

'Sea Grapes And Kennips'

Book highlights chapters in Virgin Islands history

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ST. CROIX — Arnold Highfield's latest book, "Sea Grapes And Kennips," is a collection of articles that brings to life some of the lesser known chapters of Virgin Islands history.

The book contains more than two dozen chapters, some based on previously published articles and lectures, Highfield said.

"I get calls for copies which I am always sending out so I thought it would be perhaps more convenient all the way around to publish them in book form, in much the same manner of my "Time Longa Dan Twine," which came out in 2009," he said.

The anchor piece of the book is "The Story of Christiansted," which follows the development of the town from the end of the 15th century and the Spanish Conquest to modern times. Included is an interesting piece about how and why the town was called "Le Bassin," by French and Danish inhabitants.

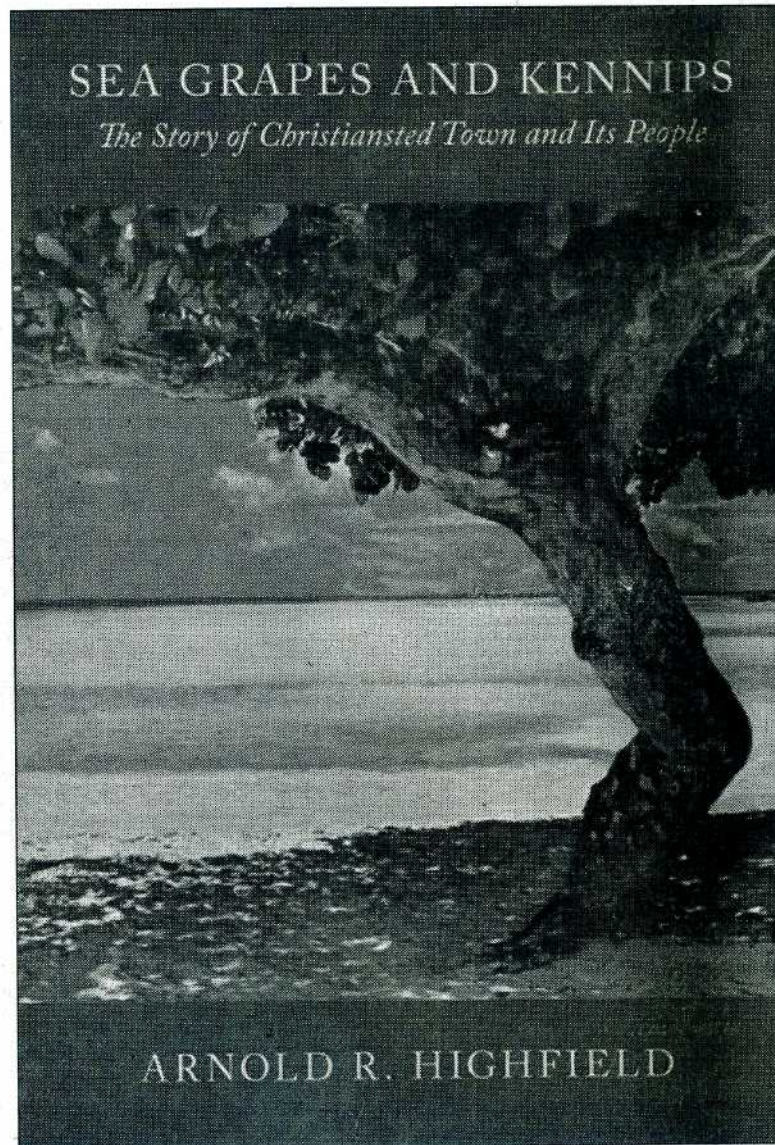
Another chapter of "Sea Grapes And Kennips" is devoted to a relatively unknown governor-general, Adrian Bentzon, born in Norway and educated in Denmark. He governed the Danish West Indies from 1816 to 1819, according to Highfield. He was married to Magdalen Astor, daughter of the nation's wealthiest man, John Jacob Astor and later divorced. As governor-general, Bentzon became involved

in disputes with some powerful St. Croix plantation owners and was forced to leave his post in 1819, according to Highfield. He died in 1827 in his home at 32 King Street in Christiansted.

Highfield also tells the stories of street artist Lloyd "Dove" Brafith and German-born artist Socha Svender who made St. Croix her home in the 1960s and 1970s. He details the story of Ernest John, a Carib native from Dominica and Juan Garrido, reportedly the first African to set foot on St. Croix. After traveling from Africa to Spain to Hispaniola, Garrido followed Ponce de Leon and Hernan Cortez on their expeditions to Puerto Rico, Guadeloupe, Dominica, Cuba, St. Croix and Florida. Later, Garrido followed Cortez to Mexico and California.

The book also contains articles about hurricanes, tsunamis, buccaneers, pirates, Obeah and jumbies. Not only does Highfield talk about the Danes on St. Croix but also the German influence and some of the Palestinians who settled here. He profiled St. Croix residents, including American industrialist and Crucian farmer Ward Canaday; journalist and community leader Ralph de Chabert; and world-renowned photographer Fritz Henle.

Highfield said he chose the subjects of the book to preserve the past before it becomes distorted and is lost. He records events and peoples while information about



Arnold Highfield's latest book, "Sea Grapes And Kennips" was published earlier this year.

them is still known and can be verified.

"My job is to paint them boldly

into a picture that will be available now and for generations to come," he said.

—Police blotter—

ST. CROIX

Assaults:

9:21 a.m. Mon., Richmond
9:06 a.m. Mon., Sunny Isle Shopping Center
11:25 p.m. Sun., Calquo-houn

9:27 a.m. Sun., Aureo Diaz Heights

7:52 a.m. Sun., Richmond

Burglaries:

11:09 a.m. Mon., Mars Hill
2:37 p.m. Sun., Mary's Fancy
5:55 a.m. Sun., Old Hospital Street, Christiansted

Larceny:

12:17 p.m. Mon., Mars Hill

Weapons/shots fired:

8:41 p.m. Sun., Midland Road

8:27 p.m. Sun., Mon Bijou

Stalking:

9:43 a.m. Mon., Richmond

ST. THOMAS-ST. JOHN

Assaults:

6:34 a.m. Mon., Wintberg
4:07 a.m. Mon., St. John

Robbery:

7:27 p.m. Sun., Palms Court Harbor View

Burglaries:

12 p.m. Mon., Frenchman's Bay

8:52 p.m. Sun., Thomas

5:33 p.m. Sun., Sea Chest

8:33 p.m. Sun., Charlotte Amalie

8:11 p.m. Sun., Hospital Ground

10:44 a.m. Sun., Hospital Ground

12:09 a.m. Sun., Grunwald

Larcenies:

11:47 a.m. Mon., Charlotte Amalie

10:22 a.m. Sun., St. John

Weapons/shots fired:

1:45 a.m. Mon., Charlotte Amalie

10:35 p.m. Sun., Tutu Val-