

# AfroPanamanian Newsletter



*English opens doors. Read the Newsletter*

[www.afropanameniannewsletter.mex.tl](http://www.afropanameniannewsletter.mex.tl)

*We encourage our web readers to feel free to use our links to find scholarships, jobs, grants and others.*

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*Lloyd O'Meally*



*A Fruitfull Career*

**Anecdotes**

**Controversy**

**Poetry**

## LOS AMIGOS :

**Por la superación de la Etnia Negra  
(Incorporated to SEAPAT EVENTOS, S.A.)**

**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*

#### *ADVICE FOR LIFE*

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***“Whoever is careless  
with the truth  
in small matters  
cannot be trusted  
with important matters.”***

– Albert Einstein

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

*If you would like to be removed from our mailing list, please type REMOVE and reply to afropanamiannewsletter@gmail.com*

December 2014 Feedback

Thanks to you and your colleagues for sharing information over the year. May the afro newsletter continue is quest in 2015 and best wishes for the future. Silvia.

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Hola Ines:

Just read the current newsletter, & the Tribute for Mothers by Kerri-Ann Smith is a keeper. I smiled at parts, & shed tears at other parts, remembering my mother saying some of the same things. Yahweh took her home December 26, 2009, 2 weeks after my only grandbaby was born.

Thanks for sharing, and many 'kudos' to Ms. Smith.

Feliz Año.

Marcia

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Happy Holidays to you!  
Nice edition.  
Nadya.

**Reminiscence:** On the night of January 6 each year when the Christmas trees were taken down, they were collected by the older teenagers, taken to Hideaway beach and burnt, at which time a weenie roast was held.

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#### **OPPORTUNITIES:**

Scholarships in English in Canada: [tamwoodcareers.com](http://tamwoodcareers.com)

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“AMERICANAH” by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie (contributed by Ricardo Millett)

If you have not read 'Americanah' put it at the front of your reading list.

I highly recommend it as a 'must read'. It is one of the most lyric, poetic, insightful, vexing, informative, extraordinarily well written contemporary novel I have read. Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie is an amazing writer!

Check out the link below, see the video, but most of all read the book

<http://billmoyers.com/2014/12/16/nigerian-author-chimamanda-ngozi-adichie-id-entity/>

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## **"¡AFROLATIN@S, PRESENTE!! 2015: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IN THE INTL DECADE FOR AFRODESCENDANTS"**

Is hosting a fundraiser in support of its [Kickstarter campaign](#) which will also introduce the United Nations International Decade for People of African Descent (2015-2024) to a public NYC audience.

**More info and FREE REGISTRATION here:**

<http://www.mistharlem.com/event/afrolatins-presente-2015-community-engagement-in-the-international-decade-for-people-of-african-descent/>

A picture of the Kickstarter webpage itself is attached which you can refer to when you read the below.

The easiest way to donate is via this link- <http://www.kickstarter.com/projects/afrolatinospresente/afrolatins-presente-2015>

TO WATCH the video click on the main image on the BLACK **Play** button (in case you haven't seen it yet).

TO DONATE click on the GREEN button on the right side of the screen that says **Back This Project**

It will take you through a login for Amazon (they handle all payments securely). For each pledge-donation to count towards pure final goal, ideally they have to go through this same system.

**The bound versions of the 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013**

**AfroPanamanian Newsletter**

**are still available**

**from Ines at (507)224-4177.**

**Olden days sayings:** *"Honesty is the best of policy"*

*How honest are we? Do we agree with the examples, the moral? What are your conclusions, comments, suggestions?*

*This maybe an hypothetical anecdote, but it teaches us many lessons. (contributed by Lewis Eccleston)*

A few years ago robbers entered a bank in a small town.

One of them shouted: "Don't move! The money belongs to the bank. Your lives belong to you."

Immediately all the people in the bank laid on the floor quietly and without panic.

This is an example of how the correct wording of a sentence can make everyone change their view of the world.

One woman laid on the floor in a provocative manner.

The robber approached her saying, "Ma'am, this is a robbery not a rape. Please behave accordingly."

This is an example of how to behave professionally, and focus on the goal.

While running from the bank the youngest robber (who had a college degree) said to the oldest robber (who had barely finished elementary school):

"Hey, maybe we should count how much we stole."?

The older man replied: "Don't be stupid. It's a lot of money so let's wait for the news on TV to find out how much money was taken from the bank."

This is an example of how life experience is more important than a degree.

After the robbery, the manager of the bank said to his accountant:

"Let's call the cops and tell them how much has been stolen."

"Wait", said the Accountant, "before we do that, let's add the \$800,000 we took for ourselves a few months ago and just say that it was stolen as part of today's robbery."

This is an example of taking advantage of an opportunity..

The following day it was reported in the news that the bank was robbed of \$ 3 million.

The robbers counted the money, but they found only \$1 million so they started to grumble.

"We risked our lives for \$1 million, while the bank's management robbed two million dollars without blinking? Maybe it's better to learn how to work the system, instead of being a simple robber."

This is an example of how knowledge can be more useful than power.

**Moral: Give a person a gun, and he can rob a bank..**

**Give a person a bank, and he can rob everyone**

#### CHOMBO ?

As a term of endearment, so crafted to be  
A Italian sailor, who lost his sails at sea  
Encountered a land, which in fact seemed  
To be west of India, so did history decree.

Many sailors alit, from three ships the crew  
A cute young lass sighted, there in plain view  
Columbus summoned her, some say it's untrue  
"Ven aca mi chomba" a friendly word used.

Centuries elapsed, thus Panama was created  
Men ventured to that land, readily and  
unshaken  
A railroad the canal, toiled by West indian  
natives  
Their earnest contributions, historically  
degraded.

Then chombo morphed, into a despicable term  
Towards a people, their descendants, whom came  
To help build a country, which is now not the same  
By a canal which provides, untold wealth and fame.

A number of our young, has so often refrained  
To speak their parents language, being ashamed  
Of their ancestry, in the past when laws declaimed  
Silver people their labor, being visibly disdained.

Yes! "chombo" they say I am, and will readily admit  
If the meaning of such word, has a context that fits  
The heritage that labored, on this canal that was built  
A wonder of our world, for a infinite number of ships.

L. Emanuel

## “Let's rebuild Colon”

*When Marcus Garvey's son Julius came to Panama in May 2013 his call was “Let's rebuild Colon”. Apparently some Colon residents have been suggesting ways to rebuild Colon now that the new government is interested. Maybe the time has come to put those ideas into practice. The AfroPanamanian Newsletter for June 2013 proposed that it is time for all of us to push our Governments, present and future, to start fixing the **sewage system** in Colon so that we can pool our forces to reconstruct most of the abandoned buildings and make Colon the beauty it was in “**days gone by**”.*

One of our readers' view of why Colon floods:

What causes Colon to flood nowadays everytime it rains?

The principal reason, and most important: From the time the streets of the City were paved, a sewage system was devised for the whole city.

People who are above a certain age, can remember Amador Guerrero Ave. having little islands from 2<sup>nd</sup> street to 16. Under these little islands there is an underground canal through which the rain water ran off into the sea. Each year the North Americans took up the metal covers spaced along Amador Guerrero, introduced machines to clean out these underground ditches, this prevented the waters from settling or backing up.

When the North Americans left there was an allowance set up for the upkeep of this sewage. Our Panamanian Government, so as to expand Amador Guerrero, decided to eliminate these islands. They installed water pumps both for rain water or any other type, which, instead of solving, created a problem.

7 and 8 streets are the highest, but they still flood when it rains now, which they didn't before.

He feels that the solution to the problem is to once more open the middle of Amador Guerrero Ave. Review the pumps to check their capacity and let the sewage system do its work.

And since the populace continues to throw their garbage in the streets, the Municipality should be lobing fines on the offenders, such as days or weeks to clean the streets and alleys.

Projects have been suggested before: [The Historic Center of the City of Colon: A project for its conservation, revitalization and sustainable management.](#) Posted on World Monuments Watch.

[The George Westerman Center presented a project to ex-President Perez Balladares, which was tabled.](#)

President Varela's view:

Recently President Varela initiated the demolition of several old houses with the intention of constructing new multi-family buildings on those premises. Let's hope correction of the sewage system is included in the reconstruction of Colon.





## Innauguration of the **International Decade for People of African Descent**

Gersan Joseph recently wrote:

After having successfully celebrated the International Year for People of African Descent in 2011 declared by the United Nations, we are now entering the **International Decade for People of African Descent** with the motto: “People of African descent: recognition, justice and development”.

The United Nations acknowledges the fact that their objectives as set forth in resolutions in which it proclaimed three Decades to **Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination** are yet to be attained, have now declared **January 1, 2015 to December 31, 2024**, to be the **International Decade for People of African Descent**.

1. Proclaims the International Decade for People of African Descent, commencing on 1 January 2015 and ending on 31 December 2024, with the theme “People of African descent: recognition, justice and development”, to be officially launched immediately following the general debate of the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly;
2. Requests the President of the General Assembly, through the facilitator, to continue consultations with States members of the General Assembly and other stakeholders, with a view to elaborating a programme for the implementation of the International Decade, with a draft programme developed by the Intergovernmental Working Group on the Effective Implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action as its basis, to be finalized and adopted during the sixty-eighth session of the Assembly and not later than 30 June 2014;
3. Calls for the allocation of predictable funding from the regular budget and extrabudgetary resources of the United Nations for the effective implementation of the programme of action and activities under the International Decade.

[http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/68/237](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/68/237)

At least one political party in Panama is paying attention to the United Nations' call and is promoting the innauguration of the **International Decade for People of African Descent**.



**PRD Women innaugurate International Decade for People of African Descent.**

## **Women to the Forefront.**

*In our black community we look up to our professional black women as role models for our young girls to emulate and follow. Honored by SAMAAP and highlighted by Lic. Alberto Barrow,*

Today we are going to talk about **Guillermina McDonald**, a distinguished jurist elected president of the "Movimiento de Abogados Gremialistas" (MAG), one of the most belligerent members of the National College of Lawyers.

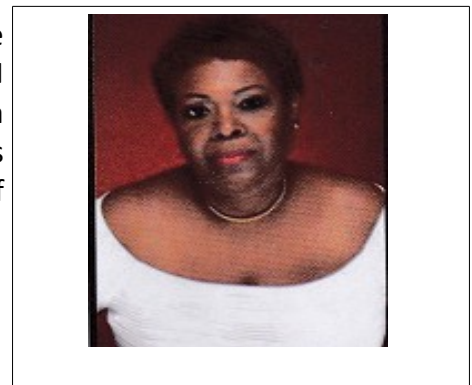
Guillermina is a Colon girl, born to afrodescendants: William Augustus McDonald and Esther Maria Acuña, she did her high school at the National Institute in Panama city, graduating as a lawyer at the University of Panama and moved on to the USA, to specialized and better her English speaking at the Norfolk State University.

This is important to highlight, **in this era of school dropouts, it is important to show our girls, that many of our black professionals come from a poor background but they had the courage to break the chains and move up professionally.**

Throughout Mrs. McDonald's professional career and as all of us, she possibly had her ups and downs, but she never gave up. She worked as a prosecutor; then as a first circuit prosecutor. She specialized in investigation and interrogation techniques at a course provided by USAID/ICITAP. She participated in the structure of the curriculum for the formation of circuit prosecutors.

In 1995 Guillermina was part of a commission on crime prevention that represented the Republic of Panama at the UN meeting celebrated in Cairo - Egypt; she also formed part of a commission that wrote the law that typifies family violence as a crime. She was also one of the precursors in the creation of the specialized prosecutor's office on family issues.

Guillermina McDonald has been the anti-corruption attorney.



In the year 2001 she resigned her job as a public prosecutor went into private practice as a litigator.

As you can see, from day one Guillermina has been career oriented she set her goals and achieved them. This is what we need to teach our black children; hold their hands and teach them to set goals, follow up on them until they are accomplished.

Life is very competitive and our black children need to be trained to meet their professional goals. As adults we cannot leave them alone in this. Professional black men and women should mentor our black youth.

***Get your bound copy of the AfroPanamanian Newsletter***

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are now available, also 2010, 2011 and 2012  
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## **ROLE MODEL:**

### **Lloyd O'Meally: steadfast and forward.**

When the first TV station was inaugurated in Panama in 1960, the Afro-West Indian descendant: **Lloyd O'Meally** was directing the engineering department after having installed the first nationwide **radio network**.

O'Meally's great interest in electricity and electronics lead him to retire as the General Manager of the oldest TV station in the country.

When RPC, owned by Fernando and Carlos Eleta, offered him a technician job in 1957, little did he know that that interest would lead him to his life's work for the next 40 years:

1958: Director, engineering department; 1972: Assistant General Manager and Director, Engineering; 1993-1996 (retirement): General Manager; 1996-2000: Board of Directors, Corporacion Medcom, which incorporated RPC, Telemetro and Cable Onda.

Interesting milestones during his tenure at RPC:

1957 – 1963. Installation of the first nationwide radio network.

1960: Innauguration of the first Television station of Panama.

1962-1964: Installation of first nationwide television network.

1962-1966 Installation of television facilities in Costa Rica and Guatemala.

1972: First color broadcast originating locally.



Archibald O'Meally, who migrated to Panama from Jamaica during the construction of the Canal, and Mabel Gardiner O'Meally, also Jamaican, had two children: Cary O'Meally (Maxwell) and Lloyd who was born at Gorgas Hospital on December 21, 1929.

As a child he resided with his parents in Guachapali (Marañón) until 1935, when Archibald, a Panama Railroad locomotive fireman, was transferred to the Atlantic area and the family moved to Camp Bierd, a Canal Zone townsite.

He went to: Mr. Jones pre-school in Camp Bierd, then on to elementary up to ninth grade (which was the highest high school grade for regular Non-US students on the Canal Zone) at Silver City School. Upon graduation in 1945 he was admitted to La Boca Occupational High School (which wasn't for everyone) and moved back to Guachapali, graduating in 1948. While attending elementary and high schools, his overriding interest was electricity and electronics, and a lot of his free time was spent studying electronics and experimenting with projects and building devices as part of a group of classmates with similar interests.

O'Meally spent Two years at the University of Panama, which at that time operated at night in the Instituto Nacional complex, studying biology and chemistry since there were no courses for electricity or electronics at the university level in Panama.

Correspondence courses were the thing in those days and were obtained from places like Capitol Radio Institute, Cleveland Institute of Electronics and others.