

HISTORY OF TRIPLE C SCHOOL

In 1941 most of the western world were concerned with one thing, the second world war, then just two years into its seven-year stream of death and genocide. In September of that year, a number of Grand Cayman, families were still in deep grief from the recent death of 27 men and boys who were killed when their turtle-fishing schooner, the "Majestic", sunk. Of course, this was just 9 years after the deaths of 108 men, women and children who died in the 1932 hurricane – deaths on land and sea.

In those difficult and dangerous days-because German submarines torpedoed vessels within sight of our shores-the Cayman Islands became even more isolated from the rest of the world. Education for the masses in those days was meagre at best. Those families who could afford it would send their children overseas-mainly Jamaica-to be educated. But those war years made traveling by sea dangerous, even for small, motorized vessels.

The Merren family, who have a deep involvement in the Church of God-which had only set down roots in 1934-had a different vision for their children's education. Why not start a school? This vision was shared by another church leader. So, three Church of God members approached the recently arrived missionaries from America, Leslie and Nina Ratzlaff with their vision about starting a school.

October 20, 1941, was the first day of school (then unnamed). Seven students, most of them from the Merren family, were the first to be registered.

Location:

An empty room on the second floor of the present National Museum building, became the first classroom. That second-floor space was a room above the jail. In 1942 another missionary teacher joined the ranks: Caroline Glassman (later Merren). It was under her principalship that the school was given a name – Triple C School – based on three prominent

words that the children had submitted in a bid to name the school: Creative Christian Character.

In 1944 the decision was taken to adopt an American-styled education system offering a K-12 grade curriculum. This system has served local and expatriate children alike for the past 82 years.

The school graduated its first class of 7 in 1947, obviously these students had a head-start with their education prior to the founding of Triple C.

From its humble beginnings, there was always one central goal – to provide more than just a high-quality education: it was to provide a quality education from a biblical Christian worldview. Neither the founders nor those of us who have inherited the reins of the school were interested in just having a church-owned and church-run school. The vision and mission were to have a Christian school. That is why in the nascent years of the school, and for many years afterwards, Triple C School and the Church of God Chapel congregations were and remain interconnected.

In terms of the history of the school and church, when it moved from its one room above the jail, it was housed in a makeshift, dirt floor building on the premises of the Church of God on the waterfront in George Town, as the building was labeled in those days. In 1964, the school took occupancy of its first permanent, purpose-built facility. It was located off Hospital Road-now the Government Car Park behind the Immigration Department HQ. When it finally outgrew that campus, new land was purchased where we are now located, and in 1997 the school moved to this campus.

This move was made possible by the financial support provided by the Church of God Chapels - 50% of the mortgage was carried by the four local congregations for ten years.

In 2004 Hurricane Ivan devastated the island, flooding the school building and rendering it unusable for an entire year. However, the school was able

to be operational after just six weeks from Ivan's visit because space was provided to it at the George Town Chapel Church and Family Life Center.

For eighty-two years, Triple C school has been the most prominent ministry of the Church of God Chapels to the Cayman Islands, with longer service than any other school including those operated by the Cayman Islands Government.

So, as we celebrate the blessings of the past 82 years, we invite you to come and be a part of the next 82 years of excellence at Triple c School!

(Sources: Mr. Orren Merren III, The late Cecile Crighton, Pastor Alson Ebanks)