

NATIONAL ARCHIVES

OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Archives Awareness Week

Discovering History at Our Doorstep

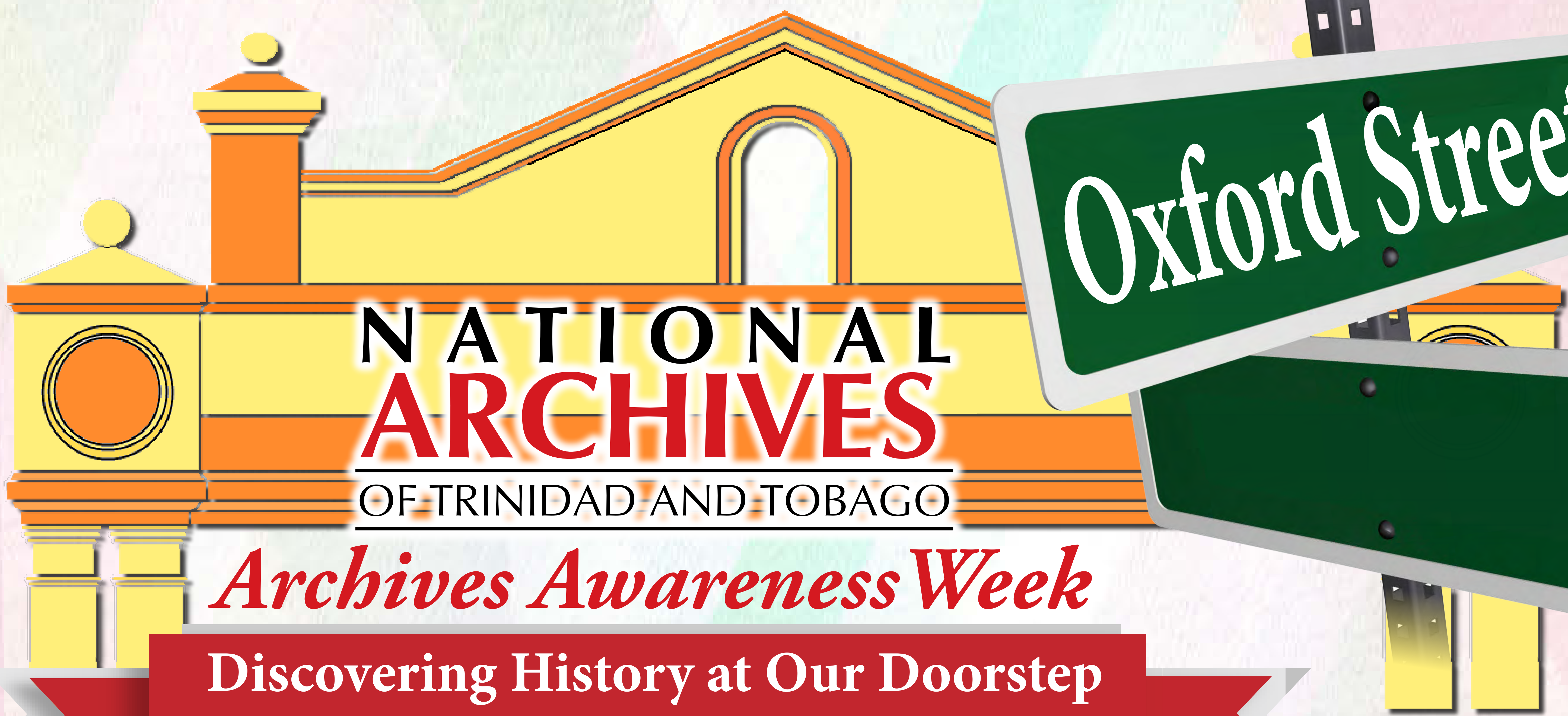
NOVEMBER 10th - 14th, 2014



With its theme, “Discovering History at Our Doorstep” the National Archives this year journeys to its past at its doorstep on upper St. Vincent Street. The space at #105 St. Vincent Street, previously called Cambridge Street, has a rich and diverse history, having been the home of the Portuguese Club, the Government Teachers’ Training College, the Sacred Heart Girls’ R.C. School, and the National Archives, as well as other groups, including the Astor Johnson Repertory Dance Theatre.



The history of its environs on upper St. Vincent Street, New and Oxford Streets, reveals art, commercial, and family histories as well as features architectural gems such as gingerbread houses and a barrack yard dwelling.



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Barrack-yard

The barrack-yard was any building or collection of buildings divided into rooms and occupied singly or in sets by persons of the lower income bracket. There was a common barrack-yard and conveniences. Barrack-yards developed in the twentieth century in response to the need for cheap accommodation in the capital cities. Few barrack-yards were visible from the streets and access to them was through narrow gateways.

There were "yard" barracks, "front" barracks called "apartments" and "upper storeys" locally called "upstairs." Locals and West Indians of African descent made up the majority of the dwellers in the barrack-yards in Port of Spain but there were also Chinese, Portuguese, East Indian and Venezuelan dwellers.

Source: Cummings, James. Barrack-yard Dwellers. Trinidad, School of Continuing Studies, UWI, St. Augustine, 2004.

Keith Scotland Attorney at Law and Comprehensive Insurance Brokers Ltd.

The building housing Keith Scotland, Attorney at Law, (Virtus Chambers) at the corner of Oxford and St. Vincent Streets, and the adjoining red building, are owned by Vernon Gosine of Comprehensive Insurance Brokers Ltd. and were once residential homes. The building at the corner was previously owned by Emile Elias through NH International (Caribbean) Ltd and housed Educare Limited, an affiliated company of NH International. Later on the building was occupied by CONCACAF until Keith Scotland assumed occupancy. From the 1970's to the 1990's the adjoining property was owned by the brokerage firm D'Arcy, Alcantara and Rojas until it was purchased by Vernon Gosine in 1995. Not many structural changes were made to the buildings.

Source: Comprehensive Insurance Brokers Ltd



Fifi House

This house was once the home of Louis A. Fifi, Registrar General at the Red House and his wife Josephine, during colonial times. The house, which bears stunning architectural features reminiscent of gingerbread houses, was used in the filming of "Mystic Masseur" and as the set for several commercials. The house was designed by architect, Dirk Meinertz Hahn.

New Street

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Kosmos Club — 75 and still going strong

By Terry Joseph

THE FIRST social club seeking to ensure that all ethnic groups have a common place in which to mingle, the Kosmos Club, will be 75 years old this month. The very name of the club, Kosmos, is derived from the word cosmopolitan, "carefully and deliberately chosen for the specific purpose of identifying the club as a place open to all colonial citizens in those days, regardless of race, religion, colour or creed," says club secretary Ferdie Ferreira. "One needs to remember that at the time of the club's founding, the done thing was for each ethnic or class grouping to have a social club which catered exclusively for its type of people; but Kosmos set out to change all that," he said.

Sir Errol Dos Santos, a civil servant, in September 1922 witnessed the signatures to the original Memorandum of Association, the constitutional instrument with which the club was formed. The original signatories were J. Rousseau, J.T.

Gittens, Nora Maillard, Gerald Donawa, HOC Hendy and Lucille Lack. Dos Santos, who was later knighted for his work in the civil service, eventually became a member. The club makes one demand on potential members — that they be of good character. From that basic position, Kosmos has been able to maintain a register of members, many of whom have, over the years, become national icons and still keep the clubhouse links with the rest of the fold. Names like C.L. Duprey, Norman Tang, Clarence Sooden, Winfield Scott, Knolly Henderson, Jack Bynoe, Sir Errol Dos Santos, Ray Diefenthaler, Joffre Serrette and the Mathieu Brothers are but a few of the famous people who regularly walked the halls and sat at the gaming tables. The clubhouse, originally at the corner of Edward and New Streets in Port of Spain, was burnt flat in 1970. The members set out to raise funds to reconstruct the Club and after three years were able to put up the present building at 36 New Street.



SOCIAL AND CLUB LIFE IN TRINIDAD

In recent years club life in Trinidad has expanded. Social life has however degenerated. There are innumerable sporting clubs and just over sixteen social clubs if a proper check is made of those seeking recognition as such. Social life amongst these clubs literally means little or nothing. They merely serve the purpose of providing entertainment in some form or other, mainly card games, dancing or drink, but beyond that they do not mean much to the maintenance or improvement of social life or standards.

There are two forms of social clubs in the Island; the proprietary clubs, namely the Country Club, the Perseverance Club, the Palm Beach Club, the Naparima and the Palms Club, San Fernando, and the private social clubs such as the Clydesdale Club, Union Club, St. Clair Club, Portuguese Club, Cosmos Club, St. Augustine Club, Chinese Club, India Club, Casuaris Club, Shamrock Club and the Maple Club. Within the last two years the Savannah Club once the most dignified and exclusive club in the Colony went out of existence.

Tavern on the Green

RESTAURANTS

TRINIDAD'S "TAVERN ON THE GREEN"

Trinidad's "Tavern on the Green" was established by Messrs. Carl A. H. Boisjere and Joseph G. Balocco, late of Pawling, New York, in April, 1950.

It is the only French restaurant in the Colony, catering to the elite and discriminating sections of the population, and possessing, during its short existence, a large and increasing clientele.

Lunches, Dinners, Teas, etc., are supplied a la Carte. Special attention is also paid to catering for Lunches, Dinners, Teas, Cocktail Parties, Weddings and receptions is a specialty.

A well-stocked American Bar of Wines, Liqueurs, Liquors and other alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages has been installed in its attractively decorated premises at No. 109, Upper St. Vincent Street, Port-of-Spain, where an efficient and courteous staff is at the disposal of patrons. Charcoal Broiler, outdoor bar on its attractive lawns, and umbrellared tables and chairs are added amenities of this popular establishment.

With its bamboo setting, thatched carat roof, bar and attractive murals depicting Trinidad's principal Industries, "Tavern on the Green" is filling a long-felt want for a modern and up-to-date French Restaurant within the limits of the City. Sumptuous and delicious meals and the latest in drinks of all kinds, including the Restaurant's own Cocktails, Punches, Swizzies, Frozen Daquiries etc. are the order of the day. "Tavern on the Green" are noted for their specialty of Spring Chickens as supplied exclusively by the San Diego Farm.

Catering to the Tourist Trade of the Colony is a feature of the Restaurant's activities which is under the supervision and management of an expert French-American Maitre d'Hotel in its Managing Director.

Authorised Capital of the concern is \$50,000. Directors are Messrs. Carl A. H. Boisjere (Governor), and Joseph G. Balocco (Managing). Bankers: Royal Bank of Canada. Solicitors: J. D. Sellar and Co.

TRINIDAD'S TAVERN ON THE GREEN
 109 ST. VINCENT STREET (Upper)
 THE ISLAND'S MOST UP-TO-DATE RESTAURANT
 Centrally located within City and Suburban Limits
 Famous for its LUNCHESES, TEAS and DINNERS
 Under the supervision of French-American Maitre d'Hotel, Mr. JOSEPH G. BALOCCO,
 formerly of French Pavilion World's Fair, and Pawling, New York.

WELL STOCKED AMERICAN BAR

SPECIAL CATERING FOR—
 LUNCHESES, TEAS, DINNERS,—a la Carte WEDDINGS & RECEPTIONS

The Restaurant of the Discriminating

CHARCOAL BROILER,
 OUTDOOR BAR, BEAUTIFUL LAWNS, UMBRELLARED TABLES,
UNEXCELLED SERVICE
 PHONE 4703.

Source: Trinidad - Who, What, Why, 1953



RHAND Credit Union

RHAND (Red House and Neighbouring Departments) Credit Union was formed on the 27th March 1947 to help civil service employees better face financial challenges.

The first location of the credit union was at the Red House on Abercromby Street but after changing locations several times, it eventually constructed its own building at 57-61 Abercromby Street. While the construction took place, RHAND Credit Union was temporarily located at the Telly Paul Building on the corner of New and St. Vincent Streets.

Source: RHAND Credit Union

St. Vincent Street

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Alton House

Alton House was the first home of Charles E.H. Boissiere, who was responsible for building the Boissiere House, an architectural icon at 12 Queen's Park West, now owned by Junior Sammy, contractor. The house bears architectural features such as intricate fretwork, slate roofing, cast iron fencing, jealousy windows and portecochere, typical of the gingerbread house of the 1900s, influenced by Scottish architect, George Brown.



Charles E.H. Boissiere

St. Ursula's Girls' Anglican School



THE OLD BUILDING: St Vincent Street Anglican School in the 1940s. Its demolition in 1952 made way for the present St Ursula's building.



Dr. Eric Williams' visit to the school in the 1960's

St. Ursula's Girls' Anglican School is one of oldest primary schools in Trinidad and Tobago. The school opened in 1852 as a co-educational institution with a total of 150 boys and girls and was known then as the St. Vincent Street Anglican School. It was instrumental in educating the children of former enslaved. In the late 1970s it became a girls' school and produced graduates such as 1977 Miss Universe Penny Commissiong-Chow and singer Heather Headley. Over the past decades, several St. Ursula's girls have placed on the honour roll of those scoring 95 per cent and above in the SEA exam. In addition to excelling in academics, the school also has a vibrant extra-curricular programme including track and field, netball, chess, karate, music, swimming and gymnastics. Following the demolition of the old school building, the new school was constructed in 1952, catering for about 250 pupils. The school is run by the Anglican Board of Education.

Source: St. Ursula's Girls' Anglican School



New school building





St. Vincent Street

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French Guiana, and B.W.I. Noted authority on *Caribbean* American travels. Married. No children. Add: Carenage. Successful businessman and prominent figure in trade, commercial and industrial circles of the colony.

LOUIS JAY WILLIAMS: Founder and Managing Director, L. J. Williams Marketing Co. Ltd. Born T'bad, 1897. Educ. Coffee Street E.C., San P'do. 1925 started business as Manufacturers Agent and 11 years later established L. J. Williams Marketing Co. Ltd., of which he is Managing Director. Also Co-proprietor of Louis Jay Associates, Advertising Agents and Publicity Experts. First T'bad businessman to use local broadcasting station for advertising purposes, notably the running of commentaries on the M.C.C.--T'bad and W.I. cricket matches, 1935. Big supporter of local film industry. Produced Film featuring T'bad's Bonniest Babies for Cow & Gate Ltd., England. Was associated with Messrs Cox Ritchie & Co. Ltd., England and Petty & Co. Ltd., London, part donor of Green Pastures Shields awarded to W.I. Schools for proficiency in essay writing. Founder and Secretary (Honorary) T'bad and Tobago Boy British Comm. which did much to popularise and foster the buying of British and Empire goods locally. Pioneer of direct Australia to W.I. Shipping Service which has resulted in reorientation of West Indies Import Trade in many commodities including Dairy Products, Milk, Fresh and Canned Meats and Fruits, Jams, Tallow, Fatty Acids, Flour, Butter, Cheese, and Manufactured articles. In this has been associated with Mr. Brian M. Sims, partner Roborn Dried Fruit Co. of Adelaide, South Australia. Travelled extensively to U.S.A., Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, Mexico, Panama, France, Holland, Belgium, Denmark, U.K., Germany, Luxembourg, Venezuela, Jamaica, B.G. and the B.W.I. Married Miss Eileen Lai Fook. 10 children. Address: 28, Elizabeth Street, P.O.B. Prominent figure in trade, and commercial circles, playing a big part in its economic development.



L.J. Williams Ltd.

L.J. Williams Ltd. was established by Louis Jay Williams in 1925. The company was the pioneer in the establishment of the direct Australia-West Indies import trade in foodstuffs, meats, milk, butter, cheese and dairy products. Notable lines represented include the famous Cow and Gate Ltd. of England. L.J. Williams was the first businessman to use the local broadcasting station for advertising purposes, notable being the running of commentaries on the M.C.C. – Trinidad and W.I. cricket matches, 1935.



“Aspirations” by Pat Chu Foon

The sculpture, “Aspirations”, located at the corner of New and St. Vincent Streets, was commissioned by L.J. Williams Ltd in 1976. This is one of several public sculptures created by artist, Pat Chu Foon. The image depicts the family of ‘Man’ aspiring to social and industrial ‘Universality.’ The summit consists of a variety of used automobile parts, such as gear wheels, wheel hubs, pressure plates, clutches and crank shafts.

ASPIRATION
Cast Iron and metal sculpture on a bedrock base depicting a family of man aspiring to social and industrial universality.
 P. Chu Foon 76
L.J. WILLIAMS LIMITED
 22 ST. VINCENT STREET
 PORT OF SPAIN

St. Vincent Street

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Rose Liris McShine-Masanto

Rose Liris McShine-Monsanto

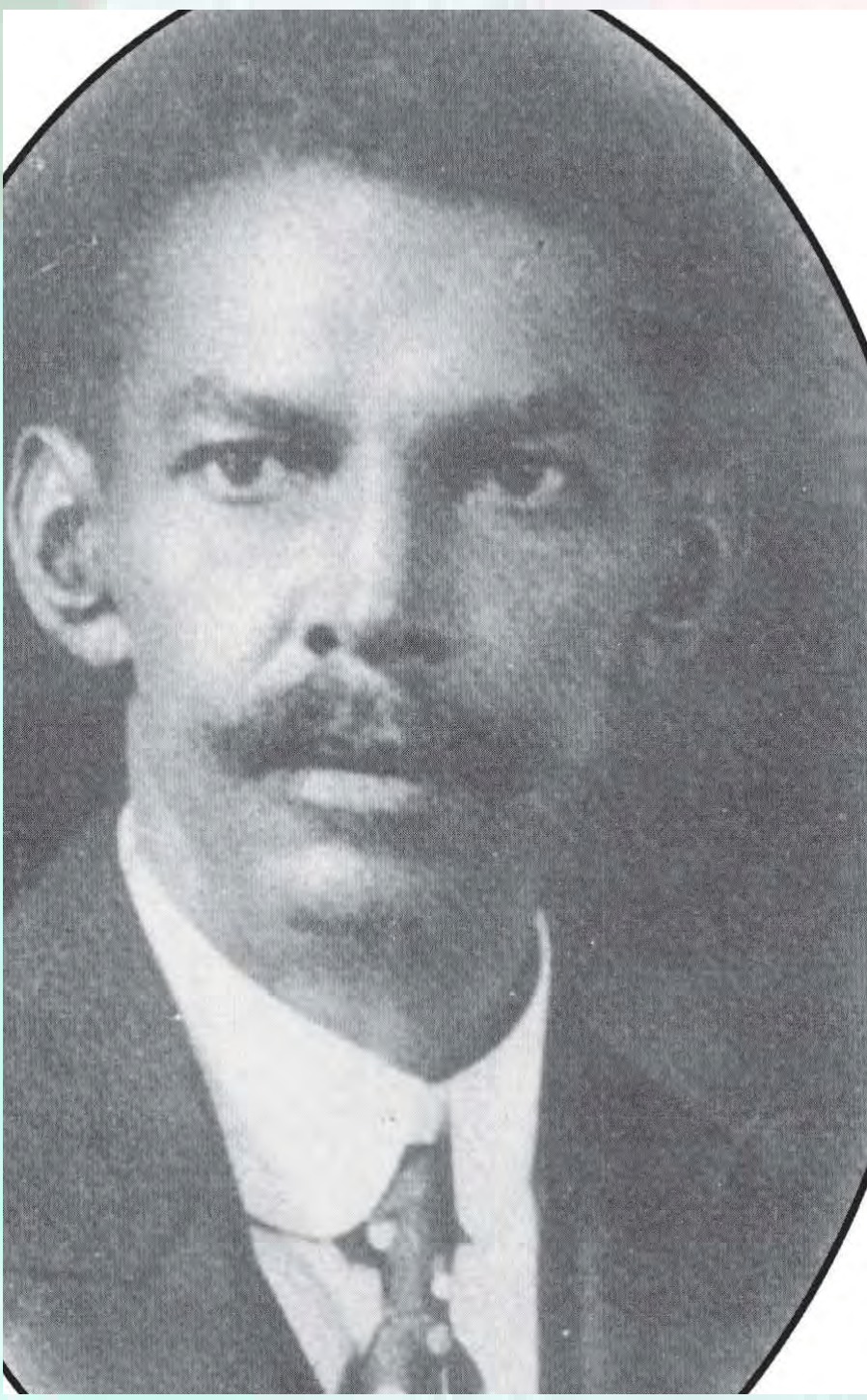
Born in 1908, Rose Liris McShine-Monsanto was one of 11 children of Dr. Arthur Hutton McShine and Marie Leontine Robertson McShine. One of her major accomplishments was being the first female to be appointed to a bank's board of directors. The bank was the Cooperative Bank popularly referred to as the Penny Bank. She was also one of the first students to attend Bishop Anstey High School, after the school opened in 1921.

From 1926, Rose Liris was employed as an auditors's assistant at the Cooperative Bank, in a period when very few women, were employed in banks.

Rose Liris remained in her post for sixteen and a half years, eventually leaving to get married in 1942, since in those days, married women were not employed by banks. She however, became a director on 15 June 1943 and served until 1945, when she resigned to pursue law. She later became the first woman in Trinidad to be "articled," or apprenticed to a solicitor, John Algernon Davis. This followed her efforts to successfully petition the Government to change the law to allow women to become articled.

At his death in 1948, her father Dr. Arthur Hutton McShine willed the house at 103C St. Vincent Street to Rose Liris. The house, originally built by a well-known architect Hahn at Queen Street, was reconstructed at its St. Vincent Street location by Dr. McShine. Rosa Liris died in 2009 at the age of 101.

Source: De Verteuil, Anthony. The McShines of Trinidad, Port of Spain: Litho Press, 2006. Photos courtesy: Hilary McShine



Dr. Arthur Hutton McShine

Trinidad and Tobago's first ophthalmologist, Major of Port of Spain (1921-22), and one of the founders of the Trinidad Cooperative Bank.



The McShine monogram - M C S



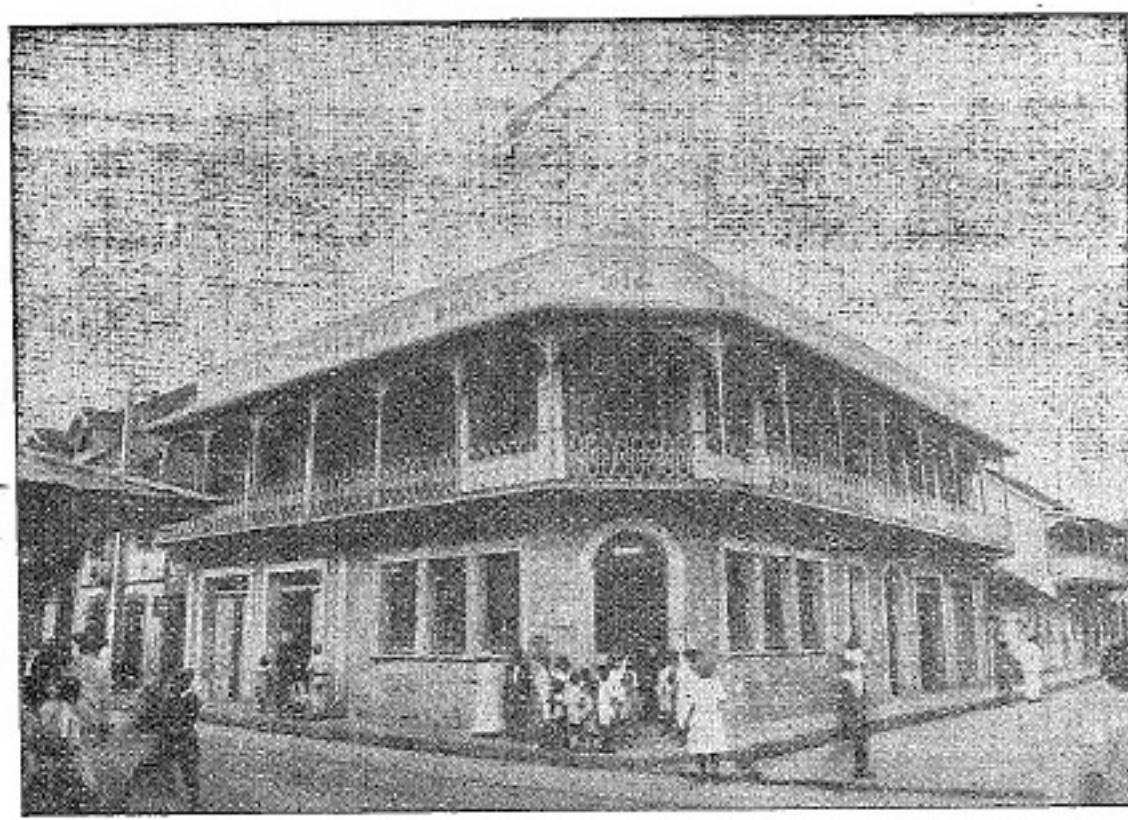
Arthur Hugh McShine, second Chief Justice of independent Trinidad and Tobago.



Umilta McShine, appointed the first local principal of the Tranquility Girls' School in 1936.

Trinidad Co-Operative Bank, Ltd.

INCORPORATED 1914.
GABLE ADDRESS: "THRIFT"
80, 82, 84, CHARLOTTE ST. : : : PHONE 1494
CAPITAL: £30,000
Established to promote THRIFT, and to combat USURY



SHARES: One Pound each payable by weekly instalments of 1/-
LOANS: Advances made on easy terms, repayable by instalments.
SAVINGS: START WITH US, GROW WITH US, TEACH your children to save regularly and spend wisely. Set the example to your servants and employees. Deposit from ONE PENNY upwards. Interest 4 per cent.
PREFERENCE SHARES at \$10.00 and \$100.00 guaranteed 6% interest to improve Workers Humble Homes.
OPEN DAILY—from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Mondays & Saturdays till 8 p.m.
DO SAVE THE PENNIES

WITH THE COMPLIMENTS OF
THE PRESIDENT — Hon. Dr. A. H. McShine
THE VICE-PRESIDENTS — A. A. Waterman, Esq., C. M. Lastique, Esq., (Production Officer) Hon. C. Henry Pierre
THE SECRETARY-MANAGER — Mr. S. A. WALKER
and all the DIRECTORS.



St. Vincent Street

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Astor Johnson Repertory Dance Theatre

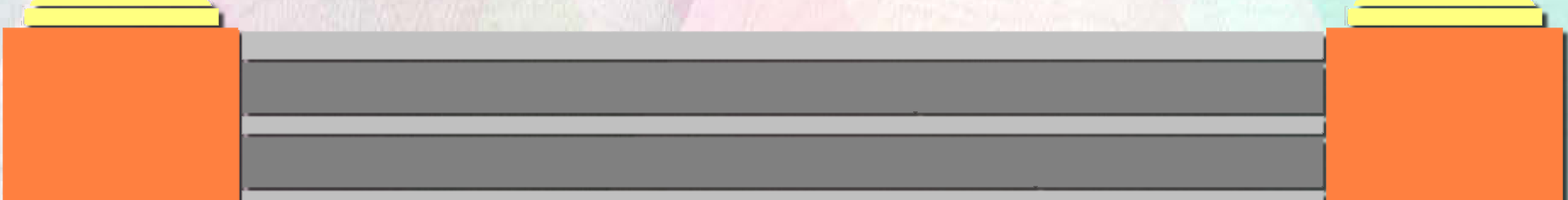
In 1972, Astor Johnson's dream of a Caribbean company was realized when a group of dancers from various companies, schools and traditions decided to share their knowledge and points of view at weekly dance workshops in Port of Spain, Trinidad, including at the Government Teachers' Training College. With the evolution of these weekly workshops came the birth of the Astor Johnson Repertory Dance Theatre.

Source: <http://www.astorjohnsondance.com>



Sacred Heart Girls' R.C. School

The compound of the National Archives was once shared with the Sacred Heart Girls' Roman Catholic School, whose building had been destroyed by fire. The school moved to their present location at Kew Place in 1990 and is now one of the leading primary schools in Port of Spain.





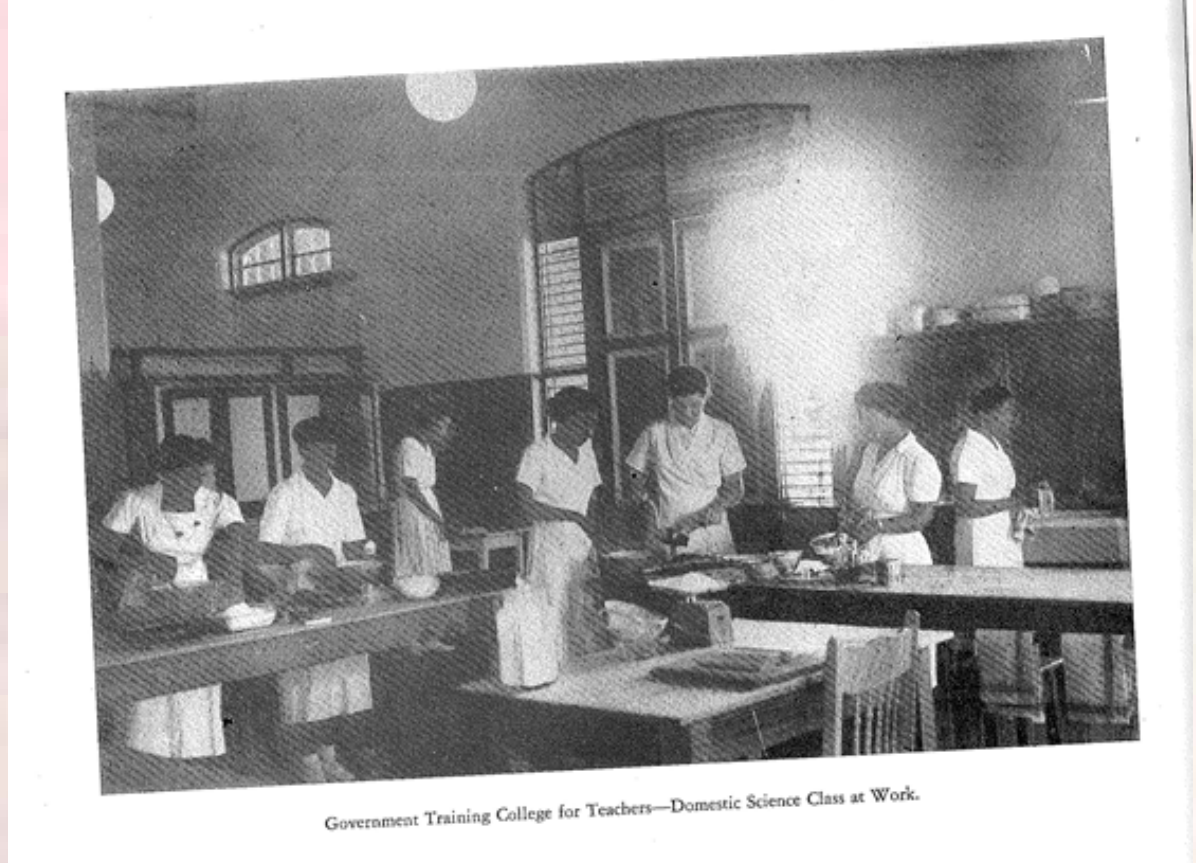
Government Teachers' Training College

The first government teacher training institution was opened on the Woodbrook estate in 1852 but moved to a larger facility at #105 St. Vincent Street (formerly the premises of the Portuguese Club) in 1934. Though the Government Training College existed, it should be noted that there were other teacher-training institutions in Trinidad and Tobago: the Naparima Training College established in 1894 by the Canadian Mission for the training of teachers in Presbyterian schools and the Catholic Women's Training College which opened in 1895 at St. Joseph's Convent, Port of Spain.



In subsequent years, three other government teachers' training colleges were established. In 1963, the Mausica Teachers' College opened followed by the Corinth Teachers' College and the Valsayn Teachers' College in the 1970s. In 2006, the Colleges came under the umbrella of the University of Trinidad and Tobago.

Sources:



Historical Development of Education in Trinidad and Tobago, Port of Spain: Government Printing Office, 1962.

Campbell, Carl. The Young Colonials: A Social History of Education in Trinidad and Tobago, 1834-1939. Barbados, Press U of the West Indies, 1996.

Colony of Trinidad and Tobago. Trinidad and Tobago Education Report 1950.



Portuguese Club

Established in 1927, the Portuguese Club was one of two socio-cultural clubs of the Portuguese community of the early 20th century. The other was the Portuguese Association established by Portuguese immigrants in 1905. Dissatisfaction among the Portuguese Creoles who were rarely given a voice in the administration of the Portuguese Association as well as the lack of understanding of patriotism towards Portugal, prompted the formation of the Portuguese Club. The club acquired its first club house at 105 St. Vincent Street in Port of Spain in September 1928 and later moved to 11 Queen's Park East in 1934. Today the Club has evolved into the Portuguese Magnolias Hockey Club, located in Woodbrook.

Portuguese Club

The early Portuguese Community

The Portuguese presence in Trinidad began as early as the seventeenth century and left a lasting mark on the history and culture of our nation. The majority of Portuguese immigrants to Trinidad came from Madeira during the nineteenth century as labourers to work on the cocoa and sugar estates. At the end of the contracts, most of the Portuguese immigrants left the estates for towns, and turned to the retail trade to make their living. The first Portuguese shop opened in 1846 and became a feature of towns and villages island-wide. Over time the Portuguese immigrants began to assimilate into the wider community of Trinidad and

have had a significant influence in every sphere of life, including religion, business, politics, the arts and cuisine.

Sources:



Portuguese Association



Ferreira Jo Anne S. The Portuguese of Trinidad and Tobago: Portrait of an Ethnic Minority. St. Augustine: Institute of Social and Economic Research, The University of the West Indies. 1994. Print.

Ferreira, Jo-Ann. The Portuguese of Trinidad and Tobago, Locating an important minority, Trinidad and Tobago 50 Years of Independence.



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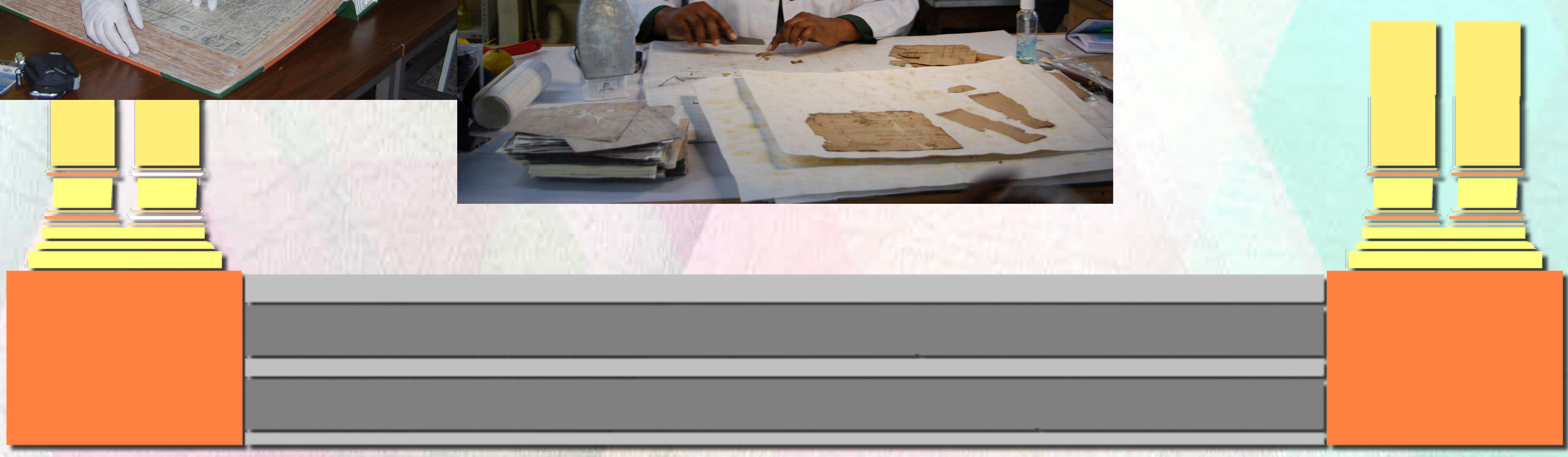


National Archives of Trinidad and Tobago

The National Archives of Trinidad and Tobago is the repository for permanent records and archives of the Government as well as historical records of national significance. After a disastrous fire at the Red House in 1903 which destroyed almost all the records in the colony, provisions were made for new Government buildings with fireproof strong vaults for the storage of records.

The archives was relocated to the basement of the Prime Minister's Office at White Hall when the first Government Archivist was appointed in 1960. It was later moved from this location to accommodate another Government Department and during the years 1964 to 1970 changed location several times.

In 1970 permission was granted to occupy a building on the present site on a temporary basis. This building was to become our main repository at 105 St. Vincent Street, Port of Spain. The 1990's brought several changes. Previously, the National Archives shared the compound with the Sacred Heart Girls' R.C. School whose building had been destroyed by fire. Their departure in 1990 created much needed additional space.



Port of Spain

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