

NEWSLETTER OF THE MONTSERRAT LEGISLATURE

VOLUME 1

ISSUE 2

Monday, March 28th, 2022



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WELCOME

The Office of The Montserrat Legislature is pleased to offer you the second edition of its newsletter.

As we are expanding our work to keep you fully informed about your Parliament, we shall be paying especial attention to the younger segment of the population.

PARLIAMENTARY CORNER:

In our first edition we gave you the eight types of Governments practised worldwide. We will give you a brief definition of a Democratic government as this is the type practised in Montserrat.

What is a Democratic Government?

Democracy means rule by the people, whether it be directly or indirectly. The people are responsible for major undertakings, policies, laws and leadership of the country.

In the Montserrat context, we changed from a plantocracy type of government into a democratic one. Prior to 1951, the type of Government practised in Montserrat was the plantocracy system which was ruled by planters. This system was still of a slave type system where the leaders of the government were either planters, plantation & or slave owners. In this type of Government the people did not have a say.

The adult suffrage or the universal suffrage law introduced in 1951 allowed Montserratians the chance to vote and to have a place in the Government. With this new law Montserratians of voting age were able to vote no matter their social status, gender, race or ethnicity. It was no longer that the voters income earned had an limitations nor did they have to have certain amount of money.

Parliamentary News:

On February 20, 2022, the Montserrat Legislative Assembly held a thanksgiving ceremony and parade to recognise 70 years of democratic parliament in Montserrat. The Platinum Jubilee celebrations were celebrated with a week of activities. The highlight of the week was a dinner and awards and ceremony held on February 24, 2022. Thirteen former and present parliamentarians were awarded for their invaluable service to Montserrat.

To form part of the week of activities, Madam Speaker went into the Primary schools as part of the outreach program of the Montserrat Legislative Assembly. During these visits a book was launched that focused on the younger populous. The book "*How Parliament Works*" gives the children information on parliamentary functions.

In other parliamentary news, the Social Security Bill was amended successfully.



Robert W Griffith was born on 13th August 1904 but his birth registered as 6th August in the registry. Griffith's father who was a manager of Weekes Estate saw first-hand how workers were being treated on the Estate which perhaps influenced him in his later years to form the Montserrat Trades and Labour Union in 1946. Through the MTLU, Griffith as leader championed the cause of the voiceless, illiterate, and un-empowered workers across Montserrat. Griffith understood from an early age the cost of living and inflation, so he vigorously fought for the workers to be treated fairly, he lobbied for better working conditions, fairer and better wages.

Before Montserrat moved from the plantocracy system into the democratic system, Griffith was already forcibly standing up for Montserratians. Griffith began his political career in 1943 under the plantocracy system where he held the distinguished title of Deputy President of the Legislature. He was also the local representative for the Leeward Islands Federal Parliament which was held in Antigua and became their official delegate to Britain at Buckingham Palace. He was the first Montserratian to make representation for the island at an international level in a political forum.

Marse Bob as he more affectionately called was known for his industrial relation actions to include calling out of the HMS Bigbury Bay and the Defence Force in the early 1950s. Though this caused him to lose favour with the British, Griffith was willing to die for Montserratians.

In 1936, Robert Griffith invited the honourable Marcus Garvey to address the people of Montserrat. This event in itself spoke to the visionary that was Bob Griffith and the strong beliefs he held about liberation for his people. Marse Bob is also remembered by many Montserratians as a baker, a real estate broker, and activist and of course a businessman.

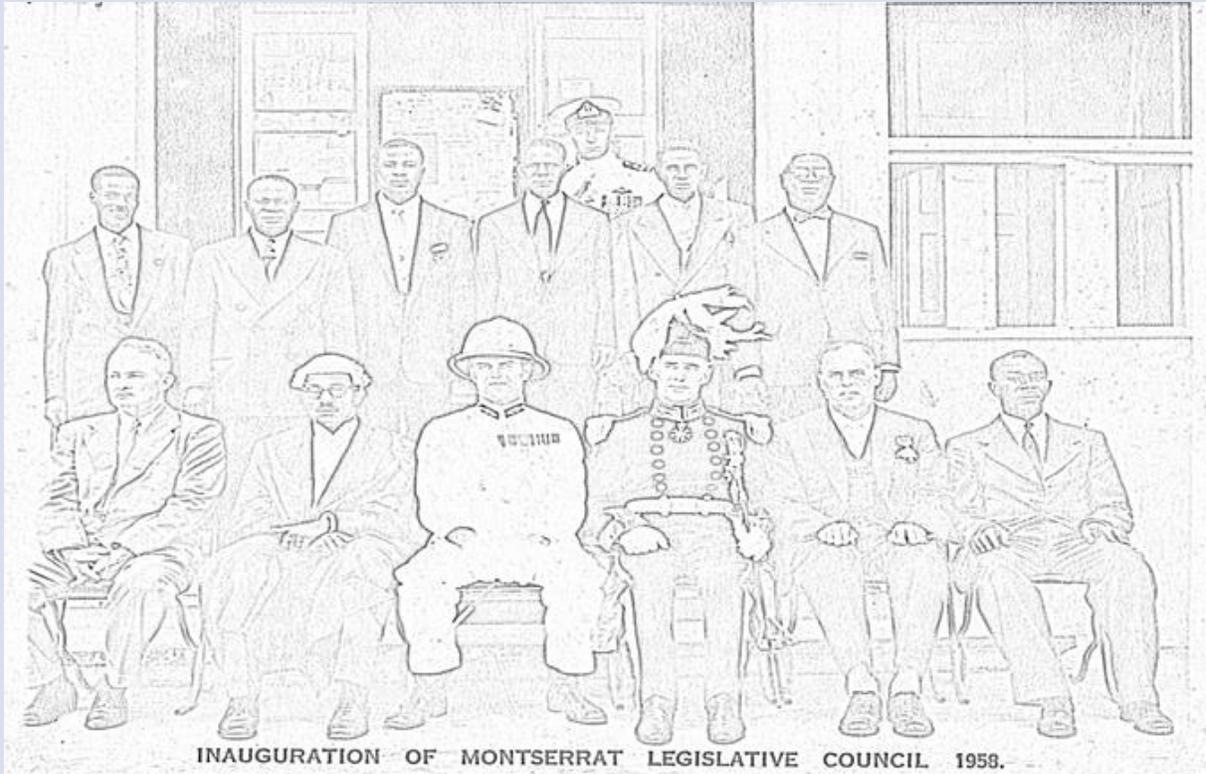
The father of trade unionism and politics has been honoured on several occasions. In 1987 his picture was unveiled in the Legislative council, he received the Order of British Empire in 1991. He was named a national hero in 2015 and a street in Little Bay was named the R W Griffith Drive in his honour. Further, in August 2020 his picture was unveiled at the ports of entry in recognition of him being a National hero.

QUESTION AND ANSWER

(1) In what year did Robert W Griffith named a National Hero of Montserrat?

(2) Name the Trade Union that Robert W Griffith established in 1946

(3) Who did Robert W Griffith invite to Montserrat in 1936?



Unscramble the words below

EOTDCRCAMI	_____
MAINLREPAT	_____
AUDTL	_____
GRFASFEU	_____
MENTASROTR	_____
MEVTRNOGNE	_____
CEAICPRT	_____
CAOLPYRANTC	_____
LLIGAEUSRET	_____
AERPSKE	_____
LWAS	_____
LCIOPEIS	_____

Government
Democratic

Practice
Policies

Adult
Parliament

Plantocracy
Suffrage

Laws
Montserrat

Legislature
Speaker

PHOTO GALLERY

Remembering Plymouth



Houston Street - (Plymouth)



Marine Drive - (Plymouth)

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