
Centerpiece

Newsletter of the Center for Southeast Louisiana Studies
College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences
Southeastern Louisiana University

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From the Director

Extraordinary change remains an ever present reality in southeastern Louisiana. The dramatic recasting of regional identity occasioned by Hurricane Katrina was reinforced over the past year as Hurricane Gustav delivered another devastating blow to the Florida parishes. In the wake of Gustav, Hurricane Ike ravaged the Texas coast necessitating the cancellation of the 26th annual Gulf South History and Humanities conference scheduled for Galveston in October 2008. Amid the burdens associated with such unprecedented changes, the staff at the Center have searched for, and found, some silver linings. Our new film, *American Crisis, American Shame: The National Consequence of Coastal Erosion*, inspired by the consequences of the storms, offers that nature's wrath has forced us to aggressively confront a long impending crisis threatening the Bayou State. Likewise the storms have inspired scores of collectors to realize the fragility of their holdings and encouraged them to deposit their collections in the Center. In the past twelve months we witnessed the arrival of unprecedented numbers of new collections to augment the Center archives.

Change has arrived in other forms as well. The Center has procured substantive new equipment that advances our technological capabilities and offers us the ability to vastly enhance services to the university and public. Our sustained commitment to primary source research highlighting our subject region is providing new insight into the forces that contributed to the peculiar pattern of development enjoyed by Louisiana's most curious region. In a more obvious sense, change has arrived in the form of location as the Center was moved from the second to the third floor of Sims Memorial Library. Our new environs offer expanded space and the opportunity for new creativity in our exhibition area and adjoining research room.

The details of all the changes we have endured over the past year, as well as the opportunities these changes bring in the coming months, are discussed in this edition of the



Center staff seated from L to R: Victoria Mocsary, Holly Furlow, Katelyn Towns, Yana Uvarova. Standing from L to R: Andrew Barr, Samuel C. Hyde, Matthew Doolittle, Keith Finley.

Centerpiece. Amid the transitions we have remained true to our mission of “preserving and promoting the history and cultures of Louisiana’s Florida parishes, southwestern Mississippi, and surrounding areas” through an ever expanding series of scholarly vehicles. While many of our traditional projects have been enhanced and amplified, none have been abandoned. The current financial crisis confronting our state and nation may force us to engage in some creative maneuvering to sustain our efforts, but it can not dampen the enthusiasm for our purpose. As we advance toward the approaching bicentennial of the West Florida Republic and the opportunity for an unprecedented celebration of our culture and identity, we encourage you to join us in the effort. We are certain you will find the effort rewarding and your appreciation of our home region dramatically enhanced!

Samuel C. Hyde, Jr.
Leon Ford Professor of History, Director

Moving on Up

Early in the fall semester 2008, rumors began circulating that major changes were coming to Sims Memorial Library. At first, the Center staff paid little attention to the gossip as we felt certain our little redoubt would remain untouched. Besides, we had our energy focused on an array of pending projects that commanded all of our resources. It soon became clear however that the Center was at the epicenter of the planned change. Word trickled in that we would be relocated to the third floor, the site of government documents. Director Hyde immediately voiced his concerns to the administration, regarding the importance of maintaining the integrity and safety of our collections. Our apprehensions were alleviated as the specifics of the project became known. Change would occur, but not of so drastic a nature as to threaten our basic operation. After what will surely be a short-term period of readjustment, we are confident that our new location in the Morrison Room will enable us to even better serve the needs of our patrons and, with the addition of extra space, to remain the preeminent repository of archival material pertaining to southeastern Louisiana.

As the Center resumed its normal operating hours following the Christmas holiday, we began preparations for our move. In less than three days it was over. All of our belongings were transported to the third floor save for the material in the climate controlled closed stacks room which will remain in its current location protected by a soon-to-be constructed ante-room accessible only to Center staffers. Our multi-level security plan continues unchanged.

As we adapt to our surroundings, we ask for your patience. The division of our holdings on two floors will necessitate slightly longer than customary waits for requested archival items. This minor inconvenience will ensure that our holdings on both floors are safeguarded in an archivally appropriate manner. We are sure our patrons and benefactors desire this objective as much as we do. If you are in the area, feel free to visit us in our new location on the third floor of the Sims Memorial Library, Room 306—the Morrison Room.



A moment of levity in the midst of much movement. Center staffers Andrew Barr, Lindsey Marshall, Yana Uvarova, and Holly Furlow convert Sam Hyde's office into a winter wonderland.

Another Hurricane, Another GSHA

Gulf Coast residents are painfully aware of the threat posed by hurricanes. Property damage, flooding, and loss of power are all too common occurrences in our region. Inconveniences abound as does the sad realization that another hurricane season is right around the corner. During the past five years, major hurricanes have battered our region affecting not only our people, but also our study of history. Recent meetings of the Gulf South Historical Association have coincided with especially devastating storms from Hurricane Ivan in 2004 to Hurricane Katrina in 2005. Each tropical system prompted some changes, even last minute venue shifts, but the Gulf South conference went on as scheduled. The 2008 GSHA gathering proved different.

Preparations for last year's conference commenced immediately following the one that preceded it. Gulf South Board members, along with GSHA Executive Director Sam Hyde settled on Galveston, Texas as the site for the 2008 conference. Dr. Donald Willett of Texas A & M, Galveston assisted by Dr. Sam Marks volunteered to organize the conference, selecting the historic Hotel Galvez as the location for the event. Center staff members pitched in with sorting several bulk mailings inviting the interested to attend the 1-4 October event with special theme sessions on "The Gulf South in Change." Both Drs. Finley and Hyde prepared papers and even made reservations at the Galvez. Concerns were raised when Hurricane Gustav plowed thru south Louisiana as the conference date neared and then powerful Hurricane Ike entered the Gulf. GSHA officials carefully tracked the storm's trajectory, hoping it would dissipate before making landfall. Despite hopes, it became clear that the Gulf coast of Texas would bear the brunt of the storm. Galveston was under the gun. On September 13, 2008, Ike brought significant damage to south central and south west Louisiana and utter devastation to the Texas Gulf Coast. At the Center, we waited patiently for word from Galveston Beach. When it arrived, the news was bleak. The Hotel Galvez received significant damage, while the infrastructure of Galveston Island had been devastated. Galveston's mayor urged residents to stay away. No conference could possibly occur in October.

With few options for relocation available in the wake of Gustav and Ike, Director Hyde in consultation with the GSHA Board decided to cancel the conference for the year. E-mails of disappointment started pouring in as scholars, who had devoted their energies to preparing conference papers found themselves without a sounding board for their ideas. All were informed that the organization would host a conference in 2009—this time in Pensacola, Florida, the home of many successful previous conferences. Our hearts and prayers go out to our good friends in

Galveston—we thank them for all of their hard work in preparing what would surely have been a first-rate affair. We hope to see all of you in Pensacola later this year. Be on the lookout for information on the event.

Judge Leon Ford III Lecture in History - Hodding Carter



Hodding Carter, III

In 2006, the Center in conjunction with the Ford Family Charitable Foundation initiated a new lecture series during Fanfare, Southeastern Louisiana University's month-long celebration of the arts. The lecture series, named in honor of the late Judge Leon Ford III brings in world-renowned scholars to address a historical topic of their choosing. Professor John Boles from Rice University delivered the very first Ford lecture and set the standard of excellence against which all future speakers will be judged.

In 2008, we were fortunate to retain the services of Hodding Carter III, a nationally known journalist, author, and public servant, for the lecture. A native of New Orleans, Carter grew up in Greenville, Mississippi, where his parents, legendary journalist and Hammond native Hodding Carter II and Betty Werlein Carter, relocated after operating the Hammond Daily Courier. He graduated from Princeton University in 1957, and returned to Greenville and his family's daily newspaper, the Greenville *Delta Democrat-Times* in 1959. While there, he won a national professional journalism award for editorial writing in 1961 and a Nieman Fellowship at Harvard for 1965-66. He served as reporter, managing editor, and editor/associate publisher during his seventeen years at the paper. In 1968 he served as co-chair of the biracial delegation that ousted the state's white Democratic Party delegation at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago. He worked in Lyndon Johnson's presidential campaign in Washington in 1964 and Jimmy Carter's campaign in Atlanta in 1976. Following Carter's victory, he was named Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs and State Department spokesman. He is currently Professor of Leadership and Public Policy at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Carter did not disappoint. In front of a large crowd at the Columbia Theater in downtown Hammond on the evening of October 16th, he regaled the audience with humorous anecdotes from his youth which had many in attendance nodding nostalgically. He further urged the audience to step outside of the narrow strictures of partisan politics and embrace a philosophy that has served as the hallmark of the American republic. Bi-partisan consensus, Carter observed, is the linchpin of our political system. Delivered in the midst of the rancorous presidential campaign pitting Democrat Barack Obama against Republican John McCain, Carter's observations reminded everyone that regardless of party loyalty we are all Americans and must work together toward the achievement of the common good.

Following the lecture, the Ford Family sponsored a cocktail party reception that featured great food, excellent spirits, and a relaxed atmosphere for conversation. Hodding Carter graciously remained at the reception to answer questions, to offer comments to reporters, and to reminisce with old friends. The event was a smashing success and a fitting tribute to the man it honors.

Southeast Louisiana Historical Association Thrives

The SELHA experienced an exciting 2008 with the initiation of new programs, along with the continuation of old ones. The year started with our annual membership drive. During that period we urged members to sign up for another stint with the organization and hinted at the revival of a regional scholarly journal. (See article elsewhere in this newsletter for details) Membership in the organization soon reached an all time high with many old friends returning and many new ones joining for the first time. Next came the announcement that our spring 2008 dinner/lecture event would feature nationally known scholar Dr. Jon Kukla author of the critically acclaimed book *A Wilderness So Immense: The Louisiana Purchase and the Destiny of America*. To house its growing membership, the organization's executive committee scheduled its meeting at the historic Columbia Theater.



Jon Kukla

At the April 17 event, the organization also recognized two of Southeastern Louisiana University's most beloved historians, Dr. Michael Kurtz for his service as a faculty member and as Dean of the Graduate School and Dr. Roman Heleniak for his service as a faculty member, Department Head, and as a Scholar in Residence in the Center for Southeast Louisiana Studies. The moving ceremony culminated with the awarding of certificates to the honored guests. Kukla's engaging presentation followed by the usual food and libations, served as the perfect ending for a perfect evening.



Dr. Kurtz and Heleniak

Look for even bigger things in the future. For those interested in joining the Southeast Louisiana Historical Association, dues for 2009 are \$20.00 per person, which entitles you to admission and dinner at the spring lecture as well as to receive the association's new scholarly journal titled, *Southeast Louisiana Review* and the *Centerpiece*. For more information please call 985-549-2151. Those already on our SELHA mailing list should be receiving a membership renewal application soon.

Southeast Louisiana Review

The Center for Southeast Louisiana Studies has commenced publication of the *Southeast Louisiana Review*, a new annual journal highlighting regional history and culture. According to Director Samuel C. Hyde, "the new journal will reveal the peculiar components of our identity that make our home region such a special place to live." The *Review* will provide opportunities for scholars and the general public to publish articles highlighting regional history and culture.

The new journal will fill the void left by the termination of previous Center publications, the *Southeast Louisiana Historical Papers* and *Regional Dimensions*. "Those publications were regrettably discontinued in favor of the films, television programs, books and other projects the Center now produces," Hyde said, "but many continued to express interest in a regional publication."

The inaugural edition of *Southeast Louisiana Review* includes a scholarly article by King Robinson, a recent graduate of

Southeastern's master's program in history, on Spanish Governor Bernardo de Galvez's military operations to "liberate" the Florida Parishes from British control; the late Judge Leon Ford's reflections on Hammond's post-Hurricane Betsy days as the southern terminus of the Illinois Central Railroad, and a spooky short story, based on historical fact, detailing the strange happenings on a road in northern Tangipahoa Parish by Roseland resident Emma Davoll.

The new publication will be the official journal of the Southeast Louisiana Historical Association and will be sent to all dues-paying members along with the Center's annual newsletter, *Centerpiece*. SELAHA dues are \$20 annually. Individual copies of each edition can also be purchased through the center for \$10.

The journal staff will be happy to consider submissions highlighting all periods of history and topics of cultural interest in southeast Louisiana and the surrounding regions of southwestern Mississippi. All submitted articles will undergo a peer review to ensure accuracy and/or literary merit depending on the manuscript.

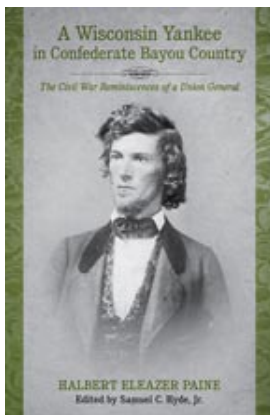
To purchase individual copies or for information on submissions, contact the center at 985-549-2151 from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., weekdays. The Center is located on the third floor of Southeastern's Sims Memorial Library.

Continued Scholarship

As always, the Center's staff strives to make history accessible to both the general public and the scholarly community. This year proved no different, as Assistant Director Keith M. Finley published a book titled, *Delaying the Dream: Southern Senators and the Fight Against Civil Rights, 1938-1965*, with LSU Press. In it, Finley goes beyond traditional images of the quest for racial equality—the heroic struggle, the southern extremism, the filibusters—to reveal another often neglected side to the conflict. By exploring the epic legislative battles of the 20th century from the perspective of the often overlooked southern opposition, *Delaying the Dream* adds a fresh perspective to the canon on the civil rights era in modern American history. Finley's book is available at all reputable bookstores and online venues.



Center Director Samuel C. Hyde, Jr. continues his active research on the Florida parishes. Forthcoming from LSU Press in the spring 2009 is Director Hyde's carefully edited work on the wartime diary and post-war memoirs of Halbert Eleazer Paine titled *A Wisconsin Yankee in Confederate Bayou Country: The Reminiscences of a Union General*. Paine was commissioned Colonel of the 4th Wisconsin Regiment on 2 July 1861 and was quickly promoted to Brigadier General of Volunteers. On 13 March 1863 Paine was promoted to Brevet Major General for displaying conspicuous gallantry during the battle of Port Hudson. Paine's reflections on his active service in southeast Louisiana during the Civil War presents scholars with new insight into the federal occupation of New Orleans and the surrounding area. Hyde explores both the unvarnished reflections Paine noted in his diary often still enraged with passion from an altercation with a fellow officer and the far more tempered assessment of events he put forward in his official memoirs many years after the conflict.



Hyde's forthcoming book

In addition to writing, both Hyde and Finley continue to speak to audiences large and small across the state. This year Hyde's audiences have included school students, historical associations, and even federal law enforcement officials. From charitable organizations to today's and tomorrow's leaders, Hyde is always prepared to share his love of Louisiana history. Finley has also spoken to several local audiences to promote *Delaying the Dream* and is scheduled to speak at this year's Fanfare festivities as well as at the Louisiana Historical Association's Annual meeting where he will unveil new research on local politics.

***American Crisis, American Shame* Premier**

Every 38 minutes a football field size portion of Louisiana converts to open water – an unpleasant truth that serves as the focal point for *American Crisis, American Shame: The National Consequence of Coastal Erosion*, the Center's latest documentary film.

The 30-minute film is the product of extensive research by Center director Samuel C. Hyde Jr., Southeastern's Ford

Family Chair in Regional Studies; Center assistant director Keith M. Finley; and Nick Norton, professor of biology and director of the university's Lake Pontchartrain Basin Research Program (LPBRP). It was produced for the Center by the Southeastern Channel.

Three years in the making, *American Crisis, American Shame*, underwritten by a generous grant from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, premiered at Southeastern's Columbia Theatre on Tuesday, Oct. 7, 2008 as part of the university's annual Fanfare celebration. Nearly seven hundred people packed the venue. Following a brief introduction by University President John Crain and Center director Sam Hyde, the lights dimmed for the start of this important film. From the initial foreboding music composed by Southeastern Music Department graduate student Brian Hanson to the credits which revealed the long list of people involved in the project, the audience sat in rapt attention as they learned of the national consequence of coastal erosion.



Premier Night Crowd Awaits Film

American Crisis, American Shame continues the story begun with *The Manchac Swamp: Manmade Disaster in Search of Resolution*, the Center's award-winning 2006 documentary that focused on the past, present and future of the fragile wetlands. The film makes clear, Hyde said, that Louisiana can no longer afford to ignore the consequences of coastal degradation. "Years of exploitation by extracting industries such as oil and gas corporations and timber interests have combined with passivity from politicians and policy planners to create conditions conducive to disaster," Hyde said. The film underscores how the toll of Gulf hurricanes has increased since unregulated development has eroded the natural buffer of marshlands and cypress swamp.

While the film analyzes the sources of the catastrophe, Hyde said it also suggests a coordinated method, referred to as the "Lines of Defense Strategy," for containing and reversing the effects of environmental degradation. The film contains interviews with a variety of scientists currently engaged in wetlands research, such as Southeastern

biologist Gary Shaffer and John Lopez, Coastal Sustainability Program director of the Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation. The scientists reveal that a coordinated strategy “is the only alternative available to secure Louisiana’s coast and not only protect a national environmental treasure, but also offer security to industries vital to our national economy,” Hyde said. In the end, the film reveals that the very same industries that contributed to the problem may very well emerge as critical partners in any solution.

American Crisis, American Shame was filmed and edited by Steve Zaffutto of the Southeastern Channel, who also created the graphics. “It was a pleasure for the Southeastern Channel to produce Dr. Hyde's documentary,” said channel General Manager Rick Settoon, co-executive producer of the film. “The program is eye-opening for viewers in our region and points out the urgent and critical nature of the coastal erosion crisis.”

Following the film, the Center for Southeast Louisiana Studies unveiled an interactive exhibit that depicted through a series of interpretive displays the implications of coastal erosion and the directly-related consequences of Gulf hurricanes. Members of the audience lined up outside a uniquely constructed mood tunnel that recreated, in miniature, the sights and sounds of a hurricane. Other components of the exhibit included a working replica of the Bonnet-Carre Spillway, models of the “lines of defense,” and a wave tank that illustrated the impact of strong storms on unprotected coastlines. Children on hand found the mood chamber particularly enticing as they returned again and again to its entrance for another walk through. Along the way, we hope they also became aware that coastal erosion is an issue of importance to everyone.



Putting it together: Center Graduate Assistants Holly Furlow and Lindsey Marshall construct the exhibit.

As with every Center event, food and drink were available for all in attendance.

American Crisis, American Shame is now being shown across the state of Louisiana. It premiered on LPB in January 2009, followed next by its debut on the Southeastern Channel, before its airing on other area television networks. Check your local television listings for additional opportunities to view the film. And as always, we encourage you to get involved. Together we can make a difference.

Florida Parish Chronicles

Since 2004, the Florida Parish Chronicles have become a mainstay of the Southeastern Channel’s line-up and an important venue for the Center to reach local residents. Four years after its commencement, Sam Hyde continues his small screen voyages into our region’s rich and colorful past. Awards continue to pile up in recognition of the unique contribution the series has made to fostering interest in area history. At the 2008 Telly awards, honoring national, regional, and local cable television programs, two “Florida Parish Chronicles” episodes both of which aired in 2007, “Part One: Legendary Crimes and Criminals of the Florida Parishes” and “Ghosts and Haunted Houses of Southeast Louisiana,” won in the “History Series” category.

In 2008, the Center added to the growing FPC catalogue with “Part Two: Legendary Crimes and Criminals of the Florida Parishes.” The episode explores the mysterious 1963 appearances together in various parts of the Florida Parishes of three key JFK assassination figures and alleged conspirators -- accused lone gunman Lee Harvey Oswald, his reputed associate David Ferry, and Kentwood native Clay Shaw, head of New Orleans’ International Trade Mart.

The show also describes the 1933 murder of Hammond City Marshal Gordon Anderson, the only Hammond city peace officer to die in the line of duty.

According to the program’s writer and creator, Sam Hyde, “this episode demonstrates that developments in the Florida Parishes often directly impacted circumstances of national consequence -- such as in the case of the mysterious Oswald link to our area.” Furthermore, Hyde opined, “the death of a police officer, killed in the line of duty, served to advance popular demands for an honest and effective legal establishment, just as it reveals that race relations in our area may not have been as dire as previously believed.”

In the JFK assassination segment, Hyde interviews Kennedy assassination expert Michael Kurtz, whose extensive research on the murder is housed in the Center for Southeast Louisiana Studies. Kurtz, who authored such notable titles as *Crime of the Century: The Kennedy Assassination from a Historian’s Perspective*, describes how Oswald, Ferry and Shaw were spotted together in the Florida Parishes on a number of occasions only months and even weeks prior to the 1963 assassination.

The Marshal Anderson story is set against the backdrop of “Bloody Tangipahoa,” an era of rampant violence throughout the parish spawned by bitter reactions to Reconstruction. Many in Hammond complained of the lack of competent law enforcement. In 1932 the town set a record for killings. Into this cauldron sprang Isadore Marsh, a drifter and thief known to make his escape by jumping trains. When Marshal Anderson confronted and arrested Marsh, he attacked the police officer, seized his weapon, and shot him to death on the railroad tracks in downtown Hammond. The Gordon Anderson story is brought to life by dramatic reenactments, historical footage and archival photographs. At the site of the 1933 murder, Hyde interviews Anderson’s grandson, Hammond attorney and former city mayor Tom Anderson, brother of current city marshal Gordon Anderson.



Morrison Lecturer: Mike Strain

Oral History Remains an Important Part of the Center’s Mission

The Center for Southeast Louisiana Studies continues its commitment to preserving the history of the Florida parishes—a mission that includes conducting oral history interviews of area residents. We are still scheduling World War II interviews and encourage any area veteran who has yet to participate in the project to call the Center.

Interviews on many other subjects are also being recorded. Samuel C. Hyde conducted an interview with former Livingston Parish law officer Tom Stewart who regaled the director with his insider’s view of the often bloody civil rights struggle. As part of his ongoing Masters Thesis research, Matthew Doolittle, the Center’s Administrative Assistant traveled to St. Francisville to interview Judge John Rarick. Keith Finley interviewed Hammond resident Helen Carter Rownd on her experiences as a WASP in World War II. These and many other interviews are available at the Center for Southeast Louisiana Studies.

Furthering our active oral history agenda, Director Sam Hyde agreed to support efforts of English department professor Joel Fredell to undertake an extensive civil rights era oral history project in an effort to preserve the voice of African-American citizens who wish to record their memories of Jim Crow for posterity. The product of these interviews will be housed in the Center for the benefit of researchers and posterity.

New Collections

As with any archival repository, the Center’s relevance to scholars derives from its collections. We are always honored when people entrust their collections to our care. In 2008, the Center received many important donations. Leon Ford, IV continues to add to the Judge Ford collection. Some of the items he recently donated include Hammond area maps, rail road history records, and other material that reflect his father’s diverse interests. Congressman John Rarick contributed additional photos and articles related to his Washington career. Donald Sharp added to his preexisting collection—only strengthening what was already an impressive assortment of



Look for this and other FPC episodes Monday and Wednesday nights at 7:00PM on the Southeastern Channel. Check your local listings for additional Chronicles’ airings.

2009 James H. Morrison Lecturer Selected

The James H. Morrison Lecture in Politics and Government, which honors the memory of the late Congressman “Jimmy” Morrison, has featured some of Louisiana’s most important political figures, including John Breaux, Mary Landrieu, and Jay Dardenne. This year Mike Strain Louisiana’s Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry will deliver the lecture. Before becoming Ag Secretary, Strain served in the state legislature. Strain is also a seventeen year veteran of the St. Tammany Parish Sheriff’s Office Reserve Force. A graduate of Louisiana State University’s School of Veterinary Medicine, he has been a member of the Rural Legislative Task Force and Parish officer for the Louisiana Cattlemen’s Association. Since taking office, Strain has worked tirelessly to help Louisiana farmers rebound from the devastating consequences of recent hurricanes. We are pleased that he has agreed to speak and look forward to what will surely be a powerful presentation. Be on the lookout for additional information on the Morrison Lecture which is scheduled for Thursday, April 2, 2009 at 10:00Am in the Student Union Theater.

primary and secondary sources focusing on southeast Louisiana's colonial and early American history. Long-time Southeastern Louisiana History Instructor and Center friend, C. Howard Nichols bolstered his collection on all things Louisiana, making it a popular choice for local researchers. Arthur Hardy of Mardi Gras Guide fame has begun discussing with the Center the possibility of donating his enormous collection that highlights the role of carnival in Louisiana culture. The City of Covington entrusted the Center with the care of the earliest known map of the city. Ms. Irene Morris of Kentwood has begun depositing what promises to be the single largest collection on material related to her hometown available anywhere. Ms. Linda Ryan donated an extensive series of video recordings filmed by the late L.E. Wallace whose unfortunate death last year greatly saddened all who knew him. L.E. had been a good friend of the Center and a creative voice behind the Center's early film efforts. We will miss him.



Liston E. Wallave

Many others have graciously deposited materials with us. If you have not visited the Center in awhile, we encourage you to stop in for a visit to our new third floor location for a perusal of the collections found in our holdings or visit the Center's website for a search of our calendar lists. You will be amazed at what you will find.

We encourage readers of the *Centerpiece* to consider establishing donations in their name so that their research in local history can be made available to others. Call the Center at 985-549-2151 and ask for Matthew Doolittle.

West Florida Revolutioin Bicentennial

Next year marks the two-hundredth anniversary of the West Florida Rebellion in which southeast Louisianans declared their independence from Spanish rule and created the short-lived Republic of West Florida—the original lone star state. Since 2001, the Center has devoted considerable resources to bring attention to this historic event. From an exhibit highlighting the revolt to the film “Reluctant

Americans” we have been at the forefront of increasing awareness of this important part of our area's history. Anyone traveling Interstate 12 east from Baton Rouge will discover road signs emblazoned with the Lone Star flag that reads “West Florida Republic Parkway, 1810.” Center Director Hyde, along with others, spearheaded the roadway initiative. Although many are now familiar with the episode, we hope to use this historic anniversary to once again rekindle interest in the revolt.

In February, the Center will host a meeting which will include members of local tourist commissions, state officials, and interested scholars to coordinate efforts meant to mark the event. Exhibits, documentaries, public lectures, and other festivities are already being planned. We believe this offers an enormous tourism stimulus opportunity for our region and we are eager to insure maximum exposure for our events. Any person or agency interested in assisting are strongly encouraged to contact the Center to get in on what promises to be an exciting commemoration.



Center for Southeast Louisiana Studies

The Center for Southeast Louisiana Studies is always pleased to receive letters, printed materials, and photographs which help document the history and the cultures of our region. We can, if necessary, copy photographs and manuscripts for historical research and return the originals to their owners. For more information about contributing materials or about the Center, please contact:

Center for Southeast Louisiana Studies
Second Floor, Rayburn Room
Linus A. Sims Memorial Library
Hours: 8:00am-4:30pm Monday-Friday
www.selu.edu/Academics/Depts/RegionalStudies

Dr. Samuel C. Hyde, Jr., Director
Center for Southeast Louisiana Studies
SLU 10730
Hammond, LA 70402
(985) 549-2151/Fax (985) 549-2306

Centerpiece is written by Dr. Keith M. Finley and edited by Dr. Samuel C. Hyde, Jr.

Mission:
The Center for Southeast Louisiana Studies preserves and promotes the history and the cultures of Louisiana's Florida Parishes, southwestern Mississippi, and surrounding areas through scholarly research, conferences, film productions, and publishing.

Center for Southeast Louisiana Studies
Southeastern Louisiana University
SLU 10730
Hammond, LA 70402

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