

Tribute to Charles Hyatt

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By T. 'Boots' Harris

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Charles Hyatt — comedian, actor, broadcaster and author — died on New Year's Day 2007 in Palm Bay Florida. Reports are that Mr. Hyatt died from cancer, three weeks after he was diagnosed with the terminal illness. A relative told the press that he died from lung cancer, which had also spread to his kidney and liver.

Jamaicans in South Florida would remember Charles for his hosting of the Reggaesoca Awards along with Fae Ellington from its inception in 1994, to the awards 13th staging in 2006.

Charles Hyatt was truly a legend in his own right and time. He excelled in the fields of theatre, broadcasting, television, the big screen and the print media. Charles was the entertainment editor for the now defunct Jamaica Record newspaper.

He was very active in the theatre, appearing in numerous dramatic productions such as "Smile Orange" and most of the leading pantomimes.

His popular radio show "Charlie's Time" featured the best recordings of great jazz, blues and contemporary artistes such as Louis Armstrong, Ella-Fitzgerald, Sarah Vaughn, Johnny Ace, Nat King Cole and Miles Davis whose music of the 1940s 50s and 60s stood out, and today are still considered as classics of their respective eras.

Charles also gave detailed information on the artistes, musicians, arrangers and conductors, and played many rare tracks, that kept his dedicated audience in great anticipation, as to what would be presented on the next show.

"Charlie's Time" was aired every Sunday night from 8 p.m. until midnight on KLAS FM 89.

The show also included a popular feature, "When

I Was A Boy" from a book, which he authored, and which highlighted truly Jamaican characters such as "Slim And Slam" — a comedic news team that sang the news in the markets for a penny. This segment of Charles show also featured listeners reminiscing about traditional Jamaican food, medicines and superstitions.

Charles Hyatt studied drama at the Theatre Royal in London, and worked for the BBC's Caribbean Service. Charles personified commitment, dedication and love for the Jamaican theatre. Over the years this has won him widespread admiration and respect of Jamaicans from all walks of life, and throughout the Caribbean, North America and Europe.

Charles Hyatt is survived by his widow Marjorie, four children from his first marriage and grandchildren.

Florida Reggaesoca mourns Charles passing

By Vinette K. Pryce

Winsome Charlton is distraught with the New Year's Day passing of her friend and 12-year host of her popular Reggaesoca Awards, Charles Hyatt.

"My day and year started out with shock, grief and phone calls," Ms Charlton, founder of the Florida Reggaesoca Awards said.

"I had planned a quiet day when the phone rang early in the morning that Charlie had passed," she added.

Apparently Ms Charlton surmised that the actor/comedian might not have been well. She did not elaborate but said she felt compelled to reach out to him three weeks ago in Palm Bay.

She said she had not spoken to him recently but tried to reach him by phone.

"He was sleeping at the time and I intended to call at another time. This sad news is like a blow to me. I just cannot believe it," said Ms Charlton.

Charles Hyatt along with Fae Ellington consistently hosted South Florida's annual tribute to the two Caribbean genres. Together the pair provided jokes relevant to a predominantly Jamaican audience.

Last year, Mr. Hyatt received the Louise Bennett Award of Distinction and was regaled by the South Florida community, Hi Class Promotions, WAVS-radio and colleagues actresses Ellington and Leonie Forbes.

Charles Hyatt

a legend in
his own time



Fae Ellington bows to Charles Hyatt at Reggaesoca Awards 2006 in South Florida.