



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago
Ministry of Community Development,
Culture and the Arts

MEDIA RELEASE

7th March, 2018

Attention: News Editors

42 YEARS- FROM THEN TO NOW **TODD'S ROAD COMMUNITY CENTRE RE-OPENS**

The history of the Todd's Road Community Centre goes way back to 1958 when the Village Council was first formed and, back then, meetings were held at the Todd's Road R.C. School. After the abolition of the Trinidad Government Railway, the Village Council of the day acquired the land on which the current centre rests. Construction of the original building began in November 1971 and was finally completed in 1976 and opened by then Community Development Minister, Mrs. C. Clarke-Allen.

From then to now, the original building temporarily housed the health centre, the Nesta Patrick Nursery School, which still exists today, and a computer literacy centre. Over the years, the community benefitted from this space through the various courses and training programmes conducted by the Ministry of Community Development, Culture and the Arts, YTEPP and other agencies. Some of the skills imparted included tiling, cake making and decorating, grow box, draperies, chinese cooking, bread and pastries among others. To date, many persons have gone on to make a career in the different areas as a result of the training they received at the Community Centre.

Unfortunately, with little or no maintenance the building gradually deteriorated and by the year 1993 the structure was in such a deplorable condition that it was rendered unsafe for further use and the Village Council meetings made a full circle back to the Todd's Road R.C. School. But the Todd's road community proved that their spirit was stronger than brick and mortar.

As avid participants in Prime Minister's Best Village Trophy Competition, the community is embedded in a rich cultural history of music, drumology and drama. It is therefore not surprising that the Todd's Road Community Centre re-opened its doors on Tuesday March 6, 2018 to the rhythmic sounds of African drums. The Todd's Road R.C School, demonstrated that their community's rich legacy was weaved into these young drummers who set the tone for the formal rededication of the Todd's Road Community Centre on Tuesday 6th March, 2018.



Drummer Boys: Students of the Todd's Road Roman Catholic School performs an African Nango - Drummology

The community came out to celebrate the rededication of the building and in his remarks, Frank Matthews, President to the Village Council, said, *"the Executive and members of the Todd's Road Village Council have recommitted ourselves to the care, use and maintenance of this building as we recognize the need for the continued development and enrichment of the residents of Todd's Road and environs and by extension the entire country."*

Also present was Ryan Mohammed, Councillor for Longdenville/Talparo, Couva/Tabaquite, who represented the MP, Tim Gopeesingh. The occasion was very personal to him, being a home grown member of community, as expressed gratitude to the Ministry for not only doing the renovation works but for using a contractor from the community and completing it in a record time. Also coming in for high praise was the MP for La Horquetta/Talparo, Maxie Cuffie, who was influential not only for lobbying to get the refurbishment project done but also the upgrading of the Todd's Road Recreation Ground.

During her address, the Community Development Minister, Dr. the Honourable Nyan Gadsby-Dolly said, *"opening or rededicating a centre is a celebration for the Ministry, in light of all the challenges and finding the solutions around those challenges, we are in celebratory mood because everyone at the Ministry is happy and proud that we have gotten to this stage."* She went on further to state that *"this building, once again forms part of the iconic landscape to the community of Todd's Road; and speaks directly to the role the Ministry of Community Development, Culture and the Arts plays in creating an enabling environment, a space, a hub to ignite the community spirit."* Four members of the community were also recognized for their contributions to community and culture.



Ribbon Cut L-R: Ms. Susan Corbett, Director of Community Development, Mr. Ryan Rampersad, Councillor for Longdenville/Talparo, Couva/Tabaquite, Dr. the Honourable Nyan Gadbsy-Dolly, Minister of Community Development, Culture and the Arts, Ms. Susan Shurland, Deputy Permanent Secretary, Mr. Frank Matthews, President of the Todd's Road Village Council and Reverend Junior Francis.



Community Award: 80 Year Old – Ms. Eileen Gomez receives her award for her contribution to Community involvement at Todd’s Road Community Centre Rededication.

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