Laffite Society Minutes  
Submitted by Carolyn Peterson  
Corresponding/Recording Secretary

Tuesday, August 13, 2013  
Meridian Retirement Center

Board Members Present: President Larry Porter, FVP Jack Watson, SVP Kathy Modzelewski, co-TVP Ginny Roberts, Treasurer Jeff Modzelewski, Archivist Dorothy Karolanovic, Parliamentarian Diane Olson, Publicity Director Dave Roberts, Editor Dan Cote

Board Members Absent: co-TVP Lynette Haaga, Secretary Carolyn Peterson, Technology Director Rob Peterson, Coordinator of Research Pam Keyes

Advisory Board Present: Kathy Modzelewski, Jeff Modzelewski, Jean Epperson

Advisory Board Absent: Pam Keyes, Dr. Reginald Wilson, Robert Vogel, R. Dale Olson

The evening’s event began at 5:45PM with the usual 45-minute period of socialization, food and beverage provided by "stewards of the sideboard" Ginny Roberts and Ed Connor

President Larry Porter welcomed visitors J. P. Bryan, Jr., owner of the Visions of the West Collection (formerly Torch Energy); Peter Van Borssum, Diane Falkenhagen, George Parsons, and Mr. and Mrs. Kelly from the Meriden Tower. Larry Jansen announced his new membership in the Society and introduced his guess and visitor, Ernest Caldwell.

Laffite Society member and veteran researcher Jean Epperson commented on a recent trip with member Sheldon Kindall to an archeological steward’s meeting at Texas State University during which findings were discussed of a recently discovered copper-sheathed sunken ship with cannon and swivel guns, located at about 2,000 feet, 170 miles southeast of Galveston. The ship may be a privateer from the Laffite era. Jean was pleased to see that the William Jack Davis book "The Pirates Laffite" and her own work "Pirates and Privateers of the Texas Coast" were in current use by the archeological group as a reference source

TAMUG librarian Dave Baca has informed President Porter that funds have been obtained with which to purchase objects from the privateering era for display era at the university. The library is still accepting historical documents for its Laffite collection.

Larry discussed travel plans to Grand Isle and Grand Terre, Louisiana: departure date on Friday, November 15 and possible return on Monday, November 18 after a short stay in New Orleans depending on travelers' choices. Grand Isle hosts are obtaining boats, seating capacity of 40, for the trip between the two islands to view Ft. Livingston on Grand Terre. A kit and flyer with trip info, i.e., hotels, trip routes, etc., will be prepared for members signed up for the trip. R. Dale Olson has offered to put together a PowerPoint presentation based on previous Laffite Society travel to the Barataria area.

Third Vice President Lynette Haaga informed the President that she will soon begin planning the December holiday banquet and wants to call a meeting to discuss ideas for the program.
First Vice President and Program Chairman Jack Watson announced that next month's topic will be on the Bowie brothers.

Program Speaker – Andrew Gustafson Topic – Visions of the West Collection

Andrew Gustafson, Assistant Curator of the VISIONS OF THE WEST COLLECTION, introduced visitors and owner of the collection, J. P. Bryan, Jr. of Houston, and his associates, Peter Van Borssum and Diane Falkenhagen. The speaker gave a PowerPoint presentation of many of the collection's 30,000 items, divided by subject matter and historical periods, dating from the pre-Columbian period to recent times. Items represented from the periods, include: pottery, jewelry, intricately tooled antique leather saddles from Mexico, ornate silver spurs, important Texas, Mexican, and American historical documents, interesting personal items of colorful historical personages, weapons, including a collection of 1870-90 Winchester rifles; fine paintings; Mexican and Spanish fine art, folk art and religious art painted on metal; an 1820 letter in French from the privateer Pierre Laffite to Gov. Patterson concerning an appeal for reconciliation - and countless more.

At the conclusion of the program, the speaker announced plans in progress to move the entire Visions of the West Collection to the former Galveston Orphans' Home on 21st Street, built in the 19th century by Galveston's great philanthropist, Henry Rosenberg.

Following questions and excited exclamations from the members on this announcement, there being no further business, the meeting this date of August 14, 2013, adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by Secretary Emerita, Dorothy Karolanovic (Standing in for Corresponding/Recording Secretary Carolyn Peterson)

Tuesday, September 10, 2013 Meridian Retirement Center

Board Members Present: President Larry Porter, FVP Jack Watson, SVP Kathy Modzelewski, co-TVP Ginny Roberts/Lynette Haaga, Secretary Carolyn Peterson, Technology Director Rob Peterson, Treasurer Jeff Modzelewski, Archivist Dorothy Karolanovic, Parliamentarian Diane Olson, Publicity Director Dave Roberts, Editor Dan Cote

Board Members Absent: Coordinator of Research Pam Keyes

Advisory Board Present: Kathy Modzelewski, Jeff Modzelewski, Dale Olson, Jean Epperson

Advisory Board Absent: Pam Keyes, Dr. Reginald Wilson, Robert Vogel

President Larry Porter called the meeting to order at 6:33PM and proceeded to welcome all the visitors and members, old and new. Larry said that the turnout was one of the largest estimated at 65.
The first point of business was the Christmas Banquet that will be held at Moody Gardens on Sunday, December 15, from 6:00-9:00PM. Lynette is soon to reach an agreement with the hotel for about ten rooms for members for that evening. The banquet will have a Bourbon Street theme.

Next on the agenda was the "Back to Barataria" field trip scheduled for Nov. 13-19. Plans are being firmed up and approximately 38 members has signed up for the trip. For more information, please contact Larry Porter.

The latest issue of the Laffite Chronicles were on hand for pick up.

Larry mentioned that long time member, Ann Forester, had recently had a heart attack and asked all to keep her in their thoughts.

He mentioned that TAMU has hired a digital librarian who will be taking care of the archives.

Jack Watson said that The Jane Long Society festival will be offering a series of lectures and that pamphlets describing them were available.

Program Speaker – Betty Connor Topic – James Bowie

Betty began her presentation by saying that whenever she thinks of James Bowie two things come to mind: the Bowie knife and his death at the Alamo.

She first spoke about the dispute over who really made the Bowie knife. Some say Bowie himself and some say it was his brother, Rezin Bowie. Then there are others who say that it was James Black who really was a blacksmith and a friend of the Bowie family. What is known is that there were a series of knives that were refined and improved by Bowie himself. Betty said that it was considered a dangerous weapon and some Southern states wanted to make it illegal while others wanted to place danger warnings on it to discourage its purchase. Neither method worked since it was hugely popular. It was so much in demand it had to be made in a small factory in Sheffield, England to accommodate the European market. The knife's popularity is still evident today. It is on the shoulder patch of the 39th Infantry Brigade headquartered in Arkansas. The Marine WWII K-bar knife is modeled after it while in 1960 the Air Force included a version of it in the pilot's survival kit. An original Bowie knife (1840s) in good condition could be sold for $20-25K today.

Betty proceeded to tell about James Bowie, the man. He was born in 1796, the ninth of ten children, in Logan County, Kentucky. The family moved around a lot starting of in Georgia, moving then to Missouri and Louisiana. All of the Bowie children were expected to help with the farm duties as well as learning to read, write, and James and Rezin spoke French and Spanish fluently. In 1814 James and Rezin joined the militia and went to New Orleans only to find they had missed the battle for the city. James went to Rapides parish and made a living cutting timber. Before his father's death, both sons were given their inheritances consisting of ten slaves along with horses and cattle. The brothers had ambitions of taking advantage of rising land prices by becoming speculators, but lacking the capital they entered into the slave trade with Jean Laffite. James made money on some slight of hand slave dealings to support his land speculation plans. In 1819 James joined the Long Expedition and remained with the
fighters until after Nacogdoches was captured and Texas was declared an independent republic. 1825
James, Rezin, and Stephen Bowie bought the Acadia plantation near Alexandria and within two years
had established the first steam mill used in the grinding of sugar cane.

James had an ongoing feud with the sheriff of Rapides Parish and in 1927 they were both attending a
duel in Natchez - each supporting a different duelist. Neither duelist was hit and so they ended it by
shaking hands, but their supporters would have none of that. A brawl began and in the ensuing
mayhem, Bowie was shot, then impaled with the sheriff’s sword, but the sheriff was disemboweled by
Bowie with his knife. The fight gave Bowie his international reputation as a superb knife fighter.

In 1828 James became Catholic in order to take advantage of the religious preference that the Mexican
state had for land grantees. In 1830 he permanently moved to Texas and pledged his allegiance to
Mexico that same year.
During the years between 1830 and 1832 Bowie established himself as a land speculator and brought
businesses into the area. On April 25, 1831, Bowie married nineteen-year-old Maria Ursula de
Veramendi, the daughter of his business partner. During the years of 1830-1832 the Mexican Congress
passed a series of laws that seemed to discriminate against Anglo colonists in the province of Coahuila y
Tejas, causing increased tension between the Anglo citizenry and Mexican officials. In August, 1832
Bowie was involved in the Battle of Nacogdoches ending with the defeat the Mexican army there.
Bowie lost his family in a cholera epidemic in 1833. In 1835 Anglos in Texas began to agitate for war
and Bowie worked with William Travis to gain support for it. Later that same year the Texas
Revolution began with the Battle of Gonzales. In late 1835 Texas declared itself an independent state
and formed a provisional government. Meanwhile in early 1836 Ben Milam led an assault on San
Antonio forcing the Mexican forces out. Many Texians thought the war was over until they heard that
Santa Ana was approaching with a large force. Soon the fight for the Alamo began in earnest and a
great Texas legend was born.

Trivia: Did you know that rock star David Bowie took his name from James Bowie and the Bowie knife?

Miscellaneous

October's presentation: Lou Ann McBeth will speak on "Henry Journeay, a survivor of the notorious
Black Bean Episode."

The meeting was adjourned at 7:26PM.
Submitted by Carolyn Peterson, Corresponding/Recording Secretary

Tuesday, October 08, 2013
Meridian Retirement Center

Board Members Present: President Larry Porter, SVP Kathy Modzelewski, co-TVP Ginny
Roberts/Lynette Haaga, Secretary Carolyn Peterson, Technology Director Rob Peterson, Treasurer Jeff
Modzelewski, Archivist Dorothy Karolanovic, Publicity Director Dave Roberts, Editor Dan Cote

Board Members Absent: FVP Jack Watson, Parliamentarian Diane Olson, Coordinator of Research Pam
Keyes

Advisory Board Present: Kathy Modzelewski, Jeff Modzelewski, Jean Epperson
Advisory Board Absent: Pam Keyes, Dr. Reginald Wilson, Robert Vogel, Dale Olson

President Larry Porter called the meeting to order at 6:32PM and began by thanking the Hospitality group that provided the delicious food for this meeting. He then recognized many visitors to this evening's presentation, one being Rob Cooke of the Fort Bend County Historical Commission - a distant relative of tonight's topic.

A field trip to Barataria and Grand Isle is set for November 14 with an October 15 signup date. Please contact Larry Porter for details.

On November 13-14 there is an event at Moody Gardens involving shipwrecks and Jack Watson will represent the Society at that event.

It was announced that the next weekend was the Jane Long Festival on Bolivar and members were encouraged to attend.

Jean Epperson brought a couple of her books for sale to the group.

Lynette Haaga spoke about annual Christmas Banquet will be held at the View Finders Terrace at Moody Gardens on Sunday, December 15 with the theme of "Cafe Laffite". The cocktail hour starts and 6:00PM with dinner at 7:15. The price is $60/person which includes one drink ticket plus there will be a cash bar. Rooms are set aside at the hotel for a special rate for those who would like to stay overnight. Lynette also mentioned that the Meridian would be providing the meal for the next meeting in November.

Program Speaker – Lou Graves McBeth

Lou Graves McBeth began by saying that she was bit intimidated by 1) following Betty Connor's presentation last month and 2) having an ancestor of Journey in the room to hear her presentation. She said that her interest in history began when she found out that her great-great grandfather (Sheldon Graves) arrived in Galveston in 1838. He opened a blacksmith shop on 20th and Mechanic. He died in 1855, but his widow lived until she was 93 and one half years and was one of the earliest women on Galveston Island. She also said that in her research she found out that Henry Journey and her own family's Galveston history intermingled during the same period. Lou first became acquainted with Henry Journey by visiting a Facebook site named "Traces of Texas" and saw a picture of Journey's headstone in the Episcopal Cemetery in Galveston. The inscription said he survived the Mier Expedition; she confused it with the Mina Expedition, but Dale Olson set her straight. Henry Journey was a survivor of the notorious "Black Bean Incident".

Journey was born on Staten Island, NY in 1815. He left for Texas in 1838 and joined the Texas army in 1842 just in time for the Mier Expedition. As background Lou spoke about the two treaties after the Battle of San Jacinto - a public treaty and a secret treaty. The public treaty said that all hostilities would stop, the Mexican troops would withdraw and not take up arms against the Texans, an exchange of prisoners and property would take place, and Santa Ana would be sent back to Mexico without the Texas Army pursuing his troops. The secret treaty was for the immediate release of Santa Ana, for Mexico to recognize the independence of Texas, and the Texas border would be the Rio Grande river. Unfortunately, Mexico did not accept either treaty leaving Texans in fear of Mexican invasion into their
towns -- which happened in San Antonio in March 1842. In an attempt to draw the Mexican troops into a fight, a company of Texas scouts were sent to Salado Creek where they were all killed (Dawson's Massacre). As a result of this and other battles Sam Houston sent Alexander Somervell and 700 volunteers on raids into the disputed lands. After several skirmishes back and forth, Somervell decided that this was going to cost Texas too much money and decided to disband the group, but many of the volunteers were not ready to turn back and chose William Fisher as their new leader. In December, 1842 the remaining troops entered the town of Mier, at first encountering little resistance. On December 25 a large Mexican detachment arrived and the battle raged for twenty four hours. The Texans while only losing thirty men, eventually ran out of ammunition, food, and supplies and were forced to surrender. Unknown to them, they had inflicted over 800 Mexican casualties. They were taken prisoner and forced marched to Mexico City. Some prisoners tried to escape, but were later recaptured. When Santa Anna heard of the escape attempt he ordered all to be executed, but the governor of Coahuila refused to carry out this order and implemented a "decimation" order. One hundred and fifty nine white beans and seventeen black beans were placed in a jar and the prisoners were forced to draw one. Those drawing the black beans were executed immediately. The majority of the remaining Americans were imprisoned in Pecote Prison in Vera Cruz and one of those was Henry Journey. This is where the story of Henry and his violin begins.

Lou read an excerpt from the Abilene news and it said that all the prisoners had duties and Journey's was in the carpenter shop. He was able to smuggle out wood, glass, bone, and a razor along with other odds and ends that he used in the creation of his violin. He entertained his fellow prisoners and the noise they made masked the sound of an escape in the making. Several groups escaped, but Journey refused to join them. On September 18, 1844 Journey and the remaining prisoners were released and sent back to Texas. Lou said she had no information about where Journey settled immediately after his release, but she found him on the 1850 census of Galveston as a carpenter and living in a livery stable. A later census lists him in the sawh and blind business. He married Caroline Wetzel in 1851, had six children, and served as an alderman for the city several times between 1850 and 1859. Lou's ancestor was an alderman during this same period. During the Battle of Galveston (Civil War) the Union commander was killed (Captain Wainwright) and a coffin was required that was supplied by Henry Journey. Lou's ancestor was an engineer on one of the cotton clads that rammed the Union ship (Harriet Blaine) making it possible to capture it. Lou noted the involvement of the Masons in the burial of the Union commander and showed us Journey's application to join one of the lodges in Galveston, but it was never completed.

Having survived the horrific events in Mexico, Henry was the victim of a freak accident. On this way home from a musical performance with his wife, their wagon was hit by a mule drawn trolley and after several months he succumbed to his injuries that had required amputation. His obituary states that he was a very upstanding citizen and known to all as a very good person. His family graciously gave the violin to the State of Texas for all its citizens to enjoy.

The Dawson Massacre and Mier Expedition were memorialized in 1937 on a monument that was erected in La Grange.

**Questions**

*Can the land grant be tracked?*  Yes. Rob Cooke is going to Austin to pursue this.

A note: The Masonic funeral is going to be reenacted in January as part of the Battle of Galveston celebration. Jeff said that he has the minutes for the actual ceremony and that they are very touching to read.
Larry mentioned reading a story about one of the bean drawers who noticed that the white beans were smaller than the black ones so he reached all the way to the bottom of the jar to get a white bean since the larger black ones were at the top. Supposedly he was a Texas Ranger named Bigfoot Wallace.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:25PM.
Submitted by Carolyn Peterson, Corresponding/Recording Secretary

Tuesday, November 12, 2013
Meridian Retirement Center

Board Members Present: President Larry Porter, FVP Jack Watson, co-TVP Ginny Roberts/Lynette Haaga, Secretary Carolyn Peterson, Technology Director Rob Peterson, Treasurer Jeff Modzelewski, Archivist Dorothy Karolanovic, Publicity Director Dave Roberts, Editor Dan Cote
Board Members Absent: Coordinator of Research Pam Keyes, SVP Kathy Modzelewski, Parliamentarian Diane Olson

Advisory Board Present: Jeff Modzelewski, Jean Epperson

Advisory Board Absent: Pam Keyes, Dr. Reginald Wilson, Robert Vogel, Kathy Modzelewski, Dale Olson

President Larry Porter called the meeting to order at 7:06PM. Larry thanked the staff of the Meridian for providing the evening's food and drink and it was delicious.

Lynette Haaga spoke about the Christmas party being held at Moody Gardens on December 15 encouraging everyone to participate. The price is $60 per person and that includes food and two drink tickets. Special room rates have been arranged for the Society members, but you must make your own reservation.

Larry mentioned several special events taking place in November. The first was the "Back to Barataria" field trip that was taking place soon after this month's meeting. The other was the Monterey Ship Wreck seminar that was held at Moody Gardens with Jack Watson acting as the Society representative.

Program Speaker – Jack Watson
Topic – Dr. James Long - Part II

Jack began by saying that this is a continuation of his presentation on Dr. James Long (Laffite Society Minutes, July 08, 2013, Part I). He said that most of what is known about Dr. Long comes to us through the writings of Maribea B. Lamar based on Jane Long's recollections of her husband. Jack showed a compilation of Lamar's writings about Long prepared by Jean Epperson saying that it was very well done and that she is giving it to the Laffite archives. He said that Lamar's stories should be taken with a grain of salt and that the impetus for his own research was to pick holes in Lamar's work. Jack wondered why James Long didn't quit after being defeated at Nacogdoches, his wife was nowhere to be found, and his creditors were after him. James went to New Orleans after hearing that there was new support to be had for the filibuster movement. In New Orleans Long made the acquaintance of Eleazar Ripley (a retired general in the War of 1812 and Louisiana politician) who thought the overthrow of the Spanish government was possible if the Mexican insurgents were included in the filibuster. These were the people who had been fighting for independence since 1810 and Ripley chose Felix Trespalacios
Milam, William Christy, and John Austin. In April of 1820 James returned to Bolivar accompanied by Jane and Warren D.C. Hall. The Longs' return and Laffite's exit from Galveston overlapped by about one month. It was during this time that Jane attended dinner with Laffite. James stayed at Bolivar (Fort Las Casas) for about 18 months with support coming from Ripley and Trespalacios. Despite Lamar's flowery description of life at Bolivar there was dissension in the ranks. Many of the soldiers wanted to march on to San Antonio, but Ripley, who controlled the purse strings, told them to stay where they were to act as security for future settlers that were to be brought to the area. Many problems started to creep up during this period. Trespalacios visited Bolivar during the time and found that the soldiers were not being paid. Trespalacios came up with an idea of printing script for payment, but then the soldiers found out the script was worthless and Long had to defend him from the wrath of the troops. Then Long, in his wisdom, decided to battle the Karankawa Indians killing forty and pushing the rest off Galveston (Battle of Three Trees). Jack thought it a waste of time and ammunition, but Lamar thought it was to keep the troops sharp. A nephew of Trespalacios, Santiago Modello, came to Bolivar and immediately started trouble in the fort. A final incident ended with his execution by Long's troops. Surprisingly, Trespalacios did not appear to be overly upset about his nephew's demise! He seemed to be very friendly toward Long when they met in New Orleans shortly after the execution.

In 1821 a two pronged scheme to attack Mexico was hatched. Trespalacios, Milam and Christy were to enter Mexico by way of Tampico by sea, Long and his troops were to march on La Bahia (close to today's Goliad) and then destinations south where both groups were to reunite. Long told his wife that he would be back in about ten days, but they never saw each other again. Long's men captured La Bahia without a shot being fired on the Spanish side - everyone had evacuated. After 10-12 days Long was captured by Ignacio Perez - the same person who had killed his brother, David, some time earlier. The details of his capture are unclear since the witness accounts vary so greatly. Jack stated that this was a really bad time for Long's group to attempt a filibuster since there were so many different factions inside Mexico trying to gain independence that outsiders were viewed with suspicion and risked being jailed. During the next five months Long's group was marched to San Antonio where they were very ill treated, then on to Monterey and eventually Mexico City where they were recognized as supporters of the revolution and treated much better. Finally they were reunited with Ben Milam's group in Mexico City in April, 1822. Ten days later, James Long was dead.

What was happening in Mexico during this period? The winner of the revolution was Augustin de Iturbide, a longtime loyalist who had no problem switching sides during the revolution. During this time Long, Milam and Trespalacios disagreed. Trespalacios wanted to join Iturbide, but the others did not. Trespalacios arranged a meeting between Long and Iturbide where Long was reported to be insulting and turned down the offer of a high ranking position in the Mexican Army. Still Long was given a passport in Mexico City and could come and go at will. One day he was joining a Colonel Riley (?) for chocolate and as he approached the fort Long was challenged by soldiers. As Long reached for his passport, he was shot dead. As to who was behind this killing, Jack said that this is a real who dunnit. On the behest of Ben Milam Iturbide had the incident investigated and it was declared an accident. Conveniently this happened on the soldier's first day on the job. He was convicted of some sort of manslaughter charge, imprisoned for five months, then upon his release was promoted. Interesting. But who really killed Long? Most historians today think Trespalacios had him killed as revenge for his nephew's death on Bolivar. Jack doesn't think it was Trespalacios because he didn't fit the mold or have anything in his past to indicate he was a villain. Also Milam, Long, Trespalacios, Christy, and Austin
had a very strong bond during their campaign and Jack does not believe that Trespalacios would have violated this trust by having one of their own killed. Jack suggests that it might have been Iturbide since he did have a reputation for cruelty and murder -- even bragging to his own troops about his involvement in a mass execution. Jack then gives a third option - that it was indeed an accident caused by a mouthy gringo talking back to a green, inexperienced soldier.

Ben Milam and the gang thought it was Trespalacios and they intended to ambush and kill him, but they were betrayed by one of their own. They were imprisoned for five months, then released. Milam found Jane Long in Alexandria and gave her a letter from James as well as some other papers and a narrative of what happened in Mexico. He became one of her favorite suitors. Within a few weeks, Milam and Trespalacios were tight friends again after Trespalacios convinced Milam of his innocence in Long's death.

More research is needed to get to the truth.

Miscellaneous

The meeting was adjourned at 7:57PM.
Submitted by Carolyn Peterson, Corresponding/Recording Secretary

Tuesday, January 14, 2014
Meridian Retirement Center

Board Members Present: President Larry Porter, FVP Jack Watson, SVP Kathy Modzelewski, co-TVP Ginny Roberts/Lynette Haaga, Secretary Carolyn Peterson, Technology Director Rob Peterson, Treasurer Jeff Modzelewski, Archivist Dorothy Karolanovic, Publicity Director Dave Roberts, Editor Dan Cote

Board Members Absent: Coordinator of Research Pam Keyes, Parliamentarian Diane Olson

Advisory Board Present: Jeff Modzelewski, Jean Epperson, Kathy Modzelewski

Advisory Board Absent: Pam Keyes, Dr. Reginald Wilson, Robert Vogel, Dale Olson

The meeting began at 7:06PM with a champagne toast by President Larry Porter wishing all a Happy New Year.
Helen Mooty announced that the Galveston County Museum is now on Facebook and encouraged all to go to the web page and hit "Like". She said that new pictures and videos are being loaded every week. Larry announced that it is time for yearly dues to be paid and that Kathy Modzelewski was available to take payment. Jean Epperson introduced some new publications about Laffite - some good, some not so good. The first is titled "Jean Laffite - The Pirate That Saved America". The other is titled "The Paper Republic: The Struggle for Money, Credit and Independence in the Republic of Texas". The author of the this book will speak at the March meeting of the Society.

The next topic on the agenda was Mardi Gras which will be on March 4. The Society has again been graciously invited by Jack McCoy to celebrate at his condominium in the Panama Hotel Lofts.
The Seminar at Texas A&M is scheduled for April 25th and 26th. Five different sessions have been decided upon and speakers have been selected. The general theme is the people who surrounded Laffite like Jim Bowie and the people left behind when Laffite exited Galveston. The program based on the letters of John A. Laffite will be presented at the seminar.

Larry said that the February meeting's food menu will be Mardi Gras based and he reminded people to sign up for food donations.

Jan Porter spoke about the upcoming Spring style show benefiting the Salvation Army that will be held March 20th. Please contact her for information and tickets.

Publicity Director Dave Roberts asked Larry to announce that the story in the newspaper about the Christmas party was not printed as he had submitted it and hoped no one was offended if he/she was left out.

Program Speaker – Greg Whittaker  

Jack Watson introduced Greg Whittaker by saying that he is the animal husbandry manager at Moody Gardens and a new member of the Society. Greg was born in New York State and came to Galveston in 1985 to attend Texas A&M - Galveston. He worked at the old Sea-Arama, then at the Marine Biomedical Institute, and ended up at Moody Gardens. After a stint of working overseas, he came back to Moody Gardens in 2002 and has been there ever since.

Greg said that his talk is about the animals that inspired the myths of nautical folklore going back a very long time and crossing many cultures. His reference material was a book called "Sea Monsters on Medieval and Renaissance Maps" and said that it lays the groundwork for research that continues today. He said that he has heard the term "Here Be Monsters" so frequently he thought it would seen on many pirate maps and other historical documents, but the term (HC SVNT DRACONES) has been found to exist on only two maps on globes. The first is the Hunt-Lennox globe that was produced around 1503-1507 and the second was on a conjoined engraved ostrich egg from East Asia from approximately the same time period. It is thought that the term referred to Komodo dragons. The globe now resides in the Lennox collection in the New York Public Library (Wikipedia). It has been concluded that the globe was a copper cast of the ostrich egg.

Monsters show up on a "T-O" Mappaemundi (9th century) that depicts the Mediterranean Sea, the Nile, the Tanais River forming a T separating Europe, Asia, and Africa. Representations of mythical sea creatures can be seen on these types of maps especially in the areas where they were known shipping lanes. Sometimes these creatures were depicted as hybrids between terrestrial and marine animals such as this cross between an elephant and squid. Our speaker gave several examples of this type of hybrid. He showed an
illustration of an animal swallowing a man, possibly Jonah and the whale. There was a medieval theory that anything that could be found on land had an aquatic counterpart spawning things like sea dogs, sea horses, sea lions, and many others. Between the 13th and 16th centuries monsters were more frequently showing up on maps and globes to indicate areas of great danger. For example, they were often illustrated as attacking whales and mysterious sirens. This information was from mappaemundi which were not accurate nautical maps but source materials that practiced artistic license. Nautical maps of the time did contain some basic information regarding shipping lanes, but a buyer had to pay for the addition of any desired monsters and dragons. The nautical maps were at least useful tools to the mariner.

Greg showed a series of slides illustrating some mythological animals evolving into their more realistic terrestrial counterparts. He ended his presentation by going through a list of animals and how they were possibly mistaken for sea monsters in the past such as the sirens that are believed to have really been manatees.

Questions
Some pictures showed whales with two spouts - any other animals that have two? Seals and some other pinnipeds have two nostrils, but whales have only one spout. He thinks it was artistic license.

What is the great white whale as in Moby Dick? It was a sperm whale with a mottled white forehead. What extinct species would have been in the area 200 years ago? The Caribbean monk seal and tarpon used to inhabit this area within the period question was the answer.

What is your opinion of the Loch Ness Monster? Greg thinks it might be a land-locked seal, or even possibly a Plesiosaur.

Miscellaneous

Future Presentations
February: Root Choyce Vessels that Laffite sailed in and the vessels he went after
March: James Bevill "The Paper Republic: The Struggle for Money, Credit and Independence in the Republic of Texas"

The meeting was adjourned at 7:57 PM.