

# AfroPanamanian Newsletter



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*Lloyd Bartley*

*Prolific Artist*

**Controversy**

**Poetry**

**Anecdotes**

## 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*

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*“Humility*

*is the true key to success...*

*Humility halts ...*

*arrogance and self-indulgence.*

*Humble people share*

*the credit and wealth...”*

— Rick Pitino

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

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**COMING TO AN END WITH GOOD ADVICE:**

**Guinness World Record** holders for the longest marriage of a living couple: **Zelmyra is 101 years old and Herbert is 104.**

The happily married couple teamed up with twitter on Valentine's Day to answer some [relationship questions](#). Check out the reason why they've been together so long and so happy.

**1. What made you realize that you could spend the rest of your lives together? Were you scared at all?**

**H & Z:** With each day that passed, our relationship was more solid and secure. Divorce was NEVER an option - or even a thought.

**2. How did you know your spouse was the right one for you?**

We grew up together & were best [friends](#) before we married. A friend is for life - our marriage has lasted a lifetime.

**3. Is there anything you would do differently after more than 80 years of marriage?**

We wouldn't change a thing. There's no secret to our marriage, we just did what was needed for each other & our family.

**4. What is your advice to someone who is trying to keep the faith that Mr. Right is really out there?**

**Zelmyra:** Mine was just around the corner! He is never too far away, so keep the faith - when you meet him, you'll know.

**5. What was the best piece of marriage advice you ever received?**

Respect, support & communicate with each other. Be faithful, honest & true. Love each other with ALL of your heart.

**6. What are the most important attributes of a good spouse?**

**Zelmyra:** A hard worker & good provider. The 1920s were hard, but Herbert wanted & provided the best for us. I married a good man!

**7. What is your best Valentine's Day memory?**

**Zelmyra:** I cook dinner EVERY day. Herbert left work early & surprised me - he cooked dinner for me! He is a VERY good cook!

**Herbert:** I said that I was going to cook dinner for her & she could relax - the look on her face & clean plate made my day!

**8. You got married very young - how did you both manage to grow as individuals yet not grow apart as a couple?**

"Everyone who plants a seed & harvests the crop celebrates together". We are individuals, but accomplish more together.

**9. What is your fondest memory of your 85-year marriage?**

Our legacy: 5 children, 10 grandchildren, 9 great-grandchildren, and 1 great-great grandchild.

**10. Does communicating get easier with time? How do you keep your patience?**

The children are grown, so we talk more now. We can enjoy our time on the porch or our rocking chairs - together. May 2015

**11. How did you cope when you had to be physically separated for long periods of time?**

**Herbert:** We were apart for 2 months when Z was hospitalized with our 5th child. It was the most difficult time of my life. Zelmyra’s mother helped me with the house and the other children, otherwise I would have lost my mind.

**12. At the end of bad relationship day, what is the most important thing to remind yourselves?**

Remember marriage is not a contest – never keep a score. God has put the two of you together on the same team to win.

**13. Is fighting important?**

NEVER physically! Agree that it’s okay to disagree, & fight for what really matters. Learn to bend - not break!

**14. What’s the one thing you have in common that transcends everything else?**

We are both Christians & believe in God. Marriage is a commitment to the Lord. We pray with & for each other every day.

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**They also closed out the Q&A with one last message:** *We wish we could answer more questions! Thanks for your support and interest in our story - we are overwhelmed. And we wish you a happy Valentine’s Day - may it be filled with love and joy. God bless you all, Herbert and Zelmyra*

**Don’t wait for people to be friendly,  
show them how.  
~Author Unknown~**

**Carry a heart that never hates.  
Carry a smile that never fades.  
Carry a touch that never hurts.  
~Author Unknown~**

**Don’t let those who  
take advantage of your generosity  
stop you from being generous.  
~Author Unknown ~**

**OLDEN DAYS SAYINGS**

“New broom sweeps clean, but, the old broom knows the corners”,

**DISAPPEARING THINGS**

**SACA, CANAL ZONE BUS TERMINAL  
behind  
Standard Building (which has also disappeared)**



## THE UNTOLD STORY

AMBROZINE VILLIERS JAMIESON made noteworthy contributions to the Panamanian society as an educator, pharmacist, journalist and churchworker until her demise November 14, 2004. *(taken from commemorative booklet of testimonial luncheon at which she was honored in 2002, edited by her son Martin)*

Ambrozone was born and reared in the Canal Zone town of Empire “down the lines”, on July 30, 1912, the first of Two daughters born to John and Sarah Villiers Jamaican descendants.

Despite proven difficulties for members of the Afro-West Indian group to pursue education in government supervised, Spanish language schools in Panama, Ambrozone E. Villiers managed to enter the Escuela Profesional Isabel Herrera Obaldía. After graduation she was employed as an elementary school teacher in the Canal Zone Schools at La Boca, a circumstance equally unusual then, also due to racial discrimination.

Upon leaving the Canal Zone Schools system, Ambrozone E. Villiers furthered her education to the point of receiving two degrees from the University of Panama. The first was in Pharmacy, in 1948; the second, as an English language teacher. Employed as an English instructor at the Liceo de Señoritas, she retired in 1970.

An ardent civic worker, Mrs. Jamieson was a founding member of the Junta Femenina and also one of its presidents; a founding members of the Junta Progresista de Juan Díaz, of the Gourmet Cooking Club, and a volunteer at Brown's Infirmary.

Married to Ernest (Jack) Jamieson, a journalist of renown in the Isthmian West Indian community, Ambrozone Jamieson became the mother of two sons, Melvyn and Martin, and also reared Lance.

Aside from representing the Methodist Church at national and foreign meetings, Mrs. Jamieson contributed as Church School Superintendent, leader of the Girls' League and chorister for her church. She also found time to write columns for the Panama Tribune, an English language weekly.

### Bracho

In the 1930's there were families living across the Canal on the West Bank. They lived far apart from each other. Neighbors did not see or meet with each other except at market in the City of Colon, where they went to sell their produce. That area was called Bracho.

Life was rudimentary, mainly farming, both to supply their needs and sale of the excess. The meat came from animals they hunted or domesticated.

The residents bathed in the Canal and collected rain water to satisfy their needs. This water was boiled, inclusive with bushes, for its consumption.

There were families of numerous members: The Catons included Glynn Eulith, Alvin, Oliver Vernon, Enid, Karl, Veritta and Janet. All the boys studied at Canal Zone schools, graduating with honors and held good positions on the Canal Zone or Panama. Alvin learned and worked at armature winding with Ashton Battery shop. Alvin was a mechanic-inventor and armature winder. He solved the problem helicopters had with trees and invented something to stabilize the propellers. Worked on gliders, etc.

Eulith had 4 daughters: Arlene, Cynthia, Celia, Elsa.

Janet Claire Caton Edwards, one of 19 children of Earl Joseph Caton, who died in Bracho from a stroke, and was one of these residents until the age of 5.

## Leroy Ernesto Rogers Gordon

Born in Gamboa, Canal Zone, the son of Adolphus Rogers and Muriel Gordon on January 30, 1935, Leroy was a very quiet, steady, loyal, intelligent person to deal with.

Although he did his Primary studies on the Canal Zone, his High School started at the National Institute of Panama and was accomplished at the Melchor Lasso de la Vega Arts and Crafts School (*Artes y Oficios*) where he obtained a Diploma in Construction in 1955. He studied at the University of Panama, obtaining a degree in Architecture in 1962. In 1977 he completed a Masters in Urban and Regional Planning from Cornell University NY.

As a young man Leroy participated in sports: Pole vaulting and cannonball slinging, besides track and field, representing the country in Bolivarian Games in Barranquilla, Colombia, 1961; the Central American and Caribbean Games in Jamaica, 1962.

A worker from 1962, as a partner in the firm of architects ROGERS & SMITH (together with Alberto Smith *bio in AfroPanamanian Newsletter April 2012*) Leroy designed and constructed St. Christopher's Gym in Parque Lefevre, which was recently amplified. From 1968 on, he worked for the Panamanian Government at the *Instituto de Vivienda y Urbanismo*, Panama (IVU), *Ingenieria Municipal* of the District of Panama, At the Ministry of Housing he headed the Department of Specific Projects, was Chief of the Planning Section of Settlements, Technical Advisor of the Directorate General of Urban Development, and Chief of the Department of the Use of Soils.

He was member of the Panamanian Society of Engineers and Architects.

All these positions cause a lot of stress. There are different ways of dispelling tension. His way was singing. Beside singing in church choirs, Leroy was a foundation member of Coro Polifonico de Panama. He was present at all the practices and performances he could. This faithfulness took him travelling to Cali, Colombia in representation of Panama at the cultural section of the PanAmerican Games, 1971. First International Tour of choirs in Israel's XIV ZIMRYA where they sang to the Pope on July 30, 1986, also at the Auditorium of the headquarters of the United Nations and at a Gala Concert at the Presbyterian Church in Brooklyn, NY.

The Coro Polifonico in collaboration with the Social Security Choir participated in its representation of Panama in Costa Rica on 2 occasions.

### In the Community:

Leroy participated in community work as President of the Board of Directors of Llano Bonito, Vice-President of the Civic Society of Don Bosco, Juan Diaz; President of the Softball league of Don Bosco,

The First President of Respuesta Afro Panameña and Coordinator of the National Social Center for Seniors and the Needy in Barrio Norte, Colon.



His literary production included: (*titles translated*) Normative Plan for Paraiso and Pedro Miguel, Housing is also Sovereignty, Norms for the Urban Development of the City of Panama, Revision of the Zoning of the City of Panama, Norms to Control and Develop the Swamp Sector of the Borough of Juan Diaz, Urban Regulations for the "Nuevo Renacer" Rehabilitation Center (Gamboa Penitentiary *AfroPanamanian Newsletter Feb-Mar 2015*).

On September 17, 2015 Leroy succumbed to an unattended blow to his head from a fall, leaving behind his wife, 5 children, 6 siblings, grandchildren and other relatives.

## The Arts in Panama.

*At the beginning of the XX century, when Panama was still a part of Colombia, and even after its separation, art was not considered a viable source of income. Painting & sculpture were for families with money, where their members didn't have to work and could wile the time away with art or if the artist had a government assignment to produce a sculpture of some object or person, such as: The National Theater, the Mayor's Building, or Schools, such as: The National Institute in the province of Panama and the Juan Demostenes Arosemena Normal School in the province of Veraguas, or, maybe a contest of some sort. The arts came into the limelight after the Revolution in 1968. The Omar Torrijos administration brought the arts forward as a means of both entertatainment and income. Including a Ministry of Arts and Sports and a Faculty at the University of Panama.*

*Sculpture in ice may be done in one day, these days, but, in marble or wood it takes a long time. and was predominantly neo-classical at that time. Making a living as an artist was very difficult, if not impossible for Black artists. **“While the grass is growing, the horse is starving.”** To support a family with money from the Arts, was risky.*

*The emphasis during the 50's, 60's for West Indian descendants, was to finish school and get a job, either in Panama or on the Canal Zone, or, go off to the US. Music, painting and sculpture, poetry and writing were for pastimes or hobbies.*

*But after being exposed to drawing, Bartley was a persistent student of the Arts, both formally and informally. He spent many hours in Libraries studying the art forms from books.*



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**LLOYD BARTLEY**

Sidney Young



*Meet the guy who sculpted the Sidney Young bust installed in Rio Abajo.*



**Lloyd Bartley**, painter and sculptor, was born in the city of Colon on September 29, 1913 to Jamaican parents John and Mary Bartley, who arrived in Panama to seek work on the Panama Canal, met and married.

Since his father worked for the Canal Zone, he grew up and studied in the Atlantic town of Silver City.

While working on the Canal Zone military base of Camp Coiner in 1943 he meets artist Todd Banach, who awakens his interest in the arts. Todd gave him some pointers in drawing with charcoal. His first public exposure during a collective exhibition, including Roberto Lewis and Humberto Ivaldi at the Washington Hotel was in 1945, with Two charcoal drawings where he was impressed by a mural painted by artist Roberto Lewis. He received honorary mention.

Bartley decided he wanted to study with Lewis, so he presented himself at Lewis's studio in Panama City soliciting to be a student of his. Although Lewis suggested that Bartley inscribe in the National School of Arts under Ivaldi, and, Lewis only taught private classes, Bartley stubbornly insisted, and was accepted.

He was also influenced by Ciro Oduber, who took over the National School of Painting in 1950 and invited him to attend his classes. Ciro's abstract and modern style gave Bartley a boxing lesson, but he persisted and benefitted. Yet he preferred the Classic style of Cedeño.

When Ex-President Jose Antonio Remon Cantera visited Washington DC to review the Remon-Eisenhower treaties, Bartley's paintings were included in a 10-painter's Exhibition.

Like other Black artists: Malanga, Hector Sinclair, Morro, etc. Bartley worked on Carnival floats in the 40's, 50's and 60's.

**As a Painter** we can list his portraits:  
Eva de Young, Inocencio Galindo, Mery Q. De Fabrega, Casimiro Moreno, General Bean, Nisso Alkavez, Carola Bartley, Sra. Huey, Ernesto De La Guardia, and our own Prof. Elma de Payne

**And as a sculptor:**  
Charles Ramon Zachrinson – Plaza de Francia  
Frank Ulrich – in Colon

2 busts of Dr. Augusto S. Boyd – at the Divisa Agricultural school and at Cemento Panama  
Don David Delvalle and Dr. Audilla in Aguadulce – Cocle  
Polidoro Pinzon at the Juan Demostenes Arosemena Normal School  
**Mr. Sidney A. Young, 13<sup>th</sup> St. Rio Abajo – Panama**  
For the Firefighters of Panama – Sculpture to Mothers – coins with David Brandon, Florencio Arosemena and Juan Antonio Guizado.

**And a sculpture in Bronze of his son: Carlos, at the age of 10.**