



The Newsletter of the Barbados Genealogy Group (BGG)

Connections

"A forum for family researchers in Barbados and the diaspora to stay connected through news, articles, tips and tricks."

BGG Objectives

- Encourage and promote family research.
- Foster communication, cooperation, mentorship.
- Educational talks, discussions and workshops.
- Share resources.
- Develop presentation skills.
- Advocacy in family research.
- Provide encouragement and support to young people in researching their family history.

Mission Statement

"To inspire and encourage Barbadian-related family history research and to foster the development of individual and shared identities."

THE BARBADOS MERCURY AND BRIDGETOWN GAZETTE

History and genealogy enthusiasts were delighted to learn about the successful completion of the digitisation of one of Barbados' oldest newspapers, the Barbados Mercury and Bridgetown Gazette. This newspaper, which was published bi-weekly, opens a window to the past, allowing persons to gain greater understanding of everyday life in the slaveholding society of Barbados during the late 18th and early 19th century. The editions of the newspaper available range from a few years in the 1780s, 1807 to 1825, 1835, 1839, and 1848, with the earliest edition available being that of Saturday April 5, 1783.

The online availability of this newspaper provides another source which can aid persons involved in genealogical research. The newspaper contains names of political figures of the time, names of estate owners, persons seeking to sell estates and goods, names and relatives of enslaved persons and references to wills, birth information, marriages, travel, and deaths.

For example, the front page of the April 5, 1783 edition lists names of persons pre-

sent at a general assembly meeting. The second page of this same edition features a petition to resolve a matter relating to the will of a Henry Thornhill Esq. of the parish of St. Thomas. The paper lists the names of his relatives and notes that at one time he owned Lion Castle estate. On page four of the same edition, a runaway notice is posted pertaining to two persons, a "negro wench" about 45 years old named Sarah Clarke from Ashton Hall estate in St. Peter, and "a black skin young fellow named Ben" who was suspected of being harboured by his father Ned who belonged to a Captain Barclay.

On page two of the January 8, 1839 edition we find a list of persons intending to leave the island. On this same page, death notices of a few persons are given; namely Dr. James Clinckett who died at age 69; Matilda, the only daughter of Captain John Phillips; and Nathan, the eldest son of the late Mrs. Katherine Lewis Carter, who died at age 23 at his Cheltenham Villa home.

The online version of this newspaper can be accessed via the link:

<http://dloc.com/AA00047511/00003/allvolumes?search=barbados+%3dmercury>

BAJAN GARVEYITES (Part 1)

One hundred years ago, in 1919, a local branch of the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) was established in Barbados, largely through the efforts of John Beckles and Israel Lovell. The main objectives of this association were; to educate and instil black pride among black Barbadians, encourage black unity, and instil the concept of self-help within this group. The local UNIA was mainly made up of skilled artisans and veterans returning from World War I and boasted a membership of over 1,800 in 1920. Branches were established in Reed Street, the City, which was the headquarters, Westbury Road in St. Michael, Crab Hill and Half Moon Fort in St. Lucy. Another branch of the UNIA was later established in Indian Ground, St. Peter and Venture, St. John. Alexandria Gibbs was the president of the Reed Street branch of the UNIA. She actively participated in this organisation by distributing the *Negro World* newspaper throughout the island and spoke at its public meetings. She, along with John Beckles, ran a night school at the Reed Street branch, which provided the only formal education for many underprivileged youths in Bridgetown. Israel Lovell was the president of the Westbury branch. The Indian Ground branch was administered by Cyril Foster, a speculator and H.I. Gill, the district shopkeeper, and in whose shop meetings were held. The Crab Hill division was under the leadership of Gladstone Leacock. Leacock was a member of the UNIA during his stay in Cuba and upon his return to Barbados started the movement in rural Barbados.



The authorities in Barbados became concerned with the activities of the UNIA and accused members of trade unionism when they sought to organise workers to advocate for better pay and working conditions. This was during a time when trade unions were still illegal in the country. The Governor of the island became increasingly concerned when the organisation sought to become the official diplomatic body to represent British West Indian Workers in Cuba. The Governor accused the organisation of sending threatening letters to planters and encouraging workers to strike. The UNIA was also accused of being hostile to white interest and bent on creating racial unrest. In response, the Governor met and encouraged leading planters to pay their workers a decent wage in order to spare the likelihood of insurrection. The wages of police were raised to abate the discontent which was brewing within the force, and police were sent to spy on this organisation, its meetings and its members. The police spies compiled a list of UNIA members, their

addresses and occupations which included; Leach Worrell, a shopkeeper of Westbury Road; William Yard, a vendor of aerated drinks from Church Village Bridgetown; Edwin Miller, a ship labourer from New Orleans; and Reverend Cragwell, a mission minister from Shop Hill, St. Thomas.

The imprisonment of Marcus Garvey between 1925 and 1930 resulted in the UNIA branches worldwide suffering some decline, including in Barbados. In addition, internal and leadership squabbles, a shortage of funding, adverse propaganda, victimisation and intimidation from employers and the authorities contributed to the decline in membership. Melville Inness, Annie Hooper and Edwin Miller were constantly harassed at their jobs by their employers and by the police. James Chase spoke of being told by his employer that he heard he was a member of the UNIA. Fitzgerald Haynes, President of the UNIA in 1928, unexpectedly resigned in order to avoid losing his job in the civil service. Joseph Garner, an ex-soldier who served in the British West India Regiment, received no help from the Returned Soldiers Committee, could no longer serve as a juror, and the government reviewed his citizenship with the possibility of expelling him as an undesirable citizen. Many of the middle class blacks left the organisation and joined the Democratic League started by Charles Duncan O' Neal. Others became members and organisers of other groups such as the Barbados Progressive League and the Barbados Political Association.

(To be continued in Part II)

BGG LECTURE

On Thursday 21st March, 2019 the Barbados Genealogy Group held its bi-monthly talk at the Barbados Museum & Historical Society, to a full house. This talk entitled, "Using a Will as a Research Tool" was delivered by Dr. Editha (Nancy) Fergusson-Jacobs who spoke about the life, death, and will of a Jewish lady named Jael

Pinheiro. During this highly informative lecture Dr. Jacobs made reference to her article entitled "Bound Up in the Bonds of a Jewish Life" which was published in the Journal of the Barbados Museum & Historical Society Vol. 64:2018. Dr. Fergusson-Jacobs spoke about her own personal experiences while conducting this research, explored Jewish life and customs, talked about the life of Jael Pinheiro, examined her will to provide a greater understanding of this lady and her relations, and sought to highlight and dispel any misconstrued statements relat-



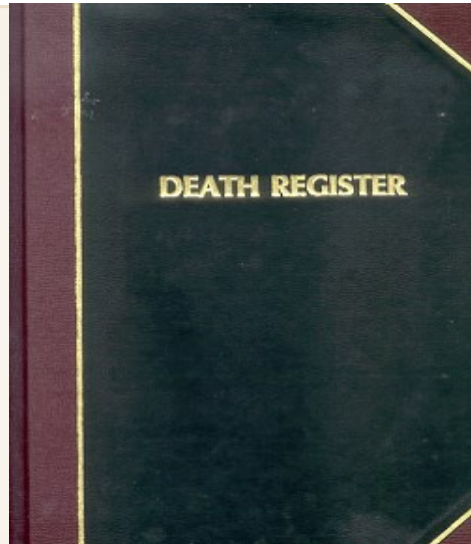
ing to the circumstances surrounding Pinheiro's death. This was the first lecture in 2019 of the Barbados Genealogy Group and it was streamed live via the Museum's Facebook page. Persons are encouraged to purchase the 2019 BMHS Journal to read this and other articles and to attend the Group's upcoming talks, workshops and bus tours.



DEATH REGISTERS

Death and burial information are some of the crucial records used to aid persons in their genealogical research. Because the Bajan tradition of sickness and death can be a “hush hush” issue, it can become challenging finding out what medical conditions run in the family or identifying the common causes of death which plagued our families. Deposited at the Barbados Department of Archives are death registers which span the time period 3rd January 1925 to 3rd December 1971. Compulsory registration of deaths was brought into effect on 1st January 1925 under the Registration of Deaths act, 1924. These death registers are very complete and contain: _

- (a) the date of death,
- (b) name of deceased,
- (c) sex, age,
- (d) rank or profession and country of birth;
- (e) cause of death;
- (f) person who certified the cause of death and their signature,
- (g) description and residence of



- informant;
- (h) date registered;
- (i) signature of registrar; and
- (j) street, house, or village and parish where the person died.

Some “description and residence of informant” provides the name of family members who reported the death and can be useful when conducting genealogical research. The following are a few examples of information derived from

the death registers using the previously mentioned format.

(a) 19th November, 1939; (b) Clara Hunte; (c) female, 40, (d) Domestic, Barbados, (e) Cancer of the Stomach; (f) Dr. A. Winston Scott; (g) Oscar Bayley, Chauffeur, Beckles Road; (h) 20 November, 1939; (i) R.. Crichlow, (j) Constitution Road, St. Michael.

(a) 10th Dec. 1940; (b) Geraldine Jackman; (c) female, 35, (d) Hawker, Barbados, (e) Pulmonary Tuberculosis; (f) Dr. H. Gordon Cummins, Bank Hall; (g) Gordon Batson, reputed husband of deceased of Cave Hill; (h) 10 Jan. 1941; (i) F. Harris; (j) Cave Hill, St. Michael.

(a) 13th July, 1940; (b) John G. Haynes; (c) male, 83, (d) Carpenter, Barbados, (e) Cerebral Apoplexy; (f) Dr. A. Winston Scott, Woodside, Bay Street; (g) Norima Haynes – wife of the dec'd, My Lord's Hill, St. Michael; (h) 15th July, 1940; (i) F. Harris; (j) My Lord's Hill, St. Michael.

GENEALOGY WORKSHOP

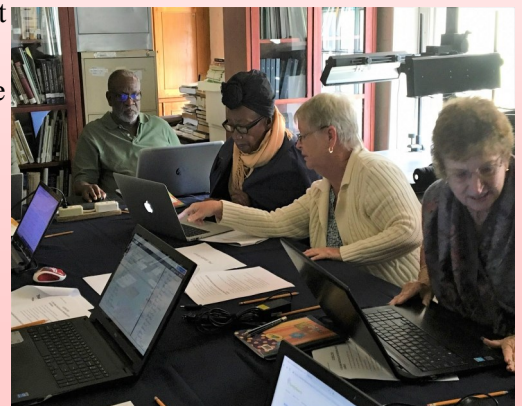
The Barbados Genealogy Group held its first workshop for the year on Saturday 06th April, 2019 at the Shilstone Memorial Library located at the Barbados Museum & Historical Society. This well-attended workshop demonstrated the varied information which can be derived from the free website www.familysearch.org. Partici-



who travelled and lived overseas in places such as Panama and the United States, as well as how to use the website to obtain the name and information of Barbadians who served in the British military. More workshops will be held later this year and will be announced at a subsequent date, so look out for these sessions which can greatly assist in genealogical research.



pants were asked to bring their laptops but if unable to, laptops were provided. Also participants were asked to subscribe to the website if they did not have an account. Participants were given a brief background of the website and the services offered. They were shown how to navigate the website to gather birth, marriage, and death records spanning from the 17th century up to 1931. They were shown how to gather information on Barbadians



BARBADOSGEN

www.barbadosgen.wordpress.com is a detailed and resourceful website recommended as a source of information for those Barbadians and their descendants conducting genealogical research. It is a free website which provides guidelines in research techniques and methods along with links to other genealogy-based websites. See the homepage for links that either provide guidance in conducting family research, for documents and articles about the island and its history, websites that can assist Barbadian researchers, places in the island where genealogical information can be obtained, an index to various sources of information and a link to all the Connections newsletters published by the Barbados Genealogy Group.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Group Meetings

May 15th: Journey to Ancestors

Marcia Nurse

July 18th: The Ward Family of

Barbados

Linda Bowen

Sept 18th: TBA

Nov 21st: Open Session

Bus Tour

**June 15th: Northern St. Michael
& St. James**

Submission of articles for our upcoming newsletter are welcomed and can be submitted via email to

library@barbmuse.org.bb

Good News! Slave Registers Again Free to All!

by Dr. Patricia Stafford

Many Barbadians searching for ancestors reach a period around 1840 or 1850 when they find ancestors recorded with no surnames, and being aware that their ancestors were probably enslaved prior to Emancipation in 1834, turn to the slave registers, formally known as the Slave Registers, of former British Colonial Dependencies, 1813-1834. While the registers for Barbados can be browsed on microfilm at the West Indies Collection at Cave Hill, sadly part of the microfilm is corrupted, especially for the Parish of St. John in 1834.

For several years it has been possible to access the registers for all former British colonies at <https://www.ancestry.co.uk/search/collections/britishslaves/>, but earlier this year Ancestry decided to charge for access to the data, and although members of the Genealogy Group are able to use this service by appointment at the Museum Library, it seemed doubtful that Ancestry had the legal right to give access to only paying customers.

Consequently, an approach was made to the National Archives in England and the following response was made on 27 March,

“Thank you for your email. To my knowledge, it was an informal arrangement whereby Ancestry hosted the T71 content free of charge and TNA waived any

right to royalties... I am concerned to hear that the registers are now being charged for and will make enquiries with my counterparts at Ancestry as to why this appears to be the case,”

I am now delighted to report the following conclusion from 10 April,

“Dear Patricia, The collection has been taken off the subscription service on Ancestry and should now be freely available to view. Please do get in contact if you experience any further issues.”

So, please members of the group, should any further issues arise regarding access, please make Harriet or myself aware and we will follow up.”

Incidentally, should you wish to use the Registers, only large plantations tend to be named; mostly only slave owners are listed. You may need to use the Hughes/Queree Plantation record at the Archives to locate the owner of the property, or even trawl through the records of a whole Parish. Another drawback is the lack of surnames, but the fullest details, such as occupations are given on the 1817 and 1820 listings; 1834 gives occupations but mostly only as labourer or domestic. And of course if your ancestor had a common name such as Jack or Mimbo, there are many. But always worth a try!

Executive of the BGG >>>

NAME	ROLE
Harriet Pierce	Facilitator
Dr. Patricia Stafford	Deputy Facilitator
Marie-Claire Lyder	Secretary
Nicholas Mayers	Information Officer
Penelope Hynam	Editor
Angela Skeete	Education Officer
Betty St. John & Lynda Lewis	Floor Members

The Barbados Museum and Historical Society was established in 1933 by an Act of Parliament. It is housed in historic buildings which were originally used as the military prison of St. Ann's Garrison.

The Shilstone Memorial Library is a research library. It is open Monday to Friday and every 2nd and 4th Saturday 9am – 1pm.

Contact Harriet Pierce, Librarian for further information.

Address: St Ann's Garrison, St Michael, Barbados.

Phone: 1 246 538 0201

