



Hollywood On The Bayou's Louisiana in Film

Volume 1

Issue 1

WHAT DO **YOU** KNOW ABOUT LOUISIANA'S FILM HISTORY

Since the early 2000's, the term "Hollywood South" has become a part of everyday life here in Louisiana. Chances are that no matter where you live in the state, you will at some point encounter closed streets and traffic buildup in your community – all due to the extensive amount of film, television and commercial filming that happens everyday in Louisiana.

Since the popular tax incentive program was instituted by the state legislature in the early 2000's, the movie industry has FINALLY recognized Louisiana as a great place to shoot a movie, with its diverse landscape, beautiful architecture, rich history, unique culture and heritage and temperate climate. **Well, not exactly.**

Long before the tax incentives, filmmakers have been coming to Louisiana to shoot their projects. In fact, BEFORE there was a "Hollywood," several of the leading film studios of the time (early 1900's) had offices in New Orleans, including Kalem and Selig Polyscope.

American Biograph and Mutoscope Company, one of the major American motion-picture studios in the early days of filmmaking, sent film crews to New Orleans as early as 1898. The first films were actually short "actuals" (short documentaries), and images from New Orleans were in great demand. The photo on the right is from the Mutoscope catalogue of 1898.



So how important is our film history? As film accessory researchers, we believe it is a critical part of our cultural history and why we're on our quest to document, preserve and teach our rich film heritage.

VITASCOPE HALL: THE BIRTHPLACE OF THE AMERICAN MOVIE THEATER

In New Orleans 1896, the city's famed Canal Street was the commercial and social hub of the city. Like other major cities, the street was lined with 3-4 story buildings. The first and sometimes

second floors of these buildings would serve as commercial shops and services, such as clothing stores, drug stores, service companies, and entertainment spots.



The building located at the corner of Canal and Exchange Place had been the home of a series of standard retail outlets for decades. However, the building would soon get a fresh new look and purpose which would land the facility in the record books.

In July 1896, business partners William Rock and Walter Wainwright were busy preparing for their new business, an enterprise that would be like no other seen in New Orleans – or anywhere in the United States at that time.

Rock and Wainwright fitted their new retail space with 400 benches and chairs that they had acquired from a local bankrupt funeral parlor. A large white cloth was tightly stretched across a frame that was mounted at the front of the room. Sheets of black canvas were hung across all of the windows to block out the sunlight.

Once the necessary equipment was installed, the partners planned their opening.

On Sunday, July 26, 1896, Messrs. Wainwright and Rock opened the doors of their new risky enterprise -- and ushered in a new era in American cinema.

Vitascope Hall,
623 CANAL STREET.

THE VITASCOPE

Is no longer at the WEST END, but is now at the above, where daily exhibitions will be given, with an entirely new series of pictures.

See Niagara Falls.
COMMENCING TO-DAY.

From 10 a. m. till 5 p. m. and from 7 p. m. till 11 p. m.

Admission - - - - 10c.

WAINWRIGHT & ROCK,
SOLE OWNERS AND MANAGERS.

The above advertisement appeared in the *Daily Picayune* on July 26, 1896.

“POP” ROCK BRINGS FIRST MOVIES TO LOUISIANA

William T. Rock (top right) was born in Birmingham, England and came to the United States as a young man. In 1886, he formed the Ball Electric Illuminating Company handling arc lamps. In 1896, he was contacted by Raff & Gammon to do some electrical work for them.



At that time, Raff & Gammon had acquired the rights to sell territorial use of Thomas Edison's new moving picture camera called the Vitascope. Unlike the single-user viewing equipment that was in general use, this new camera projected images on a screen which could be seen by any number of viewers at one time. Edison had purchased the camera from its inventors Thomas Armat and Francis Jenkins. Originally called the Phantoscope, Edison promptly renamed the camera "Edison's Wonderful Vitascope" and marketed the camera as his own.

While working for them in New York, Raff & Gammon asked Rock to take some of their Vitascope territory, but the best they had to offer was Louisiana. Rock purchased the Louisiana rights for the use of the Vitascope for \$2,500 (\$1,500 for the Vitascope and another \$1000 for accessories and training).

With the Vitascope in hand, Rock headed down to Louisiana in late spring of 1896. Along with him came Walter J. Wainwright, a carnival showman and former tightrope walker, and Walter A. Reid, a projectionist from Koster and Bial's live performance music hall.

At that time, it was common for movie exhibitors to show their films at existing amusement venues, such as parks, vaudeville theatres, etc. After looking around New Orleans, Rock, Wainwright and Reid found the perfect location on West End and Lake Pontchartrain.

West End Park was a popular entertainment center with a big bandstand which extended out over the water for band concerts, vaudeville acts and prominent stage personalities to appear. This area could also accommodate dances and fireworks displays. The park offered one other benefit to Rock -- it was located at the end of a streetcar line which provided the electrical power necessary to operate the Vitascope.

Although outdoor viewing was not ideal, audiences flocked to see the "moving pictures" and were AMAZED! Rock had entered into a contract with the West End Park for four weeks. After packing in the crowds, he renewed the contract and continued playing the West End Park for several seasons.

Impressed with the positive response he had received, Rock, along with Walter Wainwright, made the decision

to open an indoor location dedicated solely to exhibiting films. The idea was quite risky, since no one knew if the movies, without other entertainment, would draw crowds. Rock and Wainwright would soon get their answer.

On July 26, 1896, Vitascope Hall became the first indoor seated theater dedicated strictly to exhibiting films in the United States. It was located at 623 Canal Street in New Orleans, Louisiana.

Information for this article can be found in ***Louisiana Film History: A Comprehensive Overview Beginning in 1898*** available on Amazon or on the website HollywoodOnTheBayou.com.

Since 1996, we have been petitioning local and state officials to mark this location so that locals and tourists can appreciate the significance of the location. We are happy to report that we have been in contact with the state Department of Culture who are now actively working on placing a plaque on the building marking it as the location of the first seated indoor theater in the United States.

THE MAKING OF JEZEBEL - 1939

Before Scarlet O'Hara made her first appearance on the screen, Julie Marsden had already captivated moviegoers, and earned a second Academy Award for Bette Davis in her role as 1938's *Jezebel*.

While a second camera unit crew was sent to Louisiana to film exterior shots, most of the filming for *Jezebel* was done in California. But Louisiana's influence on the production of *Jezebel*, which was nominated for an Academy Award for Best Picture, cannot be overstated.

Director Robert Haas built a Louisiana plantation house on the Warner Bros. ranch, which was located approximately thirty miles from the California studio. To ensure authenticity in all aspects of the film, Haas hired Dalton S. Reymond, who was at that time the head of the opera department at Louisiana State University (L.S.U.).

Reymond initially thought that his job entailed simply making certain that the film's stars like Bette Davis, Henry Fonda, George Brent, Fay Bainter, Richard Cromwell, Irving Picel and John Lite spoke their lines in the natural, fluid, easy-going, soft speed of the river parishes above New Orleans. He shortly realized that his understanding was wrong.

Reymond discovered that his job included expert advice on what kind of

wallpaper had appeared in a sugar planter's home during Franklin Pierce's administration; what kind of harness was used for a fiacre; what kind of desserts and beverages would be served at the table of a slave owner of the times; and what songs were sung by the field workers in the years before the War Between the States. He was essentially given the responsibility of all articles, costumes, sets and furnishings as well as diction of the actors.

One of Reymond's innovations for the Marsden plantation home was a huge overhead fan. The fan was suspended from the ceiling over the dining table of the plantation home. It was operated by slaves who pulled gently on cords from opposite ends of the dining room. The fan measured 7' in length and 3'6" at its widest point. It was made of light wood, covered with brocaded pink damask with a gold tassel hanging from its bottom.



Reymond was also charged with overseeing the building of the various sets. The bar of the old St. Louis hotel which was located at Royal and St. Louis streets in New Orleans (demolished in 1919) was the setting for several scenes, including the place where Henry Fonda's character collapses from yellow fever. [See image below] . He also taught movie workmen how to build a pillared portico for a plantation mansion of 1840.



Another major set was the carriage approach to the plantation where 30 workmen spent two days dressing oak trees of the Warner Ranch with handmade, artificial Spanish moss.

The *Times Picayune* of January 9, 1938 reported that there was a great deal more than merely the diction which Reymond had to correct to make the film authentic.

Bette Davis had an unusually crisp New England speech, with its bit of extra emphasis upon all final consonants; George Brent had occasional relapses into brogue from

his Irish roots; Henry Fonda had a slightly Midwestern accent with its lingering vowels and Fay Bainter had cultivated New York expressions.

Also, of the 60 Black actors hired, only 6 had ever lived anywhere in the South. So Reymond had to work with the actors to hide the crisp everyday speech patterns heard on Los Angeles city streets.

(The above taken from the book ***Louisiana Film History: A Comprehensive Overview Beginning in 1898***)

FILM SYNOPSIS

In New Orleans, in 1850, Julie Marsden, a strong-willed Southern belle, is engaged to marry Preston Dillard, a prominent New Orleans banker with an equally strong mind. Their struggle for supremacy in the relationship comes to a head the night of a traditional ball to which unmarried women are expected to wear white, but Julie defiantly insists on wearing red. Pres is shocked, but ultimately agrees to escort her. At the ball, Julie begins to regret her decision, but Pres forces her to dance, and afterward ends their engagement. In disbelief, Julie waits for Pres to apologize, but he stands his ground, leaving for the North on business. When he returns, she humbles herself in front of him, begging for forgiveness, but it is too late. Pres has married a Yankee, Amy Bradford, and asks Julie to accept his wife without bitterness.

The growing threat of yellow fever in New Orleans has forced Julie and her Aunt Belle to move to their country plantation. There they entertain the Dillards, Pres's younger brother Ted, and one of Julie's persistent suitors, the rebellious Buck Cantrell.

At dinner, Pres and Buck argue politics, but Pres is called to town and it is Ted who finishes the argument in a duel with Buck. Buck is killed, and Pres is struck down with fever. Julie sneaks through the fever line with the help of her servant, Gros Bat. In town, Dr. Livingstone tells Julie that Pres must go to the leper colony for quarantine.

Amy, accompanied by Ted and Aunt Belle, follows Julie, and as Pres's wife, she insists on attending to him. In a final confrontation, Julie convinces Amy that her ignorance of Southern ways means certain death for them both. Amy acquiesces, and Julie rides into the night at Pres's side. (synopsis from AFI Catalog)

Davis reportedly received an injury during production when, while employing the Southern custom of reddening her cheeks by slapping them with the back of a hairbrush, she hit herself too hard and had to take three days off.

According to modern sources, Henry Fonda had an agreement with Warner Bros. that his work on the film would be finished by early Dec 1937 so that he could attend the birth of his child

[Jane Fonda] in the East. As the production was behind schedule, Fonda had to leave before all his scenes with Davis were completed, leaving Davis to do the scenes in close-up without Fonda there to read his lines.

According to studio publicity material, Bette Davis wore sixteen different costumes, each with a cost of over \$500, and that the now-famous red dress that she wore, which cost \$850, was, in fact, bronze-colored because red appears as grey in black-and-white film. A total of \$30,000 was spent on dresses for the film, and seventy-five seamstresses worked for a month making them.



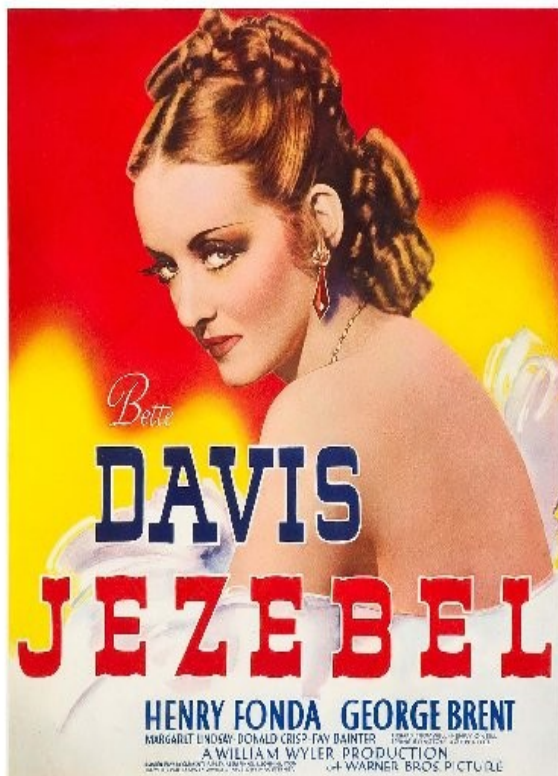
Bette Davis won the Academy Award for Best Actress for her portrayal of Julie Marsden. In addition, the film received nominations for Best Picture and Ernest Haller received a nomination for Best Cinematography.

The National Board of Review named it the best English language film of the year. ***Jezebel*** was inducted for preservation in the 2009 National Film Registry of the Library of Congress.



MOVIE POSTERS

Warner Brothers took different approaches to its film accessory merchandising. The movie poster on the left is the one sheet released in the United States and features a glamorous Bette Davis as Julie. The poster on the right is the Italian 2-fogli. It represents the film's final scene where the narcissistic Julie unselfishly faces death by going with her love Pres to the leper colony. (Reproductions of these beautiful posters are available on HollywoodOnTheBayou.com).



Jezebel - 1938 U.S. Window Card
Louisiana Film Series

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www.HollywoodOnTheBayou.com



Jezebel - 1938 Italian 2 Fogli
Louisiana Film Series

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Heroine to Hussy: Women in Louisiana Films

Evangeline - 1929 - *Evangeline*



In the quiet Nova Scotian village of Grand-Pré lives the fair Evangeline (Dolores Del Rio) and her father, Benedict Bellefontaine (Paul McAllister), a prosperous farmer. Though she admires and is loved by Baptiste (Donald Reed), she is pledged to Gabriel (Roland Drew). Before they can be married, France and England declare war. The Acadians, bound by allegiance to England and by ties of kinship to France, refuse to take up arms against France, and are ordered deported.

As the men are herded aboard a British man-o'-war, the governor-general sets fire to the village of Grand-Pré. Suffering from exposure and broken by the sight, Benedict dies in the arms of Evangeline, who then departs for unknown lands with Father Felician. They arrive at Bayou Têche, Louisiana, where former residents of Grand Pré have established a settlement, just missing Gabriel.

Through the wilds of the gulf coast, Evangeline suffers many hardships in search of her beloved, refusing the hand of Baptiste, who has become a prosperous land owner. Basil offers to help her search for Gabriel, but they are separated by a storm. Traveling alone, Evangeline arrives at a settlement of Jesuits where she becomes a Sister of Mercy, though ever hopeful of finding Gabriel. At the end of the war, Evangeline is sent to Philadelphia to care for the maimed and friendless. Finally, she is at last reunited with her long-sought beloved.



Jezebel's Julie Marsden is only one of the many strong female characters that are included in the new book, ***Heroine to Hussy: Women in Louisiana Films***.

Evangeline is an Acadian beauty who spent her life searching for her lost love. Jane Morgan is the sophisticated woman who tamed the man-beast Tarzan. Blanche Dubois is an aging southern belle whose checkered past brings her to the brink of insanity. These are all iconic female characters brought to life on the silver screen ... and all have a connection to Louisiana. See sample page on left.

HOLIDAY SPECIAL

THIS GREAT BOOK – A MUST FOR
ALL FILM FANS – IS CURRENTLY ON
SALE FOR

\$20.00

[Click HERE to buy](#)

HEROINE TO HUSSY

Women in Louisiana Films



Ed and Susan Poole

Hollywood on the Bayou

LOUISIANA PLANTATIONS: REAL TO REEL

Louisiana has been a favorite shooting location for filmmakers for almost 130 years. As early as 1898, the largest movie studio of the time, American Mutoscope and Biograph Company, came to the state to film actuals of New Orleans and the surrounding areas. For the next thirteen decades, movie makers have continued to come to Louisiana.

Why does Louisiana pique the interests of film producers? There are a number of reasons. Two of the major draws are the colorful history and the magnificent architecture. These two factors are clearly evident in Louisiana's famous -- and infamous -- plantations.

The plantations of Louisiana represent a period in history from the birth of our great nation to a time when it was nearly torn apart. They capture the heart, soul and spirit of the people who inhabited them, from the affluent to the poor. The land, homes and buildings tell the story of the great planters of cotton, sugar, indigo before the Civil War and how they built their empires on the backs of slaves. Many stood as witnesses to the wrath of war, and many suffered near destruction.

Fortunately many of these gems have survived through the efforts of individuals who spent time and money to restore them to their old glory. These living monuments offer visitors a chance to relive a time in our country's early history. They also provide a unique filming opportunity for movie makers.

In the "reel" world, these plantations have been used as backdrops for time periods as early as the antebellum era to today. They have been used to tell tales of the Civil War; they have served as the home for the rich, famous and political of all time periods; their "ghostly" reputations provide an excellent atmosphere for films dealing with the "other world"; and can represent any house in the USA.

The new publication ***Louisiana's Plantations: Real to Reel*** features 38 plantations located around the state of Louisiana. It focuses on their rich history and how filmmakers from around the world have used them to make their movie magic. The following article on The Cottage plantation is a sample of the information found in the new book.

COTTAGE PLANTATION

East Baton Rouge Parish

The Cottage was built in 1824 by Colonel Abner Duncan as a wedding gift for his daughter Frances Sophia and her husband, Frederick Daniel Conrad. The Greek Revival mansion was set in a grove of live oaks.

Twelve Doric columns enclosed a brick-paved gallery and supported a wide second story gallery and dormered roof. The lower floor was brick, the upper was wood. The paneled doorway was flanked by fluted columns and sidelights and topped by a fan light. The house had 22 rooms and was considered one of the finest in the Baton Rouge area.

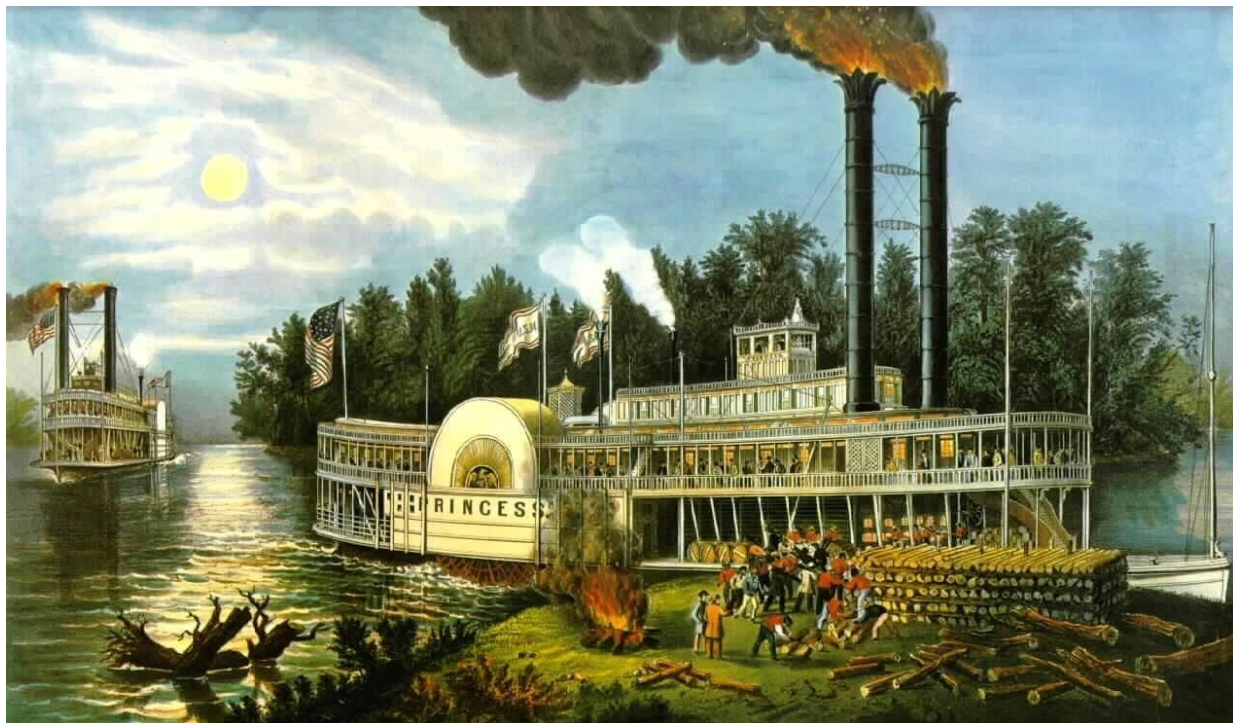


It soon became one of the most successful sugar plantations in the area. By the 1850's, the Conrads were entertaining many rich and powerful guests including such notables as Jefferson Davis, Henry Clay, Zachary Taylor, and the Marquis de Lafayette.

The Conrad family itself had esteemed beginnings, tracing its ancestry to George and Martha Washington. In the years before the Civil War, life was very good at the Cottage. They imported furniture, collected a fortune in jewelry and amassed great wealth.

In the 1850's, another man came to live at the Cottage - a traveling teacher named Angus Holt, who would become the private tutor to the Conrad children and Frederick Conrad's personal secretary. Holt became a part of the Conrad family and lived there happily until war came.

On the foggy Sunday morning of February 27, 1859, the four boilers of the *Princess*, a steam-powered riverboat, exploded near the Cottage, sending bodies and cargo flying in all directions. It was loaded with cotton and passengers bound for Mardi Gras in New Orleans. Conrad had his slaves help the victims to shore, and laid out bed sheets covered in flour on the lawn of the house on which to lay the wounded. The explosion left 70 dead, and many others wounded. The boat and its cargo were a total loss. Human error, failure to maintain safe boiler pressure, was determined to be the cause, and a pall was cast over the 1859 Mardi Gras celebrations.



Life, after the beginning of the Civil War, changed forever. The Union Army took over the Cottage and removed everything that could be found of value, from horses to furniture to jewelry to even the clothing of the children. The troops occupied the plantation and held the family prisoner, being especially brutal with Frederick Conrad and his secretary, Mr. Holt.

After the troops left, the family abandoned the house and it was taken over and used as a hospital for Union soldiers with yellow fever. In the years that followed, this is probably what saved it from being destroyed by vandals. Many had died from the disease in the house and were buried on the grounds. The fear that the sickness lingered kept many people away.

A few years later, Frederick Conrad died in New Orleans and Holt returned to the abandoned Cottage a changed man. He became a recluse, spending all of his time trying to repair the old house for what remained of the Conrad family, most of whom had been his students. He stopped shaving and was seen wandering the grounds of the Cottage with a long, white beard. Many local people avoided him, but they could never forget the wonderful man that he had once been. The neighbors made frequent gifts of food to sustain him while he stayed on at the house.

When Holt finally died, friends went through his many trunks and found huge quantities of books and clothing, along with moldy half-eaten biscuits and portions of meals. Holt had taken to walking about the house at night, reliving the happier times in the house. As he walked, he would munch on biscuits and meat and then throw the uneaten portion into one of his trunks. Holt was buried in a local cemetery.

As the years passed, the Cottage again stood empty. People who lived nearby said it was haunted. No one would go near the house after dark, fearing that Holt's ghost was still there. There were reports of doors opening and slamming by themselves and sightings of apparitions on the grounds. These shadowy figures were often seen, but when investigated, the place was found to be empty.

In 1917, the Cottage was used as the background for the silent film ***Burning the Candle***. According to early film records, this was the first film shot on location in Baton Rouge and is one of the first examples of filmmakers using the plantations of Louisiana to give authenticity to their movies.

In the 1920's, the Conrad family began a restoration of the house. Luckily, thanks to the rumors of ghosts and yellow fever, the house had managed to survive fairly intact throughout the years. In the 1950's, the house was opened to the public and served as a museum to the memory of the Old South. It attracted a great deal of interest and artists came from all over the world to capture the flair of the south before the Civil War.

During this time, the rumors of ghosts still persisted. Some visitors would report the sounds of singing and strange music in the house and on the grounds. It seems that in the heyday of the house, before the war, the Conrads would often entertain their guests by having their slaves sing for them and play music. Now, nearly a century later, the sounds of that music could still be heard at the house, a residual and ghostly echo from another time.

Other visitors reported their own encounters with Mr. Holt. He was said to be seen walking through the house, pulling at his long beard and mumbling to himself. In 1940, one reporter for the *Elks Magazine* even photographed the ghost by accident. He was doing a story about the Cottage and after having his film developed, he noticed the image of an old man looking out the window. He was sure that no one had been there at the time and after showing it the staff members at the house identified the apparition as Mr. Holt!

On a February morning in 1960, the Cottage burned to the ground. The firemen who were on the scene would later report a very strange incident. It seemed that while they were directing water on the house from the side garden, a man appeared in the upper window of the house. The fire fighters directed him to jump, but he never seemed to notice them or the fire that was all around him. The roof suddenly collapsed and the man was gone. After the fire was put out, they sifted the debris, searching for the man's remains but found no body.

There are nothing but ruins now where the Cottage once stood, but visitors to the property still claim to hear the sounds of music and singing there. They also claim to encounter the ghost of Mr. Holt as he wanders about the property.



In addition to ***Burning the Candle***, 1917, two other films featured the Cottage.

***Burning the Candle* - 1917**

American stage and film actors Henry B. Walthall and Mary Charleston came to Baton Rouge to film scenes for ***Burning the Candle***. The film was directed by Harry Beaumont and released through Kleine-Edison-Selig-Essanay. The film projects a powerful lesson on the liquor theme.

The story involves a young southerner who goes to New York to accept a job soon after his married. Once in New York, the former non-drinker finds himself slowly becoming an alcoholic. He loses his job and his young wife returns to her southern home. After becoming a vagabond and losing family and friends, he decides to conquer his demons, regaining his position and his wife.



The Cottage served as the southern home featured in this film.

Cinerama Holiday - 1955

Cinerama Holiday was the second of the Cinerama films. Cinerama is a widescreen process that, originally, simultaneously projected images from three synchronized 35 mm projectors onto a huge, deeply curved screen. The trademarked process was marketed by the Cinerama Corporation. It was the first of a number of novel processes introduced during the 1950s, when the movie industry was reacting to competition from television. Cinerama was presented to the public as a theatrical event, with reserved seating and printed programs, and audience members often dressed in their best attire for the evening.

In this musical travelogue, two real life couples, John and Betty Marsh from Kansas City, and Fred and Beatrice Troller from Zurich, Switzerland, meet at the St. Louis Airport just before embarking on separate vacation adventures. The Marshes are en route to Europe, while the Trollers will simultaneously explore the United States. After several stops in the United States, the Trollers head to New Orleans where they attend a music-filled service at the Second Free Mission Baptist Church, visit the Lafayette Cemetery where they witness a funeral, and attend a music performance by the Original Dixieland Jazz Band at the Absinthe House nightclub. While touring the south, they visit the Cottage. ***Cinerama Holiday*** was directed by Robert Bendick.

Band of Angels – 1957

Based on the best seller written by Robert Penn Warren, the film is set in the south at the time of the Civil War. It focuses on the romance between Hamish Bond, a wealthy New Orleans gentleman and former slave runner, and a Southern plantation heiress, Amantha Starr. When her father dies, Amantha learns that her mother was a slave, making her property of the plantation. At a slave auction, she is purchased by Bond who makes her the mistress of his house. Clark Gable stars as Bond and Yvonne DeCarlo portrays Amantha.



The film, which also stars Sidney Poitier, Efrem Zimbalist, Jr. and Patric Knowles, was directed by Raoul Walsh.

The image below features DiCarlo, Gable and Walsh discussing a scene.



The filmmakers wanted to ensure an authentic feel to the film so it was shot on location at and around Baton Rouge.

The Cottage served as Pointe du Loup, the up-river plantation home of Bond where Amantha becomes house mistress. Ashland Belle Helene Plantation was also featured in the film as Belle Helene, another of Bond's plantation homes. It is from Belle Helene that Bond and Amanthe escape to the West Indies.

To read the real to reel history of 38 Louisiana plantations, get your copy of *Louisiana Plantations: Real to Reel* [HERE](#).

Louisiana Plantations: Real to Reel



Ed and Susan Poole

**SPECIAL
HOLIDAY
PRICE
ONLY
\$10**

FROM "DIRTY SHIRTS" TO BUCCANEERS: THE BATTLE OF NEW ORLEANS IN AMERICAN CULTURE

January 8, 2015 will mark the 200th anniversary of the Battle of New Orleans, the last major battle of the War of 1812. In the early morning hours of January 8, 1815, British soldiers marched against a seriously outnumbered ragtag group of Americans led by General Andrew Jackson. Jackson's forces included soldiers and sailors, as well as state militia from Louisiana, Tennessee, Kentucky and Mississippi. African Americans, Cherokee Indians and Jean Lafitte's Baratarian pirates also served under Jackson. The Americans defended with deadly artillery and rifles, resulting in British casualties of more than 2,500 (about 700 dead) in contrast to 71 American casualties (about 13 dead). Jackson defeated the British in just 30 minutes, halting their plans to attack New Orleans and establishing himself as a national military hero. The Treaty of Ghent, which ended the war, had been signed two weeks before the battle but the news had not yet crossed the Atlantic.



The Louisiana State Museum will commemorate this major historical event with its ***From "Dirty Shirts" to Buccaneers: THE BATTLE OF NEW ORLEANS in American Culture*** opening ***January 11, 2015***.

The Louisiana State Museum's groundbreaking bicentennial exhibition features two national treasures: the uniform coat Andrew Jackson wore while leading troops at the Battle of New Orleans and a portrait of him by Ralph E. W. Earl. General Jackson wore the same coat for the portrait, now part of the National Portrait Gallery's collection in Washington, D.C.

On loan from the National Museum of American History of the Smithsonian Institution, the coat's inclusion in the exhibit opening at the Cabildo on Jackson Square marks the first time it has been in New Orleans since the battle.

The victory of a ragtag band of "dirty shirts," as the British called their foes, captured the American imagination, contributed to a sense of national identity and propelled Andrew Jackson to the White House. The exhibition explores how a diverse group of French Creoles, Kentucky and Tennessee riflemen, Baratarians and free men of color, among others, defeated the mighty British army. With movie clips and a variety of memorabilia, the exhibition also considers what the battle meant to later generations. For more information on this great exhibit, click [HERE](#).

JEAN LAFITTE: THE REEL STORY

While the truth surrounding the life and death of Jean Lafitte has been debated for over 200 years, one thing is certain, Lafitte was both an outlaw and a hero – an enigmatic character born for the silver screen. While taking creative liberties with the truth, Lafitte has been the subject of many films. Here are a few:

1913 – *The Buccaneers* – Universal Pictures – directed by Otis Turner and starred David Hartford as Jean Lafitte.

1919 – *Millionaire Pirate* – Bluebird Photoplays – directed by Rupert Julian and starred Monroe Salisbury as Jean Lafitte.

In the early eighteenth century, pirate leader Jean Lafitte fights another pirate and wins a beautiful girl recently captured with a treasure. Although the girl offers herself to Lafitte to save her English lover, Lafitte makes him walk the plank. The girl then delivers a curse that Lafitte and his descendants will never know the true love of woman.

Two hundred years later, in the West Antilles, painter Paul Winthrop poses Joe, a pearl diver, as a pirate. Seeing the painting, each envisions the earlier situation. Later, Joe finds the buried treasure, and sails to New York, where he learns that the portrait has also attracted wealthy Lily Demorest and her suitor, Robert Spurr, a "financial pirate." Joe kidnaps Lily for Paul, who timidly loves her, but he decides to keep her himself, until Lily's cry for Paul reminds

him of the curse. Joe returns Lily to Paul, and takes his contentment from thinking of their happiness.



1926 – *Eagle of the Sea* – Paramount – directed by Frank Lloyd with Ricardo Cortez. Captain Sarazac was the rumored name used by Lafitte in public as he wanted to hid his true identity.



Captain Sazarac--actually the notorious buccaneer Jean Lafitte--saves Louise Lestron from harm while attending a masked ball in New Orleans, being given in honor of Gen. Andrew Jackson. The hall is invaded by John Jarvis and a band of mock pirates, among them Sazarac; Jarvis unmasks the buccaneer, and General Jackson gives him until dawn to leave town. Colonel Lestron, a French patriot, wishes to send the *Seraphine* to rescue Napoleon from St. Helena and invites Lafitte to lead the ship; but he declines and exposes her uncle's plans to Louise.

When she is sent away on another ship, Lafitte abducts her, but in New Orleans, Crackley, leader of the insurgents, imprisons Lafitte and his followers. The *Seraphine* is captured by a Spanish man-o'-war on which the colonel has followed; and with the aid of Louise, Lafitte and his men are freed.

1938 – *Buccaneer* – Paramount – Directed by DeMille with Frederick March as Lafitte.



In August, 1814, as the British seize and burn the President's Palace in Washington, D.C., Senator Crawford of Louisiana plots with British naval officers to attack New Orleans. Meanwhile, the *Corinthian* sets sail from New Orleans carrying Marie de Remy, whose sister Annette loves privateer Jean Lafitte, who is wanted by Governor Claiborne. Lafitte and his thousand pirates hold Barataria, a territory of bayous which separates the ocean from New Orleans and claims allegiance to no nation.

When pirate Captain Brown sinks the *Corinthian*, breaking Lafitte's rule never to attack an American ship, the sole survivor is a Dutch girl, Gretchen, who falls in love with Lafitte. On the advice of Crawford, the British bribe Lafitte to lead them through the bayous to attack General Andrew Jackson's army at New Orleans. Lafitte, however, convinces his men to fight for "the only shore that has let [them] stay" and turns the letters of conspiracy over to Claiborne.

Now a man of honor, Lafitte proposes to Annette. Crawford, however, convinces Claiborne that Lafitte's letters were forged and when Lafitte's men greet the American ships, they are met with cannon fire and taken prisoner. Lafitte escapes, however, and when General Jackson learns of Crawford's demands for surrender, Lafitte offers his army of pirates in exchange for their pardon and a head start of one hour for his own escape.

Behind bales of cotton, aided by Dominique You, ex-cannoneer for Napoleon, Lafitte defeats the Scottish army, while Jackson fights the British. That night at the victory ball, when Annette sees Gretchen wearing Marie's dress and the miniature of her mother, she demands to know the whereabouts of the *Corinthian*. As leader of his men, Lafitte takes responsibility for Brown's crime and is about to be hanged when Jackson fulfills his promise of Lafitte's escape. As Lafitte's ship sails, Gretchen, at his side, swears her loyalty to him.

1939 – *Old Hickory* – Warner Bros. – directed by Lewis Seiler and starring George Renavent as Lafitte. The film featured four key incidents in the public life of Andrew Jackson, one addressed his victory at the Battle of New Orleans in 1812 after an alliance with pirate Jean Lafitte.

1950 – *Last of the Buccaneers* – Columbia – directed by Lew Landers with Paul Heinreid as Lafitte.

During the War of 1812, pirate Jean Lafitte helps General "Stonewall" Jackson defeat the British and endears himself to Belle Summers, the beautiful niece of wealthy shipowner George Mareval. Later, when the governor of Louisiana refuses to return his ships to him, Lafitte captures a recently provisioned ship belonging to Mareval. He then offers his services to the consul of Venezuela, whose country is at war with Spain. Knowing that as long as he loots only Spanish ships, the American authorities will leave him alone, Lafitte promises to return for Belle and takes to the seas.



As the months pass, Lafitte and his buccaneers establish a kingdom on the island of Galveston in the Gulf, and Lafitte builds a castle, which he names the Maison Rouge. The spoils from his raids are kept in tunnels which, if threatened, can be destroyed by a pulling a secret lever.

When pirate Cragg Brown attacks an American ship against Lafitte's express orders, he is hanged. In New Orleans, the news that one of Lafitte's ships has plundered an American vessel angers the people. Belle is convinced that Lafitte is innocent and offers to prove it. Under safe conduct from the authorities, Lafitte takes Belle to Galveston, where she plans to prove that the bills of lading for the goods in his warehouse do not correspond with those from the missing American ship.

Shortly before her wedding day, however, Belle finds a document that proves that Lafitte does have the loot from the American ship. Not knowing that Lafitte has hanged the responsible man, she gives the authorities in New Orleans information that will enable them to capture Galveston. Just before the soldiers arrive, Belle learns the truth about the capture of the ship, but it is too late to stop the invasion. When the soldiers are about to search the tunnel, Swallow, the daughter of one of Lafitte's loyal workers, pulls the secret lever, and the treasure is buried forever. Lafitte forgives Belle, and the two lovers escape in a fishing boat.

1958 – *Buccaneer* – Paramount – directed by Anthony Quinn and Yul Brynner as Lafitte.

In late 1814, New Orleans has been under the control of the United States for less than a decade, and Gen. Andrew Jackson, who has been leading the fight against the British for the past two years, realizes that to win the war, he must maintain possession of the vital, still-wild port. With Washington, D.C. having been captured by the enemy, the outcome of the war lies in Jackson's hands. Desperate to prevent an impending blockade by the British, Jackson heads to New Orleans, despite warnings that notorious French Creole pirate Jean Lafitte is the de facto ruler of the city and especially of Barataria, the outlying swamps.

Meanwhile, in New Orleans, Lafitte flouts territorial law by selling his booty outside city limits, thereby avoiding paying taxes, while also secretly courting Annette, the

daughter of Governor William Claiborne. At one rendezvous, Annette protests that she can no longer see Lafitte, as he is defying the American cause, which her father is attempting to solidify. The pirate replies that he has forbidden his men from attacking American ships and tells her that she can be the queen of Barataria, regardless of who rules New Orleans. Annette dismisses Lafitte's offer, stating that she needs a man of whom she can be proud.



Later, at the harbor, Capt. Brown, one of Lafitte's men and the father of the fiery Bonnie, one of the pirates, watches as a strongbox of gold is loaded onto an American ship. The ship also carries Annette's younger sister Marie, who is eloping with her beau. Despite Lafitte's prohibition on attacking Americans, Brown orders his men to capture the ship, the *Corinthian*, and after securing the loot, burns the vessel without offering aid to those trapped aboard. Only young cabin boy Miggs is saved, and Lafitte is so horrified when he learns of the vicious crime that he has Brown hanged.

In Barataria, some of the pirates want to kill Miggs, as he is the only witness to the *Corinthian's* fate, but Lafitte protects the lad. Bonnie vows revenge against Lafitte for her father's death, and yells at the others that Lafitte is supporting the Americans only because of Annette.

Soon after, Lafitte is visited by British naval officers who offer him royal pardons, land grants and a fortune in gold if he helps the British take New Orleans. Lafitte's righthand man, Dominique You, ridicules their promise to give Lafitte a captaincy in the British Navy, noting that Lafitte has far greater power as a pirate. Although the British vow to destroy Lafitte if he does not join them, he casually states that he will send them his answer in a week, then dismisses them.

Later, Dominique teases Lafitte about his devotion to Annette, and Lafitte replies that he has come to believe in the ideals America represents, and that at some point in his life, a man must change. Lafitte then takes the letters from the British to Claiborne, who deeply mistrusts him. Lafitte asks only for a pardon for him and his men, and a "place under the American flag," in exchange for joining the Americans, and Claiborne agrees to take the matter to the defense council.

Annette is so thrilled by Lafitte's transformation that she accepts his marriage proposal, but Lafitte's happiness is ruined when he returns to Barataria and discovers that the pirate village has been destroyed by the Americans. Bonnie tells Lafitte that the survivors have been imprisoned in New Orleans, and he

determines to free them. Bonnie, who cannot help loving Lafitte, then begs him to escape with her, but he demurs.

Meanwhile, in the city, Annette castigates her father for betraying Lafitte, while Mercier, a cowardly member of the council, asserts that their only hope is to surrender to the British. His comment is overheard by Jackson, who has just arrived, and the general proclaims that he will burn New Orleans rather than surrender it.

Afterward, as Jackson rests alone, Lafitte sneaks in through a window and holds the general at gunpoint to demand the release of his men. Lafitte offers Jackson a huge store of arms in exchange, and Jackson, impressed by Lafitte's courage, agrees.

As they talk, a young French Creole bursts in with news that the British are burning his father's plantation, only eight miles away. Lafitte helps Jackson devise strategic defense plans, then goes to the jail, where he tries to rally Dominique, who tells him that the men feel betrayed, as they believe that he has abandoned them. Lafitte shows him the pardon for himself signed by Jackson, who has offered to pardon any other pirate who fights alongside him.

Lafitte then leaves, while on the battle lines, the Americans grow fretful, worrying that he will not bring the much-needed supplies. Claiborne arrives with three hundred city dwellers to reinforce the soldiers, although they are still vastly outnumbered by the British. Just as the battle begins, Lafitte arrives with not only the ammunition, but all of his men.

Jackson tells Lafitte that due to the heavy fog, he cannot employ his deadly, long-range Kentucky rifles, and so Lafitte undertakes a dangerous mission, accompanied by one of his men and one of Jackson's Indian scouts. The trio succeeds in sending aloft a fiery arrow to pinpoint the British Army's location, and soon the Americans win the battle.

Claiborne hosts a party celebrating the victory, and both Jackson and Lafitte are feted by the townspeople. The evening is spoiled, however, when Bonnie arrives dressed in the wedding gown that Marie intended to wear, which was taken in the booty from the *Corinthian*. Miggs also appears, and when he is relentlessly questioned about the *Corinthian's* fate, Lafitte comes to his aid by revealing that he was there when the ship was sunk. Lafitte does not place the blame on Brown, however, stating instead that as

the leader, he was responsible. Annette tries to defend her beloved, but the townsmen grab him and plan to lynch him. Jackson stops them, insisting that the pardon offered to the pirates still remains in force, as they stood by the Americans during the battle.

Lafitte turns down his offer, asking only for an hour's "head start." Jackson agrees, and although Annette begs to go with him, Lafitte tells her that he loves her too much to subject her to a life on the run, without a country to call home. Telling Claiborne that while he cannot restore his other daughter to him, he can give him the thing he loves most in all the world, Lafitte places Annette's hand in his, then leaves. Later, aboard his ship, Lafitte sails away with Dominique, Bonnie and the others. Bitterly declaring that they have no flag to fly, Lafitte gives orders to head to sea, and Bonnie joins him at the wheel.



LOUISIANA'S FUTURE FILM HISTORY

Here are some of the movies currently filming throughout Louisiana:

Daddy's Home - Paramount feature film starring Mark Wahlberg and Will Ferrell shooting in New Orleans November 17th through February 3rd .

Geostorm - Warner Bros feature movie starring Gerard Butler is filming in New Orleans October 20th through February 10th .

Joe Dirt 2 - Sony feature film Joe Dirt 2 starring David Spade is filming until December 19th in New Orleans.

Valencia - Paramount feature film starring John Goodman and Mary Elizabeth Winstead is filming until December 20th in New Orleans and Home Plantation in Hahnville.

Vincent & Roxxy - Independent feature starring Zoë Kravitz and Emile Hirsch is filming in Baton Rouge through January 15th.

The following movies will begin filming in Louisiana early 2015:

Big Life – 28 Entertainment movie will begin filming in Baton Rouge January 12th through February 4th.

Elvis & Nixon – HW Productions feature starring Kevin Spacey and Michael Shannon will shoot in New Orleans January 13th through February 13th.

Showing Roots – Upload Feature starring Cicely Tyson and James Moses Black will shoot in Baton Rouge January 12th through 31st.

When the Bough Breaks – Screen Gems feature will shoot in New Orleans February 2nd for 33 days.

Peeks Kill – Independent feature movie will film in Baton Rouge February 16th through March 4th.

The Long Night – Summit feature film will film in New Orleans March.

BACKGROUND ACTORS GUILD B.A.G. AWARDS



The Background Actors Guild (B.A.G.) Inaugural Awards Program will be held Wednesday, December 17, 2014 from 8:00 to 11:00 p.m. at Sportsbeat Bar & Café, 3330 Ridgelake Drive, Metairie. The program will be hosted by Eric J. Price.

To get more details or to RSVP, visit the Background Actors Guild Facebook page [HERE](#).

To see the award nominees and to vote for your favorites, visit the B.A.G. website [HERE](#).

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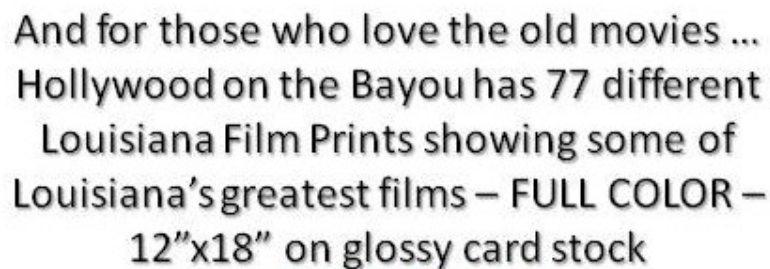
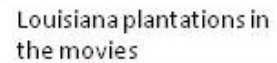
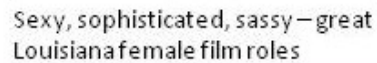
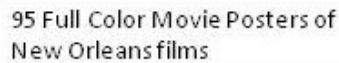
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- **FILM KREWE** IS A NEW ORLEANS BASED CARNIVAL PARADING ORGANIZATION FOR LOUISIANA FILM INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS.
- **FILM KREWE** BRINGS TOGETHER THE SPECTRUM OF FILM PRODUCTION TALENTS TO SHOWCASE THE SUPERIOR TALENTS OF LOCAL ARTISTS AND TECHNICIANS.
- **FILM KREWE** PROVIDES AN OPPORTUNITY FOR LOCALS AND TRANSPLANTS TO CO-CREATE THE SPECTACLE OF CARNIVAL WHILE FOSTERING SOCIAL AND PROFESSIONAL CONNECTIONS.



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# WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

For over 35 years we have been involved with documenting, recording and preserving film accessories (i.e., press books, movie stills, movie posters, general press materials, etc.). Our path has evolved from being just collectors to retail and wholesale dealers and eventually to full time researchers. And now our focus is on Louisiana's extensive film history.

In researching information related to our personal collection of original movie posters (see photo below), we realized that there was no central location to find information about our state's history in the filming industry. Thus, we have taken on the quest of preserving this information through books, film prints, lectures, research and an information website.



We are now introducing our ***Hollywood on the Bayou's Louisiana in Film*** epublication to entertain and enlighten film fans and history buffs to the tremendous contributions that Louisiana has made, and continues to make, to the movie industry.

# Hollywood On The Bayou's Louisiana in Film

**Hollywood on the Bayou's *Louisiana in Film*** is an online publication dedicated to documenting and recording the state's film industry, chronicling Louisiana's current status as the top feature filmmaking location in the country while preserving the longstanding history of Louisiana in film.

We would appreciate receiving comments, article ideas or article submissions for future issues from our readers. Please forward these to Susan at [sue@HollywoodOnTheBayou.com](mailto:sue@HollywoodOnTheBayou.com) or visit our website [HERE](#).

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## LOUISIANA FILM HISTORY POWER POINT PRESENTATIONS

If your organization, historic group, class, etc. would like to schedule our hour long PowerPoint presentation on Louisiana's rich film heritage, please contact us at (504) 298-5267 or send an email to [edp@HollywoodOnTheBayou.com](mailto:edp@HollywoodOnTheBayou.com). The presentation can be customized to suit your organization's needs.

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