



ACTION BEQUIA 2016 /2017 REPORT

Supporters ask what Action Bequia has been up to so here is a brief review of the past twelve months which we hope you will find helpful:

RECYCLING

The Recycling Project has undergone significant adjustments. From originally planning a large, capital intensive Bequia based facility, we subsequently realised that the only sustainable way forward is to focus on collection, sorting and onward transportation of recyclable material to larger partners. These larger partners (in St Vincent, Barbados or possibly Trinidad) in turn deliver their crushed, shredded and bailed material to international specialists whose output is raw material such as metal ingots, plastic pellets or paper pulp.

Stage 1 of the retargeted project is what we call 'The Bin Program'. Our goal here is to collect, from locations where people hangout or stroll, the most value recyclable material available to us, which are plastic and metal drink containers. Valuable because there is a \$0.50 recoverable SVG importation levy on those containers. We normally put bins out in pairs to minimise the amount of litter put in the recycle bin, (litter has its own bin). The added benefit of this arrangement is that it also reduces environmental litter.

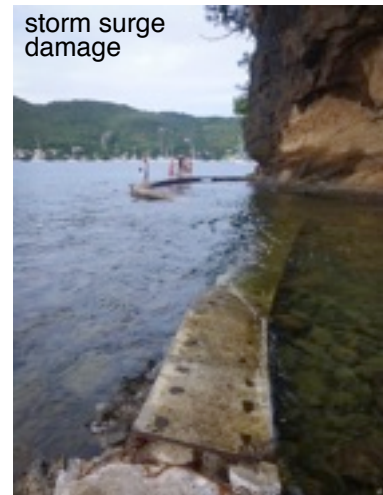
We have built a collection, sorting and washing area at 'The Sandpit' in Port Elizabeth (thanks to Kelly Glass for the rent free loan), have our own collection truck and most importantly, two excellent operating personal. By mid 2017 we will have 150 bins placed throughout Bequia and an optimum collection regime. It is very early days yet, but in mid March we delivered our first truckload of material to All Island Recycling (AIR) in St Vincent and just two weeks later, we are ready with our second load. At present Bequia Express are kindly transporting these lorry loads of recyclables for free which helps considerably with the sustainability of the program.

We are also getting a lot of positive comments about the reduction in litter. Although this isn't our most important goal, we plan to build on that because it's an important motivator. In stages 2 & 3 we will add additional material like glass bottles, as well as collections from businesses and homes. It is complicated and hard work because we are inexperienced, but we are determined to make Bequia a recycling example to be proud of.



The first truckload of recyclable materials on the way to St Vincent, with staff collectors/sorters Ewancie & Calvin

PRINCESS MARGARET TRAIL



Badly damaged this season by two separate incidents: The massive surges caused by Hurricane Matthew breached the seaward section of the Trail and an arsonist who took it into his head to set fire to the timber section causing severe structural damage.

Both situations were quickly overcome and the outpouring of public support for the Trail, especially against the mindless criminal arsonist were very heartwarming to see. It's further confirmation that the Princess Margaret Trail is vastly popular with the great majority of Bequians and a significant enhancement to island life.

Recovery work on the damage and making the elevated timber section more immune to arson will be undertaken in the summer.



The fire damage to the elevated section of the trail was repaired in just 30 hours after the incident amidst an

HARBOUR BEAUTIFICATION

We continued to finance efforts to help make the Harbour more attractive with things like the replacement of the historic almond tree whose life ended in 2016 and significant improvements to the central reservation on Front Street.



Front Street after it's 'facelift'

EXTENSION OF THE BELMONT WALKWAY PAST PLANTATION HOUSE

The reopening of Plantation House effectively cut off any legitimate route from the Belmont Walkway to the Princess Margaret Trail so Action Bequia built an extension of the Walkway on the outside of the Plantation House wall. This enables access to the Princess Margaret Trail without trespassing or risking damaged limbs.



MOSQUITOES

Mosquitoes are a dilemma. We led a massive breeding site elimination cleanup in February last year in conjunction with the Ministry of Health but our discussions on the use of genetically modified male mosquitoes as a tool to reduce the risks of Dengue, Chikungunya and Zika have come to nothing despite the support for their use from the World Health Authority (WHO).

Regrettably there seems to be a deeply held opinion in SVG which is in contradiction not only to the WHO but to an opinion expressed by the (ex) Chief Scientific Advisor to the European Union that 'opposition to the use of safety proven genetic modification technology is a form of madness'!

MAINTENANCE

During 2017 we have carried on with a continuous maintenance program on the Walkway, in the Harbour and on the Trails.



A far cry from the Belmont Walkway of the recent past.
Only five years ago it was a rather a scramble.



FIRST FIVE YEARS ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION PARTY - February 11th 2017

Generously hosted by Plantation House seating 120 for dinner and with further support from Hairoun, CK Greaves, Gonsalves Liquors and Mt Gay.



The Art auctioned was of a very high standard generously donated as follows with prices achieved in US\$.

- 1, 'Swimming in Sunshine'. Artist Bequia and UK based Simon Chinnery. Bought by Eric Johnson for \$2,100. Proceeds to Bequia United Swim Club' (BUSC)
2. 'Closing In On The Fish' a beautiful and widely acclaimed painting by Grenadian based English artist Judith Jarvis. Bought by Andrew and Carrie Beeson for \$4,300 setting a new top price record. Proceeds to Sailing in Bequia
3. Two small works 'Small Blue Drop' and 'Small Blue Shield' by internationally recognised US based artist Tom Lieber. Sold respectively for \$1,900 and \$2,250 to discerning buyers Donna Durling and John and Chrissy Burstein. Proceeds to Paget Farm based 'New Roots'.
4. An evocative 'Demeter' carved from local white cedar by famous yachtsman and Bequia resident Morris Nicholson. Became the focus of an exciting bidding war between Wendy Leighton and Mike Wilkie. Going eventually to Mike Wilkie and Nicola Cornwell for \$3,800. Proceeds to Hamilton Progressive Organization (HPO)

A total contribution of EC\$70,000 was achieved from the evening. Next year's event will be on **Saturday 17 February 2018**. Please do save the date! We have listened to suggestions for improvements so next year will start earlier, have shorter introductions to the auction pieces, two entry points for the buffet and more food.





Eric Johnson bidding for Simon Chinnery's 'Swimming in Sunshine'



Kara Randall of BUSC



'Closing in on the Fish' by Judith Jarvis





WHAT DOES THE MONEY GO TOWARDS?

Of the Action Bequia's EC\$400,000 expenditure in the last 12 months, 50% went to our Lead (managed) Projects, 25% to projects where the donor specifies the cause from our list and 25% to Management Committee Projects (where our seven person Management Committee must approve expenditure from our General Fund).

Our Lead Projects are the Belmont Walkway, The Princess Margaret Trail, Recycling, Mosquitoes and Harbour Beautification. The other 2016/2017 projects we supported financially are:-

Athletics Club, Bequia Hospital, Bequia Mission, Bequia United Swim Club (BUSC), Bequia Tourism Association Signage, Coast Guard Boat Repairs, Cricket Club, Christmas Lighting Up, Channel 21, Easter Regatta, Football Club, Friends of Bequia Hospital, Hamilton Progressive Organisation (HPO), Medical Relief Fund, Music Fest, Netball Club, New Roots at Paget Farm, Queens Young Leader, Sailing Cubs, School Supplies, Sunshine School, SVG Preservation Fund, The Hub Collective, The Learning Center.

People often ask 'What's Next?'

Answer, there is still a huge amount of work needed to complete the things we have already undertaken as Lead projects, particularly recycling where the possibilities are almost endless. Plus many of the organisations listed above will probably come back to us for further financial support. Our ability to assist depends significantly on the amount of funding we have.

See www.actionbequia.org for further details on all the projects we have been involved with.

THE ACTION BEQUIA TEAM

The core team of five Executive Board members are:

David Harper - CEO, Lucille Cozier -Treasurer & Director of Recycling, Mike Connell - Architectural Technologist & Project Manager, Tim Parsons - Implementer and myself.

Others who make an outstanding and sustained contribution include Nicola Cornwell and Neil Sanders. We are making some progress in drawing in more Bequians, especially younger Bequians, to become involved. We welcome all and any help.

FUNDING

A new donor at Benefactor level this year is Tropical Hideaway (US\$10,000 upwards). Such very generous donations are increasingly rare although the continued support from Grenadines Partnership Fund for suitable infrastructure type projects remains key to our ability to continue.

But it's the steady stream of smaller donations and help which are so necessary (and boost our morale when the going gets tough). A notable disappointment is that we only receive one regular standing order a month, (thank you Paula and Graham Waters) and we hope this brief review will encourage you all to keep helping the five to six thousand Bequians who live and work here.

When thinking about whether you will donate or not, do reflect on the considerable difference you have made so far and wonder what might have been if you hadn't. See How to donate: www.actionbequia.org/donatenow.php

Continuing thanks to all our supporterspast present and future

Richard Roxburgh

Catalyst

