



**OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR**

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For Immediate Release  
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294-2009

JNW  
July 20, 2009

**GOV APPLAUDS VI SOCIAL HISTORY ASSOCIATES AND ANCESTRY.COM PARTNERSHIP,  
ENCOURAGES VIRGIN ISLANDERS TO UTILIZE NEW ONLINE DATABASE**

~St. Croix Population Database most comprehensive virtual archive acknowledging ancestry/genealogy~

Governor John P. de Jongh, Jr. is encouraging all Virgin Islanders to visit the new St. Croix Population Database for years 1734-1917, the most comprehensive collection of records ever digitized chronicling the African American population created by the Trans-Atlantic slave trade. The new web site ([www.visharoots.org](http://www.visharoots.org) or [www.ancestry.com/virginislands](http://www.ancestry.com/virginislands)) describes the St. Croix African Roots Project and was launched at a ceremony held Saturday at Fort Frederik in Frederiksted, St. Croix. The new site brings together the Virgin Islands Social History Associates and Ancestry.com in a unique partnership that will enable generations of Virgin Islanders and others worldwide to research family history.

“When I first learned of the scope of this project, I immediately realized the tremendous potential for Virgin Islanders to discover new linkages in their family history by tracing their ancestral roots while also reconstructing life stories and family histories of forgotten or unknown ancestors,” de Jongh said. The Governor noted that the launch of this new online capability is “not coincidental to the timing of the address of President Barack Obama, a black president, to the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the NAACP and just following President Obama’s address to the people of Ghana. We are all connected, and it is up to us to determine our future as individuals and as a Territory going forward.”

DeJongh applauded the partnership of the Virgin Islands Social History Associates and Ancestry.com, noting that “the launch of this online resource tool is truly historic and will help Virgin Islanders in the Territory and worldwide to access newly organized information that has been archived for generations. This capability will give our young people the access to better understand their past and will unify the generations in the overall history of the island and its people. I encourage all Virgin Islanders to log onto the web site and spend some time learning more about our collective history as a people,” de Jongh said.

The St. Croix Population Database (1734-1917) is a searchable, virtual archive consisting of 1.83 million biographical entries that were transcribed from a vast array of historical records found in American, Danish, and Virgin Islands archives. The Database enables Virgin Islanders to access previously inaccessible historical documentation relating to the history of St. Croix and

its multi-ethnic, multi-racial populations. Most significantly, this online tool will permit thousands of families to trace their ancestral roots to individual Africans and to specific African homelands. The Database is a product of the St. Croix African Roots Project (SCARP), a project that launched in 2002 by the Virgin Islands Social History Associates (VISHA).

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