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BOOK REVIEW

LEGEND OF GASPAR REMAINS WITH US

By HAMPTON DUNN


Dana M. Groff, Jr., native Tampan and a member of Ye Mystic Krewe of Gasparilla, has published a neat little book telling all about the legendary pirate Jose Gaspar.

If you expect the author to legitimatize Gaspar as a real historical figure, you’ll be disappointed. But Dana has a lot of fun giving his impressions of the pirate days along Florida’s Gulf coast, and you’ll enjoy his yarns.

At the very outset of the book, Groff spells out his conclusions:

"This is a story of fiction. Except for Juan Gomez, George W. Hardee and other obvious individuals of history, the characters of this story are fictitious, and any resemblance to those living or deceased is purely coincidental. Also, some historical events, dates and locations are based on factual information.

"Though this is a fictitious tale, the author does not deny the possibility of a real Spanish pirate named Jose Gaspar, or, Gasparilla, who plundered Florida’s west coast into the early 19th century. However, the author believes that documented evidence (as has been suggested by others) to substantiate such a character, either has yet to be discovered, or does not exist."

Having said that, Dana then goes on to spin a colorful story about pirates, the Spanish Main and other interesting bits of fact - or fiction.

A history of Ye Mystic Krewe is included and was written by Regar Mickler. He traces the beginning to May 4, 1904. The appendix includes "Ye Royal Line of Gasparilla" listing Kings and Queens of the social group.
This charming account complements other books on Gaspar written by the late Ed Lambright and, more recently, by Nancy Turner. Add it to your library.