

Creole Day

Creole Day in St. Lucia was celebrated on October 24, 1999. It has become customary for the Department to celebrate with break-fast and lunch. This year was no exception, as the Department celebrated Creole day on Friday, October 22, 1999. There was the smell of salt fish, hot bakes and cocoa tea in every corner of the office.

In an effort to promote staff relations, the Administration and Data Processing Sections decided to come together, with Administration preparing Breakfast and Data Processing preparing Lunch.

The other Sections did follow suit and had their own breakfast and lunch.



Birthday Corner

Happy Birthday to:



Congratulations !!

to Mrs. Innocenta Vincent on her marriage !!!

ReveNews was written and produced by the Taxpayer Relations Unit of the Inland Revenue Department - St. Lucia

March 2000

Old Year's Day Luncheon

On Friday, December 31, 1999, the officers of the Inland Revenue Department enjoyed their customary Old Year's Luncheon. It was an activity-filled afternoon.

Following the luncheon there was a short presentation made by the Management Team where the following officers were presented with Certificates of Merit for their outstanding performance in 1999.

Congratulations to: Sophia Henry, Winster Frederick, Wayne Quinlan, Denise Dujon, Sean Greenidge, Leton Clovis, Cynthia Cox, Lisa Goodman, Kervyn Tobias, Cheryl Casseau, Allison Beniot, Arlene Williams, Lesley Ann Modeste, Benedict Joseph, Mansley Popo, Denise Regis, Martina Daniel, Priscilla Dworkasingh, and Norma George.



A special Comptroller's plaque was presented to Mr. L. Arnold (Ag. ACIR Data Processing), Mr. K. Tobias (Ag. Systems Administrator) and Mr. W. Martial (Network Administrator) for excellent teamwork and outstanding and dedicated performance in 1999.

The afternoon's activities did not end there. There was also a Kareoke session which was hosted by Ms. Solange Stanislaus of GEM Radio. At this Kareoke Session we realized that the Department was filled with talented persons. Ms. Dilia Jn Baptiste was specially acknowledged for her singing.

This Session lasted the rest of the afternoon. The officers of the Inland Revenue Department ended their year singing and looking forward to the year 2000.



Inland Revenue's Quarterly Newsletter

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Revision of Instructions	1
Editorial	2
What's New	3
Training/Lectures	4
Property Tax	5
Revenue Collections	6
Staff Profile	7
Old Year's Luncheon	8

Our Mission

The Inland Revenue Department stands committed in its impartial treatment of its customers. We aim to provide an efficient, professional and courteous service, while administering the relevant tax laws on behalf of the Government and people of Saint Lucia

October - December, 1999

ReveNews

Volume 4



October to December, 1999

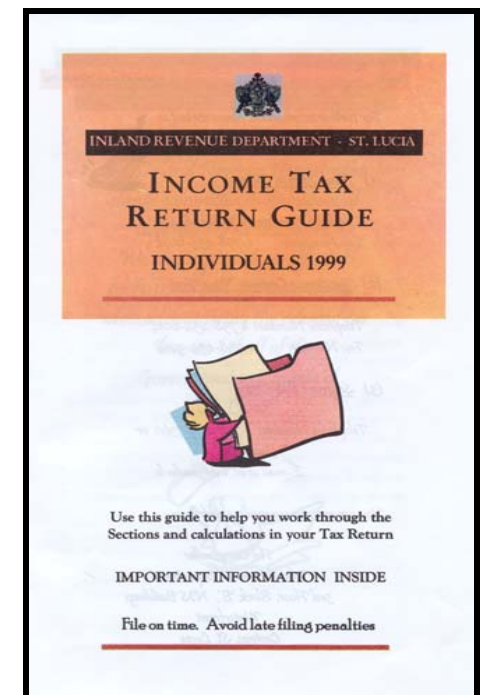
Revision of Tax Return Instructions

Numerous complaints from taxpayers as well as staff members saw Management taking the initiative to revise the Instructions which have accompanied the Individual Income Tax Return over the years.

The Taxpayer Relations Unit in a collaborative effort with Mr. Augustus Amedee, Ag. Senior Tax Inspector I in the Audit Section and Mr. Gaubert Alexander, ACIR - Property Tax & Tax Roll Section took on the task with great enthusiasm. In the early part of November the first draft of the new Income Tax Return Guide for Individuals was published.

The new Tax Guide is printed in colour, is user-friendly and gives step-by-step instructions on the completion of the Tax Return. It is very informative and highlights some of the new tax features introduced in 1999.

The Guide was given rave reviews by the Comptroller and other members of the Management team and is expected to play a meaningful role in the Department's Taxpayer Education Programme for the 1999 filing period and in future years. It was included in the package mailed to taxpayers for the 1999 tax filing period.



Use this guide to help you work through the Sections and calculations in your Tax Return

IMPORTANT INFORMATION INSIDE

File on time. Avoid late filing penalties

Editorial Committee

Agosta Degazon
Assistant Comptroller -
Administration & Objections
Chief Editor

Lesley Ann Modeste
Taxpayer Relations Supervisor
Associate Editor,
Writer

Arlene Williams
Taxpayer Relations Officer
Writer,
Layout & Design

Liaison Officers:

Leton Clovis,
Data Processing

Marva Mathurin, Audit

Peter Clery Auguste,
Property Tax & Tax Roll

Felicia Lubin, Collections

Hannah Epiphane,
Administration & Objections

Other Publications

The following brochures/booklets are also available from the Inland Revenue Department: -

- Know Your Taxes
- A to Z of Taxation
- Tax Facts - Personal Allowances & Deductions
- Tax Facts - Corporations
- Tax Facts - Small Business Enterprises
- Tax Facts - RHOS Plan
- Income Tax Return Guide for Individuals

Editorial - by Mr. Agosta Degazon, Chief Editor

Welcome to our fourth enlightening issue of ReveNews. Our sincere apologies for the late release of this issue. The Taxpayer Relations Unit was very busy working on another important assignment. Rest assured, however, that the next issue will be published much earlier. In fact, work has already started on the January to March 2000 publication.

A concerted effort is being made to improve our newsletter with every issue. This is consistent with our policy of continuous improvement in all aspects of the Department's operations. The management team has continually encouraged staff to strive for excellence. We ought not to be satisfied with mediocrity. We need to be creative, innovative, and diligent if we are to deliver the high quality customer service that is alluded to in our mission statement. Simply put - we must be outstanding. We should settle for nothing less than excellence in discharging our duties at the Department.

It is against this background that we congratulate all the staff members who were awarded certificates of merit at our annual year-end luncheon for outstanding performance in 1999. Special mention must be made of those officers who have received certificates of merit every year from the time it was introduced in 1997 namely Wayne Quinlan, Priscilla Dwarkasingh, and Arlene Williams.

Let us continue our good work as we strive to make our Tax Department the best in the OECS sub-region, the Caribbean and the World.

Recycling Project

The Youth Skills Section of the Department of Youth & Sports has undertaken the responsibility of a paper-making project in Marc called "Papye' St. Lucie".

Being environmentally conscious, the officers in the Taxpayer Relations Unit collected the many bags of shredded paper which the Department produces every day and contributed them to this recycling project.

The last visit was on the 25th of October, 1999.



October - December, 1999

Staff Profile - ELDAH PHILBERT

Mrs. Eldah Philbert affectionately known as Ms. Shalon has been employed with the Public Service for the past thirty five (35) years, all of which have been spent within the walls of the Inland Revenue Department.

She joined the Department on February 18, 1965, a day she vividly remembers for she entered the Department during the period when it was a male dominated office - of course the reverse exists today. Mrs. Philbert thinks her presence at the Department came at a crucial time, a time when the PAYE system was introduced and many forms which are used today were designed and implemented.

Ms. Philbert holds the position of Senior Tax Inspector I and she presently supervises the Taxpayer Assistance Unit. Over the years Mrs. Philbert has worked in almost every section in the Department, viz: Cash, Audit, Accounting, and Objections. She was even the Department's Paymaster at one point. Mrs. Philbert stated that the most challenging position she has held to date was Supervisor of the Other Employees/Traders Unit in the Collections Section of the Department.

When asked her reason for remaining with the Department all these years Mrs. Philbert stated that it was her love for taxation and her firm belief that all St. Lucians should contribute to the development of St. Lucia by adhering to their civic responsibility of paying taxes. She has always been a very proactive member of staff endeavouring always to treat both internal and external customers fairly and justly at all times. There have been many opportunities for Mrs. Philbert to leave the service, having been approached by many business places in the Private Sector.

During her years at the Department Mrs. Philbert participated in many training programmes, both internal and external. Two courses which stand out in her mind are the Commonwealth Tax Officers Course, which she attended in 1969 in England and the OECS/USAID Middle Management Course.

Mrs. Philbert is remembered for the part she played in the Department's initiative to open a Sub-office in Vieux-Fort. She was one of the first officers to be selected to work at the Vieux-Fort office which has since been upgraded to a Tax Service Centre. Mrs. Philbert thinks she was chosen for such a position because of her vast knowledge of the different areas within the Department and also because she is a resident of Vieux-Fort. Using the Vieux-Fort Office as a medium, she was able to create a certain level of tax awareness in that part of the island.

Mrs. Philbert is one of the most helpful persons to be found at the Inland Revenue Department today and firmly believes that persons are more likely to comply and pay their taxes if they know where their tax dollar is going.

Mrs. Philbert served as the Chairperson of the Regional Technical Coordinating Committee - Region 4, Micoud and Deputy Chairperson in Vieux-Fort. This committee was responsible for the different regions on the island. This task entailed assessing and fulfilling the needs of the people within her region in both the private and public sectors. She served for five years on this Committee.

Most of Mrs. Philbert's community services are tax related. She has represented the Department as a taxpayer relations officer in many communities, schools and also on a personal basis. Mrs. Philbert seems to have dedicated her life to the Tax Department.

Mrs. Philbert says that the Department has come a long way in terms of its services provided to taxpayers, but expressed her disappointment in the Department's staff relations. She urges the younger members of staff to become more professional and learn to treat each other with respect.



Mr. Eldon Mathurin, former Comptroller of Inland Revenue, made an impression on Mrs. Philbert because she learnt the intricacies of the St. Lucian tax system under his guidance.

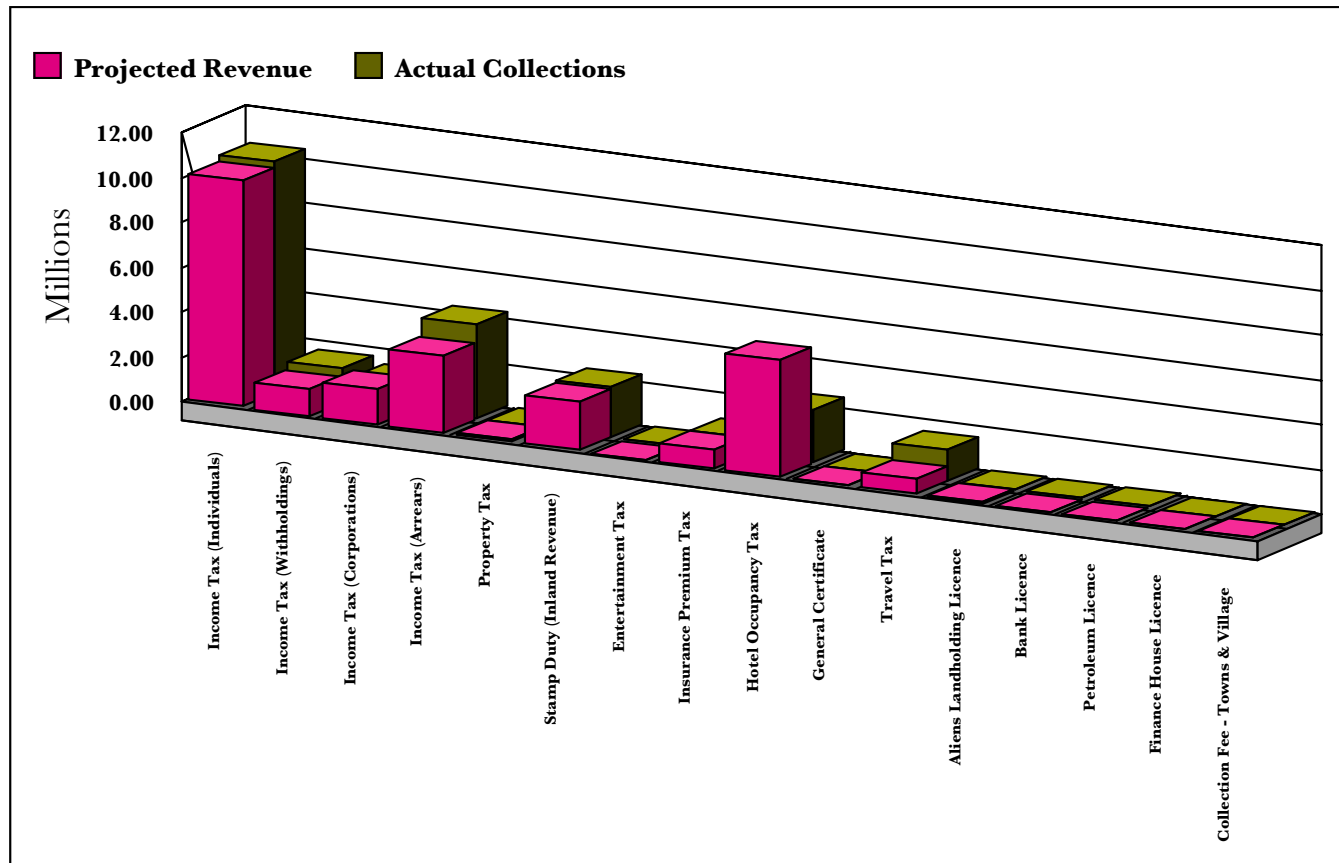
Fond memories are also held of Mr. Jeffrey Stewart, past Comptroller, who also had an impact on her career as a Tax Officer.

Mrs. Philbert will soon be retiring and says her future plans are to stay home and take care of her husband and children, which proved difficult in the past with her daily travel from Castries to Vieux-Fort. She would also like to write a book on her experiences at the Inland Revenue. Mrs. Philbert is notorious for her "green thumb" and hopes to continue working in her garden.

The editorial committee of ReveNews takes this opportunity to congratulate Mrs. Philbert on her 35th year at the Department. We wish her the best of luck in all her future endeavours.

October - December, 1999

Revenue Collections - October to December 1999

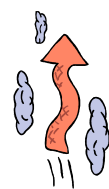


Trip to En Bas Saut

In late November, the Inland Revenue Sports & Cultural Club hiked to the En Bas Saut Waterfall in Soufriere. Reports coming from the participants indicated that even though the trip started out late and the turnout was poor, they "enjoyed it to the max".

The hike was very long and treacherous but the satisfaction of completing the journey made it a very worthwhile venture.

The hikers splashed around for about half an hour in the cold, but delightful water. The trip back seemed never-ending as a different route was taken by the hikers. There was a constant fear of getting lost and trampling on the snakes that roamed the area.



The above bar chart shows the Revenue Collections for the quarter.

Hats Off!!! We're Right on Target !!



"You never get ahead of anyone as long as you try to get even with him."

Lou Holtz

What's new in the Sections

Data Processing

- Mr. Lyndon Arnold officially assumed his new role as Acting Assistant Comptroller (Data Processing Section) on October 4, 1999. His successor as Systems Administrator, Mr. Kervyn Tobias, has shown that he is more than capable of handling his new responsibilities. Best of luck to both of them in their new posts.
- The Department welcomed the following eight (8) temporary officers to work in the Assessments Unit:-

- Imana Griffith
- Shani Willie
- Michelle Alexander
- Kimya Williams
- Shera Jn Baptiste
- Barbara Monroe
- Mildred Leonce
- Melissa Inglis

The officers were assigned our special annual project of sorting and organizing the tax-filing package to be posted to taxpayers.

Audit

The Audit Section bade farewell to the following Auditors:

- Mr. Andrew Morille, Senior Tax Inspector I was transferred to act Accountant II in the Ministry of Health; and
- Ms. Merlicia Malikan, Acting Tax Inspector II, proceeded to Trinidad to pursue the ACCA programme.

Property Tax & Tax Roll

The staff members of this Section welcomed their new Assistant Comptroller, Mr. Gaulbert Alexander, on the 4th of October, 1999.

After assuming his new responsibilities, it was time for a visit to the island's City, Town and Village Councils. The main purpose of the visit was to familiarise the Department's delegation with the operations of the Councils as well as to collect the various Tax Rolls.

The response from the various Councils was quite positive as evidenced by the enthusiasm and confidence of the delegation of persons who went to visit.

Mr. Alexander reported that the Property Tax Unit intends to have a good relationship with the Councils.

NEW STAFF



There was an addition to the staff of the Valuations Unit in the Property Tax Section in the person of Mr. Keith Louisy.

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome Mr. Louisy to the Department.



"The value of a man should be seen in what he gives and not what he is able to receive."

Albert Einstein

What's new in the Sections Continued

Administration & Objections

- The Administration & Objections Section welcomed two members of staff in this quarter. Ms. Ixora-Rose Emmanuel was assigned to the Refunds Unit whilst Mr. Anthony Samuel, who is here on a temporary basis, was attached to the Objections Unit.

It was very easy for these officers to settle as they are former employees of the Department. We are very happy to have them with us.

- Whilst this Section gained two employees, it lost two officers in the Objections Unit. Ms. Priscilla Dwarkasingh and Ms. Mansley Popo are now in Trinidad pursuing the ACCA programme. A farewell gathering was held in the Administration Section to mark this occasion. We were happy for these officers in their quest for self development. However, we were saddened to see them leave, even if it is only temporary.
- In an effort to encourage Christmas cheer, the Section held an exchange of gifts activity to encourage the spirit of giving and appreciation among staff members.

Lectures

Every year the Small Business Enterprise Unit of the Sir Arthur Lewis Community College invites the Department to deliver lectures to their Business Studies students.

Two lectures were conducted in December. The first was conducted at the school's campus in Castries and was facilitated by Ms. L. A. Modeste and Mr. S. Dickson. The second was delivered at their campus in Vieux-Fort by Ms. P.A. Soudatt, the Officer-in-charge of our Vieux-Fort Tax Service Centre.

TRAINING

Two officers of our Data Processing Section recently began the Intermediate Accounting course with NRDF.

We wish them the best of luck.

ON-THE-JOB-TRAINING

The Department welcomed Ms. Stephanie Henry who joined the Department in mid December on a two-week work experience project. She is an employee of Parry Husbands Chambers.

Ms. Henry was attached to our Systems Unit since her training was in the field of computing and networking.

Reports coming from the Systems Administrator, who supervised Ms. Henry during her short stay with us, indicated that she did a very good job and that her future is very bright in her chosen career.

Playing its part in providing a well rounded education to students, the Department welcomed five Form 5 students from the Seventh Day Academy.

The students joined us on a three-week work experience programme from the 14th to 31st December, 1999. They were assigned to the Audit and Collections Sections with one student assisting the Receptionist with her duties.

The students were Tatyana Hilaire, Ron Caesar, Junior Herman, Quentin Sleuthere and Toska Hippolyte.

Property Tax Our vision for the future

Property taxes originated as a method of distributing the cost of certain geographically based services such as education, fire protection, security, roads, health to name a few. The tax attempts to allocate the cost fairly among those who benefit from the services. The tax charged on each property is in proportion to the property's value. The Inland Revenue Department and the District Councils were charged with the responsibility of collecting property tax. The Inland Revenue Department collected property tax in the rural areas while the District Councils collected in the urban areas.

Government felt it was necessary to centralize the management, assessment and collection of tax on land and houses throughout St. Lucia. This led to the establishment of a Property Tax Section within the Inland Revenue Department in 1999.

The objective of the Property Tax Section is to value and assess all properties in St. Lucia in accordance with the property tax legislation. The Section is responsible for:

1. Registering all properties in St. Lucia.
2. Updating registration information when required on the database.
3. Generating property tax assessments to inform taxpayers of their liability.
4. Preparing a Property Tax Roll.
5. Preparing a Delinquent Property Tax Roll
6. Valuing every property in the island.

There is general consensus that the existing property tax legislation is outdated and needs to be replaced. This is as a result of a worldwide trend of establishing a more equitable method of valuing properties. The thinking is that the method of valuation used should be the market value approach instead of the Annual Rental Value approach which is currently in use.

Presently the Department is reviewing the proposed Land Tax and Valuation Acts. These two Acts are expected to replace the existing Ordinance.



The bitterness of poor quality service remains long after the sweetness of meeting the schedule has been forgotten.

New Staff at Vieux-Fort Office

As we all know our Vieux-Fort office has been under-staffed. In an effort to address this situation, the Department welcomed Ms. Merline Didier who was assigned to the Vieux-Fort Tax Service Centre.

Ms. Didier is no new-comer to the Department having worked with us before under the Short Term Employment

Programme (STEP).

The Department would like to take this opportunity to welcome Ms. Didier.



Giggles Corner

HA !

HA !

A woman walks into a lawyer's office and asks, "is it true that if I get divorced, I'm entitled to half of my husband's possessions?" "In most cases," answers the lawyer, "it is true. Are you getting a divorce?" "Not yet," the woman replies. "First, I've got to get married!!!"

HA !

HA !

HA !

HA ! HA ! HA !!!

HA !

HA !

