

ARGYLE INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT UPDATE

Building our Future, Preserving our Heritage!

Earthworks Progressing!

The pace of earthworks has picked up to keep the airport on schedule to begin operations by mid-2013. With more than half of the earthworks having been completed, the Chatoyer-Che Contingent is looking to complete most of the remaining earth works by the end of this year. These works include: (a) the continuation of construction of the runway, aprons and taxiways, (b) preparation of the area for the construction of the cargo terminal building, fire and rescue station, and control tower, (c) construction of the culvert in the first kilometre of the runway, (d) commencement of construction work on the culvert for the Yambou River, and (e) work on the sea defenses, at the North-eastern end of the runway.



Viewing the site from the top of the remains of Fort Hill

Two and a half years into the construction of the Argyle International Airport, the International Airport Development Company (IADC) continues to move mountains and fill valleys to ensure that the long held dream of many Vincentians is realized.

Construction of the drainage system in the 1st kilometer progressing smoothly.



Terminal building and other landside facilities

Work on the construction of the passenger terminal, though delayed, is expected to commence soon. A tender for the construction of the terminal building was issued on 7th June 2010, but for a variety of reasons, no tender was received by the appointed time for submission of tender. The Board of Directors subsequently approved the awarding of a contract for the construction of the terminal building to the Taiwanese firm, Overseas Engineering and Construction Company Ltd. (OECC). This contract is worth US\$25,094,530.00 and covers construction of the terminal building, electrical substation, internal and external signage, and related preliminaries. IADC will, at some stage this year, enter into contracts with other private firms for the construction of the Fire and Rescue Station, Cargo Terminal Building and Control Tower. However, IADC has decided to do the site works, internal roads, drains and parking areas, using resources already at its disposal.

Archaeologist Jode Mackay (kneeling center) and overseas volunteers during the public archaeology programme.



The Cuban contingent pose for photo on returning to SVG in February.

Public Archaeology Programme

The IADC, in collaboration with the National Trust of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, in its continued effort to preserve as much as possible of the history and cultural heritage of Argyle enabled a team of Archaeologists and volunteers from Canada and elsewhere to carry out archaeological excavations in an area just outside the offices of the IADC.

This programme, which took place in January 2011, and dubbed "SVG Volunteer Archaeology Programme", was proposed by archaeologists from Circle Consulting of Canada and done in collaboration with the University of Calgary.

The archaeological team was led by Canadians, Margarita De Guzman and Jode Mackay. Overseas volunteers also came from Canada, California, Florida and Greece. Vincentians were invited to participate in this programme and many did join their overseas counterparts to offer voluntary service on the site.

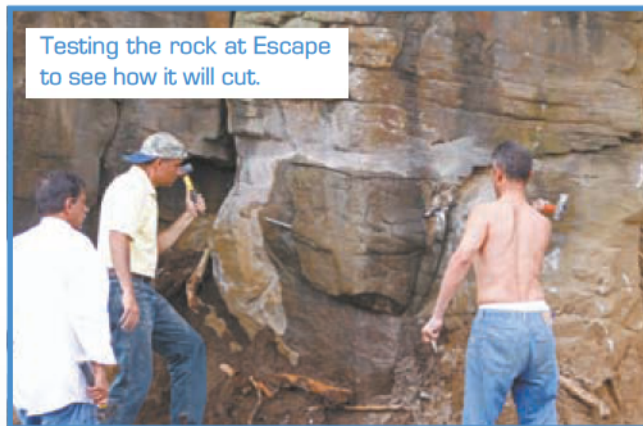
During this programme, a number of significant pieces of artifacts and several skeletal remains were uncovered. Proceeds from the programme were donated to the Argyle International Airport Contributory Fund and to the National Trust to assist the Trust with preservation of the nation's cultural heritage.



A prized artifact reconstructed by volunteers.



Skeletal remains found at Argyle during the Public Archaeology programme.



Testing the rock at Escape to see how it will cut.

Relocating the Yambou Petroglyphs

Four members of the Egyptian Ministry of Culture arrived in St. Vincent and the Grenadines on January 10th 2011 to investigate into and advise on the possible relocation of the Petroglyphs at Yambou.

The relocation of the petroglyphs, which are incised on a large rock located on the Western side of the Argyle International Airport's runway, is part of a wider Cultural Heritage Plan proposed by the National Trust and funded by the IADC.

The four member team was headed by Architect, Abu El Darda Abuzaid, Chief of Technical and Engineering Affairs. The team remained in the country for three weeks, during which time they advised the National Trust and made recommendations for other prehistoric heritage conservation projects in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, in particular, the relocation and preservation of the petroglyphs at Yambou.

Following their three week investigation, the Egyptian team advised the National Trust that the Yambou Petroglyphs can indeed be relocated, though the process is likely to be painstaking and expensive. The Egyptian team left with the intention to return to St. Vincent and the Grenadines in April 2011 to carry out the work. But with the recent events in Egypt, we have to await confirmation of their return visit.

As part of the Heritage Plan, IADC has purchased nearly 3 acres of land at Escape and made it available to the National Trust to establish a cultural heritage park, where the petroglyphs would be relocated.



Egyptian Archaeologists registering the cracks in the rocks at Escape.