

LOUISIANA LANDMARKS SOCIETY
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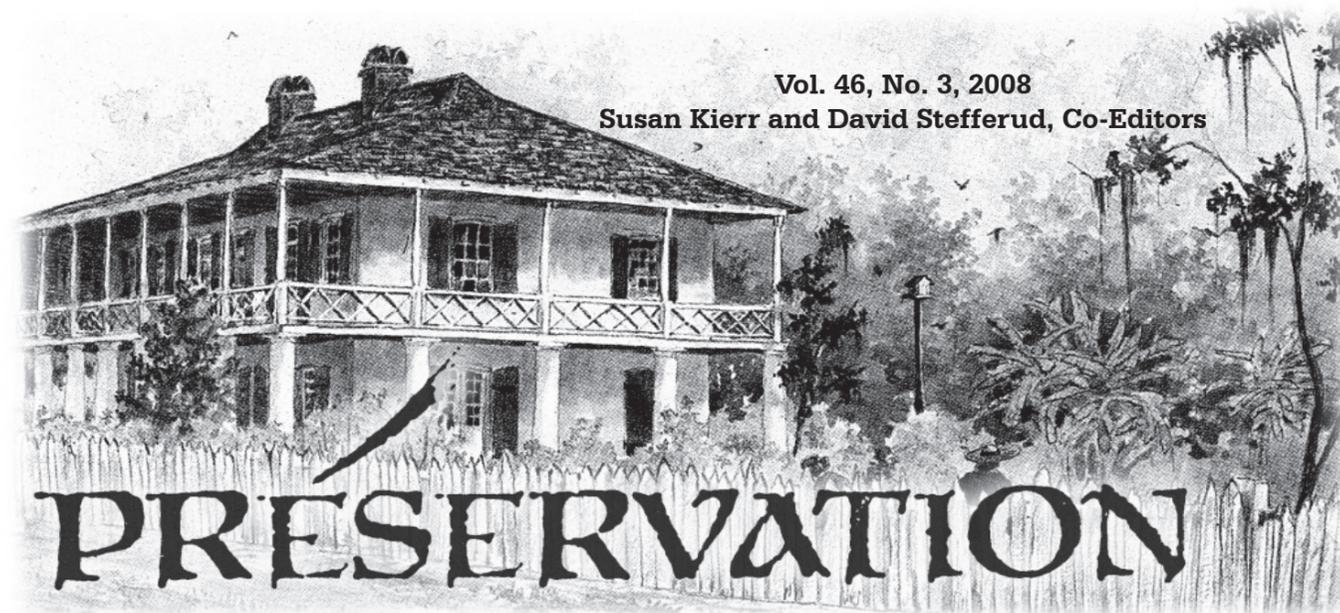
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Vol. 46, No. 3, 2008

Susan Kierr and David Stefferud, Co-Editors

WHAT MAKES KEITH HARDIE TICK?

Rather than wishing and hoping for good results, New Orleans native Keith Hardie leads the Landmarks' Advocacy Committee. His leadership style is to urge his group to decide what is possible, and then he splits up the work, and, with little fuss, takes the bulk of responsibility upon himself.

Keith grew up in Carrollton, and graduated from Mater Dolorosa and De La Salle. He has a PhD in literature from the University of Oregon and graduated from LSU Law Center. This uptown attorney is shy and self deprecating, but in his heart burns the soul of a preservationist willing to take on City Hall, the Courts, and public opinion. Keith has taken preservation and neighborhood cases on a *pro bono* basis.

Living a stone's throw from Audubon Park, Keith fought to preserve the original Olmstead plan for the Park (much as New York has restored the Olmstead plan of Central Park) against the push to expand the golf course and build a Clubhouse in a grove of oaks. "But after months of organizing, all we really managed to save was Hurst Walk," he says. But he did not give up his dedication to preservation.

The following asks what makes Keith tick....

How do you earn a living?

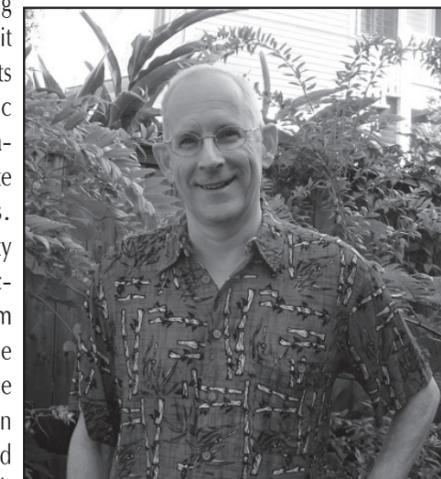
I've had my own law office since 1990. Most of my practice is representing individuals and small businesses in disputes with insurance companies, though for the past few years about half of my practice is in preservation and neighborhood issues.

You take on many pro bono preservation fights, demonstrating a righteous indignation that makes others feel confident and sure of the battle, though the odds of success may be slim. What motivates your indignation?

"It's very frustrating to know that New Orleans is so unique and even many of our educated residents don't see the distinctive qualities of the city, or allow their economic and social interests to cloud their judgment. Bit by bit, the irreplaceable beauty of the city and its living neighborhoods are being destroyed. I'm angry about the outrageous tactics of developers and the carelessness of public officials. I spent much of the last two years defending my neighbors in a defamation suit brought by a bar owner. Such suits are called SLAPP suits (Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation) and are used to intimidate residents who opposing projects. It's also frustrating to see the city grant permits indiscriminately, forcing citizens to take time off from work to fight them. And when the Mayor recently used Hurricane Gustave as an excuse to do an end-run around agencies charged with reviewing demolitions, much of the preservation community was tied up in needless meetings, phone calls, and email exchanges."

Advocacy Committee bursts with vigor under the leadership of Keith Hardie

Interviewed by
Betsy Stout
Landmarks Board
Member, Advocacy
Committee Member



Continued on page 6

The mission of the Louisiana Landmarks Society is to influence the community about the value of preserving neighborhoods, historic sites and landmarks.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Anne Morse, President

We have been very busy this summer and fall both with activities at the Pitot House and our advocacy efforts. Two grants have been received to offset some of our operational expenses. We have been invited to be a consulting party in the LSUHSC/VA hospital plans and the disposition of the Beauregard Houses at Jackson Barracks. We have hired, for a 6 month period, a part-time consultant, Karley Frankic to assist with our advocacy work.

The first of our annual lecture series was held on October 21st at Turners' Hall. William Borah, an author of the Master Plan for the city of New Orleans was the speaker. We have a video tape of the lecture posted on our website: louisianalandmarks.org. Our lecture series this year is partially funded by a generous grant from the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities. The next lecture will be held on Monday, December 1st with Carleton Dufrechou who will speak on the current state of the wetlands.

Hurricane Gustav forced the cancellation of the September "Vino on the Bayou", but successful ones were held in October and November. The Faubourg St. John's annual "Voodoo on the Bayou" was on October 25th at the Pitot House with beautiful fall weather. A good time was had by all!

The Board has embarked on a strategic planning process for the Landmarks organization.

The last strategic plan was created in 2004, and much has happened since then that warrants our addressing that plan with its goals and objectives. There will also be development of a fundraising plan to begin implementation in 2009.

The Louisiana Landmarks Society supported the amendment to the City Charter in the recent election. As you all know, this gives the city's forthcoming Master Plan the force of law, meaning that all zoning and land-use decisions will have to conform to the plan. The amendment passed and will be so important in the future development of New Orleans.

I hope you and your family have a wonderful upcoming holiday season. We look forward to an exciting new year for the organization and we appreciate your continued support.

Best Regards,
Anne Morse

HAVE YOUR NEXT EVENT AT THE PITOT HOUSE

weddings • receptions
birthdays • luncheons • tea parties
private dinners • corporate events

For more information, please call 504.482.0312
or email info@LouisianaLandmarks.org



The real Preservation!

The Pitot House Museum is seeking recipes for **preserves!** They might be in a Pitot House book that's in the works. Please let us know of your favorite ones by contacting Susan at the Pitot House, 504 482 0312 or smcclamroch@louisianalandmarks.org.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

If any of our members have an item of interest or an idea for something they would like to see in *Préservation*, please let us know! Leave a message at the Pitot House, or email either editor at skdance@bellsouth.net or davestef@bellsouth.net.

LOUISIANA LANDMARKS SOCIETY PUBLICATIONS CURRENTLY AVAILABLE

William E. Borah, *A Master Plan for New Orleans: What Is It? Why Do We Need It?* (1998) One of the most crucial issues facing New Orleans as it enters the 21st Century is its lack of a coherent, legally-binding plan for the city's growth and development. In this pamphlet attorney and veteran preservationist Bill Borah, who helped prevent destruction of the French Quarter in the 1960s, cogently explains how this glaring omission threatens our city's heritage and distinctive character. (\$1, 6 x 9 in., soft cover, 8 pages.) SOLD OUT

Abbye Gorin, ed., *Conversations with Samuel Wilson, Jr., Dean of Architectural Preservation in New Orleans.* (1991) The venerable historian and scholar who for six decades championed preservation of New Orleans' architectural heritage tells his own story, recounting specific restoration projects as well as sharing his personal philosophy about architecture. A must for any serious student of historic preservation. (\$12, \$10/members, softbound, 5 1/2 x 8 1/2 in., 180 pages, illustrated.)

Abbye Gorin, ed., *Learning from Samuel Wilson, Jr.: A Collection of Oral Histories, 1980-1989.* (1999; rpt. of 1992) Compiled by one of Prof. Wilson's former students and based directly on audiotape recordings, these are the unabridged transcriptions that served as the basis for *Conversations with Samuel Wilson, Jr.* (\$12 \$10/members, softbound, 8 1/2 x 11 in., 110 pages)

James Guilbeau, *The St. Charles Streetcar: or, The New Orleans & Carrollton Railroad.* (1992; rpt. of 1975) A thoroughly detailed history of the oldest, continuously operated street railway line in the world, built in 1835 and now honored with status on the National Register of Historic Places. (\$12 \$10/members, softbound, 6 x 9 in., 108 pages, illustrated with rare black & white photographs)

Leonard V. Huber and Samuel Wilson, Jr., *Landmarks of New Orleans.* (1991; rpt. of 1984) New Orleans is justifiably renowned for its architecture, and this handsome and profusely illustrated volume records and depicts many notable structures in the Crescent City. French Quarter townhouses, plantation homes on Bayou St. John, Garden District mansions, notable churches, distinctive warehouses, banks, and schoolhouses are each represented by a half-tone photograph and brief history. (\$20 \$18/members, softbound, 8 1/2 x 11 in., 163 pages, over 250 illustrations, maps)

Leonard V. Huber, *The Battle of New Orleans and Its Monument.* (1993; rpt. of 1983) Provides a concise overview of Andrew Jackson's decisive victory in 1815 plus a detailed history of the efforts, begun in 1839 and completed in 1908, to construct a monumental obelisk commemorating the battle's heroes. (\$9 \$8/members, soft cover, 6 x 9 in., 40 pages, numerous black & white illustrations)

Leonard V. Huber, *The Battle of New Orleans: New Orleans As It Was in 1814-1815.* (1994; rpt. of 1965) A written and pictorial reconstruction of life in New Orleans at the most crucial period in its history. (\$9 \$8/members softbound, 5 x 8 in., 48 pages, rare black & white illustrations.)

Jerah Johnson, *Congo Square in New Orleans.* (2000; rpt. of 1995) For over a century the legendary *Place des Negres*, better known as Congo Square, served as a public gathering place for slaves and free people of color. Today it is considered by scholars to be the birthplace of both jazz and modern American dance. This highly readable study traces the Square's history from its earliest days in the French colonial period to the challenges it faces in the present day. One of Louisiana Landmark Society's most popular publications. (\$10 \$8/members, soft cover, 6 x 9 in., 54 pages, 12 black & white illustrations)

Karen Kingsley, ed., *Modernism in Louisiana: A Decade of Progress 1930-1940.* (2001; rpt. of 1984) Traces the work of the "neglected moderns" -- that first generation of American architects who sought to reconcile the new forms of Modernism with the local traditions and semi-tropical climate of Louisiana. (\$1, soft cover, 11 x 8 1/2 in., 14 pages, 12 half-tone illustrations.)

Bernard Lemann, *The Vieux Carre: A General Statement.* (2001; rpt. of 1966) Beginning in the 1920s, New Orleans was one of the first U.S.

cities to deliberately attempt preservation of its architectural heritage. Paradoxically, much of that momentum has today been lost and the fate of the French Quarter now hangs in the balance. In this influential and prophetic essay, Tulane professor of architecture Lemann argues for a rational balance between commercial growth and historic preservation in the French Quarter, offering a philosophical blueprint for keeping the Quarter a living, vibrant neighborhood. As pertinent a document today as it was when first written three decades ago. (\$12/\$10, softbound, 7 x 9 in., 92 pages, black & white illustrations)

Ann M. Masson and Lydia Schmalz, *Cast Iron and the Crescent City.* (1995; rpt. of 1975) Decorative ironwork is one of New Orleans' most distinctive architectural features, and this handsomely illustrated study chronicles the growth of the art form, along with analysis of its methods and notable examples throughout the city. (\$12 \$10/members, soft cover, 6 x 9 in., 52 pages, over 45 black & white illustrations)

Henry Clement Pitot, *James Pitot (1761-1831): A Documentary Study.* (1988; rpt. of 1966) A scholarly reconstruction of the life of the French immigrant who rose to become a prominent judge, businessman, and mayor of New Orleans. (\$15 \$12/members, softbound, 6 x 9 in., 124 pages, maps, 19 black & white illustrations.)

Samuel Wilson, Jr. *The Battle of New Orleans: Plantation Houses on the Battlefield of New Orleans.* (1996; rpt. of 1965) The Battle of New Orleans was waged upon some of the most fertile soil in the Mississippi Valley, and this booklet studies the ten plantation homes, some modest, some grand, that stood there during the British campaign of 1814-15. (\$9 \$8/members, softbound 5 x 8 in., 96 pages, 32 black & white illustrations and maps)

Samuel Wilson, Jr., *The Buildings of Christ Church.* (1997) Historian and architect Sam Wilson wrote several monographs on religious institutions in New Orleans, including this posthumously published study of four successive churches built between 1814 and 1886, each reflecting the growth and changing history of New Orleans. (\$8 \$6/members, soft cover, 6 x 9 in., 60 pages, illustrated)

Samuel Wilson, Jr., *The First Presbyterian Church of New Orleans: Its Buildings and Its Ministers.* (1988) The story of the First Presbyterians in New Orleans, "beautifully and accurately told." (\$6 \$5/members, soft cover, 6 x 9 in., 56 pages, 31 illustrations in black & white.)

Samuel Wilson, Jr., *A Guide to Architecture of New Orleans.* (1998 edition, rpt. of 1960) This small but extremely handy book lists over 200 significant structures in and around the Crescent City, including both old and modern buildings, with separate sections on cemeteries and nearby plantation homes. A useful guide for both the scholar and the tourist. (\$10 \$8/members, soft cover, 5 1/2 x 8 1/2 in., 80 pages, over 100 black & white illustrations.)

Samuel Wilson, Jr., *The Pitot House on Bayou St. John.* (1992) A detailed study of an architectural treasure, one of the only plantation houses surviving from Louisiana's Spanish colonial period. (\$9 \$7/members, soft cover, 6 x 9 in., 64 pages, 12 full color photographs plus numerous black & white illustrations)

ALSO AVAILABLE FROM LOUISIANA LANDMARKS SOCIETY:

Tired of scouring the house for an attractive and preferably blank piece of paper on which to write an invitation or thank-you note? The Louisiana Landmarks Society is pleased to offer the following, highly attractive notecards for sale. Each card measures 6 1/4 x 4 1/2 inches and is printed on fine woven paper accompanied by a matching buff-colored envelope.

Notecard: Pitot House, featuring a delicate sepia-tone drawing by Charles Alexandre Leseur, c.1830, box of 10 notecards (blank), \$10.

Notecard: Old Spanish Custom House, featuring a handsome black & white drawing by Samuel Wilson, Jr., dated 1930, box of 10 notecards (blank), \$10.



To purchase any of these publications, contact:

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1440 Moss St.
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www.louisianalandmarks.org

PUBLICATIONS SPOTLIGHT

Text by Jan Arrigo

Photography by
Laura Mc Elroy

Voyager Press, 2008

Reviewed by
Susan Kierr

PLANTATIONS & HISTORIC HOMES OF NEW ORLEANS

Pitot House has a beautiful new book in its library and it is available for purchase. The author, Jan Arrigo, and photographer, Laura Mc Elroy, have documented history in words and photographs, getting into the nooks and crannies of the preserved past. As much as this book covers familiar territory, it also surprises with startling and delightful detail:

Did you know that St. John was the patron saint of the city's founder Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne deBienville? That is why we have a bayou named after the Saint. Bienville gave Bayou St. John its current name, changing it from the Choctaw-French "Bayouk Choupique," which is actually a large fish from antiquity.

Did you know that Madame Pontalba's father-in-law was so determined to get her fortune that he shot her in her chest four times? She protected her heart with her hands and lost two fingers while saving her own life. Have you driven to Woodland Plantation in Pointe a La Hache to see the plantation home in early morning as the sun light first reaches the front gallery? Seen the fresh churned butter dished out on a wooden spoon in the Gallier House kitchen?

The photography is scrumptious. Elroy captured Pitot House's beauty in many shots, including a view of the front of the house and its garden when the proud trees were full of beautiful yellow grapefruit. Interiors appear with intriguing details, such as a game table in

MARIETTA'S HOUSE: A GRANDMOTHER'S COTTAGE

Text by
J. E. Bourgoyne

Photographs by
J. G. Tyburski

Margaret
Media, Inc.
2008

Reviewed by
David Stefferud

Everyone should have a Marietta's house — not necessarily owned, but remembered or imagined — in his or her life; then, now or in the future. Grandmother's cottage is memories of youth and transformation, love, warmth and family. It is the house, humble or palatial, where our persona is formed and where we return, even in our mind's eye, from time to time, for psychic nourishment.

This charming book tells of a real grandma's real cottage, in Old Turnerville, a neighborhood of Plaquemine, Louisiana, on the banks of the Mississippi about a hundred miles above New Orleans.

The cottage; plain, unornamented and of modest dimensions, was built in the 1880's and bought by the author's grandparents in 1915, and he, the author, lived there with his grandmother, mother and sister for several years in his youth. Now little changed, it is a representation of life in the first half of the twentieth century in the semi-rural, agricultural heart of America

the Cornstalk Hotel where chess men line up for battle as a winged cherub holds a feathery lamp and shade, casting a warm glow over the battleground.

Arrigo is a storyteller in the best sense of the word. The text is full of well-told tidbits and important chronicles from three centuries of history. It is good to be reminded of the rich inheritance of New Orleans, including the early nuns of Old Ursuline Convent and more recent philanthropists Edith and Edgar Stern at Longue Vue House and Gardens, all well photographed by McElroy. The text ties into our most recent history, right up to observations of post-Katrina recovery. The book notes the roles architecture and urban planning take in preserving buildings during floods and hurricanes.

This publication works for natives and visitors. It has a glossary of architectural terms and a house-hunting guide for touring, listing some of the most beautiful and interesting historic homes in the New Orleans area, their locations, websites where available, and phone numbers when permissible.

Plantations & Historic Homes of New Orleans is a good value. The book is expensive to produce and \$25.95 is a fair price. Well-written, and well-supported by its photography, it has been published with high quality materials. The book is a wonderful gift for visitors and a desirable addition to any collection of Louisiana history books.

where most folks lived in those days. Marietta's house, restored and maintained, "a monument to those simpler times", is open by appointment.

A nostalgic preface by author J. E. Bourgoyne (who currently operates the Bourgoyne Guest House on Bourbon Street in New Orleans), the house's restorer, fixes the cottage in time, place and family continuum. Careful, sympathetic black-and-white photographs by J. G. Tyburski of simple furnishings and views, each with an evocative caption, form the body of the book.

This unassuming vernacular architecture, usually the product of a carpenter's memory and imagination, or a pattern-book, is all-too-often overlooked as one of the core components of our built environment and is frequently bypassed in the scramble for funds and energy for preservation. It is a tribute to the makers of this heartwarming book that the house has been restored, preserved, made available and now beautifully documented.

PITOT HOUSE NAMED TO FODOR'S CHOICE 2008

Fodor's Travel. The foremost name in travel publishing, has named the Pitot House Museum a 2008 Fodor's Choice selection. This distinction recognizes a remarkable achievement for the Louisiana Landmarks Society. Since 1988, Fodor's Travel, a division of Random House, Inc. has been awarding the Fodor's Choice category to only the very best hotels, restaurants and attractions around the world. Fodor's writers experience, examine and evaluate thousands of establishments. While every listed place included in a Fodor's Guide is deemed worth a traveler's time, only fifteen percent of those selections receive the Fodor's Choice designation. As a 2008 Fodor's Choice recipient, the Pitot House receives special recognition in Fodor's guidebooks and Web site, www.fodors.com, as being currently among the best in its field.

LOUISIANA LANDMARKS SOCIETY WELCOMES OUR NEW MEMBERS!

Welcome aboard!

The Louisiana Landmarks Society is overjoyed to have the following members join us this quarter in our quest to save what's best in the Louisiana built environment, especially our precious Pitot House, and to add to our strong voice in advocacy for preservation:

Ms. Jan Arrigo
Ms. Nancy L. Claypool
Mr. Donald Costello
Ms. Kim Giberti
Mr. Greg Heimsoth
Ms. Rebecca Hillr
Ms. Betsy Kleinfelder
Ms. Lucinda Lautenschlaeger
Ms. Laurie Ledet
Ms. Bonnie Lee
Ms. JoLeigh S. Monteverde
Mr. W. Peter Raarp
Cork & Bottle Wine Shop
Ms. Donnie E. Texidor
Mr. John Wilkinson
Ms. Kathryn Wollan

The Society is glad to have you with us: your talent and enthusiasm are our most important resource and we look forward to seeing you in our many activities and in the pages of *La Preservation* if you care to make a written contribution.

William E. Borah is a land-use attorney and co-author of *The Second Battle of New Orleans: A History of the Vieux Carre Riverfront Expressway Controversy*.

On the evening of October 21st, at Turners' Hall, in the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities building, Mr. Borah spoke to an interested and educated group of individuals involved in the New Orleans community.

A handsome man with startling blue eyes, dressed in a dark suit, white shirt and red and blue striped tie, William Borah was welcomed as a friend as well as a member of LLS. He made it clear that he admires the Louisiana Landmarks Society for what he called a willingness to "Hit the Beach" as an organization that confronts where necessary in advocating preservation.

The evening's discussion instilled pride in the listeners by reminding them that New Orleans is a model of land use development. The "Sliver on the River" is a jewel of grid-patterned streets that remains, after Katrina, intact and an example of good planning and architecture. Visitors in the field of land use development are dazzled by the pedestrian-scale living and the remarkable history of historical preservation. Borah pointed to the preservation of the French Quarter in the 1936 constitutional amendment that was achieved by local preservationists, lead by Mrs. Werlein. He reminded us that in the 1960's activists again saved the French Quarter by preventing the construction of an elevated expressway in front of Jackson Square, an effort in which he took an important leadership role.

Mr. Borah admitted that spending a lifetime in opposition is like beating your head against a wall, but he also felt that because of the dysfunctional New Orleans planning process, which he entitled "Planning by Surprise," he felt compelled to battle anarchy.

His choice of battles has been to support the creation of a Master Plan with the Force of Law, (an amendment to the City Charter, presented to voters November 4th).

"New Orleans is the Queen of Funk," he reminded us, "And funk can not be reproduced, it needs to be preserved and protected."

WILLIAM E. BORAH SPEAKS TO LLS

by Susan Kierr



PITOT HOUSE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

By Susan McClamroch
November, 2008

A wonderful fall season befell the Pitot House, that is, after hurricanes Gustav and Ike blew away the first "Vino on the Bayou" wine tasting fundraiser of the season. The two that followed more than made up for that missed gathering. For both, the weather was beautiful, the bayou was romantic, and Cork and Bottle provided excellent wines, as usual. At the October wine tasting party, Jan Arrigo signed copies of her new book, *Plantations and Historic Homes of New Orleans*. Ian McNulty signed copies of *A Season of Night: New Orleans Life After Katrina* at a votive-lit table during the November "Vino on the Bayou." After a winter-weather pause, look for more delightful "Vino on the Bayou" parties to sprout in the Pitot House garden.

Indeed, the grounds of the Pitot House have been topical since Dr. Lake Douglas' "Strategic Landscape Plan" presentation to the Louisiana Landmarks Society Board of Directors in September. Over the summer the LSU professor of Landscape Architecture developed an interpretation program that addresses the unique history and geographic situation of the museum's site on Bayou St. John, focusing on the evolving New Orleans environment from late eighteenth century French and Spanish Colonial periods to the city's early American period.

Also over the summer, Tarah Doggett, Preserva-



Diana Smith, Publications Committee chair, (l), sells a book published by the Landmark Society to Roulhac Toledano at the Pieux Redux workshop. Photo by Nijme Rinadi-Nun.



Alberta Lewis (foreground), John Schackai and Heidi Neuman Hampton whitewashing Pitot House fence, Heather Knight, (l), instructing. Photo by Nijme Rinadi-Nun.



Erin Edwards, Mercedes Whitecloud and Heather Knight, (l to r), leading workshop session on lime putty and lime wash production. Photo by Nijme Rinadi-Nun.

tion Studies student from Tulane School of Architecture, completed a practicum at the Pitot House. Her study, focused on the role of decorative arts collections in historic house museums, will serve to refine the Pitot House's interpretation program. Tarah's excellent help with the museum's daily operations became increasingly valuable over the course of her final graduate course and in September Miss Doggett joined the Pitot House staff.

This fall the Pitot House hosted a variety of visitors with vastly different interests in historic sites. The Stonebridge Garden Club crossed the Crescent City Connection to learn about this lovely New Orleans landmark. Koch and Wilson Architect Robbie Cangelosi led a tour of design professionals through the structure his firm lovingly restored in the 1960s

Commission which until now had been solely the choice of the mayor. The Charter Amendment should make everyone's life a lot more predictable, both residents and developers.

There was opposition to the charter amendment in two areas:

1. The master plan does not exist yet.
2. This is a mechanism to give power to developers and displace poor communities.

Master Planning Process

The fora for the new master plan are under way and include input for the rewriting of the comprehensive zoning ordinance. A schedule can be found at: <http://www.nolamasterplan.org/> Meetings are scheduled through January of next year and the consultants Goody Clancy of Boston will be returning the planning districts with their drafts plan for further input from the community. Citywide forums are also under way:

Saturday, December 6, 2008 | 9:00am – 3:00pm. Citywide Forum 4: How We Prosper. Xavier University Center, The William McCaffrey Ballroom, 3rd floor, 1 Drexel Drive

Spring 2009 | Time TBD. Citywide Forum 5: Presentation of the Draft Master Plan

Riverfront Development

The first of three phases of the riverfront development plan, known as Reinventing the Crescent, should begin within the next year. This \$30 million dollar investment between Esplanade and Poland Avenues is developing the riverfront as community space including green space, performance space and athletic facilities. After a long process, the development team now has an agreement of understanding with the adjacent neighbors.

Haunted House

A 19th Century building at 4800 Canal St. near the cemeteries has been converted to The Mortuary Haunted House (www.themortuary.net). Originally built as a residence in the 1870s, the exterior has remained remarkably intact since 1923 renovations by architect William Burk. It operated for many years as the PJ McMahon Funeral Home. In 2007, after the building had been vacant for over 6 months, the City approved an application for a proposed use as nightclub and grandfathered 251 off-site parking spaces to the site. (Not unlike ghosts, grandfathered spaces are fictitious and incorporeal. The City uses them to justify granting a permit to a business which does not have sufficient

on-site spaces for its operations.)

Neighbors, alarmed by the proposed hours of operation and the congestion that would be produced by so many grandfathered spaces, appealed the issuance of the permit to the Board of Zoning Adjustments (BZA). The Advocacy Committee voted to support the neighbors, and Landmarks submitted a letter to the BZA. Advocacy Chairman Keith Hardie spoke at the July hearing. At that hearing, there was a motion to revoke the permit, but instead, the Board asked the City Attorney for a legal opinion as to whether grandfathered parking spaces are lost as a result of the vacancy, just as the right to nonconforming uses is lost by vacancy. The City Attorney's opinion was that the right to nonconforming parking, once vested, lives forever (haunting the neighborhood), regardless of vacancy or even change to a less intensive use. Keith Hardie wrote another letter on behalf of LLS, challenging the City Attorney's position, and citing a case in which a New Orleans funeral home had lost its right to grandfathered parking due to vacancy. In October, however, the BZA denied the appeal based on City Attorney's opinion and approved a permit. However, over the course of the dispute, the number of grandfathered spaces was significantly reduced by the Department of Safety and Permits. In August 2008 this site was nominated as an historic structure by the HDLC, which will prevent the operator from attaching television cameras and animatronic figures to the facade. The neighborhood is considering an appeal and has thanked Landmarks for its support.

LANDMARKS WANTS YOU!

Louisiana Landmarks Society is looking for a few good men and women to help out with a variety of tasks. If you're interested in assisting with our programming activities, events at the Pitot House, house tours, or clerical support, please call the Landmarks office at (504) 482-0312 or email us at info@louisianalandmarks.org. Thanks!

ADVOCACY COMMITTEE REPORT

Submitted by
Karley Frankic

Charity/LSU/VA

The push by the state and city continues for the demolition of Lower Mid-City to build a new medical complex despite a report by internationally renowned architectural firm, RMJM Hillier. This report stated that the Charity building can be fully gutted and made into a state of the art medical facility. Despite naysayer's claims that the exterior is unsalvageable, the report explains that the settlement cracks have been there since soon after the building was constructed seventy years ago and were fully documented in the 1950's. In short, the building is not settling further and the exterior is restorable. The report said that Charity can be rehabbed in three years, half the time, and for \$136,000,000 less than building a comparable new hospital.

On September 29th the City Council heard a request from the neighbors, including Bobbie Rogers, Davida Finger, attorney for some residents whose homes are in danger, and Mary Howell, an attorney with an office in the foot print. They are still waiting for a public forum for all options to be discussed openly.

Those options include restoring Charity, where excess beds can be rented to the VA while they secure and complete a hospital. The Victory development that includes the Lindy Boggs Medical Center in Mid-City has failed and the developers have offered the site for sale to the VA. Mid-City residents are supporting the plan. The non-compete clause will expire before the VA could open in that location.

The mayor continues to push for the Lower Mid-City location. On August 11th Dr. Blakely, the Recovery Czar, at a neighborhood meeting at Grace Episcopal basically said if the Lindy Boggs site was chosen, the VA would get no help from the City of New Orleans. His office will provide assistance for one site only: the "preferred site" in lower Mid-City. In other words, the City will help take land through eminent domain and raze acres of historic neighborhood — but won't provide any assistance if the VA decides to build on the site of an old hospital.

Demolitions

Mayor Nagin claimed that the Neighborhood Conservation District Committee's work had to be halted temporarily to avoid "unnecessary delays" in removing buildings badly damaged by Hurricane Gustav and issued an executive order Sept. 5 that not only properties in imminent danger of collapse, but also properties declared an imminent health danger, i.e. has weeds, are unpainted and vacant can be demolished

without review.

At a Council meeting on October 3rd., Paul May, Director of Safety & Permits, said that under the Executive Order 161 demo permits were granted for Imminent Health Threat properties and 171 demo permits were granted for Imminent Danger of Collapse properties. Michelle Kimball said that 56 IHT permits should have gone through NCDC. Veronica White, Director of Sanitation, was confused about how many had actually been demolished, claiming all of them, but that was proven inaccurate and Councilperson Head requested of Ed Blakely, Recovery Czar, to figure it out and send the remaining un-demoed properties back through NCDC. Blakely agreed, but still a handful of buildings were demolished without review.

Church closings

By order of Archbishop Alfred Hughes October 26th was scheduled to be the date of the final services at Our Lady of Good Counsel, St. Francis de Sales and St. Henry churches. The parishioners have fought the closures and have been occupying St. Henry and Our Lady of Good Counsel. Four members of Our Lady of Good Counsel filed a lawsuit in Civil District Court to stop the archbishop from closing their church because they claimed that the church is owned not by the archdiocese but by Our Lady of Good Counsel, a separate non-profit. The case was dismissed.

Louisiana Landmarks pledged support for St. Francis de Sales, which was listed in the New Orleans Nine, to identify and help write grants for the preservation of the church if the doors could be kept open.

Master Plan Amendment

This Charter Amendment passed narrowly and forces the city to develop a master plan for the city. This will direct the land use plan that in turn drives the zoning. Up until now, there has been no finished master plan, though we have participated in UNOP, Bring Back New Orleans, and any number of planning processes in the past. All zoning issues were at the will of the district councilperson who often made ad hoc decision in complete contrast to the will of the residents who had participated in all those processes. This amendment was supposed take that power away from the councilmembers and make the City Planning Commission the last stop in appeals. However, this part of the amendment was watered down at the request of some council-members. The amendment would further change the appointment procedures for the City Planning

and LSU's Dr. Jay Edwards led two groups of Pioneer American Society Conference attendees through this rare example of Colonial Era Creole construction.

In September a delegation of preservation scientists and engineers from CRdC INNOVA, *Centri Regionali di Competenza Regione Campania ("la ricerca scientifica e l'innovazione verso l'Area NAFTA)*, and preservation practitioners from the National Center for Preservation Technology and Training (NCPTT) located in Natchitoches, Louisiana, convened on the Pitot House gallery to discuss the latest in preservation technological advances...and, in the process, "wow" Pitot House Committee Chair, Mercedes Whitecloud and Preservation Technology Adjunct Assistant Professor, Heather Knight.

And "Wow!" is what Heather and Mercedes did for a preservation minded audience at the Pitot House's inaugural Pieux Redux historic fence workshop program! For three consecutive Sunday afternoons, the Pitot House hosted a series of fun and educational public events focused on the site's two hundred year old cypress barrier (enclosure). Heather Knight, owner of Chaux Vive Architectural Conservation and Historic Preservation Services, along with graduate students from Tulane School of Architecture's Preservation Studies program, led two sessions on the environmental benefits of traditional protective finishes for historic fences, walls, and furniture. Charlie Duhé, pieux (picket) splitter extraordinaire, and Preston Barras conducted the final session on traditional fence construction. Please visit Landmarks' website (www.louisianalandmarks.org) to view a video clip of Mr. Duhé in action with a good old fashioned froe!

Pieux Redux was a Passport Event, supported by a grant from the Office of the Lt. Governor, the Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism, and the World Cultural Economic Forum (WCEF). The New Orleans Chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) partnered with the Pitot House to offer continuing education credits for its members who participated in the workshop sessions and Cecil Film Productions donated video services to create beautiful documentary footage of a dying construction art form.

An exhibit of historic fence fashions based on watercolor paintings from the New Orleans

Notarial Archives "Plan Book Plans," mounted for the workshop series, will remain on display at the Pitot House through the spring. Landmarks members and Pitot House visitors are invited to view the study that will inform Preservation Technology coursework slated to take place at the Pitot House over the upcoming semester and help celebrate the new Tulane University Service Learning partnership created with this class. From February through April, on select Saturdays you will see students in action, serving the New Orleans community by helping to preserve the city's precious Pitot House and its rare *pieux* perimeter.



David Barfield, photographer.

A CHILD'S VISIT TO GALLIER HOUSE

By Susan Couvillon

Gallier House, located at 1132 Royal Street, will be decorated for the holidays during the month of December. That would be a wonderful time to give children from about ages seven to thirteen a glimpse of life in the 1850's in New Orleans.

Guides at Gallier House bring the house alive for younger visitors while keeping those young-at-heart interested. It may be startling to see a traditional Christmas Tree decorated only with candles, homemade cookies and fresh camellias--flowers found in many New Orleans gardens. Children will learn firsthand the reason for a bucket of water near the base of the Christmas Tree.

At Christmas or anytime, youngsters will learn that natural light was used to advantage in this house as they stand under one of the first skylights used in a private residence in New Orleans. They will also enjoy seeing some of the first indoor plumbing. The Galliers were *tres chic!*

When my grand-daughter and I visited this historic home last summer, seven-year old Taylor was delighted to learn the language of the fan as she browsed the gift shop waiting for the tour to begin. And she was fascinated by the room of the girls who were about her age when the rooms were furnished. Although the playthings were sparse, it was obvious that the children were happy living in this beautiful home in the French Quarter. Guide Louise Schaffer, a former elementary school teacher, brought the house and the 1850's alive for the young visitor.

Gallier House and Hermann-Grima House participate in the Revillon festivities which will take place from December 3 through Twelfth Night, January 6, throughout the French Quarter. Nineteenth Century holiday traditions will be showcased for visitors. As a special activity, the Hermann-Grima House will have a Kids Cooking Day on the open hearth of the early kitchen on December 22 for ages 7 to 13.

What Makes Keith Hardie Tick?

Continued from front page.

What makes you confident?

"I'm confident that preservation of buildings and neighborhoods is good for economic development and for the quality of life. We should succeed in protecting our architecture and neighborhoods, even though the city is often inept, overworked, or too corrupt to do the right thing."

You lead LLS Advocacy, you are Vice-President of Maple Area Residents and you are on the board of the Lafayette Square Association where your office is. With this much exposure to neighborhood efforts, what do you find neighborhood associations need to do to be effective in zoning disputes?

"Get organized. Get documentation. Research the issues. Educate people. Lobby public officials with authority over the proposal. Don't let up on City Hall. It's also important to have a thick skin. I often know the developers or property owners whom I'm opposing. They may know my mother or my brothers and sisters. If you are going to stick by your principles, you have to be able to oppose a project based on the merits, not on who the developer is or what clubs he or she belongs to."

What is the best part of living uptown?

"Living in the University area is a double-edged sword. The students are noisy, and there are parking problems, but the Universities bring cultural events uptown. It's great to be able to walk to a lecture or concert at Tulane or Loyola. Since Katrina, the Opera and Symphony have been using the Universities as a venue, and I've really enjoyed that."

What makes preservation involvement so satisfying that you volunteer your time when you could be relaxing by the lagoon in the park?

The uniqueness of New Orleans: our architecture, our walkable neighborhoods, and main street business districts are the envy of architects and planners worldwide. We already have what planners elsewhere are trying to create. It's hard to see a great organic plan dismantled in favor of a suburban automobile-based model. So I resist those retrograde changes.

Thank you, Keith, for resisting.

KAREN GADBOIS: DOCUMENTING A SQUANDERED HERITAGE

Submitted by Susan Kierr.

Karen Gadbois came to New Orleans from another historical city, Boston, Massachusetts, and did not desert her new home town after Katrina. In fact, she became a champion of efforts to preserve the more modest structures, including many shotgun cottages, threatened by demolition after Katrina. Her painstaking cataloging and documentation of these structures made it possible to monitor the city's erratic demolition process and turn it around. Her research was used to help substantiate evidence of a scandal in the post-Katrina housing clean up programs (New York Times, August 12 and 13, 2008.)

Karen remembers coming back to New Orleans on New Year's Eve, December 3, 2005, happy to sleep in her own bed again in the raised side-hall Carrollton area house she and her husband love.

"I should have known when I had to pick aside the charred remains of timber that had floated down the street that there was no normal and that fortunate was relative."

Her neighborhood lost almost an entire block to a fire during the flood. Karen said "For the life of me I could not recall each and every house that had existed there on Aug 28, 2005. I walked, drove or rode by there every day and my daughter waited for the bus there. That block on Carrollton Avenue was the backdrop for our life. And yet, I had little memory of it."

During the winter months of 2006 she saw people begin to gut with a vengeance; piles of lathe and mountains of plaster took the place of the moldy sodden furniture, personal possessions and the stuff that made up post-Katrina life.

In addition to their home, Karen's husband had an art studio in the Hollygrove neighborhood, a sturdy shotgun that had been filled up to the window sills with water. The couple pulled out all the ruined furniture and canvases and found that all they needed to do was let the house dry out. The plaster and lath were resilient materials that could sustain the beating they had taken.

It helped that Karen was raised among people who appreciated the structural elements of buildings. "My

father was a lather; my Dad had spent his entire adult life in the "trades". So I knew a bit about the materials used as well as the talent and skill needed to do the job. In

addition to that, my Grandfather was a stone carver and owned a granite quarry in Massachusetts."

Karen credits this early experience to her later recognition of the waste that followed Katrina: "When I saw the piles of plaster and lathe I knew New Orleans in its haste was displaying a fundamental ignorance of what the city was made of, and who made it."

Karen began to catalog the houses targeted for demolition, and along the way, forged relationships with other preservationists and housing rights advocates. She discovered the world of blogs, specifically <http://urbanplacesandspaces.blogspot.com>, which belongs to Richard Layman. She named her own space, squanderedheritage.com, as a tribute to Blair Kamen's series www.chicagotribune.com/features/custom/landmarks/chi-landmarksfront-htmlstory,0,6326641.htmlstory. She found many efforts to address issues of resilience, renewal and self determination. To these she added her own:

"That moment, when I bent down to remove the charred timber off my front steps, timber that rested at the high water mark that stained the steps of one of the beautiful homes on Carrollton Avenue, was the moment I decided to fight to preserve more than the grandeur of New Orleans but also the subtle daily gestures of gentility that we live with all around us: the house you may not remember but that you can never forget."

We thank you Karen for your willingness to lead in the preservation of our city.



"Karen, camera and notebook in hand, leaves home for her important preservation work"