



CANAL GATOR TALES

September 2020

A Look at Our Recent Researchers and Their Interests

We have had a steady increase in the number of questions received from researchers in recent months. Although we have remained busy assisting researchers throughout the pandemic, we are certainly seeing an uptick in the past few weeks. In the six-month period from March to September 2020, we have assisted 32 researchers. While that number might seem low, it is actually slightly higher than normal when compared to the same six-month period in 2019. Also, it is important to understand that some of these questions are quite in-depth and sometimes require a few hours of our time in order to satisfy the needs of the researchers. We averaged about 75 questions annually in the previous two years.

It comes as no surprise that we have received questions pertaining to topics such as genealogy, Canal construction, West Indian laborers, relations between the U.S. and the Republic of Panama, and information about buildings and sites of the Canal Zone. These are the most popular research topics every year, by far. In addition to these topics, we have received questions relating to:

- Health care and medicine
- Women in the Canal Zone
- Archaeology
- Clubs and nightlife in Panama
- School yearbooks, publications, etc.
- Tropic Survival School
- Molas
- Sports and recreation (e.g., racing)



Ancon Hospital, Ancon, C.Z.

We received questions from a wide variety of people, including K-12 students, college students, and faculty and scholars. We also received many requests from people who lived in the Canal Zone or from family members researching their relatives who worked on the Canal. We actually do not have a lot of resources to assist genealogists because records for employment, service, etc., are maintained by the Federal government. However, we do have yearbooks, newspapers, and other publications that are occasionally useful. We also received research queries from archivists, librarians, and museum professionals who are researching topics for possible exhibitions at their libraries or museums.

Of course, the pandemic has had an impact on how researchers are using the collection. Only one person of the 32 researchers in the past six months has actually visited the Smathers Library Building here on campus to examine materials in person. We assisted all of the other researchers remotely, primarily relying on materials that had been digitized and are available online.

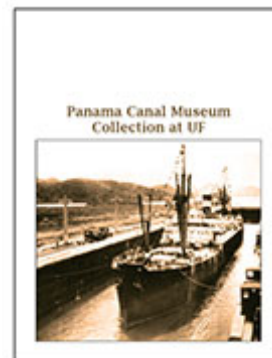
Memorial and Honor Gift Program Supports Oral Histories

Would you like to give a gift in honor or memory of a family member, friend, classmate, colleague, or group? Such a gift is a meaningful way to honor or preserve the memory of someone special to you, and it can be an excellent way to commemorate a special occasion, a milestone, an anniversary, or other significant event. The Smathers Libraries are pleased to announce that, effective immediately, all PCMC memorial and honor gifts will be used to support the oral history program. The oral history program was created to document the story of the Canal in the words of the people who lived it; capturing the details of life that are often not discussed in publications, not captioned in photographs, and not documented in other traditional ways. Your donations will help advance efforts to conduct oral history interviews that will be preserved as part of the PCMC for future generations. During the pandemic, we have shifted away from face-to-face interviews, and instead we are conducting interviews via telephone or online. We're also hard at work transcribing so that the text of the interviews will be available along with the recordings as part of our [online digital collection](#).

All memorial and honor gifts are tax deductible. If you donate any amount over \$25, you automatically become a member of the Friends of the PCMC. When you give a gift of \$50 or more in someone's honor or memory, we will send a card or email to your

designated honoree or a recipient you designate notifying them of your gift. These beautiful cards and email messages will feature scenes of the Canal from the collection. Your name and the name of the person or group you are honoring or memorializing will also be acknowledged on the PCMC website, on an interactive digital monitor in the Albert H. Nahmad Panama Canal Gallery at UF, and in the Canal Gator Tales email distributed to all Friends of the PCMC.

In addition to membership in the PCMC Friends and the acknowledgements and recognition described above, for gifts of \$100.00 or more you have the opportunity to participate in our Books of Honor program. When you make a Books of Honor gift, a special PCMC bookplate will be placed inside a book in the collection and a virtual bookplate will be added to the online catalog. This will include your name and the name of the person or group you are honoring or memorializing. We try to select an appropriate book based on your preferences and your knowledge of your honoree's interests.



To make a gift by check, please make your check payable to the "UF Foundation/Panama Canal Museum Collection Endowment (017605)." Please indicate that it is an honor or memorial gift and provide the following information:

- The honoree's full name (an individual, a couple, or a group, such as a class).
- Your contact information, including your email address.
- The contact information for the honoree or another recipient you designate if you want them to receive an acknowledgment that the gift has been made in their honor or memory.
- If applicable, the occasion being recognized such as an anniversary, birthday, or other event.

Please mail your check to the Office of Development, George A. Smathers Libraries, University of Florida, PO Box 117000, Gainesville, FL 32611-7000.

If you prefer to make your gift online rather than by check, please use the [University of Florida Foundation gift page](#). Remember to indicate in the online form that your gift is in honor of or in memory of someone.

If you have any questions, please contact John Nemmers at 352-273-2766 or jnemmers@ufl.edu. Thank you for your support!



IMPORTANT DATES

March 27, 2021

Joint meeting and luncheon of the Friends of the Panama Canal Museum Collection and Panama Canal Society at the University of Florida's Smathers Library in Gainesville, FL.

July 7-11, 2021

Panama Canal Society Annual Reunion, Caribe Royale Resort, Orlando, FL.

Of course, these events may be impacted by the pandemic, including any restrictions for large group events implemented by the University or State. But, we're thinking optimistically!

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PANAMA CANAL
Museum Collection
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

