

- ...Disability Rights Center, the Virgin Islands and its federal funding partners, the US Department of Health and Human Services, US Department of Education, and the Social Security Administration. This morning, we have very interesting program for you and a very special guest, her name is Susan Lugo, she is the Territorial Archivist or Archivist, however you pronounce it. Susan, you will correct me, for the Department of Planning and Natural Resources, Division of Libraries, Archives, and Museums. Good morning.

- Good morning. Thank you for having me.

- Well, thank you for joining us. Iris, I know you had quite a few questions because you've done a lot of research, and that's part of stuff that Susan does, right? Research.

- Yes, research, I think. But though, thanks for being here, Susan. I really appreciate it especially when you've been busy all week with what you're gonna talk about. But from what I researched, archivists are responsible for the provision, care, and management of permanent collections of information that are intended to preserve the past and allow others to discover it. And this is kind of what our program is doing from trying to promote information about our history, our culture, to not only preserve it, so that the younger generations can learn more about it.

- And we talk about the government archives which is where I work and that's applied to government records. So these are records that are created by all of our executive branch government agencies, those of the ones that come under the care of the Department of Planning and Natural Resources, Division of Libraries, Archives, and Museum, so we have to manage the records as well as preserve them. And most importantly, make them accessible to the public because it's the public information that drives the importance of these record-keeping process.

- So when you, when you say records, what, can you give examples of the records?

- Sure. So each agency has responsibilities for carrying out various duties and transactions as part of its mandate, and in the process of doing that, executing branch agencies create documents, they create transactional records. And those are the kinds of things that need to be preserved in order to document those decisions that are being made in government. Not everything is an archival record, not everything will be preserved in perpetuity, but those documents must at least be managed for a period of time, and that's also the responsibility of the Territorial Archives. When they are preserved in perpetuity, it's usually because they have a historical importance or some sort of decisional importance, maybe a legal importance that makes it our responsibility as archivists to preserve that information forever. And very little actually will end up in the archives forever of all the records that are created. When you think about, just think about something like the Department of Motor Vehicles, how many records they must create every single year, we don't need to keep those records in perpetuity. But records about taxes and taxes payers records about, property transactions, those things are needed forever because you may need to substantiate ownership, you may need to substantiate a legal claim, you may need to prove something for probate, and of course, for documenting family history as well.

- So how far back, or do you have information on that property and things like that in case somebody wants to go back and research?

- Sure. So we have a, we are very fortunate, we have such a long history that has been documented and those documents are in three places. They're here in the Virgin Islands. They're, some of the records are in Denmark and some of them are actually, in the National Archives in Washington. So we have a challenge sometimes to have a complete record because it may be fractured into where, into whereabouts, storage, or access, but our records do go back even as far as the late 1600s and 1700s. We have some documents here on Island that are in from the 1700s. We do have a lot of documents on hand in the island from the 1800s and then, of course, many from the 1900s on.

- Wow. That's, so how do you go about protecting and preserving it?

- Well, it's a, that's the challenge, isn't it? With the, with limited resources all around for everyone these days, it's very difficult. We need to have proper storage conditions, proper environment that means air conditioning to keep temperature at a certain degree that suits the materials that are being preserved. So paper needs to be stored at a different temperature than perhaps microfilm or photographs. You also need to have controls on humidity. Humidity affects all of us here in the tropics.

- Right.

- And it doesn't, it's no different for our records. So we can often find traces of mold or mildew in our records and that is very damaging to the information that's stored the those records. Excuse me. We also have to be careful about security because these are records that belong to the Government of the Virgin Islands but more importantly, to the people that it serves. And so we wanna make sure that those records are available to everyone who needs to access them for as long as they should be kept. And so that means keeping them safe. And keeping them accessible at the same time is the real challenge. Having a place where researchers can go to look at the records, having the staff to service that public is a real challenge for us right now because we're a small group. We don't have any staff right now for the territorial archives so since I have a territory-wide responsibility, that spreads our resources pretty thin. But we do the best we can and we're trying to get as much information out there. Thank goodness for the internet because that really, that really provides us with the way to reach a lot more people than we used to be able to just providing, access to copy, paper copies.

- Can you, can you share what were some of the records that were sent to Denmark versus which ones stayed here in the Virgin Islands?

- Sure. So Denmark has a, an archives log many, many, a couple of hundred years ago, and so they actually have been archiving in the royal archives for many, I think it was the late 1700s or late 1800s when they passed their law, maybe eve earlier than that. When the Danish West Indies, during the Danish West Indies era then, there was, there were several times when documents were gathered up from here and sent to Denmark for retention in the archives there, just as a matter of administration, just like we do now. After 1917, there were some documents left behind that were essential to the Islands to be kept here, mostly property records, and some other taxation records, and records of matters that were still in process, those might court records and so forth that had not yet been resolved. And there's always those that just get left behind by mistake. Denmark came and actually took some of the, came back, looked through the records, and took the ones that belong to the Danish West Indie era in the early 1930s, those were out up here, and then we started sending records to the National Archives for retentions, and then as of about 1989, we have our first archivist here. And that was under, after the reorganization of the government, it was brought that duty, and responsibility, and function was brought under the Department of Planning and Natural Resources. So that was our first archivist that we had here, with this area, and actually, a regional archivist from the National Archives who was brought down on a loan from the National Archives, and we had him for three years, came in 1989. You remember what happened in '89, don't you?

- Yes, we do.

- Yes, we do.

- So he had a good greeting when he first came down, but despite Hugo and the challenges that presented him upon his arrival, as soon after his arrival, he was able to do it, like, at least start a management program here. Unfortunately, that was not able to be sustained over the years, and we had one other archivist for a year, and then we had fifteen years about when, before I came on, but we had no archivist for the territory. So there's a lot of work to be done, lot of agencies have paper in their offices that still needs to be gone through, and they have no room for it, and this is why a lot of records have been lost because there's been no one to collect it, and actually arrange, and describe it, and make it accessible to the public.

- Let me, let me mention that this is indeed a call-in show. And if you are so inclined, you may call-in with a question for Susan Lugo at 713-1709 or 779-1079. Susan, I have a question. What is the difference between an archivist and a librarian?

- Good question. And so, I'm actually based out of Saint Thomas as your listening audience may know and they, we have our office right now, or my office is in the Turnbull Regional Library. Our boundaries between institutional responsibilities between libraries, archives, and museums are fast disappearing, it's all about collaboration. But there are still differences. So the librarians will manage a collection, they'll make it accessible to the public through catalogs, they do a lot of programing, and there's, they're mandate is not necessarily to preserve, and they don't necessarily deal with government documents. Now, there is a section at the library called Special Collections and we have them in the Williams Library here, Christiansted. In the Petersen Library, there's a smaller subset of it. And then in Frederiksted we have a small sub--even smaller yet subset at the Sprauve Library in Saint John. And a very large collection in Saint Thomas at the Turnbull Library called the Von Scholten Collection. This is a Virgin Islands centric collection, it's about local history but it's also about the wider Caribbean. This was something that was started even before Enid Baa was head librarian in the territory but it was mainly of expanded and refined under her leadership. We now have over 28, 000 volumes at the Von Scholten Collection of local history and Caribbean history. And so, librarians take care of that but they integrate our responsibilities with the archives because if I get a research question, I will often go to the special collections librarian, or technician who's handling that area of responsibility, and we will work together to find the information. So I deal with paper, I deal with records, I deal with documents, but the library deals mostly with publications and books. They would not necessarily take care of artifacts either so that could normally be the responsibilities. Say, we have a museum, if we have one operating, that could accept artifacts, they have to take those.

- That's interesting. So, but how did you get involved with, I mean...

- I was really fortunate to, um, to know Jeannette Bastian, who used to be the Director of Libraries, Archives, and Museums, back in the '80s, late '80s. And about 2000, I helped to cofound the Caribbean Genealogy Library in Saint Thomas, decided to go back and get my Masters in Library and Information Science. What an interesting time to go back and get your Masters in Library and Information Science because I walked in to class thinking that it would be one thing and it was actually all about computers. It was no longer about index cards and it was no longer about catalogs, it was about computers. So it was a wonderful time to make that transition. And Jeannette was very, really a wonderful mentor, and encouraged me to consider archives because she knew the kind of work that needed to be done here and I followed her lead. And I joined the government in 2008 as in the territorial archives and have been there ever since.

- That's interesting.

- So essentially, you're the only archivist in the territory?

- Yes. Yes. I don't have any staff right now. But one can always hope. And if there are anyone, anybody out there who would like to think about volunteering to see whether you would like to do this sort of thing, there is always something that we can have you do to assist us in the archives. And I, in fact, I just had a volunteer and his wife of, a Virgin Islander who had moved to the mainland, actually worked for the National Archives for a while, retired. He's now teaching but he comes down once a year and spends about two weeks helping me in the archives. And that really helps me a lot to have a second pair of hands.

- Take us to just a typical day, you come to the office, what is a typical task that a, say, your volunteer would have to do?

- Uh-hmm. I don't know how exciting this is but, I take a lot of research questions, either by email or by phone that take time. Right now, we're doing a series for the daily news on the centennial scene so they've asked us to provide them photographs from the archives. So we've been doing that to represent

the period of transition between, just prior to transfer and just following it. And we've been doing research on those photographs to accompany the photographs and gets more background and context to them. That takes a lot of time. Do a lot inventorying right now, one of the things that we have in the archives, we have such a rich archives but we don't know what we have. So I've been doing a lot of inventory to find what we have. And that takes a good portion of my day as well. Some writing, we just did a program, I don't know if you'd be interested to hear about the program, the workshop that we just did here in Saint Croix. In fact this week and prior to this, last week in Saint Thomas, we did a week-long workshop in partnership with the Danish National Archives, a collaboration. We called it that our joint Centennial Project. And Denmark, as you are probably aware, and your listeners are probably aware, is going to be providing access to over five million images of scanned documents from the Danish West Indian records in Denmark, to the people of the Virgin Islands for, in observance of the centennial. Those will be available online for free on March, as of March 1st. Now here's the challenge, a lot those documents are written in Danish.

- Oh, that's a big challenge.

- Which is, which is to be expected and a lot of them are written in a handwriting that is Danish-Gothic handwriting, which is not always not [ inaudible ]

- Right.

- This workshop was to train our researchers here in the Virgin Islands to handwriting [ inaudible ] revive them with, find aides and finding strategies, search strategies so they could find the records that they need in order to do the research about the history of the Virgin Islands. So it's an absolutely incredible treasure trove of records. They have by far the largest records of the Danish West Indian period at, in Denmark. So we're very lucky to have access to them and free, unfiltered access online.

- Wow.

- Photographs, documents, you name it.

- That's gonna be awesome. That is gonna be really awesome. Because, even when I was going through the researching for archivists, you know, the Frederiksted Denmark Society has a lot of pictures online also.

- That's right.

- And it's just kind of humbling when you look at what was there then, back then and, you know, what we have now, it's just like, very historical.

- It's also helps us contextualize where we are.

- Yeah.

- Yeah.

- Yeah.

- And this celebration for the centennial is not just about looking at our past but understanding our present.

- Yeah.

- And hopefully, that will guide us ahead as we move forward. It's a lot about how we were positioned during that transition period from Danish to American, and what did or didn't work out right. And so this

allows us to see the actual records, firsthand accounts, the documentation that gives us the picture, the whole picture that we've sometimes only have partial access to in the past.

- Okay. Well, we're gonna continue on exploring this picture, we'll take a brief break and we'll be right back. You're listening to Ability Radio, You and Your Life. We're back, you're listening to Ability Radio, You and Your Life. I am your cohost Amelia Headley LaMont, joined this morning by Iris Bermudez. And our special guest is Susan Lugo, Territorial Archivist for the Department of Planning and Natural Resources, Division of Libraries, Archives, and Museums. If you've missed anything from the show this morning, you're reminded that you can listen to a recording of this broadcast on [drcvi.org](http://drcvi.org) where we've listed most, if not all, of our broadcasts in the past year plus and so you can check out Ability Radio, You and Your Life, and You and Your Health on [drcvi.org](http://drcvi.org). Susan, you had some more to share with us. I'm intrigued that you were able to train a staff to what, recognize Danish in a Gothic form?

- Right.

- I mean, that seems awfully intense, isn't it?

- It was intense and, I think, if you ask any of the 14 workshop participants who just finished the training, they would say the same thing. 6:00 to 9:00, every night for one week, they're very dedicated. In fact, in one night, there was another lecture, competing with our event, so we started the class at 7:00 and ran until 10:00.

- Uh-hmm.

- So these are people who are really dedicated and intent on being able to do this. They, like anything, this is a librarian principle, you don't always have to know everything but you have to know how to find it.

- Right.

- Uh-hmm.

- So like the librarian quota, you have to be able to go into the records knowing how to find things. So it was a lot about that. And likewise, it's also about being able to discern the letters and then understanding how to transcribe them so that you could then paste it into a utility like Google Translate to get a rough translation and understanding of what's there. But those kinds of tools are invaluable now. Did everyone walk away with the skills completely? Oh, no.

- Okay.

- And even after two weeks of doing this, I haven't either. But they are, I think their interest will sustain them and certainly their passion for family history and local history will do that as well.

- Okay. Well, I understand we have a call.

- Hello, good morning.

- Hello.

- Hi.

- Good morning.

- Good morning.

- Good morning.

- I have a question for Ms. Lugo.

- Good morning.

- Good morning. How are you?

- I'm fine.

- Good. We have a guest last month who had some curiosities about the origins of names of some of the estates here on Saint Croix and I have been chasing them down with almost no success. I had run in to a document called the Geographical Dictionary of the Virgin Islands of the United States which was prepared for the Department of Commerce in 1925 which listed the name that we're concerned about which is Estate Slob also known as Estate Body Slob, but can't find any document to give me either a Danish translation or how that name originated. Do you have a document or archive that would help find where the origin of that name came as applied to on an estate name on this island?

- What a great question and thank you for it. I also want to say before I address your question that the reference document or resource that you've been mentioned, the Geographic Dictionary is available online in a .pdf format for anyone who wants to access it. Just Google Geographic Dictionary, the Virgin Islands and you can get to it. It used to be available only in print. But for the last several years, it's been available online as well. So the other thing I wanna say in response to your question is that you're in luck. Because the Danish National Archives, we'll let me back up. About 20 years ago or so, there was a project when there was photo duplication lab facility in the Division of Libraries, Archives, and Museums and the project was Federally funded and 78 reels of microfilm were made of the early Saint Croix land records. These are the old ancient books of property transactions that are at the Recorder of Deed Office that are falling apart and are, have been so handled over the years, so frequently handled over the years by users, title searchers, researchers, you name it, that they are literally falling apart. And some of the pages are so brittle that they break off in your hands. But luckily, most of these were microfilmed back in the '80s, '90s, and those records are coming online on March 1st.

- Uh-hmm.

- So those thousands of pages of early Saint Croix land records will be available to all researchers for free and if you have access to a computer. If you don't, there is the BINGN public computer center at your local library, public libraries to go to and have free access to these, to the online records for these documents. And hopefully the answer that you seek will be in those as well.

- Thank you.

- You're welcome. Good luck. And please let me know if you find it.

- I certainly will. Take care.

- Is there a site that has been at least established to do the research for these land records to your knowledge?

- The, all of the documents will go up onto a website that is being maintained by the Danish National Archives. That website is [www.virgin-islands-plural-history.com/en](http://www.virgin-islands-plural-history.com/en) for English version. And then if you put that into your computer you should be able to get to the website that will take you in to search the records, you, there's place where you can learn about the history of the Virgin Islands. There's a webpage, a link there that can take you to a timeline of historical events so that you can get an overview of the period that you might want to search on. And what, some of your listeners may be interested, and there are also some teachers' aides for teaching and classroom instruction under one of the tabs as well. When, I could talk about this all day obviously, but I also want to get in for you that, your listeners that there is also a crowdsourcing opportunity. Now crowdsourcing means that you as a researcher or as even as a non-researcher but with skills for typing and reading documents can go into the records and type in

the information that you are seeing. What does that do? That allows us to search on all of the terms that you type in. So if a document like a census record is being crowdsourced, you would type in for example the name that is on the census record. You, another required field might be of the address that is being taken for the census, the year, and so forth. And then when our researchers go on that same website to search the records, they will be able to be pointed directly to that. Some of the records are actually being fully transcribed and some of the records are actually being translated. So a few those so far but we're hoping that workshops like the one we just had with Denmark, both islands will yield more volunteers for crowdsourcing, get the word out. And while we don't have confirmation yet from, a full confirmation yet from Denmark, it's very likely that we will be able to do these workshops again this year. Thanks for the funding that they're able to provide. The logistical arrangements the DPNR is able to provide as part of its obligation under this collaboration. And if we can see that through, we may be able to do another round of workshops for all three islands this time. So we're very happy to be able to get that information and skillset out there to the public.

- That'll be great.

- Yeah. Yeah.

- That will be awesome. I understand that the Danes are very, very good at record-keeping.

- Very good, yes.

- Very good. How far back do their census records go?

- So their census records, we have Danish census available to us now from 1841 forward. But they actually go back earlier than that in the form of various ways in which people would be listed for government record-keeping purposes. So there, it might be entitled census or you might have information on plantation owners, you might have information on people who were on the plantations, so it's, it may not have the title census to it, but it accomplished the same purpose. But they do go back quite a bit. There are not as many, obviously records from the 1700s that have survived to this day. Part of that is because of storms and insects, mold, mildew, all the things that we talked about before. But you'll be amazed of how much of that record has been brought forward. And yes, they were very good record keepers and why? Why were they good record keepers? Because number one, this was a, an absolute monarchy for quite some time. This was the king's property. These were the king's possessions and so there had to be an accounting for that. So just like a business, things had to be documented, everything had to be documented. And even when we went to a constitutional monarchy later in the 1800s, the same thing. They were, they were, the Danish West Indies were responsible for reporting to parliament and to the king as well. So though, thank goodness, because that's how we have the records that we do. Not everyone has a voice in those records, a clear voice. They aren't always as detailed as we would like them to be but we know that we can weave together stories by putting various documents together. George Tyson and his Saint Croix African Roots Project has done a great job of that, actually taking record series that might be tax records, very dry, don't really tell a story but when you start weaving it with the church records and you start weaving it with the passenger arrivals and departures, suddenly you get a much more vivid picture of what was going on and you do get a real story in it that has dimension to it. Let's say that I like this stuff.

- Yeah, I do, because I like history myself and while you're talking, my mind is here but it's also in the past thinking about how.

- Have you had family history?

- Not yet.

- Not yet?

- Not yet, but no. I'm really in...

- You all have some wonderful resources here at the Williams Library. The Saint Croix Landmark Society has done a fabulous job in supporting that facility over the years, we have a, you have, had an active ancestry discovery group here as well and I just encourage all of you to participate in that effort as much as possible all of us are connected. It's amazing the connections we all have. And for fortifying those connections with these stories from the past just enriches our lives so much more.

- Yeah

- Yeah.

- That's right. That's right. So what do you like the most of your job because you have some really interesting areas that, you know, you work with?

- You know, right now is we try with a limited staff and resources to render this information to the public. I really enjoy making the network connections throughout the community, having this chance to do a workshop, was great because we did some outreach. At least we can do that much. I would be more satisfied if I could get more information out to the public and make it available to them in a research room but we're working towards that. And we know that that's our goal and that's our mandate. I do enjoy working to resolve a research question. Like your caller, I really do wanna hear back from him because that helps me then to serve us another patron who may call in with the same type of question.

- Well, how can a caller get in touch with you?

- Good question. I'm at the Turnbull Regional Library in Saint Thomas and that number is 774-0630. That's 340-774-0630. Or you can always email me at susan, S-U-S-A-N.lugo, L-U-G-O @dpr, that's Department of Planning and Natural Resources, dpr.vi.gov. And usually, you can get a response back from myself or a special collections librarian within 24 to 48 hours and hold us to that, hold us to that.

- So what would you tell students here in the Virgin Islands? What, how do they prepare to become an archivist if that's their calling, they're interested?

- The pathway used to be always through libraries, you know, getting a library degree. And now, Library and Information Science Masters are being renamed as Information Technology degrees or Information Science degrees. My own university, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign where I got my masters, has recently changed its master's program to no longer being Library and Information Sciences that to Information Sciences because this is the way forward, having connect, connectivity to the internet and being able to connect through the internet is really how we're going to reach so much more of our patrons and the public we're supposed to serve. So I would suggest if you're students who are interested in history or interested in the social sciences but not necessarily limited to that, are interested in research like detail, like organizing information, all of those are qualifications for a career in archives and records management. You might like the library side better, you might like the archive side and maybe you'd like working with things and displays and exhibits that we tend to maybe have you go into the museum side. But all of those can come through any degree program in a university that might have something akin to Library and Information Science or Information Science program. I'd love to have some classes out at UVI. We haven't been successful yet in doing that. We are trying, the University of West Indies in the Mona Campus in Jamaica has now got an archives program. And the University of West Indies in Barbados, does it, well, I believe. The other one is, that we're trying to develop, we were trying to develop some courses between us and the BVI so that we could bring up the next generation of archivists and records managers here, but we haven't yet gotten that up the ground but there is, there is definitely interest from the University of the Virgin Islands, it's just a matter of putting that all together and getting, again, the resources to launch a program like that.

- That's amazing because I'm, when you just said that, I thought about all the Caribbean folks that have gone from one island to another and where is all that information?

- And yet again, the connectivity I was talking about, it's not just our history [ inaudible ]

- It's, you know, everybody. It's in the Caribbean.

- It's our Caribbean history.

- Yeah.

- And there's so much movement during that, remarkable amount of movement, even in very early periods, that was how you communicate, you left, and you went, and you came back.

- Yeah.

- So when we talk about Caribbean history, many of the other islands are on the same situation. We are aware, our colonial power had the records and so they're separated from, basically from their history. And like I said, now that we have the internet, that's bridging that gap somewhat, but it's also allowing us to connect to each other. There is a Caribbean branch with the International Council on Archives that I've, I'm a member of and used to be on the executive council, and they are very active in trying to create a signal portal for the Caribbean where, one, a person can go into this portal or access point through the internet and reach all of these archives at once. So you could decide whether you wanna to look in Antigua or in Martinique or in the Dominican Republic and so we're trying to do that now. It's called MIGAN, your memory to the Islands: gateway network or something, I mean, I'm...

- I'm gonna call you on that.

- I know. Don't quote me. But MIGAN, the MIGAN project from, for the CARBICA, which is the Caribbean Branch of the International Council on Archives, and we got a grant from the EU in order to start it a couple of years ago.

- I'm gonna tease that out from you, Susan, during the break and we'll be right back after this short break. We're back and you're listening to Ability Radio, You and Your Life. I'm your co-host Amelia Headley LaMont joined by Iris Bermudez and our special guest this morning is Susan Lugo, Territorial Archivist from the Department of Planning and Natural Resources, Division of Libraries, Archives, and Museums. And I understand we have a call this morning. Good morning.

- Hello, good morning.

- Good morning, Archie. How are you?

- Oh, I'm fine. How are we [ inaudible ] this morning?

- Pretty good.

- Good morning.

- Archie Jennings is our co-host who broadcast our Ability Radio shows from Saint Thomas. So you have a question for Susan Lugo?

- Yes. Ms. Lugo, good morning.

- Good morning. Sorry, I'm not in Saint Thomas today, well, no, I'm not, sorry. I'm glad to be in Saint Croix.

- But I [ inaudible ] working. We have a little, hard time in two years, but I was wondering, being with these transitions between the Danish record and the US Virgin Islands and the military, you know, administration of this Islands where appeared to be as, I can't remember the exact number.

- Right.

- But those recent, where you to have access to all the military and navy records as to what was taking place in the Virgin Islands because at one point, I was informed that the, like, quantity of land transfer from Danish measure to US measure and, um, the US military had those records but I don't know if you have access to all of that information that took place from like 1917 to whenever they turned over to the civilian side of the administration of the Virgin Islands.

- You've brought up a very interesting and critical point for our listeners because those records were kept by the Naval Administration. They would be found in the administration's, Naval Administration's record series in the national archives for the most part. And so as to the, and the, that record series is kept in Washington, DC. I don't know if you are aware that our records are actually not in DC but they're at College Park Maryland at what's called the Archives II facility. They were moved there some years ago with brand new facility, a number other record series as well and it's a comfortable place for researchers to go and look at what's called Record Group 55 which are the records of the Danish West Indies and US Virgin Islands that are held by the National Archives. Now the Naval Administration records are, I'm not positive if those are still in DC or they are also moved out to College Park. But those, that is where our records would be. Keeping in mind that at that time we were not treated as a political entity per se by the Naval Administration, we were just being administered by them. So the kinds of records that they would create would not be on par with a state or territorial record-keeping system that we presently have or might have had after the Organic Act. So for example, the Naval Administration would keep track of things that were important to the Navy and the administration of these islands and it may not yield the kind of information that researchers are looking for so again, you have to read into the records, you have to think about who would've created the record that you are looking for, who would've, to whom would that information have been important, and decide where that record-keeping might now be stored if at all. For example, the, you've raised the issue about the Danish measurements for land, you're right, there is a difference between Danish acres and the present US acreage measurements. I am told by the instructor that we had these past two weeks from Denmark for the workshop that there is yet some dispute even what a Danish acre is. So there, that's not an easy thing to resolve a hundred years later if we're trying to address land descriptions now. But to find out about that history, there's a wonderful paper that was written about Danish acreage and what it meant at the time how it was applied in the Virgin Islands and I'm blanking on the name of the authors. It's one, maybe one of your listeners call in with it. I don't have access to my computer. But if you like, I'll send you a link to that after the show and then you can, if you haven't already consulted it, you'll have that at least there's a resource for reference purposes.

- Okay. Thank you. That's very interesting. And so, almost it would look like it might have to go to the pre-location and sort of combine that knowledge to, and get to the issue you want.

- Well, as you probably know too well and maybe your listeners don't know as well, that the land descriptions, early land descriptions were often, the property lines would, the demarcations were by the tree or this rock or that fence, post that's no longer there.

- Or the end of the bay, or the end of the bay.

- There you go. There you go.

- Okay. Okay. Thank you, Ms. Lugo.

- All right. Thank you for your question.

- You have a good day. Thank you.

- Thank you.

- Thank you, Archie.

- Bye-bye.

- Bye-bye. One of the things I do wanna mention, this is just a preface side is, you know, we are a disability rights organization and the question has come up, "Well, this is an interesting topic. What does it have to do with persons with disabilities?" And our contention is that, any issue has an impact or is of interest to whether you have a disability or not.

- Yeah.

- We are hope, focused for our work, for the Disability Rights Center is for an inclusive world. And that means issues and problems and whatever, everyone has an interest, everyone has a stake. And so I was just wanted to bring that up because we didn't wanna have a program that was just very limiting and insular, we're just that focused, so I just wanted to share that.

- But to that point, I think it's also important for us as a government agency to keep in mind as we make records available that they have to be available to everyone. This is one of the issues we're facing right now with the designation of the Enid Baa Building by the legislature as the future home of the archives and records center. We don't have accessibility from the street level. The building is actually just slightly below, the building entrances on the first floor is slightly below street level. Even for our employees who would have to bring records from the second and third floor, they would have to transfer stairways that are very steep.

- Uh-hmm.

- With 40-pound boxes in their hands, no elevator whatsoever. And they would also have to take the boxes from an enclosed protected environment into the outdoors in order to bring them downstairs for the researchers. So while the building is wonderful and full of history and is the landmark in the community for, in that community for libraries and archives, we understand that it's gonna take a lot to make it accessible in so many ways to protect the information and to make the information as useful to our researchers as possible on the ground floor. We have also any kind of security system problems there as well. So, we need to think about that for the safety of our patrons while they're using the facility.

- And the employees, we'll take a brief break and we'll get back to that. That's a very important subject.

- Thank you.

- We're back. You're listening to Ability Radio, You and Your Life. And we had taken up, started up a conversation about architectural access at the Enid Baa Library which is a subject near and dear to the hearts of the staff attorneys at the Disability Rights Center of the Virgin Islands. So, Ms. Lugo what is the present situation? Is there any movement afoot to, because I know it's an old building, it's a beautiful building, has there been any effort to make any kind of improvements? Which is certainly possible in a historical building.

- And that's exactly what we're trying to do. There are some engineering studies that have to be done, some analysis that has to be done by of course an architect redesign that access while preserving the historical historicity of the building and its, and its integrity. So it's gonna be done with a lot of care and a lot of forethought. We need things like a generator to make sure that we have an uninterrupted power supply, those kinds of things. And the elevator going to be a major structures that have to be added onto the building so all of that will have to be taken into consideration, of course, the very high capital improvement cost in projects as well. We, but I will say that the new facility at Turnbull Regional Library doesn't have that issue right now, Special Collections, you should feel comfortable going into your Special Collections there at the Von Scholten Collection. There's very easy access from the parking lot, same level and we have no barriers there, really. We have also our great regional library for the blind and physically handicapped here in Saint Croix. You may think they're here in Saint Croix but they're actually throughout the territory by virtue of all of the public libraries here. So any service that they render out of

Saint Croix, we can facilitate out of any of the libraries throughout our system. So that's a fact that a lot of people don't realize as well. We need to get that word out better. Hopefully when the archives gets up and running and becomes more publicly accessible at the paper portion of it not what's online, we can also make sure that that gets out to the rest of the Islands through the internet as well.

- So let me make sure I understand you, is there a physical structure for the center or a library for persons who are blind?

- Yes, there is.

- Okay. In Saint Thomas?

- Yes, yes, uh-huh.

- Where is that?

- That's over in Golden Rock Estate.

- Oh, yeah, I know the one in Saint Croix. Is there one in Saint Thomas?

- Oh, I'm sorry. In Saint Thomas.

- Or in Saint John?

- It's done through the public libraries themselves.

- Okay.

- So if someone comes in to the Turnbull Regional Library, sorry, I misunderstood your question. But if they're coming to the Turnbull Library and Sprauve Library in Saint John, then we can provide them the same kinds of services for the talking books and so forth that we provide here in Saint Croix so, and whatever others assistive devices they might need.

- And that was gonna be one of my questions, you know, if a person needed information here in Saint Croix, would he have to get it in Saint Thomas, but you've already answered that for me so...

- We'll work with librarian Letitia Gittens out of the Regional Library to get, to get that accommodation.

- Well, it has been a very, very informative show, Susan Lugo, Territorial Archivist from the Department of Planning and Natural Resources, Division of Libraries, Archives, and Museums. Thank you for bringing so many things up to speed. Did you have any, one minute, you have less than a minute.

- Less than a minute [ inaudible ] The 18th Century Invention of a Measure in the Caribbean: The Danish Acre of Saint Croix by Daniel Hopkins, it's available in a .pdf Format on academia.edu. There's your answer.

- All right. And we will send it when we see it on her phone. Next week we will have an interview with Prof. Erwin Chemerinsky who is from the School of Law of UC, California at Irvine and so I encourage you to listen to that. Thank you so much for taking the time to listen to us this morning, this is Ability Radio, You and Your Life. Have a good day.

- Thank you for having me.

- You're welcome.