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Celebrating a Prominent Actuary: The Hon Daisy McFarlane Coke

By Cathy Lyn

It was a glorious and scintillating Saturday evening, Oct. 21, 2017 in Kingston Jamaica, celebrating Daisy McFarlane Coke's 80th birthday and her awesome contribution to the actuarial profession as a pioneer in the Caribbean. The local actuarial community, close friends and family organized this memorable occasion to show how much they appreciated Daisy's professional and social contribution as an actuary to all the various communities she served. Daisy has been long-time mentor for many local actuaries and she founded the Caribbean Actuarial Association in 1991, which became a full member association of the International Actuarial Association (IAA) in 2008. She has been honoured with the Order of Jamaica in recognition of her extensive public service. Daisy has been a member of International Association of Consulting Actuaries (IACA) for over two decades and is a regular attendee at Colloquia and Congress.

A young girl from rural Jamaica, Daisy won an open scholarship to university in 1953 followed by a Jamaican government scholarship to England to become an actuary. There she got practical experience at the U.K. Government Actuary's Department and earned her FIA in May 1970 becoming the 13th living female FIA. Daisy received her ASA designation from the Society of Actuaries around 1974. She found SOA events very useful and convenient to attend due to their proximity to Jamaica when we had severe foreign exchange restrictions and



Cathy Lyn, Daisy Coke and Mike Smith

in the days when only journals and meetings were available for career development

The Hon Portia Simpson, a former Prime Minister, Dr Peter Phillips, leader of a prominent political party, former Minister of Finance, and former Governor General Sir Kenneth Hall were among the many dignitaries who joined the actuaries to honor her. Nikhil Asnani, a talented musician, who just earned his fellowship at age 23, played a couple Bob Marley pieces with the band. Astor Duggan and St Elmo Whyte, two senior actuaries, led the happy birthday song. ■



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