



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Community Comes Together to Restore Historic West Bay Sand Yard

15 September 2026 – WEST BAY, CAYMAN ISLANDS — In the early hours of Saturday, 12 September, more than 20 volunteers from across the Cayman Islands gathered at *The Old Homestead* in West Bay to begin restoring the traditional white sand yard of one of Cayman’s historic homes.

Organised by the **West Bay District Committee of the National Trust for the Cayman Islands**, the project brought together residents, supporters, high school students and seniors in their 70s, united by a shared commitment to preserving Cayman’s architectural and cultural heritage.

Built in **1912, for a family of eight**, *The Old Homestead* is the last surviving structure of its kind in what was once a residential neighbourhood. The property is a reminder of Cayman’s vibrant architectural heritage and the longstanding tradition of maintaining carefully swept, white sand yards around Caymanian homes.

Armed with buckets, shovels, wheelbarrows and gloves, volunteers worked swiftly to complete the first phase of the project on the north side of the yard. The old, discoloured sand was removed, or “**backed off**,” and replaced with fresh white beach sand in record time.

Restoring the yard is about more than beautification. **Traditional sand yards are an important part of Cayman’s cultural landscape and domestic heritage.** Historically, the grounds surrounding Caymanian homes were covered with white sand and carefully swept and maintained. The tradition can still be seen at preserved heritage properties, including the National Trust’s **Mission House**, which features a traditional Caymanian sand yard.

All sand used for the project was collected in accordance with relevant Cayman Islands laws. **Section 28 of the Development and Planning Act** regulates the removal of sand, gravel, pebbles, stone, coral and other filling from shoreline areas and land covered by water, including provisions governing limited quantities removed for domestic purposes. Care was taken to ensure the quantities collected complied with the law and that the sand was sourced sustainably.



The initiative reflects the West Bay District Committee's broader commitment to encouraging community participation in the preservation of Cayman's built and cultural heritage. By bringing people together to practise a traditional form of maintenance, the project provides an opportunity to **experience, share and keep Caymanian heritage alive**, while helping younger generations connect with traditions that shaped the Islands' distinctive sense of place.

The project is being undertaken with the **consent and support of the Bothwell family**, who retain ownership of and responsibility for the care of the property. Family members were present, working alongside volunteers and supporting the initiative.

The West Bay District Committee extends its appreciation to the Bothwell family for their continued stewardship of *The Old Homestead* and to all the volunteers who contributed their time and energy.

The restoration and beautification work will continue over the next several months, with the hope of completing the project in time for the **Christmas season**, when the traditional sand yard can once again be enjoyed in its original beauty.

Community members interested in volunteering are encouraged to contact the National Trust Office at: info@nationaltrust.org.ky

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Notes to editors

The National Trust for the Cayman Islands works to preserve the country's natural environments and places of historic significance for present and future generations. Through its district committees, volunteers, members and community partners, the Trust encourages residents to take an active role in protecting the heritage and character of the Cayman Islands.



Legal reference: [Development and Planning Law \(2017 Revision\), section 28.](#)

Cultural reference: [National Trust's Mission House materials describing its traditional Caymanian sand yard.](#)

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About the National Trust for the Cayman Islands

The National Trust for the Cayman Islands is a non-governmental organization whose mandate under the National Trust Law (2010 Revision) includes the preservation of the historic, natural and maritime heritage of the Cayman Islands for present and future generations.

About the Blue Iguana Conservation Programme

The Blue Iguana Recovery Programme began in 1990 with only 30 dedicated Blue Iguanas and the primary goal to restore the wild population to 1,000 Blue Iguanas, encouraging viable population in the long-term. Having met its primary goal in 2018, the initiative formally transitioned to the Blue Iguana Conservation Programme in 2019 with a new focus of sustainably conserving the native species of Grand Cayman.

About the National Trust's Environmental Programme

The National Trust for the Cayman Islands' environmental programme was founded on the concept that the protection of native plants and animals is best achieved by protecting the natural areas in which they depend.

About the National Trust Conservation Programme



The National Trust for the Cayman Islands' conservation programme strives to protect Cayman's native species and the habitats in which they live, and includes the endemic Blue Iguana of Grand Cayman, the Sister Islands Rock Iguana and Cayman's native bat species.

About the National Trust Historic Preservation Programme

The National Trust for the Cayman Islands introduced the launching of its *Historic Preservation Fund* at its Annual General Meeting in September 2021 for the purpose of inviting increased support of its continuing efforts to encourage the preservation and protection of historic homes and buildings for present and future generations of the Cayman Islands.