



PANAMA CANAL SOCIETY  
ANNUAL REUNION GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING  
MINUTES – July 8, 2016

Meeting called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Mike Coffey (President).

**Attendees:**

Shirley Avery (1<sup>st</sup> Vice President), Kathy Malin (2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President), Noreen Hanson (Treasurer), Kelly Parthenais (Director), Mike Young (Director), Brittney Wilder (Director), Raymond Husum (Director at Large), Patrick Smith (Sergeant of Arms), Richard Grimison (Chaplain), Tom Wilder (Past President), Bill McLaughlin (Historian & Past President), Jacque Vowell (Editor), and Cheryl Williams (Office Manager).

**Location:** Rosen Shingle Creek Resort, Orlando Florida

Minutes were passed out as everyone entered. Mike asked for a motion to approve the May 16, 2016 minutes. Elaine Lewis motioned, Margot Jordan seconded the motion, and it was approved by all present.

**Presidents Report:** Mike welcomed the board and guests to the 84th Annual Reunion Membership Meeting and thanked everyone for attending. Our by-laws require the President to provide an annual report to membership on the business, activities, and health of our great Society. This is our opportunity to discuss issues and activities, and an opportunity for members to provide feedback and input. My thanks to the many members who attended our Annual Meeting and had the opportunity to win great door prizes donated by our generous vendors.

I want to first thank all of our board members, committee chairs, and their families who volunteer their time to support our Society. Every board member and chair is a volunteer and works as a team throughout the year to manage the Society and support our membership. From planning and working at the reunion to organizing ongoing events throughout the year, they give their time and effort. Their names are listed on the inside cover of this Record and we all owe them a great deal of gratitude for their effort. Thank you!

I also want to thank the many volunteers who help out at the reunion and at our yearly events. We need members to volunteer as this is the only way we can pull off an event as big as our reunion. To all of you who volunteered—thank you! If you have any interest in volunteering in the future, please contact any member of our board.

At last year's Annual Meeting we communicated a number of priorities we identified and were working on. To follow is an update on those priorities:

**Office Space:** We needed to move the Society Office from Cheryl Williams' home and this was completed in October of last year. We now have a beautiful new office in Lutz, Florida with ample meeting space, storage, and facilities to meet our needs.

**Database:** We established a goal to update our database management system to improve our ability to communicate with membership, provide accurate reporting of data, and resolve our labor-intensive reunion registration process.

**James Beattie (BHS '92)** has volunteered over 250 man-hours of his personal time to perform this upgrade and will see it to conclusion by the end of this year. (If there is such a thing as a "conclusion" with technology) James provided a great update of this technology change, benefits, and transition to membership at the Annual Meeting.

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Our sincerest thanks to James and also to **Chris Wilder**, our web master, who has been collaborating with James to make this transition a reality.

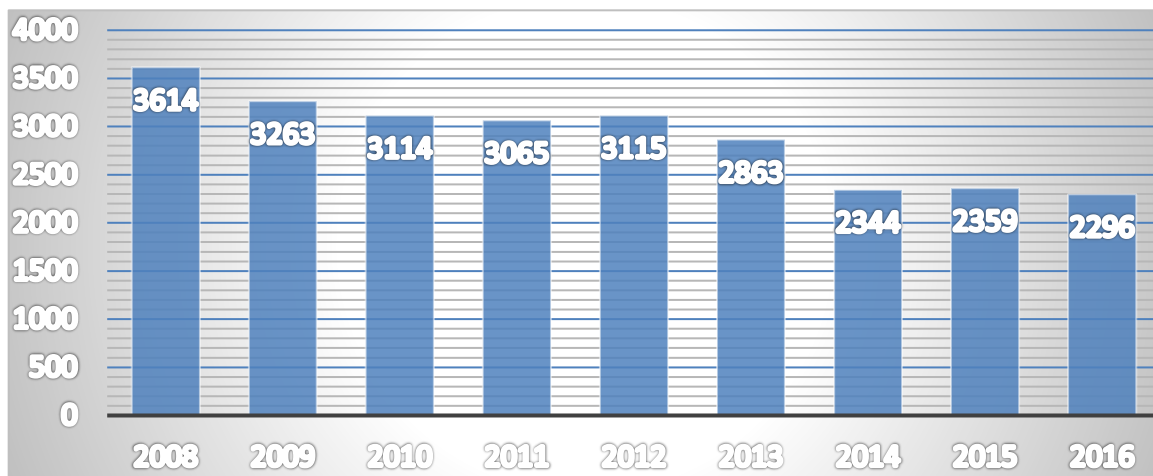
**Hotel Registration:** We improved the hotel registration and notification process to create a much better experience for our membership. **Cheryl Williams, Betty Ledoux, Nancy Van Siclen**, and the **Rosen Shingle staff** deserve the credit for making this happen. Thank you!

**Directory:** We finalized a revision to the Annual Directory and distributed the new Directory in April

**Membership:** Last, but certainly not least, we want to GROW membership. In order to do this we are continually looking for ways to improve the value we provide our members. Some of the ways we are doing that are:

- Enhancing our meeting schedule to include our March Luncheon at the Panama Canal Museum in Gainesville, a South Florida Picnic, and a Causeway Party in Tampa.
- Retain Membership – contacting all 2011 Governors Club members to ensure everyone renews!
- Improving our ability to communicate with members by updating our database.
- Partnering with Merlin Entertainment to provide members discounts to Legoland, Sea World, Madam Tussaud’s, and the Orlando Eye
- And, we always appreciate your suggestions

**Financials:** Here is a look at our overall membership trend:



With regards to our financial health, the Board continues to be stewards of the Society budget and assets. We are living within our means and our primary driver for our “means” is membership. As you can see from the snapshot below, we achieved a surplus in 2015 largely due to operational savings and slightly better membership numbers. As a “Not-For-Profit” organization we strive to invest all revenues in membership benefits and activities. This surplus helped offset our loss in 2014 and will help us in planning events for 2016 and 2017.

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<b>2015 Budget vs. Actual</b>			
	2015 Budget	2015 Actual	Variance
Membership Dues	\$103,510	\$104,030	\$520
Reunion Fees	<b>\$67,112</b>	<b>\$66,847</b>	(\$265)
Total Income	\$181,809	\$184,186	\$2,377
Operating Expense	\$103,173	\$96,267	(\$6,906)
Reunion Expense	<b>\$70,280</b>	<b>\$70,345</b>	<b>\$65</b>
Total Expense	\$173,453	\$166,613	(\$6,840)
Net Income	\$8,356	\$17,573	\$9,217

Below is our budget for 2016, which illustrates a slight decline in membership and a reduced budget for our 2016 Reunion. We historically see less Reunion attendance in the third year at the same property, so we accounted for this as we enter our third and final year at Rosen Shingle Creek. Surprisingly, and happily, we experienced great attendance at the 2016 Reunion and hope we can continue this trend as we move to the Orlando World Marriott next year.

<b>2016 Budget Comparison with 2015</b>			
	2015 Actual	2016 Budget	Variance
Membership Dues	\$104,030	\$97,620	(\$6,410)
Reunion Fees	<b>\$66,847</b>	<b>\$58,761</b>	<b>(\$8,086)</b>
Total Income	\$184,186	\$169,733	(\$14,453)
Operating Expense	\$96,267	\$103,969	\$7,702
Reunion Expense	<b>\$70,345</b>	<b>\$59,270</b>	<b>(\$11,075)</b>
Total Expense	\$166,613	\$165,240	(\$1,373)
Net Income	\$17,573	\$4,493	(\$13,080)

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I had the honor to present a Distinguished Service Award to **Margot Jordan** in recognition of her long-term and continued support of the Society. In addition to being a Past President, Margot has chaired our Annual Golf Tournament for many years and this year passed the reins over to **Katie Beattie** (BHS '97). Margot received a framed award in addition to a gift certificate to one of her favorite restaurants since one of her favorite activities is a family meal with her children and grandchildren. Thank you again Margot for your service and support!

I also had the pleasure of recognizing **Bill McLaughlin**, our Reunion Coordinator and Past President for the year-round work he does for the Reunion. Bill's work on our next Reunion begins immediately following the current Reunion. He collects surveys, member feedback, vendor feedback, and begins making plans for the Yellow Pages, part of our December Canal Record. My sincerest thanks to Bill as he is the man behind the machine that makes our Reunion happen.

At the conclusion of the meeting **Past Present Tom Wilder**, who led our nominating committee, presented the ballot count to elect our new board. The new board was announced and is featured on the inside cover of this Canal Record. I want to thank **Mike Young** for his many years of dedicated service to the Society Board. Mike reached his term limit but has offered to continue helping the board and the Society. Thank you Mikey!

In closing I want to thank our vendors for their tremendous support of our vendor room and for their generous door prize donations. **Lori Snow of Condor Travel** presented three free travel packages to lucky winners at the Annual Meeting. You will see their pictures in this edition and they will all enjoy luxury accommodations on future travel to Panama. If you'd like a chance to win, please attend next year's Annual Meeting.

As always, thank you for your membership and support of the Panama Canal Society. I hope to see you at a Society event in the near future.

**Database:** James Beattie (BHS/92) gave a brief update on the new Access Data Base and technology. We have two current data bases on that holds everything regarding our membership information and the second regarding all the information for the Reunion. James is working on placing the information in one centralized place. With this new program we will be able to send our membership with reminders that their dues are due, and reminder of upcoming events. In the future we would like to be able to offer our members access to change their address, emails and telephone numbers. James was asked about the security of our data base. We have our own server and our data base is secure and Chris Wilder monitors it. One member asked about messaging us through our web site, Mike responded that we are doing that on our Facebook page and that Tom Wilder monitors our FB page. Next question was "once we get our web site up and running will we have the *Canal Record* etc online? This is something that we are considering in the future. By updating our system this will help with less errors from having to manually input everything. Mike thanked James for all his work and for presenting at the meeting.

**Location for Next year reunion:** Marriot World Center 2017-2019. We normally have a the dates set for 2020-2022 We are committed to finding a place where the members will enjoy. We have passed out a survey, please fill it out and leave it at the door, or drop it off at the information desk.

Several Door Prizes were given out.

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**Reunion Report:** Bill McLaughlin gave the Reunion Report. The reunion planning is started right after the current reunion ends. The yellow pages go out in the December issue, everything has to be completed for registration before they can be sent to the members.

Our preregistration numbers before we got to the reunion are as follows: 1734 people registered, 37 vendors, 385 luncheon ticket sold, 387 Panazonian Ping Ding Dance, 744 Ball tickets, 888 rooms.

This year the golf course had to be changed to Champions. Our long time photographer David Wright had health issues this year, so we have a new photography team to help us out. After this meeting Samantha LaPorta will be preforming at the club house. Friday night dance will be different this year, we are combining the Friday night Dance and the DJ afterhours dance. Lucho music will be played the first few hours (everyone applauded). The Murga will be tonight and starts at 9:00p.m. at the Hospitality Suites. The Pool Party will once again require a photo ID and a 2016 Reunion name badge. The Saturday night Ball will be the same. The yellow flyer has all the information in it. Cultural Seminar will be this afternoon with Lila Cheville talking about the polleras and the diablitos.

**Museum:** Joe Wood announced it has been four years since the Museum Collection was transferred to The University of Florida. Naturally they are the best university in the state claimed Joe! Joe thanked Dr. Judith Russell and UF for their outstanding support that they have given us to continue our mission.

Dr. Judith Russell was introduced and gave a brief update on the museum. She stated they had to create a new data base for the collection and that there are currently 19,979 photo albums and records. We have digitized over 1250 titles which constitutes 7,000 items and those are all available online at the Panama Canal Collection

<http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/pcm/Home.aspx>. In 2014 we had 2.7 million views of the digital collection, in 2015 we had 3.3 million views and the first half of the year we have had 1.7 million views so we are continuing to see this has been steady which is very important to us. We have 286 year books from various schools.

We know that it is important for you all to have a physical place to go and look at. The university is giving us a space for this collection, it is a long corridor on the main floor in the library. It was first thought we would have to do this in two phases. Joe told me today we only have commitments on all but 2 cases phase one and have received several already for phase two. We are hoping to have phase one completed by your visit in the spring of next year, we may even have part of phase two completed as well. Dr. Russell introduced the UF staff that was in attendance.

Joe Wood then spoke about the PCS meeting held in March at UF. He stated immediately after the meeting they had a few cases already pledged for. They also accept individual donations or families, friends that want to go in as a group to donate/pledge for a case.

Mike shared that the membership for the museum has gone down tremendously since UF's involvement. He encourage everyone to join the Friends of the Museum to help support them. He asked for a show of hands of our members who would like to see an option on membership page to join the Friends of the Museum. The show of hands was very positive.

**Golf:** Katie Beattie thanked Margot Jordan for running the golf tournament for the past 22 years. She told everyone she had 15 years' experience in the golf industry. Patrick Smith and Katie collaborated on the tournament which was changed from the Rosen Shingle Creek to an offsite location Champions Golf. It was decided this year to do a 4 man scramble. They had prizes ranging from Panama beer to bouquets of Scratch off tickets and reunion survival baskets. Katie thanked her volunteers Darlene & Kelly Hunt who are queens of 50/50 raffles. The 50/50 raffle earned 947.00. Capt. David Bell who won the 50/50 drawing donated his back to the Society and the full \$947.00 was then donated to Lori Snow's project to buy a new organ for the Balboa Union Church in Panama. Next year the tournament will be at the Marriott and Patrick and Katie encouraged everyone to register early!

**Events for 2016:**

September 17, 2016 – Party at the Causeway at the Bay Harbor Hotel, Tampa FL. Noreen Hanson is the Chair

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October 15, 2016 - South Florida Picnic – Tradewinds Park, Coconut Creek FL. Kathy Malin and Scott Parker are the Chairs

November 5, 2016 – Space Coast Picnic – 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Bob & Fran Morrissey/Bob & Kathy McConaughey – Chairs and Richard Grimison – Board Liaison Location TBD

December 10, 2016 – Holiday Luncheon – 11:30 a.m. at the St. Petersburg Yacht Club, Kelly Parthenais is the Chair

More Door Prizes

**Distinguished Service Award Presentation:** The board considers all recommendations for this award and Margot Jordan was nominated for this award for serving as Golf Chairperson for many years. Mike asked for a vote from the membership and she was unanimously voted for. She was awarded the Distinguished Service Award as well as a \$200.00 gift certificate to Outback Steak House.

Mike also recognized Mike Young and thanked him for serving as Director. He thanked Noreen Hanson for giving her time as Treasure and working at the office on her time off with Kathy Malin on registration.

Mike presented Bill McLaughlin with a gift certificate to Burns Steak House as well as two nights at a hotel to come to Tampa.

**Nominating Committee:** Tom Wilder thanked his committee members, Richard Grimison, Noreen Hanson, Steve Nehring and Nancy VanSiclen. The votes were counted at 8:30 a.m. They received 167 ballots, 4 were deemed invalid. The voting count was as follows:

Directors

Brittney Wilder – 160

Pat Smith – 156

Kathy Malin – 157

2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President

Kelly Parthenais – 158

1<sup>st</sup> Vice President

Shirley Avery Bentley – 161

President

Mike Coffey – 163

Tom asked if anyone had any questions, and no one asked. Then he asked for a motion to destroy the ballots. Hubert Jordan first the motion and Robert Grondahl seconded the motion and the motion was approved by all present. The new officers were sworn in.

Final Door Prizes

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting. Bob Russell first the motion and Hubert Jordan seconded the motion.

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Cheryl Williams Office Manager/Secretary

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Mike Coffey/President