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FREE

DECEMBER 2019

THIS MONTH IT'S EIGHT PAGES. MY CHRISTMAS GIFT TO ST MARTIN PARISH

MERRY CHRISTMAS EVERYONE

The Basin Gazette ®

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Page 3 and more will be on Facebook and the Web!

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Ronnie Eades

R & B Baritone Saxophone
Muscle Shoals Horns, Studios.
Born: May 9, 1942
Tarrant City, AL
Lived: Muscle Shoals, AL.,
Then in Floyds Knobs, IN.
Currently in Arnaudville, La.

Member of the Muscle Shoals Horns. While primarily a studio musician, he toured extensively with Elton John in the mid-70s, playing on the famed "Philadelphia Freedom" recording, which also featured John Lennon. His saxophone can be heard on the recordings of Joe Cocker, Lynyrd Skynyrd, Delbert McClinton and many others. Later in the 70s, the Muscle Shoals Horns released three albums of their own compositions which capitalized on the disco dance craze and toured, opening for groups such as Parliament-Funkadelic.

Ronnie Eades joined the group in 1987 bringing a distinctive, soulful saxophone style which has been recorded and heard around the world. Co-founder of the Muscle Shoals Horn Section from 1967-88, Ronnie recorded and performed with over 400 artists by 1981. These included such legendary talents as Elvis Presley, Aretha Franklin, Percy Sledge, Wilson Pickett, The Oak Ridge Boys, Candy Staton, The Osmond's, Bob Dillion, Elton John, Paul McCartney, Rod Stewart, Barbara Mandrell, Bob Dylan, Dolly Parton and too many more to name. There was a time when Muscle Shoals Horns were being heard on five hit records at the same time.

Source: Alabama Music Hall of Fame

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

ALL ON PAGE 4

You'll need to go on Facebook or the Web

VETERANS!!!!

Veterans, I know most of you, like me, are proud of your service. And, like me, a lot of you were shamed when you got back. Nowadays it's very different. I get people walking up to me and saying "Thank you for your service". I would have been stunned if someone told me that back then!

I know most of you have stories you would like to tell. Well now you can do it. No matter what branch of service you were in if you send me a letter or call me at (337)228-2400 I'll publish your story. People would love to read your story.

By Perry J. Serrette

I put some of my original songs on reverbnation.com. Click on my Facebook link @ Perry Serrette and you can hear them.

BAYOU BELLE TRUCK STOP

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Car Show–2nd Sat. of every month. Next Show-Dec. 14th

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THIS IS A CONTINUATION OF (LORDS OF THE BASIN) BY KENNETH DELCAMBRE.

In 1907, the east (Baton Rouge) and the west (Lafayette) and the tremendous amount of work became a realization with the construction of the steel girder bridge. Photographs indicate that the construction was still in effect in December, 1907.

Apparently, the completion of the bridge took place in 1908. The railroad built small houses to accommodate the workers employed in the construction of the bridge. One such house can be seen in the photographs.

Soon thereafter, a bridge tender by the name of George Westfall with his wife, Elvina Aucoin Westfall, moved from the area and the houses built by the railroad were taken over by either trappers, fishermen or squatters. The Village of Atchafalaya had its beginning. More history of the railroad will be carried into the forthcoming chapters.

In 1910, Thomas L. Martin, a commercial wildlife entrepreneur, also chose to live near the bridge area. After constructing his home, he then became actively fluent with the remote citizens of the basin, gaining popularity instantly. Later he formed the Martin Fish Company, buying and selling the fish caught in the basin.

Thomas L. Bernard, on the other hand, ventured to the area from Thibodaux, Louisiana in 1914. Bernard had set up a similar business a few miles from the bridge known as Pelba. Tom Bernard was to have the longest association with Atchafalaya.

To be continued!

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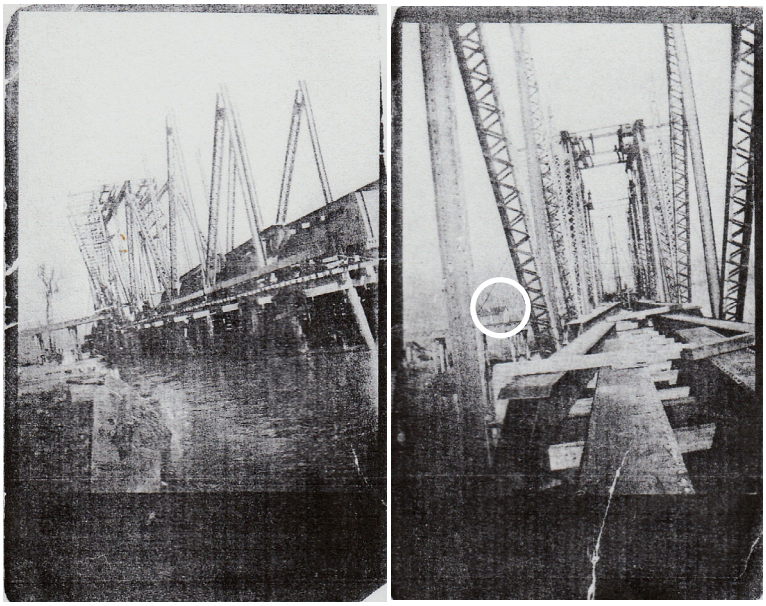
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The two pictures above are of the Atchafalaya Bridge being built in 1907. The circle in the picture on the right is the house for the workers.

The Squirrel Cook-Off At Red's in Catahoula







Peter Paul & Tanya Bienvenu (1st)
JJ (Red) Melancon (2nd)
Chuck Latiolas & Gage Bourque (3rd)
Mike Huval & Carroll Laviolette (best exotic)
Shannon & Blake Kidder (side dish)
LA Marine (people's choice)

Crew de Le Pos Bon Beer Drinking Champs

Also, Sunday December 15th we will be celebrating 67 years of business. Free food, drink specials, DJ etc.



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How about a SHOUT OUT to T. Marie for helping me with the Gazette.

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

1st RYAN THERIOT
3rd CRAIG DUHON
4th DANIELLE LATIOLAIS
MYA BREAUX
5th KELLY MELANCON
6th MELINDA LATIOLAIS
7th PEARL HARBOR
ASHLEY FONTENOT
9th JOHN (BOOBY) ARNAUD
FAUNA MECHE
CATHY BOREL
11th ELLEN BROWN
TIFFANY REBERT
MAKYNLEE MADISON
12th DEANNA CONQUES
PAULA QUEBEDEAUX
LORRIE TAUZIN
GLYNN MELANCON
LATOYA NOEL
13th CASEY LATIOLAIS
14th ELISE DEVILLIER
15th ALAN SANDERS Jr.
ANGELA BRITTEN
16th JED ROBIN
17th ALBERT "BUZ" LeBLANC
TOBY LeGRAND
MARY MARGARET CHAMPAGNE
19th NICK BREAUX (23)
21st HOLLY BREAUX
23rd MICHELLE BROWN
24th BILL LeGRAND
DELTA ROGERS
25th JESUS
COURTNEY (CoCo) LeBLANC
DENNISON ALLEMOND Jr.
26th MONIQUE LeBLANC
27th SETH LANDRY
BRIANNA GUIDRY
28th CARROL ROBIN
PRESTON SNELLING
29th MICHELLE JOHNSON
30th BRAD "B.J." ROBERT
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PAT'S ATCHAFALAYA CLUB

HENDERSON, LA.—DECEMBER SCHEDULE
Sun. Dec. 1st———5:30-'til ** Foret Tradition
Fri. Dec. 6th———8:30-'til ** Cajun Christmas with STEVE RILEY & MAMOU PLAYBOYS
Sat. Dec. 7th———8:30-'til ** NIK-L-BEER
Sun. Dec. 8th———5:30-'til ** Junior LaCrosse
Sat. Dec. 14th———8:30-'til ** Don Rich
Sun. Dec. 15th—5:30-'til ** Warren Storm & Willie T
Sat. Dec. 21st———8:30-'til ** Bernie Alan
Sun. Dec. 22nd———5:30-'til ** Foret Tradition
ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PARTY
Sat. Dec. 28th———8:30-'til ** LA Red
Sun. Dec. 29th———5:30-'til ** Foret Tradition
Tue. Dec. 31st NEW YEARS EVE-8:30-'til ** LA Red



The Potato Shed Road Bridge. They've put the side rails and a concrete slab to meet up with the road. It looks like all they have to do is bring the black top to meet the bridge. It won't be long Y'all.



Ask Boudreaux

Dear Boudreaux, the town I live in is kinda' small. There aren't many women. My girl friend isn't the prettiest thing on earth but she can cook real good. I don't know if I should find another one or just keep her. What do you think I should do?

Boudreaux

Does she have a boat? Can she clean fish? Does she like to go hunting? That's some things you need to consider.

If anyone has any questions for Boudreaux ….. call us at (337) 228-2400, message me on Facebook, or leave a comment on our web sight. We'll pass them along to Boudreaux.

CROSSING ⇩ THE EQUATOR



I can't seem to get veterans to tell me their stories, so I'll start with one of mine. A little on the light side. The picture above is a certificate that doesn't come easy. Any NAVY SHELLBACK knows that. It's a certificate they give you after you cross the equator the first time. The US NAVY takes that very serious. Before that you're considered a POLLYWOG. After that you're considered a SHELLBACK. I was on the USS MACDONOUGH for the crossing.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5

PLACES TO GET THE BASIN GAZETTE

In Color

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PAT'S RESTAURANT
MISS MAMIE'S
ATCHAFALAYA GOLD
HEBERT'S GROCERY
BOYER'S PHARMACY
MYERS QUICK STOP
HEND. CITY HALL
ROCKY'S
CRAWFISH TOWN USA
TURTLE'S BAR-ON THE LEVEE

IN CATAHOULA
RED'S LEVEE BAR
BLUE'S GROCERY
LANDRY'S GROCERY

IN BREAUX BRIDGE
B. B. CITY HALL
HOPPER'S ICE HOUSE
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
GRAND POINT TAVERN
BAYOU CABINS
YOKA RESTAURANT
BUCK AND JOHNNY'S

IN CECILIA
T-COCHON'S

IN BUTTE LA ROSE
DOUCET'S GROCERY
QUIN'S **IN GRAND ANSE**

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The USS Vermilion.

The top photo is a Higgins Landing Craft. It was carried on the main deck of the USS Vermilion. You can see the matching number on the back. It was boat #4.

The second picture is the USS Vermilion in all her glory. You can see all the Higgins boats on the main deck.

The bottom picture is The USS Vermillion sinking in the Atlantic. She was my home for two years. It was sad to watch that. I was on the decommissioning crew. The last day I saw that ship was July 1st, 1971. She was put to rest on March 4th, 1988. She's part of a reef now.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4. (CROSSING THE EQUATOR)

A brief rundown of what they put you through. First you take your clothes off, turn them inside out, then put them back on. Then you're told to crawl on your hands and knees all the way around the ship. You're told to look at the deck, don't look up and don't make a sound. Just follow the guy in front of you.

All this time SHELLBACKS are lined up around the ship. Most with a SHALALA (A 3 foot piece of fire hose taped on one end to make a handle). Some with a fire hose plugged in. The whole time they beat your back side (or back). It's worse if you make a sound or look up. Some guys have buckets of garbage collected all week they dump on you.

Then the fun begins! Then they bring you to the BABY. (The guy with the biggest belly dressed in a diaper and a baby cap.) He rubs lard on his belly and makes you kiss it. All the while rubbing your face in it.

Then they guide you to the coffin and they push your face in it. (Half a torpedo tube filled with garbage and water). Then comes the tunnel, a bunch of sacks sewn together about 12 feet long, filled with garbage. You have to crawl through it. Everyone holds their breath while crawling. When you get through the end, you open your mouth to take a deep breath and that's when they shove a raw oyster in your mouth. Oh…..they hold your jaw closed so you can't spit it out. The joke was on them. I like raw oysters. Of course I swallowed it and smiled!

The rest of the day the SHELLBACKS can do anything to a POLLYWOG as long as they don't leave a scar (physical)! They even have guys sweeping cobwebs from the air all around the ship. And that was the easy part.

I won't go through the rest of the day. One good point is the day before you cross, a POLLYWOG can do anything to a SHELLBACK and get away with it. You have to remember retaliation comes the next day.

The day before I, along with a few guys, were trying to think of something we could do to them. I saw a guy hosing down the deck in front of the bridge (Pilot house). I asked him to let me have the hose. I took the hose and pointed it to a corner and said "the next guy that comes around the corner gets a wash-down. You'll never guess who came around the corner.

It was the Captain (NO JOKE)! I was looking at the deck and wanted to knock "him" off his feet. I didn't see his face until his hat flew off. His hat went overboard, I shut the hose off and dropped it. I went help him up apologizing the whole time. He just smiled at me and said

"TOMORROW"!

AND TOMORROW DID COME! :)

I know you veterans have plenty of stories you could tell. You don't have to give names or places. I'll keep it confidential. This was only two days in a four year hitch. There's plenty more where that came from.

Story by Perry Serrette



I would like to thank all the people that helped me through the years. Especially Dr. Benson (retired) and Dr. Wilt and the staff of the Radiation Dept. at Oncologics in Laf. Carrie, you and B.J. are special too. Merry Christmas Everyone!

U.S.S. VERMILION (AKA/LKA-107)

VINCIT ROBOR
STRENGTH TO CONQUER

CAN DO-WILL DO

USS VERMILION (AKA-107) - a Tolland-class attack cargo ship In Commission 1945 to 1971

USS Vermilion (AKA-107/LKA-107), was a Tolland-class attack cargo ship of the United States Navy, named after a parish in southern Louisiana and a county in eastern Illinois. She served as a commissioned ship for 25 years and 9 months.

Tolland was laid down as a Type C2-S-AJ3 ship under a Maritime Commission contract (MC hull 1700) on 17 October 1944 by the North Carolina Shipbuilding Company in Wilmington, North Carolina and launched on 12 December 1944, sponsored by Mrs. Rex Freeman. She was delivered to the Navy on 23 December 1944 to be completed as a Navy attack cargo ship at the Todd Shipyard in Brooklyn, New York. She was commissioned at Brooklyn on 23 June 1945 with the hull code AKA-107, Captain F. B. Eggers commanding.

AKA-107 GENERAL SPECIFICATIONS

Class: Tolland-class attack cargo ship
Named for: Vermilion County in eastern Illinois and Parish in southern Louisiana
Complement: 425 Officers and Enlisted
Displacement: 13910 tons
Length: 489 feet 2 inches
Beam: 63 feet
Flank Speed: 16 Knots

AKA-107 DEPLOYMENTS - MAJOR EVENTS

Month	Year	to	Month	Year	Deployment / Event
OCT	1944	-			Keel Date: 17 OCT 1944 at North Carolina Shipbuilding Company Wilmington NC
DEC	1944	-			Launch Date: 12 DEC 1944
JUN	1945	-			Commissioned: 23 JUN 1945
OCT	1946	-			Shellback Initiation - 7 OCT 1946 - Pacific Ocean
JUN	1952	-	SEP	1952	Blue Nose - Arctic Circle
MAY	1955	-	AUG	1955	Artic Circle making a DEW line base at Hall Beach
JUN	1955	-	NOV	1955	blue nose
JUN	1955	-	NOV	1955	Antarctic circle
AUG	1955	-	NOV	1955	Antarctic Circle
JUN	1958	-	DEC	1958	Mediterranean-Lebanon
JUL	1958	-	SEP	1958	Occupation of Lebanon
FEB	1960	-	NOV	1960	Mediterranean
JUN	1960	-	DEC	1960	Mediterranean
OCT	1962	-	OCT	1962	Cuban Missile Blockade
APR	1963	-	OCT	1963	Mediterranean
JAN	1965	-	JAN	1965	Caribbean
MAR	1965	-	JUN	1965	Mediterranean
MAR	1965	-	JUL	1965	Caribbean
MAY	1965	-	JUN	1965	Caribbean
NOV	1965	-	JAN	1966	Caribbean
JAN	1968	-	MAR	1968	West Pac
JAN	1970	-	MAY	1970	Caribbean
APR	1971	-			Decommissioned: 13 APR 1971

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U S S V E R M I L I O N (A K A - 1 0 7)

Vermilion (AKA-107) was laid down under a Maritime Commission contract (MC hull 1700) on 17 October 1944 at Wilmington, N.C. by the North Carolina Shipbuilding & Drydock Co. launched on 12 December 1944; sponsored by Mrs. Rex Freeman; delivered to the Navy incomplete on 23 December 1944 moved to the Todd Shipyard at Brooklyn New York completed as a Navy attack cargo ship and placed in commission at Brooklyn on 23 June 1945 Capt. F. B. Eggers in command.

Assigned to the Atlantic Fleet and based at Norfolk Va. *Vermilion* spent more than a year after commissioning engaged in shakedown and refresher training. That routine occupied her time until late in 1946. In November of that year she made a cruise to South American waters and resumed duty out of Norfolk upon her return. Normal fleet operations including midshipman summer training cruises amphibious exercises type training and reserve training cruises -- took up *Vermilion's* time for almost three years. On 26 August 1949 she was decommissioned and berthed with the Reserve Fleet Group located at Orange Tex. The outbreak of the Korean War in the summer of 1950 interrupted her inactivity. She was recommissioned at Orange on 16 October 1950 Capt. A. Jackson in command.

Though the Korean War occasioned *Vermilion's* return to active duty she never saw service in that conflict. Instead she replaced more combat-ready ships in the Atlantic Fleet and released them for duty in the Far East. After shakedown training the attack cargo ship began normal operations with the Atlantic Fleet. That employment continued until the summer of 1951 when she participated in Operation "Bluejay " the first large -scale seaborne lift of supplies to the new air base under construction at Thule Greenland. She returned from that mission to Norfolk on 29 August 1951 and resumed operations with the Atlantic Fleet. During the summer of 1952 the ship returned to Thule on another supply mission. She completed that operation on 25 August when she returned to Norfolk and to duty with the Atlantic Fleet. The end of the year and the beginning of 1953 saw her operating in the West Indies out of the base at Guantanamo Bay Cuba. She returned to Norfolk on 2 February and once again started normal duty out of that port.

For the next five years *Vermilion* participated in Atlantic Fleet amphibious exercises at Onslow Beach N.C. and in the Caribbean. She also conducted independent ship's exercises and made cruises the length of the Atlantic seaboard. In June of 1958 the attack cargo ship left the east coast of the United States for a six-month deployment to the Mediterranean Sea. She returned home in December and resumed her normal schedule of operations.

Her routine of amphibious exercises independent ship's exercises and the like continued until the fall of 1962 when she was deployed to the West Indies to support the American quarantine of Cuba during the Cuban missile crisis. Following that mission the ship returned once again to her familiar routine of operations out of Norfolk. In May 1963 she once more departed the east coast for a deployment with the 6th Fleet in the Mediterranean .

Vermilion returned to Norfolk on 17 October and began another four-year stint of operations along the Atlantic seaboard and in the Caribbean. In January 1968 she departed Morehead City N.C. with Marine Air Control Squadron 6 bound -- via the Panama Canal and Pearl Harbor -- for the Ryukyus. She arrived in Buckner Bay. Okinawa on' 22 February and departed those islands on the 25th with the Marine Air Squadron 8 embarked. She disembarked the air squadron at Morehead City on 30 March and returned to Norfolk on the 31st. Following a six-month overhaul at the Norfolk Naval Shipyard during which she was redesignated LKA-107 on 14 August *Vermilion* resumed Atlantic Fleet operations in November. She continued to operate out of Norfolk for over two years On 13 April 1971 the ship was decommissioned at Norfolk. She was transferred to the Maritime Administration on 27 July 1971 for layup in the National Defense Reserve Fleet at James River Va. Her name was struck from the Navy list on 1 January 1977.

Year	Rank/Rate	Last Name	First Name	Hometown	Home State	Remembered by
1968	SK	Carlson	Jeff	Green Bay	WI	Email
1969	BM	Fisher	Kenneth	Huntsville	AL	Email
1969	BM	Wallace	Dick (Richard)	Hagerstown	MD	Email
1969	HT	Williams	Wesley	Medina	OH	Email
1969	MR	Hetrick	Gary	Akron	OH	Email
1969	RD	Serrette	Perry	Henderson	LA	Email
1969	RM	Glarner	Terry	Coral Springs	FL	Email
1969	SN	Bishop	Dell	Shawmut	AL	Email
1969	YN	Guardino	Louis	Queens	NY	Email
1969	YN	Van Dyke	Ronald	Pueblo	CO	Email
1970	DC	Harrell	John	New Bern	NC	Email

She was my home for two years. We were up and down the east coast from New York to Miami. We spent most of the time in the Caribbean and made thirteen (13) cruses there. I've been to San Juan Puerto Rico twenty six (26) times. The first and last stop. We even went to GITMO; one incident there. Most people don't know that there are two Virgin Islands, the British and American. There are a lot of other islands . Bermuda was beautiful. We did make a show of force at GRANADA, off the north coast of South America. We were halfway across the Atlantic, going to the Mediterranean when they decided to decommission the ship. I volunteered to be on the decommission crew. I spent four months doing that. Last time I saw her was July 1st, 1971. SAD DAY! Even MORE when She went DOWN!