



Media Release

NEW DISTILLERY VISITOR CENTRE OPENED TO BOOST SCOTLAND'S TOURISM

The High Commissioner of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, His Excellency Garvin Nicholas today (15th June 2012) opened a new visitor centre at an historic distillery in Doune, Scotland. Deanston Distillery is operated by Burn Stewart Distillers, which is part-owned by Angostura Limited and in recognition of the importance of its ties with Trinidad and Tobago, the High Commissioner was asked to open the Centre.

Located on the banks of the river Teith, near Stirling, Deanston Distillery and Visitor Centre offer a unique insight into Scotland's industrial past and traditional whisky production. It is expected to attract 15,000 visitors a year and contribute to whisky tourism, an industry generating an estimated £30 million for the Scottish tourism economy¹.

The distillery and a number of staff have already attracted international attention as Deanston featured as the distillery location in the recently released and highly acclaimed Ken Loach film, 'The Angels' Share' which won the prestigious Jury Prize at this year's Cannes Festival. One of the stars of the film, Jasmin Riggins, was also present at the opening. The location, in the heart of the Central Belt, means that Deanston Visitor Centre will be accessible to day visitors from Scotland's major cities in addition to visitors from overseas.

Established in 1966, Deanston Distillery, which produces the hand-crafted Deanston Highland Single Malt Scotch Whisky, is the only distillery in Scotland to be self-sufficient in electricity with power generated by the on-site hydro-energy facility. In 2000, the Distillery was also one of the first in Scotland to start producing organic whisky.

The impressive 18th century former cotton mill which the distillery occupies, also boasts a number of nationally important innovations which are interpreted and brought to life within the new visitor centre.

Richard Arkwright, the original owner of the mill, invented the water-powered spinning frame and designed the modern factory system. Hercules, one of four colossal waterwheels powering the mill from 1833, was the largest waterwheel in Europe and the second largest in the world.

The elegant vaulted weaving shed which is the maturation warehouse today is recognised as being one of the greatest surviving Regency industrial buildings in Scotland. Deanston was also the first major industrial concern to produce its own currency for trade in the distillery and local village. It is also said that the majority of sheets and toweling used on the maiden voyage of the Queen Elizabeth were produced at Deanston.

On performing the opening, The High Commissioner said: "I am pleased to be able to officially open the Visitor Centre in the Deanston Distillery. Scotland is such a lovely place and I have thoroughly enjoyed learning about the whisky distilling process. This building is rich in history, and has links with Scotland's strong industrial and engineering past. It is very satisfying to know that Trinidad and Tobago is improving its commercial ties with this historic community."

Andrew Mitchell, Chairman of Burn Stewart Distillers, speaking at the opening explained the significance of the new Visitor Centre to whisky, tourism and heritage:

"Most single malts tend to have an interesting provenance story. They're part of their own society with their own personalities but Deanston enjoys an enormous wealth of personality.

"The creation of the Visitor Centre here at Deanston has been a vision of the company for some 22 years because the distillery and the former cotton mill tell such a riveting and important story about the handcrafted production of whisky, the heritage of this stunning building and its place within the community and Scottish history.

"From the unique open air mash tun and vaulted maturation warehouse to the solid granite staircase, visitors will feel a real sense of the tradition, the sense of community, the hand-crafted whisky process and the proud self-sufficiency of the distillery here."

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