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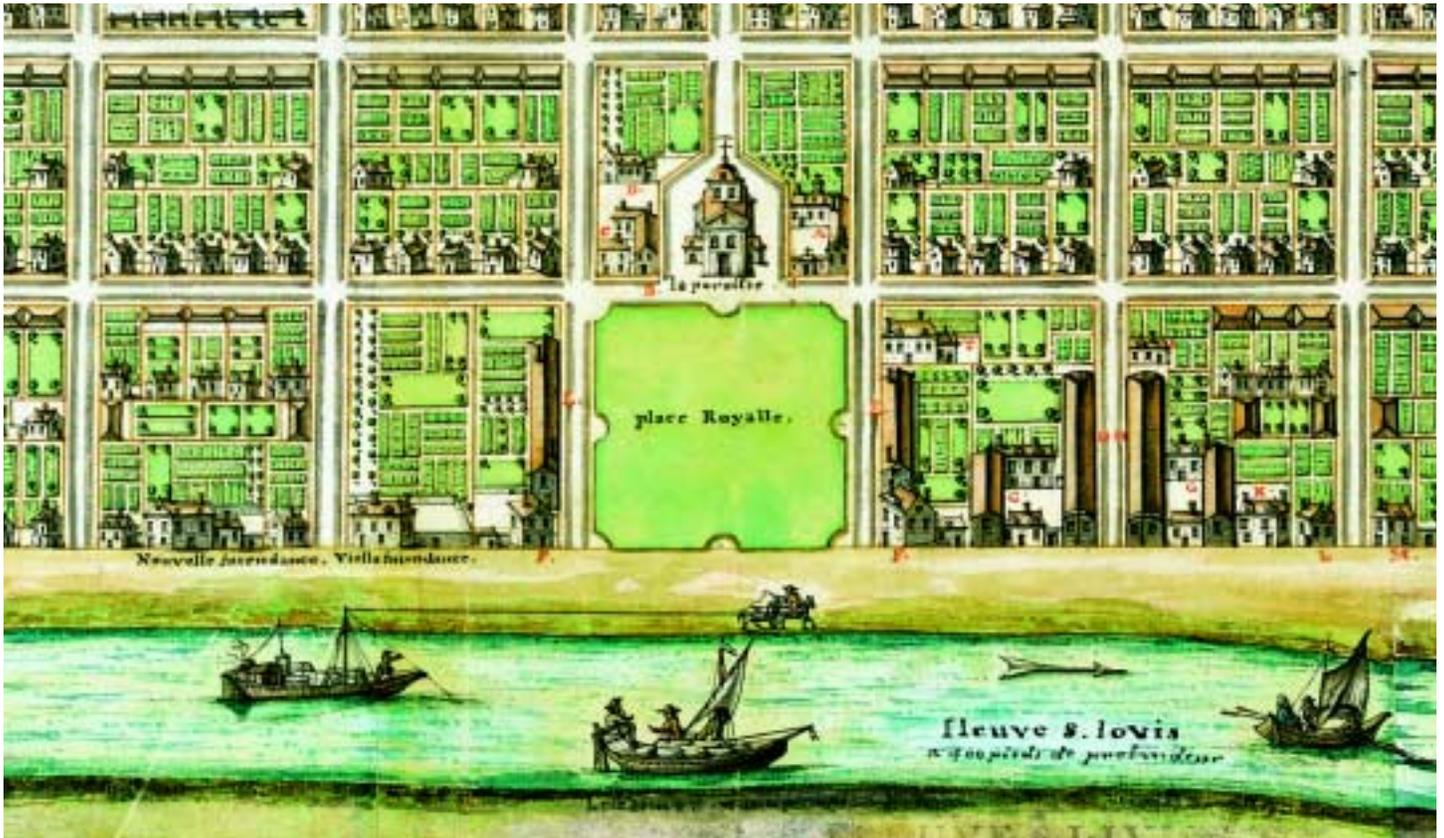
*In Search of
Yesterday's Gardens*



American Aloe or Century Plant, *photograph by Jay Dearborn Edwards, between 1857 and 1860 (1982.167.4)*; top, *Camellia japonica 'Alba Plena' Photograph by Michael P. Smith*

Landscapes of 19th-Century New Orleans

IN SEARCH OF YESTERDAY'S GARDENS: LANDSCAPES OF 19TH-CENTURY NEW ORLEANS



Detail, Plan de la Ville/La Nouvelle Orléans/Capitale de la Province de la Louisiane by Thierry, 1755 (1939.8). Eighteenth-century gardens were based on function.

In April 24 the Historic New Orleans Collection opened its doors to the exhibition *In Search of Yesterday's Gardens: Landscapes of 19th-Century New Orleans*. In many ways the story of gardens echoes the history of the city itself. Guest curator Lake Douglas examines 19th-century gardening, drawing upon information from early horticultural journals and books, advertisements, maps, photographs, paintings, and garden plans. He traces the growth of gardens as they evolved into places of beauty and repose. His view of yesterday's gardens includes materials from THNOC's holdings as well as from the archives of institutions throughout the state.

Lake Douglas talked to the *Quarterly* about the New Orleans landscape and his plans for the exhibition.

Quarterly: Tell us about the earliest gardens.

LD: The colonial settlers had to produce food to sustain themselves. On early maps, you can see the organizational patterns of gardens. Dwellings and gardens were organized in a geometric pattern, a plan based on function. In a drawing by Dumont de Montigny—it's in the Newberry Library in Chicago—you see orchards and vegetables, and there's a roosting tree for chickens. By the 1750s German settlers upriver were producing enough food to export to the Caribbean islands. Then you fast forward to the end

of the 18th century and find many different kinds of people here. Cotton and rice and sugar were successful cash crops. The French, Spanish, Germans, and Africans brought their customs to Louisiana—there were many layers and influences.

Quarterly: When did gardens become more ornamental and less utilitarian?

LD: It's complicated. The short answer is from the 1830s to the 1850s. New Orleans by the 1840s and '50s was one of the largest cities in the country. There was an explosion of economic growth, and New Orleans was the center of this growth in the South. Entrepreneurs were on the scene, and many of them settled in the Garden District. Their buildings and gardens followed American



Decorative garden urn from Hinderer's Iron Fence Works, Catalogue No. 7, 1890, New Orleans

styles—they were more rectangular and were placed in the middle of the property, as opposed to the French system. People wanted to acquire things. There was an explosion of interest in plant materials—if you have an ornamental garden, you must have plants available.

Quarterly: What did an early 19th-century garden contain?

LD: Martha Turnbull of Rosedown Plantation near St. Francisville kept a plant record—we know that by 1834 she was buying camellias for the garden. And newspaper ads from the 1820s list camellias, jonquils, and tuberoses. Camellias were introduced from Japan into Europe in the 1790s. They came to America, probably through Charleston, and were quickly available in New Orleans.

Quarterly: Was there more gardening

interest in New Orleans than in other places?

LD: The place is so lush and people responded accordingly.

Quarterly: Where did gardening information come from?

LD: From Thomas Affleck, a Scotsman, for one. He settled in Natchez and started a nursery in the mid-19th century and began publishing a horticultural almanac. There were magazines, too, such as *The Horticulturist* by Andrew Jackson Downing. Also, *Le Nouveau Jardinier de la Louisiane* by J. F. Lelièvre. The book follows a certain format, month by month, and there was a suggested list of plants, with instructions on things like how to raise a garden bed or what to do about garden pests. The interesting thing is that books from France at the same time were similar.

Quarterly: When did fountains in French Quarter gardens come into fashion?

LD: Courtyard gardens with fountains are probably a 20th-century addition. In the 19th century, courtyards were service areas—for laundry or for growing vegetables.

Quarterly: How did the 1884 World's Fair influence the New Orleans landscape?

LD: For the first time New Orleanians were exposed to a large organized open space—the fair was on the site of the former Boré plantation and, much later, the place where Union troops had set up camp. Horticultural Hall was a popular feature of the fair where visitors discovered new plants, such as water hyacinths, and admired basins of goldfish. After the fair, the area was developed as Audubon Park by the Olmsted Brothers [the Massachusetts firm].

Quarterly: What is the legacy of 19th-century gardens?

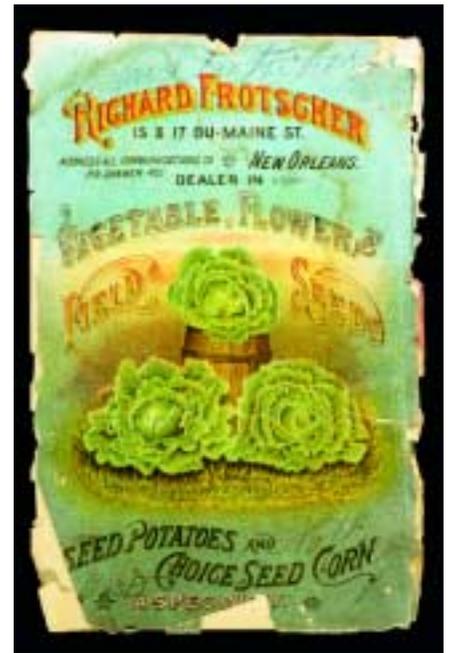


Rose, 'Duchesse de Brabant.' Photograph by Michael P. Smith

LD: We have a rich inventory of different kinds of open spaces. We're used to what's around us, but we need to look closely at our green spaces and our neutral grounds [median strips]. They're really linear parks, like Boston's Emerald Necklace. You could take a walk on the neutral grounds in New Orleans that would take you from Lee Circle to Carrollton Avenue, to the New Orleans Museum of Art, down Esplanade



The Horticultural Hall of the World's Industrial and Cotton Centennial Exposition, poster, Southern Lithographic Company, 1884 or 1885 (1957.40)



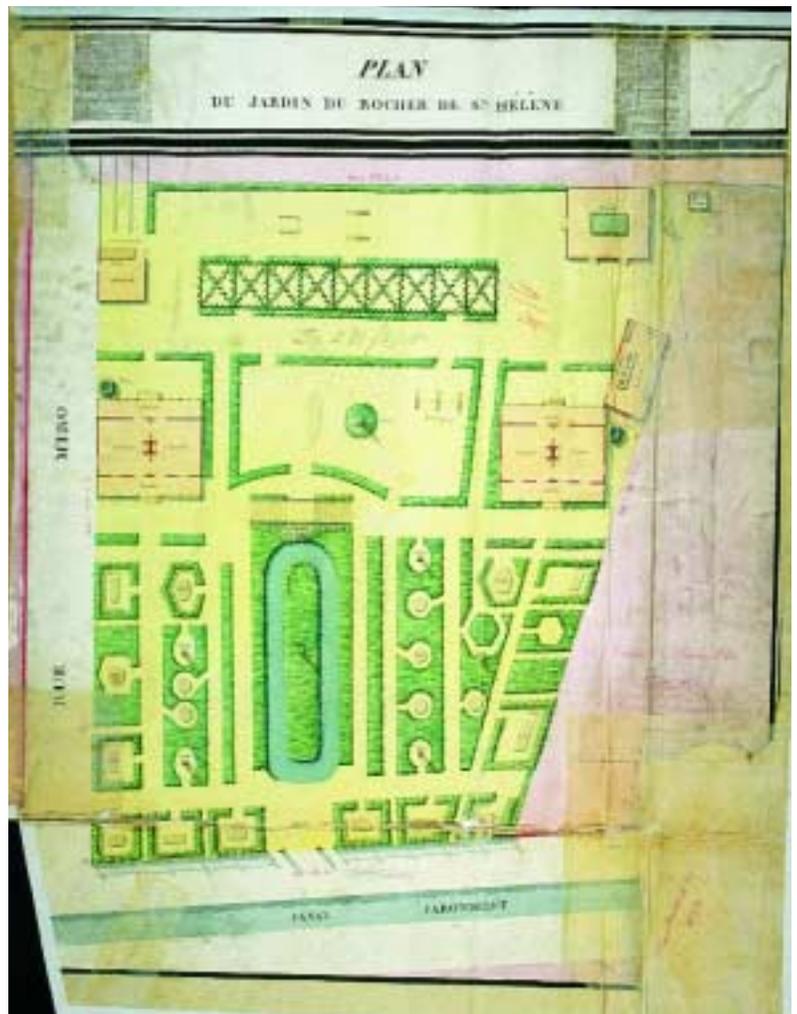
Catalogue, Richard Frotscher's Almanac and Garden Manual for the Southern States, 1891

Avenue to the river, and from the foot of Canal Street up to Audubon Park.

Quarterly: What are some of the things we'll see in the exhibition?

LD: Well, just to mention a few, there's the Thierry map of New Orleans from the middle of the 18th century that shows orderly French parterre gardens. From the next century, you'll see the Thomas Affleck almanac and garden calendar for 1852 and 19th-century garden-furniture catalogues from Hinderer and Company. There are wonderful images from the Notarial Archives—plans of properties for sale that included gardens—such as the *jardin du rocher de Ste Hélène* (1844), a pleasure garden on the Carondelet Canal, as well as early photographs of local gardens. All of these images and artifacts in the exhibition pay homage to New Orleans's rich horticultural heritage—we see it all around us in our parks and squares, neutral grounds, and in our private gardens.

In Search of Yesterday's Gardens: Landscapes of 19th-Century New Orleans remains on view in the Williams Gallery through December 29, 2001.



Plan du jardin du rocher de Ste Hélène, 1844, a pleasure garden on the Carondelet Canal. Courtesy New Orleans Notarial Archives (35.16)

THOMAS AFFLECK AND THE SOUTHERN RURAL ALMANAC, 1851-1854

Thomas Affleck (1812-1868) is a central figure in the advancement of horticulture in the mid-19th-century South, though today, his contributions are largely unknown. His career included extensive writings and horticultural activities from 1842, when he settled near Natchez, until his death in 1868 in Brenham, Texas. In 1846 he began editing *Norman's Southern Agricultural Almanac* (published in New Orleans); in 1851 its name changed to *Affleck's Southern Rural Almanac and Plantation and Garden Calendar*. The Collection has recently acquired editions from 1851 to 1854, now bound in one volume, where they join a well-worn copy of *Norman's Almanac for 1847*. Together, these works represent an important body of information about mid-19th-century horticultural commerce and practices in the Natchez/New Orleans region.

Born in Scotland, Affleck attended lectures in agriculture at the University of Edinburgh. Ambitious and enterprising, he immigrated to America in 1832, and his arrival coincided with the country's geographic, intellectual, and economic expansion. Markets for agricultural information were increasing, and technological advancements made publication and distribution of scientific information possible and affordable. Consequently agricultural publications appeared in America like mushrooms. Finding his way to Cincinnati by 1840, Affleck became junior editor (then editor) at one such publication, the *Western Farmer and Gardener*.

Affleck traveled extensively in Mississippi and Louisiana in 1841 and reported on his travels for the *Western Farmer*. What he found there was opportunity. In 1842 he moved to Washington, Mississippi, married the widow Anna Dunbar Smith, became a large-scale planter, and created one of the first horticultural nurseries in the South, importing plants from European and American suppliers. Surviving commercial records show that he corresponded extensively with New Orleans clients and conducted business there with horticultural suppliers, publishers, merchants, lawyers, and others. Though his family's residence, nursery, and plantation were in the Natchez area, much of his business was in New Orleans. In 1857,

sensing imminent conflict, he moved to Washington County, Texas, where he established another farm and nursery with stock from his Mississippi operation. At the time of his death, he had done much to rehabilitate postbellum Texas agriculture and livestock.

Affleck wrote throughout his career. Highly regarded, his reports, articles, and commentaries appeared in a variety of contemporary newspapers (he became agricultural editor of the New Orleans *Picayune* in 1851), journals, and national periodicals. The cover of the 1854 *Southern Rural Almanac* proudly states that it "enters upon its sixth year with a circulation of 100,000 copies. It is believed that its effect upon the Agriculture and Horticulture of the South has been beneficial..." Offering practical advice on how, when, and what to plant, this work also reported on local environmental conditions and listed plant varieties available from Affleck's nursery. His other works include *Record and Account Books* for cotton and sugar plantations (published in New Orleans and used extensively throughout the South) and *Hedging and Hedging Plants in the Southern States* (1869).

Collectively these works are important records of agrarian affairs in the Mississippi/Louisiana/Texas region during the mid-19th century; individually *Affleck's Southern Rural Almanac* provides important information about horticultural practices in the New Orleans region.

—Lake Douglas

Mr. Douglas is the guest curator of In Search of Yesterday's Gardens: Landscapes of 19th-Century New Orleans.



Lake Douglas



Illustration from Thomas Affleck's *Almanac* (2001-38-RL)

GARDEN EVENTS

In Search of Yesterday's Gardens, a documentary film on the vanished gardens of colonial and antebellum New Orleans and surrounding area, will air on WYES-TV 12 in New Orleans **Sunday, May 6, 2001, at 7:00 p.m.** The film is produced by the Historic New Orleans Collection with Karen Snyder as writer/producer. Narration is by actor John McConnell, and original music is by Sanford Hinderlie. Contributing support for the documentary and exhibition comes from a grant from the Louisiana Division of the Arts, Office of Cultural Development, Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism in cooperation with the Louisiana State Arts Council and the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency. Video cassettes of the film will be available in the Shop at the Collection (504-598-7147).

Lake Douglas, guest curator of *In Search of Yesterday's Gardens*, will present *Cultivating Open Spaces in 19th-Century New Orleans*, a lecture on the development of the parks, squares, and other open spaces of the city, **Thursday, May 10, 2001, at 6:00 p.m., 533 Royal Street.** After the lecture, authors Lake Douglas and Jeannette Hardy and photographer Richard Sexton will sign *Gardens of New Orleans: Exquisite Excess*. Reservations are suggested (504-598-7171).

THIRD SATURDAY

A Continuing Program at the Williams Research Center

410 Chartres Street, 9:30 – 11:00 a.m.

An introduction to research at the Williams Research Center. The final portion of each session focuses on a particular resource. **May 19:** Cultivated Pleasures: Researching Louisiana Gardening; **June 16:** Studying the Germans of New Orleans; **July 21:** 300 Years of Mobile, Alabama.

Sessions are held in the reading room of the Williams Research Center. Please call (504) 598-7171 for reservations. Light refreshments follow. The reading room will open to the public at noon.

JOSÉ FRANCISCO XAVIER DE SALAZAR Y MENDOZA: SPANISH COLONIAL PAINTER IN LOUISIANA

Although people equate the Vieux Carré with New Orleans's earliest French colonists, the architecture, courtyards, and ironwork are Spanish in influence. Correspondingly, Louisiana's earliest art traditions have a Spanish foundation. The first known painter in the colonies was a Spaniard, Miguel García, who accompanied Jean Baptiste Le Moyne, sieur de Bienville, to Louisiana, but his artistic contribution is unknown. José Francisco Xavier de Salazar y Mendoza (mid-1700s-1802), a native of Mérida in the Yucatán Peninsula, was the earliest portrait painter to thrive in colonial Louisiana, painting for two decades. He arrived in New Orleans in 1782 with his wife, Maria Antonia Magaña, his infant son, José, and his daughter, Francisca—whom he taught to paint, and who assisted him in painting portraits.

The source of Salazar's artistic training is uncertain, but the transparent glazes in many of his portraits, as in *Clara de la Motte and Captain Julien Vienne and his son Julien George Vienne*, bear similarities to Goya's technique, and his style has frequently been compared to that of Goya. Salazar's legacy richly documents many of the city's French and Spanish citizens during those early years of the city's founding. His best known works portray the city's first religious and civic leaders—including Père Antoine de Sedella, Bishop Luís de Peñalver y Cárdenas, and Don

Andrés Almonester y Roxas. Two signed companion portraits by Salazar depict Carlos Trudeau, Louisiana's first surveyor general, and his wife. Other portraits include those serving in the militia or the army, particularly under the command of

limitations in the appearance of depth. Salazar restricts himself to a limited palette composed of monochromatic hues, yet he revels in depicting silvery blue dresses and bold red trim on military uniforms. He arranges his subject against a dark background with minimal tonal variation. His works convey a sense of directness and freshness, particularly in the brushwork, which retains the character of the brushstroke. This is usually visible in the highlights of women's gowns and in gentlemen's cravats and waistcoats, as seen in a July 1797 signed portrait of an unidentified man (at left).

This portrait differs somewhat from Salazar's usual thin transparencies, especially in the area of the clothing, but the oval format is typical of many of his portraits. There are, however, no attributes referring to the sitter's life or career. Despite the lack of identifying uniform or props, the sitter conveys a sense of self-assuredness and social position. It has been suggested that the sitter is the wealthy entrepreneur-politician, Daniel Clark. The Collection's staff would appreciate any information on the subject. Although the body of Salazar's works provides a view of life in the colony, this painting is but one presenting questions that are unanswered.

—Judith H. Bonner

This article is taken from the lecture that Mrs. Bonner gave at the sixth annual Williams Research Center symposium, Bourbon Louisiana: Reflections of the Spanish Enlightenment.



Portrait of a gentleman, oil on canvas, 1797, by José Francisco Xavier de Salazar y Mendoza (1984.14)

General Bernardo de Gálvez, such as Captain Vienne.

Although many sources state that he was self-taught, Salazar arrived in Louisiana as a mature artist. His existing portraits underscore his technical proficiency, his skill in compositional complexity, and his awareness of Mexican and European painting traditions.

There are drawing problems and



January 20: Symposium speakers, Bourbon Louisiana: Reflections of the Spanish Enlightenment, *left to right*, Dr. Vicente Ribes, Dr. Javier Morales, Dr. Guillermo Nández Falcón (moderator), Dr. Gilbert C. Din, Dr. Leticia Ruiz, Dr. Sylvia L. Hilton, Judith Bonner, Dr. Ralph Lee Woodward, Jr. Not pictured, Dr. Alfred E. Lemmon. The symposium was also presented in Spain at the Universidad de Alcalá.



February 17: Symposium speakers, Taking the Measure of Marie Adrien Persac, John Lawrence, Sally Kittredge Reeves, Barbara SoRelle Bacot, John Magill. Not pictured, H. Parrott Bacot

AWARDS

Grave Injustice, a documentary film produced by Ralph Madison for WDSU-TV, won both an Emmy award and an Associated Press best documentary award for 2000 for its coverage of statues and other decorative artifacts that were stolen from New Orleans cemeteries. The film featured images from THNOC's holdings and interviews with Mary Louise Christovich, president of the board of directors, and Patricia Brady, director of publications.

Marie Adrien Persac: Louisiana Artist (LSU Press) won the Humanities Book of the Year Award at the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities 2001 Humanities Awards

ceremony on April 6. The book also won the Louisiana Literary Award of the Louisiana Library Association.

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

Expansion of the Historic New Orleans Collection museum facilities has created the opportunity to increase our volunteer corps. For more information please call Marjy Greenberg at 598-7141, Tuesday through Friday.

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Spring is such a glorious time in New Orleans! We invite you to visit the French Quarter and see *In Search of Yesterday's Gardens*, the new exhibition in the Williams Gallery. Many thanks to our guest curator, Lake Douglas, for helping us explore the history of how gardening developed from colonial times to the 20th century. Wonderful documentary evidence is on view, and I'm sure this will be an exhibition you will want to enjoy over and over. The accompanying video program airs on WYES-TV 12 on May 6. Patricia Brady was the executive producer of the video.



We are sorry to announce that Pat Brady will be retiring as our longtime colleague. As director of publications for the Historic New Orleans Collection for almost 20 years, she has developed our publishing program into an award-winning endeavor. A distinguished scholar and historian, Pat has also contributed enormously to every aspect of our services. We wish her the utmost success in her new writing career—she will be sorely missed.

Congratulations and thanks to Lou Hoffman, current *Quarterly* editor, for agreeing to serve as acting director of publications. With Lynn Adams, editor, and Mary Mees, publications assistant, the excellent work of the department will continue.

A special donation from Les Comédiens Français to establish a fund for an annual lecture on aspects of French history and culture deserves particular notice. Look for a forthcoming announcement for the first lecture to be held during the summer. Many important donations are received each year that build the collections and enhance our services. So many of you give your time and resources to assist the Historic New Orleans Collection in its mission. Thank you all!

— Priscilla Lawrence

“I’m very passionate about prepositions!” Patricia Brady declares, an editorial gleam in her eye. The right ones to use, that is. And not only prepositions. Errant apostrophes get plenty of attention, too. She always holds out hope that writers will use *comprise* correctly. “Perfection is not impossible!”—this remark comes after years of shepherding manuscripts along the slippery path to the printer, a job she has relished since joining the Collection staff in 1980.

To begin at the beginning, Pat Brady came to New Orleans from Texas to study English at Newcomb College but decided instead to become a historian (“by happenstance,” she says, “because of the professors in the history department”). She earned her Ph.D. from Tulane University and soon afterward began teaching history at Dillard University.

When Pat came to the Collection, she was able to combine two passions, history and books. “Reading, writing, making, and selling books has been an overriding theme of my life,” she says. An early project was editing and writing the introduction to *Nelly Custis Lewis’s Housekeeping Book*. In 1982 Pat was named director of publications and in 1983 launched the first issue of the *Historic New Orleans Collection Newsletter*, now the *Quarterly*. She worked with architectural historian Samuel Wilson, Jr., to produce John H. B. Latrobe’s journal of 1834 and served as general editor of *The Encyclopaedia of New Orleans Artists, 1718-1918*, a reference classic. The ensuing years saw the publication of preservation guides, a bibliography of New Orleans imprints, and books about the photographs of Clarence John Laughlin and the art collection of Laura Simon Nelson. The award-winning *Queen of the South: New Orleans, 1853-1862*, *The Journal of Thomas K. Wharton*, lavishly illustrated, appeared in 1999 and soon became a local bestseller.

She reads voraciously and is a self-confessed addict of mystery stories—which she buys by the pound. Her childhood favorite,



Photograph by Michel Varisco



Nancy Craig and the Mystery of the Fire Opal, was the book that first captured her imagination. Reading is a way of life (does she read while sleeping?), providing her with a special cache of arcane information about 18th-century English sailing vessels, say, or obsolete Mexican coins, or the foreign phrase that stumps everybody else (just recently, it was *dolce far niente*—sweet indolence).

Literary influences? Marcel Proust is an ongoing favorite who created “a whole universe of experience. He was a gossip and a storyteller who explored the layers of people’s lives.” She recalls Anthony Powell’s multivolume *A Dance to the Music of Time*, and eventually the conversation circles back to her special focus—history. “All good his-

torians need to be interested in gossip. I want to know about relationships, about people—that’s what history is about.”

Pat Brady says that working on *Complementary Visions of Louisiana Art: The Laura Simon Nelson Collection at the Historic New Orleans Collection* was a watershed event in her publishing career at the Collection. She met donor Laura Simon Nelson—“a luminous soul, so much generosity”—and decided to start her own collection of art, following Mrs. Nelson’s example. “My paintings speak to me artistically, but they also tell me a story.” She favors women artists and is particularly drawn to subjects depicting an artist at work. “It’s peeking inside to see the creative process.” She adds, “That’s why I like to read the *Paris Review* interviews. Take Richard Ford, for example. You can read about how creativity strikes him, how he expresses it.”

The image of a kaleidoscope comes close to revealing Pat’s world of related interests, each facet reflecting and enriching another. Picture her surrounded by page proofs of the Wharton book or serving as Saturday captain of the New Orleans Booksellers tent at Jazz Fest—in the rain. Think of her giving a standing-room-only lecture at the Jefferson Parish Library or holding a reception for Newcomb’s writer-in-residence at her eighth-floor condominium overlooking Audubon Park. Or she is calling Susan Larson—the *Times-Picayune* book-page editor—to say her review of Eudora Welty’s *Country Churchyards* is on the way. She’s a regular at the Tennessee Williams Festival, sharing literary panels and repartee with writers such as Alfred Kazin, Gail Godwin, Doris Betts, and Andrei Codrescu. The kaleidoscope turns, and you find Pat chatting in Spanish with Leticia Ruiz, curator at the Prado, in town for the Collection’s symposium, *Reflections of the Spanish Enlightenment*. Or she is at Mount Vernon presenting a paper about

Nelly Custis Lewis, George Washington's adopted daughter.

But the best place to picture her is at the Collection, standing in front of a podium in the Counting House. She feels at home. She is speaking about New Orleans in the 1850s and the ravages of yellow fever. Her voice is clear. She rarely looks at her notes. While she is speaking, the audience is wrapped in her words, visualizing the scene she is describing. "I come from a family of

storytellers—everybody was competing to see who could tell the best story. So when I lecture, I tell a story. I just revisit somebody else's old times." She makes it look as easy as one, two, three.

—*Louise C. Hoffman*

Dr. Patricia Brady resigned from the Collection April 1 to become a full-time writer. She is working on a biography of the first First Lady, Martha Washington.

Le Chevalier de Pradel



Mon Plaisir, house and garden of Jean Charles Pradel (le Chevalier de Pradel) as it appeared in 1750, watercolor by Jim Blanchard

The public spaces of New Orleans are strewn with monuments to politicians, soldiers, philanthropists, and assorted public figures, but strangely enough, the man who introduced artichokes to the city has been overlooked. That culinary pioneer, the chevalier de Pradel, was also one of the earliest, perhaps the first, to plant turnips and beets in Louisiana.

Colonial French settlers early accustomed themselves to native plants, such as wild apples, grapes, cushaws, and beans, eating them with relish. Pecans were a favorite for snacks or in desserts. Sweet potatoes were widely served—boiled, cooked in the coals like chestnuts, or dried as sweetmeats. Some enterprising colonists even made a sort of brandy from

them, perhaps more prized for its kick than its savor.

But like all expatriates, immigrants in Louisiana yearned for the foods of home. Citrus trees, brought from the Caribbean in the 1720s, were profusely planted in New Orleans, appreciated as food and for the sweet scent of their blossoms. Lettuces and other salad plants, green peas, peaches, pears, and other plants dear to European hearts were imported as soon as possible.

Jean Charles Pradel, a French officer, spent his first 16 years in Louisiana on military duty, mostly fighting Indians. After 1729, he settled into the life of a small planter and merchant, dealing in such French goods as cheeses, laces

(which he suggested be brought in a pocket to avoid import duties), ladies' headdresses, and barrels of wine, as well as secretly backing a common tavern. His enterprises flourished despite the periodic inconveniences of hurricanes and warfare, and in 1750, he bought a plantation on the west bank of the river, facing the Place d'Armes. There he built his dream "chateau," Mon Plaisir, laying out a large fan-shaped parterre garden in front on the riverside.

Indigo was his main cash crop, but he also planted a grove of wax myrtles. One of the out-buildings contained a "cirerie," a room with large cauldrons where the myrtle berries were boiled to extract wax for candles—green and yellow—which Pradel sold at a good price. Fruits and vegetables from his gardens also became a reliable source of income. Slaves rowed fresh produce across the river every day to sell at the open-air market on the levee.

Getting vegetable seeds to Louisiana in good shape, however, was difficult; many of the imported seeds proved unusable upon arrival. Pradel had a system for ensuring healthy seeds: Fresh-picked seeds were placed in little earthenware vessels, which had been varnished inside and closed tightly with cork stoppers. The necks of the containers were then dipped in melted wax to make them airtight. Following these precautions, the seeds survived the lengthy Atlantic voyage to grow in the garden of his "charming" estate.

Pradel apparently first planted artichokes in Louisiana in 1751, but a harsh winter killed many of his plants. The following year, he planted more, and with the blessing of a mild winter, the plants produced a thousand shoots which he carefully transplanted. By March 15, 1753, the garden of Mon Plaisir was producing two or three dozen fresh artichokes daily to sell in the New Orleans market at 6 sols 3 deniers each. The proud proprietor boasted: "They are as large as a saucer and much finer than those of France."

As Pradel wrote to his brother back home, "although we are in a different world than France we like our ease, and we look after our comforts as well as we can." And abundant artichokes were certainly one of the delights of civilized life in colonial Louisiana—thanks to the chevalier de Pradel.

—*Patricia Brady*

CELEBRATING TENNESSEE: THE FESTIVAL AT FIFTEEN

The 15th annual Tennessee Williams/New Orleans Literary Festival began with Master Classes, held at the Historic New Orleans Collection at the end of March. Literary and theatrical events took place at Le Petit Théâtre du Vieux Carré and at several other sites in the French Quarter. The Collection honored patrons and festival participants at a reception March 30.



Top row, Philip Caputo; Barry Unsworth; Michael Cunningham. Second row, Elizabeth Taylor; Melanie McKay, vice president for programming, with Jennifer Moses; Wally Lamb. Third row, Jonathan Dolger; Valerie Martin with Kenneth Holditch and Brobson Lutz; Susan Larson with Sybil Kein. Fourth row, Dakin Williams; Peggy Scott Laborde, festival president; Emily Heckman

ACQUISITIONS



THE HISTORIC NEW ORLEANS COLLECTION encourages research in the Williams Research Center at 410 Chartres Street from 10:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday (except holidays). Cataloged materials available to researchers include books, manuscripts, paintings, prints, drawings, maps, photographs, and artifacts about the history and culture of New Orleans, Louisiana, and the Gulf South. Each year the Collection adds thousands of items to its holdings by donation or purchase. Only a few recent acquisitions can be noted here.

CURATORIAL

Mrs. Laura Simon Nelson continues her annual donation with five paintings by Louisiana artists. Three of these are by Ellsworth Woodward: a turn-of-the-century view of Louisiana irises blooming in a swamp, a 1902 oil titled *Archway with Stairs*, and a 1935 watercolor profile of Robert Woodward, older brother of William and Ellsworth, who stayed at home and worked on the farm in Massachusetts in order to send his brothers to school. Mrs. Nelson's gift includes two other oil paintings: *Supplication* painted by Achille Peretti in 1897 and *The Farm in Autumn*, a mid-20th-century scene by Clarence Millet. This latter scene is a smaller version of a painting that hangs in the governor's mansion in Baton Rouge.

■ Mrs. Walter Cook Keenan III has given two paintings in memory of her mother, Rose Forsyth Strachan, both showing 1134 First Street. A watercolor by Boyd Cruise, painted in the 1960s, depicts the facade of this stately mansion, and a 1960s ink-and-wash drawing by Auzeklis Ozols shows the bricked courtyard and gardens in the backyard.

■ The State Library of Louisiana contributed a group of 115 photographs taken during the 1960s by the Louisiana Tourist

Commission showing historical sites and plantations throughout the state, including Nottoway and Rosedown, as well as views in Alexandria, Baton Rouge, Breaux Bridge, Donaldsonville, St. Martinville, St. Francisville, Ville Platte, Shreveport, and New Orleans.

New Orleans businessman Jules Cahn (d. 1995, see *Quarterly*, vol. XVII, no. 3) had a passion for New Orleans and its music that he expressed through photography, motion pictures, and tape recordings. Though best known for his intimate and informed photographs of the city's jazzmen, he found much to delight him in New Orleans's cemeteries, architecture, and the always changing street theater of the Vieux Carré.

A number of other donations provide an overview of changes caused by technol-



House at 1134 First Street, New Orleans, watercolor, 1960s, by Boyd Cruise (2000.82.1)



Robert Woodward, watercolor, 1935, by Ellsworth Woodward (2000.94.5)

ogy. The Peel Heritage Complex gave two 1927 Charles L. Franck views produced for Forest Products Chemical Company. One of the views depicts a horse-drawn wagon laden with bags of Red Seal Charcoal, while the other shows a motorized truck loaded with the same product. Robert M. Vogel gave views of the Market Street S. E.

Power Station of the Phoenix Utility Company showing the boiler house under construction as well as machinery and equipment at the plant. Ron Hoffman gave a ca. 1900 photoprint by Charles T. Yenni of the Louisiana Rifles Base Ball Club showing the players in uniform.

■ A donation from Dr. Chester A. Peyronnin includes drafting instruments, a Pitot tube, and other materials related to his long career as an engineering professor at Tulane University. Two views of oil rigs are the gift of Mr. and Mrs. Hugo Wedemeyer. One of the views is a watercolor painting by Fred Lowe showing oil activity in the Gulf of Mexico during the 1960s or 1970s.

■ Other gifts document Louisiana citizens and their homes. Mr. and Mrs. John McCaffrey provided ten ca. 1905 views of White Hall, the Barnes family home in New Orleans, and family vacation scenes including children riding ponies or riding in a horse-drawn cart. Fred Kahn gave a 1999 photograph of a tomb called *On Guard*.

— *Judith H. Bonner and John H. Lawrence*

MANUSCRIPTS

Recent acquisitions expand holdings that document the French and Spanish in Louisiana and the Battle of New Orleans.

John Law (1671-1729), born in Scotland and educated in London, initiated banking reform in France. Stimulation of the economy with a banking system empowered to issue money appealed to the French who suffered from heavy debt, a result of the wars under Louis XIV (1638-1715). Law established a note-issuing bank in 1716, and in 1717 he was granted a 25-year charter for his Company of the West (later called the Company of the Indies) to develop territories in the Mississippi River Valley. Law's monopoly on trade and aggressive marketing attracted speculation that fueled the "Mississippi Bubble," an inflated investment destined to burst. The upward spiral included the issuance of bank notes, which fell to half value by 1720. THNOC has acquired a September 1720 bank note issued just three months before the collapse.

■ Also acquired is a letters patent, issued September 24, 1717, naming commissioners to draw up a contract for collecting revenues for the Company of the West. The document supplements the manuscripts

collection, Acts of the Royal French Administration Concerning the Company of the Indies in Louisiana, 1717-1771. This collection (Mss 268) of 28 items includes royal letters patent, orders, decrees pertaining to the establishment of the Company of the Indies and its trade and land rights, provisions concerning settlers, and dealings with the Jesuits.

Other acquisitions include five microfilm reels of documents in the French National Archives that relate to colonial Louisiana. The microfilm (series D2C 2-4, D2C 10, D2C 50-51, D2C 59, and D2C 222) chronicles civil and military activities.

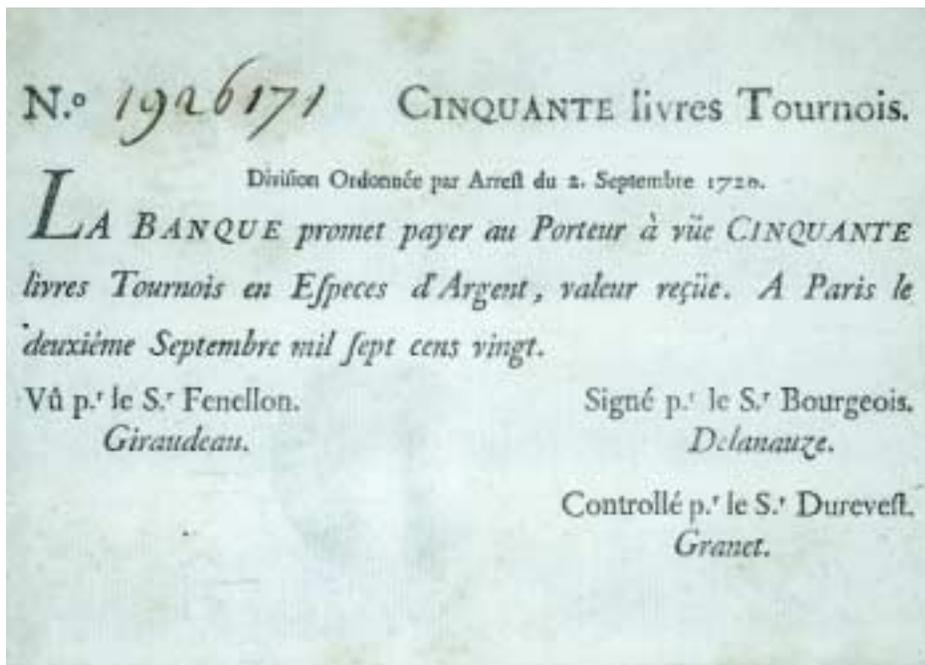
■ Documents concerning expenses incurred by the city during the years 1772-1796 when New Orleans was under Spanish rule have been acquired. Included are costs for maintenance of the city lighting



Letters patent naming commissioners of the Company of the West (2000-105-L)

system, chimney inspection, fish-oil lighting fuel, and levee and bridge repairs. Specifications dated December 8, 1813, for the construction of two bridges over Bayou St. Jean document early business practices.

■ Battle of New Orleans holdings are enhanced by two documents detailing actions prior to the decisive January 8, 1815, battle. A letter written March 3,



Bank note related to John Law's Company of the West (2000-97-L)

1814, to Brigadier General Thomas Flournoy addresses the use of a military barge and troop movement. A letter-book entry made in French (ca. 1815) recounts a December 28, 1814, report on movements of Major Jean Baptiste Plauché's militia beginning the day before the battle. The battle orders of Colonel George Ross, commander of the 44th U.S. Infantry and volunteer battalions, are also included.

■ Recently acquired is an album, entitled *Histoire de la Famille Magnon* (1907), compiled by Ervine Denison York and his wife, Alice Marguerite Magnon York, containing documents, letters, photographs, news clippings, and typescripts about four generations of the Magnon family in the 18th and 19th centuries. Their son, Everett Magnon York,

is identified as collaborator and probably added later material. Archival research and narratives containing family interviews result in expansive coverage of a century of life in New Orleans. An accompanying album documents the personal and business interests of Ervine York, lawyer and diligent family historian, who also researched the York and Denison families.

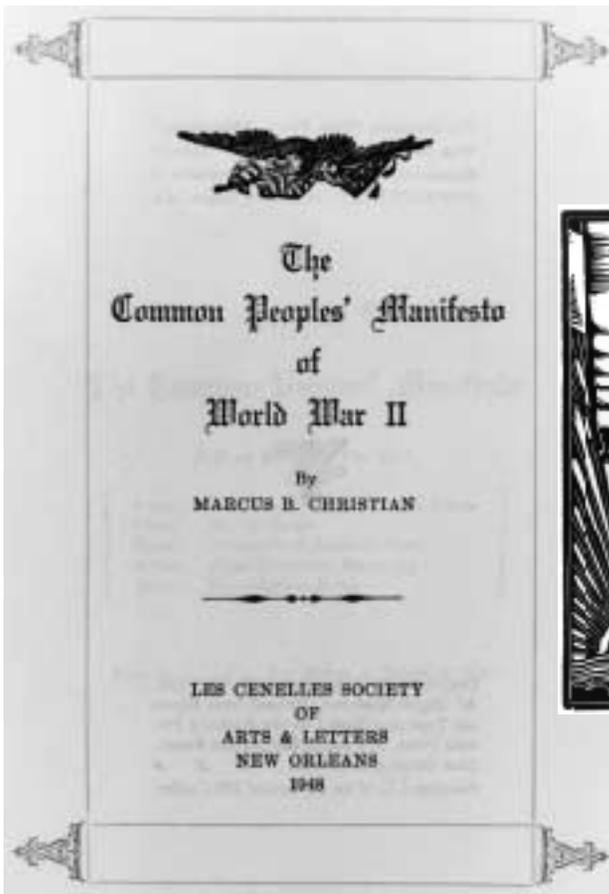
— M. Theresa LeFevre

LIBRARY

The historical controversies that swirled around General James Wilkinson, Revolutionary War officer and alleged participant in the Burr Conspiracy, are explored in an exceptionally rare broadside and companion pamphlet acquisition entitled *Public*

BOOK REPAIR WORKSHOP

SOLINET (Southeastern Libraries Network) is sponsoring a workshop, Fundamentals of Book Repair, on Wednesday, May 16, and Thursday, May 17, at the Historic New Orleans Collection, 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The workshop is designed for staff members who actually perform book repair in libraries but will also be useful to those who supervise repair units. Call SOLINET at 1-800-999-8558, extension 4896, for more information.



Title page and illustration from book of poetry by Marcus Christian (2000-247-RL.1)

Plunder, recently added to the holdings. These 1809 publications, aimed at the general public, charge Wilkinson with the embezzlement of government funds in the Louisiana and Mississippi territories. The accusations rest largely on the statements of William Simmons, an accountant in the Department of War; one of the documents offered as proof of Wilkinson's dishonesty is a letter written by Simmons to Wilkinson informing him that drawing reimbursement from the Treasury for freight and fuel purchases was illegal. The pamphlet includes a detailed account of the allegations and the amounts in question. In 1811 Wilkinson was court-martialed on numerous such charges but was cleared of wrongdoing.

The fact that these publications are not cited in the noteworthy Shaw and Shoemaker *American Bibliography* series speaks to their rarity as well as to their significance to research about Wilkinson. In addition to this important acquisition,

other library items concerning Wilkinson include his published memoirs and a number of Wilkinson's letters and documents, as well as his portrait.

■ *Road—Washington to New Orleans* is an 1828 government resolution from the House of Representatives to the Committee on Roads and Canals. The committee was instructed to inquire into the construction of a national road from Washington to New Orleans. Some of the reasons given for the road were frequent mail interruptions between Washington and New Orleans and the need for “a more speedy and certain intercourse between the Seat of Government and the remote and much exposed frontier of the Union.”

■ Also acquired is a signed, limited edition of *The Common Peoples' Manifesto of World War II*, a book of poetry that looks at the war from an African American viewpoint. The book was published by Les Cenelles Society of Arts and Letters (New Orleans, 1948). The publication also contains a linoleum block print by Frank Wyley as well as an inscribed drawing of the author, Marcus Christian. In addition to serving as an editor for the Work Projects Administration from 1939 to 1942, Christian headed the War Information Center in New Orleans, 1944-45. For his noteworthy efforts as printer and publisher, he received the Rosenwald Fellowship in 1943, an award for outstanding literary achievement. The book of poetry joins other literary works by Marcus Christian in the library's holdings.

— *Gerald Patout*

ON LOAN

The Historic New Orleans Collection lends materials from the permanent collection for specific periods of time only to other private or public museums, historical organizations, or educational agencies for use in temporary exhibitions. These institutions must comply with the Collection's security and environmental standards.

Materials from the collections are included in the following exhibitions:

America and the Sea

Mystic Seaport Museum, Mystic, Connecticut
Dates of loan: December 2000-July 2001

Mississippi: Outpost of Majestic Spain

Old Capitol Museum of Mississippi History, Jackson, Mississippi
Dates of loan: April 1-September 2, 2001

DONORS: OCTOBER–DECEMBER 2000

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STAFF

IN THE COMMUNITY

Fred Smith, member of the board of directors of the Kemper and Leila Williams Foundation, has been elected president of the Rotary Club of New Orleans. **Patricia Brady** was made a fellow of the Louisiana Historical Association and received a Mellon



Fred Smith

fellowship from the Virginia Historical Society. **John Magill**, French Quarter walking-tour guide for *Bourbon Louisiana* symposium speakers and guests; also interviewed by WYES-TV and WLAE-TV; **Louise Hoffman** and **Patricia Brady**, panel moderators, Tennessee Williams/New Orleans Literary Festival.



Patricia Brady



Jennifer Drinkwater



Camille Kempf



Hugo Wedemeyer

Louisiana Association of Museums workshop, "Avoiding Legal Problems in Your Museum"; **Louise Hoffman**, Publishers Association of the South, Savannah.

CHANGES

Patricia Brady resigned from the Collection to become a full-time writer (see profile, page 8). Intern: **Jennifer Drinkwater** (Tulane University); library volunteers: **Camille Kempf** and **Hugo Wedemeyer**.

LECTURES

John Magill, Friends of the Cabildo tour guides, U.S. Department of State Foreign Service Institute Senior Seminar, Tennessee Williams/New Orleans Literary Festival, Orléans Club; **John Magill** and **John Lawrence**, presentation at the Marie Adrien Persac symposium, THNOC; **Gerald Patout**, presentations on the Ursuline Collection to Founder's Chapter of Louisiana Colonials, Louisiana Library Association, and Algiers Historical Society; **Mark Cave**, Jewish Community Center Book Club; **Mark Cave** and **John Magill**, University of New Orleans Women's History class; **Patricia Brady**, Le Petit Salon, Book Club, Hattiesburg Regional Library; **Judith Bonner**, **Patricia Brady**, and **John Lawrence**, Tulane Educational Conference; **Judith Bonner**, **Alfred Lemmon**, and **John Magill**, American Society for Eighteenth Century Studies.

PUBLICATIONS

John Magill, "The Dance Craze," *Argentine Tango New Orleans* newsletter; **Judith Bonner**, *New Orleans Art Review*.

MEETINGS

Pamela Arceneaux, Louisiana Library Association, Lafayette; **Gerald Patout**, Special Library Association, Savannah, and coordinator, Louisiana/Southern Mississippi Chapter of the Special Libraries Association held at Tulane University; **Amy Baptist**, LaSoMi Chapter of the Special Libraries Association and chapter archivist; **Theresa Lefevre** and **Warren Woods**,



THE HISTORIC NEW ORLEANS COLLECTION QUARTERLY

Editors:
Patricia Brady
Louise C. Hoffman

Head of Photography:
Jan White Brantley

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THE SHOP

The Shop has a new look and a new entrance. Visitors enter the carriageway at 533 Royal Street and turn to the right to enter the Shop, where the emphasis is on reproductions from the Collection's holdings, books published by THNOC, and gift items related to the exhibitions. To complement the garden exhibition, the Shop will feature reproduction English gardening baskets, glass cloches for covering tender plants, and cast-iron garden ornaments such as finials, urns, planters, and birdbaths. Other gift items are English botanical prints by W. Curtis and T. Curtis.

The Shop is also offering out-of-print books and first editions of Louisiana-related titles, including *New Orleans and Its Living Past* (1941), signed, with photographs by Clarence John Laughlin and text by David L. Cohn, number 852 in a limited edition of 1000 copies. Also available is a soft-cover copy of *New Orleans Interiors* by Mary Louise Christovich with photographs by N. Jane Iseley and an introduction by Samuel Wilson, Jr. Shop manager Diane Plauché welcomes inquiries about hard-to-find books.

Available this spring is a silk scarf (pictured, above right) with a decorative border taken from the illuminated manuscript that contains the 1783 patent of nobility issued to Louisiana military leader Bernardo de Gálvez. The scarf, designed by Grace Newburger, comes with either an ecru background or a charcoal background and measures 12 x 54 inches. A book that reproduces the Gálvez Patent, *Tribute to Don Bernardo de Gálvez*, published by the Collection in 1979, is also available.



Above, scarf displayed with page from the Gálvez Patent. The decorative border inspired the scarf design.
Below, English botanical prints



PLEASE SEND

Quantity

_____ Silk scarf, 12 x 54 inches, \$50

_____ *Tribute to Don Bernardo de Gálvez*, \$29.95

To inquire about purchasing the English botanical prints (print A at left, print B, right) and *New Orleans and Its Living Past* or *New Orleans Interiors*, please call 504-598-7147.

Shipping and Handling

Scarf, \$7 (UPS)

Tribute to Don Bernardo de Gálvez, \$5

Taxes as applicable:

9% Orleans Parish

4% other La. residents

Amount

Total Amount Due

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

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Account Number: _____

Exp. Date: _____

Signature: _____

VISITING THE COLLECTION



Orientation center. Joan Lennox is pictured at the front desk.

The Collection's new orientation center, situated on the left-hand side of the carriageway (533 Royal Street), is the starting point for visitors who wish to tour the history galleries and the Williams Residence. After viewing a short film about the Collection's founders, Kemper and Leila Williams, visitors begin their tour led by a member of the docent staff. There is a nominal charge. Entry to the Williams Gallery (free), the site of changing exhibitions, is opposite the orientation center and through the Shop.



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