A New Home for the Jean Lafitte Monument
Tom Linton

It has a desolate, forlorn and deserted look about it, especially in the late afternoon on a chilly January day. It sits on a sliver of land facing on to a busy road, backed by a pool of stagnant water that is fringed with pond scum. This is what I saw in my most recent visit to the site of the Jean Lafitte Monument on Stewart Road.

The monument has a slightly tilted off center --- a result of the inundation it received from the waters of Hurricane Ike. It is a site poorly tended and deserving of far better treatment than it presently receives. And that is purpose of this article --- to enlist the assistance and support of the Jean Lafitte Society in securing that, “better treatment” of that monument which is the namesake of your Society.

I am proposing that the monument and the granite bench be moved to a more suitable location, Galveston Island State Park.

The Galveston Island State Park is getting a new lease on life! For awhile after Hurricane Ike it appeared that the park might cease to exist. Instead it is in the process of being restored even bigger and better than before. Bigger in that the old Outdoor Theater will come back as a part of the park, being the site for construction of a major meeting/education facility. Better by having an expanded set of out-door amenities for the public on the 800 acre of land on the North side of SH 3005 --- one being the History Trail.

The yellow line showing the location of the trail in the Park on the North side of 3005, the Park Welcome Center in the left hand corner of the picture and 13 mile Road along the right-hand margin.
The History Trail in the State Park has been approved by Texas Parks & Wildlife officials for inclusion in the rebuilt Galveston Island State Park. Along with life sized statues, 6 feet in height, of a West End cowboy, Cabeza de Vaca and a Karankawa there will be a statue of Jean Lafitte.

The statues will be made from oak trees removed from the median in Broadway and retained for these purposes.

Selecting Trees to Use for Statues on the History Trail
Perhaps you have seen some of the carved wood statues in Galveston made from trees that were killed by the saltwater flooding from Hurricane Ike. They were done by the man shown here selecting the trees for the statues. Some examples of his work are show below.

We have an agreement with this individual to make the statues. He has the four tree trunks in his work yard in Houston in readiness to carve the statues for placement in the park. Permission to move the monument into the Park has been obtained (in writing) from the governmental entities (TXDOT, Texas Historical Commission, Galveston Historical Commission) that have jurisdiction. It would be most helpful to have a resolution passed by The Laffite Society endorsing the transfer of the monument from its present location on Stewart Road to the Galveston Island State Park to be a part of the park’s History Trail. So think of this as an

FROM A NEGLECTED MONUMENT!