

CAJUNS, CREOLES, PIRATES AND PLANTERS

Your New Louisiana Ancestors Format

Volume 2, Number 32

By Damon Veach

BOARD MEETING: The Board of Directors of Le Comite des Archives de la Louisiane met Saturday, October 16 at El Rio Grande Restaurant on Airline Highway. Several important matters were discussed and approved as well as setting dates for the next two board meetings and the annual meeting for September 2011.

The most important points discussed related to improvements and additions to the website, appointment of members to committees, report on ballot counts for officers, a complete discussion and approval of by-laws updates, and a welcoming note for new board member Winston De Ville.

Ann Riffel reported that only one book was published thus far this year. That was *Natchitoches Baptisms, 1840-1849*. There are currently no new books in the planning stages, but it was also noted that several books were in short supply.

After the meeting adjourned, dinner was served for all those in attendance.

XXX

FALL FESTIVAL: On Saturday, October 23, the Fall Family History Festival will take place at the Bluebonnet Regional Branch, 9200 Bluebonnet Blvd., from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Several family historians will share their discoveries with those in attendance. Included in the program will be topics such as African-American genealogy, early Louisiana topics, and Midwestern ancestries. There is also a skit planned about the early Canary Islanders.

Among those groups displaying their books will be Le Comite des Archives de la Louisiane, and there will also be displays of photos and special items of family interest. This event will feature many other interesting topics.

XXX

FAMILLE BEAUSOLEIL: The Beausoleil family has a meeting scheduled for November 6, 2010 at the W.O.W. Hall in Maurice, Louisiana. Doors will open at 8 a.m. for visiting and sharing of genealogical information, and the meeting will start at 10 a.m. The CAFA meeting will also be held during this time period.

One of the discussions at this meeting will be to start the planning of the Broussard/Trahan/Thibodeaux Family Reunion to be held in conjunction with the GRA 2011 Celebration. The Grand Reveil Acadian/Great Acadien Awakening begins on October 7, 2011 and goes through October 16, 2011. This celebration will

be held in four Acadian regions – New Orleans, Houma, Lake Charles, and Lafayette.

More information can be obtained from Kim Viator Broussard, 214 Highland Drive, Lafayette, LA 70506 or from Mitch Conover at whiskey6@lusfiber.net.

XXX

BOUDREAUX MEETING: Members of the Boudreaux Family Association are invited to attend a meeting and reunion of members at the Golden Corral Restaurant on Ambassador Caffery Parkway in Lafayette on Saturday, October 23, 2010 at 11:30 a.m. They are planning a raffle to raise money for future projects, and other business matters will be discussed.

XXX

DOBSON BOOKS: Clearfield Company and the Genealogical Publishing Company of Baltimore have helped provide outstanding research material to genealogical researchers for many years. They have one of the largest collections of research books on the market today to aid in genealogical research. They continue to produce new volumes and reprint older ones as the demands arise. (I might also note here that Claitor's Publishing is one of the largest firms offering genealogical research books, so be sure to check out their complete list of genealogical books, especially those concerning Louisiana topics.)

In 2005, Clearfield Company launched a new series of books by David Dobson that were designed to identify the origins of Scottish Highlanders who traveled to America prior to the Great Highland Migration that began in the 1730s and intensified thereafter. The first four volumes cover Scottish Highlanders from Argyll, Perthshire, Inverness, and the Northern Highlands. This fifth volume, *Scottish Highlanders on the Eve of the Great Migration, 1725-1775, the People of the Northern Isles*, in the series pertains to the area of Northern Isles, commonly known as the Orkney Islands and the Shetland Islands.

Much of the Highland emigration was directly related to a breakdown in social and economic institutions. Under the pressures of the commercial and industrial revolutions of the 17th and 18th centuries, Highland chieftains abandoned their patriarchal role in favor of becoming capitalist landlords. By raising farm rents to the breaking point, the chiefs left the social fabric of the Scottish Highlands in tatters. Accordingly, voluntary emigration by Gaelic-speaking Highlanders began in the 1730s. The social breakdown was intensified by the failure of the Jacobite cause in 1745, followed by the British military occupation and repression in the Highlands in the aftermath of the Battle of Culloden. In 1746, the British government dispatched about 1,000 Highland Jacobite prisoners of war to the colonies as indentured servants. Later, during the Seven Years' War of 1756–1763, Highland

regiments recruited in the service of the British crown chose to settle in Canada and America rather than return to Scotland.

Once in North America, the Highlanders tended to be clannish and moved in extended family groups, unlike immigrants from the Lowlands who moved as individuals or in groups of a few families. The Gaelic-speaking Highlanders tended to settle on the North American frontier, whereas the Lowlanders merged with the English on the coast. Highlanders seem to have established “beachheads,” and their kin subsequently followed. The best example of this pattern is in North Carolina where they first arrived in 1739 and moved to the Piedmont, to be followed by others for more than a century.

Another factor that distinguishes research in Highland genealogy is the availability of pertinent records. Scottish genealogical research is generally based on the parish registers of the Church of Scotland, which provide information on baptisms and marriages. In the Scottish Lowlands, such records can date back to the mid-16th century, but Highland records generally start much later. Americans seeking their Highland roots face the problem that there are few, if any, church records available that pre-date the American Revolution. In the absence of Church of Scotland records, the researcher must turn to a miscellany of other records, such as court records, estate papers, sasines (legal documents showing transfer of ownerships), gravestone inscriptions, burgess rolls, port books, services of heirs, wills and testaments, and especially rent rolls. (Some rent rolls even pre-date parish registers.) This series, therefore, is designed to identify the kinds of records that are available in the absence of parish registers and to supplement the church registers when they are available.

The Northern Isles were once isolated on the northwest fringes of Europe. However, as trans-Atlantic trade expanded, they found themselves astride a major sea route between North America and northern Europe. Stromness in the Orkneys became the first or last port of call for many vessels crossing the Atlantic. For example, the vessels of the Hudson Bay Company from the late 17th-century traveled from Stromness to North America. For most Orkney emigrants, the motivating factors were poverty and lack of opportunity. Also noteworthy is that, unlike the other Highlanders, the Northern Islanders were of Scandinavian, not Celtic, origin (with an element of Lowland Scots).

While this volume is not a comprehensive directory of all the Orkney and Shetland Islander emigrants during the mid-18th century, it does pull together references on more than 1,000 18th-century inhabitants. In all cases, compiler David Dobson gives each Highlander’s name, a locality within the Northern Isles (place of birth, residence, employment, etc.), a date, and the source. In some cases, readers also learn the identities of relatives, the individual’s employment, and vessel traveled on.

This soft-cover book sells for \$22.00, postage and handling included, and is available from Clearfield Company, 3600 Clipper Mill Road, Suite 260, Baltimore, MD 21211.

XXX

FREE SERVICE: Correspondence to this column should be directed to Damon Veach, Cajuns, Creoles, Pirates and Planters, 709 Bungalow Lane, Baton Rouge, LA 70802-5337. The e-mail address is ancestorslaveach@cox.net. Queries and book reviews are printed as space permits, and you are encouraged to take advantage of this free service. Claitor's Publishing can serve as a distributor for self-published genealogy titles. Go to their homepage for details on how you can obtain this excellent service.