

CAJUNS, CREOLES, PIRATES AND PLANTERS

Your New Louisiana Ancestors Format

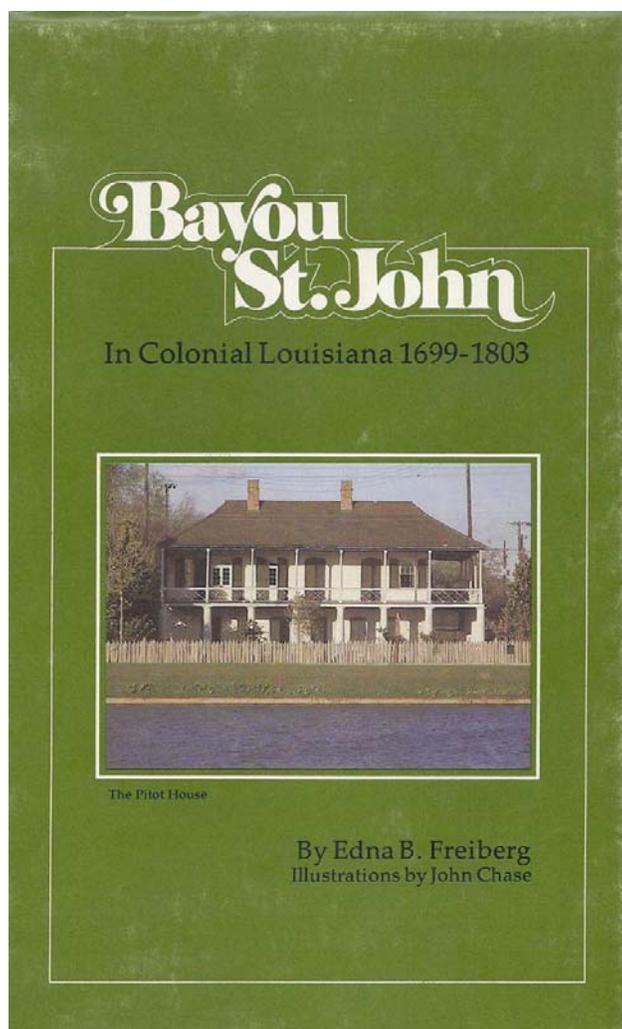
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DRESSED FOR THE OCCASION: Historian and Canary Islanders Historical Society member John Hickey presented a lecture titled “Unknown Louisiana – The Spanish Period” at the Parkview Library in New Iberia, Louisiana on March 1, 2012. Pictured above are Kristie Rose Trahan, Community Relations Coordinator, Janelle Hickey, John Hickey and Thomas Gotte, Assistant Community Relations Coordinator. Mr. and Mrs. Hickey are dressed in traditional Canary Islander apparel. (Photo by Joan Aleman)

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BAYOU ST. JOHN: It is important when doing genealogical research to check out as many sources as possible when compiling a family history. When it comes to ancestral ties to New Orleans, there are many records already published, but much has to be gleaned from early documents and other library and archival sources. One book that should not be overlooked is *Bayou St. John In Colonial Louisiana, 1699-1803*.



This book was published in 1980, but it is still as important today as it was when first introduced to genealogists. It is the first book depicting the role Bayou St. John played in the establishment and early development of New Orleans. The bayou and Bayou Road were the links in the lake route between the Gulf Coast and the Mississippi River and the best route available to Indians, trappers and explorers on their way to the upper Mississippi and Canada.

Prior to the introduction of steam-powered vessels, the lake-bayou route was both safer and shorter than the one through the passes and up the Mississippi River, which was plagued by strong currents and winds from the north. The first plantation of the region fronted on the bayou in 1708, ten years before the building of New Orleans began.

This history, gleaned from French and Spanish court records, letters and reports of colonial governors, and countless other sources gives fascinating insight into everyday lives of the earliest settlers on Bayou St. John and its environs. It gives insight into what life was like during this period of time, how the settlers lived, what

foods were available, a look into the practice of voodoo, how slavery played a part in this early period of development, and how Indians made up the majority of people living in the area.

There are lots of books available on New Orleans, but no look at the city is complete without checking out Edna G. Freiberg's wonderful look at the beginnings of a great city. Illustrations for this book were done by John Chase. Included in the back is a packet containing a huge (folded) pull-out map of the area at this period of time.

Documentation done by Freiberg is outstanding, and researchers will be surprised to find so many names that are important not only to the history of this city but to those seeking out missing links in ancestries. Don't overlook this one when doing research in Louisiana. You can check out the availability of this one on the internet. It was published by Harvey Press in New Orleans.

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SPECIAL TRIBUTE: The latest issue of *Les Memories du Bayou Lafourche* is filled with excellent information on the Guedry (Guidry) family. The Guedry-Labine and Petitpas reunion was held on October 8, 2011 in Cut Off, Louisiana. It was held at the Cut Off Youth Center and dedicated to Velton P. Guidry, who was a major part of the planning and preparation of the events for this day.

Including color pictures and many presentations, it was a fitting tribute to an outstanding genealogist. There were also many displays and exhibits of various local artists ranging from boatbuilding to quilt making to genealogical records. Most of today's Louisiana Cajuns are aware that their roots lie in Old Acadie, but many will never get the opportunity to visit there.

It was the Guidry family's desire to bring a little piece of home to Louisiana's Acadians. A gray granite boulder was transported to Houma by truck from the town of Lunenburg on the Atlantic coast of Nova Scotia. During the 1600s, Lunenburg was known as the Acadian settlement of Merligueche. This is the original site where the Guidry family's ancestors, Claude Guedry and Marguerite Petitpas, lived and raised their family.

Most of this issue was devoted to the Gary Joseph Triche family history, but there are also many other items of interest here that readers will find interesting. This publication comes from La Societe des Cajuns, and membership is only \$15 per year. Further information can be obtained by writing to them at P.O. Box 433, Larose, LA 70373, or contacting Mary Breaux at mbreaux@viscom.net.

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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 can be any length, and book reviews are printed as space permits, and you are encouraged to take advantage of this free service. All genealogical/historical/preservation books are reviewed in this column format, but a review copy is necessary for this service. Another service is offered here too. 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. It is a way to get out-of-print books back into the system and definitely is a great assistance to genealogists who may need this information.