

WE HERITAGE ON DISPLAY



We Gatherin'
2025

BARBADOS

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HOME

We Gatherin' in Barbados... to Celebrate who we are!

ST. Philip

St. Philip sits on the southeasterly, rugged but picturesque rump of Barbados' "leg of lamb" geographical shape. It is by far the largest of our eleven parishes comprising 15, 040 acres, 730 more than Christ Church which is the second largest parish with 14, 301 acres. St. Philip is two and a half times larger than St. Joseph, the smallest parish, comprising 6,010 acres, and contains 500 acres more than St. James and St. Joseph combined.

St. Philip is named for St. Philip the Apostle and was so named, long before this final Barbadian parish was approved and confirmed as an administrative centre by Governor Philip Bell, after 1645. Before then the chapel had existed as a chapel of ease in the parish of Christ Church, out of which St. Philip, earlier considered a satellite borough, was eventually carved. The final survey resulted in the new parish having a larger land space than its mother.

Topography of St. Philip

The parish occupies an elevated coastal plain which stretches from its southern extremity near Gemswick - the former Penny's Hole - to the base of the Moncreiffe Hill above Oughterson, then inland towards neighbouring St. John and west towards Byde's Mill in St. George. The black soil is shallow and, like St. Lucy, allowed mostly for grass crops, including sugar cane. Only in rare cases were root crops planted.

The Churches

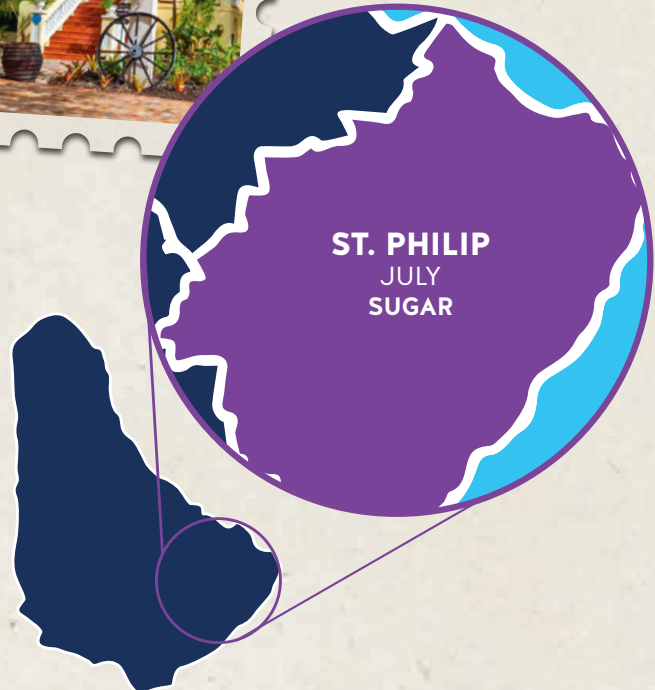
The earliest record of the parish church is dated 1640, but since it is most likely that original Wolverstone land grants were dispensed by Governor Hawley before he finally demitted office in 1640, it is almost sure that the first wooden chapel might have been erected as early as 1635. It is also known that this first timber chapel would have been replaced circa 1660, as were all other extant chapels, for none of the other original timber chapels survived the first four decades of settlement. That second building was severely damaged by the hurricane of 1780 and a new church was built in 1786 but was ravaged by the great hurricane of 1831. Rebuilt and consecrated by Bishop William Hart Coleridge on October 20th, 1836, it was restored through voluntary subscriptions and rededicated by Bishop Drexel Gomez on December 17th, 1979.

Anglican chapels of ease in the parish are St. Catherine's (consecrated 1841), St. Martin's, 1860, and Holy Trinity of 1830. Of historical interest: when the Methodists first came to Barbados in 1788, St. Philip was one of their earliest outposts, with a mission at Supers. They eventually created a strong presence in the parish with chapels now established at Beulah, Ebenezer, Rices, and Shrewsbury. Moravians, Catholics, Mormons, Adventists and Pentecostals are more recent arrivals.

Barbados' Most Easterly

Perhaps the most widely visible man-made structure in Barbados is the newly refurbished lighthouse at East Point. It can be seen from various vantage points in St. Philip, St. John, St. Andrew, St. Peter and as far north as Cove Bay, St. Lucy, some fifteen miles away. It can also be seen from some parts of St. Patrick's, Christ Church,

which means that it is visible from six of Barbados' eleven parishes. Of the four lighthouses in Barbados, East Point, also named 'Ragged Point', is the third oldest and tallest, at 97 feet (29.5 m). It was recently refurbished and is open to visitors.



The Train is Coming

When the Barbados Railway functioned from 1881 to 1937, there were 11 stations starting from the Terminus at Fairchild Street and ending eventually at Belleplaine in St. Andrew. On the way it made four stops in our parish: Carrington, Sunbury, Bushy Park and Three Houses, the most stations in any one parish.

Only in St. Philip

Culpepper Island, named after the owners of the old plantation nearest to it, is a tiny piece of land some half a kilometer south of Skeete's Bay and a similar distance to the north-west of Ragged Point Lighthouse. It is about 35 metres long by 25 metres wide, 20 feet (7.5 metres) above sea level and about 40 metres from shore. One can walk to it at low tide, or it can be reached by a short swim at high tide. Its main claim to fame is that it is now the largest piece of land off Barbados' coast since Pelican Island was joined to the mainland when the Deep Water Harbour was constructed circa 1960.

With so many roads on a small island like Barbados, it is inevitable there would be a number of four-cross roads, created when two roads intersect. Only in St. Philip will one find three roads intersecting and forming Six Cross Roads. To the author's knowledge there is only one other such place, in the United States of America. Better known as Six Roads, St. Philip, this is the largest of a series of smaller business enclaves in outlying parishes. It looks more like a small town, with some forty places of business.

St. Philip has the largest sporting arena in Barbados and the leading circuit racing facility in the English-speaking Caribbean - the Bushy Park Racing Circuit. First used in 1971 and upgraded in 2013 into a category 3 international car racing circuit, it can accommodate 25, 000 spectators. The track is 2.5km long and cars speed up to 130mph (209kph). The parish had long been a venue for racing - horse racing - at the said Bushy Park. The

stretch of road, then unpaved, led from the plantation, southwards to the Home Agricultural Station. That avenue was at one time referred to as the Race Road.

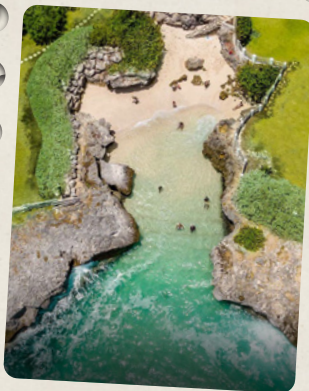
The Barbados National Oil Company Limited, sited at Woodbourne, is the sole entity responsible for production of crude oil from beneath the earth's surface. The first Woodbourne well was drilled in 1966 (although oil and gas production in Barbados began in the 1870s) and to date over 200 oil wells have been drilled in this area which spans Edgumbe, Lower Greys and Boarded Hall. There are other wells drilled outside of the Woodbourne area e.g. at Bissex Hill, the Ridgeback, Turners Hall, and Scotland District to name a few.

St. Philip's Most Wanted

It was way back in 1948 that a young man, Lloyd Linton was accused of stabbing to death one of his Brereton Village colleagues. Nobody has ever given a reason for the altercation and death for, simply put, Linton obviously fled the scene and has never been found. He was the subject of an island wide manhunt - for years - and his name was conjured up to frighten little children, all over Barbados, into good behaviour. If Lloyd Linton is still alive - and he very well could be -he would have eluded the long arm of the law for seven years.

The Mobile Cinema

The second public park in Barbados, King George V Memorial Park, was opened on May 3rd, 1936, and followed the 1909 opening of Queen's Park, Bridgetown. The mobile cinema was brought to Barbados in February 1945 and placed under the joint control of the Government Information Service, the Director of Education, and the Chief Medical Officer, to help provide public education as well as a source of entertainment. Its first programme was screened on the night of March 12th, 1945, at the King George V Memorial Park. St. Philip boasts of two public parks, the other being Three Houses Park, opened on National Hero's Day, April 28th, 1990, comprises 10 acres, while King George V Park is 19 acres.



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There was once a zoo in St. Philip, the Oughterson Zoological Park, established by naturalist the late Bill Miller, who has been credited as the person who introduced tilapia to Barbados. Among the animals there were a pair of zebras, a tapir, green monkeys, snakes, tortoises and mongooses, the latter of which were tame enough to allow visitors to touch them. Along with other exotic birds, the endangered St. Vincent parrot was bred there.

Education in the Parish

Ever since the beginning of English Barbados, there were efforts and some endowments to educate the children of the parish. During the episcopacy of Bishop Mitchinson, Government-funded primary schools were established at nearly all chapels, but earlier, circa 1831, in the time of Bishop Coleridge, a private boarding school for white children was established. Trinity Central School soon ran into financial difficulty and asked Government for help, with an 1838 proposal to open its doors to 'pupils of all colours'. Most of its pupils eventually transferred to other schools when Trinity closed.

Presently there are public primary schools at St. Marks, St. Catherine's, St. Philip, St.

Martins-Mangrove, Reynold Weekes (formerly Four Roads), and Hilda Skeene. There is one secondary institution: Princess Margaret at Six Roads, was opened by Government in 1955 under principal Reginald Lewis. Industry High, a privately owned school, was opened by Hilda Skeene; and Mapp's College, opened by Graham Wilkes. Both subsequently went out of business.

The Barbados Workers' Union Labour College, now renamed the Frank Walcott Labour College, is a residential arm of the Barbados Workers' Union, opened on September 20th, 1974 as a result of the pressing need for an institution of this nature to cater to the specialized requirements of the membership of the trade union. The college is located at Mangrove and occupies ten acres of the former Mangrove plantation.

Dodds Plantation and its Institutions

Dodds, originally a successful sugar plantation, comprises 23.175 hectares or 57.264 acres, practically all of which is now occupied by two penal institutions, and a football sized playing field at the Government Industrial School, as well as the prison farms.

Other Special Features

The Crane Hotel, first opened in 1887, is the second oldest hotel in Barbados after the Marine, which was opened in 1878. The Crane developed out of a large villa believed to have been built in the late eighteenth century. It was used throughout the nineteenth century as a holiday house known locally as a 'bay house'. It was bought in 1886 by Donald M. Simpson and Co., enlarged and converted into a resort hotel.

A Great Myth

Another famous hotel, Sam Lord's Castle, was originally built as the luxurious home of planter and businessman Samuel Hall Lord, of whom a great myth was perpetuated for ages. Jealous of his success, competitors concocted the story that 'Sam planted lanterns in his coconut trees to lure passing ships aground. He would then, like a pirate, raid the ships and dispose of the crews.' Research has shown that Mr. Lord was seldom in Barbados when a passing ship ran aground off the coast of St. Philip. After his death in 1844, shipwrecks continued off the dangerous southeastern coast until well into the 20th century.

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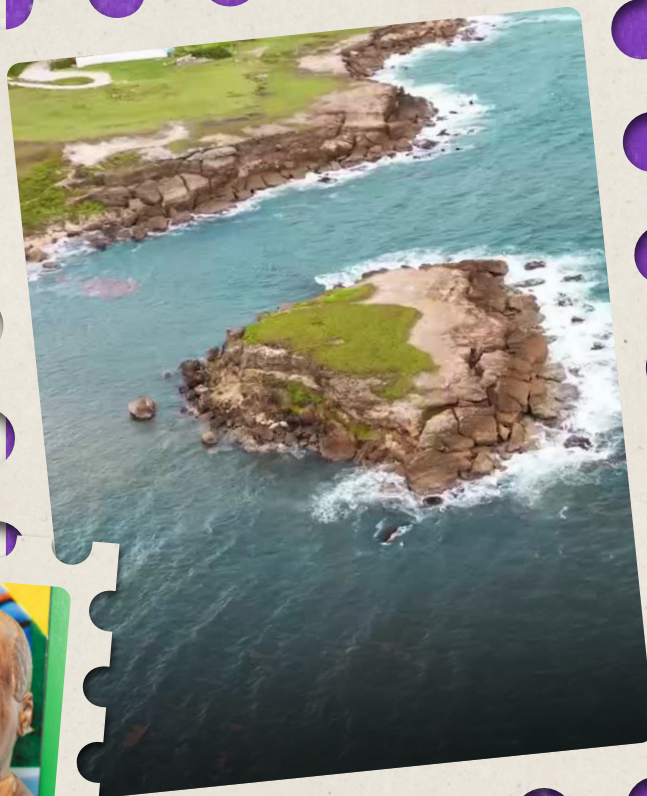
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Barbados' reform school is called the Government Industrial School and has been on Dodds plantation from 1883, 124 years before the adult prison, sometimes called 'Big Dodds'. Initially, delinquent boys were housed at Boarded Hall in St. George, but reports of inhumane treatment there, forced the closure of that institution. The girls were housed at the northern end of Dodds plantation, in the building now at the entrance of the adult prison. The boys, removed to the southern end, were derisively called "Dodd's Boys." The girls have since been removed altogether and are now housed in St. Lucy.

Glendairy Prison was established in 1855 in St. Michael, and served Barbados for the next 150 years, until March 30th, 2005, when as a result of a prison riot, a portion of that prison was destroyed by fire. The prisoners were temporarily housed at Harrison's Point, St. Lucy on the abandoned site which the U.S. Naval Base had occupied from October 1st, 1957, until March 31st, 1979. In October 2007, the new Dodd's prison was completed, expediting plans that had long been discussed to build a new prison on the same spot to replace the aging Glendairy.

A National Hero

It was 14th April, 1816, when General Bussoe (Bussa), an African born ranger of Bayley's Plantation, gave the signal for the start of a well-planned and orchestrated slave rebellion, designed to eliminate the elite plantocracy and end slavery which, the slaves thought, had been abolished since 1807, but whose freedoms were continually denied. Unfortunately, the combined forces of the Parish Constables, the militia, and the British



James "Jim" Wedderburn

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Garrison with its far superior armaments, converged from nearby Three Houses Plantation, after the initial outlying skirmishes, to put an end to the Rebellion. General Bussoe was one of the casualties, but dire consequences befell the Barbadian slave population as hundreds more were executed over the next two years. These included a mulatto, Joseph Washington Pitt Franklyn, who, it is said, was denied by the authorities, the bequest of Franklyn's Plantation (now Vineyard) written in the will of his white father. Other innocent slaves were tortured and killed. Some were deported to Sierra Leone. Right Excellent General Bussoe is installed in the pantheon of National Heroes of Barbados.

Other prominent personalities from St. Philip include: The Most Honourable Dame Sandra Prunella Mason GCMG, DA, QC, President of Barbados; The Honourable Freundel Stuart, former Prime Minister of Barbados; The Honourable Sir David Simmons, former Chief Justice of Barbados, who conceptualised and helped to establish the Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ) and The Honourable Reynold Weekes (1913-1995), parliamentary representative with the distinction of having served for twenty years.

The Honourable Florence Daysh (1908-1979) was elected to the vestry of St. Philip, and then to the Legislative Council (now Senate), in each case being the second woman so honoured. She was also the only woman contesting the Federal Parliamentary elections of 1958 which she won, handsomely defeating a young Errol Barrow (later Prime Minister, now The Right Excellent Errol Walton Barrow).

G. Addington Forde, former teacher, cultural officer, folklorist, and author has penned several books including "De Mortar Pestle", 1987; "Folk Beliefs of Barbados", 1988; The 1937 Disturbances of Barbados; and co-authored A-Z of Barbados Heritage, 1989.

James "Jim" Wedderburn CBE was the first Barbadian to win an Olympic medal, a bronze at the 1960 Rome Olympics, competing as a member of the West Indian 4x400m relay team. This was during the years of the

West Indies Federation (1958 - 62). Stetson "Red Plastic Bag" Wiltshire, now Cultural Ambassador, in 1982, at the age of 19, became the youngest person to win the Pic-O-de-Crop calypso competition. He went on to win the competition ten times.

These are among those stalwart 'Philipians' who deserve our undying praise and admiration for the excellence of their scholarship, their enterprise, discipline, and for their varied contributions to the parish and our nation.

Finally, on the highest pedestal, we salute those who have assumed the mantle of longevity.

Our Beloved Centenarians include Alicia Waithe, Claudine Wooding, Dorothy Casey, Dudley Gooding, Erie Forde, Florence Mason, Francis M. Clarke, Gladys Trotman, Gwendolyn Goodridge, Helen Hutchinson, Isabella McCaskie, Leotta Cuffley, Matilda Walker, Melvie Harewood, Viola Haynes and Violet Gilkes.



*Their names are
writ in gold,
Scribed in bold,
And they have
stood the test of
time.
For us to see,*

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