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Irving Burgie Returns to the "Island in the Sun"

Irving Burgie, also known as "Lord Burgess," original composer of classic Calypso favorites such as *Day-O*, *Jamaica Farewell* and *Yellow Bird*, is returning to The Bahamas to release his newest CD and continue his long-standing humanitarian relationship with one of his favorite "Islands in the Sun."

Mr. Burgie will be meeting with Bahamian officials and educators in reference to his generous donation of new children's songbooks and accompanying CDs entitled *Share Caribbean Music*, published by McGraw Hill, to all primary schools in The Bahamas.

During his trip, Mr. Burgie will be interviewed on ZNS TV about his newest CD, *The Father of Modern Calypso*, produced by New York's Valley Entertainment. The new CD features his new song, *Nassau Crystal Waters*, to be aired on Bahamian radio prior to its official May 2003 release.

Irving Burgie & Doris Johnson

During the ZNS interview, Mr. Burgie will also be asked about his close friendship with the legendary Doris Johnson, aptly referred to as "a woman of many firsts." Mr. Burgie initially met Doris Johnson in New York in the late 1950's, and they continued their friendship during the years Doris Johnson was working on her Doctor of Education.

Ms. Johnson also helped Mr. Burgie catalogue his home library, which eventually came to include an original edition of Doris Johnson's book, *The Quiet Revolution in The Bahamas*, chronicling the events surrounding the PLP's first successful election.

Following Mr. Burgie's numerous successes across the globe and with the encouragement of Ms. Johnson, Mr. Burgie traveled to The Bahamas in the late 1960s to perform his successful musical *Ballad for Bimshire*, centered on a fictitious island in the Caribbean.

Mr. Burgie spent nearly one month rehearsing for the elaborate show with the Lucayan Chorale. "The Chorale was a pretty big outfit," Mr. Burgie described; "They had Sonny Johnson," one of the most popular singers in Nassau at the time. "Of course it involved all the creative people practically in Nassau." Performed at the Casino on Paradise Island, the musical was "a big deal... they made a big fuss over it," Mr. Burgie proudly stated.

During Mr. Burgie's visit, Doris Johnson was able to introduce him and his wife to numerous heads of state, including Lady Marguerite Pindling.

Irving Burgie & Harry Belafonte

"Harry Belafonte and I both thought exactly alike along measures of projection. With Harry out there in front singing my songs, you couldn't want a better salesman at the time, and he did a terrific job of it," Mr. Burgie stated. "That one-two punch really created what they called the Calypso thing in the United States back in 1955 with the *Calypso* album, which became the first album to sell a million albums in 1956 – the first album of *any* kind, not just Calypso. It was number one on the Billboard charts for 32 weeks," he added.



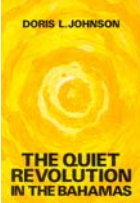
Speaking of performing his most popular songs at the height of their success, Mr. Burgie revealed: "I didn't have the opportunity or the necessity to perform that much, because after the *Calypso* album came out, I did two more albums with Belafonte because he ended up recording 34 of my songs. I kind of had the feeling of competing with myself if I went out performing, and Belafonte was everybody's idol, one of the most handsome men of the time."

“He’d come out in the club with this red shirt on with this plunging neckline that went down to the fourth button,” he recalled, “as a matter of fact, if it had gone down another button, the vice squad would have closed up the place! So you know, he was hot stuff at that time. Belafonte had that feel for himself as a singer. He had no competition. Still doesn’t have any competition as such.”

Mr. Burgie is currently working on his autobiography, which he hopes to complete this year. He will also make periodic guest appearances at primary schools in the Caribbean and the United States to attend student performances of his "*Island In The Sun*" play from his newly released *Songs of The Caribbean* children’s songbook.

While in The Bahamas, Mr. Burgie will be staying at the Sheraton hotel on Paradise Island 18th to 24th April.

Photos/Captions:

Photo	File Name	Caption
	burgieminaya250.jpg	Irving Burgie and Frank Minaya in Mr. Burgie’s library, catalogued by Doris Johnson in the 1950’s while earning her Doctorate in New York City.
	burgiebethel250.jpg	(Left to Right) Frank Minaya, Irving Burgie and Consul General Ed Bethel, who met at the Bahamian Consulate in New York to discuss Mr. Burgie’s donation of children’s songbooks and CD’s to The Bahamas.
	quiet250.jpg	Written by Mr. Burgie’s close friend Doris Johnson.