

Legacy.com® OBITUARIES ▾ FUNERAL HOMES ▾ NEWSPAPERS ▾ SEND FLOWERS ▾

Home > News & Advice > News Obituaries > Gordon "Butch" Stewart (1941–2021), founder of Sandals and Beaches resorts



NEWS OBITUARIES

Gordon "Butch" Stewart (1941–2021), founder of Sandals and Beaches resorts

By Linnea Crowther | January 7, 2021

Legacy.com® OBITUARIES ▾ FUNERAL HOMES ▾ NEWSPAPERS ▾ SEND FLOWERS ▾

- **Died:** January 4, 2021 ([Who else died on January 4?](#))
- **Details of death:** Died in Miami at the age of 79.
- [We invite you to share condolences for Gordon "Butch" Stewart in our Guest Book.](#)

Lifelong entrepreneur

Stewart was an entrepreneur from a young age as he grew up in Jamaica, buying a canoe at age 10 and using it to catch fish, which he sold. He later used his earnings to buy a larger boat, then beginning a business of ferrying rich tourists from their yachts to the shore and back. This work ethic continued after Stewart attended college in England: He founded the business Appliance Traders, Ltd., selling air conditioners and other appliances, and eventually founded Sandals resort chain in 1981. He was the company's longtime owner and chairman as well as founder.

Sandals was one of the first all-inclusive resorts, and it was the first in the Caribbean to feature a swim-up bar. With Sandals reserved for couples only, Stewart later founded Beaches Resorts, catering to families. Sandals received criticism for its longstanding policy of excluding LGBT couples, which wasn't lifted until 2004. In 1994, Stewart bought a majority stake in Air Jamaica and became the airline's chairman. He was also the founder of the Jamaica Observer newspaper.

Advertisement

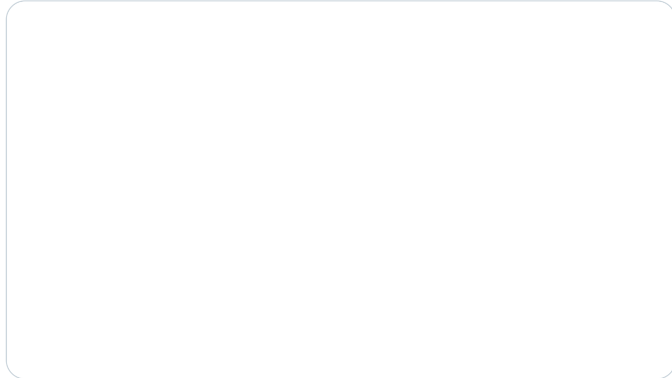
Stewart on growing up in Jamaica

"I had a great childhood, one of the best. When you grow up by the sea, you do a lot of fishing and swimming. You do what comes naturally. And the communities I grew up in were so protective everybody looked after everybody. I think it does an enormous amount for you later in life. It allows you to look after yourself. It allows you to be protective of others. It makes you realize you're no more special than the rest." —from a 2008 interview with Business Jet Traveler

Tributes to Gordon "Butch" Stewart

Legacy.com® OBITUARIES ▾ FUNERAL HOMES ▾ NEWSPAPERS ▾ SEND FLOWERS ▾

1/ It is with deep sadness that I learnt of the passing of one of Jamaica's most brilliant, innovative and transformative business minds, the Honourable Gordon 'Butch' Stewart OJ, CD, Hon. LLD.



12:19 AM · Jan 5, 2021



♥ 496 💬 113 people are Tweeting about this



Dr Norman Dunn
@DrNormanDunn



Great Men has graced us with their presence as Jamaicans. Few men has achieved what Gordon Butch Stewart has. His life of humble beginning to world wide success is an inspiration to all Jamaicans. Whatever you set your minds on u can achieve. You have been my inspiration.

2:33 PM · Jan 5, 2021



♥ 18 👤 See Dr Norman Dunn's other Tweets



Bethany Young
@BethanyYoung876



52 years of game-changing, trail-blazing entrepreneurship and a globally renowned tourism brand, that has made an indelible mark on Jamaica and indeed the entire region.

Legacy.com® OBITUARIES ▾ FUNERAL HOMES ▾ NEWSPAPERS ▾ SEND FLOWERS ▾

8:07 AM · Jan 5, 2021



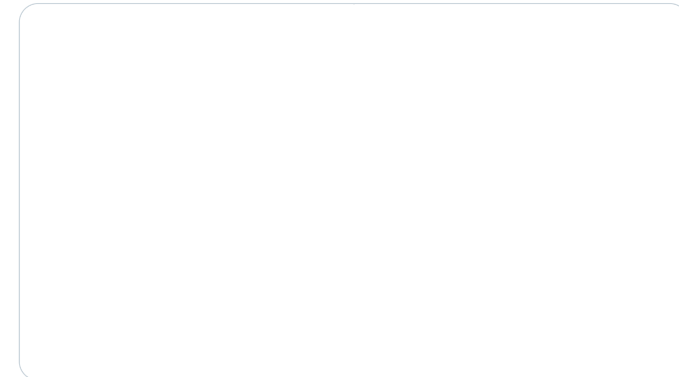
♥ 22 👤 See Bethany Young's other Tweets



Audley Shaw
@AudleyShaw



Gordon "Butch" Stewart was a truly outstanding citizen of Jamaica. He started from humble beginnings and with discipline & hard work he climbed the ladder of success. His success was not his alone, it led to wealth creating opportunities for thousands of people at home & abroad.



11:44 AM · Jan 5, 2021



♥ 55 👤 See Audley Shaw's other Tweets

Full obituary: [The Washington Post](#)

R.I.P. 2020: Celebrities Who Died in 2020 Year in Review | Legacy