

Guyana Cultural Association of New York Inc.on-line Magazine

# GUYANA FOLK

July 30  
2014  
Vol 4  
Issue 7

*And Culture*



# WELCOME TO THE 2014 FOLK FESTIVAL SEASON

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During July 2014, after months of planning within the diaspora served by GCA, many of the events our organization produces materialize.

For GCA this is not a dry season. It is one, as has happened over the years, that shows to the community with which it is connected the results of months of steady planning by a group of volunteers.

Here then are the primary events produced by Guyana Cultural Association of New York, Inc. for the 2014 season.

But first let me note that these activities punctuated by the memory of Maurice Braithwaite and Muriel Glasgow. GCA has moved to accommodate these losses to its ranks and has tried, without being maudlin, to honor their general visions for the organization overall and for the specific activities to which they gave a lot of their individual time. Therefore, the Performing Arts Season is undergoing a renaissance as GCA explores, qualifies and quantifies the work of Mo Braff. Look for The Dinner Theatre, the 2013 essay into what is now known The Maurice Braithwaite Performing Arts Series. STEM and the awareness to our ecological system, the parts of the Summer Workshop Series to which Muriel attached herself, continue vigorously and well with grants, large and small, being sought. In addition, both of these tireless workers loved the Kwe Kwe. They will be missed this year, in person, but Mo's remarkably inventive set design template and Muriel's agile, back to the roots footwork and fashion sense will still be there. They will be missed also at Family Fun Day, here Mo, Assistant to the Cultural Director, served at the Field Manager, and Muriel lately delighted friends, old and new, as GCA representative in the GCA tent and at the Awards Ceremony.

In our 2014 season, under the theme, "We Bridgin," we are conducting the following: the seventh iteration of our Summer Workshops, Caribbean Heritage/Arts in the Community Series which holds its six week sessions from Monday, July 7 through Thursday, August 14th; The Awards Ceremony which is on Wednesday, August 27th; the Kwe Kwe which is on Friday, August 29th; The Literary Hang which is on Saturday, August 30th from noon to 7 p.m. and Family Fun Day which is on Sunday, August 31st.

An exciting development in the Award Ceremony is the Godfrey Chin Award. Information about this honor is in the article on the Award Ceremony.

Through that Chin family supported medium, we continue to acknowledge and offer a tangible recognition of the contributions to the culture of Guyana by another of the stalwart members of our Board. Judges for this prize comprise a ranging roster of experience within the broad field of culture. They are listed in the article. Ya tink it easy!

Details on all these events over the Labor Day weekend 2014 are related in this newsmagazine. We hope to see you at those of your choice -- we hope all of our productions -- and welcome you as We Bridgin!

Later in 2014, our season being elastic, we will be holding the Annual Symposium. The Call for Participation for this November event is in this issue. While the main locus for this discourse will be in Guyana, Empire State College/SUNY, Brooklyn, NY is planned as the place to be for those of us who want to participate in the ongoing discussion of "Who are We." Connection during the proceedings with the sessions in Guyana will be, as it was last year, via various technological modes.

Please read about reunions of all types both here in the US and in Guyana. These are the tactile bridges by which we maintain our sense of oneness, home and integrity of commitment to developments in Guyana.

The continuum that is time is observed by the passage of its most vulnerable organisms. In this edition of the newsmagazine, we acknowledge the passing of the inimitable Habeeb Khan. Please read, learn and remember this brave raconteur of the performance stages of Guyana in the article about him.

Our articles this month include one on the ongoing singing journey of Lisa Punch.

For GCA it is not a dry season. And so on we go. We Bridgin!

Cheers,

Juliet Emanuel, Editor, July 2014

## SUMMER HERITAGE WORKSHOP 2014

JULY 7-AUGUST 14, 2014

ST. STEPHEN'S CHURCH AUDITORIUM  
2806 Newkirk Avenue (E28th St.)  
Brooklyn, NY 11226  
MON - THURS: 9:00 A.M. - 3:00 P.M.

# GUYANA FOLK FESTIVAL SEASON 2014



CELEBRATING GUYANA'S CULTURAL HERITAGE  
A PRESENTATION OF THE GUYANA CULTURAL ASSOCIATION OF NY INC.



## GCA AWARDS

AUGUST 27, 2014

BROOKLYN BOROUGH HALL  
209 Joralemon Street,  
Brooklyn, NY 11209  
6.00 P.M.

## LITERARY HANG

SATURDAY, AUGUST 30, 2014 - 1:00 P.M.  
ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL  
CHURCH GARDENS  
139 St Johns Pl. Brooklyn, NY 11217

## KWE-KWE NITE

AUGUST 29, 2014 - 8.00 P.M.  
ST. STEPHEN'S CHURCH AUDITORIUM  
2806 Newkirk Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11226  
ADMISSION \$20.00

## FOLK FESTIVAL FAMILY DAY

SUNDAY, AUGUST 31, 2014  
OLD BOYS HIGH SCHOOL GROUNDS  
736 Rutland Road (& Troy Avenue)  
Brooklyn, NY 11203; 12 NOON.-7.00 P.M.  
(SPORTS & MAYPOLE: 2.00 P.M.)  
SHOWTIME: 4.00 P.M.)  
ADMISSION: \$10.  
KIDS UNDER 16 & SENIORS FREE

## GCA SYMPOSIUM

GUYANA - NOVEMBER 1-8, 2014

INFORMATION - Website: [www.guyfolkfest.org](http://www.guyfolkfest.org) TEL: 718-209-5207

*This activity is not sponsored or endorsed by the New York City  
Department of Education or the City of New York*

**"WE BRIDGIN" - 2014 SYMPOSIUM**

# **CALL FOR PARTICIPATION**

## **WORKING ON IDENTITY:**

### **The Diaspora and the Creative Arts**



**NOVEMBER 1-3, 2014**  
**GUYANA, SOUTH AMERICA**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

This will be the third GCA symposium to be held in Guyana. It continues a partnership with the Ministry of Culture, Youth, and Sport. The title for the 2014 symposium signifies GCA's ongoing response to the recommendations from the 2013 "Who are we?" Symposium, which challenged participants to "[imagine] Guyana beyond Indian and African politics of race." The Report and White Paper from the 2013 symposium is available at: [http://guyfolkfest.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/reassembled\\_report\\_and\\_w](http://guyfolkfest.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/reassembled_report_and_white_paper_final_without_overview_may_2_2014.pdf)hite\_paper\_final\_without\_overview\_may\_2\_2014.pdf

The 2014 symposium also recognizes the crucial role of the contemporary creative arts in representing Guyanese identity to local, regional, and global communities, such as the Guyanese diaspora. Further, the symposium also demonstrates GCA's continued commitment to supporting the study and celebration of Guyanese heritage along with encouraging and supporting Guyanese creativity.

#### **BACKGROUND**

In 2013, there were substantial curricular and human resources deficiencies in Guyana's creative arts education and training curriculum. These deficiencies not only undermine the scope of Guyanese creativity; more than anything it undermines Guyana's ability to participate in the globally-connect cultural industries. The creative arts provide a language that allow Guyanese to participate in, benefit, and contribute to global conversations and creativity.

The case of Lisa Punch is instructive. Lisa Punch, the Guyanese competitor on ABC's talent show "Rising Star" recently admitted during an interview show that she had no idea what "pitch" meant! She had been told by one of the show's judges that she had a pitch problem at the start of her performance. This 21-year old former Bishop's High School student who has been pursuing a career as a singer, dancer, and actor also stated during the interview that she was never exposed in Guyana to an education program that equipped her with the most elementary levels of the vocabulary of music. As Derry Etkins has noted on July 13, 2014, "talent needs to be balanced with training."

To see the Lisa Punch interview, go to:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=reQHBAjlv8&feature=share>

The current rehabilitation of Guyana's Institute of the Creative Arts (ICA) is an important step in recognition of the need for new strategies to address this crucial sector in Guyanese life in an interconnected world.

#### **Institute of Creative Arts**

The origins of the Institute of Creative Arts (ICA) are to be found in the assessment of the state of Guyanese creative arts after Carifesta 72. That assessment resulted in the establishment of the National School of Dance (1974) and the E.R. Burrowes School of Art (1975). Plans for schools of music and creative writing were not implemented. The current version of the Institute of Creative Arts will, through the E.R. Burrowes School of Art, National School of Dance, National School of Music, the National School of Theatre, and the soon to be created National School of Creative Writing and

# CALL FOR PARTICIPATION 2014 SYMPOSIUM

**NOVEMBER 1-8, 2014  
GUYANA, SOUTH AMERICA**

School of Media Arts will deliver the nation's pivotal creative arts curriculum. The new institute will hold its first convocation in September 2014.

Through a dynamic and high quality curriculum, the institute will have important linking roles with Guyana's secondary and post-secondary education communities, civil society, and diaspora.

The discourse on cultural policy in Guyana, including the discourse on creative arts education in Guyana can become shrill at times. However, despite the current shrillness, there is at the core, apparent agreement among crucial stakeholders on the following:

- ***Guyana needs a coherent and sustainable creative arts education and training system.***
- ***There is need for a human resources development strategy to develop and sustain the creative arts education and training system.***

The 2014 symposium will provide an opportunity to develop a strategy to respond to these twin needs.

## ENGAGEMENT & PARTICIPATION

On Saturday, November 1, 2014, as part of the 2014 symposium, the organizers will create a videoconference "bridge" to connect Guyanese creative artists and other professionals in the diaspora with stakeholders in Guyana's curriculum for education and training in the creative arts. The primary diaspora site will be CUNY/Empire State College, Brooklyn and a venue to be determined in Georgetown.

The goal is to contribute to the creation of a sustainable system for enriching Guyana's creative arts education curriculum.

To this end, panel proposals, papers, posters, and other formats are invited on the following and related fields:

- ***Global and regional trends in creative arts education and training;***
- ***Creative arts in Guyana: origins, current state and trajectories;***
- ***Guyanese aesthetics and the cultural industries;***

In addition, the 2014 symposium will continue to promote the rehabilitation of Guyana's masquerade heritage through a workshop on masquerade costume design and manufacture on Sunday, November 2, 2014

at a venue to be identified in Guyana. Again, Guyanese at home and in the diaspora, especially those associated with the fashion arts are encouraged to participate.

Abstracts of no more than 300 words should be sent by September 15, 2014 to [symposium@guyfolkfest.org](mailto:symposium@guyfolkfest.org)

## OTHER ACTIVITIES

One of the successful activities during the 2012 symposium in Guyana was the visit to Victoria Village for the "Masquerade Flounce Off." In addition to supporting the rehabilitation of the art form, the visit also provided participants with an opportunity to conduct valuable research on Guyana's masquerade heritage. During November 3 to 6, symposium participants will have an opportunity to visit heritage sites and conduct research in urban and rural areas of the coast and in hinterland locations. On Saturday, November 8, symposium participants will attend celebrations in Victoria to commemorate the 175th anniversary of the founding of Guyana's first village

In summary, the objectives of the 2014 symposium are:

- ***To contribute to the development of a sustainable system for diaspora engagement with the creative arts curriculum in Guyana;***
- ***To continue GCA's commitment to the masquerade rehabilitation initiative by organizing a workshop on masquerade costume design;***
- ***To establish partnerships for the design and execution of the film and video, literary, performing arts, visual arts, and culinary arts programs to celebrate Guyana's 50th anniversary of independence in 2016 as identified in the above-mentioned Report and White Paper;***
- ***To provide opportunities for travel to heritage sites in urban, rural, and hinterland Guyana;***
- ***To participating in Victoria's 175th anniversary celebrations.***

GCA Symposium Team



THE NINTH ANNUAL LITERARY HANG

# LITERARY HANG

GUYANA CULTURAL ASSOCIATION OF NEW YORK, INC.  
2014 FOLK FESTIVAL SEASON

## CELEBRATING AUTHORS IN OUR DIASPORA

NO MAN IS AN ISLAND ENTIRE OF  
ITSELF; EVERY MAN IS A PIECE OF  
THE CONTINENT, A PART OF THE  
MAIN

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH ST. JOHN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

SATURDAY,  
AUGUST 30, 2014

THE UNDERCROFT  
**St. John's  
Episcopal Church**

139 ST. JOHN'S PLACE  
BROOKLYN, NY 11217  
From noon - 7:00p.m.  
Books on sale.

FOR INFORMATION:

Dr. Juliet Emanuel  
[JAEMANUEL@cs.com](mailto:JAEMANUEL@cs.com),

GCA Secretariat:  
Tel: 718 209 5207



Includes a traditional Ice-Cream Banquet

**"WE BRIDGIN"**

# **GCA LITERARY HANG 2014:**

## **Gaiutra Bahadur, Ingrid Griffith, Kennard Ramphal, Hans Verasamy, Dwarka Ramphal, Roy Brummell, Fenton Sands and Abiola Abrams to participate**

*Juliet Emanuel*

The GCA Literary Hang for 2014 will be held on the premises of St. John's Episcopal Church, 139 St. John's Place, Brooklyn, NY 1127, on Saturday, August 30th beginning at noon.

Itself a representation of bridging, this institution, according to its Mission Statement, was planned and built as a multiracial parish in 1826 while slavery continued to be a law of the state of New York. As usual, the members of the parish seek new ideas from members of the community and welcome the stranger.

There is no doubt that Rev. Malbone Johnson who, in the founding of St. John's, used his own funds to actualize his vision of inclusiveness, would have continued to welcome all and would have rejoiced in this collection of wordsmiths sharing their works with the community.

We Bridgin'

The connections over the past nine years, since the first gathering during the Second Annual GCA symposium which was held at Columbia University, have yielded a steady reputation for both richness of content and craft. The Literary Hang remains a welcoming platform for writers of any generation, published or not. In 2013, the appearances of Liann Aris Henry, Tiffany Herod, Volencia LaRose and Terrance Bobb, average age - nine years, moved the heartstrings of the venerable Brother Eusi Kwayana. Everyone is anticipating the contributions of these children of Guyana, who are far removed from the times, if not the realities of related experience, during which Rev. Johnson conceived and created his beacon of hope, at the Literary Hang 2014.

But we bridgin'.

The Literary Hang is open to all in the community. The concentration is on the Guyanese writer but one does

not have to be of Guyanese descent to participate. We ask only that the sensitivities of young ears be acknowledged.

Generally, the focus of The Hang is exclusive to its particular purpose for the year. For 2014, however, The Hang follows more closely than in previous years the overall theme for the GCA season. And, the primary writers selected for participation include Gaiutra Bahadur, Ingrid Griffith, Kennard Ramphal, Hans Verasamy, Dwarka Ramphal, Abiola Abrams, Roy Brummell and Fenton Sands.

And the Young Writers Series of the GCA Summer Workshops will appear of course! All participating wordsmiths will acknowledge bridges in this celebration of the book.

There will be an Open Mic, sale of books, general discussion, lots of laughter and great fun.

Refreshments this year will take the form of a traditional Guyanese Ice Cream Banquet.

A new supporter for the Literary Hang 2014 is Wendy Peters representing A Clean Slate.

We Bridgin'

The gates of St. John's open at noon to the public. The event ends at 7:00 p.m. The time allotted for a reading or any other presentation by a participant is 10 minutes with a question and answer session to follow each appearance. All writers sign their works. Because of an unprecedented call for books this year, you may be advised to reserve copies so that the writers may have yours on hand.

As always, expect writers you have not heard of before. If you have something to share do call the GCA Secretariat 718 209-5207 or write jaemanuel@cs.com by August 15th.

In 2015, The GCA Literary Hang will be held down South, both Georgia and Florida are sites under consideration and in 2016, as part of the celebrations in Guyana, with the Symposium, it will be held there. In 2017, it is likely that the Literary Hang will be held in Canada or Maryland.

**Support the writing community.**

**It is a good thing.**

**FENTON B. SANDS NEW PICTURE BOOK OF GUYANA****"REFLECTIONS OF GUYANA"**

The author says: "Guyana's beauty, color, mystery, culture, history, and diversity inspired me to pick up my camera and capture what impressed me most about the country. I lived in Guyana between 2005 and 2007, not as a professional photographer but to work for USAID and lead efforts in developing the country in areas of health, education, and economic growth. Since I've lived and worked in many different countries, I quickly realized that Guyana is a wonderfully photogenic country. I hope Guyanese appreciate their magnificent country through my photographs that capture an image, impression and feeling. Actually, everyone will come to realize how wonderful, delightfully attractive, beautiful, and diverse Guyana really is."



## GCA 2014 THEME: “WE BRIDGIN”

### Describe how you came to the decision to publish a book on Guyana?

I came to the decision in stages. I'm not sure where to start, but will start from a convenient point of reference for how it got started. Because, if you wind the history tape back far enough, the story would go back decades. But let me pick it up from the fact that I took a lot of pictures in Guyana, thousands of pictures.

When I got to Guyana, I was immediately struck by the vibrant, clear, images I saw that were different from what I had seen in other places. I have lived and traveled in many countries around the world as a Foreign Service officer. For one thing, the environment made pictures come out clear, crisp, and sharp. This was a different country culturally, socially and somewhat geographically too – which also drew my attention. Eventually I had quite a catalogue of pictures which I showed people in

Guyana, family, and friends who had also traveled a lot in the Foreign Service. Many of them said they liked my pictures.

Several Guyanese friends kept telling me I should put my pictures together in a book – and one friend in particular kept pressing me to do that. So when I had the time, I self-publish a small book I titled “Among my Best Pictures of Guyana”. I learned a lot about how to do page layouts, pick good pictures, and prepare images for top quality printing. Again, people kept saying they liked what they saw and they again encouraged me to publish a bigger table-top picture book.

Therefore, with this encouragement and after doing a lot of research on publishing, I got the courage and felt confident enough to publish a nice book on Guyana.

*I have lots of good pictures of Guyana and I felt like sharing my impressions of this beautiful, interesting country. I also felt like providing a positive image of Guyana with good quality images despite some of the not-so-nice things people see and hear about the country – including Guyanese themselves.*



## GCA 2014 THEME: “WE BRIDGIN”

### Why a book of pictures?

The answer to this is tied to the background on how I got into photography. It all goes back to my father who had an illustrative career as an agricultural expert who lived and traveled all over the world, but mainly in Africa. I remember how excited my extended family in the States was when we returned from countries like Liberia, Nigeria, Sudan, etc. and he showed them pictures of the continent. This inspired me to do the same thing when I followed pretty much the same career path as my father and ended up working and traveling overseas, mainly in Africa.

However, about 8 years prior to coming to Guyana, I had literally put down my camera because there wasn't much that interested me (photographically) except on some occasions when I got to witness and take pictures of great cultural events in Ghana where I had been living and working for 5 of those 8 years. At the same time, I was forced to make the transition from using a film-based 35 mm camera to using a digital 35 mm camera (which is another story) -- and I also began learning about and using computer software to manage and modify digital images – something I had done before in a darkroom.



So as I mentioned above, I have lots of good pictures of Guyana and I felt like sharing my impressions of this beautiful, interesting country. I also felt like providing a positive image of Guyana with good quality images despite some of the not-so-nice things people see and hear about the country – including Guyanese themselves. I often got a kick out of people wondering where I took a certain picture, which could be a person living in Guyana or someone who had never been near the country, or knew where it was!

### How will buyers get a sense of what Guyana is from this book?

*Following the many photographic themes in the book, people will get a glimpse of the different features of Guyana. I hope that people of Guyanese decent, primarily those who have either never been to the country, or haven't been there in many years, will be impressed with how nice the country is. I know, from the reaction I've gotten from people who don't know about Guyana, some pictures will surprise and maybe even awe them – plus, perhaps make them want to visit this unknown place with such a natural environment and Caribbean culture full of interesting, friendly, and attractive people.*

# About Fenton B. Sands

Dr. Sands came to Guyana as the USAID Mission Director in 2005 and after a 30 year career in development, he retired after leaving Guyana. He remains an active senior economic policy adviser in Africa. Fenton and his wife Cynthia, raised two boys (Bemani and Jahmal).



Since his birth in Liberia, West Africa Dr. Sands has been a world traveler. His father (born and raised in Harlem New York) traveled to Liberia in the 1940's with his mother to start the agricultural school at Cuttington College. Thus, Dr. Sands inherited part of his gypsy-lifestyle from his parents – his father being a PhD agriculturalist who worked for several development organizations, including USAID and the World Bank. This is after his father was one of the historic Black men known as the Tuskegee Airmen. Dr. Sands picked up his interest in photography from his father who recorded many aspects of his life and travels with a camera. In fact, it was the result of his father's inspiration that led to some of Dr. Sands' photos being published by Life Magazine -- recording the socially turbulent university life of 1960s in the United States.

Besides growing up in Liberia, Nigeria, and Sudan and going to high school in both Egypt and Switzerland, Dr. Sands has lived and traveled for most of his life in almost 20 countries covering the four corners of Africa. He has also traveled to many countries in Europe and a few countries in the Middle East, Latin America, and the Caribbean.

He built on his first degree in agricultural economics from Cornell University with a Masters degree in the same discipline from Michigan State University. Two years later, Dr. Sands started his first job at the U.S. Department of Agriculture. From there, Dr. Sands joined USAID and served 3 years in Zaire (now the Democratic Republic of the Congo). The first of Dr. Sands' 2 sons was born while he was in there. Right at the end of this tour, the family expanded by one and Dr. Sands returned with his family to Michigan State University for his doctorate degree in agricultural economics. Thereafter, he and his family headed off to live and work in Uganda after which the odyssey continued for over 25 years from Uganda to Morocco, to Egypt, then Ghana and finally briefly in Washington, DC before going to Guyana in June 2005 as the USAID Mission Director.



CELEBRATING YOUNG GUYANESE ACHIEVERS:

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# Abiola Abrams



BOOK  
NOMINATED  
FOR AFRICAN  
AMERICAN  
LITERARY AWARD  
IN CATEGORY WITH T.D. JAKES,  
IYANLA VANZANT, RUSSELL SIMMONS

CELEBRATING YOUNG GUYANESE ACHIEVERS:

# ABIOLA ABRAMS

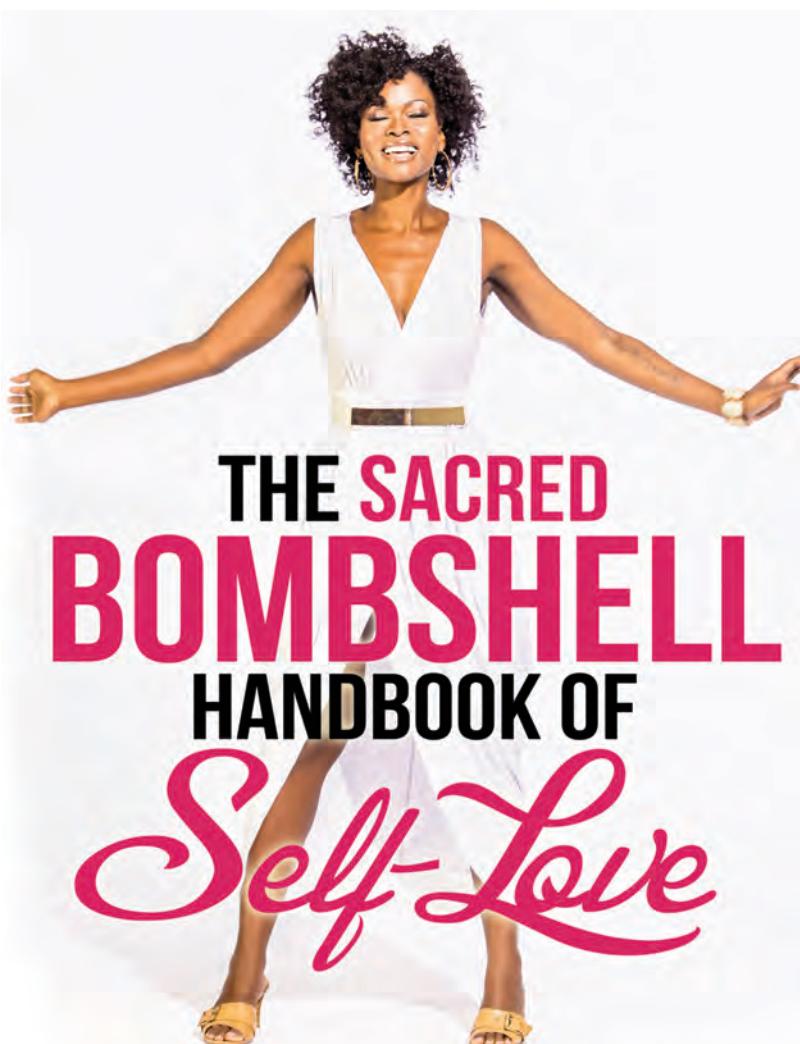
**“The Sacred Bombshell Handbook of Self-Love”  
NOMINATED FOR AFRICAN AMERICAN  
LITERARY AWARD IN CATEGORY WITH T.D.  
JAKES, IYANLA VANZANT, RUSSELL SIMMONS**

Abiola Abrams spins her magic as a life coach and lifestyle journalist focused on women's Love-Body-Spirit™ empowerment. The Essence.com advice columnist is known for giving wake-up-call self-esteem advice when it comes to relationships and healing on networks from the BBC to MTV and columns from Yahoo to Match.com.

Abiola is leading the feminine power self-help revolution, redefining the word “bombshell” to mean a woman who loves mentally, emotionally, and spiritually and accepts herself, without apology. The in-demand coach, columnist, and speaker is also the founder of an award-winning blog and web series where she interviews other luminaries and shares powerful personal development lessons. From her online coaching programs to her new African Goddess Affirmation Cards, Abiola's mission is to help women create personal development breakthroughs.

The granddaughter of farmers in Buxton, Guyana on both sides, Abrams is a certified life coach, has a BA from Sarah Lawrence, and Master's Degree from Vermont College. In addition she brings tools and inspiration from her personal history as the granddaughter of a Guyanese midwife and women's fertility healer and daughter of a teacher and a journalist/minister to her work.

Abiola's favorites among her previous inspirational projects include her first book, *Dare* (Simon & Schuster), a novel about a sociologist learning to love herself; award-winning documentary “Knives in My Throat;” being a Teen Dating Empowerment Coach on the MTV show “Made.” Like Tony Robbins and Iyanla Vanzant, she believes in the power of human potential. Find her at [AbiolaTV.com](#) and on Twitter and Facebook



## ABIOLA ABRAMS

@abiolatv.

Photo by Liz Nikols.



# SCHOOL REUNIONS

## A VITAL CARIBBEAN DIASPORA CONNECTION

Lear Matthews

Photographs by Tangerine Clarke

## SCHOOL REUNIONS

*“... offering that rare and unique opportunity to physically and emotionally revisit and reconnect with your alma mater and friends, often in the same environment and space where nostalgic memories were initially created and later solidified”.*

### Lear Matthews

Among Guyanese and other English Speaking Caribbean immigrants, the month of July has become well known for reunions, many of them hosted by High School Alumni Associations and celebrated by supporters. The Alumni Associations in New York holding reunions during the month of July this year include: Bishops High School, Tutorial High School, Christ Church Secondary School, and Cambridge Academy. The president of one of these groups recently described the role of reunions as “offering that rare and unique opportunity to physically and emotionally revisit and reconnect with your alma mater and friends, often in the same environment and space where nostalgic memories were initially created and later solidified”. Indeed the school reunion can be an event that is anticipated

with much excitement for many, while for others it may be characterized by curiosity, unexpected surprises and even tension.

However, apart from providing the milieu and opportunity for former classmates to interact, reminisce and celebrate an important milestone, reunions have the broader function of fund raising and planning for the future of the participants’ alma mater. A key dimension of the reunion activities, which generally lasts from a few days to one week, is the Business Meeting, designed to identify and plan projects for the school. Chapter Executives also use the occasion to develop rules and procedures for disseminating funds collected from the reunion and other sponsored events, and to reaffirm their commitment to the sustenance and progress on their alma mater.

Courtesy calls to make political, governmental and potential sponsorship connections, are a critical part of the reunion proceedings. Furthermore, when the reunion is held in the home country, trips to various locations in the homeland are arranged, giving participants an opportunity to visit areas of the country many have never ventured while they resided there. Some form of “charity work” beyond the school environment is also not uncommon.

### Lear Matthews



## REUNION SEASON 2014

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In addition, an Awards Ceremony is an integral dimension of the reunion program, paying tribute to those alumni or contributors for their outstanding work and accomplishments. The event usually culminates with an extravagant formal Dinner Dance or Reunion Ball, at which participants seemingly cherish the chance to showcase their best sartorial attire and to demonstrate the remnants of their youthful dance moves they once performed with confidence and grace.



Lear Matthews

Photographs by Tangerine Clarke

## REUNION SEASON 2014

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The host groups of these reunions, i.e. the respective overseas Alumni Chapters, have emerged as a significant part of the increasing number of Hometown Associations in the Caribbean Diaspora over the past decade. A Hometown Association is an organization formed by immigrants from the same village, town region or shared institution (such as a former High School), seeking to support their place of origin, sustain connections through cash or kind (e.g. granting scholarships), while maintaining a sense of community as they adjust to life in their adopted home.

The role, symbolism and significance of these reunions are often underestimated. Beyond the revelry, celebration and nostalgia for which reunions are known, it is important to note that the mission of providing academic/ Sports and material support for the former educational institution is essential. There is a perception that school reunions, characterized by physical assemblage of former classmates, may be outmoded by Face book and MySpace. However, this writer argues that this activity, as it has been traditionally conceived and celebrated will survive, regardless of the modern technological social media surge, maintaining a lasting and vital Caribbean Diaspora connection.



### St. Rose's Alumni Association USA 20th Anniversary Ball

Date: Thursday, August 28, 2014

Place: Russo's on the Bay  
162-45 Cross Bay Boulevard, Howard Beach, NY, 11414

Cocktails: 7:00 p.m. ~ Dinner: 8:00 p.m.

Honoree: Dr. Hazel Campayne, Keynote Speaker  
(former Headmistress of St. Rose's High School)

Dress: Formal

Donation: \$100.00 (all inclusive)

For information: 718-287-5187 | 917-796-1723 | 718-342-7046 | 917-727-6737



*Dr. Aubrey F. Bentham,  
President CAAAI*

On Saturday July 19, 2014 the Cambridge Academy Alumni Association International celebrated its 4th biennial

Reunion in Brooklyn, New York, but this was a different event set apart from the standard repertoire normally expected at a High School gathering of its alums.

A significant attendance of approximately 235 members of CAAAI, friends, supporters, and well-wishers filled the Glen Terrace reception hall and were participants of an sumptuous menu of fine dining, followed by an evening of dancing to oldies and an unrestricted amount of Caribbean musical genre. But what happened between dinner and frolic were the key indicators by which the association's executive body measured the event's success and uniqueness.

The Master of Ceremonies for the night's proceedings was the world renowned Guyanese born scholar and scientist Dr. Frank L. Douglas, PhD., MD who was both a student and a teacher at Cambridge Academy. The coveted Robert A. Pinkerton awards for Humanitarian Services, and Excellence in Education were presented respectively to Rev. Dr. Walter V.L. Eversley; Dr. Myrtle Adams-Smartt, and Mr. Edvertus R.M. Caesar, former Chief Education Officer (in absentia). If, however, a

'crescendo' is the highest increased volume of music, then the defining highlight of the Cambridge 2014 family reunion was the posthumous presentation of the Golden Arrowhead National Award of Guyana to the late Robert A. Pinkerton, Founder and Principal of Cambridge Academy.

There is no empirical evidence that supports whether or not Mr. Pinkerton is the only Guyanese high school Principal to ever receive this high honor; but the CAAAI executive board, alumni members, and this writer opine that the Golden Arrowhead award is a prestigious national symbol in recognition of his life-long devotion to education excellence and human piety. The national award, along with two other proclamations was ceremonially presented by Ms. Patricia Jordan-Langford, President of the Guyana Tristate Alliance, and Ms. Lorna Welshman-Nebbett, CAAAI Liaison Officer, to the association's CEO Dr. Desiree DeFlorimonte, and President Dr. Aubrey F. Bentham who accepted them on behalf of the Pinkerton family.

Both formal ceremony and gala celebration were the two-pronged objective of the CAAAI leadership, and we are grateful for the support received from our members, sponsors, supporters, and patrons, with special recognition to the Embassy of Guyana, The Guyana Tri-State Alliance, and the GCA Online Magazine.

# THE REUNION WITH A QUINTESSENTIAL DIFFERENCE



2014 GCA AWARDS: CELEBRATING OUTSTANDING GUYANESE

# THE FIFTEENTH ANNUAL GCA AWARDS CEREMONY

*Juliet Emanuel*



On Wednesday, August 27th, 2014, beginning promptly at 6:00 p.m. at Borough Hall, 209 Joralemon St., Brooklyn, NY 11209, at the corner of Joralemon and Streets, will be the venue for the Annual Awards Ceremony.

This celebration will be held under the kind patronage of Brooklyn Borough President, Hon. Eric L. Adams.

The event, a production of Guyana Cultural Association of New York, Inc., is one through which the creativity, cultural acumen and commitment to the promotion of exploration and expression of the cultural modes of the people of Guyana by those who may not have been given sufficient public applause by the community are acknowledged.

Some of the honorees are household names; others are not. **It is through the Awards Ceremony that we, Guyanese, honor the achievements of our own practitioners. We place on their brows our own laurels of recognition.**

The selection process, honed over fifteen years of practice, is a serious and stringent one. Indeed, because, given our colonial history, considerations are affected somewhat by age and time, GCA digs into the midst of our community to bring forward the practitioners who are shocked sometimes to find themselves acknowledged for years of unsung service and for doing what they love to do within their own small communities.

It is not gilding the lily to repeat that from the inception the Awards decisions have been dictated by a strict and transparent process. Nominations, when received, are subjected to adherence to the clear and precise proto-

cols established and developed over more than fifteen years of practice by GCA. Members of the 2014 Awards Committee, a diligent and active core group, include Ms. Gail Nunes, Mrs. Allison Skeete, Mr. Chuck Mohan, Mr. Alex Neptune, Mr. Edgar Henry, Mrs. Claire Patterson Monah and Ms. Pat Jordan Langford. In his instructions to the team of judges, Chair of the Awards Committee, Mr. Ronald Lammy, wrote: The emphasis for the Awards in 2014 is on identifying and celebrating individuals and organizations whose initiatives and efforts were inspired by Guyana's rich multiethnic heritage. We acknowledge their contributions to the improvement of inter-ethnic dialogue and feelings of trust in Guyanese society at home and in the diaspora.

## FIRST GODFREY CHIN PRIZE FOR HERITAGE JOURNALISM

Also, as it continues to maintain its mission and vision, GCA is awarding its first Godfrey Chin Prize for Heritage Journalism this year. This is an exciting new component in the Awards Ceremony. This Chin Family advocated honor is being determined by an independent committee dedicated to the Chin Prize. Chaired by Dr. Vibert Cambridge, the team consists of Dr Dawn Forde; Ms. Ave Brewster Haynes; Ms. Jocelyn Josiah; Dr. Lear Matthews; Mr. Wayne McWatt, Dr. Gillian Greaves-Richards and Ms. Jacqueline Smartt.

A reception, courtesy of food and drink representatives in the Guyanese diaspora, follows the distribution of the awards.

Full details on all aspects of the Award Ceremony will be available in the Award Ceremony Commemorative Journal which will be distributed at the event. The names of those who have been honored by GCA in previous years are listed on its website. The website is updated after each event.

Please call the GCA Secretariat, at 718 209 5207, for information regarding accommodation. Seating is limited. Invitations are required. The usual public security methods are enforced at Brooklyn Borough Hall.

***Do join GCA as we honor our own on Wednesday, August 27th from 6:00 p.m. The proceedings close at 9:00 p.m.***

REUNION SEASON 2014

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BHS ALUMNI ASSOCIATION 2014 REUNION

# Sports Day-Olympic style

Vibert C. Cambridge, Ph.D.



The BHS 2014 Reunion held in New York between July 22 and July 27 was rich and wonderful. The energy was positive. The 2014 reunion demonstrated the strength of an organizational model that brings together diaspora and homeland in rich and positive moments of community bonding. There were many moments for reflection, updating, and looking forward during the reunion. The Sports Day held on the lawns of the Hyatt Regency in Hauppauge, Long Island, New York brought together generations of alumni and friends in healthy camaraderie.



*The day started with a march past by all of the "houses." The jubilation evident in the faces of the contingent from Baskett House was emblematic of the pride exuded by contingents from the other houses—Allen, Dewar, Vyfhuis, and Wearn.*



*The events of the day—the sprints, the walking races, lime and spoon, sack races, tug-o-war, and the hula hoop competition took place in a nicely decorated backdrop of trees festooned with the colors of the houses and a live soundtrack provided by DJ Flex.*

**REUNION SEASON 2014: BHS AA 11TH INTERNATIONAL REUNION**



## REUNION SEASON 2014: BHS AA 11TH INTERNATIONAL REUNION

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Competition was keen and friendly.



The Sports Day was an enjoyable moment. It was a definitive example of what reunions do—offer “that rare and unique opportunity to physically and emotionally revisit and reconnect with your alma mater and friends.”



REUNION SEASON 2014: BHS AA 11TH INTERNATIONAL REUNION

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It was a wonderful day. Everyone was a winner. The BHS 2014 reunion demonstrated organizational competence and showcased that legacy that told the story why there is something special about the BHS experience.

The Sports Day was just one event in a tasteful and memorable program. The cultural components evident in the Welcome reception and the Cultural Evening deserve separate exploration. For me, the 2014 cultural evening was a milestone in Guyanese performing arts.

Congratulations to the organizers of the BHS 2014 Reunion.

*All photographs © Vibert C. Cambridge*

# GCA SUMMER HERITAGE WORKSHOP CONTINUES

*"When Music Master Edgar Henry announced on the last day of the Performing Arts series to the students that instructor Uncle Francis Quamina-Farrier was leaving for Maryland, he was mobbed by the children some ending up on the floor, as Director for the week Pat Jordan-Langford looks on in awe."*



Photograph by Verna Walcott-White

Guyana Cultural Association of New York Inc. on-line Magazine



## **GCA SUMMER HERITAGE WORKSHOP:**

**Ongoing July and August, 2014**

*Juliet Emanuel*

The work of GCA is never stagnant.

A good example of this renewal and re-energization is seen this year in the Caribbean Heritage Summer Workshop Series/Arts in the Community.

Conducted this year at St. Stephen's Lutheran Church, 2806 Newkirk Ave Brooklyn, NY, the young participants engaged in the GCA produced curriculum that has been approved by the Department of Youth and Children Services after a vigorous review easily passed.

Therefore, from July 7th enthusiastic workers have been guiding the children from ages five through twelve in well organized sessions. The children have enjoyed music in theory and practice - drumming, steelpan, piano; song - gospel, traditional folk; dance, kite-making; cooking demonstrations; the performing arts with the art of telling the story, art and literacy practice. With the notion of self worth embedded in each session, reflection on each activity is easily entered into by the young participants who

expect joy and excellence as the weeks have progressed. In other words, they want to show you what they have done and how proud they are to have done so.

At this the mid-point of the Workshop Series, Directors, Instructors and Medical Personnel have included Edgar Henry, Penny Bascom, Pat Jordan Langford, Keith Proctor, Hilton Hemerding, Rudy Bishop, Francis Quamina Farrier, Verna Walcott White, Rose October Edun, Donna Mitchell, Roy Brummell, Claudette Howell, Claire Patterson Monah, Winston "Jeggae" Hoppie, Moses Telford, Doris Harper Wills and the several members of the Board of GCA.

Added to this rota are the interns to the program, Kaylah Connelly, Chaniece Allen, Lian Aris Henry and Tiffany Herod.

Sponsored by NYC Council Members, Jumaane Williams and Mathieu Eugene, with strong support from The New York Chapter of Tutorial High School Alumni and other groups, this series is truly a community event.

The children would like to show you what they have done. Why don't you drop by on Thursday, August 14th, the last day for the series, and enjoy the fruits of their season.

For further information please call the Secretariat at 718 209-5207



**Arts  
in the Community**

Good Nite Aye,  
good nite oh,  
Awe come cum  
tell yuh,  
**Good Nite**  
**aye**

Woman lie down and  
de man caan function,  
Wah kinda man, is dat, is dat;  
Tek yuh calabash, wash yuh bembe,  
Na me shame,  
a yuh Mama shame.

## Come to my Kwe Kwe!

A UNIQUELY AFRICAN  
GUYANESE PRE-WEDDING  
TRADITION:

an evening of singing, dancing,  
eating and drinking.

An opportunity for the  
two families to  
get to know  
each other and  
traditionally to provide  
instructional and  
psychological  
preparation  
to the bride and  
groom for  
married life.



2014 FOLK FESTIVAL SEASON: KWE KWE NITE!

## Kwe Kwe Nite!

Rose October-Edun

This year, Kwe Kwe embraces GuyFolkFest's theme: "We Bridgin'. This simply means that we plan showing how gaps are filled and connections are made when we indulge in bringing Kwe Kwe to the public on Labor Day Friday, August 29 at 8PM. These connections to be made include tracing its roots, and showing how various cultures share the similarity of Kwe Kwe, such as Maticore and Dig Dutty.

In the Guyanese culture, Kwe Kwe is known to be one of the celebrations before an Afro-centric wedding when general schooling of the bride and groom-to-be by the village elder(s) takes place. During this celebration, many aspects of marital relationships are addressed in preparation for a marriage that is expected to last. Kwe Kwe uses singing of songs to tell the story, along with the traditional three-step dance movement. It is to be noted that traditionally, drums are not used for Kwe Kwe, but the addition of drums for GuyFolkFest's Kwe Kwe encourages our participating audience to join in the swing of things to learn the songs and dance movement.

At our Kwe Kwe, usually there is a real couple about to be soon married. In event there is none, our participating audience members volunteer to make believe they are a bride and groom-to-be, adding so much fun to this annual celebration. We encourage everyone to dress comfortably: women with wide skirts/dresses and flat shoes, and men with pants that allow for freedom of movement. This event is a participatory one. The audience comes prepared to get involved, and be a part of the core Kwe Kwe Ensemble with Jeggae, Akoyaw, Hilton, Verna and Rose. As always there will be food and drink for sale. Children under fourteen years of age are not encouraged to attend, for the most part.

**See you at St. Stephen's Lutheran Church Auditorium, 2806 Newkirk Avenue and E28 Street, Brooklyn, NY 11226.**

Let's add this year's to the other enjoyable Kwe Kwe celebrations.

NO CHILDREN UNDER 14 YEARS OLD ALLOWED. TASTY CREOLE CUSINE ON SALE



# Cecil Carl Cunha, M.S.

*Major General (retd) Joseph G Singh, MSS*

Born on June 25, 1914, Cecil Carl Cunha, M.S. transitioned last Friday, five days before his 100th birthday. Exactly 10 years ago (June 2004), I published a book titled: The Mataruki Trail, which is a record of the work of the Boundary Commission that established the Tri-Junction Point at the head of the east Kutari River, which the joint survey team of the British, Brazilians and Dutch in 1937, verified through detailed on the ground surveys, was the source of the Corentyne River – the border with Suriname.

In my research for the book, using the notes of the diaries compiled by Major Arthur Hudson of the Royal Engineers, I came across a photograph of the young communications officer, Cecil Cunha, a wireless telegraphist attached to the Boundary Commission from 1935 to 1938. The photograph of young Cecil, 21 years old, was taken in 1935 outside of the British Boundary Commission Camp at Camp Oronoque in the New River. He was dressed in his field khaki outfit, short pants and long socks, kneeling on one knee with his left hand on his wireless set.

I included it in the book at 'page 106'. Any visitor to Cecil's residence at 114 Akawini Street, Campbellville, from 2004 to his passing last Friday, must have been shown that book and the photograph and listened spell-bound to Cecil's experiences with the Boundary Commission. He was one of three dedicated wireless operators attached to the Boundary Commission and his colleagues were Messrs Rego and Westmaas.

Time will not permit a lengthy discourse of his career and exploits but for those of my generation who have had the good fortune of knowing Cecil and feel honored for being numbered among his friends, he was a mentor for many of us in uniform. He was a pioneer in the field of telecommunications - having joined the Central Telegraph Office at the McInroy Building located on the site of what became the Guyana National Co-operative Bank, as an apprentice aged 15 in 1929. For 14 months of his apprenticeship, he learnt land-line telegraphy by rote and drew neither pay nor stipend - the global economy being a victim of the Wall St slump.

Mc Inroy Building, as described by Cecil, had on its ground floor the battery shop which was heavily concreted and secured with iron gates (Cecil opined that this facility may have been configured for use during



slavery). The floor above that was the mechanic shop and stores, run by Pat Holder's father, Carl Holder. Above that was the Central Telegraph Office.

On completion of his apprenticeship, he commenced working as a land-line telegraphist at the princely sum of \$4 per month. At that time, the coastal communications system from Charity to Skeldon – a distance of 200 miles, was based on land-line telegraphy, utilizing a magneto, hand-cranked system. After spending 4 years at the McInroy Building, he had a short stint as Assistant Supervisor (earning a monthly salary of \$9) at the 100-line telephone exchange, located in a concrete building (now seen as a concrete and wooden building) directly north of the Alberttown Police Station. Cecil had such a prodigious memory that he remembered the number for the then Funeral Home - Bastiani Stables, as #225.

In 1934, at age 20, he was sent as one of five local operators, to the Admiralty Coastal Wireless Station – Call Sign VRY, at Pln Thomas (Thomas Lands), now the location of GT&T's Training School.

Here using valve transmitters and 3 x 100 ft masts, ship to shore communications were maintained as a matter of policy by the British Government to ensure security, safety, and search and rescue relating to ships and crews. Cecil recalled one night in 1934, while working the 8p.m. to 2a.m. shift, his Wireless Station VRY received a Morse code transmission from the Wireless Station in Paramaribo, Suriname. It commenced with greetings to the Governor and then indicated that a German Zeppelin Airship was going to be overhead Georgetown at that particular time.

## A TRIBUTE IN MEMORY OF:



# Cecil Cunha

Ltd ( now Cable & Wireless), was handed over the responsibility for the Admiralty Coastal Wireless Station at Thomas Lands and the five local operators were given the choice of either joining the new entity or remaining with government. Cecil chose to remain with government and was then assigned to the Garraway Stream Wireless Telegraph Station in the Potaro.

McInroy Building's Central Telegraph Office networked with six Wireless Telegraph Stations located at Mabaruma, Bartica, Kamarang, Lethem, Mckenzie (now Linden) and Garraway Stream. Ron Robinson's father had set up and was in charge of the Garraway Stream Telegraph station. Cecil took over from him after leaving the Admiralty Station. His hinterland service had commenced.

The British Guiana – Brazil Boundary Commission, which was set up to do a detailed survey and demarcation of the British Guiana – Brazil boundary, had started work from Mount Roraima in 1934, setting up on its summit the Tri Junction Point with Venezuela, and then continued its work up to the Onoro River in the upper Essequibo, until Beri Beri took its toll on the local leadership (Cheong -who died and was buried on the right bank of the Kassikaityu River, and Bradford, Lord, and De Freitas who all became ill and had to be medically evacuated overland since there were no aircraft operating in British Guiana). The Commission's work recommenced in 1935 and the British contingent was led by the Army's Royal Engineers.

The tasks were to establish the British Guiana, Suriname and Brazil boundaries' 'Tri Junction Point' on the Corentyne River; and, to complete the demarcation of the boundary between British Guiana and Brazil, westwards to the area above the Onoro River in the upper Essequibo, where the earlier survey had been aborted. Wireless telegraphists were required and so

Cecil went outside of the Station and was just in time to see the disappearing lights of the Zeppelin. He later surmised it was on a German reconnaissance mission, in anticipation of the Second World War.

In 1934, Imperial International Communications

Cecil was assigned to the British Boundary Commission 1935 and remained there until 1938.

On completion of his stint in the hinterland he returned to Georgetown and was then assigned to the Wireless Telegraph Station at McKenzie. From McKenzie, bauxite ships transported ore overseas to be processed into alumina. It was at the McKenzie Station that Cecil heard the announcement by Winston Churchill on September 03, 1939, of the Declaration of War against Germany.

On the outbreak of the War, the importance of the bauxite ore as a strategic commodity, made the bauxite vessels especially vulnerable to German 'U' boat attacks off the coast en route to Chagaramas in Trinidad. Because of this threat, wireless transmissions relating to the movement of bauxite vessels, were encoded to ensure that such messages would not reveal information of use to the enemy. Cecil had to place on each encoded telegram, a verification stamp endorsed with his signature. He remained at McKenzie throughout the 1939-1945 War and in 1949, went back to Central Telegraph Office, McInroy Building as an Inspector of the Telegraph Services. He remained there until the system was automated and in 1966, he was appointed Superintendent of Radio Communications.

He informed me of a letter (not yet located) received after Guyana's Independence in 1966, by then General Manager Lambert Philadelphia. The letter originated from the International Telecommunications Coordinating Agency in Geneva, which had oversight of the global use of the Spectrum. The letter notified that Call Signs issued while the colony was under British jurisdiction, would be replaced now that Guyana was an Independent State, by new call signs 8R-A to 8R-Z. Cecil recalled that Call Sign 8R-A was allocated to Telecommunications; 8R-B to Cable & Wireless; and 8R-C to the Civil Aviation Department.

Cecil Retired in 1974 - aged 60 and, as he said: "a pension is not a salary", so he had to find other sources of employment. I am certain you will hear from other Tributes and the Eulogy, of how he became involved in politics, and of his assignments with the City Council, the Telecoms Credit Union, the Pensions Association, the YMCA, the Legion, etc.

Cecil was a Founder Member of the Guyana Heritage Society - of which I have the honour to be the Patron. His, was an assumed presence at all of our meetings and he never felt he was properly dressed unless he wore his medals – the Independence Medal and the Medal of Service. He wore these, and later the Legion Medal, with pride and dignity. On such occasions also, he never failed to entertain us with his Harmonica.



COMEDIAN  
**HABEEB  
KHAN**

2006 GCA AWARD HONOREE,  
FOUNDER OF THE 4 Bs,  
PERFORMED WITH  
THE MIGHTY SPARROW, BOB MARLEY,  
BEN E. KING, PERCY SLEDGE AND  
COUNT BASIE

## A TRIBUTE

# REMEMBERING HABEEB KHAN COMEDIAN, ACTOR

*Article by the late Angela Osborne, published in Stabroek News on March 28, 2004*

**S**tar of If Wishes Were Horses and comedian extraordinaire, Habeeb Khan nevertheless insists that he's a simple man who leads a simple life.

Interviewed by Sunday Stabrook at his Friendship, East Bank Demerara home, Khan said, *"I live a simple life; on stage I am a comedian but off stage I just want to be me, a Guyanese. I am the product of a slave and an immigrant and I am very proud of my heritage. As we say in Creolese, 'Me ain't kay who black, who white, who pink, a nothing, once yuh born in Guyana, you is Guyanese and dat is me."*

He described his home, (the interior walls and all the furnishings are blue, his favourite colour), as a humble little place which he had worked hard for. He lives there with his ninth wife, Doris (he is a Muslim, he said), and their youngest daughter, Felicia. Khan has fourteen children in all, which he puts down to the fact that he is the middle child of seven children. His oldest son, Habeeb Khan, Jr is almost 35-years-old and his youngest is ten.

He said that he would like to have more children, but his wife is not taking the hint. This minor setback aside, he credited all of his achievements to Doris: *"She has been my inspiration and is the most sincere woman I know; when I had nothing she picked me up."*

Khan's parents were Dr Khan, an Indian, and Pauline Geraldine Nurse, an African/European. He said he thought it was an accident his parents had met, but *"of course in those days, love had no colour; it was a rainbow."*

He was a gift from God to them, he explained, and this is what his name meant - along with 'court jester.' His parents were told after their third child that they would never be able to have any more children, but he believed that because of the prayers of his brother, Barakat, he then came along.

The comedian declared himself proud of his Guyanese heritage, and said that based on the stories his parents had told him, he wished that Guyana could be the country it was when they were young, or what it was like when he was growing up.

Khan who was born on June 15, 1936 said his career as a comedian began from the moment he started crying after his birth. *"My philosophy in life is that humour is*

*the safety valve of piled-up emotions, and if you could laugh at a situation it can ease it."*

Recalling what steered him in the direction of comedy, Khan said that his childhood days were a bit complicated, and his father was "somewhat dictatorial; it wasn't only that he was a cuss bird, because he liked to see things in the right place and if he came home and found it out of place, he would kick hell."

Khan described how he would find himself imitating his father, and the elder Khan would then look at him and laugh. "One day when I was eight years old, my father was carrying on and I started imitating him, and my father asked me if he behaved liked that, and I said yes, I am exactly you. So he [his father] went on to ask why I was exactly him, and I responded by telling him, 'like father like son.'"

The wrong attitude, he said was the cause of his somewhat rebellious ways towards his parents. "My father had this way about him - of course that was in the colonial days - where he would say, 'Come boy, ah calling yuh.' Well those commands were not for me; you either call me 'son' or 'please come.' So one day, I remember him calling me and said 'Come boy, you went and swim?' and I said yes, that way I wouldn't drown."

Khan grew up in Queenstown, the only "half-black" man living in the area at that time. He went to a Roman Catholic Primary school, and then graduated to St Stanislaus College - though he doubts there are any records of that because he only spent two days there after they discovered he was a Muslim. He finished his education at Central High School. He said that it was after graduation that he discovered how beautiful nature was, because he had to be on his own.

School concerts were the stepping stone for Khan's long career in comedy, and he has not looked back since. He has performed in the Caribbean, Canada and New York, remarking, "I have better waters overseas than in my own country, because my water here is too expensive, I have to pay for it." He said that he can imitate seven languages, and is so good at it that he has managed to convince people that he was a national of several countries - in particular, India.

"Firstly, a lot of my work has been pirated, my tapes and my movie. Secondly, promoters in this country make millions and the performers and artistes are not respected; in most cases they [the performers] have to change in the toilets, and they are not offered any drinks." Khan also feels that young comedians should try to be ambiguous and suggestive, and not come out plainly in four-letter words - "This is not America and people still enjoy wholesome comedy."

# GUYANESE AT HOME ROOTING FOR LISA PUNCH

*Francis Quamiona Farrier*



As the drama of the ABC television reality show, "RISING STAR", continues to grip Guyanese both at home and abroad, I thought to myself, why not share with the fans - especially those abroad - just how popular Lisa Punch is with us down here at Home in Guyana. One of the things which I thought to do, was to take two photographs which expand on the Charlotte Street, block in Georgetown, where Lisa grew up. Millions of viewers of "RISING STAR" all around the world, saw the humble building which Lisa Punch called home for most of her life. What was not shown, were the impressive structures which sandwich her modest home. One of Guyana's greatest female public Figures, Ms Jane Phillips-Gay, who is a relative of Lisa Punch, also lived in that building for many years. After taking the photos, I paid a courtesy call on Mr. Randolph Ezekiel Daniels, the grand-father of Lisa Punch. He told me how proud he is of his grand-daughter, and he feels that "she is capable of doing many things in music." Lisa's proud grandfather said that he wished his grand-daughter all success in her future endeavours. People all around Guyana are rooting for Lisa Punch and wish her well, whether she wins "RISING STAR" out-right or not. There is a large banner on the fence of the Palm Court Restaurant and Bar on Main Street in downtown Georgetown. It reads, "We support our own Lisa Punch. "SHE'S ALREADY A STAR WITH A KNOCKOUT PUNCH". Watch ABC's RISING STAR every Sunday at Palm Court from 9.00 p.m." And as the "RISING STAR" competition continues, Lisa Punch is the Talk of the Town; not only in Georgetown, Guyana, but in many towns and cities all around the world.

THIS SUMMER  
THERE WILL BE  
**ONE**  
RISING  
**STAR**  
**support**  
*Lisa Punch*

**VOTE FOR BHS ALUMNA LISA PUNCH**

*Download the "Rising Star Abc" app through the apple app store,  
Windows Market Place, or the Google Play store.*

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN OUR COMMUNITY

# SAVE THE DATE

**SATURDAY, AUGUST 30, 2014**  
**10 a.m.- 6 p.m.**

**Fort Valley State University Wildcat Stadium**

\*FOOD

\*FAMILY  
FUN

\*MUSIC

\*VENDORS

\*HEALTH  
SCREENINGS

\*SPORTS

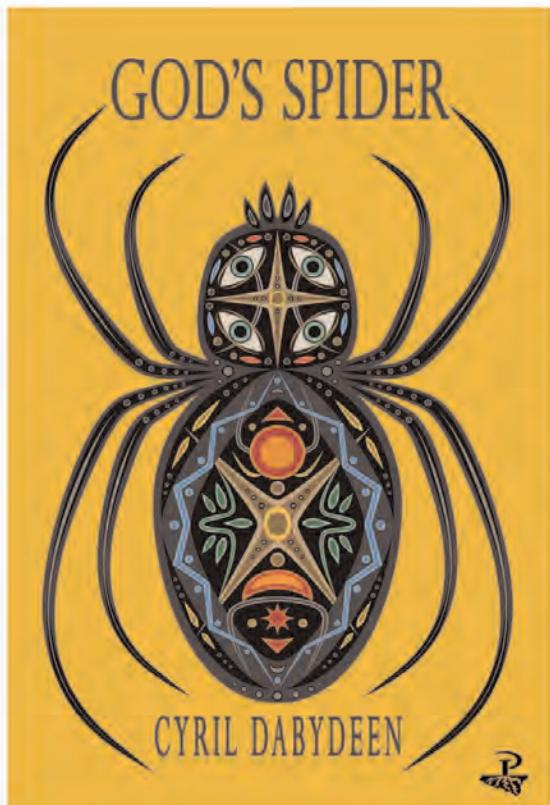


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# GOD'S SPIDER

CYRIL DABYDEEN



Place frequently provides the metaphorical threads that run through this collection. Poems are drawn to hinterlands and interiors both as actual places and as mental landscapes and as a metaphor for the interior life of the poem. Poems investigate journeyings and borders that connect to the adventure of engaging with the otherness of encountered people. Poems celebrate identities that can never be other than as multi-layered as the places that shaped them.

Cyril Dabydeen writes with lyric grace, but perhaps his most characteristic voice is conversational, often witty and amused in its sharing of experiences as diverse as the incidents of travel, cricket, and the absurd pretensions of the literary world. In these conversations with the reader, the poems make enlightening connections between ancient Greece and Amerindian myth in Guyana; the present and the buried voices of the past.



Cyril Dabydeen's work has appeared in over 70 literary magazines and anthologies. A former Poet Laureate of Ottawa, his books include *Imaginary Origins: New and Selected Poems* (Peepal Tree Press) and *Drums of My Flesh* (2007), which was nominated for the IMPAC/Dublin Literary Prize. He has taught writing at the University of Ottawa, Canada for many years.



Supported using public funding by  
**ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND**



PEEPAL TREE

Out November 2014  
£8.99 / \$19.95  
ISBN: 9781845232443  
112pp.

Peepal Tree Press, 17 King's Avenue, Leeds LS6 1QS, United Kingdom  
[orders@peepaltreepress.com](mailto:orders@peepaltreepress.com) / +44 (0) 113 245 1703  
 Online bookstore & website at [www.peepaltreepress.com](http://www.peepaltreepress.com)