The 20-year-old dream of a large national park for South Louisiana was finally grasped and made reality by the 95th Congress on Nov. 10, 1978.

The aim of the park direction is many faceted; complex and interesting. Visitors to South Louisiana respond favorably to the unique culture of the region. The music, food, religion, language and carefree life style is the veneer covering a much richer diversity of culture.

People of the Mississippi Delta Region frequently speak foreign languages, and their music, dancing, cooking and folklore reflect their ancestral origin in Europe, the Caribbean, Africa and Asia. These Louisianaans have much in common because they share the same environment, the same future, the same love of life, and the same limited dry-land areas for homes, labor and recreation.

Several culture groups have occupied the low-lying land of the delta region and have contributed to its unique culture. While becoming a part of American society and adopting a Southern life-style, most of the groups have retained their identity and continued most of their traditional practices. One of the aims of the JLNHP is to identify, study and preserve the 29 separate culture groups and their traditions. Studies now underway are providing details about these populations.

The Lafitte Park will be operated out of six units, each independent and dealing with separate historical, archaeological, natural history and cultural themes.

The main operating unit of the JLNHP is located in the Lower Pontalba Building, 500 St. Ann Street. Built by the Baroness de Pontalba, one of the early benefactors of New Orleans, the unit features a museum describing most of the culture groups which make up the population of South Louisiana, their history and their current contributions.

Four different guided tours of walks are offered daily, every hour, on the following subjects:

The Haunts of Jean Lafitte — 1 hour.
The History of the French Quarter — 1 hour and 15 minutes.
The Legends of the French Quarter — 1 and a half hours.
The People of the French Quarter — 45 minutes.

Each of these tours is presented by a trained qualified United States National Park Ranger. Also, in the station at the Pontalba there is a bookstore and sales counter, where books, slides, record albums and post cards may be purchased. Special events are held throughout the year at nearby Jackson Square.

The second unit of the Lafitte Park is located about six miles down the Mississippi River from the Pontalba Unit. The Chalmette National Battlefield Unit is in the town of Chalmette and commemorates the victory by Andrew Jackson and Jean Lafitte and their gallant heroes over the veteran British forces under General Sir Edward Fakenham. The final land battle of the War of 1812 was fought on the battlefield Jan. 8, 1815, to bring the war to a successful conclusion for American arms.

The Barataria Marsh Unit is being purchased by the Federal Government to establish, preserve and maintain important areas of the coastal marsh wetlands. Archaeology, history, natural history and folk ways will be pointed out and protected in the swamps and marshes of Jefferson Parish, Louisiana.

The marsh unit will include 8,500 acres and will preserve many sites of ancient Indian cultures. Remains of Troyville, Marksville and Tchefuncte groups will be interpreted for visitors who may arrive by boat or by land vehicles. Several self-guiding trails will be constructed throughout this section of the park, lying between Bayou Coquille to the North and Bayou Barataria to the south of New Orleans on Louisiana Highway 45.

The Big Oak and Little Oak Islands sites, containing important ancient American Indian remains, lie just off Interstate 10 in New Orleans East, not far from Irish Bayou.

Two uniformed Park Rangers will be on duty to guide visitors through the area and to answer questions. The remains of the ancient Tchefuncte culture will be featured at this unit.

The Isleno Museum Unit is located in St. Bernard Parish, Louisiana, about 10 miles down the highway from New Orleans. See PARK, pg. 5
PARK, continued from pg. 4
Chalmette Battlefield on Highway 46. It was donated and furnished to commemorate the Isleno People of South Louisiana, their culture and folk-ways under the Spanish Regime in Louisiana in the middle 1770s.

Don Bernardo de Galvez brought in several groups of immigrants from Spain, France and the Canary Islands to colonize South Louisiana. The Canarians were referred to as Los Islenos and were assigned to form colonies, to set up farming, fishing and defense operations.

Galveztown, Valenzuela, Barataria and San Bernardo were set up between 1778 and 1783. After several years, the first three colonies failed, leaving all the Islenos settled in the area around Delacroix Island in St. Bernard Parish. Canary Islanders sent to Louisiana by Charles III, King of Spain, numbered 1,600. It is estimated there are 10,000 Islenos in St. Bernard Parish today.

The Isleno Museum will feature written and audiovisual material on the culture of the group: recordings of decimas, the ten-line sung folk music, recipes and samples of cuisine, Isleno Spanish language and history. Many arts and crafts will be demonstrated on an irregular basis. The museum will be manned seven days a week, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. There are no fees or charges of any kind within the park or its units. Transportation must be arranged by the park visitor.

The National Park System, of which JLNHP is a unit, is dedicated to conserving the scenic, scientific and historic heritage of the United States for the benefit and inspiration of its people.

The National Park Service administers two other areas commemorating the War of 1812 besides the Chalmette National Battlefield. They are Fort McHenry National Memorial and Historic Shrine, Baltimore, Md., and Perry's Victory International Peace Memorial, Put-in-Bay, Ohio.

No overnight accommodations, camping or swimming are available at this time. Boating, cycling, horseback riding, hiking, fishing and photography are encouraged.

For further information, persons may contact the Superintendent at 1-504-589-3832.

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Historical context, moreover that fact, insofar as its potential for offending any members of our community, should be considered in light of the further fact that he was fully pardoned by President Madison for any and all of his misadventures and according to Bienvenu, "He turned against slavery after living with the Mortimores in the 1830s."

The idea of naming the bridge after Lafitte is a good one for the following reasons, among others,

1. He personifies cultural diversity (French, Spanish, Jewish) and he stood for equality of opportunity.

2. He is historically identified with this area and the aura and mystique associated with his name is attraction for any tourist.

3. The name immediately associates with Contraband Days.

4. It would be a lot of trouble to take all the crossed pistols off the bridge.

5. The name is apolitical.

Maybe someone else will come up with a better name, but I doubt it. Anyway, I send you all of this in hopes that you won't turn it down for the wrong reason.

Yours truly,
Fred R. Godwin

JLNHP DRAFT PLAN PUBLISHED

The Draft General Management Plan, Development Concept Plan and Environmental Assessment for Jean Lafitte National Historical Park, Louisiana, was published in July by the Dept. of the Interior.

Filled with well-drawn maps of all the park units and their alter-

concise and clear language which presents the five park alternatives in a brief but thorough manner.

The JLNHP staff have been conducting public meetings in conjunction with the publication of this draft. Comments from the public will be collected by the park officials until...