

JANUARY, 2001

NO MEETING HELD

**Members attended the annual meeting of The Louisiana Historical Society
in New Orleans on January 8, 2001**

Corrected 4/7/01

MINUTES
General Meeting
The Laffite Society
February 13, 2001
The Eiband's Gallery
2201 Post Office St.
GALVESTON, TX. 77550

BOARD PRESENT: Jeff Modzelewski, President; Second Vice-President, Don Peak; Recording/Corresp. Secretary, Dorothy McDonald Karilanovic; Press Director, Dave Roberts; Coordinator of Research, Kileen Prather

BOARD ABSENT: Judy Dolfi, First Vice-President; Third Vice-President, Kathy Modzelewski; Treasurer, Jerry Eubank; Archivist (office vacant); Historian, Jean L. Epperson; Parliamentarian, Diane Olson; Editor-of-Publications, Don Marler

ADVISORY BOARD PRESENT: Dr. Reginald Wilson

MEMBERS-AT-LARGE: Stephen Broadstone; Richard Prather; Richard Rasche; Ginny Roberts; Norman Sachnik; Betty Wilson

VISITORS: Ginger and Joe Curtis; Bob and Ella Lossow; Gwin and Bob Mortinson (sp. ?)

GUEST: Al King

CALL TO ORDER

The President called the meeting to order at approximately 6:30 p.m., acknowledged visitors present and reported that Third Vice-President Kathy Modzelewski could not be present for the evening's meeting due to illness.

MINUTES

Minutes of the November 14 meeting were not read.

TREASURER'S REPORT

No treasury report was available.

OFFICERS' RESIGNATION

The President announced that First Vice-President Judy Dolfi had resigned from her position due to family illness, and that Second Vice-President Don Peak had turned over his duties as Membership Chairman to Mike Eubank.

MEMBERSHIP DUES

The President reminded members to send in their renewals for 2001.

NEW ORLEANS TRIP

The President announced that he had submitted an article for publication in *The Laffite Society Chronicles* describing the recent trip in January, 2001 by members to New Orleans to attend the annual meeting of The Louisiana Historical Society.

YUCATAN TRIP

Mike Eubank reported that some of those who had traveled to the Yucatán in January of this year were able to visit briefly the archives in Isla Mujeres, the Cultural Institute of Mérida, where no data were immediately available, and Puerto Aventuroso where the CEDAM museum was located. The Municipal Archive in Mérida was closed during the day the group visited. Other sites visited were 1) San Francisco of Santa Clara church, where some say that Pierre Laffite may be buried; 2) Mission Santa Anna at Dzemul; and 3) the Laffite grave monument at Dzilam de Bravo. Photos of these sites were shown to members. Ex-Officio President Dale Olson and Editor-of-Publications Don Marler, who both participated in the trip, will give a more detailed account of sites visited and impressions in due course..

AUSTIN SYMPOSIUM

Members were reminded of the upcoming symposium at The University of Texas in Austin, TX March 8, 9, 10, entitled *The French in Texas*, at which Ex-Officio Laffite Society President Dale Olson will speak March 9, during the segment from 12:30-2:30 p.m., on the history of the document alleged to be the diary of Jean Laffite, published as *The Journal of Jean Laffite: the Privateer-Patriot's Own Story*. According to Advisory Board member Dr. Reginald Wilson, French Laffite Society member Sylvie Feuillie is scheduled to attend the symposium. Dr. Wilson suggested that The Laffite Society might want to consider inviting her to visit Galveston and the Sam Houston Regional Library and Research Center in Liberty, TX.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Advisory Board member Dr. Reginald Wilson reported that he had made an audiotape recording of historian and author W.C. Davis' talk on Jean Laffite presented at The Louisiana Historical Society's annual meeting in New Orleans on Jan. 8 of this year. According to Dr. Wilson, author Davis stated that there is a wealth of information in the Cuban archives and in the New Orleans Notarial Collection. Member Norman Sachnik volunteered to make a copy of the tape for The Laffite Society Archives.

In addition, Dr. Wilson mentioned that certain correspondence involving John Matejka (a.k.a. John A. Laffite) had been located in the Missouri Historical Society. Dr. Wilson also stated it had come to his attention that certain persons had remembered seeing a grave marker with the name of Jean Laffite in an "old Catholic cemetery." He also noted for genealogical interest that the name of John Matejka's step-father, "Nofsinger," had an alternate spelling of "Nofzinger."

MEETING ADJOURNED

There being no further business, the general meeting of February 13 adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Submitted by,
Dorothy McDonald Karilanovic
Recording/Corresponding Secretary
THE LAFFITE SOCIETY

MINUTES
March 13, 2001
THE LAFFITE SOCIETY
The Eiband Gallery
2201 Post Office Street
GALVESTON, TX. 77550

BOARD PRESENT: President, Jeff Modzelewski; Second Vice-President (Membership), Mike Eubank; Third Vice-President (Special Events), Kathy Modzelewski; Recording/Corresp. Secretary, Dorothy McD. Karilanovic; Treasurer, Jerry Eubank; Parliamentarian, Diane Olson; Historian, Jean L. Epperson; Editor-of-Publications, Don Marler; Press Director, Dave Roberts

BOARD ABSENT: First Vice-President (office vacant); Archivist (office vacant)

ADVISORY BOARD PRESENT: R. Dale Olson; Robert Vogel; Reginald Wilson

MEMBERS-AT-LARGE: Stephen Broadstone; Joe and Judy Dolfi; Randy Hanks; Craig Hlavinka; Sybil Marler; Don Peak; Ginny Roberts; Richard Rasche; Norman and Marguerite Sachnik

GUESTS/VISITORS: Joe & Virginia Curtis; Candace & Carroll Lewis; Ella & Bob Lessow; Jim Nonus; Richard Steed

CALL TO ORDER

The President called the general meeting to order at 6:40 p.m., welcoming two new visitors, Joe and Virginia Curtis, new member from Bay City, Craig Hlavinka, as well as visiting Advisory Board Member Robert C. Vogel and Kathleen Taylor Vogel.

MINUTES

The Secretary read to members the February 13 Minutes which were approved with one correction.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer Jerry Eubank reported the balance at \$3,112.86.

CHRONICLES

The President expressed thanks to Editor-of-Publications Don Marler for his diligent efforts to get out a timely issue of *The Laffite Society Chronicles*. Members present received the February, 2001 issue, Vol. VII, #1 at the meeting. Copies will be sent out to the remainder of the membership at large.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF OFFICERS

The President announced again the resignation of two officers and their replacements, and that Mike Eubank is now Web Master for the Society, in addition to assuming the office of Second Vice-President as Membership Chairman.

MEMBERSHIP

An up-dated membership list was distributed to members present by Mike and Jerry Eubank, with a written reminder from Treasurer, Jerry Eubank, to send in dues for 2001. The list and reminder is being sent out to other Members-at-Large who cannot attend the regular meetings.

NEW WEB ADDRESS

Mike Eubank announced the new Web address as: <http://laffite.participant.org>. Mike asked members to let him know if there are errors or changes to be made on the Society's Web page.

NEWS ARTICLE ON JANUARY NEW ORLEANS TRIP

Press Director Dave Roberts reported he had submitted an article to *The Galveston County Daily News* about the recent special event trip by members to attend the annual meeting of the Louisiana Historical Society on January 8. The article was not published although two photographs of some members were published in the "Scenes" column of the February 11 Sunday issue.

AUSTIN SYMPOSIUM

Diane Olson read a short outline of topics presented at the recent symposium March 8, 9, 10 sponsored by the French and Italian departments of The University of Texas at Austin, entitled, "*The French in Texas.*" According to Diane, forty speakers presented papers, and there were about 100 attendees.

The following papers were presented representing one section of the symposium on "*Corsairs, Pirates, and Filibusters.*"

- 1) "*The Adventures of Louis Aury on the Texas Coast,*" by Robert C. Vogel
- 2) "*Was Laffite an Officer of the Grand Army?*" by French researcher Sylvie Feuillie
- 3) "*History of Laffite from His Own Legend,*" by R. Dale Olson

Laffite Society Advisory Board member, author and researcher Robert C. Vogel suggested that the Society consider publishing all of the foregoing papers in one issue of *The Laffite Society Chronicles*.

SYNOPSIS OF PAPERS

1) Robert Vogel presented a short overview of the topic of his paper on Louis Aury presented at the Austin symposium. Members received copies of a) a bibliography of works on Aury b) a chronology of the events of Aury's career, and c) a map of the Gulf Coast rim showing sites of important events in Aury's life and career.

2) R. Dale Olson spoke on his topic given at the symposium on the history of Jean Laffite, some of the current theories on his birth and death.

1815 MAP

Advisory Board member Dr. Reginald Wilson gave out copies of a "sketch" map published June 30, 1815, of "*The Position of the British and American Forces during the Operations Against New Orleans, from 23rd December, 1814 to 18th January, 1815.*" The map was made available to members by Pam Keyes, Advisory Board member of Joplin, MO.

FUTURE TRAVEL

Frequent traveler to the Yucatan, Robert C. Vogel, reported that he intends to gather information for future special event trips to that region and to South America which may be of interest to researchers.

PROPOSAL TO FUND RESEARCH

Editor-of-Publications Don Marler gave out copies of a "*Proposal to Fund Research,*" containing guidelines for making available funds for research to members, and non-members, including researchers in foreign locales.

Due to time constraints, discussion on the proposal was deferred until the April meeting.

NEW PUBLICATIONS BY MEMBERS

- 1) Member-at-Large Don Peak will have a book signing on April 28 at The Eiband Gallery; the title of his book is "*Fire Mission*," an account of the life and exploits of a fellow naval officer in World War II.
- 2) Author and professional historian Jack Ramsay is coming out with a new book on Jane Long, and may attend an upcoming meeting to discuss his new work.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS AND CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

The President thanked Dave and Ginny Roberts for providing the evening's buffet, and called for volunteers to provide refreshments for future meetings.

MEETING ADJOURNED

There being no further business, the general meeting of March 13 adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Submitted by,

DOROTHY MCDONALD KARILANOVIC
Recording/Corresponding Secretary
THE LAFFITE SOCIETY

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MINUTES
General Meeting
THE LAFFITE SOCIETY
April 10, 2001
The Eiband's Gallery
2201 Post Office Street
GALVESTON, TX. 77550

BOARD PRESENT: Jeffrey Modzelewski, President; Kathy Modzelewski, Third Vice-President (Special Events); Dorothy McDonald Karilanovic, Recording/Corresp. Secretary; Jean L. Epperson, Historian; Diane Olson, Parliamentarian

BOARD ABSENT: First Vice-President (office vacant); Mike Eubank, Second Vice-President (Membership); Jerry Eubank, Treasurer; Kileen Prather, Coordinator of Research; Archivist (office vacant); Don Marler, Editor-of-Publications; Dave Roberts, Press Director

ADVISORY BOARD PRESENT: Jean L. Epperson; R. Dale Olson; Reginald Wilson

MEMBERS-AT-LARGE: Craig Hlavinka; Richard Rasche; Betty Wilson

VISITOR: Al King

CALL TO ORDER

The President called the meeting to order at 6:15 p.m.

MINUTES

The Minutes of March 13, 2001 were approved as read to members by the Secretary.

TREASURER'S REPORT

In the absence of the Treasurer, the President reported the account balance as \$3,112.86.

WEB PAGE

The President again called attention to the new Web page address for the Society which is now as follows: <http://laffite.participant.org>. Discussion on payment to the Web page server was deferred until a later date. Diane Olson moved to authorize Web master Mike Eubank to spend the necessary funds to maintain the Society's web site. Motion seconded by Reginald Wilson, and approved by members in attendance

PROPOSAL TO FUND RESEARCH

Diane Olson suggested that the Laffite Society consider setting up a budget for the Society's expenses, allowing for a portion to be set aside to fund research. A motion was tendered by Diane Olson, seconded and approved, to set up a committee to consider the proposal submitted by Editor-of-Publications Don Marler who was not present at the meeting. The committee, to consist of Jeff Modzelewski, R. Dale Olson, Kathy Modzelewski, and Dorothy Karilanovic, will convene on a date in the near future to discuss options for the proposal, to be reported on at a subsequent meeting, preferably when Editor, Don Marler, the author of the proposal, can also be present to participate in the discussion.

LEGEND FOR 1815 MAP

Advisory Board member Dr. Reginald Wilson distributed copies of an "English map legend" to accompany the "sketch" map published June 30, 1815, of *The Position of the British and American Forces during the Operations Against New Orleans, from 23rd December, 1814 to 18th January, 1815,* donated to the Society by Advisory Board member Pam Keyes at the March 13th meeting, a copy of which will be entered in the Archive along with a copy of the map.

NEW INFORMATION FROM THE YUCATÁN

Among several subjects, Dr. Wilson discussed new information obtained through his on-going association with a foreign researcher in the Yucatán on various documented newspaper accounts from 1823 of Jean Laffite's death at sea, as well as accounts from alleged descendants with the surname of Estrada, now living in Dzilam de Bravo, Yucatán, pertaining to their historical connection to the union of Jean Laffite and the North American woman known as Lucy Allen. Dr. Wilson stated that, according to his research sources, historian, Dr. J. Ignacio Rubio Mañe had concluded several decades ago that Jean Laffite did not die in the Yucatán, but perished in a naval battle "fighting in the service of the liberator of South America, Simón Bolívar." According to Mané, Dr. Wilson stated, this event was published in the *Gaceta de Cartagena* [*Cartagena Gazette*] in Cartagena, Colombia, March 19, 1823. Dr. Mañe also is thought to have believed that a tomb "near the ocean" in Dzilam de Bravo, no longer in existence, purported to be that of Jean Laffite, was in actuality that of his brother Pierre.

In addition, Dr. Wilson reported he had had contact with a Laffite enthusiast in Alton, Illinois who stated that he had had direct knowledge of a possible burial site for Jean Laffite in an abandoned Catholic cemetery in use from 1848-1858, from a person who claimed to have seen on a grave stone, sometime between the years of 1959 to 1961, Laffite's name and some dates from 1800.

Dr. Wilson also mentioned a discovery by American writer Alma Reed, whose work had been published in the Mexican newspaper *Excelsior*, of a "true diary of Jean Laffite," found, according to Dr. Wilson's research source, in the "Central Library of New York" [possibly the New York Public Library?] - the diary attesting to Jean Laffite's occupation of Isla Mujeres, Dzilam de Bravo, and Las Bocas, Yucatán.

PATRICK LAFITTE REPORT ON HANDWRITING ANALYSIS

The Secretary reported she had translated into English Patrick Lafitte's analysis in French of the handwriting in *The Journal of Jean Laffite: the Privateer-Patriot's Own Story*, and that copies of both would be placed in the Society's Archive. Mr. Lafitte had submitted this report to be read at the *March* seminar held in Austin, Texas entitled, *The French in Texas*, sponsored by the Italian and French departments at The University of Texas.

HISTORIAN, JACK C. RAMSAY, TO SPEAK

The President announced that author-historian, Professor Jack C. Ramsay, will present a talk at the May meeting on the subject of his new book on 19th Century Bolivar settler Jane Long.

MEETING ADJOURNED

There being no other business, the general meeting of April 10 was adjourned.

Submitted by,

Dorothy McDonald Karilanovic
Recording/Corresponding Secretary
THE LAFFITE SOCIETY

MINUTES
General Meeting
The Laffite Society
May 8, 2001
The Eiband Gallery
2201 Post Office Street
Galveston, TX 77550

BOARD PRESENT: President, Jeff Modzelewski; Second Vice-President, Mike Eubank; Third Vice-President, Kathy Modzelewski; Recording/Corresp. Secretary, Dorothy McD. Karilanovic; Treasurer, Jerry Eubank; Editor-of-Publications, Don Marler; Press Director, Dave Roberts; Historian, Jean L. Epperson; Parliamentarian, Diane Olson

BOARD ABSENT: First Vice-President (office vacant); Archivist (office vacant)

ADVISORY BOARD PRESENT: Jean L. Epperson; R. Dale Olson; Reginald Wilson

MEMBERS-AT-LARGE: Stephen Broadstone; Craig Hvalinka; Carroll Lewis; Sybil Marler; George Najarian; Don Peak; Richard Prather; Richard Rasche; Jack and Karen Ramsay; Ginny Roberts; Norman and Margie Sachnik; Betty Wilson

VISITORS: Ivan Arceneaux; Rick Elliot; Ed Greiner; Jan Johnson; Sheldan Kindall

CALL TO ORDER

The President called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m., welcoming guest speakers Jack C. Ramsay, Jr. and his wife Karin Ramsay with a short bibliographical sketch preceding the special presentation.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

“Keep on Keepin’ On”

by Jack and Karin Ramsay

Author/Historian Jack Ramsay discussed the background of his research and preparation for his five published works, and encouraged Laffite Society members to continue on with their own good research, in his words, to “keep on keepin’ on.” Signed copies of Mr. Ramsay’s latest work, *Texas Sinners and Revolutionaries* were made available to members for purchase.

Karin Ramsay spoke on the eight flags of Texas, including 1) the Jane Long flag, said to have been made of a red petticoat with a large star in the center, and to have been the prototype for what eventually became the official Texas flag; and 2) the 7-star flag of the Southern Confederacy.

MINUTES

Due to time limits, reading of the April 10 Minutes was deferred.

TREASURER’S REPORT

Treasurer Jerry Eubank presented a balance sheet for May 2001 to the Secretary for the Minutes showing a beginning balance of \$3,275.29, with disbursement of \$137.50 to Jean L. Epperson for research expenses; dues collected, \$200.00; and ending balance of \$3,337.79.

NEW INTERNET INTEREST IN *THE JOURNAL*

Advisory Board Member Dr. Reginald Wilson reported that Advisory Board Member Pam Keyes had recently noted on the Internet three new translations of *The Journal of Jean Laffite: the Privateer-Patriot's Own Story*.

FORT ANAHUAC INVESTIGATION

Laffite Society Historian and Advisory Board Member Jean L. Epperson reported briefly on research on the on-going investigation of the Mexican fortress at Anahuac overlooking Trinity Bay, built in 1831, and uncovered with the aid of magnetometer readings. An article on the site entitled, *Mexican Fort Leaves Imprint in Anahuac*, appeared in the April 21, 2001 issue of *The Houston Chronicle*, in which Ms. Epperson who has spent years researching the fort was quoted as saying, "Fort Anahuac should be called the birth place of the Texas Revolution."

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RESEARCH FUNDS

Jean L. Epperson, current Laffite Society Historian, presented to the Secretary for the Archives, a card dated May 8, 2001 gratefully acknowledging a recent research grant extended to her by the Laffite Society for a search in the British Maritime Archives, which Ms. Epperson reports, revealed "some data on pirate activity in the Gulf and Caribbean during 1822 and 1823, but nothing on Jean Laffite."

Ms. Epperson stated that copies of all material found will be placed in the Laffite Society archives in due course. Her written acknowledgment of appreciation, according to the Secretary, will be shown to members at a next regular meeting.

OTHER ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

1) The President extended thanks to Jack and Karin Ramsay for the evening's presentation, and announced that they would return again for additional book signing at The Eiband Gallery on June 16, 2001.

2) Thanks and appreciation given to Betty Wilson and Don Peak (his cake) for the evening's refreshments.

MEETING ADJOURNED

There being no further business, the general meeting of May 8, 2001 was adjourned.

Submitted by,

DOROTHY L. MCDONALD KARILANOVIC
Recording/Corresponding Secretary
THE LAFFITE SOCIETY

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5/1/01

MINUTES
General Meeting
July 10, 2001
THE LAFFITE SOCIETY
The Eiband Gallery
2201 Post Office Street
GALVESTON, TX. 77550

BOARD PRESENT: President, Jeff Modzelewski; Second Vice-President, Mike Eubank; Third Vice-President, Kathy Modzelewski; Rec./Corresp. Secretary, Dorothy McD. Karilanovic; Treasurer, Jerry Eubank; Parliamentarian, Diane Olson; Historian, Jean L. Epperson; Press Director, Dave Roberts

BOARD ABSENT: First Vice-President (office vacant); Archivist (office vacant); Coordinator of Research, Kileen Prather; Editor-of-Publications, Don Marler

ADVISORY BOARD PRESENT: Jean L. Epperson; R. Dale Olson; Reginald Wilson

MEMBERS-AT-LARGE: Vivienne Kay Bass; Stephen Broadstone; Craig Hlavinka; Donald Peak; Ginny Roberts; Betty Wilson

VISITORS: Loyce Jardell; Sheldon Kindall; Jim Nonus; Kelly Wilson

CALL TO ORDER

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

MINUTES

Minutes of the June meeting, recorded by Press Director Dave Roberts in the absence of the Secretary who was out of town, were read and approved.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer Jerry Eubank reported the balance in the LS account on 6/2/01 as \$3,382.79, with disbursements as follows: refreshments, \$26.82; deposits (dues), \$196.00. Ending balance on 7/10/01, \$3,551.97.

PATRICK LAFFITE ANALYSIS OF HANDWRITING IN *THE JOURNAL*

President Jeff Modzelewski read to members the Laffite Society Secretary's March 29 English translation of a report on an analysis of the handwriting in the controversial document, *The Journal of Jean Laffite: the Privateer-Patriot's Own Story*, prepared by French Laffite Society member Patrick Lafitte. Mr. Lafitte's report was intended for a seminar held at The University of Texas in Austin, TX on March 9, 2001, entitled *The French in Texas*, sponsored by the departments of Italian and French at the university. However, due to time limits, and as no English translation was available at that time, the paper was not presented at the seminar.

Following the reading, members discussed various conclusions observed in the report questioning the authenticity of the handwriting in *The Journal*.

JEAN LAFFITE - A FRENCHMAN OR A *GASCUONO*?

Referring to *Privateers of the Gulf*, from a copy of a type-written manuscript written in 1928 by Stanley Faye, recently published by Dogwood Press' Don Marler, , Dr. Reginald Wilson discussed quoted material from a letter written by Faye, who had lived and been educated in France, to Texas history writer

J. Frank Dobie Jan. 16, 1929. Paraphrasing from Faye's text, Dr. Wilson stated that, assuming that the Laffites were from Bordeaux or Bayonne, in the Languedoc region of southwestern France, it does not necessarily follow that they spoke French. In the 19th century and for generations the *Gascono* dialect had been spoken fluently "by certainly half the people, preferred to French by the working people . . . in some places used to the exclusion of French." Further, three dialects or separate languages, including *Gascono*, which sounds like Spanish, were spoken in the Languedoc region, any one or all three of which, or a mixture, may have been spoken by the Laffites, thus possibly explaining why most of the French language used in *The Journal of Jean Laffite: the Privateer-Patriot's Own Story*, alleged to have been written by Jean Laffite, was not that of a well educated speaker of French.

"PROOF" THAT *THE JOURNAL* IS A FORGERY?

In his recent analysis of the handwriting in *The Journal*, French researcher Patrick Lafitte has called attention to the omission from John A. Laffite's 1958 publication of this document of a sentence that mentions the city of Trujillo in Santo Domingo (*cf.* p. 193 of the original French text). Since the name "Port-au-Prince" was not changed to "Trujillo" until the years 1936 to 1961, the author of *The Journal* which was allegedly written from 1845-1850, could only have known this if he had written it in 1936 or after.

Discussion followed on whether or not other sites named "Trujillo" existed in Santo Domingo in the 1800s to which the author of *The Journal* might have alluded.

DID JEAN LAFFITE REALLY DIE IN 1823?

President Jeff Modzelewski read to members from three letters written to Dr. Reginald Wilson from Laffite author/researcher Robert C. Vogel, referring to newspaper accounts of the purported death of Jean Laffite during a skirmish with a British warship. Quoting Vogel's reference, "the 'famous Laffite' was reported among the gang of pirates attacked by USS Alligator off Sugar Key, Cuba, in May, 1822 - he escaped, according to the officer in charge."

In another instance, Robert Vogel quoted, "British naval records clearly stated a gun battle with pirates occurred off the Isle of Pines in March, 1823, when a RN [sic] sloop captured a ship commanded by the 'notorious Pepe'." Mr. Vogel further states that "these two independent events, widely reported (and misreported) in the national press may have become the basis for the claim in future generations that Jean Laffite died at sea in 1823.

JAMES DE LA PORTA, THE AUTHOR OF *THE JOURNAL*?

Member-at-Large Jim Nonus suggested that James De La Porta, possibly a cousin of Jean Laffite and who also served as his secretary, may have written *The Journal*. However, in this discussion, Dr. Reginald Wilson noted that De La Porta's handwriting appeared to be "completely different from that in *The Journal*."

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The President extended appreciation on behalf of members to Diane and R. Dale Olson for providing the evening's refreshments.

MEETING ADJOURNED

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at approximately 8:30 p.m.

Submitted by,

DOROTHY MCDONALD KARILANOVIC
Recording/Corresponding Secretary

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THE LAFFITE SOCIETY

MINUTES
General Meeting
August 14, 2001
THE LAFFITE SOCIETY
The Eiband's Gallery
2201 Post Office
GALVESTON, TX. 77550

BOARD PRESENT: President, Jeff Modzelewski; Second Vice-President, Mike Eubank; Third Vice-President, Kathy Modzelewski; Recording/Corresp. Secretary, Dorothy McDonald Karilanovic; Treasurer, Jerry Eubank; Historian, Jean L. Epperson

BOARD ABSENT: First Vice-President (office vacant); Archivist (office vacant); Parliamentarian, Diane Olson; Coordinator of Research, Kileen Prather; Editor of Publications, Don Marler; Press Director, Dave Roberts

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

MEMBERS-AT-LARGE: Vivienne Kay Bass; Stephen Broadstone; Donald Peak; Richard Rasche

VISITORS: Mia. Cummings; Sheldon Kindall; Al King

CALL TO ORDER

President Jeff Modzelewski called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

MINUTES

Minutes of the July 10th meeting were approved as read to members by the Secretary.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Beginning balance on 7/10/01 and ending balance on 8/14/01 was \$3,551.97; no disbursements, no dues, according to Treasurer, Jerry Eubank's report.

THE CHRONICLES

Copies of *The Laffite Society Chronicles, Vol. VII, No. 2, October, 2001*, were given out to members present.

OLSON'S BOOK CHAPTER ACKNOWLEDGED

The President called attention to a book chapter on Jean Laffite, some theories of his origin and fate, recently completed and submitted by ex-officio President of The Laffite Society R. Dale Olson. The chapter will be included in a publication compiling historical research by contributors to a seminar entitled *The French in Texas*, held in March of this year and sponsored by the French and Italian Departments at the University of Texas in Austin.

UPCOMING PRESENTATION ON SLAVERY IN TEXAS

Secretary Dorothy Karilanovic reported she had arranged for Professor Alex Pratt of College of the Mainland in Texas City to speak to The Laffite Society on Tuesday, November 13, 2001, on the subject of slavery in Texas and in Galveston. At Prof. Pratt's request, the Secretary will prepare and send a letter to him confirming date and time, etc.

RESEARCH FUND PROPOSAL OF MARCH, 2001 DEFERRED

After a short discussion and review of Laffite Society funds available, members decided that funding of individual research investigation would not be feasible at this time due to the expense required. The Committee formed to consider the proposal of Editor of Publications Don Marler is therefore dissolved.

“FINAL YEARS OF LAFFITE” ARTICLE

Laffite Society Historian and Advisory Board Member Jean L. Epperson read to members present her new article in the latest issue of *The Laffite Society Chronicles*, “The Final Years of Jean Laffite,” intended for the purpose of inspiring responses pro and con from readers on the theories presented. The article included a summary of theories and historical newspaper accounts of the reported death of Jean Laffite, leading Ms. Epperson to a logical conclusion that Laffite died “in the early months of 1823, probably in a sea battle with an, as yet, unknown adversary.”

Other historical newspaper accounts possibly confirming Laffite’s death at this time are being investigated by Laffite Society member, Gary Fretz of Fort Lauderdale, Florida, and will be reported in due course.

SILVER MINING BY THE SPANISH

Advisory Board Member Dr. Reginald Wilson continued his discussion briefly on the Spanish practice of mining and transporting great quantities of silver from South America which continued over several centuries. Dr. Wilson referred members to an article in a recent issue of *National Geographic Magazine* on pirates and privateers and the practice of transporting silver into Havana, Cuba in the 15th and 16th centuries.

MEETING ADJOURNED

There being no further business, the general meeting of August 14, 2001, was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Submitted by,

DOROTHY MCDONALD KARILANOVIC
Recording/Corresponding Secretary
THE LAFFITE SOCIETY

\dk

MINUTES
General Meeting
October 9, 2001
THE LAFFITE SOCIETY
The Eiband Gallery
2201 Post Office
GALVESTON, TX. 77550

BOARD PRESENT: President, Jeff Modzelewski; Second Vice-President, Mike Eubank; Third Vice-President, Kathy Modzelewski; Recording/Corresp. Secretary, Dorothy McDonald Karilanovic; Treasurer, Jerry Eubank; Historian, Jean L. Epperson; Parliamentarian, Diane Olson; Press Director, Dave Roberts

BOARD ABSENT: First Vice-President (office vacant); Archivist (office vacant); Coordinator of Research, Kileen Prather; Editor-of-Publications, Don Marler

ADVISORY BOARD PRESENT: Jean L. Epperson; R. Dale Olson; Dr. Reginald Wilson

MEMBERS-AT-LARGE: Judge Susan Baker (Hunger); Ron Broadstone; Stephen Broadstone; Don Peak; Richard Rasche; Ginny Roberts; Betty Wilson

GUESTS: Sheldon Kindall; Jennifer Smith, Atty.-at-Law

CALL TO ORDER

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

ANNOUNCEMENT OF UPCOMING NOV. 13 MEETING

President Jeff Modzelewski called for volunteers to provide refreshments for the November 10 meeting on "Slavery in Texas," at which extra attendance may be possible. Don Peak and Stephen Broadstone offered to contribute and other members were invited to bring a dish.

The President stated he would contact Professor Alex Pratt, speaker for the Nov. 13 date, via phone to reconfirm date and to request a bio-sketch.

MINUTES

Minutes of the August 14 meeting were approved as read to members by the Secretary. Due to cancellation of the September 11 meeting, the date of the terroristic attacks in New York City, Pennsylvania, and in Washington, D.C., no Minutes were available for that month.

TREASURY REPORT

Treasurer, Jerry Eubank, submitted her report showing a balance as of October 9, '01 of \$3,067.83, with no additions of deposits or dues.

LETTER OF SYMPATHY FROM PATRICK LAFITTE

The President read to members a letter written in English from French Laffite Society member Patrick Lafitte, offering his condolences to us as Americans after the September 11 attacks on our nation, to which President Jeff Modzelewski sent his thanks in a letter in French on behalf of the Laffite Society.

PROPOSED ARTICLE ON DEATH OF JEAN LAFFITE IN SEA BATTLE

The President reported that Laffite researcher Gary Fretz from Fort Lauderdale, FL has offered to submit an article for publication in *The Laffite Society Chronicles* on his recent research based on newspaper articles from authentic South American sources on the death of Jean Laffite, reported to have occurred during a sea battle in the early months of 1823. The President further stated that prior to publication of the Fretz article, an editorial committee will have the opportunity to review it. Also, at some future date, as a collateral project, the President suggested the Society might want to publish an article summarizing important research contributions by its major researchers, centering around the evidence on file for Jean Laffite's survival and life in anonymity as a resident of St. Louis, Missouri and Alton, Illinois.

PAM KEYES WEB PAGE

According to Dr. Reginald Wilson, advisory Board Member Pam Keyes of Miami, OK now has a Web Page focusing on court cases involving Pierre Laffite from 1800-1835, as well as on members of the New Orleans Association.

MYSTERY SOLVED?

Historian Jean L. Epperson read to members an e-mail letter from Laffite researcher Gary Fretz in which he referred to a newspaper article quoted from the *Gaceta de Colombia* from April 20, 1823, stating that Jean Laffite was killed in a battle with two Spanish vessels off Omoa, Honduras, February 4, 1823. According to Mr. Fretz in his e-mail letter, the above information was provided to him in August, '01 in an English translation by Paula Covington, Latin American and Iberian Bibliographer at Vanderbilt University. Subsequent to receipt of this initial English translation, Mr. Fretz forwarded a copy of the original news article in Spanish to President Jeff Modzelewski who provided a second English translation which was essentially in agreement with the Vanderbilt version.

Following receipt of the news article in Spanish, an exchange of correspondence occurred briefly between the President and Mr. Fretz on the possible meaning of the word "Viento" as used in the news article to refer to the coastal site near which the sea battle may have occurred - "Viento de Omoa." It was suggested, but not decided conclusively, that the word "viento" may have referred to a sea term describing a course or direction, or a "land breeze" possibly, rather than to mean "wind" as is its usual translation.

In further reference to the description of the Spanish schooner given in the translation, Laffite Society member and nautical archeologist Tom Oertling offered the opinion via e-mail that the word "coliza" (or "colisa") in the Spanish text might refer to a "pivot gun" located amidships rather than at the stern of the ship.

Mr. Fretz further stated in his August e-mail correspondence that he had sent an inquiry on the newspaper report of Laffite's death in 1823 to the Latin American section at Duke University's library, suggesting that more information might be available from Colombian, South American naval logs.

For members' interest, Mr. Fretz also forwarded to Ms Jean L. Epperson a copy of his biography.

A SUMMING UP

Advisory Board Member and a leading Laffite researcher Dr. Reginald Wilson provided a brief oral summary of major goals accomplished to date by Laffite Society researchers since inception of the Society in July, 1994.

EMMA MORTIMER LAFFITE'S MARRIAGE

Dr. Reginald Wilson reported that Susan Baker Hunger, Member-at-Large, had searched the Baltimore, MD marriage certificate files via the Internet for evidence of a marriage contracted in 1831 between Emma Mortimer and Jean Laffite. The marriage was stated to have occurred, according to Laffite, in his controversial "journal" alleged to have been written under his own hand. The search produced no findings.

Dr. Wilson suggested that the marriage might have occurred in South Carolina, possibly in Charleston. Ms. Hunger offered to continue an Internet search.

SUGGESTED SPECIAL EVENT TRAVEL LOCALES

Advisory Board Member R. Dale Olson mentioned possible future travel sites in association with Laffite Society research interests: 1) Soto la Marina, MX; 2) Veracruz, MX; 3) Yucatan Peninsula, MX; 4) Bordeaux, France; 5) Cartagena, Colombia, S.A.; 6) Island of Cuba; 7) Palacios, TX; 8) Matagorda, TX; 9) New Orleans, LA (annual Louisiana Historical Society meeting in Jan.).

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The President welcomed a visit from Attorney-at-Law Jennifer Smith.

MEETING ADJOURNED

There being no further business, the General Meeting stood to adjourn at approximately 8:45 p.m.

Submitted by,

Dorothy McDonald Karilanovic
Recording/Corresponding Secretary
THE LAFFITE SOCIETY

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MINUTES
November 13, 2001
THE LAFFITE SOCIETY
General Meeting
The Eiband Gallery
2201 Post Office St.
GALVESTON, TX. 77550

BOARD PRESENT: President, Jeff Modzelewski; Second Vice-President, Mike Eubank; Third Vice-President, Kathy Modzelewski; Recording/Corresp., Secretary Dorothy McDonald Karilanovic; Treasurer, Jerry Eubank; Editor-of-Publications, Don Marler; Press Director, Dave Roberts; Historian, Jean L. Epperson; Parliamentarian, Diane Olson

BOARD ABSENT: First Vice-President (office vacant); Archivist (office vacant); Coordinator of Research, Kileen Prather

ADVISORY BOARD PRESENT: Jean L. Epperson; R. Dale Olson

MEMBERS-AT-LARGE: Ron Broadstone; Stephen Broadstone; Richard Prather; Richard Rasche; Norman and Margie Sachnik;

GUESTS/VISITORS: Ellen Adriance; Samantha Bosshart; Lisa Del Bosque; Kelly Emerson; David Gaston; Jean Gusman; Carlos Guergin; Jackie Hasan; Sharon Herrington; Douglas J. Kanoy; Al King; Lisa Leal; Debra McCracken; Louis and Dolly Nichol; Joseph C. O'Drobinak; Lesley Sommer; James Templar (Vice-Pres., College of the Mainland); Lynn Thompson

CALL TO ORDER

President Jeff Modzelewski called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m., and following welcoming remarks to members and the many visitors in attendance, gave a brief description of the Society's goals and interests.

Upon opening remarks, Professor Alex Pratt from College of the Mainland at Texas City, TX. gave a talk on the history of slavery in Texas and on Galveston Island, in association with the Society's interest in the smuggling and selling of slaves practiced in the 19th century by Jean and Pierre Laffite and their contemporaries. To accompany his talk, Professor Pratt provided the audience with copies of news articles describing conditions of life, slavery laws and codes as they existed in Texas at that time.

MINUTES

Minutes of the October 9, 2001 meeting were approved as read to members by the Secretary.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer Jerry Eubank reported the current balance on today's date as \$3,077.91.

VOGELS' VISIT TO ISLE

The President reported that Laffite Society author and researcher Robert C. Vogel and his wife Kathleen Taylor Vogel had visited the island for several days the previous week.

TRANSLATORS CONTACTED

Laffite Society member and researcher Gary Fretz from Ft. Lauderdale, FL mentioned in a recent e-mail the possibility of arranging for two Spanish translators to assist in research in South America on news articles in that country relating to the reported death in a sea battle in 1823 of Jean Laffite.

RESEARCH FUNDS

A short discussion was taken up on a previous proposal to make some funds available for researchers. Parliamentarian Diane Olson suggested that, since the Society's financial resources are limited, requests for funding should be considered on an individual basis and a cap placed on funds permitted for use.

HONORARY MEMBERSHIP

Richard Prather, Member-at-Large, suggested that, in lieu of offering honoraria to potential speakers, the Society might consider giving an honorary membership.

JARVIS PAINTING OF LAFFITE

In a recent e-mail to Jean L. Epperson, Laffite researcher Gary Fretz reported that, beneath layers of paint on the canvas of the work attributed to Jarvis known as *THE GAMBLER*, the name of "Ames" was uncovered.

SUNKEN LAFFITE VESSEL FOUND?

Member-at-Large Richard Prather gave to the Secretary for the archive an article dated Sunday, November 4, 2001, from *The Houston Chronicle* about a sunken vessel found in a little known lake off of the Trinity River, 35 miles east of Galveston, long believed by some to have belonged to Jean Laffite. State marine archeologists want to officially examine the site. Laffite Society researchers Jean L. Epperson and Robert C. Vogel were quoted in the article.

Due to time limits, a reading and discussion of the article was deferred until the next regularly scheduled general meeting.

SPECIAL EVENT TRAVEL

Discussion followed on plans for travel in the spring down the Texas coast to Palacios, TX, to Soto la Marina, Mx. and possibly to Veracruz, MX. Third Vice-President and Special Events Chairman Kathy Modzelewski will gather information on these areas to present at a future meeting.

HOLIDAY PARTY

Instead of the regular meeting, the Laffite Society will hold its annual holiday party and covered dish buffet at The Eiband Gallery on Tuesday, December 11, 2001.

MEETING ADJOURNED

There being no further business, members stood to adjourn at 8:45 p.m.

Submitted by,

Dorothy McDonald Karilanovic
Recording/Corresponding Secretary
THE LAFFITE SOCIETY

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