

# **NATIONAL CULTURAL POLICY**

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## **MONTSERRAT**

*(DRAFT)*

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# **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This Executive Summary presents a brief philosophical statement, the policy positions of the government and the aims of the policy. It defines culture, outlines the areas of national life considered in the policy and provides a selection of the action to be taken. The policy document emphasizes the importance of the development of a sense of self-worth and national pride, the role of folkways in defining a Montserratian identity and the role of training, research and documentation in cultural development and preservation. Particular emphasis is placed on culture as a means of broadening the frame of economic activity. The co modification of aspects of culture brooks of no debate; it is inevitable in these challenging economic times. The policy is presented against a backdrop of the Montserrat cultural landscape.

## **Philosophical Statement**

Montserrat's culture is rooted in its history with all its trials and triumphs. Culture is not only dynamic and subject to influences and changes over time, but it is also dialectical, meaning that while it springs from history and development, culture also impacts and informs development. The cultural policy focuses among other things on those bedrock aspects of island culture which give a distinctive identity and spirit to the people and promote social cohesion.

## **Definition of Culture**

Culture is defined as the distinctive way of life of a people called Montserratians. The arts by which is meant creative and disciplined expressions of mind, hand, spirit and imagination such as dance, music, painting, design, craft and literature are important aspects of culture. It is treated however as wider than the arts, inherited beliefs, values and traditional practices. The arts themselves are regarded as economic assets and the commercialization of culture generally is accepted as reasonable and prudent. Beyond this, culture embraces the physical and spiritual environment, the ambience of peace which characterizes the country and the indomitable spirit of its people in the face of disasters.

## **Proposed Policy Position of the Government of Montserrat**

- a) Culture is a total human experience transcending the arts but they are a very important aspect; and therefore every effort should be made to facilitate the development of the artistic potential of all Montserratians.

- b) Development of the arts is a development of human resources and provision should be made for training in and outside educational institutions as appropriate. Training must pervade the implementation of the policy.
- c) Culture harbours economic assets which should be harnessed to expand the frame of economic activity.
- d) The Christmas Festival Committee which incorporates a range of cultural activities and products should be placed on a professional footing without jettisoning the voluntary element.

### **Aims of the Policy**

The Policy aims therefore *inter alia* to:

- a) firmly establish a broader concept of culture than a commonly held one which almost equates it with arts and customs.
- b) describe a collective vision of the role and importance of arts and letters and material aspects of culture in popular life and national development.
- c) instil and develop a greater sense of self-confidence, national pride, commitment and a collective spirit.
- d) promote cultural education, including research and training and stimulate creativity in various art forms.
- e) foster respect for individual and collective potential and promote a culture of inclusiveness which embraces positive elements from the immigrant sectors.
- f) identify infrastructure and institutions necessary for the effective promotion and management of culture and make requisite provision for financial support.
- g) establish a context in which truth and beauty are appreciated, the creative talents are nurtured and entrepreneurs are facilitated.
- h) establish the importance of logical and critical thinking in youngsters as a counter-measure to the power of mass media, the internet and influential personalities.

**Subjects Considered are:**

Self-Worth and National Pride, The Arts, Folkways, Masquerades, Heritage, Education, Tourism, Economic Development, Media and Technology and Infrastructure.

**Government will endeavour to:**

- a) Establish an Endowment Fund for culture to attract donations and bequests after advertising in the appropriate media.
- b) Treat culture as a special sector of economic development for planning purposes.
- c) Sensitise aid partners to the concept of culture as investment with economic potential and to its links with education, science, health and tourism.
- d) Develop projects in culture and seek funding from UNESCO who by definition is committed to the development of culture and cultural policies. Partnership with regional entities like CARICOM and OECS could also yield dividends as our regional counterparts make a similar thrust in cultural development.
- e) Encourage private sector participation investment and collaboration in cultural enterprises.
- f) Conduct research into cultural products to evaluate quality, ascertain something of their true economic value and quantify their contribution to personal and national income.
- g) Forge and foster links with universities that will see the island with its active volcano as an ideal learning laboratory for volcanology and related sciences.
- h) Establish a National Cultural Foundation to advise broadly on culture including a Culture Cabinet that will work closely with the Coordinator of Culture who should be re-designated Director.
- i) Endeavour to raise the status of culture by removing it from under the administration of the Tourist Board and staffing it appropriately. Volunteers will be recruited to help 'staff' the Cultural Unit.
- j) Amend the existing legislation which established a National Arts Council to take account of the developments proposed in the present policy document.

# NATIONAL CULTURAL POLICY

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## MONTSERRAT

### Towards the Formulation of a National Cultural Policy for Montserrat

I love every hill and gully  
Every ghaut stream and valley  
She is still my emerald city  
Montserrat nice nice nice (A. Cassell)

#### 1. Philosophical Statement

Montserrat's culture is rooted in its history with all its trials and triumphs. Culture is not only dynamic and subject to influences and changes over time, but it is also dialectical, meaning that while it springs from history and development, culture also impacts and informs development. A cultural policy should focus among other things on those bedrock aspects of island culture which give a distinctive identity and spirit to the people and promote social cohesion.

#### 2. Methodology

A National Cultural Policy is legitimized and commissioned by the government of the day through a statutory process. This of itself does not make it national; and it is not truly national merely because it is to be implemented for everyone, but partly because it has emanated from wide consultation of the people. It was advantageous that the authors of the document were all cultural practitioners; but much of the raw material for their work had to come from the people in a consultative process, making allowance for the views, understandings and analyses of the team.

2.1 It has to be conceded therefore that a time-frame of five weeks imposed serious limitations on the consultation. In the circumstances a valiant effort was made to canvass the ideas of Montserratians as widely as possible at home and abroad. Organizations and some known opinion leaders in the diaspora were contacted. (A list of persons who responded by one means or another appears in Appendix 1).

2.2 In an effort to be as inclusive as possible, the team covered a range of ages from youths to the elderly in their conferences. The consultative methods took various forms including focus groups, town hall style meetings, one-to-one interviews, the use of Facebook and the Montserrat-oriented electronic service MNI Alive; and there was a radio call-in session. In addition to targeted individuals, the public was invited to share their views on cultural development by e-mail.

2.3 An effort was made also to engage a range of persons and groups that are active in cultural endeavours. Some of these were media persons, choral groups, youths, people in theatre and dance, musicians, craft artists, economic planners, workers in tourism, educators and practitioners of folk art. When Peter Minshall, that great Trinidadian exponent of carnival bands observed that “the poem, the song, the painting is but water drawn from the well of the people” he was reflecting on the rootedness of culture. In pronouncing on Montserratian culture, this notion was taken seriously even if reality did not always accord with intention. Dialogue with the people including a centenarian was critical. Naturally, documentary research was included. It is our belief that this draft document has a high level of authenticity.

### **3. Background**

3.1 A micro British colony for over 375 years, Montserrat is smallest of the small. The island was a primary producer which never developed a strong manufacturing base. This meant dependency on imports which reinforced the psychology of dependence which according to Jamaican Prime Minister is associated with protracted colonialism. Montserrat still has trappings of colonialism although it is designated a British Overseas Territory (BOT) and recently received a new constitution which gave it a greater measure of internal self-government. The island’s political status is relevant to its cultural policy. This is not to deny that that Montserratians have demonstrated a marked level of resilience in the wake of recent natural disasters.

3.2 From early in its history, Montserrat had a hybrid culture with its African and European

heritage and a particular Irish element based on the colonizing vanguard. A couple of major occurrences in the twentieth century brought other peoples, other influences and even other values.

- 3.3 The late 1950s and early 1960s saw a significant change in the island's fortunes and social dynamics. Push and pull factors led to mass migration to the UK and a downturn in agriculture – the exodus being both a cause and result of agricultural depression. To fill both the personal and economic void, North Americans descended on a terrestrial paradise and the concept of residential tourism was born. Regular tourism also grew generating demand for luxury hotel beds and a premium on entertainment. Golf, for instance, was added to the national sports and a North American element to the culture in general.
- 3.4 The second landmark was the eruption of the Soufriere Hills volcano which began in 1995 and still throws tantrums periodically. The eruption with its litany of loss impacted every facet of national life - population, habitable space, capital city, economy, and infrastructure – and reconfigured the environment. The fact that accommodation for the cultural arts was lost, added to the psychological burden of the people. On the positive side, Montserratians demonstrated creative capacities in their efforts at rehabilitation. And volcanic deposits in the form of building materials and the potential for geo-thermal energy are welcomed. The volcano gave to Montserrat, a naturally enticing island, added beauty and attraction, albeit rugged and awesome. The other thing that the eruption did was to attract hundreds of migrants to the country to take the place of those who fled the island for social and economic survival. They came from countries like the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Jamaica, Guyana and elsewhere bringing new cultural elements in the form of language, culinary arts, customs and values. The plural culture further widened.
- 3.5 Development Plans in Montserrat date back to 1966 but its first Cultural Policy Statement came in 1993. It was less elaborate than the present one but valuable although it did not appear to have fueled extensive governmental action. A decade later, a Five-Year

Development Plan committed Government to increasing opportunities for recreational, cultural, spiritual and community activities. Interestingly that plan promised a National Cultural Policy which would outline policies and programmes to enhance creative, cultural and artistic expressions, preserve the environment and provide opportunities for the exposure of indigenous artistes.

- 3.6 Awareness of the island's rich cultural expressions has never been lacking. Folk art like masquerades, string band, theatre dance, choral music and other arts have traditionally entertained people at home and won recognition abroad. Further value attaches to them because of the link with tourism. In this policy document the notion of culture goes beyond artistic expressions.

#### **4. Definition of Culture**

- 4.1 Culture can be a complex and even contentious concept. We can however in this context dismiss it as a "developed state of mind" or "as the best that has been thought and said in the world". We see it here as the distinctive way of life of a people called Montserratians.

A World Bank-based definition elaborates this in sociological language to mean:

the whole complex of distinctive, spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features that characterize a society or social group. It includes not only arts and letters, but also modes of life... value systems, traditions and beliefs. (Serageldin, 1998:9)

- 4.2 The arts are obviously an important aspect of culture, and by the arts are meant creative and disciplined expressions of mind, hand, spirit and imagination such as dance, music, painting, design, craft and literature.
- 4.3 Our understanding of culture in this document is wider than the arts and inherited beliefs, values, social systems and practices. The arts are regarded as economic assets and commodification of culture generally is accepted as reasonable and prudent. Beyond this, culture embraces the physical and spiritual environment and the ambience of peace which characterizes the country. Sports are culture also as are aspects of science and technology.

4.4 Calypsonian and national icon Alphonsus “Arrow” Cassell sings Montserrat as “nice”, a scarcely felicitous epithet in formal English. But there is something in this “niceness” in the Montserrat psyche that has both positive and negative cultural implications. The welcoming tradition bodes well for tourism and social integration; and the first mention of the island’s reputation in this regard, was in the seventeenth century when the island’s second governor Roger Osborne welcomed the anti-papal English ruler Oliver Cromwell “with marked civility”. This was not a reference to the ordinary people but the historical connection is interesting. It is worth stating though that local niceness should not be allowed to militate against the development of self-respect and a sense of self-worth or as some would say the proper development of personhood. As part of the positive culture, Montserratians are called upon to be ‘nice’ to each other as well. Values are inherent in culture but ‘values’ is not necessarily an innocent term. Every aspect of culture is not necessarily desirable. A number of respondents emphasised the importance of spiritual values in the Montserratian distinctive way of life.

## **5. Mapping the Cultural Landscape**

Rooted in the island’s history and subject to influences of time and place there is a rich intangible and material culture. In mapping this landscape as part of the context for a cultural policy it is difficult to be exhaustive. Proverbs, riddles, anansi stories, landmarks such as trees and stones are imbedded in culture. We may not have many historic buildings, but architectural styles are important. Besides, some older structures exhibit admirable artisanship in the quality of the masonry and carpentry. This became dramatically evident when some small houses with hip roofs survived while some more palatial types on the North American model were seriously damaged during hurricane Hugo in 1989. The very concept ‘yard’ around which so many aspects of social and communal life and livelihood revolved is part of culture. Montserratian poet, Archie Markham imaginatively captures something of the centrality of yard to folk activities. He is writing of the slaughter of pigs in the back of the yard at Christmastime:

I let the animal kick me as you slit its throat,  
Steady it, hold up the lamp

As you scrape it clean, string up and jack ripper....

Now the yard is silent, pigs come  
In packets and kerosene lamps went out with you  
When the yard died.

## **6. The Cultural Backdrop Includes:**

### 6.1 Tea Meeting and Concerts

Although tea meeting and soirées were associated with the upper classes, some were held in the country and included performances showcasing natural talent. The humbler folks had their shows in Sunday afternoon penny concerts held in the village centre.

### 6.2 Choral Tradition

The island has a strong choral tradition exemplified in two community choirs, the Emerald Community Singers and VOICES along with a number of church choirs some of which were famous for their cantatas in former years. All-age primary school concerts and village choirs which performed for the nation in the cultural arts programme of the UWI Extra-mural department in the 1950s formed part our singing society. The present groups have benefitted from training but renewal, expansion and continual training are necessary if standards of excellence are to be maintained. It augurs well for future development that someone of international fame such as Maizie Williams of the Boney M pop group hails from the island and that some youngsters are taking the advantage of training in vocal arts in metropolitan countries.

### 6.3 Folk Music

Folk Music is used broadly here to include string band, jumbie dance music and folk songs. They are important in the process of self-definition because of their cultural richness, and because for the most part, they survived the brutality of slavery while incorporating elements from the enslaver. Popular with the lower classes, the string band

was used for dances and weddings but later became a favourite at hotels and night spots. Typically they play folk songs which tell local stories in creole English; and some of the instruments like the boom pipe, shak-shak, triangle and ukelele are locally made. In string band music, industry and history meet to spell culture.

6.3.1 The jumbie dance, a folk religious practice in which anthropologist and Roman Catholic priest J. Dobbin found some parallels in his religion, cites some of the instruments of the string band, adding African and perhaps Irish drums. The dances, waltz, polkas and quadrilles also reflect European influence. It is now no longer practised but is a testimony of the syncretic blend of aspects of the culture, although it is the strength of Judaeo-Christian doctrine that led to its demise. To view the jumbie dance purely from a Christian standpoint is to miss the hidden meanings and covert ways of communicating, beneath this most expressive masked dancing. The gradual demystification of the supernatural element has contributed to the discontinuance of the dance.

#### **6.4 Steel Band**

Steel band arguably the only percussion instrument that has been invented in the twentieth century originated in Trinidad. Montserrat like so many Caribbean countries, has embraced it. Beginning in 1949, Montserrat steel band has had good times in numbers and quality as well as dull periods. Enough memories have abounded to spark a renaissance in the Small Beginnings group and the Volpanics both brain children of Culture Coordinator, Herman Francis. A cultural policy should seek to ensure that this instrument never makes the endangered list. Its introduction to the youth should serve this objective well.

#### **6.5 Masquerade**

Montserratian masquerade is an institution on its own, comparable to the jonkanoo in the Bahamas. These masked dancing mummers in colourful costumes performing celebratory rituals date back to the middle of the nineteenth century or perhaps before. Masquerades

constitute the richest folk ensemble in Montserrat incorporating dance, music, folk songs and art-craft. Once seasonal performers, they are now the signature of indigenous art and even culture, and represent the island internationally. There is a promise of continuity in the formation of Emerald Shamioles, but there is a choreographic challenge to preserve the pristine art as practiced by the elders. On the other hand there are those who may wish to see it adapt to modern elements. It is not surprising that this powerful folk ensemble has danced its way to the diaspora. Active masquerades exist in England and Canada. Montserratians are fortunate to have been favoured with an authentic study of masquerades by playwright Eddie Donoghue (2001). Dr. Clarice Barnes who is herself part of an emerging female troupe has reportedly conducted research in masquerades; and Ann Marie Dewar has also written on the subject.

## **6.6 Theatre**

Vincent Brown, Principal of the Montserrat Secondary School, a playwright, instituted drama at the school, and the Speech Day plays were widely appreciated. Under the sponsorship of the University of the West Indies Extra-Mural Department Leeward Islands drama festivals, theatre flourished in villages especially Salem. It was not until 1971 with the development of the Montserrat Dance Theatre at the University Centre and flowering of the artistic work of Director David Edgecombe, that amateur theatre approached sustainability. With the migration of central figures it faded after 15 years. Montserratians enjoy theatre and occasional practice of the art after 1986 have been greeted with plaudits. Thus audiences welcomed the work of Yvonne Weekes' Rainbow Theatre Company and Chadd Cumberbatch's Yac Ya Ya. The island has valuable assets in playwrights and directors of international stature at home and abroad. The notable figures include Edgar Nkosi White, David Edgecombe, Eddie Donoghue, Yvonne Weekes and Chadd Cumberbatch. What is lacking are sustainable theatre companies and continual training to ensure continuity. A proper theatre house is also an imperative.

At least one of our local actors has debuted in film and there are persons in the diaspora

who are acting in movies. So there are prospects and possibilities.

## **6.7 Dance**

A strong tradition of dance in the folk genre is already evident; and some still recall popular forms such as rhumba and chuck. Attempts at forming dance companies have not been uniformly successful; although national dancer Willy Kinnie O'Garro made a commendable effort to teach dance through his UWI-based Montserrat Dance Theatre, as did Rose Willock and others. The interest lives on and there is talent emerging both at home and in the diaspora. The current Dance Excel which treats with varied styles is promising.

## **6.8 Christmas Festival**

Montserrat's weeks-long Christmas celebrations which formally started in 1962 is a cultural show-case of multiple art forms unparalleled anywhere. It runs the entertainment gamut from choral music to bacchanalian revelry with beauty contests, calypso competition and other shows in between. It is the biggest visitor attraction to the island. Originating in volunteerism, it cannot now be left to chance because of its recognized economic value. It now enjoys strong government financial support and a ministerial portfolio. In its fiftieth year many regard it as ready for re-appraisal.

## **6.9 Other Festivals**

The St. Patrick's Day week-long festival observes the Montserrat Irish connection linked to colonisation. Many wear green the colour of Ireland and the island is one of the few countries which has made St. Patrick's Day 17 March a public holiday. The programme emphasis is not necessarily leprechauns but local arts including cuisine and the people's history. Irish folks with interest in their diaspora visit the island, and the event has received official backing as a boost to tourism. The St. Patrick's Day celebrations reflect the island's cultural mix with the African element dominant.

**6.9.1** In 2006, local business woman Florence Joseph introduced a Calabash Festival in July. The calabash fruit, which grows locally, has economic and artistic value; it is

used for make eating utensils, musical instruments, jewellery and handbags. The programme which aims at attracting visitors and generating creative works has included fashion shows, exhibitions, music and a lecture series in the name of Professor J. A. G. Irish a national artiste and intellectual.

**6.9.2** The village of Cudjoe Head reportedly named from a slave Cudjoe who lost his head in a judicial killing celebrates Cudjoe Head Day on the Saturday before August Monday. Sports and exhibitions of cultural products have marked the day. Cudjoe Head Day has to be a small step away from celebrating emancipation, that red-letter day in the history of Afro-Caribbean people which is marked with ceremony on 1 August in many other jurisdictions. This would be a step in self-affirmation, self-realization and the promotion of a national spirit so necessary in a society that has had more than its share of colonial tutelage.

**6.9.3** The Alliouagana Festival of the Word, a literary festival was introduced in 2010 by the local Head of the Open Campus of the University of the West Indies. It showcases the works of literary figures at home and abroad and attracts from anywhere those who love and cherish the word.

## **6.10 Air Studios**

Air Studios is now only a memory, but an important memory pointing as it does to the island's potential as an important music village. The name of the music mogul Sir George Martin who owned it, is enshrined on a Cultural Centre in the island and big boys like the Rolling Stones and Elton John once 'played' here through his initiative. Then of course, this is the home of Arrow. Air Studios resonates possibilities in the areas of music and development, from its eminence at historic Waterworks overlooking Belham River gently flowing into Isles Bay.

## **6.11 Literary Organizations**

A literary organization existed in the early twentieth century for "wide-awake" men or

the intelligentsia. Their menu included debates, discussions, impromptu addresses and other literary activities. In 1941 a Montserrat Secondary School Old Students Association succeeded and later on, groups like the Endeavour Club (1948) took over. Today the Writers Maroon at the University of the West Indies Open Campus confines itself to literature; but that institution also hosts lectures on stimulating issues of national importance. On the whole there is a strong emerging Montserratian literature, though there are marked deficiencies in some genres and there is need for training generally.

## **6.12 Recent Cultural Initiatives**

Certain initiatives by young persons have brought freshness to the cultural landscape and stimulated creativity. The Sunrise Productions in 2005 and Sherylene Dyer's Lady Foundation in 2011 are cast in this mold in their staging of princess and prince shows. By emphasising personal grooming, education and values they are articulating something of their concept of the ideal Montserratian person. They offer more than a show. This is relevant to culture, for CARICOM includes in its model Regional Cultural Policy a section on the Caribbean Person. On the matter of values and the ideal citizen, groups albeit by no means recent, such as scouts, guides and church brigades (a generic term) have a role to play.

## **6.13 Small Business Association**

A Chamber of Commerce dates back to 1930 although it was not formalized until 1970-71; it broadened to the Montserrat Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) to reflect a new interest in 1979. The MCCI is essentially a private organization with a materialistic ethos, but in 1991, it extended its mission "to improve and stimulate trade, industry and economic development of Montserrat" In addition it has sponsored educational and social programmes.

**6.13.1** The Small Business Association, a division of the MCCI is highlighted because of its potential to promote entrepreneurial activities among a range of persons who are producing goods for local sale and visitor-purchase. Emphasis needs to be placed on

production which utilizes local raw materials whether water, volcanic ash, beads, shells, fruits and plants (including medicinal plants). In addition to indigenous materials, creativity and artistic flair as well as an element of risk are involved. An Arts and Craft Association which functions on occasions fits conveniently under the Small Business Association umbrella. Visitors are an important clientele of this association, so its link with tourism is obvious. Its interest in using indigenous materials creatively and profitably places this association in the mainstream of culture.

#### **6.14 Montserrat Tourist Board**

The *raison d'être* of the Montserrat Tourist board (MTB) is the attraction of visitors to the island and increase in their expenditure. Consequently the MTB markets the island, conducts research and training to increase the people and enhance the product. Tourism thrives on cultural activities whether they are arts and entertainment, sports, eco-trails or an educative environment. More than anything else therefore, tourism demonstrates the economic substance and countenance of culture. MTB must of necessity invest in culture. A pillar of this policy is the potential for the commodification of culture without robbing it of its strength. It is readily understood then why investment in culture is very much a policy priority. There is a sense in which tourism is itself a cultural industry.

#### **6.15 Montserrat National Trust**

The Montserrat National Trust was established in 1970 for cultural conservation *inter alia*. In pursuit of its mandate it has facilitated archaeological explorations, published monographs, planted a botanic garden and mounted exhibitions; it has also built a museum and houses valuable artefacts and archives. It is an agent of cultural education and an ally of the tourist industry. Migration has robbed the Trust of some membership making it for the moment more dependent on government for viability than it was at the outset.

#### **6.16 Co-operatives**

Three practices of the principle of co-operatives are highlighted here. Maroons an

African communistic custom (though not uniquely since it existed as “cooring” in Ireland), was a common labour mechanism in the island. This was the voluntary co-operation of a number of persons to assist one or more of their fellows in a particular task such as building, house-moving, planting or harvesting. ‘Minding’ was another such device. A more successful individual gave a reliable person one or more head of stock to rear on the basis of ‘half improvement and half increase’. The transaction was based on mutual trust and agreement generally without a legal document. The well known ‘box hand’ called soosu by some was another co-operative activity in compulsory saving for economic advancement. The island has had a successful Co-operative but the principle of joint action which some ethnic groups practise to their advantage needs to be adopted more widely, especially by small business persons. It has a creole pedigree.

#### **6.17 Montserrat Christian Council**

The Council established in 1964 carries out national worship ceremonies on demand and is a gatekeeper of certain morals, principals and values as befit a Christian liberal democratic society. The cultural challenge which it faces and indeed which the political authorities face, is that of accommodating other faiths which have immigrated especially in the wake of the cataclysmic hurricane Hugo and eruption of Soufriere. There are implications for integration and cultural cohesion which may be necessary for the educational, social and economic welfare of the land which the Council is committed to serve.

#### **6.18 Mass Media**

Media exerts a strong influence on culture. It does so through its role as reporter, informer, disseminator and critique of arts and ideas. The mere act of choosing what to play or report and who to promote is an exercise in cultural influence. Media personnel help to write the cultural script. The island’s first newspaper published by Richard Piper in the nineteenth century was a private enterprise. Named the *Jack Spaniard* (the

common name for a wasp) this paper was fearless and aggressive in voicing the grievances of the people “who groaned under the tyranny of petty officialdom”. It antagonized the authorities and lacking the financial and moral support of the people whose caused it championed, it went out of publication.

**6.18.1** The *Montserrat Herald* of late 1890s was similarly conceived, and was similarly hated and despised for its exposure of injustice. A ban was put on the paper and with its owner James T. Allen in prison with the help of regulatory statutes, publication was snuffed out. These pioneer newspapers had technical deficiencies but they faithfully recorded cultural events; and their criticisms had cultural value of a philosophic kind. The newspapers which followed beginning with the *Montserrat Reporter* were also privately owned and were not apolitical either, although the degree of political partisanship varied from paper to paper. By their reports, reviews and discussions, however, they have contributed to culture; and their very existence constitutes primary sources of the island’s history.

**6.18.2** Information Communications Technology (ICT) impacts culture both positively and negatively. It is a conduit of fresh ideas and a means of sharing local cultural experiences. On the other hand it can lead to cultural distortion and dilution as foreign values invade a micro country. Yet the island is fortunate that MNI Alive which has a Montserratian orientation (together with Facebook) is a lively medium of interchange and influence on culture. The avowed aim of this on-line resource is to help expand Caribbean values, culture, business and tourism. In the case of Montserrat it does so as an insider and critically at that. Montserrat should use MNI Alive for decided cultural purposes.

**6.18.3** Radio Montserrat which started in volunteerism was the first national radio in the British Leeward Islands. Fortunately, the personnel were cultural artists in their own right so it is not surprising that “its cultural programmes helped to set trends, develop tastes and give public exposure to artiste” (Fergus 2001: 231). Radio Montserrat still influences culture in this manner while being sensitive to the fact

that it has obligations to the government of the day who may be more or less liberal to opposition politicians and other voices in a country which subscribes to the democratic ideal. The powerful Antilles Radio Corporation, a subsidiary of Deutsche Welle of West Germany set up in the island in 1966. It covered the Caribbean and beyond with its transmission at 200,000 watts. Its leadership was German but its programme focus was Caribbean; it's Caribbeanness in news and culture did much to break down the anglophile conservatism of the Emerald Isle. Radio Antilles no longer exists, but islanders can be encouraged to patronize those Caribbean radio and television channels that reach them. A countervailing force to the powerful influence American television, these are healthy for culture.

### **6.19 Iconic Figures**

In a recent release, the UK government announced that aspirants to British citizenship would be required to have knowledge of notable British figures like Shakespeare and the Duke of Wellington. Montserrat cannot match those figures but is has eminent persons in its history. While it makes sense for those seeking Montserratian citizenship to have some knowledge of Montserratian culture, research and prudent measures must place iconic Montserratians in the education system for youngsters to emulate in their advancement towards personal and national fulfillment. A 1996 publication, *Gallery Montserrat: Some Prominent People in Our History* identified a number of eminent Montserratians. Selecting national heroes is a more sensitive issue and those would be very few anyway. There are however outstanding persons who could be chosen as models by some acceptable process. A number of individuals in music, literature, politics and sports, suggests themselves.

## **7. Proposed Policy Positions of the Government of Montserrat**

- a) Culture is a total human experience transcending the arts but they are a very important aspect; and therefore every effort should be made to facilitate the development of the artistic potential of all Montserradians.
- b) Development of the arts is a development of human resources and provision should be made for training in and outside educational institutions as appropriate. Training must pervade the implementation of the policy.
- c) For a healthy economic climate every effort should be made to produce versatile workers and the arts are an area which is suitable for exploitation in this regard.
- d) Creativity which is inherent in the arts is beneficial to other areas of enterprise and may even be transferable. At the very least it can serve and support other economic activities.
- e) Culture harbours economic assets which should be harnessed to expand the frame of economic activity.
- f) The country must utilize all of its natural endowment where possible– including fruits, plants, fauna, water and volcanic deposits in its development thrust.
- g) The Christmas Festival Committee which incorporates a range of cultural activities and products should be placed on a professional footing without jettisoning the voluntary element.
- h) Citizens and residents should be knowledgeable of the culture of the island as a basis for fostering national commitment. Some knowledge of the history and culture of other Caribbean peoples is necessary, given our geo-political situation.
- i) Every effort should be made to preserve the distinctive Montserradian culture while promoting openness to change and accommodation of new cultural elements.
- j) Through education and cultural programmes Montserradians should gain a better understanding of the nature of the society and its role in their personal development.

## **8. Aims of the Policy**

The Policy aims therefore to:

- a) firmly establish a broader concept of culture than a commonly held one which almost equates it with arts and customs.
- b) describe a collective vision of the role and importance of arts and letters and material aspects of culture in popular life and national development.
- c) instil and develop in Montserratians a greater sense of self-confidence, national pride, commitment and a collective spirit.
- d) promote cultural education, including research and training and stimulate creativity in various art forms.
- e) stimulate interest in the preservation of what is profitable in our heritage and arrange for, research and documentation, archival management and museum development.
- f) articulate the links between culture and education, health, Information Communication and Technology (ICT), tourism environmental management, agriculture and intellectual property rights.
- g) indicate Government of Montserrat's (GOM) intention to promote research into the viability of existing cultural productions with a view to upgrading and expanding cultural industries.
- h) identify infrastructure and institutions necessary for the effective promotion and management of culture and make requisite provision for financial support.
- i) summarise GOM's cultural programmes as a subset of its overall national development policy.
- j) establish a context in which truth and beauty are appreciated, the creative talents are nurtured and entrepreneurs are facilitated.
- k) foster respect for individual and collective potential and promote a culture of inclusiveness which embraces its positive elements from the immigrant sectors.
- l) establish the importance of logical and critical thinking in youngsters as a counter-measure to the power of mass media, the internet and influential personalities, and for its

inherent value in the development of personhood in a democratic environment.

## **9. SELF-WORTH AND NATIONAL PRIDE**

- 9.1 Youth in a focus group referred to the lack of what they termed “self-image” in young Montserratians which suggests the lack of a worthy self-concept and a proper sense of identity. People are socially adrift if they don’t know who they are, their place in the community and what the society stands for. The focus groups also identified lack of a “sense of place” in some Montserratians. There seems to be good grounds then for instilling approved values, a need that a number of persons have identified.
  
- 9.2 In a situation where what we have designated a sense of self-worth is inadequate, it is difficult for upcoming generations to fulfill their personal destiny and be energized for national building. The youths in particular need to know who they are, the forces that have shaped and continue to mold them if they are to face the future with confidence and become what one psychologist famously called ‘self-actualised’ persons. It is contended that an understanding of the island’s history and culture is critical to the process of responsible maturation.
  
- 9.3 A feeling of self-worth is necessary for the development of a sense of identity, and the latter is a cornerstone of national pride. As citizens of the British Empire, Montserratians had a sense of loyalty to Great Britain and the songs we sang, the poems we recited, the books we read and the trappings of colonialism to which we were exposed, nourished this sentiment. Our heroes were Lords Nelson and Rodney, Drake and Churchill. Montserrat is one of a few remaining British colonies (now designated British Overseas Territory) which explains in part why the spirit of dependence which we cited earlier, may have lingered so long.

- 9.4 Although the British connection remains, an emerging sense of independence and self-reliance needs to be nurtured along with a new commitment to the island home. We all need to declare with iconic Arrow: “I am proud of this great land/Proud to be Montserratian”. Commendable steps have already been taken to counteract any sense of alienation, in efforts to create a national song and in identifying national symbols such as bird, tree and dress.
- 9.5 Finding ourselves and our identity and maintaining a nationalistic posture have become more urgent with the influx of new peoples with their own cultural traits and values. And yet in carving our and securing a Montserratian identity, one has to be appropriately tolerant and accommodative as befits a people belonging to a Caribbean family and a global village. While some consider the melting pot metaphor inappropriate in relation to the several immigrant peoples among us, one has to accept the fact of diversity. Indeed while we focus on a Montserratian culture, we also need to foster some understanding of and appreciation for regional and world cultures ever mindful of the dynamic and evolutionary nature of culture. With an open society and its migratory pattern, changes are inevitable over time.

**9.6 Accordingly, the Government of Montserrat will endeavour to:**

- (a) Introduce children at the earliest age to the history and culture of the island in assimilable form through rings games, rhymes and pictures and other suitable methods.
- (b) Promote parental education which includes the responsibility of elders to pass on to the young approved customs, folklores, manners and values. The strategy of inter-generational dialogue is itself a means of reviving the oral tradition which is imbedded in the culture, and of reducing over-reliance on the internet for stimulation and information.
- (c) Identify Montserratians who have achieved significantly in various fields and emblazon their names on important buildings, roads and monuments; and

include youths in the national honours systems thereby marking them out as role models for their peers. The consultation actually threw up names such as W. H. Bramble, V.B. Browne, Ted Edgecombe, R.W. Griffith, Dr. James Irish and Michael Walkinshaw. Deserving women should also be included in the list; and the idea of designating St. Patrick's Day as Heroes' Day will be addressed and could be the day when national awards are distributed.

- (d) Establish the celebration of Emancipation Day as an important national event. Its proximity to Cudjoe Head Day suggests the idea of a Festival of Freedom week-end.
- (e) Post the photographs of outstanding Montserratians at entrepôts and popular places of assembly across the island as a way of promoting pride.
- (f) Encourage the use of national songs at schools and community functions, without prejudice to the national anthem, when appropriate.
- (g) Encourage and even mandate that candidates for Montserratian citizenship demonstrate basic knowledge of the history and culture of Montserrat. At the same time, arrangements will be made for Montserratians to learn their own history of immigration and emigration and to gain an understanding of the backgrounds from which new residents and citizens have come.
- (h) Promote the development of a national literature and give recognition to outstanding people of letters such as Edgar Nkosi White, E. A. Markham, George Irish, David Edgecombe, Chadd Cumberbatch and Yvonne Weekes; and facilitate research, writing and publication of Montserratian life and ideas, with grants, where possible. In the 1980s, through a UNESCO initiative, two readers were produced to assist less gifted children. One was entitled *Cotton in Montserrat* and the other *Mermaids and Curses*. The texts were written by Montserratians and illustrations drawn by a local artist. The books treated aspects of culture in agriculture, history and folklore. This kind of activity will be revisited and supported as resources become available.
- (i) Encourage the inclusion of local and regional material in local television programmes. Youths take interest and are positively influenced when they see

people like themselves in action on television and in books.

- (j) Encourage media personnel, educators and people of influence to play a positive role in personal development by posing national ideas for discussion and critical thinking. This could lead to proficiency in the formal language and logical thinking which contribute to healthy personalities and a sense of self-worth. These attributes define in part, the Montserrat citizen who should emerge from the culture.

## 10. THE ARTS

The sound of the Fife  
is  
The sound of victory

The sound of the Fife  
Is the sound of the Victory  
Of Life  
Over the lie  
Of death.

( Edgar Nkosi White)

10.1 In mapping the landscape, the prominence of folk music and dances such as the string band, steel band, masquerade and other creole dances were highlighted. These traditional arts are of continuing importance because of their link with the past and their role in defining a uniquely Montserratian people. There must therefore be plans for their preservation and upgrading.

10.2 This section focuses also on the fine arts such as music, drama, dance, literature, painting and sculpture. There is a need for initiative in some, development in others and training in all forms. It is in music that the island has distinguished itself most highly especially in calypso and choral music and even here there has to be ongoing training and exploration. Theatre has attracted some regional attention, but has suffered from lack of sustainability for one reason or another. It is obviously one

field which is ripe and fertile for development and present activities suggest optimism. Dance never attained the quality and recognition of music and drama but there is an encouraging history and possibilities for development exists. Needlework which once flourished among the folks and which survives in pockets is a fine art in its own right worthy of national attention.

10.3 In the literary arts, this island has achieved far beyond what its micro size might suggest. A number of national names with international recognition are connected with drama and poetry and there are a couple of novelists and autobiographers. This is an area which requires some attention to ensure the building up of a respectable repertoire of Montserratian writings; and there is a competent cadre of writers who produce works of another kind about the nature of the society and its people. It is a mistake to omit Montserratian writers from the slate of cultural practitioners.

10.4 Our visual artists may be few but they have produced work worthy of exhibition. One or two have combined painting with photography to good effect. Painting has been one means of recapturing and recreating a landscape which the volcano has transformed. The kind of fashion design that expresses itself in annual carnival costumes and the outfit of beauty queens has aesthetic value also.

10.5 Arts and technology are important not only because of their economic value but also because of their contribution to children's cognitive development. The production and appreciation of music and poetry for example, require insight, intuition, critical judgement, artistic discrimination and recognition of rules; and these are high-level mental processes. Besides, it is believed that the creativity exercised in the arts may be transferable to other areas of enterprise of economic significance. It is indeed accepted that the imagination has a role in science.

10.6 For the performance arts to flourish they have to be serviced by engineers in sound and light and by videographers. It is important that no skills necessary for production be overlooked in any training programme.

**10.7 Accordingly the Government of Montserrat will endeavour to:**

- (a) Support the training of musicians, actors, choreographers and dancers and persons with technical skills needed for quality performances. In the absence of a local school of arts the Government will support overseas training as far as its means will allow, and also local seminars and workshops which draw on local expertise or artistes from abroad.
- (b) Support the equipping of spaces which have potential as venues for artistic expressions in relatively large communities like Lookout and Salem. This could mean installing sound and light equipment and stage improvement. Such action will help to answer to the need for rehearsal space.
- (c) Ensure that schools are equipped to teach a variety of arts to enable each student to practise or appreciate at least one art form.
- (d) Identify and nurture emerging talents and interests in areas such as sculpture and jewellery.
- (e) Provide grants to artistes from an Endowment Fund established for training and for the creation of significant works which portray the history, culture and spirit of the island and its people.
- (f) Encourage activity in the cultural arts by providing incentives such as tax exemptions on imported materials and equipment related to their work.
- (g) Enact and upgrade legislation necessary to protect the rights of creative artistes to allow them to make maximum profit from their work. This means keeping abreast of developments relating to intellectual property rights, copyright, patents and trademarks.

## 11. FOLKWAYS

Mars Sam really know de ole way  
Jumbie dance and masquerade  
Aal de dance music an folk song  
Na ee brain a mek parade  
What a misicker, eh Tantie,  
What oo fifer ee me be!  
God bless culture na dis island  
When ee sen Sam to awe. (Dewar)

- 11.1 Montserratians of an older generation are very passionate about folkways by which, we mean customs, folktales, child rearing practices, foods and food preparation, the use of herbs and even religion. They accept that not every element can be resurrected and preserved, but argue that the youngsters should be educated about them. Such education and practice where feasible should be part of the programme of culture. It is the general thinking that folkways have practical, social and economic value; and some practices reflect the African heritage and traditional knowledge. It is accepted that the computer and internet are with us to stay, but there is a place for folk and anansi stories which contain lessons and wisdom for living. These will also restore something of the oral tradition and moonlight night culture which made for social and inter-generational bonding. Games and riddles also belong to the moonlight setting and were vital in a day when entertainment even by radio was scarce.
- 11.2 Many hark back to the time when what is now termed child abuse had for them as spiritual basis. It is the new rules about rights that are spoiling the children, they insist. They also remember with approval the days when children were to be seen and not heard. But that is history, and not the proudest part of the culture, others argue.

- 11.3 The nutritious and economic value of creole foods stirred very lively discussions. What used to be regarded as poor and ‘coarse’ food is now known to be complex carbohydrates. It was thought that if the youths were taught to properly prepare local foods they would find them palatable. Cassava was considered an example of a local food which could reduce import and have export possibilities as an organically grown and stone-baked product of high nutritious value. Breadfruit and plantains too only needed some creativity and a sense of enterprise to make a dietary difference, the team was told.
- 11.4 With so much emphasis on herbal teas and alternative medicine world-wide, it is hardly surprising that Montserratians who are steeped in a culture of bush and bark tea did not display a lively interest in the subject. This is one aspect of the heritage that the elders have had some success in handing down. For there are young persons who voiced their enjoyment of bush teas and their faith in herbal remedies. Some saw tea herbs as a potential source of income for Montserratians. At the very least processing and packaging local herbs can reduce foreign exchange drainage.
- 11.5 What is remarkable not just for Montserrat but for the region is the fact that modern experiment and research have confirmed the wisdom of the elders on these matters. The knowledge is of course linked with the African heritage. Aloe Vera which is processed and sold in a variety of forms as a promoter of health is the local *cintibibi* that has been used for decades. It was drunk, applied to cuts and swellings and used in baths. Research at UWI had shown that marijuana (*cannabis sativa*) has properties that can successfully treat some eye problems. Of course some bush teas can also have harmful properties. A bush doctor came to be associated with obeah and evil in some minds, but that person was really a herbalist in the African context. (Annette Duberry a Montserrat student at UWI

completed an interesting study on *Folk Medicines of Montserrat and their Use* around 1979).

- 11.6 The reference to obeah, brings us into the realm of African folk religion and certain practices which are near to extinction. Obeah which has been made illegal here as elsewhere in the region under the influence of Christianity, is closely related to the jumbie dance. The jumbie dance rests in the belief in the ever presence of ancestral spirits who can help in the solving of everyday problems.
- 11.7 People are still now fascinated by the jumbie table another activity which involves ancestral spirits. Thus there is a kind of communion between the living and the dead through the sharing of a meal. What is really significant about these manifestations is community reliance on the wisdom of ancestors and the problem-solving capacity which resides in abiding family bonds.
- 11.8 There is no great enthusiasm to relive these practices in a country flooded by Christian teaching; but it is felt that every generation should know that they existed and have some understanding of their meaning and those spiritual forces that shaped the lives of the people along with European traditions. Some of the practices are fascinating and could engage present-day attention including research into the matter of cultural retention.
- 11.9 There is a variety of other folk customs which deal with labour, economy and superstition or religion. They range from devices like 'box hand' which we cited earlier to throwing drops of rum in the foundation of a house, to setting out the white of an egg on Good Friday and interpreting the form it takes. They too make for interesting reading and study and in some cases there are folk stories associated with them. Most people agree that recognition of folklore has a place in the cultural package. It is not always easy to determine the place.

### **11.10 Accordingly, Government of Montserrat will endeavour to:**

- (a) Facilitate experimentation and research into local bush, barks and roots to ascertain their nutritional and curative properties. Their potential role in healing and health generally should be given special attention. The need for documentation and publication on these and other folkways is obvious.
- (b) Encourage entrepreneurial activity using local plants, fruits and produce like cassava to make commodities for local market and export. Training with regional assistance where necessary could focus on curing, drying, production techniques and packaging.
- (c) Include suitable topic from folk beliefs, stories and custom in the social studies curriculum.
- (d) Have tradition evenings organized when selected folkways such as the jumbie table, jumbie dances and jumbie dance music and traditional products like ginger sticks, cassava bread and cassava flour can be exhibited in live settings.
- (e) Arrange for radio and television discussions on those elements of the culture that have been lost.
- (f) Acknowledge good traditional child-raising practices and blend them with modern ways in a bid to preserve vital family and community values of respect, responsibility and self-reliance.

## **12. MASQUERADES**

12.1 Masquerades are not unique to Montserrat, but Montserratian masquerade is unique. Since they made their regional debut at CARIFESTA in Guyana in 1973, they have become favourite crowd pleasers abroad as they have been at home since around the middle of the nineteenth century. They have indeed become the signature of Montserrat's folk culture.

- 12.2 As with jonkanoo in the Bahamas, masquerade in Montserrat is an institution. There is so much more to it than the colourful costume, the ritual dances, the combination of African and western dance steps and the hypnotic drum beat which moves the most phlegmatic.
- 12.3 Masquerades are a history lesson in colour and motion with symbols of profound and even complex meaning. The cart whip which the dancers 'crack' may be a symbol of authority which mimics the overseers' power to punish the slaves. Or is it a means of clearing evil spirits out of the path of the dancers? Then there is the headdress in the shape of a bishop's mitre and a mask. The church condoned and justified slavery with the Bible as the companion of the whip. Were the freedmen turning religion on its head? There is so much hidden meaning here, so much to probe. Is there a philosophy of masquerades that speaks deeply to our past? Masks, while not confined to Africa are common in West African societies where they are associated with spirits, deities and rituals. The island is fortunate to have preserved this elaborate dance ritual of beauty which may harbour levels of truth as yet unexplored. The covert communication which the mask suggests has already been commented on.
- 12.4 Montserrat masquerade is not only entertainment and there is perhaps more mystery behind the mask, than we have dreamed of. This wellspring of knowledge requires research and study. One challenge is to discover what if anything has been lost over time and to preserve the dance as close as possible in its pristine form. In his work *Montserrat Masquerade: Cultural Preservation in the Modern World* Donoghue (2001), Donoghue points to the need for further research of an archival nature. This needs to be firmly placed on the masquerade agenda.

## **12.5 Accordingly, the Government of Montserrat will endeavour to:**

- (a) Include masquerade in the social studies, history and art curricula in the schools.
- (b) Encourage instruction in the dance form in schools by persons with mastery in the art to ensure continuation of the authentic masquerade tradition.
- (c) Promote further research of the Montserrat masquerades and encourage comparative studies of masquerades elsewhere especially in St. Kitts and Guadeloupe. The meanings, symbolisms, ideas and values associated with dress, dance steps, movements and troupe composition are still open to scholarly investigation. Similar traditions such a jonkanoo of the Bahamas and Jamaica can also be studied in a comparative context.
- (d) Encourage Montserratian students at the UWI to promote the masquerade as an interesting area of Caribbean Studies.
- (e) Promote masquerade competitions as more troupes are formed in the island.
- (f) Encourage persons in arts and crafts to utilize ideas from masquerades in their work. This could give a lift to the souvenir trade.
- (g) Promote professional video-taping of the dances and recording of the music for enjoyment and sale.
- (h) Support the publication of a definitive monograph on Montserrat Masquerade.

## **13. HERITAGE**

Stop you passersby and look  
Gaze you lovers on my face.  
Read this granite history book  
And know the black strength of your race  
(“The Sugar Mill Speaks” by Dorcas White)

- 13.1 The focus here will be the tangible heritage since folkways is treated as a separate area. Buildings, especially houses often take a prominent place in heritage

discussions. The English side of the heritage is usually evident in grand plantation houses or great houses as they are called. In Montserrat most of these are presently in the exclusion zone and include government house, a Victorian mansion, ruins of a Great House at Galways identified through a study facilitated by the (MNT), Providence Estate House, Olveston House associated with the famous Montserrat Company and remnants of 'The Cot' their dwelling house in the Salem area "high on the side of Olveston mountain" built between 1872 and 1873. Waterworks an estate which dates back to the seventeenth century when the fourth Governor owned it, is also of heritage interest. The Hollenders family owned it early in the twentieth century and still does.

- 13.2 The architecture of a number of churches is also of interest including the St. George's Anglican in Harris' the St. John's Anglican church, the Cavalla Hill Methodist church and the St. Anthony's church in Plymouth. St. Anthony's, the first church built in the island for a Roman Catholic population is of added interest because of the many ways in which it served the island. Of historic interest also are its silver chalices and communion plates which the freed slaves donated as a memorial of their freedom.
- 13.3 There are a number of other structures and remnants which contain elements of history. The Trants and Blake Estate ruins, forts such as the one on St. George's Hill, the Plymouth gaol which marks the site of an early Plymouth town, the 1686 tombstone of a Justice of the Peace, John Davis at Rocklands and the Carr's Bay historic site which is under archaeological investigation, are all part of the island's material culture. These are important for learning about ourselves our world and our roots. Montserratians recognize the links between the great houses and the skills of local artisan and masons evident in stone ovens and water tanks. They however wish to see a local chattel house complete with a traditional yard or replica preserved for posterity. Thatched houses which go back to the Taino

Indians and Africans were also discussed with enthusiasm.

- 13.4 The MNT established the first museum in 1976 at Richmond Hill in an eighteenth century sugar mill, itself a museum piece as are others on the island. The MNT holds artefacts and archives from that museum. Exhibitions always a part of the Trust's programme are now accommodated at the new Little Bay museum opened in 2012 and open to further development. Some of the island's heritage material has had to be housed temporarily abroad for different reasons. The valuable Amerindian skeletons from Trants are in the USA and can only be repatriated when proper conditions are created for them at home (The superstitious link their absence to the eruption of the volcano). The mountain chicken in Jersey, are different. They are bred there, reportedly at some expense, to ensure survival. In the case of the oriole, the national bird, what is necessary is continual monitoring to prevent any threat of extinction.

**13.6 Accordingly, the Government of Montserrat will endeavour to:**

- (a) Develop a heritage space in the new town to encompass the Carr's Bay archeological investigations, the new museum and its environs. A functional chattel house in a 'yard' setting could be situated in this space
- (b) Scout the island's safe zone to identify historical ruins for study and preservation.
- (c) Enact and enforce appropriate legislation to prevent pillage, plunder and export of artefacts. In the absence of a local archaeologist, this could require regional co-operation. Protocols to govern the out-shipping of artefacts for study and their repatriation may need to be established.

- (d) Include ruins and structures such as stone ovens in the sign-posting of heritage objects.
- (e) Support the MNT in its development of a programme for the management and use of the museum.
- (f) Rationalize the housing and preservation of archives and records at various sites such as the Public Library, the MNT and the Registry; and establish and seek funding for a project to arrest deterioration and loss of valuable records and archival material.
- (g) Encourage and support research in various aspects of local history outside and inside the schools. The Montserrat Company, Blakes Estate and various villages are just a few examples.
- (h) Establish and celebrate a heritage day in schools with minimal curricular dislocation.
- (i) Pursue the establishment a Volcano Interpretation Centre complete with research and historical information on Montserrat volcanoes. Possibilities for the creation of a national volcano park in the now exclusion zone, in time, will not be ruled out.

## **14. EDUCATION**

14.1 Culture is a legitimate source of educational curricula; and there are serious teachers who are looking to the national cultural framework for guidance in selecting content for subjects such as civics and social studies. Of course the links between culture and education go beyond school content.

14.2 It is in the educational setting, though not exclusively, that youngsters learn to think for themselves and develop the capacity to process ideas logically and

critically. This has implications for their development as persons who will not be easily manipulated either by mass media or persuasive rhetoric. Growing up in a cultural setting with its heavy residue of authoritarianism, this is very important for the youth. Achieving this is just as much about learning and teaching styles as it is of content; and the development of a rational mind is a valuable and necessary cultural trait in the Montserrat milieu.

- 14.3 Citizens are calling for emphasis on moral and spiritual values and the school is one of the agencies that can bring this about. This is perhaps better done than through the ethos of the school than by zealous exhortation. The living out of the golden rule, fairness, mutual respect and an atmosphere of decency will help. The adults of course must themselves model these principles for the younger generation.
- 14.4 The days of the arts as extra-curricular activities are hopefully over. To teach the cultural arts is to develop human resources; and given the contemporary urgency to widen opportunities for employment and economic activity, the development of artistic skills has to be part of the solution. Teachers have correctly identified the need to emphasise practical activities like playing instruments, making costumes, knitting and preparing indigenous foods in schools in addition to the understanding of folk rituals. While the emphasis here is appropriately on the arts, one needs to recognize also the role of science and technology in the lives and development of Montserratians. The arts and sciences must never be regarded as two opposing cultures across a divide as C.P. warned in a famous 1959 work, *The Two Cultures*.
- 14.5 The arts rightly belong to the central curriculum. Part of their power lies in the fact that they communicate both ideas and feelings. Research have shown that a strong arts programme in schools leads to higher student motivation to learn, greater student engagement, increased multicultural understanding and growth in

higher order thinking and problem-solving. In other words, the arts are not an antidote to boredom on hot afternoons or just subjects for relaxation. They are unique and high level modes of thought and ways of knowing. It is also shown that some children learn more effectively through spatial, rhythmic, visual and meditative techniques. The cultural arts in schools can therefore broaden the available learning styles to the advantage of some children. Additionally, the arts allow for ready correlation with other subjects such as agriculture, housecraft and crafts generally.

14.6 Education in culture should also be conducted outside the schools as well, among adults in community settings. And the instructors even for schools can be recruited from the community. In some cases this adds a touch of realism to the process. Already there are encouraging reports of volunteers who are teaching music in schools.

**14.7 Accordingly, the Government of Montserrat will endeavour to:**

- (a) Encourage the introduction of more materials from the local culture into schools from the early years. These include folk-tales, local sayings, folk traditions as well as music, musical instruments, dances and games.
- (b) Promote the use of a wider range of learning styles some of which are derived from the creative arts.
- (c) Encourage the routine use of certain cultural institutions outside the walls such as the museum the Montserrat National Trust and libraries.
- (d) Encourage the promotion of spiritual values, including Christian values, not only by appropriate content and religious teaching but by inter-personal relationship and behaviour patterns. Ethical issues in the form of stories may be raised in classrooms at appropriate stages using appropriate language.
- (e) Promote respect for national symbols, songs and iconic persons as well as the understanding of other peoples and their culture; and organize days of culture on which diverse expressions are mounted for the richness of all and

the wholesomeness of society.

- (f) Include the quality of cultural expressions and performance in the evaluation of youths and educational institutions. They should not be regarded as marginal or extra-curricular.
- (g) Encourage the use of elders with special skills as resource persons in the schools. Their knowledge and skills in making indigenous cultural items like crochet, traditional foods (ginger sticks and ginger round) should be tapped.
- (h) Encourage critical and open-ended thinking among young people and a de-emphasis of imitation and rote learning.
- (i) Promote the establishment of an orchestra at the MSS and the Community College to produce classical and contemporary music.
- (j) Collaborate with adult education institutions and entities such as the Chamber of Commerce and Industry to offer training in cultural work.
- (k) Explore and discuss matters such as the cultural significance of science and technology, the importance of objective debate and the democratic ideal, thereby placing the idea of the appreciation of truth and beauty within the larger context of democratic governance. This is particularly suited to an informal education programme.

## **15. TOURISM**

15.1 The link between tourism and culture has been long recognized in Montserrat. A 1973 GOM publication not only articulated the connection but itemized the key elements:

However, it is felt that if tourism is to contribute genuinely to Montserrat's development, the factors influencing its development here must take account of our own way of life and make use of all the resources

available here which bear any relevance at all to the development, promotion and marketing of the industry. It is absolutely essential to harness and release the energies of the local population in support of the industry. This can be achieved by their involvement in the expression of local culture in the form of art, handicraft and environment conservation and preservation (1973).

- 15.2 The population in 1973 was 11,000 and the habitable space was more than twice what it is now but tourism is still regarded as a key sector for economic growth. This is reflected in the annual subvention of EC\$1.3 in 2012 including EC\$454,000 for the Cultural Unit. The industry has however been plagued by declining numbers as a result of the volcanic eruption and more recently by the economic depression in the USA and Europe. Problems of access have further enfeebled the tourism business.
- 15.3 The island is still stunningly beautifully enhanced by its political stability and ambience of peace. This is in spite of real losses in historic sites and environmental attractions like waterfalls and bamboo forests. The irony is that the volcano added as well as subtracted. There has been a long welcome lull in its eruptive behaviour but its ruins, ravages and occasional *son et lumière* (sound and light) displays constitute a unique attraction. Besides, there are ongoing efforts to improve the product such as exploring niche or special markets, and adding or improving visitor attractions. Nature trails, a botanic garden at the National Trust, a new visitor centre at the Montserrat Volcano Observatory, a new national tourism plan and a port development plan are all calculated to put tourism on a firmer path to progress. It is evident that these plans are aimed at improving the cultural product. Hikes to view the oriole and mountain chicken areas, live viewing of the volcano cradle at Soufriere are culture in action just as much as

steel band playing at a hotel or night spot.

15.4 The idea of portraying tourism as “every one’s business” aims at engaging the people’s understanding of and involvement in tourism at all levels. A person is a creature of the culture while culture is the expression of the people – their attitudes, manner, art and artifact and the environment that molds them.

15.5 The island’s black sand beaches, product of its volcanoes used to be considered a disadvantage, but these have their own attraction. Besides, it is now well established that visitors look beyond the stereotype which focuses on beaches (important though they are) and palm trees. They are interested in the country, its history, culture and the interaction with its people. The citizens of Montserrat has to be aware of this and set value on their creativity and way of life including their warmth, while maintaining their dignity as a people. People and culture are at the heart of tourism while the visitors are on the ground.

**15.6 Accordingly, the Government of Montserrat will endeavour to:**

- (a) Include authentic information on the island’s history and culture in the training of tour guides and persons in the hospitality industry.
- (b) Ensure collaboration between the entertainment and art and craft producers and the tourism unit.
- (c) Involve the youth in the provision of traditional cultural expressions for the entertainment and education of residents and visitors. The best of their own literary and artistic creations should be offered.
- (d) Involve entire communities in the protection and preservation of heritage sites including water sources; and encourage them to take pride in sharing these with visitors.
- (e) Reduce imported souvenirs in order to provide visitors with authentic local hand-made craftwork. To this end training with a strong artistic element

will be made available in the presentation and marketing of souvenirs. Miniature masquerade figures in only one idea of the kind of craftwork that could increase earning potential.

- (f) Identify heritage objects such as stone ovens, tombstones, buildings and remnants for the education and enjoyment of the public and visitors alike. Where these do not exist, a chattel house may be built and used for some function related to the tourism unit or the National Trust.
- (g) Facilitate displays at hotels featuring genuine Montserratian arts, crafts, drinks, leatherwork and local creations generally with a view to boosting sales and making foreign trade links. Some persons interviewed took pride in the fact that some of the instruments of creole music were locally made. A revival of this practice will be encouraged.
- (h) Promote the island's major annual festivals – St. Patrick's Day, Calabash, Cudjoe Head/Emancipation and Christmas Festival – as part of the tourism package.

## **16. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

- 16.1 Economic development connotes more than increase in goods and production, in gross domestic product, positive trade balance or whatsoever constitutes growth in statistical terms. It is about the development of human beings and their ability to participate intelligently in the advancement of themselves and their country.
- 16.2 Economist C. Y. Thomas contends that development is about people and the concrete context of their lives and although he does not employ the term culture, when he observes that development is largely influenced by the social conditions which a people inherit and the rhythms and movements underlying those conditions, the description approximates closely to culture.

- 16.3 In the cultural sector, the people whether as musicians, actors or creators of art-objects, are at the centre of the productive process. But people-centred development means more than mere participation or being tools of production. It entails the development of persons with dignity and self-worth. The training and employment of persons in cultural industries is human resource development and the latter goes beyond population policy to include the wider issue of culture. Culture is really the basis of development and the motivating factor in development. Our ancestors practiced this when they employed co-operative practices in economic production.
- 16.4 Even if we were to accept the untenable dichotomy between culture and development, the former has economic value in the traditional sense. First of all as indigenous resource, culture factors highly in the development equation; and secondly it is in Government's interest to utilize all available resources in an effort to broaden the compass of production and the frame of economic development. Culture embodies economic assets; and it is a sector over which local persons have strong control. To help solve the unemployment problem, we must turn to the cultural sector.
- 16.5 The link of culture and economy has been gaining wide acceptance in the Caribbean region. A Barbadian 1996 draft discussion paper on culture refers repeatedly to the marketing of music and the need to research and create support systems for the economic contributions made by culture to national incomes. And a St. Lucian cultural policy document is similarly concerned with skills for marketing culture and contends that the contribution of cultural activity to the national economy was underrated. The formulation of this policy is predicated in part on GOM's acceptance of the economic importance of culture.
- 16.6 Some of the persons consulted were aware of the place of agriculture and environment in culture especially in respect of food provision; and local food

production has health implications. The mountain chicken is part of culture. We import farine or cassava flour and also cassava bread. One understands that impact on production of a small population and one understands economy of scale; but these were part of our food security and were rooted in our African past long before the concept of 'ital' food appeared. The name "cumba" a South African word meaning to spread out in thin layers was actually given to cassava cakes which are baked in small pans or pots. They may not have so conceptualized it, but for our parents, culture was their lived life and their means of survival. In the volcanic dispensation walking in some of these cultural footprints may be critical for the economic journey ahead.

**16.7 Accordingly, the Government will endeavour to:**

- (a) Direct more resources to cultural organizations and agencies with the assistance of regional and international organizations. This policy document can only become functional if it is underpinned by financial investment.
- (b) Provide incentives for entrepreneurs to produce based on local resources, and encourage Montserratian consumers to purchase local products, assisted where feasible by appropriate legislation.
- (c) Conduct or support research into the quantification of the economic contribution of cultural activities. This should include issues of customer satisfaction, organizational performance as well as environmental preservation. An aim would be to derive maximum profit from cultural services.
- (d) Treat cultural industries as an important subsector of the economic agenda by providing training and funding for both traditional and contemporary forms of cultural manifestations. This will involve partnership with

organizations and individuals that deal in art and craft.

- (e) Facilitate coordination and collaboration among government initiatives, NGOs and private sector action to ensure quality and maximization of resources in cultural businesses.
- (f) Mount periodical exhibitions of cultural industries especially of arts and craft with visiting artists participating. The 1993 policy idea of a National Gallery still has merit. It could showcase Montserratian products and has potential for enhancing foreign exchange earnings. Workshops should be linked to exhibitions to ensure continual improvement of standards and quality.
- (g) Encourage the utilization of local fruits to make drinks and other edibles and mount classes to teach the relevant skills and knowledge nutritious contents. Apart from the economic value, these activities allow for the inculcation of values such as thrift, industry and enterprise and the entrepreneurial spirit.
- (h) Provide opportunities and support for marketing the songs of calypsonians and the work of other performance artistes through CDs and other means. Videos of masquerades fall into this category. These should be ongoing enterprises and not confined to the festivals when they are highlighted.

## **17. MEDIA AND TECHNOLOGY**

And God fulfils himself in many ways  
Lest one good custom should corrupt the world.  
(Alfred Lord Tennyson)

- 17.1 Montserrat is both a small and open society and is therefore susceptible to external cultural influences. Cable television of American origin is a powerful conduit of culture which continually impacts on the Montserratian way of life including ideas, beliefs and values. The migration traffic in and out of the island

also affects culture as Montserratian travelers themselves, for instance, bring back new thinking and customs. Traditional knowledge and folkways in particular suffer from this external bombardment and the result is cultural distortion and dilution.

- 17.2 Montserratians accept that culture changes, but nevertheless lament the loss of 'the good old days' when certain approved behaviours and beliefs were considered pillars of culture and society. New technology in the form of television, radio and the internet threaten what some elders regards as sacrosanct to the essential culture and would wish to rescue and salvage the old ways which are critical to defining who Montserratians really are.
- 17.3 Even the matter of food preferences and tastes has come under foreign influence as fast foods and instant products with their high content of sugar and salt captivate young and old. This has implications for health and even for food production as the culture of backyard gardens takes a backseat. Entertainment also in many cases is imported just as canned foods.
- 17.4 And yet media and technology have their legitimate roles in the development of culture provided certain precautions are taken and the necessary regulations put in place. Both the print and the electronic media and the internet can shape tastes, determine emphasis and propagate ideas through what they present to the public and how they present it. The printed word and graphic image still fascinate and persuade.
- 17.5 The great challenge lies in our heavy dependence on foreign materials for radio and television broadcasts especially television. This is an intractable problem given the size of the island and the size of its finances. The island has made great strides in local radio programming having been in the business since 1952. On the other hand local television programmes featuring local people are few,

and interestingly, it is cultural material that predominates in these cases. Films would be struggling to be born for a while even though a couple of Montserradians have acted in films. Money is required not just to produce local material but to invest them with the quality that will captivate an audience.

**17.6 Accordingly, the Government of Montserrat will endeavour to:**

- (a) Support local artistic groups in the performing arts in their drive for excellence.
- (b) Provide support for local action in theatre, dance, visual arts and literary work through incentives such as tax relief and exemptions.
- (c) Encourage the Radio Montserrat Cultural Show to include more focused programmes which give the opportunity to elders to share their knowledge and experience with oncoming generations.
- (d) Support efforts by the mass media to present a positive image of Montserradians and their culture and to disseminate the work of artists to the wider world through the world-wide web and other electronic means.
- (e) Give constant support to the production of television programmes with a view to introducing regulations to guide the inclusion of a certain volume of regional and local material for local viewing. An immediate aim would be to utilize the channel geared to local programmes as fully as possible.
- (f) Encourage citizens, residents and civil and corporate society to support local television and radio programmes such as the discussion of recipes, alternative medicine, jumbie stories, folk stories, literary readings including plays. Interviews with cultural practitioners and prominent figures in the diaspora could be included in these programmes. More initiatives along the lines of “Under the Tamarind Tree” on ZJB Radio are

to be encouraged also.

- (g) Support the upgrading of local technology to enable quality recordings, transmission and improvement in the quality of local programmes.
- (h) Make use of MNI Alive for interchange between the island, the diaspora and even the region on Montserrat lifestyle and festivals and to stimulate and ventilate thought. And more specifically develop a live link between MNI Alive and ZJB to promote airing and preservation of cultural practices across the diaspora. Additionally, U-Tube already in use can be engaged more systematically to exchange ideas on cultural matters both locally and across wider spaces. This could lead to improvement in the quality of cultural products and informed disputation.
- (i) Support programmes by the media to stimulate independent and critical thinking, and to analyse the Montserrat Story, past and present including positions on cultural, moral and spiritual values.
- (j) Promote a vibrant and responsible mass media with enabling legislation that underpins a free press in a democratic society.

## **18. INFRASTRUCTURE**

18.1 In mapping the cultural landscape we referred to organizations and community groups that have carried out cultural activity but apart from churches, the national radio station and the MNT, there are few permanent cultural institutions and spaces. Cultural activities have occurred in yards, churches, school building and much more recently (1960s) at hotels. In the 1970s the new Shamrock cinema offered space for occasional activities and this was followed by a crude theatre attachment at the UWI Centre which became a main public space for the performance arts until the evacuation of Plymouth. It was built purely by community effort. This situation reflected the general perception of culture as ad hoc and spontaneous entertainment without any particular economic significance. Culture was not necessarily regarded as critical to sustainable development.

- 18.2 The appointment of a Coordinator of Culture in 1992 reflected a shift in the thinking on culture. Not surprisingly it was imbedded in the Ministry of Education. Interestingly, the policy statement linked with the new development pointed to the need for a Performing and Creative Arts Centre complete with stipulated equipment. The authors pointed out the necessity for the centre “to become financially viable decreasing government subvention and establishing a revenue earning capacity”. This could be instructive as a new way forward on the space issue is charted.
- 18.3 The building and opening of the Sir George Martin Cultural Centre came with great hope and expectation. It has, however drawn criticism from some quarters for not being readily accommodating to cultural groups and for being expensive to use. Whatever flaws there are in its management, maintenance expense is a challenge. Even when it acquires new management as it is likely to do, some level of cost will attach to its use unless Government fully underwrites its operations. The Cultural Centre which has hosted many cultural activities will not answer to every need. There is still no committed theatre space, for instance. The presence of a national museum provides welcome space for exhibitions and the availability of auditoriums such as the Brades Arts and Education Centre the St. Patrick’s Corporative building and even the commodious Roman Catholic Church at Lookout have been used to some advantage.
- 18.4 The positioning of the Cultural Division in the Ministry of Economic Development is a healthy signal. Its administration by the Tourism Unit including budgetary expenditure does raise questions, however, about its mandate and authority. As an interim measure, this could be understandable but if the new policy is to drive vigorous development action, the strategy and agents of implementation may require change in the administrative arrangements for culture.

- 18.5 In the new dispensation, the role of the MNT a now permanent cultural institution comes into sharper focus. Apart from its educational value, the museum should in time yield revenue; and the opening of a new botanical garden is also of significance. This with trails, historic sites, the housing of artefacts makes the MNT an important cultural institution.
- 18.6 The island's rise from volcanic ashes includes capitalizing on the destruction. The Montserrat Volcano Observatory is not just a stopping point for visitors, but must in time be at the centre of seminars which attract students and faculty to the island where there is a living laboratory for volcanology and related sciences. Marketing culture must assume varied forms.
- 18.7 In a new cultural regime, new attention would have to be given to legislation to protect the intellectual property rights of our musicians, painters and other artists. Patents and trademarks will need to be established for cultural industries which are uniquely ours such as goat water recipe and masquerade dress local sea-island cotton articles and some of the aesthetic needlework.
- 18.8 Accordingly, the Government of Montserrat will endeavour to:**
- (a) Re-examine the present administrative arrangements for the cultural unit in the light of the new cultural policy.
  - (b) Treat the cultural unit as a coordinating agency for the various entities in cultural work – organizations of artists, art and craft groups. It could become a clearing house for information on culture in the island.
  - (c) Provide cultural agencies with the necessary technology to promote their programmes and ensure sustainability.
  - (d) Establish the Montserrat Cultural Centre as a statutory body with government support managed by a Board on which organizations such as the

cultural unit, the tourism unit and cultural practitioners are represented. The Centre can then be used to solve some of the problems of cultural space that many have highlighted. This will not necessarily mean free usage.

- (e) Seek further solution to the problem of space by building an extension to the Centre dedicated to theatre and other performing arts.
- (f) Increase the budget allocation to culture incrementally as new projects are undertaken. This could take the form of assisting cultural agencies such as the MNT to access project funds.
- (g) Establish an Endowment Fund for the cultural arts to attract donations from persons and foundations at home and abroad. These funds could be assigned to training cultural workers and artists in a bid to improve the quality of the island's cultural products.
- (h) Encourage private sector involvement in cultural activity by providing tax incentives as appropriate.
- (i) Enact and enforce laws to protect Montserratian creations and prevent the pillage of Montserratian artefacts. Where necessary steps will be taken to repatriate artefacts.
- (j) Support the private Scholarship Fund which the Festival Committee established in 2002 to provide bursaries and scholarships in the arts.

## **19. IMPLEMENTATION**

19.1 Montserratians are blessed with talented persons in the cultural arts but if many are to move beyond mediocre performance and polite applause, there has to be a sustained programme of training. Deficiency in infrastructure relates to training. The absence of any institution dedicated to training in the arts means Montserratians obliged to access training overseas in places like UWI Trinidad, The Edna Manley College of the Visual and Performing Arts in Jamaica and various relevant institutes in the United Kingdom. The lack of galleries and adequate performance spaces aggravates the situation.

Private recordings take place, but there is no professional recording studio.

19.2 Money is obviously a factor, and so is management. A new regime which places culture at the centre of development needs to re-examine the management structure. The chief executive must be empowered to initiate, manage and co-ordinate, working with a committed budget.

19.3 Implementation of the National Policy outlined here will inevitably cost, but is hoped that strategic partnerships, funded projects, grants, profit from cultural enterprises, a more invigorating economic climate and an enhanced tourism project will in time bring healthy dividends.

**19.4 Accordingly the Government will endeavour to:**

- (a) Establish an Endowment Fund for culture to attract donations and bequests after advertising in the appropriate media.
- (b) Treat culture as a special sector of economic development for planning purposes.
- (c) Sensitise aid partners to the concept of culture as investment with economic potential and to its links with education, science, health and tourism.
- (d) Develop projects in culture and seek funding from UNESCO who by definition is committed to the development of culture and cultural policies. Partnership with regional entities like CARICOM and OECS could also yield dividends as our regional counterparts make a similar thrust in cultural development.
- (e) Encourage private sector participation investment and collaboration in cultural enterprises.
- (f) Conduct research into cultural products to evaluate quality, ascertain something of their true economic value and quantify their contribution to personal and national income.
- (g) Forge and foster links with universities that will see the island with its active

volcano as an ideal learning laboratory for volcanology and related sciences.

- (h) Establish a National Cultural Foundation to advise broadly on culture including a Culture Cabinet that will work closely with the Coordinator of Culture who should be re-designated Director.
- (i) Endeavour to raise the status of culture by removing it from under the administration of the Tourist Board and staffing it appropriately. Volunteers will be recruited to help 'staff' the Cultural Unit.
- (j) Amend the existing legislation which established a National Arts Council to take account of the developments proposed in the present policy document.

## **Appendix 1 – Groups and Persons Consulted**

### **(a) Organizations /Districts Consulted**

Brades (Representatives from the Community)  
Brades Primary School Staff  
Cultural Practitioners  
Evergreen Senior Citizens Club  
Lookout Community (Representatives)  
Media Personnel  
Montserrat National Trust  
Saint Peter's Community  
Salem Community  
Montserrat Tourist Board  
Youth Groups

### **(b) Partial List of persons who attended Meetings**

Dr. Sheron Burns  
Albertine Browne  
Eleanor Silcott  
Marie Edwards  
Edith Weekes  
John E Allen  
Catherine John  
Sylvia Harris  
Amelda Buffonge  
Mary Burns  
Florence Malone  
Mary Allen  
Susannah Gerald  
Matilda Farrell  
Jane Ann Ryan  
James Greenaway  
Meridith Blake

Chadd Cumberbatch - MTB  
Eudora Fergus - Montserrat National Trust  
Vereen Woolcock - MTB  
Rosetta West - MTB  
Dolcie James - MTB  
Beverley Mendes - MTB  
Florence Griffith Joseph - MTB  
Nadia Browne - CYC  
Rhonda Boatswain - Emerald Youths  
Bettrice Jones - Emerald Community Singers  
Dekel S. Hamilton - CYC  
Milykhia Mckenzie - Optimist Club  
Siobhan Tuitt - St. John's Action Club  
Vanice Tuitt - Interact Club  
Jose White - St. John's Action Club  
Jane White - St. John's Action Club  
Hazel Riley - News Link newspaper  
Bennette Roach - The Montserrat Reporter  
James White Junior - ZJB Radio  
Jeevan Robinson - MNI Alive  
John Jeffers  
Marcia Jeffers  
Jermaine Wade  
Sharlene Lindsay

(This list does not contain the names of the two persons who attended the Brades meeting, the three from the Teachers' group, the 15 of Salem and some 18 cultural practitioners).

(c) Written Submissions and Individual Interviews

Gracelyn Cassell (Head, UWI Open Campus)  
Glen Francis (Director of Education/ PS Education (Ag.)  
Angella Greenaway (Cabinet Secretary, Formerly, PS Development)  
Randal Greenaway  
Dr. J.George Irish

Edwin Martin

Gordon Mullings

Mrs. Ponde (100+)and Mr. Ponde

Brenda Thomas

Yvonne Weekes (Former Coordinator of Culture)

## Appendix 2 – Consulting Instruments

### (a) Letter

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

A committee consisting of Dr. Clarice Barnes, Ms. Ann Marie Dewar, Mr. Herman Francis, Mr. Alric Taylor and myself has been tasked with producing a National Cultural Policy for Montserrat by the end of July. If it is to be national it has to be informed by wide consultation in spite of the time constraint. This is why we are writing to you/your organization to seek your views on the concerns, actions, priorities, and areas of focus which the Policy should address.

We are writing to persons who have been engaged in cultural activities either as practitioners or promoters or are interested in the development of Montserrat. In a general sense, we are seeking the views of as many of our known opinion leaders as possible. In this context we very much value your input and will recognise it.

The meaning of culture is debateable but it is generally agreed that it has to do with the way of life of a people in a particular country. For the purpose of the Policy, we are adopting a broader definition. Culture is “the whole complex of distinctive, spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features that characterise a society or social group.” We want to go further than this UNESCO-based definition. It is not just dance, music, drama, traditions and values, but it is a people’s environment, their relationship to it and their mode of making a living. A people’s understanding of their culture should give them a sense of identity and self –worth and this we believe is critical for creativity and real development. Culture underpins development as a whole. Our own working definition which may well change in the process is not intended to constrain your thinking in any way.

We look forward to hearing from you and to receiving your contribution in due course.

Yours sincerely  
Howard Fergus

**(b) Questions for Consultations/Focus Groups**

1. When you hear the word 'culture', what do you think of? What does it mean to you?
2. What in your view are the most important aspects of Montserrat's culture?
3. What aspects /areas/ items of our culture has been lost or in danger of dying out?
4. What should we do to restore or preserve these?
5. From where (How) did we get our culture?
6. Has the culture been changing? If so, what has caused the change?
7. Should we include the culture of our new residents in the island's culture?
8. Please tell us some of the important matters that Montserrat should write into its policy on culture, especially with respect your organization?
9. How do you think culture can help the island's economy?

**(c) Focus Group Questions for Seniors - Evergreen**

1. Tell us about growing up in Montserrat and how things have changed
2. What are the things that you treasure/love about Montserrat ways?
3. Are there any things that you don't like?
4. How are we going to keep Montserrat ways going?
5. There are a new people in Montserrat now do you think that we should take on their ways
6. How could we make a living out of the things that we do/make?

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