

TERREBONNE GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

P.O. BOX 20295
HOUMA, LA 70361
NEWSLETTER

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NEXT MEETING JULY 25, 2026 1:00 PM
MAIN BRANCH LIBRARY 151 LIBRARY DR. HOUMA, LA
FIRST FLOOR MEETING ROOM

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NEWSLETTERS BY EMAIL ONLY



Donovan Garcia was our speaker last month. He designed all the Cajun Coast paddling trails and Bayou Teche National Wildlife paddling trails. In 2004, he became a founding member of the Friends of Bayou Teche National Wildlife Refuge and is still a current board member. He designed most of the hiking trails on the refuge, one of which was nationally recognized. In 2022, Donovan was asked to help with the expansion of the Bayou Teche Wildlife Refuge. This project became known as the Wildflower Energy Project. He is currently documenting flowering plants on the refuge and has found some rare plants. There are about 2500 plants native to Louisiana. He has documented 314 plants in St. Mary Parish. He planted black-eyed Susie seeds, and they were growing then they sprayed weed killer and all the plants died. He listed some of the plants on the trails, too many to name them all in this newsletter, some are edible, medicinal, and some are poisonous, toxic, and invasive. Thank you, Donovan, for such an informative presentation.

GUEST SPEAKER

Dr. Elista Istre, an avid traveler with a passion for cultures across the globe, founded Belle Heritage to offer consulting expertise and create cultural experiences that inspire individuals and organizations to celebrate the beauty of heritage. A descendant of Cajuns, French Creoles, and Spanish Isleños, Istre is a native and lifelong resident of Lafayette, Louisiana. She earned her B.A. in History and M.A. in Public History from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette and studied abroad at the Universidad de Sevilla in Spain. Graduating with top honors, she worked for several years in the museum world before teaching English as a second language in the U.S. and Africa. An accomplished historian dedicated to advancing the field of cultural heritage at home and abroad, Istre earned her Ph.D. in Heritage Studies at Arkansas State University. During her career thus far, Istre has established, directed, and supported several historic sites and museums in

Louisiana, including Vermilionville, a Cajun & Creole Heritage and Folklife Park in Lafayette; Longfellow-Evangeline State Historic Site in St. Martinville; and the Louisiana Military Museum in Abbeville. Istre also established and directed Historic Dyess Colony: Boyhood Home of Johnny Cash, in Dyess, Arkansas, and worked with the U.S. Army's Center for Military History at various Army museums around the country. Through engaging lectures, informative publications, and hands-on history programs, Istre has shared the beauty of heritage with academic and public audiences for over twenty-five years. She has published and presented both nationally and internationally on many different topics and has worked as an advisor for a variety of film productions including the nationally televised live concert The Johnny Cash Music Festival: 2011, the documentary film Joanne Cash, I Do Believe, and several travel-related programs. Istre served as historical consultant and assistant director for the documentary film First Cousins: Cajun and Creole Music in South Louisiana and authored the book *Creoles of South Louisiana: Three Centuries Strong*. Her latest publication is a children's book entitled *Josette and Friends Cook a Gumbo*. She has developed and implemented numerous cultural and historical interpretive programs at home and throughout the U.S. She served as a board member for the National Association for Interpretation (NAI) and directed NAI's Cultural and Historical Interpretation section for many years. One of the first in the U.S. to obtain a Master Certification in living history, she chaired the Arkansas Living History Association's certification committee for several years and continues to serve on the certification committee. She is currently serving as Louisiana's inaugural regional director in the newly renamed ArkLaHoma Living History Association. She also serves as a member of Northwestern State University's Creole Heritage Center Advisory Council and as a member of the University of Louisiana at Lafayette's Alumni Advisory Council for Public History. Inspired by the Scripture "Truly, I have a beautiful heritage" (Psalm 16:6 ISV), Istre named her company Belle Heritage as a fitting tribute to not only her French heritage and the first language of her grandparents (belle is French for "beautiful"), but also in honor of the universal beauty of heritage worldwide. The topic will be based on her book entitled *Creoles of South Louisiana: Three Centuries Strong*. Feel free to visit her website- www.BelleHeritage.com.

EVENTS

The Genealogy Club hosted by Kevn Allemand will meet on Monday, August 3, 2026, at 9:00AM at the Lockport Library in Lockport, LA.

The **48th Annual LHS Seminar** will be held Saturday, August 8, 2026, registration deadline is Friday, July 24, 2026. The Seminar will be held at the Thibodaux Regional Wellness Center at 726 N. Acadia Rd. (5th Floor), Thibodaux, LA Doors open at 8:30AM – Program begins at 9:00AM. Price \$40.00 per person. Registration forms are online to download and mail your payment, or you can click to register and pay online. See their website www.lafourcheheritagesociety.com. Speakers will be:

Elaine Bourque – *L'Amour de Maman – A Mother's Love. La Tradition Acadienne du Tissage en Louisiana*. She will speak about a 250-year-old tradition carried out by the Acadian Women of Southwest Louisiana, the tradition of weaving with coton juane – brown cotton. These same techniques were passed down generation from France to Canada to Louisiana. Upon arrive in Louisiana, the Acadian women had to learn coton jaune which was used in clothing, blankets and all household textiles.

Judy Riffel – *The Louisiana Plantations of the GU272. The Batey & Thibodaux Plantation*. Six Louisiana plantations scattered along the rivers and bayous of South Louisiana from the setting of

the story of the GU272, a group of enslaved people sold by the Maryland Jesuits to two Louisiana plantation owners in 1838. The Batey & Thibodaux plantation, located along Bayou Terrebonne was one of those plantations. This presentation will cover the history of the plantation, its owners, and the GU272, who were enslaved there.

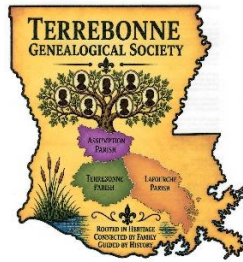
Dr. Christopher Cenac – *The Bowie Brothers and Bayou Buffalco (DuLarge)*. He will speak the saga of one of the most rural and rustic regions of coastal Louisiana – Bayou DuLarge. In a story that has its origin centuries ago, Volume II, with its thousands of photos, maps, and images, traces a legacy of perseverance and faith by the notable people who carved out an existence along the winding path of a waterway show on maps as early as 1804 as Bayou Buffalo. These pioneers, who tamed a wilderness of swamp and prairie, reaped a great bounty from the very environment they often had to battle. The book documents the Bowies' entrepreneurial entrance into the State of Louisiana and the parishes of Terrebonne and Lafourche. These notorious brothers were farmers, politicians, and soldiers as well as contemporaries of the infamous pirate, Jean Lafitte. Amongst their numerous and controversial pursuits, they made a fortune in the illicit slave trade.

Dr. Renee' Naquin & Katie Richard – *Sweeten Your Day with Katie & Renee'. The Louisiana Sugar Cane Industry*. Sugarcane production is a vital component of agriculture in South Louisiana, supporting local economies and rural communities across the region. It is grown by hundreds of farmers managing large acreages in multiple parishes. As a perennial crop, sugarcane is planted once and harvested over several years through regrowth cycles known as plant cane and stubble crops. This presentation provides an overview of the industry, guiding you through the history, planting, harvesting, processing, and refining of sugarcane, while highlighting the many factors involved in transforming the crop from field to finished product. Overall, the industry relies on strong coordination amount farmers, mills, and processors to efficiently move sugar from the field to the marketplace.

TERREBONNE GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY				
2026 MEETING SCHEDULE				
DATE	LOCATION	ROOM/FLOOR	BOARD	GENERAL
7-25-2026	Main Branch	Large Rm 1 st Fl	11:00 AM	1:00 PM
8-29-2026	Main Branch	Large Rm 1 st Fl		1:00 PM
9-26-2026	Main Branch	Large Rm 1 st Fl	11:00 AM	1:00 PM
10-31-2026	Main Branch	Large Rm 1 st Fl	11:00 AM	1:00 PM
<i>No Meeting in November</i>				
12-12-2026	Main Branch	D.E. Rm 2 nd Fl		Noon

Check out our website: www.terrebonnegenealogicalsociety.org
Facebook Group: Terrebonne Genealogical Society

HAPPY 4TH OF JULY
HAPPY 250TH AMERICA



ABOUT US

The Terrebonne Genealogical Society is dedicated to researching preserving and sharing the rich family histories of Terrebonne, Lafourche, Assumption and surrounding parishes.

We support genealogists of all experience levels – from beginners to seasoned researchers – through education, collaboration, and access to historical resources.



WHAT WE DO

- Research Assistance
- Terrebonne Life Lines Publications & Resources
- Educational Programs & Presentations
- Monthly Meetings with Guest Speaker or workshop
- Connections with fellow researchers & historians
- Opportunities to share and preserve family histories

CONTACT US

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