



OUR NATIONAL HEROES SCRAPBOOK

CAYMANIAN SEA CAPTAINS

CREATIVITY : HERITAGE : EDUCATION

CAPTAINS PHOTO ALBUM



Capt. Rosendell
Bodden



Capt. Carl Bush



Capt. Geddes
Grant

“The men who left Cayman to sail with Capt. Southwell were for the most part very young, inexperienced and had had the opportunity of only a very limited education. It is to their credit that they, most of whom had never traveled outside the Cayman Islands before, would embark on journeys that would take them around the world and into every port on earth, sailing on, and some eventually commanding, the largest ships afloat at that time.”

Consuelo Ebanks - The Southwell Years



Captains Memorial,
Cayman Brac



Capt. Harold Banks,
Cert. Hon.



Capt. Theo Bodden,
OBE



Capt. Keith Tibbetts,
MBE, JP



Capt. Callan Ritch



Capt. Paul Hurlston



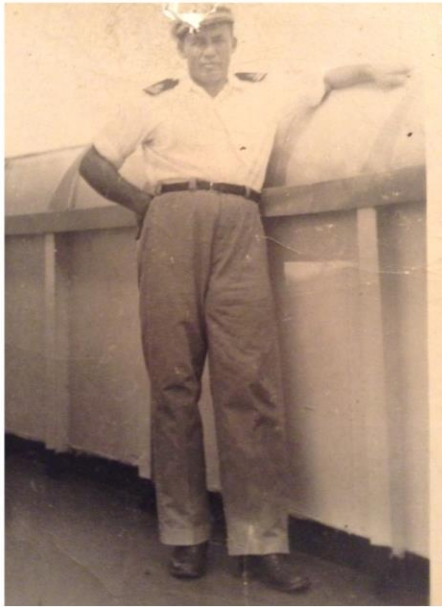
Capt. Martin Ritch

THE ADVENT OF NATIONAL BULK CARRIERS

“I was told by one of the first Caymanians who worked for National Bulk Carriers how the company started to recruit Caymanian seamen. They first hired Jamaicans on these small T.I. tankers shuttling between Venezuela and Aruba and they were having a lot of trouble with the crew. You see, this was a very tough run, about 8 to 10 hours at sea and then 4 to 6 hours in port.

The 3rd Mate, Dell Bodden, a Caymanian, suggested to the Captain that he could get good seamen from the Cayman Islands who would be happy for the jobs. The Captain passed this information on to Mr. Southwell, the owner, and the rest is history. So, Capt. Dell Bodden really was instrumental in the company recruiting Caymanian seamen.”

Capt. Paul Hurlston - The Southwell Years



Capt. Rosendell Bodden

“At 16 years of age, I spent my first night at sea sleeping in my only shirt, pants and pair of shoes on an old coil mattress that was very sticky. Next morning, I could hardly walk because a rat had bitten my toe.”

Capt. Geddes Grant - National Archives, Memory Bank



In the course of his work of meeting passengers from the cruise ships, he is often their first and last impression of Cayman. He therefore ensures that visitors receive a warm welcome and that they are encouraged to return as stayover guests and hands out thousands of personal business cards and other materials. The reward, he says, has been hundreds of phone calls to him by thankful visitors who have returned for longer stays.

In 2011 an official from the cruise line conglomerate AIDA Cruises added to Capt. Banks' many commendations. That document concluded: “The island of Grand Cayman, without Capt. Harold Banks, would be like the Caribbean without a northeast wind and sunshine”.



**Capt. Harold Banks,
Cert. Hon.**

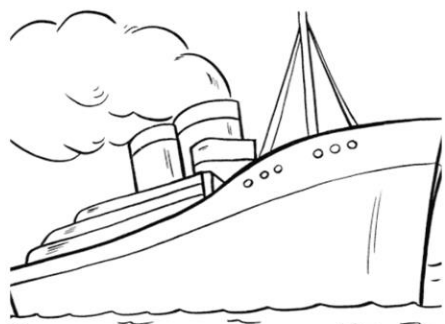
Photo: Simone Scott



“The captains of the schooners became so skilled that they could look at the water and tell you exactly where they had to go to special spots where the turtle lived. It was unbelievable how some of them who couldn’t read or write could find those places with pure instinct comparable to a bird or a fish, going back to the same places, 200 to 300 miles away.”

Capt. Keith Tibbetts, MBE

National Archives, Memory Bank



Passenger Cruise Ship

“So today they have women captains. I don’t think that will happen in my lifetime here in Cayman because the men [nowadays] don’t want to go to sea, so what you think about the women. But they’re making a mistake. There’s good careers now on ships and it’s good money.”

Capt. Paul Hurlston

National Archive, Memory Bank

“At the early age of 16, I left home to go to sea to support my family. I obtained my Mate’s licence at 19 and my Captain/Masters licence at 24.”

Capt. Theo Bodden, O.B.E.

National Archive, Memory Bank



Photo: Simone Scott

PHOTO CREDITS

Thanks to all those who contributed photographs for the inspiration of our youth.

Capt. Harold Banks (Cayman Brac)

Source: Mrs. Isabel Banks, CB

Capt. Rosendell Bodden

Source: Roy Bodden, CB

Capt. Theo Bodden, O.B.E. (Little Cayman)

Source: Maxine & Maureen Bodden

Capt. Geddes Grant

Source; Mrs. Mexiann Grant, CB

Capt. Carl Bush & Capt. Paul Hurlston (Grand Cayman)

Source: Capt. Paul Hurlston, GC

Capt. Callan Ritch

Source: CI National Archive

Capt. Martin Ritch

Source: Mrs. Reva Bodden, CB

Capt. Keith Parker Tibbetts

Source: Mrs. Wanda Tatum, CB

Catboat, Tall Ship, Seamen’s Cenotaph

Source: Ms. Simone Scott, CB

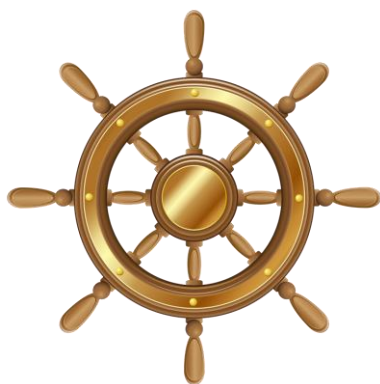
Merco & S.S. Ulysses

Source: Capt. Paul Hurlston, GC

Cayman Brac Captains, Close up of names on CB Cenotaph

Source: Mrs. Nola Bodden, CB

Photos of CNCF Awardees Source: CNCF Cayfest Brochures, Kelly Holding



CNCF HERITAGE AWARDEES

The Cayman National Cultural Foundation's annual Arts and Culture Award for Heritage is conferred on an individual for his/her significant record of accomplishments and excellence in heritage/traditional arts.

Some Caymanian sea captains who received Heritage Awards from the Cayman National Cultural Foundation (CNCF)



Capt. Keith Parker Tibbetts, MBE, JP. 1994 Heritage (Role Model)



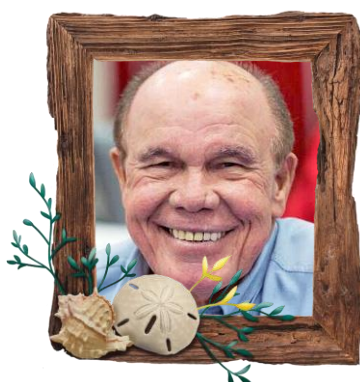
Capt. Paul Hurlston, 2013 Heritage Cross, GOLD (Seafarer Ambassador)



Capt. William Kemuel 'Kem' Jackson, MBE. 2015 Heritage Cross, GOLD (Heritage Preservation: Catboat)



Capt. Charles Marvin Ebanks, 2012 Heritage Cross, GOLD (Role Model)



Capt. Arlin Tatum, Sr., 2015 Heritage Cross, GOLD (Heritage Preservation: Music)

CAPTAIN HAROLD BURNELL BANKS, CERT.HON.

VESSEL	RATING	JOINED
SS Bulk Oil	Messman	Jan. 55
SS Transpar	OS	Jan. 57
SS Universe Commander	AB & 4 th Officer	Apr. 57
SS Berkshire	3 rd Officer, 2 nd Officer	Jun. 58
SS Ore Mercury	2 nd Officer & Ch. Officer	Jul. 59
SS Sprucewoods	Ch. Officer 1	1962
MV Dangin	Captain/Master	1962

Highlights of Captain Banks' Maritime Career

1953 (16 years old) Mess Boy On 'Amoa', an opportunity given to him by the late Capt. Theo Bodden

1961 (24 years old) Attained his Master Mariner license

Became Manager & Chief Mooring Master of Cayman Energy – a ship-to-ship transfer agency in the Sister Islands.

1977-1985 Ensured employment of 91 permanent employees from Cayman Brac. Taught mooring skills to many fellow Caymanians

Served as Chief Pilot for Bodden Shipping in the Cayman Islands responsible for the safe piloting and mooring of all ships entering the George Town and Creek harbours

2003-2016

August 2016 (78 yrs. Old) – Retired from sea



COMMENDATION: A captain from AIDA Cruises once wrote that “the island of Grand Cayman, without Capt. Harold Banks, would be like the Caribbean without a north-east wind and sunshine”.

These are the flags of some of the countries with vessels captained by Caymanians:



Canada



Cayman Islands



Denmark



Germany



Liberia



Norway



Trinidad & Tobago



United Kingdom



United States of America

CAPT PAUL'S PHOTO ALBUM



'Ulysses', world's first supertanker anchored in the English Channel (Photo: Paul Hurlston, 1958)



School children at the George Town dock waiting to visit a warship in the harbour (Photo: Paul Hurlston, 1958)



Postcard of the 'Merco', owned by H.O. Merren – Cayman's lifeline to Jamaica and Tampa (photo taken in the late 1940s)



Stanley Seymour and William Hurlston, young Caymanian seamen aboard the 'Ulysses' (Photo: Paul Hurlston, 1958)



Paul Hurlston in CUC uniform, 1994

THE OLD SEA CAPTAIN



TRIBUTE TO CAPT. CALLAN RITCH

January 10, 1945

TO WHOM THIS MAY CONCERN

This is to certify that Captain Callan H. Ritch was Master of the vessel assigned to our General Agency from December 5, 1944 till January 9, 1945.

He was assigned this command after the death of the vessel's Master due to enemy attack and successfully brought the vessel to home port in the company of tugs, with no radio or navigation equipment, and steering from aft station.

We take great pleasure in commending Capt. Ritch for his seamanship, ability and devotion to duty.

Sign
N.W. Lee
Assistant Supt. Engineer
American So African Line, Inc.
United States of America

NOTE: Capt. Ritch was celebrated on Andy Martin's hit CD with the song "The Old Sea Captain", lyrics written by the Barefoot Man, and he is featured at the Linton Tibbetts Maritime Museum, Little Cayman.



TRIBUTE TO CAPT. KEITH PARKER TIBBETTS, MBE

(Extract taken from a longer poem)

Praise to K.P.

You've been a boat builder, a house builder,
A representative of our land, a merchant, a farmer,
A great seaman in demand,
And many more good things-I could go on and on
But my gift is not given to poetry you see,
I've only tried to compose this for our dear K.P.

"This poem was given by a friend of mine when I turned from the diaz after being made an M.B.E. on June 13, 1988."

Yours truly,
Keith Tibbetts

Tribute - words written to show one's respect or thanks to someone

Maybe you'd like to write a few words in tribute to all our heroes, our very brave, Caymanian sea captains.



Goldfield

TRIBUTE TO OUR HEROES

by _____

(April _____, 2021)



The schooner "Allocate", formally a pilot boat from Mobile, Alabama named 'Alabama', was purchased by Capt. Timothy Augustos Ritch of Cayman Brac and Jamaica in 1925 and used as a lumber carrier from Abaco Island in The Bahamas and also as a bulk salt carrier from the Turks & Caicos Islands from 1925 to 1935. She was captained by Capt. Timothy Ritch and later by sons, Capt. Carril N. Ritch and Capt. Martin W. Ritch. In 1938 it was sold to the Kirkconnells. The schooner 'Allocate' went through several storms and hurricanes at sea.



Replica of the 'Allocate' made by Ernest Walton, CB, From his childhood memories while living in Tampa in the 70s.



I WANT TO BE A SEA CAPTAIN WHEN I GROW UP

SEA CAPTAIN PAPER DOLLS

DIRECTIONS: Cut out the paper dolls and the faces of the three Captains below and paste the three faces on the men paper dolls. The smaller paper doll is for your face if you want to be a Sea Captain some day. You can either draw your face or paste a cut out face from a photo of yourself that you have permission to use. Paste all four dolls on heavy card stock or cardboard, then use your coloured pencils to colour your dolls. Remember that both boys and girls can become Sea Captains in the future so you may want to hang these on your wall for inspiration.

Capt. Theo
Little Cayman

Capt. Harold
Cayman Brac

Capt. Paul
Grand Cayman



Me

