

BARBADOS JAZZ SOCIETY
4th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
20th June 2015

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Good evening and welcome to the fourth annual general meeting of the Barbados Jazz Society.

First, we must say “thank you” to our past president Ann Smith who resigned in February 2015. She guided us through that early period of rebirth and restructuring of the Barbados Jazz Society, giving unselfishly of her time and resources.

Reflecting over the past year on our achievements ...

Our jazz radio program on VOB 92.9 continues on the first Sunday of every month and we receive positive and encouraging feedback. From the beginning in December 2013, Plum Tree Club at Rockley has been our faithful sponsor... again; the Barbados Jazz Society recognizes the generosity of our past president, Ann Smith.

During the year members and friends have been welcomed to our mingles in the homes of Ann Smith and Dolly Straughn. We were entertained by international flautist Sherri Winston; the mingles have also provided a forum for students from Barbados Community College (BCC) to perform. Our elder statesman, Hamilton Grandison, would always be there at our mingles. He passed away earlier this year; we will miss the presence.

Our emphasis on supporting education continues. BJS assisted in the fund raising efforts for Joseph Callender, saxophonist who will be going to Humber College, Canada, to pursue music studies. Kweku Jelani, trumpeter and scholarship recipient, will be going to Berklee College this summer for their five weeks program. As we have done in the past, the Society will support each student with a donation of \$500.00.

Our secretary Cheryl Holder has been enthusiastic in spearheading our participation in International Jazz Day. Our week of activities began with a “jazzy” church service at The Church of Christ the King. We say “thank you” to Roger Gittens and the musicians but especially... to the members and congregation of The Church of Christ the King for their warm welcome. We convey sincere appreciation to Rev. Luther Johnson who has indicated that he looks forward to further collaboration with the Barbados Jazz Society.

Collaboration with the music department at BCC produced an event at Scoopie's Jazz club on Wednesday of the “jazz week.” Under the watchful eyes of their teachers student combos performed admirably. This was part of their formal academic evaluation. There was consensus that this should be a permanent feature of our “jazz week.”

There have been setbacks. We had to abort our main event, a dinner/dance scheduled for Friday May 1 2015 at the Sea Rocks Dome. Ticket sales were poor and financial

projections indicated that we would have incurred significant loss. A flagship event on I'D is desirable but it is imperative now to have open discussion and input from all members with regards to the theme, character and type of entertainment package we should offer.

What's ahead ...?

We must strive to increase our membership, recalling past members and attracting new ones. Graduates of BCC music program will again be notified that dues for the first year post graduation are waived. The board has reduced subsequent annual dues for students to \$25.

“Students on stage” project:

This program would give Jazz students additional opportunities to perform and showcase their talent.

BJS would invite various Jazz clubs/restaurants to partner/collaborate with us on the project.

A student combo (trio, quartet, or quintet) would be invited to perform at one of the participating venues

Initially we would aim for one event each quarter.

The BJS will pay each student \$50.00 for the performance.

I have discussed this with Roger Gittens, director of the music department at BCC; he looks forward to collaborating on this project.

Finally, I must give recognition to other members who have made significant contribution to the Society over the past year: Susan Bain for maintaining our website and Sidi Streetly for maintaining our Facebook presence. During the past months when I acted as President, I received maximum support and assistance from the board of directors and many other members. Please accept my sincere gratitude.

Jerome Jones

Acting President, Barbados Jazz Society