



*Government of Bermuda*

Ministry of Community, Culture and Sports

## **National Heroes Induction Ceremony 2015**

### **MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

To the House of Assembly

By

**The Hon. Patricia J. Gordon-Pamplin J.P., M.P.**

Minister of Community, Culture and Sports

June 12<sup>th</sup> 2015

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**Mr. Speaker,** I rise today and am very pleased to share with Members of this Honourable House and the people of Bermuda the names of the persons who will be inducted as Bermuda's National Heroes on Sunday June 14<sup>th</sup>. On Monday of this week I announced that Mrs. Gladys Carlyon de Courcy Morrell and Sir Edward Trenton Richards CBE will be posthumously honoured as our newest National Heroes.

**Mr. Speaker,** Members may recall that in January of this year the public were invited to submit nominations to the Naming and Recognition Committee. Over thirty (30) nominations were received and reviewed; and recommendations were made to Cabinet who made the final selection.

**Mr. Speaker,** Many of the members in this esteemed House know of the worth and work of both Gladys Morrell and Sir Edward Richards. These two individuals, through their ongoing efforts significantly shaped our country and her development.

Both individuals embodied many of the criteria that had been established under Bermuda's National Heroes Guidelines. According to these guidelines individuals (or groups) must meet most of the following criteria:

- The person has made a significant and lasting contribution to Bermuda
- The person has enriched the lives of others
- The person's legacy will stand the test of time and have continued relevance in the future
- The person has contributed to the quality of life and destiny of Bermuda
- The person is considered outstanding in their area of activity
- The person has ready name recognition among the general population
- The person is recognized by his/her profession
- The person is reflective of Bermuda's cultural heritage and diversity

There is no doubt that both Gladys Morrell and Sir Edward Richards met most if not all of the above criteria.

**Mr. Speaker,** Many will remember Gladys Morrell as one of the primary forces advocating for women's voting rights in Bermuda for thirty years. Mrs. Morrell demonstrated tremendous courage, perseverance and fortitude in the face of serious challenges, "mountains" of obstacles and personal risk of imprisonment. Indeed, because of the efforts and steadfastness of this formidable woman, my female colleagues and I are able to stand and give voice to issues of the day in this House. Her fight paved the way for us to participate fully in the democratic process and serve as representatives of the people.

**Mr. Speaker,** This lady of stature also "shone a spotlight on" a number of other issues in the community at that time including the very high infant mortality rate. She was a co-founder of the Bermuda Welfare Society; which established Bermuda's district nursing system. She was also concerned about environmental issues; hence the Morrell Nature Reserve named in her honour.

**Mr. Speaker,** Our other distinguished national hero being posthumously inducted this year is Sir Edward Trenton Richards; well known as Bermuda's first black leader. Sir Edward was instrumental in shaping and directing the political landscape as we know it today. Sir Edward was one of the principal architects of the 1968 Bermuda Constitution. During his tenure as the Leader of the Government major political changes occurred. The Constitution was further refined, resulting in the now familiar bodies and titles such as Cabinet, Senate, Ministers and Premier. Prior to his involvement in the political arena Sir Edward had been a school teacher at the Berkeley Institute; was active in organizations such as the Pembroke Hamilton Club and the Warwick Workmen's Club; and also previously worked as an Assistant Editor of the Recorder. It was through that medium that he presented articles decrying the social ills of Bermuda.

**Mr. Speaker,** Both of the National Heroes being inducted this year have helped to progress Bermuda to the country that we know today. We are indeed most grateful for their sacrifices; their commitment to right "wrongs" and their fortitude. Bermuda is indebted to them for all that they did. It is therefore most appropriate that on June 14<sup>th</sup> we as a people pause to salute and pay homage to these individuals. I invite every member of this honourable house and all residents to join with us on Sunday June 14<sup>th</sup> at 4pm in King's Square, St. George's for this most important induction ceremony.

**Mr. Speaker,** I would like to express my gratitude to the members of the Naming and Recognition Committee for their work. I would also like to express my sincere appreciation to all of those members of the public who took the time to complete and submit nominations. By nominating persons to be considered for the designation of "National Hero" you are recognizing the worth and work of fellow Bermudians who selflessly toiled and labored for the betterment of all. Your nominations are a testament to your pride in who we are as a people.

**Mr. Speaker,** Permit me to close with words by poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow who once said that *"lives of great men ... [and women] oft remind us that we can make our lives sublime and departing ... leave behind us ... footprints on the sands of time"*. Certainly our two new National Heroes, Gladys Carlyon de Courcy Morrell and Sir Edward Trenton Richards CBE have done just that.

**Thank you Mr. Speaker.**