

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Mapp Appoints Turnbull To Centennial Commission

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Ernice Gilbert **February 03, 2015**



Governor Kenneth Mapp has appointed former Governor Charles W. Turnbull to the Centennial Commission, the body tasked with planning the 100th anniversary of the territory's transfer from Denmark to the United States, Government House announced Monday.

The commission was formed in 2010 by the 29th Legislature and is comprised of 16 members -- 14 appointed by former Governor John P. de Jongh, Jr. and two by former Senate President Shawn-Michael Malone.

De Jongh's choices on St. Croix were Sonia Jacobs Dow, Al Franklin, Gerville Larsen, Hans Lawaetz, Eugene Petersen, and Pamela Richards Samuel. On St. Thomas, de

Jongh chose former first lady, Cecile de Jongh; Lois Hassell-Habtes; Dr. Marilyn Krigger; Ronald Lockhart; Clement Magras; and Roy Watlington.

Pat Harley and Robert O'Connor were de Jongh's choices from St. John.

Of all included, only Krigger resigned and will be replaced by Turnbull.

In selecting the members, de Jongh said he sought persons who are active in the community and who have held leadership positions in the past.

"I selected individuals who are active in the community and have held leadership positions in various organizations ranging from cultural commissions to academia," de Jongh said. "I wanted to ensure that the Centennial Commission represents the strength and diversity of the community, and that the commission members appreciate not only that the future of the Virgin Islands grows out of our cultural and social ties to Denmark and the United States, but that the future we build together is one which we can all embrace and understand."

The centennial celebrations will take place over a 17-month period, from Aug. 2016 through Dec. 2017. They will commemorate the transfer of St. Croix, St. John and St. Thomas, by purchase from Denmark for the sum of \$25 million in gold, to the United States, on March 31, 1917, during World War I.

"I would like to thank the Honorable Charles Turnbull, I appreciate his willingness to serve. I know that his interest and experience will be of great benefit to the people of the Virgin Islands," Mapp said.

The legislation that created the Centennial Commission also created a separate fund with the sole purpose of financing the upcoming events. According to language in the legislation, the Department of Tourism Commissioner is responsible for setting policy for use of the funds.

File Photo: Former Governors Charles Turnbull, Roy Lester Schneider and John de Jongh pose with Gov. Kenneth Mapp.