

RELOCATION of the **“WALLACE FOUNTAIN”**.

In 1987 or thereabout, an article captioned “Our Solitary Square” was published in the print media – reflecting and expressing the nostalgia of a lad growing up on the Lance in Gouyave, and his experience during the 1940’s while attending the Grenada Boys Secondary (GBSS) and travelling from Gouyave to St. George’s at the beginning – and returning to Gouyave at the end of term.

During the pre-independence period – around the 1950’s and 60’s the Market Square was like a stage in an open theatre, a focal point of convergence with an ornate fountain (the Wallace Fountain) – one of fifty manufactured in Paris – France by a British Philanthropist – Sir Richard Wallace in 1872 and transported to the then French Colony in Grenada – the others – to my knowledge are still in use in Paris. (See attachment)

The Square was then a place where the citizens meet from time to time for important civic events. It was a revered location for rest, spiritual uplift and other cultural, religious and political happenings – in addition to market vending, undertaken within umbrella type prefabricated red roofed Victorian steel structures, with seats under two large flamboyant trees for shade and relaxation.

Today’s Market Square has become a cluttered “huskers” ghetto – not fit for the relocation of the ornate Wallace Foundation which was rescued and repaired by the late Dr. Alister Hughes and his wife Cynthia, when it was a dominant but decaying feature in Our Capital City, at that time the square was indeed a civic centre. After the actual repairs undertaken by Lincoln Ross combined Workshop- the fountain was relocated to the Alliance Franchises compound for safe keeping. For some unknown reason the fountain was removed from Alliance and is somewhere under the “Care” of the Grenada Tourism Authority, and may now be in need of further repairs.

A fountain in a city’s centre is a symbol of civic pride, an aesthetic and functional facility which contributors in no small measure to the ambience and mood of the place it occupies; successive governments however, have turned the square into a political football – catering for vendors vote, instead of planning and implementing the orderly physical enhancement of St. George’s and its environs, with the proliferation of side-walk vending resulting into pedestrian overflow (from the sidewalks) unto vehicular traffic which has become the new normal nightmare.

In light of the above deteriorating condition, it is recommended that the fountain be located finally, in an environment with a suitable “social infrastructure” that reflects the aesthetic appreciation of this unique civic facility.

In this regard, opportunity is taken to congratulate the Hon. Andy Williams and his MIT team on the transformation of the Lagoon Road into a truly “Kirani James Boulevard”. Although the large trailers and containers are still on site, improvements are taking place and eventually the final transformation will occur.

In this process it is recommended that a suitable location in the boulevard be allocated to the fountain, – which in the Willie Redhead Foundation’s view would be “the jewel in crown”, as users of this new “social infrastructure” and green open space would experience the ambience of an enhanced St. George’s.

If the National Celebration Committee under the Chairmanship of Dr. Wendy Crawford - with the assistance of MIT could make this occur by February 7th 2024 at the celebration of the 50th GOLDEN Anniversary of Independence, it would indeed be a golden anniversary, “as we aspire build and advance as one people”

Norris Mitchell President Emeritus – the Willie Redhead Foundation

July 10th, 2023



The Wallace Fountain