

January, 1989

PEOPLE IN PROFILE

LYNN JONES

*Our office  
newsletter*

People observe New Year's Day in a variety of ways. For Lynn Jones, CEC Dartmouth, January 1, 1989 was especially significant because she spent the beginning of the new year on African soil. Lynn has just returned from a month-long trip to Nigeria, with visits to Madrid and to the Republic of Beni. Lynn had always wanted to visit her ancestral homeland. Four years ago, she took a one month tour of Africa. This time she wanted to spend time in Nigeria, to live in the country rather than to visit.

In Lagos, the capital of Nigeria, she stayed with a family who are friends from Dalhousie University days. She also spent a week in the town of Enugu. During her visit to Enugu, she was invited to attend a traditional Ibo wedding ceremony. The traditional wedding starts with family discussions of arrangements, dowry, etc., then proceeds to a huge ceremony with groups of musicians and dancers. On New Year's Eve, Lynn attended a Yoruba church service (English translators were provided). There was a great deal of singing and dancing during the service, and visitors to the church were welcomed by the minister and congregation. During Lynn's visit, she went to the beach. Very few people swam, except of course for Lynn, who had left a Nova Scotian December. Other side trips were to the Canadian Embassy (where she suggested they offer calendars from Halifax Universities); the Nigerian museum, where Nova Scotian Black History was written up; and to the site of FESTAC 1977, the location of a world festival of Blacks held in Lagos when the country was oil-rich.

Lynn felt that she had "gone home". Everyone welcomed her, she was guest of honour at parties, and received several gifts. Many of her new friends weren't aware that there are <sup>(native)</sup> Blacks living in Canada - now they know!

When she's in Nova Scotia, Lynn is active in the community. She's not a "joiner" but always offers help when she becomes aware of a need. She's also currently taking a sign language course, and is president of the Dalhousie Transition Year Program Alumni Association.

When Lynn joined CEIC in 1979 she was an Employment counsellor, offering Itinerant Services in Preston for half a day, 5 days a week. Gradually she moved to the CEC full time; there is now an Outreach Project in that area. Although she is now in the Labour Exchange Unit, Lynn continues to hear from former clients, who call with both success stories and problems. Lynn remains concerned about Preston, which is the largest Black Community by population in Canada, and has an extremely high Unemployment rate.

One of Lynn's CEIC assignments was as Trainer for the Staff Affirmative Action Training. She says that it was an excellent training program which was much needed. Lynn also thinks that there should be a staff Consultation workshop for Black employees, to allow them to share experiences and address concerns.

Lynn anticipates a busy summer - several friends from Africa are planning to visit Nova Scotia to see what Canada is really like. They'll have a good tour guide.