

Lafayette Genealogical Society
General Monthly Meeting Minutes

November 19, 2019

Call to Order

The monthly meeting of the Lafayette Genealogical Society was held Thursday, November 19, 2019 in the meeting room of the South Regional Library, 1601 Johnston Street 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 October, 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 \$5,715.15, which was approved.

A motion was made, seconded and voted on affirmatively to accept the slight increase in the fee for the storage unit utilized by the society.

Leblanc announced that there were no additional members since the last meeting, and no membership anniversaries for the month of November.

Old Business

- 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.
- On the 1st Saturday of each month, an informal group also meets at the Main Library to share genealogical information and stories.
- **LGS End of Year Banquet and Induction Officers**
The end of year banquet and induction of officers will be held at 11:00 on Friday, December 6, 2019, at the Petroleum Club. The speaker will be Father Vidrine. Cost to attend is \$20 per person and can be paid at the door.

New Business

ULL Professor Emeritus Barry Jean Ancelet was the guest speaker for the evening. Ancelet is a Cajun folklorist and expert in Cajun music and Cajun French.

His presentation highlighted the musical contributions of Caesar Vincent. The enigmatic Vincent (1882–1970) was not a musician in any professional sense, never recorded commercially and never owned a car. Instead, he was a subsistence farmer who raised five children with his wife Olive.

But what makes him astounding is his encyclopedic repertoire of ancient French songs, many stemming from the Middle Ages, all crammed inside his head. The eccentric balladeer sang practically everywhere, walking to the store, parties, funerals, often out of the blue unannounced.

Vincent's legacy may have been lost without the efforts of renowned folklorists and local preservation efforts. In 1953 he was recorded by educator Catherine Blanchet and four years later by LSU professor Dr. Harry Oster. Digging through the Archives of Cajun and Creole Folklore at the University of Louisiana at

Lafayette and obtaining reels from the National Archives, Ancelet gathered 44 songs sung by Caesar Vincent. Ancelet transcribed and translated the lyrics. The songs guided Ancelet to assemble the music in a presentable format.

Ancelet gathered nearly 30 musicians, such as Zachary Richard, Steve Riley, Roddie Romero, Wayne Toups, Bonsoir, Catin and others to reinterpret Vincent's songs and extract the essence of the old music. The result of those efforts is a 30-song, two-CD album CD entitled: *Travailler, c'est trop dur: The Lyrical Legacy of Caesar Vincent*

Vincent didn't live to see his hero status. Interest in his songs faded as radio, TV and other modern entertainment moved into his Vermilion Parish community. Although parts of Vincent's repertoire was documented by folk music recordists, Oster and Blanchet, Vincent died in 1970, right before the explosion of the Cajun cultural revival that CODOFIL helped ignite. Because Oster and Blanchet's recordings in French Louisiana are also not particularly well known or understood, Vincent remained a virtual secret to all but a few die-hard scholars of Louisiana French folk music.

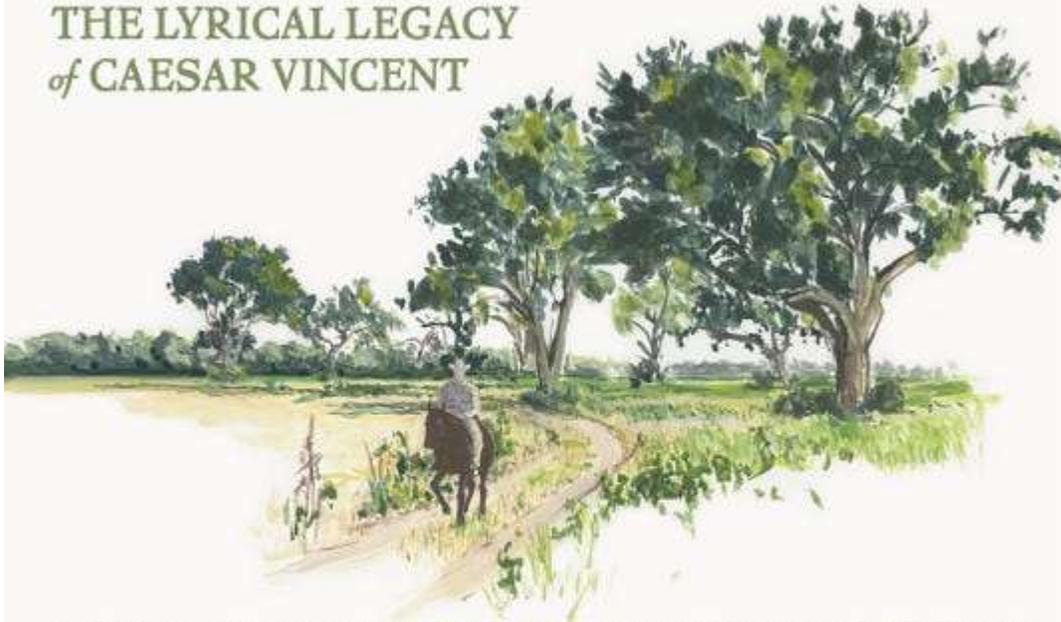


Caesar Vincent was the honoree of the 2018 Festivals Acadiens et Créoles, at which time the CD was released to the public for purchase. The CD, which includes 40 pages of lyrics, etc. can be purchased for \$20 at Floyd's Record Shop, as well as <http://www.festivalsacadiens.com/shop/cds>

Mr. Caesar Vincent

(1882–1970)

TRAVAILLER, C'EST TROP DUR :
THE LYRICAL LEGACY
of CAESAR VINCENT



ZACHARY RICHARD · STEVE RILEY & THE MAMOU PLAYBOYS · FEUFOLLET
RODDIE ROMERO · WAYNE TOUPS · BONSOIR, CATIN · SAM BROUSSARD
BARRY JEAN ANCELET · ANN SAVOY & JANE VIDRINE · DAVID DOUCET
ANNA LAURA EDMLSTON · JOURDAN THIBODEAUX & CEDRIC WATSON
MEGAN BROWN & KELLI JONES · JOSH & CLAIRE CAFFERY · BLAKE MILLER
& AMELIA BIÈRE · LAFAYETTE RHYTHM DEVILS · BABINEAUX SISTERS
LES ÉTOILES DE LA LOUISIANE · CAESAR VINCENT

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Labbe Boudreaux