

AfroPanamanian Newsletter



English opens doors. Read the Newsletter

www.afropanameniannewsletter.mex.tl

No.3 Vol. II

April 2011

Donation

GOOD FRIDAY & EASTER

Jerusalem OBITUARIES 33 AD



Calvary

Jesus Christ, 33, of Nazareth, died Friday on Mount Calvary, also known as Golgotha, the place of the skull. Betrayed by the apostle Judas, Jesus was crucified by the Romans, by order of the Ruler Pontius Pilate. The causes of death were crucifixion, extreme exhaustion, severe torture, and loss of blood.



Jesus was self educated and spent most of his adult life working as a Teacher. Jesus also occasionally worked as a Medical Doctor and it is reported that he healed many patients. Up until the time of His death, Jesus was teaching and sharing the Good News; healing the sick, touching the lonely, feeding the hungry, and helping the poor.

Jesus was most noted for telling parables about His Father's Kingdom and performing miracles, such as feeding over 6,000 people with only five loaves of bread and two fish, and healing a man who was born blind. On the day before His death, He held a Last Supper celebrating the Passover Feast, at which He foretold His death.

The body was quickly buried in a stone grave, which was donated by Joseph of Arimathea, a loyal friend of the family. By order of Pontius Pilate, a boulder was rolled in front of the tomb. Roman soldiers were put on guard.

In lieu of flowers, the family has requested that everyone try to live as Jesus did. Donations may be sent to anyone in need.

Controversy

Anecdotes

Poetry

LOS AMIGOS :
Por la superación de la Etnia Negra

A group of friends, in Panama, decided to join forces to work on the rescue of values, customs and cultural traditions bequeathed to us through our ancestors. These have been displaced by others, thus losing a large part of our Black Heritage. We are evaluating all these forgotten traditions and values and highlighting figures as examples for future generations.

“For Black history to be done right, we must do it ourselves.” Edward Gaskin

CREDITS

Editor : Sandra Patterson

Assistant: Ines V. Sealy

MEMBERS

**President
Anthony Cox**

**Treasurer
Fernando A. Goldson**

**Others
Ines V. Sealy
Sandra M. Patterson
Roberto L. Alleyne**

**The editor is not responsible for the
opinions expressed by our collaborators**

Cover Page: The stamp which appears on the cover was proposed to the Canal Zone Government by Mr. George W. Westerman (r.i.p.) accepted and used as a 10 cent postage stamp for years. Permission for its continuous use was given by his grandnephew, Cecil Reynolds.

EDITORIAL

The Angel said:

*“Do not be afraid for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here, for he has risen as he said”.
Mat.25:5-6.*

Happy Easter

<http://afieldnegro.com/videos.html>

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q96ylFiQK_I (Why do Fools Fall in Love?)

FEEDBACK (from our Feb.-March issue)

Great issue!
I loved all the articles. Keep up the good work.
Tilsa
Dallas, TX

My condolences on the passing of your cousin Inez.
I enjoy reading the newsletter.

Tony R.

Thank you for this. I am very, very sorry to hear about the loss of Dr. Mason. Best,

K. Zien

Ines:

I published the announcement and tribute in our Newsletter Positive Tourism News (www.positivetourism.com)

Maybe you can add our note to Dr Mason in your next newsletter.

Please find the link below:

http://www.positivetourism.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1684:dr-una-clarke-announces-the-passing-of-dr-marco-mason&catid=67:breaking-news

SHARON PARRIS-CHAMBERS,

-0-

Kwanzaa: a cultural holiday, not a religious one, will be celebrated right after Christmas each year. LOS AMIGOS invite other organizations to take one of the days so that all seven can be celebrated. Ours will be Dec. 30.



Fullbright Scholarships: (forwarded by Cedric Gittens)

Scholarships are granted through contests in which the participants are selected based on their academic merits, no consideration is given to race, political or religious creed, or sex.

Fullbright Master's or doctorate directed towards professors, investigators or university administrators (administrated by LASPAU – offering up to 8 months of intensive English in the U SA– **deadline May 3, 2011.**

Fullbright – Hubert H. Humphrey Professional exchange (administrated by IIE) – 10 months of academic and professional experience toward an academic degree Offers up to 25 weeks of intensive English in the USA. Applications available from March 14, **deadline June 30, 2011** .

Fullbright – of Investigation for Caribbean and Central American Professors y Professionals (administrated by IIE) offering 3 months of investigation and training. Requires a high level of English. Applications available from August, **deadline October 1, 2011.**

Interested parties may obtain further information about the Fullbright scholarship offers at the US Embassy's website <http://spanish.panama.usembassy.gov/es/becas.html>, or by calling 207-7000, extensions 7459 or 7196, or by writing to e-mail: pancultural@state.gov.

EASTER

By Sandra Patterson

Easter, also called Pascha is the feast of Christ's resurrection from the dead. Every Gospel gives account of it because it is the cornerstone of Christianity. It follows Holy Week and is not only a day but an entire season called Eastertide that runs up to the Feast of Pentecost.

In Western Christianity, Easter festival is observed in many different ways: among Roman Catholics and some Lutherans and Anglicans with the Easter Vigil that concludes with the celebration of the Eucharist (known in some traditions as Holy Communion). Some churches prefer to keep this vigil very early on the Sunday morning instead of the Saturday night, particularly Protestant churches, to reflect the gospel account of the women coming to the tomb at dawn on the first day of the week. These services are known as the Sunrise. The first recorded "Sunrise Service" took place in 1732 among the Single Brethren in the Moravian Congregation at Herrnhut, Saxony, in what is now Germany.

Years ago, among the West Indians in Panama, this was a big celebration, a real social event. Aside from the religious part they had programs, dances and also the so called "Easter parade" (not a real one) to show off their best dresses. Today only a handful of people go to mass or service at the different churches and there are almost no social events.



A celebration is a celebration but do we really understand the meaning of this one?

Do we realize what Christ did for us?

Saint Paul states clearly that our faith is in vain without Christ's resurrection from the dead.

Celebrating Easter is a way to thank him for what he did for us but we have to open our hearts and souls and believe in Him.

OPPORTUNITIES

Harvard University Announcement No tuition and no student loans

Harvard University announced over the weekend that from now on undergraduate students from low-income families will pay no tuition. In making the announcement, Harvard's president Lawrence H. Summers said, "When only ten percent of the students in elite higher education come from families in the lower half of the income distribution, we are not doing enough. We are not doing enough in bringing elite higher education to the lower half of the income distribution."

If you know of a family earning less than \$60,000 a year with an honor student graduating from high school soon, Harvard University wants to pay the tuition. The prestigious university recently announced that from now on undergraduate students from low-income families can go to Harvard for free... no tuition and no student loans!

To find out more about Harvard offering free tuition for families making less than \$60,000 a year, visit Harvard's financial aid website at: <http://www.fao.fas.harvard.edu/> or call the school's financial aid office at (617) 495-1581. SEND TO SOMEONE WHETHER THEY CAN USE OR NOT. THEY JUST MIGHT KNOW SOMEONE WHO CAN.

"The Lord is faithful and able"

THE UNTOLD STORY

Education and entertainment were our things in those days. We had radio and live music.

NATIONAL COMBOS

by Ines V. Sealy

Being at the Mai Tai lounge atop the Soloy Hotel right after Carnival, reminded me of the time when the Ebony Group was the House Band at the Mai Tai.

Some of the members of Ebony, were members of the Soul Fantastics.

The Soul Fantastics Combo began in 1968 in the home of Enrique Howell (2^o guitar player) in Parque Lefevre. These were teenagers, hi school students eager to play music and wanting to be heard. Enrique, Samuel Archer (vocalist) and Antonio Marshall (bass) were the original three. Daniel Bulgin) incorporated himself bringing Antonio Philpotts (1st guitar) and Luis Thomas (conga player) augmentng the group to six.

Earnest practice brought them a contract in Marañón (Panama City) Their sound was good but it needed the afro beat (drums), this incorporated Ricardo Staple into the group in the middle of 1969, who also suggested the name Soul Fantastics, which was chosen by the others above other suggestions. Other members included: Horacio Boyce (conga / percussion), Eduardo “Chombin” Jones, Guillermo Gilling (2nd guitar), Johns, Zeñon Antonio Portillo (conga), Moises Portillo (vocalist). They played for Sarao (school dances), At the clubs on the Canal Zone Bases, at many hotels, the bohios: Florencia and Agewood, the Nuevo Panama gym and TV stations.

Few had musical education, but they had talent, so much so, that most of them are still playing today. Some have taken formal training, but for others their God-given talent is what has kept them going.

HOG'S FANS MOURN

by Sandra Patterson

During the 60's at 830 Khrz on your radio dial, HOG was a must for the West Indian community in Panama, Colon and the Latin American communities on the former Canal Zone, because of it's full English program, remembered by those who enjoyed them and became familiar with the DJ's.

It's to our regret to let you know that one of HOG's icons: Vicente Watson (Vince Monchini) has departed this world leaving an emptiness in the lives of relatives, friends and old time radio fans.

Before his demise Vince contributed important information for this Newsletter. He will be remembered by all who had the privilege to be part of those radio golden days. May your soul rest in peace.

-0-

NOTHING IS THE SAME

by Melvin Brown

*Rio Abajo is not the same.
the board houses getting weak.
cow pastures and hunting grounds
have long disappeared.*

*Condominiums and concrete streets
are coming close to listen
while the old buildings weep.*

*The river barely exist
and King's yard too quiet.*

*Rio Abajo is practically a city
don't put the land and house on sale
fo little or nothing.*

TRANSPORTATION

City Transportation

Sandra Patterson

For a good many of years public transportation in Panama City has become a big headache.

Until the early 70's buses were owned by either one person or companies that had concessions to the city's various routes; bus drivers worked for them but unsatisfactions and the lack of benefits forced General Omar Torrijos' government to omit those concessions and handed them over directly to the drivers so each man had his own working tool and was his own boss. Eventually some drivers became owners of more than one bus and turned into new transportation tycoons, applying the same systems as before to the drivers who have to turn in a daily quota.

Concession holders had their own terminal/garage/gas station for check in/out and maintenance: Ciniglio, Garcia, Carbonell, TAB (Transporte Arosemena Brid), HBB (Heraclio Barleta Bustamante), CPT (Cía Panameña de Transporte) and others covering several routes and without racing, buses used to run on schedules you could always count on. In the 50's women passengers would await a special bus because it had radio and the chauffeur would put on the novela for them. Most drivers if not all were polite, children under 12 and students paid half price (that was five cents). Very seldom you heard of a bus accident or knocking down someone.



The city's main artery, Avenida Central/Vía España/José Agustín Arango, was a two way road from Calidonia's crossing to Juan Díaz. Most routes took you along this avenue and turned off at a given point. The two largest routes were Río Abajo-Santa Ana-Chorrillo and Río Abajo-Calle "J"-Límite.

It's been a long time practice that buses have names taken from songs, social clubs, mythology or from wherever the owner got his inspiration, maybe you remember these: Palma Soriano, El distinguido, El preferido, El Conde de Monte Cristo, El Conde Sigfrido, Alma libre, Kontiki.

The key to Río Abajo-Santa Ana-Chorrillo route bound for the city was Santa Ana. it meant that this particular route came down José Agustín Arango/Vía España/Ave. Central and kept on rolling on the last until it reached Santa Ana then turned off to West 12th street to "A" Avenue down to Chorrillo. On it's return it came up "A" Ave. to West 13th to Santa Ana then rolled down East 12th street to "B" Avenue. At the railroad crossing it went through 23rd street to 26 and back on Ave. Central/Vía España/José Agustín Arango to Río Abajo maybe up to El Retiro de Matías Hernández.

(cont.)

On the other hand a “J” street bus into the city took you down José Agustín Arango/Vía España/Ave. Central to Calidonia’s crossing (Lessep’s Park) then turned up Calle Estudiante (Rochet Yard) and via West 17 down to “B” street and on this one, to El Limite in Chorrillo. To return back to Río, it came on “B” street to Avenida Ancón, Calle Monteserín, Calle “J”, Avenida “B”, Calidonia’s crossing to the bus stop at Muller’s building. From there it kept on it’s way on Vía España/José Agustín Arango ending in Río Abajo.

Parque Lefevre route took you from Calle 5th Parque through some streets in Parque then on to José Agustín Arango/Vía España up to Teatro Bella Vista where it turned off to go down Avenida Perú, Calle 26 then turn to Avenida Central up Catedral. On it’s return he made it back almost the same way. Other routes took you to Santo Tomás Hospital, Catedral Park, Avenida Justo Arosemena and don’t forget the chivitas to the Commisary (C.Z).

Did you miss a bus or a route?

-- 0 --

METROBUS

by Ines V. Sealy

The new Metrobus system has taken us back to the *Barletta* and *Arosemena* Briggs (or Brid) bus system.

Arosemena Briggs were the green busses headquartered on *Vía España* where the Price Smart Delivery section is. They covered San Francisco to Cathedral.

I remember in the 1940’s up to the 70’s when the CPT Blue busses owned by the *Barletta* family existed, they went from *Parque Lefevre* to Cathedral (in the old quarter) carrying about 40 passengers, on a 5 minute schedule, used a booklet to pay the fare, which was collected at the entrance and had a machine at the entrance like the Metrobus.

They charged a nickel which could take you to Cathedral and back as long as you didn’t get off the bus. As far as I can remember, they started at the entrance of *Ernesto T. Lefevre* beside what is now the gas station, where there was a bus stop in the shape of a tall cone with the name “*Parque Lefevre*”. Across from this was the *Suarez* shop where the HSBC bank is, and the *Cantina-Restaurante Parque* where the *Tamburelli* Restaurant is.

Then they started coming inside *Parque Lefevre* up to 5th St. When the “outside busses” started charging a dime, they were still charging 5 cents. People came from all over Rio and Parque to board the busses in 5th St. They even reached as far as *Jardín de Paz*. Then they started going up to Kelvin’s for the same 5 cents. By this time we paid cash instead of the booklet. They were considered slow, but if you left early, you got to where you were going on time. They were swept and washed, all in all, maintained. It took them many years to begin to flounder on the road. There came a time when bus routes were instituted in Panama. *Barletta* had *Ruta 1, Ruta 2, Ruta 3, Ruta 4 & Ruta 5*, which now belong to *Panama Viejo*. The float was replaced by *CUTSA*; and *CUTSA* died. Some of the routes have not been in use for some time. Every now and then someone revives them. *Ruta 3* was revived recently, which passed 12th of October Ave. Transisthmian to the Terminal and *Ruta 4* took *Vía Cincuentenario, San Miguelito, Tumba Muerto* to the Terminal. These were small blue air conditioned busses and they also died.

The “outside busses” got a 5 cent zone instituted which stopped at the Golf entrance (ULACIT Univ.). If you were at San Fernando Clinic and didn’t want to pay 10 cents, you could walk to ULACIT (golf entrance) and pay 5 cents to *Pedregal* or *Tocumen*.

Could it be that the only busses that can resist Panama’s passengers and traffic are the “Red Devils”?

SAMAAP's Carnival Fair

Sandra Patterson

In celebrating carnival, SAMAAP's annual fair is the most awaited social event not only for West Indians but also for friends from other ethnic groups who highly appreciate the viands sold.

It takes place on Saturday and Sunday carnival, usually on the museum's grounds that has proven too small for the gathering, yet, it makes the event seem more like a family reunion. While at it enjoying a program, music, eating and dancing, you are sure to see and meet friends and people you normally don't, whether they live here or abroad.

*This fair is a way to exhibit the heritage handed down from generation to generation, where our matrons show off their cooking skills; just with the aromas, starts your "**mouth running water**", imagine when you get to the taste.*

To have a stand at the fair involves not only cooking but an economical investment, time and labor. Deciding the menu may be or may not be a big task depending on the goals of each matron.

There is no doubt that the activity is an economical one, so the menu, without losing its homey touch, depends mainly on this fact that limits whatever is offered to a limited variety of dishes. This maybe why you find the same food on most stands leaving out other delights. It can also be the reason why less matrons have stands. This has opened a breach so that others are invading our kitchen.

Due to uncontrollable facts, this year's fair was held at ATLAPA. A bigger setting, more accessible, better parking but very few West Indian matrons' food stands and more non West Indians. The good thing about it is that no matter how they try, there is no way they can equalize the real touch, but if this practice continues, we will be the losers.

Shorty & Slim, "Zonians" dedicated to Calypso, participated on the fair's cultural program. Try this video for some memorabilia of the Canal Zone and Panama. (contributed by Jose French)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DzDK1Myn3cU>



Foto by Christhelene I