

# A founding father's story

*B*orn on January 6, 1927 in the quiet district of Big Woods in the parish of St. Elizabeth, he attended the elementary schools (now Primary) in that community. During this time he prepared himself for entry into Mico Teachers' Training College by sitting 1st, 2nd and 3rd Jamaica Local Examinations.

*O*n passing these examinations then, one would find employment in the area of Government or the Private Sector. He needed to have eight subjects with an optional subject in the 3rd year, and if one failed one subject, you would have failed the entire examination. Hard work and consistency were the requisites for success in those days.

*I*n 1949 he opted to join the Jamaica Constabulary Force, being one of the first recruits of the then Commissioner, Mr. Calver.

*T*raining was done at the Elleston Road Police Depot, where upon completion, he was transferred to the parish of St. Ann.

*A*fter spending some time in this parish, he was then transferred to Special Branch Head Quarters in Kingston where he spent the better part of his service, retiring in 1987 at the rank of Assistant Commissioner of Police.

*H*e is twice married and the father of four children.

*M*r. Buchanan recalls the problems the eleven visionaries had with then commissioner, Col. R.T. Mitchelin in 1954-1955, in attempting to get the Police Credit Union started. It was no easy task. Mr. Mitchelin said, he was not encouraging members of the Force to borrow money, they should put their money in the banks and building societies. Perseverance was the moving factor, and so in July 1955 the eleven men, with one shilling each, founded the Jamaica Police Co-operative Credit Union.

*H*aving gotten that hurdle out of the way, there were many others to cross, we had to get the Credit Union manned, they could not afford getting someone from the outside of the Force, and to get a member of the force was like going around the walls of Jerico, but where there is a will, a way will be found.

*W*e had to get to other "Top Ranking Members of the Force", and so on a one to one approach meeting with the Deputy Commissioner, Mr. L. P. R. Browning, Messers Noel Crosswell, A. Gordon Langdon, Basil Robinson, we were able to get the services of the late Joseph E. Tolluch to be the Secretary and Treasurer of the Union.

*W*e were given a little room over at the east street canteen, but with the movement growing we were moved to Elleston Road, then to Hope Road, back to Elleston Road and then eventually Church Street. This building we purchased for

*ourselves without borrowing a penny.*

*Perseverance, hard, and conscientious work brings success. Today, I am the only surviving member of the eleven founding fathers, and I am greatly thankful to the Almighty for allowing others and myself to be of such service paving the way for the younger generation to build on.*

*When one looks at the membership today, the services offered to members, the widening of the bond, the branches and agencies across the island, one must be proud of the foundation laid.*

*My hope is that the Credit Union will be properly managed, by the Board and especially the Supervisory Committee, ("the Watch Dog") of the Credit union, and everyone, not biting off more than you can chew at anyone time, but providing a service that every member will be happy with.*

*My health is failing, and again, I wish members to understand the difficulty the founding fathers had in bringing this Police Credit Union into being, and therefore it must not be taken for granted, nor treated lightly.*

*May you grow from strength to strength!*

**Mr. Larchin Astley Buchanan**

**Founding Father of JPCCU**