



# Le Journal des Amis



## GREETINGS FROM YOUR PRESIDENT!

The 2nd Annual Duplantier Christmas Party, held in December, was a great time for the members to gather for holiday cheer, food, and conversation in the beautiful Hart House. Thanks to all who made it such a lovely event.

Soon Spring will arrive! Already the Japanese magnolias and azaleas are blooming. Irises will soon follow. Progress is moving forward to fix moisture issues which have plagued the Main House for a number of years. The Friends thank BREC for the purchase of four new dehumidifiers, which have been installed in the main house. Also another dehumidifier, purchased by BREC, will be installed in the Friend's storage room in the Hart House, which has been emptied while BREC vents it more efficiently and repaints it.

Magnolia Mound is an accredited House Museum. Its re-accreditation comes up in 2024. Magnolia Mound's staff, executive board, and John Sykes, Museum Director, are busy working on this project already.

April 1st is the date for the 23rd Annual Petite Antiques Forum. The Friends are very excited about our speaker, R. Larry Schmidt from BK House in New Orleans, and our featured tours of the LeJeune House and the Saurage House next door to each other in New Roads. Please see the article in this newsletter for more details. We hope to see you there!

Sincerely,  
Karen Zobrist

## Don't miss the 23rd annual Petite Antiques Forum & House Tours on Saturday, April 1

By Catherine White



*Tour the LeJeune House in New Roads, built in the 1820s.*

Since its creation by H. Parrott Bacot (late Curator Emeritus of Magnolia Mound) the Petite Antiques Forum has delighted antiques enthusiasts with its single day format featuring a lecture, luncheon, and tour of a historic home or two. For twenty-three years the Friends of Magnolia Mound has offered an entertaining and enlightening lecture on many aspects of architecture, arts, and antiques.



R. Larry Schmidt, board president of the Historic BK House and Gardens in New Orleans, will present "If These Walls Could Talk – A Small Museum with Many Stories". His illustrated talk will highlight the history, restoration and ongoing stewardship of this unique French Quarter structure. Built in 1826 by a French Creole family, the Beauregard-Keyes home is a rare example in the Vieux Carré of a raised center hall dwelling with Federal influences. As board president, Mr. Schmidt manages the funding and implementation of a five-year, four-million-dollar renovation of this two hundred year old national landmark.



*Forum with R. Larry Schmidt: the BK House and Gardens in New Orleans.*



*Tour the Saurage House in New Roads, built in 1905.*



Library at the LeJeune House.



Kitchen at the LeJeune House.



Dining room at the Saurage House.



Parlor at the BK House.

Following the lecture attendees will have luncheon at the Baton Rouge Country Club, then journey to New Roads to tour two privately owned historic homes.

The LeJeune House, built in the 1820s, was the residence of the Samson and LeJeune families until 1971 when it was purchased and restored by Mr. and Mrs. Rollinger. Restoration was ongoing under the next owners the Dunsmares, until it was acquired by Richard Gibbs and Randy Harelson in 2006. They have continued their restoration of the home and gardens, furnishing the residence with their collection of art and antiques.

The second tour home is the adjacent Saurage House, built in 1905. The current owner Cary Saurage purchased it from his friends Randy Harelson and Richard Gibbs in 2013 with the request that they assist him with renovations. They were uniquely qualified for the project, as Richard is an architect and Randy is a landscape designer. Mr. Saurage has filled his home with a collection of contemporary Louisiana art. With an interest in landscapes, he and friend landscape architect Jon Emerson designed the garden.

Make your plans now to attend the Friends of Magnolia Mound Petite Antiques Forum on April 1, 2023. The cost of the educational event is \$125 per person, which includes the lecture, luncheon, and the tour of two Pointe Coupee landmarks. Reservations are necessary, and space is limited. Limited seating is available on a chartered bus for an additional \$15.



Parlor at the LeJeune House.

Photographs of the LeJeune House by Randy Harelson and Craig Macaluso, and of the Saurage House by Cary Saurage and Richard Gibbs

Tickets for the Forum will be available March 1 online at: [www.friendsofmagnoliamount.org](http://www.friendsofmagnoliamount.org) or by calling Babeth Schlegel at (225) 421-3165.

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*If you would like to be a Petite Antiques Forum sponsor:*

Sponsorships help defray the costs of the event. All proceeds enable the Friends of Magnolia Mound to continue their support of Magnolia Mound. Sponsorships are available in the amounts of \$1000, \$500, and \$250.

**Please contact Forum Chairman Catherine White at [ctwhite@cox.net](mailto:ctwhite@cox.net) for more information about sponsorships.**

*Proceeds from the forum will be used to preserve the collection of decorative arts and artifacts displayed at Magnolia Mound, one of the earliest buildings in Baton Rouge and a historically significant structure listed on the National Register of Historic Places. This museum is owned and operated by BREC, and the collection of furnishings is owned and maintained by the Friends, a nonprofit 501 (c) (3) organization.*

# Indigo

## For the love of blue

By Babeth Schlegel – The majority of this article was excerpted from “Colour Making and Using Dyes and Pigments” by Francois Delamare and Bernard Guineau



Indigo plant (*Indigofera tinctoria*)

Color is everywhere in nature and has always fascinated humankind in the search to replicate it. It has been a long evolving journey to add colors to fabrics.

Indigo, extracted from the indigo plant (*Indigofera tinctoria*), was used to create a blue dye that could go toward a purple hue. In the age of exploration, dyes and colorants became precious commodities equivalent to spices and silk. Indigo became a golden market which was to be impacted by social and political changes.

Francois Delamare and Bernard Guineau write in “Colour Making and Using Dyes and Pigments” that “The traditional trade and shipping routes were disrupted by the discovery of new ones and new continents. Maritime exploration and the political evolution of the European nation-states tended to suppress intermediaries and favor national industries.”

In the 18th century, European governments wanted to safeguard their local pastel (*Isatis tinctoria* plant that produces a blue dye) industries by implementing restrictive laws. But the use of indigo as a domestic blue dye became so popular that it ruined the pastel producers. By cultivating the indigo plant in their American colonies, the French, English and Spanish were able to participate in the profitable market of the blue dye.

Louisiana’s plantation owners during the Spanish period (1763-1803) became wealthy from the production of the lucrative blue dye. The cultivation of the *Indigofera tinctoria* plant and the process to make the dye necessitated a large number of enslaved people. Enslaved women worked in the indigo fields while most enslaved men worked in the production of the dye.

Most of the Caribbean indigo made its way to the port city of Marseilles in France which became a shipping hub for supplying textile mills. Delamare and Guineau state that “through Marseilles, American dyes were transshipped east as far as Smyrna, Aleppo, Constantinople, Salonica, and Egypt. The volume of the trade was enormous: an average of 44 million pounds (200,000 quintals) a year between 1764 and 1775. In 1771, Bordeaux imported 18,000 hundredweight of indigo from Santo Domingo (now the Dominican Republic), with a value greater than the rest of its imports from the Antilles combined, including sugar. In spite of the outbreak of the American War of Independence, with its attendant shipping blockades, this commerce remained highly profitable, and continued until the French Revolution.”



A Peruvian dyer at work

“As indigo produced the most lightfast and fadeproof color many national armies chose its handsome, resilient blue for their uniforms. Napoleon’s Grande Armee imported 150 tons of indigo to dye the uniforms of 600,000 soldiers a year. During the Napoleonic Wars, the British blockade made American indigo impossible to obtain. In response, the French attempted to revive the pastel industry. In 1811, 14,000 hectares were devoted to its cultivation, and chemists worked to extract the best possible indigotin from the plant. A prize of 25,000 francs was offered to anyone

who discovered a way to extract from an indigenous, easily cultivated plant a dye whose cost, use, brilliance, and evenness were equivalent to indigo.

The British established indigo factories in India in the 19th century and became the leading makers in the world. As a result, some regions of India became highly dependent of the indigo production which resulted in periodic famines and rebellions in area of monoculture like the 1860-67 Indigo War.

The indigo business continued to be profitable until the end of the eighteenth century. Many factors contributed to the end of its production: plant diseases, competition, and the successfully granulation of sugarcane in 1795 by enslaved people working at Etienne DeBore’s plantation in Louisiana. Then sugar replaced the indigo production for commercial production.

In 1880, the German chemist Adolf von Baeyer (1835-1917) completed the synthesis of indigo in his laboratory but could not find a synthesis that was cost-effective on an industrial level. It took the collaborative efforts of chemists at MLB and BASF more than twenty years of research, funded by an investment of twenty million marks, to succeed. In 1904, Germany exported 9,000 tons of synthetic indigo, and three times as much in 1913. Once again whole regions were ruined, this time in India and the Caribbean: the English indigo trade disappeared and the shipping trade of Marseilles, wholly dependent upon it, also collapsed.”

Source: *Colour Making and Using Dyes and Pigments* by Francois Delamare and Bernard Guineau. Thames & Hudson

Whitney Plantation: [www.whitneyplantation.org/history/slavery-in-louisiana/](http://www.whitneyplantation.org/history/slavery-in-louisiana/)



A 1756 box of samples of pan indigo from India, Java and Guatemala

## DuPlantier Holiday Party

By Karen Zobrist, photos by Babeth Schlegel

The second annual Duplantier Holiday Party, Sunday afternoon, December 11th was a festive success! The Hart House was decorated for the Holidays in Victorian splendor. The mantels were decorated with fresh greens and potted rosemary trees. The trees were gifted to the DuPlantier honorees, who were honored for their gifting of \$1,000 or more to The Friends of Magnolia Mound.

The lovely rooms of the house were filled with conversation and eating! Thank you, Susan Eaton, for chairing this event. Also thank you to Susan Wilder and her committee for the delicious food and coffee punch, Pat Alford for the wine, Trader Joe's for the rosemary trees, and to Cary Saurage for underwriting this event!

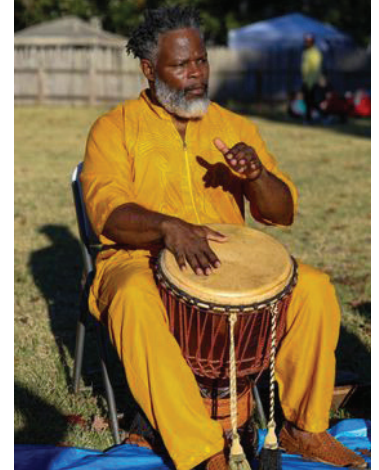


## Creole Christmas & Holiday Fair

Creole Christmas & Holiday Fair was held on the grounds of Magnolia Mound on Sunday, November 27. Mary Williams again served as the Friends' chair for the event and along with BREC staff helped coordinate a wonderful sunny afternoon.

Papa Noel, resplendent in an authentic costume (made by Mary Williams) helped welcome and coordinate our events during the day. We had more local vendors than in previous years. The Hogs, opera singers from Southeastern University, and Jerry Jenkins performed during the day. We estimated the crowd at roughly 650 persons, 250 of which were young children.

The Friends would like to thank the board members who volunteered their time to make the Creole Christmas 2022 a successful celebration: Susan Eaton, Jane Thomas, Mary Boston, Ethan Melancon, Karen and Mike Zobrist, Melisse Campbell, Catherine White, Susan Wilder, Jeanne Yerger, and Kay Collier



Left: Robbie Williams as Papa Noel (photo by Craig Rowley). Right: Jerry Jenkins, drummer and storyteller, of Vicksburg, MS returned again to enthral visitors (photo by Ryan Dumas).



Left to right: Susan Eaton, Jane Thomas, and Mary Boston volunteered at the Friends table at Creole Christmas (photo by Babeth Schlegel).



You are invited to a reading by Blaise Ducos in the Turner Visitor Center at Magnolia Mound

Wednesday / March 1, 2023  
4:30 PM

Magnolia Mound is pleased to host a reading from Blaise Ducos's collections of prose poems, *Hypnos Speaks (Hypnos parle)*, published in 2022 by Le Bois d'Orion, L'Isle sur la Sorgue, near Avignon, France.

The reading will be in French, with translated English excerpts provided.

*Blaise Ducos is Chief Curator of 17th- and 18th-century Dutch and Flemish Paintings at the Musée du Louvre in Paris and teaches art history at the École du Louvre. He will also be in Baton Rouge to give lectures at LSU and the LSU Museum of Art. He holds the prestigious Conservateur du patrimoine qualification. His publications and curatorial experiences related to art from this period are extensive. He is also a poet and a philosopher.*

## Staff Changes at Magnolia Mound



We welcomed **Monique W. Mulder** this past October as our new education program specialist. A native of Baton Rouge, Monique is a graduate of Southeastern Louisiana University with a B.A. and a Master's in History. Her field of study was Louisiana's Afro-Creole communities, with an emphasis on race and gender relations in colonial and antebellum

Louisiana. Monique previously worked at Whitney Plantation, which has been recognized for its ground-breaking interpretative focus. In 2021, she led a program on diversity and inclusion in museum interpretation for the Magnolia Mound staff, sponsored by the Friends of Magnolia Mound. We are thrilled to have her knowledge, enthusiasm, and experience and look for great things to happen for our educational programs in the years ahead.



**Brooke Kidder** joined us in January as our new volunteer coordinator and education assistant. Originally from Lafayette, Brooke graduated from the University of Lafayette, and is currently completing her Master's in Arts Administration at the University of New Orleans. Brooke previously served as volunteer coordinator for the New Orleans Jazz Museum,

operated by the Louisiana State Museum. Brooke will be a great addition to our education team.

For 2023, we have three new tour guides, **Ann-Felice Fourier**, **Mykayla Jackson**, and **Alexandrea McDaniel**. We are excited to welcome them all. Magnolia Mound is very fortunate to have such a great team on staff.

## Friends of Magnolia Mound Underwriters, Membership and Donations as of Fiscal Year Oct 2022 – Sept 2023

*Thanks to the following donors for joining the Mound or renewing their membership.*

*If you have questions about membership or your renewal date please call Babeth Schlegel at (225) 421-3162.*

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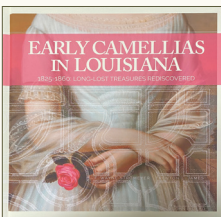
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## First Free Sundays at Magnolia Mound

**On the first Sunday of every month, admission is free!**

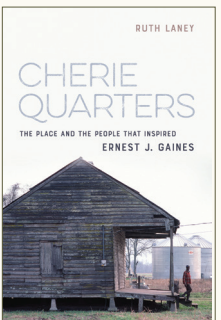


March 5 / 2 p.m. / Turner Family Visitor Center

### **Early Camellias in Louisiana** –

Authors, Dr. F. Wayne Stromeyer and Dr. Trenton L. James, will discuss their new book, *Early Camellias in Louisiana*. Learn about the historic

varieties, the immense popularity of the flower and its interesting history. Their new, beautiful, coffee table book will be available for purchase and signing.



April 2 / 2 p.m. / Turner Family Visitor Center

### **Cherie Quarters: The Place and the People That Inspired Ernest J. Gaines**

– Author Ruth Laney will discuss her new book that rediscovers the plantation quarters in Pointe Coupee that inspired its most famous resident, Louisiana writer and Pulitzer Prize nominee Ernest J. Gaines. In 1991, a cabin from the Quarters was donated

to BREC and the Friends to help interpret the African American experience at Magnolia Mound. Now restored, this building is the lone survivor of Cherie Quarters. Laney's new book will be available for purchase and signing.

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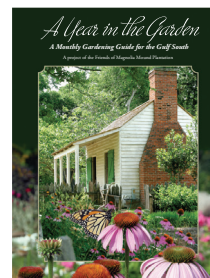
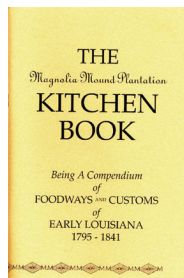
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Friends of Magnolia Mound

**MISSION STATEMENT**

*To assist in the preservation and interpretation of the historic house and site as a demonstration of early plantation life in south Louisiana for the education and enjoyment of present and future generations and to procure and manage the Collection*

**RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Friends, working with BREC, the Museum Director and staff, assist in implementing the master plan for the structures, landscaping, future additions and changes to Magnolia Mound.

BREC owns and operates Magnolia Mound. All of the furniture, decorative items and artifacts are owned and cared for by the Friends. This collection brings to life the interiors of the house and other buildings for the community, school groups, and tourists.

The Friends provide advisory and financial assistance for the kitchen garden, which is part of the educational tour at the Mound. Produce from the garden is used in the cooking demonstrations in the kitchen building.

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Friends of Magnolia Mound

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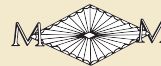
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Babeth Schlegel, *Executive Director/Collections Manager, Friends of Magnolia Mound*



*The Friends & BREC - partners in preservation for over 50 years.*

Questions? Please send an email to [friendsofmagnoliamount@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofmagnoliamount@gmail.com) or call Babeth Schlegel at (225) 421-3162

*Friends of Magnolia Mound is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization.*

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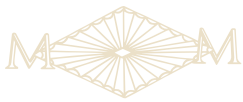
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## Planning the garden at Magnolia Mound

By Camm Morton

It is important to plan any garden, whether you have a dozen large pots or an acre of fertile ground. Here at Magnolia Mound's kitchen garden we plan both our fall and spring gardens. Although it is possible to plant some fall plants in February or March in this part of Louisiana, I prefer to focus on Fall in the fall and Spring in the spring. In doing that, there are several fall plants that are not mature until later in the spring, such as onions and artichokes. So we plan to harvest them later and plant something after them that benefits from the prior crop. For example, peanuts benefit from our sweet corn because of the fertilizer used to produce the sweet corn.

At Magnolia Mound, we have the ability to produce 21 rows 25 feet long. We also have side beds for herbs and other assorted plants and flowers. Our goal is to have continuous plantings that will all mature by the end of July except for the sweet potatoes, hot peppers, and sometimes the peanuts. That way, both the garden and its Master Gardeners can stay out to the heat of August and early September until it is time to begin the fall garden.

How do we come up with our garden plan? We first decide what we want to grow and then try to grow as much of each as we can. Then we take a look at what which of those crops can best tolerate the heat of summer, like hot peppers, sweet potatoes and peanuts. These can be the follow-on crops to the vegetables that have a shorter harvest season, like sweet corn and potatoes. We also have our onions and garlic that matures later. We have follow-ons for those.

We have exciting news for 2023!! We are planting two rows of Magnolia Mound sugarcane in the field behind the pavilion. We got a late start on planting so we started the plants in a greenhouse. Our target date to plant is February 15th. As you can see from the pictures we are preparing the ground.

Enjoy both planning and growing your garden in 2023.



*Preparing the ground for the sugarcane.*



*Sugarcane ready to be planted at the Mound.*

*Photos by Camm Morton*