



Know Your Cayman Islands



GRAND CAYMAN



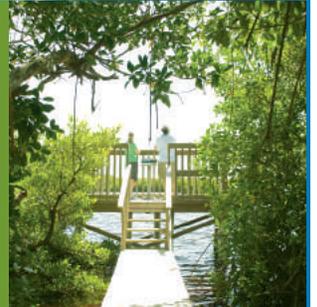
KNOW YOUR CAYMAN ISLANDS



CAYMAN BRAC



LITTLE CAYMAN



THREE ISLANDS. ONE EXCEPTIONAL STANDARD OF SERVICE.



Photo courtesy of Cayman Islands National Archive.



PREFACE:

The *Know Your Cayman Islands* book was designed by the Cayman Islands Department of Tourism to highlight basic facts about Cayman roots and culture for tourism service professionals. We hope that reading this book will inspire you to unearth the treasures of times past, and encourage you to experience the present wonders of the Cayman Islands, bettering the lives of those around you as you take PRIDE in Cayman—whether it be in your home, work or community. We look forward to a culturally and socially enriched Cayman as each of you build upon your growing knowledge of the Cayman Islands.

PRIDE: *Personal Responsibility In Delivering Excellence.*



Experience our Cayman Islands

Dear Friends and Partners,

The Cayman Islands experience – our inviting and gracious hospitality, world class diving and snorkelling, white beaches and warm Caribbean sea with its many shades of blue - is something enjoyed by all.

For those of us who call Cayman home, it is essential that we take pride in our unique heritage and share our Caymanian courtesy with every guest we meet. For those of you who are guests, or business partners, we trust that you will grow to love the Cayman Islands as we do.

To assist you in getting more familiar with us, we designed this reference guide to answer basic questions about the Cayman Islands and to provide you with a 'snapshot' of our home. We hope that you find it useful and look forward to your continued support.

With warm regards,



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How the Cayman Islands got its name:
A turtle or a caiman?



HOW THE CAYMAN ISLANDS GOT ITS NAME?

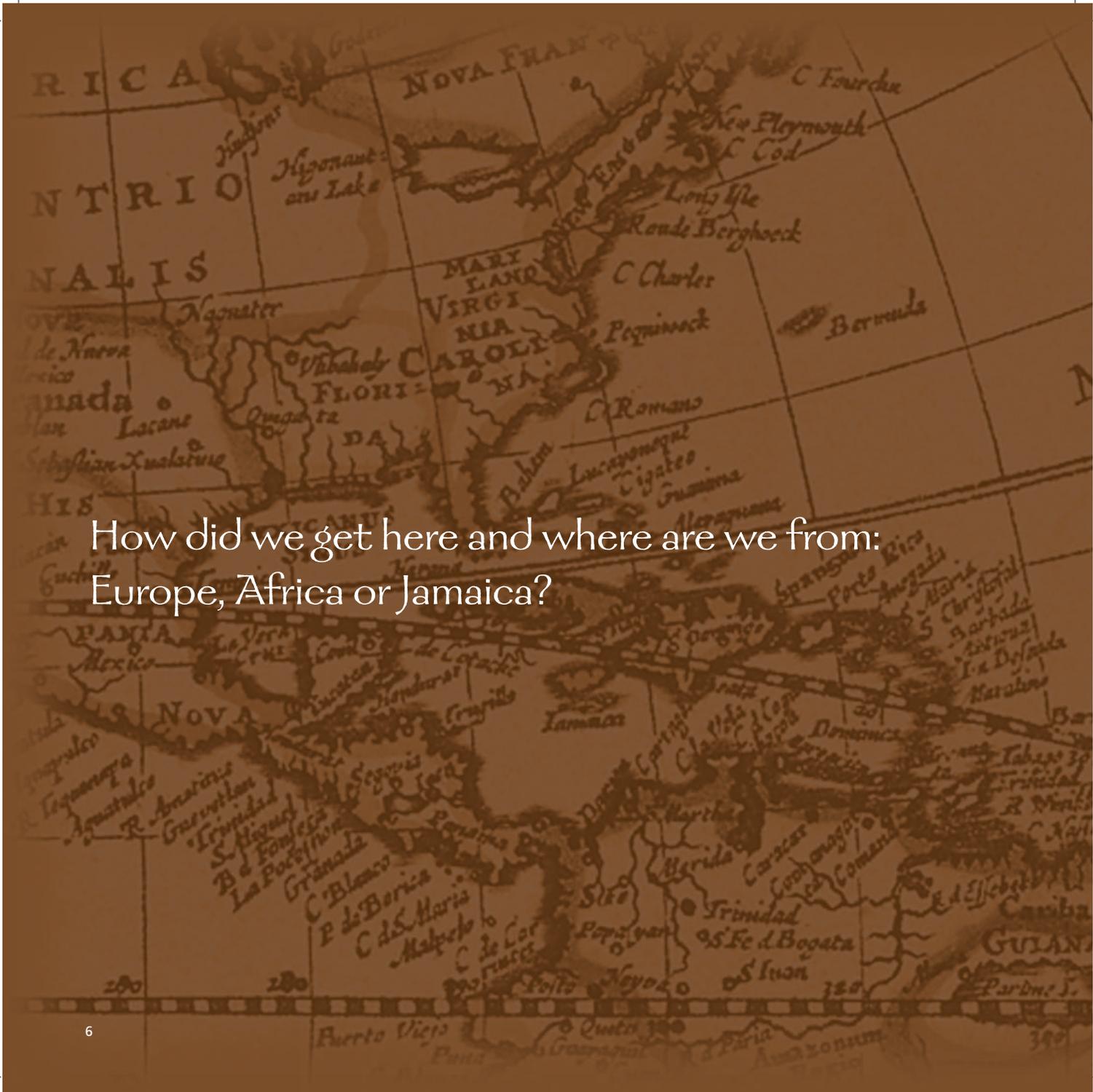
The Cayman Islands was first sighted by European explorers on **May 10 1503**, owing to a chance wind that blew **Christopher Columbus'** ship off course. On his fourth and final voyage to the New World, Columbus was en route to the island of Hispaniola (home to Haiti and the Dominican Republic) when his ship was thrust westward toward "two very small and low islands, full of tortoises (turtles), as was all the sea all about, insomuch that they looked like little rocks, for which reason these islands were called **Las Tortugas**". Columbus named the islands after the turtles he saw in the waters around them.

The two islands sighted were Cayman Brac and Little Cayman. A 1523 map showing all three Islands gave them the name **Lagartos**, meaning alligators or large lizards, but by 1530 the name **Caimanas** was being used. It is derived from the Carib Indian word for the marine crocodile, which is now known to have lived in the Islands. This name, or a variant, has been retained ever since. Thus the word eventually developed into **Cayman** and adding the word Islands, we became the '**Cayman Islands**'.

An early English visitor was **Sir Francis Drake**, who on his 1585-86 voyage to these waters reported seeing "great serpents called Caimanas, like large lizards, which are edible." It was the Islands' ample supply of turtle, however, that made them a popular calling place for ships sailing the Caribbean and in need of meat for their crews. This began a trend that eventually drastically depleted our local waters of the turtle, compelling Caymanian turtle fishermen to go further afield to Cuba and the Miskito Cays in search of their catch.



Turtles and Iguanas, our namesake...



How did we get here and where are we from:
Europe, Africa or Jamaica?



Sir Francis Drake

WHO WERE THE FIRST INHABITANTS?

The first recorded English visitor who visited our shores was **Sir Francis Drake** in 1586. He reported that the Caimanas were edible, but it was the turtles which attracted ships in search of fresh meat for their crews. Overfishing nearly extinguished the turtles from the local waters.

It is a well established fact that most of the early settlers in the Cayman Islands came from the British settlement in Jamaica. The first known settlers arrived in Little Cayman around **1658**, and it is generally believed that they were deserters from Oliver Cromwell's army in Jamaica. It is also believed that some may have been pirates who gave up their errant ways to live a more peaceful life on the islands. The first two settlers were **Mr. Bodden or Bowden** and **Mr. Watler or Walter**. Over the course of the next couple of years some other

settlers came to join Mr. Bodden and Mr. Watler, and many of these settled on Cayman Brac. Some of the early settlers were fishermen who caught turtle to sell to Jamaican merchants. **Isaac Bodden**, the first recorded permanent inhabitant of the Cayman Islands, was born on Grand Cayman around 1700. He was the grandson of the original settler named Bodden who was likely one of Oliver Cromwell's soldiers at the taking of Jamaica in 1655. A variety of people settled on the islands: pirates, refugees from the Spanish Inquisition, shipwrecked sailors and slaves. The majority of Caymanians are of African and British descent, with considerable interracial mixing.

The first recorded settlements were located on **Little Cayman** and **Cayman Brac** during the 1661-71 tenure of Sir Thomas Modyford as Governor of Jamaica. Because of the plundering attacks of Spanish privateers, Modyford's successor called the settlers back to Jamaica. Governor Modyford's Proclamation of 1671 was issued at this time, requesting all settlers to return to Jamaica as the inhabitants could not be properly protected from pirates, privateers and other raiders who frequented these islands. He offered a pardon to the privateers and deserters of Cromwell's army. Few of these inhabitants took up the Governor on his offer. Other settlers moved to Grand Cayman as this offered them better protection from attack by the Spanish ships, since the settlers could hide in the woodlands when necessary. Likewise, on Grand Cayman there was more land to cultivate. Thus as a result of this the settlements of East End and Bodden Town were founded around the same time. Isaac Bodden, one of Mr. Bodden's descendants and his wife Sarah were early members of the East End settlement. The records show that they were married in Jamaica in 1735. By this time Spain

had recognised British possession of the Islands in the 1670 Treaty of Madrid. Often in breach of the treaty, British privateers roamed the area taking their prizes, probably using the Cayman Islands for replenishing stocks of food and water and careening their vessels. During the 18th century, the Islands were certainly well known to such pirates as Edward Teach (Blackbeard), Neal Walker, George Lowther and Thomas Anstis, even after the Treaty of Utrecht, in 1713, was supposed to have ended privateering.

The earliest population record of the Cayman Islands goes back to the year 1774 when it was estimated that a total of 176 persons lived in the Islands. Edward Corbet in his report to Governor Nugent in Jamaica in 1802 said that Grand Cayman had a population of 933 persons, 545 of whom were slaves. Cayman Brac and Little Cayman were reportedly uninhabited at that time.

WHERE DID THE INHABITANTS OF THE CAYMAN ISLANDS COME FROM?

The people who make up the Cayman Islands came from a variety of places from around the world, however, initially many of our Caymanian ancestors were **Africans** and **Europeans** who were either shipwrecked on the Islands or came on ships from Jamaica. History reveals that African slaves came to the Cayman Islands with their Jamaican masters to plant various crops such as sugar cane, cotton and tobacco. Other Africans were shipwrecked here when slave ships foundered (ran aground on our barrier reefs). These shipwrecked slaves were not treated as slaves, they were called 'free coloureds'.

As the 1900s became the century of massive discoveries so did Caymanians become more and more renowned as a '**sea faring**' people whose menfolk became masters of the seas, having sailed virtually across the globe. Caymanians made their own vessels in which they travelled to far distant ports in their quest of a livelihood for their families back home. By the 1900s these islands had persons from many parts of the world who either frequently visited or made the Cayman Islands their home.

HOW DID WE GET HERE AND WHERE ARE WE FROM: EUROPE, AFRICA OR JAMAICA?

The names of some of the early families in the Cayman Islands were and still are today: **Grand Cayman** – Bodden, Bush, Coe, Conolly, Eden, Foster, Jennett, Ebanks, Hill, Hunter, Hydes, McLaughlin, Rivers, Parsons, Tatum, Walton, Watler and Webster; **Cayman Brac** – Scott, Foster, Ritch, Kirkconnell and Ryan; and **Little Cayman** – Bodden and Ebanks. It is generally believed that colonization of the Cayman Islands began in earnest during the 1730s. It was at this time that His Majesty the King of England made a number of Royal Land Grants. Royal Land Grants were made to William Foster and Samuel Spofforth in 1731. Each of these were given 1,000 acres of farm land. In 1734 similar grants were made to Daniel Campbell, John Middleton and Mary Bodden. Each of these persons were also granted 1,000 acres of land. The areas given to these were Prospect to South Sound and North Sound, extending into the Hog Sty Bay area which is in central George Town.



Top Row Left: Oliver Cromwell
Historic Cayman Islands photos courtesy of Cayman Islands National Archive

HOW DID WE GET HERE AND WHERE ARE WE FROM: EUROPE, AFRICA OR JAMAICA?

WHAT EUROPEAN COUNTRIES OCCUPIED CAYMAN?

When Christopher Columbus discovered these islands he claimed them for the King and Queen of Spain. Thus the islands were in Spanish possession from 1503 until 1670. While they were Spanish possessions, the inhabitants of Jamaica had for years taken up residence and established settlements in the Cayman Islands.

The Treaty of Madrid that was signed between Spain and England in 1670 officially turned the Cayman Islands, Jamaica and the Turks and Cacos Islands over to Great Britain.

Jamaican history reveals that the British defeated the Spanish and claimed Jamaica for Great Britain as early as 1588; and that in the settlement Spain ceded its rights to Jamaica and the Cayman Islands to Great Britain. There are no records of the Spanish ever occupying the Cayman Islands; however, there is evidence that the Spanish fleet repeatedly raided the settlements of the Cayman Islands.

SLAVERY AND EMANCIPATION?

History shows that slaves were brought to the Cayman Islands from Jamaica when planters moved here.

1835 marks the end of slavery in the Cayman Islands. An Emancipation Bill was passed on 31 July 1833. Emancipation itself occurred, at midnight on 31 July 1834. Part of the act called for slaves to be known as 'apprentices' for six years, the idea was to give both slaves and their masters a chance to get used to the system. This system helped prepare the slaves to be able to work independently and become self sufficient so that they were weaned from being dependent on their former masters. However, this was cut short to ten months when the Emancipation Proclamation was read on 3 May 1835 thus ending a century long slavery in the Cayman Islands.

Nation Builders and Ship Builders



OUR NATION BUILDERS

The Cayman Islands has produced 'Nation Builders' who have evolved over the years as we have grown from a tiny remote village to the diverse cosmopolitan 'melting pot' that we are today.



Mr. James M. Bodden

Mr. James M. Bodden (affectionately called Mr. Jim) and **Mrs. Sybil I. McLaughlin** were declared National Heroes of the Cayman Islands. Mr. Jim is our first named Hero. This honour was conferred on him in September 1994. He was born in 1930 in Lower Valley, Bodden Town, Grand Cayman. He was elected to the Legislative Assembly in 1972 and served until 1988, when he suddenly passed away.

In 1976 he became Minister of Tourism (then called Executive Council). Today a life size statue of Mr. Jim, our first National Hero, stands in Heroes Circle which is opposite the Legislative building in central George Town.



Mrs. Sybil I. McLaughlin

Mrs. McLaughlin is our second National Hero and is our first 'living' National Hero. The honour of National Hero was conferred upon her in October 1996. Miss Sybil as she is affectionately called, was born in Mobile, Alabama in 1928. She joined the Cayman Islands Civil Service in 1945 as a clerk/typist. She later became Clerk of the Legislature and then Speaker of the Legislative Assembly in 1991.

Mr. Thomas William Farrington, CBE, JP (1900 to 1978): Named as a "Former Legislator and Father of the House...", Thomas William Farrington was a great contributor to the Cayman Islands community. Born in June 1900 to William Farrington and Elizabeth M. Parsons, he became one of Cayman's most outstanding citizens. He was a man of immense wisdom, persuasiveness and sincerity, especially in matters involving his beloved district of West Bay. "Mr. Willie" as he was commonly known, exemplified what Caymanians represent. He became a civil servant in 1921 and until today he remains the longest-serving representative in the Legislative Assembly, having held his seat for 55 years.





Mr. Thomas William Farrington,
CBE, JP

Mr. Willie was also the first elected member to be responsible for finance. During the 1940s, he supported the establishment of what is today the John Gray High School. In 1959, he was among the first to be elected to the Executive Council after the first constitution was signed and in 1965, he became the first Caymanian to be honoured by Queen Elizabeth II as a Commander of the British Empire.

As a pioneer in the Cayman Islands Government, Mr. Willie led the House in legislation matters and was a founding member of the Christian Democratic Party. He was named 'Father of the House' both for his lengthy continuous service and for the wisdom and insight he displayed in matters of public interest. He was also a founding member of Cayman International Airways and played a major role in the development of Cayman's first airport and in discussions regarding Cayman's participation in the West Indies Federation.

His name was heard and known in every corner of the Islands because in the truest sense, he was a proud Caymanian, one who played a major role in crafting the Islands into the success story it is today. For his accomplishments as a husband, father, Justice of the Peace, Law Agent, church elder and civic leader, he will always be honoured.



Mrs. Sybil Joyce Hylton, MBE

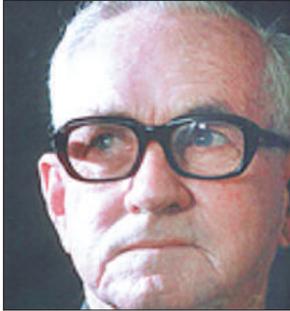
Mrs. Sybil Joyce Hylton, MBE (1913 to 2006): Remembered for "*An outstanding commitment to youth*", as the daughter of Edward and Jane Russell and wife of Wilfred Augustus "Conrad" Hylton, Sybil Joyce became Cayman's first probation and welfare officer as well as an extraordinary lifelong advocate for disadvantaged young people.

Mrs. Hylton became the Islands' sole probation officer in 1963, going on to serve as the first head of the country's Probation and Welfare Department until 1982. That was a role for which she was particularly well-suited and she revolutionised her department's work.

Her background and training included years of volunteering with the Jamaican authorities, with whom she maintained a close relationship throughout her tenure.

By the time of her appointment, she was already lobbying government to rectify a number of inequities that confronted the Islands' youth. Her zest for championing issues such as the need for a separate court for juveniles continued into her retirement, as did her lengthy service on the Adoption Board. And Ms. Hylton's exemplary commitment to young people extended to her private life; among other projects, she helped to develop the scouting movement in the Cayman Islands. Presenting her with a special award in 1972, the *Nor'wester Magazine* recognised her numerous contributions to young people.

She received the Cayman Islands Certificate and Badge of Honour in 1968 and was named a Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE) ten years later.



Mr. Ormond L. Panton, OBE

Mr. Ormond L. Panton, OBE (1920 to 1992): "A very special son of Cayman..." , Mr. Ormond L. Panton, OBE was one of the most prominent political figures in Cayman's history. Mr. Ormond L. Panton founded Cayman's first political party and was the first politician to win an election as party leader.

As a member of the National Democratic Party, he was heavily involved in politics and was the youngest delegate to attend the West Indies Federation discussions. His professional skills combined with a relish for helping others and assured his success in many local trials. Mr.

Ormond was regarded as an outspoken attorney, one who also achieved many firsts for his country. In 1955 he succeeded in confirming his right to a fair trial - a right now enshrined in Article 14 of the United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. He was also lead negotiator between the UK and its Overseas Territories in discussions on independence. The first Caymanian attorney to appear before the Privy Council in London, he also introduced a motion to allow Cayman authorities to issue US visa waivers, thereby facilitating merchant marine employment for Caymanians.

A member of the Cayman Bar Association, Mr. Ormond also served as a director of Cayman Airways Ltd. between 1980 and 1984. He was also one of the first Chartered Rotarians of Grand Cayman. Honoured by Queen Elizabeth II in 1984, he became an Officer of the Order of the British Empire for his contributions to society.

Ormond L. Panton enjoyed working and interacting with people of all backgrounds. Having participated in many areas of community life, his biography described him as a 'very special son of Cayman.' His many outstanding qualities ensure that he will forever be honoured for his legal, political and personal contributions to the Cayman Islands.



Mr. Desmond V. Watler, CBE

Mr. Desmond V. Watler, CBE (1914 to 1994): "His life stands as a sterling example..."

is the tribute paid to Mr. Desmond Vere Watler -- an exemplary citizen and exceptional civil servant. Starting out as a 23-year-old clerk, his almost four-decade career saw him rise through the ranks to become in 1969, Cayman's first Treasurer, a title that was constitutionally changed to Financial Secretary.

Mr. Desmond became the first Chief Secretary of the Cayman Islands in 1972. He served in the Legislative Assembly for 32 years and was the First Official Member and Chairman of the Executive Council. He served in every area of parliamentary administration in the Legislature and regarded the provision of proper communications and the writing of tax haven legislation as being key factors in the progress of the Cayman Islands.

Equally active in the wider community, Mr. Desmond became a Chartered Rotarian of Grand Cayman in 1965 and was a lifetime church elder of the Gun Bay United Church, conducting services throughout all districts. He was honoured twice by Queen Elizabeth II, first in 1966 as an Officer of the Order of the British Empire and again in 1975 when he became a Commander of that Order.

Highly regarded for his soft-spoken demeanour, he became even better-known as a role model regarding standards of civil service integrity. His life remains a sterling example to today's young people, demonstrating that with hard work, dedication and commitment to excellence, it is possible to reach the top of the career ladder.



*Ms. Mary Evelyn Wood,
Cert. Hon.*

Ms. Mary Evelyn Wood, Cert. Hon. (1900 to 1978): *"Dedication and selfless service..."* is how Ms. Mary Evelyn Wood, Cert. Hon. is remembered.

A true pioneer, Mary Evelyn Wood dedicated her life to bringing change to these Islands, for the benefit of the Caymanian people. She was born to Charles and Julietta Wood and was the youngest daughter in a family of six. Miss Evie, as she was known, was the first woman ever elected to the Cayman Islands Legislature and was also the first to serve on a jury. Those groundbreaking achievements and more were products of her lasting commitment towards addressing the needs of the local community.

With a level of dedication towards others that was evident even at a young age, she was only in her early 20s when she started a small school in her father's home, serving as its sole teacher. Several years later, after receiving training as a practical nurse, she changed vocations, entering what was then known as "private nursing." That entailed visiting the homes of new and expectant mothers, in addition to sick persons around Grand Cayman. Her most notable service undoubtedly occurred during the typhoid epidemic of the late 1930s when she provided tireless care. By 1957, an interest in women's rights led her to join hundreds of other women in signing the petition for female suffrage of that year, now commemorated in Heroes Square, George Town. After women won the right to vote in 1959, she joined Ormond Pantón's National Democratic Party as treasurer and chair of the Bodden Town Committee. In 1962, she became that district's Legislative Assembly representative.

Aside from her participation in social and political life, Miss Evie was also active in the church. Her unstinting service to the community was recognized in 1965, when she received the Cayman Islands Certificate and Badge of Honour.

*"Tradition"**Hero's Square, George Town*

In January 2007 a memorial statue called **"Tradition"** (so named after the Caymanian tradition of handing down seamanship from father to son) was unveiled in Heroes' Square. The Cayman Islands has a rich maritime history and seafaring tradition that dates back hundreds of years, and "Tradition" is a memorial to those brave men who set off to sea to earn a living for their families 'back home in the Cayman Islands'. The many wreaths that are laid at the monument show that those lost at sea are true heroes to the people of the Cayman Islands and sincere thanks is extended to **Mr. Bob Soto** and his wife **Suzy**, whose dream for such a monument saw "Tradition" become a reality.

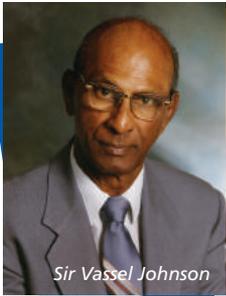
There are many other Caymanians who have helped to build and develop the Islands. These nation builders have stayed the course and have persevered despite the many difficulties and challenges that they encountered. The following persons have gone far beyond the call of duty in helping to build the Cayman Islands into a nation of people renowned for their integrity, friendliness, commitment and dedication to excelling to attain the best for themselves and succeeding generations.

Names such as Mr. William Allen McLaughlin, Mr. Craddock Ebanks, Mr. Ernest Panton, Miss Annie Hulda Bodden, Mr. Aston Rutty, Captain Keith Tibbetts, Miss Geneveave Bodden, Mr. Bertie Ebanks, and Mr. G. Haige Bodden are among those recognised. On the first celebration of National Heroes' Day, a **Wall of Honour** was dedicated in

KNOW YOUR CAYMAN ISLANDS

Quincentennial Square in central George Town. The Wall bears the names of 500 men and women from each of the three Cayman Islands, and from every district, who made significant contributions to the Islands' development. Many of our nation builders have been recognised by being given Honours by Her Majesty the Queen. There are many, many more nation builders who have made a significant contribution to the development of Grand Cayman, Cayman Brac and Little Cayman. Only a few are mentioned above.

In 2003 the Cayman Islands celebrated its Quincentennial and the fourth Monday in January became a new public holiday, National Heroes' Day.



SIR VASSEL JOHNSON

Compiled by The Johnson Family.

Sir Vassel Johnson was appointed as Cayman's first Financial Secretary in 1965, having begun what was to be a long and illustrious civil service career twenty years previously on his graduation from Cayman High School. His appointment came when most Caymanians had few material possessions, and Sir Vassel was greatly concerned about the effects that lack of work and financial insecurities had brought to the country. As he watched the men go to sea to earn a living, he tried to devise some means of creating a sustainable financial sector so that husbands and fathers could stay at home with their families and still prosper. Thus was born Cayman's offshore financial industry, with Sir Vassel steering Cayman through the maze of required legislation and attendant regulations that created what would become one of the world's largest financial centres. In addition to this major achievement, Sir Vassel served on several occasions as Chairman of Cayman Airways, and on retiring as head of government's Finance and Development Ministry in 1982, was elected to the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council two years later. This new Ministry gave him responsibility for Development and Natural Resources, and his many accomplishments during this four year term of office has had a lasting impact on Cayman's environment and tourism industry. These included the enactment of the Marine Park Regulations, the creation of the National Trust, the completion of the George Town water and Seven Mile Beach sewerage systems, the protection of endangered species, the establishment of a cooperative farmers market, the development of a building code, and the introduction of local licensed land surveyors.

Sir Vassel's other areas of focus for most of his active life included the church (United) and its school (Cayman Prep and High). His efforts in both government and the community were recognised with awards of the OBE in 1970, the CBE in 1980, and finally in 1994 with Cayman's only knighthood, bestowed publicly by Queen Elizabeth during a visit to Cayman. Sir Vassel is married to the former Rita Hinds, and he and Lady Johnson have six children and ten grandchildren.

DOES CAYMAN HAVE ANY FAMOUS SHIPWRECKS?

The treacherous coast around the Cayman Islands is littered with shipwrecks dating back some 475 years. At least 120 are known to exist and today their barnacle-crusted remains, as well as holding the key to Cayman's nautical heritage, support marine life and provide colourful diving around the islands of Grand Cayman, Cayman Brac and Little Cayman.

The reefs at the eastern end of Grand Cayman have long been a hazard to shipping. In the past, East End was known as the "Graveyard of the Caribbean". In 1794, a great maritime tragedy took place known as "**The Wreck of the Ten Sail**". Still legendary on Grand Cayman, 10 merchant vessels went aground in rough seas off Grand Cayman's East End, led by the HMS Convert. At that time, there were very few inhabitants at that end of the island (just three families are named in a census taken 10 years later) but they, and residents of Bodden Town, rendered valiant assistance to the crews of the wrecked ships using canoes. Miraculously, only eight lives were lost.



Maritime Heritage Trail Marker



The ex-USS Kittiwake, Grand Cayman

Eastern Channel in Gun Bay was designated as a port of entry for East End towards the end of the nineteenth century. Much business was conducted there. William Conwell Watler was the man in charge. He gave clearance to vessels leaving and arriving in East End on fishing and turtling expeditions, and to ships bringing in freight and mail. In those days, the exports of the islands were mainly **thatch rope**, **mahogany** and **turtle products** which went chiefly to Jamaica.

A comprehensive collection of shipwreck photography was compiled in 'Shipwrecks of the Cayman Islands' by Scottish dive photographer Lawson Wood. Visitors can also drive the Cayman Islands Maritime Heritage Trail. This trail can be recognised around all three Islands, by signs located at important maritime sites, which are explained in two colourful brochures – one for Grand Cayman and one for the Sister Islands. These can be purchased at the National Trust or from the National Museum Gift Shop.

KNOW YOUR CAYMAN ISLANDS

Miss. Myfanwy Leggatt

CAYMAN'S FAITHFUL WOODEN SAILORS

Written by: Miss. Myfanwy Leggatt, Jr. Minister of Tourism, 2007



The history of our people is embodied in these sea bound wooden sailors...they have seen every sunset and sunrise since 1907, carried the dreams of Caymanian men and women for generations and although they are strangers to our new way of life, they still stand as a triumphant representation of our undying culture and history. Catboats in all their glory represent the altruistic and infallible ingenuity of the Caymanian people and tell a tale of perseverance and quiet strength against seemingly insurmountable odds. Conceived by Mr. Dan Jervis, the first thoughts of a catboat were vested in a bean pod fitted with matchsticks for tauts, then a foot and a half model made of a wood old timers refer to as "bloody head and raw bones," and finally, in 1904, the beginnings of the first seaworthy catboat which was finished and launched in 1907. The name "catboat" is a representation of one of the endearing parts of Caymanian culture, simple honesty. A black cat appeared skulking around the beginnings of the boat, day after day, no one the wiser as to where she came from. Then, one morning a quiet mewing was heard and it was the quaintest sight, a litter of kittens with their mother in the boat. Mr. Jervis laughed and said to his wife, "This cat must believe she owns this boat! Well, I'll call it a catboat".

Things in Cayman today are constantly changing and developing, but the catboat has remained ageless and entrenched in our culture thanks to the efforts of the Catboat Association. Mr. Kem Jackson remembers eagerly awaiting the return of the fishermen in their blue, white and black boats to be able to go out himself. He says catboats seemed so huge to him then! His wonderment and reverence for catboats has not faded and one can still see the deep respect he pays to these vessels as he runs his hands over the bow and stern of a catboat he built himself. He explained the characteristic colouring of the catboats, paying homage to the intelligence of the old folk, the blue bottom he said was to prevent the turtles from seeing the boat as it approached, the white bands the colour of the sky on a clear day, and the black, the colour of the sky when storm clouds were o'er head. He pointed out that



Catboat at sea



Catboat coming home

the sharpness of the bow and stern allowed the boat to cut through the water quickly. He then went on to explain where the true efficiency of the boat lay. He said catboats are not stable, they tilt from side to side easily and this makes them ideal for turtling. They would simply lean the boats over and slide the turtles in, "It would be difficult to lift a 300lb turtle!".

Catboats also seem to be as much a work of nature as of man. Mr. Jackson related this point, "I was asked once by a man wishing to build a catboat, for a blueprint... I laughed. There is no such thing!" he smiled. "No two catboats are alike, not even if they are built by the same man!" The timbers or ribs he said, I get like the old folk did, by going into the bush and finding trees that grow curved that way. That way you get all the grains going the right way, and that way, the ribs are strong. Of course he noted, "You can steam bend the timber too, but I prefer to do it the old way, the problem is that it is so hard to find the wood these days". As my time with Mr. Jackson grew to a close he pointed out a boat lying in his yard near the other three, this one was ravaged by time, timbers broken, paint faded and flaking off. It was saddening to see this great sailor lay so helplessly in the heat of the sun, forgotten by time and people. But Mr. Jackson then smiled and said, "I'm going to restore that one, I don't know how, but she'll sail again". It makes one smile to think that, the old sailor was not forgotten or fading, she sat there proudly in the heat of the sun, yearning for the sea and carrying within her frame the history and quietly persevering character of the men who made her.

"I... will never give up."

THE WRECK OF THE TEN SAIL: THE LEGEND AND THE TRUTH

Written by: Mrs. Peggy Leshikar-Denton

The Wreck of the Ten Sail is the most famous shipwreck disaster in the history of the Cayman Islands. It happened in the winter of 1794. HMS Convert, a British frigate, sailed from Jamaica defending a convoy of 58 merchant ships on a journey from the Caribbean to ports in Europe. The French



Mrs. Peggy Leshikar-Denton

Revolutionary Wars made armed protection necessary; in fact only months earlier, Convert had been captured from the French. After midnight on February 8th, six or seven of the merchant ships sailed against orders ahead of Convert and unwittingly ploughed into the fringing East End reef. At 3 a.m. Convert's crew heard their distress signal. "Breakers ahead! Close to us!" cried a sailor from a topsail

yard. Captain Lawford fired a warning shot to the rest of the convoy to disperse and save themselves. While trying to escape the foaming reefs, Convert was struck by another ship, causing her to run aground. The morning light revealed ten wrecked ships: William & Elizabeth, Moorhall, Ludlow, Britannia, Richard, Nancy, Eagle, Sally and Fortune, along with Convert. Caymanians provided all assistance possible, saving many lives. Eight people drowned. A court martial acquitted Lawford, attributing the loss to a strong northerly current setting the Convert out of her reckoning.

A popular, yet fanciful, legend places a prince aboard Convert. By this account Caymanians were freed from taxation, and from conscription in wartime, for saving the royal personage.

All ships wrecked in the Cayman Islands are protected under law as part of our maritime heritage.



Homes in Cayman: From Wattle and Daub to The Ritz-Carlton



CAYMANIAN ARCHITECTURE

WHAT IS THE HISTORY BEHIND CAYMANIAN ARCHITECTURE?

At the turn of the 18th century, as settlers arrived in the Cayman Islands, they constructed quick and simple thatch work buildings, using the trunks of young trees and the abundant leaves of the **Silver Thatch Palm**. However, thatch had to be replaced every few years and storm damage could be significant so a more permanent type of structure was needed. As time passed, and the populations on the Islands grew, so a style of building developed which, although having much in common with its Caribbean neighbours, was uniquely Caymanian.

WHAT IS IRONWOOD AND HOW WAS IT USED FOR BUILDING?

Ironwood, so called for its durability, was plentiful in the Cayman Islands and has become the basis of uniquely Caymanian architecture. It is a particularly hard wood unique to these islands, resistant to water rot and termites and not inclined to warp. It was ideal for the framework of houses. Vertical posts were sunk into the ground, with horizontal beams running across top to bottom, held in place using dovetail joints and wooden dowel joints.

The spaces between the vertical posts were filled with **woven panels** known as "**wattles**" and covered with a **plaster-like substance** called "**daub**".

HOW WAS WATTLE AND DAUB MADE, AND HOW WAS IT USED?

"**Wattle**" is woven green-wood panels (usually Sea-grape, Strawberry or Cabbage wood) used to fill the spaces between vertical posts and horizontal beams of the ironwood. "**Daub**" is a plaster-like substance of coral lime which covered the spaces.

The labour-intensive preparation of the daub was often a neighbourhood effort. There was very little cash available on the Islands at the time, so people shared the labour and their resources. Large quantities of coral rocks had to be collected, transported, broken up and then baked in a large kiln all night to create lime ash. The lime ash was then mixed with water and sand until pliable, then daubed on to the wattles, inside and out, to a thickness of six inches. When dry, it would resist rain and sun, and even hurricanes.

Houses built in this way are sometimes called "**wall**" houses. For a period of more than 150 years these simple, two-room wattle and daub houses were the primary style of construction in the Cayman Islands.

WHAT ARE THE MOST SIGNIFICANT HISTORICAL STRUCTURES IN CAYMAN?



PEDRO ST. JAMES

In 1780 at a time when most people lived in tiny, thatch-covered houses, a wealthy Englishman created an astonishing 3-storey building called Pedro St. James that was so impressive it was given the honorary title of "castle". Set on dramatic Pedro Bluff overlooking the Caribbean Sea, Pedro St. James has a fascinating history. Buffeted by hurricanes, struck by lightning, engulfed by fire, it has survived as a public building, family home, social venue, plantation house and even a jail.

Today, this historic landmark is the oldest surviving stone structure in the Cayman Islands and has come to symbolize the birthplace of democracy in the Cayman Islands; the decision to form the **first elected parliament** in the Cayman Islands was made during a public meeting at **Pedro St. James on December 5th 1831**.

Opening hours are 9am to 5pm daily. Admission is CI\$8.00 (children under the age of 12 FREE with parent). (Final seating of multi-sensory presentation at 4.00pm). Closed Christmas Day. Phone: 345-947-3329.

THE OLD COURTS' BUILDING NOW THE NATIONAL MUSEUM

One of Cayman's few surviving 19th century structures, the Old Courts' Building, has survived countless hurricanes and nor'westers. During its one hundred and fifty years it has been used for everything from town jail and courthouse to a meeting hall for Sunday worship and civic dances. The exterior stairs gave rise to the saying, "Walking the twelve steps" meaning being taken to court! The complete story of this historic building is told in one of the Museum's exhibits. The preservation and rehabilitation of the structure was acknowledged in 1990 by an award from American Express Preservation Awards Program for the Caribbean. *For opening hours, please visit our website at www.museum.ky" or call 345-949-8368.*

EARLY HOMES IN CAYMAN: FROM WATTLE AND DAUB TO THE RITZ-CARLTON

MISSION HOUSE

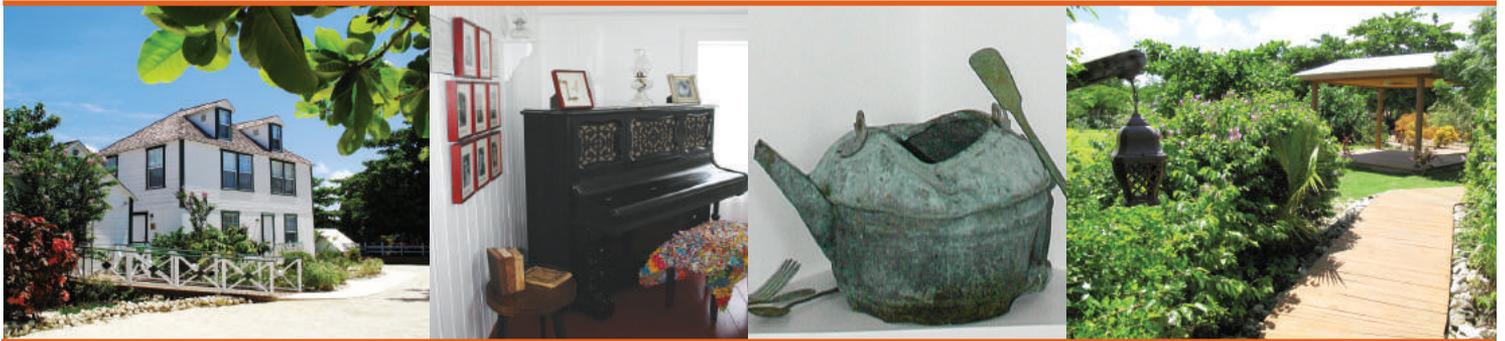
The Mission House historic site includes a traditional Caymanian two-storey home situated on an area of dry and wetland frequented by a variety of local wildlife. This site is known to have been utilised by early settlers for its abundant waterfowl and supply of water in the 1700s, as is evidenced in oral history accounts and by some of the shards of glass and ceramics found on site and displayed for your interest. This site rose to prominence in the 1800s and became known as the “Mission House” to early missionaries, teachers and families who lived and contributed to establishing the Presbyterian ministry and school in Bodden Town. Today, the Mission House takes us back to an earlier time in Cayman’s history by recreating the living situations of the three families known to have owned the home.

As your guide leads you through the Living, Dining, Bath and Bedroom you will see many of the genuine artifacts known to be owned by the Watler family who lived there for 77 years. A real sense of family is evident in the home as well as many opportunities to understand the challenges faced by the early missionaries and teachers in Cayman like the Reverend and Mrs. Redpath and Mr. and Mrs. Lyon. The Mission House also houses a small resource room organised by the Cayman Islands National Archive as well as a display from the Cayman Islands National Museum.

The onsite retail store provides an opportunity to purchase children’s toys and refreshments, as well as locally made craft pieces. The Mission House is located at # 63 Gun Square in Bodden Town, Grand Cayman.

Opening hours are 9am to 4:30pm, Tuesday to Saturday. Admission is CI\$5 for adults and CI\$2.50 for children.

Phone: 345-947-5805.



The Mission House, surrounded by an array of flora and fauna, showcases original artifacts dating from the 19th century.



Fort George, Grand Cayman

FORT GEORGE

What remains of **Fort George** stands on the corner of Harbour Drive and Fort Street in George Town, Grand Cayman. The Fort once stood overlooking the harbour, but development has landlocked this historic site. Today's visitor will see its low stone walls adjacent to the Royal Watler Cruise Terminal and may wonder when it was built and why so little is left of it!

The origins and early history of the Fort are uncertain. It is known that in 1662, the new Governor of Jamaica, Lord Windsor, received royal instructions to take charge of the "Caimanas Islands ... by planting and raising fortifications upon them". Although there was some settlement, the task of fortifying the small outpost was not undertaken until sometime around 1790.

Fort George was built by Caymanians using local coral rock and limestone. Its design was based very much on the typical military battery being built by the English around that time. The oval base of the Fort measured approximately 57 feet by 38 feet. There were eight embrasures for cannon around the sides and a mahogany gate on the landward side.

The walls ranged in thickness from two feet on the landward side to five feet on the seaward side, with coral rock facings surrounding a limestone rubble core. The walls were only about five feet tall, perhaps implying that the defence requirements were not deemed to be very great. Certainly in 1802, when Edward Corbet came to Grand Cayman to compile a report for the Governor of Jamaica, he found the Fort "by no means well equipped" with only "three guns, four to six pounders", rather than the eight required by the original scheme.

EARLY HOMES IN CAYMAN: FROM WATTLE AND DAUB TO THE RITZ-CARLTON



The purpose of the Fort was to defend (the port of George Town) Grand Cayman from attacks by Spanish marauders from Cuba. The heyday of piracy on the high seas was over by this time but there was still plenty of lawless activity around. Fishing and turtling fleets were locked in fierce competition with each other. Caymanians were not very comfortable with the knowledge that they were so close to the Spanish colony of Cuba and the

possibility of an attack. Manned by a local militia, Fort George commanded control of the principal harbour of the three islands. There are no official records though of it ever being used to ward off marauders - from Cuba or anywhere else!

By the beginning of the twentieth century, the Fort enclosure was sand-bottomed. Children from the adjacent school (Dobsin Hall) used to play in it, under the shade of a huge silk cotton (kapok) tree, which stood right beside it. Older Caymanians remember that two large cannons and a thick chain were there too - but these were not the remains of the original set of three cannons. They have disappeared.

During World War II, the tall silk cotton tree was used as a lookout post. The Home Guard, whose barracks were next to the Fort at Dobson Hall, would climb up into its branches to watch for German submarines. There were many of these patrolling Caribbean waters, hunting for merchant ships setting out to cross the Atlantic with supplies bound for English ports.

In 1972, there really was a battle over Fort George. The Cayman Islands Planning Authority and a local developer disagreed over its future. The developer took matters into his own hands and began to demolish the structure. Caymanians who saw what was happening objected so strongly that he was forced to stop. The ruins were donated to the National Trust in 1987 and were declared inalienable, to be held in trust forever. The structure was then stabilized and officially dedicated in August 1992.



OTHER PLACES OF INTEREST:

A Cayman Islands Map of Historic & Natural Attractions is also available at the Trust House.

Grand Cayman

TRUST HOUSE, GIFT SHOP AND VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRE

Trust House is the headquarters of the National Trust for the Cayman Islands. The Trust provides retail products for sale, information sheets on environmental and historical topics and walking tour booklets on Cayman's historic districts are available. *558A South Church Street, South Sound Dart Family Park (white building at front). Free entry - please stop by!*

THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF THE CAYMAN ISLANDS

The National Gallery is primarily an educational non-profit organization. Since its origins in 1996, the National Gallery has become synonymous with the energy and growth of the embryonic art scene of the Cayman Islands. By offering an average of eight exhibitions of both local and international art per year, in addition to numerous programmes, artist workshops, lectures and annual events, the National Gallery continues to set the stage for the development and success of artists in the Cayman Islands. The National Gallery is located in George Town at Harbour Place.

Opening Hours are Monday through Friday 9:00am to 5:00pm and Saturdays 11:00am to 4:00pm. Admission is free.

BODDEN TOWN GUARDHOUSE PARK, BODDEN TOWN

Located at the entrance to Bodden Town, Cayman's first capital, the site commemorates one of the posts used for military purposes over 150 years ago. *Off Shamrock Rd. Up Hill in Bodden Town. Free entry.*



Left to Right: Trust House; National Gallery of the Cayman Islands; Bodden Town Guardhouse Park; Heritage Beach.

EARLY HOMES IN CAYMAN: FROM WATTLE AND DAUB TO THE RITZ-CARLTON

DR. ROY'S IRONSHORE HISTORIC SITE

The "Ironshore" across from the former homesite of the late Dr. Roy McTaggart overlooks historic George Town Harbour. It is the perfect place for watching the sunset. Interpretive signage on site. *South Church Street, George Town.*

HERITAGE BEACH, EAST END

Small public recreational beach; ideal picnic site. *Free entry.*

OLD SAVANNAH SCHOOL HOUSE, SAVANNAH

The Old Savannah School House was the first historic building restoration to be completed by the National Trust for the Cayman Islands. A fine example of a one-room schoolhouse, which was common in Cayman from the late 1930s to the early 1950s. On display inside are documents and original artifacts donated by former pupils and teachers.

Free entry by appointment only (345) 949-0121.

WATLER'S CEMETERY, OLD PROSPECT ROAD

This cemetery offers a traditional Caymanian family graveyard, with unusual house-shaped grave markers. *Free entry.*

SOME OTHER SITES AND OR PLACES OF INTEREST ON GRAND CAYMAN ARE:

Bodden Town Caves; Graveyard across from Webster Memorial Church; George Town Post Office, built in 1939; George Town Town Hall built in 1919; George Town Library, built in 1939; Emslie United Church; Webster Memorial Church; West Bay Town Hall, now West Bay Library; North Side Town Hall, now Library; Bodden Town Town Hall, now Library and East End Town Hall, now Library.

Cayman Brac

CAYMAN BRAC MUSEUM

The Cayman Brac Museum offers residents and visitors alike a glimpse of the past. This old historic building is one of the oldest structures on Cayman Brac. It once housed many Government Departments and is still referred to as 'The Old Government Administration Building'. It contains a vast collection of artifacts and relics of the past. The people of Cayman Brac are proud of the rich heritage that this Museum displays. It contains materials in print that are over a century old, and it also has an assortment of old tools, machinery, and other implements that were used by our forefathers as these islands grew and developed into the magnificent Islands that they are today!

Opening hours are Monday to Friday 9am to 4pm and Saturday 9am to Noon. Admission is free. Phone: 345-948-2622.



Cayman Brac Museum

KNOW YOUR CAYMAN ISLANDS

Little Cayman

LITTLE CAYMAN VISITORS CENTRE

An interpretive centre, gift shop and office with elevated observation deck overlooking the Booby Pond Reserve. Telescopes are provided and the deck is open everyday. *Opening hours are Monday to Saturday, 9am - Noon and 2pm - 6pm. Admission is free.*

LITTLE CAYMAN MUSEUM

Like the larger sister islands, Cayman Brac and Grand Cayman, Little Cayman also has its own Museum. It is owned by Mr. Linton Tibbetts who takes great pride in showing visitors his wonderful collection of artifacts. The Museum has quite an array of artifacts which showcase the past. *Opening hours are Thursday and Friday 3pm - 5pm. Admission is free.*

BLOSSOM VILLAGE

This area on Little Cayman is probably the area that was inhabited by some of the first settlers. It was and still is the main town on this island. Blossom Village is home to the Quincentennial Monument that was erected in honour of brave Little Caymanians who dedicated their lives to service to country. These brave men and women helped to put Little Cayman on the map.

EDWARD BODDEN AIRFIELD

The Edward Bodden Airfield is one of the most unique experiences that visitors experience as they touch down on a virtually grassy airfield. Running alongside the runway is a public road by which residents travel to and from their homes and or businesses in Blossom Village or the rest of the island.



Left to Right: The Bluff, Cayman Brac; Old Savannah School House, Grand Cayman; Blossom Village, Little Cayman; Peter's Cave, Cayman Brac.

EARLY HOMES IN CAYMAN: FROM WATTLE AND DAUB TO THE RITZ-CARLTON

Our Flag, Coat of Arms and National Symbols: The Turtle, the Parrot and the Thatch





WHAT IS THE FLAG OF THE CAYMAN ISLANDS?

THE CAYMAN ISLANDS FLAG, the official ensign, was adopted in 1959, shortly after the Coat of Arms was adopted. There are two versions

of the flag - the blue for use on land and the red for use at sea. These are based on the British blue and red ensigns.

THE LAND FLAG has a dark blue field (background), with the "Union" in the corner nearest to the flagstaff.

The national arms are shown in a roundel, which is a white circle in the centre of the field.

THE FLAG FOR USE AT SEA has a red field, but everything else is identical. On April, 12, 1606 the British Union flag combined the English red cross of St. George with the Scottish white cross of St. Andrew. The Irish red cross of St. Patrick was added in 1801.

FLAG COURTESY The proper flag to fly on land in the Cayman Islands is the blue one, as described. However, since this is a British overseas territory, the British flag (the Union Jack, also known as the Union Flag) may be flown if desired. If both are flown, the Union Jack should be in the superior position. At sea, Cayman-registered vessels should fly the red Cayman ensign. Foreign vessels should fly this flag as a courtesy when in Cayman waters.

COAT OF ARMS

WHAT IS THE COAT OF ARMS AND WHAT DOES IT SYMBOLISE?

The Cayman Islands coat of arms consists of a shield, a crested helm and the motto. **Three green stars** representing the Islands are set in the lower two-thirds of the shield. The stars rest on **blue and white wavy bands** representing the sea. In the top third of the shield, against a red background, is a **gold griffin** "passant guardant" (walking with the further forepaw raised and the body seen from the side), representing Great Britain. Above the shield is a **green turtle on a coil of rope**. Behind the turtle is a **gold pineapple**. The turtle represents Cayman's seafaring history; the rope, its traditional thatch-rope industry; and the pineapple, its ties with Jamaica. **The Islands' motto**, He hath founded it upon the seas, is printed at the bottom of the shield. This verse from Psalms 24:2 acknowledges Cayman's Christian heritage. The proposal for a coat of arms was approved by the Legislative Assembly in 1957, and public input was sought on its design. The Royal Warrant assigning "Armorial Ensigns for the Cayman Islands" was approved by Her Majesty's command on May 14th 1958.

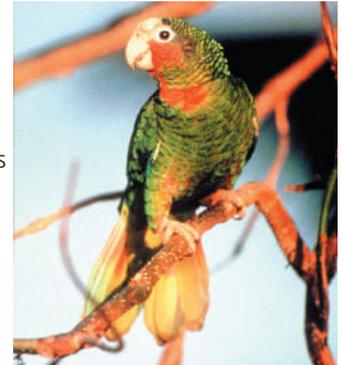


KNOW YOUR CAYMAN ISLANDS

WHAT ARE THE NATIONAL SYMBOLS?

CAYMAN PARROT

About 2,000 parrots inhabit Grand Cayman, while the quieter, smaller Cayman Brac Parrot maintains a stable population of about 400. Nesting in tree holes in old-growth forests, the colourful parrots depend on undisturbed woodlands and black mangrove forests for survival. The Cayman Islands parrots are two sub-species of the Cuban Parrot (*Amazona Leucocephala*). Cayman's parrots have iridescent green feathers with darker edges over the body, a white eye ring, red cheeks, black ear patches and brilliant blue wing feathers which are only obvious when the bird is in flight. The tail has blue outer edges, with some red and yellowish-green underneath.



Parrot in the wild

THE GRAND CAYMAN PARROT (*Amazona leucocephala caymanensis*) also has a pink flush to its whitish forehead.

THE CAYMAN BRAC PARROT (*Amazona leucocephala hesterna*) is slightly smaller, with more black trim on its green feathers. The crown is pure white, and there is a large maroon area on the abdomen. It is now found only on Cayman Brac. Although it used to inhabit Little Cayman, it was apparently wiped out from there by the 1932 hurricane. Historically parrots were common family pets. Today, however, it is illegal to take a parrot from the wild and keep it as a pet.

SILVER THATCH PALM

Tall, slender **silver thatch palms** are especially conspicuous at the eastern end of all three of the Cayman Islands, where they sway in the trade winds high above the low, dry thickets of native trees and shrubs. Bearing the scientific name *Coccothrinax proctorii* after botanist Dr. George Proctor, the leaves are what give this tree its common name; they are green on the top and silver on the bottom.



Silver Thatch Palm

Up to the early 1960s, the silver thatch palm played an important role in the lives of Caymanians. Unusually strong, the leaves have a variety of uses, from roofing for houses to the plaiting and sewing of hats, baskets and fans. In earlier years, thatch rope made from the thatch palm was highly prized in Cuba and Jamaica for use in shipping, fishing and sugar industries.

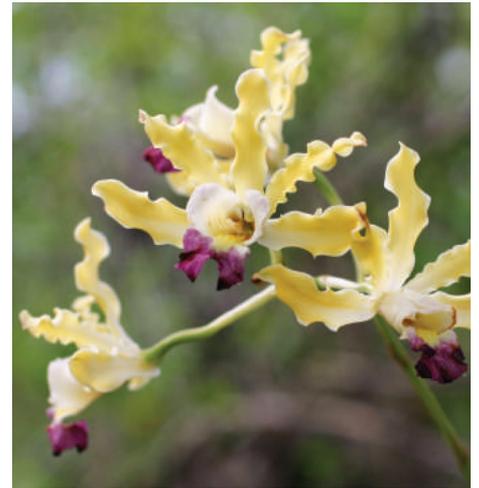
Exporting rope was Cayman's largest source of revenue.

THE TURTLE, THE PARROT, AND THE THATCH

THE WILD BANANA ORCHID

The woods provide shelter for several varieties of flowering plants, including orchids. Probably the best known of Cayman's 26 species of orchids is the **wild banana orchid**, of which there are two varieties: *Myrmecophila thomsoniana* var. *thomsoniana*, which originated on Grand Cayman, and *Myrmecophila thomsoniana* var. *minor*, which came from Cayman Brac and Little Cayman.

Both varieties have scented flowers with purple lips, although the petals are predominantly white on the Grand Cayman variety, while the Sister Islands' has slightly smaller flowers, with pale yellow petals. The flowers appear at the top of a long curved spike at the bottom of which cluster banana-like pseudo-bulbs that give this orchid its name.



Wild Banana Orchid - Photo courtesy of the Cayman Islands National Trust

THE NATIONAL SONG

Cayman's national song, "**Beloved Isle Cayman**", was written by the late Mrs. Leila Ross Shier in 1930. Regarded as the unofficial national song for many years, it became the official national song when the Cayman Islands Coat of Arms, Flag and National Song Law was passed in 1993.

As a British Overseas Territory, the national anthem is "God Save the Queen".

Beloved Isle Cayman as composed by Leila Ross-Shier, June, 1930.

<i>O land of soft, fresh breezes,</i>	CHORUS	<i>2. Away from noise of cities,</i>	<i>3. When tired of all excitement,</i>
<i>Of verdant trees so fair</i>	<i>Dear, verdant island, set</i>	<i>Their fret and carking care,</i>	<i>And glam'rous worldly care,</i>
<i>With the Creator's glory</i>	<i>In blue Caribbean sea,</i>	<i>With moonbeams' soft caresses,</i>	<i>How sweet thy shores to reach,</i>
<i>reflected ev'rywhere.</i>	<i>I'm coming, coming very soon,</i>	<i>Unchecked by garish glare,</i>	<i>And find a welcome there,</i>
<i>O sea of palest em'erald,</i>	<i>O beauteous isle, to thee.</i>	<i>Thy fruit and rarest juices,</i>	<i>And when comes on the season,</i>
<i>Merging to darkest blue,</i>	<i>Although I've wandered far,</i>	<i>Abundant, rich and free,</i>	<i>Of peace, good will to man,</i>
<i>When 'ere my thoughts fly Godward,</i>	<i>My heart enshrines thee yet.</i>	<i>When sweet church bells are chiming,</i>	<i>'Tis then I love thee best of all,</i>
<i>I always think of you.</i>	<i>Homeland! Fair Cayman Isle</i>	<i>My fond heart yearns for thee.</i>	<i>Beloved Isle, Cayman!</i>
	<i>I cannot thee forget</i>	(CHORUS)	(CHORUS)

KNOW YOUR CAYMAN ISLANDS

Natural Beauty, Sustainable Development, Marine Parks and Conservation



WHERE ARE THE CAYMAN ISLANDS LOCATED IN RELATION TO NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES?



The three Cayman Islands, Grand Cayman, Cayman Brac and Little Cayman, are located in the **Western Caribbean** about 150 miles south of Cuba, 460 miles south of Miami, Florida, and 167 miles northwest of Jamaica. George Town, the capital, is on the western shore of Grand Cayman.

WHAT IS THE SIZE OF THE CAYMAN ISLANDS, BY ISLAND?

GRAND CAYMAN, the largest of the three islands, has an area of about 76 square miles and is approximately 22 miles long with an average width of four miles. Its most striking feature is the shallow, reef-protected lagoon, the **North Sound**, which has an area of about 35 square miles. The island is low-lying, with the highest point about **72 feet about sea level in North Side**.

CAYMAN BRAC lies about 89 miles northeast of Grand Cayman. It is about 12 miles long with an average width of 1.25 miles and has an area of about 14 square miles. Its terrain is the most spectacular of the three islands. **The Bluff**, a massive central limestone outcrop, rises steadily along the length of the island **up to 153 feet above the sea** at the eastern end.

LITTLE CAYMAN lies five miles west of Cayman Brac and is approximately ten miles long with an average width of just over a mile. It has an area of about 10 square miles. The island is low-lying with a few areas on the north shore rising about **63 feet above sea level**.



The Bluff, Cayman Brac

WHAT IS THE HIGHEST ELEVATION, AND HOW HIGH?

The highest elevation is found on Cayman Brac with the Bluff rising 153 feet above the sea. Grand Cayman's highest elevation is approximately 63 feet in the Beach Bay area. Little Cayman's highest point is 40 feet on the north shore.

KNOW YOUR CAYMAN ISLANDS

WHAT IS THE GEOLOGICAL ORIGIN OF THE CAYMAN ISLANDS?

Geographically, the Cayman Islands is part of the **Cayman Ridge**, which extends westward from Cuba. **The Cayman Trench**, the deepest part of the Caribbean at a depth of over four miles, separates the three small islands from Jamaica.

The islands are also located on the plate boundary between the North American and Caribbean tectonic plates. The tectonic plates in Cayman's region are in continuous lateral movement against each other. This movement, with the Caribbean plate travelling in an eastward direction and the North American plate moving west, limits the size of earthquakes and there has never been an event recorded of more than magnitude 7.

It is not unusual for minor tremors to be recorded. Many residents don't even notice them. However in December 2004 a quake of 6.8 magnitude rocked Grand Cayman and everyone noticed. The earthquake, short in duration, opened some small sinkholes but otherwise didn't cause any damage.

WHAT IS CAYMANITE?

Geologists believe that the multi-layered semi-precious gem stone believed to be found only in the Cayman Islands was formed between sixteen and twenty-five million years ago, during the Oligocene-Miocene epoch. The various colours result from different metals. Black and grays from Manganese, the red hues from iron, blue, and green from copper, and so on.



Cross section of a piece of Caymanite

MASTIC RESERVE AND TRAIL

The Mastic Reserve is a centre of biodiversity and unique species for Grand Cayman. It harbours rare and endangered trees, shrubs and herbs in an area which encompasses a transition from mangrove wetland to two million years old, high, dry rocky forest. As part of the management of the Mastic Reserve the Trust has re-opened a traditional footpath, the Mastic Trail, which links North Side with the coast.

For a guided tour call (345)-945-6588 for reservations and prices.



A visitor learns about vegetation on the Mastic Trail from a guide

NATURAL BEAUTY, SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, MARINE PARKS AND CONSERVATION

GOVERNOR MICHAEL GORE BIRD SANCTUARY, SPOTTS NEULANDS

Over a quarter of all bird species native to the Cayman Islands have been observed in this small-protected area. Dawn and dusk are the best times for birdwatching from the observation boardwalk or gazebo. *Free entry.*

QUEEN ELIZABETH II BOTANIC PARK

A woodland trail allows visitors to explore the Island's natural habitats. Home to a variety of native wildlife, the Park is also the centre for the National Trust's endangered Grand Cayman Blue Iguana breeding programme. *Opening hours: October to March – 9am to 5.30pm, last admission at 4.30pm.*

April to September – 9am to 6.30pm, last admission at 5.30pm. Admission is CI \$8.00 (US\$10), age 12 and under are free with parent! Off Frank Sound Road. Closed Christmas and Good Friday. Phone: 345-947-9462.



*Cayman Cottage
at Botanic Park*

THE BLUFF

The island of Cayman Brac is different from its sisters Grand Cayman and Little Cayman. It has an unusual ridge, that runs through the middle of the island called '**The Bluff**'. The Bluff commences at the West End of the island and extends throughout the rest of the island down to Spot Bay. It is the highest point on this island as well as throughout the Cayman Trio. On the Bluff there are literally hundreds of caves of all sizes. In the caves are bats and other living creatures. In times of hurricanes, the inhabitants of this island take shelter from the ferocity of approaching storms. The caves offers visitors and natives alike an opportunity to explore these fascinating crevices, which in some cases extend deep under ground.

BRAC PARROT RESERVE

Extending over 180 acres of woodland on Cayman Brac's Bluff, **the Reserve** is an important breeding habitat for the Cayman Brac Parrot. The Bight Road, a traditional footpath across the Bluff, forms part of a nature trail. Please note that several other traditional trails on the Bluff are also open for hiking and bird watching. *Free entry.*

KNOW YOUR CAYMAN ISLANDS

THE SPLITS

These deep natural splits in the rock provide one of the few year-round sources of water to birds and animals in the Brac. The 17 acre site is presently inaccessible.

BOOBY POND NATURE RESERVE

The Booby Pond Nature Reserve is home to one of the largest breeding colonies of Red-footed Booby in the Western Hemisphere. The Reserve also contains Cayman's only breeding colony of magnificent Frigate birds. A Visitor Centre provides an elevated viewing point for observation of the Booby Rookery through a fixed telescope. *Free entry (entry into the breeding colony itself is not permitted).*

WHY ARE THE CAYMAN ISLANDS SO FAMOUS FOR SCUBA DIVING?

As the Cayman Islands aren't mountainous and don't have rivers, there is no run-off into the oceans inhibiting reef development. The Cayman Islands are the 'tops of' submerged mountains so there are incredible walls all around the islands, in some areas reaching 20,000 feet or more in depth. Cayman waters are also protected by law where fishing is limited, spear fishing has been outlawed, and the Government has established Marine Parks and wildlife interaction zones.



Red-footed Booby



Marine Park sign on Grand Cayman

WHY DO THE CAYMAN ISLANDS HAVE A MOSQUITO PLANE?

Mosquitoes were once said to be so numerous on Grand Cayman that they suffocated cows by flying up into their nostrils and blocking them. The Mosquito Research and Control Unit (MRCU) employs the principles of Integrated Pest Management in order to bring about the control of mosquitoes in the Cayman Islands. The most apparent aspect of the department's work is the use of fixed wing aircraft and ground vehicles fitted with ground ULV (ultra low volume) equipment around sunset.

WHAT ARE SOME OF CAYMAN'S INDIGENOUS TREES?

At one time the forests of Cayman abounded in tall mahogany and ironwood but today the trees are of much smaller varieties: coconut, thatch palm, sea grape and almond. Breadfruit, papaya, avocado, citrus, mango and naseberry are the predominant fruit trees.

NATURAL BEAUTY, SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, MARINE PARKS AND CONSERVATION

WHAT ARE SOME OF CAYMAN'S INDIGENOUS ANIMALS?

There are few indigenous animals. Bats, non-poisonous snakes, iguanas, other small lizards, freshwater turtle (the hickatee), land crabs and two species of tree frogs are the most common. Grand Cayman's rare and endangered Blue Iguana can be viewed at the Queen Elizabeth II Botanic Park. Blue Iguana Tours are held on Tuesday and Thursday at the Botanic Park at 2pm. Tickets maybe purchased at the National Trust Park House in Dart Park.



Blue Iguana

More than 180 species of birds have been identified in Cayman. Among the most predominant are the Antillean Grackle, the smooth-billed Ani, and many species of heron, including the Green Heron, the Yellow-crowned Night Heron, and the Snowy Egret. The common Ground Dove, the Bananaquit and the Cayman Parrot, Cayman's national bird, also abound.

Mr. Frederic J. Burton



"HERE BE DRAGONS" – GRAND CAYMAN'S UNIQUE BLUE IGUANA

Written by: Mr. Frederic J. Burton, MBE, Director, Blue Iguana Recovery Programme

Endangered species stories are often full of doom and gloom, but here in Grand Cayman the red eyes of an enormous blue lizard don't speak bad news at all. Not nowadays, anyway – the Grand Cayman Blue Iguana's numbers in the wild have risen from barely a dozen in 2002, to around two hundred and fifty today.

The first time I saw one of these magnificent creatures I thought I must be dreaming. Four-to-five foot long blue vegetarian lizards sound more like fantasies from ancient maps – "here be dragons" – but they turn out to be as real as they are vulnerable, and in urgent need of our help. Grand Cayman is their only natural home, and this was the Kingdom of the Blue Dragons before we faced them with

our dogs, cats and fast cars.

Our Blue Iguana Recovery Programme is stepping up to the challenge, and now if you drop by the Queen Elizabeth II Botanic Park on Grand Cayman, you can actually see Blue Iguanas roaming free on the trails, and even take a tour behind the scenes at our internationally acclaimed captive breeding facility. A few miles away in the inaccessible, rocky interior of the island, we release two-year-old Blue Iguanas, bred at the captive facility, into a nature reserve each December. Numbers are climbing, and the older iguanas have started to breed in the wild. Just so long as we can protect enough of their wild habitat, our unique Grand Cayman Blue Iguanas have their future again.



KNOW YOUR CAYMAN ISLANDS

MARINE PARK REGULATIONS & MARINE CONSERVATION LAWS

1986 MARINE PARK LAW –

CREATED FOUR ENVIRONMENTAL ZONE DESIGNATIONS ON ALL THREE ISLANDS:

- **MARINE PARK ZONE** – prohibits the taking of any marine life except by line fishing, permitted either from shore or beyond the drop-off. Anchoring is allowed only at a fixed mooring, of which there are 234 for all three islands, installed by the Department of Environment's Protection & Conservation Unit.
- **REPLENISHMENT ZONE** – completely prohibits the taking of lobster and conch, and only line fishing is permitted.
- **ENVIRONMENTAL ZONE** – prohibits marine life being taken or disturbed in any way, anchoring and in-water activities prohibited. These zones are breeding grounds and nurseries for marine life, which repopulate the reefs and territorial waters.
- **NO DIVING ZONE** – protects traditional fishing areas.

1987 NATIONAL TRUST – COMMITTED TO:

- Preserving the natural, historic and maritime heritage of the Cayman Islands through preservation of areas, sites, building, structures and objects of historic and cultural significance.
- Conservation of lands, natural features and submarine areas of beauty, historic or environmental importance, acquirable through gift, bequest, lease, purchase or other means.
- The protection of flora and fauna.

1993 CONSERVATION LAW –

AMENDED AND STRENGTHENED THE EXISTING LAW BY STRICTLY PROHIBITING:

- Illegal dumping of waste in Cayman Islands' territorial waters. Any vessel convicted of this offence may be fined a maximum fine of US \$625,000, consistent with international standards.
- Damaging coral by anchor, chain or any other means anywhere in Cayman waters.
- Taking of any marine life while scuba diving – no exceptions.
- Taking of any coral, sponges, sea fans or other marine specimens from Cayman waters.
- Collection or export of any marine life.
- Dumping anything in the Cayman Islands waters.
- Fishing with gill nets, poison or other noxious substances.
- Importation, possession or use of a spear gun.

NATURAL BEAUTY, SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, MARINE PARKS AND CONSERVATION

SUMMARY OF CAYMAN ISLANDS MARINE CONSERVATION LAWS

LOBSTERS

- Closed season: 1 March through 30 November. No one may take lobster from Cayman waters during these months. No one may purchase, receive or possess lobster taken from Cayman waters during these months.
- Open season catch limit: Three per person or six per boat per day, whichever is less.
- Size limit: Six inch tail minimum size.
- Only spiny lobster (*P. argus*) may be taken.

CONCH

- Closed season: 1 May through 31 October. No one may take conch from Cayman waters during these months. No one may purchase, receive or possess conch taken from Cayman waters during these months.
- Open season catch limit: Five per person or ten per boat per day, whichever is less.
- No one may purchase or receive more than five conch from Cayman waters in any one day.

WHELKS

- Closed season: 1 May through 31 October. No one may take whelk from Cayman waters during these months. No one may purchase, receive or possess whelk taken from Cayman waters during these months.
- Open season catch limit: Two-and-a-half gallons in the shell or two-and-a-half pounds of processed whelks per person per day.
- No one may purchase or receive more than two-and-a-half gallons in the shell or two-and-a-half pounds processed whelks from Cayman waters in any one day.
- Chitons, periwinkles and bleeding teeth may not be taken from Cayman waters at any time.

TURTLES

- No one may disturb, molest or take turtles in Cayman waters without a licence from the Marine Conservation Board.

- Possession of turtle eggs is prohibited.
- For licensed fishermen, closed season runs from 1 April through 30 November.

SHARKS

- No one may feed, attempt to feed or provide or use food to attract any shark in Cayman waters.

NASSAU GROUPERS

- Size limit: Twelve inch minimum size limit applies throughout Cayman waters year round EXCEPT: **Designated Grouper Spawning Areas are protected.**
- No one may take Nassau grouper from any of the Designated Grouper Spawning Areas from 1 November through 31 March.
- No one may spearfish or set a fish-pot within a one-mile radius of any Designated Grouper Spawning Area from 1 November through 31 March.

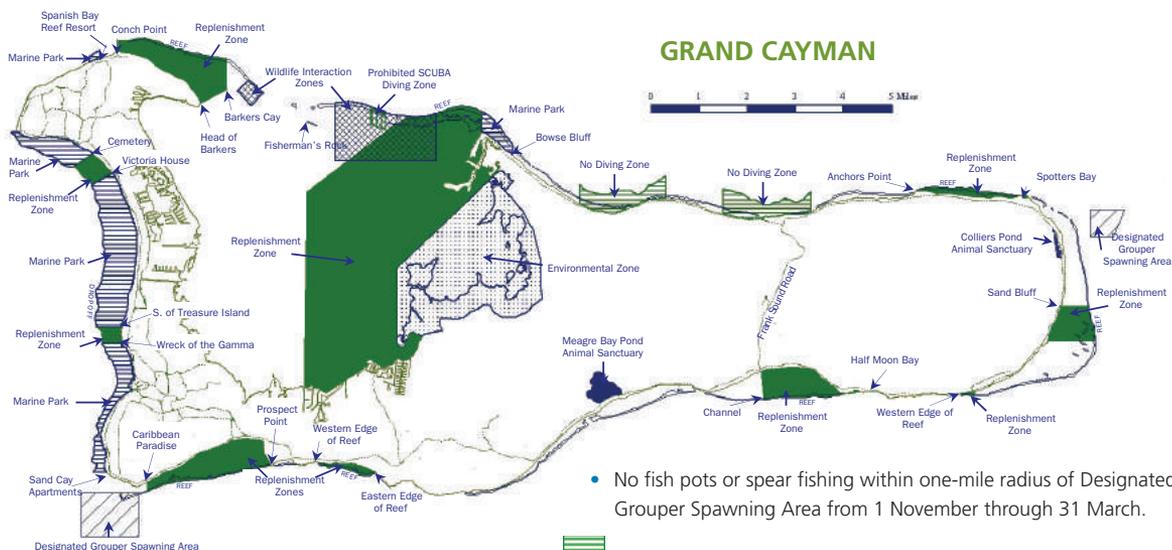
OTHER FISH

- Protected fish: Jew fish, tilefish (whities), filefish (pipers) and angelfish, including Grey, French and Queen angels (old monks), may not be taken from Cayman waters at any time.
- Size limit: Eight-inch minimum size on all other fish except goggle eyes, herrings (including sprats), anchovies and silversides (including loggerhead and fine fry).

FISH POTS

- Must be licensed by the Marine Conservation Board.
- Only Caymanians over 18 may be granted licences.
- Only two pots per family and pots must be identified with a DOE tag.
- No fish pot may be set within a one-mile radius of any Designated Grouper Spawning Area from 1 November through 31 March.

KNOW YOUR CAYMAN ISLANDS



MARINE PARK ZONE

- No taking of any marine life alive or dead, except:
 - line fishing from shore is permitted.
 - line fishing at depths of 80 ft or greater is permitted.
 - taking fry and sprat with a fry or cast net is permitted.

NOTE: fish traps, spear guns, pole spears and other nets are totally prohibited.

- No anchoring - use of fixed moorings only, except:
 - boats of 60 ft or less may anchor in sand, so long as no grappling hook is used, and neither the anchor nor the rope or chain will impact coral.
 - anchoring permitted in designated Port anchorage areas – contact Port Security VHF Channel 16.
 - anchoring prohibitions suspended during emergencies and by permission of Port Director.
- Bloody Bay, Little Cayman - Special restrictions have been placed on the use of the Bloody Bay Marine Park, no commercial operations may use the park without a licence from the Marine Conservation Board.



DESIGNATED GROUPEL SPawning AREAS

- East and West End of: Cayman Brac, Little Cayman and Twelve Mile Bank. Coxswain Bank and South West Point Grand Cayman.
- No fishing for Nassau groupers 1 November through 31 March.



NO DIVING ZONE

- No SCUBA diving.



ENVIRONMENTAL ZONE

- No taking of any marine life, alive or dead with no exceptions.
- No in-water activities.
- Public may access only at speeds of 5 m.p.h. or less.
- No anchoring of any boat.

NOTE: Line fishing, fish traps, nets, spear guns and strikers are totally prohibited.



REPLENISHMENT ZONE

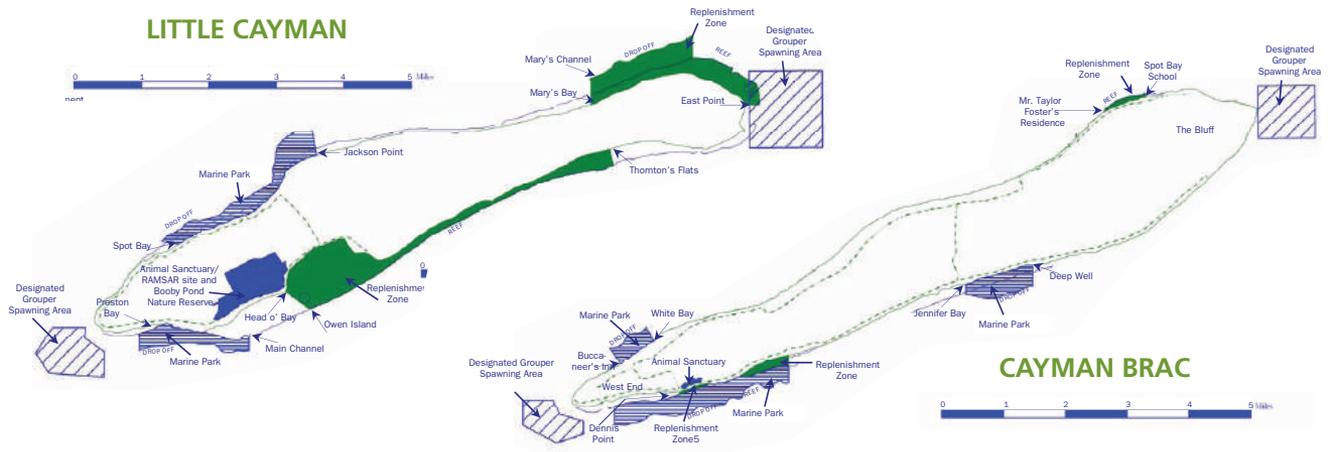
- No taking of conch or lobster by any means.
- Line fishing and anchoring permitted.
- Anchor, chain or line must not touch coral.
- Spear guns, pole spears, fish traps and nets prohibited, except that fry and sprat may be taken with a fry or cast net.

NOTE: These zones include the outside edge of the reef to a depth of 20ft.



WILDLIFE INTERACTION ZONES (WIZ)

- No taking any marine life by any means.
- No selling of fish from boats.
- No removing of any marine life from the water.
- No anchoring in water shallower than three feet or so that the anchor or boat is within 20 ft of any reef structure.



- No feeding any marine life with food of any kind or amount other than that approved by the Marine Conservation Board.
- Fish feeding is prohibited anywhere in Cayman waters outside of a designated WIZ unless licensed by the Marine Conservation Board.
- No wearing any footwear in water shallower than four feet.
- Special conditions apply to commercial boats whom must have a licence issued by the Marine Conservation Board and clearly displayed on the boat to enter this area.

ANIMAL SANCTUARIES/RAMSAR SITES

- No hunting.
- No collecting of any species.
- No littering.

PROHIBITED DIVING ZONE

- No SCUBA diving within this zone unless licenced to do so by the Marine Conservation Board.

PUBLIC MOORINGS

Public moorings are located around each of the islands to reduce anchor damage to coral. It is an offence to anchor so as to damage coral ANYWHERE in Cayman waters. These 18 and 30 inch white buoys may be identified by their blue stripe and yellow pick-up line and may be used free of charge. The smaller buoys are designed to hold vessels up to 60 feet long and the larger buoys are for vessels up to 100 feet. Public moorings should not be used when wind speeds

reach or exceed 25 knots. Please limit your use of the mooring to 3 hours or less. It is the responsibility of the boat operator to ensure that the mooring is in safe condition – do not leave the boat unattended while on the mooring. Damaged moorings may be reported to the Department of Environment on VHF 10 or 949-8469.

PENALTIES

Violation of any of these laws is an offence carrying a maximum penalty of CI\$500,000 fine and one year in jail. Upon conviction, forfeiture of the vessel or other equipment may also be ordered.

For additional information contact the Department of Environment:

580 North Sound Road, Grand Cayman
Phone: 949-8469 Fax: 949-4020

REPORT OFFENCES TO:

Grand Cayman: 949-8469 or 916-4271

Cayman Brac: 926-0136

Little Cayman: 916-7021 or 926-2342

VHF: Channel 10 or Call 911

Report oil spills or other marine pollution to the DOE
949-8469 or 911

KNOW YOUR CAYMAN ISLANDS



A Colony, a Territory or a Country?



FORM OF GOVERNMENT

The Cayman Islands Government is headed by a **British Governor** who is appointed by **Her Majesty the Queen**.

The Cayman Islands is a parliamentary democracy with **judicial, executive** and **legislative branches**. The present constitution, which came into effect on 6 November 2009, provides for the government of the Cayman Islands as a **British Overseas Territory**. It is the fourth written constitution issued for the Islands by the British Crown since 1959, though there is a history of over 165 years of representative government. There is no second tier of local government. A district commissioner represents the governor in Cayman Brac and Little Cayman.

The 2009 Constitution made important changes to Government, including the appointment of the first Premier, Deputy Premier, Deputy Governor, and Minister of Finance; the expansion of the Legislative Assembly to 18 members; the appointment of an Electoral Boundary Commission to change district boundaries to allow for the new members; and the appointment of three new commissions to advise the Governor: the Judicial and Legal Services Commission, the Commission for Standards in Public Life, and the National Security Council. The Islands pride themselves on having an independent judiciary, emphasizing that the Grand Court was established by the Constitution. In many forms of parliamentary government, executive and legislative branches are not totally separate. In the Cayman Islands, the people elect the members of the legislature, and the legislature elects the majority of the Cabinet.

THE JUDICIAL BRANCH

The Cayman Islands has three resident judges, three magistrates and over 140 justices of the peace, some of whom serve as lay magistrates. The governor appoints magistrates, judges, and the chief justice on the advice of the Judicial and Legal Services Commission, a body newly formed by the 2009 Constitution. Justice in the Cayman Islands is administered at three levels - in the **Summary Court** (including the Youth Court), the **Grand Court** and the **Court of Appeal**.

THE ROLE OF THE GOVERNOR

Appointed by Her Majesty's Government, the governor presides over **The Cabinet**, whose advice must be taken except in matters of defence, external affairs, internal security, the police and the civil service. The governor may also go against Cabinet's advice if he or she considers it against the public's interest. In cases of urgency this may be done without prior approval from London, but such action must be immediately reported to the secretary of state.



Left to Right: Inside the Legislative Assembly; Legislative Assembly in session

THE CABINET

The Cabinet is composed of two official members and five elected members, called ministers; one of whom is designated premier. The official members are the deputy governor and the attorney general. They are appointed by the governor in accordance with Her Majesty's instructions. The five ministers are voted into office by the 15 elected members of the Legislative Assembly. One of the ministers, the leader of the majority political party, is appointed premier by the governor.

After consulting the premier, the governor allocates a portfolio of responsibilities to each Cabinet member. Under the principle of collective responsibility, all ministers are obliged to support in the Assembly any measures approved by Cabinet.

THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

The 15 elected members of the Assembly www.legislativeassembly.ky represent the Islands' six districts, four each from George Town and West Bay, three from Bodden Town, two from Cayman Brac and Little Cayman, and one each from North Side and East End.

The Governor must dissolve the Assembly four years after its first meeting, unless it has been dissolved sooner, and a general election must be held within two months of dissolution.

Under the new Constitution (6 November 2009) the Legislative Assembly will be expanded to 18 members. An Electoral Boundary Commission will be appointed to change district boundaries to allow for the new members. These changes should be in place before elections scheduled for 2013.

The Financial Industry



Cayman National

THE FINANCIAL INDUSTRY IN BRIEF

While the financial services chapter of Cayman's history dates back 40 years, the seeds of it were sown as early as the 1700s. At this time, two important legacies of history remain from that era - English common law and tax neutrality. The Cayman Islands has always been an open, free market, economy and from the 1960s onwards, successfully invested its "historic capital" to the benefit of the financial services sector.

Over the past 40 years, the Cayman Islands has established itself as a mature, sophisticated international financial services centre, providing institutionally-focused, specialised services to a global client base. Cayman's main industry sectors include banking, investment funds, captive insurance, companies and partnerships, trusts, structured finance, vessel and aircraft registration and the Cayman Islands Stock Exchange, and has significant market share in a number of these areas.

The sector currently accounts for approximately 30 per cent of GDP and 21 per cent of the labour force in the Cayman Islands. Many of the market participants are branches or subsidiaries of established international institutions. The Cayman Islands' competitive strength in global financial services lies in its ability to provide an effective and cost-efficient tax neutral platform for international capital flows. Cayman offers a 'one-stop-shop' for clients, supported by an excellent professional infrastructure in an environment of economic and political stability. Stability, integrity and quality are important to Cayman as a global provider of financial services.

More information on the Cayman Islands financial services industry can be found at www.caymanfinance.gov.ky.

CURRENCY AND THE CURRENT EXCHANGE RATE

The Cayman Islands has its own currency – first issued in 1972, whose basic unit is the Cayman dollar (KY), issued in notes with denominations of CI\$100, 50, 25, 10, 5 and 1 and coins valued at 25, 10, 5 and 1 cents. The value of the CI dollar is tied to the US dollar so the exchange rate remains constant. The commonly used exchange rate is CI\$0.80 equals US\$1.00.

There is no need for visitors to exchange their US dollars into local currency as US currency is accepted throughout the islands at a rate of CI\$0.80. However, this can be confusing to visitors: for example, a US\$20 note becomes CI\$16.

Major credit cards (with the exception of the Discover Card) and travellers checks are widely accepted. Canadian dollars, Euro dollars and pounds sterling can be exchanged for CI dollars at local banks.

Something worth knowing for our cruise ship visitors is that while all stores accept US currency, they do not all (and this is predominantly the smaller stores) give change in US.

CAYMAN ECONOMY

GDP: 2,493 million (per capita \$47,216)

Growth Rate: 6.6%

Trade Exports: 16 million

Trade Imports: 719.9 million, Manufactured Articles, Machinery and Transport Equipment

Natural Resources: Scenic Beaches and underwater attractions, favourable climate

Official Exchange rate: 1 Cayman Islands dollar = 1.2 U.S. dollars

*(Source: The Cayman Islands' Annual Economic Report 2006
The Economic and Statistics Office Portfolio of finance and Economics)*

WHAT IS CAYMAN'S MAIN EXPORT?

Traditional exports were turtle products, mahogany, coconuts and thatch rope which went mainly to Jamaica. Today, rum cake is a popular Cayman export.



Thatch rope

WHICH INDUSTRY EARNS THE MOST REVENUE?

Offshore financial services and tourism are the pillars of Cayman's economy. Together they earn 95% of Cayman's national income. After the passing of Hurricane Ivan in September, 2004, figures suggest that Finance has moved ahead of Tourism and has now become the number one revenue earner in the Cayman Islands. Tourism is and has been the islands 'bread and butter' and this industry continues to play a key vital role in the nation's economy.

WHAT ARE THE OTHER MAJOR INDUSTRIES IN CAYMAN?

Apart from banking and tourism, there are no major industries in Cayman. There is limited, although very successful, agriculture. Cayman also exports its scrap metal. The pillars of the Caymanian economy are Tourism, Banking/Finance, Insurance, Real Estate, and Construction. These form the core of the islands economic activities. It is obvious that our industries are fickle and in a flash can disappear if care is not exercised in executing them properly.

WITHOUT TAX, HOW DOES THE GOVERNMENT EARN REVENUE?

The Cayman Islands remain a tax free jurisdiction. The government does not impose income or corporation tax, nor capital gains, inheritance or gift taxes. There are no property taxes or rates and no controls on foreign ownership of property. The bulk of government revenue is earned through consumption-based taxes, such as licenses, fees and custom duties.

THE FINANCIAL INDUSTRY

Culture, Cuisine and Celebrations



WHAT ARE OUR MOST UNIQUE PUBLIC HOLIDAYS AND WHAT DO THEY REPRESENT?

NATIONAL HEROES DAY – FOURTH MONDAY IN JANUARY

In 1993, the Legislative Assembly passed the National Heroes Law, providing for the declaration of persons who have rendered exceptional service, as national heroes. In 2003 the country celebrated its Quincentennial and the fourth Monday in January became a new public holiday, National Heroes Day. The Wall bears the names of 500 men and women who made significant contributions to the Islands' development.

GOOD FRIDAY AND EASTER MONDAY

The Friday before and the Monday after Easter Sunday. A Caymanian tradition is camping over the long Easter weekend on our beautiful beaches.

DISCOVERY DAY – THIRD MONDAY IN MAY

Commemorates the discovery of the Cayman Islands by Christopher Columbus in 1503.

QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY

Observed locally on the Monday following the Saturday designated as the official observance in the UK.

CONSTITUTION DAY – FIRST MONDAY IN JULY

Commemorate Cayman's first constitution which it received in July 1959.

BOXING DAY – DECEMBER 26TH

The day after Christmas Day. Traditionally, this was the day to open the Christmas Box to share the contents with the poor. The Christmas Box was a wooden or clay box where people placed gifts. In Cayman, Boxing Day is a day to spend with family and friends.

ASH WEDNESDAY

Known as the first day of Lent for many Christians.

The Agricultural Show is held on Ash Wednesday every year, it is a family event worth attending.



*Cayman Carnival Batabano
Adult Street Parade*



Pirates Week Festival



Cayman Cookout

KNOW YOUR CAYMAN ISLANDS

FESTIVALS AND ANNUAL EVENTS

SCUBA DIVING HALL OF FAME – JANUARY

An annual induction ceremony in to the International Scuba Diving Hall of Fame is held in January every year to recognise those nominees who have contributed to the success and growth of recreational SCUBA diving in the areas of dive travel, entertainment, art, equipment design and development, education, exploration and adventure.

RUNDOWN – MARCH

This is the popular satirical comedy about life in the Cayman Islands and the characters that reside here.

CAYFEST (THE CAYMAN ISLANDS NATIONAL FESTIVAL OF THE ARTS) – APRIL

This is a major production by the Cayman National Cultural Foundation. Cayfest is the islands' premier cultural showcase, encompassing the performing, culinary, literary and visual arts.

BATABANO – MAY

Batabano, Cayman's carnival features a colourful parade with floats from all over the island vying for the best-adorned truck. Fun for all the family includes junior carnival, a street dance and a masquerade fete at Pedro St. James.

PIRATES WEEK – NOVEMBER

Festivities for the National Pirates Week Festival usually start with the first of many fireworks displays viewed best from Hog Sty Bay in George Town. There is a spectacular parade through George Town, district heritage days throughout the week, costume contests, music, street dances, food festivals and sporting events during the ten day celebration. The celebration features many activities for children.

GIMISTORY – NOVEMBER

This is an international storytelling festival, which is sure to bring joy to audiences of all ages. People gather to wind down in an evening of enchantment and joviality, and fill up on local dishes of fried fish and fritters, washed down with a cold glass of swanky. The venues change around the islands as the festival travels to historic and picturesque locations. Visitors to the festival can expect to be welcomed into the fold of the audience, as they become drawn in by the mix of traditional, funny and duppy (ghost) tales delivered by means of music, mime, dance and dramatics from the spirited performers. This imaginative festival is the creation of the Cayman National Cultural Foundation.

TASTE OF CAYMAN – JANUARY

Taste of Cayman is a Food & Wine Festival that showcases a sampling of local and international cuisines from over 30 restaurants amongst many other activities.

CAYMAN ISLANDS CUISINE

WHAT ARE THE NATIONAL DISHES OF THE CAYMAN ISLANDS?

Turtle stew, conch stew, fish tea, whelks, breadfruit salad, and heavy cake.

WHAT DRINKS ARE CAYMAN NOTED FOR?

Tamarind drink, swanky (swanky is a mixture of lime, brown sugar and water), lemon-aid and coconut water.

WHAT DESSERTS ARE THE CAYMAN ISLANDS NOTED FOR?

Cassava cake, heavy cake, peppermint candy, custard corn bread and rum cake.

WHERE CAN I FIND CAYMANIAN AND CARIBBEAN FOOD?

Grand Cayman

George Town

Coritta's Copper Kettle
Luz Restaurant
Mango Tree
Myrtles Restaurant
Champion House
Country & Western Restaurant
Breadfruit Tree Garden
MacDonald's Restaurant
Singh's Roti Shop
Tony's Jerk Foods
Sea Inn Restaurant
Seymour's Jerk Centre
Welly's Coolspot

Bodden Town

Rankin's Jerk Centre
Heritage Kitchen

East End

Amelia's Kitchen
Vivine's Kitchen
East End Fish Fry

West Bay

Cracked Conch
Liberty's

North Side

Over the Edge
The Barn
Driftwood Village

Cayman Brac

Aunt Sha's
Biggies

Little Cayman

Hungry Iguana



Heritage Kitchen in West Bay



Vivine's Kitchen in East End



Hungry Iguana in Little Cayman

List is correct at time of print.

KNOW YOUR CAYMAN ISLANDS

LANGUAGE

WHAT IS THE OFFICIAL LANGUAGE OF THE CAYMAN ISLANDS?

English is the official language, but it is important to note that it is British English, rather than American English... thus we say '**colour**' rather than '**color**' and 'centre' rather than 'center'. Despite this, Caymanians have over the years developed their own vernacular dialect which is a form of broken standard English. Each district has its own idiosyncratic differences.

WHAT ARE SOME COMMON EXPRESSIONS OR SAYING USED BY CAYMANIANS?

Traditionally Caymanians have been known to pronounce words beginning with "V" as "W's" e.g. Very become W-ery. Vegetables become W-egatables. The dialect of Caymanians is very distinct and each District has its own intonations. For example, when asking someone who their parents are, an East Ender would say: **Boy who ya fah?** (Boy, who are you for?). While a George Towner would query: **who u belong ta?** (Who do you belong to?). Cayman Brac and Little Cayman also have distinct ways of pronunciation and it is quite noticeable when they speak.

WHAT DOES A CAYMANIAN ACCENT SOUND LIKE?

Caymanian speech is a mixture of American Southern drawl and the English slur with a Scottish lilt to end a statement, all combined to fall charmingly on the ears. A singsong of Cornish, Irish, Scottish and Welsh.

RELIGIONS

WHAT IS THE MOST WIDELY PRACTICED RELIGION IN CAYMAN?

In the Cayman Islands, the dominate religion is Christianity. Within the Christian faith, there are quite a large number of different denominations some of which are United Church (Presbyterian and Congregational), Anglican, Baptist, Church of God, other Protestant, Roman Catholic and Seventh Day Adventists. Other faiths have also come on the scene recently, some such groups are Baha'i and Rastafarians.

Essential Services



IS THERE A PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM?

Most taxis in Cayman are minicabs and charge per person. The main taxi rank is in the center of George Town but taxis can be summoned on most of the busy roads. Many of the taxi companies double as tour operators. The bus depot can be found next to the library in central George Town. The bus route covers West Bay and Seven Mile Beach, Bodden Town, North Side and East End areas. Fares range from CI\$1.50 - \$2.50. The bus for each district is marked with different coloured circles: West Bay – Turtle Farm = Yellow Bodden Town = Blue North Side = Orange
West Bay – Birch Tree Hill = Green East End = Red

WHAT UTILITIES ARE USED?

Electricity: 110 volts, 60 cycle (same as the US and Canada). **Water:** There is a central supply of desalinated water throughout Grand Cayman. **Phone:** Reliable phone service exists as the islands are serviced by a host of international telecommunications providers. Mobile users can use the roaming facility or rent a unit from any of our local service providers. **Internet:** Many hotels provide wireless connectivity, a number of internet cafes exist and mobile devices such as the BlackBerry can be expected to work.

WHY ARE SHOPS CLOSED ON SUNDAYS?

The Cayman Islands is a Christian country and as such, observes Sunday as the day of worship. Supermarkets are closed, along with most other stores. Clubs are closed on Sundays and establishments are only allowed to play soft, background music. Bars are required to close early on a Saturday night and must be empty by midnight to observe Sunday worship. Good Friday and Christmas Day are treated like a Sunday, regardless of the day of week that they actually occur on.

WHAT ARE THE BUSINESS HOURS IN THE CAYMAN ISLANDS?

Most shops are open from 9am-5pm, Monday to Saturday, and business and professional offices from 8:30am-5pm, Monday-Friday.

DRESS REGULATIONS

Our laws prohibit all forms of public nudity, including topless sunbathing. In accordance with local customs, we also request that guests put on a shirt, dress or beach cover up as they leave the beach or travel throughout the Islands.

WHEN IS THE HIGH TOURIST SEASON? December through April.

WHEN IS HURRICANE SEASON? June 1st to November 30th.



Left to Right: Cayman Craft Market, George Town; Duty Free Shopping, Grand Cayman; Cayman Airways; Cayman Express.

WHAT IS THE NAME OF THE NATIONAL AIRLINE?

Since 1968, Cayman Airways has been serving the Cayman Islands as our national flag carrier. Today, Cayman Airways operates three Boeing 737-200s, two Boeing 737-300 jets, and Cayman Express operates two Twin Otter aircrafts from our base in Grand Cayman. Cayman Express provides service to: Little Cayman and Cayman Brac; Cayman Airways provides service to Cayman Brac, Miami, New York, Tampa, Washington, Houston, Chicago, Havana, Cuba, Montego Bay, JA and Kingston, JA.

WHAT IS SIR TURTLE?

This unofficial national logo was originally created by **Suzy Soto** in 1963 and sold for \$1.00 to the Department of Tourism in the early 1970s. A variation of this logo, with a flying scarf, is used as the symbol of Cayman Airways.



DAYLIGHT SAVINGS

The Cayman Islands is on **Eastern Standard Time** year round – it does not adjust its clocks back when the US transitions to Daylight Savings time.

ESSENTIAL SERVICES

GETTING MARRIED IN THE CAYMAN ISLANDS

Couples, including those arriving by cruise ship, can marry the same day they arrive in the Cayman Islands.

Just be sure to have the following:

- a non-residents marriage license, and
- a letter from the authorized Marriage Officer who is to officiate
- Applications for non-resident marriage licenses (\$200 U.S.) and a list of licensed Marriage Officers can be obtained from the Deputy Chief Secretary's Office. (On Cayman Brac this is provided by either the Deputy Chief Secretary or the District Commissioner's Office) **Office of the Deputy Chief Secretary, Government Administration Building, 3rd Floor George Town, Grand Cayman Phone: 345.949.7900 or 345.914.2222**

You will also need to provide: Proof of citizenship and age – passport or an original/certified copy of birth certificate with photo identification (18 is the minimum legal age without parental consent). Proof of marital status (legal divorce decree or death certificate, if applicable) Cayman Islands Immigration Department card, or Cayman Islands international embarkation/disembarkation card for cruise ship passengers. Two witnesses at the ceremony.



Tying the knot in the Cayman Islands couldn't be easier: host properties or any of the on-island wedding professionals can help visitors with everything from floral arrangements to legal requirements.



Left to Right: Stingray City, Grand Cayman; Pedro St. James, Grand Cayman; the Brac, Cayman Brac; Point O'Sand, Little Cayman.

WHAT ARE THE MOST FAMOUS ATTRACTIONS IN THE CAYMAN ISLANDS?

Stingray City/Sandbar, Turtle Farm, Seven Mile Beach, Hell, Pedro St. James Castle, Queen Elizabeth II Botanic Park in Grand Cayman. Caves on The Bluff in Cayman Brac and Point o' Sand in Little Cayman.

PLACES OF INTEREST

Grand Cayman

Atlantis Submarine
 Barker's National Park
 Turtle Farm
 Cayman Craft Market
 Cayman Islands National Gallery
 Cayman Islands National Museum
 Cayman Motor Museum
 Dolphin Cove
 Dolphin Discovery
 Diving, including The Kittiwake
 Governor Gore Bird Sanctuary
 Hell
 Maritime Heritage Trail
 Mastic Trail
 Mission House
 North Sound (an area of 35 miles and marine conservation areas

which are clearly marked along the coastline)
 Pedro St. James
 Queen Elizabeth II Botanic Park
 Seven Mile Beach
 Stingray City
 Sunset cruises
 Wreck of the Ten Sail

Cayman Brac

Bluff
 Cave explorations
 Cayman Brac Museum
 Cayman Brac Parrot Reserve
 Diving, including M.V. Capt. Keith Tibbetts #356 dive site
 Heritage House
 Lighthouse
 38 Nature tourism sites and trails

Little Cayman

Bloody Bay Wall dive site
 Booby Pond Reserve
 Central Caribbean Marine Institute
 Deserted beaches
 Indigenous wildlife
 Owen Island
 Point O'Sand
 Pristine lagoons
 Salt Rock Nature Trail
 Tarpon Lake
 Blossom Village

KNOW YOUR CAYMAN ISLANDS

Photo courtesy of Cayman Islands National Archive.



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- Ms. Karie Bounds, Cayman Islands Department of Tourism
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Guest Authors

- Mrs. Peggy Leshikar-Denton
- Mr. Kem Jackson as interviewed by the Junior Minister of Tourism,
Miss. Myfanwy Leggatt
- The Johnson Family
- Mr. Frederic J. Burton, MBE, Director, Blue Iguana Recovery Programme

The Cayman Islands



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