

The Greater New Orleans Archivists

Newsletter

Fall

1998

Next Meeting
Wednesday, September 23
Time: 5:30 PM
Jean Lafitte National Historical Park
and Preserve
365 Canal Street, Suite 2400

Fall Meeting

Our Fall Meeting is being hosted by the Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve, September 23 at 5:30 p.m. The meeting will be held at Jean Lafitte's office at 365 Canal Place, Suite 2400, 24th floor at 5:30. If you come after 6:00 p.m. they require you to sign-in.

****Cathy Kahn** reports that GNOA has been awarded a \$2,000 grant from the Jewish Endowment Foundation for the publication of *Jews and New Orleans: An Archival Guide*. This grant, in addition to the earlier grant of \$1,500 from the Southern Jewish Historical Society, will ensure the completion of the project.

1997 Spring Meeting

On April 21, 1998, the GNOA met at the New Orleans Museum of Art. Norbert Raacke, librarian and archivist for the Museum, and Susan Tucker, President

welcomed members to the meeting. Susan also introduced new members, Rosalee McReynolds and Alan Drain. Susan expressed her thanks to the Museum administration for the delicious food for our meeting.

Treasurer's Report - Because Rob Sherer was not present, Susan gave out copies of the dues list. She asked that members send their dues to Rob and also volunteered to collect dues. Only dues paying members will receive the newsletter.

Old Business- The guide to Jewish records was discussed. Lester Sullivan reported on the work of the subcommittee and noted that the official title is now *Jews and New Orleans: An Archival Guide*. The guide will be finished by October and will include the holdings of congregations, those of archival repositories in New Orleans, and those archives outside of New Orleans that contain materials on Jews in

New Orleans. Further information can be found under Touro Infirmiry Archives' files.

New Business - Susan asked that we consider educational programs that might help members and their institutions. This might be a simple project such as making sure all members have access to the online archives discussion group.

Robert asked that archivists look for materials relating to Degas in New Orleans. In association with an exhibit scheduled for May 1999, scholars are looking for materials on the Musson and Rillieux families and on art supplies in the 1870s.

Susan noted that the SSA Conference could be held May 28-31.

Wayne Everard announced that the New Orleans Public Library had received \$91,000 from the Gates Foundation for the opening of their technology center.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:50 p.m. that members could look at pictures of the Delgado family and the early days of the New Orleans Museum of Art.

News From The Archives

Amistad Research Center at Tulane University

Structure

Friday, **September 18th**, from 6-8:30 p.m. Amistad will host a memorial tribute to New Orleans poet, playwright, and civil rights activist **Tom Dent** who died this year. The program will feature readings from Tom's writings by Jason Berry, Quo Vidas Gex Breaux, Chakula Chabon, Wayne Coleman, Lolis Eric Elie, and Terry Ward.

Recent acquisitions

American Committee on Africa (143 In. ft.) This addendum to this

human rights organization founded to inform the American public about the abuses in South Africa and eventually reporting and working in numerous countries in Africa, includes correspondence, books, periodicals, the organization's files, videos, audio tapes, and writings and collected items.

Tulane University's Pathways Fellows Program (2 In. ft.) Tulane University's Department of Teacher Certification (formerly the Education Department) established a program called Pathways Fellows. The program's Assistant Director/Mentor, instructor, and donor is Dr. Elaine Armour Wolo. All Pathways fellows are teachers, substitute teachers, or para-professionals in Orleans Parish Schools. The goal is to provide more certified teachers for Orleans Parish Schools. The donation includes completed teaching kits as final projects for a course in Curriculum Development using the Amistad Schooner Case as the subject. The teaching kits are thematic activities on the Amistad experience. Kits suggest teaching ideas for language arts, social studies, math, science, health, arts, and technology across grade levels. Some of the kits consist of instructional notebooks with laminated exhibits, interactive materials, news and magazine articles, and maps.

Archives of the Dominican Congregation of St. Mary

The archives has doubled its space in acquiring a Heritage Room, which is a tiny museum. It houses the artifacts accumulated since 1860 when the sisters came from Cabra, Dublin, Ireland. The new space is directly across the hall from the original location, freeing it to become a proper archives, complete with "linear feet," acid-

free boxes, how-to books, and documents from the congregation's history.

**The Historic New
Orleans Collection
Williams Research Center**

Exhibits:

An exhibit on view at the Williams Research Center sheds new light on paintings of itinerant painter **William Aiken Walker**. Known for his stereotypical depictions of African Americans, cotton fields, plantations, rural cabins, and dock scenes, this exhibition reveals Walker as an artist of much greater range producing fine portraiture, still lifes, and landscapes. *William Aiken Walker, Sojourner Artist: Selections from the Monroe-Green Collection*, will run through January 9, 1999.

Childhood in 19th century New Orleans is explored in the exhibit *Seen and Not Heard: Facets of Childhood in 19th Century New Orleans*, on view at the Historic New Orleans Collection from November 17, 1998 through April 1999. The exhibition, consisting of vintage photographs, drawings, prints, books, manuscripts, and ephemeral, highlights five themes of childhood-infancy and care, education and religious training, recreation, social change, and mortality.

Lectures

September 27: "Complementary Visions", symposium on 150 years of Southern and Louisiana art

October 13: "The William Russell Jazz Collection and Early Jazz History"

October 29: "Among the Cybercajuns: Constructing Identity in the Virtual Diaspora"

November 4: The work of William Aiken Walker

November 19: "Childhood in

America: A 19th Century Perspective" For more information on these exhibits and lectures call 523-4662.

New Orleans Notarial Archives

The New Orleans Notarial Archives would like to announce that we are moving part of the collection to a new location that promises a better environment for it. All records dating prior to 1900, (with some minor exceptions) will be relocated beginning September 9, 1998 to Notarial Archives Research Center, Suite 360, Amoco Building, 1340 Poydras St., New Orleans, LA 70112; 504-680-9604; fax 504-680-9607.

To be moved are: archival drawings, 18th and 19th century notarial volumes, the conservation center, and the book re-binding department. Incoming plans will also be processed there. The site will be equipped with Spacesaver mobile shelving, supplementary air conditioning, a relatively spacious reading room, and a conference room that will be available for meetings. All 20th and 21st century notarial records will remain at the Civil District Courts Building location.

The Notarial Archives looks forward to a visit from the GNOA at the comfortable new quarters.

**New Orleans Public Library,
Louisiana Division**

Finding Aids/Inventories of the following series have been added to NUTRIAS, NOPL's web site. All are linked in the "Archival Inventories" section of the site at <http://home.gnofn.org/~nopl/inv/invlist.htm>: Records of District C Councilman/Councilman-at-Large **James E. Fitzmorris**, 1954-1966. Records of Commissioner **Thomas M. Brahney**, 1946-1954. **New Orleans Police Department**. Rosters,

ca. 1882-1946. **Criminal Sheriff.** Orleans Parish (La.). Penitentiary Record Book, 1896-1935. **Chief Administrative Office.** Correspondence/Subject Files, 1955-1971. **Capital Projects Files,** 1961-1980 (bulk 1970-1976). Correspondence, 1990-1994. **Council Research Office.** Bed and Breakfast Records, 1990.

An explanation of the history and organization of the Orleans Parish civil courts entitled "Digging Up Roots in the Mud Files: Sources for Family History Research in the Orleans Parish Civil Court Records" has been added to NUTRIAS at <http://home.gn.ofn.org/~nopl/inv/cdcdemo/text2.htm>. The **Helen A. Mervis** papers, 1953-1989 (bulk 1965-1978) have been added to the Louisiana Division's Manuscripts Collection. Mrs. Mervis was active in the civil rights movement in New Orleans in the 1960s and continued in the 1970s and 1980s to work toward better race relations on a local and national level. This small collection (5 cu. feet) documents her work with the National Urban League, the Southern Regional Council and, locally, with the Community Relations Council, a bi-racial, non-sectarian group formed in 1962 to promote harmony between the races. The finding aid is available in NUTRIAS.

Wayne Everard and **Irene Wainwright** attended the annual Society of Southwest Archivists meeting in Lafayette on May 29 and 30; Wayne chaired a session titled "Exploring the Dream State: Research on Lesser-Known Ethnic Groups of Historic New Orleans." Wayne has been asked to serve as a grant review panelist for the National Endowment for the Humanities.

The Louisiana Division's next exhibit, *219 Loyola: Building a Library for New Orleans*, will be on view on the third floor of the Main Library from September 28

through January 28, 1999. The exhibit will use photographs, documents, drawings, and other materials from the City Archives and other Louisiana Division collections to illustrate the construction of the Main Library building, which celebrates its 40th anniversary this December. An online version of the exhibit will be available in NUTRIAS.

Touro Infirmary Archives

Below is a brief explanation of the *Jews and New Orleans: An Archival Guide* project as reported by the Chairperson **Catherine C. Kahn**.

The concept of *Jews and New Orleans: An Archival Guide* began with **Andrew Simons**, then the Reference Archivist at Amistad Research Center at Tulane University. as early as 1990, he began surveying the New Orleans repositories for holdings relating to the history of the New Orleans Jewish community. His search took him not only to the public and private libraries and archives but also to synagogues and community centers. In 1993, Mr. Simons contributed an article entitled "Jewish Historical Resources in New Orleans" to the fall issue of *Louisiana Literature*, the literary publication of Southeastern Louisiana University. In this article, Mr. Simons wrote, "Although the percentage of Jews in the New Orleans population is small, their Crescent City presence and their contributions to defining local culture are not. For those wishing to learn about this Jewish community, there is ample source material waiting to be used, largely self-documented by individual families and social and religious organizations. Preservation and access to these records are made possible by the various archives throughout the city."

In 1995, Mr. Simons left New Orleans to

become Jazz Curator of the National Sound Archive of the British Library in London, England. He left behind a draft of his unfinished "Guide to Jewish Collections in New Orleans", one copy of which resides in the Touro Infirmary Archives's study file and has been an invaluable resource for researchers since 1994.

In 1997, the Greater New Orleans Archivists under the leadership of its president Carol Bartels of the Historic New Orleans Collection sought and received permission from Mr. Simons to enlarge, edit and publish his work. Entries now include descriptions of both manuscript collections and published materials gleaned from government and notarial records, hospital and university archives, business records, architectural archives, synagogue libraries, and museums. Each archives has refined and edited its own entry. An editorial committee, which includes Sally K. Reeves, Norbert Raacke, Rebecca Hankins, Leon C. Miller, Irwin Lachoff, and Catherine Kahn, moved the project along, under the guidance of our present president, Susan Tucker of the Newcomb College Center for Women's Studies at Tulane University. As we worked the enormous value of the research guide became apparent to all of us, and a commitment to include undiscovered records still in private hands led Xavier University Assistant Irwin Lachoff to picking up the detective work where Mr. Simons left off. His research resulted in additional entries and added to his comprehensive historical introduction to the volume. In some cases, the research itself has led to endangered records being deposited into proper hands for preservation and cataloging. The responsibility for final editing and typesetting has been undertaken by Lester Sullivan, Xavier University Archivist. The collective hours

spent on this project are staggering.

The funding for the publication has been provided by two grants, the Southern Jewish Historical Society in 1998 and the Jewish Endowment Foundation in 1998. The Greater New Orleans Archivists are grateful for their help and support.

***University of New Orleans,
Archives and Manuscripts/
Special Collections Unit***

Florence Jumonville, head of Louisiana and Special Collections, Earl K. Long Library, was appointed to the Louisiana Historical Records Advisory Board by Governor Mike Foster. Our organization for the state, LAMA, has been working for several years to persuade the state to establish such a board. A former LAMA president, Bruce Turner, of USL, was the primary mover in this endeavor. Several of the current Board members of LAMA are also members of the new Board, including Robert Sherer of GNOA.

***News Notes**

SOLINET

Hurricane Guide Updated and Expanded SOLINET and Chicora Foundation have issued the Second Edition of *Hurricane! Surviving the Big One: A Primer for Libraries, Museums, and Archives*. Designed to help institutions increase their chance of surviving a hurricane through advance planning and preparedness, the joint publication has been revised by its author, Dr. Michael Trinkley, Director of Chicora Foundation. The cost is \$15 per copy, postpaid. For further information on ordering call Alicia Riley at SOLINET (1-800-999-8558 or 404-892-0943, ext. 205).

* We received a variety of mailings concerning workshops, seminars, and items to purchase. I will bring them all to a meeting for those interested parties. In addition, we receive the newsletters of **The Alabama Archivist**, **The Tennessee Archivist**, and **The Society of Georgia Archivists**. Take a moment at the meeting to review some of these publications.

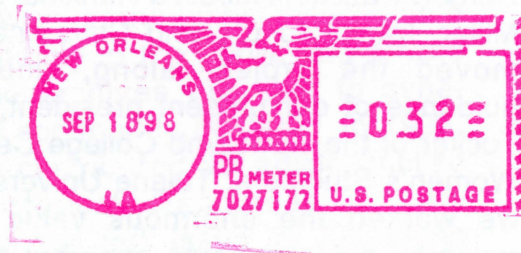
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Please send submissions to Rebecca Hankins care of The Amistad Research Center, Tilton Hall/Tulane University; New Orleans, Louisiana 70118-5698; Fax (504) 865-5580; e-mail: hankins@mailhost.tcs.tulane.edu

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