



SOC Gram

Save Our Cemeteries, Inc.
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January-February, 2005

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President's Annual Report To The Membership

(below is 2004 Board President René Fransen's speech, given at the December 8th annual meeting of the membership)

I would like to begin by thanking Board member Ruth Goodman for hosting this lovely evening and also the committee of volunteers who helped organize the refreshments for tonight.

As I enter the final days of my two-year tenure as President of Save Our Cemeteries, I want to acknowledge our fine Board of Directors and especially those members of the Executive and Advisory Committees. Thanks to this committed group of people, our accomplishments are impressive.

As most of you know, the SOC mission is a three fold one of restoration, education and preservation.

In February, we worked with the Travelers Conservation Foundation, the local and national tourism industry, the Tour Guide Association of New Orleans, Chaux Vive and the New Orleans Archdiocesan Cemeteries



Richard Briede of Lake Lawn Metairie Cemeteries and Funeral Home presents René with \$10,000 donation raised at the third annual "A Run through History" held in November in Metairie Cemetery

to execute the largest volunteer initiative that St. Louis Cemetery No. I has ever seen. More than 350 volunteers spent a day landscaping,

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Bacchanalia at Bultman - A "Super" Parade Party

Save Our Cemeteries is hosting a Bacchus "Super" Parade Party at the historic Bultman Funeral Home, 3338 St. Charles Avenue at Louisiana Avenue on Sunday, February 6, 2005 from 4:30 PM until 9:00 PM.

Join us for Bacchanalia at Bultman and view the spectacular Bacchus Parade from the expansive front porch and patio on St. Charles Avenue, while keeping up-to-date on the action of the Super Bowl XXXIX on our large screen television.

At this all-inclusive event you'll enjoy jambalaya, hot dogs, pasta salad, King Cake and more. Sip daiquiris, wine, beer, and soft drinks. Restroom facilities and security are provided.

SOC Members \$40.00, Non-Members \$50.00, Children Ages 1-6 Free, Ages 7-13 \$10.00, Ages 14-20 \$20.00. Limited parking available by advance reservation: \$25 for the parade, \$50 all day. Join SOC at a fun filled private "super" parade party and help support its efforts to preserve and restore New Orleans' historic above-ground cemeteries.

For information and to purchase tickets, call the SOC office at (504) 525-3377 or if you are out of town, toll free at 888-721-7493. Visit our website at saveourcemeteries.org.



PRESIDENT (continued from page 1)

cleaning, lime-washing, and replacing loose bricks. Many thanks especially to the team leaders - our community's local tour guides, and to Michael Valentino of Valentino New Orleans Hotels - the chair and motivation behind bringing this project to us.

This project spawned several other volunteer efforts including more lime-washing at St. Louis No. I by the Rotary Youth Leadership Association this summer. We also participated in clean-ups with staff from Ch2MHill and the volunteers from the Summer Service Camp of Mount Carmel Academy at Valence Street Cemetery; and the congregation of Celebration Church cleaning-up Carrollton and St. Mary. Through our dedicated Holt Cemetery co-chairs, Bari Landry and Mark Britz, bi-monthly clean-ups of Holt using Judge Paul Bonin's Alternative Sentencing Program continue. Also, at Holt, Bari and Mark have secured funds from Delgado to complete the last section of fencing to finally enclose the cemetery and to even plant irises on the General Diaz side to improve the landscaping there.

With \$40,000 in grant money from both the Wisner Fund and the Booth-Bricker Fund, we have just this month embarked upon a \$100,000 survey of the wall vaults, pathways and drainage at Lafayette Cemetery No. I in the Garden District. Although we were forced due to financial constraints to return the responsibility of the Lafayette No. 1 grass cutting to the City of New Orleans, we hope this survey will motivate capital improvements, making a greater impact in the long run.

As always, SOC provided security for Holt, and Lafayette I and II and co-sponsored security at St. Louis I & II with the New Orleans Archdiocesan Cemeteries, to encourage All Saints' Day traditions and visits on Mothers' Day, Fathers' Day and Easter.

On the education front, Lecture Series Chairman Gerald Patout did an excellent job arranging for our programs which included: Jack Stewart presenting his new research on Funerals with Music in New Orleans; Helen Anderson who spoke on

the conservation of London's Highgate Cemetery; Downs Matthews who shared stories of the Lost Colony of the Confederacy in Brazil; and Terrence Fitzmorris who shared his knowledge of Irish Wakes and Burial Customs. Many thanks to both The Historic New Orleans Collection and Jacob Schoen and Son Funeral Home for allowing us the use of their space for our programs.

Cemeteryscape - our photography exhibit - returned after a one-year absence - bigger and better. Thanks to a grant from the Joe W. Dorothy Dorsett Brown Foundation, SOC was able really put on a good show this summer. Chairperson Melanie Martin, with the help of her creative husband Steve Martin, moved the month-long exhibit to the Poydras Center, where lots of foot traffic helped SOC sell numerous pieces.

The fund raising events started with our Bacchanalia at Bultman on February 22nd chaired by Linda Christovich. What a fun event it was! Special thanks go to Foster Guillory and Bultman Funeral Home for their generous use of the entire property for this night of fundraising. We raised \$12,000 and hope to double that next year - so mark your calendars for February 6th.

Instead of a Soirée this year, André de La Barre put together a wonderful Fête to honor our third Founder's Award recipient - Barbara and Paul Spencer of the Brown Foundation. The November dinner at Antoine's followed by a wonderful picnic that weekend at Kevin Kelly's beautiful Houmas House Plantation were a fine series of events to honor the Spencer's contributions to SOC. A good time was had by all and \$30,000 was raised between the two events and the auction -generously supported by so many of this city's business owners.

The city's official "Save Our Cemeteries Week" was climaxed by the Run Through History on November 7th in Metairie Cemetery. The run was coordinated by board member Richard Briede and a great team of staff members from Lake Lawn Metairie Cemeteries and Funeral Home and Stewart Enterprises

including Jerry Schoen, Heidi Hages, Leslie Terrell, Georgiann Gullett, Robert Beckman and Chuck George from the New Orleans Track Club. Since some of them are here tonight, we'll here more about that event in a minute.

One of our major sources of income are our cemetery tours, which thanks to the generosity and dedication of our volunteer tour guides raised \$31,000 this year. SOC has developed a training course that we offer not only to our own guides, but to all guides in the city - to make sure that correct info is available for giving cemetery tours. Fifty guides attended the two-day course which was hosted by the Hotel St. Marie. Many thanks to our 14 excellent speakers, and our primary sponsors Subway Sandwiches and Valentino New Orleans Hotels.

I would also like to thank the Lupin Foundation for funding the installation of marble tablets in St. Louis Cemetery No. I as part of our Save America's Treasures project; and BFI for a grant to purchase supplies for our cemetery clean-up efforts. And I thank you, the membership, for your continued support of Save Our Cemeteries.



Save Our Cemeteries Board President

René J. L. Fransen's 50th "Golden" Birthday keeps raising dollars for SOC. We have exceeded \$5,000 in donations. Since the last SOCgram, we would like to thank:

Edward Bonin
Mrs. Philip Breitmeyer, II
Ken Combs
Keith Coppens
André de La Barre
Jean Droste and Bill Stout
Torie Kranze
Brobson Lutz
Marie O'Neill
Angele Parlange
Scott Searfoss

Grace King Award Recipient: Emily Sue Deville

Sue Deville serves as a member of the eight-member "Voices from Our Past" committee. This committee was created by volunteers from the City of Opelousas, the Opelousas Little Theater, and the Catholic Diocese of St. Landry Catholic Church. Their goal is to raise funds through cemetery tours each October to be used for restoring the tombs in Opelousas Cemetery. Volunteers don costumes and re-enact significant historical events. Oftentimes, they find one of the descendants to portray the life of the historical figure. Tours to school groups for free.

Sue Deville also serves as director of the Opelousas Museum and Interpretive Center. She has gathered together volunteers, including herself, to survey and document many of the rural cemeteries of her area. She has worked with regional



René Fransen and Mary Louise Christovich congratulate Sue Deville on her receipt of the 2004 Grace King Award.

archaeologist Chip McGimpsey in cataloging tombs and graves and archiving the information with the state.

Because of her dedication to cemetery preservation through these two projects, she was selected as Grace King Award recipient, 2004.

Save Our Cemeteries 2005 Calendar of Events

February 6	Bacchanalia at Bultman, Bultman Funeral Home, St. Charles Avenue at Louisiana Avenue, 4:30 pm to 9:00 pm
February 12	Holt Cemetery Clean-up, 635 City Park Avenue, 9 - Noon
February 15	Executive Committee Meeting, Noon
February 17	African-Americans and New Orleans Cemeteries: a Lecture on Myths and Mystery by Lester Sullivan, University Archivist and Head of Special Collections, Xavier University
February 26	Holt Cemetery Clean-up, 635 City Park Avenue, 9 - Noon
March 5	Holt Cemetery Clean-up, 635 City Park Avenue, 9 - Noon
March 10	Board Meeting, Noon
March 14	Napa Valley Wine Tasting, The Foundry, 333 St. Joseph Street, 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm, Tickets on sale now.
March 19	Holt Cemetery Clean-up, 635 City Park Avenue, 9 - Noon



Donations

Meredith Bradley wishes her parents, John and Pam Bradley of Pearl River, Merry Christmas through a generous donation to SOC.

Many thanks to Maria Irwin, Shelley Rote and the entire team at Signature Events for their continued support of SOC through their generous donations.

In Memoriam

Generous donations have been made to Save Our Cemeteries by

Mrs. Beauregard Avegno in memory of:
Kenneth Chew Kennedy

Kelly and Carroll Bienvenu and family in memory of:
Arnie Seidule

Mr. and Mrs. William K. Christovich in memory of:
Bill Bailey
Jewel Bates
Margaret Gauntt
Commodore Thomas J. Lupo
Cecile Stone

New Members

(from New Orleans unless otherwise noted)

Mary Catherine Aaron - Metairie
Randy Bibb
Laurie Hayes Coniglio - Covington
Thomas Diemer - Metairie
Harold Dulitz - Metairie
Robert Jones and Randy Cole
Michele Garval
Kate Hannah - Hoboken, NJ
Terry Keegan
Lynda Moreau - Metairie
Nancy Rappa - Arlington, VA
Adam Stevenson
Greg Storms - LaPlace
Keoka Williams - Kenner
H. L. Dufour Woolfley
Mark and Barbara Workman - Metairie
Camille Yeldell - Metairie

On behalf of the Hope for Holt Committee, thank you to Senator Edwin R. Murray for his contribution in support of our clean-up efforts at Holt Cemetery.

2005 Save Our Cemeteries
Public Lecture Series

presents

AFRICAN-AMERICANS AND NEW ORLEANS CEMETERIES:

A Lecture on Myths and Mystery by Lester Sullivan, University Archivist and Head of Special Collections, Xavier University

Fact or Fiction? Is Lieutenant Governor Oscar Dunn really buried in St. Louis II? In a professional career managing and developing archival and library special collections focusing on the New Orleans' African-American community, Lester Sullivan has encountered many interesting and noteworthy details about our famous cemeteries and the personalities buried within. His slide-filled lecture will reveal what he has uncovered in his years of sleuthing.

The opening lecture in SOC's 2005 Public Lecture Series is being held in recognition of Black History Month.

Thursday, February 17, 2005

6:00 PM

The Praline Connection

907 S. Peters Street

lecture is free for members of SOC, \$5 for non-members

following the lecture

please join us at 7:30 pm

for dinner at The Praline Connection

featuring a savory buffet of Fried Catfish with Praline Connection Cocktail Sauce, Crawfish Etouffee, Gourmet BBQ Chicken, Fresh Sauteed Medley of Vegetables, Cornbread, Tossed Green Salad, Bread Pudding with Praline Sauce, and Iced Tea.

Cash Bar

lecture and dinner \$37 (including tax and tip) paid in advance to SOC Reservations required for dinner:

Call the SOC office at 525-3377 by Feb. 14th

www.saveourcemeteries.org

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