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Summer
Edition
2003



CARIFETE PARADE

The Chicago Carifete Parade is Saturday, Aug. 23 at Midway Plaisance, Hyde Park (6000 south). To learn more call United Caribbean Nationals at 773.509.5079 or visit www.chicagocarifete.com

Attentions Jamaicans!

Please come out and support the Jamaican community by marching in the parade or standing at the sidelines with your Jamaican flags. If you would like to march with the Jamaican American Club's group, contact: 847.663.1598 or JamaicanAmericanclub@yahoo.com.

Carifete fundraiser : July 12, 2003 • 5PM-1AM
Quilombo Cultural Center - 1757 N. Kimball ave.

RECREATING AFRICA IN THE AMERICAS THROUGH RHYTHMS AND RITUALS



Recreating Africa in the Americas Through Rhythms and Rituals, hosted by DePaul University Center for Black Diaspora, took place this spring. It featured a range of speakers on Afro-Caribbean ritual practices, language, music from Cuba, Haiti, Trinidad, and Jamaica; and Cuban Abakua dance and music by Omi Odara troupe, directed by Roman Diaz.

Among the featured speakers was Ken Bilby an ethnomusicologist from Bard College who presented a paper entitled "Kumina Performance in Jamaica." Prof. Bilby explained the presence of what he terms two "African Nations" co-existing in Jamaica, meaning communities who participate in Afro-Jamaican religious practices in specific locations within the rural areas of the country. The first is the Maroon/Croymenti Nation made up of the decedents of a community of run-away slaves and for whom Nanny of the Maroons was once their leader. This nation still practices many rituals that are found in the Akan ethnic group in West Africa, what is now modern day Ghana and

Ivory Coast. The Maroon Nation is located for the most part in the Blue Mountains of Jamaica. The second nation is the Bongo/Kongo Nation, which originates in the Congo/Angola region of Central Africa. This nation as made up the descendants of "Free Africans" who migrated to St. Thomas in the 1840s after emancipation. In addition to the ritual practices that both groups have maintained, traces of African languages and music are still performed by these nations. These two nations have a long history of sharing and cultural exchange and have developed a musical tradition comprised of shared songs that are performed in Jamaican Creole and not the African languages that the groups speak. Professor Bilby played recordings of songs from both nations as well as some of the shared songs. He also demonstrated the differences between the drum patterns of each group. The audience of about sixty people responded with enthusiasm to his talk and asked several insightful questions about the history of these nations and their relationship to present day Jamaican society. ✉

contributed by: Karima Atiya Robinson

Trivia!

Where is the origin of Ackee? Is it native to Jamaica?



BOOK CLUB NEWS

Our summer book club selection is:

Wishful Thinking, by Eliza Hamilton Abegunde



Q: What inspired you to write this book?

The pain I felt when I heard the news story of the two missing Chicago girls. I wanted to explore how such a thing could happen in a neighborhood, on a sunny day, right after the fourth of July. I kept thinking of my younger sister – what if something ever happened to her? I kept thinking about how frightened these two little girls must be. I write because I don't want people to forget: love or losses. This was an event that I did not want forgotten amidst all the stories of young children missing. I think for the first time in a long, long time I thought about being scared. The moment I turned my head from the TV, not wanting to watch because I didn't want to absorb one more pain of a hurt child, I knew my life had changed. As I wrote, I focused on how I, a stranger, was moved by this event. I wanted to explore how no event is really isolated and how some of us are called to action when terrible (and good) things happen.

Q: What do you wish your readers would think about when they read your work?

In this work, I want readers to first think about what can be done to safeguard our children. I want them to think about community. When I grew up, your next door neighbor knew your every move. And, when I grew up in Grenada, the neighbor on the other side of the parish knew your business before you even got home. It was a way to help us be safe, grow well, and understand the importance of staying in touch and in tune with those around you. Now, a year can pass before someone realizes they have not seen their neighbor.

In this work, as with all of my published work and facilitation of healing, I want readers to understand the contemporary links we have with African and Caribbean history. In this case: How we as a people have often gone missing.

Q: How are you affiliated with the Jamaican community?

My father is of Jamaican descent. His grandparents, the Goodmans came to this country in the late 1800's. They later moved to Newark, NJ. My father instilled in me a strong

awareness of who I was not only as Jamaican, but Caribbean and African. My mother was from Grenada – I grew up with my grandmother until I was nearly six.



I have always been grateful that this knowledge of who I am - a woman of African and Caribbean descent descended from people who were Maroons and from people who changed the entire face of History. It helped me make my way in the world knowing that my heritage was rich and helped shape the history of the world.

Q: Which authors have influenced you and why?

Octavia Butler and Nola Hopkinson for their ability to weave African and Caribbean history and spirituality into the fantastic and the real. Lucille Clifton and Angela Shannon for their ability to tell an entire history in a condensed space. Flannery O'Connor because of her ability to tell the absolute bitter truth about the people we don't want to know the truth about. I am also greatly influenced, sometimes more so, by visual images and sound. I

watch movies – science fiction, foreign, animation, children's – for different ways to tell a story through sound (or silence) and color.

Q: Do you have any other upcoming works?

I am working on a novel. I am also completing my journals about my sailing trip with Captain Bill Pinkney between Puerto Rico and Brazil to retrace the Middle Passage routes. Somewhere in there is a full-lengthy poetry manuscript. I travel to teach about the Middle Passage and TransAtlantic slave trade from an experiential point of view. I design workshops so people can "feel" the journey through drama, writing, and discussion. I feel that writing is the way to articulate some of this work, to distill it into a media that is accessible. As a healing facilitator, my primary focus is on recovering genetic and ancestral memory, especially for African peoples. There is an entire history of us stored in our bodies and accessing it has been one of the many fascinating things while working with people all over the world.

The writing gives me a way to document and share some of these

things. I am grateful to the Ancestors and the All Powerful of the Universe, and the Universe itself to be given this life to live in this manner. It is truly humbling and awesome.

To purchase this book: 312.203.3297 or abegunde@yahoo.com

UNLOCKING
by Eliza Hamilton Abegunde

**Your disappearance recalls the question:
What would you give to find them?
I have learned since then to answer the orisha
with my head.
But, what mother would not follow her children
to death, to keep them safe if only for 45 days?***

**What does it matter we were sold to different
parts of the world?
I held a sliver of nail, a curl of hair and both my
children were alive to me.
But you. You have left nothing.
And that nothing has unlocked the cell where I
store the memory of my children.
Your voices haunt me.
The way of my children's silence.
Are you with them now?
Or are they with you, protecting you?
Is it your crying I hear in my sleep,
or my daughters' on their first night alone?
I can no longer tell the difference.
It no longer matters that I can't.
Is it your whispering I hear at dawn,
words like clouds floating past me?**

* 45 days: Journeys from the West Coast of Africa to the Americas or Caribbean took between 30-120 days, depending on the final destination and weather



Interested in joining the book club? Call 847-663-1598
Fall book club selection: *Going Home to Teach*
by: Anthony Winkler
Available at popular bookstores

SOMEONE YOU SHOULD KNOW Summer Spotlight



Our summer spotlight is on **Herbert Witter**, who is the entrepreneur behind Insurance Brokers Incorporated (IBI). A native of St. Mary Jamaica, Herbert traveled to Kingston to earn his degree from the University of West Indies. Eventually he migrated to the United States and has been a businessman in the community since

1986. As an insurance broker, he works with a variety of companies, enabling him to provide the best rates for the public. IBI also sells stocks, bonds and mutual funds. We salute Mr. Witter for providing this important service, charitable donations and for being a positive role model. ✉

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WHAT A GWAAN WHAT A GWAAN

8TH ANNUAL MARCUS GARVEY FEST



This summer marks the 8th annual Marcus Garvey Fest. This is an all day all night festival live music, poetry, dance, vendors, reparations

speakers, children's games, nature hike, farmer market, horseback riding, african history, camping and much more. This is the only rural festival celebrating the life and times of Marcus Garvey. For information call : 312-287-7991 / 815.944.5891 or e-mail: ifarms @ direcway.com



Exploited and oppressed people are often misinformed, which is why intellectual conversations should take place on a fairly regular basis. One person who did address this problem was the Honorable Marcus Mosiah Garvey, when he presented his formula for learning in his courses during the 1930s. These lessons and guide post in learning can be found in *Marcus Garvey, Message to the People*, and the *Course of African Philosophy*, edited by Tony Martin.

Here are some of Mr. Garvey's philosophies:

- Knowledge is power. When you know a thing and can hold your ground on that thing, you can win over your opponents on that thing. Those who hear you will learn to have confidence in you and will trust your ability.
- Continue always in the application of the things you desire educationally, culturally, or otherwise, and never give up until you reach your objective.
- To be able to read intelligently, you must first be able to master the language of your country. To do this, you must be well acquainted with its grammar and the science of it.

"Up you mighty race. You can accomplish what you will. One aim, One destiny" - Marcus Garvey

11TH ANNUAL FESTIVAL OF LIFE



"Out of many nationalities, races and colors, we are one people"

Martin's Inter-Culture presents the Annual African/Caribbean International Festival of Life July 4th Independence Week. This gigantic Independence Celebration takes place Thursday to Sunday, July 3-6, 2003. The Festival of Life will be held in Washington Park (near the University of Chicago), 55th street and south Cottage Grove, in Chicago. Festivities will take place from 10am to 10pm each day, except for Thursday, July 3rd when events will be held from 2:00pm to 10:00pm.



The Festival of Life is a family event with music, ethnic foods, arts and crafts and children's activities. This program includes exhibits by merchants, service oriented-

businesses, organizations and corporations within the community. For details call (312) 427-0266. The website address is www.festivaloflife.com and www.martinsinterculture.com. Reach them by e-mail at reggaeintl@aol.com. If you or your company would like to be a sponsor, exhibitor or to advertise in the events magazine, please call 312/427-0266. ✉



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INNA COMMUNITY



Peter Broggs, AKA Henry James, has been singing, recording and performing reggae music for a very long time. He is a classic roots reggae singer with an easy and righteous style. His conscious lyrics find their roots in Rastafari, and carry a positive message that is the root of reggae. While he has been on the reggae scene for 30 years he may be best known to hardcore reggae fans.

Mr. Broggs grew up in the countryside in Lucea, in Hanover, Westmoreland. When he was 17 he left for Kingston where after a rough start his musical career began. His album *Progressive Youth*, released in 1979 helped to launch his career. Notably, he was the first artist to record an album for Ras Records (*Rastafari Liveth*) and his work with Dr. Dread of Ras, was instrumental in the birth of that label.

In his biography posted on his web site, Peter says: "I've always liked to put across positive messages, those that evoke God, those that show to people the existence of a beautiful and living God. The words that come out when I sing, Jah puts there for me. I am only a servant, and I try, thanks to Him, to guide His children down the right path. My whole career has been in the name of Jah Rastafari. I am a messenger of Jah. All I can do is use the gifts he gave me."

To check out his music visit: www.peterbroggs.com

Recently, we learned that Peter has developed Glaucoma, an eye disease that involves progressive damage to the optic nerve. Glaucoma is a leading cause of blindness. Unfortunately, Mr. Broggs's disease has progressed – he has lost sight completely in one eye and the other is failing. Surgery can control the progression of glaucoma and prevent blindness. Friends and family of Mr Broggs say that cost is prohibiting Peter from seeking further treatment and he may soon lose his sight completely. They hope to raise funds so that he may get the help he needs. For information on how you might help contact: ccolman@earthlink.net.

Peter is currently recording – expect a new album in 2003!

We had the pleasure of interviewing Mr. Broggs and here is what he had to say.

Q. You grew up in Lucea, in the parish of Hanover. Where do you make your home now?

In Montego Bay

Q. It seems that you have been singing for most of your life. Who were your musical influences?

Otis Redding was a big influence growing up in Jamaica

Q. While you were living in Kingston as a youth, you become a Rasta. What would you tell people about the Rastafari faith and how it affects your life?

It was when I was in Kingston I realized that I'd always been a Rasta. I just needed the spark that would reveal this to me. All those evenings spent with the old Rastas gave me the key. I began to understand who I was and what spiritual voice I should follow. At this time, I wasn't in contact with any musicians, I just sang

for myself. Then one day I was sacked from my job because of my dreads, and that was how everything started. I said to myself that, with my redundancy money, I must throw myself seriously into music. It was now or never.

Q. What influenced you to choose music as your career?

One day I met Bim Sherman at the record-pressing factory. He said, "I heard your song 'Vank Out' and I like the way you sing. You should keep it up." So I started singing with renewed confidence and it became my career.

Q. What reggae artists do you like today and why?

I like many artists like Luciano who have conscious lyrics. I love roots music. I really don't care for the dancehall lyrics.

Q. We were very sorry to hear of your battle with Glaucoma. How has the disease affected your life?

I have already lost one eye and am learning that I have to live with this.

Q. How was your disease diagnosed?

I went to Washington Eye Hospital and learned of my Glaucoma. I take eye medicines to try and keep the pressure down but surgery was recommended to me.

Q. Do doctors feel that your prognosis is hopeful?

While medicine would help to slow the progress of the disease, they feel surgery is the best option to prevent blindness. blindness comes from pressure to the optic nerve. The drops cannot always relieve the pressure to prevent blindness.

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

West Indian Folk Dance Company



Founded in 1971 by Mr. Fred Baker, the West Indian Folk Dance Company has delighted audiences throughout the country. Dancers from several Caribbean Islands dance with the company and bring the unique folk dances of their island. Always energetic, and a whirlwind of color, the West Indian Folk Dance Company is a treat to watch. For more information: 773.324.2015.

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Out of many, one people.

Jamaican Diaspora is a free forum newsletter published in corporation with the *Jamaican American Club* and dedicated to Caribbean culture around the world in issues of healthcare, education, environment and cultural pride. Jamaican and Caribbean organizations: Please contact us and say hello. We will advertise your affairs. Knowing what you are planing prevents us from scheduling events on the same date as yours. Remember: unity is strength; knowledge is power.

If you have a business, creative ideas or anything vital for the community's well being please contact us. Email: JamaicanDiaspora@yahoo.com / Address: P.O. Box 62 Elk Grove, IL 60009-0062 USA / Phone: 847.663.1598.

For advertising rates call: 847.663.1598 One love and may peace be with you always.

RECIPE CORNER

Ginger Drink



- 1 lb (450 g) fresh root ginger
- 3 pt (1650 ml) water
- 1 lb (450 g) raw cane sugar
- Juice of 2 limes

Peel the fresh ginger, grate and mix with water in a large saucepan. Bring to a boil and simmer for 3-4 minutes. Cover the pan, turn off the heat and leave for at least 24 hours. Strain the liquid through a sieve. Add the lime juice and sir in the raw cane sugar until thoroughly dissolved. Chill. – Serves 6-8

Note: This drink is best left to mature for a day before drinking. It is most refreshing served cold with plenty of ice.

SUMMER SPORTS



Evanston Cricket Club

The game of cricket has been apart of Jamaican culture since the days of British colonialism. This sport is played worldwide but primarily in the British Commonwealth until quite recently. The Evanston Cricket Club (ECC) is a non-profit organization that has been in existence for over thirty years. The purpose of the club is to play the game and unite individuals who may share similar social community interests. Because this cricket club has primarily Jamaican members, they give back to the community by supporting charitable projects on the island. Games are played on weekends during the summer. To learn more contact:

ECC • P.O. Box 691, Evanston, IL 60104 • 847 328 4863.



West Indies Jets Football

One of Jamaica's national pastimes is football, best known as soccer in the U.S. Jamaicans in the diaspora have continued this popular summer activity. The West Indies Jets is a Jamaican dominated soccer club; nevertheless, they welcome anyone who wants to join the group and loves to kick the ball. They are affiliated with a national league and play regularly in tournaments. To learn more about this organization, call 708 474 9724.

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Answer to trivia question:

The Ackee is native to West Africa and was introduced to Jamaica in 1778 when some plants were purchased from the captain of a slave ship. Captain Bligh who brought the first breadfruit to Jamaica in turn took the first ackee from Jamaica to London. There it was given the botanical name 'Blighia Sapida' in his honor. The name Ackee is derived from the original name *Anka*. Ackee is a member of the Lychee family.