

New design competition for Shearer monument

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THE Jamaica National Heritage Trust (JNHT) has relaunched the design competition for a monument at National Heroes Park in honour of the late Prime Minister and labour leader, Hugh Lawson Shearer.

JNHT director of estate management, Gavern Tate, told a briefing at the Trust's head office, Duke Street, Kingston, last week, that the aim is to complete the project by May 7 next year.

Shearer was Prime Minister of Jamaica between 1967 and 1972, and president of the Bustamante Industrial Trade Union (BITU) up to the time of his death on July 5, 2004.

Both the Jamaica Labour Party (JLP), whose administration he led in 1967-72, and the BITU, in which he succeeded the late national hero, Alexander Bustamante, as president, as well as his widow, Professor Denise Eldemire-Shearer, have constantly expressed their concern that he is the only former leader buried at National Heroes Park without a monument in his honour.

At the ceremony in memory of his death at Heroes Park on July 6, Opposition Leader Bruce Golding hinted that a new process towards building a monument would begin.

He said that he had been asked by the JNHT to name a representative of the JLP on the panel to judge the design entries.

Former JLP senator, Dr Oswald Harding will represent the party. The BITU will also name a representative.

Tate told the briefing at the JNHT's head office to announce the Trust's activities, that the previous effort failed because the designs entered were not considered suitable.

He said that in addition to the JLP and BITU representatives, there would also be judges from the Jamaica Institute of Engineers, the Jamaica Institute of Architects and the Guild of Artisans and Craftsmen involved in the aborted initial attempt in 2006, which required a design for a \$5 million monument.

"Based on the criteria that was set up for the judging, we were unable to actually select from the entries one that we thought was suitable," Tate said. "This year, what we have done is to restart the process and this briefing is, actually, just the introductory thing that we need to launch the process, publicly," he said.



Hugh Lawson Shearer

"The advertisements will be in the newspapers, come next Sunday, inviting the public to put in entries for the competition. What we will be looking at, in terms of judging, are: the completeness of the entry, based on the criteria that will be set out in the document; the strength of the concept; responsiveness to the design brief; artistic impression of the design and concept, itself; the appropriateness of the design in terms of occupying the space in Heroes Circle; and affordability and economy;

He said that the schedule requires submission of entries by September third and preliminary judging in the first half of September.

After the finalists are selected, the designs will be placed on display at Gordon House.

"What we want to do is to have a sort of participatory approach to the judging process. The entries will be displayed in Parliament for four days to allow the public to make comments," Tate said.

The final judging is scheduled for September 17-21 and the winner will be announced on September 24.

"We are hoping for the monument's construction to be completed by May 7, 2008," Tate said.