

CAJUNS, CREOLES, PIRATES AND PLANTERS

Your New Louisiana Ancestors Format

Volume 3, Number 2

By Damon Veach

ANNUAL SEMINAR: The Louisiana Genealogical and Historical Society will conduct its annual seminar on Saturday, April 30, 2011 at the Embassy Suites Hotel on Constitution Avenue, off I-10 and College Drive in Baton Rouge. The speaker is John Sellers, and a number of topics will be discussed.

Registration for members is only \$30 prior to March 31, 2011. After this date, the fee is \$35 for members and non-members. Coffee breaks, free parking, and book vendors will all be a part of the day's activities. Seminar topics are:

"What Are They Saying About Your Family in the Paper?"

"Was Grandpa 'His brother's Keeper'?"

"Here Comes the Judge"

"The Other Louisiana"

Door Prizes will be given out throughout the day, and the seminar fee does not include lunch but you can eat at the hotel or in numerous restaurants in the area. Registration at the hotel begins at 7: 45 a.m. with a short business meeting scheduled prior to the beginning of the sessions. There is even a discount for rooms at the hotel, and you can learn more about this by calling the hotel directly prior to April 3, 2011 at 225-924-6566.

Further information can be obtained from the society at LGHS, PO Box 82060, Baton Rouge, LA 70884-2060. Registrations should also be sent to this address. This is always a nice and informative seminar and highly recommended for both amateur genealogists and the avid family researcher.

When the LGHS was founded, the stated purpose was "to collect, preserve and make available genealogical and historical materials, to assist its members in tracing their genealogy, to ascertain the location of public and private records that they may be made available to students of genealogy, and to aid in investigation of this nature." Today the purpose of the LGHS remains the same. Ongoing programs and special projects focus upon these goals.

XXX

GENEALOGY FAIR: Bobbie Beyers Edwards of the Vicksburg Genealogical Society would like to interest researchers in attending a Spring Genealogy Fair, hosted by the MSU-ES Warren County Extension Office, 1100C Grove Street in Vicksburg on Friday, March 25, 2011. Those who are interested and wish to learn more can contact mlthomas@ext.mssstate.edu.

Topics at this event will be the following: researching your African-American and Native-American ancestry by author Betty Wiltshire; preserving your cherished family memories by archivist Mona Vance; and preserving and restoring tombstones by Rick Dixon of the Mississippi Marble & Granite Company.

XXX

SACRED GROUND: It had been many years since I visited the Chalmette Cemetery, but last week found me there once more. I had actually planned to go to the Islenos Festival, but when I got to the location, the parking and crowds were just too much, so I opted to go back and tour the cemetery. I'll return to the Islenos area at a later time and report on the history of this colorful part of our state's history.

To refresh your memory, here is a little about this area of the state. After founding the Louisiana colony in 1699, France, of course, decided on the basic culture for the area which included religion, language, law, architecture, music, and food. There were other groups, but they had minor influences when merging in with the French. There were Chitimacha, Houma, and other tribes of Indians here as well as the Canadian French, Germans, enslaved people from West Africa, and settlers from the Canary Islands.

During the Spanish rule from 1763 to 1800, Spanish-speaking Islenos (Canary Islanders) and French-speaking free people of color from the Caribbean arrived here. The French Acadians who were driven from Nova Scotia by the British were among these early settlers, but many of these settlers moved on into Acadiana and occupied the bayou and prairie areas of the state.

The French residents called themselves Creoles so as not to be confused with the influx of Americans and other immigrants after the Louisiana Purchase. They were mostly Catholic, and this separated them from all the newcomers. It was at the Battle of New Orleans that all these diverse cultures came together under General Andrew Jackson to protect the city against the British in January of 1815, the final battle of the War of 1812. The victory secured the Louisiana Territory for westward expansion, bolstered national pride, and gained the United States respect abroad.

It is also at this time that all the deeds of one Jean Lafitte turned positive as he and his men came forward to help protect the city and fight alongside General Jackson. Lafitte commanded a large confederation of smugglers and privateers based in Barataria Bay. He had long been at odds with the American authorities, but after his service in defending New Orleans against the British, he was pardoned for his service.



**Burials at the Chalmette Battlefield and National Cemetery
(looking toward the Mississippi River)**



Burials looking toward the main highway



Malus-Beauregard House

The Malus-Beauregard House, was named for its last resident, Rene Beauregard, son of Civil War Confederate General P.G.T. Beauregard, whose monument is at the entrance to City Park at the north end of Esplanade Avenue and who also lived in the house on Chartres Street in the French Quarter that belonged to my wonderful friend and author, Frances Parkinson Keyes.

History abounds in Louisiana, and it seems that the older I get the more it just multiplies with connections to people and places, both past and present. When I last visited the park, the Malus-Beauregard house was the main tourist center, but they now have a nice one built near the home. I will be donating a copy of the Jane Lucas DeGrummond book about the Battle of New Orleans to the museum there and also a copy of the listing of burials in the cemetery.

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.