

PRESS RELEASE

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Cabinet Office Team Learns about The 250th Anniversary of The Self- Manumission of The Long Look Free People

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The Cabinet Office Team received an engaging and informative presentation on May 4 from Ms. Bernadine Louis, Chair of the Executive Committee for the 250th Anniversary of the Self-Manumission of the Long Look Free People and Co-Chair of the Long Look/East End Heritage Committee. She highlighted the historical significance of the Self-Manumission of the Long Look Free People as part of the Committee's ongoing public awareness outreach.

Ms. Louis' presentation formed part of the Office's monthly team meetings and offered a compelling account of the courage, resilience, and determination demonstrated by the Long Look Free People, underscoring their lasting impact on the history and cultural identity of the Virgin Islands.

She noted that the Government of the Virgin Islands has declared Tuesday, June 30, 2026, a one-off public holiday to commemorate the 250th Anniversary of Freedom at Nottingham Estate, Long Look, marking the 1776 manumission of 25 enslaved persons by Quaker Samuel Nottingham, who bequeathed 50 acres of land in Tortola to them. Ms. Louis also provided valuable insight into the social and historical context of the period, bringing greater awareness for the Cabinet Office team to this pivotal moment in the Territory's past.

Cabinet Secretary Ms. Sandra Ward welcomed the opportunity to have Ms. Louis as this month's guest speaker, particularly in support of such a significant initiative. She noted that, as the Territory actively commemorates this important anniversary, it is essential to continue advancing awareness and facilitating meaningful conversations about its history. Ms. Ward added that presentations of this nature not only educate but also inspire a deeper appreciation for the resilience and contributions of the people of this Territory. "The Cabinet Office remains committed to fostering accountability, excellence, and historical and cultural awareness within our team," she affirmed.

Ms. Louis also shared that, as part of the commemoration of this milestone anniversary, a series of activities has been planned to honour the legacy of the Long Look Free People. These include an opening ceremony and parade reflecting the spirit and contributions of the Long Look community, panel discussions at the H. Lavity Stoutt Community College, and a culminating concert at Greenland Field.

Team members expressed appreciation for the depth of research and clarity of the presentation, reinforcing the importance of preserving and sharing such stories with the people of the Territory. The Cabinet Office Team also committed to encouraging participation in the upcoming events as the Territory reflects on this important historical achievement and celebrates the enduring legacy of self-determination and freedom.

Monday's presentation forms part of the Cabinet Office's ongoing commitment to continuous learning and to advancing the team's understanding and appreciation of this significant milestone in Virgin Islands history.

Photo Caption: The Cabinet Secretary Ms. Sandra Ward (third-left) and Team with Chair of the Executive Committee for the 250th Anniversary of the Self-Manumission of the Long Look Free People celebration and Co-Chair of the Long Look/East End Heritage Committee, Ms. Bernadine Louis (second left).

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