

June 30, 2026

The Thurland family is appreciative of the recognition that will be given to Peter G. Thurland, Sr. with the designation of the Christiansted Bandstand on St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands as the Peter G. Thurland, Sr., Bandstand and we are in full support of the H.R. 8121 legislation.

Peter G. Thurland, Sr., who served in World War I in the U.S. Navy Band, was a patriotic and civic-minded individual. He proudly displayed the American and Virgin Islands flags on his home for Flag Day and other important holidays.

At the transfer of the Danish islands to the United States on March 31, 1917, Peter G. Thurland, Sr., played with the Christiansted Industrial Brass Band on the Wharf where the bandstand was later built by himself and the other musicians while in the U.S. Navy. He served in the United States Navy Band from 1917 – 1921, and obtained the rank of First-Class Musician.

Peter G. Thurland, Sr., in 1938, organized the St. Croix Community Band and directed that band until 1967. The Community Band provided free concerts in the Christiansted Bandstand and throughout the island where the band performed military marches, polkas, jazz, and popular tunes. Mr. Thurland directed the Band in military parades, such as Veteran's Day and Memorial Day, and for community and church events.

Music was not his only contribution to the island, as a master cabinetmaker he mentored apprentices, worked as a vocational teacher at the Christiansted High School and at the Anna's Hope Vocational School where, in addition, he taught music to students from St. Croix and St. Thomas and later advocated for vocational training for all students..

In 1942, Peter G. Thurland Sr., became a charter member of the Alexander Hamilton Post No. 85, the first American Legion Post in the U.S. Virgin Islands. His sons and grandson have held leadership positions in the Post No. 85. Four generations later, descendants of Peter G. Thurland, Sr., have served and are still serving in the U. S. military.

Sincerely,

Karen C. Turland, Ph.D.
Historian, educator and author