

AfroPanamanian Newsletter



English opens doors. Read the Newsletter

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Donation

<http://www.kleph.com/Slideshows/panamacanal09/index.html>

Compare Canal Construction Era with Canal Expansion Above



Controversy

Anecdotes

Poetry

**LOS AMIGOS :
Por la superación de la Etnia Negra**

A group of friends, in Panama, decided to join forces to work on the rescue of values, customs and cultural traditions bequeathed to us through our ancestors. These have been displaced by others, thus losing a large part of our Black Heritage. We are evaluating all these forgotten traditions and values and highlighting figures as examples for future generations.

“For Black history to be done right, we must do it ourselves.” Edward Gaskin

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**The editor is not responsible for the opinions
expressed by our collaborators**

Cover Page: The stamp which appears on the cover was proposed to the Canal Zone Government by Mr. George W. Westerman (r.i.p.) accepted and issued in 1951 as a 10 cent postage stamp, used for years. Permission for its continuous use was given by his grandnephew, Cecil Reynolds.

Editorial



Don't let cancer get the best of you, forget about foolish myths, take a step ahead of it.

October has been selected as the pink and blue month to remind you that breast and prostate cancers can be cured if they are detected early.

This does not mean that these cancers are the only ones that can be cured, any cancer detected in an early stage can be cured.

Get your medical check up.



--Kindness is the language the blind can see and the deaf can hear.--

FEEDBACK (from September Newsletter)

Thanks so much for the information in the News Letter. I remember my first husband (deceased) born in the Canal Zone had to do a written exam in order to get his *Cedula*. The statement about Arnulfo Arias is so true and my dad, almost was unemployed because of him. (Sorry I can't tell the story). Good letter. M.

**Born in 1939 Ines also had to apply to the President for her cedula when she became of age (21). George Westerman served as a bridge between West Indians, Panamanian West Indian descendants, the American managers of the Canal Zone, and the Panamanians. He waged a relentless battle against social inequities and discriminatory racial practices in all fields. He formed the National Civic League to lobby the Constitutional Assembly to amend the 1941 Constitution which had effectively denationalized Panamanian born children of foreign parents by requiring that they pass a test on the history and other aspects of Panama after coming of age before Panamanian citizenship would be granted.*

I enjoyed the recent newsletter, especially the article about lodges you said would be in it! Also really appreciated the downloads about the convention in Honduras—and was doubly sorry you couldn't attend. I misunderstood that it was focused on youth—but instead was on old AND young, including delegates from Africa. Wow! **Robin**

FLY BUTTERFLY (song)

Pretty little butterfly, What to do today
Hang around the place all day
Nothing to do but play

Nothing to do but play, All the live long day
So, fly butterfly, fly butterfly
Don't waste your time away

International Year of the Afrodescendant

(contributed by Lloyd Gallimore)

Miss Universe 2011 is Leila Lopez,
Angolan born, of Caribbean descent

Her Cuban parents went back to Africa as
desired by Marcus Garvey.



Third world solution to lighting problem – useful in homes with zinc roof without drop ceiling.
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SBWi3NtND68> (received from John E. Edwards)

Olden Days Sayings

“EVERYDAY BUCKET GO AH WELL, ONE DAY THE BOTTOM DROPOUT”. In this the International Year of the Afrodescendant, we are pleased with the **“no nonsense”** attitude of the Miss Universe contest, giving the Angolan-Caribbean contestant her just due, although some **“foo-foo”** **“red eye”** people have derogatory things to say. When will the discrimination stop?

Were you a Novella Fan?

Sandra Patterson

Before the 1960's when TV became officially a communication media in Panama, radio was the main source of entertainment. There came a time when there were as many radio stations as there were theatres in Panama city without mentioning those in the interior. According to their programs so was their audience; some were more popular than others.

Except for HOG that transmitted in English and HOXO that did the same at certain hours daily, all others did it in Spanish.

Radio stations such as La Voz del Pueblo, Radio Programas Continental (RPC), Radio Panamericana, Onda Popular, HOQ-HOQQ, Radio Miramar, Radio Hogar, Radio El Mundo, Radio Musical were the top ones.

As time went by, more and more stations appeared and there were so many radio stations that they almost filled the radio dial: Radio Mia, Radio Mia Selecta (Radio Guadalupe- Radio mia Guadalupe), Radio Reloj, Radio Aeropuerto, Radio Universal, Tic Tac, Radio Mil, RadioTV2, Radio Minutera most of all do not exist today. These stations had a variety of live programs starring local actors, news, sports, musicals, poems and others.

*To the tune of Glen Miller's American Patrol, Jorge Carrasco would knock three times on wood and say "**arriba dormilones**", his morning wake up program at 7am over RPC. From 1:15pm to 1:30pm RPC had the dramatization of local and international events/crimes et all. At 11:45 to 12noon Red Panamericana transmitted **La familia plantillera** starring Harry Iglesias and Eneida Valdes. When rock 'n' roll was in it's high lights with Frankie Lymon, and others, HOQ-HOQQ had 3 daily programs called **aquí está el rock 'n' roll** with Eduardo Soto.*

*At 12:30pm **Lucho Azcarraga** came on from Salon Bella Vista at Hotel Panama over Red Panamericana. Nacho Valdes commented on different topics from his **Vibraciones** through Red Panamericana. Radio Miramar kept you up to date with what went on at the National Assembly.*

*When Radio Mia Selecta began, Hugo Wood had **Wood's work shop** in English from 5 to 6pm with a little of everything.*

*9pm was a critical hour; if you were 10 or under you had to be in bed (sleeping?). If you were over you could get a chance till maybe 10pm so you could listen to **La tremenda corte** with Tres Patines. Then adults took over the radio with **Los monarcas del aire** first from Radio Musical then from Radio Mia.*

News could not be left out:

*6:00 am SCN
6:30 am RPC
12:30pm Radio Mía (Los Marcianos)
1:00pm RPC
4:00pm Red Panamericana
6:00pm SCN
6:30pm RPC*

*Dramatized programs (novellas) for children: **Tanganika, el rey de la selva, Luis Dragón, el Conquistador del Espacio, Los Tres Villalobos** and also live kid's shows like **Tio Pepe** with Demostenes Hassan at 4pm from Red Panamericana were also part of the evening where you could participate.*



Novellas...

Just as they are on TV today, for a very long time novellas have been part of women's entertainment life.

In the 50's when there was no TV in town, radionovellas were the most companionable way to do housework and keep women's minds entertained; you had them of all gender for different types of audiences. They had them in the morning at 10 am, at noon, from 3pm and at night from 8pm.

*Funny they only lasted 15 minutes but had your imagination running wild. Here are some titles you might remember: **Kadir el Arabe, Sergio Velásquez Acusa, El Jinete, and El Derecho de Nacer.***



El Derecho de Nacer

Sandra Patterson

*Neither for radio nor TV has there been a novella heard or seen more than **El Derecho de Nacer**.*

Originally written for radio in 1948 by Cuban author Felix B. Cagnet, this novel became a hit in its homeland Cuba then was exported to other countries. It was such a smash hit that by 1958 it was produced for TV making another hit in Cuba.

*Well it came to radio in Panama in the early 50's and that was something big. Easily you can say there wasn't a home that did not tune in to *El Derecho de Nacer*. By 8pm everything had to be done in the house and not even a paper could rustle because the ladies had to listen to the novella.*

If she was on her way home and the novella started, there was no problem, she could stop at any door (and was even offered a seat) so she could listen. When commercials began then she'd move on not before thanking her host (a friend of mine said to me that she and her brothers called this stations of the cross).

*The Cuban novel *El Derecho de Nacer* has been a box office hit on radio, TV and on the big screen. Many other countries have made their versions of it*

Breast and Prostate Cancer

Sandra Patterson

Originating from breast tissue, while the overwhelming majority of cases in humans are women, men can also develop breast cancer.

Size, stage, rate of growth and other characteristics of the tumor determine the kinds of treatment that may include surgery, drugs (chemotherapy) and radiation.

Surgical removal of the tumor provides the single largest benefit capable of producing a cure in many cases. Chemotherapy kills cells that are dividing rapidly anywhere in the body. Its secondary effects include temporary hair loss and digestive disturbances. Radiation may be added to kill any cancer cells in the breast that were missed by surgery. Survival rate varies greatly depending on cancer type, staging and treatment.

Symptoms of breast cancer other than a lump include changes in the size, shape, skin dimpling, nipple inversion, and spontaneous nipple discharge. There is also an inflammatory breast cancer that can be mistaken for a simple inflammatory condition; symptoms include itching, pain, swelling, nipple inversion, redness throughout the breast, orange peel texture of the skin. Pain is not a reliable symptom to diagnose breast cancer.

However there are aggressive cases, prostate cancers are slow growing. This cancer tends to develop in men over the age of fifty and although it is one of the most prevalent types of cancer in men, many never have symptoms.

Including genetics and other factors, such as diet and life style, have been implicated in the development of prostate cancer. Its presence may be indicated by physical examination, prostate-specific antigen (PSA), biopsy or symptoms such as difficulty to urinate, problems during sexual intercourse, or erectile dysfunction. Cancer cells may spread from the prostate to other parts of the body particularly the bones and lymph nodes causing other symptoms.

Athletism & Sports – A lifestyle

Participating in sports is good, but it is not a long-term activity. One can only make a living in sports for a limited period of years, afterwards what? A profession is a necessary addition to a career in sports or athletism.

By Fernando Goldson

--**Hubert “Mickey” Brown** was born in Panama and resided in Parque Lefevre. He was coached by the legendary Jennings Blackett, however his talent was brought to bear by the great coach Carlos Belizaire.

“Mickey”, as he is well known by his friends here and abroad, exploded on the scene when he won the 440-meter dash at the First Latin American (*Iberoamericana*) Games held in Santiago, Chile in January 1961.

He received a track scholarship to Morgan State University that year. While at Morgan, in 1961, he won the 440 collegiate IC4A Championship

In 1962 the NCAA Championship

In 1963 the CIAA Championship defeating the World Record holder in the process.

“Mickey” was also instrumental in his school winning the Penn Relay 4 x 400 Three consecutive years.

He was also summoned by his country of origin to represent it (Panama) in the Bolivarian Games in 1962 held in *Barranquilla*, Colombia, where he was once again victorious in the 440-meter dash defeating several Olympians from Latin American Countries.

In 1962 “Mickey” was ranked 7th best quarter-miler in the World. Sports did not stop him from studying and earning a Masters degree in Social Work from New York University.

Hubert “Mickey” Brown is now retired and resides in the U.S.A.

--**CECIL JAMES WILLIAMS CAMPBELL Panamanian Athlete and teacher.** (*taken from his facebook profile*)

As a youngster, studying at the Uruguay Primary School in Colon, he liked to play baseball being a first baseman, but because of his height his teacher in Abel Bravo College, Benito Hernandez, guided him into basketball in 1948. He played Minor Leagues under Professor Jaime Velez. The Colon Sportsman, Fernando Tom, then incorporated him into Major leagues. An avid, reader, Williams read up on the lives and techniques of great basketball authors, putting their experience to good use when he was chosen to play in the First Central American Games in 1950 in Honduras, and in 1951 the First Pan-American Games in Argentine.

While still in High School he obtained a Scholarship to study in the U.S.A. acquiring his Bachelor in Science in 1954 specializing in Math from SAVANNAH STATE COLLEGE.

Returning to Panama he continued in sports gaining another scholarship to NOTRE DAME UNIVERSITY where he obtained his Masters. He continued teaching, which is the career that could put food on the table until his retirement in 1986.

Athletism & Sports (cont.)

--**Westerman - Self taught diplomat** *(an excerpt from Reynolds' contribution, more to be used as applies)*
 George Washington Westerman gained national prominence as a tennis player. In 1936 and 1938 he won both the singles and doubles titles in the Panamanian National Tennis Championship under the auspices of the National Olympic Committee, and in 1938 he was a member of the tennis team representing Panama in the IV Central American and Caribbean Olympics.

Westerman, like many other West Indian Panamanians of his generation, had a limited formal education. He attended the Canal Zone Elementary School at La Boca (the West Indian district) between 1916 and 1920 through third grade. He described himself as being largely self-taught and a prolific reader, especially of history and black literature; he also took correspondence courses.

President *Ernesto de la Guardia* appointed Westerman a delegate with the rank of ambassador (Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary) to the General Assembly of the United Nations, where he served from 1956-1960 based on his community leadership, journalism, and social work.

--**CIRILO McSWEEN** Besides other wonderful things in his lifetime, during his teens he became very popular in track and field, breaking the National 400-meter Olympic record 1952 in Helsinki, Finland. He represented Panama in the Central American and Caribbean games besides participating in the Panamanian team which attended the World Olympics.

Sports earned him a scholarship to Illinois University in the U.S.A. from which he graduated with a title in Economics in 1954 which he used to become one of the most successful Black businessmen in the Chicago area, owner of a McDonald's franchise.



--**Rod Carew**, the professional [baseball](#) player whose full name is Rodney Cline Carew, was born in Gatun, Panama on October 1, 1945,. One of the great hitters of his generation, he received the Most Valuable Player award Three years in a row: 1973, 1974, and 1975.

Officially ending his Hall of Fame career about six months after MLB owners did it for him by conspiracy, Rod Carew announced his retirement on June 2, 1986.

A George Washington High School alumni, Rod Carew now participates in the education of youngsters at schools in the U.S. he often advises them not to let anybody tell them they can't do something. As far as he is concerned, "anything can happen in life".

He thinks: "It's OK to dream, because dreams do come true," whatever walk of life you might take.

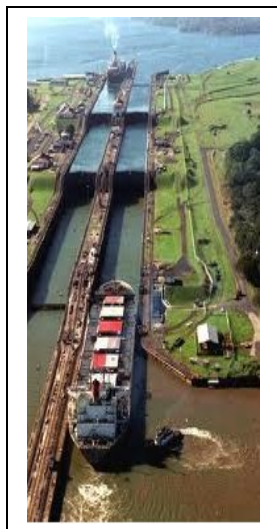
Opportunities:

http://www.positivetourism.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2015:health-care-a-holistic-therapies-school-seeks-more-caribbean-students-for-itec-uk-accreditation-program&catid=82:caribbean-wellness-tourism&Itemid=457 (contributed by Sharon Chalmers)

Canal Treaty Anniversary – September 7

Black Population in PANAMA 2002: App. 600,000? By Claral Richards – founder of *Dia de la Etnia Negra* (continued from September 2011)

Panama's Lock Canal



Trees are an important part of the preservation of the water supply for the Canal

1849 (*discovery of gold in the US*) instigated the building of the Panama Railroad (1850-1855) and the opportunity for work. It initiated the coming of Black Afro-Caribbeans, mostly from Jamaica, Barbados and Trinidad, who were recruited to work on the railroad. In 1880, the French started work on the Compagnie Universelle du Canal Interoceanique. Its purpose was for a transoceanic canal across the isthmus. Finally, the building of the Panama Canal by the USA began in 1904. Like the building of the railroad, Blacks were recruited to work for the French and the Americans in Panama. Workers lost their lives during construction of all 3 projects and after the jobs were done, most Blacks remained.

Racial discrimination has been taking place ever since the building of the canal. A "Gold" and "Silver" label was used in Panama, White workers were paid in gold while Blacks were paid in silver. Public facilities were labelled "gold" and "silver"



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(more from Westerman's biography)

TREES

Joyce Kilmer

I think that I shall never see
A poem as lovely as a tree..
A tree whose hungry mouth is prest
Against the earth's sweet flowing breast;
A tree that looks at God all day,
And lifts her leafy arms to pray;
A tree that may in Summer wear
A nest of robins in her hair;
Upon whose bosom snow has lain;
Who intimately lives with rain.
Poems are made by fools like me,
But only God can make a tree.

It was not until 1960, with the passage of the "Bazan Amendment" enacted under President Roberto Chiari, that the right of full citizenship from birth was restored. Another issue Westerman protested was the Panamanian Immigration Law of 1948 which forced African Americans and other "prohibited peoples" who wished to visit Panama to pay a deposit of \$500 to guarantee their return to their country of origin. This was in contrast to white visitors who only had to pay a deposit of \$150.

<http://www.taboga.panamanow.com/history/history.html> (history of Taboga Island contributed by Tilsa Muldoon)