

I

I was born in Jamaica, December 15<sup>th</sup> 1919. Boarded a ship with my mother at the age of 5 to Cuba where she had secure employment in the sugar cane fields. After a few months my mother told me we were boarding another boat heading for another country. (Costa Rica) even though at the time I was not aware of where that was. My mother was told that the pastures were greener in Costa Rica, so within 3 days we arrived by boat in Puerto Limon. I was 6 years old. Soon after, my mother was offered a job in Siquirres. I liked Siquirres because the locals spoke almost the same broken English as in Jamaica. Siquirres was a wonderful town, but the stress of being a single middle age woman in a new town and new country began to take a toll on my mother.

In Siquirres I was restless and did not like school, my mother administered quite a few beatings on my person trying to keep me in school. We had some cousins that lived in Puerto Limon that visited us often. Eventually I ran away from home in Siquirres and went on my own to Limon where I search and found my cousins and lived with them for some time while working on their farm.

In 1935 my mother heard about opportunities of employment in Puerto Viejo and she travelled to Pto. Limon looking for me to accompany her to Puerto Viejo on these new ventures. I was 15 when we arrived in Puerto Viejo where my mother started baking bread and buns. I was encharged of selling the baked goods to the farmers in the area. I sustained myself with that venture for quite some years until the government developed a program allowing the locals to clear land for farming cacao.

Some friends and I decided to take turns in clearing land and that is how I ended up owning my farms. While clearing land for farming in 1948 I got involved with playing music, first by listening to the best musician at the time who encourage me to pick up the guitar. I was later encouraged to study music by a famous and successful farmer by the name of Mr. Shegoul who questioned my knowledge of reading music. This prompted me to learn music professionally by taking a correspondence course from the United States.

By 1950 I was offered the opportunity to join the Riverside Band. During this time, I would travel over the weekend to different parts of the country and Panama to play music. Traveling to play music was very hard as transportation was not as accessible as it is today.

By 1954 I met my children's mother Ms. Evelyn Hines who previously had children of her own. I left the music business in 1967 completely, and dedicated my time to raising the children through farming.

Through the cacao, I was able to raise my children and provided them the education that I did not myself obtain

Today I enjoy my children, Loretta, Yolanda, Mateo and all of my stepchildren along with the grands and great grands. I have the privilege to live to see 7 grandchildren and 2 great grand

At 100, I have seen many moons and I am grateful for the opportunity to see my children grandchildren and great grands.

Although most of my friends have passed on, I've been fortunate enough to have great friends who have assisted me in making it through the years. To them I owe a debt of gratitude.