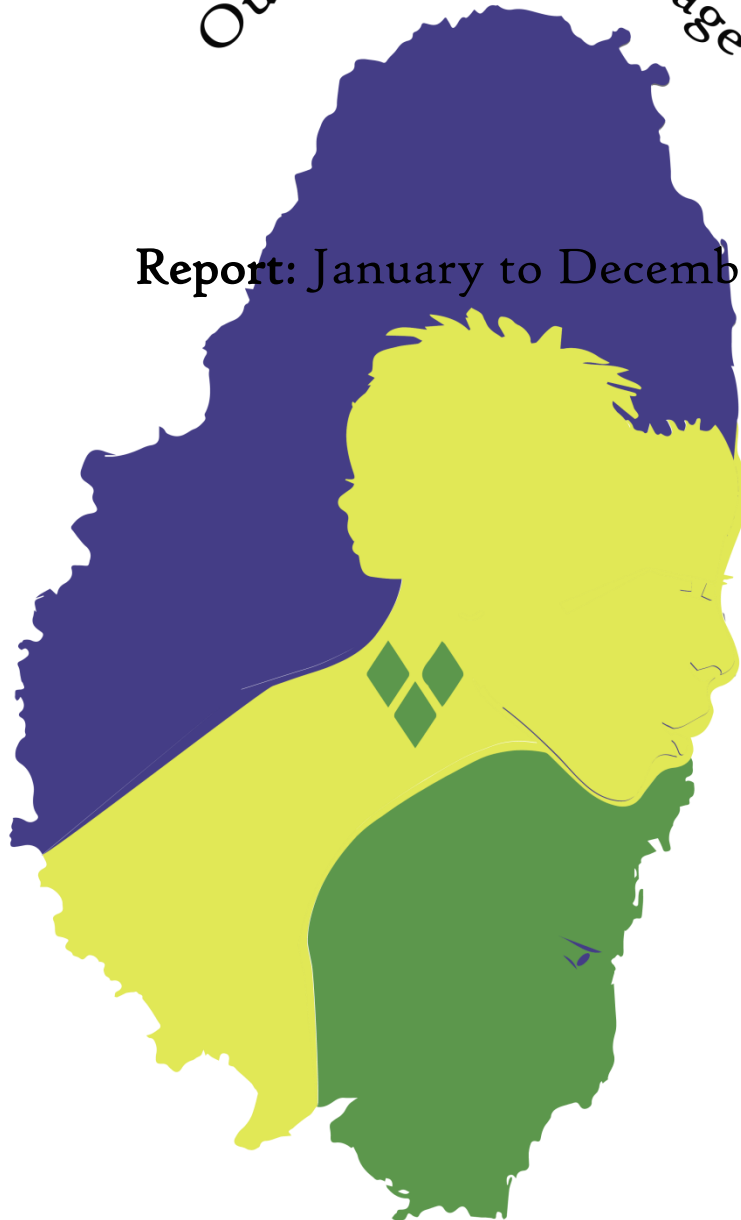


Preserving, Protecting, Promoting
Our Cultural Heritage

Report: January to December 2016



NATIONAL TREASURES[®]
OF ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES

National Treasures of St Vincent and the Grenadines'
Report: January to December 2016

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About the Organisation:

National Treasures of St Vincent and the Grenadines Incorporated is a non-profit organisation which was established in 2014. Discussions began in June of that year and over the following five months the framework for the entity was crafted. This process included identifying and setting up a Board of Directors; drafting a synopsis of National Treasures, a Proposal document, budgets, non profit company articles and By Laws; the legal requirements for registration; the Terms of Reference (TOR) for a logo design and seeking Cabinet/Government endorsement of the organisation.

Definition and Conceptualisation:

The idea for an organisation of this nature and the work that needs to be done emerged from conversations- over a twenty year period- with older Vincentians (in their 70's to 90's) and from listening to their oral histories both personal and general. Initially the focus was to be primarily linguistic and etymological: looking at words, phrases, sayings, meanings, origins, Creole dialectal variations, stories, etc. However, over time it became clear that not only were 'things' changing, but that there were few records of many aspects of our cultural heritage. Not only were the knowledge and oral histories being lost with the death of older Vincentians, but the younger generations would not have been exposed to many aspects of our cultural heritage, which would, unless some initiative was taken, eventually disappear.

The tangibles such as flat irons, drum ovens, photographs, written or printed materials are being preserved and can be used to illustrate how we lived etc., but what about the sayings, e.g. "*guava can't bring lime*"; the stories, the songs; the ways in which different communities, families, individuals lived, prepared foods, celebrated festivals etc.? What about oral histories? We need to preserve some of that which still exists before it dies with our older citizens and is lost forever.

Mission:

National Treasures of St Vincent and the Grenadines is committed to the procurement, preservation, protection, promotion and dissemination of that which encompasses the intangible history, heritage and culture of St. Vincent and the Grenadines and its people.

Purpose:

The purpose of National Treasures of St Vincent and the Grenadines is:

- (1) to fill the gap in the preservation of our cultural heritage by beginning the process of capturing some of the trove of knowledge, experiences, memories and oral histories which are a vital part of our cultural heritage in order to preserve some of that which still exists before it is lost forever.
- (2) To remind Vincentians about and/or raise awareness of our cultural heritage through the process of collecting or gathering the 'data' of our history, heritage and culture. This is intended to re-awaken or engender, (where necessary), a sense of national pride. Also it will help us to understand that which has made us what we are; and make us able to esteem or value ourselves as individuals, as a people and as a nation.

1. Administration/Management Structure

National Treasures of St. Vincent and the Grenadines is managed by a Board of Directors and officers of the company according to the Non-Profit Company By-Laws. A total of five Directors (one of whom is the Executive Director), and an Advisor constitute the Board. The following serve as directors:

Chairperson	Anthony Theobalds
Deputy Chairperson	Deirdre Myers
Treasurer	Tony Regisford
Secretary	Carlita Daniel - Executive Director
Director	John Horne
Honorary Member	Sir Errol Allen

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The Board is ultimately responsible for the full accountability of the organisation and its resources. Presently Board meetings are held at Frenches House and following an initial setting up period where the Board met twice per month, the Board now meets on a monthly basis to set guidelines in accordance with organisation's objectives; to assist with the work; and to review and assess the work and the performance of National Treasures; and to initiate fund raising and promotional activities.

The office of National Treasures, in the future, subject to available funds, will be staffed by an Executive Director, an Administrative Assistant, a Technical Officer, an auxiliary worker and volunteer support.

As of November 2014, the person to serve as Executive Director was identified and officially began working: carrying out administrative functions, fundraising, promoting the organisation; and began some of the work and research of National Treasures. Until the necessary funds are available the Executive Director works from home and receives a stipend.

Legal, Accounting/Auditing and Web Design and ICT services are presently being provided pro bono.

2. Legal Status

Zhinga Horne Edwards of ZHE Chambers provides legal advice and carried out the work necessary to set up and register National Treasures as a non profit company.

In October of 2014 the organisation was given the right to use the name National Treasures of St Vincent and the Grenadines after application to CIPO. Our application for non profit status was granted in November 2014, and National Treasures was registered on 14th November. In February of 2015 the By Laws were registered with CIPO.

In November 2014, once we were legally registered as a non profit company, National Treasures applied to the Minister of Tourism and Culture, to seek Cabinet/Government endorsement of National Treasures on behalf of the organisation. In June 2015 we received official notification that National Treasures had been fully endorsed by Cabinet.

Once our logo design and font style for the name of the organisation were finalised and approved by the Board, National Treasures applied to CIPO for Trade Mark registration on 30th June 2015.

As of December 2016 we were still awaiting the completion of the Trade Mark registration of our name and acceptance of our logo for Trade Mark Registration.

3. Financial: Budgets, Accounting and Funding

3.1 Budgets

A budget was drawn up for setting up and carrying out the work of National Treasures for the first two years. The budget included capital costs and running costs for Year One and running costs for Year Two. A Start up Budget was also included to cover the first six month period. However, as National Treasures did not get the financial assistance required to execute the proposed Year One and Two budgets, we have postponed the setting up of an office, identifying staff members and purchasing equipment until such a time as it is feasible.

3.2 Accounting

Arrion Barnwell of BDO Financial Services continues to assist National Treasures with accounting, bookkeeping and filing annual returns. Ms Barnwell will provide auditing services when and as required. She has also produced the 2016 Financial Report for National Treasures. (This has been included as Part Two of this report).

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3.3 Funding

In 2015 we received some financial assistance from The Bank of St Vincent and the Grenadines and Metrocint General Insurances and some funds came from subscriptions from Board members.

National Treasures continued to seek financial assistance from local businesses and organisations in 2015 and 2016. Early in the year two members of the Board of National Treasures met with managers of a few businesses and were invited to submit project proposals for funding- we wrote up the Treasure Trove and the Kingstown Heritage Walks for Schools; but while the response continued to be enthusiastic about what we are doing, no commitments were made to provide any financial assistance.

We also made applications for funding from a regional initiative and from a private charitable trust. In each case we sought to fund the equipment to film and edit the Treasure Trove interviews and to have our website designed, built and operational.

Late in 2015 we had spoken to the Island Manager of FLOW about assisting National Treasures with a mobile phone and we followed up in 2016 with this request in a letter. In May we were given a handset and monthly credit for six months.

Having identified Membership subscriptions and Supporters' donations as an ongoing source for raising funds, we produced a Membership/Supporters' form in the last quarter of 2015. The intention was to get as many people as possible St Vincent and the Grenadines to sign up in the first instance; and then to distribute the form through contacts in the UK, the USA and Canada.

Most of the funds we raised in 2016 came from subscriptions and supporters' donations mainly in St Vincent and the Grenadines, with a few persons from the USA and the UK signing up.

4. The Work of National Treasures

In 2015 we had identified the areas of our work with which we would begin- they were as follows:

- 1) Interviewing and videotaping Vincentians over 70.
- 2) Kingstown Heritage Walks.
- 3) Sayings, proverbs and idioms/Foods, drinks and herbal remedies.
- 4) One off Projects
- 5) Preparation of future projects

4.1 Interviewing and videotaping Vincentians over 70

This project is called the 'Treasure Trove'.

This project is a combination of filmed, audio recorded and face to face written interviews. Some will be biographical and most will document the memories stories of particular events, festivals, life in different communities etc.

One of the challenges was getting the interviews filmed, as it was costly to use outside sources; we spent much of 2016 trying to get the necessary equipment so we could do the filming and editing ourselves. We were not able to raise the required monies, but in about November of 2016 one of our Board members arranged for us to get the services of a freelance videographer who would not charge us but would be allowed use the footage on his streaming website.

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In 2016 two face to face, written interviews were completed- they were largely biographical and one which was incomplete due the health and failing memory of the interviewee.

4.2 Kingstown Heritage Walks

This project has been very involved and complicated so far and is intended as a fundraising and an educational initiative. The aim is to create a series of walks which will introduce tourists, Vincentians in general and students in particular to the history, cultural heritage and stories of the people of Kingstown in the first instance. Then to provide a tourism product, which will raise funds and give visitors to our country some exposure to our cultural heritage and history.

The Kingstown Heritage Walks project generated a lot of information which needs to be verified and organised so that it can once finalised be imparted to those who will train as tour guides. In 2016 we decided that the two routes in Kingstown needed to be edited, and that we needed a combined route which included the main sites and information. To this end Routes One and Two and a Combined Route were plotted. We then consulted an experienced London, UK tour guide as to what we should include, omit and ways of imparting the information in order to provide interesting and entertaining tours.

The volume of information has meant that the verification and checking for accuracy is a long and ongoing process which we have determined must be completed in 2017.

4.3 Sayings, Proverbs and Idioms, Foods, drinks and Herbal Remedies

We have continued with the collection, collation and documenting of sayings, proverbs and idioms and of foods, drinks and herbal remedies. Some of the information gathered is anecdotal and many people have different versions of the same thing. We are now in the process of putting together some of this information for the web site and will continue to collect and add to our store of information. We will also document some of the information for storage at the National Archives.

4.4 One off Projects

Many one off projects or topics will be part of our work when and as they occur or are relevant.

We are doing research and producing articles on various topics: once complete the articles will be published in the Vincentian Newspaper. The Vincentian has given a commitment to giving space to National Treasures for any articles looking at our heritage and history that we produce.

The first of these was on Victoria Park on the occasion of its 129th Anniversary. The story of how the Park came into being and how it was named was documented as a precursor to the 130th Anniversary in 2017 which we hope will be commemorated in various ways. The anniversary date is the 22nd June and the article appeared in the 17th June edition of the newspaper. We plan to do other such projects/articles of which we will include a longer version on our website.

The next project is a series of articles looking at the history of Carnival in St Vincent and the Grenadines to coincide with the 40th Anniversary of Carnival in June/July which was changed from the Pre-Lenten period in 1977.

4.5 New Projects

In 2015 we had completed the planning and setting of criteria for the three projects: 'Unsung Heroes', 'Pioneer Vincentian Women' and 'Schools' Pages' for our website. Eventually we focussed on the Pioneer Vincentian Women and the 'Schools Pages' and began collecting information and checking it. Our method is to select one or two at a time and then to continue to add individual women or schools and also to add any new information to each woman or school already written up.

We are working directly with some of the schools or past teachers of the schools to gather as much information as we can. We have started with schools over seventy years old- including schools which no longer exist.

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One other new project which we have started doing the preparatory work for is the honouring of a Vincentian who has excelled and has contributed so much, especially in their particular field, without the recognition that they deserve. We have enlisted the support of the Minister of Tourism and Culture et al and once we have gathered the necessary information, we will collaborate in the hosting of a function for the honouring of the individual. (This will take place once we have completed the necessary research.)

5. Affiliations and Collaborations

Last year National Treasures established links with The Ministry of Tourism/Department of Culture, The Department of Libraries and Archives, The St Vincent National Trust, National Broadcasting Corporation, the UWI Open Campus SVG, the St Vincent and the Grenadines Community College and the Girls' High School National Heritage Committee.

This year we continued to strengthen links especially with the Ministry of Tourism and the Department of Culture, the Department of Libraries and Archives, The St Vincent National Trust and the National Broadcasting Corporation.

6. Challenges

National Treasures has faced many challenges from its inception and continues to face many of the same challenges in 2016 as it did in 2015: 1) Financial, 2) Promoting National Treasures and 3) the Work of National Treasures.

6.1 Financial

The difficulties experienced in getting financial assistance locally and accessing international agencies' funding is still our biggest challenge. Funding from international sources was not available to us because National Treasures had not been in existence for the required minimum length of time (usually two years); or because St Vincent and the Grenadines was not eligible to apply or because some agencies were only offering funding on a national or regional basis- not to individual organisations. This is still the case in 2016 and generally funding globally has shifted focus and in some cases there are fewer sources of funds.

As reported under the funding section, we met with and submitted projects to a few businesses and charitable trusts locally, as well a regional initiative for financial assistance but we received no further communication, were turned down or could not complete the process due to some of the requirements.

The financial challenge, however, is one to which National Treasures will have to be more proactive in its approach in the future.

6.2 Promoting National Treasures

Promotion and Public Relations are still not at a level from which National Treasures can truly benefit. 2015 had many things which took precedence in terms of media and public attention- this was not the case in 2016 but opportunities were not capitalised on.

The articles which have been published in the Vincentian Newspaper have been well received, but that medium no longer reaches the widest possible audience. Social media (such as face book, twitter, what's app and websites) is definitely the most effective means of communication and promotion today. Once again in 2016 National Treasures

did not launch its website nor has it been able to get someone to set up and maintain a face book page. Both of which would have raised its profile significantly and promoted its work and activities.

The opening of an office was initially a priority in 2016; however two factors determined the decision to defer this. One was the inability to find a suitable location, and two the lack of finances to cover the overheads needed for operating an office. Members of the Board had considered two possible locations: the buildings that formerly housed the Intermediate High School and Bishop Woodruff's House next to the Archives. One was under private management and was to be sold and the other site was earmarked for development and had been temporarily in use by a Carnival Mas Camp. Ultimately, the lack of finances to operate an office at this time was the deciding factor.

National Treasures may have had some Promotion/Public Relations challenges, but we did not do enough to promote our organisation in 2015 and in again 2016. In the future we need to devise a plan and strategies to improve in this regard.

6.3 The Work of National Treasures

The work of National will always be a challenge in terms of the scope of work, especially as regards what should be a priority. Perhaps the most significant challenge, as we have found in 2016, is that a lot of the work undertaken consisted of research and sourcing and verification of information and this is time consuming, and often entailed depending on others to look for the information and contact us, this meant waiting for months and then not getting any useable information or that nothing had been done. There is also the problem of lack of documentation and proper record keeping or storage of information in St Vincent and the Grenadines on the whole.

The challenges of interviewing older Vincentians remain, especially regarding the health and memories of those who we would like to record. The challenges regarding the research of things seasonal remain also: in that the gathering information is time sensitive if it is to be relevant.

One other challenge which has and will continue to impact the work of the organisation is the lack of personnel: the few persons who carry out the work can only do so much, but we have on occasion gotten support and assistance from various individuals which have been most welcome.

National Treasures continues to focus on the concept, the purpose, the mission and the work and, while we recognise the magnitude of the challenges, we strive to overcome those we can while doing as much as we can.

7. 2016

This year has had its challenges and disappointments and while much of the work and accomplishments of National Treasures are not quantifiable, there have been some tangible achievements.

7.1 Administration of National Treasures

In November of 2016 National Treasures had been a legal entity for two years. And while we did not mark the occasion with any activity, we were proud to have achieved this milestone.

This year also saw the filing with CIPO of National Treasures' first Annual Return.

7.2 National Treasures' Logo

We applied for Trade Mark registration of both our logo and our name since 30th June 2015 and are still awaiting the conclusion of what has become a protracted process. In June of 2016 we were informed we could register our name but not our logo. We have asked for a special dispensation given the nature of the work in which we are engaged, but as of December 2016 we still had no progress on this nor had we received the confirmation of our name registration.

7.3 Continuing Relationship with the Bank of St Vincent and the Grenadines

In 2016 Mr Derry Williams, Managing Director of the Bank relocated and Mr Bernard Hamilton took over in SVG. National Treasures met with Mr Hamilton and Omari France from Marketing, and discussed the ways in which we could continue to work together and how the Bank could assist us. The main areas in which we agreed to collaborate are in assistance with marketing our organisation and support for some of our initiatives, especially fund raising initiatives. There is a shared commitment to preserving, protecting and promoting our cultural heritage between the Bank of St Vincent and the Grenadines and National Treasures.

7.4 Affiliations and Collaborations

The Prime Minister and the Minister of Tourism et al have continued to support National Treasures in many ways and have each met with us to discuss various pertinent matters. We put forward some ideas regarding the commemorating of the 40th Anniversary of Carnival in June/July which were well received and have subsequently been acted upon.

The Department of Libraries invited National Treasures to attend a meeting about the UNESCO World Memory Body- where SVG is to gather information about entries either local or regional for the World Memory. The Indian Registry is being put forward. National Treasures was suggested as a member for the local body and our Chair person will represent us once the entity is established.

The Archives has provided us with their resources to research various articles and in turn we have provided information at their request and submitted documents to be archived. We have also met to discuss how best to locate, gain access to, sort and store various administrative documents from the 1800's and early 1900's.

The National Trust assisted us with the use of the Curator's House at the Botanic Gardens which is under its stewardship, for our Annual General Meeting in May of 2016. We also collaborated and wrote a joint letter to the National Lotteries' Authority regarding commemorating the 130th of Victoria Park in 2017.

The National Broadcasting Corporation has continued to be very supportive of the work National Treasures is engaged in and has invited us onto various programmes to talk about our organisation and various relevant topics as well as offering the opportunity to produce our own short programme about matters of history, heritage and culture. National Treasures, whenever possible, has provided information especially for the 'This Day in History' segment on NBC.

7.5 Annual General Meeting

National Treasures' first Annual General Meeting and Social took place on Wednesday, 4th May 2016. It was held at the Curator's House, Botanical Gardens, Kingstown, courtesy of the National Trust of SVG. The meeting was from 5.00 p.m. for about an hour, followed by the Social which also lasted about an hour. The background to National Treasures, a review of 2014 to 2015, the Annual Report, a Presentation and the Confirmation of Members of the Board were the main items on the Agenda.

The Social was in keeping with our cultural heritage in terms of the food, drink and the music. There was also an exhibition of old photographs mainly of Kingstown, taken by Albert 'Juss' Edwards and kindly displayed for us by his daughter Marissa Edwards.

7.6 Working with Community groups/Community Heritage:

National Treasures spoke to the Brighton/Belvedere Neighbourhood Watch Group and the Rathomill/Prospect Group about the idea of looking for heritage sites etc, in their communities and working to preserve and protect them and document them. For example an old well from the Prospect Estate days has been revealed along the main road and it should be researched and then cleaned up and signage placed at the site. This could be the first such project for the area's neighbourhood watch group. We started with these two groups and got some names of active groups from other areas.

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The Rathomill/Prospect group then organised a Heritage walk on Independence Day starting at 5.30 a.m. from Prospect to Diamond, Brighton and back to view sites on the route. National Treasures and the Brighton/Belvedere Neighbourhood Watch Group were invited to join them and about 25 persons including several young persons were on the walk. It has been suggested that a clean-up be done of the Diamond Airport terminal building and tunnels for the river be done to coincide with the opening of the Argyle International Airport.

8. 2017

The three key areas on which National Treasures will focus in 2017 are the same as in 2016:

1. Engaging in income generating and fundraising activities,
2. Completion of work started last year and planning the work priorities for this year; and
3. The promotion of National Treasures- especially launching our website.

8.1 Income Generation/ Financial Assistance

In order for our work to continue, National Treasures needs sufficient funds for equipment and supplies and to pay the necessary personnel. The ways in which this will be done are one, for National Treasures to generate income or raise funds and two, to seek financial assistance and donor funding.

Income Generation and Fundraising

The following are some of the activities we intend to engage in:

Production of Commemorative and Promotional items:

- Collectibles depicting aspects of our history and cultural heritage.
- Tee shirts with proverbs, sayings or idioms/ designs which reflect our heritage.
- Tee shirts with National Treasures logo and name.

Annual events-

- A Heritage Treasure Hunt at Carnival time
- National Treasures' Cultural Showcase

Regular Events/Activities-

- Kingstown Heritage Walks
- Kingstown Heritage Walks for Schools
- Island Heritage Walks

Financial Assistance

In 2017 National Treasures will present to the companies which have provided financial assistance in the past a report for 2016 which will include financial statements. We will be seeking to continue such relationships and hope that they will assist us.

We will meet with and to speak to other companies about providing financial assistance to carry out or complete some of our work. In addition we will be approaching some companies to seek sponsorship for our various events and activities.

Donor Funding

National Treasures has been exploring the possibility of applying for donor funding from regional and international agencies, in 2017 we will identify new sources of such funds and where possible make applications. Where necessary we will request assistance from Central Government and/or the Ministry of Tourism, Culture et al. with such applications.

Having been established for three years, we should be eligible for consideration for some of the available funding in the areas of preservation and promotion of heritage and culture.

Membership Drive

We have signed up some members in 2016 but need to significantly increase the numbers of members and supporters which will provide an ongoing source of revenue and assistance to carry out some of our work. We intend to include people from as many countries in the Diaspora as possible and to establish National Treasures of SVG in England in the first instance then in the USA and possibly Canada to facilitate membership, donations and work projects.

8.2 The Work of National Treasures in 2017

Our work in 2017 will include the continuation and completion (where applicable), of work already begun; and some 'new' projects identified from our Proposal document. We will include also work on any relevant new topics. Some projects on which work will continue are: the Kingstown Heritage Walks; (including walks specifically tailored to primary and secondary schools); the Treasure Trove interviews of older Vincentians, Pioneer Vincentian Women and the Schools' Page.

Work will be on going to gather information on seasonal and historic events, and produce articles for publication and our website.

We will also continue, in conjunction with the work and research, to disseminate information in a variety of ways and seek feedback and contributions from Vincentians.

8.3 Promoting National Treasures and working to establish a tangible presence.

It is clear that many Vincentians either do not know that National Treasures exists or what it is and to address this we must do more to promote National Treasures, to raise its profile and to establish a tangible presence.

The National Treasures' website will be launched in 2017 and this will give us a link with Vincentians both at home and in the Diaspora. Also we have to create a face book page which will enable us to reach a wider demographic-including younger Vincentians.

We endeavour to take full advantage of offers of media coverage on radio, television and in the newspapers. These activities will also serve to raise our profile as they will include programmes produced by National Treasures as well as coverage and interviews about our organisation and our work. National Treasures will also continue to support other organisations and assist, if we can, with the work they are doing.

National Treasures must be more proactive about documenting our work, our involvement in events and any collaborations; both in terms of audio visual/photographic and written accounts.