

## THE LAFFITE SOCIETY

Meridian (formerly Edgewater) Retirement Center, 2228 Seawall Blvd., Galveston, Texas 77550

### MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, July 13, 2010

BOARD PRESENT: President Ed Jamison; 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Jim Nonus; 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Kathy Modzelewski; 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President Lynette Haaga; Treasurer Nancy Beaman; Secretary *pro tem* and Archivist Jeff Modzelewski; Editor of Publications *pro tem* Dan Cote; Historian Ginny Roberts; Parliamentarian Diane Olson; Press Director Dave Roberts; Privateer-At-Arms (nominal) Wil Zapalac.

BOARD ABSENT: Coordinator of Research Gary Fretz; Coordinator of Research Pam Keyes.

ADVISORY BOARD PRESENT: Jean Epperson; Jeff Modzelewski; Kathy Modzelewski; R. Dale Olson.

ADVISORY BOARD ABSENT: Pam Keyes; Don Marler; Gene Marshall; Robert Vogel; Dr. Reginald Wilson.

Ed Jamison called the meeting to order at 6:38 p.m. and welcomed all attendees. He then extended a special greeting to several returning visitors and members who are often unable to attend meetings, including charter Society member Dorothy McDonald Karilanovic, visiting from Florida.

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PROGRAM: Jim Nonus introduced the evening's speaker, Tom Oertling, a long-time Society member, a marine archaeologist, and an instructor at Texas A&M Galveston.

Tom spoke about various types of sailing vessels, the names of many of which are encountered in narratives concerning the Laffites and their era. Examples include the brigantine, sloop, ketch, bark/barque, and schooner. Tom noted that in the present day ships are classified according to their numbers of masts and types of sails, while in older times they were classified according to their hull types.

Tom mentioned that Galveston's own *Elissa* is a three-masted bark, and that, with a deck 160' in length and an overall length of 202', she is relatively small for that ship type; barks such as those familiar to the writer Joseph Conrad a century and more ago were typically 50' longer. But because of that smaller size, the *Elissa* was able to call at shallow-draft ports (she drafts perhaps just 16'-17' of water fully laden).

Tom noted that privateers and pirates preferred smaller, faster vessels such as the "Baltimore Clippers" used in the War of 1812, which featured "V"-shaped, rather than flat, hulls. The privateers and pirates needed much canvas for speed, and many men to crew captured prizes.

A question-and-answer session followed Tom's talk, in which a wide variety of interesting topics was addressed, such as the service of women on sailing vessels of centuries past; crew's nests; beverages (including grog) and food (including livestock for future eating) found on board; and the status of the *Denbigh* project.

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Following the presentation, biennial elections were conducted, with the following results:

President: Ed Jamison

1<sup>st</sup> Vice President (Programs): Jack Watson

2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President (Membership): Kathy Modzelewski  
3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President (Hospitality): Vacant [Ginny Roberts volunteered to assist]  
Recording/Corresponding Secretary: Carolyn Peterson  
Treasurer: Nancy Beaman  
Archivist: Larry Porter  
Technical Director [new position]: Rob Peterson  
Parliamentarian: Diane Olson  
Coordinator of Research: Pam Keyes  
*Chronicles* Editor: Dan Cote  
Press Director: Dave Roberts  
Advisory Board: Jean Epperson, Pam Keyes, Jeff Modzelewski, Kathy Modzelewski, R. Dale Olson,  
Robert Vogel, Dr. Reginald Wilson

Ed Jamison thanked retiring board members Lynette Haaga, Jeff Modzelewski, and Jim Nonus for their service.

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Miscellaneous -

Dorothy McDonald Karilanovic addressed the group briefly to emphasize the importance of the archives, as these now begin to be restocked with material salvaged from Hurricane Ike.

R. Dale Olson followed up on an item discussed at the previous meeting by Lou Olsen about a purported Laffite treasure in Hendricks Lake near the east Texas towns of Beckville and Tatum. Dale cited author Tom Townsend's *Texas Treasure Coast* and the numerous tales of treasure contained therein in noting that, in general, serious researchers considered tales of Laffite buried treasure to be myths.

Lastly, Jack Watson informed the group that at the next meeting on 10 August 2010 he would present part two of his research into the Laffites' accomplice James Campbell, the topic of his presentation at the 13 April 2010 meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:46 p.m.

Submitted by

Jeff Modzelewski  
Secretary *pro tem*  
The Laffite Society