

Mr G: Yes, it was intentional. I don't know why but I just liked the idea.

Carl: Did you every bring any of the children up to Pine Ridge during the lumbering days when you came up here?

Mrs.G.: No, not the lumbering days, but then there were only the two older ones - even then, they were quite young. They wouldn't remember.

Carl: Now we are going to hear from Father Brendan Forsythe, of Freeport.

F.Br: In 1960 when I was chancellor of the Dioces in Nassau the Bishop in Nassau asked me to come out one afternoon for lunch; had an interesting person he wanted me to meet. The interesting person turned out to be Mr. Wallace Groves. In the course of the lunch Mr. Groves ~~asked~~ asked if he could be provided with some Sisters for his school in Grand Bahama, and that he and Mrs. G. would build a convent ~~and~~ <sup>for the</sup> school and help with the church ..... After Mr. Groves left, the Bishop asked me what I thought and I said it was too good to be true - I don't believe it for a minute, so the Bishop said "Well, somehow I do." The fact that Mr. G. himself was ~~not~~ not a Catholic made me wonder why he was anxious to make such an offer. Maybe it was only because he was interested in the community, and he felt that good religious schools were important in building up a good stable community, which was what he wanted to have in Freeport. Then I thought all this was too good to be true. However, as time went on, it became obvious Mr. G.'s offer was indeed a very sincere one, based on fact, and when the Bishop was able to get the Franciscan Sisters to come, Mr.G. offered them his own home on ~~Emerson~~ <sup>Emerson</sup> ~~XXXXXX~~(?) Drive in Freeport as a convent for the Sisters and also another building across the street as the first Mary Star of the Sea school. From that time on Mr.G. kept every promise he ever made. I will remember visiting Grand Bahama a few years later, and Mr. G. showed me the property for the future Mary Star of the Sea church. I thought it was far too far from downtown, and said so. Mr. G. said no, this was going to be a very choice piece of property, and it turned out to be ~~tx~~ he was completely right. Then the Port Authority gave the church the eleven acres where the church, school, convent and rectory are now located. It is indeed a prime location. ~~Rx~~ Even before making the offer to us, the Port Authority built St. Paul's Methodist School, and supported it, I believe. The determination that Mr.G. had in making the Freeport community a God-fearing ~~rxgx~~ religious one. Since building the Mary Star convent and school on its present location, Mr. and Mrs. G. have proved to be very loyal and generous friend. In 1966 Mr. G. and Keith Gonsalves discussed the possibility of building a high school. The property was donated for the high school out at Hawksbill.

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Then in 1966 the doors were opened for the first time. Now the size has grown now to where it has over 300 students. Under the direction of Mr. G. and Mr. Gonsalves the school and also the convent for the Sisters who were teaching there.

In the same year Mr. and Mrs. Wallace G. donated five acres down at Sea Grape, in the Eight Mile Rock Rock area, and the Sea Grape church was built, designed by Mr. Peter Barrett; also a combination rectory and clinic. The Franciscan Sisters regularly attended the clinic for pre-natal and post-natal patients in the next few years there. ~~At the same time~~ The Franciscan Sisters were conducting a clinic out at High Rock at St. Leonard's Mission, ~~which~~ <sup>on</sup> the property the church later ~~xxxxx~~ purchased. Mary Star of the Sea Parish includes Freeport and the rest of Grand Bahama to the east - 75 miles out to McLean's Town. We have a mission out at High Rock, dedicated to St. Leonard, which for eleven years was cared for by Father Cornelius Salsenburg (?), recently deceased. Father Joseph McNicholas is currently the priest in charge of the mission at St. Leonard's. In Grand Bahama there are three other parishes: St. Vincent de Paul at Hunter, which was the original Catholic parish here built in 1943. Then there is also St. Michael's at West End, and also St. Agnes at Sea Grape previously referred to. ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ Each parish has its own pastor. Each school has flourished and has over 750 children today in attendance. There have been separate additions to the facilities there, built largely under the influence of Mr. Wallace Groves. The auditorium at Mary Star of the Sea has just recently been dedicated and renamed the Wallace Groves Auditorium. The Bishop obtained the ~~Sisters from~~ Franciscan Sisters from Clinton, Iowa. He had known these Franciscan Sisters who had taught him when he was a lad in school. Mother Leona and Mother ~~Regis~~ Regis responded to his request for Sisters to come. These schools have always had a high academic rating. Several of the teachers have contributed a great deal. Sister Mary Justin in the Science Dept. has won quite a name for the students of our school by winning several science prizes from national associations in the United States. ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ <sup>Father</sup> Forsythe has been at the school since 1965. He has been Chancellor of the Diocese in Nassau for 25 yrs. before that. Sister Mary Alice Scantley, the head mistress of the school from 1963 until 1978. She celebrated her Golden Anniversary as a ~~Nun~~ Nun, and is deeply reverend by all Freeport citizens. She retired because of failing eye sight to the Mother House at Clinton, Iowa.

Sister ??? who understudied Sister Mary Alice for four years has now become Head Mistress, and is carrying on the fine tradition that Sister Mary Alice began.

One thing that has been outstanding about Freeport is the fine relation between the various denominations. The various ministers and congregations have worked together for the welfare of the community.