

Hey Charli,

I'm so glad you had a ball in Trinidad. I did not doubt you would, not for a moment. So sad to hear about Claudette. I have a story, one of those that illustrates how small the world is.

When I left Trini, Claudette gave me the phone number of her sister in Vancouver. I eventually tried the number but it was not hers. I gave up. Janet and I had joined a single's club called TGIF - Thank God I'm Free. They were having their summer picnic on one of the nearer coastal islands. We decided to take the bus to avoid the high cost of transporting the car on the ferry. At the bus stop was this pretty lady all covered in flowers. Her bright dress was floral, her shoes had plastic flowers, she had flowers in her hair. I whispered to Janet that she thinks she's in the Caribbean. Anyway, a fair journey later, we arrived at the island picnic spot and there was the floral lady! She was also a member of the club and found the picnic spot before we did. As soon as she opened her mouth I knew she was from Trinidad. I went over and we chatted. Guess what? Yes, she was Claudette's baby sister! She was the one who called me this week-end to tell me about Claudette. I always hoped that Claudette would take time to write her stories of Trinidad as she had a special touch when it came to writing. A part of our "Writer's group", so we got to know her and knowing she's no longer there, leaves a gap. Another gap! I'm getting tired of losing friends and family members. It must be the stage I'm at.

Thanks for sending news to me. I love reading about your travels and all news of Trini. I was just writing to friend in the Philippines of the wild New Year's eve we had in the yard there. They think it's fun to fire guns, machine guns into the air to add to the general noise at midnight. Friends of ours had bullets come through the roof and slam into the floor next to the bed! I guess we were lucky our hull remained undamaged. I prefer my festive celebration a little more traditional.

Best,

Gwen Cornfield