

** Graham Groves' additions

Mrs. Lilla (Robert Keith S) Gonsalves

Pines make a noise (creak) if they have too much pressure on them –

Lilla and Keith went to England on a pit prop ship – Hornfels. Keith on Barclays (he was head of the Caribbean – started in Antigua – based in Nassau)- why don't you go to Grand Bahama and go over on pit prop boat – 12 passengers – said bank.

Landed on Hawksbill Creek in Widgeon (Grumann sea plane) – all friends in Nassau knew she was afraid of flying and landed for Hawksbill and boat sculled to area where Pink House now is (1954). And had to wait 2 days and sat on boat while counted pit props.

Dr. Richee – Dr. at West End was passenger on (?) ship. Bahamian sculled after ship – “My wife is pregnant. Almost left ship. When came back people at West End gave a car.

Lilla and Keith came to Freeport in 1957.

Keith thought up BITCO + Groves (Bahama International Trust Company – it was part of Barclay's Bank – created in 1957)

First five years, Freeport was very shaky. Keith's future at Bank was assured.

Lilla was born in Antigua and grew up there – lived in Barbados where Keith was in bank there.

There was a man Antegua
Who said to his wife what a pig you are
He said o my dear,
It's not manners I mean
I only refer to your figure – fug-u-ah (?)

Contrast – between Nassau and Freeport – Cocktail party every night – Nothing to do all day in Freeport except to harbor and read book.

Freeport was very civilized compared with Antigua. Electricity and Refrigeration and modern conveniences even in so-called pioneering days.

In Antigua – conveniences were not so modern – no indoor sanitation, kitchens removed from house, cooked on charcoal only. Oil lamps.

Planes to Freeport would bring fresh milk and fruit. Freeport was never primitive.

Moved from Pink House and Green House and moved to Marco City ([Marine Construction – built by Diamond](#))- opposite Rugby Club and YMCA.

Garnet J. Levarity

Born in Bimini, OBE.

Came to Grand Bahama several times with Anglican priests and headquartered at West End.

Eight Mile Rock was original capital of Grand Bahama.

Bootlegging

Came in years – took dingy boat with priest – stop at little settlements

Walked from Eight Mile Rock to Smith Point – walked the beach because it was raining. Lady was cross because priest was late. He said he wouldn't answer any questions until lunch. She opened tin of Bally Beef and he took his time doing wedding.

In out island service

Grand Bahama Mercantile Co – West end – Big general store owned John Murray – J.W's grandfather

Wynel Hollingsworth land at West End belonged to grandmother

See Benjamin Smith in West End. Lives above Anglican Church. See on Sunday.

Born in Bimini 1909. Father was "honest" Capt'n Mac – strong and honest man – when he died he owed no one – recalls Garnet.

Mother was very strong of spirit. She always said pride keeps your head above water.

Moved to Grand Bahama ----- 20's and bought a petrol station at West End.

Married Wynell Hollingsworth in 1931.

Moved back to Bimini where he worked as a brick mason. Then to Cat Cay. In 1935, with two children – Warren and Jeatrelo (sp?) joined police force. Stationed in Nassau. Paid in Pounds 2/12/6 - \$6.30. Not all -----to use instead-

During was officer in charge of entire island of Grand Bahama 1943-45.

1956 – Levarity worked in immigration. 1965 was promoted and moved to Freeport as deputy chief of immigration

1967 given title of chief administrative officer of Freeport. Later promoted to under secretary and given OBE by Queen.

Other children – Tellis, Lionel Cyprianna and Claudette.

Washington Gaitor

Born in Rum Cay.

Came to Grand Bahama in 1942 from Abaco by transfer by Abaco Lumber to Pine Ridge from Melville orders.

Wilson City

Norman's Castle

Melville – close to Sandy Point

In Melville was locomotive engineer, before that was fireman. Became locomotive when Mr. Louis Morrison, Green Turtle Cay, was transferred to power house in Melville.

Two locomotives when he came to Grand Bahama - #'s 4 and 5. Operator of #5.

Before Mr. Groves showed up only got paid after shipment of lumber cut. Paid in Balbo (a coin) and script good only at commissary.

After came to Pine Ridge the distance for uncut trees was too great steam dragline to handle by cable.

After Mr. Groves came extended railroad.

After Groves pay roll became weekly and got portable mills that put all through forest to get lumber.

Groves also got big diesel trucks to bring into settlement where big mill was where could be dressed and dried in kiln.

#5 locomotive blew up. Mr. Gaitor on day off.

Richard Forbes, Abaco, there was a grade and if you have 10 or 12 cars of load – you need a lot of steam. Relief (valve) set at 150# pressure. But anytime

approaching the grade with load – would cut of relief valve – 175# - 185" and on way down grade would open valve and release pressure.

Forbes forget to release valve. Parked engine and went to lunch and was on his way back to release. Killed 5 people. Early 1950's.

Railroad was 8 miles to harbor from Pine Ridge 4-1/2 to 5 miles.

#4 usually worked north side where shipped lumber. Gaitor worked south side when they shipped pit props and lumber together. #5 was heaviest locomotive. #5 was rebuilt after explosion. #4 was first to go when they stopped shipping lumber to North side. Tracks were used for side tracks for pit props parking.

Typical to lumber yard 8 cars and maybe 3 or 4 cars of pit props.

Gaitor stayed in Freeport when lumber operation moved to Riding Point.

10 children living – scattered around Bahamas

Worked for power company
27 years in diesel plant
1 quick start gas turbine
Retired in 1977

Now working as security officer at Grand Bahama Hotel and Country Club.

Millville – location

Cornwall – location first before Pine Ridge

Portrait XX Groves

PAA Pr Dept shot of
S2 landing at Little Whale Cay

Cost of printing gook 200
Timetable for printing paperback

John Green – BORCO 373-2893 – Be gone 10 days
Clifford Knowles 352.8225
41 E. Gambier

Pix of Charles Allen – Herbert Allen
D. K. Ludwig

Kimmons Wilson – Founder of Holiday Inn.

First full concert of piano – Witold Malcuzyński – Polish born – visited Freeport
February 1962

150 people at home of Wallace and Georgette Groves

Show Card for The Garden of Groves

Showcase

Measure

When Rand McNally put Freeport on map?

Georgette Groves (wrote??)

“Our dream, our aim, was to upgrade standard of living, education, medical, employment, so that every man could stand with dignity. We see it today and are happy that our dream has come true. Now we wish all of the people of the Bahamas continued happiness”

Cover Design: Art Work

Gray Russell

When Wallace Groves purchased Abaco Lumber Company Gray Russell was elevated to head of the timber business.