The Historic

GUAM CONGRESS/GUAM LEGISLATURE BUILDING

People's Voice







Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Project of the Guam Preservation Trust and the 33rd Guam Legislature

LIHESLATURAN GUAHAN HAGATNA

GUAM INANGOKKON PRESERVATION INADAHI GUAHAN TRUST

"It has been said that, at its best, preservation engages the past in a conversation with the present over a mutual concern for the future."

—William J. Murtagh, first Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places



THE PEOPLE'S VOICE

Dedicated in 1948, the Guam Congress/Guam Legislature Building has played a significant role in Guam's history. It served as the backdrop of the dramatic growth of Guam's self-governance and the recognition of the right to U.S. citizenship of Guam's people.

For the following four decades it was a vibrant stage where the people's voice was heard and acted upon. After some 40 years of service, the distinguished landmark building was closed.

Now with the re-dedication celebration of its rehabilitation in December 2016 by the 33rd Guam Legislature and its official occupancy by the 34th Guam Legislature in January 2017, the Guam Legislature Building will again echo with lively consideration of the goals and aspirations of the people of Guam.

It is of special note that the original 1948 Guam Congress Building was both authorized and funded by the federal government. Some 68 years later this new multi-million dollar rehabilitation and expansion project is authorized by the Territory of Guam and funded by the Guam Preservation Trust and the Guam Legislature.

Naval Governor of Guam, RAdm. Charles A. Pownall, USN, speaks at the cornerstone laying ceremony of the Guam Congress Building on October 4, 1947.

The Guam Congress/Guam Legislature Building project preserves Guam's cultural heritage for the future and moreover makes a significant and positive contribution to that future. Instead of bulldozing the original building, our leaders have chosen to bring it back to life by saving what is best from the past while designing for the future.

The character of the formal chambers and public areas remains intact, but two new wings have been added for legislators and staff. The signature mahogany paneling have been restored. Throughout the building are environmentally friendly materials and efficient use of water and power generated by rooftop solar panels. In this way we respect the past, serve the present, and plan for the future.



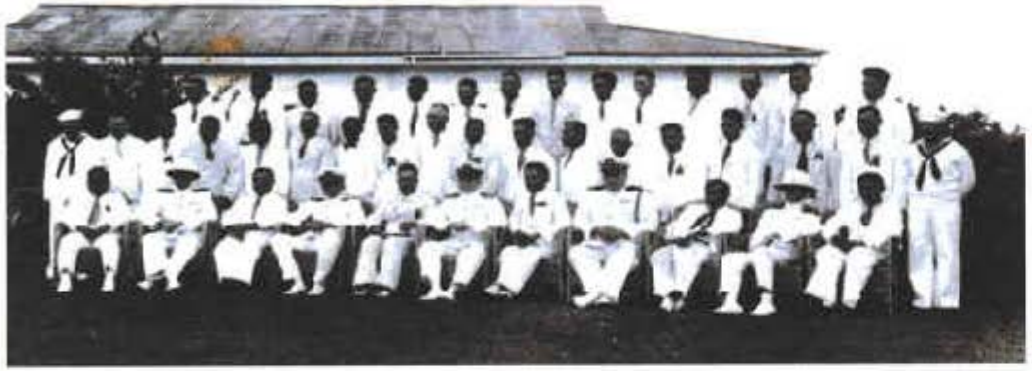
Guam Legislature Building in 1960.



Guam Congress/Legislature Building rehabilitation project in progress in August 2016 showing installation of solar panels underway on the two wings.



HIGHLIGHTS FROM HISTORY
GUAM CONGRESS/GUAM LEGISLATURE



The 9th Guam Congress staged the decisive Walk Out that—supported by national media attention—resulted in President Truman's first steps toward self governance and the recognition of U.S. citizenship for the people of Guam.

Guam's modern history was shaped by the legislative bodies that served here on behalf of the people of Guam from1948 to1989. The 34th Guam Legislature is slated to return to this building in January 2017 when these chambers will again echo with the People's Voice.

1944 – Liberation of Guam. Guam administered by the U.S. Navy.

1947 – Ground broken on the construction of the Guam Congress Building on September 2 signaling the beginning of re-construction of Agana after its World War II devastation.

1947 – Cornerstone laid in a ceremony on October 4.

1948 – U.S. Navy Admiral Charles Pownall, Governor of Guam, gives legislative powers to the Guam Congress subject to veto of appointed Naval governors.

1948 – Guam Congress Building is presented to the people of Guam on July 21, 1948, by Governor Pownall who read a message from President Harry S. Truman.





President Truman signs Organic Act on August 1, 1950. Carlos Taitano (second from left) was in attendance.



Original cornerstone (above) was recovered and preserved in the rehabilitation process.

1949 – The "Guam Congress Walk Out" of 9th Guam Congress on March 5, 1949, leads to greater self-governance. News of the walk out reaches the press including the New York Times.

1949 – Administration of Guam moves to U.S. Department of Interior. Carlton S. Skinner appointed first civilian governor.

1950 – On August 1, the Organic Act is signed by President Truman recognizing the U.S. citizenship of the people of Guam and creates a unicameral legislature with powers of enacting laws.

1951 – At its first meeting, legislature takes name First Guam Legislature thereby changing the building's name as well.

1989 – After 40 years of service, building deemed unsafe.

1990 – Legislature moves to nearby Hesler Place. The Guam Legislature was displaced for some 27 years.

2001 – Guam Congress Building/Guam Legislature Building added to the Guam Register of Historic Places.

2007 – Guam Congress Building/Guam Legislature Building added to the National Register of Historic Places.

2008 – Guam Preservation Trust funds the Historical Structures Report, an assessment of the building's condition and potential.

2009 – Architecture and engineering design plans finalized.

2015 – Funding from the Guam Preservation Trust and the Guam Legislation is achieved and work on the project begins.

2015 – RNK Architecture is awarded the project bid. BME & Sons, Inc. is awarded the construction bid.

2016 – Re-dedication of the building with the closing session of the 33rd Guam Legislature on December 22.

2017 – The 34th Guam Legislature is scheduled to inaugurate the new facility in January 2017.



Antonio B. Won Pat, Speaker of the First Guam Legislature and Guam's first delegate to the U.S. Congress.



The First Guam Legislature members and attachés in January 1951.







Modern Style for a New Era

The Guam Congress Building was the first "strictly all stateside" construction on Guam. It is an example of the Modern style of architecture. This fresh, unadorned style was popular all over the world in the era of recovery and expansion after World War II. The influence of Modern architecture is still felt today.

Designed to withstand tropical storms and typhoons, the building's construction is concrete and steel with a concrete roof. The original interior design was rich with Philippine mahogany materials that were more easily acquired in the mid 20th century than today. These fine wood features were salvaged and remain a central feature in the new design.

The building served the Guam Congress for two years until the body renamed itself the Guam Legislature in 1950. It met here until 1989. The Island District Court and the Territorial Court of Guam also met in this building until 1968. The building was closed due to safety concerns.

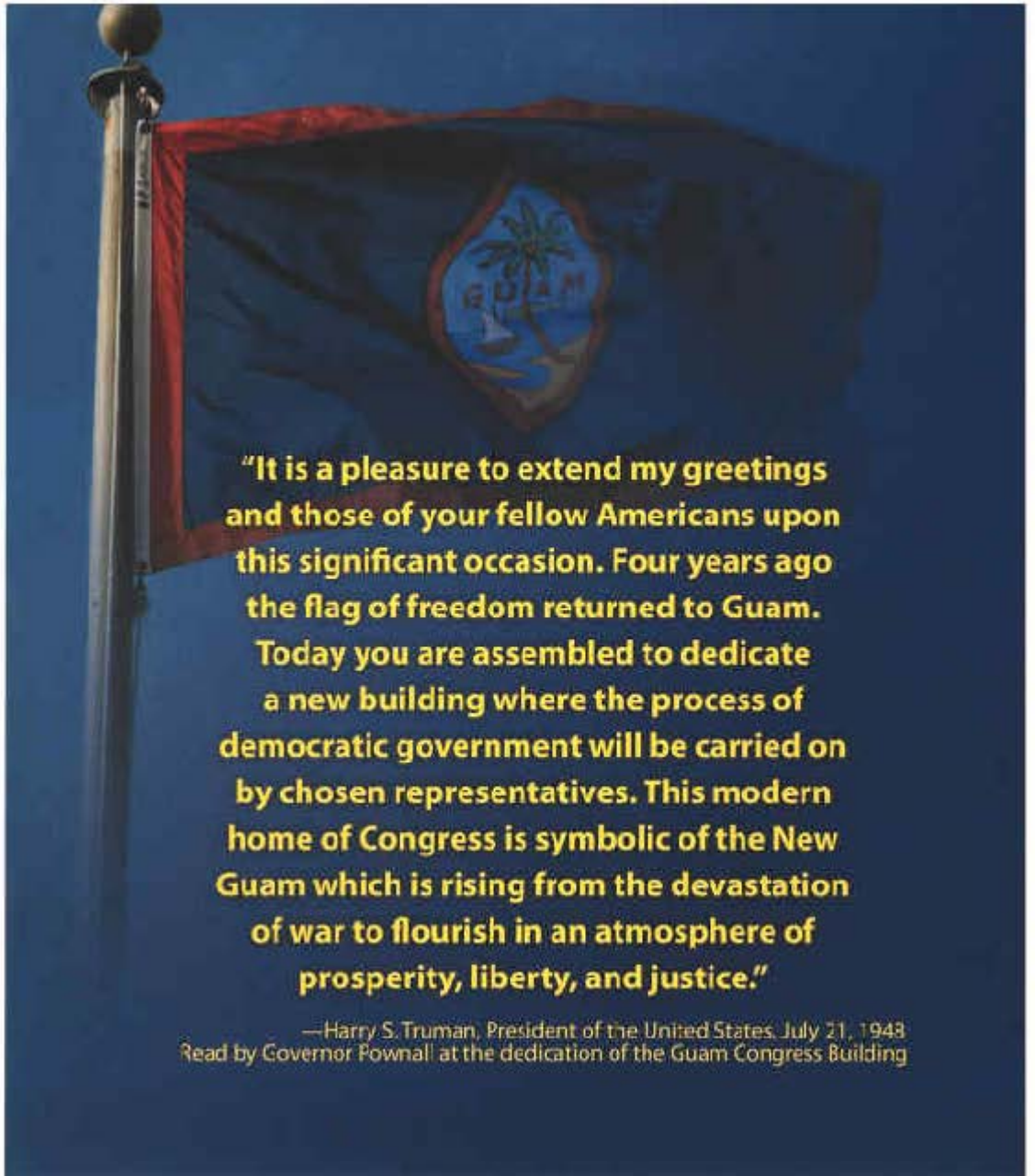
The rehabilitated and reconstructed Guam Congress/Guam Legislature Building again became the home of Guam's elected legislative representatives with its re-dedication by the 33rd Guam Legislature on December 22, 2016, and will be inaugurated by the first session of the 34th Guam Legislature in January 2017.



The 15th Guam Legislature in the legislative chamber.



The conversation suite in the Speaker's office. As a senator Ricardo J. Bordallo (third from left) introduced the law that first created an unofficial Guam delegate to the U.S. Congress



"It is a pleasure to extend my greetings and those of your fellow Americans upon this significant occasion. Four years ago the flag of freedom returned to Guam. Today you are assembled to dedicate a new building where the process of democratic government will be carried on by chosen representatives. This modern home of Congress is symbolic of the New Guam which is rising from the devastation of war to flourish in an atmosphere of prosperity, liberty, and justice."

—Harry S. Truman, President of the United States, July 21, 1948
Read by Governor Pownall at the dedication of the Guam Congress Building



The formal hall in 2009. The building was cleared of asbestos in 1991 and shuttered until assessments were made in 2008-2009. When work began on the rehabilitation project the signature wooden features such as the railings and panels seen above were removed and refurbished for use in the restoration.





Assessment and Planning

In 2009, the Guam Preservation Trust requested a Historical Structures Report (HSR) to access the Guam Congress/Guam Legislature Building before any rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts might be considered. The HSR thoroughly documented the building, its historic evolution and its cultural significance.

The report noted that the building was in good structural condition, but the interior was full of dirt from the large numbers of birds that had been roosting there for years. In addition, the landscaping had not been maintained with weeds, shrubs and mature trees hiding the building from public view.

The HSR indicated that extensive repair, reconstruction and restoration of the building would be required but cited a 2008 structural assessment that declared the underlying building to be sound.

The assessment cleared the way for planning a rebirth of the Guam Congress/Guam Legislature Building that would combine preservation of the important Guam legacy while investing in a sustainable facility that would serve present and future needs.

Far left: During the years it was abandoned, the building was largely hidden from view by overgrown vegetation. When restoration began, the building was found to be infested with large numbers of pigeons. The floors were covered with several inches of dirt and debris. Humidity and rain had also taken a toll.

Near left: When the Philippine mahogany window shutters were opened, they were damp to the touch from humidity, but like the walls and floors of the building, they were salvageable.

Highest 'green' rating expected

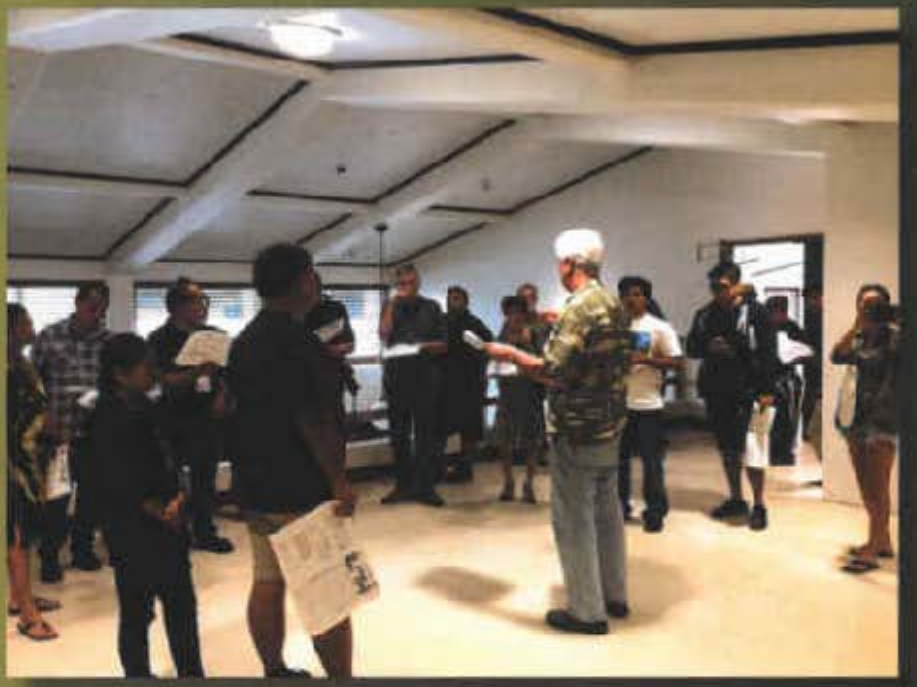
The Guam Congress/Guam Legislative Building project is on track to receive a Platinum rating for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED). The LEED Platinum rating will be the first project on Guam to earn the highest certification level for creating environmentally responsible and efficient structures.

Some of the key areas addressed in the planning construction of the building included prevention of pollution at the building site during construction and use of low emitting interior finishes and coverings inside. Also low or no consumption of power through solar collection. Reduced water use through water efficient landscaping and innovative wastewater technologies.

High marks toward the Platinum rating were earned for the reuse of the walls, floors and roof of the existing building. The project also exceeded water reduction requirements by an additional 32% and requirements for open space by 6%.

LEED Credit Categories







Above: Guam artists gather for an orientation tour of the Guam Congress/ Guam Legislature Building conducted by Joe Quinata, Guam Preservation Trust, and Richard Reed, RNK Architecture, on December 3, 2016. Artists will create art for the building with the theme of "People's Voice" under the One Percent for the Public Arts Program. The Guam Council on the Arts & Humanities Agency assisted the Guam Preservation Trust and the Guam Legislature.

Construction and Rebirth 2015 -2016







Extensive use of mahogany had been the signature interior design feature of the building. The "new" Guam Legislature Building retains this hallmark. The grand lobby and the two formal chambers are now clad with wood from panels, railings, window shutters, facings and trim recycled from this historic building.





Groundbreaking of the original Guam Congress Building in 1947 was said to have signaled the start of recovery for a "New Agana" after the devastation left behind after World War II.

Today our 21st century rehabilitation and reconstruction of the Guam Congress/ Guam Legislature Building brings the revitalization of central Hagåtña to a new level. It is a modern, professional facility that will serve our needs today and tomorrow while honoring the contributions from those of the past.





Right and above right: The rehabilitated and reconstructed Guam Congress/Guam Legislature Building sits at the heart of Hagåtña on a corner across from the Cathedral Basilica, the Plaza de España, the Guam Museum in Skinner Plaza and a short walk from the Chamorro Village at the Paseo de Susana.







GUAM CONGRESS/GUAM LEGISLATURE BUILDING

MAILA HALOM TALO AND WELCOME HOME TO OUR LEGISLATORS

Thank you to everyone who helped make this project a success and for advancing historic preservation on Guam

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Hon. Ray Tenorio
Lt. Governor of Guam

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