



# JAMAICA HOUSE

## A Short History

**Jamaica House** is the iconic building that represents the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM). It is located at 6 Hope Road, Kingston 6 on 12. 14 hectares (30 acres) of land.

The building was constructed in 1963 to be the official residence of the Prime Minister of Jamaica. It has been occupied by three Prime Ministers and their families:

- The Rt. Excellent Sir Alexander Bustamante and Lady Bustamante, 1964– 1967
- The Most Hon. Hugh Shearer in 1972
- The Most Hon. Michael Manley and his family, 1972– 1974

In 1972, the Office of the Prime Minister was located at East Race Course which was later renamed National Heroes Circle. However, a decision was made to remove the Office of the Prime Minister to Jamaica House and the original bedrooms and sitting rooms in the guest wing were used as offices for the Prime Minister's Personal Support Staff. Weekly meetings of the Cabinet were conducted in the Banquet Hall, however, the Cabinet Secretariat, remained at National Heroes Circle.

In 1995, an Administration Building was constructed on the same property to accommodate the OPM staff and in 1998, an adjoining wing, the Executive Building was added. The Executive Building now houses the Prime Minister's Office and the Cabinet Room. Jamaica House continues to be used as offices.

An outstanding architectural feature of Jamaica House is its wraparound verandah which features a colonnade. The columns are tapered at either ends lending an airy ambience to the building.

The Banquet Hall in Jamaica House sometimes hosts State Dinners for as many as 60 persons. The Banquet Hall décor features a replica of the Arms of Jamaica carved from mahogany by sculptor, Christopher Gonzales, OD, whose work includes the statue of international reggae superstar, Bob Marley in Ocho Rios.

Most of the furniture used throughout Jamaica House was locally made from native woods such as mahogany, guango and Spanish Elm. Marble quarried from St Thomas is used on the floors and to decorate the walls.

The OPM is pleased to welcome groups to visit Jamaica House including school children and visitors to Jamaica to view this national treasure. Groups of no more than 50 persons can be accommodated. Requests must be made at least two weeks ahead of time.

To request a tour, write to:

The Permanent Secretary

The Office of the Prime Minister

1 A Devon Road

Kingston 10

email: [ps@opm.gov.jm](mailto:ps@opm.gov.jm)