

AEBI 427 Final Report: Eco-Tourism Marketing Project: Farley Hill National Park, Barbados

Shuang Liang, Sabrina Gill, Francis Tersigni

1. Abstract

We worked with the National Conservation Committee (NCC) of Barbados to develop various marketing and educational materials for Farley Hill National Park. Farley Hill National Park is an eco-tourist destination in Barbados, notorious for being an ideal picnic location, as well as the host of many large scale festivals. To determine what materials we wanted to produce, we conducted a variety of research initiatives. We deliberated with NCC officials, such as our mentor Mr. Carlos Dottin and Farley Hill National Park General Manager, Mr. Stanley Grimes, to discuss the major challenges to marketing. We also scrutinised various online reviews from credible sources such as TripAdvisor to gauge opinions from previous patrons. Additionally, we interviewed visitors to receive feedback regarding what they would like to see. After conducting our research, we decided upon creating an updated tri-fold brochure, an interactive discovery hunt for different age groups, and a proposal to the NCC regarding tree catalogue information for the development of future QR codes, as well as other recommended future initiatives. We successfully completed all intended projects, and present them in our final presentation. These materials are going to be reviewed by the NCC before further editing and final implementation.

2. Introduction

Farley Hill National Park is situated in the Saint Peter's parish of Barbados. The park serves as an ideal location for relaxation and recreation among the towering canopy of impressive trees. Once the site of a regal mansion, the ruins stand today as an enchanting backdrop to the serene park. As one of the tallest points in Barbados, Farley Hill features a breathtaking view of Eastern Barbados and the Atlantic Ocean. The park serves as a multifunctional space for picnics, weddings, movie shoots, and music festivals, such as 'Soca on De Hill'.

3. Objectives

After consulting with the patrons of the park and the NCC regarding what they would like to see more of, we identified two major objectives for our project:

1. Create educational materials, which will engage various age demographics. After an interview with our advisor, Carlos Dottin, he informed us that "...most of the guests in Farley Hill are locals. And a lot of them are children of school age [children]. And their parents and they ask a

lot of questions. So it will be good for locals to have a great understanding of what Farley Hill is or what Farley Hill meant or the impact of hist of Farley Hill in terms of Barbados.”

2. Create marketing tools, to increase Farley Hill profits. Again, we were informed by Carlos that another NCC priority was “to improve revenues for the Commission [NCC]. And as a tourist destination.”

We devised three initiatives to complete the two aforementioned objectives:

1. General Brochure: inclusive of information regarding administrative details, photoshoot locations, a brief history of the park, events that are hosted, and more.
2. “Discovery Hunt” Worksheet: For younger demographics, there is a ‘checklist’ of certain features of different plants for them to find. For teenagers, this worksheet identifies 24 trees, divided into 3 sections, where students have to find the tree. For older generations, there are QR codes on every display panel for them to learn more information.
3. Proposal: inclusive of potential future initiatives that could be implemented at Farley Hill.

The following literature review section will outline the various reasons why our initiatives achieve the objectives set out by the NCC.

4. Literature Review

Target Market Reasoning

Barbados is known for its up-scale tourism which is characterized by infrastructure such as villas and luxury resorts, golf resorts, and timeshares.¹ Thus, at the moment, the type of tourism that is prevalent in Barbados is not compatible with the kind of tourism that the National Conservation Commission (NCC) envisions for Farley Hill, which mainly uses ecotourism approaches. According to The International Ecotourism Society (TIES), ecotourism is defined as “responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment, sustains the well-being of local people, and involves interpretation and education”.² Kiesha Farnum, the managing director of Walker’s Institute for Regenerative Research and Design (WIRRED) explains that agro tourism or ecotourism is still of minor importance in Barbados’ tourism industry and can be further developed.³ Due to this, foreign tourists do not commonly visit

¹ Philippe Seguin, “Trade Policy Impact on Land Use and Food Security in the Caribbean”, Barbados, Holetown, St. James Parish, June 26, 2019.

² Carlos Dottin, personal communication, June 3, 2019

³ Kiesha Farnum, Walkers Reserve, Walkers Savanna, July 3, 2019.

Barbados for its ecotourism offerings and are rather more interested in up-scale tourism.⁴ Additionally, Carlos Dottin explained that the majority of visitors to the park are locals who are seeking a relaxing afternoon in the quaint park.

However, we still recognize that foreign tourists might be interested in enjoying Farley Hill. As ecotourism becomes more prevalent in Barbados (evidenced by sites such as Walker's Reserve, Andromeda Gardens, Hunte's Gardens, and PEG Farm and Nature Reserve) and the country gains more recognition for its ecotourism sites and activities⁵, Farley Hill may eventually become an important destination for foreign tourists. The park will allow tourists to enjoy a relaxing and beautiful environment while simultaneously learning about the rich history and biodiverse range of tree species found at Farley Hill. Therefore, we are designing our materials in a way that will still be useful for both local users of the park and potential foreign tourists.

After analyzing hundreds of online reviews from Google and TripAdvisor, we extrapolated the key trends and ensured that positive feedback was highlighted in our brochure and discovery hunt. The most common results were that visitors wanted more activities for children, more information regarding the history of the park, as well as various locations for photoshoots. We also received information through interviewing several park users, such as families, Farley Hill staff, and summer camp supervisors. Some positive reviews state that locals commonly visit Farley Hill for its relaxing, breezy and beautiful atmosphere, and to entertain children. The constructive criticism that was found in the reviews will be reworked into our materials and activities to demonstrate that Farley Hill has considered these criticisms and overcome them. These criticisms include the lack of activities for children and the lack of historical and ecological information about the park.

After learning about the current state of Barbados' tourism industry, and researching and surveying the experience of those who have visited the park, we decided to make local visitors, more specifically families and groups with children (such as school and church groups), our main target audience. Thus, we want to design materials and activities that could provide information that is interesting and useful for both the young and adult visitors of the park.

To further promote ecotourism projects for the NCC, Carlos Dottin explains that the results from our project at Farley Hill could be implemented in other NCC national parks throughout Barbados. According to Carlos Dottin:

“If we can extrapolate what we do at Farley Hill through this project into those other areas, it will create a whole tour essentially that we could market with cruise ships, hotels.

⁴ Philippe Seguin, “Trade Policy Impact on Land Use and Food Security in the Caribbean”, Barbados, Holetown, St. James Parish, June 26, 2019.

⁵ Kiesha Farnum, Walkers Reserve, Walkers Savanna, July 3, 2019.

There's a whole branch of tourism that we are looking at – ecotourism. This will get us into the market with ecotourism [...].”⁶

The remainder of the literature review section will outline how we will consider the experiences of our target markets, the reviews of park users, and considerations from NCC and Farley Hill staff to guide our brochure, interactive scavenger hunt, and informative QR codes.

Brochure Content Reasoning

The brochure will act as a channel to promote education and marketing for Farley Hill, and will include the following features: photoshoot locations, a map of the park, history of the grounds, event space offerings, administrative information, and an equity notice.

Photoshoot Locations

During our first meeting with our supervisor, Carlos Dottin, he had expressed that many guests visit the park to have picnics, explore, and take pictures in the park.⁷ In fact, Carlos said that taking pictures is becoming more integral to the marketing strategies of the park, especially since social media platforms, such as Instagram, are on the rise in Barbados.⁸ Featuring various photoshoot locations is a method of simultaneously attracting tourists and channeling greater marketing through a stronger social media presence. When a group has minimal prior knowledge of your organization, online photos are vital to allow potential customers to visualize your offerings.⁹ Additionally, online photo sharing allows people to share experiences that they enjoyed and recommend them to their friends online, thereby encouraging word-of-mouth marketing.¹⁰ For Farley Hill, sharing of photos on social media platforms will spread the word to those who may be unaware of the park's offerings and allow potential visitors to more easily grasp the beauty, history, and activities offered in the park.

Furthermore, we wanted to put forth this initiative in line with a new wave of ‘influencer culture’ that the younger generation is experiencing. According to the BBC, “there's a curious trend you might've spotted sweeping through tourist hotspots...influencers and their increasingly elaborate photoshoots... [who are] rapidly building a new, online economy. And businesses have begun responding to this trend by

⁶ Carlos Dottin, personal communication, June 18, 2019.

⁷ Carlos Dottin, personal communication, June 3, 2019.

⁸ Carlos Dottin, personal communication, June 18, 2019.

⁹ "Benefits Of Photo-Sharing Services For Business | Business Queensland". *Business.Qld.Gov.Au*, 2019, <https://www.business.qld.gov.au/running-business/marketing-sales/marketing-promotion/online-marketing/photo-sharing/benefits>.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

offering photography services tailored for people who crave professional-quality shots for their Insta feeds.”¹¹ To appeal to younger generations who are engaged and dominant on social media, we wanted to feature these scenic photoshoot locations in our brochure.

Map of the Park

We wanted to include a new and updated version of the map, because the other versions that we found were outdated, inaccurate and/or incomprehensible. We found one map in the old brochure, but it had marked several now non-existent park features and it had handwritten annotations all over. We looked at the map that is featured on a display panel at Farley Hill, but unfortunately there was no soft copy for us to use and annotate when planning out our scavenger hunt. Thus, using information from both maps, we created a new map to correctly feature all of the geographical highlights of Farley Hill and to use it for our discovery hunt map.

History of the Grounds

We wanted to include a section elaborating on Farley Hill’s history because we found that this information is largely lacking in availability; it cannot be found on the internet or brochures that visitors can keep. The history of the park is so rich and important to understanding infrastructure such as the ruins of which Farley Hill is known for. Thus, in including the history, we hope to “teach people how to think analytically while at the same time noting and appreciating innovation and creativity”¹² about the origins of the park, and how they relate to the history of Barbados as a whole. The Forest School Canada explains that storytelling is a way to “teach, engage and provoke thinking”¹³ in children and adults alike. Thus, this educational aspect of the brochure will contribute to ecotourism for Farley Hill and engage visitors through storytelling and historical insight.

Several park visitors indicated that they would like to learn more about the history of the park and specifically about the origins of the ruins and those who used the buildings and grounds in the past.¹⁴ Similarly, online reviewers of the park indicated that they would like to know more about the park’s history and that there is little to do and learn about while visiting Farley Hill.^{15 16} Since there is minimal

¹¹ "How We're All Being Changed By Influencer Culture - BBC Three". 2019. *BBC Three*. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bbcthree/article/b5488f38-e9c4-4e0c-95e2-3002f47f88f8>.

¹² "What Is History's Role In Society?". 2019. *BBC News*. <https://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-19844685>.

¹³ *Forest and Nature School in Canada: A Head, Heart, Hands Approach to Outdoor Learning*. Ottawa, Ontario: Forest School Canada, 2014. P.g. 32.

¹⁴ Anonymous, personal communication, July 5, 2019.

¹⁵ "Google Maps". 2019. *Google Maps*.

<https://www.google.com/maps/place/Farley+Hill+National+Park/@13.2644294,-59.5952725,15z/data=!4m5!3m4!1s0x0:0xd09dab2bded0748f!8m2!3d13.2644294!4d-59.5952725>.

information on the history of the park and many want more activities to do while at Farley Hill, including a history section in our brochure will allow visitors to learn about the history of the park and incite more interest and curiosity into the park's past.

Information regarding the history of the park was sourced from Farley Hill's old historical brochure and various online resources, which will be explained in more detail in the Results section (see 1. General Brochure, E. Historical Timeline).

Event Space Offerings

We wanted to include details about Farley Hill being an event space because it is a major marketing selling point, as affirmed by our advisor Carlos Dottin.¹⁷ Although Farley Hill is mainly a venue for leisure and picnics, we also want to advertise it as a multifunctional space. These events are crucial in generating revenue, which, according to Carlos, is one of Farley Hill's biggest concerns as they are underfunded and under-marketed.¹⁸

This will be evidenced by highlighting several precedented events at Farley Hill in the brochure, including weddings, school field trips, and church bonding events. With particular reference to weddings, which is an initiative that Farley Hill administration wants to focus on in the coming future, we plan to link this to our 'photoshoot locations' information, so that couples know the best places to take wedding photos.

Most notably, Farley Hill is a popular venue for several music festivals, such as 'Soca on De Hill' and 'Reggae on De Hill.' In regards to Soca on De Hill, which happens late July, the event is incredibly popular due to its affiliation with Crop Over.¹⁹ Crop Over is a festivities period, happening over 2 to 3 months during the summer, in which several events all over the island celebrate Bajan culture and the historic end of the sugarcane crop harvest.²⁰ As such, Soca on De Hill is marketed as "the most anticipated Soca party, and is the signature event during the ever-popular Barbadian Crop-Over Festival."

²¹ It happens at Farley Hill because its outdoor and open venue space is the perfect place to listen to live

¹⁶ "Farley Hill National Park (Saint Peter Parish) - 2019 All You Need To Know BEFORE You Go (With Photos) - Tripadvisor". 2019. *Tripadvisor*.
https://www.tripadvisor.com/Attraction_Review-g1183146-d148698-Reviews-Farley_Hill_National_Park-Saint_Peter_Parish_Barbados.html.

¹⁷ Carlos Dottin, personal communication, June 28, 2019.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ "Barbados Crop Over 2019 - Most Colorful Festival In The Caribbean". 2019. *Visitbarbados.Org*.
<https://www.visitbarbados.org/crop-over-festival>.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ "Soca On De Hill". 2019. *Socaondehill.Com*. <http://socaondehill.com/>.

music and have picnics with friends. A ticket to Soca on De Hill is priced at \$40 USD²² and draws large crowds to Farley Hill, thus this event serves as a major marketing tool for the park. For more information on the effect of this event on Farley Hill, see the Discussion section.

The brochure allows Farley Hill to advertise the park in various locations such as restaurants, cruise ships, and hotels. The event section serves as an advertising tool where potential visitors of the park are able to visualize the offerings provided by the park, such as Soca on de Hill which can potentially draw many visitors to the park.

Administrative Information

When researching Farley Hill online, we had difficulties finding important administrative information about the park. Details such as opening/closing hours and admission rates are not easily available on Google²³ and Farley Hill does not have its own website. We hope that by including this information in our brochure, it will help future guests to access and share this pertinent information more easily.

Equity Notice

We wanted to include an equity notice regarding respecting the natural environment, in line with Barbados' new natural beautification initiative. According to the Barbadian government "The Ministry of Environment and Natural Beautification is to promote and facilitate the sustainable use of our resources by encouraging the involvement of all citizens and the integration of environmental considerations into all aspects of national development."²⁴ This has included initiatives across Barbados to clean up trash and prevent littering. As such, this is something we wanted to advertise in our brochure; to remind guests to be more mindful of their impact on the natural environment and to do their part in keeping Farley Hill clean and enjoyable for all visitors of the park, whether they be humans or animals.

²² 2019. <https://ticketlinkz.com/events/socaondehill/>.

²³ "Google Maps". 2019. *Google Maps*.

<https://www.google.com/maps/place/Farley+Hill+National+Park/@13.2644294,-59.5952725,15z/data=!4m5!3m4!1s0x0:0xd09dab2bde0748f!8m2!3d13.2644294!4d-59.5952725>.

²⁴ "GOV.BB". 2019. *Gov.Bb*. <https://www.gov.bb/Ministries/environment>.

Organisms of Interest

We had originally intended to include an ‘organisms of interest’ section that would highlight a number of tree and/or animal species that are commonly found in the park. However, in order to avoid overloading our brochure with content, we have decided to highlight our “organisms of interest” in our interactive discovery hunt. Please see our “Discovery Hunt Reasoning” section for further elaboration.

Discovery Hunt Reasoning

We chose to create an interactive discovery hunt for several reasons. Firstly, upon analyzing online reviews and surveying various guests of the park, many of whom were families/groups with children, we learned that many of them would like to have an activity for the children to do at the park.²⁵ ²⁶ ²⁷ Currently, the major attraction for children at Farley Hill is a playpark. However, visitors of the park explained that the playpark is very worn down and they wished that it would be refurbished.²⁸ Unfortunately, NCC’s financial limitations prevent the refurbishment of the playpark in the near future, therefore meaning that our discovery hunt will serve as an economical means for Farley Hill to provide more activities for children. When we discussed the idea of our interactive discovery hunt with park visitors, many responded positively, suggesting that we perhaps also include information regarding historical sites²⁹, which we will include in the ‘History’ section of the brochure. After analyzing online reviews of the park, it was clear that many past visitors found that the park had little activities for children, and adults alike, to engage in.³⁰ Since children and their parents or supervisors are a major proportion of our target audience, we hope that this worksheet will act as a ‘pull’ factor to attract more visitors.

Secondly, we learned that especially for younger children, an effective way of engaging them in educational experiences is through understanding “how play stimulates a child’s natural curiosity to learn”³¹, according to the British Council, who coordinates several cultural and educational opportunities.

²⁵ Anonymous, personal communication, July 5, 2019.

²⁶ "Farley Hill National Park (Saint Peter Parish) - 2019 All You Need To Know BEFORE You Go (With Photos) - Tripadvisor". 2019. *Tripadvisor*.

https://www.tripadvisor.com/Attraction_Review-g1183146-d148698-Reviews-Farley_Hill_National_Park-Saint_Peter_Parish_Barbados.html.

²⁷ "Google Maps". 2019. *Google Maps*.

<https://www.google.com/maps/place/Farley+Hill+National+Park/@13.2644294,-59.5974612,17z/data=!4m7!3m6!1s0x0:0xd09dab2bde0748f18m2!3d13.2644294!4d-59.5952725!9m1!1b1>.

²⁸ Anonymous, personal communication, July 5, 2019.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ "Farley Hill National Park (Saint Peter Parish) - 2019 All You Need To Know BEFORE You Go (With Photos) - Tripadvisor". 2019. *Tripadvisor*.

³¹ "Five Essential Tips For Teaching Very Young Children English | British Council." 2019. *Britishcouncil.Org*. <https://www.britishcouncil.org/voices-magazine/five-essential-tips-teaching-very-young-children-english>.

Additionally, the Forest School Canada explains that “Children’s experiences with learning are defined by their capacity for inspiration, innate sense of exploration, strong desire to learn through play, and their level of engagement with their surroundings.”³² This worksheet will enable children to learn about the biodiverse ecology featured at the park through a fun ‘scavenger hunt’ game.

Thirdly, according to Mind Tools, there are three main ways of learning: through audio, visual, and/or kinesthetic support.³³ In many cases, teaching is only geared towards one or two of these channels. However, this discovery hunt aims to teach and cater to all three of these learning methods. Audio teaching comes from being able to discuss and collaborate with other children and staff at the park in order to locate and learn about the various plant species put in the discovery hunt worksheet. Visual cues come from looking for the specific plants and matching them with our interactive worksheet. Kinesthetic learning comes from incentivizing the children to walk around and explore the park, helping them to stay engaged in the activity.

Overall, our discovery hunt utilizes the information gained and a great deal of creativity on the part of its designers to create a game that is engaging to many members of the park. The following section will outline the main age groups visiting the park and why they were chosen.

Age Groups

To accommodate the needs of variously aged visitors of Farley Hill, our Discovery Hunt will have aspects that appeal to different target age groups.

I. Ages 4-7.

- This group will require simple games, such as a checklist where children are asked to identify a plant with a certain colour. While older children can engage in more complicated activities, this young age group is distinct in that they require simple tasks.³⁴

II. Ages 7-12.

- Based on interviews with visitors to the park, analyzing online reviews, and information from the NCC, we identified that the most common age group of children attending the park are children aged 7 to 12 years old. Thus, this section comprises the majority of the discovery hunt. To aid

³² *Forest and Nature School in Canada: A Head, Heart, Hands Approach to Outdoor Learning*. Ottawa, Ontario: Forest School Canada, 2014. P.g. 21.

³³ "VAK Learning Styles: Understanding How Team Members Learn". 2019. *Mindtools.Com*. <https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/vak-learning-styles.htm>.

³⁴ "How to Have an Outdoor Leaf Scavenger Hunt With Your Kids |." My Kids' Adventures. January 19, 2014. <http://www.mykidsadventures.com/fall-leaf-scavenger-hunt/>.

children in the discovery hunt, we will include descriptive and informative clues that the children will use to find different plants in the park.

III. Ages 12+.

- Though this age group will be engaged through the historical timeline and photoshoot locations in the brochure, QR codes will also be used in the discovery hunt to engage teenagers and adults visiting the park. The following section will elaborate.

QR Codes

QR code, which stands for “quick response” code, is a type of two-dimensional barcode that has a large data capacity of 7,089 numeric characters and 4,296 alphanumeric characters.³⁵ It enables the scanner to have instant access to detailed information, which can be presented in various different formats such as text, picture, video, or web pages.³⁶ In addition to its large data capacity, it also offers several other advantages which make QR codes an ideal tool for designing a digital scavenger hunt for Farley Hill National Park and NCC. Firstly, it can be scanned from any direction.³⁷ This characteristic makes it easier for children to scan the codes, especially in the context of group activities. Secondly, QR codes can still be read correctly with up to 30% barcode area damage.³⁸ This feature is very important for outdoor activities like the scavenger hunt that we created since outdoor conditions (e.g. human activities, animal activities, weather) are unpredictable. Moreover, since NCC is relatively under-funded, this characteristic allows NCC to operate this activity with low maintenance.

In terms of costs of operation, the creation and implementation of a QR scavenger hunt would not pose any stress on NCC neither in terms of staff, nor in terms of funding. The creation of QR codes is a fairly simple and easy process as we have demonstrated during our final presentation. As we already finished the gathering and editing of information for this scavenger hunt, the NCC staff only need to put these texts and pictures into a QR code generator, print out the generated code and display them throughout the park on trees that we already marked with a rope, using a display panel template that we have designed (refer to figure A in Appendix). We provided a more detailed step-by-step protocol in our proposal to NCC in order to further facilitate the implementation process for the NCC staff. Moreover, both the QR code generator and scanner can be found on a wide variety of devices with different systems,

³⁵ Mehmet Emek, “Usage of QR Code in Tourism Industry,” 6th World Conference for Graduate Research in Tourism, Hospitality and Leisure (2012): 2.

³⁶ Ibid., 1.

³⁷ Kellie A. Shumack, Erin Reilly, and Nik Chamberlain, “QR Code Mania!,” *Strategies: A Journal for Physical and Sport Educators* 26 no.3 (2013): 10.

³⁸ Emek, “Usage of QR Code in Tourism Industry,” 2.

and most of them are free of charge.³⁹ In particular, we found out at the Andromeda Gardens that the camera application that comes with iPhones is able to recognize QR code in the absence of Wi-Fi and cellular service. Upon further testing, we observed that this feature seems to be available for iPhones and iPads with iOS 11 and up. However, we were unable to find out exactly which devices or which system updates enable this feature. Consequently, we did not write any instruction for the visitors regarding how to obtain a scanner and would recommend more research or testing by the NCC. More detailed recommendations will be discussed in the “Discussion” section of this paper.

In terms of its educational value, Chung et al.’s study suggests that QR codes offer two main advantages when it comes to education in informal learning environments. Firstly, most children who used QR codes to learn about the designated topics of this research expressed increased interest to learn more about these topics in the future than those who used exhibition display panels.⁴⁰ Secondly, children who used QR codes in their learning process generally scored higher than those who did not in a test designed by the researchers.⁴¹ Thus, Chung. et al. concluded “QR code scanning can serve as an effective, informative and engaging tool for supporting informal learning”.⁴² An informal learning environment is defined by Chung et al. as “including public spaces such as museums, outdoor facilities or shopping malls”.⁴³ According to this definition, Farley Hill National Park can be considered as an informal learning environment once our scavenger hunt activity is implemented. Thus, we believe that the positive learning outcomes associated with QR code in informal learning environments found in Chung et al.’s study can be readily applied to our scavenger hunt activity at Farley Hill.

Lastly, the implementation of a QR code scavenger hunt has the potential of attracting more foreign tourists to Farley Hill National Park. As shown by Figure 1 below, most foreign tourists welcomed by Barbados in 2014 and 2015 come from the United Kingdom, the United States and Canada.⁴⁴ Among the top 10 users of mobile barcodes in the third quarter of 2011, these three countries were respectively ranked in fourth, first and third place.⁴⁵ Therefore, we believe that the implementation of a QR code scavenger hunt can be the first step that Farley Hill National Park and NCC can take in order to attract more overseas tourists.

³⁹ Ibid., 4.

⁴⁰ Chung et al., “Quick Response Code Scanning for Children’s Informal Learning,” *International Journal of Information and Learning Technology* 36 no. 1 (2019): 47.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid., 49.

⁴³ Ibid., 38.

⁴⁴ Barbados. Barbados Statistical Service. Socio-Economic and Gender Statistics Division. *Annual Report of Tourist Arrivals*. 2015/2014. 6.

⁴⁵ Emek, “Usage of QR Code in Tourism Industry,” 3.



Fig. 1

In terms of the practical considerations of this activity, we met with the NCC’s Deputy General Manager on August 2nd and discussed about the feasibility of this project. Both the Deputy General Manager and our mentor, Carlos Dottin, showed great interest in implementing and even extrapolating this activity to the other parks and museums managed by NCC such as Queen’s Park, King George V Memorial Park, Heritage Park, Folkestone Park and Marine Reserve, etc.

5. Methodology

Brochure

Step 1: Conduct market research

- To begin our market research, we analyzed online reviews and interviewed park visitors to extrapolate the most important positive and critical. Additionally, we worked with NCC staff to understand the information that they would like to be incorporated in the brochure.

Step 2: Design a brochure outline that responds to the guests’ feedback

Step 3: Discussion with project mentor

- We presented our outline to our project mentor, Carlos Dottin, to see if all of the required sections were included. We then reworked our brochure to include missing information or exclude unnecessary points. For example, we originally included the ‘Barbados Jazz Festival’ as an event that occurs annually at Farley Hill, however it is no longer held there due to pricing difficulties.

Step 4: Research

- We then conducted in depth research of the brochure content. We researched the history of the grounds to create the historical timeline, took photographs of popular locations in the park as described by Carlos Dottin, and found old maps of the park to create an updated map.

Step 5: Compile gathered information

- We created a draft by inputting all of the brochure content into the outline.

Step 6: Design the final brochure

- Using our first draft, we interviewed various members of the public to ensure that the brochure was easy to understand and aesthetically pleasing. This process involved creating multiple drafts until we ended with a final copy that we were pleased with.

Discovery Hunt

Step 1: Choose desired plant species and take pictures of them

- We took an initial walk around the park and noted interesting looking plants/trees and marked them on our updated map. We also included plants that were deemed to have historical or cultural by our project mentor.

Step 2: Identify the plants

- We initially used an old plant catalogue, *Farley Hill National Park Tree List*⁴⁶, to match them up with the plants that we had chosen. Based on the expertise of NCC staff, Carlos Dottin and Stanley Grimes, many plants were able to be identified. We sought advice from Sean Carrington, a Caribbean plant's specialist, who was able to identify a number of plants based on pictures that we sent him. Carrington then directed us to theplantlist.org, where we could check the scientific names of each tree to verify whether or not that name was still in use. He explained that this was necessary since a plant's name changes over time, or there may be different names in different regions of the world. We then double checked the scientific names online to verify that online images of the plant matched photographs that we took.

Step 3: Design a path by selecting specific plant species

- A path was created so that visitors could start at the entrance and end at the gazebo lookout. The path is numbered based on the identified plants and we ensured that there was a minimal distance between plants. We displayed the numbered path and each plant's location on our updated map.

Step 4: Mark selected plant species with a yellow rope

Step 5: Research

- We used theplantlist.org, multiple texts, and other online resources to gain additional information about each plant, such as the family name and the origin. For the Discovery Hunt, we required information on each plant's visual appearance in order to provide clues for children to find the plants visually. Thus, we chose information based on the visual appearance of the trees and any other additional information was used for the QR code content, wherein the plant could be explained in more detail. The Bellairs Research Institute library was particularly helpful for this

⁴⁶ Farley Hill National Park Tree List, n.d.

step in that it contained multiple books with detailed information regarding many of our selected plants. We cross-verified information gained from the texts using online databases to ensure that the information was up to date.

Step 6: Compile gathered information

- We created short clues for each plant that could be used in the ages 7-12 discovery hunt. We then inputted each plant's short clues into a chart that would be used for the children to find the plants. Additionally, we incorporated more extensive information about each tree into the QR code content.

Step 7: Design worksheet

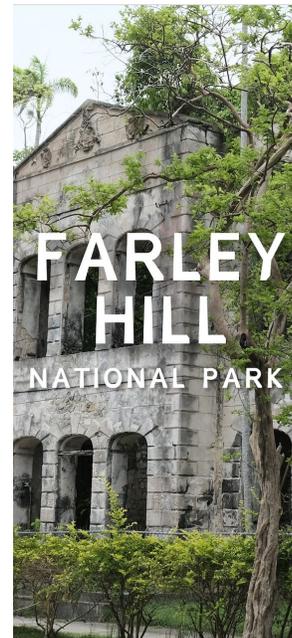
- We created a draft and interviewed members of the public to ensure that the discovery hunt was easy to understand. The draft was revised multiple times until we were satisfied with the final product.

6. Results

1. General Brochure

The updated general brochure that we created is a trifold document that includes several pieces of key information regarding Farley Hill. This will be given to patrons at the park entrance, and will be theirs to keep after their visit. The brochure is broken down into the following components.

A. Front Page - which features an original photo (by Sabrina Gill) of the famous Farley Hill Ruins. It also features the NCC logo.



 National Conservation Commission

<p>B. Introduction - gives a comprehensive summary of the rest of the brochure’s content and Farley Hill’s appeal.</p>	 <p>Introduction</p> <p>Welcome to Farley Hill National Park! Farley Hill is the ideal location for relaxation and recreation, where patrons can come together for a day of fun. The tranquil landscape features a plethora of diverse plants and animals, as well as an awe-inspiring view of Eastern Barbados and the Atlantic Ocean. The famous Farley Hill ruins, which was once the most impressive mansion on the island, has an incredibly rich history, and has acted as the iconic backdrop for many music festivals, weddings, and movie shoots. Farley Hill is a premiere multifunctional space, and a Barbadian staple that you cannot miss!</p>
<p>C. Amenities - features 5 of the major amenities at the park, presented iconographically.</p>	 <p>Amenities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Picnic Tables Free Wifi Bathrooms Play Ground Car Park
<p>D. Equity Notice - Barbados has a “National Beautification” policy, which regulates the maintenance of the natural environment. To promote this initiative, we included this equity notice in our brochure, to remind guests to be respectful and safe when present at Farley Hill.</p>	<p>Equity Notice</p> <p>In line with Barbados’ National Beautification policy, please help to maintain our park.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Throw away litter in designated bins. • Do not disturb the living organisms of the park, particularly the monkeys. • Do not write on the infrastructure. • Do not approach the perimeter.

E. Historical Timeline - As mentioned previously, after conducting market research, we found out that many guests wanted to learn more about the history of the park, more precisely, the history of the ruins. Thus, this section is designed to meet their demands by providing a brief overview of the ruins' history. We chose to present this information in the form of a timeline because we think that this format will be easy to read for all.

In terms of the sources, we mainly used the old brochure that Farley Hill had and did some additional research using Barbados Museum and Historical Society's Facebook page. One thing that we paid particular attention during our research is the fact that we noticed that the only woman who was named in Farley Hill's old brochure was Queen Elizabeth II and the other women were only referred to by the title of their relationship with a man. For example, Mary Jane Briggs (born Howell) was never named and was only referred to as "Sir Briggs' wife" or "his widow". This is actually a common trend in the study of history. Thus, we made extensive effort to find her name because we believe that it is important that later generations can call her by her name. We finally succeeded in finding her name in *The Archives of the Briggs' Family*.



F. Events - Farley Hill hosts several large scale and small scale events. This section features some of the long standing events that have occurred in the past.



Events

Gospel Fest: An annual Christian festival with multi-talented Gospel performances.

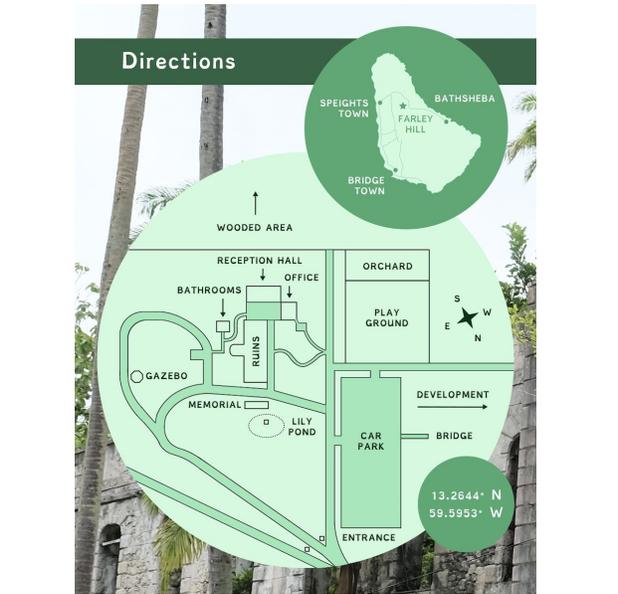
Music Festivals: The location of the ever famous "Reggae on De Hill" and "Soca on De Hill".

Weddings: Farley Hill features a beautiful garden and a gazebo. Contact the NCC for more details.

School Field Trips: Pick up the Farley Hill Discovery Hunt at the park entrance.

Picnics: Farley Hill is the ideal picnic spot, with picnic tables, a cool breeze, and bathrooms.

G. Directions - featuring a map of Barbados, and where Farley Hill National Park is on the island. It also features an original map of the park, with various amenities. Furthermore, there are the GPS coordinates of Farley Hill.



Directions

Map showing the location of Farley Hill National Park on the island of Barbados, with labels for Speight's Town, Bathsheba, and Bridge Town.

Map showing the layout of the park with various amenities: WOODED AREA, RECEPTION HALL, OFFICE, BATHROOMS, RUINS, GAZEBO, MEMORIAL, LILY POND, ORCHARD, PLAY GROUND, DEVELOPMENT, CAR PARK, BRIDGE, and ENTRANCE.

GPS coordinates: 13.2644° N, 59.5953° W

H. Administrative Information - contains information regarding admission fees, opening hours, and contact information. This information was unavailable online. It was only available at the park, on various signs.



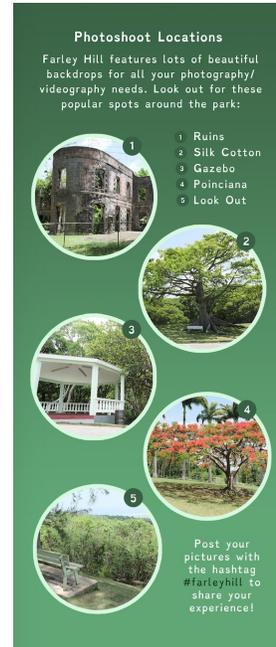
Hours
Open daily: 8:30am-5:30pm

Entry Fees

BUSES.....	\$29.50 BBD
MINI-BUSES.....	\$23.50 BBD
CARS.....	\$6.00 BBD
MOTORCYCLES.....	\$3.50 BBD
WALK-IN.....	FREE

Contact Information
Address: Highway 2, St. Peter's Parish
Telephone Number: (246) 425-1200
Email: ncc@caribsurf.com
Web: www.nccbarbados.gov.bb

I. Photoshoot Locations - features 5 ideal photoshoot locations in Farley Hill. These are ideal for potential future weddings, or for guests looking for vacation photos. These photoshoot locations are ideal for potential future social media initiatives, where guests can use the hashtag #farleyhill when posting their photos.



2. Discovery Hunt

The discovery hunt is broken down into three major components for three different age demographics.

I. For ages 4-7, we have a checklist. Small children, accompanied by their parents, walk around and try to find plants with general and identifiable characteristics. (e.g. find a plant with red flowers).

II. For ages 7-12, we have a discovery hunt. Children will locate a plant in a section, and find a corresponding letter. After collecting all the letters in that section, children will have to unscramble the letters to form a word. The word is the answer to a question on the back of the worksheet.

III. For ages 12+, the display panel next to each plant on the discovery hunt has a QR code. If people were to scan the code, they would find compiled information regarding that plants. The content for these QR codes is in our final NCC proposal.

3. NCC Proposal

As our project is of a short duration, there are many things that could not be completed during our stay. However, we want to leave a development plan that will contribute to the long-term sustainability of tourism at Farley Hill National Park. Thus, one constituent of our final project is a proposal that will be submitted to NCC for internal reference. This proposal will contain the following elements:

- Constructive criticism collected from park users and visitors, both local and foreign, through interviews in person or reviews from different review websites such as Google Maps and TripAdvisor;
 - Various plans that we envisioned for the improvement of marketing strategies and tourism at Farley Hill National Park that we were unable to complete due to various constraints such as the short duration of our project, lack of funding, or insufficient staff from the NCC.
- * See attached document in the submission email for the completed report.

7. Discussion

Challenges

One major problem that we faced was the fact that, halfway through our project, when we were mapping out trees and the infrastructure of the park, we were informed that the NCC had to extend the fence around the ruins, up to 40 feet further out. This decision was made after they had brought in an engineer consultant to examine the ruins' structure and the consultant had determined that the structure was too unstable for close human contact. Thus, the fence needed to be widened. However, to our surprise, this extension did not end up affecting our project in any significant way as our mentors asked us to not take the fence into account while mapping the park's grounds as it will be a temporary structure. As for our discovery hunt, we were still able to incorporate some plant species in the garden area even if the fence removed half of it from public access. In terms of the wedding venue, after exploring the park for several weeks and discussing with our mentor, we believe that Farley Hill National Park can still offer a very stunning and unique wedding venue in the other areas of the park until the ruins' structure is stabilized (see attached document in the submission email – NCC Proposal).

Another challenge we encountered was several communication difficulties with our mentors or NCC staff. For example, for the whole duration of our project, we have been planning a meeting with Ricky Marshall and the NCC's Public Relations Department. However, the response time amongst many of our advisors was sometimes delayed, and it took a long time to determine meeting times and places. Moreover, unfortunately, Ricky Marshall had to cancel both of our meetings due to personal emergency. Nevertheless, we were able to meet with our mentors several times and with the NCC's Deputy General Manager once to confirm the overall direction of our project and the marketing strategies we developed.

Another thing that delayed our initial plans was that fact that we only received the internal plant species catalogue halfway through the project. However, as this document is about 10 years old and many new plant species were added to Farley Hill during this time period, many plant species were not recorded in this document. As such, it still took us a long time to correctly identify the plant species we chose for

our discovery hunt. Luckily, our mentors had extensive knowledge about the plant species in Farley Hill and they were able to identify certain species for us and to double check our work.

All in all, although it took longer to begin working on certain initiatives than we previously planned, we adjusted our strategies around this inconvenience and were still able to come up with satisfying results.

The Impacts of Soca on De Hill and Other Major Events Hosted at Farley Hill

We do recognize that many events hosted at Farley Hill each year, such as Soca on De Hill, do not fit the ecotourism model that we envision for the tourism at Farley Hill. As discussed earlier, ecotourism is defined by the International Ecotourism Society (TIES) as the following: “responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment, sustains the well-being of the local people, and involves interpretation and education”⁴⁷. Having experienced Soca on De Hill ourselves, we can assert that these events do the complete opposite of conserving the natural environment at Farley Hill. Firstly, alcohol is usually heavily involved in these events and, sadly, contributes to the destruction of natural flora and fauna. Secondly, people leave a considerable amount of trash on the grounds after the events. Even if the event and Farley Hill staff would do a cleanup in the days following the events, it is impossible for them to pick up every piece of trash, nor to reverse the harm already caused by this litter. Moreover, it is possible that animals ingest some of the trash before the staff can pick them up. Lastly, our mentor Carlos mentioned that the influx of people at these events causes the soil to become more compact afterwards, which will hinder the healthy growth of vegetation. Although the flora eventually recovers several months after the events, the negative impacts of these events cannot be ignored. Both the NCC and our group are aware of the damages such events can cause to the natural landscape of Farley Hill, which is something that the park relies on heavily to attract visitors. However, upon discussions with our mentors and staff at Farley Hill, we realize that it is extremely difficult to find a solution to this dilemma in the short-term since these events often bring huge revenues to the NCC and act as a major marketing tool for the park. Although we do believe that the NCC always tries its best to minimize the damages caused by these events, we still hope that the NCC or event organizers could develop more strategies in the future to improve the long- and short-term sustainability of such events.

⁴⁷ "What Is Ecotourism - The International Ecotourism Society". *The International Ecotourism Society*, 2019, <https://ecotourism.org/what-is-ecotourism/>.

QR Code Research

As discussed above, we were unable to find out exactly which mobile devices and/or which systems have the QR code scanner feature integrated. Therefore, we recommend the NCC to either do more research or testing to find out detailed information about this matter before writing instructions for the visitors to inform them of the steps they need to take in order to obtain a scanner.

Cost Estimations

This report does not include any cost estimation as our mentor, Carlos Dottin, explicitly excluded this process from our project objectives from the start. However, for the whole duration of our project, we did take into consideration that Farley Hill is currently short on revenues while designing the marketing tools and activities. For example, one of the major reasons why we chose QR codes over other types of interactive technology was its outstanding cost efficiency. Another example is that Carlos mentioned that producing a trifold brochure would be less costly for the NCC to produce, compared to other materials such as a booklet, since the NCC has its own printers which are designated to print marketing materials in specific formats.

8. Conclusions

We presented our results (the general brochure, the discovery hunt worksheet, the NCC proposal) in our final presentation. Our results were well received by our audience, and most importantly, Carlos Dottin our mentor. We gave both the hard and soft copy of our results to our mentor, who will review these materials with NCC managers for future implementation. Our list of future recommendations comes in the form of our NCC proposal, which is a separately submitted document.

9. Acknowledgements

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Jeff Chandler, Program Advisor

Francis Lopez, Program Advisor

Paula Figueroa Delgado, Program Assistant

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Appendix

Figure A. Display Panel Template for the Discovery Hunt

