



Volume XXIX  
Number 2  
Spring 2012

# THE QUARTERLY

## THE HISTORIC NEW ORLEANS COLLECTION



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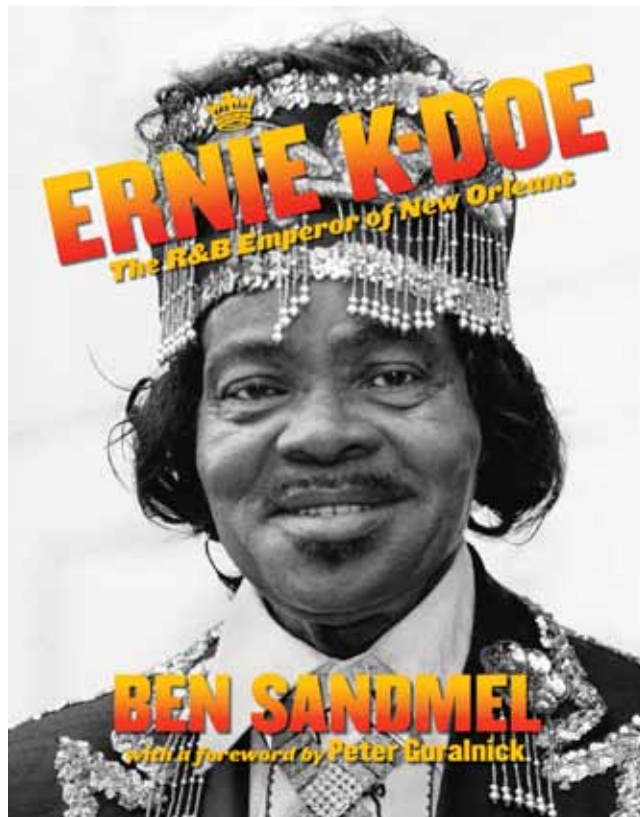
# Ernie K-Doe: The R&B Emperor of

**M**ay 1961, and one tune was sitting pretty atop both the R&B and pop charts: “Mother-in-Law” became the first hit by a New Orleans artist to rule black and white airwaves alike. Ernie K-Doe was only 25 years old, and his reign was just beginning: decades after releasing his only number-one hit, he crowned himself Emperor of the World. A decade after his death, lovers of New Orleans music remain his loyal subjects.

Journalist Ben Sandmel takes readers backstage in an intimately framed biography, the latest release from The Collection’s publications department. *Ernie K-Doe: The R&B Emperor of New Orleans* features exclusive interviews with Ernie, his family and friends, and more than one hundred musicians, including Allen Toussaint, Aaron Neville, and Dr. John. The book is already generating buzz, with Eric Overmyer, cocreator of HBO’s *Treme*, observing that “Ben Sandmel has captured and conveyed the loopy genius, linguistic and musical, that was Ernie K-Doe. . . . The prose is lively, the quotations generous, the photos and graphics spectacular. This is one of the five essential books on New Orleans culture. You gotta get it.”

In its broad outlines, K-Doe’s story parallels that of his beloved, beleaguered city. He rose, fell, and rose again. He weathered storms and lingered long after most considered him down and out. Ultimately, Ernie K-Doe believed in himself and inspired confidence in others. His core message was the indomitability of the human spirit, the belief that all things are possible with faith and motivation.

The following excerpt from the book tells the story behind its protagonist’s breakout hit, “Mother-in-Law.”



**T**he Mother-in-Law Lounge, which thrived in K-Doe’s image until 2010, was a place that filled visitors with giddy wonderment. Their delight ensued from the lounge’s welcoming environment and the surreal sensory overload that walloped all who crossed the threshold. This physical entrance doubled as the conceptual portal into Ernie K-Doe’s eccentric parallel universe—a festive, Fellini-esque realm where shameless idolatry and unfettered happiness reigned supreme. (“There’s a lot of love in here” was a frequent, typical reaction of first-time visitors.) The harmonious interactions of the diverse patrons affirmed them in the tradition of Huey P. Long’s credo “Every Man a King.” Or, as Ernie K-Doe often put it, “All you got to do is just keep the faith in what you are doing. You set your goal line, and don’t let nobody change you.



You know what you say when people tell you you can’t do something? ‘Fool, shut your mouth up!’”

# New Orleans

This resolute stance helped propel Ernie K-Doe through years of scuffling before “Mother-in-Law” hit the top. It also helped sustain him through the long, lean years after his star had faded. He nurtured himself during these tough times with glorious memories of May 1961, when “Mother-in-Law” became the best-selling record in America. The best-selling record in two Americas, actually—white and black—as delineated by *Billboard* magazine’s separate sales charts for pop and R&B. “Mother-in-Law” topped both charts, ruling pop’s Hot 100 for a single week and dominating the R&B survey for five. In pop it unseated Del Shannon’s “Runaway” and was in turn replaced by Ricky Nelson’s “Travelin’ Man.” (No other New Orleans artist, not even Fats Domino, had ever reached this peak with a song recorded in New Orleans. Domino, in fact, despite his frequent lofty chart positions and astronomical sales, never had a number-one record.) On the R&B side, “Mother-in-Law” displaced Ray Charles’s “One Mint Julep” and was bumped by Ben E. King’s “Stand by Me.” (Charles and K-Doe would compete again at the Grammy Awards, when Charles’s “Hit the Road Jack” was voted best R&B recording of 1961, leaving “Mother-in-Law” as an also-ran.)

Compared to these hits and most others of the day, in both pop and R&B, “Mother-in-Law” has very blunt lyrics. Though tame by contemporary standards, they raised eyebrows in the early ’60s, especially overseas. The English music weekly *Melody Maker* opined that “Mother-in-Law” “has made a big showing in the States—more, we feel, on account of its simple melodic appeal and rocking beat than the libellous sentiments it contains.” But London’s *New Musical Express* praised the song as “a cute comedy number in which Ernie tells his mother-in-law a few home truths about herself.”



**Cover:** Detail, Ernie K-Doe publicity photo, ca. 1961, courtesy Antoinette K-Doe. **Opposite:** Book cover photo by Cheryl Gerber, design by Alison Cody; “Mother-in-Law” sheet music, ca. 1961, courtesy Jurgen Koop. **Above:** K-Doe, King of Krewe du Vieux, 2001, photo by Pat Jolly.

If K-Doe’s disdainful sentiments in “Mother-in-Law” flirt with libel, his terse and deceptively cool delivery belie its caustic message. In New Orleans speak, this state of obvious annoyance—which, as alert observers realize, could imminently escalate into fireworks—is often telegraphed with the warning “You are working my last single nerve!” K-Doe’s ominously understated, last-single-nerve delivery is complemented by the sparse, less-is-more arrangement of producer Allen Toussaint. Toussaint, a New Orleans rhythm and blues savant who emerged as a major creative figure in American popular music, also plays piano on “Mother-in-Law.” His lilted solo echoes the Afro-Caribbean-influenced styles of such seminal New Orleans pianists as Jelly Roll Morton (Ferdinand LaMothe) and Professor Longhair (Henry Roeland Byrd). A century before “Mother-in-Law,” the same folk traditions had inspired the classical compositions of native son Louis Moreau Gottschalk.

In 2010 The Collection launched the Louisiana Musicians Biography Series to document the region’s rich musical heritage. The first title, *Unfinished Blues . . . Memories of a New Orleans Music Man* by Harold Battiste Jr. with Karen Celestan, won the Outstanding Contribution to Publishing award from the Black Caucus of the American Library Association in 2011. Both *Unfinished Blues* and *Ernie K-Doe* are available for sale at The Shop at The Collection and independent booksellers nationwide.

ON SALE



*Above:* A crowd gathers outside Gallier Hall for K-Doe's funeral procession, July 13, 2001, photo by Tabitha Haggerty. *Below:* K-Doe and Billy Delle, WWOZ-FM, May 1990, photo by Paula Burch-Celentano.



“Mother-in-Law” was so popular that it inspired two “answer songs”: “Son-in-Law,” by the girl group the Blossoms, also recorded by Louise Brown (“the other day he even hocked her wedding ring”), and “Brother-in-Law (He’s a Moocher),” by rockabilly artist Paul Peek (“He’s lazy, won’t work, never had a job—get out of my house, you big fat slob”). “Mother-in-Law” is still considered a classic of overlapping genres, including R&B, pop, rock, and the loosely defined “beach music” of the Carolina coast. It has been reissued on at least a hundred anthologies and continues to spawn new renditions, including several Spanish-language versions, commonly titled “La Suegra.” In New Orleans, where the borders between musical genres are extremely porous, bands of every sort are asked to play “Mother-in-Law.” They’re expected to know it, along with K-Doe’s regional hits “T’aint It the Truth,” “Hello My Lover,” “Te Ta Te Ta Ta,” and “A Certain Girl.” None of these other fine songs

achieved national success comparable to that of “Mother-in-Law,” but all are perpetual Gulf Coast favorites. Collectively they established the reputations of Ernie K-Doe and Allen Toussaint as masters of New Orleans rhythm and blues.

This was no small achievement at a time when that field was quite crowded. A vast surge of creativity and commercial success energized the Crescent City from the late 1940s to the early '60s, an era later dubbed the golden age of New Orleans rhythm and blues. A cursory list of its other luminaries includes Fats Domino, Professor Longhair, Shirley and Lee, Smiley Lewis, Irma Thomas, Lee Dorsey, Lloyd Price, Art Neville, Aaron Neville, Huey “Piano” Smith, Frankie Ford, and Clarence “Frogman” Henry. The Meters and Dr. John, who emerged in the late '60s, and the Neville Brothers (with siblings Aaron, Art, Charles, and Cyril), who formed a decade later, also stand in that illustrious number. So do the musicians who accompanied these artists on many of their records: saxophonists Lee Allen and Nat Perrilliat, drummers Earl Palmer and Smokey Johnson, bassists Frank Fields and Lloyd Lambert, and guitarists Roy Montrell, Justin Adams, and “Deacon” John Moore, to name but a few.

Ernie K-Doe felt thrilled when “Mother-in-Law” reached the top. He felt gratified decades later by its staying power. But he never ever felt surprised. “There ain’t but two songs that will stand the test of time,” K-Doe often declared. He would then pause at considerable dramatic length before naming them: “The first song is ‘The Star Spangled Banner,’ and the second song is ‘Mother-in-Law.’ Because people gonna have a mother-in-law until the end of the world.”

When the song hit number one, Ernie K-Doe became a respected peer of his R&B idols. He began performing at prestigious venues around America and in the Caribbean. He cast a significant shadow of musical influence over Europe, especially the nascent world of the British Invasion; in the UK his songs were covered by the likes of the Yardbirds



and Herman’s Hermits. And he created a substantial and lasting legacy of top-notch rhythm and blues recordings. . . .

Ernie K-Doe recorded “Mother-in-Law” on April 25, 1960. But the song that would become his signature tune sat on the shelf for nearly a year before its release, and it almost wasn’t recorded at all. Accounts of the genesis of this epic number diverge on several key points. For the most part, K-Doe claimed to have written “Mother-in-Law” himself, referring to his grim experience with his own mother-in-law Lucy (or Lucifer, as he called her) as ample proof of authorship. Sometimes he simply cited Allen Toussaint as the writer, acknowledging, “There wouldn’t be no Ernie K-Doe if there wasn’t no Allen Toussaint.” In a third, more complex version, K-Doe claimed to have originated the concept and then coached Toussaint on how to get it down on paper.

Toussaint’s recollection includes no such collaboration, nor any real-life experience, on either K-Doe’s part or his own. “It was odd,” he told journalist Steve Wildsmith, “because I wasn’t married at the time, so I had no mother-in-law. It was just a joke used on television a lot in those days—‘Take my mother-in-law . . . please!’ [The song] was such a huge success, but it came from such an odd place.”

*K-Doe and his fans, the Warehouse, New Orleans, 1974, photo by Michael P. Smith, 2007.103.1356*

Everyone involved with recording “Mother-in-Law” agreed that Toussaint hastily scrapped the song when K-Doe didn’t take to it immediately. Beyond this point of agreement, the narrative road quickly forks again. Toussaint has repeatedly stated that singer Willie Harper retrieved the song from the trash and persuaded Toussaint to try it again. K-Doe, of course, credited himself; who else would have had the prescience to rescue the creased and crumpled lead sheet from the wastebasket? “Don’t you never think,” K-Doe raved, “that I don’t know what I’m doing. I could make ’em or I could break ’em, I could throw ’em in the trash can and dig ’em out again like I did ‘Mother-in-Law’! Oh, that was a blessed day, that day I dug ‘Mother-in-Law’ out the trash can! It made Ernie K-Doe all over the world, and that’s why I’m Ernie K-Doe today!” Toussaint, with typical tact and forbearance, offered a differing account: “The story that ‘Mother-in-Law’ had gone in the trash is not fiction. But who pulled it *out* is fiction.”





## FROM THE DIRECTOR

A particularly satisfying aspect of contributing this column is the opportunity to, quite simply, brag about The Historic New Orleans Collection. As you can see from our many activities recorded in the *Quarterly*, a committed and accomplished group of colleagues—the staff of The Collection—works tirelessly to bring a variety of services to the public. In doing so, The Collection continues to earn kudos for its commitment to preserving the history and culture of New Orleans and the Gulf South. Our publications win awards and our research center receives continual acclaim for its service. Recently, several organizations have recognized The Collection for its collections and its visitor experience.

On January 26 the Louisiana Travel Promotion Association presented The Collection with the 2011 Travel and Tourism Industry Louey Award for Travel Attraction of the Year. More than 300 members of the state's tourism industry were on hand to see The Collection accept the award at the 2012 Travel Industry Summit at the Shreveport Convention Center. "To receive a Louey is truly an honor," said Darienne Mobley, coexecutive director of LTPA. "It is one of the few awards in Louisiana that exclusively recognizes the accomplishments of tourism professionals across the state."

In its January issue *Antiques and Fine Arts* magazine named THNOC's acquisition of an early 19th-century silhouette of statesman Thomas Bolling Robertson (see page 16) one of the nation's top 20 acquisitions of 2011. Other institutions recognized alongside THNOC were the Art Institute of Chicago, the Baltimore Museum of Art, the J. Paul Getty Museum, and the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

Also in January, readers of *New Orleans* magazine voted THNOC one of the top three museums in the city, along with the World War II Museum and the New Orleans Museum of Art. Then, in February, readers of *Country Roads* magazine named THNOC their Favorite French Quarter Cultural Experience in the magazine's annual Favorite Things contest.

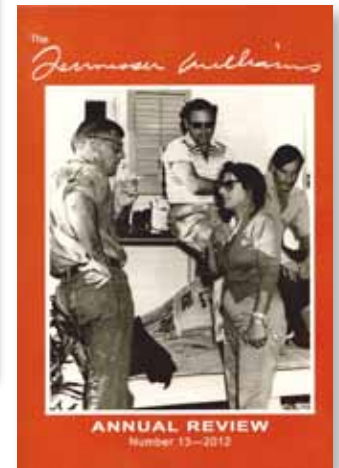
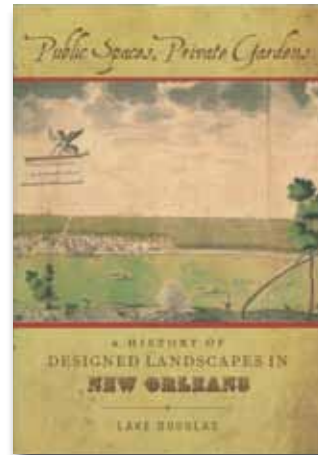
We are certainly proud of this recognition and thank all of you for your presence and your support!

—Priscilla Lawrence

## Williams Prize

Lake Douglas's *Public Spaces, Private Gardens: A History of Designed Landscapes in New Orleans* (Louisiana State University Press) has received the Kemper and Leila Williams Prize in Louisiana History. Douglas, who teaches at LSU's Robert Reich School of Landscape Architecture, employs written accounts, archival data, historic photographs, lithographs, maps, and city planning documents—many of them previously unpublished—to explore public and private outdoor spaces in New Orleans and the people who shaped them.

Named for the founders of The Historic New Orleans Collection, the Williams prize is offered annually by THNOC and the Louisiana Historical Association. Since its inception in 1974, the prize has recognized excellence in research and writing on Louisiana history. Recipients receive a cash award of \$1,500 and a plaque and are honored at the LHA's annual meeting each March. *Public Spaces, Private Gardens* is available for purchase at The Shop at The Collection, 533 Royal Street in New Orleans, [www.hnoc.org](http://www.hnoc.org) or (504) 598-7147.



## New Issue!

The release of the 2012 issue of the *Tennessee Williams Annual Review* marks eight years of fruitful collaboration between The Historic New Orleans Collection and Dr. Robert Bray of Middle Tennessee State University. The journal's cover image, from THNOC's Fred W. Todd Tennessee Williams Collection, catches the famed playwright, in dark sunglasses, during a relaxed moment on the set of *The Rose Tattoo* (1955) with actors Burt Lancaster and Anna Magnani and, far right, his partner Frank Merlo. The 2012 issue features an analysis of Williams's treatment of Italian American themes in *Tattoo*—along with probing essays on Rose Williams's medical diagnosis, Tennessee's debt to European painting, and the celebration of the Williams centenary on the New York stage. Submissions for the 2013 issue are due July 1; visit [www.tennesseewilliamsstudies.org](http://www.tennesseewilliamsstudies.org) for guidelines.



*A series of three images showing change over time at 521 Royal Street. The photograph to the far right, by John Watson Riley, was captured specifically for the digital version of the Vieux Carré Survey.*

## A Beloved Resource Finds New Life in the Digital Realm



The Vieux Carré Survey comprises 130 large binders containing information on the properties bounded by Canal Street, Rampart Street, Esplanade Avenue, and the Mississippi River—information including chain of title, images, maps, charts, and historical building survey data. No other resource among The Collection’s holdings is more frequently used by visitors to the Reading Room of the Williams Research Center. Yet the survey has certain limitations. One is inherent in the structure of the data: researchers can easily access information about discrete addresses, but the lack of an index prohibits targeted searches for other terms. Another limitation looms in the physicality of the resource itself: the overstuffed binders and their pages are fragile and worn from years of use.

With two goals in mind—preservation and increased access—The Collection’s systems department conducted an extensive analysis in 2000 to determine how best to digitize the Vieux Carré Survey. Charles Patch, former director of systems, designed a Microsoft

Access Database to hold the data and begin the survey’s transition from the physical to the digital realm.

The conversion was challenging—time consuming and labor intensive. Fortunately, the Collins C. Diboll Private Foundation stepped up to assist with the financial challenges of the project. The foundation’s generous support made it possible to complete the transformation of the survey. Over the course of 13 years, a total of 53,794 property transactions were entered into the database to recreate the nearly 3,400 chains of title—and approximately 10,000 photographs, diagrams, and documents were scanned and linked to property records.

The digital version of the survey does not simply replicate the original; it expands upon it. In 2010 The Collection hired photographer John Watson Riley to photograph every property in the Vieux Carré. Additional visual documentation includes several maps and plans of the French Quarter. Chains of title, which had stopped circa 1980, are being updated under the ongoing leader-

ship of curator Howard Margot. As new data and illustrations become available, the digital survey is capable of expanding to embrace them.

Perhaps the most striking change, however, is the flexibility of the digital survey. A searchable website—created by David Martin of NolaFlash—allows searches not only by location but also by property owner, owner’s status as a free person of color, architectural rating, building material, and, in limited cases, sale price. The database also allows for key-word searches; queries can be made on building names and business types, for example. Contextual information on the block and city square in which any given property is located, a hallmark of the original survey, remains a vital feature of the database.

The Vieux Carré Survey has taken on new life as the Collins C. Diboll Vieux Carré Digital Survey, accessible via the internet at [www.hnoc.org/vcs](http://www.hnoc.org/vcs). We invite you to search at your leisure—and for your pleasure!

—Carol Bartels



## Fine Prints from the Permanent Collection

The Historic New Orleans Collection celebrates 38 printmakers who worked in Louisiana from the late 19th century to the present in *Fine Prints from the Permanent Collection*. The exhibition features portraits, landscapes, marine scenes, still lifes, and genre scenes produced through various printing techniques. On view are works by notable artists including Thomas Hart Benton, Henry Casselli, Elizabeth Catlett, Ralston Crawford, Caroline Durieux, Mabel Dwight, Morris Henry Hobbs, Sadie Irvine, John McCrady, Clarence Millet, Jules Pascin, Joseph Pennell, Sue Jane Smock, Ellsworth Woodward, and William Woodward. Several prints come from limited editions of 20 or fewer; many have never been published.

From the late 1890s many printmakers focused on the Vieux Carré, including British-born Léon René Pescheret (1892–1971) and Bulgarian artist Jules Pascin (1885–1930). Harry Lee Gadbury's (20th century) concern for the effects of advancing technology is evident in his depiction of a blind man standing on a corner while automobiles pass. An etching by Morris Henry Hobbs (1892–1967) depicts daily life in a busy café. Ralston Crawford's (1906–1978) modernist lithograph presents abstract, geometric louvered shutters.

Several of the portraits on display are rare, particularly Ellsworth Woodward's (1861–1939) painterly monoprint of his young wife, Mary.

Characteristically, no two monoprints are created alike. During this process the print must be transferred quickly to paper or the ink may dry too quickly and unevenly. Woodward's sensitively rendered 1890s monoprint, a medium atypical for the artist, demonstrates his skill in this difficult technique. A rare double-sided woodcut by Charles Surendorf (1906–1979) features a 1934 self-portrait on one side and a 1935 surrealist scene on the other.

Werner Hoehn (1882–1940) and Caroline Durieux (1896–1989), native New Orleanians who resided for a time in Mexico, are represented with sympathetic

*Morning Coffee, Old New Orleans, 1947,*  
by Morris Henry Hobbs, 1959.185.21

portraits of African Americans. Hoehn's lithographic proof, *Sangolo*, portrays a pensive lad in profile. Durieux, who pioneered new technical methods of printmaking, created electron prints with radioactive ink. Her *In Memoriam* shows a despondent woman; the geometric patterns of her subject's plaid tignon, hoop earrings, and patterned dress create a rich visual surface. New Orleanian Henry Casselli's (b. 1946) *Generations* represents three ages—a time-weary elderly woman, a hopeful young woman, and a babe in arms.

Sculptor-painter Elizabeth Catlett (1915–2012), a former chair of Dillard University's art department, resided in New York and Mexico until her recent death. Her 2004 woodcut portraying abolitionist Frederick Douglass is powerful in its contrasting darks and lights, simplified forms, and linear patterns. Jack Jordan (1925–1999), who chaired the art department at Southern University at New Orleans for three decades, evokes an underlying narrative of race and poverty in his 1970s linocut *Going Home*. A man clad in overalls, viewed from the back, heads toward a distant cabin, a hole worn through his shoe sole. His hands and feet are exaggerated in size. The swaying house, swirling landscape, and undulating forms in this energetic composition precede similar canvases by contemporary painters. Sue Jane Smock's (b. 1937) circa 1971 linocut *Bitter Blossoms* portrays a cluster of generic faces growing from a single treelike stalk. *Nonagenarian Father Hermann*, a 1957 aquatint by Guy Livingston Woolley (1893–1973), represents a psychological view of human tribulations by focusing on the gnarled hands of an elderly cleric holding a cross.

Several prints in the show reflect artists' interest in Louisiana's terrain, its marshes and rivers. Joseph Jefferson (1829–1905), who gained international fame for his role as Rip Van Winkle, produced monotypes of southern swamps while on tour. He customarily painted an image on tin and rolled it



Refinery at Night, between 1947 and 1953, by John McCrady, 1998.104.1

through a wringer to transfer the image to paper. An 1882 etching titled *Pilot Town Grocery* by Philadelphian Joseph Pennell (1857–1926) depicts a community near the mouth of the Mississippi. *Swampland*, an unsettling lithograph by regionalist painter Thomas Hart Benton (1889–1975), shows a rowboat afloat on the mirror-still waters of a bayou and a skull perched atop a cross in the immediate foreground.

Louisiana has long appealed to sportsmen, including President Theodore Roosevelt. Walter DuBois Richards (1907–?) produced a lithograph titled *Duck Blind, Bayou Club*, depicting a popular hunting club where Roosevelt once hunted. Visiting artists were also attracted to harbor scenes. Mabel Dwight's (1876–1955) 1929 lithograph *Derelict Banana Boatman* focuses on the drudgery of life as a dockworker. This print contrasts with her *Old Southern Graveyard*, a bucolic scene with lambs lying among tombs.

John McCrady (1911–1968), who taught printmaking at the Arts and Crafts Club of New Orleans and at his own French Quarter art school, is known

for paintings of steamboats. His *Refinery at Night*, executed for the Standard Oil Company, captures the effects of industrial light radiating in the evening sky.

The prints in this exhibition, which present a broad range of artistic subjects, document the evolution of printmaking in New Orleans. Collectively, they underscore the artists' versatility in portraying rural, urban, industrial, and marine life in Louisiana.

—Judith H. Bonner

*Fine Prints from the Permanent Collection*

On view in the  
Boyd Cruise Gallery II  
410 Chartres Street

Tuesday–Saturday  
9:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m.

Free and open to the public

ON VIEW

The   
New Orleans  
Antiques Forum  
2012



Two hundred years ago, as the United States prepared for war with Great Britain, Louisiana joined the Union as the 18th state—the first added to the coastal south outside of the original 13. For two centuries the Pelican State has exerted a distinctive influence on the region’s history and culture. Louisiana’s principal city, New Orleans, has served as a design center for the decorative arts and as a magnet for the importation of these arts from other parts of the country and overseas. In recognition of the bicentennial of Louisiana statehood and the War of 1812, The Historic New Orleans Collection pres-

ents the 2012 New Orleans Antiques Forum, *Circa 1812*. Tom Savage, director of museum affairs for Winterthur Museum, Garden and Library, will serve as forum moderator.

The four-day event will be held from Thursday, August 2, through Sunday, August 5, beginning with optional guided tours on Thursday and continuing with daily sessions Friday through Sunday in the Boyd Cruise Room of the Williams Research Center, 410 Chartres Street.

Registration will open June 1; visit [www.hnoc.org/antiques.htm](http://www.hnoc.org/antiques.htm) for details or call (504) 523-4662.

*Left to right:* Tablespoon and teaspoon by Anthony Rasch, New Orleans, ca. 1821; courtesy of The Hermitage, Home of President Andrew Jackson; photograph by Skip Comer. Card table attributed to Duncan Phyfe, 1815–1825; courtesy of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, partial and promised gift of James and Laura Freeman, 2004 (2004.538); photograph © The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Detail, armoire attributed to the workshop of François Seignouret, New Orleans, 1800–1825; 2009.0027, gift of John Geiser III in memory of Marjorie Peirce Geiser and John Geiser Jr. Tall clock dial by Aaron Willard, Boston, ca. 1800; courtesy of a private collection; photograph by Thomas Neill.

## Thursday, August 2

Optional preconference tours: morning walking tour of the historic French Quarter or day trip to St. Francisville, Louisiana, to visit three magnificent plantation houses

## Friday, August 3

### *Welcome*

Priscilla Lawrence, Executive Director  
Jack Pruitt Jr., Director of Development and External Affairs  
The Historic New Orleans Collection

### *Opening Remarks*

#### *1812: An Overture*

Tom Savage  
Director, Museum Affairs  
Winterthur Museum, Garden and Library

#### *Circa 1812: A Most Interesting Time in the Coastal South*

John H. Lawrence  
Director of Museum Programs  
The Historic New Orleans Collection

#### *Burned and Rebuilt: The White House in the War of 1812*

William Seale  
Author, Historian

#### *"The Hunters of Kentucky": Origins, Influences, and Objects of America's Frontier Riflemen*

R. Scott Stephenson  
Director of Collections and Interpretation  
The American Revolution Center

#### *Peace Then Plenty: Duncan Phyfe and the Rise of the New York School of Cabinetmaking, 1812–1825*

Peter Kenny  
Ruth Bigelow Wriston Curator of American Decorative Arts and Administrator of the American Wing  
The Metropolitan Museum of Art

### **Reception**

The Historic New Orleans Collection  
533 Royal Street

## Saturday, August 4

### *Andrew Jackson, Consumer*

Marsha Mullin  
Vice President, Museum Services, and Chief Curator  
The Hermitage: Home of President Andrew Jackson

### *The Federalization of Vernacular Design*

Eugene Darwin Cizek  
Professor of Architecture and Latin American Studies  
Tulane University School of Architecture

### *Alexander Wilson and the Beginnings of American Ornithology*

Christopher W. Lane  
Co-owner, The Philadelphia Print Shop

### *The Importance of Commerce and Trade in Southern Clock Making, 1760–1825*

Robert Cheney  
Director of Science Technology and Clocks  
Skinner, Inc.



## Sunday, August 5

### *New Treasures at The Historic New Orleans Collection*

Priscilla Lawrence  
The Historic New Orleans Collection

### *"Only Superficial"?: The Importance of Wall and Floor Coverings During the Early National Period*

Lynne Dakin Hastings  
Museum Consultant

### *Collecting For a Federal Period Southern House*

Morgan Delaney  
Collector

### *Closing Remarks*

Priscilla Lawrence  
Jack Pruitt Jr.  
The Historic New Orleans Collection

Optional brunch with the speakers:  
Antoine's Restaurant

New Orleans Silversmiths



Hotel Monteleone

Royal Antiques



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[www.hnoc.org](http://www.hnoc.org)

## BECOME A MEMBER

### Membership Benefits

All members of The Collection enjoy the following benefits for one full year:

- Complimentary admission to all permanent tours and rotating exhibitions
- Complimentary admission to the Concerts in the Courtyard series
- A 10 percent discount at The Shop at The Collection
- A subscription to *The Historic New Orleans Collection Quarterly*
- Special invitations to events, trips, receptions, and exhibition previews

### New Benefits of Membership!

Responding to your requests and to the increase in program benefits, The Collection is offering new opportunities for membership at the Founder level.

**Founder Individual Membership:**  
\$35 for one person

**Founder Family Membership: \$65**  
for one or two adults and any children under 18 all residing in a single household, or for one member and a guest

We value your association with our community. Should you have any questions related to membership, you may call (504) 598-7109.

### How to Join

To become a member of The Historic New Orleans Collection, visit [www.hnoc.org](http://www.hnoc.org) and click the Support Us link, or complete the form on the enclosed envelope and return it with your gift. Memberships at the Founder Family level and above include benefits for up to two adults and any children under 18 residing in a single household, or for one member and a guest.

### Membership Levels

FOUNDER INDIVIDUAL \$35  
FOUNDER FAMILY \$65  
*Full membership benefits*

MERIEULT SOCIETY \$100  
*Full membership benefits plus:*

- a special gift

MAHALIA SOCIETY \$250  
*Full membership benefits plus:*

- a special gift
- private, guided tours (by appointment)

JACKSON SOCIETY \$500  
*Full membership benefits plus:*

- a special gift
- private, guided tours (by appointment)
- free admission to all evening lectures

LAUSSAT SOCIETY \$1,000  
*Full membership benefits plus:*

- a special gift
- private, guided tours (by appointment)
- free admission to all evening lectures
- invitation to annual gala evening

BIENVILLE CIRCLE \$5,000  
*Full membership benefits plus:*

- a special gift
- private, guided tours (by appointment)
- free admission to all evening lectures
- invitation to annual gala evening
- lunch with the executive director

### North American Reciprocal Museum Program

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## FOCUS ON PHILANTHROPY

### *Timothy Killeen*

**N**o one understands the importance of preservation better than Timothy Killeen. After falling in love with the Gulf Coast and its unique environment as a young boy, he committed his career to fighting for the safety and integrity of the region's coastal wetlands. He has worked for the state of Louisiana for more than 30 years, and even though he could retire soon, he has no plans to do so. This unwavering dedication to conservation is what first drew him to The Historic New Orleans Collection and convinced him to become a member.

In 2006 Killeen attended a lecture at the Jefferson Parish Library, given by Director of Museum Programs John Lawrence and Curator/Historian John Magill, on the exhibition *Common Routes: St. Domingue • Louisiana*. "I was amazed," says Killeen. "Growing up here and studying Louisiana history, you have this little paragraph in your history book about the Haitian slave revolt, but we didn't really learn about the far-reaching effects of what happened in Haiti to the culture of New Orleans."

Killeen recognized the similarities between his work at the Department of Natural Resources and The Collection's commitment to cultural and architectural preservation. "Natural history and cultural history go hand in hand, especially in Louisiana," he explains. "It's very similar to what we do trying to preserve coastal resources." He likens his passion for the outdoors and wetlands to The Collection's passion for old New Orleans architecture, for keeping its "integrity."

He also knows intimately what can happen when culture is not conserved. Killeen's mother's family emigrated from France to South Louisiana in 1873. The family was eager to adapt to its new,



English-speaking home, and the retention of the French language was not a priority. "My grandmother spoke fluent French, but . . . [the family] was starting to get away from it because they wanted to assimilate. My mother knew a little bit of French, but a loss of the culture had occurred."

The paternal side of Killeen's family, meanwhile, departed Ireland during the potato famine of the mid-19th century and eventually settled in Algiers. Killeen's father, a decorated World War II veteran, and his brothers were active in the Algiers Irish Association, helping to preserve their Irish connections for younger generations.

"The Collection, as a leader in preservation of cultural resources, helps protect what is in danger of being lost," Killeen observes. "It gives people a better understanding of our traditions."

When asked about his favorite aspect of The Collection's work, he immediately mentions the accessibility of exhibitions, programming, and the Williams Research Center. "What I appreciate is that The Collection offers a lot of historical information to people

for free," says Killeen. "It's there for free, no excuses. It's especially great for students—grammar school, high school, college. If you want to see it, it's there."

As for himself, Killeen is a typical Louisiana sportsman—he's a fan of spending time outdoors fishing, biking, and hunting. And like any good Louisianian, he's a fan of local music. When he's not slogging through mud doing research or slogging through paperwork analyzing results, you can probably find him at a concert.

"I think The Collection's Concerts in the Courtyard are great—you need to have that social aspect to an institution. Plus, with the smaller group you can feel like you're closer to the artists performing."

Killeen knows that the fragile natural beauty of the Gulf Coast is intertwined with its distinctive culture.

"We understand that we don't have a pristine environment—it has been impacted, and we have to be realistic. But the reason why people enjoy the outdoors here, and the culture of this area, is because of those resources, and we have to protect them."

—*Lauren Noel*

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January–March 2012

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## ACQUISITIONS

The Historic New Orleans Collection encourages research in the Williams Research Center at 410 Chartres Street from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday (except holidays). Cataloged materials available to researchers include books, manuscripts, paintings, prints, drawings, maps, photographs, and artifacts about the history and culture of New Orleans, Louisiana, and the Gulf South. Each year The Collection adds thousands of items to its holdings. Though only selected gifts are mentioned here, the importance of all gifts cannot be overstated. Prospective donors are invited to contact the authors of the acquisitions columns.

### Curatorial

For the fourth quarter of 2011 (October–December), there were 30 acquisitions, totaling over 220 items.

■ Shortly before Virginia-born Thomas Bolling Robertson (1773–1828) was appointed secretary of the territory of Orleans by President Thomas Jefferson on August 12, 1807, he posed for a profile portrait by Charles B. J. F. de Saint-Mémin (1770–1852) in Richmond. The chalk portrait, drawn on pink paper and framed under eglomisé glass, was recently acquired by The Historic New Orleans Collection through The Collection's Laussat Society.

Robertson, who studied law at the College of William and Mary, served in several governmental capacities in Louisiana during its territorial period and early statehood. After his stint as secretary, he briefly took on the post of federal land commissioner in 1808. In 1812 he became the state's first member of the House of Representatives and served until 1818. The next year

he was appointed the state's attorney general, a position he held until 1820 when he was elected Louisiana's third governor. His authority compromised by escalating tensions between established Creoles and newly arriving Americans, Robertson was forced to resign in 1824. He was appointed to a federal judgeship in Louisiana, which he retained until his death.

Escaping the French Revolution, Saint-Mémin came to the United States in 1793. Here he taught himself engraving and drawing, and made profile portraits using a device called a physiognotrace, invented by fellow Frenchman Gilles-Louis Chrétien ca. 1783. His technique allowed him to capture delicate facial and clothing features, evident in the Robertson profile. Saint-Mémin traveled throughout the United States and is credited with making nearly 1,000 such portraits. He returned to France in 1814 and from 1817 until his death served as director of the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Dijon. (2011.0408)



■ Joe Wilkins of New Orleans recently donated a collection of 66 black-and-white snapshots, most of which he took on Mardi Gras, March 2, 1965, in the French Quarter. Some dated "196\_" are most likely from that same year or the following Mardi Gras, February 22, 1966. In one shot, masking-tape Xs can be seen in the windows of Pepe's Piano Bar, 327 Bourbon—a possible remnant from 1964's Hurricane Hilda or 1965's Betsy.

Most sites in the photos are recognizable to viewers familiar with the present-day French Quarter: Jackson Square; Brennan's Restaurant, 417 Royal; Le Pretre House, Dauphine at Orleans; and the LaBranche Buildings, Royal and St. Peter. Some no-longer-operating businesses include A&P, Royal and St. Peter; Dixie's Bar, 701 Bourbon; Toney's Spaghetti House, 210 Bourbon; Buck Forty Nine Steak House, 216 Bourbon; and Maison Blanche and D. H. Holmes department stores, Dauphine and Iberville Streets.

In some images people can be seen strolling along Bourbon and Royal Streets, far fewer than the throngs that crowd the French Quarter during carnival today. Among the costumed revelers are some men dressed in drag—one garbed as a 1920s flapper, others in the evening dresses and bouffant wigs popular in the mid-1960s. Most individuals are not costumed but provide an excellent picture of casual clothing from the period.

One notable shot shows Pete Fountain's Half-Fast Walking Club near the Washing Well Laundryteria, 841 Bourbon, marching in costume toward Pete Fountain's French Quarter Inn. Then popularly called Pete's Place, it is now the site of Oz bar, 800 Bourbon. The photographs appear to have been shot in the morning, since Bourbon is not yet filled with litter and mounds of discarded beer cans. A sign of the times is a Lucky Dog cart advertising 35-cent dogs. (2011.0378.1-66)

—John T. Magill

### Library

For the fourth quarter of 2011 (October–December), there were 28 acquisitions, totaling 106 items.

■ Although sugar was the major crop in the immediate New Orleans area in the 19th century, the city was also an important center for the business of cotton. In 1860 approximately two-thirds of all American cotton was produced

in the area east of the Mississippi River. New Orleans boasted numerous cotton presses; wharves; insurers; cotton factors, who acted as agents for the planters; and brokers, who represented the interests of private investment houses and textile manufacturers. Indeed, antebellum New Orleans was developed to a great extent by men who made their fortunes in cotton and its related businesses. But while the sugar industry generated an annual report on sugar production in Louisiana, printed in New Orleans, there was no comparable report on cotton production. Other than a very few items and some general articles in *DeBow's Review*, most antebellum publications on the subject focus on national or international aspects of cotton production rather than the local trade. The library recently acquired an unusual book on cotton in New Orleans published in Paris in 1859 in the Armenian language, demonstrating far-reaching interest in the trade. *Nor Orleani Bambaki Mshakutiwne*, or *La Culture de Coton à la Nouvelle-Orleans*, discusses cotton production, contains numerous depictions of the tools and processes unique to handling cotton in that period, and is a beautiful example of the bookbinder's art. (2011.0432.1)

■ Pierre Gustave Toutant Beauregard (1818–1893), arguably one of the Confederacy's ablest generals, married his second wife, Caroline Deslonde of St. James Parish, in 1860. A scant four years later, following a lengthy illness, she died on March 2, 1864, in federally occupied New Orleans while her husband was away commanding troops near Jacksonville, Florida. Her funeral drew thousands of people in an outburst of patriotism and sympathy for the Southern cause, and Louisiana composer Theodore von La Hache (1822–1869) wrote a piece for the occasion. A copy of *Elegy on the Death of Mme. G. T. Beauregard for the Piano Forte* was recently given to the library by Elizabeth P. Miles. The sheet music, “à la mémoire de Mme. G. T. Beauregard,”

was published by Louis Grunewald at 26 Chartres Street, in the block now occupied by the Marriott Hotel, and bears carrier notations for E. W. Bogel in Baton Rouge and W. Nash in Natchez. (2011.0292)

■ Captain Obadiah Congar (1768–1848), mariner and commercial shipmaster for 50 years from the port of New York, willed his journal “to the Seamen's Friend Society, with instructions to have a book prepared out of it, and three thousand copies to be printed and circulated among seamen at his expense.” According to the editor, Rev. Henry T. Cheever, it was Congar's hope that his life and religious experiences might be useful to others. His career at sea took him to many places around the world—the West Indies, Jamaica, Ireland, England, China, Malaysia. Although he made several trips to New Orleans and briefly maintained a mercantile business in Natchez in the early 1820s, Capt. Congar's editor reports little of what the captain's journal may have included about his impressions of those cities. The captain is quoted, “Our fears at leaving New York, lest some person on board might have the yellow fever, were great; and no less so were they lest some of us might take the disease in New Orleans.” Eventually he settled in Florida, becoming mayor of Jacksonville in 1844; he died while on a visit to New York at the age of 81. (2011.0351.1)

—*Pamela D. Arceneaux*

## Manuscripts

For the fourth quarter of 2011 (October–December), there were 34 acquisitions, totaling approximately 88 linear feet.

■ The Historic New Orleans Collection has recently acquired a letter of David Bannister Morgan (1773–1848), a statesman, surveyor, and soldier who played a prominent role in the Battle of New Orleans. A decade prior to the battle, in September 1804, Captain Manuel García y Muñis captured Morgan, who had been surveying Juan Ventura

Morales's land along the Tchefuncte River, and held him captive aboard a Spanish naval schooner.

In his December 4, 1804, letter to Adam Comstock of Greenfield, New York, Morgan describes in detail his shipboard captivity and escape. Having escaped his captors, Morgan successfully filed suit to recover personal property the Spanish had taken from him. Soon thereafter, American officials arrested García y Muñis, inflaming Spanish loyalists who demanded his release.

The David Bannister Morgan letter complements an earlier Collection acquisition. David Bannister Morgan's survey of land along the north shore of Lake Pontchartrain at the junction with the Tchefuncte River (1977.128) was prepared on July 23, 1804, less than two months prior to the surveyor's abduction. (2011.0313)

■ A gift of Ms. Laura Butler Bayon and Ms. Lucile Bayon Hume, the Farar, Mercer, and Butler Family Papers include personal correspondence of Dr. William Newton Mercer (1792–1874) and his wife, Ann Eliza Farar (1796–1839), owners of Laurel Hill Plantation. Mrs. Mercer's mother, Mary Ellis Farar, previously owned the plantation located near Natchez, Mississippi.

Mary Ellis Farar's niece, Ann Ellis (1794–1878), married Judge Thomas Butler (1785–1847) of the Louisiana Third District Court. A politician and planter residing in St. Francisville, Louisiana, Judge Thomas Butler led two failed Louisiana gubernatorial campaigns in the 1820s. The newly acquired papers contain correspondence relating to Butler's political aspirations.

Judge Butler's great-grandson, James Pierce Butler (1880–1941), served as the president of the Canal Bank and Trust and chairman of the Louisiana Flood Control Committee. In 1927, in recognition of his campaign for adequate flood control, the *Times-Picayune* awarded Butler its Loving Cup. A proponent of the controversial decision to dynamite the levee at Caernarvon, Louisiana, in

**Culinary Forum**

*Creole Sweet: The Praline and Its World*  
The Collection joins with Dillard University to present a day-long forum featuring talks and panel discussions on the vending, production, and consumption of the quintessential Louisiana candy and its cousins. Historian Jessica Harris and other distinguished speakers will serve as guides on a culinary journey stretching from Mexico to Jamaica, from Puerto Rico to the Pelican State, and into praline-loving households worldwide.

**Friday, June 8**

Reception: 6–8 p.m.  
533 Royal Street

**Saturday, June 9**

Registration: 8 a.m.  
Forum: 9 a.m.–4 p.m.  
Williams Research Center  
410 Chartres Street  
Registration required: \$50 per person; \$35 for Dillard faculty, THNOC members, and students.  
Call (504) 523-4662 for reservations.

**10th Les Comédiens Français Lecture**

*Julien Poydras: Planter, Statesman, Poet*  
A prominent landowner and statesman, Julien Poydras (1726–1824) was also a man of letters. Following a biographical address by THNOC curator Howard Margot, actress and attorney Janet Daley Duval will read an English-language translation of Poydras's poem "La Prise du morne du Bâton Rouge par Monseigneur de Galvez." Printed in 1779 under the sponsorship of Carlos III of Spain, the poem describes the Spanish capture of Baton Rouge from the English.

**Thursday, July 12**

6:30 p.m.  
Williams Research Center  
410 Chartres Street  
Admission: Free  
Open to the public; seating is limited.

hopes of sparing the city of New Orleans during the Great 1927 Mississippi River Flood, Butler later managed reparations made to St. Bernard and Plaquemines Parish residents whose lands were intentionally flooded. Highlights of the Farar, Mercer, and Butler Family Papers include Butler's 1927 Loving Cup trophy, as well as a scrapbook containing news clippings concerning both the award and Butler's flood control efforts. (2011.0344)

■ The Historic New Orleans Collection has recently acquired materials relating to the career of Danish explorer and archaeologist Frans Ferdinand Blom (1893–1963). The Frans Blom Collection includes a small number of photographs and postcards Blom sent to correspondents in New Orleans. Highlights include a note regarding a Maya archaeological dig and a postcard sent to Dr. Rudolph Matas.

Blom was equally at home in Jazz Age New Orleans's art and literary communities as in the jungle ruins of Central America. Counted among his many friends were William Spratling, Sherwood Anderson, William Faulkner, Lyle Saxon, and society columnist Dorothy Dix, who wrote of her experience accompanying Blom on an expedition to Yucatán: "Going to Mexico with Frans Blom is like being shown over heaven by an archangel."

Blom first encountered Mesoamerican ruins while working in the oil exploration industry, and in 1922 he landed a job as assistant to archaeologist Manuel Gamio in the Dirección de Antropología in Mexico City. Blom's personal research at Palenque caught the attention of top scholars, resulting in his being offered a Harvard scholarship. In 1924 he joined Tulane University's newly formed Department of Middle American Research under the direction of William Gates.

In 1925 Blom and anthropologist Oliver La Farge led an expedition through Mexico and Guatemala, a journey later recounted in the book

*Tribes and Temples*. The following year Blom succeeded Gates as director of the Department of Middle American Research, a position he held until 1940. While at Tulane Blom was an important contributor to scholarship about Maya hieroglyphics and culture—but his professional successes did not extend to his personal life, which, by the late 1930s, was falling apart.

Blom's first marriage ended in divorce in 1938; two years later, alcoholism abruptly ended his career at Tulane. Relocating to Mexico, he met and married Swiss photographer Gertrude "Trudi" Duby (1901–1993). Blom died at San Cristóbal de Las Casas, Chiapas, Mexico, on June 23, 1963, at the age of 70. Trudi Duby Blom continued her husband's work until her own demise in 1993, at the age of 92. (2011.0428)

—*Mary Lou Eichhorn*



THE QUARTERLY

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Jessica Dorman  
*Head of Photography*  
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*The Historic New Orleans Collection Quarterly* is published by The Historic New Orleans Collection, which is operated by the Kemper and Leila Williams Foundation, a Louisiana nonprofit corporation. Housed in a complex of historic buildings in the French Quarter, facilities are open to the public, Tuesday through Saturday, from 9:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m., and Sunday, from 10:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. Tours of the History Galleries, Williams Residence, and Courtyards and Architecture are available for a nominal fee.

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ISSN 0886-2109  
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## STAFF

### In the Community

Both **Pamela D. Arceneaux** and **Erin Greenwald** presented a variety of New Orleans-themed lectures to passengers aboard Royal Caribbean's *Voyager of the Seas*. **Anita Kazmierczak-Hoffman** will be serving as CaMMS (Cataloging and Metadata Management Section) mentor for the Association for Library and Technical Services, a division of the American Library Association; the program matches experienced catalogers with library school students and individuals new to the profession of cataloging. The American Association of Museums awarded a 2012 AAM Emerging Professional Fellowship to **Jennifer Reback** and a 2012 AAM Mid-Career Professional Network Fellowship to **Erin Greenwald** to support their attendance at the organization's annual meeting in Minneapolis/St. Paul this spring.

### Changes

**Mark Cave**, senior curator and oral historian. **Matt Farah**, research assistant and project specialist. **Andy Forester**, programmer/systems analyst. **Erin Greenwald**, curator and historian. **Goldie Lanaux**, head registrar. **Howard Margot**, curator. **Elizabeth Ogden**, docent and project specialist. **Bobby Ticknor**, docent and receptionist.

### Volunteers

**Marie Castaing**, **Durban Clark**, **Sara Gothard**, **Ellen Harris**, **Capt. Clarke Hawley**, **Beth Lubel**, **Jean Paul Perrilliat**, **Elizabeth Reade**, **Lydia Schmalz**, **Gloria Slater**, **Susan Williams**, **Colleen Willoughby**, and **Lisa Wilson**, docent department.

### WRC Spotlight

**Marie Chouleur**, originally from Nîmes, France, is a graduate of the École nationale des chartes in Paris, with which The

Collection has an ongoing internship program. She was our first student intern from the prestigious Institut national du patrimoine in Paris. Chouleur worked for six weeks with Jason Wiese, assistant director of the Williams Research Center, to process and catalog the Jean Baptiste Longpré archive (MSS 627).

**Julie Bursch** is a graduating senior and history major at Tulane University. Like many student volunteers from Tulane, Bursch learned about The Collection through the university's history department and its Center for Public Service. Originally from Nashville, Bursch will be working on the Collins C. Diboll Vieux Carré Digital Survey.

**Vasser Howorth** is earning a master's degree with a concentration in archives from LSU's School of Library and Information Science. A native of Oxford, Mississippi, Howorth will also be volunteering primarily on the Collins C. Diboll Vieux Carré Digital Survey.

*Guests mingled on March 23 as The Collection hosted a cocktail party for participants in the 2012 Tennessee Williams/New Orleans Literary Festival. Among those enjoying the festivities were (top left) Amy Dickinson, Christian Jules LeBlanc, and Janet Daley Duval, and (top right) Annette Saddik and Denys Landry. On April 11 the Counting House was packed to the rafters for the launch of Ernie K-Doe: The R&B Emperor of New Orleans. Karen Celestan, author Ben Sandmel, and the one-and-only K-Doe statue fielded questions from the audience (below left), while Joe Honeydripper, Geannie Thomas, and Ernie Vincent (below right) mingled following the Q&A.*



ON THE SCENE



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## THE SHOP AT THE COLLECTION

### *Louisiana Bicentennial Candles*

In the decade since its founding, Nouvelle Candle Company of Scott, Louisiana, has become one of the most respected candle makers in the industry. In recognition of the company's excellence, Nouvelle has been selected as the official candle manufacturer of the 2012 Louisiana State Bicentennial. A special Louisiana Bicentennial collection features four fragrances—Atchafalaya, Vieux Carré, Live Oak & Magnolia, and River Road—that richly evoke the state's unique landscape and history. Each fragrance may be purchased in a single-scent candle or combined in one



spectacular layered candle that Nouvelle has christened Layers of Louisiana. Nouvelle playfully describes the signature candle of the collection, Kingfish, as “complex, bold, and somewhat corruptive, like the famed Populist himself.”

A portion of Nouvelle's retail sales will be donated to the Louisiana State Bicentennial Commission to help fund the year-long celebration.

The candles range in price from \$15 to \$45 and are now available in The Shop.