

NATIONAL LIBRARY OF JAMAICA

Tributes to B/N  
Miss Amy

THE HONOURABLE AMY BECKFORD BAILEY, O.J.  
NOVEMBER 28, 1896 - OCTOBER 3, 1990

FROM THE WOMEN OF JAMAICA



"she changed the face  
of Jamaica"

OCT 29 1990

digitized

*Miss Amy's life motivated SISTREN  
and the Organisation of Women for Progress (OWP)  
to call on women  
to pay tribute  
to a truly inspiring  
Jamaican stalwart.*

## Thank You Miss Amy

For winning the right  
for women to vote  
for winning our right  
to hold public office  
We say thank you.

For leading the fight  
for black women to work  
in banks and stores  
We say thank you.

For training and caring  
six thousand girls in the  
art of home making  
We say thank you.

For leading the fight  
for our reproductive rights  
We women, say thank you.

For opening the door  
so children could see  
For paving the way  
for teachers like we  
To continue the struggle  
for all to see

Miss Amy,  
*SISTREN* say thank you!

## **A Fortright Student**

Miss Amy Bailey graduated from Shortwood Teachers' College circa 1917-1918. As a student she was forthright and her interest was wide ranging. Since her graduation she has been an excellent role model for teachers - articulate, competent and not afraid to tackle controversial issues. She was honoured as a nation builder by the College in its Centennial year, 1985.

Miss Bailey was a founding member of the Shortwood Old Students' Association and remained active in the Association until recently. Her name will remain in the annals of Shortwood Teachers' College as a daughter who gave selflessly and unreservedly to her fellow men and women.

May her soul rest in peace.

*Shortwood Teachers' College and  
Shortwood Old Students' Association*

## **An Illustrious Teacher**

The members of the National Union of Democratic Teachers hold with highest esteem and gratitude, the extraordinarily great contribution made to education and the nation on the whole, by Amy Bailey, an illustrious teacher.

*National Union of Democratic Teachers*

## **Magnificent Innings for Jamaica**

With the death of Miss Amy Bailey, a flag bearer and warrior of the early golden days of the Young Women's Christian Association has slipped from the scene.

The late great Amy Bailey was an active member of the Association, and contributed greatly to consolidating the fledgling movement. Her passion for the liberation of the hitherto suppressed talents and potential of women found common cause with the aims and ideals of the YWCA. Indeed Miss Amy and the YWCA nurtured each other.

In her final note to the YWCA in June 1990 in response to congratulations on the award of the Order of Jamaica, Miss Bailey wrote: "I have happy memories of my past with the YWCA. They can never be forgotten. I do hope the future will hold many happy memories for some of its present members. The "C" is so vital to all we do."

In her usual gracious manner she closed, "Again thanks".

Thank you Miss Amy for your magnificent innings for Jamaica and for the foundation which you helped to lay for our YWCA.

Yes, Miss Amy, the "C" is key.

*Y.W.C.A. of Jamaica*

## **Fine Example of a True Jamaican Woman**

I have known Ms. Bailey for many, many years since the days when she worked at the Kingston Technical High School. She was an executive member of the Jamaica Federation of Women from the very beginning in 1944, and she did a good job of training Federation members at her Housecraft Training Centre.

I have always admired her tenacity. She is to my mind a fine example of what a true Jamaican woman should be. I extend my deepest condolences to her family on her passing. I know it will be a great comfort to them to think of her great contribution.

May her soul rest in peace.

*Lady Allan*

*President, Jamaica Federation of Women*

## Flair for Excellence

The Girls' Brigade of Jamaica had the honour of having the Hon. Amy Beckford Bailey, O.J. serve the organisation for three years, 1966-1968. As was her lifestyle and her flair for excellence, her performance as National President was outstanding. She gave of her best in her skills and available facilities; her Housecraft Training Centre was literally converted into the headquarters for training Girls' Brigade officers and girls. The National Executive met there monthly and not only carried through its business but enjoyed her usual hospitality and tasty snacks free of cost.

Miss Amy, although unable to continue active service, maintained her interest in the Girls' Brigade and was always delighted to have a telephone call or receive a visit from members of the organisation.

We have all been inspired by her life and work. May her soul rest in peace.

### *Girls' Brigade of Jamaica*

## She Changed the Face of Jamaica

Miss Amy was truly a great woman - in a country that breeds strong women. She was impatient with anything that was less than excellent, and she was practical, too; she boasted that her father had taught her to build a fire without using kerosene, which she considered just as important as being able to speak proper English. She was a demon for work and she had a tremendous sense of humour. She had her principles to work for and she didn't care what other people thought. She and May Farquharson campaigned for birth control sixty years ago, and for women's rights and racial equality - all of the unpopular causes of the day. It's hard for today's young people to visualize a time when all bank clerks had white faces and civil service posts were reserved for the sons of the gentry. But Amy Bailey helped change the face of Jamaica.

She was so happy about the video production we did at Sistren Research about herself and Miss May, and of course she was deeply touched by the awarding of the Order of Jamaica shortly after the video was launched. She took my hand and said, "I'll never forget this year!" And then she said, "I pray the Lord takes me quickly". Well, the Lord followed instructions. I'm sure wherever she is, Amy has already rolled up her sleeves and set about getting Heaven properly organized. The last thing she said to me was "I'm burning up, Cynthia, I'm burning up with things to do for this country!"

Well, Miss Amy lit a fire. It's up to the rest of us to keep the flame burning. We'll truly miss her.

*Cynthia Wilmot*  
*Director, "Miss Amy and Miss May"*

## **Genuine Consumer Advocate**

Ms. Amy Bailey, Educator, Social Worker, Teacher, Consumer Advocate (who has bid us goodbye in her 95th year) has influenced the lives of thousands in the classroom and in the wider community, as an active Christian whose beliefs were the foundation of her work and relationships with others.

Ms. Amy was loved and respected by all who knew her. She motivated people to excel, and spared no effort in encouraging them and helping them over the rough spots.

Ms. Amy was a disciplinarian. She instilled respect for discipline in the young people whose lives touched hers. Her training of 4H Club members was exemplary: her constant reminder of their role in building the New Jamaica, which called for hard work, respect for elders, commitment and loyalty to justice, truth and freedom.

Ms. Amy was a genuine consumer advocate, who kept abreast of all that was happening in this field: she would 'phone us to point out any case that appeared to be an infringement of consumers' rights.

We will all miss Ms. Amy Bailey very much. May her soul rest in peace.

*National Consumers League*

## **Miss Amy Stepped Out**

At a time when women, particularly black women, were severely hampered because of prejudice, lack of education and an economic base, Miss Amy stepped out. She laid the basis for women to take their destiny in their own hands and made it easier for those of us who are now trying to carry on with that work.

*Women's Housing Group*

## **Lasting Monument**

Your contribution to the women's movement will be a lasting monument to the lives of all Jamaican women.

*Combined Disabilities Association Women's Group*



## **Champion of Women's Rights**

Miss Amy can fittingly be described as a "champion of women's rights". She had the clear vision, the heartfelt belief and the unwavering courage needed to champion a cause that is in advance of established society. As we work for the principle of rights as well as jobs for women in the garment industry, particularly in the free zones, we are inspired by her example.

### *Women's Action Committee*

## **Good News to the Poor**

The women of the Church join with all other women in saluting Amy Bailey whose life has touched so many of us through the formal education system, through her Training Centre for girls and through the many social causes she championed for the freeing of women. Truly her life has been a sterling example of the liberating purpose of Christ to "bring good news to the poor - liberty to the captives and to set free the oppressed".

### *Church Women United Jamaica.*

From God (Allah) we come and to God (Allah) we return.

### *Sankore-Nubian Cultural Workshop*

## **Beacon of Light**

The Association of Women's Organisations in Jamaica (AWOJA), hails the life and work of Ms. Amy Beckford Bailey, O.J., an outstanding Jamaican woman who fought for equal opportunity for women and for their participation in public life.

Ms. Amy, teacher, social worker, farmer and worker was leader of the Jamaican women's movement in the '30s and was a stalwart in her work on behalf of women and children.

She was an inspiration and a beacon of light to the many women's organisations that have been formed since that time, and we pledge to continue the spirit of her work in the future.

### *Association of Women's Organisations in Jamaica*

## **Exemplary Courage**

Ms. Amy Bailey will be long remembered in the annals of Jamaica's history for her courage, her vision and her commitment to the development of our country.

She dared to take positive action and to speak out on issues affecting her fellow men and women, when others were simply fed up with social conditions. She bothered to put pen to paper, to express her views and to motivate others to take action, when others were satisfied with being silent spectators.

The Council of Voluntary Social Services commends Ms. Amy for her personal demonstration of unselfish voluntarism and her support for organisations which promote social welfare and development. We are particularly appreciative of her dedication to the betterment of women in Jamaica, especially where Family Planning is concerned.

Her courage will be an example for many generations to follow.

*Council of Voluntary Social Services (CVSS)*  
*Women's Sector*

## **Unparalleled Dedication**

The students and staff of the Women's Centre Programme pay tribute to the immeasurable contribution to the upliftment of young women by the inimitable Amy Bailey.

Amy Bailey's life was a vocation. Her dedication to the cause of women was unparalleled in her time.

The Women's Centre Programme accepts the loss of our sister with grief but gives thanks for the life of one who committed herself to the working class women of her Nation.

*Staff and Students*  
*Women's Centre Programme for Adolescent Mothers*

## Woman of Vision

The Women and Development Studies Group of the UWI bids Amy Bailey farewell. She has inspired many generations of Afro-Jamaicans to strive and achieve excellence.

Like her namesakes Amy Ashwood Garvey and Amy Jacques Garvey, she developed great consciousness about contribution of the Africans to the development of Jamaica as well as tremendous organizational skills in the Universal Negro Improvement Association.

On this foundation of racial pride and self-knowledge she engaged her considerable intellectual and academic talent in the battle for advancing Jamaican women whether in traditional women's work as domestics for which training and compensation were required or in planning new roles as an advocate of women's reproductive rights.

A practical woman and a woman of vision, she mortgaged her resources to make the Housecraft Training Centre a reality, and she made alliances with women of other races and classes to further women's cause.

Thank God "for Amy Bailey", a great 20th Century woman.

*UWI Women and Development Studies Group*

## Outspoken, Strong Leader

The Bureau of Women's Affairs is saddened by the passing of Miss Amy Bailey, O.J.

She has served actively in Jamaica's educational and social life and was active in the Women's Movement. She will be remembered for her outspokenness and strong leadership qualities.

The Bureau wishes to extend sympathies especially to her sister Miss Elsie Bailey and close relatives and friends.

She will certainly be missed.

*Bureau of Women's Affairs*

## "No-Nonsense" Woman

The Organisation of Women for Progress (OWP) and the Women's Resource and Outreach Centre (WROC) pay tribute to Ms. Amy Beckford Bailey, who stood out among women in Jamaica's recent history.

She made it possible for poorer Jamaicans to pursue and achieve goals and better themselves. At a time when society promoted the idea that a woman's only mission in life was to be wife and mother, Ms. Amy challenged women to seek wide opportunities through education, to set their sights on new occupations, to enter the political life of the country, to share responsibility for national decision-making.

Ms. Amy particularly challenged the Black Woman to a sense of pride in herself and her potential. It was her commitment to women's rights which propelled her work in the formation of the Women's Liberal Club, the Family Planning League and the Jamaica Federation of Women.

She was a "no-nonsense" woman. She was fearless in speaking the truth even when this was considered "bad manners", if not dangerous. Ms. Amy's personal courage, her pioneering spirit and her tremendous sacrifices for and on behalf of us, will long be remembered.

### *Organisation of Women for Progress & Women's Resource and Outreach Centre*

## Willingness to Give

It is with profound regret that we learn of the passing of Miss Amy Beckford Bailey, O.J., M.B.E., J.P., one of Jamaica's most distinguished and patriotic daughters. Miss Bailey's work in the field of education and training is legendary. A woman of indomitable spirit, she was never afraid to speak or write against injustice and she often stood alone for what was right. Her contribution to the teaching profession and her services as a dynamic social worker are well known throughout Jamaica and the West Indies. A pioneer in the development of training opportunities for underprivileged women, Miss Bailey was the founder of the Housecraft Training Centre. She gave dignity to what was then known as domestic science. Under her guidance at the Centre, young women found new hope and new meaning to life. She moulded their character and taught them skills. Miss Amy's life was characterized by her willingness to give and she did so unstintingly.

It was in recognition of her outstanding national service, especially in uplifting the less fortunate, that the Government awarded her the Order of Jamaica earlier this year.

We extend our condolences to Miss Bailey's relatives.

*People's National Party Women's Movement*

## "Do Not be a Little Lime, Small and Sour"

Woman of integrity, strength and distinction.  
For your commitment to the development of our country,  
We shall remember you.

For your belief in the beauty of human dignity -  
Embedded in splendour, waiting to burst forth in the light,  
For the training and nurturing you gave to the young and the women of  
our land,  
We shall remember you.

For your belief in the training of women to fit themselves  
For political leadership,  
We shall remember you and try to fulfill your dream.

When the challenges of life shall face us,  
We'll each remember as you said:  
"Do not be a little lime, small and sour".  
Miss Amy, may your soul rest in peace.

*National Organisation of Women*

*May light eternal shine upon her*

Representatives from the following Organisations make up the Guard of Honour:

*Association of Women's Organisations in Jamaica (AWOJA)*

*Bureau of Women's Affairs*

*Church Women United Jamaica*

*Council of Voluntary Social Services*

*Girls' Brigade*

*Girl Guides*

*Jamaica Federation of Women*

*Kiwanis Club of New Kingston*

*Mothers Union (St. Matthew's Church)*

*National Union of Democratic Teachers*

*National Organisation of Women*

*Organisation of Women for Progress*

*People's National Party Women's Movement*

*Salvation Army*

*Shortwood Teachers' College*

*Sistren Theatre Collective*

*Sistren Research*

*St. Peter Claver Women's Housing Cooperative*

*Teens in Action*

*U.W.I. Women's & Development Studies Group*

*Woman Incorporated*

*Women's Action Committee*

*Women's Centre*

*Women's Housing Group*

*Women's Media Watch*

*Women's Resource & Outreach Centre*

*Y.W.C.A.*

*Y.M.C.A.*

*Thanks to Carol Bell (MRCS) and Paul Aiken*



October 10, 1990