

# Belize

Travel by Bus  
Summer of 2005

Dr. Amy Owen

# Location

## Central America Mainland

### Caribbean Rimland



# History

- Formerly “British Honduras”
- British Colony
- Became independent nation within Commonwealth in 1981
- Member of Caribbean (CARICOM)
- Considers itself culturally both Central American and Caribbean

# Economy

- Adopted US dollar
- Tourism largest industry: best to use guides and tip them!
- Agricultural sector is important for subsistence
- Growth 3.8%: growing trade deficit and debt
- Unemployment: 9.4%
- Poverty: 33%
- Good lifestyle and harmonious ethnic relations



# Demographics

- Population: 200,000
- Racially diverse and mixed (Belizean)
- Mestizo 50%
- Creole 25%
- Mayan 11%
- Garifuna
- Mennonite
- South Asian
- “Expats” from everywhere

# Mennonites



AnaBaptist

Reject Modern Culture

Off the Grid

# Hurricanes

- “Hattie” destroyed Belize City in 1961
- Capital moved to Belmopan.
- “Mitch” (1998) damaged Barrier Reef - killed 11,000 people, 8,000 missing
- Reef second longest in world.

# Languages

- English
- Spanish
- Creole and Caribbean Trade Language
- All of these spoken everywhere – highly multilingual people.

# “Rough Tourism”

- Little infrastructure
- Minimal and inexpensive accommodations
- Electricity unpredictable
- Bus travel inexpensive, old “Bluebirds”

## My Itinerary:

- Jungle and Beach “Surf and Turf”
- \$30/Day for 45 days

# Districts



1. Belize
2. Cayo
3. Corozal
4. Orange
5. Stann Creek
6. Toledo

# Arrival District 1: Belize

- Belize City
- Port of entry for tourists
- High murder/crime rate
- 6 murders a month, many by gun
- Cruise ship access to Mayan Ruins, jungle walks and dive sites

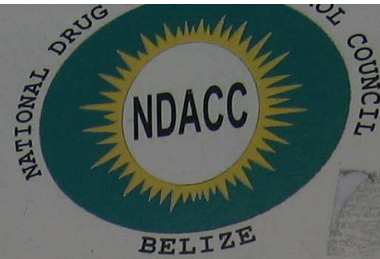








CONTROL COUNCIL  
HIGH COMMISSION



Part four

**! WARNING !**  
CABLE CROSSING  
UNDERWATER

CALL THE B.T.L. OPERATOR  
TOLL FREE AT 139  
24 HOURS BEFORE  
DIGGING OR DREDGING  
IN THIS VICINITY



















# District 2: Cayo

- Gateway to “Jungle Treks”
- “Extreme” Day Tripping
- Mayan Ruins
- Caving and Rafting
- Horseback riding and jungle hiking



# Ruins near Cayo

- Xunantunich
- Cahal Pech

Caracol least accessible  
Tikal across border



# Xunantunich

- Ceremonial Center
- Plazas, Temples and Palaces (Castillo)
- Architecture built to embody Mayan Spirituality 13 Heavens (7 “days”, six “nights”, 9 Underworlds, 20 based system for cycles of time





Another Fine Photo by Kay Scott

## Mopan Ferry







13: Heavens,  
divisions

9: Underworlds or  
levels

20 steps: Sacred repeating number is base of calendar



Frieze





# Stelae

Mayan  
Characters and  
“Day Signs”  
Of Calender,  
  
Predictions and  
Historical record  
over 5,000 years

18 Rabbit at Copan



Photograph by Haley Hodnett





# Actun Tunichil Muknal ATM Cave

- Caves part of Mayan underworld
- Burial and ritual site
- Hour hike through jungle
- Three stream crossings
- Cave underground swimming
- Cave climbing without ladders or safety ropes
- Six hour Trek





Cave entrance



## Curtain Stalactites





Crystal  
Maiden

# Blue Morpho Butterfly House























Mayan Artist





Market Day





Open Market





Sambutes

# Hummingbird Highway



# Stann Creek

- Dandriga and Garifuna Communities
- Placencia
- Caye Caulker





# Garifuna

- Known also as “Black Caribs”
- Carib group: Venezuelan Indians and Africans from slave boat crashes
- Men and women have different languages



Dangriga







Ferry to Placencia from Dandriga









Cabanas on Beach in Placencia









Dive Trip



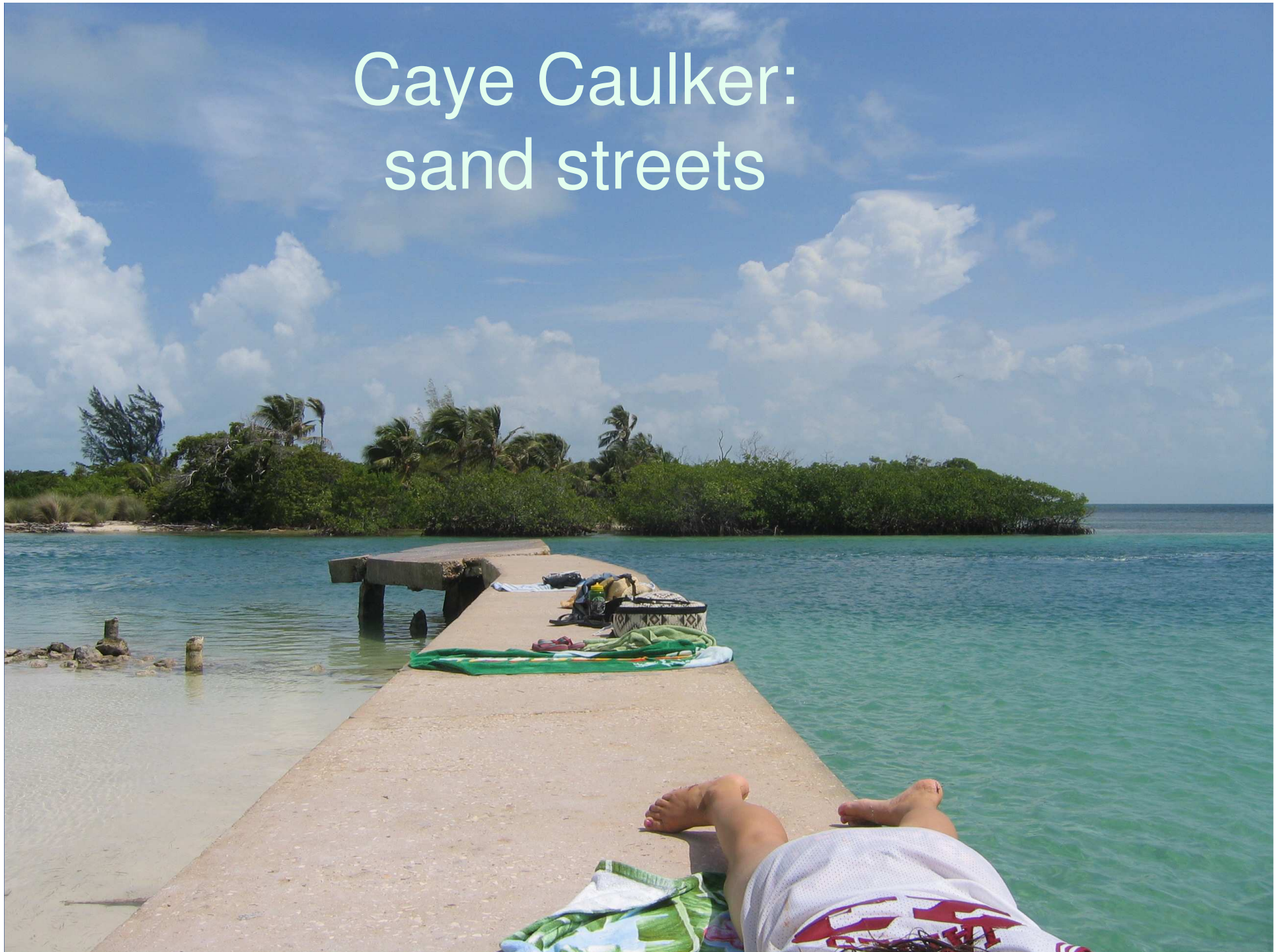




Swimming with  
Fish, Rays, Sharks,  
Dolphins and Turtles



# Caye Caulker: sand streets







Morgan's Place on Caye Caulkner



















Caretaker









Mennonite Adult Baptism



Aftereffects..

# Human Botfly





# Summer 2008

