

# CANAL GATOR TALES

March 2021

## Raising Funds for the Oral History Program

We are very excited to kick off our new campaign to raise funds to support our Oral History Program. The program was established in 2010 to capture the stories and personal experiences of the American Era of the Panama Canal. Oral history interviews allow people to tell their own stories in their own words and share their own tales of everyday life and work, challenges faced, and achievements reached. We have already produced 80 [oral history interviews](#) and made them available online, and we are transcribing and editing more than 40 interviews to publish online in upcoming weeks. We offer these and future oral history recordings freely to a global audience as part of the [UF Digital Collections](#) and the [Digital Library of the Caribbean](#). We share these interviews with students of all ages and include excerpts in our online and physical exhibits so that everyone can learn from your firsthand experiences, insights, and perspectives.

Because of all the time and talent needed to record, transcribe, and publish these important histories, they can be a significant cost to the PCMC. The total cost of a one-hour interview can range from \$400 - \$1,000. Our goal is to create 25-50 interviews annually, so we need approximately \$20,000 each year.



**Recent silent auctions conducted by the PCMC Friends annually raised \$25,000!  
These funds were used as seed money to prepare for this campaign.**

**With your help, we can reach this goal!** Our new PCMC fundraising campaign aims to raise \$250,000 for our [Panama Canal Museum Collection Endowment](#), an amount that will support the oral history program in future years. To prepare for this new campaign, the Friends of the PCMC, in 2019, contributed \$25,000 in funds raised by the annual Silent Auction in the past few years. The auction proceeds, along with funds from the Libraries, were used as seed money needed to hire personnel dedicated to the initiative. As the campaign began to take form in 2020, we received a lead gift of \$25,000 from a generous donor, a gift representing 10% of our goal.

The 10-year anniversary of the museum collection at UF is coming up in 2022 and it would be wonderful to celebrate that anniversary with the completion of this oral history fundraising campaign. You can help by making a gift and being part of this

vital program. Together we can make it a great success, one that will benefit the PCMC and education and scholarship far into the future.

**To make a gift by check**, please make your check payable to the University of Florida Foundation/PCMC Endowment #017606. Please mail the check to the Office of Development, George A. Smathers Libraries, University of Florida, PO Box 117000, Gainesville, FL 32611-7000.

**To make a gift with a credit card**, please call the UF Foundation's Gift Processing toll-free number: 1-877-351-2377 (and mention Fund #017605) OR give online at [https://www.uff.ufl.edu/give-now/?fund\\_id=017605](https://www.uff.ufl.edu/give-now/?fund_id=017605).

For more information, contact the Development Office at (352) 273-2505 or [lib-development@ad.ufl.edu](mailto:lib-development@ad.ufl.edu).

## Recent Acquisitions



**World War II poster  
featuring Frank Townsend**

Over the past two years, we have received a wide variety of materials - everything from family letters and photographs to ice cream cartons and a Palo Seco token. We collected numerous items relating to World War II, including the War Bonds poster seen here, which we were able to include in our [current exhibition](#) in the Panama Canal Gallery. The following list includes selected gift offers accepted by our PCMC Collection Committee. In upcoming months, we will share additional images of some of our recent acquisitions.

- Thousands of photographic prints, slides, and digital images of various scenes in the Canal Zone and Panama
- Church bulletins (e.g., *The Messenger*, Union Church) and transcripts of church sermons

- A set of papers relating to gems, rocks, minerals including issues of *Las Pediras* (Canal Zone Gem and Mineral Society)
- Papers and publications (e.g., *Deviled Ham* newsletter) relating to Canal Zone schools and the Canal Zone College
- Isthmian Collectors Club papers
- Panama Canal Company milk crate
- Ice cream and milk carton
- Menus
- Palo Seco Canal Zone token (five cents)
- Naval Supply Depot newsletters, *Stock Item*
- Papers, photos, and a 16mm film relating to the sailing of "Chief Aptakisic" from the Canal Zone to New York as part of the 1976 Bicentennial.
- *Memoirs, Holding on to Cocoli* (formerly *Cocoli Verses*)
- Revised version of the *Cocoli Dictionary*
- Yearbooks and booklets for the Order of the Eastern Star and the Order of the Rainbow for Girls
- Pamphlets, brochures, and tourism publications
- Programs for the Annual Jamboree, Scoutcapades, the Shrine Bowl, and Army Band concerts
- Books, reports, reprints, etc.
- Papers, photos, clippings, and stickers pertaining to Operation Just Cause and the U.S. military in the 1980s and 1990s
- Shovel blade from the Construction Era
- A wide variety of World War II-era materials including war bonds posters, personal letters and photos, magazines and newsletters (e.g., *The Panama Bulldozer*), WWII-era comic books, and dance cards, invitations, flyers, and other documents relating to dances, holiday parties, and other social events.
- Recorded music on CD and LP
- Badges, pins, rings, and uniform insignia
- Letters relating to Masonic lodges
- Miscellaneous brochures, guides, maps, etc.
- Miscellaneous papers primarily from the 1990s relating to the Canal transfer to Panama (e.g., programs for closure, transfer, inactivation, change of command, departure, and similar ceremonies relating to bases, forts, units, etc.)
- Postage stamps, first day covers, and philately materials
- Postcards
- Sheet music
- Scrapbooks on a variety of topics containing photos, programs, news clippings, etc.

The following is a list of some of our terrific donors from 2019-2021, and we thank them for their important contributions to the PCMC.

- Alison Almquist
- Bill Angrick
- Marcia Barrere
- Carl N. Berg
- Robert Boyd
- Jim Bradley
- George Brisbin
- Helen Calvit
- Susan Cecil
- Peter Copeskey
- Deborah Cornish

- Richard Crowe
- Carolyn Cunningham
- Barbara Dedeaux
- Mike Ellman
- Mickey Walker Fitzgerald
- Mike Flanagan
- Frederick W. (Rick) Ford
- Hendrik Gesink
- Ruth Greenwood
- Larry Hoover
- Paul Hughes
- Teri Kaminski
- Charlotte Kerksiek
- Kathryn Koloseike
- Jan F. Lundy
- Laurel Lynch
- Kathy Malin
- Jim Manning
- John McLelland
- Carole Walker Miller
- Wilma Nowotny
- Judith Pillans
- John Rumbold
- Jennifer Saville
- Carol Schwenke
- Jane Shanard
- Margaret Spradlin
- Bob Sprague
- Talbot Historical Society
- Frank Townsend
- Sam Trickey
- Dottie Whitlow
- Brad Wilde
- Joe Wood
- Bob Zumbado

We are still working on processing recent donations, so do not worry if you have donated items and your name doesn't appear above. We will be sure to acknowledge your generous gift in future articles. For more information about donating items to the PCMC, please contact John Nemmers at 352-273-2766 or [jnemmers@ufl.edu](mailto:jnemmers@ufl.edu).

### SAVE THESE DATES

**July 7-11, 2021**

Panama Canal Society Annual Reunion, Caribe Royale Resort, Orlando, FL.  
Please contact Mickey Walker Fitzgerald at [mickeyftz@aol.com](mailto:mickeyftz@aol.com) if you wish to volunteer your time or items for the Silent Auction.

**Friends of the Panama Canal Museum Collection**

If you haven't done so already, now is the time to renew your membership in the Friends of the Panama Canal Museum Collection at UF. If you're not a member already, please consider joining!

The funds collected are used to support education and research through the preservation, conservation, digitization, and processing of the collection. Funds also support the creation and development of local, traveling, and online exhibits that increase awareness about the collection, the Panama Canal, the Canal Zone, and its people. Dues and donations qualify for tax deductions. Thank you for your continued support of the PCMC at UF.

As of Spring 2020 each membership is active for a period of 12 months starting with the date you join or renew. For example, if you renewed on March 1, 2020, your membership is active through February 28, 2021.

To join or renew membership in the Friends of the Panama Canal Museum Collection visit <https://apps.uflib.ufl.edu/pcmembership/> or call 352-273-2505 for more information.

