

2012 Steamboat New Orleans Bicentennial Celebration

River Heritage Foundation, Inc.



Commemorating a moment that changed America
and started a revolution



"The New Orleans Streaming Upstream by Moonlight, 1811" Gary Lucy



Rivers Institute at
HANOVER
COLLEGE

STEAMBOAT NEW ORLEANS

Who would have thought a steamboat trip could spark a revolution? Yet, the epic voyage of the New Orleans, first steamboat to descend the Ohio and Mississippi rivers to New Orleans, changed American civilization as well as the lives of its passengers and crew.

Departing Pittsburgh in October 1811, the New Orleans received gala welcomes at every port, and its passage was marked by the Great Comet of 1811 streaking across the sky and by the greatest earthquake ever recorded in the continental United States. Aboard the steamboat, the passengers and crew saw their craft under threats of tribal attack and fire. They experienced romance, weddings and births on deck, weathered disbelief and found new faith, participating unknowingly in the demise of one civilization and the rise of another. America was never the same after the first inland river steamboat passed on to glory.

The first steamboat on western waters harbinger of the industrial revolution that changed America, was owned by Robert Fulton and Robert Livingston and constructed by Nicholas Roosevelt, whose wife and children joined him as the first steamboat passengers on inland rivers. From the voyage of the New Orleans in 1811 until the docking of the Delta Queen in 2008, steamboats carried passengers along the Ohio and connecting rivers day and night for two centuries. Steamboats stimulated manufacturing and economic development along the inland rivers, launching the Ohio valley's industrial revolution and moving the nation's freight until supplanted by railroads, trucks and towboats.

To fuel the New Orleans, some of the first coal mines in the Ohio valley opened, presaging the boating of coal along the rivers to generate power for homes and industry. Pressing the frontier steadily west, steamboats carried Native Americans to new homes and converted agricultural villages into boat construction centers, manufacturing emporiums, and, ultimately, cities, altering the social fabric of both native American and Euro-African settlers alike; even today, steam engines supply most of the energy powering our home appliances and manufactories. The voyage of the New Orleans changed not only the lives of its passengers and crew, it changed ours.

Prior to 1812, New Orleans was a bustling port where commerce while brisk, was subject largely to the current of the Mississippi River. Goods could be floated down, but upriver was slow at best. After 1812, vast quantities of goods could be shipped through New Orleans thus solidifying the Crescent City as one of the premier ports and international cities in the world.

Summary provided by Dr. Leland Johnson

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

The success of the New Orleans led to thousands of steamboats operating on the rivers of America.

Soon after the trip of the New Orleans, a dramatic increase in river commerce led to the growth of cities such as Cincinnati, Louisville, Paducah, Memphis, St. Louis and New Orleans.

The success of the New Orleans, and the subsequent increase in steamboat travel had lasting economic, social, and cultural impact on American literature, food, music, speech, and architecture.

The era of the steamboat spurred unique forms of literature, such as the writings of Mark Twain, and allowed the sharing of unique regional music up and down the river. The Showboats brought entertainment to thousands of people isolated in remote towns many days travel away from cities.

The success of the New Orleans turned the inland river system in North America into the main transportation route for commerce and for westward migration.

Steamboats aided in stimulating agricultural development in the Nation's heartland as steamboats stopped in rural areas and farms to exchange produce and commodities. Steamboats brought sugar, cotton, and oysters north, and Yankee pork, notions, and guns south.

Steamboats brought former slaves, along with banjos, blues, and jazz north to Memphis, Nashville, and Owensboro, and carried south music from the pens of Stephen Collins Foster and Will S. Hays.

Growth of steamboat travel led to a national policy of constructing improvements to navigation on America's rivers, resulting in the current system of locks and dams throughout the Nation.

Today:

The volume of freight moved on the inland waterways is equal to about 15% of all intercity freight, and is valued at nearly \$ 70 billion.

If tonnage transported on rivers today moved by truck instead of barge, an additional 1,700,000 trucks would have been required on our interstate highways.

The inland waterway system generates over 35,000 jobs directly, with many more being utilized in shipyards, terminals, and shore support positions.

Moving a ton of cargo one mile by barge generates only 25% of the carbon dioxide emissions compared moving that ton of cargo by trucks.

The Port of New Orleans is consistently ranked as one of the top ports in the world. Over 6,000 Ocean vessels call on the port annually. The port and related activities are responsible for over 160,000 jobs. All of this complements to being at the head of 14,500 mile inland waterway system



**TENTATIVE
STEAMBOAT NEW ORLEANS
BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION
JANUARY 28, 2012**

10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Hilton Riverside Hotel

Historical Symposium on the voyage of the Steamboat NEW ORLEANS and how it changed America.

**2:15 p.m. Port of New Orleans
Administration Building**

Riverboat picks up the re-enactors, including Mr. and Mrs. Nicholas Roosevelt and other passengers and crew of the Steamboat NEW ORLEANS

2:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. Mississippi River

Riverboat will carry the re-enactors to the Lower Bienville Wharf. Enroute, they will be escorted by the United States Coast Guard, Crescent Towing, E.N. Bisso, and Bisso Towboat, Turn Services and the Port of New Orleans Fireboat.

**3:00 p.m. – 3:45 p.m. Lower Bienville Wharf
and The French Quarter**

The riverboat arrives and re-enacts the arrival of the NEW ORLEANS. The re-enactors are welcomed by Gov. W.C.C. Claiborne (portrayed by Dr. Martin Claiborne) and Edward Livingston (portrayed by Former Congressman Bob Livingston). They all parade in the French Quarter by Horse and Buggy to the front of the Cabildo and St. Louis Cathedral.

3:45 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. Jackson Square

The re-enactors arrive at the Cabildo where they are welcomed by Lt. Governor Jay Dardenne as Master of Ceremonies and given the keys to the city. Lt. Gov. Dardenne will introduce State and City officials. The Washington Artillery Salute Unit will provide a 21-Gun Salute, the U.S. Navy Jazz Band will provide music and a U.S. Coast Guard helicopter will flyover.

5:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. St. Louis Cathedral

The Archdiocese of New Orleans will celebrate a Mass of Thanksgiving and Blessing for the beginning of the year of the State Bicentennial and this SB NEW ORLEANS Bicentennial.

6:00 – 9:00 p.m. The Cabildo

Cocktail Reception, hosted by the Lt. Governor featuring a private preview of the Louisiana State Museum's Exhibition of the "First Steamboat on the Western Rivers: The Legacy of The New Orleans, 1811-1812" for the State Bicentennial Celebration.

SPEAKERS

Dr. Lawrence Powell:

A History Professor at Tulane University, Chairman; Dr. Powell is the James H. Clark Endowed Chair in American Civilization and is also the author of the upcoming book: *The Accidental City: Improvising New Orleans* (Harvard, 2012)

Mr. Richard Campanella:

A Geography and Research Assistant Professor at Tulane University; Mr. Campanella is author of several books, including, *Lincoln in New Orleans: The 1828-1831 Flat Boat Voyages and Their Place in History* and *Bienville's Dilemma: A Historical Geography of New Orleans*.

Mr. Charles "Chuck" Parrish:

A retired historian with the United States Army Corps of Engineers, Louisville District and expert on the Steamboat NEW ORLEANS and the industry; Mr. Parrish is the Chair of the Steamboat Bicentennial at Hanover College, Indiana.

Dr. Mark Fernandez:

A History Professor at Loyola University in New Orleans; Dr. Fernandez has written extensively on Edward Livingston and Legal History.

Captain Clarke C. "Doc" Hawley:

A retired Riverboat Captain and Steamboat Historian.



**BICENTENNIAL CABILDO EXHIBITION
AND COCKTAIL RECEPTION**

The Celebration, with the exception of the exhibition and cocktail reception, is open to the public. Tickets to the reception are obtained with a donation of \$50 per person. These donations may be made at the door with a reservation by January 26, 2012 or in advance at:

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