



Houston Canoe Club
Waterline



www.houstoncanoecub.org :: Volume 2008 :: April

Table of Contents

Next Meeting Announcement
Last Meeting Minutes
New Members
Market Place
Two Forgotten Cemeteries of Downtown Houston by Louis Aulbach
Interview With A Paddler by Cecilia Gill
Backwater Backwash by Cecilia Gill

Trip Reports:

Upcoming River Trips
Paddling In Arkansas by Anne Olden
Burnham's Ferry by Bob Arthur
Paddle Bayou Lafourche by Sheila Hill Lorenz

The Waterline is the monthly newsletter of the Houston Canoe Club, Inc. The Waterline is made possible by your dues and critically depends on member contributions. Please submit items to HCC's Newsletter Editor, Cecilia Gill at whitewaterider@yahoo.com.

The Waterline is prepared by an on-line newsletter editor written by Fraser Baker, HCC's Webmaster.

Next Meeting Announcement

- When:** May 14, 2008
- Where:** Bayland Community Center, 6400 Bissonnet, Houston, Texas
- Directions:** First driveway, North side of Bissonnet, just East of Hillcroft.
- Speaker:** Paul Woodcock
- Speaker Bio:** Long time member of HCC. He enjoys and does a lot of expedition canoeing down rivers all over the United States and Canada.
- Description:** Paul Woodcock will portray his unique and eventful trip down the historic Niobrara River in Nebraska.
-

Be sure to set this date aside on your calendar, then come out to support our speaker and club.

Last Meeting Minutes

Date: April 9, 2008

Recorder:

Minutes: We will post April's minutes in the May Waterline.

Please contact HCC's recorder, , if there are any omissions or corrections.

New Members

Member Name: No new members at this time.
Membership Type: individual
Member's Family:

The HCC cordially welcomes new members to our club. New members are the life blood of the HCC, so be sure to provide opportunities for all our new members to paddle by coordinating more trips.

Market Place

Items For Sale

Item: DAGGER VESPER touring kayak
Description: 13'10", 40 lbs, Multi-colored plastic. Good day tripper/overnighter for lakes, bays and rivers. Works well for paddlers up to about 180 pounds plus gear. Rear hatch and two small air bags. No bulk-heads. (Not a large cockpit rec boat)
Asking Price: \$500
Contact Name: Bob Arthur
Contact Phone: 713-416-0017
Contact Email: rwarthur@oplink.net

###

Item: Nimbus "Auk" take-apart kayak paddle.
Description:
Asking Price: \$100
Contact Name: Bob Arthur
Contact Phone: 713-416-0017
Contact Email: rwarthur@oplink.net

###

Item: 6.5 acres of undeveloped land along Pine Island Bayou
Description: 6.5 acres of undeveloped land along Pine Island Bayou on the north side of Beaumont. It used to be waterfront with some 400 feet of water frontage, but the national park service bought a 200-foot buffer directly on the river, so now it is technically not waterfront, but "national parkfront." There is a rough driveway that reaches to the back of the land (700 feet back from Stonetown Road), then it's an easy canoe portage and a very easy "climb down" to the water, 200 feet away. At any rate, I think someone in your group (or your group as a whole) would be very interested in this parcel, as it offers excellent easy access to Pine Island Bayou, which as you know, isn't very easy to reach. I love the place, but it is simply too far from Austin, where I live, to make it convenient for me. I would really like to see this place go to a fellow canoeist who will appreciate the bayou for what it is, and not trash the place. Thank you.
Asking Price: \$22,000.
Contact Name: Sam Mitchell
Contact Phone: 512-743-1883,
Contact Email: hambone78745@yahoo.com

###

Item: Blue Hole Sunburst 2,
Description: currently, temporarily outfitted as a tandem WW playboat (similar to a Dagger Caper), but original configuration as a solo. 14' 9", approx 60lbs, maroon in color and not beat all to heck, although it is well used. Includes air bags and custom spray cover for Lower Canyons type trips. An oldy, but a goody and has a real cult following for larger paddlers in the SE, USA. If you know anything about original Royalex, you know that the five layer ABS is far superior in durability (altho heavier in weight) to the later "Royalite" type hulls. I've had them and they last for a couple seasons of hard use, but nothing like the older version. Includes

bow and stern air bags
Asking Price: \$500
Contact Name: Bob Arthur
Contact Phone: 713-416-0017
Contact Email:

###

Item: Dagger Vesper touring kayak.
Description: 13'10", 40 lbs, Multi-colored plastic. Good day tripper/overnighter for lakes, bays and rivers. Works well for paddlers up to about 180 pounds plus gear. Rear hatch and two small air bags. No bulk-heads. (Not a large cockpit rec boat)

Asking Price: \$500
Contact Name: Bob Arthur
Contact Phone: 713-416-0017
Contact Email: rwarthur@oplink.net

###

Item: Nimbus Auk take-apart paddle
Description:
Asking Price: \$125.
Contact Name: Bob Arthur
Contact Phone: 713-416-0017
Contact Email: rwarthur@oplink.net

###

Item: YAKIMA CANOE/BIKE/SKI RACKS AND ACCESSORIES
Description: >>>Item 1. 1 Complete set to fit a 2000 Toyota 4 runner & similar. Includes: Q Tower, Q clips, (roof mount that attaches over front doors) Control Tower & Landing Pads which attaches to existing Toyo rack tracks, 78" bars, includes 4 locks, New price for the whole set is \$313 + tax at your local retailer. \$225 from me

>>>Item 2. 1 Complete Set of Yakima 1A Raingutter Towers (4 towers & two 66" round bars) with locks. New price \$239 plus tax. My price \$150

>>>Item 3. 1 Yakima "Basket Case" mounts. New price is \$117 plus tax. My price, \$80

>>>Item 4. 1 Yakima "Powder Hound 4 pair" ski racks. That means two pieces that will handle 4 pair of skis with locks and mounts. New price is \$118. My price \$75.

Asking Price: \$
Contact Name: Bob Arthur
Contact Phone: 713-416-0017
Contact Email: rwarthur@oplink.net

###

Items Wanted

Item: Jackson Fun 1 & Gear
Description: Looking for what is possibly the tiniest WW playboat ever made. I am trying to find a used one and all the gear that goes with it (spray skirt and paddle, mostly, but any other stuff you have would be great!) for 4 year old Morgan.

Contact Name: Cecilia Gill
Contact Phone: 832-741-2713
Contact Email: whitewaterider@yahoo.com

###

Item: Jackson Fun 1 1/2 & Gear

Description: Looking for the same thing as above, only a bit bigger for 7 year old Lonnie.

Contact Name: Cecilia Gill
Contact Phone: 832-741-2713
Contact Email: whitewaterider@yahoo.com

###

Please contact the Newsletter Editor, Cecilia Gill at whitewaterider@yahoo.com to post any items that you may have for sale or desperately need.

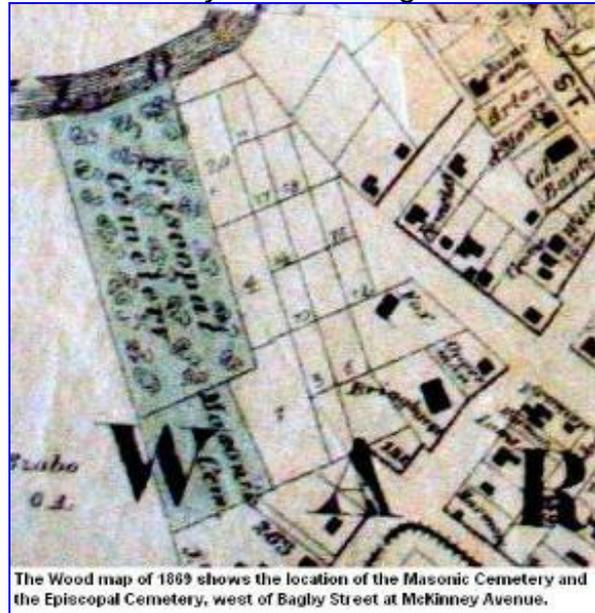
Two Forgotten Cemeteries of Downtown Houston by Louis Aulbach

by

As you paddle downstream on Buffalo Bayou past the Sabine Street bridge, you emerge from under the noisy main lanes and access ramps of I-45 to a pleasant view of the downtown Civic Center. The recent landscaping of the Sabine Street Promenade provides an elegant green space that opens to the City Hall Annex, a modern civic building that is flanked on the south by Sam Houston Park and on the north by the new William P. Hobby Center for the Performing Arts. The access ramp extensions of Walker Avenue and McKinney Avenue separate the City Hall Annex from the entities on each side. Today, little evidence remains on this site of the two cemeteries that were the resting place of prominent Houston residents of the early Republic of Texas.

About 1847, the Masonic Cemetery was established by Holland Lodge No. 1 on

3/4 acres (34,583 sq ft) on the banks of Buffalo Bayou in the far southwest part of town off Bagby Street at Lamar Avenue. George H. Bringhurst was a Mason who served as the secretary and the treasurer of Holland Lodge No. 1 for more than thirty years. Bringhurst was the City surveyor for ten years during the 1840's and he owned property on Bagby Street. Quite possibly, through his efforts that the land for the Masonic Cemetery was acquired. Since the Masonic Cemetery and the adjacent Episcopal Cemetery have traditionally been linked, the Episcopal Cemetery may have been established at this time as well. Together, the two cemeteries consisted of about two acres of land in a long and narrow strip extending from a one lot "set back" from Bagby Street to the bayou.



The Wood map of 1869 shows the location of the Masonic Cemetery and the Episcopal Cemetery, west of Bagby Street at McKinney Avenue.

Those buried at Episcopal Cemetery included Stephen Richardson, one of Stephen F. Austin's Old 300 settlers. The 28 year old Richardson was shipwrecked near the mouth of the Brazos on December 22, 1822. He went on to San Felipe de Austin and established a business with Thomas Davis. In January, 1838, Richardson moved to Harrisburg where he operated a steam sawmill until about 1848. He moved to Houston in early 1849 and he died in Houston on July 6, 1860 at age 66.

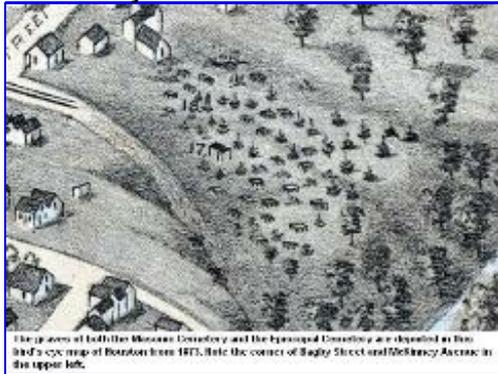
Moseley Baker, a veteran of San Jacinto and a legislator in the Republic, died on November 4, 1848 of yellow fever in Houston. He was buried initially in the City Cemetery on Elder Street, but was later moved to the Episcopal Cemetery. The remains of Baker and his wife were moved to the State Cemetery in Austin in 1929.

Also buried at the Episcopal Cemetery are the children of Mrs. Priscilla Hadley Key, a descendant of Francis Scott Key who wrote the Star Spangled Banner, our national anthem.

The most notable burial in the Masonic Cemetery was that of Anson Jones, the last president of the Republic of Texas, who died on January 9, 1858. Jones' remains

were subsequently moved to Glenwood Cemetery.

The City Council prohibited interments in the Episcopal Cemetery and the Masonic Cemetery in 1879. At that time some of the bodies in the Episcopal Cemetery and the Masonic Cemetery were unearthed and reinterred in Glenwood Cemetery.



There is some indication that, in spite of the ban, the last burial in the Masonic Cemetery was in 1900. Without a doubt, though, both cemeteries were neglected and fell into disarray. Many of the headstones lay broken and scattered. The two acre tract surrounded by a five foot metal fence was unkempt and overgrown with weeds. With the construction of the new City Hall on Bagby Street and the civic center development on the west side of downtown, more graves were

removed from the Episcopal Cemetery and reinterred in Brookside Cemetery in 1938.

In 1959, the expansion of the Civic Center with the construction of the City Hall Annex on the west side of Bagby Street and the expansion of Sam Houston Park required the removal of the two cemeteries. An additional eighty bodies were moved from the site to Glenwood Cemetery.

Today, there is no visible sign of the two old cemeteries. The exit ramp from I-45 to McKinney Avenue covers part of cemetery tract while the exhibits of Sam Houston Park have replaced the remainder. The Three Coyotes Fountain, a 1992 work by California sculptor Gwynn Murrill, lies over much of the former Masonic Cemetery. The bronze scavengers seem to be appropriate protectors of the ghosts of early Houston.



Interview With A Paddler by Cecilia Gill

by

THIS MONTH: Sheila Hill-Lorenz from Gulfport, Mississippi



1. WHAT MADE YOU WANT TO GET INTO THE SPORT OF PADDLING?

I have always loved the water. Some of my earliest fondest childhood memories are of playing in the bath tub all 4 of us kids. My Mom put the 4 of us in and washed us. She had 4 kids in 4 1/2 years. I really only remember 3 of us playing in the tub maybe she kept the smallest one out. But we'd play like ducks and have the shower on the entire time. She'd sit and watch us play and get clean. Then, after we each had to have her inspect our ears and re-clean them! I loved to play in mud puddles too as I grew older. Yes, I was a farm girl and a tomboy. It was only natural to play on the water with so much so close. I actually remember my Mom water-skiing when she was pregnant with the third child. We grew up in a small ski boat and my dad did some trick skiing. He also shot archery even trying out for the Olympics but not making the cut. We'd go watch him practice and play there with the turtles and watch the peacocks that were there and give my Mom a break from the four of us. Then, he let us bring the turtles home and we would put them in the boat to contain them and play for hours before letting them go.

As teenagers it was natural to go rent canoes and paddle the rivers.

Yes, I have a story of my first real boyfriend and I turning the canoe upside down and breathing the air and visiting under the upturned boat.....Gosh, the best part of remembering that story is that I was skinny!

2. WHEN DID YOU FIRST TRY PADDLING?

I have no idea when I really first tried paddling and it must have been with one of my brothers. I remember that when we went we always got into an argument because I was never good at tandem canoeing. Once I ask my brother Bart if he was blind and he began to sing Stevie Wonder songs while tossing his head around with a big grin and eyes shut tight. I still think he paddled better while singing those Stevie Wonder songs. And, that is the reason I don't tandem canoe and have a solo kayak.

3. WHAT KIND OF PADDLING DO YOU DO?

Kayak flat water of the bayous in south. I live less than a mile from the Gulf of Mexico but have yet to try one of our barrier islands just a few miles off shore. I enjoy the sights and ease of the bayous. Lots of other people are out fishing usually and while your alone you also aren't far from a coke machine or bathroom.

4. DO YOU HAVE A FAVORITE RIVER OR SPOT TO PADDLE?

Oooh, all of them that I don't drag on when low tide. We have a river that is a one-two day at most trip. It is the only white water in Ms. and has about 3 nice drops on it. I love that river. It also has a few sand bars for stopping to watch the accidents on these rapids. It is the Okatoma River just about 2 hours north of the coast. Lots of trees yet plenty of sun. There are only a few homes along the route because it is mostly government owned land. This is also the same river close to the home of now retired Green Bay Packers Bret Farve. He will rent a boat and party here from time to time. It is a dry county here which means no alcohol off the river. You can drink all you like in your boat and most do.

5. WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE BOAT?

I don't own it yet. I have owned powered boats with an engine and others that are man powered. I think there isn't a favorite yet but continue to day dream of the different trips to make with each different type of boat. I think the boat is a way to have fun and not the love that the trip is. It is the boat that is the means to the end which is the experience shared with friends or with understanding of yourself in a meditation type healing one experiences when on the water.

6. DO YOU HAVE A GOOD PADDLING STORY TO SHARE?

Can't you tell by now I have a story to tell for everything! Why, just this week I participated in a trip that was a charity "fun" fund raiser in Louisiana. We camped each day with our cars. That made it easy to pack. We would get up and take the boat to the launch site and drive to the next campsite where we'd be shuttled back to the boats and paddle to the camping area. All meals are included and all drinks with nightly entertainment and bathrooms with showers. No, don't think they all had hot water or plush towels or even soap. But, it beat the shovel and coffee can thing.

Day one I discovered the night before that the dry pants that I'd purchased last year didn't even fit. I put the trip off one day and went to Academy Sports for a Frog Toggs set and, by the way, they don't look cool but they are great and really inexpensive. So, I left later and met up on the night of their first day of paddling. It was very windy and I didn't miss the 17 miles of strong head winds.

Day two was wonderful and fun. The people were great and I just loved listening to those Cajuns talk. They do know how to have fun. They know how to bring you into the fun with them and it's a real hoot.

Day three I wake to find no car keys. I knew I put them in my sweatpants pocket (Pajamas) but they had fallen out between the bathroom and the tent just a short walk across paved road on Nicholas State University in Thibadoux, La. So, I decided maybe I locked them in my car and they were still in my shorts pocket. After police security opened the car they were not in there. So, I enjoyed my own chauffeur ride in a tow truck to the nearest open Honda dealership over 1 1/2 hours away in Baton Rouge, La. This day wasn't meant to be a wasted day of vacation so I toured the Oak Ally Plantation Home and properties. Shopped the gift shop and met up with the group at this night's campsite. There was so much food! Also entertainment was put on by the Homa, La. Indian Tribe. There were crafts and authentic foods and music and dancing. It was very well done and educational and reflective as well as fun. Okay, this night I find my keys in my sleeping bag. They really were in my pocket.

Day four I get ready and my car won't start. Someone checks says it isn't the battery and is the starter they believe. Not to waste the last day I call my towing chauffeur and ask him to meet me later this day here. I load the boat onto my brother's truck and prepare to put in. After stepping in a fire ant bead, we put in and have a great time. While partying to the Cajun Tojour Band someone told me that it sounded like the key wasn't programmed correctly. I said but I used it to travel from the dealership to tour a home and to the campground. It must work. Okay, not being the sharpest knife in the block or as some might say one short of a six-pack. It occurs to me that maybe I was trying to use the newly found lost key and maybe needed to use the newly programmed and proven to work key. When I got back to the car the new key did work and after calling the towing stuffer to cancel I headed home.

What a way to have a wonderful get away with the most problems ever. How can this be so much fun? It just is. The friends one meets and the good times stay with you and each trip I learn something new. I can't wait to do it again and have another

story to add to my memory of good times on the water.

THANK YOU, SHEILA HILL-LORENZ!

Cecilia Gill

Backwater Backwash by Cecilia Gill

by

Welcome to "Backwater Backwash", a random and incomprehensible collection of thoughts, observances and experiences in no particular order, so that it makes absolutely no sense at all.

To swim, or not to swim.....What was the question?

This past weekend my boys and I enjoyed ourselves at the Hidalgo Falls Festival on the Brazos River. For those who haven't been, it boasts a 28 mile race, a whitewater play boat rodeo, classes, demo's, food, music, presentations and general fun and camaraderie. They also have an auction and a very short 3 mile paddle from the falls to Hwy 105. We stopped a lot to make it longer, and it STILL didn't last very long...



I have noticed that for some reason, if you have everything properly tied in and in dry bags, and you are fully prepared for getting dumped in the drink, no matter what ridiculous and incorrect thing you do, you most likely won't even get close. But the minute you have something that might sink, get ruined if it got wet, not tied in properly, etc., in other words, you are not prepared, it is almost a written guarantee that you will get slightly moistened if not down right drenched.

There was a young lady who managed to flip on the very first 20 feet of the trip. I am not sure, but I believe she was pretty new at this to begin with. She, however, proved my above point wrong and did EVERYTHING correctly, and still flipped. And, unlike me who manages to rarely if ever actually TOUCH my boat much less grab it when I go for a swim, she had her boat. And her paddle. The one time I DID actually have my boat, I went down the rapids in FRONT of it, backwards, head first.... Oh, joy... and the guys at work were trying to tell me that riding my MOTORCYCLE was dangerous! They thought I was all banged up from a bike wreck...

Anyway, this lady did everything text book perfectly. I didn't think to get a picture at the time, but for someone who supposedly didn't have much experience, she sure handled that situation like an old pro. My only excuse for my total seeming lack of control in that kind of situation is that I am a total clutz and a spaz.... If I EVER actually grab the boat and go down feet first BEHIND the boat, and hold on to my paddle, I will be pleasantly surprized! I am usually the poster child for what NOT to do.....

SYOTR!
Cecilia

Upcoming River Trips

HCC Trips:

Date: Saturday, April 19, 2008

Title: Guadalupe River trip

Inclusive Dates: Apr 19 - 20

Description: If the water is up, we will paddle Hwy 281 down to Rebecca Crossing and then First Crossing to Gruenes. We'll camp at Pecan Park

Skill Level: **Intermediate:** Knowledge of basic whitewater safety, self-rescue and rescue such as retrieving a pinned boat. Able to capture small eddies, run Class 2 rapids confidently, but challenged by Class 3 rapids such as Cottonseed on the San Marcos at say 300-400 cfs.

Contact: Contact Donna Grimes by phone 713 728 1645, or by email donna.grimes@mindspring.com.

###

Date: Saturday, May 03, 2008

Title: Medina River Cleanup

Inclusive Dates: May 3

Description: We hope you will join us by boat or by land for the Eighth Annual Medina River Cleanup on May 3, 2008. Rain or drought, the Medina River Cleanup will be held without fail on that day. Each year between 100 and 200 people from cities and towns across Texas come to clean up the river, its banks and crossings

Registration will be from 9-12 AM at the Bandera City Park at the dam. Your donations go to grow the fund and cover the expenses for the annual river cleanup.

Skill Level: **Intermediate:** Knowledge of basic whitewater safety, self-rescue and rescue such as retrieving a pinned boat. Able to capture small eddies, run Class 2 rapids confidently, but challenged by Class 3 rapids such as Cottonseed on the San Marcos at say 300-400 cfs.

###

Date: Saturday, May 03, 2008

Title: 8th Annual Dragon Boat Festival

Inclusive Dates: May 3

Description: Allen's Landing - Downtown Houston

Welcome to the thrilling sport of dragon boat racing! We are entering our 6th year paddling at the birthplace of Houston – Allen's Landing in downtown.

You can expect over 30 teams racing throughout the day with colorful entertainment, educational cultural booths, delicious cuisine, and fun games for kids and adults alike.

If you are not paddling as part of a team, then you are missing out on a truly wonderful experience. Check our sponsorship opportunities for how you can get involved.

Skill Level: **Blank:**

Other Club Trips:

Start Date: Saturday, May 10, 2008
Title: Paddle Lafayette 2008
Inclusive Dates: May 10-11, 2008
Description: The Lafayette Paddle Club invites you to Paddle Lafayette 2008! This event will be held on May 10-11, 2008 in Lafayette, LA. It is a two day event showcasing both the ecology and culture of the Lafayette, LA area.

For more information and registration please visit www.paddlelafayette.com

--

Shawn Jolet
Lafayette Paddle Club
Contact: Contact Shawn Jolet by email spjolet@gmail.com.

###

Start Date: Saturday, April 26, 2008
Title: Marsh Mania
Inclusive Dates: April 26, 2008 & May 31, 2008
Description: 2008 Planting Sites and Dates:

April 26, 2008
Pierce Marsh (Hitchcock)
North Deer Island (West Bay)
Clear Creek (League City)

May 31, 2008
Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge (Anahuac)
Armand Bayou Nature Center (Pasadena)
Chocolate Bay (Alvin)
Texas City Prairie Preserve (Texas City)

To register for Marsh Mania, please send us an e-mail at marshmania@galvbay.org. Please include the following:

- Your name
- Address and phone number
- Number of volunteers in your party
- Organization name (if applicable)
- Age range of volunteers in your party
- Site preference
- Tells us how you heard about Marsh Mania
- Let us know if you do not want to plant but prefer to help with check-in, set up, food station, etc.

THANK YOU!

Contact: Contact Natalie Wiest by email wiestn@tamug.edu.

###

Start Date: Saturday, May 03, 2008

Title: Cedar Bayou

Inclusive Dates:

Description: You are invited to bring your canoes or anything that floats, and join us at Roseland Park on beautiful Cedar Bayou in Baytown on Saturday May 3rd.

Contact: Contact Jerry & Linda Jones by phone 281-837-7225 , or by email captainjerry001@comcast.net.

###

Paddling In Arkansas by Anne Olden

by

We looked at the USGS river gauges two or three times a day in the week before our Easter trip, and watched the weather maps to see where it might rain. A big storm on Monday the 17th dumped plenty of rain into Arkansas – too much for some parts of the state. In southwest Arkansas the rivers rose high but would come down quickly. We camped below the new Cossatot River State Park Visitor's Center on Hwy 278. Camping is free because there are no facilities except tent pads. Flooding would wash away any structures. We got daily gauge readings at the Center.

By Friday the 21st we were on the Little Missouri along with Linda Day, Christy Long and Debbie Snow. The LM has a unique level indicator (in addition to the USGS gauge) - air space at the Albert Pike bridge. At 18" on Friday, this space made for an acceptable run, if a little on the low side. There were rock gardens, chutes and drops, which made the 8.5 mile stretch a good warmup for the Cossatot.

Saturday was the first Cossatot trip for three of us. Linda and John had been on the river many years before. At a gauge reading of 3.7, we ran the stretch above the Falls, from Hwy 246 to the Sandbar low water crossing. The second half of this run held two challenging rapids, Zig Zag and the Esses, a left to right boulder-filled rapid. Everyone did well. At the end of the day we scouted Cossatot Falls on foot; the Falls is a series of six drops over rocky ledges.



Sunday morning the group packed up and headed to the Falls under cloudy skies and cool temps. The gauge was now at 3.35, a good level for first-time Falls runners. The first three drops went well. The fourth, Washing Machine, intimidated all but Linda. She scouted it from her kayak, and after John set up below with a rope, she did a clean run. Did she have a big grin on her face afterwards! The rest of us hauled our boats over the rocks. Below the last drop Linda and Christy put on dry Capilene and polypro. Although the sun was out, the breeze was chilly on wet kayakers.



It took us at least 1 1/2 hours to get down the Falls. More rock gardens lay ahead. At Devil's Hollow Rapid, Anne's canoe hit rocks and dumped her out. She sent the canoe down the

second half of the rapid but found herself stuck on a rock in mid-rapid. It was too rocky to consider swimming the rest of the way. Now John and Christy got to practice throwing rescue ropes. Finally one made it, and with Christy holding tightly to the back of John's PFD, John held the rope as Anne swung to shore. Good practice for all involved. The ledges at Devil's Hollow were portaged on the right



It was 4 pm when we arrived at the 278 takeout, and another hour for the shuttle

and packing up for the 7 hour drive to Houston. It was an exciting and exhausting trip, but we'll do it again.

Burnham's Ferry by Bob Arthur

by

Many of you may not know.....and some of you may not care (and shame on you) that the Battle of San Jacinto was fought on April 21, 1836 in Harris County, TX.

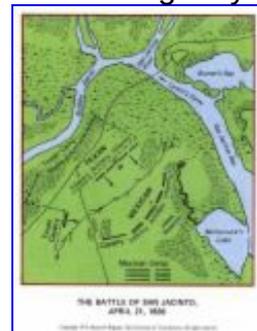


Much was going on in Texas prior to that battle, the Alamo had been attacked and the garrison there was all killed. See the various movies to get a Hollywood version of what happened. The Texas Army was located at Gonzales and many wanted to march to San Antonio and attack the Mexican Army. Sam Houston had just been appointed the Commander of the army at Washington on the Brazos and made his way to Gonzales to take command of the army. He chose to retreat causing an event known as the "Runaway Scrape" and I'll leave it to those that have interest to peruse all of that history.

Some years in early spring I was visiting my son in the Columbus/LaGrange area. We just happened to go down to the Colorado River in an area now known as the Santa Anna Bottom. I had known that an ancestor was with the Texas army, had fought at the Battle of Bexar in San Antonio and also fought at San Jacinto. I also learned that he was in the army with the retreat and learned that the army had crossed the Colorado River at Burnham's Ferry on March 16 & 17, 1836. Being curious, I wanted to go to the exact area where the army had crossed and stand in old great, great grand pappy's footprints. The history was perused, the Columbus and LaGrange, TX historical societies were visited, old maps were purchased and still, no one knew exactly where the crossing was. The locals in Columbus wanted it to be in Colorado County and the locals in LaGrange knew it was in Fayette County. The discussion has been going on for years.

Suffice to say that the area of the crossing has now been rediscovered. The Burnham family home site and cemetery have been located. The river has moved east some 500 feet in the intervening years so the exact area of the crossing may never be known,

On April 26, we'll do the 83rd annual Colorado River trip to once again try to determine the approximate location of the crossing. You're invited to go along. Local historians and vocational archaeologist will be on the trip and we may be able to visit the area of Burnham's home site. This will be a day trip of about 12 miles with primitive camping at the take-out. You can either stay the night or return home after the trip.



Paddle Bayou Lafourche by Sheila Hill Lorenz

by

Editor's Note: I apologize, but I could not download (and then upload) any pictures for this trip. Please check the link provided at the end of the story. Also, this was actually written by Sheila's brother Bart, but she was on the trip, too, and contributed to the writing of the tale.

A couple of months prior to the event, I saw on a website that there was to be a four day paddling event down Bayou Lafourche, in southern Louisiana sponsored by the Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program and Foundation (BTNEP) The event could be done for any of the four days or for all four.

BTNEP is an organization trying to restore the "naturalness" of the region. One of their main objectives is to clean-up and clear the bayou. Another objective is to remove invasive plant species, such as: hydrilla, water hyacinth, elephant ears and wisteria plants. Another objective is to make the bayou more inviting to visitors in order to promote tourism and to create sustainable economic policies for local communities.

Shortly after learning of the event I contacted my sister, Sheila, and told her that I had signed up for the last two days: Saturday and Sunday.

Shortly after that she said she had signed up for all four days and asked if I could get an additional day or two off from work. As it happened, I worked an additional day the week prior to the event and thus had Friday off. I then called the organizers, to see about signing on for an additional day and was told all I had to do was show up and pay an additional \$20.00 for the day. Cool.

Sheila called me on Wednesday night and told me that she wasn't going on Thursday since she wasn't fully prepared but would meet me at the campsite for Thursday night's gathering of paddlers.

The following day I gathered my camping supplies and boat, etc.. and after work I headed south. I didn't reach the camp site until shortly before 1:00 a.m. The first campsite was at Madewood Plantation in Napoleonville, LA. Madewood has been ranked by various magazines as one of the best hotels in the United States. However, we were sleeping in our tents on the grounds, not in one of the expensive rooms.

March 28, 2008: Got up early and packed my tent and supplies in my truck and unloaded my kayak across Madewood Plantation just off Highway 308. Along with Sheila, we must have had nearly 100 paddlers in at least 50 boats. Some folks rented boats while many of us had our own. I later learned that there was an average of just over 100 registered participants per day.

We then drove to the take-out site at Jean Lafitte Acadian Cultural Center at Thibodaux, LA.

Once we arrived, we parked our vehicles and rode in two school buses back to Madewood Plantation and got into the water for a 7-mile paddle downriver to Labadieville, LA for lunch. For lunch, several of us ate at the Cajun Café. I had a crabmeat burger and Coke and Sheila had a large Chef's salad. Outside, the staff had prepared jambalaya for the group and I had a bowl of that as well.

Following lunch we then proceeded approximately 4 miles down until we reached the E.D. White House and Historical Site. At this historical site, we were able to

visit the house and go to the restroom if necessary. It is a nice place to visit if you're in the area. If memory is accurate, E.D. was a long term U.S. Supreme Court Justice and his father was a LA Governor.

After a nice long break we then paddled on toward Thibodaux, LA. Along the way I pulled over to the side of the river and was handed several strands of Mardi Gras beads. The elderly couple, I was told, has done this for several years.

In Thibodaux we loaded our boats on our vehicles and then proceeded to Nicholls State University. Near the baseball park we all set up tents and many of us went to the gym to shower. I'm not sure if I was at the right gym since I was showering in the ladies locker room, but I saw no way to get to the men's locker room. Plus, the shower was one of the coldest in recent memory. I suppose all the hot water had been used earlier.

On the other hand, the food was prepared by a local caterer and was fantastic. I had a small green salad, potato salad, blackened red fish(?), white beans over white rice, bread and I don't know what else. It was all good.

March 29, 2008: We awoke early in the morning and began to pack up to transport our boats across the road from the University to the next put-in. At this point, Sheila realizes she had lost her keys and had contacted the University Police to unlock her vehicle, thinking the keys must be inside. Eventually, they unlocked the vehicle, but the keys were not to be found.

Sheila then found out that the only way to get the keys replaced was to have her Honda Element towed to Baton Rouge so that the local dealership could make a new key. So, because of this occurrence I left her behind and continued on with the group.

Around Noon we stopped for lunch at Plaisance's Vegetable Stand near Raceland, LA where there were too many desserts to choose from as well as terrific Redfish couvillion, chicken & fish gumbo and sausage links. There was also a Cajun band to keep the paddlers entertained.

After lunch, we then headed for a long trip to Mathews, LA where we set up camp on the lawn of Dr. Michael and Brenda Dardar Robichaux's home, and shortly after I arrived Sheila joined us for the evening meal. For this meal I had an Indian taco, seafood gumbo, chocolate chip cookies, and a variety of other goodies.

Dr. Robicheaux also arranged for us to have a pow wow presented by members of the Houma Nation Indian tribe. He, and his wife, are very active in a variety of projects concerning the tribe. I skipped out on part of the pow wow, which featured a variety of dances dressed in regalia, and took a shower at the Dr.'s house. Dr. Robichaux and his wife live on the second floor of the home, while the first floor has been converted into offices for the Houma Nation and other interests. I bought a pair of Indian-made earrings for a friend and a hand carved hiking stick from one of the artisans. Strangely, he was going to give it to me, telling me he gets the wood for free, but I really liked it and gave him \$11.00 for the stick, which was half the cost of the ones he was selling.

I later learned that "Dr. Mike" is a former Louisiana State Senator.

March 30, 2008: Awoke early and packed up our supplies and our boats, etc... and headed a short distance to the put-in on LA Highway 1.

This time there were no breaks in the trip down to Lockport, LA since this day's trip was slightly more than five miles.

Thus, most of us arrived at Bayouside Park shortly after Noon and had another prepared lunch, while being entertained by a different Cajun band. The most memorable thing about this short trip was that the wind had picked up as we were heading toward the Intracoastal canal area. Also, we saw several large ships docked along the river.

Shortly after 1:00 I headed back to Lafayette and Sheila back to Gulfport, MS.

In all, the four day trip covered 52 miles. Day 1 was 17 miles in very strong southern winds (I was told). Day 2 covered nearly 15 miles and Day 3 was just over 14 miles, and Day 5 was slightly over 5 miles.

I saw no alligators and the only snake I saw was a 3 feet long dead water moccasin. The wildlife consisted of a variety of birds and ducks. The other thing of note was that even though some of the houses along the bayou were very nice and well maintained, there were more homes that looked like they would have been better off sliding into the bayou. An interesting dichotomy of people living along the bayou.

We were never out of sight of either Hwy 308 or LA Hwy 1 during the entire trip. One or the other, and sometimes both, highways follow the bayou we paddled. Louisiana Hwy 1 is called the longest street in the world. This is because of the settlements along the highway following the path of the bayou. A geologist on the trip told us that it is because of the length of running sewage lines and other infrastructure over such a long distance the costs in maintenance and repair is very expensive for the local communities.

Another item of interest was that many people were sitting or fishing along the bayou and would greet all of us as we passed. One elderly couple handed out left over Mardi Gras beads to paddlers and others offered beer to the paddlers. It was perhaps best not to have been drinking, particularly on Saturday, since we were passed several times by the Lafourche Parish Sheriff's water patrol.

The highlight of the trip was that while paddling each day the people on this canal on both sides would watch us. They would picknick with kids and wave. They'd comment on the boats and ask about the trip and where we were from. There were a few that took photos and had the web site on their piers so we could look up the photos later and some handed out little plastic bags of pralines. Some also threw mardi-grass beads to us and others brought their animals to watch. I forgot my sunglasses on Sun. and a man that works for a dollar store ran and got a box of sunglasses and handed them to anyone not wearing sunglasses that might want some.

My greatest accomplishment was not getting sunburned.

Another photo gallery can be found at: <http://www.keriturner.com/> my sister is featured in the entire row, third from bottom in a blue kayak and is wearing a red shirt and blue shorts. I am only in one photo, fifth row from the bottom and third from right. I am in the camouflaged Mad River Canoe.

Dr. Mike Robichaux also has a photo gallery on his website:

<http://web.mac.com/docmikerobi/Site/Welcome.html>

click on BTNEP Paddle Trip. I am featured on page 1 fifteen rows down with cell phone in hand wearing a Miller Chill T-shirt. I am also on page 2 twenty-two rows

down in 1st photo on left holding a red cup and on page 3 nine rows down in middle of row seated in kayak.

Not that I'm begging for attention or anything.