

MORAVIAN ARCHIVES

Finding aid  
of the

**Fernando Colomer Papers**

(1948-2012)

2000 - 2014

PP CF

Ted Wilde

2014

**1.1 Reference Code**

PP CF

**1.2 Title**

Fernando Colomer Papers

**1.3 Date(s)**

2000-2014

**1.4 Level of Description**

folder level

**1.5 Extent and medium of the unit of description (quantity, bulk, or size)**

**2.1 Name of Creator**

José Fernando Colomer

**2.2 Administrative / Biographical History**

José Fernando Colomer (1948-2012) was a minister of the Moravian Church in Nicaragua. He served as president of the Provincial Board from 1980-1982 and from 1998-2000. He was the first Miskito to serve in this position. His first term as superintendent was at the height of the civil war between the revolutionary Sandinista government of Nicaragua and indigenous groups of the East Coast region of the country. He was an advocate on behalf of the East Coast people and for a peaceful alternative to civil war. He was arrested in 1982. After the war in Nicaragua Colomer joined his family in the United States where he wrote a history of the Moravian Church in Nicaragua and an autobiography.

**2.3 Archival History**

After Colomer's death in 2012 his family placed all remaining historical materials in the temporary care of Rev. Theodore Wilde. He was expected by the family to make copies of the main documents for the Colomer family and for the Moravian Church in Nicaragua, and to prepare the materials for delivery to the Moravian Archives. He continued to communicate with the Colomer family and with Bishop Wilson during this preparation. In 2014 the family decided the documents were to be placed in the Moravian Archives in Bethlehem, where a substantial collection of material relating to the Moravian Church in Nicaragua exists.

**2.4 Immediate source of acquisition or transfer**

Theodore Wilde, Aug. 25, 2014

**3.1 Scope and content**

At the time of his death on October 6, 2012, the Rev. Fernando Colomer had prepared documents for each of the three main historical projects on which he had worked for more than 20 years. These three main documents are intended for publication, but it appears that Brother Colomer was expecting further work to ready them for publication. In addition to these documents of approximately 400 total pages, there are approximately 1,500 pages of other projects, early drafts, and hundreds of photos, most without captions. The Colomer family is offering the full file container of materials to be preserved in the Archives of the Moravian Northern

Province. The family presents these materials to the public in the hope that they be used by current historians and theologians. The expectation is also that someone with experience of the languages and historic situation would continue preparing the three main documents for publication.

Materials are presented according the three organizing categories determined by Brother Colomer: Nicaraguan Moravian church history, pastors of the church, and autobiography.

There is substantial overlap in these three volumes. All three are memoirs, reflecting Brother Colomer's concerns and viewpoints. For example, the Memoria (Memoir) of the Moravian Church contains information about pastors in church leadership and personal expressions of Colomer family loss and distress.

### **3.2 Appraisal, desctruction and scheduling information**

#### **3.3 Accruals**

#### **3.4 System of Arrangement**

##### **4.1 Conditions governing access**

unrestricted

##### **4.2 Conditions governing reproduction**

##### **4.3 Language/ scripts of material**

Spanish

##### **4.4 Physical characteristics and technical requirements**

##### **4.5 Finding aids**

finding aid,

Augias

##### **5.1 Existence and location of originals**

##### **5.2 Existence and location of copies**

##### **5.3 Related units of description**

##### **5.4 Publication Note**

##### **6.1 Note**

##### **7.1 Archivist's Note**

##### **7.2 Rules or Conventions**

### 7.3 Date(s) of descriptions

2014

- 1 **Colomer, Fernando, "Iglesia Y Comunidad: Memorias de la Iglesia Morava de Nicaragua, Años 1974-1990"**  
**Church and Community, Memories/memoir of the Moravian Church in Nicaragua by Fernando Colomer**

Includes:

Colomer, Fernando, "Moravian Serts Storka Tara Nani," (Moravian Church history) 2001, 53 pages, punched-hole binder, in Spanish and Miskito. history of the Moravian Church, based on current sources, in Miskito for use in Nicaragua, with color photos of Nicaraguan Moravian pastors and church buildings. Additionally, 13 pages of photocopied text in Miskito from the document are included in the folder.

Colomer, Fernando, "Iglesia 'Unitas Fratrum' Sarasota Florida: Memorias West Palm Beach y Sarasota," no date, 42 pages, spiral bound, in Spanish and English, photos of Moravian work among U.S. Miskito Moravians; includes also "The Ground of the Unity." An additional page of text titled "En West Palm Beach" and an accompanying page of photos are filed at the back of the bound document.

Colomer, Fernando, ANIM - Asociación de Niños de la Iglesia Moravia en Nicaragua; some photos removed by Brother Colomer..

Colomer, Fernando, photos of Nicaragua Moravian Church buildings, 30 photos pasted into "Scalpel to Sketch" book, without captions.

Colomer, Fernando, unbound pages of Memorias de la iglesia Morava, some of which are parts of the main document. Some of these short documents are complete essays, for example, "Cuadro de los miembros de la Junta Ejecutiva 1974-2007"; "Cada pastor, una Historia en si mismo"; "Los Cristianos Según el FSLN en Nicaragua" and "Breve Reseña Historica de la Obra Morava en Managua y sus Dificultades."

Government of Nicaragua, "Documentos Oficiales; Gaceta-Diario Oficial de Nicaragua 1867-1968; Relacion: Managua Versus Indígenas de la Costa Atlántica," approx. 150 pages, spiral bound, with a brief preface by Brother Colomer.

many photocopied black and white photos; 2-page table of contents, indicating the materials presented and also sections Brother Colomer intended to include or reorganize, but which remained unfinished. Includes a directory of congregations and pastors during the period of war, including destroyed villages of the Río Coco District, programs of the Moravian Church, and Provincial (Executive) Board membership 1974-2009. The copy was originally distributed to the members of Brother Colomer's support group. The marginal markings were made at that time and should be ignored.

65 p.

Note also pocket folder, MEMOIR OF THE MORAVIAN CHURCH IN NICARAGUA  
 Spanish

- 2 **Colomer, Fernando, no title, autobiography with emphasis on service in the Moravian Church.**

Includes:

Chapters:

Recordando y Reviviendo mi Senda  
 DEL TEMPLO A LA CARCEL  
 Mis Origenes, Mis padres, mis heroes  
 Suerte o Bendicion

Instituciones importantes en mis tiempos de Desarrollo  
Que les paso? En Memoria de los que en Paz Descansan  
Chapter 2 Mi senda Social, Educacional, Laboral y Religiosa  
Chapter 3 IBSM (Moravian Bible Institute) y Ministerio  
Chapter 4 Mi adolescencia y mis retos  
Chapter 5 Mi otro Yo Habla  
Chapter 6 Del pulpit, a la Docencia, a la Presidencia  
Chapter 7 regreso a la Superintendencia, Morava 1998-2000  
Chapter 8 Mis Adversidades Y las Bendiciones  
Chapter 9 Como cantar Cancion nueva  
Chapter 10 La Salud en Mi senda  
Chapter 11 Fuerzas para vivir  
Colomer finished the autobiography on August 27, 2012, six weeks before his death on October 6, 2012.  
1 spiral-bound notebook  
Also note pocket folder: OTHER AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL MATERIALS  
Spanish

2012

3 **Colomer, Fernando, Memorias de la Iglesia Morava 1974-2000, Nicaragua Centro America, Memories [or Memoir] of the Moravian Church 1974-2000, Nicaragua, Central America,**

Includes:

Chapter 1, Administracion Bajo Liderazgo Nativo;  
Chapter 2 Alpromisu-Apromisu, (indigenous organizations relating to church and Sandinista Government)

Includes biographical sketches of superintendents of the Moravian Church in Nicaragua, 1974-2003; directory of congregations and pastors during the period of war, including destroyed villages of the Rio Coco District, and wartime programs of the Moravian Church.

Most of the document is composed of remembrances and essays concerning events in the conflict, many of which involved Fernando Colomer directly (e.g. "Unidad Sospechosa, Preambulo de muchos Conflictos" and commentary (e.g. "Un Punto de Vista Sobre Conflictos"). The final 100 pages of the memoir are interspersed with appended documents by and to the Moravian Church in Nicaragua, its institutions, and Bro Colomer. The documents are presented as photocopies, some of which did not reproduce clearly or completely

The photocopied black and white photo of Atlantic Coast fighters in Honduras in 1981, on the inside back cover, is presented more clearly, in color, in the 2010 calendar.

spiral bound notebook (257 p.)

Also see: OTHER MATERIALS--MORAVIAN CHURCH IN NICARAGUA  
Spanish

2012

4 **Colomer, Fernando, Y Me Sereis Testigos/Bara Yang Witniski Kama "A Brief History of the Bishops and Presidents of the Nicaragua Moravian Church"**

Includes:

Biographical summaries of the bishops and superintendents of the Moravian Church in Nicaragua, beginning 1974, except none for the Rev. Andy Shogreen, the fourth indigenous superintendent (information on his term of service is included in Memorias de la Iglesia Morava 1974-2000.) Includes lists of pastors and spouses who died from 2000-2007. Prayer list for pastors and spouses and illnesses suffered. (Pages 57-59 duplicate pages 54-56.). 21 photographs, 19 in color, plus 16 thumbnail color photos of deceased pastors.

Also includes:

Colomer, Fernando, no title page, no date, beginning with photo and caption "Hedley Ewart Wilson Bateman Obispo de la Unidad Morava," 87 half-size pages, presented as a booklet, but unbound, in Spanish. 19 biographical summaries of pastors. In addition, 4 pages beginning with the same photo of Bishop Hedley Wilson, with 4 pages of biography in Miskito.

Colomer, Fernando, et. al, biography formats unbound, completed by Joseph Kelly, John F. Wilson C., Cora Luisa Antonio Matamoros, Gonzalo Paiz Salano, Silvio Diaz Thompson, Roberto Peralto Valendres, Ofreciano Julias, Steadman Augusto Bent Omeir.

Colomer, Fernando, Iglesia Morava en Nicaragua, Biografias de los Pastores del Distrito Sur, 1999, 11 pages, spiral bound; pastors' written responses to questionnaire administered by Brother Colomer.

Colomer, Fernando, biographies of pastors, including extensive biographies of Bishop Hedley Wilson, Joseph Kelly, and Bishop John Wilson. unbound:

Colomer, Fernando, 25th anniversary of episcopate of Bishop Hedley E. Wilson, 8 pages plus cover, unbound.

Colomer, Fernando, Thumbnail photos of pastors, collection of 106 without identification and another collection of 46 with first-name identification.

Colomer, Fernando, no title, 2010, "una sintesis Biografica de los Siervos de Dios Obispo Hedley Ewart Wilson Bateman, Obispo John F. Wilson, Rev. Joseph N. Kelly, Rev. Waldemar Ferdinand Bushy y Rev. Fernando Colomer Thomas," 38 pages glued in a sketchbook; many original photos have been removed by Brother Colomer.

spiral bound notebook (67 p.)  
Spanish

2002 - 2013

5

### **Calendars.**

Includes:

2002 (Moravian seal on cover) Color photos of Nicaraguan Moravian villages.

Lists of Nicaragua Provincial Boards 1974-2000. Thumbnail photos of 51 Moravian pastors, identified by first names. Lists of retired pastors, ordained and lay.

2003 Color photos of Moravian church buildings.

2005 (no date; year indicated on calendar was added by Theodore Wilde), double-size with all 12 months on a single page with color photos.

2010 Color photos, most with extensive captions. Color Photo of Atlantic Coast indigenous fighters in Honduras, taken by Brother Colomer while on an unsuccessful mission in 1981 to encourage Atlantic Coast Nicaraguan refugees in Honduras to return to Nicaragua. The mission was met with hostility and Nicaraguans in Honduras did not return at that time. (No caption provided by Brother Colomer re this photo). This color photo appears as a black and white photocopy as last page of Memorias de la Iglesia Morava. Bishop John Wilson and the Rev. Joe Kelly, members of Brother Colomer's advisory group, correct the titling of the photo on the front page: it is an aerial view of Bluefields, not Bilwi (Puerto Cabezas).

2013, January - October with theme of indigenous religious music groups in Nicaragua and Florida; color photos. Brother Colomer was working to complete this calendar at the time of his death in October 2012.

Brother Colomer's papers include five annual Nicaraguan-themed calendars. A few were sent to friends in the hope for contributions to the historical work.

4 items  
Spanish

2006 - 2008, [2012]

6 **Other autobiographical materials.**

Includes:

Colomer, Fernando, no title other than photo caption, "Rev. J. Fernando Colomer Thomas," November, 2008, 100 pages, spiral bound, in Spanish, Presents a detailed outline, which was not fully realized. 90 photos of which 85 are in color. This appears to be a complete autobiography; the 2012 autobiography does not copy the material from this earlier version.

Daughter Tangni Colomer and Theodore Wilde have commented that when revising a document, Brother Colomer would not just edit previous material already saved on his computer, but preferred to start writing anew.

Colomer, Fernando, "Jose Fernando Colomer Thomas," no date, 37 pages, in Spanish, "La historia narrada de mi vida, basada en mi memoria y en lo que mis padres me contaron mientras aun estaban en vida."

Colomer, Fernando, "World's Greatest Mom," also "World's Greatest Dad," 21 pages, spiral bound.

Colomer, Fernando, "En Memoria de Imelda Colomer Chow," 2007, order of memorial service, reflection, and color photos of Brother Colomer's sister.

Short autobiographical essays and summaries, unbound; includes the following examples from the 15 documents in this file (not in any particular order).

Colomer, Fernando, "Contenido." 2 pages, in Spanish. outline of Autobiography.

Colomer, Fernando, "Fragmentos," no date, 8 pages, in Spanish, connecting years of ministry with 30 years struggle with diabetes.

Colomer, Fernando, "Rev. Fernando Colomer Thomas," August 29, 2006, 2 pages, in English, concerning role as mediator and dialogue leader for peace and repatriation.

Kelly, Rev. Joe "Mis Recuerdos de la Boda de Fernando y Magda," no date, 1 page, in Spanish.

Autobiographical fragments of longer documents, unbound.

Diplomas/Certificates of Fernando Colomer, 14 pasted in bound booklet from Doctors Hospital.

1 folder

Also see folder AUTOBIOGRAPHY, LAST VERSION

Spanish

without date

7 **Photos.**

Individual photos are in a separate pocket file. Except for a few of the photos with captions, the photos are not annotated (compare with calendars)

1 folder

Language:

2000 - 2014

8 **Overview of the Project.**

Includes:

Brother Colomer's intention

Advisory Team

Preparation for the Archives

Tribute and Memorial Services

Proposals and Outlines

Other Correspondence

Contents of all Folders

1 folder

English, Spanish