



The Laffite Society Chronicles

Volume XXI Number 2
August 2014

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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MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Annual Dues:

Student.....	\$15.00
Senior (Over 65).....	\$20.00
Institution.....	\$20.00
Individual.....	\$35.00
Family.....	\$40.00
Sustaining Member.....	\$100.00
Sponsoring Member.....	\$100.00
Life Membership (One Payment)....	\$300.00

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The Laffite Society
Post Office Box 1325
Galveston, Texas 77553-1325
<http://thelaffitesociety.com>

Editor's Page

Dan Cote
dancote1@comcast.net

Observations on Articles in This Issue

This is a real issue. Program Chair Jack Watson lets us know the excitement of the coming Second-Tuesday programs. Secretary Carolyn Peterson's outstanding reporting of the past meetings with such clarity and accuracy that if you missed the meeting you were brought up to speed. Carolyn's minutes are appended by Dorothy Karilanovic's July minutes.

President Porter shares some of the excitement of the Second Annual Laffite Society Seminar and he assisted by the photography of Dave Roberts.

Dale Olson gives us a quick tale on the origin of the Society on this its twentieth year; his words are delivered to us by Jeff Modzelewski.

Bill Adriance outlines the history of Galvez and his role not only in relation to Galveston but for the entire region and his accomplishment during the American War of Revolution..

We think this issue will keep you reading for quite a while

Material Submission Notes

As an absolute last resort the editor will accept material that must be scanned or is in .PDF form. He prefers WORD or text documents with only **VERY ELEMENTAL** formatting: tabbing is preferred to spacing. Photos and drawings presented in .JPG or related formats are also preferred.

The Laffite Yahoo Group

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

By Larry Porter

It has been another great year for our society. This year marks the 20th year of our formal organization!

Our first special event, Mardi Gras, got off to a cold, wet start. However, the turnout was good despite the weather and the party was as fun as ever. Jack McCoy hosted again at the Panama Hotel and the “pot luck” meal was plentiful, varied and tasty. Sazeracs flowed like the rain on the strand. See the pictures that follow. Thanks to all who came and brought goodies!

Our next endeavor was our 2nd Annual Laffite Seminar at Texas A&M Galveston. A summary of the event is included later in this Chronicle. We began with our welcome party, Friday April 25th at the Trolley Station. As usual, Lynette and Ginny provided a sumptuous smorgasbord of hordurves featuring cold boiled shrimp, assorted cheese, meat balls, asparagus and other veggies. Bar service was provided by Jack McCoy, Ed Jamison, Larry Porter and others as stand in for our celebrity bar tender, Ed Connor, who was recovering from recent knee surgery. Dave Roberts captured it all on film; so, see the pictures later in the Chronicle.

The Seminar on Saturday maintained essentially the same format with six sessions, but shortened intermediate introductions in favor of more Q&A with the speakers. Our attendance increased to about 80. Many new faces were present and we gained several new members. Drs Andy Torget and Betji Klier were featured presenters. Andy was a big hit with his entertaining explanation of how Jim Bowie and Jean Laffite collaborated to “laundry” the slave trade in Louisiana. Betji gave us yet another new insight into the mysteries and people who established “Champ d’ Asile”. See the program outline that follows.

A subsequent board meeting was held in May to review and access results of the Seminar II. This year we managed a small “profit” and had a larger attendance. Accordingly, the board voted to have a 3rd seminar. Committees were appointed and set to work. Ed Jamison will head Programs, Lynette Haaga will manage Hospitality. April 18 has been approved by Texas A&M for our date.

June was election month. The table of officers and directors for 2014-2016 is listed at the beginning of this edition. Root Choyce joined the group as Technical director and the Recording Secretary’s position was left unfilled. Thank you, members, for your vote of confidence for another two year term!

I’m sad to report that Jack Watson, our 1st Vice President and Program Director, had to resign shortly after June elections due to health issues. Ed Jamison has agreed to step in and direct our programs. Ed’s report on Program’s for the second half of 2014 follows.

We owe a huge thanks to Jacks for his untiring and excellent work on behalf of the society. He will be sorely missed and we wish him God’s speed on his journey to recovery.

Our Christmas party delegation is already at work. December 14th, Sunday night, has been chosen as our banquet evening. Theme and location have yet to be decided.

January 9th, 1815- where were you!

Next year is the 200th anniversary of the Battle of New Orleans. The Jean Laffite National Park plans several events in New Orleans with a reenactment at the Chalmette battle field and other events yet unannounced. There is a seminar(#3!) scheduled at Nunez Community College near the Calumet site which will feature Jack Davidson as key note speaker. I have been attempting to connect with both parties to see if we as a society can participate. At the least, it looks like a great field trip for January and a running start on 2015.

Thank you, one and all! Your enthusiasm and hard work make this a fun thing. Let's wrap it with a great fall and holiday season, and then explore more adventures in 2015- watch out Arkansas!

Laissez les bons temps rouler

Or words to that effect.

Previews of Upcoming Programs

By Jack Watson

This year seems to be galloping by at a faster pace than usual. But that's how things work when everything, and I'm referring to our monthly programs, not only go off as planned, but also are of excellent quality. To our Society members who spoke, and to our fine guest speakers as well, the quality of your presentations was what people expect when they join the Society. As we hit the 20th Anniversary mark for the group in August the quality of our presentations has risen with the quality of the membership.

Well done!

Then there were the presentations and performances of those who participated in the Second Annual Laffite Society Seminar at TAMUG. Members Jeff Modzelewski, Lou Graves MacBeth and R. Dale Olson were prominent as they joined guest speakers Andy Hall, Dr. Betje Klier and Dr. Andrew J. Torget in adding to the knowledge we Laffitians seek. The Laffite Amateurishly-Professional Theater Company added to the fun and edification with their rendition of R. Dale Olson's opus "Audrey, Lacey and John A." portrayed by Betty Connor, Helen Mooty and Larry Porter, respectively. The Seminar, as anticipated, was another success and opened the door to the third confab at Texas A&M, Galveston, to be held April 18, 2015.

The programs for the remainder of the year show excellent promise and are scheduled as follows:

August 12- Galvestonian Bill Adriance of the Bernardo de Galvez Chapter of the Sons of The American Revolution will speak about Galvez's life and his importance as a hero in the American Revolution.

September 9 – Galvestonian and Laffite Society member, Betty Connor, continues her speaking series for the Society with the causes of the War of 1812; the occurrences in the years 1812-1814 and the results of the war on the United States, Canada and England.

October 14 - Aya Katz is a linguist, primatologist and author of 10 books. A Ph.D in linguistics from Rice University, Ms. Katz will speak about the effect of the changing laws concerning privateering on the career of Jean Laffite.

November 11- Long-time Society member Rob Peterson will speak on the life of Lyle Saxon and critiques of his works. As a bonus, Rob will make a trip to the "Little Temple" near Barataria in September, and may have something to report on about that, as well.

Laffite Society Minutes

Submitted by Carolyn Peterson

Meridian Retirement Center

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Board Members Present: President Larry Porter, FVP Jack Watson, SVP Kathy Modzelewski, co-TVP Ginny Roberts/Lynette Haaga, Secretary Carolyn Peterson, Technology Director Rob Peterson, Treasurer Jeff Modzelewski, Archivist Dorothy Karolanovic, Publicity Director Dave Roberts

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

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

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

The meeting was called to order at 6:40PM. Larry Porter started by saying what a grand supper Ginny Roberts and Lynette Haaga had provided for the group. He announced that Kathy Modzelewski was handing out the latest Chronicles and asked all to please sign the log that you have received it. Ernest Caldwell was recognized as a first time visitor.

Larry then talked about the upcoming Seminar that is being held April 25-26 saying that the schedule is filled and all involved have been confirmed.

Jack McCoy is again hosting the Mardi Gras party on March 4 at 5:30PM in the Panama Lofts. Attendees are requested to bring a dish or snack and a contribution of \$5 per person for drinks.

The food theme for the March meeting will be in honor of St. Patrick's Day. Interesting suggestions were made for contributions such as Irish whiskey or green beer.

Larry said that the board had done a post mortem of the Christmas Party with the folks at Moody Gardens. As a result the date for next year's event has been set for Sunday, December 14, 2014, but no venue has been decided upon as yet.

Treasurer Jeff Modzelewski thanked Lou McBeth for helping to get bank fees waived for the Society account at Frost Bank.

Lou McBeth said that the H2 channel had a presentation regarding the recovery of the ship "Whydah" and it was very interesting. This ship is the subject a display that is opening on March 8 at Moody Gardens. There will be a members event on March 7 and Greg Whittaker asked that if anyone was interested in providing a presentation for it to contact him.

Larry said that he had received a call from Dr. Andrew Torget regarding the Texas Independence relay being held March 29 that will be a fund raiser on behalf of the Texas State Historical Association. It is a relay from Gonzales to San Jacinto prior to the battle of San Jacinto anniversary.

Program Speaker – Root Choyce

Topic – Ships of Jean Laffite's Era

Jack Watson introduced tonight's speaker saying that he had met her in a birding class and found out that she has many varied interests. She worked in lighting design for the theaters at the University of Texas in Austin and is a

master electrician. Root is involved with several organizations such as NOAA, OLLIE, the ship Elissa, Meals on Wheels - just to name a few.

Root began by saying that this was an overview of various ships and she would not concentrate on any one type since information was sketchy. She talked about how ships evolved through the ages into the types Laffite might have sailed. Beginning with basic ship design she went over the various parts of a ship that are common to all such as the keel, hull, rudder, types of propulsion, cargo storage, and quarters and how each had changed over time.

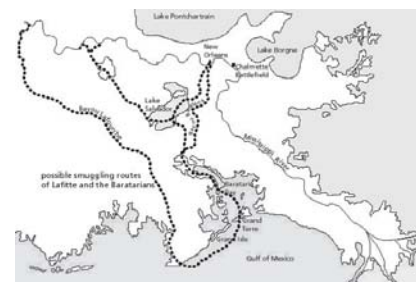
The crew's life at sea was not easy with each man sleeping in a hammock and maybe having three feet of space to call his own. Personal possessions were contained in small sea chests that also doubled as tables or chairs. To occupy time, they might do wood carving, scrimshaw, tying fancy knots - things to keep their hands busy and them out of trouble. They worked on the ship 24/7 with four hours on and four hours off. Food was terrible since it was packed to last two years making it tasteless and hard. This consisted of hardtack and salted meats with the big splurge of the week being a suet pudding. Due to a large turnover in crew resulting from illness and accident there was usually more crew at the beginning of a trip than at the end.

Her first illustration was an Egyptian ship that was primarily propelled by oars and stayed mainly in the close coastal waters. The Viking ship of the 1300's was capable of making long range voyages and could carry over 300 crew. The Vikings were very competent sailors who didn't have modern navigational support, but had the skills to reckon their location. Root then talked about the 18th century ships saying that these were much more complicated with the various sail configurations and multiple masts. These ships were able to carry much more cargo than those previously mentioned.

Pirates (sea people) have been reported throughout the ages starting in 1400 BC. She said that the second boat out there was probably a pirate. Privateers are in a different category from pirates as they were authorized by a specific country (letter of marque). This practice was done to save the country money since it didn't have to support a navy and the privateers took all the risk, but were able (through admiralty courts) to keep much of the loot they captured.

A dateline was presented showing how Laffite took advantage of the laws of the US regarding shipping in 1805 to set up his operation to supply the New Orleanians with the niceties they wanted, but couldn't get through the legal channels. Laffite was asked to leave New Orleans in 1817 and settled in Galveston. In 1820 Laffite was implicated in the Le Brave incident where some of the crew were executed for piracy and he was asked to vacate Galveston in 1821.

Root presented a list of the ships that Laffite possibly owned and a map of his presumed smuggling routes around Grand Terre and Barataria. She then showed some pictures of how his ships and his prey might have looked. His captured cargo would have included slaves, fine clothing/fabric, gold, silver, fine wines and object d'art.



Questions

What is the name of the Spanish ships? They were just called a "full rigged ship".

Have you cooked hardtack? No, she said.

Were pirogues used to move goods in the bayous? Yes, feluccas were also used.

Did Laffite have settlements on the west end? No, that was James Long.

What was the keel system on bigger ships made of? They were made from heavy oak.
When the "Elissa" was in operation, how many crew did she carry? There were only 15-20 crew members.
How many does she take today? There are about 30-40 including officers.

Larry Porter said that the "Victory" in Portsmouth harbor was one of the best restored ships he has ever seen. He also said that a visit to Mystic Harbor in Connecticut is well worth the effort.

Future Presentations

March: James Bevill "The Paper Republic: The Struggle for Money, Credit and Independence in the Republic of Texas"

Larry is interested in having someone with a medical background give a presentation about medical practice on the sailing ships of old.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:38PM.

Submitted by Carolyn Peterson, Corresponding/Recording Secretary

Tuesday, March 11, 2014

Meridian Retirement Center

Board Members Present: President Larry Porter, FVP Jack Watson, SVP Kathy Modzelewski, co-TVP Ginny Roberts/Lynette Haaga, Secretary Carolyn Peterson, Technology Director Rob Peterson, Treasurer Jeff Modzelewski, Archivist Dorothy Karolanovic, Publicity Director Dave Roberts, Parliamentarian Diane Olson

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

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

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

The meeting was called to order at 6:34PM and President Larry Porter greeted members and visitors with a "Welcome Spring Breakers". He said that the Mardi Gras party was a great success despite the terrible weather and he thanked Jack McCoy for again acting as host.

Larry reminded the group that the seminar is next month and that everything is set. He hopes that there will be a good turnout for it.

Dale Olson asked Larry to announce that he has a new book coming out about the "Maison Rouge" and it will be available sometime before the seminar.

Program Speaker – James Bevill Topic – "The First Texas Navy 1835-1837"

Second Vice President Jack Watson began his introduction by saying that tonight's speaker, James Bevill, is very active in the American Numismatics Society and several historical societies here in Texas. Currently he is the first Vice President of Investments at UBS Financial Services-River Oaks, lives in Houston and has a home in Pirates Cove in Galveston.

The formation of the Texas Navy is a topic that is covered in his book, "The Paper Republic: The Struggle for Money, Credit and Independence in the Republic of Texas". Bevill said that he ran across Laffite while doing

research and found him a very interesting character. The delegates to the new Texas government in 1835 were aware of Laffite too, especially his operating system under Letters of Marque and Reprisal. They perceived this as a way to finance a navy that they needed for the defense of the new Texas republic. The government licensed six privateer ships to patrol the coast and disrupt Mexican shipping, but knew this was only going to support the government so far. Stephen F. Austin, Branch T. Archer, and William Morton went to New Orleans on a fund raising mission in January of 1836 and the meeting was chaired by William Christy, a friend of Sam Houston. The three men took turns appealing to the audience that Texas desired independence and needed financial help (\$250K) to outfit the navy and army. Our speaker said that this sum was a lot of money at the time, about the equivalent of \$20 million today. The three didn't represent an organized government as of yet, so a back room scheme to borrow the money was hatched. They would pay it back with land in Texas for 50 cents per acre and was known as a "Texian Loan". The arrangement proved so popular that a second loan for \$50K was made a week later. To raise the needed funds, the three commissioners pledged 500,000 acres in Texas for repayment. Everyone wanted this, but the only problem was that the land belonged to Mexico and Santa Anna was on his way into Texas to drive the Anglos out! The \$20K advance they received in New Orleans was used to purchase and outfit the first ships of the Texas Navy - *Liberty*, *Brutus*, *Independence*, and *Invincible*. Jim spoke about each ship, where it was bought, and how each was refitted to serve its purpose in the Texas Navy. The Allen brothers contributed to the republic by buying a ship and refitting it, then selling it to Texas on credit. Our speaker thought they were protecting their real estate investments. Stephen F. Austin was getting worried about the escalating costs of the Navy and wanted strict accountability. To do this, Robert M. Potter was named as the first Secretary of the Navy - a man with a checkered past. As a member of the cabinet he set the tone for how the Navy would do its business, but it was really the captains that carried out the day to day duties. Jim discussed the first three captains in the Navy and they were no angels - an international pirate (Hawkins), a privateer (Heard), and a smuggler (Brown). These men were very aggressive and believed that taking the war to the enemy by any means possible was the most direct way for them to get paid. He spoke of two instances where Mexican ships were taken and goods sold. Then Jim told about the ship, *US Pocket*, that was stopped while going into a Mexican port by Captain Brown of *Liberty*. It was boarded and gun powder and other things meant for the Mexican war effort were found. *Pocket* was taken to Galveston where it was stripped and its goods seized igniting an international incident since it violated strict neutrality laws regarding US flagged vessels engaging in legitimate trade with Mexico.



In April, 1836 the Battle of San Jacinto took place and Santa Anna was captured. Jim said that Sam Houston had been injured in the battle and had been taking opium for pain. When Santa Anna was brought before him the Mexican leader was on the verge of a mental meltdown. To calm him down Houston shared some of his drug and the two eventually agreed to a cease fire and troop withdrawal while under the influence of an opium haze. Santa Anna was taken to Velasco and Sam Houston was moved to New Orleans for medical treatment escorted by the ship, *Liberty*, under the command of Captain Brown. Upon arrival in New Orleans, Brown was fired by Secretary Potter and replaced by Captain George Wheelwright. Wheelwright ordered about \$7000 worth of repairs to *Liberty*, but had no funds to pay so the ship was lost to creditors in New Orleans. Shortly thereafter Potter also got the axe and President Burnet named Alexander Somerville as Potter's successor. A few days later the ship *Invincible* arrived at the mouth of the Mississippi and captain and crew were arrested by the US Navy for piracy. They were released for lack of evidence and freed to return to their ship. In July of 1836 Captain Heard of *Brutus*

decided that his vessel needed some work and supplies so he sailed it to New York City. Without permission from the Texas government or funds to cover the costs, he put the ship up as collateral for a loan covering expenses and crew pay. Amazingly, the captain of *Invincible* did the very same thing! Now one ship had been lost in New Orleans and two are tied to the dock in NYC for non payment. S. Rhodes Fisher was now the Secretary of the Navy and it was his responsibility to clean up this mess. In order to regain *Brutus* and *Invincible*, more "Texian Loans" were made to cover costs and once again this venture was successful. After release the ships were given strict orders to return to Galveston, but they didn't. The captains thought they would try to capture Mexican shipping, but by the time they got back into the area the Mexican Navy was blockading all Texas ports. When the ships finally made it into Galveston the captains were fired and their crews deserted. Two new captains (Boyland and Thompson) were named and the ships were sent to Velasco to protect the port. *Independence* was already there and was captured by the Mexicans while the Secretary of the Navy (Fisher) watched from the beach. Being incensed by what he had just witnessed, Fisher wanted to pursue a naval offensive, but Houston said "No". Fisher asked for time off, and went to Matagorda where coincidentally *Brutus* and *Invincible* came into port. Fisher, Boyland, and Thompson decided to go out and try to capture a prize. They sailed first to New Orleans and then to the island of Cozumel. There the crews planted the flag and claimed the island for Texas. After that they went on to pillage, ransom, and burn towns along the coast of Mexico. The Mexican Navy didn't know where they were, but knew they would come back to Galveston. When they did in August of 1837, Mexican ships were waiting for them at the mouth of Galveston Bay. *Brutus* sheared off her rudder and *Invincible* was blasted out of the water after going aground. *Brutus* waited for a month to have her keel repaired, but then was lost in the September, 1837 hurricane (Racer's storm). So ends the story of the first Texas Navy.

Future Presentations

April: Mike Wonio

"Elissa"

The meeting was adjourned at 7:22PM.

Submitted by Carolyn Peterson, Corresponding/Recording Secretary

Tuesday, April 08, 2014

Meridian Retirement Center

Board Members Present: President Larry Porter, FVP Jack Watson, SVP Kathy Modzelewski, co-TVP Ginny Roberts/Lynette Haaga, Secretary Carolyn Peterson, Technology Director Rob Peterson, Treasurer Jeff Modzelewski, Archivist Dorothy Karilanovic, Publicity Director Dave Roberts, Editor Dan Cote

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

The meeting began at 6:34PM with President Larry Porter asking everyone to sign up to bring food for next month's meeting and that the theme will be "Cinco de Mayo". Helen Mooty of the Galveston County Museum distributed fliers announcing a series of workshops for training volunteers that will be involved in the move to the Museum's new site. Larry announced that on April 24 at the Rosenberg Library James Bevill will be presenting a talk titled "Galveston before the Civil War".

Larry again reminded the group about the upcoming seminar at Texas A&M University. The welcome party will be held at the Trolley Station at 6:00pm on Friday, April 25 and the seminar continues the next day on Saturday, April 26.

Program Speaker – Mike Wonio

Topic – "*Elissa*"

Second Vice President Jack Watson introduced the speaker by mentioning that Mike is very active in the Galveston theatrical scene. He has worked at UTMB in the Pediatric Hematology Department for 30 years and is an *Elissa* Volunteer since 2005.

Mike said that for the last couple of weeks he has been intensely involved with sailing on *Elissa* and last week he had invited several of the Laffite Society members out on a guest sail. Some of them stood up, introduced themselves, and told about whatever sailing experience they may have had prior to this sail.



He began his presentation with images showing *Elissa* at the time she was first built in 1877 in Aberdeen, Scotland and when she was found by an archeologist in a scrapyard in Greece. We saw pictures of her various lives on the sea, pointing out that with every new owner, she was downrigged (simplified sail plan) from her original configuration. Prior to Galveston buying her, she was purchased by the city of San Francisco, but they didn't have a clue about restoring her so she was sold to a Canadian politician who died soon thereafter and his family didn't want her. Galveston was in the market to buy a ship, but wanted one that had actually visited the city and *Elissa* had been here twice, 1883 and 1886. She was bought from the family for \$40K and then \$1M was raised and sent to Greece to spruce her up. Unfortunately, the \$1M was only enough to fix the hull - no facelift! The restoration committee raised more money and had her towed to Galveston in 1979 and she was open to the public in 1982 after restoration. People with the right skills came from all over the country to accomplish this feat and make her what she is today.

Mike then spoke about the volunteer program saying that each volunteer puts in many, many hours per year to maintain the ship. All are welcome to volunteer - no experience required. The entire program is under US Coast Guard auspices. Volunteers are very careful so accidents don't happen that might threaten the ship's insurance --and without insurance there would be no volunteers to maintain the boat and it would slip into disrepair again. When *Elissa* was a work ship she was sailed with a minimum of eight crew plus four officers and was built to carry bananas, lumber - really anything that could be stored in the hold. Today there are usually 30-40 crew plus officers. Mike said that there are only about nineteen of these iron and steel, late 19th century sailing ships left in the world and that only three still sail at all. *Elissa* is the only one that sails regularly every year.

What is it like to be on the sailing crew? You do maintenance to the ship with myriad of tasks that keep volunteers busy for many hours. Extensive training in sailing techniques are also required to earn a spot on the crew. Mike showed images of the training that each person receives in this program. There is a formal graduation program where each graduate signs the ship's log, gets a certificate and a cup of grog to celebrate the event. Then you are ready to sail! On a day sail provisions are brought aboard and the crew and officers board along with Coast Guard personnel to do a safety inspection of the ship. If the crew is lucky, the ship passes inspection and the sail is a go. Mike showed images of the activities on a typical day sail. Of course, no sail would be complete without bottles of rum being brought out at the dock for the crew to share.

Mike then began a comparison of sailing ships saying that most were wooden and these had a multitude of problems like rot, worms, and mollusks. This is the reason copper cladding was put into use. During the 19th century there was a transition from wood to iron to steel hulls, but the metal hulls had their drawbacks too. They don't leak, but they may sweat leading to rust problems, especially in this climate. Pirates would not want a ship like *Elissa* because she is too heavy and bulky, unlike the small sloops that were the pirates' ships of preference - quick and maneuverable.

Merchant sailors of the day were professionals that might start at 14-15 years of age and work until they got a promotion to an officer or went ashore. If you were not promoted by your 30's you were washed up. Pirates were mutineers, renegades, and conscripts who were there either willingly or not. Those with special skills like carpenters and sail makers were more likely conscripted. Crew were also recruited from captured ships.

A merchant vessel might make a passage in a month, but some could take longer depending on the destination. *Elissa's* passages are usually day sails while passages on pirate ships were decided by vote. Whalers were gone for two years and then five years as the whales became scarce. *Elissa* did go on a long voyage to New York City in 1986 for the rededication of the Statue of Liberty.

Watches for merchant and navy ships were usually four hours on, four hours off. On *Elissa* it is usually all hands, all the time except on overnights when it is four hours on and eight off.

Food - back in the age of sail food stuffs were stored in barrels for long periods and tasted pretty bad. While on *Elissa* the crew eats very well with food being brought on fresh daily and many times catered.

Questions:

Since there are so few ships like Elissa today, how does the Coast Guard evaluate its condition? They don't know much about 19th century iron so that creates a lot of problems when it comes to repairs.

Was the keel able to be saved? Yes, very much of it is left since she was built with the best materials and workmanship at the time.

What is below decks? The fo'c'sle in the front of the boat is where the crew lives. There is also ballast, museum exhibits, additional living space, water tight compartments, and officers' living space.

What made up ballast? Ballast was made up of everything that was cheap like rocks, railroad ties, cargo, and even dirt.

What is the composition of the hull now? It is a combination of 1877 iron and modern welded steel.

What kind of engine does she carry? She has a 450hp diesel V-12 and two 35Kw diesel electric generators.

Can any of the masts be stepped? Mike said the masts can all be taken down and be put up together again.

What were the lower masts made of? They were made of riveted iron.

How is the rust taken care of below decks? Wire brushes, chip hammers, sandpaper, and some modern rust treatment products.

Miscellaneous

The meeting was adjourned at 7:39PM.

Submitted by Carolyn Peterson, Corresponding/Recording Secretary

Tuesday, May 13, 2014

Meridian Retirement Center

Board Members Present: FVP Jack Watson, co-TVP Ginny Roberts/Lynette Haaga, Secretary Carolyn Peterson, Technology Director Rob Peterson, Archivist Dorothy Karilanovic, Publicity Director Dave Roberts, Parliamentarian Diane Olson

Board Members Absent: President Larry Porter, SVP Kathy Modzelewski, Treasurer Jeff Modzelewski, Editor Dan Cote, Coordinator of Research Pam Keyes

Advisory Board Present: Jean Epperson, Dale Olson

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

The meeting began at 6:31PM with former President Ed Jamison welcoming all to the meeting. He told the group that Walter Modzelewski, a long time Society member and father of Treasurer Jeff Modzelewski, had passed away in late April.

Ed said that the seminar was a big success and that suggestions were welcome for next year's topics and speakers. A meeting is being held on May 21 to discuss next year's seminar.

FVP Jack Watson said that there are slots opening for programs in July, August, and October. He also recognized some new members in the audience: Donna Reznicek and Joyce Zongrone who is a local historian from League City. He then began his introduction of the evening's speaker.

Program Speaker – Nikki Diller

Topic – "Medicine on the High Seas 1790-1815"

Jack told us that Nikki is the curator at the Galveston County Museum. She is a native Texan and has held positions as art curator/conservator for several museums.

Nikki's program was about naval medicine at the time when the United States was establishing its Navy. She spoke about the standard medical practice of the time which was pretty much still in the dark ages. Since the origins of disease were not understood, good health/hygiene practices didn't exist and modern advancements in these areas were decades away. Disease was believed to be spread by miasmas (foul air caused by rotting organic matter) and humoral balance (belief from ancient times that four humors controlled human wellness). Bleeding was the usual remedy for any humoral imbalance. Nikki showed images depicting bloodletting in ancient Greece and in the 1860's saying that it was a very common treatment during the ages.



She said that the US Navy was established in 1794 and modeled after the Royal Navy following many of their rules even into the medical arena. The Navy was authorized to have one surgeon and two surgeon's mates for every forty-four gun frigate and one surgeon and one surgeon mate for every thirty-six gun frigate. The pay for a surgeon was \$50/month plus rations and his mates received \$36/month plus rations. These were not great salaries, but since the average worker in Boston was making \$150/year at the time they don't sound so bad in comparison. Our Navy was small and by the War of 1812 there were 20 surgeons and 24 surgeon's mates. At the end of the War there were 44 surgeons and 36 mates. By contrast the British Navy had 855 surgeons and 600 mates. The British had 900 fighting ships and the US had 25.

Nikki went on to discuss some of the daily responsibilities of a naval surgeon. Besides taking care of the ill on his ship, a surgeon was to visit with all the men at least twice a day and check in with the captain to give him health of the crew updates. If the surgeon sent a man to shore for treatment and the onshore doctor decided that the patient

could have been treated onboard, the surgeon was fined \$10. The surgeon was required to keep a daily journal that was then broken down into two books - one for his physical practice and one for his surgical practice. He was also in charge of shipboard hygiene. In contrast, merchant ships had no surgeons onboard so administering medicine was the duty of the master -- or if the cook was experienced with folk medicine he took on the responsibility.

By 1812 many books about naval medicine had been published by British authors. James Lind wrote a very important treatise about scurvy and its prevention with either lemon or orange juice. Lime juice did not have the desired affect. Surprisingly, neither the British or American Navies implemented this treatment until 50 years after this treatise was made public. Dr. Edward Cutbush wrote a book that suggested many ways to keep seamen and soldiers healthy -- something that had never been done before. He also suggested that the use of alcoholic drinks should be kept to a minimum because alcohol was the cause of more injuries to sailors than any disease. In 1803 the captain of *US Constitution* was authorized to use hospital ships and started the first naval hospital in 1804 in Sicily and Dr. Cutbush was its organizer. In 1811 Congress allocated funds to set up hospitals in several cities.

Nikki introduced the group to common diseases that might befall the sailor - scurvy, typhus, venereal diseases, fevers and fluxes, yellow fever, consumption, and sickness caused by vermin. She went on to discuss some of the usual treatments with herbs, bark, some poisons, and let us not forget the good old standards - bloodletting and purging! These treatments could and sometimes did have deadly consequences for the poor patients.

During battles the surgeon was in his area down below decks where amputations and other procedures were done with no antiseptics or anesthesia to prevent infections or soothe the pain. Nikki said that the surgeon used a saw to take the leg off and then used hot pitch to cauterize the limb -- ouch!! Mortality rates were high at 33% and it was not until World War II that the numbers dropped. The Act of 1798 established a system of hospitals for sick and disabled seamen to be paid for by withholding an amount from the monthly sailors' pay which went into the fund for the hospital system.

Nikki concluded her talk by showing images of early medical instruments that looked like they could have been used for Medieval torture. These included the tooth key and an instrument for trepanation (cutting a hole in the skull) which looked like a primitive cork boring tool.

Questions or Comments

The saw in the picture looks like it's from Home Depot. If there wasn't a proper surgical saw onboard, the had to use the carpenter's saw and sometimes he was the most skilled person for the job.

What about James Long as a surgeon? He served at the Battle of New Orleans, but really didn't like practicing medicine and eventually went into merchandizing. He had two years of medical training but most of his expertise came from on the job training.

Before the 19th century didn't barbers also work as surgeons? Yes, they did. They did procedures like tooth extractions and basic surgical procedures. Physicians were more into academics instead of hands on practice.

Was triage used during this time? Yes, it was used during naval battles when deciding who to first treat after injury. Those with a greater chance of survival were treated first, then progressing down the line of severity.

Have any of the medicines shown in the previous slides been proven to be true remedies? Yes, ginger is one that has been shown to be effective for mal de mer. In fact a bottle of ginger was recently found on the *Monterrey* shipwreck in the Gulf.

Comment from presenter: Even though medical practice during this period was very primitive, some procedures were very creative and experimental. For example, the tracheotomy was being done in the 1800's.

Nikki said that the Galveston County Museum has been closed since Hurricane Ike and is now ready to move to its new home at the old Courthouse on Moody and will reopen after the first of the year. She acknowledged several volunteers in the Society that were present.

Future Presentations

June presenter: John Trojanowski Topic: Dueling

The meeting was adjourned at 7:17PM.

Submitted by Carolyn Peterson, Corresponding/Recording Secretary

Tuesday, June 10, 2014

Meridian Retirement Center

Board Members Present: President Larry Porter, FVP Jack Watson, SVP Kathy Modzelewski, co-TVP Ginny Roberts/Lynette Haaga, Secretary Carolyn Peterson, Technology Director Rob Peterson, Archivist Dorothy Karilanovic, Publicity Director Dave Roberts, Treasurer Jeff Modzelewski, Editor Dan Cote,

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

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

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

The meeting was called to order at 6:39PM. President Larry Porter welcomed all and introduced his special guest, Bob Moore. Mr. Moore spoke about his efforts to have a section of Pirates Cove recognized as part of the state park due to its importance as a Karankawa burial site. He will be invited back at a later date to give a presentation in more detail.

A board meeting was held and it was decided since this year's seminar was so successful another should be held next year. The date being looked at is April 17-18, 2015. Also December 14, 2014 has been set for the annual Christmas party. Details will follow for this event. Mike Wonio announced that his first OLLIE summer course will be held on the next Monday and reminded those interested to sign up. FVP Jack Watson said that he and Root Choyce will do a course for OLLIE in late June on ships that Laffite might have used. The July program will be presented by Lou McBeth and Kevin Carne on the subject of Rene (Renato) Beluche. Beluche is Kevin's 4th great grandfather.

Program Speaker – John Trojanowski

Topic – "Dueling as an Institution in the 19th Century"

John is a longtime member of the Society who has followed several different career paths such as bartender, waiter, and stage manager to name a few. He is very active in fencing, holding positions as a teacher, coach, and referee on the local and national level.

He began by saying that when most people think of dueling they believe it means any type of fight between two combatants and this assumption is incorrect. Historically (Middle Ages) the concept of "trial by combat" allowed by the liege lord involved the belief that the winning participant was chosen by God and was definitely in the right. Dueling fell out of favor because of the deaths of men that were needed to go to war for their leaders. It was

eventually banned by the King of France and the rest of Europe followed suit. John said that during the 1500's up to the early 1800's people operated on a concept of "personal honor" which is a radically different outlook than we have today. If a person suffered a personal insult, he was expected to challenge the offending party to a duel and the offender was expected to accept.

John said that there were three things that constituted a duel. **First**, all duels were considered illegal and were sometimes the duelers were prosecuted most stringently. **Second**, the participants were social equals being a carryover from the Middle Ages "trial by combat". No one challenged above or below his station. Most duels were fought over very trivial matters and if a person was insulted publicly, he was obliged to challenge or risk social ostracization. The one challenged was likewise obligated to participate. In dueling contests, there were persons who acted as "seconds" representing each party in order to attempt to resolve a dispute, hopefully without bloodshed. If the matter could not be resolved, the dispute was moved to an entity called the "honor court" or "honor board" in order to decide whether a duel was to be allowed or not. Stephen F. Austin, Sam Houston, and Warren D.C. Hall were members of these courts. If the court decided to disallow a duel and it was carried out anyway, both participants could be ostracized and if one person was killed the other could be hung. **Third**, witnesses must be present at the duel to ensure fairness. The second from each party checked the other side to see if he was taking unfair advantage like wearing chain mail or having lucky charm or amulet. If one dueler cheated and either killed or injured his opponent, the second of the injured party may attempt to kill the cheater.

There were many unspoken assumptions in duels - one of which is equality in the types of weapons that were chosen. Most of the pistols and swords came in pairs insuring that each party had the same chance of success. In the American South the Code of Dueling was adopted from Ireland. This code was written to insure equality of the combatants or no duel should be fought. Again, cheaters could and did forfeit their lives when found out. By the time of the Civil War people were beginning to turn down challenges with no threat of stigma. The incidence of duels waxed and waned over time, but really dropped off after major wars. In the 1880's it picked up again in Texas and the South about twenty years after the Civil War as it had been forgotten by a generation. In France dueling all but disappeared completely after WWI. The last duel in Texas was fought with revolvers in 1904.

In 1880 the concept of "first blood" was introduced. Just a nick and a drop of blood could satisfy the offended party and the two could proceed with their lives and honor intact.

Dueling pistols were considered a lot safer because of their inherent inaccuracy. When revolvers came into play and were much more deadly, the sword was then looked back upon in a more favorable light.

Questions

Where is the "Dueling Oaks" site in New Orleans? It is located in City Park.

How long is a dagger blade? It is approximately one to one and one half feet in length.

What about the cowboy gunslingers that met out in the street to fight? John only knows of two instances that might qualify - one involved William Bonny, but he shot his opponent before the other turned around. The second is the fight at OK Corral which was more of a face to face fight. He knows of no instances like the gunfights seen in the old TV Westerns.

Do you know anything about the gunfight outside the courthouse in St. Augustine? No, he did not, but John said that historically St. Augustine always had a widespread reputation for violence and crime.

Was there a standard distance for pistol duelers to walk from each other? Yes, but it varied over time. Right after the American Revolution the custom was to walk twenty paces from each other, turn, and fire. In the

1800's duelers were usually separated from each other then either commanded to fire together or one was preselected to fire first. In the case of a misfire, the second person could fire off to the side showing himself as a good sport to his fellows. In a pistol duel it was considered dishonorable if a shooter took over three seconds to fire since it gave him an advantage in taking more time to aim at his target.

If dueling was always illegal in Texas, why was a law up for consideration to ban it in 1842? In the early years of the republic it was probably legal by default, but an incident in Houston (1837) led to a push for its ban. There was theft of money from a boarding house resident and another resident was accused of taking it. The accuser challenged the other to a duel and the accused was killed. A third person was eventually found to be the guilty party, but he had escaped to England. The Houston newspaper was behind the push for the ban after this incident. Sam Houston was an avid anti-duel proponent even though he took part in the "honor boards".

When fighting with swords, what parts of the body were the main targets? This depends on the time period. During the 1700-1800's the torso was the prime target. Foil fencing was introduced to allow practice without injury and you could only score with a torso hit. Going for a leg strike was not smart because the sword can be stuck in the leg and the other man's sword is still in his hand - bad strategically! After 1833 when the idea of "first blood" came out, the hand and arm became the most accessible targets. All it took was a nick for the fight to be over.

Comment by speaker: Street gangs of the 21st century are closely bound to a Code of Honor that French noblemen abided by in the 1600's.

Miscellaneous

The hospitality group (Lynette Haaga and Ginny Roberts) was thanked for another delicious meal along with Jack McCoy for bartending. Best wishes were sent to Ed Connor on his recovery from knee surgery

The meeting was adjourned at 7:46PM.

Submitted by Carolyn Peterson, Corresponding/Recording Secretary

Tuesday, February 11, 2014 Meridian Retirement Center Submitted by Dorothy **McDonald Karilanovic**

Board Present: President, Larry Porter; Third Co-Vice-President (Hospitality), Ginny (Virginia) Roberts; Third Co-Vice-President (Hospitality), Lynette Haaga; Editor, Dan Cote; Archivist, Dorothy Karilanovic; Press Director, Dave Roberts

Board Absent: First Vice-President, Jack Watson (Programs); Second Vice-President (Membership), Kathy Modzelewski; Treasurer, Jeff Modzelewski; Parliamentarian, Diane Olson; Corresponding-Recording Secretary, Carolyn Peterson; Technical Director, Rob Peterson; Coordinator-of-Research, Pam Keyes

Advisory Board Present: Jean L. Epperson

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

The evening's event began at 5:45 p.m., attended by about 60 members and guests, the customary period of socialization, food and beverage provided by "stewards of the sideboard" Ginny Robert and Lynette Haaga, Laffite Society Members John Dickey and Jack McCoy standing in for Celebrity Bartender Ed Conner who is recovering from knee surgery.

OPENING REMARKS:

President Larry Porter welcomed members and guests.

ELECTIONS:

The President opened the floor for nominations for Corresponding-Recording Secretary, replacing Carolyn Peterson who is retiring from the position. Laffite Society Member Ed Jamison read to members a list of responsibilities required in the position. Also announced, Laffite Society Member Root Choyce has accepted the position of Technical Director recently vacated by Rob Peterson.

With the exception of Ginny Roberts who is stepping down as Third Co-Vice-President (Hospitality), previous Board Members were re-instated for another two year term. There were no nominations or volunteers for Secretary, and the position remains open as of July 19, 2014.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

The President briefly discussed plans for the next Laffite Society Seminar scheduled for Friday, April 17 through Sunday, April 19, 2015 at Texas A. & M. University (TAMUG) at Galveston. Also on the calendar is the annual Holiday Banquet scheduled for Sunday, December 14, 2014. The Hospitality Committee is currently taking ideas for a venue and other arrangements.

Plans are also in the making for members to attend the 200th anniversary of the 1815 Battle of New Orleans to be held in New Orleans the first week in January, 2015. Members planning to attend are urged to make plans early as large crowds are expected for this important historical event.

SIGN-UP SHEET FOR REFRESHMENTS:

Third Vice-President of Hospitality, Lynette Haaga, announced that, in addition to a hard copy sign-up sheet at monthly meetings, members can also access "Sign-Up Genie" on the Laffite Society Yahoo website to enter food selections to bring to meetings.

Lynette also called for ideas and volunteers to help with food and beverages served at meetings.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

GENERAL RENATO "RENE" BELUCHE

A Power-Point Presentation

By LOU GRAVES MACBETH AND KEVEN R. CARNEY

Laffite Society Member and local historian Lou Graves MacBeth introduced her co-speaker, visiting guest from California Keven R. Carney, a direct descendant (4th generation great-great grandson) of Renato Beluche, privateer-pirate and *confrere* of Jean and Pierre Laffite. Keven's father, Clark Robert Carney, has spent years of ancestry research on Beluche's life and his descendants.

Renato "Rene" Beluche, Jr. was born on December 15, 1780 in New Orleans, La. At 632 Dumaine Street, in a house known as "Madam John's legacy," currently owned by the Louisiana State Museum. His early life in New Orleans and, later, on a plantation south of the city of New Orleans which his father purchased when Renato was three years old, was no doubt influenced by his father's activities as a smuggler. In author and historian Jean DeGrummond's book, *The Baratarians and the Battle of New Orleans*, Beluche, by 1798, at the age of eighteen, was about five feet, three inches with powerfully built, broad shoulders and a strong nose and was the epitome of a swashbuckling adventurer.

In 1801, having already gained experience in naval warfare on a government flagship, Beluche soon went on to sailing as a master on merchant ships out of New Orleans. By the age of 21, he had become a pilot's mate on the schooner, *Catalina*. By 1810 he had become a French privateer, presumably licensed with a Letter of Marque, sailing out of St. Bart's in the Leeward Islands under several aliases. After capturing a British prize of \$600,000.00, he gained the reputation by the English as a pirate. In due course, Beluche joined up with Jean Laffite and Dominique Youx (alleged brother or cousin of the Laffites, also known as "uncle"; and becomes one of Laffite's lieutenants. By 1813, Beluche had entered service with the Cartagena Navy, sailing under Letters of Marque. The Laffite's had also become licensed privateers by this time.

Pierre and Jean Laffite burst on the scene in the Gulf of Mexico in about 1803, selling smuggled slaves and merchandise to merchants from New Orleans in the bayous of Barataria. Beluche contributed large bundles of captured merchandise to Barataria for sale in New Orleans.

In 1814, Beluche joined Laffite and Dominique Youx in the Battle of New Orleans, Laffite describing Beluche and Youx as his best cannoners. Later, General Andrew Jackson gave "warm approbation" of their

performance and that of their men under his command . Following the Battle of New Orleans, Beluche returned to raiding Spanish ships under Letters of Marque from Cartagena, often using the alias Pedro Brugman.

In 1816, during Simon Bolivar's flagging struggle in the South American revolution against Spain, Beluche was able to unite effectively the jockeying factions of patriots under his command. Following a successful battle in 1816, Beluche was named Commodore. Simon Bolivar named him Commander of the Venezuelan Navy in 1828.

In 1845, after exile for nine years in 1833 for having sided in a failed coup with a rebellion against the Venezuelan government, Beluche's rank, titles and decorations were restored; and he returned to Venezuela to live with his family whom he had moved there in 1826, eventually becoming a Venezuelan citizen.

Beluche was officially married two times and had a daughter, Anne with Marguerite Despin, ancestor of Keven Carney. Beluche was also known to have had numerous unofficial liaisons and, presumably, an unknown number of descendants.

Beluche died on October 4, 1860, and is buried in Puerto Cabello, Venezuela. According to author Jean DeGrummond, 103 years later, the government of Venezuela exhumed his remains and buried him alongside the "great liberator", Simon Bolivar.

During his years as a privateer, pirate, and patriot, Renato Beluche gained fame and respect as both a General and an Admiral for his success on land and sea. The January 8, 1815 Battle of New Orleans was fought on the site of Chalmette Plantation, the same land that Beluche's father, Rene, had purchased in 1783, and where the family lived until his death.

Following a call for questions to the speakers after the presentation, the President expressed thanks and appreciation to the Hospitality Committee for the evening's bounty, as always unsurpassed.

There being no further business of the evening, the President adjourned the meeting of July 8, 2014 at approximately 7:45 p.m., after which members and guests returned to the sideboard for further socialization.

Respectfully submitted, DOROTHY McDonald Karilanovic, SECRETARY *EMERITA*

2nd Annual Laffite Seminar

April 25th, 26th 2014

By Larry Porter

The second annual Laffite seminar was held on April 25th and 26th in Galveston. Activities began with a welcome reception Friday night at the Trolley Station on the Strand. On Saturday, the Pelican Island campus of Texas A&M hosted the seminar.

The program featured six presentations of approximately 45 minutes each followed by a question and answer session. Lunch was served mid- day in the Jack K. Williams Library, Dr. David Baca hosting.

The time periods covered were the final years of Mexico's struggle for independence from Spain. It was during this period that Galveston Island, with Jean Laffite as self -appointed Governor, was bustling with activity. Not only were Laffite and his captains plundering ships at sea but exciting activity was taking place on the Island itself.

The Laffite Society's past president Jeff Modzelewski opened the program with "Laffite 101", a brief review and time line of the careers of Jean and Pierre Laffite.

Dr. Andrew J. Torget, a historian of nineteenth century America at the University of North Texas discussed how, during a time of changing anti-slavery laws, James Bowie and Jean Laffite schemed to form an unlikely business partnership.

Marine archeologist and author Andrew Hall described how a growing U.S. Navy was working to end piracy and privateering in the Gulf of Mexico. This effort led to Laffite's ultimate departure from Galveston Island.

Some families currently living in the Galveston Bay area were particularly excited to hear Lou Graves Macbeth speak about "The Crew Left Behind" concerning crew members who remained to begin family life on the mainland when Laffite sailed away.

Many seminar attendees learned for the first time how officers from Napoleon's defeated army at Waterloo sought aid from Laffite in their quest to build a fort near the Trinity River. Dr. Betje Klier of Austin will relate the story of Camp d' Asile.

Concluding the day of presentations was a short dramatization by Laffite members Betty Conner, Helen Mooty and Larry Porter comprised of actual letters between the main players in the great "Laffite Journal" hoax.

The entire program was videotaped and is available in our archive in the Jack K. Williams Library. A brief synopsis of the opening comments and program outline follows.

Opening Welcome

President L. Porter: Howdy! And welcome to the second Annual Laffite Seminar brought to you by the Laffite Society of Galveston and Texas A&M University of Galveston. We thank you for coming and hope you will enjoy today's program.

Once again, we set sail on an adventure to explore the mysteries and myths of the Laffite brothers and early Galveston.

Who were these masked men? To partially answer that question, we have assembled a group of noted historians and scholars who will guide our journey into the past of the early 19th century on the Gulf Coast and Caribbean. This frontier was a murky nether world of freewheeling expansion where people were out for fame, fortune and

adventure. It was a fulfillment of our Manifest Destiny and established, in fits and starts, what became our United States.

The Laffite brothers were at the forefront of this dynamic period playing a significant role in its culture, politics and commerce. They were very real people of wonderfully mixed elements, seemingly involved in everything. Men such as these became either heroes or villains. The Laffite Society was founded to explore the facts and expose the myths surrounding the romantic and sometimes brutal careers of Jean and Pierre and early Galveston. Today this scholarship continues.

This symposium is made possible by Texas A&M University here in Galveston where the Laffite Society has its archive.

Now, I'd like to introduce Dr. Dave Baca, Director of the Jack K. Williams Library, who will bring greetings from the university.

Dr. Dave Baca: Remarks

President L. Porter: Thank you, Dave

To conduct our journey today, Ed Jamison, our past president, will serve as our master of ceremonies and will introduce our first speaker.

Laffite Seminar Time Line

April 26, 2014

OCSB Texas A&M Pelican Island Campus

8 am – SHOW LS logo

8:45 – Porter opening welcome

8:48 – Baca welcome

8:50- Porter Introduces Ed Jamison, Master of ceremonies

8:55 –Ed introduces Jeff Modzelewski

9:00-9:20 **“Laffite 101” by Jeff Modzelewski**

9:20 Ed introduces Andy Hall (background visual)

9:20-10:20 – **“David Porter and the Suppression of Piracy, 1823-1825” by Andy Hall** (45 minute talk, 15 minute Q&A)

10:20-10:30 – Break, SHOW LS logo

10:30 Ed introduces Lou Graves (background visual?)

10:30-11:30 – “The Crew Left Behind” by Lou Graves (45 minute talk, 15 minute Q&A)

11:30 Ed introduces Dr. Betjie Klier (background visual?)

11:35-12:30 – “Emerging...Constantine Malczewski” by Dr. Klier 11:05

12:30 –1:30 Buffet Lunch- TAMUG library

1:30 Ed introduces Dr. Andrew Torget

1:30-2:30 – “Jim Bowie, Laffite, and Slavery by Dr. Torget (45 minute talk, 15 minute Q&A)

2:30 Ed introduces Betty Conner, Helen Mooty and Larry Porter (background visual)

2:30 –3:30 “Audrey, Lacie, and John A” The ensemble (45 minute presentation, 15 minute Q&A by Dale Olson)

3:30- Closing remarks and thanks, Porter

4:00- Lobby Reception

Speakers’ Bios

Andy Hall is a native of Galveston and has spent most his life on the Texas coast. He spent his early working years, beginning while still an undergrad student, in local history museums, including the Texas Maritime Museum in Rockport. Hall holds degrees from the University of Houston–Clear Lake and Texas Tech University.

For the last twenty years, Hall has served as a volunteer with the Texas Historical Commission in investigating shipwrecks and in 2001 was part of the first group of state marine archaeological stewards appointed in the United States. Hall has worked on numerous marine archaeology projects in Texas, notably from 1995 to 2002 on the Denbigh Project, the most extensive excavation and research program on a Civil War blockade runner in the Gulf of Mexico. When he’s not working with the Historical Commission on sites in the “Wet Texas” region of the state, he blogs at MaritimeTexas.net, DeadConfederates.com and at the historical magazine, the Civil War Monitor. Hall was an early member of the Laffite Society, and continues to hold an active interest in the era.

Andrew J. Torget is a historian of nineteenth-century America at the University of North Texas, where he directs the Digital History Lab. A veteran of pioneering work in the digital humanities, including the "Valley of the Shadow Project" at the University of Virginia, Andrew served as the founding director of the Digital Scholarship Lab at the University of Richmond. Andrew's own digital projects have been featured in the Chronicle of Higher Education, Inside Higher Ed, and attracted the attention of Google. His scholarship has been listed as among “the best and most important new work” in the developing digital history medium and Andrew has been a featured speaker at Harvard, Stanford, Rice, and the National Archives in Washington, D. C. Andrew is currently working on a book titled *Seeds of Empire: Cotton, Slavery, and the Transformation of the Texas Borderlands, 1800-1850*.

Lou Graves Macbeth is a native Galvestonian and descendant of Sheldon Graves who settled in Galveston in 1838. Her great-grandfather, Sheldon’s son, was an engineer on the cotton clad *Neptune* in the Battle of Galveston in 1863. Her family remained involved in city activities over the years. Her grandfather was also a ship’s engineer and instrumental in founding the Marine Engineer’s Benevolent Association – a forerunner to unions. Prior to that time, 21st and Mechanic was called “Monkey Wrench Corner” when individuals – often full of drink – were knocked unconscious and put on ships as crewmembers. Her father served as a captain and assistant chief with the Galveston Fire Department.

Lou is a member of the Galveston Historical Foundation, the Daughters of the Republic of Texas and charter member of The Laffite Society.

She has presented programs at the Laffite Society meetings, but this is her first presentation at a Laffite Society Seminar. Her subject is “The Crew Left Behind” and she will tell us about her research into those members of Laffite’s crew who remained in the area after their captain sailed away.

Jeff Modzelewski earned a B.A. in Hispanic Studies from Connecticut College in 1977, an M.A. in Spanish from New York University in 1979, an M.B.A. from the University of Houston in 1987, and his Certified Public Accountant credential in 1988. His junior year of undergraduate studies and all of his M.A. coursework were completed in Madrid, Spain.

In 1995 Jeff joined - approximately one year after its founding - the Laffite Society, a group dedicated to the study of the celebrated privateer, smuggler, and patriot Jean Laffite and of the events of his time. Jeff has since served in various officer capacities within that organization, including two two-year terms as its President.

In 2006 Jeff completed the translation of a noted work about Jean Laffite and his older brother Pierre titled *The Pirates Laffite*, by the late Mexican historian and author Jorge Ignacio Rubio Mañé. This translation was the first into English from the original Spanish.

Jeff lives in a downtown loft in Galveston, Texas, with his wife, Kathy. His day job is with the Galveston County Auditor’s Office. He enjoys learning and sharing knowledge, both of which he believes should be life-long processes. Jeff has spoken to diverse groups about the Laffites and their era, including the Texas Map Society, the Daughters of the Republic of Texas, and multiple chapters of Rotary International, and he continues to feel privileged to receive invitations to do so.

Betty Conner, born in Galveston, is a graduate of Ball High and majored in music at the University of Houston. Her original goal was to be a music teacher but found her interests lie in government and civic activities. After a career in the Trust Department of United States National Bank and as a Job Developer, Betty has served her community for many years on a multitude of boards and committees. Among them are the League of Women Voters (both state and local level), Children's Protective Services, Red Cross Disaster Education Committee, Moody Methodist Church's Permanent Endowment Fund, and the Galveston County Recovery Fund. Now one of her main activities is traveling the world!

Helen D. Mooty is Director of the Galveston County Museum and serves on the Galveston County Historical Commission. She is overseeing the re-opening of the Museum at its new location, planned for the County Courthouse, after a five year hiatus due to Hurricane Ike. Later this month the Museum will display the historic Fresnel lens from the Galveston South Jetty Lighthouse as its first exhibit in the courthouse lobby.

Ms. Mooty is a highly sought-after speaker at historical lectures and re-enactments around the state. She has given her interpretation of Jane Long, the “Mother of Texas,” at the Richmond, Texas, 175th Anniversary Celebration, the Austin Town re-enactment in Brazoria County, the ceremony for the unveiling of Jane Long’s portrait at the Texas State Capitol, and the SS Selma birthday celebration held in Galveston each year. Last year in Houston she was the keynote speaker at the Dick Dowling Statue ceremony, participated in the Greening of the Bayou, and rode in the St. Patrick’s Day parade. Each year she is a speaker for the Jane Long Society lecture series, for the Laffite Society, and at the annual Jane Long Festival on Bolivar Peninsula.

Ms. Mooty wrote the Texas Historical Marker application to recognize Jane Long's courageous encampment during the icy winter of 1821-1822 on Bolivar Peninsula. She holds a master's degree in humanities from the University of Houston-Clear Lake and has studied history and humanities at Cambridge University in England. She is a member of the National Trust Forum and has twice been named a Texas Scholar by Preservation Texas and the Texas Historical Commission. She will be a speaker at the Texas Association of Museums' annual conference this year.

Larry G. Porter was born in deep East Texas in 1942 and raised in the saw mill town of Diboll, Larry has had a long time love of history as evidenced by winning the History Medal in junior high. However, his career took a more practical path as he earned a Bachelors and Master's degree in Mechanical Engineering at Texas A&M. in 1964-65. During that time, he also graduated with honors from the U.S. Marine Corps Platoon Leaders Officer Training Course at Quantico, Va. He deferred his commission to pursue a PhD in Controls Systems Engineering. Later, he pursued an MBA at the University of Houston while working for an international conglomerate and traveling world-wide as a young acquisitions and merger executive.

Larry's career focused on developing and building technical company's in the industrial and natural resource markets. By 1983, he founded LPA Ltd and pursued niche technical business opportunities on a global basis for the next 25 years. He retired to Galveston in 2007 with his wife Jan. Since both were graduates of Texas City High, it was a home coming.

Larry joined the Laffite Society in 2007 and now serves as President. He is active in Harmony #6 Masonic Lodge and is Vice Chair of the Coastal District, Bay Area Council, and Boy Scouts of America. He earned his Eagle Scout Badge in the Bay Area, 1958. Recently retired as Chair of the Industrial Advisory Council, Mechanical Engineering, Texas A&M, Larry was just honored as Distinguished Graduate, Mechanical Engineering Texas A&M University

Second Annual Laffite Seminar Photos

by David Roberts

THE FRIDAY RECEPTION



Lynette and Ginny making sure Norm Sachnik is well fed



Jane Rushing with daughter-in-law Sherry Rushing and Jane's son Lee Rushing



Jan Porter, Jim Atchly and Betty Conner pause for picture at the reception



John Dickey and Jeff Modzelewski enjoying libations at seminar reception



Judie Beville, Jim Beville and Pessy Dillard smiling at the Friday night reception



Visiting the bar where Jack McCoy, Ed Conner, Larry Porter and Jeff Modzelewski



Society veep Jack Watson visiting with Dorothy McDonald



Jeff Modzelwski, Ted Daily, Tom Halco visit at Friday reception



Hosting duties at reception were carried out by Ginny Roberts and Lynette Haaga assisted by A&M student Kelsey Hazley



Dave and Ginny Roberts enjoying reception



Jack McCoy tends bar while Rebecca Snow and Helen Mooty visit at the reception



Kathy Modzelwski, Ann Boyd, Sandra Rogers, Diane Olson and visitors from Los Angeles Liz Lachman and Susan Feniger gathered in the courtyard at reception



Marge and Norman Sachnik enjoying the welcome reception



Helen Mooty, Betsy Horner and Pat Butler smiling pretty at Trolley Station reception



Gene Bindhammer and Jan Johnson at Friday reception



Sheldon Kindil, Jean Epperson and Lou MacBeth visit at the reception



Prez Larry Porter, Dale Olson with seminar presenter Betja Klier in from Austin



Happy at the reception were Betty and celebrity bartender, Ed Conner



Cheryl Watson and Bill Haaga visiting at the Friday welcome party



Jack Watson and Bob Randal visiting at the reception



Two happy guys – Ed Conner and Ed Jamison enjoying the evening



Judy and Joe Dolfi taking time out at welcome Party



President Larry Porter and Society founder Dale Olson enjoying seminar party



Jan Porter and past president Ed Jamison at reception

THE SEMINAR ON THE TEXAS A&M GALVESTON GEORGE MITCHELL CAMPUS



Society President, Larry Porter, welcomes :
all to the Second Annual Laffite Society Seminar



Ed Jamison introduced each presenter at the seminar



Seminar's first presenter, Andy Hall, told
about Commodore Porter's mission to end
piracy.



Lou MacBeth tells attendees about Laffite's
crew members who stayed on the island
when the captain sailed away



Dr. Betja Klier discusses activity at Champs
Azile on the Trinity River



Dr. Andrew Torget speaking about the slave
trade



Helen Mooty, Larry Porter and Betty Conner
portrayed the three primary characters
involved in the Laffite Journal hoax, with nar-
rator Jeff Modzelewski



Texas A&M Galveston's Dr. David Baca
extends the university's welcome to seminar
attendees.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE LAFFITE SOCIETY

by R. Dale Olson

Galveston Island, Texas - 1994 - a small bookstore near The Strand - Louise Nichols, proprietor.

Among Louise's clients were Jim Nonus and R. Dale Olson, who at that time were unacquainted. Both Jim and Dale often visited with Louise, and both made known to her their interest in Galveston history in general, and in the privateer Jean Laffite in particular.

Louise inquired of both Jim and Dale if they would give her permission to transmit contact information for each to the other, anticipating that the two avocational historians might wish to meet. Both said, "Yes."

Soon after, Jim, Dale, and Dale's wife Diane Olson met and immediately became immersed in their common interests. They also sought out others who might wish to join their informal discussion group. Although there were certainly others on the Island who had similar interests, most were likely unknown to each other, as no formal interest group yet existed. Only through casual contact - perhaps at a bookshop like Louise's, or at the Rosenberg Library - would individuals with these interests chance to meet.

Over the ensuing months, Jim, Dale, and Diane met, often weekly, exchanging documents, books, and research notes. Eventually at these visits, talk began about the possibility of organizing a "study group" or assembly of people who held the same interests. As this concept matured, it was Jim who adamantly insisted that: 1) the group must be a formal organization with by-laws, periodic scheduled meetings, and officers, so that others with kindred interests would have the opportunity of joining - of becoming a member of - something; and 2) the group must be named "The Laffite Society"!

During the summer of 1994, the group expanded to include Lou MacBeth, Dorothy McDonald Karilanovic, and others. At that time, all met weekly at the Galveston Victorian home on Sealy of Diane and Dale Olson. Each member volunteered for certain assignments leading toward the establishment of a formal organization, and, within a month or two, the group was sufficiently numerous to formally launch "The Laffite Society."

Whereas it was Jim Nonus who was responsible for the character and name of the organization, it was Diane and Dale who suggested an organizational format and personality. For many years, in California, Diane and Dale had been members of an automobile collectors club, The Maserati Owners Club of North America. The Maserati Owners Club of North America was highly successful, and one reason for this success was a subtle mixture of technical talk of automobiles with a social element. It was after the Maserati Owners Club of North America that The Laffite Society was patterned.

From the very first time Jim, Diane, and Dale met, wine and cheese were important ingredients, and every Laffite Society event since has included a strong social aspect. With the Maserati Owners Club of North America, some members were recognized as the highest experts on that make of automobile in the world, while others simply appreciated, but were not true authorities on, the cars. So it has occurred, as well, with The Laffite Society. Its membership, in the year 2014, includes most known Laffite authorities in the world, but additionally there are those who maintain their membership primarily for the social aspect of our meetings, and both types of members are equally respected and appreciated. The mixed ambiance of "technical" and "social" characteristics derived from the Maserati Owners Club of North America now permeates The Laffite Society, and is one of the reasons for the continuing success of the organization.

By August 1994 the group had adopted bylaws and formally announced its organization to the *Galveston County Daily News* and other publications. It was now a formal, legitimate historical organization, but, specific titles and responsibilities had not been established.

In one informal discussion, Jim Nonus opined, “Dale, either you or I must be President, and I vote for you!,” to which Dale responded, “Jim, I vote for you to be President.” The deadlock was overcome by Dale’s eventual acceptance, and the first Board of Directors was soon thereafter established as follows:

President	R. Dale Olson
First Vice-President	Jim Nonus
Second Vice-President	Randy Pace
Third Vice-President	Diane Olson
Secretary	Dorothy McDonald Karilanovic
Archivist	Kurt Voss
Coordinator of Research	Bill Foley
Parliamentarian	Lou MacBeth
Treasurer	Bruce Roberts
Historian	Mary Agnes Roberts

On Wednesday, 3 August 1994, the first formal Board of Directors meeting was held and minutes thereof were taken. The first formal full-membership meeting was held five days later, on Monday, 8 August 1994, in the McCullough Room of Galveston’s Rosenberg Library. Dale Olson introduced all of the board members and presented short descriptions of their responsibilities, and Lou MacBeth outlined the Society’s goals. Jim Nonus described expectations for the general meetings, and he offered a suggested reading list as well as a roster of antiquarian booksellers. Sixteen prospective members attended, and the meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m., thus setting in motion The Laffite Society, as we know it today.

ADDENDA

by Jeff Modzelewski

Just as occurs today, the Society early on often attracted visitors and members at its monthly meetings, so the founding members were not long alone. Veteran members and officers Dave and Ginny Roberts, as well as Kathy and I, joined just about a year after the organization’s inception, about September 1995. The impetus for Kathy and I to do so was a notice published in the *Galveston County Daily News* advertising an open-to-the-public visit to the presumed locale of the Laffites’ Maison Rouge in the 1400 block of Harborside Drive, a property owned by Dale and Diane Olson.

I remember walking onto the Maison Rouge site for that visit behind Richard Rasche, an early Society member and bona fide “character.” When Dick passed away at the age of 87 in May 2003, he left us vivid memories especially of his love for food. On one Society field trip to NOLA, he led us on a lengthy trek through the French Quarter in search of a particular restaurant whose name and location he could not recall. We finally entered one which he thought was it, but he quickly decided it WASN’T it and turned on his heel and walked out. The rest of us,

however, were so tired of walking that we just plopped down then and there and ate. I don't think we ever learned where Dick eventually lunched that day or whether he ever found his restaurant.

Of course, with a life now spanning two decades, it is natural for the group to have lost a number of folks who were once a part of its fabric, such as original Coordinator of Research Bill Foley, and Margaret Earthman, former wife of life member Jim Earthman. Another passing, which the Society recognized with a piece in its Chronicles, was that of William Simpson - not a member, but a figure involved in the ownership thread of the original French Journal of Jean Laffite in the years before it was housed in the Sam Houston Regional Library and Research Center in Liberty, Texas.

Now, here's to another two decades of existence for our Laffite Society! (ed: glasses held high in tribute)



Founder Dale and President Larry blow out the anniversary candles

Bernardo de Galvez

Highlights of his life

By Bill Adriance

- July 23, 1746 - Galvez born in Macharaviaya, a municipality in the province of Malaga in the mountains of the south of Spain (Figure 1). He was the son of Matias de Galvez and nephew of Jose de Galvez. Matias was a sheepherder and farmer. Jose de Galvez, Bernardo's uncle, left their small town at the invitation of a bishop who saw great potential in the young man. Although Jose chose not to follow the church as a career, he did turn to the law and completed his degree in Madrid where he became a lawyer for the French Embassy.

- 1757 - Matias de Galvez entered the Royal Artillery Corp and was stationed with his family in the Canary Islands (Figure 2). There Bernardo grew to the age of 15.
- 1762 - Galvez entered the army as a volunteer in the Royal Cantabrian Regiment; a French unit that was in Spain to fight against Portugal during the Seven Year's War (1756 - 1763). At the end of that war, he returned with his regiment to France where he remained for seven years where he learned French and completed his studies in Military Strategies.
- Spring 1769 - Lieutenant Bernardo de Galvez was appointed by King Carlos III to the frontier military units at Chihuahua, Mexico (Figure 3). In August, he received command of a unit and carried out four campaigns against the Apache Indians.
- Spring 1771 - A tribe of natives attacked Chihuahua. While in pursuit the Apaches wounded Galvez in the arm and torso and he was left for dead. His soldiers found him and returned him to Chihuahua.
- 1772 - Galvez returned to Spain to recover from his wounds
- 1774 - He was assigned to the Military Academy of Avila for training. During this time, he joined a force of 20,000 men to combat pirates in the Mediterranean and was wounded by a bullet in his left leg.
- July 1776 - Galvez was named Colonel of the Fixed Regiment of Louisiana with its forces in New Orleans (Figure 4). He carried instructions from the crown to colonize both sides of the Mississippi River to counter the efforts of the British (Figure 5).
- January 1777 - He was named Governor of the Province of Louisiana. By the end of the year, he married Marie Felicite de Saint Maxent (Figure 7).
- 1777 to 1779 - Governor Galvez organized secret support of the American rebels (Figure 6), sending them muskets, gunpowder, food supplies and medicines. This was shipped up the Mississippi to Illinois (Figure 8) where General George Rogers Clark used them to defeat the British throughout the Illinois territory.
- 1779 - Spain entered the war and Galvez decided to attack the three British forts along the Mississippi before they received notice that Spain had entered the war (Figure 9). As he prepared ships to carry his recruits upstream to Manchac, a hurricane struck sinking his boats and destroying supplies. He decided to march up river with 1,500 men and 10,000 head of cattle from Texas (Figure 10), caught the British by surprise and easily captured the fort. He then proceeded to attack Baton Rouge and Natchez so the entire Mississippi River was back in Spanish hands.

- 1780 - After acquiring some troops to attack Mobile (Figure 11), his small naval forces were destroyed by another hurricane as they approached Mobile Bay. His men salvaged canon and supplies from the ships and mounted an attack on Fort Charlotte. They captured all the British forces at Mobile (Figure 12).
- Spring 1781 - Galvez had amassed a fleet of ships to attack Pensacola, the last British bastion on the Gulf of Mexico. The narrow entry to Pensacola Bay was defended by a British battery called Red Cliffs and a gun emplacement on the tip of Santa Rosa Island blocking the Spanish troops from entering (Figure 13). The Admiral in charge of the Spanish fleet feared his ship might run aground and refused to enter. General Galvez unfurled his own banner on his twelve-gun ship *Galveztown* and sailed under the guns of Red Cliffs and established his men on land around the forts and began a siege that lasted three months, the longest battle of the American Revolution.
- May 8, 1781 - Galvez at last was able to land a cannon ball in the powder magazine of the Queen's Battery, which convinced the British to surrender Pensacola (Figure 14). This victory helped General George Washington by keeping him from having to fight the British from the west and the south (Figure 15) (Figure 16).
- 1783 - King Carlos III granted him title of Count of Galvez (Figure 17) and on his coat of arms added the French Fleur de Lis, the emblem of Louisiana, and the sloop *Galveztown*, with Galvez at the tiller. Also added was the banner reading "Yo Solo" -I Alone, in memory of his gallantry at Pensacola (Figure 18).
- 1783 - Count Galvez and his family returned to Spain.
- 1785 - Bernardo de Galvez's father died and he was assigned to succeed him as Viceroy of New Spain, (Figure 19) he was 39 years old. He endeared himself to the people by feeding the poor with his own money after a freeze had destroyed crops, enchanting the crowds at bull fights and finishing a road to Acapulco to bring in the goods from the Manila Galleons. He also lighted the streets, finished the cathedral of Mexico City and was known to pardon felons when he came across judicial executions.
- 1786 - While suffering from amoebal dysentery that he had acquired years earlier, he died on November 30. He was buried across from his father at the Church of San Fernando, the only two Spanish Viceroys to be buried in Mexico City (Figure 20).

Current Recognition

- Association de Amigos of Bernardo de Galvez, Malaga, Spain
- Granaderos y Damas de Galvez, Houston, San Antonio, Texas

- Bernardo de Galvez Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution, Galveston, TX
- Effort to hang portrait of Galvez in Congress (as per resolution of 1783)
- Effort to make Galvez an honorary citizen of the United States (#8)
- Effort underway in Spain to build a replica of the *Galveztown*, his ship (oak from Galveston after Ike)
- Effort underway to build statues of Galvez in Galveston, TX and Pensacola, FL

BERNARDO DE GALVEZ

Figures to go with HIGHLIGHTS OF HIS LIFE

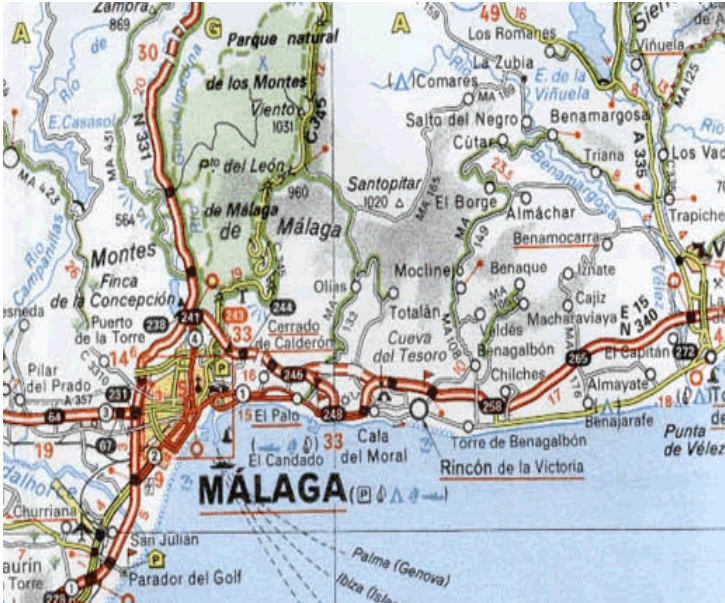


FIGURE 1



FIGURE 2



FIGURE 3

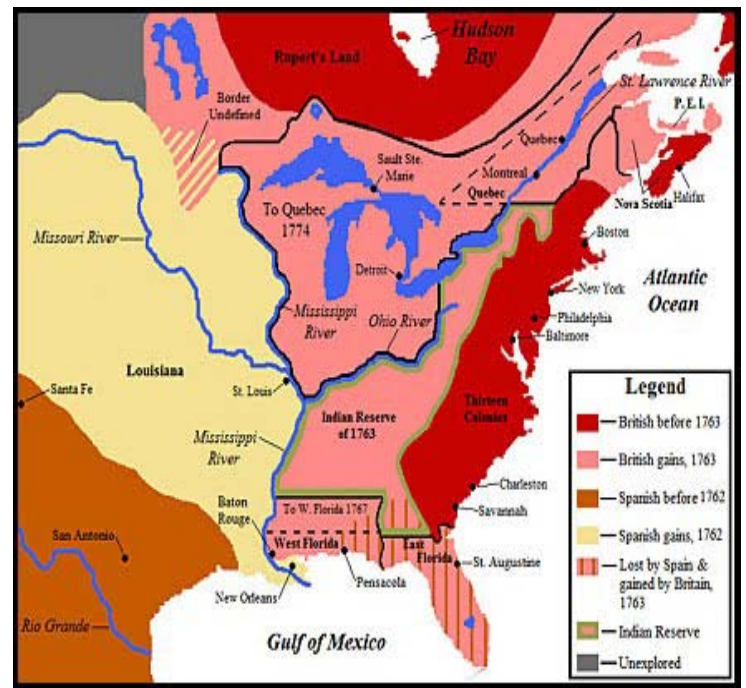


FIGURE 4



FIGURE 5



FIGURE 6

Marie Felicite de St. Maxent,



FIGURE 7



FIGURE 8

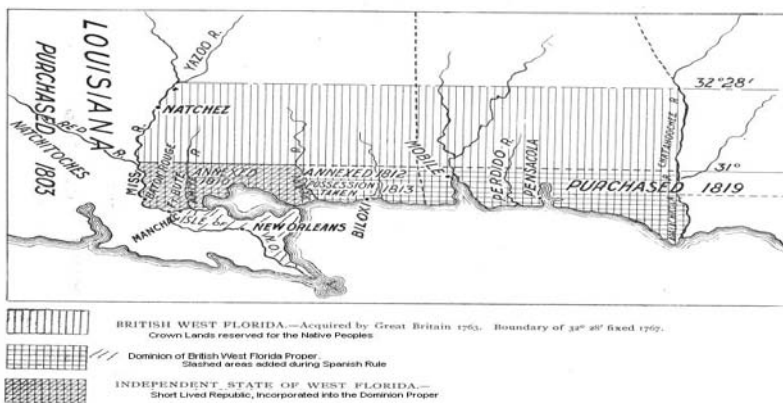


FIGURE 9



FIGURE 10

Granaderos de Gálvez

**Recruits from
New Orleans,
Louisiana,
San Antonio,
La Bahía,
Nacogdoches**

**Canary
Islanders sign
up to fight**



FIGURE 11

Gálvez attacks Mobile - 1780



Defeats the English

FIGURE 12

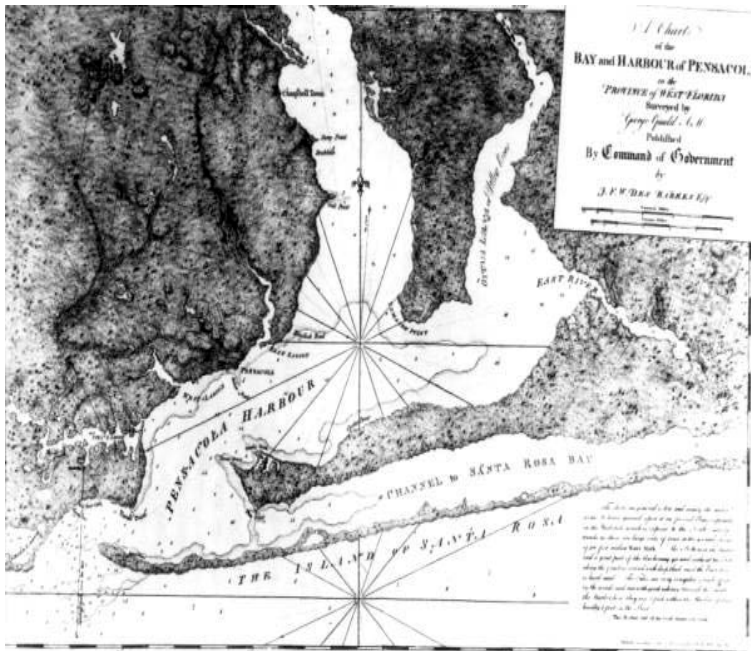


FIGURE 13



FIGURE 14



FIGURE 15



FIGURE 16



FIGURE 17



FIGURE 18



FIGURE 19



Burial of the Viceroy Gálvez in San Fernando



FIGURE 20