

Duke of Edinburgh's International Award - Barbados

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

2017 BARBADOS AGM

October 2016 – October 2017

NATIONAL AWARD OPERATORS ACTIVITIES

The year in review started off with my attending the International Council Meeting in Missenden, just outside London City. The IC was briefed on the many changes taking place in the Award, especially the changes in the Grant Funding. Reports were fielded from Delegates from the International Award community.

In November 2016, Mr. Richard Goddard was awarded for his many years of service to the Award. Mr. Goddard was instrumental in the growth of the award in Barbados during the 1980's and 90's, and served as Barbados Chairman for several years. He also was central to the establishment of C.A.S.C. which he also chaired for several years. He is an Icon of the Award.

The Annual Fundraising Golf Tournament was held at The Royal Westmoreland Course, raising much needed funds for the Award Program. In recent years, the after-tournament dinner and prize-giving ceremony have been replaced with a more cost-effective cocktail party. It was felt that the dinner costs too much and consumed much of the raised funds.

A **Gold Award Ceremony** was held at Government House on 30th November 2016. HRH Prince Harry presented the Awards as part of the island's 50th Anniversary of Independence. Receiving their Gold Awards were Jade Gibbons and Charlee Gittens.

On June 27th this year, the DEIA signed a **Sub-Licensing Agreement** with the Barbados Boy Scouts Association. It is hoped that this will help swell the number of active participants in the program. This is the second Sub License signed by the Award in Barbados.

Retirement of the GG

June this year also saw the Retirement of the Governor General of Barbados, His Excellency Sir Elliott Belgrave, and Patron of the Award. Two tickets to the Elliott and Loretta Belgrave Scholarship Trust Dinner were purchased by the Award, and Carla and Nadia attended as representatives of the Award. A token of appreciation was also presented to His Excellency for his service to the Award.

The Award Council meetings were well attended throughout the year with lively discussions taking place on the various issues. Many suggestions were put forward as to how the Award could be advanced, but so far change has been slow. This is not due to lack of will, but further information etc. is required to implement some of the strategies, with specific skill-sets required for some. The processes are on-going.

The Finance Committee in particular needs attention, as we desperately need to up our efforts to raise funds.

There has been a decline in the number of participants joining the program and consequently a decline in the number of Awards being achieved. This is engaging the attention of Council, and it is my belief that there are several factors to be considered as to why the numbers are dropping. Consequently, there is no one solution and hard work and creative thinking will be required to reverse the trend. There is a plan being developed by the Cadets, and this has attracted the interest of the wider Council as we believe it has good promise as a way of recruiting participants in a meaningful way. However, one of the main issues confronting us as we seek to expand the program is one of human resources, specifically Award leaders. Recruiting participants without having the needed leaders would be futile.

A Home for the Award

One of the major activities engaging the Award office at this time is the acquisition of a permanent home for the Award. As mentioned at last year's AGM, in August 2016 I wrote to the Government seeking the use of an abandoned property for the Award. Progress has been slow, as the property has been derelict for many years and there are many issues. However, the relevant Authorities have been very cooperative, and we have been offered a 25-year Lease on the property. Earlier this year I signed a document agreeing to the terms and conditions which would govern the Lease. We are at an advanced stage of the process, and the property is being surveyed to properly demarcate the substantial lands around the main house. An engineer has been contacted and he has agreed to carry out a formal assessment on the buildings and the repairs needed to bring it back from the dead. Upon getting the keys, some quick repairs will be done to one of the lesser buildings on the site which can be used as the Duke Offices while the more substantial structure is being renovated.

A serious fund-raising drive will be embarked upon to raise the enormous amount of money it will take to fully recover the property. However, in the long-run this will be a tremendous asset to the award and a big boost to the profile and stature of the Award program. The Trustees have approved the project and stand ready to jump in at the appropriate time.

The 2017 CASC AGM held in Guyana

The meeting was well attended, and several issues were discussed. It is clear that there are common issues in the region as regards to governance, participant recruitment, and leader

recruitment. The issues discussed are Regional issues, but of note to the Barbados AGM, I am informing you that Barbados was duly re-elected for a further 3-Year term as CASC Chair. This augers well for Barbados and for the region for several reasons, including that the CASC registered body is domiciled in Barbados, and the bank account etc. is also operated from here. Barbados is also seen as a leader in the CASC region and in a good position to set the pace for the region.

The 2018 Adventurous Journey has been awarded to the Bahamas and will take place on Cat Island.

Training

Coming out of the Grenada experience, the Trinidad CASC, and the Guyana Exploration, a training course will be held here next week-end for Leaders and Award managers. Wearing my other hat as CASC Chairman, I am of the view that the CASC Expeditions are being held with varying standards and degrees of success. We have therefore asked The Americas Regional Director Maj. David Clarke for help and he will conduct the exercise here over two days. It is intended that this will be a pilot for bringing a consistent standard back to the program.

Going forward, I intend to focus Council on the on-going matters, particularly finance and program expansion. The current Council is showing good energy and willingness to serve, and I am hopeful that they will avail themselves to staying on to keep the momentum, subject to the election process at hand.

Thank you.

Stephen R Smith
National Award Chairman
Oct 7 2017