

CAJUNS, CREOLES, PIRATES AND PLANTERS

Your New Louisiana Ancestors Format

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By Damon Veach

WEBSITE UPDATE: Le Comité des Archives de la Louisiane has recently launched the Members' Page of its website (www.lecomite.org). Current members were recently e-mailed their login ID and password to access the page.

Material on the Members' Page is organized into eight categories – Parish Research Guides, General Research Guides, Finding Aids, *Le Raconteur* Articles, Book Indexes, *E-Communiqué* Newsletter, Used Books and Periodicals for Sale, and About Le Comité. Files will be listed in each category as pdf files.

Currently, Parish Research Guides have been posted for Avoyelles, Caddo, Catahoula, Concordia, Iberville, Morehouse, Rapides, St. Landry, and St. Mary. These Parish Research Guides provide helpful facts about each parish including information about its formation, records, and genealogical and historical societies. Also included are lists of Le Comité publications and *Le Raconteur* articles related to the parish, and a list of genealogical collections at the Louisiana State Archives related to that parish. These collections provide descriptions gleaned from the Archives' in-house computer database, LASOS, plus useful information not available anywhere else such as links to websites and online finding aids.

These Parish Research Guides will be supplemented by more detailed Finding Aids to collections at the State Archives. Currently, two Finding Aids have been posted, one for the massive Opelousas Post colonial documents collection and another for a collection of photographs used in the society's Iberville and Pointe Coupee Parish history books.

The Book Indexes category currently includes indexes to four World War II service men and women books for Louisiana.

Other files currently online include the current and all back issues of the society's *E-Communiqué* electronic newsletter, lists of used books and periodicals for sale, and society business files including bylaws, policies, minutes, and annual reports. No General Research Guides or *Le Raconteur* Articles have yet been posted but are in the works.

New files will be posted as they become available. Sponsored files will get priority. Sponsorships can be made in memory of an individual or individuals for \$25 per year. Commercial advertisements are \$50 per year. No political advertising is allowed. Sponsorships help cover the expense of setting up and maintaining the website.

Access to the Members' Page is available through membership only. A 2011 membership is \$20, and a membership application can be found on the website.

Other information available on the website that is freely available to all researchers include indexes to many of the society's publications, some back issues of the *E-Communiqué* newsletter, and a What's New page with announcements and information of interest.

Any member who did not receive his or her login ID and password, should contact Judy Riffel at riffelj@bellsouth.net.

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EXHIBIT OPENS: For more than 300 years, Spanish explorers navigated, charted and settled much of the continent of North America and its waterways. These early colonists left an indelible imprint across the southern United States, their heritage embedded in the histories of our lands, rivers, bays and gulfs. This summer, a traveling exhibition coming to the Gulf Coast examines the centuries-old ties between the two countries, ties dating to the early 16th century, stretching through the charting of the Mississippi and the settlement of the West, and remaining vibrant today.



The Threads of Memory: Spain and the United States (El Hilo de la Memoria: España y los Estados Unidos) marks the U.S. debut of nearly 140 rare documents, maps, illustrations and paintings, many of which have never been displayed outside of Spain. The exhibition opened on May 11th at The Historic New Orleans Collection,

the final stop on a limited, three-city American tour. *The Threads of Memory* will be on view through July 10.

The survival of these extraordinary materials, selected from the Archive of the Indies in Seville, is a testament to Spain's pride in its role in the formation of the United States. The exhibition offers an opportunity to celebrate a common but often overlooked heritage.

The Threads of Memory is divided into 10 sections, each exploring a different aspect of Spanish colonial history, such as early exploration in Florida, the Spanish administration of Louisiana and Spain's role in the American Revolution.

"While Louisiana is frequently identified with France, the importance of Spain to the development of Louisiana and the Gulf South is more critical than what immediately meets the eye," said Alfred E. Lemmon, director of the Williams Research Center at THNOC.

"When horrible fires destroyed New Orleans in 1788 and 1794, Spanish officials enacted far more stringent building codes, which protected many of the buildings you see today. They even helped protect the French language by issuing proclamations in French and in Spanish, publishing a French newspaper and encouraging the immigration of French St. Dominguan and Acadian refugees."

New Orleans is the final city on the exhibition's American tour. Prior to the display here, *The Threads of Memory* was on view at the New Mexico History Museum in Santa Fe and the El Paso Museum of History in Texas. Following its Gulf South visit, all materials will return to the Spanish archives.

"New Orleans is a key point in this exhibition, a perfect city for its closure," said curator Falia González Díaz. "And there could be no better place in New Orleans to present the exhibition than The Collection's building on Royal Street, which is a Spanish colonial home."

The exhibition is presented in English and in Spanish, with an accompanying full-color, bilingual catalogue detailing all of the documents on display and featuring essays on Spanish missions in the New World, Louisiana under Spanish rule, and Spain's role in the emergence of the United States. The catalogue is available in The Shop at The Collection for \$65.

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ARMCHAIR GENEALOGY: Do you wake up with genealogy on your mind? Do you wish you knew where to check your facts online when it's not convenient to go to the Library? Do you prefer to do genealogy in your pajamas? Then "Armchair Genealogy" is the class for you!

Join the genealogy librarian on Wednesday, June 4, at 10 a.m. at the Bluebonnet Regional Branch Library, 9200 Bluebonnet Blvd., for a session on armchair genealogy research to discover free places online to click your mouse for the best results right from home.

Registration is required. For more information or to register, call (225) 763-2283.

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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.