

**Lafayette Genealogical Society
General Monthly Meeting Minutes
February 18, 2021**

Call to Order

The monthly meeting of the Lafayette Genealogical Society was held Thursday, February 18, 2021, at the South Regional Lafayette Public Library located at 6101 Johnston Street. At 6:30 p.m., the meeting was held in the Library auditorium and presented via Zoom for individuals unable to attend in person.

The meeting was called to order by President Joan Boudreaux, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence for our deceased ancestors and members, as well as others who are no longer with us.

An introduction of our guest speaker and other members which were present were announced.

Approval of Previous Minutes

President Joan Boudreaux announced that the minutes for the January, 2021 meeting were online and available for review on the <http://lafayettegenealogicalsociety.org> website.

A motion was made, seconded and voted on affirmatively to approve the minutes as posted on the LGS site and dispense with the reading of the minutes.

Treasurer's Report

LGS treasurer, Warren Leblanc, presented the current financials, with an ending balance of \$ 5,317.94.

It was further noted that we increased our current membership by 13 new members. Names of individuals were to be given to President Joan Boudreaux.

A motion was made, seconded and an affirmative vote was accepted to the treasurer's report.

Old Business

Our March meeting date was moved from Thursday, March 18 to Wednesday, March 17, due to the availability of the conference room. Further information is forthcoming.

Of our previous survey, the results were reviewed and discussed.

LGS Webmaster, Everett Thompson is seeking to retire from his long standing position. We are in need of an individual with web development experience and is willing to assist in the transition. Please provide information to an officer, if you know of anyone that would be interested.

New Business - Announcements by President

None discussed.

Evening Speaker

Our guest speaker was Ms. Elaine Larcade Bourque, a Master Spinner and Weaver and a member of the Lafayette Genealogical Society.

Elaine discussed the cultural traditions and the history of coton jaune, the natural Acadian brown cotton, associated with the farming and weaving in Louisiana. The Acadian people were accomplished spinners and weavers who migrated from France to Acadie (now New Brunswick and Nova Scotia). Their expulsion by the British led them to resettle in lower Louisiana. The Acadian people were met with basic challenges, but with a determination and willingness to both learn and adapt they recognized this particular fiber, as suitable for spinning and weaving their household textiles and clothing.

Cherished for her artistic merit and cultural importance, Elaine learned the process and craft of weaving brown cotton, from her time apprenticing under the renowned weaver Gladys LeBlanc. Mr. Austin Clark is her fellow weaver and apprentice, practicing this vibrant 250 year tradition.

Elaine described a mother's love, "L'Amour de Maman". A mother's desire to pass on the values of both land and family. The physical expression of maternal love, a mother's beautiful, skillfully woven blankets were made as dowry gifts. A dowry may have included blankets, bed-spreads, sheets, towels, mattress covers and pillows. She discussed how weaving practices were passed largely from mother to daughter and how weaving as a cultural tradition in Acadiana tended to spread geographically. The ginning to weaving process and home furnishings were common in Acadian households, before the mid-twentieth century. Economic conditions in Acadiana played an important role in the revitalization of brown cotton weaving, over the last 150 years.

Family genealogy is an important part of Elaine's on going research. Blankets were found in families located in three surrounding parishes, Vermilion, Lafayette and St. Landry. The Broussard, LeBlanc and Duhon Families were mentioned in her discussion. She continues to document Acadian blankets and other textiles that remain in the families that wove them, meeting many new friends and relatives along the way.

Elaine is a cultivator of coton jaune for her personal use. A small patch of brown cotton provides her with a supply of fiber for spinning and weaving her textiles.

Elaine has been instrumental in the formation of the current exhibition, "Acadian Brown Cotton: The Fabric of Acadiana." at the Hilliard Museum in Lafayette, Louisiana. This exhibition is on view from September 12, 2020 - June 30, 2021.

<http://www.hilliardmuseum.org/calendar/virtual-tour-of-acadian-brown-cotton-the-fabric-of-acadiana>

Another website to visit

<https://www.acadianbrowncotton.com/>

Field to Fashion in Acadiana

Also mentioned, the Acadian Museum in Erath, Louisiana has an exhibit of textiles made with brown cotton.

<https://www.acadianmuseum.com/museum.html>





Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Janice Plaisance