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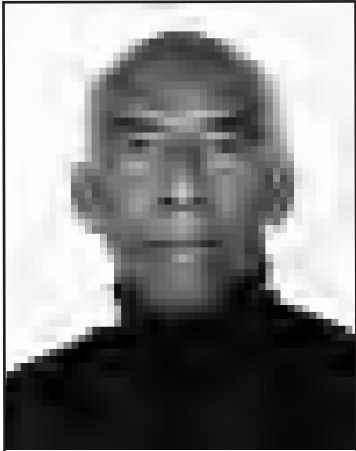
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Honoring All Who Served and Those Who Are Serving

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Colin Powell, Son Of Jamaicans



Jim Z. Daniels

He was clearly an enigma on the American scene and a very complex one at that. But unlike so many engaged in a very visible public life, his most protective self, and conceivably how the public saw him, he was a decent man with his integrity unbesmeared.

By now most everyone knows that Colin Luther Powell was born in Harlem, New York, on April 5, 1937, and passed away on October 18, 2021. His parents were immigrants from Jamaica. He spent most of his childhood in the South Bronx neighborhood of New York City, which was then regarded as a step up from Harlem. The neighborhood included white, Jewish, African American, and Puerto Rican residents. Despite his parents' urgings

that he should "strive for a good education" in order to "make something" of his life, Powell remained an ordinary student throughout high school.

At City College of New York, however, Powell discovered his leadership skills after joining the army's Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC). He graduated from the program in 1958 and was made a second lieutenant (an army officer who is below all other officers) in the U.S. Army. He was then assigned to duty in West Germany. In 1962 he met and married Alma Vivian Johnson from Birmingham, Alabama and together they eventually had three children.

How Powell entered military life is described by his sister as a youth who became enamored with the image of the military uniform, and it influenced his decision to seek admission to the R.O.T.C. program. Powell, many years later, would remark that his upbringing was unremarkable and in his South Bronx neighborhood he never felt or saw himself as a minority.

But, growing up in the 1940s and 1950s in what he called the "heavily Jewish neighborhood" of Hunts Point, Powell's life in fact, was filled with Yiddish—Jewish influences. It is reported that his friend Melvin Klein's family had Powell over every week to watch Milton Berle and Molly Goldberg on one of

the first televisions in the neighborhood. It is not difficult to concede that Colin Powell, according to an editorial in the Jerusalem Post, "represented a unique breed of US supporters for Israel, who had an emotional understanding of what makes Israel unique and what the country means in historic terms for the Jewish people."

"Right from the start," writes Karen DeYoung in her book, *Soldier*, "Powell seems to have been perfectly suited to the United States Army and rose rapidly through its ranks. Along the way he proved himself competent, reliable, punctilious, and physically brave. Most famously, in Vietnam he rushed into the wreckage of his crashed and smoking helicopter to drag fellow soldiers to safety. But he was brave in other ways too and stood up for the Army when he might more easily have walked away and left it to rot."

After rising through the military ranks, Powell became a four-star general and the first black Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff under President George H.W. Bush. He had served as U.S. national security adviser for President Ronald Reagan in the 1980s. He served twice in Vietnam—during the first tour, he was wounded in action and on the second tour, and he received the Soldier's Medal for rescuing several men from a burning helicopter.

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General Colin Powell

In Memoriam: "We Didn't Have To Claim General Colin Powell, He Claimed Us"

By Curtis A. Ward

Former Ambassador of Jamaica to the United Nations

Many Jamaicans and Caribbean people in the Diaspora, and also at home, tend to claim famous individuals of Caribbean descent as their own. We bask in their achievements. We didn't have to claim General Colin Powell, he claimed us. He was proud of his Jamaican heritage. He wrote and spoke of his Jamaican and West Indian heritage, proudly.

General Powell (he preferred to be called "General" rather than "Secretary" in retirement) in his book, speeches, and interviews proudly proclaimed his Jamaican heritage.

He related how he grew up in a Caribbean environment in the Bronx (New York) where he was nurtured, molded, and steeped in West Indian traditions and culture. He laid claim to his Jamaican upbringing.

In addition, he told stories of his visit to his father's birthplace, walking in his father's footsteps at his former home in Top Hill, meeting family members and praying at his grandparents graves, and his visits to rum bars with his cousin in Kingston in the country from whence his parents came. He was comfortable playing Caribbean music in his



From left: Mrs. Sonia Ward, Gen. Colin Powell, and Ambassador Curtis Ward at a Jamaican Independence celebration in Washington DC

office and having Jamaican rum in his office liquor cabinet.

It was quite a coincidence that Jamaica's Minister of Foreign

Affairs the Hon. K. D. Knight had the distinction of presiding over a meeting of the UN Security Council meeting at the foreign ministers'

level, on November 12, 2001, when Secretary Powell made his first appearance in the Council as US Secretary of State. In clear reference

to his Jamaican heritage, Secretary Powell addressed Minister Knight saying, "I am sure you will understand

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Son of Jamaicans

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He became under President George W. Bush the first black Secretary of State. He'll be most remembered for the act he most regretted, his 2003 presentation to the UN security council laying out US evidence of Iraqi weapons of mass destruction, which turned out

not to exist. The Powell speech marked a decisive moment in undermining US credibility on the world stage – all the more because of the then secretary of state's repeated insistence that his claims were based on hard intelligence.

Powell was widely mentioned for

president in 1996, but he quickly removed his name from consideration. It is alleged that the general's wife, Alma worried that talk of her husband as "the first Black president" might arouse a potential assassin. It vetoed any talk of a candidacy for that high office.

Powell broke with his

Republican party by endorsing Mr. Barack Obama over Mr. John McCain in the 2000 presidential run and suffered little for it because of the questions around McCain's selection of Sarah Palin as his running mate. On the other hand, Powell attracted the ire of Harry Belafonte who accused him of being a house slave by not being more vigorous in his objection to the US war against Iraq.

It is hard for this column not to add a personal note to General Powell's upbringing under the influence of Jamaican values. That parental expression "make something of your life" is loaded with high expectation, and he did not disappoint. We continue to be reminded of the accomplishments by Jamaicans - from the fastest man alive to the first US black secretary of state.

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In Memoriam

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that it is a particular treat and an honor, Sir, to have Jamaica in the chair as president." Indeed, it was an honor also for Minister Knight and for all of us members of Jamaica's Security Council delegation. Minister Knight had been appointed as Minister of Foreign Affairs just a few days before the meeting. I won't reveal what a very pleased Minister Knight said to me afterwards.

In his memoirs "My American Journey" General Powell proudly related details of his life growing up as a West Indian in Bronx, New York, his encounters later with racism and bias in civilian and military life, and how he overcame them not only as a West Indian but as a black man in America.

As a soldier and commander, he was exemplary. Having served two tours in Vietnam, surviving a helicopter crash, and as a war hero and four star general he later became the first black Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. He had successfully commanded the UN Security Council backed 35 nations coalition forces to expel Saddam Hussein's Iraqi military from Kuwait during the first Gulf War (August 1990 to February 1991) to end Iraq's annexation and occupation of Kuwait.

As Secretary of State, he was the first black to serve as America's top diplomat. Many at home and abroad have praised him as an extraordinary diplomat and human being. But the George W. Bush administration and US intelligence community betrayed him. He is often criticized for his fulsome representation to the UN Security Council, on February 5, 2003, about the presence of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) in Saddam Hussein's Iraq.

He was misled by the intelligence community on Iraq and the claim of WMD in Iraq. His presentation to the UN Security Council though brilliant was not persuasive. The UNSC refused to approve the invasion of Iraq. As the story goes, Powell insisted on having the Director of the CIA, George Tenet sit behind him during his presentation to the UNSC. The message to the international community was the information he presented to the Council was backed by US intelligence. He opposed the neocons in President Bush's administration on going to war with Iraq in 2003.

I was in the gallery of the

UNSC watching Powell's presentation and I knew from the outset he was wrong. I said then to one of my colleagues from the CTC, "His presentation was brilliant, but his facts are wrong." We knew from the Hans Blix-led UN inspection team there were no WMD in Iraq. Blix had asked for more time to confirm beyond doubt Saddam Hussein had no WMD. The Bush administration driven by the warmongering neocons instead of waiting invaded Iraq. Although Powell initially opposed the invasion like a good soldier he went along with the President's decision to invade Iraq. Secretary Powell's legacy is unfairly tainted by this series of events.

Powell's relationship with the Caribbean was good, except for the surreptitious removal of Haitian President Aristide sometime in the early morning of February 29, 2004. He held to the view that stealthily removing Aristide from Haiti under cover of night and taking him to the Central African Republic was the right thing to do. He maintained, during a conversation with me a few years later, saying it was the right thing to do to stabilize Haiti and in the interest of Aristide's safety. CARICOM, led by Jamaican Prime Minister P. J. Patterson, felt betrayed. Powell had given his word that CARICOM's resolution of the standoff in Haiti was the correct course of action. It did not include removing Aristide from Haiti.

In our conversation Secretary Powell maintained he was right on the Aristide removal and Prime Minister Patterson was wrong. I took Prime Minister Patterson's side of the issue with which I was most familiar. General Powell and I agreed to disagree.

General Powell was the biggest name in American politics who never sought the presidency. He passed up the opportunity to become the first black president of the United States. He was praised in life and after his death for his leadership, bravery, integrity, and decency. We can see him as all that and more. He was a man of Jamaican and Caribbean heritage in the Diaspora who transcended America's military, political, and diplomatic history and reached the pinnacles of his career.

We would have proudly claimed him, but we didn't have to because he claimed us. His passing leaves us saddened. The world has lost a great man.

(Excerpted from *The Ward Post*, 2021 Curtis A. Ward. Printed with permission).

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Grenada Updates Protocols For Fully Vaccinated Travelers, Removing 48-Hour Quarantine

St. George's, Grenada W.I.A: As the holiday travel season begins and with global vaccinations on the rise, Grenada has updated its Pure Safe Travel protocols.

All fully vaccinated travelers entering Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique, with a WHO-approved vaccination and a negative PCR test, taken no more than 72-hours before travel, will no longer be required to quarantine for 48-hours upon arrival in the country.

This is the first major update to the health and safety protocols since July 31 when the destination instituted a policy requiring

all non-nationals be fully vaccinated to be granted entry.

Along with the 48-hour quarantine removal, Grenada has made several other updates to its Pure Safe Travel protocols:

- Persons traveling to Grenada will no longer be required to fill out a 'Pure Safe Travel Authorization Certificate.'
- Travelers will now be required to fill out a Health Declaration Form, which can be accessed at covid19.gov.gd. A physical copy of the certificate must be presented upon arrival to Grenada.
- Vaccinated visitors will no longer be tested on arrival unless deemed necessary by Health Officials during

health screening (symptom review and temperature checks). As a result, the fee for on arrival testing has been waived.

- Fully vaccinated travelers are required to present their original vaccination card as proof of vaccination to the airlines and upon arrival in Grenada.
- Vaccination card or certificate must be in English.
- Fully vaccinated travelers can now use their personal transportation or can be picked up by a fully vaccinated individual.

For more information on Grenada or to plan your getaway to the destination, visit www.puregrenada.com.

About Grenada: Pure Grenada, the Spice of the Caribbean, a hidden gem with unspoiled beauty offering a lifestyle so pure and authentic that you will feel instantly renewed. Famed for its aromatic spices and organic chocolate, the tri-island destination of Grenada, Carriacou, and Petite Martinique is located in the eastern Caribbean just south of Barbados.

The Pure Grenada experience amplified by the "Pure Safe Travel" initiative, beckons visitors to its 40 white sandy beaches including the world-famous Grand Anse Beach, 15 breathtaking waterfalls, six chocolate factories, three rum distilleries, and more than 30 unfor-

gettable dive sites, including the largest shipwreck in the Caribbean 'Bianca C' and the World's First Underwater Sculpture Park.

The World Travel & Tourism Council "Safe Travels" approved destination is committed to protecting your health and safety while allowing you to tailor a beyond-the-ordinary experience of a lifetime. To plan your next vacation to Grenada, visit www.puregrenada.com.

Behind The Scenes: Willie Pep Movie Production Company Selected WISC To Film Some Scenes In Hartford

HARTFORD, CT: The West Indian Social Club of Hartford would like to thank the Willie Pep Movie Production Company for selection us as one of several destinations in Hartford, CT for filming

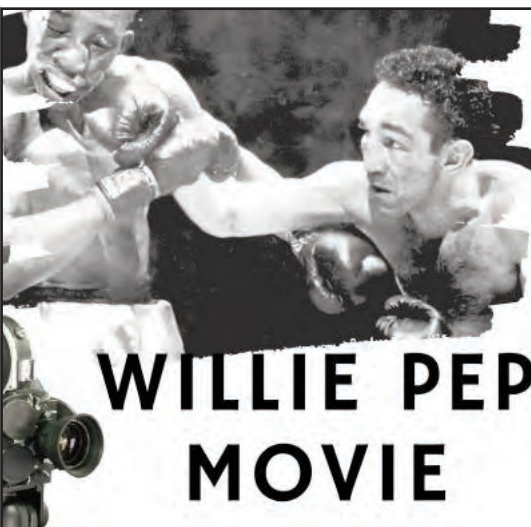
scenes for the upcoming movie biopic of the legendary Boxer; also, for giving the opportunity to our community to participate in something normally reserved to a chosen few. We appreciate the visit and


would welcome any future visits.

The cast and crew of the new independent film "Pep" are shooting all around the area for the story that chronicles the career of legendary Hall of Fame feather-

weight boxer, Willie Pep. The filmmakers insisted that Hartford was the location to shoot because Pep is a local hero, who was a two-time world boxing champion. He was the fighter with the most wins in profes-

sional boxing and his long-shot journey out of retirement and back into the ring.





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A photograph of a family of four laughing together. A woman on the left is laughing with her mouth open. A young girl in the center is laughing with her mouth wide open. A man on the right is laughing with his eyes closed. A young boy on the far right is laughing with his mouth open. They are all smiling and looking towards the camera.

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