



Cariso!

The Newsletter of the
Alton Augustus Adams
Music Research Institute

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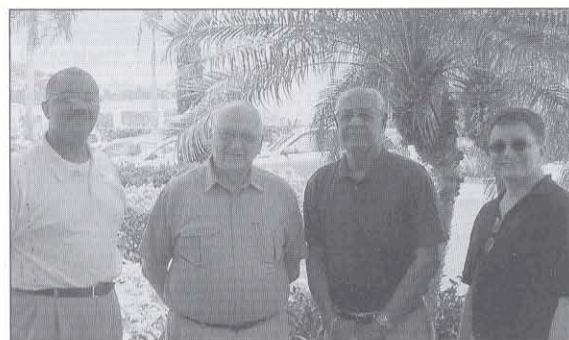
The Life and Times of Alton Augustus Adams Sr., a Cultural Odyssey

BY DR. LOIS HASSELL-HABTES

DURING MAY 2006, THE VIRGIN ISLANDS COMMUNITY witnessed a public celebration and acknowledgment of the life and times of Alton Augustus Adams Sr., the first black bandmaster of the U.S. Navy. The program was the brainchild of Dr. Samuel A. Floyd Jr., Interim Executive Director of the Center for Black Music Research, Columbia College Chicago, and the first director of the Alton Augustus Music Research Institute (AMRI) in St. Thomas, Virgin Islands.

During his past visits to the islands, Dr. Floyd met and became good friends with Adams and proposed this project to the Adams family and the AMRI Advisory Committee as a means to recognize and explore the implications of the far-reaching contributions of Alton A. Adams Sr.

Colloquium sessions were held on May 10 and 11 at the Bertha C. Boschulte Middle



Dr. R. G. Barrett, Raoul Camus, Alton Augustus Adams Jr., and Mark Clague

School Auditorium from 9:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., with live broadcasts on WSTA radio station, hosted daily by popular radio personality Irving “Brownie” Brown and Peter Ottley. I was honored and privileged to moderate these sessions, which opened with a presentation by Dr. Mark Clague, editor of the forthcoming book *Culture Crossroads: The Memoirs of Alton Augustus Adams Sr.* The first
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CBMR Ends Tenure in the Virgin Islands

THE CBMR TENURE in the Virgin Islands came to its end with the More Than a Bandmaster Project. We depart with the knowledge that CBMR’s stated mission—to help “young people and out-of-school adults on small islands of the Caribbean learn to document and preserve their own musical traditions”—has been materially advanced. We depart St. Thomas with feelings of sincere gratitude for the opportunity to serve the islands in that way. Particular thanks go to Alton Adams, who

hosted our project, to Myron Jackson who encouraged us to locate there in the beginning, to the members of AMRI’s Advisory Committee, and to the people of the Virgin Islands who welcomed us in many ways and supported our efforts over the course of our stay, with their attendance of the cultural summits and documentation workshops that we held on all three islands and by their support of the More Than a Bandmaster Colloquium and Navy Band Concert.

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Black Music Research
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