

The 2011 Rex Procession: "This Sceptred Isle"

Tuesday, March 8, 2011
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 traditions and images of Mardi Gras, symbolizing the great feast on the day before Lent begins.
- 5. Title Float: "This Sceptred Isle"** In the Second Act of William Shakespeare's great play, *Richard II*, the Duke of Lancaster speaks the words from which the theme of the 2011 Procession was taken: "This royal throne of Kings, *this sceptred isle...* this England." These proud and patriotic words describe the Duke's feelings for the Island Kingdom, comprising England, Scotland, and Wales. Rich in history, mythology, and culture, the British Isles provide ample inspiration for the 2011 Rex Procession.
- 6. Queen Elizabeth I** The daughter of Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn, Elizabeth became Queen of England in 1558 at the age of 25. She ruled successfully through a period of intense religious, political, and diplomatic challenges. The "Virgin Queen" never married, claiming to be married instead to England.
- 7. The Witches of Macbeth** In the first scene of William Shakespeare's great play, "Macbeth," three witches, also known as the Weird Sisters, conjure visions. Their prophecies play a central role in the unfolding tragedy, foretelling Macbeth's treachery and eventual downfall.

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

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

- 8. Lewis Carroll** Best known for his great works "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland" and "Through the Looking Glass," Carroll was christened Charles Lutwidge Dodgson. The focus of his education and early career was actually mathematics, but children were delighted by the fanciful stories he told, and those stories became his legacy.

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

<http://www.online-literature.com/carroll/>

9. Stratford upon Avon This lovely market town in Warwickshire, near the Cotswolds, has been a trading center for 900 years. Tourists flock to Stratford upon Avon to visit the birthplace (in 1564) of William Shakespeare, the greatest English writer and poet. Many Shakespeare sites remain, including his childhood home and the school he attended.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stratford-upon-Avon>
<http://www.stratford-upon-avon.co.uk/>

10. Symbols of the Cymry Known in the Welsh language as Cymru, Wales retains much of its Celtic culture, including traditional music made on the Celtic harp. The national flower, the daffodil or narcissus is portrayed on this float, along with the Red Dragon of Cadwaladr, also known as *Y Ddraig Goch*. This dragon, Wales' national symbol, figured prominently in early Welsh mythology.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wales>
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_symbols_of_Wales

11. Horatio Hornblower C.S. Forester created this fictional British naval officer, and told of his adventures in a series of very popular novels. From a modest background, Hornblower achieved the pinnacle of success in the British Navy, serving as Admiral of the Fleet. Both his name and the scope of his adventures suggest a real British naval hero, Horatio Lord Nelson.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Horatio_Hornblower
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Horatio_Nelson,_1st_Viscount_Nelson

12. Excalibur King Arthur received his magical sword, Excalibur, from the Lady of the Lake, who, in turn, learned her magic from Merlin. According to Arthurian legend, the King could not be defeated while fighting honorably with Excalibur. In one battle he needed only to pull Excalibur from its sheath—his enemies were instantly blinded.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lady_of_the_Lake
<http://www.lib.rochester.edu/camelot/swrdmenu.htm>

13. St. George and the Dragon Told in many versions since the 10th Century, this legend always has common elements: a terrified village menaced by an evil dragon, a damsel in distress, a brave knight who rescues the maiden and slays the dragon after a terrible battle. Crusaders returned telling the story, and St. George became the patron saint of England, and one of its enduring symbols.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saint_George_and_the_Dragon
<http://www.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk/customs/stgeorge2.html>

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

His Majesty's Royal Calliope The Calliope provides a lively and traditional musical counterpoint to the brilliant array of bands in the Rex Procession.

15. The Loch Ness Monster Reportedly inhabiting Scotland's Loch Ness, and with sightings going all the way back to St. Columba in the 6th Century, "Nessie" is one of the best-known creatures in the world. Perhaps a hoax, perhaps a descendant of ancient plesiosaurs, "Nessie" still attracts thousands of visitors to this beautiful lake.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Loch_Ness_Monster
<http://www.nessie.co.uk/>

16. William Blake A great English poet, artist, and printmaker, Blake is remembered for his collections of poems published with his own paintings, or "illuminations." One such collection, "Songs of Innocence and Experience" includes "Infant Joy," the illuminated poem which inspires this float's design.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Blake
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Songs_of_Innocence

17. Queen Victoria's Jubilee Ruling over the British Empire for almost 64 years, Queen Victoria's was the longest reign of any British Monarch, and her name came to describe an entire era. Bells rang all over England on the occasion of her Jubilees, or Anniversary years. The bells on the float are also a reference to Rudyard Kipling's poem, "The Bells and Queen Victoria," with this line: "For she was ours...as we, even we, were hers...."

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Queen_Victoria
<http://www.victorianstation.com/queen.html>

18. John Milton's Comus John Milton, the English writer and poet, created this masque, or short play, in 1634. It tells the story of a virtuous Lady's refusal to be tempted by Comus, who offers her his magical cup, a symbol of worldly pleasures. Comus, the Greek god of revelry and celebration, also provided the name and symbol of New Orleans' oldest Carnival organization, the Mistick Krewe of Comus.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comus_\(John_Milton\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comus_(John_Milton))
<http://www.mith.umd.edu/comus/final/>

19. Beatrix Potter Born in England in 1866, Helen Beatrix Potter was a well known and beloved author and illustrator of children's books such as "The Tale of Peter Rabbit" and "The Tale of Mr. Jeremy Fisher," the fishing frog featured on this float.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beatrix_Potter
<http://www.peterrabbit.com/us/index.asp>

20. Robin Hood The tales of Robin and his Merry Men, including Friar Tuck, portrayed on this float, originated in stories and ballads in England in the 14th and 15th centuries. Whether these stories were based on a real individual or grew from local myth and legend will never be known.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robin_Hood
<http://www.boldoutlaw.com/>

21. A Midsummer Night's Dream One of Shakespeare's most beloved works, this play portrays the conflict between Oberon, the King of the Faeries, and Titania, his Queen. Their arguments are so intense that they change the weather, thus Oberon's crown of icy buds.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Shakespeare
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oberon_\(Fairy_King\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oberon_(Fairy_King))

22. Rudyard Kipling One of the greatest British writers and poets, Kipling was born in India, the setting of many of his books, stories and poems. Some Kipling favorites are children's books, such as "The Jungle Book" and "Rikki-Tikki-Tavi," both set in India. He won the Nobel prize for literature in 1907.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rudyard_Kipling
<http://www.kipling.org.uk/index.html>

23. The Enchanted Castle of Narberth Much of early Welsh mythology played out in and around the great castle at Narberth (or Arberth). The castle was said to be the home of Pwyll, a legendary Welsh lord and his lady, Rhiannon. Within the enchanted Castle at Narberth was a magical fountain, surrounded by dolphins.

<http://www.castlewales.com/narberth.html>
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Welsh_mythology

24. Wordsworth's Daffodils Born in 1770, William Wordsworth was one of England's greatest poets. In his poem, "I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud" he describes his encounter with "...a crowd, a host, of golden daffodils." Later, when he remembers the sight "...my heart with pleasure fills/ And dances with the daffodils."

<http://www.online-literature.com/wordsworth/>
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Wordsworth

25. Swan Upping Since the twelfth century the Kings and Queens of England have claimed ownership of all unmarked swans on the River Thames. Each year, in a special ceremony, swans are gathered, counted, and marked by costumed officials in colorful launches.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Swan_Upping
<http://www.royal.gov.uk/RoyalEventsandCeremonies/SwanUpping/SwanUpping.aspx>

26. The Royal Fireworks Royalty's favored entertainments have always included elaborate displays of fireworks, often commemorating special occasions. In 1749 George Friderick Handel composed "Music for the Royal Fireworks" to accompany one such memorable display honoring King George II.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Music_for_the_Royal_Fireworks
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fireworks>

27. 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, once a feature of each Rex Parade.