

The Welcoming Arms

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ST. THOMAS HISTORICAL TRUST

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Physical Location
of Office & Museum:
Roosevelt Park West
St. Thomas
U.S. Virgin Islands

Give the Gift of History



Membership in the Trust is only \$25 for an individual or \$50 for a family. This will ensure that your gift recipients receive our newsletters, notices of tours and lectures and eventually a discount on items in the Museum store. Membership also entitles them to a great discount on our annual HALLOWEEN GALA tickets.

Buy someone a set of **Historical Trust license plates** and support our historical preservation efforts. Members pay \$45 for numbered or \$96 for vanity plates. See the back page of this newsletter for more information on how to order Christmas gift license plates.



Best Theme Costume
Tom Bolt

2010 Halloween Gala - Rock N' Roll



Best Overall Costume
Charles Kim



Best Couple
Penny & Hank
Feuerzig

Our Mission Statement...

To identify, protect & preserve the historical identity, structures and sites & cultural heritage of St. Thomas through education, advocacy and promotion.



Letter from the President

Hello Fellow Trusters!

A short report on what has been going on in the Trust. Our museum/ office is in full swing thanks to Bernice Turnbull and her volunteers. Our Executive Director Debbie Avery is well on the way to help us get the Trust moving along in the right direction. A direction we will be proud of.

Our Hassel Island project is moving ahead. Trailers are in place to store our Bush Hog and the sites are starting to look great again. The vegetation project begins in January. The Hassel Island committee - spearheaded by Charles Consolvo, is working hard. New blood on our board leads to new blood on the committee. Filippo Cassineli is en-

thusiastic in helping the committee with our mission. Trevor Milner's Step Street Committee continues to work diligently on that project to clean up and beautify our step streets around and about Charlotte Amalie. We even had a VI lottery ticket with photos of step streets and some good press surrounding it!

Our lecture series began with a talk on furniture restoration led by Director Mike Sheen. It was very informative. Look for the schedule for future lectures.

www.stthomashistoricaltrust.org has been upgraded, and among the new additions, you can pay for your membership online. You can still look

for us on Facebook.

Our annual Halloween Gala was a huge success thanks to the hard working committee led by John Woods, we made more than ever before. It can only get better!

A new Ft. Christian Task Force has been added led by Steve Bornn. He has hit the ground running with that project to see what we can do to get it back on track.

Your board members have also been involved with the Form Based Code Charrette that the whole community is giving input to as we work on a plan for the historic district.

We continue to be activists for Historic St Thomas and Charlotte Amalie. We need all the help we can get with volunteers. I always harp on that and will continue to, so please do!

Thanks to Steve Jones for taking up the mantle of the License Plate project that continues to keep Virgin Islanders aware of the Trust hopefully every time they see a plate!

Happy Holidays!!

Thank you

Ronnie
Ronnie Lockhart
President

Hassel Island Committee Report

The committee met in June with the VI National Park Service and established a series of goals to be accomplished during the coming months.

These goals include:

- Draft and complete a cultural landscape plan for Creque Marine Railway
- Provide shelter for the Bobcat and other equipment
- Undertake preservation of the antique steam operated machinery at Railway
- Remove the old WAPA transformers
- Remove the asbestos piles
- Review the interpretive signs for Railway being supplied by Friends of the Park
- Repair fence and gate around Creque

Head House

- Place Frenchtown house donated to Trust on Railway site
- Mark and clear new trail to Shipley Battery
- Establish a brush clearing program with herbicides for Creque Marine Railway and Shipley
- Repair the iron cistern behind the Head House to hold water
- Stabilize the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company building
- Stabilize and repair the Railway and Bronsted wharves

Thanks to the generosity of our donors, we are funding an intern to complete the cultural landscape plan for Creque Marine Railway, providing shelter for the Bobcat, and have repaired the iron cistern. We will be constructing a roof for rain catchment shortly. The Frenchtown

house should be in place by the end of the year, and the remainder of the projects completed by February, 2011.

The Trust has also received a grant in the amount of \$44,500 from the American Battlefield Protection Program of the National Park Service for work on Ft. Fredrik on the southeast end of Hassel Island. This project will consist of three phases: a documentary search in the United Kingdom and Denmark for the history of the construction of the fort and the battle fought with British ships on March 3, 1801; an engineering study for the stabilization and future development of the fort, and an underwater survey in the waters immediately adjacent to the fort. It is hoped that work will commence on the documentation in October, with the two other phases following in January.

“The British are Coming!”

By Charles Consolvo

During the Napoleonic Wars, Britain insisted on the right to stop the merchant ships of neutral countries and seize them if they were carrying war materials (very broadly defined) to France. To counter this, Russia, together with Denmark and Sweden formed the “Armed Neutrality League” to forcefully respond to these seizures. Interpreting this as a serious threat, Britain declared war on Sweden and Denmark at the beginning of 1801. This resulted in Lord Nelson’s famous Battle of Copenhagen, where he supposedly turned a blind eye to the Admiral’s recall signal, and won the battle.



Admiral Lord Nelson

Less famous, but of significance to the Caribbean, the British government determined to seize the colonies belonging to Sweden, France, Holland and Denmark in the Antilles. To that end they formed a fleet at Antigua consisting of about 25 ships and 4,500 troops. Beginning at the first of March, 1801, they proceeded to seize

St. Barts (Swedish), St. Martin, where they encountered some resistance, and on March 28, St. Thomas. The Danish governor of St. Thomas, on receiving the demand for surrender requested that the forces opposing him be verified by his officers. Upon their report, he immediately surrendered without a battle. St. Croix soon followed.

The British immediately began to construct fortifications and accommodations for the troops on St. Thomas. Conscripting slave labor from the plantation owners, they constructed in a very short time batteries, barracks, officers’ housing and a hospital. Evidence of their construction remains today. Shown below is an 1802 drawing made by the Danes of the British installations on Hassel Islands. South is at the top of the map, with Crowley’s Battery on top of the hill with Ft. Frederik to the east. Going north, there are the hospital, the barracks and married men’s quarters, the officers’ quarters and finally, Shipley Battery on the hill at the north end. Ft. Frederik, (re-named Ft. Willoughby by the British, and the Garrison House just

north of the fort are still in evidence, as are some parts of Cowell’s Battery, although it became a signal station in modern times. The foundations and some walls of the other residential structures are still visible, and Shipley Battery is in reasonably good condition.

The British returned the island to the Danes in April, 1802 as a result of the treaty of St. Petersburg, which was closely followed by the Treaty of Amiens establishing a temporary peace with France. The peace was short-lived, and in 1803 Britain again declared war on France. Being faced with the threat of French control of the Danish fleet, Britain again attacked Copenhagen in 1807 and this was followed by the seizure again of St. Thomas in December of 1807. This time the British remained until 1815, when the Battle of Waterloo and Napoleon’s exile to St. Helena finally ended the Napoleonic Wars.

The Trust, and its partner, the VI National Park Service, are working together to preserve, protect and make available to the public these wonderful treasures from our past. Please join us in this effort, by becoming a member and sending a contribution for the Hassel Island fund. Only through the contributions of member donors will we be able to fulfill these goals.



Danish Map of British Fortifications on Hassel Island, 1802



The Battle of Copenhagen, April 2, 1801

Show your support for historical preservation in the Virgin Islands with

ST. THOMAS HISTORICAL TRUST LICENSE PLATES



These attractive plates are based on Fritz Melby's 1850 painting of St. Thomas harbor. Through your contribution, and every time you drive your car, you'll show your support for the Trust. Profits from the sale of these license plates will allow the St. Thomas Historical Trust to pursue its mission:

To identify, protect and preserve the historical identity, structures and sites, and cultural heritage of St. Thomas through education, advocacy and promotion.

Please complete this form and mail, email, fax or bring by the Trust Office along with your check or credit card information.

Plates can be legally registered at the VI Motor Vehicle Bureau.

The MVB will charge a one-time \$10 plate transfer fee for Numbered Series Plates and a yearly \$30 fee for Personalized Plates.

Allow 3-6 weeks for delivery. Please use one order form for each set of plates. *Make check or money order payable to St. Thomas Historical Trust.*

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE/ZIP _____

DAY PHONE: _____ EVENING: _____

EMAIL: _____

- I will register my plates in the Virgin Islands
- I am purchasing these plates as souvenirs
- I am a MEMBER I am a NON-MEMBER
- I want to become a member of the St. Thomas Historical Trust.** Fill out information on form and send with check or money order payable to: St. Thomas Historical Trust.

Membership Fees are (check one):

- Student (under 21) \$10.00 Individual \$25.00 Family \$50.00
- Business \$75.00 Sponsor \$100 Benefactor \$250 Patron \$500.00

Payment Date: _____ Check # _____ Amt _____
 Cash

Credit Card: Mastercard Visa Discover Card

Number: _____ Exp: _____ Sec: _____

- Send me a set of Numbered Series Plates. Numbered plates commence with H for Historical. \$45 for Trust members and \$50 for non-members, plus \$6.00 for shipping and handling.

Total: \$51 for members or \$56 for non-members

- Send me a set of Personalized Plates. Select up to seven (7) characters and numbers only. No symbols allowed except for a dash ("-"). No offensive wording is allowed. Leave a blank to indicate a space. \$90 for Trust members or \$100 for non-members, plus \$6.00 for shipping and handling.

Total: \$96 for members or \$106 for non-members.

- Send me a set of Plates with a number between 1-10. Total: \$1000.

1st Choice:	_____
2nd Choice:	_____
3rd Choice:	_____

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Upcoming Events

St Thomas Historical Trust 2011 Lecture Series

January 23

Virgin Islands Artists

Shansi Miller, John Jowers, Edney Freeman, Mike & Jane Sheen



February 6

We From Up Street

Myron Jackson, Ruth Moolenaar, Mr. Carl Plaskett



March 6

St John

The Sprauve's: Elroy and Gilbert Sprauve



April 3

Virgin Islands Music

Adams Navy Band, Milo & the Kings, Jeppsen & his Band of Reknown



May 1

Frenchtown

Anne Marie Danet, Mr. Richardson, Valerie Danet



June 5

Historic Foods

Gail Shulterbrant



November 6

Architecture Restoration

John Woods, AIA, Sean Krigger, SHPO, Robert DeJongh, AIA



December 4

Archaeology of Hassel

Island
Ken Wilde