

AfroPanamanian Newsletter



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(August 2013)

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Barbara Wilson

(We would like to contact her family)

Anecdotes

Controversy

Poetry

LOS AMIGOS :

**Por la superación de la Etnia Negra
(Incorporated to SEAPAT EVENTOS, S.A.)**

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

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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 issued in 1951 as a 10 cent postage stamp, used for years. Permission for its continuous use was given by his grandnephew, Cecil Reynolds.

Editorial ADVICE FOR LIFE

*"There's no
charge for love.*

It is a gift.

*Life is a gift
to you.*

*The way you
live it, is
your gift to those
who come after
you.*

*Make that life
a fantastic
one."*

Kindness is the language the blind can see and the deaf can hear.

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Feedback from the July issue

Congratulations, Inés. This edition contains a lot of valuable historical and biographical information.
Melva

Fe de errata (correction) Mandela's 95th birthday, July 18, 2013. (*Thanks Gloria Kodzwa*)

Hola Ines: just read this issue & enjoyed reading several of the articles; I even saw one of Basilio's video.

What I found amusing was the article on the traffic jams here; though it's no laughing matter, specially if you drive, is that you have to stay very alert, or else.

My daughter's fiancée came to visit for the 1st time, & asked about renting a car; I said 'no way', & he was a bit perturbed. Well, he understood exactly when I drove them around. He was 'breaking' & holding. I thought he would get a heart attack!
Funny.
Marcia

<p>Dear Inés, Thank you for resending this latest issue of the AfroPanamanian Newsletter. I did not receive the first mailing. This issue was so informative, Did not know about Lima's Black Pallbearers. Enjoyed reading about Basilio (R.I.P) such a talented composer and singer, taken away from us too soon.</p> <p>Continue the good work!</p> <p>Dr. Nadya E.Parker</p>	<p><i>Hi Nadya: I missed receiving feedback from people like you, so I knew something was not right. Last month I had to reformat my computer and lost some information although I had passed it to a USB. I went back to my listing, to realize that I hadn't sent it to the readers abroad.</i></p> <p><i>If anyone missed any one of the issues, please go to www.afropanameniannewsletter.mes.tl to catch up.</i></p>
<p>Estimados colegas, I assume that you are aware of Yvette Modestin's (Marta Moreno Vega and Marinieves Alba) new publication "Women Warriors of the AfroLatina Diaspora" published by Arte Publico here in the U.S. It features the life stories of AfroLatino women known in their own countries for their historic anti racist, antioppression, and continued efforts to counter the injustices suffered by our kind throughout Latin America.</p> <p>It is a read well worth featuring in a future AfroPanamanian newsletter edition. Thanks for your attention to this request,</p> <p>Ricardo A. Millett</p>	<p><i>We have not been blessed with a copy of the book, but we encourage those of our readers who can get the book from Amazon to do so.</i></p>
<p>Dear Ines,</p> <p>First, I would like to congratulate you and your staff for the outstanding job that you have been doing for the past few years, by keeping our community informed of our heritage, it is not an easy job to obtain information that had not been written before, but you have been very successful in gathering all of that untold knowledge to pass on to our younger generation.</p> <p>Now I will collaborate by giving you some information that may have been missed during the elaboration of "SCOUTING series (<i>snippets from here and there</i>)" in the Afro Panamanian Newsletter No. 6 Vol. IV of July 2013.</p> <p>I was always told that Sidney Adolphus Young, my uncle, was the pioneer of boy scouting in Panama, and founder of the first troop of boy scouts at the Methodist Church in 17th street in Panama City ("Santana").</p> <p>Yours truly, Rogelio O. Spencer G.</p>	<p><i>Hi Rogelio:</i></p> <p><i>Thank you for the congrats. We try to record as much as we can delve out and research with interviews of the few people who would know, that are left.</i></p> <p><i>It is a series, and will include mention and bios of many scout leaders.</i></p> <p><i>We are not permitted to use info from the etnia negra site. But, we will get to the bottom of the truth. Dates tell a lot of stories.</i></p> <p><i>Any obituary or other written article you may be able to supply will be greatly appreciated.</i></p>

OLDEN DAYS SAYINGS:

“*TINACO*” Do you know of any other country in which a garbage can in Spanish is a “*tinaco*”? When the Canal Zone was in charge of collecting the garbage in the City of Panama, they purchased garbage cans from Tin & Company (Tin & Co was the logo on all the cans) which to Panamanians, who accomodate English things into Spanish became “*Tinaco*”.

“*CAMARON*” is another Panamanian translation, this one, used to represent an odd job, known in other Spanish speaking countries as “*Chamba*”, comes from “come around” used in the Canal Zone by the bosses who could at one time employ “**on the spot**”, so if you were looking for a job you could “come around” to see if there was anything for you to do today. So “come around” (or any odd job) became a “*camaron*”. “**Nowadays**” it is hard to find someone to do a “*camaron*”. With all the big construction jobs going on now, if you need a carpenter or someone for any odd job in constuction, “*no hay*”.

West Indians are very religious. Children were sent or taken to Sunday School as soon as they could walk or talk. Besides what they were taught at Sunday School, they also received teaching at home.

<p>(A Good Night Prayer) Now I lay me down to sleep, I pray the Lord my soul to keep. If I should die before I wake, I pray the Lord my soul to take.</p>	<p>St. Christopher's Creed I believe in God above, I believe in Jesus love, I believe his spirit too comes to teach me what to do. I believe that I can be true and loving Lord like thee.</p>
<p>And God said, (finger indicating forward) the sun should shine, (fingers intertwined over head) the rain should fall, (fingers wiggling down before you) the winds should blow, (hands together in praying manner moving from side to side before you) And God said, (finger indicating forward) the flowers should grow, (fingers wiggling up from your sides) and it was so, was so. (finger indicating forward)</p>	<p>The Bee Hive (Make a fist with one hand covering the closed fingers of the other and say...) This is my bee hive, but where are the bees? Hidden inside where nobody sees. Soon they'll come Creeping out of their hive" One, two, three, four, five (Pop fingers up while counting) Bzzzzzz! (wiggle fingers around like bees escaping)</p>

GAMES WEST INDIAN CHILDREN PLAYED

Then there was playtime outside where we ran, skipped rope, played hide and seek, lata, etc.

<p>Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear (This one we used for skipping rope) Teddy bear, teddy bear, turn around. Teddy bear, teddy bear, touch the ground. Teddy bear, teddy bear, show your shoe. Teddy bear, teddy bear, that will do! Teddy bear, teddy bear, go upstairs. Teddy bear, teddy bear, say your prayers. Teddy bear, teddy bear, turn off the light. Teddy bear, teddy bear, say good-night!</p>	<p>Two little black birds (hold one finger from each hand, in front of you) Sat upon a wall One named Peter (wiggle one finger) One named Paul (wiggle the other) Fly away Peter (put hand behind back) Fly away Paul (put the other hand behind back) Come back Peter (bring one hand back to front with finger up) Come back Paul (bring out other hand)</p>
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We reiterate our willingness to hear from our readers with their anecdotes or historical knowledge about life in Panama from construction days to the present.

<https://mail.google.com/mail/?shva=1#inbox/14016b211457912f?compose=140209fe80e21d53>
resistance contributed by Juan Fagette.

August 2013

OPPORTUNITIES (contributed by Carmen Ramsey)

It seems we've included these opportunities before (Newsletter November 2011), but, they might help someone.

Please see the list of opportunities below. Please distribute widely to your contacts to include, schools, colleges, universities, churches, sororities, fraternities, etc. As you read down, you'll see the free eyeglasses for children

Educational Opportunities

1. Wake Forest University has an opportunity for minority students to attend its MBA program for FREE, and so far, the response has been very poor. Please pass along this opportunity to your friends, families. This is a great school and a tremendous opportunity to attend a top graduate school. The contact person is: Derrick S. Boone, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Marketing, Rm. 3139, Worrell Professional Center, Babcock Graduate School of Management - Wake Forest University - Winston Salem, N.C. 27109-8738. email: derrick.boone@mba.wfu.edu or visit www.wfu.edu; Phone number toll free (866) 925-3622.

2. Black male Teachers needed. Do you know any black Males who are seniors in high school who want to go to college out of state for FREE? The CALL ME MISTER program offered by 4 historical black colleges in South Carolina--Benedict College, Claflin University, Morris College and South Carolina State University. For details and online applications, visit www.callmemister.clemson.edu/index.html or Call 1-800-640-2657.

3. Harvard University is offering free tuition to families of HONOR STUDENTS and their income is less than \$125,000 per year. Visit www.fao.fas.harvard.edu or call 1-617-495-1581.

4. Syracuse University School of Architecture is desperately seeking young women and men of color interested in pursuing a 5 yr. Professional degree in Architecture.
Contact: Mark Robbins, Dean School of Architecture, 201 Slocum Hall, Syracuse, NY 13244-1250 or go on-line at www.soasyr.edu/index.php.

5. A free pair of eyeglasses from Target for any child ages 12 and under. Bring a valid prescription for glasses from their doctor. You can find stores with optical departments at www.target.com

6. APPLY NOW - If you have/know young adults between the ages of 18-31 with a High School Diploma. Can earn up to \$100,000 and earn benefits. The Federal Aviation Association is taking application for Air Traffic Controller School visit the website at www.faa.gov/jobs_opportunities/airtrafficcontroller/

WHY HANDS-ON?

I tried to teach my child with books;
He gave me only puzzled looks.
I tried to teach my child with words;
They passed him by often unheard.
Despairingly, I turned aside;
"How shall I teach this child," I cried.
Into my hand he put the key,
"Come," He said, "Play with me."
~author unknown~

NOTE to Ralph Beckles in Caiman Islands: Please send your correct e-mail to afropanamamaniannnewsletter@gmail.com. Thank you

SCOUTING series (*snippets from here and there*)

BADEN-POWELL

By Cecil V. Reynolds

Lord Robert Cecil Stephenson Smyth Baden-Powell of Gilwell, 1st Baron of Gilwell was born in London England on Feb. 22, 1857 and died in Nyeri, Kenya on Jan 8th, 1941.

He was an actor, painter, musician, military, sculptor, & writer, founder of the World Scout movement that embodies over 200 countries; he also participated in various military campaigns in Africa.

He became a National Hero in the South African Siege of Mafikeng that began Sept. 19, 1899,. This was a war that lasted 217 days where they were outnumbered by their enemies, the Boers, who were superior in numbers, and used commando tactics.

Although this was considered a white man's war he recruited 300 African natives with rifles, to guard the perimeters of the city. His strategy was to use cadets between the ages of 12 and 15 years to care for the different responsibilities within the city allowing the soldiers to defend the city. This contingent was known as the "Black Watch".



Having learned that his military textbook AIDS TO SCOUTING (1899) was being used to train boys in woodcraft, he wrote SCOUTING FOR BOYS (1908) and that same year established the Boy Scout Movement.

After he retired from the British Army he wrote books and devoted his time to the formation of scouts throughout the world inspired by the cadets groups he had formed during the Mafikeng War.

His ideas embodied scouting for boys and other works inspired also by youth groups forming patrols and this way informally began scouting.

In 1910, together with his sister Agnes and his wife, Olave, he founded the Girl's Guides.

Baden-Powell visited Panama twice: 1912 & 1930.

Scouting from 1907 to 1923

by Cecil V. Reynolds

We already mentioned the beginnings in 1907 and 1908. But, according to Wikipedia (taken from the internet) Baden-Powell met the American born Chief of Scouts in British Africa, Frederick Russell Burnham, and learned from him the fundamentals of scouting in 1896.

"In 1909, Chicago publisher W. D. Boyce while visiting London, was lost on a foggy street when an unknown youth came to his aid, guiding him to his destination. The boy then refused Boyce's tip, explaining that he was a Boy Scout and was merely doing his daily good turn. Interested in the Scouting program to save young boys in the U.S. from going astray, Boyce met with General Baden-Powell, who was Chief Scout at the time. Upon his return to N.Y., Boyce incorporated the Boy Scouts of America on February 8, 1910."

In 1911 Scout organizations appeared both on the Canal Zone and in Panama. The first group of Scouts appeared in Panama among the West Indian workers of the canal, under the British flag, known as the British Boy Scout Brigades in Santa Ana, Las Bovedas at the Methodist church sponsored by the British Consulate.

On Sept. 20 the same year, known as the Isthmian Scout Council, we find the first record of Scouts in the Canal Zone: Boy Scout of America (BSA).



This picture taken of Boy Scout Troop No. 1 is evidence of the division and was taken on February 16, 1911.

The Gorgona site where the picture was taken is now under water.

Scouting from 1907 to 1923 (cont.)

After meeting with Lord Baden Powell on his first trip to Panama in 1912, Prof. Jose Mercedes Villamil founded “*Exploradores Panameños*”, officially inaugurating it on Nov. 28, 1914. That year also, the British Boy Brigade was registered in England

1916 Clarence McAllister founded the International Boy Scouts under the name of Lone Scouts Group, the name came from a *Lone Boy Scout* magazine, then changed it to the British Boy Scouts Brigade and lastly to the International Boy Scouts.

David Herbert De Leon Martin joined the British Boy Scouts Brigade at the Methodist church at El Malecon as a cub scout in 1921. He worked his way up to be a patrol leader earning many merit badges.

He left the group in 1940 when President Arnulfo Arias interrupted a parade that was celebrating the World Scout anniversary because they were using flags from England and the United States, this was considered a disrespect to the country. As a result, the president named a commission in which Clifford Bolt and Isidoro Beluche sat down and formed the “*Club de Exploradores de Panama*”, some of the leaders he remembers in those days: Clifford Bolt, Butcher, Bell, Sidney Young and Omphroy. Scout books, uniforms and equipment were sold at his store on the ground floor of “*Casa Mueller*”. We have to remember that 1940 is when the President of the country, Arnulfo Arias, wanted to send all the West Indians back to their country of origin and we were not considered Panamanians as they also did with the orientals.

1923 Clyde H. Smith (reds) joined Troop No. 5 in the Methodist church in Guachapali, British Boy Scouts Brigade.

China closet to bar

By Ines V. Sealy

Furniture in our homes have evolved. According to the, inventions, necessities, etc. designs and styles change.

In the 1940's, as children we grew up seeing a china closet, bureau, side board, iron beds and ward robes.

The China closet has evolved to the bar. The use of each one is different, but, that shows how our values have also evolved, from the dining room to the patio.



China Closet



Bar

If one kept alcoholic beverages in the home, they were hidden in the bureau, probably under lock and key. Now the alcoholic beverages are on display in the bar in the home, either in the living-dining room or on the patio ready for the party, which may be combined with a barbecue.

Our China closet was to display the set of best dishes, which were taken out and washed once or twice a year, to be used on special occasions.

They have been bought by foreigners refurbished and used for curios.



David Herbert De Leon



Arnulfo Arias



Arrival of Baden Powell

Barbara Wilson



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HdVv8vchB6g>

The Chanteuse Barbara Wilson didn't wait out the homage being prepared for June 2, in her honor, she passed away on May 24, 2005.

Born Glenda Brooks to parents of West Indian descent in Panama on October 7, 1940, she took Barbara Wilson as her artistic name, making it famous in this country with her melodious crooning voice, which caused some people to cry and labeled her, by people like Danilo Perez, as "Panama's Ella Fitzgerald" or "Billie Holiday".

She was doing boleros and blues in this singing business when being an artist was not respected in Panama, when singers like *Marta Estela Paredes*, *David Watts*, *Solinka*, *Hector Amante*, and others were trying hard to make a living through the arts. Although she was a regular on the *Blanquita Amaro* show on Channel 2 at 1:00 on Sundays, Victor Boa (R.I.P.), mentor to herself and Violeta Green, started her out at the Windsor Club, (one of the Black owned businesses in the '50s & 60's) on National Ave. After Boa, she sang with the Jimmy Maxwell Quartet, and then with Jazz Effects until failing health slowed her down.

Barbara was a participant in the 2003 Jazz Festival, which is being produced annually by Danilo Perez and then was honored by him posthumously at the Festival in 2007.

Glenda Brooks was known probably only to people who had gone to school with her, her neighbors and her family. But, everyone else knew her as Barbara Wilson. She was married to Wilbert Wilson and the mother of two children.

Can anyone lead us to her family?

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