

*A Memorial Celebration
Of the Life of
Edward Leon Towle, Jr., Ph.D.*

*Atrium
H. Lavity Stoutt Community College
Tortola, British Virgin Islands
Saturday, December 2, 2006 at 10:30 a.m.*

Order of Service

The Invocation	Reverend Lester Bowers
Introductory Remarks	Dr. Michael E. O'Neal, President H. Lavity Stoutt Community College
Remarks	Dr. D. Orlando Smith The Honorable Chief Minister of the British Virgin Islands
Tribute and Introduction of Speakers	Bruce G. Potter, President Island Resources Foundation
Tribute	Lloyd S. Gardner
Tribute	Ivor Jackson
Tribute	William S. Moody
Tribute	Dr. LaVerne E. Ragster
Tribute	Dr. Caroline S. Rogers
Tribute	Sir Probyn Inniss
The Benediction	Reverend Lester Bowers

TRIBUTE TO DR. EDWARD TOWLE

By Dr. Michael E. O'Neal

President

H. Lavity Stoutt Community College, British Virgin Islands

Friends and family of our departed friend, Dr. Edward Towle, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, good morning.

We are convened today to celebrate the life of Dr. Edward Towle, a man of many parts: husband of Judith Towle, renowned conservationist, mentor, friend, scholar.

One of the early publications of particular note that was produced by Dr. Towle was *The Island Microcosm*, which has been regarded as the bible of sustainable development for small islands' ecosystems. Ed was a pioneer in this regard—he was a visionary, but I would suggest to you, in the words of the philosopher Erwin Schrodinger, that “the task is not so much to see what no one has yet seen, but to think what nobody has yet thought, about that which everybody sees.” That characterized Ed Towle. That spoke to the manner in which he lived and the manner in which he went about all of his work.

Let me speak a bit if I may about the relationship of Ed Towle with the British Virgin Islands and more particularly with H. Lavity Stoutt Community College. Island Resources Foundation's (IRF) relationship with the British Virgin Islands goes back to the earliest years of the organization when, in the 1970s, the Foundation prepared for the British Virgin Islands' Government a number of planning documents that, for the first time, looked at economic development options within the context of sustainable use of natural resources. From its headquarters—then in St. Thomas, USVI—in the decades that followed, the Foundation served as an advisor and source of environmental counsel to various agencies of the British Virgin Islands Government in the areas of environmental impact assessment, marine archaeology, land use planning and GIS applications.

During the 1990s the Foundation developed a closer working relationship with the BVI National Parks Trust, in particular, providing technical assistance and occasional small grant support.

Beginning in 1997, H. Lavity Stoutt Community College and Island Resources Foundation began to seek to define a collaborative relationship between these two institutions. In the first instance, this related to a then-proposed relocation of the Foundation's base of operations from the U.S. Virgin Islands to the British Virgin Islands. Secondly, it related, and perhaps more particularly, to the transfer of the Foundation's unique environmental library and insular resource systems database from the U.S. Virgin Islands to the British Virgin Islands, more particularly under the custody of this institution.

The Foundation's environmental library was subsequently legally transferred to the College's proprietorship in 1999, and with the assistance of the College, the library was physically moved from St. Thomas to Tortola. It remains housed at the College's annex in Road Town where it was established as the Insular Systems Environmental Information Centre. Initially, it was housed on the first floor of the building which is now occupied by the College's popular bakery, but with the advent of that institution it was relocated to the second floor of the same building. It remains under the continuing and long-standing interim management of the Foundation, pending eventual relocation to the College's new Paraquita Bay Learning Resource

Centre and we expect its integration into the library of the College, with some aspects of it probably being housed in the Centre for Applied Marine Studies.

There are several areas that Ed Towle and Island Resources have been involved in in the British Virgin Islands over the years in addition to those just mentioned. Let me just enumerate a few of them:

- IRF prepared a hazard and risk assessment for Pockwood Pond for the Town and Country Planning Department.
- They have worked with the National Parks Trust in drafting new legislation that both updates and revises the original trust establishment act which dates back to the 1960s, through a project funded by the U.K. Foreign and Commonwealth Office.
- IRF has continued a facilitating role on behalf of the estate of the late Mr. Laurance Rockefeller with respect to Sandy Cay and through which the Foundation has been asked to work with the appropriate BVI institutions, in particular the College and the BVI National Parks Trust, to prepare and test a management framework for the island that ensures its long-term protection when the estate divests itself of responsibility for and ownership of the island.
- And finally, just to note one additional aspect of IRF's involvement in the Territory, it has provided technical support to the Association for Reef Keepers (ARK), a long-standing NGO in the BVI, and to Island Erosion, a more recently established group that seeks to minimize erosion and damage to the marine environment resulting from construction activities.

Let me now, if I may, speak to some rather more personal recollections and remembrances of Ed Towle. I first met Dr. Edward Towle in 1968 when he was the Director of the Caribbean Research Institute at the University of the Virgin Islands. I, at the time, was in my senior year, in fact my last semester as an undergraduate student in Puerto Rico, and I was involved in a project which had to do with the then-recent revolution which had occurred in Anguilla and I was doing some research in St. Thomas in that regard and had occasion to go to the University and thereby had the honor of meeting Dr. Edward Towle. Dr. Towle offered me some advice as a soon-to-be-graduated student. I had shared with him that my plans were to pursue postgraduate study in sociology, to which he said, "Please don't do that. Sociologists are bean-counters with pretensions to empiricism. I suggest instead that you study anthropology."

But I disregarded, at least initially, Dr. Towle's advice and proceeded to register as a graduate student at the New School for Social Research of New York in sociology. However, when I got there—bear in mind the tenor of the times, the tumultuous 1960s—I encountered a sociology department at the New School which was in absolute disarray and turmoil. So I was directed to the anthropology department. And thus began my career as an anthropologist, and Ed has his way finally, as fate would have it.

Simultaneously, more or less—that being in the late 60s early 70s—I became aware of a common interest and involvement of both Ed and my late father, J.R. O'Neal, as founding members of the Caribbean Conservation Association. Ed, of course, subsequently became the first president of the organization. Both Ed Towle and my late father were eventually honoured by election to the Global 500 Honour Roll of the U.N. Environmental Protection Agency. That was a relationship which I observed over the years as one of mutual admiration and deep respect.

Over the years, what evolved with regard to my relationship with Ed Towle was one of mentorship, but more especially a friendship which deepened as the years progressed. And it

is one that I am happy to have shared not only with a dear, departed friend, but also with his wife, Judith Towle.

In 2003, Dr. Towle was appointed to the Board of Governors of this institution. And he served with an amazing commitment because his appointment coincided, more or less, with the declension of his health. He went to extreme lengths to ensure that he would attend board meetings, both in terms of his travel and perhaps somewhat less problematically, within the buildings here on campus. We surely and sorely miss his presence.

In February 2003—actually I suspect that that was probably before his appointment to the Board of Governors—I had the honour and privilege of organizing a reception hosted by the College to honour Dr. Towle for his dedication and contributions to the Virgin Islands and, indeed, to the region. Let me, if I may, advert to a few quotes that arose from that particular event. He mentioned on that occasion: “The longest time I’ve been away from the Caribbean is the last six months, and it was awful. This has nothing to do with the weather; it has to do with the people. My friends and my feelings are here.” He also said on that occasion: “This is the first time that something like this has happened for me. I’m very, very happy,” and, in his usual style, he quickly dismissed all the fuss and said, “Now I can get back to work.”

Ed was a jewel of a man and in his concluding comment on the occasion of that reception in his honour he said of the British Virgin Islands: “This is a jewel. Take care of it.” I am sure he could say the same for the rest of the region to which he was dedicated and so loved. It is incumbent on all of us to cherish and polish the jewels which he so loved.

TRIBUTE TO DR. EDWARD TOWLE

**By Honourable D. Orlando Smith, OBE
Chief Minister of the British Virgin Islands**

Ladies and Gentlemen: We gather today in a moment of sadness to mourn the loss of a true friend.

Our Lord and Savior tells us that "blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted."

We take comfort being together as a community — and seeing in each other the many lives that this good man touched and made better.

And we take comfort in our remembrance of the life he led, the contributions he made and the last legacy that he has left. Dr. Edward Towle was a true and devoted friend of our community for over thirty years. Before it was fashionable or popular, he was a champion of the environment — a man who recognized that protecting and preserving our natural blessings is one of the great social and moral imperatives of our times.

From his modest offices at Red Hook in St. Thomas, he and his wife Judith lived as part of the greater community of the Virgin Islands.

In their own lives they exemplified the true bond that exists between all these magnificent islands. They understood better than most that the people of the Greater Virgin Islands are one people — one family — and they were a part of that family.

In his tireless work on behalf of the environment, Dr. Towle's life reminded us of the words of the scripture: "The Earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof."

He understood to the depths of his soul the deep responsibility we all share to tread lightly on the bountiful world we have been given — and to improve it for future generations.

In that spirit, he provided very good leadership in the development of our system of National Parks and Protected Areas.

As one of the world's leading marine biologists, Dr. Towle's good reputation inspired some of the most prominent institutions in the world to come work in our Territory and contribute resources and knowledge to the goal of preserving our environment.

It was with deep pride that we all celebrated when Dr. Towle was honoured by the United Nations Environment Programme as one of their "Global 500" leaders in environmental protection.

As Dr. Towle advanced in age, he turned his focus towards the legacy he would leave to those who would follow.

Among other projects he donated a complete library worth of materials and resources that now constitute the "Island Systems Environmental Information Centre", which will be transferred to the stewardship of the H. Lavity Stoutt Community College. This impressive and inspiring act of generosity will ensure that Dr. Towle's importance and influence will live on.

Every young student who passes through the information centre and learns more about our beloved islands' fragile eco-system; and every young person inspired to take action to protect our endangered planet; and every academic who is able to push forward on a vital project — all will have cause to give thanks to this fine man and to be inspired by all he accomplished.

Ladies and Gentlemen: God called home one of our dearest friends.

We take comfort knowing that he is at our Lord's side now and forever.

And in his passing we pledge to pick up and carry forward the torch he held that guided so many while he was among us.

Our thoughts and our prayers are today with his wife Judith Ann, his daughters Amy, Sarah and Jazz, and his sons Peter and Geoffrey, and six grandchildren. Mrs. Towle is kindly requesting that, in lieu of flowers, friends consider a donation to the Island Resources Foundation.

Ladies and Gentlemen: When we leave this place today, it will be with heavy hearts.

Let us take from this place fresh resolve to continue the work he began.

There is yet so much to do to preserve our environment. Dr. Towle showed us the path — let us travel it together with the same dignity and resolve that he always showed.

And in so doing, let us feel assured that we can yet preserve the natural blessing of the Virgin Islands and protect them for generations to come.

There could be no more fitting way to celebrate this good man's life.

TRIBUTE TO DR. EDWARD TOWLE

**By Bruce G. Potter
President
Island Resources Foundation**

Good morning. My name is Bruce Potter, and I have been President of Island Resources Foundation since 1998, when Dr. Ed Towle, my friend and mentor, retired and became the Chairman of the Foundation's Board of Trustees.

Welcome to all to this "Memorial Celebration of the Life of Edward Leon Towle." To a considerable degree, *your* presence and *your* contributions to this Memorial are the greatest tributes to Ed Towle to be offered here today. After a few brief comments, my role is to facilitate the presentations of the announced friends who were asked by Mrs. Towle to provide tributes to her husband today. Beyond those offerings, I want to encourage any or all of you to offer your own personal recollections, as you feel so inspired.

My wife Kinsey and I first met Ed Towle in July or August of 1973, shortly after our arrival by sailboat in St. Thomas, when we were introduced by our mutual friend, Henry U. Wheatley, who had recently become a Trustee of a new St. Thomas-based non-profit organization called Island Resources Foundation (a position he still holds). Henry took us out to the new offices of the Foundation at Johnny Harms Marina, where we were introduced to Ed Towle. It was the beginning of a long and enjoyable association.

One of the sidelights I would like to offer about Ed Towle and the many contributions he made to conservation and sustainable development for small islands is to recognize that over the years Ed produced three major intellectual works that have regional and global significance for the study of small island systems.

In 1974, working with the Canadian John McEachern (whose moving tribute from Alberta about the early days of the Foundation is notable in your Memorial booklet), Ed wrote *Ecological Guidelines for Island Development*, published by IUCN, now called the World Conservation Union. This book, which may have been one of the first to have used the word ecology in its title, was a major contribution to the emerging field of "island systems," a part of the growing academic awareness of the unique features of island environments.

A decade later, as also mentioned by Judith in the Memorial booklet, Dr. Towle wrote *The Island Microcosm*, in which he made the case about the fundamental error of trying to apply *inappropriate continental models* of development and environmental change to the social and bio-chemical realities of small island systems. It is worth noting that this intellectual and theoretical argument was developed as Ed and Judith were concluding the Foundation's masterwork compendium of eight *Country Environmental Profiles* for the small islands of the Eastern Caribbean: Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Having assimilated a vast amount of information about the environments of these small islands (and I don't think Ed Towle ever forgot a fact in his life), *The Island Microcosm* represents the considered conclusions of one of the intellectual giants (as well as fiercest advocate) of island studies in the Caribbean.

Then again, in the mid-1990s Ed wrote *Guidelines for Integrated Planning and Management of Coastal and Marine Areas in the Wider Caribbean*, for the United Nations Environment Programme's Caribbean Environment Programme in Kingston, Jamaica. Ed designed this

manual specifically to adapt the best of the new thinking about integrated (continental) planning processes to the special scale and community dynamics that he had come to understand so well for small islands.

In a small bit of irony, we had recently decided to use the Foundation's web site to make these documents more accessible to modern audiences. I had converted *Ecological Guidelines for Island Development* to digital form, and Ed and I were working on a new introduction in which he would reflect on some of the changes in thinking about island systems studies since the 1970s. My own impression after working closely with the text of *Ecological Guidelines* is that it is a very contemporary work, with many important lessons for today. This book will be available on our web site soon.

Since its original publication in 1996, the *Guidelines for Integrated Planning and Management of Coastal and Marine Areas in the Wider Caribbean* has been continuously available for free download in English or Spanish translation from the UNEP/CEP web site at <http://cep.unep.org/information-services/cep-technical-reports/cep-technical-reports-listing/>.

Finally, as a continuing tribute to Ed Towle, the Foundation intends to pursue the conversion and mounting on its web site of the other major works by Ed, including *The Island Microcosm* and eight of the *Country Environmental Profiles* and the regional overview. In the meantime, these can be consulted as hard copy reprints from the Foundation, or at associated reference centers, such as the "Island Systems Environmental Information Centre" here at H. Lavity Stoutt Community College, the smaller collection we are transferring to the St. Croix Environmental Information Repository Project at the University of the Virgin Islands campus in St. Croix, or the Foundation's office in Washington, DC.

We invite your assistance and your active use of these reference resources as the intellectual backbone of development and environmental conservation which Ed Towle had always intended.

TRIBUTE TO DR. EDWARD TOWLE

**By Lloyd Gardner
Environmental Planner
Jamaica and St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands**

I am here this morning, not to share my memories of Ed, but rather to celebrate his life. I say his life because in most cultures, including ours, there is a belief that a person's soul does not die with the flesh, but merely moves to another form or plane of existence.

Today I celebrate Ed's life because his works continue to make a significant contribution to the way most Caribbean peoples perceive and treat their environment and their civic organizations. Ed is one of the few persons that can be credited with starting, not one, but several regional institutions, each of which continues to play a vital role in Caribbean development, and one of which is more than four decades old.

I celebrate his life because his works have been so far ahead of their time that they remain relevant despite the significant changes experienced in the Caribbean during the past two decades. I should know, because I use his work in my own work all the time.

I celebrate his life because he is alive within me. In his humorous chidings to me for being late on an assignment. In the way he guided me, indeed many of us present here today, to try to see beyond the confines of an immediate problem or endeavor. In his consistent urging to be curious, creative, and to thirst for knowledge.

Ed has influenced an entire cadre of Caribbean environmental professionals and leaders. When I travel in the Caribbean, I occasionally meet people who remember Ed fondly, whether for his insistently high standards or a personal fond moment.

All of you are here because he somehow shaped your institution, or because of those moments he shared with you. So I want you to celebrate his life because Ed will always be alive in all of us.

TRIBUTE TO DR. EDWARD TOWLE

By Ivor Jackson
Environmental Planner, Antigua

I first met Ed and his wife Judith in the late 1970s after I was employed to work as Town and Country Planner in the British Virgin Islands. From the very start, he made me feel as though we had known each other for a long time. His excitement about his work, love for islands and eagerness to help were all very apparent then and still were when we last talked a few months ago.

My professional association with Ed started in 1977. After being interviewed by Elton Georges for the position of BVI Town and Country Planner and got the job, I turned to Ed. Or rather Ed heard that I was in town and got in touch. I welcomed this because Elton had told me that the BVI needed a planner with a keen interest in the environment. As a young professional then, who best to turn to than Ed, whom I grew to admire and to consider the father of regional environmental consciousness. I cannot think of anyone who contributed more to the region in this respect.

It did not matter what you called him for, when you called or how long you wanted to talk, Ed was there ready with his wealth of knowledge, sharp intellect, good sense of humor and dedication to islands. Before the Internet, Ed was for me the best possible resource on environmental knowledge, scientific studies and other reference material.

He offered insight and guidance when we embarked on a project to develop a Parks System Plan for the BVI after I had left the position of planner and was working with the Eastern Caribbean Natural Area Management Programme (ECNAMP), the forerunner of CANARI. The contribution of this project to the development of the Park System in the BVI should therefore be considered part of Ed's legacy.

I use myself as an example of his generosity and kindness but hundreds benefited in the same way. He assisted students, professionals, NGO's, private sector organizations, governments, regional and international organizations in the service of islands and always with the same enthusiasm and spirit that had no boundaries.

When in 1990/1991 IRF teamed with the Caribbean Conservation Association in the publishing of *Country Environmental Profiles* for several Eastern Caribbean islands, professionals, researchers, students and governments had access to what at that time were perhaps the most comprehensive documents on the general state of environments in those islands. Ed was a walking resource on the "who is who" among scientific, technical and professional persons within or available to the region.

He is gone, but his spirit lives to shine above clouds of hope and to cast away those of despair. It soars in love for people, animals, plants, natural systems and manmade spaces. And as he would often remind us in a favorite quote of his: "In all things respect the genius of the place".

For all whose lives he touched, let the genius of his spirit guide us in our husbandry of natural and built environments.

TRIBUTE TO DR. EDWARD TOWLE

By William S. Moody
Rockefeller Brothers Fund

I am indeed fortunate to have known Ed Towle for more than 30 years and to have worked closely with him and Judith in recent years in the British Virgin Islands.

Ed was curious about the whole world and traveled far and wide with Judith. Yet, the islands of the Caribbean, with special attention to small islands, and the challenges and opportunities facing the people living on them were his passion throughout his long professional career. Ed was the best example I know of a person who understood sustainable development in an island context and the ways to work towards achieving its objectives. Much of his adult life was devoted to analyzing and communicating key issues relating to the well being of marine and terrestrial life of islands. Countless individuals and groups learned from Ed's writings and field projects, thus empowering them to work more effectively for better protection and wise use of natural and cultural resources in the Caribbean.

In so much of his work, Ed was certainly fortunate to have Judith as his partner. Keen analyst and clear writer that she is, Judith brought fresh insights and valuable explanations in communicating Ed's path-breaking ideas. Moreover, Judith's leadership and management talents were of critical importance in the life of the Island Resources Foundation. Most of all, Judith's and Ed's deep love for each other sustained them through difficult times, as Ed's medical challenges became more and more complex.

Laurance S. Rockefeller and his principal associates, Wes Frye and Ellen Pomeroy, gave me an extraordinary opportunity, as their liaison, to work closely with Ed in very recent years. This effort focused on the keen interest of LSR, as we referred to him, in arranging for his last land holding in the British Virgin Islands to become a managed wilderness for all time. This is Sandy Cay, a 14 acre uninhabited island near Jost Van Dyke. While Ed turned to Laurance Rockefeller at the beginning of his career for encouragement and support—as in 1969 for the first assessment of the conservation needs and priorities in 13 Caribbean countries and in 1972 to launch the Island Resources Foundation—LSR, near the end of his life, turned to Ed for his cumulative experience and wisdom in the planning for and eventual disposition of Sandy Cay.

My involvement in the Sandy Cay project allowed me to appreciate Ed in so many ways I had not expected. Here was a man struggling with the ravages of diabetes, yet he was eager to do his part to move the project along, including my pushing him in his wheel chair to meetings in Government House across from Maria's by the Sea in Road Town. The combination of Ed's inquiring mind and incredible memory helped to guide the implementation of this project until shortly before his death.

His creativity never waned during this time, as one illustration reveals: I remember Ed pondering the concept of Nature's Little Secrets, the logo and motto of the BVI and the need to have "keepers" of these secrets. He was wondering how BVI islanders might be encouraged to increase their own involvement in protecting the natural and cultural assets of the territory. He was imagining ways in which people in all walks of life could be very proud "keepers" of the incredible treasures of the BVI.

Ed will long be remembered. He was a man of vision and determination. He understood science, economics, politics, history, human nature and so much more. He cared deeply about people and all other living things. While he was not shy about giving his point of view, he was a very good listener. His incredible appetite for reading and learning not only contributed to his knowledge but also to his wit. He never seemed to stop working, but he always had time for his friends and colleagues. He was certainly ahead of his times, as the *Ecological Guidelines for Island Development*, written in 1974 with John McEachern, and his other writings confirm. Time and again, I have heard that Ed was an inspiration for a generation of environmentalists. He was a natural teacher and a cherished mentor. Ed was a deeply caring and courageous man. I will certainly miss my dear friend and colleague, Ed Towle.

TRIBUTE TO DR. EDWARD TOWLE

By Dr. LaVerne E. Ragster

President

University of the Virgin Islands, St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands

Good morning to all present — Honorable Chief Minister of the British Virgin Islands, Dr. Orlando Smith, President of the H. Lavity Stouff Community College, Dr. Michael O'Neal, Mrs. Judith Towle and members of the Towle family, members of the Island Resources Foundation Board, friends and fans of Ed Towle, ladies and gentlemen.

Let me first declare that this is a celebration of a great man's life, and I am privileged to be here to offer three tributes to Dr. Edward Towle.

First, as President of the University of the Virgin Islands, I bring a statement of condolences to Judith Towle for the loss of her husband, Dr. Edward Towle, on behalf of the Board of Trustees and the UVI community. My statement also includes a message of gratitude from the University's Board for Dr. Towle's contributions to the development of the then College of the Virgin Islands when he served as Director of the Caribbean Research Institute from 1967 to 1972. The evolution from college to university, from the Caribbean Research Center to the Eastern Caribbean Center and the goals of UVI today in 2006 have elements of the vision that Ed Towle had for the institution in the 1970's. We are proud and grateful to include Dr. Edward Towle in the legacy of the University of the Virgin Islands.

I also bring condolences for Judith and expressions of gratitude for Dr. Towle's contributions to UVI and their tenure at CVI/UVI from Dr. Frank Mills, the Director of the Eastern Caribbean Center, and former president of the University, Dr. Orville Kean.

My second responsibility today is to forward the tribute offered to Dr. Towle by the U. S. Coral Reef Task Force at its meeting in St. Thomas, USVI in October of this year. The U.S. Coral Reef Task force recognized Dr. Towle "for his work conserving and restoring the environment of small islands, particularly in the Caribbean". I am pleased to have this opportunity to publicly present the award plaque to his widow Judith Towle today. In October, the award was presented before a full house at a plenary session, naming him "Coral and Island Ecosystem Champion".

The third tribute I will present today is a personal one. It is an honor to be offered the opportunity to pay tribute publicly to the life of Ed Towle. Judith, I truly appreciate that you have included me in this celebration of the amazing person that you have known as a husband and partner. By the way Judith, I hope you know that I am also grateful to you for all the interventions and calming of Ed that you did on my behalf when things went wrong or I made life hard for you both. In my mind, one of Ed's successes in life was his loving, dynamic partnership with you.

My story about Ed Towle begins around 1968-69, the year I graduated from the Charlotte Amalie High School with intentions of becoming a "great marine biologist". Ed hired me to work as a summer research intern as a part of one of his initiatives at the Caribbean Research Institute (CRI) at the then College of the Virgin Islands. In those days the CRI office was in the old World War II hanger that served as the gymnasium and CRI office space for the College. Today, the same building is the Sports and Fitness Center with a very different look. Because Ed never, ever wasted an opportunity to help someone achieve their potential,

especially if they asked for help, he put me to work on a project that would help build my skills as a marine scientist. He empowered me to fully participate in a project to collect and analyze water samples that would monitor the impact of dredging in Brewer's Bay, St. Thomas. He was usually calm when he heard my stories about the Zodiac inflatable slowly leaking while we were collecting samples and watching sharks pass in the water. I had a ball learning about the joy of hands-on experience, the value of data and information in decision-making, and the importance of working to meet a standard. These bits of knowledge about science, teaching and learning, project management, and people have been useful and used by me over the last 37 years. Thanks Ed.

Many today and elsewhere have noted that Ed Towle's great legacy as a proponent for conservation and restoration of small islands included internationally recognized scholarly works on the policy and science needed to make appropriate decisions about development and wisely use our natural resources. I certainly concur with these conclusions and statements, but to me this is an incomplete assessment of the impact of the life of a complex human man who grew on personal and professional levels over his lifetime. Another piece of the portrait of Ed would be to see the significant impact he had on the development of the mind-set or philosophical approach of persons he trained or worked with over the years. Ed's indomitable spirit and enthusiasm for good science and the use of appropriate information were formidable weapons in his arsenal to convince others to see issues from more than one perspective and to grow as professionals.

I truly appreciated being a part of the historic USAID-CCA-IRF Country Environmental Profiles Project for the Eastern Caribbean that began in the late 1980's and were published in 1990-91. These profiles are still used today as the basis for policy updating and development exercises by governments and the private sector. The rigor and consistency evident in the work were a part of the signature of Ed's life work. I remember fondly Ed barely controlling his frustration and exasperation with academics who could not seem to understand the importance of focus (on the problem), connectivity of issues and the need to meet deadlines. Ed was very gentle with me in this learning phase (maybe Judith helped him again) and did not become overly excited about a long report from my field trips that included quantification of how many roaches I killed in my room.

Ed Towle came to love and accept the people of this part of the world and his humanist core spread to the way he approached working to improve conservation on small islands over the years — for that feat of human development he will always have my respect.

Please allow me to quickly share four lessons I learned, through my professional and personal relationship with Ed who supported all my major career decisions.

1. Find out what is important to achieve and stay focused despite the challenges.
2. Share your passion and information, and let others see your vision as you seek partners and supporters.
3. Enjoy the challenges that come with change, learn from anything and everything, including mistakes and pay attention to the connection between human and environmental systems.
4. Learn to laugh at yourself and life.

Ed Towle left much more than footsteps in the sand during his time on this earth. His contributions to the development of small islands will be felt for years to come through the lives he touched (like mine) and his scholarly works.

I am happy he took his time on earth seriously — we are better off because he lived and shared himself with us. I now have to learn to live without a mentor and friend. Judith, Roy Watlington and I once debated for some time what would be a good definition of a Virgin Islander. We settled on a person who wanted to be buried/interred here. I somehow knew Ed would fit the definition.

Thank you again for allowing this moment of celebration and closure to happen.

TRIBUTE TO DR. EDWARD TOWLE

By Dr. Caroline S. Rogers

Virgin Islands National Park, St. John, U.S. Virgin Islands

I met Ed over 20 years ago. He helped me get started with my new job with the National Park Service in St. John. During my very first week on the job, he spent several hours with me helping to get me oriented, and I came away with a wonderful impression of him. He was generous with his time, and I distinctly remember being surprised at how he spoke to me as an equal — when I had no clue what I was doing.

Ed was my mentor, my colleague, and my friend. I hope he knew how much he meant to so many of us and what an inspiration he was. His intelligence could have been intimidating, but he was patient as he waited for the rest of us to catch up. He was modest about his many accomplishments. I do not know of anyone who worked more selflessly and with more dedication for conservation in the Caribbean and elsewhere.

I once had the hair-raising experience of driving with Ed from Red Hook to the University of the Virgin Islands. Ed was a terrible driver!

I just don't think that staying on his side of the road, or even on the paved part of the road for that matter, was intellectually stimulating enough to hold his interest. Ed would be talking about how the British Virgin Islands and the U.S. Virgin Islands should get together to address common natural resource issues along their shared boundary . . . while I would be hanging on and asking things like, "Ed, do you see that cow over there? Ed, Ed!!"

He had a wonderful sense of humor and knew how to wear lots of different kinds of hats. I do not mean this in the trite bureaucratic sense — I mean he really looked great in bombers' hats, boat captain's hats, even a mask and snorkel (I am probably one of the few people who ever went snorkeling with Ed!). He knew how to have fun and was even mischievous at times. He showed incredible dignity and courage. He was fundamentally kind. He was dearly loved and cared for and was blessed to have Judith by his side. He had a very full life. He never gave up, and he would not want us to either.

TRIBUTE TO DR. EDWARD TOWLE

**By Sir Probyn Inniss
President
Brimstone Hill Fortress National Park Society, St. Kitts**

My first contact with Dr. Edward Towle was at a workshop on “The Uses of Historical Resources in Eastern Caribbean Island Development” held at the Brimstone Hill Fortress, St. Kitts in October 1983. This workshop, which may have been the first of its kind in the Eastern Caribbean, was held by the Island Resources Foundation (IRF), an organization founded in 1972 by Dr. Towle and his wife, Judith. The primary focus of the IRF was (and is) the protection of the environmental resources of tropical small islands and the proper planning and sustainable development of those resources for the benefits of the inhabitants and their successors.

That the Brimstone Hill workshop — which brought together sixty participants including archaeologists, government planners and technocrats, cultural activists, students, environmentalists, skilled workers, among others — was about the promotion of *cultural* resources as tools for development, is largely attributable to the eclectic vision of this remarkable man who long recognized that, in the Caribbean as it must be among small island states elsewhere, environment and culture are intricately interwoven and the protection and development of vulnerable resources depend upon the active involvement of all sectors of island communities.

The association of Dr. Towle with the Brimstone Hill Fortress National Park Society (of which I am now the President) goes back earlier than the 1983 workshop. In 1971, the Society for the Restoration of Brimstone Hill (as it was then known as) was just six years old and, having leased the Hill and its Fortress from Government, was earnestly searching for funding to enable it to undertake the stabilization, restoration and maintenance of this extraordinary historical and cultural monument. In that year, the Caribbean Conservation Association (CCA), under its dynamic President, none other than Dr. Edward L. Towle, came forward with a presentation of US\$4,000.00 for the restoration of the Main Guardhouse of the Prince of Wales Bastion.

The then President of the Society, the late D. Lloyd Matheson, CBE, would later express his conviction that this seemingly small grant was very important in enhancing the profile of the Society and of the heritage site which it managed, thus paving the way for more substantial funding from other sources which resulted in the complete restoration of the bastion and other structures of the Fortress.

My reminiscences may seem to focus on Brimstone Hill, but I suggest that they also exemplify the vast contributions which Dr. Edward Towle has made to the Caribbean. He was not, of course, alone: there were the organizations which he helped found and which he led; the many colleagues and associates as well as influential friends and supporters in the right places; and his wife Judith, who shared his commitment and actively participated in realizing their many projects, while imparting stability and warmth to the creative and sometimes restless genius of her husband.

But I think I can say with some justification that Dr. Edward Towle was possessed of a vision, a fertile energy and an abiding commitment to not only the conservation but to the planned development of the Caribbean and its people — a vision, energy and commitment that pulled

people in then sent them marching out in pursuance of this noble but challenging mission. The Caribbean has lost a true friend; but he has left us a great legacy.



Mr. Mahamad Hanif (right), Executive Director of the Caribbean Conservation Association, presenting a cheque for US\$2,000 (the initial installment of a \$4,000 pledge by CCA) to Mr. D. Lloyd Matheson, President of the Society for the Restoration of Brimstone Hill (16th May, 1971). The CCA grant was made for the restoration of the Main Guard Building of the Prince of Wales Bastion at the Brimstone Hill Fortification, St. Kitts. Also pictured (left to right), Mr. Edmund B. Morton, Principal Assistant Secretary, St. Kitts-Nevis-Anguilla Ministry of Trade, Development and Tourism, and Dr. Edward L. Towle, President of the Caribbean Conservation Association. (Source: *photo archives of E.L. Towle*)