



# The Toledo Howler

Newspaper of the Toledo Chapter of the Belize Tourism Industry Association

FEBRUARY 2009

YEAR 2, ISSUE 3

FREE

## Maya Day Celebrations

16<sup>th</sup> - 29<sup>th</sup> March

### INSIDE THE HOWLER

Maya Day Celebrations	1
Garifuna Healer: Ana Arzu	2
Calendar of Events	3
Maya Day Celebrations cont.	3
Village Life: Barranco	4
Barranco cont.	5
BTIA Members	6
Restaurant Guide	6
Transport Schedules	8
Photo Op	9
Barranco Midwife: Jean Zuniga	9
Toledo Archaeology : Payne's Creek	10
Accommodation: Hickatee Cottages	11
Tour Operator: TIDE Tours	12
Spotlight on Craft: Amanda Ramos	13
School under Sail	13
Wat's Cookin?	14
Map of P.G.	15
Map of Toledo	16
Classified Ads	16

This year, Tumul k'in Center of Learning will host the 4<sup>th</sup> annual Maya Day celebrations which promise to be bigger and better than ever.

There will be 13 days of activities starting on March 16<sup>th</sup> with the Torch Run and culminating on March 29<sup>th</sup> with a full day of games, competitions, food, music and dancing in Blue Creek village.

The 13 days symbolize the 13 energy levels or gradations on the Sacred Maya Calendar.

The celebrations kick off on the 16<sup>th</sup> with a motorcade and bicycle rally from Tumul K'in in Blue Creek to the Maya temple of Lubaantun, starting at 4pm. This will be followed by a Maya Spiritual ceremony at Lubaantun, an offering to show the Mayan's gratitude to their ancestors. Then the Torch Run will depart from Lubaantun and will travel through the communities of San Miguel, Silver Creek, Big Falls, Dump and Mafredi, ending at Tumul K'in Center of Learning in Blue Creek with a display of the Fire Ball game (a traditional game that is played with a burning ball of fire) and live Marimba music.

Tumul k'in describes the Torch Run as symbolic of Mayan reconnection and "...the borrowing of the fire from our great grandparents to reignite the desire for our existence as a people."



A Mayan ball player in action at last year's event

One of the most memorable events from last year's celebrations was the re-enactment of the ancient Mayan ball game, Chaj Chaay. This year the spectacle will take place at 3 venues: Belize City on March 27<sup>th</sup>, Punta Gorda on the 28<sup>th</sup> and Blue Creek Village on the 29<sup>th</sup>. Mark this down in your diary as 'not to be missed'!

(Continued on page 3 )



### Barranco Village Special

Starts on page 4

Mrs Jacinta Tregueno and Alvin Laredo beg Harvey Sandoval to tell another joke at Tregueno's Bar and Shop in Barranco. See inside for more stories and pictures from Barranco.



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# ANA ARZU: TRADITIONAL GARIFUNA HEALER

The Garifuna have been described as “a nation across borders” and Ana Arzu’s life story embodies this notion.

She was born in the Garifuna village of Travesia on the coast of northern Honduras close to Puerto Cortes. She was brought up by her grandmother and great grandmother who was the village healer as well as the midwife. (Contrast this situation in Garifuna communities where the healers are female to Mayan communities where they are exclusively men.) Ana naturally took her place beside her relatives as an assistant and novice learning, like her grandparents, to speak and listen to the animals, birds and plants.

Here she describes her experiences in her own words. “Gutu was my first teacher and my great grandmother, and she did not work alone. She used the help of ancestral spirits and the assistance of animals for her diagnoses, mostly ants and other insects.

Everyone who came to see her had to urinate in a pot. The urine was then taken and poured under the huge tree under which the helper ants lived. I was her assistant, and my job was to watch the ants and tend to the urine. I would pour the urine on the side of the anthill, over to the side as to not drown or upset the ants. A small number of ants would come out first, and she would greet

them as her helpers. Other ants would come out later, but she said they were just being nosy, and I was to pay no attention to them.

During the information exchange be-



tween my great grandmother and the ants, there would emerge different patterns made by the helper ants over the urine. She would talk to them in Garifuna ... She insisted it was the only language the ants understood. She would tell the ants about the person’s complaint, and we would wait patiently for the ants to respond. Somehow, from the patterns they formed and the overall behavior of the ants, she could read the illness and know what remedies to prepare for the person. She would always thank the ants before going back in the house to prepare the remedy as the ants advised.”

learning from her grandmother was not forgotten but continued in New York with advice and assistance from other women and then she herself was turned to for healing. She learned to talk to the plants silently since most people who talk to plants in Central Park are likely to end up in a straitjacket.

Ana’s New York education was preparing her for medical school and an MD program which she followed for three years. Rather than seducing her away from Garifuna healing, formal medical education in the Western tradition served to confirm that what she had learned from her great grandmother was valid, not primitive, scientifically verifiable and known to work from experience.

In the early nineties she met up with John Perkins of the Omega Institute one of the world’s foremost authorities on “shamanism” who had heard about Garifuna healing while traveling in South America. Ana has been traveling the world delivering healing workshops since 1995. The travels included three years living in Ireland at the invitation of native Irish druids where she learned the sacred herbs of that region too.

Now back among the Garifuna nation in Punta Gorda, Ana continues to offer her healing services as well as wellness retreats and plant medicine workshops in which she shares her wisdom on why plants add power to healing and explains the vibrational frequencies and spiritual properties of the seven sacred herbs. The workshops include the creation of personalized Medicine Bundles for participants. She is now a candidate for a Doctor of Naturopathy.

Her professional name Mountain Spirit is a translation of her Garifuna name Lafurugu Wubu meaning spirit of the mountain. You can listen to her radio show “Mountain Spirit Speaks” on Wamalali Radio, 106.3 FM on Tuesdays at 6:40 pm. The show is repeated on Thursdays at the same time.

Ana can be contacted on 600-3873 or through her web site

<http://www.arzumountainspirit.com>

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**Leonie at 722-2070 Email: watertaxi@btl.net**

At the age of eight the family moved to another village.

This time the village was in the Bronx in New York but it remained a tight knit Garifuna community with limited social contact with the world outside the “village”. And within this closed off community Garifuna life continued with its ceremonies, rituals and traditional healing practices. So Ana’s

**Who says man can’t fly?**



**Come to Toledo and let your imagination soar!**

*A visitor enjoys the thrills of Rio Blanco waterfall park.*



# Calendar of Events

Date	Event	Venue / Time	Other Info
20 February	Annual Basket Festival & Competition	Central Park, PG	For more information: 722-2906
16 March	Motorcade and Bicycle Rally Mayan Spiritual Ceremony	Tumul k'in to Lubaantun Lubaantun	Starts 4pm
16 March	Torch Run	Lubaantun to Tumul k'in (follows spiritual ceremony at Lubaantun)	
16 March	Fireball Game	Tumul k'in, Blue Creek village	
21 March	Harp and Marimba Competitions (men and women)	Central Park, PG / starts at 9am	
28 March	Maya Ball Game 'Chaj Chaay'	PG Sports Complex / 6pm	Donation at the door
29 March	Maya Day celebrations in Blue Creek village	Tumul k'in / starts at 9am	
12 April	TIDE Fishermen's Fest	TIDE dock, PG	For more information: 720-2006
22nd- 24th May	Toledo Cacao Fest		

The Toledo Howler aims to print all upcoming district events in each issue but we depend on you, the organizers, to let us know what's going on. If you are planning an event and have a confirmed date and venue and welcome the general public, then please contact the BTIA Tourist Information Office on Front St in PG with details on 722-2531 . Next issue of The Toledo Howler due out in mid April.

## Maya Day Celebrations *(cont.inued from page 1.)*

Mr. Jose Mucia Batz, Maya promoter of the ballgame, shares that *“this game is inspired by the histories of our ancestors, based on the Cosmovision. The origin of this game can be found in the sacred book Popol Wul... we can find some archeological evidence of this old game, like the jom (playground) located at Copan, Tikal, Chichen Itza, Lubaantuun’ and other Maya temples.”*

A small entrance fee will be charged at the door for this event.

On March 29<sup>th</sup>, Maya Day, make your way to Blue Creek village for a full day of fun. Some of the games and competitions planned are: best dressed, pepper eating contest, tortilla making, marimba & harp dance competition, Mopan & Q’eqchi’ poem competition, etc.

There will also be lots going on for children: greasy piglet contest, corn shelling, sack race and much more. The famous Cortez Dance will be performed and tasty local food will be available all day.

This is a great opportunity to have a fun and educational day



21st century Mayan ball players survive to play another day. Their ancient counterparts were not always so lucky!

out while helping to promote Mayan culture and heritage. The full schedule is listed in the Calendar of Events above.

**Contact Tumul k'in Center of Learning in Blue Creek (608-1070) or the Tourist Information Office in PG (722-2531) for more information.**

## Coral House Inn

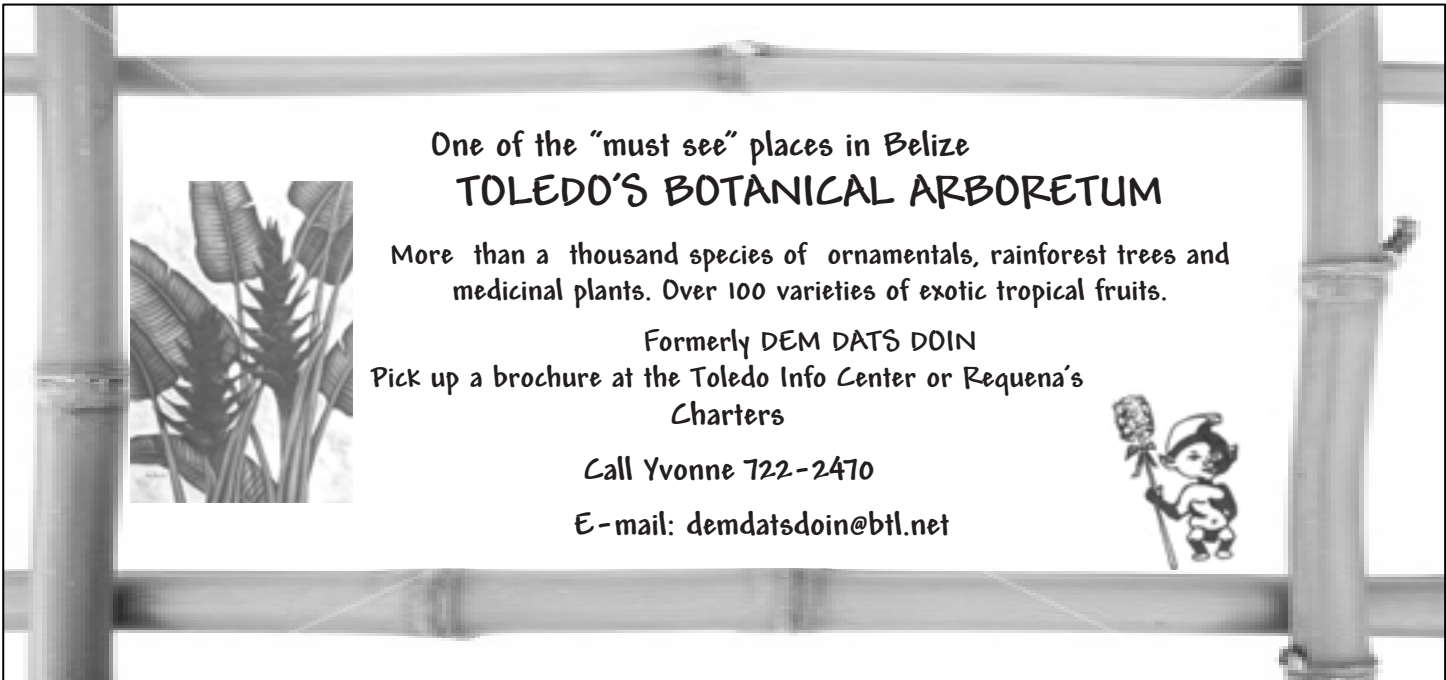
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## BARRANCO VILLAGE



Inside Barranco's House of Culture where displays include dried herbs used in Garifuna healing, domestic wares, photo displays and antique bottles washed up on the shore

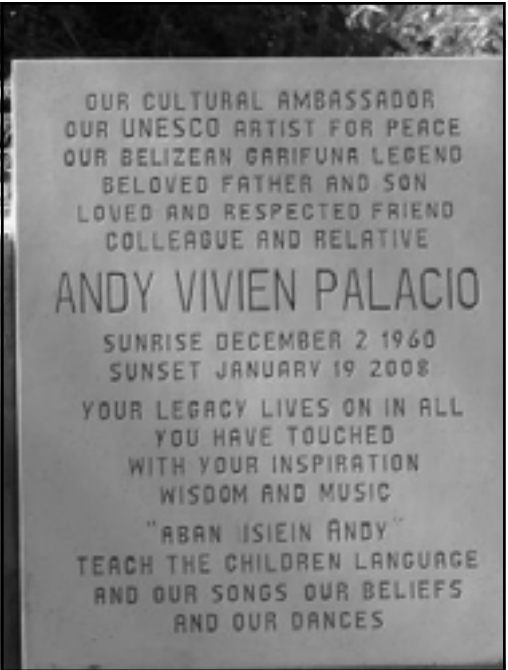


A display of all the traditional equipment used in the production of cassava bread from a giant comal (metal grill plate) to a ten foot long "woler" for squeezing the juice from the raw cassava



Above The dabuyaba was constructed in 200?? The roof is bay leaf palm and the walls are made from comfra palm (*manicaria saccifera*). The only stands of comfra in Belize are found within the Sarstoon-Temash National Park to the south and west of Barranco. The temple can hold up to three hundred people. The Garifuna believe that death is of the flesh only and that the soul lives on. Part of the purpose of ceremonies will be to communicate with ancestral spirits and also for healing.

Right Andy Palacio, Barranco's most famous son who died tragically young in January 2008 just after a long tour with the Garifuna collective which had put Andy and Garifuna music on the map of world music






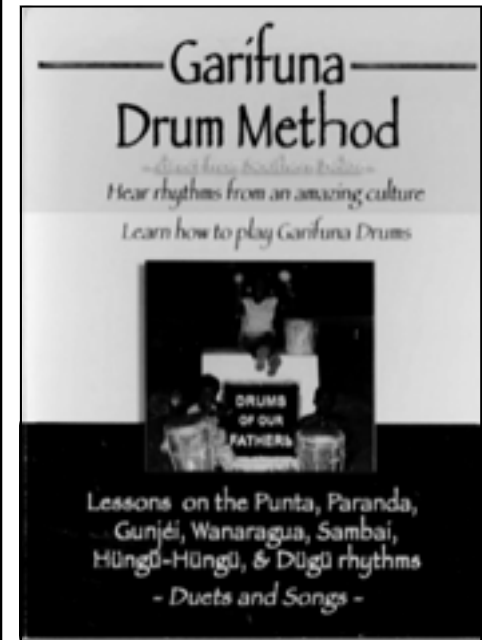
PLANNING A TRIP TO BARRANCO

<p>The Garifuna village of Barranco with a population of just 140 is the southern-most village along Belize’s coastline, a few miles south of Punta Gorda Town and close to the mouth of the Temash river.</p> <p>You can get there by road, turning off the southern highway at Jacintoville, nine miles inland from PG. The road is unpaved and it will take about 45-50 minutes from the highway to Barranco. You will pass through the picturesque village of San Felipe before crossing the Moho River at Santa Ana. Barranco has a daily bus service to Punta Gorda leaving at 6am and returning to the village at 12pm</p> <p>Arriving in Barranco you reach a cross-</p>	<p>roads with grassy lanes leading off to right and left and towards the sea just a hundred yards in front. Immediately on your right you will find Tregueno’s Bar and Store which is the hub of the village and a good place to get information if you have not made any arrangements.</p> <p>Alvin Loreda and Egbert Valencio are both guides and can show you around the village. You can visit the grave of Andy Palacio, tour the Barranco House of Culture and the recently built Dabuyaba where traditional Garifuna ceremonies are held. There is great food available at Zuniga’s Bar if you call ahead and order. Amanda Ramos and her husband Fabian also run a bar where they sell crafts and drums.</p>	<p>Community telephone 709-2010</p> <p>Where to get your copy of The Toledo Howler:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Toledo Tourism Information Center on Front Street in PG as well as other shops, restaurants and places of business of BTIA members in Toledo (see list on Page 5).</li><li>◆ Maya Island Air and Tropic Air terminals throughout Belize</li><li>◆ Tropic Air and Requena’s Charters in Puerto Barrios, Guatemala.</li><li>◆ Placencia Tourism information Center</li><li>◆ Gas stations on southern and western Highway</li></ul>
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FRAGMENTS FROM BARRANCO’S PAST

<p>There are no records of the foundation of Barranco which probably began as a fishing camp. The Garifuna have an oral tradition with history being passed down from one generation to the next and it was not until the arrival of Spanish Catholic missionaries that written records began. It is also said that these same missionaries were responsible for corrupting the original Garifuna family names and rendering them in similar sounding Spanish equivalents.</p> <p>The village was probably founded somewhere around the 1850s.</p> <p>One Santiago Avilez who fished for turtles with nets came from Punta Gorda bringing with him relatives and friends to this place with its high red clay bank along the shore. In those days it was known as Redgliff. The word “barranco” has a similar meaning in</p>	<p>Spanish, being a steep bank or deep</p>  <p>Looking south from Barranco to the Sarstoon Temash National Park and Guatemala</p>	<p>to work in their banana plantations on the Temash and Sarstoon rivers. Barranco was a thriving community with work enough for everyone. In those days, if the citizens of PG wanted a good Saturday night out they would get in their skiffs and go down the coast to Barranco. Later the bananas were wiped out by disease and the Spanish workers left along with many of the local Garifuna population.</p> <p>These days Barranco has a basic water system, mains electricity and a bus service to Punta Gorda on five days a week. A few people are coming into the village. Some are Garifuna retiring to Barranco after a lifetime working in the USA but basically life continues with little to disturb the gentle rhythms in one of the most traditional and welcoming villages in Belize.</p>
<p>gully. The red clay bank has since disappeared through natural erosion and storms.</p> <p>During the 1930s the United Fruit Company brought in many hispanic workers</p>		

Review: Garifuna Drum Method



Garifuna Drum Method (2008) is a major new DVD for enthusiasts of Afro-Caribbean and World music as well as

drummers interested in learning the Garifuna rhythms. The Garifuna rhythms taught include Punta, Paranda, Gunjei, Wanaragua, Sambai, Hungu-Hungu and Dugu. The Paranda is normally accompanied by acoustic guitar and vocals including social commentary. The Wanaragua (also known as the “Jonkunu”) is the seasonal house to house processional dance performed during the twelve days of Christmas by troupes of performers wearing costumes and masks which are a fusion of Garifuna, European and native American cultures although the masks depict European faces. The Dugu is a funereal dance performed as part of an ancestor ritual. It symbolizes the gathering of family members from near and far to honour ancestor spirits through music, dance and food offerings. Unexplained physical ailments are believed to be caused by neglected ancestral spirits. The dugu is normally performed in the Garifuna temple, the dabuyaba, and

only the segunda drums are used in its performance.

The DVD includes exposition of the different beats followed by practice exercises. It explains the significance of the various drum rhythms and their use in traditional ritual and ceremony. The last section includes recordings of public performance with Andy Palacio, Paul Nabor and the Garifuna Collective performing in Millenium Park, Chicago as part of their 2007 world tour. It is worth buying for this footage alone.

It is a must buy for anyone with an interest in Garifuna culture and music and is available wherever Stonetree Records are sold.

Find it in Punta Gorda at the Rosewood Studio on Front Street where aptrsd of the DVD were recorded. Ask for Oscar Burke.

Recommended retail price is around BZ\$40

BTIA TOLEDO MEMBERS 2009

Business Name	Email	Phone	Contact Person
Belize Crafts Ltd, Maya Bags	belizeexecutivedirector@mayabags.org	722-2175	Desiree Arnold
Beya Suites	info@beyasuites.com	722-2188	Lisa Avila
Blue Belize Guest House & Tours	info@bluebelize.com	722-2678	Dan Castellanos & Rachel Graham
Carlo Wagner	stcharlespg@btl.net	722-0193	Carlo Wagner
Coral House Inn	ridarbelize@yahoo.com	722-2878	Rick & Darla Mallory
Cotton Tree Lodge	chris@cottontreelodge.com	670-0557	Chris Crowell
Cuxlin Ha Retirement Village	cuxlinha@hotmail.com	501-614-2518	Dona Lee Scafe
Dem Dats Doin	demdatsdoin@btl.net	501-722-2470	Yvonne Villoria
Garbutt's Marine Investment Co.	garbuttsmarine@yahoo.com	604-3548	Dennis Garbutt
Hickatee Cottages	cottages@hickatee.com	662-4475	Ian & Kate Morton
The Lodge at Big Falls	info@thelodgeatbigfalls.com	671-7172 / 614-2888	Marta & Rob Hirons
Machaca Hill Lodge	info@machacahill.com	722-0050	Brian Gardiner
Requena's Charter Service	watertaxi@btl.net	722-2070	Julio Requena
Romero's Charter Service	rcharters@btl.net	722-2625/2924	Frances Romero
Scotia Bank	elvis.perez@scotiabank.com	722-0098/0099	Elvis Perez
The Sea Front Inn	larry@seafrontinn.com	722-2300	Larry & Carol Smith
Sun Creek Lodge	suncreek@hughes.net	600-8773/614-2080	Bruno & Melissa Kuppinger
TIDE Tours	info@tidetour.org	722-2129	Karel Kuran
Toledo Eco-Tourism Association	teabelize@yahoo.com	722-2531	Vicente Sackul / Reyes Chun
Tranquility Lodge	mspenny@yahoo.com		Penny Leonard
Tumul K'in Center of Learning	tumulkindevelopment@yahoo.com	608-1070	Esther Sanchez Sho

Restaurant Guide				
Name	Address	Type of Food	Phone	Hours
Coleman's Cafe	Big Falls Village, near the rice mill	Belizean	720-2017	Daily: 7- 9am, 11:30- 4pm & 6- 9pm [ Reservations Preferred ]
Emery's Restaurant	Main St, PG, just behind Texaco	Belizean/ Sea-food	722-2317	Daily: 8am – 10:30pm
Gomier's Restaurant and Soy Centre	Alejandro Vernon St, near PG welcome sign	Vegetarian / Sea-food	722-2929	Tues–Sat: 8 am–2pm & 6 – 9 pm
Grace's Restaurant	Main St. PG	Belizean/ International	702-2414	Daily: 8am – 1-pm
Hang Cheong Restaurant	Main St, PG	Chinese	722-2064	Daily: 10:30am – 2pm & 5 – 11pm
The Lodge at Big Falls	Big Falls Village, near the rice mill	International / Middle Eastern	671-7172	Daily: 11:30am – 2pm & 6:30 – 9pm [ Reservations Required ]
Marian's Bay View Restaurant	Front St, south of the market by the sea	East Indian/ Belizean	722-0129	Mon-Sat: 11am – 2pm & 6 – 10pm Sun & Hols: noon – 2pm & 7 - 9pm
Mom's Restaurant	Queen St, PG, by the park	Belizean	620-1607 661-1359	Mon–Sat: 6 am–2 pm & 4– 9 pm      Closed Sundays
The Snack Shack	BTL parking lot, PG	Breakfast & lunch/ Snacks, Shakes & Juices	702-0020	Mon – Sat: 7am – 4pm. Closed Sundays

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TRANSPORT SCHEDULES

Schedule of Flights from Punta Gorda To Belize City and from Belize City To Punta Gorda					
Flights stop at Placencia & Dangriga					
Depart Punta Gorda	Arrive In Belize City	Service Provider	Depart Belize City	Arrive In Punta Gorda	Service Provider
6:45am	7:45am	Maya Island Air	8:00am	9:00am	Maya Island Air
7:00am	8:10am	Tropic Air	8:30am	9:30am	Tropic Air
9:30am	10:30am	Maya Island Air	10:00am	11:00am	Maya Island Air
9:40am	10:50am	Tropic Air	10:30am	11:30am	Tropic Air
11:30am	12:30pm	Maya Island Air	12:30pm	1:30pm	Tropic Air
11:35am	12:40pm	Tropic Air	2:30pm	3:30pm	Tropic Air
1:35pm	2:45pm	Tropic Air	2:30pm	3:50pm	Maya Island Air
4:00pm	5:00pm	Maya Island Air	4:30pm	5:30pm	Maya Island Air
4:00pm	5:00pm	Tropic Air	4:50am	6:00pm	Tropic Air

Schedule of Buses leaving Punta Gorda			
Departs from Punta Gorda	Arrives in Belize City	Service Provider	Type of Service
3:00am	10:30am	National Transport	Regular
4:00am	10:00am	James Bus Line	Regular
4:30 am	9:15am	National Transport	Regular
5:00am	11:00am	James Bus and Usher’s Bus Line	Regular
6:00am	11:00am	James Bus Line	Express
6:00am	12:30pm	James Bus Line	Regular
8:00am	2:30pm	James Bus Line	Regular
10:00am	4:30pm	James Bus line	Regular
12noon	6:30pm	James Bus Line	Regular
1:30pm	7:30pm	Usher’s Bus Line	Regular
2:00pm	7:30pm	James Bus Line	Regular
3:00pm	8:30pm	James Bus Line	Regular

Boats To Puerto Barrios and Livingston, Guatemala				
Service Provider	Dep. Punta Gorda	Arrive In Puerto Barrios	Dep. Puerto Barrios	Arrive In Punta Gorda
Requena’s Charter Service	9:30am	10:30am	2:00pm	3:00pm
Pichllingo	2:00pm	3:00pm	10:00am	11L00am
Marisol	4:00pm	5:00pm	1:00pm	3:00pm

Boats to Livingston depart on Tuesdays and Fridays at 10 a.m.

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ARCHAEOLOGY IN TOLEDO

Tree rings hold the secret

[Dr Heather McKillop from Louisiana State University updates us on her team's work in Payne's Creek]

The pristine mangrove ecosystem of Payne's Creek National Park (in northern Toledo, see map on back page) was once a thriving salt industry supplying the demand for salt of Classic Maya cities in southern Belize and Guatemala. The salt works were submerged as the sea rose and hidden from view until their discovery by archaeologists from Louisiana State University led by Dr. Heather McKillop.

A startling discovery was a peat bog below the sea floor. The peat preserved 1300 year old wooden buildings contemporary with the inland cities of Lubaantun, Nim Li Punit, and Pusilha. Dr. McKillop and her team have mapped wooden architecture at 50 underwater salt works in Payne's Creek . The wooden posts define rectangular buildings where brine was boiled in pots over fires to produce salt, leaving "briquetage," for the archaeologists to map.

The team has cut samples of the posts to identify the wood species, for radio-carbon dating, and for tree-ring dating. The wood presents a conservation nightmare since it decays when exposed to

the air, so the best place to preserve it is in place in the peat bog!

In the dry season of 2008, the LSU archaeologists mapped wooden structures at several underwater sites and



searched for and found additional sites, bringing the total number of sites to 103!

While cutting wood post samples, McKillop noticed tree rings, suggesting the wooden buildings could be dated using tree-ring dating:

If all the Payne's Creek salt works were used at the same time, it was an enormous industry serving the Late Classic inland cities. In contrast, if they were used a few at a time over the course of

the 300 years of the Late Classic, then it was a more modest industry.

In 2008, the team cored modern trees to evaluate the presence and periodicity of tree rings in different species. You might ask why? Although tree-ring dating is standard in temperate climates, there is no tree-ring sequence for Central America, so we had to carry out experimental research on modern trees. Ongoing research in the lab indicates some species do have rings.

The next phase of archaeological fieldwork in Payne's Creek will include diving in deeper water to map deeper sites, using the "hooka" system of hoses instead of scuba diving. They also plan to use an automated unmanned research vessel in collaboration with a marine geologist who designed it, to map the seafloor and hopefully wooden structures in the peat bog below the seafloor!

They also are preparing a display of the famous K'ak' Naab' wooden canoe paddle, which will be on display in Punta Gorda and elsewhere in Belize.

Questions about the research? Contact Dr. McKillop at [hmckill@lsu.edu](mailto:hmckill@lsu.edu) or come hear her presentation at the Belize Archaeology Symposium the first week in July 2009.



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~ Photo Op ~

Seeing as the Howler Monkey is our newspaper’s namesake, we just had to print this lovely photograph of one of our more vocal residents. This howler was photographed recently by Kate Morton at Hickatee Cottages near PG. Nice photo Kate!

*Send us your best photographs of Toledo scenes to print in the Howler.*

Midwife  
Jean Zuniga

Ten miles south of P.G. in the small sea-side village of Barranco, you can find Jean Zuniga relaxing on her porch chat-ting with family and friends... unless she’s been called out to deliver a baby. Jean has been a midwife in Barranco for around 37 years. In fact she is the only midwife in Bar-ranco so she has delivered every baby in the village during that time. Everyone knows Jean. Even our guide, Alvin Laredo, smiles and ad-mits that he too was delivered by Jean.

Jean says she learned midwifery from her grandmother and assisted at many births when she was young. She also received training at the hospital in Punta Gorda. The government requires midwives to go through this training before they are given a license permitting them to prac-tice. The license has to be renewed every five years.

Jean tells me she has delivered at least 35 babies. No one would be surprised if she had forgotten one or two over the years, but I suspect she remembers them all. She is rightly proud of the fact that she has never lost a baby or mother during her tenure as midwife in Bar-

ranco. However, there have been times when the mother needed to go to the hospital in PG. due to special complica-tions. When a hospital visit is necessary, Jean will make the arrangements and will also accompany the mother to hos-pital. This is certainly a much more per-sonal service than most mothers in



Jean Zuniga relaxes on her front porch in Barranco

north America and Europe can expect to receive. Sitting here with Jean, I am re-minded that childbirth is a normal part of human experience rather than the expensive and fraught medical emer-gency it has become in some countries.

Jean is well trained in the use of tradi-tional plant-based medicines to help with deliveries. For example, she pre-pares a strong tea from boiled ginger

root to help reduce labor pains. Also sorosi leaves are prepared in a drink to aid the evacuation of the afterbirth.

Jean obviously has an enormous store of knowledge and experience. Luckily for the local community, she is training a girl in the village to take her place when she retires. Yet having met Jean, I would say she doesn’t look ready to retire just yet.

I learned a lot just sitting and chatting with Jean on a sunny afternoon in Barranco. Did you know that labor is longer with boys than with girls? Or that, traditionally, Mayan men are present at their children’s births and may help with deliv-ery whereas Garifuna men are unlikely to be present at a birth. Jean admits these cul-tural norms are changing and when a Garifuna father wishes to be present, she encourages

them.

With all the babies Jean has delivered over the years, she has also found time to have ten babies of her own. Her chil-dren and grandchildren are now spread throughout the country as well as abroad. Her granddaughter, Lynn, lives in Barranco and is also featured in this issue.



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Visiting the Sarstoon Temash National Park

This national park is managed by SATIIM (Sarstoon and Te-mash Institute for Indigenous Management) Tel 722-0103 or 722-0124. Arrangements for visits can be made through their office. There are park rangers located in each of the five villages bordering the park of which Barranco is one. The oth-ers being, Midway, Sunday Wood, Conejo and Crique Sarco. Egbert Valencio s the park ranger for Barranco.

The entrance fee is \$10 per person and visitors enter the park with a guide and ranger. More than 200 species of bird have been identified in the park as well as Manatee in the Temash river and sightings of all Belize’s big cats and other mammals such as howler monkeys, tapir and peccary.



## HICKATEE COTTAGES



British-born couple, Ian and Kate Morton, first discovered Belize after they met in San Francisco at the start of a six-week 'Green Tortoise' bus journey through Mexico. Kate jokes that when, at the end of their journey, Ian asked her if she'd like to go to Belize with him, she asked "What's Belize?"

Thirteen years later, the British rat-race and the thrill of jobs in social housing management and marketing communications lost their appeal and they, yet again, returned to Punta Gorda where they found their ideal piece of land and quickly set about indulging their hobbies – entertaining, socialising, good food – and their passion for gardening, and nature.

The result is Hickatee Cottages, which has quickly gained a reputation for affordable, quality accommodation, highly recommended by many of the major guide books,

and continuously rated number 1 B&B in Belize by TripAdvisor.com since March 2006.

Hickatee is intentionally small, with just four rooms and 'Charlie's Bar' where breakfast and dinner are served. Family-run, Kate cooks and Ian serves, and they build their menus around the fresh, seasonal produce from PG market. The cottage buildings are all of a traditional Caribbean-style design, built in wood to allow them to cool down quickly at night, and comfortably furnished with locally made hardwood furniture and hand-made furnishings.

They have recently added a one-bedroom suite which offers something more special for couples. Originally built as their house, it offers spacious accommodation with a queen-sized bed in the bedroom, en-suite bathroom facilities, and a large lounge with a vaulted ceiling, with locally-made rattan furniture. The suite has a larger private verandah with hammock and couch, as well as a small deck at the back of the house and a private garden area next to their 'farm'.

Their accommodation prices from US\$50-110 include free transfers to Punta Gorda, a light continental breakfast with tea or coffee delivered

to guests' cabanas, internet access and free use of bikes to explore the local area as well as 5% discount on Tropic Air flights booked through Hickatee Cottages.

Kate and Ian are zealous stewards of the environment, and the lion's share of Hickatee Cottages is in its original natural state, with many large trees and lush vegetation, and is home to an array of wildlife, including quash, gibbon, bush dog, and the occasional jaguarundi. Over a mile of wide, well-maintained trails wind through the jungle land where visitors are regularly serenaded by troops of howler monkeys, and the garden areas surrounding the cottage rooms are often visited by toucans, hummingbirds, and blue morpho butterflies.

**Phone:** Tel: 662-4475

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# TIDE Tours

TIDE Tours is the commercial arm of the Toledo Institute for Development and the Environment (TIDE) and was one of the first tour operators in Toledo district. They begin 2009 with a new manager, Karel Kuran, a Czech national who is also an experienced dive master. Karel arrives with fresh ideas to breathe new life into the range of tours available in Toledo.

While many of their existing inland tours focus on Mayan culture and overnight stays in villages, new tour offerings will be adding an extra dimension of adventure for the fit and energetic. Much of this remains in the planning stage and

The Howler will publish updates of new TIDE tour offerings as they are launched. Inland adventures will include caving, jungle trekking and kayaking, while at sea they will begin to offer more dive choices for divers who want to ex-

Creek Cave and to the waterfalls of San Antonio and Rio Blanco National Park.

Using TIDE's kayaks to explore Joe Taylor Creek is a great way to discover high bush within a stone's throw of Punta Gorda itself. Other kayaking routes in-

clude Esso Landing to Punta Gorda showing visitors the mouth of the Rio Grande and mangrove forests along the coast north of PG. Santa Ana village to Boom Creek on the Moho river south of PG includes high bush on the banks with the possibility of seeing troupes of howler monkeys.


TIDE Tours' colorful entrance on Front St in PG




plore the southern tip of the barrier reef. For now TIDE Tours continues to offer its existing menu of trips and can arrange day tours for visitors to the Mayan sites of Lubaantun and Nim Li Punit, to Blue

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Spotlight on Craft::  
**Amanda Ramos  
of Barranco**

Amanda and Fabian Ramos are Barranco natives who run Marlah's Cool Spot, named after their granddaughter, where they also sell their crafts. From 1968 they spent seventeen years away from home in Orange Walk where Fabian worked in a sugar refinery and they brought up their seven children. Only one child now lives in Barranco where she is the principal of the village school while the others are part of the Garifuna diaspora in other parts of Belize and the USA.



Amanda remembers the time when her father and most of the other men in the village earned their living from fishing while the women baked and sold cassava bread. (Visit the House of Culture

in the village to see the tools and equipment used in the baking process).

Amanda makes traditional skirts which

she sells for between BZ\$20-25 as well as Garifuna dolls. The stuffed dolls all depict women; some returning from the farm carrying fire wood on their heads or baskets of fruit. Dolls range in price from BZ\$10-25.

Fabian makes traditional Garifuna drums of all sizes which retail for between \$30 for a small ornamental drum up to BZ\$500 for a large segunda drum. The entire drum making process takes a couple of weeks. Fabian prefers to use Santa Maria or mahogany for his drum but has also used cedar and yemer which are softer and not so durable. The drum skins are traditionally made from deer skin but now sheep skin is also used and, although thinner, sheep skin will last longer.

**SCHOOL UNDER SAIL**

If you were walking along the seafront in PG in mid January this year, you might have looked out to sea and wondered whether Hollywood was making yet another spin off of Pirates of the Caribbean.

For the seventh year in a row, the educational ship T/S Gunilla, a three masted square rigged sailing ship from Ockero, Sweden was anchored about two miles offshore (due to its deep draft of 10+ feet) near Punta Gorda. The ship arrived on Sunday January 18<sup>th</sup> and departed on Friday the 23<sup>rd</sup>.

The T/S Gunilla is a sailing college with a professional crew plus teachers and students – a ship's complement of 54 persons. The students are in their third year of studies and sail the ship from PG to Cuba, Florida and on to Santo Domingo where they disembark and fly back to Sweden. Then an entirely new group takes over sailing the ship on its next leg before making their way back to Sweden.

"Besides normal schoolwork and individual studies the students are working as seamen (and seawomen) under sail. Conducted by experienced watch leaders and officers they serve as acting crew onboard, responsible for all work aloft and on deck including upkeep of the



The T/S Gunilla anchored off Punta Gorda in January.

ship. Hoisting heavy square sails or balancing out on the yard arm some thirty meters above deck requires co-operation and communication that will develop a

sense of solidarity within the group in a unique way" (according to the brochure).

As part of the sailing college activities while in PG, the crew, teachers and students participate in the Maya Village Homestay Network (MVHN) coordinated by Alfredo and Yvonne Villoria, owners of Dem Dats Doin. A total of fifty four (54) people spend two nights in the remote villages of Na Luum Ca and San Jose. They also visit the archaeological site of Lubaantun.

The students also have study topics as part of their social science course and are required to interview local people while in Punta Gorda. Subjects range from - Impacts of International Funding, Fair Trade, EcoTourism, Garbage, Environmental Issues, Population, Recycling, Pollution and Alternative Farming to name a few.

Perhaps these sea-worthy students will return to our shores one day for a longer visit with their own families. We wish them every success with their studies.

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- 1 small onion
- 2 cloves of garlic
- Waha leaves
- Salt and black pepper

Grate the green bananas into a bowl  
Grate the coconuts and squeeze out the coconut milk and then mix the milk with the grated bananas  
Add a small grated onion and grated garlic cloves to the mixture  
Wash the waha leaves and cut in half across the length of the leaf  
Place the waha leaf on the table with the lighter green side up  
Spoon some of the banana mixture onto the middle of the leaf along the central stem  
Wrap the leaf around the banana mixture and fold the ends to enclose it completely  
Place the filled leaves in a saucepan and place another leaf in the pan so that it covers all the wrapped leaves  
Add cold water to cover the leaves  
Place on the stove and bring to the boil and then allow to boil over a high flame for another 30 minutes  
Drain the water and remove the filled leaves and set aside to cool.

*Recipe kindly contributed by Lynn Zuniga of Barranco village*

Lynn Zuniga and her husband run the Weibayuwa Bar in Barranco village. Weibayuwa means “shark” in Gari-nagu. The Barranco community telephone 709-2010 is in their house so if you call Lynn is likely to answer. The bar also serves food although visitors to Barranco should telephone their orders ahead of time. Chicken rice and beans costs \$8 and hudut with fal-moti (fish in coconut milk) is \$10 and excellent value.

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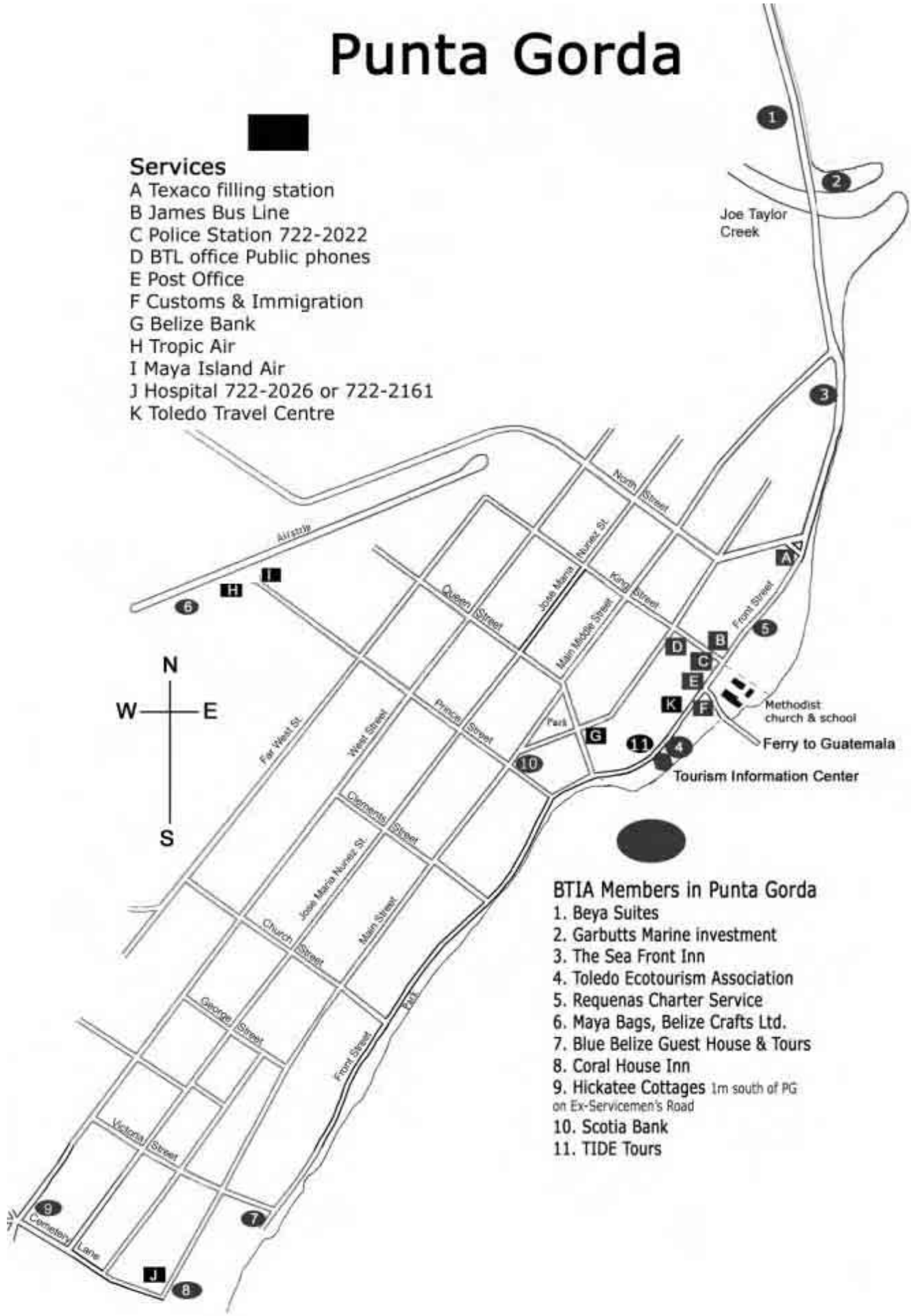
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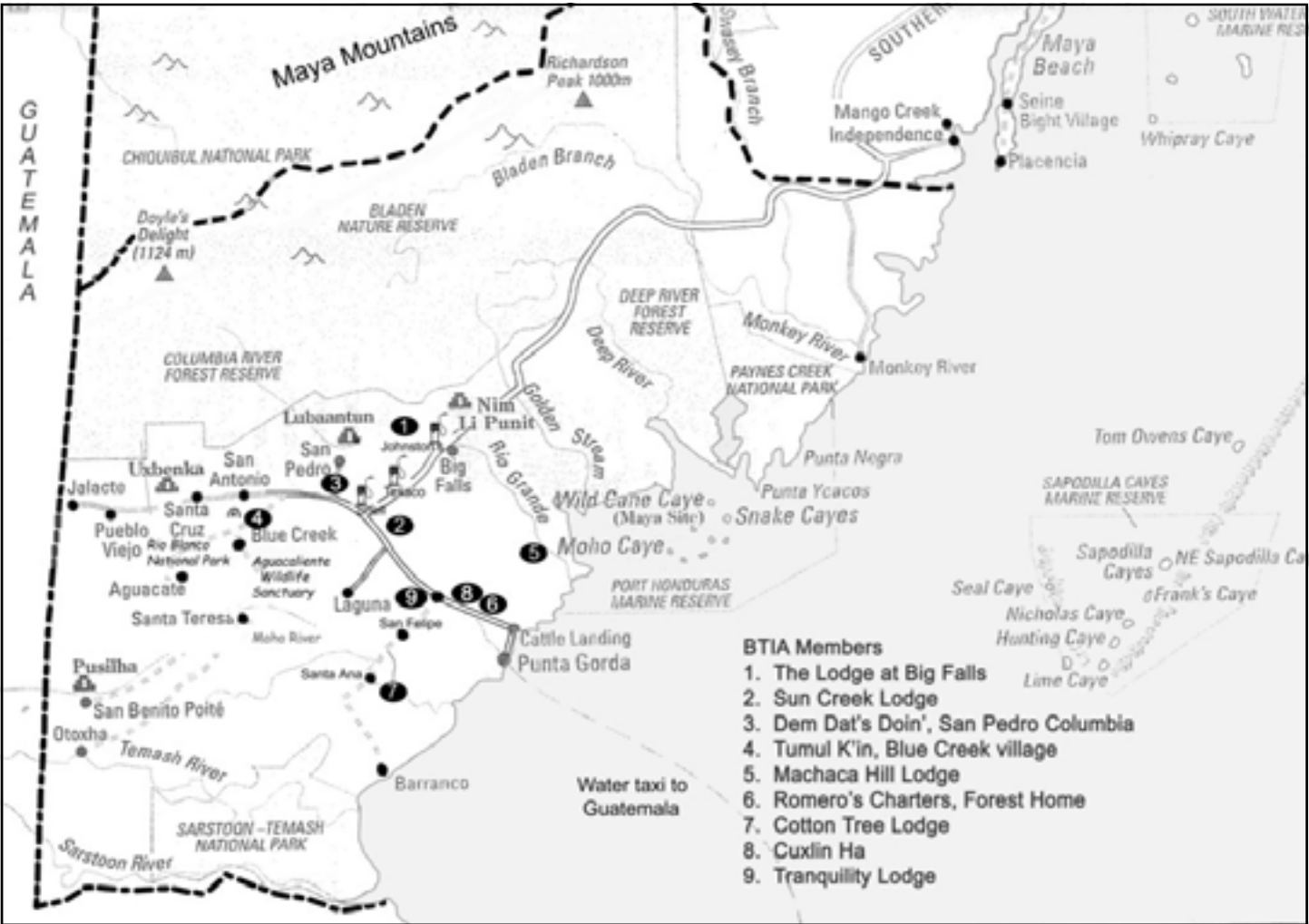
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TOLEDO DISTRICT



Original map from "The Rough Guide to Belize" by Peter Eltringham, published by Rough Guides

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