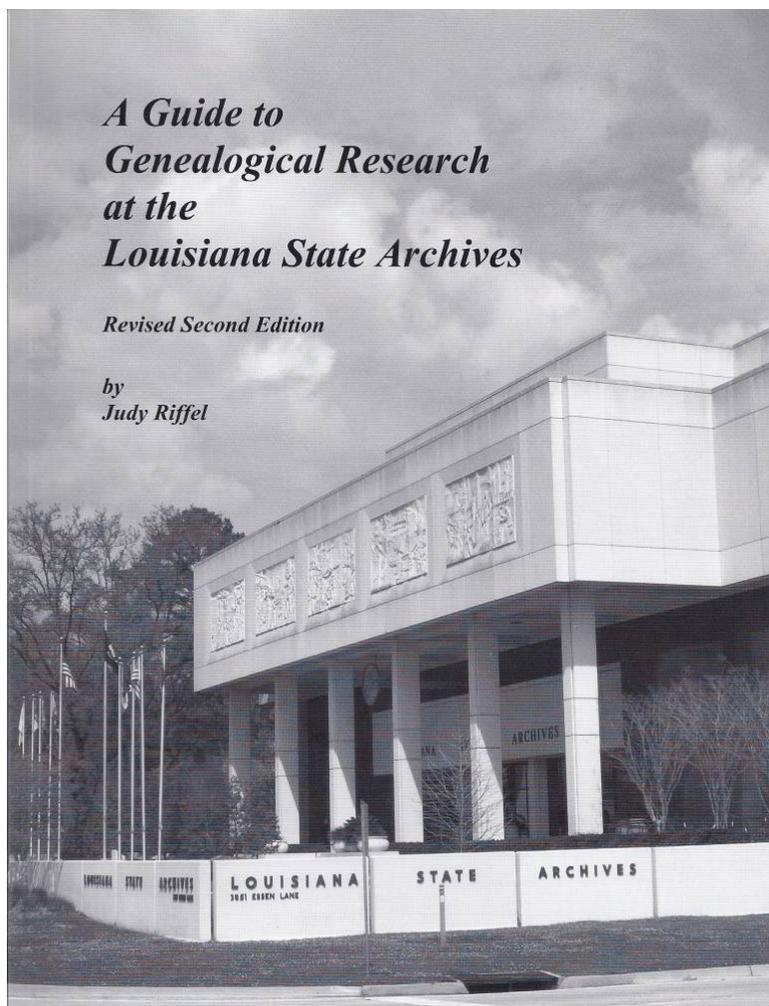


CAJUNS, CREOLES, PIRATES AND PLANTERS

Your New Louisiana Ancestors Format

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EXCELLENT GUIDE: As most of you know by now, I have donated a large portion of my genealogical collection to the Veach-Foshee Memorial Library Collection in Mansfield, Louisiana, located at the Mansfield Female College Museum. I keep few books in my own personal collection. One of the ones that I do like to keep on hand for use as needed is *A Guide to Genealogical Research at the Louisiana State Archives*, an excellent compilation by Judy Riffel.

As the interest in genealogy has grown over the years, many of the state archives have increased their collections to meet the needs of researchers. The Louisiana State Archives is fortunate to have Le Comite des Archives de la Louisiane working to promote its research section, and this was begun many years ago when the collection of state documents was located in a less-than-desirable location north of the State Capitol.

Through the interest of Le Comite and by working with the Secretary of State, a new structure was built on Essen Lane. Over time, the genealogy section has increased in size and with it a new resurgence of interest in using the facility for family research. The Louisiana State Archives holds numerous record collections of interest to researchers, but finding out what was actually in this facility was very difficult to determine.

Through the work of Judy Riffel, a new interest in using these old records came to the surface. The holdings here include books, microfilm, manuscripts, and other materials that can be used in compile family histories. What used to be an unknown source of research data is now one of the best of its kind in the South. Many changes were made over the years, and many people have been involved, but the important thing that happened was that desire of so many to preserve these old records and make them available to the public.

It has been an undertaking that should never be forgotten, and with the work that Le Comite has done over the years, the Louisiana State Archives now stands out as a fine research center. Members have also donated their time to see that others get the full benefits of what is offered in the research room. Materials are constantly being added to the collection, and interest in working here by individuals and many other societies has grown and will continue to grow as Riffel and others continue to spotlight the importance of the records housed here.

LASOS is the computer system used in identifying and locating data in the Louisiana State Archives. It contains several databases of genealogical importance. These can be accessed by researchers from terminals in the main research area. Riffel goes into detail to explain this system making this publication guide even more important, and researchers unable to work at the archives facility can now contact and request information by mail. All fees for the different documents are detailed here, and every effort was made to cover all things of interest to researchers.

Le Comite des Archives de la Louisiane was founded at the request of the State Archives and has contributed to the success of creating such a successful research center. It is a continuing process with more data being added every year. The growth of the collection is a source of pride brought about by the interest of a few of the top preservationists in the state, and many of these individuals are unknown by name but they have contributed by their continued interest in and support of one of the finest organizations in the entire country.

Membership fee in Le Comite remains the same, something that no other research group can claim. This has been accomplished through hard work, proper planning, and a desire to be the best. Some of the same people who started in the beginning are still with the group. This too can explain the success by a continuing interest in all levels of historic preservation.

Membership is open to anyone for only \$15 per year prior to March 1st of each year. Thereafter a \$5 extra fee is added to cover the cost of mailing out any back issues of the society's journal published during the year. This membership is on a calendar year basis. Complete details on joining this group and on obtaining copies of their publications can be obtained from Le Comite, P.O. Box 1547, Baton Rouge, LA 70821-1547.

Since the founding of Le Comite, thousands of dollars of microfilm, manuscripts, books, periodicals, equipment, and supplies have been supplied to the Louisiana State Archives. Through all of this period of support, two publications have stood out. *Le Raconteur* has maintained its excellence over the years, and now *Le Comite E-Communique*, a quarterly electronic newsletter, has been added. In addition to all of this, numerous books have been published with all profits going to the organization for the continued support of archival preservation.

A Guide to Genealogical Research at the Louisiana State Archives is something you need to have in you own personal library, and it definitely should be made available to researchers in all major genealogical library collections.

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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.