

Lafayette Genealogical Society

Meeting Minutes

April 16, 2018

The monthly meeting of the Lafayette Genealogical Society was held on Thursday, April 16, 2018 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 Brenda Thibodeaux. The meeting began with a few words of welcome to our members thanking them for their attendance. This was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. We then had a moment of silence to honor our ancestors who have gone before us and to remember our men and women serving in the armed forces. Guests were then asked to introduce themselves. They included: Linda Walker, Helen Breath, Cindy Broussard, Jana Broussard and Frank Hebert.

President Thibodeaux then stated that the minutes from the March meeting were on the website and asked for a motion to dispense with reading of the minutes. The motion was made by Henry Peterson and seconded by Everett Thompson. The motioned was passed and everyone is encouraged to read the minutes on-line.

Warren LeBlanc was called upon to give the Treasurer's Report. It is as follows:

Beginning Balance	\$5,301.44
Dues	180.00
Books Sold/Donations	
Supplements Sold	
Acadian Project	
Banquet	
Publication Expense	(40.00)
Speaker Meals	
Banquet Expenses	
Office expenses	

Other Expenses/Rent	
Library Book Project	
Ending Balance	\$5,421.44

New Members for 2018	17
TOTAL MEMBERS	96
Members with Dues Unpaid	70

New members for this month are:

Susan and Wayne Ducote
Christian Roundtree
Ronald and Margaret White

Members with March anniversary of club membership are:

Calice and Julia Breaux	8 years
Kathy Higginbotham	5 years
Donna Latiolais	5 years
Terry Graham	3 years
Tamra Broussard	2 years

Henry Peterson motioned that we accept the treasurer’s report for March. It was seconded by Elaine Bourque. The motion was passed without opposition.

President Thibodeaux reminded everyone about our Tuesday mornings at the main library. Society members are at the library to assist with research. Everyone is invited to go to the library and participate.

Warren LeBlanc was called upon to make a special presentation to the Library. The Society purchased two books from the Orphan Train Society with information on the orphans who were brought here early in the 20th century. Many were adopted into Louisiana families and in September the director or the Orphan Train Museum will be our guest speaker.



Warren LeBlanc presents Orphan Train Books to Sam Lollar of library staff

This ended the business part of the meeting.

President Thibodeaux then introduced our speaker Peggy Broughton who is an expert on assisting Adoptees with researching their biological families.



April speaker Peggy Broughton reads from USA Today article

She began her talk by saying that adoption is older than Moses. An adoptee has 2 sets of parents, birth and adoptive. DNA provides clues and information. She is a former member of the Adoption Triad Network of Lafayette, La., founded in the early 1980's. It is still active today and information can be found at their website. She says that many adoptees want to know their heritage and have a right to health information. Louisiana is still a sealed adoption state. Things, however, are progressing and more information is becoming available. Before the 1850's adoption was mostly done within families and no "official" records were kept. Orphans were taken in by family members. Later on, each state formalized adoption and information was sealed. These laws were made to protect children's rights.

When assisting an adoptee with research privacy and courtesy are very important. Many people want the information to remain private. Adoptions were kept private to protect all parties. Today things have changed and there is not as much of a stigma surrounding adoption. There are groups on Facebook where individual information is posted and people spread the information.

She read part of an article she found in USA Today written by Betsy Brenner entitled *Unwed Birth Mother Kept a Lifelong Secret: Me*. In the article, Betsy Brenner tells about her search for her birth mother. She tells how she found out by accident that she was adopted. For the article, Ms. Brenner interviewed Ann Fessler the author of *The Girls Who Went Away*. Ms. Fessler called the period between WWII and the Roe vs Wade decision as the "Baby Scoop" era. Approximately 4 million babies were adopted during this period. A full copy of the article can be found on line. (I found the article on google by typing, Betsy Brenner article in USA Today). Even though Betsy had a wonderful life with her adoptive parents, she just wondered about her birth mother. Birth fathers were even harder to find than birth mothers. Many were not named. In the 1990's laws were passed that stated a child could not be put up for adoption without a search for the father. He was then given the option of waiving his parental rights. Betsy does not know who her birth father was but she has some clues. Only a DNA test would confirm if her information is correct.

With so many babies being put up for adoption, it was inevitable that search groups were organized to assist adoptees search for their birth parents. Computers and the rise of the internet, as well as DNA testing has made searching easier. The ISSR Soundex Reunion Registry is a data base formed to help. It can be found on the internet as ISSR.org. Other searches are done with DNA. Facebook and other groups can be found on the internet to assist in a more private setting.

The talk concluded and Ms. Broughton introduced her nephew Philip Chriceol who is her assistant. The meeting was then adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Pellerin
Secretary

