

ROADS TER

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“Paving the Way”

\$500 Million Road Programme

Underway Across the Island

**Road Patching, Gully Works and
River Training among activities announced
by Prime Minister Portia Simpson Miller**



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On the roads with Minister Luther Buchanan and NWA CEO



Minister Buchanan (left) getting a first hand look at a drain being constructed along the road between Dam Head and Old Harbour Road in St. Catherine. Also in the photo (from left), NWA officers, Brian Duquanay, Varden Downer and Edgar Llewelyn



Minister Buchanan and Mayor of Spanish Town Norman Scott (3rd right) looking at defected drain covers in the old Capital.



Minister Buchanan on tour with Member of Parliament for South Manchester, Michael Peart (3rd right). Also present were NWA CEO, E.G. Hunter (1st right) Managing Director of the Road Maintenance Fund (RMF), Clement Watson (4th right) and NWA Officers Lloyd Heron, Joseph Rose and Cuthbert Thomas.



Member of Parliament of South Trelawny, Marissa Dalrymple Phillibert making a point about one of the dangerous breakaways in her Constituency needing attention. Minister Buchanan and NWA CEO E.G. Hunter shared the moment.



Minister Buchanan making a point about the need for the cutting of overhanging trees as part of the approach to preserving the life of roads. Sharing the moment are: Member of Parliament for North-West Manchester, Mikael Phillips (1st right); NWA CEO, E.G. Hunter (2nd right), NWA Regional Manager for Southern Region Sadiq Mahabeer and Principal Financial Officer in the Ministry of Transport, Works and Housing, Richard DePass.



What is happening here?

Minister Buchanan being joined by Member of Parliament for Central St. Mary, Hon. Dr. Morais Guy (2nd left) and NWA's Director of Technical Services, Roger Smith, as they examine a section of road that is eroding.

Note: Minister Buchanan was on assignment as Minister of State for Works for just over a month between October and November 2013.

The Kintyre Bridge... An Effective Solution to Years of Inconvenience

It was with much appreciation and a sigh of relief that residents of Kintyre and surrounding communities welcomed, on December 4, 2013, the official opening of the new Kintyre Bridge, in St. Andrew, by the Most Honourable Prime Minister, Portia Simpson Miller.

The new Kintyre Bridge is anticipated to be an effective solution to the plight suffered by residents of that area for many years. Its predecessor, the Kintyre Ford, which had spanned the Hope River, has been replaced because, for many years, flood waters continually washed away sections of the Ford in periods of heavy rainfall. Temporary restorations effected to the area over the years often proved futile. Residents therefore approached each hurricane season with much trepidation, anticipating a removal of access to interlinking communities, whenever there is heavy rainfall.

This recurrent situation was exacerbated when, in late September 2012, flood rains affecting the island resulted in the Hope River overtopping its banks, allowing torrents of flood waters to flow over the Ford, severing it in two. The Kintyre Ford was a major and most central route used by residents of Clarke Street, St. Joseph Road, Bedward Pastures, Cosmo Mews and Kintyre itself. Residents of these communities were then separated from other areas of the Kingston Metropolitan Region, for some time after the 2012 flood event.

In March 2013, the Government of Jamaica, through the Ministry of Transport, Works and Housing/National Works Agency took a decision to construct a Bridge over the Hope River, replacing the Kintyre Ford. The completion of the bridge four (4) months later, was welcomed by residents, offering them much hope for a future where they may no longer fear heavy rainfall in their communities.

The Kintyre Bridge, a modular structure imported from China, extends 61.3 metres in length, with a double span and supporting middle Pier. The bridge is also supported by piles which are driven 12 metres underground. Two retaining walls, each 25 metres long, were constructed along both sides of the river. Some river training works were also undertaken and included the excavation of 4 to 5 metres in depth of the river invert. This was done for approximately 25 metres both upstream and downstream the river, providing adequate space under the bridge to accommodate expected storm flows. The new bridge is complemented by the construction of 20 metres of approach roads at both ends of the bridge.

The Kintyre Bridge Project was completed at a cost of J\$100-million.



Prime Minister Portia Simpson Miller cutting the ribbon to officially declare the Kintyre Bridge open. Also in the picture are: (from left) Member of Parliament for East Rural St. Andrew, Damion Crawford; Chairman, NWA Advisory Board, Dr. Parris Lyew-Ayee; NWA's CEO, E.G. Hunter; State Minister for Works, Hon. Richard Azan and Minister without Portfolio in the Ministry of Transport, Works and Housing, Dr. Morais Guy. At right are Member of Parliament for East Central St. Andrew Andre Hylton (1st right) and JLP spokesman on Infrastructure, Dr. Horace Chang.

Impacting communities: \$500 million programme making a difference

The 500 million dollar works programme announced by Prime Minister Portia Simpson Miller in November 2013 has started to make a significant impact in communities around the island. Under the programme, \$200 million is being spent to carry-out patching activities on the main road network; \$130 million on bushing and drain cleaning; \$50 million for the repair and replacing of Gratings and Manhole Covers and \$70 million for river training works. The Tourism Enhancement Fund (TEF) has also come on board the programme and is financing projects valued at \$51 million.

The programme to date has seen roads in all parishes being bushed and the patching activities being ramped up. Sixty-five million dollars was budgeted to be spent in all parishes during the month of December 2013. Fifty-four million dollars is to be spent in January 2014 and February 2014 and \$27 million in March 2014, when the programme is to be completed.

CLARENDON ROADS BENEFITING FROM THE PATCHING PROGRAMME

Several roads in this Southern parish of Clarendon have already benefitted under this latest \$500-million dollar thrust by the government to deal with poor road conditions across the country. The programme got underway in Clarendon with works being along the Mitchell Town to Lancet Hall, Cocoa Piece to Alexandria, Colonel Ridge to Kupius to Kellits, and Kellits to Macknie to Douglas Castle corridors under the \$200 million allocation for patching of critical corridors islandwide.

Some 4,500 square meters of hot mix patching costing over \$11 million were undertaken by an NWA's Force Account Team along the Mitchell Town to Lancet Hall roadway in South Clarendon. This project was completed in December 2013 and was welcomed by the many residents from the communities of Mitchell Town, Dawkins Pen and Salt River.

In northern Clarendon, approximately 7,400 square meters of the corridor from Colonel Ridge to Kupius to Kellits were targeted at a cost of \$10 million. The scope of the works along this 22 kilometres stretch of roadway included the cleaning of side drains, temporary restoration of scoured areas and patching, using Asphaltic Concrete. This project was also completed in December 2013.

Also in the north, the eight (8)-kilometre stretch from Kelits (Shooter) to Macknie to Douglas Castle benefitted under the programme. Some 4,500 square meters of the road were targeted for attention. The scope of works included cleaning of side drains,



Cleaning of side drains along the Colonel Ridge to Kupius main road



Preparatory work along Cocoa Piece to Alexandria

temporary restoration of scoured areas and patching, using Asphaltic Concrete. The works were completed in December 2013 at a cost of \$12 million.

Four thousand seven hundred (4,700) square meters of the road section from Cocoa Piece to Alexandria were completed at a cost of \$13 million. This too was completed in December 2013.

...ROADS IN ST. ELIZABETH BENEFITING TOO

The parish of St. Elizabeth too has benefitted from the \$200 million patching programme. The emphasis was to improve the road surface along the main road that connects St. Elizabeth with the parishes of Manchester and Westmoreland.

To this end, 57 kilometers of roadway between Gutters and Luana were targeted. Approximately 1,200 square meters of the stretch from Gutters to Tombstone were patched at a cost of \$2.8 million. The road section from Scotts Cove to Luana benefitted from 300 square meters of patching, while 600 square meters were completed along the stretch from Luana to Tombstone. These sections were done at a cost of just over \$4-million.

The projects were completed in December 2013. Chairman of the St Elizabeth Parish Council's Infrastructure Development and Maintenance Committee, Councilor Audley Myers at the December meeting expressed gratitude to the NWA, for the work completed over the period.

KINGSTON METROPOLITAIN REGION

Thirty four of the main corridors in the region were identified, where approximately 6,200 metres square of patching will be carried out. Among the corridors that were identified for this activity are National Heroes Circle, Marcus Garvey Drive, Michael Manley Boulevard in Kingston and Duhaney Drive, Waltham Park Road, Constant Spring Road and Hagley Park Road in St. Andrew.

The programme has been introduced in an attempt to arrest the deteriorating conditions along many of these corridors despite government's budgetary constraints.



A section of the Scott Cove to Luana main road, St. Elizabeth



Squaring of potholes along the Gutters to Tombstone road, St. Elizabeth



NWA Patching crew at work on the Gordon Town Road, St. Andrew



Rock Excavation along the Sligoville main road, St. Catherine



Construction of a retaining wall along the Sligoville main road

Sligoville to Bog Walk Road Rehabilitation Project Makes Steady Progress

The Sligoville to Bog Walk Road Rehabilitation Project which began in August 2013 has been making steady progress. Approximately 9.2 kilometres of roadway are being repaired. The works are scheduled to be completed by March 2014.

After four months of activities, the project is approximately 40% complete. This entails laying of culverts, construction of 'V' and 'U' drains, kerb & channel, retaining walls and rock excavation to widen sections of the roadway.

Following the completion of base and sub-base works, over one kilometre of the roadway has been paved with Asphaltic Concrete and another 200 metres have been regulated and patched.

Outstanding works include construction of 'V' drains, paving with Asphaltic Concrete, road markings and signage. The contract was awarded to Build Rite Construction Company Limited for an amount of \$324 million.



A section of the Sligoville main road being prepared for the construction of a 'V' drain



A section of the Sligoville main road that is being widened

The NWA Works to Improve Pedestrian Safety along the Norman Manley Boulevard in Negril, Westmoreland

The NWA, during the first quarter of 2013, commenced a multifaceted programme aimed at reducing the high incidence of traffic collisions and the resultant fatalities involving both pedestrians and motorists. To this end the NWA began the implementation of a programme designed to reduce vehicular speed and separate vehicular and pedestrian movement by the development of separate user paths, thereby creating a much safer environment for all concerned.

This programme has achieved a level of success as speeding has been reduced along critical points along the corridor. This has been made possible through the installation of three pedestrian actuated signals at locations along the corridor (Kuyaba Resort, Rondell Village, and Couples Swept Away). In addition medians which were constructed at four points along the roadway (Travellers Beach Hotel, Beachcomber Hotel, Grand Pineapple Negril and Sea Wind Resort), have assisted in effectively reducing the speed of motorists'. This has provided some sense of security for pedestrians who are now able to make their way along this busy corridor with much more ease and safety.

The NWA, as part of its wider plans to optimize safety along the corridor, is now on the final leg of the construction of 1.5 km of sidewalk along the landside of the Norman Manley Boulevard. This sidewalk is being constructed some distance away from the main road, creating a buffer between the main road and the sidewalk. This sidewalk is being constructed in two phases, the first of which extends from the Norman Manley Boulevard Bridge to the Grand Pineapple Hotel. The second phase of this project will see the sidewalk being extended along the length of the Boulevard to the Little Bay Country Club.

The sidewalk will function as a multi-purpose user path with clearly demarcated areas for cyclists and pedestrians. The design of the sidewalk will provide optimal safety for pedestrians and cyclists who can now traverse this section of the corridor without direct 'contact' with vehicular traffic, except when making their way across the roadway, which is now made easier through the pedestrian signals and cross walks located along the corridor.

This phase of the programme is valued at approximately \$26 million and is being funded through the Inter-American Development Bank. The second phase of this project will be financed through the Tourism Enhancement Fund.



NWA officers examining the Shared User Path constructed in Negril, Westmoreland. (From left) Stephanie Bromfield – Highway Planning Engineer, Mr. Horace Cotterell – Major Projects Manager and Ms Bobbeth Buchanan – Quality Assurance Officer – West Region.



A view of a section of the Shared User Path constructed along a section of the Norman Manley Boulevard in Negril, Westmoreland.

NWA Tackles Overgrowth and Blocked Drains in Annual Programme in Northeastern Jamaica

In early December 2013, the National Works Agency (NWA) rolled out, in earnest, its annual Christmas Bushing and Drain Cleaning Programme, in the northeastern parishes of St. Ann, St. Mary and Portland. This programme, which is a part of the \$130 million designated for islandwide mitigation and bushing, is meant to improve safety on the roadways by the removal of bush and some overhang as well as a minimal amount of drain cleaning.

In parishes such as Portland, St. Mary and St. Ann, bush along the roadways is a grave concern. Residents would have loved to see this type of programme occurring at least once a month, and that is due mainly to the fact that these parishes get more than their fair share of rainfall so the bushes regrow rather quickly. The programme was described by many residents as "a God-send". The NWA and the political directorate were lauded for their efforts and although not all the areas affected were able to be addressed under this programme, a significant amount of work was done. It is also important to note that a large number of community members also benefitted from employment under the programme.

Under the programme, a combined total of over \$13 million was spent to do mainly bushing in the three parishes. A small number of very critical drains were also addressed in some sections of Portland and St. Ann. Approximately seventy-one roadways benefitted under the programme which began in the first week of December 2013 and lasted between seven and 14 days.



Before and after photos of the bushing along the Hope Bay to Chips Hall road section in Portland

Motorists and pedestrians alike have commented on the works. As usual, there are varying degrees of satisfaction but the general consensus is that the roadways appear much safer now that there are fewer bushes. The programme, therefore, can be deemed a success as we 'fly' into the Holy season of Christmas with greater visibility and safety on our roads.



Justin Naylor (2nd right) and Barrington Bernard (3rd right) discussing Phase II of the Papine Infrastructure and Improvement Programme



A section Gordon Town Road, St. Andrew – being prepared for the construction of 550 metres of sidewalk

Papine Infrastructure Improvement Programme Phase II

Phase Two of the National Works Agency’s Papine Infrastructure Improvement Programme began on November 04, 2013 and is scheduled to be completed during the first quarter of 2014.

The objective of this programme is to improve pedestrian safety through the construction of 550 metres of sidewalks, and to alleviate congestion by construction of medians and widening of the intersection of Golding Avenue and Old Hope Road, facilitating a left turning lane. Traffic flow is expected to improve and delays reduced.

The project also involves the construction of drop kerbs where sidewalk locations impede parking and the construction of a traffic island at the intersection of Golding Avenue and Old Hope Road. The latter is to facilitate vehicles U-turning from Papine Circle to travel along Gordon Town Road, and function as a storage bay for pedestrians, enabling them to cross the roadway in stages.

This phase of the improvement project complements Phase One , when traffic signals were installed at the intersection of Old Hope Road, Golding Avenue, Papine Circle and Chandos Place. Just under Nine Million dollars were spent to complete the first phase of the project.



Construction of 550 metres of sidewalk in progress along Gordon Town Road, St. Andrew



Sidewalk construction in progress along Gordon Town Road, St. Andrew

National Works Agency and Tourism Enhancement Fund Join Forces to Improve road in Portland

The northeastern parish of Portland is known worldwide for its eco-tourism products. In recent times, the National Works Agency (NWA) has joined forces with the Tourism Enhancement Fund (TEF) to improve two roadways, in the parish, that are deemed important to two of the more prominent eco-tourism products. These are Rafting on the Rio Grande and the Blue Mountain Bicycle Tour. The roadways are the stretch from Wakefield to Hardwar Gap in Western Portland and that from Fellowship to Berrydale in Eastern Portland.

FELLOWSHIP TO BERRYDALE

The Fellowship to Berrydale roadway is located in the well-known Rio Grande Valley which is home to the eastern Maroons and also home to the popular tourist attraction, Rio Grande Tours, also known as Rafting on the Rio Grande. Rio Grande is, in fact, touted as being the birthplace of river rafting in Jamaica. The activity started many decades ago when rafts were just a medium of transportation for banana farmers wanting to transport their produce across the river to the Port Antonio harbour for export (the rapids prevented the use of boats which were more susceptible to capsizing). The activity was popularised as an attraction when international movie star Errol Flynn, who lived in Portland, used rafting races, along the Rio Grande, as a way to entertain his guests.

The activity continued and eventually evolved into one of the attractions that Portland is most known for. The Fellowship to Berrydale road is the access to this very popular activity as the Rio Grande Tour starts at Berrydale and continues four (4) kilometres downriver to Rafters Rest in St. Margaret's Bay.

As far back as January 2010, residents of Berrydale have publicly complained that the roadway was being threatened by sand mining along with natural disasters and needed immediate attention. They were also concerned about how the roadway, or lack thereof, would affect rafting activities, which provided a source of income for many persons in the community. Farmers, too, feared that if the roadway should be compromised then not only the transportation of their produce but also their entire livelihood would be at stake. Resources, however, were sparse and an immediate remedy to their concern was not forthcoming.

In August 2013, the residents again protested, this time taking their frustrations to the streets.

By early November 2013, work had begun in earnest which saw the NWA and the TEF teaming up to save the roadway and the important economic possibilities it enabled. Under the project, the road was rehabilitated, in sections, to include the reshaping of some areas, the construction of drains and kerb and channels, and the paving of the roadway with



Tourists travel, in varying weather conditions, along the Wakefield to Hardwar Gap roadway while participating in the Blue Mountain Bicycle Tour (photos taken from the Blue Mountain Tours Ltd. website www.bmtoursja.com)

Double Surface Dress (DSD), a.k.a Chip and Spray. The project, which is in its final stages, is being funded by the TEF at a cost of \$27,893,852.11, while the work is being undertaken by NWA's Force Account teams.

WAKEFIELD TO HARDWAR GAP

The Wakefield to Hardwar Gap roadway is located in the picturesque Buff Bay Valley in Western Portland. It is en route to the Blue Mountains and is the roadway along which the Blue Mountain Bicycle Tour is routed. Travellers along this thoroughfare are treated to scenic views of beautiful waterfalls cascading through the mountains, tropical plants and birds, all complemented by the calming acoustics of the river.

The roadway also leads to numerous communities which include Spring Hill, Cascade, Padhouse, Green Ridge and Section. Over the past five (5) years, much work has been done in this area as due to its topography and recurrent rainfall, the roadway has been affected by numerous landslides. The most memorable project, in recent times, was a major Random Rubble (RR) Wall Programme which was initiated in 2009 and completed via the Jamaica Development Infrastructure Programme (JDIP).

The road surface had also suffered some disrepair and has been remedied through the partnership of of the NWA and the TEF who teamed up to restore the corridor. Under the project, which began on November 4, 2013, and lasted for four weeks, the Wakefield to Hardwar Gap roadway was cleared of bush and overhang and repaired with hotmix patching. The project which cost \$4,991,552.13 was funded by the TEF and done by NWA's Force Account team.



A section of the roadway which was cleared of bush



Sheet patching being done along the Wakefield to Hardwar Gap control section as part of the Blue Mountain Bicycle Track Project



FINALLY! DALINTOBER PAROCHIAL ROAD REHABILITATED

State Minister for Works in the Ministry of Transport Works and Housing, Richard Azan (Center) about to cut the ribbon to officially declare the Dalintober parochial road opened.

The road was rehabilitated under the Jamaica Development Infrastructure Programme (JDIP) at a cost of \$81-million. Sharing in the moment are: (from left) NWA's CEO, E.G. Hunter; Councillor of the Brompton Division in the St. Elizabeth Parish Council Sandra White; Member of Parliament for South-West St. Elizabeth, Hugh Buchanan; NWA's Regional Manager for the South, Sadiq Mahabeer; NWA's Communication Manager, Stephen Shaw and NWA's Parish Manager for St. Elizabeth, Norris Richards.

RECONNECTED AFTER YEARS OF BEING IMPASSABLE



A view of the Moreland Hill Roadway before and after works to restore the corridor. The Mooreland Hill roadway was closed in 2010, following the passage of Tropical Storm Nicole which severely eroded the roadway resulting in its closure. The roadway was reopened in October 2013, following the execution of a \$33 million dollar contract to restore access to the corridor.

Smoother Travel - Dam Head road rehabilitated



Workmen completing work on the section of the road from Dam Head to Old Harbour Road Round-a-bout, in St. Catherine. The road was recently rehabilitated in section as part of the NWA efforts at reducing travel time along the throughfare.

NWA Hanover Moves Office....

The NWA Relocates its Parish Office to new Haughton Court Location

Finally! This single word best described the feeling of the Hanover staffers, on October 23, 2013, when they completed the process of moving from their Fort Charlotte Location in Lucea to a new and much improved office space, located mere minutes away, in Haughton Court, Hanover.

This move was long in coming, and the staff as well as customers who used the original location had become frustrated with it's deteriorating conditions. It had become customary for chunks of the concrete ceiling to fall, creating an uncomfortable working environment for staff. This created respiratory challenges for staffers and also proved to be quite unsightly.

In 2010, the NWA recognizing the need for a new and safer working environment, broke ground to construct a new space. Numerous setbacks were encountered along the way, which led to the delay in the completion of the project. However, in 2013 the NWA was able to regroup and overcome the challenges which had halted the progress of this project. By October 2013 the building was substantially completed, allowing the staff to relocate.

The new space consists of, among other things, three office spaces to be used by the Parish Manager and his assistants, a lobby area, a large conference room and kitchenette. Currently the NWA is in the final stages of completing the landscaping of the property.

The project was funded through the Institutional Strengthening Component of the Jamaica Development Infrastructure Programme (JDIP).

RELOCATION IN THE PIPELINE FOR ST. JAMES PARISH OFFICE

In the meantime the NWA is now making preparations to move the St. James Parish Office from its location in Flankers St. James to the nearby property which houses the NWA Western Regional Office.

The current location has been deemed unsafe for staffers due to pest infestation as well as a general deterioration of the structure which now serves as the Parish Office. As such the NWA, in December 2013, commenced the rehabilitation of a building located on the grounds of the West Regional Office, also in Flanker. This project which is valued at approximately \$3 million is now in an advanced stage of completion.



A view of the newly constructed Parish Office in Haughton Court, Hanover.



Conference Room - Hanover Parish Office



A view of the newly renovated office space which now houses the St. James Parish Office in Flankers, St. James.

Franklyn Thames ... THE OIL IN THE NWA'S TRANSPORT SYSTEM ENGINE

He went from Working at the PWD Work Shop in Richmond to Fleet Supervisor at the National Works Agency. For Fleet Supervisor, the affable, well-spoken Franklyn Thames, there is always something to do. It is probably safe to say that if his face were placed on the Notice Board next to that of the CEO or the Minister of State, a passerby may ask the question "who is that person?" Colleagues who know him would argue that the Agency needs more hard working men like Franklyn Thames.

In 1991 he was just a youngster when he came to work at the Public Works Department (PWD) Work Shop in Richmond, St. Mary, after his graduation from Montego Bay Community College in Montego Bay, St. James. Twenty two years later Franklyn Thames is the man at the centre of the Asset Management operations in Kingston. What did Franklyn do to achieve this feat and level of success?

Contrary to what many colleagues may think he doesn't like interviews and really avoids talking about himself or what he does. He has been avoiding this interview for quite some time and sitting him down for a one-on-one was a task. He is organized, articulate, frank, enthusiastic and energetic. Despite his no-nonsense approach to work, he appears to be a gentle, soft-spoken yet assertive soul. He is extremely focused and it is obvious that he takes a great deal of pride in what he does and enjoys the satisfaction of achieving the goals he sets himself.

'I really don't like the limelight. I much prefer to remain in the background and get things done. My life is centred around my work'. That sums up his philosophy of life. Well, kind of...

THE EARLY DAYS IN HIGHGATE

Born on February 19, 1968 he was an only child for his parents (both deceased). His early recollection is of life was in Highgate, St. Mary, where he enjoyed a happy childhood. "It was highly structured and organized". Among his childhood pastimes was fishing. He was barred from bird shooting with a sling-shot as this could cause damage to another child; however, he was allowed to go bird shooting with adults during the season which was between August and September each year. He also enjoyed the abundance of a variety of fruits that were available when he went exploring with his young friends in the St. Mary countryside.

Franklyn recalls that his parents were very protective of him. Occasionally permission was given to visit a nearby stream, but this was never really encouraged. He had to have their

consent to visit friends in the community or proceed on frequent excursions, which were the delight of every country boy his age. "So I was given things for my own comfort. When I learned to ride a bicycle, I remember falling off and spraining the middle index finger on my right hand which remains slightly twisted to this day. My mother enquired what had happened and I told her I had a

minor accident and sprained the finger. Well to make a long story short one of my mother's friends who knew about the accident told her what had happened and I almost got a thrashing for not speaking the truth".

The young Franklyn Thames attended the Hampstead All Age School where he came under the influence and guidance of the late Mrs. Mary Victoria Bailey-Walters. "She had a great influence on my life. She was a rounded teacher who spoke well, taught piano and who insisted that each student should have a good command of the English language. She was also connected to my parents and "she pushed me". I don't play dominoes because of her, I can match, but I can't play".

Mrs. Bailey-Walters got young Thames involved in the Spelling Bee Competition and during the year that he participated he was among the top three spellers in St. Mary. "She prepared me for the Common Entrance, and because of her I became a 4H Clubbiter. She prepared me for life. She was a friend of the family and we attended the same Baptist circuit of churches in Hampstead and Port Maria on alternate Sundays".

THE HIGH SCHOOL YEARS

He passed the Common Entrance and began attending St. Mary High School in 1980. The late Carlton Cargill was the Principal. It was at St. Mary's High that he met Opposition Senator, Robert 'Bobby' Montague who became Deputy Head Boy and Gary Allen (now Managing Director at RJR Communications Group of Companies) who was Head Boy. Robert Francis (Parish Manager - NWA) was also his school mate, they were in the same stream but not the same form.

Continued on next page



According to Franklyn all three still remain friends. He also recalls that David Knight was at St. Mary during that time but, "I was his senior".

At High School Franklyn was an average student. He was quiet and got along well with all his teachers. Franklyn did not have many friends, according to him, maybe two or three. One such was Donovan Thomas who was his best friend in school and now resides in England. Another is Andrew Timberlake who now resides in Clarendon and operates a farm. "Somewhat of a family tradition, his parents operated a farm in Guys Hill, St. Mary when we were youngsters"
Academic Pursuits

In High School Franklyn developed a love for the sciences and focused on science subjects. "I wanted to be a Mechanical Engineer or a Doctor which was due to childhood influences". After leaving High School he attended Montego Bay Community College where he studied pre-engineering and then returned to St. Mary and began working at the Public Works Department Work Shop in Richmond. His Supervisor, Mr. Leaford Mc Kenzie saw the young man's potential and encouraged him to practice typing, book keeping skills and office procedures. This advice would, in the future, serve young Thames well.

He spent one and a half years at Richmond, from 1991 to 1993 and was transferred to Kingston as a Data Centre/ Payroll Supervisor and was located at Hagley Park Road. This transfer and promotion was due mainly to the quality of his work. This lasted for a few years until payroll was transferred totally to the Corporate Office. He was then placed in mainstream Accounts and the responsibility for payroll was still attached to him. During this period he did a short stint as a Cashier at the Department of Electrical and Mechanical Services (DEMS).

While carrying out these functions Franklyn attended the Management Institute for National Development (MIND) where he pursued Government Accounting up to module five and continued in accounting.

In 1996/97 he went back to the University of Technology and resumed the engineering courses he began at the Montego Bay Community College. He started out in Mechanical Engineering, and then switched to Electrical and finally Computer Technology. Franklyn did not complete the degree course in Computer Technology. The stress of daily travel between St. Mary and Kingston, job related issues and not being accustomed to not succeeding at anything, took its toll. He was devastated and so the year prior to his final he gave up his studies in Computer Technology.

This was in 1998/1999 and he continued working with the PWD. During the two years he was back and forth between the Accounts Department and the Mechanical Unit Branch where he provided assistance.

THE NWA YEARS

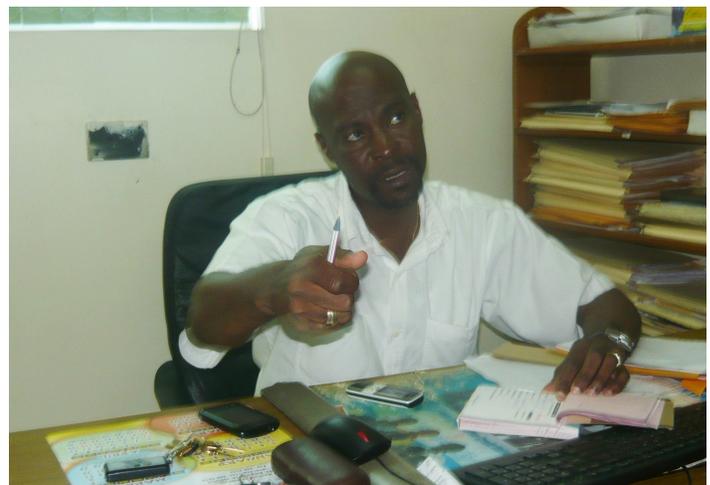
Franklyn Thames joined the National Works Agency in 2001 as a Fleet Assistant and in 2004 he was reassigned as Fleet Supervisor. According to Franklyn, "This entails working with a smaller group of persons. We have brought over many of the PWD principles; however there has been a paradigm shift. The PWD was government oriented, the NWA is government/private sector oriented. Hireage of equipment for example, equipment repairs, management of fleet, and distribution of fleet are similar principles to that of the PWD or an adoption of many PWD principles. The difference is that, far less resources are available to manage and achieve the same goals plus what the Agency has as its own agenda.

FAMILY LIFE

Apart from work his other focus is his daughters, Jhanelle 13 and Brianna 9. The elder is a second form student at Ardenne High School. With some amount of pride and emotion he says rather casually, she is more like me, and I can see myself in her. The younger attends Gordon Preparatory in St. Andrew.

He spends a lot quality time at home just kicking back, watching movies or having fun with the kids. Occasionally he goes to the beach which he enjoys.

Sitting in a chair in one of the offices at Hagley Park Road, Franklyn smiles, it is the smile of a man who knows he will continue to make critical decisions about using limited resources in the best interest of the Agency.



An animated Franklyn Thames at his desk

Contributing to National Development

Highlights of Projects Completed by the NWA in 2013

The National Works Agency's continuous efforts to fulfil its mandate of providing a safe, reliable and quality main road network, have, over the past two years, 2012 and 2013, shown notable progress.

The manifestation of this progress included the construction of 14 new bridges across the island, over this 2-year period. These structures included the Rio Grande Bridge in Portland; the Westmoreland Bridge, in St. Mary; and the Queensborough, Cassia Park and Kintyre Bridges, in St Andrew. The improved infrastructure now offers a relief of untenable inconveniences for thousands of residents, pedestrians and motorists across these parishes, significantly improving their safety.

In the area of road condition improvement, the past two years have seen over 250 road sections repaired under the Jamaica Development Infrastructure Programme (JDIP), across the length and breadth of the island. A total of 25 Retaining Walls were also constructed Island-wide. In addition, major road improvement works were undertaken along the Fern Gully, in St. Ann; and the Ferris to Belmont roadway in Westmoreland.

Other major projects included: the rehabilitation and protection of the Palisades Peninsula, in St Andrew, as well as significant sea defence and drainage/gully improvement works done during this period. Sea defence and drainage works included construction of the Black River Seawall, in St. Elizabeth; and the repairs of several critical sections of the Sandy Gully, in St Andrew, as well as within the Capital Heights Gully, in St James. These, structures now provide much increased protection to the life and property of persons living and/or traversing these vicinities.

The following table provides a detailed highlight of the Agency's achievements for the years 2012 and 2013.

BRIDGES		
Location/Parish	Project Duration; Cost	Remarks
1. Kintyre Bridge, St Andrew	Commenced: March 2013 Completed: July 2013 Officially Opened: December 4, 2013 Project Cost: J\$100M	Communities now protected from the impacts of the Hope River, during adverse weather conditions.
2. Westmoreland Bridge, St Mary	Completed 2013 Officially Opened: August 27, 2013 Project Cost: US\$13.4M	One of the longest bridges in the Island – Spans 180 metres. Also done as part of the project, was 260 metres of approach roads.
3. Eden River Bridge, St Mary & 4. Fontabelle Bridge, St Mary	Completed: March 2013 Completed: March 2013 Both Officially Opened: May 31, 2013 Combined Project Cost: J\$32M	More reliable infrastructure to enable easier and safer travel during adverse weather conditions.
5. Stony Bridge, Smithfield, Westmoreland	Completed: May 2013 Project Cost: J\$19M	Main access to Savanna-la-mar more reliable.
6. Cassia Park Bridge, St. Andrew	Commenced: August 2012 Completed: December 2013 Project Cost: J\$183.7M	Eliminated the old Ford. Travel now safer for commuters.
7. Queensborough Bridge, St Andrew	Commenced: May 2012 Completed: December 2013 Project Cost: J\$154.3M	Eliminated the old Ford. Travel now safer for commuters.
8. Dover Castle Bridge, St Catherine	Completed: 2013 Project Cost: J\$23.37M	Safer travel, even during adverse weather conditions.
9. The Rio Grande Bridge, Portland	Commenced: March 2013 Completed: July 2013 Official Opened: December 2013 Project Cost: US\$28M	Replaced bridge destroyed during previous hurricane. Main gateway to Port Antonio.
10. Dawkins Pen Bridge, Clarendon 11. Crooked River Bridge, Clarendon 12. Craigmill Bridge, Portland 13. Robins Bay Bridge, St. Mary 14. Southwood Bridge, Clarendon	Completed: 2013 Project Cost: US\$83M Project Cost: US\$40.2M Project Cost: US\$28M Project Cost: US\$34M Project Cost: US\$25M	More reliable infrastructure to enable easier and safer travel during adverse weather conditions.
ROADS		
The Fern Gully, St Ann	Commenced: March 2013 Completed: November 2013 Project Cost: J\$680M	- 1.4 km of rigid Concrete Road constructed; - U-drains constructed along 1.6 km of the roadway from Fern Gully to Milford Road (rehabilitated)
Bay Farm Road Improvement, St Andrew	Commenced: 2012 Completed: 2013 Project Cost: J\$177.5M	Major Rehabilitation/Drainage Improvement undertaken.
Ferris – Belmont, Westmoreland	Commenced: 2013 Completed: 2013 Project Cost: J\$400M	Major Rehabilitation/Drainage Improvement undertaken.
• Red Hills – Santa Maria, St Andrew • Bog Walk – Sligoville, St Catherine	Commenced: 2013 Project Cost: J\$212M Completed: 2013 Project Cost: J\$324M	Major rehabilitative work done on this corridor to provide alternative route to the Bog Walk Gorge.
Brunswick Avenue – Damhead, St Catherine	Commenced: 2011 Completed: 2013 Project Cost: US\$33M	2.5 kilometres of roadway rehabilitated in order to accord more convenient travel to the North Coast.

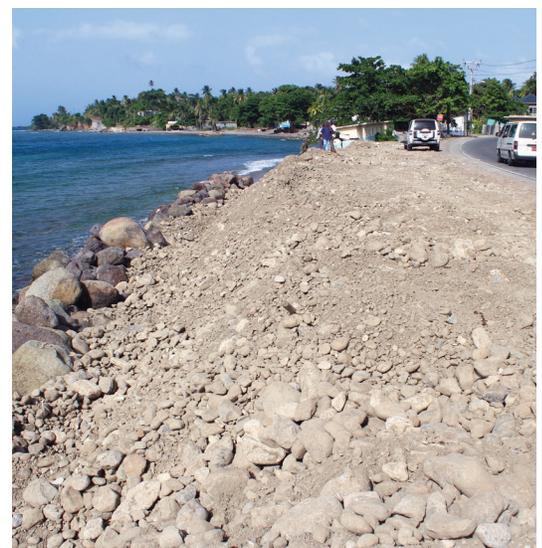
FLOOD MITIGATION - SEA DEFENCE		
Location/Parish	Project Duration; Cost	Remarks
The Black River Seawall, St Elizabeth	Commenced: July 2013 Completed: November 2013 Project Cost: J\$31M	70 metres of Random Rubble wall; guard rails; sidewalks. Road way now secure for pedestrians and commuters.
The Palisades Peninsula, St Andrew	Commenced: 2012 Completed: 2013 Project Cost: US\$65M	2.65 kilometres of Rock Revetment done along the shoreline of the Caribbean Sea side; and a further 3.6 kilometres along the Harbour-side. 4.38 kilometres of the roadway was widened by a minimum of 8 metres, to a maximum of 12 metres in some sections, from the Harbour View Round-About to the Airport Round-About. Drainage facilities were also greatly improved.
Roselle Revetment, St Thomas	Commenced: 2013 Completed: 2013 Project Cost: J\$200M	Rock revetment works now affording protection on the St Thomas main road.
Blueberry Hill, Portland Orange Bay, Portland Annotto Bay, St. Mary	Commenced: 2013 Completed: 2013 Project Cost: J\$11M	Providing Protection to roadways and properties.
FLOOD MITIGATION - GULLIES		
Sandy Gully, and Tributaries St Andrew	Commenced: 2012 Completed: October 2013 Project Cost: J\$3.48 Billion	Major repairs done on several critical sections of the Sandy Gully, thereby extending the life of the infrastructure and protecting life and property.
North Gully (Capital Heights) Green Pond, St James	Commenced: March 2013 Completed: October 2013 Project Cost: J\$27M	Widening of existing drain along 60 metres of the most critical sections in order to increase capacity of channel.
FLOOD MITIGATION- RIVER TRAINING WORKS		
Otram, St. Mary	Commenced: 2013 Completed: 2013 Project Cost: J\$260M	River Training Works - facilitating flood control, thereby protecting life and property as well as roads and road infrastructure.
Rio Cobre: • Port Henderson Drive; • Lasco (St. Catherine)	Commenced: 2013 Completed: 2013 Combined Project Cost: Project Cost: J\$200M	
Nightingale Grove, St Catherine	Commenced: 2013 Completed: 2013 Project Cost: J\$20M	
• Mount Oakley, St Andrew	Commenced: 2013 Completed: 2013 Project Cost: J\$28M	
Yallahs, St. Thomas	Commenced: 2013 Completed: 2013 Project Cost: J\$20M	Protective works completed to Piers of the Yallahs Bridge.
TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT		
Downtown Kingston Parade Harbour Street Port Royal Street	Commenced: 2013 Completed: 2013 Project Cost: J\$30M	Intersection now controlled by improved timing, through more effective technology, leading to greater benefits to road users and the economy.
In St Andrew (Corporate Area):- • Papine (Intersection of Old Hope Road and Golding Avenue) • Wellington Drive/Mona Road	Commenced: 2013 Completed: 2013 Project Cost: J\$8.7M Project Cost: J\$6.46M	New signalizations designed to improve traffic flows, reduce congestion and enhance vehicular and pedestrian safety.
• Old Hope Road/Stand Pipe	Commenced: 2013 Completed: 2013 Project Cost: J\$5.4M	
• Lady Musgrave/Seaview Avenue	Commenced: 2013 Completed: 2013 Project Cost: J\$6.3M	



River Training at Mount Oakley (Caneside River), Portland



Construction of Retaining Wall at Red Hills Road, St Andrew



Orange Bay, Portland - Sea Defence

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RETAINING WALLS		
Location/Parish	Project Duration; Cost	Remarks
Nedhut Retaining Wall, St Andrew	Commenced: 2013 Completed: 2013 Project Cost: J\$14.8M	Construction of Retaining Walls - securing roadways and protecting against adverse weather effects.
Mount Ogle and Lawrence Tavern St Andrew	Commenced: 2013 Completed: 2013 Project Cost: J\$43M	
Castleton, St Mary	Commenced: 2013 Completed: 2013 Project Cost: J\$28M	
Allman Hill, (Rock Hall to Parks Road, St. Andrew)	Commenced: 2013 Completed: 2013 Project Cost: J\$30M	
Oberlin, St Andrew	Commenced: 2012 Completed: 2013 Project Cost: J\$33M	
Buff Bay Valley, (Hollywell, Cascade, Regale)	Commenced: 2012 Completed: 2013 Project Cost: J\$42M	



Breakaway at Red Hills Road, St Andrew

What we are today is result of our own past actions;
 Whatever we wish to be in future depends on our present actions;
 Decide how you have to act now.

We are responsible for what we are, whatever we wish ourselves to be.
 We have the power to make ourselves.



On the roads with Minister Luther Buchanan and NWA CEO



Minister Buchanan being joined by Member of Parliament for South-East St. Elizabeth, Hugh Buchanan as they look at the recently completed project to reconstruct the Black River Sea Wall.



Minister Buchanan on tour with Member of Parliament for Central Westmoreland, Hon. Roger Clarke. NWA officers (from left), Howard Ramsey, Damion Towsend, David Clarke and Varden Downer were also present.



Minister Buchanan making a point to Regional Manager for the Western Region, Damion Towsend regarding this massive landslide that left the Stettinto Highgate Hall main road impassable in the Community of Wire Fence in Trelawny.



Minister Buchanan looks at another breakaway in South-Trelawny. This one along the Albert Town to Ulster Spring main road.



Dr. Morais Guy (left) and Minister Buchanan looking at a breakaway in Highgate, St. Mary. To his left is NWA officer, Edgar Llewelyn.



Dr. Guy pointing to the defective McGarth Bridge which is to be replaced soon.

Note: Minister Buchanan was on assignment as Minister of State for Works for just over a month between October and November 2013.



Mexican Fisherman Meets Harvard MBA

What Really Matters in Life?

A vacationing American businessman standing on the pier of a quaint coastal fishing village in southern Mexico watched as a small boat with just one young Mexican fisherman pulled into the dock. Inside the small boat were several large yellowfin tuna. Enjoying the warmth of the early afternoon sun, the American complimented the Mexican on the quality of his fish.

"How long did it take you to catch them?" the American casually asked.

"Oh, a few hours," the Mexican fisherman replied.

"Why don't you stay out longer and catch more fish?" the American businessman then asked.

The Mexican warmly replied, "With this I have more than enough to support my family's needs."

The businessman then became serious, "But what do you do with the rest of your time?"

Responding with a smile, the Mexican fisherman answered, "I sleep late, play with my children, watch ballgames, and take siesta with my wife. Sometimes in the evenings I take a stroll into the village to see my friends, play the guitar, sing a few songs..."

The American businessman impatiently interrupted, "Look, I have an MBA from Harvard, and I can help you to be more profitable. You can start by fishing several hours longer every day. You can then sell the extra fish you catch. With the extra money, you can buy a bigger boat. With the additional income that larger boat will bring, before long you can buy a second boat, then a third one, and so on, until you have an entire fleet of fishing boats."

Proud of his own sharp thinking, he excitedly elaborated a grand scheme which could bring even bigger profits, "Then, instead of selling your catch to a middleman you'll be able to sell your fish directly to the processor, or even open your own cannery. Eventually, you could control the product, processing and distribution. You could leave this tiny coastal village and move to Mexico City, or possibly even Los Angeles or New York City, where you could even further expand your enterprise."

Having never thought of such things, the Mexican fisherman asked, "But how long will all this take?"

After a rapid mental calculation, the Harvard MBA pronounced, "Probably about 15-20 years, maybe less if you work really hard."

"And then what, señor?" asked the fisherman.

"Why, that's the best part!" answered the businessman with a laugh. "When the time is right, you would sell your company stock to the public and become very rich. You would make millions."

"Millions? Really? What would I do with it all?" asked the young fisherman in disbelief.

The businessman boasted, "Then you could happily retire with all the money you've made. You could move to a quaint coastal fishing village where you could sleep late, play with your grandchildren, watch ballgames, and take siesta with your wife. You could stroll to the village in the evenings where you could play the guitar and sing with your friends all you want."

The moral of the story is: Know what really matters in life, and you may find that it is already much closer than you think.

<http://www.weboflove.org/051230whatmattersinlife>