

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."



WINTER
2024

NEWSLETTER ÉCOUTEZ



A PUBLICATION OF THE WEST BATON ROUGE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION



SAVE THE DATE

WEST BATON ROUGE HISTORICAL
ASSOCIATION ANNUAL MEETING

JANUARY 13, 2025 AT 11AM



TV, STAGE, AND MOTION PICTURE MOVIE STAR VISITS OUR MUSEUM

ANNUAL ETHEL CLAIBORNE DAMERON LECTURE SERIES

The traveling exhibit, *Backstage Hollywood: The Photographs of Bob Willoughby* came to life on Sunday, September 22, 2024 when John Mese, Baton Rouge native and tv, stage, and motion picture movie star who now resides in Los Angeles visited the museum as the guest speaker for the West Baton Rouge Historical Association's 2024 annual Ethel Claiborne Dameron Lecture Series.



LES LETTRES



WINTER 2024 ÉCOUTEZ letter

Thank you for following our journey

WEST BATON ROUGE
HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

BRIAN FALCON Board President

Dear All,

To all of our members, here's hoping you are having a blessed holiday season with a bountiful Thanksgiving, merry Christmas and hopeful New Year.

The Historic Preservation Committee is proud to announce that the State of Louisiana historic marker memorializing the wreck of the Monmouth has been installed. The committee is working toward a dedication ceremony in the Spring.

Thank you to all of our members who helped make fundraising this year a success with their volunteer and leadership efforts. We are planning a new and exciting fundraiser to involve artists, especially our young artists, in the parish schools. Stay tuned!

Mark your calendars for the Historical Association's annual board meeting on **Monday, January 13, 2025** at 11am at the Museum.

NEVER FORGET: Preservation begins with each of you. Whether it is passing along a memory or saving a building, preservation of our community and culture is vital for us to know who we were, how we got here, and where we might go in the future.

Cheers!





Dear Friends,

There was so much to be thankful for this fall – our largest SugarFest yet, stunning and informative exhibits, a packed house for the first My French Book Fest outside of New Orleans, as well as our annual and monthly programs.

Rolling into the New Year, we have lots to look forward to at the West Baton Rouge Museum... starting with a partnership with the Baton Rouge Blues Festival at our January Historical Happy Hour. Join us on **Friday, January 17, 2025** as we welcome Lil Ray Neal to the stage and witness the unveiling of the 2025 Baton Rouge Blues Festival Poster.

We will close out the Haitian Art exhibit with a Lunchtime Lecture on **Thursday, January 23, 2025** at 12 Noon featuring Food Network's Chopped award-winning Chef Charly Pierre, owner of New Orleans restaurant, Fritai. Chef Pierre will speak on Haitian culture, south Louisiana culture, and how they intertwine, especially through his food!

In February, the West Baton Rouge Museum will host the Baton Rouge Regional Competition for National History Day. Middle and high school students can submit projects on this year's theme *Rights and Responsibilities in History* before February 5, 2025. The Museum welcomes volunteers to judge the history projects and papers on **Saturday, February 22, 2025** at the Baton Rouge Regional National History Day.

WINTER 2024

Director's Letter

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

ANGÉLIQUE BERGERON, PH.D. Executive Director

Our monthly programs continue in the New Year with a few changes: *Behind the Barn Doors* will remain on the 1st Sundays and *le Café Français* continues on 1st Fridays, but we've now added *Kafé Krèyol-la* on 1st Saturdays at 10:30AM. Genealogy programs will continue on 2nd Saturdays at 10:30AM, but instead of a speaker series, this year researchers will be on hand until noon to assist individuals with their research quests. Our monthly music programs will remain the same with the *Old Time Jam* on 2nd Sundays, *Historical Happy Hour* on 3rd Fridays, and the Cajun Jam on 3rd Sundays. *Yoga* remains on last Tuesdays. *Children's Painting and drawing* has grown in popularity and we are now offering two classes on last Saturdays: 10:30-11:30 for 4-6 year olds and noon to 1PM for 7-12 year olds.

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

Angélique Bergeron, PH.D.
Executive Director

BR BLUES FEST

JANUARY

Historical Happy Hour

featuring the Baton Rouge Blues Festival Foundation and Lil Ray Neal

Join the West Baton Rouge Museum on Friday, **January 17, 2025 from 6-8 PM** for Historical Happy Hour. This month's Happy Hour will feature the Baton Rouge Blues Festival & Foundation for a not to be missed big reveal and West Baton Rouge native Blues artist, Lil Ray Neal.

The Baton Rouge Blues Festival will reveal its 2025 Festival Art during the January Happy Hour. The festival organizers are excited to stretch across the bridge to celebrate the blues, art, culture, dance, and of course, music. The Festival & Foundation Executive Director, Lauren Lambert-Tompkins stated, "This year's art symbolizes our communities' partnership and should be familiar to all who attend!" The 2025 festival posters will be available, and festival VIP pass discounts will be offered to all Happy Hour attendees.

The evening's featured entertainment, Lil Ray Neal, also known as the gentle giant of the Blues, is part of the legendary Blues family that hails from West Baton Rouge. Son of the famed Blues icon, Raful Neal, Sr., Lil Ray Neal has had a remarkable career that has spanned over four decades leading him on a journey to play with greats such as Milton Campbell and Bobby "Blue" Bland and earning him several prestigious BB King awards. He is known for his exceptional vocal and instrumental abilities. His deep, resonant voice has captivated audiences worldwide conveying the Blues genre's rich storytelling tradition. His guitar playing features an intricate finger-picking style and powerful, evocative riffs that create a technically impressive and deeply moving sound.

This FREE event is open to the public. This performance will take place outdoors at the Juke Joint stage on the grounds of the West Baton Rouge Museum near 6th Street. At Historical Happy Hour, the drinks are on you, and the history is on us. All are invited to bring blankets, folding chairs, and refreshments to enjoy on the museum grounds. In the event of inclement weather, the event will move indoors. *For more information, call (225)-336-2422, visit www.WestBatonRougeMuseum.org, or www.facebook.com/TheWBRM.*



January 17th

Lil' Ray Neal

February 21st

Kasey Ball

March 21st

Zia Tammami



Monthly MUSIC PROGRAMS

Old Time Jam

with Kent Louque 2nd Sundays of the month, 3PM

Historical Happy Hour

with various guests 3rd Fridays of the month, 6 - 8PM

Cajun Jam with CFMA

3rd Sundays of the month, 3PM

Curators' Corner

UPCOMING EXHIBITS

BLUES FESTIVAL POSTERS THROUGH THE YEARS
JANUARY 11 - APRIL 13

SORTING OUT RACE
FEBRUARY 8 - APRIL 13

Blues Festival Posters through the Years

January 11 - April 13

The permanent collection at the West Baton Rouge Museum has grown, and we are inviting you to view some of our favorite new accessioned pieces. Opening January 17, 2025, an assortment of Baton Rouge Blues Festival posters will be on display. These posters, designed by local artists, offer a unique perspective of the Blues genre in the Capital Area. Join us for a very special Historical Happy Hour on opening night to see our collection, and witness the unveiling of the 2025 Baton Rouge Blues Fest poster

Sorting Out Race

February 8, 2025- April 13

Every day thrift stores across America receive donations of objects that display racial imagery- antique advertising cards, collectible salt-and-pepper shakers, vintage children's books, and mugs with sport team mascots. Are these objects harmless reminders of historical attitudes or do they continue to perpetuate negative stereotypes about race? Should thrift stores sell these objects? Or should they be "sorted out" of the resale environment and discarded?

Sorting Out Race arose from the desire to divert artifacts with racial content from thrift stores to an exhibit that would generate a healthy community conversation about racial stereotypes past and present in order to heighten awareness of our continuing struggles with race.

Call for Artifacts

On going

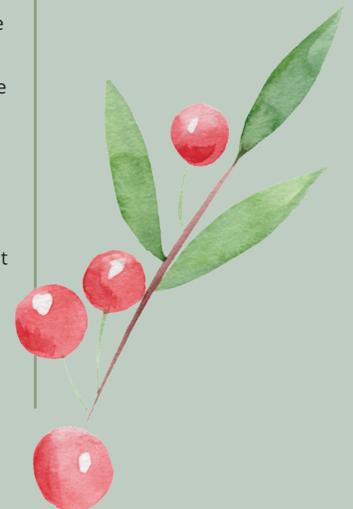
2025 marks the 50th anniversary to the end of the Vietnam War. The West Baton Rouge Museum would like to take this moment to make a call for photographs and artifacts from veterans and families of veterans that served during this conflict.



AMANDA MOAK



LAUREN HAWTHORNE



National History Day

The West Baton Rouge Museum is host to the Greater Baton Rouge Area Regional National History Day competition on **Saturday, February 22, 2025**. National History Day is a project-based learning experience that was established in 1974 and currently engages more than a half a million students each year in grades 6 – 12 across the nation. The Baton Rouge contest is open to middle and high school students from 12 Parishes including *East Baton Rouge, West Baton Rouge, Pointe Coupee, Iberville, East Feliciana, West Feliciana, St. Helena, Livingston, Ascension, Assumption, St. James, and Tangipahoa* who are invited to research, create, and present projects using primary source research and critical thinking skills to interpret an annual theme.

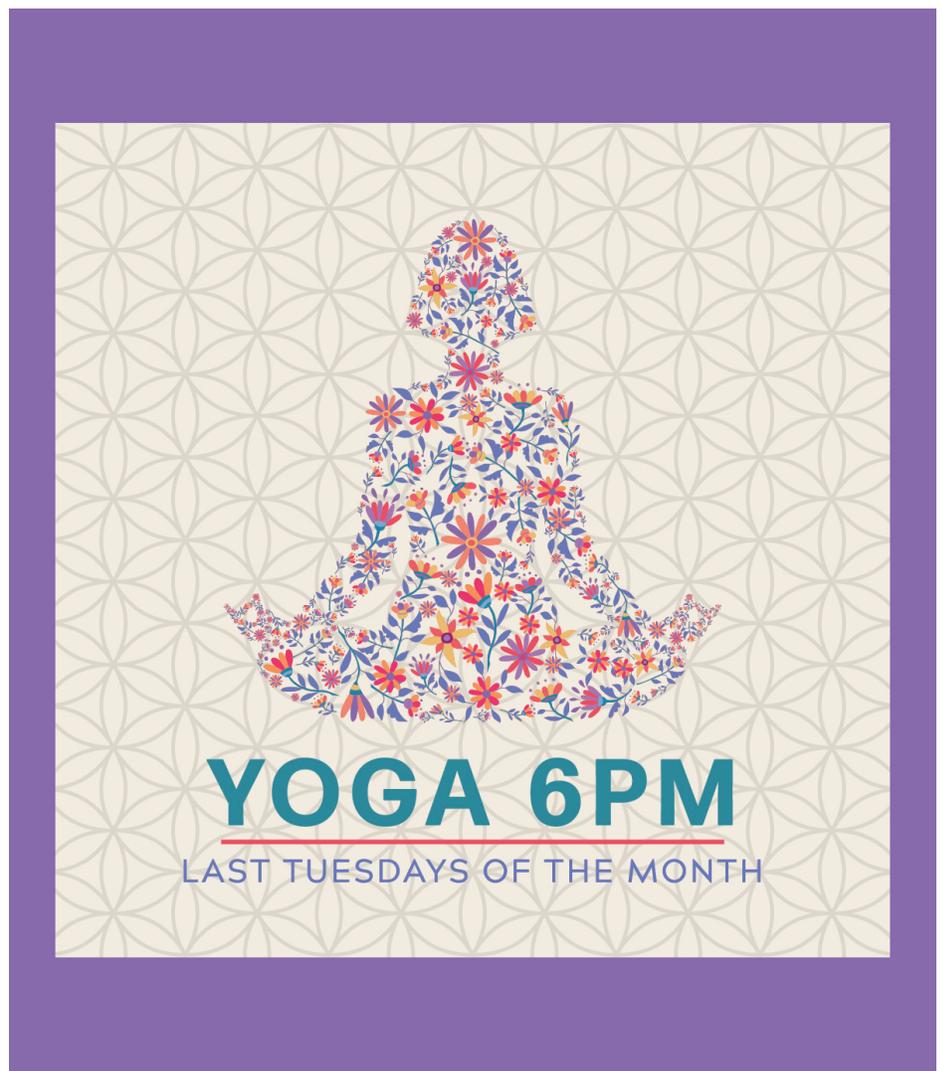
This year's theme is Rights & Responsibilities in History. Students choose a topic and create projects in one of five categories: *exhibit, website, documentary, performance, and research paper*. They are competing for the chance to represent their schools at the state competition held at the National World War II Museum in New Orleans.

National History Day makes history engaging, relevant, and fun by allowing students to direct their own learning and showcase their creativity while building historical thinking and 21st-century skills. Please join us and share your passion for history and learning with our competitors. Winners in each category will advance to the Louisiana State History Day Competition at the National World War II Museum in New Orleans this spring. Winners from the state competition will have the opportunity to compete in the National History Day Competition in Washington D.C. this summer.

More information and registration for Students, Teachers and Judges can be found at <https://westbatonrougemuseum.org/523/National-History-Day>.

Call For Judges

CALLING ALL HISTORY ENTHUSIASTS! On **Saturday February 22, 2025**, the West Baton Rouge Museum is set to host the Baton Rouge Regional History Day Competition. The campus will be full of junior high and high school students presenting projects, and we are looking for judges and volunteers to help facilitate the day. Judges can register at <https://la-brrc.nhd.org/>.



Pics from Past Programs

SugarFest is the Best 2024

On Sunday, October 6, 2024 West Baton Rouge Museum welcomed its largest crowd yet to its annual SugarFest, a sweet celebration of the sugar cane harvest that has been growing strong since 1995 with roots deeply planted in preserving and promoting traditional Louisiana folklife traditions.



Pics from Past Programs

Veterans on Parade

On Sunday, November 10, 2024 the 18th Annual **"Veterans on Parade"** rolled in front of the museum to salute veterans and current military members and their families and was followed by a patriotic ceremony and reception on museum grounds which included presentations by local, parish, and state officials, recognition of parade grand marshals, Olivia Singleton, Gloria Rivault Wilbert, and Morris Bellelo (awarded posthumously) a performance by the National World War II Museum's Victory Belles, military medleys by the Brusly and Port Allen High School bands, and a local dance troupe.



Merry Not Scary Halloween

Children and adults of all ages had a spooktacular time gathering under the stars on Friday, October 18, 2024 to celebrate fall with vintage Halloween games, craft making, trick-or-treating, and live entertainment

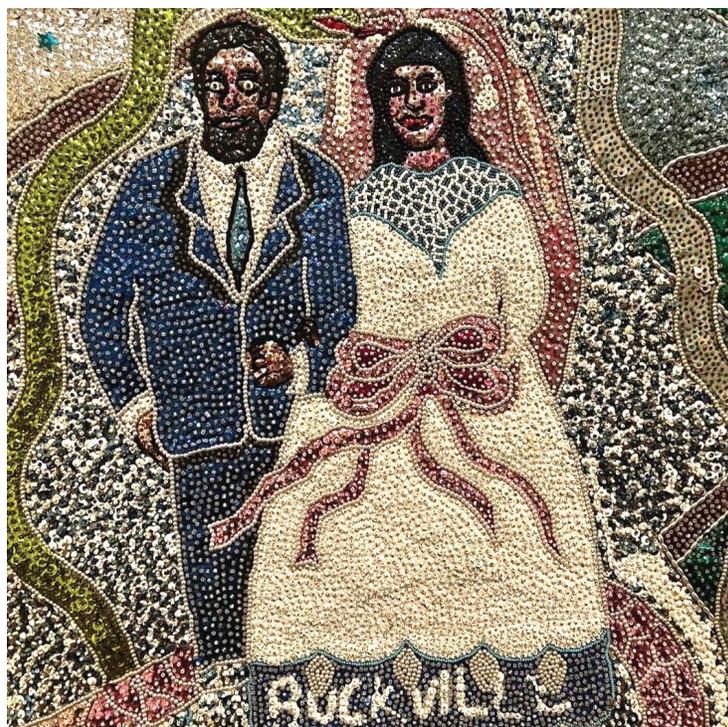
including the “friendly witches” of the Ogden Park neighborhood and professional storyteller, Oneal Isaac at this program hosted jointly by the West Baton Rouge Parish Library and the West Baton Rouge Museum.



Opening Celebration for Haitian Art: *The Jacques Bartoli Collection* was a Hit for the *November Historical Happy Hour*

And, what a hit it was on Friday, November 15, 2024 when the museum combined the opening reception for the exhibit, Haitian Art: The Jacques Bartoli Collection with our regular monthly Historical Happy Hour and evening shopping hours for **My French Book Fest** which surrounded

visitors with vibrant art, a taste of Haiti prepared by Bull Fish Bistro, a collection of French literature and children’s books, and live Haitian and Louisiana Creole music performed by Bruce “Sun Pie” Barnes and The Louisiana Sunspots.



Pics from Past Programs

Growing Up in the South: *An Anthology of Modern Southern Literature Book Club*

The museum hosted a six-week literary series this fall led by facilitator, Dr. Olivia Pass where participants enjoyed moderated discussions about the writings of William Faulkner, Alice Walker, Flannery O'Connor, Eudora Welty, Richard Wright, Ernest Gaines, and other great American storytellers, and at the conclusion of the class, several members of the group traveled to the historic Eudora Welty House and Garden in Jackson, Mississippi.

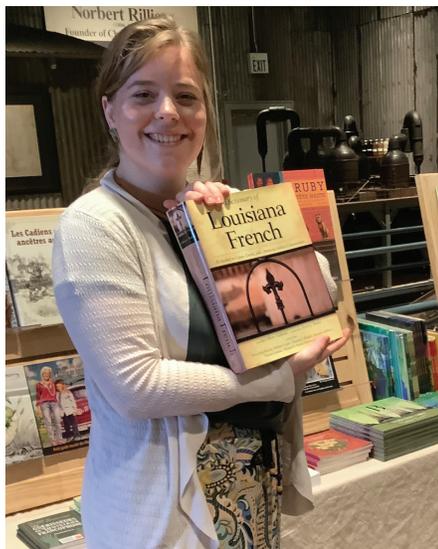


West Baton Rouge Museum on the Move

Fall was a busy season for museum staff both on and off campus as we were honored to be invited and take part in many outreach opportunities including the Cane Syrup Heritage Expo in Franklin, LA organized by University of Louisiana, Lafayette, the Louisiana Conference for the Social Studies at the National World War II Museum, the Louisiana Art Summit at the Arts Council of Greater Baton Rouge, the Taste of Southern Soul Festival and the Louisiana Book Festival, both in downtown Baton Rouge, the Greater Baton Rouge Maker Faire at the East Baton Rouge Parish Library, the West Baton Rouge Resource Fair at the Port Allen Community Center, and more! *Whew!*



My French Book Fest West Baton Rouge Museum would like to thank the Consulate General of France in New Orleans, Villa Albertine, and Alliance Française of New Orleans for allowing us the privilege of hosting My French Book Fest for the very first time in the greater Baton Rouge area for school groups, families, and adults to visit to explore a vast collection of French literature with books available for purchase for all ages provided by Cavalier House Books on November 14th, 15th, and 16th, 2024.



4th Saturday

Children's Painting & Drawing Workshop

with Ms. Shaun

10:30-11:30am

4-6 year olds

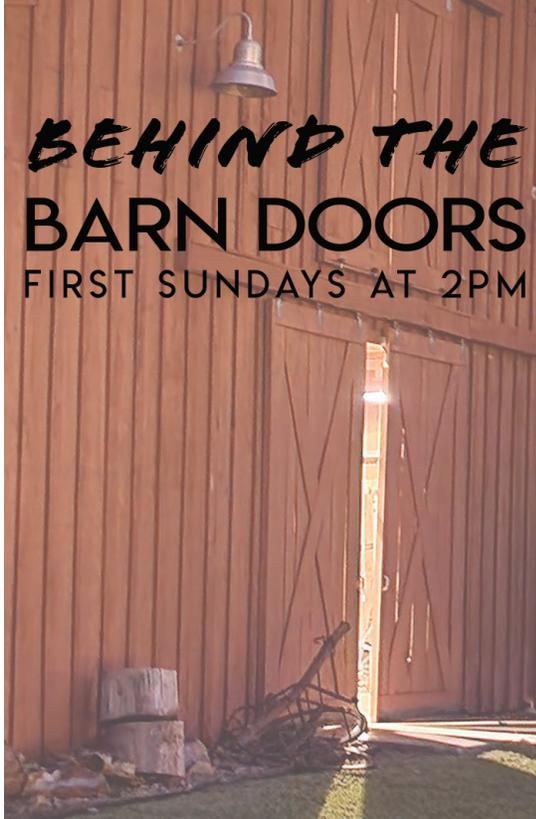
Noon - 1pm

7-12 year olds

Supplies are provided.
Advanced registration required

BEHIND THE BARN DOORS

FIRST SUNDAYS AT 2PM



Join us on the first Sunday of the month in the big red barn for featured demonstrations and instructional workshops including Blacksmithing, Spinning and Weaving, and Woodworking.

For more information call 225.336.2422 or check our website www.WestBatonRougeMuseum.org.

FIRST FRIDAY OF EVERY MONTH

LE CAFÉ FRANÇAIS

French speakers of all levels are invited to gather in the West Baton Rouge Museum Classroom from 1-3pm for guided conversation and a delicious treat!



WEST
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ROUGE
MUSEUM
ASSOCIATION



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Monthly Programs

- 1ST FRIDAYS, 1PM:** *Le Café Français*. GRATUIT
- 1ST SATURDAYS, 10:30AM:** *Kafé Kréyol-la*. GRATUIT
- 1ST SUNDAYS, 2PM:** *Behind the Barn Doors*. FREE
- 2ND SATURDAYS, 10:30AM:** *Explorations in Genealogy*. FREE
- 2ND SUNDAYS, 3PM:** *Old Time Jam*. FREE
- 3RD FRIDAYS, 6PM:** *Historical Happy Hour*. FREE
- 3RD SUNDAYS, 3PM:** *CFMA Cajun Jam*. FREE
- 4TH SATURDAYS, 10:30AM:** *Children's Art workshops*. FREE
- LAST TUESDAYS, 6PM:** *Yoga*. FREE