



## Interaction with First and Second Form Students

By Jeune Persaud Meredith

The morning of Friday, July 4, 2014 saw continuous heavy showers of rain which resulted in flooding in several sections of Georgetown. Dark clouds lingered long after the rain had ceased.

In contrast to the cold, daunting atmosphere of the streets, the warmth we felt on entering the school was uplifting. Members of staff and students were friendly, welcoming us with bright smiles and wishes for "a good morning." Joy O'Jon, Holly Morgan, Yvonne Harewood-Benn, Geraldine Halls and I were encouraged by their courtesy.

After being introduced by a senior member of staff, we invited the group of about 35 students to pose questions. We soon found that the students were eager to learn about The Bishops' High School in the 1950s and 1960s.

The first question was whether any significant modifications were done to the school building over the years. The only one we could think of was the construction of the classroom above the Home Economics Department.

The students found this surprising. They then enquired about the presence of the huge silk-cotton tree on the western side of the school. They were amazed to learn that it was already a full grown tree in the 1950s.

Many of the students did not know that BHS was initially an all-girls school. They were also unaware that the school had had two levels below the first form. To gain admission to them, students were required to write an entrance examination at the age of nine years.

Next came a request for a description of the school uniform in the past. The students were informed that the uniform entailed a deep V-necked top attached to a gathered skirt made of green fabric worn over a white shirt. They learnt too that the skirt had to be below the knee and a belt made of the same fabric was worn. The uniform was not complete without the school tie and a hat with a band. When students arrived at school, they placed their hats flat on assigned spots on the racks in the cloakrooms and regular hat inspections were conducted by the teachers.

The students were fascinated to learn that back then Latin was one of the subjects taught and that students sat on the floor of the Oswald Parry Hall for assembly. They expressed surprise on hearing that the students played netball and lawn tennis on the school grounds.

More surprises were in store for the students. These included the facts that:

- Students who resided in Berbice travelled to Georgetown by ferry and train on Monday mornings, remained in Georgetown during the week and returned home on Friday afternoons.
- Students who lived on the West Coast of Demerara travelled to school by train and ferry.
- The majority of students resided in Georgetown and rode bicycles which they parked in the iron racks below the Hall. Some of the students were unaware of the purpose of the racks that are still there.

Many students, particularly the girls, stated that they were not adequately prepared in Grade Six for the transition to secondary school. The boys expressed dissatisfaction with washroom facilities. The boys would like equipment and facilities to play a real game of football. The girls are interested in playing cricket and basketball, as well as more opportunities to play outdoor games.

The students would like to hear more of the achievements of alumni, as they believe that such stories would help to motivate them to realize their potential.



## **Have a Laugh!**

### **DEATH**

"Do you believe in life after death?" the boss asked one of his employees.

"Yes, sir," the new employee replied.

"Well, then, that makes everything just fine," the boss went on. "After you left early yesterday to go to your grandmother's funeral, she stopped in to see you!"

### **PALM SUNDAY**

It was Palm Sunday and, because of a sore throat, 5-year-old Johnny stayed home from church with a sitter. When the family returned home, they were carrying several palm branches. The boy asked what they were for. "People held them over Jesus' head as he walked by."

"Wouldn't you know it," the boy fumed, "the one Sunday I don't go, he shows up!"

### **CHILDREN'S SERMON**

One Easter Sunday morning as the minister was preaching the children's sermon, he reached into his bag of props and pulled out an egg. He pointed at the egg and asked the children, "What's IN HERE?" "I know!" a little boy exclaimed.

"Pantyhose!!"

### **SUPPORT A FAMILY**

The prospective father-in-law asked, "Young man, can you support a family?" The surprised groom-to-be replied, "Well, no. I was just planning to support your daughter. The rest of you will have to fend for yourselves."

### **FIRST TIME USHERS**

A little boy in church for the first time watched as the ushers passed around the offering plates. When they came near his pew, the boy said loudly, "Don't pay for me daddy. I'm under five."

### **CLIMB THE WALLS**

"Oh, I sure am happy to see you," the little boy said to his grandmother on his mother's side. "Now maybe daddy will do the trick he has been promising us."

The grandmother was curious. "What trick is that?" she asked.

"I heard him tell mommy that he would climb the walls if you came to visit," the little boy answered.

## **Getting Older**

As I was lying around, pondering the problems of the world, I realized that at my age I don't really give a hoot anymore.

.. If walking is good for your health, the postman would be immortal.

.. A whale swims all day, only eats fish, drinks water, but is still fat.

.. A rabbit runs and hops and only lives 15 years, while

.. A tortoise doesn't run and does mostly nothing, yet it lives for 150 years.

And you tell me to exercise?? I don't think so.

Just grant me the senility to forget the people I never liked, the good fortune to remember the ones I do, and the eyesight to tell the difference.

### **Exercise Block for Seniors - Don't Overdo It!**



## Meet the Seniors

### Holly Morgan: 1946-54

Holly Morgan began her education at Moravian Primary School. She moved to Christ Church Primary before entering the Bishops' High School. A member of Mary House, Holly remembers the activities organized to celebrate House Days, including decoration of the school in House colours and the House parties. For Holly, the opportunity to socialize with classmates and friends after school was significant. She recalls riding on the seawall, visiting friends' homes and meeting their parents as important to her development.

School without some pranks would be dull, not only for Holly but also her peers. While in 5<sup>th</sup> Form, Holly bought herself a mouth organ and took it to school. One day, while perched on a desk and blowing a tune, Mrs. Allen, the Headmistress, appeared at the door. She quietly said to Holly, "My dear girl, don't you know what's fitting?" No other words were needed! While in 6<sup>th</sup> Form, Holly joined classmates to sneak out of the back gate for a foray to Bookers. There they met a teacher. Fortunately for them, no reprimand was given as the teacher herself had broken the rules.

Holly's classmates included Eileen Griffith Robinson, Janet Wong, Maureen Hansfied, Jean Thomas Small, Aisha Sankar and Joy Harewood Pilgrim. She was a Girl Guide and Ranger which afforded her the opportunity to see different parts of the country. She remembers camping during Easter at Madewini which was cold in the morning and also at Leguan, Suddie and Den Amstel. She recalled that at one camp, someone started a church service at 3 a.m., opening with the School Hymn. The fun-loving girls readily joined in, much to the chagrin of Gwen Parris.

Upon leaving BHS, Holly worked at the Treasury for six months. There she joined other alumni such as Shirley Wong and Audrey Knight. Her job entailed sorting and categorizing withdrawn currency notes, a rather dirty job.

Holly was awarded a Guyana Exhibition Scholarship which allowed her to attend the University College of the West Indies (UCWI) where she majored in French and Spanish. During her tenure, she spent one term in Haiti. There, she was struck by the fact that Haitian women wore natural hair which they styled elaborately as well as fantastic head wraps.

For one year after graduation, Holly taught at Berbice High School. She was surprised that many of the students had only one name. Not one to be satisfied with a humdrum existence, she encouraged the staff to swim in the canal and go on picnics. While in Berbice, Holly lived with her aunt who worked at the Mental Hospital.

In search of adventure, Holly moved to France to teach English conversation spending one year in the southern part of the country and one in the north. She was struck by the approach of the teachers who focused only on teaching. She noted that students were employed as monitors to maintain discipline while some were given the responsibility of marking assignments.



Next came a 5-year spell at St. Rose's High School teaching French and Spanish. Working with nuns was a great experience, especially the Headteacher, Mother Teresita, from whom she learnt much including how to deal with people.

Off again she went to Europe, this time to Madrid, Spain. Armed with enthusiasm and confidence, Holly scoured the newspapers for a position, landing a job as Senorita Ninos (governess) to a boy. She spent one year teaching him in French while learning about the city's folklore and customs.

On her return to Guyana, Holly taught at Charlestown Government School for five years and was in charge of the Secondary Department of the school in St. Ignatius for the next five years. She bought a mini-moke with which she traversed the Rupununi. She recalls travelling from St. Ignatius to Aishalton in one day as well as the hairy experience of heading to Moco Moco and back while the road was flooded.

After a visit to her brother in Matthews Ridge, Holly acquired an acre or two of land at Yarakita and became a peanut farmer. When that exercise became too tedious (10 years later), she spent one year assisting her sister to take care of her nephew.

Holly's colourful life took a new direction when she became Housemother at President's College. For three years, she tried to preempt the students' escapades, doing the rounds before she going to bed. With her skills in French, she was next enlisted to teach the subject, an appointment which lasted for 10 years.

Holly is one of four sisters who attended BHS. The others are Desiree Hutchinson, Fay Sobryan and Aileen Thomasson. Her niece, Kathryn Eytle McLean is also an alumna.



## Myrtle Bobb née Pollard

Myrtle Bobb née Pollard was born in January 1917 to Marjorie and Frederick Pollard, founder of the F. E. Pollard School in Kitty, Georgetown, Guyana. Myrtle graduated from The Bishops' High School for Girls in 1936. She then began her career as a sixth-standard teacher at Christ Church Anglican School. She later taught at the Carnegie Trade School for Women and Kingston Methodist School. She instructed students in reading and home economics.

Myrtle married the Rev. Dr. Douglas C. J. Bobb (deceased). Rev. Bobb briefly pastored in St. Vincent where the couple started a secondary school in Chateaubelair. After returning to Guyana, Rev. Bobb pastored several churches in Guyana, including Mahaica Methodist Church. In the fertile country village, the couple founded a private secondary school, St. Mary's Institute, and helped the villagers start a business raising pigs cooperatively.

Myrtle managed her growing family, but was always willing to serve others--teaching, offering first aid and playing music. She later served with her husband at Susamachar Methodist Church and Bedford Methodist Church. Myrtle was a quiet supporter of her husband, who was not only involved in the ministry and education, but also served as a member of the Legislative Council of British Guiana.

The family had grown to seven children when, in 1964, the Bobbs moved to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. There, Myrtle served as pastor's wife at Memorial Hall Methodist Church, an urban mission in North Philadelphia, and Trinity United Methodist Church in Germantown where the couple pioneered a Head Start program. Later, they ministered at Sanctuary United Methodist Church in North Philadelphia. Myrtle helped with many aspects of ministry including Sunday School, Vacation Bible School, summer camp, children's ministry, drama, singing, playing piano and even teaching English country dances to the children.

Myrtle valued education. With four daughters, she attended the newly opened Community College of Philadelphia. She and daughter, Hyacinth, graduated in the first Community College class of 1967. Later, she earned a BA in Romance Languages and an MA in Psychology of Reading from Temple University. She began teaching reading at Ferguson Elementary School. She spent the majority of her career in Philadelphia at Stoddart Fleisher Junior High School. Even after retirement, she often helped adults improve their reading literacy.

Myrtle loves the Lord and spends her time in God's service primarily at New Covenant Church of Philadelphia, founded by her son-in-law, Bishop Milton Grannum and daughter, Pastor Hyacinth Bobb Grannum. She still blesses thousands with her wit and wisdom, her sunny smile, her prayers and spontaneous praise dancing.

Her children--Pastor Hyacinth Bobb Grannum and Bishop Milton Grannum, Rev. Daphne Bobb, Avril Moody, Hilary and Jay Selman, Douglas and Lidia Bobb, and Joy Bobb—thank God for her 97 years. One daughter, Pastor Myrtle Asala Bobb, is deceased. Myrtle Bobb takes great joy in her ten grandchildren, their spouses and her four great-grandchildren.

Four of Myrtle's daughters, Hyacinth, Daphne, Avril and Hilary as well as her sister, Marjorie Spencer née Pollard also attended BHS.

