

## Author A.C. Frieden Travels to Panama for Research

**PANAMA CITY, Panama (Dec. 30, 2008)** – Author A.C. Frieden traveled to Panama to continue his research for two upcoming novels, including researching the former U.S. military presence in the country. His first stop was at the former Fort Gulick, near Colón. Fort Gulick used to be the home of the infamous U.S. Army School of the Americas (“Esquela de las Americas”), known for its counterinsurgency training that lasted in Panama until 1984. Today the base is a refurbished residential area and also hosts the Melia Panama Canal Hotel, where Frieden stayed two nights.



*Above:* A.C. Frieden standing in front of abandoned barracks at Fort Gulick.  
*Below (left):* The base seen from Frieden’s rental plane; *(right)* The former base’s movie theatre





Above: A.C. Frieden standing near the Caribbean entrance to the Panama Canal, in Colón.



Above: A.C. Frieden standing by his rental Cessna 182 at Galebert Airport in Panama.



*Above:* A.C. Frieden stands on a boat on Panama's Pacific coast, soon after crossing the Panama Canal's Miraflores Locks and passing under the Bridge of the Americas.

During his 10-day stay in the country, A.C. Frieden scoured numerous sites for scenes for his books. Some of the most interesting sites were located in the Casco Viejo, which is the old colonial quarter of Panama City, as well as the nearby Balboa and Amador areas. "As a writer, you can find anything here. This is a place with a lot of controversial history, volatile opportunities, dangerous areas, and lingering contradictions," said Frieden, "all of which offers the ingredients for page-turning novels." The newer parts of the capital, where Frieden stayed at the Radisson Decapolis hotel, also have numerous interesting sites that perfect for literary protagonists and villains alike. He also visited the Miraflores Locks at night and toured the canal by boat before taking to the skies for a 1.5 hour aerial tour of central Panama in a rental Cessna.

In addition to researching sites, Frieden conducted numerous informal interviews with longtime local residents in Panama City, Portobelo, Colón, and Isla Grande, all of whom have interesting memories of the former U.S. military presence.

**About the author:** A.C. Frieden is a Swiss-Brazilian mystery novelist and lawyer living in Chicago. He is currently working on two political novels, including one set in Latin America. For more information, visit his website at [www.acfrieden.com](http://www.acfrieden.com) and his literary travel blog.

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