

The 2008 Rex Procession: "Royal Rivers"

Tuesday, February 5, 2008
New Orleans, Louisiana

1. Rex, King of Carnival, Monarch of Merriment Rex's float carries the King of Carnival and his pages through the streets of New Orleans each Mardi Gras.

2. His Majesty's Bandwagon From this traditional permanent float one of the Royal Bands provides lively music for Rex and for those who greet him on the parade route.

3. The King's Jesters Even the Monarch of Merriment needs jesters in his court. Rex's jesters dress in Mardi Gras colors—purple, green, and gold.

4. The Boeuf Gras This is one of the oldest images of Mardi Gras, symbolizing the great feast on the day before Lent begins.

5. Title Float: "Royal Rivers" The Rex Procession winds through the streets of one of the world's great river cities, but on every continent, and throughout history, rivers have played a central role in the growth of civilization. Ancient peoples gave them magical names, and ascribed to them god-like powers. Even the mythical underworld needed a river, the River Styx. Rivers became the earliest highways and routes for commerce, and opened the unknown world to exploration. Nowhere was that more true than in the New World, where rivers like the Amazon, the Hudson, the Mississippi, and the Missouri welcomed explorers and settlers. This year's Procession pays tribute to the role the great rivers of the world have played over the centuries.

6. Amazon The Amazon River is the world's greatest river, with over one fifth of the world's total river flow. Up to six miles wide in places, the Portuguese called it "o rio-mar," or the River Sea—a river so wide that it has never been bridged. The Amazon originates in Peru, and most of its course runs through Brazil's Amazon rain forest.

TheAmazon:Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amazon_River

The Amazon River

<http://www.extremescience.com/AmazonRiver.htm>

7. Volga Europe's largest river, the Volga River courses through the heart of Russia, and is known there as "Mother Volga." A cradle of Indo-European civilization, in ancient times the Volga was linked to the mythological Spirit of the Great Water, a river that was believed to flow around the world.

Volga: Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Volga_River

River Profiles: Volga

http://cgee.hamline.edu/rivers/Resources/river_profiles/Volga.html

8. Mekong Named "Mae Nam Khong," or "Mother of All Rivers" by the Thai people, the Mekong begins in the Tibetan Plateau and runs through Myanmar, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, and China. In Vietnam it is known as the "River of Nine Dragons."

Mekong: Wikipedia

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mekong>

Outline of the Mekong

http://cantho.cool.ne.jp/mekong/outline/mekong_river_e.html

9. Thames Only a little over two hundred miles long, the Thames derives its fame from its course through the historic heartland of England. The name "Thames" derives from the ancient Celtic word meaning "dark." Royal palaces, grand homes, and the sites of innumerable battles line its shores.

Thames: Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/River_Thames

Thames: Virtual Tour

<http://web.archive.org/web/20011215052659/http://www.museums.reading.ac.uk/thames/ThamesIM.html>

10. Hebrus Located in Thrace, in Ancient Greece, the Hebrus River was the scene of a dramatic event in Greek mythology. As Orpheus searched for his love, Eurydice, he encountered the Thracian maenads, who were disappointed when he rejected them. They killed him, and threw his head and his lyre into the Hebrus River, where he continued to sing beautiful songs to his lost love.

Mythography: Orpheus

<http://www.loggia.com/myth/orpheus.html>

Orpheus: Wikipedia

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orpheus>

11. Tigris and Euphrates Mesopotamia, the land between these two rivers, is often called the "Cradle of Civilization." Babylon, Nineveh, and other great cities of the Sumerian and Persian civilizations were founded here. The Tigris was thought to be one of the four rivers flowing from the Garden of Eden.

About.com: Mesopotamia

http://ancienthistory.about.com/library/bl/bl_mesopotamia.htm

Tigris: Wikipedia

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tigris>

12. Tiber According to legend, the great city of Rome was born on the banks of the Tiber River. Romulus and Remus, the twin sons of Rhea and Mars, were thrown into the Tiber. They were protected by the River God Tiberinus and nursed by a she-wolf on the Palatine Hill. Romulus became the first King of Rome, and gave the "Eternal City" its name.

Tiber River: Wikipedia

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tiber>

Romulus and Remus: Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Romulus_and_Remus

13. River Styx The boundary between the world of the living and the world of the dead, between Earth and the Underworld, the River Styx circles Hades nine times. Many images depict Charon, the old ferry pilot who carries the dead across the river to the place from which they can never return.

Styx: Encyclopedia Mythica

http://www.pantheon.org/articles/s/styx_river.html

River Styx: Wikipedia

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Styx_\(mythology\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Styx_(mythology))

14. The Streetcar Named Desire This permanent float honors the most famous of all of New Orleans' streetcar lines.

The Royal Barge Complete with Royal Gryphon, the Royal Barge is one of Rex's permanent floats. This float is the last remnant of the Royal Navy, boats carried on wagons that were part of the earliest Rex Processions.

15. Congo Once known as the Zaire River, the Congo is the major river of Central Africa, second in length only to the Nile. Navigable for most of its length, Western explorers arriving in 1482 discovered a land rich in unique tribal cultures and varied natural resources.

Congo: Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Congo_River

Congo: ThinkQuest

http://library.thinkquest.org/16645/the_land/congo_river.shtml

16. Atchafalaya Fed by water from both the Red River and the Mississippi, the Atchafalaya flows through historic Acadian country to the Atchafalaya Bay. There it is forming a new delta—the only place on its coast where Louisiana is gaining land. The Atchafalaya supplies water to areas rich in fish, plant, and wildlife resources.

Atchafalaya: Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Atchafalaya_River

Atchafalaya: Louisiana Coast

<http://www.lacoast.gov/landchange/basins/at/index.asp>

17. Ganges A major river of the Indian subcontinent, the Ganges originates in the Himalayas and empties into the Bay of Bengal. In its personified form, as the Goddess Ganga, the Ganges is considered holy by India's Hindus. Many keep a vial of water from the Ganges in their homes, and bathing in her sacred waters is believed to bring forgiveness from sins.

Ganges: Wikipedia

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ganges>

The Ganga Basin

<http://www.cs.albany.edu/~amit/ganges.html>

18. Nile The Greek historian, Herodotus, wrote that "Egypt is the gift of the Nile." The lifeline of Egypt since the Stone Age, the Nile was long considered the world's longest river. Ancient Egyptians called the river "Iteru," meaning "great river," and one of their many gods was Hapi, the god of the Nile, and of fertility.

Nile: Wikipedia

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nile>

The Nile River

<http://touregypt.net/magazine/mag05012001/magf4a.htm>

19. Urubamba The Urubamba River rises in the Andes and flows through Peru to the sea. For part of its course it is called the Rio Vilcanota, or the Sacred River. Its upper reaches extend to the mountains guarding the ancient Incan city of Machu Picchu.

Urubamba: Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Urubamba_River

20. Rio Grande The Rio Grande originates in Colorado and flows through New Mexico before forming the boundary between Mexico and the United States as it completes its course to the Gulf of Mexico. In Mexico this river is known as the Rio Bravo. The eagle and snake are ancient Mexican symbols.

Rio Grande: Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rio_Grande

Rio Grande: Infoplease

<http://www.infoplease.com/ce6/us/A0841960.html>

21. Yellow River (Huang He) The Yellow River is known both as “China’s Pride” and “China’s Sorrow,” the former because of its role as the Cradle of Chinese Civilization, and the latter because of its frequent and catastrophic floods. Its yellow color comes from the silt it carries.

Yellow River: Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yellow_River

22. Missouri The Missouri River, the “Big Muddy,” begins its journey in the mountains of Montana, and becomes a major tributary of the Mississippi River. Following the Lewis and Clark Expedition the Missouri became the major means of access to and commerce with the western United States, especially once paddle wheel steamships came into broad use.

Missouri River: Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Missouri_River

Missouri River Infolink

<http://infolink.cr.usgs.gov/>

23. Mississippi With its tributary, the Missouri, the Mississippi represents one of the longest and most important river systems in the world. From its source in Lake Itasca, Minnesota to its Gulf of Mexico delta outlet, “The Father of Waters” has been critical to our nation’s development historically, culturally, and commercially.

Mississippi River: Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mississippi_River

Mississippi: The Basics

<http://www.42explore2.com/missriv.htm>

24. Yangtze The longest river in Asia, and the third longest in the world, the Yangtze begins in the Tibetan plateau and continues through China until it enters the South China Sea near Shanghai. Historically the boundary between North and South China, the Yangtze is now the site of one of the world’s largest dams, the Three Gorges Dam.

Yangtze: Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Three_Gorges_Dam

25. Hudson Named the Tappan Zee by the Dutch; it was later renamed by the British in honor of Henry Hudson, who explored it in 1609. During America’s first century the Hudson, its tributaries, and man-made canals connecting to it formed the earliest access for settlement and commerce in much of New England. The Hudson is more estuary than river by the time it reaches New York City.

Hudson River: Wikipedia

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hudson_River

Hudson River Valley

<http://www.hudsonriver.com/>

26. Seine The word “Seine” derives from two early Celtic words meaning “Sacred Source.” While tourists love this river, especially as it flows through Paris, the Seine is also an important commercial river serving much of France.

Seine: Wikipedia <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seine>

27. His Majesty's Royal Calliope The Calliope provides a fitting musical conclusion to "Royal Rivers," the 2008 Rex Procession.