

RESOLUTION NO. 1917

BILL NO. 36-0029

THIRTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

Regular Session

2025

A resolution honoring and commanding Sonya Hough posthumously, the creator of the St. Croix “Crucian” Hook Bracelet, and proprietor of one of the first hand-wrought jewelry stores in St. Croix

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WHEREAS, Sonya Hough was born in San Diego, California in January 1930;

WHEREAS, she graduated from Hoover High School and completed two years of college at the University of Southern California;

WHEREAS, Sonya had been recently divorced when she met David Hough and they worked on an art project outside the City Hall in National City, California and fell in love in the process;

WHEREAS, Sonya and David married and made a blended family with his two children and her three children;

WHEREAS, they came to St. Croix for their honeymoon and fell in love with the island;

WHEREAS, David stayed in St. Croix and got a teaching job, and Sonya returned to California to pack, to sell the house, and to return to St. Croix with the children;

WHEREAS, while David taught, Sonya opened a small shop to help make ends meet;

WHEREAS, David Hough’s paintings line the shop, as well as their entire home;

WHEREAS, she coined herself a craftsperson and the children helped her to make pictures, postcards, bowls, belts, and plant hangers, and she said some days, they only sold three postcards;

WHEREAS, Sonya had no formal training in the craft and said it was mostly trial and error;

WHEREAS, a trial judge, who is proficient in the craft and the daughter of a watchmaker, helped Sonya develop her craft;

WHEREAS, she made jewelry just by looking at the customer's drawing and did so upon request;

WHEREAS, David was not only a talented painter, he also designed the Hurricane Hugo Bracelet; it is a creatively shaped "H" bracelet to commemorate one of the worst hurricanes to hit St. Croix and he also designed the Sugar Mill jewelry; that is painstakingly created brick by brick;

WHEREAS, Diana Hough, David and Sonya's daughter, designed the Hurricane Wrong Way Lenny Bracelet and Hurricane Isabel Bracelet, along with many other designs, carrying on the family tradition;

WHEREAS, in 1964, she created the St. Croix Hook Bracelet, which idea was derived from the unisex and the elephant hair designed jewelry of that time;

WHEREAS, in 1965, Sonya opened The Corner Shop, which is now called Sonya Ltd., and is located across from the Steeple Building, 2101 Company Street, Christiansted, St. Croix, Virgin Islands;

WHEREAS, the St. Croix Hook Bracelet has become one of the most sought-after pieces of jewelry in the Virgin Islands;

WHEREAS, her creation, the St. Croix Hook Bracelet, has topped customers lists as the memento from their vacation on St. Croix and is an extremely popular gift for all occasions;

WHEREAS, each bracelet is hand-wrought and no two are exactly alike;

WHEREAS, the Hook Bracelet is so popular and distinguished, being worn downward if one is single and upward if one is taken;

WHEREAS, it has become folklore, with people telling stories of how they spot the bracelets all over the world and can tell if a person is from St. Croix or has visited the island;

WHEREAS, Sonya Hough has demonstrated exemplary creativity and dedication through the creation of the St. Croix Hook Bracelet, a symbol that has come to represent the cultural and artistic spirit of the Virgin Islands;

WHEREAS, the St. Croix Hook Bracelet has significantly contributed to the promotion of the Virgin Islands, particularly St. Croix, enhancing its visibility and appeal in the global tourism market;

WHEREAS, the design of the St. Croix Hook Bracelet is not only a testament to the rich cultural heritage of the Virgin Islands, but also a celebration of the unique identity and craftsmanship that define the Territory;

WHEREAS, Sonya Hough's work fostered pride among the residents of the Virgin Islands and drew attention from visitors, thereby supporting local businesses and the tourism industry;

WHEREAS, through her efforts, Sonya Hough exemplified the entrepreneurial spirit and commitment to cultural preservation that are integral to the continued growth and development of the Virgin Islands;

WHEREAS, with the success of the Hook Bracelet, the family created a vast number of differently designed bracelets, each having its own unique clasp;

WHEREAS, then and until her death, her business philosophy was the "customers are our gold" and Sonya Ltd. has survived and thrived by treating each customer as an individual and that philosophy has kept customers loyal, with most of her advertising being by word of mouth;

WHEREAS, after over 55 years in the business, Sonya has retired and passed away on March 6, 2025, but the legend and the store live on; Now, Therefore,

Be it resolved by the Legislature of the Virgin Islands:

SECTION 1. The Legislature of the Virgin Islands, on behalf of the people of the Virgin Islands, honors and commends Sonya Hough for her remarkable achievement in creating the St. Croix Hook Bracelet. Her innovative work has brought recognition and admiration to the Virgin Islands and has played a significant role in promoting St. Croix as a premier tourism destination.

SECTION 2. The Legislature acknowledges the positive impact of the St. Croix Hook Bracelet on the tourism industry and the local economy and recognizes Sonya Hough's role and contribution in enhancing the cultural heritage and global presence of the Virgin Islands.

SECTION 3. The Legislature extends its sincere gratitude to Sonya Hough for her dedication, creativity, and contribution to the Virgin Islands.

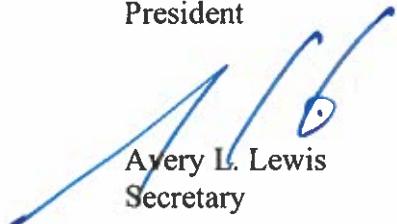
SECTION 4. In appreciation and recognition of her exceptional contributions to the Virgin Islands, the President of the Legislature, or the President's designee, shall have a permanent plaque copy of this resolution prepared and presented to Sonya Hough's family, at an appropriate ceremony held for that purpose.

Thus passed by the Legislature of the Virgin Islands on June 27, 2025.

Witness our Hands and Seal of the Legislature of the Virgin Islands this 30th day of June, A.D., 2025.



Milton E. Potter
President



Avery L. Lewis
Secretary