



The Laffite Society Chronicles

Volume XVIII Number 1
February 2012

THE LAFFITE SOCIETY

The Laffite Society is a not-for-profit organization devoted to the study of the privateers Jean and Pierre Laffite and their contemporaries, and to the geographical locales and chronological era associated with them.

The Society meets at 6:00 pm on the second Tuesday of the month, except December, at the Meridian Retirement Community, 23rd Street just off Seawall Boulevard.

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| Student..... | \$15.00 |
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| Sustaining Member..... | \$100.00 |
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| Life Membership (One Payment)..... | \$300.00 |

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Editor's Page

Dan Cote
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What an issue if I do say so myself.

The Society's Program Director, **Jack Watson**, brings us up to date and sends us into the future with a review of the last half of 2011 and the first half of 2012. The Society truly has an active Program Director. **Juan Mugartegui** gives us a detailed look into the start and progress of piracy activities in the 16th and 17th centuries in the Caribbean with a map for you to follow the action. Examining the ears of Theodosia, **Tom Linton** again leads us into early forensic work. Rising from cabin boy to active pirate, **Cindy Vallar** traces the history of Dominique Youx. Intriguing. **Carolyn Peterson**, Secretary, gives us a collection of Society Minutes in wonderful detail. Want to know what's been happening in the Society, peruse and learn. And, lastly but not leastly, **Dave Roberts**, Master at Arms of the Lens, gives us a couple of pages of pictures of this years Christmas Season Society party.

The next issue of the Chronicles should be coming out in late September 2012. Articles should be electronically submitted by the last week of August with only the most elemental formatting, no page numbers and only special font graphics. You have my email address for other questions and clarification.

The **Laffite Society** maintains an Internet newsgroup on the social-networking site Yahoo. Group members can post text and upload documents and pictures of interest. The group is titled "laffite."

To join the Yahoo group, one must first have a (free) Yahoo account. To register, go to www.yahoo.com and follow the instructions. Make a note of your user ID and password for future reference.

Once registered, browse the groups for "laffite" and follow the instructions to request to join it. A group moderator must review and approve your request before you may join (so that we can exclude those who wish to join simply to post spam, promote their businesses, etc.).

If you have difficulty, e-mail Jeff Modzelewski at jeffiemod@gmail.com for assistance. However, please do not request assistance before you have a Yahoo account - a Yahoo account is a prerequisite for joining the "laffite" group. If you have a Yahoo account but cannot navigate the procedure to request to join the group, inform Jeff and he will send you via e-mail an "invitation" to join, which you then simply need to accept with a click of your mouse.

President's Page

Ed Jamison
ezlife71@comcast.net

Happy New Year all!

It was standing room only at our most recent monthly meeting; a situation that will be corrected henceforth. Still, this is a tribute to the Society and the quality of programs we present. Program Director, Jack Watson, has consistently provided us with speakers of interest and entertainment. Further, Jack is responsible for meeting Ritch Wright who is developing our new web site, which will probably be on line by the time you are you reading this.

While all of the presentations we've had have been of interest to us, perhaps none could be timelier than the one at our meeting on March 13th. Galvestonian Armin Cantini has agreed to talk about his trip to Cuba this past November. If you know Armin, his presentation will be more than some terrific photography...a travelogue, if you will...but will bring us some insight as to the current state of affairs in that island nation. I see this as what could be the first step of the trip that some members have long expressed a desire for: the chance to go to Cuba for research into the Laffite's long-ago presence there. The membership will be kept informed as to any developments on this subject.

Also in March, on the 3rd to be exact, there is a symposium at LSU in Baton Rouge at which two of our esteemed members will be presenting. The subject of this one-day event is "The Neutral Zone: Redbones, Rascals and the Camino Real" and will feature a total of six speakers. Member Don Marler will speak on "Redbones in Louisiana" and Dale Olson will offer "Jean Laffite: After the Battle of New Orleans". Some of us from this area will attend the presentations, possibly making a weekend of it.

Finally, no matter where you live the Society would like you to be here for it's annual Fat Tuesday Mardi Gras get-together. It will be February 21st in the lobby of the Panama Hotel Condominiums. Since the parade passes that area twice there is no question that beads will be thrown and caught. Come join us!

Monthly Programs for the Second Half of 2011 and a preview of Programs for the First Half of 2012

by
Jack Watson, Program Director

The year 2011 was full of very interesting programs presented by our members and non-members. My objective as your program chairman includes three things. First, I hope to encourage members to do their own research and make a presentation on their subject. You have sure come through on that one. Betty Conner did an exceptional presentation on the women in Jean Laffite's life. I have heard more positive comments on her talk than any other program. Thanks so much to Betty for stepping up to the plate. I am looking forward to another by Betty. Longtime member Cindy Vallar traveled down from her home near Fort Worth and presented a lecture on Dominique Youx. Cindy's talk was very well received and the Laffite Society appreciates Cindy and Tom's efforts. My second objective for our programs is to bring in non-members for programs. This not only gives us new faces to look at, it also brings in new members. Although the familiar Galveston artifact Selma is a hundred years removed from the times of Laffite, it makes for a great story for our organization. It makes one wonder what Jean Laffite would have thought about a ship made of concrete. Many thanks to the owner of the ship, Bill Cox and his sidekick and concrete ship expert Jim Saye for entertaining us with a very interesting story. I bet anyone that heard their story that night, and subsequently took the Bolivar ferry across Bolivar Roads took a second and even a third look at the enigmatic relic.

The November program featured long time member and one of the founders of the Laffite Society, Dale Olson. Dale's talk concerned a subject he has researched extensively and pays property taxes on: The Maison Rouge. If we measure a program's success on attendance numbers, Dale won the prize. I think there were close to fifty people there that night. You see my third objective is to increase attendance.

Looking forward to 2012, our January program will feature our own Jean Epperson. Jean's subject will be the Stewart Mansion at 13-mile road. Not only does this particular location have an important place in Galveston history, it seems there are some very interesting pirate murals on the cracked walls inside. Jean has some interesting tales on this abandoned place and I'm looking forward to her talk as usual.

For our February program the head of special collections at Rosenberg Library, Casey Greene will be our guest. I have requested Mr. Greene tell us about items at the History Center on Laffite that are unique to Rosenberg. Things, in other words, that can't be found anywhere else. Bring your notebook.

In March our guest will be Hewitt Clarke of the Texas Heritage Society. Hewitt will travel to our Island and give us a talk on Philip Nolan, the first Texas filibuster. Mr. Clarke is an historian and the author of numerous books. Oddly I met him when he called me and requested an interview with me at my home. It seems his current book has a chapter on a relative of mine from Mississippi. Naturally I can't wait to read it. Meanwhile, if you are unfamiliar with Philip Nolan, I suggest you read up on him. His story is interesting indeed.

Anyone anticipating doing a program for 2012, please call me. I have openings from March on. I am working on a biographical sketch on Warren D C Hall for a presentation sometime this summer. This guy was everywhere. He was a filibuster, an acquaintance of Jean Laffite, and a Texas patriot.

PIRATES, PRIVATEERS AND BUCCANEERS IN THE CARIBBEAN

by
Juan M. Mugartegui

After Columbus' discovery of the New World in 1492, the Caribbean region became a center of European trade and civilization, attracting many pirates and privateers from many nationalities.

In the 16th Century, Spain was removing staggering amounts of silver bullion from the mines of Zacatecas in New Spain (Mexico) and Potosi, Upper Peru. The huge Spanish silver and gold shipments from the New World to the Old World attracted all kinds of pirates and privateers who sailed across the Caribbean Sea and the Atlantic looking for Spanish ships to plunder. Also, the outbreak of the destructive Thirty Years' War in Europe which led to the climax of the Protestant-Catholic conflict of the Reformation between Habsburg Spain and Bourbon France generated an increase in piracy in the Caribbean, especially of French, English and Dutch privateers. At first, gold, silver, specie and manufactured goods were sent from South America through Cartagena (Colombia), Porto Bello, and Panama City from New Spain through Veracruz (Mexico) to Santiago de Cuba and Seville (Spain).

In order to avoid the constant danger of piracy in 1560, the Spanish Crown adopted a convoy system. A treasure fleet or "flota" would sail from Seville carrying passengers, soldiers and European manufactured goods to the Spanish colonies in the Americas. While the fleet sailed from the Peruvian and Zacatecan Mexican mines, the silver was transported in a mule convoy called the silver train to a major Spanish port, usually on the Isthmus of Panama or to the port of Veracruz in New Spain. The "flota" would meet with the silver train, unload its cargo, and then transfer the gold and silver bullion or coins into the holds of the ships. The normal route for the treasure was through the Caribbean Lesser Antilles to the ports along the Spanish Main in Central America and then into the Gulf of Mexico through the Yucatan channel to Veracruz. Once the silver train cargo had been transferred to the "flota", it would head back to the Caribbean to meet more ships in Habana, Cuba, and then the long Atlantic crossing began to Seville or Cadiz, Spain. The Spanish treasure fleet was a tempting target, although pirates were more likely to shadow the fleet to attack stragglers than to seize the well-guarded main vessels.

The first known pirate settlement in the Caribbean was established on Tortuga Island off the coast of Hispaniola (Haiti and the Dominican Republic). The crews were made up of deserters, castaways, maroons and fugitives from justice and run-away slaves. Most of the pirates and privateers were French, English, and Dutch, although there were also Welsh, Swedish, Irish, Portuguese, and American colonists. Later, more pirate havens sprang up, the most notorious being Port Royal in Jamaica and Trinidad off the Venezuelan coast. The flourishing of piracy and privateering occurred during the 16th and 17th centuries due to the wars between the European colonial powers. In the early 18th Century, there was a resurgence of piracy and privateering which lasted only until the presence of the Royal Navy and the Spanish Guardacosta fleet in the Caribbean ended the threat, especially with the loss of the last pirate safe haven in Nassau.

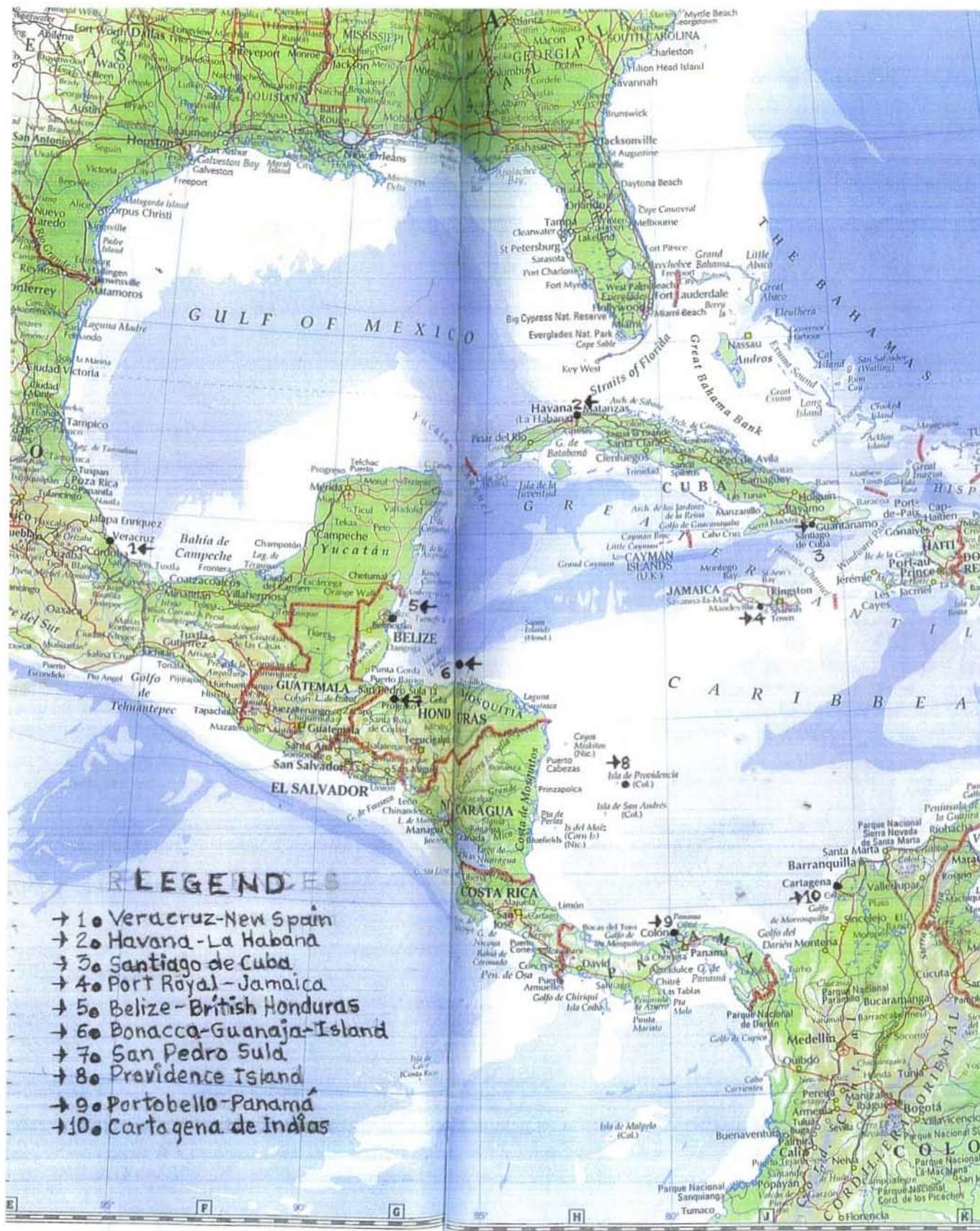
During the piracy era, Spain's New World settlements of Cartagena (Colombia), Panama City, and Porto Bello (Panama), Santiago (Cuba), Santo Domingo (Hispaniola), Veracruz (Mexico), Maracaibo (Venezuela), Buenos Aires (Argentina) were sacked and burned by pirates, who then became heroes to their followers. In 1670, the pirate Henry Morgan attacked and captured Panama City, burning

it to the ground and killing and wounding its inhabitants. Morgan was made a nobleman by the English Crown and died a wealthy man on his enormous sugar plantation in Jamaica.

Pirates, privateers and buccaneers found safe havens in Central America which was sparsely populated; places such as British Honduras (Belize), Providence Island off the Nicaraguan Mosquito Coast and the Bay Islands off the Honduras Caribbean coast. Having been born on the Honduran Caribbean coast, as a boy I remember hearing my Belizian cousins' tales of pirates and buried treasure in the Bay Islands, specifically on Bonaca (Guanaja) Island, and two well-known pirates, Francois L'Ollonais and Charles Vane, used it as a base.

Francois L'Ollonais captured Spanish galleons and raided Central American Spanish settlements during the 17th Century. He was responsible for the attack and burning in 1752 of my hometown San Pedro Sula, Honduras, forcing its inhabitants to build a second settlement. He is also credited with the attack and sacking of Maracaibo and Gibraltar in New Granada (Venezuela).

Charles Vane was an infamous bloodthirsty pirate who used to winter on Bonaca Island where he is believed to have buried his treasure in a place named Coxen Hole. The rest of the year he would operate between the Great Antilles, the Carolina coast and New York. His pirate career ended when his vessel was wrecked off Bay Island and a buccaneer ship picked him up. Vane and his crew were turned over to Jamaica's British governor and hanged in March, 1720.



THEODOSIA'S EARS DON'T LIE

by
Thomas Linton

Alphonse Bertillon created anthropometry, an identification system based on physical measurement of various human body parts ----- including the ear.

It is an identification system based on physical measurement of humans.

It was the first scientific system used by police to identify criminals. In its day it came to be known as *Bertillonage* ---- a name coined to honor the creator of the system.

A person was identified by measurement of the head and body, individual markings (i.e. tattoos, scars)- and personality characteristics.

The measurements were made into a formula that would apply to only one person.

The system was eventually found to be flawed, however, because often two different officers made their measurements in slightly different ways and therefore the formula would not apply.

Measurements could also change as the criminal aged.

The system was replaced by fingerprinting because finger prints are taken using simple, standard methods ---- they do not change with age.

However, there were two techniques used in the system that are still in use in criminal investigations. These are mug shots and the systematic crime-scene photography.

Another measurement that, although not used in modern day criminology but has stood the test of time is the human ear ---- they are unique.

And so you may rightfully ask what does this have to do with the un-solved mystery of the disappearance of Theodosia Burr Alston (are even more germane) or why it is appearing in the chronicles of the Jean Laffite Society.

The former I shall attempt to explain in what follows ---- the latter will require a couple more installments in this series to make that connection.

There is a portrait of a woman that was taken from a ship that wrecked on the infamous Diamond Shoals of the outer banks of North Carolina, It is known as the "Nags Head Portrait."



It is, although not verified, purported to be a portrait of Theodosia Burr Alston.

The Nags Head Portrait is supposed to be an important clue in determining where Theodosia and the ship in which she departed Georgetown South Carolina ended the voyage.

It is an unsigned painting therefore making it even more suspect as to its origin. And aside from a vague provenance for the painting given by a 70 year old woman in 1869 ----- it was given to her, "In the winter when we were fighting the British on the sea,"

(http://www.antiquetrader.com/articles/feature-stories/portrait_of_nags_head).

Over the years the portrait has been subjected to a wide variety of tests conducted numerous expert opinions sought and offered in an effort to authenticate that it is of Theodosia ---- all to no avail.

It therefore seems unlikely that it is of Theodosia.

There is a further comparison that might be made ----- Bertillonage.

There is a portrait of Theodosia Burr Alston that was painted (and signed) by John Vanderlyn in 1802.

The painting by Vanderlyn was commissioned by Theodosia's husband; therefore, there is no doubt of its authenticity.



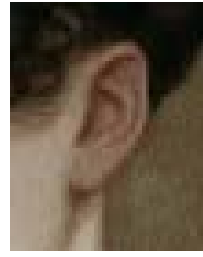
Both portraits have side views of the person.

If the ears can of both be isolated and enlarged it can easily be seen that they are drastically different in shape and form.

At no time did Bertillon advocate that any one part of the human anatomy, including the ear, was sufficiently unique so that individuals could be distinguished by measuring and comparing that part of the body.



Theodosia's ear
from painting
by John Vanderlyn (1802)



Ear of person in
the
Nags Head Portrait

Given the poor provenance of the Nags Head portrait, the lack of similarity when the Bertillon type comparison is made, the Patriot ending its voyage on the Outer Banks of North Carolina seems to me to be highly unlikely.

This coupled with other documented facts cause me to look to the Caribbean for answers ----- and gets me closer to the Jean Lafitte connection I mentioned previously.

Dominique Youx, Intrepid Warrior

By
Cindy Vallar

... he refused to tell his name, but the sailors knew he was from Saint Domingue. When they wanted him to do something they would yell, 'Domingue, vous!' or 'Dominique, You!'" (de Grummond, 17)

This tale of a seven-year-old stowaway, who became a cabin boy because the ship on which he sailed had traveled too far from port, explains how Dominique Youx¹ got his nickname. Whether it is a true account or the product of an imaginative writer's mind is unknown. Several documents that he signed or that concerned him show his name as Frédéric Youx, while some histories give his Christian name as Alexandre Frédéric, identifying him as the eldest brother of Jean and Pierre Laffite.² To further complicate the question of his name, Charles Etienne Arthur Gayarré³ mentions in his *Histoire de la Louisiane* (1847) that Americans called Youx "Johnness".

As with many pirates, the Laffites included, Youx's early life is an enigma. Most resources cite Haiti as his place of birth in 1775. Stanley Clisby Arthur⁴ is more precise: Port-au-Prince, San Domingo, April 14, 1771. Included in the Laffite family papers that he consulted, one person wrote: "foxy Oncle Youx had the reputation of telling the truth one day but would lie the next." (*Gentleman*, 227) He may have gone to France to serve as a gunner in Napoleon's army. He may have returned to Saint-Domingue in 1802 with General Victor Leclerc. According to a letter in volume five of *The Laffite Society Chronicles*, one member and his associates located evidence in France placing Dominique, as well as the Laffite brothers, in Baracoa, Cuba in 1798.

Beginning in late 1805, however, Dominique's name appears in documents housed at the *Archives de France* in Paris, France. Records from the prize courts located in the West Indies mention him as the captain of *la Superbe*, a privateer owned by *Monsieur* Jacques Plaideau. Youx and fellow corsairs captured three American vessels – *Jane*, a brigantine, and two schooners, *Eliza* and *Eleanor*⁵ – which were condemned as lawful prizes then sold in Cuba.

On 27 November 1492, Christopher Columbus discovered a natural harbor on the northeastern coast of Cuba. The Indians called it Baracoa, although the Spanish changed the name to Neustra Señora de la Asunción de Baracoa in 1511 when Diego Velázquez established the island's first settlement and capital there. Sailors used El Yunque, the anvil-shaped mountain rising 1,885 feet above Baracoa, as a landmark because they could see it from miles away at sea. The city's remoteness made it difficult to govern the entire island and in 1538 the capital moved 600 miles farther west to Havana. Baracoa's isolation, however, made it a haven for corsairs and illegal traders. During the Haitian revolution (1791-1803), many citizens fled the French colony for Baracoa. The corsairs, who attacked ships from America and Sweden bound for Saint-Domingue with cargo for the rebels or carrying African slaves, took their captures to Basse-Terre, Guadeloupe or Saint-Domingue. Once the Admiralty courts judged the ships as lawful prizes, the corsairs sent the vessels to Cuba to be sold. Youx sold his prizes in Baracoa.

The next archival mention of Dominique Youx concerns the loss of his privateer, *la Superbe*, in 1806. According to authorities for the *Ministère de la Marine* (French Admiralty) in Saint-Domingue, the corsairs captured two prizes (*la Vipre*⁶ and the *Exchange*), but the privateer was so badly damaged in a battle at sea that she sank with the ships' papers confiscated from the captured vessels. Their loss

prevented Youx from proving to the court that they were legitimate prizes. The register containing this information also revealed the following:

. . . he and his officers escaped from the disaster to his house in Baracoa . . . he did not know how to sign his name (this information is clearly written in the margin of the document). (Feuillie, 2)

While the French document doesn't identify the vessel that attacked Dominique's ship, the *London Gazette*⁷ published the following item from the Admiralty on 27 December 1806.

*His Majesty's Sloop Drake, at Sea,
27th October 1806.*

SIR,

I HAVE much Pleasure in reporting to you the Capture of the French Schooner Privateer La Superbe of Fourteen Guns (Two Nine-Pounders and Twelve Six-Pounders) and Ninety-four Men, commanded by M. Dominique Houx, by Lieutenant Fitton in His Majesty's Schooner Pitt.

This Officer meeting La Superbe off Cape Nicholas Mole on the 24th, after an arduous Chace with Sweeps, got within Gun Shot, and commenced a running Fight, which he continued with little Intermission, and in almost every Direction until the 26th, when at Nine A. M. Cape Maize bearing N. N. W. Six Leagues, they were discovered from the Tops of the Ship I command, and it was then that I witnessed with the greatest Satisfaction a display of Skill and Bravery supported for Four Hours and an Half, which entitles the Parties to the greatest Praise. The Two Schooners within Pistol Shot kept up a constant Fire. La Superbe seeing us to Leeward, made many Manoeuvres to escape, but was as often foiled, Lieutenant Fitton carefully preserving the Weather Gage, and it was not until after a desperate Resistance, until she was in a sinking State, and when our fortunate Leeward Position prevented further flight, that the Frenchman ran his Vessel upon the Rocks in Ocoa Bay and deserted her, accompanied by those of his Men who were not either killed or dangerously wounded in the Action.

I cannot help repeating how much I am gratified in describing the Merits of this Affair, and in thus bearing Testimony to the Credit which Lieutenant Fitton, his Officers and Men have acquired, by the Stile in which they fought and captured this notorious Robber.

In La Superbe's Hold were found Four Men already dead of their Wounds, and Three whose State affords little Hope; they allow that Fourteen fell in the Action, and from the Appearance of the Decks much Blood must have been shed.

The Pitt has suffered in her Sails and Rigging, and had Two Men badly, and Six slightly wounded; and I am happy to add that we succeeded in getting the Prize off.

I am, &c.

(Signed) R. Nicholas

*James Richard Dacres, Esq; Vice-Admiral of the White, Commander in Chief, &c. &c.
&c. (Issue 15987, 1680-1681)*

Could Dominique Houx, the notorious French robber, be Dominique Youx? Possibly. He lost *la Superbe* in a naval battle. Ocoa Bay is part of the Dominican Republic, which was called Santo Domingo at this time, and lies about forty-seven miles west of the capital (also called Santo Domingo), and Youx could have gotten to Saint-Domingue (Haiti) either by going overland or waiting until the coast was clear and hitching a ride on another vessel. Later naval histories, however, identify

Dominique Houx as Dominique Diron, “not only a daring and experienced privateersman, but he was a perfect freebooter. He detained American as well as English vessels (two schooners which he had sent into Baracoa were Americans); and, where he wanted a cause to capture, was never without one to pillage. . . . Among the papers found on board the *Superbe*, was a list of captures, English, Spanish, and American, made by Dominique, to the amount of 147,000*L.* sterling.” William James’ description, which appears in volume four on page 269 of his *Naval History of Great Britain 1793-1827* (1837), might easily describe Dominique Youx, who lost the papers that would identify *la Vipre* and the *Exchange* as American.⁸

On 29 July 1807, Dominique Youx aided Captain Luis Arrúe, in the defense of Baracoa against the British.⁹ Although the Governor of Jamaica refused to lose men in a fight against the privateers who frequented the Spanish port, Captain Tait of the Royal Navy decided to go against those wishes. He received orders to take the army’s 99th Foot from the Bahamas to Bermuda aboard HMS *Chichester*, a store-ship. Four officers and eighty-seven men, who had been recuperating at the hospital in Nassau, came aboard, then Tait asked permission from the Governor of the Bahamas to attack Baracoa. He, too, denied the request, but Tait chose not to heed those commands. With the assistance of a privateer, the two ships set sail for Cuba where Tait disembarked his passengers, along with some marines, with orders to capture the battery that prevented the *Chichester* and privateer from getting too near the port. The soldiers came under heavy fire from nine cannon and a large contingent of infantry. Driven back to the beach, they surrendered because the boats had returned to the *Chichester*. The captured soldiers spent one month as prisoners until they were exchanged. Thirteen men died in this failed endeavor. Another twenty or so were wounded.

In 1810 Dominique learned that a junta had severed ties with the Spanish government in Cartagena de Indias, New Granada. He sailed there and acquired a letter of marque with the signatures of *Presidente-Gobernador* Manuel Rodriguez Torices and Secretary of War Joseph Axnazola y Vonay. Youx also received a code of conduct that outlined the regulations and rules for privateering.

Although history is mute about the precise date on which Dominique Youx fell in with Jean and Pierre Laffite at Barataria, he enters the archival records of New Orleans in September 1812. The previous month “The Great Louisiana Hurricane of 1812”¹⁰ ravaged the city with such force that many residents later compared it to the storms of 1831, 1856, and 1860. An article in the 21 August 1814 issue of the *Orleans Gazette* recounted:

On Wednesday night last (19th) about 10 o’clock, a gale commenced occasionally accompanied with rain and hail, and which continued with a most dreadful violence for upwards of four hours. As we have never witnessed anything equal to it, neither do we believe the imagination can picture to itself a scene more truly awful and distressing, than that which its consequences present. (Ludlum, 75)

The Louisiana Gazette and New Orleans Advertiser, published the next day, said of the storm:

It would be a vain expectation in any of our readers to suppose any pen capable of giving a faithful picture of the scene exhibited after the tremendous gale of Wednesday night – Tuesday evening was remarkably warm and sultry – Wednesday morning the wind was from the north, the weather very cool for the season, and the horizon covered with dark heavy clouds which indicated a storm; – before eleven o’clock it commenced raining, the wind still at north, and continued with short intervals during the day; at dark the wind

(still from the north) began to increase, and the rain fell in torrents, the wind shifting a little to eastward; at half after eleven, wind at ESE, the storm raged with great fury, – and from that to one o'clock, the whole of the damage was sustained. At one o'clock, or soon after, the clouds began to break, and at three o'clock the storm had nearly subsided. (Ludlum, 75)

Until recently, however, our knowledge of the storm was scant because news from the War of 1812 eclipsed other events. Dr. Cary Mock, an associate professor at University of South Carolina's Department of Geography who has studied this particular hurricane, said it "was the closest to the city, passing just to the west. It wasn't as big as Katrina, but it was stronger at landfall, probably a mid-three or four category hurricane in terms of wind." Cost comparisons of the damages sustained "would rank [it] among the worst Louisiana hurricanes . . . if it occurred today." (Office) *Le Moniteur de la Louisiane* estimated losses at "three million piastres."¹¹ (Ludlum, 75)

Dominique Youx, aboard *le Pandoure*, noticed "violent winds" and "waves" as he approached the Mississippi on 19 August. The hurricane eventually forced the corsair to seek refuge ashore in the Plaquemines area of Louisiana.

. . . sur le même Jour à quatre-heures de l'après midi la violence du vent le força d'atterrir sur l'habitation de M. Charles Jacob – a environ Quinze ou Seize lieues de la ville; que le vent ayant alors continue à augmenter avec la plus grande violence et les Eaux du fleuve et des lacs voisins s'étant considérablement accrues au point d'avoir huit à dix pieds d'eau environ au dessus de rez de chaussée de la maison du dit Sieur Charles Jacob, Il se refugia avec les Susnommés et la famille du dit Sieur Jacob Sur le Sommet de la dite maison . . .

*. . . on this same day at four o'clock in the afternoon the violent winds forced him to land at the residence of Mr. Charles Jacob, situated about fifteen or sixteen leagues from the city; the wind having continued to increase with greater force and the waters of the river and the neighboring lakes were considerably heightened, to the point of having eight to ten feet of water above the ground floor of the house of said Mr. Charles Jacob, He took refuge with the above named and the family of said Mr. Jacob on the summit of the said house . . .*¹²

The estimate of the water being eight to ten feet on land meant the river actually rose at least "17 or 18 feet" because the water level in August was around "10 or 11 feet below the banks." (Mock, 1659) The *Louisiana Courier*, another city newspaper, reported:

The levee almost entirely destroyed; the beach covered with fragments of vessels, merchandize, trunks, and here and there the eye falling on a mangled corpse. In short, what a few hours before was life and property, presented to the astonished spectator only death and ruin. (Ludlum, 76)

Nearly all the buildings in the city have suffered more or less; several being half destroyed; a great many made roofless; the market place near the river bank, between St. Ann and Dumaine streets, blown down; a wall of Mr. Coquet's theatre, carried away; . . . All the vessels in port sustained serious injury; nearly all the street lamps were broken; the United States store-houses, the convent of the Nuns, the barracks, the military

hospital, etc. were seriously damaged. Many lives were lost on the river. The country in the vicinity . . . was laid bare and desolate. (Mock, 1660)

While Captain John Shaw, who commanded the naval station at Fort St. Philip, mentioned the devastation to the city in his 23 August report to Secretary of the Navy Paul Hamilton, his primary concern was for the ships under his command because of the war.

The Brig Enterprize . . . was driven ashore, high & dry . . . without loss of lives, and with little or no injury to her hull: The relaunching of her . . . will . . . be attended with considerable difficulty and consumption of time. The Brig Viper . . . was completely unrigged, and, with the loss of her bowsprit, mainmast, and guns, completely cut-down fore and aft, to her waterways . . . Gun Vessel No. 64, was stranded in Lake Ponchartrain . . . but as she has been forced, by the violence of the tempest, over an extensive level shallow mud bottom, we anticipate much trouble in getting her off again. The Ship Remittance . . . has received but little, or no injury. The Ketch Etna . . . being driven from her position, by several large Merchant vessels, sunk, and had Two men drowned. . . . I feel much anxiety for the fate of the Brig Siren . . . at anchor off Ship-island, as well as for that of the Gun Vessels at, and in the vicinity of, the Bay of St. Louis, and at the Balize; from none of which, have we as yet, had time to receive any intelligence. (Naval)

Many other vessels incurred damage, including *le Pandoure*. Her captain, Dominique Youx, also sustained injuries. An unsigned letter, written to Mayor McRea and dated 23 August 1812, says:

Dear Sir,

The French privateer Pandour, which has weathered the past storm with the loss of her Masts; and whose Capt. has been nearly killed, is now at port Plaquemine. They have made an application to me to obtain the permission to pass the fort and come to town to undergo the necessary repairs.

I request Sir that you have the goodness to send me your written permission which their Doctor is waiting for in my office, to go to the assistance of his Captain. (Dominique)

An inventory of *Pandoure*, filed a month later, detailed the prizes Youx and his fellow corsairs had seized during their cruise:

| Date | Prize | Value |
|----------------|--|-----------|
| April 12, 1812 | 3-masted English ship with 18 carronades bound for Jamaica | \$ 92,000 |

| | | |
|---------------|---|-----------------------|
| May 1, 1812 | 2 Spanish schooners bound for St. Iago, Cuba & Europe 3 merchant barques | \$ 13,383 \$ 2,493 |
| June 29, 1812 | Spanish schooner coming from Vera Cruz | \$ 8,713 |
| July 21, 1812 | English pilot boat bound for Bay of Honduras | \$ 2,030 |
| July 24, 1812 | Spanish brig bound for Campeche via Havana Spanish schooner | \$ 302 \$ 800 |

Youx's share came to \$743.02. The vessels and their cargo, which were valued at \$36,921, sold for \$20,721.38.

This inventory also detailed the privateers' expenses during this voyage. At Cape Cruz, Cuba, they purchased two cows, bananas, pigs, and eggs for sixty-four dollars.¹³ Among the items secured at Grande Isle à L'Isle à Breton were medical instruments for fifty-two dollars and provisions that included peas, rum, cheese, ham, and butter. At la Pointe au Sable near la Balize they secured four barrels of tafia or rum.

Sometime between his arrival in New Orleans and 15 October, Dominique's letter of marque expired. On that date he sold *le Pandoure* for \$7,500. An inventory, dated 17 September and signed by "frederic youx" and the French Consul Laporte, described the schooner as being 126 tons and measuring seventy-five feet from stem to stern and almost twenty-two feet at her widest point. She mounted one 16-pound and six 12-pound carronades, two 8 pounders, and a 9 pounder, while another three 4 pounders were stored in the hold. The arms found on board included pistols, blunderbusses, and cutlasses. Other items included eighty or so cannonballs of various sizes, thirty to forty packages of grapeshot, four barrels of powder and cartridges.

Thereafter Youx was frequently seen in the company of Jean Laffite, Renato Beluche, and Vincent Gambi. Vincent Nolte, a merchant, complained about them.

. . . time and again, seen walking about, publicly, in the streets of New Orleans. They had their friends and acquaintances, their depots of goods, &c., in the city, and sold, almost openly, the wares they had obtained by piracy, particularly English manufactured goods. (Davis, 113)

If Dominique was so recognizable, what did he look like? Jane Lucas de Grummond included the following description in her book on the Baratarians:

Dominique was short, not quite five feet four inches tall. His shoulders, twice as broad as the average man's, made him seem strong and stubborn as an ox. He was swarthy, with flashing black eyes and a hawk-like nose. Scars from powder burns on the left side of his face made him look ferocious, yet men soon discovered that he was a likable cuss.
(5)

Sometime after the sale of *le Pandoure*, Youx became captain of *le Tigre*, also a schooner. Not much is known about the vessel, but accounts of her final voyage exist. At the time she sailed under the colors of Cartagena, which meant Dominique had secured another privateer commission from that fledgling nation's new government, possibly through Jean Laffite. In May 1814, Youx and his men sailed near

the coast of Mexico. Colonel Ellis P. Bean, an American who fought for Mexican independence, wrote his memoirs in 1816. Two years earlier he had been at Nautla, located about seventy-five miles north of Vera Cruz, when two ships approached, one of which was *le Tigre*.

. . . the other vessel, which I found to be a large brig, came close alongside the schooner, and, hoisting English colors, the fight began between them. The schooner spread her sails, and played around the brig, until she had shot away her mainmast. The brig was then ungovernable. The schooner made off out of gunshot, and then lay to again. The brig sent out two large boats to board the schooner. As they came near, she sunk one of them, and the other was badly shattered. The brig having picked up her men from the wreck, the schooner made off toward New Orleans, and the brig returned a southwest course. (Bean, 95)

Two days later, Bean learned of the presence of a schooner six miles up the coast and that “her deck was covered with men, and she had no masts.” (Bean, 95) This vessel turned out to be Dominique’s schooner. After crippling the British brig and getting away from her, “the crew . . . had got to drinking, and ran her on the shoal which extends out a great distance from shore.” (Bean, 96) The privateers returned to Nautla with Bean and with their assistance, he repaired and made ready a small vessel he had dubbed “the first vessel the Mexican nation ever owned.” (Bean, 95)

. . . in ten days [we] set sail for New Orleans. In thirteen days more I landed safely on Barataria island. (Bean, 96)

Dominique’s next vessel was a felucca, but the record so far has revealed little of his activities again until 14 September 1814. Eleven days earlier, HMS *Sophie*, under the command of Captain Nicholas Lockyer, arrived off Barataria.¹⁴ He carried four documents for Jean Laffite. The first was a proclamation urging the citizens of Louisiana to rise up in support of the British. The second one promised that if Laffite and the Baratarians ceased their attacks on British and Spanish ships and joined the Royal Army, his rank would be that of captain and the Baratarians would receive land grants. The third document contained orders for Lockyer depending on what Laffite’s response was, while the fourth demanded restitution from the Baratarians for captured prizes or Lockyer would “destroy, to his utmost every vessel there, as well as to carry destruction over the whole place.” (Davis, 169) Laffite duped the British into believing he needed ten days to convince his men to take advantage of their offer. In actuality, he sent the documents to Governor William C. C. Claiborne in New Orleans. Lockyer sailed off, promising to return.

Laffite and the Baratarians offered their prize cargoes for sale through auctions that bypassed customs. Since the U. S. government did not receive the tariffs from this merchandise, some residents considered these men to be pirates and smugglers who should be punished for their crimes. Claiborne was one of these men, but he understood the significance of the information Laffite sent him. Another enemy of the Baratarians was Commodore Daniel Todd Patterson, who assumed command of the New Orleans Naval Station in 1813. Patterson had a thirst for prize money, which the illicit cargoes and ships represented, and he also hated pirates. As a midshipman aboard the USS *Philadelphia*, he spent three years in captivity when Tripolitan corsairs captured her after she grounded in 1803. On 15 November he wrote to Secretary of the Navy William Jones:

[they] have now arrived to such a pitch of insolence and confidence from their numbers as to set the revenue laws and force at defence, and should they not be soon destroyed, it will be extremely hazardous for an unarmed vessel even American to approach this coast.

Seven days later, he wrote in regards to Laffite and his men:

The honest merchant cannot obtain a livelihood, by his sales while those robbers robe in riches piratically captured on the high seas and brought and sold in face of day in this place. (Davis, 130)

Patterson believed he could destroy the Baratarians, but not until 8 July 1814, did Secretary Jones order him to do just that and sent him the USS *Carolina* to assist. She arrived in New Orleans in mid-August. When Governor Claiborne received the British documents from Laffite, he called a meeting of those men he sought counsel from on the defense of the city, including Patterson. Claiborne suggested the commodore postpone his attack on Barataria, but Patterson refused on grounds that he could and would not disobey his orders. The majority of men present agreed with Patterson, so the planned attack was put into motion.

On 11 September 1814, Patterson set sail with seventy soldiers aboard the *Carolina*. Six gun vessels and a tender accompanied the schooner. When lookouts sighted the flotilla on the morning of the sixteenth around 8:30, the Baratarians assumed the British had returned. The privateers and smugglers prepared for a fight until they realized the ships flew the Stars and Stripes. With orders not to fire on American ships and only three cannon to defend the pass permitting entry into Barataria Bay, Dominique and the others had few options – flee into the bayou or submit.¹⁵

Although the white flag of surrender, as well as the flags of the United States and Cartagena were flown from one of the privateers in the bay and Patterson acknowledged with a white flag in response, he saw two other privateers torched. Realizing the Baratarians meant to destroy whatever they could, he ordered his men to attack. Dominique tried to flee in his felucca, but American gunboats blocked his escape. One opened fire, forcing the felucca to run aground. He then tried to escape in a pirogue, but the soldiers and sailors captured him and eighty others.

In the ensuing week, the Americans ransacked Laffite's warehouse and searched all their captives, including merchants who happened to be present the day of the attack. They burned forty houses, the warehouses, and signal towers. Although Patterson's men torched some of the twenty-seven vessels anchored in the bay, he retained the following:

| Name | Description | Owner |
|------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| <i>Dorada</i> | hermaphrodite brig | Laffites |
| <i>Misere</i> | | Laffite |
| <i>Harlequin</i> | pilot boat | Laurent Maire |
| <i>Surprise</i> | 90 tons | |

| | | |
|-------------------------|---|---------------|
| <i>Petit Milan</i> | schooner of 50 tons | Vincent Gambi |
| <i>Fly</i> | felucca of 32 tons | Laffites |
| <i>Comet</i> | 75-ton captured prize whose owner had paid her ransom | |
| <i>Moon of November</i> | felucca of 15 tons | |
| <i>Amiable Maria</i> | schooner | Laffites |

The confiscated goods included medicinal herbs, glassware, anchors and other ship's supplies, wine and spirits, German linen, silk stockings, coffee, cocoa, window glass, flour, spices, cigars, raisins, candles, and chocolate. The raiders also seized in excess of \$8,564 in gold, silver, specie, and paper notes. Documents, pertaining to merchants who did business with the Laffites and a list of the signals the Baratarians used to permit a friendly vessel to enter the bay, were also found.

Patterson and his flotilla set sail for New Orleans with their prizes and captives on 23 September. He informed the Secretary of the Navy:

. . . it is a great subject of satisfaction to me to have effected the object of my enterprise; viz. capturing all their vessels in port, and dispersing their band without having one of my brave fellows hurt. (de Grummond, 47)

Once they arrived in the city, Patterson charged the Baratarians with piracy and imprisoned them in the Calaboose behind the Cabildo. Dominique was put in heavy irons. Patterson also filed suit with the court claiming the confiscated ships and goods as prizes so he and his men would receive their shares once these items were condemned and sold at auction. Information gleaned from a private letter and published in the *Niles' Weekly Register* on 27 October 1814, estimated the value of the confiscated property at \$500,000.

During grand jury proceedings in October, testimony was given against Dominique. It stated he had taken \$6,000 worth of goods, but that he did not take them or the vessel to Cartagena. Other evidence claimed he never displayed a letter of marque from that nation or any other country. The indictment against him was returned on 24 October. But events unfolding outside the court system and influential men contrived to prevent the prosecution of the captured prisoners. Edward Livingston felt the government was responsible for their activities because it failed to deal with their smuggling in a timely manner. He pointed out that they numbered among their contacts many influential people, which when coupled with the social and ethnic divisiveness within the city, might lead to trouble at a time when America could ill afford it. To quiet this unrest, he suggested to President James Madison that he pardon all Baratarians who agreed to help defend the city against a British attack.

After Major General Andrew Jackson's arrival in New Orleans on 1 December 1814, a handful of men approached him about the prisoners, but he refused to intervene. The legislature passed a resolution requesting the federal court postpone any further trials. It also asked the general to offer amnesty to any man who enlisted during the next thirty days and promised to petition Madison for a full pardon for anyone who served faithfully. Dominique and the other captives were eventually released on 18 December, took oaths of allegiance, and joined the militia. Baratarians who escaped Patterson's raid also took up arms in defense of the city and Jean Laffite turned over 7,500 flints.

Dominique and Renato Beluche were sent to Fort St. John with orders to defend this approach to the city. The French built the first fortification at the mouth of Bayou St. John at Lake Ponchartrain in 1701 before New Orleans was founded. When the Spanish gained control of Louisiana, they built a larger brick fort on the site. The Baratarians defended this site until they received orders from Jackson on the morning of 28 December.

The British fleet arrived off the Louisiana coast on 9 December. Five days later, under the command of Captain Lockyer of HMS *Sophie*, enemy forces engaged and defeated five American gunboats on Lake Borgne. On 23 December, the British advanced as far as the Villeré plantation. That night Jackson led a surprise attack against them. After creating a shambles of the British camp and wreaking havoc on their troops, he ordered his men to withdraw to the Rodriguez canal located between the plantations of Macarty and Chalmette.

When Dominique Youx and Renato Beluche joined Jackson on the 28th, they were given command of two 24 pounders (later known as Battery Number 3 and positioned directly opposite six British 18 pounders) on the right side of the American line about 150 yards from the Mississippi River. On New Year's Day 1815, Dominique, a master gunner, peered at the enemy through his telescope. The British cannon opened fire, and a shell fragment struck his arm. Vincent Nolte, a German cotton merchant present at the battle, wrote in his memoirs:

. . . [Youx] caused it [the wound] to be bound up, saying, "I will pay them for that!" and resumed his glass. He then directed a twenty-four pounder, gave the order to fire, and the ball knocked an English gun-carriage to pieces, and killed six or seven men. (Nolte, 218)

In the hours before dawn seven days later, or so the story goes, Dominique and his men savored their coffee when Andrew Jackson remarked:

"H'm-mm! That smells like better coffee than we can get . . . Where do you get such fine coffee? Maybe you smuggled it?"

"Mebbe so, zénéral," rejoined Dominique with a grin. The Baratarian chief then offered a small tin cupful from the pot. It was black as tar and its aroma could be smelled twenty yards away . . . Jackson drank it with gusto, thanked Dominique and then walked slowly towards the left of the line. "I wish I had fifty guns on this line, with five hundred such devils as those fellows are, at the butts," he said the moment he and his aides were out of earshot of Battery No. 3. (Arthur, 119)

By this time, General Sir Edward Pakenham had assembled nearly 10,000 men on the British side of the battlefield.¹⁶ Later that morning, that army began its assault.

As the blazing trail of flame [from a rocket] rose into the gray clouds, the advance guards on both flanks ran forward toward Jackson's line and the American guns opened fire. . . . For the brief moment before men began to die Pakenham's army paraded in proud, colorful, and stirring display. Within five minutes the image was shattered; within ten the parade ground had become a churned field of mud heaped with tangled and bloodied masses of scarlet, tartan, and green. (Reilly, 317)

Within half an hour, two thirds of the three thousand soldiers who began the attack had been killed or injured. Though skirmishing continued for some hours afterward, the battle was over, and the Baratarians gunners had played an important role in breaking up the assault, with Dominique taking a second wound and Gambi shedding his blood as well. (Davis, 218)

Between 23 December and 8 January, the Americans lost 333 men, but the dead totaled only fifty-five. In contrast, British casualties numbered around 2,500, which included those killed, wounded, and missing or taken prisoner. These engagements essentially divided the number of British men in half, which still left eight times as many men as the Americans had. “Analysis of the British casualties on January 8 does much to support claims that it was the American artillery which won the battle” (Reilly, 329) Captain R. N. Hill, the acting chief of artillery for the British Army, later wrote:

The Americans . . . opened in good earnest and, as soon became apparent along our line, with startling effect. For the first half-hour the weight of execution was undoubtedly in our favor. But the American defences – a heavy, solid earthwork – soon proved far superior to our flimsy protection, improvised from hogsheads of sugar or filled with loose dirt. These were soon knocked to pieces. Then our gun-carriages and ammunition-chests began to suffer. Moreover, our calibers were only 12- and 9-pounders, while the enemy had 18’s, 24’s and 32’s . . . Either by accident or design or because fate was against us, the enemy’s gunners bestowed most of their attention upon our heaviest and best guns. . . . The battery of theirs that did us by far the most injury was the third one from their right which brought it about opposite to the centre of our formation. This battery mounted 24-pounders, which were fired alternately with great deliberation and with unvarying effect. (Buell, 418-419)

That battery, whose guns proved most effective, were those manned by men who just a month before awaited trial on charges of piracy. Their commanders were Dominique Youx and Renato Beluche.¹⁷

When Jackson congratulated his men on 21 January, he praised Dominique and Renato.

The general cannot avoid giving his warm approbation in which these gentlemen have uniformly conducted themselves while under his command, and of the gallantry with which they have redeemed the pledge they gave at the opening of the campaign to defend the country. (Latour, 340-341)

The following month, they received their full pardons from President Madison. In March, Judge Hall, who had postponed the Baratarians’ prosecutions, demanded the general appear in his court and pay of fine of \$1,000 for contempt. Jackson did so. Among those gathered outside the court to support him were Dominique and Renato. Edward Livingston successfully represented Dominique in his case for compensation for the felucca, which Patterson had confiscated and was sold after the raid, four months later.

After a Spanish schooner, the *Mexicain*, was brought into port later that year, Dominique was hired to refit and make her seaworthy. Once that work was completed he would become her captain and she would cruise as a privateer again. Although he didn’t own the vessel, he incurred \$1,061.25 in debt working on her, but the owner only reimbursed Dominique \$580. He placed a lien on the privateer, but

her sale in December failed to recoup his money and prevented him from continuing his career as a privateer for the next three years.

After procuring the *Louise* in September 1717, Dominique made repairs to the schooner, rechristened her *Josephine*, and acquired a Mexican commission. With the checkerboard flag of that republic atop a mast, he captured a Spanish schooner on 30 November and put in at Jean Laffite's new base of operations, Galveston. In 1818 Dominique joined forces with Louis Aury, who had used Galveston as a base of operations before Laffite took over. Aury planned to attack Honduras seaports loyal to Spain, so Dominique added four additional guns to his schooner *Guerrière* with her crew of twenty-five and two long nine-pound guns. They attacked two strongholds in April and May of 1820, but Dominique preferred privateering to fighting an army.

With opportunities to legally seize enemy vessels in the Gulf of Mexico greatly diminished, Dominique bid adieu to the seafaring way of life. He returned to New Orleans, where he lived in a small cottage in the Faubourg Marigny section of the city. According to Stanley Faye, he served as an alderman for a time. Whenever Andrew Jackson ran for office, Dominique supported him. During the final two years of his life, he kept to himself and rarely went out. "At times, it is said, his humble home was without food" and he "was too proud to seek aid from 'fair-weather friends'." (Kendall, 27) They didn't become aware of the direness of his situation until the day before he died.

Death came to this privateer on 14 November 1830 at four in the afternoon.¹⁸ Although there were had no funds for his burial, New Orleans didn't forget this hero of the battle who saved the city and its citizens from British occupation. He was given a military funeral with a mass at the cathedral. Businesses closed. Flags flew at half staff. Cannon were fired in his honor. Among those who attended his funeral were members of *La Concorde No. 3*, the Masonic lodge he joined in 1814. His body was transported to St. Louis Cemetery No. 2 for interment. The *Louisiana Courier* carried his obituary.

Captain DOMINIQUE YOU, well known for his virtues and his intrepidity, cherished and esteemed by every Louisianian and American, for the signal services which he rendered this State and Union during the invasion of the British, is no more; he ended his honorable career yesterday morning. Captain Dominique, to whom fortune has never been very favorable, died almost in want; but no sooner did these circumstances become known to the members of the city council, than they hastened to pay the sacred debt which this city owed for the efforts of this brave man, by procuring the suitable necessities for his funeral at the expense of the corporation. Our Legion, who ever know how to appreciate worth, and services rendered to the country, paid military honors to their old companion in arms, and numerous citizens of all classes accompanied his remains to the abode of rest. (Gentleman, 236)

On the marble slab of Dominique Youx's sarcophagus are etched the following words from Voltaire's *La Henriade*:

*Intrépide guerrier sur la terre et sur l'onde
Il fut dans cent combats signaler sa valeur
Et ce nouveau Bayard, sans reproche et sans peur
Aurait pu sans trembler voir s'écrouler le monde.*

Intrepid warrior on land and sea

*In a hundred combats showed his valor
This new Bayard without reproach or fear
Could have witnessed the ending of the world without trembling.*

Notes:

1. Some historians spell his name as You, others as Youx. Copies of documents from the Williams Research Center in New Orleans use the latter spelling, but the center itself uses the former. For clarity and to distinguish him from the pronoun, I use Youx.
2. When Stanley Clisby Arthur and Jane Lucas de Grummond, both reputable historians, published their books, they believed one of their consulted sources to be authentic. The controversy as to whether *Le Journal de Jean Laffite* is actually Laffite's or a remarkable forgery continues today. Robert L. Schaadt, Director-Archivist of the Sam Houston Regional Library & Research Center for twenty-seven years, wrote: ". . . I believe that I have proved conclusively that [it] is filled with inaccuracies, inconsistencies and several glaring and outright distortions of the truth." (*Memoirs*, 33) The position of The Laffite Society, whose members conduct research on the Laffites and their contemporaries, is that the journal is a forgery. I concur. Nor do I believe Youx was a Laffite.
3. Born in 1805, Gayarré was one day shy of his tenth birthday at the time of the Battle of New Orleans. His family's plantation was located in what today is known as Audubon Park, and during his lifetime, he was a lawyer, politician, judge, historian, and writer. As a child he certainly knew of Dominique Youx, but whether the two ever met I don't know.
4. A former war correspondent during the Spanish-American War, Arthur spent much of his life documenting Louisiana's culture, history, and customs after he moved there in 1915. He was a regional director for the Survey of Federal Archives, a joint project of the Works Progress Administration and the National Archives during the Great Depression.
5. The *Eleanor* was captured in consort with another corsair, Victor Lesage.
6. *La Vipre*, a schooner out of Baltimore, Maryland, was declared a lawful prize on 15 December 1806.
7. The *Gazette*, the oldest continuously-published newspaper in the UK, began its run in November 1665 as the *Oxford Gazette* as a news sheet for Charles II and his court, which resided in Oxford because of the rampant spread of the plague in London. When the Court returned to the capital the following year, the name was changed to its current title. It had two columns on the front and back of a single sheet of paper and was published every Monday and Thursday. The principal readers were merchants, lawyers, and military officers.
8. The resources I had access to at the time of this writing do not permit me to delve deeper into this mystery to see if Youx, Houx, and Diron (in this instance) are the same person. The historians who name Diron as the infamous privateer that tangled with the *Pitt* may have confused him with Dominique Diron of the *Decatur*, a successful privateer out of Charleston, South Carolina, during the War of 1812.
9. The minutes of The Laffite Society (11 January 2000) state this information was confirmed in a letter to the French ambassador of the United States. One member acquired the letter for the society's archives, but whether it survived Hurricane Ike is unknown at present because those documents that did

survive have yet to be indexed. Additional sources that confirm this are *Mercurio de España* 1807 (pages 239-240), *La Gazeta de Madrid del martes* 1 March 1807 (No. 18, page 218), and *La Gazeta de Madrid del viernes* 1 January 1808 (Vol. 1, pages 218-219).

10. David Ludlum coined the name in the second half of the 20th century while researching hurricanes between 1492 and 1870.

11. Dudley Callais' article, cited below, puts the total cost at \$6,000,000, which is equivalent to \$85,000,000 today.

12. This passage is taken from an affidavit in the collection of The Williams Research Center in New Orleans. Frederic Teinburier (lieutenant), Pierre Mouillé (master carpenter), André Bertellau (second gunner), Thomas Raffo (topman), and Pierre Manuel (topman) were members of Youx's crew aboard *le Pandoure* and gave testimony on 23 August 1812 before Jean Baptiste Laporte, Chancellor of the French Consul in New Orleans. Although I translated the majority of the document, I am indebted to Armand Robichaud of Canada for assistance in deciphering what I could not.

13. Eleven years after Dominique visited Cape Cruz, Commander David Porter led a squadron of naval vessels there with the intention of destroying a pirate stronghold. The leader of the landing force was Lieutenant David G. Farragut, best known for his "Damn the torpedoes!" statement during the Battle of Mobile Bay in 1864.

14. Launched in 1809, *Sophie* was a brig sloop of eighteen guns. Lockyer and his men burned the Baltimore privateer *Pioneer*, with seventeen guns and 170 men, on New Year's Eve 1813. In April of the following year, she captured another privateer, the *Starks*, a schooner with two guns and twenty-five men. At the time Patterson attacked Barataria, *Sophie* joined the British attack on Fort Bowyer at the mouth of Mobile Bay. Lockyer later led an attack on American gunboats on Lake Borgne in mid-December 1814.

15. Jean Laffite had absented himself from Barataria, perhaps because he knew the raid was imminent.

16. Pakenham, the brother-in-law of the Duke of Wellington, distinguished himself during the Peninsular War and the Battle of Salamanca in 1811. Sir John Lambert, the only British general of the four present at the Battle of New Orleans to survive, wrote to the war minister: "The brave commander of the forces, who never in his life could refrain from being at the post of honour . . . galloped on to the front to animate them [the troops] by his presence; and he was seen with his hat off, encouraging them on the crest of the glacis. It was then (almost at the same time) he received two wounds, one in the knee, and another, which was almost instantly fatal, in his body. He fell into the arms of Major M'Dougall, his aide-de-camp. The effect of this in the sight of the troops, together with Major-General Gibbs and Major-General Keane being borne off wounded at the same time, with many other commanding officers . . . caused a wavering in the column . . ." (Cole, 357-358)

17. Youx's gun crew consisted of Jean Lulan (chef de piece), Etienne Tour, Jean Sapia, Jratrain, Baptiste Plauche, Pierre Brulor, Barthelemy, Lauriat, Jacques Alain, Joarmy, Mackerie, and Sterling. (This partial list can be found in Appendix A of the Historic Resource Study Chalmette Unit. A full list of the forty-two Baratarians who served with him can be found in Casey's book.)

18. Sixty-five years after his death, Dominique Youx's exploits inspired Octavius Nash Ogden, a lawyer and judge who owned a cotton plantation in Rapides Parish, Louisiana, to write a three-act tragedy entitled *Dominic You* in 1895. It bears little resemblance to the privateer's actual life and career.

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Author's closing note:

After I published my article at Pirates and Privateers, a gentleman in Baracoa, Cuba contacted me. During our e-mail exchanges, he shared this information with me that might be of interest to the members:

The Church books in Baracoa have important information and documentation related to the Laffite brothers and other corsairs, contraband merchants, slave traders and pirates. It is highly probable, even possible, that a sons of Pierre and the only legitimate son of Jean were born and baptized in Baracoa. Also, that they both married in Baracoa. And that the only legitimate married and child of Jean Laffite is registered in these books. And it probably happened circa 1800-1809 or earlier. But these books are in such a poor condition that they can no longer be use for research unless these books are restored by an expert in restoration and preservation of historical documents and colonial books. Before thousands of French from Saint Domingue went on to New Orleans, Savannah, Pensacola, and Philadelphia they lived, married, operated business, owned properties such as houses and plantations, owned slaves, died, and were born and baptized in Baracoa. I have proposed the idea of savings and restoring these books with the intention of extracting the information and documentation related to Jean and Pierre Laffite and possible of Dominick Youx which also lived in Baracoa. But this requires a great amount of time that I do not have. It also requires funds and expertise. It will be great if this information could be published in line. I think that this is the missing link between Saint Domingue and New Orleans in the biography, geography, history, story and genealogy of Jean and Pierre Laffite as well as Rene Beluche and Dominic Youx. Maybe one day, in the future, a researcher, publisher, author, institution, group, university, etc could become interested in doing this.

Laffite Society Minutes

Submitted by Carolyn Peterson
Corresponding/Recording Secretary

Tuesday, August 10, 2010

Meridian Retirement Center

Board Members Present: President Ed Jamison, FVP Jack Watson, Acting TVP Jim Nonus, Secretary Carolyn Peterson, Treasurer Nancy Beaman, Editor Dan Cote, Publicity Director Dave Roberts, Technology Director Rob Peterson, Archivist Larry Porter, Parliamentarian Diane Olson

Board Members Absent: SVP Kathy Modzelewski, Coordinator of Research Pam Keyes

Advisory Board Present: R. Dale Olson, Jean Epperson

Advisory Board Absent: Pam Keyes, Jeff Modzelewski, Kathy Modzelewski, Robert Vogel, Dr. Reginald Wilson

President Ed Jamison called the meeting to order at 6:33PM. He acknowledged guests in the audience. They were Claudette Freeman Pfennig-High accompanied by member Ondree Kuhn. Margaret Blackburn was also a visitor.

Rob Peterson reported that the website has been updated and that its registration and hosts sites have been paid for the next three years.

The Harris County Historical Society has contacted Ed requesting that a speaker from the Society give a presentation on Laffite to their group on March 1, 2011.

The date and location of the Winter Banquet was announced. It will be held at the Trolley Station Ballroom on Sunday, December 12 and will feature a presentation given by Dale Olson and Jim Nonus.

A possible group trip to the yearly commemoration of the Battle of New Orleans was discussed. It will be held by the New Orleans Historical Society on January 8, 2011.

Volunteers are being requested for the Revival Race (September 11) and the October Loft Tour (October 2 & 3). Interested parties should contact Ed for more information.

Ed Jamison would like to see Buccaneer Days revived in Galveston, but rename it "Laffite Days",

Program Speaker - Jack Watson

Topic - James and Mary Campbell

Jack began by giving a recap of his earlier presentation on his visit to the Campbell cemetery on Virginia Point. He went through the chronology of their lives and then began to delve into each as individuals.

James Campbell emigrated from Ireland at the age of four years old and lived with his family in the Baltimore area. As a young man he joined up with Mina and Aury. Later after joining with Laffite he became one Laffite's top producing captains. It was James Campbell who convinced Lafitte that he should build slave barracks on the lower Sabine River, north of present-day Orange, Texas, in order to market directly to the Louisiana sugar planters. At one point Laffite sent him to New Orleans to buy more vessels and to possibly spy on John Marotte, a rebellious captain. Jack talked about a duel mentioned in the Lamar papers between Marotte and Laffite that turned out to be a non-event. Campbell eventually killed Marotte after Marotte attempted to assassinate both Laffite and Campbell. James Campbell died in 1856 at the age of 70.

From Jack's talk one gives the impression that Mary was the more colorful character of the two. Jean Epperson shared with Jack her correspondence with W. T. Block regarding Mary and her possible dual personality (sweet woman or fiery troublemaker). Mary went by several surnames such as Sabinal, Chabineaux, and Crow. She met James in 1814 at age 14 and married him two years later at 16. In 1817 She and James joined Laffite on Galveston where she was left alone for extended periods during James' excursions out to sea. When Laffite quit Galveston in 1820 James was still at sea so Mary moved to Fort Las Casas on Bolivar under the protection of

Dr. James Long. Her unpleasantness made her many enemies and she and her friend, Modello, were banned from the Fort for cursing one of the wives. When Dr. Long returned and tried to remove Modello from Mary's home, Modello challenged Long to a duel. Modello was killed which alienated Long to Trespalacios, Modello's uncle. Long met his end in Mexico City. Possibly Trespalacios extracted his revenge for the death of his nephew. Mary passed away in 1884 at the age of 84.

After their privateering days were done they lived in several locations around the area, but settled down for good at their home on Virginia Point until their deaths.

After reading Lamar's papers, W. T. Block proposed to Jean Epperson a titillating thought: could there have been a more interesting relationship between Dr. Long and Mary since she was left under his protection for so long when Captain Campbell was away? Jack thinks this is unlikely since the time line doesn't agree nor do the personalities involved lend themselves to mutual attachment.

Miscellaneous

Treasurer Nancy Beaman reported that there is approximately \$1899 in the Society's account.

Rob Peterson talked about the extra print copies of some of the Laffite Study Group publications that are available to interested members.

Mike Riley mentioned several odd advertisements in the Bolivar Peninsula local monthly paper, "The Beach Triton". These ads said "Was James Long a Filibuster? Come to the fort in October and find out." No other information was provided. Mike promised to look into this further.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50PM.

Tuesday, September 14, 2010

Meridian Retirement Center

Board Members Present: President Ed Jamison, FVP Jack Watson, SVP Kathy Modzelewski, Acting TVP Jim Nonus, Secretary Carolyn Peterson, Treasurer Nancy Beaman, Editor Dan Cote, Publicity Director Dave Roberts, Technology Director Rob Peterson, Archivist Larry Porter, Parliamentarian Diane Olson

Board Members Absent: Coordinator of Research Pam Keyes

Advisory Board Present: R. Dale Olson, Jean Epperson, Jeff Modzelewski

Advisory Board Absent: Pam Keyes, Robert Vogel, Dr. Reginald Wilson

President Ed Jamison called the meeting to order at 6:38PM. He acknowledged guests in the audience. They were Jim Atchley and Carlos Rios.

Treasurer Nancy Beaman gave her report saying that as of August 10 there was \$1964.73 whereas on September 14, there is \$2280.50 in the Society account.

Ed talked about the new exhibit opening on October 8 at the Houston Museum of Natural Science titled "Real Pirates". The period involved began in 1715. He also spoke of a pirate festival to be held at the Elissa Museum called "The Golden Age of Piracy" that will spotlight piracy from the culinary perspective.

Mike Riley was called up to introduce two members of the Jane Long Society, Margo Johnson and Gerry Lang. Margo married into the Johnson family who settled at Bolivar in the mid 1880's. She wanted to highlight the Jane Long Festival to be held on October 9 from 11:00AM to 4:00PM. There will be vendors and booths that will have

goods and crafts from the Jane Long period. They hope the festival will illustrate that Bolivar is on its way back after the storm.

Program Speaker – Kirk Clark

Topic – Historical Maps

Jack Watson introduced Kirk Clark who is a Registered Engineer and Sr. Process Safety Consultant for the refining and petrochemical industry. Kirk is the official historian for the Friends of Galveston Island State Park and also an acting board member of that organization.

In his presentation he discussed overlaying old and more modern maps to compare the changes in geography and topography over time. It provides a useful tool for historical research. He used this technique to pin down the location of the “Three Trees” in West Galveston. Many old and more recent maps were presented to the group for their inspection.

Kirk explained some of the early surveyor’s techniques such as use of the chain (67 feet) in measuring distances and that the State Land Office should have original surveyor’s notes on each project.

He then presented maps showing Pelican Island and spoke of the changes it had undergone in the last couple of hundred years. The island was there in historical times, but has been enlarged due to spoil buildup from dredging operations. Kirk showed maps of Turtle Bay and explained that Lake Anahuac was formed when spoil from the Trinity River closed off Turtle Bay.

Kirk concluded that Galveston’s coastline really has not changed that drastically over time.

Questions to the Speaker

Q: Where can you get these maps?

A: From the Texas Land Office; USGS Quad Maps can give a photo of a specific area of interest; TAMU has copies of negatives for reproduction.

Q: Why are you interested in these maps?

A: They are snapshots in time.

Q: What was the purpose of the 1837 map?

A: Kirk said that there was some interest in selling the land. He also said that this map accurately locates the position of the Bolivar lighthouse even though the tip of Bolivar has moved around over the centuries.

Q: Was Hitchcock Bayou in the same location as the Lost Bayou subdivision?

A: Hitchcock Bayou was filled in during the Civil War. He is unfamiliar with the subdivision.

Q: What kind of markers did surveyors use?

A: They drove stakes in the ground and used concrete posts. They did not mark trees because of possible confusion about the meaning of the markings to the general populace.

Ed thanked Ed Connor for bartending. He also thanked Jim Nonus and Ginny Roberts for the delicious food they provided.

He reminded the group about the Olson’s need for docents for the Loft Walk on October 2 & 3.

Jeff Modzelewski said that he had received a note of thanks from Dr. Paul Spellman for help the group gave him in regarding John Roach. He specifically thanked Mike Bailey. Spellman is writing a book on the Stephen F. Austin colonists and Laffite pirate history will be of great use. The book may be out in two years and the Society may host a book signing event.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:38PM.

Tuesday, October 12, 2010

Meridian Retirement Center

Board Members Present: President Ed Jamison, FVP Jack Watson, Acting TVP Jim Nonus, Secretary Carolyn Peterson, Treasurer Nancy Beaman, Editor Dan Cote, Publicity Director Dave Roberts, Technology Director Rob Peterson, Archivist Larry Porter

Board Members Absent: SVP Kathy Modzelewski, Parliamentarian Diane Olson, Coordinator of Research Pam Keyes

Advisory Board Present: Jean Epperson

Advisory Board Absent: Pam Keyes, Jeff Modzelewski, Kathy Modzelewski, Robert Vogel, Dr. Reginald Wilson, R. Dale Olson

President Ed Jamison called the meeting to order at 6:27PM. He welcomed several guests in the audience. One was member, Betty Lou Glover from Lake Jackson. Jack Watson recognized other guests. Helen Mooty is a historian who specializes in historical architecture. She has a special interest in women of Southeast Texas and may give a future presentation on Jane Long. Also in the group was Helen's husband John Dickey, Bruce Dressner and Debbie Thomas of Seabrook. Jean Epperson introduced Patsy Parmer from Alabama who is a Society member and a direct descendent of the pirate Andrew Roach and Anson Taylor. Taylor's three sons died at the Alamo. Roach and Taylor were reputed to have been associates of Laffite.

Larry Porter introduced Natalie Wiest, an archive librarian at Texas A&M University-Galveston. She said TAMUG library may be interested in housing the Laffite archives and that the structural changes made to the library since hurricane Ike would provide a secure home. Tom Oertling said that a new course on ancient piracy is being introduced at the University and that the archives could provide good resource material for his students.

Program Speaker – Rob Peterson

Topic – The “Temple”

Rob is an electrical engineer and has been a member of the Society since 2007. He now serves as the director of Technology.

He spoke about his attempts to locate the “Temple,” a large shell mound in Barataria and the site of many events in the Laffite literature. We saw some images from a 1994 boating excursion from the town of John Lafitte down to Grand Terre, yielding only the Fleming Cemetery as a candidate site. After being told that the Temple was on the western end of Lake Salvadore, he got only as far as the end of Bayou Gauche road on his next attempt.

Rob then presented a literature search including the Internet, the Chronicles and Laffite Study Group publications, and an assortment of books. He discussed five references to the “Little Temple”. This site was located at the convergence of Bayous Rigolette and Perot, an area called Little Temple by the locals today. He showed two old maps, by Lafon (1805) and Darby (1816), each with a “Temple” at the Little Temple site (on the south end of the Island of Barataria or Boutte's Island). The one map showing all of Lake Salvadore showed no Temple there. Stanley Arthur said the Little Temple site was known as “The Temple” as late as the 1930's. It seems very likely this was the site fortified by Jean Laffite prior to the Battle of New Orleans but the details of which of the two sites corresponds to each of the recorded Laffite events remain uncertain.

Steve Austin said that besides being a cartographer, Lafon was a pirate so he would have known where the Temple was located. Lafon was also an engineer according to Jean Epperson. Jim Nonus said that Lafon might have been the architect of the Maison Rouge.

Jack Watson reported that Jodi Wright Gidley from the Galveston County Museum would present next month's program discussing the status of the Museum since Ike and its interest in the Laffite Society. There will be no December meeting because of the Winter Banquet. In January the Society will host a book signing for Jean Epperson.

Ed Jamison recognized some other guests, Todd and Sherl Schott, who own the Chopin Mon Ami Restaurant in Galveston and are interested in participating in the Society.

Dan Cote had the latest Laffite Society Chronicles for distribution (Vol. XVI, Number 2).

The meeting was adjourned at 7:31PM.

Tuesday, November 09, 2010

Meridian Retirement Center

Board Members Present: President Ed Jamison, FVP Jack Watson, SVP Kathy Modzelewski, Acting TVP Jim Nonus, Secretary Carolyn Peterson, Treasurer Nancy Beaman, Editor Dan Cote, Publicity Director Dave Roberts, Technology Director Rob Peterson, Archivist Larry Porter, Parliamentarian Diane Olson

Board Members Absent: Coordinator of Research Pam Keyes

Advisory Board Present: R. Dale Olson, Jean Epperson, Jeff Modzelewski, Kathy Modzelewski

Advisory Board Absent: Pam Keyes, Robert Vogel, Dr. Reginald Wilson

President Ed Jamison called the meeting to order at 6:06PM. Jack Watson was called upon to introduce the speaker for this month's program.

Program Speaker – Jodie Wright Gidley Topic – Status of the Galveston County
Historical Museum

Jodie is the curator of the Galveston county Historical Museum and co-author of the book - Galveston, City on Stilts. She gave an update on the museum facility, post Ike and the space the museum currently occupies in the Shearn Moody Plaza building at 25th and the Strand. The museum provides storage for over 15,000 photos and archival materials. It also houses documentation for the historical markers in Galveston County. They have received grant funding for various projects such as the rehabilitation of books, rehousing of Mardi Gras costumes, and a collection of World War II artifacts. One interesting project is the restoration of an old tamale vendor cart that belonged to a Mr. Serrato. The museum has a large research library and houses many materials on loan such as Jim Nonus' newspapers on Laffite. They also sponsor outreach programs to schools and are creating a curriculum for the Sattori museum school. The museum is soliciting artifacts to be used for the upcoming 100th anniversary of the Hotel Galvez. The Jane Long exhibit at the Bolivar festival was produced by the museum. They also have conducted tours to local historical sites such as the World War II blimp base in Hitchcock and Camp Wallace and Fort Travis.

Jodie said that she does not know what will happen with their building, but hopes that repairs will begin soon.

Questions for the Speaker:

Is that all that is left of the blimp base (referring to the picture)? Yes, and a few buildings, one of which is now a private residence. Only the pillars remain, but the roof structure is gone.

What happened to all the debris piled up in front of the former museum building after the storm?
It was picked up by waste management. No artifacts were lost, only supplies such as exhibit cases, tools, and wood for exhibit production were destroyed.

Will there be temporary exhibits such as in the Railroad Museum until the building is repaired?
They have done what they can in the Court House and in schools, but there is no temporary space available at this time.

Does the Museum have any Rosenberg family artifacts other than what is already known? She is

only aware of those already exhibited in public.

Was the prism from the lighthouse saved? Yes, it is still in the building in a specially built box. The museum and Coast Guard (it belongs to them) are monitoring it during repairs.

The meeting resumed with Jeff Modzelewski sharing humorous stories about long-time member Stephen Broadstone who passed away last week. Jeff said that Stephen was involved in many aspects of Galveston life since he moved to the island. He also said that Stephen was a real gentleman who was known for his white jackets.

Miscellaneous

Ed Jamison welcomed new members, Todd and Sherl Schott. He then thanked Ginny Parker for the wonderful meal she provided and Ed O'Connor for tending bar. Ed Jamison took orders for flasks engraved with "The Laffite Society" and a skull and crossbones -- how piratey!

A few items regarding the Winter Banquet were discussed. Sazeracs will be offered as well as beer and wine, and setups will be available. Hard liquor will not be provided, but attendees may bring their own if they wish. The invitations were mailed on Tuesday.

Ed reported he had been interviewed by Barbara Canetti for an article about the Laffite Society in Coast Magazine which may be out in February. The latest edition ran a story that featured an article about catering and Todd Schott, and the restaurant (Chopin Mon Ami) he co-owns with his mother. Barbara is planning to attend the banquet providing her an opportunity to interview more people for her article.

Kathy Modzelewski had correction pages for the last Chronicles. Jan Porter asked for volunteers to ring the bells for the Salvation Army at Kroger's. No specific time was announced.

Nancy Beaman, treasurer, reported that there is a total of \$1756.00 in the Society account. She said that \$300 had been spent this month publishing the Chronicles. Ed reported on his purchase of the video cameo explaining that the camera costs approximately \$400, but he put \$100 towards the purchase leaving the Society with a \$300 balance.

A question was asked about inviting more people to the Winter Banquet and Ed said that the room could accommodate up to 200 comfortably so guests would be welcomed.

Ed said he would put information about the January 08, 2011 Battle of New Orleans commemoration on the website.

The meeting was adjourned at 7.08PM and a mini meeting of the board was held regarding the Winter Banquet. There was nothing specific to report.

Tuesday, January 11, 2011

Meridian Retirement Center

Board Members Present: President Ed Jamison, FVP Jack Watson, SVP Kathy Modzelewski, TVP Ginny Roberts, Secretary Carolyn Peterson, Editor Dan Cote, Publicity Director Dave Roberts, Technology Director Rob Peterson, Archivist Larry Porter, Parliamentarian Diane Olson

Board Members Absent: Coordinator of Research Pam Keyes, Treasurer Nancy Beaman

Advisory Board Present: R. Dale Olson, Jean Epperson, Jeff Modzelewski, Kathy Modzelewski

Advisory Board Absent: Pam Keyes, Robert Vogel, Dr. Reginald Wilson

President Ed Jamison called the meeting to order at 6:29PM. Ed provided copies of the January 9 edition of the Galveston County Daily News which carried an article covering the Winter Banquet. The coverage was arranged by our Publicity Director Dave Roberts. He also provided copies of the obituary of Aleksandar 'Alex' Karilanic

who passed away on Friday, January 7. He was the husband of the Society's past secretary and longtime member, Dorothy Karilanovic.

On a happier note, Ed said that he had spoken with Ginny Roberts about taking over the Third Vice President position in charge of providing food for each meeting. Diane Olson made the motion to nominate Ginny for the position, it was seconded by Rob Peterson, and carried. Jeff Modzelewski briefly reported on the Battle of New Orleans Banquet held at the New Orleans Country Club. Eleven from the Laffite Society attended and Dale Olson was the featured speaker. It sounds like a good time was had by all.

Program Speaker – Jean Epperson

Topic- Book Signing and Question Session

Jack Watson introduced Jean who was born and raised in Harris County, Texas. In college she studied pre-med, then switched to Psychology. She obtained her Master degree in Education and taught in the Goose Creek School district. This evening she was here to discuss her third book, "Filibusters, Pirates, Privateers of the Early Texas Coast" which is a collection of articles she did for the Society.

Jean in her introduction says that she considers herself a researcher, not a writer. She gave a brief description of her other two books. The first is "Historical Vignettes of Galveston Bay" which was written several years ago and is a collection of articles she had written for the Society's Chronicles. The second is "Lost Spanish Towns" about old Atascosito and Trinidad de Salcedo.

Panelists' Questions:

Dale Olson:

Who was John A. Laffite mentioned in Chapter 7? Jean says that this is a complex issue. John A. Laffite was the author of the Journal of Jean Laffite that first appeared in 1958. This journal was thought to be legitimate and was bought by Governor Price Daniel and placed in the Sam Houston Regional Library in Liberty, Texas. The journal has now been shown to be an elaborate hoax by this man who tried in 1942 to pass himself off as Laffite's great grandson. In 2004 Jean obtained his railroad pay records that showed his real name as John Matejka and no relation to Laffite.

What about the origins of the documents and other information included in the journal? Some of it may have been inspired by a 1826 pamphlet called "Memoirs of Laffite, the Privateer's Own Study". The journal is very fuzzy.

Rob Peterson:

What was the connection between the Paul Bouet family and the Laffites? Bouet had two sons, Jean and Pierre, who were thought to be the Laffites. They probably knew the Laffites, but were not the pirates.

You say little about Laffite after he left Galveston. Jack Davis said quite a bit more, Why? She basically said she gave as much wordage as she thought the subject warranted. Jean said that there are some good sources available to track his movements and demise.

What was left on Galveston when they left? Not much was left. Only about four of his men stayed and Campbell was the only one that stayed on the island. The others including Andrew Roach, Burrell Frank, and John McHenry who moved around the area.

Mike Riley:

Did Jeff Modzelewski and Dorothy Karilanovic donate two different translations for the 1816 map in Chapter 1? Jeff was asked to answer this question and he said that as far as he knew, they had not.

What was the nature of the relationship the Indians had with the Europeans on Galveston? It seemed like they oscillated between cycles of conflict and peace.

Where the Karankawa cannibalistic? This practice was only used for ceremonial rites.

Question from the audience:

What is the difference between pirate and privateer? The privateer sails with letters of marque issued by warring countries—legal pirates. During the time of Laffite, the United States issued letters of marque to privateers to supplement its navy. Congress still retains the power to grant letters of marque and reprisal, and make rules concerning captures on land and water according to the Constitution..

Dale ended the session by saying that Don Marler had called Jean the most significant researcher on Laffite over the past 50 years.

Miscellaneous

Ed welcomed guests Jim Atchley, Barbara and Jeff Rabek.

January is the time to send in membership dues to Kathy Modzelewski. Please go the Society website for the address.

Jack Watson gave a short introduction of the presentations for the coming months:

February - Helen Mooty will speak about Jane Long

March - Larry Porter will present on the history of Privateers

April - Bill Kroger will talk about his study of the condition of the State of Texas court archives and how best to preserve these records

May - Don Marler will give a presentation on Aaron Burr

Ed thanked Jack for his handling of the past and future programs. The meeting was adjourned at 7:45PM.

Tuesday, February 08, 2011

Meridian Retirement Center

Board Members Present: President Ed Jamison, FVP Jack Watson, SVP Kathy Modzelewski, Secretary Carolyn Peterson, Treasurer Nancy Beaman, Editor Dan Cote, Technology Director Rob Peterson, Archivist Larry Porter, Parliamentarian Diane Olson

Board Members Absent: TVP Ginny Roberts, Coordinator of Research Pam Keyes, Publicity Director Dave Roberts

Advisory Board Present: R. Dale Olson, Jeff Modzelewski, Kathy Modzelewski

Advisory Board Absent: Pam Keyes, Robert Vogel, Dr. Reginald Wilson, Jean Epperson

President Ed Jamison called the meeting to order at 6:42PM. He thanked Ondree Kuhn for the reminder about the Houston Museum of Natural Science exhibit, The Forgotten Gateway, saying that it had been extended through March 18. He welcomed guests Carolyn and Walt Pruitt, Betsy and Les Horner, Jane and Sandy Rushing, Frank and Connie Dryden (members), Jim and Brenda Atchley (new members). Ed reminded the group that it is membership renewal time.

Editor Dan Cote said that the Chronicles are coming out the following week and gave brief description of the contents. He applauded Jack Watson for a job well done in arranging the past and future presentations for the Society meetings.

Jeff Modzelewski gave instructions on joining the Yahoo group so members can receive Society mailings and information.

Ed thanked Ed Connor for bartending and Marge and George Dersheimer for providing a delicious meal. Lynette Haaga, Todd and Sherl Schott, and Carolyn Peterson provided desserts.

A question came up the Society plans for next month's meeting since it would be on Fat Tuesday. Ed said members would be notified by email of any special plans for the meeting.

Program Speaker – Helen Mooty

Topic – Jane Long

Jack Watson introduced Helen giving a little background information on her. Helen is a Galveston County architectural historian, a writing consultant, and interpreter of historical sites. She has a Bachelor's in mathematics and a Masters in humanities. For her presentation she dressed as Jane Long and concentrated on the time period between 1838-1858. Jane Long was born in 1798 and married James Long in 1819 when they came to Texas. They moved to Bolivar where James wanted to establish a Customs House to do business with the privateers operating on Campeche. Jane reported that she had attended a function hosted by Jean Laffite and found him to be handsome and refined. She attempted to befriend him to find out his intentions, but did not get much information from him although she did get some lumber and gunpowder when he quit Galveston.



In 1821 James Long left for La Bahia and not long after everyone left Bolivar. She was left with a five year old daughter (Anne) and a ten year old slave (Ken) to survive a horrible winter. They fired the cannon and raised her red petticoat as a flag to give the Indians the impression that the fort was fully manned. Jane was pregnant when James left and on December 21, 1821 she gave birth to another daughter, Mary James. In 1822 she received a letter telling her that James had been killed and she was a widow at 24 years. Many people were coming to Texas through Bolivar so she was able to support her family by washing and cooking. Trespalcios promised her a pension for her husband's death. She moved to San Antonio de Behar to collect her pension in Oct, 1822 and Juan Sequin housed her and her family at that time. In 1823 Trespalcios was deposed before giving her the promised pension, so the family then went to Mississippi where Mary James died. She returned to Texas and Stephen F. Austin gave her land at San Felipe de Austin, an honor usually given to the male head of household. She was one of the first Anglo woman in Texas and exhibited tenaciousness to survive overwhelming odds. Mirabeau Lamar was a prolific historian who entrusted his papers with her during the war. The papers along with some soldiers' possessions were with her on the trip to Louisiana, but she only made it only as far as Bolivar before the war ended. Jane was made an honorary member of the Texas Veterans Association of the Republic of Texas. She never remarried and was proud to be known as the "Mother of Texas".

Questions:

Do you know the precise location of the fort? She does not, but believes that it is not Fort Travis.

What did she do after the war? She lived in San Felipe, but she set up a boarding house in Velasco when the revolution broke out. Stephen F. Austin held his first rally at her boarding house. Jane then moved to Richmond and got her land. She and Lamar were very close, having adjoining property. She had another boarding house that catered to entertainers like Lily Langtry.

Was she on Bolivar during winter of 1821-1822? Helen said no, but that she has Lou Fincher looking into the weather of that time.

Is there anything still in Richmond to memorialize her? Jane's house, known as the McFarland house, is in City Park and her daughter's house is still there.

What Indian tribe attacked the fort? The Karankawas was her answer.

Do you know of any research in the geographical location of the Indian burial grounds on Bolivar? Helen said that she was not aware of any mention of the mounds in her Jane Long research.

Where is the historical marker noting the Jane Long Exhibition on Bolivar? It was destroyed by Ike, but a new one may be put by the ferry landing. Its replacement has been approved and she hopes it will be unveiled in the fall during the Jane Long Days festival.

Helen lives in Clear Lake and has a special interest in Victorian houses.

.The meeting was adjourned at 7:36PM.

Non-Meeting Minutes Tuesday, March 8, 2011

Panama Hotel Condos at 25th and The Strand

Board Members Present: President Ed Jamison, FVP Jack Watson, TVP Ginny Roberts, Secretary Carolyn Peterson, Editor Dan Cote, Publicity Director Dave Roberts, Technology Director Rob Peterson, Archivist Larry Porter, Parliamentarian Diane Olson

Board Members Absent: SVP Kathy Modzelewski, Coordinator of Research Pam Keyes, Treasurer Nancy Beaman

Advisory Board Present: R. Dale Olson

Advisory Board Absent: Pam Keyes, Jeff Modzelewski, Kathy Modzelewski, Robert Vogel, Dr. Reginald Wilson, Jean Epperson



President Ed Jamison, looking resplendent in his Mardi Gras attire, called the non-meeting to order at 6:28PM with the statement, "Go out and catch beads!"



The food was abundant and the wine flowed freely for the crowd of merrymakers.

Program presented by the Krewe of Aquarius

Topic: Laissez Les Bon Temps Roulez!

Aquarius started at 6:45pm and luckily got through most of the lineup before it rained on our parade.



This parade had some unusual entries like the funeral home float.



The weather did not dampen the spirits of this group, though!



We ran across some Mardi Gras royalty on our way to the car. I think he was the King of the Disco Ball.

Thank you to everyone who put this wonderful event together.

The non-meeting was not adjourned.



Tuesday, May 10, 2011
Meridian Retirement Center

Board Members Present: President Ed Jamison, FVP Jack Watson, SVP Kathy Modzelewski, TVP Ginny Roberts, Secretary Carolyn Peterson, Treasurer Jeff Modzelewski, Technology Director Rob Peterson, Archivist Larry Porter, Publicity Director Dave Roberts, Parliamentarian Diane Olson

Board Members Absent: Coordinator of Research Pam Keyes, Editor Dan Cote

Advisory Board Present: Jeff Modzelewski, Kathy Modzelewski, Parliamentarian Diane Olson

Advisory Board Absent: Pam Keyes, Robert Vogel, Dr. Reginald Wilson

Ed Jamison called the meeting to order at 6:29PM. He began by thanking Ginny Roberts for providing the delicious meal and Ed Connor for his great bartending skills. He welcomed Gene Aubrey whose book with sketches of Galveston will be published within the year.

Ed welcomed back Philip and Judy Trittel, Marla Drost (Jean Epperson's daughter), Carl Shepard, Margie and Norm Sachnicks who have rejoined, and Jim Milligan.

Program Speaker – Larry Porter

Topic – Privateering Versus Pirate

Jack Watson introduced Larry Porter who is an officer in the Society. Jack gave a short biography on Larry saying that he was born in Lufkin, graduated high school in Texas City, then attended Texas A&M receiving a BS and MS in mechanical engineering. During this time he married his wife, Jan, who is also a member of the Society. In 2006 he and Jan moved to Galveston and have happily lived here since then.



Larry began his presentation looking like Capt. Jack Sparrow complete with dreadlocks hair and tri-corner pirate hat saying that he finds the subject of “Letters of Marque” very intriguing. He began by defining a Letter of Marque and Reprisal as a government license authorizing a private vessel to attack and capture enemy merchant vessels and bring those vessels before an admiralty court for condemnation and sale. Marque is a German term meaning border and a Letter of Marque gives permission to cross international borders and effect reprisal. Letters of Marque represents a power given by the US Congress in Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution. He gave examples of laws regulating privateering back to antiquity (Rhodian Law of the Sea-900 BC) illustrating that this is not a recent concept.

Larry also spoke about the specific terms and conditions that a ship and crew must maintain in order to prevent revocation of its Letter of Marque. Some of these were: a captured ship becomes a naval auxiliary subject to the rules of war, captured crew must be treated as prisoners of war, the crew must avoid attacking neutrals, and captives be treated courteously.

A Letter of Marque is issued by a sovereign or head of state or his representative and is subject to all laws, customs, and treaties of the issuing country. Admiralty courts determine legitimacy of the Letter of Marque, review capture and treatment of prisoners and ownership of the captured vessel and its cargo. They also transfer the titles of prizes to be sold at auction and administer the division of proceeds.

The Letter of Marque system gave way to incidents of criminal behavior on part of maritime raiders fighting on both sides and to officials taking bribes for the letters. The legitimacy of these letters were called into question especially during civil wars here and abroad. In these cases many crewmen were hanged as pirates. Captain Kidd was hanged as a pirate in 1701 when caught fighting on both sides.

Uprisings by colonists in the New World against their European subjugators occurred all over the Caribbean, South America, and Mexico providing ample opportunities for privateers (legitimate or not) to make a profit. The US used privateers during the American Revolution and the Civil War. During this time the era of the Filibuster began with the likes of Mina, Humbert, Aury, and our hometown favorite -- Jean Laffite.

Questions:

Who does you hair? I Wil give you the name, Larry replies.

Which flag did a privateer ship fly? The country that issued the Letter of Marque.

Program Speaker - Wil Zapalac

Topic – Laffite Portrait

Jack presented Wil as a member of the Society since 1991 and is a former maritime officer. He was not born on Galveston, but was raised there.

Wil talked about a portrait, supposedly of Laffite, that hangs in the Fox Room of the Rosenberg Library and said he thinks something is not quite right about it, specifically the clothing. He proposes that a second painter, after seeing another portrait of Jean, did his own version, but gentrified Laffite's clothing. Wil then spoke of this portrait's origins and whether there is a second portrait in existence. There is some speculation that the portrait may have come from the old Stuart mansion where there are still wall murals with pirates and Galveston scenes in the background. All are very interesting mysteries to ponder.



Questions:

Does this painting hang in the Fox Room? Yes, it does—but things could change.

What was the date of construction of the Sealy mansion? It began in 1889.

What was there before the Sealy mansion? The property was owned by Ebenezer Nichols who may have had a house there. Dale Olson said perhaps this painting was found during excavation for the Sealy mansion. Jean Epperson said that she covered the painting and the wall murals in her book.

Miscellaneous

Ed asked if there was any new or old business that needed attention; none heard. He thanked all for coming.

Jack Watson gave a preview of the following months' programs:

| | |
|----------|--|
| June: | Don Marler talks on Aaron Burr |
| July: | Jack Watson on Lord Byron and Laffite |
| October: | Cindy Ballard speaks on the Pirate Dominique You |

The meeting was adjourned at 7:41PM.

Tuesday, May 10, 2011

Meridian Retirement Center

Board Members Present: President Ed Jamison, FVP Jack Watson, SVP Kathy Modzelewski, TVP Ginny Roberts, Secretary Carolyn Peterson, Treasurer Jeff Modzelewski, Technology Director Rob Peterson, Archivist Larry Porter, Publicity Director Dave Roberts

Board Members Absent: Coordinator of Research Pam Keyes, Editor Dan Cote, Parliamentarian Diane Olson

Advisory Board Present: Jean Epperson, Jeff Modzelewski, Kathy Modzelewski

Advisory Board Absent: Pam Keyes, Robert Vogel, Dr. Reginald Wilson, Dale Olson

Ed Jamison called the meeting to order at 6:33PM. First of all, Ed expressed his pleasure at the return of Don and Sybil Marler, long time members. He welcomed visitors Elizabeth Hoyle, daughter of Sheldon Kendall, visiting from France. He also welcomed Marla Drost (Jean Epperson's daughter), John Kemp, and Charles Kelly. TVP Ginny Roberts was thanked for providing a delicious meal and Ed Connor for pouring libations.

On a sad note, Ed announced the passing of John Buck, a Society member.

Program Speaker – Don Marler

Topic – Aaron Burr-The Most Unfairly Maligned Politician in American History



Jack Watson introduced Don saying that he was born in Louisiana and was a Frogman during the Korean War. Don has a Masters degree in Psychiatric Social Work and he has worked for government agencies and then for himself in this field. He was the former editor and publisher of the Laffite Chronicles and officer of the Laffite Society.

Aaron Burr had some association with the Laffites in the early 1800's and Don believes it broadens our knowledge when we study some of the peripheral people with whom the Laffites had contact. Burr was born in 1776 in New Jersey. His mother was the daughter of the evangelist, Jonathan Edwards, and his father was Aaron Burr Sr, first president of a university that would become Princeton. He had a tragic life before age four; he lost his parents, grandparents, and a cousin. His first wife, was Theodosia Prevost, who had several miscarriages before giving birth to a daughter, who died at three years of age. The next daughter was Theodosia who later was lost on the ship Le Brave along with most of Burr's papers. The mother died when Theo was eight years old. Burr had a very passive or laidback nature never defending himself from taunts and insults.

Alexander Hamilton was a life-long bachelor and was illegitimate. His mother was married to John M. Levine, a wealthy Jew from the Netherlands. She was pressured into this marriage, later leaving Levine and taking up with James Hamilton (father of Alexander), having several children with him, but no marriage. Some say Alexander was a genius, but he had a personality problem being that he was always on the attack. Whereas Burr was the complete opposite being very passive and later regretting it. To a fault, he displayed the "stiff upper lip". Hamilton followed in Burr's footsteps in almost everything, even working for Washington after Burr quit the position.

Hamilton projected his own weaknesses upon Burr. After the war Hamilton and Burr were both lawyers who worked together often and peacefully, but Hamilton would publish anonymously unflattering articles about Burr that Burr would just let pass with no rebuttal.

Hamilton and Burr both opposed slavery while Jefferson did not. Burr was a big advocate for women's rights similar to where we are today education, right to vote, etc. He was a horrible money manager, but was very generous to those who would continue their education. Late in his life he supported ten elderly women--no strings attached. He also supported (not financially) the only woman impresario in Texas, Jane McManus, illustrating his dedication to the pursuit of women's rights.

In 1880 Burr and Jefferson were running for president and Burr became VP because Jefferson received the most votes. Jefferson kept him under his thumb so Burr couldn't do much; he couldn't even use the library. In 1961 it became known that Hamilton was a British agent, number 007. Don supposed this might be a reason why he treated Burr so badly, being afraid that Burr would learn his secret and reveal it. In 1804 Burr ran for governor of New York and lost due to Hamilton's behind the scenes doings. During the campaign for governor Hamilton made some especially questionable comments about Burr. Burr asked Hamilton to retract or explain the many negative things he said but he refused, leading to the duel. Hamilton had participated in twelve duels and Burr in one, but neither had killed anyone. Hamilton had access to trick pistols that did not meet the dueling code, but this did not give him an edge in the duel as we know. In 1940 the pistols were X-rayed and the triggers were discovered. Burr was never tried for murder.

Burr was a bad judge of character, especially regarding James Wilkinson who was the head of the US army. Wilkinson was also a double agent to the Spanish (Number 13) under four presidents, but was never discovered and all these presidents knew of his duplicity but never took action. He was a double agent so perhaps his association with the Spaniards provided the American government some useful information. He was for sale to either side. He urged the Spanish to kill Lewis and Clarke Clark among other despicable deeds. Due to his association with Wilkinson, Burr was tried for treason 3 times but not convicted. Eventually Jefferson and Wilkinson attempted to have Burr killed without success. Burr remarried at 77 years of age and lived to see Sam Houston take Texas.

In the Journal of Jean Laffite (which Don considers highly unreliable) Jean writes that he and Pierre went to Washington to meet with Jefferson, his cabinet and Burr. In their meeting with Burr they talk about Spain and Texas. Another entry says that Pierre was contracted by Burr to report malfeasance in the use of funds in New Orleans and Jean was to sweep the Gulf clean of pirates--the fox guarding the henhouse so to speak. Don thinks Burr had no power to contract anything with these two.

Two of Laffite's men, Robert Johnson and Jean Desfarges, admitted in the Le Brave trial that they sunk the ship that Theodosia was on sending her to her death.

M i s c e l l a n e o u s

Ed thanked several members for bringing salads and desserts. He then asked Jack to tell the audience about the upcoming programs.

Jack Watson gave a preview of the following months' programs:

| | |
|------------|---|
| July: | Jack Watson on "Lord Byron and Jean Laffite, More Links than You Think" |
| August: | Jim Saye and Bill Cox on the SS Selma at Bolivar Roads |
| September: | Betty Connor on the Women in Laffite's life |
| October: | Cindy Vallar speaks on the Pirate Dominique Youx |
| November: | Dale Olson on the Location of the Maison Rouge |

The meeting was adjourned at 7:36PM.

Tuesday, July 12, 2011

Meridian Retirement Center

Board Members Present: President Ed Jamison, FVP Jack Watson, SVP Kathy Modzelewski, TVP Ginny Roberts, Secretary Carolyn Peterson, Treasurer Jeff Modzelewski, Technology Director Rob Peterson, Editor Dan Cote, Parliamentarian Diane Olson, Publicity Director Dave Roberts

Board Members Absent: Coordinator of Research Pam Keyes, Archivist Larry Porter

Advisory Board Present: Jean Epperson, Jeff Modzelewski, Kathy Modzelewski, Dale Olson

Advisory Board Absent: Pam Keyes, Robert Vogel, Dr. Reginald Wilson

Ed Jamison called the meeting to order at 6:33PM. He then introduced some members who he considers to be instrumental in the success of the Society: Dorothy McDonald Karilanic (past Secretary) and Lou McBeth Olson accompanied by her husband, David. He welcomed Joyce McLane, Marla Drost and Mia Cummings, (daughters of Jean Epperson), Charles Sanders, Natalie Wiest, Head Librarian of the Jack K. Williams Library at TAMUG. and Judy and Joe Dolfi (members but infrequent attendees), and Tom Perkins.

Joyce McLane who owns "Head to Footsies" talked about the new attraction she is trying to introduce in downtown Galveston for family entertainment. The name will be the "Pirate Experience—Legends of the Gulf Coast" showcasing such as the Laffite brothers, Aury, and the other well known pirates of that era. This is not only to benefit downtown, but also the Elissa. She is working on a syllabus for students at all grade levels to use when they come to the Experience to encourage their knowledge about the history, lore and legend. The other half of the attraction will be a Victorian haunted house and both will be housed in the former Bass shoe outlet next to Fuddruckers.

Jeff Modzelewski apologized for sending out an invitation to a Spanish blogging site. He reassured us that it was not spam and done unintentionally. Mea Culpa!!

Ed said that member and old friend, Jesse Dunbar, had been in an accident the past weekend and was hospitalized with a broken arm. He expects Jesse to make a full recovery.

Ed thanked TVP Ginny Roberts for again providing a delicious meal and Ed Connor for doing an excellent job as bartender.

Ed stated that Texas A&M University has agreed to store the Society's archives and volunteer help would be needed to help copy/scan the items since everything will be kept in electronic form. Tom Ortling has said that he plans to use some of his students in the process and also plans for his students to use the archives in their research.

Program Speaker – Jack Watson



Topic – The Relationship between Lord Byron and Jean Laffite

Jack Watson stated that he was not really a poetry person, but this possible link has interested him for a long time. He used an article written by Pam Keyes (2007) as his source material and consulted with Dr. Richard Peake, a fellow bird watcher and English Literature professor, about the possibility of Laffite being the subject for Byron's "The Corsair". Dr. Peake believes that this is the case.

Jack thinks that Joseph Ingram gave root to the myth when he published his romantic novel in 1837 featuring Jean Laffite. These novels had no historical content, but they glorified a fanciful Laffite. Ingram's book was published in 1938 in London and included the last line from "The Corsair" in the preface. Byron may have supported this later myth (generated by Ingram's book) by including a note regarding an article from an American newspaper talking about Laffite and the Baratarians in the 8th edition of his poem printed in April 1814. The only problem is that the timing does not lend credence to the myth. "The Corsair" was first published in early 1814 before Laffite's exploits occurred in the War of 1812. Being that communication between continents was quite slow, Byron could not have been aware of Laffite's actions during the war.

Jack went on to describe the Byronic hero with his flaws and virtues. Some think Laffite was a criminal for his privateering, but also he could be the most gentlemanly person. Jack gave several other examples of the Byronic hero -- Sam Spade in the Maltese Falcon, James Dean in Rebel Without a Cause, and even Victor Frankenstein whose crime was making the monster, but he did it for the betterment of mankind. Jack gave some information on Byron himself indicating that he was a troubled person much like the heroes he invented in his poems and that Byron was killed fighting for Greek independence.

Jack concluded by saying that he does not believe that Laffite was the inspiration for Byron's poem, primarily due to the timeline mentioned above. He also said that Laffite biographers such as Ramsey and Davis do not believe there was a link, but that Pam Keyes thinks there may be because of possible communications between Mary Shelley (receiving information from her uncle about Laffite) and Lord Byron.

Miscellaneous

Ed mentioned that he had received emails from Steve Austin and Cathy Hitchcock who have moved back to Portland, OR. They are doing well.

Dale Olson told the group that at the Winter Banquet the toast is made with the recitation of the last couplet of "The Corsair".

Lou Olsen who lives in east Texas said that Phillip Waldrop is still trying to find the Laffite treasure that supposedly was dropped in Hendricks Lake. Laffite hired Trammel of Trammel's Trace to take silver and gold bars to St. Louis. Supposedly the Mexican Army found out and they rushed to intercept the shipment. To prevent its capture, the booty was said to be dumped in the lake. People are still looking for it today. Jack said tongue in cheek that recently he was told that there is supposed to be Laffite treasure in Chocolate Bayou, too.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:34PM.

Tuesday, August 09, 2011

Meridian Retirement Center

Board Members Present: President Ed Jamison, FVP Jack Watson, SVP Kathy Modzelewski, TVP Ginny Roberts, Secretary Carolyn Peterson, Treasurer Jeff Modzelewski, Technology Director Rob Peterson, Editor Dan Cote, Publicity Director Dave Roberts, Archivist Larry Porter

Board Members Absent: Coordinator of Research Pam Keyes, Parliamentarian Diane Olson

Advisory Board Present: Jean Epperson, Jeff Modzelewski, Kathy Modzelewski

Advisory Board Absent: Pam Keyes, Robert Vogel, Dr. Reginald Wilson, Dale Olson

President Ed Jamison called the meeting to order at 6:34PM.

Ed invited Lynette Haaga to talk about the Winter Banquet. Lynette is already busy with this year's event and says she is in need of volunteers. She is having a planning session in a couple of weeks and requested that interested persons sign up to help her.

Ed announced that the Chronicles were here and ready for the members. He mentioned the President's Page which covers the discussion of using Texas A&M as the repository for Society archives. Steve Conway, head librarian, agreed by email to the Society's conditions and so after the Board's approval, TAMU will take over this responsibility.

He talked with Steve Austin who said hello to everyone and that they will be here for some months in the near future.

Visitors welcomed to this month's meeting: John and Evelyn Keeling, Celina Guyewski, daughter of the late "Frenchy" Leblanc, Glynda Oglesby and Debbie and Chuck Morris.

Program Speakers – Jim Saye & Bill Cox**Topic – The SS Selma**

FVP Jack Watson began by saying that the Selma is a true historical artifact for Galveston and thanked Helen Mooty for arranging this presentation by Jim Saye and Bill Cox.

After serving in the Korean War, Jim pursued an advertising career with a major client being the former Southwest football Conference. He later started his own firm and came in contact with A. Pat Daniels who had him set up the annual celebration for the SS Selma.

Bill, a pilot during WWII, a sixth generation Texan, and a retired CPA, has served on many historical societies' commissions. He is the sole owner of the SS Selma since Pat Daniels' passing this year.

From the ferry the Selma looks like a old ship sunk in the mud. During WWI there were shortages of steel and petroleum. To alleviate this, the US Navy commissioned the production of 12-13 experimental concrete ships by Fred May Ship Building Company in Mobile, AL. The tanker, USS Selma—named for Selma, AL, was the largest with her dimensions as follows: 420 feet in length, beam of 54 feet, fully loaded draft of 26 feet, bottom hull thickness of 5 inches, and side thickness of 4 inches. Her displacement was 13000 tons fully loaded, she cruised at 10.5 knots, and had a crew of 49. She was launched in June 28, 1919—the same day WWI ended so she began her career carrying crude oil from Mexico to the US. The success of the Selma and her sisters proved that the US ship builders could construct seaworthy ships of concrete and 104 more were constructed for service during WWII. This was not new technology since the Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans used concrete for early construction projects that are still in use today. In 1920 the Selma crashed into a jetty in Tampico, Mexico where a quick fix was carried out and it was towed to Galveston. There were many problems in dry-dock since no one had experience with the repair of concrete ships. Then a storm threatened and she was rushed from dry-dock. She was towed to Pier 37 where she stayed until the government refused to pay the docking fees. She was then towed to her current resting place. Two Galveston captains bought her to make a fishing pier and resort and she became SS (Steam Ship) Selma. The ship was sold to the Galveston Boat Company, but no rehabilitation took place. In 1936 Frenchy LeBlanc bought the Selma for \$100. From 1948 he lived a solitary existence on the Selma and tried oyster cultivation, but was only successful at raising chickens and goats. He hosted the Hermit's convention on the Selma as a publicity stunt for Fox Movietone News. During the 1947 Texas City disaster debris from the harbor was stored on the deck of the Selma so barges could get into Texas City to help. In 1957 after gambling was closed down in Galveston, Jim Simpson used the Selma as a backdrop to dispose of slot machines in front of the press. The machines floated, much to Simpson's embarrassment.

In 1992 Pat Daniels, former editor of the Galveston Daily News, purchased the Selma, later getting it listed on the registry of National Historic Places. It is a Texas Historical Landmark and the flagship of the Texas Army. May 4 is designated as SS Selma day in Galveston. Daniels organized the annual Selma birthday party at the Austin House and it will be held on the second Saturday in May next year.

Bill Cox says that the highest point above mean sea level is about 8-10 feet now, indicating how much the Selma has sunk since it was placed in her resting place. He bought half interest a couple of years ago finding out later it was his half that is already sunk (many chuckles). He has set up a shell corporation paying property taxes on her little plot of land. He asked about possible things to do with the Selma in the future.

Questions for Jim:

What propelled the boat? A single screw engine that burned coal.

Was the Selma meant to be launched sideways? Because of a mishap in England, the US builder launched sideways to avert any possible disaster. Someone mentioned that for boat launchings in Beaumont they put banana peels on the skids to make the boats slide easily.

Miscellaneous

Ed discussed the possibility of asking William Davis as a speaker for the Winter Banquet.

Helen Mooty spoke about Pat Daniels as a driving force behind the Jane Long Festival and about his books on the local area. Jim Saye is writing a book about the 1915 hurricane. Galveston County is honoring Daniels with a proclamation on August 16 and an invitation to attend was given.

Casey Edward Greene, head of the special collections at the Rosenberg Museum, will talk on the information available about Laffite. Please give Jack Watson some input regarding your area of interest. The talk will be presented in February, 2012.

Jeff Modzelewski suggested that Jack Ramsey's book may be an easier read than Davis' book for people who are entering this field of study. Jeff finds it less intimidating for the beginner.

You can have an interesting photo taken with Captain Hook at the Ashton Village store.

Ginny Roberts thanked Lynette Haaga and the Dersheimers for bringing desserts. Ed Connor was thanked for his excellent bartending skills.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:35PM.

Submitted by Carolyn Peterson
Corresponding/Recording Secretary

Tuesday, September 12, 2011

Meridian Retirement Center

Board Members Present: President Ed Jamison, SVP Kathy Modzelewski, TVP Ginny Roberts, Secretary Carolyn Peterson, Treasurer Jeff Modzelewski, Technology Director Rob Peterson, Editor Dan Cote, Publicity Director Dave Roberts, Archivist Larry Porter, Parliamentarian Diane Olson

Board Members Absent: Coordinator of Research Pam Keyes, FVP Jack Watson

Advisory Board Present: Jean Epperson, Jeff Modzelewski, Kathy Modzelewski, Dale Olson

Advisory Board Absent: Pam Keyes, Robert Vogel, Dr. Reginald Wilson

President Ed Jamison called the meeting to order at 6:34PM.

He welcomed visitors and returning members: Norm and Margie Sachnik, Dorothy Karilanovic, George and Lizette Gaudin Najarian, Jo Ann Cote, Eric Connor—son of Betty and Ed Connor. Ed mentioned that the person who announced President Obama before his speech is former Galvestonian, Bill Livingood. Speaking of history, he mentioned that the day after the meeting was the anniversary of the writing of the National Anthem by Francis Scott Key.

Ed thanked Ginny Roberts for the wonderful dinner, Marg for the salad, Carolyn for the cookies, and Todd for the assorted desserts. It was announced that Todd and his wife are expecting a child. Ed Connor was thanked for bartending this evening.

Editor Dan Cote announced that he is planning to put out a new Chronicle in January and that interested parties should get their articles in very soon.

Program Speaker – Betty Connor

Topic – Women in Laffite's Life

Ed introduced Betty by saying he remembered from elementary school and that she impressed him as being a serious student. Betty's first intent was to become a music teacher, but then she became interested in history and government leading her into a lifetime career of civic/government service. She serves on the boards of several public service groups. Betty says her favorite activity now is traveling and says that she has been to thirty-five foreign countries, but she hasn't been able to lose Ed yet.

Betty began by saying that there are family traditions, folklore, and fantasies about the women in Laffite's life, but not too much factual information exists. Laffite did not leave many letters records—so no paper trail. Records were lost due to governmental change, storms, and other events such as fires making it hard to pin down accurate information. During her presentation she dressed to give the allusion of various women she was depicting.

The first important woman in his life was his mother and Betty gave three different suppositions of his birth listing the possible locations of Santo Domingo, Bordeaux, Bayan—all French cities or possessions so he could make claim for a French Privateer license. Betty said that there are many examples of family folklore regarding Laffite's real identity. She brought up the case of Francois Zenon Boutte, whose parents were Antoine and Marie Francois Hyacinth Boutte. It would be very convenient if this folklore were correct, at would at least we would know his mother's and father's names and where they are buried. But alas-not so!

The second important woman would be his wife, but no one person can be verified. A name that has been referenced twice is Christiana Lewein (Levine). Betty presented two stories regarding her marriage to Laffite under different circumstances. The third reference of a wife has Laffite as a planter whose property is confiscated by the Spanish government and the wife (unnamed) commits suicide. A totally unrelated story comes from a record from a church in Cuba saying that a Juan Laffite married a Juana Mané in 1805 and they had a son, Bartolomé.

The next category of important woman characters were his female and possible loves. The first mentioned was Beatrice Tolliver, the well bred daughter of a plantation owner, who met Jean at a ball. skeptical about his bad reputation until he killed one of her suitors "Freebooter". She wasn't very understanding about this and sent



Another similar story was that of Wilson who came to Charleston and Martin/Morton. Again another former killed in a dual and Mortimer fled to become a pirate (the dread pirate passed and Wilson sneaked back into to find that Mary had died.



acquaintances beautiful and She was for calling him a him packing.

Mortimer met the Mary suitor was Florida and Laffite?). Time Charleston only

Back in New Orleans another woman entered Laffite's life in the person of Catherine Villars, sister of Marie -- Pierre's mistress. Jean set up house, gave her money, and they eventually had a son. During this period, Jean would leave and return to New Orleans several times, but after 1820 he left for Galveston never to return to

Catherine.

There were rumors that there was something between Governor Claiborne's daughter and Laffite, but this seems to be a contrivance by Hollywood for a movie romance.

Charles Sallier and Laffite were in business together in Lake Charles. One time when Charles was away, Laffite called upon his wife, Catherine, and gave her two young slaves. Charles arrived and thought that this was a very extravagant gift. He believed that something must be going on between the two. In a fit of rage, Charles shot Catherine. Thinking that he killed her, he disappeared, but she recovered and lived to a ripe old age.

Next in this lineup is Madeline Rigaud, widow of General Rigaud. There are two different versions of her and Jean's meeting, but both end with her death and her burial under the Maison Rouge.

The last two ladies are ones that we have heard about previously. One is Mary Campbell who greatly admired Laffite when they met on Galveston island. The other is Jane Long who was invited to Galveston for dinner and given a powder horn as a token. Jean leaves her building materials when he quits Galveston.

Questions:

How long did Betty's research take for her presentation? She said she began in July using internet sources as well as Jack Ramsey's book.
Of all the wife possibilities, which person is most likely? Christiana, she said.

Miscellaneous

Ed asked the audience if they were pleased with last year's Banquet venue and most said they were. He also polled the audience on whether or not A&M should be given the archives and most agreed it is a good decision. Jean Epperson mentioned some interesting changes at the Liberty library. The Laffite Journal is now in Austin and not in the Liberty museum. It may no longer be available for viewing by the public

The meeting was adjourned at 7:33PM.

Submitted by Carolyn Peterson
Corresponding/Recording Secretary

Tuesday, October 11, 2011

Meridian Retirement Center

Board Members Present: President Ed Jamison, FVP Jack Watson, TVP Ginny Roberts, Secretary Carolyn Peterson, Treasurer Jeff Modzelewski, Technology Director Rob Peterson, Editor Dan Cote, Publicity Director Dave Roberts, Archivist Larry Porter

Board Members Absent: SVP Kathy Modzelewski, Coordinator of Research Pam Keyes, Parliamentarian Diane Olson

Advisory Board Present: Jean Epperson, Jeff Modzelewski

Advisory Board Absent: Pam Keyes, Robert Vogel, Dr. Reginald Wilson, Kathy Modzelewski, Dale Olson

President Ed Jamison called the meeting to order at 6:40PM. Ed began by telling about his meeting Carole Hamaday at the Jane long Festival the past weekend. Carol is the proprietor of the Out By the Sea Bed & Breakfast in Crystal Beach and she has written a book titled *Surviving the Terror...Ike*. She brought along an old, rusted sword that washed up one night and is trying to find information regarding it. She is a new member as of this evening.

Jean Epperson had a follow-up announcement that the Laffite Journal will be returning to Liberty Library after deciding what the best method of conservation will be for the Journal.

Ed said that TAMUG has accepted the agreement to house the archives based on our wording of the contract. Ed called the A&M librarian to ask about the best way to index the archives.

Mardi Gras sometimes falls on our meeting night, but not next year. We can have a regular meeting and then meet again for Fat Tuesday—something to ponder.

The Winter Banquet committee met last week and decided on a menu. It will be held at the Trolley Station on December 11.. The program is still a secret. And there will be **Sazeracs!!**

Program Speaker – Cindy Vallar

Topic – Dominique You

Jack Watson introduced Cindy Vallar by saying that she is an editor, writer, poet who specializes in historical novels. She has written for the Laffite Chronicles and previously given presentations for the Society. She and her husband were raised in Pennsylvania, then moved to Maryland and Kansas before finally settling in Texas.

Cindy said she first heard of Jean Laffite in the 1970's while watching a "Wonderful World of Disney" presentation on him. The actor playing Jean was a good looking



guy (a young Frank Langella) and she fell in love. The mystery of Laffite really attracted her. She began her first novel on Laffite, but put it away when she returned to college. Cindy wrote her second novel, *The Scottish Thistle*, and then eventually returned to the Laffite novel for reworking. While on this project she came to Galveston to get some old issues of the Chronicles and met with Jeff and Kathy Modzelewski. After talking with them she decided to change the focus of her book (usually a secondary character). She had planned to use a sister of Jean and Pierre, but turned her attention to Dominique You (or Youx). Not much information was known about You in the 1970's when she was doing her research on Laffite, but is now surprised so much is available on the internet. Cindy posed the question of what Dominique You may have looked like. Author Jane De Grummond tells us that he was short, not quite 5' 4" tall, with shoulders twice as wide as the average man. He was swarthy with flashing black eyes and a hawk like nose with powder burns on the left side of his face. He went to sea at age seven becoming a cabin boy. Since he wouldn't reveal his name to the captain, the crew, knowing he came from San Dominique, called him Dominique Vous—translating to Dominique You. In signed documents he used the first name of Frederic, always spelled in lower case letters.

Cindy gave many instances where Dominique You is mentioned in historical records. Here are just a few. It is believed that he was born in Puerto Prince, Haiti between 1771- 1775. He was a master gunner, but no one knows where he acquired his skills, maybe in Napoleon's army. He first shows up in French admiralty records 1798 showing that he was in Baracoa, Cuba—the original Cuban capital. Cindy cited several references where Captain You is mentioned after capturing ships and claiming the prizes. In 1806 the London Gazette gave an account of the capture of the ship, *Le Superb* with ninety-four crew after many hours of fierce battle. The captain's name was given as Dominique Hou—could this be our Dominique You? Later naval histories identified the captain as Dominique Durrant, a name that is unfamiliar to Cindy, but the description regarding his fighting skill and the ships of prey sound like this is Dominique You. The Great Louisiana Hurricane of 1812 happened shortly after the War of 1812 was declared. There are two versions of where he rode out the storm. The first version said that he was at the home of Charles Jacob in Plaquemine and the second was that he was on his ship "*Le Pandoure*" where he was injured during the storm. In 1814 Commodore Daniel Patterson received permission to go after the Baratarians pirates using the USS *Carolina*. In September 1814 the British approached Laffite about joining their cause, but he said that he needed to consult with his crew. Laffite sent a message to the governor detailing the British offer, but told Claiborne that he wanted to support him instead. Of course, Patterson objected and went to Barataria anyway. Seeing that it was an American force, the pirates surrendered, but they started to burn their ships. Patterson, not wanting to lose his prize immediately attacked. Dominique tried to escape, but was captured along with about eighty others and taken to New Orleans where they were charged with piracy. Jackson offered a pardon in return for defending New Orleans against the British and the Baratarians distinguished themselves in battle as Battery 3. In 1820 You joined Aury in fighting against Spain and went back to privateering—but there was no one to privateer against. He retired to New Orleans, but during the final two years he was pretty much a hermit, having no money. He died on November, 14, 1830. A grateful city paid his funeral expenses and his service with military honors was held in St. Louis Cathedral. He is buried at St. Louis Cemetery #2.

Questions:

Where did you take French Lessons? She was a French major in college.

Do you feel that Dominique was a brother of the Laffites? No, maybe related by blood like distant cousins.

Is the current novel you are writing a continuation of one you began about Laffite many years ago? Yes, it is a grownup version, though, and is hoped to be finished next year.

When Laffite was on Galveston, did Dominique spend more time in New Orleans? Yes, he was getting up in age at that time.

Cindy's website: <http://www.cindyvallar.com/pirates>

Miscellaneous

Ed thanked Ginny Roberts for the wonderful dinner, Dersheimers for the salad, Carolyn, Judy, and Todd for the desserts. Ed Connor was thanked for bartending this evening.

Wil Zapalac brought up the sword and Ed said that Jim Nonus thought it might be quite old. John Trojanowsky might know about it. He also suggested the Stork Club as an optional meeting place.

Jim Nonus said that the Strand Theater might do a showing of the *Buccaneer*, preferably the 1938 version.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:52PM.



LAFFITE SOCIETY ANNUAL PARTY



A nice crowd



And the party continues....

