

PROFILES

with JENNIFER BARR



"Jamaica is more than a beach" read recent slogans coming out of that sunny tourist haven, for Steve Ormsby of Elizabeth Drive, Jamaica was certainly more than a beach—it was home for the first 16 years of his life.

Jamaica has been in a state of revolt for some years against the very things that Steve represented as he was growing up—wealthy plantation owners and managers. Yet his memories of the country and his fellow Jamaicans of all races are happy and pleasant.

It's easy to take sides in any social revolution, and it's usual to put down the upper classes.

However, when the subject is explored, it's often found the situation isn't black and white or good and bad. Instead a form of benevolent symbiosis often develops.

Hard work for all

Such was the case in the '40s and '50s on a Jamaican sugar plantation, as Steve remembers it. His father was overseer for three estates of 1200 acres in Spanish Town. Steve went to good British-type schools, and had servants to assist his mother.

However, Steve also remembers the long hours his father put in, the enormous amount of work he did, and the care he took of his employees, most of which would have been in very poor straits indeed if they didn't have their farm job.

Steve is critical of the system to the extent that he felt workers were underpaid for the amount of labor (his father, as overseer, had his hands tied in this area). Such was the case in most countries at that time.

Education in those days was in private British schools for children whose parents could afford the fees. Public schools offered education for all other children up to high school level.

Steve attend several schools with a wide variety of boys. Segregation was practiced but it was sexual and economic rather than racial. Steve says the education he received was very very British and hardly fitted the boys for life. They were taught little of Jamaican history, folklore, or culture. That he learned from his 'nana' and other friends, along with the native patois they spoke at play.

The boys explored their surroundings; particularly the 100 acre grounds of the DeCateret School in Mandeville where he spent many happy years. They'd try to trap wildcats and birds and generally "made a nuisance" of themselves.

Despite living in a country surrounded by the sea, Steve didn't learn to swim till he was 12. Two bad experiences observing drowned people with his Nana had instilled a fear of the water into the young boy. However, once he learned to swim he rapidly made up for lost time making the school swimming team.

Hurricanes frequent

One of the hazards of living in a tropical country is the frequency of hurricanes. Steve experienced three in his lifetime and recalls the big one of '51.

"You always knew it was coming." Our house was a two storey without electricity and with verandas outside. The stairs to the upstairs were on

either side of the verandas. Dad cut a hole in the floor—a trapdoor—just above the icebox so we could get downstairs. The roof blew off, rain came pouring in and we had to spend the night in the kitchen building. It rained for a day-and-a-half with winds of 125 to 130 mph. My uncle's house blew apart and he got trapped under his piano as it blew on top of him.

"My father had to bore holes in the floor to let the water out. We'd just started putting the roof back on when another hurricane almost hit us—it just missed us."

"Not impressed" with education

Steve was 16 when his family came to Canada. It was then he realized the lack of preparation his schooling had given him. He also feels Canadians are lucky having the chance to learn to do things for themselves. He describes his childhood as "pampered" because family servants did everything for him when he was home from school.

His orientation in this country was hard but he rapidly adjusted getting situated with a West Indian land surveying company.

He is now in the lithographical printing business and lives with wife Berna, and children, Michael and Heather, near Fairy Lake.

He and Berna have been back to Jamaica twice in '65 and '67 travelling the island from the Kingston waterfront and Dunn's River Falls to the bauxite mines of Reynolds and Alcan.

They were amazed at the amount of government subsidization of businesses and building as Jamaica, independent of Britain since 1964, attempted to equalize the wealth.

They noted, that although the peasant homes were still the same shack type dwellings, most had 60 to 70 hp boat motors outside to help with their fishing.

Improvements in peasant living standards were obvious to the Ormsbys' without seeming to destroy the relaxed happy way of life.

Steve feels time and better education of the poor are needed to bring the haves and the have-nots closer together.

He would love to return to Jamaica and show his children his homeland. He'd also like to have a little villa there and would go back despite economic and social unrest at present.

That's the way the island in the Sun affects a lot of people.



Steve Ormsby examines a tray made of various Jamaican woods.

International president visits Y's Men

Christian Bach Iverson of Denmark has been international president of the Y's Men's club for only a month, and already has made several stops in Canada and the United States, with Acton being one of his most recent.

Mr. Iverson spent two weeks in Acton last week, one at the home of former international president Pat McKenzie, Jeffrey Ave. the other with the family of Acton Y's Men's president Jim Rivett. He had been in London, Ontario the night before his arrival in town, and was expected in Barrie two days later.

Mr. Iverson, at 41 years old, is the second youngest international president in the history of the club. The youngest was 39, according to Mr. McKenzie.

He was sworn in as president in July, after a surprisingly short period of time as a member. He joined his local chapter in Denmark in the late 60's, and soon worked his way up to president. He was then made district secretary, with the post of lieutenant director for Denmark closely following. In 1973-1974, he was made regional director, and in 1976 to 1978 was the area Y's Men's president of Europe. He was elected international president through a mail-in ballot.

During his three week stay in the United States, Mr. Iverson visited North Carolina, Texas, Colorado, North Dakota, Minnesota, and New York. While in Texas he attended the U.S. area convention. This was the only time he spent in a hotel, staying with Y's Men's members during the other stopovers.

In Canada, he will make his way east to attend the Canadian area convention in Fredericton, New Brunswick. He goes home August 21, after a seven week tour.

Mr. Iverson, a school teacher, spends the next year travelling around the world, including Asia in October, and North America again, in the new year. He will also be preparing for the international convention in Stockholm, Sweden, next year.

Mr. Iverson can speak four languages, and understand a fifth. English, he said, is the international language of the Y's Men's club. He also speaks Swedish and Norwegian as well as his native tongue of Danish. He understands German, but cannot speak it.

Mr. Iverson is the third international president to be elected from Denmark, and the second in a row. One president has come from Australia and Japan with all the others elected being from North America.



Acton Y's Men's president Jim Rivett, and Pat McKenzie, right, welcomed International Y's Men's president Christian Iverson into their homes last week for a two day stay. Mr. Iverson is touring North America for seven weeks before heading home to Denmark. Mr. McKenzie presented the guest with a leather wallet from Beardmore as a reminder of his visit to leather town.

they were returning to school this week. His wife teaches English.

Mr. Iverson was very pleased to meet Mr. McKenzie. He explained he had heard about the past international president (1963-64) for several years and had always wanted to meet him.

Mr. McKenzie and wife Mary were happy to return some of the hospitality they received while visiting Denmark in 1965. They were treated royally, Mrs. McKenzie said of the trip, and hope Mr. Iverson enjoyed his short stay in their home.

Acton is a good example of how a Y's Men's club works across the world, Mr. Iverson said. "We are an independent

organization working closely with the YMCA, but remain separate." purpose is to support the activities of the YMCA.

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Saturday, Labour Day: 8:25 a.m., 9:25 a.m., 10:25 a.m., 11:25 a.m., 12:25 p.m.

GEORGETOWN: Moore Park Plaza
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Saturday, Labour Day: 8:40 a.m., 9:40 a.m., 10:40 a.m., 11:40 a.m., 12:40 p.m.

GEORGETOWN: Delrex Plaza
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NORVAL
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FARES	Acton	Georgetown	Norval
Adult, One Way	\$ 3.10	\$ 2.55	\$ 2.20
10 Tickets	27.00	22.25	19.00
Kids Under 12, One Way	1.55	1.30	1.10
Senior Citizens, One Way	1.55	1.30	1.10
Family Pass—Good All Day	10.75	9.00	7.75

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MOORE PARK PLAZA, Cochrane Travel
NORVAL, Ken's Coffee Shop

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Georgetown dump costs \$100,000 month

Halton Region's Public Works Committee has recommended \$199,210 be spent to import final cover and put in leachate controls at the Georgetown (Halton Hills) waste disposal site.

The only problem which bothered some councillors at the committee meeting Aug. 8, is the fact the site will only be in operation until the end of October, meaning that it will cost \$100,000 a month to keep the site rolling.

The total sum breaks down as: Fill import for day-to-day cover until Oct. 31, \$62,000; fill for final cover, \$50,000; leachate control system, \$45,000, and contract operation July 1-Oct. 31, \$42,000.

Presently, it is necessary to provide six inches of soil cover daily. Last year there was enough cover material in the area that it could be supplied free; but this year, the lack of cover has meant purchase and shipment to the Georgetown site.

One boon from the extensive environmental work on the dump site is that water running from the area has been found to be "of trout stream quality."

Nevertheless, the \$45,000 leachate control system has been added to make sure there will be no contamination of ground waters or the Credit River.

The committee was told sufficient money is in the operating budget to cover the cost of the systems and disposal site cover as planned.

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42-112	1080		153.90

Western police nab Acton B & E suspect

The last member of a trio allegedly responsible for a series of town break-ins was caught doing the same routine—in Alberta.

Edmonton police arrested the 18-year old Acton youth on break and entry charges. He is in custody. When police out there are finished with him, he is to be returned to face charges by Halton Regional Police.

Two other members of the group are out of custody on bail. They are also from Acton and district.

Local police allege they broke into several town establishments this summer. Included on the known when a permanent list were: the Royal Canadian Legion, Acton Bowling Lanes and Reliable Taxi Stand.

Temporary postmaster

Acton has a new postmaster—at least temporarily.

Bob Hammond, present postmaster in Bolton, has been called in to temporarily fill the position left vacant with the sudden death of Gord McKeown in June. However, Mr. Hammond, is only in Acton on a temporary basis. It is not known when a permanent person will be appointed.

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