

New festival to honour fisherfolk



Minister of the Environment and National Beautification, Blue and Green Economy Adrian Forde, speaking at the launch of Barbados' newest festival, BARFISH – the 2024 Barbados Fisherfolk Festival, yesterday. Looking on are Permanent Secretary Yolande Howard (left) and Chief Fisheries Officer Dr Shelly-Ann Cox. (BGIS)

Minister of the Environment and National Beautification, Blue and Green Economy Adrian Forde said that \$4.3 million has been allocated to build a fisherman's community centre and a boat park at Consett Bay, St John, later this year.

Forde said this was to enable fisherfolk to repair and carry out necessary maintenance on their fishing vessels. He was speaking at the launch yesterday of Barbados' newest festival, **BARFISH** – the 2024 Barbados Fisherfolk Festival – at the Barbados Fisheries Division, on

Princess Alice Highway.

The minister further mentioned that plans are under way for the building of new slipways, later this year, for hauling in and launching fishing vessels at Pile Bay, St Michael, and Weston, St James.

Meanwhile, Chief Fisheries Officer Dr Shelly-Ann Cox stated that during **BARFISH 2024**, fisherfolk will share their experiences and knowledge about being actively involved in building the blue and green economy.

She said BARFISH would consist of a myriad

of activities during June featuring food, fashion, film, poetry, music, dance and real-world live demonstrations to showcase what it means to live sustainably on a small island.

Activities include the Fisherfolk Month Church Service, at the Church of the Nazarene, Collymore Rock, St Michael, on June 2 and Fisherfolk Day at various locations across the island. On June 30 there will be a Fisheries Ball and Awards Ceremony. (BGIS)

Centenarian Minnie a woman of 'immense wisdom'

Barbados' newest centenarian Veronique McCollin, affectionately known as "Minnie," attributes her longevity to reading her **Bible** and praying regularly.

McCollin, a mother of five, moved to Barbados from Dominica at 18 and worked as a housekeeper throughout her life.

Celebrating her 100th birthday, McCollin was surrounded by family, friends and neighbours at her home in Jordan Land, Silver Hill, Christ Church.

President The Most Honourable Dame Sandra Mason visited to mark the special occasion. Dame Sandra and McCollin shared laughs as the centenarian reminisced about her life. The President encouraged the family to let "Minnie" share her stories often.

Loving

Anita Brathwaite, McCollin's daughter, described her mother as loving and hardworking and always willing to make sacrifices for the betterment of her children.

"Because of her attitude towards life and determination, despite the hardships and challenges, I thank God she reached this age. She faced so much with faith and courage," she said.

Brathwaite noted that her mother moved to Barbados seeking a better life and worked tirelessly to support

her family.

"The beautiful thing about my mother is that when I was going to school, in those days a bursary was a scholarship and was only \$5. My mother used to work [ironing clothes] for people just to get my school fees. That's how hard it was [but] she did all she could to make sure we were good. I would always repay her by doing my best at school. She used to neglect herself to feed and support us," she recalled.

McCollin's nurturing spirit left a lasting impact on those she helped raise, including the Jordan family, her former employer for whom she worked for more than 35 years.

Former educator Marsha Jordan

praised McCollin's dedication: "Talk about a housekeeper! This woman kept our house in a high state of quality, it wasn't just the cleaning and organising, it was her presence and the enrichment we got from her. She is someone we could depend on," she said.

McCollin worked for the Jordan family from 1972 to 2007.

Marsha's daughter, Alex Jordan, held back tears as she expressed gratitude for McCollin, whom she considers a second mother.

"Minnie, despite her limited formal schooling, possessed immense wisdom and intelligence. She exemplifies lifelong learning and continues to read vigorously at 100 years old," Alex said.

She also highlighted McCollin's positive role in her late father Oscar Jordan's life and credited much of her success to McCollin's influence.

"We weren't allowed to take buses as children, but I was allowed to travel with Minnie. Visiting her in The Pine Housing Scheme exposed me to a different side of Barbados, which profoundly shaped my identity and work," she shared.

McCollin remains active and enjoys cooking.

"I get up in the mornings, drink my tea and go outside to pray. I read the **Bible** everyday and love to cook, especially banana cou cou and salt fish, but also soup," McCollin said. (AL)

Barbados Trust Fund to host review session

The Barbados Trust Fund Limited will launch the 2024 edition of its Manifest Manufacturing Incubator Programme for Manufacturers with a Product Review and Business Excellence session today at Bagnall Point, Pelican Village Complex, St Michael, from 10 a.m.

During the event, participants will be given an opportunity to showcase, sample and retail their products, while interacting with several industry professionals, including Export Barbados, the Barbados National Standards Institution, Barbados Manufacturers' Association, Government Analytical Services, and **Caribbean Label Craft**. The industry professionals will review the products on display and provide valuable feedback to participants.

In addition, industry professionals will make a

presentation on their respective organisations and highlight their role in developing businesses in the manufacturing sector.

Meanwhile, from Monday, the Trust Fund will embark on a seven-week training initiative geared towards strengthening businesses in the manufacturing sector.

The programme will place emphasis on building client competencies in manufacturing quality essentials; public speaking and presentation skills; the business model canvass; business innovation; costing and pricing; marketing and sales; and inventory management.

Participants have been assigned to the following sub-sectors: beauty; health and wellness; food and beverage; wines and spirits; as well as the creative and cultural industries. (BGIS)