



PANAMA CANAL SOCIETY  
GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING  
UF SMATHERS LIBRARY  
MINUTES – March 3, 2018

Dean Judy Russell welcomed all and explained about the UF Smathers Libraries and the Panama Canal Gallery/Museum.

Meeting was then called to order at 12:12 pm by Mike Coffey (President)

Mike welcomed the 64 members and guests present and thanked them for coming. He started the Pledge of Allegiance.

Richard Grimison gave a wonderful invocation acknowledging UF in preserving the American era of the Panama Canal and commenting on all the great food that we consumed in the Canal Zone.

The meeting adjourned for lunch and resumed at 12:58 p.m.

Mike thanked all involved for their hard work. He introduced the Past Presidents and Board Members in attendance: Bill McLaughlin and Bob Russell, **then** Shirley Avery (1<sup>st</sup> VP), Noreen Hanson (Treasurer), Richard Grimison (Chaplain), Lee Bentley (By Laws) and Kathy Malin (Office Manager).

Mike announced the PCS Picnic Phillippe Park, Safety Harbor, May 19. The PCS Annual Reunion is in Orlando from June 27-July 1 and called on Bill for a reunion update. He mentioned the deadline to register is May 21<sup>st</sup>. Bill spoke on the Friday night "Ping Ding" dance as well the Cultural Seminar and the Luncheon speakers. Mike asked UF to consider filming the Cultural Seminars. He said that the Society is returning to Sarasota to The Dutchman in September with Bob & Cheryl Russell's assistance. Mike advised that the March issue of the Canal Record would be mailed out soon and the decal included was designed by Yovi Wainio. The new set of officers are in this Record and encouraged all to vote.

Dean Judy Russell welcomed all to visit the cooking exhibit at the Museum and showed a short video the staff put together where they tried some of the recipes. She thanked Lourdes and Liz for the video. John Nemmers thanked all for the privilege of being the Collection Manager where he and Liz Bouton (Asst Curator) are trying to preserve and promote the collection to researchers, scholars, students and others. The number of researchers asking about the collection has doubled. The digital view has grown from 3.7 million in 2016 to 5.5 million in 2017. John encouraged people to follow the Blog activity – the link is on the PCMC homepage. The *Opening the Gates to Canal Cuisine* has been announced as a winner in the American category of the Gourmand World Cookbook Awards and is a finalist for "Best in the World" award to be held in China in May. One can purchase the cookbook from UF. John stated they are still processing gifts where it goes through a Collection Committee Review. This years' Museum exhibit at the reunion will be on Pop Culture – dance, music, arts, etc. in the Canal Zone. Next year, the Gallery will display all the big momentous anniversaries: i.e. – 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Transfer of the Canal; 30<sup>th</sup> of *Just Cause*; 40<sup>th</sup> of the Treaties; 55<sup>th</sup> year of the '64 Riots; and the 500<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Panama.

Judy stated that our collection is 10% digitized which is great and above normal than other collections. Funds continue to grow and UF was grateful for the loans to UF to digitized new items.



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Joe Wood, President of the Friends of the Executive Committee, thanked Judy, John and the UF staff for their dedicated service. It takes funds to digitize items thus people need to join the Friends of the Museum Endowment fund. They are also looking for people to join the Executive Committee board too. Kathy Egolf is selling membership to the Centennial Club which is \$100 and you receive a medallion that replicates the First Transit.

Mike thanked Judy, John and Joe. He loved walking through the exhibits and the great memories it brought. He introduced Andrew Kaufman, author & photographer.

Andrew had a slideshow of pictures and stories about Panama and the Canal expansion. He mentioned in Panama next year, the World Youth Day is hosting the Pope and expecting ½ million people to attend plus it is the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Panama.

Mike explained about membership, Associate membership program, succession planning, and the Society is becoming more family oriented because of descendants becoming more involved on the Board and in the Society. He thanked everyone for attending and encouraged people to join. Door prizes were drawn.

Meeting adjourned at 1:58 p.m.

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Mike Coffey, President

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Kathy Malin, Office Manager