

Edgardo Civallero

The stories of Galapagueana

- issue III -



Fundación
Charles Darwin
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GALAPAGOS

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Edgardo Civallero

The stories of Galapagueana

- issue III -

Project Galapagueana
Galapagueana to take away

Charles Darwin Foundation
Library, Archive and Museum
Puerto Ayora - Santa Cruz
Galapagos Islands - Ecuador - 2023

Impresione

de un

ESTACION BICLO

Highlight

Impressions of a journey (to Galapagos)

Impresiones de un viaje ("Impressions of a journey") is a milestone in the travel literature produced in Ecuador, and one of the first texts written about the Galapagos Islands by an Ecuadorian. The CDF Library preserves, in one of its special collections, a first edition of the famous book.

Its author, Nicolás Guillermo Martínez, was in the archipelago between November 1906 and August 1907, during an agitated period in the country's political history. Having just resigned his position as assistant at the Astronomical Observatory of Quito, and being in Guayaquil, he contacted by chance with the representative of the sugar mill "El Progreso", located in the highlands of San Cristobal Island. That man organized the trip for Martínez to Galapagos aboard the *Manuel J. Cobos*, and prepared letters of recommendation for him. In San Cristobal he was received by the Territorial Chief, Colonel Pedro Jaramillo, and remained on the island carrying out, in his own words, "a modest civil position". He took advantage of a trip of Antonio Gil's *Tomasita* to get to know Isabela Island, and became interested in the local reality, with which he had already had a first approach through the book of German naturalist Franz Theodor

Wolf Ein Besuch der Galápagos-Inseln (1879, published in Quito in 1887 as *Memoria sobre las Islas Galápagos*).

To understand the importance of Martínez's trip (and his subsequent chronicle), it is necessary to realize that, at that time, the only boats that covered the route between the continent and the islands were the *Manuel J. Cobos* and the *k*, which went to San Cristobal, and the *Tomasita*, which went to Isabela. The three ships used to carry the workers and employees of the local haciendas, as well as officials of the national government, and many recommendations or influential friends were needed for them to accept other types of passengers, as was the case with Martínez. Sometimes the cruise ship *Cotopaxi*, of the Ecuadorian Navy, arrived in the archipelago, but the boat was in poor condition, and the local captains had such bad training that on one occasion the ship was lost at sea and did not find the islands (which had disappeared in some unknown cataclysm, according to the official explanation of the incident).

Given the difficulties to get there, visits to the islands by travelers (especially nationals) were not frequent and, therefore, Ecuadorian chronicles are scarce, especially when compared to the produced by foreign authors.

Throughout his months of stay, Martínez wrote down a series of notes about his experiences. He published an extract of them, those related to San Cristobal, in the newspaper *La Prensa* of Ambato in 1911, and two years later he did the same with his writings on Isabela. In 1915 the complete chronicles were published for the first time in Quito, in the Talleres de la Policía Nacional. In 1916 the text was presented, in 23

parts, in *El Telégrafo* of Guayaquil. The second edition of the complete work appeared in Ambato (Imprenta de R. Costales) in 1919, and the third was launched in 1934 as part of a series by the Quito Observatory.

At present, reprints of this work continue to appear. A work which had as its predecessor *Las islas Encantadas* by Bognoly and Espinosa (1905) and which would, in turn, precede *Galápagos, las últimas islas encantadas*, by Paulette E. de Rendón (1946). One more link in the chain of literary works that made the Galapagos their object and their motive.

References

- Bognoly y Espinosa (1905). *Las Islas Encantadas ó el Archipiélago de Colón*. Guayaquil: Imp. y Lit. del Comercio.
- Rendón, Paulette E. de (1946). *Galápagos, las últimas islas encantadas*. Guayaquil: [n.d.].
- Wolf, Franz Theodor (1879). *Ein Besuch der Galápagos-Inseln*. [N.d.].

Catalogue

Martínez, Nicolás Guillermo. *Impresiones de un viaje*. [Book]. Quito : Talleres de la Policía Nacional, 1915. 120 pp. : [n.d.] : 18 cm. DDC 918. Poorly preserved.

Indexing

Subject categories: Biography | Geography | History of Galapagos | Literature | Natural history | Sociology

Keywords: Books | Memory | Population | Travels

Time framework: 1915

Publication

01.10.2022

<https://galapagueana.darwinfoundation.org/en/highlight/high003.html>



Feminine presence in the islands

A Norwegian student

In 1926 the first Norwegian settlers arrived at Santa Cruz Island, aboard the *Ulva* captained by Olaf Eilertsen. The 45 people that made up the group (43 men and 2 women) landed near the Aguada de Chávez: the water well located near the small beach now known as Pelican Bay.

Near the cliffs of the western limit of the current Puerta Ayora, the newcomers built a bread oven, a fish cannery, and a dock (still in use) that they called *Ulva*; they installed 400 m. of steel tube to guarantee the provision of water and 40 m. of railway line from the dock to the cannery; they blew up with dynamite a channel that linked the sea with the Laguna de las Ninfas, and in that channel they installed a fish trap that also served as a barrier against sharks.

With the settlers came Borghild Kristine Rorud, one of two women on the expedition (the other was settler Marie Dahl). Borghild was a teacher-in-training at the University of Oslo, and had received a scholarship to spend time in the Galapagos Islands, commissioned to collect specimens for the famous university natural history museum, created in 1917.

The Norwegian stayed in Santa Cruz for about six months. The chronicles indicate that she did not live in the prefabricated houses that the settlers quickly built, but in her own tent, along with all the samples that she collected.

Born in June 1900, Borghild married Kristian Sørensen Rambek around 1941 —which is why she is sometimes mentioned in literature as "Mrs. Rambech"— and died in February 2002. Her work in the Galapagos yielded 262 plants, adding 2 new species to the known flora of the islands. This is stated in an article by Erling Christophersen, who is the one who, unfortunately and perpetuating a trend of the time, offered the report of her findings.

The woman ended up becoming a teacher and continued her botanical work, with a good number of species collected and identified to her credit. In fact, and since she was the first to describe it, the *Vachellia (Acacia) rorudiana* was named in her honor: the "Galapagos acacia" native to the islands.

[The photograph that illustrates this text is included in the Nourmahal album, and was taken during the expedition of the same name, which reached Santa Cruz Island in 1930. It is labeled "Abandoned fish cannery. Indefatigable I.", i.e. the cannery built by the Norwegians in 1926 in Indefatigable, the old name of Santa Cruz].

References

- Christophersen, Erling (1931). A collection of plants from the Galapagos Islands. *Nytt Magasin for Naturvidenskapene*, 70, pp 67-95.
- Karlsson, Ingolfur Snorri (2013). *How the Vikings conquered Galapagos*. [S.d.]: [s.d.].
- Lundh, Jacob P. (1997). La colonia de Santa Cruz en 1926. *Noticias de Galápagos*, 56-57, pp. 61-62.
- Ramos Pasquet, Daniela (2021). *A-Islandas: Desplazamientos y encuentros desde las islas Galápagos*. [Tesis]. Sevilla: Universidad de Sevilla.

Publicación

01.10.2022

<https://galapagueana.darwinfoundation.org/en/women/wome003.html>



Contents and pieces | Piece

Soldiers in Baltra

Between late 1941 and 1946, Baltra Island (also known as South Seymour) hosted a US military base. It was a part of a number of geostrategic moves aimed at protecting the Panama Canal during World War II, and followed the signing of the *Treaty of Occupation of South Seymour* between Ecuador and the USA in January 24, 1942.

The Americans brought several changes to the Galapagos Islands. They built an aqueduct from El Junco to El Progreso, in San Cristóbal Island, to supply drinking water to arid Baltra. They set up radar stations at Point Albemarle and Webb Cove, on Isabela Island, and on the south side of Española Island, and they placed several machine gun nests on the northern coast of Santa Cruz Island.

Their presence was well recorded in numerous documents currently preserved in US military archives, and in the memories, stories and photos of the soldiers who were stationed at *The Rock*, as that isolated place was nicknamed.

A series of these photos, belonging to Dr. Alfred Croneis and taken around October 1943, were donated by his widow, Catherine, to the CDF Library, Archive & Museum.

The one selected as the relevant piece shows a group of soldiers together with an old settler —the Icelander Walter Finsen— in an area covered in palosantos in Santa Cruz.

These types of images are significant insofar as they show the social interactions of the troops, and their exploration and knowledge of the environment, far beyond the narrow limits imposed by military life and Baltra's geography.

References

- Idrovo, Hugo (2013). *Baltra: Base Beta*. Quito: Fondo Editorial.

Catalogue

Croneis, Alfred. [*American soldiers from Baltra in Santa Cruz*]. [Slide]. Baltra : Alfred Croneis, 1943. [N.d.] : col. ill. : 3 x 5 cm. DDC 986. Well preserved.

Indexing

Subject categories: History of Galapagos

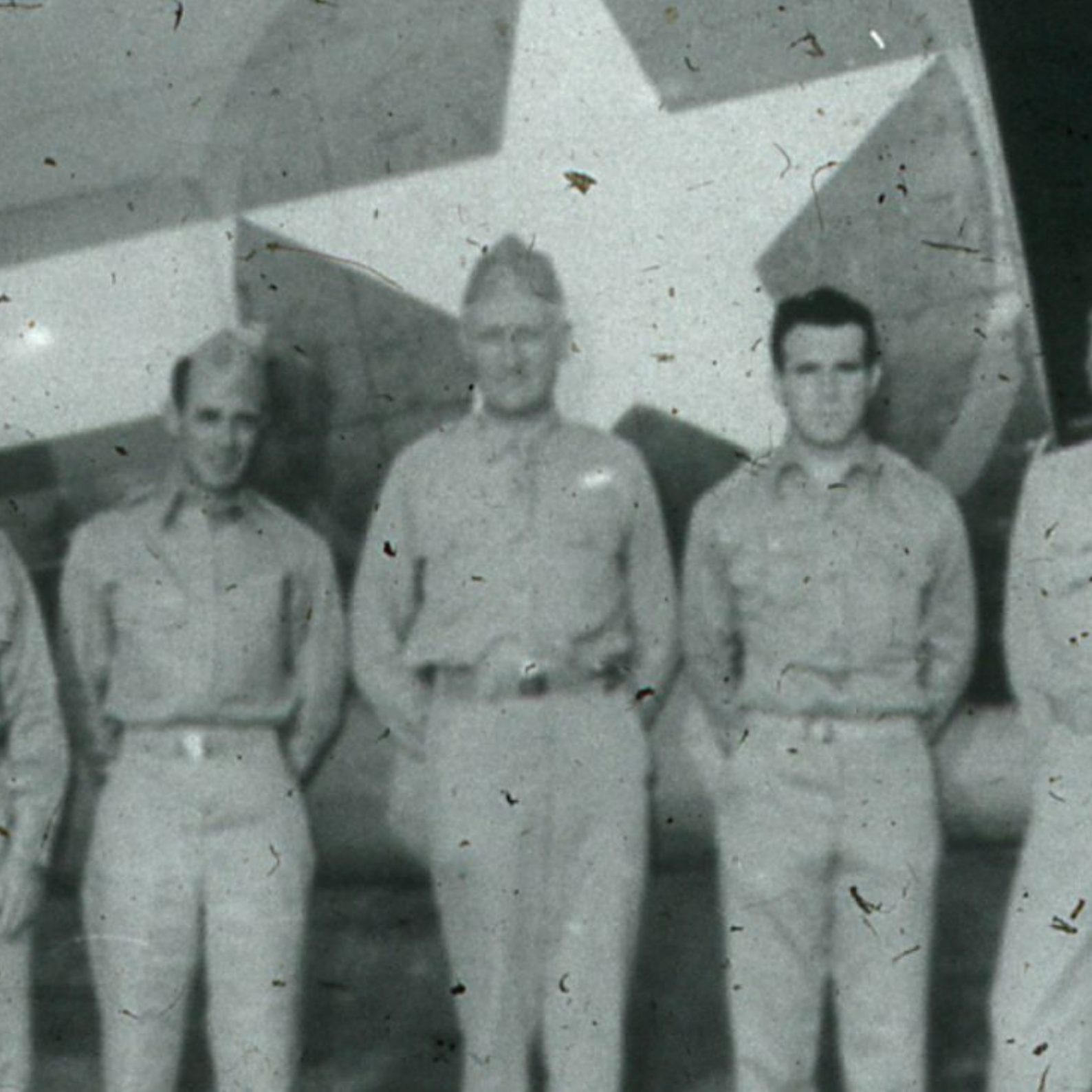
Keywords: Memory | Slides

Time framework: 1943

Publication

01.10.2022

<https://galapagueana.darwinfoundation.org/en/contents/cont003a.html>



Contents and pieces | Line

Croneis's photos

Among the many documents that account for the US presence at the Baltra (or South Seymour) Island's military base between 1941 and 1946 are photos of the soldiers who were stationed there.

A series of these photos, belonging to Dr. Alfred Croneis and relating to life in Baltra, were donated by his widow, Catherine, to the CDF Library, Archive & Museum. Taken around October 1943, they reflect not only part of the reality of the military base, but also the tours of the troops to other islands and their aerial cartography and surveillance tasks.

The collection includes slides with cardboard frames, and the only slides with metal frames in the CDF Archive — frames sadly remembered for unsettling slide projectors with their excessive weight and thickness.

Among the contents of the slides are black and white images of life on the base, especially next to large planes, and color photos showing aerial views of different

points of the islands (taken from those same planes), and visits of the troops to other points of the archipelago.

Among these visits, a subseries tells of a trip to Santa Cruz Island, where a group of soldiers contact the Icelandic settler Walter Finsen and some inhabitants of an incipient Puerto Ayora.

In addition, the series includes one of the few existing images of the diplomas of the "Order" of Baltra.

The collection is interesting for showing the life of the military, their social interactions with the island settlers, and their exploration of the Galapagos space beyond the borders of little Baltra.

Catalogue

Croneis, Alfred. [*Photos of soldiers in Baltra*]. [Slide]. Baltra : Alfred Croneis, 1943. [N.d.] : col. ill. : 3 x 5 cm. DDC 986. Well preserved.

Indexing

Subject categories: History of Galapagos

Keywords: Memory | Slides

Time framework: 1943

Publication

01.10.2022

<https://galapagueana.darwinfoundation.org/en/contents/cont003b.html>

e These Presents

DR. CRONEIS

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Contents and pieces | Story

The Order of Baltra

Ye Ancient and Honorable Order of Goat Whiskered Galapagons (YAAHOOGWG) was a humorous "Order" created among the military stationed at the US base on Baltra (South Seymour) Island during the 1940s.

After a comical ceremony (which, according to what some survivors recalled, included the ritual consumption of alcohol), its new members were given a diploma that read as follows:

To all who shall see the presents greetings: That X, being of good health and sound mind, and of his own volition, with practically no duress did pass a period of at least three suns without the solace of the sex known as woman, subjected to the vicissitudes of fickle nature, in constant danger of the most treacherous of flora, the most loathsome of fauna, snagging his fundament on cactaceae, battering his [femur?] on rubble, in close communion with the [hermits?] of these parts. In so doing, does qualify for the fraternity of *Ye Ancient and Honorable Order of Goat Whiskered*

Galapagons. He will be rudely treated accordingly, publicly shunned, and avoided from this day hence. Done by my hand this X day of X, 1943.

The "Order" is outlined in the book *Doctor Yank* (Robert Reiss, 2000), written by the base's dentist, which includes a photo of his own diploma (albeit its low quality and detail make the text unreadable). A slide of a diploma extended to "Dr. Croneis" (Alfred Croneis) is kept in the audiovisual section of the CDF Archive; its quality is higher than the one on the book, although it does not allow to clearly understand some words.

The "Order" was one of the most vivid memories among the last survivors of Baltra's troops, or so their conversations on some old Internet forums indicate. Humor was definitely an essential element to survive the experience of living in the desolate *The Rock*.

References

- Reiss, Robert (2000). *Doctor Yank: Memoirs of a Military Dentist*. New York: Turner Publishing Company.

Catalogue

Croneis, Alfred. [*Ye Ancient and Honorable Order...*]. [Slide]. Baltra : Alfred Croneis, 1943. [N.d.] : col. ill. : 3 x 5 cm. DDC 986. Well preserved.

Indexing

Subject categories: History of Galapagos

Keywords: Memory | Slides

Time framework: 1943

Publication

01.10.2022

<https://galapagueana.darwinfoundation.org/en/contents/cont003c.html>



Contents and pieces | Memory

"Baltra pine"

This fragment of local memory was collected in *The Galapagos: A brief history* (1999), a historical chronicle by Norwegian settler Jacob P. Lundh.

When, at the end of the 40's of the last century, the US military base located on Baltra (or South Seymour) Island was dismantled, a good number of wooden barracks were left uninhabited, deteriorating at the mercy of the sea breeze and the sun. It was then thought that Galapagoan settlers could take advantage of all that material, so it was announced that any family or individual residing on the islands could apply for a house. The former would be awarded the large barracks, while the small ones would remain for the latter. The only condition, apart from residence, was that the interested parties had to disassemble and transport the material by themselves.

Apparently, many took advantage of the offer, including the local Franciscan Mission. For some reason that has not been recorded, an individual with the surname Falconi took over several barracks. With them he was able to build the first hotel in San Cristobal Island: a four-story building that automatically became the tallest in all of Galapagos.

This is how "Baltra pine" became the most popular building material on the islands, displacing adobe, logs and thatched roofs, which until then had been the most common.

Cement blocks had already appeared in Galapagos in 1946, when settler Sigurd Graffer built a shed for Captain Kristian Stampa in Santa Cruz Island. Graffer made the blocks himself, using wooden slats for the molds and empty beer cans found in Baltra's base to create the hollow core of each piece. Given the abundance of the mentioned pine, these blocks would only become a popular building material on the islands in the late 1950s.

[The photograph that illustrates this text belongs to the series of slides by Alfred Croneis. It was taken on Santa Cruz Island in 1943, and shows the traditional construction style in Galapagos before the use of pine wood].

Catalogue

Lundh, Jacob P. *The Galapagos: A brief history*. [Book]. Galapagos : Jacob P. Lundh, 1999. [N.d.] : col. ill. : [n.d.]. DDC 986. Well preserved.

Indexing

Subject categories: History of Galapagos

Keywords: Books | Memory

Time framework: 1943 | 1999

Publication

01.10.2022

<https://galapagueana.darwinfoundation.org/en/contents/cont003d.html>

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The traces of the islands' memory

The Galapagoan documentary heritage

Documentary heritage, as its name suggests, is made up of documents: any material that encodes information of some kind. Among the most classic and universal documents are books. But this category includes formats as disparate as photos, fabrics, graffiti, maps, and pots, among many others.

As a whole, it is part of a much broader unit, intangible cultural heritage, which, together with its tangible counterpart, makes up a network of spaces, constructions, voices, and memories that define the culture, the past and the identity of a community — and of a territory.

In 2015, UNESCO established the *Recommendation Concerning the Preservation of, and Access to, Documentary Heritage*, noting that "documentary heritage in archives, libraries and museums constitutes a major part of the memory of the peoples of the world and reflects the diversity of peoples, languages and cultures".

The Galapagos are no exception. Unfortunately, the islands' documentary heritage has been poorly preserved in the archipelago, being located abroad, mainly in American

institutions. The CDF Library, Archive & Museum is one of the few local spaces dedicated to recovering that intangible memory, both physically and digitally. All its activities and projects—including *Galapagueana* itself—are framed within the guidelines on protection of heritage, knowledge and memory established by UNESCO and other similar international organizations.

Probably one of the most important components of documentary heritage is bibliographic heritage: books, magazines, articles, reprints, theses, reports and other similar materials, printed, typed or handwritten, relating to the Galapagos. Among them are the elements that make up the "historical bibliography" gradually built as a section in *Galapagueana*. But also the entire corpus of scientific literature produced on the archipelago, the novels written by islands' authors or about the islands, the chronicles and travel diaries (including the logbooks of pirates, whalers and other sailors), the notebooks of travelers and explorers, the management manuals of protected areas, all the existing electronic information, and much more.

Another voluminous component of this patrimonial body is the audiovisual heritage, which includes fixed and moving images, audio pieces, or a combination of both. Included in this diverse field are photographs, slides, negatives, films, videos and audio recordings. That includes the first images taken in the Galapagos, the early films, the first recordings, VHS tapes with Galapagos television programs, audio tapes with local radio broadcasts, combinations of slides and cassettes in educational packages, videos of scientific talks and family events, official photos from municipalities and governments, journalistic archives, and the terrible avalanche of digital images and

videos distributed through social networks during the last two decades. In this area, the variety of formats is greater, since audiovisual documents are produced in a more "democratic" way (i.e. by anyone) and are subject to a certain "planned obsolescence".

Maps, architectural plans, diagrams, and other cartographic information also fall under the umbrella of the documentary heritage. The same happens with signs and posters (including scientific ones), and with their more official versions (bronze and marble plaques) and more popular ones (murals and graffiti). Among the latter are some of the earliest graphic expressions of the Galapagos — the inscriptions left by whalers, the oldest of which dates back to 1804 (left by Cameron Hathawson, of the *Halard*, on Santiago Island).

In addition to the elements mentioned so far —a terribly basic approach to an otherwise complex and diverse universe— there is a whole series of other materials that could also be cataloged within this category of heritage. This includes (but is not limited to) drawings, paintings, and other artistic works; museum artifacts, both archaeological and historical; memorabilia, souvenirs, and other small and fragmentary materials.

Documentary heritage includes both the elements produced by the hegemonic system (government, academia, "authorized" voices) and those produced from the "margins". In this sense, it is necessary to carry out an exercise of "memory weaving" that includes all the voices and all the perspectives reflected in the different documents.

That is the only way to build a plural and complete history of the Galapagos Islands from its cultural heritage.

[The photograph that illustrates this text corresponds to an inventory notebook kept in the CDF Archive].

Publication

01.10.2022

<https://galapagueana.darwinfoundation.org/en/memory/memo003.html>

BDO

Galapagueana's collections

An introduction with cards

Business cards were an essential element for human relations until a moment in the not-so-distant past. In fact, they played a key role in creating social networks, especially at a time when modern communication technologies (and their means and channels of personal interaction) were not even a dream.

Generally, the cards received were kept arranged alphabetically in a card holder or, in the case of the large amounts handled by an institution, company or organization, in file boxes. This was the case with the collection found in the CDF Archive, which probably belonged to the Library.

The collection includes, primarily but not exclusively, business cards from researchers and scientists from around the world. An analysis of the contents makes it possible to establish a sort of "who's who" of the time, highlighting who were the personalities from the academic world who maintained relations with the CDF, which were the institutions that worked in the Galapagos at an international level (and which were their hierarchies, and which their countries of origin), what internal relationships existed between those actors, in what discipline or field of knowledge did they move, and a long etcetera.

Besides being a useful identification and contact tool, this file box allows to establish a kind of "social map" framed within a particular time period. A map that helps to understand the socio-cultural (and even economic and political) context of the CDF and the Galapagos Islands at a specific point in the past, and to understand who participated in that context, and how.

Catalogue

Aa.Vv. [*Business cards*]. [Card]. [N.d.] : Aa.Vv., [ca1980?]. [N.d.] : [n.d.] : 12 x 7.5 cm. DDC 986. Well preserved.

Indexing

Subject categories: History of CDF | History of Galapagos | History of science

Keywords: Archives | Cards

Time framework: 1980

Publication

01.10.2022

<https://galapagueana.darwinfoundation.org/en/collections/coll003a.html>

THE COLLECTION
OF
ES DARWIN RESE
AGOS - ECUADOR

Galapagueana's collections

A catalogue of invertebrates

Before the invention of the now ubiquitous computer programs known as "databases," information used to be stored in index cards or, in a more organized way, in inventory notebooks: tables in which all kinds of data were recorded. They included bibliographic elements, archaeological artifacts, technological devices, items from biological collections or archive materials, among many other possibilities.

With the emergence of different data management software, the information collected and contained in the inventory notebooks was progressively poured into computers and hard drives. Not always reliably, by the way. Over time, the original notebooks proved to survive longer than their computer counterparts: floppy disks were damaged, devices were broken, online databases were accidentally deleted... and paper, with few exceptions, lasted. That is why the most cautious institutions, despite having modernized their knowledge management systems, kept the original inventory supports in a corner of their archives. Just in case.

CDF's biological collections —in constant dialogue with the institutional Archive— keep a series of notebooks of this type, particularly related to biological materials. Together

with cards, they continue to be consulted today when it is necessary to corroborate specific data. In addition, those pages have proven to be a small compendium of institutional history, with its different handwritings, notes, and dates. All these elements, which in other circumstances could be considered anecdotal and insignificant, account for the many people who have made a contribution to Galapagos science and to the social memory of the islands.

The document chosen as an example of this collection is an inventory / catalog of the invertebrates in the biological collection of the Charles Darwin Research Station. The dates of the entries range from 1974 to 1999, and the data collected includes an identification number, the taxonomic classification of the specimen, the name of the species, the place of collection, the date of entry in the catalog, some notes, and the name of the collector.

Catalogue

Aa.Vv. *Catalogue of Galapagos animals (invertebrates) in the collection of the Charles Darwin Research Station*. [Manuscript]. Santa Cruz : Aa.Vv., 1974-1999. [N.d.] : [n.d.] : 32 cm. DDC 508. Regularly preserved.

Indexing

Subject categories: Conservation | History of CDF | History of Galapagos | History of science

Keywords: Catalogues | Invertebrates | Manuscripts

Time framework: 1970

Publication

01.10.2022

<https://galapagueana.darwinfoundation.org/en/collections/coll003b.html>

**PROFESSIONAL
VIDEO CASSETTE**

30'
(BETACAM)

HQ



Galapagueana's collections

VHS tapes

VHS tapes (acronym of Video Home System) were one of the standard formats of magnetic video tape used for the recording, display and mass distribution of moving images.

The development of this material took place mainly during the 60's of the last century. Around 1973, the first VHS prototype appeared in Japan. Between the mid-1970s and early 1980s, a commercial "war" took place between VHS and its direct competitor, the American Betamax. By the mid-1980s, VHS became the dominant medium, a reign that lasted until the early 2000s, when optical discs, and specifically DVDs, unseated it.

Like all magnetic media (including audio cassettes and early computer floppy disks), VHS tapes were vulnerable to magnetic radiation, and even to heat and dust, and suffered from a problem known as "magnetic migration." Even so, for almost two decades they were a terribly popular element, allowing the emergence of video clubs and access to movies on demand, the recording and distribution of television programs, and the dissemination of family-based tapes.

In 2016, Japanese company Funai, the last to manufacture VHS tapes internationally, closed its doors. With it, an important period in the history of technology came to an end, and a field of study for media archeology was inaugurated.

The audiovisual section of the CDF Archive maintains a small collection of a hundred of these items, the contents of which include educational videos and recordings of conferences. It is not the most abundant format in the CDF video collection, but it is the easiest to digitize, given the relative abundance of old players on the market.

Catalogue

Aa.Vv. [*VHS tapes*]. [Video tape]. [N.d.] : Aa.Vv., [ca1980]. [N.d.] : [n.d.] : 10 x 19 cm.
DDC 508. Well preserved.

Indexing

Subject categories: Communication | Education | History of CDF

Keywords: Videos

Time framework: 1980

Publication

01.10.2022

<https://galapagueana.darwinfoundation.org/en/collections/coll003c.html>



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Galapagueana's collections

Photo strips in b/w

Photographs or still images in paper format, whether in black or white or in color, were and still are one of the main visual information supports of the modern era, and one that has several other formats associated with it, including slides, proof prints, and negatives.

Proof prints are an intermediate stage in the process of development of non-digital photos. The photographic roll, a strip of translucent plastic material, is cut into pieces that contain a standard number of pictures, generally between 4 and 6. These strips are subjected to a chemical process, showing, as a final result, images with inverted colors. From these strips the prints are produced on paper.

However, on many occasions, proofs were generated: impressions of the strips, which made it possible to check the quality of the images on paper and the need to produce final copies.

The audiovisual collection of the CDF Archive contains a limited series of proof prints, some of which do not have their printed, final copies counterpart. These are images

from the 80's and 90's of the last century, whose contents revolve around Galapagos nature and the work of CDF scientists.

Catalogue

Aa.Vv. [*Proof prints*]. [Proof print]. [N.d.] : Aa.Vv., 1980-2000. [N.d.] : b/w ill. : 4 x 20 cm. DDC 508. Well preserved.

Indexing

Subject categories: History of CDF | History of Galapagos | History of science

Keywords: Photos

Time framework: 1980

Publication

01.10.2022

<https://galapagueana.darwinfoundation.org/en/collections/coll003d.html>



Fragments for a history of Galapagos

Inkan legends

The Galapagos Islands were officially discovered in 1535 by the Spaniard Tomás de Berlanga, by then the Bishop of Panama. But they could have been known much earlier. Or, at least, that's what the legends say.

The Spanish conquistador Pedro Sarmiento de Gamboa dealt with the matter in his *Historia de los Incas (Historia Índica II, 1572)*.

While Topa Inga Yupanqui was conquering the coast of Manta and the islands of Puna and Túmbez [present-day Ecuador], some merchants arrived there who had come by sea from the west on rafts with sails. They informed of the land from which they came, which were some islands, one called Auachumbi and the other Niñachumbe, where there were many people and gold. And as Topa Inga was of high spirits and thoughts and was not content with what he had conquered on land, he decided to try that happy, inviting adventure by sea.

But he did not lightly believe the seafaring merchants, since he used to say that the capacs [chiefs, authorities] should not believe merchants so easily, because they were people who talked a lot. And to obtain more information, and since it was not a business that he could be reported about anywhere, he called a man he brought with him on his conquests, called Antarqui, who was known to be a great necromancer, so much so that he flew through the air. To him, Topa Inga asked if what the seafarers said about the islands was true. After having thought it over, Antarqui replied that what they said was true, and that he would go there first. And so they say that he went by his arts, and he checked the way and saw the islands, people and riches of them, and when returned he gave assurance of everything to Topa Inga.

Who, with this certainty, decided to go there. And for this he made a very big number of rafts, in which he embarked more than twenty thousand chosen soldiers. Topa Inga sailed and went and discovered the Auachumbi and Ninachumbi islands, and returned from there, bringing black people and a lot of gold and a brass chair and a horse's hide and jaws. These trophies were kept in the fortress of Cuzco until the time of the Spaniards. This horse's hide and jawbone was kept by a principal Inga, who lives today and provided this story, and when the others were ratified, he was present, and his name is Urco Guaranga.

Hahuachumbi ("outer island") and Ninachumbi ("island of fire") also appear in the accounts of the Hispanic chronicler Miguel Cabello Balboa (*Miscelánea Antártica*, ca. 1586) and the Mercedarian friar Martín de Murúa (*Historia General del Perú*, ca. 1616). The first points out, in chapter XVII:

...and conquering and dominating those untamed nations, he was able to reach the valley of Xipixapa, and from there to Apeloque, and Topa Ynga learned that very close to that point there was a good port to navigate, and see if there was any enterprise in the sea in which to gain name and reputation, and having consulted with his elders in deliberation and intent, he set out with his squads (almost innumerable by then) and settled in Manta, and in Charapoto, and in Piquaza, because in less space could not house or sustain so many nations as he brought behind him. It was in this place where king Topa Ynga saw the sea for the first time, to which, as he discovered it from a height, he made a very deep adoration, and called it Mamacocha, which means mother of the lagoons, and he gathered a large quantity of the boats that the natives used (which are certain remarkably light sticks) and tying them tightly together, and making a certain roof of woven reeds on top, it is a very safe and comfortable boat, which we have called rafts. Having collected the quantity of these that seemed to him sufficient for the people he intended to take with him, taking from the natives of those coasts the most experienced pilots he could find, he went into the sea with the same spirit and courage as if he would have experienced its fortunes and dangers [of the sea] from his birth. On this

trip he moved farther from the mainland than one can easily believe, for those who tell the story of this brave Ynga affirm that on this journey he was in the sea for a year, and they also say that he discovered certain islands, which they called Hagua Chumbi and Nina Chumbi. What islands are these in the South Sea (on whose coast the Ynga embarked) I will not dare to affirm with certainty, nor what land is the one that can be found in this navigation. The reports that the ancients give us about this trip are that he brought black Indian prisoners from there, and a lot of gold and silver, and a brass chair, and hides from animals like horses...

The second author wrote in his chapter XXV:

On this occasion some ancient Indians say that he embarked on the sea in some rafts on the island of Puna and went to Manta, and from there he sailed for a year by sea and reached the islands called Hahua Chumpi and Nina Chumpi and conquered them, and from there he brought, to show off his triumph, a people like negroes, and a great quantity of gold and a brass chair. He brought horse skins and heads and bones, all to show it here, as it was an ancient custom among these Ingas to bring all the showy things that could cause admiration and fear to Cuzco, so that they could see them and magnify their exploits, and to keep the memory of the things that happened in the other remote provinces. It is understood that all these trophies were burned later by Quesques and Chalco Chuma, captains of Atahualpa, when they took Cuzco, making Huascar Inga prisoner. There

they burned the body of this Tupa Ynga Yupanqui, because no memory of all these things was found when the Spaniards came.

Others say that this conquest of these lands and islands was made by Tupa Ynga Yupanqui during the lifetime of his father Ynga Yupanqui, when he went to Quito and conquered it with his brothers. Both opinions may be kept, because it doesn't matter if it was at one time or another.

Of these islands that Tupa Ynga Yupanqui conquered in the sea, today there is no certain news, more than the confused one of those who say that there are islands with somewhat mulatto people, and other ancient Indians, who refer that in past times of the Incas, some people came from certain islands to the coast of this kingdom, in very large canoes or rafts, to exchange gold and pearls and large snails, very rich and dressed in cotton. This has stopped altogether...

Some researchers, aware of the many Polynesian legends about long-eared sailors arriving from the east, assume that the voyage was real and that it reached Rapa Nui or other islands in Oceania.

Only a few authors keep maintaining the hypothesis that the islands visited by Tupaq Yupanki, the regent of the *Tawantinsuyu* or "Inca Empire", could have been the Galapagos.

[The photograph that illustrates this text corresponds to a landscape on Isabela Island, and was taken by Edgardo Civallero].

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01.10.2022

<https://galapagueana.darwinfoundation.org/en/history/hist003.html>

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Iguanas

entre la tier



Activities and projects | Publications

Marine iguanas

Marine Iguanas: Between Land and Sea is a digital book dedicated to the famous reptiles of the Galapagos Islands. The work combines a series of photographs by British researcher Godfrey Merlen, preserved as slides in the audiovisual collection of the CDF Archive, with a selection of historical texts on the archipelago that are part of the "historical bibliography" in *Galapagueana*.

Using both resources, and connecting the visual works with fragments of narratives and chronicles, a more immediate approach to one of the most iconic Galapagos species is sought. An approach that goes beyond mere scientific knowledge, and that places it in a much broader and comprehensive frame. The minimalist design reinforces the importance of the images, which are already part of the audiovisual heritage of the Galapagos.

The CDF thanks Godfrey Merlen for the photos, and all the chroniclers, travelers and scholars who left, in their notebooks, testimony of the natural wonders they encountered on their way through "The Encantadas".

Catalogue

Charles Darwin Foundation. *Marine Iguanas: Between Land and Sea*. [Photographs by Godfrey Merlen; texts edited by Edgardo Civallero]. [Book]. Santa Cruz : CDF, 2022. 27 pp. : col. ill. : 21 x 30 cm. DDC 508. Well preserved.

Indexing

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Activities and projects | Oral history

Recovering orality

The written word was traditionally the sphere of (re)production of the established and hegemonic powers. Writing perpetuated (and, in certain cases, continues to do so) an image that is certainly incomplete —and, therefore, biased and distorted— of the reality of a culture and an era. The spaces for knowledge and memory management (libraries, archives, museums) usually acted as mere instruments of this process, or as (un)conscious accomplices of it. Voices and thoughts that didn't get shelf space disappeared with their owners; only a tiny fraction of human reality transcended through written documents.

Popular traditions have been neglected by libraries and archives throughout history, except for those traditional elements that were included in literature, classical music, or academic art. The development of sound recording technologies —from the wax cylinders developed at the end of the 19th century— allowed the recovery of artistic and oral expressions within anthropology, linguistics, and ethnology. The appearance and evolution of audiovisual media allowed the improvement of those registers and the extension of their domains to history, politics, and sociology. Oral history —a resource already used by Thucydides and Herodotus in classical Greece— witnessed a

renaissance after World War II. The testimonies of the participants in the different scenarios of the great conflict allowed a different understanding —more complete and, at the same time, more complex— of crucial events, opening the doors to experiences in other places. Spanish miners and combatants, French anarchists, Latin American guerrillas and trade unionists, Brazilian *sem-terras* and a large number of other categories provided alternative appreciations of a personal and unique nature, which allowed enriching the understanding of specific events.

Overcoming sexist and ethnocentric limitations, the spectrum was later expanded with the contributions made by social anthropology (indigenous communities), sociology (rural populations) or gender and sexuality studies. Thus, the oral history archives or "archives of words" were born — collections that, usually separated from libraries, are in charge of preserving, organizing and studying this valuable intangible heritage.

The development of digital media for data storage and transmission made the management of information and the organization of knowledge, including sound and audiovisual media, more flexible. Slowly, oral tradition has begun to be included in libraries and specialized documentation centers, and, although there is a remarkable lack of training in the management of this kind of knowledge, a good number of international recommendations related to cultural diversity and intangible heritage encourage the generation and growth of collections aimed at disseminating the orality of different cultures and peoples. For oral tradition includes all human experience, and that encompasses a wide range of knowledge. The typologies of persons that may

provide such testimonies is wide: all ages, genders, cultural and educational levels, ethnic origins, currents of thought and creeds are included.

In this sense, oral word is much more inclusive than written. And the richness inherent in such a medium is more than evident.

[The photograph that illustrates this text corresponds to a slide kept in the CDF Archive. It was taken in the 1990s on Santa Cruz Island, and has no mention of authorship].

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<https://galapagueana.darwinfoundation.org/en/activities/acti003b.html>

BOSQUE DE LOS NIÑOS

ARBOLES DE LECHOSO, UNA PLANTA
PROPIA DE ESTA ISLA.

PROTEGIOS PARA LOS NIÑOS DE
ISABELA Y DEL MUNDO.

FAVOR NO PISAR NI
PAR SOLO PISADAS
GRATIAS



Activities and projects | Social memory

Forest of the Children

On Isabela Island, *Scalesia cordata*, popularly known as "lechoso", grows only in a handful of spots, including the area of the Sierra Negra volcano. The terrible fires (such as the one in 1985, which consumed some 20,000 ha, or the one in 1994, which devastated some 4,000), together with agriculture, cattle grazing, and the introduction of foreign species such as the guava, the grass elephant or the cachimuela, have cornered this unique species. A species, by the way, used since the beginning of the human occupation of the island as a source of wood, as can still be seen in the beams of some old buildings.

The Isabelan *Scalesia* redoubts are a real treasure. This is how Jacinto Gordillo understood it. Gordillo was a man with a long history in Isabela and, for many years, the CDF representative on the island. Around 1992, Don Jacinto paid attention to a small "lechoso" grove that was located on one side of the road that connects Tomás de Berlanga, the parish seat, with the San Antonio de los Tintos precinct. The trees were threatened, since the land on which they grew was privately owned (by D. Heriberto Gil), it was invaded by guava trees and other weeds, and cattle were tied up on the trees.

The man was not daunted and in August 1992 he wrote to the head of the Botany area of the CDF, Hugo Valdebenito, who recommended the purchase of the property. By September the land was being negotiated, but then the matter fell into oblivion. Gordillo took up the issue again in August 1993, and the director of the Station, Chantal Blanton, managed to formalize the acquisition shortly after. Additionally, she requested the donation of a small piece of land that served as the entrance road to the sanctuary, which was municipal property. The formal owner of the forest ended up being, in a very symbolic way, the Isabela Island's Renacer Club, which made its first visit to the forest on August 27, 1993.

Don Jacinto baptized the reserve as "El Bosque de los Niños" ("The Children's Forest"). The protected area was 1,200 m², fenced with wire and stakes, and free of guava and other invaders thanks to the application of the infamous Roundup insecticide (glyphosate, still popular at the time). At the beginning, the forest had 168 specimens of *Scalesia* and other endemic species such as guayabillo and pega-pega.

In December 1994, a big wooden sign sent from the Darwin Station in Santa Cruz was installed. Explanatory small signs and a rain gauge were placed on the internal trails, and in March 1995 "bands" were created to grow new *Scalesia* plants.

The grove was visited by members of the European Commission in July 1994, and by Henri de Nassau-Wellburg, Grand Duke of Luxembourg, in November 1995.

How do we know all this? Because Jacinto Gordillo produced a series of reports, typed, illustrated with photos glued to the paper, cut out and stapled, and written with his personal prose and all his (many and strong) opinions about the conservation of the islands' environment. Those reports are one of the jewels of the CDF Archive. About this project, "The Children's Forest", he left numerous writings, letters, and petitions...

...and a good number of photographs: the trees, the children next to them, the posters, the landscapes... Reading his paragraphs, it is impossible to ignore the idea underlying his words: these islands, this world, are the legacy that we leave to those children that appear in the photos. And to everyone else.

Catalogue

Gordillo, Jacinto. [*El Bosque de los Niños*]. [Report]. Isabela, Galapagos : Jacinto Gordillo, [ca1995]. [N.d.] : col. ill. : 29 cm. DDC 333.72. Regularly preserved

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Jardín Nativo
Native Garden

Activities and projects | (In)tangible heritage

Wooden signs

The Charles Darwin Research Station is strewn with signs: those that point out paths and destinations, those that identify buildings or spaces, those that inform, those that sometimes misinform...

Some of them are small works of craftsmanship, such as the one in the Unidad de Aislamiento para Estudios Entomológicos (Isolation Unit for Entomological Studies), decorated with a huge ant. Others are simpler but, even so, they are not devoid of charm: an example is the one that is usually at the entrance to the Library, or the one that, in the middle of the central path of the Station, indicates to disoriented visitors in which direction is Puerto Ayora.

It is extremely difficult (if not impossible) to know the origin of each of the old signs that still survive. However, it is possible to link them thanks to the stylistic patterns they display and share: those with carvings painted in blue and green, those with sober black letters and no adornment, those exuberant (such as the "Casa de sombra" sign, with its silhouetted tree), and those that could very well go unnoticed...

And there are those who appear in the photographs of the Charles Darwin Station almost from the beginning of its history. Like the one that says "Jardín Nativo" (Native Garden), and which is still standing next to the building that houses the Library, Archive and Museum area.

The signs make up a network of warnings, notices and signals that has been continually renewed throughout the six decades of the Station's history. They are essential to understand what was given importance to in each era, how each corner was identified, how the land was organized and divided, which were the busiest routes and which were the internal paths. Like other, generally ignored elements, the signs are part of CDF's tangible heritage, and their survival, or at least their preservation, should be guaranteed, since they are part of our social and collective history. One that is built by carefully linking a thousand details and many other small pieces.

[The photograph that illustrate this text was taken by Gregg Smith. It is a slide preserved in the CDF Archive. It was taken in November 1997, and features Charlotte Causton and Alan Tye].

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