



and Frank Paccassi, their two daughters Lynn and Judith and Patricia's 81 year old maternal grandmother, Elsie Mollie Snyder until 1972, when they moved to Barbados to help in the consolidation of the recent Mass Teaching Project held there. In the summer of 1970 Miss Hedy Deuschle arrived on St. Thomas and stayed until June 1973.

A large influx of American pioneers and travel teachers resulted when the Caribbean was made a goal of the United States in 1964. By 1966 14 pioneers had moved into the Virgin Islands. Dan and Charlotte Mildren went to St. Croix in March 1965 and stayed until 1968. In July 1965 George Buder arrived in Christiansted, St. Croix and took up employment at the Merwin Hardware store. He was joined in September 1964 by his wife, Katherine, and in November 1965 by his daughter, Ann Marie. Ann Marie returned to the U.S. in March 1970 and the Buders in March 1971. Mrs. Kathy Lukey was also a pioneer on St. Croix. Mr. Nelson Brignoni, an American arrived in Frederiksted, St. Croix in the November 1971 and was joined by his wife Carlatha Greer, on 14 June 1972. They stayed until 20 July 1978. August 1965 saw the arrival in Tutu, St. Thomas of William and Louise Dickerson.

In July 1968 David Morris and Frank Paccassi opened the British island of Jost van Dyke, where four new believers enrolled: Elanzo and Christian Callwood, Norris Dupont and Ethien Chinnery. Two more members of the Callwood family and one more Chinnery enrolled, four months later, during a visit by Katherine Meyer, Knight of Baha'u'llah for Margarita Island off the Coast of Venezuela.

Morris and Paccassi taught on Tortola, as well as Jost van Dyke, in July 1968. Tortola received American pioneer Nancy Destanick and her daughter by 1975. A year later Wally Cluett, a pioneer from St. Croix arrived on Tortola.

Ron Lucero and his family pioneered briefly on St. John in 1968.

The first to enroll in the Bahá'í Faith in the Virgin Islands was Knud Jensen in 1961. His mother was a native to St. Thomas and his father to Denmark; this was not an unusual combination as St. Thomas had been a colony of Denmark from 1670—1917. Mr. Jensen was brought from Denmark to St. Thomas as a baby. He remained a firm and active Bahá'í until his death 30 April 1987. Alma Lake, a St. Thomian, embraced the Faith in St. Thomas in June 1965.

**Institutional Development.** The Virgin Islands came under the jurisdiction of a succession of National Spiritual Assemblies: South America in 1953; the Greater Antilles in 1957; the Dominican Republic in 1962; the United States in 1964; the Leeward, Windward and Virgin Islands in 1967; the Leeward and Virgin Islands in 1972. The National Spiritual Assembly of the Virgin Islands was elected in 1981.

The first local Spiritual Assembly of the Virgin Islands was formed in St. Thomas in April 1964 and incorporated 19 March 1965. In 1967 a local Spiritual Assembly was elected in Fredericksted, St. Croix. The island of St. John, being set aside as a National Park and thus having a population of less than 3000,

has only one local Spiritual Assembly, that of Cruz Bay which was formed in 1978. Also formed 30 June 1978 was the first local Assembly in the British Virgin Islands on Tortola. By May 1982 there were ten local Spiritual Assemblies in the Virgin Islands; the number has decreased to eight by May 1989. (why?)

The Virgin Islands first national Haziratu'l-Quds was near the centre of Charlotte Amalie. St. Thomas. There is also has a temple site and a local endowment, as well a local endowment on St. John.

Official Recognition. The local Spiritual Assembly of St. Thomas became legally incorporated on 19 March 1965. The National Spiritual Assembly was incorporated\_\_\_\_\_?

Bahá'í Marriages were allowed through an amendment to the Virgin Islands Code on 9 December 1970 [BINS 336: 11]. Bahá'í Holy Days were officially recognized in the school system of the U.S. Virgin Islands on 15 February 1974 [BINS 65: 8] for children, and in 1976 for teachers.

Senators and administrators in the Virgin Islands were sympathetic to the plight of the Baha'is in Iran, and letters were read into the Congressional Record, by a delegate from the Virgin Islands. Government officials in the Virgin Islands have received delegations over the years. Governor Ralph Piawonsky of the U.S. Virgin Islands was presented with The Proclamation of Baha'u'llah; Governor Melvin Evans of the U.S. Virgin Islands met with two Hands of the Cause of God, in 1970—Amatu'l-Bahá Ruhiyyih Khanum in June and Enoch Olinga in August.

Distinctive Contributions. Free radio programs in the Virgin Islands began in the late 1950s, thanks to the station manager who was a friend of Charles Dayton. In a half hour Bahá'í program called "The Man in Touch", moderated by a local Bahá'í, Joe Lillidahl began to be broadcast weekly. On 1 March 1977, visiting Hand of the Cause Paul Haney was interviewed for an hour on the popular television program "Conversation" [BNS 85: 9]. A half hour radio series called "The Jeff Reynolds Show" began to air in 1983. Television spots featuring the Bahá'í Faith were started in 1983.

Growth of the Bahá'í Community. By April 1965, there were nine adult Bahá'ís in St. Thomas. Traveling teachers making a stop from the Bahá'í Conference in Jamaica enrolled large numbers of Bahá'ís on the island of St. Thomas in 1971. St. John had five resident pioneers in 1976.

year  
# of  
localities  
local  
groups  
Spiritual Assemblies  
incorporated

1973

5

2

3

1979

26

5

1986

22

11

10

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