

'Kid Brock Outta St. Georges'



"The highest aspiration of my life has been to make my mother proud."

Potted Bio: Kenneth Bascome

- **Born:** Bermuda, 1948, grew up in St George's.
- **Schools:** East End Primary School, Howard Academy, St George's Secondary School.
- **Occupation:** Part-time taxi driver and Mayor of St George's.
- **Family:** Married and father to one son. Also a grandfather and a great-grandfather.
- **Political track record:** Sat as an independent in 1998 against Dame Jennifer Smith in Constituency #1. Runner-up to Dame Jennifer in 2003 and 2007 when he represented the UBP.
- **Hobbies:** Reading and researching the history of St George's and the town's fortifications.
- **Music:** Greatest Love by George Benson and My Way by Frank Sinatra.
- **Book:** Reads "a little bit of everything, except biographies".
- **TV show:** NCIS Los Angeles.

Foreword

This is a Bermudian biographical account depicting the rise to prominence of Kenneth ‘Kidbroc’ Bascome of St.



Georges, Bermuda. His story like all history is the study of change. The changes experienced in the life and work of Kenneth Bascome can be an inspiration and motivation to others who like himself when faced

with difficult circumstances, can rise above the challenges and be successful. It is an account of how the support of God, family, friends, community service and hard work can help you lead a successful, meaningful and happy life.

I have known Kenneth for about sixty years as I also lived in St. Georges, Over the years, I have been impressed with the success he has made of his life and with his community efforts to make St. Georges a thriving, safe and close-knit community to live in and enjoy.

We have always chatted on many topics that are dear to his heart. He takes a particular interest in the development of young people and serves as a great mentor for them.

I was happy that he consented to work with me on this biography which is the result of many in-person interviews, phone calls and a relatively large collection of written

articles that have appeared in the various news publications in Bermuda.

Throughout this book, I have sought to capture key statements made by Kenneth which I believe have the potential to encourage positive change in people and society.

By Anthony Outerbridge

'The Good Ole Days'



Where I Grew Up: Kenneth Bascome, St. George's Parish

Kenneth Bascome was born at home in St. Georges in August 1948 and enjoyed a happy childhood which is best described in a November 2018 article written in the "Bermudian", entitled, "When I grew up: **Kenneth Bascome, St. George Parish**. This article and its contents is written below:

<https://www.thebermudian.com/heritage/heritage-heritage/st-georges-parish/>

Born at home on Wellington Hill, St. George's, in August 1948, he fell on the floor at the age of two hours and hit his head. "That's why," he says, "I'm half crazy! I struck my head when I was a youngster."

However, apart from this unfortunate start, he enjoyed a happy childhood living in the house with his grandparents, Leonard and Muriel Bascome, and his mother, Ada. He was the second child in a family of six children; his siblings were Lynette, Earl, Melody, Eugene and Candy.

He also made long-lasting friends. "It was a strong neighbourhood. There was the Ming family. Dr. Fred Ming—now he's in charge of conservation. And sister Darlene, the announcer. Johnny has his own bakery. Sister Sharon was a nurse, and sister Laverne an educator. Then there was Randolph Trott—he's a banker. We even had an airplane pilot, Johnny Swainson, who passed some years ago. And there was Kenny Pearman. I was close to Anthony Burgess and Copeland Tucker. We were like three peas in a pod. We all played together."

It was a safe neighbourhood as well. "We never even locked our houses then. Someone might holler, 'Cathy, you can have some spread. Go and get it and just replace it.' People would borrow, some sugar, a few potatoes, some onions. Everyone knew basically everyone in the neighbourhood." There were police officers, Dudley Swan and Gladwin Hall, who lived in St. George's and who were always out and about. "***You had the relationship with them because you saw them and you respected them.***"

Outside the slip gate was the neighbourhood grocery store, owned by Stephen Dowling. "There was also Winey's variety store, which was owned by Mrs. Wilson. She was known for her pies—chicken, beef and fruit pies."

Playing outside was easy, since there was lots of open space. “It wasn’t farming land. It was people’s private property, and we basically used to have permission to clear it off and have a playing field for cricket, football, go carts. You can’t do that today. ***It’s one of the reasons in my opinion that has caused the demise of the family, the loss of the open space where children could just go and let off steam.***”

He recalls there were always “people looking out for you. They knew who you were.” Mothers, he explains, tended to stay at home to look after their children. Although in his case his mother worked. “My mother and my aunt Viola used to have a beauty salon. My mother was a hairdresser and my aunt a seamstress.

“We created our own activities. We didn’t have all those games children have today. We played simple little games we were happy with. We’d build tree houses and we’d catch lizards with grass. I never had a slingshot, though; I never liked slingshots. We’d play with spinning tops and the girls played jacks. We’d play spin the bottle so you could kiss your nice girlfriend! There were marbles—alleys—and hula-hoops. And we’d play golf. In those days we could go on the golf course, but then they became so strict you couldn’t even go on it.”

In the summer, of course, swimming was a favourite activity, but as was typical of the time, there were no formal swimming lessons. “I started to swim when I was 3 years old. I was living with my grandparents, and my grandfather used to come out every day and say to me, ‘We ask you not to go on that dock [at the end of the Wellington peninsula] because we can’t watch you.’ And then one day

he threw me over. And it was either sink or swim. He was there to make sure he could help. But I learned at an early age your natural buoyancy will cause you to float. People who drown, it’s because they panic.”

Later he swam with his friends off the rocks on the North Shore where a slaughterhouse used to be.

While he spent many a happy hour in his own neighbourhood on Wellington Hill, he was also free to roam the town of St. George’s, and that freedom gave him a love of history. “I’ve always loved old-fashioned things. The forts fascinated me. I used to run round around St. Catharine’s Fort and Alexander’s Fort day in, day out.” He could also run around Ferry Reach and also on the cricket grounds. “We had more freedom than the children of today. Back in the days when there was concrete wicket, we could play on the cricket grounds. But when the clubs all got turf, children weren’t allowed. You know I was telling my mama about 15 years ago, when children started to play in the street, ‘When you were coming up, there were 122 lots of land. When I was coming, there were 84 lots of land. Now that the children are coming up, there’s no land.’ So now they’re playing on the street. There’s an attitude because people don’t know who they are.”

His first school was East End Primary, which he attended from ages 5 to 7, and which was then in St. George’s itself. It was known as the “small school.” Next he went to the “top school,” which was at the barracks in St. George’s. The main challenge was taking the 11+ test, the examination that determined which high school a student would attend.

“I can remember that as clear as all get out because of my teacher, Mrs. Eunice Simmons. I retained, but I didn’t put in a lot of study. She used to say, ‘When everyone else passes and you fail, don’t blame anyone else but yourself.’ I was successful and was accepted into Howard Academy. Out of 25 students, I came second. So she had to put me on the stage and say, **‘The young man is somewhat unorthodox, but he always seems to get things done.’ Even in my life today, she’d tell me the same thing!**”

No doubt she was pleased that he was a child who loved to read. “I loved fiction, adventure stories like Huckleberry Finn. I was always reading.” At Howard Academy (in Devonshire on Roberts Avenue), he had teachers Edward DeJean, now deceased, and Donald Dane, with whom he is still friendly. His last years of high school were spent back in the old town at St. George’s Secondary.

Sunday school was also an important part of his life. “As a youngster I went to Sunday school every week. You got to see your friends at the other end of town that you only saw in school. I remember our Sunday-school teacher, Mr. David Brangman. He was in the Salvation Army, and he gave us pennies for our birthdays. If you were 9, he’d give you nine pennies for your birthday, one for good luck and one for bad luck. Everyone wanted to be in his group! We used to have a Sunday-school picnic every year up at Somerset Long Bay. I used to get sick on a bus, so I pedalled there. It took me about an hour.”

Other annual events included Cup Match. A St. George’s supporter, he never missed a game until he was 40. But he didn’t play in the game. “I was too afraid of the ball to play in it, but I was always willing to be a part of the

training. I’d run around and field the players—Lloyd James was one—and I was honoured to be part of the preparations.”

He has fond memories of two other annual matches: the Up Hills and Down Hills cricket and football games. “The guys who lived below the Wellington track were the Down Hills, and the guys above the track were the Up Hills. So it was Wellington against Town. But those games do not happen anymore.”

Living in St. George’s as a child definitely instilled his love for the town and a desire from an early age for a role in public life. Despite the changes that building has made to the neighbourhoods, he’s sure of one thing: “I wouldn’t want to live anywhere else but St. George’s.

A Loving Mother’s Influence and Support

There is no work greater than the work of a mother. One inspired writer, penned these words, “The tenderest earthly tie is that between the mother and her child. The child is more readily impressed by the life and example of the mother than by that of the father, for a stronger and more tender bond of union unites them.”

Kenneth attributed much of his success to his mother Ada Foggo who raised him and his siblings in Wellington, St. George.

He describes his mother and the relationship he had with her in a tribute recorded in a newspaper article shortly after her death at the age of 91 in 2020.



The East End lost a distinguished senior last month after charity volunteer Ada Foggo died, aged 91.

Kenneth Bascome, a former MP and former Mayor of St George, said his mother had been looked upon with pride by her community as “the hat lady”.

He said: “She had so many different styles of hats. She would never be seen without one.”

Mr. Bascome added: ***“The highest aspiration of my life has been to make my mother proud.”***

“As a young man, I put my mom through some trials and tribulations.”

Mr. Bascome said Mrs. Foggo attended every election night he was involved in, whether for the Corporation of St George or as an MP.

He added: “If I lost, she was more devastated than I was.”

Mr. Bascome said he set out to be “a force to be reckoned with in this society” to honour her.

Mr. Bascome said his grandfather had been determined his mother and her sister, Viola Fubler, would learn a trade and support themselves.

The family ran a store on Water Street and Mrs. Foggo became a beautician and Ms. Fubler worked as a seamstress and tailor.

Mr. Bascome said: “Then my mom had a hairdressing parlour up Wellington Hill. My grandfather built that parlour for her.”

He added his mother lived in “Calalee” on Waterloo Lane in St George's and was proud of her independence.

The house's name came from her son Eugene “Calabash” Foggo, a former St George's Cup Match cricketer, and her daughter, Candy-Lee Foggo, the town manager and secretary at the Corporation of St George.

After cancer was diagnosed in Mrs. Foggo, she was disappointed she could no longer drive herself.

She was cared for at the Agape House hospice in Paget, where she passed.

Mr. Bascome said he was heartbroken by the family's loss.

He added: "When young people tell me they can't get on with their mothers, I can't relate to that."

Tributes were paid to Mrs. Foggo in the House of Assembly on June 19.

Michael Dunkley, an opposition backbencher, offered sympathy on "the passing of a wonderful lady".

He added: "We love our mothers, but Kenny certainly had a close affinity for his. She was the centre of his world."

A Troubled Youth

Youth is a period of personal and social Development. It is a time when we are at our physiological peak but are most at risk for involvement in violent crimes and substance abuse. It is a time of focusing on the future and putting a lot of energy into making choices that will help one earn the status of a full adult in the eyes of others.

It was as a youth, Kenneth made some unwise decisions which resulted in him being incarcerated.

Personal Tragedy – Loss of His Wife, Rochelle

A Tribute to His Wife, Rochelle

<https://www.royalgazette.com/other/news/article/20140821/bascome-mourns-his-rock-who-made-all-things-possible/>



Team: MP Kenny Bascome is pictured with his wife Rochelle

St George's MP Kenneth Bascome has spoken of his deep grief at the sudden and tragic death of his wife.

Describing Rochelle as his "rock" the One Bermuda Alliance MP said that his wife of 32 years had helped make his dreams come true.

Mrs. Bascome was rushed to hospital on Tuesday evening after falling over at the couple's home on Ferry Road in St George's.

But despite efforts to resuscitate the 53-year-old she was pronounced dead at King Edward VII Memorial Hospital.

“She was always more supportive of my dreams than her own,” last night Mr. Bascome told The Royal Gazette. “I always wanted to be in a position to make a contribution to my community and Rochelle helped make that possible.

“She supported me when I told her I wanted to run for Mayor and she was there when I was elected as an MP. She has been my rock and when I have had voids in my life she has been there to fill them.

“We had a good working relationship. We really understood each other’s strengths and weaknesses and it worked.”

Mr. and Mrs. Bascome met as youngsters because they both grew up in the same area of St George’s.

And they got married on November 17, 1981 at Richard Allen African Methodist Episcopal Church.

“We had a horse and carriage take us down the main street,” said Mr. Bascome. “She told me when we were young that she had made up her mind and wanted to marry me.

“I would often tell people that she chose me and that they would need to ask her why she did that. While for me she was always a very attractive young lady and I appreciated the way she carried herself.”

The couple went on to run the Tobacco Bay Concession for more than two decades before Mr. Bascome was elected to the Corporation of St George’s.

“Even to this day people come back to St George’s and ask after Rochelle,” the former Mayor of St George’s said. “They loved her cooking and they appreciated her professionalism.

“She was a little bit more private than me but she had her own personality.

“We became well known as the proprietors of Tobacco Bay and visitors would come back year after year.

“People in the town often asked me to get her to open up a restaurant.

“It was always a dream of mine to run a business and we did that successfully for 22 years. That allowed us to take some great holidays. We both loved to travel.”

Mr. Bascome had been at the OBA caucus meeting on Tuesday night when he was told that his wife had had an accident at home.

He immediately went down to the hospital and was ushered into the family room.

“By the time I had got down there I think I already knew she had passed, even before they gave me the relevant details,” he said. “I am still not convinced that her falling down was the cause of death, and am hoping to find out more about the reasons why she died, and if there was more to it than just a fall.”

Mr. Bascome added: "I will have to find more things to keep me occupied now. I am very active in the community and I will continue with that work. But, when I go home now I will have to sing to myself and cook my own food.

"If you never had the privilege of meeting my wife before you would have been overwhelmed with her professionalism and her beautiful personality. I will miss her so much.

"I would also like to thank all the people that have contacted me since Rochelle died to offer their condolences. I have been overwhelmed."