

Memoria	Mémoire	Hap`iqay	Qaahal	Geheugen
Memory	Memória	Mandu`a	Memwa	Nasundaa`wa

The newsletter of the Latin American & Caribbean Cultural Heritage Archives Roundtable,
Society of American Archivists

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LACCHA – Latin American and Caribbean Cultural Heritages Archives Roundtable

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Message from LACCHA's Senior Co-Chair, Susan Laura Lugo:
“Pardon me while I sneeze . . .”



I have mold, mildew and dust allergies so of course I logically decided my passion in life should be to pursue a career in archives management where I sit eight hours a day inside an uber-refrigerated room filled with musty documents from the early 1800s, indecipherable and faded ink ledgers bound in fraying leather and disintegrating cloth, discolored and water-stained cardboard boxes from the 1950s (complete with detritus and insect carcasses older than I am) and some previous inhabitant's idea of indoor/outdoor carpeting that is made specifically to trap every allergen known to mankind.

Even more significantly, I have chosen to pursue this illustrious career path holed up in a magnificent and historical 250 year old building constructed when “environmentally controlled” meant closing the wooden shutters for

hurricanes. My office is located just steps away from the bustling local market place and one block from the cooling harborfront breezes of one of the most beautiful sub-tropical destinations on the planet: Charlotte Amalie on the island of St. Thomas in the U.S. Virgin Islands . . . a place I have called home for over 31 years.

My career path has been anything but linear, but (and for a linear thinking person this is an amazing confession) I think that has been a good thing. After seven years in California at Bank of America cutting my teeth in operations management, followed by a three-year stint at an offshore drilling company, Global Marine, Inc. (does anyone remember the Glomar Explorer debacle or am I dating myself?) where I managed accounts receivable and drilling contracts, and then well over a quarter of a century as a certified legal assistant in St. Thomas, I realized that what really satisfied me had nothing to do specifically with banking or finance or law. Organizing information was my turn-on, and when I returned to graduate school in 2000 to get my Master's in Library and Information Science at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, I simply could not get enough of it. Combine that appetite with a passion for history—especially family history, and more precisely Caribbean family history—and you can see why I can be so content (pardon me while I sneeze) here among the dust blooms.

In January 2008 the Governor of the Virgin Islands appointed me as Territorial Coordinator for Archives and I haven't looked back since. Although I serve at the pleasure of an elected official, I am more concerned about preserving history than preserving my job and that keeps me focused and alert to new opportunities for networking and building collaborative relationships.

Which brings me to SAA. I have been a member of SAA for years because it provides me with the opportunity to meet and network with information professionals and to continue my archival education. Like many of us, my job no longer affords me the opportunity to travel much for professional development, and here in the Caribbean some 1,100 miles southeast of Miami, it is rather difficult to find a gathering of archivists.

Which brings me to LACCHA. When LACCHA roundtable organizers and promoters Maria Estorino and Marisol Ramos and I first met at an SAA pre-conference workshop in 2007, there was an immediate sense of shared passion, not only for archives but for archival information emanating from and about Latin America and the Caribbean. On my paternal side I am a descendant of one of the soldiers in the first sea and overland settlement expeditions from New Spain (Mexico) to California in the latter half of the 1700s and my family has strong ties to Southern California where I lived most of my life before moving to the U.S. Virgin Islands. My husband's family has been in the Virgin Islands for at least 7 generations, and elsewhere in the Caribbean even before that, blending his Scottish, English, French, Danish, Dutch and African ancestries into 100% proud West Indian. But in both Latin America and the Caribbean it has been difficult to access, prove and hear the voices of the archives that document our personal histories.

LACCHA's mission is to create a space to exchange ideas and provide support among U.S., Caribbean and Latin American archivists about the challenges and opportunities of acquiring, managing, preserving and giving access to those archival materials not only originating from Latin America and the Caribbean and housed in the United States but also archival collections created by groups from different Diasporas coming from those regions and living in the U.S.

This year, Junior Co-Chair Patrick Stawski and I are endeavoring to complete the organizational framework for the LACCHA roundtable – scaffolding, if you will, on which LACCHA can firmly establish its roundtable format, so that we may get on with the business of making a difference in Latin American and Caribbean archives. To that end, we have established a LACCHA discussion and meeting blog for roundtable business and issues of interest (<http://laccha.blogspot.com/>). It is just one way to continue the conversations begun at the annual meeting and to more efficiently share our resources.

Patrick and I are also encouraging greater use of the listserv by members and member-liaisons to foster the exchange of ideas and provide the support that are the objects of LACCHA's mission. This year LACCHA

welcomed seven volunteers who agreed to serve as information liaisons with other key organizations and post updates to the listserv for the benefit of the entire LACCHA community: Michelle Gachette, SAA-Archivists and Archives of Color (AAC) Roundtable; Brad Bauer, SAA-International Archival Affairs Roundtable; Claudia Holguin, American Library Association-IRRT (International Relations Roundtable); Silvia Mejia, SALALM liaison (Seminar on the Acquisition of Latin American Library Materials); Avril Belfon, CARBICA (Caribbean Regional Branch of the International Council on Archives); Rebecca Hankins, ICA (International Council on Archives); and I will liaise with IFLA-LAC (International Federation of Library Associations-Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean).

Soon-to-be launched enhancements to the LACCHA Web site by Webmaster Marisol Ramos will contribute to improved roundtable and SAA communications via the Web, and Newsletter Editor Noah Lenstra and Assistant Editor Luisa Yanez are chronicling LACCHA's news, views and feature articles in a semi-annual digital publication "Memoria," for LACCHA members.

Marisol Ramos is also spearheading our collaboration with the Latin American Network for Information Center (LANIC) (<http://lanic.utexas.edu/>) and in Spring 2010 members will begin contributing information and links to LANIC's Latin American Government Documents Archive (LAGDA) Project (<http://lanic.utexas.edu/project/archives/lagda/>).

From archives in political distress, to professional education for non-English speaking archivists, to building a network of information professionals in its geographic regions of concentration, LACCHA is working hard to be recognized for the force it is capable of becoming.

Perhaps this is the family historian in me, but as we endeavor to look ahead, I hope each member of LACCHA will also chronicle where he or she is and where he or she came from. As we seek to innovate and initiate change, it is important to remember that for 400 years or more some of the evidence which inspired us to become caregivers of Latin American and Caribbean information has managed to endure tropical weather, humidity, harsh sunlight, floods, earthquakes, political insurrection, fire, mismanagement, and theft. For me, a little mold, mildew and dust is just a daily reminder of the reason why I have taken this path, and (pardon me again while I sneeze) why I find it hard to resist its allure. Ten, twenty or thirty years from now, it will also be important for others who come after us to understand the information gaps and gores faced in this archival generation, the priorities we set, the decisions we made and how we sought to preserve and provide access to the past.

Two LACCHA Panels to be presented at the 2010 Washington, D.C. conference

Two LACCHA-sponsored panels will be presented at this year's conference of the Council of State Archivists/National Association of Government Archives and Records Administrators/Society of American Archivists. The organization's Joint Program Committee approved the proposals for "Minding the Information Gap: Research Outreach Programs in Caribbean Government Archives" and "Insular Records for the Unincorporated: Archiving the Historical Record of U.S. Territories." The conference is scheduled for August 10-15, 2010 at the Marriott Wardman Plaza in Washington, D.C.

The panel proposals were two of four submitted by LACCHA for consideration in October 2009. Both were co-sponsored and endorsed by the Government Records Section. Session organizer and LACCHA member Bergis Jules had a particular vision for his panel on outreach programs in Caribbean archives. Inspired after attending the 2009 LACCHA-sponsored panel on "Brick by Bricolage: Sustaining Caribbean Archives in the 21st Century," he first pitched his idea to LACCHA leaders. Jules serves as Project Director and Archivist for the Black Metropolis Research Consortium, described on its Web site as an unincorporated Chicago-based association of libraries, universities, and other archival institutions with major holdings of materials that document African

American and African diasporic culture, history, and politics, with a specific focus on materials relating to Chicago (visit: <http://www.blackmetropolisresearch.org/>) Jules also has family ties to St. Lucia and strong connections to the Caribbean.

For the first panel, Jules recruited "Minding the Information Gap" panelists representing the national archives of three Caribbean nations: Margot Thomas, National Archivist, St. Lucia National Archives; Dominique Taffin, National Archivist, National Archives of Martinique; and Avril Belfon, Senior Archives and Records Officer, Government of Trinidad and Tobago. Jules will chair and moderate the panelists' presentations. The basic premise for the "Minding the Information Gap" panel is to showcase primary documents for fragmented communities of record. According to the proposal: "The Caribbean's fragmented colonial history has fostered an information gap in government archives. Researchers seeking to document local history perspectives must fill this gap with narratives and commentary expressed in native voices but there are access and knowledge barriers to conducting complex research using primary documents. Archivists from three Caribbean nations reveal successful strategies for 'minding the gap,' showcasing creative outreach programs to generate increased interest in and local use of government archives by researchers."

The three panelists will detail their work in their perspective islands. Thomas's work in St. Lucia will be featured in her paper, "Highlighting the Work of the National Archives of St. Lucia through Innovative Educational and Outreach Activities." Taffin, who also serves as President of CARBICA, the Caribbean Regional Section of the International Council on Archives, will discuss "Reclaiming Memory : What is the Response from Caribbean Archives?" Belfon, whose engaging presentation in 2009, drew much praise and comment from the audience, will focus on "Outreach: Up Close and Personal" efforts in her native Trinidad and Tobago.

The second LACCHA panel approved by the 2010 Program Committee focuses on the challenges of archiving marginalized historical records in U.S. territorial holdings. "Insular Records for the Unincorporated" is a particularly important topic to LACCHA Senior Co-Chair Susan Laura Lugo, C.A., who organized and promoted this panel with sponsorship by LACCHA and the Government Records Section. Lugo is the Territorial Coordinator for Archives for the Government of the United States Virgin Islands where she has lived for over 31 years. She knows first-hand the difficulties of identifying, claiming and maintaining records that span ownerships of record across many colonizing entities, a common feature of most U.S. unincorporated organized territories.

The term "insular" refers to a U.S. territorial possession that is not a U.S. state or a federal district. Inhabited insular areas are unincorporated territories meaning that the United States Congress has determined that only selected parts of the United States Constitution apply. For example, although technically native-born citizens of U.S. territories are not considered U.S. citizens under the Section 1 of the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution, Congress has extended citizenship rights to all inhabited territories and these citizens may vote and run for office in any U.S. jurisdiction in which they are residents. [See other interesting definitions at the Department of the Interior ("DOI") Web page "Definitions of Insular Area Political Organizations" at http://www.doi.gov/oia/Islandpages/political_types.htm.]

The "Insular Records for the Unincorporated" session will be chaired and moderated by Basil C. Ottley, Jr., the DOI Desk Officer for the U.S. Virgin Islands, Office of Insular Affairs. Ottley will oversee a panel of diverse experiences and backgrounds with territorial records as well as provide DOI's perspective with regard to territorial archives and recordkeeping. A native of the Virgin Islands, Ottley will also offer his unique perspective on access to the colonial records created by Denmark before the Danish West Indies became a territorial possession of the U.S. in 1917.

Panelist Dr. Vernon P. "Paul" Rood is the Staff Archivist at NARA's Archives II facility principally responsible for the arrangement of Virgin Islands records transferred to that repository for safekeeping after the purchase of the Danish West Indies. Rood prepared an online finding aid for the records of the Virgin Islands from 1672-1917 and will discuss his experiences in his paper, ""The Records of the Virgin Islands in the National Archives (U.S.)." [The largest holding of Danish West Indies records remains in Denmark, and many records are still held in the U.S.

Virgin Islands, and in repositories like the Bancroft Library at the University of California at Berkeley.] Thomas F. Cotter, Senior Archives Analyst in the Life Cycle Management Division at NARA will relate his professional and personal experiences at NARA in his paper "Federal or Local?: Repatriating the Records of the Former Panama Canal Zone." In addition to presenting new material, Cotter will reprise some of the content of a 2001 presentation he made to the Mid-Atlantic Region Archives Conference (MARAC) about "Records of the Panama Canal During a Time of Transition" in which he and other presenters discussed the complex process to transfer records of the Panama Canal Commission to NARA after the US ceded sovereignty of the Panama Canal Zone to the Republic of Panama on December 31, 1999.

Rounding out the panel will be Milagros Pepín-Rivera, Specialist in Cultural Affairs at Archivo General de Puerto Rico (the Puerto Rico Archives). In her paper "Archivo General de Puerto Rico: Resources and Challenges," Pepín will describe and document some of the challenges of preserving archival records of a territorial government, including the unique barriers to resources and access resulting from political status, in this case an unincorporated territory with commonwealth status.

Other LACCHA panel proposals that were submitted for consideration but were not accepted were Noah Lenstra's "Collaborative Digitization in an International Context" and Marisol Ramos' "Silence No More! Archives Threatened by Political Instability in Central America." LACCHA strongly supported all proposals it sponsored this year and congratulates all panel organizers for focusing on topic offerings that are both current and well-balanced in scope and application. As further evidence of subject matter currency, each proposal meritoriously garnered at least one additional endorsement by another SAA or CoSA section, roundtable or task force. Each proposal had a different emphasis on important issues of concern, not only to LACCHA members but to all archivists.

LACCHA has learned that the Committee anticipates fewer session slots in 2010 than the approximately 76 slots offered in 2009 in Austin, yet almost 150 proposals were received to fill those fewer panel slots, making the selection process very competitive this year. Congratulations again to all for a fine showing on behalf of LACCHA!

Electronic Voting Coming to LACCHA in 2010

Starting this year, the Latin American and Caribbean Cultural Heritage Archives Roundtable will begin electing incoming officers using an on-line voting process, replacing paper ballot or acclamation method used in prior years.

As we discussed in LACCHA's October 2009 blog meeting, on-line elections will afford LACCHA and other SAA Sections and Roundtables a myriad of benefits:

- 1) On-line voting allows a greater number of LACCHA members to participate in voting.
- 2) LACCHA members will no longer need to travel to the annual SAA conference to cast a vote. This is important considering the current economic climate. Many institutions are facing budget shortfalls and have been forced to decrease support for professional development and travel. Individuals are facing financial hardships.
- 3) Because on-line voting is done prior to the conference, newly elected co-chairs will have a greater opportunity to prepare to take office at LACCHA's annual business meeting.
- 4) The time previously spent on elections at LACCHA's annual business meeting can be allocated to more interesting subjects and discussions.

SAA's Technical Services staff will administer the technical aspects of the on-line voting process. Brian Doyle, SAA's Director of Member and Technical Services, explained to LACCHA that some SAA Roundtables have already conducted on-line elections. Asked how these roundtables felt about their experience with on-line elections, Brian said: "They have varied according to how well the groups in question publicized the availability of their online ballots. By promoting common guidelines and timetables for all groups, we hope to realize better participation among all sections and roundtables in 2010 and thereafter." These common guidelines and timetables are now included in SAA's revised Guidelines for SAA Sections. SAA guidelines for on-line voting

can be found at http://www.archivists.org/governance/handbook/section9.asp#guidelines_sections.

At the beginning of 2010 LACCHA's co-chairs will review and revise the LACCHA Handbook to include on-line voting. The revised handbook will be posted on the LACCHA blog for member feedback. If no concerns or objections are expressed, LACCHA will then officially adopt on-line voting of officers. We will be sending out a message on the LACCHA listserv notifying members of availability and approval of the revised handbook. In the meantime, we encourage all LACCHA members to consider helping lead what is undoubtedly one of SAA's most dynamic roundtables!

Leadership of the Latin American & Caribbean Cultural Heritage Archives Roundtable

Co-Chairs: Susan Laura Lugo, CA, and Patrick A. Stawski

Susan Laura Lugo, CA is Territorial Coordinator for Archives for the Government of the Virgin Islands, Division of Libraries, Archives and Museums, and she is Advisor and Co-founder of the Caribbean Genealogy Library, Inc., in St. Thomas, VI. susanlauralugo@gmail.com

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Latin American and Caribbean Cultural Heritage Archives events at regional archives conferences

In this new, regular feature, the *Memoria...* newsletter will highlight LACCHA-related panels and presentations at regional archives conferences. To submit news notes for future *Memoria...* newsletters, please direct your correspondence to co-editor Noah Lenstra at nlenstr2@gmail.com.

Midwest Archives Conference, April 22-24, 2010, Chicago:

Plenary speaker Dominic A. Pacyga will present on "Ethnic Chicago: Searching the Roots of Chicago's Past," including Latin Americans of various nationalities; Karen Mason will present on Mujeres Latinas project at the Iowa Women's Archive in the panel "Conundrum at the Crossroads: Challenges of Ethnic and Immigrant Collections"; and Tracy Grimm will present on the Midwest Latino Arts Documentary Heritage Project in the panel "Re-Casting the Net: Redefining Regional Archival Surveys and Expanding Access to Underrepresented Cultural Collections."

Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference, April 29-May 1, 2010, Wilmington, DE

Conference theme is "Outside the Archival Box: Cultural Heritage Collaborations"

Southwest Oral History Association Conference, April 9-11, 2010, Boulder City, Nevada

http://www.southwestoralhistory.org/addl_pages/conference.html

SECTION 2: NEWS NOTES

University of Texas Libraries website features Latin American human rights resources

by T-Kay Sangwand,
Human Rights Archivist,
University of Texas Libraries

Preserving fragile born-digital human rights records is now one of the roles of the Human Rights Documentation Initiative (HRDI), a fully-funded program based out of the University of Texas Libraries that acquires digital and traditional archival material documenting human rights activities around the world. The new website features full-text searchable archived human rights websites containing primary source documentation such as newsletters, reports, videos, and photographs; a browsable list of human rights related archival collections at UT Austin; the HRDI blog, twitter feed (@UT_HRDI); and events calendar. To visit, go to: <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/hrdi>.

The archived websites cover topics such as genocide, immigration, disappearances, ethnic conflict, gender, sexuality and civil liberties. A sixth of the archived websites focuses specifically on Latin American countries and is published in English, Spanish and/or Portuguese; the other represented regions are Africa, Asia, the Middle East and North America.

Over half the archival collections identified as human rights related focus on Latin America and Latinos in the U.S. and are located at the Benson Latin America Collection at UT Austin. These collections include colonial era slavery documents from Colombia, papers from the Texas Chicano movement, queer activist organizations, human rights abuses under the Pinochet dictatorship, social justice art prints, transcripts from the Argentina military junta trials, oral histories and radio programs on Latino and Mexican American experiences.

The HRDI website will also be releasing new features such as indexed and full-text searchable video testimonies and transcripts from the HRDI's partner organizations, the Texas After Violence Project (<http://www.texasafterviolence.org/>) and the Kigali Memorial Centre (<http://www.kigalimemorialcentre.org>), as well as a growing collection of individual human-rights related news articles, reports, photographs and videos materials harvested from the internet. Many of these items focus on human rights in Latin America, particularly the 2009 political situation in Honduras. These new site additions are slated to launch in 2010.

Alan Lomax Archives will repatriate digital audio recordings to Haiti

Collecting global music was a passion for Alan Lomax, an American folklorist of the 20th century who traveled around the world gathering local songs and recorded thousands of them in the United States, the Caribbean and Europe.

But Haitian music was a special fascination for Lomax.

Now, Lomax's work in Haiti has been restored and preserved and will soon be returned to the island. The project, sponsored by the Green Family Foundation, a humanitarian agency based in Miami and operating in Haiti, brings to light the recordings Lomax made in Haiti for The Library of Congress from 1936 to 1937. The Alan Lomax Archives/Association for Cultural Equity (ACE)'s Haiti Repatriation and Cultural Preservation Project has been selected as an outstanding project of the Clinton Global Initiative in Haiti.

Over the last ten years ACE, in collaboration with the Magic Shop in New York City and staff at the American Folklife Center, has had the recordings digitally transferred, restored, and de-noised in order to return them to the

Haitian people. Harte Recordings of San Francisco is publishing a box set of ten CDs with sound and video drawn from the collection, with extensive song notes and lyrics by Haitian music specialists, Gage Averill and Louis Carl St. Jean. It will include a book, compiled by Ellen Harold, of Lomax's fascinating Haitian diaries and his correspondence with his friend, Zora Neale Hurston; anthropologist, Melville Herskovits; and his mentor, Charles Seeger, as well as with the Library of Congress.

Alan Lomax in Haiti, produced by Anna Wood, Jeffrey Greenberg, and David Katznelson, has just been released. To learn more visit The Haiti Box and Cultural Equity. Together with Kimberly Green and advisors from the Open Society Institute, we are exploring options for appropriate recipient institutions for the full collection. ACE's major concern is that the materials will be widely accessible to the public, to educational institutions, and other outlets, and we have outlined a possible program of dissemination and cultural feedback based on models in public folklore. We expect a formal repatriation ceremony to take place in Haiti next spring.

Over the next few months, we will have the entire collection mastered before it is repatriated, and Gage Averill and his students will compile a digital catalog of the recordings. In its original form, the collection comprised 1,500 aluminum discs (over fifty hours) of recorded folk and popular music. It includes 350 ft. of 8mm film of music, dance, and ritual and over 250 pages of Alan Lomax's diaries, notes, and correspondence about his fieldwork in Haiti.

Copies of the restored collection will be also be "repatriated" to the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress, and deposited at the Schomburg Center for Research Center in Black Culture. Other key partners in this initiative include Harte Recordings, the Rock Foundation, the Concordia Foundation, the Lake Ray Foundation, and Beldock Levine & Hoffman LLP.

University of Miami Receives \$2.4 Million Gift from the Goizueta Foundation

The Goizueta Foundation has donated \$2.4 million to the University of Miami to support a comprehensive University-wide plan that will enhance and expand the reach of the Otto G. Richter Library's Cuban Heritage Collection (CHC). The gift will also establish prestigious fellowship programs within the UM Libraries and the College of Arts and Sciences and launch a lecture series with the world-respected Institute for Cuban and Cuban American Studies (ICCAS).

The grant of \$2,443,500, which will be spread over five years, will augment the reach of the CHC in its acquisition, preservation and processing of documents, books and other materials. It will also support the digitization of materials, including Web Site development and marketing efforts. Part of the grant will also establish the Libraries' Fellowship Programs and support an Undergraduate Fellows Program in a partnership with the College of Arts and Sciences to attract students and scholars and cultivate the use of this unique Collection for research. In conjunction with UM's ICCAS, the grant will help launch a lecture series designed to showcase the Collection and its relevance.

"We are delighted with the Goizueta Foundation's generous gift because it will allow this first-rate collection to become fully integrated into our curriculum, as well as fulfill its role in the mission of the university," said UM Executive Vice President and Provost Thomas J. LeBlanc. "The Cuban Heritage Collection is a treasure that is an invaluable resource to students, scholars and the community at large."

The CHC is one of the largest comprehensive collections of Cuban and Cuban diaspora materials in the world. The Collection includes rare books, manuscripts, photographs, maps, architectural drawings, prints, broadsides, posters, audio visual materials, newspapers and journals and other materials. Housed on the second floor of the Richter Library in the Roberto C. Goizueta Pavillion, the CHC attracts students, scholars and academics from all over the world to its venue for research on Cuban history, culture and politics.

In keeping with the educational mission of UM, the Undergraduate Fellows Program will allow for CHC to be integrated within the College of Arts and Sciences, increasing the exposure and promotion of the collection and enriching student research opportunities. All undergraduate students will be eligible to apply. Those chosen for the fellowship would utilize the CHC for an individual research project and would be provided with one-on-one attention and direction.

The Graduate Fellowship Program will establish a Library Fellows program for doctoral students based on other programs established at other research libraries such as the Newberry Library in Chicago and the Yale University Library. These competitive fellowships would be highly coveted and would allow the fellow ample access to the CHC.

The CHC has a virtual presence on the Internet through its Web Site at: <http://www.library.miami.edu/chc/> and through the Libraries digital repository at <http://merrick.library.miami.edu/digitalprojects/chc.php>. The grant would improve access to CHC materials online, including the development of online exhibitions and other enhancements. Funding from the grant will also increase digitization efforts to preserve the Collection and most importantly increase awareness of and access to its resources, ultimately extending the reach of its holdings to a larger community of users.

We want to know what you are up to! Contribute to the LACCHA newsletter and website.

We have been thrilled by the amazing articles we received for our first volume. Let's keep the momentum going! The second issue of volume two will be sent out in mid summer 2010. We seek articles, news notes, book reviews and event announcements of all types for this issue. We encourage the submission of images to accompany articles. E-mail the newsletter co-editor at nlenstr2@gmail.com with ideas and articles for the upcoming newsletter.

SECTION 3: FEATURE ARTICLES

Newspaper helps preserve the records of famed child exodus, Operation Pedro Pan

Marking its 50th anniversary this year, the largest exodus of children in the Western Hemisphere, dubbed Operation Pedro Pan, is a unique chapter in Caribbean and Miami history. It began on Dec. 26, 1960 as Cuban President Fidel Castro cemented his 1959 revolutionary take-over of the island. Parents opposed to the new regime's Marxist leanings and planned indoctrination in all Cuban public and private schools soon came to a conclusion: They had to get their kids out.

But how?

Figure 1: Image shows children and teens in the program arriving at Miami International Airport. Circa early 1960s. Courtesy of The Miami Herald.



In an unusual partnership never forged before or since, the U.S. government and the Catholic Church joined forces to issue Cuba children visa waivers and arranged for their travel to Miami, where those who had no relatives would be cared for by the church until their parents could get out of Cuba. Sometimes the parent-child separation was for months; sometimes for years. Today, the story of those 14,048 children -- ages 5 to 17 and sent alone to the U.S. -- is being preserved and brought to the forefront not by a library or a museum, but a daily newspaper.

DATE	NAME OF CHILD	BIRTH DATE	I-20	SPRING WITH (NAME AND ADDRESS)
12-17-61	FLORES GARCIA, ELSA A.	5-17-47	F	4040 - 74 ST. N.Y.C.
"	DOLAMPO RODRIGUEZ, CANDIDA M.	1-14-46	F	601 W 137 ST. Apt. 23, N.Y.C.
"	TALAYERA CASTELLANOS, MIGUEL	3-12-46	F	133 BERKELEY PL. BROOKLYN, N.Y.
"	D'RIEAVI SALGADO, ADRIANA A.	8-3-47	F	109-31, 44 AVE, CORONA, L.I., NY
"	" " MIDAS C.	12-25-46	F	" "
"	DEL TORRE LEON, CARLOS	12-24-48	F	CW/B - KENDALL
"	BARQUET ALONSO, FRANCISCO G.	12-3-51	F	CW/B - FLA. CITY
"	" " AGUEDA	11-30-40	F	CW/B - FLA. CITY
"	SANCHEZ PEZEL, ROSELIA	1-22-46	PR	1634 SW 1st ST. MIAMI APT. 2 SALOME HOEL
"	MENENDEZ HERNANDEZ, SILVANA	1-20-46	F	267 SW 23 ST. - APT. DE LILLIAN - 3RD FLOOR
"	MARTIN DENIS ALINA M.	4-17-46	PAR	34-7 STREET DE VENEZUELA
"	" " SANDRA A.	2-15-46	PR	" "
"	" " HAROLD A.	2-11-46	PR	" "
"	SANTIAGO ESTEBAN CANOAS	1-23-58	PR	820 NW 29th Ave. Miami
"	MESA GARCIA, MARIA T.	2-17-47	F	10047 SW 4th ST. MIAMI TO N.Y.C.
"	ROSSELL MATOS, RANDY A.	2-31-46	F	5194 Williams Ave. CORONA 2ND TO N.Y.C.
"	" " RODOLFO R.	11-31-46	F	" TO N.Y.C.
"	ESTEVE ALONSO, MARIAL EDO.	3-5-48	F	3255 NW 32 Ave. Miami
"	" " ANTONIA E.	1-10-47	F	" "

For years, the only record of the childrens' arrival were three giant binders called the "Airport Log," made up of hundreds of handwritten sheets that listed a child's name, date of birth and arrival, and the name of the camp where they were sent on the day they flew to Miami.

In December 2008, Miami Herald staffers Luisa Yanez and Nancy San Martin acquired the rudimentary records from Barry University, a Catholic college in Miami Shores, and the newspaper began the time-consuming process of transcribing and digitizing the 14,048 names on the Airport Log and the accompanying Parents Log. There were snags along the way. Catholic Charities in Miami, owners of the records, had second thoughts and decided they should not be made public. But The Miami Herald felt the preservation of the Operation Pedro Pan arrival logs were too important and proceeded with the project.

The Airport Log is the record keeping of a man named Jorge "George" Guarch, who had worked for the Catholic church in Miami and Father Bryan O. Walsh, considered the father of Operation Pedro Pan. Guarch's job was to pick up the Cuban children as they arrived daily, alone on commercial flights from Havana to Miami International Airport. His logs are the only known listing of all the children who took part in the 22-month-long Operation Pedro Pan. The Miami Herald's plan was to create a one-of-a-kind searchable database with the logs.

Once completed, Multimedia staffers Rob Barry and Stephanie Rosenblatt added a Facebook-like component to the database so Pedro Pans could reconnect with each other. Through the database, we invited Pedro Pans, who are now in their 50s and 60s, to tell of their experience as children alone in a foreign country, send each other e-mail messages, upload photos from then and now and share memorabilia. Many former Pedro Pans have become successful in the U.S. Among them: former Florida Sen. Mel Martinez, Latin singer Willy Chirino and two Miami mayors, current office holder Tomas Regalado and former mayor, Joe Carollo,

Today, the database is a living history of the famed Operation Pedro Pan, which got its name from a story that appeared in the newspaper in the early 1960s that said the children had flown away like the fabled Peter Pan. The Operation Pedro Pan Database has attracted more than 1 million hits since its unveiling in March 2009. It is maintained with the help of two volunteers who are former Pedro Pans, Eloisa Echazabal and Carmen Romanach.

This marks the second time The Miami Herald had unveiled such a unique, searchable database in an effort to help preserve the history of Cubans who sought exile in Miami in the last 50 years. In 2008, the newspaper unveiled the Freedom Flights Database, which lists the names of the 250,000 Cubans who fled the island between 1965 and 1973 on U.S. sponsored flights. To visit the databases go to www.MiamiHerald.com/pedropan and www.MiamiHerald.com/freedomflights.

Genealogy Library Provides Information on Caribbean Family History

They are nameless and faceless -- the five to six million slaves imported into the Caribbean from Africa between 1519 and 1867. But that could change one day. The Caribbean Genealogy Library organization, supported by membership fees and donations, seeks to fulfill a long-recognized need: to provide access to information and primary resources for establishing the identity and origin of the slaves, as well the colonists who governed them.

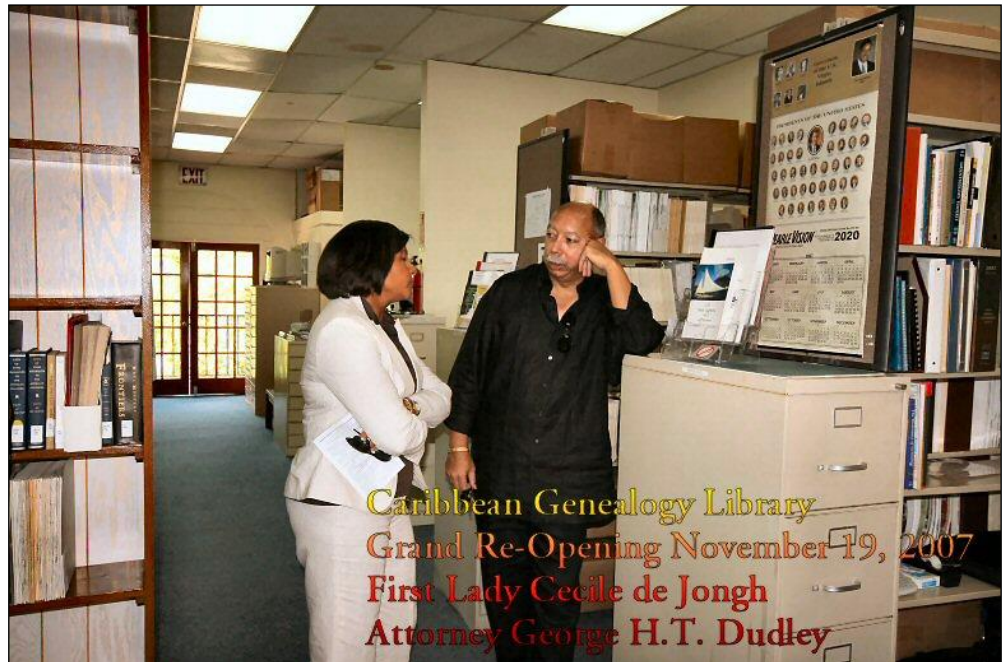
Believed to be the only repository in the Caribbean specifically dedicated to Caribbean genealogy and family history resources, the

tax-exempt Caribbean Genealogy Library was established as a nonprofit organization in 2000 on the island of St. Thomas in The Virgin Islands. In nine years, library membership has grown to 80 members, over 2,000 books and monographs; hundreds of newsletters, journals and society bulletins; special collections of funeral and memorial books, government publications, program booklets and posters from the Virgin Islands.

There are vertical files rich in local information and copies of articles; photographs; maps; genealogical charts; and digital media--all enhanced by the microfilm borrowing privileges of an authorized branch of the Family History Library of the Church of Jesus Christ of The Latter Day Saints in Salt Lake City, Utah. Over 2,000 rolls of Family History Library microfilm has been identified as pertaining to the Caribbean so the branch status is indeed a privilege for CGL and its geographically isolated members.

Today, the library has an active elected Board of Directors of 12 members under President Thyra Hammond, but no paid staff so CGL patrons travel to the library to do research when a volunteer librarian is present. Opening hours may vary but usually range from 12 to as many as 33 hours a week depending upon the availability of volunteers. Little family information exists in print for the Caribbean, and often this information is not indexed or physically accessible to researchers so volunteer librarians must be knowledgeable in general genealogy research methodology as well the specific information barriers posed by Caribbean colonial records.

By way of illustration, consider the difficulties of researching information contained in tax records or land records using primary documentation that may be housed in the archival holdings of seven different countries. This is precisely the case for the island of St. Croix. Over the past 500 years it was claimed by or administered under seven different flags: Spain, Netherlands, England, France, Knights of Malta, Denmark and the U.S. Add to that the



complex but often "faceless" and nameless documentation of the African slave trade and it quickly becomes apparent what kinds of challenges Caribbean family history researchers must overcome. Perhaps more than most regions, this is why Caribbean genealogists must rely so heavily on primary government documentation to illuminate the past.

For more information on the challenges faced by CGL and other repositories in the Caribbean serving family history patrons, see: "What a Pistarckle! Access to Caribbean Records for Family History Research" by Susan Laura Lugo (2008) at <http://ifla.queenslibrary.org/IV/ifla74/papers/117-Lugo-en.pdf>. For more about the Caribbean Genealogy Library and how to become a member visit the CGL Web site at <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~vicgl>, write to CGL at P.O. Box 366, St. Thomas, VI 00804-0366, or call at 340-714-2136. To peruse an online catalog of books and monographs in the library's collection, go to <http://www.libraryworld.com/opac>. The login is "CGL" for the library name (no password is required). Material is continuously being added.

General Santa Anna in Saint Thomas

[Editor's note: The full-text of this article can be found at <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~vicgl/SantaAnnaGenFinal.pdf>]

Article Abstract:

Throughout his storied career, Mexican General Antonio López de Santa Anna (1794-1876) had many opportunities to flaunt his presence in the Caribbean. These opportunities, however, unlike his flamboyant soldiering, originated in disgrace and humiliation, as Santa Anna sought refuge in the Caribbean archipelago not once, not twice but on five separate occasions of political exile. True to his penchant for drama and hyperbole, Santa Anna's exiles spanned a 22-year period as turbulent as any in Mexican history.

Cuba, Jamaica, the coastal city of Cartagena, Colombia, the island of Santo Domingo (now the Dominican Republic) and the Bahamas were major destinations and safe harbors for Santa Anna during his frequent banishments. Curiously, though, few outside the Caribbean recall that Santa Anna also considered St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands, his home during his fourth exile from 1858 to 1866 when the island was still part of the Danish West Indies.¹ Santa Anna's main residence burned down in 1986, but its site perches on a hill overlooking picturesque Charlotte Amalie harbor in St. Thomas, and today it has a guest house still known to locals and visitors as "Villa Santana."

This article, "General Santa Anna in Saint Thomas" by Aimery Caron, reveals new information about the Caribbean life and lifestyle of the ill-fated General and, using original sources, describes where and how he made his home in St. Thomas for eight years.

About the Author:

Aimery Caron is a Caribbean historian with special interests in the U.S. Virgin Islands and the French West Indies. Born in France, he relocated to St. Thomas in the 1950s with his parents and has made the island his home ever since. Dr. Caron served as French Consul for the U.S. Virgin Islands for 17 years, and retired from the University of the Virgin Islands as Professor emeritus (chemistry). He has translated, authored and published several monographs on Caribbean history, is proud to be a long-standing member of L'Associ  t   d'Histoire de la Guadeloupe, is a founding member of the nonprofit Caribbean Genealogy Library in St. Thomas (www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~vicgl) and continues to actively serve as a member of its Board of Directors and volunteer librarian.

¹ The Danish West Indies (St. Thomas, St. John and St. Croix and their surrounding cays and lesser islands) were sold by Denmark to the United States in 1917 for \$25 million. Today this island group remains an unincorporated U.S. Territory. The U.S. Virgin Islands is located in the Caribbean Sea approximately 60 miles east of Puerto Rico and about 1,100 miles southeast of Miami, Florida.