

MG
856

ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA PROGRESSIVE
SOCIETY RECORDS

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ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA PROGRESSIVE SOCIETY RECORDS, 1934 - 1984
Sc MG 856

Bulk Dates: 1934 - 1970

Extent: Shelving Unit: 13 boxes
Linear feet: 6.2

Source and Date: Gift of ABPS, 2011

Processor's Name: Tanya Desdunes with assistance from Edwina Ashie-Nikoi, Aileen Bloise and Steven G. Fullwood

Finding Aid Prepared By: Edwina Ashie-Nikoi and Steven G. Fullwood

Date Finding Aid Completed: December 2013

Abstract: Administrative, financial records and other files that document the ABPS's history and activities.

Organization note: Collection is organized into 3 series: Administrative, Membership, Committees

Access: Unrestricted access

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Citation: [Item], Antigua and Barbuda Progressive Society Records, Sc MG 856, Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, The New York Public Library

Index Terms

Names: Antigua and Barbuda Progressive Society

Subject: Immigrants - New York (State) - New York Metropolitan Area - Social Conditions
Immigrants - New York (State) - New York - 20th Century
Immigrants - New York (State) - New York - Societies and Clubs
Blacks - Services for - New York (State) - New York
Blacks - New York (State) - New York - Societies and Clubs
Minorities - Political Activity - U.S. Fraternal Organizations
Antigua and Barbuda - Social Conditions

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Organizational Note.....	1
Scope and Content.....	3
Container List.....	4
Separation Record.....	8
Appendix.....	9

**ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA PROGRESSIVE SOCIETY RECORDS, 1934 - 1984,
(bulk dates, 1934 - 1970)
13 boxes (6.2 linear feet).**

Organizational Note

The Antigua Progressive Society was established on August 22, 1934 by a group of 22 Antiguans in New York City under the leadership of Bishop James P. Roberts. Membership was open to those born in Antigua as well as their spouses and descendants. The Society provided charitable assistance to Antiguans, Barbudans and the neighboring community, as well as lent assistance to institutions on the home island. In 1964, the Society purchased a brownstone on 122 Street in Harlem which still functions as the Society's headquarters. Previously, Barbuda had an independent society, the Barbuda Benevolent Society of America, founded in 1915 and ceased operating sixty-two years later. In December 2010, the Antigua Progressive Society's by-laws were changed to include Barbuda and became the Antigua and Barbuda Progressive Society.

Scope and Content

Organized into the ADMINISTRATIVE, MEMBERSHIP and COMMITTEES series, the Antigua and Barbuda Progressive Society Records, 1934-1984, contain correspondence, membership application forms, meeting minutes and financial documents which offer insights into the functioning of the Society as well as members' experiences as Caribbean immigrants in New York City.

The **ADMINISTRATIVE** Series (2.8 lin. ft.) consists of correspondence, financial documents and meeting minutes organized into five sub-series.

The **Governing Documents** and **Executive Board** sub-series outline the establishment, early goals and development of the Antigua Progressive Society.

The **General Office Files** provide a portrait of the scope and breadth of the organization's activities. Of particular interest are several letters, such as the 1938 and 1949 recommendations sent to the Royal West India Commission and Secretary of State for the Colonies respectively, which divulge immigrants' political sensibilities, diasporic sympathies and nascent pan-Caribbean identification. Also significant are several letters from Antigua, including two from V.C. Bird, the

first prime minister of sovereign Antigua. While these letters commend the Society for the work it pursued for citizens at home, they also outline conditions on the island. Evinced in the Junior League file is the Society's concern to groom its younger members for the responsibilities of fundraising and administrative work. Also evident is the intent to develop among Junior League members a connection with, and sensitivity to, the histories and cultures of the African diaspora of which they were a part.

Included in the **Organizations** sub-series are letters, invitations to events and programs that document the interactions between the Society and other Caribbean associations in New York such as those founded by immigrants from the sister island of Barbuda, Anguilla, Bahamas, Dominica, Montserrat and St. Vincent. In addition to showing how the migration experience birthed a burgeoning pan-Caribbean identification among immigrants, this sub-series also gives evidence of the Society's commitment to the well-being of the community and city in which they lived. An index of these organizations and the number of items from them that are represented in the collection is provided in the appendix.

The substantial **Financial Records** sub-series provides a fairly comprehensive look at the Society's financial development and health over the span of four decades as the group built its membership and purchased a building on which it conducted extensive renovations in the late 1960s. Although the majority of the Society's financial records are in this sub-series, financial reports and other documentation can be found elsewhere in the records, in both the Membership and Committee series.

The bulk of the records include disbursements and receipts ledgers which give a daily accounting of the Society's business activities including banking, insurance, taxes, building expenses and general operations. These ledgers also capture the organization's fundraising efforts and contributions to other benevolent societies. Complementing these ledgers are handwritten and typed reports (1934-1940), check receipt books (1959-1966), bank statements (ca. 1940s-1970s), and miscellaneous receipts and notes that in some cases fill in gaps from the journals.

The membership applications and correspondence contained in the **MEMBERSHIP** series (.8 lin. ft.) most vividly bring the immigrant experience to life and allow a reconstruction of

Antiguan immigrants' lives in New York - where they lived, who their family and friend networks were, what they did for a living, and even where they received health care. Also evident in the correspondence is the high regard that Society members generally had for each other and the officers. For example, in Robert Parker's 1955 letter to the membership upon the death of his aunt, he commended them for their kindness further adding: "As a Society, you have done your part very well; as humanitarians you are wonderful." Equally significant in this series are the beneficiary correspondence and financial records, which detail the nature and amount of assistance the Society gave members.

Highlighting the means by which the Society sought to promote social and intellectual activities among its members, the **COMMITTEE** series contains correspondence, minutes and reports created by the various committees that operated as the membership's vehicle of service to their community and training ground for civic service.

Provenance

Gift of the Antigua and Barbuda Progressive Society
SCM 11-29

Processed by Tanya Desdunes with assistance from Edwina Ashie-Nikoi and Steven G. Fullwood

Finding aid prepared by Edwina Ashie-Nikoi and Steven G. Fullwood with assistance from Aileen Bloise.

2013

ADMINISTRATIVE SERIES

- 1 Governing Documents (Constitution & By-Laws)
 - 1 Certificate of Inc., By-Laws, etc., 1934-1955, 1975
 - Executive Board
 - 2 Correspondence, 1938-1984
 - 3 General Meeting Minutes, 1936-1984, n.d.
 - 4 Executive Board Meeting, 1971-1973
 - 5 Events and Affair, 1936-1984
 - 6 Officers Roll Call*
 - 7 Minutes Log, 1946-1949*
 - General Office Files
 - 8 Address Book*
 - Correspondence
 - 9 1936-1971, n.d.
 - 10 Eaton Rental Space, 1953-1956
 - 11 Correspondence to and from Antigua, 1935-1959, 1976, 1981, n.d.
 - 12 Political Concerns, 1938-1973, n.d.
 - 13 Community Involvement, 1968-1969, 1979
 - 14 Junior League, 1941, 1952-1956, 1968, n.d.
 - 15 Heritage/ Culture, n.d.
 - 16 Antigua Research, n.d.
- 2 Organizations[†]
 - 1 #, 1953
 - 2 A, 1938-1983, n.d.
 - 3 B, 1939-1959, n.d.
 - 4 C, 1940-1979, n.d.
 - 5 D, 1939-1976, n.d.
 - 6 E, 1954-1957, n.d.
 - 7 H, 1943-1973, n.d.
 - 8 I, 1955-1957, n.d.
 - 9 J, 1955-1982
 - 10 M, 1939-1983, n.d.
 - 11 N, 1940-1971, n.d.
 - 12 O, 1953-1959
 - 13 P, 1938-1958
 - 14 R, 1971, n.d.
 - 15 S, 1940-1966, n.d.
 - 16 V, 1943-1959
 - 17 W, 1945-1971

* Filed in Box 11

† See Appendix for an index of organizations

- 3 Financial
 Check Stubs Logs
 1945-1948
 1962-1964

- 4 Check Receipt Books
 1 February, 08, 1959 - May, 24, 1959
 2 July, 06, 1959 - January, 24, 1960
 3 January, 24, 1960 - May, 08, 1960
 4 July, 10, 1960 - November, 13, 1960
 5 November, 13, 1960 - March, 12, 1961

- 5 1 March, 12, 1961 - September, 10, 1961
 2 September, 24, 1961 - November, 14, 1962
 3 January, 13, 1963 - May, 12, 1963
 4 May, 12, 1963 - October, 12, 1963
 5 October, 13, 1963 - December, 22, 1963
 6 December, 22, 1963 - March 08, 1964

- 6 1 March, 08, 1964 - July, 12, 1964
 2 July, 12, 1964 - November, 08, 1964
 3 December, 12, 1965 - May, 08, 1966
 4 May, 22, 1966 - October, 9, 1966
 5 October, 23, 1966 - December, 12, 1966
 6-8 Banking Information, 1940s-1970s

- 7 1-2 Building Expenses 1963-1984, n.d
 Disbursements and Receipts Ledger
 3 1948-1954**
 4 1950-1952**
 5 1952-1958**
 6 1959-1961**
 7 1961-1964***
 8 1964-1966***
 9 1969-1983***
 10 General Receipts and Disbursement Ledger,
 July, 10, 1940 - January, 28, 1948
 11 Insurance, 1943-1958, 1970-1977
 12- Reports, 1934-1959, 1979, n.d.
 13
 14 Tax, 1946-1957, 1977-1980
 15- Miscellaneous Receipts and Notes, 1939-1974
 16

** Filed in Oversized Box 12

*** Filed in Oversized Box 13

MEMBERSHIP SERIES

8

Applications

- 1 n.d.
 - 2 1934
 - 3 1935
 - 4 1936
 - 5 1937
 - 6 1938
 - 7 1939
 - 8 1940
 - 9 1941
 - 10 1942
 - 11 1943
 - 12 1944
 - 13 1945
 - 14 1949
 - 15 1950
 - 16 1951
 - 17 1952
 - 18 1953
 - 19 1954
 - 20 1955
 - 21 1956
 - 22 1957
 - 23 1958
 - 24 Correspondence - General, 1935-1970
 - 25 Correspondence - Sick, 1937-1968, n.d.
- Beneficiary
- 26 Correspondence, 1935-1959, n.d.
 - 27 Death Certificates, 1936-2001

Financial

9

- 1 Miscellaneous Documents, 1935-1966, n.d.
- 2 Membership Dues Notebook, 1943-1945, n.d.
- 3 Membership Dues Ledger, 1934-1950

10

COMMITTEES SERIES

- 1 Administrative, 1950-1973
- 2 Advisory Board, 1935-1955, n.d.
- 3 Anniversary, 1938-1957
- 4 Auditing, 1937-1956
- 5 Banking, 1940
- 6 Carnival, 1972
- 7 Christmas Cheer, 1950-1959, n.d.
- 8 Dance, 1936-1957

10	9	Economic Development, 1966
	10	Education, n.d.
	11	Entertainment, 1971-1982, n.d.
	12	The Luncheon, 1971
	13	Newsletter, 1967
	14	The Program, 1936-1966, n.d.
	15	Recommendations, 1940
	16	Scholarship, 1966-1973, n.d.
	17	Senior Citizen Housing, 1971
	18	Sick, 1956
	19	Sick Committee Logs*
	20	Thanksgiving, 1953
	21	The United Emergency Ambulance, 1955-1956
	22	Post 1984, 1996-2000
11		Ledgers and Logs
12		Ledgers
13		Ledgers

* Filed in Box 11

**SCHOMBURG CENTER FOR RESEARCH
IN BLACK CULTURE**

MANUSCRIPTS, ARCHIVES AND RARE BOOKS DIVISION

SEPARATION RECORD

The following items were removed from:

Name of Collection/Papers: Antigua and Barbuda Progressive
Society Records

Accession Number: SCM 11-29

Donor: Antigua & Barbuda Progressive Society

Date received: November 2011

Date transferred: August 2013

The item(s) listed below have been sent to the division indicated, either to be retained or disposed of there. Any items that should receive special disposition are clearly marked.

Photographs and Prints Division

1 folder of photos.

Jean Blackwell Hutson Research and Reference Division

Howard University December 1973 Alumni News

Howard University April 1973 President's Newsletter

Separated by: Edwina Ashie-Nikoi **Date:** December 12, 2013

Index of Other Organizations

#

32nd Precinct Coordinating Council [1, 1953]

A

Aegis Society Inc. [1, 1967]

African Academy of Arts and Research, Inc. [4, 1954-1955, n.d.]

African Nationalist Pioneer Movement [1, 1959]

African Orthodox Church of New York, Inc. [1, 1953]

L'Alliance Hatienne de New York, Inc. [1, 1955]

The American Aid Society for the West Indies, Inc. [1, n.d.]

American Virgin Islands Civic Association [2, 1958-1959]

Anegada Progressive League, Inc. [6, 1955-1983, n.d.]

Anguilla Benevolent Society [19, 1938-1959, n.d.]

Antillean League of New York [4, 1942-1958, n.d.]

Association for the Advancement of Caribbean Education, Inc. [2, 1953-1955]

B

The Barbuda Benevolent Society of America, Inc. [7, 1955-1957, n.d.]

The Bermuda Benevolent Association, Inc. [24, 1955-1958]

Beulah Wesleyan Benevolent Society [3, 1953-1955]

Boys Town, Nebraska [5, 1955-1957, n.d.]

British Guiana Benevolent Association [4, 1955-1956, n.d.]

British-Jamaicans Benevolent Association, Inc. [14, 1939-1959, n.d.]

British Virgin Islands Benevolent Association of New York, Inc. [15, 1945-1958, n.d.]

The British West Indies War Veterans Association, Inc. [2, 1940-1955]

C

Caribbean League of America, Inc. [3, 1957-1959]

Church of the Good Shepherd [1, 1940]

Club Las Servidoras, Inc. [2, 1966]

Communion United Benevolent Society of America, Inc. [2, 1945-1954]

Contigua Progressive Society, Inc. [1, 1959]

Corinthian Lodge No. 23, Inc. [5, 1955-1957, n.d.]

Creative Vest [1, n.d.]

D

The Dominica Benevolent Society of New York, Inc. [8, 1939-1976, n.d.]

E

Eaton Benevolent Society, Inc. [13, 1954-1957, n.d.]
Elizabeth Kenny Foundation [1, n.d.]

H

Holy Cross Church [3, 1943, 1951, n.d.]

I

Industrial Home for the Blind [10, 1955-1957, n.d.]

J

Jamaica Benevolent Association, Inc. [1, 1955]
Jamaica Development Committee, Inc. [1, 1956]
Jamaica Progressive League [5, 1955-1982]

M

Manhattan Citizens Committee [1, n.d.]
Metropolitan Section - ASCE [2, 1973]
Montserrat Progressive Society of New York, Inc. [22, 1939-1983, n.d.]
Morningside Community Center [1, 1956]
Mount Morris Park Hospital [5, 1955-1957]
Mutual Society of French Colonials, Inc. [1, 1953]

N

NAACP, New York Branch [1, 1959]
Nassau Bahamas Association, Inc. [10, 1955-1959, n.d.]
National Maritime Union [1, 1943]
New York City Cancer Committee [10, 1954-1957, n.d.]
New York City Mission Society [12, 1955-1958, n.d.]
New York Tuberculosis and Health Association, Inc. [2, 1956]
New York Urban League [1, 1940]
Nevis Benevolent Society [3, 1955-1956, n.d.]

O

The One for All Club [1, 1953]
Orange Benevolent Society No.1, Inc. [13, 1954-1959, n.d.]

P

Pan Euro-Carib Tours [1, 1958]

Phoenix Triangle Lodge No. 34 [1, 1938]
Police Athletic League, Inc. [4, 1955, n.d.]

R

Rehabilitation Center for the Disabled [5, n.d.]

S

The Salvation Army [3, 1955, n.d.]
Samuel's Shipping Agency [2, n.d.]
The Schubert Music Society [1, 1955]
Senior People's Community Activities [2, 1956]
Slimline International [2, n.d.]
Small's Paradise [1, 1956]
Sons and Daughters of Barbados, British West Indies
 Benevolent Society of America, Inc. [1, 1955]
St. James Mutual Aid Society, Inc. [8, 1953-1958, n.d.]
St. Lucia Benevolent Association [1, 1941]
St. Martin's Episcopal Church [15, 1940-1959]
St. Vincent Benevolent Association, Inc. [11, 1955-1957,
 n.d.]

V

Victoria United Benevolent Society, Inc. [13, 1943-1956,
 n.d.]
Virgin Gorda Mutual Society of New York [8, 1956-1959]

W

W.C. Handy Foundation for the Blind, Inc. [1, 1956]
West Indian-American Day Association, Inc. [1, 1971]
West Indian and American Friendly Society, Inc. [2, 1955,
 n.d.]
West Indian Students Association, Inc. [2, 1956]
Windward Islands Progressive League [1, 1945]