



CANAL GATOR TALES

April 2020

COVID-19 Impacts and Oral History Interviews

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Smathers Libraries closed to the public on March 19, 2020, and will remain closed until further notice. While most Libraries personnel are working remotely, we continue to respond to researcher questions as best we can without access to the collections. A few essential employees also continue to monitor the security and environmental conditions of library facilities, so all collections are protected during this time.

Prior to COVID-19 we had announced our plans for our renewed oral history program, and we got off to a great start by conducting several interviews in February and early March, including multiple interviews at the joint Friends of the PCMC and Panama Canal Society luncheon on March 7. Our plans were derailed, of course, and we are now shifting our processes so that we can continue our projects while working remotely. Although we can't enjoy meeting face-to-face, we will continue conducting interviews over the phone or computer. If you are interested in participating in an interview please get in touch with us by emailing John Nemmers at jnemmers@ufl.edu.

In addition to an interview with a PCMC staff member, we have put together two ways for you to share your written personal narratives through an online submission process.

If you want to respond to a list of short-answer questions, similar to questions you would be asked in our oral history interviews please click here:

<https://forms.gle/qpLudaYy84nHGpfq9>

If you want to write down a memory of your choosing without questions, please click here: <https://forms.gle/eEcB5o581yBjyv5a9>

We encourage you to participate. Your answers can be short and to the point or long and filled with details. You can talk about one specific memory, activity, or event, or you can discuss your whole experience in Panama and the Canal Zone.

Thank you to those who have shared their stories with us!



The design and layout of the Panama Canal Museum Collection website (<https://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/pcmc>) will be changing in upcoming months as the UF George A. Smathers Libraries migrate all web pages to WordPress software. Although the look and feel of the website will be changing, the content of the website will not be changed significantly. Visitors will still have access to the *Panama and the Canal* digital collection, donor information, links and resources for researchers, and the PCMC blog, among other web pages. In fact, the blog has been managed as a WordPress website for many years now. The redesigned pages will probably appear online in May 2020.

Exhibition Opening and Spring Luncheon

The joint Friends of the Panama Canal Museum Collection and Panama Canal Society luncheon and meeting at the University of Florida took place on March 7, 2020. Over 50 visitors were in Gainesville for the event, which included the opening of the new exhibition in the Albert H. Nahmad Panama Canal Gallery, *Are We Next? Fear and Social Roles in World War II*. The exhibition explores the personal experiences, social aspects, and politics of defending and operating the Canal during World War II. *Are We Next?* will be available in the Gallery until February 2021.

For those of you unable to visit the UF campus to see the current exhibition, we will be releasing an online version of the exhibit in the near future. We also want to share with you some photos of the exhibition as it is displayed in the Smathers Library Building.



In upcoming issues, we will share additional images so that everyone can see how the exhibition is displayed in the Gallery.

Important Dates

June 24-28, 2020

Exhibit, Cultural Seminar, and Silent Auction at the Panama Canal Society Reunion at the Caribe Royale. If you are interested in donating items, please complete the [Silent Auction Donor Form](#). If you are interested in volunteering

your time, please complete the [Volunteer Form](#). Both forms can be sent to Mickey Walker Fitzgerald at mickeyftz@aol.com.



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Museum Collection
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