredrick in Grenada. To a greater or lesser extent, basic stabilization, clearance and visitor facilities have been provided for these and other forts in the subregion, forming a network of military installations.

As far as World Heritage sites are concerned, these fortifications must not merely be seen as individual entities but as a complex of linked, inter-related sites that together tell the story of European rivalry across the whole of the region. In the Eastern Caribbean, where the islands stand in an arc, like the battle line of eighteenth-century ships, the fortifications can best be appreciated as chain of defence stretching from Trinidad in the south to Cuba in the north, where another World Heritage site is San Pedro de la Roca Castle, Santiago de Cuba.

There is also a growing awareness of the African contribution towards the construction of these edifices and the role of the enslaved people as skilled artisans. Understanding their role in the fortification of the region is still in the early stages of research. It links the African skills with stone and timber to a system of defence that ironically guarded against their own liberation. The place of the West India Regiments and other black forces in the manning of forts is also important when interpreting the history of the period. It corrects the historical imbalance and previous neglect of an important aspect of our past and broadens public awareness of the colonial defence systems across the Caribbean. In Haiti, the World Heritage site of the Citadel, San Souci, Ramiers forms a national historic park. It brings together all these aspects of Haitian and Caribbean heritage in the awesome monuments created by leaders of the first black republic. Here is a site that combines the tourism and educational components of heritage with a symbol of nationalism.

### Designing for the environment

A new look is also being taken at the design of private homes. During colonization, builders learned by trial and error how best to adapt the Creole house to the moods of the Caribbean climate: how to deal with its breezes, sunshine, rain and hurricanes. Too often these elements have been disregarded. One interesting feature of Hurricane David, which hit Dominica in 1979, was that the older, steep-sided hip roofs, constructed in the nineteenth or

early twentieth centuries, stood up far better to the 240 km/hour winds than the flatter roofs constructed since the 1950s. The angle of these roofs and the internal beams held together by wooden pegs, mortise and tenon joints, resisted the wind force and changes in air pressure that tear buildings apart during hurricanes.

The constant flow of the trade winds from the north-east is another feature of the Caribbean that has influenced the design of shelters from pre-Columbian times. The Taino and Kalinago/Carib Indians always put a low overhang on the windward side of their thatched houses to fend off the rain but still allow the breeze to cool the inside of their homes. During colonization, settlers learned to place their bedrooms along the eastern side of their homes for the same reason and to channel air through the house by way of at least one large corridor running from east to west. Wooden louvres or jalousies were widely used as a solution to the problem of how to admit air while keeping out the glare of the sunlight. Shaded hoods over the window helped to keep out both sun and rain.

The verandah had a dual purpose, acting as an extension of the drawing room and a shady zone for air to cool before entering the house itself. Well-tied hip roofs were found to best withstand hurricanes and verandah roofs were attached to the house separately so that during storms they could be swept away without taking the main roof with them. Inside the house, decorated spaces along the top of partitions allowed air to circulate from room to room. These details of structure and style are now receiving more attention in the development of designs best suited to the climatic and social needs of the region. Hopefully it will result in a beneficial union of modern needs and 'Creole' practicality.

### Vernacular

The vernacular architecture of the smaller, mainly wooden houses has taken some time to gain respect among the pioneers of historic preservation. It was usually the 'grand' historic sites that received attention first. However, after the 1970s architects such as Jack Berthelot of Guadeloupe



Caribbean Vernacular architecture



drew attention to the 'Ti Kaz' of the French islands, while in Barbados an interest developed in studies of the wooden 'chattel house', named as such because it could be dismantled and moved to new locations as land tenure demanded. Today the chattel house has become an architectural icon of Barbados and is used in shopping malls, craft markets and historic parks. One such example is the chattel houses in the grounds of Tyrol Cot, the former residence of the Barbadian statesman Sir Grantley Adams, now owned by the Barbados National Trust. On Saba in the Netherlands Antilles, the traditional family houses of steep red roofs and wooden whitewashed sides, built by shipwrights to match the strength of their island schooners, are a distinguishing feature of the island. Until recently no planning regulation existed to maintain the style. Generations of Saban people have followed the designs and colour scheme that is a mark of loyalty to their home on the island.

Elsewhere in the region, the homes of island leaders or those who have left and become famous elsewhere have been transformed for modern uses. The house of the Grenadian patriot T. A. Marryshow in St Georges, Grenada, is now the site of the School of Continuing Studies of the University of the West Indies. On Nevis, the stone ruin has been rebuilt of an eighteenth-century building, the birthplace of Alexander Hamilton, one of the founding fathers of the United States. It now serves as the Nevis House of Assembly and the Hamilton House Museum. Historical connections with the US, as in the case of the George Washington House in Barbados, or the Commandant's House at Cabrits Garrison in Dominica that was designed by the early American architect Peter Harrison, have popular appeal for US visitors who make up a large proportion of the tourists in the region. Places associated with the British Royal Navy have a particular fascination for many UK visitors. Heritage sites with Dutch and French connections attract the interest of that segment of the European tourist market. The birthplace of Empress Josephine at La Pagene, near Trois Islets in Martinique, is an example of a colonial site that is of immense metropolitan interest.

### The challenge

The main problems facing historical conservation in the area are both physical and psychological: funds and community interest. Idealistic as it may be, one does not often expect a purist approach to historical conservation in islands that are battling with pressing social and economic problems. But examples do exist where quality preservation is achieved in spite of all the odds. These projects in fact help to solve socio-economic problems and do much to enhance the quality and character of life in each community. Some fine compromises have been reached in cases where old buildings have been carefully converted into hotels or public buildings and civic centres.

In Barbados, one can point to the hall at Queen's Park, once army officers' quarters, as a fine example of conservation and utility in harmony. British designer Oliver Messel worked with traditional West Indian materials and architectural styles of Barbados and Mustique to prove how much can be done. Parts of the Fort Young Hotel in Dominica and the Cobblestone Inn in Kingstown, Saint Vincent, are other sites that have proved successful in this respect.

Many of these sites may not qualify for World Heritage status because of their small size or because they lack unique and outstanding features worthy of designation. But this does not rule them out from being recognized as important national heritage sites within their island or state. Neither does it negate the role that such sites play along with others in the regional context. The process of qualifying for World Heritage status includes very useful guidelines that can help to maintain sustainable programmes for these sites. The *World Heritage Convention's Operational Guidelines* can help all those responsible for heritage sites in the Caribbean to identify, document and propose management structures and economic uses for their future development. It is a valuable procedure towards maintaining their integrity. Clearly, there are many relics of our history waiting for such treatment: gaping walls and abandoned sites that can be brought to life once more to provide inspiration, pleasure and sustainable development for today's Caribbean.

# Wooden Caribbean cities as World Heritage: outline for a comparative analysis between Paramaribo (Suriname) and Georgetown (Guyana)

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## Wooden Caribbean cities as World Heritage: outline for a comparative analysis between Paramaribo (Suriname) and Georgetown (Guyana)

### Abstract

*In June 2002, during the 26th session of the World Heritage Committee in Budapest (Hungary), the Historic Inner City of Paramaribo in Suriname was inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage List. It was considered to be an outstanding example of the interaction between different cultures during the initial period of colonization of this part of the world during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, resulting in a city that shows the gradual fusion of European architecture and construction techniques with local indigenous crafts and materials.*

*The greater part of the above justification could also apply to Georgetown in Guyana, as its colonial history and urban and architectural development followed a similar pattern. Given the ambition of the State Party of Guyana to nominate its capital city to the World Heritage List, what could be the outstanding universal value of Georgetown that would justify its inscription? And, equally important, what would be the difference in this respect to its already inscribed neighbour?*

*This paper addresses these questions by outlining a comparative analysis between the two Caribbean wooden cities, originating from research and fieldwork conducted by the author over the last ten years. Brief descriptions of historic economic and urban development and architectural heritage are given, revealing distinctive differences in city foundation, urban layout and architectural influences. These result in rather similar but not identical cities that could very well supplement each other in presenting an important stage in the cultural development of wooden cities in the Caribbean region.*

**In December 2000 the Permanent Delegation of the Netherlands to UNESCO allocated funds for two preparatory assistance missions to Guyana to assess the feasibility of a nomination of Georgetown to the World Heritage List. The first mission, undertaken in February/March 2001, focused on the identification of a cultural property and the justification for its inclusion on the List. The second mission, in October 2001, further elaborated on issues of protection and management of historic Georgetown. The mission's findings were described in two consultant reports.<sup>9</sup>**

**In June 2002 the Historic Inner City of Paramaribo in Suriname was inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage List under cultural criteria (ii) and (iv). The justification for inscription reads:**

- **Criterion (ii): Paramaribo is an exceptional example of the gradual fusion of European architecture and construction techniques with indigenous South American materials and crafts to create a new architectural idiom.**
- **Criterion (iv): Paramaribo is a unique example of the contact between the European culture of the Netherlands and the indigenous cultures and envi-**

**ronment of South America in the years of intensive colonization of this region in the 16th and 17th centuries.**

**The registration of Paramaribo on the World Heritage List crowned efforts on protection, conservation and management that had started precisely ten years earlier. During the UNESCO General Assembly in October 1993, the Director for Culture in Suriname, Ms Alexander-Vanenburg, presented on behalf of her country and with the support of the Netherlands an amendment to the UNESCO Draft Programme and Budget for 1994–1995 requesting, among others, the Director-General of UNESCO to take all necessary steps using extrabudgetary funds for the preservation of the historic centre of Paramaribo.**

**At the same time, a project for a Master Plan for Paramaribo had been finalized, which included recommendations for the design of a Restoration and Conservation Plan for the historic inner city.<sup>10</sup> Based on this Master Plan and related data and information, a co-operation was established between Delft University of Technology and the Dutch Department for Conservation in Zeist (Netherlands) to embark on a mission to safeguard the historic city of Paramaribo.**

**Over a four-year period, between 1994 and 1997, a series of field missions to Suriname was undertaken and assistance was given to the Suriname Government for the design of a conservation plan, the establishment of an institute for monuments management linked to the Ministry of Education and Community Development, and the drafting of a World Heritage nomination dossier, of which a first version was finalized in 1998.**

### Economic development of the Guianas

At the end of the fifteenth century the Spanish made the first voyages of discovery to the so-called 'Wild Coast' of South America, or the Guianas, a name for the region between the Orinoco and Amazon rivers referring to its inaccessibility and the presence of Amerindian tribes. From the beginning of the seventeenth century onwards, Dutch traders established themselves in permanent settlements several miles upstream of three of the largest rivers in what is now Guyana (formerly British Guiana), being the Pomeroon, Essequibo and Berbice. For the region now known as Suriname, Dutch trading posts must have existed as early as 1614 near the Corantin River bordering Guyana and near the Amerindian village of Parmarbo or

9. R. van Oers, *Mission to Georgetown – Final Report to the Government of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana*, Paris, UNESCO World Heritage Centre, April 2001; and R. van Oers, *Mission Report Guyana*, Paris, UNESCO World Heritage Centre, October 2001.

10. R. van Oers, *Master Plan voor Paramaribo - Suriname*, Delft University of Technology, the Netherlands, 1993.

## Wooden Caribbean cities as World Heritage: outline for a comparative analysis between Paramaribo (Suriname) and Georgetown (Guyana)

Paramaribo, now Paramaribo, on the banks of the Suriname River. Next to trade in hardwoods and dyes, colonization of the Wild Coast primarily aimed at agricultural development, especially in sugar cane and tobacco. The European governments involved in this colonization encouraged settlers to establish private plantations and to exploit the cultivated area in order to meet the increasing demand for tropical products in Europe.

In 1651 the English peer Francis, Lord Willoughby of Parham, and 300 planters from Barbados relocated to Suriname due to overcrowding and established flourishing tobacco and sugar plantations in a relatively short time. When a Dutch fleet commanded by Abraham Crijnsen conquered the colony of Suriname during the second Anglo-Dutch War (1665–67), British patronage ended and Suriname would remain under Dutch rule for the next 300 years. From 1667 to the end of the eighteenth century hundreds of plantations were established and approximately 600 of them were in business at the height of Suriname's productivity.

In Guyana in 1746, Andries Pieterse, a Dutch planter of the colony at Essequibo, asked the Directors of the Dutch West India Company, established in 1621 as the governing body of the colonies and settlements in the West, permission to establish a plantation along 'the uninhabited river of Demerary'. Permission was granted and within six months Pieterse and eighteen other colonists had established plantations along the banks of the river. The new colony developed rapidly: after fifteen years it consisted of 130 sugar and coffee plantations.<sup>11</sup>

To provide for the necessary labour force to work the many plantations in Suriname and Guyana, the Dutch West India Company began to supply the colonists with slaves from Africa. More land came under cultivation and new settlements sprang up along the major rivers. During the eighteenth century the sugar industry began to dominate other crop cultivations and both colonies witnessed fluctuating fortunes. The abolition of the slave trade and the termination of the apprenticeship system brought about an exodus of former slaves from the plantations to newly laid-out neighbourhoods in and around Paramaribo and Georgetown. In the latter, by around 1850 over 42,000 ex-slaves had settled in the newly created villages that emerged around the capital.

The grave labour shortage led to the importation of indentured labourers, particularly from China and India. By 1917, 238,000 immigrants had arrived in Guyana,<sup>12</sup> while the colonial government in Suriname imported indentured labourers mainly from India and Indonesia (Java). During

the period 1873–1939 a total of 34,000 Hindustanis and 33,000 Javanese were brought to Suriname. Both countries gradually changed from large-scale agricultural practices to countries where every cultural group was working its own fields. Over time Georgetown and Paramaribo developed into multicultural, multi-ethnic cities.

While the economic development of Guyana and Suriname followed the same pattern, urban and architectural development showed major differences. At the beginning of the nineteenth century the colony of Guyana came under British rule until its independence in 1966; Suriname would gain its independence from the Netherlands in 1975. Thus, for both colonies Dutch rule had lasted for at least 200 years, which explains some of the similarities in material culture between these territories. However, major differences resulted from distinct planning and design influences, related in part to site location, from different European traditions.

### Urban layout in relation to location

#### Paramaribo

After the takeover of Suriname from the British in 1667, the Dutch built the brick Fort Zeelandia on the site of the former British wooden Fort Willoughby, on a protruding point on the left bank of the Suriname River, to guard incoming ships. Paramaribo was developed on a site where initially an indigenous village had existed, with streets containing warehouses, bars and brothels lining the harbour front. In 1683, after the colony came under the command of Suriname's first Governor and co-owner Van Sommelsdijck, the proper layout of the city was



**The Fort Zeelandia Complex on a protruding point on the left bank of the Suriname River with Independence Square and the historic inner city behind it**

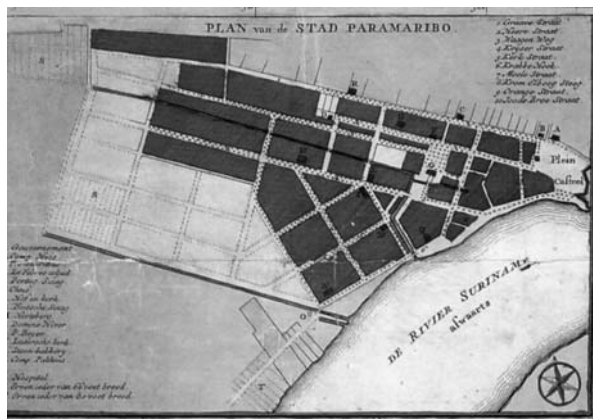
11. A. N. Paasman, *Reinhart: Nederlandse literatuur en slavernij ten tijde van de verlichting*, Martinus Nijhoff publishing, Leiden (Netherlands), 1984, pp. 170–74.

12. T. Mangar, 'Conceptualisation and history of the Guianas', in H. Jeffrey and J. Menke (eds), *Problems of Development of the Guianas*, Anton de Kom University of Suriname, Paramaribo, 1991, pp. 16–17.

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planned. During the second half of the eighteenth century, when a growing number of plantation owners migrated to Paramaribo and left the day-to-day management of the plantation to an appointed administrator, the city further developed. While this trend caused individual plantations to gradually decline, the town grew steadily with many spacious residential dwellings constructed along tree-lined streets, and cultural life flourished.

The inner city of Paramaribo, the part which is now inscribed on the World Heritage List, was laid out behind Fort Zeelandia surrounding a military parade ground, currently named Onafhankelijkheidsplein (Independence Square). Next to being a parade ground, this square provided for an open field of fire in front of Fort Zeelandia, a common strategic feature in colonial city planning. The city was laid out westwards on shell ridges, which are remnants of ancient times when the ocean reached this far inland. These ridges consisted of stable soil with natural drainage and made good construction sites. From the mid-eighteenth century the city was extended southwards on the sandy banks of the river. By constructing canals with sluices and canalizing existing creeks, the wider area around Paramaribo was drained to keep the city dry and make more land available for construction. In between these canals the land was subdivided into regular and standardized plots according to egalitarian principles. All this resulted in a rational town plan, which followed the natural lines of ridges and creeks and the curves of the river.



**Plan of the City of Paramaribo (c. 1700) Dutch General State Archives, The Hague**

The registered World Heritage property covers an area of 60 ha and is bordered to the north and south by old creeks, the Sommelsdijkse Kreek and Viottekreek respectively, which have been converted into canals. The streets and open spaces are tree-lined, providing shade and a serene townscape. The overall urban fabric of Paramaribo, dating from between 1680 and 1800, still survives virtually intact. Within this cultural property over 150 historic buildings are protected by law, out of a total of 267 listed monuments (57%), and they exhibit high authenticity because of the use of traditional materials and techniques in repair and rehabilitation works.

### Georgetown

The origins of Georgetown, which are rather confusing because of the many shifts in colonial power that took place during the latter half of the eighteenth century, are subject to academic debate. Whereas some studies indicate that a settlement was established with the proclamation of the British Governor lieutenant-colonel Robert Kingston in 1781, or the subsequent construction activities ordered by the French admiral Comte de Kersaint a year later, others suggest that earlier spatial-functional planning initiatives, first undertaken by the Dutch around 1748, mark the start of the urban process and therefore could be considered as the origin of the city.<sup>13</sup>

Whatever the opinion, from 1781 onwards a series of planning and construction activities took place, rather haphazardly, which would eventually lead to the establishment of what alternately was labelled during the nineteenth century as the Garden City of the Caribbean Region, the Elysium of the Tropics, the Transatlantic Eden, the Venice of the West Indian Archipelago – today's Georgetown.<sup>14</sup>

Georgetown is a typical planned city: no indigenous settlement existed at the mouth of the Demerara River before the decision was made to found a settlement, a strip of land for public functions was reserved and a town plan prepared. The flat, clayish and fertile lowlands at the mouth of the river were divided into numerous rectangular plantations, separated by dams and drainage canals



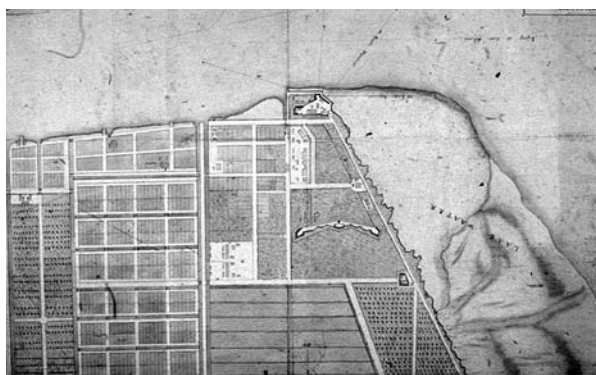
**The outskirts of Georgetown, where former plantations are being converted into urban neighbourhoods**

13. See, for example, J. Rodway, *The Story of Georgetown*, Guyana Heritage Society, Georgetown, 1997 reprint, p. 14; V. T. Daly, *A Short History of the Guyanese People*, Macmillan, London, 1975, p. 92; L. J. Hernandez, *Historical Georgetown – Guyana*, Universal Bookstore, Georgetown, 1997, p. 5; L. Vidal and E. d'Orgeix, *Les villes françaises du Nouveau Monde*, Somogy éditions d'art, Paris, 1999, pp. 131–32; R. van Oers, *Dutch Town Planning Overseas during VOC and WIC Rule (1600–1800)*, Walburg Pers, Zutphen (Netherlands), 2000, p. 68.

14. The majority of these names are mentioned by A. Trollope in the Rodway edition of 1920; in C. M. W. Loomans, *Georgetown*, unpublished Master's thesis, Leiden University, the Netherlands, 1999, p. 8.

running from east to west. The dams were converted into roads and streets when the town grew. The 'damstreets' were supplemented by parallel streets in between and cross streets running parallel to the riverbanks, resulting in a gridiron pattern.<sup>15</sup>

The conversion of the low-lying, fertile clay banks surrounding the Demerara River into plantations required large civil engineering structures, consisting of canals running perpendicular to the river and high dams (back and front) parallel to the river. The canals were used to drain the water surplus of the hinterland into the river through sluices, which were opened during low tide. The frontdam or dyke supported a road connecting the different plantations. This system of canals, sluices and connecting damroad defined the urban layout of Georgetown and they are still essential visual characteristics of the city. Georgetown's most important streets, High Street in Kingston, Main Street in Cummingsburg and Avenue of the Republic, originate from the ancient connecting damroad.



*Plan of Georgetown (1798) Dutch General State Archives, The Hague*

Over time the plantations, one by one, were subdivided into residential plots and converted into urban neighbourhoods. This process resulted in a gridiron pattern with the canals as dominant subdividing elements. The need for drainage canals directly affected the width of the streets and gave rise to a spacious layout. Wide streets also played an important part in preventing fires from spreading in the town. A relatively dense planting scheme for the residential areas in the centre, which started in the late nineteenth century, gave it the name of Garden City. 'The big parks, open lawns and the tree-lined avenues are very noticeable elements in the design of the city.'<sup>16</sup>

To sum up, after both cities were founded their urban development took different paths relating to two different European planning traditions: one following a pragmatic approach, sensitive to local conditions, i.e. the Dutch for Paramaribo, while the British used a more rigid, imported urban model – the grid pattern – for Georgetown.

15. *Georgetown Planning Area – Development Plan Year 2000*, Vol. 3: Special Studies, Guyana Town and Country Planning Department, Central Housing and Planning Authority, 1982, pp. 232–33.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 236.

### Architectural heritage

In Paramaribo the most important listed monuments are Fort Zeelandia and its surroundings (dating from 1667), the Presidential Palace (1730), the Ministry of Finance (1841), the Roman Catholic Cathedral (1885), 'Cornerhouse' (1825), De Waag (the Weigh House, 1822) and the Reformed Church (1837). Larger buildings, such as the Ministry of Finance and the Court of Justice, were designed by Dutch architects employed by the colonial government. They were built according to the existing architectural style in the Netherlands combined with local construction traditions. The wooden vernacular houses were designed and built by local craftsmen, including free blacks, and entirely reflect the Surinamese style.



*Fort Zeelandia Complex in Paramaribo (1667)*

Uniformity, derived from the dominant use of timber and a strict adherence to the prevalent style, is typical of Paramaribo architecture. The majority of wooden houses, both large and small, are similar and built after the same basic design: a rectangular layout, plain symmetrical walls, a high-pitched roof, red brick substructures as basement, with white façades and green doors and shutters. By painting the wooden walls white and the brick elements red, form rather than material was emphasized, a Dutch tradition. Extensive use of symmetry in the layout of buildings, in groundplan and façades, gives further clarity and simplicity.



*Historic streetscape in the inner city of Paramaribo*

## Wooden Caribbean cities as World Heritage: outline for a comparative analysis between Paramaribo (Suriname) and Georgetown (Guyana)

Georgetown, on the other hand, as a primarily British colonial ensemble, is characterized by the remarkable combination of architectural styles, which are mostly nineteenth-century European in origin, such as Gothic, semi-Tudor, Romanesque or Italian Renaissance. Exceptionally, all have been executed in wood, always easily available and as a light material well-suited to the load-bearing capacity of the clay soils. Even within the vast British colonial empire this unique aspect is virtually unmatched: 'Georgetown ... home to some of the most exuberant Victorian architecture in tropical and subtropical climes'.<sup>17</sup> The wood used during British colonial times was a mixture of hardy local greenheart and pine imported from North America, which came as ballast in the ships that transported the famous Demerara sugar. The buildings, which also reflect major influences from the West Indies in response to the particular climatic conditions in Guyana, refine Georgetown's distinctive character: the architectural heritage is a blend of styles and a true example of 'mutual heritage'.



*Demerara windows of the Red House, Georgetown (Guyana)*

In general, the resulting image is one of wooden buildings on brick stilts, with steep roofs, wide eaves, verandahs, roof overhangs and open staircases in front of the houses. Old houses still have carved decorations, small-chequered windows, sometimes Demerara shutters in the topmost floor with the bedrooms, and a tower – a vantage point to look out for incoming ships from the ocean. Also typical is the light colour setting of the buildings: white with green windows and red or green roofs. Some of the finest examples of the historic architectural heritage of Guyana that reflect the above styles and qualities are listed by the National Trust as protected monuments, such as the Red

House (late nineteenth century), the Prime Minister's Residence (mid-nineteenth century), the Walter Roth Museum of Anthropology (before 1890), the Sacred Heart Church (1861), and St George's Cathedral (1892) and the City Hall along the Avenue of the Republic.

### Conclusions

Both Paramaribo and Georgetown were established in marshy country, along large rivers for easy transportation of plantation products, with rich clay soils that were ideal for agricultural exploitation. With regard to their location, both cities depended heavily on civil engineering structures such as canals, dykes and sluices to drain their territories of excessive water and make the land exploitable – for urban development as well as agricultural practices. The foundation of both cities was properly planned and executed by the Dutch, with their extensive knowledge of water management stemming from similar practices in Holland dating from as early as the fourteenth century.

Regarding the urban layout, however, there is a major difference. Georgetown has a gridiron pattern originating from perpendicular civil engineering structures that defined the rectangular plantations existing before the urban development of the area into canals, dykes and damstreets. Paramaribo has an urban core determined by pre-existing natural features in the terrain: the shell ridges and creeks running in an east-west direction dominate the city plan, while the course of the river was also incorporated in the design. Paramaribo's pattern was subtly adapted to its natural environment, while Georgetown's was imposed on the natural environment by way of the pre-existing cultural landscape.

While both cities can be regarded as fine examples of mutual heritage, blending planning and building traditions of Dutch, British, African and West Indian origins, nevertheless a distinctly different residential architecture emerged. Features special to Georgetown are the wooden houses on brick stilts (as opposed to wooden houses on solid brick foundations in Paramaribo), the situation of individual buildings centrally on the plot (as opposed to buildings fronting the street and forming continued streetscapes in Paramaribo), different ground plans (rather circular organization unlike the symmetry found in Paramaribo) and some specific architectural elements, such as the Demerara window, laced ornaments in the façade and the 'staircase tower'.

Whether or not Georgetown is of outstanding universal value, the principal criterion for World Heritage listing, has to be established by the World Heritage Committee on the advice of ICOMOS, UNESCO's Advisory Body for culture, once a nomination dossier has been completed and submitted to the World Heritage Centre in Paris. However, this draft comparative analysis between Georgetown and Paramaribo, both wooden Caribbean cities, shows an

17. T. Varadarajan, 'Guyana's capital, tropical Victorian', in *The New York Times*, 6 February 2000, TR/8,9.



*A wooden house on brick stilts, richly decorated and well-maintained, Georgetown (Guyana)*

important aspect of the region's built heritage: that parallel economic development under the same colonial powers, resulting in a similar material culture including urban and architectural heritage, does not automatically mean that this cultural heritage is identical. Thorough research, documentation and analysis reveals the uniqueness, the specific characteristics and distinct differences that exist between these two similar properties.

This could also be true of wooden cities on other Caribbean islands, which taken together would represent the rich history, development and diversity of this region of the world more adequately – in fact, it would fill the existing lacunae in this regard. Like an ancient mosaic, which is made up of similar but differently coloured ceramic tesserae, a clear, complete and often marvellous picture can be obtained only once all the pieces have been examined and put together in a formal arrangement. After all, one single tessera cannot represent a mosaic. Consequently, a Caribbean-wide research and documentation programme involving wooden cities has to be initiated, while the picture of Caribbean wooden cities that is now represented by Paramaribo alone would be complemented by a World Heritage nomination of Georgetown.





# Thematic application: Caribbean wooden urban heritage

*by Patricia E. Green*  
(Architect)

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**'Caribbean Wooden Treasures' was the title chosen for this Thematic Expert Meeting on Wooden Urban Heritage in the Caribbean Region. Collectively, these ensembles represent a regional cultural landscape that comprises individual local distinctions and identities. This presentation therefore first classifies this heritage environment, secondly places it into categories, and thirdly defines some thematic associations for analysis and interpretation as a basis for discussion.**

### Classification and the heritage environment

Regionally, wooden urban heritage can be classified according to the socio-cultural time frame linked to the dominant groups of Caribbean people and dated accordingly. The stylistic modes associated with dominance would relate to the influence of a group in any specific period. For example, the wooden heritage associated with the Amerindian people, as well as the heritage of the emancipated African people that dominated in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Additionally, there are specific local influences, and these are affected by natural phenomena such as earthquakes, hurricanes, floods and volcanoes. These have created local variations in the urban patterns and stylistic variations. Other factors that cause localization are fires, wars and so on.

### Categorization and the heritage environment

Five main categories define the Caribbean Wooden Treasures as an ensemble: Aboriginal/Amerindian; Colonial; Creole; Vernacular; Modern. Note that this heritage environment may be distinctly one category or contain a mixture of the categories. A decision would need to be made to define such an ensemble, and it is recommended to apply the category that dominates to arrive at a definition.

**Aboriginal/Amerindian** describes the cultural landscape of the Amerindian people prior to 1492. It is very important to note that in some rural settings this environment is still evident today, such as on the island of Dominica and in Belize.



*Amerindian Landscape, Belize*

**Colonial** describes the landscape that lasted from about the first quarter of the sixteenth century to about the last quarter of the eighteenth century (1530s to 1780s), representing the 'formal' architecture and town planning from Europe versus the 'folk', for a strata of society who established European taste and fashion in the Caribbean colonies. Interestingly, those responsible for establishing this type of landscape were of European, African or mixed descent.

Both Creole and Vernacular are the most significant categories of the cultural landscape of the wooden urban heritage in the Caribbean. **Creole** represents the distinct local spirit of the Caribbean that contains a mixture of European, African and Amerindian peoples. This landscape dominated from around the 1780s, the period of Peace Treaties and cessation of territorial wars between the European powers in the Caribbean region. It lasted until after the period of the emancipation of slavery until about the 1840s.



*Creole Landscape, Spanish Town, Jamaica*

**Vernacular** originated from about the 1840s, after emancipation, up to the end of the First World War and into the 1920s. The vernacular is the most picturesque and ornate category of the ensembles, distinctively neither Amerindian, Colonial nor Creole, and was born as a 'new' Caribbean expression.



*Vernacular Landscape, Roseau, Dominica*

**Modern** may also be termed 'International Caribbean'. The period for this category was from about the end of the First World War and the 1920s, to date. It includes the post-Modern style that I have termed 'Heritage

Modernism' with the reconstruction and invention of the heritage in the landscape, primarily the Amerindian, Creole and Vernacular styles outside of their historicity and authentic setting.

## Thematic associations and the heritage environment

The analysis and interpretation of the wooden urban heritage in the Caribbean landscape can be grouped into eight thematic associations. These groupings also formed the subject headings for the various sessions where the papers were presented:<sup>18</sup> Inventory; Construction and Material; Stylistic Interpretation; Authenticity; Cultural and Climatic Connections; Conservation and Maintenance; Wooden Architectural Ensemble; Development Controls. They are reproduced here as a structure for discussion, analysis and interpretation, perhaps useful for professionals and experts in this field.

### **1. Inventory:** *identifying and mapping the various types and categories of wooden heritage*

The methodology of recording and categorizing wooden urban heritage is vital to its conservation. As part of the inventory process, this theme identifies any legislative protection and aspects of listing of this heritage, whether individually or as an ensemble, to improve knowledge of its localized characteristics. Discussions on the inventory can also highlight strategies to show the significance of the specific value of the heritage as culture and for tourism development.

### **2. Construction and Material:** *building and decorating wooden architectural heritage*

Historic construction techniques and the type of material help to define an appropriate intervention based on knowledge of the way the artisans have erected the architecture. Discussion could focus on the original parts of the heritage, as well as where possible renovations or substitutions.

### **3. Stylistic Interpretation:** *understanding and associating social context and functional needs*

This theme deals with stylistic categories such as Creole and Vernacular and any variant of these as they relate to wooden urban heritage. What terms are associated with the styles, and how do they fall within any social context? Recognizing that typology and use of wooden architecture are related, the original intent and function of the heritage should be examined as they also impact on the establishment and development of style.

### **4. Authenticity:** *maintaining or replicating historicity and the tourism product*

This theme explores issues of authenticity, particularly as they pertain to the promotion of wooden urban heritage as a tourism product. The authenticity of the individual heritage becomes essential and even critical to maintain the integrity of wooden heritage as an ensemble. Discussions are encouraged on original material, situations of replication of the wooden elements and whether these actions endanger or jeopardize authenticity of the heritage.

### **5. Cultural and Climatic Connections:** *identifying and interpreting regional significance*

Layers of cultural connections influenced by the variety of Caribbean microclimates have influenced technology, typology and settlement patterns. This theme focuses on the very rich cultural diversity of wooden urban heritage within the Caribbean region that has been shaped by different microclimates. Historic influences have also shaped the landscape with colonial urban patterns supplemented by post-emancipation layers, giving a distinct character to coastal and interior landscapes.

### **6. Conservation and Maintenance:** *preserving and restoring historic wooden architecture*

Wood conservation is one of the important aspects in the process of halting and reversing everyday deterioration. Discussions centre around current local traditions, regional practices, and how international issues can be introduced and worked out for the Caribbean. Methodologies to improve interventions for conservation using traditional techniques versus state-of-the-art technology offer challenges that need careful consideration for the continuation of the heritage in the landscape.

### **7. Wooden Architectural Ensemble:** *the setting of towns*

Recognizing the (visual) impact of wooden architecture as an ensemble, smaller and larger architectural pieces mixed together in scale and appearance can be examined under this theme. An urban site may be adjacent to the sea, a river, or located in the interior. The impact of the setting on the ensemble, including any economic influences stemming from its setting, can be explored.

### **8. Development Controls:** *developing controls and sustainability in the preservation of wooden urban heritage*

This theme focuses on the promotion of strategies for management and monitoring of wooden urban heritage, including consideration of related issues of sustainability of preservation of this heritage in the context of local communities. Ways of local and perhaps regional strategies for control on new development in urban areas are critical.

18. Note that the published proceedings do not follow this grouping into sessions.



# Papers on Case Studies

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# The use of timber in Barbados: the case of the chattel house

*by Steve A. Devonish*  
*(Member of the Barbados World Heritage Committee)*



**Timber, sometimes referred to as 'wood' or 'board', has enjoyed widespread use in Barbados for generations. It has been used in boat building, as utility poles, in construction, furniture manufacturing and in all types of house adornment, often in combination with naturally occurring coral stone. While most of it has had to be imported, locally felled mahogany continues to supply the furniture industry, albeit on a much smaller scale than around half a century ago. However, the provision of shelter, through the journey of timber from chattel house to wooden bungalow, in my opinion is best exploited in Barbados. The development has occurred over some 150 years since emancipation. This journey has been facilitated with considerable skill and competence, together with a fundamental understanding of the material.**

### The chattel house

The term 'chattel house' is an old-fashioned term said to mean 'movable'. After emancipation, freed persons were tied to the plantation and built movable houses in case of a change of job. Change of job meant moving house, on a mule cart in bygone days and on a truck in more recent times.

Houses were built to be easily dismantled, stacked section by section and moved from one site to another. In today's language this would be known as prefabrication and mobility. Timber allowed for this type of modular construction, settlement, relocation and expansion. This form of housing, more often associated with poor people, reflected the slowly changing status of owner/occupier in society and their transition from transient to more permanent dwellings. The chattel house did not exist in isolation; rather it was part of a community or village, surrounded by similar structures all telling the same story of the socio-economic transformation gradually taking place.

I have had the opportunity, for most of my life, to live in a chattel house. I have learnt about its origins and social significance as it related to our family, and witnessed the ways in which the chattel house has developed as an architectural style. I will use this firsthand experience to tell my story of the use of timber in Barbados.

I was reliably informed by my grandmother that my grandfather purchased his chattel house 'second-hand' and had it relocated to his newly purchased half-acre plot of land. This house was a four-hip house that contained one bedroom. Although still a chattel house, it was to become a permanent fixture. He was able to achieve independence by removing his family from rented lodging to his own piece of the rock, gradually extending the building to accommodate the growing family. When it came to expansion, timber was the material of choice. Coral stone was ruled out because it was harder to obtain and more expensive. To this four-hip he added a gable unit, which allowed for another bedroom and an eating area. The bathroom

and cooking areas were detached. As the children grew, a 'shed-roof' was added to the structure, which became an additional eating area. Evidence of the expansion can be confirmed where external walls have become internal walls and the external windows remain in place.

My earliest memory of this house was a four-hip section, a gable section, a lean-to section and a kitchen. Social conditions at the time meant that we cooked in the house on a kerosene oil stove. It is still amazing that our timber home never caught fire, as this still is one of the hazards of life in the chattel house.

Ours was one of many styles of chattel dwelling to be found in Barbados rural communities. The variety of styles in the early 1960s can be seen in direct relation to people's meagre disposable income; how much of it they were willing or able to spend to provide shelter for a large family or in renovation. Some houses, lengthened to accommodate the extended family, could be termed 'chattel trains', so elongated they became. The styles and upkeep could be viewed in direct relation to the occupation of the homeowner, too; for instance, a painter always kept a well-painted house, others lacking the skills and the income would not be so fortunate. Painting, carpentry and joinery were three distinct trades, so too were 'storm carpenters', but the last would only be pressed into action in the most dire of circumstances. There were only a few, if any, in the village who could lay claim to being a reputable practitioner of more than one trade.

Chattel houses are high-maintenance structures requiring a profound understanding of timber construction, the preparation of joints such as the mortise and tenon used in the building or replacement of a window or door, the effects of moisture, shrinking and expansion from dry season to rainy, flaking of paint, particularly on windows and doors, and preventative measures such as regular painting to prevent the breakdown of the material.

The considerable skill required was always demonstrated when Sonny Browne was informed that my grandfather wanted to see him about repairs to the house. Most often, not a single piece of wood was left over once repairs were completed – not even a meagre 2" x 6", long enough to make a cricket bat. The most experienced quantity surveyor today would be hard pressed to make such detailed calculations on a refurbishment job.

Maintenance required the owner to replace any rotted timber before painting took place. The meticulous preparation also included puttying, sanding and priming. When it came to the actual painting, knowledge of oil-based paints was essential, while the mixing of colours and the use of thinners was an art form in itself. Two or three base/primary colours would always produce many shades. Today the computer at the paint store will match the colour for you. All this ensured that the life of the timber was extended as it contended with heavy rains and temperature in excess of 25 °C. Even where timber had to be

removed, part of it was used for the repairs to the detached toilet, pig pens, and so on – an early form of recycling.

## Design

Generally, chattel houses are known for their cool environment. However, this is not the case when the shed-roof is too low or when a bedroom on the leeward side cannot be avoided. From living in a chattel house I too developed a super-awareness of the elements: rain, sun, wind and hurricane. Fortunately, I have not yet experienced the latter, but my grandmother told me that during Hurricane Janet of 1955 the house 'stood up' because it was a four-hip. The chattel house is a living thing, sighing during very hot days, with the heating and cooling leading to joint expansion during the day; and moaning during high winds when one could clearly hear the house making compensatory structural adjustments.

An often overlooked aspect of chattel house design and construction has been that of the gifted craftsmen and artisans: the painters, carpenters and joiners. There may have been some skills overlap but, in the main, carpenters built the houses, painters painted them and joiners created the furniture, floors, verandahs and jalousie windows, mainly for the economically disadvantaged sectors of society. Today, this process of chattel house construction would be defined as design and build, and the tradespeople would be specialist or nominated subcontractors.

The key to the design of the chattel house is near-perfect symmetry (Fig. 1). A typical feature is that it is almost always constructed with a central door on the long side, facing the street, with a window on either side. The roof is gabled (two slopes) or hipped (four slopes). Bathroom and cooking amenities were not incorporated in the main structure during the early days of the chattel house (Fig. 2).



*Fig. 1: Typical chattel house in near-perfect symmetry*

The floor was usually constructed of 1" x 5" tongue and groove on 2" x 4". The walls were of 1" x 5" siding fixed to 2" x 4" intermediate uprights. These uprights were fixed to the upper and lower plates by mortise and tenon joints. Doors and windows were jalousied with flaps (fixed louvres). Not counting ironmongery, a chattel house with

a roof made from wooden shingles would be entirely timber (Fig. 2).



*Fig. 2: Main structure of a chattel house of the early days*

As owners and occupiers of a chattel house improved their lot, their change in social status was reflected in the physical appearance of the house. Additionally, land settlement became a more permanent feature of chattel house ownership. This improvement in the appearance of the housing unit led to a reduction in the demand for timber and an increase in its use as a decorative material. Window hoods were added, either jalousies or solid, bell-shaped hoods known as bell pelmets. Pediment porches appeared as fortunes increased; they were not only ornamental but functional, providing shelter from a 'passing shower' of rain as they were for the most part on the street side of the house. The porches were also a transitional space from the outside to the inside.

Over the years, the traditional timber chattel house has given way to the 'wood and wall' house. While most people who are familiar with the chattel house may have their idea of what constitutes a typical house, it is important to note that the style and designs of the house are as transient as the lifestyle of the occupiers. This can be demonstrated through the development of the window.

## The wooden bungalow

Concrete additions housing shower, bathroom and sometimes kitchen facilities have increasingly become the norm.



*A chattel house in design transition, where there are varying window types: jalousie, sash and double-hung glass. The entrance door is also on the move.*

In addition, the hip and gable have been abandoned for what has been called the 'flat-top' or two lean-to roofs, each at an angle of approximately ten degrees, perfect for lift-off during high winds. Wooden windows have been replaced by metal glazed versions, which allow more light but, in the case of a sash window, will only ever open halfway.

Despite the partial 'concretization' of the modern chattel house, the lingering image (usually seen on picture post-cards) is one of a charming, vividly painted structure with curtains flying through windows surrounded by shutters, hoods and detailed trellis and fretwork. The chattel house has survived what I would call the 'concrete period' and has settled down for the time being as a wooden bungalow. The kitchen, toilet and bath have been totally integrated, and increased use of glass in the windows lets much more daylight into the house (Fig. 3).



**Fig. 3: Contemporary wooden bungalow, with integrated kitchen, toilet and bath**

### Conservation of heritage

Along the way, through the chattel house, timber gave rise to an art form and to the patterns of style and decoration, developed and honed by generations of craftsmen and their apprentices. The more recent wooden bungalow, although an adequate provision of shelter and social expression, has lost some of the finest design traditionally associated with the chattel house; with its flatter roofs and the abandonment of the basic idea of natural ventilation. Either with electrically powered tools or because of electrically powered tools, the attention to detail seems to have been lost. There are no incentives to facilitate and encourage the skills developed over generations.

Collective efforts have been made to conserve and promote this unique use of timber in Barbados, with the Barbados National Trust in the forefront. Architects today have been referencing the unique qualities of the chattel house, and commercial/business enterprises have also been supporting this effort through adaptive reuse. These efforts have also been supported through the endeavours of many proud home owners, as seen in Fig. 4, as well as bungalows of greenheart which can better withstand the elements and are more cost effective.



**Fig. 4: Contemporary use of the chattel, a home-owner's pride and joy**

A more recent opportunity for the chattel house and wooden bungalow has been the increasing number of visitors who have ventured beyond the colourful exteriors and are enquiring about the experience of living in a chattel house. While the timber house has always been accepted as part of our heritage, the focus has tended to be on its appearance rather than the experience of living in these houses within the communities defined by them.

Now that Barbados has ratified the *World Heritage Convention* (April 2002), I anticipate that a more focused perspective will come into effect and the use of timber in Barbados will be set in the Caribbean context, and with this the journey of timber from chattel to bungalow.

# Wood: cultural bridge of the Caribbean

*by Nilson Acosta Reyes*

*(Vice-president, National Council of Cultural Heritage;  
Secretary, National Commission of Monuments, Cuba)*

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The Caribbean, thanks to its geographical position, climate and topography, is a region of great floristic diversity, where thick forests grow with a great variety of species, many of them excellent for use either as farm instruments, means of transport or shelter for the people that have inhabited the islands for several centuries. Wood has also been a vehicle of expression of their crafts, rites and customs.

The first Cuban inhabitants are thought to have come to the island around 10,000 years ago, and even though there are different hypotheses about how they arrived, the scientific community agrees that the main group of aborigines moved through the arc of Caribbean islands and wood was particularly important as means of transportation. Wood was greatly appreciated by the European colonizers, not only for the construction of ships but also because it provided for the foundation of the first villages, the genesis of the contemporary Caribbean city. In Cuba, the first seven villages founded by the Spaniards during the first half of the sixteenth century were almost entirely built from wood, taking advantage of the wealth of our tropical forests and the flexibility of the material, as well as the use of indigenous labour with experience in using it.

The wooden architecture defined in great measure the character of our first cities. Even when they all assumed new construction techniques under commercial development and the growing number of inhabitants, the wooden architecture never disappeared; it evolved and incorporated a formal and technical multiplicity of elements that have allowed it to survive until today. On the other hand, the most popular rural housing in Cuba is still the *bohío*, a wooden rustic tent-like construction of indigenous peoples, who use the bark and leaves of the royal palm in the walls and roofs.

### History of development

Over the last five centuries the wooden constructions have coexisted with an entire universe of different architectural models and styles. Although housing has been the predominant use, wooden churches, theatres, markets and even fortifications were also erected. However, these wooden constructions were dispersed, and only in the nineteenth-century new-town neighbourhoods was it possible to find compact wooden ensembles. At the beginning of the twentieth century, wood was introduced in the industrialized construction process for new settlements, largely by North American capital.

In fact in the first decades of the twentieth century this industrial process allowed the development of a group of settlements, called *batey*, associated with the emergence of new sugar factories that required large-scale cultivation of land and at the same time concentrated great numbers

of workers. Wood lent itself to highly industrialized processes such as the 'balloon frame'. Easy to assemble and competitively priced, this system spread over the whole country, not only in the sugar estates, but also in the new urban schemes of the main cities. The facility of space and great variety of ornamental elements that this system offered achieved both individual characterization of each construction and of each group of buildings.

Fine examples of urban ensembles representative of wooden vernacular architecture are Cayo Granma in Santiago de Cuba Bay and Jagua in Cienfuegos Bay, both of which developed close to important cities and are inhabited by fishing families. The constructions are grouped in urban units characterized by great simplicity in design and spatial arrangement, and in most cases the houses have been lifted on piles, are covered with tiled roofs or metal sheets, and some of them have jetties or other facilities for small craft.

Another type of wooden urban ensemble that grew up in the first decades of the twentieth century are the resort areas of Punta Gorda in Cienfuegos and Varadero in Matanzas. They are characterized by an elaboration and refinement in the design of the housing, and most of them are owned by the wealthiest classes. In both cases the settlements are located on peninsulas, with an urban plan spreading out from a street that serves as an axis along which elegant mansions are built using the balloon frame system but incorporating a great variety of formal elements. Links of this type of architecture with that in other Caribbean islands are not only formal, but also in the design of the roof and the corridors on three sides of a building or around the whole perimeter.



**Wooden ensembles along Cuba's coastlines, Cienfuegos**

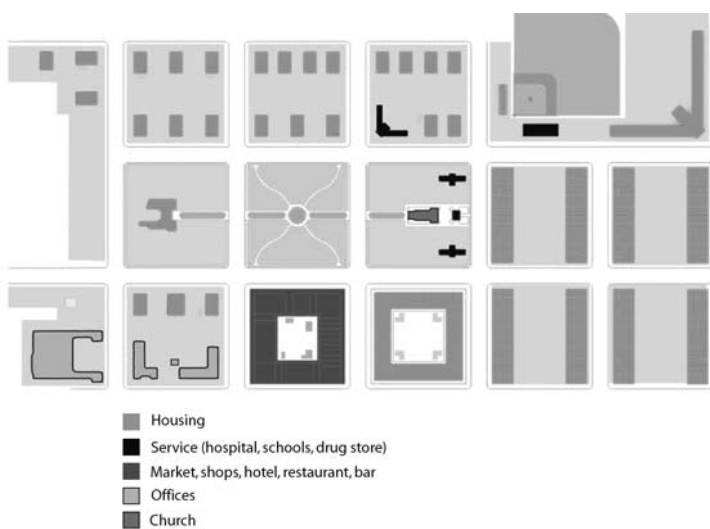
The intensive tourist development at the Hicacos Peninsula, such as Varadero, started in the 1980s when the hotel capacity rose from 3,000 to 14,000 rooms. Planners are considering a maximum capacity of 30,000 rooms. This significant transformation of the original settlement with

new visitor facilities on a huge scale and often inadequate design has resulted in a definite loss of the image and character of the wooden urban ensemble.

Compared to the situation in Varadero, Punta Gorda has remained in a relatively good state of conservation. The original 1950s houses of the settlement have suffered little from new interventions, except those that had to be restored after the damage caused by hurricanes that have hit the city of Cienfuegos in recent years.

Perhaps the largest collection of wooden urban architecture in Cuba is in those settlements that arose as a consequence of the evolution of the colonial sugar industry during the Republican period, with the presence of North American capital on the island. This new industry of increased production capacity resulting from technological innovations required large quantities of workers and extensive cultivation areas, in the centre of which a factory was usually located with an industrial town next to it.

These settlements were carefully planned, not only from a functional point of view, but also formally. In general they were organized around a city centre, crossed by an axis that began in the church and finished in the estate owner's house, often with a park between, and all the services located in the lateral streets: hotel, pharmacy, stores, schools, hospital, restaurant, etc. The residential areas were clearly differentiated: the owner's mansion, the technicians' houses, workers' housing and the dwellings of immigrants and temporary personnel. This stratification was apparent in the design, spatial organization and quality of the construction materials. However, as an ensemble these towns maintained a distinctive urban coherence in harmony with the surrounding landscape.



**Formal planning scheme of the Sugar Mill Cunagua Batey, a National Monument**

Cunagua, Violeta, Chaparra and Manatí are examples of wooden urban ensembles that have survived to this day with a high level of integrity and with few alterations in their urban plot. The biggest challenge is the maintenance

of their constructions, which is extremely expensive because of the huge volumes of wood required.

The development of the sugar industry created an economic boom, coinciding with a rise of the sugar price on the international market during the First World War, and facilitated city growth. While the wealthiest classes adopted eclecticism as the official style for mansions and public buildings, the popular classes found in wooden architecture an affordable option fitting their needs and resources. The urbanization that occurred at this time with modest wooden houses has unfortunately been seriously transformed over time. Only some neighbourhoods, such as that of the railwaymen in the city of Camagüey, have maintained their urban design in essence.

### Current status

Some of the most significant wooden urban ensembles in Cuba have legal protection: the National Commission of Monuments declared both Punta Gorda and Cunagua to be national monuments some years ago and San Pedro de la Roca Castle, Santiago de Cuba, was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1997. In these sites some restoration works have been carried out, although insufficient to guarantee their conservation.

The elaboration of a national inventory in urban areas has helped to better evaluate Cuban cultural heritage. Starting with the identification of the most significant areas, a technical file on each relevant construction was drawn up in consultation with high-level professionals, architects, engineers and other workers at the Offices of Monuments, in various fields including the preventive conservation of wood and risk preparedness to face natural catastrophes such as hurricanes, fires or floods.

The results achieved so far, however, are far from satisfactory. The high cost of wood, the difficult economic situation in the country, the lack of awareness of the cultural values of this architecture in the community, deterioration because of lack of maintenance and a particularly aggressive climate, as well as the fragility of these systems to face natural hazards, make it not feasible to save the whole spectrum of present-day examples of this heritage. Sustainable ways of conservation are urgently needed, at least for the most outstanding sites – a task common to other Caribbean islands, because wooden architecture is considered to be one of the most representative elements of the Caribbean cultural heritage.

Finally, if over thousands of years wood has made it possible for human communities to come to our islands, and if it has supported the expression of an important part of our cultural legacy, including wooden urban heritage, I believe that today we face the challenge to preserve that bridge with the past.



# Promoting the rescue of a misunderstood heritage

*by Iris de Mondesert*

*(Director of Interinstitutional Agreements, National Department of Monuments Heritage, Dominican Republic)*

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**Historic city centres in the Dominican Republic, dating from the nineteenth century to the first third of the twentieth century (the 'Republican' period), are in danger of disappearing. An unfortunate combination of factors is working to substitute neighbourhoods of modern construction for these vernacular or wooden urban ensembles. The worst enemy of these historic centres is however the lack of recognition of their value, owing to the unawareness of the people who have inherited them.**

**These Republican historic centres can be found scattered over the country, located in the heart of our provincial cities. Some are evidence of golden economic and cultural times, which made those cities almost as important as Santo Domingo, the capital. Most still represent the best area in their cities and are preferred places of residence for traditional wealthy families.**

**Unfortunately these historic ensembles, which gave birth to today's major cities, are no longer the most important centres of activity. Displaced by accelerated urban development, their market value is decreasing and they are losing their physical integrity and architectural unity. This is particularly true of wooden constructions.**

**Today, for all levels of society, the Republican historic centres are no longer important. This fact defines one of the main challenges for the National Bureau of Monumental Heritage: to give them back their importance and convince the people, the government and private investors that these centres are a good choice to accommodate the lives and needs of citizens.**

### **Traditional attitude towards rescue of historic centres**

The valorization of Dominican built heritage is not without prejudice, the worst being the devaluation of all our inheritance that does not belong to the colonial period. As a result, we value our cultural inheritance built in stone much more than that built in wood.

Historically, most of the efforts and resources dedicated to the rescue and conservation of our tangible heritage have been focused on the historic centre of Santo Domingo and, in some isolated cases, on colonial buildings in stone or masonry scattered over the provinces. This resulted in the inscription of the Colonial City of Santo Domingo as a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1990.

Unfortunately, the historic centres from the Republican period have not received the same attention. Protected in some cases by conscientious citizens, who have taken initiatives that should have been made by the national government, they have not received the benefits of the protection plans that were part of state policy.

Until recently, government interventions in provincial historic centres have consisted of the occasional restoration of isolated old buildings and the elaboration of 'Contingency Plans', which were preliminary versions of what would later become Regulatory Plans for the old towns. There is an exception, the historic centre of Puerto Plata, whose rescue in the 1970s was undertaken parallel to the tourist development of the area and in support of it.

Recently, direct government intervention has led to the alteration of old or vernacular houses with the aim of 'improving' them. It was believed that improving these structures consisted of substituting zinc panels for the original palm-leaf roofs and, in many cases, concrete blocks for the wooden walls. The most tragic incursion of the government led to the destruction of a complete historic centre in the 1970s, that of the city of Samaná, with all the social, cultural and emotional trauma of a population that lost its identity without being able to recover the investment and not having benefited from the expected tourist development.

The Ministry of Culture and the National Bureau of Monumental Heritage have however begun work on the rescue and conservation of Republican historic centres, where the largely wooden constructions now coexist with stone, masonry and concrete. To achieve this goal, the good intentions of the authorities will not be enough – efforts must be made to attract the support of public and private institutions that have not always been aware of the importance of this crusade.

### **Factors hindering rescue of wooden historic centres**

Our historic built heritage is intimately attached to feelings of nostalgia. Some people therefore appreciate their old houses as family memories and as part of the past rather than a way to the future. This distorted notion of the importance of our heritage is accentuated by other elements that impact on its already poor valuation.

- The Dominican people suffer from a terrible sense of indignity, a lack of appreciation of our inheritance in comparison with other neighbouring cultures that, perhaps for historical reasons relating to power, have been seen as paradigms or models to imitate. This pathological idea has devalued our cultural inheritance, which affects the vision of the great potential of our historic centres.
- The pragmatism of official policy that has traditionally privileged resistant constructions in masonry and concrete, discourages initiatives for constructions in wood. In cases where the authorities have favoured building in wood, they have done so in order to improve the miserable pre-existing constructions, unavoidably associating the wooden houses with the poorest social groups.

- The lack of incentives for investors and owners of historic properties, for whom the severe restrictions placed on modifications to these buildings limit the possibility of extracting profits from them.

All these elements manifest themselves in the little value attached to historic properties in wood in the real estate market and with the insurance companies.

### **Market value of properties in historic centres**

#### **Value of the land: location and infrastructure**

A historic city centre usually has the best location, infrastructure and services. It is usually the area in highest demand, therefore it is among the highest priced in the city. Those places become the main objective of investors who, on the other hand, consider the historic properties as impediments to the construction of very profitable multi-storey buildings in such expensive and sought-after parcels of land.

#### **Value of the wood: real estate and insurance companies**

In a country lying in the path of hurricanes, wooden constructions appear insecure in comparison with those in concrete. This speculative fear has taken root very strongly in our culture, although it has been broadly demonstrated that wooden structures that are well designed and built are able to resist strong winds without breaking up. This fact, along with the simplicity and versatility of construction, ease of transportation, as well as the excellent adaptation to the climate, should constitute arguments strong enough to surmount our fears; but they are not acceptable to insurance and real estate companies as well as much of the population. Many insurance companies refuse to offer policies for constructions in wood, and when they do offer them they are limited to touristic projects and tend to be very expensive.

Financial institutions have supported very few projects in wood and, in cases where they did, the projects lacked acceptance among buyers because of the little confidence they had in the durability of the material, high maintenance costs and expensive insurance policies. Where a loan was requested, the plot of land was the only guarantee required, the house being considered of minimum value.

There is also a potential value that is still poorly understood: as a result of the support plans and incentives for the historic centres, the value of any of these properties of patrimonial interest will increase. This has already happened in regulated historic centres in other countries where a wide range of tourism and cultural activities have been developed.

### **Consequences: current state of conservation**

As a result of the lack of importance that has traditionally been given to wooden historic centres, the minimal maintenance that they have had, and because many property owners have few resources and little consciousness about their properties' values, the state of conservation of these centres is now critical. Inclement weather conditions and speculation have combined to destroy many of the old buildings, so losing the architectural unity in the urban ensembles and further diluting their identity.

A new orientation has therefore been given to the state Cultural Patrimony policy to rescue numerous Republican urban ensembles of great heritage value, most of them in a critical state of conservation, little valued by the population yet built in highly priced urban areas.

### **What can we do?**

Only a process that simultaneously involves public administration as well as private investors, that encourages owners to preserve their aged buildings, and that educates the general population to appreciate and promote interest in their heritage, will have a positive affect on rescue attempts. With this objective, intensive work is required in the following areas:

- encouraging investors to take an interest in the rescue of these urban ensembles through tax exemptions in all matters relating to their preservation;
- elaborating development plans that involve the historic centres, particularly plans to promote tourism;
- regulating the management of historic centres, focusing on improving their value as privileged places where the quality of the heritage will be seen as an added value;
- involving the largest possible number of government institutions in order to concentrate resources on rescue, such as the National Institute of Lodging, Ministries of Tourism and Environment, General Development Offices, Presidential Plan Against Poverty;
- obtaining the support of international organizations in order to spur public interest in the rescue of tangible heritage;
- promoting the old wooden structures by presenting their qualities through the media;
- educating new generations in the value of built heritage, so that they will become its main defenders.

### **Current rescue strategies set up by the government**

Current government policy on protecting and rescuing the Republican historic centres is focused on the following three strategies.

- (1) The formulation and implementation of development and regulation plans for each city where there is an important historic centre. With this instrument, which involves different government institutions as well as the resident population through their city councils,

sufficient resources to contribute to conservation should be attracted into the area. Some good examples of the success of such a measure are the historic centres in other countries that have been included in a cultural scenario for tourism development, such as New Orleans and Key West in the United States.

- (2) Recently a bill was before Congress on the possibility of tax concessions on construction materials and all activities dedicated to the rescue, restoration and conservation of properties of patrimonial interest, and tax exemptions on the property itself, its use and ownership.
- (3) The National Bureau of Monumental Heritage is now developing an educational plan, 'The Tangible and Intangible Cultural Patrimony in the National Educative System', aiming to teach the value of our cultural heritage to primary and secondary students.

### Facing vandalism

In the case of partial or total destruction of elements of universal value in historic centres, the official position should be clear: there should be no doubt that it is a crime against the collective heritage and accordingly the punishment should be severe. A damaged historic property must be restored before being negotiated.

Ownership of a historic property is a privilege, therefore it is a civic responsibility to maintain it. The authorities are making every effort to optimize the conditions that would allow substantial improvement in the historic centres of the country, in their environmental quality, in the dynamics of development, and consequently in the quality of life of the citizens that inhabit them.

The reaction expected from these same citizens is support for the government initiatives in the collective interest. When one of these historic properties is damaged through ignorance or profit-seeking, the potential to improve the whole environment is destroyed.

### Conclusion

The decision whether or not to preserve is in fact an educational problem and a matter of conscience and vision of the future. We have enormous wealth waiting to be restored. We can destroy everything and start again, achieving 'modern' cities that can become caricatures of other modern cities. Or we can also exploit our legacy, achieving more authentic cities, improving the quality of the urban landscape and enriching the tourist offer with different destinations of cultural and scenic interest.

Faced with the possible loss of revenue from tourism, there should be no question of damaging the quality of life and the atmosphere, as in other historic communities where unplanned development has destroyed heritage. Can we continue to ignore this danger?

# Dominica's architectural heritage in transition: authentic vs aesthetic

*by Elise Johnston-Agar  
(Architect)*



## Dominica's architectural background

What some might consider Dominica's shortcoming is to others a saving grace: terrain so beautifully rugged that colonization and 'development' as we know it, was slow in coming. While the French and British fought fiercely for control in the eighteenth century, it was for the 'Gateway to the New World', i.e. the island's strategic location as a control point for access to the Caribbean and not for its perceived economic potential. Large and efficient plantations were not possible and Dominica never saw elaborate or grandiose buildings that other more prosperous islands could boast. As a result, the architecture was functional, primarily suiting the climatic needs, followed by social and cultural needs.

Civic and industrial buildings, many of which remain today, consisted mostly of local stone, providing cool and stable shells in which to work. Some residential buildings in town, especially the European-influenced ones, were also constructed completely of stone and some used the bricks that came in as ships' ballast. More typical in Roseau however are the small wooden 'Ti Kaz' residences (Fig. 1) and the French Creole buildings (Fig. 2). The latter consists of an upper storey in wood, encircled by a verandah, on top of a solid masonry ground floor which housed a commercial outlet for the residents above. Wooden construction used local hardwoods which have natural resistance to moisture and termites, and elastic properties protecting



Fig. 1: A 'Ti Kai' with hipped roof and small verandah



Fig. 2: A French Creole residence/commerce

them from tremors and high winds. According to Berthelot and Gaumé in *Kaz Antiye* (Caribbean Popular Dwelling),<sup>19</sup> Dominica's roof shapes tend to be half-hipped gables, as shown in Fig. 1, which are well braced for hurricane winds.

Despite the lasting strength of the materials and construction techniques, many previously beautiful buildings have started to disintegrate over the generations. Rural settings, especially those that were uninhabited for a long period, suffered more than the urban areas where even slight maintenance helped preservation. Fires and hurricanes also destroyed a number of buildings.

## Loss of wooden architecture

The 1980s were in fact the beginning of the end for wooden heritage between the accelerated construction 'post-Hurricane David' and a new deep-water harbour, which allowed huge container ships to unload large machinery and new materials. Dominica's growth of concrete jungles paralleled that of the import industry. The construction speed and the structural capabilities of steel and concrete led to the explosion of huge anonymous blocks of commercial buildings as found all over the world.

Again, it was the rural areas that suffered most, especially the relatively flat plots of land close to the capital. To be fair, this development was well needed and appreciated by Dominicans. It was not until a group of citizens, concerned about the rate at which Roseau was starting to lose its identity, that in 1992 a non-governmental organization was formed to lobby for an official historic district. The Society for Historic Architectural Preservation and Enhancement (SHAPE) struggled to promote public awareness regarding Dominica's built heritage, against various forms of opposition within economic, social and political environments.

Dominica's economy was looking up, land prices were rising and businesses expanding. The general public, meanwhile, did not want to be reminded of their colonized past but did want to be 'modern' like the United States they visited and saw on television. And so, courtyards were filled in with commercial space, and natural ventilation and light were blocked as well as views to the sea and to the mountains. The first heritage buildings to be replaced with multi-storey, air-conditioned, glass and concrete buildings brought their property owner significant returns from the increasingly high rents. Foreign companies, especially the influx of offshore companies, could easily pay triple the regular rents without even being aware of it. Local companies wanted the 'modern' image and would struggle to pay reduced rents for a new space. Politically, nobody would consider stopping this trend since heritage preser-

19. Jack Berthelot and Martine Gaumé, *Kaz Antiye Jan Moun Ka Rete: Caribbean Popular Dwelling*, Point-A-Pitre, Éditions Perspectives Créoles, 1982.

vation was generally seen as a means of withholding 'development', not to mention the fact that politicians wanted in on this investment as well.

## Transition

As the following decade passed, Roseau continued to see a number of traditional buildings of stone and wood demolished in favour of taller concrete structures, yet many good examples remained. Most property owners simply did not have the finance to invest in a new building, and many older residents were happy to continue living as they had been. There were, however, a number of examples of property owners, family-run businesses in particular, who were actively taking pride in their traditional buildings with new coats of paint and woodwork. Perhaps they consciously kept energy costs down with natural air-flow instead of noisy air-conditioning as well. Certainly, a relatively recent downturn in the economy encouraged property owners to see value in their existing buildings. Considering that now the supply of space for rent outweighs demand, such that banks will not give loans for office construction, people acknowledge the fact that minor repairs and a facelift are much more affordable than a large new construction.

Emphasis on ecotourism has also helped Dominicans to realize that foreigners wish to see a country's heritage in all its forms, and that like Creole food, costume, dance and music, there is a market for the appreciation of Creole architecture.

So, with changes in both politics, economics and social interests, the concept of a designated and protected Historic District within Roseau was approved by the Cabinet of Ministers as part of the new Physical Planning Act of 2002. The Development and Planning Corporation has now put together an advisory committee consisting of architects, an engineer, a contractor, a town councillor, a historian and a lawyer to detail the construction restrictions and guidelines. These will have to go through public forums and various approval processes before legislation is passed.

## Architectural aesthetic in Roseau today

Interestingly, prior to any formal legal regulations, a few private businesses have demolished old buildings and constructed new ones to emulate them. The outward appearances are fairly congruent with the previous buildings, but the interiors are completely different. This tends to be the contemporary solution in cities that want to maintain elements of historic architecture while being commercially efficient.

In the examples in Roseau, steel and/or concrete is used for the main structure and concrete blocks for the walls.

Plastering or any alternative cladding can be applied for visual, and potentially insulating, effects. Often stone is used for the exterior of ground-floor walls and wood or a simulation thereof is applied to the upper floor. The weather resistance of plastics and metals as sheathing offers low maintenance that is attractive to Dominican owners. For the most part, the general public does not realize that the material is not wood, especially on upper floors. Architectural details such as dormers, railings, fret-work, jalousies and shutters complete the pseudo-traditional picture even though these are often pasted-on decoration as opposed to functional elements.

It can be easily agreed that this new historically based 'Creolized' style results in a more attractive urban setting and that it maintains a more human scale of streetscape. What can be debated however is the continued loss of authentic heritage form and quality. Different users will applaud different definitions of comfort and beauty, and for the most part economic viability overrules subjectivity, but when studying the *raisons d'être* of traditional structures, we are reminded of simple and effective architectural solutions to the environment.

Most of the major differences result in increased temperature of the new interiors. New and lighter materials such as concrete block are porous and trap hot air. Thin plywood sheets directly under galvanized roofing do not absorb the heat that inch-thick boards did. Reduced verandahs allow more direct sun to hit more wall surface and enter windows. Glass windows provide no shade at all and limit the amount of openings for air circulation. Lower roof slopes trap hot air, especially when no dormers provide convection, not to mention the reduced stability under strong wind forces. These factors create spaces that require cooling systems greater than a fan, tremendously increasing energy needs.

Whereas new buildings may look like the old ones from the street, it is often the façades alone that are imitated. In plan, these buildings may be much larger, thereby reducing natural light and airflow to the core (and to the neighbours). When courtyards are filled in, trees disappear along with their cooling and air-purifying properties. Noise echoes in tiny passages between buildings, many of which become too narrow to safely pass.

It should be clear that the planning authorities must step in to help control public safety and comfort, especially within a dense urban fabric that is squeezing out its residents. Restrictions on building heights are crucial, whereas those of material usage may be less so. The question of how much control Dominicans are willing to accept is yet to be seen. Generally, property owners are not accustomed to having limitations enforced upon them, and public support will need to be stimulated.

## Conclusion

Whether the transition away from an anonymous urban architecture is due to SHAPE's work, heritage movements throughout the Caribbean, a wave of Dominicans travelling and returning from abroad, or a general sense of nostalgia, is not the point. What is important is that Dominica is starting to be aware that architecture is an art and a language describing one's culture, and that its heritage must not be lost. This heritage though cannot (and would never) be totally preserved as it was; that is as unreasonable as trying to rebuild it exactly as it was. The challenge for planners, developers and property owners is thus to distinguish between preserving historical architecture and replacing it with contemporary renditions while understanding the nature of the architectural elements as solutions.

# The glories of pre-colonial timber construction of the Guianas and Caribbean

*by William Harris*

*(Architect/Urban Research Planner, University of Guyana)*

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There are two restless twins in the womb of Guyanese architecture. The Centre for Architectural Heritage, Research and Documentation (CAHRD) at the University of Guyana, in its commissioned role of midwife for this process, notes that the first will become a prominent city dweller, confident perhaps to the point of arrogance; while the second, grasping the heel of the other, is a child of the forest, and heir to the legacy of the cradle into which both are to be nourished and sustained. Both children are legitimate.

When the first colonizers arrived in the mid-fifteenth century on the landscape later called the Guianas, there already existed a handsome culture of timber craft in buildings. Perhaps undocumented is the exact point of contact and influence this often ridiculed culture had on the European statements to follow.

### Historical context

Admittedly, the pre-colonial era in the Central and Southern Americas is best remembered for its works in stone, often ingeniously dressed, and adobe. This is understandable, as these structures still remain and cannot simply be ignored. Meso-American architecture, as it has been called, is the architecture of the civilizations that flourished from c.1000 BC until the Spanish conquest in AD 1519–21, mainly in Central America, i.e. comprising part of modern Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, Belize, El Salvador and Nicaragua. Whatever their linguistic and ethnic type, the peoples living in the region shared similar religious beliefs and rituals, as evident in their architecture.

Nearly all surviving buildings were religious. There is evidence, however, that a vast majority of complex and inspiring structures, which did not survive the elements of weather and human assault, were made from impermanent, often timber, materials. Today, by extrapolation, we are forced to reconstruct a missing legacy, drawing from the height of development evident in the more lasting examples such as pyramids.

### Settlement patterns

An examination of the pre-colonial period of timber architecture in the Guianas and the Caribbean begins with a survey of settlement patterns, in terms of both location and arrangement. Selecting a location for a house on the one hand depended on purposes of concealment and, on the other, on suitability of observation for the approach of enemies. As such, the Demerara Indians seldom constructed houses on the immediate banks of a river, and whenever they decided to settle close to one they ensured that some of the bush was left standing to conceal the building.

Open terrain surrounding the buildings however offered much less chance of the approach of an enemy going unnoticed. Often the selection of the site was also determined by the availability of clay used in pottery. As such Carib Indians have been noted for setting up camp on the edge of clay-rich savannahs.

### Types of house

Island and mainland settlers, at the advent of the colonizers and even of recent times, were essentially nomadic but did display recognizable tendencies and competence to permanence, as the need dictated. The anthropologist Walter E. Roth described three types of huts and houses 'temporary, semi-permanent and permanent' on the Guiana mainland.<sup>20</sup> Of particular relevance to this discussion would be the permanent type, since this employed similar, and in some cases the very selection patterns and dynamics, which would govern the materials used by their European successors.

Island examples built by the Arawak Indians were palisaded. Those on the mainland were not commonly of this type and only in cases where the occupants felt threatened by enemy attack. In such cases they were about 120–130 feet (36–40 m) long and 30–40 feet (9–12 m) wide. Pallisades were placed close to each other, some as thick as 3 inches (some 8 cm) in diameter. Spaces were randomly left for shooting arrows through.

Bancroft recorded that in order to protect their homes, the Akawai guarded the approach avenues with pieces of hardwood, planted in the ground and poisoned, leaving only one obscure path that they used themselves and made known to their clans by secret marks. Similarly, migration dictated the forest dwellers' attitude to shelters.



Indigenous hut

20. Walter E. Roth, *Additional Studies of the Arts, Crafts, and Customs of the Guiana Indians, with Special Reference to those of Southern British Guiana*, Washington, United States Government Printing Office, 1929.

Schomburgk noted this persistent unsettled nature. Above all, it was reflected in the development of the *banab*, or temporary shelter, a label derived from the Arawak term *tobanna-abu* (i.e. leaf with stalk), the materials from which it is constructed. The Warrau call it *nabakobahi*, and the Makusi, *tapui*.

Where permanence was convenient, more lasting structures were attempted. Permanent huts or houses were otherwise classified in accordance with the way in which they were constructed. They appeared in the form of lean-to, an arched roof, a circular elliptical or rectangular floor plan, and some were built on poles or piles.

On the Cuyuni River (northern Guyana/eastern Venezuela), the Carib and Arawak houses are alike. Houses were constructed in two rows of flexible timber poles, about 20 feet (6 m) long, stuck firmly into the ground and bent over at the top in the shape of a pointed arch. The base also measures about 20 feet and the entire structure is covered with palm leaves laid horizontally from bottom to top. Rupununi Makusi and Wapishana covered their arched houses with durubana leaves. Similar structures are also recorded in Suriname and French Guiana, thatched with manicole and dallibanna palm, and the sides closed up with pump-wood bark. Wapishana, Makusi, Patamona and Arekuna were famous for their circular houses, bell-tents or bee-hives, beautifully thatched down to the ground with manicole leaves.

The main central post was first inserted, and a long wooden pole used to measure from it the exact spots where the side framing-posts were to be placed. These were fixed at equal distances from the central post and from each other. The circular wall plate of wattle and vine rope is now made on the ground and raised to the tops of the siding posts, notched on their outsides to receive it, and tied there with vine rope. For the child of the forest, the natural tree formed the basis for structural inspiration.

### Materials chosen

The indigenous peoples built with what was readily available and consequently the materials appearing in their structures reflected their immediate environment. In the savannahs, adobe-thatched combinations were noticeable. Pure timber types (thatched bark or staves) were typical of dwellings and structures constructed in the dense jungle and along the coastal fringes.

Apart from the central load-distributing poles and subsidiaries, the remainder of the building elements were light in nature, ranging from saplings of under 2 inches (5 cm) in diameter to leaves and fronds whose gathering was easily facilitated, often by the simple act of stripping. This frugality, dictated mainly by the available tools, led to the development of an umbrella-type concept of structures, depending more heavily on the ingenuity of plaiting and



*Plaiting skills*

overlapping to secure water-tightness and shade. Weaving of truli, dalibana, turu and other palm leaves has been the hallmark of roofs, walls and, in limited cases, even floors. For this very reason, there is an absence of lasting relics for our contemplation today. We are forced to review the continuum in the oral and built tradition, which is a race with the wind, in the context of disappearing traditions, skills and general appreciation for this style of construction.

### Spatial concept

Of more lasting value is the indigenous peoples' concept of spatial utilization and arrangements. This single entity offers perhaps the greatest impetus to the re-evaluation of the learned Eurocentric habits which have dictated the spatial arrangements prevalent in the coastal types. Living rooms, kitchens and bedrooms vary significantly from their coastal counterparts, not entirely due to the apparent lack of technological advancement, but more so to an almost alien concept of social interaction, fellowship and privacy. The full impact will be felt in the final furnishing of a new era of spatial allocation, but it is also expected that the entire form, itself based on internal prioritizing and function, will be altered significantly.

### Naming of local timbers

We are indebted to our indigenous dwellers for a significant number of the names of timber used throughout our architectural history. *Silverbali*, *kabakali*, *shibidan* and the like suggest that the colonizers were introduced to the appropriate species by their erstwhile hosts. Informed and guided sampling and selection resulted in the working of appropriate timber species, each offering a reference to what later becomes a bastion of the regional vernacular. With the introduction of manual and later mechanical saws (mills) came the ability to develop precision detailing, which in turn added grace, regularity and longevity to the perishable material.

### Recommended steps to accentuate and preserve indigenous works in timber

CAHRD's mandate to Guyanese architecture includes the promotion and development of educational research activities relating to the conservation and restoration of cultural property and raising the standards and practice of conservation and restoration work. CAHRD therefore advocates an impassioned momentum to architectural heritage recording and information management of the current indigenous stock.

Perhaps similar to approaches advocated by ICCROM and other international conservation agencies, CAHRD recognizes that the first level of conservation is associated with knowledge. Knowledge entails documentation as a fundamental aspect for preserving cultural heritage. Architectural records aim at conserving this fragile cultural heritage as one of the major challenges of our time. Architectural records, and recording and information management in the field of conservation of indigenous works and those closely related, are continuously being developed and must be considered in the context of a system and as a fundamental part of a larger body of knowledge and disciplines converging to preserve heritage.



Author's work in Santa Mission, 2002

In this context, and prior to any conservation measures, indigenous architecture must be documented, analysed and viewed as the result of its evolution and history. The conservation of this and all architectural heritage entails consideration of its material as well as immaterial aspects. The physical aspects of architectural heritage, and its symbolic meanings in historic, cultural and social contexts, make up the cultural memory and legacy left to future generations. It is therefore necessary to consider documentation as a moral, social and educational issue and to approach this branch of recording, documentation and information management from a wider standpoint than the merely architectural.

In conclusion, more emphasis needs to be given to architects and researchers engaged in the propagation of development-oriented research geared to lift the ideas and concepts transmitted to us by, in most cases, the leaking basket of the oral tradition. Tribute is hereby paid to the late Guyanese architect George K. Henry, A.A., whose contribution in 1972 saw the sufficiently refined advancement of the indigenous *benab* into the urban fabric of Georgetown. Continuing local and regional architects now need a conscious commitment to fostering a confident repetition or further refinement of the efforts of our forerunners, to the assertion of that which makes us proud, safe, comfortable, inspired, and with which we all may identify.

# The folk architecture of Saint Kitts and Nevis

*by Suzanne Gordon*  
*(Member of the Executive Board of the Nevis Historical  
and Conservation Society)*

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Each day Tim Wilkinson, 51, with his wide smile and big heart, hoofs his way up and down miles of roads, over *ghauts* (gorges), past grazing cattle, barking dogs, and through local villages, delivering mail on Nevis. His route is a colourful one, serving the friendliest of people, who reward his steadfast service with bags of just-picked mangoes, homegrown tomatoes, and an occasional freshly caught fish.

He passes dozens of local Nevis homes, the colours often dictated by the shades of leftover paint, the structure created out of random wood. These homes speak much about the lifestyles, economy and creativity of the residents inside. Often they are builders without formal training, producing homes of simplicity and comfort.

These ramshackle structures defy understanding in the modern day of manufactured parts and prefabricated components. They are products of imagination, creativity and common sense. They rely on recycled pieces and hand-me-downs. They are quaint, whimsical and fun.

Wilkinson barely notices them. They are his world and he is theirs. The mailman, who still walks the streets, resoling his shoes every seven months and patching his well-worn leather bag monthly, fits right in. Folk architecture, Saint Kitts/Nevis style, has its own nuances dictated by climate and materials and heritage, which is also seen as the greater Caribbean style, influenced by many cultures throughout the world. The Caribbean is truly a melting pot. Down through the ages, the culture has been moulded and changed by the indigenous peoples, the colonial powers, and the various peoples who have passed through as part of the changes that have shaped the islands in the Caribbean region.

### Vernacular architecture

Saint Kitts and Nevis, small islands claimed by Britain in the late eighteenth century, are part of the Leeward Island chain, about 200 miles (320 km) south of Puerto Rico. Now an independent federation, the two islands are still connected stylistically to the British, although the architectural style of the region is also influenced by African, French, Dutch and Spanish, as illustrated by the thatch and mud huts of the Carib and Arawak Indians and the French *jalousie* windows.

This blending or creolization of society produced a rich and colourful architectural style. The challenge was to adapt the European styles to the tropical environment. As Judith Towle wrote, 'Adaptation to place, combined with a sense of freedom indicative of the distance and isolation of the islands from the mother country, permitted the more

unorthodox or innovative designer and builder in the West Indian colonies to experiment with building forms'.<sup>21</sup>

The typical dwelling started in a small unit and grew over the years, as the needs of the residents expanded and the standard of living increased. Early on, the smallest folk house had a particular style all its own, distinguishing it from other islands in the Caribbean. Over time, the particular island styles were blended to create a more parochial West Indian style house, with nuances from island to island. 'One finds throughout the region evidence of a Caribbean style which is a humbler, more restrained version of imported European designs, a form which evolved in consideration of climatic requirements, the availability of limited materials and a shortage of skilled craftsmen.'<sup>22</sup>

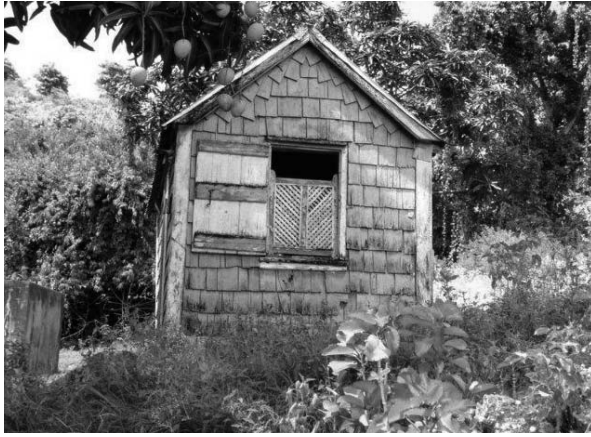
The advent of what people refer to as the typical vernacular house came in the early nineteenth century, particularly around the time of emancipation in 1834. The enslaved people, once freed, may have built and owned their houses; they did not necessarily own their land. The result was the concept of the chattel – or moveable house – used throughout the islands. These one-room structures were perched on rocks, stones or wooden slabs, ready to be hauled away at a moment's notice. To this day, homes teeter precariously on rocks, concrete blocks and are still bought, sold and moved. Particularly on Sunday, when traffic is light, it is possible to see an owner or purchaser hauling a house from one property to another on the back of a truck.

On Saint Kitts and Nevis these wooden houses can be found in urban areas, as well as in the countryside, though country locations are more common, such as downtown Charlestown on Nevis and Basseterre on Saint Kitts.

The building material of these homes was wood, a tradition that continued to a large extent until the late nineteenth century. The basic one-room house usually measures 10 by 12 feet (3 by 3.6 m), with a door at the centre of the wall and the windows on each side. The homes were built off the ground to keep the floorboards dry, the interior cooler, and the house high enough to keep the vermin away. These houses were easily expanded as more space was needed. An extension was often built behind the existing house, and the rooflines were arranged like a 'valley' so that rainwater could be collected in a cistern. Residents added verandahs to the front, and shed-roofed additions to the rear and sides. Other decorative pieces were lattice shutters, placed at the windows to provide privacy and ventilation, and solid exterior shutters for security and protection during storms.

21. Judith A. Towle, *Historic Preservation in the Caribbean*, St Thomas (US Virgin Islands), Island Resources Foundation, 1978, p. 4.

22. *Ibid.*



**Local vernacular presenting the scale, the culture and the charm of the past**

The houses exude quaintness, charm and a lot of imagination. Architect William Hubka, an expert on vernacular architecture, has high regard for this ability. He wrote that ‘the folk builders dependence on the existing context and tradition for design ideas is what fundamentally distinguishes this mode of design from more modern or scientific approaches’.<sup>23</sup>

Some of these design modes were created due to lack of money to purchase more modern solutions, and some came simply from lack of exposure to new solutions. For example, to collect water from roofs to fill cisterns for an ongoing water supply, builders or owners created makeshift gutters and downspouts connected at the roofline. They attached old buckets to the side of the wall and cut them to hold the guttering system. Other innovations include placing a gutter along the low point where the gable roofs of two houses are joined together.

It is not unusual to see houses covered in various types of siding or facing. Traditionally the homes were sided in shakes and clapboard. Today T-111, plywood simulated with a tongue-and-groove veneer, is a common choice, because it is inexpensive and widely available. It is creating its own folkiness today, painted in vivid blues and bright pinks. On Nevis, woodworker Samuel Hunkins, now over 90, has been creating the local lattice shutters and doors for more than fifty years. The man who restored some of the island’s plantation inns back in the 1950s, Hunkins still uses the same techniques he learned as an apprentice five decades ago. In his busy wood shop, he still produces traditional fretwork in various patterns and high-quality lattice doors and windows.

### The future of vernacular houses

Expanding the small houses has become a modern-day issue created by higher standards of living and exposure to the world through television and travel. It seems that people no longer want to live in small or wooden houses.

This desire for larger homes has been fed by the introduction to the Caribbean of concrete as a building material.



**Local vernacular exuding quaintness, charm and imagination**

New construction is made almost totally in concrete now as it withstands the stress of hurricanes, salt water and destructive insects such as termites. It also eliminates the social stigma connected with wooden houses: the days of enslavement, poverty, and living on someone else’s land. Concrete represents newness, affluence, and the signs of a more promising future. While all these things are true, they represents a major challenge for people hoping to preserve the history and charm of the past. While concrete is used for new building, it is also used in the expansion of the traditional wooden homes in various ways.

Sometimes, if the wood is deteriorating or if the owner is happy with the size of the original structure, a house may be encased in concrete. Most often, concrete extensions are added to wooden houses to increase the living space. Wooden railings may be replaced with concrete balusters as porches are extended, moved, or repaired. The concrete is sometimes left unpainted, but more often painted a colour to match or co-ordinate with the original wooden structure.

The use of concrete is controversial among those who are interested in preserving the colourful architectural tradition. Coated in concrete, these once delightful wooden homes become ordinary and awkward. Heavy concrete balusters can overwhelm the delicate wooden structures and the block extensions overpower the original homes. In addition, the houses, originally designed to be mobile, become permanent, heavy structures, never to be moved again.

Concrete has created a revolution in Caribbean architecture, according to French architect Jack Berthelot, who died in 1984: ‘Modern, expensive and European, concrete is the image of the dominant culture. We are in the phase of impoverishment. This concrete reduces the possibilities of the old language without yet being able to propose new ones’.<sup>24</sup>

23. Thomas Hubka, *Just Folks Designing: Vernacular Designers and the Generation of Form. Common Places: Readings in Vernacular Architecture*, London, University of Georgia Press, 1986, p. 7.

24. *Ibid.*

This appears to be true. Concrete styles are set in patterns offered by local building supply stores and eliminate personal touches afforded by the wood. Railings come standard in several shapes and sizes, and cut-out blocks used for trim are predictable. New construction, unless top of the range and customized, is taking the 'folk' out of architecture created by and for the islanders, and making it look like any other place in the world.

The vernacular architecture on Saint Kitts and Nevis, while still in existence, is slowly disappearing. The old houses are falling one by one, and only a few people are making efforts to save them. Some of the owners are local shopkeepers, who are converting them as businesses, such as a barbershop in Charlestown. Often the people trying to preserve them are from other countries, who see them from a different perspective to the society that created them. For example, Marcia Myers of Boston, a former staff member of the US National Trust for Historic Preservation, bought a house as a residence. The founders of the Nevis Historical and Conservation Society, Joan and David Robinson, established their home on Nevis in a similar way. Both their projects have brought to light the beauty and value of these simple structures, and both have been featured as part of house tours sponsored by the historical society.

It may take an effort to fix them up, but each house saved is another step towards remembering the heritage of these islands, when creativity and inventiveness were the rule rather than the exception, and concrete was merely a twinkle in a contractor's eye.

Preservation efforts on both islands are spurred onward by historical societies: the St Kitts Heritage Society on Saint Kitts, and the Nevis Historical and Conservation Society on Nevis. Loosely connected committees, keenly interested in the capital towns, such as 'Beautiful Basseterre' and 'Charming Charlestown', are also working to keep the towns intact. But legislative controls are still lacking to make preservation happen. Forces are at work to tear down and build anew. However, those involved in preservation must be very vigilant to ensure that growth and change occur in a tasteful manner, maintaining the scale, the culture and the charm of the past.

# Saint Lucia's wooden urban heritage

*by Duane Marquis*  
(Programme Officer for Cultural Heritage,  
Saint Lucia National Trust)

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The name Helen, derived from Greek mythology, belonged to a woman of exquisite beauty, daughter to Zeus and wife of Menelaus, King of Sparta, whose abduction brought about the great Trojan War. It is this fair Helen that inspired our colonial ancestors, and most appropriately so, to call Saint Lucia 'The Helen of the West Indies'. Over a period of about 150 years the island was one of the most fought-over in the Caribbean. It would change colonial rule between the empires of France and Britain fourteen times before finally settling as a British territory at the turn of the nineteenth century. In our misfortune of being the ultimate colonial prize, there were several indirect benefits. The many years of unrest and settlement brought to our shores a wealth of cultural identities that culminated in the unique built environment we know today. It could be argued that Saint Lucia had some of the most spectacular urban centres in the region, a claim borne out by some monuments still standing today. It is indisputable, however, much like Helen's curse of beauty, that throughout our history we have been plagued by man-made and natural disasters, robbing us of such a unique resource.

Saint Lucia is probably the only country in the Caribbean, save Saint Kitts, where classical architectural styles from Britain and France marry in the same structures. In the architectural language of form and function it would be considered an act of heresy to mesh the open-plan concept of French Creole with the massing and monumentality of Victorian form, but our turbulent past has dictated it, an enormous feat so tastefully represented in Saint Lucia structures. Our wooden gems identify the craftsmanship of the colonial period intertwined with the distinct influence of African masters. This hybrid of styles is undoubtedly the foundation of Saint Lucia's architectural heritage, which is quite possibly indigenous.

Two urban areas noted for their structures are Soufrière on the south-west coast and the capital Castries, on the north-west coast. Soufrière was the first seat of colonization for the French in 1744. Applying the concept of the urban grid with an open space as the major focal point, settlement took root. The many low-rise wooden town houses along the narrow streets complemented the public square, collectively promoting a qualitative and aesthetic dimension of living. These town houses, belonging to estate owners in the outer districts, were typically similar in function. The ground or parlour floor was reserved for commercial use with the living spaces on the upper floors. Also typical of these structures were their basic design concept and proportion, with generous balconies supported by wooden columns forming a natural portico that sheltered patrons along the sidewalk.



*Typical townhouse in Soufrière (Saint Lucia)*

The individuality of these structures, however, apparent in their ornamentation, was never compromised. Elaborate detail dictated by the estate owners not only ensured identity, but also served as testimony of their wealth. As the eighteenth century progressed and sugar became king, the need for individualism in detail became paramount as town houses conformed to the Tou-Kung ideology. Tou-Kung is a Chinese architectural term for interlocking cantilevered brackets supporting the roof of a dwelling, the elaboration of which is said to determine the wealth of an individual.

The wooden rendition of classical structures in Soufrière was a marvel. Collectively these structures formed a streetscape flaunting their elaborately adorned eaves and banisters, overhanging balconies and jalousies all secured with intricate pegged bracing. As time passed, many events would impact on Saint Lucia's built environment. The devastating hurricane of 1780, the civil unrest in 1795 prompted by the French Revolution, the loss of cheap labour due to the complete abolition of slavery in 1838, and the fire of 1955 resulted in a close to barren architectural heritage resource.



*Streetscape along Brazil Street opposite Derek Walcott Square*

By 1885, largely owing to its port and the economic viability of coal, Castries became the major urban centre on the island. Now permanently part of the British Crown, stability brought with it investment and again facilitated a burgeoning built environment. Although the new architectural landscape was dictated by Victorian design,

French Colonial was still the basic construct. The new design concept that emerged, however, would reflect other cultural identities. Saint Lucia's workforce, the descendants of African slaves, brought a new dimension to the town house by imposing African detail on a classical concept. Castries was adorned with two- and three-storey wooden town houses, marrying utility with artistry, massing with the open plan and monumentality with intimacy. The concept of Afro-French Victorian architecture had taken root.

As on many previous occasions, Fair Helen would again be robbed of her cultural identity; Castries was destroyed by fire in 1927 and again in 1948. In the monuments left standing, however, we can still appreciate the mastery of our ancestors. In traditionally narrow lots, how were they able to maintain the monumentality of these structures, and not at the expense of street life? How much of a role did the public space play in the design of the façade? How did these elaborate balconies really evolve? So evident was the social interaction between building and open space, and between public and private. The architectural metamorphosis of these buildings alludes to our cultural diversity, a physical representation of every facet of society. In unison and as stand-alone structures, the streetscape they created and the cultural experience it invoked was immeasurable. Such a resource begs for a more thorough study.

In these unique remnants of the island's wooden architectural heritage, the Saint Lucia National Trust has recognized the need not only to preserve these gems but also to promote them as a legitimate pillar of our cultural identity. Established by an Act of Parliament in 1975, the National Trust has the legal mandate to conserve the natural and cultural heritage of the nation. Towards this end, it is engaged in several programmes, currently in architectural heritage protection. This project includes an inventory and computer database of all buildings and spaces that have played a role in our development and identity.

Through a multidisciplinary architectural heritage committee, the project has also developed an evaluation methodology for discussion. Its application is based on the following criteria:

- **Architectural Style**, which is the recognized designation of a built form allowing its period or origin to be assigned;
- **Historical Significance**, associated with a person, an event, or both;
- **Age** with a minimum of fifty years;
- **Context** and **Craftsmanship**. Using a points system with a multiplying factor determined by rare, infrequent or typical; and low, medium or high, categories A, B and C will be established; A being the benchmark of our built environment. This architectural heritage methodology for categorizing buildings will be the guiding principal in preparing a policy containing incentives for owners of these heritage gems. Once developed, this policy will

be submitted to the Ministry of Physical Development, Housing and Environment and the Cabinet of Ministers for approval.

This initiative has received full government support. Section 33 of the Physical Planning Act No. 29 of 2001 specifically addresses preservation of sites and buildings of interest. It states that the head of Physical Planning and Development Division shall compile a list of buildings of special historic and/or architectural interest or may adopt, with or without modifications, any such list compiled by the National Trust as outlined in the 1975 Act. We are preparing such a list for submission later in 2003.

The National Trust remains vigilant. Our ultimate goal for the architectural heritage programme is to instil a sense of pride, appreciation and ownership in all Saint Lucians about our built environment. The preservation of our wooden urban heritage is necessary, not only for the survival of our cultural identity but also for economic viability through heritage tourism. The future of Saint Lucia's architectural heritage is based on a policy of preservation supported by adequate legislation, incentives, monitoring and education. We must do the same for our cultural environment as we have achieved in the natural environment if Fair Helen's beauty is not to diminish.



# Protecting the wooden urban heritage in Trinidad and Tobago

*by Vel A. Lewis*  
*(Curator, National Museum and Art Gallery)*

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**This paper presents a general overview of efforts to safeguard the wooden urban heritage in Trinidad and Tobago in the forty years since independence in 1962. Much of this heritage is a reflection of the country's history, particularly its period of colonial rule.**

**Port of Spain, capital of this twin island republic, has undergone numerous changes over the years as a result of fires and urban development programmes. Despite these events, the urban centre in Trinidad and Tobago has maintained much of its architectural integrity. In recent times, though, historic properties have come under increased pressure from new multi-storey constructions in steel, concrete and glass.**

**The preservation efforts in Trinidad and Tobago, as in many other islands in the Caribbean, although still not very advanced, have been gaining momentum as the population becomes more aware of the importance of the architectural heritage.**

## History

Christopher Columbus landed on the island of Trinidad in 1498, but it was not until 1532 that Europeans first attempted to settle the island. At that time, tribal groups inhabited Trinidad and had frequent battles with the Spaniards. Finally, the Spanish were able to colonize the island in 1592. They established their capital at San José de Oruña (St Joseph), grew tobacco, cocoa and other crops, and set up missions. In 1784, St Joseph as the main settlement was replaced by Puerta d'Espana (Port of Spain).

Large-scale immigration to Trinidad accelerated from 1783 onwards. Spain offered special incentives including free-land grants to encourage foreigners of the Roman Catholic faith to settle in Trinidad. French colonists took advantage of this offer. Sugar cane became the most important crop and slavery was introduced. In 1797 Trinidad was captured by the British under Sir Ralph Abercromby and ceded to Britain under the Treaty of Amiens (25 March 1802). In 1834 slavery was abolished, after which a labour shortage developed, leading to the importation of Chinese and East Indian immigrants to work as indentured labourers. After its cession to Britain in 1802, Trinidad became a Crown Colony.

Tobago, on the other hand, was virtually isolated, until it was visited by British sailors in 1588. During the seventeenth century the Dutch, Spanish, British, Courlanders<sup>25</sup> and French fought with one another over Tobago and alternated in occupying the island. The tribal inhabitants were also an active group in the struggle for Tobago. After changing hands several times, the island was ceded to Britain in 1814 by the Treaty of Paris. From 1876 onwards, Tobago became a Crown Colony. On 6 April 1889, Trinidad and Tobago became united as one territory. The twin island state achieved self-government in 1956 and was

granted political independence on 31 August 1962. The country became a republic on 1 August 1976.

## Economic development

During the period of rapid economic expansion (1974–82) due to rising oil production and prices, the country was in a position of strong resource surplus. Oil was discovered in Trinidad in 1866 and became commercialized in 1908. From the 1940s, oil became the principal sector in the economy. This led to British and American investors establishing oil companies in Trinidad, and subsequently to the discovery of large deposits of oil offshore. Oil is also refined in Trinidad. Other petroleum products are nitrogenous fertilizers, ammonia, urea and methanol. While oil production remains a major aspect of the economy, there are a number of other significant areas of economic activity such as natural asphalt, natural gas, iron and steel, manufacturing agriculture and tourism. Tourism is a major contributor to the economic development in Trinidad and Tobago and is also a major influence on preservation efforts.

## Architectural heritage

Trinidad and Tobago's architectural heritage is represented mostly by nineteenth- and early twentieth-century historic buildings with architectural styles ranging from French-influenced architecture to curious eclectic styles of the turn of the century. A striking display of this mixture can be seen in the group of buildings known as the 'Magnificent Seven' on the west side of Queen's Park Savannah.

Early nineteenth-century architecture influenced by the French can still be found at a few buildings on Independence Square in Port of Spain. British influence is apparent in just a handful of buildings and in those designed by military engineers, such as St James Barracks erected in 1824–27. The Spanish influence is self-evident in the original grid structure of the town's layout, which during British rule had been extended several times to the north to contain New Town and to the west to form the residential district around Victoria Square. The recently restored site of Fort San Andres at the city waterfront is one of the few architectural witnesses to Trinidad's Spanish past. The Indian, Spanish and French legacies still live on in the names of streets and places in the urban centre such as Mucurapo Road, Chacon Street and Laperouse Cemetery.

With respect to wooden architecture, it is interesting to note that a great fire of 1808 that devastated Port of Spain brought significant changes. The fire destroyed several blocks of buildings and, in order to prevent similar disas-

25. Courland was a dukedom in the present Republic of Latvia.

ters, building laws were passed for the first time to provide guidelines for the reconstruction of the town. The construction of wooden houses and the use of shingles in the town were prohibited. Despite this, many fine examples of wooden architecture have survived in the urban centres of Trinidad and Tobago.

### Early efforts at historic preservation

Historic preservation in Trinidad and Tobago is still at development stage. The Historical Restoration Unit, a government department within the Ministry of Works and Transport, was established in 1990. This was the first formal body dealing with the preservation of the urban architectural heritage. The unit's main work involves:

- Administering and supervising restoration, preservation, renovation and maintenance of public and non-public historic buildings and sites;
- Taking responsibility for existing stock of historic drawings and documents pertaining to sites;
- As part of the approval process, providing
  - (a) the Town and Country Planning Division with advice on individual applications for development on near historic sites;
  - (b) lectures to planners as part of training to recognize historic structures;
- Advising government departments as well as private owners on restoration and maintenance of historic property.

Non-governmental initiatives for preservation, however, began at an earlier date. The Citizens for Conservation group, responsible for maintaining a focus on the need to protect the architectural heritage through lobbying and public protests, was founded in 1985. Protection was not an easy task, as many people supported the view that colonialism and its relics should be forgotten. When the economy declined in the late 1980s, however, interest in cultural heritage for the sake of tourism started to gain recognition and gradually increased because of rising international concern about matters of culture and cultural heritage. Citizens for Conservation used the new attention for cultural heritage to press for a National Heritage Trust.

### Establishment of the National Trust

A varied series of events and the efforts of many dedicated people over several years have contributed to the eventual establishment of the National Trust of Trinidad and Tobago. This, however, was not before preservationists in Tobago grew impatient and the Tobago House of Assembly established a Tobago Trust in 1990.

In response to the UNESCO Draft Plan for Educational Development in Trinidad and Tobago 1968–83, part of which specifically dealt with the conservation and preservation of our national heritage, and the lobbying of con-

cerned citizens and organized groups, particularly Citizens for Conservation, against the destruction of historical sites, the government agreed to set up a National Trust committee. The committee comprised specialists from government ministries having appropriate interests as well as other private individuals. For example, the Ministries of Education and Culture, Forestry, Agriculture, Public Utilities, Finance, Planning and Development, Legal Affairs, Petroleum and Mines were represented, as well as the National Archives, the Historical Society, the Architects Society, the Art Society, the Central Library and the University of the West Indies.

After several meetings chaired by the Director of Culture and well-known artist MP Alladin, spanning a little over one year, the Secretary of the Committee, Holly Gayadeen, another local artist, was directed: (1) to collate the many and varied concerns recorded; (2) to read through the National Trust Acts of Commonwealth countries; and (3) to prepare a draft of the National Trust Act of Trinidad and Tobago.

The National Trust Committee, after a few amendments, agreed that the draft should be sent to each participating ministry. At this stage it suggested a legal framework for the preservation and conservation of the natural and built heritage of Trinidad and Tobago as well as the establishment and *modus operandi* of the National Trust Council.

However, despite great expectations several years elapsed before Citizens for Conservation could persuade the government to seriously pursue the project and the National Trust of Trinidad and Tobago Act was finally passed in 1991. However, the Trust was still not set up and another eight years passed during which significant examples of the architectural heritage would be lost despite the efforts of Citizens for Conservation, among others.

After protests from a number of the conservation groups, amendments were effected to the National Trust Act in 1999 and in July 2000 the first Council of the Trust was appointed.

The National Trust Act makes provision for listing property of interest and the Council is empowered to prepare lists of buildings and sites of particular national, historic or architectural interest which should be preserved. This is now the chief instrument available to the National Trust to preserve and protect the wooden urban heritage as well as other forms of the built and natural heritage in Trinidad and Tobago.

The National Trust Council manages the affairs of the Trust and membership is open to the public. The general purposes of the Trust are as follows:

- listing and acquiring property of interest;
- permanently preserving lands that are property of interest;
- preserving or arranging for preservation of heritage property;

- making provision for public access to property of interest;
- encouraging research into property of interest;
- compiling records of property of interest;
- making the public aware of the value of property of interest;
- advising government on conservation and preservation of heritage.

### **Conclusion**

In closing, it should be noted that in Trinidad and Tobago it took a long time and a major effort to establish legal means for the protection of heritage in general and the wooden urban heritage in particular. Although the Trust is now formally established with powers that can successfully prevent large-scale destruction of the built heritage, much remains to be done in the area of historic preservation, chiefly the identification and acquisition of adequate financial resources and the recruitment of people skilled in conservation techniques.

## Programme of the meeting



## Programme of the meeting

**Wednesday, 5 February 2003**

### **Material and Interpretation**

08:30 am	Registration of Participants
09:00 am – 10:30 am	Official Opening Ceremony Keynote Address <i>by the Hon. Prime Minister of Guyana</i>
10:30 am – 11:00 am	BREAK

**Session 1:**                      **Chair: Ms Hélène-Marie Gosselin**  
***Director, UNESCO Office for the Caribbean***

11:00 am – 12:30 pm	The Tourism Potential of Wooden Heritage: An Underlying Aspect for Sustainable Development of Wooden Heritage in the Caribbean <i>by Mr Bernd von Droste zu Hülshoff (Advisor to UNESCO)</i>
	Inventory as a Key Joint among the Caribbean <i>by Ms Maria Carlotta Ibenez (CARIMOS)</i>
	Thematic Application: Wooden Urban Heritage <i>by Ms Patricia Green (CARIMOS)</i>
	Discussions
12:30 pm – 2:00 pm	LUNCH

**Session 2:**                      **Chair: Ms Gail Teixeira**  
***Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports of Guyana***

2:00 pm – 3:30 pm	The City of Paramaribo <i>by Mr Harmarain Jankipersadsingh (Suriname)</i>
	Wooden Urban Architecture of Antigua: The Face of a Nation <i>by Mr Reginald Murphy (Antigua)</i>
	Discussions
3:30 pm – 4:00 pm	BREAK

**Session 3:**                      **Chair: Ms Gail Teixeira**

4:00 pm – 5:30 pm	The Promotion for the Rescue of a Misunderstood Heritage <i>by Ms Iris de Mondesert (Dominican Republic)</i>
	The Glories of Pre-Colonial Timber Construction of the Guianas and the Caribbean <i>by Mr William Harris (Guyana)</i>
7:00 pm – 9:00 pm	Welcome Reception <i>by Government of Guyana at Umana Yana</i>

Thursday, 6 February 2003

**Authenticity and Connections**

**Session 4:** **Chair: Mr Alwin Bully**  
**Senior Programme Specialist for Culture, UNESCO office for the Caribbean**

9:00 am – 10:30 am      *Dominica's Architectural Heritage in Transition: Authentic versus Aesthetic*  
*by Ms Elise Johnston-Agar (Dominica)*

*Preservation of the Wooden Heritage of Trinidad and Tobago*  
*by Mr Vel A. Lewis (Trinidad and Tobago)*

Discussions

10:30 am – 11:00 am      BREAK

**Session 5:** **Chair: Mr Alwin Bully**

11:00 am – 12:00 pm      *Jamaican Timber as Architecture*  
*by Ms Ann Hodges (Jamaica)*

*Caribbean cities of wood as World Heritage: A comparative analysis between Paramaribo, Suriname and Georgetown, Guyana*  
*by Mr Ron van Oers (UNESCO World Heritage Centre)*

12:00 pm – 12:30 pm      *Introduction to the Tour of Georgetown, Guyana*  
*by Prof. Rory Westmaas (University of Guyana)*

12:30 pm – 2:00 pm      LUNCH

2:00 pm – 5:30 pm      *Tour of Georgetown*  
*Conducted by the Tourism and Hospitality Association of Guyana (THAG), Ministry of Tourism, City Council, and the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport*

Friday, 7 February 2003

**Conservation and Controls**

**Session 6:** **Chair: Mr Ron van Oers,**  
**Project Manager, UNESCO World Heritage Centre**

9:00 am – 10:30 am      *The Wooden Urban Heritage of Guyana: Issues and Challenges for Wood Preservation*  
*by Mr Clayton Hall (Guyana)*

*Wooden Urban Heritage in the Netherlands Antilles*  
*by Mr Michael Newton (Netherlands Antilles)*

Discussions

10:30 am – 11:00 am      BREAK

## Programme of the meeting

### Session 7:

**Chair: Mr Ron van Oers**

11:00 am – 12:30 pm

Wood: as Cultural Bridge in the Caribbean  
*by Mr Nilson Acosta Reyes (Cuba)*

Wooden Urban Heritage in the Caribbean: The Virgin Islands case  
*by Mr Richard Courtney de Castro (British Virgin Islands)*  
Discussions

12:30 pm – 2:00 pm

LUNCH

### Session 8:

**Chair: Ms Carmen Jarvis**

**Secretary General, Guyana National Commission for UNESCO**

2:00 pm – 3:30 pm

Saint Lucia's Wooden Urban Heritage  
*by Mr Duane Marquis (Saint Lucia)*

La Maison: "Altieri": Architectural Description and Cultural Value  
*by Mr Patrick Delatour (Haiti)*

Wooden Urban Heritage in St. Eustatius: A Case Study  
*by Mr Siem Dijkshoorn (Netherlands Antilles)*

Discussions

3:30 pm – 4:00 pm

BREAK

### Regional Strategy

**Chair: Ms Carmen Jarvis**

4:00 pm – 4:20 pm

UNESCO Integrated Programmes in the Caribbean  
*by Mr Alwin Bully (UNESCO Office for the Caribbean)*

4:30 pm – 7:00 pm

Summary / Recommendations / Declaration

7:00 pm

Official Closing

## List of Participants

## List of participants

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# ICOMOS Charter on Principles for the Preservation of Historic Timber Structures (1999)

*ICOMOS International Wood Committee*

Annex C



The aim of this document is to define basic and universally applicable principles and practices for the protection and preservation of historic timber structures with due respect to their cultural significance. Historic timber structures refer here to all types of buildings or constructions wholly or partially in timber that have cultural significance or that are parts of a historic area.

For the purpose of the preservation of such structures, the Principles:

- recognise the importance of timber structures from all periods as part of the cultural heritage of the world;
- take into account the great diversity of historic timber structures;
- take into account the various species and qualities of wood used to build them;
- recognise the vulnerability of structures wholly or partially in timber due to material decay and degradation in varying environmental and climatic conditions, caused by humidity fluctuations, light, fungal and insect attacks, wear and tear, fire and other disasters;
- recognise the increasing scarcity of historic timber structures due to vulnerability, misuse and the loss of skills and knowledge of traditional design and construction technology;
- take into account the great variety of actions and treatments required for the preservation and conservation of these heritage resources;
- note the Venice Charter, the Burra Charter and related UNESCO and ICOMOS doctrine, and seek to apply these general principles to the protection and preservation of historic timber structures;

And make the following recommendations:

## Inspection, recording and documentation

1. The condition of the structure and its components should be carefully recorded before any intervention, as well as all materials used in treatments, in accordance with Article 16 of the Venice Charter and the ICOMOS *Principles for the Recording of Monuments, Groups of Buildings and Sites*.<sup>26</sup> All pertinent documentation, including characteristic samples of redundant materials or members removed from the structure, and information about relevant traditional skills and technologies, should be collected, catalogued, securely stored and made accessible as appropriate. The documentation should also include the specific reasons given for choice of materials and methods in the preservation work.

2. A thorough and accurate diagnosis of the condition and the causes of decay and structural failure of the timber structure should precede any intervention. The diagnosis should be based on documentary evidence, physical inspection and analysis, and, if necessary, measurements

of physical conditions and non-destructive testing methods. This should not prevent necessary minor interventions and emergency measures.

## Monitoring and maintenance

3. A coherent strategy of regular monitoring and maintenance is crucial for the protection of historic timber structures and their cultural significance.

## Interventions

4. The primary aim of preservation and conservation is to maintain the historical authenticity and integrity of the cultural heritage. Each intervention should therefore be based on proper studies and assessments. Problems should be solved according to relevant conditions and needs with due respect for the aesthetic and historical values, and the physical integrity of the historic structure or site.

5. Any proposed intervention should for preference:

- (a) follow traditional means;
- (b) be reversible, if technically possible; or
- (c) at least not prejudice or impede future preservation work whenever this may become necessary; and
- (d) not hinder the possibility of later access to evidence incorporated in the structure.

6. The minimum intervention in the fabric of a historic timber structure is an ideal. In certain circumstances, minimum intervention can mean that their preservation and conservation may require the complete or partial dismantling and subsequent reassembly in order to allow for the repair of timber structures.

7. In the case of interventions, the historic structure should be considered as a whole; all material, including structural members, in-fill panels, weather-boarding, roofs, floors, doors and windows, etc., should be given equal attention. In principle, as much as possible of the existing material should be retained. The protection should also include surface finishes such as plaster, paint, coating, wall-paper, etc. If it is necessary to renew or replace surface finishes, the original materials, techniques and textures should be duplicated as far as possible.

8. The aim of restoration is to conserve the historic structure and its loadbearing function and to reveal its cultural values by improving the legibility of its historical integrity, its earlier state and design within the limits of existing historic material evidence, as indicated in Articles 9 to 13 of the Venice Charter. Removed members and other components of the historic structure should be catalogued, and characteristic samples kept in permanent storage as part of the documentation.

26. <http://www.international.icomos.org/recording.htm>

## Repair and replacement

**9.** In the repair of a historic structure, replacement timber can be used with due respect to relevant historical and aesthetic values, and where it is an appropriate response to the need to replace decayed or damaged members or their parts, or to the requirements of restoration.

New members or parts of members should be made of the same species of wood with the same, or, if appropriate, with better, grading as in the members being replaced. Where possible, this should also include similar natural characteristics. The moisture content and other physical characteristics of the replacement timber should be compatible with the existing structure.

Craftsmanship and construction technology, including the use of dressing tools or machinery, should, where possible, correspond with those used originally. Nails and other secondary materials should, where appropriate, duplicate the originals.

If a part of a member is replaced, traditional woodwork joints should, if appropriate and compatible with structural requirements, be used to splice the new and the existing part.

**10.** It should be accepted that new members or parts of members will be distinguishable from the existing ones. To copy the natural decay or deformation of the replaced members or parts is not desirable. Appropriate traditional or well-tested modern methods may be used to match the colouring of the old and the new with due regard that this will not harm or degrade the surface of the wooden member.

**11.** New members or parts of members should be discreetly marked, by carving, by marks burnt into the wood or by other methods, so that they can be identified later.

## Historic forest reserves

**12.** The establishment and protection of forest or woodland reserves where appropriate timber can be obtained for the preservation and repair of historic timber structures should be encouraged.

Institutions responsible for the preservation and conservation of historic structures and sites should establish or encourage the establishment of stores of timber appropriate for such work.

## Contemporary materials and technologies

**13.** Contemporary materials, such as epoxy resins, and techniques, such as structural steel reinforcement, should be chosen and used with the greatest caution, and only in cases where the durability and structural behaviour of the materials and construction techniques have been satisfactorily proven over a sufficiently long period of time. Utilities, such as heating, and fire detection and prevention systems, should be installed with due recognition of the historic and aesthetic significance of the structure or site.

**14.** The use of chemical preservatives should be carefully controlled and monitored, and should be used only where there is an assured benefit, where public and environmental safety will not be affected and where the likelihood of success over the long term is significant.

## Education and training

**15.** Regeneration of values related to the cultural significance of historic timber structures through educational programmes is an essential requisite of a sustainable preservation and development policy. The establishment and further development of training programmes on the protection, preservation and conservation of historic timber structures are encouraged. Such training should be based on a comprehensive strategy integrated within the needs of sustainable production and consumption, and include programmes at the local, national, regional and international levels. The programmes should address all relevant professions and trades involved in such work, and, in particular, architects, conservators, engineers, craftspersons and site managers.



# Summary Reports of Thematic Expert Meetings in the Caribbean

The following thematic expert meetings, workshops and conferences, organized by the World Heritage Centre in the framework of the Global Strategy Action Plan for the Caribbean, have taken place between 1996 and 2004:

<b>Fortifications of the Caribbean</b> <i>(Cartagena, Colombia, 1996)</i>	Page 92
<b>The Cultural Heritage of the Caribbean and the <i>World Heritage Convention</i></b> <i>(Fort-de-France, Martinique, 1998)</i>	Page 93
<b>The Natural Heritage of the Caribbean and the <i>World Heritage Convention</i></b> <i>(Paramaribo, Suriname, 2000)</i>	Page 97
<b>Plantation Systems in the Caribbean</b> <i>(Paramaribo, Suriname, 2001; undertaken jointly with the UNESCO Slave Route Project)</i>	Page 98
<b>Regional Training Course on the Application of the <i>World Heritage Convention</i> and its Role in Sustainable Development and Tourism in the Caribbean</b> <i>(Roseau, Dominica, 2001)</i>	Page 100
<b>Wooden Urban Heritage in the Caribbean</b> <i>(Georgetown, Guyana, 2003; these proceedings)</i>	
<b>Meeting on the Harmonization of Tentative Lists and Possibilities for Serial and Transboundary Nominations for Eastern Caribbean States Parties</b> <i>(Kingstown, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, 2003)</i>	Page 103
<b>Conference on the Development of a Caribbean Action Plan</b> <i>(Castries, Saint Lucia, 2004)</i>	Page 105
<b>Identification of Archaeological Sites of the Caribbean likely to be nominated for inscription on the World Heritage List</b> <i>(Fort-de-France, Martinique, 2004)</i>	Page 110
<b>Meeting on an Implementation Structure for the Caribbean Action Plan in World Heritage</b> <i>(Kingston, Jamaica, 2004)</i>	Page 112

## Fortifications of the Caribbean (*Cartagena, Colombia, 1996*)

by Herman van Hooff

The Ninth Forum of Ministers of Cultural Heritage of Latin America and the Caribbean, which took place in Cartagena, Colombia from 27 to 30 June 1997, has formally endorsed the conclusions and recommendations of an expert meeting calling for the nomination of a multinational 'Fortifications in the Caribbean'. The ministers decided to support the initiative of Colombia to work towards the inscription of a coherent ensemble of fortifications in the Caribbean on the World Heritage List. In this context, they also decided to support the study of new categories of cultural and natural heritage within the framework of the *World Heritage Convention*, such as cultural landscapes, cultural routes, industrial heritage, the heritage of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and expressions of living cultures.

This decision, together with future Global Strategy and Thematic Meetings, will undoubtedly contribute to a better representation of Latin America and the Caribbean on the World Heritage List.

The expert meeting on Fortifications of the Caribbean took place in Cartagena, Colombia from 31 July to 2 August 1996. The meeting, which included experts from Colombia, Cuba, Jamaica, Mexico, the Dominican Republic and Venezuela, was organized on the initiative of the Colombian Institute for Culture (COLCULTURA) and supported by the World Heritage Fund.

The report of the expert meeting, published as *Fortificaciones del Caribe* in 1997, includes a preliminary inventory of the most representative fortifications in the Caribbean, subdivided in four categories: fortified cities, garrisons, military forts and fortified systems, as well as a strategy for the inscription of the fortifications on the World Heritage List.

## The Cultural Heritage of the Caribbean and the *World Heritage Convention* (Fort-de-France, Martinique, 1998)

by Leon Pressouyre

### Conclusions and Recommendations

Unlike earlier global strategy meetings (Harare, 11–13 October 1995; Addis Ababa, 29 July–1 August 1996; Suva, 16–18 July 1997), the workshop on the Cultural Heritage of the Caribbean and the *World Heritage Convention* did not bring together representatives of all the countries in the region, but a small number of experts from various geographic, scientific and cultural backgrounds. As states and governments are not directly involved, the work presented will most likely have delayed, rather than immediate, effects. This is not necessarily a handicap. More than anywhere else, in the Caribbean region, where decision-making powers are dispersed as a result of complex political geography, it is risky or pointless to draw up Tentative Lists on the basis of decisions taken unilaterally at the national level. The involvement of various intergovernmental agencies such as the Caribbean Community Secretariat (CARICOM), CARIFORUM or the Association of Caribbean States (ACS) and of such institutions as the Caribbean Conservation Association (CCA) and the Association of Caribbean Historians (ACH) is vital for channelling initiatives and building a co-ordinated and coherent regional strategy out of separate proposals. The work on Caribbean fortifications carried out under the auspices of Colcultura is a good illustration of such concerted action.<sup>27</sup>

On the basis of monographs and general surveys, the workshop defined a number of important features of the region which should be used to develop an overall strategy for the Caribbean.

That the region is made up of islands is a fundamental and essential point, albeit one which requires no further mention here, except to say that several participants demonstrated how this can be turned into an asset. With regard to the World Heritage List, the region can rightly claim recognition for its status as an archipelago, washed by the Atlantic Ocean and the Caribbean Sea, with a rich maritime heritage: its ports – points of call for galleons and slave ships – and also, as Jean-Luc Bonniol pointed out, its straits, channels and vis-à-vis which, freed from the logic of terra firma, sometimes make a neighbouring island accessible and complementary.

Many aspects of the archaeological heritage – for example, the shell mounds discovered on many Amerindian sites, or groups of traditional buildings – may obviously be considered in combination with this feature of island status. The fact that the 1972 Convention does not cover the protection of movable property as such does not prevent the classification of coastal sites which have a direct asso-

ciation with, for example, boat building (the monoxylic pirogues of Dominica have been the subject of recent studies)<sup>28</sup> or fishing. Any approach to the traditional or industrial heritage – whose interest and fragility were stressed by all the speakers, inspired by Esteban Prieto Vicioso and Lennox Honychurch – must include work on the coastal infrastructure.

How can UNESCO assist in making an inventory of an island region? One thinks first of the co-ordinating role played by the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) for the past thirty years; in that connection it is to be hoped that all Caribbean States will soon be represented on the Commission. In addition, the UNESCO Secretariat possesses a Coastal Regions and Small Islands (CSI) Unit, the fruit of the transdisciplinary project initiated in 1995 by the General Conference. CSI could serve as a clearing house for information from island regions around the world. In fact, the most innovative projects are often developed at the subregional or even national level, for example the ARCHIPELAGOS programme adopted in 1994 by UNESCO at the initiative of Greece and, also in the Mediterranean region, the programme supported by the Island Council of the Balearic Islands which essentially concerned that archipelago. It would be useful to discover the methodology of these programmes and to compare them with other initiatives such as those carried out in the Fiji Islands and assessed at the third Global Strategy meeting (Suva, 16–18 July 1997).

The workshop also emphasized the vulnerability of the Caribbean heritage. First, there is the vulnerability of the intangible heritage, as the memory of the indigenous populations and, later, that of the African slaves were for long confiscated by the European colonizers only to be replaced by the memory of the colonial power rooted in a shameful nostalgia. The tangible heritage is also vulnerable: fragile, lightweight, perishable materials are at the mercy of seasonal climatic changes and even earthquakes. Economic vulnerability can also affect the heritage. Danielle Bégot spoke about Habitation Clément which, following the sugar-cane crisis, was converted into a banana plantation in 1997; if the banana trade is in turn destroyed as a result of the globalization of the economy – which favours the American multinationals – what will be the fate of this exceptional example of Martinique's industrial heritage?

27. *Fortificaciones del Caribe* [Caribbean Fortifications], Minutes of the meeting of experts, 31 July–2 August 1996, Cartagena de Indias, Colombia, Colcultura, 1997 (includes English and French versions of original text).

28. Sophie François, *Les pirogues monoxyles de la Dominique* [Monoxylic pirogues of Dominica], DEA thesis, University of Paris 1, 1998.

Lastly, there is social vulnerability. The Caribbean region must find a way to bring about fair and sustainable development by combating not only prejudices left over from the colonial era but also the perverse effects of the abandonment of rural areas, a corollary of unrestrained urbanization, exacerbated by international tourism, the immediate benefits of which do not always compensate for the damage done in terms of accelerated social breakdown and disintegration of biosphere reserves. Like every other paradise for tourists, the Caribbean region is being polluted and disrupted by the huge number of tourist hotels built on its coastlines.

A greater awareness of these various risks is vital to defining a heritage protection strategy and should both precede and inspire it. It is worth mentioning in this respect the Focus on the Caribbean symposium announced by Alwin Bully in his presentation. This symposium, scheduled for 10 October 1998 at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, will provide an opportunity to define a general strategy into which our own strategy can be integrated.<sup>29</sup>

The marked specificity of the Caribbean region – which makes it a striking cultural exception – should not discourage comparisons. The Caribbean has many features in common with other regions of the world. Three among them are noteworthy: questions about authenticity, arising from an awareness of the fragility of construction materials, to which answers may be found in the Nara Conference conclusions;<sup>30</sup> concerns about urbanization and its implications for the future of the heritage, which are widespread at a time when, according to statistics, 3.2 billion people, or approximately 50% of the world population, live in cities; fears about poorly regulated tourism, which are regularly the subject of symposia, some of which have been organized by UNESCO.<sup>31</sup> The observations on the vulnerability of the Caribbean heritage, about which the workshop participants were in full agreement, should as far as possible be placed in a more global context. It is not a question of minimizing or downplaying the risks due to disquieting regional circumstances, but of finding suitable answers by breaking down the accumulated problems in order to resolve them more effectively, just as a schoolchild reduces fractions to the lowest common denominator.

A third element, the multiplicity of the Caribbean heritage, was hinted at in nearly all the papers presented at the workshop – historic sedimentation, complexity and even ambiguity were the among the terms employed. Two speakers used the word ‘palimpsest’ to describe the difficulty of interpreting a heritage where a past that is not easily identifiable outcrops from beneath contemporary structures that are at times all too present, a heritage where nature can still be found everywhere beneath a random pile of cultural facts corresponding to very different spatio-temporal models. This observation, which can hardly do justice to the thinking of all those who expressed it in so many different ways, should lead at the very least to a common strategy.

There was a genuine consensus on encouraging complex nominations combining several cultural features within a relatively well-preserved natural environment. In that connection, the presentations of the La Navidad site (Haiti) by Harold Gaspard and Jean-Wilfried Bertrand, the Brimstone Hill site (Saint Kitts) by Larry Armony and the New Seville site (Jamaica) by Isabel Rigol laid the foundations for a model that could easily be used throughout the region as it takes into account natural elements and a wide variety of cultural features – archaeological remains or places of memory, colonial-era buildings or present-day agricultural landscapes, industrial environment, social representativeness and so forth.

The notion of the cultural landscape, which seems to run through a diverse range of nominations, may not be the ultima ratio of the Caribbean heritage strategy. Nevertheless it can be quite useful for the formulation of a certain number of nominations for inscription on the World Heritage List or even for the reshaping of proposals concerning sites such as La Isabela (Dominican Republic) or Puerto Real (Haiti) which were earlier rejected because of their exclusively archaeological focus.

The idea of groups of buildings, which is enshrined in Article 1 of the 1972 Convention, can also be of great help in resolving the problems inherent in Caribbean architecture. Patricia Green’s typological study reveals a rich series of sequences, each worthy of interest but, in terms of individual monuments, hard to fit into the selective logic of the Convention. For example, Aboriginal or Amerindian architecture can only be understood through archaeological evidence or reconstituted structures, which means including the most representative traces in broader nominations for a site or cultural landscape. While many authentic examples are still extant, colonial architecture cannot easily be reduced to a simple list of important buildings. It would be hard to find the equivalent of the grand cathedrals and monasteries built from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries in the major towns of Mexico and Central America, or of the grand neoclassical plantations of Virginia, Georgia, the Carolinas, Florida and Texas. On the other hand, the Caribbean region still has, located in relatively well-preserved historic centres, coherent groups of public, private, civil, religious and military buildings which were built or rebuilt during the centuries following the arrival of the Europeans in 1492. The Caribbean still has large sugar and coffee plantations where industrial infrastructures and housing for masters, slaves and freed slaves are set in agrarian landscapes. All these ensembles, especially in urban contexts, are part of the heritage, not so much because of the juxtaposition of elements from different periods of history but by virtue of a kind of cultural polyphony shaped by diverse influences and by creolization, which is virtually ubiquitous.

29. See *Focus on the Caribbean. Caribbean People: Tapestry of the Past, Fabric for the Future, Final Report*, Paris, UNESCO, 1999.

30. Knut Einar Larsen (ed.), *Nara Conference on Authenticity*, Paris, UNESCO, 1995.

31. *Culture, Tourism, Development: Crucial Issues for the XXIst Century*, Paris, UNESCO, 1997.

Vital to the region, the phenomenon of creolization transcends the various definitions of colonial architecture. This architecture can be reduced neither to a political logic (if the European models were adopted without variation, why is there such a broad range in Spanish colonial architecture from Mexico to Argentina, from the Caribbean to the Philippines?) nor to an aesthetic principle (there is not, for a given period, a single colonial Baroque or even, later on, a Palladian style common to all plantations). Creolization, which went through numerous variations and distortions,<sup>32</sup> remains the primary feature of an original style of architecture, one of the first in the world to experiment, beginning in the sixteenth century, with globalization by incorporating various, at times heterogeneous, references into architectural groupings whose unity is due as much to chance exchanges as to the use of the same techniques. It is worth noting here that, following an amendment in 1994 to cultural criterion (ii) of the *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*, it became possible to do full justice to acculturation phenomena that had originally been underestimated.

Cultural landscapes, groups of buildings, sites – these are the standard terms found in the majority of the nominations suggested at the workshop. The idea of identifying diverse but complementary cultural and natural values within a given set of boundaries appears to have more support than the kind of bridge-building between states that would lead to the submission of resolutely thematic nominations. Of the latter, only three specific examples were provided: the industrial heritage, on which there was no consensus; Caribbean fortifications, based on a preliminary study the results of which were presented by Olga Pizano; and petroglyphs, shown by Jean-Pierre Giraud to be present in the Greater Antilles and most of the islands of the Lesser Antilles.

The observations made with regard to these thematic studies should be transformed into recommendations. There was general agreement that a transnational inventory had to be carried out before proceeding to choose significant elements that might be submitted for nomination to the World Heritage List. The need for a scientific inventory in which precise descriptions and graphic and photographic evidence could be combined with preliminary safeguarding measures – making casts of petroglyphs, for example – has been reiterated at all the Global Strategy meetings. It has been accepted since the first of those meetings that the World Heritage Committee could provide preparatory assistance for the elaboration of such inventories.

32. I have borrowed these terms from Danielle Bégot, 'Imitation et créolité: une problématique des Beaux-arts en espace créole insulaire, le cas des Antilles francophones, Martinique, Guadeloupe, Haïti, XVIII<sup>e</sup> – XX<sup>e</sup> siècles' [Imitation and Creolity: a fine-arts problem in a Creole island region, the case of the French-speaking Antilles, Martinique, Guadeloupe, Haiti, 18th – 20th centuries], *Études créoles*, Vol. X, No. 1, 1987, pp. 118–43.

## The World Heritage Global Strategy Action Plan 1999-2000 for Latin America and the Caribbean

by Herman van Hooff

The World Heritage Committee, at its 22nd session held in Kyoto, Japan from 30 November to 5 December 1998, examined regional strategies for the implementation of the Global Strategy for a Representative World Heritage List and adopted a Global Strategy Action Plan for the years 1999-2000.

The *World Heritage Global Strategy Action Plan 1999-2000 for Latin America and the Caribbean* concludes that the activities undertaken over the past years have contributed considerably to a greater awareness on the *World Heritage Convention* and the -changing- concepts of World Heritage among natural and cultural heritage specialists and States Parties. The number of State Parties with World Heritage properties is increasing and several States Parties not represented on the World Heritage List are preparing or have submitted nominations (Guyana, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Suriname). However, it notes that so far activities have hardly resulted in a more-balanced or diversified World Heritage List for the region. New nominations follow the existing pattern of pre-colonial and colonial periods with a strong emphasis on colonial historical cities/centres.

The Action Plan also recognises that there is a need for expert meetings to explore different categories of World Heritage, for example, the 1998 meeting on *the Cultural Heritage of the Caribbean and the World Heritage Convention* identified specific themes to be further explored in expert meetings (Arawak and Carib cultures, rock art, vernacular architecture, industrial heritage, cultural landscapes). Central American countries have requested for a cultural landscape meeting for their countries. At the same time the Action Plan notes that a problem seems to be how to transfer new concepts of heritage and the results of expert meetings to the decision making process and how to get them transformed into concrete actions by States Parties.

On the basis of the above assessment, the World Heritage Committee adopted the following for Latin America and the Caribbean:

### Latin America

#### Objective:

Awareness of the Global Strategy for a more balanced and diversified World Heritage List, to include properties in categories such as cultural landscapes, nineteenth and twentieth century heritage, industrial heritage.

#### Targets:

Expert meeting reports on cultural landscapes covering the whole of Latin America.



Preparatory Assistance to four States Parties for the preparation/revision of tentative lists and nominations to include cultural landscapes and/or nineteenth and twentieth heritage.

### Activities:

- Advice to States Parties on categories, criteria and procedures for the nomination and inscription of properties on the World Heritage List (information, staff missions) and the preparation of tentative lists and nominations (Preparatory Assistance, upon request). Particular attention will be given to categories currently underrepresented in the region, such as cultural landscapes, nineteenth and twentieth centuries heritage, geological and fossil sites, wetlands and coastal and marine areas. Encourage States Parties with Amazonian Moist Forests (Peru, Bolivia, Brazil, Venezuela) to identify sites and prepare nominations, co-ordinate activities with WWF and IUCN staff in the region (1999-2000).
- Publication and distribution of the report of the expert meeting on *Cultural Landscapes in the Andean region*, in Spanish (1999).
- Expert meeting on *Cultural Landscapes in Central America* (request made by Costa Rica, El Salvador and Nicaragua; 1999). Publication and distribution of the report (1999).
- Expert meeting on *Cultural Landscapes in the MERCOSUR* (Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay) (2000). Publication and distribution of the report (2000).
- Continue the identification of nineteenth and twentieth century heritage through ICOMOS/DOCOMOMO activities (1999-2000).

### The Caribbean

#### Objective:

Awareness of the Global Strategy for a more balanced and diversified World Heritage List, particularly a full and balanced representation of the Caribbean on the World Heritage List.

#### Targets:

Adherence to the *World Heritage Convention* by two non-States Parties.

Preparatory Assistance to four States Parties for the preparation/revision of tentative lists and nomination dossiers.

Two thematic studies completed.

Complete the first phase of studies and promotion with a joint culture-nature conference on *The World Heritage Convention in the Caribbean*.

#### Activities:

- Promotion of adherence to the *World Heritage Convention* by non States Parties (1999-2000).
- Advice to States Parties on categories, criteria and procedures for the nomination and inscription of properties on the World Heritage List (information, staff missions) and the preparation of tentative lists and nominations (Preparatory Assistance, upon request) (1999-2000).
- Publication and distribution of the report of the expert meeting (Martinique, 1998) on the *Cultural Heritage of the Caribbean and the World Heritage Convention* (1999).
- Expert meeting on *the Natural Heritage of the Caribbean* (international assistance request made by Suriname in 1998, scheduled for 1999).
- Thematic studies on matters such as Arawak and Carib cultures, rock art, vernacular architecture, industrial heritage, cultural landscapes, marine sites (proposals to be made by States Parties; 1999-2000).
- Meeting of Caribbean natural and cultural heritage experts to discuss potential World Heritage sites and collaboration among the Caribbean countries. Compilation of existing studies, organization of meeting and publication/distribution of report in English, French and Spanish.

# The Natural Heritage of the Caribbean and the *World Heritage Convention* (Paramaribo, Suriname, 2000)

by Herman van Hooff and Niklas Schulze

**Thirty-one experts from the region and representatives from UNESCO, IUCN, Conservation International (CI) and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), as well as twenty-one observers, participated in the meeting, which was organized by the World Heritage Centre and the Suriname authorities.**

## Recommendations

The participants of the seminar on the Natural Heritage of the Caribbean make the following recommendations to the World Heritage Committee and its Bureau, the Caribbean countries, UNESCO and other organizations as appropriate. They recommend that:

### Awareness building

- Member States of UNESCO in the Caribbean region, who have not yet done so, be encouraged to ratify the *World Heritage Convention*;
- national awareness be raised about natural heritage, cultural landscapes and traditions – making full use of the media and the World Heritage education kit *World Heritage in Young Hands*;
- a publication on natural heritage in the Caribbean be produced with funding from the World Heritage Fund (CCA, IUCN, UNESCO);

### Policy

- States Parties be encouraged to develop and establish national heritage legislation;
- States Parties prepare national inventories, national sites and other types of recognition of their heritage and formulate appropriate national policies/strategies;
- regional organizations (e.g. Caribbean Conservation Association) be encouraged to become more active in the implementation of the *World Heritage Convention*;
- UNESCO assist in sharing information on donors and encouraging them to consider funding for projects at (potential) World Heritage sites;

### Capacity building and training

- training workshops for the preparation of natural nominations be organized to enhance professional skills;
- training seminars on the identification of cultural landscapes in the Caribbean be held, wherever possible within ongoing activities and programmes;
- a specific workshop on the co-operation concerning protected areas with Guyana, Suriname and French

Guiana be organized, taking into account the ecosystems of the Guyana shield (Colombia, Brazil and Venezuela should be invited as observers);

- institutional and human capacity be strengthened in order to ensure effective enforcement of legislation;
- incentives to attract and retain personnel in protected areas management be provided, such as the provision of the necessary facilities and equipment in protected areas;
- Caribbean island states be encouraged to share their experiences and expertise and UNESCO be asked to facilitate this; in particular, a review of marine protected areas be carried out and the preparation of joint/transboundary nominations be encouraged;

### Management

- a framework for the involvement of local communities in management planning be developed (as required under the Biodiversity Convention);
- local communities benefit from sustainable development (including tourism, cultural practices etc.) at sites;
- an integrated approach towards tourism and tourism planning be encouraged, making full use of inter-sectorial linkages and taking into account community development and joint facility schemes with local communities;
- intra- and inter-regional twinning arrangements/schemes to share experiences and skills be prepared (e.g. guidelines for nature tourism and environmental interpretation).

## Plantation Systems in the Caribbean

*(Paramaribo, Suriname, 2001; undertaken jointly with the UNESCO Slave Route Project)*

by Herman van Hooff and Niklas Schulze

The expert meeting on Plantation Systems in the Caribbean explored the heritage connected to plantation systems of the region in relation to the *World Heritage Convention* as well as in the context of the *Slave Route Project (SRP)*. It looked at plantation systems in the broadest sense, integrating aspects such as cultural landscapes, industrial heritage, monumental and vernacular architecture, multiculturalism, places of memory as well as the concept of cultural tourism of memory.

Experts from eleven countries participated in this meeting, as well as representatives from UNESCO (World Heritage Centre, SRP, Kingston Office), ICOMOS and the Museums Association of the Caribbean (MAC).

The representatives of the Caribbean countries gave presentations on the plantation systems in their respective countries, while speakers from international organizations outlined the various programmes in the region. Working sessions on lists of sites to be promoted as places of memory and/or potential World Heritage properties led to a set of recommendations, in which the widening of the definition of plantation systems to include fortifications, market places and churches should be highlighted. Caribbean states were encouraged to ensure the preservation and sustainable development of plantation systems as heritage sites and/or working plantations. States Parties were further encouraged to complete national inventories and Tentative Lists of sites for potential inscription on the World Heritage List under special consideration of sites forming part of plantation systems. Discussions should be initiated and regional co-operation enhanced in order to promote (transfrontier) serial nominations for inscription on the World Heritage List of heritage sites representing aspects connected to plantation systems common to more than one State Party.

### Recommendations

In order to bring the Slave Route Project and World Heritage in the Caribbean subregion to their full potential concerning the identification, protection, conservation, education, scientific research, artistic expression and cultural tourism, as well as to initiate a series of dynamic activities in keeping with the aims and objectives of the project and those of the World Heritage Centre, the participants of the expert meeting on Plantation Systems in the Caribbean give the following set of recommendations.

### General recommendations

- Allow more flexibility in the definition of plantation systems, bearing in mind that a wider definition could include e.g. fortifications, market places, port areas and churches.
- Recognize the role of the indigenous peoples of the Caribbean in delaying the establishment of plantations and in resisting against the plantation system. This should be considered in the deliberations concerning properties proposed for inclusion in the SRP as Places of Memory and/or the World Heritage List.
- Recognize the Santo Domingo effort of commemoration of the 500th anniversary of the arrival of the first African slaves to the Americas.

### Recommendations for UNESCO (especially SRP and World Heritage Committee)

- Forward the current documentation or update of the activities in the SRP to ICOMOS in preparation of the ICOMOS meeting in Zimbabwe in October 2001 with the objective to strengthen the relationship between the SRP and ICOMOS. The documentation should be accompanied by a letter from the Director of the SRP that should affirm the establishment of collaboration between the two. Similar documentation should be sent to ICOM.
- Extend the SRP for four more years. A resolution formally requesting this extension will be submitted by Jamaica. It is recommended that all States Parties request their National Committees to support the resolution for extension of the SRP, in particular, those States Parties that have voting rights in UNESCO (a resolution to this effect was adopted by the meeting).
- Establish (as already suggested at the 2nd Caribbean Workshop on UNESCO/WTO Cultural Tourism Programme SRP) a SRP Secretariat in order to actualize and manage the SRP in the Caribbean subregion. A central role in establishing this Secretariat should be played by UNESCO. It was furthermore suggested that the Secretariat should initially be established at the UNESCO subregional office in Kingston (Jamaica). UNESCO extrabudgetary funds should be designated for the initial establishment of this Secretariat.
- Seek reconfirmation of the commitment of the WTO in the Cultural Tourism Programme of the SRP. This entails WTO participation and support for continuing programmes and activities of the SRP.
- Forward relevant documentation to National Committees and that information on the SRP and World Heritage be sent to relevant regional organizations for closer co-operation.

- Actively seek support and co-operation of the governments of states participating in the SRP and/or World Heritage especially for financial contributions to the projects.
- Organize the next SRP meeting on the subject of market systems in the Caribbean (to be held in Curaçao in 2002).

### **Recommendations for the Caribbean States**

- Ensure the preservation and sustainable development of plantation systems as heritage sites and/or working plantation, we recommend to raise extra budgetary funds through private/public fund-raising. The protection and conservation of the sites should also be encouraged through e.g. tax exemptions, grants and/or awards from foundations.
- Design and initiate a systematic regional training programme focused on the identification, protection and conservation of Places of Memory and (potential) World Heritage sites as well as on cultural tourism.
- Set up national committees for the SRP, as was previously recommended during the 2nd Caribbean SRP workshop in Barbados in 2000, where not already in place.
- Prepare national inventories and Tentative Lists of sites for potential inscription on the World Heritage List under special consideration of sites forming part of plantation systems. This could be done in co-operation with heritage organizations on a regional or national level.
- Initiate discussion and enhance regional co-operation in order to promote (transfrontier) serial nominations for inscription on the World Heritage List of aspects of heritage sites connected to plantation systems common to more than one State Party.

## Regional Training Course on the Application of the *World Heritage Convention* and its Role in Sustainable Development and Tourism in the Caribbean (*Roseau, Dominica, 2001*)

by Herman van Hooff and Niklas Schulze

The principle objectives of the training course were to increase the capacity of states in the Caribbean to implement the *World Heritage Convention*, to increase the knowledge in the Caribbean of the aims, objectives, principles and operations of the *World Heritage Convention* and to explore its relevance in the Caribbean context, mainly in relation to sustainable development and tourism. Another objective was to provide a forum for networking and regional collaboration among States Parties, NGOs and experts from the Caribbean. The course had immediate positive results, such as the formulation of recommendations in the framework of the *Dominica Document 2001 (included)*, creation of a Caribbean network and of the *Dominica UNESCO Heritage Organization (DUHO)*.

### The training course

The ten-day course included three field exercises, nine modules and thirty-six working sessions with a number of additional special sessions. The modules were arranged as follows:

- Module I: World Heritage in the Caribbean Context
- Module II: Identification and Definition of World Heritage
- Module III: Sustainability and Protection as Requirements for World Heritage Listing
- Module IV: The Nomination Process
- Module V: Post-Inscription Process
- Module VI: Economics and Value of Heritage
- Module VII: Sustainable Development of Heritage and Tourism
- Module VIII: National Action Plans for the Implementation of the WH Convention
- Module IX: The Way Forward

In one of the special sessions the invited regional NGOs presented their cultural and natural heritage work, other sessions were dedicated to presentations by participants outlining the state of implementation of the *World Heritage Convention* in their countries.

The three field trips to heritage sites in Dominica, of which the trip to Cabrits National Park and the hike across Morne Trois Pitons National Park (inscribed on the World Heritage List since 1997) have to be highlighted, gave the participants a common base of knowledge, which later facilitated discussions on subjects such as buffer zones and (World Heritage) values as well as exercises, e.g. filling in a nomination dossier.

The forty-six participants were registered as follows:

- Eight delegates from Caribbean States Parties
- Two delegates from Caribbean non-States Parties
- Three delegates from Caribbean Territories (other States Parties)
- Nine participants from Dominica
- Five representatives of Caribbean regional organizations
- Seven experts from the Caribbean region
- Three experts from outside the Caribbean
- Three representatives of the Advisory Bodies (ICOMOS, IUCN, ICCROM)
- Six UNESCO staff

The delegates from Caribbean States Parties, non-States Parties and overseas territories were identified by and through the respective National Commissions; those from the regional organizations and Advisory Bodies by the organizations concerned; other experts and resource persons were identified on the basis of discussions at the preparatory workshop in January 2001.

### Results and achievements

Although a detailed analysis and evaluation of the results and achievements of the course is to be undertaken (questionnaires were filled in by all participants), it can be said that the course fully met its objectives. To follow up on the issues raised during the course and in order to continue the exchange of opinions, the Caribbean Conservation Association representative established and hosts an e-mail discussion group.

Representatives of States Parties and non-States Parties will develop follow-up activities within their institutions and countries. They are expected to submit reports on these activities.

During the final days of the course, participants prepared the *Dominica Document 2001* in which the main principles and approaches were laid down for the application of the Convention in the Caribbean and the preservation of the cultural and natural heritage in general.

## Follow-up activities

The World Heritage Centre will follow up the issues raised during the course by:

- compiling all papers, presentations and reports from participants;
- completing the evaluation of the course (analysis of questionnaires);
- preparing a full report of the course. Submission of the report to the participants, States Parties in the region, the World Heritage Committee and the Italian Government;
- discussing the course and World Heritage activities in the Caribbean with Permanent Delegations, National Commissions, etc.;
- publicizing the course and its results on the World Heritage website, Newsletter and in the form of a publication;
- revising and updating the Global Strategy Action Plan for the Caribbean 2000–2002. Propose to the World Heritage Committee a budget under the Global Strategy for a representative and Balanced World Heritage List for the years 2002 and 2003;
- actively participating in the electronic discussion group that was set up in the Caribbean;
- continuing a proactive approach and paying particular attention to the Caribbean region in the work of the Latin America and Caribbean Unit of the World Heritage Centre;
- identifying needs for follow-up assistance to States Parties and exploring possibilities of further financial assistance.

## Dominica Document 2001

The Caribbean has an immense cultural and natural heritage due to a particular historical development and to specific geographical and climatic conditions and reflects the mixture of Amerindian, European, African, Asian and other peoples. As a result, a magnificent ensemble of natural and archaeological sites, cultural landscapes, historic towns and buildings, maritime heritage, as well as art works and traditions, can be appreciated. The vernacular character of a great part of this legacy is precisely one of its main attributes.

Notwithstanding, these values are threatened due to their fragility, economic conditions, recurrent natural disasters, and in many cases, by a lack of understanding of the heritage as an asset in the sustainable development process.

Considering the above, the participants of the Regional Training Course on the Application of the *World Heritage Convention* and its Role in Sustainable Development and Tourism in the Caribbean, gathered in Roseau, Dominica, from 24 September to 3 October 2001, declare that:

1. The *World Heritage Convention* is the most universal intergovernmental legal instrument for the protection of the cultural and natural heritage of humankind. Its principles and achievements should serve as stimulus and inspiration to protect and preserve not only the sites inscribed on the World Heritage List, but also other sites whether they are of outstanding universal value or not.

2. Each of the governments and regional NGO partners in the Caribbean subregion need to take urgent and systematic action in a co-ordinated manner to preserve the cultural and natural heritage of the Caribbean.

3. The preservation and conservation of Caribbean heritage as an expression of identity and a basic resource for sustainable development should be examined as a matter of priority at governmental levels within the fora of CARICOM, the Association of Caribbean States (ACS), etc., in order to generate awareness, subregional collaboration and concrete actions.

4. Urgent action should be taken to integrate the preservation of heritage in national policies and development strategies and to ensure intersectorial and interministerial co-operation (cultural, natural, touristic and developmental entities, as well as private and public sectors).

5. Intelligent territorial and urban planning should be undertaken within the national development plans in order to guarantee a balanced land use, an adequate distribution of functions, the proper and fruitful orientation of tourism and other investments, the satisfaction of social needs and, in general, a prudent use of the natural and cultural environment as assets for economic and social progress.

6. Legislation, as well as institutional and management arrangements should be reviewed, revised, if necessary, and fully applied in response to sustainable development in the Caribbean and in order to give the heritage a role in contemporary society.

7. Risk preparedness and mitigation should be fully integrated into the management planning for cultural and natural heritage sites in order to avoid irretrievable loss of heritage in cases of disaster. Emergency response should be provided for the safeguarding of cultural and natural heritage (e.g. the volcanic eruption on the island of Montserrat).

8. Rehabilitation projects of historic towns, monuments and/or cultural landscapes should integrate tourism, community participation, the improvement of the quality of life and other issues related to sustainable development. Demonstration projects could be developed to this effect. With this purpose, it is indispensable to actively raise funds from and collaborate with governments, private sector, foundations, international governmental and non-governmental organizations, universities, and others.

**9.** Concepts of authenticity and integrity of heritage should be considered in the light of the particular social and economic conditions of the Caribbean subregion.

**10.** Broad education and awareness-building programmes should be directed to the public in general and young people in particular.

**11.** Systematic subregional and local training programmes with a Caribbean focus and integrating heritage protection, management and tourism should be initiated by the Caribbean countries utilizing new technologies for better dissemination of information at a regional level with the assistance of UNESCO, ICOMOS, IUCN, ICCROM, CCA, CARIMOS, MAC, the International Association for Caribbean Archaeology (IACA), the Eastern Caribbean Coalition for Environmental Awareness (ECCEA), and other entities.

**12.** Countries should consider submitting requests for international assistance from the World Heritage Fund for the preparation of National Action Plans, Tentative Lists and nominations, as well as training activities.

The participants sincerely thank the UNESCO World Heritage Centre, the UNESCO Subregional Adviser for Culture, the Government of the Commonwealth of Dominica through its Ministry of Tourism, the National Commission for UNESCO and Dominica NGOs for organizing and supporting this training course, which they consider of major significance for the Caribbean and they also thank the Italian Government for its generous financial contribution.

The course provided a unique opportunity to better understand the aims and operations of the *World Heritage Convention* and its potential significance for the region. It also provided for exchange of opinions and experiences and strengthening the regional networking and co-operation.

The participants encourage UNESCO and the World Heritage Committee to continue to give major attention to the Caribbean in the context of the Global Strategy for a representative and balanced World Heritage List and to provide continued assistance and develop further activities aimed at the full application of the *World Heritage Convention* in the Caribbean subregion.

## Meeting on the Harmonization of Tentative Lists and Possibilities for Serial and Transboundary Nominations for Eastern Caribbean States Parties

(Kingstown, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, 2003)

by Ron van Oers

**A total of eighteen Caribbean resource persons participated in the meeting in Saint Vincent, which included representatives from Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago, and the French Overseas Territory of Guadeloupe. The Programme Officer for Culture from the UNESCO Kingston Office unfortunately had to cancel his participation, while the present author represented the World Heritage Centre. Three Caribbean cultural and natural heritage experts participated as well: Patricia Green, cultural heritage specialist from Jamaica, Lennox Honychurch, historian from Dominica, and Richard Robertson, geologist/volcanologist from Saint Vincent, based in Trinidad and Tobago.**

The meeting was opened by Carlton Hall, officer of the Ministry of Tourism, followed by an address given by Rene Baptiste, Minister of Culture of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. Ron van Oers, Chief of Unit a.i. for Latin America and the Caribbean, UNESCO World Heritage Centre, briefly explained the background and objectives of the meeting.

After the official opening, Ron van Oers gave a presentation on the 'State of Implementation of the *World Heritage Convention* in the Caribbean – Opportunities and Challenges for an increased Representation'. Patricia Green followed with a presentation on the preliminary conclusions of the Periodic Reporting exercise for the Caribbean and possible directions for the future.

It was explained that of the fourteen Caribbean States Parties, only seven had officially submitted Tentative Lists: Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, Saint Kitts and Nevis and Suriname. The meeting, therefore, was highly relevant in explaining the benefits of establishing such a list (functioning primarily as a planning tool, for both the State Party and the World Heritage Centre) and in stimulating the development and submission of Tentative Lists.

Proposals were put forward to co-operate in the preparation of a Caribbean Amerindian Archaeology/Cultural Landscape serial nomination between Belize, Dominica and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, involving the heritage of the Garifuna people. Another suggestion was made involving Plantation Systems, in particular sugar technology in Barbados, the Dominican Republic, Saint

Kitts and Nevis and Antigua. For natural heritage, suggestions involved the Caribbean volcanoes of the 'Soufrières', located in Montserrat, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Martinique, Saint Lucia and Dominica. The Tobago Cays between Grenada and Saint Vincent were highlighted as important marine sites.

In the discussion that followed, it was first explained that the revised *Operational Guidelines*, scheduled for adoption at the World Heritage Committee meeting in China in 2004, includes the notion of 'incremental serial nominations': the nomination of a collection of sites not physically connected and phased in time. Particular notice was made of the importance of defining Caribbean identity prior to the process of identification of heritage, which would also impact on the notion of authenticity. Authenticity, it was explained, was a paradox regarding the nature of the Caribbean, which is a melting pot of imported and immigrated populations on (very) small island territories (as opposed to continents, like the United States). The theme for the Caribbean could be 'Unity in Diversity' and suggestions were made to look for funding to execute a Caribbean-wide study to define identity in relation to authenticity in a Caribbean context (similar to the African exercise).

Furthermore, it was debated that elements of a Caribbean Action Plan should reflect on the 4 Cs adopted by the World Heritage Committee: Credibility, Conservation, Capacity Building and Communication of significance and values. An overview was given of the execution of the Periodic Reporting exercise for the Caribbean, its objectives and the state of conservation of the sites. Certain States Parties representatives reflected on some of the practicalities, in particular the difficulties of interpretation of the questionnaires relating to the application of the Convention. A revision of the process was strongly suggested, as currently there was confusion about the exact meaning of and intention behind the questions, leading to wrongly formulated answers and inaccurate interpretations.

In addition, the need for a national policy framework for (cultural) heritage conservation was stressed, explained through the case of Saint Kitts and Nevis where such a policy is absent and an NGO has been appointed for the management of Brimstone Hill Fortress National Park, a World Heritage site. This generated a discussion about the responsibilities of the State Party, related management activities and tasks, which need to be clearly documented.



Overall, representatives emphasized a growing understanding and awareness of (the meaning of) heritage in the Caribbean, including its implications and potentials for development, highlighted by the case of Dominica. Caribbean historian Lennox Honychurch stressed the need to build upon previous UNESCO meetings held in the region, which have indicated important themes for heritage identification and nomination, such as the seminar on archaeological sites (Santo Domingo, July 2003).

Richard Robertson of the Seismic Research Unit (University of the West Indies, Trinidad and Tobago) gave a presentation on 'The Lesser Antilles Subduction Zone – Effects on the development of landforms', explaining the formation of the Caribbean islands in recent times. The volcanic islands of the inner arc in the Caribbean were not unique in this respect, he explained, as other island arcs of volcanoes exist elsewhere (Indonesia; Japan). However, Barbados, in consisting of scraped-off sediment, was considered to be unique. In particular Kick 'em Jenny, an underwater volcano north of Grenada, was unique as landform including accompanying exotic marine life.

After this general introduction and discussion, the States Parties representatives (totalling seven) presented their Tentative Lists, or provisional lists, of cultural and natural heritage of potential outstanding universal value located on their territories. It was noted that Trinidad and Tobago had not yet ratified the *World Heritage Convention*, but was participating because it was in the process of doing so. The representative wanted to make a statement on issues of protection and conservation, highlighted by a preliminary selection of properties and sites of potential supra-national importance.

### Conclusions

- The participants concluded that, in principle, the establishment of a Tentative List could serve multiple functions and needs, not necessarily only relating to World Heritage nomination and listing: it is primarily a tool for planning, enabling prioritization and proper management of resources for heritage conservation;
- States Parties representatives agreed to submit formal Tentative Lists to the UNESCO World Heritage Centre by November 2004;
- For cultural heritage, it was agreed to aim for a prioritization of the Slave Route Project as well as Caribbean Fortifications as potential Caribbean-wide serial nominations;
- For natural heritage, priority should be given to nominations focusing on volcanic landforms, which run over the complete arc of Eastern Caribbean islands, as well as marine sites and dry forests;
- The Tobago Cays were indicated as part of a potential transboundary nomination between Grenada and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, comprising a large marine site;
- It was agreed that the above-mentioned possibilities should be further discussed at the national level to

obtain formal government approval and that during the upcoming Saint Lucia Conference, scheduled for February 2004, a consensus should be reached on prior. Furthermore, the Saint Lucia conference should have a political component, next to a technical one, aiming for a conference declaration asking for (more) support for Caribbean heritage conservation activities, including World Heritage.

### Recommendations on the way forward

(Actions presented are not sequential, but can take place in parallel and are iterative.)

1. Discuss proposals for draft Tentative List as elaborated during the Saint Vincent meeting with relevant authorities at home, and obtain approval;
2. Submit formal Tentative Lists by the State Party to UNESCO World Heritage Centre (example to be found on WHC website);
3. Identify the components of serial nominations within the territory of the State Party;
4. Establish and/or improve a policy for heritage conservation and legislation for heritage protection, in particular for cultural heritage, in relation to the 2004 Periodic Report for the Caribbean;
5. Establish a work plan for activities of conservation and sustainable management of properties and sites on the Tentative List (including education, promotion, funding, monitoring, etc.);
6. Draw up a priority list for nomination of properties and sites to the World Heritage List;
7. When involving a transboundary and/or serial nomination, obtain and maintain support of decision-makers to be formalized in a co-operation agreement (MoA) between concerned States Parties (provide example of the Philippines);
8. For transboundary and/or serial nominations and between the States Parties concerned:
  - identify and promote common values;
  - promote co-ordinated and co-operative activities;
  - achieve co-ordinated planning and protected area development;
  - develop co-operative agreements;
  - work towards funding sustainability;
  - monitor and assess progress.

Actions 1 and 2 would be established in 2004; actions 3 to 6 are for the biennium 2004–2005.

## Conference on the Development of a Caribbean Action Plan

(Castries, Saint Lucia, 2004)

by Herman van Hooff, Larry Armony and Ron van Oers

At a meeting of the Caribbean subregion held in Haiti in June 2003, it was agreed to formulate an Action Plan for the Caribbean to support the Periodic Report on the Application of the *World Heritage Convention* in Latin America and the Caribbean, which is to be presented to the World Heritage Committee at its annual meeting in July 2004.

The Action Plan is to take into account the 4 Cs as adopted by the World Heritage Committee in the Global Strategy: Credibility, Conservation, Communication and Capacity Building. The elements of an Action Plan based on these 4 Cs had been outlined at the Haiti meeting, and the first three provide the basis for this elaboration of an Action Plan for the period 2004–2014.

### Credibility

**Discussion:** The terms ‘heritage’, ‘authenticity’ and ‘integrity’ need to be clearly defined. While the former is universally understood as referring to the cultural and natural legacy of the past; the other two speak to ‘values’ and must be interpreted within the context of the Caribbean. Such an interpretation can be aided and informed by the preparation of comprehensive inventories of natural and cultural heritage; and the discussion must first be engaged at national levels.

### Recommended actions

1. Each delegate to the Saint Lucia meeting is to present within two weeks a report of the meeting to the respective States Parties, to include the following proposals:
  - (a) that there be held a national consultation on ‘Heritage, Authenticity and Integrity’, to take place by September 2004;
  - (b) that the preparation of national inventories of natural sites and cultural heritage sites and monuments be finalized (all the required technical formats having already been formulated by CARIMOS and CCA).
2. The World Heritage Committee is to write to the States Parties recommending such national consultations on Heritage, Authenticity and Integrity and providing guidelines for such consultations.
3. The World Heritage Committee is to convene, by March 2005 ideally or not later than June 2005 (bearing in mind the necessity of procuring funding), a subregional consultation on ‘Heritage, Authenticity and Integrity’ involving selected regional experts; and representatives of the States Parties, the World Heritage Committee, ICOMOS and IUCN. Such a consultation/conference

should also review the status of national inventories of the States Parties with the view to identifying challenges and ways and means of overcoming these.

### Tentative Lists and Thematic Studies

**Discussion:** Under the general concept of credibility, ‘Tentative Lists’ and ‘Thematic Studies’ were examined. The following principles were accepted:

- Tentative Lists must satisfy the World Heritage criteria and demonstrate universal value, authenticity and integrity;
- Tentative Lists were to be regarded as tools for the World Heritage Committee and also for the States Parties. Thus, if the same or similar properties from around the world appeared in large numbers on Tentative Lists, few would stand a chance for nomination – hence the desirability of the harmonization of the lists;
- Tentative Lists were not necessarily to be fixed, although it was not desirable that they be changed frequently;
- one should move beyond the definition of ‘heritage’ as being synonymous with ‘antiquity’: the NASA space station and the Tuff Gong music studies were given as examples of modern monuments which are of national and even universal heritage value.

It was revealed that an expert meeting to establish a Tentative List of Caribbean archaeological sites had been convened. It was also pointed out that some States Parties had not yet presented Tentative Lists and may be at a disadvantage if their sites were similar to those which had already done so; but an ‘artificial’ or provisional deadline or November 2004 had been established to allow time for such newcomers to get on board.

### Recommended actions

1. State Party representatives are to review the harmonized Tentative Lists produced by the meeting in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines held in November 2003; and other States Parties not represented were encouraged to add to the list those sites to be considered for serial nomination.
2. States Parties are to request the World Heritage Committee to circulate their Tentative Lists among their colleague States Parties of the Caribbean region.
3. Various thematic studies undertaken for Latin America and the Caribbean or resulting from workshops and expert meetings are to be compiled and circulated to States Parties in advance of the consultation/conference proposed for March 2005.

4. The Slave Route – Places of Memory project is to be designated as a priority theme in which follow-up research be facilitated by the World Heritage Committee in collaboration with one or more regional institutions, such as the University of the West Indies, and organizations such as the Association of Caribbean Historians; to be completed by June 2005.

### Conservation/Management

**Discussion:** It was accepted that the formulation of Management Plans were to involve community participation and seek to create employment opportunities and alleviate poverty. Further, strategies were to be developed for procuring international and regional funding assistance and for engaging private sector collaboration.

#### Recommended actions

1. A meeting is to be convened within the next three years of managers of natural and cultural heritage sites, for the purposes of exchanging intelligence, sharing experiences, and forging closer collaboration.
2. Efforts are to be made to establish communication with national and regional agencies and international agencies working in the region to discover what they may be doing in the areas of heritage conservation, management and training and how such efforts could be integrated; such efforts to include: a Caribbean Tourism Organization project for a meeting of managers of World Heritage and potential World Heritage sites, which meeting should specifically include representatives from territories and states who are relative newcomers to the World Heritage process; the OAS STEP Programme; the training programme of the Antigua National Park Authority; CCA; and the Association of Caribbean States.
3. The World Heritage Committee is to identify and distribute training manuals in heritage conservation and management, and in risk preparedness and mitigation.
4. The World Heritage Centre is to facilitate the preparation of a manual for best practice management of natural and cultural sites.
5. The States Parties, in conjunction with the World Heritage Committee, are to be urged to request of UNESCO that the Caribbean office (located in Jamaica) be strengthened so as to facilitate the co-ordination and implementation of action plans relating to the World Heritage strategic objectives in the Caribbean.
6. The State Party representatives are to lobby their respective governments and/or disaster management and response agencies to incorporate natural sites and cultural heritage sites within their national programmes and be responsive to the particular circumstances of such sites. Further, the State Party representatives and/or the National Commissions are urged to request the World Heritage Committee to write to the States Parties towards achieving the same actions.

7. The World Heritage Committee is to seek further information regarding the intention of the Dominican Republic to establish a training and reactive centre for disaster management, mitigation and response for cultural properties to serve the Caribbean region; and the States Parties are to be encouraged to express support for such an initiative of the Dominican Republic.
8. State Party representatives and/or National Commissions are to propose to their respective governments that they request the World Heritage Committee to intervene and facilitate the release by European countries of information and copied documentation pertaining to natural and cultural heritage sites of their former (and current) colonies in the Caribbean.
9. States Parties are urged to seek assurance of the World Heritage Committee that every effort would be made to provide funding assistance for the implementation of the foregoing actions.

### Communication

**Discussion:** It was recognized that some of the issues covered could readily be considered under the category of **communication**, and that there necessarily were overlaps in other areas.

#### Recommended actions

1. The UNESCO Associated Schools Network Programme is to be revisited and its product *World Heritage in Young Hands* is to be reviewed and modified in order to project Caribbean images and content.
2. State Party representatives are to activate e-networking among members, and endeavour to sustain the communication network, for which the tools and facilities are widely accessible.
3. A consultancy is to be established within the next three years towards the preparation and development of a multimedia World Heritage Communication Plan targeted at the people and the various constituent groups of the region, youth in particular. This plan is to be presented at a workshop for managers, resource persons and the media; such a workshop to include the transmission of communication skills to managers.
4. The World Heritage Committee is to compile and periodically update an inventory of natural and heritage site managers, State Party representatives and other resource persons of the Caribbean region.
5. State Party representatives are to promote the establishment of World Heritage Committees in their respective states and territories.
6. The National Commissions of the respective states and territories are urged to be more proactive in the dissemination of information to stakeholders, particularly to communications from the World Heritage Committee; and should actively promote the mission of World Heritage.

## Capacity building

**Discussion:** After presentation, discussion took place concerning the Haiti-Guadeloupe proposal for a Caribbean School of Heritage (École Carabienne du Patrimoine, ECP), as well as on the recommendations of the Training Needs Survey and Periodic Report. The following observations were made:

- the ECP proposal is part of a finalized first phase of a feasibility study; the second phase is going to be launched later on;
- there are two options: a fixed pedagogic/administrative unit with outlying units in various Caribbean countries; or a rotating pedagogic/administrative unit;
- traditional skills improvement relating to crafts is a current focus, but the proposal aims to cover a whole range of conservation-related activities;
- the current political situation in Haiti has little influence, as it is focused on implementation all around the Caribbean;
- the language issue is not really relevant, as any programme design would encounter this challenge; furthermore, the second phase of the feasibility study aims to take into consideration coverage of the different geocultural sections of the region.

## Recommended actions

1. Is another, new institution needed? Any new initiative should pull existing structures and initiatives together. Flexibility is the key word. What is needed is a **network** to deliver a **variety of training** courses that needs to be **co-ordinated**.
2. Currently much overlap and duplication.
3. Any new initiative should be screened on what it brings into the current existing palette of initiatives.
4. Core of a training network: university for accreditation.
5. Existing institutions and organizations that deliver need to be strengthened and publicize their activities and results.
6. Where gaps exist, institutions or organizations need to be invited or created.

## Further development

- The World Heritage Committee has allocated US\$75,000 for the 2004–2005 biennium for the development of the Caribbean Capacity Building Programme.
- Participants identified that a programme is needed on both natural and cultural heritage preservation training, that covers the English-, Spanish-, French- and Dutch-speaking regions and territories, and that fills the gaps and minimizes overlap
- The Training Needs Survey has identified that currently a mechanism to link existing initiatives and to sustain those links is lacking, while a lot of work is going on.
- Thus, as a *first start*, is proposed the establishment of a co-ordination unit (administrative and, if needed, pedagogic) with an 'embryonic' network of existing organizations and institutions with proven track record in

conservation training and capacity building, such as the postgraduate school in Santo Domingo (part of the National University Pedro Henriquez Ureña), branches of the University of the West Indies, the University of Antilles Guyana (UAG) in Guadeloupe, the National Centre for Conservation, Restoration and Museology (CENCREM) in Havana, among others.

- The Board of this Unit should consist of members representing each language group.
- The co-ordination unit should receive and screen further additions to the network on a set of criteria that should include proven track record, curriculum on offer that would fill gaps, availability of sustainable resources, possibilities for exchange of scholars and professionals, etc.
- In this context, the ECP proposal, with a fixed administrative unit in Guadeloupe, could be used to further explore this idea, taking into consideration certain adaptations to be made, which include:
  - coverage of natural heritage conservation training next to cultural heritage;
  - different traditions and experiences in heritage conservation training that already exist in the wider region;
  - institutions in the network should take the *World Heritage Convention* into their programming;
  - representation of each language group in the decision-making structure.

## Proposal

1. To investigate possible structures as a co-ordinating structure for a Caribbean network of which the ECP proposal is one option and to see if the identified needs and proposed adaptations of the outcomes of the UNESCO consultant's survey and the findings of this meeting can be included in this proposal.
2. When under investigation and further development, regional consultation on a regular basis should be undertaken, with allocated resources.
3. The development of Terms of Reference should be undertaken at the earliest opportunity, and should be circulated widely for discussion and approval.
4. As a starting point, an 'embryonic' network of existing organizations with a broad curriculum in conservation training can be proposed, which can be extended in the course of the further development of the network.
5. To develop a set of screening and admission criteria for new members of the network.
6. To develop a fund-raising strategy.
7. To develop modalities for allocation of funding to administrative unit and outlying training units.

Additional remarks made by the complete group of participants included the need to inform the Haiti-Guadeloupe team (governments and consultants) of the outcomes of the Saint Lucia Conference and to ensure future co-ordination of activities.

## **Declaration of Castries**

**We, the representatives of Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, British Virgin Islands, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guadeloupe, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Netherlands Antilles, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, and Turks and Caicos Islands;** having met from February 23 to 27 2004, in Castries, Saint Lucia, at the Conference on the Development of a Caribbean Action Plan in World Heritage, came, once again, face to face with the realities of Caribbean people living in a globalised environment which is less than sympathetic to the vulnerabilities of the Caribbean and the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) of the region;

**Taking note** of our realities which include poverty rates of 25–30%, indigence of over 20%, unemployment and under-employment rates which exceed 20%, and high illiteracy rates;

**Recognising** the scarcity of trained heritage professionals in the Caribbean in the field of cultural and natural heritage;

**Realising** that we are vulnerable to natural disasters and a globalised environment characterized by open competition and trade liberalization;

**Agreeing** that we are searching for a sustainable development paradigm based on the principles of equity and participation, and a Caribbean Vision of 'unity in diversity';

**Agreeing further** that our ability to survive as Caribbean and Small Island Developing States (SIDS) will depend on developing a new paradigm which is driven by strategies that take into consideration our diverse natural and cultural resources, our inspiring landscapes, our climate, our unique identity and the resilience and creativity of our people who have overcome centuries of hardship and exploitation;

**Taking cognisance** of the World Heritage Convention of 1972, which establishes a List of the World's natural and cultural heritage; promotes and supports the identification of natural and cultural heritage sites; prescribes high standards of conservation, community participation and sustainable management; and provides training;

**Acknowledging** the CARICOM Regional Cultural Policy of 1997 and the Saint George's Declaration of Principles for Environmental Sustainability in the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS);

**Recalling** the contribution made by the Global Strategy Action Plan for the Caribbean, which recognized the under-representation of the Caribbean on the World Heritage List;

**Further recalling** that the World Heritage Centre has organized ten regional and thematic expert meetings from 1996 to 2004 that have identified heritage sites and issues associated with the implementation of the World Heritage Convention in the Caribbean;

**Reaffirming** the Dominica Document 2001 that sets out a comprehensive vision on the heritage of the Caribbean and the application of the World Heritage Convention;

**Strongly supporting** the global strategic objectives in respect of Credibility, Conservation, Capacity Building and Communications, as articulated by the World Heritage Committee in 2002;

**Observing** that of US\$7,000,000 granted to States Parties between 1979 and 2002 upon their request from the World Heritage Fund and disbursed through International Assistance to Latin America and the Caribbean, only 15% was spent in the Caribbean where at present 14 out of 31 States Parties to the Convention are located;

**Acknowledging efforts** to address this disparity by the World Heritage Committee and UNESCO through the allocation of extra budgetary and bilateral resources, particularly through the generous support of the Government of the United Kingdom, who provided financial support for this conference;

**Call upon** the Governments of Caribbean States Parties to:

- (i) Provide the necessary financial, technical and administrative resources and structures required for States Parties to take full advantage of the benefits derived from the implementation of the World Heritage Convention;
- (ii) Undertake national inventories of natural and cultural heritage sites, prepare Tentative Lists and Nomination Dossiers for the most outstanding of these sites, with financial and technical assistance which may be obtained from the World Heritage Fund and other sources;
- (iii) Improve existing policies, legislation, and resource management systems within their countries;
- (iv) Encourage the Governments of the Bahamas and Trinidad and Tobago to ratify the Convention at the earliest possible opportunity;
- (v) Work together through appropriate mechanisms to enhance collaboration among Caribbean States Parties to the World Heritage Convention in the identification and preparation of properties for inscription on the World Heritage List, including serial, trans-boundary, and serial-transboundary nominations;
- (vi) Endorse the Action Plan prepared by their representatives at the Saint Lucia Conference under the strategic objectives of Credibility, Conservation, Capacity Building and Communication;

- (vii) *Support and maximize opportunities for the implementation of the Caribbean Capacity Building Programme; and*
- (viii) *Maintain a Caribbean presence on the World Heritage Committee by ensuring that a Caribbean State Party puts itself forward when Saint Lucia steps down in 2005;*

**We also call upon** the World Heritage Committee to:

- (i) *Approve the Periodic Report for Latin America and the Caribbean at its next meeting in 2004; and*
- (ii) *Approve the related Action Plan and Capacity Building Programme and allocate the requisite funding for their implementation at its next meeting in 2004;*

**We encourage** all States Parties to the World Heritage Convention to collaborate with each other in the implementation of the Caribbean Action Plan;

**Finally, we call upon** UNESCO to strengthen its organizational structure in the Caribbean Region and to assist in accessing all necessary technical assistance for implementation of the Action Plan;

*We acknowledge with gratitude the significant contribution by the World Heritage Centre for the advancement of the World Heritage Convention in the Caribbean;*

*We also express our appreciation to the Government of Saint Lucia for hosting and efficiently co-ordinating this most important event and congratulate them on their efforts in giving visibility to Caribbean considerations on the World Heritage Committee.*

Approved at Castries by the representatives of all States Parties and Associated States on the 27th day of February in the year Two Thousand and Four.

# Identification of Archaeological Sites of the Caribbean likely to be nominated for inscription on the World Heritage List

(Fort-de-France, Martinique, 2004)

by Nuria Sanz

The UNESCO World Heritage Centre organized an international seminar from 20 to 23 September 2004 between official representatives and experts in Caribbean archaeology on the Identification of Archaeological Sites of the Caribbean likely to be nominated for inscription on the World Heritage List, at Fort-de-France (Martinique). This seminar was a follow-up to World Heritage Global Strategy activities in the Caribbean region since 1996 and the International Seminar on Archaeological Sites of the Caribbean held at the Museo del Hombre Dominicano of Santo Domingo (Dominican Republic), on 7 and 8 July 2003.

The main objective of this international and inter-governmental meeting was to initiate an in-depth reflection on archaeological cultural heritage in the Caribbean and how to best represent this heritage in all its diversity on the World Heritage List. The identification, protection, conservation and nomination of this type of very vulnerable cultural heritage in the Caribbean were also objectives of the meeting.

This meeting provided the opportunity for archaeologists and experts to communicate about their work and to propose recommendations regarding the archaeological sites likely to be considered for World Heritage nomination according to five major transversal themes: Rock Art, Amerindian Archaeological Sites of the Caribbean, Contact Period, Cultural Landscapes, African Heritage in the Caribbean, as well as possible individual sites or potential areas for serial nomination.

The seminar also provided guidelines for the orientation of activities of a transnational character in line with the *World Heritage Convention*, and highlighted the urgency for protection and conservation of archaeological heritage in the countries of the Caribbean. Finally, it emphasized the implications of enhancing archaeological areas, while respecting and strengthening Caribbean cultural identity.

During the meeting, a Martinique Declaration and a short- and medium-term Action Plan were prepared.

This meeting was organized by the UNESCO World Heritage Centre and the Regional Council of Martinique (Museum Services). To this end, cooperation was established between the Spanish and French Ministries of Culture and the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Technical support was provided by

CARIMOS and ICOMOS as well as the International Association for Caribbean Archaeology (IACA).

## Action plan

*Some recommendations for an archaeological action plan for the Caribbean Region*

- Caribbean regional management
- International networking
- Public information
- Short- and long-term goals
- Relevance to local people

## Caribbean regional management

- Set up a Central Data Management component, with representative contributions of specialists from the various territories. For serial nominations, to use one of the islands of the serial group as a central base.
- Request UNESCO extrabudgetary funding to develop some of those sites of various categories recommended in this seminar, as nominations from the region.
- Seek out and provide funding allocations to assist the Caribbean territories with the necessary technical assistance and training to undertake required work on these identified monuments and sites.

## International networking

- Develop a Co-ordinated Regional Programme in conjunction with specialist organizations from the region, such as ICOMOS, CARIMOS, IACA, MAC, WTO, Caribbean tourism organizations, etc.
- Allow these organizations to assist in charting the way to promote these sites, and commence immediately with some seed projects from the selected sites, as either individual or serial sites.
- Work with the current initiatives of the governments, to introduce or reinforce archaeology awareness among the countries of the Caribbean.
- Seek international co-operation for research within the region and also with North/South America, Europe, as well as the African continent, yet respecting local priority for values representation.

### Public information

- Create a commission to package and publish a popular document about the nominations, for general distribution and possible multimedia dissemination, such as videos, etc.
- Foster and develop relationships among regional institutions, museums, and universities which have already initiated archaeology projects and curriculum development, including the significance of archaeology and capacity building for development.
- Create interest among special cultural publications of the region for World Heritage nominations.
- Create a programme of information for the public schools of the region about archaeology and the World Heritage nominations.

### Specific short-term goals

- Identify and define site(s) nominations within each of the five themes identified at this seminar.
- Submit the Declaration of Martinique compiled at this seminar to the governments of the region.
- Make direct approaches for UNESCO extrabudgetary funds to assist in preparing the various tentative nominations.
- For single-site nominations, begin preparation of the Tentative List documentation, a draft to be ready for submission in July 2005.
- For serial nominations, create direct contact networks for the various properties, then begin Tentative List preparations, a draft to be ready for July 2005.
- Target and make contact with specific UNESCO and expert meetings which have direct relevance to the nominations, such as Cartagena in 2004, Durban in 2005, and IACA Trinidad in 2005.
- Stimulate more specific pre-Columbian research in the region.
- Propose a concept for the World Heritage Committee meeting in Durban, South Africa, which emphasizes the importance of Caribbean expert input for the African continent.
- Look to consolidate a databank for legal frameworks from the various territories of the region, to be evaluated with expert consultation in view of serial nominations.
- Explore co-operation with CARIMOS to provide a database format for serial nominations.

### Long-term goals

- Stimulate governments to be involved in protection and education relating to archaeological resources.
- Achieve the successful nomination of various archaeological sites to the World Heritage List.
- Create a regional network for archaeological research co-operation.

### Relevance to local peoples

- It is very important to extend any educational and/or public awareness programmes into the local communities.
- There is a need for making connections between their world and the past, through World Heritage sites.
- Intangible elements of Caribbean heritage should be considered as a significant matter when defining historic archaeological research programmes.



## Meeting on an Implementation Structure for the Caribbean Action Plan in World Heritage (*Kingston, Jamaica, 2004*)

by Ron van Oers

The meeting in Jamaica, which took place in Kingston from 27 to 29 September 2004, was a follow-up to the successful presentation of the 2004 Latin America and the Caribbean Periodic Report during the 28th session of the World Heritage Committee, and in particular to the Saint Lucia Conference in February 2004, where the Caribbean Action Plan in World Heritage was established.

Twelve representatives of Caribbean States Parties and Associated Territories, from the Bahamas, Barbados, British Virgin Islands, Cuba, Dominica, Guyana, Jamaica, the Netherlands Antilles, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, together with representatives from UNESCO – Regional Office for the Caribbean in Kingston, Office for Culture for Latin America and the Caribbean in Havana, Jamaican National Commission and World Heritage Centre – participated in the Meeting on an Implementation Structure for the Caribbean Action Plan in World Heritage.

In a first 45-minute presentation, the activities and initiatives undertaken by the World Heritage Centre were highlighted, comprising various items as defined in the Action Plan such as transmission of a conference report, preparations for a subregional conference on ‘Outstanding Universal Value, Authenticity and Integrity in a Caribbean Context’, compilation of summary reports of past thematic expert meetings in the Caribbean, information on the Center for Disaster Management in the Dominican Republic, as well as the organization of a thematic expert meeting on Caribbean archaeological sites (20–24 September 2004, Martinique).

Subsequently, the UNESCO Kingston Office reported on the activities supported in the wider Caribbean, among which the visit of the Director-General of UNESCO to the Bahamas and the establishment of a Subregional Working Group to further the Action Plan. Following these overviews, representatives provided the meeting with brief accounts on particular activities in World Heritage, and relating to the Action Plan, undertaken at State Party level.

### Implementation of the Caribbean Action Plan 2004–2014

Implementation of the Caribbean Action Plan in World Heritage, it was agreed, first required a detailed outline of

activities to undertake, when and by whom, which was set up item by item **following the Action Plan as established in Saint Lucia in February 2004** (see Summary Report, above). Modalities of operation were then established, focusing on the one hand on inter-office co-operation and communication between Kingston, Havana and Paris, and on the other hand on UNESCO/States Parties co-operation and communication.

### Credibility

**1(a).** Each State Party will decide to what extent national consultations will be held prior to the subregional meeting on ‘Outstanding Universal Value (OUV), Authenticity and Integrity in a Caribbean Context’. It was agreed that certainly *after* the subregional meeting, the results and recommendations would have to be transmitted through national consultations.

**1(b).** The technical formats as prepared by CARIMOS (for cultural properties) and by the CCA (for natural properties) would have to be directly consulted by the States Parties in order to proceed and finalize the preparation of national inventories. The CARIMOS website already features lists of collated inventories of monuments and sites submitted by Caribbean States Parties and individual experts. Each State Party is advised to consult this website in order not to duplicate efforts.

**2.** Upon confirmation of venue and preliminary dates by host country Barbados, the World Heritage Centre will send a Letter of Invitation to inform the Caribbean States Parties of the purpose, objectives and modalities of the subregional meeting on OUV, Authenticity and Integrity.

**3.** A subregional meeting on ‘Outstanding Universal Value, Authenticity and Integrity in a Caribbean Context’ will be scheduled for May 2005 to be hosted by Barbados in cooperation with the University of the West Indies (to be confirmed). As part of the preparations for this subregional meeting, relevant literature on the subject, such as *Authenticity in an African Context*, *Nara Conference on Authenticity* and *Authenticity in a Latin American Context* would need to be made available to Caribbean States Parties, either in hard copy if still available or in electronic form (web). Next to these, the reports submitted to the 28th session of the World Heritage Committee by ICOMOS (Filling the Gaps) and IUCN would also be relevant.

Other than inviting internationally renowned academics to write position papers on relevant subjects, States Parties will be invited to send two top-level experts, one for

culture and one for nature, to participate in this meeting. Selection of these experts could be organized through submission of credentials to the World Heritage Centre, with preselection at the national level by States Parties and priority given to representatives already participating in the current network, in view of efficiency and continuity.

### Tentative Lists and Thematic Studies

1. At the meeting in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines in November 2003, a provisional deadline for submission of Tentative Lists to the World Heritage Centre was established for November 2004. To date only two Caribbean States Parties have submitted a Tentative List: Grenada in August and Haiti in September 2004. It was discussed that an informed discussion on (the implications of) Outstanding Universal Value, Authenticity and Integrity would only be possible through established Tentative Lists. Following the September 2004 meeting on Archaeological Sites in the Caribbean, organized by the World Heritage Centre in Martinique, it was proposed to include archaeological sites in Tentative Lists.

2. Upon specific request of States Parties representatives, the Tentative List submitted by Grenada in August 2004 will be sent to the other Caribbean States Parties as an example. Furthermore, States Parties would like to receive a model for a natural and a cultural World Heritage site in the Caribbean for information purposes.

3. A compilation of summary reports of previous thematic expert meetings and conferences in the Caribbean is in progress at the World Heritage Centre and will be published as an annex to the proceedings of the Wooden Urban Heritage in the Caribbean meeting in Guyana (February 2003).

4. Information concerning the current status of the Slave Route – Places of Memory project will be obtained by the UNESCO Havana Office and disseminated to Caribbean States Parties, while the UNESCO publication *Struggles against Slavery* for the United Nations International Year to commemorate the Struggle against Slavery and its Abolition (2004) and the MAC inventory were circulated by the UNESCO Kingston Office.

### Conservation/management

1. A subregional meeting on Caribbean World Heritage sites and (managed) sites on the Tentative List is to be organized by the UNESCO Havana Office, taking advantage of the broad experience of Cuba in this respect. The meeting would comprise cultural and natural sites together, as it was agreed that conservation and management primarily concerned the same issues, despite obvious differences, in order to facilitate dialogue and exchange of learning experiences.

2. Further to the above, the participants expressed a need for a balanced programme of meetings that would focus on a broad range of issues relating to World Heritage, next to tourism aspects. The UNESCO Havana Office would contact the Caribbean Tourism Office to discuss outline and funding proposal for this meeting.

3. States Parties were advised to consult the internet to access the Training Manuals for Cultural Heritage Management and Risk Preparedness that have been published by ICCROM and UNESCO. Hard copies of Spanish versions of these two manuals have recently been published and sent to all Spanish-speaking territories in the LAC region (<http://www.iccrom.org/eng/bookshop/publications.htm>).

Furthermore, the UNESCO Havana Office will provide States Parties representatives with further information on the Center for Disaster Management in Santo Domingo (Dominican Republic).

4. At the 28th session of the World Heritage Committee in China (2004) it was decided that the World Heritage Centre, in co-operation with the Advisory Bodies, should work towards the publication of a best practice manual for conservation and management of World Heritage sites. The Caribbean States Parties will be kept informed on the progress of this publication.

5. Taken up in Decision 28 COM 16 Rev-2 of the World Heritage Committee, relating to the presentation of the 2004 LAC Periodic Report, as well as in the resolution of the Martinique Meeting on Archaeological Sites, strengthening of UNESCO human resources in the field would ultimately be a decision for the Director-General. Currently, extra human resources in the UNESCO Havana Office were available for World Heritage activities aiming to increase co-operation in the region.

6. In the context of the recent destruction caused by hurricanes and the World Heritage Fund Emergency Assistance request by Grenada in this regard, the World Heritage Centre was to send a letter to all Caribbean States Parties in October 2004 advising them to put cultural and natural heritage under national risk preparedness programmes. At the same time, possibilities have to be explored to include an article in the *World Heritage Newsletter* on this subject.

7. Contact details of the new Director for the Center for Disaster Management in Santo Domingo were transmitted to all State Party representatives and each State Party was advised to contact the Center for further information regarding programmes and activities, if needed.

8. It was thought that the release of information and documents pertaining to natural and cultural properties of former colonies in the Caribbean was possibly best done in detailed co-operation programmes at bilateral level, instead of along the broad multilateral level. Furthermore,

it was explained that most of these documents were becoming available online.

**9.** Activities to search for extrabudgetary funding by the World Heritage Centre pertaining to activities in the Caribbean were in full swing, taking up much of Headquarter's time. However, no assurances in this regard could be given, but active participation of States Parties in the region, such as in this Action Plan, was facilitating the search for funding to move the agenda further.

**10.** The representative of Saint Lucia proposed that a monitoring project should be established focusing on research and surveys into direct, tangible benefits to World Heritage listing, as a means to informing decision-makers and investors, next to the general public. The World Heritage Centre endorsed this proposal and will seek funding.

### Communication

**1.** Instead of 'review and modify', better to add a chapter on Caribbean heritage, which could be prepared by the University of the West Indies in Barbados (to be confirmed). The outline of such a chapter should be circulated to Caribbean States Parties for endorsement. Preparations have already started in the UNESCO Havana Office, which should communicate closely with Barbados and the UNESCO Office in Kingston on further developments. States Parties were requested to contact the Centre if they wished to buy copies.

**2.** Establishment of an e-network in the region: no lists of Caribbean experts were available as yet, but the UNESCO Havana Office was in the process of establishing one (in co-operation with Haiti) as part of the Culture Portal. The UNESCO Kingston Office has a Communication Officer who was aware of the portal.

**3.** With regard to a Regional Multimedia Communication Strategy, it was proposed to prepare a subregional cross-cutting project on World Heritage and Communication, in co-operation with the Havana and Kingston Offices, to be submitted to UNESCO for the 2006–2007 biennium. As priority was given to this item to facilitate lobbying during the Executive Board in October 2004, a special working group was created which prepared a Draft Outline for the 'Development and Implementation of a Cross-cutting Project for a Communication Strategy on World Heritage for the Wider Caribbean Region', with the kind assistance of Jocelyne Josiah, Programme Specialist for Communication at the UNESCO Kingston Office. This Draft Outline was discussed during session 3 of the meeting on Wednesday 29 September.

**4.** The State Party representative informed the meeting that Jamaica was in the process of establishing a national World Heritage Committee (expected for March 2005), while Cuba, Barbados, the Netherlands Antilles, Saint Lucia and Dominica had established such committees or

similar government-appointed bodies with a specific mandate to promote World Heritage. The need for such committees, it was agreed, arose from the implementation of the Convention in all its aspects, from identification, protection and conservation, to promotion and transmission to future generations of both natural and cultural heritage. It was further discussed that issues pertaining to World Heritage were to be transmitted to the responsible ministers of the States Parties in preparation for the CARICOM meeting and wider discussion and agreement.

**5.** The point was made that some National Commissions were very active, often because of the personalities responsible for World Heritage matters, while a lack of resources was identified as a factor hampering the active involvement of these Commissions.

### Capacity building

The UNESCO Havana Office made a presentation on their World Heritage activities in the Caribbean during 2004–2005, including a workshop on Cultural Landscapes in Santiago de Cuba (tentatively scheduled for the second half of 2005), a training activity on the management of cultural and natural heritage in the Caribbean (2005), the development of the Caribbean chapter of the teacher's kit *World Heritage in Young Hands* and a regional conference on UNESCO's Normative Actions on Illicit Trade in Cultural Heritage Artefacts in Lima (Peru).

It was agreed that the Cultural Landscapes workshop would follow the series of thematic expert meetings implemented by the World Heritage Centre since 1996, aiming to draw from the experience of Cuba that has the only cultural landscape in the Caribbean on the World Heritage List. Co-operation between the Havana Office and the World Heritage Centre was proposed, to share experiences and costs.

It was further agreed that the proposed training activity on the management of cultural and natural heritage in the Caribbean, somewhere in 2005, should coincide with Recommendation 1 under Conservation/management referring to the need for a meeting of managers of natural and cultural sites, both World Heritage and on the Tentative Lists. In the context of this activity, the UNESCO Havana Office would contact the CTO to further discuss obtaining European Union funding for implementation.

The representatives of the Netherlands Antilles and Barbados made respective presentations on training and capacity building activities currently under way in these territories, involving identification of national needs and wishes, and curriculum development in particular at the University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus (Barbados). Mention was made of the need for a more specific focus on World Heritage, although the relatively small target groups on the islands would make implementation of these courses financially problematic.

### **Haiti and Guadeloupe Proposal for the Creation of a Caribbean Heritage School (ECP)**

Unfortunately, owing to last-minute visa difficulties, the consultants from Guadeloupe and Haiti were unable to be present at the Kingston meeting to report on the progress made on the proposal for a Caribbean Heritage School (École Carabienne du Patrimoine). However, a PowerPoint outline sent by e-mail was presented and discussed among participants.

Having seen the presentation, many questions were put forward regarding the structure and funding of the Haiti-Guadeloupe proposal, which could only partially be answered through the minutes of the Saint Lucia meeting. The States Parties representatives expressed a general feeling that co-ordination within UNESCO on this initiative was inefficient and that the recommendation from the Saint Lucia meeting in February 2004, which was to integrate efforts in the development of a Caribbean Capacity Building Programme, was not fully recognized.

However, it was also argued that the ECP proposal by Haiti and Guadeloupe was launched before the Capacity Building Programme designed by the World Heritage Centre on request of the World Heritage Committee, and the participants welcomed the invitation made by ICFC (Institut de Cooperation Franco-Caraibe) to the World Heritage Centre to participate in a working meeting in October 2004 in Guadeloupe, at the start of the development of Phase II of the ECP proposal, to discuss further integration into an overall programme that would serve the needs of the wider Caribbean. The UNESCO offices in Havana and Kingston should perhaps participate as well.

A working group, consisting of representatives of the Bahamas (Keith Tinker), Barbados (Karl Watson, chairing the working group), the British Virgin Islands (Esther Georges), Cuba (Nilson Acosta Reyes), Jamaica (Roderick Ebanks), the Netherlands Antilles (Reinoudt Karsdorp), Saint Kitts and Nevis (Larry Armony), and the World Heritage Centre (Ron van Oers), was established to prepare a proposal to further the development of the Caribbean Capacity Building Programme. The proposal included the establishment of a steering committee chaired by Karl Watson of Barbados, comprising the representatives mentioned above, including Dominica (Cyrille John), of both the natural and cultural heritage fields. Furthermore, a representative of the ICFC, in particular Teddy Isimat-Mirin, ECP Project Manager, should be requested to take part in the steering committee, which was endorsed by the meeting's participants.

The central task of the steering committee would be to consider terms of reference, not limited to but including matters relating to accreditation, networking, funding, identification of courses and resource persons in existing institutions in States Parties and Associated Territories. This committee would communicate mainly via e-mail.

Recommended follow-up actions included that each State Party representative would provide a list of institutions, resource persons and available training (including curricula) in each territory. These institutions should include field schools and research and conservation institutions having existing avenues for the transfer of particular knowledge or training for various levels of staff. Representatives were advised that the Cuban Government offered extensive scholarships in related fields, which may be considered to address training needs. These courses could be organized in English.

After this inventory and selection of relevant institutions, Phase II of the Capacity Building Programme would include expansion of conservation management training (for cultural and natural properties) at the existing institutions. This might be accomplished through the strengthening of these institutions as regards course content and teaching capacity.

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**Cover photo:** The Sacred Heart Church in Georgetown, Guyana, opened on Christmas Day in 1861, tragically destroyed by fire on Christmas Day in 2004. © R.van Oers 2002