

BON VOYAGE, PJ

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Gleaner Writer

WITH A delightful send-off dinner held on Monday evening at Fort Charles, Port Royal, the Port Authority and Shipping Association of Jamaica bade the outgoing Prime Minister, the Most Hon. P. J. Patterson, farewell, and lauded his accomplishments during his time in office. Though the cannons at the venue were clearly not functional, the night was still a blast, as it was charmingly entertaining and flawlessly executed.

The venue alone was a grand sight as it was beautifully lit and the grand stature of the redbrick structure was reminiscent of the days when Port Royal was one of the richest cities in the Western Hemisphere. The historic theme was also carried through in the attire of the waiters, who were dressed as pirates.

The Transport and Works Minister Robert Pickersgill, acted as the Master of Ceremonies, and welcomed the guests, and did so within the one-minute restriction, he jokingly mentioned.

SEAFOOD DELIGHTS

Norma Shirley, of Norma's on the Terrace, catered for the event, and the menu featured an array of seafood delights. During dinner, jazz musician Dwight Richards performed classics like Toots and the Maytals' 5446.



Noel Hylton, president of the Port Authority (left), makes a presentation to Prime Minister P.J. Patterson.

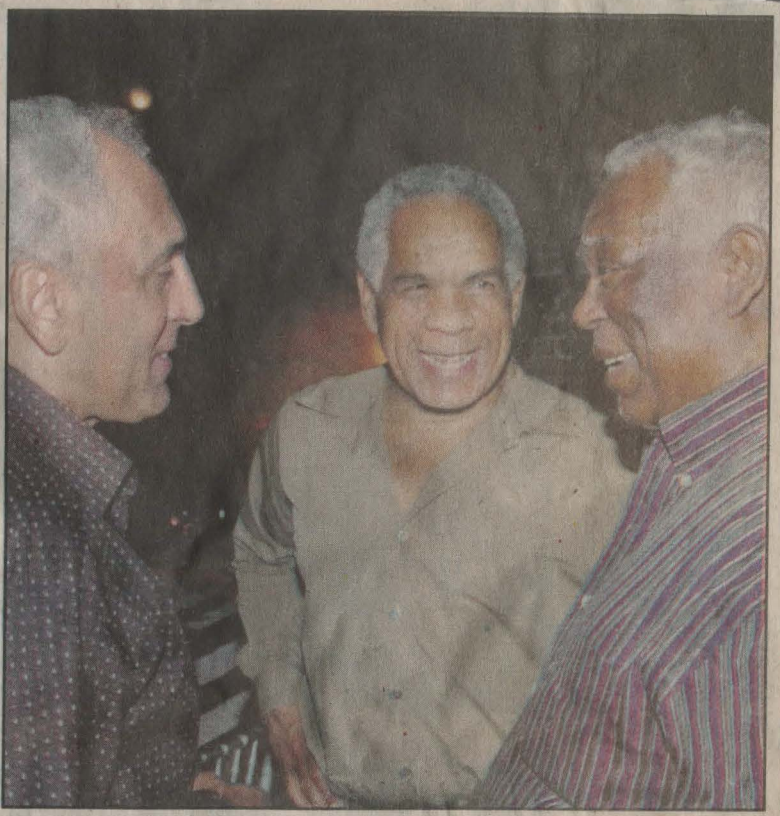
While singing Louis Armstrong's **Wonderful World**, he invited the PM on stage to help him perform the song. The PM willingly complied forthwith. Alas, he did not get some of the words to the song, but his performance still proved to be extremely entertaining for the guests. Mr. Patterson was clearly in high spirits as he moved from table to table, greeting his friends and colleagues with a broad smile spread across his face. He also gave another impromptu performance alongside jazz singer, Karen Smith.

FORMALITIES

After dinner, the formalities got under way beginning with commentary from Mr. Pickersgill. He revealed interesting anecdotes on Mr. Patterson's musical history, noting that he once managed the Skatalites. Mr. Pickersgill explained that if he were to do over his political career, he would want to work under the same boss.

Michael Bernard, president of the Shipping Association of Jamaica (SAJ), highlighted the PM's role in building Jamaica's shipping industry, after which a video recording outlining his contribution to the industry was shown. In his reply, Mr. Patterson accepted the praises of the SAJ with his characteristic humility.

The evening ended with a fantastic fireworks display.



CitiGroup's head, Peter Moses (left), shares a laugh with Anthony Hylton (right) and Omar Davies (centre) at the farewell dinner.

P.J. Patterson, Percival James

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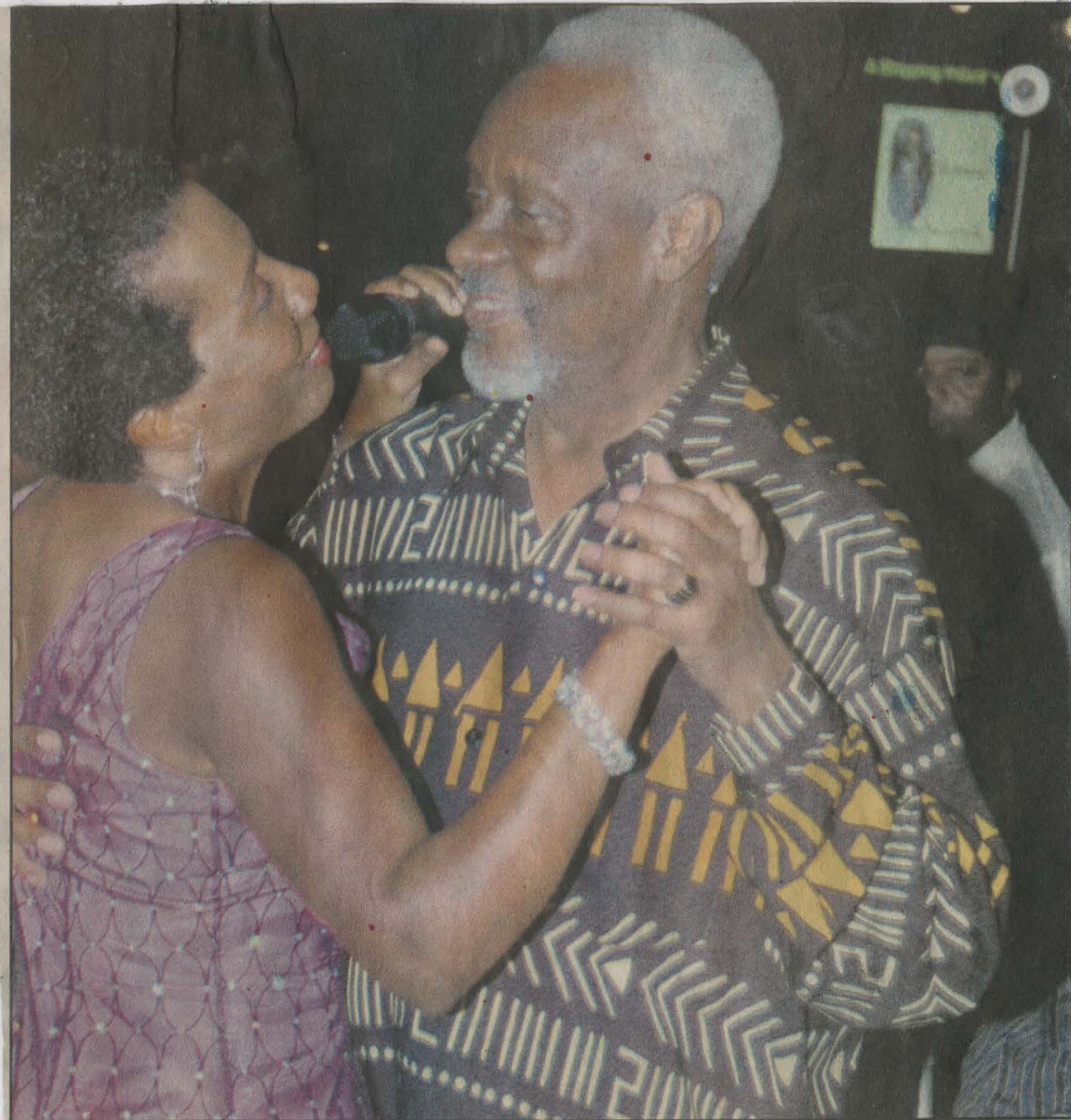
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PHOTOS BY WINSTON SILL/FREELANCE PHOTOGRAPHER

Prime Minister P.J. Patterson (right) sings his rendition of Louis Armstrong's 'What a Wonderful World' with the backing of jazz musician Dwight Peters, at the 'Bon Voyage Dinner' that was hosted by Port Authority and Shipping Association for the outgoing Prime Minister, held at Fort Charles, Port Royal, last Monday.

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P.J. Patterson dances with jazz singer Karen Smith as she performed at the farewell dinner.

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