



PINE HILLS HOTEL DATES FROM AROUND 1925

Luxury May Return One Day to Deserted Gulf Coast Hotel

By RONNY CAIRE

Driving on the U. S. 90 Bay St. Louis bridge, tourists see what appears to be a pink tinted medieval castle in the distance on the north shore of Bay St. Louis. Invariable strangers ask, "What's that?"

"That" is the deserted building that once housed a luxury resort hotel, U. S. troops training for World War II, and the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate. The building has been abandoned since the Oblate Fathers moved to St. Louis to consolidate their seminary training.

At present, an individual holds an option on the property and is trying to interest a national motel chain in restoring the structure, since it is only a short distance from the DeLisle I-10 turn off, and next to the DuPont titanium dioxide plant to be constructed at DeLisle.

It is the Pine Hills Hotel on the north shore of the Bay St. Louis.

The site was first described by one of Iberville's lieutenants, the Comte de Lisle, who explored Bay St. Louis in August, 1700, shortly after Iberville established the first white settlement on the Mississippi Gulf Coast at Ocean Springs in 1699.

In his diary, de Lisle wrote of the Indian mound at the location and the natural artesian spring where he was able to fill the drinking water casks on his ship. The site was a shoreline camping grounds for the Choctaw Indians, who inhabited the area at the time of de Lisle's explorations.

In 1845, William Alexander Whitfield of North Carolina established his plantation "Shelly" on the site. His home was a center of attention for a number of years because of the unusual furnishings and

the landscaping of the grounds. About the turn of the century the site became a nursery.

Around 1925 a group of New Orleans businessmen built an 18-hole golf course and a palmetto-clad \$75,000 country club to attract the patronage of their wealthy friends. Shortly afterwards, they built the jewel of their financing, a \$1,350,000 multi-storied hotel facing the bay. The furnishings cost \$200,000. A sand beach was put on the shore in front of the hotel.

Business boomed at the hotel for a short time. There was even a stock ticker tape machine to handle the stock interests of the monied clients of the luxury hotel. The hotel was reached from Bay St. Louis via the road to Kiln and then east on the old Delisle-Kiln road.

Construction of the first U.S. 90 bridge across the bay from Bay St. Louis to Henderson Point in 1928 isolated the hotel. It is a 32-mile trip from Bay St. Louis to Henderson Point via the route north of the bay, while the highway bridge is just over two miles long.

The stock market crash in 1929 finished the job of closing the hotel as some of the owners changed from "wealthy" to "broke" overnight. There just wasn't money to spend at a luxury hotel.

Caretakers were the only occupants of the hotel during the depression years and the early years of World War II. Finally, the U.S. government used the hotel to quarter servicemen during the War.

The Oblate fathers were the next occupants with their seminary. Their problem was that the nearest Catholic college where the novices could get college credit was either at Mobile or New Orleans. This meant that the young men had to spend too much time away from the close discipline of the seminary. The

fathers decided to close the facility and move to St. Louis where the seminary could be located near college facilities.

The construction of I-10 just a mile or so from the entrance gate of the hotel has brought the old place back to the investor's attention again. The basic structure is tough. It survived the 1947 Hurricane, Hurricane Betsy in 1965, and even "Killer" Hurricane Camille in 1969 with no structural damage although lesser buildings over 150 years old went to the ground.

The "eye" of Camille passed right over the Pine Hills Hotel building. A similarly constructed building, the old Edgewater Gulf Hotel at Biloxi, took two massive charges of dynamite to bring it down a few years ago.

So, the hotel that folded when the Bay bridge opened may be coming back as a new luxury facility just off I-10. Perhaps some honeymoon couple from the 1920s will be able to revisit for a wedding anniversary.

Bienville Has Aronson Exhibit

By GEORGE E. JORDAN

Bienville Gallery, 539 Bienville, is presenting paintings by Jan Aronson through July 9.

This is not the style of work usually seen at Bienville and some of the regular collectors of the Bienville clan may wonder why it is there at all.

Aronson would rather not be called an Op artist. No wonder! Op art has been passed for a number of years. One of the last great Op art presentations was a Joe Levi show in New York, circa 1970.

When viewing Aronson's works, however, the optical illusion created by color is the major impact.

Aronson was a student of Abstract Expressionism and it shows in her handling of paint and brush strokes. Some of these vibrant canvases, like "Ebdyed" and "Red and Green," almost make it.

While studying her works, one really can't help but recall the early works of Marcel Duchamp and the Op color studies of Francis Picabia and, a few decades later, the art of Victor Vasarely and the Op artists.

Although not yet ready for the big time, Aronson's works show an energy, emotion and determination which will probably pull her out of her problems in color and possibly make a fine artist of her!

presenting, through July, its final show of the season.

This exhibition is composed of 29 works by 24 artists.

The overall quality is so good that there is little point in using up space to single out the weak pieces. These stand out like weeds in a rose garden when displayed with the work of such experts as Bob Gordy, Terry Weldon and Jim Richard.

The "show stealers" here are Bob Gordy with his newest silkscreen, "Hot Diggy Dog," and Terry Weldon, with his top quality and fascinating "Framged Textural Study-Brown Holes."

The other super items are Jim Furr's "Tucumcari," Wayne Amedee's "Acra Axix Hanger," Ed Pramuk's drawing from his recent "Huey Long Suite," and two sensitive landscape drawings by Doyle Gertjensen.

Most of the works are new and the whole is one of the best group showings the Stern has put together.

The Gallery of Primitive Man, 3964 Magazine, is presenting a comparison of African and South American primitive art.

You won't have to be a specialist to appreciate this collection—the labels show you which continent you are admiring.

Good primitive works are hard to find. In our own lifetime, some tribes have completely stopped making their ancestral items.

Most of the works in this show are early with some being Pre-Columbian.

The decorated hunting and ceremonial pieces are more interesting to the novice but the designs on some of the pots are fascinating.

There is a beautiful little fiber toy from the Yagu Indians of the Amazon and a fine woven Peruvian Chimu piece, dating to 1300 A.D.

A special note to collectors—it is worth a trip to see these beautiful "hard to display" items just to observe the really fine stands and mountings created by Jamie Allen at his 3316 Magazine St. studio. They support and protect the object of art without taking away from its beauty.

Why doesn't somebody commission him to build stands for some of the local museum collections?

Galerie Simone Stern, 516 Royal, is

Tsongas Preserve Life Style

An open-air "live" museum, Tsonga Kraal in South Africa's Transvaal preserves the life style and architecture of the Tsonga people, threatened by modern progress. A fully functioning tribal village, the museum is near the Phalaborwa Gateway to Kruger National Park.

Visitors entering the Kraal through the main entrance come at once upon the homes of a chief and his eight wives. Different architectural styles, many of which have fallen into disuse, are represented.

The cattle kraal, prime source of village wealth, stands opposite the main entrance. To the right is the meeting place of the men, and behind this is the chief's personal hut. On the opposite side is the hut occupied by the chief's son. Other women's huts are arranged in a circle along with granaries and fowl runs.

Central to the village is the place of sacrifice under a marula tree with the horns of sacrificed cattle nailed to its trunk.

Each day, when the kudu horn sounds, the villagers gather to blend the music of the finger piao and drums with folk songs and dances for the delectation of visitors.

Mississippi Plain

Rich farmland covers the Mississippi alluvial plain which was once useless swampland.

The World of Art 'Saloon' Gallery Gave Artists Public Exposure in Lean Years

By ALBERTA COLLIER

On Sept. 5, 1954, a terse note in the Times-Picayune said, "An exhibition of paintings by Peter Lobello, a young New Orleans artist, is on display at the gallery at 901 Bourbon and will be up until Sept. 15."

The "gallery" at 901 Bourbon was a saloon rather than a salon, run by Tom Caplinger, a former world traveler, antique dealer and intimate of celebrities who had found a spiritual home in New Orleans.

Tom, in an era almost devoid of art outlets, made the walls of his bistro available to any starving or other artist who had at least 14 works to hang—he obtained Times-Picayune coverage for his shows by staging one so outstanding the newspaper couldn't afford to ignore it.

Lobello's first new New Orleans exhibit, which may or may not have been reviewed, must have been presented after Tom's spectacular.

The paper's next mention of Lobello was printed in the issue of Aug. 20, 1961; it was essentially a feature story quoting the then 26-year-old artist on his feelings about art directions and his own credo.

(He stated that he felt that the prevailing abstract style would endure through the sixties but believed it would be succeeded by a "tremendous renaissance" in objective painting.)

His own career was coming on. He had, by this time had two paintings accepted for that year's Delgado Museum annual and had a solo show slated for Lucille and Marc Antony's 331 Gallery.

That one-man show was presented in January of 1962; the review, written by this critic, described Lobello as "a young artist of considerable strength."

A May of 1962 item reported on his first New York solo exhibit.

Lobello continued showing in New Orleans until 1967 when he decided to continue his art studies in Rome, Florence and other Old World areas.

This artist, whose only formal art training was received at the Tulane University School of Architecture, has done fairly well for himself ever since.

His home base and studio (which he owns) occupies two floors of a large complex in New York's Soho District and



PETER LOBELLO, a New Orleans-born artist who has "made it big" in both New York and Europe, posed with one of his smaller sculptures during a recent visit

to this city; the piece, a perfect square when closed, opens up into an equally perfect triangle.

he now works almost exclusively by commission.

He has changed his medium from painting to sculpture and, though his prediction about the renaissance of the image has been realized, has, for his own conceptions, moved in the direction of geometric purity.

His large and small burnished metal works might be called the sculptural equivalents of Joseph Albers' "Variations on the Square."

Lobello now has clients both in this country and abroad—they keep him so busy he rarely has enough pieces available for gallery show.

He is, however, represented in the Aldrich Museum of Contemporary Art, the Phoenix Art Museum and the University of Minnesota and his work is among the art holdings of several large corporations.

He is also represented in a number of private collections including those of Italian royalty Victor Emanuel and Marina de Savoie, who now live in Geneva, and of Sadruddin Aga Khan, who also lives in that Swiss metropolis.

If he were still alive, Caplinger would be tickled pink at having one of his ducklings turn out to be such a swan!

Paintings and prints by noted American wildlife artist Guy Coheleach will go on display this Monday in the Clearview Shopping Center Office of the First National Bank of Jefferson Parish and continue on view at regular banking hours through July 9.

The artist is coming to New Orleans during the run of his show and will be on hand to greet his admirers July 8.

His show will consist of 28 paintings of American eagles, turkeys and a few of his creatures and will also have a few wild paintings of more exotic wildlife.

Coheleach, who had his training at the Cooper Union, will give a talk for the New Orleans Audubon Society on the evening of July 7; he will be honored guest at a gala planned for friends of the bank the night of July 8.

The New Orleans Porcelain Art Guild is sponsoring noted Spanish artist-craftsman Miguel Jimenez as conductor of a three-day seminar planned for this Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday at the Kay Godshalk Studio, 5600 Camp.

Hours will be 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. with 30 minutes out for lunch all three days. The Monday sessions are primarily for out-of-town teachers and students and the Tuesday and Wednesday sessions are for the guild membership.

The Jimenez seminars will serve as a prelude to an International China Paint-



MIGUEL JIMENEZ, a porcelain expert from Madrid, Spain, will be the conductor for a porcelain seminar beginning this Monday.

ers and Teachers Convention set for July 7 to 10 at the Fairmont Hotel.

Treaty visitors to Washington, D.C. have a July in store in a rare-Leonardo da Vinci drawing show will go on view this Friday in the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of History and Technology.

The exhibit, which will contain 25 drawings, comes from the personal collection of Her Majesty, Elizabeth II of Britain, will be on display for a month. This is the first time the drawings have ever come to America.



"WILD TURKEYS" by noted American wildlife artist Guy Coheleach is one of a number of Coheleach paintings included

in an exhibition opening this Monday in the Clearview Shopping Center. The show will continue through July 9.

Remoulade Of Pithy Palaver And Hot Flashes

By HOWARD JACOBS

BIRD-WATCHER Gordon Meyer reports a bizarre spectacle that greets his optics daily in the 300 block of S. Lopez, like side. It's the strange spectacle of a bird—possibly a mockingbird—which sits for hours atop a telephone pole in the middle of the block, periodically rising several feet into the air, doing a flip and coming to rest back on the pole. "Boggonest thing you ever did see," enthused Meyer. . . . Aside to Miriam Neeb: Shed a tear for the dear departed, but don't cancel your subscription.

AMAZING FACTS Department: Little Hibou recently came across a leetle own bit of etymology. The word HILOT comes from a Greek word meaning "a person not holding public office."

Hibou says that definition must have been concocted by a politician.

HE DIDN'T SCORE the winning touchdown, or grandly endow the academy, but in his own unique way George R. (Cellom) Davis has achieved a comparable niche in the annals of the San Marcos Baptist Academy. The lad, son of the late Item reporter Mario Fellom and Mrs. Fellom, the late Donna Lou Davis, of New Orleans, was cited by the faculty of the Texas institution for his willingness—and even eagerness—to serve in the school's multiple extracurricular activities. After graduation he returned here, where he lives with his grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Jeff Davis, and is enrolled at the University of New Orleans.

SOMEBODY sent your scribe a letter addressed simply to H. J. T. P. N. O. and you know what? The Postal Service returned it to the sender marked INSUFFICIENT ADDRESS. As the drill

sergeant once said of an expedited court martial verdict: They didn't waste no time, and they should of."

THE SPOONERISM buildup to end all Spoonerism buildups is forwarded by Alden C. Sonnier of Crowley in an excerpt from the San Juan Star. In it staffer Ernie Ceijas tells in several hundred well-chosen words about what befell a renegade Indian named Frantic Scout Cree, and how he became the scar-mangled tanner. And to all you Spoonerism fanciers, if you want a copy of the whole schmeer send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to Remoulade.

IT WAS a fitting memorial to the late Ray McNamara that a story of his sparkling musical career should have appeared in the Aug. 12, 1973, edition of Dixie Roto Magazine some two years before his recent death. The clipping, which traces the musical life of McNamara from early boyhood, was forwarded by Harry L. Ginsburg. It stressed the inseparable link between McNamara and the Saenger's Mighty Morton Organ, at whose keyboard he presided for many years.

A TAKE ISSUE WISSUE to a Take Issue Wissue emerges from scholarly Rousseau Van Voorhies, who responds to an asserted error in his French translation to wit: "A hearty welcome to Bayou Barrister Paul C. Tate of romantic Mamou in his interpretation of the motto of our laughing philosopher, Francois Rabelais: 'Car le rire c'est le propre de l'homme,' (for laughter is the right of man, our interpretation, which is also the definition of 'propre' in The New Cassell's French Dictionary, page 598).