



# Le Journal des Amis



## GREETINGS FROM YOUR PRESIDENT!

October has arrived with a hint of coolness in the air, mums and pumpkins on the porches, and fall vegetable plantings in the Magnolia Mound Kitchen Garden! The Friends are forever thankful for the Master Gardeners of Baton Rouge in keeping up our garden. Soon the cooking will begin in the Magnolia Mound Kitchen.

The Friends congratulate BREC for 75 years of excellence, and their National Gold Medal service. This is a huge honor. Currently The Friends and BREC are working together on a project to renovate the HVAC system in the main house, maximizing humidity control.

I am looking forward to this fall/Christmas Season, which is an active time at Magnolia Mound. Please note the dates of the holiday Season.

Sunday, November 27, Creole Christmas will be celebrated on the grounds. There will be a bonfire, hayride, tours of the historic buildings, and Christmas shopping at the booths full of goodies. The Friends and the public are invited.

Sunday, December 11, the Duplantier Christmas Party will be held at the Hart House. The membership of The Friends are invited.

The Petite Antique Forum will be Saturday, April 1, 2023! Please put the date on your 2023 calendar!

Wishing you all a wonderful fall season!

Karen Zobrist

## The return of the slat-back child's side chair from Colonial Williamsburg

By Babeth Schlegel & Mary Boston



*Creole slat-back child's side chair, circa 1780-1820.*

In 2014, Colonial Williamsburg asked the Friends to borrow one of our slat-back chairs for their exhibition: "A Rich and Varied Culture: The Material World of the Early South".

The compelling artifacts they collected showcased the early populations in Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, the Carolinas, Georgia, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Louisiana. Many of the objects had never before been available for public view.

The late Pat Bacot, Friends Curator Emeritus, arranged the loan of the Creole slat-back child's side chair which was donated by Donna Wright in 1996. It is made of red mulberry and dated circa 1780-1820. Its origin is in the region from Baton Rouge to New Orleans along the River Road or Bayou Lafourche.

It was an honor for the Friends to have one of its furnishings at Colonial Williamsburg.

Slat-back or ladder-back chairs were the most common chair form throughout the western world and maybe the most common in America. In the seventeenth century, rush seated chairs appeared in the European Low countries. By the end of the seventeenth century, they appeared in French royal inventories, listed as: "*petites chaises de paille*".

Many slat-back chairs were found in early inventories and numerous examples that have survived attest that it was the most widespread chair form in Louisiana. Chair making was considered a distinct trade. Early ones were most likely made by turners, but by the early nineteenth century chair makers were advertising in local newspapers.

In Louisiana, red mulberry was the most common wood used to make this type of chair and maybe this tradition came from France since "*mûrier*" (mulberry) was the French chair-making wood. The Louisiana slat-back chair evolved in a distinctive manner. The seats are usually lower and more generous than others with thick-bowed front and side rails. This gives the seat a rough circular shape.

The turning can indicate the maker or the shop where the chair was made. Common turning shapes include sausage, nipple, acorn,



*The shipping was organized by Williamsburg and carefully done. A small chair in a big truck!*

*Continued on page 2*



*The chair on display at Colonial Williamsburg from 2014 to 2022*



*In June 2022, the chair finally made its way back to Magnolia Mound after 8 years at Williamsburg. You can now see it in the historic house in the boys' bedroom.*

and ball. The back is usually composed of three slats. Each getting larger in height and width as they move up the back of the chair.

Rush and corn shuck seats were woven in various designs including converging triangles, rows, basket, diamonds, and central furrow. The pattern on the Friends' chair is converging triangles, concave, and broad, which is typical of French style rush bottom chairs as described by Pat Bacot.

[www.colonialwilliamsburg.org/explore/art-museums/current-exhibitions/rich-and-varied-culture-material-world-early-south/](http://www.colonialwilliamsburg.org/explore/art-museums/current-exhibitions/rich-and-varied-culture-material-world-early-south/)

**Furnishing Louisiana Creole and Acadian Furniture, 1735-1835.** Jack Holden, H. Parrott Bacot, Cybele T. Gontar. The Historic New Orleans Collection. P285-290

## Where would Armand Duplantier shop for paper hangings?

The wallpaper trade in early nineteenth century America.

By Isabelle Cooper

For more than two centuries, both France and England wallpaper manufacturers had been furious competitors in an ever-growing industry. As colonial powers, both countries looked to America as a new and potentially lucrative source of revenue. Therefore, both eagerly competed for a share of the New World wallpaper market. Records of sale in the colonies appear as early as the mid-eighteenth century. Until then, wallpaper had been acquired from dealers in Paris and London. The majority of paper hangings consumed in British Colonial America were imported from England, and to a lesser extent, from France. English wallpapers were regarded as being of greater quality and England's strong regulatory laws, which impeded the trade between its colonies with other countries, reinforced that impartiality.

While some records do indicate that French paper hangings were imported in New France during the eighteenth century, there is no evidence that paper hangings were imported to the lower Louisiana Territories of French Colonial America. Upholstery shops in the North, supplied wealthy northern colonists with wallpaper. In the South, wealthy planters could only procure paper hangings via agents or friends traveling abroad. Armand Duplantier might have done just that. However, while New Orleans had remained a provincial town until the dawn of the nineteenth century, the city rapidly became a major trading post and the gateway to cargo ships sailing to and from the east coast, the Caribbean islands, South America, Central America, and Europe. Armand Duplantier might have simply chosen to go to New Orleans to acquire wallpaper for his home.

During the first quarter of the nineteenth century paper hangings were procured via wholesale importers. Commission merchants acquired newly arrived merchandise at port then sold it to local shopkeepers. Some commission merchants possessed shops of their own.

English paper hanging had dominated the British colonial market until the American Revolution interrupted trade. The wallpaper trade between England and America resumed after the Revolution. Conversely, French paper hangings were also imported as Americans no longer had to contend with the restrictive English trade laws that were exerted prior to the Revolution. The embargoes imposed on English goods during the war had also served to promote French wallpapers – as the threat of competition from English wallpapers was temporarily halted. Furthermore, French paper hangings became more accessible when French export duties on wallpaper were lifted in 1787.

**FRENCH PAPER HANGINGS.—10 cases**  
French paper hangings, just landing and for  
sale by [may 5] THOS. TOBY.

*New Orleans Argus, (New Orleans, Louisiana), 05-15-1828, p.1, Historical Newspapers, infoweb.newsbank.comlibproxy.tulane.edu*



*A view of New Orleans, taken from the Plantation of Marigny - 1803, Courtesy of the Historic New Orleans Collection*

Americans were also inclined to buy French paper hangings after the American Revolution because of the support provided to them by the French during the Revolutionary War. Moreover, the quality of paper hangings in France had become superior to any product produced by English wallpaper manufacturers; so it might have also been in part that Americans recognized and demanded quality.

**FOR SALE,** 20 half chests Gunpowder and Young  
Hyson Teas, 250 baskets Bordeaux Sweet Oil  
100 blbs. Porter, 50 do. Cider, 50 blbs. Porter  
10 do. Linseed Oil, 10 do. Plaster Paris  
15 do. Starch, 1 cask Mace, 50 kegs Starch  
30 pieces Scotch Bagging, 20 bags Pepper  
50 Stoves and Pipes, 10 nests Tuis  
50 sets Cart Harness, 200 pair Cart Hames  
150 dozen Mule Collars, 50 boxes Window Glass  
5 cases (handsome) French **Paper Hangings**  
20 do. Cayenne Pepper, hds. & bls. Shav'd Hoops  
Hoe Harrows, Coal Grates  
2 casks Patent Cooking Furnaces  
100 sets Backs and Jams, 5 Pumps complete  
kegs White Lead, Rye Flour  
12 pair Ox Cart Wheels, 10 Carts and Harness  
30 Wheelbarrows, 7 Drays and Harness  
3 sets Marble Mantles, 3 Gies and Harness  
1 do. Coach Harness, 1 Barouche & Harness, by  
sept 20 THOMAS TOBY, Bienville street.

*Louisiana Advertiser, (New Orleans), 10-10-1826, p.3, Historical Newspapers, infoweb. newsbank.comlibproxy.tulane.edu*

Some of the wallpaper unloaded from the ships' cargo hulls was American-made. America's constant urbanization during the nineteenth century contributed to the development of a homegrown industry, which had emerged as early as 1756 when the first mention of American-produced paper hangings appears in a New York advertisement. However, American-made wallpapers, with patterns often borrowed from their French counterparts, could not rival the French-made wallpaper of the time.

In the 1810s New Orleans was still a small town – a few streets wide and a few streets deep. The bustling area between the Levee and Bourbon Street was the epicenter of New Orleans' commercial and residential district. Predictably, commission merchant shops and

**Paper Hangings.**  
**A** FEW boxes of Paper Hangings of new and fashionable patterns just received from the manufactory of Messrs Curry & Williams, at Pittsburg, and for sale at the lowest prices.  
Orders received, and executed at the shortest notice by  
**March 10. BENJ. W. BASDEN.**

*New Orleans Daily Chronicle, (New Orleans, Louisiana), 09-13-1819, p.4, Courtesy of the Historic New Orleans Collection*

upholstery shops carrying paper hangings were conveniently located in the center of the Creole business district. New Orleans had remained very much a European city and much business was conducted between the port city of New Orleans and the port cities of France. New Orleans residents sought to emulate French trends and fashions. As New Orleans shops continued to follow French wallpaper trends, the Duplantiers would have been perfectly at ease selecting among the French paper hangings for sale in this very young southern American city, steeped in the knowledge that their selection would be as refined as what could have been selected in a Paris shop.

#### **About the author:**

*An Interior Designer by trade, Isabelle Cooper has a special interest in historic interiors and more specifically in historic wallpapers. Much of the material in this article was drawn from her Practicum's research presented in 2018 on the subject, as part of a Master in Preservation Studies at Tulane University.*



## Farewell to our Education Manager

In September 2022, Magnolia Mound honored Education Manager Ashley Freeman. A native of Galliano, Ashley began work at the Mound in May 2017 as exhibit coordinator and archivist. Her initial job helped in the enormous task of organizing fifty years of the Mound's institutional archives. In April 2018, Ashley joined the staff as the full-time Education Manager, succeeding Patty McCarthy Hood. A graduate of Nicholls State University, with a master's degree in Public History from Southeastern Louisiana University, Ashley remarked that: "This was my dream job. I've always enjoyed working with children and doing education programs. Having a historical setting as a classroom was a perfect place to teach."

As the Mound's lead educator, Ashley planned and directed the school year learning expedition programs which averaged 2,600-3,000 children per year. These hands-on activities have been the hallmark of the Mound's education programs since their development in the late 1970s. Ashley was instrumental in updating our classic programs to fit the state recommended curriculum standards. Every fall and spring, she planned and directed our Holiday History Camps. This past summer, Ashley coordinated the Mound's 42nd year of Summer History Camp, helping to make this program engaging and fun for children, inspiring their love of learning, and hopefully, sparking their interest in history for a lifetime.

Ashley commented that "Being a part of a strong tradition of public history education at Magnolia Mound was very special for me." Ashley will become a stay-at-home educator to her young daughter, Bonnie. She will be missed but we're grateful for her work to continue the good reputation of our education department.

## 2023 Petite Antiques Forum

Mark your calendars now for April 1, 2023 to attend the Friends of Magnolia Mound Petite Antiques Forum. The 23rd annual forum will take place on the first Saturday of April. Mr. Larry Schmidt, chairman of the board of trustees of the BK Historic House and Gardens in New Orleans, will tell us all about this house museum. Built in 1826, its designer incorporated Creole and American features. The Beauregard Keyes home is also known for two of its famous residents, P.G. T. Beauregard, a former general in the Confederate military, and Frances Parkinson Keyes, the noted author who restored the property in the twentieth century.

After Mr. Schmidt's lecture in the auditorium of the State Archives, attendees will enjoy luncheon at the Baton Rouge Country Club.

Following luncheon, attendees may tour the LeJeune House in New Roads, Louisiana. This historic house built in the 1820s has been lovingly restored by its present owners Randy Harelson and Richard Gibbs. The grounds and gardens have been enhanced and embellished as well, making for a beautiful spring tour.

Tickets will be on sale in the spring. Please plan to attend. All funds will be used by the Friends organization to continue our maintenance of historic Magnolia Mound Plantation.

# A day of cleaning

By Babeth Schlegel

On April 27, 2022, Janie and Chet Coles, Karen and Mike Zobrist came to help me clean the overseer's house. It was a full day of cleaning, and I sincerely thank them for their valuable help.



*All interior photos were taken in the large bedroom of the ca. 1871 Overseer's House.*

*Top photo, left to right: Mike Zobrist, Karen Zobrist, Chet Coles, and Janie Coles*

*Middle left photo: Mike and Karen on the porch of the overseer's house*

*Middle right photo: Janie*

*Bottom photo: Chet*

The overseer's house is the only surviving original outbuilding at Magnolia Mound and was built around 1871 to replace an earlier building destroyed by a tornado. The building has been reinterpreted to the period of 1870s-1880s with furniture donated by Chet and Janie Coles.

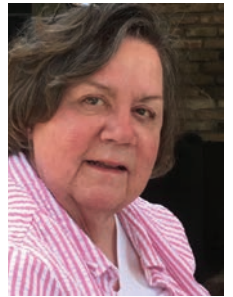


## Academic research at the Mound

Dr. Kenneth Hafertepe, left, chair of the museum studies program at Baylor University, and Collections Chair, Dr. Chet Coles, pause after a visit to the Friend's decorative arts collection at the Mound on Sunday, June 12, 2022. Dr. Hafertepe made a special visit to take photographs of the collection to use in his museum studies classes. A distinguished scholar, Dr. Hafertepe also served as chair of the Museum Professional Training Committee of the American Alliance of Museums (AAM), the organization that provides the accreditation for Magnolia Mound.

## Sue Price of Abigail's Fine Catering

For more than two decades, Abigail's Fine Catering was the caterer of every event associated with the Friends of Magnolia Mound. From volunteer luncheons, quarterly board meetings, special events honoring donors like the Salon Duplantier, or even large public events, like Creole Christmas, there was no event at Magnolia Mound that didn't rely on Abigail's.



Susan "Sue" Krebs Price, the owner and culinary talent behind Abigail's, died on September 9, 2022. For every event, Sue, assisted by her husband (and business partner) Ray "Buddy" Price, had a distinctive style and quality. Sue's catering was unique, whether it was an outdoor luncheon served in garden pails and gingham napkins; or an elaborate reception featuring coffee punch. She liked a challenge, creating gingerbread and meat pies for hundreds at Creole Christmas. Sue's culinary specialties like her Almond Tea, or her Chicken & Artichoke Parmesan Pasta Salad were "must-haves" for years at Board events.

Sue's relationship with the Mound began with her friendship with a neighbor, Pat Comeaux, Friends' former executive director. The two worked well together. The Mound would often get asked, "Who is Abigail?" Sue Price confessed to Laura Webb, former administrative assistant, that Abigail was a name she liked and chosen only because it guaranteed that her company would be the first catering company in the phone directory.

We will miss Sue and her generous support of the Friends of Magnolia Mound.

# Creole Christmas & Holiday Fair – November 27

Join us at the Mound for this year's Creole Christmas & Holiday Fair on Sunday, November 27 from 12 noon to 5 p.m. Wonderful holiday vendors, musical performances, craft demonstrations and horse drawn carriage rides on the grounds.

We would welcome members of the Friends as volunteers for this special event. To volunteer, contact Babeth Schlegel at 225-343-4955 or bschlegel@brec.org.

This annual holiday event is co-sponsored by BREC and the Friends of Magnolia Mound. No admission is charged.



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*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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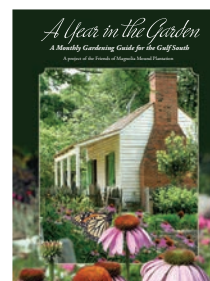
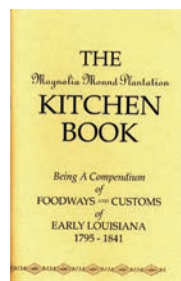
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20% discount in gift shop  
E-newsletter  
Advance notice of events

## SUPPORTER - \$50

Name on donor page  
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20% discount in gift shop  
Invited to Le Salon Duplantier  
E-newsletter  
Advance notice of events

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Advance notice of events

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20% discount in gift shop  
*Inside Magnolia Mound* book  
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20% discount in gift shop  
*Inside Magnolia Mound* book  
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Advance notice of events

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### DUPLANTIER CIRCLE \$2,500

Honored at Le Salon Duplantier  
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Two tickets to the Petite Antiques Forum  
Free private tour for you plus ten guests  
20% discount in gift shop  
*Inside Magnolia Mound* book  
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Advance notice of events

## ARMAND ALLARD

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\$5,000  
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Free private tour for you plus ten guests  
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## MARQUIS DE LAFAYETTE CIRCLE

\$10,000  
Candlelight dinner for eight in the Hart House  
Honored at Le Salon Duplantier  
Name on donor page  
Six tickets to the Petite Antiques Forum  
Free private tour for you plus ten guests  
20% discount in gift shop  
*Inside Magnolia Mound* book  
Printed newsletter mailed to you  
Advance notice of events

## 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.

### YOUR MEMBERSHIP SUPPORTS THIS MISSION

## Friends of Magnolia Mound

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*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.*

## 1-Year Membership (For a renewal, the year's membership will begin when the current membership expires.)

Name \_\_\_\_\_ (as you would like it to appear in acknowledgments)

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Check Membership Level: ☐ Student \$25 ☐ Supporter \$50 ☐ Contributor \$100 ☐ Patron \$250 ☐ Magnolia Circle \$500

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☐ Marquis de Lafayette Circle \$10,000 I would like to make an additional donation in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is a check for \$ \_\_\_\_\_. I prefer to charge \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to type of card \_\_\_\_\_

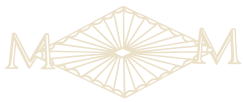
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## It's sweet potato time at the Mound

By Camm Morton

It is fall in the Magnolia Mound Garden, and we just finished harvesting our sweet potatoes. They love the summer heat, and they got a lot of it this year, so we had a bumper crop.

Let's talk about growing sweet potatoes so you will be ready next spring.

We started out last March by buying a few whole sweet potatoes. When the soil began to warm in mid to late March to about 75 degrees, we dug some shallow trenches and placed them lengthwise, and then covered them up. Not too deep but fully covered. In about a month, small sweet potato vines begin to appear, called slips, each with its own roots. (*see photo*) We let them grow to 6" to 8" or so and then removed them from the mother plant and planted them in rows 18 inches between plants. Just before planting, we tilled in a good complete fertilizer like 13-13-13.

Sweet potato plants are aggressive growers. The nearby picture shows two rows of vines approximately 10 ft wide just before harvest. After about 4 to 6 weeks, we added some additional nitrogen as a side dress because sweet potatoes are heavy feeders.

After about 100 days of growing, the sweet potatoes are ready to be dug. You will find the potatoes right under the "slips" you planted to begin the crop. Each original plant will now have 4 to 6 sweet potatoes underneath that original slip. (*see photo*).

After digging, the sweet potatoes must be cured for up to 3 weeks at a temperature of 80 to 90 degrees and with high humidity (85% to 90%) out of the sun. These conditions are not a problem in early fall in south Louisiana. This curing helps heal any wounds and deepens their true flavor. The starches in the tuber turn to sugar, intensifying the buttery sweet flavor and texture.

**FUN FACT** - the sweet potato that we eat is the storage root of the plant, essentially an enlarged lateral root, as opposed to a potato which is a tuber or thickened stem. So get gardening and grow some sweet potatoes for next year. You will be glad you did.



Photos by Camm Morton