



# MAINSHEET



## BLACKFLY LODGE OPEN FOR BUSINESS!

by JUNE RUSSELL

BLACKFLY BUSINESS MANAGER

After three years of planning and preparation, Blackfly Bonefish Lodge has cut the ribbon on its new Schooner Bay headquarters. The building itself is breathtaking, a grand manor house with wraparound porches prominently located on the harbour-front in the center of town. The design team of AL Designs and La Guardia Designs have come together to create an environment full of old-world charm and subtle sophistication. Antique furniture combining tropical hardwoods and tasteful fabrics mingles with crisp, airy paint schemes and original artwork for a feel that is both timeless and authentic.

The first floor features a chef-inspired, open kitchen and gracious dining room on one side and a living room bar

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## LEGENDS OF GOOMBAY WEEKEND A SWINGING SUCCESS

by JAMES MALCOLM

DESTINATION SCHOONER BAY

On Saturday, January 26, Schooner Bay hosted several living legends of Bahamian entertainment in a village concert showcasing goombay music, a distinctly Bahamian style of calypso. As defined by musicologist, Timothy Rommen, in *Funky Nassau*, his comprehensive study of traditional Bahamian music, "[T]he term goombay tended to designate the drumming as well as the whole range

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## MEDICAL CLINIC TO OPEN IN SCHOONER BAY

by GLEN KELLY

TOWN MANAGER

We are pleased to announce the opening of the medical clinic at Schooner Bay, an exciting new facility that will create access to quality health care services for the residents of Schooner Bay and South Abaco. The clinic is located in the Commons at the entrance to Schooner Bay and will be staffed full-time by a registered nurse. Initial plans call for a doctor to hold specialty sessional clinics at the facility one day a week, though the schedule is designed to be easily adjusted to increase doctor occupancy as patient demand grows. For the days when a doctor is not physically present in the

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## COMMUNITY

## THE VILLAGE VOICE

by GLEN KELLY  
TOWN MANAGER

Greetings from the entire Schooner Bay Team. I am pleased to report that thus far 2013 has seen an increase in the pace of development on all fronts at Schooner Bay! There is no shortcut to creating an enduring place with true sustainability. It takes hard work, perseverance and single-minded devotion to the ultimate goal.

These attributes are evident in each of the many operations underway in the village of Schooner Bay. **Blackfly Bonefish Lodge** in particular has begun to taste the fruits of its labours after three years of planning and hard work. And my, what fruits their efforts have borne! The final product has exceeded everyone's expectations and Clint informs me they are now fully booked through the spring. With this incredible facility now open for business and a brand new fleet of custom-designed skiffs ready for action, the best-kept fishing secret in The Bahamas is on its way out of the bag!

Another exciting development to emerge from many months of discussion and planning is the advent of the **Schooner Bay Community Medical Clinic**. Operated by Doctor Larry Carroll, Chief Radiologist at Doctor's Hospital in Nassau, this new facility will bring state-of-the-art health care services to Schooner Bay and South Abaco. The community should benefit immensely from services including record-keeping, pharmaceuticals prescriptions and telemedicine consultations with top health care professionals.

Another new civic asset coming to fruition after intensive planning and preparation is the **Schooner Bay Institute for the Arts & Sciences**. This not-for-profit organization will help promote and protect the cultural and environmental assets of Schooner Bay and the surrounding community by hosting visiting students and scholars and coordinating seminars, outreach programs and other civic events. With the Institute's fully-equipped field station completed at the entrance to Schooner Bay, we have been reaching out to many new faces in the scientific and arts community and rekindling existing relationships for the benefit of all.

Just across the street from the Schooner Bay Institute is **Lightbourn Farm**, which has also been a hive of activity in the



*Daybreak at Schooner Bay*

months since Jennifer and Mike Lightbourn came to Schooner Bay. The build out of their farm is nearly complete and includes a hydroponic growing facility and plant nursery in addition to their traditional organic crop enterprises. Lightbourn Farms recently hosted its first farmer's market in combination with the Abaco Horticultural Society Meeting at Schooner Bay. Over 60 folks from around Abaco turned out to learn about their committed approach to sustainable farming and bring home some fresh veggies! The local produce has also been a big hit within the village, finding its way into most everything coming out the kitchens of Blackfly Lodge and the **Cabana Beach Club Bar & Grill**.

Speaking of the Cabana Beach Club, this seaside bungalow restaurant is now open to the public regularly for dinner on Fridays through Sundays, offering a range of delicious local cuisine from Abaco's top culinary talent. (Please call Trio for reservations: 475-8331 or 426-5440). To this end, fishing activity in the area has been very healthy, ensuring Schooner Bay's restaurants the top pick of fresh seafood. Tuna, Mahi Mahi and deep water Snapper are all among the local species turning up in innovative dishes around Schooner Bay.

The excellent fishing has corresponded with a marked increase in boat traffic in Schooner Bay Harbour. Indeed, we have welcomed a range of sport-fishing and cruising vessels throughout the winter season. The fishermen like our proximity to world-class sport-fishing grounds, while the sailors and cruisers are delighted to have an interesting and secure port along a previously inaccessible stretch of pristine Bahamian coastline. As my role as

CLICK for more on **PAGE 3**

## THE VILLAGE VOICE

Continued from **PAGE 2**

Town Manager continues to grow, long-time Schooner Bay team-member Albert Russell has begun to assume more responsibilities within the Harbour Master's position. Albert is a pleasure to work with and a very valuable asset to our burgeoning marine operations.

Another exciting and important harbour development is the progress of our fueling operation, which should be up and running by the time this issue of *The Mainsheet* goes to press! As

Boaters and homeowners alike will welcome the imminent opening of the Schooner Bay **Harbour General Store**. Offering essential food and household items along with ice, bait and tackle, beach toys and other sundries, the Harbour General store is sure to make provisioning an easy and pleasant experience. Whatever they don't have in stock, Owner/Manager Tracy Kelly will be sure to get for you and the store will also serve as an exchange point for her full-service provisioning business, **T's Island Delivery**. The Harbour General Store will also be ground zero for those wishing to rent golf

experience every time. Mark will also be bringing a small fleet of Jeep Wrangler 4x4s to Schooner Bay along with beach cruising bicycles, which will be available for rental to homeowners or visitors wanting independent transportation for errands and expeditions around Abaco.

Meanwhile, looking after your homes just became considerably less work. With **Destination Schooner Bay (DSB)**, James Malcolm and his highly competent team have quickly addressed the challenges of owning a holiday home by the beach. They have also developed creative and effective ways

sophisticated and dynamic infrastructure grids in the Caribbean basin. In recent weeks we've also flipped the switch on what we believe is the most robust electrical sub-station in The Bahamas, permanently powering all homes and businesses in Schooner Bay. Finally, Schooner Bay's prolific and ongoing landscaping program continues to mature, populating the village with native species sourced on-site and propagated at our nursery.

And this is merely the tip of the iceberg. As the years of planning and decades of study that have gone into Schooner



in all things at Schooner Bay, our approach to fueling facilities involved challenging our engineers and fuel suppliers to develop a safe and environmentally-responsible system to meet our specific needs. The result is unlike any other marine fueling system we are aware of. In order to respect the aesthetics of our harbour-front community, we have used aircraft industry technology to develop a mobile fueling system that can be safely stored away from the harbour's edge and out of sight when not in use.

carts from Schooner Bay's brand new fleet of late model Club Cars. We trust this new store and its services will save many trips to Marsh Harbour and help maximize the full enjoyment and convenience of our growing number of residents and visitors.

For those requiring "trans" for journeys further afield, **Mark Swain**, our new ground transportation partner from Marsh Harbour, can quickly and cheerfully usher you from town to the village in less than 25 minutes. With agreed upon rates, you can be assured of a fair and agreeable

of promoting cottage rentals while homeowners are away, taking advantage of historically strong rental rates in The Abacos to create valuable revenue streams that help offset ownership expenses. More information can be found on DSB's new website at [www.dsbbahamas.com](http://www.dsbbahamas.com).

Taken together, these various initiatives are snowballing into an increasingly vibrant and active civic life at Schooner Bay. And these are simply the most visible signs of progress. Buried under ground is one of the most

Bay's development come to fruition and one initiative enhances and energizes the next, we expect the wheels of progress in Schooner Bay and South Abaco to spin ever faster. Please continue to follow these exciting developments through the pages of *The Schooner Bay Mainsheet*, and hopefully, by coming to see us in Abaco. There's never been a better time to visit!



## LDC ANNOUNCES REGULARLY SCHEDULED FLIGHTS TO SOUTH ABACO

by JAMES MALCOLM  
DESTINATION SCHOONER BAY

Effective April 12th, Lindroth Development Company (LDC) will begin offering weekend flights from Nassau to South Abaco on its Britten-Norman Islander aircraft. The plane will operate the following regularly scheduled flights between Nassau's Odyssey Aviation FBO and the airstrip in Sandy Point:

### Friday Flight:

NAS 9am > SP 9:30am  
SP 5pm > NAS 5:30pm

### Monday Flight:

NAS 8am > SP 8:30am  
SP 9am > NAS 9:30am

The one-way fare for this flight is \$135/pp and includes ground transportation to and from Schooner Bay. A book of six one-way vouchers can be purchased for \$720, a discount of more than 10% off the regular fare. The plane can accommodate up to six passengers, and a minimum of four passengers are required for the flight to operate. The cost of these flights is comparable to commercial alternatives, but travelers save time flying into Sandy Point as opposed to Marsh Harbour and are spared the hassle of ticketing, security checks and boarding queues. Just show up ten minutes ahead of time and you'll shortly be on your way!

For further information, please call James Malcolm at 376-9858 or email [james.malcolm@schoonerbaybahamas.com](mailto:james.malcolm@schoonerbaybahamas.com).

## SCHOONER BAY FEATURED ON COVER OF COASTAL LIVING



Schooner Bay was again featured on the cover of *Coastal Living*, the popular

lifestyle and travel magazine focused on seaside design, decorating, entertaining and architecture. The porch of the yellow-walled Casa Del Sol appears on the March 2013 cover linked to an article titled, "Sunny Color!" that encourages property owners to "transform your home with fun patterns and new hues." Previously, the magazine's November 2011 cover featured an interior shot of the Schooner Bay

Beach Cabana and an in-depth profile of Artist-in-Residence Antonius Roberts and his Schooner Bay cottage, Post House. With an annual circulation of over 6,000,000, *Coastal Living* brings the best of coastal styles to a wide audience, and we feel honored to have graced its cover for the second time in as many years.

## SCHOONER BAY UNVEILS NEW WEBSITE

by CARTER REDD  
LINDROTH DEVELOPMENT  
COMPANY

We are pleased to announce the imminent re-launching of Schooner Bay's new and improved website: [www.schoonerbaybahamas.com](http://www.schoonerbaybahamas.com). While the URL remains the same, the look, feel and content will be enhanced and the functionality of the page optimized to facilitate easier navigation. The site in its current form functions as a comprehensive repository for all things Schooner Bay, with detailed site plans, development principles, architectural sketches, academic studies,

guidelines, handbooks, white papers and local resource guides among other features. All of this information will still be available to interested parties as necessary or requested. However, in order to streamline and simplify the user experience, some of this content will be removed from the website.

The new site will feature more photographs, renderings and images that highlight the reality of what Schooner Bay is becoming, as opposed to some of our earlier conceptual content, which was more appropriate in pre-development or

infrastructure stages. Nothing beats time spent on the ground at Schooner Bay, but we want time spent on our website to be the next best thing. Hopefully, users will come away from the site with a better feel for the charm and beauty of the village and a deeper understanding of how our development theories are being applied in reality. The site should be up and running by mid-April. We hope you'll pay it a visit and encourage you to please utilize the "Contact Us" link to share any comments or feedback or request additional information.



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# INKEEPER'S DIARY

*Hospitality Notes from Schooner Bay*

Spring is in the air in Abaco.

Along with the longer and warmer days, it is exciting to see new growth throughout the village.

Beautiful palm trees are sprouting coconuts and pushing out new fronds, flowering vines drape over the bulkheads of Harbour Island and newly planted parks and dunes add color and in some cases a shaded canopy above. But it's not just Schooner Bay's abundant flora that is blossoming this spring. Diverse, creative new businesses are emerging around the village and specifically in the hospitality sector.

The Cabana Beach Club and Trio Catering are now established and weekend meals at the Cabana are a

new treat that visitors can look forward to on their next trip to the village. The Cabana serves sumptuous, simple lunches and dinners on Fridays and Saturdays and Bahamian brunches on Sundays. Your table overlooks pristine Schooner Beach and the great blue Atlantic Ocean, a perfect setting for sublime, relaxed meals and drinks with friends. In the evenings, the stars are simply beyond words. Sitting under this spectacular canopy with a glass of red wine as the beach bonfire crackles is a delightful way to end a fulfilling day in the community.

Open since March 1, Blackfly Lodge has been humming with activity and there are no signs of letting up in the foreseeable future. Designed by La Guardia Architects



*Lunch on the Cabana Beach Club deck*

and AL Designs, the lodge is quite simply the finest building in The Abacos and a lovely place to enjoy a glass of wine, a cocktail or a meal. The warm, hospitable staff offer gracious service, young chef Devon Roker is turning out exceptional dishes full of things fresh and local, and the colourful cast of characters constantly coming and going contributes to Blackfly's lively, fraternal atmosphere.

An added culinary treat introduced to Schooner Bay in recent weeks is Edison's Conch Salad. When he's not busy tending to his duties at Lightbourn Family Farm, Edison gets "conchy" at the Harbour Shack, dicing up some of the zestiest, freshest conch salad you'll find anywhere. Available select weekends and on demand,

Edison's services can be arranged through Harbour Master, Albert Russell or Town Manager, Glen Kelly. Definitely an experience to be savoured!

It's amazing to see so much coming to life in our harbour village. As homes spring up left and right and families begin to enjoy island life, clever, local entrepreneurs are stepping in to meet the growing service and hospitality needs of our homeowners and businesses. We are fortunate to have some of the most talented and enthusiastic individuals in The Bahamas hospitality industry working at Schooner Bay. Come and see for yourself, we know you'll agree!





## CULTURE

# LEGENDS OF GOOMBAY WEEKEND

## A SWINGING SUCCESS

by JAMES MALCOLM

DESTINATION SCHOONER BAY

*Continued from PAGE 1*

of music that generally accompanied social dancing from the later nineteenth century to the 1960s. By the mid-1950s, [goombay] musicians had crafted a sound that, while drawing on calypso as a general, regional model, also incorporated Cuban, North American and specifically Bahamian sounds, thereby localizing the style while retaining its pan-regional accessibility.”

The event was emceed by Bahamian businessman and impresario, Charles Carter, who through his Island FM studio, television talk show and endorsement of various recording artists has probably done more than anyone to promote authentic Bahamian music of the past and present. The Legends of Goombay was attended by many close friends and visitors of Schooner Bay and featured a veritable who’s who of great musicians from the Golden Age of Bahamian Entertainment, a period in the 1950s and ‘60s when Nassau boasted more than 55 nightclubs featuring live, local entertainment on a nightly basis.

*Chippie Chipman and Peanuts Taylor*

Among the entertainers present at the event was Peanuts Taylor, a well-known percussionist who provided “the beat” for the goombay generation. In the 1960s, Sir Stafford Sands appointed Peanuts as a cultural ambassador and he traveled the world promoting Bahamian music. A successful entertainer in his own right, he is also credited with discovering Andre Touissant and Guy Durosier, two Haitian singers who moved to Nassau and made a number of popular calypso albums. Peanuts owned several nightclubs in Nassau – the most famous of which was the Drumbeat Club on Market Street – and often performed live with the late, great George Symonette. Peanuts’ fame spread around

the world; he played for 40,000 people in Germany on New Years Eve in 1960, appeared on the Johnny Carson and Ed Sullivan Shows and was named a Member of the British Order of the Empire by Queen Elizabeth II.

Pat Rolle, a Bahamian singer often mentioned in the same breath as the great American jazz pianist, Nat King Cole, was also in attendance at the Schooner Bay event. Pat played with Peanuts in the nightclub era and for many years had a regular act at the Drumbeat Club. He was also a member of the highly acclaimed Montague Three, which played at the Montague Beach Hotel from 1960-69. In addition to Rolle, the band also

*Charles Carter*

featured Donald “The Voice” Butler, and consequently is remembered for showcasing two of The Bahamas’ most talented vocalists in the same incredible act.

Also performing at the Schooner Bay event was Chippie Chipman, an outstanding drummer who played alongside Peanuts for much of the Golden Age. Chippie’s career started in the late ‘50s at the legendary Paul Meeres Club, where he worked his way up from waiter to world-class percussionist. Chippie has also traveled the world as a cultural ambassador for The Bahamas. Well into his ‘80s, Chippie shows no signs of letting up and

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## LEGENDS OF GOOMBAY WEEKEND

*Continued from PAGE 6*

can occasionally still be found beating his drum at the Prince George Dock Welcome Center in Nassau.

One of Chippie's closest friends, Maureen Duvalier, also performed for the captivated crowd. Known around the world as the Queen of Junkanoo, Maureen got her start in show business singing with the famous Freddie Munnings Orchestra at the Silver Slippers nightclub. Considered the original Bahamian diva,



*Geno D*

Maureen was also invested as a Member of the British Order of Empire in 2004. Now an octogenarian, she was recently quoted as saying, "I'm going to perform any time they ask me. I still have my voice, I still can move. I am not thinking about retiring."

Joining these Bahamian icons was a younger generation of entertainers including Veronica Bishop, Geno D and the Tingum Dem Band led by Fred Ferguson. The artists performed their best known classics while the appreciative crowd savoured some of The Bahamas most enduring melodies. The mutual respect

and admiration shown between the two generations of entertainers was a heart-warming sight with positive implications for the future of Bahamian music. In a letter we received after the event, Peanuts reflected that, "at one time, Bahamian night life and entertainment was the most valuable asset we offered visitors coming to The Bahamas. And the visitors that came back did so as a result of what they experienced through entertainment."



*Maureen Duvalier and Chippie Chipman*

Speaking privately with Charles Carter during the event, the impresario enthused: "the talent on stage is one of a kind. This collection of Bahamas treasures has not performed together like this in this century. This is, indeed, a very special day for these guests, witnessing an era of Bahamas culture that has largely been forgotten. Schooner Bay has helped resurrect our heritage and remind this audience of the best of The Bahamas. I thank you for this."

From all of us at Schooner Bay, we'd like to thank Mr. Carter and all the entertainers in return for everything they've done to advance the cultural arts in The Bahamas. These are truly living legends and we were honored to have



*Veronica Bishop and Peanuts Taylor*

with Peanuts that Bahamian music and arts can attract an increasing number of cultural tourists who visit our islands for more than just the sun, sand and sea.

Entertainers like Peanuts, Chippie, Pat and Maureen have left invaluable legacies that remain a source of pride and identity for Bahamians throughout the islands. They will live on long after these talented entertainers are gone, helping future generations understand their unique cultural heritage and serving as a firm foundation for the continued development of the arts in The Bahamas.

experienced their talents first-hand in our harbour village. The authentic music of The Bahamas remains an important cultural asset that we at Schooner Bay will do our part to preserve and promote. We agree



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# art's place *in a community*

by JENNI COALE

Most (western) surveys of the history of art begin in the same place. In the remote recesses of the caves of northern Spain and southern France, images of aurochs, buffalo, cattle, and deer populate the ancient walls. These prehistoric sketches are some of the earliest extant images created by human hands. Supremely beautiful and seemingly impossible, these enigmatic beasts are the perfect place to begin a modern study of art because they beg the question that every artist must ask: why does man make art? Without written records, it is impossible to know the intent of the cavemen-artists from 30,000 years ago, but their legacy has inspired us to contemplate the essential role that art plays in human society.

With the advent of the art museum, many works of art were removed from their original public forums and placed within the climate-controlled walls of the institution. I do not intend to attack art museums, which play an essential role in conserving and restoring many of the world's greatest masterpieces. But unfortunately, for the contemporary mind, the white walls of the museum have become the natural habitat of fine art. Ironically, for much of human history, art was intended for the public sphere. From political propaganda to ritual worship, art has helped foster and define communities across the globe. Michelangelo's celebrated statue of *David* is a revealing example: originally commissioned to fill an exterior niche of the Florence Cathedral, its patrons decided instead that the magnificent effigy belonged in the *Piazza della Signoria*, guarding city hall on the city's public square. Here *David*



*Sea Turtle made of found fishing nets*



*Mermaid carved into limestone boulder*



*Vaughn Cochran's art hanging in Blackfly Lodge*

stood for over 300 years – Michelangelo's masterpiece, exposed to the elements – before it was transferred to the safety of a museum in 1873. *David* was a civic symbol, his strength of will, faith, and character protecting the Florentine Republic; his rightful home was in this public venue.

On a recent visit to Schooner Bay, I was struck by this community's earnest commitment to the arts. Schooner Bay is working to foster a creative environment by investing resources in the arts. Most appropriately, these efforts are public and communal. With the support and patronage of Artist-in-Residence, Antonius Roberts, the creation of the Schooner Bay Institute for the Arts & Sciences and the hosting of festivals and seminars for visiting and local artists, public art is alive and well in Abaco. In a community like Schooner Bay, where design, sustainability, and nature commingle, many of these artistic efforts focus on or borrow from the natural realm. Antonius's ethereal reflections of the pristine Bahamian waters, Vaughn Cochran's vibrant oils of local fish species: these works evoke the beauty of the community's greatest resource. Examples of "found art" are scattered throughout the village – a mermaid etched into a limestone boulder, a sea turtle shaped by discarded fishing nets – and blur the line between nature and art, material and spiritual.

In anticipation of your next visit, I urge you to reflect on your community: where is the art? At Schooner Bay, art is not an accessory but part of its very tissue. I am proud to see a place like Schooner Bay follow in the traditions of cavemen and Renaissance masters alike, a community that embraces artistic endeavors in developing its voice.

*Jenni Coale teaches AP Art History at Pace Academy, an elite preparatory school in Atlanta, GA.*



# ARTIST'S CORNER

## *New Paintings by Artist in Residence, Antonius Roberts*

by ANTONIUS ROBERTS  
ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE

I am pleased to introduce a new series of oil paintings inspired by the land and seascape of Schooner Bay. The paintings will be on display at my gallery in Schooner Bay throughout the spring season. I have also enlisted a bright and talented young gentleman to be present at the gallery on a daily basis. A native Abaconian, Mackenson Altidor returned to The Bahamas in 2010 with a degree in Marketing from Temple University. I hope you enjoy the selected images of my new paintings featured in *The Mainsheet*, and please contact Mackenson at 458-4283 or [mack.altidor@gmail.com](mailto:mack.altidor@gmail.com) to arrange a visit to the gallery.



# Introducing the SCHOONER BAY INSTITUTE FOR THE ARTS & SCIENCES

by GLEN KELLY  
TOWN MANAGER



Schooner Bay Institute for the Arts & Sciences is a not-for-profit organization seeking to advance the understanding and stewardship of our cultural and environmental assets through multi-disciplinary research and outreach. The Institute is headquartered in Schooner Bay, a traditional harbour village on the Bahamian island of Great Abaco that has become a leading model and proponent of sustainable development in the Caribbean region.

The facility itself is an 1800 square foot building located on a 100-acre tract of Crown Land at the entrance of Schooner Bay designated as communal farmland and an economic empowerment zone for all of South Abaco. 15 beds, offices, conference rooms, and a kitchen and dining room are all part of this dynamic and flexible facility. Available by room, by night or extended periods, this is a comfortable, affordable base for visiting scholars, scientists and artists, complete with all of the resources required to facilitate productive research and collaboration in a unique environment teeming with ecological diversity.

Schooner Bay Institute for the Arts and Sciences is a place of idea generation where global and local expertise join together to promote the sustainable growth of South Abaco and the islands of The Bahamas.

For further information please contact Town Manager, Glen Kelly at [townmanager@schoonerbaybahamas.com](mailto:townmanager@schoonerbaybahamas.com)

## MEDICAL CLINIC TO OPEN IN SCHOONER BAY

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clinic, he or she will be available via “telemedicine” – a live video chat facilitating remote doctor-patient communications.

The sessional clinics at Schooner Bay are being organized by a group of seven medical specialists headed by Dr. Larry Carroll, Chief Radiologist at Doctor’s Hospital in Nassau. This talented group of medical professionals will rotate weekly clinical duties to ensure that full coverage is provided for the clinic at Schooner Bay. The facility at Schooner Bay will have the capabilities and basic equipment of a private doctor’s office and be sufficient for emergency triage in addition to routine care. The facility is designed to be flexible and scalable, permitting expansion of both physical size and service capabilities as growth and activity in Schooner Bay progresses. The doctors will also be able to write prescriptions and stock the facility with necessary medicines required by patients under their care at the clinic.

The clinic will first open on a trial basis in April and the management and resources of the facility will be fine-tuned in coming months to best serve the needs of the community. Such a high level of professional health care in South Abaco will be a great asset for the community, saving many trips to Marsh Harbour and making time spent in Schooner Bay as safe and comfortable as possible. According to Doctor Carroll, “we expect the sessional clinics will be very robust and meet most basic health care demands in the community with a high level of service and expertise.”

For further information about the clinic, please contact Nurse Siren Davis at 366-2044/5 or email at [siren.davis@lindroth.cc](mailto:siren.davis@lindroth.cc).

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## SCHOONER BAY **SNAPSHOTS**





## NATURE

## REMEMBERING RICKY JOHNSON

by THE EDITOR

The Bahamas lost an extraordinary individual with the passing of Ricardo Johnson in January. Ricky was a respected naturalist and passionate advocate for the Bahamian environment whose eco-guiding operation, Abaco Nature Tours, was based in Schooner Bay. He was a regular sight around the village, decked out in safari gear wandering the coppice or the dunes with a group of attentive visitors hanging on his every word. Ricky's knowledge of the flora and fauna of Abaco was encyclopedic; nature was the prism through which he saw and understood the world. Gentle, erudite and modest though he may have been, there was no mistaking his enthusiasm for the natural world around him, and when Ricky spoke everyone listened.

I can recall numerous times when a group would be sitting around a porch or at lunch in the cabana discussing this or that and Ricky, ever polite but mind clearly elsewhere, would seize upon the first moment of silence to point out the piping plovers that had landed nearby or to call our attention to the sound of the parrot's song. It was his way of inviting the group into his world - the real world all around us waiting to be discovered if we would just take a moment to slow down and recognize it.

Ricky had a clear vision for a better Bahamas and for the role that eco-tourism could play in developing and broadening the Bahamian economy. In a profile of Ricky that appeared in these pages in 2010, he explained: "I'm always careful not to isolate eco-tourism as a specific category. If we look at it from a broader perspective, The Bahamas is an eco-country, and that's the very reason we have such a thriving tourism sector. People come here for the clear water and the colorful reefs and beautiful beaches and the exotic animals and the pleasant



climate, and so we need to broaden our discussion of eco-tourism by realizing that the environment of The Bahamas is actually the basis of the entire tourism sector, which is, of course, the most valuable sector in our national economy. When people see it that way, they realize that our environment is a valuable asset and they work harder to protect it."

Indeed, more than just restoring their connection to nature, Ricky strove to convince Bahamians that the natural environment was their greatest asset. "One thing I would really like to see is in the south of Abaco, in my community, is more people learning about the natural resources around them," he urged. "I want them to realize the diversity of the environment and how the different environments come together to create this beautiful place where we live. It is important that we don't take these things for granted. I want children to grow up in this community and realize that it is unique, that they have things going for them."

He used as an example the Abaco parrot. "Do you realize that the Abaco parrot is the only ground nesting parrot in the world? If people take an interest in these things, they will take greater pride in their community, and they can then invite visitors in and show them these natural wonders. Because there are people out there who want to see these things, and if we as Bahamians know how to show them off, it allows these visitors to experience the people of The Bahamas and the ecology of The Bahamas in a truly authentic way."

These are clearly the words of an enlightened man. His efforts did not go unnoticed. Ricky was recognized as a "Top Guide in the Caribbean" by the Caribbean Tourism Conference and twice nominated for the prestigious Cacique Award, the highest honour bestowed by the Bahamas Ministry of Tourism. Yet, he was never in it for the accolades and certainly not for the money. "It's a passion and a love for me much more than it is a means to an end," was how he explained his chosen vocation.

And he worked hard. In his quiet, earnest way, Ricky was always striving to do more, to cast a wider net and spread the enjoyment and edification of the natural world to a broader audience. He knew it was a tall order. "Eyes wide shut" was how Ricky described the way many of us go through life, surrounded by nature's miracles but rarely stopping to acknowledge or enjoy them. Nevertheless, he persisted with his efforts, setting ambitious goals and progressing towards them with an unwavering faith in his cause. In doing so, he opened our eyes, our minds and our hearts to the many wonders of this world and enriched the lives of all who crossed his path.

# BLACKFLY LODGE OPEN FOR BUSINESS!

Continued from **PAGE 1**

and fly-shop on the other. A central staircase leads to well-appointed guest quarters on the second floor, from which views of Schooner Bay Harbour and the Atlantic Ocean abound. Another staircase accesses the third-floor cupola, a perfect space to sample some of the fine regional rums and cigars procured by Blackfly's in-house aficionados!

The lodge's eight guest rooms are all being named after living legends of saltwater fly-angling. Blackfly celebrated its first room dedication – in honour of our very own Vaughn Cochran – in a memorable ceremony on February 27th that also marked the unofficial opening of the lodge. It's been full-speed ahead ever since! Some of the notable events held in the mere month of Blackfly's existence as an operating lodge included a March 7th birthday party for a good friend and client (where a great day of fishing was capped off by a Junkanoo Rushout) and the dedication of the Stu Apte Room on March 14th.



*Blackfly East Cape Vantage Skiff*

Stu was a fighter pilot in the U.S. Navy and worked for years as a commercial pilot for PanAm. Along the way, he managed to amass 44 International Game Fish Association (IGFA) world records and earn a well-deserved place in the IGFA Fishing Hall of Fame. Stu and his wife Jeannie were both in attendance for the dedication ceremony along with a number of friends and a good time was had by all. Of course, during the day they

all hit the flats, and Captain Clint Kemp considered the experience of guiding the legendary Stu Apte “definitely a high point in my fishing career!” Over the next few months, Blackfly will host the six remaining room dedications, with the storied anglers lending their names to our guest quarters all expected to be in attendance.

One of the highlights of these events thus far has been the excellent food coming out

of Blackfly's beautiful new kitchen. Chef Devon Roker and his team have certainly been proving their talents, serving up incredibly fresh, local fare in a creative array of simple, but sophisticated dishes. Soon everyone in Abaco will be able to sample these culinary treats when Blackfly opens to the public for lunch and dinner this spring. As soon as we've confirmed the exact opening date, it will be posted on our Facebook page, so please follow Blackfly on social media! With seating in our inviting dining room as well as al fresco on our generous Bay Street porch, we trust you'll find a meal at Blackfly to be a memorable experience.

Sometimes we're so overwhelmed by how well the lodge has come together as a destination in and of itself that we forget about the real reason we're all here – the fishing! On that important front, we're pleased to report strong results. Our guides have been seeing plenty of fish in all of our zones, and encouragingly, we're noticing a particularly healthy

.....  
[CLICK for more on \*\*PAGE 14\*\*](#)



*Rum lounge with original art by Vaughn Cochran*



*Guest Room*





*Blackfly Atrium*



*Dining Room with chef's kitchen*

## BLACKFLY LODGE OPEN FOR BUSINESS!

*Continued from PAGE 13*

mix of species this year. Opportunities for the "Abaco Slam" – landing a bonefish, permit, tarpon and mutton snapper all in the same day – have never been better!

Additionally, we've had the opportunity to survey some of the blue water areas outside Schooner Bay Harbour in our 31' Yellow Fin. We know of no other lodge where guests are in such close proximity to flats and mangrove species on the one hand and bluewater sport-fish like tuna, mahi mahi, wahoo and marlin on the other ... all of which have record-setting potential!

The whole team at Blackfly Bonefish Lodge wishes to extend a warm invitation to

all anglers in 2013. And feel free to bring your spouse, children or friends - even if they don't fish – because at Blackfly Bonefish Lodge, epic saltwater fishing and a luxurious resort experience are no longer mutually exclusive! For additional information or booking queries, please contact Jean Cochran at [blackfly.jean@gmail.com](mailto:blackfly.jean@gmail.com) or (904) 997-2220

Also keep an eye out for Blackfly Business Manager, June Russell's monthly *Abaco Offshore Forecast* in *Coastal Angler Magazine*. The report is also available online at <http://coastalanglermag.com/bahamas/abaco-offshore-fishing-forecast-march-2013/>.



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# TIME SPENT FISHING:

## *An Early Account of the Blackfly Experience*

by ANDY RIDALL

I.

The sport of fishing seems to inspire a great deal of folk wisdom, much of which has little to do with the actual act of catching a fish. Typical of this convention is the adage, “many people fish their whole lives without realizing it’s not the fish they are after.” Similarly, I once read one fly-angler declare: “some people go to church and think about fishing; I go fishing and think about God.” A bit high-flown, but perhaps not too far off the mark for some angling enthusiasts.

The best fruits of this tradition conjure up the archetypal fisherman himself; ironical yet confident, simple but substantive. When I was younger I worked at a trout lodge on the Soque River, a cobbled idyll that burbles its way down the foothills of Appalachia before joining up with the Chattahoochee somewhere north of Atlanta. Whenever we had trouble turning fish, without fail one guide would inform the party: “that’s why it’s called fishin’, not catchin’.”

My favorite fishing adage isn’t even a fishing adage. It’s borrowed from hunting - big game hunting to be exact. This one was related by Clint Kemp, proprietor of Blackfly Bonefish Lodge, when we were out poling the flats south of Nassau one day. Clint told me about a client who went lion-hunting in Africa and after a few days



*Albula vulpes, ghost of the flats*

tramping through the bush still hadn’t spotted a single lion. Frustration mounting, he turned to his guide and demanded, “Well, where are these bloody lions?!” To which the Masai tribesman replied: “they exist.”

II.

The first day of my two-day fishing trip at Blackfly Bonefish Lodge this January was a “they exist” type of day. We had caught the tail end of a norther and low-hanging cloud-cover all but turned out the lights on the flats. This is not how my father and I had described the flats of The Bahamas to our other two companions. Not only were they first-time bonefishermen, they also happened to be married, respectively (and I suppose respectably), to my two sisters. There didn’t seem to be many fish around, and the wind periodically lashing us with rain was closer to

what they’d left at home than the balmy breezes I’d promised.

We called it early that day on account of the weather and met back at the dock. I was feeling a bit guilty, considering the billing I’d given this place. But, they came in all smiles. Against the odds, they’d both hooked up with bonefish... felt the pull.. The official count (not that I was keeping score) was two for the “greenhorns” and zero for the “experts.” Ernest Hemingway once wrote: “we are all apprentices in a craft where no one ever becomes a master.” He was probably reflecting on the craft of writing, though Papa certainly spent enough time on the flats that he could have meant bonefishing.

III.

A unique advantage of Blackfly Bonefish Lodge is

its proximity to the flats. I could hardly believe my eyes when I first visited Schooner Bay and saw a bonefish flat lapping its leeward shores. You can literally step off the curb directly onto a pristine flat. It’s not something that’s advertised much; if you don’t fish, you probably wouldn’t care. But, for the fly-angler accustomed to putting some effort into reaching these magical places, the idea of having one right in your backyard is intoxicating. In fact, Clint says when he’s passing by in his pickup truck, he often spots tailing fish out the window. I can see how that might become a distraction.

Incidentally, there’s a blue hole on this same flat, just off the small pier where Blackfly launches their boats. No more than twenty feet in diameter, the hole plunges vertically more than two hundred feet before extending horizontally into an elaborate network of underwater caves and tunnels. *National Geographic* explored the site for an August 2010 cover story titled, “Bahamas Blue Holes: Dive into Beauty, Danger and Discovery”. Apparently, the dark, oxygen-free environment resembles conditions thought to exist in water pockets deep beneath the surface of Mars, and astrobiologists consider blue holes a sort of terrestrial laboratory. This anoxic environment is also

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## TIME SPENT FISHING

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a perfect preservative for organic compounds, and on their expedition *National Geographic* divers found both the skull of a Lucayan Indian (the native tribe that thrived in The Bahamas six centuries ago) and the jaws of a crocodilian species previously unknown in the area.

Diving in blue holes is not for the faint of heart. As the author of the article, Andrew Todhunter, explains, “From a diver’s perspective [the blue holes of The Bahamas] are on par with Everest or K2, requiring highly specialized training, equipment and experience.” Floating over this world-class “descent,” our guide mentioned that jacks and snapper sometimes liked to feed in the uppermost reaches of the blue hole, and that it could be a productive spot for jigging. “Just don’t fish the hole if you see bubbles coming out of it,” he implored, “that means the scientists are down there.”

### IV.

I offer this digression simply to make the point that, as the saying goes, we weren’t in Kansas anymore. This feeling only got stronger as our guides - Paul Pinder and Nick Roberts – began our second day of fishing by careening Blackfly’s skiffs go-cart style through a winding maze of mangrove forest. After a minute or two blasting through super-skinny water in narrow mangrove creeks at 30 miles per hour (an experience in itself) we emerged on the Little Bahamas Bank.

To my relief, the cold front had moved on and in its

place was the sort of big, fat high pressure system that arrives every so often in the Bahamian winter. This means a cloudless sky, warm sunshine and light winds. To someone who has never spent time on the flats of The Bahamas, it’s hard to describe the sort of environment these conditions create. It’s exotic to the point of being surreal.

Looking off into the distance on a day like this, there is no formal separation between up and down, wet and dry. You find yourself surrounded by a spectral orb of blues, beginning up high with intense cobalt before fading into royal blue, then azure and finally aquamarine. The mirror image of this pattern spills out onto the palette of still water below. The horizon is somewhere between the azures and the aquamarines, but it’s impossible to pinpoint. Air and water float off into one another, losing their elemental identities in this giant bathtub paradise. It’s hypnotic, and as we raced across the shallows to Moore’s Island – some 20 miles west of Schooner Bay – I felt myself slipping into a daydream.

The trance was abruptly broken when Nick throttled back and banked hard to starboard. “Grab the 12-weight,” he said coolly. I scrambled for the rod, a bit out of sorts and still mesmerized by the great blue nothingness. “Never mind,” he announced, “They’re gone.” Nick revved up the engine and started back on our course. I yelled back at him, “what was that!?” “Permit,” he replied ... “maybe thirty of ‘em...”

We continued on alongside the other Blackfly skiff, the horizon-less blues cushioning its bow creating the

appearance of flight. Slipping back into that cosmic frame of mind, I watched its wake slice the stillness and recalled a line from the American yacht designer, Ray Kauffman: “We could cut a path just thirteen feet and nine inches across this ocean, like a meteor wandering through the solar system.”

### V.

The beam of an East Cape Vantage Skiff – Blackfly’s vessel of choice – is not thirteen feet nine inches, but a slither six and a half feet. When I visited, they were eagerly awaiting delivery of their fourth hull in a five-boat contract with the Florida-based builder. These skiffs are highly-customized; when the fourth vessel arrived in Abaco a couple weeks later it sported a teak-decked poling platform and top-sides the color of aster petals, or the indigo spectrum of a Bahamian sunset. In other words, it was purple.

The advantage of the East Cape skiff is its versatility. This is a matter of necessity, given Blackfly’s varied terrain. Here’s the design brief: a trailerable skiff that corners responsively, poles nimbly and draws next to nothing, yet can handle the blue-water stretches between Abaco and Moore’s Island without jarring or soaking the crew. A fishery as diverse and exceptional as this required a boat equally up to the challenge, and East Cape rose to the occasion.

The folks at Blackfly also deserve credit for their exacting standards. From the whisper-quiet Evinrude V-Tech engine to the custom-designed bow seat, to the bottle opener fastened like deck hardware to the console, those who appreciate

attention to detail will be at home on this boat. A quick word about the bow seat (which, by the way, folds back into a hip-rest). With all the naiveté of a purist, I immediately dismissed this feature as a geriatric concession and spent half an hour silently disparaging the ungainly apparatus bolted onto my casting platform ... before spending the rest of the day thoroughly enjoying it! First, there’s more than ample room forward of the bow seat to cast and strip. Second, one soon realizes that hunting bonefish is just as effective - and infinitely more enjoyable - when perched five feet above sea-level with a cold Kalik in your spooling hand.

### VI.

Fish at Moore’s Island behave unlike I’ve ever seen anywhere else. It’s borderline spooky, Bermuda Triangle-type stuff. At one point, idling through deepish water between two flats, we found ourselves in a vortex of maybe 200 bonefish. Nick drifted the boat and they circled clockwise around us, time and time again. I roll-casted furiously before giving up and just taking in the phenomena.

In the afternoon, we visited the prettiest flat I’ve ever seen. A long stretch of mangroves bordered its southern end and a giant driftwood tree rose like an apparition from a neighboring shell-bank. Any degree of elevation is dramatic in The Bahamas, and the spindly, bleached-out hardwood carcass rising high in the distance created powerful contrasts in an environment dominated by low-lying mangrove clusters and irradiated liquid blues. A

CLICK for more on **PAGE 17**

## TIME SPENT FISHING

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Great Blue Heron perched picturesquely on one of its branches while sandpipers splashed around the bank below. A daytime full moon hung in the cloudless sky. The heron took flight. Dad caught a 10-lb bonefish.

The final flat on the easternmost edge of Moore's Island surrounds a small, circular mangrove cay that erupted with birdsong whenever we got within 50 yards. This flat is striking as well, suspended a mile or so east of Moore's Island, but still too far west of Abaco to see the big island. It's a totally unprotected, wild-feeling flat that, in calm conditions at least, could best be described as a bonefish oasis. This was the scene of one of our more exciting moments of the day. Nick piped up from the stern, "Ok, we got a permit coming ten o'clock ... 100 yards." I motioned for the permit rod, but Nick stopped me. "I've seen more shots at permit blown because people are too busy changing up their tackle," he said. "Permits eat the same things bonefish do."

He had a point. It didn't matter, though, for two reasons. First, the permit turned out to be a bonefish. This got Nick really excited. "Oh mudda, that's a bone!" he said, trying without success to muffle his excitement. And second, when this

Jurassic bonefish swam accommodatingly into the middle of my ideal casting zone, I promptly lined him and he disappeared. "Ha ha!" Nick laughed. "That was the biggest bonefish I've ever seen! That's what we call a Gussy Mae. Man, that was a big fish!"

You can't let these things bother you. It's like sitting outside a cafe in Portofino and being served a bad glass of wine. Hey, at least you're in Italy. Or so I counseled myself as we left Moore's Island in our wake.

### VII.

Over the course of my two-day fishing trip, I reached a few conclusions. First, Blackfly fishes world-class waters. This much is indisputable. We fished Moore's Island that day, but the whole area around Schooner Bay is lightly fished and immensely productive. There's an area off the southeast tip of Abaco known as the Cross Harbour flats system that drops off into arguably the best blue-water fishery in the Caribbean region. Expect some monsters on that particular flat. There's a flat 50 feet from the fishing village of Sandy Point where I've stood at daybreak surrounded by a sea of bonefish tails. Then there's the southern marls and the mangrove network on the western shores of Schooner Bay, which one could alone spend a lifetime exploring.

The list goes on and on. Blackfly fishing staff have identified six distinct zones in the area containing hundreds of flats all with their own unique characteristics. Additionally, they are developing a blue-water fly-fishing program targeting the billfish, tuna and mahi mahi that live right outside Schooner Bay Harbour. A 31' Yellow Fin center console was recently acquired for this express purpose. Nowhere else will one find such a wide variety of target species and angling strategies in an environment geographically diverse enough to be fishable in virtually every wind condition.

Then there are the people of Blackfly, a motley crew if there ever was one. Proprietor Clint Kemp is an eleventh generation Bahamian who has at various times been a purveyor of Cuban tobacco, an ordained minister, a social activist and a bonefish guide. Vaughn Cochran, the man behind the Blackfly brand, is an artist and Florida Keys fishing guide of great renown. Paul Pinder, Schooner Bay's Head of Fishing Operations, is a man of mythical stature and preferred guide of some of the world's greatest fly-anglers. Vaughn jokes that when they travel to roadshows together, he's generally identified as "that guy with Paul Pinder." Nick Roberts is a wealth of technical knowledge and keen observer of life in South Abaco. Then there's Devon

Roker, Blackfly's young chef, who whipped up conch fritters and lobster pizza when we arrived unannounced at the lodge to catch the second half of a football game.

Of course, there's also the lodge itself, which celebrated its soft opening in February. There's no need to exaggerate. Blackfly is simply the nicest bonefish lodge I've seen anywhere in the world. It's a plantation-style manor house on Schooner Bay's harbour-front featuring eight guest-rooms, a full-service chef's kitchen, dining room, bar and fly shop. There's even a rum and cigar tasting room tucked away in the cupola. With its generous wraparound porches, vibrant art collection and rich cane and lacquered furniture, the lodge radiates old-world charm and sportsman's sophistication. What's more, it's the centerpiece of one of the most interesting and positive development projects in the history of The Bahamas!

There's another fishing adage I've always liked. It goes, "God does not deduct from one's allotted hours the time spent fishing." Well, even if he does, there's nowhere I'd rather spend mine than Blackfly Bonefish Lodge.

*Andy Ridall is a Nassau-based angler and yachtsman.*

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by LIGHTBOURN FAMILY FARM

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After a few months of short days we are ready to push a new set of crops on through the spring until around June. With the daylight hours increasing we begin sowing seeds again, planting seedlings and putting down compost or other fertilizers. We are also finishing up pruning back long term vegetables, fruit trees as well as ornamental trees, bushes and other landscape, all in anticipation of the spring rains.

The longer days with more frequent rain provide the optimal environment for plants to grow and mature. So proper planning and timing are critical in being well-positioned as a farm, garden or backyard to take

full advantage of Mother Nature's gifts.

Our progress on buildout of the farm is coming along nicely and we are on a good pace to be poised for a very productive season with lots to offer this coming September. We hope to offer a unique experience on the farm, along with making our produce available through many other avenues.

Despite buildout we are still currently harvesting Salad mix, Romaine, Arugula, Spinach, Swiss Chard, Red Beets, Candy Cane Beets, Watermelon Radish, Red Grape Tomato, Yellow Grape Tomato, Cherry Tomato, Med. slicing Tomato, Sweet Pepper, Hot Pepper, Eggplant, along with Dill, Cilantro, Parsley, Thyme and Mint.

You can taste some of our produce at the Blackfly Lodge or down at the Cabana on the weekends. Also, the General Store will be providing various fresh veggies along with ready-to-go salads from



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# SCHOONER BAY SUSTAINABILITY

by THE EDITOR



A street in Schooner Bay

In *Silent Spring*, a scathing indictment of the petrochemical industry now widely credited with launching the modern American environmental movement, Rachel Carson drew the following conclusion. “We stand now where two roads diverge,” she wrote. “But unlike the road in Roberts Frost’s familiar poem, they are not equally fair. The road we have long been traveling is deceptively easy, a smooth superhighway on which we progress with great speed, but at its end lies disaster. The other fork of the road – the one less traveled by – offers our last, our only chance to reach a destination that assures the preservation of the earth.”

As in Frost’s poem, the imagery conjured up by Carson’s forking road is powerful in its depiction

of the relationship between choices and consequences, causes and effects. On the surface, roads are functional thoroughfares for the transport of vehicular traffic; but they’ve always been more in the popular imagination.

Eastern and western cultures first negotiated their differences – and discovered their similarities – on the ancient Silk Road trading route. “The Road to Serfdom,” a treatise on individual liberties written by Austrian philosopher F.A. Hayek during the height of the Second World War, planted the seeds of an ideology known today as libertarianism. Jack Kerouac’s “On The Road” inspired a generation of soul-searching journeymen in the 1960s, while Cormac McCarthy’s “The Road” probed the relationship between father

and son in a harrowing post-apocalyptic narrative. Dr. Seuss showcased the powers of the imagination to many impressionable young minds in his fantastical work, “And To Say That I Saw It on Mulberry Street,” and Sesame Street either tickled your senses or tried your patience, depending on whether you watched it as a child or a parent.

In music history, *The Golden Road (to Unlimited Devotion)* introduced the world to the *Grateful Dead*, while *Abbey Road* closed the book on the *The Beatles* storied run. More recently, Robert Earl Keen reinterpreted the legend of Sonny and Cher with the plaintive refrain, “the road goes on forever and the party never ends.” Blues legend, Robert Johnson, allegedly sold his soul to the devil at a rural Alabama crossroads in

exchange for guitar-playing prowess. A young rapper named Eminem captured all the pathos of a declining Detroit community in his song “8 Mile Road”. And Tin Pan Alley, a storied block in lower Manhattan, has since become synonymous with urban music-making clusters the whole world wide.

Even here in The Bahamas, roads are loaded with cultural symbolism. Through the first half of the 20th Century, Bay Street in Nassau represented on one hand the industry and accomplishments of a tiny island outpost and on the other all the inequalities and paternalism of the colonial system. The 1942 Burma Road Riots were a reaction to the injustices of the period and one of the only violent flare-ups in what former MP

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## SCHOONER BAY SUSTAINABILITY

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Doris Johnson called “The Quiet Revolution in The Bahamas.” (Meanwhile, halfway across the world, U.S. troops created a different Burma Road by hacking through the jungles of today’s Myanmar to supply the Chinese front against Japan).

If this all sounds a bit too dark for a light-hearted island news-sheet, readers are encouraged to go to YouTube and type in “Burma Road Ronnie Butler.” There you’ll hear one of the country’s greatest entertainers deliver a spirited calypso number that both honors the memory of the downtrodden while uplifting anyone who listens with the infectious optimism, rhythm and playfulness of Bahamian culture.

Symbolically, then, roads represent more than just the prospective destinies of the individual. The fates of entire communities hang in their balance. This doesn’t merely apply to roads in the metaphorical sense. Consider actual, physical roadways. As Allan B. Jacobs writes in the introduction to “Great Streets,” his fascinating primer on urban thoroughfares: “Streets are almost always public: owned by the public, and when we speak of the public realm we are speaking in large measure of streets.”

There’s another important distinction here. Jacobs writes of *streets*, not *roads*. In an excellent discussion detailing how the demands of modern transportation infrastructure are negatively impacting the places we live, Strong Towns co-founder, Chuck Marohn, explains:

“The problem ... is we’ve introduced elements of streets into roads. We’ve confused the two.” Marohn uses the example of a dirt track he remembers running alongside his parents’ farm when he was a boy in rural Minnesota. By the time he went off to college it had become a gravel drive and today it is a paved, high-speed freeway. As Marohn notes: “Now I can drive to Minneapolis/St. Paul in two hours instead of the four that it took my parents. But, the fact that I can get to town now in eight minutes instead of 10 shows that there are diminishing returns to this approach.”

The scale of America’s freeway network is beyond any comparable road scheme in the world (though, like in most things, China is quickly catching up). As of the most recent information (2008), the U.S. had a one-third larger road network than those of China and India, its two closest competitors, and more than three times the road network of its third closest rival, Brazil. Yet, what has America’s experiment taught us? In fact, the economic benefits derived from such a massive and well-maintained continental freeway network come nowhere close to matching the costs required to simply maintain it. The American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) estimates that it will cost the U.S. government \$2.2 trillion to maintain the existing national road network over the next seven years. And what will the U.S. economy get in return? \$1 trillion of economic output, according to ASCE. I remember a friend in the hospitality industry once telling me that the best way to get a million bucks was to start with two million and open a restaurant.

Well, as it turns out, the best way to make a trillion bucks might be to start with two trillion and build a road.

But, it shouldn’t have to be this way. Marohn defines a street as “a network within a place that helps you get around. Streets not only move cars, they accommodate parked cars, they accommodate people walking, they accommodate people biking, they accommodate people in wheelchairs and roller skates.” As he explains: “[By reconfiguring] our streets to have the characteristic of roads ... what happens is we’re no longer able to capture the value because so much of the street has turned into parking lots and the development just flees ... it disappears and you wind up with a space that is, financially, incredibly unproductive.”

By contrast, Jacobs contends that “[f]irst and foremost, a great street should help make community: should facilitate people acting and interacting to achieve in concert what they might not achieve alone.” He goes on to explain: “In the United States, from 25% - 35% of a city’s developed land is likely to be in public rights-of-way, mostly in streets. The percentages may be more varied in European cities, but the amounts are always significant ... If we can develop and design streets so that they are wonderful, fulfilling places to be, community-building places, attractive public places for all people of cities and neighborhoods, then we will have successfully designed about one-third of the city directly and will have had an immense impact on the rest.”

Streets are more than just thoroughfares for vehicular traffic and the

transport of goods and individuals. They’re tone-setters for communities, the facilitators of interaction and collaboration and important canaries in the coalmine of urban development. Bad streets are like tears in the fabric of a community, while good ones are the seams that stitch communities together, making them more than just the sum of their parts. And, as Jacobs points out, “in a very elemental way, streets allow people to be outside.” The importance of this simple function cannot be overstated, and anyone tasked with designing a street must keep in mind they are designing a place where the majority of people spend most of their time experiencing “the outdoors”.

At Schooner Bay, we’ve spent a lot of time thinking about how best to design our street networks. From an urban planning perspective, this means a street-grid that begins by connecting the rest of Abaco to Schooner Bay. This is achieved via a wide, palm-lined boulevard that climbs to the top of a civic square before forking into parallel one-way lanes surrounding an open greenbelt at the highest elevation in the community. While the lawn within is preserved as a formal green corridor for the benefit of residents and visitors alike, the outer verge of the one-way streets are intended primarily for commercial development. Shops, restaurants and other places of industry create a transition zone between the outside community and the village within. They are magnets attracting civic activity from both directions, and the spectacular views, cool breezes and broad,

Continued on **PAGE 21**



## SCHOONER BAY SUSTAINABILITY

*Continued from PAGE 20*

palm-lined lawns create an environment in which people are instinctively happy to linger.

From this dramatic vantage point, the separation scheme continues downhill, flanking a terraced staircase and descending into the village before merging into a generous avenue that leads straight to the harbour-front. Several narrower residential alleys extend from this boulevard until its culmination at the water. This becomes Bay Street, a gracious main street circling the harbour. Inland on Bay Street is a collection of prominent mixed-use buildings, while a swath of tree-speckled green space separates the street from the water on the bayside.

From a developer's perspective, such rational street and block principles are well known – if generally ignored – and readily accessible to anyone interested. But the devil, they say, is in the details. More intriguing to us over the past few years has been the technical composition of the streets within Schooner Bay. With the design phase of community street-grids completed, how have we gone

about actually constructing these essential arteries?

As in most things at Schooner Bay, we take our cue from nature. Frank Lloyd Wright once claimed: "I go to nature every day seeking inspiration for the day's work. I follow in building the principles which nature has used in its domain." The best way to build a street in many parts of The Bahamas is simply to clear away flora at the desired breadth and length or your thoroughfare. That's pretty much it. The abundant corals, shellfish, algae and other organisms that live on The Bahamas Platform have produced vast amounts of calcium carbonate skeletal debris over many millennia. This, in turn, has produced one of the world's largest chemically-formed limestone deposits.

When firmly packed over time, limestone hardens and becomes an extremely desirable road surface. Its light colour absorbs and dissipates heat instead of reflecting it, creating a more pleasant streetscape and reducing the need for air conditioning in surrounding homes and businesses. Limestone is also relatively porous, which permits the absorption and filtration of rain-water and reduces runoff, a major environmental hazard negatively impacting most urban watersheds. And unlike asphalt, limestone is a naturally occurring organic

compound consistent with its surrounding environment. The aesthetic appeal derived from this symbiosis is immediately obvious.

In the spirit of Leonardo da Vinci's declaration that "simplicity is the ultimate sophistication," we'd be happy to leave it at that and let the desirable natural qualities of Abaco's limestone crust do the important work of minimizing ambient heat, filtering pollutants from the ground-water, reducing storm-water runoff and beautifying our community. Alas, government regulations require paved roads, so we've been working closely with representatives in the Ministry of Public Works to "seal" the roads without compromising their natural characteristics. In doing so, we have developed a heavily watered-down cement compound that we believe does just that.

In the 19th Century, French urban planners made streets the primary focus of city design. Anyone who has wandered the boulevards, avenues and alleyways of Paris can attest to the myriad delights created by this approach to urban design. In *Great Streets*, Jacobs contrasts this with urban development priorities of the last half of the 20th Century, which have "been more concerned with the preciousness or 'preciousness' of individual

properties, unique signature buildings of their designers and owners." Far be it from us to disparage architecture; on the contrary, at Schooner Bay we've paid more attention to architecture than any other development we're aware of in The Bahamas. However, it shouldn't dominate or come at the expense of the streetscape.

At Schooner Bay, we seek to create positive relationships between the various realms of community, between the residential and commercial buildings, the streets and alleys, and the abundant green space throughout. Consequently, each realm should support and enhance the other. These spaces, all inspired in their own way by designs and considerations found within nature, work together to create an efficient, harmonious community. The technical construction of a street may at first blush have little to do with the overarching health or culture of a community, yet it is a critical consideration that goes into making places that are loved and endure.

What will our streets say about us? Which road have we as a community chosen to go down? And what will it ultimately reveal about the approach to development that we call Schooner Bay Sustainability?

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## QUOTES

*"Our problem was not, and is not, a lack of growth. Our problem is sixty years of unproductive growth. The American pattern of development does not create real wealth; it creates the illusion of wealth. Today we are in the process of seeing that illusion destroyed and with it the prosperity we have come to take for granted."*  
– [www.strongtowns.org](http://www.strongtowns.org)

*"Fishing is much more than fish. It is the great occasion when we may return to the fine simplicity of our forefathers."*  
– **Herbert Hoover**

*"Nature is pleased with simplicity."*  
– **Isaac Newton**

*"You can't be suspicious of a tree, or accuse a bird or a squirrel of subversion or challenge the ideology of a violet."*  
– **Hal Borland**

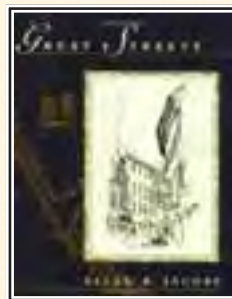
*"The sun, with all those planets revolving around it and dependent on it, can still ripen a bunch of grapes as if it had nothing else in the universe to do."*  
– **Galileo**

*"Nature is what wins in the end."*  
– **Abby Adams**

*"If one way be better than another, that you may be sure is Nature's way."*  
– **Aristotle**

*"Nature does not tolerate the whimsical and the inane; all her structures are on principles, and she allows no others."*  
– **J. Ingram Bryan**

## BOOKS



### GREAT STREETS

by **Allan B. Jacobs**

Which are the world's best streets, and what are the physical, designable characteristics that make them great? To answer these questions, Allan Jacobs has surveyed street users and design professionals and has studied a wide array of street types and urban spaces around the world. With more than 200 illustrations, all prepared by the author, along with analysis and statistics, *Great Streets* offers a wealth of information on street dimensions, plans, sections, and patterns of use, all systematically compared. It also reveals Jacobs's eye for the telling human and social details that bring streets and communities to life.



### THE STORY OF PURPOSE

by **Joey Reimann**

Schooner Bay's good friend Joey Reimann, an educator and thought leader in the fields of ideation and purpose marketing, has just put out this excellent new book. Reimann contends that some ideas are bigger than others, and the Master Idea—your company's purpose—is the biggest. Whether addressing communication between leadership and associates, suppliers to manufacturers, sales force to customers, or brand to consumers, *The Story of Purpose* details a proven methodology for businesses, small to large, how to build a purpose-inspired organization to positively impact employees, customers, and the bottom line. It reveals the process for uncovering what makes a company distinctive and guides you to discover the fundamental force behind the organization that no competitor can replicate or replace.

### TED TALK: CHUCK MAROHN – THE IMPORTANT DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A ROAD AND A STREET

<http://tedxtalks.ted.com/video/TEDx1000Lakes-Chuck-Marohn-The>



In this 2011 presentation Strong Towns founder, Chuck Marohn, explains the difference between a road, which is a connection to two places, and a street, which is a network of activity. He stresses the importance of returning roads to towns for community and economic development. An informative and insightful lecture that will change the way you think about some of our most common civic places.





# TIME TO SIMPLIFY



*Located on the pristine beaches of Great Abaco in The Bahamas, just a short flight from Nassau and South Florida, is a unique place called Schooner Bay. It's a planned and phased authentic Bahamian harbour village, where stores, vacation cottages, homes and businesses will co-exist with the native landscape. A place where traditional architecture, true island*

*lifestyle and a myriad of experiences will cater to all, including tranquil beaches, nature trails, the arts, farming, eco-adventures and unlimited fishing. With the harbour now open and dockage available, this blossoming community, even in its early years is delightful. Welcome to sustainability. Welcome to tradition. Welcome to Schooner Bay.*



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