

LANDMARKS' PRÉSERVATION



THE JOURNAL OF THE LOUISIANA LANDMARKS SOCIETY



Louisiana Landmarks Society named its New Orleans' Nine Most Endangered Sites list for the twelfth year at a press conference held at the Pitot House, June 1, 2017. R. Stephen Chauvin, Chair of the 2017 New Orleans' Nine Committee, presented the locations and briefly described the threats facing each. Sandra Stokes, Landmarks President, and Carol Gniady, Landmarks Executive Director, welcomed the attendees. Special guests and speakers included Leo Watermeier, French Quarter resident and preservation advocate, and Jeffrey Treffinger, designer, builder and architectural historian.

This year's list encompasses a diverse spectrum of rich assets. Included are the *Historic Buildings in Louis Armstrong Park* -- Municipal Auditorium and the National Park Service (NPS) Jazz Complex buildings. Chauvin noted that the NPS, FEMA, and the City of New Orleans all play a part in the deterioration of these structures.



New Orleans Jazz Complex



New Orleans Municipal Auditorium

Watermeier, a neighbor of the park and vocal critic of its neglect, urged the city administration to make emergency repairs to the Municipal Auditorium's roof and to come to a final settlement with FEMA on repair costs for Katrina damage, so that it can be restored to its original condition as one of the great public spaces of New Orleans. He also called on the City and the National Park Service to come to a resolution about the fate of the four Jazz Complex buildings. If the NPS no longer wants the buildings for its New Orleans Jazz National Historical Park, he said, the agency should return the buildings to the city, which could seek proposals for appropriate new uses... *Continued on p. 6*

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Hilary Somerville Irvin,
Editor

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Join Louisiana Landmarks Society for the **Life on the Bayou Heritage Fair** Saturday, August 12, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. at the Pitot House, \$5 Entry Fee

Children of all ages, parents and adults are welcome to explore the Life on the Bayou artisans, storytellers, and crafts people demonstrating centuries-old techniques and customs.

Enjoy basket weaving, indigo dying, crafting Native American jewelry, pottery making, caning, brick masonry, calligraphy, quilting, nature painting, herbal remedies, and more!

FREE PARKING at Cabrini High School

SAVE THE DATES

Life on the Bayou Heritage Fair
Saturday, August 12, 10-3 pm
At the Pitot House

LECTURE: Richard Campanella
Lincoln in New Orleans: The 1828-1831 Flatboat Voyages and their Place in History
Thursday, October 5, 6 pm
Central St. Matthew United Church of Christ
1333 S. Carrollton

Fête du Jardin
Sunday, October 22, 4-7 pm
At the Pitot House



A Message from the President

The Louisiana Landmarks Society Legacy Fund: Ensuring your legacy in preservation

Sandra L. Stokes

We have made great strides and had many accomplishments in the last year, but none that is more significant for the future of the organization than our launch of the Louisiana Landmarks Society Legacy Fund.

Landmarks Society has a rich and deep history in this community. We are the oldest citywide preservation organization in the state, built on the backs of preservation greats who saw the need for serious advocacy to preserve the cultural and architectural treasures in our midst. It is our responsibility to ensure that the work of the organization is strong and relevant in the future, guaranteeing the legacy of historic preservation for generations to come.

In March, the board launched a new fund to do just that. Now, with a balance of \$110,000 – and a commitment from our past president, David Campbell, of

\$20,000 more, we are off to a great start. We have heard the painful stories of long-time preservation organizations across the country that are now defunct because of the lack of funding. We don't want to ever be in that position. We have been very proactive managing our budget and now, with the Legacy Fund, we can accomplish two things: offer our donors the opportunity to include Landmarks Society in their estate planning; and lay the foundation for our work in the future.

Gifts to Louisiana Landmarks Society now include four types: support for our advocacy work and general operations; donations for specific programming; donations for maintenance of the Pitot House; and now planned giving to our Legacy Fund. Planned giving is the most significant way to demonstrate your commitment to Louisiana Landmarks Society and its future.

Planned giving allows a donor options such as:

- Include a bequest to Landmarks Society in your will or trust.
- Name the organization as a beneficiary of a life insurance policy, securities, a portion of your retirement account, property, or other type of investment.

A donation to the Legacy Fund will ensure your legacy in preservation.

Call us to arrange a private meeting. With **your** help we will secure the treasures of New Orleans for future generations.

We, and the future, thank you!

Sandra L. Stokes
(225) 445-3800

Give the Gift of Membership!

Share your love of historic preservation with a gift of membership to Louisiana Landmarks Society.

Your gift includes quarterly newsletters, complimentary tours of the ca. 1799 Pitot House, free entry to our annual Lecture Series and Vino on the Bayou membership socials, and discounts in the Pitot House Museum Gift Shop.

*Show that you care
by giving the gift of
preservation!*

In Search of a Historic Preservation Chapter – and Plan

Sandra L. Stokes

The Master Plan's Chapter Six, entitled *Historic Preservation*, includes a directive for a Preservation Plan to be written – yet seven years later, we have yet to see any movement by the city. The value of our historic assets and their preservation are clearly low priorities in the entire Master Plan – and are, in fact, pitted against other objectives in some of the proposed amendments. In a city that supposedly cherishes its historic neighborhoods, and makes its tourism dollars embracing them, we do not provide the protections needed to preserve them. In fact, new proposals put such protections at risk.

The *Historic Preservation* chapter should prioritize the preservation of New Orleans' historic architecture, historic districts and neighborhoods – and maintain their scale and character. This is a land use issue; yet many of the amendments proposed for Chapter 6 weaken preservation's focus and importance and will pit other objectives against historic preservation. While important, those objectives should be addressed in other areas of the Master Plan. A good *Historic Preservation* chapter should focus on preserving **only** the physical landscape, scale and character of the city.

The 2009 Bureau of Governmental Research's (BGR) report entitled "In Search of a Master Plan," states "the city charter requires the Planning Commission to prepare a 20-year master plan for the **physical development of the city** (emphasis added). In order to serve as an effective guide for physical development, the plan must provide clear policy directives..." The report criticizes the Master Plan saying, "while the plan is weak in guiding physical development, it addresses a wide range of unrelated issues." The BRG report is even more relevant today. Some of the proposed amendments add more unrelated issues and objectives to what should be about preserving the physical fabric of the city.

The Master Plan is still flawed, and yet we keep adding to it, rather than rewriting it. The *Historic Preservation* chapter needs to be focused, and actually prioritize and guide the future development in our historic environment, without all the extraneous material. Additionally, the city must fund and create a community-based, comprehensive, citywide Preservation Plan informed by recognized preservation and neighborhood organizations and constituents interested in advancing historic preservation.

Meet our 2017-18 New Board Members



Pictured left to right:
Robin Ruiz, Gordon McLeod,
Mamie Gasperecz,
and Sally Reeves

MAMIE GASPERCZ: A native of Alexandria, Louisiana, Mamie graduated from Loyola University with a B.A. in History and Master's of Business Administration. Mamie worked at First Commerce Corporation for more than a decade, eventually serving as Vice-President in the bank's Retail Banking Group. In 2004, Mamie was co-chair of the Hermann-Grima+Gallier Historic Houses "Amazing Grapes" Wine Auction and subsequently spent three years on the organization's Board of Managers. She served as Executive Director from 2007 to 2017, the longest-serving Executive Director in the museums' history. Mamie has been married to Kirk Gasperecz for 28 years. They have one son, Jackson, who graduated in May from Isidore Newman School. The family lives in an 1880s shotgun house in Uptown New Orleans.

GORDON McLEOD: Gordon is the Chief of Staff for the District A New Orleans City Council office, and is a partner with LM Development, a real estate development firm focused on historic renovation and adaptive reuse projects in New Orleans. Through his work with the District A City Council Office, he is a member of the Local Foods, Local Places, Steering Committee, the Greater New Orleans Water Collaborative, and has participated in the Urban Water Series presented by the Greater New Orleans Foundation and City of New Orleans in partnership with the Surdna Foundation. Gordon holds a Master's Degree in historic preservation from the Tulane University School of Architecture and a bachelor's degree in historic preservation and city planning from the College of Charleston. Gordon enjoys architecture, history, and travel with his wife, Kathryn, and his son, Thomas.

SALLY REEVES: A lifelong New Orleansian, Sally has contributed tirelessly and for many years to the preservation of the city. With degrees from Newcomb College and UNO, she served with distinction as the archivist at the former New Orleans Notarial Archives, where she worked among "the hidden world of Creole cottages, cabinet galleries, wrought iron balconies, [found in] legal documents clothed in art." Sally is also a gifted author and speaker on diverse architectural and historical subjects, including co-author on volumes 4-7 of the lauded New Orleans Architecture series. Sally has remained active in the historic preservation community, including the Louisiana Historical Society, the Southern Garden History Society, New Orleans City Park, and the Louisiana Landmarks Society.

ROBIN RUIZ: Robin is an appraiser of antiques and fine art with over twenty years experience in the local antique auction and retail field. In addition to appraisals, she was in the employ of New Orleans Auction Galleries for many years as auctioneer, consignments agent and cataloguer of fine art, furniture and decorative objects, specializing in Southern Regional Art and American Furniture. Ms. Ruiz was in the employ of the Neal Auction Company for four years as an auctioneer, appraiser, consignments agent, and decorative arts cataloguer. Ms. Ruiz graduated from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, Bachelor of Fine Arts degree, and studied for one year at the Université du Mans, Le Mans, France. She was an active member of the Certified Appraisers Guild of America and is a past Candidate for Membership with the Appraisers Association of America, Inc.

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Drew Stewart

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Carol Gniady

HOUSE COORDINATOR

Amanda Duhon

LOUISIANA LANDMARKS SOCIETY & PITOT HOUSE

1440 Moss Street

New Orleans, LA 70119

Ph. 504-482-0312

info@louisianalandmarks.org

www.louisianalandmarks.org

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2017 Harnett T. Kane Award Presented to Nathan Chapman



Nathan Chapman, May 8, 2017

In addition to the welcoming of four new board members—Mamie Gasperecz, Gordon McLeod, Sally Reeves and Robin Ruiz—the highlight of this year’s annual meeting was the presentation of the 2017 Harnett T. Kane Award for lifetime achievement in preservation to Nathan Chapman. Carol Allen, Louisiana Landmarks board member and former president of Vieux Carr  Property Owners, Residents and Associates (VCPORA), introduced the award recipient.

A passionate and eloquent New Orleans preservationist and business leader, Nathan has made the revitalization of the city of New Orleans his life and business mission. A marketer by profession, he moved to New Orleans in 1984 from Bastrop, Louisiana, and in 1985 became a resident of the French Quarter, where he lives today with Dennis Alonzo in a renovated 1832 Creole townhouse. A proponent of using marketing along with community organizing to achieve his goals as a preservationist, Nathan founded his own advertising and marketing agency in 1991, Firmidable (formerly The Marketing Center).

As Carol noted in her introduction, Nathan “cut his teeth” on the heated battle over the location of the Audubon Institute Insectarium (originally proposed for Esplanade Avenue at the Mississippi River). “To fight the Insectarium, the next major proposal after the Aquarium of the Americas” she continued “Nathan offered and was appointed to chair the Riverfront Committee.” Largely due to his advocacy efforts, the location of the Insectarium was moved away from the riverfront. In 2002, he was elected President of VCPORA, a post that he held for six years.

Using his marketing expertise to advance his passions, Chapman has successfully communicated that the Vieux Carr ’s value is as a precious neighborhood and not a tourist mecca.

Most recently, Nathan organized and is the chair of the Riverfront Alliance, a collaborative of all neighborhood organizations that front the river, downtown, on both the East and West Banks. The threat to the city’s historic riverfront by potential high-rise condominium developments and cruise ship terminals requires constant vigilance and planning. And this is what Nathan is doing.



Harnett Kane Award Winners at the 2017 Annual Meeting

Left to Right: David L. Campbell, William E. Borah, Michael Duplantier, Nathan Chapman, William and Sally Reeves, John Geiser, and James Logan.



UPDATES:

1828 Baronne St.

The 2013 endangered list included 1828 Baronne Street, one of a pair of Italianate double gallery houses built side by side shortly after the Civil War. Landmarked by the Historic District Landmarks Commission, the frame structure had lost salient detailing such as wooden columns, fascia, and generally was in a state of deterioration. Recognizing the potential, new owners acquired the threatened property in 2014 and renovated it for use as residential units, preserving an integral architectural element in this Central City streetscape.



Touro Shakespeare Home 2621 General Meyer Ave.

On the flip side of the coin is the state of the city-owned Touro Shakespeare Home in Algiers, the neglect of which in 2015 placed the stately institutional building on the endangered list of that year. Designed by local architect William



R. Burk, the building combines elements of both Neo-Classical revival and Jacobethan revival styles, and is particularly notable for its diamond-patterned polychrome brickwork, symmetrical massing, stepped parapets, and prominent front portico. The institution, named for philanthropist Judah Touro and former mayor Joseph Shakespeare, functioned as a city-owned nursing home until 2005. Today, conditions have worsened. Overgrown and exposed to the elements, both the exterior and interior exhibit progressive deterioration. Even more derelict than the condition of the building is its owner—the City of New Orleans—in either not renovating or selling to a private developer, while the property still retains salvageable detailing.

(photographs by R. Stephen Chauvin, 2017)

Monumental Decisions

By Michael Duplantier and Sandra L. Stokes



The P.T. Beauregard Monument pedestal as it stands now, without the statue, 2017.

The men of stone have now been vanquished. On the eve of the Tricentennial of New Orleans, a celebratory event seeking to remember New Orleans' 300-year history, the Mayor chose to rewrite that history by removing historic monuments constructed during the complex post-Civil War era.

These issues are complicated, as is our history. There is good, and bad – and certainly the ugly and the cruel. All of it is part of our past, whether we like it or not. Other cities opted to face these same issues more maturely by undertaking a more balanced and measured approach to their Civil War monuments -- encompassing learned

research, discussions, and sensitivity. Leaders of those cities chose to study each monument separately, with commissions formed to carefully review the history and to recommend expanded context that was designed to inform, teach, and learn from the past.

In New Orleans, informed and rational voices urged a calm and deliberative process. Instead, with single-minded conviction, the city administration formed an unassailable and preemptive historic narrative in a relentless and focused strategy of removal. As anticipated, this ill-conceived political initiative served to divide our citizens and to alter important elements of our historic landscape.

Banishing the monuments from display in Orleans Parish may offer temporary satisfaction to some, but it is not remedial. It simply removes them from our sight – and maybe our conversations. Removal without more does nothing to correct for past wrongs or to provide any uplifting or unifying outcome; it just serves to forestall any real opportunity for an expanded and more objective historic narrative.

Would it not make more sense to keep these artifacts in our city, in some reconfigured fashion, so they

could become the impetus for the much-needed discussions of our difficult past? In fact, why not do what other cities have done, and keep Civil War monuments together but with proper narrative? Add memorials that speak of other points of views. Put it all into context. Learn from it.

Louisiana Landmarks Society continues to believe that our city's monuments should be preserved as artifacts of New Orleans' rich, historic built environment. The fact that the statues or monuments put up 100 or more years ago may still remind us of persons and events now viewed differently from a more contemporary historic perspective does not rob them of the legitimacy as historic witnesses. Monuments serve as historic mileposts, which mark the evolution of a city's culture through the years and how our ancestors, rightly or wrongly, experienced their set of values at another time. Monuments continue to hold value today through their ability to remind, explain, and teach.

Let's look for ways to bring the city together again – and to face our history, not hide from it through acts of obliteration.

Air Rights Victory

By Michael Duplantier

In the face of strong and determined opposition from preservationists and property owners, the Landrieu administration recently withdrew its policy of assessing a permanent fee on long-standing building encroachments on public property.

This so-called "balcony tax," more correctly a fee for the use of "air rights," had been a policy of the City of New Orleans in recent years and had the effect of imposing in perpetuity an onerous amount of annual charges on historic properties having a building element, such as a gallery, balcony or

stoop, extending over or encroaching on the sidewalk or other public property. That these original elements represented attractive and useful building amenities that often were more than one hundred years old and had never previously been taxed was a sound argument that the city somehow found unpersuasive. City officials consistently refused to negotiate the amount of the fee or to modify the terms of the cooperative endeavor agreement that citizens were required to sign, a document that was recorded on conveyance records and that arguably acted as a

cloud on the title to the affected properties.

But as the number of complaints and litigation threats by angry property owners grew, the city finally agreed to suspend its policy in order to study the legal issues. After further study, the city chose to withdraw its policy with respect to the building elements that had been in place for many years.

So, for now, stoop sitting and balcony gazing will remain untaxed.

2017 New Orleans' Nine Announcement Cont'd...

Still recovering from the levee breach after Katrina, the *Industrial Canal Communities* (Ninth Ward and St. Bernard) are now threatened by a 13-year infrastructure replacement project by the Corps of Engineers that includes the demolition of the 1921 Inner Harbor Navigation Canal (IHNC) Lock and St. Claude Bridge. Treffinger, who studied the lock and conducted neighborhood survey and analysis of impacts of the IHNC widening project on the surrounding neighborhoods, discussed the numerous unanswered questions regarding the impacts to these historic neighborhoods.

Threatened by Demolition by Neglect are the Spanish revival style *Israel M. Augustine School*, 425 South Broad, hidden inside of which is a series of murals commissioned in 1931 by the Works Progress Administration; the *Milneburg Lighthouse*, significant for its 159-year role in New Orleans history; the colossal mansion designed by James Gallier, Jr, the *Luling Mansion*, 1438 Leda Street; the *St. Claude Pharmaceutical Building*, 2337 St. Claude Avenue, a product of the eminent 20th-century architect Emile Weil; and the Prairie School style *Early 20th Century Service Station* at 3420 Washington Avenue. Completing the list are *Oretha Castle Haley School*, 2515 North Robertson, the owners of which are seeking its full demolition for a "strip mall" development; and the historic layout, the *French Quarter Street Grid*, challenged by the "Citywide Security Plan," which would close seven Bourbon Street blocks to vehicular traffic round-the-clock.

In closing, Chauvin noted the continuing proliferation of demolition by neglect and the lack of mechanisms that address the destructive trend to the city's built heritage. For more about these nine endangered sites, visit our website www.louisianalandmarks.org.



Industrial Canal Communities



French Quarter Street Grid



Israel M. Augustine School



Luling Mansion



Early 20th Century Service Station



Milneburg Lighthouse



Oretha Castle Haley Elementary



St. Claude Pharmaceutical Building

Inside the Pitot House with Patsy Campbell



Patsy Campbell has come home to New Orleans after traveling the world with her military family for the past thirty years. Her travels began after meeting her husband in the 1960s, but her childhood in the French Quarter, living in a multi-generational home, remained dear to her heart.

During the post-Katrina years, the city called, and Patsy and her husband bought a condo on Esplanade Avenue so they could visit regularly. As the self-proclaimed "Chamber of Commerce of New Orleans abroad," Patsy promoted her hometown, encouraging people to visit. After retirement, she from her profession as a registered nurse and her husband from the military, they decided to move back here.

With her love of history and an inclination toward meeting new people, it was only a matter of time before Patsy became involved in the historically cultural threadwork of the city. Currently, she volunteers for the New Basin Canal Lighthouse as well as serving as a docent for the Pitot House.

"I like being by the water, and helping visitors understand how unique the Pitot House is - it's a part of our history that's really underappreciated." She also loves the Creole influence of the house.

Would you like to be a docent?

We are currently seeking docents to volunteer on Saturdays and/or help to fill in during the week between 10 am - 3 pm.

Split shifts are also available. For more information, call us at (504) 482-0312.

From the Executive Director

Carol Gniady

Collaboration is integral to what we do at Louisiana Landmarks Society. We take our responsibility of being a reliable and effective preservation advocate very seriously, and we embrace those individuals and groups who are working toward similar goals. Preservation can be challenging, and we believe in a united front.

In order to publish opinions, report on issues, share updates, and issue calls to action we rely on many people to help us get to the essence of an issue. The various members within the preservation community, whether a sister non-profit, neighborhood organization, retired board members, or passionate individuals are a tremendous resource. We know we are stronger together, and not one of us can

do this work effectively alone. Whether someone lends a hand with writing an email, shares a useful document, cites a city code, sends a newspaper article, or offers an account of what happened during prior administrations, it matters.

There are a multitude of perspectives that benefit the development of a position. This was obvious recently as Louisiana Landmarks Society developed our list of the eight worst Master Plan Amendments proposals — land use matters that will forever change the city we love. Our Advocacy Committee members, and representatives from groups such as Preservation Resource Center, Committee for a Better New Orleans, the Riverfront Alliance, and several neighborhood associations contributed to the analysis of

the 600+ page Master Plan Amendments, the more than 1,200 map changes, and the confusing process.

From this collaboration we established a very short list of items we felt you would want to know about, so that you, too, could act to protect our historic neighborhoods. The list was distributed widely, read into the record at public meetings by many speakers, and used in focused meetings with our city council members.

Your role in our efforts — your letters, calls, and attendance at meetings — makes us even more effective. Let us continue the collaboration.

Thank you to all who attended and supported the 2017 Awards for Excellence in Historic Preservation!

Images from the evening:



1.



2.



3.



4.



5.



6.

All guests listed left to right:

- 1. Guests mingling in courtyard ;
- 2. Sandra Stokes, Beth Jacob, Melissa Lee, Gordon McLeod, and Brenda Breaux;
- 3. Jenny Coomer, Jim Logan, Bill Borah, Meagan Pryor, Julie Koomler, and Sandra Stokes;
- 4. Michael Duplantier and Paula Peer;
- 5. Jim Logan, Carol Gniady, Father Lou Molinelli and Chuck Berg;
- 6. Jeff Bernard, Stephen Chauvin, and Hilary Irvin.



Honor someone special to you with a donation in their name to Louisiana Landmarks Society

Your generous, tax-deductible gift will help continue to the work of preserving New Orleans.

Please provide the name of the person in remembrance. If you include the individual's main family contact name and address, they will be promptly notified of your charitable donation in memory of their loved one, only sharing your name and address, but not the donation amount.

Louisiana Landmarks Society is a 501(c)3 non-profit. Donations are tax deductible as provided by law. Please call our office if you have questions: 504-482-0312.



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---	\$250 Guardian
---	\$500 Protector
---	\$1000 Preserver

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

As always, 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 at 504.482.0312, email info@louisianalandmarks.org, or email our editor Hilary Somerville Irvin at hilaryirvin@gmail.com.

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