

CAJUNS, CREOLES, PIRATES AND PLANTERS

Your New Louisiana Ancestors Format

Volume 2, Number 34

By Damon Veach

LE COMITE: The October issue of *E-Communiqué* has recently been posted to Le Comité des Archives de la Louisiane's website (www.lecomite.org). Members of this society receive this quarterly electronic newsletter via e-mail on the first of January, April, July, and October. It is posted for the public a few weeks after its release to members. It contains news items and an extensive calendar of genealogical and historical events around the state for the upcoming quarter.

Of interest to book collectors and researchers is an announcement regarding the society's latest used book and periodical sale. The Terrebonne Parish Library and several Le Comité members donated a large quantity of used genealogical publications, which the society is selling at very low prices as a fund raiser. For a list of available books and periodicals, send an e-mail to Judy Riffel (riffelj@bellsouth.net).

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DVD AVAILABLE: A major 2010 highlight in Salt Lake City was definitely *A Celebration of Family History*, a once-in-a-lifetime event that will never be forgotten by those fortunate enough to have attended. Now, all can enjoy this remarkable, inspiring event on DVD. To purchase the video (which will sell for \$4.50, includes shipping and handling) or watch video highlights, go to celebration.familysearch.org.

The DVD features a celebration of family history through music, stories, and the captivating words of renowned author and historian David McCullough and President Henry B. Eyring of the First Presidency of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The event includes moving musical numbers by the famous Mormon Tabernacle Choir and Orchestra at Temple Square and inspiring video presentations showing the impact family history can have on individual lives.

The talks, music, and films can be played as a single program, or they can be viewed as individual segments for those wishing to use the video as a teaching or reference aid. The presentations are sure to inspire those looking for additional insights into family history.

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GREAT SOURCE: There is a wonderful internet site that may be of interest to you. It is called GenealogyWise, and members talk about their ideas and research. You can learn about a lot of subjects that you normally wouldn't think about including

the weather, illnesses, daily tasks, hardships suffered during migrations, and lots of individual family history material. Lessons can be learned here on a personal and individual basis. Check this group out at <http://www.genealogywise.com/>.

I have often discussed the importance of recording as much information from older relatives as possible. It may seem unimportant at the time the discussions take place, but I often go back and read some of the material I noted years ago, and it all falls into place and makes perfect sense now in the overall scheme of understanding the hows and whys of individual family histories.

Because of my interest at an early age, I now have descriptions even though no pictures are available of some of these relatives. My maternal grandmother gave me so much information that I am amazed now as I read back over it. My paternal grandmother wasn't as forthcoming with information. I did record what she told me, and even though it isn't much, it was a help in tracking down distant relatives.

Whatever you do, don't overlook the importance of what older members know about the family. Do it quickly because you never know when the chance will be gone forever.

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JANET JEHN: The latest *Acadian Genealogy Exchange* has been released, and it is again filled with a lot of wonderful information on early Acadian families. Janet Jehn is the editor and publisher, and she issues this one twice yearly with a \$17 subscription.

Now in its 34th year, it is one of those rare publications that seem to have weathered the years by continuing to provide excellent information on Acadians. One of the interesting sections of the latest issue concerns the religion of the Micmac Indians. However, this is only a starter to what is actually in this issue. Other items include: baptisms at Becancour and St. Gregoire de Nicolet; how the Acadians came to Maine; residents with personal property in Randolph County, Illinois in 1851; Acadians in Rowley; history of Canton; St. Joseph Catholic Cemetery in Cloud County, Kansas; Attakapas and Opelousas census of May 4, 1777; Guillot family history; and, of course, several lengthy queries.

You can contact Jehn at 3265 Wayman Branch Rd., Covington, Ky 41015-4601.

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RESEARCH SOURCE: The State Land Office in Baton Rouge is another good place to trace genealogical information. It has among its collection many original records of inestimable value and interest to genealogical researchers.

In 1910, when the office of the United States Surveyor General of Louisiana was abolished, maps and field notes were transferred to the State Land Office. In 1927, when the U.S. Land Office in Baton Rouge closed, the state acquired their tract books, claim papers and official plats and maps.

One of the interesting aspects of a visit to the State Land Office is being able to examine the indexes of the "Exhibit of Private Land Claims" covering the land district where the examiner's ancestors are known to have settled. In this way, it is possible to locate the land by section, township and range, and pinpoint the area on the official township plats, providing that the claim was confirmed by a board of commissioners. Claim papers leading to the confirmation of certain claims are on file and usually arouse more than passing interest. Often, the signature of the claimant can be found among these valuable old documents.

The Tract Book indexes may also be examined for names of original settlers. These indexes will lead to the location of the lands settled, and list not only those who claimed land from British, French, and Spanish grants but those who homesteaded and purchased tracts from the United States and state governments.

The American State Papers are well worth an investigation. Volumes 2, 3, 4, 6, and 8, which pertain to land claims in Louisiana, are on file. Each volume has a name index.

There is a copy of the Pintado Papers consisting of 11 volumes. However, most of the data in these volumes relates to land grants in the West Florida Parishes, an area known as the Greensburg Land District.

The documents at the State Land Office are quite valuable and contain a wealth of information for researchers, but none of these show origins of families, children and other family history material. This type of data can be found at the offices of the clerks of court.

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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.