



Bayamo is the centre of much debate in years gone by with the city set alight by the local towns people in 1869 rather than let it fall back into the hands of the Spanish they then headed to the surrounding mountains regions whilst the town burnt. It seemed like the best option for the local people rather than live in fear of the Spanish and Bayamo is now know as the Grand Mother or the beginning on independence led across Cuba.

Many smugglers from the nearby town of Manzanillo who brought money into Bayamo from their smuggling of various items invested in huge properties and sending their children to schools abroad of which Carlos Manuel de Cespedes was one of these people. He went on to be a lawyer but began the revolution against the Spanish in 1868 which saw the death of more than 3000 people by the Spanish before the townspeople set the town alight.

Bayamo predates Havana and Santiago de Cuba and the Cuban National Anthem's composer Peruchito Figueredo was also born in here and José Julián Martí Pérez (José Martí) died here in 1895 aged just 42. José Martí was a Cuban national hero and an important figure in Latin American literature. In his short life he was a poet, an essayist, a journalist, a revolutionary philosopher, a translator, a professor, a publisher, and a political theorist. Through his writings and political activity, he became a symbol for Cuba's bid for independence against Spain in the 19th century, and is referred to as the "Apostle of Cuban Independence.

The Granma Province was named after the yacht Granma, used by Che Guevara and Fidel Castro to land in Cuba with 82 guerrillas in 1956. The American who sold them the secondhand yacht in Mexico apparently had named it after his grandmother and so the name of this vessel, with its non-standard spelling, became an icon for Cuban communism.

The local cinema had this amazing wooden 'What's On Guide' made from wood (please see above right) which I thought was very unique stuck on the wall.