



Schooner Visit Preserves Amistad Legacy

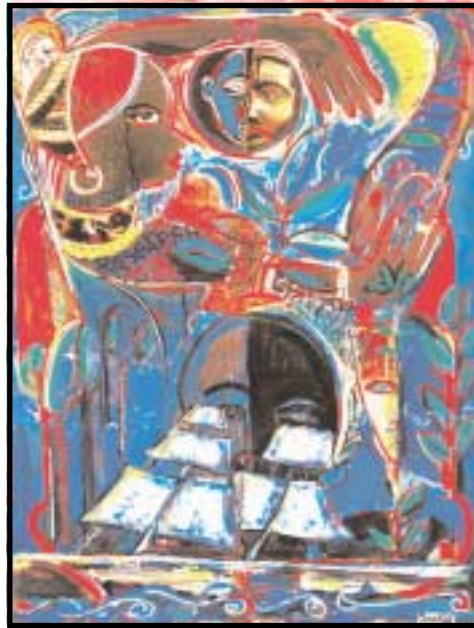
On November 22, 2002, the Freedom Schooner *Amistad* docked at Woldenberg Park in New Orleans to bring a message of historical valor, a sense of commitment to human dignity, a cry for reconciliation and peace among the races of the world. The message of this schooner, a direct replica of the cargo schooner, *La Amistad*, was in direct contrast to its predecessor and vessels like it. They had docked in New Orleans and other major ports along the eastern seaboard during the 18th and 19th centuries, yet they had brought a human cargo of slaves and the stench of death and sickness from the arduous journey through the Middle Passage.

During this visit of the Freedom Schooner *Amistad*, the story of the Amistad Incident was told many times by the ship's captain, Mary Flynn, and her crew. The highlights of the Incident were that 53 Africans, who had been kidnapped and enslaved in Africa in 1839, had revolted and ordered their former captors to sail toward Africa. Their instructions were not followed and they were subsequently captured and put on trial for the murder of the captain of the ship. When they were placed on trial in New Haven, Connecticut, a group of professionals and businessmen like Arthur and Lewis Tappan, organized the Amistad Committee to arrange for their defense. This defense, composed of some of the outstanding legal minds of that day, was able to secure the freedom of the Africans. Following their release in 1841, the Amistad Committee sought to have them returned to their homeland without the threat of being forced back into slavery. The Committee was determined to establish an anti-slavery mission for the resettle-

ment of the Amistad Freedmen and were finally successful in establishing a mission in the Port of Bonthe, Sierra Leone.

The Amistad legacy is thus more than a story of 53 men and children who were willing to fight for their freedom. It is more than a court case that released them from bondage or the struggle to return them to their homeland. Following the establish-

ment of the mission in Sierra Leone, the Amistad Committee joined with other like-minded Christian organizations to form the American Missionary Association (AMA), an organization dedicated to the elimination of the "sins of caste, polygamy and slavery." Its message was spread through its established missions and the AMA schools established at home and abroad. Its influence was felt everywhere and many of its



Amistad Revisited, David Driskell 2002

graduates and friends carry the message of the need to preserve the human dignity of all people and to consistently fight the scourge of poverty, ignorance and disease.

One person who understands clearly the importance of the Amistad legacy is John Kamara, a crew member on the Freedom Schooner *Amistad*. Kamara is a life-long resident of Freetown, Sierra Leone. He believes that some of his ancestors were among the 53 captives. He enlisted to be a crewmember on the Freedom Schooner to tell the story of the horrors of the journey to American children. John Kamara is one of the links that binds the players of the Incident to the present day and keeps the story fresh in the memories of all. For the story of the Amistad Incident is not only a story of the cruelties of slavery, but also a part of the history of this nation and of the continent of Africa as well.





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FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S DESK

The staff and friends of the Amistad Research Center are pleased by the success of the visit of the Freedom Schooner *Amistad* that took place in New Orleans' harbor from November through December, 2002. The goal of this visit was to bring the story of the Amistad Incident to this region and inspire the citizens to search deeper into the written documents that portray a vital segment of American history. It is imperative that our young people learn the true facts of the American past and become active in developing its future. Thus, "Where Heritage Meets Vision" is our motto at the Amistad Research Center. Our success in this project has been outstanding, and we have portrayed the sequence of these events in words and pictures in this issue of the newsletter.

We of course would not have been successful in this endeavor without the contributions of many different people. Our corporate sponsors, the ARC staff and volunteers were essential in supporting, developing and planning the visit. Captain Bill Pinkney, Master of Freedom Schooner *Amistad*, Captain Mary Flynn and their excellent crew brought the Schooner safely into harbor. The Schooner's crew was invaluable in describing the workings of the vessel and sharing the horrors experienced by the Africans who were illegally enslaved, brought here, and eventually emancipated through the efforts of the Amistad Defense



"It is imperative that our young people learn the true facts of the American past and become active in developing its future."

Committee and others.

The Freedom Schooner *Amistad* has now departed to spread the message of the human courage that took place more than 160 years ago. We here at the Amistad Research Center have the task of preserving the materials associated with the Amistad Incident and other events of races of people who make up this Republic. As we depended heavily on the help of others to be successful in the visit of the Freedom Schooner *Amistad*, we will continue to look to our friends as we work on the task before us.

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**AMISTAD RESEARCH CENTER
NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT**

FREEDOM SCHOONER AMISTAD VISIT

Captain's Dinner

The Freedom Schooner *Amistad*, a replica of the original cargo schooner *La Amistad*, sailed into the Port of New Orleans and docked at Woldenberg Riverfront Park from November 22 through December 8, 2002 under the leadership of Captain Mary Flynn and her crew of thirteen. During this period, the community was provided an opportunity to tour the Schooner and learn the history of the Amistad Incident that began in 1839.

The event was a major undertaking and with the help of volunteers, sponsors and Amistad Staff members, the event was a success. A host committee was organized to create and support the event both financially and operationally. The sponsors for this event included 27 community,



(From l to r) Captain Bill Pinkney, Congressman William Jefferson and Captain Mary Flynn



(From l to r) Warren Wilson, Pamela Bordelon, Captain Mary Flynn, Captain Bill Pinkney, and Brenda & Allen Square



(From l to r) Mr. & Mrs. William Oliver, Congressman William Jefferson, Dr. Andrea G. Jefferson, Congressman C. Teamer, Sr., Captain Mary Flynn, Captain Bill Pinkney and Mr. & Mrs. David Schulingkamp



(From l to r) Mrs. Dale Bonds, Captain Mary Flynn, Captain Bill Pinkney & Dr. Regenia Perry



(From l to r) Beverly McKenna, Sandra McCollum Robert and Avis Clayton

FREEDOM SCHOONER AMISTAD VISIT

Legacy Celebration 2002



John Kamara at the helm of the Schooner

business, philanthropic, academic, political, and religious organizations.

The events for the Freedom Schooner *Amistad* visit consisted of cultural, religious, educational and political activities that impacted approximately 10,825 adults and youth of all ages, ethnicities, and socio-economic levels from 9 different states. This number included 3,540 students from 45 school groups representing over 8 Louisiana parishes, and 4 states in the southeastern United States that toured this historical site.

In addition to the tours of the Freedom Schooner, a variety of events were held before and after the arrival of the Schooner to prepare and educate the community on the history of the Amistad Incident. Five organizational recep-



Schooner docked at Woldenberg Park, Port of New Orleans

tions and ceremonies were held shipside. A Captain's Reception at Hubbard Mansion kicked off the event, followed by an inspirational Ecumenical Service of Remembrance and Welcoming Ceremony held on November 23. Four Historic Lecture Series

presentations were held at Tulane, Xavier, Dillard and Loyola Universities, along with two Teacher Workshops impacting 27 different schools. Tours were also held at the Amistad Research Center, which displayed exhibits specific to the Amistad Incident. These events helped many to rethink the history of this period in the United States. They also placed the Amistad Incident in an international context, particularly regarding slavery in the Americas.

CHICAGO FRIENDS UPDATE

Our Affiliate Chapter, the Chicago Friends of the Amistad Research Center, will hold their Annual Luncheon, **Thursday, August 14, 2003** at 12:00 noon in conjunction with the **2003 Freedom Awards** honoring Chicago's own Captain Bill Pinkney who will receive the distinguished *Irma Kingsley Johnson Service Award*. The Freedom Schooner will dock in Chicago at Navy Pier from July 26 - August 13, 2003. For more information call toll free (866) AMISTAD.





(From l to r) President & CEO of Amistad America - Christopher Cloud, Dr. Andrea G. Jefferson and Dr. Charles Teamer



(From l to r) - Eric Burt (Bamboula 2000), John Kamara, Hannibal Lokumbe and Luther Gray (Baboula 2000)



Shackles, Amistad America Exhibit



Silhouette, Amistad America Exhibit



Some of our volunteers: Westbank Rangers Club and Moderator Irene Ceesay



Crewmember of Schooner providing tour

AMISTAD ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Gala

On November 2, 2002, the Amistad Research Center held its annual gala at the Le Meridien Hotel in New Orleans. Throughout the years, the legacy of the Center has been built on the development of collections that document the contributions of African Americans and other ethnic groups. The recipients of achievement awards at this annual gala reflect the mission and goals of the Center that have existed since its founding.

There were three dynamic honorees including Dr. Clifton H. Johnson, Cynthia Tucker and August Wilson.

DR. CLIFTON H. JOHNSON represents the very essence of the Amistad Research Center. He served as its founder and former director for many years. A scholar in his own right, Johnson has used his influence to help people understand the importance of collecting and preserving documents, and making those documents available to researchers throughout the world. During his tenure as director, the Amistad Research Center has become one of the largest repositories to have as its focus the contributions of African Americans and other ethnic groups.



Clifton Johnson, one of the event honorees.



Event honoree Cynthia Tucker (shown far left) shares a joyful moment with family and Reverend Wilmer Brown.

CYNTHIA TUCKER, syndicated columnist, became the first African American woman to edit the editorial page of a major daily newspaper, the *Atlanta Constitution*. In 1988, Tucker was one of 12 United States journalists to receive a Harvard University Nieman Fellowship. In 1993, Tucker was named as the nation's top columnist by the National Women's Political Caucus, which recognizes outstanding coverage of women and politics. Tucker also received their Exceptional Merit Media Award in New York City. Writing in the spirit of Ida Baker Wells, Tucker has been fervent in her search for the truth. She holds all people to the same standard, no matter what their race, sex or position.

AUGUST WILSON, Pulitzer Prize playwright, has been noted for a number of plays such as "Ma Rainey's Black Bottom", "Fences" and "The Piano Lesson". Wilson's work has captured the attention of theatergoers throughout the world. Using Blues lyrics and images, Wilson has painted the picture of Black life in America as few artists have in his generation. Despite his success, Wilson told the New York Times: "I always tell people that I'm a struggling playwright. I'm struggling to get the next play down on paper." Although the lives of many of his characters are depressing, Wilson has maintained an optimistic perspective about the situation of people of color in the United States. "Black culture is still alive, still vital. The human spirit cannot and will not be broken."

In addition to the honorees present, other special guests included Board Chairperson Dr. Andrea Green Jefferson, Executive Director Dr. Charles C. Teamer, Sr., Achievement Committee Chairwoman Brendolyn McKenna, publicist Rosalee Baker and United States Representative William "Bill" Jefferson. The event began with a silent auction and was followed by dinner and dancing. Local music makers Dr. Robert N. Perry, III and Silk and Satin provided entertainment.

In keeping with the tradition of the Annual Achievement Gala, this year's event promises to be an exciting experience you will not want to miss.



Pictured here with Congressman William Jefferson. Sakina Ansari, daughter of Playwright August Wilson accepted the award on her father's behalf.

2003 AMISTAD ACHIEVEMENT AWARD GALA Saturday, November 1st

Honorees

Julius Coles, President, Africare, Inc. | Whitney LeBlanc, Author of Blues In The Wind
Edith Jones, President/CEO, New Orleans Urban League

REQUIEM

*"But the souls of the just are in the hand of God
and no torment shall touch them"*

Lillian Velma Dunn Perry

October 23, 1914 - November 23, 2002



The Amistad Research Center and the Friends of the Amistad Research Center mourn the passing of LILLIAN VELMA DUNN PERRY who ended her earthly journey of 88 years on November 23, 2002. Mrs. Perry, the wife of the late Robert Perry, Jr., was known throughout the city of New Orleans as an accomplished musician, a devoted wife and mother, and a community activist.

Lillian Perry was a prime example of those who succeeded in their field, and served as an example for all those she met. She was educated in the Straight University system in the elementary and secondary grades, received Bachelor of Arts in Music from Dillard University, and a Master of Arts in Music from Columbia University. Mrs. Perry taught music at all levels in the New Orleans Public School System and retired from that system as a Music Consultant. In addition to her work with educational institutions, Mrs. Perry served as organist at the Central Congregational United Church of Christ for many years and as organist/choir director for other churches as well throughout the city. She was also the director and accompanist for the Robert Perry Singers of the B-Sharp Music Club, and the musician for the Louisiana Retired Teachers Association. In addition to her involvement in the world of music Lillian Perry served as either a member or officer of countless associations that had an impact on her life, including the Friends of Amistad.

Many will miss Mrs. Perry, but her legacy in education and music will be remembered for years to come. She is survived by her son, Dr. Robert N. Perry III; her daughter, Mrs. Beatrice Perry Stanley; and her sister, Mrs. Elsie Dunn Cain.



Collection UPDATES

Dr. Louis-Charles Roudanez



The Amistad Research Center has acquired the inscribed 1853 dissertation of physician, and early civil rights activist Dr. Louis Charles Roudanez (1823-90). Born in St. James Parish, Louisiana, Roudanez had a thriving medical

practice in New Orleans during the civil war and played a major role as a champion for universal suffrage. He earned a medical degree in Paris and the U.S. and published *L'Union*, the first Black daily newspaper in the south, and *Tribune de la Nouvelle Orleans*, the nations first Black daily.

EXHIBITION SCHEDULE

JUNE-JULY

Toussaint L'Ouverture:
A VISUAL NARRATIVE
OF THE LIBERATION
OF HAITI IN 1804

AUGUST-SEPTEMBER

A PHOTOGRAPHER'S PHOTOGRAPHER:
Carl Van Vechten (1860-1964)

OCTOBER-NOVEMBER

A NEW ORLEANS-MUNICH
CONNECTION:
Folk Paintings by Vivian Ellis

DECEMBER-JANUARY

SEASON'S GREETINGS
Original Designs by
Louise E. Jefferson for the
NAACP & NUL

Amistad Reports

Special Edition

AMISTAD RESEARCH CENTER

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New Orleans, LA 70118

FROM OUR GALLERY TO YOURS



The commemorative print, "Amistad Revisited" featured on the front cover of this publication was designed by the artist David Driskell for the Amistad Research Center in honor of the 2002 Gala.

It is available for purchase
by contacting the center at
(504) 862-3238.

Signed: \$100.00 • Unsigned: \$75.00

Address service requested

WE'RE ON THE WEB!

<http://www.tulane.edu/~amistad>

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Donations are tax-deductible.

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For more information, call (504) 862-3238.

Big changes are in store for Amistad in the future. Partner with those who are supporting the growth and expansion of our research center. Let your dollars help build a strong foundation for Amistad.

JOIN or RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP TODAY!