

Source Pack 2

Source 1



program booklet, Taste of the Caribbean & Jerk Festival, 2013. CHS Collection 2015.196.71.3

Background: The Taste of the Caribbean and Jerk Festival began as a single evening event and expanded into a day-long festival held since 2006 at the Riverfront Plaza at the beginning of Celebration Week. Billed as a “One day festival of Caribbean food, culture, music, games, traditions” the festival includes local and visiting performers, food vendors from a variety of Caribbean cultures, information booths, arts and crafts vendors, local and visiting dance groups, and since 2011, a procession of Mas dancers from CCHAP’s Mas Camp program in collaboration with CICCAs, the Caribbean International Carnival Cultural Association. With Greater Hartford now being home to the third largest West Indian community in the nation, beloved traditions like Carnival have been transplanted and sustained here. In 1962, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago claimed their Independence from Great Britain. Since that year, the West Indian Parade and Independence Celebration has been a highlight of Hartford’s summer activities. The week of activities includes many events taking place at the different island clubs around Hartford and features headlining musicians who perform at the West Indian Social Club. The celebration concludes with a parade and festival in Hartford featuring floats, steel band performances, and masqueraders displaying brilliant costumes.

Jamaicans Seek Future In America: Dr. R. C. Ransom Cites Conclusions Based on Group Study
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Jamaicans Seek Future In America

Dr. R. C. Ransom Cites Conclusions Based on Group Study

Many of the Jamaican workers in Connecticut look with eagerness to the opportunities for education and training they may have in America, according to Dr. Reverdy C. Ransom, new director of the Service-Canteen of Hartford, who has been a minister to the Connecticut workers for eight months.

Questioning a group of workers, chosen as a cross section, Dr. Ransom discovered that 62 per cent are definitely interested in coming back to America at the close of their war contracts. More than half of these wish to return to further their education and vocational training.

A number of the group are already taking correspondence school work in their free time. More than half would like to go to night school.

Dr. Ransom, who was a minister to the Jamaicans for the Connecticut Council of Churches and the Connecticut Shade Tobacco Growers Agricultural Association from November, 1944, to June of this year, decided to make a study of the educational aims and postwar interests of these men "with the hope that some future program might benefit the migrant Jamaican worker throughout Connecticut."

He interviewed more than 200 men and collected data through detailed questionnaires put to a slightly smaller group.

Night Study Difficult.

Long working hours during the summer on tobacco farms have made night school work difficult to set up, Dr. Ransom points out. However, he believes that during the winter season, when men are employed in warehouses as they have been the past two winters, there might be a good opportunity for night school work among the Jamaicans.

"There is a further possibility that schools and colleges in postwar planning programs might open up opportunities for these migrant workers who are interested in preparing themselves educationally."

Indications from the answer of his small cross-section group, Dr. Ransom points out, are that many of the nearly 4000 Jamaicans now in Connecticut will wish to remain in America. Nineteen per cent of those questioned would like to secure American citizenship. A much larger group, 48 per cent, want to be able to come back to America on a permit for a few years.

Continuance of migrant labor after the war by Jamaican workers will depend largely upon regulations of the United States and British governments, Dr. Ransom points out.

Employers Satisfied.

He notes, however, that farm managers have been well satisfied with Jamaican labor and a number have said that the advantages of having men living on the farms and available for overtime and emergency work was so great that they "did not know what they would do if Jamaican labor were permanently taken away after the close of the war."

Correspondence courses which the men are now taking are practically all in the fields of mechanical and industrial education. Some 40 courses, however, are listed as those the men would like to take. They include regular scholastic courses and such specialties as animal husbandry, veterinary science, auto mechanics, fowmanship, civil engineering, telegraphy, typing, finger printing, photography.

Although over two-thirds of the Jamaicans in Dr. Ransom's study have finished elementary school, few have done much college work.

Many Jamaicans in State.

Connecticut has taken a special cultural interest in the Jamaican workers, Dr. Ransom points out. Various organizations and agencies in the state are spending thousands of dollars each year on programs designed to help the workers become better adapted to their new environment.

This state has been one of the largest employers of migrant Jamaican labor. There were 3308 Jamaicans in Connecticut at the end of April, according to Dr. Ransom's figures. The majority, 2033, were employed in agriculture. Some 1200, however, were in industrial jobs. The total number of Jamaicans in the state has increased by now, with summer agricultural demands, to nearly 4000.

Coming from an agricultural country, the majority preferred to do farm work here. Others, however, with a previous experience in sugar factories and smaller industries in Jamaica, or with a desire to gain industrial experience, seek factory work. More than 20 Connecticut factories now employ Jamaicans.

Actually, the group questioned by Dr. Ranson has been engaged in a wide variety of occupations in their native land before coming to America. It included carpenters, clerks, farmers, construction foremen, welfareworkers, teachers, masons, mechanics, students and many others.

About one-third of the men own some kind of property in Jamaica. Most are between 20 and 30 years old, and the majority unmarried. Nearly all, Dr. Ranson learned, are affiliated with a religious faith, the majority being members of the Church of England, Baptists and Methodists.

Both farm owners and industrial executives throughout Connecticut express appreciation, Dr. Ranson reported, for the manner in which the migrant Jamaican workers have given results in their work.

He quotes Ernest W. Elliott, justice of peace in Kingston, Jamaica, and official photographer for the United States Department of Labor, as saying on a recent visit to fellow Jamaicans on Connecticut farms that he found "employers to be absolutely satisfied with the services given by the Jamaicans, and that they are well behaved, consistent workers." He added that "the Jamaicans are satisfied with the wages and type of work" and "there is a strong desire to have them here from year to year."

Source 3

YouTube Video:

[Lunch and Learn: Social and Cultural Expressions of Puerto Rican Settlement in Postwar Hartford - YouTube](#)

Watch: minute 6:02 to minute 12:10 (~6 minutes) and minute 16:20 to minute 17:50 (~1 minute 30 seconds)

Background: This video is of a virtual presentation titled, *Social and Cultural Expressions of Puerto Rican Settlement in Postwar Hartford*. The virtual presentation took place on June 14, 2022 for the Connecticut Historical Society. The presenter, Elena Marie Rosario, is a Ph.D. Candidate at the University of Michigan and a public historian. Her dissertation project focuses on Puerto Rican migration and settlement in Hartford, Connecticut, during the post-War World II era and pairs in-depth archival research with community-centered methodologies, such as oral histories and community engagement projects. Her research interests include labor, education, urban development, social movements, and identity formation. She is a member of Hartford's Puerto Rican community and received her B.A. from Connecticut College in 2014.