

MR. PITOT'S HOME:

surely a place of viniferous refinement

by Jon Smith



Meg Lousteau and Jon Smith at the November 13 "Vino"

Jon Smith is a Louisiana Landmarks Trustee, a generous patron of the Pitot House through his sponsorship of many "Vino on the Bayou" events, and an owner of Cork & Bottle Wine Shop.

During the time that James Pitot owned the home at what is now 1440 Moss Street on Bayou St. John, New Orleans was just beginning its run as "The New Paris." Lavish parties and entertaining were *de rigueur* and it could be suggested that the Pitot House might have been indeed a place of much imbibing. With his lineage of French nobility, the wealth of a successful cotton trader, education and political clout, certainly James Pitot would have entertained at his home. Of this there is no doubt. The nature of the tittle, however, is a source of a little investigation.

Considering that James Pitot was raised in Normandy, the home of France's finest apple brandies and ciders, and had a family background in Languedoc, the home of the sites of France's oldest viticulture, and was educated in Paris, it is certain that from an early age Pitot was aware of a level of elegance in alcohol that the new

world hadn't even yet begun to understand. Moreover, the brief time Pitot spent in Santa Dominga, though a boy, really, would have no doubt given him at least some exposure to the Spanish inspired brandy and rum trade, of which New Orleans was a major port of call. Certainly by the time he arrived on the bayou as a cotton merchant in 1810, Pitot would have been well versed in the ways of the spirit.

In 1810 the term "cocktail" was nothing more than a mistaken utterance in a book in New York. Antoine Amédée Peychaud was over 20 years away from mixing up the first Sazerac. The fledgling new Union had no significant identity as a producer of wine or spirits and James Pitot did not have the luxury today's residents do of making a "quick trip" to the wine store on the other side of the Bayou.



James Pitot was the fourth owner of the Pitot House, residing there from 1810-1819.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Anne Morse, President



Many readers, me included, have commented on the *Préservation's* last edition that published statements by some of our Board members giving candid and insightful information documenting the ways individuals became interested in LLS. I attribute my own long term commitment to historic preservation to being a citizen of New Orleans, and my recent presence on the Board is because of my friend, Sally Reeves, who nominated me to that service in 2002. It has been very rewarding since then to work along with wonderful board members towards fulfilling the mission statement of The Louisiana Landmarks Society.

Our primary objectives are preservation of historic buildings through education and advocacy and the stewardship of the Pitot House. We have many dedicated members who are passionate and actively involved with the preservation of historic buildings and neighborhoods. LLS has actively supported them. The importance of stewardship of the Pitot House has increased significantly since Katrina. Working with the staff and the board towards raising community awareness of the House has continued towards achieving our mission statement.

This year, the stewardship of the Pitot House has included work on the restoration of the loggia and galleries. It was recently successfully completed. The finished product is beautiful, and everyone should visit the Pitot House to see the improvements. Our thanks again to The Ella West Freeman Foundation, The Almar Foundation, and The National Trust for Historic Preservation for funding this project. Susan McClamroch continues to successfully prioritize grant writing to further our objectives.

Continuing revenues are important to the stability and operation of the LLS. I am happy to report that year to date our tour admissions, book sales, and rental incomes have increased compared to 2008 despite the economic situation. This fall we hosted 3 successful

“Vino on the Bayou” wine tastings. Our thanks to Jon Smith, board member and owner of Cork and Bottle, for his continued generous sponsorship of these events, and who demonstrates the depth of his knowledge in his article on the front page of this issue.

Continued on page 6

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:

Mr. Malcom Burns
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Ms. Peggy Pierrepont
Ms. Jordan Stewart
Mr. and Mrs Andrew Stall
Ms. Rosemary Grenier Stricks
Ms. Gianne Sultana
Ms. Claudia deGruy Voulgarakis
Ms. Jean Wiggin
Mr. and Mrs. Jim Willeford

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 Préservation* if you care to make a written contribution.



PRESERVING A NEIGHBORHOOD

Project Home Again is a cluster of New Orleans style homes recently built in the 9300 block of Harrison Avenue, near Bayou St. John, a stone's throw from Park Island. Vance Nimitz, a trumpet player who has lived and worked as a musician in New Orleans for decades, is now a resident of this new neighborhood. Mr. Nimitz says his new home was available to him, his wife and son if they gave the Riggio Foundation their old, damaged, house on Painter Street in Gentilly. Their old house was paid for and insured, but after Katrina they were not able to live in it. They made the exchange and quickly moved into a brand new house. He adds "It's a blessing that applies to regular people."



ABOVE PHOTO FROM PHA ONLINE GALLERY

The Nimitz family's blessing is a renewed neighborhood development, and it is the inspiration of the Riggio Foundation, established by Barnes and Noble founder and chairs, Leonard Riggio and his wife Louise. Their architect is an LLS Board Member, John Schackai, III, AIA, architect and planner. Before Katrina, John had many designs and architectural achievements, which notably included converting old mills in the warehouse district into state of the art residential buildings. John and his wife Lynn were both ready for retirement, he from his architecture practice and she from a high level position

in the city's government. It was John's plan to increase his pro bono service to the preservation community and so he had joined the LLS Board of Directors.

Then Katrina hit and brought a renewed commitment to rebuilding New Orleans, John's beloved home town, and that necessitated staying in the job. Now he is balancing both volunteer work for the community and professional work. John tries to explain the rewards and frustrations of this combination. The contrasts require perspective and John is convinced that, because LLS is an important organization with far reaching consequences to the city, it is meaningful to him to be involved. Unlike the professional world, he finds his volunteer role on the Pitot House Committee a slow-paced process. He has helped others stymied by building permits, design, insurance and construction, and these skills make him very aware of the steps needed to maintain Pitot House and very concerned that these factors are addressed in the care of our house museum.

A native who loves this city, John is passionate about sustainable architecture. He is an expert on wood-frame and raised-floor construction, which he applied to the homes in the Harrison Avenue Project Home Again neighborhood. John has studied the history of Louisiana's coastal battles. He knows that between 1851 and 2004 Louisiana was hit by 49 hurricanes. Low-lying houses had been built above ground: wooden huts on stilts. The Project Home Again homes are excellent examples of how wood-frame raised-floor houses can recreate the New Orleans look. Schackai believes that this construction is the best for this area, with special precautions for using galvanized metal for nails and studs to help prevent rust when the inevitable water invades and weakens the structure. John has applied his career skills to the non profit sector, most recently designing houses for three different non-profit organizations: Project Home Again, which has built 32 homes and has another 12 under construction; The Broadmoor Development Corporation, which is supported by the Salvation Army; and the Jaeger Foundation, building in Algiers.

REPORTED BY SUSAN KIERR



AN EXPERT DISCUSSES HOUSE MUSEUMS

Stephen Moses is known to New Orleans as an expert in his field. At Waldhorn Antiques and Neal Auction Company he helped many of us understand and appreciate antique furniture and jewelry. More recently, as Executive Director of the Hermann-Grima/Gallier Historic Houses, he has helped the city set a high standard for house museums. It is for that reason that we asked him to talk to us about the role of Louisiana Landmarks Society as owner of a special house museum, The Pitot House.

Mr. Moses notes that the role of house museums in the city of New Orleans includes participating in tourism, (the largest source



STREET FACADE OF GALLIER HOUSE

of the city's income,) and education - of natives and visitors and especially of children - and preservation. About this third role, preservation, he specifies that he means the preservation of the physical structures and their contents and also preservation of the history of the properties and their roles in the history of the city.

When asked what is the most important thing to help preserve and augment the role of house museums in our city, he hesitated only briefly before answering: money. "I have always felt that not-for-profit organizations, just like for-profit institutions, must be financially sound if they are to survive." He described correct stewardship of the institution by its Board, carefully selected staff and well delineated responsibilities of the individuals as critical. Ultimately, he says, balanced budgets and endowments are the most important aspects of any museums continued existence.

As Executive Director of the Hermann-Grima House and Gallier House, Mr. Moses was able to maintain a balanced budget by a series of changes in the operating income. The major change was designed specifically and uniquely to benefit these two historic house museums and that was the replacement of the "Soiree" fund raiser of many years with the "Historic Houses Society." This produced a change in net income and over the past ten years has totaled more than one million dollars.

In addition to this format for larger fund raisers, the wine auction, which was not new to either of the Houses, continued but moved to a larger venue to accommodate more guests. Both changes meant that neither House would be showcased for the fund raisers. He emphasized that these two factors — dollars vs. exposure — are always considered in making decisions of this kind.

Additional sources of revenue, he agreed, come from more entrepreneurial ventures, as occurs with The Pitot House, a favorite venue for weddings and receptions. In the particular case of the two French Quarter buildings, he was able to initiate specific ways of increasing operational income: Gallier House has a parking lot that produced rental income and unused office space that was converted into an apartment; the Hermann-Grima courtyard was leased for catering use when the museum was closed to the public.

The final part of the income stream for these two historic houses, Mr. Moses clarified, came from increasing the endowment and only using part of its income for operating expenses. "It is always wise not to use all endowment income, so that it will grow and keep pace with inflation."

When asked how he changed the presence of the House museums, he pointed to the joint venture among the five historic houses in the French Quarter — Hermann-Grima House, Gallier House, 1850 House, Historic New Orleans Collection's William Residence, and the Beaugard-Keyes House. Joint advertising, marketing and promotion of these houses produced increase in visitors to some degree. The larger effect was the increase of each individual house's visibility.

**STREET FACADE OF
HERMANN GRIMA HOUSE**



We asked what other changes occurred during the eight years he was Director. Mr. Moses mentioned two improvements appropriate to the unique circumstances of these buildings: restoring and opening new galleries in the Hermann-Grima House and the replacement of the antiquated HVAC system at Gallier House. While in charge he also made certain of the addition of a modern website and new job descriptions and duties for the staff.

But the highlight, he said, was the return of numerous family artifacts that were original to the houses. Mr. Moses expressed the joy of having the portrait of Mrs. Gallier donated by a direct descendant. It matched the portrait of her husband, already in the House, and the pair of paintings is now back in the double parlors in their original matching frames — “Looking wistfully at each other once again.”

As he thinks that acquiring family pieces original to a house would be a highlight for any historic house museum, we asked him to elaborate. “The Herman — Grima House was very successful in its earlier days in being able to find four original portraits of Mr. and Mrs. Hermann and two of their children. There is also a promise for the return to the house of the portraits of Judge and Mrs. Grima.”

Another direct descendant made a donation of family property, which Mr. Moses said included the original dining room table, Judge Grima’s bed, dressing table, armoire and commode. Also donated were a “wonderful pair of original etched glass hurricane shades,” and tables and chairs. While an historic house can always be restored, he explained, the interpretation of the house can best be done with original family furniture, paintings and decorative items.

Stephen Moses was interviewed for this article by Susan Kierr.

MAKING NEW ORLEANS A WORLD CLASS MEDICAL CENTER

Letter by
David W. Aiken, Sr. M.D

As a 1946 graduate of LSU Medical School, a former faculty member at Tulane Medical School, and having practiced many years in New Orleans, I know virtually all about the current hospital controversies and the various political and academic factions and their financial resources (or lack thereof). I also know things about post-Katrina Charity that have never been in the press.

To understand the dynamics of the present situation, one needs to appreciate some fundamental things about this state and city. First, Louisiana is divided into its largely rural areas and its New Orleans metropolis. Since in the legislature the former very much outnumbers the latter, “us versus them” is a usual problem, the same as in a number of other States, New York being the most prominent example. Rarely has the city succeeded in having its way in the legislature. Thus Louisiana has never given New Orleans the respect and support it deserves as the Jewel of the entire South, least of all the pride of the State.

With no one advocating restoring Charity Hospital, my views appeared in the Times Picayune Feb. 12, 2008, namely, the reason politicians much prefer building a new hospital is that this would be “a gold mine of kickbacks, sweetheart contracts, patronage, and federal money.”

About the present financial impasse, comment is beside the point of this letter, but one thing being neglected in the press is notable: no estimate of the cost of lawsuits that will result from expropriations of private property has been given.

The political strength behind the building of a new LSU Charity (not its name) Hospital is formidable, including numerous higher education and LSU Boards and Commissions, where the members from rural areas vastly outnumber New Orleansians. The former Charity Hospital was never an LSU Hospital. It’s the same old “New Orleans versus the rest of the State” scenario.



With this background I offer my own conclusion, namely, New Orleans needs both a renovated “Big Charity” hospital AND the planned new LSU University Hospital, if it is to be a world class medical center anywhere near approaching Houston’s.

Our medical leaders’ vision has not been far-seeing enough, so far. I think Tulane, LSU, and the other schools here have much more potential than this. It is possible that with greater vision among our leaders and legislators, not to mention governors, wealthy philanthropists would be interested in adding their support to a variety of medical and public health endeavors.

Respectfully submitted,

David W. Aiken, Sr. M.D.

LOUISIANA LANDMARKS SOCIETY
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Pitot House Angels

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*Be a Pitot House
Fan this Holiday!*

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ANGELS DONATING \$100 OR
MORE RECEIVE A COMPLIMENTARY
SET OF "THE TWELVE TOURS AT
CHRISTMAS" NOTE CARDS, BASED
ON ILLUSTRATIONS BY LONGTIME
LANDMARKS BOARD MEMBER AND
ART EDUCATOR LLOYD SENSAT.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

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We also want to thank Robbie Vitrano of Trumpet Advertising for his pro bono consulting services to develop a marketing strategy for LLS. We have begun to implement some of his helpful strategies.

Our lecture series is an important contribution to the membership and the community. We thank board member Karen Gadbois and Lee Zurik, investigative reporter and Peabody award winner, for their timely and outstanding presentation on December 1st. Our next lecture is scheduled for Tuesday, January 26th.

Every organization needs some special angels. The ongoing LLS "Angel Appeal" campaign is bringing in needed funds to continue improvements to the Pitot House. We thank everyone who has generously supported this effort and ask those of you who have not responded to consider doing so.. The Louisiana Landmarks Society is a 501(c)(3) not for profit organization; therefore your donation is fully tax-deductible in accordance with the Internal Revenue Service's charitable giving laws. This also applies to membership dues.

My special thanks to Susan Kierr and David Stefferud for yet another great edition of our newsletter. We look forward to an exciting year ahead. My best wishes to everyone for the holidays.

THE LOUISIANA LANDMARKS SOCIETY
IS SEEKING A DEDICATED
GROUP OF VOLUNTEERS!

A new volunteer program is in development to provide our members with more opportunities to be involved. *(If you aren't a member yet, after ten volunteer hours, you will receive a free Louisiana Landmarks Society membership!)*

Volunteer opportunities include:

- Special events worker (to be available for special functions, including weddings, parties, and fundraisers)
- Garden maintenance
- Program assistant (to help with various things in preparation for and during lectures and other educational programs, like "Life on the Bayou")
- Miscellaneous production activities (such as scheduled Paint Chip Parties, etc.)

If you are interested in being a Louisiana Landmarks Society volunteer, please send in the Volunteer Interest Form to:

Louisiana Landmarks Society
Pitot House
1440 Moss Street
New Orleans, LA 70119

or email the office at info@louisianalandmarks.org with your information.

LOUISIANA LANDMARKS SOCIETY
Volunteer Interest Form

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

EMAIL: _____ PH: _____

THE BEST WAY TO CONTACT ME:
please check one

EMAIL TELEPHONE

MY INTERESTS ARE: (PLEASE CIRCLE 1 OR MORE TOPICS)

- Special events
- Program assistant
- Garden maintenance
- Miscellaneous production

Please describe any past experience in the above areas, or any special skills or talents, or describe what you are looking for as a volunteer for Landmarks: _____

MEET THE BOARD:

Landmarks Trustee Pamela Pipes

It was shortly after Katrina when Anne Morse telephoned me to ask if I had any thoughts on how to promote the Pitot House. Not hesitating I said it would be my pleasure to print 20,000 Pitot House display cards and place them in my New Orleans "A La Carde" display rack at no cost. Several weeks later we met for the first time and I agreed to do whatever I could to help promote this wonderful little jewel on Bayou St. John.

Then on Sunday April 20th 2008 I chaired their first fundraiser since Katrina; The "Crepuscule Concert" was held on the lawn benefitting the Louisiana Landmarks Society's Pitot House Museum and gardens. We had The Preservation Hall Hot Four and Topsy Chapman performing along with presentations by Tom Sancton and Ben Jaffe which was aired live worldwide on WWOZ radio.



PAMELA SPEAKING AT 2008 CREPUSCULE CONCERT

ON LEAVING NEW ORLEANS

By Walter Gallas

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Centripetal force, I vaguely remember from high school science class, is that force which tends to draw things toward the center of something. I searched for that term recently in trying to describe the force that draws people to New Orleans.

New Orleans has had me in its clutches since the summer of 1977, when I first laid eyes on the place. I saw Carrollton Avenue, Riverbend and St. Charles Avenue first, and by the time I got downtown night had fallen, and so the Vieux Carré looked especially exciting and mysterious.

I would return to the city often in the ensuing years, needing to get my New Orleans “fix” at least once a year if possible. The territory I explored each time was confined pretty much to the typical tourist scene — the

French Quarter and Garden District, with gradual expansions to Magazine Street, City Park or the Marigny, and that was about it.

When I moved to New Orleans in 1992, the only place I wanted to live was the French Quarter. I was still hooked on its exoticism — and I knew hardly anything about the rest of the city.

Walter Gallas studied and worked at UNO’s College of Urban and Public Affairs, served as president of the Vieux Carré Property Owners, Residents and Associates, and was deputy director of the Historic District Landmarks Commission before taking a position in Washington, D.C. with the National Trust. After Hurricane Katrina, he was appointed director of the National Trust’s New Orleans Field Office headquartered at the PRC. He was recently transferred to Philadelphia to direct the Trust’s Northeast Field Office. He is responsible for Delaware, Pennsylvania and New Jersey: a piece of cake after four years working seven-day weeks to help rebuild New Orleans.

Leaving New Orleans in 2004 (not knowing, of course, that almost exactly one year later, Katrina would strike the city), was painful and exhilarating at the same time. I had grown very comfortable in this place that allows you to be yourself and revels in its quirks and customs. I had established my small circle of friends and was settled in my routines. At the same time, I was looking forward to new adventures in Washington, D.C. and imagined a life there that — while certainly no match to the life in New Orleans — would be stimulating and fun. I left open the possibility of returning to live in New Orleans again.

Coming back in the aftermath of Katrina was not how I imagined my return to New Orleans. But, I did, in any case, out of a profound sense of determination to contribute to something, anything to this city that had been my home for so long, and which clearly had suffered a nearly fatal blow. I returned — as I always had — to live in the French Quarter, the only place I really knew how to live in, and the place I always loved.

And now I have left New Orleans and the French Quarter once again, leaving behind four more years of memories chalked up in this town that experienced so much pain and difficulty, but which is as resilient and unstoppable as ever.

I will say “See you later,” because I have always come back to New Orleans. That centripetal force is unrelenting, so I know it’s probably not goodbye.

MEET NEW PITOT HOUSE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR,

Tarah Doggett Arcuri

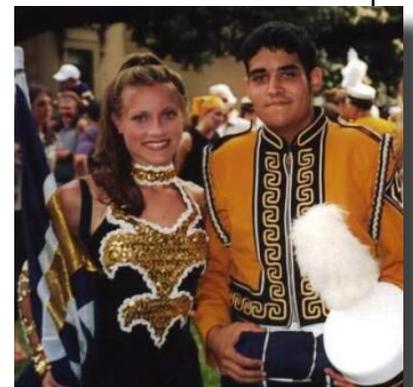
the Acadiana region as I am a grandchild of the brother of Joseph dit “Beausoleil” Broussard.

I received a copy of Clarence John Laughlin’s book *Ghosts Along the Mississippi* when I was in middle school. This inspired my interest in architectural history. Before I knew anything about preservation, I had already decided I would try a creative degree at LSU but ultimately finished in 2005 with a liberal arts degree focused on art history, dance, political science and sociology. At LSU, I distracted myself from all of that studying and made friends I’m still close with today as a member of the Tiger Band Colorguard and the LSU Dance Ensemble. I still dance at a small studio in Metairie called “Dancers Only.”

Once graduating LSU, I wasn’t satisfied creatively and searched for a new career. After working at a high end antiques and interiors store in Baton Rouge, I returned to LSU for interior design and a minor in historic preservation. Unfortunately, LSU lost its preservation program. Soon I learned about Preservation Studies at Tulane and applied immediately. I graduated from Tulane’s program in December 2008 after working at the Pitot House for both my internship and practicum requirements.

I got married in June of this year to my best friend of 8 years — we met in Tiger Band (he was a drummer- see photo), and now I happily work full time at the Pitot House. We are both looking forward to what the future holds for us in New Orleans!

Geaux Tigers and Geaux Saints!



TARAH AND HUSBAND BLAKE IN '02
BEFORE AN LSU GAME

NEIGHBORHOOD BILL OF RIGHTS

BY J. KEITH HARDIE

1. **Neighborhoods and small businesses are entitled to effective enforcement of laws and regulations affecting land use.**
2. **Permits shall issue only when applicants meet all legal requirements.**
3. **Plans of major institutions and businesses must consider their effect on neighborhoods and small businesses.**
4. **Significant preference should be given to businesses needed by neighborhoods.**
5. **Conditional uses shall be subject to special scrutiny and rigorously enforced.**
6. **The rule against continuance of non-conforming uses shall be strictly enforced.**
7. **Uses involving alcoholic beverages shall be subject to special scrutiny.**
8. **Parking requirements are to be calculated realistically.**
9. **Permits, waivers and variances shall not be granted to allow structures to exceed lot and bulk requirements merely for the purpose of increasing the number of dwelling units.**
10. **Boards, commissions, and committees must provide written reasons sufficient for an understanding of the basis of their decisions.**

DISCUSSION

1. ***Neighborhoods and small businesses are entitled to effective enforcement of laws and regulations affecting land use.***
 - Much of the friction between neighborhoods, developers, and commercial users is due to lax enforcement. If citizens could rely on the City to enforce land use laws and regulations, they would be more willing to support development and commercial uses, knowing that restrictions on those uses would be enforced. The long history of lax enforcement, sometimes due to economic constraints and sometimes perhaps to deliberate policy decisions or ad hoc rationales, has left citizens often unwilling to welcome new businesses and housing.
 - Until effective enforcement is provided, planning will be an exercise in futility.
2. ***Permits shall issue only when applicants meet all legal requirements.***
 - Careless issuance of permits or, worse, issuance of questionable permits to achieve unstated policy goals, has created a lack of trust in the system, chaos in neighborhoods, and delay and uncertainty for businesses. Lax permitting defeats the purpose of planning.
3. ***Plans of major institutions and businesses must consider their effect on neighborhoods and small businesses.***
 - Planning for major institutions such as shopping centers, hospitals, churches, parks, schools and universities must involve local residents.
 - Housing stock should not be purchased, expropriated or de-
- molished by major institutions until a plan has been fully vetted and approved by the appropriate bodies (which always includes the Planning Commission and the Council) and neighborhood residents and businesses are heard.
4. ***Significant preference should be given to busines needed by neighborhoods.***
 - Citizens and neighborhoods have repeatedly expressed a desire for real grocery stores, with fresh fruits, vegetables, meat and fish. Chain drug stores, convenience stores and other outlets compete with real grocery stores by selling non-perishable and easily warehoused but unhealthy products, without providing healthy fresh alternatives or food traditionally part of local culture.
 - Money earned by chain stores do not remain in the local community. Buy Local.
5. ***Conditional uses shall be subject to special scrutiny and rigorously enforced.***
 - The CZO requires that a conditional use is “compatible with and preserves the character and integrity of adjacent development and neighborhoods” and that the “proposed use is not materially detrimental to the public health, safety, convenience and welfare, or results in material damage or prejudice to other property in the vicinity” CZO 16.5. (1)(d) and (e).
 - However, all too often the staff, CPC and Council have approved conditional uses which are not good fits for neighborhoods and existing businesses, on grounds that waivers and provisios have

Continued on next page

mitigated the harmful effects of the project, when, in fact, the waivers and provisos are mere band-aids which do little or nothing to cure major issues such as congestion and noise.

- The CPC and Council must police existing conditional uses by revoking those that fail to comply with waivers and provisos. The concept seems elemental: the “use” is subject to the “conditions.” However, the Commission and Council have shown reluctance to revoke conditional uses where the holder has failed to meet the conditions.

6. *The rule against continuance of non-conforming uses shall be strictly enforced.*

- The provisions for continuation of non-conforming uses should be strictly construed to secure their gradual elimination. *City of Lake Charles v. Frank*, 350 So.2d 233 (La. App. 3rd Cir. 1977). Since a nonconforming use is inconsistent with the purpose of zoning ordinances, decisions regarding such status should be viewed narrowly with all doubt resolved against continuation or expansion of the non-conforming use. *Id.* at p. 8, 337. *Brown v. City of New Orleans*, 560 So.2d 983 (La.App. 4 Cir.1990), writ denied 566 So.2d 378. *Weisler v. Board of Zoning Adjustments*, 745 So.2d 1259 (La App. 4th Cir. 1999). See CZO 13.1.1 ff.
- Many non-conforming uses are uses unwanted in the neighborhood, such as ABO’s and stores associated with crime, or uses too intense for the neighborhood. The gradual elimination of non-conforming uses is essential to planning.

7. *Uses involving alcoholic beverages shall be subject to special scrutiny.*

- Conditional uses for alcoholic beverage permits should not be granted unless it is truly shown that the “proposed use shall not be injurious to nearby properties or contrary to the public interest or neighborhood program of conservation or improvement.” CZO § 11.13 (a)
- Bars are forever. Alcoholic beverage outlets, particularly where they are nonconforming or conditional uses, tend to remain alcoholic beverage outlets for long periods of time, and can stymie development and set the tone for a neighborhood.
- Neighborhoods where bars, restaurants and liquor and other stores that sell alcohol are close together suffer more frequent incidences of violence. Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation.
- The City currently has 10% per cent more restaurants than before Katrina, serving 2/3’s the population. The explosion in restaurants may be an economic bubble, and a decline in demand could result in a painful shakeout or force some owners to intensify hours or sales.
- Moratoria should be enacted and maintained in areas which already have high numbers of alcoholic beverage outlets.

8. *Parking requirements are to be calculated realistically.*

- Where the actual or projected actual peak occupancy will generate parking demand in excess of that required by the CZO, the

actual or projected actual peak occupancy must be the dominant controlling factor in determining the parking requirements of a project. Uses which will actually draw walking patrons from the surrounding neighborhood may require less parking, but regulations should be enforced when most patrons will arrive by automobile.

- “Grandfathering” of parking spaces should be exercised with deference to the needs of existing residents and businesses (as well as for future businesses which will need to use currently vacant space), and grandfathering should not be permitted once a non-conforming use has been lost. *Elysian Fields v. St. Martin*, 600 So.2d 69 (4th Cir. 1992) (property had lost its nonconforming status and, thus, off-street parking would be required to be provided unless variance was granted). Grandfathering a large number of spaces for an intensive project can result in a loss of available spaces for existing businesses or new businesses. As to subsequent development, this could only be remedied by even more grandfathering.

- In three blocks of Maple St., over 70 parking spaces have been grandfathered, primarily for high parking demand uses such as bars and restaurants. This has led to a shortage of parking in the neighborhood, taken commercial properties out of commerce (so that they could be used for parking for other buildings), to the blocking of sidewalks by illegally parked vehicles, and to the destruction of infrastructure as cars roll over sidewalks to get to parking spaces.

9. *Permits, waivers and variances shall not be granted to allow structures to exceed lot and bulk requirements merely for the purpose of increasing the number of dwelling units.*

- Increased density should not come at the expense of quality of life. Infill should conform to existing neighborhood standards.
- The City is allowing duplexes to be built on lots too small for singles. This is primarily done for the economic interests of developers, not to enhance the quality of life of renters.

10. *Boards, commissions, and committees must provide written reasons sufficient for an understanding of the basis of their decisions.*

- Though the BZA is required to provide written reasons by existing law, it generally resorts to boilerplate forms which provide little guidance as to the rationale behind the decision.
- CZO 14.3. Standards and Reasons for Decisions. The Board shall prepare and adopt general standards and guidelines to insure achieving desirable goals and uniformity of action in the major instances in which it is authorized to act. The records of the Board shall include a summary of the facts of each appeal and the reasons for the decision of the Board. Where an appeal is approved, the decision shall include a reference to the specific section or sections of this Ordinance under which such action is taken.

A NEW ORLEANS TREASURE: THE DEGAS HOUSE

By Susan Couvillon

Approaching the Greek Revival building at 2306 Esplanade, the visitor is struck by the beauty of the home where Edgar Degas lived and painted in 1872. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the front of the Degas House is graced with native plantings and the original cast iron handrail depicted in Degas' paintings.



THE EDGAR DEGAS HOUSE

The front door is opened by Joan Prados, Degas' great-grand niece. Her love of the ancestral home shines in her bubbly personality as she explains that the original house was divided into two separate buildings in 1920 and that the Keeping Room and Infirmary were moved to the rear of the house on the right where they remain today. The servants quarters remain in their original position and can be seen from the rear yard but are not part of the Edgar Degas Foundation.

Edgar Germain Hilaire Degas lived from 1834 until 1917. He was born in France though his mother and grand-mother were born in New Orleans. In 1872, he visited his relatives, the Mussons, who lived in New Orleans. Michel Musson, a Creole cotton broker, had suffered serious financial reverses due to the Civil War. He was forced to sell his house in the Garden District and move his family to a rented house in the Creole Section on Esplanade Avenue. This is the house that Degas visited. It was a typical center-hall house with double parlors on the right and a formal parlor and dining room on the left. There were four large bedrooms upstairs. The front rooms open onto the galleries where the original wrought iron handrails can be seen. When Degas visited, the parlors on the left (now in a separate building) were used as bedrooms. Degas himself was installed in a small room at the rear of the house next to the Library. He lived and painted in the room now named "Atelier d'Edgar" while in the Musson home.

There were many relatives living in the large house and Degas found ample subjects to inspire his paintings of life in mid-Century New Orleans. The Degas House figures prominently in the paintings at this time and provide much information to help with restoration. One can see the front and back porches, the Greek Key door molding, the Victorian wallpaper and the gracious style of living at that time in his paintings. There are copies of many of Degas' paintings around the house, many in the loca-

tion depicted in the respective painting. The original painting of Estelle arranging flowers in the dining room hangs in the New Orleans Museum of Art in City Park which is a short drive down Esplanade Avenue.

Degas also visited the family downtown at the Cotton Broker's office where he sketched family members and other employees at work. It is believed that he completed the actual paintings in his studio in the Musson/Degas House.

Visitors should pay special attention to the construction wall in the original library which is now used as an office for the Foundation. This excavation shows the original wallpaper and colors of the room.

The furniture in the downstairs of the main house is correct to the period. There is a suite of original parlor furniture in the museum part of the house, where drawings and a model of the original house are located. A beautiful drawing by Adrien Persac shows the house which was built in 1852. The architect was Benjamin Rodriguez. Originally, the house along with the servants quarters and stable or carriage house occupied half of a city block. In 1920, the house was split in two and remains that way today.

David Villarrubia bought the house in 1993. After a three-year restoration, he opened the museum and bed and breakfast to the public.



OIL PAINTING BY EDGAR DEGAS TITLED:
THE COTTON EXCHANGE IN NEW ORLEANS, 1873.

Continued from page 1

What Pitot did have in his favor was a body of water just outside of his front door that was quite an active transport corridor for popular offerings of the day. Perhaps the most prevalent spirit of that time was rum or “aguardiente de caña” imported from Cuba, Martinique and other West Indies locations. Rum, however, was more of a commodity than a beverage and did not share the cachet and excitement of two other products that an educated gentleman such as Pitot and his social and business connections would have enjoyed. At that time the tone of the city was decidedly French which meant, of course, Cognac and other French Brandies were prevalent. French wine, however, was then difficult thing to ship and have the product remain fresh so many noblemen took cues from the former British Colonies of the American northeast and enjoyed another European wine.

Madeira Wine would no doubt have had a place front and center as the tipple of choice in the Pitot household. Made on the island of Madeira, south of Portugal and west of Morocco, Madeira was an incredibly popular beverage in the British colonies, primarily since the British authorities banned the importation of products made or grown in Europe unless shipped on British vessels from British ports. The island of Madeira was specifically exempted and a significant wine trade grew between merchants in Madeira and Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Charleston and Savannah. Although New Orleans never recognized British rule, the port of New Orleans nevertheless saw more than its fair share of Madeira shipments. Even after the War of Independence, the popularity of Madeira wine remained high throughout the new nation. It was the popular wine of choice for prosperous new Americans in the late 1700’s and early to mid 1800’s.

While it seems as though Pitot’s French lineage would have made him long for claret, the quality wine persisted. Surely Pitot’s time in Philadelphia would have him in social settings to help him develop an appreciation for Madeira wine, in its predominance, its travel worthiness and symbol of status. The hearty, fortified Madeira aged well, traveled well and was so popular in fact that it became an item in high trade demand against American products as indigo, corn and, yes, even cotton. This trade continued throughout the mid 1800’s. It has been published that “Madeira Parties” were a much envied social event of the time and could be considered akin to today’s wine tasting parties. Today’s “Vino on the Bayou” events at The Pitot House Museum could be mere extensions of the wine fetes replete with casks of Madeira held in Pitot’s time.

The other spirit most probably imbibed at the Pitot House was Bourbon, a relative newcomer and, because of New Orleans, one of America’s first premium spirits. In the late 1780’s New Orleans developed a de facto Bourbon trade when Kentucky whiskey distillers

would use the Natchez Trail to transport Bourbon from Lexington to New Orleans for shipment to sea. At the time Bourbon was a bitter, high proof and clear Corn Whiskey, hardly the premium product we know today. To ready this firebrand corn whiskey for its trip through the Natchez Trail and down the Mississippi River, through the French Quarter and out onto the Bayou for shipping to the East Coast, it was stored in old fish barrels. To clean the barrels the distillers would burn the insides, store the whiskey in them and send them



Jill Adams, Erin Edwards and James Wade volunteer at the “Vino,” Nov. 13

down river, a trip in total that took upwards of three months or more. When the Bourbon arrived in New Orleans what happened was the charred oak had unintentionally mellowed the Bourbon and turned it from a hard, high alcohol Corn Whiskey into a mellow, delightful product. Instantly Bourbon became popular in New Orleans and was the drink of choice for the growing American socialites of the city.

Keep in mind Pitot, though born French, was an American citizen and a popular businessman. To engage in the Bourbon trade was common and it was fashionable for American gentlemen in New Orleans to have their own connection to a whiskey house in Kentucky. Though there is no financial record of Pitot paying taxes on Bourbon or any shipping bills, certainly someone with Pitot’s connections in both politics and the cotton trade would have a hand in helping transport and consume Bourbon.

Although the “New Paris” mentality flourished in New Orleans and the city was still very much a French colony in spirit, conveniently flying the American flag by association, “new Americans,” such as James Pitot, buoyed by their prosperity, were certainly swayed by popular trends in libations as much as we are today. The opportunity to entertain and be a part of the burgeoning jewel of the south, to grow business, to live and laugh, to eat and dance and develop a centuries old tradition of New Orleans joie de vivre was one that was not lost at the Pitot House, then, or now.

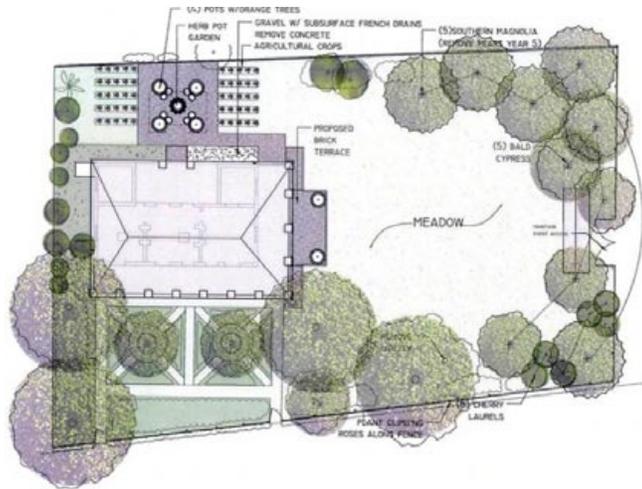
¹ The Rare Wine Company, website.

² Ibid

WHAT'S BLOOMING

By Mercedes Whitecloud, Pitot House Chair

Implementation of "The Louisiana Landscape:1700-1820" project is underway! Phase I of this project, Lake Douglas' study and interpretive landscape design, was funded by the Garden Study Club in 2007 and completed in 2008. At that time, Douglas thoughtfully gave "seed money" to germinate a crop of landscape-project donations. This fall the Garden Study Club awarded the Louisiana Landmarks Society funding for Phase II, the initial implementation portion of Dr. Douglas' plan.



Pitot House Landscape Plan by Lake Douglas

Four aged Bradford pear trees were removed from the Pitot House lawn just before Thanksgiving Day. By New Year's Eve more inappropriate planting will be removed from the historic site and 2010 will ring in new appropriate baffle planting along the south perimeter.

In addition to the Magnolias and Cypress looking Metasequoia trees that the Garden Study Club grant will purchase, the following plants gifted

to the Pitot House await planting:

- 10 citrus trees given by Marian Cominsky Roper to commemorate the marriage of Bridget Kane Kelly and Aaron Orion Hayes, celebrated at the Pitot House on October 16th.

- Two flats of herbs given by Arthur and Martie Waterman to commemorate the marriage of Sara Jane Waterman and Jamie Davis, celebrated with a reception at the Pitot House on November 21st. The selection includes rosemary, parsley, artemisia, dill, oregano, thyme, lovely edible flowers such as nasturtium, viola, petunia, and pansy.



Read about this on page 15.

With a generous donation from Claudia deGruy Voulgarakis, two Magnolia grandiflora will be planted in honor of Louise Harris and her brother, Father William B. Faherty, S.J.

Please contact Susan or Tarah at the Pitot House to let them know of any plant or financial donations you'd like to make in support of "The Louisiana Landscape:1700-1820" landscape project this holiday season. Better yet, plan to come see what's new and view old favorites in bloom at the Pitot House—Japanese Plum, Camilla, Paper White, Dianthus, Sweet Olive—and check out the exotic aluminum and hot pink hybrid blooming front and center in the Pitot House's parterre garden. (See Pitot House Director's column for more details)

Preservation is not always a serious matter, involving heavy footwork, fund raising, or city hall. Sometimes it is about preserving the fall abundance that is harvested from the garden.

This one is for canning **Red Pepper Jelly:**

3 cups of chopped red peppers
 Include some jalapeno peppers for extra kick
 1 ½ cups of apple cider vinegar
 3 cups sugar
 3 chopped apples or 3 ounces of liquid pectin

Boil together for 10 minutes stirring constantly
 Skim off the foam
 Pour into canning jars
 Seal and set in boiling water-canner for 5 minutes

Cool and wrap for holiday gifts!

HAVE YOUR NEXT EVENT AT THE PITOT HOUSE

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



Pitot House Director's Report

By Susan McClamroch

With its newly and *beautifully* restored gallery wrapped in festive lights, the Pitot House is celebrating the holiday season with a crew of landscapers. The initial planting for an environmental heritage plan called "The Louisiana Landscape:1700-1820" begins in 2010. With generous support from the Garden Study Club of New Orleans, interpretive planting of historically accurate material related to the region's environmental history from the 17th century to the mid-1800s will ultimately provide the Louisiana Landmarks Society's historic site with environmental preservation programming in the form of lectures, workshops, exhibits, and hands-on demonstrations. In the meantime, this new year's kick-off for implementation is giving parterre garden aficionados a plethora of gift-giving opportunities. (See "What's Blooming" for details.)

Just as the Pitot House staff posted "Loggia and Gallery Restoration" progress reports on the historic house's Facebook page through the summer and fall, this winter we'll continue to post "The Louisiana Landscape: 1700-1820" updates for facebooking Pitot House fans, too. As you give thought to ways you can support this one-of-a-kind landscape project, don't forget to sign up as a Pitot House fan and invite your facebooking friends to sign up with you!

Doesn't it seem the most fascinating house guests are friends of friends? That certainly appeared to be the case this fall when nine museum officials from the Ukraine were introduced to the Pitot House by the New Orleans Citizen Diplomacy Council (through its participation in the U.S. Department of State's International Visitor Leadership Program) and former Pitot House resident advisor, Peter Patout, led descendants of the Graveline family on a tour of this colonial structure and other ancestral sites. Thanks to the Pitot House's very famous friend, Anne Rice, the site relived its supporting role in the filming of the author's New Orleans-set movie, *Interview with a Vampire*. In early fall the travel/lifestyle writer for the Malaysian Institute of Accountants monthly journal, *Accountants Today*, contacted the Pitot House for her October article on "Vampire Tourism" and then three nights before October's hallowed eve a British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) film crew possessed the house for an evening, in the process of producing a documentary on vampires that will air on British television in early 2010. Only friends and neighbors however, haunted the historic house and grounds on the hallowed eve itself—for the annual Faubourg St. John Neighborhood Association "Voodoo on the Bayou" bash.

Of all the friends who came for visits this fall, the Pitot House's most sincere fans are those who are constructing new homes based on the Pitot House. Three wise persons journeyed to study Landmarks' Moss Street

model this fall and shared details about construction projects underway in New Orleans, Mobile, and Lexington, South Carolina. We'd love to know of other instances where aspects of Landmarks' historic property are being or have been reproduced and we're always happy to swap information about Creole house construction!

As for sharing this constructive information with up-and-coming young contractors, the Pitot House's new best friend is the Louisiana Children's Museum (LCM)—the hands-on learning place that celebrated its 23rd birthday with a fabulous new architecture exhibit for children in September. This fall, with the help of seven Preservation Studies students from Tulane University, the two private museums began to develop a preservation-focused construction educational partnership. In fulfillment of a graduate level Heritage Education course, Todd Adams, Chuck Berg, Genevieve Burguières, Ella Camburnbeck, Katie Carroll, Melissa Stein, Gianne Sultana, and James Wade (in fulfillment of an Independent Study project) met with Rachael Robinson and Ruth Bloom of the Louisiana Children Museum's educational department and with the Pitot House staff to draft programs for third, fourth, and fifth grade classes.

The resulting fieldtrip program is structured as a progressive investigation of historic building designs, trades, techniques and the importance of their preservation. Ideally students would progress from one program level to the next, but each is designed to function independently. Each program includes a teacher lesson plan and fieldtrip workbooks for each student. The third grade program, called "Craftsman for a Day," focuses on contemporary construction crafts at the LCM in comparison to colonial era craftsmen at the Pitot House. A third-grade reenactment of these historic tradesperson roles will replace the nearly two decade tradition of "Life on the Bayou" reenactments in which children present the lineage of person who have lived in the Pitot House. Fourth graders will learn how buildings are put together in their "Builder for a Day" program. At the LCM they'll use modern methods to construct a "Hammer House." At the Pitot House they'll focus on historic "green" architectural practices. Then each fifth grader will become a "Preservationist for a Day." The benefits of adaptive reuse and sustainable architecture will be introduced to these young preservationists using both the Pitot House building and the LCM's Julia Street structure as successful examples. At the Pitot House fifth graders will complete a workbook survey of the structure after viewing a presentation on the house's restoration. They will then go to the LCM to learn more about New Orleans' architectural styles, city planning, and to make simple architectural take-home drawings utilizing templates of the Pitot House. An additional class session will be scheduled after the

fieldtrip for Pitot House educators to lead an in-class “most endangered site” nomination activity, based on Landmarks’ “New Orleans 9 Most Endangered Sites” program. The results of these student nominations will be published in future Preservation issues. Please tell your favorite third, fourth, and fifth grade teaching friends and their principals about this innovative program. We’re eager to share our new museum friend and our combined educational efforts with new school audiences.



Cazayoux’s weather station in the parterre garden, as seen from the upstairs gallery.

A big project in the works for adults is a workshop that will address the Pitot House’s climate-savvy design and the science of twenty-first century “green architecture” applications in eighteenth century structures, such as the Pitot House. Evidence of the study currently underway by Lafayette architect, Eddie Cazayoux, can be seen in the parterre garden (see “What’s Blooming” photograph) and throughout the Pitot House in the form of climate measuring monitors peeking out of select hiding places. Many more Pitot House friends and scholars have related studies up their sleeves—all to be revealed with program updates in the spring.

In the meantime, we’re compiling an invitation list of those whose curiosity is piqued. Be sure to let us know if you want to be in that number.

With saints in mind we’d like to extend our sincere appreciation to James Wade, who came to the Pitot House as an Intern and Heritage Education student last spring and continued to volunteer at the Pitot House through the summer. Earlier this fall James wrapped up the momentous task of organizing Landmarks’ historic materials for placement in the Louisiana Landmarks Society Collection at Tulane’s Southeastern Architectural Archive and now a beautifully bound volume of *Préservation* newsletters will continue to represent his archiving activities at the Pitot House. Landmarks members and scholars are encouraged to investigate the SEAA collection at Tulane and peruse the three bound volumes of newsletters that are kept at the Pitot House.

Bound *Préservation* newsletters at the Pitot House.



Our history often determines our future. Our built environment tells the stories of the people who have lived here. As an art history major at LSU, I had the opportunity to travel in Europe. I have always enjoyed our Louisiana built environment; being from the New Orleans area, how could I not appreciate architecture? But something about the architecture in Rome, the ruins of an ancient city under magnificent churches, took my breath away. Italy is where my love for architecture began to grow wildly.

During the 1st week we were there, my classmates and I went to the ancient forum of Rome and visited the Basilica of Constantine. I was in utter amazement of how this gigantic building was built without the use of any machinery and remains standing after over 700 years. Standing in the ancient city, a light turn on and I knew I wanted to be someone who keeps buildings alive to amaze generations and generations of people, just as these were amazing me. That was when I understood: architecture has the ability to grab our attention and force us think about what and who were here before we were.

I was in my last year at LSU and when I returned from Europe I began taking more and more architectural history courses. In this way I was able to gain a minor in architectural history. I enrolled in a service class that required us to spend time in the Lower 9th Ward. Being in such a devastated part of the city while it was struggling to rebuild 5 years after Katrina spurred my passion for architecture and historical preservation. Looking at the homes that were being built did not give me a sense of the history of the area. I missed something of the lost architectural style and I wrote my last college paper on the importance of preserving traditional styles. New Orleans and the surrounding areas have such a vibrant and colorful past and these can slip through the cracks of time if nothing is done to preserve it. Like the Romans, we must treasure our architecture so that it may keep our history alive. This will allow us to build and learn from the knowledge of the past.

As I have mentioned I am from the New Orleans area, I was born and raised in Folsom and attended school in Covington. Our once small community has now grown into something much larger than I could have ever imagined as a child. This growth has made it all the more important to preserve the history that we have. As the suburbs expand further and further out from our towns and villages, the downtown area has flourished and many of the historic buildings have been able to stand the test of time. As I walk through downtown Covington and New Orleans I sometimes catch myself daydreaming of what it must have been like before all the cars and the traffic. There is something mysterious and romantic about the past that can lead our minds to daydream. Without the careful planning and maintenance of our much loved downtown areas it would be much harder to imagine.

A PATH TO PRESERVATION

By Cara L. Bartholomew



ACHIEVEMENT

By David Stefferud

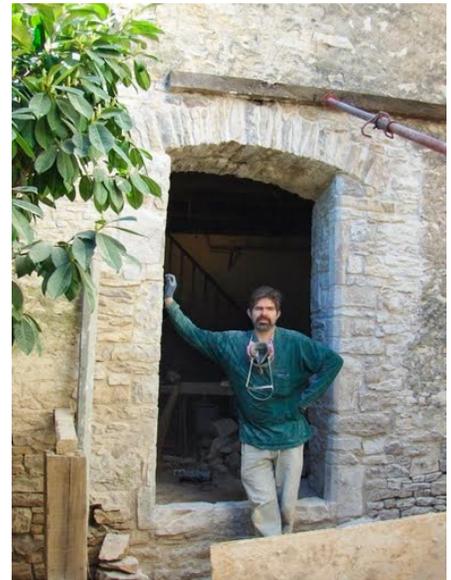
An architect I know well and respect greatly astounded me recently by saying of himself that he was an “under-achiever”. I didn’t quiz him on the point at the time; in my surprise I could only assume that his description of himself was ironic or sardonic.

This gifted man has restored to vibrant contemporary life at least two twelfth-century stone houses in a picture-perfect French village. His previous work in New Orleans included a well-done Bourbon Street restoration which successfully walked the tightrope of restrictions and permissions from many layers of government and well-meant advice in addition to the economic and esthetic imperatives that any restoration architect faces. In his foreign village far from America, he is part and parcel of the fabric of the town, the people and the historic continuum in which he works and lives. He works largely alone, trying and fitting a beam; plastering a wall after having taught himself the medieval method; installing a faucet respectful of both the old and new necessity of providing clean water to his family; discovering, excavating and restoring the perfect window, sealed for centuries, which illuminates a lived-in angle of the big center room.

How can he be an “underachiever”? Is he comparing his work to a Gehry spectacular of titanium and glass? Or a kitschy set of office boxes piled on one another for twenty stories?

But there’s another dimension in which his self-characterization falls short. He is the center of a radiating and radiant circle of interdependent and loving people who draw from his strength and purposefulness. How could it not be the greatest of life’s achievements to give to the world a kind, questioning, moral, bright and enthusiastic son or to live in unassailable harmony with a wife, the son’s mother, and their ever-widening circle?

This careful and thoughtful architect preserves. His gift is twofold: to restore the built works of others from ages past and thereby honor and learn from them, and to preserve the eternal values of hearth and home. May every architect reach such a pinnacle and may we all achieve so much.



Daniel Bain, Architect

Ally Mayor, 11, a conversation with a young north shore lady

conducted by Susan Kierr



I live in Madisonville, a half block from the old town jail, which is now a museum. In the old cell on the first floor is the body of a man lying on the bed, with a plate of food near him. This is somewhat strange. The

food looks like maggots have gotten to it.

Of course, it is really not a man; it is a straw hat and clothes stuffed to look like a man. I always knew it was make believe. The rest of the museum is upstairs, though the town offices used to be up there. Now the upstairs has exhibits and videos about the *Silk Lady* and other Madisonville stories. The arrowheads in the Museum are from the time when Indians lived here. I had not known Indians were here until I saw that exhibit.

My favorite part of Madisonville is the old lighthouse. When I see it I think about the boats on the water coming close in the fog and at night and needing the lighthouse to help them know where to go. I loved the houses that were out

there, right on the water, but they were destroyed by Hurricane Katrina. If I could live anywhere in town it would be on Water Street. The down side is the floods. After Katrina my Dad and I got in a boat and went out on the river. The water was so high my Dad had to duck under the bridge. I was small and I could stand up.

When I walk to school, which is about two blocks, I notice the street slopes, so I know that my house is on a little higher ground. I know that I am safe when there is a hurricane, I am not afraid, we made it through Katrina. But trees fell on some of the very old buildings, like the Black Cat Bar, which was famous because we have a lot of black cats in Madisonville. If you go out at night you see black cats running around everywhere.

I like the old stories, especially the *Silk Lady* story. She is supposed to have very long finger nails, so people say that she has claws. She has long hair, maybe silver, maybe white, she wears a white dress and she has been spotted in the swamp. Growing up with stories like that means I can tell my kids the same stories. I like that I live in the old part of town where all the stories are.

From the Editors: Earn a Certificate of Preservation Involvement

Architects do it. Doctors must do it. Lawyers need to do it. Would you like to? We're awarding Continuing Education points at Preservation U.!

Like the professional people we admire and trust, readers of *La Préservation* now have the opportunity to continue their education with CE information and points.

How does it work? Each fact-filled edition of *La Préservation* will contain a CE quiz based on LLS material you have just read in our LLS journal. Score yourself, (honor system). Ace the quiz and earn five points. When you get to twenty-five points, *La Préservation*, on behalf of the Society, awards you a Certificate of Preservation Involvement (CPI), to frame, to brag about or to convince your children you're still sharp as a tack in a field you care about.

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HERE ARE THE CE QUESTIONS FOR THIS ISSUE OF LA PRÉSERVATION:

(ANSWERS ON BACK COVER)

1. What is the site of France's oldest viticulture and how would this relate to the Pitot House?
2. A "Vino on the Bayou" of James Pitot's time would have featured what spirit, and why?
3. The family of a featured author in this issue researches and writes about lost plantations, including the one on which he was raised, _____ Plantation.
4. Of all the southern plantations that once existed in the south, what percentage remains to this day?
5. Leonard Riggio, through his foundation, has sponsored a project which exchanges Katrina-damaged homes for new ones for the owners whose insurance and grants couldn't stretch far enough. This project is "Project _____", the architect is _____, and the houses are _____-framed and of _____-floor construction. Why?
6. The President of Louisiana Landmarks Society, Anne Morse, reached her position, enabling her to effectively influence preservation in the New Orleans area, by one small action of a local historian, who first nominated her to the LLS Board of Directors. This path of proactive selection of leadership was initiated by a woman with an established reputation of her own, and well published in the field, _____.
7. In the interpretive period of the Pitot House, foods brought to the table were restricted to what was grown and harvested in any given season, with the exception of a culinary process of cooking and sealing ingredients, such as jams and jellies, called _____.

NEW BOOKS OF INTEREST TO LLS

Book Review by Susan Kierr

Marc R. Matrana is a doctor and active preservationist, author and historian. He speaks often to the public about topics that are important to him, including lost plantations in Louisiana. He fervently references the goals of Louisiana Landmarks Society, which are in line with his own: "I want to educate people about what we have lost in order to save the historical properties that we still have."

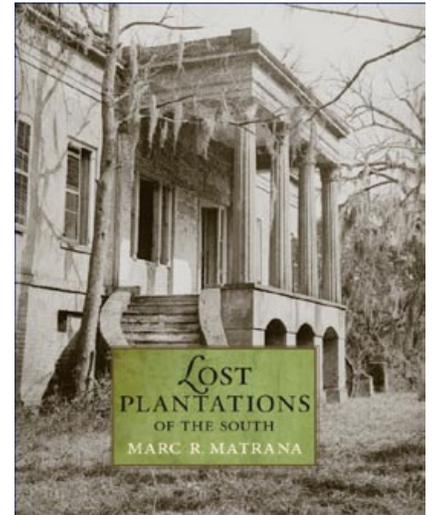
Matrana spent the first ten years of his life on a family farm in Nine Mile Point, an old settlement on the Mississippi River. In high school he started looking into his family history, which included his great-grandmother's stories of being raised on Seven Oaks plantation in Westwego. He loves to talk to people who were involved in battles to save historical sites and those who have lived in some of the old buildings.

One result of his research is a new book entitled *Lost Plantations of the South* (University Press of Mississippi, Jackson, September 2009) about the irreplaceable loss of southern plantation homes, stories of the families who lived there, with photographs, diaries, letters, architectural renderings and other rare documents. The historical research is his way of managing the stress of his demanding medical practice, and it allows him to tramp through abandoned buildings with a camera and a notebook, talk to neighbors about the ruins, and make friends with friendly plantation dogs that invariably appear to greet him.

Matrana is a young professional, about to get married, and excited about his medical career. So why does he also research, write and speak about lost plantations? "I'd like people to get the full picture of plantation history, especially the ones that are gone, which represent about 96% of all the southern plantations that once existed."

NOW LOST: SEVEN OAKS PLANTATION,
WESTWEGO, LA

PHOTO FROM HABS DATABASE



FRONT COVER OF MATRANA'S
RECENTLY RELEASED BOOK



LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

We realize that this issue of Preservation reveals our biased interest in the process that produces preservationists.

Our fascination with this evolution of committed individuals has been nurtured by the biographical statements sent in over the past six months by members of our Board of Directors. Each has revealed elements of his or her personal evolution: precious years sailing with Dad, a memorable streetcar ride conversation with Mom, a grandmother's collection of children's china dishes, a friend's encouragement to join LLS, military travels, concern for vanishing homes; misuse of neighborhoods and buildings.

This piqued our interest and wish to know more of what alerts young people and busy professionals to issues of preservation. For this we interviewed Ally, an eleven year old living in one of the oldest towns in Louisiana: Madisonville. We spoke to Cara Bartholomew, an art and architecture graduate of LSU. We questioned a young woman who works in the Pitot House, Tarah Arcuri. We learned more about an established architect on our Board, John Schackai, who has committed his "retirement" to preserving the wisdom of the earliest builders in Louisiana. Finally, we enlisted the expertise of someone whose professional life always focused on New Orleans' antique treasures, Stephen Moses.

We hope the evolution and wisdom of preservationists fascinates you as much as it does us. All our readers have a story to tell: how did your interest in preservation evolve? Write us and let us know.

Susan and David

skdance@bellsouth.net
davestef@bellsouth.net



ANNUAL AWARDS NOMINATION FORM

Dear Member,

One of the privileges of membership in LLS is our ability to nominate recipients of the annual awards, presented at the Annual Meeting. I invite you to submit nominations for either or both of our two awards:

The *Harnett T. Kane Award* was created and endowed by LLS founding member Harnett T. Kane in 1965, to be given in recognition of an individual or organization for significant lifetime contributions to historic preservation, locally or regionally. This award can be given to a member of Landmarks or to someone who is NOT a member.

The *Louisiana Landmarks Service Award* was created by the LLS Board in 2002 to honor members who worked to sustain Landmarks and Landmarks goals. It is given to honor a member who has shown exceptional dedication to LLS and its work. (Current officers and trustees are not eligible until they have been off the Board for at least two years following the Annual Meeting when their term expired.) A list of past recipients for each of these two awards is enclosed with this letter.

Here are guidelines for making a nomination:

1. Send letters of support and nominations to **Louisiana Landmarks Society**, 1440 Moss Street, New Orleans, LA 70119, **by March 15th**.
2. Supporting letters can be from LLS members as well as the general public.
3. LLS employees are not eligible for work done while employed by Landmarks.
4. Nominees not chosen will remain in consideration for the next two years.

Additional letters may be submitted, but are not necessary.

Sincerely,

Betsy Stout, Chair of the Nominations Committee

LOUISIANA LANDMARKS SOCIETY AWARD NOMINATION FORM

Name of LLS member making nomination: _____

Name of Nominee _____

For which Landmarks Award _____

Is nominee a LLS member? (___) No (___) Yes. If yes, for how many years? ___

About the nominee: (Please attach additional pages as needed.)

Letters in support of your nomination: Please ask others who know the candidate (they need not be LLS members) to send letters of support. All information should be sent to **LLS, 1440 Moss Street, New Orleans, LA 70119**.

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.)

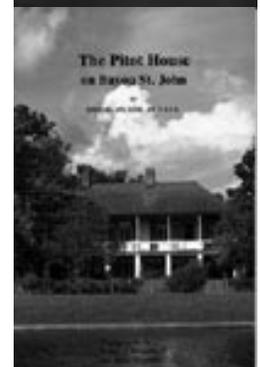
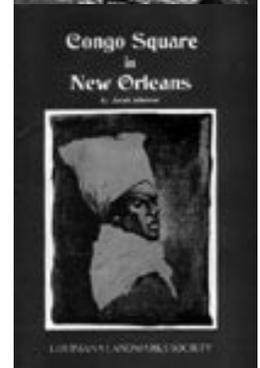
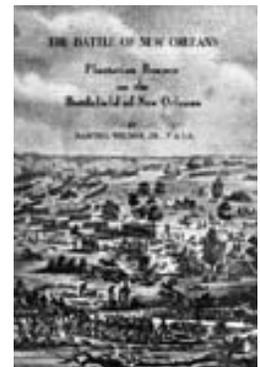
Samuel Wilson, Jr., *The Pitot House on Bayou St. John*. (1992) A detailed study of an architectural treasure, one of the only plantation houses surviving from Louisiana's Spanish colonial period. (\$9 \$7/members, soft cover, 6 x 9 in., 64 pages, 12 full color photographs plus numerous black & white 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: An assortment of views of historic Bayou St. John houses handsomely drawn by Samuel Wilson, Jr. Box of 10 notecards (blank) \$10.



To purchase any of these publications, contact:

Louisiana Landmarks Society

1440 Moss St.

New Orleans, LA 70119

504.482.0312

info@louisianalandmarks.org

Or order online:

www.louisianalandmarks.org

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1. Languedoc — a region with a role in James Piro's family's background.
2. Certainly Madeira, a wine that had status, travelled well, was popular in New Orleans and was traded against American products such as indigo, corn and cotton.
3. Seven Oaks Plantation
4. Only four percent of the old plantations remain.
5. Project Home Again — John Schackal — wood-raised. After 49 hurricanes here between 1851 and 2004, this method of construction seems perfectly appropriate.
6. Sally Reeves
7. canning

Answers to CE Questions



Remember....

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 Landmarks, to renew, or to
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