The City Hall located at the corner of Regent Street and the Avenue of the Republic is considered by many to be one of the most distinctive buildings of Georgetown’s landscape. Through the efforts of the National Trust of Guyana, City Hall has been nominated by World Monuments Fund (WMF). This is a private, international, non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation of historic architecture and cultural heritage sites around the world through fieldwork, advocacy, grant making and education.

Of the 248 applications, City Hall was one of 69 sites which qualified. This achievement has allowed City Hall to be imprinted on the World Monuments Watch list. This prestigious list offers world recognition of the world’s most endangered sites. It presents the opportunity for City Hall to benefit from the services offered by WMF over a period of two years.
History and Architecture of City Hall

A Brief History
The construction of the Town Hall was proposed several times during the nineteenth century. In 1871 it was proposed that the City Hall be erected circa Stabroek Market. Another site close to where the National Library now stands was also earmarked as the location for this magnificent structure, which houses the offices of the Town Council of Georgetown. The site on which the City Hall now stands was acquired from Mr. George Anderson Forshaw, a former Mayor of the city of Georgetown: the site was then a 'tumble down coffee logie used for dances'. On December 23, 1887, under a small white tent, his excellency Governor Sir Henry Turner Irving laid the foundation stone of the City Hall. Eighteen months later on Monday July 1, 1889, his excellency Governor Viscount Gormanston, before a gathering of four hundred influential persons, formally declared the new offices of the Council open.

The Architecture
The architecture of the City Hall is of the Gothic Revival style with features of the British Victorian era. It shows expert craftsmanship in the manipulation of wood including the decorative use of iron at verandas and stairways. The tower is one of the main attractions of the building.

Rising to the fourth floor, it has conical pinnacles at its upper corners and is capped by a pyramidal flat-topped spire, gothic arches over windows and verandas and cast iron pilasters and other metal work expresses decorative styles.

Designed by Father Ignatius Scoles the City Hall is an interpretation in wood of the masonry construction 'fancy dress' style Gothic Revival architecture prevalent during the Victorian era in Great Britain.

Another distinct feature is the hammer beam roof, which gives the ceiling the arches typical of medieval Gothic buildings in Britain, a famous example being Westminster Hall in London. Its architecture distinguishes it from all other in the country and regional neighbours.
Watch Day Forum and Exhibition, 2014

The National Trust and The Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sport, in collaboration with the World Monuments Fund, hosted a ‘Watch Day Forum and Exhibition’ on June 5, 2014, dedicated to raising awareness of endangered City Hall in the hope of its protection and promotion. The exhibition continued to June 6, 2014. The Watch Day Forum featured a guest lecture which targeted the rich history and architecture of City Hall, including the benefits of its preservation.

Watch Day is an event proposed by the nominator to promote community engagement at the site by dedicating a day to raising awareness with one or more activities that celebrate the importance of your site to the local community and beyond. The World Monuments Fund provided US$ 1,000 in support of our Watch Day.

The exhibition which was situated at one section of the Umana Yana, highlighted the various aspects of City Hall and the role played by the World Monuments Fund Organization.

Additionally, it contained information about ways to preserve and conserve our heritage and the role of City Hall in quest to UNESCO’s World Heritage List. There were also publications for free distribution which included brochures and the second edition of our Heritage Guyana Magazine which featured World Monuments Fund and City Hall.
Upcoming Event

Children’s Heritage Awareness Programme

The National Trust will be hosting its annual children’s heritage awareness program commencing July 21 to 25. As per normal we will be educating a group of approximately 30 children between the ages of 8 to 11 about the importance of our heritage. Tools such as model making, arts and crafts, tours, and demonstrations will be used to deliver knowledge about our heritage.

Remembering The Enmore Martyrs

The Enmore Martyrs' Monument, located at Plantation Enmore, East Coast Demerara, was erected in honour of the five heroic sugar workers who sacrificed their lives in the courageous attempt to secure improved working class rights.

This year marks the observance of the 66th Anniversary of the Enmore incident in which the five valiant sugar workers dedicated to bringing about improvements in the working conditions in the sugar industry were gunned down by the colonial police.

Remembering Dr. Walter Rodney

This year marks the 34th anniversary of the death of one of Guyana’s most prolific historians and political activist, Dr. Walter Rodney. He was born in Georgetown, Guyana on March 23, 1942, and developed into an excellent scholar and was acknowledged as one of the Caribbean’s most brilliant minds.

During his time in Guyana he was active on the political stage, always promoting the working class and denouncing injustice.

He was also a key player in the development of the Working Peoples' Alliance (WPA). The WPA was successful in mobilizing and uniting the Guyanese people and it was strongly felt that this party with Walter Rodney at its helm would restore democracy to Guyana.