

HISTORY
OF
HOME ECONOMICS
IN THE CARIBBEAN

By

The Research Committee

of the

**CARIBBEAN ASSOCIATION OF
HOME ECONOMISTS**

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Why History?

The purpose of this document is to record and preserve the history of Home Economics in, and its contribution to, the Caribbean.

This historical document has been compiled from reports submitted by member territories of the Caribbean Association of Home Economists.

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Janice Archibald
Chairperson
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PREFACE

Any history involving territories as discreet, diverse and of such plurality as the Caribbean must depend on the cooperation, commitment and sense of belonging on the part of each territory to give accurate, factual and enlightened information for a smooth, continuous and unified presentation of a permanent record.

The history of Home Economics in the Caribbean is a case in point. Previous efforts at gathering information have met with many seemingly sincere promises, but little success. Even now, requests for information from the various territories have not been treated with the diligence and sense of occasion expected in order to render the production one of the highlights marking the twenty-fifth year of the Caribbean Association of Home Economists.

The Research Committee of the Caribbean Association of Home Economists of which Ms. Janice Archibald is the current Chairperson, having set itself the task of producing such a document enlisted the help and cooperation of member territories of the Association towards the submission of all available and relevant information for compilation of a historical document embracing all aspects of Home Economics in the Region. Up to the time of compilation, there have been submissions from Antigua, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago, Montserrat and St. Kitts, despite repeated requests, have not yet responded.

Some of the territories submitted information about their local association; some submitted information on Home Economics in their territory, while a few sent information on both. The quality and quantity of information supplied ranged from adequate to scant, a factor which did not give justice to the state of Home Economics in each territory and which did not give justice to the state of Home Economics in each territory and which militated against the anticipated balanced and informed perspective which should constitute such a territorial report. The present attempt at recording history should be given the affirmation it deserves; however, updating will be necessary as soon as the importance of such a document has been understood and the necessary information is supplied by all the territories concerned.

It is the sincere wish of the Research Committee that this historical document will be useful to all Home Economists in the region in terms of knowledge-sharing and future directions. It is also an indication of dire need for documentation at different stages, and better and more effective networking among member territories.

INTRODUCTION

Training in the art of home and family living existed in one form or another since the beginning of time as each society devised ways and means of initiating its people, particularly the young, in the customs and mores of its culture. The average woman, up to about one hundred and fifty years ago although trained in homemaking, received little schooling in that field; since education was believed unnecessary for her because her place in life was that of a housewife and/or mother, the kind of training given came from her mother, aunt, grandmother or older sisters. The skills she needed to meet her needs as housekeeper or housewife were producing and preparing food for herself and family, preparing medicine and caring for the sick, and providing clothing. Understanding and getting along with people were developed through living in the home especially in a large family.

The situation is different today in most parts of the world including the Caribbean; the training girls received in their homes a few generations ago which enabled them to cope with life and living in those times is entirely inadequate for the conditions under which women and families live today. Even in developing countries such as ours in the Caribbean, rapid social and economic changes and new technological developments are influencing all aspects of our lives: in addition, the increase in population and the changed distribution of people in different age groups, the growing incidence of early marriages, women re-entering employment after children have grown up, women employed in non-traditional areas, rising incidence of unemployment and underemployment, the threat of dreaded diseases, change from production to consumption due to industrialisation, these are some of the reasons for education in home economics with emphasis on new, expanded and changed concepts in keeping with the present state of technology.

EVOLUTION OF NAMES

Home Economics became firmly fixed in the educational vocabulary when the first National Vocational Act was passed in the United States of America in 1917. In that Act, commonly called the Smith-Hughes Bill, the term "Home Economics" was used to designate education for the home, and therefore, the official legal name adopted by the American Home Economics Association - and the Federal Government of the United States of America is now widely used throughout the Caribbean and some other parts of the world.

In the mid-nineteenth century the term "domestic economy" was used by Catherine Beecher and Harriet Beecher Stowe in their books and lectures on home problems. At that time "Domestic" implied "Household" while "Economy" meant "Management"; hence "Domestic Economy" meant "Household Management".

The term "Domestic Science" displaced that of "Domestic Economy" after the Civil War when boys were required to work as farm hands and girls who were assigned in the kitchen to cook, serve meals, clean and do laundry work, were not knowledgeable in these areas and so had to be trained in agricultural schools renamed

“Science” schools. These new activities in domestic pursuits justified the name “Domestic Science”. It is interesting to note that the terms “Housecraft” and “Domestic Science” are still being used in colleges in Great Britain.

Other terms used synonymously are “Homemaking Education”, “Housecraft”, “Home Science”, Family Life Education and “Human Ecology”. In a technical vocational school in one of the territories the term “Household Management” is still being used instead of “Home Economics”, in most other territories “Domestic Science” has been phased out in favour of “Home Economics”. Whatever the terminology, it remains a fact that home and family life concerns all families and that training in this field in order to cope with changes is an imperative of our times.

MEANING OF HOME ECONOMICS

Home Economics as practised in the Caribbean embraces the concept of strengthening home and family living as expressed by the America Home Economics Association in its New Directions:¹

Home Economics is the field of knowledge and service primarily concerned with strengthening family life through:

- educating the individual for family living
- improving the services and goods used by families
- conducting research to discover the changing needs of individuals and families and the means of satisfying these needs
- furthering community, national and world conditions favourable to family living.

In all the submissions from the territories, individually or collectively, there is information that the following aspects of family living have been taught in schools and community groups in one form or another and with varying emphases:

- family relationships and child development
- consumption, and other economic aspects of personal and family living
- nutritional needs and the selection, preservation, preparation and use of food
- design selection, construction and care of clothing and its psychological and social aspects
- textiles for clothing and for the home
- housing for the family and equipment and furnishings for the house-hold
- art as an integral part of every day life
- management in the use of resources so that values and goals of the individual, the family, or of society may be attained².

It is note-worthy that all the above-mentioned aspects of family living are examinable subjects at the Caribbean Examinations (CXC) and fall under three broad areas of Home economics: Food and Nutrition, Home Economics Management, Clothing and Textiles. All the English speaking Caribbean territories submit candidates for Home Economics subjects at this Examination.

¹AHEA Home Economics, New Direction, A Statement of Philosophy and Objectives. Washington: AHEA 1959 p.4

²AHEA Home Economics, New Direction, A Statement of Philosophy and Objectives, Washington: AHEA 1959 pp 4-5

THE PRACTICE OF HOME ECONOMICS IN THE CARIBBEAN

Three periods of history are herein recorded:

1. Pre 1900 period
2. 1900 - 1950
3. Post 1950 period

PRE 1900 PERIOD

Although much documentary evidence has not been available, it is possible that some form of Home Economics was taught in schools, whether private or elementary, in the Caribbean territories during the nineteenth century. The pattern of colonisation as the same in Guyana as in the Caribbean territories and missionaries along with their wives found ways and means to train young female slaves in cookery, housekeeping, needlework and other household matters.

The earliest reference to the practice and/or teaching of Home Economics in the Caribbean came from the “History of Home Economics in Guyana’ by Minerva Alexander in which was recorded:

Norma E. Cameron in his book “150 years of Education in British Guiana” provided evidence to show that Home Economics in its simplest form began in British Guiana since the year 1813 on a mission in Berbice³.

³ Minerva Alexander. The History of Home Economics in Guyana. Unpublished Research paper 1991 pp 10-11

A “School of Industry” was established by the wife of Rev. John Wray for the training of girls under fourteen years for the purpose of working “at their needles” and for making clothing. In 1845 a boarding school was established at

Bartica for girls and boys, and while the boys were trained in mathematics, the girls were instructed in plain needlework, cookery, washing and other household matters. House Craft was the term in use during that period.

Exhibitions held at the end of the training programmes consisted of highly embroidered and ornamental items, for example, mats, baskets, pin cushions, purses, bags and slippers, needlepoint embroidery and laces.

Between the years 1845 to 1870, St. Rose's High School and the Bishop's High School opened their doors to students and among the subjects taught were Needlework and Cookery. Alexander continued thus:

Although domestic subjects were taught early
In the nineteenth century it must be observed
that they were not done in an organised
manner. There was no curriculum from which
the girls were taught⁴.

⁴Minerva Alexander. The History of Home Economics in Guyana. Unpublished Research paper 1991 pp 10-11

Later in the century, as subjects became popular, the Laws of Guyana, Chapter 39:01 commonly known as the Education Act 3 of 1876 included for the benefit of all schools in Guyana suggested schemes of work to indicate generally the scope and nature of work expected by each division in a number of subjects including Needlework and Domestic Subjects included cookery, housewifery, laundry work, needlework (making, mending and renovating garments and household linen) and craft work for needlework was written separately and with a different focus.

THE PERIOD 1900-1950

While the period before 1900 can be described as exploratory in terms of home skills needed for the well being of girls in the pre and post emancipation era, the period 1900 to 1950 is characterized by the creation, development and organisation of Home Economics (Housecraft/Domestic Science) programmes in individual territories both at school and community levels

Two new Government supported Junior Technical schools were erected - The Kingston Trade Centre for youths in 1932 and the Carnegie Trade Centre for Women in 1933. Another Technical School, the Negro Progress Convention, renamed Fredericks School of Home Economics and funded by a private organisation, opened its doors in 1936 for the training of negro girls. These two training schools were established during the depression period and their objectives were to train girls and young women in skills needed to earn a living, and to upgrade skills which would make them employable in domestic service.

In each of the two Science Training institutions - Carnegie Trade School and Negro Progress Convention, although the objectives were basically the same, the

programme content was different. At Carnegie, subjects taught were Cookery, Laundry work, Housewifery, Needlework, Pattern and Dressmaking and Child Care. A training section was developed to produce custom-made ladies garments and uniforms for Departments. Catering on request, jam and jelly-making were also part of the training programme for Government Departments. Catering on request, jam and jelly-making were also part of the training programme. At Negro Progress Convention the curriculum consisted of Craft (straw-work and basketry, embroidery, macramé) and some courses in Cookery, Dressmaking and Business studies.

The first Principal of Carnegie Trade School was an Englishwoman, Mrs. B. Bryant, while Ms. Vesta Lowe, Tuskegee-trained Guyanese opened the Negro Progress Convention on her return from overseas training. Further development in Home Economics in Guyana during this period included the opening of Domestic Science Centres at Orange Walk in Georgetown, in New Amsterdam, at McKenzie and at Anna Regina. In respect of the schools, better organisation was evident with the advent of Mrs. G. Chantrell, an Englishwoman who instructed groups of girls in domestic subjects and pioneered the movement towards the building of Home Economics centres and departments throughout Guyana from 1950 and onwards.

The principal of Carnegie School was responsible for supervising not only her school, but all the departments and centres in Guyana until the appointment of the first Domestic Science supervisor in 1942 - Ms. Vivian Campbell, overseas trained Guyanese. In 1941 the Orange Walk Domestic Science Centre was closed due to lack of funds, but was reopened four years later.

ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

The evolution of Home Economics in Antigua and Barbuda was the result of industrialisation and the Home Economics movement in the United States of America. The negative forces brought about by post emancipation period and to a lesser extent the colonial period affected both individuals and families. Listed among these forces were poor socio-economic situation of family and community life, extreme poverty, poor housing conditions, poor sanitation and malnutrition, hence the recognition that education was needed for the creation of satisfactory home life which would eventually contribute to a more democratic society. Opinion was expressed that the early pioneers in Home Economics in Antigua were greatly influenced by these forces.

Miss Mary Piggot, Headmistress of Antigua Girls' Government School "had a vision that girls should be taught family living and that trained personnel should be made available to manage the programme."⁷ Towards this end, Miss Eileen Piggott was sent for training at Bath College in England to study Food Preparation, Preservation, Nutrition and Home Management, then called Domestic Science in English Schools and colleges. On her return to Antigua she exerted much influence on the curriculum at the Girls' Government School so that Cookery, Needlework, Housewifery and Mother-craft were taught, not only in that school, but in other schools in the island.

In the 1940's, the Domestic Science programme expanded to include the women and girls from many villages around the island. As in Barbados and Guyana,

Domestic Science became a part of the curriculum of the teacher-training institution in Antigua, thereby causing more local teachers to be trained to manage the Domestic Science Departments in the island.

In the absence of specific submissions from Trinidad and Tobago, Montserrat, Dominica, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Grenada, and St. Lucia for the period 1900 to 1950 there has been created a gap in the global view of our Home Economics history. However, the trend throughout the region shows that Housecraft or Domestic Science was taught both formally and informally in all the territories during the first half of the century, each with a different inaugural date and focus.

7 Report from Antigua and Barbuda

DOMINICA

In the History of Home Economics in Dominica the author stated that from as early as the 1940's girls in Primary Schools in the upper grades 6 and 7 were taught "life skills" in needlework and cookery; since most of them would not go on to secondary schools, they were being prepared for the home.⁸ In many of the villages a school feeding programme initiated by the school and village was introduced on a small scale.

ST. LUCIA

The report from St. Lucia gave information that Domestic Science, a subject that preceded Home Economics, was taught in many of the first primary schools. Cookery, Laundry Work and Housewifery were often combined under the title "Housecraft". Many school buildings required additional facilities, well designed and equipped for practical Housecraft subjects. Cleanliness, beauty and art were emphasised and integrated into each subject area while consideration in the care of the sick, injured and infants was also included. The name "Domestic Science" which was adopted instead of "Housecraft" was phased out at the end of this period in favour of "Home Economics".

1950 AND ONWARDS

Home Economics became well established as a subject in the Curriculum of schools and in community-based programmes in the Caribbean during the second half of the twentieth century, that is, from 1950 and onwards.

⁸ Report from Dominica

Among the factors responsible for this progressive state of affairs were:

1. Economic scarcity and the need for family revival after the second world war, and the oil crisis of later years.

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2. Caribbean integration and networking among the territories.
 3. Development of a set of common principles about Home Economics in the region.
 4. Development and strengthening of ties with international agencies and organisations.

A revisit to the territories is necessary in order to document areas of progress and expansion in Home Economics during the post-1950 period and up to the closing years of the twentieth century. For the sake of convenience, this period will be subdivided into:

- (a) the decade 1950 - 1960
- (b) 1960 - 1980
- (c) 1980 to the final years of the twentieth century

THE DECADE 1950 - 1960

In Guyana there were some welcome changes in the Curriculum of Carnegie Trade School during the decade 1950-1960; basic subjects were included such as Arithmetic, English, Social Studies, Geography, Art and Craft. The name of the institution was accordingly changed to Carnegie School of Home Economics which became a unique post-secondary technical-vocational training institution having at its credit the training of thousands of girls, young women and men, in a wide variety of home and occupational skills. Even in these early years, evening classes were very popular and a wide cross section of persons, both male and female received training in the art of cookery, dressmaking, upholstery, tailoring and embroidery. Special programmes were organised for sailors, soldiers and “would-be” chefs. The first Guyanese Principal of the school was Ms. Lucille Fraser-Wharton appointed in 1951.

By the end of 1959, Domestic Science had grown very popular and many church bodies, for example, Congregationalists, Roman Catholics, Anglicans, Canadian Mission, had established schools with Domestic Science departments. The Colonial Department Welfare Fund donated the sum of five thousand dollars (\$5,000) to the Government of British Guiana to establish more Home Economics departments in different parts of the country.

It was, therefore, necessary to accelerate teacher training programmes done at Carnegie School of Home Economics.

Strides in the Home Economics movement in Barbados were recorded as follows: In 1952 a home Economist visited Barbados to collect data for a conference on Home Economics and Nutrition in Trinidad and at this Conference the Caribbean Advisory Council in Home Economics was formed. Two Barbadians attended the conference. In 1953 Ms. Elsa Haglund, a Home Economist from FAO worked in Barbados for three months, advising on ways of improving and expanding training and as a result, syllabuses for primary and secondary schools were formulated.

During 1955-1957, through the joint sponsorship of FAO and the Development and Welfare Organisation the teacher-training programme received a boost with teachers being sent on nine-month courses in Home Economics at the Mona Campus, University of the West Indies. Teachers were also awarded scholarships to study Home Economics in Britain, Puerto Rico and the United States of America.

In Saint Lucia school buildings continued to acquire additional facilities designed for teaching Domestic Science. In Dominica the training of girls in “Life Skills” continued in the upper grades of the Primary School.

In St. Vincent and the Grenadines Home Economics as a subject has been taught since the early nineteen fifties. The pioneers of the programme included Ms. Amy ‘Belle’ Allen, Miss Elaine Duncan, Ms. Peggy Lewis Antrobus and Mrs. Grace Charles Williams. The earliest Domestic Science Centre was situated at Richmond Hill, Kingstown, and catered for all the primary schools in the area. The subject areas then were confined to cookery and needlework. The Girls’ High School (GHS) was then the only secondary school preparing students in these subjects for the Cambridge GCE Examinations.

Facilities available in these centres reflected the socio-economic norms of the day as in the other territories. Cookery was done mainly on the coal-pot and “Dover” stoves. This cooking facility was also used in Guyana. Water was collected and stored beforehand as pipe-borne water was not yet made available at the centre. Only girls were taught Domestic Science during these years since the main aim was to make them better housewives and to prepare them for their place in the home. Even from these early years in St. Vincent and the Grenadines the subject had been stigmatized and an incident was recalled “where a mother strongly objected to her daughter wearing an apron since the appearance was associated with being a servant”⁹

⁹ Report from St. Vincent and the Grenadines

The training of three teachers in Domestic Science during this period helped to promote the subject, and to increase the number of schools offering Domestic Science Subjects. Teachers met periodically to discuss issues relating to the subject and later formed the local Association.

In Antigua the position of Home Economics supervisor was created after the first Caribbean Conference of Home Economics in Port of Spain in 1952. That Conference focused on the home as a central contributor to social progress and emphasized the need to rationalise household production to make housewives more efficient consumers. Mrs. Gwendolyn Tonge was appointed the first supervisor and under her supervision, a structured curriculum for a certified three-year programme for students of Forms 1-3 in secondary school and seniors 1-3 at primary schools gained wide acceptance in many primary and secondary schools.¹⁰

THE PERIOD 1960 - 1980

During the years 1960-1980, Home Economics continued to make strides in the Caribbean, and developments reported by each territory included expansion in the number of schools with Home Economics departments, formation of more Home Economics Associations, training of more teachers locally and in Puerto Rico, United States of America, and United Kingdom, development of Community Development education and 4-H Clubs. In addition to the general programmes, each territory initiated and developed special and unique programmes to suit the needs of their people.

A new boost was given to Home Economics in Guyana when the first Home Economics Education Officer, Ms. Mildred Johnson was appointed in 1961, the same year of the name change from “Domestic Science” to “Home Economics.”

From 1962 to 1968, twenty-one more Home Economics departments were erected, most of them done by self-help. In 1970, Home Economics became compulsory for boys and since co-education became a reality in 1976, all schools including the former all-girls schools began the teaching of Home Economics to both boys and girls. The Curriculum of these departments and centres included instructions in Food and Nutrition (formerly Cookery), Management (formerly Housewifery), and Clothing and Textiles (formerly Needlework). Students were encouraged to write both local and overseas examinations in these subjects at the GCE and City and Guilds of London levels. Ms. Victorine Britton was appointed Education Officer in 1975 after the retirement of Ms. Johnson and from 1978-1980 Home Economics supervisors were appointed to all the education districts in Guyana- East Berbice, West Berbice, East Demerara, Georgetown, West Demerara and Essequibo. These officers promoted the teaching of Home Economics in their districts, worked hand in hand with the various ministries at community and national levels, promoted and organised exhibitions, displays in show windows, workshops, training programmes along with Home Economics teachers, community leaders, health workers and others in the communities in which they served.

With regard to teacher teaching, in 1961 the first batch of teachers attended a one-year emergency training programme which included a programme for Home Economics teachers. In addition, Home Economics was an optional subject in In-Service Training Programme for teachers. Successive training programmes were of three years duration, later reduced to two years. The Teacher’s Training College later named Cyril Potter College of Education in conjunction with Carnegie School played a major role in the training of Home Economics Teachers. In 1980, the Multilateral Training Programme for Secondary Teachers, later renamed the Lillian Dewar College of Education, provided facilities for practical training in Home Economics, thereby ending the long period of training done at Carnegie School of Home Economics.

During the 1970's tertiary training in Home Economics began at the University of Guyana; the two-year certificate in Education (Home Economics) was later replaced by a four-year programme leading to a Bachelor of Education Degree (Home Economics). Many trained Home Economics teachers graduated from the University of Guyana with a Bachelor of Education Degree. Credit for initiating this programme goes to Misses Magda Pollard and Claudia Browne, Home Economists, Principal and Vice Principal of Carnegie School of Home Economics respectively and Mr. Jacob Bynoe, the then Dean of the Faculty of Education.

Significant developments reported from Dominica during the year 1960-1970 were as follows:-

In the early 1960's cooking and sewing classes were held for young working women from the city and suburbs. Ms. Ruth Burton, a retired Home Economist and Mrs. E. Whyte taught cookery classes and garment construction and also trained a number of young women some of whom were selected for service as domestics in Canada. During the 1970's, Home Economics subject was taught in schools in the Roseau area, namely the Convent High School and the then St. Martin's Vocational School. Girls wrote the G.C.E. Examination in Food and Nutrition and later were introduced to examinations in 'Fashion and Fabrics'. Among the pioneer teachers in this period were Mrs. Elaine Warrington, Mrs. Delia Grell, and Mrs. Philomena Francis.

In 1960, a Home Economics programme was planned for the primary schools in Saint Lucia. By the mid-sixties, the programme had been implemented in many primary schools under the leadership of Ms. Camille Henry who was well equipped, by virtue of advanced and overseas training, to inspire both teacher and pupils, the result being the emergence of a "group of well trained teachers, capable of making a valuable contribution in the field of Home Economics"¹¹

Home Economics competitions, beginning in the early 1970's, and later exhibitions have added to the pupils' interest in the subject and provided an opportunity to share with the community the contributions which Home Economics can make to individual, family and community life.

Developments in Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Antigua, Grenada, during the period 1960 to 1980 although not reported in this specific period continued along the same lines as in the other territories.

One unifying force worthy of special note was the conceptualisation of the Caribbean Association of Home Economists in 1970 and its birth in 1972 in St. Lucia. As brief history of this regional professional organisation is given in the next chapter.

¹¹ Report from the Saint Lucia & the Grenadines.

The history of Home Economics in the Caribbean between the period 1960 to 1980 cannot be complete without reference to the Caribbean Food and nutrition Institute

(CFNI) and the Caribbean Research Institute (CARIRI), two regional agencies which have recognised the need for, and the ability of Home Economists to contribute to the development and innovations which have helped to improve and promote the quality of life of both the individual and families in the region. These two agencies together with the Caribbean Association of Home Economists (CAHE) and the Caribbean Association of Nutritionists and Dietitians (CANDI) have been playing an important role in family life in the region through research and dissemination of information, as they continue to influence the course of Home Economics education in the Caribbean.

THE PERIOD 1980 TO THE FINAL YEARS OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

During the period 1980 to the final years of the twentieth century, Home Economics continued to be an important area of study in schools in the Caribbean. It is indeed a tribute to all Home Economists and the unifying agencies that Home Economics has not only survived but has extended its scope and meaning, although each territory has been subjected to economic, social and political changes and their concomitant problems affecting children, youth and families.

A significant milestone during these final two decades of the century was the establishment of the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC). Its impact on Home Economics in the region has created new challenges for the teaching of the subject. A common syllabus was produced for the entire region and examinations in Food and Nutrition, Home Economics Management, and Clothing and Textiles were being written by secondary students throughout the Caribbean for the first time in 1982. Six territories entered candidates for Management and Clothing and Textiles while seven entered candidates for Food and Nutrition, some at the Basic Proficiency level, others at the General Proficiency level. The number of entries has increased over the years with all the territories now being participants.

A few territories reported specific events:

GUYANA

More teachers received training from the Government Training College in Guyana while an increasing number each year embarked on the degree programme in order to cope with the growing number of students, both boys and girls, and continuing students and adults who seek training in the subject. One of the difficulties encountered in teaching the subject has been expressed by Alexander.

Too often it has been the practice in schools to
Put the weaker students in the Technical
Vocational areas. Students with more
Academic ability need to be attracted to these
subjects which require a proper grounding in
mathematics and science for success.¹²

¹² Minerva Alexander. The History of Home Economics in Guyana. Unpublished research paper p.16

Nevertheless an analysis of student entries at CXC indicated fluctuations in the earlier decade but gradual rise in numbers in the final years.

Evening classes managed by the Carnegie School of Home Economics rose in popularity for urban homemakers over the years, but the Rural Training Programme fluctuated until it was finally dropped because of economic constraints. Other agencies like the Adult Education Association of Guyana, the Institute of Adult and Continuing Education (renamed Institute of Distance and Continuing Education), Women's Institutes, Non-governmental organisations including Trade Unions, Church groups, Community groups, the Young Women's Christian Association and a number of private organisations promoted and conducted classes in different areas of Home Economics education as part of the movement in bringing Home Economics to the people. The energies, skills, expertise and creativity of Guyanese Home Economists were severely taxed during the years of economic stress of the late 60's, 70's and 80's when many food items were banned. This resulted in the production of rice flour, composite flour, utilisation of waste and discarded materials for craft and most famous of all, the carambola (five-finger) preserve used extensively in fruitcakes and Guyana black cake, and which won gold medals at international exhibitions. Many of us remember the slogan "BE LOCAL BUY LOCAL" and the self reliance and self efficiency thrust in which Home Economics and Economists played a great part.

An initiative taken by Olga Britton, one of our Home Economists with special expertise has led to the promotion of Craft Production in schools and communities throughout Guyana. There are in many of our Community High and Junior Secondary Schools, Craft teachers who function as part of Home Economics departments, thus integration of the several areas of Craft with Home Economics is assured.

BARBADOS

In the report from Barbados, it was stated that in July 1981, the Housecraft Centre at Bay Street was closed to Home Economics and the facilities amalgamated with the Samuel Prescod Polytechnic School at Wildey, St. Michael. That division is now known as Human Ecology and subjects include Human Nutrition, Child Development, Gerontology, Family Relationships, Family/Consumer Studies, Family Health and Parenthood Education. There are two sub-divisions under the umbrella of Human Ecology - Industrial Garment and Design and Cosmetology and Hairdressing. Day and evening classes continue to be in great demand.

The report also mentioned that in 1996 Home Economics is taught at all secondary schools with the exception of one school, and an increasing number of boys pursue the Home Economics subjects.

DOMINICA

The 1980's saw the introduction of CXC examinations in Food and Nutrition being taken by female students around the island. Clothing and Textiles was introduced in the late 1980's, and in 1992 the first groups of students on the island

from St. Martin Secondary (formerly vocational) school sat the CXC examination in Home Management.

The 1990's saw changes in attitude towards Home Economics in that boys were allowed to write the examination at CXC level. In fact, the Dominica Grammar School - a co-educational facility, over the past few years has been producing more young men writing the examination than young women! The newly rejuvenated Home Economics Association played a great role in promoting a new image of Home Economics on the island. The report continued thus:

Traditionally, Home Economics subjects were only 'thrust' upon the slow learner who could not make it academically. Now we see a change in that any student who wishes to do so may select a Home Economics subject to do at the CXC level.¹³

¹³ Report from Dominica

ANTIGUA

The contemporary period of the history of Home Economics in Antigua is reflective of the shared roles and responsibilities in the home. Dramatic social and technological changes had taken place and contributed to a shift in women's aspirations. New attitudes influenced women's entry into the workplace and dual working parents have fostered new opinions about home-making. Today home-making (in Antigua) means sharing the work with others, and the inclusion of boys in the Home Economics programme is testimony that some progress has been made.

The report continued to say that Antiguan Home Economists have noticed a gap between the realities of contemporary roles at home and the curriculum offerings in schools. In light of changed meanings about roles at home it was suggested that the way forward in the twenty first century is to restructure the curriculum while at the same time retaining the original family focus.

ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES

The local Home Economics Association has been very instrumental in making Home Economics in the island "a strong focus to be reckoned with". Today Home Economics students both male and female are trained in Home Management, Food and Nutrition and Clothing and Textiles and excel at the CXC Examinations. Many skilled persons for the job market and especially the tourism industry have been trained initially in Home Economics skills.

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

During the last two decades of the twentieth century Home economics in Trinidad has undergone a series of changes intended to improve and promote the quality of life, not only for families, but also for every individual. A vigorous education programme was embarked upon in order to enable citizens to appreciate and cope with these changes and developments. Home Economics programmes were put in effect not only in schools but also in the following fields:

1. Community Development Education
2. Nutrition Units
3. Young farmers clubs
4. News media-television, radio and press.

Beryl Wood reported that Home Economics curriculum was based on the philosophy “to help people identify and develop certain fundamental competencies that will be effective in personal and family living regardless of economic and social background”.¹⁴

¹⁴ Beryl Wood. Home Economics Trinidad and Tobago. Caribbean Home Economist 1979 p. 8-9

The programme has been executed at the Primary, Secondary, technical and Craft levels, in the training college, at community centres and in extramural classes.

In summary, the practice of Home Economics in the Caribbean can be described as a progressive movement from limited training of young female slaves in cookery, housekeeping, needlework, washing and other household matters in the nineteenth century to a higher specialised and scientific field of study in today's world of rampant inflation, urban decline, unemployment and declining productivity.

In all the territories there has been widespread interest on the part of teachers to receive formal academic training in Home Economics at Training College and University levels, and the quality of professional training has improved with many home economists being trained at overseas institutions of higher learning, mainly United States of America.

The availability of technical assistance offered by bilateral, regional and international agencies has helped in the development of Home Economics in the region. Individual territories have benefited from the services of Food and Agricultural Organisation and other United Nations Home Economists both for extension and home economics education at the secondary and university levels.

Not only schools have been beneficiaries from training in home economics; the establishment of extension services in home economics for rural and urban women has awakened an interest in, and appreciation for the subject. Adult education day and evening classes in a variety of home economics and related areas have grown in popularity. There has been increased enrolment on the part of boys and women of all ages at home economics classes through the efforts of these trained Home Economists.

Over the years, Home Economics has earned such description as “a caring profession” a “mission oriented profession” and a “synergistic subject”¹⁵ drawing from a variety of disciplines for example Sociology Psychology, Business, Economics, Biology, Chemistry, Art, Architecture. English in a form that has practical application in the daily process of family living.

By the close of this century Home Economics is being serviced by trained personnel at various levels and in various fields, in schools, institutions, community colleges, health and other social services.

¹⁵ Viola Horsham. Why Home Economics? The Caribbean Home Economist 1983 p.15

HOME ECONOMICS ASSOCIATIONS

Home Economics Associations flourished during the second half of the twentieth century and were largely responsible for the growth and development of Home Economics in the region. Many of these professional organisations work collectively with their respective governments, helping to formulate policy and advise on suitable programmes for the individual territories and the region as a whole.

Reports further stated that most of the associations were formed because of a deep concern for the well-being of families on the part of Home Economics teachers and officers. In general, membership comprised and continue to comprise practising Home Economics teachers in primary and secondary schools, retired Home Economists and others in related fields employed in business, industry, community services and self employment areas.

With regard to funding most of the associations were self supporting, undertaking income-generating activities, conducting workshops and demonstrations, publishing magazines and newsletters, and also promoting Home Economics in a number of ways.

JAMAICA

The Jamaica Home Economics Association (JHEA) was formed in 1942 by a group of fourteen Domestic Science Teachers under the leadership of Miss Kathleen North, Supervisor of Domestic Science in the Education Department. Emphasis was on manipulative skills. By 1950 there was a change in emphasis from the “how” to the “why”. Courses in chemistry of foods were organised for members of the University of the West Indies with the name of the subject being changed to “Home Economics”. The name of the Association was changed to the “Association of Teachers of Home Economics.”.

During the years 1950 to 1960 the Association revised its constitution insisting on all Home Economists becoming members. These included persons in Research, Dietetics, Commerce, Industry, Housing, Catering, Family Planning, Schools, Teacher

Training Colleges, Community Development and Agricultural Extension. The Association became affiliated to the American Home Economics Association (AHEA) and the International Federation of Home Economists. (IFHEA)

Within the years 1960 and 1980 some of the activities were:

- Change of name to Jamaica Home Economics Association (JHEA) in 1963
- Celebration of 25th Anniversary in 1967
- Implementation of projects and workshops for members of the Association and others.

From 1980 to the closing years of the twentieth century activities of the Associations included:

- A week of activities to mark the 40th Anniversary of the association in 1982.
- Celebration of Home Economics week in 1989 with workshops and displays.
- Revision of the constitution.
- Collaboration with the college of Arts, Science and Technology and the Minnesota Home Economics Association in the introduction of solar box cookers in Jamaica.
- Celebration of fifty years (JHEA) with a church service, fund raising drive and a two-day display.
- Sponsoring research activities in home economics
- Publication of a journal annually.

ASSOCIATIONS FORMED BETWEEN 1950 AND 1960

Associations inaugurated between the years 1950 and 1960 were:

1. Barbados 1953
2. Trinidad and Tobago 1955
3. Guyana 1956

BARBADOS

The Home Economics Association of Barbados was established in 1953. Miss Elsa Haglund who was then the Home Economics consultant of FAO of the United Nations was instrumental in its formation.

Aims of the Association were to:

1. provide social and educational activities
2. foster better homes and family living
3. improve the nutritional standards
4. better the economy

Between the years 1950 and 1960 the Barbados Home Economics Association

implemented such activities as lectures, projects, compiling of receipts, discussion of Domestic Science syllabus, staging of exhibitions, organising programmes which included nutrition, food preparation and budgeting, and giving demonstrations on food preparation at various community centres throughout the island.

1960-1980

The Association became partially dormant during the early sixties but was quickly revitalised when Miss Enid Maxwell became the President, a position she held for many years.

Among activities implemented during this period were:

- demonstrations in preparation of dishes and nutritious foods
- making and presenting items of clothing to needy children's home
- adopting a children's home
- assisting in Culinary Arts exhibitions under the auspices of the Ministries of Trade, Agriculture and Education.
- assisting with Home Economics programmes in 4-H clubs and Applied Nutrition.
- celebration of 20th anniversary of the Association
- affiliation to the National Organisation of Women (NOW)

1980 and onwards

After a period of dormancy the association became active again because of the need for discussion on the CXC syllabus and related matters. In February 1980 the Barbados Association of Teachers of Home Economics (BATHE) was formed and has to this date been playing an important role in Home Economics on the island. A new constitution was prepared and among continuing activities are annual exhibitions of children's work, cash prizes and trophies presented to students who excel in three areas of Home Economics in the CXC examinations, seminars and workshops, weekly articles in the Barbados advocate, outreach programmes and fund raising activities.

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Trinidad and Tobago Home Economics Association was inaugurated in July 1955 at the instigation of Miss Queen Shootes, a Fulbright scholar of the United States who worked in Trinidad and Tobago during the academic year 1953-1955 under a government assisted programme. During that period, the then "Domestic Science" taught in schools and colleges was broadened into the more inclusive "Home Economics", mainly because two six-month in-service training courses for teachers of the subject were conducted by Miss Shootes.

The inaugural meeting was convened by Miss Shootes and Miss Gabrielli Hanings (Peet) was elected the first president. Membership included a wide cross-

section of persons with Home Economics training, for example, educators nutritionists, dietitians.

Objectives of the Association included:

- I further education of members
- II education of the public to help them become aware of the importance of the study of Home Economics.

Among activities of the Association were:

- 1950-1960 - public education projects
- 1960-1980 - dormancy between the years 1961-1966
- resuscitation 1964-1966
- public education exhibition members' education programmes

One special project deserves special mention. In 1970 there was a special education project in which important resolutions requesting the formation of a Caribbean Home Association and availability of training facilities for Home Economics at the University of the West Indies were passed. This project attracted participation from other territories - Jamaica, Antigua, Barbados, Grenada and Guyana.

The names of the executive of the Association merit inclusion because of the success of that project and subsequent developments from resolutions passed at the closing sessions

- President - Beryl Wood
- Secretary - Eunice Warner
- Treasurer - Pearl Massiah
- Vice President - Viola Horsham
- Assistant Secretary - Lenore Nicholls
- Chairperson - Eunice Elder
- Tobago group

From 1980 to the last years of the twentieth century, the Trinidad and Tobago Home Economics Association has grown from strength to strength and has demonstrated its competence at many public foray, consultations and workshops. The Association celebrated its 25th Anniversary with a formal launching and a week of activities in 1981.

There have been professional monthly meetings, seminars, workshops quizzes, educational lectures, field trips, annual donations and gifts to deserving institutions, social functions for members, income generation projects and newsletters.

Members of the association also co-authored the Caribbean series of Home Economics textbooks; some of these members are individual authors of textbooks used in Caribbean schools; many of them are examiners at the CXC examinations; three

well deserved members have received national awards. The Association is now twinned to the Florida Association of Family and Consumer Sciences.

GUYANA

The Guyana Home Economics Association, later renamed the Guyana Association of Home Economists was formally established in 1956. Meetings of teachers were held periodically since 1948, but the growing number of teachers trained both locally at the Teachers' Training College and overseas in Puerto Rico and United Kingdom saw the need for an association in order to promote Home Economics in Guyana and to bring Home Economics to the public.

Meetings of the association were held at Carnegie School and among the early executive members were Mesdames Millicent Greaves, Pansy Garnett, Enid Forde, Enid Abraham, Florence Troyer and Lucille Fraser (then principal of Carnegie

Major activities and inputs of the Association are given below:

1950-1960

- Establishment of the Guyana Home Economics Association in 1956 at Carnegie School.
- Affiliation to AHEA in 1958. Members of the Association attended the Ninth Congress in Maryland in 1958.
- Food demonstrations were often conducted by members for mothers at health centres, in supermarkets, and outside Municipal Markets.
- Women's Institutes worked in collaboration with members of the Association in training rural communities in food preparation and preservation.

1960-1980

Guyana Association of Home Economics an affiliate of CAHE and Conference on the Affairs and Status of Women In Guyana (CASWIG)

During these lean years in Guyana's history members of the Association played a significant role in the "Feed, Clothe and House Yourself" and "Buy Local" campaigns. Members of the Association joined government functionaries in workshops, lectures and demonstrations in different parts of the country and produced a number recipes using rice flour and others wheat flour alternatives.

Representatives from the Association attended a three-day seminar sponsored by Trinidad and Tobago Home Economics Association, in which a resolution for the formation of a Caribbean Association was passed.

Exhibitions and demonstrations were held in every year during Guyana Week in order to promote Home Economics. World Home Economics Day, World Food Day

and International Women's Day celebrations were observed each year with week long programmes.

1980 and Onwards

As in the other territories, activities of the Association were intensified during this period. The 25th Anniversary was celebrated in 1981 with a week of activities including food demonstrations, community work, and workshops for teachers of Home Economics. Other activities worthy of special mention were organising skills workshops for members, workshops for teachers of CXC subjects, street fairs and income generating projects.

The Association has honoured nine of its stalwarts for their contribution to Home Economics, while national, regional and international recognition has been given to six members. Two members were part of the team which produced the texts, Caribbean Home Economics in Action, while a few others are examiners at the CXC regional examinations.

The present members of the executive of Guyana Association of Home Economists:

Janice Archibald	-	President
Helen Edinboro	-	Vice President
Frances Shepherd	-	Secretary
Sharon Duncan	-	Assistant Secretary
Roxanne Benjamin	-	Treasurer

and five committee members.

These ladies together with a number of co-opted members constitute the local team responsible for the twenty-fifth anniversary of CAHE celebrated in Guyana in 1977.

ASSOCIATIONS FORMED AFTER 1960

More Home Economics Associations were formed during the years 1960 to 1980.

The Grenada Home Economics Teachers Association was established in 1969 with Mrs. Winifred Strachan as the first president.

Over the years the Association experienced its "ups and downs". The researcher stated that there was need for the members to become more vibrant. Attempts made to involve Home Economics teachers of secondary schools to become members proved futile.

Members of the Association have been attending CAHE conferences since 1979 and hosted the conference in 1991 which created an experience that engendered much enthusiasm among members. Meetings of the association are held on the second Monday of each month and in these session teachers share knowledge and concerns.

In St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Home Economics teachers met periodically since the 1950's to discuss issues relating to the teaching of the subject, mainly in response to specific needs.

In the early 1970's a local body known as the Home Economics Association of St. Vincent and the Grenadines was established with Miss Elaine Duncan at the helm. She held office up until 1984 then gave way to subsequent presidents.

The organisation has grown over the years and now has a membership of sixty (60) persons including teachers trained locally, regionally and internationally. Membership has been extended to a hotelier and a nutritionist.

NB 2 PAGES MISSING

discuss the resolutions and to examine the possibility of forming the association. Two years later in July 1972 CAHE was born during a seminar/workshop in St. Lucia sponsored by the Caribbean Food and Nutrition Institute. Many Home Economists from the territories as well as a few other educators and administrators were present as participants for their governments. The territories represented were Turks and Caicos, Barbados, Antigua, St. Kitts/Nevis, Anguilla, Grenada, Jamaica, St. Lucia, Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana.

Ms Viola Horsham was elected as the first president of CAHE with Mrs. Enid Forde of Guyana as the first Vice President; Ms Beryl Wood was elected as the first Secretary, Mrs. E. J. Husbands from Barbados, Treasurer and Mrs. M. Braithwaite from St. Lucia, Assistant Secretary.

Further resolutions and decisions included:

- (a) naming of the Association : Caribbean Association of Home Economists, CAHE, as distinct from Canadian Home Economics Association CHEA.
- (b) affiliation: Home Economics Associations in the different territories should become affiliated to the regional association
- (c) country representatives: the naming of one person from each territory to serve on the management committee as the liaison officer.

The next general meeting of CAHE which should have been held in the Easter vacation of 1974 was postponed to June 1975 in Trinidad and Tobago, and was attended by the many officials who were assisted with travel expenses by the population division of one of the UN organisations. Ms Viola Horsham, Ms Beryl Wood and Mrs E. Husbands were returned the office but new members included Mrs. Gwen Tonge (Antigua) as vice president and Ms Magda Pollard (Guyana) as Assistant Secretary.

The constitution of CAHE, drafted at this meeting was revised in later years and distributed to members

The Caribbean Association of Home Economists has been holding meetings biennially in different member territories usually at the invitation of one of the Associations.

Meetings held and presidents (usually serving two-year terms) are listed as follows:

1972-1977 - Ms Viola Horsham	Trinidad and Tobago
1977-1981 - Mrs Gwendolyn Tonge	Antigua
1981-1985 - Ms Victorine Britton	Guyana
1985-1989 - Mrs Veda Gill	Barbados
1989-1993 - Ms Zola Holder	Trinidad and Tobago
1993-1997 - Mrs Florentine McKoy	Antigua
1997-1999 - Mrs Norma Braithwaite Maynard	St. Lucia

There have been a number of Consultants to CAHE, knowledgeable professionals who have contributed tremendously in the field of Home Economics and related areas. Among them are Eunice Warner, Gwendolyn Tonge, Veda Gill, Olga Britton, Magda Pollard and Viola Horsham.

Conference has been held in the following territories:

Trinidad and Tobago, Antigua, Barbados, Guyana, St Vincent, Saint Lucia, Grenada.

The Association derives its funding from membership fees and from royalties accruing from sale of its major text book project - Caribbean Home Economics in Action Books 1,2, and 3, text books used in secondary schools throughout and beyond the Caribbean. In keeping with its objectives it has utilised part of its funds for training its members, conducting workshops, providing book grants and scholarships providing technical assistance to member territories on request, holding professional biennial conferences, producing and distributing to its members informative and educational newsletters and magazines and participating in international conferences.

The Caribbean Association of Home Economists is affiliated to the International Federation of Home Economics (IFHE) the American Home Economics Association (AHEA), and is twinned with the Toronto Home Economics Association (THEA) which played a major role in the production of the three text books.

The Association, with its twenty five years of service of the Caribbean has not been without problems, chief among them being, distance between one territory and another, the high cost of travelling to meetings, unsatisfactory mail service in and among territories, and lack of sponsorship.

Another achievement of CAHE is the production of a Directory of Home Economists in the region and a Code of Ethics - these being long felt needs. In its twenty five years of service to the Caribbean, CAHE, through wise, effective and committed leadership has demonstrated its usefulness and importance in elevating the role of the Home Economist to one recognition and dignity.

CHAPTER 3

CONTRIBUTION OF HOME ECONOMICS TO THE REGION

Major contributions of Home Economics to the Caribbean include:

1. Production of text and information booklets in Home Economics specially geared to meet the needs of Caribbean students. In addition to the efforts of Caribbean Association of Home Economists, individual members have produced text books - Beryl Wood, Magda Pollard, Veda Gill
2. CXC Examinations in Home Economics
The Caribbean Examination Council (CXC) which has replaced the external examinations bodies held its first examinations in Home Economics in 1982. This examination is geared more towards the needs of the Caribbean people and trained home economists have rendered valuable assistance in improving the direction and scope of CXC in the area of Home Economics.
3. Degree granting Institutions
The University of Guyana and the University of the West Indies have both instituted degree granting programmes in Home Economics and Home Economic Education and related areas, for example, Fine Arts and Sociology, Persons trained in these institutions have been using their knowledge and skills acquired for advancing the economic prosperity and social development of the Caribbean.
4. Gender Equity in Home Economics Training
Boys are now included in Home Economics classes in many secondary schools in the Caribbean. With the changing pattern of family life, many women - wives and mothers now work outside of the home; because of this, more men are taking over a share of the home making responsibility, thus the need for boys to participate in home economics programmes. The erroneous interpretation of Home Economics for girls only is gradually being changed.
5. Integration with other subjects
Home Economics has developed into a unique subject and trends reveal a tendency to integrate the academic and other general subjects on the school curriculum with Home Economics for more effective application to family and life situations.
6. Research Projects

Not much has been achieved in this area although there are many researchers in the Caribbean. The research Committees in CAHE have researched and reported on projects like Composite Flours, Textile Fibre from Banana, Natural Dyes, but information has not been disseminated throughout the region for practical application.

A booklet on Research Abstracts done in the Caribbean has been circulated and record of the History of Home Economics in the Caribbean has just been completed.

Other projects have been suggested, for example, research into the antecedents and consequences of Child Abuse, Income Generation, Malnutrition and Adolescent Pregnancy, Women's Health in Relation to Child Bearing. Future research Committees are being challenged to undertake these and other meaningful projects.

7. Student Health Intervention Programme (SHIP)
A programme which caters in a holistic way to the needs of under-privileged children.

Education Projects

The year 1994 was designated International Year of the Family (IYF). The education committee of CAHE collaborated with CFNI and CANDI to produce a booklet for use in primary schools as well as revised edition of The Caribbean Food Guide.

Family Natural Disaster Awareness Programme (FANDAP)

A community outreach programme which provides training in coping with the physical effects of natural disasters and post-traumatic stress syndrome.

8. National, Regional and International recognition
The quality of Home Economics in the region has been further enhanced through the selflessness and dedicated contribution of a number of women whom their nation, their region and the international community were delighted to recognise and honour.

Some of the women across the region who have been publicly recognised are:

Gwendolyn Tonge -	Order of the British Empire : Member of the British Empire Antigua - International
Enid Forde -	Member of the British Empire Guyana - International
Enid Abraham -	Member of the British Empire Guyana - International

Peggy Lewis Antrobus	CARICOM Triennial Award for Women St. Vincent - Regional
Magda Pollard -	CARICOM Triennial Award for Women Guyana - Regional
Irma Payne -	Area President, Associated Country Women of the World Guyana - International
Eunice Warner -	Medal of Merit Trinidad and Tobago- National
Magda Pollard -	Golden Arrow of Achievement Guyana - National
Ethel Olga Britton -	Golden Arrow of Achievement Guyana - National
Enid Abraham -	Medal of Service Guyana - National
Camille Henry -	Les Piton Silver Medal St. Lucia - National
Constance Joseph -	Les Piton Bronze Medal St. Lucia - National
Carmelita Fraser -	Barbados Service Star Barbados - National
Ena Maxwell -	Barbados - National

The Home Economics Association and Teachers' Union of some territories have also honoured a number of Home Economists for their outstanding contribution to Home Economics, Education and community development in their territories.

CHAPTER 4

THE WAY FORWARD

History has been evoked through the submission from the territories to give a glimpse of how we arrived at where we are as we approach the end of the twentieth century.

The work of Home Economists, Home Economics Associations and other related institutions is note worthy and deserves credit. Much has been achieved in the two centuries of the existence of Home Economics in the Caribbean from early nineteenth century to the final years of the twentieth century, even though there has been limited documentation of activities over the years. However, today's living has become more complex being fraught with technological changes and their concomitant problems.

Kathleen Jarvis in her discourse on "Future of Home Economics" in summary stated that:

The family is undergoing much stress and tension due to rapidity of social change, complexity of life today, inflation and high levels of unemployment. But the family continues as a powerful and precious institution in our society ¹⁷

¹⁷

Kathleen Jarvis, The Structure of Home Economics. The Caribbean Home Economist 1993 p.5

There have been severe family breakdown and family fragmentation in the Caribbean¹⁸ but through the efforts of Home Economists, traditional family values are now being reasserted and there is renewed interest the family and the quality of family life. Among the problems that have surfaced and which need to be addressed are:

- increasing number of school dropouts
- increased number of teen pregnancies
- high divorce rates
- domestic violence
- alcohol and drug abuse
- increased prevalence of abortion
- the scourge of AIDS and other sexually transmuted diseases

The Home Economist with a sense of the past and a knowledge of the present can help to shape and impact positively upon the future.

Over the years there have been significant improvements, for example, improved classrooms, more boys attending Home Economics classes, more trained and graduate Home Economics teachers, Home Economists in Education, Health, Social Services, Business on Government and in other positions.

¹⁸ Catherine Cumberbatch, Economic Scarcity & Family Survival. The Caribbean Home Economist. 1993 p.11

With regard to the Caribbean Association, there are now several areas of achievement, some of which though clearly stated need to be remembered, for example, a Directory of Home economists in the region, a Code of Ethics, and now a record of the History of Home Economics in the Caribbean. The Association needs to continue achieving so as to produce a Mission Statement for Home Economics in the Caribbean, Strategic Long Range Plans for implementation, and Research on specific problems common to the region.

Some of the problems related earlier in this final chapter can only be resolved with the cooperative effort of all Ministries, agencies and the families themselves.

The way forward for Home Economics, then, calls for visible, vocal, vibrant and visionary strategies on the part of all who believe in, and will work for, better homes and families in the Caribbean.

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