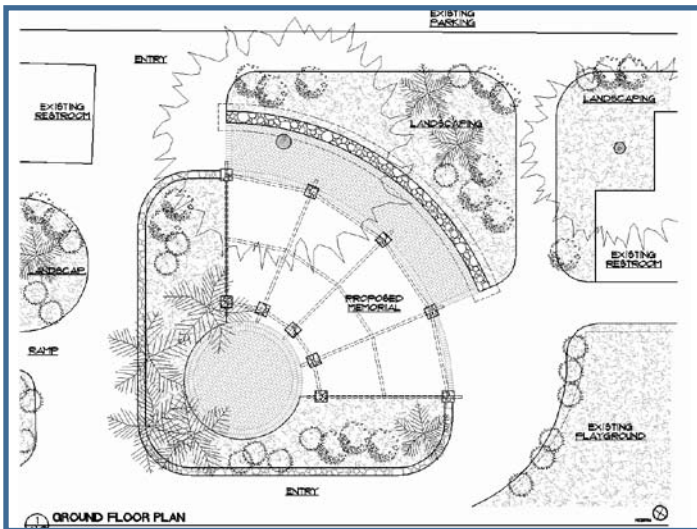


Welcome to Friends Tidings!

Welcome to **Friends Tidings**, the quarterly newsletter of the Friends of Virgin Islands National Park. While this newsletter is normally reserved for Friends members, this edition (and future winter editions) is being shared with the entire St. John community to increase understanding of the Friends and of VI National Park. Friends members will note that this edition is twice as big as usual, since there is so much going on and being planned. We hope that all readers enjoy this edition and find it informative and useful. We also hope that non-members reading **Friends Tidings** will consider joining us in our quest to make Virgin Islands National Park a model of natural resource protection and cultural preservation while promoting the responsible enjoyment of this unique national treasure. Membership information is inside.



Philanthropic Garden designed by Glen Speer;
 Drawing courtesy of Barefoot Architect, Inc.

A Community Effort — Virgin Islands National Park Visitors Center Receives a New Exhibit and Garden

From its earliest days, private philanthropy has played a significant role in the development of our nation's National Park system, and continues to play an important role today.

Most notably, families like the Rockefeller and Mellon families are early examples and widely known for their considerable contributions to the creation, expansion and improvement of many of our nation's National Parks. And today, families like the Annenberg and Haas families carry on this American tradition, ensuring our national treasures are protected for future generations to enjoy as we have.

To recognize and honor this uniquely American ideal of private philanthropy, local architect Glen Speer, the National Park Service, Friends and other local businesses have teamed up to create a permanent exhibit and garden in front of the National Park Visitors Center in Cruz Bay.

This exhibit will acknowledge the importance of philanthropy in establishing our National Park system; and in these times of dwindling National Park Service budgets, remind us that private philanthropy is today as important, if not more important, in maintaining critical levels of protection and preservation of the natural and cultural resources of our parks.

A ribbon cutting ceremony will be held on December 1st as part of the Commemorative Day Event at the Visitors Center. Newly appointed National Park Service director Mary Bomar will be our honored guest and keynote speaker that day, and will cut the ribbon opening the new garden.

Continued on Page 4

Science in the Park

Science in the Park, a three-day scientific and historical conference on marine and terrestrial research, was held Nov. 1st through the 3rd in honor of Virgin Islands National Park's (VINP) 50th Anniversary, Dec. 1st. The conference, which highlights research conducted in the Park over the past 50 years, took place at Virgin Islands Environmental Resource Station (VIERS), located in Lameshur Bay, St. John.

VINP, established in 1956, has been the site of some of the longest-term underwater biological and ecological research in the world. In the 1950s and 60s, well-known researchers such as John Randall and Sylvia Earle started their careers at these sites. Over the years, researchers have continued to make major contributions to further understanding the natural resources of the Virgin Islands. *Science in the Park* provided these scientists with the opportunity to share their research results with peers and the public, and engage in discussions regarding the direction for future research.

This sharing of information helps ensure that research projects are not duplicated, and that the public is aware of research conducted within Park boundaries. Many of the early studies in the Park also serve as useful baselines against which to measure change in the natural ecosystems of the Park. This is extremely important given the increas-

Continued on Page 6

Friends' Mission:

The Friends of Virgin Islands National Park is dedicated to the protection and preservation of the natural and cultural resources of Virgin Islands National Park and promotes the responsible enjoyment of this unique national treasure.

• TIDINGS NOTES •

2006 V.I. Coastweeks' Results

We here at the Friends could not be prouder of St. John's involvement and commitment to this year's V.I. Coastweeks, which began September 16th and came to a close October 6th. 119 volunteers pitched in by removing over 1,600 pounds of debris from 22 of our island's beaches and trails (over 10 miles). Friends would like to thank all of those who participated in cleaning our coastal shores, especially those who adopted beaches and helped organize the cleanups: Arawak Expeditions, Audubon Club of St. Thomas, Cid Hamling, Elaine Estern, Fraser Drummond, Giffit Hill School, Guy Benjamin Elementary, Hank Slodden and St. John Land Sharks, Holiday Homes, Julius E. Sprauve School, June Mays, Laurel Brannick, Maho Bay Camps, R & I Patton, St. John Brewers, St. John Rotary, V.I. Parrotheads, and Vicky Becker.

This year's effort far surpassed 2005 Coastweeks. Help to make next year even more successful by adopting a beach or trail today! To find out more contact Kristen at the Friends, (340) 779-4940.

Friends' 2007 Annual Meeting

Please join us for the Friends 2007 Annual Meeting. We are honored to have Mr. Vin Sapola, President and CEO of National Parks Conservation Association, as this year's keynote speaker. Also on the program are V.I. National Park's Acting Superintendent, Walter Chavez, to give the "State of the Park" address and Friends President, Joe Kessler, who will present the Friends Annual Report.

The meeting is scheduled for Sunday January 21, 2007 from 2:00 – 4:00 at the T'ree Lizard Restaurant at Cinnamon Bay. Light snacks and beverages will be provided, and there will be a shuttle service from the National Park Maintenance Compound near Mongoose Junction. Please call to confirm your attendance, (340) 779-4940.

Park Study Grants

Every fall, the Friends accepts applications for our Park Study Grants, small grants of up to \$500 awarded to St. John teachers to encourage the utilization of V.I. National Park as a "living classroom." Activities supported by the grants are designed to incorporate the Park in classroom lesson plans, and generally focus on science, local history, culture, crafts, ecology, or conservation. This program is a great way to teach our students about the amazing resources right in their "backyard." For an application or more information contact Kristen at the Friends, (340) 779-4940.

Interested in Becoming an Annaberg Docent?

During St. John's busy season, visitors inundate the Annaberg Plantation Ruins, a truly unique site rich in historical and cultural significance. It is during this time of year, namely December through May, when volunteers are needed at Annaberg to answer questions and provide tours of the ruins upon request, Monday through Saturday from 10:00AM – 2:00PM.

Learn more about St. John's fascinating cultural history, meet interesting people, and gain a better understanding and appreciation for the Park and our community. Each winter dedicated volunteers work to make this docent program a reliable program for park visitors. Become an Annaberg Docent and help these committed volunteers make this season at Annaberg even more successful!

From the Superintendent



Greetings Friends of Virgin Islands Park!

I am very excited to be here in St. John as Acting Superintendent for Virgin Islands National Park. My assignment here will run sometime into late January 2007. I am eager to begin working with Friends of V.I. National Park, the St John Community and Park staff for the next few months as we head into our busy season, which this year will include the

50th Anniversary of the establishment of the Park in December.

Now let me introduce myself. I am a 31-year veteran of the National Park Service currently working in San Juan, Puerto Rico as the Superintendent of San Juan National Historic Site. Prior to my appointment at San Juan NHS approximately 4 years ago, I was at Everglades and Dry Tortugas National Parks, serving primarily as the Administrative Officer for these two parks. My assignment at Everglades and Dry Tortugas also included a lengthy detail to the Deputy Superintendent position. Prior to that I served in a number of positions that included Administrative Officer, Human Resources Officer for the Southeast Region, and Contracting Officer working in parks or offices such as Jean LaFitte National Historical Park, Buffalo National River, the Southern Arizona Group Office, and the Southeast Regional Office.

As I mentioned earlier, a major focus for the coming months will be the preparation and celebration of the Park's 50th Anniversary in December. The Park staff is busy; working with the Friends to assemble a program to commemorate the 50th Anniversary. I am confident that the program will be successful and will make us all proud of the progress and accomplishments the Park and community have seen over the last fifty years. Along with celebrating our 50th, this is a great opportunity for the Park and the Friends to showcase the true partnership we share here at V.I. National Park. I look forward to meeting and working with you over the next few months.

Walter J. Chavez, VINP Acting Superintendent

A large, white, serif number '50' is centered on a blue and white checkered background. The background consists of a grid of squares in various shades of blue, creating a textured effect behind the number.

Please join us in celebrating the
50th Anniversary
of
Virgin Islands National Park
dinner, dancing and more

Turtle Bay Estate House at Caneel Bay Resort

December 1, 2006

Save the Date!

For more information about the event contact
Karen Brady at 340.779.4940 or kbrady@friendsvinp.org

Friends 2007 Seminar Series

Interested in learning more about St. John's natural and cultural wonders from the experts? Would you like to have a marine biology lesson while sailing, kayak through mangrove lagoons, or learn to make local bush tea or play the steel pan drum? Now you can! Friends of the Park offers a variety of educational seminars every year to increase public awareness and enjoyment of the Park!

Experts in these disciplines volunteer their time to Friends of Virgin Islands National Park as a fundraising effort. Field seminars range in price from \$20-\$75 for members, \$25-\$85 for non-members and last from two to six hours. All proceeds are a donation to the Friends. Call 779-4940 to pre-register, space is limited.

JANUARY	
Jan. 14, Sun.	– Marine Biology Sail I – Snorkel the underwater treasures of St. John's reefs with a NPS marine biologist aboard the catamaran, <i>Magic Carpet</i> .
Jan. 20, Sat.	– Archaeology Boat Trip I – Set a course through prehistory with NPS archaeologist Ken Wild while visiting St. John's shores by boat.
Jan. 21, Sun.	– Kayak the Mangroves of Hurricane Hole – Kayak with Arawak Expeditions through the Coral Reef Nat'l. Monument, stopping to snorkel in the mangroves and seagrass beds.
Jan. 24, Wed.	– Reptile Hike – Search for reptiles along the Reef Bay Trail with reptile expert Dr. Renata Platenberg, and enjoy a boat ride around St. John's south shore back to Cruz Bay.
Jan. 27, Sat.	– Island Tea Time – Learn the medicinal value and pungent flavor of local plants as you learn to make bush tea with Mrs. Joyce Sprauve.
Jan. 28, Sun.	– Native Plant Hike – Hike with Dr. Gary Ray, botanist and plant ecologist, on the Caneel Hill Trail and learn about St. John's rich and fascinating communities of native plants.
Jan. 31, Wed.	– Seed Bead Jewelry – Join park ranger Deanna Somerville and learn to make necklaces out of collected island treasures – seeds from local plants.
FEBRUARY	
Feb. 2, Sat.	– Botanical Hike – Local botanist Eleanor Gibney will lead you on a botany hike on Bordeaux Mt. Explore this lush terrain, learning about St. John's native plants.
Feb. 4, Sun.	– Watercolor Seminar – Learn the technique of watercolors as you paint tropical landscapes at Caneel Bay under the instruction of locally renowned artist Kat Sowa.
Feb. 7, Wed.	– Steel Pan Lesson – Learn to play the steel pan, a culturally significant instrument of the Virgin Islands, with Love City Pan Dragons.
Feb. 10, Sat.	– Coral Reef Research – Snorkel areas along the North Shore with USGS marine ecologist Caroline Rogers and learn why elkhorn corals have been listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act.
Feb. 17, Sat.	– Stars and Their Stories – Relax, lie back and let astrologer and mythologist Kelley Hunter guide you through the constellations of the night sky.
Feb. 24, Sat.	– Archaeology Boat Trip II – Set a course through prehistory with NPS archaeologist Ken Wild while visiting bays along St. John.
Feb. 25, Sun.	– Marine Biology Sail II – Snorkel the underwater treasures of St. John's reefs with a NPS marine biologist aboard the catamaran, <i>Calypso</i> .

MARCH	
Mar. 3, Sat.	– St. John Architecture I – Architect Rob Crane will take you through some of the island's homes to explain their structures and significance.
Mar. 10, Sat.	– Afro-Caribbean Drumming – Join master drummer Eddie Bruce and learn basic entertainment and ritual drumming techniques of West African and Afro-Caribbean cultures.
Mar. 14 Wed.	– Language Melting Pot – Join linguistic expert Dr. Gilbert Sprauve as he explores the language of Dutch Creole spoken in the Virgin Islands, looking at examples of sentence structure and how this language was significant in converting Africans to the Moravian and Lutheran religions.
Mar. 17, Sat.	– Oil Painting – Learn the technique of oil painting at the scenic overlook of Annaberg Plantation Ruins with locally renowned artist Kat Sowa.
Mar. 18, Sun.	– Sea Turtle Sail – Sail the <i>Castaway Girl II</i> to Buck Island, St. Thomas with park ranger and turtle specialist, Sheri Caseau, and swim with the many green and hawksbill turtles that make Buck Island their home year round.
Mar. 24, Sat.	– Coastal Ecology – Circumnavigate St. John with VINP's Chief of Resource Management Rafe Boulon, and learn about the mangroves, seagrass beds, and coral reefs that fringe our island's coastlines.
APRIL	
Apr. 1, Sun.	– Garden Workshop – Garden with Irene Patton, and take part in a basic hands-on gardening discussion on the pleasures and challenges of gardening in the semi-arid climate of St. John.
Apr. 4, Wed.	– Enduring Eloquence – Join us at Oppenheimer pavilion to watch a brief history of St. John through a slide show of historic images compiled by local historian David Knight.
Apr. 7, Sat.	– Donkey Stories – Travel to "back time" with Guy Benjamin as he shares memories of his youth in the early 1900s, learn the value of the island donkey, and then take a ride on a donkey-drawn carriage.
Apr. 14, Sat.	– St. John Architecture II – Architect Michael Milne will take you through some of the island's homes to explain their structures and significance.
Apr. 18, Wed.	– Full Moon Hike – Hike to the top of Ram Head and explore the southernmost point of St. John with park ranger Don Near. Learn about the fascinating natural and cultural history that exists there.
Apr. 28, Sat.	– Salt Pond Ecology – Hike Salt Pond Trail with park ranger Deanna Somerville and learn about salt pond ecology and traditional methods of salt collection.

• Please tear out this page and save it to use as a reminder •

Finding Anything Good?



Plans for the museum exhibits.

by Susanna Pershern

If you've ever excavated as a volunteer with Ken Wild and his archeological interns, you would have inevitably heard this question from a multitude of visitors during the excavation: "Are you finding anything good?" "Why yes," you might say, "we've just discovered the masonry floor of the Cinnamon Bay Cookhouse." You might even add that with the knowledge of

Amber Davis, a current intern with a BS in chemistry and anthropology from Bowdoin, that we will be using archaeochemistry, or chemistry as it is applied to archaeology, to identify the residues left on the floor by the previous cooks. "It's very exciting," you explain with a smile, although in asking that question, the questioner was probably hoping to hear about gold, jewels and other pirate's treasure.

In truth, it is all very interesting, and each find adds to the cultural knowledge of St. John's previous inhabitants. This year we have added many previously unidentified sites to our Archeological Sites Management Information System Database (ASMIS) and yes indeed, we are always peering into the past to root out the pirate's story and so many more mysteries. We've mapped numerous ruins in 3D cyberspace, plotted out ballast scatter from shipwrecks, and helped to document the Reef Bay Petroglyphs so that Ken could properly present these ancient carvings to the UN for consideration in a transnational nomination list for World Heritage status. We are continuing to work hard to excavate, and recently began a program, coordinated with the island's clergy, to reintern the human remains that have been washing out from the beach at Cinnamon Bay for the last thirty years. We are thankful to the Friends for helping us with this project by raising funds for the ossuaries.

One of many highlights of this past year was a partnership with Barefoot Architects and the Friends, which sponsored a historic architect intern, Ian Kaminsky, who helped draw up plans for a Museum at the Cinnamon Bay Warehouse site. This is an ongoing effort to create a space in which to put the history of Amerindians, Maritime Heritage, Colonials, and St. Johnians on display for the benefit of all to see and to develop educational tools that are so important to preserving the

island's heritage. Please contact the Friends if you can contribute funds to turn these plans into a reality.


Another significant step toward making this museum a reality was the creation of a NPS Museum Curator position. I am happy to report that after three years of being a Friends' archeological intern, the Virgin Islands National Park Service has selected me for this job. I've already started and definitely have my work cut out for me. I would like to thank the Friends for their support during the past few years, without which, I never would have gained the valuable experience which led up to this opportunity. Please help the Friends maintain this Cultural Internship program, because without your valuable donations, other students will not have this opportunity, and Ken and I will not have the help we depend on to accomplish our goals. Thanks again for everything and please visit us at www.friendsvinparch.blogspot.com to see weekly updates from the Friends' Archeology Interns.

Philanthropic Garden

(Continued from Page 1)

We thank Glen Speer for his commitment, contributions and creativity that went into the development and implementation of this project, Eleanor Gibney and Gary Ray for their landscape design, and all our community partners who have contributed materials, time and talent to this effort.

Living Art



...the spectacular photographic essay of St. John, is the perfect gift from, or to, those who love St. John and Virgin Islands National Park. This 200-page coffee table book (now with improved readability), by renowned St. John photographer Steve Simonsen, celebrates the natural beauty of

St. John in 182 stunning photographs.

A PORTION OF THE PROCEEDS FROM THE SALE OF ALL BOOKS BENEFITS THE VIRGIN ISLANDS NATIONAL PARK AND HELPS TO PRESERVE THE SAME NATURAL BEAUTY THE BOOK CELEBRATES. PLEASE CALL, COME BY THE FRIENDS OFFICE, OR VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR ORDERING INFORMATION.

Join the Friends or Renew Your Membership Today!

Fill out the form below and return it to: Friends of V.I. National Park, P.O. Box 811, St. John, VI 00831
Or join on-line at: http://www.friendsvinp.org/new_stuff/joindirect.htm

New Member Renewed Member

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: (h) _____ (w) _____ Email: _____

Donation Amount: _____ Check Enclosed _____

Credit Card #: _____ Exp. Date: _____

Thank You!

The Friends was successful this year because of the generous support of many people, businesses, and organizations whose donations, both in cash and in kind, contributed to helping protect and preserve the natural and cultural resources of Virgin Islands National Park and promote the responsible enjoyment of this unique national treasure.

Recognition of donors would not be complete without first thanking Rosalie Stahl and Donald Sussman, whose visionary donations in the past fundamentally changed the Friends and our support of the Park. The impact of their contributions continues to be felt every day.

The Friends has more than 3,000 members, and your contributions, whether it's annual dues, donations to special appeals, participating in our events, sponsoring individual projects or purchasing Friends' merchandise all help to enable us to support the Park. We are profoundly thankful for your support and are humbled by your generosity. We are especially grateful to the following individuals and organizations for their support this past fiscal year:

Donors of \$10,000 or more:

Rob Blakeney
Kenny Chesney
Disney Wildlife Conservation Fund
Jackson Hole Preserve Inc.
Maho Bay Camps
Prosser-ICC Foundation
Andy & Joy Stillman
Tropico Management
Lana Vento Charitable Trust

Donors of \$5,000 – \$9,999:

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Donors of \$2,500 – \$4,999:

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Koonce Foundation
Michael Milne
St. John Insurance Agency
Theodore Tunick & Company
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Donors of \$1,000 – \$2,499:

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Caravan Gallery
Caribbean Tourism Organization
Al & Margaret Cohen

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Pat Rissler
Susan Rissler-Sheely
Tom & Anne Rogers
William Stelzer
Jon Wilk
William Sam &
Cass Williamson Fund

Please let us know if we inadvertently omitted your name or placed you in the incorrect group.

(But, please note that the above includes donations made between October 2005 and September 2006) Thanks!

Annual Summary 2005–2006

Each year, Friends of Virgin Islands National Park receives a request list from the National Park Service for support of important projects and programs within Virgin Islands National Park. These projects are considered within the context of the Friends' mission, and if approved, a commitment is made to seek funding for approved projects and programs.

Friends of the Park also seeks funding for organizational initiatives, supported by staff and board, which are considered to be important to fulfilling our mission to preserve and protect the natural and cultural resources of the Park.

In fiscal year 2005–2006, Friends supported the Park with almost \$400,000 in program and project funding. With your help, the following is what we accomplished:

Friends supported **Archeology Research and Interns**, providing critical archival functions of artifacts from the Cinnamon and Trunk Bay digs, as well as other projects as directed by the Park's Archeologist.

This year, the **Folk Life Festival** featured renowned playwright and actress, Karen Jones Meadows, in a fascinating monodrama called *Harriet's Return*, which depicted the life of Harriet Tubman. More than 450 school children attended this festival at the National Park ball field in Cruz Bay.

Earth Day Environmental Fair for children featured exhibits which focused on themes related to conservation and preservation, such as plants, animals, recycling, and solar energy. More than 400 St. John School children attended this event.

The **Seminar Series** remains a strong component of the Friends' adult programming. Last year, new seminars included Turtle Adventure Sail, Traditional West Indian Cooking, Explore Susannaberg Ruins, and Coral World Boat Trip.

Carabana Cultural Theater presented *Distant Voices*, a dramatization of a compilation of Caribbean slave narratives. This production ran for almost four months during the beginning of 2006 at the Cinnamon Bay amphitheater.

Adopt-A-Beach/Trail Program remains a strong program, providing opportunities for volunteers to help us keep our beaches and trails clean.

Park Study Grants provide small grants to teachers in St. John schools to utilize VI National Park as a "living classroom" by incorporating the Park into lesson plans and classroom activities, focusing on science, local history, culture, crafts, ecology, or conservation. Transportation funding for class field trips into the Park was also provided.

In partnership with the University of Maine and the National Park Service, Friends supported the **Virtual Preservation of Historic Structures**, a cutting edge computer modeling process used to virtually preserve the Leinster Bay sugar plantation ruins in 3D using advanced computer imaging techniques.

The Friends, working in partnership with USGS, supported the study of **Elkhorn Coral**, which looked at White Pox and White Band disease in Elkhorn corals in various bays around St. John. The study will help marine biologists determine the cause of this disease and its lifecycle.

The initial phase of a **Boater Outreach Project** was completed. Boat rental companies were provided with stickers, posters, and maps to be placed in their offices and boats, reminding renters to "look below before they throw," and make sure their anchor does not land on coral or seagrass beds. This will be an on-going program.

SCA Trail Crew worked on the Cinnamon Bay Trail, Caneel Hill Trail, Lameshur Bay Trail, Ram Head Trail, and Reef Bay Trail, improving approximately 6 miles of trails this summer.

It was a remarkable year for summer **Eco-Camps** for VI school children. Because of increased funding for this program, 163 children participated in this three-day, two-night environmental education camp experience at VIERS in VI National Park on St. John's south side. This is a 63% increase over last year.

It is because of our generous members, that these projects were funded. We are honored by your faith in our ability to carry out challenging program plans, and grateful for your support that allows us to continue our work preserving and protecting Virgin Islands National Park for future generations to enjoy as we have.

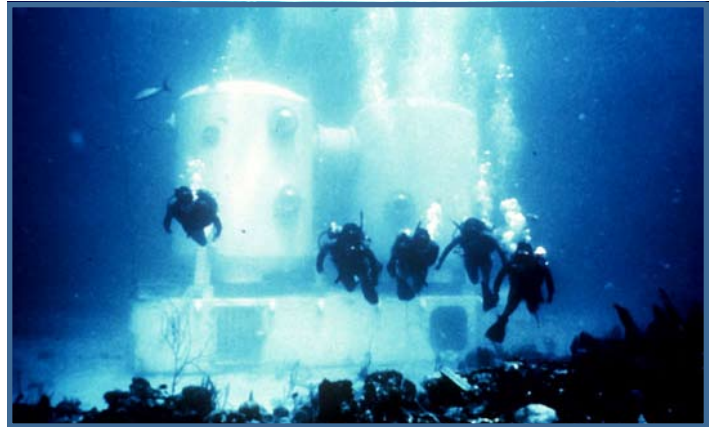


Photo Credit: OAR/National Undersea Research Program (NURP) Aquanauts at Tektite I, 1969

Science in the Park

(Continued from Page 1)

ing development and level of visitation currently facing St. John, which have produced considerable impacts on our natural resources.

The conference began with welcoming remarks from the sponsoring organizations: VINP, Clean Islands International, University of the Virgin Islands, Friends of V.I. National Park, United States Geological Survey, and The Ocean Conservancy. Gary E. Davis, NPS Visiting Chief Scientist in Washington, DC and aquanaut from Project Tektite I (1969), set the tone for the conference with his presentation entitled *Persistence and Special Places*. "The future for us now is restoration; we need to restore the beauty and vitality of these damaged ecosystems," said Mr. Davis.

After an overview of the marine and terrestrial research conducted in the Park in the last 50 years, scientists presented on a variety of studies documenting the conditions affecting corals, parrotfish, groupers, termites, lizards, deer, donkeys, rare plants, mangroves, and watersheds. On the third day of the conference the accomplishments at VIERS were celebrated with recognition of its 40th anniversary. In honor of the event, the recently renovated VIERS waterside laboratory was dedicated, and the plan to establish the Project Tektite Underwater Habitat Museum was announced.

The enthusiastic response, the many scientific accomplishments of the presenters, the variation of the presentations, and the productivity of the group discussions all contributed to the success of this conference. That success coupled with the support of the contributing organizations can only lead to further scientific discoveries and greater progress towards our goal of preserving our precious natural resources.

Projects for 2007

Supporting projects and programs in the Park is a major component of the Friends' role as a private sector partner. With this in mind the Board of Directors recently approved an ambitious and challenging program plan for 2007 that will cost nearly \$400,000. As well as the new projects this year, there are also those that have become closely associated with the Friends which we will continue to support.

Each fall the Superintendent submits a prioritized list of Park project needs to the Friends' Board of Directors. Given the limitations of federal funding for the Park, (it typically only meets about 70% of the Park's budget needs) Friends' funding is often the only way important natural resource, cultural resource, and environmental education programs can take place.

The Friends' Board carefully considers each project in the Park's Support Request. Those projects that are approved, along with Friends-initiated projects that the Board chooses to undertake, comprise our annual program plan. This year's plan includes the following projects:

Natural Resource Protection

Accessible Trails: A new and exciting program area for the Friends will be to assist the Park in making certain trails accessible to those with mobility difficulties – an obvious challenge given St. John's terrain. This year will be devoted to feasibility and design work.

Adopt a Beach/Trail (\$1,000): Promote community participation in the Park by organizing civic, religious, school and business groups to "adopt" a beach or trail for periodic cleanups.

Coral Reef Research (\$41,900): Support of four research projects studying different aspects of the health of coral reefs around St. John.

Research Symposium (\$20,000): As part of the 50th Anniversary celebration, support of a symposium to review research that has been conducted in the Park and plan future research needs.

Resource Protection Moorings (\$100,000): Complete the final phase of this project and install storm refuge moorings in Hurricane Hole for about 50 vessels.

SCA Trail Crews (\$30,000): Again sponsor a crew of budding conservationists in partnership with the Student Conservation Association to repair and upgrade priority trails within the Park. We will again build on our experience of fielding a crew of young Virgin Islanders.

Cultural Preservation

Annaberg Cultural Presentations (\$5,000): Continue ongoing support of the cultural presentation program at Annaberg Plantation and maintain a volunteer docent program at the site.

Archeological Artifact Preservation (\$30,000): Assist in the preservation of the thousands of archeological artifacts uncovered in the archeological digs by supporting material purchases, intern stipends, and organizing volunteers.

Archeology Museum Exhibits (\$40,000): Support the renovation of the archeology lab at Cinnamon Bay, including development of museum quality exhibits and displays.

Cultural Theater Presentation (\$9,000): Support weekly theater presentations from January through April at Cinnamon Bay Amphitheater. This year's presentation is "Dear Peter/Dear Anna", a play depicting the love affair between Peter VonSholten, Governor of the Danish West Indies, and his slave mistress, Anna Haggard.

Folklife Festival (\$10,000): Continuing support of the Park's premier cultural festival on St. John held during Black History Month (February).

Hassel Island Restoration: Continuing effort to restore the Creque Marine Railway area to allow the site to be safely visited.

Environmental Education

50th Anniversary Celebrations (\$30,000): Promote greater understanding of the Park through public celebrations commemorating the Park's founding and 50-year history.

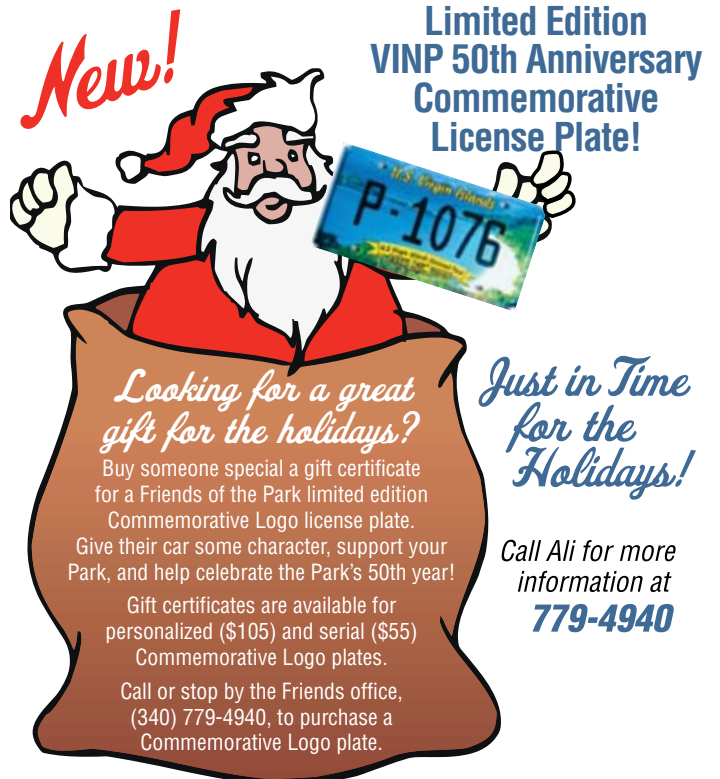
Eco-camps (\$20,000): Again sponsor summer camps for Virgin Islands youth, enabling them to spend three days at VIERS learning about marine and terrestrial ecosystems.

Parks as Living Classrooms (\$8,000): Provide small grants to teachers in St. John schools to creatively incorporate the Park in classroom studies. This will also include a fund to support transportation costs for students from St. John and St. Thomas to facilitate classes participating in VINP programs such as visits to historical sites, archeological digs, and the Reef Bay hike.

Philanthropy and National Parks Exhibit (\$30,000): Develop and construct an outdoor interpretive display about the role of philanthropy in national parks, using VINP as a case study.

Scholarship Fund (\$2,000): Provide scholarships and summer internships for two Virgin Islanders to encourage study in fields related to natural resource management.

If you would like more information, or you would like to become involved in one of these projects, please come by the office or call. We invite members who are particularly interested in one of these projects to consider becoming a special sponsor of the project. Please contact Karen for more information, (340) 779-4940.



New!

**Limited Edition
VINP 50th Anniversary
Commemorative
License Plate!**

Looking for a great gift for the holidays?

Buy someone special a gift certificate for a Friends of the Park limited edition Commemorative Logo license plate. Give their car some character, support your Park, and help celebrate the Park's 50th year!

Gift certificates are available for personalized (\$105) and serial (\$55) Commemorative Logo plates.

Call or stop by the Friends office, (340) 779-4940, to purchase a Commemorative Logo plate.

Just in Time for the Holidays!

Call Ali for more information at 779-4940

Upcoming Friends Events!

Please mark your calendars and plan to attend the upcoming Friend's events:

Celebrate 50 Years of VINP

On December 1, 2006 we will celebrate VI National Park's 50th with a Commemorative Day celebration at the National Park ball field in Cruz Bay. This event is free and open to the public. The newly appointed National Park Service Director, Mary Bomar, will be our honored guest and keynote speaker. The day's festivities will begin at 10:00 a.m. and include a BBQ, live music, a ribbon cutting ceremony at the new philanthropy exhibit and garden in front of the Visitors Center, a vessel dedication, and the premier of the video "The Establishment of Virgin Islands National Park... the way it was". Please join us.

Earth Day Environmental Fair

Friends will again host an Earth Day Environmental Fair for school

children at the NP Ball Field on Friday, April 20, 2007. Children will get a chance to visit with professionals in their environmental fields and, utilizing a hands-on approach, learn about plants, animals, recycling, and alternative energies, thus continuing our effort to cultivate the next generation of conservation citizens throughout the school year.

Friends' Beach-to-Beach Power Swim

There is plenty of time to begin training for the Friends' 2007 Beach-to-Beach Power Swim! So, swimmers, on your marks! This year's date is Sunday, May 27, 2007, Memorial Day weekend. Please make plans to join us and watch our website for details.

Call the Friends (340) 779-4940, or visit our website for more information on these events.

President's Message *By Joe Kessler*

Virgin Islands National Park celebrates its 50th anniversary on December 1st. This is truly a remarkable milestone for this park. During the celebrations many will reflect on in the past 50 years, and indeed the Park has a fascinating history and the island has changed significantly during this period; multi-fold growth in population, massive increases in residential and commercial development, and intensification of tourist visitation to about a million visitors per year. Fortunately the crystal clear waters, verdant hillsides, and fascinating historic relics have been preserved and protected by V.I. National Park.

Perhaps more important than looking back at the past 50 years, is to look ahead to the next 50 years, and consider what has to be done to continue to preserve and protect the incredible resources of V.I. National Park. We have witnessed exponential growth and development on St. John, especially in the last few years. This will undoubtedly continue, and coupled with the increasing popularity of St. John as a tourist destination, will exert significant escalating pressures on the Park's fragile resources.

Irresponsible development of properties within, or adjacent to, the Park is probably the greatest threat. However, there is a growing awareness of, and interest in, "green" building and design practices and we see this as an impor-

tant way to help mitigate or reduce damage to the island's fragile resources. Secondly is the pressure from growing visitation. We must find ways to effectively manage this visitation and educate visitors on the impact they have on the environment, and more importantly, how they can minimize this.

Looking to the future we can only be successful at preserving this jewel of a park through the collaboration and cooperation of many parties. The National Park Service cannot do this alone and must seek the partnership of many others.

We all have a role to play if we would like our children and grandchildren to enjoy and appreciate this park as we have. If you are going to build on St. John, please insist on using "green" building practices. If you are an architect or builder, please promote these practices. If you are in the accommodation industry, please help educate your clients on the fragile resources of the Park. And for the rest of us, please continue to be good park citizens and help others do the same.

Thank you for your continued support of the Friends and I hope that you will continue to keep V.I. National Park as one of your philanthropic priorities.



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