



THE HISTORIC
NEW ORLEANS
COLLECTION
QUARTERLY

Volume X, Number 4

Fall 1992

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BEFORE

DISASTER

STRIKES

Hurricane, fire, flood, earthquake – these misfortunes bring to mind the four horsemen of the apocalypse riding malevolently through a person's, or an institution's material possessions, leaving havoc among books, photographs, art objects, and whatever else is cherished and valued. (See page 2 for information on the Collection's disaster guide.)

Hurricane Betsy evacuees at Capdau School, September 1965. Courtesy the New Orleans Times-Picayune

Recent disasters have reinforced the possibility of major destruction. In a little over a year's time, a serious fire damaged the renowned Cabildo of the Louisiana State Museum – May 1988; Hurricane Hugo crashed into the coast around Charleston, South Carolina – September 1989; and an earthquake rocked San Francisco and the Bay Area a few weeks later, leaving shocked citizens and ruined buildings. A short time ago Hurricane Andrew devastated the southern tip of Florida before heading northwest and sweeping into Louisiana, while Hurricane Iniki raced across the Hawaiian island of Kauai.

Past hurricanes that have pummeled New Orleans and the Gulf Coast stand out in memory. Anyone who lived in the city in 1965 has a story about Hurricane Betsy and her wake of high water and ravaged roofs. Those who stayed on the Mississippi Gulf Coast during the killer storm Camille in 1969 were lucky to live to tell about it. And floods have left their mark in the popular imagination as well – who can forget May 1978 when water inundated the city?

Before Disaster Strikes (available in December) by Priscilla O'Reilly Lawrence, a companion publication to the Collection's preservation series, is written for the general reader and offers a discussion of precautions, emergency plans, and – when disaster strikes – procedures for recovery.

The following excerpts are taken from *Before Disaster Strikes*. Consult the guide for complete information.

DAMAGE PREVENTION

- Assess your vulnerability to damage or loss
- Remember that fire is the single most threatening disaster
- Prepare for the worst:
 - Install fire-alarm and burglar-alarm systems
 - Consider a sprinkler system
 - Install exterior window shutters
 - Secure objects in earthquake zones
- To prepare for a hurricane:
 - Close and secure shutters
 - Place valuables above floor level
 - Move objects away from windows
 - Drape furniture and large objects with plastic tarpaulins

EMERGENCY PLAN

- Have your valuables appraised
- Make lists of the following:
 - Location of valuables
 - Location of electricity, gas, and water cutoffs
 - Telephone numbers of assistance organizations
 - Telephone numbers of utility company, plumber, electrician, carpenter, glass company; hospital, ambulance service; insurance company
 - Inventory of articles needed in an emergency
 - Conservators and specialists to give advice and guidance (names available from local museums and from the American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works)
- Keep some supplies on hand such as batteries, lights (chemical light sticks, incandescent work lights, flashlights), and tape (packing and duct)
- Make periodic reassessment of insurance coverage; keep appraisal records in bank vault



Cabildo in flames, 1988. Photo by Jan White Brantley



High water from Hurricane Betsy, 1965. Photo by G. E. Arnold (1974.25.11.75)

THE HISTORIC NEW ORLEANS COLLECTION QUARTERLY

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RECOVERY: SOME RECOMMENDATIONS

- Most important: consult a conservator whose expertise includes repairing the damaged item
- Mold and mildew will grow quickly on most wet objects, so obtain professional help as soon as possible
- Freezing is recommended for the recovery of large numbers of wet books and documents
- Air drying is acceptable for most photographs if they can be laid out in single layers without stacking
- If wood becomes waterlogged, it must be dried very slowly
- If a glass or ceramic object is broken, carefully gather the pieces and place them in a padded container for transport to a conservator, taking care not to allow them to touch each other. Small pieces may be placed in an egg carton.

– *from Before Disaster Strikes: Prevention, Planning, and Recovery – Caring For Your Personal Collections In The Event Of Disaster by Priscilla O'Reilly Lawrence*



(1981.330.196)

MOMENTS IN LOUISIANA HISTORY

"I hope that all public schools have someone to talk about New Orleans and its importance in history."

- student, Gregory Junior High School

"Moments in Louisiana History," an educational outreach program of the Historic New Orleans Collection, was designed to make Louisiana history come alive in the public schools. The need to have children aware of their history, coupled with the limited scope of materials available to public school instructors, prompted the education department to initiate the history

project. Bringing the abundant resources of the Collection to the classroom proved popular with the middle schoolers, one of whom wrote, "If I had to rate the program on a scale from one to ten, I'd give it a ten-plus."

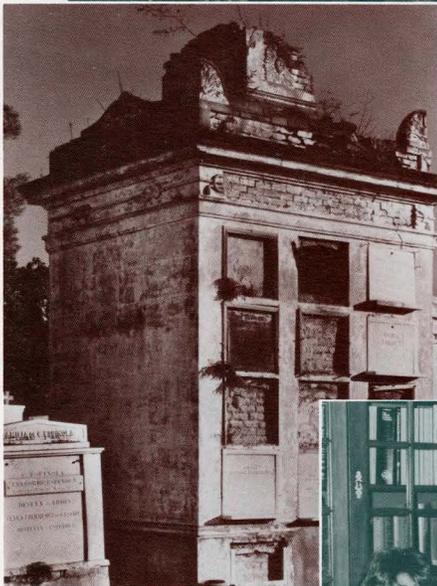
This year, an eighth-grade class in Louisiana studies at Francis W. Gregory Junior High School participated in "Moments in Louisiana History." The docents, each with a topic to present in class, began the extensive research that resulted in the following studies: "The Port of New Orleans," "Transportation on the Mississippi," "Integration of the Public Schools," "New Orleans in the Twenties," "The Men behind

Louisiana's Constitution," "New Orleans's Cemeteries," and "Louisiana's Wetlands." Packets of materials – maps, documents, newspapers, pictures – were duplicated from the library, curatorial, and manuscripts divisions and distributed to each student; videotapes enriched the presentations as well. Under the docents' guidance, the students were able to relate the past to present-day concerns.

"The session I liked...was about cemeteries. When she talked to us I learned more that cemeteries were not just a place to bury a person. I learned about vaults, water tables, monuments. I learned how to find places on a map and where many military troops and presidents were buried." This student was discovering Louisiana history – and expanding his academic skills in the process.

"Moments in Louisiana History" had accomplished its goal.

- Elsa Schneider



Above, Integration scene at William Frantz Elementary School, 1960 (1974.25.25.164); left, family tomb (1980.27.11); right, timber raft on the Mississippi River by Alfred R. Waud (1974.25.30.553)



Elsa Schneider, Pat Cromiller, Roberta Berry, Sally Stassi, Joan Lennox; not pictured: Ann Barnes, Marjy Greenberg, Dorothy Porter

DIRECTOR

This August, my reveries about summer days along the upper Mississippi – inspired by B. C. Hall and C. T. Wood's new book, *Big Muddy: Down the Mississippi Through America's Heartland*, the story of a rambling trip from Lake Itasca to Plaquemines Parish with the ghost of Mark Twain—fell victim to ominous weather reports. One didn't need John Hiatt's song to know that it felt like rain.



Gallery treasures were moved away from windows and outer walls. The *Yo El Rey* exhibition went above stairs. Shutters and plywood shielding our windows obscured brave little signs that read "Closed . . . Laissez la tempête rouler." Phone calls reached out to neighboring museums, and then it was time to wait out Hurricane Andrew. While a forgotten pint of rum-raisin ice cream thawed into a sticky puddle in the freezer, some of us dined that night to the drone of distant emergency generators. The power failure silenced Aaron Neville's descant about a hurricane that "comes out of nowhere" in "the sticky heat" of summer "down here where the river meets the sea," but restored power only brought terrible televised images of devastation in Cajun country and southern Florida.

Amid urgent human needs in time of fire, flood, or hurricane, prudent efforts to preserve the fragile artifacts and documents of our shared culture—our common memory—have their place, too. New Orleans *was* fortunate this time, but here at the Collection we were also ready. Andrew was a warning and a drill. We will refine our plan and hope to do a few things better next time, but now we can also offer you Priscilla O'Reilly Lawrence's new *Before Disaster Strikes* in full confidence about its basic principles.

—Jon Kukla



JEFFERSON LECTURE SERIES

The Library of Congress and the Thomas Jefferson Memorial Foundation (Monticello) are cosponsoring a national lecture series throughout 1993, the 250th anniversary of Thomas Jefferson's birth. Funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities, with additional support from Barton & Guestier, a

winery founded in 1725, the series will bring outstanding scholars to audiences throughout the country. The Historic New Orleans Collection will host eight lectures, four in the spring and four in the autumn. Other host institutions are the American Antiquarian Society, the Florida Center for the Book, the Missouri Historical Society, the Newberry Library, and Humanities West in San Francisco.

The schedule of lectures at the Collection during the spring of 1993 is:

January 21	Daniel P. Jordan	<i>A Day at Monticello</i>
February 4	Peter Hatch	<i>Thomas Jefferson, Gardener</i>
March 11	Jon Kukla	<i>Recipes and Rights: Jefferson's Manuscript Collection and the Origins of the American Revolution</i>
March 23	Merrill Peterson	<i>Jefferson, the Enlightenment, and the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom</i>

The autumn portion of the lecture series includes Lucia Stanton on *Jefferson, Slavery, and Plantation Life*; William Kelso on *Thomas Jefferson, Archaeologist?*; Dell Upton on *Thomas Jefferson's Architecture*; and Clay Jenkinson performing *An Evening with Thomas Jefferson*.

SYMPOSIUM



Above, Jay Edwards, Gwendolyn Midlo Hall, Jon Kukla, and Daniel H. Usner, Jr. Right, panel, "Africans in Eighteenth-Century Louisiana," with Fred Stielow, Patricia Brady, Raphael Cassimere, Jr., and Gwendolyn Midlo Hall

The symposium "Resilience and Diversity: Legacies of Eighteenth-Century Louisiana" was held at the Collection October 1–2.



SAINTLY ART

Works of art from the exhibition *My Cousin the Saint* (1982) have found a home at the Collection. Ten years ago the Contemporary Arts Center staged an exhibition that celebrated the impending canonization of Brother Michael, Francisco Febres-Cordero, an important 19th-century Equadorian educator. Artist George Febres, a distant cousin of Brother Michael, was curator of the exhibit that served to showcase local artists and art trends; forty pieces were on display. Febres has donated to THNOC that portion of *My Cousin the Saint* held in his own collection, 25 pieces in all. The donation also includes coins, stamps, postcards, photographs, and a comic-like book popularizing the saint's acts.

"What can a late twentieth-century American artist do with a saint as a

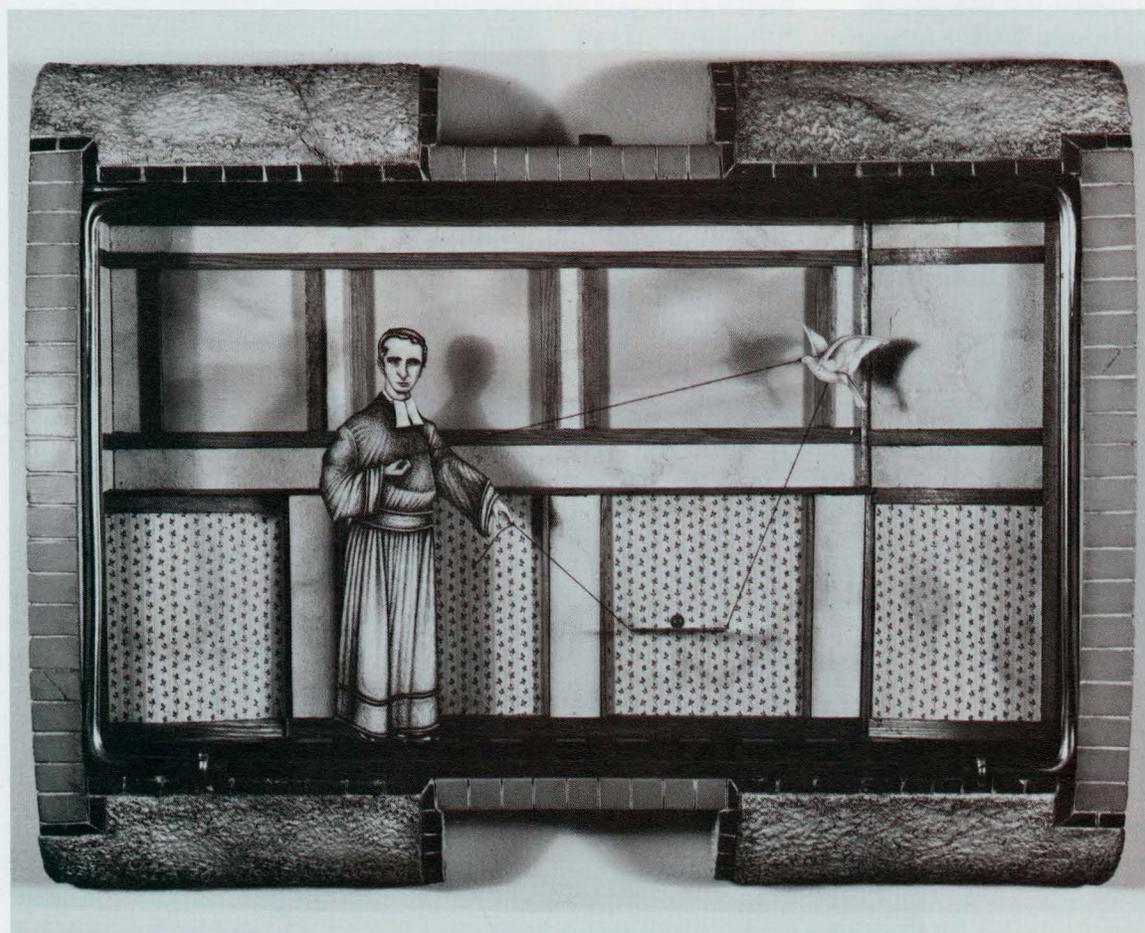
subject?" was the question posed by Febres in the show's catalogue. The response is found in works that range from the contemplative – even reverent – to the wildly satirical. Shirley Masinter's *Gossamer* is a solemn, watercolor portrait of the saint surrounded by hundreds of real butterfly wings forming an odd but fascinating nimbus and decorative border. Masinter's meticulous execution implies a dedication to her art that, to some extent, echoes the saint's own devotion.

In contrast, cartoonist Bunny Matthews's frenetic pencil-and-ink rendering, *Holy Miracle*, depicts a hobbling Brother Michael protecting two children from the charge of a fantastical bull. This vignette illustrates an act attributed to the saint who was crippled from birth with ill-formed legs. Matthews subverts the sacredness of the scene, however, by

depicting the children, now saved from the bull, stumbling backward into the gaping mouths of alligators.

The donated works embody characteristics often attributed to the ever-debatable South Louisiana style. On the whole, the pieces in *My Cousin the Saint* are modestly scaled, figurative (non-objective artists were excluded), to some degree humorous, and influenced by the vulgar arts (cartoons, advertising graphics) as much as by academic traditions. Quite obviously here, the collection reflects the predominant Roman-Catholic culture of the area. Many of the artists in the show would later be described as visionary imagists.

Douglas Bourgeois, who has gone on to national recognition, contributed *The Temptation of Brother Michael*, depicting the transfixed saint encroached



The Holy Ghost Descending on Brother Michael by Randy Ernst (1992.17.19)

upon by hellish blue-skinned angels in seductive lingerie and adorned with elbow-length gloves and cherry lipstick. This early piece displays the artist's mannered style – his skill and sophistication are balanced with a quirky naiveté – and his exploration of the relationship of good and evil.

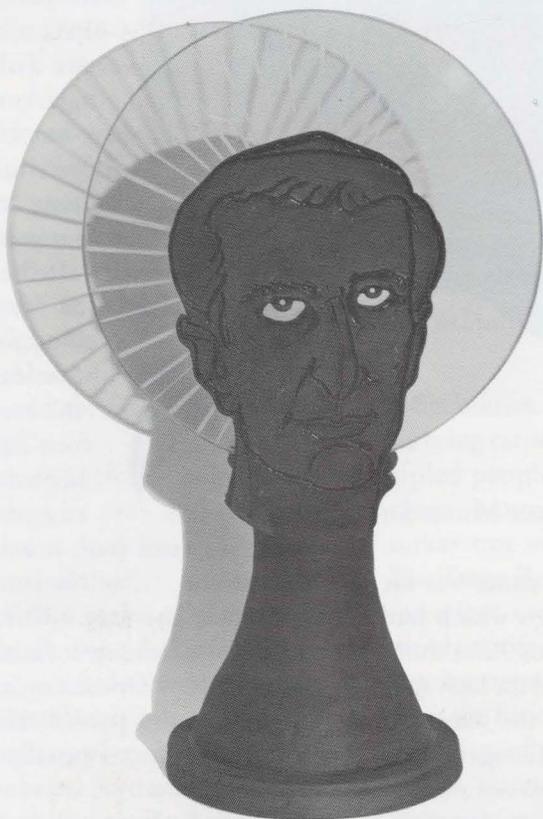
Ann Hornback's cartoon-like watercolor *Chicken Brother Michael* refers to a concoction by Febres that won a *Times-Picayune* recipe contest. "Baked chicken with some kind of syrup," Febres recalls. In this piece, Hornback envisioned a powdered version of the sauce that, when poured over a roasting hen, assumes the shape of a crucifix, as blue flames from a gas range lap threateningly at the edges of the scene.

Febres's collection catalogues the media and methods of the time. The donation includes everything from Robert Tannen's deliberately ephemeral *An Open Person with Heart and Soul*, a

felt-tip marker drawing on torn pieces of coarse paper joined together with duct tape, to John Hodges's timeless terracotta candlestick, *Brother Michael's Eyes*. Among other media represented are Martin Laborde's *Brother Michael*, an acrylic painting on shaped leather with dangling feathers; Gail Roberts's painted quilt entitled *Michael's Banner*; and Gerald Cannon's painted plaster relief, *Brother Michael's Connections*. Randy Ernst's *The Holy Ghost Descending on Brother Michael* is an exquisitely crafted shadow box incorporating fine drawing, duplication of architectural features, and doll-house carpentry.

Few collections of contemporary art are as unified and, at the same time, altogether eclectic as *My Cousin the Saint*. It is a broad yet concise view of the art of the period and will provide fertile ground for future researchers.

– Doug MacCash



Candlestick by John Hodges (1992.17.32)

WORKSHOP: SOCIETY OF AMERICAN ARCHIVISTS

The Society of American Archivists will present "Understanding the USMARC Format for Archival and Manuscripts Control" on February 11-12, 1993, at the Historic New Orleans Collection. The course provides an introduction to the USMARC Format, a national standard for the exchange of archival information between different computer systems, and training on how to use the specific fields that make up USMARC records. Workshop participants should be familiar with the basic principles and practices of arrangement and description. For more information, call Jane Kenamore, Society of American Archivists, (312) 922-0140.

MERIEULT

On view through November is a mini-exhibit relating to the current exhibition, *Yo El Rey: Spanish Louisiana in the Time of Jean François Merieult, 1762-1803*. Merieult, a prosperous merchant who operated a fleet of ships, erected the building at 533 Royal Street, the site of the Historic New Orleans Collection. The house was constructed between 1792 and 1794. Included in the exhibit is a plan that was executed when the property was acquired by J. Lanna after Merieult's death in 1818. Merieult's tombstone is also among the artifacts on display.

On the Other Hand . . .

An article on the care of lace in the spring *Quarterly* ("Collection Treasures: The Textiles of Leila Williams") suggested the use of spray starch if ironing is necessary, which is the recommendation of some conservators. Other conservators, however, believe that spray starch may damage textiles.

THE DANCE CRAZE

Around 1900 the one-step emerged along with ragtime music, soon overtaking the more sedate waltz and two-step as a popular dance. The turkey trot, a fast, bobbing one-step where the arms are flapped about like a turkey, appeared in 1910 and created an instant sensation. In response, Tin Pan Alley produced a flood of new dance music, so

that between 1912 and 1914 over 100 new dances were invented. Of these, commented the New Orleans *Daily Item*, "every little freak step that wriggles its way into life masquerades under the name . . . of some barnyard or menagerie relative." Animal dances included the grizzly bear, chicken scratch, bunny hug, crab step, kangaroo dip, possum trot, camel walk, and lame duck. And there was even the kitchen sink.

"Modern" dance steps were not new; some had been danced in cabarets and honky-tonks for years. But they were new to the middle classes, appealing especially to an enthusiastic younger generation which, with the help of the phonograph, turned any room into a ballroom.

By 1913, the United States had gone dance mad – and New Orleans went right along with it – as dancing became an important part of many people's social well-being. Dance schools sprang up, newspapers printed dance-advice columns, hotels held afternoon tea dances, and restaurants

provided lunch-hour dance lessons for businessmen.

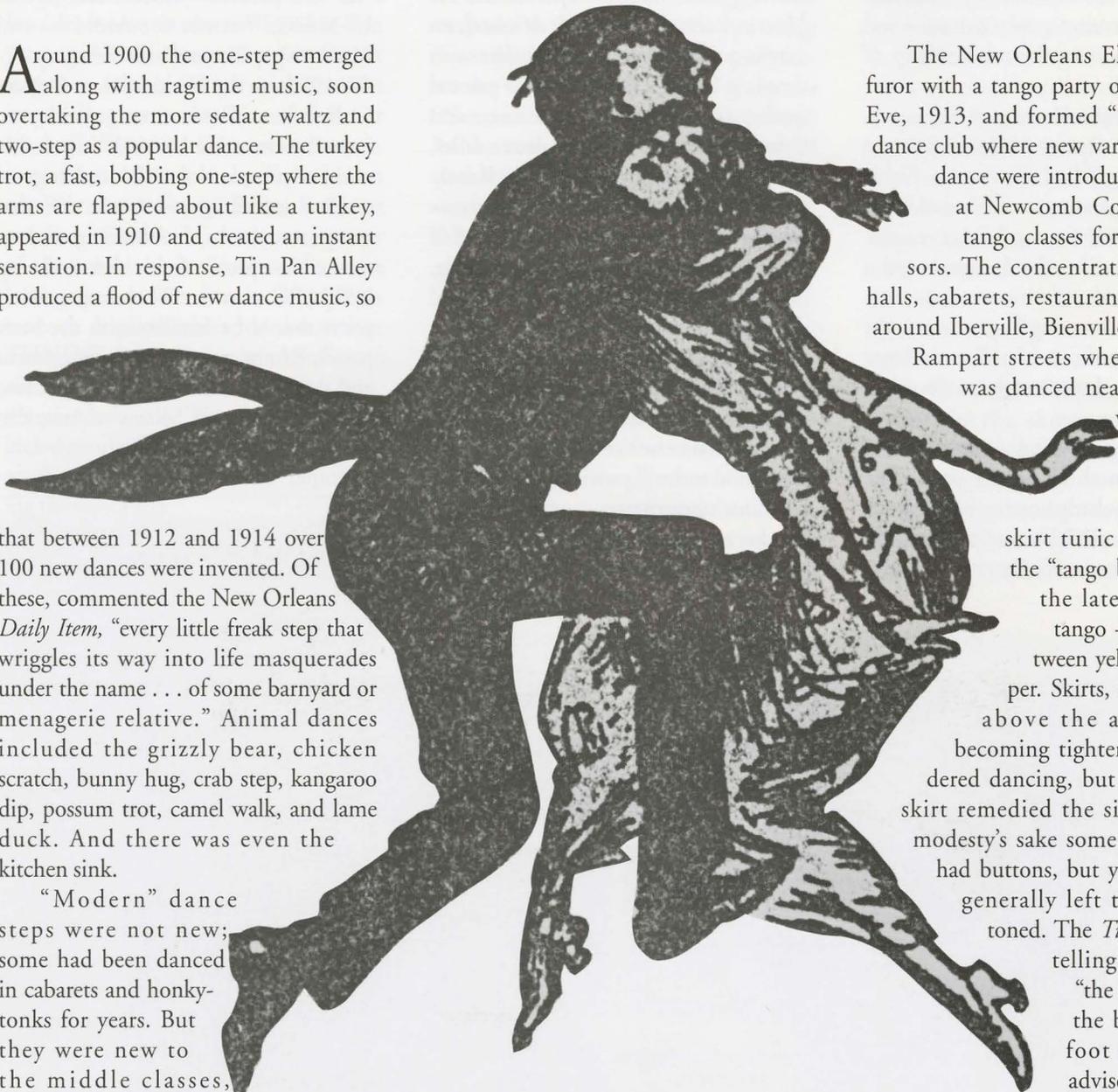
The most notorious dance was the stylish and showy tango which had emerged from the Buenos Aires slums about 1880 and combined the high-spirited Spanish tango and the sensuous, disreputable Argentine Milonga. By the summer of 1913, the dance was a worldwide craze; by winter, an obsession. "Tango dancing parties keep society busy" declared a *Daily Item* headline.

The New Orleans Elks created a furor with a tango party on New Year's Eve, 1913, and formed "Tangoitis," a dance club where new variations of the dance were introduced. Students at Newcomb College offered tango classes for their professors. The concentration of dance halls, cabarets, restaurants, and cafes around Iberville, Bienville, and North Rampart streets where the tango was danced nearly non-stop was called the "Tango Belt."

In fashion, the popular skirt tunic was dubbed the "tango bustle," while the latest color was tango – a shade between yellow and copper. Skirts, already rising above the ankle, were becoming tighter, which hindered dancing, but a slit up the skirt remedied the situation. For modesty's sake some "tango slits" had buttons, but young dancers generally left them unbuttoned. The *Times-Picayune*, telling readers that "the dance reveals the beauty of the foot and ankle," advised that "with tango la mode

from four until four, it behooves the fair devotee . . . to bestow additional care upon the feet." Not everyone approved of the new fashions. One group of New Orleans society women called for the prohibition of the new dance gowns, especially those with tango slits.

While lively, many new dances were awkward, high-stepping, and jerky. Unaccustomed to what they saw, many



critics condemned the dances as vulgar and suggestive – America’s youth, they said, was turkey-trotting its way to the devil. The public was divided into two camps according to the *Daily Item*, “Those who do the dance and know how jolly is the dancing, and those who look on and see how shocking is the prancing.”

Among the new dances, the tango bore the brunt of criticism. The *Times-Picayune* said “tango” had become a general term that “when printed in large type now includes almost everything.”

While the word meant modern dances, “demoralizing” was used by many people to describe the tango.

“A girl who dances the tango is doing the devil’s work,” said a New Orleans clergyman. Another called the dance “very demoralizing,” and while he considered some dances harmless, the tango, he felt, was an “abuse of privilege.” In contrast, another minister, having seen some of the new dances at the 1914 Twelfth Night Ball, found “nothing to criticize,” and thought the new steps “very pretty.”

By January 1914, the dance controversy reached its peak and was daily front-page news. Some cities and universities banned all modern dances. The Cardinal of Paris pronounced the tango a sin while the Pope declared that the dance perverted souls and was the “immorality of new paganism.” The *Daily Item*, asserting that the dances were not as bad as portrayed, decided “to make a protest against the eternal persecutions and criticisms. Do not those

who continue to condemn realize that the time has passed?” The newspaper surmised that “while countless discussions over the Tango, hesitation waltz and one-step are taking place...the enthralled dancer is selecting a new ‘tango dress.’”

New Orleans police superintendent James W. Reynolds was less tolerant – on January 14, 1914, the *Daily Item* headlined “Gloom falls on the cabarets.” Reynolds declared that light had to be visible between dancers and demoralizing dance steps would be stopped by



Punch illustration reproduced in Daily Item, August 13, 1913

police officers. “The tango,” he declared, “is being carried to extremes by unprincipled people...vulgar forms of the tango, bunny hug, grizzly bear, and turkey trot would not be permitted.” The Tango Belt shuddered as the superintendent announced that “We won’t merely notify the dancers that they are dancing improperly. We will drag them from the floor and into a patrol wagon, regardless of who they may be. There will be no snake-wiggling at shoulders from now on.”

The *Daily Item* wrote that the

turkey trot “is a dance where shoulders count” but cautioned against overdoing it. New, less risqué and more graceful dances were soon introduced. The tango bolero was created, said the *Times-Picayune*, as a “frank surrender to criticism heaped upon the tango.”

Lively, high-stepping gymnastics were beginning to give way to a smoother dancing style popularized by Vernon and Irene Castle – “The Darlings of the Dance Craze.” They created their style in Paris in 1912 and by 1914 had taken America’s fancy. They

introduced new dances like the innovation gavotte, Castle walk, and the more enduring fox trot. “The modern dances properly danced,” Vernon Castle wrote, “embody both grace and refinement.” The Castles were clean-cut, married, dignified, and, above all, they danced two feet apart.

Despite some lingering disapproval of the new Castle dances, the dance craze continued. Its exuberance may have been tempered by World War I, but it returned during the roaring ’20s with new dance creations and new controversies. Modern dances had come to stay.

– *John Magill*

Sources: Irene Castle told to Bob and Wanda Duncan, *Castles in the Air* (Garden City, NY, 1958); J.C. Furnas, *Great Times: An Informal History of the United States 1914-1929* (New York, 1974); *Daily Item*, June 1913-June 1914; William J. Schafer and Johannes Reidel, *The Art of Ragtime*, (Baton Rouge, 1973); Marshall and Jean Stearns, *Jazz Dance: The Story of American Vernacular Music*, (New York, 1968); Time-Life, *The Fabulous Century: 1910-1920*, vol. 2 (New York, 1969); *Times-Picayune*, June 1913-June 1914.



Of the thousands of items the Historic New Orleans Collection adds to its research and museum holdings each year, gifts donated in memory of a friend or relative have a special distinction for donors and curators alike. When cataloged and made available to researchers and visitors through the Collection's exhibitions and reading rooms, memorial gifts attest to our shared memories and reflect the interests to which remembered friends and family members devoted themselves.

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. Only a few recent acquisitions can be noted here.

MANUSCRIPTS

Among the division's collection of New Orleans artists' papers are newly acquired materials documenting the career of sculptor Rai Graner Murray (1904-1962). Donated by her daughter, Mrs. Charles S. McKendrick, Jr., these materials illustrate Murray's work both as a teacher and as an artist who was known for sculpted portraits, particularly commissioned items displayed in gardens and public buildings.

The papers consist of correspondence, photos, newspaper clippings, notes, and brochures. Visual materials illustrate her many exhibitions, particularly at the Delgado Museum of Art (now NOMA) and Newcomb Art School. Additional items relate to Murray's activities in the Arts and Crafts Club and her

Below, Southwind in sculptor Rai Graner Murray's studio; right, Southwind installed in private garden. Statue was later moved to Audubon Park in memory of the artist (91-55-L).



earlier work as a dance instructor.

Materials that illustrate the lengthy career of New Orleanian Charles Christian Stepe (1905-1970), a Mardi Gras float and scenic designer, are the donation of Raymond G. Hoffman. The collection includes items related to several carnival organizations over a long period of time (Babylon: 1940-1961; Carrollton: 1938-1961) and to krewes that no longer exist (Adonis and Druids). Other organizations represented are Bards of Bohemia, Hermes, Iris, and Venus. Stepe's work is revealed in clip-



pings from newspapers, correspondence, ephemera, and descriptions of parade themes and float designs.

A real estate appraisal file compiled by the firm of J. Wallace Paletou, Inc., is a recent acquisition that adds to the division's large holding of land records. The file, maintained by this company from the mid 1930s through the early 1960s, consists of approximately 12,000 4-by-6 cards containing property and sale information. Covering Orleans and adjacent parishes and arranged by address, the appraisal cards include such details as lot size, structural descriptions, prices, buyers, and photographs or images cut from newspapers. Clara Paletou made the donation in honor of J. Wallace Paletou and Billy J. Paletou.

When Alfred F. Theard (1866-1939) joined the city engineer's office in 1893, he began work expanding New Orleans's drainage system. His career culminated

in an appointment in 1935 as superintendent of the Sewerage and Water Board. Theard's efforts to keep New Orleans afloat are chronicled in his diaries, a recent gift to the Collection from his grandchildren, Anne Ganuchau, Frances Crist, and Marie Bezou.

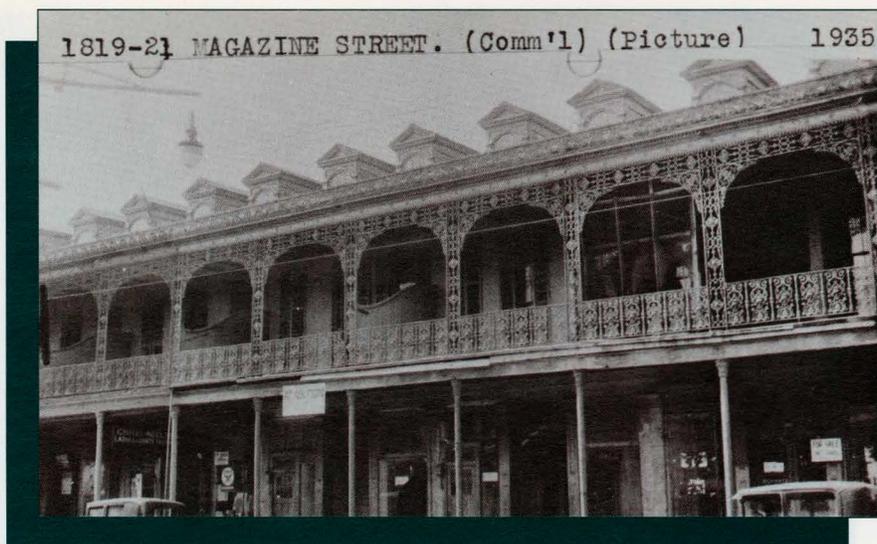
The diaries consist of 24 volumes covering the period 1915-1938. Easily readable and in excellent condition, the daily entries record both personal and professional endeavors. Theard's succinct comments on personal affairs include mention of family card games, evening radio concerts, football scores, and chess club activities. Theard's professional commentary is far more extensive and detailed, recalling road work, pipe laying, dredging, mosquito control, floods, the weather, and meetings with colleagues and politicians. Theard's devotion to his work was evident to the last. In failing health, he wrote his final entry only two weeks before his death, concerned that a low river and Gulf storms might bring salt water up the Mississippi.

—Joseph D. Scott

CURATORIAL

The Civil War was the first conflict involving the United States that saw the widespread use of photography, a technology barely 20 years old at the war's outset. The camera and photographer recorded scenes of destruction, likenesses of leaders and participants, and occasional intelligence photographs. Sometimes images were used to promote a cause. A recently acquired group of carte-de-visite portraits of slave children illuminates this particular use of photography.

Once Louisiana became occupied



Photograph from J. Wallace Paletou appraisal file (92-32-L)

territory, the education of former slaves became a priority in the reconstruction of the state. In order to gain sympathy and funding for this venture in the North, organizers of the movement had photographs made of freed slave children, frequently selecting light-skinned children for propaganda purposes. These pictures were sold in order to raise money for educating the slaves.

■ Recently received from Elinor Bright Richardson is a sterling silver fish platter that had been given to her mother, Ella LeBaron Mehle Bright, as a wedding gift. The 24-inch oval platter with floral scroll border bears the monogram ELMB and was sold by New Orleans silver-smith Maurice Scooler.

■ In her will, Elizabeth Darling left a 1940 oil painting by Dr. Marion Souchon, titled *Burnt Fields*, to the Collection. The scene, showing a small cabin in the middle of a field, is painted in the vivid



(1992.68.3)

REBECCA, AUGUSTA and ROSA.
Slave Children from New Orleans

hues for which Dr. Souchon was well known. The gift comes through Penny Foster, Mrs. Darling's daughter.

■ Jane S. N. E. Sargeant has donated a group of 23 of her works, including drawings and wallpaper designs, executed during the 1930s during the time when she was working in New Orleans and traveling through Wisconsin. The artwork also includes a watercolor sketch painted when Mrs. Sargeant was a young girl.

■ Raymond G. Hoffman's donation to the Collection, mentioned previously, also contains Mardi Gras parade bulletins, souvenir booklets, eight silver coins minted in New Orleans, and float and costume designs. Most of the items are from the collection of Charles Christian Steppe, designer of Mardi Gras floats for over 40 years. Included are designs from the krewes of Babylon, Hermes, and Carrollton.

■ Donations given in honor of specific individuals are a photograph entitled *Shoeshine, New Orleans* by Jeff L. Rosenheim in memory of John A. Mahé II, donated by the photographer; a watercolor by Boyd Cruise, donated by Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Kierr in memory of Robert M. Kierr; a landscape by



Wallpaper design by Jane S. N. E. Sargeant (1992.81.17)

George Louis Viavant donated by Mr. & Mrs. Kierr in memory of Alvin W. Zander; and a seascape by Charles L. Hultberg donated by the Kierrs in recognition of the contributions of director emerita Dode Platou to the Collection.

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

LIBRARY

Alcée Fortier, author and educator, was born in St. James Parish of a distinguished Creole family. Fortier spent most of his career at Tulane as professor of romance languages and was dean of the graduate college when he died in 1914. Aside from his command of French and English, he was fluent in Italian,

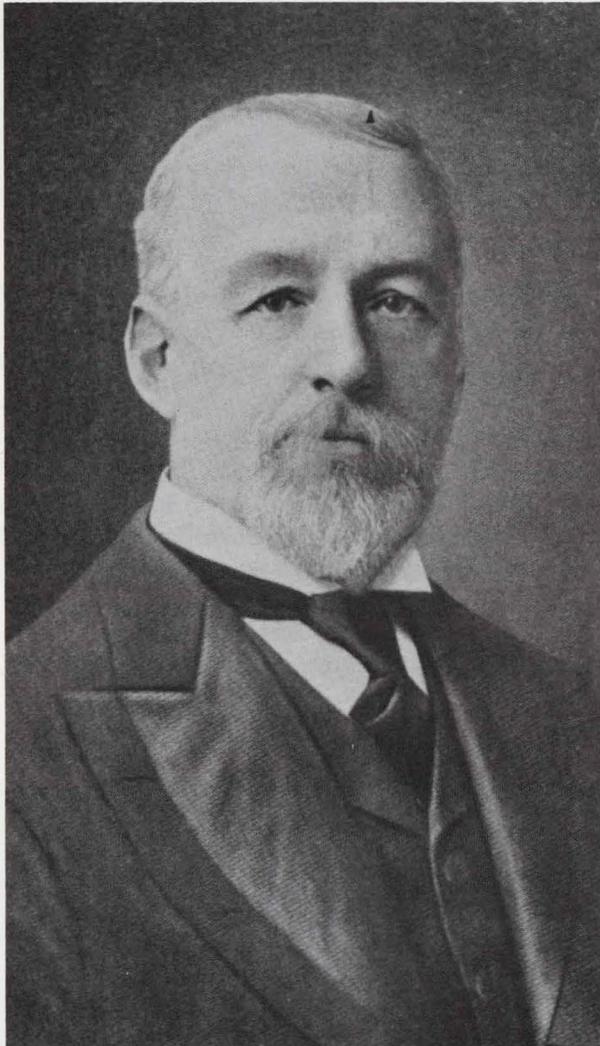
German, Portuguese, and Spanish, and had a knowledge of Greek, Latin, and Sanskrit. He received several honorary degrees as well as the cross of the *Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur*.

During his tenure at Tulane, Fortier wrote and edited many books and articles on the history and folklore of Louisiana and on French literature and language. The library has acquired Fortier's *Sept Grands Auteurs du Dix-Neuvième Siècle; An Introduction to Nineteenth Century Literature*, published in 1889 by D. C. Heath & Company and intended as a literary reader for second-year French classes. The seven authors who are discussed in these essays are: Alphonse de Lamartine, (1790-1869); Victor Hugo, (1802-1885);

PHOTO CREDITS

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Cornelius Regan
Judy Tarantino

Alfred de Vigny, (1797-1863); Alfred de Musset, (1810-1857); Théophile Gautier, (1811-1872); Prosper Mérimée, (1803-1870); and François Coppée, (1842-1908). Fortier considered Lamartine, Hugo, and Musset the greatest poets of his century, and Vigny, Gautier, and Coppée as distinguished in prose as well as poetry. Fortier included Mérimée, dramatist, historian, and short



Alcée Fortier (86-359-RL)

story writer, because he admired the “force, clearness, and conciseness of his style.”

■ Recent dissertations and theses on Louisiana-related subjects are periodically ordered from University Microfilms International. Available in a hard-bound-format, these dissertations include such

diverse topics as “Poverty and Its Relief in the Antebellum South; Perceptions and Realities in Three Selected Cities: Charleston, Nashville, and New Orleans”; “In Full Enjoyment of Their Liberty: The Free Women of Color of the Gulf Ports of New Orleans, Mobile, and Pensacola, 1769-1860”; and “Richard Taylor: Soldier Prince of Dixie.”

■ “In the Old South, the live oak was the symbol of elegance and no estate or plantation was complete without several on the grounds,” writes New Orleans native Ethelyn G. Orso in *Louisiana Live Oak*

Lore, an addition to the library’s holdings. The author covers more than local myths and legends, which cling to the trees as persistently as Spanish moss. The book also addresses the live oak habitat and its relationship to other plants and animals, the life cycle and practical uses of the oaks, and the Live Oak Society, composed of the largest examples of these trees. The book is dedicated to Edwin Lewis Stephens (1872-1938), founder of the Live Oak Society and the first president of the University of Southwestern Louisiana.

— Pamela D. Arceneaux

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STAFF



Jan White Brantley

PUBLICATIONS

George Mason University Press has just published *Antifederalism: The Legacy of George Mason*, which contains an essay by **Dr. Jon Kukla**, "Yes! No! and If...:Federalists, Antifederalists, and Virginia's 'Federalists who are for Amendments.'"

Dr. Patricia Brady, director of publications, contributed an essay, "Mollie Moore Davis: A Literary Life," in *Louisiana Women Writers*, just published by LSU Press. Photographs by **Jan White Brantley**, head of photography, and Robert Brantley illustrate *St. Patrick's Church of New Orleans* by Samuel Wilson, Jr., with proceeds to benefit the church. *Playboy's History of Jazz & Rock, Part II*, with photographs of musical instruments by Jan Brantley, will appear in a French edition. The Brantleys have recently published a poster entitled "New Orleans" that shows the St. Louis Cathedral, the Presbytère, and the Cabildo before the Cabildo fire in 1988... photographs of St. Alphonsus Church by the Brantleys have been made into postcards...all proceeds go to the church restoration fund.

Dr. Alfred E. Lemmon, curator of manuscripts, contributed "Confronting Man and Nature: The National Archives of El Salvador" and "The Archival Legacy of Spanish Louisiana's Colonial Records" to *American Archivist*. *Collection Management* published "Automated Cataloging of Rare Books: A Time for Implementation," an article by **Susan Massey**, manuscripts cataloger.

Florence M. Jumonville, head librarian, contributed an article, "Colony, Cayenne, and Convent: The Odyssey of the Laussat Papers," to the summer issue of *Manuscripts*. An essay by **John H. Lawrence**, senior curator, on photographer Elemore Morgan was published in the magazine of the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities, *Cultural Vistas*. The *New Orleans Art Review* published two articles by **Judith H. Bonner**, associate curator.



Jessica Travis and Joseph Scott

Reviews by **Jon Kukla** have appeared in the *Journal of Southern History* and in *Reviews in American History*.

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

Jessica Travis, reference librarian, has been appointed chair of the Louisiana Literary Award Committee of the Louisiana Library Association. She and **Dr. Joseph Scott**, registrar of manuscripts, attended a SOLINET workshop on copyright law. **John H. Lawrence** participated in a panel at the south-central regional meeting of the Society for Photographic Education in Baton Rouge. An artwork by **Steve Sweet**, assistant preparator, is part of *933 Window Works*, an exhibition at the Alexandria Museum of Art, on view until November 21.

Patricia Brady was moderator at a brunch during the Mid-South Booksellers Trade Show...authors Rosemary Daniell and James Colbert were the featured speakers.

MEETINGS

Leslie Johnston, documentation coordinator, traveled to Miami for the annual meeting of the American Association for State and Local History (AASLH)...she presented two papers and attended a meeting of CIMI (Computer Interchange of Museum Information) at AASLH. In October, she attended the Museum Computer Network Conference in Pittsburgh and coordinated a session on imaging in collections management systems. **Chuck Patch**, head of systems, also attended the conference...he gave a

presentation on the integration of research data on the Collection's Quixis system. **Roberta H. L. Frey**, curatorial cataloging coordinator, also attended the MCN meeting.

Patricia Brady went to the annual meeting of the Association for Documentary Editing in Williamsburg. **Maureen Donnelly**, registrar, and **Judith Bonner** attended the Southeastern Museums Conference in Columbia, S.C. The meetings



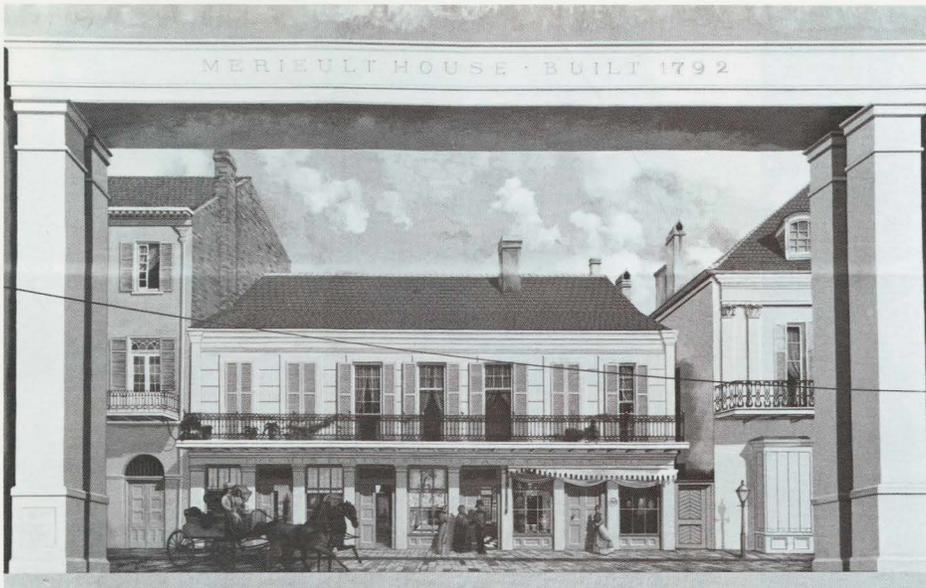
Leslie Johnston and Chuck Patch

were in October. Attending the New Orleans Writers Conference in September were **Patricia Brady** and **Louise Hoffman**, editor.

Alfred E. Lemmon gave a paper on archival assistance in third-world countries at the annual meeting of the Society of American Archivists in Montreal...he also presented a paper, "Festivals, Education, and Ethno-musicology: The Jesuit Musical Experience in Nueva España," at the Fundación Vicente Emilio Sojo in Caracas, Venezuela.

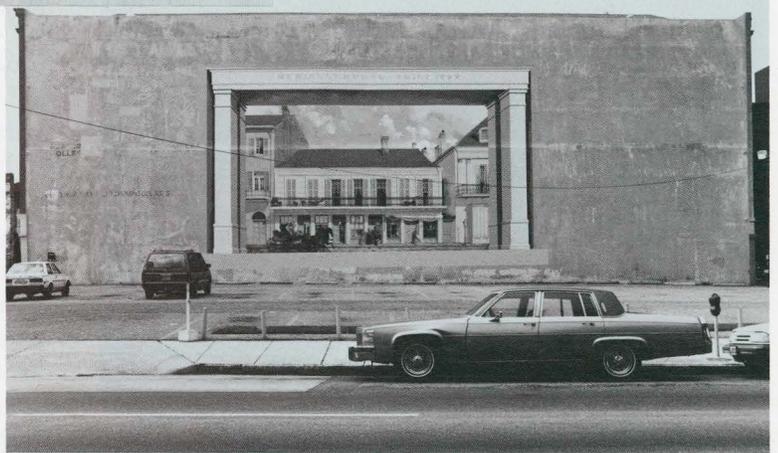


In August **Dr. Jon Kukla**, left, directed a teacher's institute for the Yorktown Victory Center museum in Virginia, supported by the United States Commission on the Bicentennial of the Constitution. Archivists at the Virginia State Library and Archives, **Conley L. Edwards**, center, and **Minor T. Weisiger**, right, selected primary sources that were used by the teachers to develop classroom activities.



WALLFLOWER No LONGER

In August, the Collection's Tchoupitoulas Street building was the scene of artistic activity. On the Poydras Street side of the building – formerly a large expanse of blank wall – Robert Dafford of Lafayette painted a mural of the Merieult House, the main building of the Historic New Orleans Collection on Royal Street. The painting was adapted from a work by Boyd Cruise, the Collection's first director, showing the Merieult House as it might have looked in the mid-19th century.



THE SHOP



One of the fine and unusual gifts available at the Shop is a reproduction of an antique safety-pin holder. The holders, first offered for sale at the turn of the century, were used to keep the three most common sizes of safety pins separated. A novelty item, the holder could be used to separate ribbons or shoe laces and makes a distinctive gift that suggests a bygone era. Antique jewelry is also a Shop specialty and makes a thoughtful gift during the Christmas season.

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Carlos III of Spain (1979.45.2); above right, detail of illustration from an illuminated manuscript, the Patent of Nobility, awarded to Bernardo de Galvez during Spanish rule in Louisiana

Midday gallery tours of the current exhibition, *Yo El Rey: Spanish Louisiana in the Time of Jean Franois Merieult, 1762-1803*, led by THNOC staff members, highlight aspects of Louisiana life under Spanish colonial rule. The 30-minute tours are scheduled every Wednesday through November 25 at 12:15 and 1:15.

Do you have 18th-century Spanish ancestors? The manuscripts division of the Collection is interested in expanding its holdings from the Spanish colonial era in Louisiana history to complement its already extensive collection of French colonial documents. If you have family papers dating from the period when Louisiana was a Spanish colony (1762-1803), please call Dr. Jon Kukla at 523-4662.



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