

911 Emergency Response

Press Release

20 July 2009

First Blue Hills Street Sign Erected

It was a momentous and historic occasion on Sunday 19 July at around 9:30am when members of the Blue Hills community planted the first street sign in the area. A member of the community donated the sign and post for Tumpa Avenue in honour of Mr. Tom Lightbourne, a long time Blue Hills resident, prominent member of the community and great supporter of the street naming and 911 initiative. Mr. Lightbourne's house is also the first in the area to receive its number and to have it prominently displayed.



The ceremony highlighted the best of the Blue Hills community – persons coming together and providing their time and energy to honouring Mr Lightbourne and supporting the 911 and street addressing programmes.

Members of Mr. Lightbourne's Native Men's Fellowship helped to dig the hole, mix the cement and plant the pole for the street sign. Several persons from the community stopped by during the ceremony and were able to get information on how they can name their streets and obtain their official address. A young man who lives nearby joined in the ceremony and provided water for the cement – he felt happy to play even a small part in this historic event.

On the occasion Mr Lightbourne said:

"I am very touched by the gesture. This is not my street alone, and I am sure other residents will be proud and happy to have an official road name & address. I hope that the community will respect the significance of having these signs go up around the islands and that they will not be defaced or destroyed."

During a presentation given to the Fellowship meeting, Ms Juliette Gooding, Manager of the 911 Emergency Response programme said:

"For the first time in the history of the Turks and Caicos, a large percentage of the streets are officially named in Providenciales and many dwellings have been assigned a number. At the moment this information is held in the street naming and mapping offices of the Department of Planning but 911 is rolling out street signs which are mostly donated or purchased by individual communities and residents, and coordinating efforts to ensure that members of the community know their address.

"The street naming programme is key to the functioning of an efficient and reliable 911 service. In an emergency situation every second matters and naming streets and knowing your address is crucial to ensuring that precious moments are not lost. We call on members of the public to get in touch with us to find out what their address is.

"I would also like to thank members of the community for their support and interest in the 911 project. It would not be possible for the project to come to fruition without their support. In particular, I would like to thank Wendal and Willette Swann who were on the Blue Hills Street Naming Committee and arranged for me to speak with you today."

The 911 project is this week receiving additional financial support and will be making announcements in that regard in the coming days, as well as launching its website. Persons wishing to know their address and register their information against that address should contact the 911 Emergency Response secretariat via email admin@911tci.com, by telephone on 946-5255 or by visiting their offices located in Williams Plaza, 34B Old Airport Road.

- Ends -

Notes to editors:

Photo Captions



Above, from left to right – Mr Tom Lightbourne; Mr Wendal Swann; Ms Juliette Gooding; Mr Willette Swann



Members of the Native Men’s Fellowship and Blue Hills Community who helped to plant the street sign.



Members of the Native Men's Fellowship mixing cement and planting the street sign.



Mr. Tom Lightbourne (right) with his son Mr Elry Lightbourne

About 911

The mission of the 911 Emergency Service is to provide 24 hour response to all emergency calls requiring Police, Fire and Emergency Medical Services within these islands. The project has been underway since the arrival of the Project Manager, Ms Juliette Gooding, in April 2008. The first stage of the project involves an extensive street naming exercise (focusing primarily on Provo and subsequently to other islands in the change), establishing the necessary IT and radio infrastructure, training staff in the 911 call centre as well as emergency services partners (police, ambulance, fire brigade). The system for Providenciales is expected to become fully operational in the last quarter of 2009.

Notice of press briefing

911 Emergency Response will be holding a press briefing on Thursday July 23rd at 3pm in the boardroom of the Hilly Ewing Building, Leeward Highway. The meeting is intended for members of the press only and not for the general public. Representatives from the Governor's office and the Bankers Association of Turks & Caicos will be present to make an announcement about the project.

For further information

Please contact Juliette Gooding, 911 Project Manager on manager@911tci.com, tel: 946 5255 or 231 1845 or Claudia Camozzi, communications volunteer, on 232 4426 or claudia.camozzi@ibgtci.com.