



# THE HISTORIC NEW ORLEANS COLLECTION NEWSLETTER

Volume VII, Number 2      Spring 1989

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Advertising booklet, *Singer Sewing Machine Souvenirs of New Orleans*, ca. 1895 (1974.25.17.128), and postcard, showing the levee at Chalmette, ca. 1900 (1988.45)



## “MUCH OF NOVELTY”: THE TRAVELER IN NEW ORLEANS

New Orleans has always elicited strong reactions from its visitors — wonder, incredulity, admiration, sometimes disapproval, sometimes delight. Travelers have been quick to note the unusual character of the city, quick to react to a place that was not at all like home.

Opening in May, the next exhibition at the Collection, *Way Down Yonder in New Orleans:*

*Visitors' Impressions of the Crescent City*, takes a look at the city through the eyes of the visitor, from the mid-1700s to the middle of the 20th century. One hundred years ago Charles Dudley Warner observed in *Studies in the South and West* that “...whatever way we regard New Orleans, it is in its aspect, social tone, and character *sui generis*; its civilization differs



widely from that of any other, and it remains one of the most interesting places in the republic."

As guides to the city, these earlier travelers make good companions in their attempts to define the distinctive character of New Orleans. Charles Mackay, author of *Life and Liberty in America*, wrote in the 1850s that "New Orleans is less like an American city than any other in the United States, and reminds the European of Havre or Boulogne-sur-Mer."

Although the exhibition includes an observation or two from the 18th century, it was during the 19th century that travelers proliferated — and travel commentary increased. English and Continental visitors set out to describe the new and growing country of America to their compatriots and, in several instances, to report on suitable places of residence to prospective immigrants. Viewpoints, naturally, differed according to the traveler's temperament and situation. Karl Bernhard, Duke of Saxe-Weimer-Eisenach, who attended balls and other social events during his nine weeks in New Orleans in 1826, was more sympathetic toward the city than the fractious Mrs. Trollope, whose *Domestic Manners of the Americans* (1832) contains the observation that "New Orleans presents very little that can gratify the eye of taste, but nevertheless there is much of novelty and interest for a newly arrived European."

Much of novelty also inspired the



The Creole of New Orleans, published by A. Baker, between 1830-1835 (1956.27)



Poydras Market (One of the French Markets) by J. Durkin, ca. 1885 (1947.22)

visitor from the American East and Midwest to write about the surprising sights and unusual customs — at least to an Anglo-American eye. Newspaperman Henry McElwin, writing in 1885 at the time of the World's Industrial and Cotton Centennial Exposition, visited the French Market on Sunday, which, he said, "was in full blast, for the citizens do all their marketing Sunday, instead of Saturday, as we do in the North.... For music on Sunday, we had organ-grinders, Italian orchestras, street pianos... and a noisy brass band advertising a horse race and shooting match to come off in the afternoon."

The 20th-century visitor has been likely to take a nostalgic view of the city, colored by the romance of the past — seeing New Orleans as a blend of people, customs, and climate that nurture the creative spirit. For playwright Tennessee Williams, New Orleans was his spiritual home; he wrote about a part of the city where "you are practically always just around the corner, or a few doors down the street, from a tinny piano being played with the infatuated fluency of brown fingers."

What first impressed the traveler and set the city apart was its geography, low and flat and situated in a curve of the Mississippi

River. In 1821, a Frenchman, Edouard de Montulé described the river "covered with a forest of ships of all sizes; its depth permits them to come right to the shore, formed by a levee which stems its force." He continued, "Without this dike, New-Orleans would be inundated, for the level of the river is four or five feet above that of the city, which becomes even lower as one leaves the river and eventually loses itself, so to speak, in marsh land."

Such geography contributed to a fine indigenous architecture, frequently remarked upon by travelers. In 1770, a Captain Pittman wrote that "most of the houses are but of one floor, raised about eight feet from the ground, with large galleries round them..." A century later, a writer describes substantial houses — still designed to accommodate the semi-tropical climate — with French windows in the Louis XV manner, and "open stone passages, ...*porte cochère* and broad, low staircases, leading from an open court-yard... with a broad-leaved fig-tree or clustering vine spreading over them...."

Or, there is this summary from the spirited George Augustus Sala, writing of the Pontalba buildings at Jackson Square in 1882: "The houses look Spanish, the merchan-



dise is American, the manners are French."

Nineteenth-century travelers found that the Creoles — descendants of the French and Spanish settlers — were a distinct element, living in the old quarter of the city. But Englishman Henry Murray observed at mid-century that the Creoles are "very sensibly seeking alliances with the go-ahead blood of the Anglo-Saxon, and I expect that but little French will be spoken in New Orleans by the year 1900." Still, the Creole's enjoyment of life was enduring and singled out by the traveler-writer. Another English visitor, geologist Sir Charles Lyell, wrote of Mardi Gras in 1849: "It was the last day of the Carnival. From the time we landed in New England to this hour, we seemed to have been in a country where all, whether rich or poor, were laboring from morning till night, without ever indulging in a holiday. I had sometimes thought that the national motto should be, 'All work and no play.' It was quite a novelty and a refreshing sight to



A Glimpse Through a Gateway  
by William Hamilton Gibson, ca. 1888 (1960.65)

## THE HISTORIC NEW ORLEANS COLLECTION NEWSLETTER

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Louise C. Hoffman

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The Historic New Orleans Collection Newsletter is published quarterly by the Historic New Orleans Collection, which is operated by the Kemper and Leila Williams Foundation, a Louisiana non-profit corporation. Housed in a complex of historic buildings in the French Quarter, facilities are open to the public. Tuesday through Saturday, from 10:00 a.m. until 4:45 p.m. Tours of the history galleries and the residence are available for a nominal fees.

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The Historic New Orleans Collection

see a whole population giving up their minds for a short season to amusement."

Then, as now, a traveler could be comforted by well-prepared food. A tasty gumbo was not lacking in 1853, according to the Swedish writer, Fredrika Bremer. "The New Orleans dinner was remarkably good," she wrote, "and gumbo is the crown of all the savory and remarkable soups in the world — a regular elixir of life of the substantial kind."

The city's portrait emerges from two centuries of observations as a place to reward the traveler with "much of novelty." After Warner described New Orleans as *sui generis*, he went on to say, "To the Northern stranger the aspect and the manners of the city are foreign, but if he remains long enough he is sure to yield to its fascinations, and become a partisan of it. It is not altogether the soft and somewhat enervating and occasionally

treacherous climate that beguiles him, but quite as much the easy terms on which life can be lived. There is a human as well as a climatic amiability that wins him."

The exhibition — how the city has captured the traveler's eye — will open May 24 and remain until October.

— Louise C. Hoffman

Sources: Fredrika Bremer, *The Homes of the New World* (New York, 1968); Thomas D. Clark, ed., *Travels in the Old South*, vol. 3 (Norman, Okla., 1969); Sir Charles Lyell, *A Second Visit to the United States of North America* (New York, 1849); Charles Mackay, *Life and Liberty in America* (New York, 1859); Henry McElwain, *New Orleans Exposition, Texas and Old Mexico* (Elyria, Ohio, 1885); Edouard de Montulé, *Travels in America 1816-1817* (Bloomington, Ind., 1951); Henry A. Murray, *Lands of the Slave and the Free* (London, 1857); Captain Philip Pittman, *The Present State of the European Settlements on the Mississippi* (Gainesville, Fla., 1973); George Augustus Sala, *America Revisited* (London, 1882); Frances Trollope, *Domestic Manners of the Americans* (New York, 1960); Charles Dudley Warner, *Studies in the South and West* (London, 1890); Tennessee Williams, *A Streetcar Named Desire* (Garden City, New York, 1947); Thérèse Yelverton, *Teresina in America* (London, 1875).



# At First Sight

For many years the port was the point of arrival for people traveling to New Orleans. Passengers alighted amidst the cargo and confusion of the levee, first having been greeted with scenes of flatboats, barges, and seagoing vessels navigating the waterways, steamboats moored along the docks in tiers five or six deep, and a "forest of masts whose termination [was] hidden by the bend of the river." Once upon the scene, passengers observed masses of cargo awaiting transshipment, barrels of sugar and molasses, and the numerous cotton presses where cotton bulk was reduced by pressurization. "You enter New Orleans just as you enter the *Iliad*, plunging at once in *medias res*," observes one writer, while another exclaims: "'Tis a busy, driving dreadful place, piled with bales and boxes, and hogsheds and casks, and cattle and bureaus, and bedsteads, and horsecarts, and pulpits....Sailors are heaving, and hauling, and yo-hoing — mates are shouting, and swearing — steamers are smoking, and puffing — and splashing about." Lady Emmeline Stuart-Wortley, enthralled with this very same site, wrote, "I should think that the best possible view of New Orleans is the one we saw on our arrival from the river."

Railroads developed in the 1880s, arrivals increased, and river traffic grew as well. The expanding city addressed some of its chronic problems, including improved drainage systems, which solved not only sewerage and sanitary problems, but destroyed the moist breeding grounds of the yellow fever-bearing mosquito which caused annual epidemics. Gas lighting was replaced with electricity. The city and the river continued to cast its spell over newsmen and travel writers who kept the presses humming with descriptions and anecdotes.

Mark Twain, who arrived as a cub pilot aboard a steamboat, departed from his customary acerbic wit, to observe: "Apparently there is a 'boom' in everything....The water in the gutters used to be stagnant and slimy, and a potent



A Levee at Night — Electric-Light Illumination by J. O. Davidson for Harper's Weekly, 1883 (1959.204.1)

disease breeder; but the gutters are flushed two or three times a day by powerful machinery....Other sanitary improvements have been made; and with such effect that New Orleans claims to be...one of the healthiest cities in the Union....It is a driving place commercially, and has a great river, ocean, and railway business." Uncharacteristically, Twain continued his praise: "At the date of our visit, it was the best lighted city in the Union, electrically speaking. The New Orleans electric lights were more numerous than those of New York, and very much better...not only in Canal and some neighboring chief streets, but all along a stretch of five miles of river frontage."

Through the years other writers sought inspiration in this culturally rich city, a partial list reading like an anthology of literature: Frances Trollope, Walt Whitman, William Makepeace Thackeray, Lafcadio Hearn, Stephen Crane, Lyle Saxon, Roark Bradford, William C. Falkner, William Faulkner, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Eudora Welty, Stephen Foster, Joel Chandler Harris, O. Henry, James Ryder Randall, William Hodding Carter, Jr., Ambrose Bierce, Sinclair Lewis, Edward Larocque Tinker, Sherwood Anderson, Malcolm Lowry,

Thomas Wolfe, John Galsworthy, Thomas Duncan, William March, Thomas Bailey Aldrich, and Tennessee Williams. Their literature contributes to the city's rich cultural fabric and attests to that inexplicable hold that the city — with all its peculiarities and shortcomings — has upon its visitors, and which continues to draw visitors to New Orleans.

— Judith H. Bonner

Sources: *Putnam's Monthly*, Oct. 1857; George Augustus Sala, *America Revisited* (London, 1882); James Stuart, *Three Years in North America* (Edinburgh, 1833); Lady Emmeline Stuart-Wortley, *Travels in the United States during 1849 and 1850* (New York, 1851); Mark Twain, *Life on the Mississippi* (Boston, 1883).

## Workshop

The Southeastern Registrars Association will conduct a workshop May 21-23, 1989, on Conservation and Condition Reporting. The seminar will be held at Colonial Williamsburg. Conservators will talk about the examination and preservation of objects and about performing in-house treatment for stabilizing problems, along with other topics. For more information, call Priscilla O'Reilly, collections manager, at 523-4662.



From the

## Director



The theme of our next exhibition — *Visitors' Impressions of the Crescent City* — brings to mind the modern-day traveler and convention participant. June 17 will bring 4,000 of these visitors, who will attend the annual meeting of the American Association of Museums. Representatives from the United States and from many foreign countries will include leading museum directors and curators, tax and computer experts, registrars, archivists, educators, and other specialists.

Our staff will have the opportunity to attend sessions — and THNOC will host a reception for the AAM Council, as well as offer an evening tour of our facilities to the AAM membership. One-to-one contact with so many professionals is the most valuable type of communication — and a scenario that keeps repeating at the Collection. For some time, we have either hosted meetings or offered our facilities to a wide assortment of national and regional groups: the American Library Association, the American Institute for Conservation, the Southern Association of Women Historians, the Museum Computer Network, the North American Print Conference. And closer to home, the Louisiana Association of Museums.

These "travelers" bring with them new ideas, fresh approaches, and their own impressions of the Crescent City. We look forward to learning from them — and to sharing knowledge of THNOC's holdings and facilities with our museum colleagues. And we hope that our exhibition, filled with choice observations from past travelers, will enrich the stay of our visiting friends.

— Dode Platou

## John E. Walker Named to Board

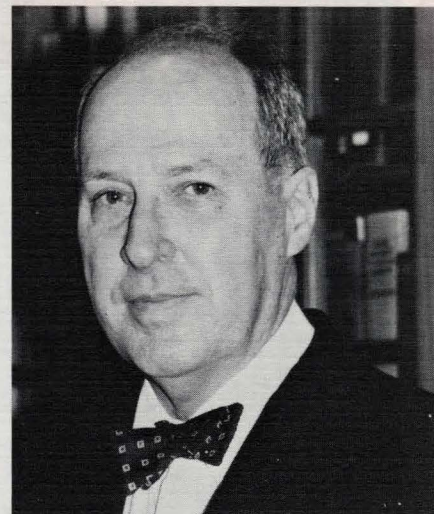
Benjamin W. Yancey, president of the board of directors of the Kemper and Leila Williams Foundation, has announced the appointment of John Edward Walker to the board. The Williams Foundation is the governing body of the Historic New Orleans Collection.

Mr. Walker, a native of Mississippi and a graduate of Tulane University, is a civil engineer and surveyor who is president of Walker and Avery, Inc. For many years he has been a friend of the Historic New Orleans Collection.

With history as his avocation, Mr. Walker brings special talents to his duties as a board member. He has been a consultant for several architectural publications, a volunteer concerning surveys at the Louisiana Division of the New Orleans Public Library, and a long-time member of the Louisiana Historical Society, Louisiana Landmarks Society, Friends of the Law Library, and the Friends of the Cabildo.

His present research project is a study of the development of the city of New Orleans — to chart when vacant lands were subdivided and when streets and houses actually appeared in those subdivisions.

Mr. Walker serves on the board of directors of Goodwill Industries



and is an active layman of the Presbyterian Church. He is president-elect of the Louisiana Society of Professional Surveyors, a representative of the American Public Works Association to the Regional Planning Committee, and a member of the Louisiana Engineering Society, the American Society of Civil Engineers, and the American Congress on Surveying and Mapping.

According to director Dode Platou, "John E. Walker brings to our board an unusual combination of professional, community, and research experience. We look forward to his wise counsel."

## AAM Host Committee



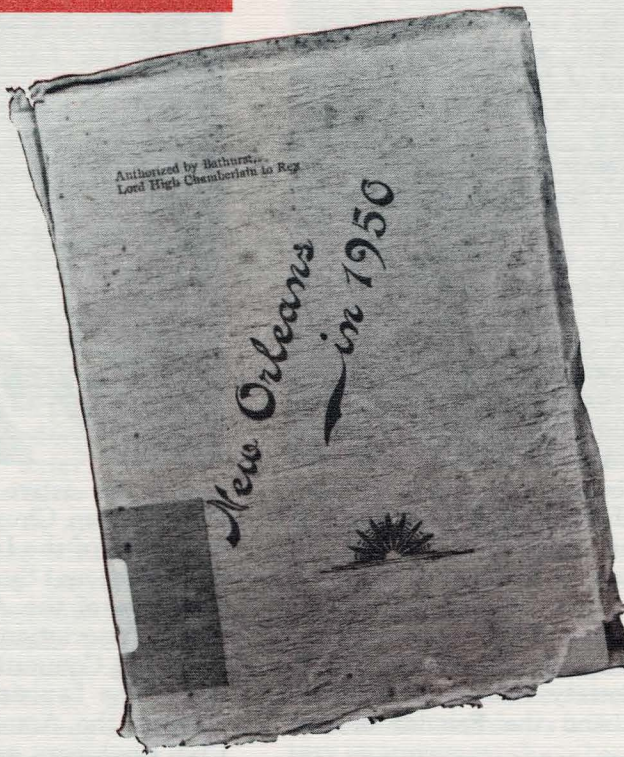
Plans for the American Association of Museum's June meeting in New Orleans have been under way for months. Members of the host committee pictured above are, seated, Charles Mackie, Alice Yelen, Dode Platou, and Sue Turner; standing, Carol Gikas, Carol Nelson, Tamra Carboni, and Gay Cunningham. Not pictured: John Bullard, Shereen Minvielle, and Phyllis Taylor



HISTORIC

## New Orleans

# Future Perfect



One hundred years ago, Edward Bellamy published *Looking Backward, 2000-1887*, a Utopian novel set in Boston in which modern wonders of daily life in the year 2000 were contrasted with relatively primitive conditions in 1887. The book, an instant bestseller, remained very popular for years and, with its vantage point in a technologically idyllic future, evidently inspired a New Orleans newspaper reporter to publish his own ideas about Crescent City life from a similar perspective.

During the carnival season of 1899, an unusual and amusing little volume appeared, entitled *New Orleans in 1950, Being a Story of the Carnival City, From the Pen of a Descendant of Herodotus, Possessing the Gift of Prescience*. On its textured cream and red paper cover, in small print, are the words, "Authorized by Bathurst, Lord High Chamberlain to Rex." It is dedicated "To the future commercial greatness of the Carnival City and to Progressive spirits everywhere." In its preface, the reader is admonished to bear in mind "that this little book was written during car-

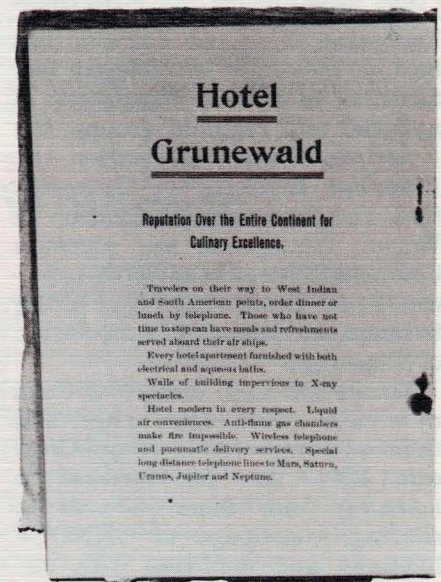
nival time in the spring of 1951." From his imagined vantage point in the future, author J. H. Whyte described the wonders of the 1951 carnival in a very idyllic New Orleans. He took a backward glance at the city in 1899 to point out its primitive state in comparison with conditions in the mid-20th century.

The author cited 1898 as the beginning of true progress in New Orleans when a sewer system for the entire city was inaugurated. This sewer system, combined with other improvements, signalled the last gasp of the yellow fever epidemics which plagued 19th-century New Orleans. With improved services and the end of yellow fever, New Orleans drew progressive businessmen and merchants from around the country.

The opening of the Nicaraguan canal and the expansion of the United States — according to Mr. Whyte's clairvoyance — through newly admitted states in Latin America helped to centralize New Orleans's position both geographically and commercially. Grand skyscrapers dominated the New Orleans skyline: docks and railroads

crowded the riverfront for miles. The city in 1951 was a clean place patrolled by men in white uniforms who kept all streets free of debris. The streets were paved with an indestructible substance and were "as smooth as a polished floor." The city's water was piped in from the Tchefuncte River's special treatment plants across Lake Pontchartrain and was as pure and clear as water could be. Other city services were models of modern perfection, and every policeman had the latest equipment, which could catch a criminal in the very act and provide indisputable proof of his guilt.

In 1951, one of the greatest boons to the business world was the phono-typewriter. The user talked into a phonograph tube which set the typewriter attachment in motion, writing out the sentences as they were spoken. Photographs could be sent by telegraph, and information spoken over the telephone could also be printed instantly. The pneumatic tube system as described by Whyte in 1951 was truly remarkable. One simply phoned a shop anywhere in the city, placed an order, and deposited the payment for the items in his pneumatic tube which then whisked it to the shop. The purchases were sent from



Page from *New Orleans in 1950* (69-183-LR)



the shop through the tube to one's home almost immediately.

Whyte's depictions of the modern home of 1951 with its clean, soot-free kitchens said much about domestic life in 1899. The clumsy coal or wood-burning stoves with their nasty smoke and fumes were a thing of the past, replaced by electric ranges which cooked with a touch of a button. Pure Tchefuncte spring water came out of an indoor faucet. The new sewerage system made slop pails obsolete. There were scientific methods of exterminating flies and mosquitoes, so that screens and mosquito bars were no longer necessary. The chief mode of private transportation was the personal airship or an "aeriocycle." Every home had modern wireless telephones, all-electric lighting and heating, and refrigerating chambers to cool the air.

Even the advertisements were written as if in 1951. The Saint Charles Hotel boasted "liquid air-chambers ... making each and every apartment cool in summer and warm in winter without electric fans or steam heaters." The hotel's roof was a major airship depot for the city. "Wireless telephone service" with every city on the continent was free to guests, and there were "phono-typewriters" in every room.

Many of Whyte's fantasies in 1899 are realities today, if not in 1951. Central air conditioning and heating are common comforts, and the wireless telephone is popular. Spring water may not come out of our faucets, but it is delivered to subscribers all over the area. Towering skyscrapers have altered the New Orleans skyline. Broad paved highways connect even the smallest towns to the outside world, and air travel is routine.

Although Rex does not hover above the parade route in a brilliant airship, who can say what wonders the future may bring?

— Pamela D. Arceneaux

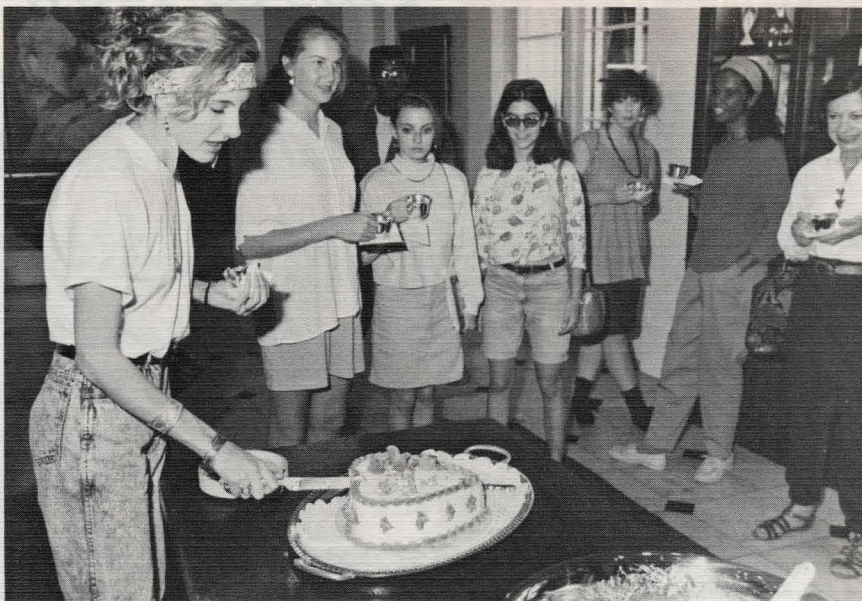
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## NOCCA Students at THNOC



Reception for NOCCA students at the Collection

*Variegations*, an exhibit of work by students at the New Orleans Center for Creative Arts will be featured in the Williams Gallery, April 27-May 15. Seniors in the visual arts will have their work on view, with performances by music students scheduled each day, including pianists and vocalists. The Royal Street Guild, a business association, is underwriting the exhibition in honor of the New Orleans Center for Creative Arts and its contributions to the city. NOCCA, part of the New Orleans Public School System, trains high

school students in music, visual arts, theater, writing, and dance.

Shop manager Sue Laudeman, a member of the Royal Street Guild, serves as project coordinator.

Students from NOCCA are Julie James, Lelia Molthrop, Mary Scharfenberg, and Desirée Braganza, classical music; Shawn Verges, Amanda Norman, Lynn Spears, and Viviana Gershanik, vocal music; and Andrea Caillouet, Jennifer Cooper, Raye Daniels, Brian Gray, Bridget McDowell, Hai Nguyen, Heidi Post, and Alison Wells, visual arts.

## AT THE COLLECTION

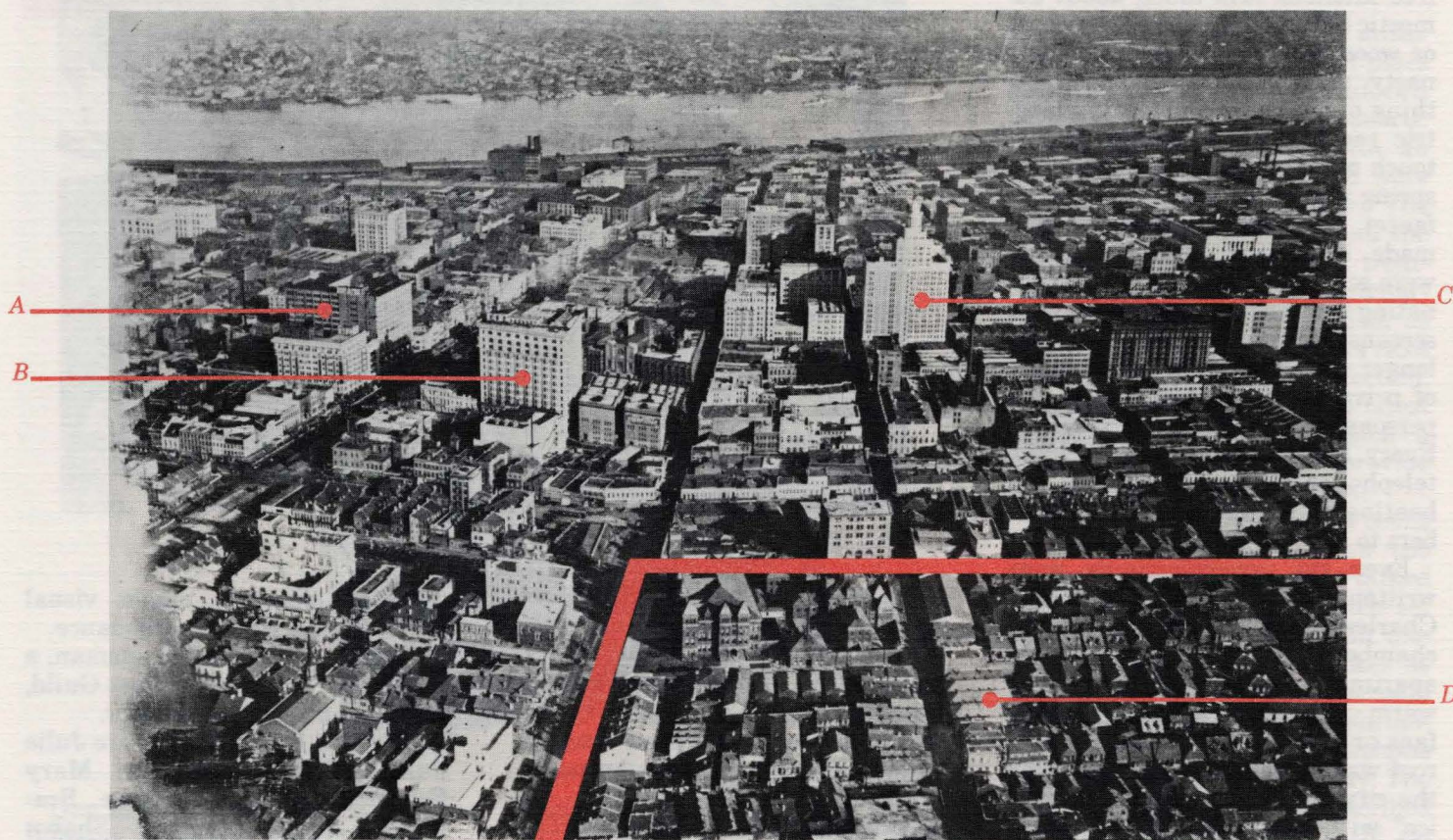


John W. Keefe, left, guest curator for A Creole Legacy, recently spoke on the Clarisse Claiborne Grima decorative arts collection at THNOC. Mr. Keefe is principal curator of decorative arts at the New Orleans Museum of Art.



Right, Rosanne McCaffrey Mackie and Chuck Patch with, far right, Kevin O'Sullivan and Hilary Bracegirdle of the Victoria and Albert Museum





(1979.325.6425)

Flying high over New Orleans in an airplane in 1922, commercial photographer Charles L. Franck (1877-1965) made photographs of the city, producing about two dozen aerial views, now part of the Charles Franck collection at the Historic New Orleans Collection. Bird's-eye views from tall buildings, such as St. Patrick's Church, were not unusual, but Franck was perhaps the first person to photograph the Crescent City from heights that only an airplane could reach.

The New Orleans depicted by Franck was not only growing along with the rest of the United States but was also a city in transition. With a population approaching 400,000, it was still much larger than other Southern cities; and with business and industry on the upswing, the local economy was vigorous.

New Orleans was also becoming a more typical American city. Its silhouette was changing and filling out, as taller buildings were being

constructed, and streets were stretching out into new territory. Major streets had been asphalted, and an adequate system of pumps finally helped drain the back-of-town swamps, thus opening up thousands of acres for much needed housing.

New Orleans was looking toward the future for the first time in many years. The *Times-Picayune* of September 4, 1922, summed up these feelings when it proudly boasted that "New Orleans is becoming a really big city..." The newspaper hailed "the urge of local pride to get together in the interest of better paving, more and better lighting, more business harmony and co-operation for swifter service and a more optimistic outlook on life."

Franck's view of the Central Business District reveals an area that was still marked by low-level structures. It was also growing upward with the addition of several tall buildings that had been built during the previous 15 years. To

the left of the view are the massive Maison Blanche Building (A) and the Grunewald Hotel (B), now the Fairmont. In the center is a cluster of structures marking the financial district. Dominating the scene is the Hibernia Bank and Trust Building (C) which was completed the year before. As the South's tallest building, it was symbolic not only of the new prosperity in New Orleans but also gave some substance to the city's metropolitan aspirations. In 1922, downtown New Orleans was on the brink of a major building boom; within ten years, new skyscrapers would even more drastically alter the skyline.

Municipal improvements left most poor neighborhoods entirely untouched — if anything could dramatize this fact, it was the residential area in the right foreground of Franck's view (D). Considered one of the filthiest, most dangerous slums in town, it was razed a quarter of a century later for a new City Hall.



One of the city's fastest growing neighborhoods is pictured in the view which looks across the Fairgrounds (E) toward Lake Pontchartrain; Bayou St. John (F) is seen to the left snaking through the wilderness. There were a number of houses here throughout the 19th century, but even as late as 1900, the area was still highly countrified. Two ridges — Metairie/Gentilly (G), which runs across the center of the image, and Esplanade (H), which runs from the lower right to Bayou St. John — are slightly higher than the surrounding land and could accommodate settlement. Nearby neighborhoods, such as Mid-City, were well below sea level, poorly drained, and little better than swamps after a heavy rain. Urbanization there came slowly, although by the late 19th century, housing was expanding into the area, as New Orleans began to move northward at an accelerated rate. Despite the threat of flood, the city had few alternatives for expansion elsewhere. With the introduction of its first real

drainage system after 1900, new houses quickly began to fill in the open spaces between Broad Street (I), seen to the lower right of the image, and the Metairie Ridge.

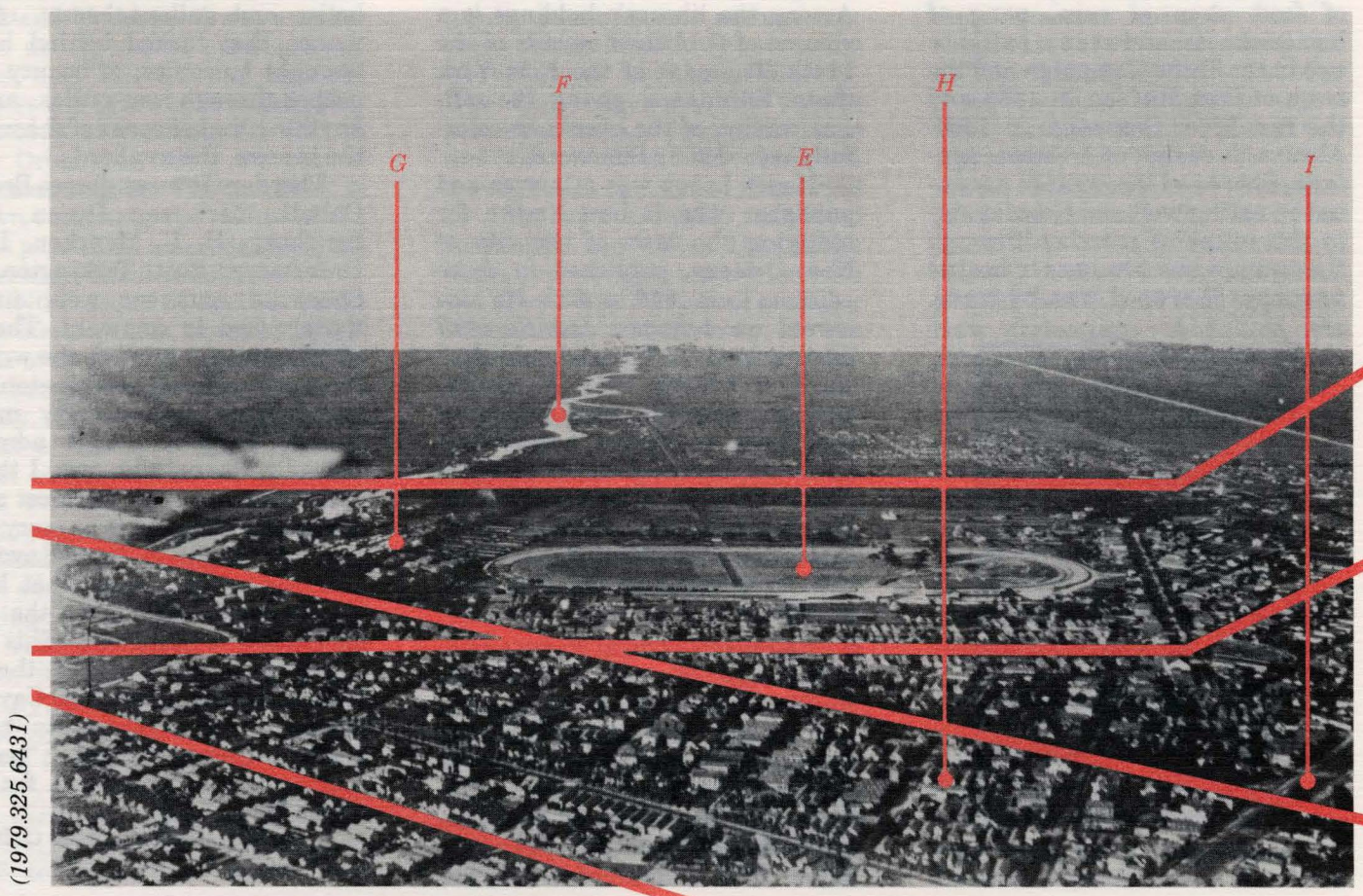
*To New Orleanians, the Metairie Ridge was practically the "end of the earth."*

Franck's view clearly shows that in 1922 New Orleans had reached the Metairie Ridge, but development past that point was almost non-existent. To New Orleanians, the Metairie Ridge was practically the "end of the earth," because it acted as a dam to prevent wind-

driven lake waters from inundating the heavily inhabited regions. The territory between the Metairie Ridge and the lake was still virtually unprotected from lake waters; furthermore, the drainage system was not yet serviceable there. It was not until the lake reclamation project and the construction of the seawall in the early 1930s — coupled with expansion of the drainage system — that the area north of the Metairie Ridge would be considered economically safe for development.

Taken as a whole, the 7,500 accessioned images by Charles Franck at the Historic New Orleans Collection reveal a close, detailed portrait of the city and its dramatic urban expansion between World War I and 1955. Of these images, Franck's 1922 aerial views best reveal New Orleans as it appeared in its entirety at the beginning of this period. The city is at once recognizable — yet distant — as it appears on the threshold of what would become its 20th-century form.

— John Magill



(1979.325.6431)



# Acquisitions

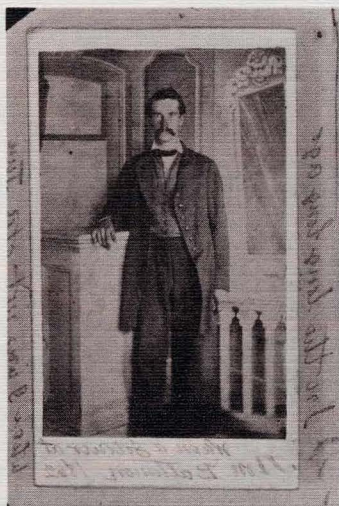


The Historic New Orleans Collection acquires thousands

of items through purchase and donation during the course of each year. Only a few recent acquisitions can be noted here.

## MANUSCRIPTS

"August 11th, 1862, I enlisted in the 114th Regiment...as a Bugler. Brother Eugene enlisted at the same time. Just what my reasons were going I can hardly tell about all my young companions were going and I didnot want to get left...." So begin the memoirs of James W. Sherwood, soldier in the New York State Volunteers, who recorded in great detail every bite of food, drop of rain, pang of homesickness, and even a battle or two in the Teche Campaign and the siege of Port Hudson in 1863 and the Red River Campaign in 1864. Always in search of creature comforts, Sherwood has written a manual on eating well and sleeping dry in the midst of marches through the swamps and bivouacs in hostile territory. Sherwood was, by trade,



James Sherwood (88-45-L)

a carpenter in his hometown of Norwich, New York, and he often mentioned carving souvenirs, as well as tombstones, for his fellow soldiers. He possessed other artistic skills, and his drawings of Port Hudson and Morganza Bend on the Mississippi River enliven his memoirs. Besides the six handwritten notebooks covering Sherwood's service in Louisiana and later on the Potomac in defense of Washington, this collection includes photographs, tintypes, and correspondence. Among the library's holdings is a volume of published records of the 114th Regiment of the New York State Volunteers, giving the official version of the events so colorfully recorded by Sherwood.

■ Henry Leovy was a lawyer and publisher who is best known for codifying the laws of the city of New Orleans, published in three editions from 1856 to 1872. He also served on Jefferson Davis's staff during the Civil War and published the New Orleans *Delta*. The Collection has recently acquired correspondence to Henry Leovy from Jefferson Davis, Edward Douglas White, Leland Stanford, William Preston Johnson, James B. Eads, and other important men of his time, covering a period from 1857 to 1900.

■ Another prominent businessman in 19th-century New Orleans was Bradish Johnson, who was involved in the sugar refining and distilling business, and the founder of a land investment company which bears his name. Mrs. Frank G. Strachan has donated a large surveyor's plan dated 1873 and several business



Sketch of Morganza Bend by James Sherwood (88-45-L)

ledgers, which will be added to the 277 items already in the Bradish Johnson Collection.

■ In 1923, journalist, literary critic, teacher, and historian G. William Nott, in his pursuit of the preservation of local culture, undertook to write various men of letters asking their opinion of Lafcadio Hearn's place in American literature. Nott had written an article for the *Times-Picayune* on September 23 of that year, in which he describes Hearn as writing "exquisite tales of Creole belles and gallant beaux, of romance that lurked behind hand-wrought balconies, of beauty that peeped through iron grilles...and of anything that savored of the weird, the bizarre, the somber."

Theodore Dreiser, James Branch Cabell, Carl van Doren, Carl Sandburg, H. L. Mencken, Louis Untermeyer, Booth Tarkington, and Sherwood Anderson were among those asked to comment. The response was as varied as the writers themselves. Booth Tarkington, expressing a view held by many, wrote: "I have always admired Lafcadio Hearn, who was, I think, one of the greatest and finest of all American writers...It is very odd that he should be passed over as often as he is. I think that he is hardly known at all by the new generation of readers...." This provocative group of letters is the gift of Mr. and Mrs. Caffery McCay and comes at an appropriate time: Lafcadio Hearn, no longer "passed over," was the inspiration for this year's Rex parade.

— Catherine C. Kahn



Stereographs: nearly identical photographic views of the same scene, mounted side-by-side, and made to be viewed with a special binocular device to give the illusion of three dimensions. These intriguing pictures were a staple of parlors throughout the late 19th and early 20th century, and they reappear today as desirable collectibles, particularly among descendants who have inherited a stereoscope, the device for viewing. A group of these views was recently added to the collection in an effort to build a significant body of such formerly ubiquitous images. They were made by the Keystone View Company, established in 1892 in Meadville, Pennsylvania, which was advertised as the largest view maker in the world at the turn of the century. The THNOC stereographs include such disparate subjects as the Lee Monument, the Palm Court of the St. Charles Hotel, and barges taking on cargo in the Calcasieu River at Lake Charles.

The New York firm of Underwood and Underwood was another large distributor of stereographic cards, and THNOC has acquired Underwood's view of President William McKinley during his visit to New Orleans in 1901, the year of his assassination. The president is shown returning the salute of the boats passing in a parade along the Mississippi River in his honor.

THNOC acquired another series of 24 stereographs, noteworthy because of their early dates (ca. 1870) and because they were produced locally. All the scenes in this group depict a variety of buildings and street scenes in New Orleans and were retailed through the city's leading photographers, Theo. Lilienthal and S. T. Blessing.

■ A small photograph album containing carte-de-visite photographs was recently donated by Charles Rush. Dating from the mid-19th century, the photographs were used as calling cards, and each is mounted with a portrait of members of the Hebert, Dupuy, and Lefevbre families. Pictured among them is Paul Hebert, governor of Louisiana from 1853 to 1856. Such documented



*Margaret Haughery (1989.14)*

albums which have descended in a family are always welcome additions to the photographic collection.

Another photograph album, dated about 1870, contains 16 images of faculty members, and perhaps students, of the Medical School of the University of Louisiana (later Tulane University). Notable figures portrayed include Joseph M. Jones and Stanford Chaillé. Dr. Jones was a surgeon at the school from 1868 to 1894 and a highly respected researcher and writer. Dr. Chaillé had an even longer association with the school (1867-1908) as professor of physiology and anatomy. He was also the personal physician to Jefferson Davis.

Local artist Lin Emery has donated her collection of official mayor's office photographs taken during the 1950s and early 1960s. They provide a comprehensive visual documentation of the administration of DeLesseps S. "Chep" Morrison and of his tenure as ambassador to the Organization of American States. Samuel Wilson, Jr., a generous benefactor to THNOC's collections, has given a large group of film and glass negatives and photoprints that had been collected by his late partner, Richard Koch. Nearly all the scenes are identified by location and subject

and include a number of plantation houses, some the work of Koch himself. Others were made by the noted turn-of-the-century photographer George François Mugnier; and there is a rare series by Nina A. King, sister of writer Grace King.

■ The work of philanthropist Margaret Gaffney Haughery (1813-1882) is legendary; through her orphanage, she cared for the abandoned, orphaned, and homeless youth of the city for nearly 50 years. Mrs. William Francis Scheyd recently donated a dramatic photographic portrait of this important New Orleanian. Although the photographer who made this image is yet unknown, the albumen photograph is in an ornate period frame, with the paper label of the framer, Laurent Uter, No. 38 Royal Street, still attached. Uter is listed at this address between 1875 and 1881. A statue of Margaret Haughery, the first in the United States to honor a woman, is located on a triangular plot of ground at the intersection of Camp and Prytania streets. Those familiar with the Margaret statue will note that the shawl seen in the photograph is the same as that depicted on her statue.

■ Coincidental with the exhibition *'Way Down Yonder in New Orleans: Visitors' Impressions of the Cres-*



cent City, the department acquired five prints by American artists who visited the city during the 1920s and 1930s. The earliest seems to be an undated drypoint etching by Irishman John McGrath (born 1880), a self-taught artist who settled in Maryland in the 1920s. The scene is characteristic of the street views drawn by artists visiting the French Quarter. A second etching is a sensitive portrait of a 1920s "street person," named Marguerete, who



*Marguerete* by E. Gerry Peirce (1989.8) is fondly remembered as one of the city's enigmatic characters with no last name and an unknown past. The artist, E. Gerry Peirce, must have frequently seen her on the streets of the French Quarter where he occupied a studio at 541 St. Ann Street during 1932-1933. Chicagoan Charles A. Wilimovsky (born 1885) visited New Orleans in 1920, the date of his abstract blue-inked linocut interpretation of Jackson Square. Printmaker Victoria Hutson Huntley created her lithograph, "Stairway in New Orleans," in 1949, ten years after her only known exhibition in the city at the Arts & Crafts Club. The fifth print is a scene of field hands picking Louisiana hot peppers. The undated lithograph is a very rare local subject by Merritt Mauzey (born 1898), a former export clerk raised on a cotton farm in west Texas.

■ A scarce postcard view of Third Street in Baton Rouge (postmarked May 14, 1912) was given by former THNOC employee, Richard C. Marvin, Jr., a frequent donor of New Orleans memorabilia. The sender of the postcard writes that the city was flooded at the time of his visit, an important historical footnote. Another gift is a bronze medal given by Robert Whitman. Emblazoned with the name "Louisiana," it was a souvenir from the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition.

— John A. Mahé II

## LIBRARY

The great English diarist Samuel Pepys and Isaiah Thomas, the Revolutionary War printer and founder of the American Antiquarian Society, both held an interest in collecting printed ephemera. THNOC also recognizes the importance of these materials which were intended to be used briefly and then to be discarded. Ephemera — from a Greek word meaning short-lived or of current and passing interest — include playbills, menus, tickets, programs, billheads, labels, greeting cards, topical pamphlets, and a variety of other materials of transitory value. Frequently fragile and easily torn, ephemera have physical characteristics that contribute to an already high mortality rate. Those that survive often were kept as souvenirs, cherished for sentimental reasons or admired

for their attractive appearance. Ephemeral materials exemplify the craftsmanship of the long-forgotten lithographers, engravers, and printers who produced them and, more important, provide a visual commentary on political, commercial, and social life. The following paragraphs highlight but a few recently acquired examples of ephemera available at THNOC.

■ Programs and playbills of musical and theatrical events lend insight into the sort of entertainment available to New Orleanians and reveal the names of the performers who provided it. "Souvenir and Musical Programme of Music Hall, World's Exposition, 1885," for example, specifies 12 songs played on Thursday, March 18, and includes an illustration depicting the popular Mexican Band, which played to immense success during the World's Industrial and Cotton Centennial Exposition (1884-1885). Another program lists selections presented by "the incomparable" Anna Pavlova at the Lafayette Theatre on February 13, 1922. The Russian dancer was considered the greatest ballerina of her time.

Playbills promoted coming and current stage productions. Among recent additions to a growing collection of these broadsides is one announcing Sarah Bernhardt's appearances in several one-act plays on January 28 and 29, 1917. It was Mme. Bernhardt's final engagement in the Crescent City. Seventy-three years of age, she had lost a leg and had to restrict her repertoire to parts that allowed her to remain



*Mexican Band, World's Industrial and Cotton Exposition, 1885 (88-539-RL)*





(88-490-RL)

seated or to recline. One of these, offered on the second night, had been written especially for her. In the melancholy "From the Stage to the Field of Honor," the "divine" Sarah portrayed a young man who lay dying alone on a battlefield after his leg had been shot off. The great French actress also interpreted for her audiences such tragic roles as the heroines of "La Mort de Cléopâtre" and "La Dame aux Camélias." Observers reported that, despite her infirmities, her golden voice remained as magical as it had ever been, and her manner as charming and gracious.

■ The custom of providing printed souvenir menus to persons attending special dinners began in New Orleans in the 19th century and continues today. Antebellum examples already in the collection include some decorated in bright colors and highlighted in gold; others contain delicate openwork. New

acquisitions include several menus of dinners sponsored by fraternal organizations in 1871 and 1872 at Victor's Restaurant and at the Cosmopolitan Restaurant on Royal Street near Canal, and another given by the alumni of the law department at the University of Louisiana (now Tulane University) at Boudro's Restaurant at Milneburg in 1876. Dating from the more austere Reconstruction period, these menus are less elaborate than those printed before the Civil War.

■ Before the first printing press in New Orleans arrived in 1764, the public was notified of official information by the town crier and by the posting of handwritten announcements. Printing supplemented these efforts, and well into the 19th century, printed notices continued to be distributed and posted to announce news, including elections. A proclamation of Jacques Philippe Villeré, the second governor of Louisiana, announced a special election to fill a vacated seat in the House of Representatives, and another enumerated the districts wherein voters would soon choose senators and state legislators. Both proclamations were issued in 1818.

■ Discovering the contents of Louisianians' private libraries discloses what publications were available and of interest locally. One such library was that of L. Placide Canonge (1822-1893), a New Orleans educator, playwright, and journalist, whose extensive collection of books was dispersed at public auction a year after his death. A recently acquired copy of the catalogue of that sale inventories Canonge's library, listing some 600 books and pamphlets, of which more than 500 were in French.

Among them were poetry and novels, grammars and travelers' guidebooks, and nonfiction on subjects ranging from the French Revolution to divorce laws. Canonge, a former director and manager of the French Opera, also collected the scores of 79 operas and nearly 50 librettos. Worthy of special note are his copies of works by other local writers, including George W. Cable, Grace King, and Alfred Mercier.

■ Anniversaries and special events often inspire the publication of commemorative booklets that are distributed briefly and are soon unavailable except on the secondary market. To celebrate its diamond jubilee during the 1947-1948 season, the New Orleans Fair Grounds published *The Fair Grounds Race Course: A Time-Honored American Institution* by Louis J. Hennessey, which presents in text and illustrations the history of horse racing in New Orleans. Similarly, the *New Orleans Chap-Book* was issued as a souvenir of the Touro Infirmary Fair, which was held the first week of February 1896. It contains brief essays by local authors, appropriately leading off with "Charity Fair" by Grace King.

Although examples of 19th-century ephemeral materials are now increasingly confined to libraries and museums, many can still be found in privately owned scrapbooks and collections of memorabilia. And 20th-century ephemera lurk everywhere, their significance to future generations of historians obscured by their current utilitarian functions and ready availability.

— Florence M. Jumonville



Illustration, *New Orleans Fair Grounds commemorative booklet* (88-435-RL)



# Staff

## PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

**Dr. Alfred E. Lemmon**, reference archivist, was elected president of Save Our Cemeteries...he also has served as a consultant to the National Archives of El Salvador.

**Judith Bonner**, assistant curator, spoke on "Art in New Orleans during the 1870s" at the symposium, "Kate Chopin's New Orleans: The 1870s," sponsored by THNOC and the *Xavier Review* in December... at the same meeting, **John Magill**, assistant curator, spoke on the city environment in the 1870s and **Alfred E. Lemmon**, on music at that time. Mrs. Bonner also served as chair for "World Literature" at the Conference on Christianity and Literature in New Orleans in February.

**Dr. Patricia Brady**, director of publications, presented a paper, "Black Artists in Antebellum New Orleans," at the Louisiana Historical Association in Baton Rouge, March 17.

**John H. Lawrence**, curator of photography, gave the keynote address on photography at Hill Memorial Library at Louisiana State University in April...one of his photographs was included in an exhibition at NOMA, concerning the work collected by Clarence John Laughlin.



Jan White

Free-lance work by **Jan White**, head of photography, has appeared in the following publications: *The Nation Reunited: War's Aftermath*, *That's Jazz: Der Sound de 20 Jaherhunderts*, and *Satchmo*. **Judy Tarantino**, photography assistant, is a free-lance photographer for

weddings and other events. Researcher **Helen Wetzel** was appointed by Governor Roemer to the study commission for the Notarial Records.

## PUBLICATIONS

**Jill Roberts**, chief curatorial cataloger, compiled a catalogue, *Pennsylvania German Fraktur and Printed Broadides: A Guide to the Collections in the Library of Congress* for the American Folklife Center.

Head librarian **Florence M. Jumonville** and **Alfred E. Lemmon** collaborated on an article for the *LLA Bulletin*, "From Piano Bench to History Book: Using Louisiana Sheet Music in Research," which appeared in the fall issue...Miss Jumonville's review of *Céline: Remembering Louisiana, 1850-1871*, the memoirs of Céline Frémaux Garcia, appeared in the January 1989 issue of *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*.

**Judith Bonner** contributed six art reviews to the November/December 1988 issue of the *New Orleans Art Review*...**John H. Lawrence** also contributed a review of Tina Freeman's work to the same issue. Mr. Lawrence wrote an essay on the work of A. J. Meek for the Southern Arts Federation Photography Fellowships catalogue.

## MEETINGS

Director of Systems **Rosanne McCaffrey Mackie** attended the annual conference of the Louisiana Association of Museums in Monroe, April 6-7...she is president-elect of LAM.

**Priscilla O'Reilly**, collections manager, attended the annual seminar of the American Law Institute-American Bar Association on legal problems for museum administration in Washington in March...she will attend the Southeastern Registrars Association workshop in Williamsburg, May 21-23. **John H. Lawrence** attended the meeting of the Photographic Materials Group in Kansas City, March 3-4.

## CHANGES

**Priscilla O'Reilly** married **John H. Lawrence** in March.

**Jude Solomon** has been promoted to the position of curatorial assistant. New staff member **Beth**

**Joffrion** (B.S., LSU) is an assistant in the manuscripts division...she is pursuing a master's degree in history at UNO, specializing in archival work. Joining the staff as systems department assistant is **Charmaine P. Forti** (B.A., Loyola University).

Beth Joffrion



Charmaine Forti

**Thinh Phi** of the maintenance staff has been joined by his wife **Thuan Thi Le Phi**, who has recently arrived from Vietnam, via Thailand.



Thuan Thi Le Phi and Thinh Phi

## MEDIA

**John Magill**, assistant curator, was interviewed about the Grima Fund on "Breakfast Edition," WDSU...and on "Steppin' Out," WYES. **Jan White** was interviewed about breast cancer on "Life Planning," WDSU.

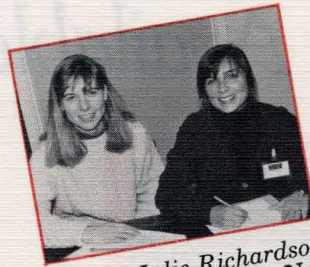


## INTERNS



Left to right, interns Ricky Heros, Trey Zoeller, and Miller Englehardt. Not pictured, Steven Gewirz, Lee Hubbard

The internship program at the Collection attracted college students from Tulane University and from the University of New Orleans.



Interns Julie Richardson and Cathleen Cotter. Not pictured, Wendy Conrad

## SPEAKERS BUREAU

Staff members have recently made presentations to the following organizations: John Magill, American Concrete Institute, Bywater Neighborhood Association, Entre Nous Book Club, Marigny Neighborhood Association, and the Tennessee Williams Festival.

## VOLUNTEER



Mary Ann Hymel

Mary Ann Hymel is a volunteer docent in the education department...she has been at the Collection for six years.

## PHOTO CREDITS

Judy Tarantino  
Jan White

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The holdings of the Collection are increased substantially through the generosity of our donors. We gratefully acknowledge their interest in our institution and in Louisiana history.

— Dode Platou

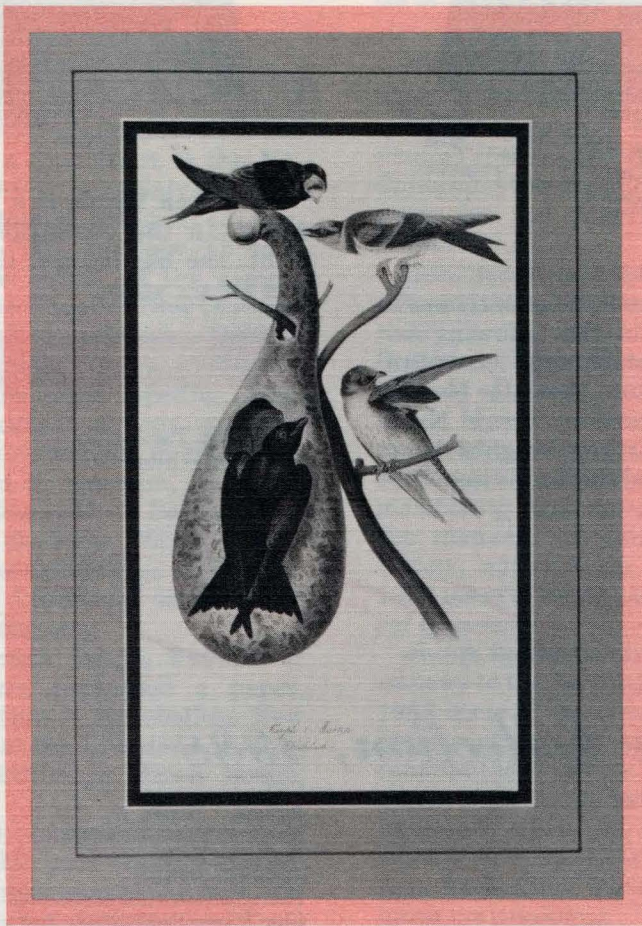
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# Audubon Prints Available



*Purple Martins by John J. Audubon*

The shop at the Collection has acquired a selection of first-edition prints from John J. Audubon's royal octavo series of *Birds of America*. The first edition was published in New York and Philadelphia in 1840-1844 in seven volumes. It was the first series to combine the plates with the text in a conventional book size of 6 1/2 x 10 inches or 6 1/2 x 10 3/4 inches, depending on how the book was bound. Audubon referred to the royal octavo series as his "Birds in Miniature," and many of the prints were based on Audubon's original drawings of birds in New Orleans or in other parts of Louisiana. Each was printed and meticulously hand-colored by John T. Bowen and assistants, under the direct supervision of John J. Audubon. Also available are a limited number of Audubon's first edition prints, *Quadrupeds of North America*, in the octavo size, printed 1849-1854.



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