



THE MUSEUMS OF
CASSIDY PARK

THE ARTIFACT

Newsletter of the Cassidy Park Historical Museums

Volume 1, Issue 2

Summer 2009

Museum of Indian Culture set for fall Grand Re-Opening



AT LONG LAST, the highly anticipated re-opening of the very popular Indian Culture Museum is set to take place October 3, 2009.

The City of Bogalusa recently replaced the storm damaged roof, repaired and renovated the lighting and air conditioning and will soon refinish the floor. Rotary Club gifts have been designated to further renovate the building. Friends of Cassidy Park Museums have removed black mold from a large area, and built new storage areas.

We have also acquired through grants new display furnishings and equipment awarded by the National Endowment for the Humanities and the State of Louisiana.

Rejuvenation is to be done of several of the large geological charts from the original museum. A digital projector has been acquired by grant and a large screen is applied for to enable us to show videos of appropriate historic interest.

The grand opening will be in conjunction with the Pearl River Wild Game Cook-Off and BBQ, and will also host a Native American Festival (powwow) with music, dance, games and other living history vignettes by representatives from clans and nations of the Southeastern Woodlands.

The popular Gift Shop will be reopened and will be open during all museum hours. It will offer affordable artifact replicas for kids (such as arrows), maps, photographic prints, stationery, hand made jewelry, and crafts of good quality that are related to the purpose of these history museums.

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Sprucing up HQ: An office and a new classroom for the Museums

With City of Bogalusa permission, the Friends of the Museums have cleaned, repainted and generally fixed up the old Deli Building near the playground - with the understanding that the building can be reclaimed as a snack shop if necessary.

In the meantime, the space provides classroom, meeting and office space, and has made the business of running the museums much more effective.

The classroom space accommodates twenty students fairly comfortably. Pottery classes for children, for instance, are easily accommodated on the wide surrounding porch.

Not to be overlooked is the building's value as a meeting place, dining area, and exhibit preparation workroom.

Many thanks for gifts by the Wayne Bourn family that make the building so well-equipped and hospitable.



Students in the pineneedle basketweaving workshop enjoy the comfort and convenience of the museum's new classroom space.

Timeline and a Heritage Garden added to the Pioneer Museum

Friends of CPM have, with both volunteer and hired labor, installed much better insulation in the Pioneer log building. It makes a wonderful difference in both temperature and humidity control.

New exhibit furnishings have also been acquired through grants and individuals. There are many additional improvements planned.



A long-awaited timeline has been placed around the inside perimeter of the museum. It was donated by Mary Dugan-Brignac, in memory of her sister, board member Lena Jacobs.

This permanent fixture will show the progress of the Bogalusa area from prehistoric times to the present, highlighting major events in our area's existence.

Another exciting addition to the museumscape is a planting area across the front of the Pioneer building that is being accomplished with grants to the City, and under the direction of Jolene Black, Master Gardener and cooking historian.

The garden is to be called the Heritage Garden because it will be planted with native plants that served both the Native American and early pioneer people.

The garden will be a teaching tool furnished with a permanent diagram, posted on the front of the building, of the plantings showing name and uses. Construction of the garden bed is complete and planting is scheduled for fall.

What comes next?: A dig, a diorama and more dynamic research

Research has taken a leap forward this year with our ongoing attempt to find records of the original temporary sawmill and encampment on the shores of Bogue Lusa Creek. First, the State Archeologist, Dr. Robert Mann, then the Southern Historical Research and Recovery Association searched the area with little luck (but a lot of fun) so far.

Both of the research groups have promised continuing efforts along the creek sites and perhaps other sites around the city. Contingent on this research is the building of a diorama or model of the area along Bogue Lusa Creek.

Robert Seal, a Bogalusa native who has in recent years built these dramatic teaching tools for other museums such as the Port Hudson State Historic Site (battlefield) is leading the research. Assisting is our intern, Owen Hyman, researcher. Many others are providing important help, including Bob Lawrence, Dempsey Allen, Irma Callendar, Berneda Birdsong, and Adrian Case, and still more volunteers are very generously lending their time and talents.

An excellent example of the value of a teaching diorama is the diorama in the Maritime Museum in Madisonville. Guides at that museum will gather students around their large diorama (as they did for MCP field trips for 150 public school students last summer) to illustrate the life of a village and woods in the Ponchartrain area, and to discuss life as it was there in earlier times.



Workers sift through screens to find the smallest evidence of the original mill builders' encampment



Archaeological dig was short-lived but has led to other dig possibilities

Our diorama would include Bogue Lusa Creek from the first encampment area on into and including a bit of the Pearl River. The scene would include tents, the Magnolia Hotel, the camp sawmill, the permanent sawmill under construction, the men, the animals, the wagons, machines, supplies, creek and river traffic; then – compressing both time and space no more than two years and one mile - it could include some of the first business buildings and residences of the area immediately surrounding the mill.

A diorama of this type would be securely covered and locked and last many years, and in future spaces, with little upkeep . The Museum has prepared several grant applications to cover the cost of this valuable resource.

Also on the research front, the Museum took an important step in having the over 4,000 Stone Age points (arrowheads) categorized according to condition, age, and owner, then arranged for study and display in archival boxes. MCP employed Mike LeBlanc - recommended by the State office of Archaeology - to do this important job.

Current Exhibits



“They Didn’t Like to Talk About It”:

Bogalusers in World War II

A survey of the Homefront and the Battlefield that includes the Depression era leading into the War. Displays include posters, military issue uniforms and armaments, as well as Depression and War Era items from popular culture.

Toys on the Hood: A Collection of Historic Auto Ornaments

A collection of elegant hood ornaments from thirteen cars of the 30’s and 40s

A Hot Time in the Old Town

An exhibit vignette of old slot machines and bootleg paraphernalia, including a genuine whiskey still - a continuing Bogalusa tradition - with Prohibition Era highlights.

Continuing Exhibits: Early Pioneer, Civil War, Early Sawmill City, and the Paper Mill and an extended exhibit of a Victorian Child’s Room to be replaced in July by a Museum favorite – the Pre-Electric Kitchen.



Recent Exhibits

Black History Month and the Civil Rights Campaign

This popular exhibit covered a controversial time in America’s history as it was experienced in Bogalusa.



Display pieces included an authentic Ku Klux Klan robe, documentary photographs of the struggle in Bogalusa, and two 8” thick FBI files of the Bogalusa campaign rosters.

The exhibit was curated by museum intern, Ceolia Dunn, as her graduate exhibition for a Museum Science Degree from Southern University. Since graduation she continues to be very active in the work of the museums.

Telling it like it Was: Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteer Docents

The absolute essential for both the museums is well trained docents able, with good training, to answer questions by visitors and conduct tours if requested.

The Cassidy Park Museums rely on Board Members and Friends to give part of their weekends occasionally to do this much appreciated service. Training sessions are conducted by current volunteers and the docents are given a packet of information relevant to current exhibits.

Media players are being prepared to record information about artifacts in the order they are seen on a tour so that visitors may listen to the guide at their own pace as they walk about the museum.

Junior Museum Guides

The Museums feel strongly that younger members be involved in telling the stories of our community and offer the opportunity to be Junior Museum Guides during special occasions such as Christmas and other times when large numbers of people would be visiting. We make these positions open to students aged 12 to 16. Through their docent training students would learn about the current exhibits and in turn offer to lead or inform visitors, especially other young people, on their tours through the museums.

Photographers are especially needed to cover events and the museums programs.

Want to get in on the action? With the opening of the Indian Museum more guides will be needed. To find out about this service, contact Judy Pritchard at 985 732 7381 or judypritchard@yahoo.com

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Director - Millicent Canter
Assistant Director - Lorraine Bourn
Registrar - Lorraine Bourn
Secretary - Cidette Rayburn
Design Assistant - Robert Seal
Researcher - Owen Hyman
Gift Shop Manager- Judy Pritchard

Board Members were elected at the Annual Meeting on May 20th.

All museum staff members are volunteers. New additions are:
Lorraine Bourn - Assistant Director
Cidette Rayburn - Secretary
Robert Seal - Design Consultant
Owen Hyman - Researcher

MEETING NOTES:

The Second Annual Meeting of the Friends of the Cassidy Park Museums was held in the home of its president, Johni Miles-Blount.

The Board of Directors for 2009-10 were elected and the activities of the past museum year and future plans were discussed.

A party followed the meeting with wonderful food catered especially by Pat Fussell of Bogalusa.

Museum Summer Camp is blazing success

After a great theme for last year's summer camp — "Rivers and Streams of our Lives", the 2009 session of the Museum summer camp followed that idea with "Our Woodlands." These themes were designed to teach the importance of the children's native environments and the way they affected the events that make the city's history. Ages 7, 8, 9 were served the third week in June and ages 10, 11, 12, the fourth week in June.



On the first camp day of each week the group along with several teachers traveled by La. Transit bus toward Franklinton to visit the Lee Memorial Forest. Dera Talley, Board member whose school year job is designing and implementing programs for the gifted and talented program of St. Tammany Parish and Lorraine Bourn, Asst. Museum Director, and former teacher and owner of a tutoring service in New Orleans, talked with the children as they rode to and from the forest about the forests and Native American life in the areas being passed.

Joe Nehlig, Forester directing the work of the LSU forest, donated in 1926 by the Great Southern Sawmill, did a wonderful job leading the children through a day of learning about the Longleaf Pines, their history and growth patterns as well as the other life in the forest that had great meaning to our early settlers. A trek through part of the forest was followed by a search for arrowheads. Lunch was eaten in the cool of headquarters and followed by cold watermelon served by "Ranger Joe".

Second Day at Museum Camp began with papermaking led by Brian Smith, environmental engineer for Temple Inland. Hand-made brown kraft paper was produced to be used later in individual scrapbooks of the week.

Mike Purvis and Jim Reeves demonstrated on a pine log the two-man sawing and bark skinning that prepared the longleaf pines to make the early settler cabins. Native American habitats were built of clay or clay, straw, and twigs.

Next the children began work on building their own log cabin models made from hand crafted logs and bark shingles. The models were taken home at the end of the week.

The many volunteers involved included Lorraine Bourn, Alan Thompson, Judy Pritchard, Cidette Rayburn, Amanda Young and Jack Harry.



The Wheels on the Bus: Museum tour of historic homes

On a cold, dreary day in early February, the Museums took a group of history buffs on a tour of area historical sites. The small bus was furnished free of charge by Louisiana Transit.

The 200 yr. old Ford House, usually open only on Sunday afternoons arranged a private tour for the members. The house is probably this area's most important early pioneer site. Rev. John Ford, an Englishman searching, along with his thirty slaves, for the right place to settle, chose the banks of the Pearl River just above Angie.

The group's second stop was Poole's Bluff, an early ferry crossing into Mississippi and site of a general store. Members enjoyed getting to know each other better over lunch at the new restaurant there, One Last Thing.

After looking over the beautiful river-navigation canal junction, as well as a recently installed monument honoring men who gave their lives in recent wars, the group drove on the Bush where they had a private tour of The Old Iron Museum by the owners, Mr. and Mrs. Rawlin Williams.

The museum no longer has regular opening days, a pity, since this is an astonishing collection of not just iron objects (like antique tractors), but significant household, farm and early country life.



The John Ford House on the Pearl River was the first of many stops on the history tour

A second bus tour in early June took a capacity crowd to visit the historic Sullivan home on South Border Drive, where the current owner talked about the unique history of the house and its families.

Next stop was the Varnado Store Museum on the town square in Franklinton, just opposite the Washington Parish Courthouse. The museum contains thousands of items that might have been sold in the store in the early 1900's. This is a must see place in the Parish.

The group had lunch at the Café Bouche near the Museum and then traveled on to Clifton where they toured the Bourn home furnished completely with very fine Victorian antiques – then on to nearby country antique store “Shermans” where they had fun snapping up bargains.

Upcoming tours include a day in the Madisonville, Mandeville, Fontainebleau area, and later another tour into nearby Mississippi area to see the John Ford home, a Longhorn (early Spanish breed) ranch, the Walkiah Bluff Indian Mounds and the Crosby Arboretum.

Next Civil War reenactment planned

In 2008, the Museums of Cassidy Park sponsored a very well attended event - a Civil War battlefield reenactment by Spaight's Battalion of Slidell.

The group produced the performance and participates in reenactments throughout the year and throughout the state. This year, the two-day event was hosted by the Bogalusa Chamber of Commerce.

Donis and Pricilla Davis of Slidell, the group's organizers, have predicted that the Bogalusa event will grow very large very fast because the setting, the fine cooperation by the City and Bogalusa's location are all factors that promise to attract many visitors from outside the immediate area.

**THE MUSEUMS OF
CASSIDY PARK**

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MUSEUM HOURS:
Saturday 10am to 1pm
Sunday 1pm to 4pm

**Get Involved!
Join Friends of the Museums!**

Museum members receive
free admission as well as tuition-free classes.

MEMBERSHIP PRICES:
\$25 Individual
\$35 Family



**THE MUSEUMS OF
CASSIDY PARK**

History in the Heart of Bogalusa

**Birthday parties and
special arrangements
Available for groups**



Throughout the year special dates are arranged for groups who want to make learning about local Indian and Pioneer history part of their programs and make their visit to Cassidy Park entertaining as well as educational.

Since the year began we have conducted **tours**, taught papermaking to Boy Scouts from Pearl River, read stories and made clay pots with over 50 pre-schoolers, taken a trunk show to Ben's Ford School, and at the Park toured and talked about finding Indian artifacts to 160 third and fourth graders from Franklinton Elementary, and done tours and crafts with students from Enon Elementary School.

Museum staff are always happy to travel for **on-location trunk shows** for schools and other organizations.

Birthday parties with museum-related games and crafts, party décor and food can also be arranged.

Information is available by e-mail at info@cassidymuseums.org, or by calling 985-732-9752.



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