

## Part 6

### Are we there yet? Life after UWI

Cecille DePass

In our eBook, we decided to explore aspects of our lives after we graduated from UWI. Subero's poems identify her life in Trinidad and in Canada; Edward's essay, like Cunningham-Heron's and Lumsden's earlier contributions, summarizes the practical and conceptual ways in which Geography has played major roles in their respective careers. Woodley Griffin adopts another approach to highlight how an understanding of Geography, in its broadest sense, has enhanced her appreciation of the natural world. Lumsden includes two photographs to illustrate her work, when she was as an international development consultant, in the Middle East. Dabydeen's poems reinforce our understanding of the land and people in Guyana. (Two countries which were included in our formal Geography high school education, in the 1960s). Morrissey, currently a consultant in educational, international development, explains Barry Floyd's impact on his studies, his emerging love of the Caribbean, and his writing and publishing of several Caribbean Geography high school texts. Finally, Baugh's poem paints vivid pictures of the St. Augustine Campus and the social life of some of the highly respected professors.

In many parts of Asia, Africa, and Latin America, 'development' has become for many people an odious word because of its connotations of patronization, unfulfilled promises and, worse, deceitful cover-up of inhuman exploitation; they prefer terms like 'liberation'.

For us, development is a universal process which implies three equally important matters: economic growth; fair and equitable distribution of the benefits of such growth, and, increasing participation by everyone—especially by people who were denied it before—in the political and cultural activities of society. (Mathew Zachariah, 1983, Guest Editor, *Canadian and International Education*, Vol. 12, No. 3, p. 5).

Part 6 presents some central aspects of our work lives and lived experiences after we graduated from Geography, at the UWI. For some of us who stayed to work in the Caribbean, we remember that the late 1960s to early 1970s, were marked by a sense of optimism. As mentioned in Part 1, a first degree, virtually, assured us of jobs in Carnoy's high education segment of the labour market. In graduating, we assumed adult roles. We joined the ranks of our mature colleagues, usually school teachers, with whom we had worked on campus. Many of us combined paid careers with motherhood or fatherhood. Still others, eventually, became full time career professionals and/or academics.

The following guides relate some of their memories:

- Terry/Teresa (Lee) Subero whom we saw last, in Part 5, as a Freshette who won a Carnival Queen competition, at St. Augustine, shares two poems. Her first poem speaks

to the life of being a wife and mother, whose husband worked as a professional, in the oil industry, in southern Trinidad. The second poem was written in Calgary, sometime after migration.

- Initially, Marcia Edwards and Shirley Woodley Griffin, both became Geography high school teachers. The former in Jamaica, the latter, in the Bahamas. Edwards explains that when she became a resettlement officer for one of the bauxite companies, she was impressed with the determination of one of the small farmers to ensure that his children received a sound education. Griffin, who became an Ontario judge, reflects on the links between humans and nature and Geography's significance to her. In her conclusion, Griffin states that "...Geography is about life". Both contributors expand notions introduced earlier by Faye Lumsden, Angela Cunningham-Heron and Brian Hudson.
- From the early groups of Geography students, several went on to pursue graduate degrees. Angela Cunningham-Heron was one of the first Jamaican women to register for a Master's in Geography at the UWI. Omar Davies, Faye Lumsden, Cecille Harriott DePass, and Hilary Robertson-Hickling, to name a few, were among the Bachelor's graduates who completed postgraduate degrees overseas (See Part 1).
- Mike Morrissey, an honorary UWI, professor, international development educational consultant and resident in Djakarta, explains the development of his love for the Caribbean, and the importance of timing in his professional and academic careers. Barry Floyd's compassionate role in allowing Morrissey to teach high school when he was a graduate student was an extremely important factor. As a Caribbean Geographer and educator, Morrissey has written and published several Geography school texts.
- As we see throughout the book, our Geography professors, lecturers and instructors, at strategic times, have constantly played major roles and functions in the evolution of many of our careers and lives.
- Poems by Cyril Dabydeen and Edward Baugh, in different ways, address the complexities and interactions between the human (socio-cultural) and natural landscapes. Baugh's: "Old Talk" conjures up vivid pictures of looking towards the St. Augustine Campus, as a group of professors participate actively, in a lively lime. Dabydeen's poems, present graphic snapshots of the land and people in Guyana and Trinidad---Two of the many countries which intrigued and fired the imaginations of some of us when we studied for the O-level Geography exams in the 1960s.
- Finally, Part 6 concludes with a photograph, an early map of the Caribbean, to remind us that in the 1960s through to the 1990s, many students who came to the Mona Campus journeyed considerable distances to study for undergraduate and graduate degrees. (See earlier discussions, egs. by Faye Lumsden and Cecille DePass, as well as, insights shared by Fitzgerald M. Jeffrey, Adrienne Chung Aarons and Judy Rocke). As stated by Fitzgerald M. Jeffrey, the relationships forged while studying at the UWI have lasted a lifetime.

## ODE TO THE MAYARO HOUSEWIFE

Terry/Teresa Subero, nee Lee

Without my co-operation,  
It's national liquidation.  
Should I my duty and devotion skip,  
The entire country  
Sinks into receivership.  
I'm the power behind the throne.  
Because of me this country has grown.  
Love, support, fidelity, motivation,  
I give to my man in the off-shore location.  
With neither recompense nor remuneration,  
Just sea-blast and merciless corrosion -  
Domestic efficiency's ruthless erosion.  
But with stalwart heart and cheerful mien  
My faithful contribution is never seen.  
Say, who am I that can so boast?  
Why, wife, mother, woman of the oil-bearing south-east coast.

(Written in Mayaro, Trinidad & Tobago. In 1987, this poem won a radio competition, sponsored by a Trinidadian brewery).

**F A I T H**

**Terry/Teresa Subero, nee Lee**

A gift bestowed,  
A gift possessed.  
Divinely loved,  
Forever blessed.  
Know comfort,  
Warmth secure.  
Some darkness, pain,  
At times endure.  
With promise,  
Hope, and patient virtue,  
Grow, reach beyond  
fragile walls  
- wary of the shards that test,  
that strengthen -  
With Him who conquered death,  
Defied decay,  
And grasp the treasure, joy,  
Of life anew.  
Reborn, restored,  
Transformed,  
Transfigured, too.

(Presented at an Easter Retreat, Calgary, Alberta, circa 2002).

## **Geography!! A Wonderful Subject ... but ...**

**Marcia Edwards, nee Hutchinson**  
**(Class of '72)**

As an early 1970's graduate of the UWI's Geography Department, it was a logical development for me to pursue a career in Urban and Regional Planning. Such a career, would certainly, give me room to test the many theories learnt during the study of this very comprehensive subject – theories related to: location, urban growth and decay, human behavior, economic development, population changes – and the list could go on and on. It was great to apply these theories when preparing policy documents, doing needs assessments, or making recommendations for future actions to accomplish stated development objectives.

There was a sense of security and feeling of confidence in proposing actions based on the tried and tested theories such as the Concentric Circle theory of urban growth, or to do projections based on theories of population growth. The theories allowed us to understand and thus, to acknowledged the connections between e.g., weather patterns and economic activity; the existence of certain facilities and population growth; and as importantly, land use and land value. I never thought that my job would lead to me questioning some of the theories we were taught, but – it did.

When I became the Resettlement Officer for a large industrial organization which relied much on using, one of the country's natural resources – I had to do several surveys of living conditions and life styles of a segment of our rural population who lived and farmed the land in question. I learnt a major lesson from my surveys. That experience caused me to significantly, question the authenticity of a theory which automatically increases the value of property with increased urban development. Faced with the need to decide on compensation values for several farmers whose lands were needed to carry out the organization's proposed activities, I sought official valuations for these lands.

The ingenious ways in which the owners/occupants used the lands to achieve their life's goals were unbelievable; but the assigned values were always much lower than the products of the land would suggest. I became and remain convinced that there needs to be another dimension to how land values are determined even if the desired urban type of physical infrastructure is absent. I will outline a case in point, and leave you to judge.

Some years ago, I surveyed a family of parents and six children, who were living on 2.5 acres (a parcel of land). At the time, I met them, the oldest child was in college; the second was just leaving high school and on his way to college. The third, fourth and fifth children were in high school while the youngest was attending primary school. I worked with them long enough to see the two eldest children graduate from college, the third and fourth children were in college, and the other 2 were in high school. I followed their progress over the years, and now all six children have graduated college and have taken their place in the working world.

Why was this of interest to me? This was a farmer whose wife was a ‘bammy’ maker and neither of them could properly, write their names. They had built a little house in one corner of the land and had organized the use of the remainder of the land to ensure that they were always reaping something from the land to sell, and to allow them to educate their children. I remain amazed at the level of organization and dedication from two ‘uneducated’ adults in accomplishing their goal of educating all of their children.

On the farm, there was a section with different types of fruit trees which guaranteed constant yields, and there were the annual crops such as, yams and potatoes. There was a well maintained section for animals which were timed for sale or slaughter in time to make major school payments such as, fees for the new school year or exams. There were always some short-term crops rotated in a way to ensure a yield each month.

Supplemented by his wife’s bammy making, he succeeded in ensuring that all his 6 children were educated. This farm had minor physical infrastructure works. Access was via pathways rather than roads. They relied on tank water supply. They had acquired electricity service shortly before my entry into their lives. By current standards, theirs was considered a backward way of life.

Each time I had to visit that family, I asked myself the question – given his limited educational limitations, if he had occupied a high priced parcel of urban land and depended on wage earnings to take him through, could he have educated his 6 children in the way he did?

Why then is so much monetary value placed on urban land, because of the physical infrastructure, while very productive rural land is relegated to such low values with very little, if any, consideration given to its productivity? Somehow we need to establish a measureable link between what a parcel of land allows its occupants to accomplish and the economic value placed on it.

I acknowledge that the critical mind which led me to question the parameters used to establish land values came from the Geography background which exposes and encourages its practitioners to cross disciplinary borders. Geography fosters the appreciation of multi-cultural thought, and more nuanced thinking, in terms of its approaches to life among people who live in adjacent communities, as demonstrated in my case study, and who are an integral part of the study of Human Geography.

Geography? - A wonderful subject - but we must retain open minds and continually, allow ourselves to accept observations that defy the official theories, we have learnt over the years. Such thinking allows us to form new concepts, as we appreciate the importance of the changes and differences that present themselves to us. By so doing, we continually, expand the body of knowledge that makes up the study of Geography.

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## **“Geography is really about life”**

**Shirley Woodley Griffin**

One of my favourite poems is by Joyce Kilmer (1886-1918), called ‘Trees’. It starts:

‘Think that I shall never see  
a poem lovely as a tree...’

The symbolism of a tree is particularly meaningful for me and describes some of my memories of studying Geography at UWI. The roots of a tree, in my view, represent the professors and staff in an organization who give of themselves, often with little recognition. In Ontario, where I have lived and reared my family, each year, a well established deciduous tree represents the changing seasons, with the new growth, depicting a promise of spring, and a new life.

I remember, well, that Dr. Mulchansingh, was a very kind, gentle professor whose open door policy was welcomed by many of us. In many ways he was a solid, well rooted tree who gave so much of his knowledge and time to his students.

Trees, Corries, Glaciers, Lakes, Seas, Colours of Autumn, Clouds, Pebbles, Rocks. All these are lovely and an important part of life which touch every human being who travels this earth for no matter how long or short a time. All of these phenomena fall under the vast umbrella called ‘Geography’ which we learned about in school and in far more detail, at UWI.

Two months ago I met a former student who had been in one of my Geography classes when I was a teacher. She is now a wife and mother of adult children. She greeted me fondly, she said that she was very happy to see me after so many years but then, within fifteen minutes, she could not resist the comment that she did not ‘like Geography’. How curious it was that when she saw me she remembered Geography.

On the other hand, some years ago I had a call from a former student who had called to thank me for Geography. He had been able to successfully, write ‘O-level’ exams as a result of a challenge I had given to his class. He is now, successful in the business world. He did not express liking or disliking the subject, but he thanked me for Geography without which, he feels, he would not have been able to complete his education.

The 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Geography Department at the University of the West Indies has brought me to reflect about this subject’s continuing impact. I find Geography to be all embracing, filled with beauty and calm, frailty and power. Geography touches us all, whether we reside in the city or in the country. I dare to say that, in fact, Geography plays a major part in our everyday lives, and in such a manner which cannot be either proposed or claimed by any other academic subject.

I think that a trip to the Grand Canyon first sparked my active amazement at the pervasive nature of Geography. The Grand Canyon had been pictured in our Geography books and was described for its magnificence. However, I found that the pictures and descriptions cannot replace the view of this magnificent feature through the naked eye. Depth, width, size, colour and grandeur all combine to illuminate the very essence of Geographical reality. Geography is beauty beyond compare. My memory of the Grand Canyon has remained indelibly etched in my mind. Although we tried to take several photographs of it. We were never able to capture its splendour, and its spirit which we felt, as we stood there simply, awestruck.

Geography is not always peaceful, not so anywhere in this world. Life is punctuated with the intense power of tornadoes, hurricanes, typhoons, volcanic eruptions and other manifestations of nature which could and usually does, strike fear and disaster to anyone caught in nature's destructive path. In many countries, disaster can strike at any time. In the tropics, rain will give way to drought and drought will end with torrential rain. Rivers, everywhere, still make their way tirelessly to the sea. Geography is equalization.

In short, wherever we are, Geography dominates our everyday lives. Although humanity has had and continues to have a major impact on the Geography of our planet, our relationships with the Geography and the planet itself, cannot be diminished or ignored.

Geography remains an all embracing reality which we face every day. It is a controlling factor in our lives. Perhaps we can say that to a great extent, Geography is really about Life.



**BROTHER-MAN**

--in Georgetown

**Cyril Dabydeen**

*(after R.B.)*

The Amerindian  
brother-man  
from the interior  
amid quick  
compressed  
*Amens--*  
told us  
of the spreading  
of the light  
among the tribe  
and condemned  
greedy business-men  
who worked  
Amerindian staff  
on a Sunday  
so they couldn't  
find time  
to come out  
and pray

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**ANOTHER PLACE**  
(For Ken Ramchand)

**Cyril Dabydeen**

Along the North and South Ranges,  
Or looking back from Tobago, if you will;

I take for granted your aloofness,  
With trees bending to the lip of the sea.

All journeys have their sources, I say—  
What we acknowledge and will soon forget:

A hummingbird twittering loudly,  
Or a Carib offering a blood sacrifice

To an ancient god at La Brea, do you know?  
The Chaguanas sun on a Caroni swamp,

Fronds wavering because of what the eyes  
Cannot see from the distant White North.

Indeed, let us remain in one place  
For more than a lifetime, you declare --

Debris will never overtake us  
As we come to regard weather as landscape;

The mountains start withering or shrinking  
At the speed of light in the sunset...

And I bid you farewell with arabesques  
Of memory that will never fade --

Because of the ways of the ocean,  
The wind stronger without the usual

Hurricane: the sun still going down...  
To the bottom of a deeper sea.

**“...Those few years associated with The Geography Department were fundamental to my career development.” A conversation with Mike Morrissey.<sup>1</sup>**

*Cecille: Mike, to begin our conversation, let’s hear your memories of coming to Jamaica and becoming a Jamaican - and Caribbean - citizen! How did that happen?*

*Mike:* The Geography Department transformed my life, Cecille. But what led me there at all? My undergraduate years were in what was then called “Welsh Wales” the University College of Wales, in Aberystwyth. English-born of Irish Morrissey’s, I had been brought up on the right of Ireland to freedom from England. *Plaid Cymru*, the independence movement for Wales, was very active in my university years. Nonetheless when I applied for a teaching job in Jamaica, I had no idea that I would not return to Britain to live. It was merely an opportunity to see more of the world. I had never flown in a plane, so opted for the sea voyage in 1968 to Jamaica in the SS *Golfito*, a banana boat which carried 80 passengers.

I began teaching at York Castle at a time that ‘Black Power’ was in the air (Browns Town was a centre of radical activity). Perhaps because of my rebellious Irish background, I was not unsympathetic to the cause and - without intending to - integrated into the life of rural Jamaica (including, being a supervisor in the 1970 Population Census). Beyond Jamaica, I explored the region in every school holiday. In my first two years, I visited all the British and Dutch West Indian islands, sailing there and back on the Federal Maple and Federal Palm. Flew to Haiti (where I spent a day in Papa Doc’s prison in Port au Prince); visited Mexico, Venezuela and Curacao. In hindsight, it seems that I had quickly become intoxicated with the Geography and cultures of Jamaica and the Caribbean. I did not consider a visit to the United States for several more years! By 1972, I voted in a Jamaican election (as a resident Commonwealth Citizen), and two years later I was registered as a citizen of Jamaica. Through my work over the decades, I have contributed to the development of education in various ways throughout the Caribbean, and even lived for extended periods in Trinidad, Barbados, Saint Maarten, Belize and Dominica.

*Cecille: Tell us about your career path from teaching Geography in Jamaican high schools to playing a role in the evolution of Geography education across the Commonwealth Caribbean?*

*Mike:* I am not so sure that I would call it a path, Cecille. It was more an evolution following various paths, sometimes, accepting seemingly, impossible tasks and somehow, making a success of them. I was Head of Geography at two contrasting high schools, the second was The Queen’s School in Kingston. I moved from Brown’s Town to be able to take the Masters at Mona. I read all that I could on the Geography of Jamaica and the Caribbean, and was enthusiastic about fieldwork for all classes. My reputation came to the notice of Professor John Figueroa, Head of Education at Mona. I was asked to deliver the Geography education, Diploma programme part time, which I did from October 1971 – my earlier classes comprise teachers from many Caribbean countries (I continued in this role until 1997 when I moved out of university teaching into education development work). Even as early as 1972, school publishers were knocking on my door, suggesting that I write textbooks for Geography for Jamaica and the Caribbean.

In 1975, the Ministry of Education appointed me as its representative on the newly formed CXC Geography panel to replace the Cambridge GCE. Then in 1976, I was appointed to a UWI

lectureship to cover Geography and Social Studies education, a position which combined my interests in promoting Geography as a school subject, undertaking research in Geography education, developing high quality instructional materials, and so on. My Master's in Education thesis was on the involvement of teachers in the reform of instructional materials for sixth form Geography. Although I moved on from academia in 1998, I continued, to some extent, involvement in Geography education. My Caribbean school atlases, both now in 4<sup>th</sup> editions, continue to be used in primary and secondary schools across the region. If you are interested in the books and articles I have published, they are listed on my web page at <https://sites.google.com/site/michaelpatrickmorrisey/home>

**Cecille:** *Did joining the Geography Department at UWI play a major part in your transformation from classroom teacher to a leadership role in Geography education?*

**Mike:** **Barry Floyd** agreed to my joining his new Masters programme which was full-time in year 1 per UWI's regulations. My headmistress at The Queen's School willingly organised my teaching timetable to make it possible for me to be on campus for lectures. There are many I am thankful to for what you call the 'transformation'. Mona helped me to view the Caribbean as a region. This is not a 'Jamaican thing'. Most Jamaicans see Jamaica linked to the hubs of modern migration and not as a part of a Caribbean region. The Geography Department then had as anchor that unrepentant, Trinidadian **Vernon Mulchansingh** and gathered students from across the West Indies. Equally important was my access on campus to Caribbean thought - anticolonial visions of the History, Economics and Political Science Departments which provided an intellectual basis for revisiting the way the region was interpreted. It is said that converts to Catholicism are the most loyal of Catholics. In the same way, with a new understanding of Caribbean historiography, I became passionate around the need for change in the school curriculum, in the textbooks used in schools, in making access to Caribbean Geographical knowledge to teachers and students across the region.

Halfway through my second year with the Geography Department at Mona, the PNP was victorious and Michael Manley assumed the Prime Ministership. Social justice and change were in the air. I had a strong interest in Political Geography and analysed the 1972 election results. I published my first work, in the Geography Department - *A Spatial Analysis of Jamaica's General Elections in 1967 and 1972: a Study in Electoral Geography*. Going to print gave me new confidence about writing and going public with my conclusions. I was coming out of my 'Geography teacher' persona without even realising it.

I remained close to the Geography Department over the subsequent decades, long after I graduated, even though my base was in the Education Faculty across campus. So much so, that working with David Barker from 1984 we launched a new journal - *Caribbean Geography*. Although I relinquished my position as joint editor in the 1990s (when I joined USAID as its senior education advisor for the eastern Caribbean), David has continued to sustain the journal to the present. It was a vehicle to make research on the region's geography accessible to educational institutions across the region. Published issues are listed here <http://hapi.ucla.edu/journal/detail/106>

**Cecille:** *Several of us, including you, Mike, worked voluntarily in the early 1970s to strengthen and promote the Jamaican Geographical Society (JGS). How did you get involved? How did your involvement contribute to your career?*

**Mike:** At one of the first meetings of the *Jamaican Geographical Society* I attended in 1970, I was nominated editor of the Society's Newsletter. I cannot remember now how it happened, but I certainly threw myself into the role, a new one for me! With **Beverley Phillips'** support, I published frequent newsletters for Geography teachers across the island. We were blessed by some provision in the postal code that made these free newsletters free to post. Thinking back, my involvement was very much as an educator - trying to ensure wide participation in JGS events by teachers and sixth formers across the island. **Faye Lumsden, Vincent George, Brian Hudson** and others had more of a focus on Planning and Development and established a professional society to promote this field. I guess my contribution was to focus JGS on the teaching of Geography. It was indeed a vibrant society with regular and stimulating presentations and fieldwork to mountains, caves, cane fields and cays! One field outing which I organised to Port Antonio involved leasing the train for the day. This was mid-1972 and the JGS's way of saying farewell to Barry Floyd and his family before he headed off to the University of Durham.

**Cecille:** *As well as being awarded the Master of Science (Geography), what other lasting contributions could you attribute to your early association with the Geography Department?*

**Mike:** I have already mentioned several ways, Cecille. In one sense, I made a bad decision in my choice of research. I chose my focus in 1971, soon after I moved from St. Ann to Kingston, and soon after, I had been involved in the population census. St. Ann had caught my heart in a way that Kingston has never (St. Ann still has my heart!). So I stubbornly analysed the migration patterns within that parish as my research, a thesis painfully detailing and explaining rural to urban shifts - a study lost in the archives of time. Yet, I am ever grateful to **Brian Hudson** who took over from **Ann Norton** as supervisor (when she left the island); with all the competing activities in my life, it took some time for the thesis to be finalised. My regret is that I did not select a subject with more social import and on a grander scale. I did not become a Population Geographer, and a study of a single Jamaican parish was in hindsight, far too limited in scope. But out of this, in advising countless students and researchers, I seek to guide them to avoid my own mistake, as I view it. Out of a negative, others benefit!

More broadly though, my work in education development in recent decades is anchored in a need to understand Geographical context in every case. Last year, for example, in considering barriers to primary schooling in Angola, I am continually, analysing the geographical realities – the return of refugee populations from Namibia, drought, agricultural systems, internal migration patterns to the urban oil centres and the ghettos that result. I attribute part of my success in supporting the development of education systems around the world to the knowledge and analytical skills that came out of my association with Geography at Mona.

**Cecille:** *You also took a key role in the evolution of Social Studies in Jamaica and the Caribbean. How did that involvement start? What was the connection to Geography?*

**Mike:** My involvement with Social Studies began in that first year at Mona. I was invited by **Pam Morris**, of the Ministry of Education, to work with her on the development of Social Studies and in training teachers in this new subject via workshops. The terms Social Studies and workshops were both new to me! And so began parallel, interconnected, work in Social Studies, which has continued until today, and a relationship with Jamaica's Ministry of Education which continued in many forms for 40 years.

Pam initially involved me as a Geographer. Pam, Ruby King, Pansy Robinson, Anne Hickling-Hudson and others, pioneered the school subject with its disciplines such as, History and Government. Pam wished that the subject to be introduced in Jamaica would not lose out in terms of Geographical concepts and skills. For my part, my undergraduate degree included History and International politics, so I was a natural fit with the team. We did many things together, but I am perhaps particularly, proud of our textbook for the training of Social Studies teachers: “*Caribbean Social Studies Through Discovery*”, first published in 1980 and still in print today, after several editions.

I went on to work with teachers in several Caribbean countries on the development of country-specific Social Studies textbooks for primary schools. Of course, in these books, I ensured the Geographic knowledge and skills were embedded. Working with various governments and publishers, this work resulted in books and a series of books for Belize, Bahamas, Bermuda, Cayman, Dominica, St. Maarten, Turks and Caicos. I also authored a book: “*Our Island Jamaica*” which is out of print (and out of date), but available for download at [https://www.academia.edu/12235844/Our\\_Island\\_Jamaica](https://www.academia.edu/12235844/Our_Island_Jamaica)

**Cecille:** *Your later career, Mike, seems to have morphed away from Geography. How did that happen?*

**Mike:** As I mentioned earlier, Cecille, my career has not been linear, but a flowing trajectory, like a river on a flood plain, meandering where opportunities arise, always expanding my skills, while continuing to benefit from past experiences. From my association with the Department of Statistics in the Census of 1970, the post of Geographer that was created for me in that Department in 1972, to fast track census data analysis and publication. This was followed by a position in charge of education statistics at the Ministry of Education (all this while slowly completing my Master’s thesis!). These roles, plus my work on the Social Studies curriculum with Pam Morris, brought me into government service.

Thereafter, I became involved with the governance and development of education systems, first in Jamaica, and eventually globally. Much of this transformation happened by chance meetings, and, as I said, accepting challenges. In 2006, the Australian government invited me to be their education adviser for Indonesia. In such positions, I work with several governments, on structuring investments which will be maximally effective. I finished this role with Australia in 2011, and since then have been advisor to the ambition of a Qatari foundation to assist 50 countries to address barriers to out of school children. Our target is to enrol 10 million out of school children. This may seem far from Mona and Barry Floyd, but if Barry had not turned a blind eye in 1970 to my studying and working full time, the river may have flowed in quite another direction, and perhaps one not as personally and professionally fulfilling. Those few years associated with the Geography Department, Cecille, were fundamental to my career development. And I am forever grateful!

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## Endnote

1. Professor Michael Morrissey joined the Graduate programme of the Geography Department at Mona in October 1970. Today he lives in Jakarta, Indonesia and works globally on the provision of educational opportunities to marginalised children. Dr. Cecille DePass interviewed Mike, as he has always been known, concerning the contributions of the Geography Department to his life and career. **Email:** [morrisseyjakarta@gmail.com](mailto:morrisseyjakarta@gmail.com)

## OLD TALK, OR WEST INDIAN HISTORY

Edward Baugh

From Keith Laurence's gracious patio  
on Santa Margarita Circular Road  
we looked down on St. Augustine, the library  
in darkness. Beyond, the line of car lights  
traced the Butler Highway and beyond  
the Plains of Caroni imagining the Ganges.  
A BeeWee sunbird, wing weary, homes  
to Piarco from island hopping all day  
in the sun, from Norman Manley, Munoz  
Marin, Vere Bird, Grantley Adams, which were once  
more felicitously Palisadoes, Isla Verde,  
Coolidge Field, Seawell. Diminished at this distance  
but doggedly a cane fire burns. It has been burning  
for three hundred years. In the morning  
as usual we shall brush the soot from the tablecloth  
and the pillow. A light which illumines  
nothing, our laughter breaks on this hillside,  
cascades to meet the sound of silvered  
steel ascending from a pan yard. Cut  
their names in the bark of this verse: Woodville  
Marshall, Keith Hunte, Bill and Nora  
Mailer, Joy Pilgrim, Laurence, and the bearded  
chief reveller at this wake, the onliest raconteur,  
Augier, Roy, who would pronounce  
the benediction on every late night lime.  
"No, no, we ent going home: we ent  
leaving, we ent going home to night."  
You never heard the same tale twice.

Augier's Veranda Talk, an archive  
of loose leaves scattered up and down  
the archipelago, which only the night wind  
will research. In the library below us, the books  
on their roosts of shelves twitter among themselves  
like schoolboys in dormitories after lights out  
about the futility of scribes and the passion

for fixing the past. Laurence, in his italic  
style, tells a story how at election time  
they dug the road up down the hill  
to fix it, then dug it up again  
to show how they could fix it: History as The Big Fix.  
Roy, ex-Royal Air Force gunner  
tells of sorties among sugar-apple vendors  
in Kingston's Coronation Market – O  
those imperial trades! Now hear this one:  
Paradise is to kotch up with a book, eating  
sugar apple under a sugar apple tree  
and then old Omar Khayyam wouldn't  
have nothing over we.

This settles nothing  
fixes nothing; it is only what I remember  
and what I made up, what I made. I wanted  
something to remember them by, so I invented it.  
At dawn the sunbird will lift from Piarco,  
a busha bird riding out to count his plantations.  
From the height of noon, over Hispaniola  
you will look down through a clarity so absolute  
it hurts – the brown land after  
the denudations of history, the shining caravels  
of clouds, each moored precisely over  
its shadow, and even earth's hurt-  
ling seems to have stopped. But you can't hold  
this high, the engines' throb will cut through  
any epiphany, always, ladies  
and gentlemen, we are about to begin our descent.  
Grip the arm-rest and pray: smooth landings  
mild evenings and gracious patios.

But man,  
how you could ramble so? Yes, I had meant it  
to be purposeful, like history, but is only old talk.

(In Edward Baugh, 2000, "It Was the Singing", pp. 28-30. Toronto & Kingston: Sandberry Press).



**From Faye Lumsden's Archives: "On the road for the World Bank"**

**Project Supervision, Taiz, Yemen, 1991**



I was quite comfortable in my long skirt and long-sleeved shirt, and felt I was accepted.



Faye Lumsden, on a street in Yemen (third from right, wearing pants with her head uncovered).

**Students from across the English-speaking Caribbean travelled considerable distances to come to the UWI/Geography Department**

### **Early Caribbean Map**



Christmas card from Dr. Vernon Mulchansingh to Cecille and Tony DePass. Each year in Calgary, Vernon's Christmas card was eagerly anticipated. It was a welcome reminder of home, and the good times spent at the UWI.