



WOMEN

& GOVERNANCE

"A Grenadian Experience"



**GRACIOUSLY AND GRATEFULLY
CELEBRATING**



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INTRODUCTION

It is a distinct privilege to introduce this special booklet which is intended to capture some special moments in the lives of ordinary Grenadian women who were called to serve our beloved nation, often in extraordinary ways.

Indeed, I'm deeply moved to speak here on behalf of my sister Parliamentarians.

Twenty-nine of us had the opportunity to be honoured members of Parliament – some for short periods, others for more demanding seasons. Our theme, *Graciously and Gratefully celebrating Fifty years of Parliamentary Service*, reflects the attitude of heart that underpins our differing levels of sacrifice and service and expresses our ongoing commitment to people development and nation building. It is my heartfelt desire that our stories would be ringing testimonies and lasting legacies to all others who would follow us in service to country.

I wish to speak though, not only on behalf of those of us who were given the opportunity to get into the Houses of Parliament, but for all the women of Grenada who stayed in their own houses and homes yet were actively involved in political processes to ensure the survival of a healthy democracy and the development of good governance in our nation state.

I therefore take this opportunity to salute my hardworking sisters who have prayed, planned and produced the environment for the increasing transformation of our parliamentary democracy. I say thank you to all my sisters who daily take risks, despite personal challenges, to stay true to the commitment to be *agents of change* at home, in the marketplace, the community and the Parliament.

Joan Purcell
Chairwoman, GWPC

PERSPECTIVES

I deem it an honour and a privilege to have been elected to serve as a Parliamentary Representative for St. David's for 18 years: 1961-1979. At different times during this period, I served as Minister of Health, Education, Social Affairs, Community Development and Cooperatives respectfully.


Although I was the first woman to be elected to parliament in a General Election, I do not believe that my election in 1961 was a catalyst paving the way for more gender equality. I truly believe that, even at a time when women in first world countries were struggling for equal rights, the fact that Grenada, small as it was, already recognized that its women could make as strong a contribution as their male counterparts was the reason for my successive election success. Our Government also recognized the potential of women's contributions to the workforce, which is why we started the pre-school programme, giving women the opportunity to work instead of having to stay home with toddlers.

Helping people to help themselves was a theme I promoted and lived by. Rather than waiting for Government to reach their villages, I encouraged my constituents to be self-sufficient by doing many projects themselves. With government providing the materials, villagers repaired roads to their villages themselves, laid pipelines to bring running water to their villages sooner, built community centres, and helped each other to repair or build additions to their homes very much in the maroon tradition. Encouraging people to work together for their own benefit engendered pride and a better sense of community.

I am proud to have been a part of the Government which fought for independence to Grenada, despite the severe opposition to it at the time. As we celebrate our 37th Anniversary as an independent nation, I can look back and acknowledge with pride, how far we as Grenadians have built and advanced as one people, and as one family. God bless Grenada.

Cynthia Gairy

REFLECTIONS

 I never had any doubt but that my decision to leave office as Governor of Grenada was the right one.

The New Jewel Movement staged a revolution and took office. I thanked God that those I knew had escaped.

There was a CARICOM meeting in Trinidad. A message reached me from Maurice Bishop asking me to get together Grenadians and friends of Grenada, so he could meet them. I had a party at my home in Maraval. He wished to speak with me alone, but that never happened. I always regretted this. Soon there was a coup and another Maurice Bishop was arrested and he was killed. I remembered his mother and his wife and many others.

CARICOM with Eugenia Charles and Tom Adams and some others called for intervention. George Chambers for Trinidad said a firm no.

The Americans had a Medical School in Grenada. Some believed the students were at risk. I was far away from all this, but it was always my Grenada. There was a meeting at the Trinidad Hilton between Eugenia and me. She invited me to come and see her and hinted to me about a return to Grenada. I reminded her of Paul Scoon. He was the Governor-General.

The Americans were anchored outside St. George's. Bombs falling on Grenada – my Grenada. I was in Trinidad. My people in Grenada there were trying to fight back.

Many died. Mothers and fathers, sisters and brothers were in mourning. My heart was with them.

Eugenia appeared on American television with Ronald Regan to explain things and to try to justify the invasion of Grenada. I was angry. Very angry. I remembered what could have been.

All Governors of the Associated States were provided with a pension except for the Governor of Grenada. The people have never known this. I have not received a pension to this day. Despite this, I still love my Grenada.

The failure of various governments to settle debts for acquisition of lands owned by me remains a case of sorrow. I am most disappointed.

My Grenadian passport is the only one I have. I have no other. Trinidadian citizenship through my husband, my dearly loved husband, was never an option for me. I love Trinidad too, but Grenadian citizenship is a treasured possession. I will always be Grenadian.

Dame Hilda Bynoe

PROFILES

House of Representatives

WOMEN & GOVERNANCE

"A Grenadian Experience"



**GRACIOUSLY AND GRATEFULLY
CELEBRATING**





Name: GAIRY, CYNTHIA

Constituency: St. David

Period of Service: 1961-1979

Portfolio: Minister of Health; Education; Social Affairs, Culture, Community Development and Cooperatives.

Distinct Honour: Mrs. Cynthia Gairy was the first female to sit in the House of Representatives in 1961. She was also the first female Minister of government in 1968 with responsibility for the Ministry of Social Affairs, Culture and Community Development, and to date is the longest serving female Parliamentarian, having served for 18 unbroken years.

Accomplishments: In her speeches, she reinforced the point that agriculture was the bedrock of the economy and challenged the people to grow more local food rather than depend on foreign imports and to manufacture local articles for sale to visitors. With government support provided through materials she encouraged villagers to repair roads and build community centres. She was a community activist and encouraged self reliance as a way of life.¹



Name: BENJAMIN, NADIA

Constituency: St. Andrew North-West

Period of Service: 1972 - 1976

Portfolio: Parliamentary Secretary
Ministry of Education and Social Affairs.

Accomplishments: She was chairperson of the Nutrition and Child Welfare Committee. As head of the Child Welfare Committee she represented Grenada at UNICEF meetings in Jamaica. She had special responsibility of the Cadrona Home for the Aged. She organised children's programmes in singing and reciting of poetry the winners were aired on Radio Grenada. The beaches in her Constituency were cleaned and handicraft training sessions were held for the youth of the Constituency.

Challenges: Working with former Prime Minister Sir Eric Gairy proved a challenge since opposition was not readily tolerated.

Words of Wisdom: Women can be involved in all fields of life, politics is no exception.²



Name: ANDREW, PAULINE CECELIA

Constituency: St. Andrew South-East

Period of Service: 1984 -1990

Ministerial Portfolio: Ministry of Health, Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Agriculture.

Accomplishments: As Minister of Tourism, the Tourism Desk was opened at the airport; British Airways started flights to Grenada and a special provision was

made that allowed for cargo space on the airline to take vegetables and flowers to the UK market. The picnic area at Bathway was built along with the Visitor's Centre. Camerhogne Park was built on her initiative as well as the Carenage plaza and the moving of the Christ of the Deep to the Carenage. In the area of Agriculture her ingenuity allowed for the FAO funding of fertiliser for the Model Farm Programme and for the opening of nature trails in Grand Etang Rain Forest. At the Constituency level, she was instrumental in the establishment of the pre-school at Telescope and the opening of roads in the Telescope and Mamma Cannes area. During her tenure as well, electricity was brought to the villages of Cafe, Felix Park, Hope, Munich and Mamma Cannes.

Challenges: Disunity among members of government makes it difficult to properly run the affairs of State.

Words of Wisdom: Women politicians bring a more humane side to the table. As a politician one must always strive to do one's best. Only your best is good enough.³



Name: DUNCAN, GRACE

Constituency: St. John

Period of Service: 1984 - 1990. 1995 - 1999.

Ministerial Portfolio: Minister of Health and Women's Affairs, Minister of Tourism, Minister of Works, Communications and Civil Aviation.

Accomplishments: Improving the lives of people especially the underprivileged in the community. She has taken her own finances and bought the material to pave a number of alleyways in the town of Gouyave. She represented Grenada in the early 90s at the Caribbean Women for Democracy meetings. This was a group of OECS countries. She was deputy president of the group.

Challenges: Her greatest challenge has been seeing a need especially in the community and wanting to assist and due to circumstances beyond her control things cannot get done.

Words of Wisdom: In life be positive, you can overcome whatever obstacles there are.⁴



Name: PURCELL, JOAN

Constituency: Town of St. George, Carriacou & Petite Martinique

Period of Service: Served in both Houses of Parliament: House of Representative: 1990-1995: Town of St. George, Government Member of Parliament; 1995-1999: Carriacou, Opposition Member of Parliament; President of the Senate: 2008 - present

Distinct Honour: The first Female Minister of Communication, Works, and Public Utilities.

Ministerial Portfolio: Minister of Tourism, Civil Aviation and Women's Affairs; Minister of Communications, Works and Public Utilities and Women's Affairs.

Accomplishments: As Minister of Communications, Works and Public Utilities she led the negotiations geared towards the privatisation of the Grenada Electricity Company. As Minister of Tourism, Civil Aviation and Women's Affairs she spearheaded the establishment of the Programme for Adolescent Mothers (PAM). She also attended the First World Summit on The Rights of the Child in 1990 which laid the foundation for the Grenada National Coalition of the Right of the Child. As Opposition Member of Parliament for Carriacou, she established a Youth Training Project. The multi-purpose centre was built with the assistance of the community. Young persons were taught computer skills and sewing.

Challenges: As a member of parliament in government the period 1990-1995 was quite a difficult one since austerity measures such as structural adjustments were implemented and financial resources for social development projects were limited.

Words of Wisdom: "If women want to be agents of change, if they wish to make an impact on politics, they need to be committed, prepared, and financially resourced".⁵



Name: WALDRON, LAURINA

Constituency: St. Andrew North-West

Period of Service: 1995 - 2003

Ministerial Portfolio: Ministry of Education; Ministry of Housing, Social Services and Women's Affairs; Minister of State in Ministry of Communications and Works; Minister of State in Ministry of Health and the Environment.

Accomplishments: As Minister of Education: A 54 million soft loan was attained from the World Bank to rebuild and refurbish schools; the Westerhall Secondary School was built; the Ministry focused on universal education; training opportunities were given to senior education officers at the Universities of Leeds and Howard; scholarships were extended, including to Mid-Western State University; increased allocation of the School Books and Uniform Programme; the School Feeding Programme was re-introduced first to primary and then to secondary schools.

As Minister of Housing, Social Services and Women's Affairs: Housing projects were established in Diamond, St. Mark, Dunfermline, St. Andrew, and in Carriacou. A House Repair Programme was introduced where materials were provided for the building and repair of homes. A fund was made for fire victims of \$1500 per family, the National Housing Authority would assist in the rebuilding of the house; the Necessitous Children's Fund was established also a Halfway Home for Battered Women and Children was established in Madeys, St. Patrick. Under the GULP there was a Provident Fund that estate workers and labourers paid. These workers were successfully moved over to the National Insurance Scheme.

Challenges: As a Minister of government it can be quite challenging to move from one Ministry to the next. You tend to want to see the projects that you spearheaded materialise.

Words of Wisdom: Young people should see politics as a call to service for the benefit of everyone.⁶



Name: MODESTE–CURWEN, CLARICE

Constituency: St. Mark

Period of Service: Served in both Houses of Parliament: Senate - 1998, House of Representative - 1999 - to the present.

Ministerial Portfolio: 1999: Ministry of Health, 2004; Ministry of Works, 2007; Ministry of Tourism.

Accomplishments: Construction of the new hospital; rebuilding after hurricane Ivan especially the service sector i.e. police stations, medical stations or centres, Day Care Centres and Pre-Schools example Springs, Green Street, River Road and Carriacou.

Challenges: her greatest challenge was being able to provide appropriate health care to the nation's most vulnerable – those who can ill afford to pay for it also the threat of contagious diseases like tuberculosis, swine flu and bird flu.

Words of Wisdom: Young people should be encouraged to get involved in politics. The world is changing and their input is crucial, there are issues that they would better be able to grapple with.⁷



Name: CHARLES, CLARIS

Constituency: St. John

Period of Service: 1999-2008

Ministerial Portfolio: 1999-2003: Minister of Agriculture, Lands, Forestry and Fisheries.

2003-2008: Minister of Education and Labour. In 2007 the Ministry of Legal Affairs was added.

Accomplishments: Under her leadership and initiative the following achievements were attained: Enhanced Learning Programme: a Saturday morning remedial programme for secondary school students in Mathematics and English was instituted. Guidance Counsellors were placed in all secondary schools with responsibility for the primary schools in the immediate vicinity. A Student Support Services Unit was also established in the Ministry of Education; the establishment of the T.A. Marryshow Community College Campus in Carriacou; the Introduction of the Chinese Language to The T.A. Marryshow Community College's syllabus; the introduction of Community Service as a compulsory requirement for students at the T.A. Marryshow Community College; the establishment of the 'Yes I Can' adult literacy in collaboration with the Government of Cuba.

Challenges: As a Minister of government sometimes one has little control over whether or not a directive is carried out. Ministers have to rely on the public servants to implement policies. This can be a challenge if their vision is not shared by the public service.

Words of Wisdom: Our perception as a people towards female politicians needs to change. It is disrespectful to assume that female politicians can only succeed if they are in an intimate relationship with a male politician and not on their own merit. This level of thinking is archaic and does little to encourage our young women to be a part of the process of service to their country.⁸



Name: HOOD, BRENDA

Constituency: Town of St. George

Period of Service: Served in both Houses:
House of Representative 1999 - 2003,
Senate 2003 - 2008.

Ministerial Portfolio: Minister of Tourism
& Civil Aviation, Minister of
Communication, Works and Public
Utilities.

Accomplishments: The achievement of getting cruise ships to call at the St. George's Port two months after the passage of Hurricane Ivan. She sent personal letters to the ships captains thanking them for coming to Grenada in the immediate aftermath of the hurricane. The launch of Tourism Expo which acted as a spring board for community tourism projects most notably Fish Friday at Gouyave, St. John. She emphasised the link between agriculture and tourism and got a number of hotels not only to buy local produce but to assist farmers in producing mainly short crops.

Challenges: Getting the tourism sector back 'on its feet' after hurricane Ivan proved to be the greatest challenge.

Words of Wisdom/Maxim: Our outlook on female politicians needs to be re-examined. We need to be made aware that female politicians attain their position on meritocracy not favouritism.⁹



Name: BAIN-HORSFORD, YOLANDE

Constituency: St. Andrew South-East.

Period of Service: served both in the Upper and Lower House. In 2001- 2004 Government Senator, and 2004 - 2008 elected Member of the House of Representatives.

Ministerial Portfolio: 2001 - 2004: Senator and Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Tourism, Civil Aviation, National Insurance Scheme, Culture,

Gender and Family Affairs, with specific responsibility for Family Affairs.

2004-2008: Member of the House of Representatives and Minister of Social Development, Housing, Gender and Family Affairs.

Accomplishments: The reconstruction and restoration of the housing stock (90,000 structures) after hurricanes Ivan and Emily; restoration of Community Centres in Grand Bras, La Digue, Harford Village and St. James; the commissioning of community libraries in Grenville, St. James and La Digue; designing and instituting high impact economic programme for low income and unemployed women in rural areas; developed Women's newsletter SHARE which highlights women's issues across the nation; spearheaded the harmonization and enactment of Family Law and Domestic Violence Act.

Challenges: As a politician it can be difficult at times to accept collective responsibility. There are times when your own conviction is quite strong yet you may have to yield for the greater good.

Words of Wisdom: Young women should be encouraged to get involved in politics. 'Women add value and flavour to political debates, their strength of character, tolerance and tact' shines through.¹⁰



Name: ROBERTS, GLYNIS

Constituency: St. George South

Period of Service: 2003 - to present.
Opposition Member of Parliament: 2003 - 2008. Government Member of Parliament: 2008 - to the present.

Ministerial Portfolio: 2008: Minister of Social Development, Labour, Social Security and Ecclesiastical Affairs, 2009: Minister of Tourism and Civil Aviation, 2010: Minister of Labour Social Security

and Ecclesiastical Affairs.

Accomplishments: As Minister of Tourism: the establishment of the Woburn, Conch Night Festival: the building of lockers for the Woburn fishermen and the clearing of Grand Etang Lake. As Minister of Labour: increased fees for work permits which brought more revenue to the country. In 2010 the revenue gained was \$1.9 million E.C. dollars.

Challenges: Politicians often pay mere lip service to the call of not dividing and polarising yet in actuality they do. We tend as a people to show little regard or respect for learnt experience. We place far more emphasis on academic knowledge. In so doing we can miss the contributions that can be made by those who did not have formal education but have a wealth of experience in their particular field.

Words of Wisdom: People develop at different stages in their life. Some are early bloomers while others are late bloomers. As female politicians one should hold their ground and not sway to the fancy of others.¹¹



Name: NEDD, WAPLE (deceased)

Constituency: St. Andrew North-East

Period of Service: 1972 - 1976

Portfolio: Parliamentary Secretary in the Ministry of Youth Development, Sports and Labour.

Waple Nedd was described as “a woman of strong motivation, drive and religious convictions who for generations was able to communicate the values of community, unconditional love, giving, support, caring and hard work. She lived by the principle, 'Life is a contribution and not a competition'.¹²



Name: **STRACHAN, WINNIFRED**
(deceased)

Constituency: St. Andrew South-East

Period of Service: 1990 - 1995

Portfolio: Leader of the Opposition

Distinct Honour: Winnifred Strachan was the first woman to be Leader of the Opposition.

PROFILES

Senate



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Name: **BAPTISTE, EMELINA**

Period of Service: appointed to the Senate 28th April 1975. She served for a short period. She is presently in private retirement in England.



Name: ST. BERNARD, GLORIA

Period of Service: 1984 - 1990

Portfolio: no specific responsibility

Distinct honour: She has had the honour of being the first and only woman to serve as Major of the Town of St. George in 1964 and 1965.

Accomplishments: She represented Grenada at a number of seminars and meetings including the Thirty-Seventh Parliamentary Seminar held at Westminster, England in March 1988. She also attended the Caribbean and Latin American Parliamentary Association Meeting held in Barbados in the first quarter of 1989.

Words of Wisdom: She encourages women to serve their nation as she did.¹³



Name: PALMER, JUDITH

Period of Service: 1987-1989

Portfolio: no specific responsibility

Accomplishments: Her greatest achievement was always standing firm to truth and right not merely for what is expedient at that particular point in time.

Words of Wisdom: As a community it is our responsibility to teach the youth the realities of politics. We should teach them

that politics is about love for one's country.¹⁴



Name: BUTLER, JANET FLORENCE

Period of Service: 1989 - 1990

Ministerial Portfolio: with responsibility for Housing and the Environment.

Accomplishments: Her presentation to parliament on the planned move of the garbage disposal landfill at Perseverance - there was a need to abandon the dump closer to the road and establish a new one further inland.

Words of Wisdom: 'Slander has no part in politics'. Female politicians tend to be very nurturing and often see the hurt and pain of the populace more than their male counterparts do. Often they do not get the support of their male colleagues.¹⁵



Name: **NECKLES, MARGARET ALLETTE**

Period of Service: 1990 - 1995

Portfolio: President of the Senate

Distinct Honour: Margaret Neckles was Grenada's first female President of the Senate. She was also the only woman on an eight member Caribbean team chosen by the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association in England to be an observer for South Africa's first election after the

dismantlement of Apartheid.

Accomplishments: As President she was 'totally and completely fair and an avid time keeper'. As Grenada's representative to the South African elections she chaired one of the plenary sessions.

Words of Wisdom: The call to governance is one of service. One should be well grounded in faith and moral conviction.¹⁶



Name: PETERS, ANN

Period of Service: 1995 - 1999, 2008 - to the present.

Portfolio: 1995 - 1999: Opposition Senator and also served as Deputy President of the Senate. 2008 - Minister of State in the Ministry of Health, 2009 - to the present - Minister of Health.

Accomplishments: A new approach to health service delivery that focuses on primary health care. This focus is designed around prevention. An Apprentice Training Programme that would encourage persons to enter fields where there are deficiencies i.e. radiology and physiotherapy. The strengthening of relationships between Grenada and international health organizations as well as memoranda of understanding with a number of universities which offer assistance in such areas as mental and dental health. The establishment of a health centre in the South of the island that meets a number of health care needs through the provision of a nurse, dentist and pharmacist.

Challenges: There are inadequacies in the human resource capacity of the health sector especially at the senior management level.

Words of Wisdom: Political parties can reach out to our youth by providing programmes and projects that are geared towards their particular interests like arts and sports. Young persons should not shy away from politics. In order to influence policy change one has to sit at the level of policy change.¹⁷



Name: CORNWALL, JACQUELINE

Period of Service: 1999 (one year)

Portfolio: no special assignment

Accomplishments: She formed part of the Committee responsible for reviewing the Domestic Violence Bill. Her passion has always been women's issues. She had worked tirelessly with the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) and as President of Grenada National Organisation of Women (GNOW).

Words of Wisdom: All political parties and organisations should work together to erase the polarisation of the political landscape in Grenada. All groups should speak with one voice.¹⁸



Name: DAVID- ANTOINE, ANN

Period of Service: 2003 - 2008

Ministerial Portfolio: Senator with responsibility for Health, the Environment, Social Security and Ecclesiastical Affairs.

Accomplishments: Under Ann David-Antoine's leadership and initiative three major health programmes were established: dialysis programme; cancer care and treatment and the non-communicable diseases committee. As a senator her 'door was always open' to listen and assist persons in need.

Challenges: The workload associated with the effects of Hurricane Ivan and the preparation and execution of World Cup Cricket was herculean and constant.

Words of Wisdom: In moving forward as a nation we tend to 'sacrifice all on the political altar'. We need continuity as well as change.¹⁹



Name: RUSH, INGRID

Period of Service: 2003 - 2008

Portfolio: with responsibility for Agriculture, Health, Women's Issues and Social Issues.

Accomplishments: Her greatest achievement was fulfilling her passion of helping people. She was able to reach far more persons because of her position.

Words of Wisdom: Once you know that you have worked hard to attain your goals then you are a winner. As a politician one must be grounded in their faith and have a strong prayer life.²⁰



Name: PAYNE-BANFIELD, GLORIA
O.B.E.

Period of Service: 2003 (October -
November)

Portfolio: no specific responsibility

Accomplishments: She contested every bill that was raised and let her views be known.

Words of Wisdom: Women should not shy away from politics. They offer 'a different perspective on the issues, they are compassionate and pragmatic'. Women provide balance to parliamentary debates. 'Young women should get involved in NGO's, civil society, trade unions these organisations would give them a solid grounding in local affairs and teach them leadership skills'. These attributes would assist them in making worthwhile contributions in the political arena.²¹



Name: SEON, LESLIE-ANN

Period of Service: January 2004 - February 2006

Portfolio: President of the Senate

Accomplishments: As President of the Senate one's role is that of 'arbitrator and umpire'. In her period of tenure all her decisions were made after 'studious research and relevant inquiries, they were never based on outside influences'.

Words of Wisdom: In our youth we tend to see politics through rosy coloured glasses. Having had the experience one can only survive by standing strong by the decisions one takes regardless of consequences and even in the face of strong opposition. One must maintain standards, follow procedure and protocol.²²



Name: PIERRE, EMMALIN

Period of Service: 2004 - 2008

Portfolio: Ministry of Youth Development

Accomplishments: The establishment of the Youth Parliament, Youth Training Camps that taught young people among other things leadership training, the general transformation of youth in their outlook on life for example their being excited about their own development which was manifested in the increase in

the number of young people's interest in scholarships and further education.

Challenges: Limited resources often made it difficult to accomplish goals. The vision of a Minister can be thwarted by the inertia of the public service.

Words of Wisdom: As a people we need a new outlook on politics, a new type of thinking that is not polarised.²³



Name: BERNARDINE, FRANKA

Period of Service: 2008 - to the present

Portfolio: Minister of Education and Human Resource Development.

Accomplishments: Re-focusing of Education. This is being done in four areas: (1) refocus of the curriculum, (2) training of teachers, (3) upgrading and rebuilding schools, and (4) greater opportunities in Education. Curriculum: a policy shift to include personal

development skills and technical skills on an equal footing with academic skills. For example, under personal development skills, social and life skills and anger management was piloted in the secondary schools in November 2009. Textbooks have been written for these courses. In September 2009 every secondary school offered three technical skills. In September 2010 six centres were set up in each parish to provide technical skills to the primary schools. Greater opportunities in education: the establishment of a special education desk; school book programme which removes the burden of buying textbooks from parents and guardians; the establishment of the scholarship as a means of providing opportunities for persons wishing to attain tertiary education; Boys Under Achievement workshops were held.

Challenges: Her Challenges are two-fold. Firstly, people are resistant to change and their strong adherence to the exigencies of a political party. It is a constant struggle to appeal to their professionalism. Secondly, our public management system is quite archaic and has little to do with productivity in the 21st century. She recommends constitutional change needs to be implemented to revamp our public service.

Words of Wisdom: One cannot effect change and policy by sitting on the side line. Politics places one in a position to effect change. Women give a different perspective to politics. They give a more balanced view of the issues. They are less concerned with prestige and power. Their input is critical to the advancement of the developing world.²⁴



Name: BRAVEBOY, PEMBA

Period of Service: 2008 - 2010

Portfolio: no specific responsibility

Accomplishments: She attended several conferences of the Caribbean Network of Parliamentarians and Population Growth and Development (CNPPD) This organisation spearheads discussions that affect the general populace including universal education and HIV and AIDS education. She also acted as Interim

President of International Medical Parliamentarian Representative Organisation. In that capacity she represented the Caribbean and Latin America.

Words of Wisdom: 'Young people should be aware of politics since it affects us all. To say it is not my business is foolish'. In particular young women should be encouraged to take part in politics since as a nation we need to work towards 40% of women in parliament.²⁵



Name: **PALMER-HAWKES,
AUDREY** (deceased)

Period of Service: 1972 - 1975

Portfolio: Minister of State for Tourism. In 1975 she was appointed as Public Relations Officer of the Caribbean Tourism Association.

Distinct Honour: She became the first person from the Caribbean and the first woman to be appointed Director General of the Caribbean Tourism Association.²⁶



Name: **ROSS, HELENA O.B.E.**
(deceased)

Period of Service: 1992 - 1995

Portfolio: no specific responsibility

ADDENDUM

Women who served during the Grenada Revolution 1979-1983 and the Interim Government 1983-1984.

During the period 1979 - 1983 the constitution of Grenada was suspended and replaced by People's Laws. A number of women served in varying capacities of leadership. This period in Grenada's history saw a sizeable increase of women in positions of power not only in government but in the public service as well. It also saw a substantial involvement of women in the National Women's Organisation. By November 1982, membership stood at sixty-five hundred women organised into 170 groups, with 11 groups in Carriacou and one in Petite Martinique. A Women's Desk was established in June 1979 which catered specifically to the needs of women it was spearheaded by Rita Joseph and Tessa Stroude. Between 1979 and 1982 there was one female minister and two deputy ministers. Jacqueline Creff was Minister of Education, Youth and Social Affairs. Phyllis Coard (though not a Grenadian by birth is married to Bernard Coard former Minister of Finance) was Deputy Minister of Women's Affairs, President of National Women's Organisation and a member of the Central Committee. Claudette Pitt was Deputy Minister for Community Development. Dessima Williams was Grenada's Representative to the Organisation of American States. There were four female Permanent Secretaries and one Cabinet Secretary: Marcella David was Cabinet Secretary; Dorcas Braveboy was Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Health, Lew Bourne Housing, Gloria Payne-Banfield Planning and Faye Rapier Legal Affairs. In programme planning women held key roles in education, telecommunications, health and agriculture. For example, Valerie Gordon was National Coordinator for the CPE, Sharon Fletcher was the National Coordinator for CSDP, Candia Alleyne was Coordinator of the Food and Nutrition Council, Yvonne James was Health Planner in the Ministry of Health, Jane Belfon was Director of Tourism and Pamela Buxo was Secretary for Tourism, Joan Ross was Programme Director for Television Free Grenada, Regina Taylor was General Secretary of The Agency for Rural Transformation, Angela Cape was Deputy Manager of the National and Marketing Importing Board and Bridget Horsford was Manager of the Agro-Industries Plant. Monica Joseph became Grenada's first female Judge in 1982. She acted as a diplomat

negotiating with James Mitchell's administration in St. Vincent on the issue of escaped prisoners.

After the collapse of the revolution and United States led invasion, Grenada was ruled under an interim government. The interim government ran the State from November 1983 to December 1984. The team was led by Sir Nicholas Brathwaite. Joan Purcell served as the only female on this team. She served as Minister of Social Services which encompassed Women's Affairs, Youth, Sports and Culture. It was quite a challenging period since the nation was deeply scared after the collapse of the revolution and invasion. Most persons were disillusioned, and mistrustful of politics. Joan focused her energies on trying to help people to heal especially women and to have faith in the political process again. One of her greatest achievements in this period was the preparation of a document on the Status of Women in Grenada for the first international meeting of women in development which was to be held in Beijing, China.²⁸

GRENADA WOMEN'S PARLIAMENTARY CAUCUS

Established: September 2010.

Aim: is to enhance democratic processes and strengthen legislatures by building the capacity of prospective female parliamentarians and leaders regardless of party affiliation.

In this regard the Caucus has the support of its members who see the organisation as a means of 'mentoring young politicians especially females'. They are of the united opinion that through meetings, training sessions, workshops and seminars young people will be given a birds-eye view of the intricate workings of the political arena. They will be informed on the training that is needed and they will be coached on attitudinal changes necessary for growth. They will be offered first-hand experience on what is expected of them as politicians. In so doing the Caucus will serve to encourage young people to be model politicians – upholding the value of service to the nation.

Objectives:

- To provide a forum for discussion and a platform for action on matters affecting women in the country, regionally and internationally across party lines.
- To develop and establish norms and standards that promote the effective participation of women in Parliament.
- To advocate for continued official recognition and acknowledgement of persons who have served in Parliament.
- To network with other organisations and institutions concerned with issues pertaining to women and women's participation in political processes.
- To promote and help sensitize all parliamentarians to the principles of gender equality in the country, as well as regionally and internationally.
- To advocate for legislation and implementation of the National Gender Policy for gender mainstreaming.

END NOTES

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⁶Waldron, Laurina. Interview with Dr. Nicole Phillip. Paraclete, St. Andrew, Grenada, 26 May 2011.

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¹⁶Neckles, Margaret. Interview with Dr. Nicole Phillip, Mt. Hartman, St. George, Grenada, 4 May 2011.

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²⁰Rush, Ingrid. Interview with Dr. Nicole Phillip. Tanteen, St. George, Grenada, 19 April 2011.

²¹Payne-Banfield, Gloria. Interview with Dr. Nicole Phillip, via telephone, 24 May 2011.

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²⁶Grenada Silver Jubilee Celebrations Handbook 1974 - 1999, p. 89

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²⁸Purcell, Joan. Interview with Dr. Nicole Phillip. Tanteen, St. George, Grenada, 23 May 2011.

Notes

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