

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

*Your New Louisiana Ancestors Format*

Volume 1, Number 4

By Damon Veach

**MISSIN' MISSISSIPPIANS:** Many years ago, I started writing a column called "Missin' Mississippians," but then, as now, it is difficult to interest newspapers in publishing genealogy columns. That is why the Internet is so important. It answers the need, and it is a free service. One thing to remember, however, is that you never know where you might find a clue or some recorded information about your ancestors.

With this in mind, I need to inform you of a nice publication called "Mississippi River Routes." This is the quarterly journal of the Vicksburg Genealogical Society, and it is always filled with excellent research material. The society was established in 1982 and incorporated in 1986 as a non-profit entity. Membership is open to anyone with annual dues being \$25. Their calendar year is June 1 through the end of May of the following year. The publication is included as a part of the subscription price, and as a non-profit group, they can also accept contribution which are deductible on Federal Income Tax returns. Tony Dardeau Jr. serves as editor of "Mississippi River Routes." His e-mail address is [DardeauEA@bellsouth.net](mailto:DardeauEA@bellsouth.net). Martha Price Leese and Bobbie Beyers Edwards are also members of the editorial board.

The spring issue for 2009 is really nice. So many previously unpublished materials or data that has long been out of print are offered to readers and researchers. It all starts off with the Methodist Episcopal Church South Sunday School Picnic of 1885 and continues with a number of great research items. Dardeau submitted something that should be of interest to Louisiana researchers. It is the Maxwell-Lipscomb Nuptials (Congratulations from Minden, 1934). The source was a two-page letter obtained with a packet of material from an Arcadia, Louisiana, antique shop. Genealogical materials are often found in unusual places. I found a number of old Bibles at Rudolph's Christmas Store, here in Baton Rouge, and I'm in the process of copying the information contained about the families who originally owned these. Most of the data concerns New England families, and this is now in Louisiana and will be lost in time if not copied and shared with researchers.

Edwards copied burials in the Porter's Chapel Missionary Baptist Church Cemetery located in Vicksburg. This is also an excellent means of sharing family histories, especially for those people who can't visit the locations where their ancestors or relatives lived. Another outstanding example of what a quarterly publication of this type can offer is the excellent transcription of an old Cuban document. Judy Riffel, known for her tireless efforts at historic preservation of early Louisiana records, submitted an article on the need for a Spanish Consul at Natchez. Her source was the Archivo General de Indias, Papeles Procedentes de

Cuba, legajo 51, folios 245-246, on microfilm in the Hill Memorial Library at Louisiana State University. The document is undated but is filed among other documents dated 1799.

These are only a few of the documents included in this quarterly. A complete column could be written about this one issue alone. My advice to you would be to either join this society or request that your local genealogical librarian add this one to the general research files. This society has been publishing data for sixteen years, and every issue I've seen has been quite interesting. Just remember that if you are researching you ancestors in a given region that is near a state line or on a major river, check out the adjoining areas. No only do they enter these areas to visit the nearest towns, but many marriages, death, and personal records can be in these places. Follow the clues, and don't overlook any sources of information.

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**SPECIAL BUILDING, SPECIAL OCCASION:** Denham Springs' Old City Hall, located at 115 Mattie Street, will be re-dedicated Friday, April 17 in a special 3 p.m. ceremony, and an open house and reception will follow until 7 p.m. The public is encouraged to attend and tour the newly-renovated building which is on the National Register of Historic Places.

The Denham Springs Main Street Commission is asking for information on photographs, newspapers, artifacts or any other historical items relating to Denham Springs which the owners may be willing to donate or loan for an exhibit at Old City Hall. Originals can be copied and returned to the owners if desired.

The Commission asks that people call and register the items first and not bring them to Old City Hall at this time. The Commission will decide what items are relevant for the first exhibit and contact those who have registered those items. Other items will be requested for later exhibits. Call Old City Hall at 225-667-7512, 8 a.m.-5 p.m., Mondays through Fridays, or you can contact them by way of e-mail at [oldcityhall@cityofdenhamsprings.com](mailto:oldcityhall@cityofdenhamsprings.com).

City Hall is currently open only during the week, and a list of volunteers is being compiled to see if enough people are able to work weekend hours. It would involve keeping an eye on things and showing visitors through the building. A brief written history of Denham Springs will be provided for reference. If you would be interested in doing this once a month or even once every few months, please let them know, and you will be added to their list. Also be sure to tell how often or which particular dates you would be available.

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**MORRIS - DUNCAN – KIDD:** Sally Bailey ([fbsb@earthlink.net](mailto:fbsb@earthlink.net)) of Knoxville, Tennessee is seeking the parents and siblings of Lucy MORRIS, born Jan 1864 in

Louisiana. She married William Kidd DUNCAN, born in May of 1860 in Louisiana. He was a son of Benjamin DUNCAN and Irene Penelope KIDD. William was a cotton buyer in 1900. Lucy and William had three sons, all born in Louisiana, namely Benjamin M. (1885), Aylmer Donald, known as A.D. (1887), and William K. (1895). Any help on this lineage would be appreciated.

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**McDONOGH TRADITION:** The 119<sup>th</sup> John McDonogh Day, an annual event honoring public school philanthropist John McDonogh, will take place on Friday, May 1, 2009. In return for his legacy of 39 public schools to the New Orleans area, all he asked was that students place flowers around his grave annually. Gretna's McDonogh No. 26 School is the last school still honoring this tradition. This latest honor will take place at 9:45 a.m. at the John McDonogh Cenotaph, McDonoghville Cemetery, 520 Hancock Street in Gretna. For more details, visit [www.johnmcdonogh.com](http://www.johnmcdonogh.com) or call 1-888-4-GRETNA.

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**FORENSIC GENEALOGY:** If you cannot make it to the seminar coming up on Saturday, April 18<sup>th</sup> in Baton Rouge and mentioned in an earlier column, here is a link that you really need to check out - [www.identifinders.com](http://www.identifinders.com). Colleen Fitzpatrick, who is scheduled to speak at the seminar, and Sharon Sergeant, both of Identifinders, worked with members of the Jewish community to expose false information in a Holocaust memoir. What they did was to expose and then reconstruct the true story. This is an example of how this kind of research has become so important for discovering the truth behind frauds. It can also uncover DNA references, find missing persons, and determine identities.

Because of Dr. Fitzpatrick's expertise, I have come to respect her work and the accomplishments she has made to improve genealogical research. When I first reviewed her book on the subject, I found it to be one of the most fascinating studies of family history research to ever come across my desk. I had known of this work, but this opened my eyes to a whole new world of discovery.

Here is a good example of what she has done. In December 2008, Dr. Fitzpatrick had the pleasure of reuniting a family from Sydney, New South Wales, Australia, with long lost cousins in the United States, thanks to a DNA match and dogged genealogy research.

I think you will agree that this is one of the most important aspects of current genealogical research. Be sure to check out the site, and, if all possible, reserve time to participate in the seminar. It is being sponsored by the Louisiana Genealogical and Historical Society, and the location of the Embassy Suites Hotel is at 4914 Constitution Avenue. The attendance fee is \$35.00 with registration starting at 7:45

a.m. A block of rooms has also been reserved for those people coming from out of town.

Go to <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~la-lghs/> for more information. If you want to correspond with them directly, send your inquiries to LGHS, P.O. Box 82060, Baton Rouge, LA 70884-2060.

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**VITAL RECORDS:** Genealogical Publishing Company of Baltimore, Maryland has just released the 5<sup>th</sup> edition of the leading reference book in genealogy. “International Vital Records Handbook” contains the latest forms and information for each of the fifty states and also furnishes details about records that were created prior to statewide vital records registration. It also identifies vital records collections, online databases, and institutions of interest to genealogy researchers. Then, in alphabetical sequence, the book covers the other countries of the world, giving, where available, the current application forms and instructions as well as the key addresses of repositories or embassies that might help in the obtaining of vital record copies.

This book is available for \$54.95, postpaid, and it can be ordered from Genealogical Publishing Company, 3600 Clipper Mill Rd., Suite 260, Baltimore, MD 21211-1953. The author, Thomas Jay Kemp, is a genealogist and librarian with more than four decades of professional experience. He has authored more than two dozen books and has written numerous articles for library and genealogy journals. He is currently the Director of Genealogical Products at Newsbank, a web-based information provider.

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**QUERIES:** Don’t forget to submit your queries for publication in this column format. It’s all free, and you will find the powerful outreach of the Internet to be far superior to the circulation areas of local newspapers. *Cajuns, Creoles, Pirates and Planters* is your ticket to successful genealogical research.