



# Écoutez



April - June, 2016

Volume XLVIII, No. 2

## A PUBLICATION OF THE WEST BATON ROUGE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

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*"The purpose of the West Baton Rouge Historical Association shall be to foster interest in history, particularly that of West Baton Rouge Parish, and to encourage and pursue research, collection and preservation of materials illustrating past or present activities of the parish."*



**WBR Historical Association Card Party**—Committee members are finalizing plans for the 11<sup>th</sup> annual "Christmas in July" Card Party to be held on Monday, July 25, 2016 at the WBR Community Center announced Lorry Trotter, Chairperson. Pictured from left are Janet Simoneaux, Kim Callegan, Babs Babin, Evva Wilson, Food Chairperson; Joyce Barbier, Lorry Trotter, Event Chairperson; Alice LeBlanc, and Jane Brou. Not pictured is Helen Thibodeaux. Reservations are required and the cost is \$30 per person for a full day of fun, fellowship, good food, door prizes and more! Bring your entire group or register individually to play cards or other parlor games and celebrate "Christmas in July" with us. **Reservations are required. Registration deadline is July 18.** To reserve your table, please contact Alice LeBlanc at (225) 336-2422, Ext. 10 to register or for additional information.

## Louisiana Historical Marker Approved for Oaks Plantation in Port Allen

"The WBR Historical Association Historical Preservation Committee received approval and has installed a Louisiana State Historical Marker for Oaks Plantation," announced Brian Falcon, committee chairperson. The home, located at 605 South River Road in Port Allen, is owned by Kim and Kerry Callegan who assisted Falcon in developing the proposal to submit for recognition by the Louisiana Office of Historic Preservation.

At the time of the Louisiana Purchase this tract of land belonged to a Madame Patin. In 1838 her heirs sold the tract to Jesse Patrick. Patrick purchased the neighboring southern property from

Aurore Allain. At the time of Patrick's ownership, the tract was described as measuring 23 ½ arpents front on the river with a depth of 80 arpents on the first 14 ½ arpents above, and a depth of 40 arpents for the remainder of said land, bounded on the upper side by the lands of Sebastien Hiriart and at the lower by those of Ursin Soniat and Hopkins. At its greatest extent, the plantations' boundaries reached Court Street on the north, U. S. Interstate 10 to the south and Hwy. 415 to the west.

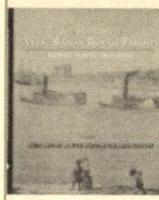
In February, 1868 the plantation was seized by the West Baton Rouge Sheriff for repayment of debts owed to Citizens Bank of Louisiana. Edward Gay, prominent Iberville Parish planter, purchased it at sheriff's sale the following March. Gay sold the property to his brother, William, in 1869. During the Gay family's ownership, the plantation grew corn, sugarcane and rice.

Levee maps in 1871 and 1914 depict the property with a residence set in a grove of oaks, presumably the plantation's namesake. Also on the plantation was a river landing, sugar mill, quarters' cabins and vegetable gardens. The house site was lost to the river in 1914, but the residence was relocated west to its present site. "The Oaks, Inc." was incorporated in 1924, and began subdividing the plantation into smaller lots around the house. The site of the house was enhanced with formal gardens by noted West Baton Rouge landscape architects Theodore and Lou Bird Landry.

The home is three rooms wide by two rooms deep with additions to its rear. A deep porch lines the front, and the whole is covered with a hipped roof topped with a lyre shaped lighting rod. Detailing of the house is restrained classical revival. Hand hewn and machine sawn wood framing is found throughout. Timbers in the roof and floor framing contain old mortise and tenon joints, but nails dating from circa 1880 are used as the sole joining method for the structural members. This is indicative of a structure built with salvaged materials or an older structure that has been significantly altered.

"Special thanks to Garry Hubble and the City of Port Allen for installing the Oaks marker," said Falcon. A formal dedication will be held in the near future.

### Great Gift Idea



*The History of West Baton Rouge Parish: People, Places, Progress* is available at the WBR Museum gift shop. The cost of the book is \$27.25 for the general public and \$23.98 for WBRHA members. For additional information, call Alice LeBlanc at (225) 336-2422, ext. 10.



Ellis Gauthier  
WBR Historical Association  
Board President

## FROM OUR PRESIDENT AROUND OUR ASSOCIATION

The invitations have been mailed, the reservations are arriving in the mail daily, and the West Baton Rouge Historical Association Card Party Committee is planning to host the 11<sup>th</sup> annual Christmas in July Card Party on Monday, July 25 at the WBR Community Center in Port Allen! Special thanks to HA Board member Lorry Trotter for chairing the event again this year and to



Evva Wilson for assisting again as food chairman. These ladies do an awesome job with the help of Card Party Committee members Babs Babin, Joyce Barbier, Jane Brou, Kim Callegan, Alice LeBlanc, Janet Simoneaux and Helen Thibodeaux. In addition to the committee, many of our WBRHA Board members also assist with set up and take down, and making breakfast food and desserts. If you'd like to help, please call Lorry Trotter at 627-6264 or 953-3867. Please remember that each board member is asked to provide at least two wrapped door prizes for the event. They should be delivered to Alice LeBlanc before the Card Party. Monetary gifts will also be accepted.

The annual Sugar Fest is right around the corner! Please mark your calendars for Sunday, October 2 and plan to spend the day at the West Baton Rouge Museum. The Historical Association hosts a Plantation Dinner and sponsors the Sweets Booth during the day. All WBRHA Board members are required to sell dinner tickets and provide something for the Sweets Booth. Members

will receive their tickets to sell in early September.

We are impressed with the quality and number of accessions that have been donated to the WBRHA. You may have some items tucked away pertaining to West Baton Rouge Parish history that you'd like to find a home for and we would be happy to add them to our collection as a donation or loan.

Brian Falcon chairs the Historic Preservation Committee and works diligently during the year to add new and replacement markers throughout the parish. The Oaks Plantation marker in Port Allen has been installed and plans are underway for its dedication. Additionally, the committee has submitted information for a marker at the Cohn High School site in Port Allen and recently received final approval for it. The marker should arrive in May 2017. Thanks to Brian and his committee for their dedication.

The Hospitality Committee chaired by Kim Callegan provides refreshments for various West Baton Rouge Historical Associations events. We appreciate Kim and her committee's assistance with wonderful treats for those who attend our events.

As active members of our association, please encourage new members to join our organization. To suggest a potential member or for more information, call Alice LeBlanc at (225) 336-2422, Ext. 10.

Sincerely,

*Ellis*

Ellis Gauthier  
President



## Commemorating the U.S. Civil War Sesquicentennial in Louisiana



Julie Rose  
West Baton Rouge

### From Our Director



Greetings,

The summer at the West Baton Rouge Museum is filled with new exhibitions, programs, visitors, and lots and lots of children! We welcomed Blast from the Past Summer Camp this year with the theme "Have a Roaring Good Time" that looked at the pop culture of the 1920s and 1930s. The camp theme was developed to complement the current exhibition "Spirited: Prohibition in America", which is an enormous installation that spills out of the Whitehead Gallery and into the Brick Gallery. This fabulous traveling exhibition is based on the book by Daniel Okrent, *Last Call: The Rise and Fall of Prohibition*. The exhibit is made possible through NEH on the Road, a special initiative of the National Endowment for the Humanities. When you take a look at the calendar in this issue of the *Ecoutez* you will see that our education team has assembled an exciting schedule of lunchtime lectures, a rum and beer tasting bus trip, and a beer making workshop to go with the exhibit, AND everyone is invited to party at the **Speakeasy Soirée** on July 23 from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Live music by Jan Dupre & the Gentlemen of Swing will set the tone

for dancing, drinks, and 1920s flappers fun. The event is free, guests must be 21 years of age or older. This summer's Teachers Institute is also based on the history of the Prohibition time period in America. We welcome summer intern Lauren Fontaine, a rising senior at LSU who is studying American history and is working closely with our curatorial team on the "Dorothea Lange's America" exhibit, which will open later this year. The museum is looking for more volunteers. With Sugar Fest around the corner, new collections that need hands-on care, exhibits to install, and many more tours on the schedule, the museum is seriously in need of more volunteers. Call Toni Brantley at (225) 336-2422 x16 and let us know what you would enjoy doing and when you can come by to find out more.

Three cheers for history!

See you at the museum!

*Julie*

Julie Rose  
Director





## Mary Bennett WBR Historical Association Volunteer

Port Allen resident Mary Bennett's interest in the West Baton Rouge Historical Association comes naturally – her parents, Barbara and the late Oscar Bennett, also volunteered with the organization. Her dad spent many hours in the early stages of the organization as a board member, planner, greeter, and doing whatever was necessary to lay a strong foundation for success. Barbara contributed by sharing her baking talents, attending activities, and serving as a volunteer demonstrator in the Aillet House. Following in her Dad's footsteps as a board member of the West Baton Rouge Historical Association provides a sense of connection for Mary.

A graduate of Port Allen High School, Mary attended LSU and Nichols and is the proud mother of three children and five grandchildren.

A recent retiree, she worked at Southern Farm Bureau Insurance Company in Baton Rouge for 28 years where she served as Executive Assistant to the Executive Vice President. "Coming from a parish rich in agriculture made me aware of farmers' issues and the important role agriculture plays in West Baton Rouge's economy," she said.

Bennett prepared for and attended board meetings, handled correspondence with the board and others, and taught customer service seminars to local parish office Farm Bureau personnel. She enjoyed her interaction with other company employees and was always willing to assist them in whatever way she could. "My number one goal was to make sure the customer was satisfied," she continued.

Always a busy lady, Mary learned how to sew from her grandmother, Mae Gremillion. She enjoys heirloom sewing, smocking and machine embroidery. She created heirloom baptismal gowns for family members and first communion dresses and clothes for her grandchildren. Currently she is holding family sewing classes for grandchildren and nieces this summer.

A longtime volunteer, Mary wanted to do things she enjoyed doing once she retired on September 1, 2013. First and foremost was babysitting her grandchildren, baking breads, sugar cookies, and French macaroons. She joined the WBRHA Board in January 2015 and soon was asked to chair the WBR Historical Association's Sweets Booth at Sugar Fest on the Museum grounds. Her love of people drew many to help in the booth as she rounded up volunteers to assist her – many who had never volunteered before! Additionally, the Sweets Booth made the largest profit ever under Mary's leadership! And yes, she has agreed to chair the Sweets Booth again this year!

Bennett loves to travel, especially in Europe and has been there several times. Additionally she has been to France, Germany, Switzerland, and Italy. She recently toured Normandy and England on a 14-day trip earlier this year. She also travels extensively in the states. Mary loves to read and garden and enjoys spending time with her two pet dogs. This is one busy lady who willingly shares her time and talents with others! "Thank you," Mary Bennett, "for sharing your talents with the West Baton Rouge Historical Association!"



Angélique Bergeron  
Curator of Collections

## Curator's Corner

### Collections Highlight

The West Baton Rouge Historical Association recently accepted a couple of beautiful examples of early Louisiana portraiture from JoAnn

Busse which have descended in her family. First is a framed miniature portrait c.1815 of Francois Mathieu LeFaux. JoAnn also donated a gold necklace with



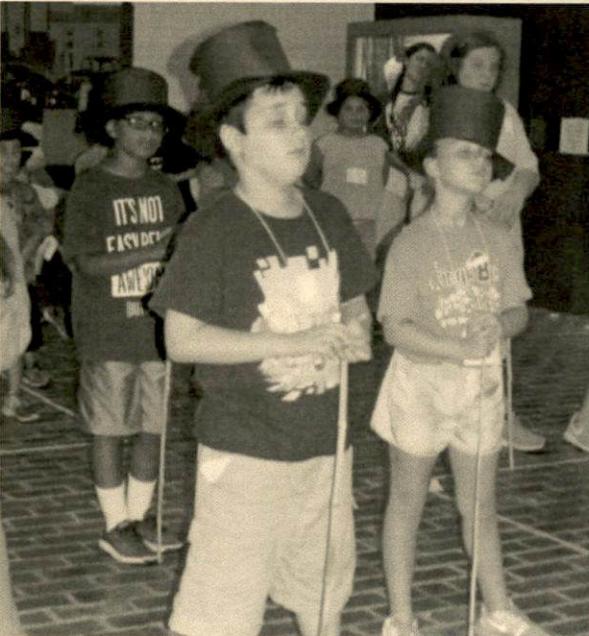
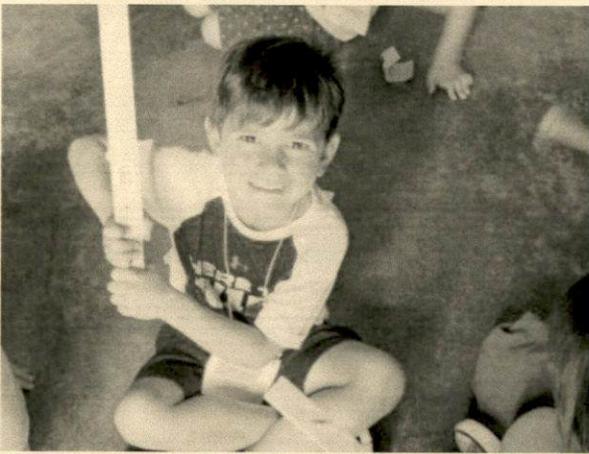
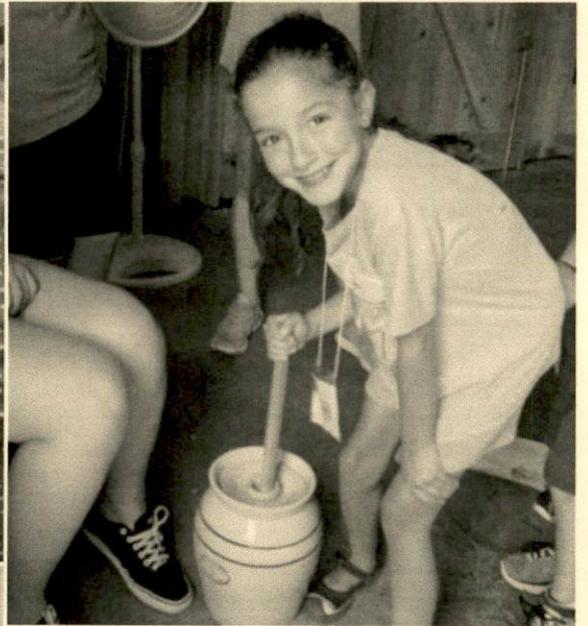
twin cameo portraits of twin girls in the family of Louisiana Governor P.O. Hebert. Both were on display in the recent 19<sup>th</sup> century portraiture exhibit, *The Portrait, the Artist and the Patron*.

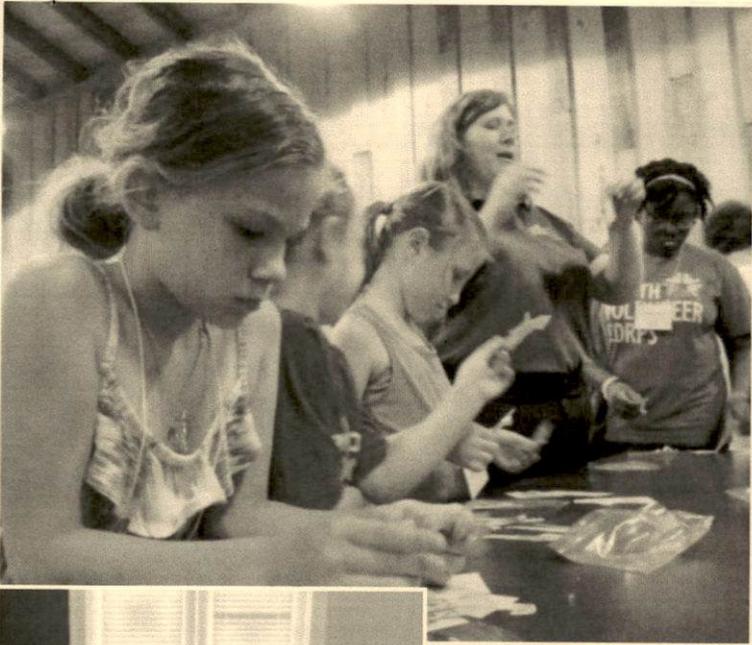
### Call for Artifacts

The West Baton Rouge Museum is always looking for artifacts, documentary material, and photos that reflect the history of our parish. Currently we are seeking photographs and artifacts from Port Allen for our centennial exhibit this fall. If you have any items you wish to share for this exhibit or if you have something you would like to add to the Historical Association's Permanent Collection, please contact Angélique Bergeron, Curator at (225) 336-2422, x11 or [Bergeron@wbmuseum.org](mailto:Bergeron@wbmuseum.org).

# Blast from the Past Summer Camp

## Have a Roaring Good Time





SAVE THE DATE



SUGAR  
FEST

OCTOBER 2  
2016



## New Consignors at the West Baton Rouge Museum Store

The Museum Store has recently garnered three new exciting consignors—Judith Braggs, a textile artist, Michelle Rowland, who hand crafts jewelry, and Jo Busse, whose note cards and journals feature images of her original artwork.

**Judith's** quilted wall hangings feature themes inspired by memories of her childhood in Cherie Quarters near New Roads. The quilts she stitches from colorful fabrics and three-dimensional materials capture her vivid memories of family, community and the way of life in her childhood days. Her work has been displayed throughout the East Baton Rouge Parish Library system and is the subject of an essay appearing in the *Baton Rouge Folklife Survey*. Each piece tells its own story and is a unique work of art.



**Michelle Rowland** of *Vieuxtique* creates Louisiana inspired jewelry pieces using beads, charms and pearls. Her whimsical crawfish, crab and alligator earrings as well as her purple and gold tassel and tiger paw print items reflect her deep attachment to South Louisiana culture and heritage. Her fleur de lis creations, in a variety of colors and styles, have wide appeal and are reasonably priced.

**Jo Busse** grew up at Arbroth at the upper end of West Baton Rouge Parish, on the Mississippi River Road. After discovering the visual arts of pen and ink, photography and painting, she found that color combinations fascinated her. So with the endless possibility of colors, she creates the backgrounds on which she presents a fleur de lis or some other image that strikes her imagination. Each art piece that she creates has an inner spiritual depth. Now using her original art, she has delved into a passionate venture creating note cards and journals to "*Reconnect to the Joy of the Handwritten Note.*"



The Museum Store is open Tuesday through Saturday, 10:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Sunday. Come in and enjoy a complimentary cup of coffee while you shop. For further information, call (225) 336-2422 ext. 19 or email Gwenn at [gwenn.lavolette@gmail.com](mailto:gwenn.lavolette@gmail.com)

JOIN US FOR A  
SPEAKEASY SOIRÉE  
AT THE  
WEST BATON ROUGE MUSEUM  
SATURDAY, JULY 23<sup>RD</sup>

## FINAL CALL FOR DUES

West Baton Rouge Historical Association

2016 Membership dues are now due

Please send your check to: WBRHA

845 North Jefferson, Port Allen, LA 70767

See Membership form on the last page for dues amount.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**July 13, noon**, Lunchtime Lecture "Historical Geography of West Baton Rouge Nightlife and Bars" with historian Dr. John W. McEwen. Free.

**July 19, noon**, Lunchtime Lecture "Forgotten Baton Rouge and book signing with author Doug Villien. Villien was a city planner for East Baton Rouge. Free.

**July 23, 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.**, Speakeasy Soirée. Enjoy Prohibition era cocktails, live Jazz music and dancing, 1920s fashion encouraged. Music by Jan Dupre & the Gentlemen of Swing. Free.

**July 28, 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.**, Home Brewing 101 workshop. Learn how to make beer with Taylor Pellerin of *C'est Bon Biere!* Free.

**August 5**, Bus Trip. Take a day trip filled with tours and tastings at Abita Brewery and Donner Peltier Rum Distillery and lunch. Pre-paid registration \$80.

**August 10, noon**, Lunchtime Lecture, "The Georgetown Memory Project: Tracing the Jesuit slaves and their descendants" with researcher Judy Riffel. Free.

**August 24, noon**, Lunchtime Lecture, "Bayou Pigeon: Spirit of the Atchafalaya" presented by local historian Cliff LeGrange. LeGrange will sign copies of his book and share folk music. Free.

**August 27 - October 30**, An exhibition: Dorothea Lange's America features Dorothea Lange, the FSA and Louisiana.

**August 31, noon**, Lunchtime Lecture "Dorothea Lange and the Remarkable Legacy of the Farm Security Administration" presented by art historian Claudia Kheel. Free.

**September 7, noon**, Lunchtime Lecture "Lives in the South" presented by LSU history professor, Dr. Aaron Sheehan-Dean. Dr. Sheehan-Dean explores how these iconic photographs represented Americans generating stereotypes of rural southerners. Free.

**September 17 - October 23**, An exhibition, City of Port Allen Centennial.

**October 2, 11:00 a.m.- 4:00 p.m.**, Sugar Fest

## CURRENT LIST OF FRIENDS

Thomas W. Acosta, Jr.	Mim and Najma Landry
Dana A. Ayo	Harry L. Laws Co., Inc.
Babs Babin and Family	Jonathan & Brandi LeFeaux
Joyce & Kenneth Barbier	Ann LeMoine *
Baton Rouge Community College	Calvin & Becky Mayeux
Michael & Jan Becnel	Modernaires Dance Club
Marlene Benedetto/Hubbens	Andrea & Joey Normand
Mary Bennett *	Dr. J. H. Odom, Jr.
Lorraine & Gordon Bergeron	Dr. Philip & Monica Padgett
Carolyn Blanchard	Placid Refinery
Mike & Pat Blanchard	Rod Prejean & Assoc., Inc.
Sue & Sid Blanchard	Rabalais Law
Mr. & Mrs. Keith Bonanno	Laura Rhorer *
Carol & Carolyn Bourgeois	Richard's Printing
Holli C. Breaux	River View Development *
Barry & Susan Brewer	Thelma & Noah P. Rizan, Jr.
Business First Bank	James & Theresa Rizzutto
Kim & Kerry Callegan	Edana Robnett
Kym & Tony Cashiola	Julie & Kenny Rose
Jim & Mary Helen Charleville	Stacy Ryan
Mr. & Mrs. Dudley W. Coates	Debra & Ronnie Salvadras
Cou-yon's BBQ-Port Allen	Claire Sarradet
Criterion Catalysts & Technologies, L.P.	Dixie Scalise
Glen Daigle	Janet Simoneaux
Chad & Ashley Doiron	Bob & Connie Smith
The Dow Chemical Company	Sneaux Balls to Geaux/Carol Quattrone
Ann Neal Dugas & Family	Bobby & Ruth Stanley
Tina Englade	Clay Stewart/State Farm Insurance
Linda Lowe Erley	Sun Plus, Inc. *
ExxonMobil	Mike & Ellen Tauzin
Don & Marie Favrot	Lorry & Bill Trotter
William H. Forman, Jr.	Al & Cathy Troy
Beryl Fourroux	Margot G. Turk
Ellis Gauthier & Family	J. Kenneth Washington
Sara & George "Skipper" Grady	West Baton Rouge Chamber
Jeff Guidry/Edward Jones	West Baton Rouge CVB
Terry & Steve Guidry	West Baton Rouge Garden & Civic
Jason Hammack/Court Street Café	West Side Women's Club
Cynthia Hallam *	Westside Homeschoolers
Lee & Michelle Hart	
Janice Hebert *	
Garry Hubble Family	
Hugh's Place, Inc.	
Iberville Bank	
Edmond & Stacie Jordan	
Caroline Kennedy	
Janice Kitchens	
Will Kleinpeter *	
LA Farm Bureau Federation	
Lagniappe Dulcimer Society	

### Welcome New Friends:

Mary Bennett  
Cynthia Hallam  
Janice Hebert  
Will Kleinpeter  
Ann LeMoine  
Laura Rhorer  
River View Development  
Sun Plus, Inc.

\* Denotes New Friends Member



# West Baton Rouge Historical Association

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Port Allen, LA 70767

Toll Free: 1-888-881-6811

Phone: 225-336-2422

Fax: 225-336-2448

Email: [contact\\_us@wbrmuseum.org](mailto:contact_us@wbrmuseum.org)

Website: [www.westbatonrougemuseum.com](http://www.westbatonrougemuseum.com)

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## Donations were received for the following Memorial Funds:

### Acquisitions Memorial Fund

J. L. Wilson – Friends

### Ethel Claiborne Dameron Memorial Fund

### Frank Carruth III Children's Fund

Stan Calmes – Jo Busse

Mike Ryan – Jo Busse

### General Memorial Fund

### Museum Memorial Fund

### Restoration of Arbroth Store

Cheney Joseph – Josephine "Jo" Busse

### WBR HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION MEMORIAL DONATION FORM

Please fill out the form, enclose your donation made payable to the West Baton Rouge Historical Association in an envelope and mail to: West Baton Rouge Historical Association, 845 N. Jefferson Avenue, Port Allen, LA 70767. Only one acknowledgement card will be sent per donation. Thank you.

FROM: \_\_\_\_\_

IN MEMORY OF: \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE MAIL CARD TO: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

NOTE: Place an (X) next to the Memorial Fund to which you wish to send your donation.

ACQUISITIONS FUND \_\_\_\_ ETHEL CLAIBORNE DAMERON FUND \_\_\_\_

FRANK CARRUTH III CHILDREN'S FUND \_\_\_\_ (make checks payable to WBR Museum)

GENERAL FUND \_\_\_\_ MUSEUM MEMORIAL FUND \_\_\_\_

The WBR Historical Association is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization. All gifts are tax exempt. Thank you for supporting the WBR Historical Association.

### Membership Form - 2016

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Please check the membership category you wish to join.

Student \$10.00 \_\_\_\_\_

Friends \$100.00 \_\_\_\_\_  
(businesses/individuals)

Member \$20.00 \_\_\_\_\_  
(individuals)

Patrons \$35.00 \_\_\_\_\_  
(families/individuals)

Make checks payable to West Baton Rouge Historical Association, and mail to 845 North Jefferson Avenue, Port Allen, LA 70767.