

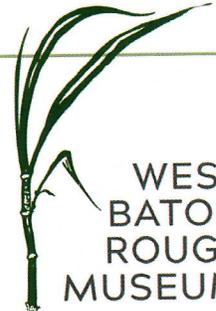


SUMMER
2023

OUR PURPOSE

"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."

NEWSLETTER ÉCOUTEZ



A PUBLICATION OF THE WEST BATON ROUGE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

Mark your calendars for
Sunday, October 1st.

In addition to SugarFest at the museum, the West Baton Rouge Historical Association will be hosting its annual Dinner Fundraiser, as well as its annual Sweets Booth. Come for the Festival, stay for the dinner, and leave with a sweet treat!

We'll save a spot for you under the tent!

OCTOBER
1

SAVE THE DATE



OCTOBER 1

SAVE THE DATE

JULY
24

CHRISTMAS IN JULY CARD PARTY

Please join the West Baton Rouge Historical Association for its annual Christmas in July Card Party. This year's event will take place on **Monday, July 24, 2023**, at the Port Allen Community Center from 10:00 AM-3:00 PM. For an entry fee of \$30, guests are invited to play games, participate in door prize drawings, enjoy lunch, and drink a mimosa! **For more information, please call (225)-300-4674.**



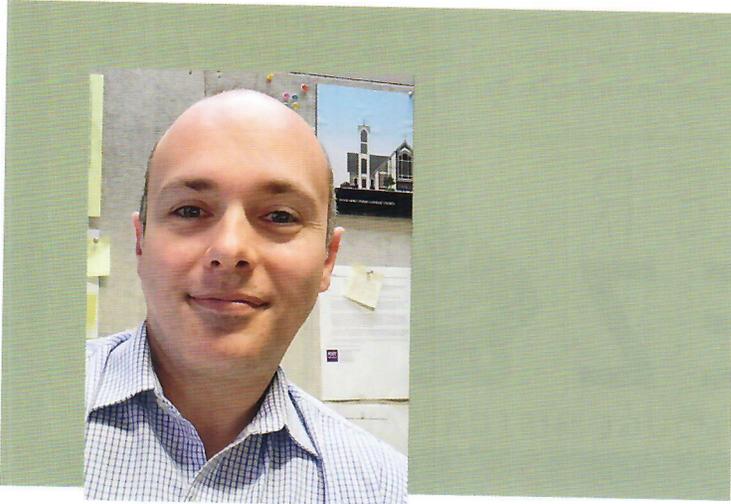
Caught Up in the Current, 1999 George Rodrigue

Acrylic on canvas 36" x 63" Collection of Wendy Rodrigue

Rodrigue Exhibit Opens

The River is the Road: Paintings by George Rodrigue opened at a preview reception during the June Historical Happy Hour. A limited number of exhibit posters featuring *Caught Up in the Current* by Rodrigue are available in the museum's gift shop. **Don't miss out on this rare opportunity to add George Rodrigue to your collection!**

LES LETTRES



Two recent events stand out in my mind. During my daily commute, I have passed several digital billboards announcing the Ben Peabody exhibition *Art & Addiction* which was on display at the Museum from April to early June. I imagine the advertisements have piqued many drivers' interests about what is happening on the West Side, and hopefully enticed some new visitors to the Museum. Additionally, a colleague of mine from Baton Rouge visited the Museum for the first time on business. I'd spoken with him about the Museum before, and am elated he had the chance to visit. He had a wonderful time and is planning to see everything in more detail.

These events remind me of our continued commitment to our community. The Museum and the Historical Association have so much to offer by way of historic interests as well as exhibits and events with current relevancy. It is our job, as stewards to this collection and these stories, to spread the word.

Speaking of community there are several activities coming up on the HA and Museum rosters. The West Baton Rouge Historical Association sponsors the Teachers' Institute, a three-day professional development series open to in-service K-12 teachers across all subject areas. This year Teachers' Institute will take place July 17-19 and will focus on the current exhibit, *The River is the Road: Art by George Rodrigue*.

SPRING 2023 ÉCOUTEZ letter

Our New President

WEST BATON ROUGE
HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

BRIAN FALCON Board President

Please mark your calendars and get your cards ready! The annual Christmas in July Card Party is scheduled for July 24th at the Port Allen Community Center. Fill out the included registration form and send it back before July 15th. The day will include refreshments, lunch, and door prizes. Call the museum for more information.

SugarFest 2023 will be Sunday, October 1st. This will also be the date for our annual Fundraiser Dinner and Sweets Booth. Amanda Moak and Laura Crook will be heading the charge to coordinate the dinner tickets, and I would like to thank them for volunteering their efforts this year. I invite you to stop by the tent to pick up your dinner and pick out a sweet treat.

Lastly, in support of preservation efforts elsewhere in West Baton Rouge Parish, I have to mention the Addis Museum. I attended an open house for their reorganized exhibits and was impressed with how they've created self-guided tours through their facility. Visit if you have the chance.

Cheers!

Brian Falcon
WBRHA President





Summer 2023
Director's Letter

WEST BATON ROUGE MUSEUM
CULTURE CULTIVATED • LA CULTURE CULTIVÉE • LA KILTIR KILTIVÉ

ANGÉLIQUE BERGERON, PH.D. Executive Director



Dear Friends,

It's been a rewarding spring at the West Baton Rouge Museum with the Art & Addiction exhibit and the powerful programs that accompanied it. We were grateful to have the dedication of artist, Ben Peabody, his wonderful wife Weegie, and the support of Lamar Advertising Company, H&E Equipment Services, and the Louisiana Lottery Corporation that helped promote the exhibit, provide helpful resources, and fund programming.

Summer is off to a busy start with *The River is the Road: The Art of George Rodrigue*. We are grateful to Wendy Rodrigue and the Life & Legacy Foundation for their assistance in curating, as well as to Telich Custom Homes, Morgan Stanley, and the Louisiana Lottery Corporation for underwriting the exhibit and opening reception. The exhibit opened with live Cajun music and welcoming remarks from Wendy. Two days later, she greeted students at the museum's 28th annual Blast from the Past summer history camp where campers set off on a Blue Dog Adventure!

Sign up for a Rodrigue-inspired evening acrylic painting workshop on July 27th with Celeste Payne where participants create Louisiana landscapes. Other programs planned to coincide with the exhibit include the September 15th Historical Happy Hour with music by Corey Ledet and Zydeco dance lessons with Brandon Broussard. If you missed Wendy Rodrigue at our June Historical Happy Hour, catch her at our Teachers' Institute in July or in October when she returns for school tours and to be the guest speaker at our annual Ethel Claiborne Dameron Lecture (October 29, 2023).

We are pleased to partner again with the West Baton Rouge Genealogical Society and Our Ancestors in Photos to organize the 3rd Annual Acadian Heritage Celebration. Come out to St. John the Baptist Church Hall in Brusly on Sunday, July 23rd to celebrate, learn, share family photos, and pass a good time.

Finally, preview the next sculpture installation in the museum's front galleries, *Angela Gregory: Portraits and Process*, at the August 18th Historical Happy Hour with 1920s-1940s blues and jazz performed by Sariah Storm & the Mysteries. Guest curator, Elizabeth Weinstein will be present for the opening of this event. Look for more sculpture program offerings next fall and spring inspired by the creative process illustrated in this exhibit.

With all that we have going on, we hope to see you at the Museum!

Angélique Bergeron, PH.D.
Executive Director



Rivers of Inspiration: How Louisiana History and Culture shaped the Art of George Rodrigue

Registration is open for the annual Teachers' Institute set for July 17th - 19th, 2023. This year's three-day summer professional development series is based on the life and work of Louisiana native George Rodrigue, a world-renowned artist most known for his portraits of prominent people from Louisiana history, his landscapes of southwest Louisiana, which often feature moss-draped live oaks, and the emblematic Blue Dog, a ghostly character that appears in a variety of settings.

This year's Teachers' Institute is designed to coincide with the exhibit, "*The River is the Road: Paintings by George Rodrigue*," which will be on display at the West Baton Rouge Museum through October 29th, 2023. This exhibit traces 45 years of the river in Rodrigue's painting, exploring the unique ways Rodrigue used the river as a reference to his culture and ultimately as a metaphor for the journey of life.

Rodrigue was born in 1944 in New Iberia, in the heart of "Cajun Country." From the beginning of his career, Rodrigue sought to portray the things he loved most - southwest Louisiana's

land, people, and traditions. Learn how George Rodrigue's childhood, steeped in local heritage, shaped his artistic vision; learn how his study of art at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette led him to interpret this heritage; and learn how his Blue Dog, which was based on a traditional Louisiana legend, became a pop icon and catapulted Rodrigue to the forefront of the regional art movement.

The 2023 Teachers' Institute will submerge participants in a river of inspiration, with a focus on how Rodrigue's art can be used in the classroom to connect a wide range of subjects. We will explore his pioneering endeavors to interpret his culture through painting. Planned events include scholarly lectures, studio time to experiment with painting and visual art, interactive group activities, and even a field trip! Teachers Institute will culminate with lab time for the creation of classroom lesson plans.

Teachers' Institute is open to in-service K-12 teachers across all subject areas. The museum has offered this professional development program since 2007. Participants will produce

a theme-based lesson with the help of museum staff and special guests for use in their classrooms for presentation before departure on the last day. Participants will also receive classroom resource materials, a certificate of participation, and a \$100 stipend upon completion of all institute activities and assignments. Daily lunches are provided.

The Teachers' Institute is limited to 20 participants. Participants are accepted on a first-come-first-serve basis. Applicants should be actively engaged in the teaching profession. For more information, please call André St. Romain at **(225) 336-2422**.

Registration forms may be downloaded from the museum's website or picked up at the museum.

Teachers' Institute is sponsored in part by the West Baton Rouge Historical Association and the West Baton Rouge Parish School Board.



JULY 17 - 19 2023

TEACHERS' INSTITUTE

The Art of George Rodrigue

Take part in a three-day summer professional development series, open to in-service K-12 teachers across all subject areas. Participants will receive classroom resource materials, a certificate of participation, and a \$100 stipend upon completion of all institute activities and assignments. Daily lunches are provided.

The Teachers' Institute is limited to 20 participants.

Register online at www.WestBatonRougeMuseum.org. Teachers' Institute is sponsored in part by the West Baton Rouge Historical Association, West Baton Rouge Parish School Board, Telich Custom Homes, and Morgan Stanley.

West Baton Rouge Museum Acadian Heritage Celebration



The West Baton Rouge Museum will be partnering with the WBR Genealogical Society for the third annual West Baton Rouge Acadian Heritage Celebration.

The celebration will be held at Saint John the Baptist Catholic Church activity center in Brusly, on Sunday, July 23rd, 2023, from 1:00 to 5:00 PM.

The West Baton Rouge Museum will have a booth at the festival celebrating the area's heritage and promoting the museum's cultural offerings. The booth will serve as a spot for French speakers to meet and converse – much like the monthly Café Français held at the museum. The museum's booth will also feature two activities for children; in one, children will get to use real washboards (“des frottoirs”) and Cajun triangles (des tit-fers) to play along to a song in French; in the other, children will learn the French names for various food items and then make a pretend gumbo using toy versions of these foods.

The Cajun French Music Association of Baton Rouge (CFMA), which often partners with the museum for cultural events, will also participate in the West Baton Rouge Acadian Heritage Celebration. The CFMA will hold a jam led by Shannon Lejeune at the celebration, which is open for any musician to join in to play traditional Louisiana songs.



VOLUNTEER OF THE QUARTER DEBBIE MARTIN



Please join us in recognizing our Volunteer of the Quarter, Debbie Martin. Debbie is a member of the West Baton Rouge Historical Association Board, who serves on several committees and frequently volunteers for museum programs.

Most recently, Debbie played a huge role in organizing and facilitating two genealogical workshops. For three weekends in May and three weekends in June, both garnered great interest and success. Debbie has also put in the hours for the Acadian Heritage Celebration, slated for July 23 from 1:00 PM-5:00 PM. The West Baton Rouge Museum will be a sponsor of the celebration at St. John the Baptist Church in Brusly. We love having a presence at these events, and it's an experience we are excited to share with our community.

In addition to helping organize these events, Debbie is a dependable volunteer. She is always quick to respond and is happy to lend a hand, even if it's just answering the phone. We are so grateful for Debbie and all of our volunteers. They are a joy to work with and make our jobs that much easier.

Curators' Corner

Check out the story behind this painting featured in the upcoming exhibit, *The River is the Road: Paintings by George Rodrigue*

COURTESY OF WENDY RODRIGUE FOR THE LIFE & LEGACY FOUNDATION

In *The Millennium*, the cosmos, sea, and land flow together in swirling waves of blue. An Egyptian holds a star, inspiring the spiritual birth of creativity, enduring through the Dark Ages as symbolized by a Viking ship, and flying as the Blue Dog, born in Louisiana from a mass of butterflies, into the 21st century.

Commissioned by Neiman Marcus for the cover of their January 2000 catalog, *The Book*, Rodrigue was given free artistic rein by the department store, provided he incorporate the butterfly in some way. This freedom allowed Rodrigue the opportunity to re-examine meaning within his art.

“I have no doubt now that my art is a journey, one that has taken many turns but is far from over. Like any journey, mine is marked by certain milestones — some that take the form of sudden epiphanies and others that are more like gentle bends in a river.”— G.R.

The Millennium, 1999

George Rodrigue

Acrylic on canvas 36" x 63"

Collection of Wendy Rodrigue



FERIN JONES



LAUREN HAWTHORNE

Pics from Past Programs

Easter 2023

ON APRIL 2, 2023, the West Baton Rouge Museum was brimming with guests for our annual Easter Egg-Stravaganza, in partnership with the West Baton Rouge Parish Library. It was a perfect spring day to hunt for

eggs, listen to music, play games, and enjoy a petting zoo. It was our biggest Easter celebration yet, with about 500 guests, and it sure made for a competitive egg hunt!



Successful Launch of New Genealogy Series

THIS SPRING, the West Baton Rouge Museum was pleased to partner with the West Baton Rouge Genealogical Society with collaboration from the West Baton Rouge Parish Library and spearheaded by West Baton Rouge Historical Association board member, Debbie Doiron Martin to host two new genealogy series, Exploration in African American Genealogy and Exploration in Acadian Genealogy. Each boasted a three-week interactive workshop series with notable guest speakers recognized in the field of genealogy and hands-on family tree building.

Special guests presenting African American genealogy research tips included Noah Lapidus, Ja'el "YaYa" Gordon, and Alex Da' Paul Lee. Acadian ancestry presenters included Stella Caline Tanoos, Billy Hebert, and Daniel Blanchard. Luis Interiano from West Baton Rouge Parish Library shared valuable resource tools the library has to offer at each series. Both series were well attended, new family connections were forged, and lots of meaningful family history was discovered.

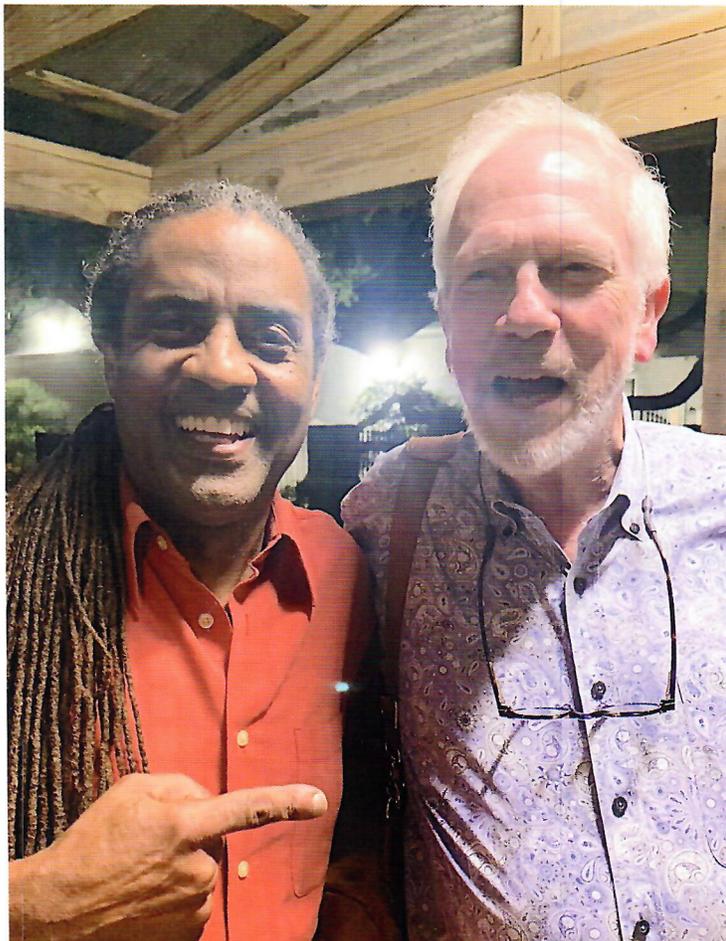


A Very Historic-Historical Happy Hour or Two!

For **APRIL'S** Historical Happy Hour, the West Baton Rouge Museum kicked off the Baton Rouge Blues Fest 2023 weekend right in our own backyard! In collaboration with 89.3 WRKF-NPR (National Public Radio), the support of over 250 plus in attendance, and a newly extended side stage, the Juke Joint rocked with narrations of the history of blues from Nick Spitzer, and the harmonic sounds of Kenny Neal. The museum would like to acknowledge Paul Maassen, Blythe Johnson, and Barbara Clark of WRKF. **Thank you!**



MAY'S Historical Happy Hour brought Ashley Orlando accompanied by the Florida Street Blowhards for a lively set. Guests enjoyed perfect weather and even better tunes from the main Juke Joint Stage. Jazz music was in the air and the crowd was even treated to a couple of French tunes. **It was a wonderful evening!**



bernard gillette

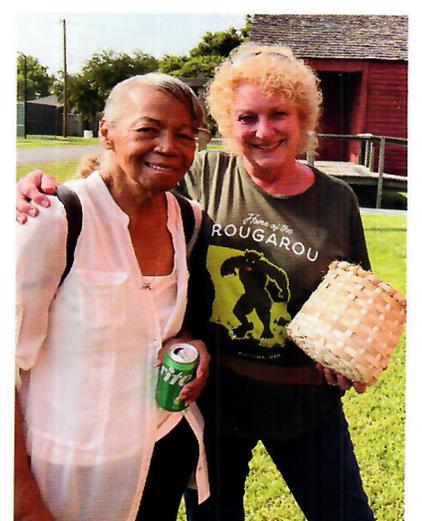
Pics from Past Programs

Split White Oak Basket Making:

From Waling in the Woods to Finished Wooden Baskets in One Week

When Maida Owens, Louisiana Folklife Program Director, asked West Baton Rouge Museum to work with tradition bearer Geraldine Robertson, known for her split white oak baskets (currently on the endangered list), we said yes! With support from the Louisiana Folklore Society, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Louisiana Division of the Arts and the Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism, we hosted a weeklong workshop on the art of making split white oak baskets with the objective of passing on this tradition. From gathering materials in the woods, to constructing a basket from start to finish, twenty-four participants ranging in age from 9 – 72 dedicated an entire week for the opportunity of a lifetime to create alongside the 81-year-old award winning folk artist. Robertson has demonstrated her craft across the state of Louisiana as well as at the Smithsonian in Washington, D.C. and in Europe.

Special thanks to Port Hudson State Historic Site for allowing this class to harvest the wood needed for this project.



Blues After School Road Trips

Thanks to tremendous community support, the students and families of West Baton Rouge Museum's Blues After School took to the road at the conclusion of the fourth year of this music enrichment series. On Friday, April 14, 2023, the students were invited to perform in Baton Rouge at the iconic Henry Turner Jr.'s Listening Room and Heritage Museum in front of a public audience dotted with professional musicians. Special thanks to internationally known bluesman, Henry Turner, Jr. for the invitation, for emceeding to make this a professional and educational experience at a real music venue, and for surprising the kids with a fish fry at the close of their performance!

To close out the year, thanks to a generous donation awarded by the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Foundation's Community Outreach Ticket Program, students and family members serving as chaperones were able to enjoy a live music experience on Sunday, April 30, 2023 at JazzFest! Much appreciation also goes to Essential Credit Union, Mark and Connie Hebert, Rose Roche, and Sheriff Mike Cazes who provided extra support to insure safe transportation. It was truly a rewarding cultural experience!

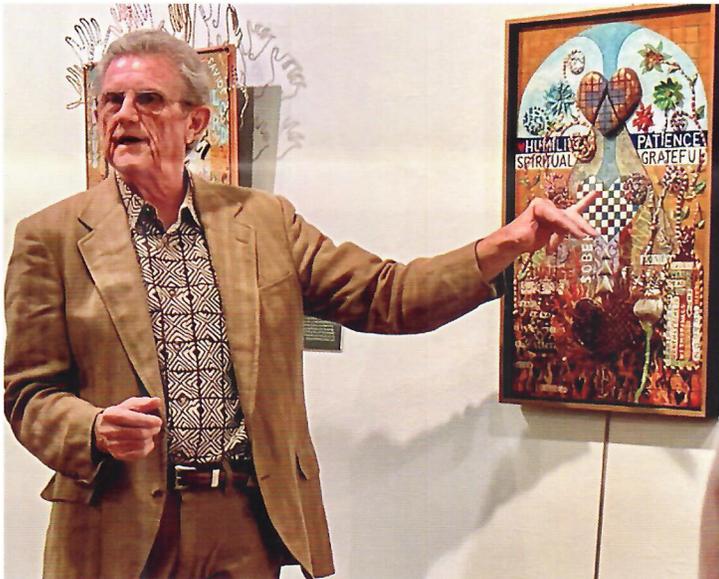
Blues After School brings together middle and high school students for two hours every Friday afternoon September – April to learn about blues culture, history and music industry best practices and how to play instruments together as a band by learning blues music. Instrument instruction is provided by music educators from Rockin' Mozart Music School, and lessons centered around the cultural tradition of the blues is presented by museum curators and educators or music industry special guests.



Pics from Past Programs

Lasting Lessons from Art & Addiction: The Art of Ben Peabody

THIS PAST SPRING, we hosted a powerful exhibit on the mystifying hold drugs and alcohol have on those who are addicted. Programming designed to accompany the exhibit offered information and hope to end the stigma of addiction. The exhibit, *Art & Addiction: The Art of Ben Peabody* opened with a tremendous outpouring of public support. Events accompanying this exhibit included lunchtime lectures, gallery talks, a presentation by a board-certified addiction medicine physician and personal stories shared by people in recovery, an *Art in Recovery* weekend workshop, and community outreach support from regional treatment centers, wellness organizations, and ministries. Thanks to work of Mr. Ben Peabody, his wife Weegie, and generous sponsors including Lamar Advertising Company, H&E Equipment Services, and the Louisiana Lottery Corporation, the exhibit provided necessary resources, distributed free Narcan kits, and brought in a range of guest speakers. The consensus of public comments received was, **"The message that we need to have the conversation about addiction was powerful!"**



GUEST SPEAKER
WARREN PERRIN

Acadian Museum of Erath
"Defender of Cajuns"



3RD ANNUAL

WEST BATON ROUGE ACADIAN HERITAGE CELEBRATION

COME AS STRANGERS, LEAVE AS FAMILY!

SUNDAY, JULY 23, 2023

1:00 P.M. - 5:00 P.M.

**ST JOHN THE BAPTIST CATHOLIC CHURCH
ACTIVITY CENTER
402 SOUTH KIRKLAND DRIVE (RIVER ROAD)
BRUSLY, LOUISIANA**

**All Acadian Descendants Will Find
Something of Interest!**

Landry Ancestors Are This Year's Featured Family
(Landry Family Photos Courtesy of Van Landry)



**Bring An Old Family Photo To Be Eligible
for Special Prizes!**

Bring your genealogies, family histories, and stories
to share, compare, and explore....

- FREE JAMBALAYA
- CAJUN MUSIC
- CAJUN DANCERS
- DOOR PRIZES
- GUEST SPEAKERS
- HEIRLOOM DISPLAY
- CRAFT TABLES FOR KIDS
- ON-SITE GENEALOGY SEARCH
- ANCESTOR PHOTO DISPLAY
- FRENCH TABLE
- COMMUNITY SOCIALIZING
- PLAYGROUND FOR KIDS
- SELF-GUIDED GRAVEYARD TOUR
- TINTAMARRE
- CANARY ISLANDERS TABLE

Fier d'être Acadien!

**FOR MORE
INFORMATION CONTACT
BILLY HEBERT
225-200-5950**

**SPONSORED BY:
WBR GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY
OUR ANCESTORS IN PHOTOS FACEBOOK GROUP
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**COME ON AND PASS
A GOOD TIME!**



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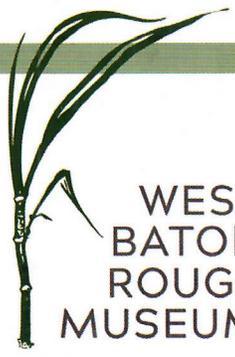
NEWSLETTER ÉCOUTEZ

A PUBLICATION OF THE WEST BATON ROUGE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

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NEWSLETTER ÉCOUTEZ



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WBR HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION BOARD MEMBERS 2023

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- Sadie Payne Woods
- Chris Kershaw, Ex-officio



Monthly Programs

- 1ST FRIDAYS, 1PM:** *Le Café Français*. GRATUIT
- 1ST SUNDAYS, 3PM:** *Behind the Barn Doors*. FREE
- 2ND SUNDAYS, 3PM:** *Old Time Jam*. FREE
- 3RD FRIDAYS, 6PM:** *Historical Happy Hour*. FREE
- 3RD SUNDAYS, 3PM:** *CFMA Cajun Jam*. FREE
- LAST TUESDAYS, 6PM:** *Yoga*. FREE