



CADDO LAKE NEWS

NEWSLETTER OF THE GREATER CADDO LAKE ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS

June, 2017

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Donna McCann, Editor

How Caddo Came to Be

By Jacques D. Bagur

The following is excerpted from the book "A History of Navigation of Cypress Bayou and the Lakes" by Jacques D. Bagur (University of North Texas Press 2001). Mr. Bagur researched the information in this book for a report on the Daingerfield Reach feasibility study conducted by the Corps of Engineers. At the conclusion of this study the Cypress Valley Navigation District contracted with Mr. Bagur to turn the report into a book and to have it published. Copies are still available online. It has a wealth of credible, well documented information in it. The book is primarily focused on navigation issues and does not always delve into the intricacies of who, what or why something was done the way it was. Still, in most cases, it is my go to reference on all things Caddo...

Robert Speight

Caddo Lake came into existence sometime around 1800 when the Great Raft caused the Red River to break through its banks and create a distributary above the area now occupied by Shreveport, Louisiana. This distributary was known as Cottonwood Bayou. Although many other distributaries were formed prior to and afterwards on either side of the river, this one is thought to have singlehandedly created 5 lakes; Caddo, Cross, Soda, Clear and Cheftel (aka Shifftail). This flow of water created a hydraulic dam, holding back the waters that came out of the Cypress Bayou watershed and allowing navigation to occur on the Cypress as far west as Jefferson Texas. At times the flow of water through Cottonwood Bayou and the other distributaries was so great it would actually induce a reverse flow in the Cypress up to Smithland, which was about 10 river miles below Jefferson near what is now Thompson's Camp.

Prior to 1800, the only true lake in this area was Monterrey Lake. It was located on a tributary of the Cypress known as Couchatta Jim's Bayou. This Bayou was named for James Shennick who operated a ferry at Mooringsport.

It is said Shennick got the nickname "Couchatta Jim" because he was the son-in-law of Larkin Edwards, (a close friend of the Indian tribes and an employee of the local Indian Agency) and he was well known to both the Caddo and Couchatta Indians of the area. The name of the bayou has since been shortened to Jim's Bayou, and over the years corrupted to Jeem's Bayou. It is also sometimes called James Bayou.

The first Steamboat to travel any distance up the Cypress was thought to be the Brian Broihme which landed at Port Caddo in 1841; the first to reach Jefferson Texas was probably the Lama in 1844.

Between 1841 and 1905 some 324 different Steamboats plied the waters of Caddo Lake and Big Cypress making 2629 confirmed trips to the area. The last steamboat out of Caddo Lake was the Anna Tardy in 1905, 32 years after the removal of the Great Raft.

(Beginnings, Continued on page 2)

Biocontrol Status Update

Daren Horton, President Caddo Biocontrol Alliance

Ted Barrow, the new interim manager of the Morley Hudson Greenhouse, has his hands full this spring. Ted has been a board member with Caddo Biocontrol Alliance (CBA) since we started in 2013. He is no longer on the board but is working with the board and volunteers to manage our weevil project. We have also relied heavily on the help of Texas Parks and Wildlife (TPWD) personnel to run the greenhouse. The hidden blessing in all this is the great relationship we have developed with the TPWD. John Findeisen, Tim Bister and Thomas Decker of TPWD have been extremely helpful and supportive of the efforts of the CBA. We are working together to develop a comprehensive Giant Salvinia Management Plan that will forever be in place on our beloved Caddo Lake.

This spring, the tanks with giant Salvinia plants and giant Salvinia weevils are being cleaned. The water has been drained and the muck that develops in the bottom of the tanks has been removed. The tanks are then filled with stored rainwater, chemically balanced and restocked with giant Salvinia and weevils. Volunteers Robert Avrett, and Ellen and Floyd Anderson helped with the tanks. Also, the shade cloth on the top of the greenhouse had blown off and has been reattached with wiggle-wire with the help of volunteers Robert Avrett, Bradley Bishop, Erik Duerkop, Marty Vaughan, Steve Sedberry, Terry Echols and Ken Shaw. These volunteers are with Cypress Basin Chapter of Texas Master Naturalists, Caddo Lake National Wildlife Refuge, and Greater Caddo Lake Association of Texas.

History has shown us that each time Mother Nature deals a blow to the giant Salvinia with hard winter freezes or floods, the vegetation is knocked back but returns even worse than before. We should expect to see this pattern repeat itself this year.

The historic flood of 2016 displaced much of the giant Salvinia over the dam in Louisiana. However, the mild winter left an abundance of giant Salvinia on the Texas side of Caddo. The rain and unseasonably cool spring temperatures have kept the plant from getting an early start, but when the hot summer arrives, the giant Salvinia will do what it does best, and the lake may very well look like it did in 2013 when boats could not drive past John-

(Biocontrol, Continued on page 2)

Angela Ledger

903.407.0329



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treehealthlady@gmail.com

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As you can see, Caddo Lake did not immediately disappear after Raft removal but continued due to a buildup of Red River sediments at the foot of Soda Lake. This allowed commercial traffic to operate on the route when there were adequate water flows from the Red. This sediment dam was slowly eroding away, threatening to drain Caddo and return it to a pre-raft condition. The distributaries were also being closed and levees built to stop the over-bank flooding and to reclaim the lands around the Red River. All these factors were combining to spell the end for Caddo Lake.

In 1872 Lt Eugene Woodruff surveyed the area in preparation of removing the Great Raft and his recommendation was to install a lock and dam at the foot of Caddo to ensure continued navigation after the Raft was removed. Over the years, numerous other studies and surveys were done all indicating the same scenario, Caddo would cease to exist and all commercial traffic along the route would be halted without the installation of a lock and dam. Finally in 1905 a dam only alternative was proposed and it was authorized by Congress in June 1910 to be built at a cost not to exceed \$100,000. This dam would not allow for continued trade between Jefferson and the Red but would maintain a constant water level to allow local commercial and recreational use. The dam would be built so that a lock could be installed in the future if so desired.

The original dam was completed in December 1914. This was a crib dam with sheet piling foundations, a design unusual for the Corps of Engineers after the turn of the century, but it met the directives from Congress that it be able to accept a future lock and that it cost no more than \$100,000.

The original Dam impounded water to a level of 168.5' MSL and was designed to let boat traffic go over it when water levels were elevated. This did happen occasionally as is reflected in the Corps annual waterway report from 1916:

Boats	Downstream	Upstream	Total
Motor boats	11	5	16
Barges	1	0	1
Houseboats	0	1	1

While the Dam kept Caddo from being drained, it did have its problems. It was well known that the original dam leaked. A major failure occurred in 1922 through seepage and undermining. The dam was shored up with riprap and fill by the Caddo Levee District and the Corps, but by the 1950s, it was obvious to most that a new dam was needed as a section of the spillway was moving downstream at the rate of 1 inch per year, and a large hole had been scoured out immediately below the spillway.

In 1962 a study was ordered to determine the feasibility of replacing the Dam. In 1965 the Corps issued its report in favor of replacing the existing Dam with a modern one that included a control structure in it for control of aquatic vegetation.

Congress authorized the building of a replacement Dam on Caddo but not the control structure option.

The current Dam was completed on June 18, 1971 with a 2400 foot concrete wall, of which 860 feet has a crest elevation of 168.5, the same elevation as the original Dam.

son's Ranch, if we don't stay ahead of it.

The good news is that we have found an abundance of weevils on the lake that have lived through the winter! A large number of weevils are present where the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) has released them in Pine Island Pond. Willowson Woodyard has a large count where CBA have released multiple times, and live weevils are present in areas where Texas A&M made releases as a part of the original weevil research project. The weevils cleared a large portion of giant Salvinia in Pine Island Pond last year, and the follow-up applications of aquatic herbicide has homeowners and fisherman enjoying that section of the lake like they have not been able to do in years. A goal of the Caddo Biocontrol Alliance is to select for, over time, a more cold-tolerant weevil that can live through our sporadically cold Texas winters. The weevils that are on the lake this spring apparently have that tolerance, and will pass it on to the generations that follow.

We have had struggles and successes with the biological control project here at Caddo. The large number of weevils present on the lake is promising as we enter what will most likely be a challenging year. We remain cautiously optimistic while remembering this is a marathon and not a sprint. We all should have realistic expectations and brace ourselves for the long fight ahead. We remain steadfast in our dedication to do all we can to protect one of the ecologically important natural lakes in the country from the most aggressive plant on earth.

A Historical Mention of Caddo Lake

(amidst some interesting political commentary)

From the *Washington Daily National Intelligencer*

23-Jan-1840

HARRISON is now our candidate for the Presidency, and, in my own opinion, it is wisely so. He has been fairly nominated for that office by a great National Convention of the Whigs, and upon their own terms.

From Passamaquoddy bay to lake Caddo HARRISON should be the Logan of the Whigs in their march against the throne of the Tarquins.

For weal or for wo we have enlisted against the rapacious despotism of VAN BUREN, and no sickly sensibility ought to shake our confidence in the choice made by our delegates, where they were all brought face to face.

In the language of Brutus, the Whigs of the Anglo-American stock should cling to HARRISON "as the foremost man of all this world."

New Members Join GCLA Board

By Donna McCann

The Board of the Greater Caddo Lake Association recently welcomed three new members - Pat Noon, Judy Patterson, and Gary Bowles, restoring a full count of 15. Extra hands come in handy when growing and distributing Salvinia weevils and grilling and serving barbeque. Most of all, we welcome their fresh ideas about how to make our organization better in order to fulfill our mission of preserving and protecting our beloved Caddo Lake.

GCLA Officers	
PRESIDENT	Doug Heard
VICE PRESIDENT	Robert Speight
SECRETARY	Stella Barrow
TREASURER	Susan Sedberry
GCLA Board Members	
Daren Horton	Terry Echols
Steve Sedberry	Doug Peteet
Jan Cook	Angela Ledger
Sam Canup	Donna McCann
Judy Patterson	Gary Bowles
Pat Noon	

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One touch of nature makes the whole world kin.

~~~~~  
William Shakespeare

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# Caddo Lake Institute Has New Executive Director

By Rick Lowerre, Executive Director, CLI



On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Caddo Lake Institute, I am pleased to announce that the Board has hired a new Executive Director to lead CLI as the organization builds on its 25 years of progress in protecting Caddo Lake. Laura-Ashley Overdyke will start on June 19th. I am excited about working with her.

Laura-Ashley is a native of Shreveport, grew up swimming, boating and fishing on Caddo Lake and returned to Shreveport in 2011, after 10 years in Washington D.C. She will work out of

an office in Shreveport, as well as CLI's office at the Caddo Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Karnack, Texas.

Most recently, Overdyke worked for The Community Foundation of North Louisiana, overseeing millions in annual grants and working with donors and grantees. She also served as the Senior Editorial Producer at KTBS News, working on in-depth and investigative stories. Prior to moving back, she spent a decade in Washington, D.C. where she helped launch the National Geographic Society's inaugural Explorers-in-Residence exploration grant program. She then served as Research Manager for the National Geographic Channel. For the next five years, Overdyke worked for the White House, on the nation's largest public health media campaign. After graduating from Loyola High School, she studied at Harvard and graduated from Washington & Lee University.

With this broad experience, Laura-Ashley brings new skills to compliment all those who are currently working with CLI to help further our mission: the protection of the ecological, cultural and economic integrity of Caddo Lake, its associated wetlands and watershed. CLI will continue to pursue this mission by working with local communities and other private and public partners. CLI will continue its current projects to protect the quality and quantity of water in the watershed which flows to Caddo Lake. With 90% of that watershed in Texas, CLI has focused most of its work in the past in Texas. However, there is also significant work to be done in Louisiana.

And of course, there is the common threat of giant salvinia and other invasive species at all lakes in the region. Working on solutions for the management of such plants and animals will remain a priority for CLI.

If you would like more information on the work of the Caddo Lake Institute, please see [www.caddolakeinstitute.us](http://www.caddolakeinstitute.us). You can learn more about the work of CLI and how you can support such work there. To reach the Executive Director after June 19, email her [lao@caddolake.us](mailto:lao@caddolake.us).



## 2017 Earth Day Paddling Flotilla

By Stella Barrow, Cypress Basin Chapter  
Texas Master Naturalists



WOW! What an event this year! Thank you, Greater Caddo Lake Association for your generous sponsorship and the use of your tables and chairs.

I have no idea why the flotilla was so successful this year but pre-registrations totaled 83. The day of the flotilla, April 22<sup>nd</sup> dawned wet and cloudy and chilly and yet – 25 more paddlers walked up! Amazing! The largest Regatta/Flotilla, so far. Wet and shivering paddlers huddled under the Shady Glade Resort pavilion (Thank you, David and Sara Smith!) for lunch and raffle prizes. Then we were gone by 2:00 pm. Mark your calendars for the Sixth Earth Day Paddling Flotilla, Saturday April 21<sup>st</sup>, 2018



## Caddo Calendar 2017 - 2018

| Event                        | Date      | Sponsor                          | Description                                                                                                                         |
|------------------------------|-----------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Caddo Lake Fun Run           | 6/10/2017 | Caddo Lake Fun Run               | Travel the boat roads, sloughs, and channels in your mud boat along with many others to raise money for lake preservation.          |
| Independence Day Celebration | 7/4/2017  | City of Uncertain                | A floating parade with prizes, live music, food and beverages at Johnson's Ranch with 45 minutes of <b>fireworks</b> over the water |
| Labor Day Barbeque           | 9/2/2017  | Greater Caddo Lake Association   | Fundraiser for GCLA sponsored lake protection projects featuring barbeque plates and a silent auction                               |
| 6th Annual Paddling Flotilla | 4/21/2018 | Cypress Basin Master Naturalists | Paddle your canoe or kayak on scenic TPWD paddling trails from Shady Glade followed by lunch, prizes, and silent auction.           |

# KEEP CADDO LAKE NATURAL!

## Join GCLA

Dues are only \$10.00 per person per year. This includes membership in The Greater Caddo Lake Association of Texas, plus you will receive our newsletters which are printed on a semi-regular basis; more often if needed. There is no better way to keep up with the issues that concern the lake.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email\* \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone (     )- \_\_\_\_\_

Additional Names \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Enclosed \_\_\_\_\_ ( \$10.00)\*(number of members)

New Members: \_\_\_\_\_ Renewals: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of Years: \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to GCLA of Texas    Mail to GCLA of Texas. P.O. Box 339, Karnack TX, 75661

Please advise us if your email address has changed so we can reach you  
for exciting volunteer activities! Send updates to: [gclaoftx@gmail.com](mailto:gclaoftx@gmail.com)

\*Your email address is voluntary. It will only be used to keep you informed of developments on the lake. It will not be given or sold to anyone. We will send one newsletter per address, unless otherwise instructed. This allows us to mail copies to our politicians and government entities to let them know how we feel on the issues!

Greater Caddo Lake Association of Texas  
P.O. Box 339  
Karnack, TX 75661