

# **CAJUNS, CREOLES, PIRATES AND PLANTERS**

*Your New Louisiana Ancestors Format*

Volume 1, Number 2

By Damon Veach

**GENEALOGICAL SOCIETIES IMPORTANT ENTITIES:** Like small businesses in times of economic hardships, some societies fail because of the same reasons. It is true of any organization, and it can't all be economic in nature. Sometimes age is a factor, and if you, as members of a society, do not go after younger members, there is a possibility that you will fail for lack of interest. Genealogical researchers are usually older citizens, and this needs to change. Thank goodness I had a high school teacher (the late Mrs. Bess Perigo at Logansport High School, Logansport, Louisiana) who saw the importance of family research, and her assignment for one of our civics classes was to complete a family history record sheet.

Whether others were prompted to continue this interest is not readily known, but it definitely caused me to take a keen interest in the history of my family. My two grandmothers were alive at the time, and I talked with both of them not only in filling out the form for class but on a continuing basis throughout the later years of their lives. That class assignment got placed in the old family trunk and forgotten through the rest of my high school and college years, but when I entered the working world, I suppose I lucked into a great place because several of the office personnel just happened to like genealogy and I was re-introduced to something that is still with me to this day.

Over the years, I've seen many organizations fold for lack of interest. Others have increased their membership prices to keep up with higher costs of printing publications and at the same time actually cutting down on the number of pages of printed data. This doesn't please the normal historian and researcher. It is, however, true of newspapers that lately have cut pages while increasing subscription and over-the-counter prices of their product. Some would say it is the sign of the times, but I sometimes think it is totally unrelated to the times but more to the managements that seek more funding when other revenues like advertising drop.

Whatever the reason, it is a sad state of affairs when the good ones go away for lack of support. There are some groups around that keep growing while leaving membership prices the same. One good example of this is Le Comite des Archives de la Louisiane. This is due to the long-range planning of their board members and the savvy in finances that their treasurer possesses. Their members also have ways of obtaining other publications at discount prices, and they can also acquire back issues of all the previous publications. Good management is the key, and when you run an organization like a corporation, it always seems to help to keep the interest and the momentum going.

There are other strong groups in the state of Louisiana too, and all of these will be discussed in time with reviews of their publications and comments on their positive attitudes toward genealogical research and the preservation of genealogical materials. Many of these groups also have outstanding annual seminars. One in particular is coming up on April 18, 2009 at the Embassy Suites in Baton Rouge. Not only do they have an excellent program planned, but there will also be display tables operated by various groups promoting genealogical materials. This offers individuals an excellent opportunity to see these publications firsthand without ordering just on the basis of a review or the result of finding information by way of an advertisement.

This April seminar is being sponsored by the Louisiana Genealogical and Historical Society, and the location of the hotel is at 4914 Constitution Avenue. They have been promoting excellent seminars for many years, and the 2009 version looks to be one of their best yet. Just having Colleen Fitzpatrick discuss forensic genealogy is definitely one of the best and most timely topics they could have chosen. Fitzpatrick is an outstanding choice, and this meeting should be on everyone's calendar of events to check out. The attendance fee is \$35.00 with registration starting at 7:45 a.m. on this particular Saturday, April 18<sup>th</sup>. A block of rooms has also been reserved for those people coming from out of town. You can check more of this out by going to their website at <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~la-lghs/>. If you want to correspond with them directly, send your inquiries to LGHS, P.O. Box 82060, Baton Rouge, LA 70884-2060. If at all possible, don't miss this one.

As other seminars and meetings are announced, they will be added to this format. Of course, any dated notice would have to be submitted early in order to meet publication deadlines, but never overlook the power of the printed word when promoting your organization's activities. This column format is one of your best ways for getting the word out to interested participants. It is the oldest genealogy column in the country.

One of the primary purposes of this column is to also promote genealogical societies in Louisiana and in other states. Just make sure whoever handles your publicity knows about this free service and takes advantage of it. Don't be a casualty of the times. Participate and grow to your maximum potential.

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**LIFE LINES FOR THE FUTURE:** The latest publication of the Terrebonne Genealogical Society has just arrived. Its full title is "Terrebonne Life Lines," and it covers the old Lafourche Interior Parish. The outstanding thing about this quarterly publication is that each issue is indexed. This takes extra time to do, but it comes in handy when researchers are going through publications seeking out individual surnames. Many societies publish indexes, but they are mostly in the final issue for each year.

This society is beginning its 28<sup>th</sup> year, and their publication continues to improve with each passing year. The website is also a good place to visit: <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~laterreb/tgs/>. Their postal address is P.O. Box 20295, Houma, LA 70360, and their quarterly is included with each paid membership. This fee is \$25.00 for individuals or \$30.00 for family memberships. Libraries and societies can join for \$22.00 per year. Their regular meetings are on the last Saturday of each month, except November and December – at 1:00 p.m. at the Main Branch of the Terrebonne Parish Public Library, 151 Library Drive in Houma, Louisiana. The November and December meetings are held on the second Saturday at the Main Branch Library. They also offer member discounts on their books, excluding, of course, pre-publication offers, special sales, and membership dues.

This is another of the Louisiana societies that keeps improving on the quality of their publications. The latest issue is a good example of quality and quantity. It contains oral histories provided by Robert Paul Hebert and Dorothy Foolkes Matherne, the 1845 list of voters for Lafourche Parish, more Terrebonne Parish conveyance records (Book K continued here), and so many more useful items and stories of old Lafourche. Eloise Sonier Brunet's story about her family is an especially nice feature, and the pictures add a lot to the story. Helen Landry/Melancon also presented an article on a Dutch Settlement plantation.

Check this group out if you have family ties to this part of Louisiana. They have a very active group of participants here, and they are doing such a fine job in promoting and preserving the legacy of this part of the state. They are to be congratulated for their efforts.

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**THE HISTORIC NEW ORLEANS COLLECTION:** If you have the chance, check out *The Historic New Orleans Collection Newsletter*. THNOC is one of the best archival facilities in the United States, and many people overlook its importance. Their research facility is one of the finest you will find, and their efforts at preserving the past are just simply outstanding. You can keep up with their activities by going to <http://www.hnoc.org/>. No research trip to New Orleans is complete without included THNOC. More about this facility will be featured in future formats.

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All correspondence for *Cajuns, Creoles, Pirates, and Planters* (your new and improved online version of the "Louisiana Ancestors" format) should be directed to [ancestorslaveach@cox.net](mailto:ancestorslaveach@cox.net). Personal correspondence to the compiler can be sent to 709 Bungalow Lane, Baton Rouge, LA 70802-5337. Queries are very important, and they are welcomed for publication with no limit to the number of words used in each. They should, however, contain a Louisiana connection by heritage or

**residence of researchers working on lines in other areas, and it is important to include both the e-mail and snail-mail address in case researchers do not have their own personal Internet service. Many researchers take advantage of Internet service at local libraries so both addresses are important. Books, society publications, and other materials are reviewed only if sample copies are submitted with each request. (Note: Make sure all material for review is sent to the address above. This column is no longer associated with any newspaper. These review items are then donated to the DeSoto Parish Historical Society for inclusion in the Veach-Foshee Memorial Library Collection which is housed in the Mansfield Female College Museum in Mansfield, Louisiana.)**