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WEDNESDAY, JULY 10, 2019



RESORTS NO THREAT TO AIRPORT RUNWAY EXPANSION

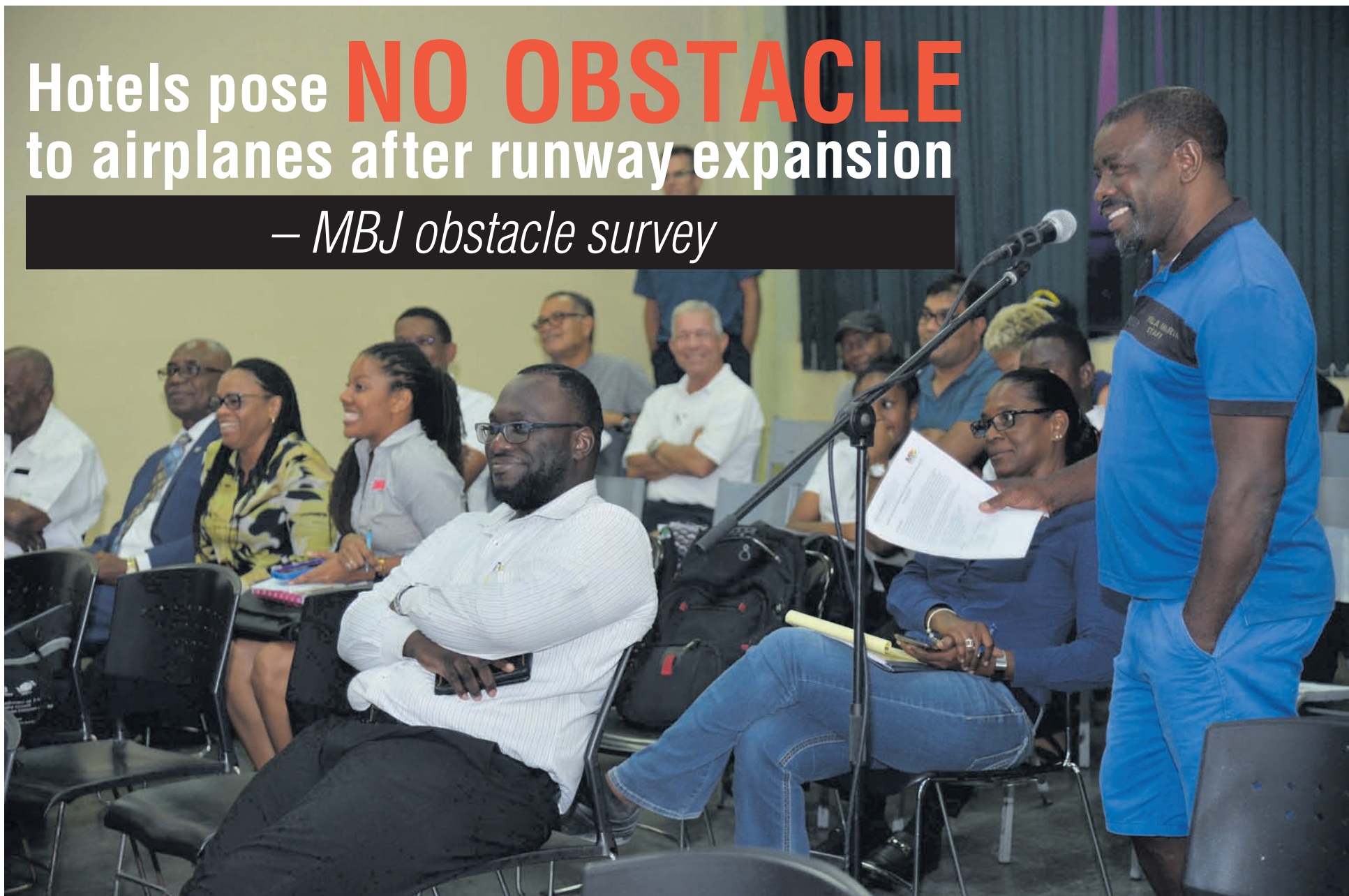
Chris Blackwell receives JHTA
Lifetime Achievement Award

American announces new
Jamaica service

Lisa Blair is the JHTA Hotel
Employee of the Year

Hotels pose **NO OBSTACLE** to airplanes after runway expansion

– MBJ obstacle survey



A member of the audience asks a question during the presentation of expansion plans at the UWI Mona Western Jamaica Campus.

Janet Silvera

Hospitality Jamaica Coordinator

MONTEGO BAY Airports (MBJ) has sought to dispel fears that hotel in the east of the tourism capital may now become obstacles to airplanes landing and taking off when the expansion of the Sangster International Airport runway is completed.

The reassurance was given by Chief Technical Officer at MBJ Shane Munroe at a recent public meeting at The University of the West Indies, Mona, Western Jamaica Campus in response to concerns raised by a senior member of the St James Fire Department.

The fire department representative raised the possibility of very tall resorts near the airport, such as RIU, becoming an impediment due to the eastward expansion of the runway.

“We have a consultant dedicated to doing what you call obstacle surveys, so what we have done is to do a survey of all the obstacles in the vicinity of the airport outside

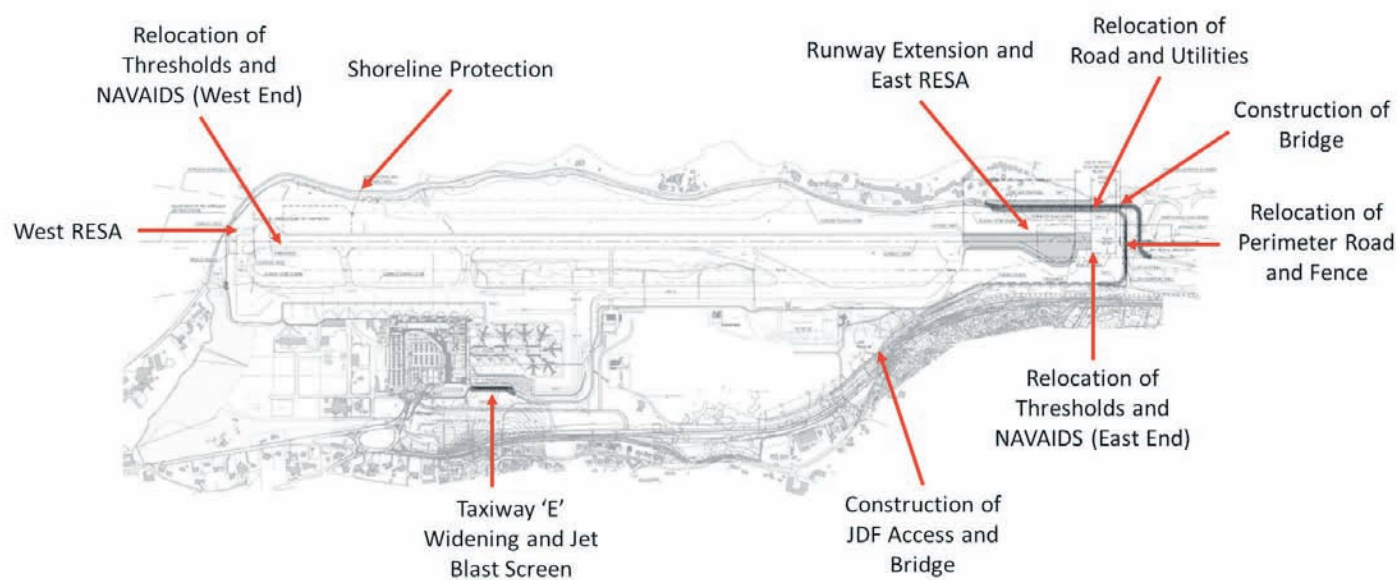
the airport property, including the RIU and beyond west, east, north and south of the runway,” Munroe explained.

With the extension of the runway, the

threshold, he said, is exactly where the aircraft will touch down on the runway and the approach surfaces.

“These are imaginary surfaces that are

protected as it relates to obstacles, and RIU will be clear of that. RIU will not be an obstruction or obstacle as it relates to this new approach that will be developed or



designed for the runway extension,” he added.

Munroe said that the only obstacles were utility electricity poles and that these would be removed and the power supply run underground.

“It’s a discussion that we continue to have with the regulator, which is the Jamaica Civil Aviation Authority, in that any obstacles that exist – and there are a few – they will be removed, and they are mainly related to Jamaica Public Service (JPS) poles, for example. There are JPS poles that are in the vicinity of the Sandals boatyard; those will be an obstacle because of the runway extension going further east,” he explained.

In this case, he added, this project will take those poles underground, which will be beneficial to the city.

The venture, dubbed the Runway Expansion and Associated Works Project, is part of MJB’s proposed Capital Improvement Plan. The scope of works includes the extension of the airport’s runway, the widening of Taxiway ‘E’, and the installation of a jet blast screen at the expanded Taxiway ‘E’.

The runway-expansion works will enable the airport to meet the



MUNROE

requirements of, the International Civil Aviation Organization as well as improve the safety of the runway, while the widening of Taxiway ‘E’ and the installation of the jet blast screen will provide increased safety at the taxiway.

The project was approved by the Cabinet in August 2018 and is being financed by the Airport Improvement Fund. Its estimated completion date is January 2021, with construction of airfield works projected to begin in September this year.

The other airfield works that comprise the project are the realignment of Kent Avenue and local utilities,



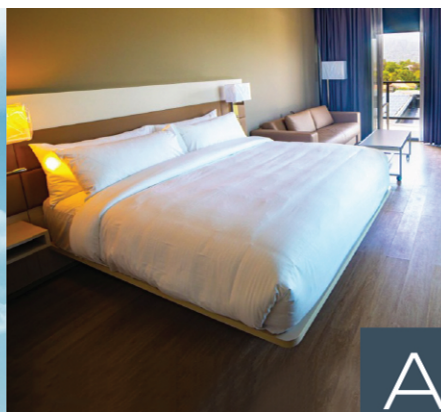
Another member of the audience asks a question.

and the construction of a bridge. Shoreline-protection works are also proposed, which would involve the rehabilitation of derelict protection infrastructure located at the western end of Kent Avenue.

According to the project document, Kent Avenue and the surrounding local utilities will be realigned to establish adequate distances between the extended runway and the north airside

perimeter, while the current access to the Jamaica Defence Force’s Second Battalion base and IAM Jet Centre will be decommissioned.

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MBJ mulls two roadways to ease traffic congestion

Janet Silvera

Hospitality Jamaica Coordinator

THE MANAGEMENT of MBJ Airports is crafting a road-construction plan that will include the creation of two new roadways to the east and west leading to the Sangster International Airport to ensure a smoother and swifter flow of vehicular traffic into and out of the Montego Bay facility.

Chief Technical Officer at MBJ Shane Munroe made the disclosure at a recent stakeholders' meeting at The University of the West Indies Western Jamaica Campus in Montego Bay. He said that the impending project is concomitant to the proposed runway extension at the airport, which is expected to commence in September.

"The airport is actually embarking on a master plan project. We are actually in the design phase for that Our intention is to create a new entry into the airport. Just about where this road meets the North Coast Highway, there will be a public entrance into the airport that will allow you to enter from the east so you no longer have to drive all the way down to the roundabout," Munroe said.

"We also have plans – at least a concept at this stage, anyhow – to create a new entrance from the west, again, an alternative entrance coming into the airport coming off what is Sunset Boulevard to



allow for traffic to enter the airport without having to enter the main roundabout," he further explained.

In February, Chief Executive Officer of MBJ Airports Dr Rafael Echevarne said the narrowly concentrated peak-hour arrivals and departures between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. that drive the facility and rapid growth in tourist arrivals were among the main factors that influenced the decision to expand

the landing strip. Tourist arrivals to Jamaica via the Sangster International Airport grew by 250,000 in 2018 over 2017.

The potential traffic congestion issue raised at the meeting is not an uncommon phenomenon. A 2016 study titled 'Airport Ground Access and Urban Congestion: A Paradox of Bi-Modal Networks' by researchers from the DICAM School of Engineering and

Architecture at the University of Bologna in Italy found that ground traffic congestion is increasing due to the rapid growth of low-cost carriers.

"In the last two decades, mainly due to the development of low-cost carriers, regional and secondary airports experienced a rapid growth of transportation demand," the researchers noted.

"In addition, airports are

increasingly developing commercial and recreational activities, attracting even more customers Most regional airports are located close to cities or metropolitan areas. As a result, urban road networks have been experiencing dramatic traffic growth: congestion and other related impacts," the study said.

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Speed and connectivity: The hallmarks of business hotels

KINGSTON IS a hub for business travellers seeking to participate in the commercial and cultural activities offered in major cities in the Caribbean. Its regional importance has also contributed to its reputation as a key location for business hotels.

As a growing segment of the hospitality industry, business hotels cater to road warriors visiting the country for meetings, conferences and dealmaking. The success of these specialised hotels depends on high-speed Internet services and end-to-end connectivity.

"The business traveller is very sophisticated. They require 24-hour connectivity from anywhere in the hotel, the ability to connect multiple devices to the network, and extremely fast Internet speeds. In short,

the changes in technology have influenced how business is conducted globally and the offerings that our customers need," stated Andreas Cope, manager of reservations, sales, marketing, and public relations, Spanish Court Hotel.

He continued, "Meetings are held at different locations in our hotel daily. The café, lobby, and even the dinner table are places where business is also being conducted. No longer are deals and negotiations limited to the conference room or even our 24-hour business centre. Our customers, therefore, demand end-to-end connectivity to ensure that they can access the services when they need it most."

C&W Business Jamaica, the premiere

telecoms partner of business hotels, provides first-class, superfast and dedicated Internet access.

"We help hotels create wonderful guest experiences from the moment that guests walk through their doors to the memories they will take away. With Wi-Fi being critical for business hotels, we have designed our connectivity solutions with mobility in mind," stated Delroy McLean, senior director, C&W Business Jamaica.

This sentiment was echoed by Andrea Atkinson-Perry, group IT manager, Courtleigh Group, which manages the Jamaica Pegasus hotel, the Knutsford Court Hotel and the Courtleigh Hotel & Suites in Kingston. "When guests visit our hotels, the

Wi-Fi access code is among the first things that they request. Therefore, having C&W Business Jamaica as our technology partner offering stability to our Wi-Fi and broadband services is important to our guests and important to us," she said.

In 2000, US\$634 billion was spent on global business travel – half of the US \$1.2 trillion spent in 2015, which is nearly one quarter of that total travel and tourism spend. By 2020, the Global Business Travel Association anticipates the spend to reach US\$1.6 trillion. With the number of business hotels in the Corporate Area set to increase, the needs of business travellers have now been brought into sharp focus, the main one being reliable connectivity.



President of the Jamaica Hotel and Tourist Association Omar Robinson (left) presents the Purveyor of the Year award to Harvey Lyn of Perry's Manufacturing Company.

Perry's Manufacturing Company – JHTA Purveyor of the Year

PERRY'S MANUFACTURING Company copped the Jamaica Hotel and Tourist Association's Purveyor of the Year award title for 2018, a first for a non-food-producing entity in a long time.

The JHTA award, though, was the third for the company, which accomplished similar feats in 1996 and 2005.

The Kingston-based entity started out as manufacturers of uniforms in 1975, and a decade later, ventured into the production and distribution of a wide range of attractive linen products for beds, baths, tables, and kitchens as well as apparel for chefs in, but not limited to, the hospitality sector.

Since then, this purveyor has become one of the leading distributors, manufacturers, and exporters of hotel supplies, serving the local and Caribbean market

with distinction.

Perry's is also an exclusive, authorised distributor of well-known brands of furniture and ware for kitchens, bars, and dinner tables and is highly rated for the range of products offered.

The entity was lauded at the awards ceremony for its more-than-four decades of indelible service to the hospitality sector.

"It continues to exceed the expectations of customers when it comes to service. The motto is "100 per cent customer satisfaction each and every day", and judging from the market response, 2018 is yet another year to celebrate "Mission Accomplished!" the JHTA said in its citation.

Perry's is the exclusive authorised distributor for Libbey's Glassware, ABOUKIR Tableware, Coyabay Outdoor Furniture, and Bison Cookware in Jamaica.

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THE BUSINESS OF TOURISM

Tourism needs a **CLOSER RELATION** with agriculture

David Jessop

Hospitality Jamaica Writer

WHEN, IN the early 1990s, it became apparent that Europe's preferential regimes for Caribbean bananas and sugar were coming to an end, an impassioned debate began about a transition to other forms of economic activity.

For the most part, the focus was on alternative crops, import substitution, manufacturing, and financial services. Little was said at the time about tourism because its sustainability was widely regarded as uncertain.

Since, then, the world has moved on. Tourism has come to dominate most Caribbean economies.

In contrast, agriculture has been slow to reorient itself; hardly scratched the surface of tourism's burgeoning demand for high-quality food, fish and processed foodstuffs; and has failed to reorient and integrate its production with the hugely valuable visitor market that is often adjacent to viable agricultural land.

Some in agriculture have moved on and identified niche domestic or export markets, and in the case of the Dominican



JESSOP

Republic, and to a lesser extent Cuba and Jamaica, have begun to encourage linkages with tourism. Despite this, most Caribbean farmers remain caught in the past. The result is an ageing industry, with little new thinking about how agriculture might adapt or be incentivised to integrate with the high value demand that tourism creates.

For this reason, a just-published Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) and UN Food and Agriculture Organization **Study on the State of Agriculture in the Caribbean** is a breath of fresh air, as it outlines how, with a significantly changed approach, the sector could

generally become of much greater economic and, social relevance, and more specifically, might adapt to supply the tourism sector.

As well as identifying the steps required to resuscitate the industry and reduce the region's huge food import bill, it, in part, focuses on how the influx of foreign tourists since the 1980s has increased the local demand for food, and for specific food products. It notes that despite this, in most of the CDB's borrowing members countries (CARICOM and the UK Overseas Territories), the opportunity this offered for local farmers to expand and diversify their production was not met. Instead, imports of food products increased.

INCONSISTENT SUPPLY

The report quotes the example of Negril where – notwithstanding the demand for locally produced foodstuffs – at times, agricultural producers have been unable to supply product in a consistent manner as a result of the absence of cold-storage facilities and inefficient irrigation systems; problems that were exacerbated by weak organisation, and poor communication between producers and hotel

representatives. It notes, too, that in some parts of the region, 32 per cent or less of the food demand arising from the tourism is being met locally.

The CDB's report also suggests that when it comes to tourism, there is substantial room for the creation of new linkages between local agricultural production and tourism, but that there is an information asymmetry regarding the standards required by hotel and restaurant chains, cruise ships, and the yachting sector.

CDB makes clear that while the principal challenge facing agriculture in the region is improving competitiveness and productivity, to adequately respond to tourism's rapidly growing demand for high-standard agri-food products, it will also need to advance its ability to comply with modern food safety and quality standards.

Despite this, the report, which addresses fisheries and aquaculture as well, says the sector as a whole has great potential for the creation of stronger market linkages with tourism if support is provided to farmers, fisherfolk and agri-food businesses to

adopt current international best practices and technologies.

The CDB's intention now is to develop a new agricultural policy and strategy paper for governments, multilateral institutions and aid donors, with the intention of modernising Caribbean agricultural practice, identifying key trends, and the innovative practices and the science necessary to support an integrated approach.

If the Caribbean's agri-food system is to become more competitive, inclusive and sustainable, it has long been self-evident that agriculture requires a new approach, new policies and investment. In particular, to survive as a sector, it needs to overcome its inefficiencies, adopt best practice and integrate with tourism and local manufacturing, in parallel to identifying niche export market opportunities.

What makes the CDB's report particularly important is that it is forward-looking, outlines solutions and opportunities, and gives hope to all who believe in the centrality of agriculture to Caribbean life and who want visitors to experience, in an holistic way, all that the region has to offer.



JHTA Hotelier of the Year leads Altamont Hotels on growth path

THE TRAINING that hotelier Christopher Jarrett got in engineering technology at the New York Institute of Technology has helped the Altamont Hotels Group to be strategic, precise and prudent in its growth plan towards acquiring 200 rooms by 2021.

“We are on our way to achieving our target with some acquisitions on the horizon in western Jamaica. But I cannot give details because of the delicate stage of negotiations at this time,” said the CEO and managing director of Altamont Hotels.

In 1981, his father, Terence, bought a 12-unit building comprising one-and two-bedroom apartments at 1 Altamont Crescent, Kingston, and converted them to 18 studio apartments for the hospitality trade. Then the property next door at No. 3 became available and 18 more rooms were built, bringing the total at both properties to 36. That number of rooms now stands at 58 at the Kingston location.

The former 21-room Belvedere

Hotel on the Montego Bay ‘Hip Strip’ was acquired by the Jarrett family in 2003, who gutted it and added 10 new rooms before it was reopened two years later as the 31-room Altamont West, with added conference facilities.

The modernisation of the Montego Bay property caused a buzz among the hospitality trade and brought the brand to the forefront. “We were among the first to introduce the electronic door locks – or the ‘swipe-card system, as it is commonly known – for each room, which brought a feeling of modern-day security for our guests. Also, we installed flat-screen TVs in each room, which was unheard of at that time in the local hotel industry. The new boutique look and feel distinguished us from other small and medium-sized properties, and stakeholders took notice,” said Jarrett.

“As a boutique hotel chain we have lived by our tag ‘Home in a Hub’, because both properties



Hotelier of the Year Christopher Jarrett (centre) shares lens time with Minister of Tourism, Edmund Bartlett (left) and president of the JHTA, Omar Robinson.

offer a cozy, intimate home setting, although located in the busy New Kingston business district and the vibrant Montego Bay Hip Strip,” he added.

Reminiscing, the Hotelier of the Year stated that during the

early days, when there was a lot more room in the fiscal space, his staff was transported from work, and those on the night shift were dropped at their gates. A pension plan was also set up and again they were among the first hotels in

Kingston to do so. That plan still exists today. “We have also operated frugally and reinvested profits into the properties to maintain a high standard of our plant. That approach has allowed our business to secure its position in the marketplace,” he continued.

Jarrett is a hands-on manager with an open-door policy, who, as a student of the respected hospitality trainer Dr Ben Henry, has adopted what he termed the “management by walking around” approach. He makes time for his staff, whether they wish to discuss business or personal matters. Between both properties there are about 80 members of staff – ranging from the maintenance team to room attendants, culinary staff and administrative employees.

“We look for the right attitude when employing staff and if they do not have training in the field, we train them. But we don’t always get it right,” admitted Jarrett.

As the recipient of JHTA’s Hotelier of the Year Award 2019, Jarrett is humbled by the recognition, but sees it as an endorsement of the hard work which his parents, siblings, and especially his employees, have put into building the brand over the past 38 years.



Christopher Jarrett (centre), receives his award from The Honourable Edmund Bartlett (left), Minister of Tourism, and Omar Robinson (right) President of JHTA.

Congratulations

to our CEO and Managing Director, Christopher Jarrett on being named **JHTA’s Hotelier of the Year 2019**

Under your astute leadership the Altamont Hotels Group has grown to become the pacesetter among boutique hotels on the island whilst maintaining that warm, ‘Home in the Hub’ vibe that only Altamont can offer.

We look forward to our journey and to what the future holds!



Altamont Hotels
J A M A I C A

Chris Blackwell receives JHTA Lifetime Achievement Award

Several others recognised at 58th annual general meeting

CELEBRATED MUSIC producer Chris Blackwell, has received the Association's 'Lifetime Achievement Award'.

Blackwell shared the spotlight with Kingston-based hotelier Christopher Jarrett, Island Route's and Sandals Resorts International's Wayne Cummings. Courtleigh Hotel Group's Nicola Madden-Greig, Joy Spence, Appleton Rum Experience and Caribbean Producers Jamaica received special awards at the organisation's 58th annual general meeting and awards luncheon at the Hilton Rosehall on Saturday, June 29 2019.

The stalwarts were among a select group of 'stars' honoured by the JHTA for excellence in their various spheres.

Blackwell, who began promoting Jamaican music in the 1950's was lauded for helping to launch performers like Bob Marley and the Wailers, Toots and The Maytals, Jimmy Cliff and others "into the realm of international fame".

He entered the hotel industry in the early '90s, creating Island Outpost – a group of intimate luxury hotels, including Strawberry Hill, Kingston; Caves, Negril, and Golden Eye.

Also collecting awards for exceptional service at the JHTA event were Lisa Blair, Safety & Security Officer, Hilton Rosehall Resort & Spa – Hotel Employee of the Year; Reggae Girlz – The Abe Issa Award; Conroy Thompson, training manager, Half Moon Hotel – Hotel Manager/Supervisor of the Year; Paul Andrew Norman, sales & marketing manager of Dolphin Cove – Tourism Employee of the Year; Nardia Angus, pool beach server, Golden Eye – Outstanding Service to Tourism; Clifford Bent, property manager, Trench Town



From left: Omar Robinson, president, Jamaica Hotel & Tourist Association (JHTA); Minister of Tourism Edmund Bartlett; celebrated music producer cum hotelier Chris Blackwell; and Camille Needham, executive director, JHTA. Mr Blackwell received the JHTA's Lifetime Achievement Award at the association's 58th annual general meeting and awards luncheon at the Hilton Rosehall on Saturday, June 29.



Wayne Cummings looking very happy after accepting special award at the JHTA annual general meeting.

Culture Yard – Special Award – Unofficial Ambassador of Tourism; Caribbean Airlines – International Airline of the Year; The Rosehall Great House Tour – Allied Member of the Year; Beaches Ocho Rios Resort & Golf Club – Environmental Sustainability Award; Chukka Good Hope – Attraction of the Year; Tourwise Ltd – Local Transportation Provider of the Year Award; Amstar – Destination Management Company of the Year; Perry's Manufacturing Co Ltd, – Purveyor of the Year Award'.



Manager of the Year, Conroy Thompson, accepts his award from the JHTA's Vana Taylor, Area Chapter Chair for St Ann/Ocho Rios.

THIS NOVEMBER, American Airlines continues to strengthen its presence in Jamaica with the launch of a new service between Sangster International Airport in Montego Bay (MBJ) and John F. Kennedy International Airport in New York (JFK). Starting on Thursday, November 21, the new route will be operated daily with a Boeing 737-800 aircraft.

“American’s rich history in Jamaica spans more than four

American announces new Jamaica service

New daily flight between Montego Bay and New York to launch in November

decades, and today includes an operation of up to 15 daily flights to Montego Bay and Kingston as well as a team of almost 100

people,” said Alfredo Gonzalez, American’s managing director for the Caribbean. “We look forward to the launch of our new

Montego Bay service this coming November, further strengthening Jamaica as a tourist destination by providing non-stop access

to the extensive network that we operate out of JFK, which includes up to 111 daily flights to nearly 40 destinations around the world.”

American began service to Jamaica on March 2, 1977, and during the high season, offers more than 95 weekly flights from Kingston and MBJ to the airline’s hubs in Charlotte, Chicago, Dallas/Fort Worth, Miami, and Philadelphia as well as to Boston.



Flight Schedule, available for purchase on July 1:

Departing city	Arriving city	Departing time	Arrival time	Aircraft type	Frequency
MBJ	JFK	12:00p.m.	4:09 p.m.	Boeing 737-800	Daily
JFK	MBJ	7:00 a.m.	11:00a.m.	Boeing 737-800	Daily

Clarendon to realise tourism potential

TOURISM MINISTER Edmund Bartlett has announced that the parish of Clarendon will be a beneficiary of the tourism ministry’s reimagining exercise aimed at transforming areas of the parish into an ecologically friendly tourist hotspot for locals and international visitors alike.

Minister Bartlett made the comments following a tour last week of sections of the parish with Rudyard Spencer, member of parliament, South East Clarendon; His Worship Winston Maragh, Mayor of May Pen and chairman of the Clarendon Municipal Corporation and officials from the tourism ministry and its agencies to include the Tourism Enhancement Fund, the Tourism Product Development Company (TPDCO) and the Milk River Hotel and Spa.

“As part of efforts to build out new experiences by developing mini destinations, we have identified areas in Clarendon

that are brimming with potential and are ready to be sustainably developed. Areas of note include the Salt River, the Salt River Mineral Spring, down into the stunning Jackson Bay beach and surrounding locales, which represent a real opportunity for tourism.”

Established in 1664, Clarendon is known for notable Jamaicans such as writer and poet Claude McKay and boxer Glen Johnson. The parish also boasts the historical Milk River Bath and Rio Minho.

Senior Adviser and Strategist, Delano Seiveright noted that the tour incorporated the Salt River area which is just under an hour away from Kingston utilising the tolled highway and the white sand Jackson Bay Beach further south, which stretches for over 350 metres (1,500 feet) with a width of approximately 12 metres (40 feet).

Bartlett also led a tour of the Milk River Mineral Spa, which recently benefitted from several



Tourism Minister Edmund Bartlett (left) is in a spirited discussion with stakeholders at the Salt River Mineral Spring in Clarendon, yesterday. Also sharing in the moment is His Worship Winston Maragh (centre), mayor of May Pen and chairman of the Clarendon Municipal Corporation and Delano Seiveright, senior adviser/strategist, Ministry of Tourism (second right).

upgrades, including a lift to facilitate disabled persons, a new lobby, expanded dining facilities, and a backup generator executed by TPDCO.

Under the instructions of Minister Bartlett, the technical team at the ministry, led by Permanent Secretary Jennifer Griffith, began an islandwide

reimagining exercise to develop new tourist destinations and reorient some existing ones.

The areas include St Thomas, Lucea, and Negril.



Representatives from 11 countries at Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport for United States Independence Day celebrations 2019.

THE JAMAICA Tourist Board (JTB) paid special tribute to the United States' (US) Independence Day at Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport (ATL) during the airport's 2019 Fourth of July celebration.

Home to one of the world's busiest airports, Atlanta remains one of Jamaica's most important US markets, playing a critical role as a connecting hub for the record-breaking number of visitors to the island every year.

Jamaica was one of 11 countries selected to join the celebration for their strong and exceptional business partnerships with ATL. Other destinations represented Taiwan, Cyprus, the Netherlands, the Republic of Korea, the Bahamas, Canada, Mexico, Belgium, Japan, and Ireland.

Jamaica contributed a stunning floral display, along with a descriptive brief about the island and a note of congratulations. This dedication is prominently displayed in the atrium of ATL's international terminal and will remain there throughout the holiday.

The event not only recognised the Fourth of July holiday but also highlighted the airport's mission to provide its 107 million annual guests with the best customer experience possible. During this year's holiday, the airport expects to have 3.6 million passengers screened through its



Alrene Richards Barr, director of international affairs, ATL Airport, speaks on the importance of Fourth of July celebrations and America's Independence.

security checkpoints.

ATL serves as an international gateway to more than 75 destinations in 50 countries across the globe, handling some 2,500 flights and 275,000 passengers each day.



From left: Tamara Christie-Johnson, business development manager, Jamaica Tourist Board; Dr Monica Dennis-Jones, Caribbean Gospel Radio; Alrene Richards Barr, director of international affairs, ATL Airport; and Cleveland Harlequin, Caribbean Gospel Radio.

From left: Tamara Christie-Johnson, business development manager, Jamaica Tourist Board; ATL General Manager John Selden; and Alrene Richards Barr, director of international affairs, ATL Airport.

Lisa Blair is the JHTA Hotel Employee of the Year

DEDICATED, RELIABLE, capable and blessed with an engaging personality is an accurate description of the Jamaica Hotel and Tourist Association (JHTA) Hotel Employee of the Year.

But there is much more to be said about Lisa Blair, safety and security officer at the Hilton Rose Hall Resort and Spa, Montego Bay, who entered the hospitality industry in 2004 as a JUTA (Jamaica Union of Travellers Association) tour guide.

She also worked as a customer service representative before taking up her current job.

From the outset, her strong leadership and customer service skills marked her as someone who would be a star performer and a credit to the hotel. A hard worker who is able to inspire and motivate others to do better than they ever thought possible, she scores top marks for quality and volume of work, reliability and initiative, courtesy and customer service, attendance and punctuality, and in

other important areas.

General Manager at the Hilton Rose Hall, Carol Bourke, concurs, pointing out that Blair has always displayed the true spirit of hospitality.

“It was not a difficult decision to recommend her as a potential nominee for this award. Her dedication to her community and the hard work that she puts in every time we initiate a project is heartwarming and exemplifies our ‘service from the heart’ culture.” Bourke continued, “We are very proud of her, and congratulate her on attaining this prestigious industry recognition.”

A vibrant, intelligent and sincere individual who takes pride in her work, Blair attained her NCTVET certification in industrial security operations and is also certified in customer service. Over the years, she has continued to broaden her horizons. She is the one who supervises the team in her manager’s absence, and she also

assists with training and room search and guest reports.

Within the hotel community, she is an enthusiastic award-winning member of the energy committee. The wider community also benefits from her passion and drive. She is heavily involved in peace management initiatives and has benefited from training in areas such as violence interruption and prevention.

ADMIRABLE DEVOTION

She works with at-risk youth and spearheads the corner league football competition in Mount Salem, St James, taking on tasks ranging from seeking sponsorship to organising matches. Her devotion to the youth is admirable. A respected and trusted contributor to the community, she figures prominently in a wide range of outreach efforts, assisting with coordinating as well as participating in events and generally supporting community-building and



Lisa Blair, flanked by Minister of Tourism Edmund Bartlett (left) and President of the Jamaica Hotel and Tourist Association (JHTA), Omar Robinson.

enhancement projects. The most recent is a home for the less fortunate in Albion, Montego Bay.

Overall, at her workplace and in the community, this fine

representative of the tourism industry is regarded as an outstanding individual who “epitomises what it means to deliver service from the heart”.



Congratulations!
Lisa Blair

**JAMAICA HOTEL & TOURIST ASSOCIATION’S
Employee of the Year 2018**

Success is not measured by money. It is truly measured by hard work, discipline and the will to win.
You have proved that time and again!

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Hot Latin Fusion bringing on **THE HEAT**

Paul H. Williams
Hospitality Jamaica Writer

IT WAS a warm Sunday evening when **Hospitality Jamaica** arrived on the cusp of twilight. Sizzling Latin music blared. A few people were at the bar. Someone was being served an original strawberry daiquiri. The scent of Cuban tobacco wafted through the air.

More people were seated around tables in an open space. On the tables were cans of Cerveza Cristal, a popular Cuban beer. Beside them were also well-known local brands, for the scene was not set in the heart of a Cuban city or a Cuban district in Miami. The Latin flavours and beats were kicking at 2A Strathairn Avenue in the heart of the Half-Way Tree area.

As darkness descended, the dance floor got busier. The music coming from the computers of Winston 'Merritone' Blake was arresting people's feet at this monthly Latin Fusion Party, held by La Guantanamera Latin Food Shop and

Cocktails, operated by Cuban resident in Jamaica Maria Romero.

And though Merritone himself was on spot, it was Reynaldo Diaz, for most of the evening, who made sure the authentic Latin beats were as hypnotic as hypnotic gets. The essence of the soirée, Romero said, is "to have an authentic Latin spot for the enjoyment of expatriates and Jamaicans in general". The services are provided by native Cubans, yet in the name of the party, the food has more than a Jamaican touch. It is Cuban-Jamaican.

A few Jamaicans were seen soaking up the Latin culture, and as word gets around, more are expected to go see what this Sunday sizzler is all about. Gates are open from 2 p.m. until midnight. Admission is inclusive of food and drink.

The Merritone-La Guantanamera Latin connection has been up dancing away for about four months now, and plans are in the pipeline to serve Latin cocktails every evening.



Patrons chilling out at Latin Fusion Party before the dancing starts.



Patrons dancing to sizzling Latin music.



Maria Romero of La Guantanamera Latin Food Shop and Cocktails serving up some Jamaican-Cuban food.



Winston 'Merritone' Black (left) and Reynaldo Diaz at the turntables.

LEADING TOURISM stakeholders from The Bahamas, St Lucia, and Jamaica took top honours at the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association's annual Caribbean Hospitality Industry Exchange Forum (CHIEF) awards celebration last week at the Hyatt Regency Miami.

Hotels, attractions, and tourism stakeholder organisations from throughout the Caribbean were evaluated in four categories covering Business Operations, Environmental Sustainability, Sales and Marketing, and Social Responsibility.

From The Bahamas, Small Hope Bay Lodge in Andros, Valentines Resort & Marina on Harbour Island, and the Nassau Airport Development Company (NAD) scored heavily with the judges. St Lucia also registered strong placements by The Landings Resort and Spa, Bay Gardens Resorts, and Bel Jou Hotel.

In the Business Operations category, The Landings Resort & Spa captured first place as judges were impressed with its outstanding success in turning around the resort's fiscal performance.

Following in second place was the Nassau Airport Development

Caribbean Tourism's Best practices shine at CHIEF Awards



Paul Collymore of The Landings Resort & Spa in St Lucia is congratulated by (from left) CHTA's Frank Comito, Patricia Affonso-Dass, and Bill Clegg.

Company (NAD), which partnered with airport stakeholders at the Lynden Pindling International Airport to develop new operation procedures to manage significant passenger growth and to improve the passenger experience throughout peak travel periods.

In third place, Atlantis

Submarines (Barbados) Inc. was recognised for its exemplary dedication to the highest principles of safety and reliability.

In the Environmental Sustainability category, Small Hope Bay Lodge in Andros placed first. The Bahamian property launched a major re-engineering and upgrades initiative

focused on solar power as part of its refurbishments following the 2016 hurricane season.

Second place went to Bay Gardens Resorts in St Lucia, recognised for its recent reduction of single-use plastics and Styrofoam products as well as its 20 per cent reduction in energy usage across occupied hotel guestrooms. Blue Horizons Garden Resort in Grenada took third place in the category for its comprehensive approach towards reducing dependence on fossil fuels.

Bucuti & Tara Beach Resort in Aruba was honoured with the Environmental Sustainability "Hall of Fame" award for ongoing leadership and excellence in this category.

Valentines Resort & Marina on Harbour Island in The Bahamas took the top spot in the Sales and Marketing award category. Through new social media and email marketing initiatives, the property saw significant increases in room revenue.

Second place was awarded to

The Somerset on Grace Bay in The Turks and Caicos, recognised for its rebranding and new market position. Third place was awarded to Bel Jou Hotel, with rebranding initiatives contributing to robust gains in average daily rate, room occupancy, and overall room revenue.

In the category of Social Responsibility, Sandals Resorts International took first place for its efforts in Jamaica. Last year, the Sandals Foundation launched its Whitehouse and Bluefields Solid Waste Reduction Project with funding from the United Nations Environment Programme. This project seeks to educate and provide residents on Jamaica's south coast with a structure for solid-waste management through effective waste separation.

In second place, The Landings Resort & Spa in St Lucia was recognised for its commitment to various interest groups, including schools and civic organisations. In third place, Half Moon Resort in Jamaica was recognised for its recent partnership with SOS International Children's Village to assist the operation in its Barrett Town, Montego Bay, location.

Sandals
RESORTS INTERNATIONAL

CONGRATULATIONS

Sandals Resorts International applauds our Beaches Ocho Rios team and Mr. Wayne Cummings for respectively receiving the Environmental Sustainability Award and an Award in Recognition and Appreciation of Invaluable Support, at the recent Jamaica Hotel and Tourist Association's (JHTA) National Awards Ceremony. Sandals Resorts International received a similar recognition and appreciation award.

Beaches Ocho Rios, with General Manager, Brian Roper at the helm, has consistently maintained the Sandals Group's standard for good environmental stewardship which has seen the resort recognised by EarthCheck® with the Master Certification for consistent best practices for over 15 consecutive years. At Sandals and Beaches Resorts, we are committed to providing quality vacation experiences while we work to minimise the environmental and social impact. Our efforts include, freshwater & energy conservation; recycling and reuse programmes for solid waste & wastewater; reducing or eliminating the use of hazardous substances; reduction of greenhouse gas emissions; focused community development and cultural relations; elimination of plastic straws and Styrofoam; and the employment of qualified local personnel in keeping with our existing human resource policy. Beaches Ocho Rios continues to be a shining example of the Sandals' environmental sustainability ethos.



Wayne Cummings, Group Commercial Director is unwavering in his support for Jamaica's tourism industry and has himself served the Jamaica Hotel & Tourist Association in various capacities including that of President from 2007-2011. A 30-year tourism and hospitality professional, Cummings has managed several Sandals resorts over the years, with a focus on exceptional customer service and an innate ability to connect with and motivate his teams. He is also credited with the introduction of Sandals Resorts International's Environmental Management and Awareness System which is the benchmark for the group's environmental practices to date. Cummings' expertise on all areas of the tourism and hospitality sector, from policy development to execution, is highly sought after and revered and he remains a true stalwart in the industry.

Sandals
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Beaches
Resorts for Everyone
by Sandals

The Black River is the longest navigable river in Jamaica.



AROUND JA WITH PAUL H.

Black River needs A REBIRTH



The Zong Monument in Black River, St Elizabeth.

ON MY way to visit a friend recently, I stopped in Black River, the capital of St Elizabeth but not the main town. That title belongs to Santa Cruz, which has outgrown Black River in physical space and popularity.

I stood, and I looked around and asked myself the question, “What is this place good for?” There was absolutely nothing in this southern town that I could actually feast my eyes on. Really?

It was once a bustling and progressive place where wealthy people lived. They got their money from the export of logwood for the dye that it contains. From 1893-94, the export value of logwood surpassed that of sugar cane, according to Olive Senior in the **Encyclopedia of Jamaican Heritage**. It became the first town in Jamaica to have electric light when the Leyden family installed electricity facilities in their house, now called Waterloo, in 1893.

Senior writes that logwood was introduced to Jamaica in 1715 through seeds brought from Honduras on the instruction of the island botanist Dr Barham. The seeds germinated, the trees proliferated, and the colonists desecrated them in the name of mercantilism. The demand for logwood fell when synthetic dyes were introduced, and the slow demise of Black River, it seems, was a response to the death of the logwood trade.

It was not my first time in this town, and every time I visit, I go to see the fishing village on the river. And, as much as I want to use the terms ‘quaint’, ‘idyllic’, ‘riparian allure’ to describe it, I cannot. Because it really is not. From where I stood at the riverside, I could see

An old warehouse in Black River, St Elizabeth.





Black River in St Elizabeth used to be a thriving town that exported logwood for the dye that it contains.

the boats that take visitors up the longest navigable river on the island.

The perching white egrets and their white droppings on the green leaves of the mangroves, I must admit, made a pretty picture. The ride up the river, which I took twice before, is rather scenic, a pleasant and wonderful departure from the drab of the town itself.

The town is an essay of abandonment and nonchalance. Who really cares for this storied place, where enslaved Africans arrived and were sold on auction blocks? Vestiges of

that most inhuman operation, I was told by an elderly Rastaman, used to be on a spot near the sea, but all those, too, have disappeared. Inside the big, high structure that is the market was almost empty. Where were the buyers?

Across the road from the market is a brick warehouse of yesteryear. I am yet to figure out whether it was built in pre- or post-Eman-cipation days. But right now, it is telling the story of present-day Black River. It is empty, and refuse is strewn all around it.



A section of the Black River Fishing Village in St Elizabeth.



The bridge that spans the Black River in the town of the same name.



Jamaica Hotel & Tourist Association
PURVEYOR AWARD 2019

Presented to
PERRY'S MANUFACTURING COMPANY LIMITED
for
Outstanding service
to Jamaica's Tourism

29 June 2019



We would like to thank the Jamaica Hotel & Tourist Association for the citation of the JHTA
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for outstanding service to Jamaica's tourism.



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Salutes the 2018 Awardees.

Your extraordinary efforts have contributed significantly to the growth and sustainability of Jamaica's tourism industry.

