



BRIEF

REPORT BOOKLET  
HISTORICAL  
NOTES ON



SCHOOLS OF

THE  
VIRGIN  
ISLANDS

STEVEN PETERSEN

Historical Notes  
on Schools in the  
Virgin Islands

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Researched and Written by: Ruth Moolenaar

Typed by: Helen Smith, Administrative Secretary

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## Foreword

As we reflect on the observance of American Education Week November 14-19 and its 1982 theme, "A strong nation needs strong schools", the thoughts of Virgin Islanders drift back to the strides education has made. Starting from the one-room school house to the large departmentalized buildings and programs they will remember those pioneer teachers who taught all subjects through the long hot hours from eight to eleven-thirty and one to four.

Dominating the walls of the classrooms were the imposing glass-framed pictures of presidents of the United States. These were the men for whom the schools were named. On St. Thomas schools were designated as Washington School, Lincoln School, Herrick School, Jefferson School, Madison School and on down the presidential line.

Gradually Virgin Islanders realized that many persons within the community were dedicating a life time of service to public education.

Furthermore, the students taught by these dedicated servants either went abroad or stayed at home and identified themselves as scholars.

In keeping with its policy to recognize significant contributions of its citizens, the Virgin Islands Government through its legislature pays fitting tribute to those who have and to those who are contributing to the education in an outstanding manner.

In most instances this policy is achieved through legislative bills and/or resolutions naming schools in honor of these citizens.

Basically, the content of this publication are excerpts from these legislations and sincere appreciation is extended to the Journals Division of the Fourteenth Legislature especially Mrs. Glencia Steele who patiently complied with our many requests.

The material is designed to provide instructional personnel, school administration and staff, students, with basic information explaining the contributions of the persons for whom the schools were named and number and date of legislative bills which mandated these tributes and other incidentals relative to individual schools.

## Introduction

### Early Historical Sketch:

1672 is reportedly one of the earliest recorded dates in the colonization of this territory. In that year Jergen Iversen is credited with hoisting the Danish flag and taking full possession of St. Thomas in the name of the King and the West India Guinea Company. He occupied his energies in fortifying the islands - As the young colony grew other areas of development received priority - education was of no concern of the rulers.

However, even in those early years people sensed the need of an education, so those who could afford it sent their children home to Europe where they received a good education, while others paid for private tutors - At times these private tutors were not of the best character or intelligence.

### Mission Schools

During these early days of colonization the Dutch comprised the majority of the European colonizers. They were reportedly of questionable characters and left quite a colorful record in the history of St. Thomas.

However, they were one step ahead of the Danes, because they had a well organized system of education which dates back as early as 1583. They were the first to open a school in St. Thomas in 1747 in which they taught white children some language. The Moravians came on the scene in 1733. Their main interest was to teach the negroes passages from the Bible and other religious books. However conflicts arose between the Dutch planters and the Moravians. The planters intimidated the Negroes from attending night classes. The Danes in an attempt to help, agreed to house the Moravians Missionaries. Evening classes included lessons in religion but this was extended to include reading and writing using Dutch books since Dutch was the most commonly used language.

The state language was Danish but was rarely spoken. Dutch was the every-day language besides some English, French, Spanish. The Africans upon arrival into the territory were unable to understand the European languages so they extracted easy words and phrases from the new languages and mixed them with their African phrases and in this way creole language came into being. It was in this language that the first text for the slaves was written. In 1780 the catechist kingo wrote the A-B-C Book, a primer for teaching reading.

## Introduction (Continued)

But credit is given to Thomas De Malleville first native born governor of the Danish West Indies for his translation of the New Testament into Dutch Creole. Known officially as the New Testament Na Creol Loal, the 1802 edition was written as evidence of the governor's interest in the final emancipation of the slaves. He believed education was the first step towards liberty.

With much hostility and jealousy, mission schools were established on St. Thomas and on St. Croix. In 1803 the government built a school which offered instruction in Danish and English, writing, arithmetic, history and English and religious instruction.

### (Lancastarian System)

In 1822 team teaching presented itself in the persons of two famous teachers, Lancaster and Bell. Their influence over Europe was very strong. It is no wonder then that the Danish West Indian schools became excited with the idea and made a bid for its introduction. Through private contributions which took care of expenses the new school was opened on April 11, 1835 and one Mr. Wulf a church clerk acted as supervisor. In the second year of the school Mr. Wulf died and was replaced by Mr. A.D. Gomez, a black. The school went through the usual pains of any newly formed organization. (1)

### Government Schools

Von Scholten is blamed or credited with several major changes during his regime as Governor General of the Danish West Indies.

He was interested in setting up an educational system for unfree children since only the mission schools bothered to offer these children any form of education.

In 1839 he sent a proposal to establish eight country schools on St. Croix. Along with the establishment of the schools came other problem as: who would supervise and in what language would the instruction be offered. He tried to abolish the Creole language but Creole was still very much alive on St. Thomas especially with the Moravians. Therefore he decided that English would be the official school language and he turned over the supervision of the educational system to the Moravians who were in turn supervised by the Lutherans.)

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<sup>1</sup>Fjeldsøe, The Development of the Educational System in the Danish West Indian Islands, 1916.

## Introduction (Continued)

The king of Denmark was so impressed by the work of the Moravians in the schools that he ordered that schools be established on St. Thomas and on St. John. He further requested the Moravians to manage these schools and to educate the children irrespective of their denominational affiliation. Schools had already been established by the Moravians at Emmaus and at Bethany in St. John and were conducted from 9:00 A.M. to 12 noon daily except Saturdays serving the children between the ages four and eight from all the plantations.<sup>2</sup>

### Private and Parochial Schools

A summary of early attempts of education in the territory reveals that the education began with conversion of the slaves and eventually spread to include other subjects. Furthermore it is proven that since the business of education rested with the missionaries all the schools were of this era were church schools and were eventually operated by such powers as the (Dutch Reformed), Dutch, Moravians, Danes, (Lutherans), Catholics and Episcopalians.

Jens Larsen's Virgin Islands Story states that "the Moravian supervision of the government country schools came to an end in 1872. While on St. Croix the schools continued uninterruptedly, on St. Thomas and St. John they were discontinued, and for several years there were no government public schools on these islands. In the city of Charlotte Amalie in 1872 there were twenty-four private and parochial schools most of which were Roman Catholic and Anglican and one prominent Lutheran which was located at No. 2 Dronningens Gade Kings Quarter.

### The St. Thomas College

Public education on St. Thomas and St. John was re-instated by the school ordinance of November 9, 1875 and was implemented on February 11, 1876. Three public schools were established on St. Thomas while smaller schools were established in the country area of St. Thomas and St. John.

Around this time also an advanced school was established on St. Thomas on July 2, 1876. It operated under the name of St. Thomas College. It became a highly accredited school. Science was the core of the curriculum. It finally phased out of existence around 1883.

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<sup>2</sup>Maynard, Oliver G. A History of the Moravian Church, Eastern West Indies Province



## Introduction (Continued)

Diversity in the curriculum was kept apace with the increase in enrollment. At each rural school on St. Croix (in the eighties) dressmaking, housework were introduced for the girls, while manual training and gardening were introduced to the boys. While there was no definite segregation in the schools it was noted that white and light skinned children were enrolled in one of the private schools while the dark skinned children who in most instances belonged to parents of economically deprived parents, attended the communal or public schools.

### Effects of the Transfer

After many long years of negotiations in 1917 the Danish West Indies were sold in 1917 to the United States of America for the sum of \$25,000,000. In his official report, Admiral Oliver, the first American Governor described condition of the newly acquired territory as "decidely backward and disgraceful". The islands were put under a Naval Administration which lasted for fourteen years (1917-1931).

To this administration the credit of establishing a Junior High School. This plan provided a ninth grade education for every child.

### Effects of Civilian Government of Education

The Navy Administration was followed by a Civilian form of government. The first governor under this administration was Paul M. Pearson whose term of office was from 1931-1935

The Civil Administration collided head-on with the worst depression to face the United States. Governor Pearson therefore inherited such major problems as unemployment, business failures, over-population. These problems of course affected the operation of the school system. Children were drawn out of school to help support families; both trained and untrained, employee suffered salary cuts.

Despite this economic decline in 1931 the first twelfth grade graduation made a historic occasion on St. Thomas. According to todays standards one may wonder how can a graduation class which is comprised of four students be considered "historic". When we consider the factors surrounding this situation it is well. Let us review the situation:

In 1931 there were four students who had completed beyond the ninth grade requirements (Enid Holst, Enid Baa, Albert Commisiong, Hugh Smith.

## Introduction (Continued)

With no regular teachers (since at that time teachers worked six hours but a few volunteered to give two hours free time to the twelfth graders) the four students were given home work under a "contract plan". This they completed and in June of 1931 the St. Thomas Junior High School awarded the first four senior high school diplomas in the same ceremonies in which the ninth grade graduates officiated.

Several other changes occurred within the system through the years. The name of the school was changed from St. Thomas Junior High School to Charlotte Amalie High School, the name it carries today.

In 1934 a move was made to abolish the Senior High School. Through the efforts of the Teachers Association, the forerunner of today's Federation of Teachers fought desperately to retain this section of our educational system.

Credit for instigating the establishment of the Teachers Institute also goes to the Teachers Association. A small but interested group of educators made an evaluation of the records of local teachers who were teaching without formal training. Some did not have a high school diploma. With the approval of the Director of School, C. Frederick Dixon the Teachers Institute became a reality. Its main goal was to upgrade the teaching profession by offering in-service training. Miss Bertha Boschulte, Miss Jane E. Tuitt and Mrs. Louise Scott paid \$2.00 per course while the instructors were paid \$20. It should be noted here that these instructors were so well qualified to offer these courses that Hampton Institute, New York University and Puerto Rico Polytechnic (Inter-American) accepted their credits towards a degree.

Teacher in-service training continued as a major service of the Teachers Institute. By 1944 less than 10% of the local teachers lacked a high school education and 15% were college graduates. Several new departments were added to the system: Vocational and Technical Education, Spanish as a foreign language, kindergarten schools and free lunches were served daily.

Wayne Aspinall School

Location: Crown Bay, St. Thomas  
Telephone: (809) 774-4540  
Type: Junior High School; Limited Special Education  
Organizations:7-8  
Enrollment: 6/1/82: 1,157

History

On November 20, 1964 the Fifth Legislature of the Virgin Islands approved the naming of a public high school in the honor of Wayne N. Aspinall of Colorado, a member of the U.S. House of Representatives and chairman of the House Interior and Insular Affairs Committee.

He served the people of the Virgin Islands with notable distinction and introduced programs which helped the islands in the field of education, health, housing, business, industry and public works.

## Bertha C. Boschulte School

Location: Estate Bovoni, St. Thomas  
Telephone: (809) 775-4222  
Type: Junior High; Limited Special Education, Ung.  
Organization: 7-8  
Enrollment: 6/1/82: 991

### History

Act No. 3923 approved on December 29, 1976 designated the junior high at Estate Bovoni, St. Thomas be named in honor of Bertha C. Boschulte in honor of the extra ordinary contributions of Miss Boschulte to the people of the Virgin Islands particularly in the field of education.

Bertha Boschulte was an elementary school teacher, principal, statistician and senator. She was born on St. Thomas March 30, 1906 and received her early education in the local school system. She received her bachelor of science degree from Hampton Institute and her Master of Arts in organization and administration of secondary schools from Columbia University and Master of Public Health from University of Michigan.

Positions she has held in the government of the Virgin Islands include: Teacher of English secondary level, Principal of Charlotte Amalie High School and Acting Commissioner of Education. She also served as director of statistical services, director of Division of Vital Records and Statistics, Director of General Services in the Department of Health.

She was elected to the Virgin Islands Legislature in 1964 and to the Virgin Islands Board of Education in 1970.

On March 1, 1981 the Berth Boschulte School was dedicated in her honor.

## Dober School

Location: Charlotte Amalia  
Telephone: (809) 774-0228; 774-5874  
Type: Elementary  
Organization: K-6  
Enrollment: 6/1/82: 318

### History

The original Dober School was a private school, operated by the Moravians. The name Dober was chosen by them to (1) perpetuate the name and efforts of one of the first two Moravian missionaries to visit the islands with the aim of Christianizing and educating the slaves and (2) to perpetuate the labor of the Moravians in the field of education in the then Danish West Indies.

The school was later closed by the Danes because of an over-crowded situation and because of certain social conditions in the area.

After the transfer, the school was reopened and called the Ulyses Grant School in honor of the eighteenth president as was the custom being introduced at that time by the Americans.

Some time later the school was sold and used as a church. The present Dober School is of recent times built around the late 1930's and was a one story building. The second story was built to facilitate the students of Jane E. Tuitt who after grade four were obliged to go out of their area to attend either George Washington or Commandant Gade Schools to complete their elementary education.

However a brief historical note will further explain the contributions of Leonard Dober in whose honor the school was named.

Dober's recognition in the Virgin Islands is closely interwoven with the religious movement which existed in the Danish West Indies and more specifically with the efforts of the Moravians.

The conversion of the slaves of the then Danish West Indies was of major interest to the Moravians and in this pursuit they were involved in many parts of the world.

Dober (Continued)

It was through the efforts of a black man named Anthony that their attention was turned to the islands. While Count Zinzendorf was attending the coronation of Christian V in Copenhagen, he heard through Anthony about the poor conditions of the slaves in the islands and their wish to become Christians.

At once the Moravians felt it was time to spread their missionary work to distant shores and Leonard Dober offered to serve as the missionary for St. Thomas.

It was one year after that he was appointed to the work and another missionary David Nitschman was chosen to accompany him.

They left Copenhagen on October 8, 1733 and arrived on St. Thomas on December 13, of the same year.

In April of the next year David Nitschman returned to Copenhagen leaving Dober to continue the work alone. His main objective was the conversion of the slaves but life in the islands was very difficult as he had no income. He tried to find work as a potter but was unsuccessful. He was finally hired as a steward in the home of Governor Gardelin. However, his work with the slaves was viewed with suspicion and distrust especially at the time of the insurrection on St. Croix. He finally left his job at the Governor's home and became a watchman on estates.

Years after, eighteen other missionaries joined him in his work and some went to St. Croix. Shortly following the group's arrival, Dober was notified that he had been elected Elder of the Unity and left to participate in the United Conference.

Joseph Gomez School

Location: Estate Tutu, St. Thomas  
Telephone: (809) 775-0834  
Type: Elementary: limited Special Education  
Organization: K-6  
Enrollment: 6/1/82: 1,078

History

The public school at Estate Tutu on St. Thomas was designated the Joseph A. Gomez School by Act No. 2658 approved by the Eight Legislature on March 6, 1970.

The late Joseph A. Gomez served with distinction as Chairman of the Municipal Council of St. Thomas and St. John and later as a member of the First Through Fourth Legislatures of the Virgin Islands

During his tenure as a legislator he sponsored many legislative bills designed to improve the general welfare of the people of the Virgin Islands including appropriation measures for the construction of schools and the employment of additional teachers for the education of the youth.

## J. Antonio Jarvis School

Location: Charlotte Amalia, St. Thomas  
Telephone: (809) 774-0036  
Type: Elementary  
Organization: 1-6  
Enrollment: 6/1/82:

### History

Jose Antonio Jarvis, a distinguished native son who died in 1963 was a poet, author, historian, artist, philanthropist and a great educator.

He founded the local newspaper, the Daily News, (now a Gannett Newspaper) in 1940 and has authored several books some of which are Brief History of the Virgin Islands; The Virgin Islands and their People.

Mr. Jarvis began his teaching career in 1934 and in 1942 became the Principal of the Abraham Lincoln School (now Jarvis School). He served in this capacity until his death.

### Background

The building which presently houses the J. Antonio Jarvis School is over 100 years old. During Danish administration it was used as a military hospital and the entire area was known as Hospital Line.

When the Americans assumed responsibility of these islands the building was re-inforced and turned into a school which became known as the Communal School.

Later on in the tradition of naming schools in honor of American Presidents the school was called the Abraham Lincoln School.

Comprised of three floors, it originally housed twelve classrooms and a principal's office. The office was initially the old hospital's morgue.



J. Antonio Jarvis (Continued)

The Lincoln School was also one of the four schools selected to include teaching of Danish in the curriculum. Later on such subjects as Practical Arts and Crafts were added which were designed to introduce boys to the trades in preparation for adult life.

At one time gardening played an important role and the area occupied by portions of the Knud Hansen Hospital were used for agricultural activities. These gardens produced record size and numbers of tomatoes, cabbages and turnips.

## Ivanna Eudora Kean School

Location: Nazareth Bay, Estate Red Hook, St. Thomas  
Telephone: (809) 775-2460; 5-1235; 5-3020; 5-1833  
Type: Senior High; Limited Special Education  
Organization: 9-12  
Enrollment: 6/1/82: 820

### History

The previously named Nazareth Bay Secondary School was renamed the Ivanna Eudora Kean High School through (Bill No. 6322) Act No. 3656 approved on January 13, 1975 by the Eight Legislature of the Virgin Islands in honor of the 52 years of devoted, dedicated and distinguished services of Ivanna Eudora Kean. She began her teaching career under the Danish administration where she started as a monitor-teacher at the Hospital Gade School (now Jarvis School).

After the Transfer in 1917 she worked at several other public schools both elementary and secondary.

Her formal educational background include training at International Correspondence Hampton Institute and the University of Wisconsin.

In addition to the naming of the school in her honor, Miss Kean was also honored by other local agencies.

## Lockhart Elementary School

Location: Estate Thomas, St. Thomas  
Telephone: (809) 774-2133; 774-3111  
Type: Elementary; limited Special Ed.; Ung.  
Organization: K-6  
Enrollment: 6/1/82: 913

### History

On February 21, 1963 by an act approved by the Fifth Legislature, the former Sugar Estate Elementary School was renamed the Lockhart Elementary School in recognition of the humanitarian qualities and honorable acts of the late Alfred Harris Lockhart, Sr.

Mr. Lockhart in his life time achieved an outstanding record as a successful businessman, a good employer and a respectable citizen.

He operated a hotel, a department store, a bakery and a variety of other businesses, all of which contributed to the economic progress of the island.

In memory of and to maintain the tradition of the patriarch, members of the Lockhart family sold to the government, at a most reasonable price, a large parcel of land at Estate Thomas on which not only the elementary school but the race track and portions of Charlotte Amalie High School are located.

Furthermore the legislature also mandated that the entire surrounding area formerly known as Estate Thomas be renamed the Lockhart Gardens.

## Evelyn Marcelli School

Location Charlotte Amalia, St. Thomas  
Telephone: (809) 774-2966  
Type: Elementary: Limited Special Education  
Organization: K-6  
Enrollment: 6/1/82: 457

### History

Originally this building was called Backerdahl and later Talital Kumai. It was used as a private residence, then as a home for wayward girls. It was administered by the Lutheran Church and supervised by the church deconesses.

With the transfer of the Danish West Indies to the United States many major changes occurred in the school system. Several school buildings were termed unsuitable. Therefore other buildings were used as schools. However, this building was one of those transformed into a public school and in 1919 was named in honor of the first president of the United States.

Act No. 3503 approved on November 26, 1973 by the Tenth Legislature of the Virgin Islands mandated the renaming of the George Washington School the Evelyn E. Marcelli School as a lasting tribute to Miss Evelyn E. Marcelli for the devotion of her considerable talent and energies to the benefit of the public education system of the Virgin Islands.

Miss Marcelli, who was born on St. Thomas has dedicated most of her life to the task of public education, starting as a trainee at the old Town School in St. Thomas in 1929.

After studying at Hampton Institute, Virginia and the University of Puerto Rico she later earned her bachelor of science degree in education from Cheyney State College Cheyney, Pennsylvania and her Masters of Arts degree from the University of Pennsylvania in 1960.

For twenty years she served as an elementary school teacher at the then, George Washington School, Abraham Lincoln (now Jarvis), Thomas Jefferson (now defunct). and Dober Schools.

Evelyn Marcelli (Continued)

In 1949 she was appointed principal of Commandant Gade School and in 1961 principal of George Washington School. At the end of the school term 1973 Miss Marcelli submitted her resignation after completing 44 years of service to the community.

## Ulla F. Muller Elementary School

Location: Estate Contant, St. Thomas  
Telephone: (809) 774-0059; 774-4862  
Type: Elementary; limited Special Ed.; Ung.  
Organization: K-6  
Enrollment: 6/1/82: 653

### History

On May 31, 1979 the Thirteenth Legislature of the Virgin Islands through Act No. 4318 renamed the Nisky Elementary School the Ulla F. Muller Elementary School as a tribute to Mrs. Muller for her extraordinary contributions to the Virgin Islands, especially in the field of education.

A product of the local public school system, she taught at the Abraham Lincoln School (now J. Antonio Jarvis) Elementary School.

Mrs. Muller was later transferred to James Monroe School as Principal-Teacher until 1951 when she matriculated at Hampton Institute, Virginia. While at Hampton Mrs. Muller was a member of the Zeta Phi Beta Sorority and was awarded the prestigious Elizabeth Codrington Award for high scholastic achievement.

After earning her Bachelor of Arts degree in elementary education she returned to the Virgin Islands and was assigned Teacher-Principal at Nisky Elementary School.

She pursued additional training and in 1963 obtained a Master of Arts degree in Administration and Supervision.

She has been a leader in education for forty-five years. She has been affiliated with several civic organizations and was honored by the St. Thomas Club of Business and Professional Women as Woman of the Year.

### Background

This school is an outgrowth of the old Nisky School formerly located near the Nisky Moravian Church. It was one of the three original Moravian mission schools.

Ulla Muller (Continued)

Increase in population mandated larger facilities and the new school was built on the present grounds on Estate Contant.

During 1962-1964 it was used as a pilot project with the New York University when this institution was contracted to assist in the upgrading of the school system. Nisky school was used as the demonstration site and the school assumed the name Nisky Demonstration School.

## Emanuel Benjamin Oliver School

Location: Estate Tutu, St. Thomas  
Telephone: (809) 775-2000; 775-4330  
Type: Elementary: limited Special Education; Ung.  
Organization: K-6  
Enrollment: 6/1/82: 803

### History

Approved on February 14, 1975, Act No. 3671 designated the new elementary school at Estate Tutu in honor of the late Emanuel Benjamin Oliver for devoted and meritorious service to the people of the Virgin Islands.

Born on the island of Monsterrat on May 29, 1876 Mr. Oliver came to St. Croix at the age of thirty-two. His former training and experience in teaching on the island of Antigua were advantageous as he subsequently became a principal of the St. Croix Dane School, was transferred to the Frederiksted School and was later moved to St. Thomas where he was appointed principal of the Abraham Lincoln School (now the J. Antonio Jarvis School). At this school he initiated and implemented a teacher training program where he was responsible for the training of teachers of that school.

His involvement was not limited to education as he also participated in other community affairs. He was the founder of the Maypole Dramatic Club, the Goodwill Odd Fellow Lodge as well as other tennis and baseball clubs all now defunct.

After he retired from public education he founded and managed the Goodwill School a private institution from which many outstanding citizens of today were graduates.

The design of the E. Benjamin Oliver School ranked top among best designed schools in the nation.



## Peace Corps School

Location: Estate Mandahl, St. Thomas  
Telephone: (809) 775-3200  
Type: Elementary  
Organization: K-6  
Enrollment: 6/1/82: 384

### History

While no legislative bill has been found designating the naming of this particular school in recognition of the service of the U.S. Peace Corps, it is known that this unit of trainees have constructed several buildings which are currently used as parts of existing school plants. Their efforts were not ignored, however as the following legislative bills will attest

### Peace Corps

Trainees of the Peace Corps of the United States before assignment in Africa, were temporarily based in the Virgin Islands for orientation purposes.

While on the islands the trainees were given experiences in constructing buildings as camping facilities. In some instances the facilities were constructed with monies borrowed from the Government Insurance Fund repayable at the interest of 4% (see act No.2083).

In 1963 two school buildings in St. Thomas were named in honor of the Peace Corps of the United States, namely: a building within the Nisky Elementary (now Ulla Muller) School and within the grounds of the James Madison (now Edith Williams) School on St. Thomas. Act No. 954 approved on March 8, 1963 mandated that each of these buildings be known as the Peace Corps Building.

### Peace Corps at Mandahl

Act No. 2083, approved on December 20, 1967 authorized the Governor to enter into a lease agreement the Peace Corps of the United States for the camping facilities at Estate Mandahl, St. Thomas.

Peace Corps (Continued)

These facilities were constructed with monies borrowed from the Government Insurance Fund.

The facilities were built on land known as No. 1513 and 16 Estate Mandahl comprising a total area of 10.18 acres of land.

In 1973 as stipulated under the 1963 agreements between the Peace Corps and the local government, the end of the ten years was completed. Even though it was also initially stipulated that a renewal could be an option, this was not the case and the local government regained control of the land and facilities.

Overcrowding of the schools in the east caused double sessions in such school as Joseph Gomez and Sibilly. The then Commissioner, Harold Haizlip requested the use of these facilities to ease the over-flow of pupils and the Peace Corps School at Mandahl came into being.

## Kirwan Terrace School

Location: Bourne Field, St. Thomas  
Telephone: (809) 774-7385; 774-3382  
Type: Elementary; limited Special Education; Ung.  
Organization: K-6  
Enrollment: 6/1/82: 650

### History

Act No. 1280 which was approved on November 20, 1964 by the Fifth Legislature designated the newly constructed public housing project in the Bourne Field area as the Michael J. Kirwan Homes.

This legislation was an effort in behalf of the people of the Virgin Islands.

To express their gratitude to Michael J. Kirwan, a member of the House of Representatives who served as a friend for the Virgin Islands. When many important measures affecting the well-being of the people of the Virgin Islands had to pass through the sub-committee of which he was the chairman he showed great interest and pushed for the passage of laws which were important to Virgin Islanders.

Sometime later a school was built to meet the needs of the people in this area and the school was named the Micheal J. Kirwan Terrace School.

Joseph Sibilly School

Location: Estate Mafolie, St. Thomas  
Telephone: (809) 774-7001; 774-0898  
Type: Elementary: Limited Ung.  
Organization: K-6  
Enrollment: 6/1/82: 263

History

On March 6, 1973, Act No. 3395 was approved by the Tenth Legislature which approved renaming the Robert Herrick School on St. Thomas, the Joseph Sibilly School in recognition of the generous donations, community spirit and good works of Mr. Joseph Sibilly.

Mr. Sibilly who was born on the island of St. Barthelemy French West Indies, January 5, 1889 migrated to the United States Virgin Islands and established residence on St. Thomas in 1912.

During his life time he established himself as a distinguished community leader and active in local affairs.

Through his generosity he donated large tracts of land to the local government for the construction of a church at Estate Elizabeth, a public school and a community cemetery at Estate Mafolie.

He also served in the Virgin Islands government as Assistant Supervisor in the Department of Agriculture and is credited with being responsible for the construction of the Agricultural Station at Estate Dorothea.

Jane E. Tuitt School

Location: Levkoi Strade, St. Thomas  
Telephone: (809) 774-0520  
Type: Elementary: limited Ung.  
Organization: K-6  
Enrollemnt: 6/1/82: 429

History

In 1959 the Jane E. Tuitt School was dedicated in honor of Miss Jane E. Tuitt as an expression of appreciation of the people of the Virgin Islands for her forty-three years of outstanding public service especially in the field of education.

A native of the Virgin Islands, born in Christiansted, St. Croix, Miss Tuitt later received her bachelor of science degree at Hampton Institute Virginia and a masters degree at Columbia University.

Beginning as an elementary school teacher, she served at all levels of public education which included: elementary school teacher on St. Croix, high school teacher, acting principal at Charlotte Amalie High School, St. Thomas, Assistant Superintendent of Education, St. Thomas/St. John, Director of Elementary Schools in the Virgin Islands, Assistant Commissioner of Education and Commissioner of Education, the position from which she resigned in 1966.

Following her retirement from public, she accepted the position and served as Associate Dean and Professor of Education at the College of the Virgin Islands.

She has been honored by the Seventh Legislature with a testimonial of recognition and appreciation which was presented to her in a fitting ceremony.

In addition, many other organizations have followed in this vein and have honored her through many forms of expression.

## Edith L. Williams School

Location: Estate Charlotte Amalia, St. Thomas  
Telephone: (809) 775-0820  
Type: Elementary  
Organization: K-6  
Enrollment: 6/1/82: 206

### History

This school carries quite an historic record as it was one of the first three built by the Moravian Missionaries in the then Danish West Indies. (see text on Dober School)

Initially its enrollment consisted of children of Moravians only, was changed when government laws made education compulsory.

As was the Danish Custom of naming schools for the area in which they were located this school was initially called "Quartee" School, then was changed to 'New Hernhutt School' which further showed its affiliations with Moravians. The building served as a church and a school in which the minister served as a teacher and preacher.

The original building was a wooden two-room construction with an out-door privy. It was later rebuilt by the Sibilly Construction Company and named James Madison School in honor of the fourth president of the United States.

On December 15, 1981 the Fourteenth Legislature of the Virgin Islands renamed the James Madison Elementary School of St. Thomas the Edith L. Williams Elementary School in recognition of forty-five years of devotion, dedication and distinguished services to the people of the Virgin Islands especially in the field of education.

Starting as a classroom teacher in 1900 she worked under the supervision of the Moravians, a religious group who was delegated governing powers of the schools by the Danes. A strict disciplinarian, she taught the three R's, religious instruction and concentrated her energies in molding the character of each pupil.

Born in 1887 the pioneer educator, taught at many of the earlier schools and when she was finally transferred to the rural school in estate Charlotte Amalia, she walked the mile and a half distance twice a day.

Edith L. Williams (Continued)

She served the people of the Virgin Islands as a teacher, surrogate mother, spiritual counsellor, civic and sports leader.

She accepted a challenge willingly and in 1935 she was one of several females who challenged the right to vote which, by law, was denied females of that era and all persons not having prescribed financial assests.

As a result of this case those persons engaged in the challenge were able to vote in December of 1936 and in 1938 universal suffrage was granted.

The Edith L. Williams School is a fitting tribute to the memory of this grand lady.

Guy Benjamin School

Location: Coral Bay, St. John  
Telephone: (809) 776-6242  
Type: Elementary  
Organization: K-6  
Enrollment: 6/1/82: 79

History

On June 4, 1975, Act No. 3695 approved by the Eleventh Legislature of the Virgin Islands changed the name of the Benjamin Franklin School on St. John to the Guy Benjamin School in honor of the forty years of devoted and distinguished service of Mr. Guy Benjamin.

He began his service in the Department of Education in 1933 as a classroom teacher in several schools on St. John and St. Thomas. Later on he was assigned principal-teacher at Benjamin Franklin School for 12 years and was later appointed Education Officer, followed by being appointed coordinator of educational programs.

He received his Bachelor of Science degree from Howard University and a Master of Arts from New York University.

During his sabbatical leave he traveled and studied in Africa, Asia, Europe and North America.



## Julius E. Sprauve School

Location: Cruz Bay, St. John  
Telephone: (809) 776-6336  
Type: Combination  
Organization: K-9  
Enrollment: 6/1/82: 419

### History

On June 4, 1957, Resolution No. 64 was passed which designated the public school at Cruz Bay St. John as the Julius E. Sprauve School in recognition of the twenty years of service in the Legislature and record of achievements of the late Senator Julius E. Sprauve, Senator from St. John.

### Clarice Thomas Annex

Clarice Adina Thomas was born on St. John, during Danish colonization on March 10, 1904. Her elementary education was earned at Bethany School after which she journeyed to St. Thomas for her secondary training and eventually acquired a Bachelor degree at Morgan State University.

Subsequently she served as teacher in grades first through ninth. After more than 40 years of service in education she retired. The annex to the Julius Sprauve School where she taught for many years has been named in her honor.

## The Alfredo Andrews School

Location: Kingshill, St. Croix  
Telephone: (809) 778-1925  
Type: Elementary: limited Special Education; Ung.  
Organization: K-6  
Enrollment: 6/1/83: 762

### History

On November 26, 1973, Act No. 3500 authorized the designation of the new school at Estate Fredensborg, St. Croix as the Alfredo Andrews School in honor of the memory of the late Alfredo Andrews and of his dedication and contribution to the educational system of the Virgin Islands.

Mr. Andrews, a native Crucian was born on St. Croix on July 14, 1913 and died July, 1971.

A product of the local educational system, in 1951, he earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from Inter-American University of Puerto Rico and additional credits towards a master's degree also from Inter-American University.

In his 35 years in the local educational system he served as a teacher at the (defunct) Diamond School, Assistant Principal at Christiansted Grammar (now Juanita Gardine) and Principal at the La Valle Princess now Theodora Dunbavin and Slob Rural and Emanuel Schools.

Through these years he distinguished himself as a dedicated and talented educator and administrator.

Elena Christian Junior High School

Location: Christiansted, St. Croix  
Telephone: (809) 773-0050  
Type: Junior High; limited Special Education and Ung.  
Organization: 7-8  
Enrollment: 6/1/82: 1,439

History

The Ninth Legislature of the Virgin Islands in 1971 publicly recognized the contributions of Elena L. Christian to her community by renaming in her honor the Christiansted Junior High School, the Elena Christian Junior High School.

Born in Basseterre St. Kitts, Mrs. Christian came to St. Croix at a very early age and lived most of her life there. She began her teaching career in 1912, has captured for herself a golden record by contributing fifty-five years of dedicated and distinguished service.

When she retired in 1967, the Seventh Legislature passed a Resolution and gave a testimonial in recognition of and appreciation for her contributions to her community.

Additional accolades are many and her civic participation are just as numerous. More can be read about Mrs. Christian in Profiles, a compilation of outstanding Virgin Islanders.

## Theodora Dunbavin School

Location: Estate La Grande Princess, St. Croix  
Telephone: (809) 773-0015  
Type: Special  
Organization: Kindergarten and Special Education  
Enrollment: 6/1/82: 60

### History

Act No. 3561 authorized the re-naming of the La Princess School at Estate La Grande Princesse, St. Croix the Theodora Dunbavin School in honor of Miss Theodora Dunbavin for her distinguished and dedicated service throughout her lengthy career as a public school educator and administrator.

Mrs. Dunbavin has given a total of forty-four years to the Government of the Virgin Islands. Starting on September 1923 he worked for twenty-one years as a teacher, nineteen years as a principal and four years as a Deputy Commissioner, Chairperson of the Title III Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) for the V.I.

To achieve distinction in her career Miss Dunbavin enrolled on on-island study programs offered by Polytechnic (now Inter-American) and Hampton Institute. She earned her Bachelor of Arts degree in administration and general education from New York University.

Even though retired since July 1967, she continues to actively participate in community affairs which include Director of Friedenstahl Moravian Church School.

### Background

To implement his ordinance of 1839 which mandated compulsory education throughout the islands, Governor-General Peter Von Scholten later established the first school on St. Croix.

La Grande Princess has the distinction of being the first school opened up in 1841. By 1842 eight other schools were established on St. Croix.

It was not until around 1844-46 that such schools were opened up on St. Thomas and St. John even though there were church schools already in existence.

## Charles Emanuel School

Address: Estate Kingshill, Christiansted, St. Croix  
Telephone: 778-0511  
Type: Elementary  
Organization: K-6  
Enrollment: 6/1/82: 696

### History

Act No. 104 passed on July 11, 1958 by the Legislature of the Virgin Islands designated the proposed public high school on St. Croix as the Charles H. Emanuel School in honor of Charles H. Emanuel, a good citizen inspired educator and devoted public servant.

Mr. Emanuel dedicated his adult life to the teaching and educational development of students in the island of St. Croix while he served as principal of the Diamond Rural School, (now defunct).

His commitment to public service was vividly demonstrated through his untiring zeal in the training of youth over his career, and in his devotion to the highest ideals of his profession.

The Juanita Gardine Public Grammar School

Location: Christiansted, St. Croix  
Telephone: (809) 773-0040  
Type: Elementary; limited Special Education  
Organization: K-6  
Enrollment: 6/1/82: 1,067

History

As approved on March 11, 1974, Act No. 3537 was designed to express appreciation of the people of the Virgin Islands for many years of outstanding services of Mrs. Juanita Gardine and in addition, mandate the renaming of the Christiansted Grammar School, Christiansted, St. Croix in honor of Mrs. Juanita Forbes Gardine.

A native Crucian, she attended both the Christiansted Grammar and Christiansted Junior High but completed high school in New York.

Her career in education range through the educational spectrum, beginning as an elementary school teacher, serving next as high school teacher, acting assistant high school principal, junior high school principal, assistant superintendent of education, associate Dean-Community College, high school principal, supervisor of educational statistics, social worker and principal of the Juanita Gardine School. She is currently pursuing advanced training at the University of Illinois.

Alexander Henderson School

Location: Estate Concordia, Frederiksted, St. Croix  
Telephone: (809) 773-1330  
Type: Elementary; limited Special Education; Ung.  
Organization: K-6  
Enrollment: 6/1/82: 755

History

Approved July 10, 1972, Act No. 3241 authorized the re-naming of the former Concordia School on Estate Concordia, Frederiksted St. Croix the Alexander Henderson School in honor of Mr. Alexander Henderson.

Mr. Henderson, born on Frederiksted St. Croix on June 16, 1914 was worthy of such recognition for twenty-seven years of distinguished service in a variety of responsible positions in the field of education. Prominent among these positions were teacher, Acting Principal and Principal of the (defunct) Frederiksted Junior High School, Christiansted Grammar (now Juanita Gardine), Principal of Claude O. Markoe, Director of Research and Statistics in the Department of Education and finally Director of Research.

While serving as principal of Claude O. Markoe he was responsible for organizing the school under a comprehensive plan, K-12. However due to later developments the organization was changed to K-8 and eventually to K-6.

Mr. Henderson has also distinguished himself as an author of many articles relative to education and other fields. Of utmost significance was his "History of Public Education in the Virgin Islands," which appeared in Education in the States: Historical Development and Outlook, "The Steel Band," and "March-Virgin Islands Month."

The Pearl B. Larsen School

Location: Estate St. Peter's Christiansted, St. Croix

Telephone: (809) 773-3070

Type: Elementary; ungraded

Organization: K-6

Enrollment: 6/1/82: 760

Approved on July 10, 1982, Act No. 3239 designated the former St. Peter's School in Christiansted as the Pearl B. Larsen School as a tribute to Mrs. Pearl B. Larsen for thirty years of devoted unselfish services to public education in the Virgin Islands.

During this period of service she has held the positions of Supervisor of Schools and Superintendent of Education, both for the district of St. Croix and Supervisor of Secondary Schools for the Virgin Islands.

She earned the respect affection and gratitude of the people of the Virgin Islands for her meritorious service to public education.



Claude O. Markoe School

Location: Frederiksted, St. Croix  
Telephone: 772-0340  
Type: Elementary; limited Special Education  
Organization: K-6  
Enrollment: 6/1/82: 801

History

An act, No.95, passed on May 22, 1958 by the Virgin Islands Legislature established a new school at Frederiksted, St. Croix with intent to consolidate and supplant the then existing Grammar and Junior High Schools.

It further stated that this school be designated and known from and after the date of its completion and dedication as the Claude O. Markoe School in honor of Claude O. Markoe, good citizen, inspired educator and devoted public servant.

A native of St. Croix, born in Frederiksted, Mr. Markoe is a product of the local public schools who earned his Bachelor of Science degree in chemistry from the University of Puerto Rico, dedicated his adult life unselfishly to the teaching and educational development of the students of St. Croix.

The name Markoe (also Marcou) is of historical significance both in national and local annals. Claude O. Markoe is the great-great-great grandson of Pierre Marcou, a French hugenot who in escaping religious persecution at home landed on St. Croix. Abrini Marcou the grandson of Pierre is credited with designing the flag that flew at the head of the column which escorted George Washington from Philadelphia to Kings Bridge as Commander-in-Chief of the Continental Army in 1775. To this flag Congress added the Union Jack which was later dropped.

## The Lew Muckle School

Location: Estate Sion Farm, Christiansted, St. Croix  
Telephone: (809) 773-1286  
Type: Elementary; limited Special Education  
Organization: K-6  
Enrollment: 6/1/82: 718

### History

Among other policies, Act No. 3040, approved on May 26, 1971 was also established to memorialize the public services of the late Senator Lew Muckle and to designate the public school at Estate Sion Farm, St. Croix as the Lew Muckle Elementary School.

Senator Muckle as a legislator, businessman, government employee, youth counsellor, teacher, civic leader, husband and father, had achieved at the age of 29 many of the goals and accomplishments that few attain in twice the years granted to Senator Muckle.

While serving as a senator he sponsored many legislative bills designed to improve the general welfare of his constituents and in particular the youth of the Virgin Islands.

Arthur A. Richards Junior High School

Location: Frederiksted, St. Croix  
Telephone: (809) 772-1500  
Type: Junior High; limited Special Education  
Organization: 7-9  
Current Enrollment: 6/1/82: 1,279

Most fittingly, Act No. 897 approved on July 20, 1977 paid tribute to an outstanding Virgin Islander, Dr. Arthur Richards by naming in his honor, the new school at Estate Stoney Ground for his many accomplishments and contributions as an educator.

Arthur Richards, (Ed.D.) President of the College of the Virgin Islands is the son of Claude J and Evelyn (Dubois) Richards and was born on St. Croix.

After receiving both his elementary and secondary education from the local public school system he earned his Bachelor of Science degree from Howard University in 1948; Master of Arts at Hampton Institute in 1961; International Institute on Comparative Education, Italy and the Netherlands 1962. In 1965 an Ed. D. was conferred on him by the New York University.

He has participated in various institutes, seminars, workshops on many topics including management, labor relations, education, the behavioral sciences, and computer uses.

His work experiences include teacher, junior high school teacher, high school level, principal both elementary and secondary, Deputy Commissioner of Education Department of Education, Assistant Commissioner of Education, Provost and Dean of the College of the Virgin Islands 1969-78; Vice President and Provost of the College 1978-1980; President of the College 1980-

Highly respected both locally and abroad for his contributions and achievements, he also serves on many boards and commissions, including but not limited to the Virgin Islands Council on the Arts, V.I. Advisory Council on Vocational and Technical Education, the National League for Nursing ad hoc Committee on Review and Revision of the Criteria for Accreditation, the Virgin Islands Rural Affairs Council and the Virgin Islands Health Coordinating Council.

Ricardo Richards School

Location: Kingshill, St. Croix  
Telephone: (809) 778-0612  
Type: Elementary  
Organization: K-6  
Enrollment: 497

History

Act No. 3948, approved April 13, 1977 was established to express the appreciation of the people of the Virgin Islands for the many years of outstanding services of Mr. Ricardo Richards to the Government of the Virgin Islands and to rename the Strawberry School on St. Croix in honor of Mr. Ricardo Richards.

Mr. Richard's career in public education of the youth of the Virgin Islands at all levels in education began in 1934 as an elementary school teacher at the now defunct Diamond Ruby School.

Later on his positions included teacher at the former LaValle Frederiksted Junior High and former Frederiksted Public Grammar School; Principal Claude O. Markoe School, and Property and Procurement Officer of the Division of Property and Procurement of Auxilliary Services.

He retired from active duty on December 24, 1976 but will be remembered for his outstanding contributions to the Virgin Islands communities both within and outside the area of education.

## The Eulalie Rivera School

Location: Estate Grove Place, Frederiksted, St. Croix  
Telephone: (809) 772-0831  
Type: Elementary  
Organization: K-6; limited Special Education  
Enrollment: 6/1/82: 953

### History

As approved on February 19, 1974 Act No. 3521 mandated the renaming of the Grove Place Elementary School on Grove Place St. Croix as the Eulalie R. Rivera Elementary School in honor of the great contributions to the teaching profession of Mrs. Eulalie Castella Rohlsen Rivera.

A native of Frederiksted, St. Croix and a product of the local educational system, Mrs. Rivera became interested in teaching at an early age. In 1932 after completion of her training she was awarded an Assistant Graded Teacher's License and in 1934 earned a Principal's License.

Among the schools which she served as a teacher were the former Diamond School, La Princess and Claude O. Markoe Schools.

In 1967 she received two outstanding awards. She was named Woman of the Year by the Business and Professional Women's Club and Teacher of the Year by the Claude O. Markoe School.

Most active in political, civic and religious activities, Mrs. Rivera has been recently re-elected to the V.I. Board of Elections on which she was currently serving as Vice Chairman.

Evelyn Williams School

Location: Estate Mount Pleasant Frederiksted, St. Croix  
Telephone: (809) 773-2844  
Type: Elementary  
Organization: K-6  
Enrollment: 6/1/82: 1,065

History

Act No. 3812, approved on June 7, 1976 mandated the name of the new elementary school at Estate Mount Pleasant in Frederiksted be the Evelyn M. Williams School as a lasting tribute to the outstanding works of Mrs. Evelyn Williams in the St. Croix public school system.

A native of St. Croix Mrs. Williams dedicated forty-one years of her life to the education of the youth in the local public school system.

John H. Woodson School

Location: Friedensburg, St. Croix  
Telephone: (809) 778-2710  
Type: Junior High School  
Organization: 7-8  
Enrollment: 11/1/82; 1,345

History

On March 30, 1981, the Fourteenth Legislature approved Act No. 4528 which named the new junior high school at Friedensburg, St. Croix, the John H. Woodson Junior High.

John Woodson was born in Brooklyn New York of West Indian parentage and immigrated to Christiansted St. Croix in 1932 where he attended the elementary school. He returned to New York City to complete his secondary education.

After service in the armed forces of the United States he graduated in 1954 from New York University and returned to the Virgin Islands where he worked in the Department of Health as an X-ray Technican and Laboratory Technician.

In 1958 he resumed working with the Department of Education where he served as a science teacher and subsequently as a principal.

His scientific interests and abilities earned for him successive invitations to attend the lift-off of the Gemini V and Apollo XII space statellites and also being named Virgin Islands Representative for the National Aeronautic and Space Administration, (NASA).

His life has been acclaimed as exemplary to those who wish to give of their best to the children of the Virgin Islands.

Heads of the local educational system 1917 to present as researched and compiled by Charles W. Turnbull, Ph.D. Commissioner of Education, United States Virgin Islands

1.	O. Rubner Petersen	1917
2.	M. Walter (Acting)*	1917
3.	P. Kastrup (Acting) **	1917
4.	Henry C. Blair	1917-1919
5.	Otto C. McDonough	1919-1921
6.	Daniel R. Nase	1921-1923
7.	Arthur E. Lindborg	1923-1931
8.	George H. Ivins	1931-1935
9.	C. Frederick Dixon *	1935-1955
10.	Raymond Thompson ** )	1935-1955
11.	A. Thurston Child ** )	1935-1940
12.	Frederick D. Dorsch **)	
13.	Pearl Byrd Larsen **)	1940-1955
14.	Robert C. Cotton	1955
15.	C. Frederick Dixon (Acting)	1955
16.	Jane E. Tuitt (Acting)	1956-1957
17.	Andrew C. Preston	1957-1960
18.	Alonzo G. Moron	1960-1961
19.	Jane E. Tuitt (Acting)	1961
20.	Pedro C. Sanchez	1961-1963
21.	Jane E. Tuitt	1963-1966
22.	Arthur A. Richards	1967-1969
23.	Charles W. Turnbull (Acting)	1969
24.	Philip A. Gerard	1969-1970
25.	Charles W. Turnbull (Acting)	1970-1971
26.	Harold C. Haizlip	1971-1975
27.	Gwendolyn E. Kean	1975-1978
28.	Charles W. Turnbull	1979-

\* St. Thomas/St. John only

\*\* St. Croix only



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