

MEGACO  
TO  
TREASURE

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Salt River Bay  
National Historical Park  
and Ecological Preserve

by CARLA D. VAUTHRIN

# LEGACY TO TREASURE

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and Ecological Preserve

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*CLIPPER PRESS*

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There's an old saying,  
*"A man cannot love a woman he doesn't know."*

As you get to know Salt River Bay National Park and Ecological Preserve  
may you find yourself moved to support and protect this priceless heritage  
for future generations of Crucians and visitors from all around the world.

*A portion of the purchase price of this book will be donated  
to the Salt River Bay National Historical Park Museum Fund  
and the Christopher Columbus Jubilee Committee.*

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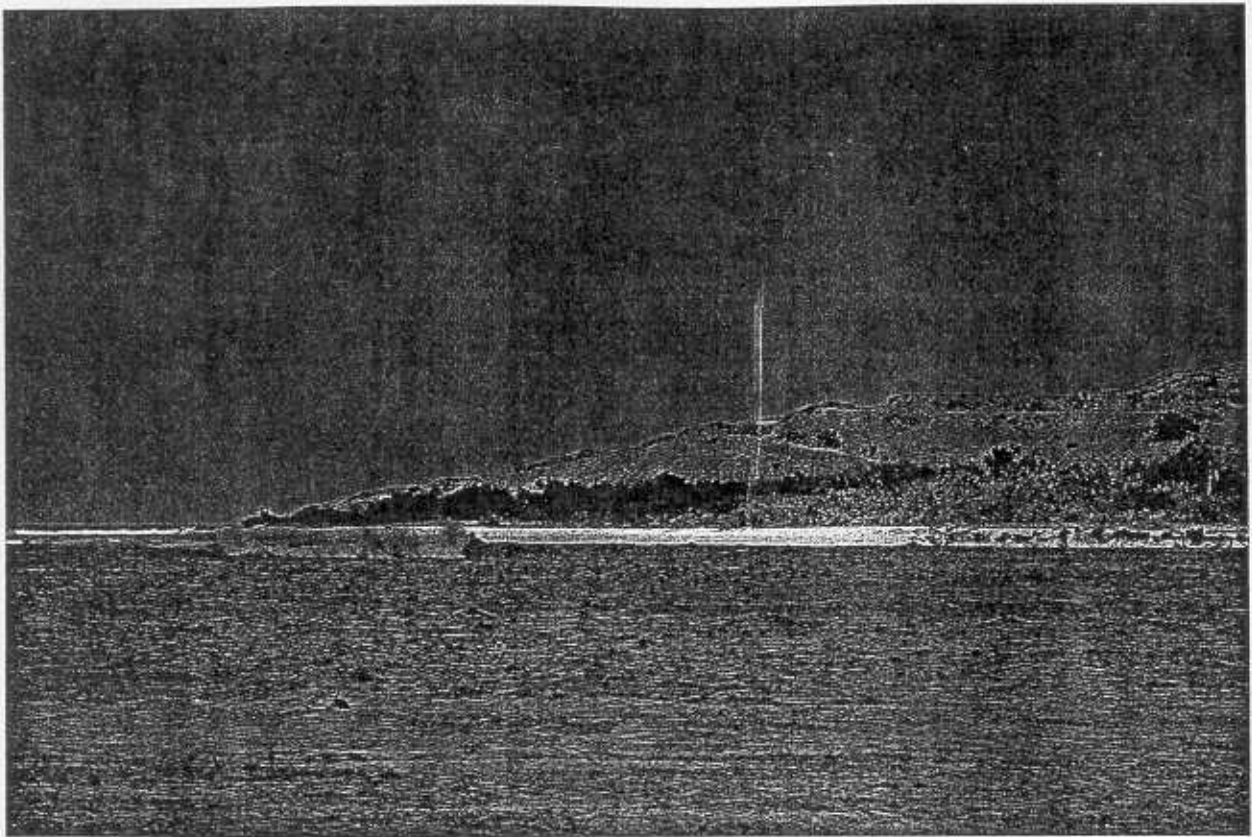
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Carroll Lee

Columbus sailed with a fleet of seventeen ships, including the *Nina*, on his second voyage in 1493. 1200 soldiers, sailors, and colonists, six priests and five of the six Indians he'd taken to Spain after the first voyage accompanied him. The fleet

anchored outside the reef at Salt River Bay and sent an armed party of 25 men ashore in a longboat. As they returned to the fleet after investigating the village on the western shore, a Carib canoe was sighted. The Caribs fired arrows at

the longboat when it approached them, wounding two men, but were taken captive along with the Taino slaves with them. Columbus named the east point of Salt River Bay Cape of the Arrows in honor of the seaman who later died of his wound.

*"In fourteen hundred ninety-two,  
Columbus sailed the ocean blue."*

Millions of American school children have used this familiar rhyme to memorize the date of the 'discovery of America' but the fact is that the first, and only, documented United States site where members of the Columbus expeditions landed was at Salt River Bay on the island of St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands on November 14, 1493.

That five acre site containing the heart of the Salt River Indian village where Columbus' men landed became a National Historic Landmark in 1960.

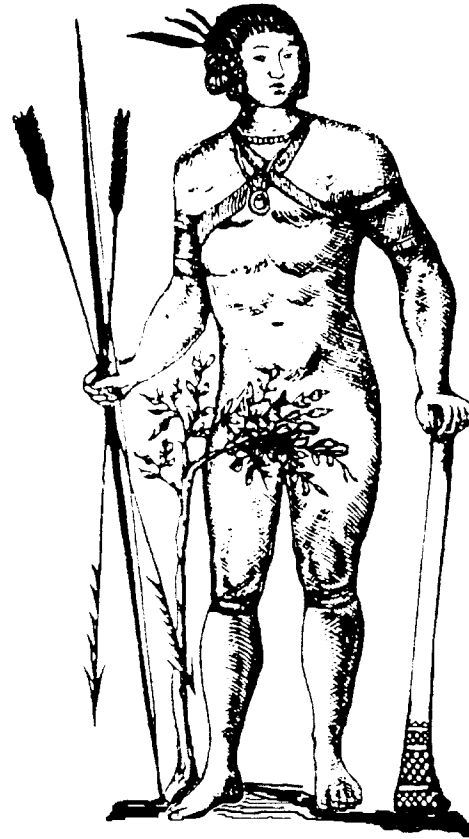
*"In fourteen hundred ninety-three,  
Columbus sailed the deep blue sea."*

No less than four eyewitness accounts confirm the time, the place and the event including those of Dr. Diego Alvaredo Chanca, the fleet surgeon, and Michele de Cuneo, an Italian nobleman and personal friend of Columbus who led the armed party ashore. Cuneo reported,

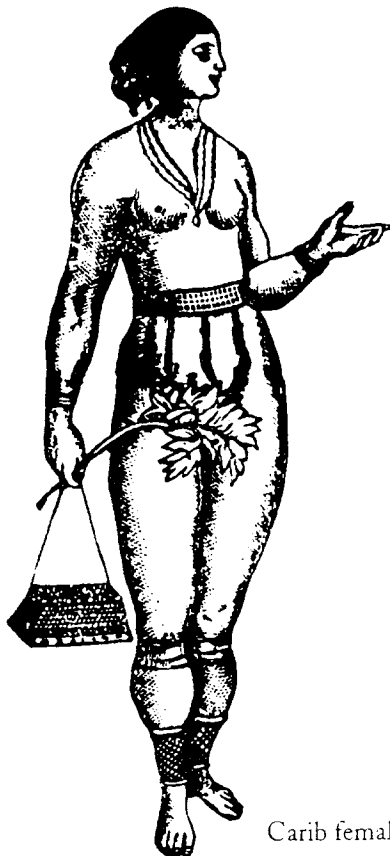
*"...we came to another island of Caribs very beautiful and fertile, and we arrived at a very beautiful harbor. As soon as the Caribs saw us they ran away to the mountains ..."*

“...while we were laying at anchor we saw coming from a cape a canoe, that is to say a boat, which they call it in their language, going along with oars so that it looked like a well-manned bergantine on which there were three or four Carib men with two Carib women and two Indian slaves...”

“...having the flagship's boat ashore, when we saw that canoe coming, quickly jumped into the boat and gave chase to that canoe. While we were approaching her the Caribs began shooting at us with their bows in such manner that, had it not been for the shields, half of us would have been wounded.”



Carib male



Carib female

“But I must tell you that to one of the seamen who had a shield in his hand, came an arrow which went through the shield and penetrated his chest three inches, so that he died in a few days. We captured that canoe with all the men... we later sent [them] to Spain.”

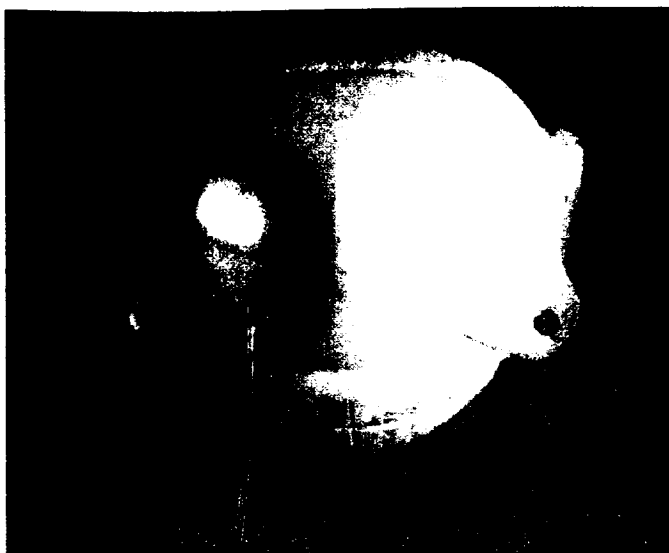
“To that cape of that island the Admiral gave the name Cape of the Arrows because of the one who had died of the arrow.”

Following the incident at Cape of the Arrows, Columbus sailed northward to the present day British and U.S. Virgin Islands and then westward to an undocumented site in Puerto Rico.

The archeological record at Salt River Bay is a long one. When bone fragments from a burial site on Cape of the Arrows were radio carbon dated the results showed that the site was in use 800 years before the arrival of Columbus.

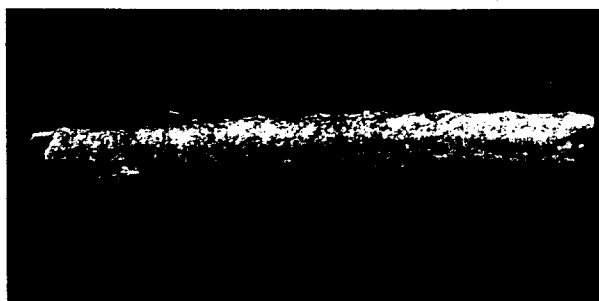
Pottery from all three major pottery making cultures found in the Virgin Islands (Igneri, AD 50-650; Taino, AD 650-1450; Kalina or Carib, AD 1425-1590) has been unearthed at Salt River.

In 1923, Danish archeologist Gudmund Hatt unearthed a Mayan-like ball court and artifacts associated with that game on the western shore of Salt River Bay. The carved stones were moved to Denmark; they are currently at the National Museum in Copenhagen.



NPS

This conch shell effigy mask was worn on a belt around the waist by a shaman or person of important rank. The Caribs believed that evil spirits entered the body through the navel and the mask would protect that area. Only two other effigy masks have been found in the Virgin Islands; they were made of clay.



NPS

A highly unusual bird bone flute

Scholars and pot hunters have all been lured to Salt River over the years. One of the best known and documented collections of Salt River pottery, the Folmer Anderson collection, is on display in the Steeple Building at the Christiansted National Historic Site.

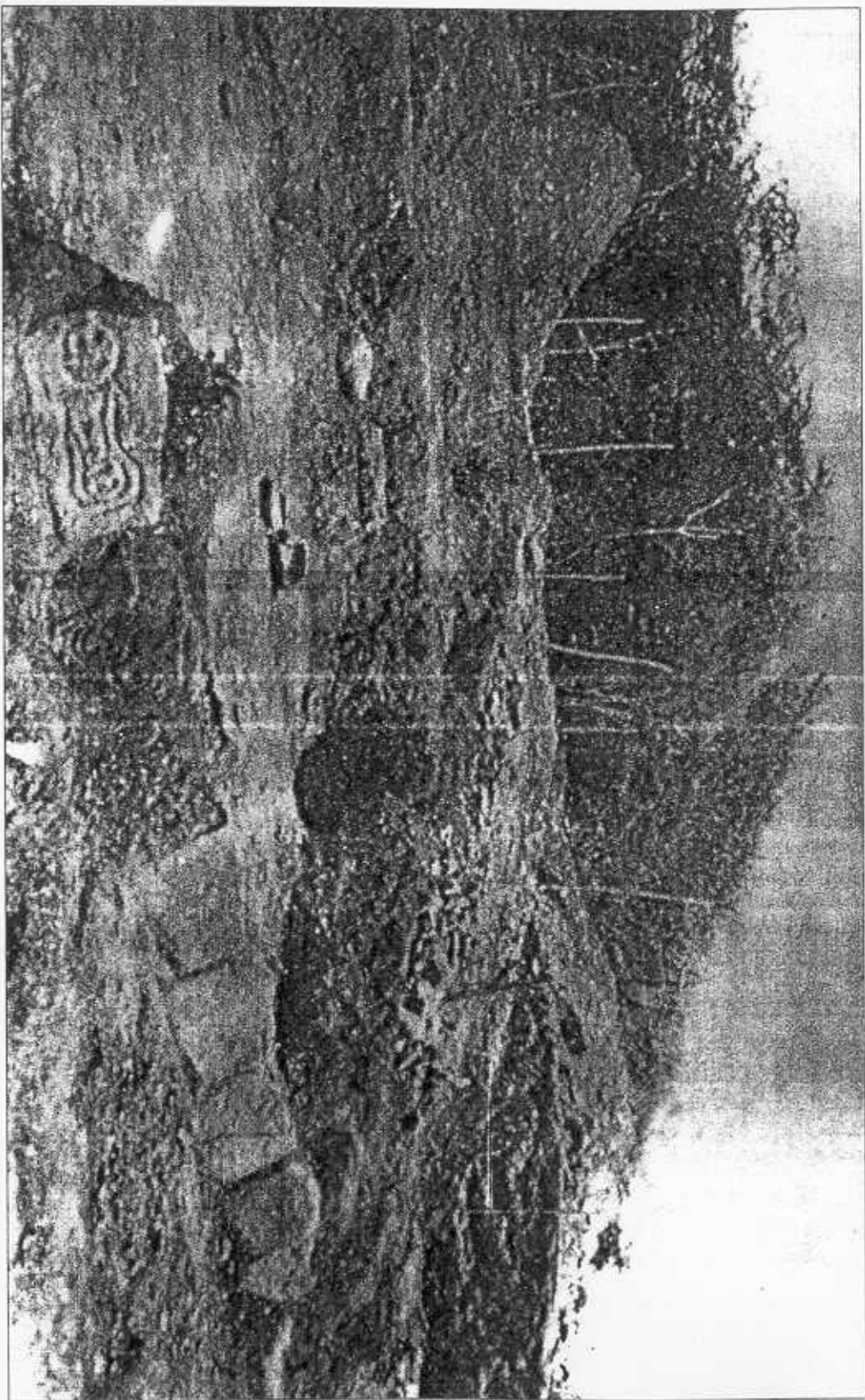
Strict protocols are observed in modern day archeological digs such as this one in 1989 on the western shore with a pre-Columbian burial completely exposed.



NPS

Even the discovery of the only known ceremonial ball court in the Lesser Antilles and artifacts associated with that game - petroglyphs, stone belts and human sacrificial burials - didn't bring wide acclaim to Salt River. The carved stones were moved to Denmark and the site abandoned. Only now is the importance of the site being widely recognized.

This photograph appeared in a paper presented by Danish archaeologist Gudmund Hart at the 21st "Congres International Des Americanistes" in 1924 with the caption, "View of the southwestern end of the stone row at Salt River, St. Croix. Behind the stone row five vessels and an idol of coral stone are uncovered."



St. Croix Landmarks Society

Just as Salt River Bay offered an ideal physical environment for pre-Columbian development as an important center of religious and commercial activity, its protected anchorage, rich fisheries and fertile shores drew Europeans searching for lands and opportunity in the New World.

In 1587, the Englishman John White, on his way to colonize Virginia for Sir Walter Raleigh, anchored in Salt River Bay for three days. The experiences of his company were reported in Hakluyt's Divers Voyages.

*"... we came to anker at an Island called Santa Cruz, where all the planters were set on land, ... At our first landing on this Island, some of our women and men, by eating a small fruit like greene Apples, were fearefully troubled with a sudden burning in their mouthes, and swelling of their tongues so bigge, that some of them could not speake."*

*"Also a child by sucking one of those womens breasts, had at that instand his mouth set on a such burning, that it was strange to see how the infant was tormented for the time: but after 24 houres, it ware away by it selfe."*

*"Also the first night of our being on this Island, we tooke five great Torteses, some of them of such bigness, that sixteene of our strongest men were tired with carrying of one of them but from the sea side to our cabbins."*



NPS

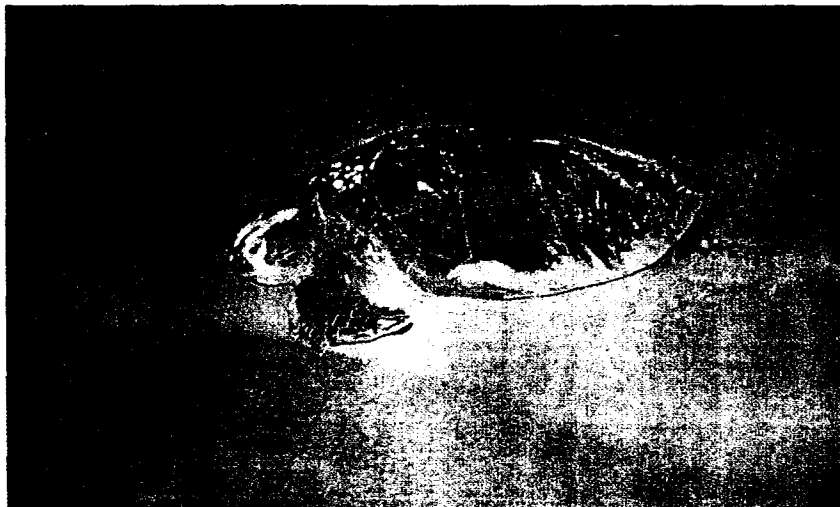
All parts of the manchineel tree, (*Hippomane mancinella L.*), including the small, apple-like fruit, contain a milky sap which is acrid and poisonous. The trees, from 10 to 50 feet high with a trunk 1 to 2 feet in diameter, grow near the sea around the shores of Salt River .



NPS

To this day, the great sea turtles continue to come ashore to lay their eggs on the beaches of Salt River. A loyal cadre of naturalists and volunteers patrol the beaches to protect the huge turtles, their vulnerable nests and hatchlings.

Solvin Zank/NPS





A brief look at these years reflects the perception of importance given to the Antilles by the European powers. The lure of great wealth to be made from undeveloped lands continues to this day.

**1641** The English established a colony on the western shore of Salt River.

**1643** The Dutch seized control and erected Fort Flamand ("the Flemish Fort," later known as Fort Sale) with earthwork fortifications and 11 canon. Most of the English settlers remained.

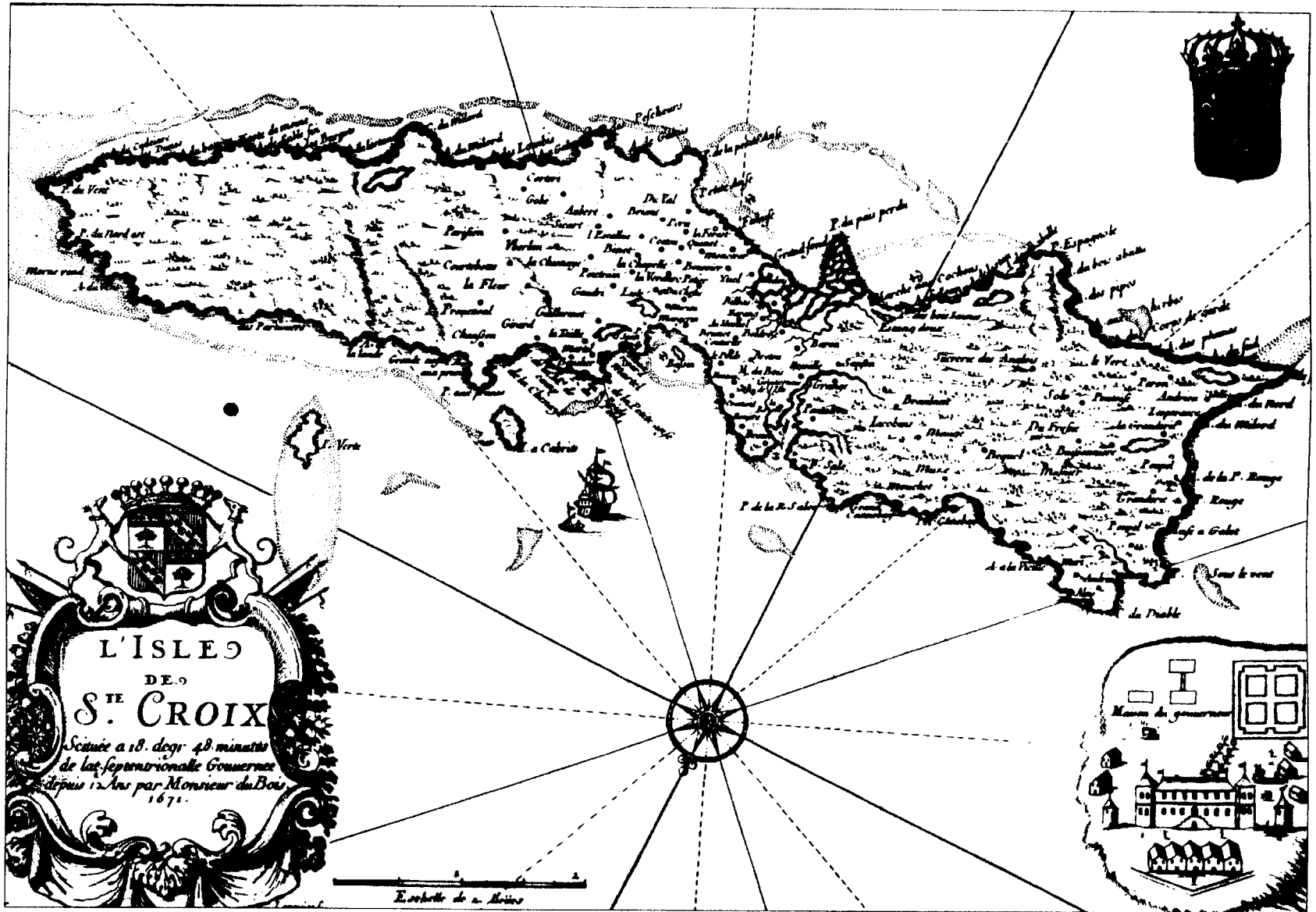
**1645** The English recovered and drove off the Dutch (who went to St. Eustatius and St. Martin). In the years that followed, the English population increased to almost 600 with settlements on both sides of Salt River Bay.

**1647** The Spanish attempted, unsuccessfully, to drive out the English.

**1650** Spain attacked again, sending five armed ships and 1200 men, and succeeded in driving out the English, giving them three weeks to leave or be slaughtered.



The distinctive triangular shape of Fort Sale, one of the few remaining earthwork fortifications in the western hemisphere, is clearly shown in this detail from the attractive, color map known as the "1647 Spanish spy map," the first map of St. Croix to show features of human activity. Recent documentation has been found to definitely connect this map to the unsuccessful 1647 Spanish raid that failed to drive the English from Salt River. The whole map shows four farms on the east side of the bay with the "house of the preachers," and the Governor's house as well as the fort on the western shore. A system of roads and fortifications in what we know as Christiansted and Frederiksted are also shown.



Harlan Hutchins Collection St. Croix Landmarks Society

The 1671 La Pointe Map clearly shows how populated the island had become during the golden years of development between 1660 and 1675 under French rule. 80 plantations and a grand two-story mansion for the governor, on the eastern shore of Salt River, are shown in great detail on this exquisitely detailed map.

**1650** A French force of 160 men, a barkentine and a gunboat sent by Lieutenant General of the French West Indies Phillipe de Poincy drove out the Spanish.

**1651** With income from his two commandaries in the Knights of Malta, Phillipe de Poincy purchased St. Croix, in 1653, he transferred it to that order, with provision that it be held in fief for the crown (of France) and be governed by a Frenchman.

The area around Salt River, as did most of St. Croix, flourished under the French. One French account of Salt River waxed eloquent, "100 and 120 ton vessels may sail a half a league up river; the roadstead at the estuary is spacious enough to accomodate five hundred of the largest ships in the world at anchor without crowding." The years from 1660 to 1676 have become known as golden years of development.

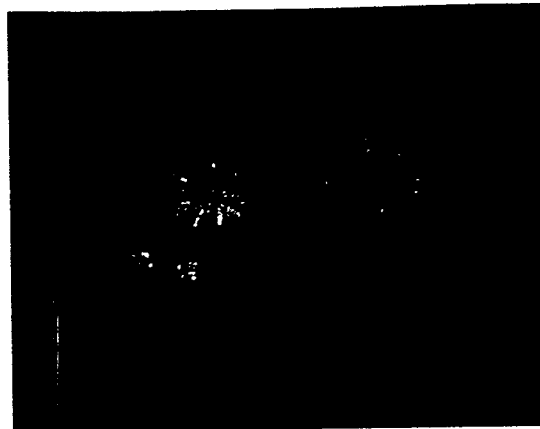
**1695** St. Croix was abandoned by the French (who went to present-day Haiti.)

**1773** The Danish West Indian & Guinea Co. purchased St. Croix. The colony grew quickly.

**1780** A Customs House was erected at Salt River Bay to combat smuggling (the well defended main harbor of Christiansted with its gun batteries manned by Royal Danish troops was probably responsible for this development.)

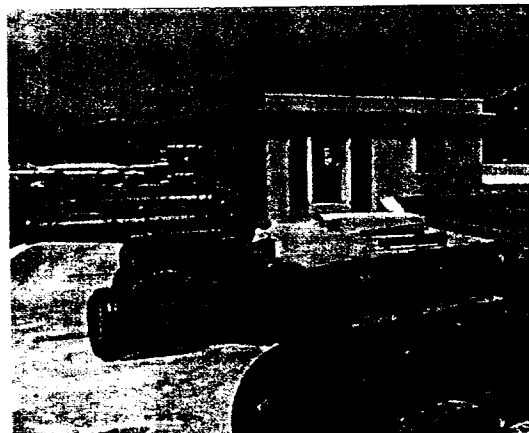
Over the next hundred years, agricultural development flourished. Sugar cane was cultivated extensively in the wide, flat midland of St. Croix.

**1917** The United States purchased the Danish West Indies. St. Croix languished during the global depression that followed World War I.



NPS

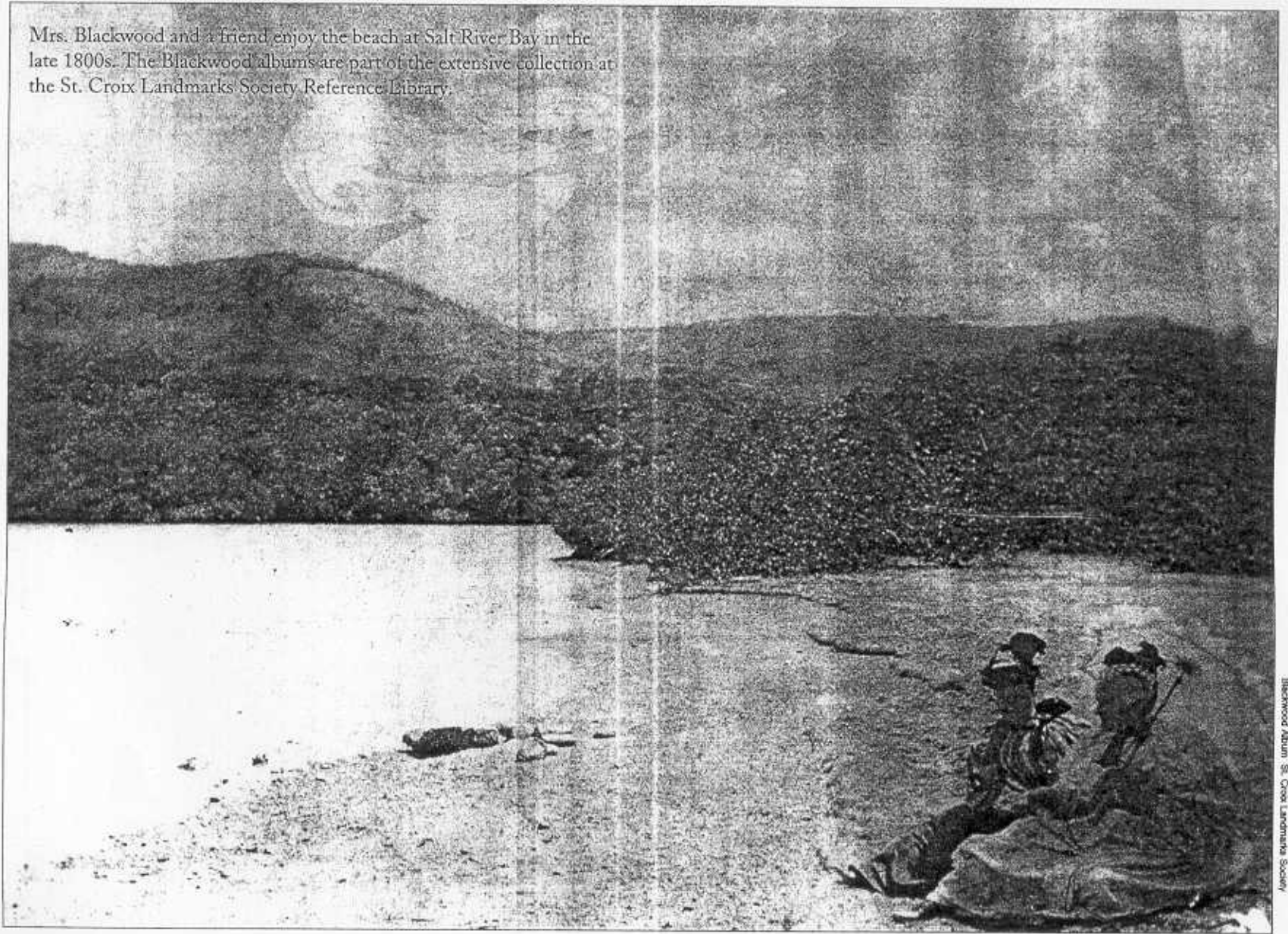
Two complete hand shaped amulets were unearthed in Fort Sale during an archaeological excavation sponsored by the Virgin Islands government. These religious objects made of jet with a gold-filled pattern were probably worn around the neck and date from the period of French occupation of Salt River.



J. Vauthrin

Restored 18-pound canons overlook the narrow entrance to Christiansted Harbor from Fort Christianvaern's main battery as they did 200 years ago resulting in would-be smugglers moving their activities to Salt River Bay.

Mrs. Blackwood and a friend enjoy the beach at Salt River Bay in the late 1800s. The Blackwood albums are part of the extensive collection at the St. Croix Landmarks Society Reference Library.



Construction of a military airport and other military activity associated with WW II in the early 1940s exposed many Americans to St. Croix and gave those stationed here a taste of life in the tropics.

During this time the fertile soil, magnificent mangrove forests, safe anchorage and unique underwater geology of Salt River Bay remained undisturbed awaiting the next wave of human occupation.

In the 1950s, as the economy geared up, St. Croix drew many Americans looking for opportunity and a place in the sun.

During the 1960s, Salt River was the chosen place for some of those seekers. Today we see the remains of a defunct tropical fish farm and an unfinished hotel on the eastern shore, unrealized dreams from that decade joining those of the Dutch, French, English and Spanish.

Residential sites were developed around Salt River Bay during the 1970s and 80s. The wave of commercial development that swept the Virgin Islands brought its great potential value, monetarily, environmentally, and culturally, into the limelight.

Heightened awareness of environmental concerns brought to light the need to control development or lose forever the rich physical environment that made Salt River Bay a place for plants, animals and humans to flourish over the centuries.

Evidence of continual use by pre-Columbian indigenous peoples was discovered by several archaeological investigations.

Salt River's importance as a historical and continuing environment of cultural and natural development was recognized as unique and too important to squander or lose.

**1992** The 912 acre Salt River Bay National Historic Park and Ecological Preserve was

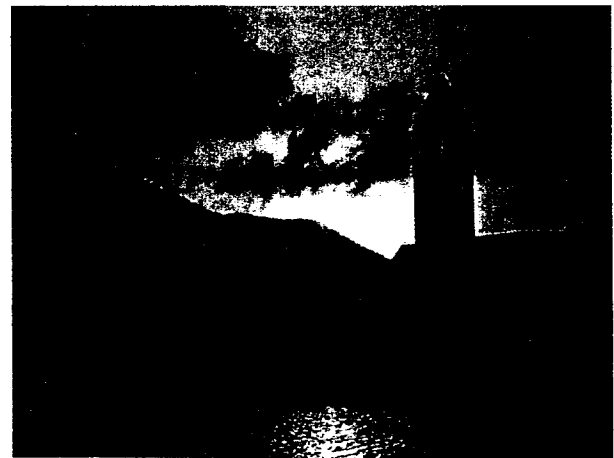
created by the Congress of the United States.

The park encompasses Columbus Landing Site and Cape of the Arrows as well as the water surface and marine resources of Salt River Bay, Triton and Sugar Bays, together with their shorelines and land areas, extending seaward to the 300-foot depth, which includes all of the reef-building corals.

The Sugar Bay ecosystem ranges from freshwater stream to submarine canyon and includes prime examples of several types of ecosystems, including mangrove fringe forest, mangrove basin forest, salt pond, and freshwater marsh.

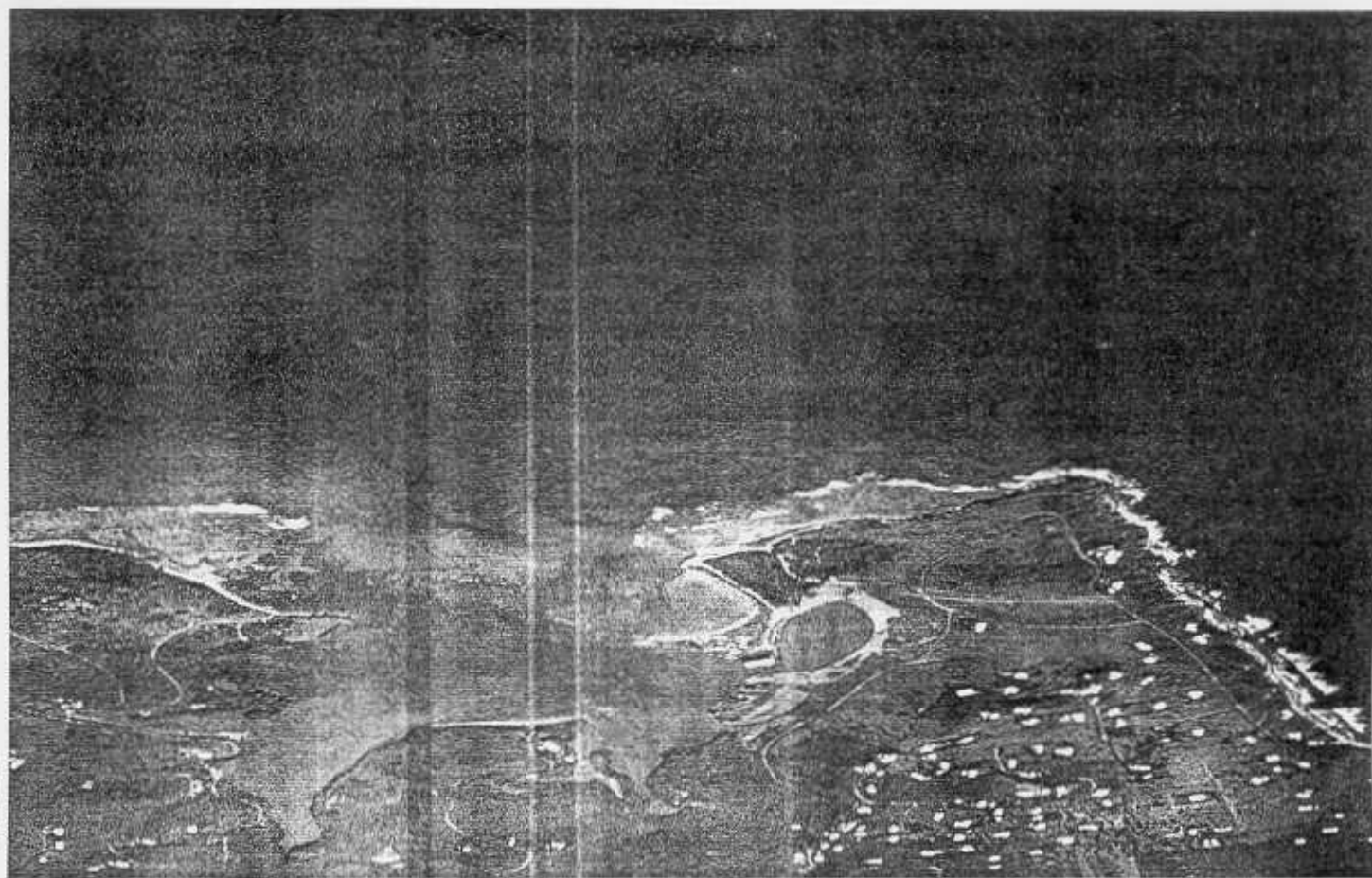
A visitor center at Cape of the Arrows will include exhibits that demonstrate the continuity of the native cultures of the Virgin Islands using pre-Columbian artifacts and post-Columbian examples of Afro-Caribbean contributions.

Interpretive trails will provide access and protection to natural and historic sites. Picnic, bathing and camping areas with adequate access, parking and facilities are an integral part of the development planned for this newest national park.



Diane Butler

Abandoned hotel slowly sinks into the unstable fill on which it was built. Adjacent areas were dredged and filled over 30 years ago as developers dreamed of immense profits from land sales.



Dennis H. Adams

In October of 1960, five acres on the western point of Salt River Bay were purchased by the Virgin Islands government and designated as a National Historic Monument. The property is known as Columbus Landing.

In February, 1980, 690 acres of the greater Salt River Bay together with its shoreline was designated as a National Natural Landmark by the Department of the Interior. The area contains a significant tropical reef system and biologically rich submarine canyon as well as the largest remaining mangrove

forest in the United States Virgin Islands. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service considers it a Nationally Significant Wildlife Habitat.

In April, 1992, a 912 acre National Historic Park and Ecological Preserve was created by the United States Congress. It includes the shorelines, land and water areas of Salt River, Triton and Sugar Bays to a depth of 300 feet, Columbus Landing Site and Cape of the Arrows.

The Sugar Bay ecosystem ranges from freshwater stream to submarine canyon and includes prime

examples of mangrove forest, salt pond, and freshwater marsh.

The known cultural resources reflect a continuum of prehistoric and historic events including the first documented encounter between native Americans and Europeans. There is an excellent potential for additional discoveries in protected sites. Salt River Bay Historical Park and Ecological Preserve is an important segment in the essential task of protecting and perpetuating the multi-faceted, diverse heritage of St. Croix.

These four Italian stamps were available at the unique combined first day issue of Columbus commemorative stamps at Salt River Bay.



U.S. Postal Service

On April 24, 1992 at Salt River Bay, dignitaries representing the United States and Italian governments joined with stamp collectors from all over the world for a special first day cancellation of the new stamps issued by the respective postal services to commemorate the 500th Anniversary of Columbus' voyage to the Americas.

A special pictorial cancellation was created for the occasion: a Carib maiden with traditional feather headdress, cotton arm and headband, holding three arrows in her hand signifying the three islands that were under

Carib control at that time (St. Croix, Dominica and Guadeloupe) seated in front of a billowing sail with a cross on it.

Hundreds of stamp collectors, residents and visitors turned out for the dedication ceremonies. Many came just for the bands, speeches and general festivities but only a few left without being caught up in the first day fever of the serious collectors, joining long lines in the hot sun for first day sale of stamps, pins, posters and special envelopes and the prized, one-time only, first day Salt River Bay cancellation.

American counterparts of Columbus commemorative stamps were best sellers at the special first day cancellation at Salt River Bay.



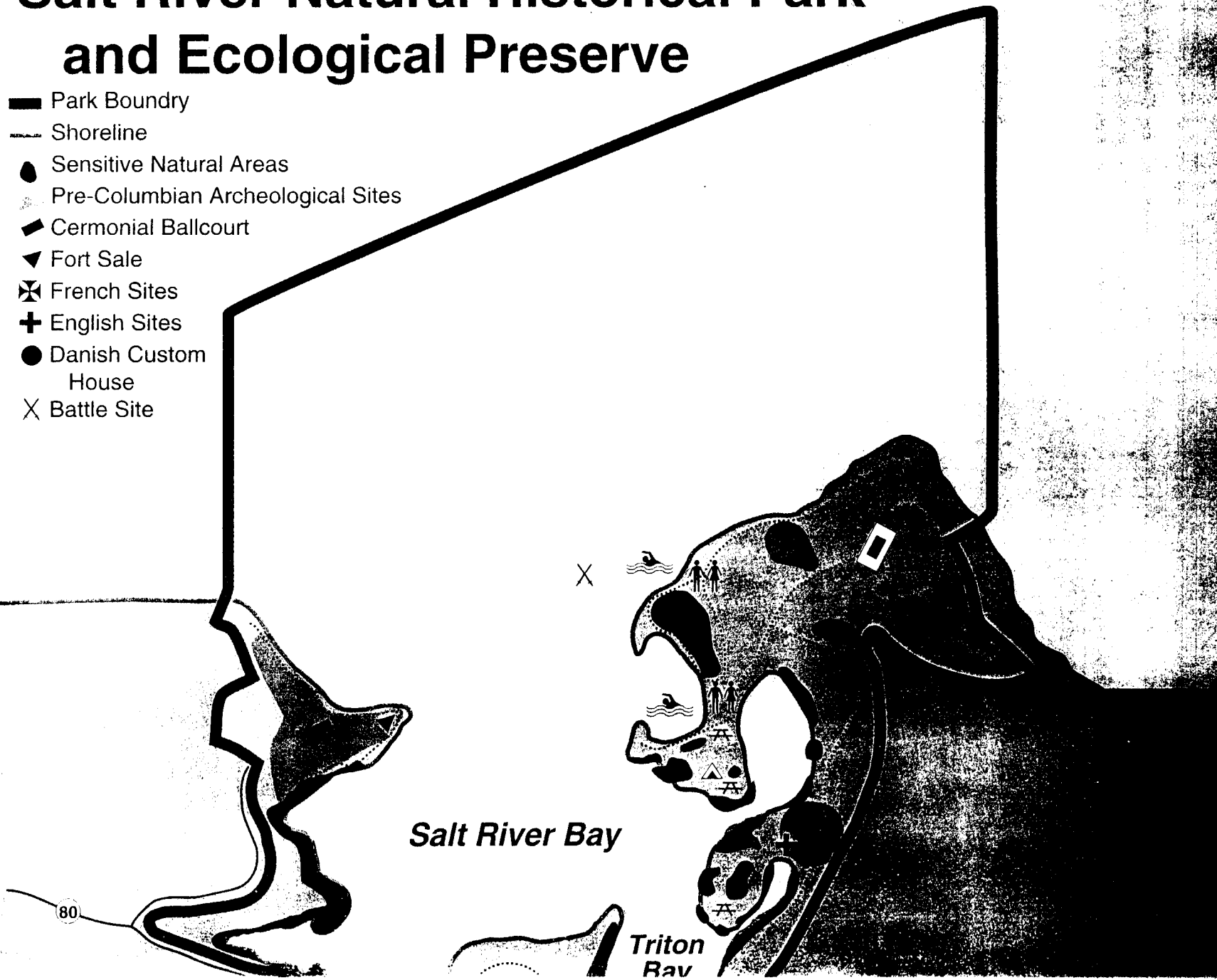
Diane Butler

School children play on Salt River's historic shore with the three masted Danish ship, Elinor, anchored in the background. Over 300 years ago a French report extolled the virtues of Salt River Bay, one of which was "the bottom of the roadstead is covered with pure sand, underneath which there is clay, so that anchors hold very well there."

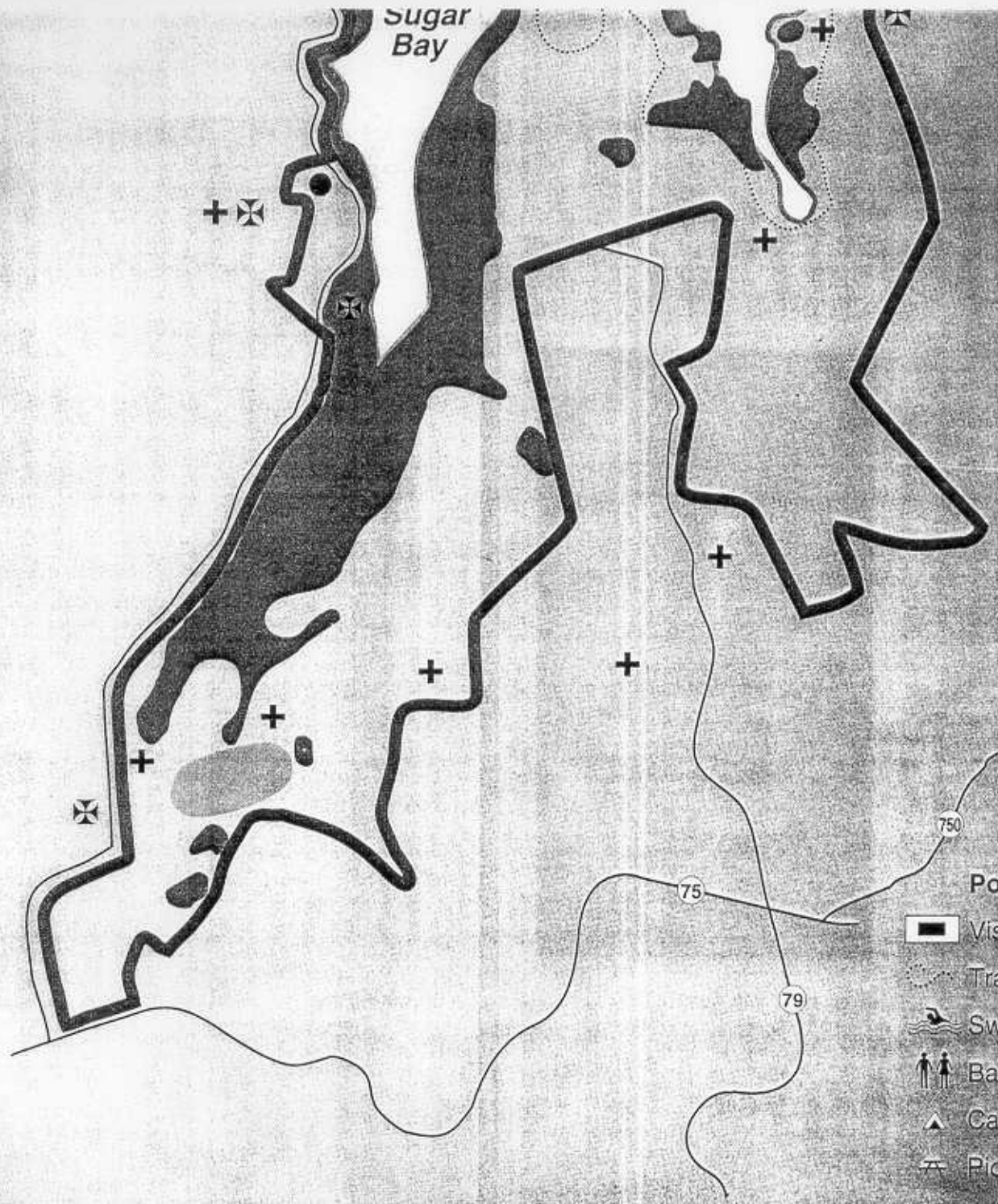


# Salt River Natural Historical Park and Ecological Preserve

- Park Boundry
- Shoreline
- Sensitive Natural Areas
- ▲ Pre-Columbian Archeological Sites
- ◆ Cermonial Ballcourt
- ▼ Fort Sale
- ⊠ French Sites
- ⊕ English Sites
- Danish Custom House
- X Battle Site



Sugar Bay



Possible Development

-  Visitor Center/Museum
-  Trails
-  Swimming Beach
-  Bathhouse
-  Camping
-  Picnic Areas

Wetlands and coral reefs such as those found at Salt River are some of the richest ecosystems on earth. Along with tropical rain forests, they are the most productive and biodiverse areas in the world.

Large numbers of fish species come to the protected, nutrient rich waters of Salt River to spawn. Keeping these hatcheries healthy is vital for the economic survival of St. Croix's fishermen. It's also vital for large numbers of birds that depend upon these inshore waters for food.

Sea birds tell us if the environment is healthy according to Sandy Point Fish & Wildlife Refuge Manager, Greg Hughes. "If sea bird numbers are declining, it's an indication that there are not enough fish. That's an indication that the ocean environment is in trouble. If shore bird numbers are dwindling, that tells us that, among other things, the inshore ocean is sick, there are not enough fry which means there are not enough big fish ..."

This endless cycle of interdependency is lovingly and emphatically pointed out again and again by environmental activist Liz Wilson who has led thousands of St. Croix children and adults on nature hikes and to a better understanding of "the web of life."

Standing on a Judith's Fancy hill

overlooking Salt River's Triton Bay, Wilson momentarily becomes pensive, "Look, look at the mangroves destroyed by Hugo," she says pointing to large stands of bare gray trunks lining the shores. Wilson conjectures that while a few white mangroves and buttonwoods are coming back, the big red mangroves, badly damaged by 1989's hurricane winds and wind driven waters, are victims of too much salt. She cites three factors: there was little rain with the storm, it was extraordinarily dry for months after the storm, and the natural runoff from the hills to the south and west has been diverted by development.



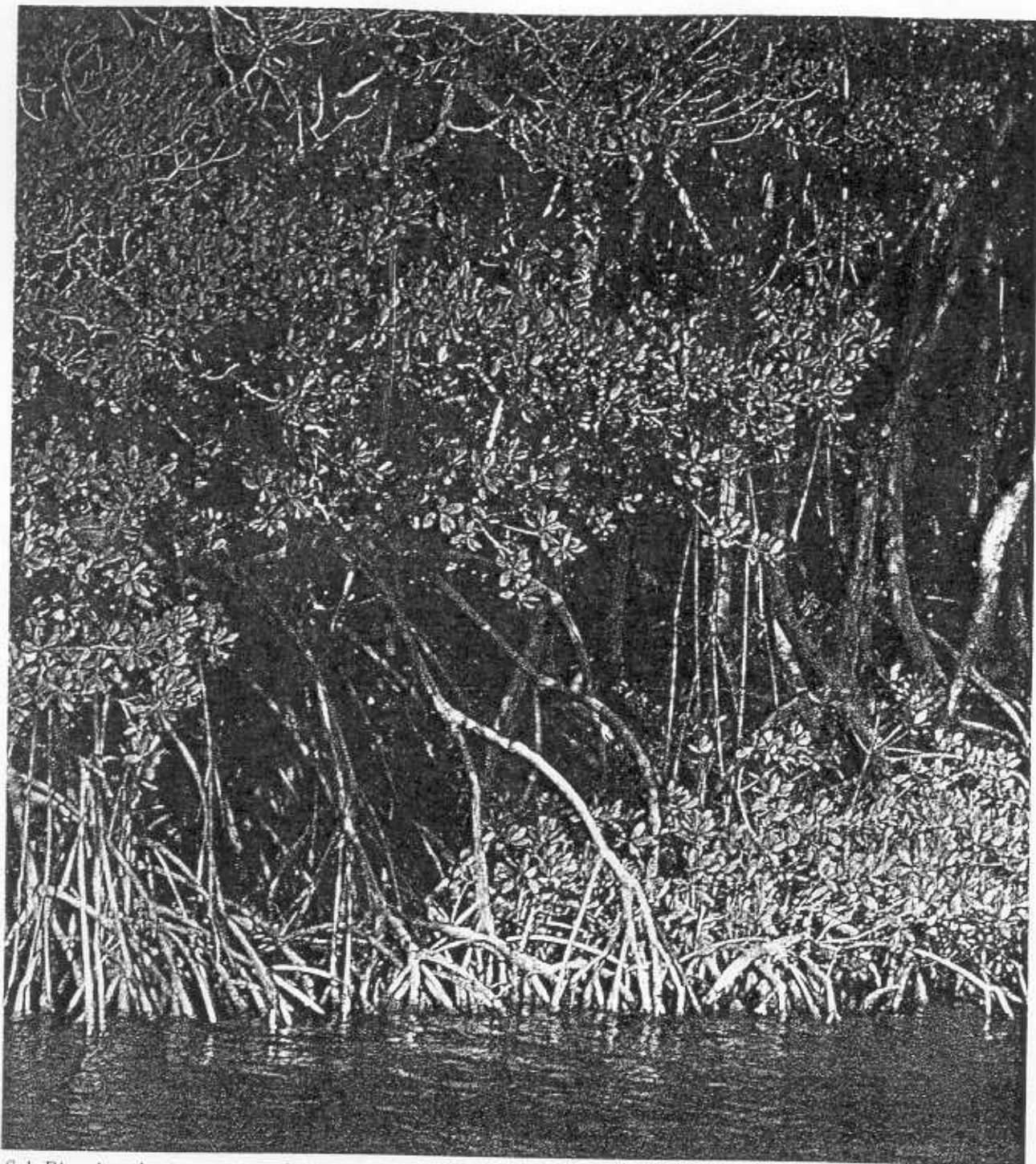
This least tern chick takes refuge, perhaps from a hungry frigate bird circling overhead, in a footprint. The endangered least tern depends on penny sized fry, small fish, from shallow inshore water for food. The presence of fry is dependent on a plentitude of healthy fish in the surrounding waters and suitable conditions inshore for spawning. Considering the complex interdependencies of life and environment can preserve the quality of both.

Fresh water runoff trickles down, eventually forming the Salt River meander and its associated wetlands, meeting the sea in Salt River Bay and creating the rich, diverse estuarine environment.

Residential development in the hills above has changed the course of many of the trickles. Attempts to use the flatter land for agriculture has dramatically reduced the amount of water flowing through the meander.

The mangroves by the marina in Sugar Bay seem to be recovering from Hurricane Hugo much faster than those in Triton Bay. Wilson contends they're doing better because there's better water flow.

For many years there was little or no



NPS

Salt River is a classic mangrove forest with salt water lapping at the aerial roots of the red mangroves, black mangroves behind the red, then white mangroves and the buttonwoods respectively.

Mangroves prevent destructive erosion and filter pollutants from the waters that move through them.

As runoff from the hills above move to the sea, heavier sediments and silt settle to the bottom. Dense mangrove roots actually trap larger debris. The resulting nutrient rich, clean water is a vital link in the food chain for a vast array of life.

attention paid to the effects of bulldozing and building on lands near the sea but now islanders and government are working towards more compatible development.

Generally, island residents seem to be among the last to recognize the importance of Salt River Bay and its potential economic good tidings for St. Croix

One federal government agency after another has evaluated Salt River and said, in effect, "It's a jewel."

After assessing the Salt River habitat, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service recommended it for National Wildlife Refuge designation, the world's largest and most diverse collection of lands set aside specifically for wild animals. Wildlife refuges are managed for migrating waterfowl, endangered species, unique ecosystems, and nongame wildlife.

The National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Office of Ocean and Resource Management expressed interest in including Salt River and its reef system in the National Marine Sanctuary or National Marine Estuarine Sanctuary programs. Marine sanctuaries are created to preserve or restore marine areas for conservation, recreational, ecological, or aesthetic values. The primary purpose of estuarine sanctuaries is to provide long-term



C. Vauthnn



C. Vauthnn

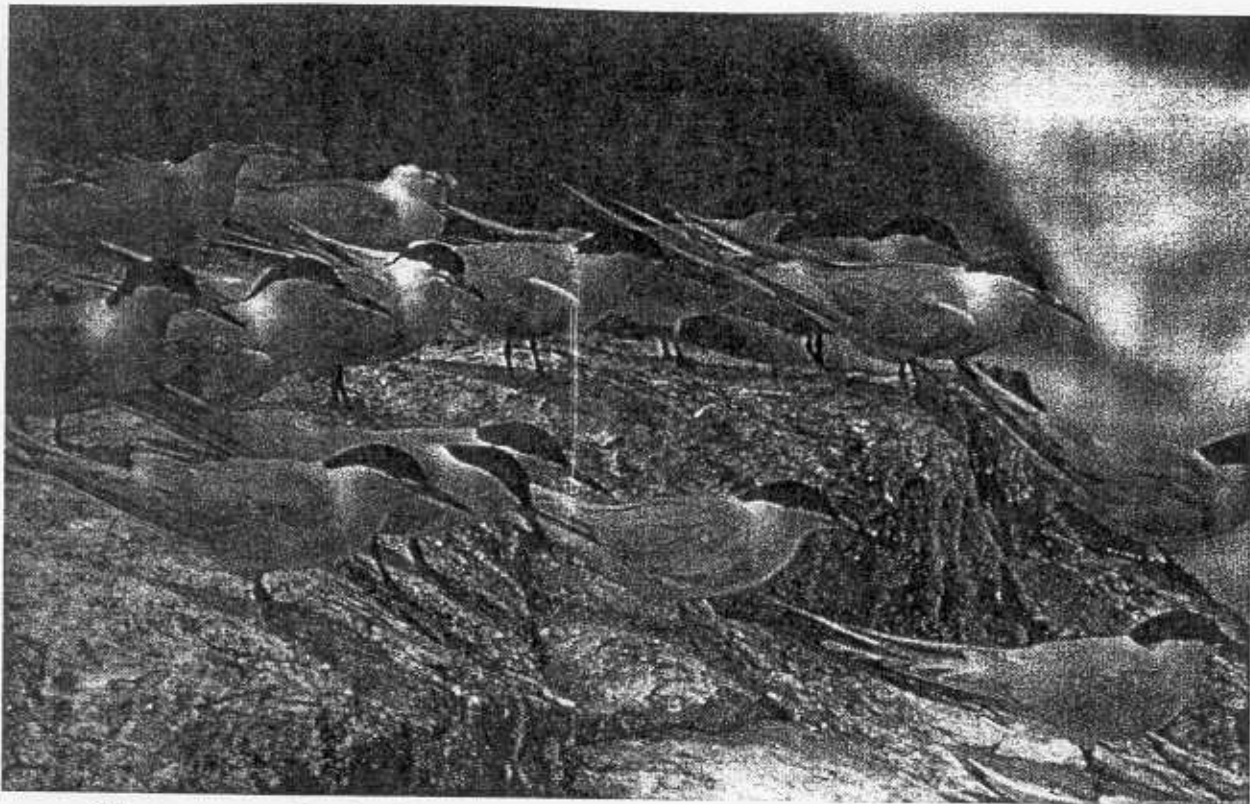
The pointed tip of this mangrove (above) will bury itself in the soft ground when it falls from its parent. (Left) New seedling shoots up amidst the roots of older trees.

protection of natural areas for scientific and educational purposes.

Compatible multiple uses of refuges and sanctuaries is encouraged as long as their primary purposes are served.

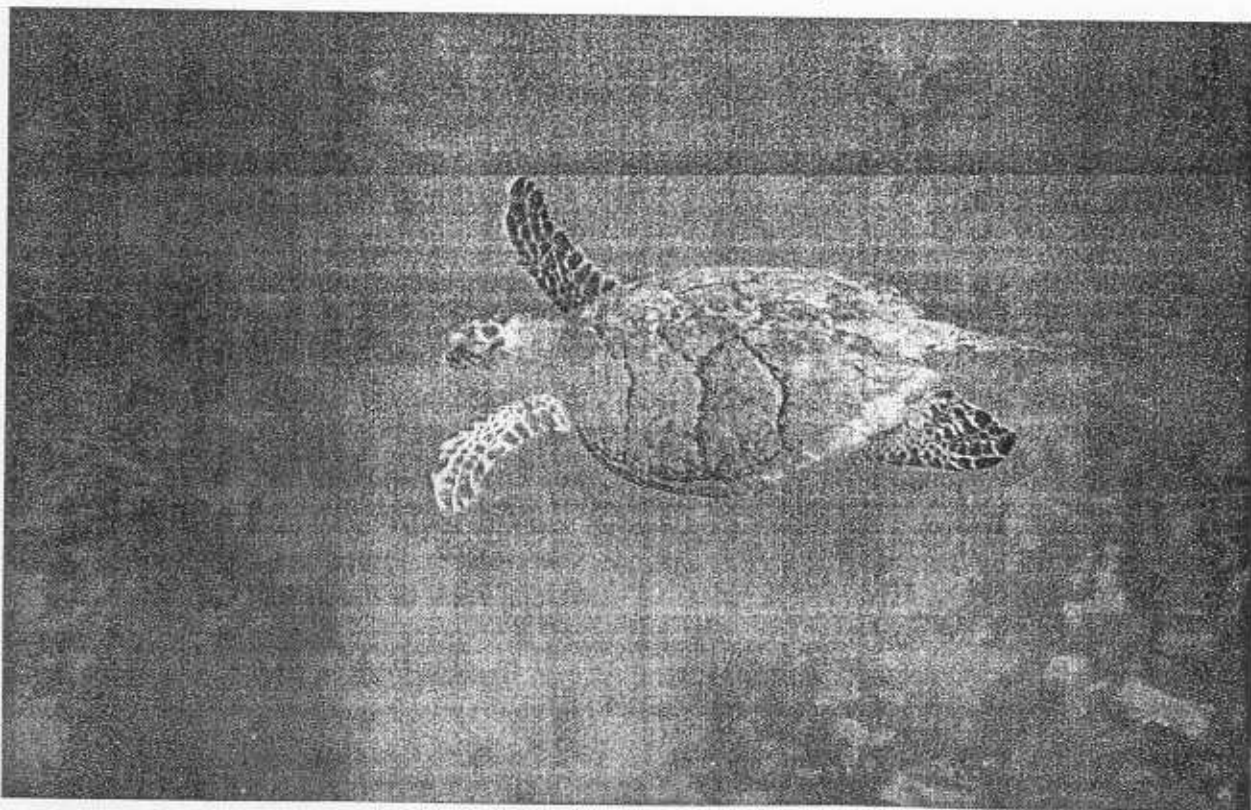
NOAA is also interested in the potential long term protection of the reefs extending to the west from Salt River Bay. They are the last remaining relatively undisturbed reef systems on St. Croix.

Salt River's unique, steep sided

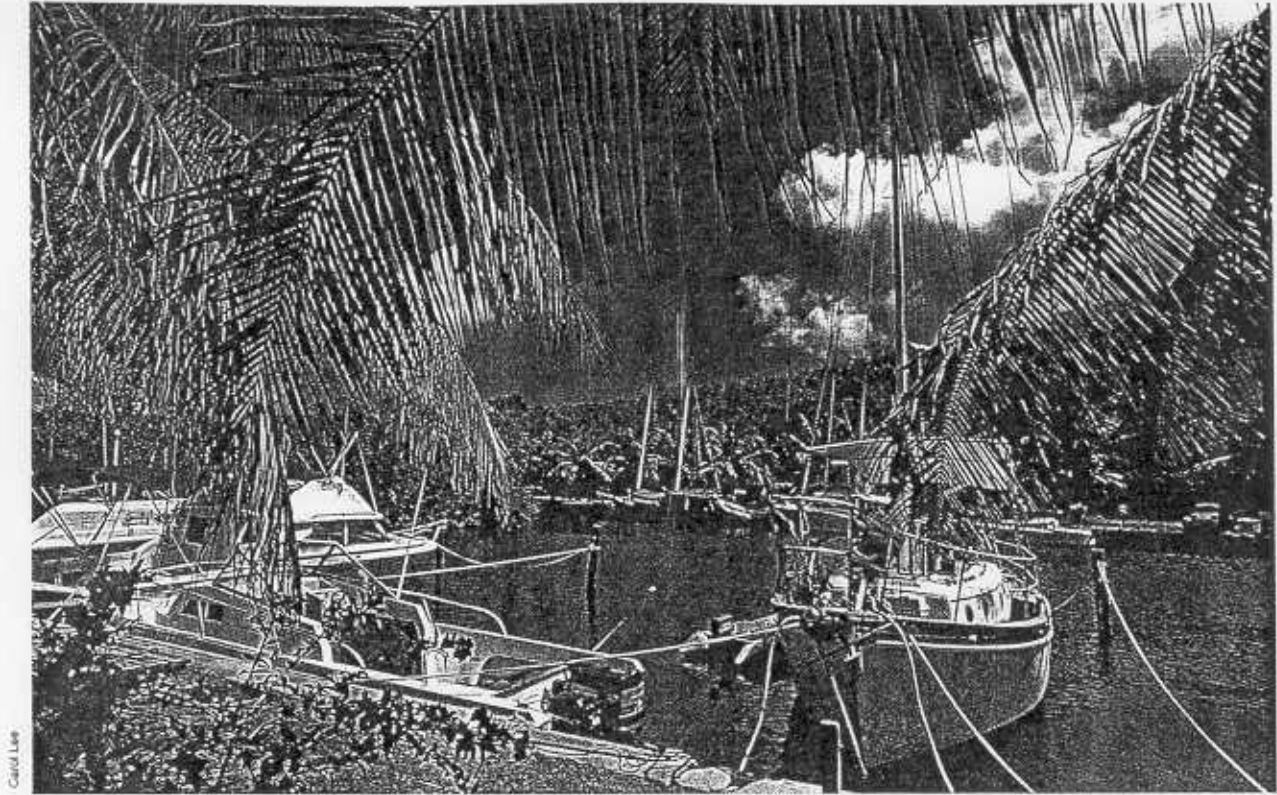


G. Hughes

The roseate tern (above) and hawksbill turtle (below) are just two of more than twenty endangered or threatened animals and plants that are found in the Salt River ecosystem.



Zandy Hill



Carol Lee

Public uses compatible with protecting the existing historical and natural treasures of Salt River are myriad. Pleasure boats, such as these safely moored in the quiet waters at Salt River Marina, are a source of enjoyment for many.

submarine canyon was studied intensively when Hydrolab, a NOAA Underwater Research Center habitat, was located there in the 1970s and 80s.

Dennis Hubbard, formerly a faculty member at Fairleigh Dickinson West Indies Laboratory, managed the scientific side of the Hydrolab program.

"Observers could get the 'big picture' and make observations over longer periods of time than possible with standard diving techniques," he explained.

Rather than relocating plants and animals to a laboratory, Hydrolab made it possible to observe them in their natural environment. One mission determined that what was previously thought to be two distinct species of octopus were actually juveniles and

adults of the same species. Conch studies begun during the days of Hydrolab are still going on.

The Virgin Islands Department of Planning and Natural Resources has identified Salt River and its coral reefs as an Area of Particular Concern.

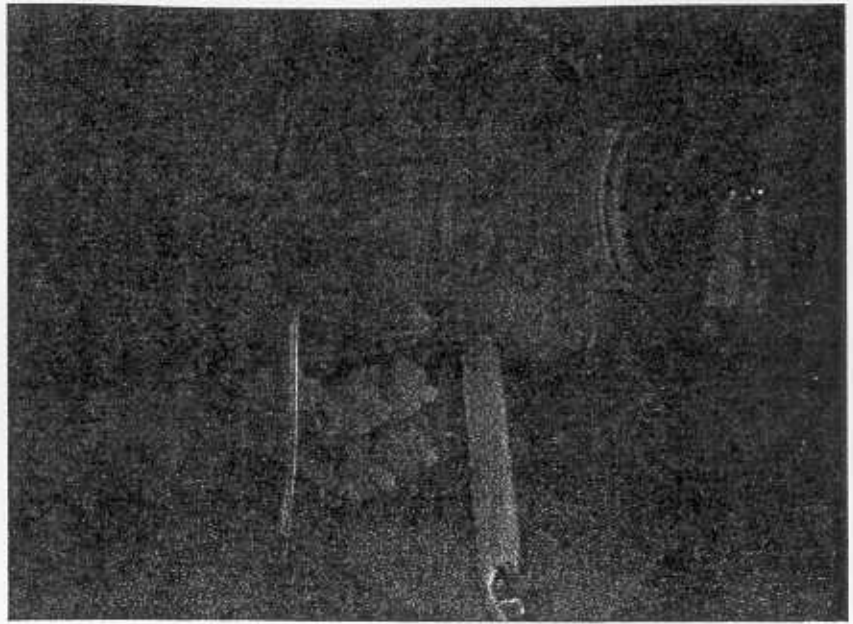
The United States Congress confirmed the significance of Salt River Bay when it created the 912 acre National Historical Park and Ecological Preserve in 1992.

A joint federal and territorial Park Commission is responsible for planning the development of the park's programs, facilities and management.

Training Virgin Islanders in all phases of park operations and management is mandated by the legislation that created the park.

In 1977 NOAA Undersea Research Center established Hydrolab in Salt River Bay. The habitat (right), located at a depth of 50', allowed marine scientists to live and work underwater. It became possible to do as much in a week as in two to three months of diving from the surface. The "pup tent" off to the side of the habitat is an underwater air station.

Hydrolab is now at the Smithsonian and its successor, Aquarius, is located in Florida.



Dennis Hubbard

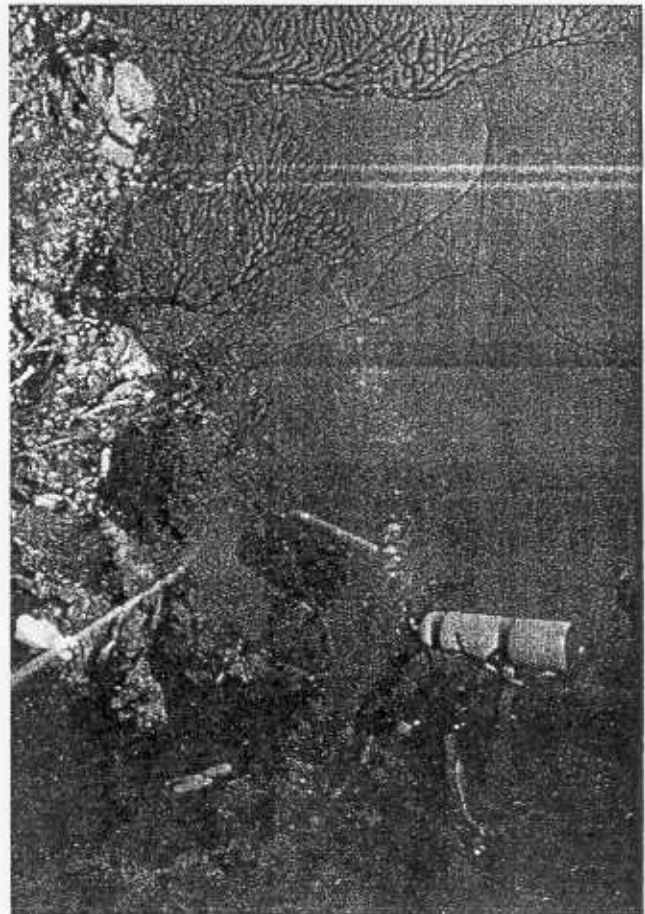


Dennis Hubbard

A Hydrolab diver (above) changes tanks at one of the underwater stations resupplied regularly by a shore crew. These stations with freshly charged sets of double tanks and domes where divers could meet and talk to one another (background) were spotted strategically throughout the area around the habitat.

On the surface above Hydrolab a platform with compressors and equipment supplying the habitat with air, power and communications was continually manned.

Divers explore a Salt River reef face (right).



M. Taylor



This yellow warbler is just one of the many songbirds that winter at Salt River and migrate north to nest in the summer. These tiny songbirds act as an early indicator of the quality of the environments in which they live. The winter months are especially important for a migratory bird species. They must be strong enough to complete their annual migration and successfully reproduce when they arrive in their nesting area.



National Weather Service data suggests as much as a 50% decline in the clouds of migrating birds appearing on their radar screens in the last quarter century. Major population decreases of migratory songbirds are also reported by U.S. Fish & Wildlife's National Breeding Bird Survey. Their winter environment in the Caribbean, Mexico, Central or South America is a critical survival factor.

G. Hughes

But the park at Salt River will remain a "paper park" until appropriations are made for land acquisition and implementation of programs to protect and develop park resources. There is money to make a reality of a park at Salt River Bay if the United States Congress will act to appropriate the funds. Billions of dollars are set aside in the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund. Its use is restricted to the purchase of lands to protect historical and natural areas and to enhance national parks.

Plans to create a world class museum at Salt River Bay are underway. A central exhibit will be the carved stones from the pre-Columbian ceremonial ball court. There is already agreement between the governments of Denmark and the Virgin Islands to return the stones and other artifacts. A fund for the museum has already been established with the National Park Foundation.

Many share the view that the 912-acre Salt River site is a prime candidate for designation as a World Heritage Site by the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Requests

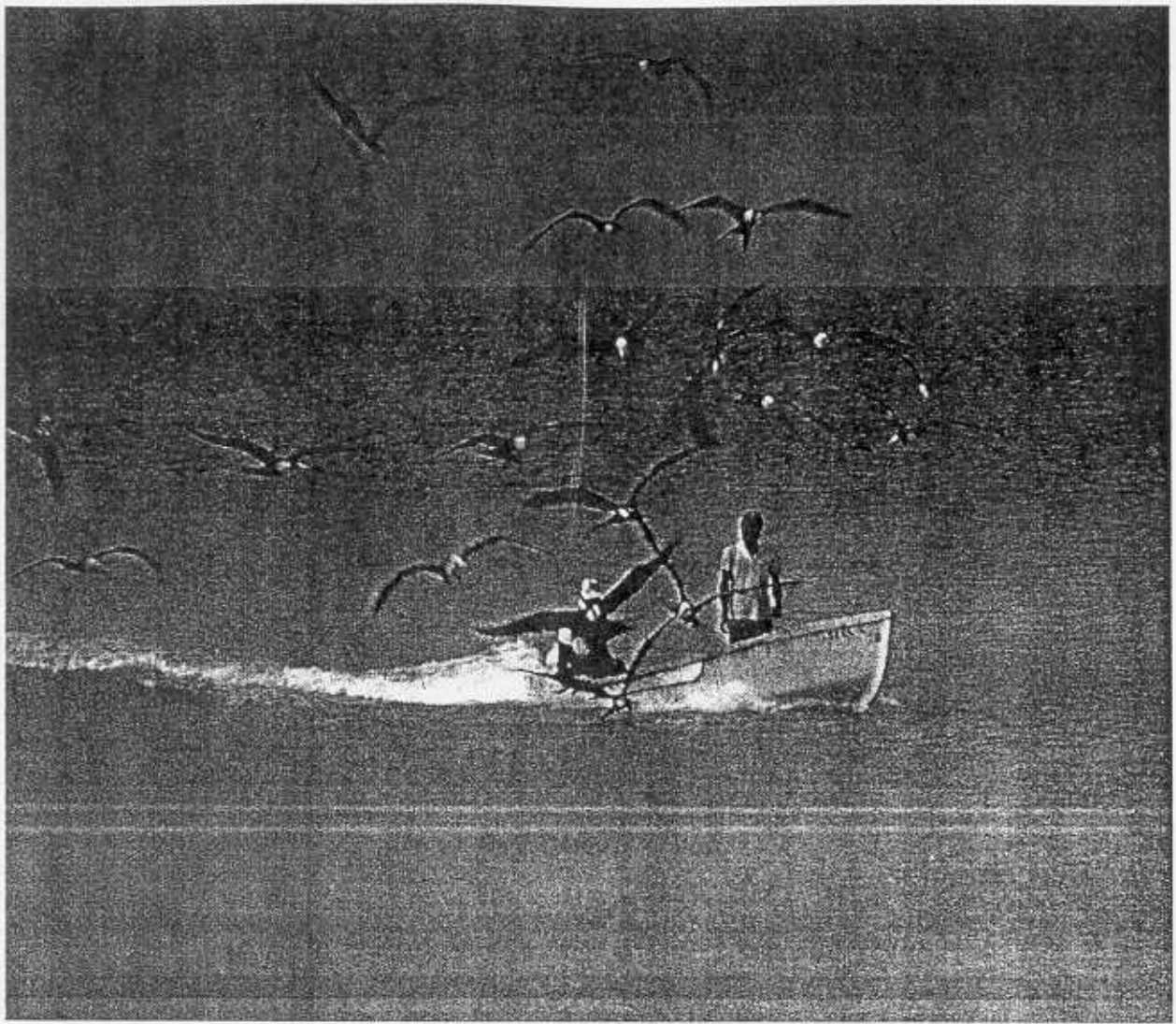
that Salt River be placed on the indicative list to be nominated as a World Heritage Site have been submitted.

UNESCO's World Heritage Site program, in existence since 1972, includes 358 monuments or sites in 83 countries. As a World Heritage Site, Salt River would join such world famous attractions as Machu Picchu in Peru, the parks of Tasmania, Old Havana and San Juan, and Australia's Wilderness of Kakadu with its natural wonders and more than 500 rock paintings.

World Heritage status means eligibility for international aid as well as being spotlighted as an important international travel destination.

Most World Heritage sites are chosen for cultural or natural value. Salt River more than meets the criteria to be considered for cultural value, environmental importance, and unique natural beauty.

According to park advocate, Jesse Thomson, Salt River "represents a microcosm of the continuum of human history in the West Indies, spanning pre-history (AD 350 - 1500), Contact (1493), post-Contact (1509-



G. Hughes

Frigate birds clamor overhead as island fishermen make their way across a peaceful sea. This traditional lifestyle

1600), and colonial periods (1642-1917). The representation of these themes in such a limited geographic area is unique in the Caribbean."

It [Salt River] "bears ... exceptional testimony to a civilization [Carib Indians] which has disappeared."

"The area contains a[n environmental] continuum from uplands to submarine canyon in a relatively small geographic area."

"The area is habitat for endangered

will be secure for many more years as the vital fisheries of Salt River Bay are protected and preserved.

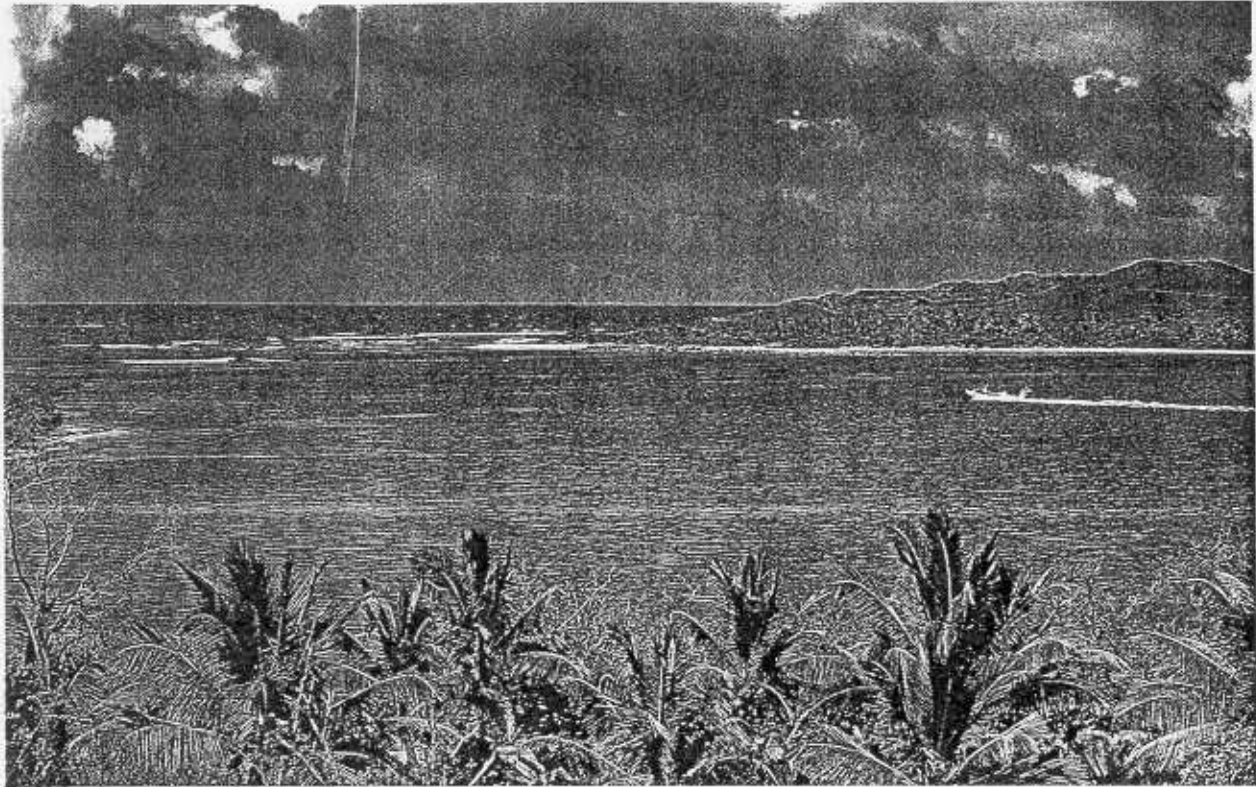
species, and has the means to maintain their full cycle."

Dedication ceremonies for Salt River Bay Historical Park and Ecological Preserve are scheduled for November 14, 1993. The dedication will be held in conjunction with the 500th anniversary of Columbus' landing at Salt River in 1493.

Quincentenary events include: a two-day conference, "The Aboriginal Population of the Lesser Antilles" for historians and scholars;

a special pictorial cancellation marking the anniversary and park dedication by the U.S. Postal Service; and a living history program with demonstrations of basketry, canoe making, singing, dancing, musical instruments, and a ceremonial ball game by Carib and Taino Indian groups from Dominica and Puerto Rico.

Salt River is beginning a new "golden age" of careful development and extended use. Virgin Islands citizens and government must work together to build a strong foundation so that generations of Crucians to come will reap the economic and aesthetic benefits of their valuable legacy at Salt River Bay.



A speedboat zips across the bay where Caribs in a log canoe encountered Columbus' men in 1493. Continued use of the bay for recreation, education, and preservation of its historical and natural treasures will be insured for generations to come under joint federal and territorial administration.

Designation of Salt River Bay as a World Heritage site will rank the park among the great treasures of the world along with the pyramids of Egypt, Mexico's Aztec ruins at Tikal, Australia's Great Barrier Reef, Chartres Cathedral, Yellowstone National Park, the bank of the Seine, and the Mayan ruins at Copan in Honduras.

World Heritage designation is usually based on a site's cultural value or its natural value. Salt River has all the

qualifications to be considered for both, a rare combination that increases the likelihood of it being chosen as a World Heritage site.

The long continuum of prehistoric use confirmed by archaeological findings, documented contact of indigenous peoples and Europeans (Columbus' visit in 1493 through 1600), and subsequent settlement and development through the present days make Salt River an extremely important cultural site.

The rich environmental continuum from grasslands to wetlands, mangrove forests, sea grass beds, and coral reefs are some of the most biological diverse and productive ecosystems known to the world today.

## Consultants, Contributors, Photographers ...

*LEGACY TO TREASURE became a reality because of the generous sharing of information, expertise, photographic materials, and support by these wonderful, caring and sharing people.*

Since **Diane Butler** moved to St. Croix from Wisconsin, she has photographed stunning aerials, beautiful models, architecture, public relations events, sailing races, students, weddings and all types and styles of portraits. Her favorite assignment is black and white portraits and fashion.

**William Fleming Cissel** is a native of St. Croix, and a tenth generation Virgin Islander.

Formerly the chief museum curator for the government of the V.I., he is currently Chief of Interpretation and Resource Management for the National Park Service units on St. Croix. Bill has worked tirelessly to marshal interest and support for a park at Salt River.

*Bill makes history interesting and understandable for the lay person. This project would never have been completed without his clear explanations and patient question answering.*

**Zandy Hillis** is a Biological Technician with the National Park Service on St. Croix. She has lived on St. Croix full time for a dozen years.

*It's easy to see how the phrase "Zandy's turtles" got started (right).*



**Dennis Hubbard's** reef coring projects at Salt River Bay are a part of the work that is revolutionizing theories about how reefs are built.

*Dennis provided enough information and photographs for an entire book about Salt River's undersea wonders, maybe that should be next.*

**Greg Hughes** was the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Refuge Manager on St. Croix until he was transferred to Louisiana. His energetic work to educate and involve the local community in protecting and preserving Sandy Point Wildlife Refuge was very successful.

For 22 years, **Carol Lee's** corporate and editorial assignments have taken her around the world. Her clients have included Time/Life, Travel & Leisure, Business Week, Sports Illustrated, Caribbean Travel & Life, and the tourist boards of the United States Virgin Islands, Aruba, St. Lucia and Guyana. Carol has lived in St. Croix for 6 years. She specializes in photographing the countries of the Caribbean region.



C. Vauthrin

**Rudy O'Reilly** (left) is a 1982 graduate of St. Joseph's High School. He received his Bachelor of Arts degree in Biology from Seton Hall in New Jersey and is currently getting a Masters Degree in Botany in Puerto Rico. Rudy is on the staff at the University of Virgin Islands Cooperative Extension Services when he's not away at school.

**Lisa Spery**, graphic artist and designer, created the map of the park that is the centerpiece of this book.

*Lisa, my partner in Graphically Speaking Design and Production, is a master of patient instruction and quiet encouragement. Thanks, partner!*

**Marcia Taylor** is a marine biologist who participated in missions using the underwater habitat at Salt River. She currently administers V.I. Marine Advisory Services at the University of the Virgin Islands St. Croix Campus and is developing the program for protection of the wetlands recently acquired by UVI.

**Emy Thomas** is a writer, world traveler, resident of Salt River and frequent participant in St. Croix Environmental Association activities.

**Jessie K. Thomson** is president of the Virgin Islands Christopher Columbus Jubilee Committee. Since 1985 she has worked steadily for the preservation of the treasures at Salt River Bay. Directly and indirectly, Jessie exerted tremendous influence leading to the territorial and federal legislation establishing the park. She will continue to play an active role in the developments at Salt River as Secretary of the joint territorial and federal commission that directs the development of the programs to protect, preserve, and enhance Salt River Bay.

*Jessie's strong support and endless supply of resource material were critical to the creation of this book.*

**Carla Vauthrin** has been a resident of St. Croix since 1965. Her background as an educator and librarian combined with her interest in the historical, enthusiasm for computers and desktop publishing, and current business pursuits in advertising and graphic production may have made this book inevitable.

*We're on the cusp of two great events: a new park is dedicated only once; the 500th anniversary of the only documented landing of Columbus in U.S. territory will never be repeated. Whether you like the idea of a park or the events set in motion by Columbus' trips to the New World, they are still significant moments in time. I hope that this book is an appropriate reminder of these two special happenings and that it will somehow play a part in the events that follow.*

**James Vauthrin**, man of many talents, is an amateur photographer of promise.

*As it has so often in the past 35 years, Jim's encouragement has made it possible for me to complete an ambitious project.*

**Carol Wakefield**, is the librarian at St. Croix Landmarks Society Reference Library.

*Carol's incredible knowledge of her collection was instrumental in locating support materials and old photographs. And she knew just how to get the photographic materials into the form that could be used for this book.*



**Roland "Ro" Wauer**, a 32-year career employee of the National Park Service, was the principal liaison between NPS and the Virgin Islands from 1985 to 1989. He was responsible for preparing the initial park alternatives for the Salt River Bay Historical Park and Ecological Preserve legislation. While studying the area's bird life, he recognized the importance of the Salt River environment and became an activist for protecting the area. Ro retired in 1989, and has since written four books, including "The Visitor's Guide to the Birds of the Eastern National Parks, U.S. and Canada," that includes a chapter on the Virgin Islands. Ro's Salt River Exhibit (left) introduced the public to the important values of the Salt River environment. *The Alternatives he prepared have been my text book for the past year.*

**Liz Wilson**, is sometimes referred to as Mrs. Salt River. She has worked unceasingly to educate the public about its importance and bring attention to St. Croix's environmental needs. Wilson has shared her energy and knowledge with thousands of students and teachers like those pictured with her (right) amid the endangered giant swamp ferns at Salt River.



E. Thomas

**Solvin Zankl** is a brilliant young photographer and naturalist from Germany. He keeps a boat in St. Croix for holidays, spending the rest of the year working on a million acre North Sea nature preserve.

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