



THE HISTORIC NEW ORLEANS COLLECTION NEWSLETTER

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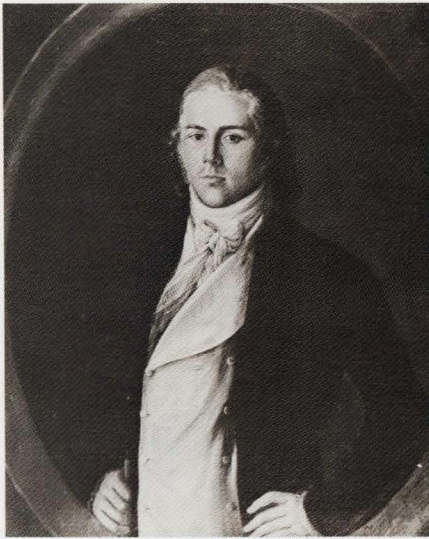


Restaurant de la Renaissance, 1904, by William Woodward (1976.181)

BRUSHES WITH HISTORY

Brushes with History: Louisiana Portraits, Landscapes, and Genre Scenes from the Permanent Collection, the current exhibition at the Historic New Orleans Collection, complements the exhibition at the New Orleans Museum of Art, *Down River: Currents of Style in*

Louisiana Painting 1800-1950. On view at the Collection will be representative works, primarily oil paintings from the late 18th through the mid-20th centuries on a variety of subjects: portraits, landscapes, seascapes, still lifes, street scenes, and levee scenes. Of



Portrait of a Gentleman, 1797, by José Francisco Salazar (1984.14)

special note are those with military subjects, non-representational paintings, and cubist-inspired works.

As the fledgling city of New Orleans began to prosper, its citizens adorned their houses in the manner they felt was properly indicative of a higher status. Among the furnishings were paintings which celebrated the persons, places, and events of the exotic city, all creating a sense of warmth and well-being. Portraiture was a natural choice for people who wished to display their wealth, preserve the likenesses of their family members, and record their own achievements.

The work of one of the first known portrait painters in the city, Francisco José Salazar y Mendoza, is represented in the exhibition by *Portrait of a Gentleman*, painted in 1797. In his 1904 biographical notes, George David Coulon wrote of Salazar: "He made good likenesses, but he was not much of a colorist" (*Louisiana State Museum, Scrapbook #100*). Whether Coulon's critical judgment of Salazar is justified or not, the portrait is well executed. The treatment of color reflects a tradition of Spanish painting in thin transparent glazes, which had continued throughout Europe since the Renaissance, but which was subsequently discontinued after the 1840s in favor of a technique employing direct application of paint. This latter method, introduced during Coulon's initial years

of artistic training, permitted a much more vivid color palette.

With the economic boom of the 1830s and 1840s in New Orleans, academically trained French artists came to the city to seek their fortunes. Jean Joseph Vaudechamp and Aimable Desire Lansot, who shared a studio, and Jacques Amans, who probably followed their lead in exploiting the lucrative New Orleans portrait market, were the most popular and accomplished of the French artists. From the Collection's holdings, Vaudechamp's *Woman with Fur Boa* (painted in Paris), the newly acquired *Portrait of Henrietta Collson* by Lansot, and Amans's *Self-Portrait* reveal the skill and technical proficiency of these artists.

The period following the Civil War saw a dearth of opportunities for artistic activities. Nevertheless, such artists as William Aiken Walker — represented by the work *Lottie Mitchell*, 1880 — continued to paint in the city. E. B. D. Julio's handwork, a pastel-enhanced photograph, exemplifies the period after the war when photography became more affordable for the average person. Twentieth-century



Woman with Fur Boa, 1832, by Jean Joseph Vaudechamp (1981.233)

works include Ellsworth Woodward's portrait of *Captain Alvin A. Callendar R.A.F.*, Helen Turner's *Helen le Grange McLellan* and Nell Pomeroy O'Brien's *Portrait of Grace King* (after Wayman Adams). O'Brien, who studied with Adams in New York during the summers of 1935-36, captures the liveliness and essence of King's character, as Adams had accomplished in the original portrait. Arthur E. Turtle portrays the publisher Joseph S.



Grace King, ca. 1936, by Nell Pomeroy O'Brien (1987.178.1)

W. Harmanson as an introspective and thoughtful man. Little is known about Turtle, his works, or the length of his stay in New Orleans.

From its founding, the city and its locale have been a compelling subject for artists; the streets and the river life and bayous have provided ample inspiration. The works of C. M. McIlhaner, August Norieri, and William Aiken Walker are represented by steamboat and levee scenes, for which the latter two artists were well known. The city's architecture and its monuments continued to be documented visually in the early 20th century in such works as William Woodward's *Restaurant de la Renaissance*, L. O. Griffith's *St. Charles Hotel*, Clarence Millet's *French Market*, and Alberta Kinsey's *French Market*. Each of these works, executed in an impressionistic style with a characteristic light palette and loose brush strokes, captures the sluggish heat and other environmental conditions of the cityscape. A watercolor



Young Woman Wearing White Gloves, between 1928 and 1935, by Josephine Crawford (1978.23.4)

**THE HISTORIC
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COLLECTION
NEWSLETTER**

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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 fee.

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The Historic New Orleans Collection

by Charles Emile Bagnetto provides the obligatory view of the St. Louis Cathedral, long a favorite subject for artists.

The exotic warmth and charm of the city emerge in Louis A. Winterhalter's *Tree-lined Promenade*, a watercolor painting showing streetcars, automobiles, bicyclists, and pedestrians strolling along Esplanade Avenue, in much the same spirit as Seurat's *Sunday on the Isle of the Grand Jatte*. Winterhalter's promenade scene, although on a smaller, more intimate scale, reflects an ambience that is conducive to a feeling of belonging in New Orleans, shared by resident and visitor alike.

In the late 19th century, landscape painting reached a zenith. One can make an informative study by comparing the misty bayou scenes of Joseph Jefferson, George David Coulon, and Joseph Rusling Meeker with landscapes by Richard Clague and his followers, Marshall J. Smith, Jr., and William H. Buck. These works capture alternately the elusive

quality of the light or the tangible, opaque quality of the ochre mud. On a note of greater sobriety, F. G. Stiles documents the Gentilly headquarters of a Massachusetts volunteer regiment during the occupation of New Orleans.

Still lifes have provided a



Night Landing on the Mississippi, ca. 1860, by C. M. McIlhaner (1960.77)



The Daily Picayune, ca. 1905, by Louis A. Winterhalder (1987.88)

steady source of income for artists, as numerous people wished to own

images of the vegetation, fruit, flowers, fowl, and fish indigenous

to the region. *Nature morte* scenes by Achille Perelli and George L. Viavant and a table scene by Louis A. Winterhalder called *The Daily Picayune* represent a variety of subjects and painting styles. Orchids, a more exotic subject, are depicted in Boyd Cruise's *Cymbidium*.

Works by Josephine Crawford, Daniel Webster Whitney, and John Clemmer underscore the movement of local artists into mainstream modern art, as their images begin to become flattened and faceted, then dissipate into soft-hued color fields. The three artists, active in the Arts and Crafts Club, produced a body of work that represents a revolutionary break with traditional painting and the beginning of abstract art.

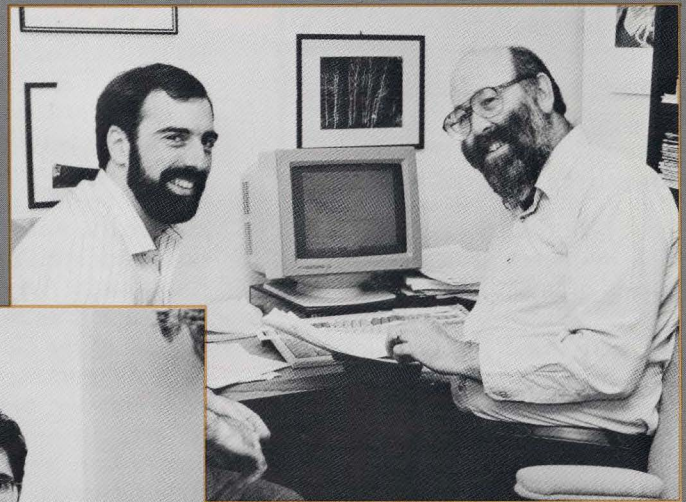
The works included in *Brushes with History* at the Historic New Orleans Collection document the tradition of painting in the state and refer directly to the national and international art movements beyond it.

- Judith H. Bonner

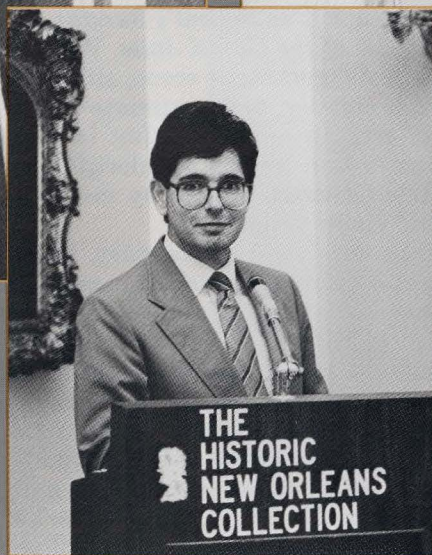
At the Collection . . .



Above, Mark Zumpe, George Herget, Alan Robinson, board members of the New Orleans/Gulf South Booksellers Association, pictured at THNOC's reception for participants in the Southern Booksellers Trade Show. Right, John Magill gave the exhibition lecture, "Pelican's- and Pedestrian's-Eye Views of New Orleans" in September.



Chris Dougherty and Elliott Welsh of Willoughby Associates, computer consultants, working on THNOC's conversion to QUIXIS, a comprehensive museum software package.





A 200-year-old Creole lady is getting a facelift.

The 1792 Merieult House — the handsome Royal Street building in the Collection’s complex — is enduring an in-depth refurbishing, but none of the original beauty will be marred. The Merieult House will glow with new lighting and enjoy the best physical protection, with multiple alarm systems to guard against all possible danger.

During these difficult months of construction, the staff has been cheered by many rewarding discoveries: layers of wallpaper from different periods; brick-between-post walls in the old French style; and walls strengthened by barge boards — lumber from the old flat-boats which carried produce and supplies down the Mississippi River to New Orleans. The ground under a new elevator shaft may reveal other interesting archaeological finds. Also revealed will be the original crisp carving and fluting of woodwork added in the 1830s — repainted after being stripped of layers of paint accumulated over the years.

The galleries will display some of the finest objects in our collections, arranged to tell the fascinating history of Louisiana. Furnishings will complement the period paintings, manuscripts, maps, rare books, and other historic artifacts.

When these galleries are opened late this fall, even the Collection’s faithful visitors will find new treasures in an enhanced setting. The public — tourists, researchers, old friends — are warmly welcome to rediscover the Merieult House, our “Creole lady,” in her new glory.

- Dode Platou

Research Notes

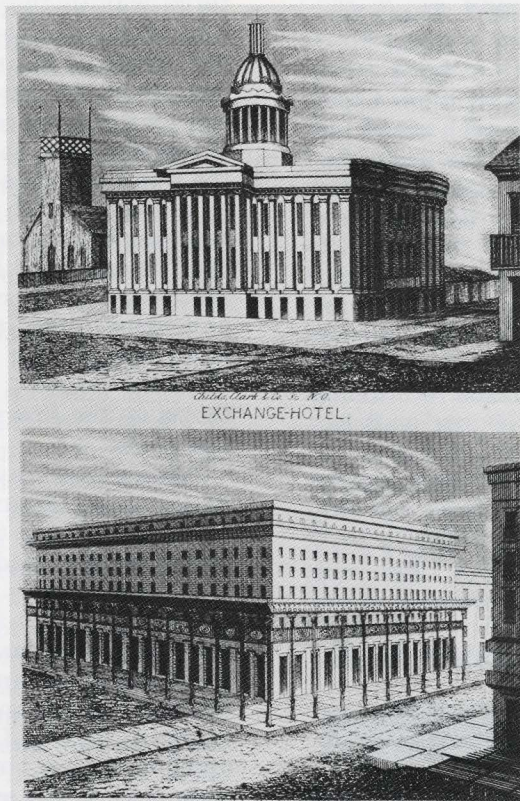
City Directories and Census Records

City directories and census records are among the useful research tools at the Historic New Orleans Collection. City-directory listings provide occupations, employers, business addresses, and a time line for a person’s moves from job to job and from one place to another. As residences are generally listed, it is often possible to determine the approximate construction date of a house by doing a city-directory check on the original owner. It is important to note that a city-directory listing for a particular year reflects information gathered the previous year.

In addition to individual listings, some city directories incorporate street guides, biographies, and maps of the city. The 1838 city directory has information on state government, railroads, colleges, public schools, and public squares. It also includes lithographic views of the principal public buildings.

The 1842 city directory lists information on banks, asylums, churches, public buildings, hotels, and theaters and gives details of the general business of the city. The 1854 city directory contains a tableau of the yellow fever epidemic of 1853, with historical sketches of the epidemics of New Orleans since 1796.

Business directories were published as separate volumes in some years but were almost always included in city directories as separate sections. These classified lists of businesses reveal much about the social and economic life of New Orleans. The 1859 city directory, for example, includes the following occupations in the business section: artificial leg makers, billiard table manufacturers, carriage makers, cistern makers, corset makers, iron and brass foundries, ornamental hair manufacturers, mosquito bar makers, moss dealers, and slave deal-



Illustration, Gibson’s 1838 City Directory. *Exchange Hotel*, above, and *The Verandah [Hotel]* (52-5)

ers. Both business and city directories contain advertisements, which are a valuable source of detailed information on businesses.

As the census is taken every decade, its research value is different from that of a city directory. Rather than providing a continuous record, year-by-year, the census yields a more complete biographical sketch at ten-year intervals. Beginning in 1850, the census lists the name of every resident of a household and provides the following information about each one: age, sex, race, place of birth, occupation, and value of personal property and real estate owned. Beyond this basic data, some censuses also include number of servants, relationship to head of family, and month and year of birth. The census records for the years 1810, 1820, 1830, and 1840 list only heads of households and the number of residents, subdivided by race (white, free colored, and slaves) and by age.

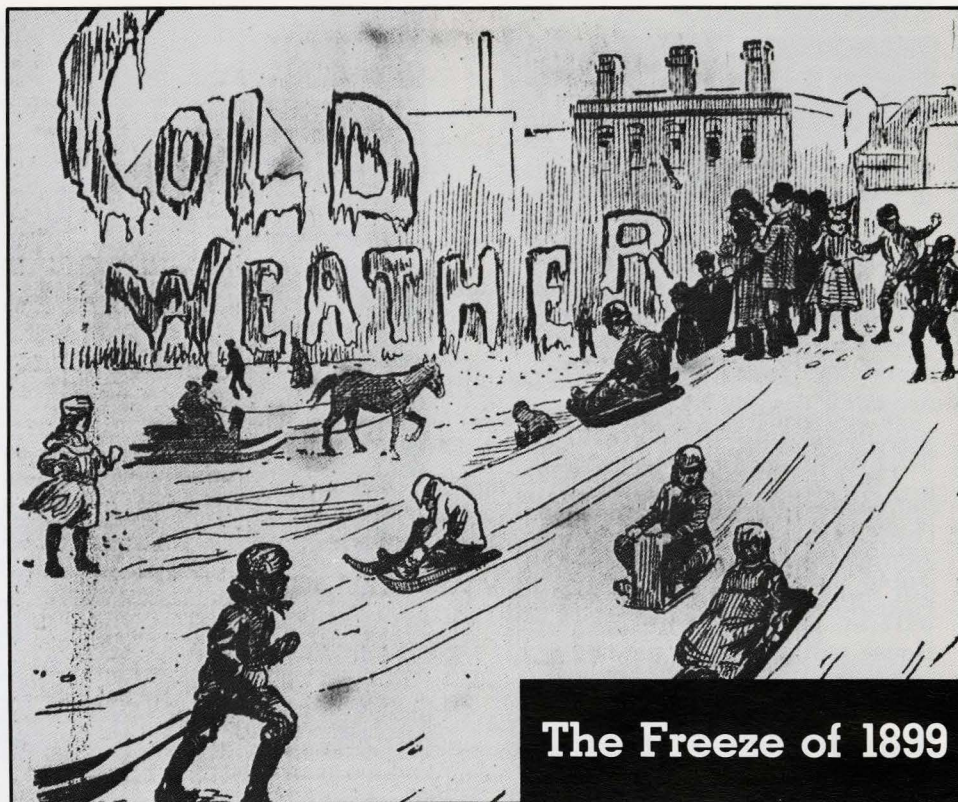
City-directory and census work was essential to the research for the *Encyclopaedia of New Orleans Artists, 1718-1918*, published by the Collection in 1987. These contemporary sources yielded vital information on the majority of artists and art organizations listed in the book. Research revealed that Louis Pepite, for example, was a free colored male, active as a painter and decorator in New Orleans from 1827 to 1835.

With very few exceptions, the Collection has city directories or microform copies from every year of publication from 1805 through 1986. Louisiana census records for the years 1810-1910 are available in the manuscripts division on microfilm. There are commercially prepared name indices for the 1810-1870 census records and coded indices for 1880, 1900, and 1910. The 1920 census will be available in 1992.

- Lynn D. Adams

PHOTO CREDITS

Jan White Brantley
Cornelius Regan
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The Freeze of 1899

Sledding at Lee monument, Times-Democrat, February 13, 1899

For about two weeks in January and February 1899, the United States east of the Rocky Mountains was in the grip of intense cold which sent temperatures in a few areas plunging to nearly 50 degrees below zero. New Orleans was initially spared the full force of the icy blast; in early February the weather in the city was almost oppressive with temperatures reaching the upper 70s. On February 7, a cold snap brought temperatures in the city close to freezing, and before long, the *Daily Picayune* headlined: "The Ice King Coming South . . . Northeast Storm on the Programme in South Louisiana."

After a cold, raw start, the sun came out on Saturday afternoon, February 11, and the temperature began to rise, leading Orleanians to believe that the weather bureau had erred in its forecast; hopes were high because this was the weekend preceding Mardi Gras. By sunset, rain and temperatures began to fall, and from midnight until morning, sleet mixed with snow fell. At 8 a.m. Sunday, thermometers registered 16 degrees. Although the sun came out, 40-mile-per-hour winds kept tempera-

tures below 20 degrees throughout the day. After nightfall, the temperature dropped dramatically and continued to fall throughout the night. The coldest recorded temperature in the city's history — 6.8 degrees — occurred at 7 a.m. on Monday, February 13.

Of the winter wonderland, the *Times-Democrat* said, "the picture . . . was by no means a cheery nor inspiring one," because the three-inch snowfall had not been enough to blanket the ground completely. Snow had been blown by high winds into low, dirty drifts; a mixture of snow and sleet created slippery ice. More picturesquely, snow piled deep around the base of the Robert E. Lee monument, which became a popular gathering place for people with improvised sleds.

Hacks, express wagons, and other vehicles were out of service because horses and mules in New Orleans were not properly shod to labor on frozen streets. Most families stored little coal for heating: when coal deliveries stopped, they suffered badly from the cold. Markets ran short of fresh food because farmers were stranded in the country. The *Daily Picayune* observed that "there were but few

swell dinners in private families.”

An 8-inch snowfall in 1895 had taught streetcar companies the value of preparedness: though their schedules were erratic, streetcars continued to run smoothly to the appreciation of those few passengers who braved the cold. Ferry riders were less fortunate: large ferries could not successfully navigate the churning, wind-blown waters of the Mississippi River and were removed temporarily from service.

Beside frost-bitten gardens and ruined crops, water pipes and cisterns froze all over town. Some families were reduced to melting snow and sleet for drinking water. Two mansions on Audubon Place at St. Charles Avenue caught fire and burned to the ground because firemen lacked water to fight the blaze. Wind-driven sparks from the fires fell like rain in Audubon Park, igniting an oak tree that burned like a torch for hours.

Most people did not venture out after dark that weekend: streets were generally left to the rule of the troublesome Ice King. On February 13, the *Times-Democrat* reported the previous night “as one during which there wasn’t ‘A hot time in the old town.’” But the *Daily Picayune* observed that Mardi Gras weekend more posi-

tively: “All last night Royal street had its run of pedestrians — they were a jolly set, many half drunk.”

Carnival was an especially inopportune time for record-shattering cold to envelope New Orleans because the city was filled with northern visitors, seeking warmth in the “Sunny South.” Although trains were delayed by snow and few carriages were to be had, most of the visitors accepted their fate placidly because they knew that the weather was far worse at home.

On Monday Rex arrived, as was his custom, by royal yacht. In the words of the *Daily Picayune*, “he determined to risk his personal inconvenience, and made his entry with the usual ostentation and display.” Rex promptly left his yacht; the very much abbreviated parade — many of the mounted marchers were excused — moved quickly through the streets.

Spectators for the parade had formed early. Their numbers, while considerable, were fewer than in past years: people did not loiter, as they usually did, but moved around briskly, attempting to stay warm. Orleanians normally wore their “Sunday best” to greet Rex. Although dress clothing “was not adapted to this kind of weather,” according to the *Daily Picayune* “it was religiously donned . . . concealed under heavy overcoats and mufflers, and ugly looking mits [sic].” The Proteus parade and ball, scheduled for that Monday evening, were postponed until the end of the week because of the dangers of ice-covered streets and the difficulties of securing transportation.

The cold mass moved rapidly to the east. On Mardi Gras morning, February 14, Orleanians awoke to a temperature of 22 degrees, which rose to the upper 30s by the afternoon. Warmer temperature created a morass of mud and slush in parts of Canal Street, which was being repaved; parades rolled over a makeshift surface of cinders.

Crowds viewing the Rex parade were large, though sparser than usual and less inclined to walk from street to street to view the floats several times as the parade followed its circuitous route. Balconies, generally thronged with

elegantly attired women, were noticeably empty. There were fewer costumes than usual, but the *Daily Picayune* stated, “There were quite a number of promiscuous maskers . . . but they did not remain very long out of doors in their costumes, some of which were quite airy and better adapted to the Philippine islands.”

When the parade of the Mistick Krewe of Comus passed City Hall at about 8:30 that evening, rain was falling but could not hamper the crowd’s enthusiasm. Multi-colored lights illuminating the facades of many buildings in the business district brought out thousands of sightseers “as if the balmiest breezes were blowing,” according to the *Daily Picayune*. Though the weather was still chilly, the freeze of 1899 had passed into history. The *Daily States* was able to proclaim that the king of carnival had managed “A Complete Triumph Over the Ice King.” The week after Mardi Gras was pleasant and warm, but as a reminder of the cold, for several days Orleanians were treated to the rare sight of large chunks of ice floating down the river.

Professor Willis Moore, chief of the National Weather Service, announced to the citizens that they should be duly thankful for the freeze. He theorized that it had killed all the germs in the city so that “there will be no yellow fever in New Orleans in 1899 unless it is brought here” (although the 1899 fever season did claim 23 lives). Moore went on to explain that freezing weather “rarefies and . . . purifies the atmosphere Oh it’s the best thing that ever happened.”

- John Magill

Sources: *Daily Picayune*, February 11-16, 1899; *Daily States*, February 9-16, 1899; *Times-Democrat*, February 8-16, 1899; Henry Rightor, *The Standard History of New Orleans*, Louisiana (Chicago, 1900); *Selected Documents from the Records of the Weather Bureau Relating to New Orleans, 1870-1912* (Washington, D.C., 1986).



Slipping on the ice, *Times-Democrat*, February 13, 1899



Daily Picayune Weather Frog, February 12, 1899



Mollie Moore Davis, ca. 1892

No invitations were sent: simply, the right people knew they would be welcome. For nearly 20 years, the “worthwhile New Orleans folk and all the well-known strangers” assembled regularly on Friday afternoons between three and six o’clock at a town house on Royal Street. There Mollie Moore Davis, a nationally known poet, short-story writer, and novelist, received guests at her “salon,” renowned for good company and good conversation.

How did it happen that an outsider, a transplanted Texan with none of the obvious attributes for social leadership in New Orleans — not descended from the founding families, not rich, not living in a fashionable neighborhood — became such an important social and intellectual force in New Orleans?

Mary Evelyn Moore Davis (1844-1909), known as Mollie Moore Davis, made her name early in Texas as a poet, then as a short-story writer for national magazines. Her husband, Major Thomas E. Davis, was a newspaper editor. In 1879 he accepted a position as associate editor of the *New Orleans Times*, and they moved to the city.

At first they rented rooms downtown on Carondelet Street,

A French Quarter Salon

convenient to “newspaper row” on Camp Street. But a downtown boarding house lacked flair: Mollie Moore Davis wanted a setting with a certain cachet. Her friend George Washington Cable, the newly successful author of *Old Creole Days*, gave direction to her search. Appealing to her strong imagination, Cable’s tales sent her house hunting in the oldest part of the city, the Vieux Carré or French Quarter.

In 1879 the Quarter was, not to put too fine a point on it, a decaying slum. Since the fashionable 1830s, there had been a long slide downward.

There were still pockets of gentility — individual houses or blocks where old Creole families maintained appearances and respectability reigned, but an influx of immigrants had been attracted by cheap, accessible housing close to the port. Since colonial days a mixed business and residential area, the Quarter teemed with enterprises of the less desirable sort. Anglo-Americans turned up their noses: even Cable lived on the American side of Canal Street.

Undaunted, Mollie Moore Davis sallied forth downtown, searching Royal Street for a suitable home. On the moderate salary of a newspaperman and the small fees paid to a writer, the Davises could not afford an impressive establishment. Turning unpleasant reality inside out, Mrs. Davis draped any deficiencies in their living arrangements in the rosy gauze of myth — and, by extraordinary force of character, convinced others to accept her romanticized view of the Quarter.

Over the next years, the Davises rented two apartments in the third block of Royal Street. In 1882, Mollie Davis finally found what she was looking for in the fourth block of Royal, three buildings down from Conti, where they would live for over 20 years.

The Davises’ new home, 84 Royal Street (later 406, when streets were renumbered in 1894), was a typical Vieux Carré three-

story brick town house with a wrought-iron balcony. The shop downstairs was rented to a piano tuner, the stylish mulatto composer Basile Barès. The house no longer stands; the entire square was demolished to make room for the construction of the New Orleans Court Building, later the Wildlife and Fisheries Building.

Entered through a heavy, dull-red door to the left of the piano shop, the dark, narrow carriage-way “whose walls [were] wrought in fantastic arabesque by the mould and the peeling plaster” emerged into a small, brick-paved courtyard with a cistern and other necessary offices. Against a wall rested “an enormous high-shouldered, mildewed earthen jar, like those wherein the Forty Thieves did hide themselves.” The courtyard was enlivened by green plants in clay pots and by Don Estaban, a big red macaw whose cage hung in one of the surrounding arches.

A curving flight of steps at the end of the passageway led up to a hall, which opened into graceful, high-ceilinged rooms with tall windows facing onto a plant-filled balcony overlooking Royal Street. Gauzy drapes and louvered shutters ensured privacy, but Mollie Davis often threw open windows and shutters to enjoy the stream



A coffee pot, cup, and spoon used at the Davis salon



Courtyard of Davis home (Vieux Carré Survey, squares 39-40). All other illustrations courtesy Davis Lee Jahncke, Jr.

of people on the street, who lent color to her books—the “calla tout chaud” girl, the praline woman, nuns, musicians, Indian women with “gombo filé.”

The rooms were not richly decorated by Victorian standards, but their simple décor was welcoming. White walls were hung with Impressionistic and Romantic paintings by local artists, drawings of Texas scenes, an arrangement of Indian baskets, and travel souvenirs. A deep sofa, easy chairs, a graceful rocking chair, mahogany tables, an old-fashioned mantel adorned with vases, shelves and tables piled with books and magazines — all combined to create an atmosphere of ease.

In the house on Royal Street, Mollie Moore Davis wrote daily: eventually her short stories were published in Harper’s and the *Saturday Evening Post*, and she wrote several novels, often incorporating French Quarter settings and characters. At the same time, she molded the life she wanted in New Orleans, as consciously and artistically created as any of her novels. Rather than money, her tools were imagination, intelligence, charm, and talent. She was

able to live modestly—and as the Gilded Age grew more flamboyant, to make such a life a virtue.

In 1885 Mollie Moore Davis established Friday as her formal day to receive callers. Refreshments were simple — black coffee, sherry, and small cakes. No hired waiters or butlers served the guests; rather, she prevailed on the young debutantes of her acquaintance to serve — and they considered it an honor. Dancing,

formal programs, and heavy food would have interfered with the purpose of her salon — to bring together interesting people and allow them the luxury of conversation.

At these simple afternoon receptions, she gathered friends from the newspapers, the university, her clubs (the Geographics and the Quarante), and, increasingly, from both uptown and downtown society. Writers congregated in her drawing room — Elizabeth Bisland, Martha Field (who wrote as Catherine Cole), Lafcadio Hearn, Eliza Jane Nicholson, Mary Ashley Townsend (the poet Xariffa), Ruth McEnery Stuart, Kate Chopin, Cecilia Viets Jamison, May W. Mount, Grace King, George Washington Cable. The artists came too — William and Ellsworth Woodward, Bror Anders Wikström, Mary Given Sheerer, Marie Seebold, Jennie Wilde — and their paintings graced her walls. Then there were the Creoles — Beauregards, Pitots, Denegres, Castellanoses, Morphys, Romans, Allains, Berthelots, Peyrats — and the Anglo-Americans — Stantons, Minors, Walmsleys, Aikens, Townsends, Maginnises, Hardies, Merricks, Fenners, Buckners. In

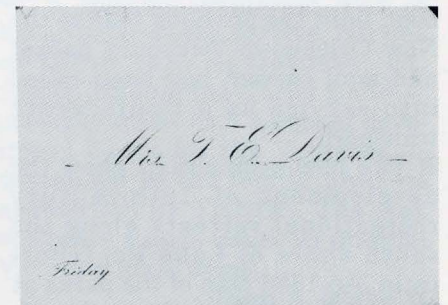
scrapbooks, she carefully kept clippings of newspaper stories about her entertainments. Mollie Moore Davis had a genius for social life — and she loved it.

By the 1890s, her guest list had been considerably enlarged by distinguished out-of-town visitors. She welcomed the admirals and officers of visiting fleets (both American and foreign), generals and bishops, explorers and archaeologists, poets and historians; she was particularly fond of actors, inviting theatrical troupes such as those of Madame Helene Modjeska, Otis Skinner, and Joseph Jefferson. National celebrities — writers Eugene Field, Horace Fletcher, Thomas Nelson Page, and Booth Tarkington, editor Charles Dudley Warner, philosopher Josiah Royce, and reformer Frances Willard — lent glamour to her salon. Fridays on Royal Street provided New Orleans with intellectual stimulation.

In 1903, Mollie Moore Davis announced in the *Picayune* the temporary cancelation of her longtime Friday receptions because of illness. That illness proved to be lingering, and eventually fatal. Her salon was never resumed, and New Orleans was the poorer for the disappearance of “a place of resort for men and women of brains and wit, where fashion is subservient to mind, and where the twaddlers cease to twaddle.”

—Patricia Brady

Sources: Mollie Moore Davis Collection, Historic New Orleans Collection; Vieux Carré Survey, squares 39-40; M. E. M. Davis, *Keren-Happuch and I* (New Orleans, 1907). Davis Lee Jahncke, Jr., Mrs. Davis’s great-grandson, recently donated the Mary Evelyn Jahncke and Mollie Moore Davis papers to the Collection. See *Manuscripts Acquisitions*, p. 12, for details of this important acquisition.



At-home card

Research Center Acquisitions



The Historic New Orleans Collection encourages research in the library, manuscripts, and curatorial divisions of its research center from 10:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday (except holidays). Cataloged materials available to researchers include books, manuscripts, paintings, prints, drawings, maps, photographs, and artifacts about the history and culture of New Orleans, Louisiana, and the Gulf South. Each year the Collection adds thousands of items to its holdings by donation or purchase. Only a few recent acquisitions can be noted here.

Paintings by Boyd Cruise (1909-1988), THNOC's first director and an accomplished artist, have rarely been available on the art market because most of his works have remained with their original owners. THNOC has recently acquired at auction a Cruise watercolor, *Customhouse*, one of the artist's imaginative series of antebellum New Orleans street scenes. The viewpoint is unusual: the rear of the building, showing only the center section of its immense facade, is framed between the darkened rows of buildings along the single block of Clinton Street.

CURATORIAL

The steamboat *Natchez* is the subject of a rare 1861 lithograph, hand-tinted with watercolor. The boat, built the previous year as the New Orleans-to-Vicksburg packet and mail carrier, had been called into service as a Confederate transport.

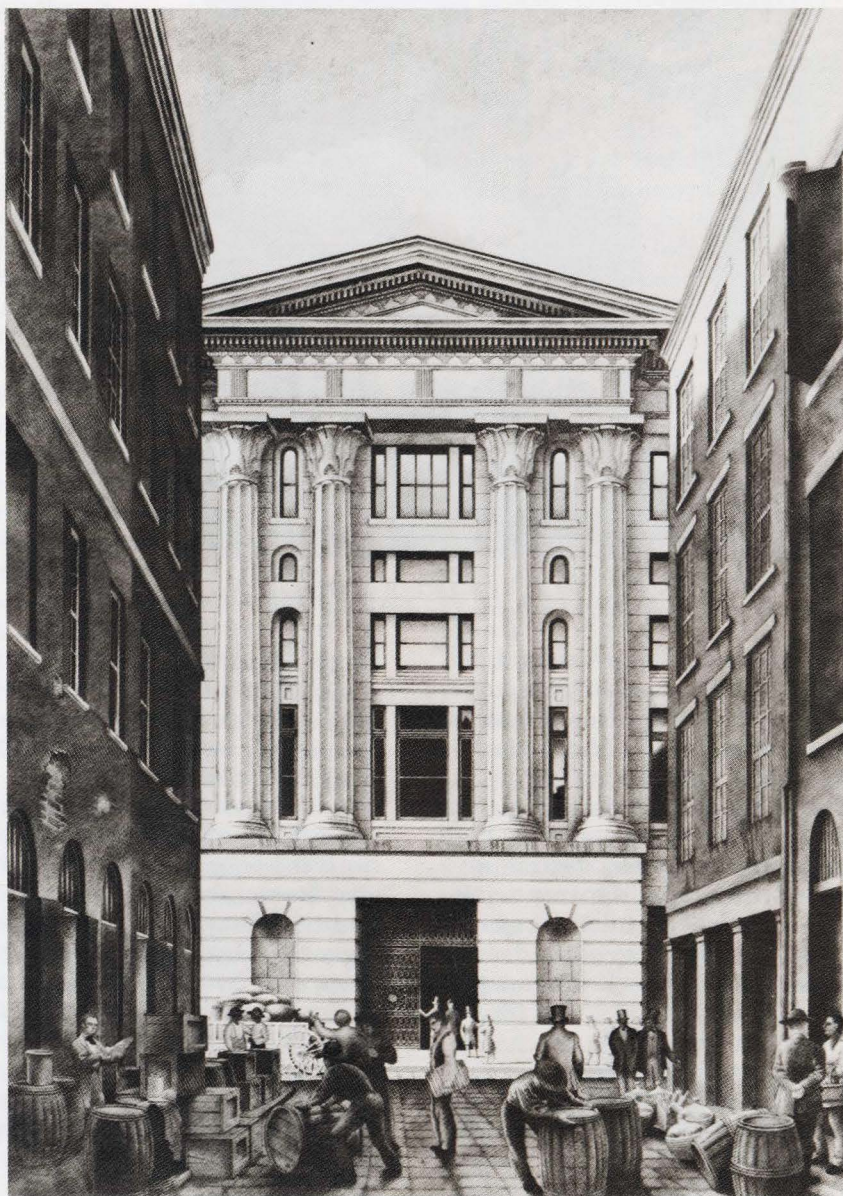
Two new acquisitions show the development of 19th-century recreational retreats along the south shore of Lake Pontchartrain. An 1886 plan of the parks at Spanish Fort, drawn by civil engineer George H. Grandjean, docu-

ments the entertainment facilities once available at the mouth of Bayou St. John. It identifies Henry Sigur's restaurant and bar, *Over the Rhine*, on the east side of the bayou and, on the opposite bank, the railroad depot, casino, theater, bar, music stand, and "Pic Nic Platform" that made up Spanish Fort Park.

A watercolor, titled *Sketch for the West End Casino*, ca. 1892-94,

shows a fantastic building designed sometime between 1892 and 1894 by the St. Louis architectural firm Stewart, McClure, and Mullgardt. Although there is no evidence that it was built, the ink and watercolor rendering shows a large central building with archway and colonnade linking two pavilions and towers on a large square along the lake.

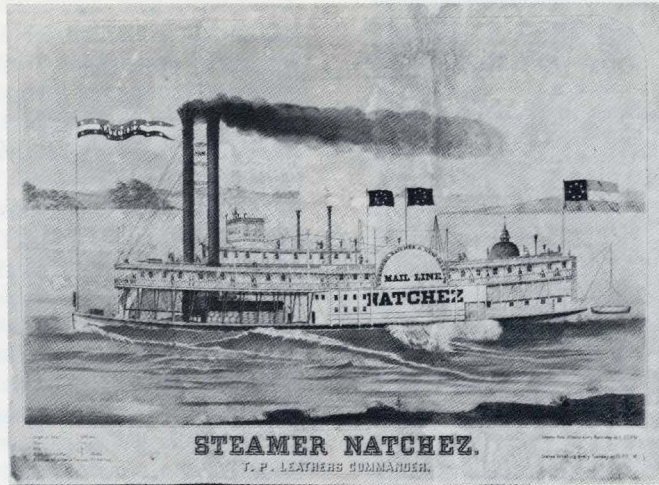
Many 19th-century industries



Customhouse by Boyd Cruise (1990.63.1)

were built along the Carondelet Canal, the main commercial link between Bayou St. John and the French Quarter. On a canalside property near St. Peter and Dorgenois streets, Bertrand Saloy built a brick kiln sometime between 1875 and 1888; the kiln is documented in a recently acquired ink and watercolor plan and elevation.

■ Richbend plantation in St. James Parish was acquired by the Fortier brothers, Florent and A. Septime, in 1845. The brothers married the daughters of Valcour Aime, whose plantation adjoined theirs; Septime's son was historian Alcée Fortier. The formal arrangement of the site is shown in a simple watercolor plan of buildings and gardens that was donated by Effie M. Stockton, a direct descendant of Florent Fortier. The gift also includes a later survey map of the Fortier brothers' property and a rare lithograph, *Scott's Great Snake*. The latter is a caricature



The Natchez (1990.63.2)

showing a map of the seceded southern states at the beginning of the Civil War, illustrating General Winfield Scott's Anaconda Plan for winning the war.

■ The Collection has received donations of photographs from several sources. A scrapbook of the family's jewelry business on Canal

street, compiled by the owner Coleman Adler, is the donation of Bonnie Aronson, Adler's granddaughter. Florence P. Whitten's donation of several photographic portraits of family members includes a posed photo of the employees in front of the warehouse and offices of the LeDoux Company Limited, an importer and wholesaler of groceries, liquors, tobacco, and cigars. Another portrait series is the gift of Dr. Jerah Johnson; it contains recent works by contemporary New Orleans photographers George Dureau and John R. Miller. Local frame conservator Penfield Cowan gave THNOC a large photo portrait of Joseph Francis Rummel, the ninth archbishop of New Orleans. When the photo was removed from its frame, a portrait of Rummel's predecessor, Archbishop John William Shaw, was found hidden under the other photo.

■ THNOC has a large and varied collection of sculpted wax figures created by four generations of the Vargas family of New Orleans, beginning with Francisco Vargas, Sr., a Mexican immigrant. Few of his original works survive, but one of these rare sculptures, St. Joseph holding the Christ Child — probably made as a personal devotional figure for the Vargases — descended in the family until its acquisition by THNOC. The wax sculpture stands under its original Victorian glass dome.

- John A. Mahé II



St. Joseph with Christ Child by Francisco Vargas (1990.66)

■ In 1763, when Spain accepted the huge, sparsely populated colony of Louisiana from France at the end of the Seven Year's War, royal officials recorded their varied reactions to the event. In addition to two documents already owned by the Collection — "Reports on the Cession of Louisiana, 1762" and "1776 Memoria" of Francisco Boulogny, the manuscripts division recently purchased a third significant document that sheds light on this transitional era. The new acquisition, written in 1799 by Spanish officials Francisco Requeña and Bernardo Yriarte, comments upon earlier reports by Luis Vilemont. A Frenchman serving in Louisiana, Vilemont entered the service of Spain in 1763 and wrote three memoranda urging policies of population, growth, and friendship with the Indian tribes of Louisiana. Asked to comment on Vilemont's proposals, the veteran Spanish officials Requeña and Yriarte agreed that Indians in Louisiana should be weaned from dependence on the United States and kept from trading with British subjects. Requeña and Yriarte regarded Spain's possessions north of the Rio Grande River as an unprofitable but necessary buffer to protect Mexico and its sea lanes from other nations. These sentiments were not novel in 1799, but the report is important for the clarity with which it articulated this persistent strategic perspective.

■ With the Louisiana Purchase in 1803, the Spaniards began the process of moving their archives from Louisiana and housing them, successively, in Mobile, Pensacola, and Cuba. Finally the documents were shipped across the Atlantic and integrated into the Archive of the Indies in Seville, Spain, where they were labelled the *Papeles Procedentes de la Isla de Cuba*. Since 1983, the manuscripts division has been systematically acquiring microfilm of these "Cuban Papers." Newly arrived film for more than eighty bundles of documents (*legajos* 631-706,

772, 830, and 2318-21) provides valuable information about agriculture, commerce, tobacco and hemp cultivation, finances, Indian affairs, public buildings, shipping activities, and slavery in Spanish Louisiana.

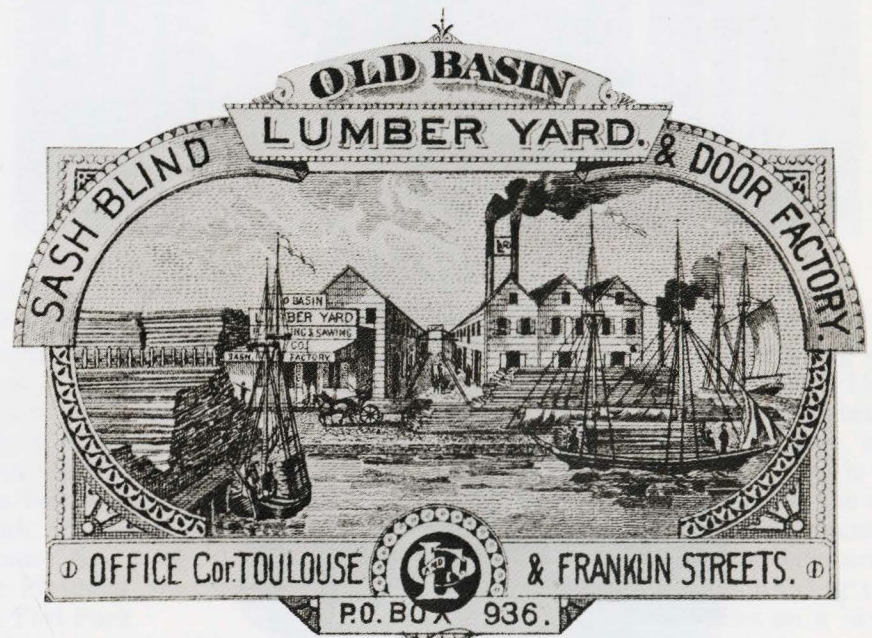
■ The recent donation by Davis Lee Jahncke, Jr., of the Mollie Moore Davis and Mary Evelyn Jahncke papers represents a significant addition to the family and women's history collections at THNOC. Rich in letters, manuscripts, and drawings, Mollie Moore Davis's papers reflect her talent for depicting everyday life in Louisiana in short stories, novels, and poetry. The inventory of her bric-a-brac, jewelry, lace, pictures, and silver provides a glimpse into the household of a prominent turn-of-the-century New Orleanian. Davis's granddaughter, Mary Evelyn Jahncke (1906-1990), continued the family literary tradition, both with her own endeavors and her association with local writers such as John Kingston Fineran (1907-1937), whose novel *Out of Final Chaos* was published posthumously through her efforts. Family correspondence details the business interests and civic activities of Fritz Jahncke, Pearl Davis Jahncke, and other family members. The Bureau of Governmental Research, National Federation of Day Nurseries, and Volunteer Port

Security Force are a few of the organizations represented in the correspondence.

■ By definition, ephemera is a category of collectibles never intended to have lasting significance. Nevertheless, when ephemeral materials survive more than a generation, they often supply scholars with unique documentation of a time now past. An anonymously donated envelope, invoice, and return envelope from the Old Basin Lumber Yard illustrate the research value of ephemera: these fragile throw-aways provide a handsome depiction of the lumberyard located on the corner of Toulouse and Franklin [now Crozat] streets, complete with ships and mule-drawn carts. The Historic New Orleans Collection is interested in acquiring further donations of ephemeral materials.

■ Published annually since 1982, *Manuscripts Division Update* is organized thematically by research fields. The most recent issue (October 1990) provides information about land records at the Collection; previous issues have described family papers, sheet music, the Battle of New Orleans, German archives, the Civil War, the visual arts, and microforms. Readers interested in receiving a copy should call the manuscripts division at 523-4662.

- Alfred E. Lemmon



Letterhead, Old Basin Lumber Yard (90-43-L)

LIBRARY

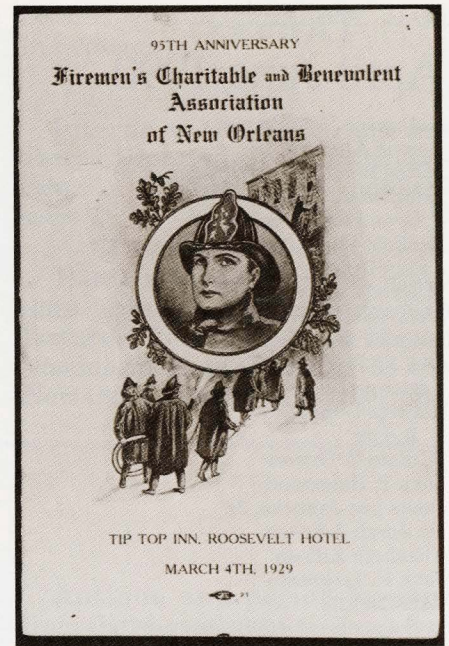
■ Camp Beauregard, five miles northeast of Alexandria, was established as a training camp in 1917 when the United States entered World War I. After the war, most units of the Louisiana National Guard trained there, and during the 1930s, it was also used by the Civilian Military Training Corps. THNOC's founder, General L. Kemper Williams, was associated with the Corps and appears in their yearbook, *The Peep Sight - 1930*. This new acquisition pictures then-Lieutenant Colonel Williams as the camp inspector.

■ A recently acquired broadside is an impressive specimen of the type of notice used during the 19th century to advertise public sales. Nearly a yard in length, it uses at least five different typefaces. Printed in Natchez, the broadside advertises an auction that took place on March 29, 1837. The property to be sold was from the succession of the late Charles S. Lee of Concordia Parish; it included four tracts of land located about 30 miles above the town of Vidalia, Louisiana, and 130 slaves, who are identified by name and age.

■ John E. Owens (1823-1886) was a popular character actor whose British parents brought him to America when he was five. Performing in New Orleans during

several successful engagements, Owens's descriptions of theatrical activity figure prominently in the biography written by his wife Mary. A passage in the book refers to the amateur efforts of the 1846-47 season: "At this time 'The Louisiana Histrionic Association' held exalted position in New Orleans. They owned a pretty theatre on St. Charles street; it was organized and conducted with perfect discipline — each member having his line of business allotted. During the summer the players from the regular theatres were engaged by the Histrionic Association, at high salaries, and many first-class stars appeared . . ." The book, entitled *Memories of the Professional and Social Life of John E. Owens, By His Wife*, was published in Baltimore, near their home, in 1892.

■ The Firemen's Charitable and Benevolent Association of New Orleans was incorporated on March 4, 1835, to provide relief to its members and their families in the event of disability or death in the line of duty. For many years the anniversary date of the Association's founding was celebrated with an annual parade in which all of the volunteer companies were represented. Volunteer fire companies ceased in 1891 when the municipal fire department was organized, but March 4 continued to be a notable date for many New



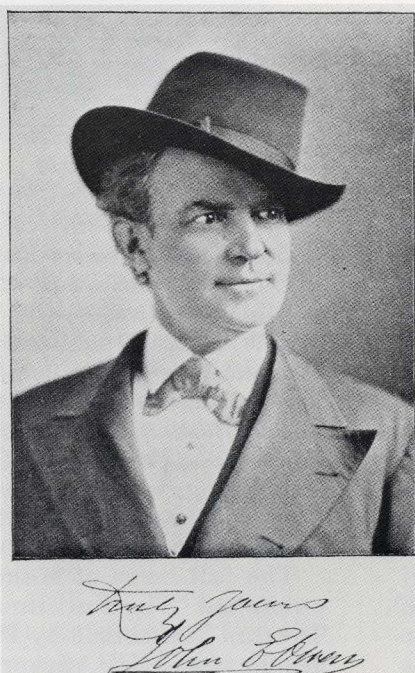
Menu (90-383-RL)

Orleanians. The library has acquired, through donation, a souvenir menu from a banquet held at the Tip Top Inn of the Roosevelt Hotel in 1929 marking the 95th anniversary of the Association.

■ *The Great Southern Liliputian [sic] Champion of All Musical Wonders, The Infant Drummer; America's Pride, The Triumph of the 19th Century, and Acknowledged Eighth Wonder of the World* is the title of a pamphlet which extols the good looks, charm, and talent of Benson A. English (b. 1849). English, the "Infant Drummer," was only four years old when this pamphlet was published in New Orleans in 1853, but he had already achieved great success because of his extraordinary musical ability. Almost completely forgotten now, the young Georgia native was highly touted in his day, as the pamphlet suggests. Though no specific performance has been documented, the pamphlet was probably issued in conjunction with the child's appearance in New Orleans.

■ A miniature dictionary containing 180,000 words and measuring only two inches by one-and-a-half inches is also a recent donation. Stamped on the leather cover of this promotional novelty are the words, "Compliments of Whitney Central Banks, New Orleans, La."

- Pamela D. Arceneaux



Actor John Owens (90-401-RL)

Donors April-June 1990

Katherine L. Anderson
Bonnie Aronson
Alfred Bendiner Foundation
Alice Breaux
J. C. and Sylvia Campbell
Penfield Cowan
Julian Craggs
Mildred Curroult
Mrs. Malcolm de la Houssaye
Maurice Denuzière
Nell M. Doyle
Adrienne Duffy
Roberta Dupont
C. B. Fox
William E. Groves
John P. Hammond
Davis Lee Jahncke, Jr.
Dr. Jerah Johnson
Elizabeth Killeen
John H. Lawrence
Winston Lill
Louisiana Land and Exploration Co.
Gary Mannina
Mrs. Bernard J. Manning
New Orleans Museum of Art
Roger H. Ogden
Orleans Parish Public School Board
Mr. and Mrs. Henry C. Pitot
Mr. and Mrs. A. Fred Renaud
Alexander Samuel Schwartz
Lloyd Sensat
Richard Snow
Jane Pharr Stewart
Audrey Stier
Stuart Thayer
Capt. F. Winter Trapolin
Tennessee Williams Festival
Mrs. Albert Vivas
WLAE-TV, Danella Hero
WYES-TV, Peggy Scott Laborde
Florence Wallace

Staff

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

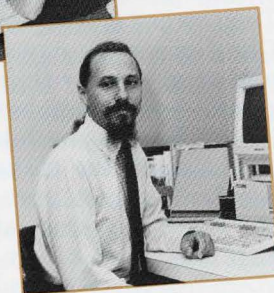
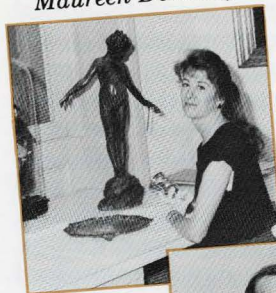
Dr. Jon Kukla, curator of collections, presented a paper, "Virginia: From Discovery to 1775," at the conference of the Virginia Historical Society in Richmond, October 11-13.

Registrar **Maureen Donnelly** was accepted as a special student in the metals conservation lab at the Winterthur Museum.

The State Library of Louisiana has appointed head librarian **Florence M. Jumonville** to the Library Services and Construction Act Advisory Council on Libraries. The Advisory Council advises the State Library on the development and evaluation of Louisiana's long-range plans for library services.

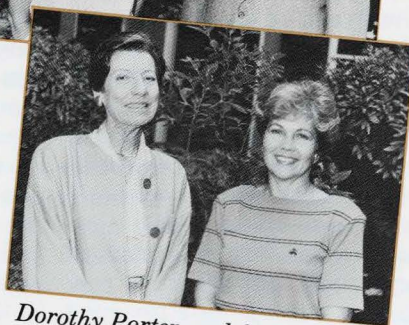
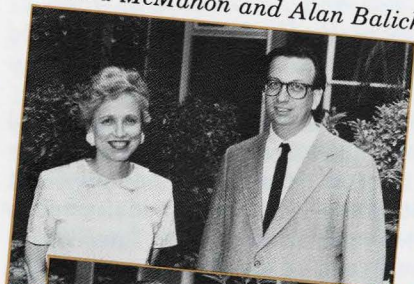
Alan Balicki, assistant registrar/preparator, demonstrated con-

Maureen Donnelly



Samuel George

Barbara McMahon and Alan Balicki



Dorothy Porter and Sally Stassi

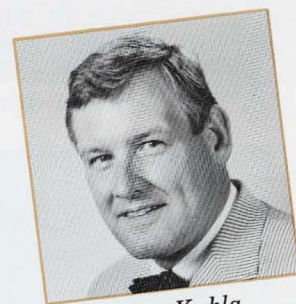
servation techniques to Dan Piersol, curator of exhibitions at the New Orleans Museum of Art. **Elsa Schneider**, curator of education, was elected treasurer of Cultural Treasures of New Orleans, Inc., which was formed to increase local and national awareness of the cultural attractions in the French Quarter . . . she is also a member of the advisory committee to incorporate African/African American studies into the Orleans Parish School Curriculum. **John Magill**, assistant curator, gave a presentation on the development of New Orleans to the Urban Design Center from the University of Minnesota.

Dr. Patricia Brady, director of publications, has been named to the publications committee of the

Louisiana Historical Association. **Stan Ritchey**, curatorial assistant, has provided research on the Vieux Carré for the U.S. Park Service and has helped with acquiring artifacts for the their Visitors Center, scheduled to open next year. **Dr. Alfred E. Lemmon**, reference archivist, has been appointed to a three-year term on the Committee on International Archival Affairs of the Society of American Archivists. **Jan White Brantley**, head of photography, and **Judy Tarantino**, photographer, attended a seminar on portrait lighting.

CHANGES

Samuel George (B.A., University of Colorado) has joined the Collection staff as systems assistant. **Barbara McMahon**, a docent in the education department for nine years, moved to Houston in August . . . assistant registrar **Alan Balicki**, associated with the Collection for the past nine years, has moved to New York to pursue graduate studies at Columbia University. **Dorothy Porter** and **Sally Stassi** are new docents in the education department . . . Volunteers in the education department are **Mendy Barry**, **Mary Ann Hymel**, **Jeanne Shepard**, and **Cora Ann Yore**.



Jon Kukla

PUBLICATIONS

Jon Kukla has coedited *A Key to Survey Reports and Microfilm of the Virginia Colonial Records Project*, a recent publication of the Virginia State Library and Archives . . . Dr. Kukla's dissertation, *Political Institutions in Virginia, 1619-1660*, brought out by Garland Publishing, was reviewed in the July 1990 issue of the *William and Mary Quarterly*.

The fall issue of *Manuscripts* published "The Fulfillment of a 'Dream,'" an article by **Florence M. Jumonville**, describing a

poem by Amy Bullock with illustrations by Boyd Cruise, from THNOC's holdings.

MEETINGS

Rosanne McCaffrey Mackie, director of systems, and **Priscilla Lawrence**, collections manager, attended the Southeastern Museums Conference in Charleston, West Virginia, October 17-19 . . . Mrs. Mackie, president of the Louisiana Association of Muse-

ums, represented LAM at the conference.

Patricia Brady and **Jon Kukla** attended the annual meeting of the Association for Documentary Editing in Charleston, South Carolina, October 25-28 . . . Dr. Kukla is serving on the ADE's Butterfield Award committee, which honors contributions to documentary publication, teaching, and service.

Director **Dode Platou** attended the annual meeting of the American Association for State and

Local History in Washington, D.C., in September.

INTERNS

Interns at the Collection are **Tanya Dimaggio**, curatorial division . . . **Regina Lyons**, publications.

SPEAKERS BUREAU

Pamela D. Arceneaux, reference librarian, presented a slide lecture, "That Old Black Magic: Voodoo in New Orleans" to the New Orleans Antique Bottle Club.

The Shop



Antique and period jewelry from the shop always makes a fine and distinctive Christmas gift. A large assortment is currently available, including bracelets, watches, brooches, rings, cameos, and decorative combs. Pictured, **far left**, is a pair of engraved gold earrings in an open-oval design and, **near left**, a gold Victorian bar pin with black enamel decorations pressed into the metal by a process known as *champlevé*. Think of gifts from the past for this year's holiday giving.

THNOC Outreach Programs

The 1989-90 presentations of THNOC's educational outreach program, "Moments in Louisiana History," will be continued into the 1990-91 school year through the generous efforts of retired teachers and principals. Plans are underway for the Collection staff to develop and present additional topics for the upcoming school year.

The students responded with enthusiasm during the first year of the program:

"The docents pointed out the important roles that blacks played

in the United States. It makes me feel proud of my heritage."

- Janeen Diaz
Gregory Junior High School

"I especially liked the topic on black ironworkers. The information given on this topic helped my classmate and myself prepare . . . "Cemeteries" for the Region IX Social Studies Fair. We used pictures and notes taken on the topics of yellow fever and black ironworkers....The project won first place!"

- Kiley Bazile
Gregory Junior High School

"I really enjoyed the report of the Battle of New Orleans. I still have the handouts and was able to use them in a special report."

- Latoya Williams
Andrew J. Bell Junior High School



(1974.25.3.50)

THNOC Staff



Photo by Jan. White Brantley



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