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The Newsletter of the Barbados Genealogy Group (BGG)

Connections

BARBADOS, GENEALOGY & THE WORLD

By Lynda Lewis, Editor, Barbados

"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."

This is the last edition of Connections for 2018. As I look back on Sept 2017-18, a couple of things stand out.

It has been an eventful year in my genealogy research. My Ancestry.com DNA test seems to confirm what I expected, but what an eye opener that experience turned out to be. Well over 400 persons from countries all over the world are connected to me. It has been an interesting but frustrating exercise trying to find out how. My biggest roadblock is persons who have done the Ancestry test, but have failed to post a family tree and do not reply to messages. Some new local connections have been confirmed, but others are yet to be. With one person I found a 4th great-aunt I never knew existed! This has opened a whole new area of research.

An area that has proven extremely fruitful is the power of Internet and social media. As members of the group have heard me say time and again Google search is my new best friend. I will share two examples. I have a 3rd great uncle who we suspected was a doctor. I put his name in a Google search and he turned up in 'Google Books' "List of Graduates of Medicine in University of Edinburgh" - 'Carolus Corbin, Barbadosis - on Catarrhal Affections 1939'. My second example is of a maternal great uncle who was blind. Family story says he was sent away to a school for the blind but nothing else. I found him online travelling to USA accompanied by a sister and brother. In researching his sister, I found a memorial to her written after her death. It mentioned where she worked. I also

found minutes of the school of the blind which had recorded her interview and subsequent employment. From that I was able to find the secretarial school where she was trained. Through the Internet and social media I now have copies of pictures of many of the places where my ancestors worked, lived, went to school etc. I am building pictorial records.

Lastly through my genealogy research I have learnt and continue to learn so much about Barbadian history. I have a deeper understanding of the times in which my ancestors lived and how Barbados' 'fingers' reached all over the world. I urge anyone conducting family research to try and understand the times in which their ancestors lived and what was the norm. Sometimes we judge 17th- 19th century life by our 21st century standards. Many things were wrong (not only slavery) but I suggest that we learn from them and resolve to make a better place for ourselves and future generations.

For my final thought, I am convinced that a family and heritage tourism niche could be developed here in Barbados. Let us capitalise on the many groups and individuals that visit this island from far and near to search records and tour places where their ancestors once lived.

And so, as we travel the world in this edition continue to enjoy your research. I look forward to reading / hearing about your findings in 2019.

Good Luck.

De Berry don Drop too Far

by Rashaun Allen, USA



When Miss Harriet Pierce asked me, “Would you like to do a presentation on your genealogy research in March?” I had no idea how my research would develop. I had only been a week or two settled in Barbados and eager to make use of three things: my great-grandma Irene Trumpet née DePeiza’s marriage and death certificates and my vision. But my own doubt and fear festered alongside my vision. *Would I even discover anything worth sharing?* I wanted to say, “I only expect to find baptism, death, and marriage records.” But I simply said, “Yes!”

My vision to write a memoir about my yearlong journey in Barbados was not a requirement of my Fulbright scholarship. The only requirement was two reports of my journey. The pressure to write a “*African-American’s year long journey to discover his Caribbean roots*”, was my own. But I wouldn’t have guessed that this genealogy research would have (1) led me to my Bajan family: meeting lots of cousins who are descendants of some of great-grandma’s 10 siblings, (2) form family ties as grown-ups beyond the initial reconnection and (3) travel back 5 generations, 175 years, from my 3rd great-granddad enslaved in Rock Dundo, St. James, to myself who was born and raised in Brooklyn, New York.

My journey to connect with my Bajan heritage didn’t start with being the first Fulbright scholar in my SUNY Stony Brook’s MFA program history. It was much less grand. A search on Ancestry.com here and there, a guessing of great-grandma’s age at the Office of Vital Records in New York City, and an unorthodox array of questions to my Brooklyn family I grew up under, to the extended cousins who are the children and grandchildren of my Grandma’s siblings. Did I lose you? My Mom, Christine Hunnicutt, was 1 of 5 children. Grandma, Carmen Trumpet was 1 of 4. And Great-grandma Irene Trumpet was 1 of 10. Keeping up with genealogy is a skill in itself. Especially for myself whose Great-grandma had three surnames. She was a Francis at birth, a DePeiza prior to marriage and a Trumpet from marriage to her death bed. On my blog, rashaunjallen.com, I write a blog series called, [7-generations](#), that digs into my family tree to consider the impact of circumstances and decisions through the generations. I write about several of my family lines including those that descend from Barbados. That was the precursor to this journey. And the Fulbright granted me a key ingredient needed to make solid strides in my family tree—time. I paused my life in the United States: placed an apartment worth of items in storage and kissed my supportive girlfriend a “See you later.”

In time, I would meet several researchers Sophia Lewis, Patricia Stafford and Marcia Nurse all members of the genealogy group. Some of my new-found cousins: Marquette Drakes (a 3rd cousin who found me through Ancestry.com)—we were both barking up the same DePeiza family tree, Ingrid Juliet Rosanne Carew who didn’t turn this Brooklyn kid away that came calling at her door, Clement Wayne Anthony DePeiza who I found in the phonebook and Duran “Ricky” DePeiza who often was busy but always made time to introduce me to family all around the island. I would spend countless hours in the Barbados Department of Archives (Stacia Adams and the Archives team), St. James Parish Church (Rose), Supreme Court of Barbados (Miss Maynard and Miss Peggy Prescod), Barbados Land Registry, Barbados Museum & Historical Society and any place connected to my Bajan family like Mount Standfast and Rock Dundo.

It would be remiss not to speak about books that were inspiring and informative like *Sugar in the Blood: A Family Story of Slavery and Empire* by Andrea Stuart, *A History of Barbados: from Amerindian Settlement to Caribbean Single Market* by Hilary McD. Beckles, and *Freedmen of Barbados: Names and Notes for Genealogical and Family Research* compiled by Jerome S. Handler, Ronald Hughes, and Ernest M. Wiltshire.



All of this to find out what brought my family to today. Was it faith? Hustle? Survival instincts? But in trying to answer those questions I found myself asking different ones: Why does my 3rd great-grand have a Jewish last name “Pizar” on the slave records of William Hinds Prescod? Why did enslavers get reparations when those enslaved like my 3rd great-granddad were given conditional freedom in the form of apprenticeship in the same place many of them were enslaved? A truth of any of my questions were answers that lead to more unanswered questions. The method to my madness was to aim for two sources to validate, contradict, or provide a new perspective from as many primary sources as possible from certificates to the oral history provided by older family members.

But Miss Harriet Pierce nudged me on like so many people before me who had come through the Shilstone Library doors looking for answers. That nudge turned into a well-received presentation called *De Berry don Drop too Far* at a genealogy meeting. What’s left? More questions that need answers. And I aim to turn all the journaling I did and documents I found into a memoir.

I NEVER THOUGHT I WOULD VISIT BARBADOS

By Simon O’Corra, France

I never thought I would ever visit Barbados, it is a long way from France and I knew nothing of its history before I arrived for a two week research stay. I was commissioned to work for a client whose ancestral families include the Kings, Bowns, Vaughans, Sarsfields, Chaddertons and Abbotts. My client, a writer, is currently working on a novel based on the 19th century Barbados. Having now spent time on the island, I am astounded by her ability to evoke the sights, sounds, smells, tastes, feel and spirit of the place especially as she has never visited. Perhaps some collective ancestral memory is working through her. Also since I have been back a distant relative of my client has come forward and confirmed some old family stories that she had had handed down to her. Aside from the initial difficulty in finding the National Archives the whole stay was most informative and of course raised more questions than it answered, which is the true nature of genealogical research, and what makes it such a special occupation.

The Archive staff and Harriet Pierce at the Museum could not have been more helpful, as was Lynda Lewis, who took us under her wing and organised a brilliant road trip so that we could get a feel for the island as a whole, which helped a lot. As a visitor from afar I must say that I managed to cover a great deal of ground thanks to these people. In addition I have only one comment which I would like to make and it is addressed to the cultural ministry. Please, please invest some more in all things genealogical on the island as this would make international visits even more productive and enhance the island’s prestige.

“I wish I had realized that family history is a perishable commodity. It disappears with time, as memories fade, and as loved ones pass on. I wish I had known that the most important aspect of family history is preserving a record of the present for the future.” -Guy Black
www.tmgenealogy.com

'THE QUEST' for Our Grandfather

By Lindy Allen, Australia, USA, Portugal

My results showed a number of hits in Barbados, which was intriguing and exciting, as our grandfather had talked about growing up in Barbados.

Robert, Richard, Kerry and I (located in USA, Portugal, Australia and Australia respectively) kept in touch by email as we all explored different aspects of what we termed 'The Quest.' Although DNA doesn't lie, it was like looking for a needle in a haystack since all we really had to go on was the surname 'Allen'.

I had a little more time on my hands and I'd recently finished full time work, and after 6 months, one afternoon, I was exploring a surname that cropped up a bit amongst my various DNA connections, 'Springer,' using Ancestry and FamilySearch. I decided to simple google 'Springer Family Barbados'. This led me to a Geni.com entry for Springers, and as I trawled through various people, noticed a photo of a woman called Effie Serolingo Hurley Springer – not only did she have something familiar in her face, she also had two names of interest. Grandad's 'manuscript' (a semi-fictional account of his upbringing, all names changed) had referred to a first girlfriend 'Effie' and a mother 'Serolingo.'

Excited but exhausted, I left it there (after shooting Robert an email, as I knew he would still be awake in the US), and returned in the morning to the search, one click away I was staring at a photo of Effie's son, one Karl Corbin, born in Boscobel, Barbados in 1886. It was unmistakably our Grandfather, whom we know as Robert Allen. We cautiously started an email correspondence with the person who

owned the Geni.com tree, Jo Ann Warren (our 2nd cousin), and gradually established our connection. We were really excited to discover we had living relatives, that Grandad Karl had two boys prior to his marriage to our grandmother (that no-one knew about) and therefore we had new cousins, including Barbara Berry.

We all decided to travel to Barbados and meeting up in Oct/Nov 2017, and the rest is history. This may be more than enough for you!



Allen brothers and Lynda Lewis at Cove Bay, St. Lucy



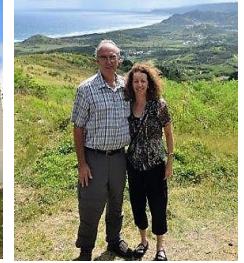
Allen brothers with newly found Bajan family

LETTER FROM AUSTRALIA

By Ann Emery, Ballina NSW



St. Jude's Anglican Church



Ann & Trevor Emery

I read with interest that your upcoming Genealogical Society tour in June will be to the Parish of St. George. 27 years ago I discovered through the LDS records that my Grandfather, Benjamin Carter was born in Barbados and not in the Highlands of Scotland, UK, as my father believed. This began the research that brought me to Barbados in 2015 to discover what it might have been like to live in Barbados during my ancestors' time, to get a feel of the country and visit places I knew held significance for my ancestors.

My great-grand parents, Benjamin Carter and Mary Elizabeth Roberts were married on 5 December 1848 in the Chapel of St Jude's, St George, by the Rev Chas Carter who I believe was unrelated. We visited the church of St Jude's and found it open as parishioners were practicing for the Sunday service. As I sat in the pews I was overcome by an immense sense of belonging and connection to my ancestors and the place. The feeling was so strong that I had difficulty leaving the church. What an amazing God given moment I experienced there in the church that day. Mary Elizabeth Roberts was born on Ashbury land where her mother, also Mary Elizabeth Roberts, was a seamstress. She was baptised privately on 5 May 1829 by the Rev B.T. Nurse. My research indicates that the Ashbury land was owned by the Nurse family at that time. Benjamin Carter was baptised in Christ Church Parish on 31 March 1829, by Rev. T.H. Orderson. His father was a planter of Ridge.

Contrary to family stories, my grandfather Alfred Clement Carter was born 15 July 1868 at Rural Felicity where his father was a shopkeeper and baptised at Christ Church 1 March 1868 by Rev A. Reece., As an Australian researcher, I was impressed by the support given to us at the Archives and from Pat Stafford through her research. I am so thankful that three years later I still receive your Group newsletter which fires up my enthusiasm for family history. I trust you will enjoy exploring St. George as much as we enjoyed exploring your lovely island three years ago.

RECENT ACTIVITIES

GROUP MEETINGS

May 16: Bengal to Barbados: 100 Years of East Indians in Barbados—Sabir Nakhuda

July 19: Archiving Oral History—Dr Cherri-Ann Beckles

BUS TOURS

June 30— St. George Bus tour

(Top Left) Sabir Nakhuda giving his presentation
(Top Left) Members of the audience pay rapt attention during Mr. Nakhuda's presentation

Images from the Bus tour
(Bottom Left) Gun Hill Signal Station
(Bottom Right) Drax Hall Plantation



ALICE ARMSTRONG 1865-1938, DO YOU KNOW OF HER?

By Jenny Alleyne, Barbados & Corsica

In March 2018 I was contacted by someone in Corsica who found a headstone for a Barbadian called Alice Armstrong, born in Barbados in 1865 and who died and was buried in Corsica. It would appear that Alice moved to Trinidad and met a family from Corsica, when they returned to Corsica she went with them and died and was buried in their "Family Plot" in Pino in 1938. The man who found this headstone wondered if I could find her family and pass on the photos and some pressed flowers from plants in the garden around her grave. Because Corsica is so hilly, many families have "Family Chapels" or "Family Plots" usually on the side of a hill, used exclusively by that family and always beautifully maintained. Why did this man contact me?

My father and grandmother often talked about Pino and Pino Soprano in Corsica, where they said my great great grandfather was born but I was not interested enough, back then, to ask the many questions, including his DOB and who his parents were. When I did take an interest, there was no one alive who could help with those details so I decided to go to Corsica and on September 27th 2015 my cousin and I flew from London to Bastia for a week of research.

It was easier to arrange than I imagined, I went online and communicated with the Archives in Bastia, where most of the BMD documents are kept. They

put me in touch with a group of genealogists and we agreed to meet. Three genealogists were at the Archives to greet us on Monday the 28th when the doors opened!

The expertise of the two senior researchers paid off within 15 minutes and they found the entry for the baptism of Benoit Giuliani, the man we went to find. We were over the moon, but wanted more. This document gave us his date of birth, date of baptism, his parent's names, including his mother's maiden name and the town where they lived. With this information we looked for his parent's marriage, then their baptisms and so on.

On the Wednesday we took a break from the Archives and drove to the town of Pino, which is the town noted on most of the records that we found. It is about 1.5 hours out of Bastia, in the right direction! While walking in the hamlet of Pino Soprano, where the family home was, we met a cousin, his grandmother was a Giuliani and he owned the family home, which we were able to see. This was an unexpected treat and we have kept in touch.

At the end of that visit we had gone back 3 generations and found not only our mutual great great grandfather but his siblings, parents, uncles, aunts, their spouses, his grandparents and great grandparents and came away with photographs of approximately 400 documents and family names we had not heard of before, Antoni, Antonmattei, Franceschi, Lucca,

Massiani, Piccioni, Tomasi and of course Giuliani. We kept in touch with our genealogy friends and they continue to help us with the translation of the documents, some in Latin, others Italian and other in French.

Two years later it became evident that we needed to go back. This time we would have only a three-day working week so the genealogist suggested that we photograph ALL documents of three towns that our extended family came from, those being Pino, Morsiglia and Barrettali, all in Cap Corse. By Friday we had 1500 photographs of documents and gone back another three generations to 1600 with a man who came from Genoa in Italy. The work to translate all of those documents has only just begun but I guess you can figure out what I am planning next? It turns out that since our visit, all of the documents have been digitized, we will no longer be able to touch those wonderful old books some of which were written 418 years ago and see the signatures of our family.

The best thing about these research trips is the help that is offered and the encouragement and guidance in searching. There are similar groups of genealogists, willing and able to help, in many parts of the world, so do not let distance be a problem but establish costs, if there are any. In Corsica there was no charge for the many hours spent helping us.

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



Top: Jenny & Lucien
Left: The family plot Right: Alice's grave

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

Group Meetings

Sept 19th: Genetics and Genealogy

Dr Ian Lewis

Nov 15th: Open Session

Genealogy at the National Library Service Summer Camp - JUL/AUG.



Executive of the BGG >>>

NAME	ROLE
Harriet Pierce	Facilitator
Dr. Patricia Stafford	Deputy Facilitator
Marie-Claire Lyder	Secretary
Lynda Lewis	Information Officer & Editor
Angela Skeete	Education Officer
Francine Bradshaw & Betty St. John	Event Coordinators
Penny Hynam	Floor Member

