

SAINT KITTS AND NEVIS
DIASPORA
DIGEST

VOL: 01 INTEGRATE AND COLLABORATE ISSUE: 02



SAVE THE DATE
FRIDAY JANUARY 5, 2024



HOSTED BY
THE HONOURABLE
DR TERRANCE M DREW

THEME:
UNWAVERING VISION FOR A SUSTAINABLE TOMORROW
7PM @ ST. KITTS MARRIOTT RESORT BALLROOM

MORE DETAILS COMING SOON

DIASPORA DIGEST

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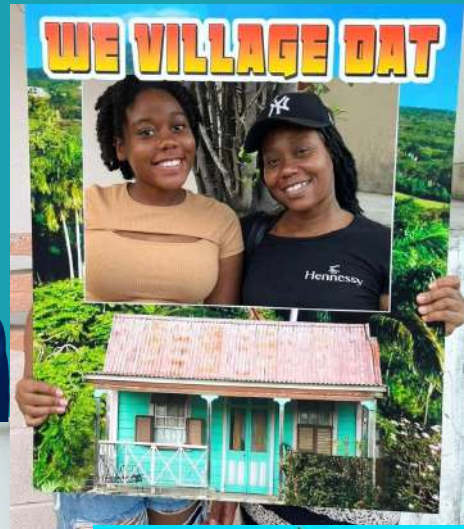
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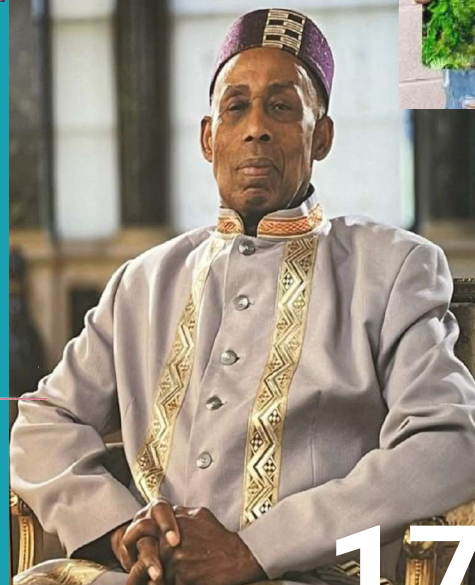


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Fellow citizens in the Diaspora,

National Carnival 2023-2024 is at the door. Another year of hard work draws to a close and the people of Saint Kitts and Nevis will soon dance in the streets in merriment, a thankful expression for having seen the challenges and successes of another year.

That is what we do in Saint Kitts and Nevis. Carnival is a part of the rich tapestry our culture of celebration.

The national culture of our federation is our food and folklore, our music and dance, the spoken and written word, as well as the innovation and artistry of our people. It ranges from the community and island festivals that showcase our abundant talents.

No matter where Kittitians and Nevisians settle around the world, we carry our national culture in our hearts and in our souls. We crave local cuisine, calypso and other cultural connections. They form the foundation of our shared values as a people. The tangible and intangible aspects of our shared heritage unite us as Kittitians and Nevisians both at home and abroad.

The Ministry of the Creative Economy supports the work of *the Diaspora Digest* as a communication tool that highlights the strides that are being made in Saint Kitts and Nevis in the various areas of economic advancement, social development and cultural involvement to you our nationals in the *Diaspora*. The Ministry embraces the passion of our people around the world to keep contact with all that happens here at home.

Many of you have already booked your flights and will be home for Christmas, Carnival and the New Year. You understand that there is no place like home. Others will take part in the celebrations via the conveniences of the world wide web. We celebrate with you in mind.

While you live and work far away from our homeland, you continue to be our cultural ambassadors. We know that our nationals and citizens, all over the world, are the proud promoters of our richly unique culture. You showcase our resourcefulness and resilience as well as pride and industry that abound in the people of Saint Kitts and Nevis. You walk as tall as the mokojumpies wherever you go.

Do enjoy this second issue of *the Diaspora Digest*. Through it, we shall continue to create a culture that is inclusive, purposeful, and uniting. We praise your influence and your efforts in the *Diaspora* and thank you for promoting our Saint Kitts and Nevis culture.

Merry Christmans and Happy New Year!

***Hon. Samal M. Duggins, MP, JP
Minister of Creative Economy et al.***





MESSAGE BY THE HON. ERIC EVELYN, MINISTER OF CULTURE IN THE NEVIS ISLAND ADMINISTRATION

It is my distinct privilege and honour to pen this brief introductory message as part of the *Saint Kitts and Nevis Diaspora Digest*.

Let me first give commendation to the initiative to create this medium through which we can address our many nationals who are currently residing overseas and who are very much in tuned to what is happening in our beloved Federation of Saint Kitts and Nevis. This is an excellent avenue of reaching our nationals in the Diaspora.

As the Minister with responsibility for Culture in the Nevis Island Administration (NIA), it is my distinct duty to remind our nationals overseas that Culture is alive, well and progressing on Nevis as well as in the Federation.

It is certainly the mandate of the NIA to ensure that our rich cultural traditions are passed on to the present generations as well as those to come. That is why we can boast of our very vibrant programmes taught in our schools as well as the communities. That is why there are so many cultural groups including masquerade, clown, mokojumbie and cake-walk on display during our annual summer festival, Culturama. Our music is an integral part of our rich culture and this is truly evident in the pulsating sounds of the big drum, African drum, and steel pan as well as the soothing sounds of the string band.

We are at a point in our history where we have never witnessed so many steel bands on Nevis, all due to the efforts of the NIA. Various steel bands are based in our schools, our communities as well as at the Nevis Cultural Development Foundation (NCDF).

As we continue to celebrate our culture, I take pleasure in inviting all nationals of Saint Kitts and Nevis living in the Diaspora to be a part of history, be a part of Culturama 50 taking place in Nevis from July 25 to August 6, 2024. *Culturama is de Caribbean's greatest Summer Lime* and the 50th edition promises to be an experience like no other. My advice to you is to reserve your vacation time now, book your tickets soon, and book your accommodation and transportation now if you need to. You absolutely cannot miss Culturama 50 which will also be a homecoming event. Our promise to you is that you will never be disappointed. We certainly look forward to welcoming all of you home in 2024.

I also take this opportunity to wish all a very Happy and Holy Christmas and may the New Year bring you good health, happiness and blessings in abundance.

*Hon Eric Evelyn
Minister of Culture
Nevis Island Administration*



RIDU - Living Heritage at home and abroad



Artistic representation of the local Masquerade by Pierre Liburd of Sandy Point, Saint Kitts.

There is much that unites the people of Saint Kitts and Nevis and it matters not how near and far we live from each other. We are closely connected by the shared heritage of food, folklore, sport, songs and stories.

While living away from the homeland, our nationals in the Diaspora seek to maintain a connection with Saint Kitts and Nevis. It can be through listening internet radio, chatting on social media, or reading digital copies of the local papers, our people keep in contact with what is happening in the federation. Requests are made of relatives and friends leaving the islands to bring breads, pastries and other local foods, because nothing out there captures the feel and the taste of our home.

The **Regional Integration and Diaspora Unit** understands that cultural heritage is a unifying identifier that has great value to our country and to all our people. The Unit also understands that cultural heritage can be diluted where connection is lost and new prevailing cultures replace that which was homegrown.

While it is understood that all cultures and heritage continuously undergo trans-

formations that reshape and reinterpret the significance of cultural artefacts and actions from generation to generation, it is sure that a culture stays intact when there is full participatory involvement. This is called “Living Heritage” which is a co-creative dimension of our cultural heritage that helps to shape new cultural norms within the rubric of the existing cultural framework. It builds on that which has been inherited from our ancestors and is passed on to our descendants. It includes oral traditions, performing arts, social practices, rituals and festive events, knowledge and practices concerning nature, and the capacity and skills related to craftsmanship.

Within this concept, the ‘intangible heritage’ undergoes changes in practices, representations, knowledge, and skills transmitted intergenerationally within a cultural system. Living culture allows descendants to engage with, define, interpret, change, and co-create the heritage that has been transmitted from past generations.

The adoption of new technologies and modes of operation can convert cultural recipes to mass produced delicacies that gain regional and international acclaim. That which has been enjoyed by a few

can eventually be known the world over as a result of efforts at rebranding the cultural norms of Saint Kitts and Nevis.

Already we are doing this each Carnival when our bands and other artistes utilise social media to disseminate new music for Nevis Culturama and National Carnival. Living Culture invites us as people to do the same with our food, our fashion, our story telling, not just at home but in the Diaspora as well.

With a focus on creating a Sustainable Island State, the Government of Saint Kitts and Nevis understands that intangible assets form part of the emerging productive capacity of our people. From food process and manufacturing to services and trade related aspects of intellectual property rights, a new thrust in co-creating our cultural artefacts into lucrative business ventures offers great potential to all the people of Saint Kitts and Nevis.

This issue of the **Saint Kitts and Nevis Diaspora Digest** encourages our nationals and citizens in the Diaspora to identify ways we can promote the culture of our country and use our resourcefulness to convert our local asset into increased national productivity.



Save
the
Date

JULY

SAINT KITTS AND NEVIS DIASPORA CONFERENCE 2024

1-4

2024

*Diasporic
Synergies in a
Sustainable
Island State*

Inspiring Innovation. Creating Connections. Exponential Growth.



REGIONAL
**INTEGRATION &
DIASPORA UNIT**
INTEGRATE AND COLLABORATE

Creatives Connect: Linking the Creative Economy with Diasporic Synergy



“Moving Together Like A Storm,” is one of three taglines that can be found on bright, colourful billboards at various locations around Saint Kitts introducing the Creative Economy to the world. Throughout the years, Kittitians and Nevisians the world over have heard about or lived the experience of storms and waves of change within and outside of our tiny twin island state. *The Creative Economy* is an eruption that has been boiling just beneath the surface of our society, waiting for the best time to break barriers and bring about meaningful change. What is *the Creative Economy* you may ask and how does it affect those who dwell beyond the shores of our country?

The Creative Industry Sector is a rapidly growing and dynamic division of the global economy and with the rise of digital technologies and the increasing demand for additional cultural content, *the Creative Economy* has become an important driver of economic growth, job creation, and innovation. As such, the Department of Creative Economy was established to support and promote the development of this emerging economic sector.

One of the key objectives of the Department is to raise the standard and advancement of skills of the Creatives. We recognise that the quality of creative output is a critical factor in the success of this industry, and we commit to provide the necessary training and support to help our Creatives

achieve their full potential. Through a wide range of training programmes, mentorship initiatives, and collaborative activities with industry leaders, we aim to promote continuous learning and skills development among our creative professionals.

Additionally, the Department also recognises the need to sensitise our nationals, at home and abroad, about the importance of the creative economy and the cultural shift that is happening in our society. A vibrant creative sector will help to build stronger communities, foster social cohesion, and enhance our cultural identity. To deliver these outcomes, the Department has been raising awareness among stake-

holders, including the public and private sectors, and the government, on the economic, and social benefits of the creative economy.

The Department is committed to promoting economic growth and diversity through the support and development of creative industries in the nation and as the Orange Economy continues to develop worldwide it is vital to create a thriving *Creative Economy* at home to significantly assist our practitioners in reaching the world stage and facilitate revenue generation. It is of utmost importance to underscore the critical role that the creative and cultural arts play in energising economic growth and keeping Saint Kitts and Nevis on the competitive edge.



Creatives are engaged in a capacity building song writing workshop.



Creatives Connect (continued)

Our Formation

Laying the foundation, the Department journeyed on developing the ideal strategic action plan for *The Creative Economy*. Added to our extensive research, consultations were held with relevant stakeholders through a platform called *Creatives Connect*.

These sessions were used to garner the thoughts, ideas, concerns, and frustrations of Creatives, which in turn offered guidance to the priority areas where focus and attention are mostly needed. Several inter-ministerial meetings were hosted which continue to solidify existing relationships, mend broken ones and form new synergies between the Department and its counterparts to build out the *Creative Economy*.

Additionally, our Department has enlisted several private sector entities to form partnerships that will offer much-needed incentives for Creatives as well as motivate others to patronise their emerging businesses. The Department seeks their support and corporate social responsibility as nation builders.

The Department has considered what is needed to facilitate the expected growth and adjusted its organisational structure accordingly and we are now made up of general administrators, arts administrators and specialists, curators, consultants, and the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) Secretariat which manages operations in the heritage sector. Our aim is to expand the present human resource systems to adequately facilitate our initiatives and achieve our goals.



The Department has introduced the re-classification of creative fields and present the ten (10) sectors deemed most appropriate for our current environment. These areas are Performing Arts, Film and Media, Tradition Bearers, Visual Arts and Craft, Culinary Arts, Cosmetic Arts, Literary Arts, Gaming and Innovation, Service Providers, and Arts Administration.

Other significant achievements in 2023 include the auspicious rebranding and launch of the Department on July 28; the launch of our informative and dynamic website (creatives.kn) where readers can

keep up to date with all the happenings within *the Creative Economy*; introduction of the Creatives ID and Catalogue platforms both of which connect practitioners with public and private partners and other industry stakeholders; and the initiation of Creatives Campaigns where a creatives anthem has been written and performed by local music artists and an energetic media/marketing campaign set to heighten Creatives' interest.

There has also been the development of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Policy, with the maintenance of strong alliances with the National Carnival, and Independence Committees, and the St. Kitts Music Festival. The birth and execution of the Creatives Community murals and beautification project and quarterly 'We Village Dat' community outreaches highlight and celebrate those who contribute creatively to community and nation building.

The Department has engaged regional and international industry professionals in many of the categories as were seen in the October 2023 Song Writing Workshop which was facilitated by Jelanie "Pops" Shaw. The product of this training will be unveiled in the upcoming 2024 National Creatives Convention.

The Department aims to assist with the financial burdens of our Creatives. The



Department has launched the unprecedented Creative Arts Fund which offers various grants that offer developmental support to creative businesses. Plans are also afoot for the National Creative Arts Centre, the proposed design of which has been unveiled for consultations with Creatives.

In March 2024, a National Creatives Convention dubbed “The Creative Power” will be hosted to reshape the national creative landscape through lectures, talent development seminars, career opportunities, networking, business development, and more. It will feature highly anticipated and qualified speakers and instructors/coaches locally, regionally, and internationally to initiate discussions, share knowledge, and develop action plans on diverse and fundamental topics for the advancement of the creative economy.

The Department will maintain and enhance existing initiatives by curating several pioneering programming, and developing the National Creative/Cultural policy. Initiatives to be undertaken include portfolio development, drama festivals, dance conferences, talent discovery and export programmes, a film/media regulatory commission, TV Shows, knowledge transfer workshops, craft vending markets, arts and innovation, cook-offs, beauty product development training, street festivals, literary arenas, script programmes, expos, open mics, instrument coaching, and music competitions, creative business clinics, mixers and networking events, stage management and production workshops, internships/apprenticeship programme, software development courses, fashion week, costume-making factories, regional and international exchanges. These will be implemented in phases to ensure that there is a plethora of avenues within the orange economy.

Our heritage is a central feature of the *Creative Economy*. The ICH Secretariat is commissioned to safeguard our Intangible Cultural Heritage so that generations yet to come may also stand proud as they safeguard our cultural heritage. With the aid of UNESCO, the ICH Secretariat began implementing a capacity building project and the development of an ICH Policy.

The ICH Secretariat is keen on expanding its knowledge transfer and skills training programming to expose hundreds more of our children and youth to the knowledge and skills that are core to safeguarding

our Intangible Cultural Heritage. Additionally, the documentation of our Intangible Cultural Heritage continues and will continue as we engage with our knowledge bearers and senior members of our community, to ensure that the vast library of unscripted knowledge that they each hold is captured and safeguarded for posterity. Their insights will be shared with the youth and the general populace through diverse media products designed for different target audiences.

Caribbean people within the Diaspora play a significant role in the development of the general economy and the *Creative Economy* both at home and abroad. Remittances aside, our Diaspora assists with the promotion of trade and foreign investment, creates businesses, spurs entrepreneurship, and offers new opportunities for the transfer of new knowledge and skills. As our people fan out across the globe, becoming more highly skilled and better connected, they are able to themselves to be enablers of the national creative initiatives that are taking place here in Saint Kitts and Nevis. Such partnerships are invited.

The Department of Creative Economy will establish our creative professionals who are more than capable of competing on the world markets and the Diaspora is not left out, as avenues will be created for our shared benefits regardless of our far flung global locations.

The Department of Creative Economy is entrusted with ensuring progressive growth of the creative industries and fostering a sustainable ecosystem for creative professionals and businesses in Saint Kitts and Nevis inclusive of the Diaspora. Human capital, creativity, and cultural content lend to the ascent of new services and industries that harness the creative intelligence and entrepreneurial spirit of our nationals and provide revenue streams and employment opportunities, landmark programs, and imprints on world stages. So as we “Move Together Like A Storm”, we will work hard to guide our creatives “From Passion To Profession”, and assist with “Unlocking Your Potential” for the continued growth and development of our twin island nation.

Department of creative economy

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RIDU News: Save the date

Diaspora Conference, July 1 to 4, 2024



REGIONAL INTEGRATION & DIASPORA UNIT

INTEGRATE AND COLLABORATE

The Regional Integration and Diaspora Unit announces the second edition of the Saint Kitts and Nevis Diaspora Conference. The global gathering of Saint Kitts and Nevis nationals and citizens will be held in Basseterre, Saint Kitts and Charlestown, Nevis over the period July 1 to 4, 2024.

Presented under the theme “*Diasporic Synergies in a Sustainable Island State*”, the cultural convocation will focus on the core objectives of inspiring innovation, creating connections and delivering exponential growth for Saint Kitts and Nevis.

In partnership with the private sector and the Nevis Island Administration, the Conference organisers will cater for the direct involvement of interested individuals and representatives of Diasporic groups and national associations.

At the close, the conference organisers will update the Saint Kitts and Nevis Diaspora Policy. The draft policy document emanating from this conference will be taken to the Cabinets of the Federal Government and the Nevis Island Administration for their endorsements.

A Steering Committee has begun planning this momentous event. The committee draws from the experience of government (Federal and NIA) experience, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs along with the private sector. The Committee is chaired by H.E. Dr. Christine Walwyn, Ambassador to the Saint Kitts and Nevis Diaspora.

There will be spaces at the Conference for an exhibition gallery for business and Diaspora groups to showcase their goods and services. A commemorative magazine

will also be published. Advertisements will be on sale and Diaspora groups will be invited to submit showcase information. More information will be provided for individual registration at a later time.

The Government of Saint Kitts and Nevis seeks earnestly to provide an enabling environment to pivot national discourse and action that would transition our country into a Sustainable Island State. The Diaspora is a key stakeholder group that should be engaged in this national effort. The conference will focus on Health, Wealth Building and Investment, the Next Generation, Culture, and Responsible Climate Action as part of the revised Diaspora Policy towards the empowering all our people within the Sustainable Island State Agenda.

The Regional Integration and Diaspora Unit is mindful that the Diaspora population and its networks offer practical solutions to local challenges. To this end, the Unit invites all members of the Saint Kitts and Nevis Diaspora to be present and to take part in this exciting session of innovation, inclusion, and action.

Added to the sessions of focused dialogue and business exhibitions, there will be exciting rail, sail and trail excursions of both islands. Conference delegates will leave inspired to be active and enabled ambassadors of the land we love.

The inaugural Diaspora Conference was held from June 26 to 28, 2018 with a focus on promoting sustainable development through building partnerships between the Federation and its nationals living abroad. The second instalment will build on its success and widen the scope of involvement to those of descendants of nationals and citizens by investment.

The Regional Integration and Diaspora Unit looks forward to hosting each of you at the Saint Kitts and Nevis Diaspora Conference 2024. Be part of the shaping the Sustainable Island State Agenda so that together we can build stronger and closer connections.



DIASPORA ORGANISATION PROFILE:

The NevCan Cultural Association

Working to Keep the Island Ties Alive



Diaspora groups are ordinarily of the three kinds. First, there are national groups. Organisations of this type draw on the grouping of citizens of a country living in a specific locale. Their work covers a broad range of issues that affect life in the home country around which they mobilise their fellow nationals living in their adopted home in the pursuit of much-needed solutions.

Second, there are thematic groups. Organisations of this type draw on nationals who share a connection in a given discipline. These may be sport lovers, music enthusiasts or business developers. Their focus centres on their circles of interest and influence in the national agenda.

Then, there are community and district groups which focus on drawing on the resources of nationals originating from their home community in order that they may best coordinate social change and development in their home area. These may be fellow villagers or islanders who organise around their specific home community interests.

While there are Saint Kitts and Nevis national associations in the Diaspora with characteristics of each of the three kinds, *The Diaspora Digest* is delighted to profile the work and achievements of the **NevCan Cultural Association** which embodies the functions and spirit of all three types of Diasporic organisations. While the NevCan Cultural Association was formed to coordinate bonds of unity among Nevisians living in Toronto, Canada, this organisation has become a stellar promoter of the national culture of the Federation and premier contributor to education advancement and holistic youth development.

Formed in 1978, the NevCan Cultural Association brought together Nevisians living in the Ontario province who were willing and able to make a change in the social and economic conditions at home. At the same time, the group wanted to maintain a socio-cultural link between Nevisians in Toronto and their families and friend in Nevis.

The NevCan founders were drawn together

by the absence of warm island camaraderie when living in the isolating, fast paced metropolis and its spreading suburbs. Friendships and associations were rekindled as the NevCan founders considered the economic and social struggles of a then colonial Saint Kitts and Nevis, in which Nevis needed greater attention and assistance.

The group recognised that it was important to establish networks for success, so it set out to establish social relationships with Nevisians elsewhere and with other Saint Kitts and Nevis and regional associations in Canada, across the Commonwealth and around the world.

Prominent among the list of NevCan founders and prominent members are Hilton Jeffers, Ena Paul, Rosemary Irish, Kenneth Liburd, Desmond Ottley, Charlene Huggins, and Hugh Jeffers. From its humble beginnings, the association has grown to exceed one hundred and fifty members.

The NevCan Cultural Association promotes scholastic excellence and encourages youth development through education and skills training. Foremost among its ongoing activities is the element of fundraising for scholarships to high school students in Charlestown and Gingerland Schools. Each year, the association awards bursaries to four students through the coordinated assistance of the guidance counsellors of the schools and the Ministry of Education, in the Nevis Island Administration.

The NevCan Cultural Association has long been a source of funding and other support for local groups who reached out in times of need. The NevCan fundraising machinery got into high gear to provide access to overseas medical assistance for treatment which was not available in the Federation. These NevCan initiatives have saved many lives.

Continued on Next Page.



NevCan Cultural Association Profile

Continued from previous page.

The annual NevCan calendar of activities promotes Nevisian pride and togetherness. Each spring, the association hosts its Annual Spring Brunch. This fundraising event takes place each April. Here, members and patrons meet in a festive environment after the long Canadian winter. In June, the group hosts its Annual NevCan Picnic. This summertime event is a family affair, which is designed to showcase Nevisian food, stories, music and games. In October, the group holds its annual Scholarship Fundraising Gala and in November its pre-Christmas Membership Appreciation Social.

NevCan has benefitted from much innovation during the COVID era when its members were made to meet in a virtual format. During the pandemic, the group used the online medium as a way to connect with its members. The COVID era meetings saw a mix of education, discussion and good old Nevis fun with the NevCan Online Bingo. Through the collaborative efforts of its executive, under the leadership of past president Sashia Godet, the NevCan found ways to lift the spirits of its members through those depressing days.

The NevCan Cultural Association is now focused on expanding its reach. The present leadership is currently pursuing a members drive which will grow present group numbers through a focus on enrolling descendants of Nevisians who are living and working in the greater Toronto area. In order to promote Nevisian culture and an appreciation for all things Nevisian, the group



is reaching out to the children and grandchildren of Nevisians to become active members of the organisation.

The association looks forward to 2024 as an exciting time which promises new opportunities for growth and to be of greater assistance. The group is preparing to host a significant Black History event in February, 2024 which will promote the work of notable African (black) women and men who blazed a trail for us. The event promises to be thoroughly educational, entertaining, and inspirational.

The present leadership of the NevCan Cultural Association is comprised of Ms. Celeste Tyson (President), Ms. Antoinette Kirwan (Secretary), Ms. Louisa Manners (Treasurer) and Mrs. Valarie Griffin (Assistant Secretary/Treasurer). These

ladies have taken on the mantle of leadership on their shoulder and are ably leading the association into a new era.

As a result, the NevCan leadership and membership are an integral part of the organisation of the Anguilla-Nevis-Saint Kitts Associations Reunion (ANSAR) which is scheduled to take place in Toronto in 2025. NevCan leadership wants to facilitate the creation of a platform where there is ample interaction between the generations both at home and in the Diaspora. As such, the association appeals for links between our experts in the various disciplines as mentors to our youth through open and honest communication. This will form a much-needed bridge between the islands and the generations.

The Saint Kitts and Nevis Diaspora Digest commends and congratulates the **NevCan Cultural Association** for 45 years of commendable service to the people of Saint Kitts and Nevis both at home and in the Diaspora. Your work has kept the ties alive. Your actions and achievements are evidence of the love, commitment and sense of belonging you have fostered for the people of your island and all the citizens of Saint Kitts and Nevis.

Keep shining in your corner of the world as you continue to create and rekindle great memories.



Revolutionising Taxation: Saint Kitts and Nevis Inland Revenue Department adopts SMARTS E-Government Portal



In an age of technological advancements and global connectivity, tax administrations worldwide are evolving to meet the unique challenges faced by individuals across borders. The Saint Kitts and Nevis Inland Revenue Department is at the forefront of this transformative journey, transitioning from traditional over-the-counter services and the E-Services Portal to a cutting-edge tax administration system, SMARTS (Sustainable, Modernized, Administrative Revenue Tax Administration). This paradigm shift, scheduled for January 23, 2024, marks a significant milestone in providing forward-thinking solutions, particularly for taxpayers in the Diaspora.

Embracing Innovation for Global Taxpayers

The SMARTS E-Government Portal, a cornerstone of this initiative, is set to redefine the tax experience. Designed with user convenience in mind, this portal ensures unparalleled access to tax management services 24/7, 365 days a year. Imagine receiving timely filing reminders, completing hassle-free online forms, and efficiently managing assessment notices—all at your fingertips. The SMARTS E-Government Portal positions itself as a comprehensive Tax Assistant, even offering automatic assessments for revised amounts.

For business owners in compliance, the

portal introduces an added convenience—they can effortlessly renew and print their 2024 Business and Occupation Licenses directly from the platform starting January 23rd, 2023. This feature is especially beneficial for enterprises with multiple locations, streamlining transitions and simplifying access for existing e-Services users.

Seamless Transition, a Universal Tax System

The SMARTS E-Government Portal is not just a technological upgrade; it's a transformative measure that will exclusively handle Property Tax administration and payments in 2024. This move signals a new era of universally accessible, user-friendly tax management that operates around the clock, aligning with real-time updates - a key feature of the E-Government Portal. The future of taxation is here, shaped by innovation and an unwavering commitment to user convenience.

Join Us on the Journey

As we embrace this exciting change, we invite you to connect with us on our social media pages for the latest updates, insights, and behind-the-scenes glimpses into the SMARTS E-Government Portal. Follow us on Facebook (St. Kitts and Nevis Inland Revenue Department) and Instagram (inlandrevenue).



The SMARTS E-Government Portal is set to redefine the tax experience and is designed with user convenience in mind.

Additionally, feel free to visit our website @ www.skniird.com to stay informed and engaged. Your feedback is valuable, and we look forward to building a community that actively participates in shaping the future of taxation.

The St. Kitts and Nevis Inland Revenue Department is not just adopting a new tax administration system; it's embarking on a visionary path that puts taxpayers at the center of innovation. Let's usher in this new era of taxation together—where convenience meets efficiency, and borders are no longer barriers to managing your tax affairs. January 23, 2023, is not just a date; it's a milestone in the evolution of tax administration in St. Kitts and Nevis. Be part of the journey, be part of the future.





2024

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DIASPORA PERSONILITY PROFILE:

Dr. Thomas Authur Benjamin France, M.B.E

*Thomas Arthur Benjamin France, MBE is proud cultural ambassador of Saint Kitts and Nevis. He has presented the authentic West Indian carnival experience in all of the England and Europe for well over fifty years. The **Diaspora Digest** presents this noted national as our Personality of the Publication.*

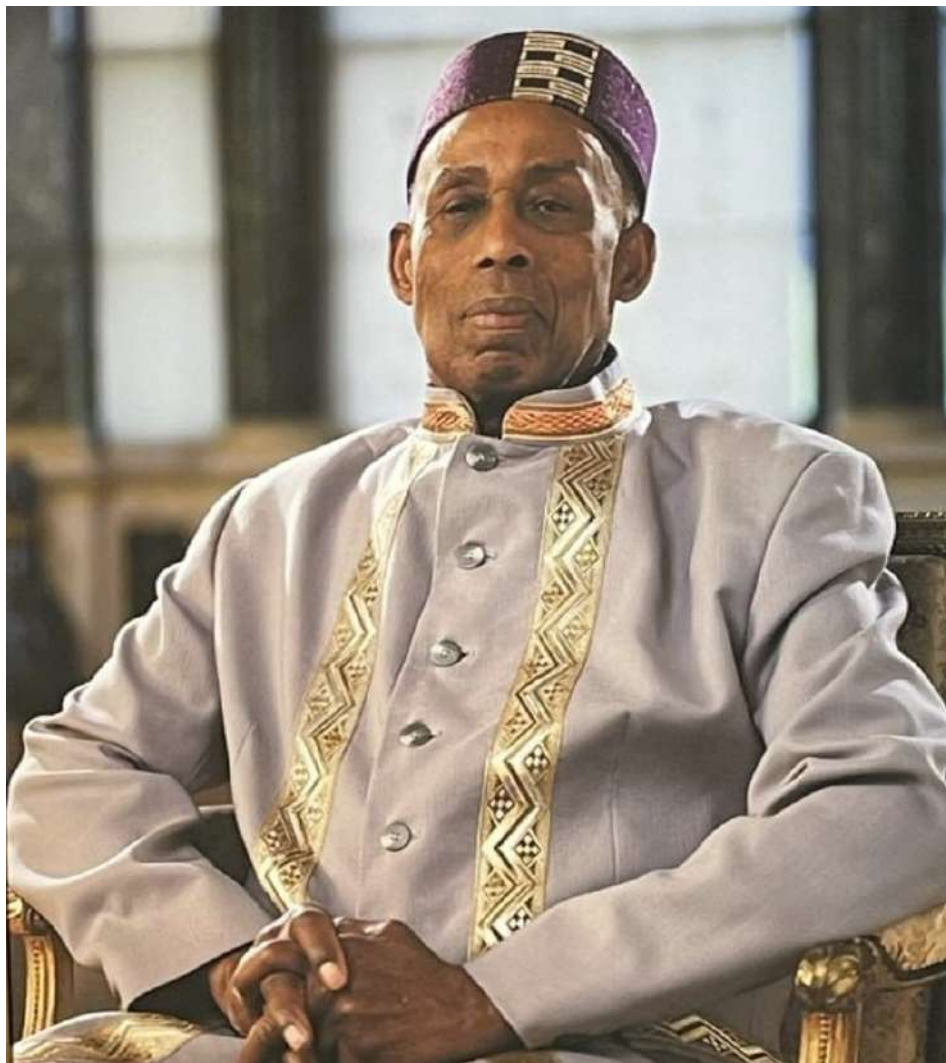
Thomas Arthur Benjamin France was born in the historic community of Mt. Lily, Nevis in 1935. These were economically challenging times in the islands and it was in the year of his birth that the workers' uprising on the sister island started a movement toward the economic and social development of our islands.

Being the nephew of now national Hero, Sir Joseph Nathaniel France, Arthur France was raised with the support of a closeknit family and a culturally vibrant community. The whole village knew him and the other children as they lived as one happy family. It was difficult then to know who were relatives in Mt. Lily in those days as it was one loving, caring and closeknit community.

His formative years were spent at the George Maynard Nursery School in his community. The memories of the discipline and academics did diminish the joys of playing games with lifelong friends. The five minutes' walk from school took much longer as Arthur and friends knew where all the fruit trees of the village were and felt compelled to raid them when they were in season.

At the completion of formal education, Arthur became an apprentice joiner and builder with Mr. Johnny Howell in Charlestown. He mastered the skills of home building and repairs which would become an asset in his years abroad. He remembers working on the Pinney Estate for the Wade Family and on Beachland Estate, now known as Nisbett's Estate between Camps and New Castle where his father (Mr. Ebenezer France) was an overseer. By age 20, he had gained an appreciation for hard work.

In the 1950s, Arthur kept on hearing of opportunities for personal and professional



advancement in England. England had been described as a special place where everything was better and so France got excited and planned his way from Mt. Lily to Leeds. He made the trek in 1957 at the age of 22.

His route was scenic both in time and the panoramic vistas he saw. France left Nevis for Saint Kitts, then flew to Barbados, where he boarded an Italian vessel called the SS Surriento which sailed for Genoa, Italy. For seven (7) days, saw the coastline of the African Continent on the starboard (right) side of the ship. This experience awakened a love of Africa in him.

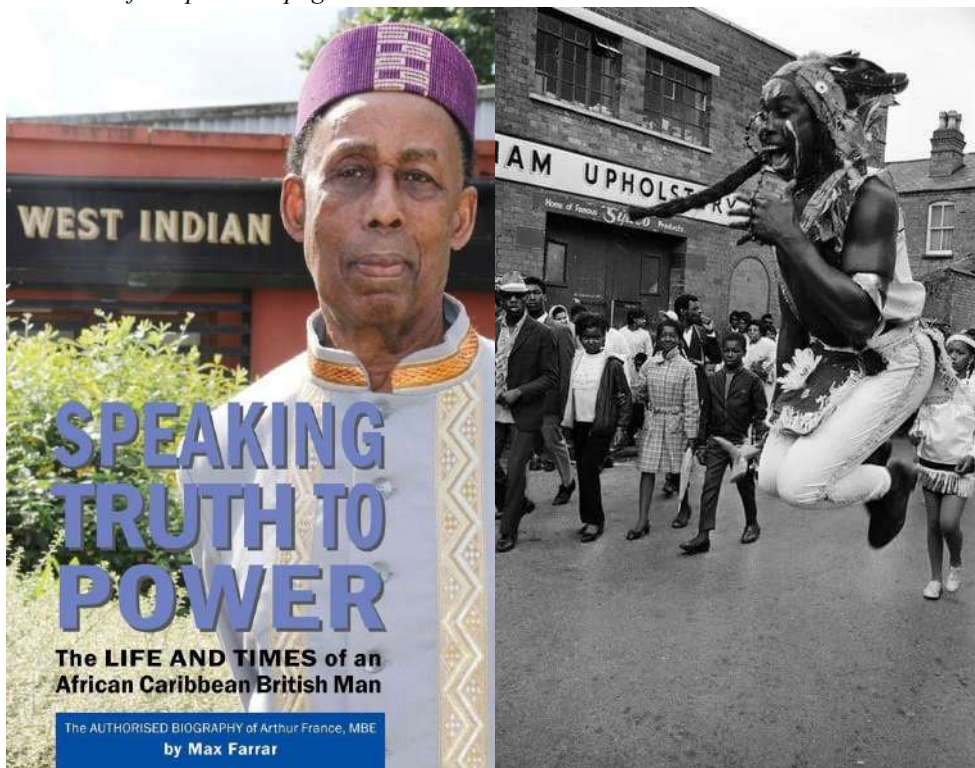
From Genoa, he travelled by train to France. He then took another boat from France to Dover, England. He then took a train from Dover to London and then finally, he travelled by train from London to Leeds. After seven (7) stops over thirteen (13) days, France had arrived to make his mark in the special place.

His first impressions of England were of dismay and disappointment. The living conditions were deplorable. Housing was scarce. He emigrated from relative comfort in Nevis where his family home has three bedrooms and a veranda and where he enjoyed the love of a community to a

Continued on next page



Continued from previous page.



Left: Cover of Max Farrar's authorised biography of the indomitable Arthur France.

Right: A spirited Arthur France participating in a carnival street parade.

situation where he would have to share a one room flat with his sister and her husband. Flats for rent carried signs of racial prejudice which boldly stated, "No Blacks. No Dogs, No Irish." Immigrants like Arthur and his sister were confined to renting in the slum areas.

France realised that life in 1950s Nevis was better than what he encountered in this 'better place'. He found that the education that he had received in his little community school Nevis was much better than that of British schools at the time. Despite the disappointments and difficulties, he was determined to find the opportunities.

His first job in the UK was as a Release Porter with British Railway. In this job, he had the opportunity to meet with thousands of Caribbean nationals who commuted on a daily basis. He would create new friendships and hold riveting conversations about the West Indian Culture and Pan-Africanism.

He regularly attended African-Caribbean

dances and meetings with his colleagues Getrude Paul, Elaine France-Archibald, and Eulalie Procopé and soon he grew disinterested in the trite nature of the meetings. France wanted more as the Christmas, New Years, Whit, and Easter gatherings were not enough.



So, on Sunday, November 29, 1964, France along with his friends, George Archibald and Cedric Clarke formed the United Caribbean Association. Together with 27 invited Caribbean Nationals, the association held its first meeting in France's one-bedroom flat. There was standing room only as Jamaicans, Barbadians, Trinidadians and Tobagonians, Antiguan and Barbudans, Montserratians and Guyanese met to promote the Caribbean values with a Pan-African ethos.

France believes that the United Caribbean Association paved the way for the creation of the many Caribbean national groups that exist today, not only in Leeds and the UK but all around the world.

The association was particularly interested in the political and cultural life of the people. Meetings were centred on discussing the principles of Garveyism and promoting the advancement of West Indians in Britain. Added to this, the association ventured to recreate West Indian Christmas celebration.

The members reminisced on Christmas events in their various islands and made every effort to replicate in England. France was happy for this opportunity, as his memories of David and Goliath being played at Christmas back home in Nevis were filled with restrictions. His parents did not allow him to participate back at home and now he was free to play all the Christmas sport as he remembered them.

By 1966, France approached the Leeds



Continued from Page 17

City council to start a Leeds West Indian Carnival in the name of the association. He formed a committee that was to be responsible for organising the event. While the Carnival was intended to showcase West Indian culture, France envisioned that the Carnival would also be the lightning rod for drawing West Indians in Leeds together for deeper political purposes.

After three attempts at getting the committee up and going, France was able to overcome the negative views of fellow West Indians who considered the idea of a West Indian Carnival in England as the idea of a crazy man who wanted black people to dance to please the 'white man'. Others hoped that when the Carnival hit the streets, police would lock up the organisers and participants or rain down them.

But France and his team persevered and on the August Bank Holiday in 1967, the first Leeds Carnival was hosted. The humble, yet significant debut of this 57-year-old festival featured troupes such as the Cheyanne Red Indians, Fantasia Britannia and the Sailors along with a children's troupe.

There was also a Queen show with memorable costumes such as the Sun Goddess (which took first place), the Snow Queen, the Gondola, Cleopatra, and the Hawaiian Queen.

The Carnival also featured a Steelband Gay Carnival Competition. France was sure to point out that the word Gay meant Festive in those days. Bands came from Manchester and Birmingham as well as



the local Leeds Invaders. The St. Christopher Steel Band from Birmingham won the competition.

The First Carnival also included a calypso competition. Two of the featured calypsonians were Arthur Davis and Leo Lewis of Saint Kitts and Nevis.

The success of the 1967 edition of the Leeds Carnival brought larger participation in the following years and many of the detractors became active revellers and adoring spectators. Lord Montagu of English nobility visited the Leeds Carnival in 1968 and later that year, France and his team brought the Carnival to the Streets of London. There has since been a spread of West Indian Carnivals in the cities of Luton, Leicester, Birmingham,

Liverpool, Derby, Nottingham, Preston, Manchester, Huddersfield, Bradford, Hull, and Notting Hill.

At the same time, France was a champion of Pan-Africanism in the UK and Europe. France enrolled in the University of Leeds and while there became the President of the West Indian Students Union from 1970 to 1973. He promoted the notion that West Indians were part of the African Diaspora. This mindset influenced his participation with the African Students Union to host a Pan African Union Conference at the University of the Leeds in 1972.

Over the many years, France has taught the virtues of Pan-Africanism, encouraging West Indians and all Blacks to connect with Africa to boost economic integration and strengthen social ties. He continues to be passionate about our cultural heritage by saying that the festival he started nearly sixty years ago is "the only authentic Caribbean Carnival experience in all of Europe".

Mr. France's cultural and Pan-Africanist exploits have been recognised by royalty and academia alike. In 1997, he personally received an MBE from Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. He was also bestowed with a Doctorates Honoris Causa from the Leeds University in 2016 and Leeds Beckett University in 2018 for pioneering work in education and social advocacy.

The Diaspora Digest salutes Dr. Thomas Arthur Benjamin France, MBE for his passion in promoting our cultural heritage.





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Our Diaspora is Part of the Crew for Sugar Mas 52



Saint Kitts and Nevis, known for its rich cultural heritage and vibrant festivities, celebrates its 52nd Anniversary of National Carnival (Sugar Mas). The cultural mixture of fun and frolic comes alive from December 15, 2023 to January 2, 2024.

Sugar Mas is a vibrant spectacle of colour, revelry and rhythm that cannot be missed. It is a manifestation of the islands' rich heritage, captivating a blend of traditions from Africa, Europe, and the Indigenous Kalinago ethnic groups.

Sugar Mas has evolved over the years to become the largest national event on the Federation's annual calendar and has become more than just another carnival. Beyond its cultural prominence, Sugar Mas is a major tourist attraction and an influential economic catalyst.

Each year visitors flock to Saint Kitts and Nevis in December to take part in Sugar Mas celebrations, making it a significant economic catalyst for the Federation. As a result, Sugar Mas has a multifaceted impact on various economic sectors,

underlining its overall importance.

The Sugar Mas official festivities kick off on December 15 with the official opening of Sugar Mas, which will take the form of a day-light parade through the streets of Basseterre featuring folklore groups, steel bands, pageant ambassadors and competitors from various National Carnival events, representatives from junior carnival troupes, cheerleaders and majorettes and Mas' Bands. The parade will culminate with a spectacular Opening Ceremony at Warner Park Cricket Stadium.

Warner Park Cricket Stadium will play host to the popular National Carnival Events that will attract thousands of spectators and supporters. These events include:-

Republic Bank Miss Teen Saint Kitts and Nevis Pageant - December 19

SKELEC Power Soca Monarch Competition - December 21

First Federal Co-op Credit Union Panorama - December 27

Miss Saint Kitts and Nevis Pageant - December 28

Carib Senior Calypso Monarch - December 29

All shows start at 8:00 p.m. and will be available to the Diaspora via pay per view streaming through the Sugar Mas website, www.skncarnival.com.

Thousands of revellers and spectators will converge on the streets of downtown Basseterre for the Carnival's street activities. These events include:

J'ouvert - December 26

Junior Carnival - December 30

Grand Parade - January 1

Last Lap - January 2

The Diaspora will enjoy free streaming of these events. For more information on Sugar Mas 52, visit www.skncarnival.com or skncarnival on Facebook and Instagram.

Wherever you are, be part of the Crew for Sugar Mas 52. Happy Carnival.





NATIONAL EVENTS



FRI •Festive Friday
08 Fort Street

TUE •Republic Bank Miss Teen
19 Warner Park Cricket Stadium

WED •FFCU Panorama
27 Warner Park Cricket Stadium

SUN •The Cable Junior Calypso
10 Marriott Resort Plaza

WED •Folklore Galore
20 The Circus

THU •Miss St. Kitts & Nevis Queen Pageant
28 Warner Park Cricket Stadium

THU •Carib Senior Calypso Monarch Semi Finals
14 No Rush Bar, Port Zante

THU •Skelec Power Soca Monarch
21 Warner Park Cricket Stadium

FRI •Carib Senior Calypso Monarch
29 Warner Park Cricket Stadium

FRI •Opening of National Carnival
15 Warner Park Cricket Stadium

SAT •Midnight Escape Street Festival
23 Bay Road

SAT •Junior Carnival
30 Downtown Basseterre

SUN •Rock The Runway
17 Ramada Hotel

TUE •Jouvert
26 Downtown Basseterre

MON-TUE •Grand Parade
01-02 Downtown Basseterre



Private Events Calendar

**UPDATED
TUE 21 NOV**



SUN 03 DEC

- ERICA EDWARDS & SHADAN PRO MGMT
- A MERI ERI CHRISTMAS

SUN 10 DEC

- SKN POKER RUN

FRI 15 DEC

- DJ TERO ENT. - SILENT NIGHT

SAT 16 DEC - TUE 02 JAN

- STUDYIT ON DE BLOCK
(DOWNTOWN BASSETERRE)

SAT 16 DEC

- THE VISION CONCERT ORCHESTRA
- A VISIONARY HOLIDAY EXTRAVAGANZA
- S.T.LV - TIES AND TIARAS FAMILY GALA
- SOCACIZE

SUN 17 & 24 DEC

- WHOLESOME FAMILY ENT
- FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS

MON 18 DEC

- ASAP GLOW PARADE

WED 20 DEC

- MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE
NIGHT MARKET

FRI 22 DEC

- CANEJUICE CARNIVAL LOVE FEST PURE BLISS

SAT 23 DEC

- CANEJUICE CARNIVAL LOVE FEST
SOCA VENGEANCE

SUN 24 DEC

- CARAMBOLA BOOZY BRUNCH
- BACCHANAL CHASERS - AKTIVATE BOAT RIDE

TUE 26 DEC

- SANDY POINT BENEVOLENT SOCIETY
11TH ANNUAL AWARDS GALA

WED 27 DEC

- BACCHANAL KINGDOM
- BACCHANAL SUNDOWN
- LUXE CARNIVAL - LUXE & FRIENDS
WELCOME PARTY

FRI 29 DEC

- DJ TERO ENT - SUNSET, WILD SAFARI
- GRAND MASTERS BAND
- GREEN VALLEY PUB HOME COMING

SAT 30 DEC

- BAADLIFE ENT. - TOP OFF BRUNCH
- HAYNES SMITH CARIBBEAN
TALENTED TEEN PAGEANT
- INCEPTION MIDNIGHT BRUNCH
- A FUTURISTIC ESCAPE

SUN 31 DEC

- ROTARY CLUB OF LIAMUIGA
- NEW YEARS EVE GALA
- TIDAL PROMOTIONS - ANCHORED

MON 01 JAN

- FETE READY : THE CARNIVAL EXPERIENCE

TUE 02 JAN

- FETE READY : THE CARNIVAL EXPERIENCE

FRI 05 JAN

- ABCPROMOS - JOU-RADE

15 DEC 2023 02 JAN 2024



ALL IN WITH YOUR CREW FOR SUGARMAS 52

SKNCarnival.com

CHERISHED CHRISTMAS TRADITIONS:

Celebrating the holidays in our Home away from Home



by Coreen Phipps

Thousands of nationals from the Federation of Saint Kitts and Nevis have migrated to other countries to pursue their goals and follow their dreams. They've taken with them cherished memories of their island upbringing and have embraced many traditions of their childhood that remain steady fixtures in their lives.

Across almost each of the world's seven continents, a citizen of our prized twin island nation of Saint Kitts and Nevis is counting down the days to Christmas Day - Monday, December 25, 2023. The popular Christmas carol "There's no place like home for the holidays," written by Al Stillman, is a reminder of the sentimental sparks that are easily set alight in many hearts, brimming with warm thoughts of a Caribbean Christmas.

The "No Place like Home" lyrics feature the happiness people feel celebrating the holidays in their hometown and provide examples of the lengths people go to just to be with their loved ones. It's for this reason, the popular Christmas tune also resonates with every individual whose lived it.

*Oh, there's no place like home for the holidays,
For no matter how far away you roam,
When you long for the sunshine of a friendly gaze,
For the holidays you can't beat home, sweet home.*

The Spirit of Christmas

Nostalgia floods the hearts and souls of many of our people during this special time of year.

For some, feeling at home in their adopted homes away from Saint Kitts and Nevis can easily seem foreign. They still lament the fact that one day, they hope to return to Saint Kitts and Nevis, or even worse, they declare they would never be truly at peace in another country. For some, "Home" is truly where the heart is.

For others, the non-traditional foreign food doesn't satisfy the deep urge for the traditional St. Kitts and Nevis Christmas dainties, nor does the sometimes-frigid weather in other countries, warm the soul.

And so, as if roused by the enthusiasm of reliving cherished Christmas traditions, many nationals excitedly take to the bright skies in anticipation of the welcoming unspoilt shores of their beloved homeland,

Saint Kitts and Nevis; the buzz of the Christmas traditions from their childhood beckoning them home.

For many of our nationals who reside abroad, the spirit of the season can only be truly felt at home, on the rock where it all began. They cannot imagine celebrating Christmas in another place; any other way.

But what of those who, for one reason or another, cannot make the trek back to the islands at Christmas time? How do they cope with the many holiday-filled emotions? How do they make Christmas abroad as enjoyable as those memorable childhood Christmases filled with rich traditions that still melt many hearts grown older?

The Big Ask!

What are some Christmas traditions you continue in your home away from your birth home?

The quickest way to gauge how our people celebrate a traditional Saint Kitts and Nevis Christmas is to actually ask them.

A few nationals who reside abroad were polled via text and social media and the candid responses provided insightful



feedback about many Christmas traditions that are deeply embedded in the thoughts of many people.

Some even balked at the thought of the holiday season without the traditions that planted the prized nostalgic seed within us; a seed that blooms every year around the Christmas season.

Answers That Warm The Heart and Stir the Soul

The laundry list of tried-and-true Christmas traditions is an indication of how signature Christmas traditions define many of our people.

From sorrel drink, ginger beer, vita malt, Peardrella, Ting, rum punch, Ponche Kuba, and Ovaltine 'tea', to succulent ham, chicken, turkey, roast pork, pigeon peas, konki, bread pudding, tarts, baked bread, coconut ice-cream and black cake, to fresh linen, new curtains, the smell of fresh paint, new tablecloths, house cleaning, a well-lit Christmas tree and fancy decor, a big Christmas morning breakfast, Christmas carols, steel pan sounds, or local music blaring on local radio stations, many nationals residing abroad hold Christmas traditions near to their hearts.

Oreatha Pondt Belle writes:

"Gone are the days when we use linoleum carpets or plastic table cloth to decorate. Those were the things that made our homes look and smell good after cleaning everything in our cabinets, another tradition.



No matter where I am, for me at Christmas, it's got to be the ham.

We no longer wait until Christmas to clean. I add the tree and a couple real pine wreath to keep my house smelling like Christmas. Playing my old Christmas carols get me in the spirit of Christmas."

Grace Moonflower writes:

"Cleaning and putting up Christmas curtains and decorations. I absolutely must to this day. I've sorrel ready. I'm making jam, BLACK CAKE, and lots of baking while helping my daughter to put up the tree. Listening to Christmas music while cleaning and I make sure some of the music is songs we would sing for

Assembly during the season. "Mary had a baby. OH yes!" The season is my absolute favourite."

By actively engaging in some of these timeless traditions, our people are honouring their upbringing and the staple holiday activities that steered them through life.

As many could attest, their parents and grandparents did not grow up privileged, yet they were creatives who used all the tools to their avail to make the year-end memorable.

Neither time nor distance can extinguish the fire that burns within the hearts of so many of our people who often yearn for the pleasures of home but are especially homesick at Christmas time.

The ability to appreciate the multiplicity of challenges many individuals faced growing up in a small developing country has helped to shape the character of its people and the way we celebrate Christmas and Carnival.

Nostalgic-filled Christmas traditions remind us of our upbringing and the forever love we hold dearly for our sweet Saint Kitts and Nevis.

Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays to all Kittitians and Nevisians across the world.



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Embarking on a New Chapter: Government of Saint Kitts and Nevis Launches Dedicated Website for Returning Nationals



Story Source: Saint Kitts and Nevis Information Service.

The Government of Saint Kitts and Nevis takes immense pleasure in announcing the launch of a groundbreaking initiative, the Returning Nationals Secretariat's dedicated website. Crafted with care, this platform is designed to extend a warm and celebratory welcome to nationals considering returning to their beloved twin-island state.

The Returning Nationals Secretariat website is more than a virtual portal; it is a testament to the government's commitment to facilitating a seamless and stress-free transition for those returning home, be it for retirement or to continue contributing to the growth and development of our vibrant nation.

More than a decade ago, the creation of the Returning Nationals Secretariat marked the beginning of a new chapter, recognising and celebrating the significant contributions of *Returning Nationals* in shaping the socio-economic fabric of Saint Kitts and

Nevis. This newly launched website is designed to offer returning nationals all the necessary information, crucial advice, and hands-on support to seamlessly facilitate their resettlement journey.

Eligible individuals will benefit from duty-free concessions on selected personal and household effects imported into the country, making the return process even more accessible and welcoming.

Dr. Marcus L Natta, Cabinet Secretary, mentioned that the new website will serve as a central source of information.

"We warmly welcome all *Returning Nationals* as you step back onto your cherished homeland. Our dedicated website serves as your primary source of vital information and resources to simplify your reintegration into Saint Kitts and Nevis," Dr Natta said.

"We recognise that coming back after a period abroad is a journey laden with diverse

emotions. This welcome portal is crafted to greet you with open arms, providing you with practical advice, cultural understanding, and the necessary support to smoothly blend back into the tapestry of your nation."

Dr Natta expressed that the moment has arrived for returning nationals to begin a fresh chapter in their homeland. He further emphasized that the Government of St. Kitts and Nevis stands ready to assist these nationals at every phase of their journey.

Visit www.returningnationals.gov.kn for more details.





The Spirits of Christmas: The Role of Traditional Drinks in Caribbean Christmas Celebration



JACINTH HENRY-MARTIN
*St. Kitts-Nevis
Ambassador to
the USA*



MARGARET MONTPLAISIR
*CEO St. Lucia Distillers
Group of Companies*

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CREIGHTON PENCHEON
*Former Director of Culture;
Folklorist, Educator, Composer*



NIGEL WALWYN
*President/CEO - Caribbean Smooth, LLC
BA, Telecomm; Emmy Award, 2005;
Edward R Murrow Award, 1999*



ROGER BRISBANE
*Owner/Operator - Spice Mill
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**17 DECEMBER 2023
SUNDAY**



**4:00 PM EAST CARIBBEAN TIME
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OpEd: Women Leading with Courage and Valour

by Dr. Janet E. Evelyn



Sources: *Caribbean Nation Weekly* and the *Saint Kitts and Nevis Information Service*.

Within the past seven years, three women in the Federation of Saint Kitts and Nevis have risen to the highest position of service: Acting Deputy Governor General Marjorie Morton; Deputy Governor General Hyleeta Liburd; and Governor General Marcella Liburd. All are former teachers and they each have had an impact on the lives of many. They have also demonstrated that women supporting and empowering other women remains the key to success.

In addition, they continue to publicly advocate for women and demonstrate their commitment to ensuring that women seek to empower themselves while empowering others. Deputy Governor General, Hyleeta M. Liburd advised women of the Federation to work together and support each other to strengthen their impact.

They are not alone. Over the past decade, several Caribbean women have broken such barriers to make history as either the first woman, Black woman, or woman of Caribbean descent to achieve an incredible feat. For example, there are more women who fit this unique grouping, while there are several moving through the pipeline. But as Governor General Marcella Liburd recently stated “although the government had worked hard to facilitate female empowerment, there was still much to be done before women fulfilled their societal potential.”

At the 67th Session of the Commission of Women hosted by the United Nations, the Saint Kitts and Nevis Representative for Gender Affairs, Minister Isalean Phillip stated “Gender disparities in this area are slowly shifting as the government of Saint Kitts and Nevis takes the lead to restructure governing institutions by proactively appointing more women as leaders in parliament, on statutory boards and in corporations. In a national climate that is prioritizing women’s empowerment through intentional measures, addressing the underrepresentation of women and girls in science and technology is also enabled by the increased visibility of female managing directors and CEOs of the country’s leading telecommunications companies”.

It is important that the government is committed to improving equality. But the most important thing is for us to look out for each other and regardless of the issue, political persuasion, educational background, religious beliefs, profession, and economic stability, we must work together in advocating for the common goal of country advancement.

Early in his administration, Prime Minister Dr. Terrance Drew pledged his support for the empowerment of all women and girls stating in part, that there is no difference between genders and that most households on Saint Kitts and Nevis are headed by women. Therefore, events like the COVID-19 pandemic disproportionately affects women. “And so, it makes a lot of sense to have programs targeting women because as this program empowers women, it empowers the home, it empowers children, it empowers partners, families, communities and the nation on a whole,” he said.

Clearly, the groundwork exists on both islands for women’s empowerment through programs such as the Gender Affairs Division. The time is now to support women’s voices, and for women to bond, grab this mantle, and run with determination!

What are some ways to take action and keep moving forward?

Identify resources geared towards the end result – e.g. The Caribbean Women in Leadership (CIWIL) Vision states ‘To

drive the advancement of Caribbean women in leadership, at the national and regional levels, through advocacy, partnership, sisterliness, mentorship, training, and development.’

Learn from others who have either traveled this path or are still on it, such as five groundbreaking women highlighted in Loop Caribbean: Ada Mae Edwards, education; Bronte Welsh, first public health nurse; Marcella Liburd, Governor General, Dr. Lenore Harney, first female doctor, pilot, a leader at the Pan American Health Organization and the World Health Organization, and Inez Baker, first female photographer.

As we forge through this pathway, the term PRIDE is a fitting acronym to keep in mind. As women, we must take PRIDE in our accomplishments and celebrate each other. Always be prepared for the situation at hand, expect downfalls and difficult conversations!

Perseverance. Through these challenges will pay off, you will grow stronger as a leader focused on building your skills

Respect. Always be respectful, regardless of the situation, and expect this to be reciprocal. The reward, as you grow, will come as others learn from you in the process.

Integrity. Develop, practice, and embody your own standards as a leader, for example, be honest regardless of the outcome. This trait will be beneficial, instill trust worthiness, and you will be admired for this characteristic.

Disciplined. You must know what is right from what is wrong, and what standards you are called upon to uphold at all times.

Engaged. Know your capabilities, know when to ask questions, and when to ask for explanations. If you have an opposing view, state it; with time you will be seen as a woman of excellence!

Overall, consider using your expert skills to help other women and pursue experts in the areas where you seek to grow. Most importantly, seek to review, develop, and build a commitment first to yourself, personally and professionally.

Continued on next page



Continued from previous page.

Accordingly aspire to the legacy of influential women, e.g., Constance Baker Motley, whose parents, Rachel Huggins and McCullough Alva Baker, were immigrants from Nevis. She was the first African American woman to argue a case before the Supreme Court, and the first to serve as a federal judge. She was lead

lawyer for the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund and chief courtroom strategist of the Civil Rights Movement, successfully litigating cases to integrate universities in Alabama, Georgia and Mississippi. She also defended Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s right to march.

Finally, as we pursue the common goal of empowering women through “forging women’s equality in the workplace, at home, and in the community” within our country, let us ask ourselves the question: Am I committed to leading with courage and valour? If so, consider following this pathway, assess, adjust, commit, and act!

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US Postal Service Gives its Stamp of Approval to Life and Service of Saint Kitts and Nevis Descendant

The United States Postal Service has announced the release of its forty-seventh stamp in its Black Heritage Series. Honoured is a descendant of Saint Kitts and Nevis, Mrs. Constance Baker-Motley.

Constance was the ninth of twelve children who were born to Nevisian teacher Rachel Keziah Huggins and Nevisian cobbler McCullough Alva Baker who migrated to the United States in 1906 and 1907, respectively. The family settled in New Haven, Connecticut. Her father worked as a steward and chef at Harvard University.

Baker studied at Columbia Law School and worked for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and its Legal Defense Fund of which the US legal luminary and Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall who was its lead attorney.

Baker-Motley had a stellar life and career. It was Baker-Motley who wrote the original brief for the *Brown v. Board of Education* case that was argued before the US Supreme Court. This was the landmark case that led to the desegregation of US public schools and later



integrated universities in Southern states such as Alabama, Georgia and Mississippi. She was the first African-American woman to argue a case before the Supreme Court. She won 9 out of 10 landmark civil rights cases she argued before the highest court.

Her outstanding career in the law shows that Baker-Motley assisted with some 60 other Civil Rights cases before US courts. She was the first African-American woman to be appointed a federal judge in 1966. She was inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame in 1993. She was the first woman to serve as Manhattan Borough President. She was also the first African-American woman to serve as Senator in the New York State Senate.

It is recorded that Baker-Motley built a highway on which other women of all colours are traveling. When Black American jurist Kitanji Brown Jackson was confirmed as the first African-American woman to the US Supreme Court in 2022, she paid tribute to Constance Baker-Motley, whom she called her role model on whose shoulders she stood and

and noted the coincidence that both of their birthdays fall on September 14.

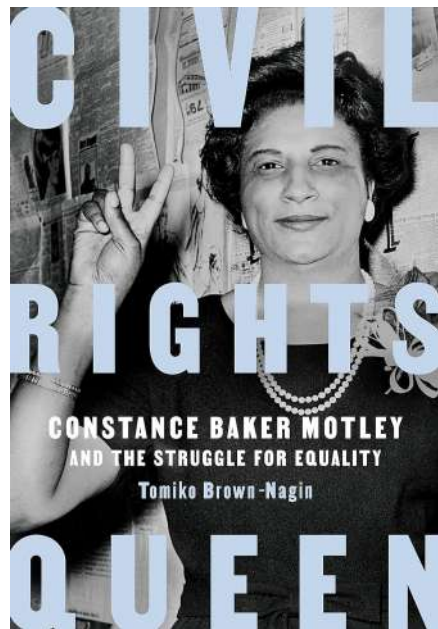
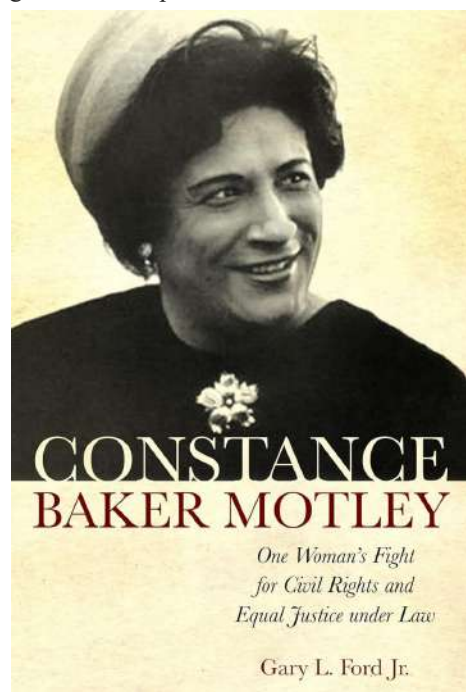
Baker-Motley who passed away September 28, 2005, in New York has certainly left her stamp on history and now the US Postal Service has given her legacy as a champion of justice its stamp of approval.

A USPS release said that the Constance Baker Motley (1921–2005) stamp “features a portrait of Motley created by Charly Palmer. The stencilled circular shapes create a subtle crowning effect, and the heavy brushstrokes and scratches add texture to the acrylic-on-canvas work. Stencilled curlicues embellish the lower background and continue onto Motley’s black dress. Derry Noyes, an art director for USPS, designed the stamp.”

The stamp goes into circulation in January 2024.

Books written about the life and work of Constance Baker-Motley include *Constance Baker Motley: One Woman's Fight for Civil Rights and Equal Justice under Law* by Gary L. Ford Jr. and *Civil Rights Queen: Constance Baker Motley and the Struggle for Equality* by Tomiko Brown-Nagin.

The Diaspora Digest celebrates the life and legacy of Mrs. Constance Baker-Motley.



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Birmingham-based ‘CreezOn’ Launches Debut Album

Birmingham, UK rap artist CreezOn unveiled his captivating, 16-track debut album entitled *1% of the 1%*. Describing it as “...a journey of storytelling,” CreezOn illustrates his unique perspective on life; by taking a musical approach that offers listeners an imaginative experience that pushes the traditional boundaries UK urban music.

The ebb and flow of his poetry and lyricism; where meaningful lyrics are combined with moving beats, has people drawing parallels between him and the likes of Gil Scott-Heron.

Born Cree Amory-Reid in Birmingham to a Kittitian mother, CreezOn was introduced to his island heritage from a very early age. His uncle Michael Crawford and cousin Tyron Amory were drafted to play football for the Saint Kitts-Nevis national football team. In addition, his grandfather Doval Amory, aka ‘Big G’, was an SKN legend in Birmingham, UK, during the 1980s and 90s. He was renowned for his avant-



garde videography and his significant contributions to the music industry. His notable achievements include accompanying ‘Musical Youth’ on their world tour and his work with a myriad of local, national, and international reggae artists, including

the legendary ‘Burning Spear’.

As CreezOn developed his own love of poetry and music, drawing inspiration from Hip-hop UK Grime, it was only natural for him to use his musical creativity to act as a bridge; connecting his Saint Kitts and Nevis and British heritage. The result is a musical versatility that has allowed him to use his inherent lyrical talent, and combine it with melodic RnB undertones, hip-hop rhythm and flow and the raw grittiness of UK Grime.

The album features CreezOn as rapper, singer, songwriter and producer and is a labour-of-love from start to finish. To join CreezOn on this musical adventure, listeners can listen to *1% of the 1%* on various platforms. (Link: <https://distrokid.com/hyperfollow/creezon/1-of-the-1>).

Having listened to CreezOn’s contemplative lyrics, flow variation, soul touching melodies and soulful beats, one will agree that he stands heads and shoulders above the many other, emerging artists, today.

Caribelle Batik Featured at Africa Fashion Week 2023

Saint Kitts and Nevis’ Caribelle Batik featured prominently in the 2023 edition of African Fashion Week Toronto over the period August 25 to 27.

Men’s and ladies’ wear and signature artwork made by the local manufacturer at its facilities at Romney Manor (Wingfield Estate), Old Road, Saint Kitts.

The iconic eye-catching designs cast onto sea-island cotton was prominently displayed on the catwalk for thousands of fashion enthusiasts in the Canadian metropolis.

Through this forum, Saint Kitts and Nevis as a destination was given a high degree of publicity.

African Fashion Week Toronto (AFWT) is a not-for-profit initiative produced in partnership with “Afro Centre for the arts”. The event occurs once a year (August) showcasing culture-rich events and brand launch activities.

AFWT spans across Toronto and brings exposure to various designers and brands



including those from across Canada and throughout the world.

This volunteer-based platform takes pride in creating opportunities for our creative industry and providing an avenue to market new and existing brands.

Brenda Foreman, a national of Saint Kitts and Nevis, is the Creative Director of AFWT.

Foreman, in an interview with *The Diaspora Digest*, highlighted the ongoing need for more connections of Saint Kitts and Nevis nationals and our businesses with Africa to create synergies in the creative sector.

Readers are able to follow the work of the AFWT on its website, afwt.ca, for details on its 2024 events.

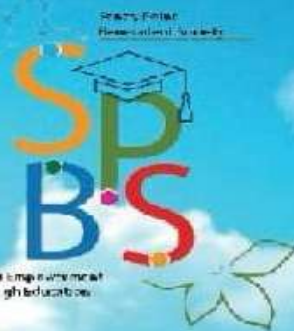


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ASKaND of Birmingham Donates 24-Hour Blood Pressure Monitors to Saint Kitts and Nevis



The Association of St Kitts and Nevis Descendants (ASKaND) of Birmingham, England has made a significant contribution to the Island Federation of Saint Kitts and Nevis by donating two state-of-the-art 24-hour ambulatory blood pressure monitors. The monitors, equipped with various arm cuff sizes suitable for individuals of different ages, will be distributed among healthcare specialists at home.

This generous donation follows the grand success of the Saint Kitts and Nevis High Commission's 40th Independence Anniversary Gala Dinner in Birmingham on September 15, 2023. Although the Gala was a free event, ASKaND members who attended, made a financial donation which enabled ASKaND to raise the funds to purchase the two machines.

This act of selfless giving is a testament

to ASKaND's commitment to supporting the work on the islands to promote and achieve better health outcomes.

Ambulatory blood pressure monitors play a crucial role in the accurate and continuous measurement of blood pressure over a 24-hour period. These monitors enable healthcare professionals to gather comprehensive data that can help in the diagnosis and management of hypertension, a widespread health concern globally.

The monitors were handed over to the Saint Kitts and Nevis High Commission which will oversee their transfer to the Government and people of the Federation. The donation when received will all for the safe transportation to of patients at home to hospitals and healthcare facilities. The impact of this donation is expected to be far-reaching, benefiting both healthcare providers and the local community.

According to a study published by the National Center for Biotechnology Information, ambulatory blood pressure monitoring is associated with better prediction of cardiovascular risk compared to standard clinical blood pressure measurements. The availability of these monitors in Saint Kitts and Nevis will enhance the accuracy of blood pressure assessments and contribute to more precise diagnoses and treatment plans.

ASKaND looks forward to receiving feedback on how these monitors have positively impacted the provision of emergency health services in Saint Kitts and Nevis. This contribution underscores the importance of accurate blood pressure monitoring in diagnosing and managing hypertension, ultimately promoting better health outcomes for the local population.



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Fax: +1 613 695 2449
Email: mission@hckstkittsnevis.ca
http://sknhcottawa.gov.kn/

Embassy of Saint Kitts and Nevis in Abu Dhabi

Office 1-A, 1st Floor, Bldg. No. 3
Plaza 30, Mireekh Street
Al Nahyan, Abu Dhabi
United Arab Emirates
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Email: info@uaeembassy.gov.kn

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http://embassydc.gov.kn/

High Commission of Saint Kitts and Nevis to the United Kingdom

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England
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Fax: 44 207-937-7484
Email: info@sknhc.co.uk

Embassy of Saint Kitts and Nevis to Cuba

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La Habana, Cuba
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Fax: 53-7-214-0741
Email: havana@embassycu.gov.kn
(General Matters)
info@embassycu.gov.kn
(Consular Matters)

Permanent Mission of Saint Kitts and Nevis to the United Nations

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New York, NY 10017
United States of America
Tel 212-535-1234
Fax: 212-535-6854
Email: info@nymission.gov.kn

Embassy of Saint Kitts and Nevis to Republic of China (Taiwan)

5 FL, No. 9-1, Lane 62
Tien Mou West Road
Taipei City, Taiwan
Republic of China
Telephone: 886-2-2873-3252
Telefax: 886-2-2873-3246
Email: info@embassytw.gov.kn

National Associations and Groups in the Diaspora

Student Associations

UVI Saint Kitts-Nevis Students' Association

Email: dhakiyaliburd23@gmail.com
Tel: +1 869 663 3335

Saint Kitts-Nevis Students' Association of Jamaica

Email: associationsknsaj@gmail.com
Tel: +1 869 764 9082
+1 876 861 1946

Saint Kitts-Nevis Students' Association of Cave Hill, Barbados

Email: sknsachill@gmail.com
Tel: +1 246 240 4973
+1 869 764 1491

Saint Kitts-Nevis Students' Association of Trinidad and Tobago

Email: rolj.williams@my.uwi.edu
Tel: +1 868 263 3732

USA

New York and New Jersey

St. Kitts and Nevis Soccer Graduates Club

Email: tlp3@westchestergov.com
larry_john35@hotmail.com
pelham.warner@hotmail.com
Tel: +1 914 720 5705
+1 646 664 7363
+1 347 553 5461

Hearts and Hands for Nevis

email: erlnew@live.com
enetsila@aol.com
dion_p@msn.com
Tel: +1 347 515 1749
+1 646 734 9716
+1 917 754 3643

Kittitians and Nevisians Association

Email: eurielw@msn.com
Tel: +1 917 613 2446
+1 347-843-7477

Kittitian American Benevolent Association

Email: enchantment63@yahoo.com
margaretr@optonline.net
Tel: +1 917 319 3255
+1 718 213 9541

Nevisians for Nevis

Email: qcnevis@yahoo.com
hazlinedla@gmail.com
Tel: +1 917 207 1307

Nevisians in America

Email: sadioc21@yahoo.com
Tel: +1 917 478 4274

New York St. Peter's Alumni and Friends

Email: keha866@hotmail.com
twelsh@outlook.com
Tel: +1 646 326 3595
+1 347 285 3299



National Associations and Groups in the Diaspora

Sandy Point Benevolent Society

Email: info@spbsinc.org
t.hanley@sbcglobal.net
stewartwilliams@dow.com

Tel: +1 267-644-9088
+1 917 923 7485

website: www.spbs.org

Sons and Daughters of Saint Christopher

Email: seat13@comcast.net
Tel: +1 973 672 3418

Anguilla Progressive Society

Email: carlsonconnor@yahoo.com
Tel: +1 516 220 1856

Green Valley Global

Email: archibaldheather@yahoo.com
coreentje@gmail.com
glennis_phoenix@yahoo.com

Tel: +1 646 510 2601
+1 917 685 2060

Nationals of Saint Kitts and Nevis

Email: dgu999@aol.com
Tel: +1 917 335 4943

Liamuiga Oualie Arts Foundation

Email: hello@loafskn.org
+1 347 578 1873

Florida

Saint Kitts and Nevis Association of Florida

Email: secretary@sknaf.org
Tel: +1 305 945 5859
Website: www.sknaf.org

Texas

Saint Kitts and Nevis Association of Texas

Email: dwarner13@comcast.net
Tel: +1 832 520 9688

Canada

St. Kitts and Nevis Association Toronto

Email: sknatoronto@gmail.com
Tel: +1 416 576 2758

NevCan Cultural Association

Email: nevcanculturalassociation@gmail.com
Tel: +1 973 820 5000
+1 416 829 1484

SKN Circle of Care

Email: skncc2008@gmail.com
Tel: +1 416-737-6410

UK

Saint Kitts-Nevis and Friends Association of Birmingham

Email: val.queeley@googlemail.com
Tel: +44 7968 486881

Leeward Islands Cultural Association

(Manchester)
Tel: +44 7961 172026

Association of Saint Kitts and Nevis Descendants

Email: askand2022@gmail.com
Tel: +44 7817 190703
Website: www.askand.org

Association of Young Professionals of Saint Kitts and Nevis

Tel: +44 7984 936736

Saint Kitts and Nevis Association Leeds

Email: sknaleeds@outlook.com
Tel: +44 7964 992382
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