

'FRIENDS OF SEYCHELLES – PRESS' WELCOMES ON BOARD MONICA GRZESIK AND PROF DR. WOLFGANG THOME

The exclusive 'Friends of Seychelles – Press' group has welcomed two new members in the last month, in the names of Monica Grzesik from Dubai and Prof. Dr Wolfgang H. Thome from Uganda.

The chief executive of the Seychelles Tourism Board, Alain St Ange, has described both members as good friends of the country, who understand and appreciate Seychelles for what it is and who promote the unique attributes of the islands through their work. Monica works for one of the renowned Travel newspapers of Dubai and received her certificate from Mr St Ange last month during the ATM tourism trade fair.

Also present at the small ceremony were the Seychelles Tourism Board's deputy CEO, Elsie Grandcourt and the Seychelles' tourism manager for the Middle East, Julie Muirhead.

When presenting Monica with her certificate, Mr St Ange said that she had travelled many times to Seychelles and had written some very good reports on the country.

"It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to the press club and we look forward to seeing more of the good work that you produce on our islands, which shows that you understand our aims and

objectives and appreciates us for who we are," he said.

Dr. Wolfgang was on his part accredited during a very recent working trip to Seychelles and he too, Mr St Ange described as "very interested in our destination."

Dr. Wolfgang is an eTurbo News Ambassador and also issues his own daily online news network on Africa, called 'Wolfgang Thome's Weekly Roundup'.

He was called upon during the opening ceremony of the 2011 Seychelles Regatta last week to receive his certificate in front of an impressive crowd of world sailors, overseas journalists and local sailing enthusiasts.

A surprised Dr. Wolfgang, who was himself busy writing notes and taking pictures for his write-ups, had to switch role to guest of honour when Mr St Ange introduced him as a "dedicated member of the press who loves and writes a lot about Seychelles".

"We have used our major events and important tourism trade fairs to announce new members to the press club and today, it is fitting to name Dr. Wolfgang Thome, who is a dedicated member of press in Seychelles and who is here to cover the Seychelles Regatta," said Mr St Ange.

An emotional Dr Wolfgang said he was overtaken by this recognition and that Seychelles could be rest assured of his continued support.



Monica Grzesik receiving her certificate from Mr St Ange



A proud Dr Wolfgang becomes a member of the 'Friends of Seychelles – Press' group

SEYCHELLES PROUD TO HAVE OFFERED ROYAL COUPLE PEACEFUL AND PRIVATE GETAWAY

William and Catherine, Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, thoroughly enjoyed their honeymoon in Seychelles, where they spent ten days on North Island last month.

Present to bid the Royal couple farewell at the end of their retreat in the archipelago were the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr Jean-Paul Adam, the CEO of the Seychelles Tourism Board (STB), Mr. Alain St Ange, and the Seychelles High Commissioner to Great Britain, Mr. Patrick Pillay, along with the British High Commissioner to Seychelles, Mr. Matthew Forbes and his wife Lydia. Minister Adam said the people of Seychelles were truly honored that Prince William and his wife chose to return to Seychelles for this special holiday and "we are proud to have been able to offer them a peaceful and private getaway."

"There has been much speculation as to the whereabouts of the couple, but we pride ourselves in being discreet and offering an unparalleled level of privacy, which is why we have refused to confirm the reports till now. We hope their stay was everything they had hoped for and we look forward to welcoming them back to our shores again in the future," the



Source Photo _ AFP _ Getty

Minister said.

Following the media frenzy surrounding the Duke and Duchess, the Seychelles Coast Guard was on hand to assist the couple during their stay and ensure that they, along with the other guests of the island, were able to enjoy their holiday uninterrupted.

On their last day, the Duke and Duchess invited the Coast Guard crew members to the island to personally thank them for their efforts.

The head of STB, Mr. St Ange said that this was the first time Seychelles has had this unprecedented level of attention but he was pleased that Seychelles had been able to offer them the level of seclusion they deserved for such an important occasion as their honeymoon.

"It was also pleasing to note that they left happy and clearly content with their stay," added Mr. St Ange.

High Commissioner Pillay, who also attended the wedding ceremony in Westminster Abbey on the 29th April, said that: "In a world of so much turmoil they bring a welcome and much needed breath of fresh air with their warmth and humility."

SUBIOS EXPANDS TO BECOME 'SEYCHELLES FESTIVAL OF THE SEA'

The Seychelles Underwater and Image Festival – SUBIOS – which has been an annual event since 1989, is set to move to a new level this year as it expands to a spectrum of activities under the name 'Seychelles' Festival of the Sea.'

SUBIOS has long been a popular forum for showcasing the islands' magnificent marine heritage with a tantalising suite of marine-oriented activities, presentations, film-shows, school projects and of course, the image & film competitions.

The twin-pronged approach of educating visitors to the islands as well as the local Seychellois population has been especially successful. Each year, the organizers have chosen a specific theme that focuses attention on a particular marine domain and which showcases its potential as well as the challenges facing it.

Recent themes have included; *Cetaceans: Our Ocean Cousins*, *The Gardens Below*, *Wrecks as Ocean Habitats* and this year's theme, *Wonders beneath the waves*.

Traditionally, reinforcing each year's theme have been the guest speakers who enrich the festival with their expertise and whose various films and presentations serve to provoke discussion and so enhance public knowledge of Seychelles' marine worlds.

SUBIOS has also been very popular with the local schools which have received visits from the guest speakers and which have also contributed to the festival with poetry and painting competitions while at the same time benefiting from intro dives and boat trips.

This year, SUBIOS has ambitious plans to build on the excellent foundation that it has achieved over more than 20 years and expand its raft of activities to become a 'Seychelles' Festival of the Sea.'

Due to be held between from November 4-6 2011, the festival will retain certain traditional elements such as the popular Film & Image competition while embracing several new concepts in a venue on the beach front at Beau Vallon against a backdrop of a flotilla of decorated boats.

Plans include importing a giant inflatable whale and octopus all the way from Florida, organising a schools' raft-building competition & race, arranging for a choice of floating eateries as well as food-stalls with a seafood theme and a raft of other entertainment options, competitions and live music shows.

In a drive to give the new festival greater international exposure, four high-profile magazines have become official partners of SUBIOS. The four magazines are from the Asian Geo group: Asian Geographic, Asian Passport, Asian Diver and Scuba Diver.



2012 CARNIVAL PUBLICITY CAMPAIGN THUNDERS OFF

Seychelles has used the recent IIPT Conference in Lusaka, Zambia, to launch the publicity campaign for its 2012 'Carnaval International de Victoria'.

Alain St Ange, the chief executive of the Seychelles Tourism Board, spoke about the Seychelles carnival in his address at the Lusaka Conference and said the event is unique and different to other carnivals of the world for so many reasons.

"Seychelles is the host country for what is today regarded as the world's unique carnival of carnivals. We saw the need for all the countries of the world to be able to showcase their cultural groups, their achievements, their people and their uniqueness and this parading side by side with the best and the known carnivals of the world. This is why our carnival is so different and unique," he told the assembly.

Mr St Ange explained that during the 2011 edition of the Seychelles carnival, one could see a delegation of the great Notting Hill Carnival from Great Britain parading in the streets of Victoria followed by a cultural delegation from Zimbabwe, La Reunion and Indonesia, before seeing the Trinidad & Tobago delegation which was in turn followed by the cultural delegation from Madagascar and Zanzibar/Tanzania and South Africa.

"These are only some highlights of what went on in this year carnival and why the Seychelles carnival is called the 'Melting Pot of Cultures'," he said.

Seychelles remains the proud host of a carnival with a difference and has now announced that it has widened the scope of participation even further by inviting marginalized communities or ethnic groups to also use its carnival to bring their own exceptionally rich culture to the attention of the world.

"Today Seychelles has set that stage and the world is invited to one of the most beautiful countries to showcase what is dear to each and every country – their people and their very own culture," explained Mr St Ange.

Posters of this big event have already started to adorn offices' windows in Seychelles and the online campaign has thundered off as countries start to register for the second edition of the carnival, which will take place from March 2-4 in the Seychelles capital, Victoria.



The Seychelles Carnival brought the community of nations to Victoria

SEYCHELLES CARNIVAL ON CNN WORLD THIS WEEKEND

A rundown for this weekend's CNN programme, scheduled to air on Saturday June 4, Sunday June 5 and Monday June 6, has on report the last Seychelles Carnival.

Among the chosen topics under their bold resolutions announcement, the Seychelles Carnival is mentioned on the international platform amongst other reports such as *The largest gathering of locally-elected African women is held in Morocco*, *A controversial play in Bosnia takes aim at the EU*, *A Buenos Aires Beatles museum strikes a chord with tourists*, *Travelers soak in the rustic beauty of a remote island*

paradise in the Philippines, *The visually-impaired get a cinematic experience in Shanghai* and *navigate the 'Garden of the Senses' in Slovenia*, *An eclectic collection of instruments keeps Persian music alive in Iran*, *A famous acrobat in Guangzhou, China, faces an uncertain future*, *A flap over horse-drawn carriages sparks debate in Vienna* and *Wounded birds are given a second chance at life in Beijing*.

The Seychelles report is entitled 'Seychelles puts on a big show for Carnival' and the introduction reads "Carnival in Seychelles - Experience the music, pageantry and revelry of Carnival in

Seychelles. Uganda Broadcasting's Bart Kakooza was there for this year's celebration."

Alain St Ange, the chief executive of the Seychelles Tourism Board was thrilled when he heard that the island's carnival would again be screened on CNN.

"This is great and I invite all those who missed the Seychelles Carnival to tune in to CNN and get a taste of what our islands had put up for the community of nations. I hope that it will entice those who missed the 2011 episode to join the Seychelles on March 2-4, for the next edition of that unique carnival," Mr St Ange said.

SEYCHELLES NOTCHES ANOTHER SUCCESS WITH 2011 SEYCHELLES REGATTA

Seychelles closed its 2011 Regatta last weekend and described it as another success on the world sailing calendar.

The best from world class sailors travelled to Seychelles to participate in the island's annual sailing regatta, and among them this year were Loic Peyron, Michel Desjoyeaux, Samantha Davies, Jérémie Beyou, Francois Gabart, Armel Le Cleac'h, Romain Attanasio and the popular Servane Escoffier.

The Hyundai team, skippered by Beyou, were declared winners, close ahead of runners-up Champagne Nicolas Feuillatte, skippered by Desjoyeaux. Third place went to Fondéole Allianz, skippered by Gabart.

Alain St Ange, the chief executive of the Seychelles Tourism Board addressed the closing ceremony where all the international sailors and crew, sponsors and race officials and organisers had gathered.

Also present were the French Ambassador in Seychelles, Mr Philippe Delacroix and his wife as well as Barry Faure, the Secretary of State in the President's Office who is also the Chairman of the Seychelles Tourism Board.

"We have just ended another great event and on behalf of the tourism board, I say again thank you to all the international known sailors who have again travelled to Seychelles. You had ordered perfect weather and good wind, and these Seychelles duly delivered. You had a perfect race across our picturesque islands, you were able to appreciate our creole welcome and discovered Seychelles from the sea, we hope you will all leave us as true ambassadors who will spread the good times you enjoyed in Seychelles to the four corners of the world," said Mr St Ange.

The winner of this year's Regatta was

decided on the last leg of the race and seconds only separated the first and second finishers.

"The Regatta has become a tough competition and it gets more and more a battle of wits and experience with each edition," said main organizer Regis Elhaouel. The Seychelles Regatta has the spirit of 'camaraderie' and togetherness for the cause of the sport of sailing displayed alongside the competitive spirit.

"Seychelles was conceived

with sailors in mind," Mr St Ange had noted at the official opening of the Regatta and many of the sailors and their crew have confirmed that the race around the islands of Mahé, Praslin and La Digue were the most pleasing.



The boats lined up ready to race between the islands of Seychelles



The Hyundai crew celebrate their victory

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC LISTS ANSE SOURCE D'ARGENT AS WORLD'S BEST BEACH

The clean white sandy beaches of Seychelles have again pulled an international recognition as being the best in the world.

This time it is the National Geographic book that has listed one of the known Seychelles beaches – Anse Source D'Argent – as a top favourite. Anse Source D'Argent on La Digue has topped the list of beaches most sought after in the world.

Second after Seychelles' Anse Source d'Argent was the Maldives which was followed by Tahiti in third place.

STB chief executive Alain St Ange said he was happy with the survey published by the National Geographic book.

"Our beaches are one of our unique selling points alongside our clean and clear turquoise blue seas, our unspoilt nature and the diversity of our islands. Seychelles remains unique as a group of islands to have both granitic and coralline islands, the diversity of our people among others," he said.

"We are happy that a respected publication such as the National Geographic has taken notice of our beaches. Seychelles today has over 50% of its land area dedicated to natural reserves because we care about our environment and our government is clearly demonstrating they are serious custodians of our environment and unique treasures for our future generations and for the world to see as they visit this last paradise on earth."

"The seas are clean and clear, the coves and bays are some of the nicest in the world and the weather is just perfect," said one of the international sailors.

The remaining other positions in this year's Regatta were fourth-placed Maia (skippered by Peyron), fifth-placed Heineken (skippered by Davies and Escoffier), sixth-placed Bruno Aubriet Bâtiment (skippered by Le Cléach) and seventh-placed Tercognita (skippered by Attanasio).



Anse Source D'Argent remains a favourite beach in the world

ETIHAD TO FLY TO SEYCHELLES

The Seychelles Tourism Board has welcomed the decision by Etihad Airways to start operating flights to Seychelles from Abu Dhabi with effect from November 1, 2011.

Alain St Ange, the chief executive of the Seychelles Tourism Board said that this is good news for the Seychelles.

“Abu Dhabi is an important hub in its own right and the UAE is a potential market for Seychelles and this direct air link will only help to consolidate the Seychelles position as an accessible tourism destination,” said Mr St Ange

Etihad Airways has on their part said: “Etihad Airways, the national airline of the United Arab Emirates, will commence operations to Mahé in

the Republic of Seychelles on November 1, subject to government approval,”

Etihad will operate four return services per week from its home base in Abu Dhabi to Seychelles International Airport on Mahé. The service will be operated by an Airbus A320 aircraft, configured in Pearl Business and Coral Economy class, offering 1,088 seats each week.

James Hogan, Etihad Airways’ Chief Executive Officer, said: “The Seychelles has strong and growing appeal as a premium leisure destination, with increasing numbers of UAE residents and European travellers holidaying there. With the recent honeymoon of the Duke and

Duchess of Cambridge, the Seychelles is likely to gain new interest as a destination of choice. “Our increased frequencies from mid-2011 on some of our primary routes from Europe make the approaching Northern Winter period an ideal time to launch these new services. We expect this will be a hugely popular destination, in particular for holidaymakers from the Gulf Cooperation Council and European markets, due to the ease of connecting services through Abu Dhabi and convenient scheduling.”

In addition to the leisure appeal of the Seychelles, the United Arab Emirates – and Abu Dhabi in particular – have investment interests in the destination, further supporting Etihad’s entry to the route.

SEYCHELLES

Enters the world of Carnival



Alain St. Ange

This book is currently at the printers and should be in Seychelles at the end of the month.