



# BHSOSA *Express*

Registered No. 738 Burial and Friendly Societies Act Chapter 36:04  
P.O. Box 101796, Georgetown, Guyana E-mail bhsosa@gmail.com www.bhsosa.org.gy

VOLUME 1, NUMBER 4

DECEMBER 2007

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

President's Message	1
Rolling Out the Mentoring Programme	2
In the Forefront of Medical Research	3
Profile: Sarah Parris	4
Christmas 2007	5
BHS Choir Shines	6
A New Dimension	7
Debating Team Places First in National Competition	7
Condolences	8
Retrospective	8
Reunion 2008 Update	8
Presidents of BHSOSA Chapters	8

## President's Message

**WHATSOEVER THY HAND FINDETH TO DO, DO IT WITH THY MIGHT... *Ecclesiastes 9:10***

As President of the Association for the year 2007-2008, it is my pleasure to provide a BRIEF message as well as to invite you to enjoy reading this issue of the newsletter.

The premiere activity of the Association for this year is expected to be the 9th International Reunion of the alumni of BHS which takes place in Toronto, Canada from Tuesday, August 5, for which an action-packed programme has been planned. We look forward to Guyana's participation in the Cultural Evening on August 8 where our steelband will be featured. The Reunion ends with a Commemoration Service and Farewell Reception on Sunday, August 10. It should be noted that the dates of the Reunion have been chosen to coincide with CARIBANA which ends with a Last Lap Lime on Monday, August 4. It means that you can get **two events** for the cost of one airline ticket.

Other activities planned for this year include the continuation of several projects. These are the refurbishing of the science labs at BHS; the mentorship initiative (for which members who are willing to volunteer their services are greatly needed); the updating of the student record system; the repair and repainting of the perimeter fence; and the computer classes for alumni who are considered (or who consider themselves) to be senior citizens.

Our usual fund-raising activities, the Games Day on April 26, the Take-Away lunch on CARICOM Sunday, July 6 and the Fitness Walk are all activities that will require the support of each member of the Association.

We look forward to a happy and productive year and to seeing many of you at Reunion.

**TERRY STUART**  
President  
BHSOSA (2007-2008)



### The Bishops' High School

#### Executive Committee

##### President

Terry Stuart  
Email: coordbhs@yahoo.com  
Tel: 222-3006 (H)  
621-8018, 629-0373 (C)

##### Vice President

Hazel Friday-Burrowes  
Email: hazelfriday@yahoo.com  
Tel: 627-6562 (C)

##### Immediate Past President

Andrea Owen  
Email: amowen@gol.net.gy  
Tel: 623-7600 (C)

##### Secretary

Andrea Bryan  
Email: secretarybhsosa@yahoo.com  
Tel: 614-1414 (C)

##### Treasurer

Dorett Leander  
Email: allileander@yahoo.com  
Tel: 642-1428 (C)

##### Assistant Secretary/Treasurer

Alethea Puranram  
Email: angelsire1skatergal@yahoo.com  
Tel: 642-1130 (C)

##### Committee Members

Gillian Butts-Garnett  
Email: gilliebutts@yahoo.com  
Tel: 646-1907 (C)

Donna Morrison  
Email: donna\_morr@yahoo.com  
Tel: 623-6254 (C)

Doreen Nelson  
Email: dorne14@yahoo.com  
Tel: 225-1735 (H)

Nkasi Nedd  
Email: nkasi.nedd@gmail.com  
Tel: 667-2656 (C)

##### Staff Representative

Malkia Payne  
Email: malkia\_jp@hotmail.com  
Tel: 646-2963 (C)

##### Woodside Representative

Jannice Simmons  
Tel: 226-6236 (H)

# Rolling Out the Mentoring Programme

In 2002, when Maureen Massiah requested BHSOSA to give support to third form students, those of us who met with her had no idea where we were heading. We talked about possible approaches and eventually decided to take a stab at establishing a mentoring programme.

The early discussions led to a pilot project introduced at BHS in 2003, with 34 students being assigned to 33 alumni. The mentors explored relationships with students and their parents/guardians. Some were required to visit the home for inspection before permission was granted for the student to venture out with the mentor. Others served as mentors for the student and parent. Some had much contact with the student while others had little.

What was certain at the end of the pilot phase was that the initiative served a useful purpose for the student, their parents/guardians and mentors alike. Wanting to extend the programme to other students, BHSOSA sought and received funding from UNICEF to expose first form students at BHS as well as those at Tutorial High School to a different support system.

This time around, alumni were in limited supply to serve as mentors. In 2005, 17 mentors were paired with students at BHS and 17 mentors were paired with students at 16 Tutorial High School.

The experience with the programme in both schools convinced us that we were on to something good. We shared the model with officials of the Ministry of Education in July 2007. The response was greater than we had expected. We were asked to share the model with officials in different regions of the country so that students from a sample of schools could benefit from the exposure.

## Sharing the Model in Georgetown

On Thursday, October 18, 2007, representatives of 11 secondary schools and one non-governmental organization gathered at BHS to learn more about the programme. They listened to perspectives of the Headteachers, parents, students and mentors of both schools as well as the Staff Liaison and members of the Management Committee and had the opportunity to give feedback on the model.

The representatives received copies of the booklets for students, parents, mentors and persons interested in establishing and managing a mentoring programme as well as a brochure on the programme.

## A Parent's Perspective

"It is indeed an honour to be invited to share my experiences on the Bishops' High School Mentorship Programme involving my son, Lakanand Singh, who is in third form, and his mentor, Mrs. Jannice Simmons. This relationship ... has blossomed into a very fruitful one over the past two years. My son has benefited tremendously from his mentor. Not only did he benefit academically but he was also able to obtain valuable assistance in other areas of his well-being. For example, recently he was ill and as parents we were very disturbed about his condition, so much that my wife and I discussed it with his mentor. We were so touched and overwhelmed by her concern for his welfare. She took it upon herself to speak with a doctor and to make an appointment for us to see him, which I must say was very successful. Ever since, she has been closely monitoring his condition even though he has recuperated.

The mentor-mentee relationship became so cemented that when my second son joined the BHS in 2006, he too began to benefit from Mrs. Simmons' counselling and guidance.

Meetings with their mentor was by visiting her at home on Saturdays convenient to both parties, visits to our home too, telephone conversations and also by visiting her at her work place.

My sons' mentor has now become a member of our family so much that my youngest son, who is 6 years old, refers to her as his grandmother as does my only daughter who is 10 years old. Last year, we invited Mrs. Simmons to our home to celebrate her birthday.

The programme has been successful for the following reasons:

- There was total commitment from the mentor and us, the parents, to make this relationship work.
- Both parents embraced the concept and I think understood and appreciated benefits that could be derived from the process.
- There was always mutual respect between the mentor, mentee and us, the parents.
- The mentor was very open and always willing to listen to our suggestions and to my son's concerns.
- The mentor was very good in creating a conducive environment for sharing to take place.
- Maintaining discipline and respect for each other is very important in such a relationship, especially as the rela-

tionship develops to an intimate one. At no time should you harbour suspicion about each other.

The one difficulty was that it was not always convenient to meet at a common time and a common place since both parties have commitments. Gladly, we were able to surmount this difficulty.

I think the programme is a very good one since my sons are benefiting from it tremendously. They are always eager and anxious to meet their mentor. Their performance at school has improved. Their ability to communicate and relate with elders has improved. They are becoming more assertive.

I would like to endorse that this mentorship programme be continued and extended to other schools.”

Hemant Indar Singh

### A Student's Perspective

“Ladies and Gentlemen,

I stand here this afternoon elated to enlighten you on the benefits of having a mentor. A mentor is best described as an older person who gives advice and guidance. Having a mentor is an advantage that is priceless, because mentors advise you on life and what to expect when you get into the world as a young adult.

It is like you have a head start in life on your own. A mentor is always there for you to discuss matters that you may not want to discuss with your parents. Some mentors even help their mentees financially.

Before I met my mentor, Mr. Terrence Campbell, I only thought about friends and other stuff that adolescents think about and after meeting him and talking about life and its ups and downs, I decided to be more serious and intense and live life to its fullest to achieve my goals.

The mentorship programme which I am a part of enables me and I am sure the other students who are a part of it too, a lot of advantages and benefits.

My mentor even assisted me with my lesson fees and ensured that I had textbooks and other school needs.

I would encourage other schools to have mentorship programmes to help in the development of their students.”

Chinua Blair

### Next Steps

Schools in Georgetown which are interested in providing mentoring for their students will be assisted in establishing programmes. They will need to identified mentors from among their alumni or other responsible persons in their community.

Discussions will be held with education officials in other regions to determine interest in the programme.

## In the Forefront of Medical Research

Angela Hopkinson has been named a Michigan Infectious Disease International Scholar. While at BHS, Angela secured passes in eight subjects at the Caribbean Secondary Education Certificate examination, with three distinctions among the five Grade 1's and three Grade 2's. Moving on to the University of Guyana, she was awarded an Associate Degree in Medical Technology, demonstrating interest in hematology and medical microbiology, influenced by the elevated incidence of diseases such as HIV, cancer and malaria. She graduated as the Best Medical Technology student.



For the next year, Angela worked at the Georgetown Public Hospital Corporation's microbiology laboratory and realized that she wanted to contribute not only by performing routine medical testing, but in a way that would have a positive impact on society. She entered the bachelors' degree programme in biotechnology at York College of the City University of New York which paved the way for a career in biomedical research. During her studies, Anglea piloted research on tRNA biosynthesis.

Now a poster girl for York College of the City University of New York in the their recruitment drive, Angela was named a 2007 Jonas E. Salk scholar for her research efforts. Apart from the scholarship, she also co-authored two publications which appeared in the Journal of Molecular Biology and RNA. The focus of her PhD research at Michigan includes human papilloma virus/cervical cancer, ulcer-causing helicobacter, toxoplasma and other parasitic pathogens, and HIV.



# Profile: Sarah Parris

Sarah Parris left Bishops' High School in 1983. She is now General Manager and Corporate Secretary of Citizens Bank, and is one of the few women in senior positions in the Banking sector in Guyana.

## Coming to Bishops' High School

I grew up in Friendship (commonly mistakenly referred to as Buxton – the neighbouring village) and Linden. When I wrote Common Entrance, I did not want to go to Bishops'. I wanted to go to Linden Multilateral. I knew Mr. Eddie London, the Headmaster. I used to see the students in their green school uniforms and I had seen things like the gym and other facilities at Linden Multilateral, exciting things which I had read about in books. Bishops' was a far-away place. However, my father convinced me that Bishops' was the better option. There were only two of us in the whole first form from Linden.

## Life at Bishops'

I was very curious about things and I did not allow anything to scare me. I insisted on joining the National Service Cadet Corps, although first formers were not usually enrolled. I had been a member of the Young Brigade in primary school and had found it quite exciting – to me it was pretty much like Guides. I eventually joined the Guides in my fourth/fifth form year. I got involved in everything else – debates, the orchestra, anything there was. I liked to do a variety of things. Ms. Jarvis was the Headmistress when I started BHS and she was larger than life. I still feel that I have to square my

shoulders and ensure that my uniform is straight when I am around her, even though I am older now. I was aware that there were different prejudices, but I did not let them prevent me from enjoying school days. I am the kind of person who would feel comfortable at the Opera or at a passa passa dance and I thrived on being able to enjoy different experiences.

## Remembering Gwen Parris

Gwen Parris, Auntie Gwen, is a woman whom I respected and who was more than just a leader in the Guides. She was very approachable and very non-judgmental. It made it easy for us to interact with her and learn from her. She was a very large influence in my life.

## Making a Career

When I was small, I wanted to be a maid or an air hostess. I was impressed at the way the staff who worked with my family in Linden managed our household and kept things in order. I never really decided on a career path – I was always only sure of the careers that I did not want – Doctor, Lawyer and Teacher. In Sixth Form, I took Mathematics, Physics and Economics. After "A" Levels, I went on a Commonwealth scholarship to the London School of Economics where I did a degree in Management Sciences. On my return, I worked at the State Planning Secretariat as a Systems Analyst. I left State Planning to work as an independent consultant for a short while before joining Citizens Bank, where I worked as the Manager - Information Systems.

I was then recruited by Mazaruni Granite, where I worked in many different roles including IT, Shipping Logistics and Administration and Finance. I was then re-recruited by Citizens Bank to be their Manager - Treasury.

I am also a mother. A mother who also works outside the home has to be able to balance and look after her children while working on her career. I am lucky to have a supportive partner but some gender roles are entrenched!

## Looking Forward

Banking is a challenging career and, more recently, the reporting requirements and the procedures to protect against money laundering have to be monitored. Even at this stage of my life, I do not have a defined career agenda – each day is a new learning experience and my general approach is the one absorbed at Bishops' – "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might...."

by Vidyaratha Kissoon



# Christmas 2007

Scenes from Carol Singing held on December 14, 2007 at the home of Claudette (Derry) Harry. The mix of younger and older alumni added punch to the evening.



Singing and swinging!



Gillian leading the way



A studious lot



We done good, girls!



Presi Terry



Deep breaths

## Seniors' Christmas Cheer

by Elsie Croal

Christmas – a holy festival for Christians, a joyous holiday for us all, a time for giving and receiving gifts. And so, in keeping with this tradition, the Seniors' Committee has over the past few years, organised Christmas Cheer for our Seniors in the form of flowers, gift baskets or wine.

I willingly assisted with the packaging and distribution in 2006 and 2007 and my involvement in this exercise contributed immensely to my enjoyment of the season. I discovered anew that sharing joy with someone multiplies the joy immeasurably. This generation of the Christmas spirit started with those persons who made donations, those who



prepared items, Evelyn Hamilton's staff members who willingly assisted in packaging and ended with those who distributed and those who received the items.

I found that the high point of the effort was the reactions of the seniors – surprise, joy, pleasure, gratitude at being remembered, and disbelief – “for **ME?**” The happy smiles and remarks made my afternoons, as well as theirs, so much brighter.

We know that we are making an impact because of the requests and feedback that we have received, such as “No non-alcoholic wine, the real thing, please!”, and “When will it be my turn to get on this list?”

So : “Forward, forward may we ever go;  
Sharing flow'rs, and wine and cake galore;  
Till at length we all our seniors show,  
That we mean what we sing in our school hymn.  
(With apologies to author, W. Hawley Bryant and all my English teachers)



# BHS Choir Shines

When the Department of Education celebrated Education Month in September 2006, the BHS Choir received public attention. The occasion was the Festival of Choirs held at Queen's College. Music Teacher, Clifton Paul provided the accompaniment while Head of Department - Science, Shelly Ann Harris, was the conductor. Singing Bill Wither's "Lean on Me" and Valerie Rodway's "Hymn for Guyana's Children", the BHS Choir amazed the judges and audience, placing first.

The finals held at the National Cultural Centre saw the BHS Choir becoming the Georgetown Choir. The administration faced a dilemma—the Festival of Carols was held on the same day as the Inter-House Athletics Sports. Thus the issue of "first loyalty" emerged. Was it loyal to House Athletics Team or loyalty to the BHS choir? The issue was resolved amicably. The teachers and members of the choir were granted early departure from sports to rest their voices and be prepared for the next event. The rest joined them at the National Cultural Centre later on.

The choir has made the following public appearances: Ministry of Education National Awards Ceremony, Opening Ceremony for the RIO Summit, Opening Ceremony for the Meeting of the Commonwealth Finance Ministers and the CPCE launch of the Caribbean Centre of Excellence for Teacher Training. (Excerpt from the Headteacher's Report at the Prize Giving Ceremony 2008).

## In the Words of Some Choir Members

"We believe that being in the Bishops' High School Choir has truly been a gratifying experience for us. The opportunities are endless. The exposure is immense. The positive responses from the various audiences have proven to be quite fulfilling. However, we feel that the best opportunity that was given to us was that of being exceptionally led by a motivating choir mistress in the form of Ms. Harris. This woman has shown all of us what grace, class, hard work and exceptional leadership and commitment are all about. She has inspired all of us to fully believe in ourselves and our true singing potential and for this we will be eternally grateful.



Our best and most rewarding performance was realized when we won the



Regional Inter-School Choir Competition. We received the recognition we deserved. This competition was held in the auditorium of Queen's College where we defeated both of the Queen's College choirs.

For these experiences and much more, we will be eternally grateful.

Niandé McKenzie - L 6  
 Tamara Gilhuys - 4C  
 Allizen Welch - 4C  
 Ayana Wills - 4C  
 Shalieza Hanniff - 4C

Hannah Langevine - 4C  
 Shenel Hercules - 4C  
 Lauren Dundas - L 6  
 Ian Smith - 4C  
 Keishann Griffith - 4A

## Reflections of the "Choir Mistress"

My role as the BHS Choir Director still leaves me, to this day, feeling both bemused and amazed. This all started when my Headteacher needed help to prepare for Prize Giving 2006. The choir has always played a major role in making this school event as special as it is. My desire was first to help but it quickly became an activity that I enjoyed being a part of. The success of the choir's performance that year led to our school taking part in both the Regional and National Choir Competition; the choir was adjudged the winners on both occasions.

Truth be told, I was often terrified that I would be found out to be a big "fraud," as I was never formally trained in Choir Direction. However, music touches my heart and soul and loving music and appreciating its many forms was taught to me by my father and this school as well.

Due to the excellent performances and the favourable reviews, the choir was soon asked to perform for national events and did us all proud.

I feel blessed by the efforts of my students and their sense of commitment to our beloved school. I feel thankful for all the words of encouragement from stalwarts like Ms. Pollard and Ms. Cunha and many other past students who were pleased and excited to see BHS in the spotlight again—for singing, no less. But perhaps, most important, it was the encouragement and support of my Head that helped me realize success in another aspect of my life and that has really led to the successes that we all feel so proud of today.

Shelly Harris, Head of Department, Science Proud, past student of the BHS

## A New Dimension by Carole Bishop

At a simple but impressive ceremony at St. Thomas Presbyterian Church, Hope Street, Georgetown, on December 12, 2007, our own BHS alumna and former Headmistress, Maureen Massiah, along with three others, was ordained a Junior Minister in the Presbyterian Church of Guyana.

The inclement weather did nothing to deter the enthusiasm of her many relatives, friends and alumni who packed the small but historic church eager to be a part of this momentous occasion. Present in the congregation were her sisters, Joycelin and Marlene, both of whom are alumni and who flew in especially for the event.

It was gratifying to note that many members of the Seniors' Group found it possible to attend the service and it must have been a most heart-warming moment for Rev. Massiah as she looked out into the congregation and observed the many "BHS" faces present.

Rev. Massiah exuded her customary dignity and calm throughout the service at which several Senior Presbyterian Ministers presided and at the end accepted the myriad congratulatory speeches and kisses with the poise and equanimity for which she is renowned.

We take this opportunity to extend heartiest congratulations to Rev. Massiah and pray that the Lord will continue to bless her and guide her as she sets out on this new and remarkable phase of her life and work.



## Debating Team Places First in National Competition

The BHS debating team of Leonie McGarrell, Keitisha Bynoe and Damali Lovell, all fifth-formers won the 2007 J. O. F. Haynes Debating Competition for Secondary Schools. They opposed the moot "The Creation of School Boards," outperforming the other finalists from Anna Regina Secondary School. Keitisha was named "Best Speaker".

The school received a Pentium 4 computer and printer while the team members received individual prizes and a trip to Arrowpoint Resort and collected extra prizes.



I reiterate the words of my address at Reunion 1990.....

Bishops' High School  
A kaleidoscope of color,  
shape and size.  
Always changing but  
forever constant in its  
overall quest for excellence.  
CONGRATULATIONS  
STUDENTS.....You have  
done it again for all of us!

Dorothy Morgan-Quelch

Congrats to students of  
the greatest school on  
earth!....Well done  
students....I have known  
Damali since she was in  
her mother's womb so I  
am really proud of  
her....and the others  
too....Again, congrats to  
the students of the Best  
School on earth!

Jeumayne Dummett

**"Hearty  
congratulations  
to the Bishops'  
Debating  
Team. The  
excellence  
continues."**

gwen stephenson  
mitchell

Like we always say..  
"B for Bishops' ....  
B for Best"

Congrats BHS team!  
Continue to make us  
proud.

Shaundell Ferrier-  
Levans

## Condolences

BHSOSA expresses condolences to the families and friends of the following alumni who have passed or have had family members pass between October and December 2007:

- Aileen Granger (November)
- Gail Robinson (Father)
- Iris Rohlehr (Brother-in-law)
- Christobel Hughes (Brother)
- Joy O'Jon (Sister)
- Joy Davis (Father)
- Candyss Odle-Speirs (PE Teacher and family (Husband))
- The Meredith family (Father)



## Gender

Girls worry 'bout how they appear,  
As for boys, they don't care.  
Girls are expected to talk people's names,  
But boys don't find that an interesting game.  
Girls have the feeling of insecurity,  
While boys don't take up responsibility.  
Girls put more effort into their academic studies,  
And all the boys do is create a lot of worries.  
Boys don't like doing certain subjects,  
Instead, they take great care in looking at certain objects.

Lower 6th 2002-2003

## Retrospective

### Ball Sports in the 1950s

by Grace Annette Mc Lean

One of the games played by almost every new student at BHS during the 1950s was netball. Two grass courts were utilised and each Form, 1A to 3B, six Forms in total, with an average of 25 students per Form benefiting from this compulsory activity which was played between 4.00 pm and 6.00 pm on weekdays.

From the middle school, 4A to 5B, the game designated was hockey. This was played at the YMCA, as there was no facility for field hockey at the school.

In the late 1950s, a new ball game was introduced, lawn tennis. With no provision for that sport the then physical education teacher, Miss Doreen Barrett, used the western wall of the Art Room as the knock-up board; the beginners' practise area was between the two bicycle racks. Later, improvised courts were used on the north-eastern side of the building and the area north of the Headmistress' house.

There was a great amount of pride when a number of girls who were sought after by club teams for several games, played at the national level, represented our country in the region and represented their various universities at the undergraduate level.



## Reunion Update

The 9<sup>th</sup> International Reunion of the alumni of BHS will take place in Toronto from **Tuesday, August 5 to Sunday, August 10, 2008.**

The theme of the Reunion is *Building on the Legacy*.

Alumni planning to attend the Reunion are encouraged to:

- Pay their membership dues to Dorett Leander, Treasurer;
- Apply for a Canadian non-immigrant visa;
- Register for the Reunion with the Toronto Chapter;
- Register at the Royal York Hotel; and
- Attend preparatory meetings of the Guyana contingent.
- Share your travel plans with Coordinator Pat Gordon.

## The Lower 6th Experience

When 26 Lower 6th students gathered in their classroom on Friday, October 23, 2007, they had no idea what was awaiting them. They looked expectantly to the front of the room to learn what would be taking them away from their classes.

Confronted with the reality that they were expected to meet on six consecutive Fridays, some welcomed what they considered the diversion while other lamented the loss of contact hours. They, however, plunged themselves into the activities.

Among their expectations of Lower 6th were preparation for university and the world of work, development of leadership skills, identification of definite career choice. Some saw Lower 6th as an escape from the world of work.

This stage of their lives is one where many distractions from studying are present. The students indicated that some of these are the time spent on the Internet, the telephone and listening to music, extra chores, relationships with the opposite sex, extracurricular activities, personal worries and a desire to have an active social life.

The students realized that they have to make an effort to balance their activities if they are to achieve success in their examinations.

### Newsletter Team:

#### Layout/ Design:

Andrea Bryan  
Janice Jackson



#### Content:

Carole Bishop  
Elsie Croal  
Shelly Ann Harris  
Janice Jackson  
Vidyaratha Kissoon  
Grace Annette Mc Lean

If you have any comments or suggestions about the newsletter, please write to us at  
BHSOSA - P.O. Box 101796, Georgetown, Guyana  
or email us at [bhsosa@gmail.com](mailto:bhsosa@gmail.com) or [secretarybhsosa@yahoo.com](mailto:secretarybhsosa@yahoo.com)