



**Statement from the Hon. Moses Kirkconnell  
Deputy Premier and Minister for Tourism  
on the passing of Eric Bergstrom**

---

It is with great sadness that the Ministry of Tourism acknowledges the passing of Eric Bergstrom, a true pioneer who played a leading role in the development of the Cayman Islands tourism industry.

Having first visited the Cayman Islands as a tourist in the early 1960's, Mr. Bergstrom returned with his family to manage the Tortuga Club in East End.

For the next 26 years, his innovative spirit often rose to the fore, leading him to play a pivotal role in raising the Cayman Islands' profile as a vacation destination.

Highlights of Eric Bergstrom's notable career include being instrumental in the creation of the Cayman Islands Tourist Board, which he chaired; and serving as our Islands' first Director of Tourism. Under his stewardship and vision in those early days, awareness of the Cayman Islands grew, particularly in the United States and visitor arrivals steadily increased as a result. The USA remains as our Islands primary source market for stayover visitation to this day.

There is no question that Eric Bergstrom held a deep love for the Cayman Islands. In 2017, his trail-blazing contribution to the tourism industry was formally recognized during the National Heroes' Day celebrations where he received the Pioneer in Tourism award.

Eric Bergstrom will long be remembered as a man with great strength of character who was never afraid to roll up his sleeves and do what needed to be done. His warmth, hospitality and passion for people were evident and he was always willing to enthusiastically share his knowledge of tourism. He was greatly respected and will be missed by all those who knew him and by countless others who have been touched by his extraordinary legacy.

On behalf of the Government and people of the Cayman Islands, I extend condolences to Eric's family and friends at this sad and difficult time. May his lasting legacy give comfort to his loved ones and may he rest in eternal peace.