

Lafayette Genealogical Society
General Monthly Meeting Minutes

June 20, 2019

Call to Order

The monthly meeting of the Lafayette Genealogical Society was held Thursday, June 20, 2019 in the meeting room of the South Regional Library, 1601 Johnston Street, Lafayette, Louisiana, at 6:30 P.M. The meeting was called to order by President Henry Peterson, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence.

Approval of Previous Minutes

President Peterson announced that the minutes for the May, 2019 meeting were online and available for review on the <http://lafayettegenealogicalsociety.org> website. A motion was made, seconded and voted on affirmatively to dispense with the reading of the minutes.

Treasurer's Report

LGS treasurer, Warren Leblanc, presented the current financials, noting a current, balance of \$5,609.15, which was approved.

It was further noted that the current membership total has increased to 96 members. Dues are \$20 per couple and renewable in February.

Leblanc announced notable membership anniversaries.

Old Business

- The LGS annual publication committee is requesting members' various contributions, such as 4-5 generational charts and/or family stories. A hardcopy will be placed in the library. Warren Leblanc will continue to accept submissions until October, 2019.
- Research assistance from Lafayette Genealogical Society members is offered every Tuesday from 8:30 - noon in the Genealogy Section (3rd floor) of the Main Branch of the Lafayette Public Library, 301 West Congress St., Lafayette, Louisiana.
- Genealogy 101 sessions are held in one of the 2nd floor meeting rooms on the first Saturday of each month at 9:30 a.m. Location is the Main Lafayette Public Library, 301 W. Congress Street, Lafayette, Louisiana.

Genealogy 101 is an informal round table discussion offered by the Lafayette Genealogical Society to introduce the genealogy process to those beginning the search for their ancestors; introductory forms are offered to those attending. Problems and "brick walls" that members may have are discussed with possible solutions offered. Time permitting, research assistance may be provided.

New Business

- A Surname Index List has been placed in the "Members Only" Section of the LGS website. This index reflects the surnames researched by the members, with said members' contact information, for the purpose of facilitation of sharing information. If any member does not wish to be include in this list, please contact Warren Leblanc.

Guest Speaker

The evening speaker was Gayle Breaux Smith, who discussed how Acadians turned salt marshes into fertile farmland by building a unique dyke system called “aboiteau.”

When the first Europeans arrived in the 17th century to the area that is now Nova Scotia, they found willing trading partners and forged positive relationships with the Mi'kmaq. In 1636, the governor of Acadie, enlisted five Sauniers from western France for the purpose of “dyking the marsh” at Port Royal. These Sauniers were keepers of the centuries-old expertise of building dykes and draining lands in western France.

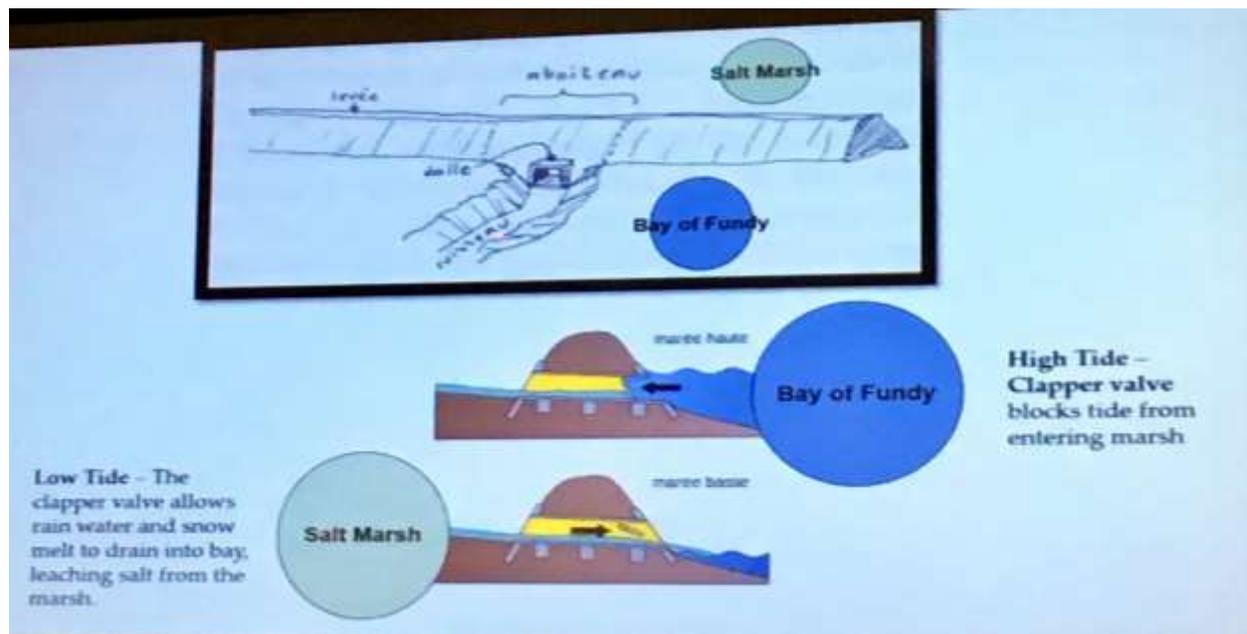
When the Acadians began transforming the marsh at Grand Pré, the Mi'kmaq did not prevent them from altering and ultimately removing a vast wetland from the regional resource base.

One element of the Acadians' success was to use sod cut from the original wetlands in their earthen dykes. Special spades were used to cut bricks of sod in specific sizes and shapes that were then assembled to form the dyke. The grasses in the sod could withstand being covered by salt water for many hours each day. They also had deep and densely matted root systems that anchored them when the sea water swirled over them, protecting the exposed sides of the dykes at



high tide. Cutting the sod and assembling the dykes were a communal undertaking because of the skills, efficiency and speed the work required.

The Acadians took advantage of the natural drainage patterns of the marsh by building aboiteau in the small creek beds that drained the marshes at low tide. The aboiteau, refers to the section of the dyke surrounding the sluice, as well as to the completed dyking project. The sluices each had a clapper, a wooden valve that allowed fresh water out of the sluice and into the bay at low tide but did not allow sea water back in during high tide.



The aboiteau approach was used by the Acadians until Le Grand Derangement in 1755, resulting in formation of over 2900 acres of fertile land in the Grand Pre area.



- On a different topic, the speaker suggested attendance at the “Congrès Mondial Acadien 2019” to be held in Canada, August 10 – 24, 2019. For more information regarding this event, go to www.cma2019.ca

Next Meeting

- The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, July 18, 2019 at the South Regional Library, 1601 Johnston Street at 6:30 P.M. The scheduled topic will be “Evaluation of Obituaries.”

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Labbe Boudreaux