Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve

New Orleans Jazz National Historical Park

Call to Action Item #3- History Lesson

Historic Masonic Lodge Perseverance Hall No. 4 Opens In Louis Armstrong Park New Orleans

Abstract

New Orleans Jazz National Historical Park (JAZZ) opened the doors on June 18, 2011 to its newest urban visitor site -- the Historic Perseverance Hall No. 4, located in Louis Armstrong Park, the gateway to the historic French Quarter "Vieux Carre" in New Orleans. This signifies a significant milestone in the next chapter of development for the urban park created to tell the story of the peoples, places, and diverse cultural and societal influences that converged to create the birth and development of the uniquely American art form jazz music in the exotic environs New Orleans.

Assigned to the park under a lease and partnership established with the City of New Orleans, Perseverance Hall No. 4 was originally a Masonic Lodge built between 1819 and 1820, making it the oldest Masonic temple in Louisiana. It is situated very next to Historic Congo Square where the African rhythms that became part of jazz were celebrated since Colonial times, and is contiguous to the most historic African American community and neighborhood in the nation, Faubourg Treme.

Description

Historically, Perseverance Hall was used for dances, where African American and Creole jazz performers and bands reportedly played for African American, Creole, and white audiences. Perseverance Hall is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. All of Louis Armstrong Park has been closed to the public since Hurricane Katrina. In May 2011 Mayor Landrieu reopened Louis Armstrong Park to public use and benefit. The City of New Orleans and several community organizations were gratified that the NPS joined the efforts in partnership to welcome the community back to its park.

JAZZ had begun renovations on Perseverance Hall just months before Hurricane Katrina devastated New Orleans in 2005. After the storm, the park immediately addressed the emergency repairs and stabilizations needed, and then proceeded to complete the renovations to the first floor visitor center of the facility. The park also completed interpretive exhibit design and fabrication through Harpers Ferry that includes the exhibits Jazz Roots: West African, Caribbean, European, American. The exceptional interpretive exhibits after being in storage for years finally have come home to their intended audience.

Perseverance Hall initially is now open on Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. throughout the year and is where the park's popular *Music for All Ages* program is presented. This program takes place Saturday mornings from 11 a.m. to noon. It teaches young people the music and etiquette required to perform in a traditional New Orleans brass band. Kids are invited to bring their own

instruments and join a professional brass band for a hands-on workshop and performance of traditional New Orleans songs.

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Call to Action Item #3- History Lesson

Centennial Challenge Cost Share Partnership Project With The Louisiana State Museum Cut The Ribbon

Abstract

November 2011 New Orleans Jazz National Historical Park (JAZZ) and the Louisiana State Museum (LSM) completed their Centennial Challenge Cost-Share Program partnership renovation project at the Old U.S. Mint located in the French Quarter "Vieux Carre" New Orleans. The project was authorized and funded for the purposes of collaborating on the development of a world class jazz park to include a museum with performance and educational and administrative space in the LSM's Old U.S. Mint building.

Description

The Old U.S. Mint building is as rich in historical and cultural stories and significance as the historic French Quarter where it is located. Purportedly, the cornerstone of the mint building was laid on the foundation of Fort St. Charles, one of five fortifications surrounding the city. Spanish Governor Baron Hector de Carondelet noted that Fort St. Charles, constructed in the form of a pentagon, was built larger than the other four to accommodate troops in the event of an insurrection. In 1821 the fort was demolished, and the land was given to the City of New Orleans the following year. The area was made into a park, aptly named Jackson Square for the hero of the Battle of New Orleans. The park remained until 1835, when the city returned it to the federal government for construction of the New Orleans Branch Mint.

The 50/50 combined federal and state investment for the project is $4 Million. The LSM will commit an additional $4 Million for the design and development of a new permanent Jazz Museum within the Old U.S. Mint upon completion of the Centennial Partnership Project. The partnership project consists of the design and renovation of the third floor of the Old U.S. Mint to create a program, performance, and special events space for the shared programming uses of the partnership. The program and performance space has been designed for optimal performance acoustics with state of the art acoustic treatments for musical performances, cultural programs, special events, and educational programs. The performance venue also will have state of the art performance, audio, and visual equipment that includes digital audio and video recording studio, voice over recording sound isolation booth, broadcast capabilities for live web streaming and CCTV tele-learning connectivity for distance learning programs, a 102" wall mounted plasma monitor, and conference hosting technologies. This is an exceptional resource for the NPS to have available for use and programming. The project additionally includes a first floor visitor contact area with a Ranger staffed desk, an Eastern National outlet, and JAZZ Ranger office space.

JAZZ will offer its visitor Ranger interpretive "informances", the ongoing free jazz performance program calendar, jazz documentary and historical archive films, special events, conferences,

community events, and civic engagement, in the new facility. JAZZ has developed a partnership with the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee to establish student summer urban service internships and also a partnership with the University of New Orleans for collaboration on cultural and ethnographic projects and programs.

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New Orleans Jazz National Historical Park

Call to Action Item #3 - History Lesson

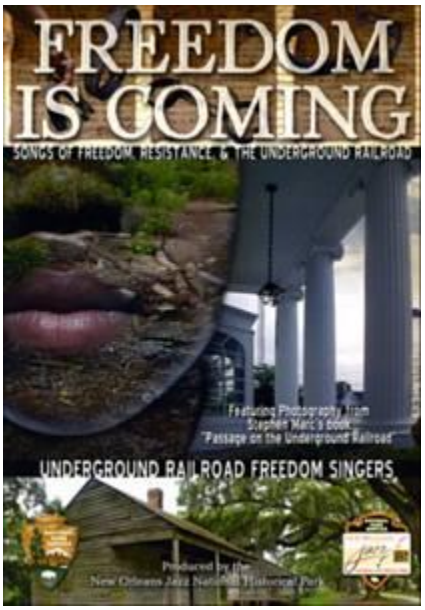
Music as the Medium to Teach and Discover

Abstract

The songs of our nation are engraved in time and place. They are fraught with emotion, revealing meanings of who we once were. New Orleans Jazz National Historical Park (JAZZ) produced two double disc CDs that explore the rhythms, lyrics, instrumentation and context of early music in the South. The project included live performances and recordings at multiple national park sites and contains detailed linear notes and lessons plans adaptable to a variety of ages.

Description

Two recordings produced by JAZZ, *Freedom is Coming* and *Songs of the Lower Mississippi River Delta* are singular in their approach to weaving meticulously researched history with excellent musical performance.

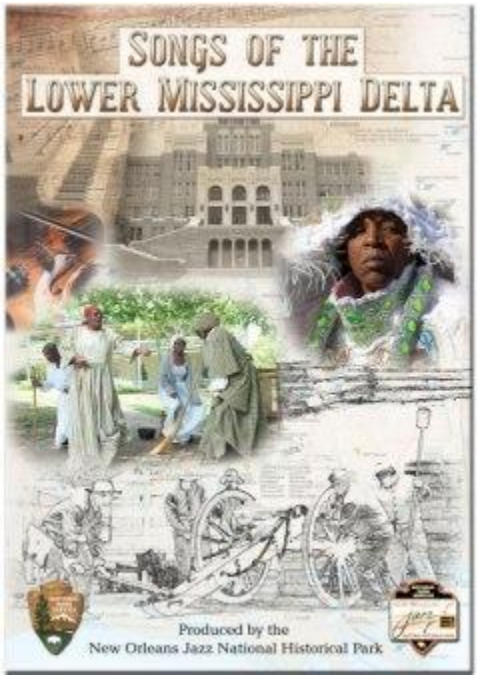


Freedom Is Coming tells the story of the Underground Railroad through song and spoken word pieces. The CDs focus on the southern routes and passages of the Underground Railroad and include extensively researched liner notes that explain the hidden messages incorporated into music in America's pre-Civil War days.

Until the Civil War abolished legal slavery in the United States, attempting to escape the oppression of slavery was a dangerous proposition. For many enslaved people "going up north" was neither practical nor possible. National Park Service, artists, academics, and

local historians learned of key destinations where enclaves of freedom were established even in the South of slavery: rural areas, swamps and bayous.

Music, folk rhymes, chants, and physical items like quilt patterns were used to provide navigation and other information to escapees. In the songs and words of *Freedom Is Coming*, the listener can also hear the syncopated rhythms, work songs, call-and-response spirituals, and liberation lyrics which influenced early jazz in New Orleans that spans over a century of folk and popular music from the American South.



Songs of the Lower Mississippi River Delta brought together National Park Services sites from Arkansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, and Tennessee. Park staff selected songs or spoken word pieces representing the story of their parks, from popular songs to topical events to traditional music. Special emphasis was placed on parks which share stories of the Civil War or the civil rights movement.

Along with performances in New Orleans, selections from the CD were performed live at Shiloh National Military Park and Fort Donelson National Battlefield in Tennessee, Vicksburg National Military Park and Natchez Trace Parkway in Mississippi, and Little Rock National Historical Site in Arkansas. Performances were filmed and added to park web sites.

For both projects park rangers partnered with local musicians and recording artists to interpret the songs, singing in swamps, bayou towns, urban areas and battlefield sites

across the south. Designed to both educate and entertain, the CDs can be accompanied by lesson plans adaptable for a variety of grade levels.

To find out more (any web links go here)

www.nps.gov/jazz.

http://africanamerican.eparks.com/store/product/94314/Freedom-is-Coming%3A-Songs-of-Freedom%2C-Resistance%2C-%26-the-Underground-Railroad-CD/

Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve

New Orleans Jazz National Historical Park

Call to Action Item #3 - History Lesson

Interactive History Programs Reach New Audiences at Jean Lafitte

Abstract

Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve (JELA) supported four new ways for a variety of audiences to experience history coming alive at the Chalmette Battlefield, Barataria Preserve and the New Orleans French Quarter. Each event connected dozens of volunteers, rangers and visitors in engaging exchanges regarding the options, consequences and meanings of the 1815 Battle of New Orleans and the Civil War in the South.

Description

In January 2012, JELA launched *The Battle of New Orleans Quest* which provided a fun way for an entire family to explore the American and British camps on the battlefield, learn about life in 1815, and discover the story of the Chalmette Monument. Similar to a scavenger hunt combined with a puzzle, Quest challenged participants to answer historical questions. Each correct answer formed a clue to answer a final, big-picture question. Quest was a hit and may join the repertoire of permanent events at the battlefield.

In April, the US Navy, Coast Guard, Marines, and thousands of visitors commemorated the bicentennial of the War of 1812 with "NOLA Navy Week." Three tall ships and six warships from six nations docked along the New Orleans riverfront and events throughout the area reminded visitors of the war that proved that the American experiment in democracy was as effective in war as in peace. A special program in Jackson Square, the heart of New Orleans' French Quarter, returned the square to its original use as *Place d'Armes*, where military drills took place during the Spanish and French colonial periods. Park staff, volunteer reenactors, a period US Coast Guard color guard, and Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) cadets from Chalmette High School performed period drills and talked with visitors about how the War of 1812 shaped American history.

In May, JELA was awarded a National Park Foundation grant to partner with tribal groups whose ancestors participated in the 1815 Battle of New Orleans, to develop meaningful ways for them to share their perspective with park visitors. Using distance learning, park rangers will teach high school students from the Jena Band of Choctaw Indians, the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, and the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, about the significance of the Battle of New Orleans to the U.S., the role that the Choctaw nation played in the battle, and about interpretation through the art of living history reenacting. The project is expected to culminate in January 2013 with the Choctaw students participating in culturally appropriate living history demonstrations at the Chalmette Battlefield.

From May through July, Barataria Preserve hosted a series of talks to help visitors understand the area's role in the Civil War. Many local residents do not know that the Preserve and nearby land was plantation country. Escaped slaves sometimes sought refuge in the swamps, forming maroon

communities, who participated in the Underground Railroad. The talks elaborated on the aftermath of the Civil war, including the Reconstruction Period in Louisiana all the way up to the desegregation of New Orleans elementary schools. Over 50 people attended the events.

To find out more (any web links go here)

http://www.navyweek.org/neworleans2012/index.html

http://www.nps.gov/jela/chalmette-battlefield.htm

Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve

New Orleans Jazz National Historical Park

Call to Action Item #6- Take a Hike, Call Me in the Morning

Creating Active Trails at the Barataria Preserve

Abstract

Barataria Preserve's Active Trails Program is soliciting community input on ways to increase trail use and to contribute to the wellness of Jefferson Parish residents. The Preserve received funding from the National Park Foundation to complete needed trail improvements, add amenities and signage, and host a large event this fall entitled Rx:Parks! We are creating messaging that has cultural relevancy – "Work off that bowl of red beans and rice!" and linking the natural beauty of the Preserve to healthy physical activity.

Description

In Jefferson Parish, where Barataria Preserve is located, the prevalence rate for adult diabetes is 12.2% of the population. The prevalence of obesity in Louisiana is 31% of the total population--the 6th highest in the nation. The health community agrees that simply getting out and walking at least three times a week can reduce the prevalence and severity of such chronic diseases. Over the years park staff has noted that locals and families have a tradition of casual hiking, boating, and fishing in the preserve, yet rarely have visitors used the trails for consistent, focused healthy activity. We have also noticed that virtually no one arrives at the park via bicycle.

The Preserve received funding from the National Park Foundation to engage park partners and local residents in trail improvements and access. This project has four primary aims: (1) develop culturally meaningful health messages related to physical activity in the Barataria Preserve in close collaboration with community partners, (2) install new, critically needed signage and amenities in consultation with both frequent park users and new community partners , (3) host a kickoff event to reintroduce 5.6 miles of more accessible and informative walking and jogging trails, and (4) use traditional and/or novel ways to evaluate the expected process changes and health outcomes that result from this project over at least a five year period. It is a participatory community engagement approach with community forums. Collaborators who are providing their expertise in recreational fitness support features, health messages, evaluation tools and marketing, include frequent visitors to the Preserve, the New Orleans Regional Planning Commission, the West Jefferson Hospital Foundation and the Tulane Prevention Research Center. The activities conducted under this proposal will target two audiences: 1) Jefferson Parish health care professionals and patients, and 2) Visitors using the park's trails for health-based recreation.

Rx: Parks! Day will be a high profile event that is estimated to attract 200-500 new users in one day. Working through the Regional Planning Commission, we can also reach local biking and hiking groups and develop scheduled events with their members, reaching another 100-200 potential users. The biking event Tour de Jefferson (which runs through the park with a rest/shuttle stop at the Visitor Center) hopes to top 900 people in 2012. In total this project has the potential to reach over 1500 new users this year, and will become part of the park's general programming and operations in future years.

Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve

New Orleans Jazz National Historical Park

To find out more (any web links go here)

http://www.nationalparks.org/our-work/programs/active-trails

Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve

New Orleans Jazz National Historical Park

Call to Action Item #12: Follow the Flow

Activate Invasive Aquatic Species Bio-Control Program

Abstract:

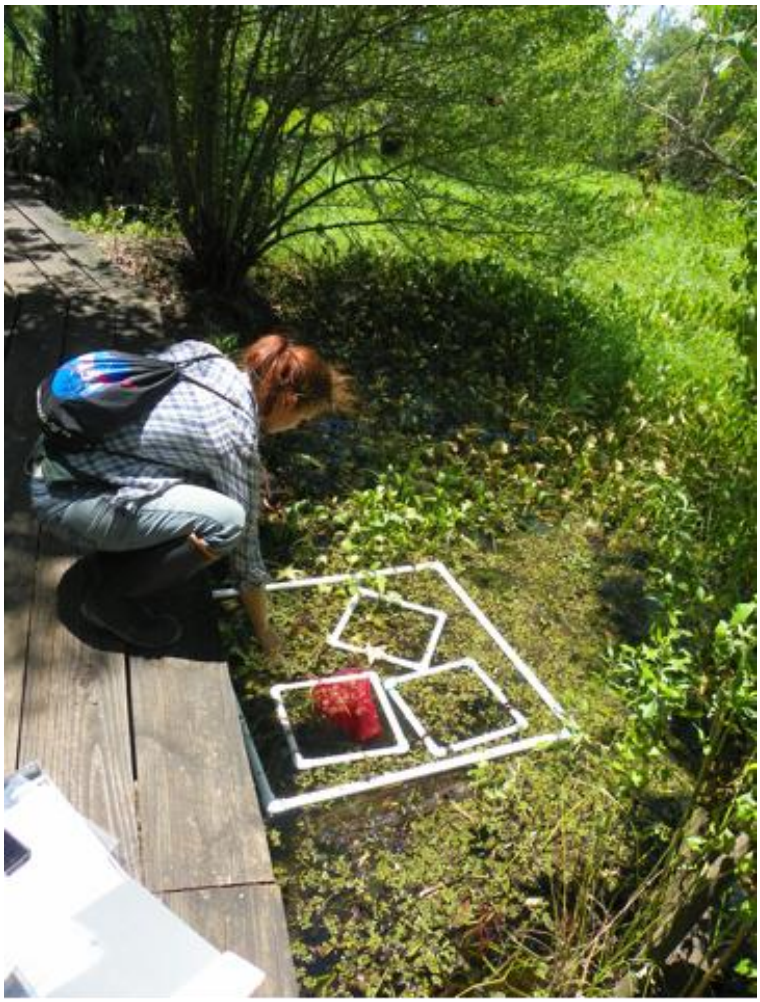
Giant Salvinia (*Salvinia molesta*), a floating aquatic fern native to the Amazon Basin, invaded the Preserve in 2006, and its populations now cover most Preserve waterways for much of the year. It exhibits classic invasive species attributes and its environmental impacts cascade from shifts in key abiotic conditions to community and ecosystem properties. It is a severe nuisance to boaters and fishers.

Accomplishments:

We developed a protocol for sampling the Giant Salvinia in the Park, built lab resources to analyze samples, designed a Giant Salvinia educational summer camp program for middle school students, created a method to quantify the weevil bio-control agent populations, explored canals and bayous to determine canoe accessible routes and made a canal map, and we assisted various researchers at the Preserve.

Description:

The Summer 2012 Environmental Stewards at Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve's Barataria Preserve engaged in an invasive species management project. The Steward's comprehensive goal was to develop our Giant Salvinia bio-control effort into a vibrant integrative program addressing Park resource management and interpretive needs and involving Park volunteers. Key elements of the Steward's summer work include sustaining the introduction and distribution of a weevil bio-control agent in selected waterways, developing and implementing a monitoring protocol assessing Giant Salvinia coverage and weevil populations in these waterways, coordinating



Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve

New Orleans Jazz National Historical Park

Park volunteer efforts on this project, producing weekly reports on waterway accessibility for Park staff and the public, and developing interpretive guides and/or programs communicating the need for, aims of, and status of this Park project.

Links:

http://www.salvinia.org/

LSU Ag Center

http://www.lsuagcenter.com/news_archive/2009/june/headline_news/lsu+agcenter+helps+attack+giant+salvinia+in+north+louisiana+lake.htm

http://text.lsuagcenter.com/news_archive/2011/june/headline_news/Congressional-hearing-focuses-on-giant-salvinia.htm

USDA

http://www.ars.usda.gov/is/ar/archive/sep04/weevil0904.htm

Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve

New Orleans Jazz National Historical Park

Call to Action – Item #16 Go Digital

Welcome to Your Virtual Park!

Abstract

JELA and JAZZ continue to utilize new technology to make a "virtual visit" almost as much fun as the real thing. Current website pages for the two parks take users from swamps to battlefields. Distance learning and film clips will soon bring JAZZ programs to virtual visitors digitally and JELA will go social by the end of this fiscal year when the park's Facebook and Twitter presences launch.

Description

Mindful of the thousands of web users who are planning a park visit and of the millions more who are virtual visitors to NPS websites, JELA and JAZZ continued to enhance their websites for users far and near. People responded: JAZZ drew over 30,000 unique users October 2011 through June 2012, and JELA had nearly 80,000 unique users in the same period.

Work is underway for distance learning programs based in the new JAZZ space at the Old U.S. Mint in New Orleans' French Quarter, where a state-of-the-art performance venue also holds technology capable of connecting to classrooms throughout the world. JAZZ is also working on a feature-length documentary on the music of the Civil War and its influence on the history of jazz; selected sections of the film will be available via the park website.

JELA's digital media team is going social: the team has been planning its Facebook and Twitter launches and expects to be making digital friends by the end of the fiscal year. JELA participated in the "Picture Yourself in a National Park" NPS Youtube project in April with a trilingual

(English, Spanish, and Cajun French) video. The park website encourages schools and other groups to share their park experiences by links from the website's Community Creations page; the Investigators in Action page follows the work of park researchers. The high school JROTC cadets who portray Battle of New Orleans participants at the battle's anniversary event next year tell their stories at the Recognizing Our Roots page where links lead users to student-created wikis on their experiences.

To find out more (any web links go here)

http://www.nps.gov/jela/forteachers/community-creations.htm

http://www.nps.gov/jela/photosmultimedia/investigators-in-action.htm

http://www.nps.gov/jela/recognizing-our-roots.htm

Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve

New Orleans Jazz National Historical Park

Call to Action Item #32 -Play It Safe

Revitalization of the Safety Culture at Jean Lafitte and Jazz

Abstract

Jean Lafitte and Jazz parks revitalized the safety culture at the parks this year. The leadership of the park began the process with a new Executive Safety Council and an employee driven Safety Committee.

Description

The park sponsored three classes in Operational Leadership to ensure all the employees received the basic information needed to become safety leaders. The Executive Safety Council working with the members of the Employee Safety Committee began extensive reviews of park incidents with Lessons Learned and shared with all park staff, cooperators, and volunteers. The Employee Safety Committee developed a new Safety Awards program to award positive safety actions of employees and volunteers.

The Operational Leadership method of developing a Green, Amber, Red (GAR) model for all activities became the accepted form of preparation for activities in the park. This was shown during the extensive preparations for the arrival of the National Lutheran Youth Volunteers Program in New Orleans this summer. The park generated a range of GAR models for the volunteer work planned in multiple park sites. Safety PPE and equipment identified during safety sessions were ordered to reduce the hazards faced by these youth volunteers. This three day event completed with no incidents.

The park continues to advance the safety culture with:

- Safety training session at the fall All Employees Meeting.
- New park safety bulletin boards
- Safety Challenge Coin Award

Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve

New Orleans Jazz National Historical Park

Safety Accomplishments:

- New Safety Charter
- Operational Leadership Training
- New GAR's and Job Hazard Analysis (JHA's)
- Staff completed 1st Aid Training
- Hazard Tree Mitigation with Olmsted Tree Crew
- Multiple Safety Walk Thoughs and Accident Reviews
- New Park Signage developed as After Action Review of lost visitor
- Ring Levee Trail safety issues addressed and reopened