

# BICKERSTETH ESTATE

## TRIBUTE TO THE LIFE AND TIMES OF PAA OLATUNDE ADENIJI

DELIVERED ON BEHALF OF BICKERSTETH ESTATE BY BARRISTER WALE KOLAJO  
AT THE SERVICE OF SONGS ORGANISED BY THE ESTATE ON MONDAY THE 10TH DAY OF APRIL, 2023

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Today, we are here at this Service of Songs to honour the life and times of a much respected Elder Statesman, a friend, a brother and a father to many. Late Paa Olatunde Adeniji who was translated to eternity on the 6th day of March, 2023 at the ripe age of Eighty Five Years.

It should not be a surprise at all that Bickersteth Estate, comprising of the CDA and the Homeowners' Association deemed it fit that Paa Olatunde Adeniji deserves to be honoured, appreciated and celebrated. Hence this Service of Songs in his honour. This tribute in honour of Paa Adeniji therefore is at the behest of the two mentioned Associations of Bickersteth Estate.

The Late Paa Adeniji was for many years the Chairman of the Bickersteth Estate Residents' Association (BERA), the precursor association to the two earlier mentioned bodies. That is, the CDA and BEHOA.

At this juncture, I find it necessary to honour the memory of the heros that have laboured selflessly in the service of this estate. In this regard, I remember Chief B.S.A Ajayi of Gbede Street. He died on the 18th April, 2006. He was the first Chairman of Bickersteth Estate/ Oko- Agbon CDA. That CDA, for those who would remember encompassed both Bickersteth Estate and Oko- Agbon community respectively.

We remember and also honour the memory of Chief (Dr.) N.O.A Smith (2008) and Chief Timothy Olaosebikan Aluko(2021). Both of Ayato Street. Each was Chairman, (one after the other) of Bickersteth Homeowners' Association. Incidentally I was secretary to the association during their respective tenures. May all their noble souls rest in perfect peace.

Late Mr. Olatunde Adeniji and his Exco, which also included my humble self as Secretary, took over the running of the Residents' Association about 1996. The association was set up to superintend over the security and welfare of the members of the Estate. This was at a

point in time when the immediate surrounding environment of the Estate was troubled with a lot of malfeasance. That was the era immediately preceeding the Establishment of the Neighborhood Watch by the Lagos State Government. There were then palpable concerns about the safety of lives and property of Residents. Mr. Adeniji, like a colossus, with astute Managerial skills, was able to bring sanity to the troubling situation. Security men were engaged and gates were installed. Provision was made for the cleaning and maintenance of the estate drainages and roads respectively. Mechanics who were then sprawling all over the Estate grounds were put in check and effort was made to prevent conversion of sidewalks of the Estate to shops by recalcitrant itinerant traders.

The challenge for most of the time and even up till now, was how to make residents perform their civic duties by paying up their respective Estate Dues, as at when due. Because of this, when all other persuasions failed, it would not be any surprise to find Mr. Adeniji with his famous knickers and cap, along with members of his Exco, assiduously manning the Estate gates to supervise the monthly collection of Estate dues. This went on for a very long time, in rain and in shine.

In later years, though, to further improve the security and welfare of the Estate, Mr. Adeniji and other stakeholders agreed to and pursued the extrication and excise of Oko-Agbon community from the Bickersteth Estate- Oko Agbon CDA. It was for that singular effort, that today, we have a distinct entity, "Bickersteth Estate CDA" registered separate from the amorphous one earlier mentioned.

Furthermore, what is today Bickersteth Estate Homeowners' Association also had his imprimatur. He and other committed landlords, agreed to the formation of an Advisory Association to serve as a kind of board of directors to advise, support and assist the fledging CDA, as at when required. It was he who in fact proposed the word "Homeowners" (as opposed to "Landlord.") Unknown to many, the idea of CDA was initiated and later founded by BEHOA.

Late Paa Olatunde Adeniji, the man in whose memory and honour we are here this evening was a very affable gentleman. From informed enquiries he moved into his home on Yori Street, on the 20th April, 1992. That was five days ahead of his daughter's wedding. He was a father figure and friend to many. He was patient, considerate to a fault and an uncommon problem solver. Little wonder that he was dearly loved and respected by all. His immediate neighbors, Mr. Adebayo Afandolo and others, would attest to this.

It is for the many years of selfless service to the Bickersteth Estate Community that papa is being recognized today as deserving of the greatest honour that can be given to one who meant so much to so many.

To his dear wife and children as well as the family members that would miss him so much, we herewith express our sincere condolences

May his great and noble soul rest in Perfect Peace.

Wale Kolajo Esq.

B.Sc, (Hons) LL.B (Hons) BL, ACI Arb, FCS