

# TCHTA attends Marketplace 2007 in Aruba

**TOURISM BOSSES** jetted over to Aruba recently to promote the Islands as one of this year's hottest destinations.

Representatives of the Turks & Caicos Hotel Association (TCHTA) along with members of the country's tourist board attended the 26th Caribbean Marketplace, the largest marketing event of its kind in the region.

This year's gathering boasted a record number of participants.

Caribbean Marketplace brings together Caribbean tourism suppliers from 35 destinations to meet with qualified international buyers, wholesalers, incentive and group buyers, meeting planners and dive shop owners from around the world.

Butch Clare, chairman of the TCHTA, said: "Turks & Caicos was well represented at this marquee event.

"We partnered with the tourist board to market and promote our destination and had an extremely positive reception.

"Before even arriving in Aruba, we had more than 40 meetings scheduled with tour operators and trade publications from all parts of the world."

Six leading TCI resorts - Royal West Indies, Grace Bay Club, Meridian Club, The Palms, The Sands and The Somerset - were also featured at the event.

Caesar Campbell, CEO of the TCHTA who attended the event along with Mr Clare plus Don Gardiner and Lindsey Musgrave from the Tourist Board, said: "Caribbean Marketplace sets the tone for travel packaging in the Caribbean.

"With professional buyers from all over the world, this

venue presents an unparalleled networking opportunity while also underscoring the importance of tourism to the region.

"In conjunction with the Tourist Board, we provided marketing and advertising support to promote Turks & Caicos to tour operators from around the globe."

TCHTA aims to achieve sustainable growth in tourism while protecting and enhancing the unique character and environment of the Turks and Caicos Islands.

It is comprised of more than 90 businesses and organisations including major resorts and property developments.



Caesar Campbell, CEO of the TCHTA, and Don Gardiner and Lindsey Musgrave of the TCI Tourist Board, meet with Travel Weekly to promote the Islands.

## TCI grandmother bids farewell after 35 years at a Bahamian condo resort

**By Thea Rutherford**  
A TCI grandmother has bid a fond farewell to colleagues after clocking up three and a half decades working at a condominium resort in the Bahamas.

For the residents of Lacayan Towers South, Inagua, an old friend is gone.

And where she once sat faithfully, she will leave a seat that may be harder to fill than it was to say goodbye to her.

Ken Brerly, 79, an off-and-on resident of the tower for the last 20 years, said: "It will be very sad to see her go, she's been like a fixture."

It will be hard for Diane Glinton as well. She has held her post at one of the island's oldest condominiums for the past 35 years.

Diane - attentive mother, doting grandmother and people-lover - was one of the first employees to be hired all those years ago.

She never thought she would still be there so many years later greeting families that have

grown - residents whose hair, like hers, has turned grey and whose children have surpassed them in height.

"I didn't know I'd live this long," she says, with a contagious giggle.

Diane has been a lot to a lot of people: A smiling face, a reliable worker, eyes and ears that would tell nothing that should not be told - a sense of security for residents.

Condo Association President Maurice Glinton said: "She has been an invaluable part of our security and greening system. People come and see the same face and they feel comfortable and they know that things will not change."

But perhaps most of all, Diane has been a mother to her co-workers.

Resident manager Wilma Bain said: "She's sort of the peacemaker. Her smile changes your whole day. It makes you feel so good."

Diane was the first person to make Wilma feel welcome eight

years ago during her early days on the job.

"She just walked into the office and said, 'I am Diane and I am here to help you in any way I can.'"

She meant it too. Her willingness to take on overtime shifts that were not always convenient, her gentle knocks on the door to check up on the resident manager when she had not seen her for the morning, her monthly home-made bread deliveries were the proof of the promise.

Seated behind the glass panel at the front desk on her last day, Diane greeted residents as they walked in and out of the building, wishing a happy new year to the ones that she had not seen since 2006.

They called her name; she called theirs back.

What helps with a job like this, she says, is a genuine love for people.

"I truly enjoy it. I just love people and I love this job. I hate leaving it, but I think 35 years is a lot."

Still it's hard to say goodbye.

Glinton savoured the moment in the meantime, expertly buzzing residents behind the security gate that leads to the elevators while greeting others. It was a gate that she once buzzed Prince Charles through.

"I got to meet Prince Charles. I shook his hand," she said of a trip the monarch made in the 1970s.

He stayed at the building inconspicuously for one night.

"We only realized after the fact that that was Prince Charles," she laughed.

The mother-of-five, who has never travelled, says she is now looking forward to seeing some of the world. Canada and Australia are top of her list.

For the colleague who was never ill, the mother who never spent a night away from home and the faithful friend, retirement will touch down gently and will be taken in stride.

But for the tireless worker, retirement will also be welcomed.