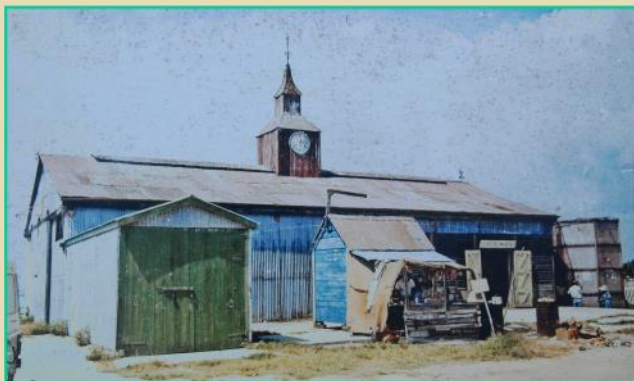


HOUSE OF CULTURE / PUBLIC MARKET



Arriving from England by ship in 1885, the cast iron frame of an intended market was assembled and a building was constructed along the shoreline close to the public pier. Inaugurated in 1886, the Corozal Town Public Market was in operation for one century.

The Public Market was the commercial and social hub of Corozal Town. For the majority of its years in operation community members routinely visited the market to purchase meat, fish, fruits and vegetables. As the centre of activity, first hand news and gossip would be shared amongst shoppers. Corozal's elite families (Schofield, Riveroll, Romero and Rosado) had the privilege of purchasing the finest cuts of meat. They were followed by the upper middle class, such as government officials, and the remaining townfolk were able to purchase what was left.

By 1986 the building was no longer big enough for the market and it closed its doors. Refurbished in 1995, various organizations utilized it until 2000 when it was abandoned. In 2011 it was restored again through the kind efforts of the community and inaugurated as the Corozal House of Culture (NICH) in 2012.





The mid to late 1800's was unquestionably a period of unrest and instability along the Rio Hondo and Corozal Town. A substantial migration of Yucatecos fleeing the Caste Wars in Mexico led to an increase in population and consequently an increase in criminal activity; mostly due to cross border illegal trading. This was compounded by threats and incursions of both Cruzob and Iciache Maya.

In the early 1870's the British colonial authorities built a police station manned by a constabulary force of Jamaicans and Barbadians and a thick high walled prison for criminals serving 3 months or less imprisonment. This was Her Majesty's Prison, built during the long reign of Queen Victoria. The structure has survived many hurricanes, including catastrophic Hurricane Janet in 1955. Her Majesty's Prison was abandoned as a result of post Hurricane Janet's reconstruction of Corozal Town. Since 1986 the structure has been occupied by Kiddy Kinder Preschool, transforming it from a detention centre to a children's classroom.





The Schofield residence was constructed in the early 1880's when mature mahogany was still thriving in the forests of northern Belize which ensured its longevity into the 21st century. It has survived many hurricanes including category 5 Hurricane Janet in 1955. It was built with many windows to capture the refreshing breeze of the sea.

The structure was first a home but it also served as the headquarters for the Schofield family who were the owners of the Goshen and Pembroke Hall Estates (Corozal Town and area). Mr. Thomas Schofield became the owner of the Estate when Mr. John Carmichael was unable to pay back a loan from Schofield to buy the estates from Anglo - French Company. Mr. Carmichael transferred the land to Schofield. Mr. Ernest Schofield (pictured here) inherited the estate from his father Thomas.

Eventually the grandson of Ernest, William Schofield inherited and in 1956 sold the estate to the Government of Belize after the devastation of 1955's Hurricane Janet, but retained his residence in the Schofield's house. In 1980 the grandchildren of William Schofield sold the house and property to the Catholic mission. It has been utilized by the Catholic mission in various ways including a resource centre, classroom, conference space and living quarters for nuns from Mexico doing pastoral work in Corozal.



PARISH OFFICE | PRIEST'S RESIDENCE | XAVIER COLLEGE

4

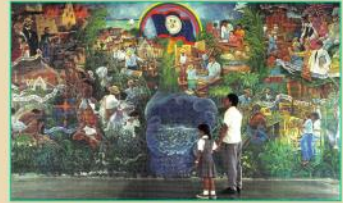


Belize Archives and Records Service
www.belizearchives.gov.bz

The priest's residence or "El Convento" was constructed in early the 1890's. Its construction is attributed to Father Gillett who was one of the English Jesuit priests who came to Belize in the 1880's. It was of typical masonry at the time with thick concrete worked stone walls, a two storey building with a long wooden verandah facing the sea. The upstairs with many rooms, was the living quarters of the resident priests - usually two; one for the town and one for rural areas. The downstairs was used as the parish office, an assembly room and an elementary school classroom.

It survived Hurricane Janet in 1955 and underwent significant changes when Xavier College was opened in 1959, using one of its rooms as First Form. By 1967 the student population had increased so substantially that the whole building was being used as classrooms for students from First to Fourth Form. A new two storey board building was built next to the College to accommodate the resident priests, a parish office and an assembly room. With the closing of Xavier College to amalgamate with Fletcher's College and the opening of the Corozal Community College in 1978, the convent reverted back to what it was a century earlier, with the original classroom becoming the office of the local manager of Catholic primary schools in the Corozal District.





In 1952 the Corozal Town Hall was constructed. It was financed by the Baron Bliss Trust Fund. The large concrete building dominated the physical landscape with only two other concrete structures; the Catholic Church and the Priests' residence existing amongst board houses. The structure was designed to be a hurricane proof building and it proved to be so when it survived category 5 Hurricane Janet in 1955, saving the lives of 300 Corozal residents who took refuge inside it.

In 1953 Corozal artist Manuel Villamor created his iconic mural which depicts the historical development of Corozal. The mural has changed over the years, in 1986 he redesigned it and in 2003 Mr. Villamor restored the mural. In 2012 at the age of 84 he completed his final restoration. Currently the National Institute of Culture and History(NICH) oversees the preservation and promotion of this national treasure. In 1958 as a result of the anti colonial movement and the constitutional reform, the magistrate as chief administrator changed to the Mayor and a town clerk. The Town Hall then provided space for a Mayor's and clerk's office and a large space as an assembly room for Town Board's regular meetings and civic functions.



Corozal Town

Historical Walk

COROZAL TOWN CENTRAL PARK

6



The Central Plaza of Corozal Town has been used for various activities and events since the town was founded in 1849. Social, cultural, sporting events and even a brief occupation in 1870 by Marcus Canul, General of the Ecaiche Maya, have made the space a gathering place for Corozalenos'. In 1955 Hurricane Janet dramatically transformed the Central Plaza. Long board buildings called "barracks" were built to house the homeless while Mayor Felipe Santiago Ricalde had the daunting task of rebuilding the town. In 1961 when catastrophic Hurricane Hattie wreaked havoc on Belize City, Mayor Ricalde, who had great diplomatic ties with the Mexican Government, organized a team of Mexican doctors and nurses to fly in with medical aid. Unfortunately the ill-fated plane crashed near Maskall Village killing all on board.

In 1965 Honourable Santiago Ricalde inaugurated the Corozal Town Central Park; he honoured the fallen doctors and nurses with a plaque inside the park's fountain. The fountain was originally donated by the Mexican Government to the people of Belize City just before Hurricane Hattie. Due to the aftermath and building of a new nation's capital, Belmopan City, the fountain was donated to Corozal Town. In 1987 the Corozal Central Park Clock Tower was constructed under the initiative of Mayor Richard Quan Sr.



NICH

national institute of culture and history

Museum of Belize
and Houses of Culture



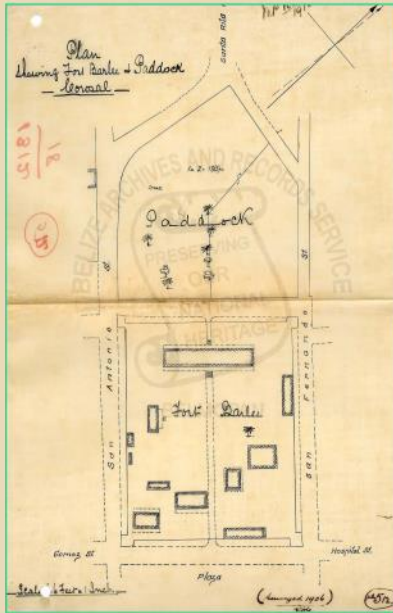
KEEP COROZAL CLEAN

Corozal Town

Historical Walk

FORT BARLEE

7



Fort Barlee was constructed in Corozal Town by Lieutenant Governor Frederick Palgrave Barlee (pictured here) in the late 1870's. The fort was built to protect British interests and Yucatecan settlers in Corozal during the latter years of the Guerra de Las Castas (Caste Wars) that was waged by the Cruzob (Santa Cruz) Maya in Yucatan Mexico and northern Belize. The fort had four gun turrets made of red bricks and wooden palisades that spanned the distance between the turrets. The bricks were originally used as ballast by ships that travelled from Great Britain to the West Indies and Belize. On their return, the ships were filled with mahogany and logwood.

Soldiers stationed at the fort were members of the British West India Regiment who mostly came from Jamaica and Barbados. At Fort Barlee, British Honduras was witness to some of the rare military incidences that helped shaped this country into what it is today.

The Corozal Public Hospital, along with doctors' and nurses' quarters was built inside the former compound in the early 1900's and was in use until Hurricane Janet in 1955 destroyed the structures. In the late 1950's government administrative buildings were constructed and are currently in use. Fort Barlee is the last standing fort in Belize.





Built in 1949 by Don Carlos Ahmad, founder of C. Ahmad E Hijos, a company that sold textiles and household items on the street level of the colonial building while Mr. Ahmad and family resided on the second storey.

Mr. Ahmad originally came from Mikhmas, a Palestinian town in Jerusalem, Israel. He arrived in Belize with fellow immigrants looking for better business opportunities. He fell in love with Corozal Town and decided to settle here. Don Carlos passed away in 1972, leaving his son Emilio Ahmad and his wife Yolanda and their two children Yousef and Jimmina to take over the family business.

Mr. Emilio Ahmad introduced the wholesale and import business and started the distribution company with the assistance of his son Yousef and his wife Yvonne. The company changed names to Emilio Ahmad & Sons Ltd. to differentiate the wholesale business from the small textile shop. Emilio Ahmad passed away in 2005. Family members currently reside in the upper level of the building; the main level shop still operates; maintaining its historical charm.

