

Grenada Embassy hosts Independence Celebrations

Washington DC, Embassy of Grenada, February 6, 2013: Grenadians turned out in record numbers to celebrate the 39th Anniversary of Independence on Sunday, 3rd of February, 2013 at the Church Service and Community Brunch. The event held under the auspices of the Ambassador of Grenada to the United States of America, is a long-standing tradition in Washington DC, Maryland and Virginia. The special sermon delivered by Grenadian Pastor Garth Dottin from Toronto, Canada, urged nationals to keep God foremost in moving forward as a nation. His sermon resonated with the Independence message of the Prime Minister, the Honourable Tillman Thomas, who called on Grenadians in the Diaspora “to continue playing their role in moving Grenada forward...”

In her remarks the Ambassador recognised the patriotism and invaluable contribution of Grenadians to their homeland, and in support of the Embassy’s outreach. Ambassador Bristol made special mention of the members of the Grenada Independence Planning Committee 2013, the several Grenada community organizations, and presented five of the most outstanding nationals with plaques of commendation. Honourees are Dr. John George, Mr. Donal Bridgeman, Mr. June Lendore, Mr. McDonald “Big Mac” Romain and Mrs. Lida Sawney.

CARICOM solidarity with Grenada was demonstrated by the attendance of the diplomatic corps in Washington, DC.

As in past years, guests were treated to a variety of national dishes at the brunch, prepared and donated by Grenadians. A highlight of the celebrations was the playing of the National Anthem on pan by two Grenadian teenage pannists Ms. Jenine Licorish and Mr. Taevaughn Reyes, and the performance of Grenadian folk songs by all in attendance.

As part of the Independence commemorations, an art exhibition is on display at the Marcus Garvey Hall of Culture at the Organisation of American States (OAS), featuring works by the Embassy’s Artist in Residence for 2013, Ms. Irma Francis. A selection of these brilliantly colourful paintings will also be on display at the Embassy and open to the public until February 2014. The Artist in Residence programme started in 2010 by Ambassador Bristol aims to provide a cost-free opportunity to Grenadian artists to showcase their talents and works. Artists previously featured are Henry Otway, Trisha Bishop, George Andrew and Roger James.

An Independence Dinner and Dance will be held under the auspices of the Ambassador on Saturday, 9th February, in Maryland, organised by the Grenada Cultural and Civic Association. President Allan Alexander anticipates usual full patronage as Grenadians continue to give back to the needy in their homeland by supporting this annual fundraiser.

Ambassador Bristol and Grenada’s 2012 Olympic swimmer Esau Simpson will be special guests at the Independence dinner and dance in Miami, Florida on the 9th organised by the Grenada Cultural Association of South Florida, which is currently under the leadership of Sherry Peters, President.

Following is the text of the Independence message from Ambassador Bristol and photographs of the Church Service and brunch:

**MESSAGE FROM HER EXCELLENCY GILLIAN M. S. BRISTOL,
AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF GRENADA
TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

**ON THE OCCASION OF THE
THIRTY-NINTH ANNIVERSARY OF INDEPENDENCE OF GRENADA**

February 7, 2013

“Celebrating 39 Years of Achievement with Renewed Optimism”



Greetings Fellow Grenadians!

Thirty-Nine Years as a sovereign nation **is** cause for celebration! We, the people of Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique, can be proud and pleased with having attained this remarkable achievement and for having persevered as a democratic state.

We have not been daunted by the challenges of our geo-political status in the world community of nations nor by our relatively limited economic capacity.

Grenadians have remained steadfast in their commitment to nationhood, contributing in the public, private and civil society sectors and from the Diaspora, to our development. We have truly aspired, built and advanced as “one people, one family”, demonstrating patriotism and resilience in the face of adversity, external shocks to our economy and political upheaval.

History will reflect that it is the fibre of our character as a People, fiercely identified as “Grenadian” wherever we roam, whatever our endeavour, that has compelled us, surefooted, on the path of Independence. From a domestic or nation-building perspective, we have maintained our economic growth, weathering changes in international demand for our agricultural and tourism products, and sought responses that create a more sustainable economic platform. On the world stage, Grenada has commanded the respect and admiration, if not awe, of its sister nations, by playing a leading role in matters that affect not only our security and stability but also the current and future wellbeing of the entire world. We have vigilantly guarded our Independence by re-asserting and defending the internationally enshrined principle of non-intervention in the affairs of sovereign states.

While our 39th anniversary of Independence finds our economy still struggling to recover from the global financial crisis and the lingering impact of Hurricanes Ivan and Emily, our indomitable spirit shows in our individual and collective labours. Our Independence is underscored by our economic prosperity and despite current faltering growth and joblessness, Grenadians have not been daunted. That is cause for celebration. The demonstrated belief that we can and will get beyond challenging experiences is cause for celebration. That we put solidarity over individualism is cause for celebration.

The Staff of the Embassy of Grenada in Washington, D. C. and I celebrate with all Grenadians at home and abroad, and recommit ourselves to serve our nation with confidence and optimism about our collective future.



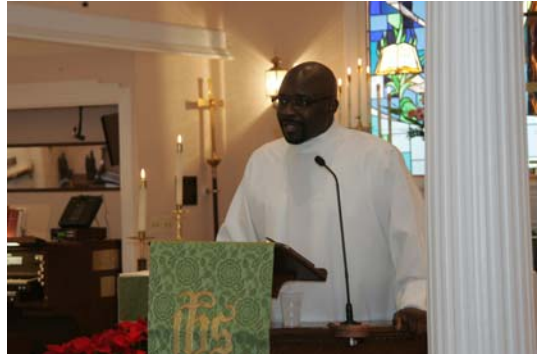
Ambassador Bristol, Ambassador Hubert Charles (Dominica) and other members of the CARICOM Diplomatic Corps



Ambassador Gillian Bristol



Feb.3, 2013: Honorees
R-L: Lidsa Sawney, Don Bridgeman, June Lendore.
Standing in for McDonald Romain, Jennie Pascal.
(Absent Dr. John George)



Pastor Garth Dottin



L-R: Pannists Taevaghn Redhead, Jenine Licorish,
Service
Ambassador Bristol and Raeyona Redhead



Worshippers at Independence Church



Community Brunch