



# St George's Caye Village Council

Latest News & Events for Residents & Friends of the Caye

SEPTEMBER 2016



## Village Council Welcomes New Members!



New Village Council members  
accepting their posts.

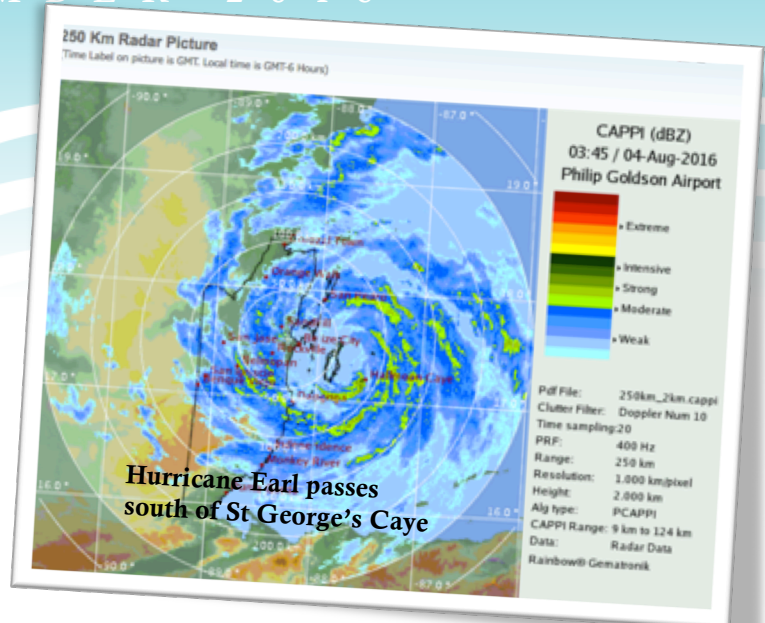
Village Council Elections were held on June 12, 2016. Elected were the following persons:

**Chairman** – John W Searle

**Councilors** – Bernadino Alvarez, Christopher DeShield, Philip Deshield, Christopher Roe, Lynn Young

Please help us welcome the new council members and give thanks to the past members including Lily Bowman, Francis "Bunky" Codd, Paul Hunt and Kay Menzies.

The Village Council asks residents to contact them with any issues so they may be addressed in a timely manner.



## Earl Impacts St George's Caye!

Belize and St George's Caye had a most unwelcome visitor arrive on August 3<sup>rd</sup> – Hurricane Earl! Many homes were extensively damaged and more than 90% of the piers on the front of the cayes were damaged. The island also lost many trees including some of the tallest and oldest coconut trees. Many

Con't on page 2

## Sep 10<sup>th</sup> Celebrations

### Battle of St George's Caye Day

### Battle Regatta

Tentative Sep 10<sup>th</sup> 2016

### Remembrance Ceremony

11 am at Historic  
Cemetery

### BBQ

The 10<sup>th</sup> falls on a weekend!

The Belize Sailing Association is working very hard to bring the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Battle Regatta to the cayes to be held Sep 10<sup>th</sup>!

Join the Village Council as they update residents on latest events and remember those that lived on and loved St George's Caye!

To commence after Remembrance Ceremony



Due to the effects of Hurricane Earl and the financial constraints on NICH resulting from the cost of clean-up at the archaeology sites impacted by Earl, and the destruction of most piers on St George's Caye, the Opening Ceremony of the 35<sup>th</sup> September Celebrations was cancelled. Hopefully everything will be back to normal in 2017!

Our annual celebrations honoring the anniversary of the Battle of St George's Caye is on schedule to take place on Saturday September 10<sup>th</sup>. All residents and friends of St. George's Caye are invited to attend the 218<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of the Sep 10<sup>th</sup> Battle!

### **SATURDAY September 10th**

#### **11:00 am Remembrance Ceremony**

Historic Cemetery

#### **1:00 pm BBQ**

Village Council will provide the BBQ and tables and residents are invited to bring something for the grill.

## **Earl Impacts St George's Caye!**

thanks to the NEMO team who visited the island a few days afterwards to conduct an assessment and deliver relief supplies to those most affected by Earl.

An important observation was that the erosion was worse in areas where there were no mangroves or vegetation along the seashore. Interestingly some of the smallest homes nestled in mangroves on the leeward side in Fishermen Town sustained little to no damage. Our thoughts go out to those who sustained damage to roofs and piers and our best wishes for repairs to be made under speed. To view more pictures taken after Earl, please visit:

<http://www.stgeorgescayebelize.org/2016-earl.html>





# Archaeological Research at St George's Caye

## 2016 Field Season

Dr James Garber and Dr Lauren Sullivan, along with their team of students from Texas State University, spent the month of July on the island conducting archaeological investigations. As usual most of the work was concentrated in and around the Historic Cemetery. This year they excavated five burials and made two interesting finds, the first being a Shako plate badge from the West India Regiment and the second being a Spanish piece of eight! For more details on the Shako plate visit: <http://www.ecomarbelize.org/sgcap-2016.html>



The Shako plate on a miniature model prepared by Mr Tony Barton.



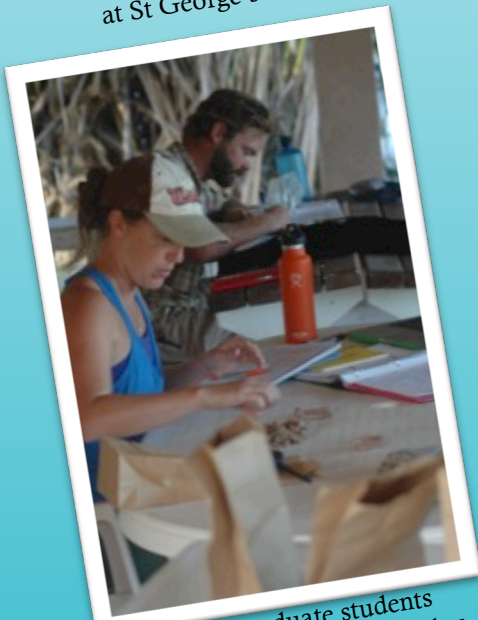
The shako plate found buried at St George's Caye



Replica shako plate badge used on miniature models



The Spanish coin is a 8 real coin dated 1796! It is in very good condition. This is the third Spanish coin found in the cemetery.



Dr Garber's graduate students Lauren Springs & Heath Bentley processing and recording finds.

## DNA Studies Compare Historic Population to Present Day Belizeans

Lauren Springs, PhD Candidate working with the St George's Caye Archaeology Project, collected DNA samples from residents and other Belizeans who could trace their ancestry to the 1700s. Lauren's objective is to compare the DNA profile of the historic population to the profile of modern day Belizeans. Forty six persons participated in the study and the data will be available prior to the start of the 2017 field season. Thank you to all those you participated in the study, we're looking forward to the results next season!

# Marine Research Highlights St George's Caye as Important Manatee Habitat!

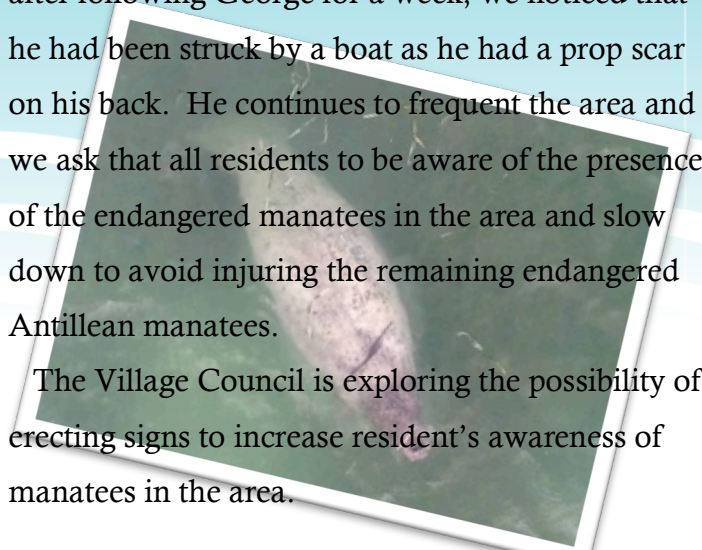
This June ECOMAR hosted five student research groups at the St George's Caye Field School & Research Station who assisted lead researchers, Nidia Chacon, Eric Angel Ramos, and Linda Searle, in collecting data on conch, coral reefs, dolphins, fin fish, lobster, manatees and sea turtles. The purpose of the research is to conduct baseline surveys of the marine environment and highlight important areas for endangered species and fisheries products. The results are currently being compiled into a report and will be presented to residents, but we'd like to share with residents and important finding about the endangered West Indian manatee.

Dolphin and manatee researcher, Eric Angel Ramos, documented manatee migration and behavior around St George's Caye using an unmanned aerial vehicle, or drone, which allowed us to observe manatees without disturbing their natural behavior and activity, and also permitted a better vantage point than from the sea surface on a boat.

The data from the surveys is still being compiled but the preliminary information indicates that a large number of manatees use the back of St George's Caye for resting and foraging. We saw many manatees, including mother with calves, and were able to identify at least one specific manatee who resides at St George's Caye, who we named George. Unfortunately

after following George for a week, we noticed that he had been struck by a boat as he had a prop scar on his back. He continues to frequent the area and we ask that all residents to be aware of the presence of the endangered manatees in the area and slow down to avoid injuring the remaining endangered Antillean manatees.

The Village Council is exploring the possibility of erecting signs to increase resident's awareness of manatees in the area.



"Our George" the manatee resides at St George's Caye!

2016 June 18



There's no better place to be than St. George's Caye!

**St George's Caye Village Council**

[stgeorgescayebelize@gmail.com](mailto:stgeorgescayebelize@gmail.com)

PO Box 1078, Belize City

*Please send us your photos and stories of St George's Caye!*