



M A G A Z I N E



Special Feature Section





THE CAYMAN ISLANDS

New Leadership For New Challenges In the New Decade

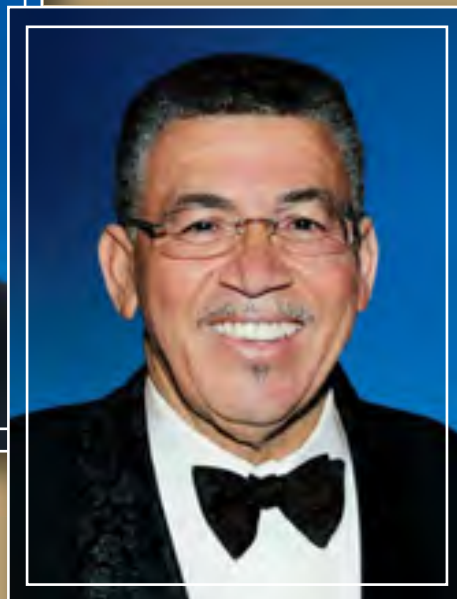


Special Feature Section





**HIS EXCELLENCY
THE GOVERNOR
DUNCAN TAYLOR**



**HONORABLE PREMIER
W. McKEEVER BUSH**

*A*s the Cayman Islands enter a new era certain to encompass challenges, changes, and opportunities, we at *Grand Cayman Magazine* want to congratulate our first-ever Premier, the Hon. W. McKeever Bush, and welcome, publicly and warmly, our new Governor, His Excellency Duncan Taylor, his wife Marie-Beatrice, and their son Max. We trust they will very quickly find they are among new friends and well-wishers in these islands.

In this special section, we will introduce you to Governor Taylor and his wife (a longer profile may appear in these pages after they get settled).

We will also share with you an extensive profile on Premier Bush that tracks his trajectory from his humble West Bay beginnings to his current post as the most powerful leader in the history of the Cayman Islands.

In addition to our editorial voices, companies and individuals have also stepped forward through our pages, and their messages of goodwill are included in this commemorative section.



His Excellency the Governor Duncan Taylor participates in formal ceremonies following his swearing-in.



Special Profile

GOVERNOR DUNCAN TAYLOR

A Seasoned Diplomat Takes Over in Cayman



When Governor Duncan Taylor moved into his new home overlooking Seven Mile Beach this January, the transition marked his 11th posting in a distinguished 27-year career with the British Foreign Service. Coincidentally, he also became the 11th Governor of the Cayman Islands.

During his swearing-in ceremony at the Legislative Assembly, though, Mr. Taylor, modestly and diplomatically, told those attending that he still had much to learn.

“Despite my experience in the Caribbean, I am conscious, in front of such a distinguished gathering, that I have a great deal to learn. I approach the task ahead with excitement and enthusiasm; with some trepidation, for the responsibilities are serious; and with humility,” the new Governor said.



Governor Taylor reviews police troops outside the Legislative Assembly.

As part of the learning process, he spoke of the importance of visiting all parts of the Cayman Islands to meet the people. “My first priority is to listen and learn; to get out into the community and to understand the issues that concern Cayman Islanders.”

Mr. Taylor also noted how much Cayman has already achieved and how the Islands are well placed to meet the current economic challenges.

“The Cayman Islands is a remarkable success story: You and those you have invited to help you have, with the beauty of the islands and the sea around them as your only natural resource, created a peaceful, tolerant, and prosperous society.

“You have used your creativity and ingenuity to develop a society that is the envy of many; and have attracted talent to supplement your own to sustain this,” he told the gathering, and added:

“This is not to say that the challenges ahead are not significant. They surely are. But what has been achieved in the past gives me confidence Caymanians can overcome them.”

Mr. Duncan, his wife Marie-Beatrice, and their son Max arrived in Grand Cayman aboard a Cayman Airways flight from Miami on Friday, January 15, 2010, to sunny skies and a small reception of dignitaries who met them at Owen Roberts International Airport.

Because the plane arrived 30 minutes late, the day’s schedule, which had been planned precisely down to the minute, went into “hurry-up mode.”

No matter. The Governor’s entourage made up most of the minutes and arrived on time, led by a motorcycle police

escort, at the Legislative Assembly in the early afternoon. “Governor Designate” Duncan Taylor walked into the Assembly and, following his swearing-in, emerged to a crowd of well-wishers as “His Excellency the Governor Duncan Taylor.”

He acknowledged a 17-gun salute and inspected the police troops as his first official act as Governor.

The day’s activities included a “meet-the-Governor” evening event at Pedro St. James, organized by Cayman’s new Premier, the Hon. McKeever Bush. The following day Mr. Bush reported that organizers “stopped counting” at 800 guests and probably another couple hundred attendees arrived after that.

Mr. Taylor continues a long and impressive family tradition of public service, dating back to 1919. His grandfather, Sir John William Taylor, capped his time in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office as the British Ambassador to Mexico from 1950 to 1954.

And the Governor’s father, Sir Jock (John Lang) Taylor, was a career diplomat whose ambassadorial posts comprised Venezuela, the Netherlands, and what was then West Germany. Sir Jock always worked to learn the language of the country where he was posted; he eventually spoke German, Spanish, and Dutch, and could handle himself in French, Portuguese, and Czech.

Like father, like son, Governor Taylor speaks French, Spanish, Hungarian, and German. Though he was born in Surrey in 1958, his father’s life as a diplomat took the family abroad, so he was brought up in Uruguay, Germany, Argentina, Venezuela, and, of course, the UK.





Marie-Beatrice Taylor is welcomed with flowers after deplaning at Owen Roberts International Airport. Right: His Excellency the Governor addresses the chamber in the Legislative Assembly before emerging with House Speaker Mary Lawrence from his swearing-in.

His schooling included French Lycée and Highgate School in London; he then took Linguistics with French, Spanish, and Latin American Studies at Trinity College, Cambridge—with hindsight, the perfect education for a man destined for international service.

Mr. Taylor joined the FCO in 1982 and his first posting was as Assistant Desk Officer in the West African Department, until 1983. He then moved on to the British Embassy in Havana, Cuba, as the Third, and eventually, the Second Secretary in the Chancery, where he served from 1983 to 1987.

Subsequent postings were just as diverse, and included the Head of Japan Section in the Far Eastern Department; the Head of Commercial Section in the British Embassy in Budapest; Director of Latin American Affairs during which he was seconded to Rolls Royce; and the Deputy Consul-General, Press and Public Affairs, and Deputy Head of Mission, in the British Consulate General New York.

Mr. Taylor served in New York from 2000-2005, and so was among the British consular staff who dealt with the aftermath of 9/11. Their post-September 11 tasks included handling inquiries from distraught relatives of British citizens who were feared to have been in the World Trade Center at the time of the attacks. Altogether, 30 consular staff, 20 British police officers, and 10 counselors were assigned to help.



Duncan Taylor was among the eight staff recognized for their outstanding work, and he was awarded a CBE, Commander of the Order of the British Empire, for his efforts.

The fourth of eight children, he married Marie-Beatrice in 1981; the couple has raised three daughters and two sons.

He has among his hobbies travel, film, and sports, especially cricket, and in the fall of 2009 he and Marie-Beatrice showed off their swimming prowess in Bermuda. At the annual Round the Sound Swim, Mr. Taylor competed in the 4K swim, finishing second among the 10 men in his age category, and 12th overall, and Marie-Beatrice had a respectable showing in the 800-meter race, placing fifth among the women in her age group.

There will certainly be ample opportunities for the couple to participate in sea swims, both casual and competitive, during their stay in Cayman. And by the new Governor's comments at his swearing-in, he is ready to be involved in all aspects of society. "My wife and I look forward very much to getting to know and to working with the people and the communities of the Cayman Islands," he said. G/C



PHOTO BY ART PASQUALI



PHOTO BY DAVID R. LEGGE



Premier W. McKeeva Bush signs the new Cayman Islands Constitution while his son Barry and wife Kerry look on.



Special Profile

THE HON. MCKEEVA BUSH

From 'Son of the Soil' To Premier of the Land

BY DOMINIC TONNER



I recline into an armchair in one of London's more imposing hotels, waiting for McKeeva Bush. His aides come and go, occasionally stopping to pass the time of day. I haven't seen any of them, Bush included, for a couple of years, and we find we have a lot to catch up on.

Eventually they return to their rooms, and I am left in the upper lobby, looking at the door to the meeting room and imagining what Bush and his closest advisers are discussing inside. I know why he is in London: The Cayman Islands Government is facing an acute financial crisis, and unless it can convince the British that it has the situation under control, it will not be allowed to borrow the money it needs to avoid the embarrassment of being unable to pay its bills or even its civil servants.



(Above left) An artist's depiction of McKeeva as a child in West Bay; McKeeva as a young man at Owen Roberts Airport; and (below left), on his wedding day with wife Kerry.

It is the first diplomatic mission of Bush's second term as the Cayman Islands' political leader. He is on the rise again. Only a year previously he was in opposition and seemed unlikely to lead his country again. But the credit crunch and global recession changed the game. On the evidence of his party's subsequent landslide win in the 2009 elections, the Caymanian people felt they needed him back—the self-styled man for a crisis. Six months after his triumph at the polls, and thanks to a constitutional change that saw some powers devolved from London to Cayman, Bush was sworn in as his country's first-ever Premier. In taking on some of



the responsibilities previously carried out by the British governor, he became, at once, the most powerful politician in the history of his country.

In many ways, he makes an unlikely first Premier. He came from humble beginnings. The house in which he was born and raised was little more than a wooden shack, without electricity and running water. The island was infested with mosquitoes, and barefooted children like him had to run home from school to keep them away. Bush's childhood experience at school was often unhappy. Occasionally taunted for being, in the local vernacular, an "outside child"—his parents were not married when he was born—he was moved from one educational establishment to another, rarely stopping long enough to excel or impress his teachers.

It was not until he joined a Christian youth group in his late teens that he emerged from his shell. He had his first experience of public speaking while volunteering there, as one of the youngsters who occasionally recited the sermon to the congregation. But the youth group was more significant in his story for being the place where he met and fell in love with his future wife, a West Bay girl about the same age as he named Kerry Parsons.

They wed a few years later and bought a plot of land in the Boltins area of West Bay where they built Faith Villa, named after Bush's mother. Times were hard, and Bush flitted from job to job—a busboy and dishwasher at one of Seven Mile Beach's first hotels; a construction worker on the Barclays Bank building; a messenger in a bank, where one of his co-workers was future political rival Kurt Tibbetts.

But his fortunes changed when he landed a job selling life insurance. He earned enough money to quit that job and launch his own business—a property maintenance firm that grew quickly after he won a contract with the new Britannia condo development. Before long he had founded a second business, a real estate agency that helped to market the Britannia complex.

By 1979, Bush, 24, was already a father of two and starting to share in the island's growing economic success. At this point in his life, he might have chosen to focus on his two businesses and enjoy a successful life as an entrepreneur, as many of his contemporaries did. But he was unfulfilled.

CALL TO ACTION

He had been fascinated with politics even as a boy. His hero then was TW "Willie" Farrington, one of the generation of early community figures who emerged in the late 1950s and early 1960s to lead the Cayman Islands after Jamaica's independence from Britain. During Farrington's campaigns, the young McKeeva Bush would stand by the roadside and shout "Vote for TW Farrington!" to pedestrians and motorists.

In 1976, Bush joined the election campaign of one of West Bay's most senior politicians, Benson Ebanks. At one of Ebanks's rallies, Bush volunteered to read a short poem to the crowd—his first political speech of sorts. Meanwhile, he took a more leading role in the community, organizing campaigns across a number of issues ranging from West Bay's woeful lack of sports facilities to the police's worrying failure to solve a series of murders.

Finally, and knowing he could count on the support of his large extended family in West Bay, he launched his candidacy for the 1980 elections at a meeting at West Bay Town Hall. He was recognized as a rising star and his witty and razor-sharp attacks on his opponents helped draw large crowds to his early rallies. And even though his bid for a seat was ultimately unsuccessful, his performance was credible enough to convince him and his advisers to try again in four years' time.

In the meantime, he returned to his businesses, yet did not disappear from the public eye. He joined a campaign to



Cayman's new Premier addresses well-wishers at a UDP gala in his honor at The Ritz-Carlton Grand Cayman ballroom.

PHOTO BY DAVID R. LEGGE

raise funds for the British naval campaign to retake the Falklands Islands in 1982. He saw it as an opportunity to stand shoulder to shoulder with the UK, and the name given to the drive—Mother Needs Your Help—said much about how he and his contemporaries viewed Britain at the time.

And when he stood again as a political candidate in 1984, he was by then more mature and could speak across a broader range of issues with greater authority. Shortly after noon on Nov. 15, 1984, he emerged from the count at West Bay Town Hall to cheers and showers of rice from his hordes of supporters. In a ceremony that he repeated in every subsequent election for the next 25 years, he donned a cardboard crown, raised his arms aloft, and joined a motorcade that passed, slowly but surely, through the jubilant streets of West Bay.



BANK COLLAPSE

Bush is a difficult man to define. Yet one adjective springs to mind—resilient. This showed through in two career-defining moments that said much about his ability to overcome difficult odds.

The first of these came in 1997, with Bush aged 42 and West Bay's representative for 13 years. He had won a seat on the Executive Council (ExCo, now known as Cabinet) and was tipped as a future Leader of Government Business. It was the era of Cayman's great leap forward, when thousands of immigrants poured through its borders and a generation of Caymanians enjoyed riches their ancestors could not have imagined, let alone predicted, a modern-day gold rush built on the pillars of mass-market tourism and financial services.

Cayman's most senior politicians eagerly courted new business. Several, including Bush, accepted positions on the boards of regional banks, moves which seemed to symbolize the strengthening bond between a booming industry and a supportive government. Bush was appointed non-executive director of Gulf Union Bank, a Qatar-based institution that



Premier McKeeva Bush and wife Kerry pose for a formal portrait on the day of his swearing-in.

operated in Cayman through First Cayman Bank, a retail bank with about 3,000 local account-holders (including Bush himself). But within a year of Bush's appointment, and amid allegations of fraud, the Cayman Islands Monetary Authority took the momentous decision to revoke Gulf Union's license and wind up First Cayman Bank.

Bush may not have been responsible for the bank's failure—he had not even managed to attend a board meeting during those 12 months—but with so many of the bank's senior officials overseas, his critics recognized that he made the ideal scapegoat. When most of his colleagues in the Legislative Assembly signed a letter calling for his immediate resignation from ExCo, he was crushed. In an episode then known to only a handful of his closest friends and advisers, he suffered a severe anxiety attack and was ordered to his bed for several days. When he finally was well enough to emerge, he traveled downtown and told the then British Governor, John Owen, that he would be standing down.

It was the low point of his career. But his supporters rallied to his cause. The start of his comeback can be traced to a public meeting that was organized for him at the West Bay Playing Fields shortly after the bank's collapse. There were audible groans from the large crowd when he announced that he would be stepping down from ExCo, and many people urged him to reconsider. People lit candles and said prayers. Bush waved to his supporters and left the stage to the cries of Bob Marley: "Man to man is so unjust, you don't know who to trust, your worst enemy could be your best friend, and your best friend your worst enemy." But the show of public support touched Bush and gave him the strength to carry on as a backbench member of the Assembly. That support grew. More public meetings



In his "pre-premier" days, McKeeva and friends show off a good catch aside Mr. Bush's boat, named, of course, for his wife Kerry.

were organized in the following days and weeks, and they always drew hundreds of people, all dismayed at the turn of events and determined to demonstrate their support.

This was (and still remains) the secret of Bush's success, the reason he has been able to come back from such setbacks. His public support comes from his service as an outstanding community representative. People regularly line up outside Faith Villa at sunrise to ask for his help or advice with a particular problem, often returning after sunset to learn about the progress that Bush has made during the day. Whether people know him as "Mr. Bush," "McKeeva," or "Mac," he has always been able to connect with his constituents in a way that few of his contemporaries and opponents have been able to.

The support—and even love—of his people made his comeback after First Cayman Bank possible. It spurred him on during his lean years as a backbencher, and when he regained his seat in 2000—on the back of yet another massive vote of confidence from his constituents—even his staunchest political opponents had to acknowledge that he deserved to resume his place in government.

Within a year, he had become Leader of Government Business. The country was in the grip of a post-9/11 economic slump, and following a backbench revolt, the then Leader, Kurt Tibbetts, Bush's former co-worker from his days as a bank clerk but by then his greatest political rival, was voted out of ExCo. Bush, as Deputy Leader, automatically replaced him.

Many Caymanians called Tibbetts's removal a "coup." The episode had ironic echoes of Bush's own loss of an ExCo post in 1997, and the whole affair reinforced the impression that ministers in the Cayman Islands lived under the constant threat of reshuffle or removal. Bush must have known something of what Tibbetts was feeling as his opponent was forced to take his place on the backbenches.

STATUS GRANTS

Two years after the removal of Tibbetts came Bush's second career-defining moment. His administration was preparing

Whether people know him as “Mr. Bush,” “McKeeva,” or “Mac,” he has always been able to connect with his constituents in a way that few of his contemporaries and opponents have been able to.

to introduce a new Immigration Law, which introduced a seven-year limit for most foreigners on work permits and established the right for longer-term immigrant residents to gain a form of citizenship known as Caymanian Status.

In order to smooth the transition from the old system to the new, Bush and his Cabinet colleagues took a fateful decision. They were faced with an enormous backlog of applications for Caymanian Status, many of which had remained in a legal limbo for years because of an official moratorium on the granting of Status. Bypassing the statutory boards that normally granted Caymanian Status to long-term immigrants, the Cabinet decided it would draw up its own list of names and award them Status.

Bush felt an affinity for the immigrants, whether white-collar or blue-collar, lawyer or construction worker, people who had traveled from far and wide to help in the development of the Cayman Islands. One case left a lasting impression on him, that of a Jamaican woman who had worked in the Department of Social Services for years and yet was being told to leave the island. He knew her well—she had lived in Cayman for 20 years, owned a home on the island and had given birth to twins there. She was distraught. He told her: “This is simply not fair,” and resolved to do something about it.

Bush originally proposed to his fellow Cabinet members that they grant Status to “only” 500 people in 2003—a way of symbolizing the 500th anniversary that year of the first sighting of the Cayman Islands by Columbus. But the Cabinet could not agree on how to cut the few thousand names they had individually proposed down to 500, and they collectively decided to grant Status to them all. The result was that almost 3,000 immigrants became Caymanians within a matter of weeks—a significant number in a population of only about 20,000 born or naturalized Caymanians.

Many people were appalled, and their mood did not improve when it was later revealed that some of the Status-recipients would not have qualified under the old system. More than that, however, the granting of Status to so many foreign-born people struck some as accelerating a decline in Caymanian identity and way of life.

It was no surprise that Bush’s party, the UDP, lost the next election (although Bush, inevitably, regained his seat in West

Bay). While his administration’s perceived lackluster response to Hurricane Ivan in 2004 may have influenced some voters, the deciding factor had been enduring anger among indigenous Caymanians over the Cabinet Status grants.

The next administration, led by Bush’s old foe, Kurt Tibbetts, was freer-spending and, to the delight of critics of the Cabinet grants, more staunchly nationalist. But the country was not able to escape the worst of the global banking crisis that exploded in 2008, and with the economy in freefall, the people turned again to their man for a crisis, voting Bush and his UDP party back into power in 2009 . . .

PREMIER BUSH

I am reflecting on Bush’s second comeback as the door to the meeting room finally opens, and I am whisked inside by one of Bush’s policy advisers. Bush is sitting on one side of a long table, staring at a small mound of papers. His colleagues look weary as they leave the room. But Bush seems surprisingly relaxed, and motions for me to take a seat.

We exchange pleasantries, and when I tell him he is looking fit and well, he explains, with characteristic honesty, that he has recovered well from the bariatric surgery he turned to in order to combat his obesity. He proceeds to display all his typical wit and charm as he regales me with stories of the recent election win, the challenges he has inherited from the previous administration (of whom he does not have many kind words to say), and the hopes he will be carrying into his crucial meeting in Westminster the following day.

I take the chance to congratulate him not only on his election victory but also his ascent to Cayman’s first Premiership. I hardly need tell him that he has come a long way, that his long political career has surprised as much as delighted even his closest supporters. And as we shake hands and he heads upstairs to his room, I am left to reflect on what his success means not just for Bush, but for the Cayman Islands.

On one level, it has been an endorsement of Bush’s good old-fashioned brand of constituency service. But there is more to it, too—a seal of approval for the good things that he stands for: a pride in one’s homeland, an unfailing determination to succeed, and above all, a desire to make the future more prosperous than the past.

And when I later discover that the British government allowed Cayman to borrow some of the money it needed, I allow myself a smile, reflecting on the fact that McKeeva Bush has always exhibited in times of crises his most enduring, enabling, and perhaps even endearing attribute: resilience. G|C

Dominic Tonner is former editor of the Cayman Observer and the author of a biography on McKeeva Bush. He currently practices his writing trade in London.





*The UDP congratulates our Party Leader
and the country's first Premier,
the Hon. W. McKeeva Bush, OBE, JP.*

*We are very proud of him on this
historic accomplishment, and we wish him
God's continued blessings and guidance.*

*We also welcome His Excellency the Governor
Duncan Taylor, his wife Marie-Beatrice,
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*We wish them a most productive
and enjoyable stay.*



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*Cayman National joins in congratulating the
Hon. McKeeva Bush, first Premier of the
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*We look forward to working together to build
a brighter future for the Cayman Islands.*

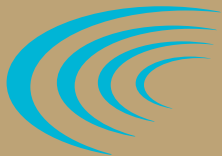
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*Baraud International is pleased to extend
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*As partners at The Strand Dental Clinic,
we congratulate the Hon. McKeeva Bush as
the Cayman Islands' first Premier, and
welcome our new Governor, His Excellency
Duncan Taylor, and his wife, Marie-Beatrice,
to the shores of the Cayman Islands, the Jewel
of the Caribbean. We shall strive to make
their family and loved ones feel at home
during His Excellency's tenure.*

*Respectfully,
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*The WaterColours development team
welcomes the Honourable McKeeva Bush
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