



Ministry of Community, Culture and Sports  
Heritage Month and Bermuda Day 2015

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT  
To the House of Assembly

By

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Minister of Community, Culture and Sports

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Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to share with Members of this Honourable House and the people of Bermuda information about some exciting and informative events taking place during Heritage Month 2015. The theme this year is "*Bermuda: An Atlantic Garden*". The Department of Community and Cultural Affairs, supported by very keen and committed members of the Heritage Advisory Committee, has chosen a theme that invites each of us to pause and reflect on the beauty of our aquatic and terrestrial environments; which has in many ways shaped our cultural heritage.

Mr. Speaker, The crystal clear aqua and jade waters, that surround this jewel in the Atlantic, have influenced and forged our ways of being. One of our earliest ways of making a living was through fishing and farming. Many of our ancestors were ship builders and sailors. In more recent times, especially since post World War II, the stunning beauty and pristine quality of our beaches and surrounding waters enticed thousands of tourists to our shores.

First, Mr. Speaker, allow me to mention a few of the events that have already taken place.

Heritage Month opened on May 1st with an exhibition at the Bermuda Society of Arts featuring some of Bermuda's visual artists who skillfully and masterfully captured images reflective of the theme. Some of the paintings were absolutely breath taking. This exhibition will continue until May 20th; and also features some craft work prepared by our elders. I would like to thank all of the artists and seniors whose creative works are on display. I am also most grateful to the Bermuda Society of Arts for agreeing to partner with the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs to make this event possible.

Mr. Speaker, Two other events that have also already taken place focused on gardening; especially in small spaces. On May 3<sup>rd</sup> and May 9<sup>th</sup> presenters Neville Richardson and Frances Eddy gave very interesting talks and demonstrations.

These extremely knowledgeable people shared not only how we can utilize space, but also stressed the value and importance of growing our own vegetables, fruits and flowers. As one presenter put it "*... people are only limited by their creativity and imagination; anyone can develop a garden!*" On May 9<sup>th</sup> the Department also organized a walking tour of Cooper's Island with Heritage Officer Richard Lowry Leading the tour. I would like to thank Mr. Lowry and presenters Neville Richardson and Frances Eddy for so willingly and enthusiastically sharing from their wealth of knowledge.

**Mr. Speaker,** Not only are there events for "land lovers" but seafarers will have an activity or two to enjoy also. On Saturday May 16th two Glass Bottom boat tours on board the Reef Explorer are being planned. One tour starts at 10:00 am; and the other begins at 1:30 pm. Both tours will take guests on an "ocean adventure" to view the exotic "sea gardens". The tours depart from the Hamilton Ferry Terminal; and tickets are going fast!

**Mr. Speaker,** On Sunday May 17<sup>th</sup> there will be a tour of the Great Sound on the Reef Explorer with historical commentary by Mr. Andrew Bermingham. This event is part of the Historical Heartbeats Lecture series organized by the Folklife Officer in collaboration with the Officers responsible for organizing Heritage Month programming.

**Mr. Speaker,** Heritage month culminates with the very popular and celebrated Bermuda Day Parade which will take place on Monday May 25<sup>th</sup> starting at 1:30 pm. The Bermuda Day Parade route will be the same as last year; beginning at Marsh Folly and Black Watch Pass; along Cedar Avenue; left turn onto Church Street; then a right turn on to Court Street; right turn onto Front Street; then a right turn at the Birdcage onto Queen Street; then right turn on to Church Street and the parade concludes in the City Hall Parking lot where participants may give final performances if they choose.

**Mr. Speaker,** We love the pulsating rhythms of the Bermuda Gombey, the exquisitely created floats, the precision of the majorettes, the electrifying movements of the dance groups and the pageantry of the parade led by our very own Bermuda Regiment Band.

**Mr. Speaker,** In keeping with our Heritage Month and Bermuda Day theme, "*Bermuda: An Atlantic Garden*", I take this opportunity to encourage people to celebrate not only the beauty of our island home; but to also pause and reflect on the beautiful spirit in which we as a people take pride. Let us vow to continue to care for and protect the natural beauty of our country; and to show kindness and respect to each other.

Finally **Mr. Speaker,** I would like to express my gratitude and appreciation to all of our cultural industry partners who continue to work collaboratively with the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs to make Heritage Month and Bermuda Day so successful. I am grateful to all of the participants, our presenters, tour guides, boat operators, the Bermuda Society of Arts, the members of the Heritage Advisory Committee, the Historical Heartbeats Committee, the Bermuda Police Service and the Corporation of Hamilton. I would especially like to single out some of the staff at the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs. With the retirement of former senior officer Mrs. Louise Tannock, Ms. Clyde-A-Mae Tucker has worked tirelessly to ensure that the heritage month events and the Bermuda Day Parade are successful.

Ms. Tucker has received support from her team – including Ms. Veney Sims, Ms. Renee Thomas and Mr. Graham Mawer- who have had to "step up to the plate", and have exhibited professionalism and a great team spirit. Job well done!

**Thank you Mr. Speaker**