



CANEEL BAY

VIRGIN ISLANDS NATIONAL PARK
P.O. BOX 120 • CRUZ BAY
ST. JOHN • U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS 00830

2/4/83.

Dear Eliot:-

We just received your lovely photo taken at Stillborough, N.H. in 1957 which appeared in "A Kingdom of Flowers". It was sent to us here by Pat Cordray who has been here and with whom and her husband we had spent a day cruising among the Virgin Islands. It arrived just in time as we have completed our annual visit and expect to return to Princeton tomorrow. We had not previously seen the M. H. of Art Calendar and did not know of your gift or its dedication. I am most appreciative. Heartly thanks for your kind thought of giving it in my honor.

(2)

This is our 23rd visit to Caneel Bay Plantation. You would be interested to see the wealth of flowering plants and shrubs. In 1950, Laurance and his brother David were cruising on their Schooner, "Wayfarer". At that time the population of St. John was about 200, consisting of 2 villages, Cruz Bay at the West end, across Pillsbury Sound from St. Thomas and Coral Bay at the East End. About half a dozen Negroes had established homes on several of the 21 beaches but most of the population were descendants of the Slaves which had been freed by Denmark in 1848. The former Cotton and Sugar Plantations had been abandoned after the Slaves were liberated.

Laurance visualized a National Park and quietly purchased 70% of the volcanic overgrown jungle. In 1956, the National Park was established and Caneel Bay was created on 7 of the Beaches with appropriate cottages and 3 Restaurants to house visitors. Henry Fofalla has been in charge of the Campuses of Yale U. Horticulture. When he became involved with T.B. his wife brought him down



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to St. Thomas. He recovered and was recommended to L.S.R. He established a remarkable Nursery and was charged with landscaping the C.B. Plantation. He assembled a unique collection of Tropical Plants from all around the World, - Inaia, Mascabigos, etc. etc. It is a delightful climate all year round.

There are comfortable accommodations for 176 couples. During the Xmas - New Year and Spring vacations, parents bring families, cats can be added and 500 or more come regularly.

In June 1981, Sally & I brought 24 of our combined families here for 2 weeks. There are 7 good tennis courts. The swimming and snorkeling are great. And, there are 1100 sail boats registered in the U.S. & British Virgin Islands. It is fun to cruise around to see the Redbellied Tropic Birds, Frigate Birds, Scores of Brown Boobies and Pelicans. Around the grounds here there are many humming birds, Banana quits, Gass quits, Kingbirds

(4) and pearly-eyed Thrashers.

There are now many excellent trails through the V. I. N. Park and there is a ridge with 3 peaks over 1200' in height. The Park is about 6,000 acres and 15% of the Island is reserved for the 2 Villages and the Island Population is over 3,000. Apts and Condos are available for many retired couples who have come here to settle. Bill & Charlotte Stark had moved here and built a cottage before the Park was established. He was the Engineer for the Plantation and Charlotte wrote books and articles and for years reviewed books for the N.Y. Times. They used to send her packages of 10 or a dozen books to review.

Hust Sign off as we have to pack as we depart early in the morning.

Warmest regards in which Sally joins me to you and ~~William~~ Alvin

Sincerely,

Dave Telpin