

Restoring hope, pride and dignity to East Ruimveldt



Keisha A. Lyte

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The Central Assembly of God church introduced Covenant/Cell Groups to East Ruimveldt in 1981 which involved gathering every Wednesday evening and evangelising different areas within East. It is from this, that a need arose to form an outstation which inevitably led to the formation of the church previously known as East Ruimveldt Assembly of God.

Approximately sixteen years ago at a Church Board meeting, a proposal



was made for a name change for our fellowship. It was believed that the name of the fellowship should affect its vision and ministry.

Since our aim has always been to minister to the total man, the name **Ruimveldt Life Improvement Centre Assembly of God** was born. Our aim as an Assembly is first and foremost to produce rounded people/leaders that will be grounded in the



Word of God, living a spiritual life and to also equip the community with life skills.

East Ruimveldt is considered an impoverished area with over one thousand (1000) residents; many of whom are untrained, unemployed, early school leavers and single parents. This became and still is a burden on our hearts.

Over the two decades of its existence; the church has grown spiritually and numerically and we have seen lives transformed by the





power of Jesus Christ. Nonetheless, our responsibility to the community in which we labour for the Lord has also grown but our desire to minister to the practical areas of people’s lives was limited by the financial resources available.

It was at this period where we were grappling with the needs of the community and our small reservoir of finances that the Guyana Micro Projects Programme (GMPP) came to the knowledge of Reverend Simon Harris our Senior Pastor.

In November of 2007, the Assembly submitted a proposal to the GMPP with much excitement and expectation. The vision around which our church’s name was coined was a potential recipient of financing. This

would significantly impact the lives of the residents of East Ruimveldt; an area labelled as one of the most depressed communities in Guyana.

It was proposed that the Assembly train fifty (50) males and females in the areas of Cookery, Information Technology, Leather Craft and Sewing for six (6) weeks from Monday to Friday starting 8th June – 18th July 2008. This Scholarship Programme entitled “**Increased Livelihood through Income Generating Activity for Reduced Vulnerability**” would specifically target individuals who are in need of an opportunity for a better way of life.

They would be exposed to skills which would aid them to either open

their own businesses or secure jobs in the ever growing employment industry. This will in a great way reduce the amount of susceptible residents in this community who otherwise could have been involved in hazardous acts. Thus, the programme will restore hope, pride and dignity to East Ruimveldt.

In February 2008 the Assembly received the great news; we were called to sign a contract with the GMPP for a grant of 75% of the total cost to build the training facility. The R.L.I.C was finally given an opportunity to bring its vision to fruition and accomplish a great feat.

Construction began on the 17th February, 2008 to expand the church building to accommodate the annex

which had to be erected, furnished and fully equipped by the end of May 2008 for the classes to commence in June 2008.

The work had just begun; children and adults realised that time was against us and came out to lend their support, strength and expertise.

Finally the annex was completed and equipped with heavy duty machines and other amenities such as the basic tools for the Sewing Department and the Leather Craft corner. The annex also houses a fully equipped Computer Laboratory and kitchen complete with the utensils and equipment for professional cooking.

The Programme was well advertised and the response of the residents and supporters was very

impressive. Many expressed appreciation for the opportunity to unshackle the chains of poverty and illiteracy.

As scheduled, the classes began with 12 applicants in the Information Technology class, 13 in Cookery, 14 in Leather Craft and 14 in Sewing. In addition, every student was required to attend an Entrepreneurship and Capacity Building class designed to enable them to maximise their learned skills.

These classes were taught by veterans who gave generously

of their time and resources. This competent team comprised of Jasmin Harris a former high achiever of the New Guyana School, Norma Washington a former Principal of Carnegie School of Home Economics. Sean Carrington a resident of East Ruimveldt and popular Leather Craftsman, Denise



Benn a highly qualified and experienced Seamstress. As well as Carlotta Walcott the Entrepreneurial Development Manager at the IPED Entrepreneurial Development Centre.

The graduation ceremony was held on Friday 25th July 2008 at the church building with residents, supporters, members of the church, representatives of the GMPP and members of the Press in attendance. Fifty three (53) residents graduated

and purposed to use the opportunity as a catalyst for upward mobility and a motive to forfeit the legacy of poverty.

Preparations are being made for the next Programme and more information will be released in the next issue of “**Ruimveldt Life.**”

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