

Thursday April 25th

This turned out to be a day of complete contrasts.

The Rev Les Isaac had hosted a team of about six pastors from Jamaica, earlier this year and I had met them at Clapham, where they were holding a meeting. These Pastors had an organisation called *Operation Save Jamaica* and some of them were working with the gangs in Trench Town. I went to see three of them on this Thursday, and the Director of *Operation Save Jamaica*, Richard Delisser, took me to Trench Town. I saw Bob Marley's compound (though unfortunately didn't go inside), visited a school, run by a pastor, who also had been to Clapham - the school, called *Operation Restoration*, was providing education for those who had missed out on other schooling, I saw *Boys' Town*, which was founded by the Revd Hugh Sherlock, and met the Captain of Boys' Town Football Team, I met a former gang leader and gang members and had a good look round the whole of Trench Town.



Meeting Action Pack's Gang Leader



Meeting members of Action Pack gang

The contrast came in the evening. As a member of Rotary International I wanted to visit a Rotary Meeting in Jamaica, and that evening I went to the meeting of the Rotary Club of Trafalgar New Heights, which was held in the Liguanea Club, new Kingston - a rather sophisticated hotel. It turned out to be a younger age club - so I was very much the old man, particularly as they had a group of sixth formers there, from a school where this club had a link. I was made very welcome.



Action Pack HQ with Rev Richard Dresser



At Trafalgar New Heights Rotary Meeting

Friday April 26th

Rev Hewie had given me the names of five of his friends - Jennifer and Paul Martin, Rev Bruce Swapp, Rev George Mulrain and Marjorie Lewis Cooper. As I have already mentioned, I'd met George Mulrain on 24th April. But I had also made contact with Bruce Swapp and with Jennifer and Paul, by phone.

I had arranged to have breakfast with Jennifer and Paul on this day, and they gave me a drive around the area, before bringing me back to Marylyn's, where I was picked up by Bruce Swapp and spent several hours with him, visiting Arnold Methodist Church and the school there - as well as Mrs Chang, aged 94, who had recently been seriously ill in hospital, yet still was caretaker at the church. Like George Mulrain, Rev Swapp had also been a former President of the MCCA and had lectured at Kingsmead in Birmingham, but I had first met him in Antigua, when he was Secretary of the Methodist Conference of the MCCA. He then took me on to Coke Memorial Methodist Church and drove me around that area of Kingston, before bringing me back to where I was staying.



The Rev Bruce Swapp with Mrs Chana



Children at Arnold Road Methodist Church's School

That evening Marylyn invited a number of her friends round - and we had good Jamaican food to eat (and plenty of it).



Marylyn Tapper

Saturday April 27th



Meeting Sarah Mackenson



Sarah with her niece

I went to see Sarah Mackenson in the morning and in the evening went to Trench Town again. This time it was for the Pastors' Concert, and a programme of amazing music from a number of Pentecostal pastors. It was a bit like a Rock Concert and there were hundreds of young people there, as well as Marylyn, her great nephew and me. It went on until after midnight.



The Pastor's Concert



Pastor Bob enjoying the Concert

Sunday April 28th

We were up early to worship at the 7 a.m. service at Bethel Baptist Church, the church that Marylyn regularly attends. It was quite a remarkable church - good and lively worship and a great social outreach, with a pharmacy, doctors, a school and many young people's and other social programmes.



With the Pastor's wife and Marylyn at Bethel Baptist Church



Doris at Coke Memorial Methodist Church

From there we attended Coke Memorial Methodist Church's 9.30 a.m. service - which was quite sparsely attended. I met Doris, a former choir member at Clapham, who was in Coke's choir that morning.

In the afternoon we went to the beach, and in the evening Paul and Jennifer picked me up to show me Kingston at night. We ended up at the University of Jamaica (where both Paul and Jennifer had previously worked), and we met The Revd Dr Marjorie Lewis-Cooper - Principal of the theological training section of the university - which trains ministers of several denominations.



The Revd Marjorie Lewis-Cooper with Paul and Jennifer at the Theological Faculty of The University of Jamaica