



Staff members from the Canal Zone Library visit the Biblioteca Nacional.



Librarians from the Biblioteca Nacional visit Canal Zone Library Reference Room.



PANAMA CANAL CO.

1953		AUGUST							1953	
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56-A-2 (798) D Col. Richardson Selee, Civil Affairs Director, right, and Mrs. Eleanor Burnham, Canal Zone Librarian, center, discuss library matters with B. Pereira J., Director of Biblioteca Nacional, left. August 4, 1953.

in conjunction with the coming anniversary holidays, at the invitation of the Biblioteca Nacional.

As it approaches the fortieth anniversary of its founding by General Goethals, the Canal Zone Library-Museum takes satisfaction in looking back on its continued and expanding contribution - together with its sister cultural centers in the Republic of Panama - to the preservation and dissemination of knowledge, which in a free world knows no boundaries. It looks forward toward a vista of ever-expanding opportunities for service.

September 1, 1953

-Eleanor D. Burnham  
Librarian-Curator  
Canal Zone Library-Museum

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## SOME ASPECTS OF REFERENCE WORK

### IN THE CANAL ZONE LIBRARY

Since the majority of the functions of and resources for reference work has been discussed elsewhere, this only attempts to give some of the interesting features of reference here as a factor in adult education, a sort of distribution center for adult learning and a laboratory providing intellectual tools for research.

In reality, the handling of reference work in the Canal Zone Library is probably one of the most varied and interesting of reference jobs anywhere - and one of the busiest, since, despite other duties, some 7,000 questions are answered in the course of one year. These questions are answered from books in the Reference Collection, which includes among other things encyclopedias in some seven languages, from the Panama Collection (over 6,000 items), from the general collection, from the mass of periodicals both recent and on file and through fine cooperation with other agencies and other libraries of this area.

The heterogeneous population at the "Crossroads of the World" does not seem to suffer any tropical languor in the desire to learn, to discover, to create. Some of the groups served will be noted.

As stated elsewhere, one of the major purposes of the Library is providing reference service for officials of the Panama Canal Company and the Canal Zone Government. Officials of the armed

forces, of the State Department, of Panama and visiting officials also have found the reference section useful for such information as the outlook for engineering, recent information on disaster control and employment situations in other areas. Too, there are recurring requests for biographies of past builders of the Canal, of personages of Panama and of the visitors.

As a group, the student category is unusual. The children have a special collection used to answer their queries on how to become a ventriloquist or for new singing games. The high school and junior college students want material on certain themes such as ballistics through the ages, penology in various countries, or perhaps in the Inquisition.

The more adult students come from the University of Panama and, in recent years, from the Louisiana State University Extension on the Isthmus. Among the many subjects covered here are colonial history of Panama, coffee growing in Guatemala, and history of the bomberos of Panama. Too, many adults take correspondence courses and supplement their knowledge with book reviews and added reading in many fields. And in this adult group also is the ever-apparent visiting student preparing a thesis or the visiting author acquiring background for a novel or for a historical book of Panama.

Among the general public an amazing number of clubs and societies abound, showing remarkable varieties of interests in all vocations and hobbies. The artists want to know how to make a mold, oil and watercolor techniques, silk screen processes or material

for a Beaux Arts Ball. The stamp clubs identify stamps and the orchid society continually requests all available material on orchid collecting, growing and identification. The women's clubs ask for recipes, for flower arrangements, for rules of procedure. The athletic clubs want names of winners in different events over the years - and such items as the weight of the largest marlin ever caught. The theater groups seek plays and tips on make-up and props. Perhaps the group interested in archaeology is the largest, if the treasure hunters and divers can be included. Maps, charts and photographs are sought, as well as written leads, and the identification of the finds includes everything in the Library. Lapidarists are growing in number, and they study geology as well as processes of stone cutting. The recreation and hobby groups use information on how to work in copper, wrought iron, leather, paper, tin, or how to organize activities for camp life. The lovers of pets are almost a club and the usual questions on care of boxers or Samoyeds are intermingled with how to take care of parrots, baby marmosets or golden frogs. Those interested in agriculture call for names and addresses of national organizations in the States, such as pigeon fanciers, for information on how to raise chinchillas, milk goats, hamsters; hydroponic farming and plant propagation of everything from avocados to black pepper.

The changing, moving quality of the population here is apparent in many requests for recent publications concerning the

political and social conditions in every section of the globe from Alaska to New Zealand. The educational situation in foreign countries receives careful scrutiny from both those who wish to remain in the new land and those who just visit. Also, requests for addresses of far off hotels, of business firms and of officials are numerous.

But of course the majority of the questions posed concern Panama and the Canal Zone. Interest is continuous in the following: the French Canal days; construction days; San Blas customs, costumes and language; historic and present day monuments, churches, forts, cities and towns; the flora and fauna; size, history, operation and costs of the Canal; treaties; geology and economy; and (since the list seems endless) museums and libraries!

September 1, 1953

-Hulda Henderson  
Assistant Librarian  
Canal Zone Library

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## THE BRANCHES OF THE CANAL ZONE LIBRARY

One of the important functions of the Canal Zone Library is to provide typical United States public library facilities for the population of the Canal Zone. So that all residents of the Canal Zone may share alike in this public library service, two branch libraries and five deposit libraries are at present maintained in Canal Zone communities other than Ancon, Balboa and Diablo Heights which are served by the Main Library.

The Cristobal Branch Library is the oldest and largest branch. It is a quiet and pleasant room on the second floor of the Administration Building in Cristobal. It has a permanent collection of some 20,000 volumes, its own public catalog, and a collection of reference books for the use of Atlantic side residents. As Cristobal is such an important shipping center, some of the Canal Zone Library's files of shipping material, such as Lloyd's Register of Shipping, are kept there. Cristobal also has its own subscriptions to thirty-five periodicals. Mrs. Ruth Turner has been the librarian in charge at Cristobal for ten years and is keenly aware of the interests and needs of her patrons. She is ably assisted by Mrs. Lucy Kelly, at present on leave in England, and by Mrs. Dora McIlhenny whose artistic ability is reflected in the delightful exhibits and neat signs used in the Cristobal library.

Although all technical library work for the branches is done at the Main Library, the Cristobal branch provides a good deal



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Saturday Morning Story Hour, La Boca Branch, Panama Canal Library, La Boca, Canal Zone February 4, 1950

of reference and readers' advisory service. In addition, the entire facilities of the Library system are available from the Main Library by official mail or telephone.

Second largest of the branches is the La Boca Branch Library located in a large, airy room on the ground floor of the La Boca Occupational High School. This very attractive small library became a part of the Canal Zone Library system in 1948 and furnishes public library service to the La Boca community as well as fulfilling its primary purpose of a school library for the La Boca Occupational High School and the La Boca Branch of the Canal Zone Junior College. The branch librarian in charge is Mrs. Lurlene Johnson who trains various high school students to act as part-time assistants. The La Boca branch contains about 3,000 cataloged books, has its own public catalog, plus as many books as can be accommodated on a long-term loan basis from the Main Library.

The remaining five branches do not have their own permanent collections but operate as "deposit libraries" by means of large indefinite loans from the Main Library. They vary in size from 750 to 2,000 volumes. These small branches may be said to fulfill a function performed in many communities in the United States by a bookmobile. They are open for a few hours each week in every community where there is a demand for books. When the circulation is no longer enough to warrant the operation of the branch or when other circumstances arise (as, for instance, the transfer of the town of

Cocoli to the jurisdiction of the U. S. Navy), the books are returned to the Main Library and the branch is closed. On the other hand when a new community comes into being and the demand for a library grows, space is acquired, often in the community's clubhouse; someone is hired, usually a resident of the community; books are sent on loan and a new deposit library is established. The latest addition to the branch system is the library at Santa Cruz which was opened in January, 1953, and which has been flourishing under the direction of Mrs. Louise Walker and Miss Dorothy Joseph.

The Pedro Miguel branch is in the Pedro Miguel Post Office building. It was installed in 1949 in response to a special request by the community and has been in the charge of Mrs. May B. Clemmons since the beginning.

The Gamboa branch is in the Gamboa Clubhouse and Mrs. Betty Malone, a resident of Gamboa, is the librarian. She is familiar with the reading interests of her patrons and she, as well as all the branch librarians, keeps posted the latest "bestseller" lists and bulletins of the new books received by the Library system. Readers in all the branches may put in request cards for the newest and most popular books which are as easily available at the branches as they are at the Main Library.

Mrs. Vera Downs is in charge of the Paraiso branch which, although small, circulates many books, especially among the children of the community.

The Gatun library has a magnificent view of the Panama Canal from its location on the second floor of the Gatun Clubhouse. Mrs. Mildred Gray, a resident of Gatun, is in charge in this branch. Each branch librarian is responsible for the maintenance of her book collection and the neat shelves of books, carefully repaired and shellacked to keep them fresh and free from mildew, bear witness to the diligence of their custodians.

A notable and gratifying fact that must be mentioned in any account of the branch libraries is the deep interest in their work shown by the branch librarians. They know their communities and concern themselves with their patrons' interests. Many times when the branch librarians visit the Main Library, they are heard to say such things as, "That new shell book is just the thing for Mr. X," "The little Z girl would love that book on ballet," "Please let me have some books on flower arranging for Mrs. Y." Even in the smallest space they make efforts to display the books to the best advantage and to make their libraries into pleasant, friendly centers of community life. The Paraiso librarian decorates the glass doors of her juvenile book cases with gay figures of storybook animals. Gatun and Gamboa display bright and attractive book jackets advertising the latest books. Cristobal and La Boca, with more space, arrange interesting and colorful exhibits; La Boca at Christmas time

is memorable for windows decorated with red and green translucent paper giving the effect of stained glass. It is in great part due to the devoted interest of the librarians that the branches are such an effective part of the Canal Zone Library.

September 1, 1953

-Emily J. Price  
Cataloger  
Canal Zone Library

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CANAL ZONE LIBRARY-MUSEUM PROFESSIONAL STAFF

Mrs. Eleanor D. Burnham, Librarian-Curator of the Canal Zone Library-Museum, came to the Canal Zone in 1936 as Assistant Librarian of The Panama Canal Library and became Librarian of the Canal Zone Library in the spring of 1946.

She is a graduate of Newcomb College of Tulane University, New Orleans, Louisiana, U. S. A. with a B. A. degree, and also holds a graduate degree in Library **Science** from Columbia University, New York.

Prior to her employment on the Isthmus, she served as Librarian in charge of Requisitions, Louisiana State University Library, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

Mrs. Burnham, who was the former Miss Eleanor Dunn, was married in 1945 to Brodie Burnham, a former Isthmian newspaperman, who is now employed in the Personnel Bureau of the Panama Canal Company.

Mrs. Burnham, together with her husband, *has* owned and operated several sailing boats on the Isthmus and has sailed extensively in the Bay of Panama. She is a member of the Balboa Yacht Club and an auxiliary member of the U. S. Power Squadrons, Canal Zone Pacific Chapter, a U. S. organization of pleasure boating enthusiasts.

She and Mr. Burnham have acquired property in Las Cumbres, Republic of Panama, where they plan to build their home.



Mrs. Eleanor D. Burnham, Librarian-Curator  
Canal Zone Library-Museum



The majority of the reference work in the Canal Zone Library is handled by Miss Hulda Henderson, whose professional library training was completed in the University of Washington, Seattle, Washington, in 1949. She also has a M. A. degree in Spanish and a B. A. in history and education. She has had some seven years of library experience. Her former residence was Tucson, Arizona and she has traveled and studied in Mexico and France. She has taught library science in the University of Panama. She is a regular contributor to the Month in Panama. Her avocation is art, particularly sculpture and mural painting. On the wall of her apartment in Panama is her large and as yet unfinished mural depicting the history of Panama.



Miss Hulda Henderson, Asst. Librarian-Curator  
Canal Zone Library-Museum

Emily J. Price is a native of Maryland who came to the Isthmus in 1937 with her naval officer father. She is married to James L. Price, known locally as Jungle Jim, a long-time resident of the Republic of Panama. The Prices live in Panama with their two children and a varying assortment of animals. Mrs. Price attended schools in Boston, Massachusetts, and Washington, D. C., was graduated from Bryn Mawr College and pursued graduate library studies at Columbia University. She was employed by the Canal Zone Library in 1950. Her chief interests are baseball and music.



Mrs. Emily J. Price, Cataloger, Canal Zone Library