



THE HISTORIC NEW ORLEANS COLLECTION NEWSLETTER

Volume VIII, Number 2 Spring 1990

New Position Announced, p. 5
Donors, p. 7
Profile: John Magill, p. 8
Publications, p. 15



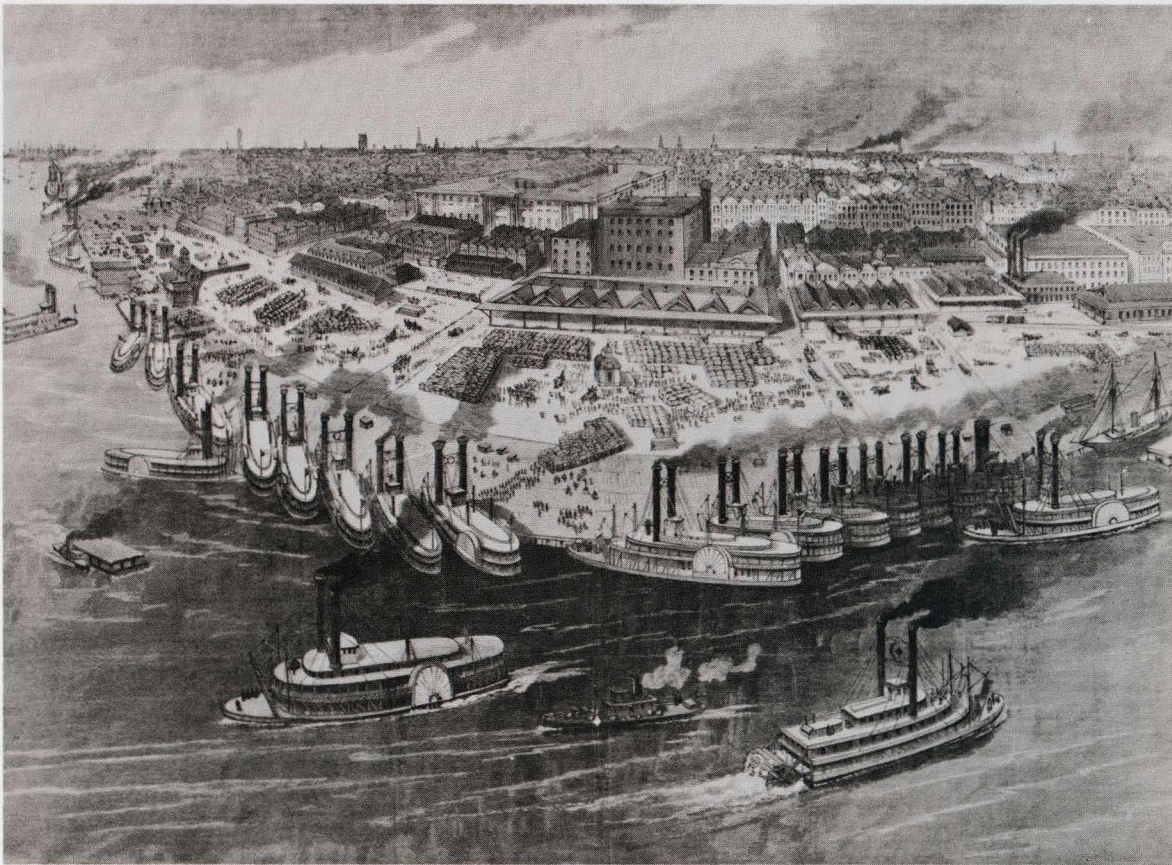
Bird's-Eye View of the City of New Orleans and the Mississippi and Mexican Gulf, or Lake-Borgne Canal, by Marie Adrien Persac, 1870, from *Appleton's Journal of Popular Literature, Science, and Art* (1967.19). Example of distortion found in printed bird's-eye views.

PELICAN'S-EYE VIEWS OF NEW ORLEANS

If wings were available, the earthbound spectator could view a city from an Olympian perspective, discovering—once free of the immediate surroundings—a newfound land of buildings, neighborhoods, and open countryside. Such a vantage point is much easier to achieve, however, through images called bird's-eye views. These elevated views transform a cluttered human community into a comprehensible mini-

ature, with each serving to record the continuous growth of the city.

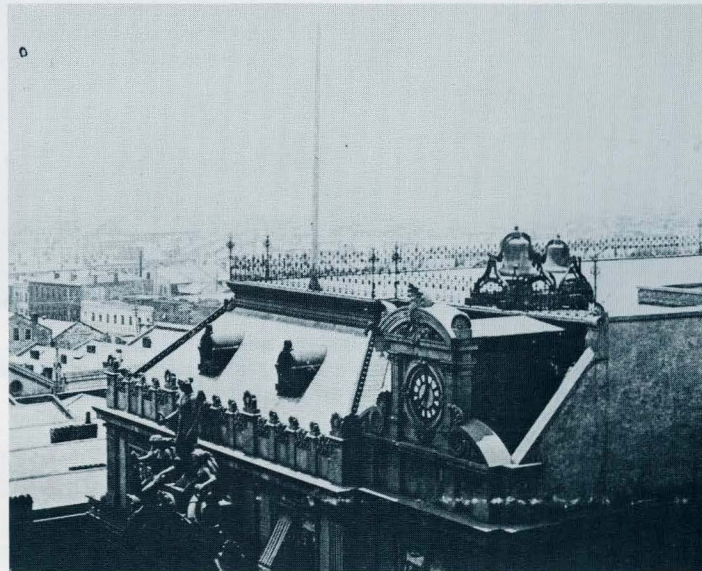
Growth and change are underlying themes of the exhibition *Pelican's-Eye Views of New Orleans*, a collection of bird's-eye views from the 19th and 20th centuries, opening in May at the Historic New Orleans Collection. Divided into two sections, the exhibition first presents the city through printed views which are followed by high-level and



aerial photographs.

The great days of New Orleans's growth occurred during the first half of the 19th century. This change is evident when comparing John L. Boqueta de Woiseri's 1803 engraving, *A View of New Orleans taken from the Plantation of Marigny*, and Dondorf's 1852 lithograph, *View of New Orleans Taken from the Lower Cotton Press*. Both look up the Mississippi River from nearly the same vantage point. While the earlier shows a small city clinging to the river with open country not too distant, the latter reveals an impressive, solidly constructed metropolis where the countryside is no longer visible. The Marigny plantation, so prominent in the early work, has been engulfed by the spreading city.

Another lithograph from 1852, *New Orleans from the Lower Cotton Press*, is the work of noted New York lithographers John William Hill and Benjamin F. Smith. It looks upriver from an imaginary point just above the cotton press and may be compared to the earlier de Woiseri view as further evidence of change. A companion piece by Hill and Smith looks downriver and is entitled *New Orleans from*



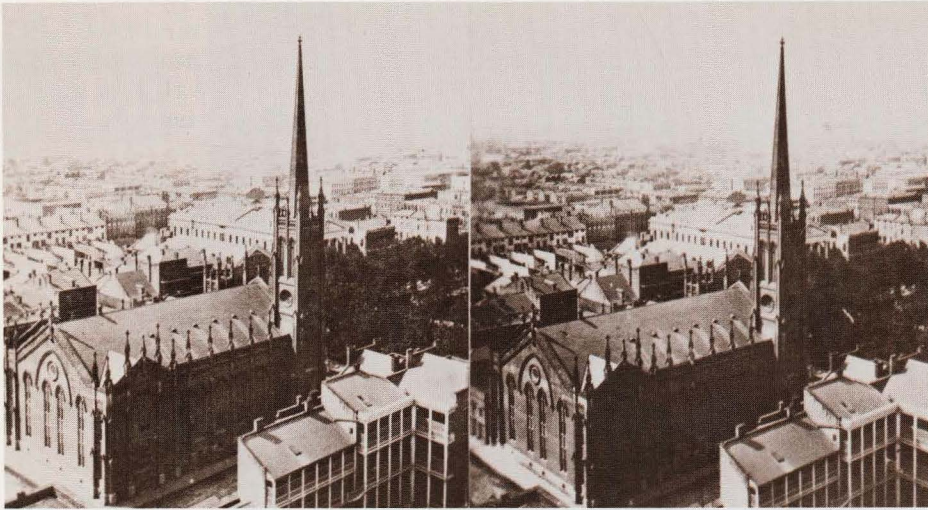
St. Patrick's Church 1852. These two splendid views, similar to other bird's-eye views of American cities by Hill and Smith, are noted for their accuracy, which is apparent when the view from St. Patrick's is seen alongside a photograph taken from the same building by commercial photographer Charles L. Franck in 1922.

Many artists of bird's-eye views felt that encircling an urban area and exaggerating its landmarks

Above, *View of New Orleans, showing sugar refinery, with Custom House behind and to the left, 1884, (1983.196)*; left, *New Orleans Cotton Exchange, 1899, (demolished late 1920s), Hawes family album (1984.134.123)*

made the city at once comprehensible and individual. While printed bird's-eye views of smaller cities could adequately depict every street and building, rarely could a big city be so enclosed. It was not unusual for cities shown in printed bird's-eye views to be distorted, and even rearranged in order to create the desired orderliness. The result was often less a true vision of the city than a sense of the place.

New Orleans was particularly



Stereograph, views of First Presbyterian Church at Lafayette Square, ca. 1875 (1988.134.5)

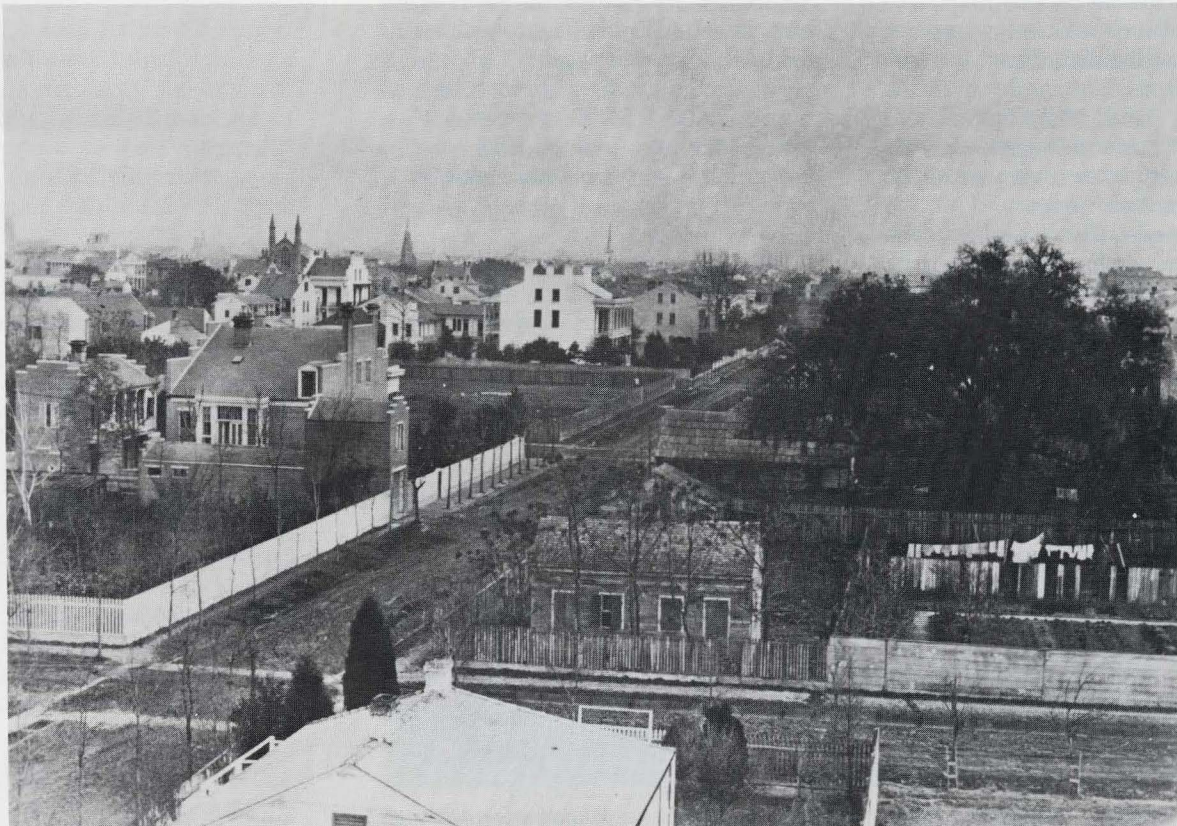
vulnerable to distortion because it stretched like a long narrow belt along a major meander of the Mississippi River. One of the first attempts to cover most of the city's area was John Bachman's 1851 *Birds'Eye View of New Orleans*. While the image is obviously New Orleans, Bachman slightly adjusted the course of the river and distorted major buildings such as the St. Louis Cathedral, which is drawn many hundreds of feet taller than

it actually was. Currier and Ives's 1858 lithograph, *The City of New Orleans, and the Mississippi River, Lake Pontchartrain in Distance*, details a still larger city: in order to include the buildings of the World's Industrial and Cotton Centennial Exposition held in present Audubon Park, the artists found it necessary to remove about two miles of the Uptown area from their interpretation. Alongside these and several other printed views in

the exhibition are modern aerial photographs of the same area which, when compared to the earlier views, make clear the distortions.

Because photographers were unable to manipulate and rearrange cities to suit their needs, photographs added a new element of accuracy to the bird's-eye view, revealing scenes endowed with all the dynamism of a concentrated human population. Though bird's-eye views continued to be popular, they eventually gave way to the more accurate photograph. Photographers were limited in their scope: they could not choose a magical point above the city but were relegated to real vantage points, making it difficult, if not impossible, to encircle an entire city. In order to present an entire urban area, it was necessary to piece together a series of photographs into a 360-degree panorama. This was especially difficult in New Orleans — a city not endowed with hills. Furthermore, in photographs, the city's sprawl faded into an atmospheric haze.

Beginning in the late 1880s, progressively taller buildings — and later, the airplane — pro-



Camp and Fourth streets, Garden District, between 1857 and 1860, by Jay Dearborn Edwards (1982.32.9)



Aerial view of New Orleans, 1967, by Sam Sutton (1984.166.2.487)

vided photographers with previously undreamed-of opportunities to portray cities. The earliest aerial views in the exhibition are by Charles L. Franck and date from 1922. These not only emphasize widespread areas of the city and depict new landmark skyscrapers; they also readily show long, narrow shotgun houses that made up much of the city and, with precision, illustrate the fringes of the urban area, neither of which could be shown in printed views.

As airplanes flew higher, the photographer was finally able to encompass an entire urban area; satellites provided an even greater perspective. But at the same time, the ability to detail neighborhoods and individual landmarks was lost. Except for topographical features

such as hills and rivers, most cities ended up looking like one another. Both printed and photographic bird's-eye views have their assets as well as their drawbacks. While the lithographer is able to encompass an entire city in one image, it often required an inaccurate presentation; the photographer, although accurate, was forced to produce many images to identify a city in his bird's-eye views. Taken together, the two processes provide a compelling picture of the growth of New Orleans.

The exhibition opens in May and continues through October.

— **John Magill**

Sources: Peter Bacon Hales, *Silver Cities: The Photography of American Urbanization 1839-1915* (Philadelphia, 1984); John W. Reps, *Views and Viewmakers of Urban America* (Columbia, MO, 1984).



View of Poydras Street, showing Queen and Crescent Building on left and former main Post Office Building on right, by Charles L. Franck, ca. 1919, detail (1979.325.6775)

Karma

In keeping with sound conservation policies, all books published at the Collection have been printed on acid-free (alkaline) paper, which has a much longer lifespan than ordinary stock. Once relatively hard to find and expensive, acid-free paper is now used extensively as museums, research centers, and historical and government agencies increasingly require its use for all publications.

The Historic New Orleans Collection Newsletter, beginning with this issue, will be printed on Karma Text White, an acid-free paper made by the Potlatch Company. Besides recording the history of the Collection, the *Newsletter* serves as a research tool for Louisiana history and culture; research institutions across the nation include the *Newsletter* in their serials holdings.

— **Patricia Brady,
Louise C. Hoffman, Editors**
*The Historic New Orleans
Collection Newsletter*

From the

Director



The basic challenge and responsibility of museums and research institutions is to collect, preserve, and exhibit for the education of the public. I've written a great deal about collecting in this column and discussed many of our exhibitions. Preservation, however, is at the heart of it all.

Anyone who has visited the Collection and has had a behind-the-scenes tour knows the care with which we protect every object and slip of paper. It is a never-ending process. We are fortunate in that we have the ability to house and to store the collections in proper atmospheric conditions and temperatures.

Each item must be individually evaluated. Books and papers are examined, fumigated, dusted, and carefully shelved or put into acid-free boxes and polyester sleeves. Proper housing will delay further deterioration.

Curatorial objects offer more diverse challenges as each medium demands an evaluation of its own — paintings, photographs, furniture, textiles, glassware, silver, porcelain, and even frames are a study in themselves. Part of our yearly budget is dedicated to conservation. Our staff continues to attend professional meetings and is knowledgeable about evaluating our needs. Conservators are becoming more and more specialized, and we are quick to call for consultations when we spot a damaging situation. Some problems cannot be reversed or repaired.

Most damage is caused by ignorance. People still use metal paper clips, rubber bands, and cellophane tape on papers and books; they still iron sharp creases into fine linen;

New Position Announced

Jon Kukla has been named curator of collections by the board of directors of the Historic New Orleans Collection. A year-long, nationwide search for candidates was conducted to fill this newly created position. Dr. Kukla is both an experienced administrator and an active scholar—a combination of talents that was requisite for the curator of collections. Beginning May 1, he will take administrative responsibility for the three research divisions—curatorial, manuscripts, and library.

A native of Wisconsin with a Ph.D. degree in American history from the University of Toronto, Dr. Kukla has directed the publications program at the Virginia State Library and Archives for the past 14 years. The list of publications produced under his direction is a distinguished one, ranging from a quarterly magazine, *Virginia Cavalcade*, through an extensive array of both popular and scholarly works on southern history. Among recent accomplishments, he is proud of the computerization of the massive Virginia Colonial Records Project and the creation of the *Dictionary of Virginia Biography*, a multi-volume work.

An historian of the South, he has written and spoken extensively on intellectual and political history.

wipe paintings and frames with a damp cloth; dog-ear book pages or press flowers in volumes; hang drawings and photographs on a sunny wall; and write on the back of photographs with ink. The sins go on and on.

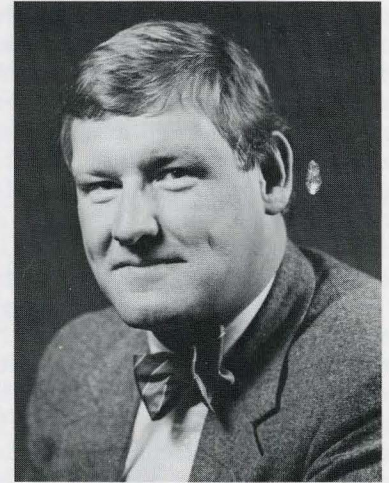
To help everyone who feels responsible for saving family souvenirs or treasures, the Collection continues to add to the number of preservation guides we publish. They are designed for the layman and are filled with practical suggestions as well as sources for ordering necessary materials.

There may come a day when attics and closets will yield fewer boxes of yellowing paper and mildewed books because of proper care.

We try to hasten that day.

—Dode Platou

Jon Kukla To Join Staff



Jon Kukla

He delights in finding parallels between disparate events: one of three books in progress is *Recipes and Rights: Southern Intellectuals and the Origins of the American Revolution, 1607-1776*, which compares the way political ideas and cooking lore have been handed down through generations of Americans.

The wide range of the Collection's holdings—manuscripts, books, other printed material, paintings, prints, photographs, sculpture, and decorative arts—made the position particularly attractive to Dr. Kukla. He believes that here the history of New Orleans can be seen in the broad context of American history by studying a variety of evidence—artifacts, as well as written and printed sources. Dr. Kukla hopes to encourage research in Louisiana history and culture by staff members, and for himself, plans to expand his understanding of southern intellectual and political history by exploring the relationship of early Louisiana with the Anglo South. The prospect of integrating the resources of the entire institution for the advance of scholarship is exciting to him; he expects to build on the Collection's many strengths and to extend its already solid reputation as a research center.

THNOC Outreach

A presidential visit from former President Ronald Reagan was the topic of conversation for days at the Andrew J. Bell Junior High School. And the visit was also discussed at the Historic New Orleans Collection—but for more practical reasons. Mr. Reagan's talk to the students preempted one of the history programs which are part of THNOC's educational outreach to the Orleans Parish public schools. A discussion of yellow-fever epidemics in 19th- and early 20th-century New Orleans gave way to presidential privilege; the following week, however, it was back to history with a discussion led by Marjy Greenberg, a member of the outreach team.



Above, President Reagan at Junior Achievement presentation, Andrew J. Bell Junior High School. Photo courtesy Jean Kennedy; left, Marjy Greenberg

Bringing History to the Classroom

What was it like to live in New Orleans in 1810? That was a question the students at Gregory and Bell junior high schools recently contemplated as part of THNOC's educational outreach program for the New Orleans public schools. Staff members have been scheduled throughout the year to lead discussions related to local history. Barbara McMahon initiated the program by giving each student a copy of an early Louisiana newspaper, *Le Courier de la Louisiane* — also called the Louisiana Courier — from July 4, 1810.

A quick glance at the *Courier* told the eighth-graders at Bell Junior High an important fact about New Orleans in 1810: there were a large number of French-speaking people in the city at that time — the newspaper was half in French, half in English.

The students discovered what a New Orleanian might be wearing in 1810. Advertisements, which figure prominently in early newspapers, were a key source of information, revealing what items could be purchased. Silk stockings, cotton shawls, and muslin robes were

advertised, as well as boots, shoes, cocked hats, and beaver hats. Numerous ads for cotton, linen, calico, madras, and velveteen — as well as the absence of notices for ready-made clothes — led the students to conclude that people in New Orleans at that time either made most of their own clothes or had them made.

From other ads offering homes for sale, students learned that kitchens were often separate from the rest of the house; water, they discovered, often came from wells. Someone furnishing a home in New Orleans in 1810 could purchase such items as chandeliers, fireplaces, marble chimney pieces, china, glassware, decanters, engraved goblets, salt cellars, looking glasses, artificial flowers, barometers, pots for jelly, and even empty bottles.

The *Courier* also indicated that a large number of slaves were sold in New Orleans in 1810; from reports of business ventures and court proceedings, the students noticed that there were also a number of free people of color. And it was evident that the port of New Or-

leans was growing in importance: ships were departing for Natchez, Baltimore, Liverpool, and Belfast.

Students discovered that Louisiana was still a territory and that New Orleans was a relatively small town. Several of the merchants did not give their addresses, describing instead their locations as “near Mr. Languedoc, the chair maker,” or “under Mr. Tricou's store.” The *Courier* made reference to the professions — law and medicine — as well as to blacksmiths, stablemen, ship captains, plantation owners, field hands, and craftsmen.

Cultural life included a comic opera at the theater and traveling exhibitions. The *Courier* mentions that Mr. Renault's exhibition had been cancelled due to “damp and bad weather.”

This early 19th-century newspaper became a window to the past for the Bell eighth-graders. They read about a New Orleans that was no longer a frontier town — one that was beginning to show signs of the bustling, commercial city it would become by mid-century.

— Barbara McMahon

Donors to the Collection, 1989

The generosity of donors insures the excellence of our collections. Once again we acknowledge and thank those who have made donations during the past year.

— Dode Platou

Angelina Albrizio
 Pamela Arceneaux
 G. Durel Arnold
 Marilyn Barnett
 Mrs. Thomas Barton
 George Bey
 Mercedes Vulliet Bonner
 Charles Henri Brandt
 Lester Burbank Bridaham
 Mr. & Mrs. Richard C. Briede
 Dr. Buell C. Buchtel
 Mrs. John Calhoun
 Christ Church Cathedral
 Margaret Chapman
 Caroline Christenberry
 Mrs. William K. Christovich
 Jerry Cohen
 Contemporary Arts Center

Jesse R. Core III
 Clyde J. Cucullu
 Irwin L. Cucullu
 Dr. Harold Cummins
 Edith Davis
 Claire de la Vergne
 Jacqueline Denuzière
 Maureen Donnelly
 Bessie Lee Dupont
 Dr. Sue Eakin
 Earl K. Long Library, University of
 New Orleans
 Laurance Eustis
 Robert W. Everett, Jr.
 Catharine Jean Farley
 F. Evans Farwell
 H. Waller Fowler, Jr.
 Friends of the Cabildo
 Louis Frierson
 Zella Funck
 Gallery Circle Theater
 Roy F. Guste, Jr.
 Earl Hart
 Gary Hendershot
 Harry Henly
 Maunsel White Hickey
 Pendleton Hogan
 Joseph Hunter, Jr.
 Internationalen Musikinstitut Darm-
 stadt
 Mrs. Robert D. Irvine
 James J. Jacobsen
 Charles N. Kahn, Jr.
 Mr. and Mrs. Fred Kahn II
 Paul Markham Kahn
 Elizabeth Killeen
 J. M. Kinabrew, Jr.
 Robert Kushner
 Peggy Scott Laborde
 Mildred Plauché Landry
 Sue Laudeman
 John C. Laughlin
 John Lawrence
 Priscilla O'Reilly Lawrence
 Mr. & Mrs. Denvrich LeBreton
 Dr. Alfred E. Lemmon
 Louis Armstrong Foundation, Inc.
 Louisiana Department of Transporta-
 tion and Development
 Louisiana Power and Light Company
 Louisiana State Board of Examiners of
 Psychologists
 Louisiana Watercolor Society
 Bob Lurate
 Charles L. Mackie
 John Magill
 Martha Mark
 Mack Marsh
 Claire Hero Martin
 F. Lestar Martin
 Richard C. Marvin, Jr.
 Masur Museum of Art
 D. Caffery McCay

Carol Meek
 Metropolitan Museum of Art
 Jackson L. Molaison
 Hermione Cahn Moss
 Museum of the City of Lake Worth
 Berte Alcus Muslow
 Mrs. L. Kent Nelson
 New Orleans Country Club
 New Orleans Museum of Art
 New Orleans Women's Caucus for Art
 Rick Olivier
 Dr. Ethelyn G. Orso
 Philadelphia Maritime Museum
 Daniel E. Piersol
 G. Henry Pierson, Jr.
 Henry C. Pitot
 Richard C. Plater, Jr.
 Mrs. Ralph V. Platou
 George Popovich
 Queens Museum
 Raphael J. Rabalais, Jr.
 Ed Reed
 Regional Planning Commission
 Mr. & Mrs. A. Fred Renaud
 Elinor Bright Richardson
 Mrs. Coleman Romain
 Dr. J. William Rosenthal
 J. Raymond Samuel, Ltd.
 San Diego Public Library
 Saraland Press
 Mrs. William Francis Scheyd
 School of Design
 Donald F. Schultz
 Mr. and Mrs. Paul J. F. Schumacher
 Alexander Samuel Schwartz
 Lloyd Sensat
 Siskiyou County Museum
 Dorothy Sloan Books
 St. Martin Parish Library
 Irma Stiegler
 Mrs. Clarence E. Strauch
 Judy Tarantino
 Barbara Alcus Threefoot
 Peggy Tirschwell
 Timothy Trapolin
 Twin City Art Foundation
 United States Department of the
 Interior
 WWL-TV
 WYES-TV
 Ed Walker
 John E. Walker
 Clay Watson
 Dr. Thomas E. Weiss
 Wade Welch
 Helen E. Wetzel
 Robert Whitman
 Whittier Museum
 Samuel Wilson, Jr.
 Mrs. Charles Wirth III
 Mr. & Mrs. J. Brison Woods
 Mrs. Brandon B. Woolley

THE HISTORIC NEW ORLEANS COLLECTION NEWSLETTER

Editors: Patricia Brady,
 Louise C. Hoffman

Head of Photography: Jan White
 Brantley

The Historic New Orleans Collec-
 tion Newsletter is published quar-
 terly by the Historic New Orleans Col-
 lection, which is operated by the Kem-
 per and Leila Williams Foundation, a
 Louisiana non-profit corporation. Housed in a complex of historic build-
 ings 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 avail-
 able for a nominal fee.

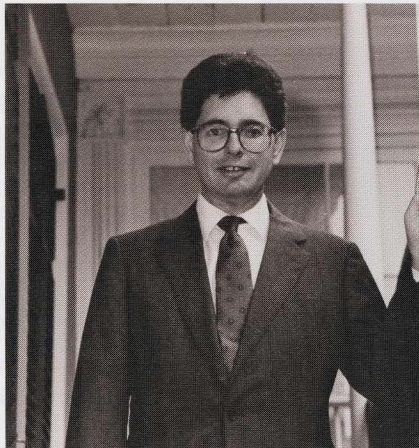
Board of Directors:
 Benjamin W. Yancey, President
 Mrs. William K. Christovich
 G. Henry Pierson, Jr.
 Francis C. Doyle
 John E. Walker

Dode Platou, Director

The Historic New Orleans Collection
 533 Royal Street
 New Orleans, Louisiana 70130
 (504) 523-4662

ISSN 0886-2109

© 1990
 The Historic New Orleans Collection



John Magill's voice on the telephone is full of contained excitement. He has just called to say that the day after the devastating freeze was, incredibly, Mardi Gras. The year was 1899. Mr. Magill, faithful contributor to the *Newsletter*, is at work on an article prompted by the severe Christmas freeze just past. What he has discovered from the old *Picayune* of February 13, 1899 — accessible from THNOC's collection of newspapers on microfilm — brings him great delight: an historical coincidence, a semi-disaster, and a good story.

For John Magill, assistant curator at the Historic New Orleans Collection, this enthusiasm for urban history goes back to another good story from his childhood in the San Francisco Bay area and the time he traded his grandfather's sterling silver shaving kit for a most coveted item: a 1906 newspaper issued a few days after the catastrophic earthquake and fire. Although the kit was retrieved, his interest in the urban scene remained, maturing over the years and eventually serving him well in his unofficial role as THNOC's resident expert on dates and delectable bites of history.

Born in New Orleans — in passing, he says, due to his father's Navy career — he lived in Hawaii and in California before returning to Louisiana where he studied at the University of New Orleans. Mr. Magill's master's thesis on municipal improvements in New Orleans in the 1880s happily com-

bined his interest in what he calls "down-to-earth history" with a period that he relishes, the 1880s, a decade of great change in American cities. To be more specific, he appreciates the stretch of time from the 1880s up through the 1930s; but his heart belongs to the '80s, when luxuries such as electricity and asphalt came to New Orleans but necessities — sewers and drainage — were neglected. "One of the most ambitious asphalt projects in the world was on St. Charles Avenue," he says.

Before he joined the Collection staff in 1982, Mr. Magill worked for the State Welfare Department as a social worker. While on his rounds, he visited some of the best 1830s and 1840s buildings in the city and remembers thinking, "Oh, I want to look at these buildings." This art of seeing a building is an essential quality for the urban historian who must be equally concerned with the evolving shape of the city and not — in the words of architecture critic Paul Goldberger — "with the building as an object isolated in either time or space."

The place to find John Magill is in the curatorial reading room which you reach, escorted by a staff member, after walking through the first curatorial building and up a short flight of stairs. There's a good chance that the head of the reading room — Magill, to distinguish him from THNOC's three other Johns — will be wearing a seasonal tie, particularly at carnival time. And he probably will be conversing with

a researcher about the pictorial resources available, including a multitude of "urban visuals" — the lithographs, photographs, and drawings that illustrate the history of New Orleans. Or he may be talking to a television cameraman about Canal Street in the 19th century.

Researchers come from all over. He remembers the day he assisted a man from New Zealand — Mr. Magill's mother is a New Zealander — and made a serendipitous discovery. (His eyes twinkle at the sheer coincidence of it.) Their common ground, it turned out, was an event in 1844, the last duel in the Antipodes, in which their ancestors were the duelists.

"Show it to Magill" is a standard response among staff members looking for the dates of a photograph, a building, a street. Acutely aware of details, he spots a tiny statue in a Charles Franck photograph and identifies the Liberty Theatre; in another image — the demolition of the St. Louis Hotel — he notes the smallest shadows and deduces that the photograph was taken in early morning. On the point of discovery, he says, "I'll have to look at this through a loupe."

For someone who pounces upon facts and relishes the details of the urban scene with all the glee of a collector, it follows naturally that he will have a favorite building. He does. He hesitates for only a second: "I guess I'm going to have to say the Hibernia Bank." It's an early New Orleans skyscraper (1921), and, for Mr. Magill, a point of reference: "I like to see the lighted beacon at night." He professes a preference for post-Civil War architecture because it shows the city's evolution. Thus it is the Central Business District and the Old Faubourg St. Mary that catch his fancy and reflect the city's movement which he describes as "rolling like a carpet up and down the river," away from the French Quarter.

What fuels his imagination is the concept of the city as a living entity, constantly reshaping itself. That's why he pores over old census figures and why he says, anticipating the results of the 1990 census, "I can hardly wait till April rolls around."

Researching themes for the ball of the Mystic Club, a carnival organization, provides another way for Mr. Magill to indulge his love of history, the “footnotes of history,” he says, “the good times.” He thinks back to a particularly successful theme, just a little bittersweet — the opening of China to Europeans in 1850 and the emperor’s reception for European merchants and their wives. He lectures and writes frequently about New Orleans development and about the city as observed by writers — Oscar Wilde, Sherwood Anderson, Tennessee Williams — with a blend of anecdote, history, and wit. His article, “The Last Frontier of Bohemia,” ran on the cover of the weekly *Gambit* to launch the annual Tennessee Williams/New Orleans Literary Festival last year.



Away from history and research, he grows roses, gardens on Sunday, and likes “just to plop things in the ground.”

When he thinks of time, he harks back to his childhood fascination, the San Francisco earthquake — oldtimers call it “the fire” — which serves as a line of demarcation: modern times, for Mr. Magill, begin after 1906. You can imagine his feelings last fall when another earthquake shook the city of San Francisco. Plaintively he asks, half-joking, half-serious, “*Why couldn’t I have been there in October!*”

This is vintage Magill.

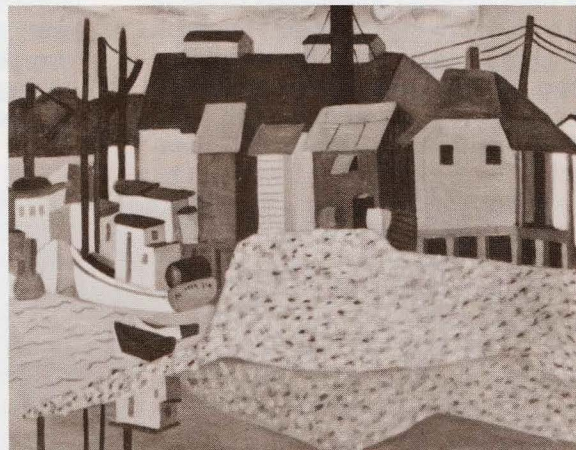
— Louise C. Hoffman

Changes at the Collection



Extensive renovations are under way in the history galleries, including new lighting, the latest sprinkler system, and refinished floors. A room under construction in the history galleries is pictured above; the galleries are scheduled to re-open for tours this fall.

Request for Information



Oyster Dock, Gulfport, ca. 1936-38, oil on canvas, by Jane Smith. Photo courtesy Jeff Rosenheim

During January and February 1991, the Historic New Orleans Collection will mount an exhibition of the work of photographer Walker Evans and painter Jane Smith. Both were active in New Orleans during the 1930s. Smith was married to the painter Paul Ninas and was later married to Evans. The exhibition’s guest curator is former staff member Jeff Rosenheim, now in the Department of Prints and

Photographs at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.

Evans’s career as a photographer is rather well-documented but less is known of Smith’s work as a painter and muralist. Readers who either knew Smith or Evans during the 1930s and 1940s, or who know the location of public or private works by Smith, are asked to contact John H. Lawrence, curator of photographs, at 523-4662.

Acquisitions

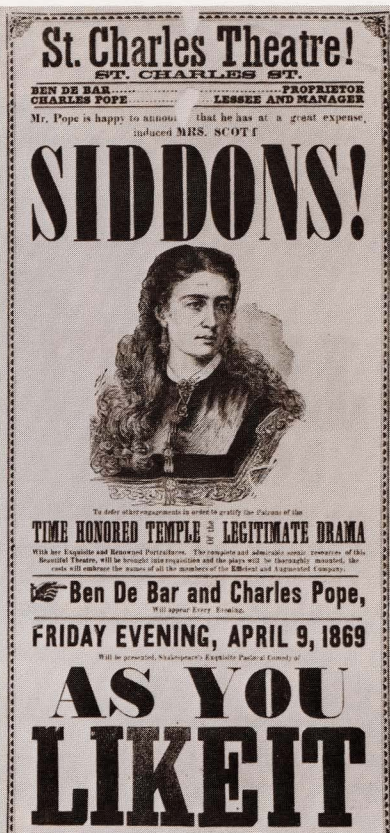


The Historic New Orleans Collection acquires thousands of items through purchase and donation during the course of each year. Only a few recent acquisitions can be noted here.

LIBRARY

Local 19th-century theatrical broadsides are becoming increasingly rare. Recently, however, the library acquired a fine one which advertised a performance by the English actress Mrs. Scott-Siddons in *As You Like It* at the St. Charles Theatre. Mrs. Scott-Siddons was a granddaughter of Mrs. Sarah Siddons, the great English tragedienne, and was said to resemble this noted ancestor. Mrs. Scott-Siddons was born in India in 1844, married a man named Canter, and came to America in 1868. Her husband changed his name to Scott-Siddons because his family objected to their name being associated with anything as disreputable as the theater. Mrs. Scott-Siddons was at the beginning of her successful American career when she came to New Orleans and appeared in several plays during the 1868-1869 season. In *As You Like It*, she was a most charming Rosalind, and local theatrical luminary Ben DeBar supported her in the role of Touchstone. This performance was staged at the second St. Charles Theatre at St. Charles near Poydras. It was built by Noah Ludlow and Sol Smith in 1843 and operated until 1899 when it was destroyed by fire.

■ The return of the French hero of the American Revolution, the Marquis de Lafayette, to the United States in 1824 for a farewell tour ignited a frenzy of adulation and patriotism unprecedented in the peacetime history of the nation. At the invitation of President Monroe and Congress, Lafayette arrived in New York in August 1824 to begin



(89-475-RL)

a 14-month journey that would take him through all 24 states of the Union. At every stop along the way there were cheering crowds, speeches, ceremonies, banquets, glittering balls, and displays of relics of the Revolutionary War. Lafayette's tour and the displays of these items sparked American interest in preserving the artifacts and commemorating the sites associated with the fight for independence. Souvenirs of every description depicting Lafayette, Washington, Franklin, and other heroes of the Revolution were mass-produced. Artists vied with one another to secure an opportunity to paint Lafayette's portrait. Engravers quickly turned out copies of these portraits as well as scenes from Lafayette's life, and books about his tour and the attendant festivities appeared. *Lafayette, Hero of Two Worlds: The Art and Pageantry of His Farewell Tour of America, 1824-1825* is an exhibition catalogue published to accompany a traveling exhibition of memorabilia and artworks associated with Lafayette's tour. The exhibition, sponsored by the Queens Museum of New York City, runs

through May 1990 but does not come to New Orleans. The extensive catalogue contains information about Lafayette, his tour, and what the tour meant to Americans of that time.

■ Several recently donated menus complement the library's collection of local ephemera. Most of these menus were from the January 1948 cruise of the liner *Antigua* which sailed from New Orleans to ports in the Caribbean, with a stop at Havana. Included are breakfast, luncheon, and dinner menus all featuring a staggering selection of possibilities to combat hunger on board ship. The *Antigua* was part of the Great White Fleet, the steamship service of the United Fruit Company. The donor, Mrs. Robert Irvine, also included a luncheon menu from the St. Charles Hotel for Saturday, February 18, 1939, and a Fountain Lounge menu from the Roosevelt Hotel for Mardi Gras, February 21, 1939.



(90-216-RL)

■ The *New Orleans Police Department Commemorative Album* was donated in memory of Patrolman Peter Bergeron, who was killed in the line of duty on December 12, 1969. The album, which contains a history of the New Orleans Police Department, a special section for each of its divisions, and a photographic roster of its officers, was published by the Police Association of New Orleans (PANO). Officer

Bergeron was the first member of PANO to die in the line of duty, and his badge number, 1544, has become part of the symbol of this organization.



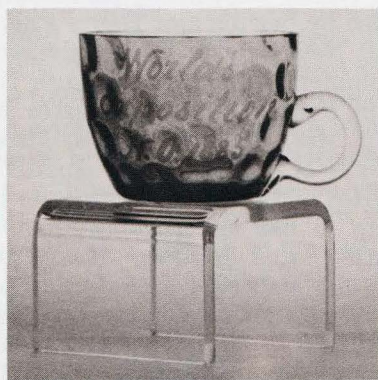
(90-117-RL)

■ “El Jaleo de Jerèz” by D. F. E. Auber may be one of the earliest pieces of sheet music lithographed in New Orleans. Although not dated, it was probably published before 1845, very likely about 1838 or 1839, by B. Casey who had an establishment on Camp Street. It features a picture of the internationally acclaimed 19th-century dancer, Fanny Elssler.

—Pamela D. Arceneaux

CURATORIAL

Following the conclusion of the carnival season each year, THNOC receives donations of the printed invitations, programs, call-out cards, admit cards, and other memorabilia that become part of the thousands of similar items in the Mardi Gras Collection.



Exposition souvenir (1990.13)

■ THNOC has a fine collection of memorabilia from the 1884-85 World's Industrial and Cotton Centennial Exposition, including a hand-painted fan and embroidered hand-

kerchiefs. Another functional souvenir of that fair, a cranberry-colored punch cup with a clear glass handle, was found in Florida by assistant registrar Alan Balicki. Perhaps the cup was taken to that state by Willie Hart, the name etched on the surface of this handsome example of American Victorian craftsmanship.

■ The Morris Henry Hobbs Collection is one of the largest groups in the division's fine-print collections; the detailed French Quarter views and courtyard scenes are the most popular of all the New Orleans etchers of the 20th century. Many years ago, his etching tools and the miniature press for printing his “postage stamp” series were acquired for the Collection; and, recently, local artist Ed Walker donated Hobbs's larger press. With this donation, the press returns to one of its earlier locations: it had once been given by Hobbs to the Orleans Gallery, whose artists used it in their rented space in THNOC's present library.

The earliest photographic process was the daguerreotype, invented in Paris in 1839 and introduced in New Orleans the next year. One of these antebellum photographs was recently donated by Clyde Cucullu: a portrait of Joseph Gustave Cucullu, a son-in-

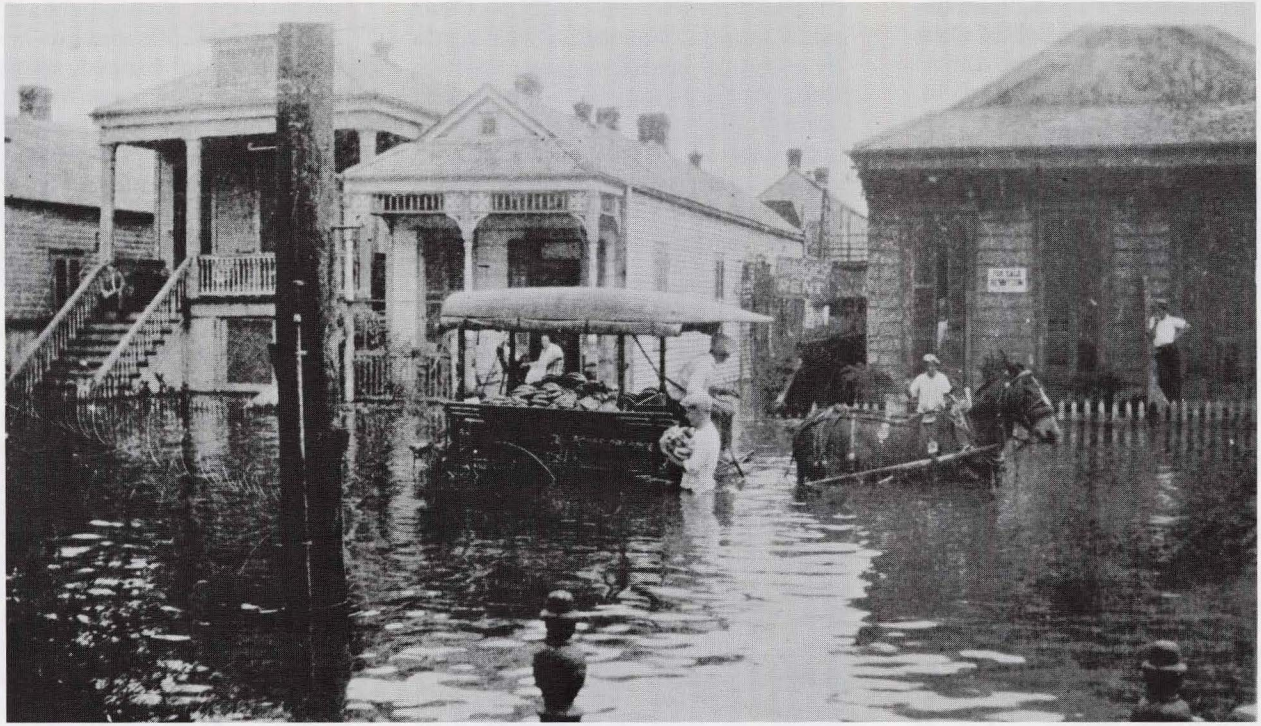
law of Louisiana Governor Louis A. Wiltz and the great-grandfather of the donor. It was probably made in the mid-1850s and has been kept in its original hinged, wooden carrying case. The case has also protected a rare relic of the Civil War. Resting inside is a miniature hand-made Confederate flag with an inscription in French, stating that the flag was made at the birth of Joseph's son, Louis Anatole Cucullu, on January 8, 1864, near the end of the war. Family tradition says that it was pinned to the infant's crib.

■ Amateur photographers often provide more personal views of life than do most professionals. Their photos may not be as valuable as daguerreotypes, but the scenes and events they document are frequently as rare. The photographer is usually unknown, as is the case in several recent donations. The first is the gift of James J. Jacobsen and may be the only extant view of a building that once stood near present-day Pauline Street. It was made in 1897 and inscribed with the title “Club House on [the] Miss. River.” The building was probably destroyed in the setback of the levee at the turn of the century.

Three other snapshots were sent to THNOC by the Siskiyou County Museum of Yreka, California. One



Flag, daguerreotype of Joseph Gustave Cucullu (1989.119.1,2)



Flood in Mid City, ca. 1927 (1989.116.2)

is titled "Street Scene, Creole Section, New Orleans," and shows a busy Chartres Street, ca. 1920, when it was a two-way street crowded with a double line of horse- and mule-drawn wagons. The photo was taken from inside one of the vehicles; its fringed top hangs across the top border of the picture.

Amateur photographers frequently bring out their cameras to record natural disasters in their neighborhoods: ten photographs, donated by Mrs. Brandon B. Woolley, show an inundation on Dupre and Baudin streets in Mid City. The photos were included in an album originally owned by Emilie Knapp Rotschild and probably were made during the disastrous 1927 flood that affected many of the cities along the Mississippi River. The scenes show typical responses to the high water: neighbors stand on their porches while the water laps at the top steps, and men navigate small boats through the streets. The flooding did not stop the produce delivery man. The horse-drawn wagon of Charles Orlando of 8330 Willow Street, identifiable in one photograph, kept to its route with a load of bananas.

■ Mrs. Mildred Plauché Landry

has added to her previous donations with a gift of drawings and photographs of her mother, local artist Leda Hincks Plauché. The photographs were taken at Mrs. Plauché's gift shop, The Green Orchid, located for many years at 616-18 Royal street and known for its carnival displays and handmade pralines.

■ THNOC staff photographer Judy Tarantino has been recording New Orleans scenes during the past 15 years. She recently donated 19 photographs of street performers, landmarks, and other subjects which will help document city life in the 1980s for future researchers.

■ Mrs. Claire Hero Martin donated her oil portrait of her mother Mrs. Leon Joubert (née Claire Peschier De Villemarest). She also gave a copy of a 1927 photograph that shows her father, George A. Hero, with the principals in a venture to bring airmail service to New Orleans. Among the group is the late tycoon Howard Hughes. More additions were made to THNOC's collection of nearly 4,000 postcards by donations from Dorothy Sloan Books, Clay Watson, and Richard Marvin.

— John A. Mahé II

MANUSCRIPTS

During the 1980s, documentary studies of women became increasingly important. Travel accounts, organization records, research projects, and correspondence recently donated to the manuscripts division reflect the contributions of women in New Orleans and the nation.

■ Nancy Brown Phelps, accompanied by her nephew Henry Phelps, left New Orleans during the early summer of 1858 on a trip to London, Bombay, and Madagascar. Mr. and Mrs. A. Fred Renaud, descendants of Phelps, have donated a series of 14 letters written on her trip to her sister-in-law, mother, father, and brother. The letters vividly describe traveling conditions, proper social gifts necessary for a lady of her standing, and social customs of exotic countries, ranging from weddings to funerals.

■ On September 22, 1884, 12 women, led by journalist Elizabeth Bisland, met at the Young Men's Christian Association and organized the first women's club in the South, the New Orleans Woman's

Club. The Woman's Club has a number of firsts to its credit: it was responsible for the first speakers on woman suffrage in New Orleans, first children's story-telling hour in the United States, and the first penny luncheons for New Orleans school children. Among early members were Sophie Wright and Dr. Sara Tew Mayo. An extensive collection of the organization's records was recently donated to THNOC by Mr. and Mrs. Richard C. Briede. The records (1897-1952) are noted for their completeness and for their detailed information.

■ Marie Théard (1892-1975) was educated at Cenas's Private School near her family's Esplanade Avenue home. Upon completing her studies there, she earned a Bachelor of Music degree from Loyola University. She then combined her knowledge of music and French and began actively compiling and arranging Louisiana folk songs. The collection was donated by her daughters, Frances Moses Crist, Anne Moses Ganucheau, and Marie Moses Bezou and consists of 92 songs. She grouped the songs into the following categories: patriotic songs, songs found in French collections, songs not found in French collections, Acadian songs, Creole songs, and hymns and Christmas carols. The usefulness of the anthology is enhanced by information on singers, composers, and arrangers associated with the songs. Théard's work reflects one of the characteristics of American folk music: the coming together of music from two different cultures.

■ Alice Blanc Labouisse taught history at Newcomb College for nearly 20 years beginning in the late 1920s. On the birth of her niece and namesake in 1944, she wrote a letter to the infant girl describing the philosophical confusion surrounding World War II and the importance of women to the future of the world. Donated by the recipient Mrs. L. Kent Nelson, the letter will assist THNOC researchers in assessing the impact of World War II on the local community.

■ Hermione C. Moss, Berte Alcus Muslow, and Barbara Alcus Threefoot, the daughter and granddaughters of Bertrand I. Cahn (1877-1968), have donated his papers and scrapbooks. Cahn's career as New



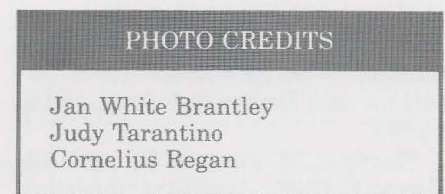
Testimonial dinner menu (89-61-L)

Orleans City Attorney, attorney for the New Orleans Board of Health, and Assistant State Attorney General and his activity in Jewish philanthropic organizations are documented in this material. The donation will allow researchers to trace his development as a skilled lawyer and community activist.

■ Manifest Destiny found many a sympathetic ear in Louisiana. J. D. B. DeBow wrote that "We will have Old Mexico and Cuba! Time has all this in her womb." Glory, financial security, and property in Cuba were promised to participants when the Cuban Narciso López established himself in New Orleans during the spring of 1851. The early overthrow of Spanish rule in Cuba was predicted and the city seethed with excitement. However, the filibustering campaigns of López were doomed to failure. After two unsuccessful expeditions to Cuba, the third voyage resulted in dispersal of his "army" and the summary capture and execution of López and some of his leaders. H. Hinch, a 45-year-old native of Ken-

tucky serving as Justice of the Peace in West Feliciana at this time, wrote to his relative Ben Hinch, in New Haven, Illinois, describing the young men who were lured by the excitement of New Orleans and the adventure López promised. With motives ranging from virtue to financial gain, some made it only to New Orleans, while others did reach Cuba. Hinch, an astute observer, also comments on the yellow-fever epidemic of 1851, noting that St. Francisville appears to have been spared any deaths. This letter is a valuable addition supplementing other accounts of Manifest Destiny in Louisiana.

— Alfred E. Lemmon



Staff

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

Rosanne McCaffrey Mackie, head of systems, was installed as president of the Louisiana Association of Museums at the annual meeting in Baton Rouge on April 6.

Priscilla O'Reilly Lawrence, collections manager, is president of the Southeastern Registrars Association.

Dr. Patricia Brady, head of publications, serves as chair of the membership committee of the Association for Documentary Editing...she also presented a paper, "Literary Ladies of New Orleans During the Gilded Age," at the March meeting of the Louisiana Historical Association and serves on the publications committee of LHA.

Florence M. Jumonville, head librarian, was appointed co-editor of LLA Bulletin, quarterly journal of the Louisiana Library Association and was elected vice-chair of LLA's Subject Specialists Section.



Florence Jumonville

John H. Lawrence, curator of photographs, has been appointed to the publications committee of the Louisiana Association of Museums.

MEETINGS

John A. Mahé II, senior curator, and **Judith H. Bonner**, assistant curator, attended the North American Print Conference in Atlanta, March 14-17...the topic was "Graphic Arts and the South."

Maureen Donnelly, registrar, traveled to the Winterthur Museum and Gardens to attend a seminar entitled "The American Home: Interiors and Decorative Arts, 1810-1840."

Florence M. Jumonville and **Adrienne E. Duffy**, assistant librarian,

Rosanne McCaffrey Mackie



Priscilla O'Reilly Lawrence

attended the annual conferences of the Louisiana Historical Association in Alexandria and the Louisiana Library Association in Monroe. **Dr. Alfred E. Lemmon**, reference archivist, also attended the LHA conference.

Alan Balicki, preparator/assistant registrar, and **Tom Staples**, preparator, attended the annual meeting of the Professional Picture Framers in New Orleans.

The following staff members attended the meeting of the Louisiana Association of Museums in Baton Rouge and the installation of Rosanne McCaffrey Mackie as president: **Lynn D. Adams**, **Patricia Brady**, **Louise C. Hoffman**, **John H. Lawrence**, **John Magill**, **John A. Mahé**, **Jill Roberts**, and **Jude Solomon**.

PUBLICATIONS

The Louisiana Library Association Louisiana Literary Award Committee has designated the *Bibliography of New Orleans Imprints, 1764-1864* by **Florence M. Jumonville**, head librarian, a 1989 Notable Book.

An article by **Dr. Patricia Brady**, "Trials and Tribulations: American Missionary Association Teachers and Black Education in Occupied New Orleans, 1863-1864," was published in the Winter 1990 issue of Louisiana History.

"Bibliography of the Visual Arts and Architecture in the South: Part II" by **Judith H. Bonner** was published in the fall 1989 issue of Southern Quarterly...Mrs. Bonner

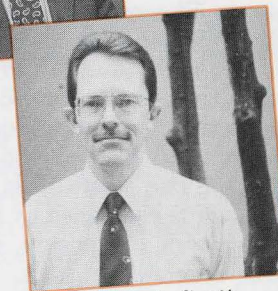
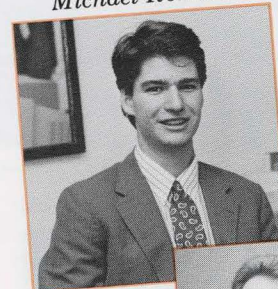
and **John H. Lawrence** contributed articles to the New Orleans Art Review. Mr. Lawrence also contributes a quarterly book review column to the Louisiana Association of Museums newsletter...two of his photographs have been selected for publication in a book on fishing and photography.

John Magill, assistant curator, contributed an article to the magazine of the Royal Street Guild.

CHANGES

Michael Romero (B.A., Loyola University) has joined the Collection staff as systems assistant. **Joseph Scott** is now working full time in the manuscripts division. **Tina McLellan** is a Junior League volunteer in the curatorial division.

Michael Romero



Joseph Scott

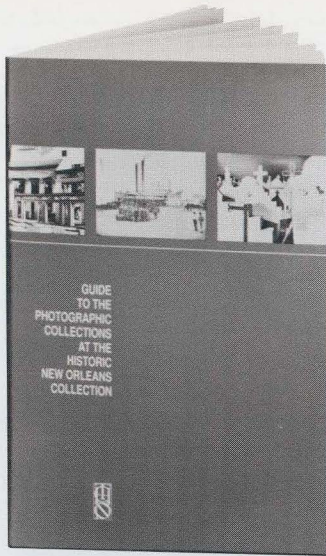
MEDIA

KGO-TV, San Francisco, interviewed **John Magill** about the development of the New Orleans riverfront...and WHDH-Radio, Boston, interviewed Mr. Magill about New Orleans history. A discussion of THNOC's exhibition *Light & Time* by **John H. Lawrence** was videotaped for Jefferson Parish Educational System cablevision.



Interns at the Collection, Will Hamaker, Whit Kellam, and Elizabeth Schmit

Publications

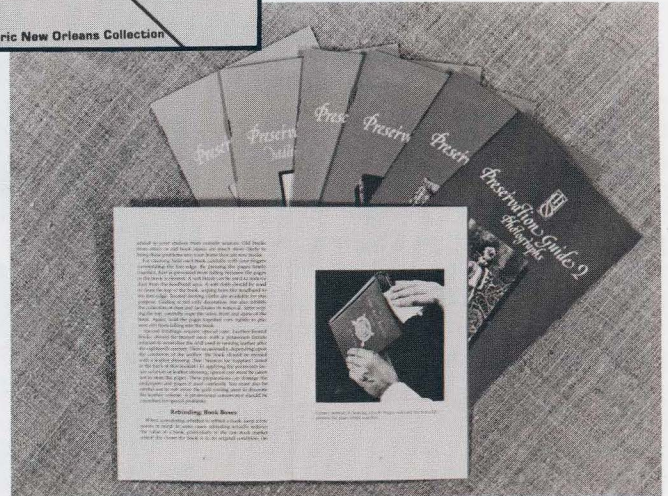
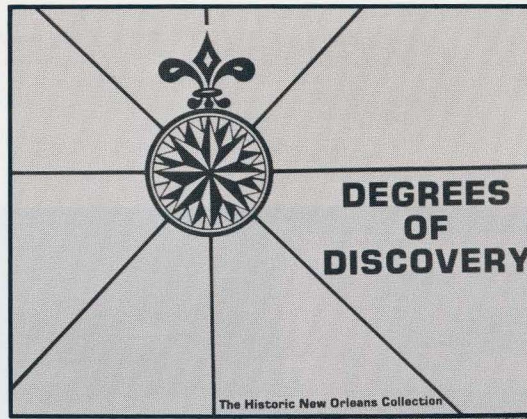


Guide to the Photographic Collections at the Historic New Orleans Collection by John H. Lawrence, curator of photographs, is part of a projected series of guides to THNOC's significant holdings. The publication features the major collections — 14 in all — through a short descriptive text and a representative photograph. Also included is an alphabetical checklist of photographers whose work is represented in the Collection by smaller groups of prints.

Guide to the Vieux Carré Survey by Florence M. Jumonville, head librarian, has been reprinted; it was first printed in 1981. The Vieux Carré Survey, housed at the Collection, is an important reference tool, containing a variety of information about each piece of property in the Vieux Carré. *Guide to the Vieux Carré Survey* describes this resource and provides a directory of selected buildings.

Preservation Guides 1-6: *Family Papers, Photographs, Paintings, Furniture, Books, Matting and Framing* belong in the library of anyone interested in the care of valuable household objects.

Degrees of Discovery: From New World to New Orleans by John A. Mahé II, chief curator, is a catalogue of rare early maps of Louisiana and the Gulf Coast. The selected maps, taken from the Collection's holdings, visually relate the history of Louisiana. Limited number of copies available.



Please send:

Qty.

_____ *Guide to the Photographic Collections at the Historic New Orleans Collection* (24 pp.) @\$3.95

_____ *Guide to the Vieux Carré Survey* (32 pp.) @\$3.95

_____ Preservation Guides 1-6 (each guide 16 pp., @\$3.95)

_____ *Family Papers*

_____ *Photographs*

_____ *Paintings*

_____ *Furniture*

_____ *Books*

_____ *Matting and Framing*

_____ *Degrees of Discovery: From New World to New Orleans* (32 pp.) @\$3.95

_____ Subtotal

_____ Shipping & handling, 1-3 books, \$1.00; 4 or more, \$2.00

_____ 9% tax, Orleans Parish

_____ 4% tax, other La. residents

_____ TOTAL AMOUNT DUE

PLEASE PRINT

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

Mastercard Visa Check or money order

Account number _____ Exp. date _____

Signature _____

Civil War Items Available in Shop

The shop offers for sale an assortment of history-related gifts which includes items pertaining to the Civil War. Shown at right is a chess set, hand-painted in England, whose pieces depict the contesting sides of the Civil War. The northern king, queen, and bishops are represented by Abraham Lincoln, Mary Todd Lincoln, Ulysses S. Grant, and William T. Sherman; their southern counterparts are Jefferson Davis, Varina Howell Davis, Robert E. Lee, and Stonewall Jackson.

Also available are prints of the period and THNOC's publication, *Vicksburg: Southern City Under Siege*.



THE HISTORIC NEW ORLEANS COLLECTION
Museum • Research Center • Publisher
Kemper and Leila Williams Foundation
533 Royal Street
New Orleans, Louisiana 70130
(504) 523-4662 Cable: THNOC
ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
New Orleans, LA
Permit No. 863