



2011 REUNION A HUGE SUCCESS



By: Roy Reeves

The wise saying that “a bad beginning makes a good ending” came to fruition before our very eyes this year. It all started with a series of misunderstandings and disagreements as preparation went underway for the planning of our ninth reunion celebration in Atlanta, Georgia. When the controversy was brought before the national body via teleconference and still did not get resolved, some people expressed doubts as to whether there was even going to be a reunion this year. The roadblocks were removed, the love for BHS took precedence over personal differences, and everyone dedicated every effort to ensure a successful convention weekend.

Our convention had a rather slow start with a faithful few arriving throughout Friday, August 12th. There was an extended Board of Directors meeting and welcome night events at the home of Joe and Diana Harmon. There was lots of food, drinks and dancing to a collection of “memory lane” music provided by renowned DJ, Joseph Mulbah. The event lasted well into the night.

Saturday’s events commenced with breakfast and the business meeting at the Holiday Inn Hotel, Gwinnett Center in Duluth, GA. Among the highlights of the meeting was the general election of a new corps of officers. Everyone came with the expectation of a somewhat close race for the top seat, but it drastically changed when the front runner, Mrs. Lucinda Nagbe abruptly withdrew from the race for reasons unknown to this date. This gave Ms. Hawa Kpakah an easy, uncontested victory replacing Wilmot Howard. Others elected were: Tommy Logan-Vice President; Frances Potter - re-elected Secretary. Roy Reeves was elected untested to the position of Assistant Secretary (created by a constitutional amendment); Mr. J. Alexander Morris handily defeated Mr. Joseph Sinyan to succeed himself as the Treasurer (the longest serving elected official). Mr. Ebenezer Boe replaced Mrs. Serena Reeves as the Financial Secretary. It would have been another easy victory for Mrs. Reeves but she chose not to run, citing personal reasons. Mrs. Mildred Karpeh easily defeated Rev. Daniel Davis to succeed herself as Chaplain. The meeting was held within the allotted time and ended right around 1 pm.

The highlight of the weekend was Saturday’s evening banquet in the ballroom of the Holiday Inn Hotel. The delicious meal was catered by the hotel and DJ services were provided by Mr. Moses Stryker. The evening was emceed by the lovely Diana Harmon, adorned in beautiful African attire. She took control of the occasion early on and maintained it well to the end. During the evening, outgoing president Howard gave his farewell/state of the organization address, outlining several accomplishments and projects in the works. For her contribution, incoming president Kpakah vowed to continue those projects as they are worthwhile ones. She called for a higher level of cooperation and respect among the membership. An open line of communication, transparency and accountability are to be important in her administration as she promised to hit the ground running from the start. Ms. Lianu Johnson graced the occasion with two beautiful selections demonstrating her promising vocal ability.

One slight disappointment was the absence of the keynote speaker for the evening, Dr. Romeo Massoud. But as we are a well rounded organization, our Chairman of the Board, Mr. Emmanuel Nuku Reeves filled the void by giving an inspiring impromptu address. He educated the sizeable American audience with the historical link between Liberia, Buchanan, and the Bassa High School and the United States of America, much to their surprise. He later installed the newly elected officers.

There was a continuation of the queen contest which was kicked off at the Providence, Rhode Island convention the previous year. We had three beautiful ladies representing the three quarters of the calendar year; Ms. Pearl Knowlden representing the months of January thru April, Mrs. Joanna Caulcrick (reigning queen) represents the months of May thru August, and Ms. Ida Lloyd representing the months of September thru December. At the end of three rounds of financial voting, Ms. Lloyd unseated the reigning queen by a wide margin. Ms. Knowlden became the first runner up and Mrs. Caulcrick became the third runner up. There was no clear loser. Each participant won a place in the race and the biggest winner of all was the organization, adding a substantial amount to the treasury. There was also the annual raffle with the top prize of \$100 won by the grandson of the outgoing president, Wilmot Howard. We had a good intake from tickets sale. The evening was climaxed by the Grand March led by Mr. Victor D. King and Mrs. Diana Harmon. Members and guests danced the night away until 1 am.

Sunday's activity, the farewell brunch was at the home of Charles and Lucinda Nagbe. People stopped by throughout the day and enjoyed delicious hometown food. While it is true that all good things must come to an end, it can be somewhat painful sometimes when really good things have to come to an end. Next year's reunion is to be held the nation's capital area and we expect it to be huge for several reasons: It is the tenth anniversary reunion; the home base of the organization; as well as the home areas of both the Chairman of the Board and the newly elected President and vice president. This is an appeal to members who have not been attending to come and celebrate the tenth anniversary in grand style. This year's convention was successful not because we had a record attendance, but because we realized a healthy financial gain. Thanks to Delvin Putugar Johnson of Africa TVOne who did an excellent job of video graphing the banquet activities and making copies available via DVD. Copies can be obtained through President Hawa Kpakah for a small contribution.