Save Old Oaks

Oak trees along the historic vista in Chalmette from the St. Bernard hwy. toward the river are dying and the Police Jury proposes to do something about it.

We hope the jury will follow through, as the Police Jury in 1965 didn't, although at least a dozen of the famous old oaks on the site of the De La Ronde Plantation were dead at that time.

The spreading, moss-festooned live oaks, growing on part of the site of the Battle of New Orleans, are suffering from neglect. James Fondren, resident landscape architect of Tulane University, says they need pruning, fertilization, better drainage and less molestation by heavy equipment and industrial pollution.

On at least the scores of drainage and traffic over the roots, the Police Jury asserts it will institute preservation measures. While this does not treat with the whole Fondren list, it should be helpful.

Presumably planted about 148 years ago, seven years after the battle at Chalmette, by Dennis de la Ronde V, the magnificent trees are viewed annually by thousands of visitors and the shade provides a popular picnic area. No wonder the Louisiana Tourist Development Commission, among others, has joined in raising its voice for protection of the remaining under-appreciated giants.

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