



St. George's Police Station



The St George's Police Station in 1998

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This is part of a series of architectural articles by the Bermuda National Trust that will highlight some of Bermuda's endangered historic buildings.

The New Police Station Act of 1904 provided for the purchase of suitable sites for the building of new police stations in the parishes of Sandys and St George. The former was built in 1906 in what has been described as an Edwardian Style of colonial architecture. In 1910 St George's Police Station Act authorised the Board of Works to purchase the lot on which stood the Main Guard House and Ordnance Reserve Store from the British military for £300.

Although built after the death of Edward VII, the Police Station was designed in Edwardian or British Imperial style as was the King Edward VII Memorial Hospital completed in the 1920s. All three buildings are thought to have been designed by the same Public Works Department architect or perhaps by the Colonial Surveyor himself. William Cardy Hallett is known to have designed Thorburn Hall in Warwick, the clock tower, colonnade and east tower additions to the Sessions House in Hamilton and his home Elevado in Pembroke.



In February 1911 an application for tenders was published in the Gazette for the erection of a combined Police Station and Magistrate's Court on the corner of York Street and Custom House Square. Electric lighting was installed in October. The tender accepted was from Jacob Richardson Trott for £979. Jacob and his brother Daniel Burrows Trott were born in Hamilton Parish, both married girls from St George's and by 1885 they lived next to each other on Wellington Hill. Jacob, a carpenter and shipwright, and Daniel, a mason, had the police station completed in December 1911. It was reported to be the handsomest and most imposing building in St George's. Indeed, its neoclassical façade with rustication on the ground floor and pilasters and pediments on the upper storey are in the grand tradition and intended to impress.

The most notable interior feature was the staircase with the steps and stringers or support frames made of pine with the remainder of cypress. The Trial Room and Magistrate's office were on the upper storey. Below was the Police Station which was described as 'exceedingly well ventilated with windows on three sides'. Also on the ground floor were the Chief Constable's office and the witnesses' room.

In 1912 Daniel Trott and his masons, were hired to build the enclosure wall on the eastern side as well as necessary ancillary buildings within it. Jacob Richardson Trott, clearly a man of many talents, constructed the tank and store room at St David's Lighthouse.



The original one over one windows were replaced sometime after 2007 when it closed but later reopened and operated on a part-time basis.



The St George's Police Station was closed in 2007 in spite of many protests from St George's residents, re-opened briefly on a part-time basis and has sat forlornly vacant since 2012. In 2017 the then minister reported that the building was found to have deteriorated to the point that it was uninhabitable and not fit for public use. A long-term rental agreement was signed with the Bermuda Land Development Corporation for a building at Southside. In 2018 the same minister reiterated that 'the historically-listed building was not suitable'. Yet the similarly-aged Somerset Police Station was meticulously restored in 1997 and again in 2019 after suffering from hurricane damage.



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