

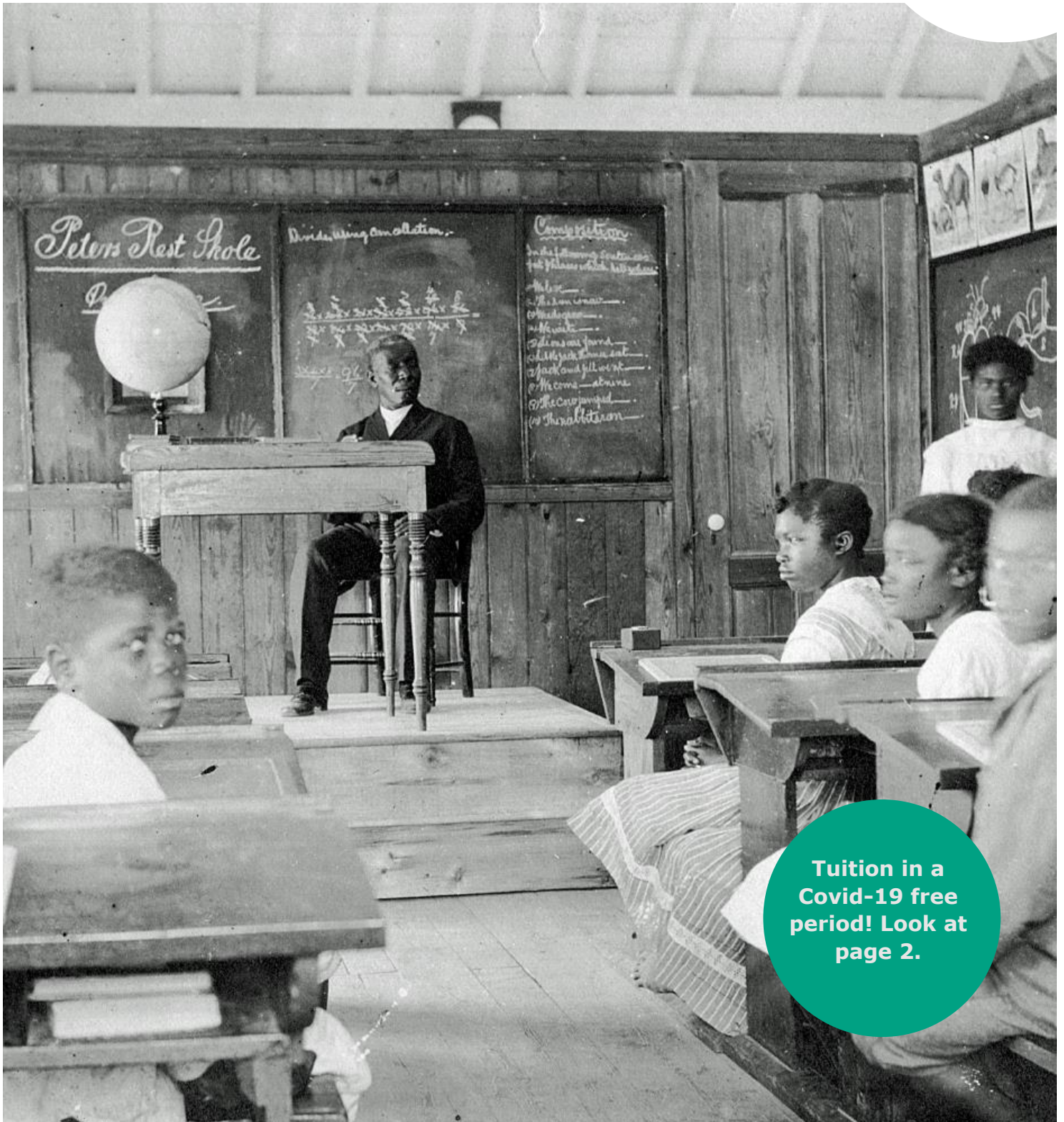


ENGLISH VERSION OF

Dansk Vestindisk Selskab

# MAGASINET

DIGESTED  
VERSION  
January  
2021  
VOLUME 56  
NO 1



Tuition in a  
Covid-19 free  
period! Look at  
page 2.

## THE ALTERNATE NARRATIVE

**Member of the board of DWIS, Anna Monica Villa, who has spent the last couple of months in USVI, has contributed her thoughts over latest events in USA. In spite the Territory has since Transfer in 1917 not had the vote in presidential elections in USA, and thus no influence on the result, events may still – indirectly – have granted the Territory some kind of influence on domestic politics in USA. Read more about this in Anna Monicas article.**

This is my perspective on the conflicting narratives which have been shouted from news and social platforms since before Donald Trump came to power. As an American citizen from an unincorporated territory, I do not have the right to vote in presidential elections. I have no loud voice in this shouting match. But, I am a Virgin Islander who is aware that the history of the Virgin Islands is not limited to the history of the United States. I know that this too shall pass. I have also lived in Denmark for over 30 years, and, my views on education and representative democracy have been influenced by the Danish perspective.

At first I didn't realize that there was another narrative. I didn't hear it even though I listened to the news every day. It was only when the November 3rd 2020 presidential election results came in, that it became clear, that at least 74 million Americans were listening to different information on their headphones. The Biden/Harris ticket got upwards of 81 million votes. Perhaps the majority of those who voted didn't hear the other narrative that attempts to impeach the character of Joe Biden by labelling him a pedophile.

Millions of my fellow Americans were captivated by a narrative that was unreal to me. Where did the millions of voices shouting for Trump to continue to lead them come from? Danish analysts tell us that they are characterized by being marginalized. They are, in other words, not necessarily unintelligent or uneducated, but, they feel that their voices have not been heard. They are, however, a diverse group of people. Reasons for supporting Trump vary from the economic to the xenophobic.

Disenfranchised Americans have been making a lot of noise lately, and, their voices have

revealed problems in the fabric of American society. The Black Lives Matter movement channeled anger about institutionalized racism into political activism. At the other end of the spectrum, Trumpism channeled fear and hatred into political activism. It is a real problem that members of the same community have incompatible versions of reality. Can American democracy survive?

Shortcomings in the educational system in the United States would seem to be at the fissures in the base of our democracy. How can we vote if we are uninformed? How can we question our leaders if we are unable to think critically.

How can violence against elected officials be justified in the name of Democracy?!?

I know that some of my neighbors here on Denmark Hill would have voted for Trump, if they could.



*The photo on the frontpage shows schoolteacher Alexander Joseph teaching at Peter`s Rest School, St. Croix in the Danish West Indies. Today's pupils know about the world from digital media.*



Suddenly we also have a voice!

In today's Daily News Stacey Plaskett is quoted as saying: "As an African American, as a woman, seeing individuals storming our most sacred place of democracy, wearing anti-Semitic, racist, neo-Nazi, white supremacy logos on their bodies... left not just those people of color who were in the room traumatized, but so many people of color around this country" were also traumatized. I would add that Americans of all ethnicities were appalled at what happened on January 6th.

This is Martin Luther King weekend. It is a national

holiday, a time to remember Dr. King's Dream "that one day this nation will rise up and live up to its creed, "We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal." In Martin Luther King's narrative we will all be judged by the content of our character rather than by the color of our skin. To quote Dr. King out of context, "It would be a mistake to overlook the urgency of the moment."

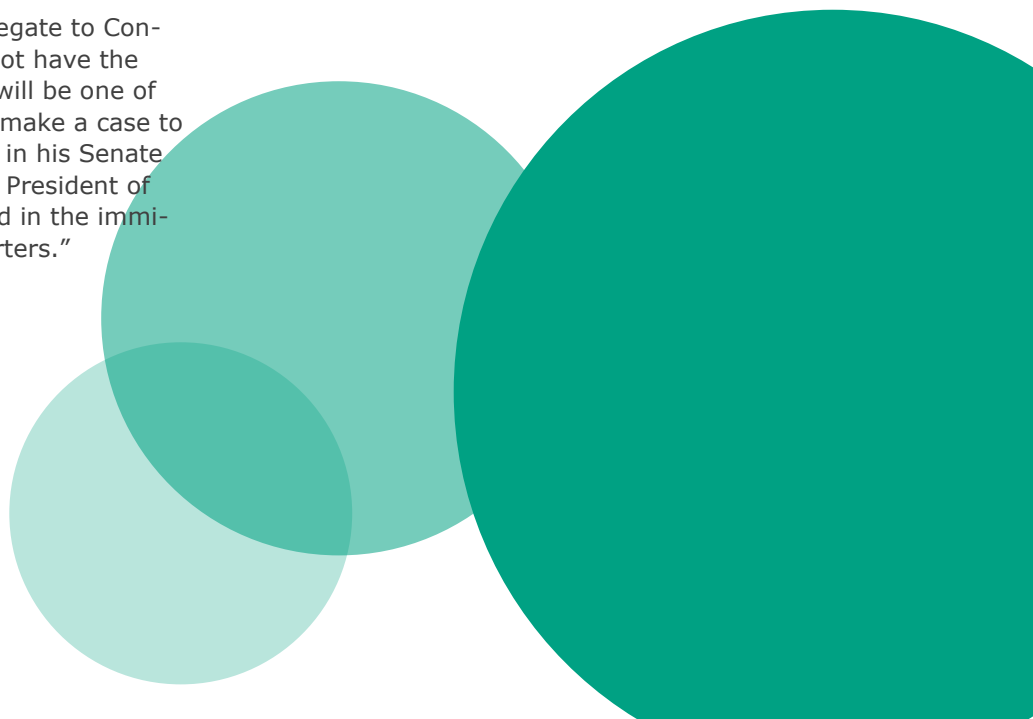
Now is the time to LISTEN to the voices of the marginalized and the disenfranchised in the United States of America. Our voices and the voices of our neighbors need to be heard.

Some of the voices shouting for Trump were welcoming in new norms of behavior in the highest office in the United States of America. From where I sit, the mayhem which ensued on January 6, 2021 was predictable.

We need to write a new narrative that connects us. The alternative is to become the "untied states" of America.

Ironically our representative, Delegate to Congress Stacey Plaskett who does not have the right to vote on the House floor, will be one of the 9 impeachment managers to make a case to impeach President Donald Trump in his Senate trial. Stacey Plaskett accused the President of "conduct that foreseeably resulted in the imminent lawless actions of his supporters."

Anna Monica Villa



## ABOUT EX-PRESIDENTS, AND A LITTLE ABOUT THE NEW PRESIDENT

# THEODORE ROOSEVELTS VISIT IN DWIS IN FEBRUARY 1916.

**The Danish West Indian population was not asked in 1917 when the 3 islands were sold to USA. However, it is a general understanding in Denmark, that for many years the inhabitants in the islands were more focused on USA than on Denmark. There were a lot of indications of that. Read here about an example.**

Theodore Roosevelt was the 26th President of the United States of America – from 1901-1909. He died in 1919 – 60 years of age. However, in February 1916 he – who now titled himself colonel – visited the Danish West Indies as part of a journey around the Caribbean. It was a very short visit, which however attracted attention,

particularly among the local population. It is doubtful, whether Roosevelt had a political agenda supporting his visit, even if he was received as well in St. Thomas as in St. Croix with flying colours and by the Danish Governor L. Helweg-Larsen

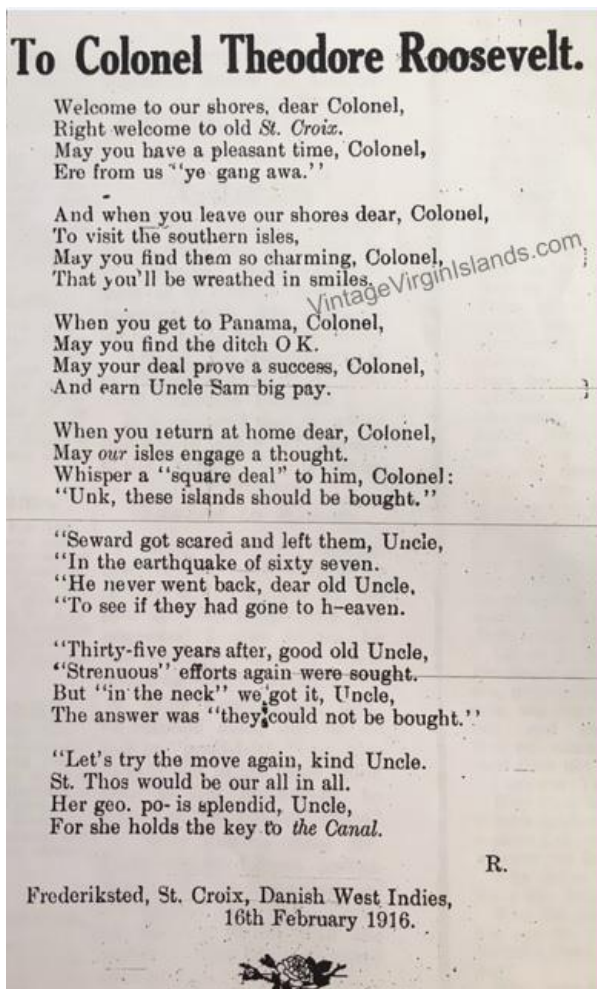
And his entourage of high ranking civil servants. But the visit brought about a poem created by some locals in Frederiksted. This poem was indisputably a manifestation by those who created it, that they wanted USA to take over the islands. You can read the poem on the next page.

Not long after Roosevelts visit, the Sales Treaty between USA and Denmark was entered into.

And now, when we talk about presidents, the 46th President, Joe Biden was inaugurated on the 20th of January – on the surface at a peaceful event in Washington D.C. – in front of Capitol Hill. And when Joe Biden is mentioned here, I should add, that he has been a frequent guest for some years in St. Croix, where he relaxes with his family, and from time to time plays golf on Hotel Buccaneers golf course, and chats with the locals.

Whether Bidens predecessor, who now needs to play a lot of golf, will visit the islands, is not known, even if it is rumoured, that the Scottish authorities have informed him, that he is not welcome in Scotland, where he has his own golf resort! Well, maybe he will stick to his golf resort in Florida – that seems to be friendly territory.

Michael Keldsen  
Editor



**NOTES to the poem:** Stanzaes 5 and 6 refers to the 2 failed sales attempts in respectively 1867 and 1902. "Seeward" was the US Foreign Secretary William H. Seeward, who negotiated the non-ratified Sales Treaty of 1867.

## BOOK REVIEW

# OUR DANISH CONNECTIONS

Review by Michael Keldsen

**In on the one side everyday life and the strive for future happiness, and on the other side the historical background, the latter normally pulls the short straw, when it comes to effort and knowledge. Therefore we need fiery souls, who can help us to get and maintain insight to history.**

**Such a person is Nina York, who born and raised Danish, has lived in St. Croix since 1976 (and up till then many years in New York). She has been extremely active in the American-West Indian islands when it comes to spreading reliable information about the Danish history and culture, which was part of life in the islands for nearly 250 years – until 1917.**

One example is her weekly contributions from 2009 to 2019 in a column in ST. CROIX THIS WEEK. Now, Nina York has collected some of the articles - appr. 70 in all - in a book titled "OUR DANISH CONNECTION - VORE DANSKE BÅND", which has been published with donations from i.a. Danish West Indian Society.

I believe, that it will be fair to say, that the purpose with the articles in St. Croix This Week and now the book, mainly is to give Americans, and not least the inhabitants in the islands, who have no special relationship with Denmark, an impression of the impact of "the Danish time" on the islands, and at the same time an insight into what Denmark, a small place in the world, is.

Therefore the various subjects in Nina Yorks articles are very broad spectred; from "hygge", candle lights, Danish Christmas, soccer, the weather in Denmark (and maybe therefore an explanation about, why we are as we are), Grundtvig, Danish cuisine, St. Hans Evening celebrations (Mid Summer Nights celebrations), Danish bricks and many other things being followed by the more or less visible consequences in the Islands from the Danish time, such as cannons, red guard houses, road- and street names, Danish building architecture, wind mills, churches etc.

But also reports on the many relations, which exist today between persons and organisations, resp. in Denmark and in the Islands, have a

central place in Nina Yorks book. Hence, the Festivals, arranged every second year by respectively DWIS in Denmark and FoD in the Islands, are mentioned; also the flight routes between Denmark and USVI, which opened, but unfortunately were closed down again; and the access to Danish archives, which has been established recently, and has particularly been a contribution to intensified genealogical research on both sides of the Atlantic.

In short, there is hardly a relevant subject in the Danish – West Indian relation, present or past, which has not been covered in Nina Yorks book.

In this way Nina York and her articles and the book jointly with her other activities become a link between an American-West Indian presence and a Danish past and presence. And this is to the benefit of many people, not least the many thousand tourists, whom Nina York has served as tourist guide in the islands; those of us in Denmark who are involved in West Indian matters, i.a. through DWIS, and Danish authorities, who have still focus on USVI; f.inst. The Danish Ministry of Culture and DEMA.



## OUR DANISH CONNECTION VORE DANSKE BÅND

ST. CROIX THIS WEEK Features, 2009-2019

By Nina York



The subjects in the book are presented as appetizers – it invites readers to do further research.

The fact that the texts are as well in Danish as in English enables it to contribute to an extended interest in the Islands. Nina York has written the book in English, which today is her main language; but the translations into Danish have been provided by herself. However, she - modestly - remarks in the introduction to the book, that the translation has caused her difficulties, because the Danish, she knew and spoke 60 years ago - when she left Denmark for good - has undergone an intense development.

Yes, 60 years without speaking and writing your mother tongue on a daily basis, no doubt will have an influence, mostly in the syntax and for a language as Danish so influenced by foreign languages - particularly English, which has yielded a complete new vocabulary.

But, Nina York writes a varied and beautiful Danish, which no doubt is readable, also for younger Danes. But, most important, she has not lost touch with what is going on in Denmark - and that is one of the qualities of the book, that it is written by a person, who still has close connections to both cultures.

So - indirectly speaking - Nina York is not a person, who sits and looks from the outside and in - she looks at both communities from the inside. And this gives a special flavor to the subject, which she has covered diligently through the span of 10 years.

**The book is in 76 pages with illustrations, and can be acquired through Danish West Indian Society; [www.dwis.dk](http://www.dwis.dk).**



***Nina York in Copenhagen 2017***

## MEMORIALS

# ALBERTA WILL GET A MEMORIAL IN COPENHAGEN



*Alberta as a pupil at the Royal Orphanage School in Copenhagen, 1908.*

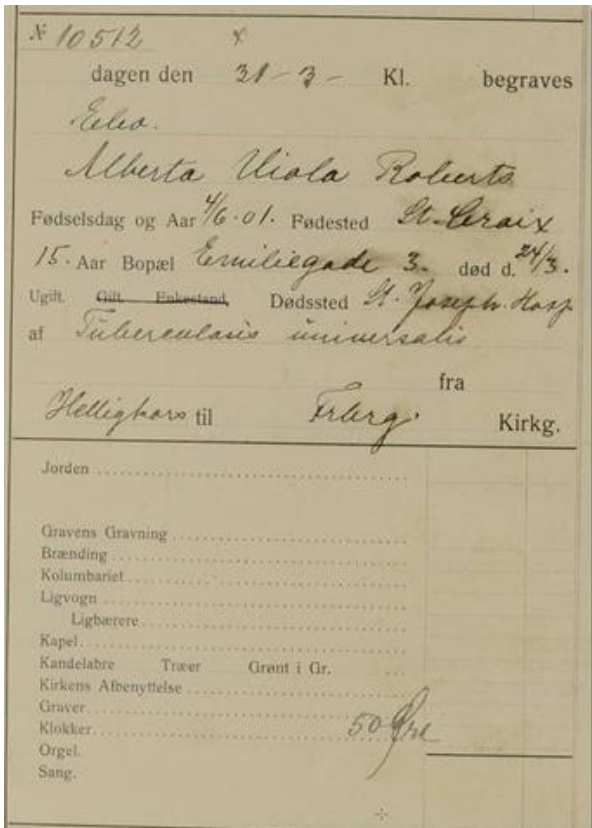
**In our June 2020 edition we told the story about Victor Cornelins and Alberta Roberts, who in 1905 were sent from St. Croix to the Danish Colonial Exhibition in Tivoli Gardens in Copenhagen. Victor had a good life in Denmark, living here until his death in 1985. But Alberta died already in 1917 of tuberculosis. Now the Borough of Frederiksberg in Copenhagen has taken an initiative to raise a memorial for Alberta. Victor Cornelins already is celebrated with a statue in the town, where he lived most of his life.**

The conservative councillor in Frederiksberg, Nikolaj Bøgh, has launched a campaign to raise money for a memorial for Alberta, in what he calls "a colonial historic memorial". "We must not forget our history, also the darker sides of it, and we need to know more about the Danish relation to the Danish West Indian Islands. But we shall not misuse the history for present day political purposes, he says to the Danish daily

Berlingske on 15th of January, 2021. He continues: "A memorial over Alberta will, as opposed to "Queen Mary", be a real and honest manifestation of an event, which took place. And there is a significant difference in destroying some of our cultural heritage (1), and, as I propose, to expand it. The memorial over Alberta can make us wiser and contribute to understanding how people back in time thought about people from foreign places."

The idea is to erect the memorial at Solbjerg Cemetery, where Alberta was buried. And Nikolaj Bøgh proposes that a competition among artists shall decide how the memorial shall look. Nicolaj Bøgh has told DWIS, that the Administration in the Borough of Frederiksberg is already preparing the framework for the project. DWIS has communicated to the borough, that we support the project.

Our member, Jens Villumsen, has made a historic perusal of Albertas rest place, which is as follows:

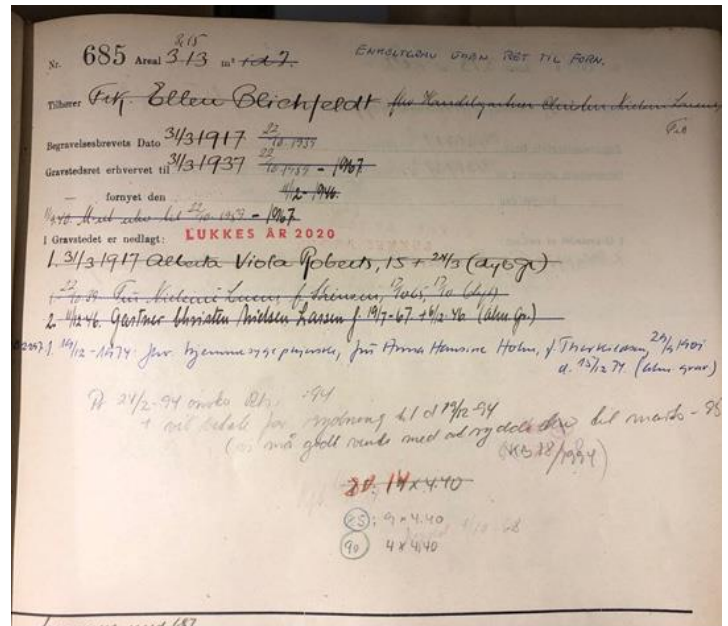


This was the document, testifying, that she had been laid to rest in grave no. 685 on Frederiksberg Cemetery, which later became part of Solbjerg Cemetery. The burial ceremony took place from Holy Cross Church on March 31, 1917



The statue of Victor Cornelius in Nakskov,

(coincidentally on the same day as Transfer took place in DWI). The rest place was acquired for 20 years by a Miss Ellen Blichfeldt, who had cared for Alberta and had her living with her.



Of the protocol from the cemetery, you can see, that in October 1939 – after Albertas grave had been annulled, a new burial took place. And the same happened again in 1946 and in 1974. Officially grave no. 685 was in the year 2020 deleted as a grave, and now remains as an open lawn.

1) A group of teachers, students and artists connected with the Royal Academy of Fine Arts (Kunstakademiet) in Copenhagen destroyed recently a bust of King Frederik V, the Danish king, who acquired St. Croix and supported slave trade and slavery, and at the same time had been the founder of the Academy. This action has been widely condemned, and the headmaster of the Academy has been removed. Even if there is a broad sympathy in Denmark for the Black Lives Matter cause, there is also a broad negative reaction to any destructive measures.

This action may jeopardize the public and governmental support for a replacement of the Queen Mary statue with a lasting statue in bronze.



## GREETINGS

# CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEARS GREETINGS FROM VIRGIN ISLANDS

DWIS was pleased to receive the following greetings on Christmas morning from Marlene Petersen-Boschulte, the chairman of the St. Thomas/St. John Friends of Denmark Society.

Good Christmas Eve morning, Lars and all of our relatives and friends; it was so wonderful to receive your letter!!

What a year this has been; but we still have a lot to be thankful for. We can still communicate with, pray for and even SEE one another via facetime.

Thank God for technology!

Yes, the Pfizer vaccine is being administered throughout the Territory. Per US Mainland/ National protocols, administering is being done in three (3) phases; Group 1: All active Medical Personnel/first responders; Group 2: All citizens ages 75 y.o. and older; Group 3: All citizens ages 65 y.o. to 74 y.o.

Of particular note, our stats are very low, thank God with sadly, though few, demises.

Although all of us have been separated for such a long time, let us continue to have faith and hope that glowing effects of the vaccines will be reflected across the globe - we can all visit with one another again.

*Glaedelig jul og Godt nytar.*

From all of us of the St. Thomas/St. John Friends of Denmark Society.

Marlene Petersen-Boschulte  
*President*



*Marlene Petersen-Boschulte.*