




EDITORIAL: With a little help from our friends

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THE restoration of the Elbow Reef Lighthouse in Hope Town, Abaco, is an unqualified success.

Yesterday marked the reopening of the lighthouse – but it is a journey that has taken years and a great deal of effort.

We shall come to the story of the restoration in a moment – but take a look at the photographs in today’s Tribune from the event for a moment first. You will find them in both our main section and a colour spread in our Weekend section.

Among the photographs from Tribune photographer Dante Carrer, you will see a united line-up of diplomats to The Bahamas.

There is US Embassy Chargé d’Affaires Usha Pitts alongside Chinese ambassador Dai Qingli and UK High Commissioner Tom Hartley.

There are smiles on all sides and a great show of unity in support of the project.

In this world where too often there are international divisions or frictions between nations, it can only be a good thing for The Bahamas to see such cordiality.

Harnessing such international goodwill can only benefit our nation. Of course, as a nation we should be able to stand alone as best we can – but how much easier it is to stand alongside friends.

Such friendship is already on show – the lighthouse project is a testament to that.

A grant from the US Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation made the project possible. The grant, to the tune of more than \$472,000, was the most significant investment the US Embassy has ever made in the country.

That does not mean it was all done by outside hands – far from it. The Elbow Reef Lighthouse Society has shown commitment and energy to bring the restoration about.

Heather Forde-Prosa, the society’s development director, said there has been help from the Minister of Tourism, help from the Port Department – and more help will be needed to ensure maintenance in the years ahead.

The outcome is more than just symbolic. The lighthouse serves as a guide for ship captains. It helps to protect. It helps to save lives. And it stands on the landscape as a landmark down the ages, and for the years to come.

What a fitting tribute it would be if that lighthouse can also serve as a guide for our future – to show how we can work with our international friends for the betterment of our nation.

Ms Pitts talked about how the lighthouse “was built by the British, its restoration was funded by the Americans, but now and forever it will belong to the Bahamian people”.

Together, we can do great things – greater than can be achieved by one pair of hands alone.

It would be a wonderful thing if Elbow Reef can not only light the way for ship captains, but light the way for our nation. And our friends.