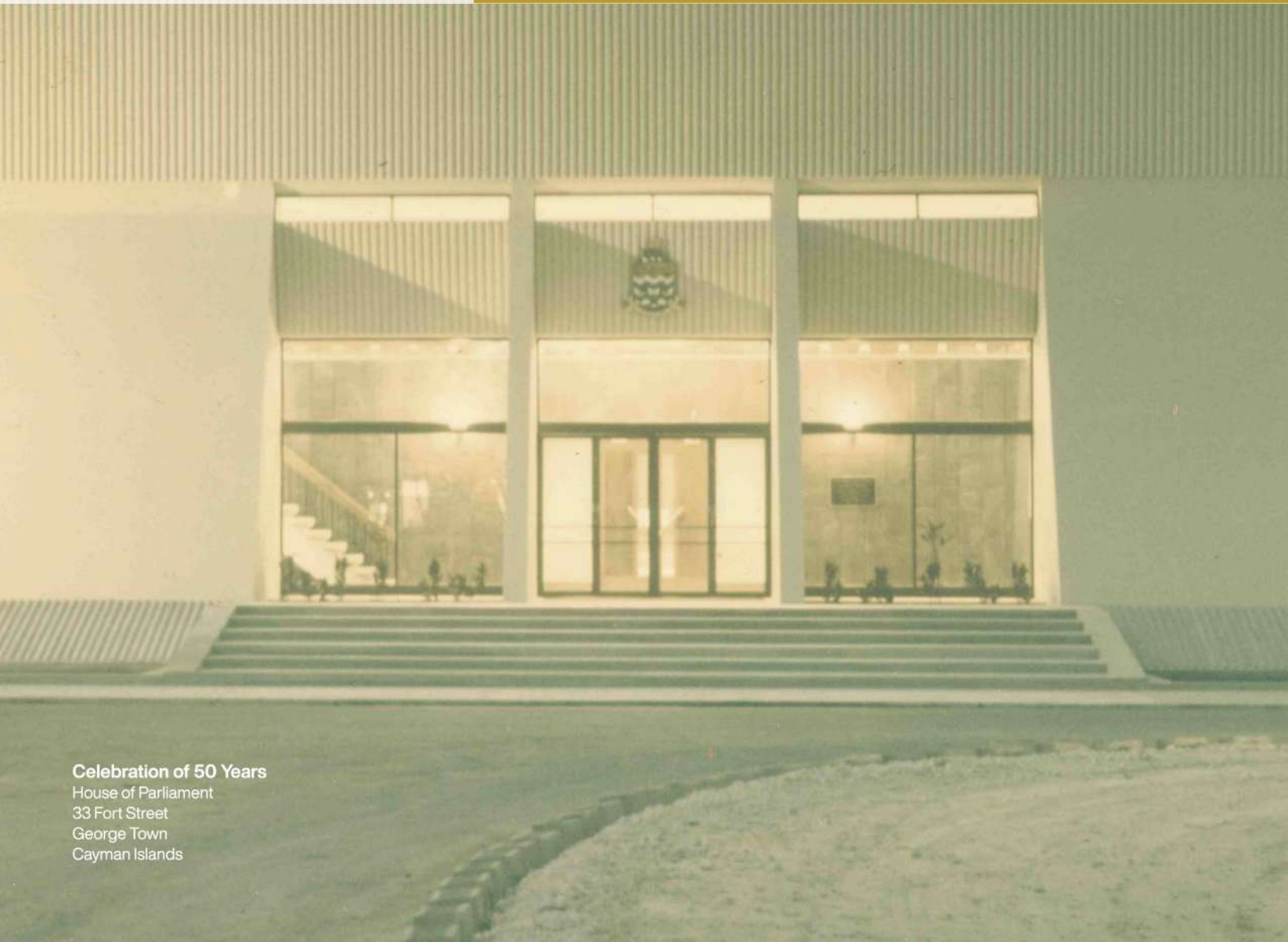




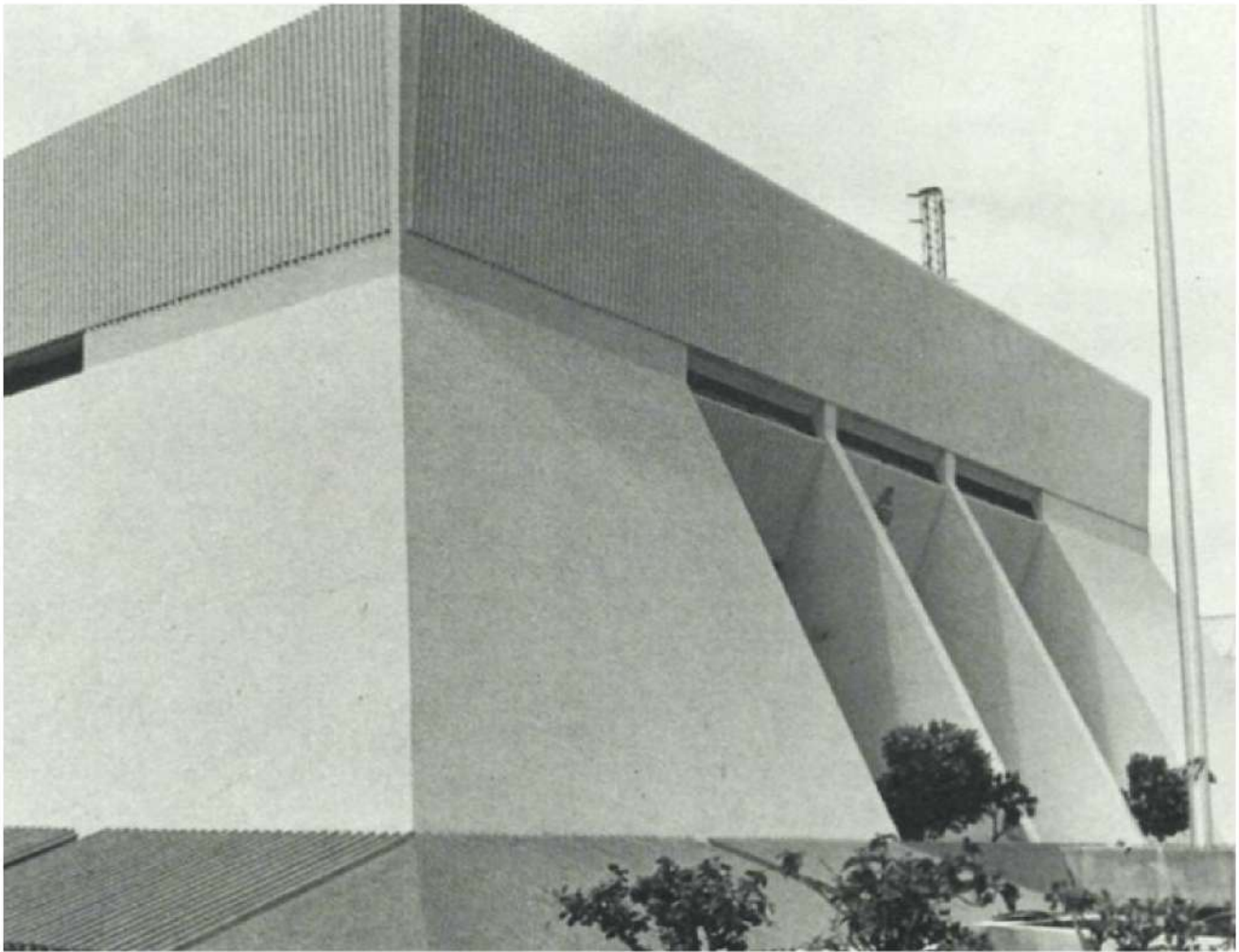
A Commemorative Retrospective

of the history of the Legislative Assembly

House of Parliament | 1972 – 2022



Celebration of 50 Years
House of Parliament
33 Fort Street
George Town
Cayman Islands



*The Cayman Islands' first permanent home for Parliament.
Photographed in 1972 courtesy of McAlpine (Cayman) Ltd.*

*Cover: The newly-completed Legislative Assembly Building,
courtesy of McAlpine (Cayman) Ltd.*

Table of Contents

1	Message from the Honourable Speaker	<i>pg. 02</i>
2	History of the Legislature	<i>pg. 04</i>
3	Early George Town & Princess Royal Park	<i>pg. 16</i>
4	International Architectural Competition	<i>pg. 21</i>
5	Architecture, Construction & Design	<i>pg. 29</i>
6	Laying of the Cornerstone	<i>pg. 40</i>
7	Opening Ceremony	<i>pg. 44</i>
8	Members of 1972	<i>pg. 53</i>
9	The Serjeant-at-Arms & Mace	<i>pg. 56</i>
10	The Speaker	<i>pg. 61</i>
11	Renovations & Additions	<i>pg. 65</i>
12	Transition from Legislative Assembly to Parliament	<i>pg. 68</i>
13	50 Years of Parliamentarians	<i>pg. 70</i>
14	Acknowledgements	<i>pg. 85</i>

A Message from

The Honourable Speaker



The Hon. Speaker
Dr. W. McKeever Bush,
JP, (Hon) MSc, MP

It is my distinct privilege and honour to recognise the passing of fifty years since the official opening of our venerated Parliament building. It is undoubtedly iconic not just for its architecture, but for the symbolism it gives to the function of democracy across these beloved Cayman Islands.

For half a century, elected officials have met in the hollowed Chamber of this remarkable building to enact and amend laws and exercise the legislative powers given to us through our Constitution. When we consider all that has transpired in the last fifty years, we cannot help but to take pause in order to truly recognise the incredible gift that a dedicated Parliamentary building has offered to the focus of the business of the legislature and by extension the shaping of our society.

Upon reflection and looking back to the year the Parliament building was opened, I am impressed by the numerous and significant developments that came about in such a brief timespan. The new building was finally opened with a formal ceremony to great fanfare on Monday, 31st July, 1972. The 1972 Constitution also enabled the role of the Speaker to become possible - though this function wouldn't be enacted until I submitted the Motion in 1990.

The House of Parliament is a testament to the heart of our people, who are industrious, resilient, and full of good-natured spirit. Since the first meeting took place in this building on 7th August, 1972, we have seen countless number of debates over the decades from across the aisles, on every topic conceivable for the good and benefit of Caymanians and residents.

The Cayman Islands Constitution Order 2009 entrenched the Legislature as one of the fundamental pillars of Government, by virtue of Part IV. The historic realisation of attaining the 50th Anniversary of the House of Parliament is a landmark achievement. This is a momentous development in our legislative maturity after the first cornerstone was laid. I for one cannot imagine the august legislative body without this majestic and iconic building.

Interestingly, the Parliament is now autonomous, and ought to equally enjoy its freedom and liberties as the other co-equal branches of government.

Consequently, it is my legacy of the Parliament and envisioned it will be World Class or First Class, and its functionality worthy of emulation with a new strategic direction and paradigm shift in its administering functions.

To that end, as the Speaker of this Parliament, I have engendered the functions of the Parliament to also be a place for the institution of ideas and the generations of thoughts other than general debate in the House. This step is undoubtedly a part of our political maturation process as we evolve and transition into a more democratic society, recognising the three co-equal branches or arms of Government which are the Legislature, the Executive and the Judiciary. ■

History of the Legislature

Parliamentary Government in the Cayman Islands prior to a House of Parliament building

The first meeting of elected officials in the Cayman Islands famously took place at Pedro St. James on 31st December, 1831, only three short weeks after the country's first election, and after roughly two centuries under the control of the Governor of Jamaica. At this pivotal meeting, two representatives each were elected for the districts of Bodden Town, George Town, West Bay, South West Sound, and Prospect.

In the years prior to this historic meeting much of the Island's activities took place at William Eden's impressive establishment, including official meetings of local leaders with Magistrates appointed by the Governor of Jamaica. Local laws were passed here before the first official legislative meeting took place. These early legal acts pertained to livestock and liquor, among other local issues. It was also here at Pedro St. James, when court was held in 1835 to issue the proclamation ending slavery in the British Empire.

As early as the 2nd January, 1832, at the second official meeting, the newly elected representatives agreed upon the rules and regulations for their functioning through the establishment of the "Act to Regulate the Legislative Assembly of the Cayman Islands (1832). The Act formed the legislative government through a two-tier bicameral legislature consisting of elected Vestrymen, who created laws, and Governor-appointed Magistrates, who approved of them in a private assembly before sending them to the Governor of Jamaica for assent.

Those present at the 1832 meeting were:

Magistrates

John Drayton
Robert Stephen Watler
Waide W. Bodden
John S. Jackson
James Coe Jr.
Abraham O Feurtado
Elin J. Parsons
Nathaniel Glover

Vestrymen

George W. Wood
James Wood
James Coe Snr.
W. Eden Jr.
John Goodhew
James Parsons Snr.
William James Bodden
Howard Lindsay Thompson
Samuel Parsons
William Bodden



Pedro St. James today in its restored state. (Wikipedia)

Several decades later, in 1863, an Act of Parliament annexed Cayman to Jamaica but provided the authorisation that these Justices and Vestry should continue to exercise legislative powers (subject to the assent of the Governor of Jamaica). At the close of the 1800's, the Assembly of Justices and Vestry consisted of a sizeable contingency: 27 Justices of the Peace and 27 Vestrymen, for a total of 54 legislative officials, with the powers of the Magistrates then falling to a Commissioner and Assembly President, appointed by the Governor of Jamaica.

At first, the communities of George Town, Prospect, Bodden Town, East End, and West Bay were the only constituencies represented in the new Assembly, though North Side was included in 1865 through an amendment to the Act. There was much discussion in the early years of the 20th century about how many Vestrymen (or Members) should be representative of each constituency, and the debate continued more or less unchanged up to the last meeting of the Assembly of Justices and Vestry on the 3rd July, 1959.



Over the years, the site of the first meetings, Pedro St. James, fell into disrepair, and by 1909, when the population was about five and a half thousand people, the legislative officials moved their meetings to "George's Town," in what is at present the headquarters of the Cayman Islands National Museum.

The historic harbour-front building is the oldest surviving public building in Cayman. It served as a multi-use location; not only was it the island's first Post Office, but it was also the earliest Commissioner's Office, community dance hall, public library, savings bank, church hall, and Court House. In 1979 it was established as the National Museum to maintain the cultural heritage and promote education and awareness of Cayman's remarkable history.

Without a permanent home, the Assembly of Justices and Vestry would soon move again, this time to the newly built Town Hall (now Constitution Hall) in the 1920's. Designed by Capt. Royal Bodden (who would lay the cornerstone of the present House of Parliament), the Town Hall became the new home for official legislative meetings of the Vestrymen and Justices of the Peace. It is also called the 1919 Peace Memorial, a tribute to Caymanians who lost their lives while serving Britain in World War I. It was also at this historic location several decades later that Cayman's first written constitution was signed in 1959 – hence it being renamed "Constitution Hall" in 2019 on the occasion of the constitution's 60th anniversary.

Above: Early George Town Harbourfront. The building in the centre-rear of the photo is the current National Museum, former home to the Legislative Assembly meetings, and the Courts. (Cayman Islands National Archive Photographic Collections)



The first half of the 20th Century didn't involve a great deal of legislative activity, as the Second World War overtook the global attention. Still, there were some significant events that developed the islands, and paved the way for Cayman's eventual decision to stay with Britain upon Jamaica's independence.

Above: Community gathering at the George Town Town Hall, 1938 (Cayman Islands National Archive Photographic Collections)

The 1930's heralded advances in radio links with the sister islands, with thanks to Commissioner Allen Wolsey Cardinal. These broadcasts improved the quality of life in the sister islands, and informed more listeners around the world to what was happening in Cayman.

Commissioner Cardinal believed firmly in Cayman's potential as a tourist destination, and organised the first cruise ship, SS Atlantis, to visit the island in 1937. It was through Commissioner Cardinal's leadership that Cayman's loyalty with Britain was deepened, particularly through its shipbuilding legacy, such as through the establishment of a holiday in commemoration of Lord Nelson, and the creation of yacht clubs and regattas that included the Royal Navy.

The Second World War solidified the connections that Caymanians felt with Britain. The Cayman Islands had the highest number of servicemen per capita of all the Allied countries fighting in WWII. The reputation for excellent shipbuilding led Caymanians to provide a significant number of ships to support Britain and her Allies.

Cayman also provided the U.S. Navy with the land behind the George Town Library to use as their base in 1943-45. Roughly 800 Caymanian sailors served in the Merchant Navy, including those who combatted German U-Boats only a few miles from our shores. By 1942, Cayman's defense of its borders against the Axis powers reached its peak, with guards on watch 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Below: Site of the US Navy's Baldpate Station in George Town, Grand Cayman, where the current parking lot for the Library is located. (Parliament Collection)

With the World Wars behind them, the legislative activity in Cayman started to pick up again. In 1957, Commissioner Alan Hilliard Donald put forward a proposal to adopt a Coat of Arms for the Cayman Islands, which was approved by resolution of the Legislative Assembly of Justices and Vestry on the 3rd April, 1957.

Through the 1959 Constitution, Cayman effectively ceased to be a dependency of Jamaica, though this wasn't truly completed until 1962, when Jamaica achieved independence from the Crown and Caymanians opted to remain with the United Kingdom.





The Commissioner's title changed to Administrator with the advent of the first written constitution in 1959, though a Special Meeting of the Assembly had been held the year prior that resulted in the unanimous agreement that the constitution should be committed to paper form.

This groundbreaking constitution replaced the old system of the Justices and the Vestry with a new Legislative Assembly and Executive Council, consisting of an Administrator, 12 elected Members, two or three nominated Members, and two or three Official Members.

Through a constitutional amendment drafted in 1971, the Administrator became the Governor the following year – though the Administrator position had effectively acted as Governor when Jamaica gained independence from Britain in 1962. In time, much of the legislative responsibilities of the Governor were effectually replaced by the Speaker in 1991.

The first written constitution of 1959 gave Cayman its first Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, National Hero Hon. Sybil Ione McLaughlin, MBE, the first woman to hold this post in the Commonwealth. She was also the Clerk of the Executive Council, which we now term the Cabinet, and served as the Clerk until her retirement in 1986 – though famously she would later return as the first Speaker of the Cayman Island Legislative Assembly the following decade.

The Executive Council in Session at the Government House, (1970). Left to Right: Miss Janice Watler, Council Secretary; Hon. W.W. Conolly; Hon. B.O. Ebanks; HE A.C.E. Long, Chairman; Hon. G.E. Waddington; Capt. Eldon Kirkconnell; and Hon. D.V. Watler. (Cayman Islands National Archives Photographic Collections)

With the new powers of the 1959 Constitution in place, the legislative officials required additional staff and office space in which to work. So it was that in addition to the official meetings of Vestrymen-turned-Members in the Town Hall, the legislative department operated out of the Administrator's Office in the old Government House, though records also indicate that the Clerk's office was at least for a time at the Jennett Building on Dr. Roys Drive. Meanwhile, official meetings were primarily held in the Town Hall.

Built in 1908 when Dr. George Hirst was the Commissioner, the Government House served as the home not only to government offices, but also was the literal home to Commissioners, Administrators, and their families. In a bizarre overlapping timeline of events, the old Government House was completely destroyed in a major fire just over a week before the new Legislative Assembly building was officially opened.

The final Administrator and first Governor, Athelstan Charles Ethelwulf (A.C.E.) Long, saw the representatives begin their quest for a new and dedicated centre for parliamentary business, and by many accounts was a powerful force in leading the charge on behalf of the Executive Council for the regional architectural competition.

The following Governor, Kenneth Roy Crook, had the distinction of overseeing the official opening of the new House of Parliament and of marking the first official speech in the building that ushered in a new chapter of legislative history in the Cayman Islands. ■



*Town Hall.
Hon. Sybil McLaughlin photographed in the
Town Hall, Clerking for a Commonwealth
Parliamentary Association's meeting.
(Parliament Collection)*



*Government House. Commissioner Weston
and family in front of the Government
House, where there were also administrative
offices. (Courtesy, Tampa-Hillsborough
County Public Library System)*

A Timeline of Legislative Events

- 1831 • 10th December: First Elections held
 - 31st December: First Assembly held at Pedro St. James
- 1832 • 2nd January: Act to Regulate the Legislative Assembly of the Cayman Islands passed
- 1835 • Proclamation at Pedro St. James ending slavery in the British Empire
- 1863 • Cayman Islands annexed to Jamaica
 - Assembly started to record its own meetings instead of the Courts in April
- 1865 • North Side included as a constituency
- 1893 • Cayman Islands Government Law passed giving full legislative authority
- 1898 • Position of Custos was changed to Commissioner
- 1909 • Legislative meetings moved to "George's Town" to what is now the Museum
- 1923 • Town Hall Peace Memorial built by Capt. Royal Bodden, site of legislative meetings
- 1956 • Commissioner Major Allan Donald instituted an Advisory Executive Council, made up of 3 Justices and 4 Vestrymen
- 1957 • 3rd April: Coat of Arms is adopted upon a resolution
- 1958 • 8th December: Sex Disqualification (Removal) Law passed
- 1959 • 3rd July: Last Sitting of the Assembly of Justices and Vestry held
 - 4th July: First written Constitution of the Cayman Islands came into effect
 - 2nd October: First Members of the new Legislative Assembly sworn in
 - First two political parties formed as the National Democratic Party and the Christian Democratic Party
- 1961 • First woman appointed to serve in the legislature, "Miss Annie" Huldah Bodden, by Commissioner Jack Rose

Effects of the 1959 Constitution

- *Provided the right of women to vote and to be elected to the Assembly*
- *Provided for 12 elected members, 2 Official and 3 Nominated Members*
- *Commissioner was changed to Administrator*
- *Elected term was changed to 3 years*
- *Statutory Executive Council was established, Members chosen by Administrator*
- *Administrator would serve as Presiding Officer over the Legislative Assembly*

- 1962
 - 19th January: Resolution passed for Cayman to continue association with HM's Government
 - Ms. Mary Wood becomes first woman elected to the Legislative Assembly, for Bodden Town
 - 6th August: Constitution Order came into effect, transferring power from the Governor of Jamaica to the Administrator of the Cayman Islands (then Mr. Jack Rose), and making Cayman a direct dependency of the British Crown
- 1964
 - Cayman Islands Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association formed on a motion by Mr. T. W. Farrington
- 1965
 - 29th October: Constitution ratified by the United Kingdom, came into effect on 5th November
- 1968
 - Legislature sat for the first time in Cayman Brac
 - Elections were held in November for Members who would then oversee the building of the new permanent home of Parliament
- 1970
 - 3rd September: Winner of the Regional Architectural Competition for the new building of Parliament announced in an exhibit held in the Town Hall
- 1971
 - 29th September: Laying of the Cornerstone by Capt. Rayal Bodden
- 1972
 - 1st May: Cayman Islands currency launched
 - 26th July: Title of Administrator changed to Governor by Constitution Order
 - 31st July: Official opening of the new Legislative Assembly building; Mr. Thomas William Farrington reads the dedication of the new building to the people of the Cayman Islands. Governor Crook declares it a public holiday
 - 7th August: First Throne Speech presented by the Presiding Officer, Governor Kenneth Crook, CMG
 - 22nd August: Constitution Order 1972 came into effect
- 1974
 - 20th November: Presentation of the Mace in the Fourth Meeting of the 1974 Session by the Bank of Nova Scotia and the Bank of Nova Scotia Trust Company (Cayman) Limited
- 1976
 - Legislative Assembly Standing Orders approved on 8th September
- 1982
 - Celebrated 150 years of Parliamentary Government
- 1983
 - HRH Queen Elizabeth II delivered the Throne Speech in the Chamber of the Legislative Assembly on 16th February
- 1990
 - 5th September: Legislative Assembly passes a Motion for a Speaker
- 1991
 - 15th February: Hon. Sybil McLaughlin is sworn in as the first Speaker
- 1992
 - 19th February: Constitution (Amendment) Order 1992 came into effect, changing the number of elected Members from 12 to 15

Effects of the 1972 Constitution Order

- *Removed Nominated Members; Financial Secretary a member of the Executive Council*
- *Official Members increased to three and included the Attorney General, Chief Secretary, & Financial Secretary*
- *Members of Executive Council were given portfolio responsibilities*
- *Voting age reduced to 18*
- *Allowed for a Speaker to be appointed by the Governor upon a resolution passed by the Assembly*
- *Term of the Legislative Assembly would be four years instead of three*
- *Now 4 members of Executive Council instead of 2 who would be elected by the 12 Members of the LA*

- 2003
 - Major renovations made to the Legislative Assembly building and to the Chamber
 - Constitution (Amendment) Order 2003 renames the Executive Council to the Cabinet
- 2005
 - Election date was changed from November of each year to May of each year due to the devastation of Grand Cayman by Hurricane Ivan in September 2004
- 2009
 - 6th October: Constitution Order 2009 came into effect. Provided for a Premier to be appointed by the Governor, a Deputy Premier, a Deputy Governor, a Leader of the Opposition and Deputy Leader of the Opposition
 - 6th November: Hon. McKeever Bush sworn in as the first Premier of the Cayman Islands, with Hon. Juliana O'Connor-Connolly as the first Deputy Premier
- 2010
 - Legislative Assembly building is shortlisted for the Governor's Award for design
- 2012
 - 14th May: Referendum (Single Member Constituency) Bill passed
 - Assembly proceedings broadcast live on television
 - Membership of the Legislative Assembly increased from 15 to 18, with 7 Ministers of Cabinet
- 2015
 - Constitution (Amendment) Order 2015 provided for 19 single Member electoral districts
- 2017
 - 24th May: First General Election held under new single Member districts
- 2020
 - 16th October: The Legislative Assembly becomes an autonomous body with the passage of the Parliament Management Act
 - 2nd November: the last meeting of the Legislative Assembly took place.
 - 3rd December: HE Governor Roper proclaims the Constitution (Amendment) Order 2020 to come into effect, thereby changing the Legislative Assembly to a Parliament.
 - 4th December: First Meeting of the new Parliament takes place; Premier Sir Alden McLaughlin oversees a public ceremony to rename the building to the "House of Parliament" and a new façade is erected on the exterior of the building
 - 31st December: Mrs. Sharon K. Smith, the longest serving Parliamentary staff, retires after 47 years (1st June, 1973 - 31 December, 2020)
- 2021
 - 1st January: The Parliament Management Act came into effect, establishing the Parliamentary Management Commission which provides for the independent management of the administrative functions of Parliament and expands the Clerk's role to Chief Officer
 - 14th April: General Elections took place, ushering in the first new Members of Parliament, with elected members increasing from 18 to 19 and Ministers increased from 7 to 8
 - 18th April: Half the Parliamentary staff moved to new offices in Bermuda House due to the growing number of staff required after becoming autonomous
- 2022
 - 13th May: The Council of the Parliament Management Commission met for the first time under the new Parliament Management Act
 - 21st July: The Hon. Speaker Bush leads celebrations of the 50th Anniversary of the construction of the House of Parliament building

Effects of the 2020 Constitution Amendment

- *Cayman becomes the third overseas territory to have a Parliament, after Bermuda and Gibraltar*
 - *Legislators are now referred to as Members of Parliament (MPs) rather than Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs)*
 - *Provides for an additional Minister, Parliamentary Secretaries (replacing Councillors), and a Police Service Commission*
 - *Cabinet has exclusive capacity in domestic affairs for any matter that is not specific to the Governor's power*
-



Aerial photograph of early George Town. (Parliament Collection)



George Town Clock Tower. The old Library Building can be seen on the right. (Parliament Collection)

Early George Town & Princess Royal Park

Life in early George Town and the first royal visitors

George Town in the mid-20th Century was very much still in its earlier development stages in comparison to the town centre that we have today, but times were speeding up quickly. Capt. Royal Bodden's prolific architectural achievements had already been accomplished and stood at the heart of George Town: Elmslie Church, the George Town Library, the Post Office, and the Town Hall.

It was in the 1950s around this central hub that a new era of growth would arrive. Tourism started to flourish thanks to the opening of the first airfield in 1952, Owen Roberts International Airport, and a number of hotels were established on the pristine shores of Seven Mile Beach.

No longer were visitors to the island required to land by seaplane at the dock in North Side. This time period also saw the opening of the first public bank in 1953 and the first hospital. George Town was starting to boom.



Mary, Princess Royal (Wikipedia), who assisted with nursing duties during the First World War, was the first Royal to visit Cayman.



*Women in early George Town.
(Parliament Collection)*

Only a few months after the Cayman Islands signed its first written constitution, the first member of the British Royal Family graced the island's shores. Mary, the Princess Royal, arrived to Cayman on 22nd March, 1960, on the Royal Yacht Britannia. The only daughter of King George V and Queen Mary, and aunt to HRH Queen Elizabeth II, Mary's visit to Cayman stirred enormous excitement for the island at a time when loyalty to the United Kingdom was about to reach its zenith.

The Princess Royal's visit is noteworthy not just for it being the first visit to the islands from a member of the Royal Family, but also for the location that she visited in George Town, which would later become the site of the building which we now celebrate. In advance of her visit, the Administrator, Alan Hillard Donald began organising a campaign with Caymanians to spruce up the island in time for the Princess' historic arrival.

Located beside the Town Hall was a small grassy area where local children would play. Wheelbarrow races were a common sight on the road in front of the park. It was there that the Princess Royal planted a tree, officially establishing the area as The Princess Royal Park. An otherwise non-descript site, the park proved to be a pivotal location and the heart of the community, with more and more businesses establishing themselves in the town centre, and regular community events of all shapes and sizes taking place in the Town Hall beside it.



*H.R.H. Duke of Edinburgh and
Administrator Jack Rose
talking to Sybil McLaughlin, Clerk of the
Legislative Assembly. (Cayman Islands
National Archives Photographic
Collections)*



At this time, the Legislative Assembly unanimously voted to remain British, and the then-Commissioner Jack Rose became Cayman's first Administrator, a role that would evolve to that of the Governor in 1971.

In 1962, the same year that Jamaica gained independence from Britain, the second Royal Family member visited Cayman as his final stop on a tour of Latin America. HRH Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh and the late husband of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, spent three days in April 1962 meeting with local officials and members of the public. The Duke met with Administrator Rose and his wife Margaret, and was the first guest to stay at the newly-constructed Governor's House.

Part of the Prince Philip's visit included a well-documented public gathering in Princess Royal Park, where he met with a number of local children, men, and women, alongside Administrator Jack Rose, MBE. With the help of His Royal Highness and a variety of local officials, Princess Royal Park was further developed with the addition of several new trees to accompany the original one planted by the Princess Royal herself. The Prince was also taken on a fishing excursion with then-Cabinet Minister Mr. Burns Rutty, upon the recommendation of the Administrator. He would later remark that the fishing excursion around South Sound had been one of the highlights of his visit to Cayman.

Crowd welcomes H.R.H. Duke of Edinburgh in front of Princess Royal Park, George Town. His Chaffeur is Mr. Walsham Conolly. (Cayman Islands National Archives Photographic Collections)

The significance of the park as the first Royal-designated area of Cayman was not lost on Executive Council in 1970, when sights were set on a new building for Parliamentarians. It was here, beside the Town Hall community hub, that construction would finally begin for the permanent home of the Legislative Assembly. This was a suitable location not just logistically but also symbolically, cementing the relationship between the Cayman Islands and the UK's Westminster model of parliamentary government. ■



Above: H.R.H. The Duke of Edinburgh, Mrs. Jack Rose, Governor of Jamaica Kenneth Blackbourne and Administrator Jack Rose leaving the Princess Royal Park, after planting a tree. (Cayman Islands National Archives Photographic Collections)

International Architectural Competition

The search begins for the designs of the heart of Cayman's democratic functions

Forming the Jury

In what would later be described as having tremendous foresight, the Executive Council decided that the Legislature and the Judiciary each deserved their own distinct and permanent homes. While the discussions pertaining to a permanent home of the legislative body had no doubt been underway for some time, plans finally began to take shape in August 1969, only nine years after Princess Royal planted the tree where the building would later be constructed.

Towards the end of the summer of 1969, Administrator Athelstan Charles Ethelwulf Long, CMG, CBE, began liaising with Mr. Eric Riley of the Overseas Development Ministry, and Mr. K. Hardaker of the British Development Division of the Caribbean (Barbados), with regards to the establishment of an international architectural competition for two new government buildings: a Legislative Assembly and a Court House. Mr. Riley would visit in October that year, providing the Administrator with building research papers in tropical building legislation relevant to development planning.

Mr. Long spearheaded much of the organisation of the competition, and had his hopes set high that the wish for the two new buildings would be complete by November 1970, with priority given to the legislature – something he would recognise as a “tall order.” Mr. Riley for advised him that “it would be unwise to mount a competition of this kind without professional architectural advice.”

The Administrator and Executive Council sought additional professional guidance from a qualified architect in the form of Mr. Peter C. Bynoe, President of the Commonwealth Caribbean Architectural Association and formerly the Chief Architect and Acting Director of Works for the Government of Trinidad and Tobago. Administrator Long wrote to Mr. Hardaker later to say that Mr. Bynoe's involvement would "assist the stature of the competition and underline our Caribbean identity."

The Administrator wrote to Mr. Bynoe on 3rd September, 1969, to invite him to act as the Assessor for the proposed Architectural Competition for the design of both the Legislative Chamber and the Court House. In his response, Mr. Bynoe graciously accepted the privileged responsibility, congratulating the Cayman Islands Government "on its extremely progressive approach to the construction of these two impressive buildings." He also laid out his terms and fees (J\$1,000 or about \$9,000 USD today), and visited the proposed site a month later.

Mr. Mostyn F. Campbell, Chief Architect for the Jamaican Ministry of Communications and Works, and past President of the Jamaica Society of Architects, was recruited as co-Assessor. The two men came to George Town frequently in the subsequent months in their new alliance for Cayman's significant architectural project, and would work closely with Mr. Cook, Director of Public Works Department, and Mr. Bryden, Economist.

A Jury was thus established, led by Mr. Bynoe and Mr. Campbell. Mr. Campbell reviewed the survey results from Thornley-Dyer, and the proposed site plan, and helped to develop the competition requirements that were then fine-tuned by Mr. Bynoe and executive approval. The conditions and rules of the competition were then developed and thoroughly outlined each aspect of the competition, from qualifications, dates, and awards. It was decided that the registrants would remain anonymous to the Jury and Assessor, that their names, brands, or other identifying marks would not be allowed on their blueprints or other designs.

BYNOE TO ASSESS ARCHITECTURAL COMPETITION

Mr. P.C.A. Bynoe, A.R.I.B.E., President of the Association of Caribbean Commonwealth Architects has very graciously consented to act as Assessor of the architectural competition being organised by the Cayman Islands Government.

The competition, will select a plan for the two prestige buildings to be completed in 1970. These are the Legislative Assembly Building and the new Court House and architects entering the competition

will be required to submit plans for both buildings so that they complement one another.

The islands are indeed privileged to have an architect of such standing as Mr. Bynoe to act as assessor and to guide the local committee in its decision as to the winner/s of the competition.

Mr. Bynoe is the husband of Dame Hilda Bynoe, Governor of the Eastern Caribbean island of Grenada.

Local News. Article from the Caymanian Weekly 1969-Oct-9th (Compass Media Ltd.)



The Bynoes. Mr. Peter Bynoe and his wife, Dame Hilda Bynoe, Governor of Grenada, with the Governor of New York (Jet Magazine, Jan 9, 1969)



Visiting Architects: Left to Right: the Hon. Administrator Long, Mr. Peter Bynoe, and Mr. Mostyn Campbell, from an article in the Caymanian Weekly, 30th October 1969. (Cayman Islands National Archives Photographic Collections)

MINISTRY OF OVERSEAS DEVELOPMENT,
ELAND HOUSE, STAG PLACE, LONDON S.W.1

Reference: A27/3/127
Your Reference: 25th November 1969 (16)

A C E Long Esq, CME CBE
The Administrator's Office
Georgetown
Grand Cayman
BRITISH WEST INDIES

Dear *Atal*,

1. I am writing to thank you very much indeed for the kind hospitality which you extended to me during my visit to Georgetown. I am extremely grateful also for all your help and advice and for the many opportunities you provided for me to meet people who could assist in my assignment.

2. I have despatched under separate cover three copies each of various Building Research Station papers on Tropical Building Legislation and also copies of a report prepared after a visit I made to Southern Africa, which may contain some information relevant to development planning in the Cayman Islands. In general the BRS papers are framed to cover the requirements of developing countries where the limitation of funds is such that building methods are bound to be rudimentary, a very different situation from that faced by your Government, but I trust that at least some of the technical information will be of value to you.

With kind regards
Yours sincerely
Eric Riley
E H Riley

Letter from Mr. Eric Riley of the British Ministry of Overseas Development to Administrator Long, 25th Nov. 1969

PETER BYNOE, A.R.I.B.A., Dip., Arch.
Chartered Architect,

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
GRENADA

10th September, 1969.

The Hon., The Administrator,
Administrator's Office,
GRAND CAYMAN,
Cayman Islands.

Dear *Mr. Long*

ARCHITECTURAL COMPETITION

This serves to acknowledge with thanks your letter of 3rd September with your kind invitation to act as Assessor for your proposed Architectural Competition for the Design of a Legislative Chamber and a Court House.

I look forward to getting together with you for the purpose of formulating the Conditions for the Competition. In the meantime, you may care to have full surveys of the proposed site prepared, and I should be grateful if you can send me a copy of your building and town-planning Regulations if these are available.

Wynne
Yours sincerely
Peter Bynoe
PETER BYNOE
A.R.I.B.A., DIP. ARCH.
CHARTERED ARCHITECT
ST. GEORGE'S, GRENADA

Letter from Peter Bynoe to Gov. Long accepting the invitation to be the competition Assessor, 10th Sept. 1969

PETER BYNOE,
Government House,
St. George's,
GRENADA.

28th October, 1969.

The Hon. The Administrator,
The Cayman Islands,
George Town,
GRAND CAYMAN.

Dear *Mr. Long*

ARCHITECTURAL COMPETITION

It is good that we have now got down to the competition exercise in detail, and completed a very reasonable Set of Conditions, and a satisfactory Programme in the context of the urgency of your Government's proposal.

I must congratulate the Cayman Islands Government on its extremely progressive approach to the construction of these two prestige buildings, which I trust will bring credit to the country and outline below what form my involvement and participation in the competition will take:

Duties as Assessor

(a) Taking instructions with respect to the promotion and setting up of an Architectural Competition for the Design of Legislative Assembly Chambers and a Court House at George Town, Grand Cayman.

1st Stage (b) Advising on the, (i) Setting out of the Requirements for the Projects,
(ii) Setting out of Detailed Instructions for the Competition and

Letter from Peter Bynoe to the Administrator with his terms for being the competition's Assessor.

CABLE AND WIRELESS
CABLE AND WIRELESS (WEST INDIES) LIMITED
INCORPORATED IN ENGLAND

CHARGE	NUMBER	DESTINATION	PT	ORIGIN	WORDS	FORWARDED PARTICULARS
OFFICE STAMP AND DATE		NO. OF WORDS	DATE	TIME	(131)	
INSTRUCTIONS						
VIA CW						
NOTICE: In the absence of any indication to the contrary it will be assumed that this telegram is to be charged at full rate and treated accordingly.						
PLEASE WRITE THE NAME AND ADDRESS IN CAPITAL LETTERS						
CLASS <u>STAY PRIORITY</u>						
AND ADDRESS <u>PETER BYNOE GOVERNMENT HOUSE GRENADA</u>						
YOU/LET 26 OCTOBER ARCHITECTURAL COMPETITION FEE AGREABLES STOP RE GENERAL CONDITIONS WE HAVE FOLLOWING QUERIES DRAFT PARA 2 SHOULD PARTICIPANTS BE LIMITED ONE DESIGN STOP PARA 3 SHOULD NOT FINISH ARCHITECT BE REQUIRED TO FORN COLLABORATION WITH ANY ACCEPTABLY EXPERIENCED FIRM HATHEN THAT LIMITATION TO WEST INDIAN CONSULTANTS STOP SHOULD A PERSPECTIVE DRAWING NOT BE REQUIRED OF ALL COMPETORS STOP PARA 11 SHOULD NOT ALL FINISHING PROJECTS BELONG TO PROMOTERS STOP GRATEFUL EARLY ADVICE ON ABOVE.						
REQUEST THAT ABOVE TELEGRAM BE FORWARDED SUBJECT TO THE CONDITIONS PRINTED ON THE BACK OF THIS FORM BY WHICH I AM TO BE BOUND.						
ADMINISTRATOR <i>A. Badden</i> TELEPHONE 2089						
MEMBER OF THE CABLE AND WIRELESS WORLDWIDE COMMUNICATIONS GROUP						

Cable and Wireless telegram from Administrator Long to Mr. Bynoe regarding his terms, 16th Nov. 1969

The initial registration deadline was set for the 20th December, 1969, though all designs had to be submitted by registered mail no later than 16th March, 1970, to the Secretary, Mr. Paul Dyson at the Architectural Competition HQ in Government House. Interested and professionally qualified architects from the Caribbean, Canada, the United States and the United Kingdom were included in the invitation to participate. Submissions were to include a site plan, blueprints, and a report elucidating the basic architectural considerations with a perspective showing the relationship of the two buildings (Assembly and Courts) to the surrounding space in town. Competitors were encouraged to visit and inspect the site at their expense.

The absence of building regulations in Cayman at the time provided a freedom to the architects to interpret and employ standards, which Mr. Bynoe suggested could be used as guidance for the framers of the future building regulations. The designers were encouraged to assume a unit square foot building cost of J\$16/square foot (about CI\$120 today). Reasons for rejection included failure to adhere to the deadline for registration and submission of documents, and a lack of clarity or considerable contradictions in other parts of the works submitted, among other reasons for rejection.

Prizes for the awards would be J \$2,000 for the first prize (roughly \$18,600 USD in 2022) as well as the task of finalizing the project; J \$1,000 for second prize (roughly \$9,000 USD in 2022); and, J \$500 for third prize (roughly \$4,200 USD today).

A dramatic development came about when, on New Year's Day of 1970, the Administrator and Mr. Bynoe received a letter from Ms. Kathleen Hall, Assistant Secretary of Competitions, Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA). In her letter, Ms. Hall advised them that the competition failed to adhere to the Institute's rules, and as such most qualified architects from the specified countries would not be able to compete due to regulations in their membership with the formal approval of the International Union of Architects (UIA), which would substantially delay the opening of the building – a priority for the Administrator.

Thankfully, through several urgent discussions via the assistance of Mr. Campbell and with various international architectural bodies, a resolution was found. In one of the final correspondences with Ms. Hall on 18th February, 1970, Mr. Bynoe indicated that the solution was to have a "Regional Competition", echoing Ms. Hall's own recommendation, which conformed to the best practices of RIBA. He also noted that "considerable enthusiasm was displayed" by the applicants, "with a wealth of high quality designs" from over 43 registrants, indicating the widespread talent and skill of the Caribbean region.

COMPETITION ANNOUNCEMENT

The Government of the Cayman Islands announces that it is holding a competition for two new Government Buildings as follows:-

(a) **New Assembly Building**
(b) **New Court House**

The competition will be held under rules governing International Competitions. The Government of the Cayman Islands invites Architects practicing in the following countries:- Cayman Islands, Jamaica, Barbados, Trinidad, Windward & Leeward Islands, Guyana, Bahamas, British Virgin Islands, U.S.A., United Kingdom and Canada to submit designs.

Conditions of the Competition:-

Conditions of the competition may be obtained on the deposit of J\$20 from the Architectural Competition Secretary Mail Pouch 1000 Grand Cayman Island. Final date for registration is 17th January 1970.

The Assessor is Mr. Peter Bynoe, A.R.I.B.A., President of the Association of Commonwealth Societies of Architects in the Caribbean.

All entries will be exhibited after the award has been made.

Prizes & Awards:-

The premiums being offered are:-

First Prize	— J\$2000	- (US \$2400 or £1000)
Second Prize	— J\$1000	- (US \$1200 or £ 500)
Third Prize	— J\$ 600	- (US \$720 or £ 300)

A copy of the announcement for the architectural competition for the new Legislative Assembly and Court House buildings (Compass Media Ltd.)

By 14th July, 1970, Executive Council agreed to invite Dr. Roy McTaggart and Mr. Arthur Hunter as representatives of the Caymanian people as Jurors. They also agreed to invite Mr. Alexander Davidson, Chief Quantity Surveyor of the Ministry of Works in Jamaica to offer his professional services to the competition. Upon completion of the competition, the Assessor would submit a copy report to the Cayman Islands Government consisting of a thorough review of the designs and an overview of the competition as a whole.

In the final assessment phase of the competition towards the end of the summer 1970, the registrants were narrowed down to 17 competitors. Finally, the formal assessments from the Jury began on 6th August, 1970, with the awarding announcement scheduled for 3rd September that year.


Below Left: The Administrator's handwriting demonstrates the alarm at receiving Ms. Kathleen Hall's notice.

Below Right: Mr. Campbell writes to the President of the UIA.

(Cayman Islands National Archives Photographic Collections)

2/19/8 YH.

18A


MINISTRY OF OVERSEAS DEVELOPMENT
 Eland House, Stag Place, LONDON S.W.1
 Telegrams: Ministrant, London, Telex
 Telephone: 01-834-2377 Ext 14

Our reference:
Your reference:


9th January 1970

The Administrator
A C N Long, Esq CMG CBE
Administrator's Office
Grand Cayman
Cayman Islands

Alan M Long,

- I attached a copy of a letter written by Kathleen Hall of the RIBA addressed to Mr Riley, one of our building advisers. You will see that this concerns the competition announcement for the design of a Legislative Assembly Building and Courthouse at Georgetown.
- It seems that the conditions laid down are such that the majority of the members of the architectural profession would be precluded from taking part in the contest. Clearly this is not the intention, and I have also attached a copy of standard regulations for such competitions, so that you may, if you think it advisable, modify the conditions to bring them into line with the requirements of the UIA.
- Without having access to the competition documents it is not easy to comment on the extent to which it does not meet the requirements of UIA regulations other than the fact that it does not comply with articles 4 and 52.


Yours sincerely,
S Adams
Miss S Adams



*A/A
PT okk. There are just
AAR
28-1*

*DPW
SH HURLEY LI
AAR
17-1*

5/1/3
25



C/O The Ministry of Communications and Work,
 140 Maxfield Avenue,
 Kingston 10,
 Jamaica, W.I.,
 18th February, 1970.

The President,
U. I. A.,
Paris,
FRANCE.

Dear Mr. President,

Re. Architectural Competition Government Buildings, Grand Cayman, Cayman Islands

Attempts were made by telephone during the very early stages of the organisation of the above named competition to inform the U.I.A., but owing to distance and bad communication nothing was finalised.

However the entire issue has now been reviewed and the Government of the Cayman Islands who are the promoters have decided to hold a Regional Competition modeled on the R.I.B.A. regulations for holding Architectural Competitions. We have been in contact with the R.I.B.A., and a copy of the conditions is now being forwarded to that institution.

Thanking you for your kind help and co-operation.

M. J. Campbell

(NOSTYN CAMPBELL),
 Chief Architect,
MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS & WORK.

Announcement Ceremony

On the afternoon of 3rd September, 1970, the ceremonial Announcement of Award & Official Opening of the Exhibit of Competition Designs was held. Present were the Administrator Long, Mr. William Warren Conolly, Capt. Eldon Eden Kirkconnell, Mr. John Delaney Jefferson, Mr. Allen Berkley Bush, and Mr. Vassel Johnson.

All 17 of the final competitors were displayed in the Town Hall where members of the public could visit and peruse the suggested options. Finally, at 5:40 p.m. the sealed envelope was opened and the First Prize was announced: Rutkowski Bradford and Partners of Jamaica, contestant entry No. 3. The Second Prize was awarded to Mr. George Henry of Guyana, and Third Prize to Colin Laird & Associates of Port-of-Spain, Trinidad. Additionally, four "Awards of Merit" were granted to four firms: Chalmers & Gibbs of the Cayman Islands, Jelbert & Awon of Barbados, the Caribbean Planning Association of Jamaica, and Gillespie & Steel of Barbados.

In the Report on the Assessment and Award of the Architectural Competition for Government Buildings for the Government of the Cayman Islands, issued by the Jury and the Assessor to the Executive Council, it was noted that "there were some outstanding designs showing the high quality of architectural skills which are available in the region," and that the Cayman Islands Government will now have "seventeen designs to choose from for their prestigious buildings, incorporating many brilliant ideas which no one architect could be likely to conceive on his own." The designs were judged on questions of "convenience and efficiency and with respect to artistic intention," he wrote, though the Jury considered several aspects of the submissions: draughtsmanship, composition and presentation, design and layout, schedule of requirements, specifications, cost, and overall feasibility.

P R E A M B L E

The Government and Executive Council of the Cayman Islands must be commended for the foresight shown in its decision to put out these two prestigious buildings which are to form the nucleus of the redevelopment of the capital city of George Town, to an Architectural Competition.

In the proposed programme for redevelopment, the priority which has been given to the new Legislative Assembly and Court Buildings is of great national significance which illustrates the democratic processes of Law and Government with considerable emphasis on the observance of all that is embodied in the concept of Human Rights. The attempt, therefore, to provide two outstanding buildings to leave as a legacy by the process of a competition will surely be acknowledged with pride by future generations as a significant contribution to the welfare of the state.

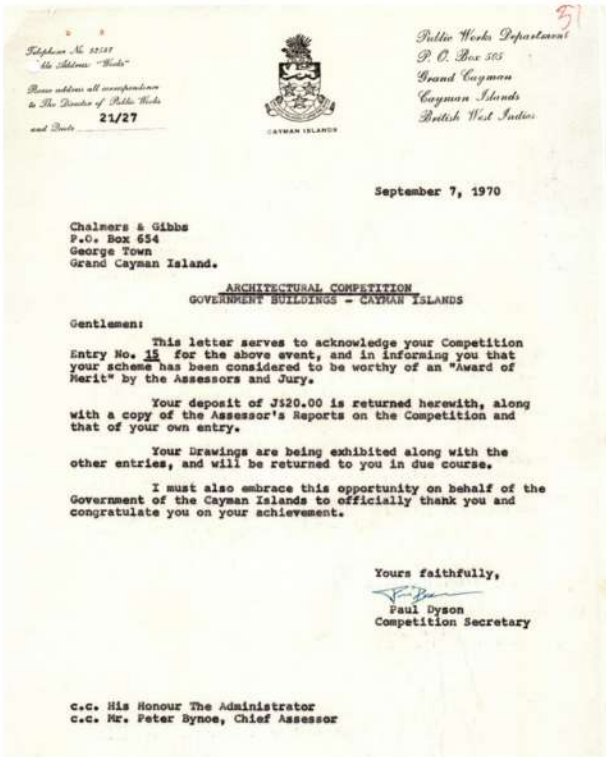
The assistance of the Chief Architect (Mr. Mostyn Campbell) of the Ministry of Communications and Works of Jamaica which was followed by discussions with various International Architectural bodies culminated in the organisation of a Regional Competition.

Excerpt from the Assessor's Report to the Government of the Cayman Islands on the Regional Architectural Competition. (Parliament Collection)

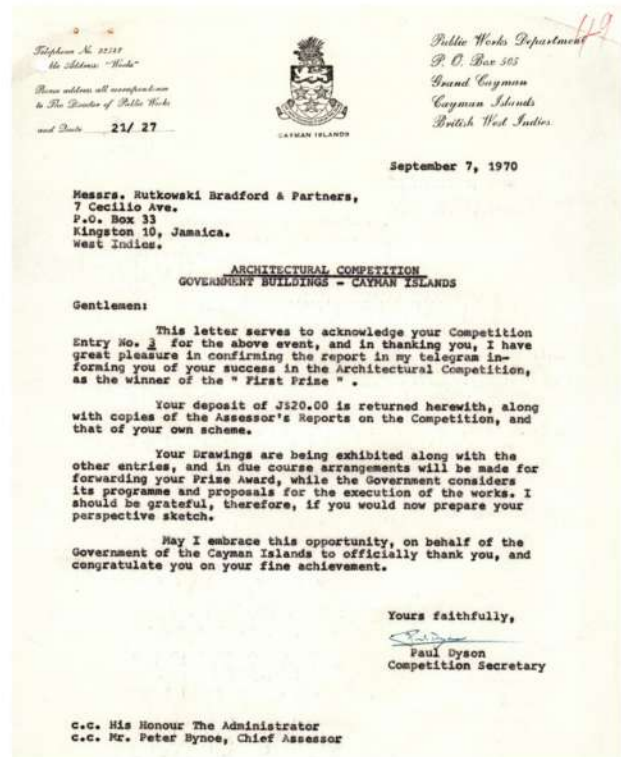
Mr. Bynoe said those most worthy considered the arrangement of the Legislative Assembly and Court House in relation to one another, as well as to the flow of traffic around Fort Street, the Town Hall, Clock Tower, and Library. They praised the designs that gave “positive character” to the buildings, and which “integrated composition of space and construction that satisfies both the emotion and the rational requirements of the particular human activity.”

“This,” he continued, “was especially the case with entry No. 3.” That registrant was the awarded firm, Rutkowski Bradford and Partners of Jamaica (though Mr. Conrad Rutkowski, Senior Partner and Structural Engineer, and Mr. Kevin Houghton, the architect responsible for the design, would remain in the Cayman Islands upon completion of the project). The firm was able to achieve “a simplicity of form and structure, bold and strong in concept,” and the “circulation is direct and economic, showing a sense of discipline which can only lead to the sort of dignity which is associated with buildings of this nature.”

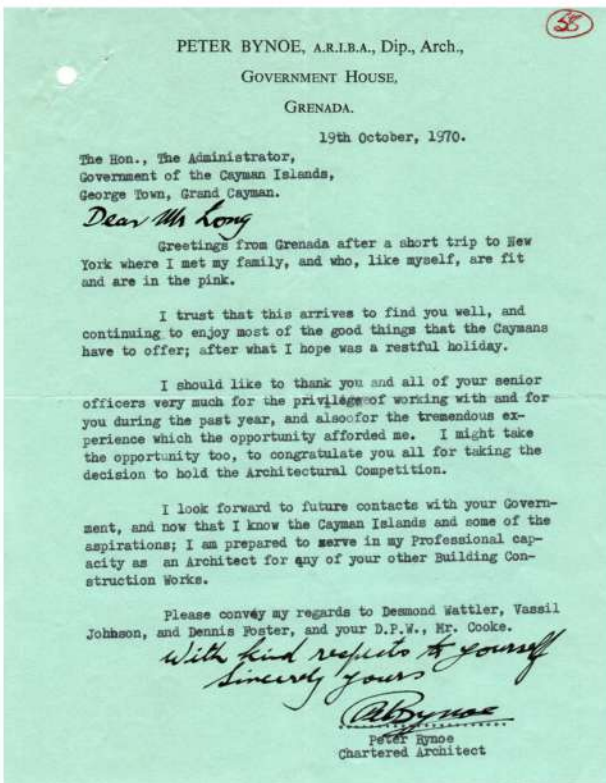
In the Executive Council meeting of 6th October, 1970, it was agreed that the winner of the Architectural Competition for a new Legislative Assembly and Court House Building, Rutkowski Bradford and Partners, should be employed by the Government to do the buildings. Council agreed that “work should go ahead now as soon as possible and efforts should be made to give the contract to a local contractor in view of the national significance of the buildings.” ■



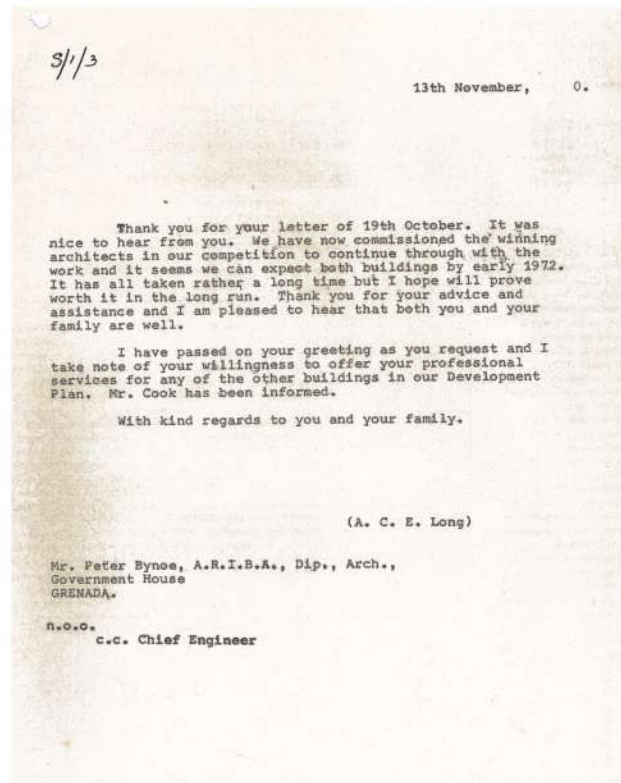
Architectural firm Chalmers & Gibbs of the Cayman Islands received an Award of Merit for their designs



Rutkowski Bradford & Partners, the winning firm, receives notification of their First Prize in the competition.



One of the final letters from Mr. Bynoe to Administrator Long thanking him for the opportunity to be the Assessor of the new Legislative Assembly and Court House architecture competitions.



Administrator Long writes to Peter Bynoe updating him that the winning firm will start work on the buildings, eyeing early 1972 as the opening date.

Architecture, Construction, & Design

The elements of architectural design, and the construction that made it a reality

The Architecture & The Architects

The architectural firm awarded the contract for the design and construction of the Legislative Assembly building and the Court House was Rutkowski Bradford and Partners, one of the largest architectural and engineering firms in the British West Indies throughout the 1960's and 1970's. The firm established an office in Cayman upon the announcement of its being awarded the first prize in the international competition and upon receiving the contract to complete the building. It would eventually become Rutkowski Baxter Houghton upon its relocation from Jamaica to the Cayman Islands permanently, during the construction of the Legislative Assembly building.

The Senior Partners of the firm were Mr. Herbert Bradford and Mr. Conrad Rutkowski. Mr. Rutkowski moved to Cayman from Jamaica with his family with the new building contract. Mr. Bradford remained in Jamaica when the firm moved to Cayman, but he was very much involved with overseeing the design and construction of the two buildings.

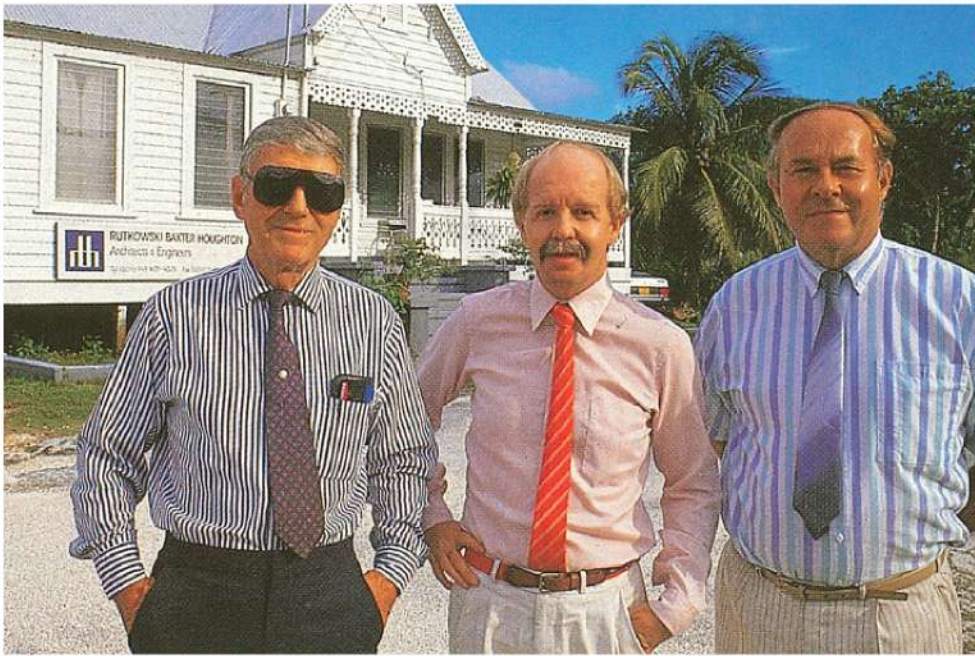
Mr. Rutkowski was heavily involved in the post-war reconstruction of London, England, and was integral in the design of many large-scale projects in Trinidad, the Bahamas, and Jamaica, including: the University College of the West Indies, the Law School, Jamaica College of Technology, the Bank of Jamaica (the tallest building in the Caribbean at the time measuring 17 stories), the Norman Manley International Airport and Montego Bay Airport, as well as 30 junior secondary schools.



His initial visit to the Cayman Islands was in 1966 when he assisted local architect Mr. Ed Dowsey with completing an architectural contract for a bank. Mr. Rutkowski would lead the firm to go on to design the Cayman Islands Police Headquarters and the former Government Administration Building (known as the “Glass House”) and was responsible for the management and completion of major civil work projects in George Town, starting of course with the Legislative Assembly and Court House.

Left to Right: Mr. Jack O'Connell, Resident Architect; Mr. Conrad Rutkowski, Partner; Mrs. O'Connell. (Compass Media Ltd.)

Resident Architect with the firm was Mr. Jack O'Connell, who was the primary representative for the firm during most of the recorded administrative meetings with the legislative committees responsible for overseeing the building, design, and construction. Ms. Wanda Domericki of the firm was also present at many of these meetings and was responsible for the initial furnishing choices for the interior of the building as well as the standardisation of the Cayman Coat of Arms and the initial drafting of the Mace design (with the assistance of Mrs. Sybil McLaughlin). Mr. Carl Beltcher also assisted with the design work, while engineering design work was carried out by Mr. John Scarlett.



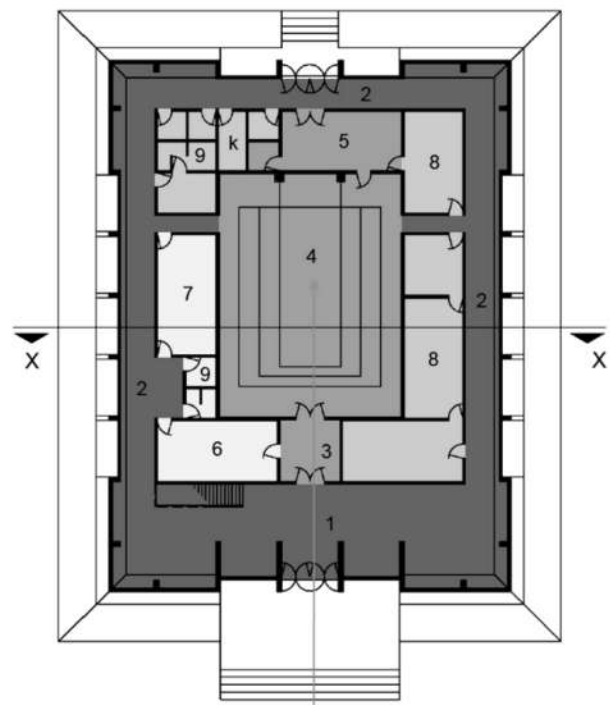
*Left to Right:
Mr. Conrad Rutkowski,
Mr. Trevor Baxter, and
Mr. Kevin Houghton, of
Rutkowski Baxter Houghton
in front of their office in
Mr. Will Wallace and
Queenie Bodden's House.*

Shortly after the finalisation of the new building's construction, the firm permanently relocated to Cayman and its new partners became Trevor Baxter and Kevin Houghton. Mr. Baxter went on to design many of the buildings in George Town, including Caledonian House, as well as several charitable projects such as the Bonaventure Boys Home and various churches. Mr. Houghton served as the Chief Architect with the Jamaican Government and then moved to the firm as a chief designer, designing the Central Bank of Jamaica and producing the winning design for the Legislative Assembly building in Cayman.

*Below: Plan of the main floor
of the Parliament building.
1: Foyer. 2: Cloister. 3: House
Lobby. 4: House Chamber.
5: Speaker's Office. 6: Member's
Lounge. 7: Committee Room.
8: Staff/Clerks. 9: Facilities.
10: Gallery. 11: VIP Gallery.
12: AC Plant Rooms.*

Mr. Houghton later described the architectural feat as a success over the challenges of the planning design. "The basic planning problem is the fact that the two sites available are separated by a road, [and] so the two buildings [the Assembly and the Court House] are isolated in their functions but must complement each other as they will form the core of a civic centre."

The main entrance of the building was designed to face the future Court House across a square, which was thought to be a suitable place for parades and ceremonial events. In a way, the design for the two buildings together considered ancient communal sites like the Forum in Rome, where citizens could congregate in a shared space. The two buildings facing each other symbolised the separation of the two powers, and yet also the connected nature of their roles for the populace.

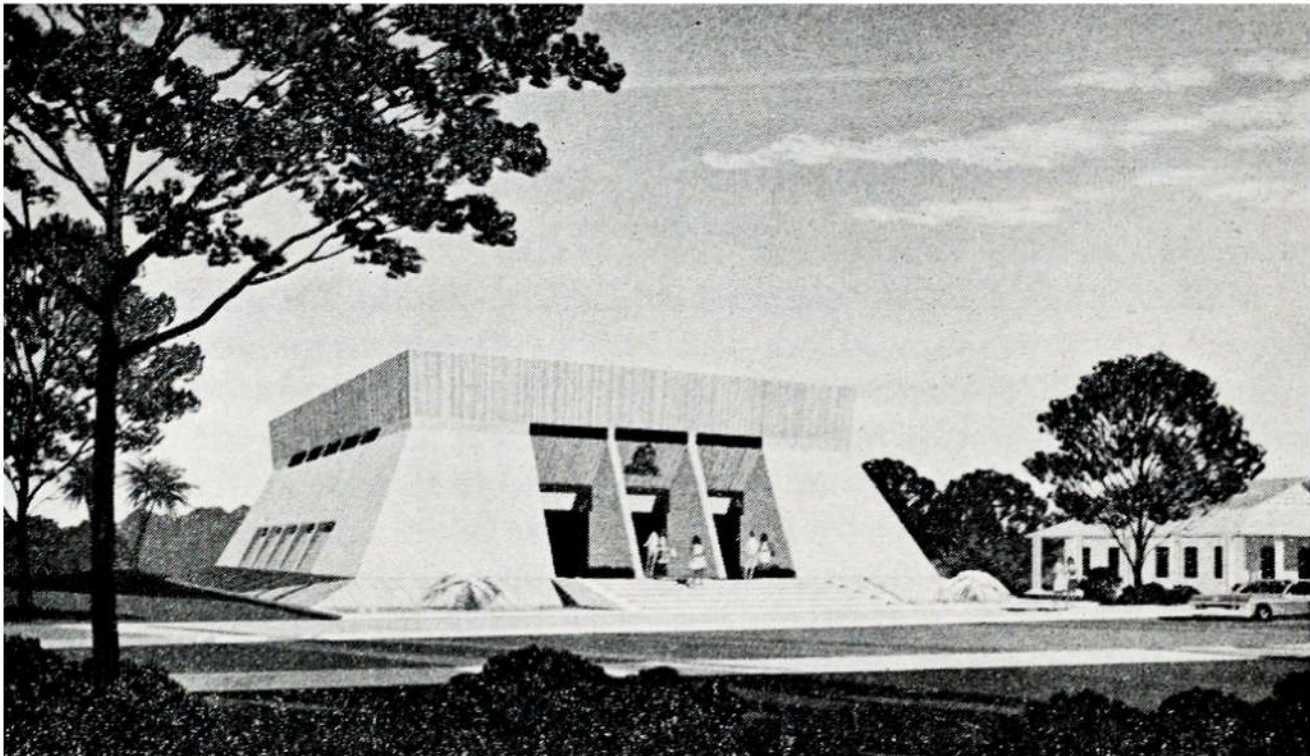


“The two buildings [the Assembly and Courts] are physically related by a processional route that terminates at the steps of the LA building itself,” Mr. Houghton explained. “The public have access to the Building through the main doors [and] a staircase from the foyer gives easy access to the public observation galleries above.” The Speaker, presiding over the House, is the centre of the building, and the Members form a horseshoe-shape around him or her. Moving further out from this central focal point are the clerical offices and committee rooms for the business of Parliament.

In his reflection on the design of the building, the designer added that one of the most significant stylistic factors for the building was “its absence of vertical features in the Island’s low-lying terrain,” which in turn is reflected in the longer sloping walls and impressive low-lying stature. Thus the building employs “bold soaring elements” and “powerful shapes,” which allow for the play of light and shade within the confines of natural concrete. The eight inch solid concrete walls “made this building passively energy efficient back in 1972, even more so after upgrades to HVAC and lighting efficiencies in [the renovation],” added Mr. Houghton.

The building would go on to be short-listed for the 2010 Governor’s Award for Design & Excellence in Cayman, an initiative of the Cayman Society of Architects, Surveyors & Engineers, and the Cayman Contractors Association. Nominees were judged based on design excellence, creativity and innovation, sustainability and the environment, value, buildability, and cultural response.

Below: Design of the new building, courtesy of Cayman Islands Government Information Services.





The Construction

In the Executive Council meeting of 6th October, 1970, it was agreed that the winner of the Architectural Competition for a new Legislative Assembly and Court House Building should be employed by the Government to do the buildings and that work should “go ahead now as soon as possible and efforts should be made to give the contract to a local contractor in view of the national significance of the buildings.” The construction contract was awarded to Sir Robert McAlpine and Sons Ltd., and to Arch Construction.

McAlpine (Cayman) Ltd was incorporated in the Cayman Islands on 20th April, 1970, as a wholly-owned subsidiary of Sir Robert McAlpine & Sons Ltd. The award to the local construction company was significant in the company’s history, as the project was the first contract undertaken by McAlpine in the Cayman Islands (though they would go on to build key government buildings including the Court House and the Government Administration Building).

Left to Right: Tommy Bodden; Tom Nixon of McAlpine (Cayman) Ltd; Jack O’Connell of Rutkowski Bradford and Partners; Keith Whittle; and David Arch of Arch Construction. (Compass Media Ltd.)

Arch Construction, led by Mr. David Arch, was one of Cayman's first construction companies and is still in the forefront of Cayman's construction industry as Arch and Godfrey. The company was responsible for the labour and supervision of the project, and Mr. Arch would later assist Capt. Royal Bodden in laying the cornerstone of the building in 1971, carrying the heavy stone himself to Capt. Bodden.

The building was made from reinforced concrete, the first on the island, and was poured nearly entirely by hand "using a bucket brigade of construction operatives," a feat that was made exceptionally challenging given the sloping external walls. Workers used the first 2114 Winget 500R mixer, which was sent to Cayman by Sir Robert McAlpine from Jamaica. The machine is notable as several workers were required to load the large container together: some would shovel in rock and cement on one side, while others would shovel in cement from the other side. The concrete was then rubbed with sand paper and painted, with no rendering.

Mr. Henry Propper was the Engineer & Manager for Sir Robert McAlpine Ltd. He was stationed in Jamaica along with the Quantity Surveyor, "Wally", and they travelled regularly to Cayman to oversee the construction of the new building. The Site Engineers for the project were Mr. Leon Pierce from McAlpine, and Mr. Cyril Garbutt for Rutkowski, Bradford & Partners.

The building was built for approximately CI \$520,000 at the time, and features a "fair-faced, fluted parapet and plinth, with extensive use internally of Welsh slate and local mahogany." Lighting throughout is provided "by a luminous ceiling."

Governor Kenneth Roy Crook in his opening address at the ceremony would say that "there are bound to be sober thoughts about the cost, but [...] I believe this has been well worthwhile; this is the physical embodiment of the Caymanian's belief in Parliamentary democracy."

In 1969, the Administrator wrote that Members were hoping to have the new building in place by 1970 when "celebrations are to be held commemorating 300 years of connection [between Cayman and] Britain."

In her correspondences, the Clerk commented that the Legislature was now hoping to have the building operational for an opening ceremony slated for 1st May, 1972, the same day that the Cayman Islands' new currency would be issued. But as the final weeks came to the wire, the Clerk noted with surety and determinism that the new date was truly set: Monday, 31st July, 1972, at 10:00 a.m.

When the construction was completed, Caymanians and audiences around the world saw a stunning and iconic set of complimentary buildings for the Legislative Assembly and the Court House.



Mr. Henry Propper of McAlpine (Cayman) Ltd served as the Engineer & Manager.

The Design

The central section of the building, which contains the Chamber where the Members of the Legislative Assembly meet, contains galleries for the public, the press, and important guests. Along the surroundings of the core Chamber are office for the Speaker, Clerk, and staff, as well as conference rooms and an anti-room.

Members of the Committee Meeting on Furniture and Furnishings for the new Legislative Assembly Building met several times in late 1971 and early 1972 to discuss and finalise plans for the interior design of the building. Present in these meetings were:

- Hon. D. V. Watler, OBE, JP, Chairman & Deputy Administrator
- Mr. T. W. Farrington, CBE, JP, MLA
- Dr. R. E. McTaggart,
- Mr. Stewart Cook, Chief Engineer, Public Works Department
- Mr. Jack O'Connell, Resident Architect of firm Rutkowski, Bradford and Partners
- Ms. Wanda Domericki, AOCA of the firm Rutkowski, Bradford and Partners
- Mrs. Sybil McLaughlin, MBE, Clerk of the Legislative Assembly

A separate Committee was established by Cayman's Commonwealth Parliamentary Association branch on 5th November 1971 more specifically to manage the reviews and designs of the Mace itself. This other Committee was comprised of: Mr. T.W. Farrington (Chairman), Mr. A.B. Bush, Hon. W.W. Conolly, Mr. E.O. Panton, and Mr. Richard Arch.



Above: The newly opened Legislative Assembly building, courtesy of McAlpine (Cayman) Ltd.

COLOUR SCHEME:

The Chairman thanked those present for finding it possible to attend this meeting and asked Miss Domerecki (who had already had prior discussions with Mrs. McLaughlin on the matter of furnishings and suggested colour schemes of the new Parliament Building - copies of these notes of discussions having been previously circulated to all members), to lead off by explaining the proposals to members.

Miss Domerecki explained in fuller detail the suggestions, set out in the Minutes of a meeting held at the Clerk's Office on the 6th of August, 1971. She stressed the importance of providing and maintaining a subtle, sophisticated atmosphere within the new building and the relation between the proposed colourscheme and the lighting effects. For this reason the architects had selected to provide sloping walls in a lighter shade of colour (samples of painted materials were shown to the Committee), and illustrated the slate which would form the walls of certain areas, as indicated in the plan. This slate was of a quality of green which would reflect the light from the windows and thus a varying and alternating reflection would result.

In the Chamber, (as indicated from the Minutes), and directly behind the Speaker would be timber panelling clear mahogany with vertical black ribs which would accentuate the location of this area: this would also carry the Crest.

CARPETING:

The selected Gobi Sunset nylon carpet (an earthy terra colour) (sample presented to Committee), had been chosen as one to stand up to sea air, sand, dirt, etc. The areas where this would be located

Left: Extract from the minutes of the Committee that selected the furniture and interior colours. (Parliament Collection)

dignified and outstanding effect desired for a Parliament,” per Hon. McLaughlin’s notes. On 19th November, 1971, the Committee unanimously accepted the colour scheme proposed by Ms. Domericki from the winning architect’s firm, as well as the furniture specifications relating to the use of particular colours in the upholstery.

The original interior of the building was built with materials that were symbolic of Cayman’s constitutional connection to Jamaica and the United Kingdom. The mahogany strips adorning the wall behind the President’s Chair (now the Speaker’s Chair) were from Jamaica, while the slate that covered the interior walls came from the Broughton Moor Green Slate Quarries Ltd., in Lancashire, United Kingdom.

It was around this time that Hon. McLaughlin began her eight-month fundraising quest, writing charmingly long and personalised letters to all the heads of the Commonwealth branches for their financial support of the new Parliament building. She sent each list of items required for the outfitting of the building, ranging from the slate walls to the inkstands, the Speaker’s Chair to the Members’ Chairs, sofas and lounges, end tables and writing tables, ashtrays, table lamps and planters, conference tables, book cases, and virtually every item one could possibly imagine for such a unique building.

Governments from the Commonwealth responded with overwhelming support to Hon. McLaughlin’s personalised letters of request.

Mr. R. C. Lowe, Honorary Secretary of the Bermuda Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, wrote to the Clerk indicating Bermuda’s desire to donate a cedar gavel and stand with a silver plate affixed bearing an inscription; the design would be based on one used by the Bermuda House of Assembly which was fashioned from the first meeting of the Bermuda Assembly in August, 1620.

Whether for interior decorations, such as Jamaica’s Commonwealth Parliamentary Association’s branch, which donated towards the entire outfitting of the Parliamentary Library, or for ceremony-specific gifts such as those from Mr. William D. Bodden, who donated the invitations and envelopes used for the opening ceremony, the establishment of the new House of Parliament demonstrated the sheer number of participants in the project and the goodwill shared with Cayman for its new legislative home.

The estimated cost of the furniture and related shipping fees to the Wharf was J\$30,000 (roughly \$275,000 USD today). However, Mrs. McLaughlin noted for the Governor’s office in late 1971 that from this will be deducted the various contributions from local banks, businesses, and overseas governments, who had already indicated their support to the Clerk.

The Financial Secretary, Sir Vassel Johnson, approved the application and asked the Clerk to “conserve expenditure here as much as possible,” as any good Financial Secretary ought to do. Sir Johnson also served from 1971 through 1982 as Cayman’s first chairman of the Cayman Islands Currency Board, the predecessor of the Cayman Islands Monetary Authority, and was instrumental behind another milestone of 1972 – the launch of Cayman’s own currency which came into effect on 1st May, 1972.

Upon receiving his knighthood, Sir Johnson wrote to Mr. Rutkowski and his wife Rosemary, noting that the creation of the Legislative Assembly and Court House “was the beginning of the tremendous development and infrastructure on which our prosperity was built,” and added that the knighthood “was meant to be shared” with people like Mr. Rutkowski and every person involved in the design and construction of these iconic buildings at the heart of Cayman’s government. ■

FURNITURE DONATED TO LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY BUILDING, 1972			\$
1.	BARCLAYS BANK (Furniture Clerk's Office & Praetors Speaker's Office)		963.00 37.00 <hr/> 1,000.00
2.	ROYAL BANK OF CANADA (Furniture Deputy Clerk's office)		624.00
3.	MERCANTILE BANK & Trust Co. Speaker's desk		605.00
4.	1st National City Bank Table desk - Speaker's office		149.00
5.	Bermuda CPA Gavel & Stand on Speaker's Desk		-----
6.	Inter-Bank Furniture for Committee room		2,946.00
7.	CANADIAN IMPERIAL BANK 2 Clerk's Chairs		238.00
	1 Painting commissioned		62.00 <hr/> 300.00
8.	B AHAMAS GOVERNMENT 12 12 VIP Chairs		1,425.00
9.	ST. LUCIA GOVERNMENT 1 Clerk's Table		600.00
10.	BANK OF NOVA SCOTIA AND BANK OF NOVA TRUST COMPANY (CATMAN) LIMITED FULL COST OF MACE (5980)		1,960.00
11.	CARIBBEAN BANK Benches & Planters Waiting Area		401.00
12.	BRITISH VIRGIN ISLANDS GAVEL & STAND (COMMITTEE ROOM)		-----
13.	JAMAICA CPA (GOVT) FULL COST OF FURNITURE LIBRARY	J	2,751.00
14.	U.K. CPA GEORGE WESTERHUK SILVER INK STAND		-----
15.	CHAIRMAN EX.COMMITTEE CPA LONDON CPA HEADQUARTERS, LONDON (Clerks Office) 1 CHARCOAL DRAWING		
16.	CHAIRMAN EX.COMMITTEE SIR FREDERICK BENNETT (PERSONAL GIFT) 1 CLOCK (EIGHT DAY) MOUNTED ON STAND Clerk's Office		
17.	ONE PAINTING BY ED OLIVER ESTIMATED TO COST APPROXIMATELY COMMITTEE ROOM		900.00

Above: Partial list of the donations made for the furnishings. (Parliament Collection)

MS. 1982.10.10.107

G.O. Box 786
Grand Cayman,
Cayman Islands
17th March, 1994

Dear Conrad & Rosemary,

Many thanks for your card with kind words of congratulations on the award of the Knighthood which was a tremendous surprise to me coming so long after my retirement from Government and politics. However, the Governor told me at the announcement on 17th November that this should have been done from 1988 on my second retirement.

When I received your card my mind went back to when we first met Conrad; at the time you designed the legislative and Courts buildings. Their creation was the beginning of the tremendous development and infrastructure on which our prosperity was built. As one who was so prominently involved I want to thank you very sincerely for assisting my my dreams of success. The honor was meant to be shared with people like you.

Rita joins me in sending best wishes to you both.

Yours sincerely,
Vassel

Right: Handwritten letter from Sir Vassel Johnson, OBE, to Mr. Conrad Rutkowski, March 1994.

CABLES COMPARLAS ST. LUCIA
TELEPHONE: LEGISLATIVE DEPARTMENT
20 MAR 1972
CAYMAN ISLANDS, B.W.I.

COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY
CASTRIES,
ST. LUCIA

13th March, 1972.

Dear Sybil,

This is to confirm my telegram of 8th March informing you that the St. Lucia House of Assembly will donate a Clerk's Table for your new Parliament Building.

The Table will be made of native wood, and will be built in such a way as to facilitate packing and shipping. If you have any suggestions concerning colour, please let me know early.

I presume that the Table will have to be shipped via Jamaica either by sea or air; any advice you can offer in this respect will be greatly appreciated.

Kindest regards.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]

Mrs. Sybil McLaughlin, MBE,
Clerk of the Legislative Assembly,
P.O. Box 890,
Legislative Department,
Grand Cayman, B.W.I.

Letter from Mrs. U. Raveneau of St. Lucia's CPA confirming the donation for the Clerk's Table, dated 13th March, 1972.

P.O. Box 609
Grand Cayman,
Cayman Islands, B.W.I.

Telephone: 92061
Telex: CP 214
Telegrams: Mercantile

MERCANTILE BANK AND TRUST COMPANY (CAYMAN) LIMITED

Private and Merchant Bankers

14th January, 1972

Cayman Islands Government,
Legislative Department,
George Town,
Grand Cayman.

Attention Mrs. Sybil McLaughlin

Dear Mrs. McLaughlin,

Legislative Assembly Building

I thank you for your letter dated December 22nd and write to confirm this Bank's interest in providing the Speaker's desk at the indicated cost of J\$605.00.

No doubt you will let me know in due course when you wish us to make this sum available.

Yours very truly,

for MERCANTILE BANK & TRUST COMPANY
(CAYMAN) LIMITED

[Signature]
Peter A. Tomkins
Executive Vice President.

Letter from Peter Tomkins of Mercantile Bank and Trust Company (Cayman) Limited confirming the donation of the Speaker's Desk for J\$605, dated 14th Jan. 1972.

Ref. L-1470-17

LEGISLATIVE DEPARTMENT
3-FEB-1972
CAYMAN ISLANDS, B.W.I.

OFFICE OF THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY
GOVERNMENT HEADQUARTERS,
ROSEAU DOMINICA,
WEST INDIES.

28th January 1972

Dear Sybil,

Gift for new Parliament Building, Cayman Islands

Thanks for your cable of 22nd December, 1971, regarding gift for the new Parliament.

At a meeting of our C.P.A. Branch the members discussed the contents of your cable and in noting that monetary donations would be preferable in order that furniture of new building would coincide with colour scheme submitted by the architects, it was pointed out that the offer of the stand for Mace or Clerk's table was to ensure that something basically Dominican was given. They went Dominica to feature in the furniture scheme of the new Parliament in the same way as Commonwealth Countries feature in the House of Commons furniture scheme.

In the circumstances, it has been decided to offer instead, a supply of the best quality Dominican timber which could be used to fit in with your colour scheme.

Letter from Ms. Marie Davis Pierre, Clerk from Dominica, discussing the donation of Dominican timber for the new building; 28th Jan. 1972.

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY
BERMUDA

27th October, 1971

Dear Sybil,

With reference to my letter of 26th August a meeting of my Executive Committee was held a few days ago at which it was unanimously agreed that a gift from our Parliament to yours should be presented to mark the occasion of the opening of your new Parliament building next year.

It is proposed that this gift should take the form of a cedar gavel and stand with a silver plate affixed bearing an appropriate inscription.

The design of the gavel and stand would be based on the ancient one in our House of Assembly which was fashioned from cedar when the first Assembly of Bermuda met in St. George's in August 1620.

Before we proceed with this matter I wonder if you would be good enough to let me know as soon as possible whether such a gift would be considered suitable.

It is proposed that the presentation be made by our Deputy Speaker, Mr. Ernest W.P. Vesey who will be visiting the Cayman Islands next year.

With kindest regards,

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]
E.C. Lowe
Secretary/Treasurer
Commonwealth Parliamentary
Association (Bermuda Branch).

Mrs Sybil McLaughlin OBE
Honorary Secretary
Commonwealth Parliamentary Assoc.
(Cayman Islands Branch) Legislative Dept.
Grand Cayman

R.C. Lowe from the Bermuda CPA writes to the Clerk to confirm Bermuda's donation of the gavel, which still sits on the Speaker's dais today.

Laying of the Cornerstone

The Symbolic Foundation for a Centre of Parliamentary Democracy

A special committee was appointed to arrange for the laying of the cornerstone. Minutes of a meeting held on 23rd August, 1971, indicated that membership of the committee consisted of: The Hon. Desmond V. Watler, Deputy Administrator and Chairman; Hon. W. W. Conolly, who was awarded an MBE just three years later; Mr. E. O. Panton, former Clerk of Vestry and Assistant Administrator; Dr. R. E. McTaggart, and the Clerk, Mrs. Sybil McLaughlin.

Members of the awarded firm, Rutkowski Bradford and Partners, were also present at all meetings, namely Mr. Jack O'Connell, Resident Architect, who the Committee had invited to sit in on all meetings. By 7th June, 1972, the role of Chairman of the Committee fell to Hon. Conolly as Hon. Watler's responsibilities to the new Executive Council became more significant. Mr. Harwell McCoy was also nominated to serve on the committee in an administrative capacity. Ms. Edna Chisholm, Deputy Clerk for the Legislative Assembly, provided substantial support to Mrs. McLaughlin for the invitations and ceremony preparation.

The committee and Governor Long (formerly the Administrator) worked together in developing a programme for the historic ceremony of the laying of the cornerstone as well as the wording for the stone. The committee agreed that the inscription should read: "This corner stone was laid by Capt. Rayal Brazly Bodden, MBE, JP, on the 29th September 1971". Mr. O'Connell had discussions with the contractors about the best type of stone for this purpose, and his recommendation to the Committee was to select granite stone, and that it would be placed on the lower left corner of the new construction.



The ceremony for the laying of the cornerstone was set for 29th September, 1971, and it was agreed that Capt. Rayal Bodden, MBE, JP, should be given this honour and privilege, citing the reasons that he was the oldest surviving Justice of the Peace and was also instrumental in the overall design of George Town's centre – he had built the Town Hall, Library, Elmslie Memorial Church, and the George Town Post Office among other central buildings across the island.

Two other persons had been identified as potential candidates: Mr. T.W. Farrington, CBE, JP, and Miss Evelyn Wood. Mr. Farrington had sat continuously in the Assembly since his election in August 1921 (50 consecutive years at the time of the meeting), and Miss Evelyn was the first elected woman to the Legislative Assembly in 1963 (Miss Annie Bodden had been appointed the year earlier).

At the ceremony for the laying of the cornerstone, Capt. Bodden told the visiting audience that it is his “firm belief that a Parliament in any territory is the most important building [for the] preservation of democratic procedures,” and hoped that “this building will see and be the centre for many illustrious Caymanian Parliamentarians.” Capt. Bodden was presented with a brass trowel in commemoration of the event.

Above: Mrs. Hettie Bodden (Sept. 22, 1887 - Aug. 8, 1973) and Rayal B. Bodden (Nov. 2, 1885 - Dec. 17, 1976) laying the corner stone of the Legislative Assembly building, 1971. Capt. Bodden carries the commemorative trowel. (Courtesy, Reid Dennis Collection)



Members old and new were invited to attend the symbolic ceremony, as well as past Commissioners and Administrators, and persons who had served in the Government, and their families. Governor Long served as the Master of Ceremonies, and provided remarks to the crowd with an outline of how the plans had developed for the new Parliament Building. Reverend Neil Banks offered the Prayer of Dedication, and the Cayman Singers sang “Bless this House, O Lord We Pray”.

Mr. David Arch, whose construction company Arch Ltd. was responsible for the labour and supervision of the construction, carried the cornerstone to Capt. Bodden and assisted him in laying the granite slab into the prepared ground. The cornerstone now rests on the south-facing side of the building to the right of the main entrance, for all visitors to George Town to see.

In the subsequent decades since the opening, three other plaques have been placed to the left of the main entrance: one noting the re-dedication in 2004 upon the completion of the major renovations to the building; one from 2021 in commemoration of the renaming to Parliament; and, one acknowledging Rutkowski Bradford & Partners, the architectural firm responsible for the iconic design. A new plaque will join these at a celebratory event held in front of the Parliament Building on 21st July, 2022, commemorating the 50th anniversary of the opening of the Parliament building. ■

Above: The Administrator Long provides remarks. Behind him, Right to Left: Capt. Royal Bodden, Mr. Jack O'Connell, Rev. Neil Banks, and the Cayman Singers. (Cayman Islands National Archives Photographic Collection)



Left: Mr. David Arch of Arch Construction assists Capt. Rayal Bodden in the laying of the cornerstone, 29th September 1971. (Compass Media Ltd.)



Left: (Left to Right): Deputy Governor Mr. Desmond Watler, Mrs. Watler, Governor A. Long, and Resident Architect Jack O'Connor inspecting the construction of the Legislative Assembly Building, September 1971. (Compass Media Ltd.)

Opening Ceremony

The Official Opening of Cayman Islands' first dedicated Legislative Assembly

The months leading up to the opening of the new Parliamentary building saw a flurry of activity from the Clerk and the Organising Committee set up by the Governor and Executive Council. The original date had been pushed back several times, initially as early as May though it was finally settled for Monday, 31st July, 1972, at 10:00 a.m., 141 years after the first meeting of the legislature.

Distinguished officials from around the world were present to participate in the momentous occasion when the Cayman Islands would finally have a permanent and dedicated home for its elected officials to conduct the business of national legislation.

As there were many eminent overseas visitors expected to attend the opening ceremony, the Clerk, Mrs. Sybil McLaughlin, requested funding from then-Financial Secretary, Vassel Johnson, O.B.E., to refresh the aging Town Hall, where a public reception was also to be held. Members of the organizing committee also chipped in to the Town Hall's facelift, such as the paint donated by Dr. Roy Edison McTaggart, MLA, who was also a central figure in ensuring Cayman remained with the United Kingdom in 1962.

The Boy Scouts Association and The Girls' Brigade participated in the form of a Dance and an open-air concert at the Comprehensive School, accompanied by the Jamaican Police Band, which was held as a fundraiser on the two-days prior to the official opening. The Jamaican Police Band were flown into George Town for the opening celebrations and regaled the impressive number of visitors who attended the historic ceremony.



Opening festivities for the new Legislative Assembly building, 31st July 1972. At left are members of the Boy Scouts Association ; in the distance is the Jamaican Police Band. (Cayman Islands National Archive Photographic Collections)



His Excellency the Governor, Mr. K. Roy Crook, with Acting Commissioner of Police Roy Archer, 31st July 1972. (Compass Media Ltd.)

Notably, it was also in 1972 that Mr. Vassel Johnson led the establishment of Cayman's first currency, the Cayman Islands' dollar, which we now also celebrate for its 50th anniversary. Mr. Johnson would go on to become the first Caymanian to be knighted, when HRH Queen Elizabeth II herself visited the islands in 1994 and performed the ceremony with the sword on the front steps of the Parliament building.

Upon the request of the Committee, official invitations to attend the celebrations were sent to all Caribbean Governments, to the United Kingdom and Canada, to past Administrators, Commissioners, Judges, past Members of the Legislative Assembly and the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. As well, formal invitations were issued by the Clerk to business leaders who supported the construction and interior design of the building, as well as to managerial staff from dozens of local businesses. In all, representatives from over two dozen governments were invited to attend the celebrations.

Yet the invites to the once-in-a-lifetime event were not restricted to officials. Both the Caymanian Weekly and the Northwester, Cayman's leading publications at the time, published numerous full-page ads inviting all Caymanians and residents to the celebrations on behalf of the Governor and all Members of the Legislative Assembly. As photos show, Caymanians and residents responded with a resounding joyfulness at the new milestone for the country, and would turn out in droves, packing the streets in front of the new building to view the proceedings.



Above: Opening festivities for the new Legislative Assembly building, 31st July 1972. At left are members of the Boy Scouts Association ; in the distance is the Jamaican Police Band. (Cayman Islands National Archive Photographic Collections; Brian and Margaret Daniel Collection)

Initial minutes of the organising committee’s meetings indicated that a number of events and items were planned for the celebrations, including special handwritten notes for “strong beer” and “cupcakes” as a sign of the jubilation Members were starting to feel.

Mrs. McLaughlin received a plethora of official and personal correspondence at the time from a wide array of Ministers and foreign officials. Some samples of the correspondence include a letter from British MP Frederic Bennett, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), to advise her that Sir Cyril Black and Lady Black would be staying at the Caribbean Club, one of the first and most popular hotels on Seven Mile. Sir Cyril Black had just retired from two decades of serving in the House of Commons as the representative from Wimbledon.

In honour of the new Parliament building, the Times of London published a Special Supplement in its 1st July, 1972, edition, showcasing Cayman’s government, business, tourism and finance to an enormous readership across Britain and Europe.



Left: Dame Hilda Bynoe of Grenada presents the new Cayman Islands Legislative Assembly with a painting from her country.

Mr. Michael Lawrence, Clerk of the Overseas Office of the House of Commons in the UK, had frequent correspondence with Mrs. McLaughlin, offering support and feedback for the opening ceremony's agenda – though he admitted in one of his letters to her that his “comments are very insubstantial” as she had already covered the details. He noted that the ceremony “ought to be an absolutely first-class occasion” due to the Clerk’s “meticulous planning.”

Mrs. McLaughlin also sought correspondence with the Clerk of the Houses of Parliament in Grenada, Mr. Curtis Strachan, and with the Clerk of Ghana’s National Assembly, Mr. C.A. Lokko. Each of them provided Mrs. McLaughlin with input and comments on the draft programme for the day’s celebrations; Mr. Lokko shared a copy of the Opening of Parliament programme from Ghana’s 1971 session for reference, which is still on hand in the Parliamentary archives.

Input was also sought from Mr. H. D. Carberry, the Clerk of the Houses of Parliament in Jamaica, with regard to the opening of Gordon House in 1960. Mr. Carberry shared with our Clerk the last remaining copy of the booklet for the 1960 ceremony, as well as copies of the Hansard transcript from the occasion.

The programme for the day was designed by Miss Wanda Domericki of the architectural firm Rutkowski, Bradford & Partners, and included a drawing of the Town Hall on the back cover as a way to recognise the symbolism of the legislative body’s previous home. Deputy Clerk Ms. Edna Chisholm confirmed an order for one thousand copies of the day’s programme be printed for the public and for commemorative souvenirs at a cost of J\$475, roughly \$4,400 USD in today’s rate.

Barely a week after the devastating fire that decimated the previous offices of many administrative departments, including the legislative offices, Caymanians gathered to celebrate the official opening at 10:00 o'clock in the morning on Monday, 31st July, 1972. Yet, by all accounts the event had been well underway as residents congregated in advance to watch the pageantry and arrival of global leaders, the Governor having declared the day to be a Public Holiday.

Members and distinguished guests arrived an hour earlier and were seated in the new Legislative Chamber, with their spouses following. Of the many distinguished guests who were invited to the celebration event, those in attendance were:

- Dame Hilda Bynoe, Governor of the Islands of Grenada, West Indies and Mr. Peter Bynoe, Chairman of the Architectural Competition.
- Sir Frederic Bennett, MP, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the General Council, Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, on behalf of the British Government.
- Mr. V. H. Courtenay, Attorney-General for Belize.
- Mrs. Gloria McPhee, Minister for Education and Libraries, Bermuda.
- Mr. R. Carl Rattray, QC, representing the Government of Jamaica.
- Mr. C. S. Pilgrim of the High Commission of Guyana in Jamaica, representing the Government of Guyana.
- Hon. Willard Weatley, Premier of the British Virgin Islands.
- Sir Cyril and Lady Black of the United Kingdom.

The Governor was ushered into the new building with a procession consisting of the Clerk, Deputy Clerk Ms. Edna Chisholm, HE Governor Crook and his wife, and the Commissioner of Police. The protocol developed by the Clerk and her correspondence with the Overseas Office finalised the details, including the three knocks at the Chamber door by the Commissioner of Police.

Mr. Vernon T. Ebanks, the first part-time Serjeant-at-Arms formally declared the arrival of the Governor to the fanfare of trumpets, and led the procession up the aisle to the Speaker's dais, where the Governor would proclaim the official opening of the new Legislative Assembly building. Mr. Justice Horsfall was seated at the front beside the President's dias, next to Mrs. Crook, the Governor's wife.

The Jamaican Government provided its Jamaican Police Band for the ceremony, and the Commissioner of Police authorised the closure of most of the streets surrounding what is now Hero's Square. The *Northwester's* editorial described the new building as "handsome" and "an object for pride by all Caymanians." (Vol. 1, No. 9, July-August, 1972, pg. 4) In the same issue, its writers described the new assembly building as a "modern pyramid shape wherein the Caymans' rulers will decide their peoples' future."

*The First Speech: The Governor
A.C.E. Long offers his first official
remarks in the new Chamber of the
Legislative Assembly building.
Mr. Justice Horsfall sits next to Mrs.
Crook, the Governor's wife.
(Compass Media Ltd.)*





Left: Mr. T.W. Farrington reads the plaque formally dedicating the new building to the People of the Cayman Islands "as a Symbol of their Determination for the Maintenance and Continuation of True Parliamentary Democracy." (Compass Media Ltd.)

Mr. Thomas William Farrington, CBE, JP, who had been short-listed to lay the cornerstone, unveiled the dedication plaque that is still on display in the lobby of the building. Mr. Farrington would later become recognised as one of Cayman's official National Heroes, having served as an appointed Justice of the Peace in the Assembly of Justices and Vestry (representing West Bay), and spearheading a countless number of projects that immensely improved the development of the island.

In the days and weeks after the Opening Ceremony, Mrs. McLaughlin received a range of correspondence from local and international government officials with extensive congratulations on an impressive building – and her impressive leadership throughout the planning of it. Governor Cook of Cayman wrote to her that her “untiring efforts” greatly added “to the success of the function.”

In a letter to the Clerk from Bermuda's Member for Education & Libraries, Mrs. Gloria McPhee, Sir Frederic was quoted as acknowledging the Clerk was the “driving force” behind the successful organisation of the opening ceremony, and that the day's events will “stay alive in the memory of all who were fortunate enough to be present.”

Governor Crook thanked the Clerk for her “untiring efforts, particularly just prior to the opening” of the building, which “contributed greatly to the success of the function”. Likewise, C. S. Pilgrim from the High Commission of Guyana sent the Clerk a note of thanks for the memorable event.

At the First Meeting of the First (1972) Session of the Legislative Assembly, on 7th August, 1972, the Governor noted in his throne speech that there were many “firsts” involved. Not only was it the first speech of the Governor in the new legislative building, but it also marked the first throne speech from a Governor at all, as the position had only months prior been instituted in place of the Administrator.

“You have waited long to build your own house,” the Governor noted to the Members, “but it was worth waiting for.” He added that it is a “beautiful and comfortable structure, one that you have every reason to be proud of, as fine a Parliament building as one can find anywhere and much better than many.” ■

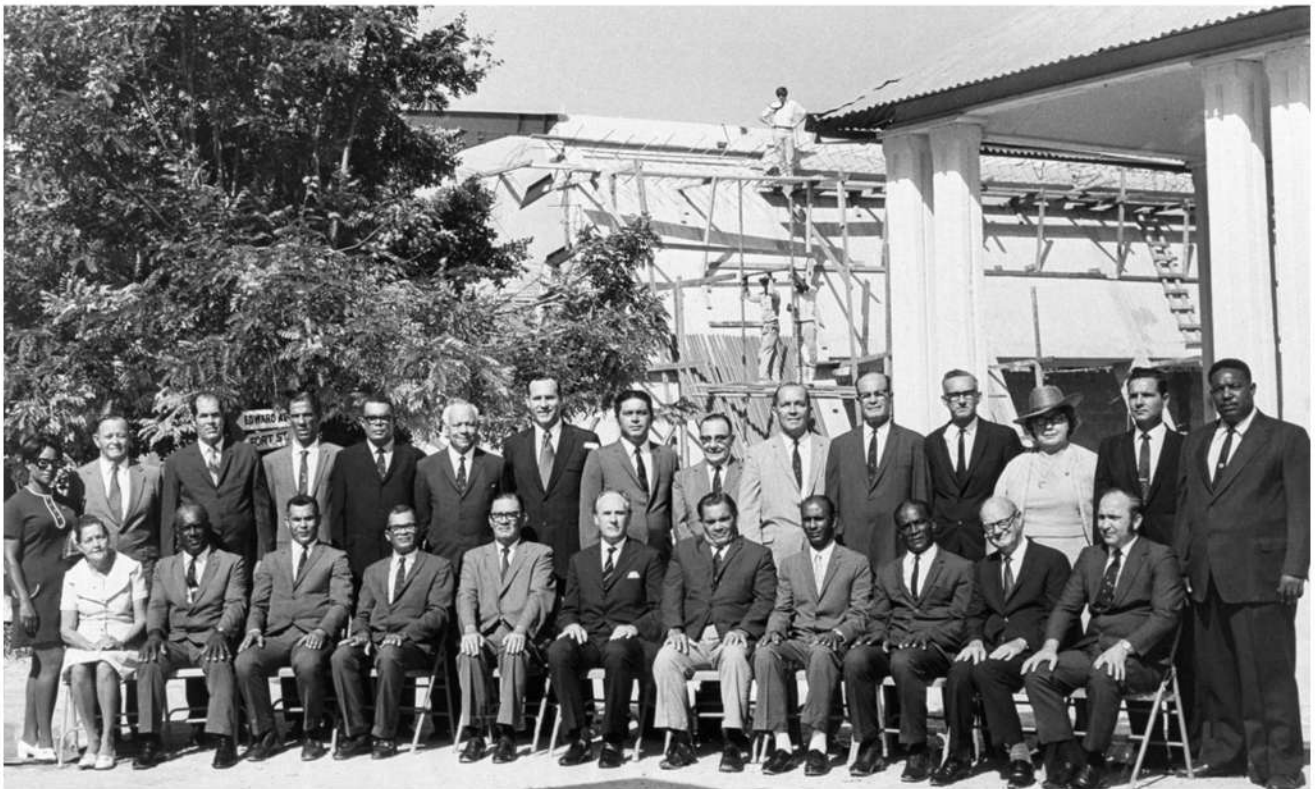
Right: The Governor A.C.E. Long and Acting Commissioner of Police Roy Archer stand with Dame Hilda Bynoe of Grenada and Members. (Compass Media Ltd.)



Right: Sir Cyril and Lady Black arrive at the Legislative Assembly opening ceremony. (Compass Media Ltd.)



Members of 1972



Left to Right (back row): Mrs. Sybil McLaughlin, Thomas William Farrington, C.B.E., J.P., Allen Berkley Bush, J.P., Hon. Desmond Vere Watler, O.B.E., J.P., (Governor's Deputy / Chief Secretary formerly Deputy Administrator), Hon. William Warren Conolly, J.P., Hon. Gerald Eugene Waddington, Q.C. (Attorney-General), Hon. Benson Obadiah Ebanks, unidentified persons, Mr. Craddock Ebanks, Captain Keith P. Tibbetts, Miss Annie Huldah Bodden, Hon. Capt. Eldon Kirkconnell, Mr. Ira Walton. Left to Right (seated): Miss Mary Evelyn Wood, unidentified, Hon. John D. Jefferson, Anton B. Bodden, C. A. Hunter, the Governor A.C.E. Long, Mr. Alford B. Scott, Mr. Vassel Johnson, Mr. Melville Goring, unidentified. (Parliament Collection)

The year 1972 was unique for so many reasons: the first Legislative Assembly opened, and the Cayman Islands Dollar was issued for the first time. In addition, it was unique in that it saw two separate administrations due to an election. The first Members to sit in the then, newly built Legislative Assembly were the Members of 1968-1972 term:

<i>Names</i>	<i>Constituency</i>	<i>Terms</i>
Miss Annie Huldah Bodden	George Town	1961-1984
Mr. Anton Brancroft Bodden	Bodden Town	1954-1956 1962-1972
Mr. Allen Berkley Bush	George Town	1950-1956 1962-1972
Mr. William Warren Conolly	East End	*1944 1959-1976
Mr. Benson Obadiah Ebanks	West Bay	1965-1976 1980-1992
Mr. Craddock Ebanks	North Side	1954-1984
Mr. Thomas W. Farrington	West Bay	1920-1976
Mr. Trevor E. Foster	Cayman Brac and Little Cayman	1968-1976
Mr. Clifton Adalbert Hunter	Bodden Town	1968-1972
Mr. John Delaney Jefferson	West Bay	1968-1976
Mr. Alford Burman Scott	Cayman Brac and Little Cayman	1968-1972
Mr. Vernon Ira Walton	George Town	1969-1972

* Mr. William Warren Conolly was first elected in 1944 and later served in the United State Merchant Marine in 1945 – 1948.

The Members of the Executive Council for this first term were:

- President: A.C.E. Long, C.M.G., C.B.E., Administrator
- Official Member: D.V. Watler, O.B.E., J.P., Deputy Administrator
- Nominated Member: Hon. Captain Eldon Eden Kirkconnell

General elections were held in November [1968], and were carried through with the exception of George Town, where there was a hiatus. The acting Administrator, Mr. D. V. Watler, on the advice of the Commissioner of Police closed down the polling booth in the Town Hall to avoid a disturbance. As a result, Her Majesty the Queen, by Order-in-Council set a date in January for the holding of the George Town election which was carried through peacefully.

After the elections, the Legislative Assembly Members of the 1972-1976 Term were as follows:

<i>Names</i>	<i>Constituency</i>	<i>Terms</i>
Mr. James (Jim) Manoah Bodden	Bodden Town	1972-1988
Mr. George Haig Bodden	Bodden Town	1972-1988
Mr. Thomas W. Farrington	West Bay	1920-1976
Mr. John Delaney Jefferson	West Bay	1968-1976
Mr. Benson Obadiah Ebanks	West Bay	1965-1976 1980-1992
Miss Annie Huldah Bodden	George Town	1961-1984
Mr. Allen Berkley Bush	George Town	1950-1956 1962-1972
Mr. Claude Hill	George Town	1965-1968 1972-1976
Mr. William Warren Conolly	East End	*1944 1959-1976
Mr. Trevor Ewan Foster	Cayman Brac and Little Cayman	1968-1976
Capt. Ashton Alva Reid	Cayman Brac and Little Cayman	*1972-1975

* Mr. William Warren Conolly was first elected in 1944 and later served in the United State Merchant Marine in 1945-1948.

* Capt. Ashton A. Reid died on the 26 November, 1975 and Capt. Charles L. Kirkconnell was elected in 1976 who served until 1988.

The Serjeant-at-Arms & The Mace

Key Elements of Parliamentary Practices installed in the Cayman Islands

The first Serjeant-at-Arms was Supt. Vernon T. Ebanks, CPM, who fulfilled the role on a purely part-time basis from 1972-74, when the first full time Serjeant was hired: Mr. Sibert Watler.

The Serjeant-at-Arms' ceremonial duties involve carrying the Mace during the Speaker's entrance into the Chamber of the House before and after each sitting. The Serjeant-at-Arms sits in the Chamber during a House meeting when the Speaker is present, and is responsible for order and access for the duration of the sitting. The Speaker can call upon them to escort people out. The Serjeant-at-Arms wears a traditional uniform and a sword.

The position holder regulates the admission of persons to the Press Gallery, the Public and VIP Galleries and to supervise and control the admission of visitors to the building. As well, the Serjeant-at-Arms is the holder of a great wealth of knowledge about Cayman's legislative history as well as that of the United Kingdom, which he or she presents to visitors and schools on guided tours of the building.

In his charismatic speech on 20th November, 1974, when the Mace was officially installed at a formal ceremony in the House, Member G. Haig Bodden highlighted the importance of the Serjeant-at-Arms, saying that "one of the primary functions of [the role] is to place under arrest cantankerous and belligerent Members of the Assembly."

Mr. Sibert Watler became the Serjeant-at-Arms only a brief time before the Mace was received and installed in the official meeting of the House. At that meeting, Mr. G. Haig Bodden described the union of the new Serjeant with the new Mace with perfection.

“ *It is very fitting that at this time we should have a full-time Serjeant, at the very Session in which a Mace is being presented, because the Mace is part of the Serjeant’s duties. I can see from the way that our present Serjeant has undertaken his duties this morning, and the graceful manner in which he lifted the Mace, and the loving care with which he put it down, that he too, will carry out his duties as a professional Serjeant-at-Arms.*

– Member G. Haig Bodden, 20th November 1974

Past & Present Serjeant-at-Arms of the Cayman Islands:

- Mr. Christopher Clarke (2021-Present (Acting))
- Mr. John Kim Evans Jr. (2010 to 2021)
- Mr. Waldo Hilton Parchment Sr. (2010)
- Mr. Shane Harrison Bothwell (2008–2010)
- Mr. Javin Jacob Powery (2005-2008)
- Mr. Walsham Ransworth Connolly (2002-2008)
- Mr. Cline Glidden Sr. (1987-2002)
- Mr. Radley Gourzong (1986-1987)
- Mr. Sibert R. Watler (1974 - 1986)
- Supt. Vernon T. Ebanks CPM (1972-1974) part time

In parliamentary legislatures, the Mace is a symbolic ornament carried by a Mace-bearer, termed the Serjeant-at-Arms, before a sovereign or other high official in legislative ceremonies like a formal Meeting of the House. Originally a weapon in medieval Europe, its design was adapted to protect the sovereign or their representative.

According to Caribbean Circuit by Sir Harry Luke, (1950), the earliest recorded Mace for a Caribbean Commonwealth country was that of the Jamaican House of Assembly, for which “His Majesty Charles II was pleased to favour the island with a Mace that cost near £80 which is carried before the Governor on the solemn occasions as a mark of his authority.”

When the Presiding Officer (Governor or Speaker) is in the Chamber, the Mace is placed in its support beams on the Clerk’s desk as a symbol of the Speaker’s authority to oversee the Legislature and is carried into the meetings of Parliament by the Serjeant-at-Arms. If the Mace is not present in the Chamber, meetings of the House with the Speaker cannot proceed. When the Serjeant-at-Arms removes the Mace from the table, the House has either adjourned or is recessed.



Above: Mr. Sibert Watler, the first full-time Serjeant-at-Arms for the Cayman Islands Legislative Assembly. (Compass Media Ltd.)



Above: Mr. Watler stands beside the new Mace in its support beams, designed by the architectural firm Rutkowski Bradford and Partners.

The initial proposal for the Mace was recorded from July 1958 by then-Commissioner Major Hilliard Donald, OBE, who had planned for a mahogany-built Mace rather than the typical brass design. However, it wasn't until 1971 when the new Parliament building was nearing completion that this iconic element of Parliaments worldwide was finally seriously considered.

The Cayman Islands Commonwealth Parliamentary Association branch established a special Committee to deal with the donations to the building on 5th November, 1971, comprised of: Mr. T.W. Farrington (Chairman), Mr. A.B. Bush, Hon. W.W. Conolly, Mr. E.O. Panton, and Mr. Richard Arch. The Committee met in the Jennett Building on Dr. Roy's Drive on 28th January, 1972, and reviewed the designers and weights of various maces within Commonwealth governments, Members favoured the simplicity and symmetry of the Mace of the Senate of Grenada. It was decided that the new design should incorporate the Crown and the Royal Arms, the turtle (representing the people of the Cayman Islands), the pineapple (representing the connection with Jamaica), the lion (representing Britain), three green stars for the three islands, and the background of white and blue bands representing the sea.

The Committee tasked the two representatives from the architectural firm, Mr. Jack O'Connell and Ms. Wanda Domericki to prepare sketches of proposals for the design of the Mace. Ms. Domericki's design was submitted to Government and ultimately obtained the approval of Her Majesty the Queen for its use in the Cayman Islands Legislature, though it would go through redesign phases via Messrs. Spink and Son., Ltd., of St. James', London, who manufactured the Mace from the finalised designs.

The cost of the Mace, and its Mahogany case lined with deep blue velvet fitted to contain both the Mace support girdles, was £906 (approximately £8,700 today), which was paid for through a donation by the Bank of Nova Scotia and the Bank of Nova Scotia Trust Company (Cayman) Limited. Measuring 3ft 2" in length and 8" in diameter at its widest point, the Cayman Islands Mace is built of polished bronze and weighs almost 70 pounds.

The body of the Mace has an open centre comprised of four vertical thick flat bars of polished bronze, and reaches a square summit displaying the Royal Arms on one side, EIRR on another, and the Cayman Crest on the remaining sides. Mr. Michael R. Goddier, Managing Director of Mariculture Ltd provided the four pieces of tortoise shell that adorn the top orb. Rutkowski Bradford & Partners also designed the support beams for the Mace, which are built into the Clerk's desk in the Chamber.

The Presentation of the Mace to the Legislative Assembly took place at the Fourth Meeting and Budget of the 1974 Session on Wednesday, 20th November, 1974, by the Hon. Donald M. Fleming, PC, QC, General Manager of the Bank of Nova Scotia and the Bank of Nova Scotia Trust Company (Cayman) Limited. By this time Cayman had a new Governor, HE Thomas Russel, who oversaw the Meeting and the official installation of the new Mace into the Cayman Islands Legislative Assembly.

The new (and first full-time) Serjeant-at-Arms, Mr. Sibert Watler escorted Hon. Fleming, Mr. Monte Smith and Mr. Royan Ellis from the Bank of Nova Scotia and the Bank of Nova Scotia Trust Company (Cayman) Ltd respectively, to be seated on the right of the Governor. Mr. Edward Warwick from the Trust was also in attendance. In his speech to the House, Hon. Fleming noted the Mace is made of “exquisite craftsmanship” and that he hopes that it “long adorns this Chamber and be a credit to it.”

Below: Mr. Cline Glidden Sr. carrying the Mace on Friday 15th February 1990 in front of Cayman's first Speaker, Hon. Sybil McLaughlin (Compass Media Ltd.)

Governor Russel spoke about the importance of the installation of the Mace, that “the gift is yet another link with the Mother of Parliaments, on which we model the conduct of our business.” Hon. Fleming then unwrapped the new Mace and presented it to the Serjeant-at-Arms, who placed it on his right shoulder and carried it to its new support beams on the Clerk’s desk.

A motion to accept the gift of the Mace was moved by Hon. D.V. Watler, OBE, JP, and was seconded by Miss Annie Huldah Bodden. After additional speeches, a resolution was passed that officially established the Mace in the Cayman Islands Legislative Assembly. Moved by Hon. W.W. Conolly, OBE, JP, and seconded by Capt. A.A. Reid, the resolution included the government’s appreciation and gratitude to the donors for their symbolic gift.

In 2003, the Mace underwent restoration work carried out locally by Tropical Metals, which included disassembling each intricate part in order to clean and apply a metal-treatment finish. At the same time, the mahogany holding case was also repaired by Mr. Ransdale Rankine, a carpenter and inmate of HM Prison Northward. Fellow inmate Mr. Tex Foster assisted in the repairs of the case, which involved stripping the wood in order to repair the cracked areas and apply a new coat of varnish.

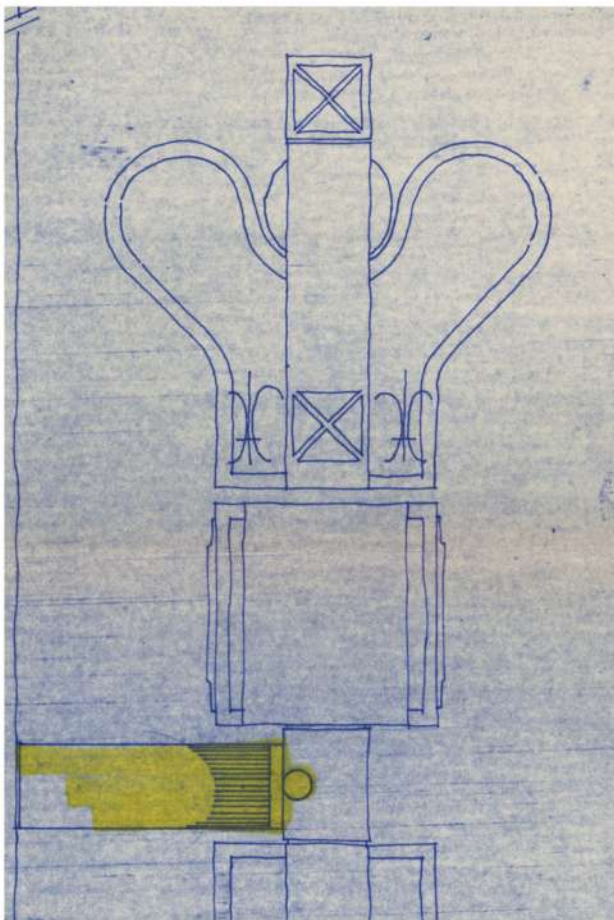
In the months after the 1974 ceremony, Mr. Ian Grey from the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association’s General Council (Houses of Parliament, London) would write to the Clerk with consistent curiosity, seeking to know whether this means that the creation of the Speaker role would therefore necessarily follow, now that Cayman had both a Serjeant-at-Arms and a Mace.

Hon. McLaughlin confirmed that at the time “there have been no further developments in this matter of the appointment of a Speaker of the House,” and that she was of the opinion that Members preferred the status quo, “so it looks as though any such appointment is still some years away.” ■

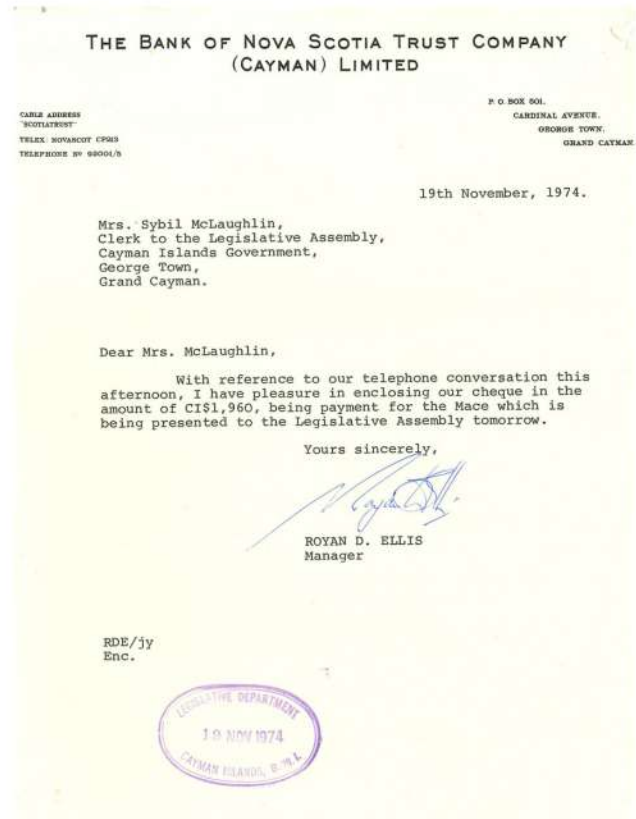




The Mace today. (Parliament Collection)



Excerpt from the Sketch of the Mace and from Rutkowski Bradford & Partners through Ms. Wanda Domericki and Mr. Jack O'Connell. (Parliament Collection)



Above: Letter to the Clerk from Royan Ellis, Manager at The Bank of Nova Scotia Trust Company (Cayman) Limited from 19th Nov. 1974 accompanying the cheque to donate the Mace to the Legislative Assembly at the following day's meeting in the Chamber. (Parliament Collection)

The Speaker

The establishment of the Speaker of the House through a Government Motion (1990-1991)

The role of the Speaker had been made available to the Governor in Section 32 of the Cayman Islands (Constitution) Order, 1972, which provided that the Governor may in his discretion appoint a Speaker of the Legislative Assembly.

Eighteen years later, on 5th September, 1990, Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, MLA for West Bay, moved Private Member's Motion No. 20/90: a resolution that would create the Office of the Speaker. Mr. John D. Jefferson, Jr. seconded the motion, and various Members provided extensive comments at the meeting for their support or resistance to the motion.

After Members had said their piece, the President, HE Governor Alan James Scott, asked for the vote. The final vote was so close that Governor Scott asked the Clerk, Mrs Georgette Myrie, for a division. In the end, the Motion passed with 7 Ayes, 5 Noes. In his closing remarks, Governor Scott noted for the Members that "in coming to a choice of a Speaker, [he] shall consider their wishes of the first importance," and that the "important thing is to find the candidate who is suitable for the task and willing to accept it."

Speaker motion passes, 7-5



Mr. McKeeva Bush

Legislators yesterday passed by a vote of 7-5 a Private Member's Motion which will result in the appointment of a Speaker for the Legislative Assembly to replace the Governor as Presiding Officer.

Bringing the motion was West Bay MLA Mr. McKeeva Bush. It was the third time since 1985 that the House has debated a move for a Speaker to be appointed, as permitted under the Cayman constitution.

President of the Assembly Mr. Alan Scott announced that Executive Council Members were free to vote their conscience on the issue. The three Official Mem-

bers abstained from debate and the vote.

Last time the vote was taken, in May 1989, the House was split "six-six" on the issue, with the move defeated on a casting vote of the Governor.

This time, some Mem-

bers on both sides of the issue changed their position from the one they held last year.

Voting yes were Messrs. McKeeva Bush, John Jefferson, Truman Bodden, Gilbert McLean, Roy Bodden,

Cont'd. on page 2

Grand Court opens

Trial dates in eight cases were fixed among the 22 criminal indictments on the list yesterday, the opening day of the current session of the Grand Court.

The rest of the indictments were set for men-

tion over September, October and early November by Chief Justice Sir Denis Malone.

The longest trial among those fixed is for five days. Full details will be published in Friday's *Caymanian Compass*.

Left: Excerpt from the Caymanian Compass, 5th Sept. 1990. (Compass Media Ltd.)

It was proposed that the Speaker should be appointed for the duration of a term of Government, with their termination at the end of the elected term. A constitutional review was slated to take place over the coming year, and while the Speaker was appointed in 1991, the "Cayman Islands (Constitution) (Amendment) Order 1993" replacing Section 32 of the Constitution with details for the Speaker and Deputy Speaker, and replaced "Governor" with "Speaker" throughout several additional sections.

"As for who will be appointed, if this Motion passes, is left to be seen. However, I do believe that the person appointed should be a Caymanian and it should be someone who is familiar with the operation of Parliament, who has a very keen insight into how Parliament works and ideally would have had experience with it." (Mr. Gilbert A. McLean, 5th Sept. 1990). While Hon. Sybil McLaughlin was Cayman's first Speaker, Captain Mabry Kirkconnell was the first elected Member to be sworn in as Speaker in 1996. In total, Cayman has seen seven Speakers including our present, the Hon. Dr. W. McKeeva Bush, JP, (Hon) MSc, MP.

Names

Hon. Mrs Sybil I. McLaughlin, MBE, JP
 Hon. Capt. Mabry S. Kirkconnell, OBE, JP
 Hon. Juliana Y. O'Connor-Connolly, JP
 Hon. Dr. Linford Ainsworth Pierson, OBE, JP, PhD. FCCA
 Hon. Edna M. Moyle, OBE, JP
 Hon. Mary J. Lawrence, MBE, JP
 Hon. Juliana Y. O'Connor-Connolly, JP
 Dr. Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, JP, Hon MSc
 Dr. Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, JP, Hon MSc

Terms

1991-1996
 1996-2001
 2002-2003
 2003-2005
 2005-2009
 2009-2013
 2013-2017
 2017-2021
 2021-Present



Above: Left to Right: Mrs. Georgette Myrie, MBE, JP; Hon. Sybil McLaughlin, MBE, JP; Ms. Wendy Lauer, JP, waiting at the meeting of the House to install the first Speaker of the Cayman Islands Legislative Assembly, 15th February 1991. (Compass Media Ltd.)



Above: Governor Alan Scott witnesses Hon. McLaughlin's signature to her oath of allegiance to HRH Queen Elizabeth II in her new office. (Compass Media Ltd.)

When Hon. McLaughlin took the oath as the first Speaker on 15th February, 1991, after the Throne Speech by Governor, the Legislative Assembly building was filled to the brim with dignitaries and visitors to witness the historic occasion when she would profess her loyalty to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. In his closing remarks as the final Presiding Officer of the Legislative Assembly, Governor Scott wished legislators well, and reminded them that "there is no more sacred trust than to have in your hands the responsibility for the future of your country."

Among the guests present for the momentous occasion was Jamaica's Attorney General and Minister of Justice, Carl Rattray, who had brought the ceremonial black and gold robe Hon. McLaughlin wore as a gift from his country's Speaker, the Hon. Headley Cunningham. Serjeant-at-Arms Mr. Cline Glidden's announcement upon opening the doors after the Governor's departure marked the official start of the first Speaker.

Members provided warm wishes for her and the future of the Legislative Assembly in their speeches. Mr. Truman Bodden said that he was "glad [she is wearing] the traditional robe and wig because [he] believes this adds dignity to the House."

The Hon. Linford Pierson said that it was a "historic day for the Cayman Islands for it marks a milestone in the parliamentary development within our political system." Mr. Gilbert McLean added that he thought it was "right, proper, and fitting and in keeping with proper parliamentary process that the executive branch of government be separated from the Legislative arm."

Mr. Roy Bodden recognised the significance of the first Speaker being a woman, adding that Hon. McLaughlin was "not only an example to those of us Caymanians who aspire in the fraternity of politics but also an example to those numerous Caymanian women who labour diligently, sometimes unrewarded, unrecognised." Hon. Norman Bodden added for the record that Hon. McLaughlin's "nomination received the unanimous approval of Members."

Hon. Dr. W. McKeeva Bush, who had moved the Private Member's Motion for the role of the Speaker to be implemented just the year prior, and who would go on to become the Speaker in 2017, noted that it was also Hon. McLaughlin who had drafted the first Standing Orders for the Legislative Assembly in 1966 while she was on attachment in the House of Commons. He added that the 1967 attempt for constitutional changes made recommendation for a Speaker, but that the next major attempt to bring the role into focus wasn't made until the constitutional review in August 1972.

This had allowed for a provision for the Speaker, but it wasn't put into effect. There were continued debates throughout the late 1980's but Members could not come to an agreement. Finally, he said, in 1990 the House was open to debate the partiality of an executive presiding over the legislature and the mover's second attempt at the Motion was passed. "You have consistently demonstrated qualities of good judgement and balance which will serve us superbly in this House," Hon. Bush said to the new Speaker in 1991.

In the months after the ceremony, when the business of legislature was well underway, Mrs. Georgette Myrie, Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, was busy arranging for the new gowns for Hon. McLaughlin, which after some delay finally arrived from the designers Ede & Ravenscroft of the UK. ■

Ede & Ravenscroft Ltd
93/94 Chancery Lane
London WC2A 1DU
England



Right: Sketch of the gown supplied by Ede & Ravenscroft of London, who supplied the Speaker's gown in September 1991 for £975. (Parliament Collection)

Renovations & Additions

Enhancements, Repairs, and Upgrades for a Technological Legislature

By 2003, the legislature had outgrown the space and the building was in need of a renovation. Consequently, the Standing House Committee, the Clerk, Mrs. Wendy Lauer, and her staff spearheaded renovations to the aging Legislative Assembly building.

With the passing of Government Motion No.2/2000, on 15 November, 2000, the Legislative Assembly appointed the Standing House Committee, moved by the Honourable James Ryan. The purpose of the Committee was to review “matters affecting the working conditions, comfort and facilities for Members during the Meetings of the House; matters affecting the working conditions, comfort and facilities for staff of the House”.

The Members of the Committee were nominated and appointed by the MLAs:

- Mr. Gilbert McLean - Chairman
- Capt. Eugene Ebanks – Deputy Chairman
- Mr. Lyndon L. Martin
- Dr. Frank S. McField
- Mrs. Juliana Y. O’Connor-Connolly, JP

On 24 May, 2001, the Committee laid their report on the Table of the House with the following recommendations:

- (a) Chamber microphones
- (b) Speakers with volume control adjustments to be replaced in all rooms and that the quality output of the speakers in the Chamber be examined.
- (c) Bathroom fixtures – The Committee recommends that the Public Works Department be requested to examine and repair fixtures in all bathroom facilities.
- (d) Security Unit and cameras – it was recommended that a proper security section, under the Office of the Serjeant-At-Arms be established.
- (e) Installation of Permanent wiring and robotic television cameras for the Chamber – this would allow for live coverage of the Legislature’s proceedings.

Repair and refurbishment work began in February, 2003, not only adding as much more space as possible through reconfiguration of the floor space—adding a Members’ Dining room and updated washrooms— but also refurbishing portions of the interior. The Chamber itself was entirely remodelled with updated carpets, chairs, desks, and audio-video equipment. The “earthy terra” colour was replaced with a deep emerald green, which is still used today.

In addition to the renovations, the windows and doors were all upgraded to the PWD Shelter Code 15 lb. Missile specification. The renovations, managed by the original construction company of the building, McAlpine, took eighteen months to complete, at a cost of approximately \$2.3M at the time. The initial survey and estimates found a great deal of deterioration to the building, resulting in enormous work to be done not only to the foundations of the building but also to the interior.



Left: The Speaker's Chair in the renovated Chamber, donated by the Hon. Dr. W. McKeeva Bush. (Parliament Collection)

Above: Commemorative plaque above the new Speaker's Chair. (Parliament Collection)

For the first time since 1972 staff and Members of the Legislative Assembly had to find an alternate home. Chief Justice Anthony Smellie offered Members of the Legislative Assembly and its staff the use of Court 5 until March, 2004, after which time the legislative body moved to the Cayman Corporate Centre on Hospital Road, where it shared accommodations at the offices of the Cayman Islands Investment Bureau.

The newly refurbished and expanded building was inaugurated with the opening of the Legislature session on 2 July, 2004, just two months before Hurricane Ivan almost completely devastated Grand Cayman. To the credit of the architects and construction companies involved, the Legislative Building withstood the legendary storm with only minor damage to its roof.

In the State Opening and First Meeting of the House on Friday, 2 July, 2004, the Speaker Dr. the Hon. Linford Ainsworth Pierson, OBE, JP, spoke about the major work that had been done in the year prior, and noted that in the three decades since the building's opening, there "have been no major renovations carried out" and that it "was therefore not surprising that the renovation work, which commenced in February 2003, has taken some 17 months to complete, at a cost of approximately \$2.3 million." He closed by saying that "it is certainly good to be back home."

The Hon. Roy Bodden, Minister of Education, commented in his speech from the Second Sitting on 7th July that he was "proud that we have such a noble edifice" where Members can "work and operate in comfort and dignity," and he thanked all who were "sensible and visionary enough to see that we have at last an edifice of which we can be proud."

Unfortunately, the Jamaica mahogany strips were not secured and thus had to be replaced with the beautiful mahogany panelling that forms the backdrop to the new Speaker's Chair, built in Cayman by a Jamaican "master craftsman" Mr. Horace Ingram. The Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, then Minister of Tourism, Environment, Development and Commerce donated the new Speaker's Chair and its accompanying pieces. "We give it, not as a gift to the Legislative Assembly or its Members, but as a gift to the Speaker and to all the people of the Cayman Islands," he said at the re-dedication ceremony.

McAlpine's Project Manager, Dave Hoptroff, said that one of the most lasting memories of the project was that of the quality of the original structure. "Built in the early 1970's using very basic equipment and materials," it required "very heavy demolition equipment to break out the openings allowing access to the new West wing," even over 30 years later. Joining Mr. Hoptroff on the project was: the Public Works Department Project Manager Jim Scott, assisted by Peter Gilmore; and, McAlpine Works Manager Dane Walton. ■

Transition from Legislative Assembly to Parliament

An Autonomous Parliament

On the 2nd November, 2020, the Legislative Assembly sat for the last time as "Legislative Assembly" and the transition to a House of Parliament was celebrated at a historic ceremony with an Official State Opening on Friday, 4th December, 2020.

The renaming of the Legislative Assembly institution to Parliament was agreed between a delegation of Members of the House and the United Kingdom Government in a package of important enhancements to our Constitution. This amendment also brought about the transition from "Members of the Legislative Assembly" to "Members of Parliament" and established the positions of Parliamentary Secretaries.

The Cayman Islands' unicameral legislature is now only the third United Kingdom Overseas Territory (OT) to be designated as a Parliament, behind Bermuda and Gibraltar, and the second among Caribbean OTs.

In addition to the transitioning of the Legislative Assembly to that of a Parliament, the Parliament became autonomous with the passage of the Legislative Assembly (Management) Law, 2020 (now Parliament (Management) Act, 2020) on the 30 October, 2020.



Above: Hon. Speaker Dr. W. McKeeva Bush assists with revealing the new name of the building. (Government Information System)

Then-Premier, Hon. Alden McLaughlin stated that “the renaming of the Legislative Assembly to the House of Parliament is yet another significant milestone in the history of the Cayman Islands. There are indeed greater things to come; and we must never lose sight of why we are here, to not only serve those who elected us, but to also leave a strong foundation for those who follow us to build upon.”

The independent Parliament is now governed by a Commission, which is managed by the Parliament Management Council. The Council, headed by the Speaker of the House, comprises nine members as provided for by the Parliament Management Act, and the Clerk of Parliament, Mrs. Zena Merren-Chin as the ex-officio, non-voting member of the Council and was appointed as the Chief Officer of the Commission. ■

50 Years of Persons in Parliament

The iconic Parliament building has been the steady and unwavering host to a changing tide of Presiding Officers, Speakers, Members and Clerks, as well as decades of dedicated staff who enable it all to function.

Past Presiding Officers & Speakers

- 1971 Athelstan Charles Ethelwulf Long, CMG, CBE
- 1972 Kenneth Roy Crook (later CMG)
- 1974 Thomas Russell, CMG, CVO
- 1982 George Peter Lloyd, CMG, CVO
- 1987 Alan James Scott, CVO, CBE
- Hon. Mrs. Sybil Ione McLaughlin, MBE, JP, 1991-1996
- Hon. Capt. Mabry S. Kirkconnell, OBE, JP, 1996-2001
- Hon. Juliana Y. O'Connor-Connolly, JP, MP, 2002-2003, 2013-2017
- Hon. Dr. Linford Ainsworth Pierson, OBE, JP, PhD., FCCA, 2003-2005
- Hon. Edna M. Moyle, OBE, JP, 2005-2009
- Hon. Mary J. Lawrence, JP, MP, 2009-2013
- Hon. Dr. W. McKeever Bush, JP, (Hon) MSc, MP, 2017-Present

Past and Current Clerks

Clerks of the Cayman Islands Legislative Assembly

- Hon. Sybil I. McLaughlin, MBE, JP, National Hero, 1959–1984
- Mrs. E. Gay Jackson, JP, 1984–1987
- Mrs. Georgette Myrie, MBE, JP, 1987–2001
- Ms. Wendy Lauer, JP, 2001–2009
- Mrs. Zena Merren-Chin, BSc, LL.B, 2009 – present

Deputy Clerks of the Legislative Assembly

- Mrs. Edna M. Moyle, OBE, JP, 1971–1979
- Mrs. Mercedes Jackson
- Mrs. Arlene Woods
- Ms. Wendy Lauer, JP, 1981–2001
- Mrs. Sharon K. Smith, OBE, JP, 2001 – 2020
- Mrs. Patricia Priestley, BSc, LLB (Hons.), 2021 - Present

Assistant Clerks of the Legislative Assembly

- Ms. Eileen McLean, 1972-1973
- Mrs. Sharon K. Smith, JP, MBE, 1973–2001
- Ms. Nana Bothwell, 1982 – 2013
- Ms. Shiona Allenger, 2013 – 2015
- Mrs. Da'Vina Ramoutar, 2016 – 2020
- Ms. Debra Broderick, 2017 – 2021
- Mrs. Patricia Priestley, BSc, LLB (Hons.), 2020 – 2021
- Ms. Nordra Walcott, LL.B (Hons.), 2021 – Present

Parliamentary Procedural Clerks

- Ms. LeSanneo McLaughlin, 2013 – 2017
- Ms. Manesa Webb, 2017 – 2020
- Ms. Susan Burke, BA (Hons.), (2022 - Present)



Above: Mrs. Sharon K. Smith, MBE, JP, was the longest serving staff of Parliament, having served for over 47 years (1st June 1973 - 31st December 2020).

50 Years of Members

December 1971-November 1972

(First Group to move into the Parliament Building)

President/Governor

His Excellency the Governor Mr. Kenneth R. Crook, CMG

Official Members & Government (Executive Council):

Hon. Desmond V. Watler, OBE, JP
Chief Secretary (First Official Member)

Hon. G. E. Waddington, QC
Attorney General (Second Official Member)

Mr. Vassel G. Johnson, OBE
Financial Secretary (Third Official Member)

Capt. Eldon. E. Kirkconnell
Nominated Member

Mr. Benson O. Ebanks, Jr
First Electoral District West Bay

Mr. William W. Connolly, JP
Sixth Electoral District East End

Nominated Members

Mr. Melville Goring

Elected Members

Mr. Thomas William Farrington, CBE, JP, West Bay

Mr. John Jefferson Sr., West Bay

Miss. Annie Huldah Bodden, George Town

Mr. Ira V. Walton, George Town

Mr. Allen Berkley Bush, JP, George Town

Mr. Trevor Foster, Lesser Islands

Mr. Alford Scott, Lesser Islands

Mr. Clifton A. Hunter, MBE, Bodden Town

Mr. Anton B. Bodden, Bodden Town

Mr. Craddock Ebanks, North Side

First Parliament – 1972-76

President/Governor

His Excellency the Governor Mr. K.R. Crook

Official Members & Government Members (Executive Council)

Hon. D. V. Watler, OBE, JP,
Chief Secretary (First Official Member)

Hon. G. E. Waddington, QC,
Attorney General (Second Official Member)

Hon. V. G. Johnson, OBE
Financial Secretary (Third Official Member)

Hon. B. O. Ebanks, Jr.
First Electoral District West Bay; Member for Education, Health
& Social Services & Labour

Hon. W. W. Connolly, JP
Sixth Electoral District East End; Member for Tourism, Natural
Resources, Agriculture, MRCU & Surveys

Hon. A. B. Bush, JP
Second Electoral District George Town; Member for Works,
Communications & Public Transport

Hon. Trevor Foster
Third Electoral District Lesser Islands; Member for Lesser
Islands Co-Ordination & Information

Elected Members

Mr. T.W. Farrington, CBE, JP, West Bay

Mr. John Jefferson, West Bay

Miss. Annie H. Bodden, George Town

Mr. Claude Hill Sr., George Town

Capt. Charles L. Kirkconnell, Lesser Islands

Capt. Ashton. A. Reid, Lesser Islands

Mr. G. Haig Bodden, Bodden Town

Mr. James M. Bodden, Bodden Town

Mr. Craddock Ebanks, North Side

Note:

Asterisk () denotes the individual held the position in a temporary or acting capacity or did not complete the full term.*

2nd Parliament – 1976-80

President/Governor

HE Governor Mr. Thomas Russell, CBE

Official Members & Government Members (Executive Council)

Hon. Dennis. H. Foster, MBE, JP,

Chief Secretary (First Official Member)

Hon. G. E. Waddington, QC,

Attorney General (Second Official Member)

Hon. David R. Barwick, CBE

Attorney General (Second Official Member)

Hon. Vassel. G. Johnson, OBE

Financial Secretary (Third Official Member)

Hon. Truman M. Bodden

Member for Health, Education & Social Services

Hon. G. Haig Bodden

Member for Agriculture, Lands & Natural Resources

Hon. Charles L. Kirkconnell

Member for Communications, Works & Local Administration

Hon. James M. Bodden

Member for Tourism, Aviation & Trade

Elected Members

Mr. Dalmain D. Ebanks, West Bay

Mr. John G. Smith, West Bay

Mrs. Estherleen L. Ebanks, West Bay

Mr. George C. Smith, George Town

Miss. Annie H. Bodden, OBE, George Town

Capt. Keith P. Tibbetts, Lesser Islands

Mr. John B. McLean, East End

Mr. Craddock Ebanks, North Side

3rd Parliament – 1980-84

President/Governor

HE Governor Mr. G. Peter Lloyd, CMG, CVO

Official Members/Minister

Hon. Dennis H. Foster, MBE, CVO, CBE, JP,
First Official Member (Internal & External Affairs)

Hon. D. R. Barwick, CBE,

Second Official Member (Legal Administration)

Hon. Michael J. Bradley, QC, LL.B

Second Official Member (Legal Administration)

Hon. Thomas C. Jefferson, CBE, JP

Third Official Member (Finance & Economic
Development)

Hon. John B. McLean

Member for Agriculture, Lands & Natural Resources

Hon. Truman M. Bodden

Member for Health, Education & Social Services

Hon. James M. Bodden

Member for Tourism, Aviation & Trade

Hon. G. Haig Bodden

Member for Communications, Works & Local
Administration

Elected Members

Mr. John G. Smith, West Bay

Mr. D. Dalmain Ebanks, West Bay

Mr. Benson O. Ebanks, West Bay

Mr. W. Norman Bodden, MBE, George Town

Miss. Annie H. Bodden, OBE, George Town

Capt. Charles L. Kirkconnell, Lesser Islands

Capt. Mabry S. Kirkconnell, Lesser Islands

Mr. Craddock Ebanks, OBE, JP, North Side

4th Parliament – 1984-88

President/Governor

HE Governor Mr. G. Peter Lloyd, CMG, CVO

Official Members/Ministers

Hon. Dennis H. Foster, CVO, CBE, JP

First Official Member (Internal & External Affairs)

Hon. J. Lemuel Hurlston, JP

Third Official Member (Internal & External Affairs)

Hon. Michael J. Bradley, QC, LL.B

Second Official Member (Legal Administration)

Hon. Richard W. Ground, QC

Second Official Member (Legal Administration)

Hon. Thomas C. Jefferson, JP

Third Official Member (Finance & Economic Development)

Hon. Benson O. Ebanks

Member for Health, Education & Social Services

Hon. W. Norman Bodden, MBE

Member for Tourism, Aviation & Trade

Hon. Capt. Charles L. Kirkconnell

Member for Communications, Works & District Administration

Hon. Vassel G. Johnson, CBE, JP

Member for Development & Natural Resources

Elected Members

Mr. W. McKeeva Bush, JP, West Bay

Mr. Linford A. Pierson, OBE, JP, George Town

Mrs. Daphne L. Orrett, West Bay

Capt. Mabry S. Kirkconnell, Lesser Islands

Mr. James M. Bodden, Bodden Town

Mr. G. Haig Bodden, Bodden Town

Mr. D. Ezzard Miller, North Side

Mr. John B. McLean, East End

5th Parliament – 1988-92

President/Governor

HE Governor Mr. Alan J. Scott, CVO, CBE

(ending 15th February, 1991)

Speaker

Hon. Sybil I. McLaughlin, MBE, JP

(starting 15th February, 1991)

Official Members

Hon. Thomas C. Jefferson, OBE, JP

First Official Member (Finance & Economic Development)

(ending 16th March, 1992)

Hon. Richard W. Ground, QC

Second Official Member (Legal Administration)

Hon. Anthony S. Smellie*

Temporary Second Official Member (Legal Administration)

Hon. J. Lemuel Hurlston, JP

Third Official Member (Internal & External Affairs) (ending 17th March, 1992); First Official Member (Internal & External Affairs) (starting 17th March, 1992)

Hon. James M. Ryan, MBE, JP*

Temporary Third Official Member (Internal & External Affairs)

(ending 17th March, 1992, changed with the title); Temporary

First Official Member (Internal & External Affairs)

Hon. George A. McCarthy, JP*

Temporary First Official Member (Finance & Development);

Third Official Member (Finance & Development) (starting 22nd June, 1992)

Ministers

Hon. Benson O. Ebanks, OBE

Member for Education, Environment, Recreation & Culture

Hon. W. Norman Bodden, MBE

Member for Tourism, Aviation & Trade

Hon. D. Ezzard Miller

Member for Health & Social Services

Hon. Linford A. Pierson, JP

Member for Communications, Works & Natural Resources

Elected Members

Mr. W. McKeeva Bush, JP, West Bay

Mr. John D. Jefferson, Jr., West Bay

Mr. Truman M. Bodden, West Bay

Capt. Mabry S. Kirkconnell, Lesser Islands

Mr. Gilbert A. McLean, Lesser Islands

Mr. Roy Bodden, Bodden Town

Mr. Franklin R. Smith, Bodden Town

Mr. G. Haig Bodden, Bodden Town (By-election)

Mr. John B. McLean, East End

Finance and Economic Development became the Third Official Member's responsibility & Legal Administration became the Third Official Member's responsibility on 17th March, 1992.

6th Parliament – 1992-96

Speaker

Hon. Mrs. Sybil I. McLaughlin, MBE, JP

Ministers

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, JP

Member for Community Development, Sports, Youth Affairs & Culture

Hon. Thomas C. Jefferson, OBE, JP

Member for Tourism, Environment & Planning; Leader of Government Business

Hon. John B. McLean, JP

Member for Agriculture, Communications & Works

Hon. Truman M. Bodden, OBE, JP

Member for Education, Culture & Aviation

Hon. Anthony S. Eden, JP

Elected Member for Bodden Town (ending March 2nd, 1994); Member for Health, Drug Abuse Prevention & Rehabilitation (starting March 2nd, 1994)

Official Members

Hon. John Lemuel Hurlston, MBE, JP

First Official Member (Internal & External Affairs) (ending on 4th November, 1994)

Hon. James M. Ryan, MBE, JP *

Temporary First Official Member (Internal & External Affairs); First Official Member (Internal & External Affairs) (starting on 4th November, 1994)

Hon. Richard H. Coles

Second Official Member (Solicitor General)

Hon. George A. McCarthy, OBE, JP

Third Official Member (Finance & Economic Development)

Elected Members

Mr. John. D Jefferson, Jr., West Bay

Mr. D. Dalmain Ebanks, West Bay

Mr. Stephenson A. Tomlinson, George Town

Mrs. Berna L. Thompson-Murphy, George Town

Mr. D. Kurt Tibbetts, George Town

Capt. Mabry S. Kirkconnell, MBE, JP, Cayman Brac & Little Cayman

Mr. Gilbert A. McLean, Cayman Brac & Little Cayman

Mr. Roy Bodden, Bodden Town

Mr. G. Haig Bodden, Bodden Town (Deputy Speaker*)

Ms. Heather D. Bodden, Bodden Town (By-election)

Mrs. Edna M. Moyle, JP, (Deputy Speaker*)

7th Parliament – 1996-2000

Speaker

Hon. Mabry Kirkconnell, MBE, JP, Cayman Brac & Little Cayman

Ministers

Hon. Juliana Y. O'Connor-Connolly, Cayman Brac & Little Cayman

Minister of Community Affairs, Sports, Women, Youth & Culture (starting 6th November, 1997)

Hon. Thomas C. Jefferson, OBE, JP

Minister of Tourism, Commerce & Transport

Hon. Anthony S. Eden, JP

Minister of Health, Drug Abuse Prevention & Rehabilitation (ending 7th November, 1997); Minister of Health, Drug Abuse Prevention, Social Welfare & Rehabilitation (starting 7th November, 1997)

Hon. Truman M. Bodden, OBE, JP

Minister of Education, Aviation & Planning

Hon. John B. McLean, OBE, JP

Minister of Agriculture, Environment, Communications & Works

Mr. W. McKeeva Bush, OBE, JP

Minister for Community Development, Sports, Women's Affairs, Youth & Culture*

Official Members

Hon. James M. Ryan, MBE, JP

Chief Secretary (First Official Member)

Hon. Richard H. Coles

Solicitor General (Second Official Member) (ending 19th Nov, 1998)

Hon. David F. Ballantyne

Solicitor General (Second Official Member) (starting 3rd Dec, 1998)

Hon. George A. McCarthy, OBE, JP

Financial Secretary (Third Official Member)

Elected Members

Mr. W. McKeeva Bush, OBE, JP, West Bay

Mr. John D. Jefferson Jr., West Bay

Mr. D. Dalmain Ebanks, West Bay

Mr. D. Kurt Tibbetts, OBE, JP, George Town

Mr. Linford A. Pierson, OBE, JP, George Town

Dr. Frank S. McField, George Town

Mr. Roy Bodden, Bodden Town

Ms. Heather D. Bodden, Bodden Town

Hon. Edna M. Moyle, JP, North Side (Deputy Speaker)

8th Parliament – 2000-2005

Speaker of the House

Hon. Mabry s. Kirkconnell, MBE, JP
(ending on 14th November, 2001)

Hon. Juliana Y. O'Conner-Connolly, JP, MP
Cayman Brac and Little Cayman
(14th November, 2001 - 10th October, 2003)

Hon. Linford A. Pierson, OBE, JP, MP
(10th October, 2003)

Official Members

Hon. James M. Ryan, MBE, JP
Chief Secretary (First Official Member for Internal & External Affairs) (ending on 29th October, 2004)

Hon. David Ballantyne
Attorney General (ending 15th March, 2003)

Hon. Samuel W. Bulgin*
Attorney General (Second Official Member for Legal Administration) (ending on 15th March, 2003)

Hon. George A. McCarthy, OBE, JP
Financial Secretary (Third Official Member for Finance & Economic Development) (ending 1st November, 2004)
Chief Secretary (First Official Member for Internal & External Affairs) (starting 1st November, 2004)

Hon. G. Kenneth Jefferson, JP
Financial Secretary (Third Official Member for Finance & Economic Development) (starting 1st November, 2004)

Ministers

Mr. D. Kurt Tibbetts, OBE, JP, George Town
Leader of Government Business & Minister of Planning, Communications and Works (ending on 8th November, 2001);
Backbench (starting on 8th November, 2001)

Mr. W. McKeeva Bush OBE, JP, West Bay
Deputy Leader of Government Business (Minister of Tourism, Environment and Transport) (ending 8th November, 2001);
Leader of Government Business (Minister of Tourism, Environment, Development and Commerce) (starting on 8th November, 2001)

Ms. Edna M. Moyle, JP, North Side
Ministry of Community Development, Women Affairs, Youth and Sports (ending on 8th November, 2001); Backbencher (starting 8th November, 2001)

Mr. Roy Bodden, Bodden Town
Minister of Education, Human Resources and Culture

Mr. Gilbert A. McLean, Bodden Town
Minister of Health Services, District Administration, Aviation & Agriculture (starting on 9th November, 2001)

Dr. Frank S. McField, George Town
Deputy Speaker (ending 8th November, 2001); Minister for Community Services, Gender Affairs, Youth & Sports (starting on 9th November, 2001)

Hon. Julianna Y. O'Conner-Connolly, JP, Cayman Brac and Little Cayman
Minister of Planning, Communications, District Administration & Information Technology (10th October, 2003)

Hon. Linford A. Pierson, OBE, JP, George Town
Minister of Health and Information Technology (ending on 8th November, 2001); Deputy Leader of Government (Minister of Planning, Communications, Works and Information Technology) (8th November, 2001-10th October, 2003)

Elected Members

Mr. Rolston M. Anglin, West Bay

Mr. Cline A. Glidden, Jr., West Bay
Deputy Speaker* (starting 8th November, 2001)

Capt. A. Eugene Ebanks, West Bay

Mr. Alden M. McLaughlin, Jr., George Town

Mr. Lyndon L. Martin, Cayman Brac and Little Cayman

Mr. Anthony S. Eden, OBE, JP, Bodden Town

Mr. V. Arden McLean, East End

9th Parliament – 2005-2009

Speaker of the House

Hon. Edna M. Moyle, JP Elected Member

Official Members

Hon. George A. McCarthy, OBE, JP

Chief Secretary (First Official Member for Internal & External Affairs)

Hon. Samuel W. Bulgin, QC

Attorney General (Second Official Member for Legal Administration)

Hon. G. Kenneth Jefferson, JP

Financial Secretary (Third Official Member for Finance & Economic Development)

Ministers

Hon. D. Kurt Tibbetts, OBE, JP, George Town

Leader of Government Business

Minister of Planning, Communications, District Administration and Information Technology (ending 30th June, 2005)

Minister of District Administration, Planning, Agriculture and Housing (starting 1st July, 2005)

Hon. Alden M. McLaughlin, Jr, George Town

Minister of Education, Human Resources and Culture (ending 30th June, 2005); Minister of Education, Training, Employment, Youth, Sports and Culture (starting 1st July, 2005)

Hon. Anthony S. Eden, OBE, JP, Bodden Town

Minister of Health Services, Agriculture, Aviation & Works (ending 30th June, 2005); Minister of Health & Human Services (starting 1st July, 2005)

Hon. Charles E. Clifford, JP, Bodden Town

Ministry of Tourism, Environment, Development & Commerce (ending 30th June, 2005); Minister of Tourism, Environment, Investment & Commerce (starting 1st July, 2005)

Hon. V. Arden McLean, JP, East End

Minister of Community Services, Youth, Sports & Gender Affairs (ending 30th June, 2005); Minister of Communications, Works & Infrastructure (starting 1st July, 2005)

Government Backbenchers

Ms. Lucille D. Seymour, George Town

Mr. W. Alfonso Wright, George Town

Mr. Osbourne V. Bodden, Bodden Town

Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell, JP, Cayman Brac and Little Cayman

Opposition

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, OBE, JP, West Bay

Leader of the Opposition

Mr. Rolston M. Anglin, West Bay

Mr. Cline A. Glidden, Jr, West Bay

Deputy Speaker

Capt. A. Eugene Ebanks, West Bay

Mrs. Juliana O'Connor-Connolly, JP, Cayman Brac and Little Cayman

10th Parliament – 2009-2013

Speaker of the House

Hon. Mary J. Lawrence, JP, Nominated Member

Ministers

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, OBE, JP, MLA, West Bay

Leader of Government Business (ending 6th November, 2009)

Minister of Financial Services, Tourism & Development (ending 18th December, 2012)

Premier (18th November, 2009-18th December, 2012)

Opposition Member (starting 18th December, 2012)

Hon. Juliana O'Connor-Connolly, JP, MLA,

Cayman Brac & Little Cayman

Minister of District Administration, Works & Gender Affairs

Deputy Premier (6th November, 2009-18th December, 2012)

Premier (starting 18th December, 2012)

Hon. Rolston M. Anglin, MLA, West Bay

Minister of Education, Training & Employment

Deputy Premier (starting 18th December, 2012)

Hon. Michael T. Adam, MLA, George Town

Minister of Community Affairs, Gender & Housing

Hon. Mark Scotland, MLA, Bodden Town

Minister of Health, Environment, Youth, Sports & Culture

Official Members

Hon. George A. McCarthy, OBE, JP

Chief Secretary (First Official Member for Internal & External Affairs) (ending July 1st, 2009)

Hon. Donovan W. Ebanks, MBE, JP

Chief Secretary (First Official Member for Internal & External Affairs) (22nd July, 2009-6th November, 2009); Deputy Governor (6th November, 2009-31st January, 2012)

Hon. Franz I. Manderson, JP,

Acting Deputy Governor;

Deputy Governor (starting on 4th April, 2012)

Hon. Samuel W. Bulgin, QC

Attorney General (Second Official Member for Legal Administration)

Hon. G. Kenneth Jefferson, JP

Financial Secretary (Third Official Member for Finance & Economic Development) (ending 6th November, 2009)

Government Backbenchers

Hon. Cline A. Glidden, MLA, West Bay

Deputy Speaker

Capt. A. Eugene Ebanks, JP, MLA, West Bay

Mr. Ellio Solomon, MLA, George Town

Mr. Dwayne Seymour, MLA, Bodden Town

Opposition

Hon. D. Kurt Tibbetts, JP, MLA, George Town

Leader of the Opposition (ending 21st February, 2011)

Hon. Alden M. McLaughlin, JP, MLA, George Town

Leader of the Opposition (starting 21st February, 2011)

Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell, JP, MLA, Cayman Brac & Little Cayman

Deputy Leader of the Opposition (10th January, 2013)

Mr. Anthony S. Eden, OBE, JP, MLA, Bodden Town

Mr. V. Arden McLean, JP, MLA, Cayman Brac & Little Cayman

Independent

Mr. Ezzard Miller, JP, MLA, North Side

11th Parliament – 2013-2017

Speaker of the House

Hon. Juliana Y. O'Connor-Connolly, JP, MLA, Cayman
Brac and Little Cayman

Ministers

Hon. Alden McLaughlin, MBE, JP, MLA, George Town
Premier; Minister of Home & Community Affairs
Minister of Home Affairs, Health & Culture

Hon. Moses I. Kirkconnell, JP, MLA, Cayman Brac and
Little Cayman

Minister of District Administration, Tourism & Transport;
Deputy Premier

Hon. Tara A. Rivers, MLA, West Bay

Minister of Education, Employment & Gender Affairs

Hon. D. Kurt Tibbetts, OBE, JP, MLA, George Town
Minister of Planning, Agriculture, Housing & Infrastructure

Hon. Marco S. Archer, MLA, George Town

Minister of Finance & Economic Development

Hon. Osbourne V. Bodden, MLA, Bodden Town

Minister of Health, Sports, Youth & Culture

Hon. G. Wayne Panton, MLA, Bodden Town

Minister of Financial Services, Commerce & Environment

Ex-Officio Members:

Hon. Franz I. Manderson, Cert. Hon, JP

Deputy Governor

Hon. Samuel W. Bulgin, QC, JP

Attorney General

Government Backbenchers

Hon. Anthony S. Eden, OBE, JP, MLA, Bodden Town
Deputy Speaker

Mr. Roy McTaggart, MLA, George Town

Mr. Winston C. Connolly, Jr, MLA, George Town

Mr. Joseph X. Hew, MLA, Bodden Town

Mr. Alva H. Suckoo, MLA, Bodden Town

Independent

Mr. Ezzard Miller, MLA, North Side

Mr. Arden McLean, JP, MLA, East End

Opposition

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, OBE, JP, MLA, West Bay
Leader of the Opposition

Mr. Bernie A. Bush, MLA, West Bay

Capt. A. Eugene Ebanks, JP, MLA, West Bay

12th Parliament – 2017-2021

Speaker of the House

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, OBE, JP, MLA, West Bay West

Ministers

Hon. Alden McLaughlin, MBE, JP, MLA, Red Bay
Premier; Minister of Human Resources, Immigration &
Community Affairs (last recorded on 12th April, 2019); Minister
of Employment, Border Control, Community Affairs, International
Trade, Investment, Aviation & Maritime Affairs (first recorded on
5th June, 2019)

Hon. Moses I. Kirkconnell, JP, MLA,
Cayman Brac West and Little Cayman

Deputy Premier, Minister of District Administration, Tourism &
Transport

Hon. Juliana Y. O'Connor-Connolly, JP, MLA,
Cayman Brac East

Minister of Education, Youth, Sports, Agriculture & Lands

Hon. Dwayne S. Seymour, JP, MLA, Bodden Town East

Minister of Health, Environment, Culture & Housing

Hon. Roy M. McTaggart, JP, MLA, George Town East

Minister of Finance & Economic Development

Hon. Joseph X. Hew, JP, MLA, George Town North

Minister of Commerce, Planning & Infrastructure

Hon. Tara A. Rivers, JP, MLA, West Bay South

Minister of Financial Services & Home Affairs

Ex-Officio Members

Hon. Franz I. Manderson, MBE, Cert. Hon, JP

Deputy Governor

Hon. Samuel W. Bulgin, QC, JP

Attorney General

Government Backbenchers

Hon. Bernie A. Bush, MLA, West Bay North

Deputy Speaker (last recorded on 31st January, 2020)

Independent Member (first recorded on 23rd April, 2020)

Capt. A. Eugene Ebanks, JP, MLA, West Bay Central

Mr. David C. Wight, MLA, George Town West

Hon. Barbara E. Connolly, MLA, George Town South

Presiding Officer (20th May, 2020-31st July, 2020)

Deputy Speaker (starting on 14th October, 2020)

Mr. Austin O. Harris, MLA, Prospect

Independent

Mr. Ezzard Miller, MLA, North Side

Leader of the Opposition (last recorded on 12th April, 2019)

Mr. Alva H. Suckoo, MLA, Newlands

Deputy Leader of the Opposition

Mr. Arden McLean, JP, MLA, East End

Leader of the Opposition (starting on June 5th, 2019)

Hon. Anthony S. Eden, OBE, JP, MLA, Savannah

Presiding Officer (22nd - 23rd April, 2020)

Mr. Christopher S. Saunders, MLA, Bodden Town West

Mr. Kenneth V. Bryan, MLA, George Town Central

13th Parliament – 2021-2025

Speaker of the House

Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, JP, MP, West Bay West

Ex-Officio Members

Hon. Franz I. Manderson, Cert. Hon, JP

Deputy Governor

Hon. Samuel W. Bulgin, QC, JP

Attorney General

Ministers

Hon. G. Wayne Panton, JP, MP, Newlands

Premier, Minister of Sustainability & Climate Resiliency

Hon. Christopher S. Saunders, Bodden Town West

Deputy Premier, Minister of Finance & Economic Development & Border Control & Labour

Hon. Juliana Y. O'Connor-Connolly, JP, MP, Cayman Brac East

Minister of Education, District Administration, & Lands

Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan, MP, George Town Central

Minister of Tourism & Transport

Hon. Sabrina T. Turner, MP, Prospect

Minister of Health & Wellness (ending 12th April, 2022)

Minister of Health, Wellness & Home Affairs (starting 12th April, 2022)

Hon. Johany S. Ebanks, MP, North Side

Minister of Planning, Agriculture, Housing & Infrastructure

Hon. Andre M. Ebanks, MP, West Bay South

Minister of Financial Services & Commerce, Investment, Innovation & Social Development

Hon. Bernie A. Bush, MP, West Bay North

Minister of Home Affairs, Youth, Sports, Culture & Heritage (ending

12th April, 2022); Minister of Youth, Sports, Culture & Heritage

(starting 12th April, 2022)

Government Backbenchers

Hon. Katherine A. Ebanks-Wilks, MP, West Bay Central

Deputy Speaker

Ms. Heather D. Bodden, JP, MP, Savannah

Mr. Isaac D. Rankine, MP, East End

Opposition

Hon. Roy M. McTaggart, JP, MP, George Town East

Leader of the Opposition

Mr. Joseph X. Hew, MP, George Town North

Deputy Leader of the Opposition

Hon. Sir Alden McLaughlin, KCMG, MBE, QC, JP, MP, Red Bay

Hon. David C. Wight, JP, MP, George Town West

Ms. Barbara E. Conolly, JP, MP, George Town South

Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell, JP, MP, Cayman Brac West & Little

Cayman

Independent

Mr. Dwayne S. Seymour, JP, MP, Bodden Town East

Government Backbencher (starting 1st December, 2021)

Current Members



Speaker
**Hon. Dr. W. McKeeva
Bush, JP, (Hon) MSc, MP**

PACT Government
Elected Member for West
Bay West



Premier
Hon. G. Wayne Panton, JP, MP

PACT Government
Minister of Sustainability &
Climate Resiliency
Elected Member for Newlands



Deputy Premier
**Hon. Christopher S.
Saunders, MP**

PACT Government
Minister of Finance &
Economic Development,
Border Control & Labour
Elected Member for Bodden
Town West



**Hon. Juliana Y.
O'Connor-Connolly, JP, MP**

PACT Government
Minister of Education, District
Administration & Lands
Elected Member for Cayman
Brac East



Hon. Bernie A. Bush, MP

PACT Government
Minister of Youth, Sports,
Culture & Heritage
Elected Member for West
Bay North



Hon. Kenneth V. Bryan, MP

PACT Government
Minister of Tourism &
Transport
Elected Member for George
Town Central



Hon. André M. Ebanks, MP

PACT Government
Minister of Financial
Services & Commerce, and
Investment, Innovation &
Social Development
Elected Member for West
Bay South



Hon. Sabrina T. Turner, MP

PACT Government
Minister of Health &
Wellness and Home Affairs
Elected Member for
Prospect



Hon. Johany "Jay" Ebanks, MP

PACT Government
Minister of Planning,
Agriculture, Housing, &
Infrastructure (PAHI)
Elected Member for
North Side



Deputy Speaker

Hon. Katherine A. Ebanks-Wilks, MP

PACT Government
Parliamentary Secretary to Financial
Services and Education
Elected Member for West Bay Central



Mr. Dwayne S. Seymour, MP

PACT Government
Parliamentary Secretary to
Labour, Housing & Transport
Elected Member for Bodden
Town East



**Ms. Heather D. Bodden, OCI,
Cert. Hon., JP, MP**

PACT Government
Parliamentary Secretary to T&T
and Social Development
Elected Member for Savannah



Mr. Isaac D. Rankine, MP

PACT Government
Parliamentary Secretary to
PAHI and Home Affairs
Elected Member for East End

Ex-Officio Members:



Attorney General

**Hon. Samuel W. Bulgin,
QC, JP**

Ex-officio Member
responsible for the
Portfolio of Legal Affairs



Deputy Governor

**Hon. Franz I. Manderson,
MBE, Cert. Hon., JP**

Ex-officio Member
responsible for the Portfolio
of the Civil Service

Members of the Opposition:



Leader of the Opposition

**Hon. Roy M. McTaggart,
JP, MP**

Opposition Member
Elected Member for
George Town East



Deputy Leader of the
Opposition

Mr. Joseph X. Hew, MP

Opposition Member
Elected Member for
George Town North



**Hon. Sir Alden McLaughlin,
KCMG, MBE, QC, JP, MP**

Opposition Member
Elected Member for
Red Bay



Mr. Moses I. Kirkconnell, JP, MP

Opposition Member
Elected Member for Cayman
Brac West & Little Cayman



**Ms. Barbara E. Conolly,
JP, NP, MP**

Opposition Member
Elected Member for
George Town South



Mr. David C. Wight, JP, MP

Opposition Member
Elected Member for
George Town West

Current and Past Staff

Shiona Allenger, Assistant Clerk
Rita Anderson, Clerical Officer
Jason Azan, Accountant
Edith Balogh, Clerical Officer
Sydonie Barrett, Intern
Tricia Bell, Accountant
Charles Bodden, Finance Manager
Tricia Bodden, Parliamentary Officer
Nana Bothwell, Assistant Clerk
Shane Bothwell, Serjeant-at-Arms
Debra Broderick, Hansard Editor, Assistant Clerk
Maureen Bunton, Hansard Officer
Susan Burke, Parliamentary Procedural Clerk
Tabias Bush, Intern
Jackelin Castro Connolly, Clerical Officer
Christopher Clarke, Acting Serjeant-at-Arms
Destinne Clarke-Falconer, Intern
Tania Connolly, Senior Hansard Editor
Walsham Connolly, Serjeant-at-Arms
Sabrina Crane, Clerical Officer
Annabelle Davies, Intern
Diana DeMercado, Intern
Ericah Dixon, Clerical Officer
Lauren Downs, Hansard Officer
Eric Ebanks, Security Officer
Vernon T. Ebanks, Serjeant-at-Arms (Part-time)
Garfield Ellison, Chief Parliamentary Advisor
J. Kim Evans, Acting Deputy Chief Officer, Serjeant-at-Arms
Kerri Francella-McLaughlin, Input Editor
Cyan Eliza Francis, Intern
Cline Glidden Sr., Serjeant-at-Arms
Locksley Gould, Recording Technician
Radley Gourzong, Serjeant-at-Arms
Rachel Hodkin, Hansard Officer
Albertini Holness, Parliamentary Page
E. Gay Jackson, Clerk
Mercedes Jackson, Deputy Clerk
Gabriella King, Intern
Wendy Lauer, Deputy Clerk, Clerk
Akeeme Lopez, Parliamentary Officer
Susani Lucas, Intern
Jessica McBean, Intern
LeSanneo McLaughlin, Procedural Clerk
Eileen McLean, Assistant Clerk
Zena Merren-Chin, Clerk
Michelle Minzett, Intern
Marlyn Moxam, Clerical Officer
Edna Moyle, Deputy Clerk
Georgette Myrie, Clerk
Waldo Parchment, Serjeant-at-Arms
Kimberley Powell, Finance Officer
Javin Powery, Serjeant-at-Arms
Patricia Priestley, Acting Deputy Clerk
Davina Ramoutar, Assistant Clerk
Alex Rankine, Intern
Yolanda Rankine, Clerical Officer
Jason Ricketts, Parliamentary Officer
Christina Rivers, Summer Intern
Kimberley Rivers, Security Officer
Aaron Antonio Roye, Intern
Anita Salmon-Beezer, Messenger/Housekeeper
Janet Seffer, Senior Hansard Officer
Elizabeth Smith, Human Resources Manager
Sharon K. Smith, Deputy Clerk
Hugh Thomas, Intern
Patricia Ulett, Personal Assistant to the Speaker
Nordra Walcott, Hansard Editor, Assistant Clerk
Tayvis Walters, Intern
Sibert Watler, Serjeant-at-Arms
Beverley Watson, Clerical Officer
Kathleen Watson, Speaker's Assistant
Chané Watt, Hansard Officer
Manesa Webb, Hansard Officer, Procedural Clerk
Kayla Jordana Welds, Hansard Officer
Cynthia West, Hansard Editor
Jenae Angelique Whittaker, Intern
Katriona Morgan Williams, Intern
Mary Williams, Clerical Officer
Kendra Rose Olivia Wood, Intern
Aline Wood, Deputy Clerk
Elorine Woods, Accountant

Acknowledgements

In 1982, to mark the occasion of the 150th Anniversary of Parliamentary Government in the Cayman Islands, then-Clerk of the Legislative Assembly Mrs. Sybil I. McLaughlin, MBE, established a research committee comprised of Members and civil servants in advance of the sesquicentennial anniversary and published a booklet that provided us with an enormous amount of reference material.

Additionally, the Government of the Cayman Islands produced a research e-book in 2018, "A Brief History of the Cayman Islands", with the help of the West India Committee as part of its celebrations surrounding the 60th anniversary of the Coat of Arms. This work contains additional research that has been a resource for this booklet on the early years of legislature.

We have also been grateful for the rich stories and documentation shared with us by Mrs. Rosemary Rutkowski and Mr. Trevor Baxter of Rutkowski Baxter Houghton. From McAlpine we are grateful for the information from Mr. Richard Noel, Managing Director; Mr. Dave Hoptroff, Sr. Project Manager; Mr. Ian Pairaudeau, former Managing Director; Ryan Dumaguing, Estimator; Jennifer Kaufman of Sta-Mar Enterprises; Henry Propper, former Engineer & Manager, and his wife Mrs. Christiane Propper. From Arch Construction we are grateful for the history shared by Mr. David Arch.

The Cayman Islands National Archive has been invaluable in the production of information, documents, and photos for this booklet and for a temporary exhibit in the Parliament building. A sincere thank you to Tricia Bodden, Dennis Denton, Maylen Reynos, Charisse Morrison, Tammi Selzer and all the Archive staff. Thank you also to Debra Barnes-Tabora from the Cayman Islands National Museum and to Ms. Tina Ebanks and Ms. Francesca Hamann of the Government Information Services (GIS).

A special thanks to the members of the 50th Anniversary Organising Committee: the Hon. Speaker Dr. W. McKeeva Bush, JP MP; Hon. Deputy Speaker Katherine Ebanks-Wilks, MP; Hon. Kenneth Bryan, MP; Mr. Joseph Hew, MP; Ms. Heather Bodden, MP; Mr. Garfield Ellison; Ms. Pat Ulett; Mr. Alfonso Wright; Mrs. Gloria McField-Nixon; Mrs. Zena Merren-Chin; Mr. J. Kim Evans; Mrs. Patricia Priestley; Ms. Nordra Walcott; Ms. Susan Burke; Ms. Gabriella King; and, Mr. Charles Bodden.

Finally, thank you to all Parliamentarians and Parliament Staff for the high caliber of support in the development of every aspect of the 50th Anniversary celebrations, without which this book could not have been completed.

Credits

Written, designed, and researched by Ms. Susan K. Burke, Parliamentary Procedural Clerk, and Ms. Nordra Walcott, Assistant Clerk, with invaluable assistance from: the Hon. Speaker Dr. W. McKeeva Bush; Mrs. Zena Merren-Chin; Mrs. Patricia Priestley; Mr. Garfield Ellison; Ms. Gabriella King; Ms. Tricia Bodden; and Ms. Tina Ebanks and Ms. Francesca Hamann of GIS.

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