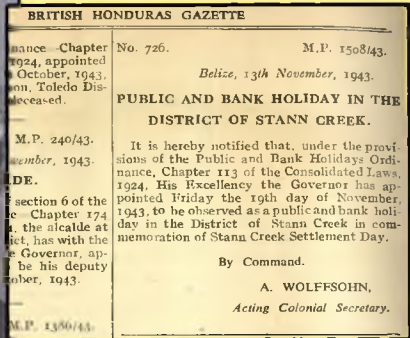


SOCIAL ACTIVIST THOMAS VINCENT RAMOS (1887-1955)



- Thomas Vincent Ramos was born on September 17, 1887 in Tulian, Puerto Cortez in the Republic of Honduras.
- In 1914, at age 26 became married to Eliza Marian Fuentes and together had twelve children.
- In 1923, at age 36 he migrated to Dangriga and was a farmer, a businessman, a candy maker, a boxing manager as well as a song composer and writer.
- In 1924 he formed the Carib Development Society, which was successful in obtaining 800 acres of land at Sarawee Village which was later designated as a Carib Reserve.
- In 1926, he became an active member of the Carib International Burial Fund Society; he later went on to establish the Colonial Instruction Association and the Independent Manhood and Exodus Uplift Society.
- These organizations were all geared towards the advancement of the Garinagu. They provided sick and death benefits and executed an educational program.
- He was a member of the Stann Creek District Board from 1927-1929.
- He originated the observance of the first Carib Settlement Day in Dangriga in 1941. In 1942 this observance spread to Hopkins, Seine Bight, Punta Gorda and Barranco.
- In 1943, he along Pantaleon Hernandez and Domingo Ventura went to the Governor requesting that Carib Settlement Day be a public holiday in the Garifuna Communities. The same year this was achieved for the Stann Creek District and for the Toledo District in 1944.
- In the late 1940's he was the Stann Creek Correspondent for "The Belize Independent, a newspaper which was published weekly during the 1940's.
- Today November 19th is recognized as Garifuna Settlement Day throughout the country and is celebrated as a National Holiday.
- In 1954, he became naturalized as a British subject.
- He died on November 13th, 1955 at age 68. In 1965, a monument was erected in his honour at the Princess Royal Children's Playground in Dangriga. On November 13th, 1990, a bust was erected at the Garden of Gethsemane, Dangriga.