

# BELIZEAN Stories

## *Mr. & Mrs. Hall*



Evan Hall, son of Ivan and Ivy (née Robateau) Hall, and Barbara Hall, daughter of Desmond and Maude (née Gibson) Parks, were born in Belize City and migrated to the United States at a very young age. As the saying goes, birds of a feather flock together and Belizeans abroad frequently socialize, drawn together by the nostalgic magnetism of

culture and homeland memories. Evan and Barbara met at one such gathering – a house party in Brooklyn – where amid the merriment and fun they found love. In May 2018 they will be celebrating their 44<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, a union that blessed the couple with two daughters, two granddaughters and one grandson. Together, they have also planted roots back home in beloved Belize, as the owners of *A Belizean Nirvana*, a boutique hotel in Placencia.

***Careers that paved the road back to Belize:*** Evan's career in the United States spanned many years in the aviation industry, where he travelled all over the world and had the opportunity to work on many notable projects such as the first five space shuttle tail sections, the next generation aircraft trainer for the US Air Force, and the A10 (warthog) fighter aircraft. Evan served as a technical liaison between the firm he worked for and the US Air Force and worked with the team that built the SF340 commuter aircraft, which was critical during the gas crisis of the 1980s. Subsequently, he served as technical representative to many corporations and airlines that purchased these aircraft. The second phase of Evan's career saw a switching of gears, with the establishment of a catering business, *My Belizean Gourmet* (which is now operated by a daughter following the move to Belize).

Barbara spent her career in the financial services sector and has held executive positions at several firms, holding a Supervisory Securities license 24, and General Licenses, 63, 7 and 99. Barbara's professional achievements include appointment as President and Chairman of the Board for an introducing stockbroker dealer, and serving as Member of Audit & Risk Committee for a Trust Company. She has worked with Securities Trading, had the opportunity to act as expert witness in court for a proxy fight and led a team performing due diligence for acquisition of financial services businesses. Barbara has also worked as head of Sales, Marketing and Relationship Management Operations.

***The Heart yearns for Home:*** After years of success and achievement in their respective careers, conversation naturally turned to retirement. For Evan and Barbara, it became clear that home is certainly where the heart is and they began to seriously consider returning to Belize. A move from the United States to a young and growing country would perhaps place challenges in their path, but after much thought they decided that the opportunities and unique beauty offered by Belize were too great ignore. With its stretches of sandy amber beaches, sparkling and abundant waters and a diverse and growing community, Placencia was picked as their future home.

***Too Young to Retire:*** The decision to move to Belize was firmly cemented, however the thought of a laid back retirement for this busy couple was quickly squashed. It became apparent to Evan and Barbara that life in an idyllic fishing village would soothe their souls, however if they were to be happy and fulfilled, they also needed a task, a project, to keep them busy. The original plan had been to build a house for retirement, and build they would, but a hotel instead of a house!

Plans were set in motion with assistance from Evan's brother Anthony Parks who worked on the hotel design and support and assistance from sister-in-law Betty. Evan and Barbara were also able to take advantage of the Diaspora program for returning Belizeans, a simple and straightforward process. And thus, their "*Belizean Nirvana*" became a reality.

***Believe in Belize:*** Evan and Barbara hope that their story will inspire more Belizeans in the diaspora to become involved in the development of the nation by returning to invest in Belize whether it be establishing a business or becoming involved in local community initiatives and organizations.

*Belize will be here for you with the warm smile of home*