



Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

Ministry of Social Development and Family Services



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

Friday 20<sup>th</sup> January 2023

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Priority: **HIGH**

#### **Tunapuna's one and only "Bicycle Man" honoured on his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday**

*Port-of-Spain* --- Every year, the "Sheppard" family throws a birthday party for Anthony Sheppard but this year the party was extra special as Mr Sheppard, also known as "Sonney", turned 100 years old yesterday, Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> January, 2023. To this day, Mr Sheppard still plays his harmonica on a daily basis for his family and friends. Joining the celebration at his home located on Macoya Road, was Senator the Honourable Donna Cox, Minister of Social Development and representatives from the Ministry's Division of Ageing and Corporate Communications Unit.

Mr Sheppard is quite well known in the community of Macoya and environs, as he has been the one and only "Bicycle Man". For decades, Mr Sheppard fixed bicycles and motorcycles. He spent his days riding bicycles, and planting moko, plantain and ground provision in Caura.

When asked about his secret to living to one hundred, according to Mr Sheppard, it is the power of prayer. He also noted that persons should put God first and take their health seriously. "Cut out the drinking and smoking". Reflecting on how much the world has changed, Mr Sheppard noted that modes of transportation have changed drastically. "Back in the day, there were donkey carts and horses used for transport then I was able to ride my own motorcycle" said the new centenarian. He also told those present that in his time, he only spent \$1000 to build his family home.

During the celebration, Minister Cox commended his family for providing excellent care for the centenarian and further stated that it would have contributed to his longevity. He has 10 children, 41 grandchildren, 21 great grandchildren and 10 great great grandchildren, and spends his days telling them jokes.

Mr Sheppard took the opportunity to play his favourite musical instrument, the harmonica, for Minister Cox, who was astonished by his melodious talent. Minister Cox told those gathered that celebrations such as these are an integral part of the Ministry's obligation to recognize and honour persons who have positively contributed to the development of our society and that she was pleased to attend and celebrate the milestone with the family. She hopes to join Mr Sheppard for his 101<sup>st</sup> birthday next year and looks forward to hearing him play again.

Following her brief remarks, Minister Cox presented Mr Sheppard with a Certificate of Achievement and Honour, a hamper sponsored by NAMDEVCO, and a birthday cake, sponsored by Kiss Baking Company.

The Ministry of Social Development and Family Services encourages persons to join us as we recognise and salute our nation's centenarians for recognition under the National Centenarian Programme. Persons may visit the Ministry's website at [www.social.gov.tt](http://www.social.gov.tt) for more information or contact the Division of Ageing at 623 – 2608; Ext 2001 to 2009 or 800-OPIC (6742).



*Anthony Sheppard plays the harmonica for Minister Cox*



*Minister Cox presents a Certificate of Honour and Achievement and a birthday cake (sponsored by Kiss Baking Company) to Mr Anthony Sheppard*

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**For more information:**

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