



The Probation Department Celebrates 60 years



The Probation Department recently celebrated its 60th anniversary with a month of activities, commencing with a church service. The activities also included a lecture discussion presented by the Chief Justice, Sir David Simmons on 'Evaluating Community Sentencing' The anniversary celebrations featured an award ceremony, a family fun day a staff picnic an open day and a Parent child symposium. The department also took this opportunity to inform the public, via the Chatroom and Morning Barbados television shows about new developments and innovations in the department as it relates to Barbados's judicial system.

Award of Excellence

One of the major highlights of the month activities was the staff award ceremony held at Accra Beach Hotel on the 28th of May 2005. For the first time the department presented an achievement award in honour of Miss Hildegarde Weekes a former Probation Officer and Chief Probation Officer.

Miss Weekes was Chief Probation Officer from 1974-1979. Her philosophy was based on the principle of "Self-upliftment." This award of excellence seeks to recognise a well-rounded individual who is highly motivated and has the ability to motivate others. In addition to being competent, committed and highly productive, must be service oriented with respect to the client and the principles of Probation work. An emphatic Probation Officer, in the first instance, who encourages confidence in others and who is highly respected by his/her colleagues.

The recipient of the first Hildegarde Weekes Award for excellence was presented to Mrs. Dorita Lovell, a Senior Probation Officer. Mrs. Lovell has served as a

Probation Officer for twenty-five years and was promoted to Senior Probation Officer in 2002. After a short stint at the Welfare Department, she expressed an interest in working in the Probation Department where she could work with the youth. She indicated that in her daily encounters with young people she found that many lacked purpose and direction. Ms. Lovell enjoys her work, since it allows her to assist young people in shaping their future direction and goals. Lovell contends that working in the department permits her to fulfil her own purpose in life. She says that over the years she has learnt tolerance, and that life does not necessarily take a straight road, sometimes great things can be achieved by following the curves in the road and climbing the hills.

Long Service Award



Mr. Ledo Gibson, Long Service Award awardee

Amongst the awardees for long service was Mr. Ledo Gibson, the department's Driver Messenger, the longest serving staff member of the Probation Department. Mr. Gibson contends that there is no other place he would wish to work. He enjoys his job and gets on well with all staff members. He indicated that everyday he tries to do his best regardless of the circumstances, which may arise.

He credits Ms. Hildegard Weekes with his development, both professionally and personally. "Ms. Weekes is a special person, she has always encouraged her staff and me especially, to go forward, she was very concerned about *all* her staff's welfare."

In respect to changes at the department, Gibson recalls, that when he first came to the department it was located in Country Road. Since then the department moved from Crompton Street and is now located in Roebuck Street. Gibson states that during his tenure, there have been five Chief Probation Officers and many Probation Officers have come and gone in his thirty-four years of service at the department.

Mr. Gibson now drives a spanking new Nissan Urvan as opposed to the Rally bicycle he used for many years. Times have changed. Not only for Gibson, but for the department on a whole as it moves forward with the implementation of its new offender assessment program.