



## CARIBBEAN ASSOCIATION OF HOME ECONOMISTS INC. C.A.H.E 1972

*HOME ECONOMICS FOR A BETTER CARIBBEAN COMMUNITY*

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### **In Memory of Dame Gwendolyn Tonge**



It is with heartfelt regret that I extend condolences to the extended family of our beloved sister Dame Gwendolyn Tonge and to the government and people of this great nation. Dame Tonge was one of the founding members of the Caribbean Association of Home Economists Incorporated, (CAHE), an organization formed almost forty years ago. This august body of over five hundred home economists spans from Guyana right up the chain of English-speaking islands to Belize. The organization is affiliated to the International Federation for Home Economics (IFHE) itself one hundred and four years old.

Dame Gwendolyn Tonge served as Vice President to the organization from 1975-1977 and was its second President from 1977 – 1981. She also served as consultant from 1981-1989. Dame Tonge held executive meetings around the region during her Presidency and in those days communicated with executive members and territorial representatives through numerous letters, circulars and by telephone. Her tenure was decorated with many highlights such as:

- The formation of local associations around the region.
- Publishing the first issue of the CAHE magazine, "The Home Economist" in 1979.
- Developing the first CAHE constitution.
- Publishing the roles for each of the standing committees
- Instituting a motto and a logo.
- She was the guest speaker at one of the banquets of the Canadian Home Economics Association (CHEA).
- She initiated the Twinning of the Toronto Home Economics Association (THEA) and the Caribbean Association of Home Economists Inc. (CAHE).
- She organized writers workshops towards the development of the text book series and
- Coordinated the CAHE text book project.
- She was in office during the launching of the Home Economics text book series "Caribbean Home Economics in Action Books 1-3". These books are still the recommended textbooks for the lower secondary school curriculum in Home Economics.
- Dame Tonge led five members of the executive team to a regional meeting of the International Federation for Home Economics (IFHE) held in Guatemala. This was the first time Caribbean persons were attending a meeting of the IFHE.
- She also sat on the first panel for the development of the Caribbean Examinations Council examination in Home Economics subjects.
- At the end of Mrs. Tonge's term of office she donated US 500.00 towards the start of a Scholarship fund now named the Dame Gwendolyn Tonge Scholarship. This award grants US 1500.00 to a member of CAHE pursuing higher education in the field.

Dame Tonge was a visionary who had the interest of common folk and the community at heart; the nutrition classes, cookery classes, household management and housekeeping classes; her television show. She lived the motto of our organization in all of her activities, "Home Economics for a better Caribbean community". She instilled the need to build wealth for the implementation of projects that would touch the core of the family and change their lives for the better and so worked tirelessly with the text book project; the royalties of which help to support our activities to date.

The executive team arrived in Antigua for a training workshop for home economists here and a two day leadership meeting on the 28<sup>th</sup> September 2012, the same morning the Dame was promoted to glory. It was our intention to visit her during the team's stay on island but she had a more important appointment. We will miss her but let us not mourn as they who have no hope; let us celebrate her life, a life well lived. She leaves a legacy, rich and full, for us all to follow. May her precious soul rest in peace.



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