

The Virgin Islands Consortium

USVI-BVI Friendship Day Celebrates 43rd Anniversary; Event To Be Held On St. Croix In 2018

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ST. THOMAS -- Governor Kenneth Mapp welcomed British Virgin Islands Premier D. Orlando Smith, center-left above, and the BVI delegation to St. Thomas for a full day of cultural exchange on Saturday.

The celebration, themed "Ties Across the Water That Bind Us", marked the 43rd anniversary of the relationship, which has seen both territories, though having different owners, enjoying a relationship that has been beneficial to their respective economies.

Saturday's activities began with a local breakfast at the historic Catherineberg estate. USVI dignitaries including former Governor Charles Turnbull and members of the Senate

joined the BVI delegation to kick off the celebration. Policy Advisor of External Affairs, Shelley Moorhead, introduced members of the delegation and announced the day's activities.

Breakfast was followed by an educational program on the history and culture of the Virgin Islands hosted at the Reichhold Center of the Arts. Vendors were on hand to provide samples of foods, snacks and crafts native to Virgin Islands culture.

Beautiful renditions of the Star-Spangled Banner and the Virgin Islands March were sung by the CAHS Hawks Concert Choir. BVI singers Kenrico Christoper and Kaywanna Pope offered solos of God Save the Queen and Oh Beautiful Virgin Islands respectively. AY-AY Cultural Dance company traveled from St. Croix to entertain the crowd with classic quadrille dancing. One of the program highlights was the presentation of the Tale of Four Wharves written by Glen Davis, Carmen Dennis and Denise Humphery. This was highlighted by the Cultural Extravaganza performed by the Caribbean Ritual Dancers.

In his remarks, Mr. Mapp thanked all for coming to the friendship celebration of the "greater Virgin Islands", a term he says was coined by former Governor Turnbull.

"Our islands share a unique culture and a deep connection that families have shared between these islands for generations and it must be celebrated," Mr. Mapp added.

The territory's leader also indicated that efforts to ease travel between the Virgin Islands was a top priority following the IVIC meetings earlier this month. And for the first time since the celebration was started, the friendship day celebration will be held in St. Croix come 2018, according to the governor.