



The Welcoming Arms

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ST. THOMAS HISTORICAL TRUST

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Physical Location

of Office & Museum:

Roosevelt Park

St. Thomas

U.S. Virgin Islands

St. Thomas Historical Trust Treasurer's Report

Audits in Progress for the Fiscal Years Ended September 30, 2008 and 2009

The Trust continues to be in good financial condition with over \$100,000 in the bank. As we have formalized our financial accounting and internal control procedure the Board has authorized and funded our first audit of the Trust financial statements.

We have engaged a CPA firm, Larry Kemp CPA, to perform an audit of the Trust books in accordance with Generally Accepted Audit Standards ("GAAS") to present our most recent two fiscal years'

statements in accordance with accrual basis Generally Accepted Accounting Principles ("GAAP") applicable to non profits. The audit is now in its final stages and we hope to have the completed report by the end of May. Current annual audited financial statements will enhance the Trust's ability to obtain grants.

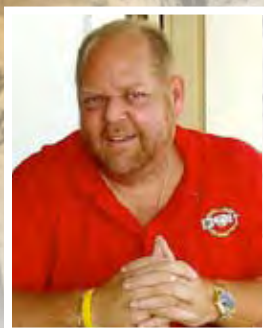
We have contracted with another accountant, Katherine Gibson CPA, to perform regular bookkeeping functions for the Trust. These activities include making and recording deposits, reviewing payables and preparing checks, updating Quickbooks, reconciling our bank account, preparing all tax returns and reports required by the VI and Federal governments under the direction and supervision of the Finance Committee of the Board of Directors.

2009 Halloween Gala - Wild, Wild West Indies



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. We have finally opened the Mini Museum/Office. Bernice Turnbull and her volunteers are trying to keep it open daily but please, we still need more volunteers.

Our Hassel Island project continues as we are now working on a vegetation plan. We have procured a machine for the National Park to use to keep the areas clean. We are working with a landscape architect to get the Creque Marine Railway area replanted.

The Step Street Committee is still working diligently to get going on that project to clean up and beautify our historical step streets around and about Charlotte Amalie.

We had a great presentation of the "Boys in the Park". Presenters Roy Anduze, Robert Moron, Tito Morales, and myself regaled the group with some great stories from the past. Look out for the next event. A great time was had by all. Some folks visited the new museum for the first time.

While our website, stthomashistorical-trust.org, is being tweaked with a few changes, we can also be found on Face Book! We are picking up new fans on there on a weekly basis.

We have set the date of October 30 for our now premier event, The Annual Halloween Gala. Any theme ideas? Don't hesitate to call 774-5541 with suggestions!

Thank you,

Ronnie
President

Hassel Island Committee Report



In January, thanks to the generosity of our major donors, Trudie and Neil Prior, the Trust acquired and delivered to the Virgin Islands National Park Service (VINPS) a Bobcat tracked vehicle together with a brush cutter, grapple and bucket, which will be utilized to keep the access clear to Shipley Battery, and for opening up new areas.

Slow but sure progress is being made to develop and implement a landscaping plan for the Creque Marine Railway toward the end of opening it as the first area

accessible to the public on Hassel Island. This is being done in cooperation with the VINPS who have committed additional resources for the stabilization of the "Head House" and preservation of the many pieces of machinery discovered during the initial clearing of the railway area.

Another major step forward was achieved in January when a crew consisting of VINPS staff and volunteers from the Friends of the National Park made an initial reconnaissance of the barracks

area above Careening Cove, clearing a great amount of bush and exposing the foundations of structures built during the British occupation during the Napoleonic Wars.

We are looking forward to a meeting with the VINPS in the near future to establish a new set of goals for mutual accomplishment.

Early Maritime History of St. Thomas

By Charles Consolvo

After Columbus' thwarted landing at Salt River on St. Croix, the earliest documented visit by Europeans was by the Danes. Prince Rupert is said to have landed on St. Thomas and careened his ship on Hassel Island in what is now known as Careening Hole in the 1650s. (To careen a ship, it is heeled over on its side in shallow water to expose the bottom for repair.) The next recorded visit was by Captain John Smith, the founder of Jamestown. He, in the Susan B. Contant stopped here in 1607 on his first voyage to North America to collect wood, water and turtles and found it to be a delightful spot.



Figure 1
Susan B. Contant, 2008

ish warship, in hot pursuit, approached to capture La Trompeuse and was driven off by her guns supported by the Danes, who also fired on him. The British captain withdrew and anchored out of range. That night he sent a cutting-out expedition to La Trompeuse and burned her, the conflagration also engulfing the Trinity. Both ships sank in the harbor and their remains lay buried there today. Isidore Paiewonski wrote a book about the incident, *The Burning of the Pirate Ship La Trompeuse*.

There is a possibility that some bronze spikes and wood fragments discovered in a search in advance of the West Indian Company's proposed dredging of the harbor are in fact from the Trinity. Radio carbon dating provided a date of about 1650 for the wood, which would be the right dating, especially if analysis showed it to be teak. The Trinity before being captured by Sharp was La Santissima Trinidad, built by Spain in the Pacific.

The European wars of the 18th century brought prosperity through trade to St. Thomas, which had been declared a free port. In 1776, the American brig Nancy loaded gunpowder in St. Thomas to supply Washington's army. As she neared the coast of Delaware, she was chased by British warships and ran aground. Another American ship came to her aid and was able to off-load about two thirds of the

gun powder and her crew before the British boarding parties arrived. They also left a surprise, lighted fuses leading to the remaining gunpowder, which exploded, reportedly killing many of the British boarders.

In 1801 the British seized St. Thomas, building fortifications and quarters on Hassel Island, only to return it to the Danes after the Treaty of Amiens in 1802. The respite was short-lived; the British again seized the island in 1807 and remained in possession until the end of the Napoleonic wars, greatly inhibiting the trade which had been the life blood of the island.



Figure 3
Fort Willoughby, St. Thomas Harbor



Figure 2
Bronze Spikes and other debris
in St Thomas Harbor

The Danes succeeded in colonizing St. Thomas in 1671, and by 1682, the then Governor, Adolph Esmit was a bosom friend of the pirates cruising the Caribbean. One pirate, Jean Hamlin, arrived in his ship La Trompeuse to sell his loot, anchoring off Hassel Island next to the Trinity, another pirate ship made famous by the notorious Bartholemew Sharp. A Brit-

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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.

COMPLETE THIS FORM AND MAIL WITH YOUR CHECK OR MONEY ORDER

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.

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- 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

Application Date: _____

Payment Date: _____ Check # _____ Amt _____
 Cash

- 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: _____

Upcoming Events

"A Date With History"
Lecture Series:
Exact dates to be announced

- West Indian Furniture Restoration
- We From Up Street
- Virgin Islands Music
- Frenchtown
- Architectural Restoration

Art Exhibit of Previously Unseen West Indian Paintings and Prints

Displayed at the Grand Hotel
 Will run for 2 Weeks
 Winter 2010/2011

Halloween Gala
 October 30th, 2010

The Park Boys



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