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MINUTES
General Meeting
THE LAFFITE SOCIETY
January 12, 1999
The Eiband Gallery
2201 Post Office
GALVESTON, TEXAS 77550

BOARD PRESENT: President, Kathy Modzelewski; First Vice-President (FVP), Dave Roberts; Rec./Corresp. Secty., Dorothy McD. Karilanovic Treasurer/Editor-of-Publications, Jeff Modzelewski; Coor./Research, Wil Zapalac

BOARD ABSENT: Second Vice-President (SVP), Judy Dolfi; Third Vice-Pres. (TVP), Jim Nonus; Press Dir., George Najarian; Historian, Bernadette Foley; Archivist, Don Marler; Parliamentarian, Diane Olson

MEMBERS-AT-LARGE: Stephen Barcik, Jean L. Epperson; Robert Hinkle; Richard & Kileen Prather; Richard Rasche; Ginny Roberts; Reginald and Betty Wilson

CALL TO ORDER

The President called the meeting to order at approximately 6:30 p.m.

MINUTES

Minutes from the Nov. 10th General Meeting, read aloud to the membership, were approved by motion.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer, Jeff Modzelewski, reported a balance in the LS account of \$1,305.00, as of December 31, 1998.

THE CHRONICLES

Editor-of-Publications Jeff Modzelewski proposed making new copies of certain back issues of *The Laffite Society Chronicles* to offer for sale through The Laffite Society Webb page at a suggested price of \$7.50 a copy. The next issue of THE CHRONICLES is expected at the end of February.

MEMBERSHIP

Tandem
Pres./Membership Chairperson, Kathy Modzelewski announced that membership renewals are due.

SPECIAL EVENTS

The President announced that information on places of historical interest, hotels, etc., in Natchitoches, LA had been requested by mail, and this information would be made available to members for the special event trip scheduled for Mar. 19-21, 1999. Robert Vogel may be arranging for members to meet some local historians for this event.

ON-GOING RESEARCH DISCUSSION

As there was no special presentation for the evening, members discussed their latest findings and acquisitions of information on topics of interest:

1) Dr. Reginald Wilson stated that Member-at-Large, Pam Keyes, on her trip 10/26/98 to Alton, IL., discovered an 1863 business directory with several names listed that were also mentioned in *The Journal of Jean Laffite: The Privateer-Patriot's Own Story*. One such name was that of a physician. Also noted, were 1850 and 1855 Censuses of Madison County, IL. which included the name of "Little," the married name of Denise Jeanette Laffite, Jean's daughter.

Dr. Wilson also stated he had received an inquiry from Fred Eaton, a researcher in Del Rio, TX, asking for confirmation of knowledge of "silver bars removed from a ship, the Santa Rosa, in 1816, supposedly by Jean Laffite." Dr. Wilson said, as far as he could determine, there was no listing of a ship by that name owned by Jean Laffite.

2) Jean L. Epperson mentioned the title of a book about a French engineer-cartographer:

Un Adventurier Visionnaire

*L'Etrange Parcours d'un Français aux Amériques. Mémoires de la Société
La Haute-Auvergne,*

by Jean Garrigeaux, 1997

Jean also reported she had obtained a copy of the index of the Edward A. Parson collection, and would donate a copy to The Laffite Society Archive. Edward A. Parson was President of The Louisiana Historical Association for many years.

3) Secretary, Dorothy Karilanovic, reported briefly again on correspondence she had received from Richard B. Smith of THE COMPANY in West Yorkshire, Eng., and his group's on-going project to decipher the Thomas J. Beale codex. At Mr. Smith's suggestion, Jeff Modzelewski, owner of ISLAND BOOKS, said he would order one copy of Peter Viemeister's book, *The Beale Treasure: "New" History of Mystery*, published by Hamilton's, Bedford, VA, for The Laffite Society Archive. Mr. Smith makes reference to certain passages in the book that may confirm some conclusions he has drawn as a result of his research

The Secretary also mentioned that she had received a Christmas greeting from THE COMPANY by fax, addressed to members of The LS, and had returned one in similar fashion.

NEW BOOK

A new title was reported: *The Laffite Case*, by Ray Peters, 1997.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks were extended to Kathy Modzelewski for the evening's refreshments, and to Wil Zapalac for libations.

MEETING ADJOURNED:

There being no further business, the General Meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Submitted by,

Dorothy McDonald Karilanovic
Recording/Corresponding Secretary,
THE LAFFITE SOCIETY

Corrected 4/7/99

MINUTES
General Meeting
THE LAFFITE SOCIETY
February 9, 1999
The Eiband Gallery
2201 Post Office
GALVESTON, TEXAS 77550

BOARD PRESENT: President, Kathy Modzelewski; First Vice-Pres., Dave Roberts; Second Vice-Pres., Judy Dolfi; Rec./Corres. Secretary, Dorothy McD. Karilanic; Treasurer/Editor-of-Publications, Jeff Modzelewski; Press Director, George Najarian; Historian, Bernadette Foley; Coor./Res., Wil Zapalac; Parliamentarian, Diane Olson

BOARD ABSENT: Third Vice-Pres., Jim Nonus; Archivist, Don Marler

ADVISORY BOARD: Reginald Wilson, Bill Foley

MEMBERS-AT-LARGE: Susan Baker, Stephen N. Broadstone; Bill Foley; John E. Hunger; R. Dale Olson (ex-officio Pres.); Kileen & Richard Prather; Richard Rasche; Ginny Roberts; Norman and Margie Sachnik; Bowen and Nell Whittington; Reginald and Betty Wilson

GUESTS: Harry A. Brown; Norma Jean Nelson; Al King; Mary Frances & Lloyd Johnson

CALL TO ORDER

The President called the General Meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

President, Kathy Modzelewski, welcomed back Mary Frances & Lloyd Johnson who spend the winter months in Galveston and attend Laffite Soc. meetings while they are here.

MINUTES

Minutes of the January 12 meeting were approved as read by the Secretary.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer, Jeff Modzelewski, reported a balance in the account of approximately \$1,200 at the end of January.

MEMBERSHIP

Second Vice-President and Membership Chairman, Judy Dolfi announced that '99 dues were in order. Judy suggested that, for the purpose of simplifying record keeping, all future renewals would be due the first of each year. A statement to the membership will go out announcing this change and reminding members to send in their dues for '99.

SPECIAL EVENTS

The special event trip to Nachitoches, LA has been changed to March 12-14, 1999 in order to accommodate those who also wish to attend the annual meeting of The Louisiana Historical Association March 12 at which Member-at-Large Robert C. Vogel will be a speaker. Standing in for Special Events Chairman Jim Nonus who was absent, The President stated that a visit to Melrose Plantation has been arranged during the Nachitoches trip, and that a block of hotel rooms has been reserved. She urged those who wish to go on the trip to inform her as soon as possible so that rooms can be booked.

The Secretary reported that she had a few copies of the LHA meeting registration and hotel forms which Member-at-Large Robert Looper in Golden Meadow, LA had sent for those interested in attending this meeting.

LAFFITE SOCIETY WEBB PAGE

Editor-of-Publications Jeff Modzelewski reported receiving numerous questions over the Internet about The Laffite Society, and asked if members who used E-mail would assist in answering these inquiries.

CORRESPONDENCE FROM "THE COMPANY"

The Secretary spoke about the latest correspondence received from Richard E. Smith, in answer to her September 29 letter, and offered copies to those interested in reading this correspondence. No new information regarding the Beale ciphers was apparent in this letter from Mr. Smith.

ACQUISITIONS FOR THE ARCHIVES

Dr. Reginald Wilson reported that Member-at-Large Pam Keyes, Miami, OK, had accessed three letters from the Internet, copies of which she would make available to The Laffite Society, as follows:

- 1) One dated Nov. 8, 1819, first published in Alexandria, and written by Jean Laffite to the captain of a schooner, The LYNX, then anchored off of Galveston.
- 2) In answer to the above letter, one from Capt. Madison of The LYNX.
- 3) A letter from McIntosh to General Long

Dr. Wilson also mentioned the following: 1) a group of letters from government offices, published by President Adams, on "Piratical Depredations" off the northwest coast of Cuba. (Copies to be given to the LS archive and to the Sam Houston Regional Library and Research Center at Liberty, TX.) 2) bound copies over 6 months of Niles Register covering the Le Brave incident.

MS FROM PATRICK LAFITTE

The President reported receiving from French Member-at-Large Patrick Lafitte a xeroxed copy of The Journal of Jean Laffite: the Privateer-Patriot's Own Story, along with correspondence and a report of Patrick's studies undertaken to determine whether or not the handwriting in The Journal is that of Jean Laffite himself. Referring to his 20-page list of words and phrases culled from The Journal, Patrick states his conclusion that The Journal was not written by a French-speaking individual, nor was the writer familiar with Spanish, Basque, or Creole. Mr. Lafitte does say, however, that his findings do not preclude the possibility that The

Journal may have been copied from other sources, the author of which may have been Jean Laffite.. Mr. Laffite's intent was not to challenge the historical content of The Journal, only the authenticity of the handwriting.

In conjunction with this report, Dr. Reginald Wilson offered to contact French scholar and linguist, Prof. Gene Marshall of McNeese University in LA who recently completed his own translation of The Journal, in order to inquire if he would be interested in reviewing Patrick Laffite's findings. Secretary, Dorothy Karilanovic, also mentioned that she had noted an acknowledgment of receipt of Patrick Laffite's studies in the Dec., '98 issue of the French genealogical newsletter GHC.

Concurrently with receipt of the MS, Dr. Wilson had also written to Mr. Laffite to ask if he would contribute a copy of his work to the LS for its on-going research.

MEETING ADJOURNED

There being no further business, the General Meeting was adjourned.

Submitted by,

Dorothy McDonald Karilanovic
Recording/Corresponding Secretary
THE LAFFITE SOCIETY

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MINUTES
General Meeting
THE LAFFITE SOCIETY
March 9, 1999
The Eiband Gallery
2201 Post Office
GALVESTON, TEXAS 77550

BOARD PRESENT: President, Kathy Modzelewski; First Vice-President, Dave Roberts; Second Vice-President, Judy Dolfi; Recording/Corresp. Secretary, Dorothy McDonald Karilanovic; Treasurer/Editor-of-Publications, Jeff Modzelewski; Press Director, George Najarian; Coordinator-of-Research, Wil Zapalac; Parliamentarian, Diane Olson

BOARD ABSENT: Third Vice-President, Jim Nonus; Archivist, Don Marler; Historian, Bernadette Foley

ADVISORY BOARD: Dr. Reginald Wilson

MEMBERS-AT-LARGE: Jeanette Haydel; R. Dale Olson; Kileen & Richard Prather; Richard Rasche; Ginny Roberts; A.M. Wilcox

CALL TO ORDER

The President called the General Meeting to order at 6:25 p.m.

MINUTES

Minutes of the Feb. 9th General Meeting were approved as read by the Secretary, with one correction.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer, Jeff Modzelewski, stated the current balance in the Laffite Society account was \$1,683.61.

MEMBERSHIP

All membership dues for '99 are expected to be paid by April or May of this year.

RESIGNATION OF THIRD VICE-PRESENT (Special Events Chairman)

The President stated she had received a formal letter of resignation from Jim Nonus, asking that he be relieved from his duties as Third Vice-President due to the pressing responsibilities of his parents' illnesses. As of this date, the President stated, no slate for nomination of a replacement for this office was available. The President called for names from the floor of members who might be interested in filling the office and stated that the matter would be further addressed at the next General Meeting on April 13, 1999.

SPECIAL EVENT AT NACHITOCHES, LA, March 12-14, 1999

The President asked for volunteers to handle arrangements for wine and cheese at the Nachitoches event. Dale and Diane Olson gave out copies of an attractively formatted itinerary they had prepared for members attending the special event 3/12-14, 1999, in Nachitoches, LA. For members' interest, Diane read parts of the text relating to the history of Melrose Plantation which included interesting references to author Lyle Saxon's "Friends of Joe Gilmore" (1948), an account of his experiences during the years he resided, wrote, and "sought refuge" at Melrose. Also in the itinerary, Diane read excerpts from "The Friends of Lyle Saxon," written by his friend Edward Dyerer following Saxon's death.

PUBLICATIONS OF INTEREST

In lieu of a special presentation for this date's meeting, R. Dale Olson talked briefly on the following topics:

- 1) Les Memoires du Bayou LaFourche, Vol. 19, #4, Dec., 1998. This publication, submitted to the Laffite Society by Member-at-Large Robert Looper of Golden Meadow, LA, included the text of R. Dale Olson's special presentation to the Louisiana Historical Association's annual meeting in New Orleans, January 7, 1998, entitled "Mysteries of the Laffites, Unraveling."
- 2) "*The Legacy of a Pirate*," Genealogical Research Society of New Orleans, Vol. XXXVIII, #148, Oct., 1998; article relating to François Boutté, alias Jean Laffite, who owned a tract of land in Grand Isle, LA in the 1700s from which his descendants still continue to receive oil royalties.

NILES REGISTER, ACQUISITION FOR THE ARCHIVE

Dr. Reginald Wilson reported a donation to the archives of a copy of six months of bound issues of the NILES REGISTER, Sept., 1819-March, 1820 - 20 pages relating to pirates, privateers, and slaves. This collection was made possible through the research efforts of Member-at-Large Pam Keyes, who purchased them through the Internet.

NEW BOOK ON LAFFITE

Dr. Wilson mentioned that a new book on Laffite is in the making by author William Davis who wrote Three Roads to the Alamo. Davis says his new work will take about two years to finish.

BOOK FOR SALE (1958 Vantage Press Publication of The Journal of Jean Laffite: the Privateer-Pirate's Own Story)

Dr. Reginald Wilson reported that Member-at-Large Jean L. Epperson has offered for sale an original 1958 edition, published by Vantage Press, of THE JOURNAL . . . , written by John A. Laffite. Dr. Wilson also mentioned that he had recently acquired a copy for his personal library of this work.

THE JOURNAL . . . ON CD-ROM

Dr. Wilson stated that Robert Schaadt, Dir. of the Sam Houston Regional Library and Research Center at Liberty, Texas, said he expected to retrieve the original JOURNAL from the Texas State Archives in Austin in May where it has been on loan for copying on CD-ROM.

Dr. Wilson further stated that completion of the new translation of THE JOURNAL by French linguist and scholar Prof. Gene Marshall was on hold until return of the original document to Liberty.

LINGUIST, GENE MARSHALL TO SPEAK TO THE LS

Editor-of-Publications Jeff Modzelewski read a letter from Prof. Gene Marshall of McNeese University stating he would be available to speak to the LS after September of this year on the results of his recent translation of THE JOURNAL . . . , and requested a date to make his presentation. In his letter, Professor Marshall also reported that French Laffite Society member Patrick Lafitte, who claims descent from Jean Laffite, presented a copy of his recently completed study of language and handwriting of the author of THE JOURNAL . . . to the Mayor of Lake Charles, LA.

JEAN LAFFITE LEDGER

Dr. Reginald Wilson, in connection with his own on-going research effort, stated he is now awaiting access to the original JOURNAL to compare handwriting in that document with that by Jean Laffite's hand in an 8 x 15-inch ledger of 8-10 pages which is presently owned by John and Jane Seuratt, the former, a descendant of John A. Laffite.

W.T. BLOCK, AUTHOR

Editor-of-Publications Jeff Modzelewski reported that a list of Mr. Block's articles on Jean Laffite and related topics is now available on WEBB site.

"NEW" LAFFITE SOCIETY ORGANIZATION

Coordinator-of-Research Wil Zapalac stated he had heard through third-hand information of the existence of another Laffite Society organization said to be in Detroit.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thanks and appreciation are extended to members Kileen and Richard Prather and to Richard Rasche for the evening's buffet.

MEETING ADJOURNED

There being no further business, the General Meeting was adjourned.

Submitted by,

Dorothy McDonald Karilanovic
Recording/Corresponding Secretary
THE LAFFITE SOCIETY

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MINUTES
General Meeting
THE LAFFITE SOCIETY
April 13, 1999
The Eiband Gallery
2201 Post Office
GALVESTON, TEXAS 77550

BOARD PRESENT: President, Kathy Modzelewski; First Vice-President, Dave Roberts; Recording/Corresp. Secretary, Dorothy McDonald Karilanovic; Editor-of-Publications/Treasurer, Jeff Modzelewski; Coordinator of Research, Wil Zapalac; Historian, Bernadette Foley.

BOARD ABSENT: Second Vice-President, Judy Dolfi; Third Vice-President (position vacant); Press Director, George Najarian; Archivist, Don Marler; Parliamentarian, Diane Dolfi

ADVISORY BOARD: Dr. Reginald Wilson

MEMBERS-AT-LARGE: Stephen Broadstone; Bill Foley; Louise Marten; Richard Prather; Richard Rasche; Ginny Roberts; A.M. and Marcia Wilcox; Betty Wilson

GUESTS: Ms. Robin Munson; Dr. Stephen Curley

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. The special presentation preceded the business meeting.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION
by
DR. STEPHEN CURLEY

Dr. Stephen Curley, Professor of English at Texas A.&M University at Galveston and popular local folk music singer, presented a talk on Jean Laffite. Dr. Curley also entertained members on his guitar as he sang tunes of familiar folk music containing lyrics he had written, some on the subject of Jean Laffite. Two such songs were "The Battle of New Orleans" and a very memorable "Three Trees."

Following the special presentation, the General meeting resumed:

MINUTES

The Minutes of the General Meeting of March 9 were approved as read by the Secretary.

FUNERAL ANNOUNCEMENT

The President mentioned that Member-at-Large Jean L. Epperson's husband, Hugh, had passed away. Members were invited to send their individual condolences. As close friends and as representatives of the LS, Dr. and Mrs. Reginald Wilson stated they had attended the funeral

VISITOR FROM CURATOR

The President acknowledged a visit from Ms. Robin Munson, curator at The Galveston County Historical Museum. Ms. Munson announced the opening in June of a new exhibit on Piracy and Jean Laffite. She asked for assistance from the LS in providing information and interesting artifacts from past excavations at the Maison Rouge site.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer, Jeff Modzelewski, reported a balance in the LS account of \$1,893.61.

LAFFITE SOCIETY CHRONICLES

Editor-of-Publications Jeff Modzelewski stated that preparation of The Chronicles was in progress.

THIRD VICE-PRESIDENT VACANCY

The President called for volunteers to fill the remaining term of the office of Third Vice-President.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Suggestions were offered to consider 1) a trip to the Sam Houston Regional Library and Research Center at Liberty, TX, and 2) travel to the Matagorda Bay area with a stay at the historical Luther Hotel in Palacios, TX. Dave and Ginny Roberts volunteered to follow up on details of the Matagorda trip.

BOOK ACQUISITION

Dr. Reginald Wilson mentioned that Advisory Board Member Pam Keyes had purchased the 1816 edition of the *Historical Memoir of the War in West Florida and Louisiana* by Arsène Latour.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The President thanked Member-at-Large Richard Rasche for providing sandwiches, chips and other edibles for the evening's buffet.

MEETING ADJOURNED

There being no further business, the General Meeting adjourned.

Submitted by,

Dorothy McD. Karilanic
Rec./Corresp. Secretary
THE LAFFITE SOCIETY

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Corrected 6/23/99

MINUTES
General Meeting
THE LAFFITE SOCIETY
May 11, 1999
The Eiband Gallery
2201 Post Office
GALVESTON, TEXAS 77550

Lite

BOARD PRESENT: President, Kathy Modzelewski; First Vice-President, Dave Roberts; Recording/Corresponding Secretary, Dorothy McD. Karilanovic; Editor-of-Publications/Treasurer, Jeff Modzelewski; Press Director, George Najarian; Historian, Bernadette Foley; Parliamentarian, Diane Olson

BOARD ABSENT: Second Vice-President, Judy Dolfi; Third Vice-President (position vacant); Archivist, Don Marler; Coordinator of Research, Wil Zapalac

ADVISORY BOARD: Jean L. Epperson; Bill Foley

MEMBERS-AT-LARGE: Stephen N. Broadstone; Ronald Broadstone; Mary Jane Najarian; R. Dale Olson; Donald Peak; Richard and Kileen Prather; Richard Rasche; Ginny Roberts; Norman and Margie Sachnik; Arthur and Marcia Wilcox

CALL TO ORDER

There being no special presentation for the evening, the meeting was called to order at 7:40 p.m.

MINUTES

The Minutes of the General Meeting of April 13 were approved as read by the Secretary with one correction.

TREASURY REPORT

Treasurer Jeff Modzelewski reported an account balance of \$1,864.00.

RIVER BARGE TALKS

The President stated that the Chairman & Executive Officer of the Louisiana river barge cruising company had visited the Eiband Gallery recently to inquire as to the availability of anyone willing to lecture on Laffite history to tour passengers during their stopover at Galveston.

NEW SOURCE OF BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION ON LAFFITE FAMILY

Secretary, Dorothy Karilanovic, reported she had seen information in the French genealogical bulletin, *Généalogie et Histoire de la Caraïbe*, on a new book entitled *Barataria* by Louis-Jean Calvet, published by Plon, 1998. The book contains reproductions of baptismal certificates of Jean & Pierre Laffite and their parents, indicating that Jean was born in Biarritz in

southwest France on the Bay of Biscay in 1783. According to the Secretary, the editors at *GHC* consider the research as “serious” and worthy of note. The Secretary suggested that the LS might want to obtain copies of the reproduced baptismal certificates for the LS archive.

RENEWAL OF *GHC* SUBSCRIPTION

The Secretary reported that she had submitted a letter requesting renewal of the subscription to the French genealogical bulletin, *GHC*, along with a check for \$44.00 from The Laffite Society to cover the annual cost of the subscription. Six International Coupons to cover cost of return postage, as requested by *GHC*, were also included with the request for renewal.

In her letter to *GHC*, the Secretary also expressed condolences on behalf of The LS in acknowledgment of the death of Laffite researcher and frequent contributor to *GHC*, Mr. Michel Camus, some of whose writings are in the LS archives.

BEALE CIPHERS

The Secretary stated she had had a phone conversation with Peter Viemeister in Bedford, Va., author of *Beale Treasure - New History of a Mystery*, published in 1997, and owner of Hamilton's Bookshop in Bedford. Members were reminded that Richard B. Smith and colleagues of West Yorkshire, England, who are presently engaged in deciphering the Beale codex, have recommended that the LS examine the contents of the chapter on Jean Laffite, p. 52, which the book contains. During the phone conversation, Mr. Viemeister allowed that this new edition of his book contains a summary of professional attempts to solicit interest in recovery of a large treasure alluded to in the ciphers, such as one by famous ship salvager Mel Fisher of ATOCHA renown.

Mr. Viemeister expressed an interest in the LS, and the Secretary volunteered to send him a copy of *THE CHRONICLES* and membership information. A copy of biographical information on Mr. Viemeister and a book description from his WEBB page was made available for members' interest.

GENEALOGICAL INFORMATION FROM INTERNET

President, Kathy Modzelewski, provided copies of memos posted on the Internet from families with an interest in and ties to the Laffites. Family surnames provided were: Troxell, Ayres, Alonzo, and Jessup. Regarding the latter family name, as quoted from the memo:

Captain Jessup out of South Carolina [was] captured by Jean Laffite's off the coast of Galveston Island ca. 1816-1820. He was blinded by pirates, eventually escaped with the aid of his first mate and returned home. . . .

BOOK ACQUISITIONS

R. Dale Olson mentioned the purchase of two books of note:

- 1) *CHARTIFACTS CATALOGUE 4B, Florida Gulf and Pacific Coasts, Historic, Antique U.S. Coastal Survey Charts from 1800s.*
- 2) *C.E.D.A.M. International, the Mexican Caribbean, Headquarters at Akumal, Quintana Roo. Twenty Years of Underwater Exploration.* By Earl J. Wilson, Exposition Press, Smithtown, NY, 1980, 1982. Book dedicated to Don Pablo Bush Romero, pioneer in underwater exploration.

The latter book contains a photograph of the gravestone memorial provided by C.E.D.A.M. members in the 50s over the site where locals claimed that Jean Laffite's body had been placed after removal from its original site in Dzilam de Bravo, Yucatan. In exchange for the grave monument erected, citizens gave to C.E.D.A.M. for their museum at Akumal the wooden cross that had stood on the grave since its removal which had a rose and a cross carved on it.

LETTER FROM ROBERT C. VOGEL

Dale Olson read to members excerpts of a letter to him from Laffite author and researcher Robert Vogel, summing up conclusions of his research regarding the final departure date by the Laffites from Galveston Island, probably May 7-12, 1820, rather than in the spring of 1821, as has been previously believed. Mr. Vogel quotes from a copy of the following document preserved in a letterbook in the Naval Archive in Washington, D.C., pertaining to "safe conduct" for Laffite:

*DIRECTIVE FROM COMMODORE DANIEL T. PATTERSON, FEB. 3, 1820,
TO THE COMMAND OF U.S. VESSELS OF WAR*

According to Robert Vogel, further corroboration of the departure date of 1820, rather than 1821, may be attributed to documentation that Spanish troops found the island deserted in 1820.

The Laffites were thought to have remained in Cuban waters for a time following their departure from Galveston. In May, 1822, Jean was sighted off Sugar Key, Cuba, says Mr. Vogel.

JEAN L. EPPERSON QUOTED IN LAKE CHARLES NEWSPAPER

In celebration of Contraban Days at Lake Charles, LA, writer Warren Arceneaux of the *LAKE CHARLES AMERICAN PRESS* quoted author/historian, Laffite Soc. Advisory Board Member Jean Epperson's research account of Laffite's use of the privateering Cartagenaian flag. The article also gave mention to the LS of Galveston.

LOUISIANA GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY: DALE OLSON TO SPEAK

Members were informed to keep in mind a Special Event trip for April 29, 2000. Dale Olson, Ex-Officio President of The Laffite Society, has been invited to speak at the Louisiana Genealogical Society in Baton Rouge. Mr. Olson also presented a lecture to the annual meeting of the Louisiana Historical Association in New Orleans in January, 1998

MEETING ADJOURNED

There being no further business, the General Meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Submitted by,

Dorothy McDonald Karilanovic
Recording/Corresponding Secretary
THE LAFFITE SOCIETY

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MINUTES
The General Meeting
THE LAFFITE SOCIETY
June 8, 1999
The Eiband Gallery
2201 Post Office
GALVESTON, TEXAS 77550

BOARD PRESENT: President, Kathy Modzelewski; First Vice-President, Dave Roberts; Second Vice-President, Judy Dolfi; Rec./Corresp. Secretary, Dorothy McD. Karilanovic; Editor-of-Publications/Treasurer: Jeff Modzelewski; Press Director, George Najarian; Coordinator of Research, Wil Zapalac; Historian, Bernadette Foley

BOARD ABSENT: Third Vice-President (position vacant); Archivist, Don Marler; Parliamentarian, Diane Olson

ADVISORY BOARD: Bill Foley; Dr. Reginald Wilson

MEMBERS-AT-LARGE: Louise Marten; Mary Frances Najarian; Richard & Kileen Prather; Richard Rasche; Ginny Roberts; Norm and Margie Sachnik; Betty Wilson

CALL TO ORDER

The President called the General Meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

MINUTES

The Minutes of the General Meeting of May 11, 199 were approved as read by the Secretary with one correction.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer, Jeff Modzelewski reported a balance in the LS account of \$1,909.61, \$323.00 to be deducted for printing costs for *The Laffite Society Chronicles*, and \$100.00 for postage.

MEMBERSHIP

The President extended thanks to Second Vice-President Judy Dolfi for preparation of an updated Laffite Society membership list, dated 6/6/99. This list consists of 87 memberships, with 17 out of state or country (excluding Louisiana), one from Alaska, and two memberships in France. Four institutions are listed: The Historic New Orleans Collection (Museum); Galveston County Historical Museum; Wallisville Heritage Park Museum; Dupre Library, University of Southwestern, LA (Lafayette).

The Second Vice-President reminded members present who had not already done so to submit their dues. A notice will also be sent out to the membership at large in due course.

THE CHRONICLES

Editor-of-Publications, Jeff Modzelewski, distributed to members present copies of the latest issue of *The Laffite Society Chronicles*, Vol.5, No. 1, February, 1999. Expressions of appreciation were extended by members to Mr. Modzelewski for his steadfast dedication in producing a publication that consistently embodies a high academic standard of presentation.

ISLAND BOOKS

Editor-of-Publications, Jeff Modzelewski, thanked members for their continued interest in and patronage of Island Books, a commercial bookseller's space located in The Eiband Gallery where titles are available for purchase in numerous categories including works on Galveston history and the Laffites and their contemporaries.

ACQUISITION FOR THE LS ARCHIVES

The Secretary stated she had placed in The Laffite Society Archives a copy of an article she had translated recently from the French genealogical bulletin, *Généalogie et Histoire de la Caraïbe*, No.103, April, 1998, entitled "Voyage from Bordeaux to Havana in 1821," by Lucile Bourrachot. The text describes experiences recorded in correspondence of French traveler Pierre Goux while crossing the Atlantic from Bordeaux, France to the island of Cuba, covering a period of April, June, & July of 1821. One such experience included an encounter with a French privateer captain in the waters off of Cuba who, proclaiming himself and his crew to be "insurgents" and thereby desiring only to remove the Spanish merchandise on board, excused the passengers from having their valuables removed.

THE JOURNAL OF JEAN LAFFITE : PROFESSOR GENE MARSHALL'S STUDY

Dr. Reginald Wilson reported that the document known as *The Journal of Jean Laffite: the Privateer-Patriot's Own Story*, which had been out on loan for copying onto CD-ROM for state archives, had finally been returned to the Sam Houston Regional Library and Research Center in Liberty, Texas. According to Dr. Wilson, Professor Gene Marshall, French linguist and scholar at McNeese University in Lake Charles, LA, will shortly resume his final editing of the linguistic elements of the document. Dr. Marshall hopes to present the findings of his research at The Laffite Society meeting on July 13.

NEW BOOK ACQUISITIONS

Dr. Wilson stated that Advisory Board Member Pam Keyes had purchased through the Internet 1) an 1853 geodetic survey of Grand Isle and Grande Terre, LA, 2) an 1816 edition of Arsène Latour's *Battle of New Orleans*, and 3) a copy of the first novel published about Jean Laffite - Ingram's *Pirate of the Gulf*.

NEW INFORMATION ON NAME OF ALLEGED BURIAL SITE OF JEAN LAFFITE

Dr. Wilson reported that new evidence had been uncovered by researcher Paul Gardiner of Edwardsville, IL on identification of the alleged burial site of Jean Laffite in the Alton, IL area. Mr. Gardiner says the site where Laffite may have been buried in 1854 was located in the "Fosterburg Cemetery," located north of Alton, rather than "Culp Cemetery" another site referred to in previous Laffite Society publications.

LAFFITE SOCIETY CORRESPONDENCE

Dr. Wilson presented a discussion on correspondence between the great-grandson of Jean Laffite, John A. Laffite, and writer Audrey Lloyd, and on letters of Lacie Laffite, wife of John A. This information, containing interesting, sometimes intimate, details about Laffite family personalities and relationships, was brought to light following Dr. Wilson's extensive reading of six folders of correspondence in archival holdings. According to Dr. Wilson, it had come to his attention that the two trunks containing personal effects of Jean Laffite, said to have been burned in a house fire according to family correspondence and statements by others, included 4 photo albums, many ledgers with names and dates of ships, and several large paintings. Dr. Wilson says he is still in hopes of being able to see a ledger, said to have belonged to Laffite, now in the possession of a descendant in South Carolina, with which he will attempt to compare samples of Laffite's handwriting.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The President extended thanks to George and Mary Frances Najarian for the Middle Eastern cuisine they had prepared and served for the delight of members.

MEETING ADJOURNED

There being no other business, the General Meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Submitted by,

Dorothy McDonald Karilanovic
Recording/Corresponding Secretary
THE LAFFITE SOCIETY

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MINUTES
THE LAFFITE SOCIETY
General Meeting
July 13, 1999
THE EIBAND'S GALLERY
2201 Post Office Street
GALVESTON, TX. 77550

BOARD PRESENT: President, Kathy Modzelewski; First Vice-Pres., Dave Roberts; Rec./Corresp. Sect., Dorothy McD. Karilanic; Editor-of-Publications/Treasurer; Jeff Modzelewski; Coordinator of Res., Wil Zapalac; Archivist, Don Marler; Historian, Bernadette Foley; Parliamentarian, Diane Olson

BOARD ABSENT: Second Vice-Pres., Judy Dolfi; Third Vice-Pres. (position vacant); Press Dir., George Najarian

ADVISORY BOARD: Jean L. Epperson; Bill Foley; Robert Looper; Dr. Reginald Wilson

MEMBERS-AT-LARGE: Susan Baker (Hunger); Sybil Marler; Walter Modzelewski; Norma Jean Nelson; Kileen and Richard Prather; R. Dale Olson; Margie and Norman Sachnik; Nell and Bowen Whittington; Arthur Wilcox; Betty Wilson

GUESTS/VISITORS: Betje Black Klier (guest); Nathan Blackmore; Mike & Jerry Eubank; Sara Keyes; Al King; Lane Manuel; Prof. Gene Marshall (guest speaker), Betty Marshall, & Mary Ellen Marshall; Jim & Lena Milligan

CALL TO ORDER

President Kathy Modzelewski called the General Meeting to order at 6:30 p.m., following a short gathering for snacks and other refreshments prior to the meeting. R. Dale Olson gave a brief background description on the history of *The Journal of Jean Laffite: the Privateer-Pirate's Own Story*, prior to introduction of the evening's speaker, Dr. Gene Marshall, Associate Professor of Languages at McNeese University, Lake Charles, LA.

SPECIAL LECTURE
"THE POLYGLOT JOURNAL AUTHOR"
by
PROFESSOR GENE MARSHALL

Gene Marshall gave a presentation on the results of his recent research and his own English translation from French on his studies of the linguistic elements of the document known popularly as *The Journal . . .*, which is alleged to have as its author, in his own hand, the privateer-pirate Jean Laffite, said to have been written in the years 1845-1850.

Prof. Marshall spoke from an outline he had provided for the audience containing certain words and phrases from the document in which he was able to demonstrate convincingly that the

writer of *The Journal*, while not unequivocally proven to have been Laffite himself, was fluent in French, knew both Spanish and English, and was also able to express himself in what Prof. Marshall referred to as “educated French.” The results of Dr. Marshall’s research and outline content presented at this evening’s meeting may at some future date be incorporated into a publication.

COMMENTS ON *THE CHRONICLES*:

Following the special presentation and resumption of The General Meeting, the President read appreciative comments received by E-mail on the recent issue of *The Laffite Society Chronicles*, Vol. 5, No. 1, February, 1999, from members Sally Reeves of The New Orleans Collection & Museum, Robert C. Vogel, Laffite researcher and author, and Jack C. Ramsay, Jr., author of the recently published book, *Jean Laffite: Gentleman Pirate*.

LETTER FROM KATIE LILLISTON

The President reported she had received a letter from member-at-large Katie Lilliston in Overland, Kansas, informing the LS that her husband Bob Lilliston had passed away. Mrs. Lilliston said that she and her husband had always enjoyed their visits to the island, and especially the regular meetings of the Society which they attended while here.

MINUTES

The Minutes of the General Meeting of June 8 were approved as read to members by the Secretary.

TREASURER’S REPORT

Treasurer, Jeff Modzelewski, reported the best balance on record for the Society’s account: \$2,091.34, less postage of \$334.00 for *The Chronicles*.

THE CHRONICLES - INTERNET SALES

Editor-of-Publications, Jeff Modzelewski, reported that sales over the Internet of back issues of *The Chronicles* have so far brought in \$90.00, at \$7.50 per copy.

ARCHIVES - NEW CATALOGUE SYSTEM

Laffite Society Archivist Don Marler from Woodville, TX reported that he and his wife Sybil had spent the day setting up a catalogue system in The Laffite Society Archive, located in The Eiband Gallery. Don called for volunteers to assist in the project for a future date when he and Sybil would again visit the island.

ACQUISITIONS FOR THE ARCHIVE

Don Marler, Archivist, reported that Advisory Board Member, Robert Looper, had donated four or five books and other documents to the LS Archives, which were entered into the catalogue system by the Marlers this date.

LS E-MAIL ADDRESS LIST

President Kathy asked members who desired to have their E-mail addresses listed as LS members, submit them to the Editor of Publications for entering into the LS Webb page- address: <http://www.phoenix.net/~tigone/laffite/>.

UPCOMING TALK ON 1865 CONFEDERATE PACKET BOAT

President Kathy announced that, at the August 10th meeting of the Society, members Andy Hall and Tom Oertling, both associated with the Underwater Archeology Society of Texas, would give a joint talk on the recent salvaging efforts of an 1865 packet boat used by the Confederate forces in the War Between the States, discovered off of Bolivar Peninsula, and, until recently, the whereabouts of which were known only to local fisherman.

HOTEL REIMBURSEMENT

Motion was passed to reimburse Jeff and Kathy Modzelewski from the LS account for the amount of \$150.00 which they had put down to reserve subsequently unused hotel space for the Natchitoches, LA special event trip this past March.

VOLUNTEERS TO PROVIDE REFRESHMENTS

First Vice-President Dave Roberts mentioned that he intended to circulate a sign-up list for those who wished to provide refreshments for future meetings.

PORT LAVACA SPECIAL EVENT TRIP

First Vice-President Dave reported that he had tried to establish communication with a man who had written to the LS a couple of years back, inviting LS members to contact him if interested in visiting the Port Lavaca area and lower Texas Gulf Coast. According to Dave, this individual can no longer be found at the address he had previously provided.

BEALE TREASURE BOOK AVAILABLE AT ISLAND BOOKS

Secretary Dorothy and Editor of Publications/Island Book Store Owner Jeff Modzelewski gave a short description on Peter Viemeister's 1997 updated edition of his book, *Beale Treasure: "New" History on the Mystery,* which gives an account of recent, unsuccessful attempts to recover the fabled treasure, including one by now deceased Mel Fisher of "Atocha" fame. Jeff announced that several copies of the book were available at a discount through Island Books, located in The Eiband Gallery.

LAFFITE LEDGER

Advisory Board Member, Dr. Reginald Wilson, reported he had written to John A. Laffite descendants John and Jane Seurratt in South Carolina about two weeks ago, to ask if they would consider sending to him copies of the contents of a Laffite ledger they say they inherited. Dr. Wilson also mentioned he intended to write to Robert Schaadt, Dir. of the Sam Houston Regional Library and Research Center at Liberty, TX, where the original *Journal* . . . is housed, to ask if he would write to the Seurratts informing them of the library's interest in examining the original ledger itself up close for content and comparison of Laffite signatures.

OTHER ARCHIVAL DONATIONS

Dr. Wilson also reported that Advisory Board Member Pam Keyes of Miami, OK had sent copies of clippings from the Alton County Historical Society of interest to Laffite Society researchers. Mrs. Keyes also provided copies of 2 maps, dated 1853, of Grand Isle and Grande Terre, LA, for the LS archives.

PATRICK LAFFITE STUDY OF *THE JOURNAL* . . .

Secretary Dorothy Karilanovic translated a brief entry from the French genealogical bulletin, *Généalogie et Histoire de la Caraïbe*, No. 111: January, 1999, in which LS member Patrick Laffite of Corneilla del Vercol, France, who claims descent from of Jean Laffite, summarized conclusions of his study and recent translation of *The Journal* and Laffite family Bible:

(Trans.)

- * “The one who recopied *The Journal* is not French but probably American, he is not Jean Laffite.
- * He nevertheless recopied a French text which was, perhaps, a copy of a diary or of notes actually written by Jean Laffite.
- * The Bible is not in the handwriting of Jean Laffite and all the information given is false.

The only official document where the age and place of Jean Laffite is mentioned is a document from the port of New Orleans in 1813 for the departure of a brigantine “goletta,” “THE DILIGENTE,” for New York, belonging to Pierre Laffite and having for its captain Jean Laffite, 32 years [old], born at Bordeaux.”

MEETING ADJOURNED

There being no further business, the General Meeting of June 8 was adjourned.

Submitted by,

Dorothy McDonald Karilanovic
Recording/Corresponding Secretary
THE LAFFITE SOCIETY

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MINUTES
THE LAFFITE SOCIETY
General Meeting
August 10, 1999
The Eiband's Gallery
2201 Post Office Street
Galveston, TX 77550

BOARD PRESENT: President, Kathy Modzelewski; First Vice-President, Dave Roberts; Second Vice-President, Judy Dolfi; Recording/Corresp. Secretary, Dorothy McD. Karilanovic; Editor-of-Publications/Treasurer, Jeff Modzelewski; Press Director, George Najarian; Archivist, Don Marler; Historian, Bernadette Foley.

BOARD ABSENT: Third Vice-President (office vacant); Coordinator of Research, Wil Zapalac; Parliamentarian, Diane Olson

ADVISORY BOARD: Jean L. Epperson; Bill Foley; Reginald Wilson

MEMBER-AT-LARGE: Stephen N. Broadstone; Joe Dolfi; Mike and Jerry Eubank; Andy and Becki Hall (Andy, speaker for the evening); John Hunger; Sybil Marler; Tom Oertling (speaker for the evening); Richard and Kileen Prather; Richard Rasche; Ginny Roberts; Arthur and Marcia Wilcox; Betty Wilson

GUESTS: Don Fullen; Al King

CALL TO ORDER

The President called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m., prior to presentation of the special lecture:

"THE *DENBIGH* PROJECT"
by Andy Hall
(Co-Principal Investigator)
and
Tom Oertling

(Asst. Project Director-Archaeologist of the Denbigh, and Co-Principal Investigator)

Laffite Society members Andy Hall and Tom Oertling gave a presentation to members on the currently on-going underwater investigation of the Civil War Blockade Runner, *Denbigh*, which ran aground and sunk on Bird Key near the shores of Bolivar Peninsula the night of May 23-24, 1865, after having completed successfully six round-trip voyages between Havana and Galveston between August of 1864 and May, 1865. The ship, named after a small Welsh market town, was flanked by paddle wheels 17 ½ ft. in diameter, and was built in 1860 by the famous ship-building firm of John Laird, Sons and Co., near Liverpool, England. Fitted with a pair of 100

horse power engines, she measured 182 ft. long, 22 ft. wide (excluding paddle wheels), and drew 4 ½ feet without cargo

The *Denbigh*, in 1863, after having been used for 3 years as a coastal steamer between Liverpool and the small Welsh town of Rhyl, and known as an “extremely fast boat,” was bought by a group of businessmen from Britain, France, and Mobile, Alabama, who intended to use her to run the Union blockade between Mobile and the neutral Spanish port of Havana.

To assist in presentation of the lecture, Andy and Tom, speaking respectively from historical and nautical viewpoints, provided slides and 19th century representations of *Denbigh*, as well as two table models showing the outline and equipment of the ship, still remarkably intact, as it resides on the bottom of the Galveston Ship Channel.

The *Denbigh* project is being carried out under the auspices of the Institute of Nautical Archaeology, College Station, Texas, under the supervision of A. Barto Arnold, III, Institute Nautical Archaeologist. Publication of the investigative findings may eventually appear in *The International Journal of Archaeology* and in *Proceedings of Nautical Archaeology*..

* * * * *

As the evening’s presentation extended over two hours, following its close, the President recommended deferment of the general business segment until the next regular meeting date in September.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The President extended thanks on behalf of members to Dave and Ginny Roberts for providing the evening’s snacks and refreshments.

MEETING ADJOURNED

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:30 p.m.

Submitted by,

Dorothy McDonald Karilanovic
Recording/Corresponding Secretary
THE LAFFITE SOCIETY

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MINUTES
THE LAFFITE SOCIETY
General Meeting
September 14, 1999
The Eiband Gallery
2201 Post Office
Galveston, Texas 77550

BOARD PRESENT: President, Kathy Modzelewski; Rec./Corresp. Secretary, Dorothy McD. Karilanovic; Editor-of-Publications/Treasurer, Jeff Modzelewski; Coordinator/Research, Wil Zapalac

BOARD ABSENT: First Vice-President, Dave Roberts; Second Vice-President, Judy Dolfi; Third Vice-President (Office vacant); Press Director, George Najarian; Archivist, Don Marler; Historian, Bernadette Foley; Parliamentarian, Diane Olson

ADVISORY BOARD: Jean L. Epperson; Dr. Reginald Wilson

MEMBERS-AT-LARGE: Stephen Broadstone; Mike Eubank; Louise Marten; Richard Rasche; Norman and Marie Sachnik; Arthur and Marcia Wilcox

CALL TO ORDER

The President called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

MINUTES

The Minutes were approved as read to members by the Secretary.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer, Jeff Modzelewski, reported a balance in the LS account of \$2,180.00, less \$300-\$350.00 pending for postage for *The Chronicles*.

MEMORIALS

The President acknowledged the recent deaths of Jim Nonus' father, Mr. Francis James Nonus, Jr., of Bridge City, TX., and Mrs. Joy Catherine Peak, wife of Laffite Society member Donald T. Peak of Galveston. A motion was passed and approved to send memorial contributions in the amount of \$25.00 each. During the meeting, the Secretary provided obituary clippings from *The Galveston County Daily News* for members to see.

STATE MARKER IN LOUISIANA FOR JEAN LAFFITE: A PROPOSAL BY JEAN L. EPPERSON

Advisory Board member, Jean L. Epperson, offered a proposal to establish a state marker for Jean Laffite in the Lake Charles, LA area. Ms. Epperson stated that, to her knowledge, no such marker yet exists in Louisiana. In pursuance of this, she recommended that the project might be undertaken together with the Lake Charles "Contrabandistas," a group which celebrates annually "Contraband Days" in Lake Charles, LA, and that The Laffite Society might consider contributing \$200.00 toward the cost of purchasing and erecting the marker. Ms. Epperson further stated that, if her proposal were to be approved, she would be willing to offer her services free of charge to do the necessary research for the marker, and to contact the Contrabandist group to see if they would be interested in underwriting part of the cost of the project.

Members were in favor of Ms. Epperson's proposal, and the President approved her request to proceed with the negotiations.

ACQUISITIONS FOR THE ARCHIVE

Dr. Reginald Wilson provided copies for the LS archive of maps, each on an 8 ½ x 11-inch sheet, sent to him by Advisory Board member Robert Looper of Golden Meadow, LA:

- 1) An 1816 chart of Galveston showing the site of Luis Aury's fort, denoting channel soundings of the routes into Galveston Bay used by Aury and Laffite prior to the 1818 hurricane.
- 2) A modern drawing of a map (undated) of Galveston & Bolivar showing possible sites of ship wrecks of Laffite and others, and alleged buried treasure locations where gold and silver doubloons and some jewels had been recovered on Galveston Island, Virginia Point, and Bolivar peninsula.
- 3) An 1863 drawing of Grande Terre and Barataria Bay, showing location of Ft. Livingston.
- 4) Map (undated) showing a more detailed drawing of various sections of Ft. Livingston, as well as the site on Grande Terre of "Ft. Laffite" and the Forestall Plantation.
- 5) May 31, 1813 map of Grand Isle and Grande Terre, proposed by Lt. Col. G.T. Ross, showing a "projected battery" site with an encampment, depth soundings off the southwest end of Grande Terre, and the words printed beneath "Grande Terre": "belonging to Mr. Merdize [sp. ?]." An offset drawing of the battering showing cannon placement is also depicted.

AUDREY LLOYD CORRESPONDENCE

Advisory Board member Dr. Reginald Wilson continued his discussion, begun at previous meetings, on letters between A. Lloyd and John A. Laffite, and others. In a letter from Mrs. Lloyd to Gov. Price Daniels, she mentioned a 20 x 24-inch painting on wood, done of Jean Laffite in about 1820 in South Carolina by an unknown artist. According to the letter, Mrs. Lloyd said she had "just this minute had a phone conversation with Christie Mitchell of Galveston. . .[who] has a picture (a painting of Jean Laffite . . ." In this letter, Mrs. Lloyd also said that she was trying to get the painting for Daniels and that Mitchell said he would "try to find it."

The Secretary offered to make inquiries in Galveston regarding the painting, and, if necessary, on behalf of The Laffite Society, to write Mr. George Mitchell, brother of Christie Mitchell, now deceased, to ask if the painting did in fact exist, and, if so, to request permission to photograph and describe it for the Society's archive.

The President authorized the Secretary to proceed with this search.

LAFFITE LEDGER

Dr. Wilson reported that Director Robert Schaadt of the Sam Houston Regional Library and Research Center in Liberty, TX, had written to John and Jane Seurrat, descendants of John A. Laffite, to ask them to consider sending a photograph of a ledger in their possession which they say belonged to Jean Laffite. As of this date, no response has been received.

NOVEMBER SPEAKER, ROBERT C. VOGEL

Laffite researcher and author, and Advisory Board member Robert C. Vogel is scheduled to speak on the pirate-revolutionist Luis Aury at the November 9th meeting of the LS.

PRESIDENT AND EDITOR-OF-PUBLICATIONS AWAY IN OCT.

Due to the absence of President Kathy Modzelewski and Editor-of-Publications Jeff Modzelewski the week of Oct. 11, First Vice-President Dave Roberts will preside as President at the Oct. 12 meeting.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thanks to the Modzelewskis for overseeing arrangements for refreshments for this date's meeting. The President reminded members to continue to make a nominal contribution to the refreshment fund at each meeting.

MEETING ADJOURNED

There being no further business, meeting adjourned.

Submitted by,

Dorothy McDonald Karilanovic
Rec./Corresp. Secretary
THE LAFFITE SOCIETY

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MINUTES
THE LAFFITE SOCIETY
General Meeting
October 12, 1999
The Eiband Gallery
2201 Post Office St.
GALVESTON, TEXAS 77550

BOARD PRESENT: First Vice-President, Dave Roberts; Recording/Corresp. Secretary, Dorothy McDonald Karilanovic; Parliamentarian, Diane Olson

BOARD ABSENT: President, Kathy Modzelewski; Second Vice-President, Judy Dolfi; Third Vice-President (office vacant); Treasurer/Editor-of-Publications, Jeff Modzelewski; Press Director, George Najarian; Archivist, Don Marler; Historian, Bernadette Foley; Coordinator of Research, Wil Zapalac

ADVISORY BOARD: None present.

MEMBERS-AT-LARGE: Louise Marten; Richard A. Prather; R. Dale Olson; Virginia (Ginny) Roberts; Marcia & A.M. Wilcox; Jeanette & Don Wood

GUEST: Al King

CALL TO ORDER

First Vice-President, Dave Roberts, standing in for President Kathy Modzelewski who was out of town called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

MINUTES

The Minutes of the September 14, 1999 meeting, as read to members by the Secretary, were approved.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Due to absence of Treasurer, Jeff Mozelewski, who was out of town this date, no report was available.

SPECIAL EVENT

Dave Roberts, standing in temporarily as Special Events Chairman, reported that he has been unable to make contact with the person in the Matagorda Bay area who, a couple of years back, had invited the Society to consider making a Special Event trip to the lower Texas coast. This contact was made initially after Dave had submitted a Letter to the Editor in local papers in that area, describing The Laffite Society and its objectives. Plans for travel to this area have, therefore, been deferred.

THOMAS BEALE TREASURE

After describing to members present the two-year, on-going correspondence of the group calling itself THE COMPANY in West Yorkshire, England, with considerable discussion on the subject, the Secretary made a motion, then seconded, to defer further discussion until the next meeting on whether or not to offer as a courtesy to THE COMPANY an announcement in *The Laffite Society Chronicles* that members of THE COMPANY had completed their project of deciphering the Thomas Beale codices, as stated by Richard B. Smith, spokesman for this group in a letter to the Secretary dated August 4, 1999.

LAFFITE PAINTING OF 1820

The Secretary read to members a letter she had prepared and sent on September 30, 1999, on Laffite Society stationery, to Mr. George Mitchell of Galveston, the purpose of which was to inquire about his possible knowledge of an 1820 painting of Jean Laffite which had been given or loaned to his brother, Mr. Christie Mitchell, by John Andracheyne Laffite, alleged great-grandson of Jean, during one of his visits to Galveston in the late 1960s. As stated in the letter, which the Secretary read to members present, the Society's only purpose in making the inquiry was to request permission to view the painting, if, indeed, it exists, to photograph it and prepare a description for The Laffite Society Archive. The Secretary reported that, prior to sending the letter, she had made a series of telephone calls locally to persons who had known or had a close relationship with Mr. Christie Mitchell, including the Executor of his Last Will & Testament and the person in charge of the disposition of his personal effects, none of which [calls] had yielded any information as to the existence of the painting.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

“

What is an ‘Expert’ on Laffite?”

by

R. DALE OLSON

Dale Olson presented his ideas on qualifications necessary to take up special study on a given historical topic, some of which are as follows:

- 1) Have an interest and enthusiasm for research.
- 2) Choose one subject to focus on, and read at least three books on the subject (you'll then know more about the subject than about 98% of the world).
- 3) Document sources of information: give complete reference information on sources.
- 4) Make photocopies of pertinent articles, news items, photos, etc., relating to the research topic
- 5) Compare research efforts with what others have done on the chosen topic.
- 6) Focus on certain “pivotal” topics relating to the research objective.

As an example of such topics, Dale provided for members a list of “Research Opportunities and Directions,” topics considered to be important in helping to define truth from legend in the on-going pursuit of “final answers” relating to the history of the Laffites, their contemporaries, and historical times.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Acting President Dave Roberts extended his thanks to those who had participated in the night's discussions, and to Marcia and A.M. Wilcox for providing snacks and refreshments.

MEETING ADJOURNED

There being no further business, the General Meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:00 p.m.

Submitted by,

Dorothy McD. Karilanovic
Rec./Corresp. Secretary
THE LAFFITE SOCIETY

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MINUTES
THE LAFFITE SOCIETY
General Meeting
November 9, 1999
The Eiband Gallery
2201 Postoffice Street
GALVESTON, TX. 77550

BOARD PRESENT: President, Kathy Modzelewski; First Vice-President, Dave Roberts;
Second Vice-President, Judy Dolfi; Rec./Corresp.Secretary, Dorothy
McDonald Karilanovic; Editor-of-Publications/Treasurer, Jeff
Modzelewski; Press Director, George Najarian; Archivist, Don Marler

BOARD ABSENT: Third Vice-President (office vacant); Historian, Bernadette Foley;
Coor./Research, Wil Zapalac; Parliamentarian, Diane Olson

ADVISORY BOARD: Jean L. Epperson; Robert Looper; Dr. Reginald Wilson

MEMBERS-AT-LARGE: Joe Dolfi; Mike & Jerry Eubank; Louise Marten; Richard Rasche;
Richard & Kileen Prather; Ginny Roberts; Margie & Norman
Sachnik; Robert C. Vogel; Arthur and Marcia Wilcox; Don &
Jeanette Wood; Betty Wilson

GUESTS: Don Fullen; Al King; Prof. Gene & Bettie Marshall; Kathleen Taylor

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

MINUTES

Reading of the October Minutes was deferred due to time constraints.

INTRODUCTION OF SPEAKER

The President introduced the guest speaker for the evening, Robert C. Vogel, Laffite researcher and author, whose topic for discussion was the "other privateer-patriot" associated with Galveston during the Jean Laffite era, Luis M. Aury - a background study of his life.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Following the special presentation by Robert C. Vogel, the General Meeting resumed. Treasurer, Jeff Modzelewski, reported a balance of \$2,176.74 in The Laffite Society account.

MEMBERSHIP

The President announced that membership renewals were due the first of the year, and that notices would be sent out in due course.

LAFFITE NATIONAL MARKER

Advisory Board member Jean Epperson, reported that she talked with the President of the Contraband Days buccaneer group, Mr. Ben Zaleski, about the possibility of their group joining efforts with The Laffite Society to research and fund a national marker for Jean Laffite, to be placed in the city of Lake Charles, Louisiana. According to Ms. Epperson, the group indicated their interest in the proposal, and a consensus of their membership is pending.

SPEAKERS FOR WINTER TEXAN GROUP

A request has been submitted from a local Winter Texans' group for speakers to present talks on Laffite history. The request will be taken into consideration.

NEW TRANSLATION OF *The Journal of Jean Laffite: the Privateer-Patriot's Own Story*

According to Professor Gene Marshall, his new translation of *The Journal* . . . will be available for purchase in about 6 months. The book includes an introduction by Robert Schaadt, Dir. of The Sam Houston Regional Library and Research Center at Liberty, TX., and will retail for about \$25.00 (hard copy). A soft-cover edition will also be available.

1820 LAFFITE PAINTING - SEARCH CONTINUES

The Secretary read to members a letter from Mr. George Mitchell dated Nov. 1, a response to her letter of Sept. 30 in which she had inquired of his possible knowledge of an 1820 Laffite painting which, according to Laffite family correspondence, may have been given to or lent to Mr. Christie Mitchell of Galveston, sometime in the 1960s by John A. Laffite, great-grandson of Jean Laffite. In his letter, Mr. George Mitchell stated that while he "remembered vaguely" that Christie, his brother, now deceased, "had something related to Jean Laffite," that, according to the Executor of his brother's estate, Mr. Ed Russell of Galveston, no evidence "of a painting or other related items" was found among his personal effects. Mr. Mitchell further stated, that should anything of this nature ever surface, he would be sure to let The Laffite Society know.

In continuing the search for the alleged painting, Dr. Reginald Wilson offered to contact Mr. Ray Simpson and his father of the Simpson Auction Gallery in Houston to inquire if they might have had some knowledge of the painting during the years that they were acquainted with Jean A. Laffite.

BOOK ON LAFFITE

Speaker for the evening, Robert C. Vogel, mentioned for members' interest a book title on Luís Aury which also contains information on Jean Laffite: *La Vida de Luís Aury*, by Carlos Ferro, 1978.

SECRETARY SPEAKS TO LIONS' CLUB

The Secretary reported that at the invitation of Laffite Society member and Lions' Club member Richard Prather, she had presented a 30-minute talk on behalf of The Laffite Society at the Lions' Club luncheon October 14 at Gaido's Pelican Club.

HOLIDAY PARTY

The President announced that the annual Laffite Society Holiday Party, a covered dish buffet, would be held Sunday, Dec. 19th at the Modzelewski's apartment on Post Office Street. Invitations will be sent out to members.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thanks were extended to Jean Epperson, Betty Wilson, Don & Sybil Marler for the evening's refreshments.

MEETING ADJOURNED

There being no further business, the General Meeting was adjourned.

Submitted by,

DOROTHY MCDONALD KARILANOVIC

Recording/Corresponding Secretary

THE LAFFITE SOCIETY

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