



Mission in Action

2018 was a busy year for the Dominica High Commission, as the office continued to support the various fundraising activities around the United Kingdom as part of the ongoing response to Hurricane Maria. The Dominican Diaspora must be commended for their resounding response and for their Commitment to the rehabilitation of Dominica.

The High Commission continued to serve the Dominican nationals in the United Kingdom and Europe with a full range of Consular Services including renewal of Passport, advice regarding travel, and provided relevant contacts for office and services in Dominica.

The provision of vital services to our nationals was delivered in conjunction with the High Commission’s diplomatic mandate of fostering multilateral and bilateral relationship with Dominica’s international partners.

The High Commission is pleased to highlight some of its activities over the past year.

Dominica Celebrates 40th Anniversary of Independence

In commemoration of Dominica’s 40th Anniversary of Independence, a Thanksgiving Mass was held at Westminster Cathedral on Saturday 27th October 2018. The Mass was organized by the Dominica High Commission with the support of the Dominica Natural Disaster and Development Fund (DNDDF).

Honourable Petter St Jean, Minister of Education represented the Prime Minister of Dominica and was accompanied by his wife Mrs Gemma St Jean.

Also in attendance were the Commonwealth Secretary General, UK Members of Parliament, Members of the Diplomatic Corp, London Mayors, Dominican Association Chairpersons and celebrated Dominicans.

More information and photographs from the Thanksgiving Mass will be issued shortly.



Dominicans celebrate Dominica’s 40th Anniversary of Independence, at the Westminster Thanksgiving on Saturday 27th October 2018.

Dominica Celebrates its 40th Anniversary of Independence with Events in the United Kingdom

Evensong at Westminster Abbey - 5th November 2018



Each year, The Dean and Chapter of Westminster Abbey invites the Dominica High Commission to Evensong at the Abbey in observance of Dominica's Independence Day.

Evensong for Dominica took place on Monday 5th November, with staff of the High Commission and Dominican nationals in attendance. Dominica's flag was flown from the Abbey's flag-staff on the day and prayers were offered for the Government and people of Dominica.

Westminster Abbey extends similar invitation to Evensong to all Commonwealth High Commissions and their nationals on or close to their National Day.

Flag Raising at Waltham Forest Town Hall – 2nd November 2018



On Friday 2nd November 2018 a small Flag-raising ceremony was held at Waltham Forest Town Hall Campus in the presence of the Mayor of Waltham Forest and the High Commission for Dominica.

This was followed by the singing of Dominica's National Anthem. Ms Josephine Mason, who represented the High Commission thanked the Mayor of Waltham Forest, the members of the Waltham Forest, Antigua & Barbuda and Dominica Twinning Association, Council staff and other attendees for their presence.

The flag raising ceremony was organised by the Waltham Forest Council to mark Dominica's 40th Anniversary of Independence.

40th Anniversary Dinner and Dance

As part of the calendar of events to celebrate Dominica's 40th anniversary of independence, the Dominica Natural Disaster and Development Fund (DNDDF) hosted a dinner and dance which was held on Saturday 3rd November 2018.

The event was held under the patronage of the Dominica High Commission and was held at the Royal Lounge Banqueting Suite in Wembley.

Guests were welcomed with canapes and rum punch before a scrumptious Caribbean dinner was served.

Mr Vincent John, Chair of the DNDDF welcomed guests and thanked them for their support. Entertainment on the night include performances by Jazz singer Bashiya, Comedian Travis Jay, and soca artists Sunshine and Nadiva. Guests dined to the music of the Metronomes Steelband and raffle prizes included tickets to the 2019 World Creole Music Festival and luxury hampers.

Ms Nakinda Daniel, who represented the Dominica High Commission extended independence wishes to the guests and thanked attendees for supporting Dominica's rehabilitation.

Popular radio personality Martin Jay was the compere for the evening and music was provided by DJ Vern, Smiley Variety and Manna.



Commonwealth Day 2018

On Monday 12th March 2018 Commonwealth Day was celebrated across the world as the member states of the Commonwealth joined together to celebrate the achievements of the organization.

2018 Commonwealth Day was celebrated under the theme 'Towards a Common Future'.

Ms Janet Charles, Acting High Commissioner represented the Government of Dominica at the annual Service which was held at Westminster Abbey to mark the occasion. Her Majesty The Queen, who is Head of the Commonwealth was in attendance along with other members of the Royal Family.

Also present at the Service were the UK Prime Minister, The Prime Minister of Malta, Dominican-born Commonwealth Secretary General and Commonwealth High Commissioners.

Dominica's flag was carried by Mr Joshua Moses, a university student of Dominican background.

To observe Commonwealth Day, member states hosted a variety of activities in their own countries including flag-raising ceremonies, school activities and cultural events.



The Dominica High Commission hosts 'A Dominican Cuisine' Commonwealth Big Lunch – 10th April 2018

The Commonwealth Big Lunches was an initiative that was part of the official celebrations leading up to the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM). It was an opportunity where communities of the different Commonwealth countries were encouraged to come together to share food, recipes and nutrition, while celebrating Commonwealth connections.

The Dominica High Commission hosted a Dominican Brunch as part of the Commonwealth Big Lunches on 10th April at the High Commission. Chairpersons of the Dominican associations in the United Kingdom were invited, along with a representative of the UK Cabinet Office. The Brunch was a celebration of Dominican cuisine, culture and traditions. Served on the day were traditional dishes such as salt fish accra, chicken pelau, bakes, souse, boulijou, ginger beer and sorrel.

Guests were entertained with traditional Dominican storytelling and forelore by Ms Jane Grell.

Ms Janet Charles, Acting High Commissioner welcomed the guests to the High Commission and thanked them for supporting the event.



Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) 16th to 20th April 2018



Leaders of the 54 Commonwealth countries meet at Buckingham Palace with HM Queen Elizabeth II for the opening of the CHOGM summit. Sitting in the front, third from the left is Dominica's Prime Minister, the Hon Dr Roosevelt Skerit. Also in front, fifth from the right, is Dominican-born the Rt Hon Patricia Scotland QC, Secretary-General of the Commonwealth.

Biannually, the Heads of Government of the 54 Commonwealth Countries meet together to reaffirm their shared common goals and to also evaluate and address global challenges and problems, with this year's gathering being held in the UK under the theme *"Towards a Common Future."* In attendance, representing Dominica was our Prime Minister the Honorable Dr Roosevelt Skerit and Minister of Foreign Affairs and CARICOM Honorable Francine Baron.

One of the biggest issues that were addressed that immensely relates to Dominica, especially in light of Hurricane Maria in 2017 and all the other storm alerts since, was the global effects of climate change and natural disasters. Heads recognized the devastating impacts climate change is having across nations, from intense rainfalls and storms in some areas to extended droughts and desertification in other parts. Without urgent action, it is predicted that the impacts of such severe climate change could force an additional 100 million people into poverty by 2030.

To tackle this ongoing problem, Heads renewed their commitment to keep the increase in global average temperature to well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, and to pursue efforts that limit further temperature increase. Heads also renewed their commitments to the Green Climate Fund, which aims to fund low-carbon emission and climate-resilient development and to also assist developing countries and the most vulnerable societies, which experience firsthand the harsh impacts and consequences of climate change. An emphasis was also placed on working together to become greener by increasing our use of clean and sustainable energy sources and also using natural resources more sustainably.

Other issues that were also a focus included youth, trade, cyber security, gender equality, health issues, the prevention and countering of violent extremism, human trafficking and child exploitation. With 1 billion young people living in the Commonwealth and the future dependent on them, there was a strong consensus among countries to cooperate and collaborate with each other to provide opportunities, knowledge, and skills to young people so as to equip them and to give them a voice on key issues such as democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

Overall, one conclusion which was agreed by all Heads, was a joint commitment to continue to cooperate and work together to create a more sustainable, a fairer, a more secure and a more prosperous future. The next Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting will be hosted by Rwanda in 2020, under the theme *"A Connected Commonwealth"* which has been chosen befittingly, as the modern Commonwealth marks its 70th Anniversary in 2019.

CARICOM Day Celebrated in London – 1st July 2018



The CARICOM Caucus of High Commissioners in London organized a Thanksgiving Service which took place on Wednesday 4th July 2018, at Holy Trinity Church in Kensington in celebration of CARICOM Day.

The CARICOM Caucus of High Commissioners were joined the Commonwealth Secretary General, and the nationals from the various CARICOM countries living in the United Kingdom. The Service included musical performances and readings, and was followed by a reception.

A small exhibition was held in the church hall, where each country showcased some of its items and products .

The Caribbean Community was established on 4th July 1973 when the first Treaty of Chaguaramas was signed by Heads of Government. The organization , whose headquarters is in Georgetown Guyana, is made up of fifteen members plus five associate members.



Dominica's 2018 Queen's Young Leaders Award Winner - Lakeyia Joseph



The Queen's Young Leader Award recognizes and celebrates exceptional people aged 18-29 from across the Commonwealth, who are taking the lead in their communities and using their skills to transform lives. Winners of this prestigious Award receive a unique package of training, mentoring and networking, including a one-week residential programme in the UK during which awards are presented to them by Her Majesty The Queen.

On 26th June 2018, The Queen's Young Leader award winner from Dominica, Ms Lakeyia Joseph, attended the ceremony at Buckingham Palace, alongside other award winners. Also in attendance to celebrate the achievements of the winners were The Duke and Duchess of Sussex, The Acting

High Commissioner of Dominica in London Ms Janet Charles, Sir John Major, David Beckham OBE, Sir Lenny Henry CBE, Nicola Adams OBE, Caspar Lee, Emma Gannon, Neelam Gill, Ore Oduba, Tina Daheley and more.

The High Commission takes this opportunity to acknowledge and congratulate Ms Joseph on her achievement and her valuable contributions to Dominica, especially in her work and commitment to helping children and young people.



Meet Lakeyia Joseph

From an early age, Lakeyia has stood up in support of young people and gender equality in Dominica. While still at school, she established a charity called Golden Opportunities which donates clothes, shoes and school supplies to children from low-income families. The organisation has distributed over \$10,000 worth of supplies to children and young adults.

Lakeyia is now working to establish the Golden Empowerment Foundation, which seeks to motivate young people through education, sport and training, and promote greater understanding of gender equality. In 2017, the High Commissioner of Canada in Barbados named her Dominica's Youth Champion and Ambassador for Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality.



Professor Laura Serrant received OBE – October 2018

On 31st October 2018 Professor Laura Serrant OBE PhD MA BA RGN PGCE Queens Nurse, received an OBE from Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, on the occasion of becoming an Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire for Services to Health Policy.

She joins an elite list of other prominent Dominicans to achieve this prestigious award.

That evening, the High Commission hosted a reception to celebrate Professor Serrant's outstanding achievement.

The High Commission joins in commending Professor Serrant on the occasion of this award and we join in celebrating her long and illustrious career in Health Service.

For more information and photographs, please see the full article on the High Commission's website.



DUKA'S NOTTING HILL CARNIVAL PARTICIPATION - 26th to 27th August 2018



Every year Caribbean communities and the rest of the world come together for the Notting Hill Carnival in London for a colourful celebration of culture, heritage, artistic talents and creativity. Since the first carnival in 1966, the Notting Hill Carnival has become Europe's biggest street festival with its spectacular displays of colourful parades and floats, pulsating music. The party atmosphere is complete with dancing, singing and enjoyment.

DUKA's Mas Dominique carnival band carried the flag for Dominica with its usual energetic band comprising of costume and tee shirt sections. Revelers and supporters of the band dressed in their vibrant costumes and T-shirts. participated in the festivities with members dressing up in national colours or vibrant costumes. This year's carnival was particularly a memorable one as Dominica celebrated its grand 40th Anniversary of Independence.

The High Commission recognizes DUKA and its members for flying the Dominican flag so proudly and prominently at Notting Hill Carnival and we recognize their commitment and dedication in representing Dominica 's culture in the United Kingdom.



COMMONWEALTH COUNTRIES LEAGUE (CCL) FAIR - NOVEMBER 10TH 2018



The annual CCL fair took place on Saturday 10th November 2018 at the Kensington Town Hall. The 2018 fair was Chair by Her Excellency Perla Perdomo, High Commissioner for Belize. The Fair is always an excellent day out for families, with many exciting features including cultural performances, food, music, exclusive raffle prizes and stalls from most of the 54 Commonwealth countries.

Once again, the Dominica High Commission was pleased to support this fundraising event with the assistance of our fantastic team of volunteers and helpers. This year the Dominica stall was facilitated through the support of Ministry of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs, The Ministry of Trade, Energy and Employment and with the partnership of Jolly's Manufacturing.



The High Commission was able to secure products from Dominica such as hot pepper sauce, spices (nutmeg, cinnamon, tamarind), miniature rum bottles, castor oil, insect repellent, rum punch, toiletries (soap and kid's deodorant) and arts and crafts which were available for sale on our stall. Mrs Ethelca Brand's fish cakes, bakes and salt fish alongside her homemade sorrel and ginger beer was also hugely popular and highly requested on the day. A bottle of rum punch was raffled on our staff and congratulate Mr Egbert Desouze of Grenada origin, who won the rum punch.

This year a total of £29,272.80 was raised. All the proceeds were donated to the Commonwealth Girls Education Fund for the education of girls in Commonwealth countries.

The Commonwealth Countries League Education Fund is a charity which aims to sponsor the secondary school education for girls across the commonwealth as statistics and research have shown that girls who attend secondary school and focus on their studies don't get married young, have fewer children of their own, understand better on how to nourish their families and also have better future prospects.

The High Commission also takes this opportunity to thank all the Dominican nationals who volunteered at the fair and managed the stall. We also thank all those who supported the worthy cause behind this year's fair by buying products from our stall.



Highlights of Events of Dominican Associations in the United Kingdom

Dominica Overseas National Association (DONA)

In celebration of its 40th anniversary as registered Dominican association, DONA held the following events:

On 16th June members and supporters of DONA attended **DONA's anniversary dinner**. Special guest representing the Prime Minister of Dominica was Honourable Ian Douglas. Ms Janet Charles, Acting High Commissioner was also in attendance.

Thanksgiving Church Service—24th June in the presence of the Acting High Commissioner.

Family Fun Day—The association's annual family fun day took place on 19th August at the North Action Playing Fields. In attendance were the Acting High Commissioner and staff of the High Commission.

Congratulations to DONA on your 40th Anniversary

Events in Bradford

On 22nd June, Ms Nakinda Daniel, Third Secretary, represented the High Commission at a civic Reception at the invitation of the Lord Mayor of Bradford to acknowledge the **Windrush 70th Anniversary**. Other Caribbean High Commissions were also in attendance.

Bradford Dominica Association

Ms Nakinda Daniel represented the High Commission at a dinner dance held at the Bradford City Hall on 2nd November to celebrate Dominica's 40th anniversary of independence. This event was organized by the Bradford Dominica Association, who took the opportunity to present awards to members of the Dominican community in Bradford for their service to Dominica and the city of Bradford.

Grand Bay UK Community Alliance

The annual celebration of the **Feast of St Isidore** took place on Monday 28th May 2019. The church service was followed by entertainment at the Ilford Sports Ground. Ms Daniel represented the High Commission at the event and provided an update on the state of the recovery in Dominica.

Dominica Kalinago Association

The Association held its **annual fundraising social** on 28th July in Forest Gate and the High Commission was pleased to attend in support of this fundraising event.

The Slough Dominican Association

A **fundraising dinner dance** was held on 22nd September as part of the Hurricane Maria relief effort. Ms Nakinda Daniel, who represented the High Commission, thanked the gathering for supporting the event and for the heart warming response to Dominica's ongoing recovery.

Thanksgiving Service for Dominica

Ms Janet Charles, Acting High Commissioner attended the church service on 18th November which was held in Farnham Road, Slough. Ms Charles delivered the independence message from the Prime Minister of Dominica to the Dominican Diaspora in the United Kingdom. Mr Joseph Vidal, Chair of DONA also attended the Service.

Dominica UK Association (DUKA)

DUKA participated in the annual Notting Hill Carnival putting on a wonderful display of Dominican culture (see more on page 9).

Waitukubli Culture and Tourism Initiative (WCTI)

The **annual Miss Wob Dwiye and Ti Matador UK Show and Dance** took place on 25th November at the Ilford Sports Ground under the patronage of the Dominica High Commission and the Discover Dominica Authority. The event highlighted the culture and heritage of Dominica and formed part of the official Dominican Independence events in the United Kingdom.

WCTI and the University of Bedfordshire hosted a two-day CreoleFest and Symposium on 9th and 10th November in Luton. High Commission was pleased to support the event which discussed the preservation of the creole culture. Ms Nakinda Daniel represented the High Commission and the other countries participating included Jamaica, St Lucia, Mauritius and Seychelles.

A **Creole Youth Symposium** was held at the High Commission on 28th July. The event featured a panel discussion and workshops around the creole culture.

Dominica Secondary School Supporters Association (DASSA)

On 22nd September, the High Commission hosted **DASSA's Quiz Night** at the Mission.

The **annual Noel Dominique** took place on 9th December at the Dominica High Commission.

Reception to honour the Commonwealth contribution to the First World War, Hosted by Cyprus High Commission & The Royal British Legion – 11th October 2018

The Dominica High Commission attended a reception jointly hosted by the Cyprus High Commission and the Royal British Legion, to commemorate all the contributions made by the Commonwealth Countries to the First World War. The valuable contribution from around the Commonwealth included service men and women and a combined 3 million volunteers.

The painting shown on the right was presented by the Royal British Legion, as a token of acknowledgment and gratitude, to all the Commonwealth Countries, including Dominica, who supported Britain during WWI



Passing of Heskeith Alexander

Former Parliamentary Representative of LaPlaine and Minister of Government

Former Parliamentary Representative for the Laplaine Constituency in the Dame Eugenia Charles Dominica Freedom Party (DFP) administration of 1980 to 1995, Mr Heskeith Alexander passed away in October in London.

Among the various public and government portfolios which he held, Mr Alexander served as Minister of Agriculture, Minister for Community Development, and Minister for Immigration in Dominica. He was a true patriot and devoted his life to public service and helping communities. Other memorable achievements include receiving the Meritorious Service Award in 2005 from the Government of Dominica.

The funeral service of Mr Alexander which was held on 16th October 2018 in London was attended by Honourable Petter Saint-Jean the Minister of Education & Human Resource Development, Mrs Gemma St Jean and all the staff of the Dominica High Commission. Representing the Prime Minister and the Government of Dominica, Honourable Saint Jean addressed the family and friends of Mr Alexander, praising his long and illustrious service to Dominica.

Oh, Maria!"

Darrel Toulon's Music and Arts Project in support of Dominica - August to November 2018



In August 2018, Darrel Toulon travelled to Dominica with Maurizio Nobili and Carole Alston, two of the International Artistes who last December participated in the Benefit Gala which raised over 30,000€ for the Blood Bank of Princess Margaret Hospital. Organized in the city of Graz, where Toulon has held the position of Ballet Director in the Opera House from 2001 until 2015, the Gala featured Dominica's own Sade Bully, along with some 40 other dancers, singers and musicians. The money raised was transferred to Dominica via the Afro-Asian Institute, for the refurbishment of the Blood Bank, which was completely destroyed during Hurricane Maria.



The trip in August was to create a song-cycle "Oh, Maria!" – which premiered at the Roseau venue of Alliance Française on Saturday 18th August, to standing ovations from a house packed full of enthusiastic audience members. Using the stories of survival as a starting point, the intensive 10-day workshop included voice lessons, writing skill exercises, key talks, innovative lyric-writing techniques, song analysis, and collaborative composition, and was held at the Convent high School. The resulting performance, nearly one hour long, was performed by 18 participants, who were all collectively responsible together with the facilitators, for the sung and spoken script, developed under the Artistic Direction of Darrel Toulon.



In October, leading up to the 40th Anniversary of Independence Celebrations, Toulon returned to lead rehearsals for additional performances: "Oh, Maria!" back by popular demand! For the second edition, "Oh, Maria!" featured brand new four-part vocals, additional verses to existing songs, and a totally new

Gospel-anthem interpreted by Marie-Pascale Affana. Well-respected Cultural Icon Mr. Alwin Bully, who was also active as participant in all the song and lyric-writing practical sessions of the August-held workshop referred to the production as being "a theatrical and musical experience that will touch one side of your heart with tenderness and compassion while strengthening the other side with optimism and vigor to last a lifetime."

Darrel Toulon's work, particularly since 2015, has been using trauma-transformation and docu-dance-theater, for interdisciplinary artistic productions, using personal and biographical experiences of the artistes themselves, in layered processes to create original theatrical works for performances in a wide variety of venues and locations.

The first of the repeat performances took place at the Karina Cultural Center in the Kalinago territory, on Monday 29th October. The open-air event was well attended by residents of the surrounding area, accompanied by a local orchestra of the nocturnal fauna, underneath a clear un-troubled sky. On that evening, a short film was recorded with several members of Miranda Langley's Kalinago performing troupe. This film would form part of a High School Graduation Ball on Saturday 10th November, for which Darrel Toulon had staged two musical numbers from "Oh, Maria!".

In addition, following up on the donations made earlier in the year to the Princess Margaret Hospital, Toulon was able to visit the Blood Bank in August and again in November. Hospital Services Coordinator Mr. Clayton Bryan had thus ample opportunity to show the equipment and furniture, purchased and installed, with the funds donated by the Darrel Toulon and Friends Gala. Amongst the new medical equipment bought were, a new water purification system, a blood bank centrifuge, a blood bank refrigerator, blood donor couches and a blood bank frozen plasma freezer. Hospital staff and lab technicians were eager to explain the functions and advantages of the new state-of-the-art equipment, expressing their gratitude and appreciation in the name of the people of Dominica who will benefit from this for years to come.

Visit Dominica—Dates To Watch Out For In 2019



Cricket	3 rd January – 19 th February 2019
Mas Domnik – The Real Mas	4 th – 5 th March 2019
Dominica Festival of the Creative Arts (DOMFESTA)	1 st – 31 st May 2019
Tourism Awareness Month	1 st – 31 st May 2019
Hike Fest	4 th – 25 th May 2019
Jazz 'N Creole	1 st – 4 th June 2019
Dive Fest	5 th – 14 th 2019
Kalinago Week	16 th – 22 nd September 2019
World Creole Music Festival	25 th – 27 th October 2019
Independence Day	3 rd November 2019

DOMINICA HIGH COMMISSION
1 Collingham Gardens | London | SW5 0HW
Tel: +44(0) 20 7370 5194 | Fax: +44 (0) 20 7373 8743
Email: info@dominicahighcommission.co.uk
Website: www.dominicahighcommission.co.uk



@UKDHC



@DHC_London