

**2006 ANGUILLA NATIONAL TRUST ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

*“Environmental Stewardship Towards Engendering Development For Today & Tomorrow”*

The pages of this report imply that there is a “new thrust” at the Anguilla National Trust. One might ask if it is possible for a 13-year-old organisation to be new. In this case, yes. In the course of the past few years, the National Trust has been remaking itself. We are, quite literally, not the same organisation we were a five years ago. The reinvention includes an important financial component. In the early part of this decade, the Trust was going through a financial crisis and the Organisation even discontinued its biodiversity conservation programme. We made a conscious decision then to move to financial sustainability and an increase in private-sector funding support. We created a realistic long-range financial plan based on programme budgeting that set ambitious goals for establishing an endowment and identifying new sources of funds for annual operating support and special projects, developing a range of new earned income initiatives, and launching our first ever capital campaign.

What has happened since then is enormously gratifying. Despite not yet being at the apex of our financial desires, the Trust's total revenue has grown. We've reached an all-time high in the size of our reserves and in the number of projects that we are undertaking even with a limited staff compliment. The successful reconstruction of our membership and financial bases are mirrored in new, more effective programmes designed to respond to the increasing demands of the Organisation and the rapidly changing environment of Anguilla. We're working harder than ever to develop, implement and refine innovative ways to save Anguilla's national heritage and build a stronger preservation movement. In a very real sense, what we're doing today is just what we were created to do in 1988 —but we're doing it better, smarter, in ways that are more focused and structured to get results. And while we are doing it without the fanfare and the flourish we have been making significant strides towards the achievement of our mandate. As a testament to this, 80% (+/-4%) of the Anguillian population surveyed in informal surveys indicate an awareness and understanding of the work of the National Trust.

Under the National Trust's leadership, eco-tourism is becoming an integral part of the tourism diversification strategy. We are engaged in invasive species eradication and we are bringing new vitality to the work of the ALHCS Environmental Club. Our Socio-Economic monitoring project gave us a better insight into the impact of tourism on our island, and has strengthened our programmatic focus. As this report makes clear, the past year has seen solid growth and real achievement, challenges met and victories won. What's more, the way ahead looks equally bright. We benefit from the work of an amazingly young, small, yet talented staff and a dedicated corps of volunteers. We have a hardworking and visionary Council that has given the Executive Director the scope and latitude to creatively but structurally implement the approved Strategic Development Plan. Over the years, the Trust has offered peace of mind to its members and despite how good this may have sounded, the reality is that people want more bang for their buck. And so, we have launched a new membership drive and have undergone a revision of the Anguilla National Trust Act and Regulations with the intent of making the Organisation more responsive to the needs of its main beneficiaries – the residents of Anguilla.

As we look back at this year, many things have changed, but the Anguilla National Trust's commitment to saving Anguilla's national heritage is not among them. In fact, the events of 2005-2006 have given our work an importance —a relevance—that is greater than ever before. Sixteen years ago, the island's first parliamentary Secretary (Environment), Mr. David Carty noted that the preservation movement's ultimate success would be determined by its ability to produce

*“bold leadership and inspiring thought...our dominion over the creatures and the earth brings with it responsibility...to ensure that future Anguillians can see the fry beating, sea turtles nesting and listen to the cooing of the turtle dove. In short, to ensure that all species live on.”*

In times like these, we need to remember who we are, remember the long process that helped shape this great island; remember the struggles, the crises, the triumphs that we've known in the past—and to be sustained and empowered by that memory. This means that more than ever before, the National Trust must work to ensure that the things that represent and define Anguilla are safeguarded so that we can continue to learn from them, be enriched by them, draw strength and inspiration from them. Anguilla's natural, cultural and archaeological environment embodies fundamental values and the Trust's working during 2005-2006 has been guided by those fundamental values. The protection of and work on migratory and seabirds birds is our commitment to ensuring that our wetlands are maintained and are used as outdoor classrooms. Our continued work with the community groups, the ALHCS Environmental Club, the establishment of the National Focal Group for the UNDP GEF/SGP are all monumental representations of the Trust's commitment to engendering active participation in the preservation process. The laser mapping of the Fountain Cavern and the vesting of the Old East End School to the Trust is the Organisation's creative way of refreshing the wells of patriotism that lie deep within us all. Our continued work with the Departments of Environment, Physical Planning, and Fisheries & Marine Resources is based on our strong ties to the land and our adventurous spirit that continues to push towards its protection. Our collaborative work on coastal resources speaks eloquently about the things we cherish most: community, family, home, livelihoods and sustainability. Our land, beaches, sand dunes, mangroves, coral reefs and marine protected areas are anchors in an uncertain world. They give us the sense of purpose, a sense of continuity that has been called “part of the very backbone of human dignity.”

They are the magnets that pull us together to truly assess whether we are developing for today and tomorrow. They are a powerful story – the story of us as a nation and a people. Saving them is an enormous challenge. As this report will indicate that the National Trust met that challenge effectively in 2005-2006. Our aim over the last year has been to transform into a more effective, more focused and more results driven preservation organisation that is more effective than ever before. Our financial base is strong but could get stronger with a larger membership and if more people like Dr. Kaethe Willms who purchased and donated a piece of land to the Trust made contributions to the work of the Organisation. Our programmes have been designed to help Anguillians find ways to save our shared heritage are meeting unprecedented success. Perhaps most important, we're helping people learn that preservation is not simply about birds, iguanas, plants and archaeological sites, it's about *life*. It's about saving important terrestrial and marine places not just as isolated bits of landscape but as environments where we can connect with the lives of the generations that came before us, places where we can build and maintain safe, rich, meaningful lives for ourselves and the generations that will come after us. We know that our work is Anguilla's work. We know that the heritage we share is worthy of our best efforts to save it. We know that the skills and vision we offer have never been more important—or more urgently needed. In a year of change, we have found strength in a reaffirmation of the mission we first embraced ten years ago, “*Preservation for Generations*”. But with the changing hands of time, we must ask ourselves, “*Are we developing for today and tomorrow, and are we being good environmental stewards?*”

While the Anguilla National Trust has been involved in numerous projects, programmes, and initiatives over the last eleven months, our key activities and developments fall under five main categories, namely:

- Organisational Development;
- Projects and Programmes;
- ANT's Advisory Role to Government & Its Agencies
- Conferences, workshops, and meetings
- Visiting researchers, officials, and consultants; and

While we should take this opportunity to share everything we have done over the last year, time would not permit us to do so. Moreover, with our two guest speakers ready to indulge us in lively discourse and debate regarding our commitment and understanding of development; I will offer only a snapshot of the accomplishments of the Organisation.

### ***ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT***

#### **1. Staff Changes at the Anguilla National Trust**

As of September 2006, Mr. Damien Hughes, Executive Director of the Trust, returned from study leave, which he took to pursue a Master's in Environmental Studies at York University (Canada). Mr. Hughes has been bonded to the Trust for 3 years in lieu of the study leave granted to him. Ms Farah Mukhida, who was acting during his absence, has now returned to her substantive post of Protected Areas Manager.

#### **2. Student Intern**

Since the completion of the summer student internship programme, the Trust has continued to employ Mr. Remone Johnson, an A' Level student on a part time basis to continue the job he started during the summer of reorganising the ANT Resource Centre by creating a Document Database in Microsoft Excel. Upon completion, this will help both staff and the public to locate documents within the Trust library. The project is hoped to be completed by the end of the calendar year.

#### **3. Conferences, Workshops, and Meetings**

Staff members of the Organisation attended and participated in the following workshops and conferences as a means of enhancing their knowledge towards the strengthening of the Organisation's capacity.

- June 2006. Caribbean Protected Areas Workshop. Sponsored by The Nature Conservancy. Miami, Florida.
- July 2006. Anguilla Coastal Resource Area Monitoring Management Project: Coastal Monitoring Workshop. Sponsored by the Overseas Territories Environment Programme. The Valley, Anguilla.
- October 2006. Biodiversity That Matters: a conference on conservation in UK Overseas Territories and other small island communities. Sponsored by the UK Overseas Territories Environment Programme. Jersey, UK.
- October 2006. Coral Reef Task Force Meeting. Sponsored by US Coral Reef Task Force. St. Thomas, USVI (end of October)
- November 2006. Leadership in Protected Areas Governance. Sponsored by the IUCN World Protected Areas Congress and The Trust for Sustainable Livelihoods. Rendezvous Bay, Anguilla.

## **PROJECTS AND PROGRAMMES**

### **1. ANT Heritage Tour**

The Anguilla National Trust continued to conduct guided tours of the East End region of Anguilla. The tour caters to the interests of each individual person; however, the experience involves at least a visit to Fort Hill, East End Pond Conservation Area, and Big Spring Heritage Site. Other bird-watching and natural history sites may also be visited. The history, culture, and natural beauty of the eastern end of the island forms the basis of the tour and it offers plenty of opportunities to take photos, to learn about the island, and to appreciate its beauty. Since November 2005, over **150** people (locals and visitors) have taken on this tour.

### **2. A Bird Watching Guide to Anguilla**

The project, which is designed to produce a bird-watching guide for Anguilla to complement recent publications on reptiles and plants is on schedule and should be completed during the first quarter of 2007. The main aim of the Guide will be to promote the island's birdlife and to foster a better understanding of the habitation upon which they depend. As a full colour guide with photographs, the book will feature birds and bird-watching sites on the island and identify Important Bird Areas. A section on bird identification and information on the Trust will also be included. It is targeted at visiting birdwatchers, Anguillians, and students, with proceeds going to the ANT.

In essence, the authors Dr. Steve Holliday, Mr. Karim V.D. Hodge and Mr. Damien E. Hughes are expecting that the Guide will serve to:

- Promote the Trust's Heritage Tour;
- Promote the importance of Anguilla's Important Bird Areas, proposed Ramsar sites, and assist in their conservation;
- Support an alternative to Anguilla's "sea, sand, sun" tourism by providing a more nature-based tourism activity;
- Provide a new educational resource for Anguilla's schools as it speaks directly to one of the areas recently included in the Environment in Education initiative undertaken with the technical and financial assistance sourced by the Trust.

### **3. UNEP SocMon Caribbean Workshop and Follow-up Project – May 2005 - July 2006**

With the discussions underway relating to transferring responsibility of MPAs from the DFMR to the Trust, both agencies have been working on a socio-economic monitoring programme for the Shoal Bay/Island Harbour Marine Park. A micro-grant of US\$2000.00 provided by the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) to implement this project have been used to collect and document baseline socio-economic data regarding the stakeholders of the Shoal Bay/Island Harbour Marine Park. Specific objectives include:

- To determine the level of public awareness (Anguillians and visitors) regarding the marine park;
- To determine and document the various uses of the marine park;
- To quantify the level of activity (including, but not limited to, fishing, diving, snorkelling, swimming, boating) within marine park boundaries;
- To gauge the level of community support for a functioning marine park; and
- To assess the level of management capacity of marine park stakeholders.

The final report for this project has been completed and copies may be had from the Trust office or from downloading it off our website.

#### **4. Anguilla Coastal Resource Assessment Monitoring and Management Project**

This project is being conducted by the Government of Anguilla. As the ANT is an important stakeholder, the Trust has been closely involved in the project since its inception. The project aims to build the capacity of Anguillian environmental stakeholders so that they can be in a better position to implement integrated management strategies in the near-shore and coastal zone. This is made possible by improving basic resource assessment and monitoring techniques and by developing an information framework that stakeholders can use to help make informed decisions.

One of the major outputs of this project is the development of a GIS-based Coastal Resource Information System. The ANT has been identified as the lead agency in a number of data collection and compilation areas, including:

- Bird monitoring;
- Sea turtle monitoring;
- Wetlands monitoring;
- Heritage site management; and
- Vegetation mapping.

The Trust will also be collaborating with the DFMR as the agency monitors and collects data on the status of Anguilla's reef benthos habitat (including coral reefs, seagrass areas, and associated reef fish stocks).

#### **5. Fountain Cavern National Park**

For a two week period in October 2006, the Anguilla National Trust and the Department of Environment collaborated on a project that saw the laser mapping of the Fountain Cavern completed. This exercise was conducted by Drs. John Crock & Wetterbee Dorshow along with Ms. Elizabeth Subin. The mapping was part of the preparation required to compile a nomination dossier that will facilitate our campaign to move up the UK Government's Nomination List and also a trans-national World Heritage Nomination which has the Fountain as the anchor site.

#### **6. Global Environment Facility Small Grants Programme National Focal Group**

The Trust continues to serve as the technical hub for the GEF SGP. The Small Grants Programme is designed to provide financial and technical assistance to non-governmental (NGOs) and civil society organisations (CSOs) for projects which conserve and restore the environment and that also enhance people's well-being and livelihoods. More specifically, the SGP supports work that is consistent with the five GEF Focal Areas: biodiversity conservation, climate change mitigation, protection of international waters, prevention of land degradation, and phasing out persistent organic pollutants.

A group of seven individuals continue to serve as the National Focal Group. This Group is responsible for reviewing project proposals and submitting them to the GEF SGP for further consideration for funding.

## **7. Public Awareness Campaign to Support the Development & Adoption of Key Multilateral Environmental Agreements by the Government of Anguilla**

A key component of the aforementioned MEA-related project is increasing the public's awareness of the purpose and importance of these conservation-oriented legal instruments.

The Anguilla National Trust has agreed to prepare and implement public awareness and educational programmes and materials relating to environmental legislation. These programmes and materials will target government department representatives, relevant statutory bodies and organisations, key stakeholders, and youth. As part of the educational campaign:

## **8. Anguilla National Trust Environmental Education Campaign: a workshop on using graphic design as a tool to raise public awareness – 8-12 February 2006**

This project was part of a larger environmental education campaign that involved using a multimedia approach (using radio, video, and printed materials) to develop and disseminate natural environment-oriented information to both Anguillians and visitors to the island.

This workshop was divided into two distinct modules:

- Training up to 12 individuals in the use and manipulation of Adobe InDesign Creative Suite 2 Premium; and
- Creating promotional material pertaining to the Anguilla National Trust.

The workshop, facilitated by Mr. Barry Lovelace, Research Coordinator with the Buccoo Reef Trust (Tobago) had nine participants and was held from 8 – 12 February. Funding was secured (US\$1500.00) from Apple Air Conditioners. Corporate sponsorship has been granted to the company.

## **9. World Wetlands Day 2006 – 2 February 2006**

To celebrate World Wetlands Day this year, the Trust organised a series of activities at East End Pond Conservation Area. Students learned how wetlands work, why they are important, and their relationship with different bird species. Students also learned about the ANT's monthly wetland bird monitoring programme, participated in a short bird count activity, and developed their observational skills through a scavenger hunt. 24 students and six teachers from primary school across the island participated in the day's event.

## **10. Johnno's Weekly Beach Clean-Up Programme – March 2006 – May 2006**

In collaboration with Johnno's, Digicel, and Mr. Leroy Martinez, the Trust served as the co-organiser and facilitator of a weekly beach clean-up programme. As an incentive, Digicel sponsored the programme by offering US\$5 for each bag of refuse collected and US\$3 for every bag of natural waste (for example sea weed). Three youth groups participated in the programme (The National Under-19 Female Football Team known as the Swarming Fire Ants, the Church of God of Prophecy youth group, and the ALHCS Environmental Club) and ten beaches were cleaned.

## **11. Earth Day 2006 – 22 April 2006**

In celebration of Earth Day, the Trust held a photo competition that was open to all residents of Anguilla. The theme of the competition was Anguilla: Environment and Society. The deadline for submission was extended from 19 April to 28 April. The Trust received a total of over 40 submissions for the two age

categories (Under-20 and Over-20) combined. The winners of the competition (Avenella Griffith for Over-20 and Leonard Connor for Under-20) took home Nikon digital cameras (value US\$360). The cameras were sponsored by Ashley & Sons Ltd. and Cable & Wireless. Judges for the competition were Carrolle Devonish (Devonish Art Galleries), Joash Proctor (Department of Youth and Culture), and Tarquel Maynard (Professional Photos Imaging Centre).

All photos have been incorporated into a fundraising exhibit where prints are now available to purchase. Profits of the sales are divided equally between the photographer and the Trust.

#### **12. Caribbean Endemic Bird Festival 2006 – 22 April - 22 May 2006**

To celebrate this year's Caribbean Endemic Bird Festival's activities, the Anguilla National Trust organised a series of activities which included a wetland bird count of all 25 of the island's saltponds, a bird watching tour and hike with the Albena Lake Hodge Comprehensive School of Cauls Pond, and a newspaper article about Dog Island as an important seabird nesting area (Eco-Corner).

#### **13. Building Capacity among Civil Society Organisations in the GEF Focal Areas in Anguilla: A GEF SGP Planning Grant – August 15 – November 15 2006**

At the beginning of August 2006, a planning grant application was submitted to GEF SGP for consideration. The GEF SGP has been trying to build capacity among Caribbean small island states particularly over the last year and a half and had requested that the ANT submit a project proposal that would help Anguilla to develop its conservation and community development efforts. In response, the ANT drafted a proposal entitled "Building Capacity among Civil Society Organisations in the GEF Focal Areas in Anguilla."

The project proposal was based on the premise that the Government of Anguilla is currently revising and drafting new key environmental legislation in an effort to improve the legal framework that directs and supports the island's pursuit of sustainable development. Public participation in the drafting and implementing are inherent parts of the process. In addition, new focus and attention has been placed on the need to have an empowered population that can play a central role in determining, shaping, and meeting a development vision for Anguilla that is rooted in sustainability and "smart growth". Indeed, from 9 to 11 November, 2005 the 2<sup>nd</sup> Biennial National Development Conference was held on-island. The theme of this year's conference, "Empowerment of a People," aptly reflected this growing awareness.

Despite this call for empowered population and this need for a development paradigm that supports sustainability, there appears to be a disjoint in not only what empowerment means or involves, but also about whether "people" should be interpreted as a collective or as individuals each seeking their own form of empowerment. As one of a small group of Anguillian civil society organisations (CSOs), the Trust promotes a type of empowerment that strengthens society as a whole in a way that supports both the rights of the individual and the community as well as the integrity of the natural and cultural environment in which they reside.

This project that would involve the holding of two workshops, the development and dissemination of brochures and posters, and radio/media publicity will help to establish a mechanism that will encourage and facilitate informed civil society participation in community projects as they relate to environmental issues and concerns (within the identified GEF Focal Areas).

### ***A SOURCE OF INSPIRATION***

During the period under review, the importance and Anguillians' perception of land became even more evident. As the island faced and continues to face enormous stresses and demands for land to facilitate tourism development, the Trust recognises the need to begin to procure and protect lands to serve as open space, national parks, protected areas, et al. At the end of July 2006 and after a two year negotiating period between the Benefactor (Dr. Kaethe Willms), the Department of Physical Planning, and the Anguilla National Trust, funds to purchase a property in Seafeathers (East End Block 99315B Parcel 181) were transferred from Dr. Willms to her legal counsel and finally to the property owner (Mr. Ronald Webster) in the name of the Anguilla National Trust. Land registration papers as well as all other relevant documents have been submitted to both the Department of Lands and Survey and to the Attorney General's Chambers. The title and deed have officially been turned over to the Trust in September of this year. The donation or purchase of land for donation to the Trust is something that the Organisation encourages and will continue to encourage so long as the donation is not an attempt to create enclaves or advance the selfish motives of the donor.

### ***THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES***

As an Organisation that is drawn upon for its views, advice and recommendations regarding most matters relating to Anguilla's national heritage, and in particular issues that directly impact our environment, the Trust continued to perform that role in the last year. During the revision of the National Environmental Management Strategy (NEMS), the ANT provided comments on the draft NEMS and has as well attended numerous stakeholder meetings to discuss the Strategy. As a result of its value to the process, the Trust was identified as the lead agency on protected areas issues.

There is no question that development comes at a cost, and the mitigating and/or curative measures of development also carry a cost. To ensure that we facilitate the procurement and availability of the necessary financial resources to engender effective environmental conservation and management, the ANT has worked extremely close with the Department of Environment to develop, shape and market the idea of a Conservation Trust Fund Bill. For the last several months, we have been providing significant feedback on the draft Bill (as developed by the Department of Environment) and continue to attend stakeholder meetings to discuss the proposed/draft bill.

In terms of regional environmental management policies, the Trust has been involved in stakeholder meetings hosted by the Ministry of Natural Resources and aimed at discussing proposed changes to and advances in the St. George's Declaration, of which Anguilla is a signatory.

#### **Visiting Researchers, Officials, and Consultants**

1. **Dr. Bill Found** (Canada, York University) – Video documentary on the ANT and Anguilla's natural and cultural heritage (December 2005)
2. **Dr. Steve Holiday** (United Kingdom, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds) – Bird monitoring (October)

## **CONCLUSION**

As we get ready to kick off a new work year for the National Trust, we are very conscious of the significant responsibilities that the small staff is expected to shoulder. In our quest to honour them and to walk according to our Strategic Plan, we are committed to reviewing salaries, the introduction of a pension scheme and staff expansion at our upcoming ANT Retreat slated for January. The members of the Council are profoundly aware of the commitment, hard work and skill of our present, those Council members who came before us and the staff that laid the foundation for our continued growth. I take this opportunity to pledge the support of the entire Council towards the continued growth, relevance and value within our community.

Our small membership, large number of local, regional and international partnerships and our volunteers represent a vital, huge and growing constituency for the Trust, and we are most grateful for their support which is expressed in a variety of ways. In a year in which the patience of some has been tested by the rate and pace of our tourism development, we say a very special thank you to those who have remained steadfast in their support of the Trust and the work that is doing and can continue to do. We depend, too, on countless partner organisations and likeminded people to help us with our work. It is invidious to mention some and not all, but this moment cannot pass without special thanks to the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, University of Vermont (Archaeological Field School), United Kingdom Overseas Territories Conservation Forum (UKOTCF), Department of Fisheries & Marine Resources, Department of Environment and the Government of Anguilla, to which we express our heartfelt thanks.

2005/06 was a challenging but ultimately successful year, especially financially. The outcome, of a Net Gain and a high level of conservation activity, has been a tremendous achievement despite pressure on membership income and the major upheaval of the reduction in staff for part of that period. As a result we are on our way to achieving the strategic financial targets which underpin our core work. The finish line is a far way off however, but we remain fiscally prudent to the target. It is undoubtedly a major challenge to reach our desired position but we are fully cognisant that it takes perseverance, commitment and sheer hard work of all of us during the coming year. While the Trust can never be complacent and must always be ready to respond to changing developments, we are hugely fortunate to have your enthusiastic support as we face the challenges ahead.

We thank you all.